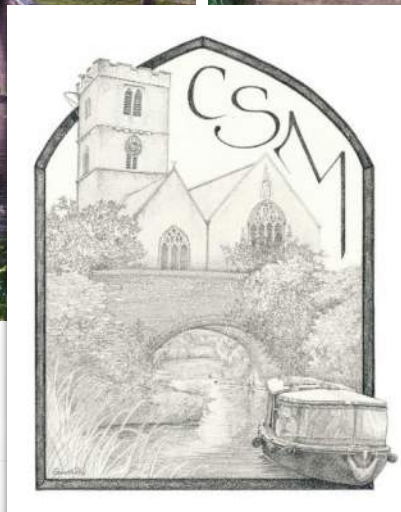
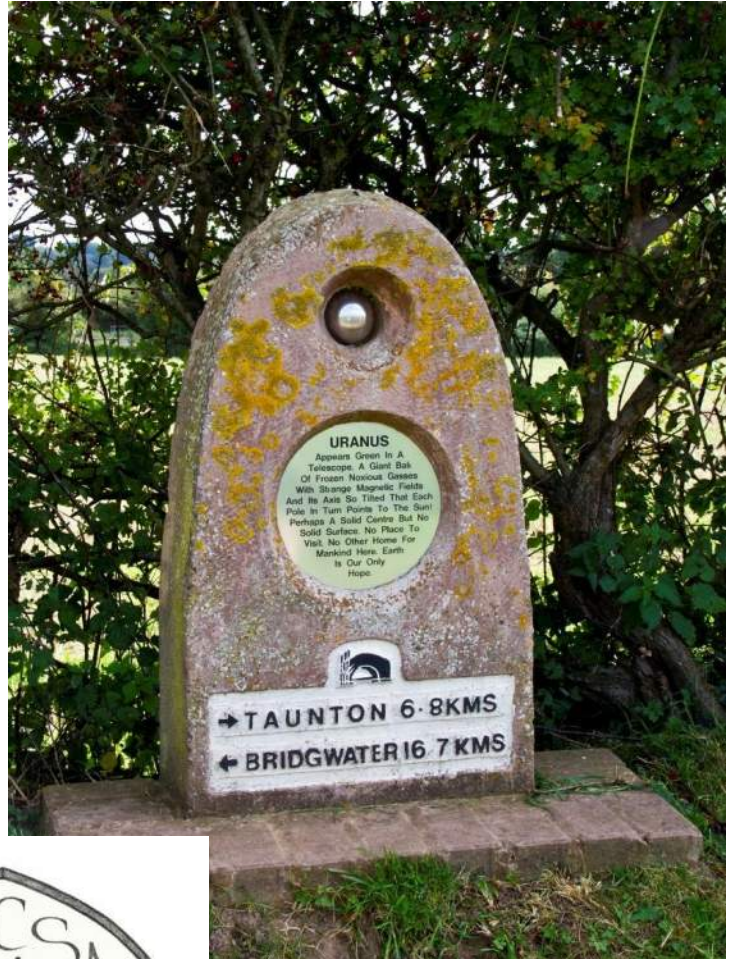


CREECH ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL

Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018-2038

April 2018



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1.0 Foreword by the Chairmen of the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Panel

The Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is designed as a structured framework to further develop the Parish over the coming years by building on its considerable merits as a place to live and work.

Its primary aim is to suggest sustainable development of the Parish through a disciplined, planned approach that delivers a safe, secure and economic future. It also seeks to preserve Parish heritage, ensure proportionate, appropriate developments, and prevent identity erosion.

Neighbourhood Plans are a relatively new concept, having only been introduced in 2011, and the Plan is, in short, a shared vision of the future based on community feedback.

The decision to propose a Plan has been taken by the Parish Council so that residents have a real voice in helping to shape the future of the Parish by saying what they want, where they want it and, equally important, what they would prefer not to have.

This includes a say on where they want new homes, shops, industrial units, offices, recreational facilities, and green spaces built, what those new developments should look like, and what supporting infrastructure and protections should be provided.

To this end a Steering Committee of parishioners and Parish Councillors was set up and, with professional help funded by grant applications, has been busy developing the Plan based on comprehensive community feedback through surveys and meetings.

The result is a number of useful ideas that will help shape future development in the Parish. Once adopted the Plan will also enable the Parish Council to claim a larger percentage of any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), money available to Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) to help deliver infrastructure projects to support development of the Parish.

Another wonderful side effect of the plan has been a widening and strengthening of relationships with residents, businesses, schools, local authorities and many other organisations too numerous to list. As a result the Parish Council has learnt the opinions and aspirations of residents and businesses in the Parish, leading to the development of the projects list at the end of this Plan.

Most importantly the Plan shows the residents' own vision for their Parish and for their future, which the Parish Council will seek to deliver to the best of its abilities.

Councillor Simon Hutchings, Chairman, CSM PC

Charlie Cudlip, Chairman, CSM NH Plan Panel

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a community-led framework that will guide and influence future development in the Parish for the period 2018 – 2038, with the end date reflecting a period of 20 years from adoption.
- 2.1.2 A NDP is concerned with matters related to future development in the NDP area, which is defined in Figure 1 and encompasses the Parish of Creech St Michael. Its objectives and policies should not be used to prevent development taking place. It is a tool that will help to ensure that development is shaped and directed to take into account the shared vision of the community.
- 2.1.3 The Creech St Michael NDP forms part of the statutory planning policy framework for the area. It will be a material consideration, alongside other national and local planning policies, during the process of determining planning applications. This means that the policies contained in this NDP will need to be weighed up by the decision maker when considering planning applications for development within the NDP area.
- 2.1.4 The following documents have been prepared in connection with this NDP:
- Basic Conditions Statement – provides an explanation of how the NDP meets the minimum legal requirements as set out paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) in relation to planning, the historic environment, EU obligations and sustainable development;
 - Consultation Statement – details the people and bodies consulted, the methods of consultation used during the preparation of this NDP, the main issues arising and how these issues have been considered and addressed within the NDP;
 - Environmental Report – demonstrates the NDP's compliance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; and
 - Evidence base documents which are explained in detail within the Consultation Statement.
- 2.1.5 The formal process for the designation of a NDP Area and preparation and adoption of a NDP is set out in full within the Consultation Statement.

2.2 Structure of the Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 2.2.1 The NDP is structured as follows:

-
- Section 3 provides a profile of the NDP area, identifying key features and characteristics of the area and providing context for the policies contained in Section 8
 - Section 4 outlines the proposals for the Monkton Heathfield urban extension (named “West Monkton” by TDBC) which is located partly within Creech St Michael Parish and explains Garden Town Principles
 - Section 5 sets out a vision for the Parish and the objectives for the NDP
 - Section 6 provides information on TDBC’s Development Plan
 - Section 7 sets out the proposed NDP planning policies
 - Section 8 provides an overview of the remit of the Community Plan which focuses on non-planning matters

3.0 Area Profile

3.1 Location and Character

- 3.1.1 The NDP area that has been designated by TDBC under Regulation 7 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) encompasses the Parish of Creech St Michael and is outlined in white in Figure 1 below.
- 3.1.2 Creech St Michael Parish is situated approximately 3 miles to the north east of the county town of Taunton, Somerset and lies partly within the Somerset levels. As shown in Figure 1, the Parish lies within the northern part of the wider administrative boundary of TDBC, bordered by West Monkton Parish and North Curry Parish to the west and east respectively. To the south, the Parish shares borders with Ruishton and Thornfalcon. The Parish of Durston also lies adjacent, to the north east. The northern border of the parish is flanked by Thurloxtton Parish and North Petherton Town, which are themselves both located within the administrative boundary of Sedgemoor District Council.

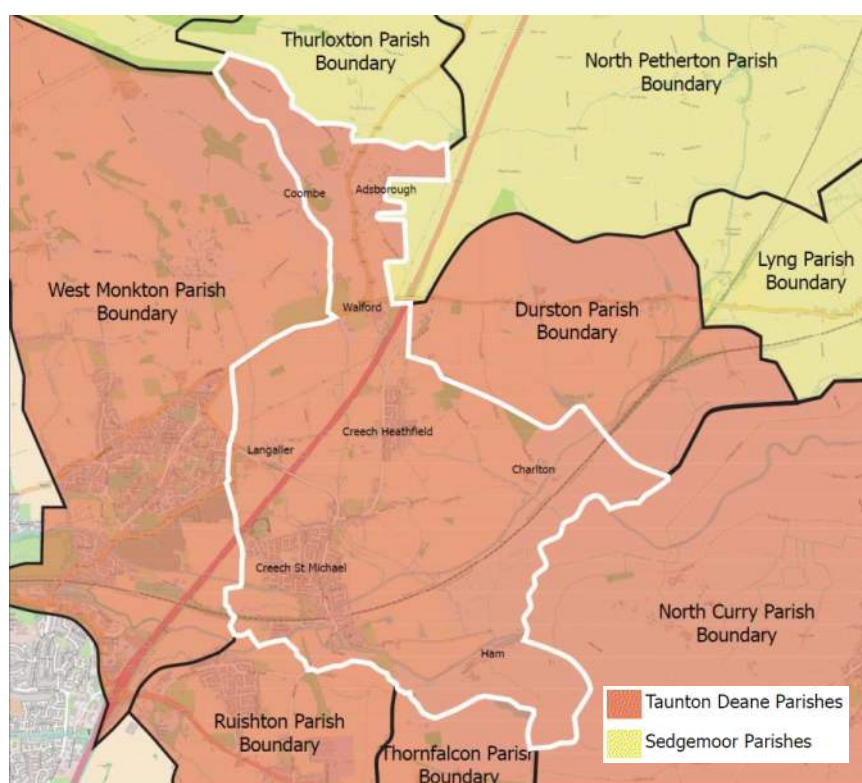


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Plan Area boundary and surrounding parishes

- 3.1.3 The Parish of Creech St Michael, and Creech St Michael Village in particular, has a rich history stretching back more than 1000 years. Creech St Michael Village is mentioned in the Domesday Book and its Parish Church is Grade 1 Listed, dating back from at least the 12th Century.

3.1.4 You can see from Figure 1 that Creech St Michael Parish straddles the M5 motorway. The motorway was extended south from Bristol to Exeter, through Somerset between 1967-1977 and the nearest junction is at Deane Gate (Junction 25), about 2 miles to the south west. The largest village of Creech St Michael which is located to the south of the NDP area and east of the M5. The village boundary is shown in Figure 2 below.

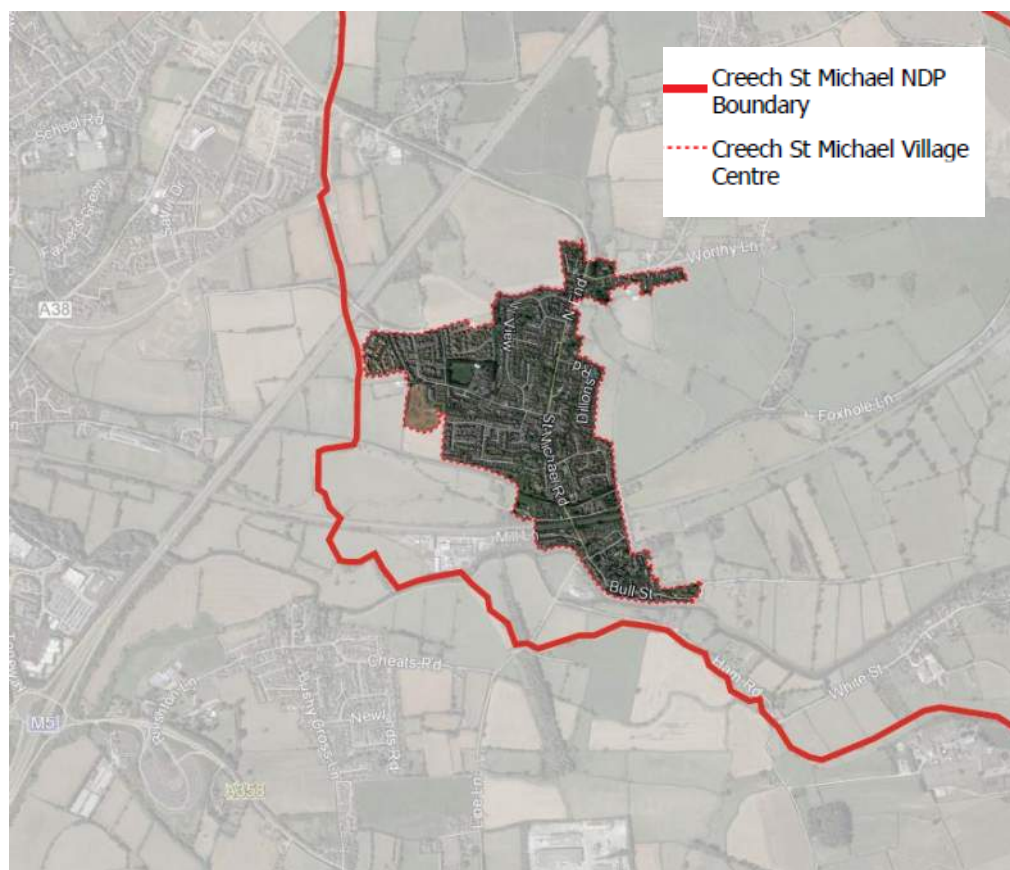


Figure 2: Creech St Michael village

3.1.5 Also to the east of the M5 are the villages and hamlets of Charlton, Creech Heathfield and Ham. The hamlets of Adsborough, Coombe, Langaller and Walford lie to west of the motorway. Historically, the route of the A38 was further west. The road was re-aligned after the Second World War, effectively splitting the settlement of Adsborough in half. Adsborough itself is within the ecclesiastical parish of Thurloxtan (within Sedgemoor District). Together with its location at the northern extremities of the NDP area on the foot of the Quantock, this gives Adsborough an altogether different character albeit still rural, in terms of topography and built materials for example.

- 3.1.6 Beyond the villages there are scattered properties and grazed farmland. For centuries the Parish's main trade has been farming. Creech St Michael as a farming community is mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086 and by the 14th Century was prosperous settlement, paying almost as much tax as Taunton in 1327 and in 1334 being one of the most highly taxed placed in the county. This is perhaps reflected in the architectural importance of the Grade 1 Listed Church for that time, which is shown in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Photographs of St Michaels Church provided by a local resident

- 3.1.7 Apple and other fruit orchards, along with cider production, have also been an important farming feature, notably on estates at Charlton, Court Barton and Langaller. There was woodland present in 1086 measuring a furlong square (approximately 40,500m²).
- 3.1.8 Figure 4 shows that over time, the historic woodland has been changed to other uses. Oak, ash and other timber was sold in 1619 which land made suitable for other use after the trees were felling. This is believed to be how Creech Heathfield and Langaller Heathfield came to be known as such.

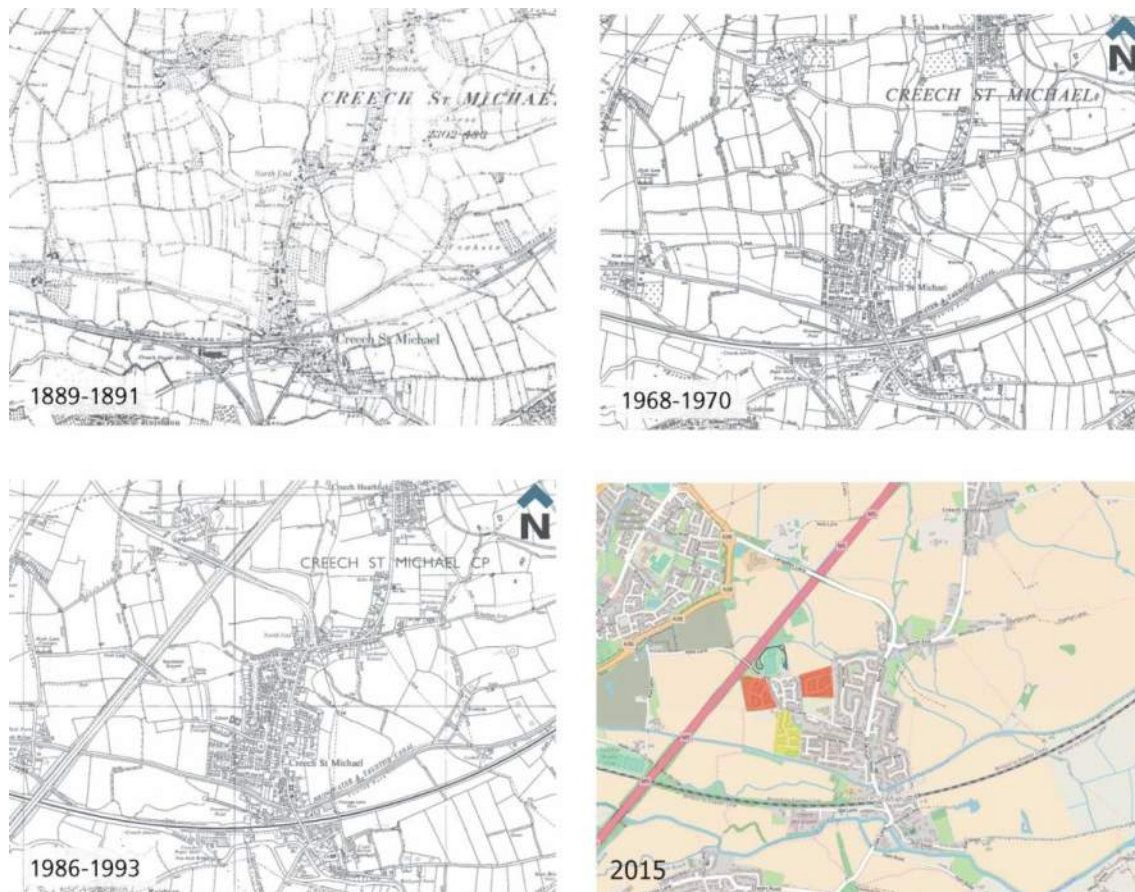


Figure 4: Maps showing the settlement patterns in Creech St Michael over time

(Source: Somerset Historic Environment Records and Ordnance Survey)

- 3.1.9 Some woodland has been replaced with new housing within the latter half of the 20th Century, particularly within Creech Heathfield and Creech St Michael villages. Nonetheless, the Parish has retained its rural identity and agricultural heritage through a mix of dairying, stock rearing and arable farming. In addition, apple production still thrives at Charlton Orchards within the east of the NDP area.
- 3.1.10 The seven key villages and hamlets have been able to retain their distinctive identities within the context of the wider, rural setting. This is significant because easy access to the countryside was highlighted as the most important thing about living in Creech St Michael Parish during the surveys carried out in 2016. A critical role of the NDP will be to ensure that new planned growth within TDBC's Development Plan is accommodated and well-integrated whilst also promoting the green and peaceful settings of the hamlets and villages that is so important to residents.

3.2 Landscape Designations

- 3.2.1 At a Borough-wide level, much of the Parish is within the Vale of Taunton and Quantock Fringes National Character Area, which forms an important vista and ecological network between the Quantock Hills AONB to the north west, and the Blackdown Hills AONB to the south east. This is shown within Figure 5 below, with the NDP area in the most northern eastern part of Taunton Deane Borough.

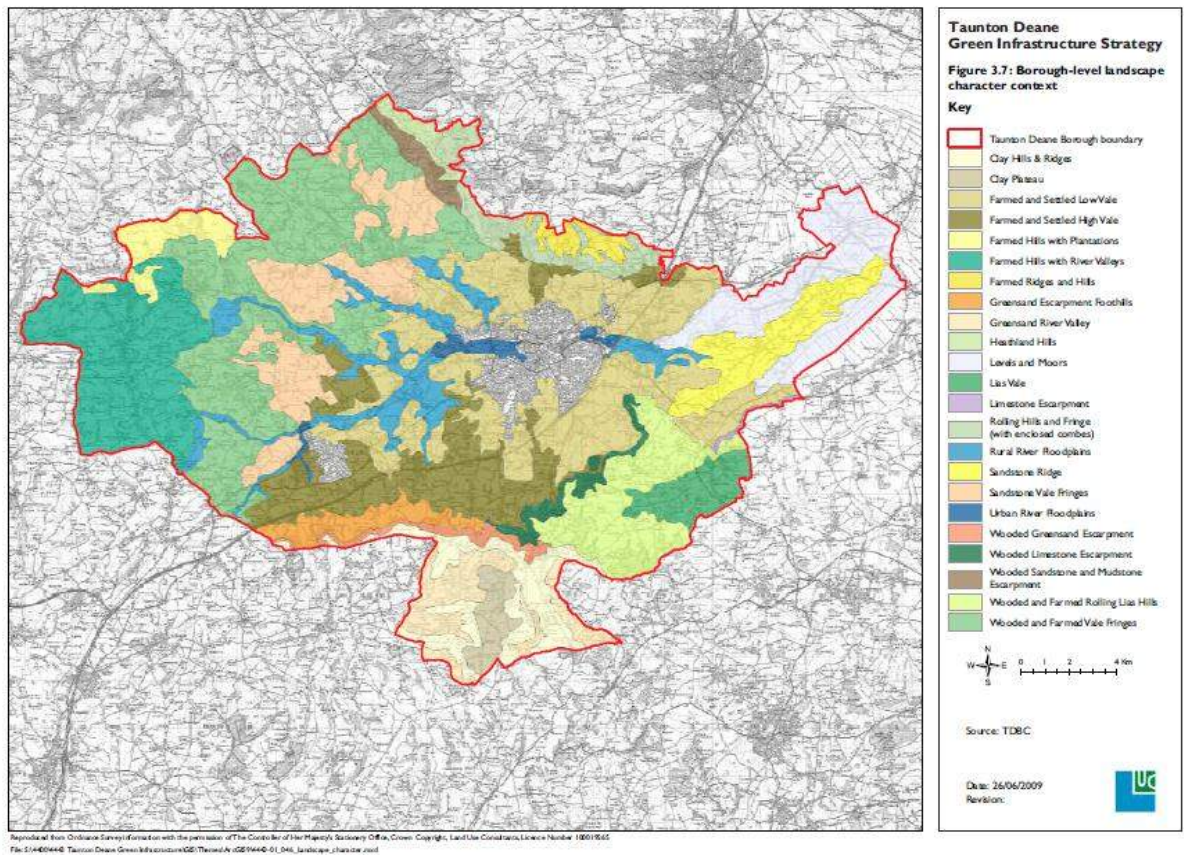


Figure 5: Local landscape character designations across TDBC
 (Source: TDBC Green Infrastructure Strategy 2009)

- 3.2.2 More locally the Parish is designated as shown in Figure 6, with Farmed and Settled Low Vale describing the patchwork of open arable and grazed farmland separated by hedgerows. To the south of the Parish, the landscape is characterised by flat, low-lying floodplain with linear rhynes.

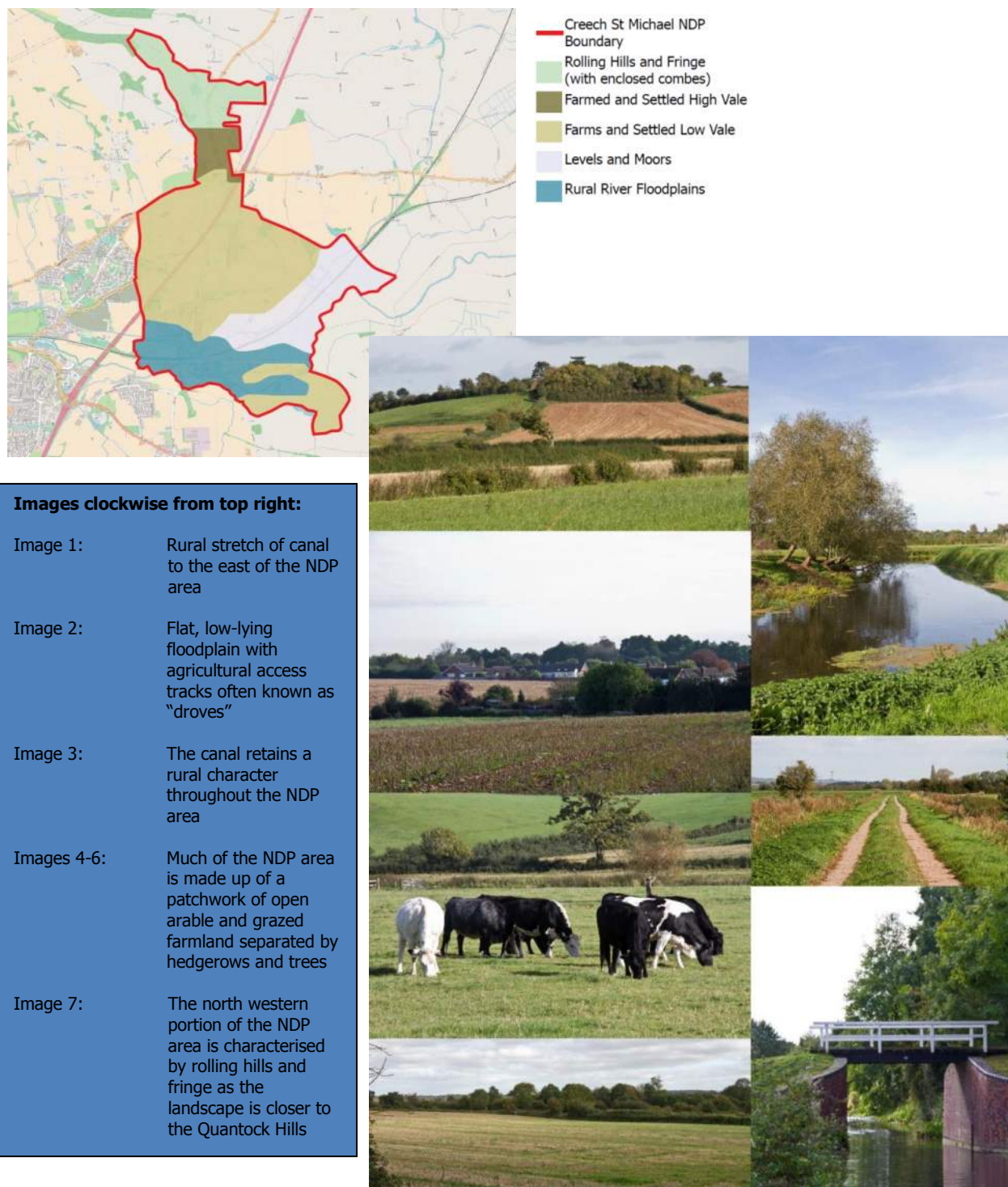


Figure 6: Local Landscape Designations

(Source: Taunton Deane Local Landscape Character Assessment 2011 and Parish Council images)

3.3 Transport

- 3.3.1 The nearest motorway junction is Junction 25 of the M5 which is located less than 2 miles to the south west via the A38 and the A358. Junction 25 is itself located almost equidistant between Exeter and Bristol, both about 40 minutes to the south and north respectively. Junction 24 of the M5 is also close, being around 4 miles north of the village of Adsborough, accessed from the A38. The A361, although located just outside of the Parish, also provides a key transport route to Street and Glastonbury to the north. These routes are shown on Figure 7 below:

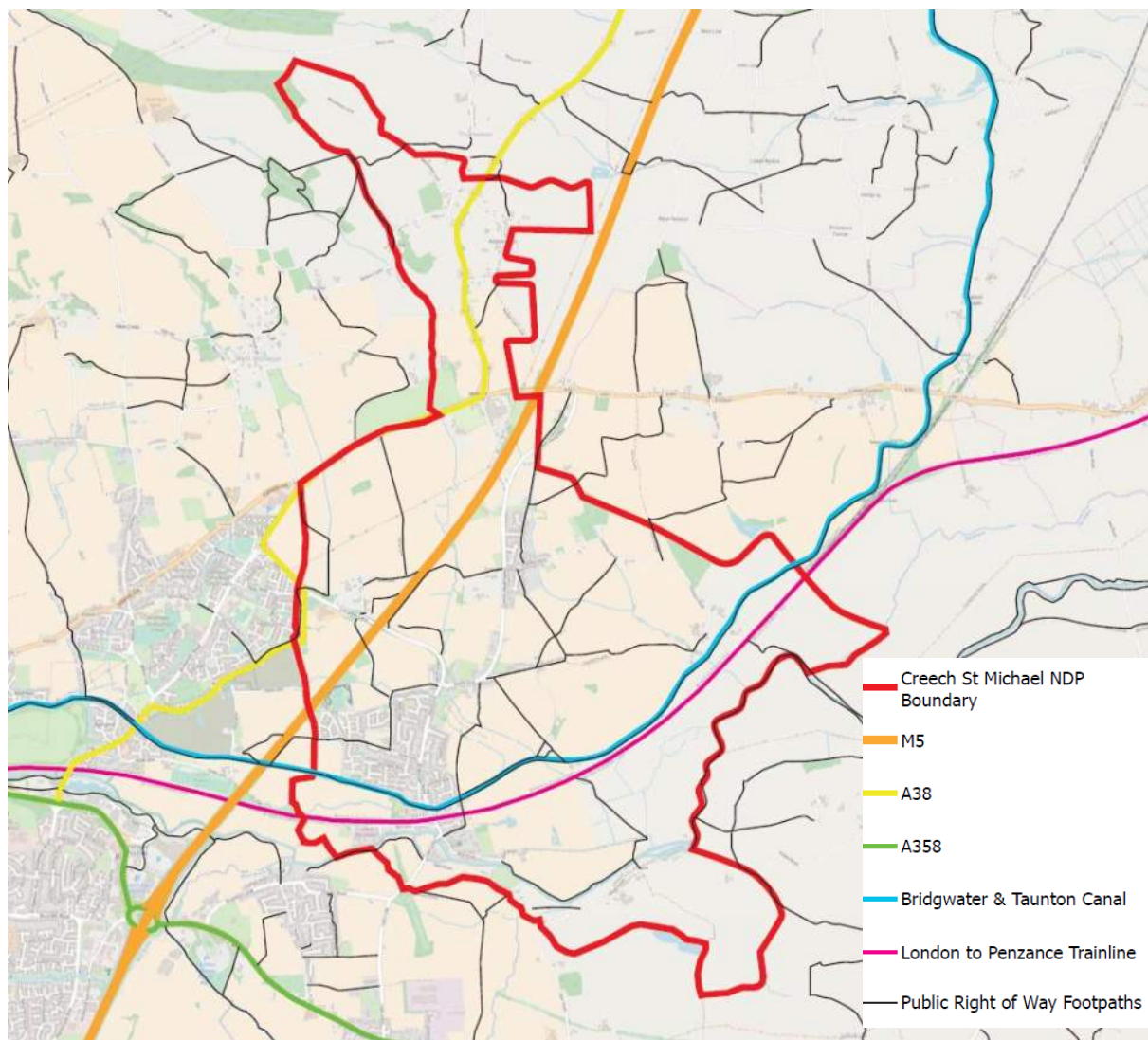


Figure 7: Strategic transport links across the NDP area

- 3.3.2 The London to Penzance main train line runs through the Parish, and historically there was a train station at Crech St Michael, however, this closed in the 1960's. The Bridgwater and Taunton Canal runs through the Parish linking the towns of Bridgwater and Taunton.

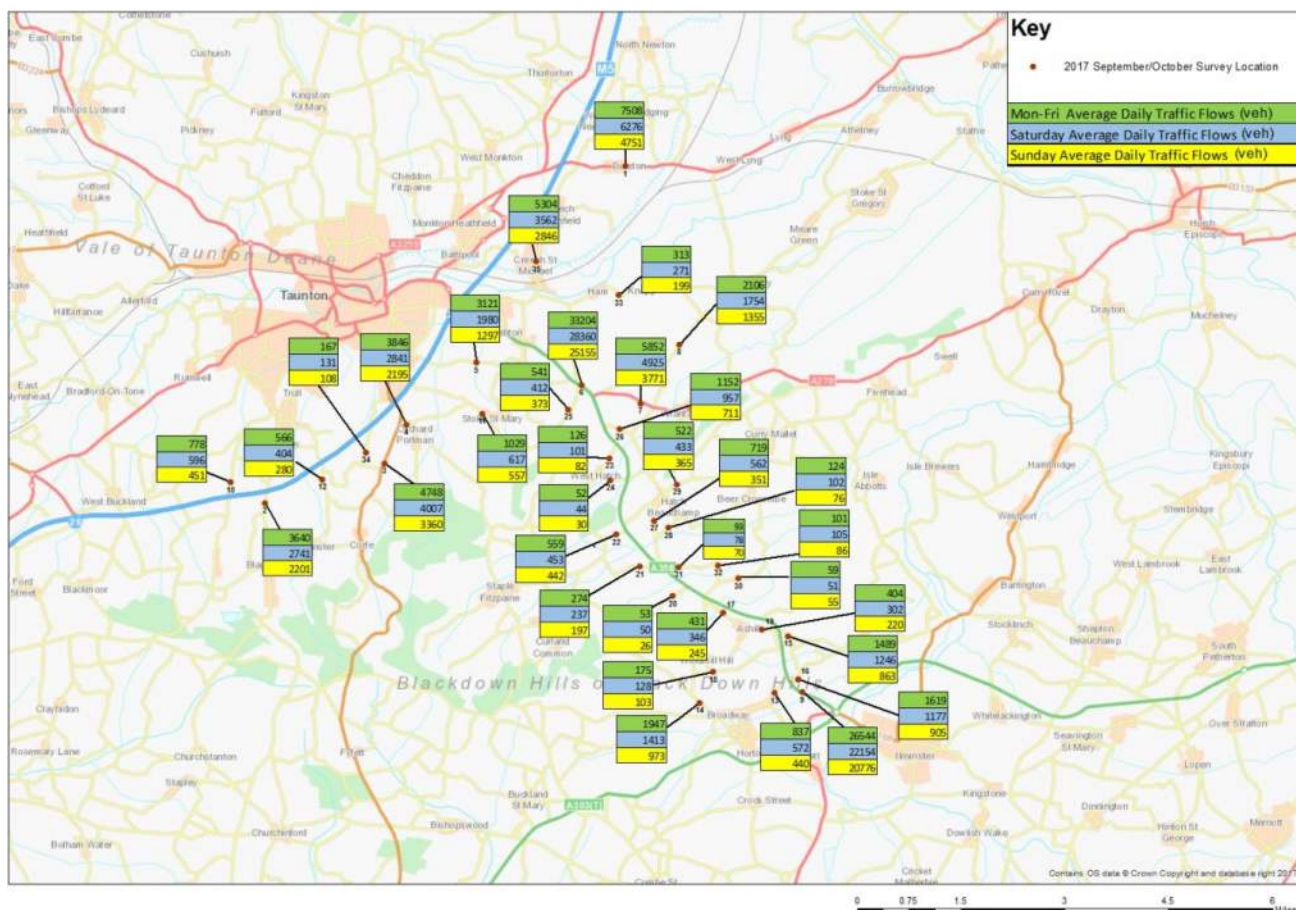


Figure 8: Traffic counts carried out and provided by Highways England as part of their draft Consultation Report (currently unpublished)

- 3.3.3 The NDP area's location in close proximity to Taunton and the M5 Junction 25 results in significant traffic flows, particularly along Hyde Lane and Langaller Road to the west of Creech St Michael village. These flows have been recently recorded as part of traffic counts carried out by Highways England to inform their forthcoming proposals to dual parts of the wider strategic network along the A358.
- 3.3.4 Figure 8 highlights the proportion of flows through Creech St Michael, which are comparable in number to strategic routes such as the A378 running east to west between the A358 and Huish Episcopi (and further east to the A303).
- 3.3.5 These flows are far beyond the limits of a B-road which is narrow and without pavements in places. Visibility and narrow bridges over the River Tone and Bridgwater and Taunton Canal through the village of Creech St Michael further exacerbates traffic conflicts within the NDP area, compromising the safety of non-car users including pedestrians and cyclists.

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- 3.3.6 Ongoing dialogue with Somerset County Council (SCC) Highways staff, including site walks with relevant officers, continues. SCC has provided comments as part of the Regulation 14 consultation to confirm that they would like to be engaged in the development of a future Traffic Management Plan for Creech St Michael in particular.

3.4 Population and Demographics

- 3.4.1 The 2011 Census data confirms a population of 2,416 within the Parish. A strategic allocation within TDBC's adopted Core Strategy at Monkton Heathfield provides for 4,500 new homes, a mixed use district centre, 22.5ha employment land and 3 new schools with associated infrastructure. About 45% of the geographic area of this strategic allocation is located within the Parish boundary although it is separated to a degree from some villages by the M5. The proposed Monkton Heathfield Urban Extension will increase the population in the area significantly and could have both a positive and negative impact upon existing facilities and infrastructure in the Parish. Many of the identified future priorities and policies within this NDP have been developed positively in the context of this strategic allocation.
- 3.4.2 In addition to the strategic allocation, there are also a further 139 dwellings allocated within Creech St Michael across three sites through the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Plan DPD.
- 3.4.3 It is vital that the new communities are integrated into the Parish. To achieve this, it will be important to secure improvements to social, community and transport infrastructure together with a range of other improvements to the Parish.
- 3.4.4 The proportion of people 65 years and over (25.4%) in the Parish is slightly higher than the average for Somerset (21.1%) and significantly higher than the UK average (16.4%). 56.3% of the Parish population is of working age (between 16-64 years). This is lower than both the Somerset and UK averages of 61.1% and 64.7% respectively. 18.3% of the Parish population is below 16 years and this broadly mirrors the County and national averages.
- 3.4.5 Unemployment within the Parish is very low at 1.8% which is less than half the national average. Just under a third of the Parish population is economically inactive.

3.5 Housing

- 3.5.1 Figure 9 below shows properties in the Parish by type and tenure. The vast majority are either detached or semi-detached and owner occupied. There are very low levels of rental, either privately or socially managed, with a total of 11.6% across the Parish, compared to the Somerset average of 28.2% and the national average of 34.3%.

Housing				
	Creech St. Michael	Creech St. Michael	Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total number of dwellings	1,068	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Detached	525	49.2%	32.3%	22.6%
Semi-detached	323	30.2%	30.4%	31.1%
Terraced	202	18.9%	23.7%	23.6%
Flats	15	1.4%	13.0%	21.6%
Tenure				
Total number of households	1,018	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Owner occupied	890	87.4%	70.2%	64.3%
Social Rented	51	5.0%	13.5%	17.6%
Privately rented	67	6.6%	14.7%	16.7%
Average household size (persons per household)	2.4			

Figure 9: Housing type and tenure within the Parish (Source: Census 2011 data)

- 3.5.2 House prices vary considerably within the Parish, from an average of £257,000 in Creech St Michael to £540,000 in Adsborough which is located on the fringes of the Quantock Hills (Zoopla 2018). Houses are extremely varied in terms of setting and design due to the large and irregular size of the Parish which encompasses several villages and dispersed hamlets.
- 3.5.3 You can see from Figure 9 that the average household size is 2.4 persons. This, together with an aging population and a high proportion of those surveyed as part of the NDP process being in 3+ bed houses, could indicate a need for a more diverse housing stock to ensure that people are able to stay in the area and encourage new residents to move in.
- 3.5.4 A Housing Need Survey was carried out by TDBC in August 2017, the conclusions of which are explained in more detail within the "*Justification and conformity*" section that accompanies Policy CSM3 within this NDP.

3.6 Services

- 3.6.1 Creech St Michael is the largest village, with a population of 1,769 (2011 Census), and is located in a central position within the Parish on the north bank of the River Tone. Local landmarks include the Parish Church of St Michael which dates from the 13th Century, the Baptist Church and the local Mill which now houses small industrial units. The village is home to several thriving businesses within the employment areas at Mill Lane and Walford Cross. In addition, the Parish supports a village shop and Post Office, a public house, a surveyors, a hairdresser, a veterinary practice, day care nursery, an undertaker, local garages, a local florist, slaughter house, sign writers, an eco-wood shop and granite and timber suppliers. There is also a hair and beauty salon at Creech Heathfield. The village has its own Medical Centre, served by two doctors and practice nurse. The Centre is also home to the Pharmacy which is used by residents from West Monkton and surrounding villages, where there are a lack of facilities. The village benefits from having a Primary School with approximately 250 pupils and two pre-schools.

-
- 3.6.2 At the social heart of the community is the Parish Council, the primary school and pre-schools, Creech St Michael Village Hall, the two churches and the two Public Houses (The Bell Inn, Creech St Michael and Maypole Inn, Coombe).
- 3.6.3 The Parish Council owns the Recreation Grounds which provides a well-cared for community facility offering play equipment, sports pitches, a multi-use games area and a pavilion with changing rooms. There are plans to enhance the ground's facilities further.
- 3.6.4 The Parish Council also leads and supports the very popular Annual Party in the Park community event, organises others such as the Senior citizens lunch and supports community groups in the Parish. The Village Hall is a registered charity run by a management committee which are elected annually. The objective of the Hall is to "provide and maintain the property for the use of the inhabitants" and many community groups make full use of the hall. The Parish also benefits from allotments at Creech Heathfield.
- 3.6.5 The following facilities and assets have been identified by the community as being important through consultation on this NDP:
- Canal and tow path
 - Public Footpaths
 - Recreation Park
 - River Tone
 - Village Hall
 - Services and facilities including the medical centre/pharmacy, village shop, village hall, primary school and the churches.

3.7 Historic Environment

- 3.7.1 There are no Conservation Areas or Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Creech St Michael Parish. However, there are 34 Listed Buildings, many of which are clustered around the centre of Creech St Michael village and shown in Figure 10 below.

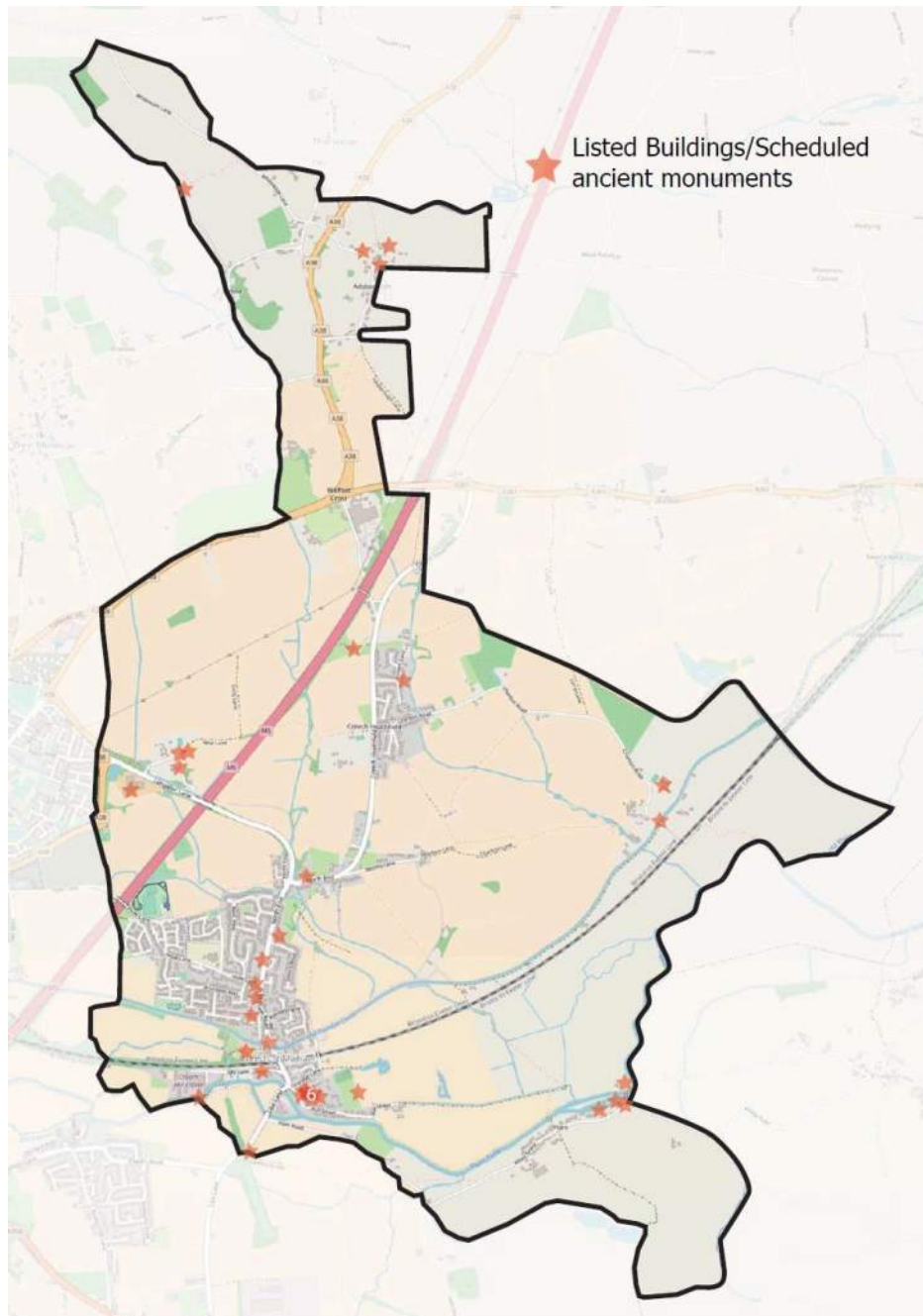


Figure 10: Heritage designations in the NDP area

- 3.7.2 The Church of St. Michael stands above the flood plain of the River Tone, the earliest parts dating from around 1250. There are dramatic remains of the Chard Canal, including the (filled) junction with the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal. A raised embankment leading south from the village, a ruined aqueduct that would have carried the canal over the River Tone and the abutments of a second aqueduct across a local road. Several Second World War pillboxes also remain along the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal, one of which has been turned into a bat habitat.

3.8 Environment

- 3.8.1 The southern portion of the Parish is located within the floodplain of the River Tone. Figure 11 shows the floodplain extent across the Parish. Much of the agricultural land forms levels and moors which provide important flood storage areas at times of high rainfall when the strategic river network capacity has been exceeded.

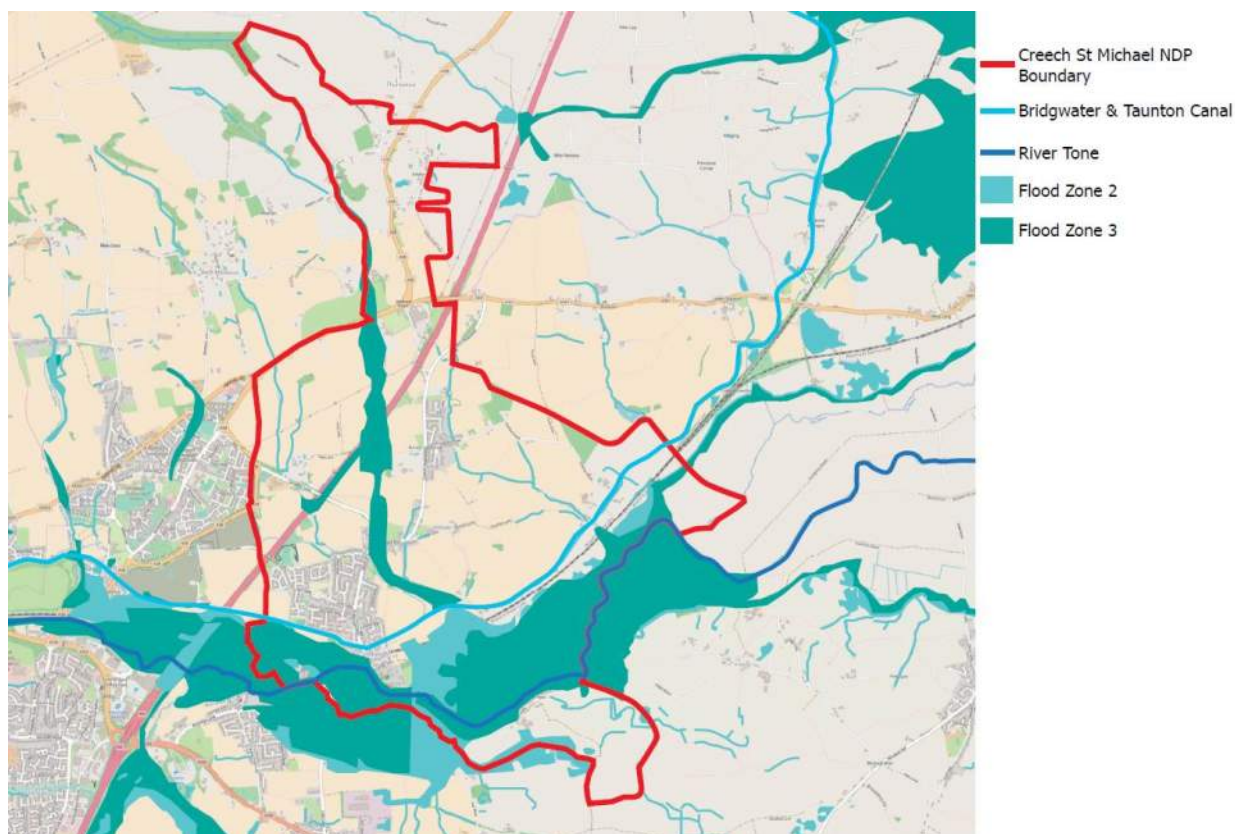


Figure 11: Floodplain extent (Source: EA Flood Map for Planning)

- 3.8.2 There are no international nature designations within the Parish however the Somerset Levels and Moors RAMSAR, SPA and SSSI lies directly to the east and is functionally linked to the network of rhynes and floodplain that are located within Creech St Michael Parish. The Hestercombe House SAC, notable for its populations of roosting and foraging bats, is located to around 2.2km to the north west of the Parish. Biodiversity designations are shown in Figure 12 below.
- 3.8.3 The River Tone and Bridgwater and Taunton Canal are designated at Local Wildlife Sites which provide habitat and foraging networks for protected species of bats, otters and water voles.

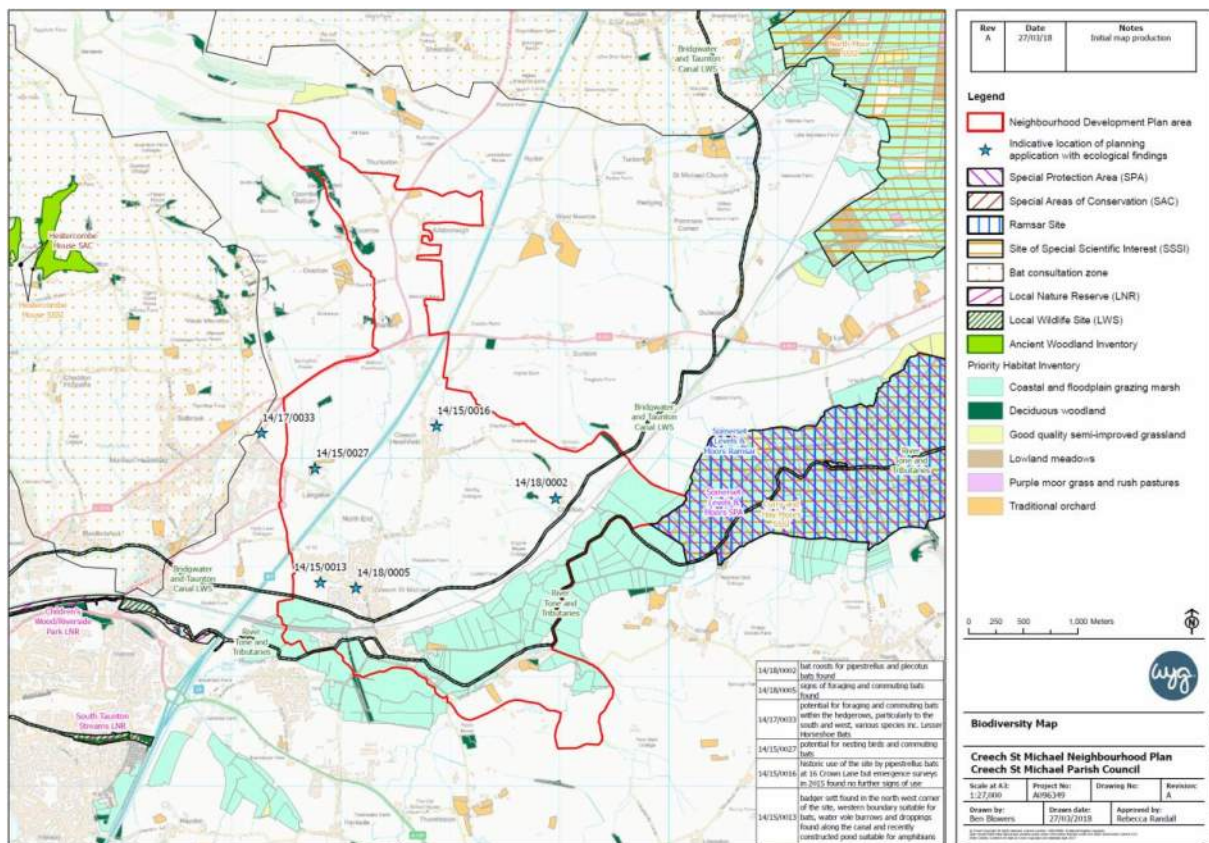


Figure 12: Biodiversity designations and records

3.9 Potential Growth

- 3.9.1 Recent years have seen increased development in Creech St Michael. More recently and as noted above, TDBC has allocated a significant urban extension to Taunton that is situated within the Parish. Whilst this will take a number of years to be developed it has the potential to introduce up to 4,500 new dwellings, employment space, retail and community facilities, schools and green spaces. In addition to this, a number of other developments and major upgrades to the road infrastructure are either programmed or in the pipeline.
- 3.9.2 Figure 13 below shows the areas where development and infrastructure upgrade are currently planned for. Further detail about this urban extension is provided in Section 4 of this NDP.

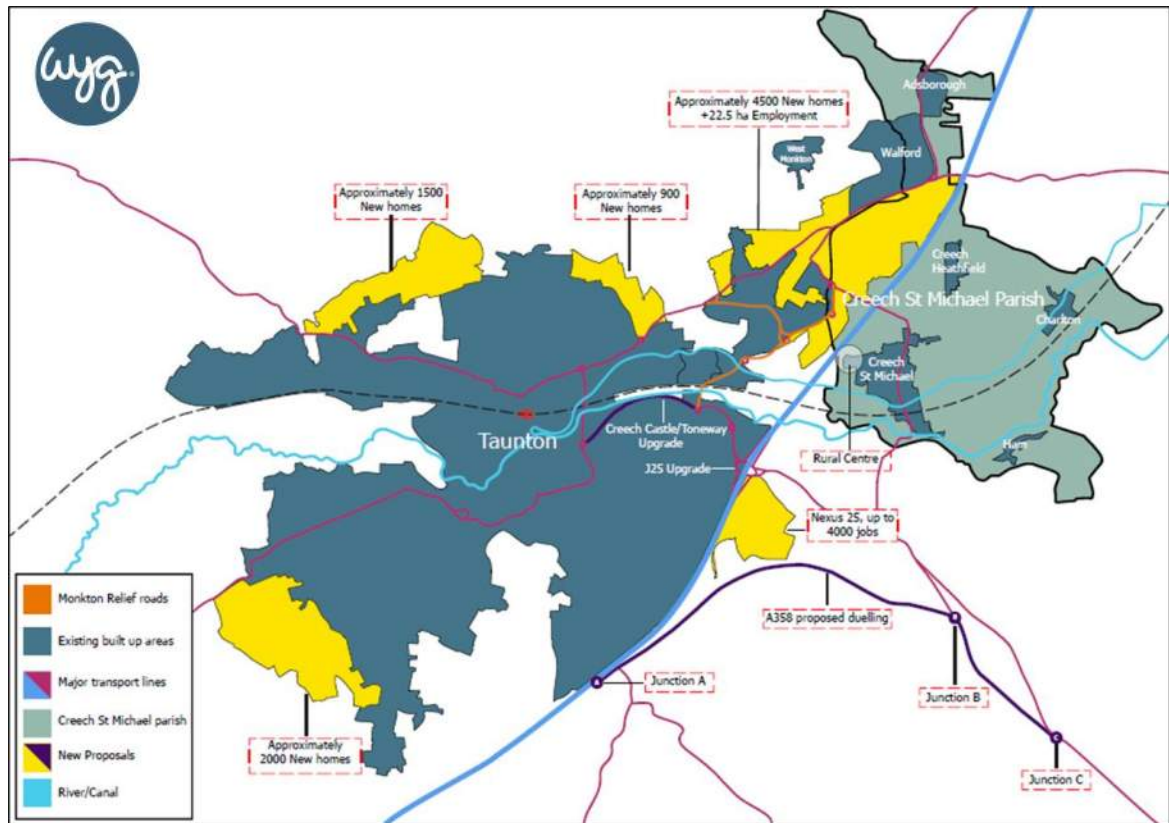


Figure 13 – New development and infrastructure improvements currently planned for or being considered

3.9.3 The new development and infrastructure that is currently planned for across the Borough of Taunton Deane is as follows:

- Urban extensions to Taunton at:
 - Comeytrowe/Trull (approximately 2000 homes)
 - Priorswood/Nerrols (approximately 900 homes)
 - Staplegrove (approximately 1500 homes)
 - West Monkton (approximately 4500 homes and 22.5 hectares of employment)
- Eastern West Monkton relief road
- Nexus 25 employment sites
- Proposals to upgrade the A358/A303
- M5 Junction
- Crech Castle Junction/Toneway upgrade.

3.9.4 More locally, new housing growth is allocated within Creech St Michael. Further details are provided in Section 6 of this NDP.

4.0 Urban extension to Taunton

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 As explained in Section 3 and illustrated in Figure 12, TDBC has allocated an area to the north east of Taunton for new development. This 'strategic site' is identified in the TDBC Core Strategy 2011-2028 by Policy SS1 Monkton Heathfield.

4.1.2 The development is proposed to deliver 4,500 new homes, of which 25% will be affordable. The site, of which about 45% of its geographical area is in Creech St Michael Parish, is also intended to include the following:

- A mixed-use district centre containing shops, restaurants, cafes and offices
- Community facilities including community hall, places of worship and health and care facilities.
- A village green
- 22.5 hectares of new employment land
- 3 new primary schools
- A country park
- An energy centre to provide locally generated electricity to the new development
- A park and ride site
- Improvements to the A38 to transform it into an urban street
- A new 'western development spine' to connect the A38 and the A3259
- A new 'eastern development spine' to the south, parallel to the A38
- Infrastructure for rapid bus transit
- Sustainable Urban Drainage infrastructure
- A multi-purpose 'green necklace' of landscape and public open space surrounding the settlement providing allotments, outdoor recreation and wildlife habitat
- Landscaping between the M5 and areas of new development.

4.1.3 Policy SS1 also advises that the site should provide:

- Connected street network which accommodates pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and promotes a viable public transport system
- Well-designed public open spaces
- A positive relationship between new housing and existing communities

-
- 4.1.4 Whilst some 1,500 homes have already either been built or granted planning permission, a significant proportion of the site is still to be planned in detail. TDBC are working with the developer consortium and stakeholders to develop a masterplan.
- 4.1.5 As noted above, it is a requirement that the NDP is in conformity with TDBC's Development Plan.
- 4.1.6 With this in mind, the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not propose any specific policies for the Monkton Heathfield urban extension.

4.2 Garden Town Principles

- 4.2.1 Taunton was awarded Garden Town status by the Government in January 2017. Exactly what this will mean for the West Monkton development is not yet clear, however a statement on TDBC's website advises:

The Council is committed to the delivery of transformational levels of growth and securing high quality development which reflects the principles of the Garden Towns movement. Over the coming years the Council will develop a new Garden Town Plan for Taunton; this Plan will articulate a comprehensive vision for the Town drawing together elements of the previously adopted local plans for Taunton. Just as importantly, the Council will place a strong emphasis on the delivery of the vision through a range of projects. (<https://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/garden-town/>)

- 4.2.2 The Expression of Interest document which supported TDBC's successful Garden Town Bid identifies the following challenges associated with the strategic allocation at Monkton Heathfield:

- Development of a co-ordinated masterplan
- Early completion of relief roads to avoid fragmentation of existing community
- Early delivery of Rapid Bus link and other sustainable transport measures to encourage modal shift
- Early delivery of primary and secondary schools
- Delivery of strategic flood mitigation works
- The unlocking of the district centre and employment land
- Provision and governance of the 'Green Necklace' and green infrastructure links

- 4.2.3 The existing and future residents of the Parish will rightly have high expectations of the new development. These expectations will only be met if the developers, local authorities, Central Government and other stakeholders are committed to working together to secure the very best possible outcomes.

- 4.2.4 The Garden Town Initiative represents a well-established and tested framework to guide the development. These principles have the support of both TDBC and Central Government.

Creech St Michael Parish calls on all interested parties to work collaboratively to deliver a high quality development for Monkton Heathfield that reflects the Garden Town Principles.

- 4.2.5 The outline planning permissions granted to date at West Monkton pre-date the Taunton Garden Town announcement. However, opportunities still exist to shape the form and design of the scheme through the reserved matters approval process. It is therefore strongly recommended that the Parish Council and other organisations base their formal consultation responses and other inputs related to the masterplanning, detailed design proposals and further planning applications for the West Monkton scheme on the objective of securing the delivery of a development that accords with the Garden Town principles and priorities identified in the TDBC Expressions of Interest document.

5.0 Vision and objectives

5.1 The Vision

The vision for Creech St Michael Parish in 20 years' time should aim for a safe and friendly environment while remaining rural, peaceful and green.

- 5.1.1 The vision for Creech St Michael reflects what has been learned about community's priorities for the Parish through the community consultation carried out for the NDP. It has been developed following consultation with the community and the word cloud below reflects the key themes and priorities most frequently referred to within the consultation by the community during the preparation of the NDP.



Figure 14 – The community's priorities and key themes drawn out by the CCS survey in 2016

- 5.1.2 It is important that the vision does not conflict with the wider strategic growth priorities established for the west of the NDP area at the Monkton Heathfield Urban Extension and delivery of the spatial strategy set out in the adopted Development Plan. It is the aim of this NDP to promote integration and cohesion between existing and new settlements and to shape development proposals outside of the strategic growth and spatial strategy to reflect local priorities.
- 5.1.3 The Parish Council, with the support of others, will achieve the shared vision by:
- Creating and taking opportunities to create a safer Parish
 - Encouraging a friendly, caring and prosperous community that delivers a high quality of life for its existing and new residents

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- Seeking measures to reduce noise and air pollution by supporting and acting on measures to improve the environment
 - Supporting measures that are appropriate, proportionate, timely and sustainable to meet the local requirements as identified in the NDP
 - Endorsing policies that have a positive effect on the environment, those that remove and minimise flooding and mitigate climate change by reducing the carbon foot print to which the Parish is exposed
 - Striving to maintain a very high natural and rural environment, to protect all wild life and natural environment and eco structures of all sorts
 - Preserving the character and history of the Parish.

5.2 Objectives

5.2.1 The following objectives will support the delivery of the vision:

- To deliver housing growth that is tailored to the needs of the Parish as a whole
- To ensure sensitive and sustainable development which protects, enhances and enriches the landscape of the Parish
- To sustain and improve local facilities for existing and new residents in the Parish
- To strengthen and support existing and new business activity
- To improve and enhance transport facilities and digital connectivity
- To improve and enhance leisure and cycle routes, including leisure trails and associated facilities
- To prioritise local village and settlement distinctiveness in every element of change and growth
- To protect our valued green spaces and landscapes, waterways and the natural environment generally
- To involve all Parishioners in the monitoring and delivery of the vision.

5.2.2 Section 7 contains the NDP planning policies. These are organised under the following themes:

- Transport
- Housing

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- Business and employment
 - Community
 - Facilities and services
 - Open and green spaces

5.2.3 More detailed objectives for each planning policy theme are set out at the start of each policy.

5.2.4 It is recognised that some aspects of the vision and the accompanying proposed actions and objectives cannot be delivered solely by the planning policies contained within the NDP. In particular, the themes of community and young people featured strongly within the results of the community consultation. These actions will be important to address within a Community Action Plan, outside of the planning process, and are included within a list of Priority Projects in Section 8. Together the NDP and Community Action Plan create a set of planning policies, projects and actions that over time will together support the delivery of the vision for the Parish.

6.0 Local Planning Policy Context

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The planning policies for the NDP are set out in Section 7 and will sit alongside those set out within TDBC's statutory development plan to be taken into account when TDBC considers and determines planning applications within the NDP area.
- 6.1.2 This means that it is not necessary for the NDP to repeat other statutory development plan policies/provisions. Rather, the NDP seeks to shape, direct and contribute to sustainable development within the context of current planning policies, and respond to the evidence that has been gathered, and add new policies that are specific to Creech St Michael.
- 6.1.3 As part of the process to develop the NDP, existing development plan policies have been reviewed to see whether they will already address the issues that have been identified during the community consultation and through the analysis of other evidence. Where existing policies are considered to be sufficient in terms of how they deal with a particular issue, an additional policy has not been included in the NDP.

6.2 Local planning policies

- 6.2.1 At the time of preparing the NDP the existing planning policy framework for the Neighbourhood Area – known as the statutory Development Plan - is made up of the following documents:
- Taunton Deane Local Plan (2004) – saved policies only (none relevant to Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Development Plan)
 - Core Strategy (2012)
 - Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (2016)

Core Strategy

- 6.2.2 The Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 and covers a plan period up until 2028. It contains a spatial portrait and vision along with core policies to be applied Borough-wide. The Core Strategy also includes spatial policies to guide and support its strategic allocations, and specific development management policies that should be applied to all planning applications during their determination.
- 6.2.3 Core Strategy policies that are relevant to the Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Development Plan are listed and summarised as follows:

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- Policy SD1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development - planning applications that accord with the Core Strategy policies (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, reflecting the principles of NPPF paragraphs 14 and 49
 - Policy CP1 Climate Change - development proposals should result in a sustainable environment, and will be required to demonstrate that the issue of climate change has been addressed through reducing the need to travel and appropriate design measures
 - Policy CP2 Economy - proposals which lead to the loss of existing or identified business, industrial or warehousing land to other uses, including retail, will not be permitted unless the overall benefit of the proposal outweighs the disadvantages of the loss of employment or potential employment on the site
 - Policy CP4 Housing - seeks to maintain a flexible supply of housing by making provision for the delivery of at least 17,000 new homes over the period 2008 – 2028, including 4000 affordable homes
 - Policy CP5 Inclusive Communities - development proposals will promote sustainable development that creates social cohesive and inclusive communities; reduce inequalities, promote personal well-being and address accessibility to health, inclusive housing, training, education, places of worship, leisure and other community facilities ensuring a better quality of life for everyone both now and for future generations
 - Policy CP6 Transport - development should contribute to reducing the need to travel, improve accessibility to jobs, services and community facilities, and mitigate and adapt to climate change by managing strategic corridors and networks, improving accessibility of public transport, walking and cycling from rural centres to key destinations and robustly managing the effects of new development in terms of transport impacts and parking provision
 - Policy CP7 Infrastructure - ensure that infrastructure is in place at the right time to meet the needs of Taunton Deane and to support the growth set out in the Core Strategy. It will also secure developer contributions towards the provision of physical, social and green infrastructure
 - Policy CP8 Environment - conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment, retain and enhance green infrastructure assets, improve green infrastructure, public access, visual amenity and the overall quality of the natural environment, direct new development away from the floodplain, encourage the use of sustainable drainage systems

- Policy SP1 Sustainable Development Locations identifies the settlement hierarchy and the spatial distribution of development. Creech St Michael is identified as a Minor Rural Centre. New housing development is envisaged to be small-scale allocations within the settlement boundary mainly on brownfield land for an appropriate mix of market and affordable housing. The five Minor Rural Centres are allocated at least 250 dwellings in total on sites, to be identified by the Site Allocations DPD.
- Policy SP2 – Realising the Vision for Taunton establishes the scale of employment and housing growth, including 4,500 dwellings at Monkton Heathfield. It also confirms the protection and extension of the existing network of green wedges to prevent coalescence of settlements and maintain a green lung between town and country and supports sustainable transport choices.
- Policy SP4 Realising the vision for the Rural Areas – limited development of up to 1,500 dwellings over the plan period, small scale employment growth and encouraging the provision of additional services, enable a step change in affordable housing and promote sustainable travel
- Policy SS1 Monkton Heathfield – discussed in more detail at Section 4 of this Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Policy DM1 General Requirements – planning applications should make the most efficient use of land, taking into account transport impacts, protect wildlife, consider impacts on character and appearance of landscapes and settlements, pollution, amenity and utilities
- Policy DM2 Development in the Countryside – will only support defined uses where a sequential approach has been demonstrated
- Policy DM5 Use of Resources and Sustainable Design – new developments will be required to incorporate sustainable design measures

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) DPD

6.2.4 The SADMP is a Development Plan Document (DPD) that includes policies in respect of specific development management considerations and allocates smaller sites. The following policies are relevant to the Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Development Plan:

- Policy C2: Provision of recreational open space
- Policy C3: Protection of recreational open space
- Policy C4: Protection of community facilities
- Policy C5: Provision of Community Facilities
- Policy A1: Parking Requirements

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- Policy A2: Travel Planning
 - Policy A3: Cycle network
 - Policy A4: Protection of disused transport corridors
 - Policy A5: Accessibility of Development
 - Policy I4: Water infrastructure
 - Policy ENV1: Protection of trees, woodland, orchards and hedgerows
 - Policy ENV2: Tree planting within new developments
 - Policy ENV4: Archaeology
 - Policy ENV5: Development in the vicinity of rivers and canals
 - Policy D2: Approach routes to Taunton and Wellington
 - Policy D4: Shopfronts
 - Policy D5: Extensions to dwellings
 - Policy D6: Ancillary accommodation
 - Policy D7: Design quality
 - Policy D8: Safety
 - Policy D9: A co-ordinated approach to development and highway planning
 - Policy D10: Dwelling Sizes
 - Policy D12: Amenity Space
 - Policy D13: Public Art
 - Policy SB1: Settlement Boundaries

6.2.5 In addition to the above, Policies MIN2, MIN3 and MIN4 include residential allocations for the plan period. These allocations and their progress in terms of build out are included on Figure 15 below.

MIN2 – Land at Hyde Lane (known as Sweetings Close)
Allocates for around 40 houses including 25% affordable housing
Permission granted for 35 dwellings and site built out by Linden Homes in 2015 under outline application 14/12/0036

MIN3 – Land north of the school (known as Hopkins Field)
Allocates for around 55 dwellings including 25% affordable housing
Full planning permission granted for 55 dwellings under 14/13/0006 and site subsequently built out by David Wilson Homes

MIN4 – Land off Hyde Lane (known as Larksfleet scheme)
Allocates for around 44 dwellings including 25% affordable housing
Built out by Larksfleet Homes in 2017 under outline permission 14/12/0043 for 44 dwellings

* Other Development consisting of 76 dwellings, built out and completed by David Wilson Homes in 2012.

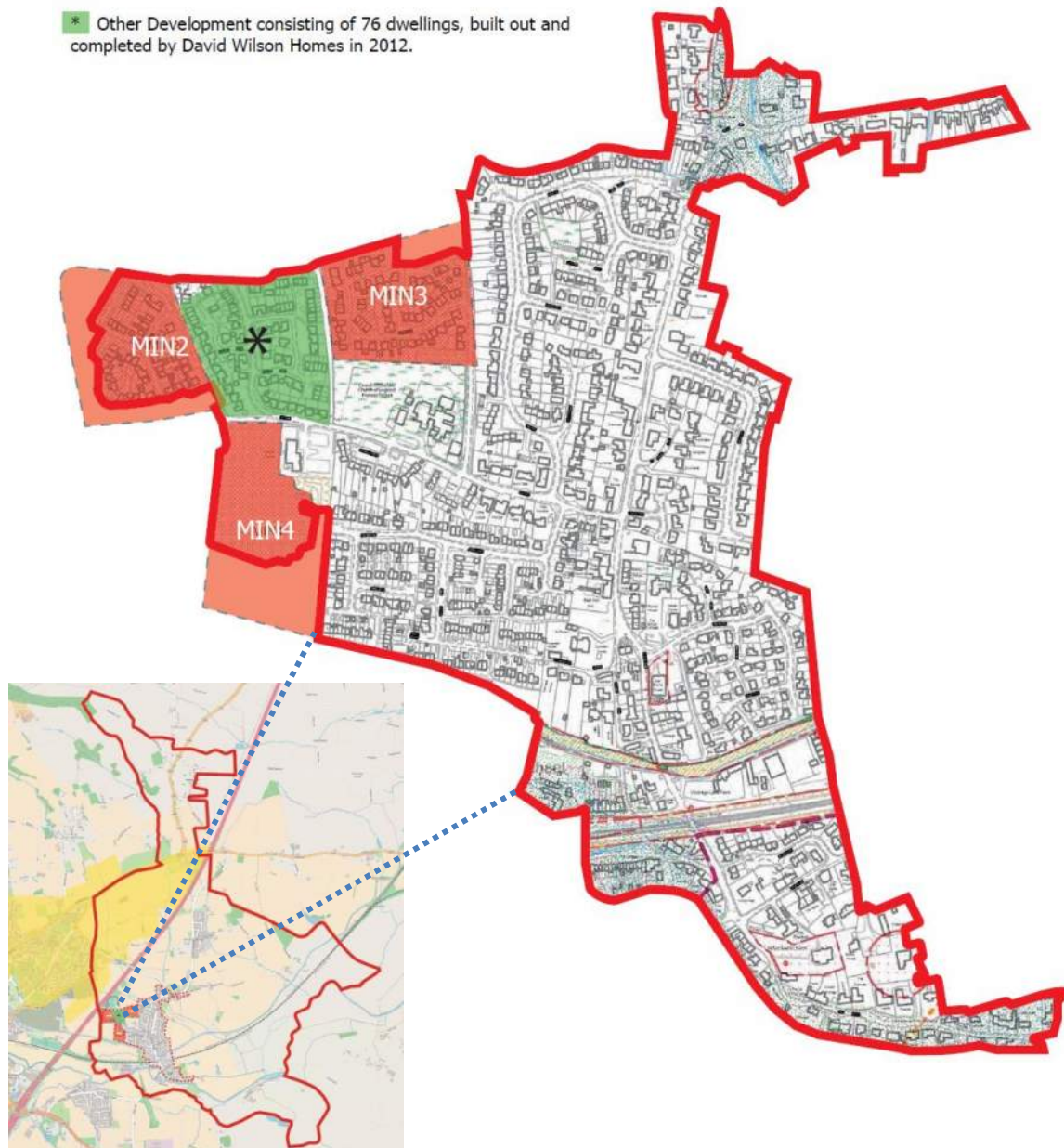


Figure 15: Residential allocations within Creech St Michael adopted in the SAADMP, set against the strategic growth in yellow within the inset plan

7.0 Proposed Planning Policies

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This section contains the proposed planning policies and approaches for the Creech St Michael NDP area. They are listed under the following themes:

- Road safety and transport
- Housing
- Business and employment
- Community
- Facilities and services
- Open and green spaces

7.1.2 For each policy theme a number of aims and objectives are identified. In addition to the policy itself, justification is provided along with an explanation of how it is considered to be in conformity with TDBC's policies and the NPPF. How each policy can make a difference to the area and contribute to the vision is also set out.

7.1.3 When drafting policies for inclusion in this NDP, consideration has been given to the strategic allocation at Monkton Heathfield and further residential allocations within Creech St Michael Parish. It is important to note that the proposed policies contained in this NDP can only apply to new development within the NDP boundary and do not cover the strategic allocation which is addressed under TDBC Core Strategy Policy SS1.

7.1.4 The impacts of the strategic allocation have previously been assessed as part of the evidence base which underpins Core Strategy Policy SS1 and the Borough-wide spatial strategy overall. In relation to transport, the strategic allocation includes for two relief roads to ease commuting along the A38 between Bridgwater and Taunton which will be important since 65% of journeys are for work (Bridgwater, Taunton and Wellington Transport Strategy).

7.1.5 There are also travel planning improvements including a park and ride and rapid transit bus route. Notwithstanding this, there will be some residual effects to surrounding villages, particularly where primary routes are blocked due to accidents or adverse conditions. These residual effects have yet to be quantified and are in the process of being assessed by the Consortium of Developers that are delivering the allocation. Ideally, the NDP should be informed by the initial findings of this work so that any transport and travel planning measures delivered by the Consortium can complement those being promoted within the NDP.

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- 7.1.6 The community consultation identified a range of concerns related to road safety and transport, with speed, rat running, volume of traffic, HGV traffic and parking all raised as specific issues. There was a significant level of support for measures such as traffic calming, 20 mph speed limit and new cycle routes. Safety concerns relating to Hyde Lane were highlighted by many residents.
- 7.1.7 Policy CSM2 seeks to address widespread concern with existing and anticipated traffic conditions in the Parish resulting from new development within and beyond the Parish. A traffic management plan will be prepared once a robust assessment of the impacts of the strategic allocation on the NDP area becomes available. Opportunities for funding and delivery will be created and taken by the Parish Council and relevant delivery partners such as TDBC, Somerset County Council and potentially developers. This traffic management plan will be necessary to ensure that traffic impacts from new development are carefully assessed and managed to protect the character of the NDP area and achieve the NDP vision.
- 7.1.8 The Parish Council will take the lead on developing the traffic management plan that addresses the concerns of parishioners in conjunction with stakeholders including the County Highway Authority. The Plan will be subject to consultation after which it will be adopted.
- 7.1.9 Retaining a distinctive, rural identity for the villages in the Parish is also a key aspiration identified throughout this NDP consultation. Whilst many of the villages are separated from the strategic allocation by the M5, there is increasing pressure on the rural character of the Parish and access to the countryside for residents is potentially threatened into the future. Improving the intervening area between the strategic growth and existing villages and hamlets through the provision of green wedges and ensuring green space provision between Creech St Michael and Creech Heathfield is seen as an important priority, and as such specific policies have been included within this NDP.
- 7.1.10 The issues raised, along with other relevant evidence, have identified the following aims and objectives:
- Provide improved safe routes to Creech St Michael Primary School and Heathfield Secondary School, as well as the new schools to be delivered within the proposed development
 - Promote opportunities for walking and cycling within Creech St Michael Parish and to other destinations including Taunton and existing and planned employment areas
 - Promote additional parking in Creech St Michael village within the vicinity of shops, vets and The Bell Inn
 - Promote opportunities to address issues with 'rat running' through Creech St Michael village
 - Ensure that the highway impacts of future development are fully taken into account and appropriate mitigation is in place to address those impacts.
- 7.1.11 The following policies seek to achieve the above objectives. Projects are also identified in the Community Action Plan that will contribute to meeting the objectives.

<p>CSM 1 – Cycle and footpath network</p>	<p>Major development proposals* must demonstrate how they will enhance the safety, legibility and capacity of the existing walking and cycling network and/or deliver a network of new dedicated walking and cycling connections where appropriate. The existing network includes, but is not limited to, the following which are shown on Plan 1 (Appendix A):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creech St Michael Baptist Church to Bull Street • Creech Heathfield to North End • Hyde Lane • North End to the centre of Creech St Michael Village • Railway and canal bridges • Routes to West Monkton, Ruishton, Sedgemoor, Hankridge and the planned Nexus Employment Park. • Larkfleet estate to Canal via proposed new foot bridge across canal and canal towpath • Key routes for education facilities <p>*Major residential developments of 10 units or more; and employment/commercial developments of 1000m² or one Hectare</p>
<p>Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF</p>	<p>Transport and highway considerations are of paramount concerns for the Parish. Within the survey work carried out in 2016, 88% of respondents cited traffic congestion as a concern from new development and over half were worried about traffic congestion generally within the NDP area. The volume of traffic, speed and safety in particular have been identified as specific issues.</p> <p>Whilst high level modelling has been carried out to identify the effects of new development at Monkton Heathfield, this does not include impacts on all routes. Work is being progressed by SCC, working with the Consortium of Developers, to review changes in journeys and potential impacts of further growth at Monkton Heathfield. This work includes monitoring along Langaller Lane and should therefore take into account recently built housing developments in Creech St Michael Parish along with the Monkton Heathfield Urban Extension.</p> <p>The position of the Neighbourhood Plan Area as a potential corridor for traffic growth as a result of development means that access for all, through a range of transport modes, should be encouraged to promote cohesion between existing and proposed communities. Policy CSM1 seeks to ensure that new development proposals take into account any effects on the existing transport network and work positively to deliver the local and strategic transport infrastructure identified by SCC as part of the wider strategy to accommodate growth in the area.</p> <p>Regard has been had to national policies within the NPPF, and specifically Section 4: Promoting sustainable transport. Policy CSM1 reflects priority routes which were highlighted as priorities for improvement through consultation. The policy is considered to be in general conformity with TDBC's adopted Core Strategy, including Strategic Objectives 6 and 7, Policies CP6, SP1, SP2, SS1 and DM1.</p>

What difference will it make?	The policy will help to improve the safety and capacity of the existing network of walking and cycling routes and as a result, increase levels of cycling and walking. This will improve road safety, reduce traffic, improve the opportunities for leisure and exercise and have a positive impact on the health and well-being of the community.
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CSM 2 – Traffic Management Plan	<p>Creech St Michael Parish Council will work with Somerset County Council and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan for the Parish that seeks to improve highway safety within the Parish <u>especially for pedestrians and cyclists</u>, reduce vehicular traffic speed and encourage vehicular movements in accordance with the hierarchy of roads. The Traffic Management Plan will be adopted by the Parish Council and reviewed by the Parish Council at the appropriate time (at least every five years).</p> <p>The initiatives agreed within the Traffic Management Plan will be coordinated with those initiatives and measures proposed in connection with the Monkton Heathfield urban extension to ensure that strategic and local transport strategies are aligned.</p> <p>Development proposals which result in a net increase in traffic movements will need to demonstrate compliance with the Traffic Management Plan objectives and include measures to ensure that the proposals will not adversely affect highway safety.</p>
Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>Transport and highway considerations are of paramount concerns for the Parish. Within the survey work carried out in 2016, 88% of respondents cited traffic congestion as a concern from new development and over half were worried about traffic congestion generally within the NDP area. The volume of traffic, speed and safety in particular have been identified as specific issues.</p> <p>Policy CSM2 seeks to work together with Policy CSM1 (which focuses on pedestrian and cycle improvements) to address specifically the impacts of vehicular traffic, taking into account its effects on other road users, and takes a positive approach to the delivery of transport infrastructure to support growth.</p> <p>It is intended that a Traffic Management Plan is progressed potentially through the use of CIL funds (unless and until appropriate alternative funding can be secured from Borough/County wide projects) and in consultation with SCC and the Monkton Heathfield Consortium. Support for the traffic management plan has been indicated by SCC within their formal response to the Regulation 14 consultation.</p> <p>Regard has been had to national policies within the NPPF, and specifically Section 4: Promoting sustainable transport. The proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy including Strategic Objectives 6 and 7, Policies CP6, SP1, SP2, SS1 and DM1.</p>
What difference will it make?	The policy will ensure that development proposals create safer roads and a better environment in the Parish.

7.2 Housing

Aims and objectives

- 7.2.1 The community consultation and Housing Needs Survey (2017) identify issues relating to the need for new housing and the quality of any housing that is to be constructed. The issues raised, along with other relevant evidence, have identified the following aims and objectives:
- Ensure that new housing constructed within the parish meets the locally identified need at the time
 - Ensure that new housing and other new development is of an appropriately high quality design that reflects the local area
 - Promote the use of sustainable construction methods and the inclusion of measures such as small scale renewable energy production and, rainwater harvesting.
 - Support the provision of self-build homes
- 7.2.2 Policy CSM3 below supports the above objectives alongside projects that are separately identified in the Community Action Plan that will contribute to the meeting the objectives.

CSM 3 – Housing to meet local needs	Planning applications for residential and residential led mixed-use development of 11 units or more must demonstrate the delivery of housing which will help to meet the local need identified in the Creech St Michael Housing Needs Survey (September 2017), and any subsequent update.
Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>The Housing Needs Assessment (August 2017) suggested a need for low cost and shared ownership housing, as well as smaller, 2 bed properties and bungalows. This is mainly due to a high percentage of existing single and two person households (making up around 74%) and an almost equally high number of those living in 3+ bed properties (73%). Therefore, whilst a high need for affordable housing may not currently exist, there is clearly a demand for a more appropriate mix of house types to cater for local demand.</p> <p>The proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies SP1, SS1, CP4 and CP5 and the NPPF. The threshold of 11 units or more reflects the position within the Ministerial Statement of 28th November 2014.</p>
What difference will it make?	<p>The provision of housing that meets the identified needs of the community will help to support the delivery of balanced and sustainable communities. Crucially, it will encourage a wider variety of tenure and mix of dwellings which will allow existing residents flexibility to move within the NDP area and new residents the opportunity to consider living in the area.</p>

<p>CSM 4 – Quality of design</p>	<p>Planning applications for residential and residential-led mixed-use development must demonstrate that that they are of a high standard of design quality that complements and enhances the local character and rural context of the area. Proposals should demonstrate a commitment to the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make use of locally distinctive materials where this will complement and enhance the character and street scene of the locality • Be limited to two / two-and-a-half storeys • Respect and where possible enhance locally important and distinctive features and their setting, including those identified in this Plan • Provide landscaped areas to maintain the rural character of the existing settlements. Where appropriate, landscaped bunds and buffers shall be incorporated to protect the amenity of future occupiers from adverse noise impacts e.g. from the M5 Motorway • Create legible, accessible and quality usable public open space, that can be used for recreational needs • Utilise where practicable sustainable construction methods, minimise the use of non-renewable resources and take advantage of opportunities for on-site small scale renewable energy production e.g. solar thermal and voltaic panels and rainwater harvesting
<p>Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF</p>	<p>Defining key design and character attributes for the NDP area as a whole is difficult due to the number of different settlements which vary considerably in terms of scale, built form and settlement pattern. There are common themes that can be attributed to all villages and hamlets, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural character provided by low density settlement patterns and properties being set back from the highway, often with landscaping or screening • Generally, dwellings are one to two-storey in height, with two-and-a-half storeys within some of the new developments • A mixed palette of materials is used in different locations including brick, stone and render <p>The above themes have been informed by evidence included at Appendix B which shows examples of existing built form within the villages.</p> <p>Importantly, the rural character of the Parish as a whole has been highlighted through consultation as being important to residents and this has been reflected within the NDP vision. Easy access to the countryside was the top-rated reason for living in the NDP area within the survey work carried out in 2016 and it is critical that the rural character and setting of the villages is retained.</p>

	<p>The green spaces between housing was by far the most popular response when residents were asked what is highly important in the design of any new build housing (72%). More generally, respect for the historic environment is an important consideration identified by the community, particularly in relation to St Michaels Church which was valued by 80% of respondents. In terms of the design of new houses there was a strong indication that single or two storey homes are the most appropriate for the area and that new development should incorporate a mix of designs along with homes that demonstrate high standards of energy efficiency or include small scale energy production measures.</p> <p>The provisions of Policy CSM4 do not apply to the Monkton Heathfield Urban Extension which is subject to the wider provisions of Core Strategy Policy SS1 and ongoing masterplanning work.</p> <p>The proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies DM4 and DM5. Regard has been had to the provisions of the NPPF which promotes high quality design that contributes positively to a place.</p>
What difference will it make?	This policy will integrate new development into the existing community whilst ensuring the protection of local assets and identity. High quality design will be encouraged in line with the NPPF and TDBC Core Strategy Policy DM4 which advocates the use of village-specific design statements.

7.3 Business and employment

Aims and objectives

- 7.3.1 The community consultation, including a specific survey of all local businesses, provided an up to date insight into the views of existing businesses and the wider community of the issues relating to local economic activity. Whilst there wasn't a significant demand amongst existing businesses for new employment space, a demand for 'start-up units' was identified by the community.
- 7.3.2 The issues raised, along with other relevant evidence have identified the following aims and objectives:
- Promote opportunities for the provision of business start-up units
 - Promote the enhancement of existing employment areas, including improvements to access for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians and additional parking
 - Promote improvements to reduce travel time to M5 Junction 25
 - Promote improvements to broadband infrastructure to support existing and future businesses
- 7.3.3 The following policy supports the objectives. Projects are also identified in the Community Action Plan that will contribute to meeting the objectives.

CSM 5 – Employment	The creation of new start up units which encourage the establishment of uses offering additional employment will be supported in principle.
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	<p>Proposals to enhance and upgrade existing employment uses will be supported in principle. Development proposals that result in the loss of employment floor space will only be supported where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A site-specific viability assessment can demonstrate that no other use is deliverable at the site; and • The site has reasonably been marketed for sale with at least two independent estate agents for a minimum of 12 months and a marketing report demonstrates no appropriate interest in the site or buildings for an employment-generating use.
Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>The business survey which was carried out in 2016 identified a good level of employment within the NDP area, of a total 64 business, considering its rural nature. The encouragement of start up and small to medium enterprise businesses is key to the sustainability of the villages in particular, where a sense of community and presence of local facilities was the second highest valued theme of the NDP area. It is therefore considered very important to include specifically a policy to encourage new business to promote the long-term vitality of rural settlements.</p> <p>The proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP2 and CP5 and the NPPF paragraphs 18-22.</p>
What difference will it make?	<p>The policy will support the local and wider economy by supporting the provision of space for existing and new businesses.</p>

7.4 Community

Aims and objectives

7.4.1 Around half of all residents who responded to the community-wide questionnaire supported initiatives to help new members of the community feel part of existing Parish and community. These included providing a welcome pack, improved communication within the community, organising additional community wide events and establishing additional clubs and activities. The issues raised, along with other relevant evidence have generated the following aims objectives:

- Encourage 'community spirit' amongst Parishioners
- Improve communication within the Parish, particularly from the Parish Council and between existing groups and organisations
- Produce a 'welcome pack' for new residents in the Parish
- Ensure that Parishioners in the housing created as part of the Monkton Heathfield urban extension to Taunton are welcomed and well-integrated with the existing community.

7.4.2 The following policy seeks to the above objectives. A number of projects are identified in the Community Action Plan that will also contribute to meeting the objectives.

CSM 6 – Community cohesion	<p>Planning applications for major residential development in the Parish must be accompanied by evidence to demonstrate how the new community or communities created by the development will be positively integrated with the existing community in Creech St Michael Parish. This evidence should address the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The anticipated economic, environmental, social and cultural impact of the new community to the existing community• Demonstrate how the development will create high quality walking and cycling links between new development and existing educational, social and community facilities in the Parish in accordance with Policy CSM1• Explain what other steps will be taken to ensure that new community facilities and open spaces will be accessible to existing residents• Prepare a welcome pack for all new residents in conjunction with the Parish Council to be made available in both print and on-line format to residents on occupation of new dwellings
Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>The proposed policy is in conformity with the principles of Core Strategy Policy CP 5 which states: "<i>Development proposals will promote sustainable development that creates social cohesive and inclusive communities; reduce inequalities, promote personal well-being and address accessibility to health, inclusive housing, training, education, places of worship, leisure and other community facilities ensuring a better quality of life for everyone both now and for future generations.</i>"</p>

	<p>The expectation is that welcome packs would be proportionate to the scale and nature of development proposed, and could in some instances form part of the travel plan to include local maps and information about local services and facilities.</p> <p>Overall, the proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity and in pursuance with the aims of Core Strategy Policy CP5 and SS1. Regard has been had to the provisions of the NPPF, specifically section 8. It is considered that the objectives of NPPF paragraph 69 are also reflected within the policy.</p>
What difference will it make?	The policy will support the integration of new community members within the existing community and ensure that there is a better level of community cohesion than would have otherwise been the case.

7.5 Facilities and services

Aims and objectives

- 7.5.1 The consultation work demonstrated how valued local services and facilities are to the community, with a range of specific facilities identified as being important.
- 7.5.2 The community engagement, along with other relevant evidence, has identified the following aims and objectives:
- Retain and where possible enhance the existing facilities and services within the parish
 - Promote opportunities to extend the range of facilities within the parish
 - Promote opportunities to enhance the facilities within Creech St Michael village
 - Ensure that additional facilities are provided to support the new development to the west of the M5.
- 7.5.3 Policy CSM7 seeks to achieve of the above objectives alongside projects that identified in the Community Action Plan that will contribute to meeting the objectives.

CSM 7 – Public Realm Improvement Plan	<p>The Parish Council will develop a Public Realm Improvement Plan that supports the delivery of new recreation, sporting or community facilities which may include, but is not limited to, the following locally identified priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal of the pavilion at the Recreation Park or erection of a new pavilion within the NDP area • Improved public realm including landscaping, signage, paving and street furniture; and • Outdoor play equipment including outdoor gym or skate park <p>Proposals that support and deliver the objectives of the Public Realm Improvement Plan will be supported.</p>
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Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>Community facilities, alongside a sense of community, has been rated the second highest valued aspect of living within the NDP area based on responses to the survey carried out in 2016. On this basis, a policy to develop a public realm improvement plan, including potential funding and delivery mechanisms is important to achieve the long-term vision of the NDP.</p> <p>Public realm improvements can be secured through the use of future Community Infrastructure Levy funds from the strategic allocation set out in Core Strategy Policy SS1 and new development in general.</p> <p>The proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policy CP3, CP5 and SP4, and the NPPF paragraph 70 to plan positively for social, recreational and cultural facilities.</p>
What difference will it make?	An improved and enhanced centre for Creech St Michael Village will provide a vital and viable local centre that caters for the daily needs of local residents by making it more attractive and safer for residents, visitors and businesses.

CSM 8 – Sports, leisure and recreational facilities	<p>Proposals to enhance, improve and extend sports, leisure and recreational facilities will be supported, and in particular, at the following locations as identified on Plans 2-11 (Appendix C).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creech St Michael Recreation Park, associated copse to the rear and fields adjacent • Creech St Michael Village Hall • Scout Hut at Sweeting Close • Ruishton aqueduct and former canal • School Playing Field • Proposed Scout Hut (Larkfleet Rise) • Larkfleet Rise LEAP • Caray Grove Park • West View Park • Canal car park (Bull Street) • Canal towpath <p>Development proposals resulting in the loss of facilities identified on Plans 2-11 will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the land and/or facility is no longer required for its sports, leisure or recreational use and that the proposed development provides recreational or community benefit greater than the long-term value of the sports, leisure or recreational facility that would be lost.</p>
Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>The facilities listed in the policy above have been identified as popular and important to the local community through the consultation carried out to support the NDP. The retention and improvement of such facilities is intended to be supported by the NDP, and in particular by the policy above. This approach is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP5 and SP4 and the NPPF paragraph 70 to plan positively for social, recreational and cultural facilities and paragraph 74 to protect existing areas of value.</p>

What difference will it make?	The policy will help to secure those facilities for current and future residents.
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CSM 9 – Protection of Community Assets	<p>The following have been identified as Assets of Community Value and are identified on Plan 12 (Appendix D):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bell Inn Public House • The Garage Site (St Michaels Road) • The field to the east of and adjacent to the Recreation Park • The Copse to the north of and adjacent to the Rec Park • The field adjacent to the field to the east of the Rec Park • The copse to the rear of the field to the east of the Rec Park <p>Any development proposals that will result in the loss of any of these assets in whole or in part will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the Asset has been marketed for a minimum period of 12 months and cannot viably be put into an alternative use.</p>
Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>The community survey and other surveys confirmed how highly valued the range of existing facilities are by the community. These areas are already registered as Assets of Community Value under the Localism Act and associated Assets of Community Value Regulations 2012</p> <p>The proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP5 and SP4 and the NPPF Section 8 to facilitate inclusive communities and a shared vision with the community in terms of facilities and environment (paragraph 69) facilities. The provisions of NPPF paragraph 74 to protect existing areas of value are also reflected within the policy.</p>
What difference will it make?	The policy will help to secure those identified assets for current and future residents.

7.6 Open and green spaces

Aims and objectives

- 7.6.1 The community consultation identified how important existing open and green spaces are to Parishioners. In addition to providing opportunities for both formal and informal recreation, they are considered to make a crucial contribution to the rural character of the area and the identity of the Parish.
- 7.6.2 Community engagement has generated the following aims and objectives:
- Retain and where possible enhance existing open and green spaces within the Parish
 - Promote opportunities to extend existing and create new open and green spaces within the Parish
- 7.6.3 Policy CSM10 support these objectives and is set out below:

CSM 10 – Local Green Space	<p>The following areas to be designated as Local Green Space are identified on Plans 13 and 14 (Appendix E):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fields between the canal and the railway line• Fields between West Monkton and Creech St Michael village <p>These green spaces are located within close proximity to the community of Creech St Michael and contribute to the rural sense of place, character of the area and the general health and wellbeing of the community.</p> <p>Any proposals for new development on these sites that will result in a loss or erosion of Existing Local Green Space, will be resisted.</p> <p>The extension or improvement of existing Local Green Spaces within the Parish for use by the community will be supported.</p>
Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>The community survey and other surveys confirmed how highly valued a number of existing green spaces are by the community, and specifically those listed within the policy above, which were highlighted as in need of protection by 4 out of 5 respondents. The aspiration and need for additional areas of green space was also identified. Such areas have the potential to provide additional opportunities for recreation and biodiversity enhancement as well as contributing to the rural, green character identified in the vision.</p>

	The proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy Policies CP5 and SP4 and the relevant tests set out in paragraph 77 of the NPPF, with the areas proposed being in close proximity to the community of Creech St Michael, highlighted as special through consultation and local in character encompassing agricultural field immediately adjacent to the settlement.
What difference will it make?	The policy aims to provide protection for green areas that have been identified by the community and that are local in nature without compromise of strategic growth objectives.

7.6.4 A Green Wedge is proposed by Policy CSM 11 on land to the east the M5 motorway and to the south of Adsborough. Its purpose is to:

- Maintain the existing settlement pattern
- Preserve the identity, character, setting and amenity of the village
- Prevent the coalescence of Taunton and Creech St Michael, which have very different functions in the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy.

7.6.5 The areas chosen to be taken forward as part of the Green Wedge have been evidenced and justified through the Green Wedge Assessment carried out by WYG (published February 2018) which forms part of the evidence base for this NDP.

CSM 11 – Green Wedge	<p>Development proposals in the Green Wedge identified on Plan 15 (Appendix F) will be resisted where they conflict with its purposes, which are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the coalescence of settlements and maintain a sense of place and identity for neighbourhoods • Maintain the open character of a green lung contributing to health and wellbeing for residents • Provide accessible formal and informal recreation, sport and play • Provide valuable wildlife corridors and habitat • Protect areas of landscape importance and visual amenity.
Justification and conformity with Core Strategy and NPPF	<p>The Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Plan 2016 Survey report confirms significant local support for the protection of this land from development.</p> <p>The proposed Green Wedge complements the green wedge extension opportunity established by the Core Strategy between the M5 and Creech St Michael the village and also the strategic greenspace to the west of the M5 as shown on Figure 4.1: Strategic GI Opportunities Map included within TDBC Core Strategy Policy SS1. Proposed Policy CSM 11 seeks to bolster this existing development plan policy and extend the landscaping strategy to the eastern side of the motorway, enhancing footpath links between Creech St Michael and Creech Heathfield and ensuring that the rural character of these villages is maintained.</p>

	<p>A Green Wedge Assessment has been undertaken to support this policy and to provide a robust evidence base for the inclusion of this land within such a designation. This assessment has undergone consultation and has been submitted alongside this NDP.</p> <p>Regard has been had to both national and local policies within the specific Green Wedge Assessment to support this draft policy.</p> <p>The proposed policy is considered to be in general conformity with Core Strategy including Policies CP6, SP1, SP2 and Vision 2: Our vision for Taunton, DM1 and DM2.</p>
What difference will it make?	<p>The policy will establish functional separation of the Monkton Heathfield urban extension to Taunton urban area (which sits at the top of the settlement hierarchy) and Creech St Michael village, which is identified as a Minor Rural Centre (Core Strategy SP 1).</p>

8.0 Community Action Plan

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 The NDP's planning policies cannot address all of the issues that are facing the area both now and in the future. The table below lists the 'headlines' of a number of projects that, alongside the planning policies, will contribute to the delivery of the Vision for Creech St Michael.
- 8.1.2 Whilst the Parish Council will be able to lead on some projects and support others, the Community Action Plan will need to be delivered by the community. It will also be important to engage with key stakeholders, such as SCC Highways and the Canal Trust to ensure that delivery and funding opportunities are aligned.

8.2 Projects

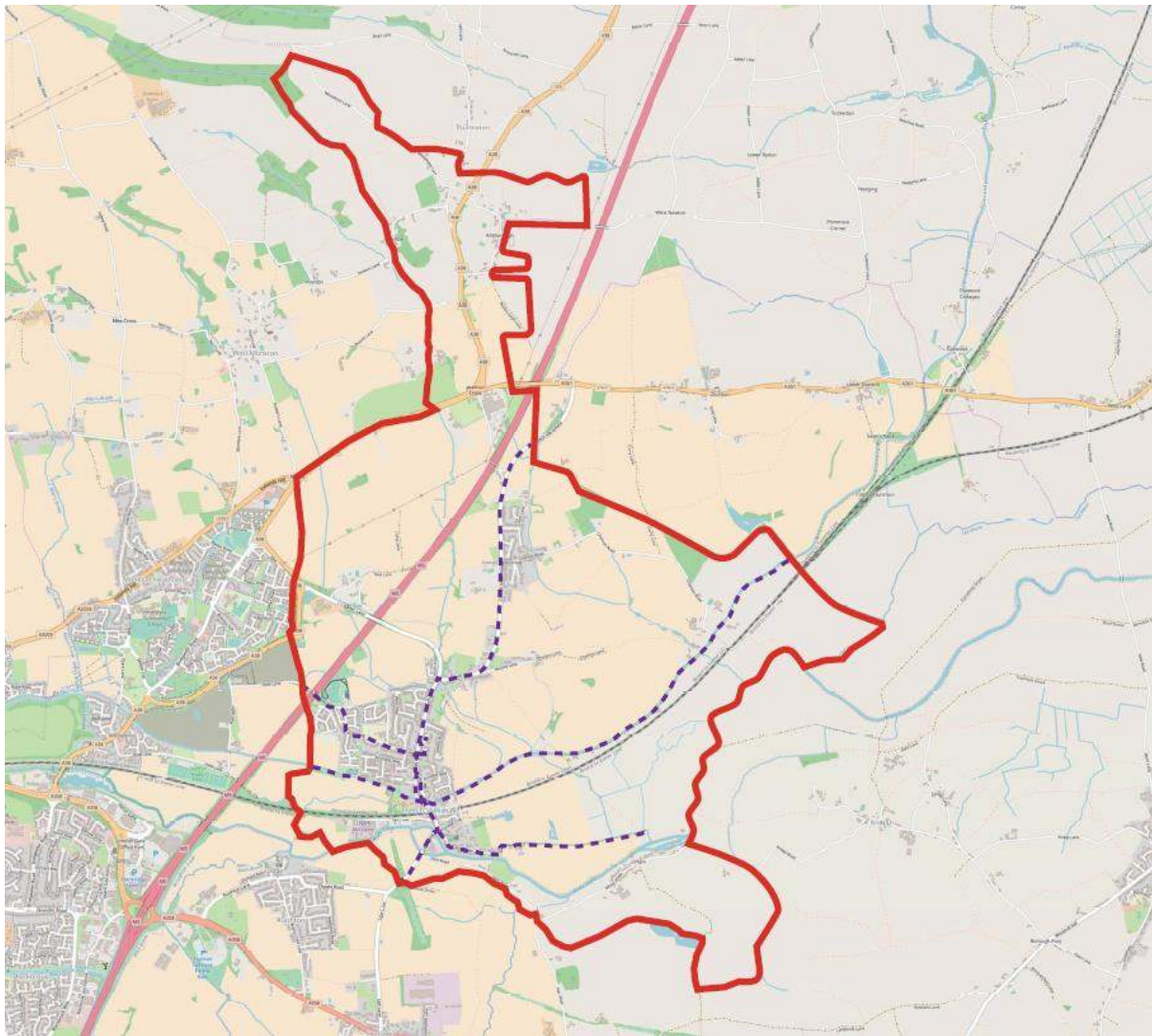
- 8.2.1 The following is a list of projects should be kept under review and further details and/or new projects added to it as necessary.



Project	Authority with responsibility for taking forward / leading:
Establish and manage a 20 mph speed limit through Creech St Michael Village	CSM PC
Traffic calming scheme through Creech St Michael Village	CSM PC
Introduce measures to reduce noise from M5 motorway	CSM PC
Canal enhancement scheme and the protection of its setting and surrounding environment	CSM PC
Creech St Michael Village centre enhancement scheme	CSM PC
Promote opportunities for public transport improvements	CSM PC
Provision of access from Hyde Lane to West Monkton Relief Road when satisfactory traffic management measures are in place in Hyde Lane as part of the village traffic management plan	CSM PC
Improve the range of clubs, activities and events for all community	CSM PC
Provision of age specific recreation areas	CSM PC
Establish a Youth Council	CSM PC
Establish a community café	CSM PC

Promote opportunities for volunteering	CSM PC
Provision of additional allotments	CSM PC
Put in place a strategy to help new member of the community to integrate and feel part of CSM	CSM PC
Provision of an open access youth club	CSM PC

Appendix A – Priority cycling and pedestrian routes

Plan 1 – Priority Walking and Cycling Routes



-  Creech St Michael NDP Boundary
-  Walking and cycling connections

Appendix B – Evidence of existing built form

Character and built form in Adsborough and Ham



Above: Properties in Adsborough in the north of the NDP

Below: Properties in Ham in the south of the NDP



Character and built form in Creech St Michael village



Creech St Michael
Photos left column top to bottom:
Arundells Way
Mill Lane
Tristam Drive
Vicarage Lane
West View

Photos right column top to bottom:
Dillons Road
Bull Street
Worthy Lane
The Old School and Bell Inn

Appendix C – Sport, leisure and recreation facilities

Sport, leisure and recreational facilities

Plan 2 - Creech St Michael Recreation Park



Plan 3 - Copse and fields adjacent to Creech St Michael Recreation Park



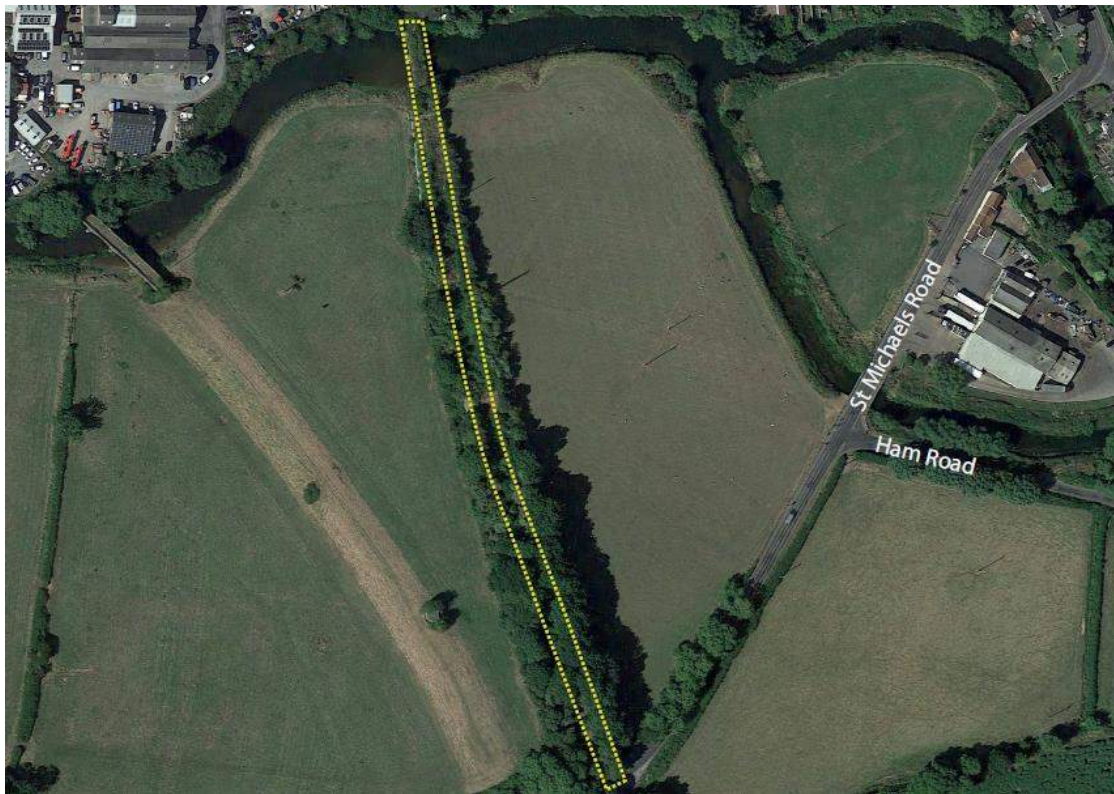
Plan 4 - Creech St Michael Village Hall



Plan 5 - Scout Hut at Sweeting Close



Plan 6 - Ruishton aqueduct and former canal



Plan 7 - School playing field



Plan 8 - Proposed scout hut and LEAP at Larkfleet Rise



Plan 9 - Caray Grove Park



Plan 10 - West View Park

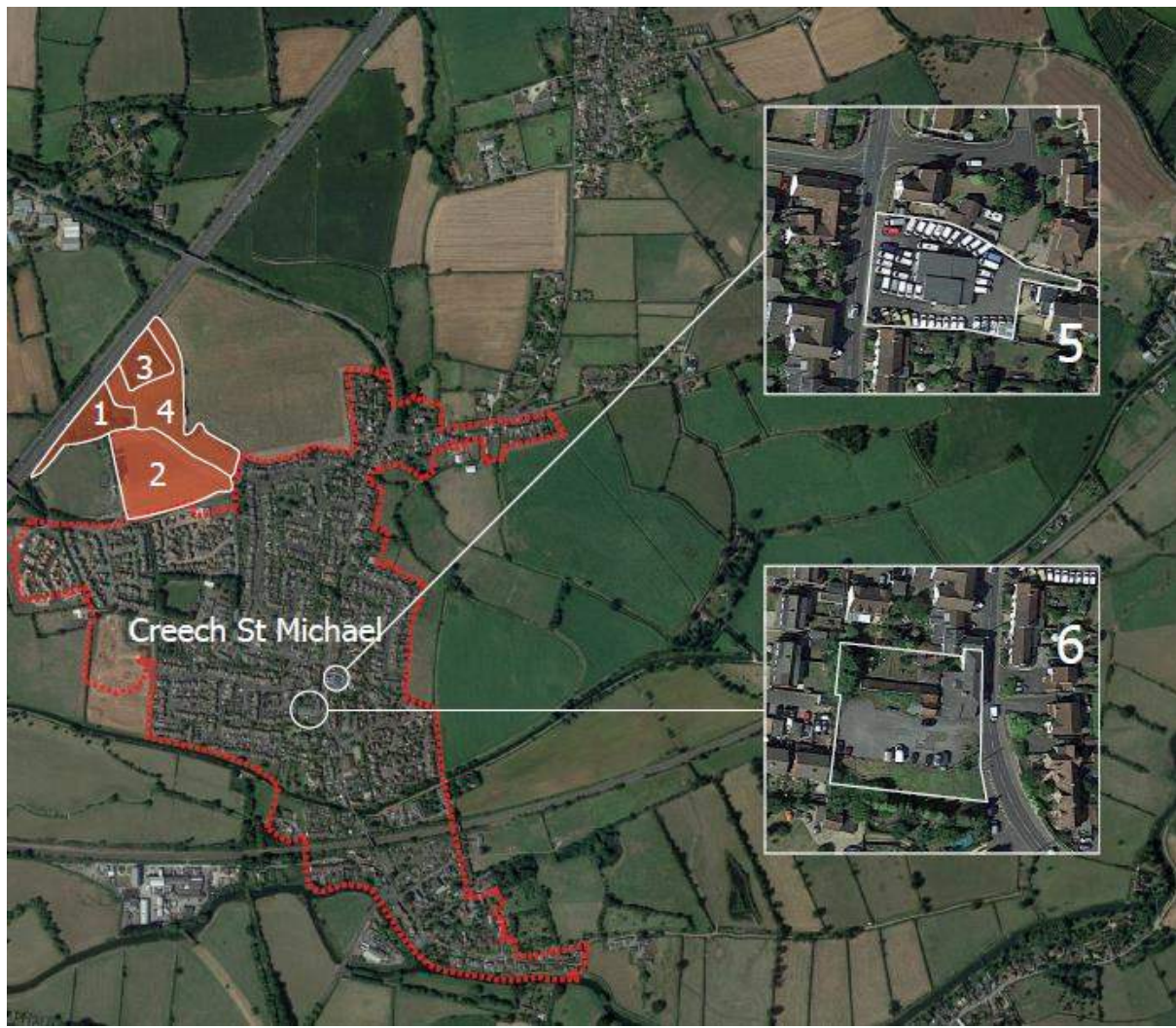


Plan 11 - Canal Car Park (Bull Street)



Appendix D – Assets of Community Value designations

Plan 12 – Designated Assets of Community Value



----- Creech St Michael Village
Boundary

1 - Copse to the rear of the Rec Park

2 - Field adjacent to the Rec Park

3 - Copse to the rear of the field
adjacent to the Rec Park

4 - Field to the rear of the field
adjacent to the Rec Park

5 - Creech Motor Company Garage

6 - The Bell Inn

Appendix E – Local Green Space designations

Local Green Space Designations

Plan 13 – Fields between the canal and railway line



Plan 14 – Fields between West Monkton and Creech St Michael village



Appendix F – Green Wedge designations

Plan 15 – Green Wedge Designation

Purpose of Green Wedge:

- Prevent the coalescence of settlements and maintain a sense of place and identity for neighbourhood
- Maintain the open character of a green lung contributing to health and wellbeing for residents;
- Bring the countryside into the heart of town;
- Provide accessible formal and informal recreation, sport and play;
- Provide valuable wildlife corridors and habitat;
- Protect areas of landscape importance and visual amenity; and
- Provide a positive approach to land use.

It is the Parish Council's aim to secure ACV status for the whole of the Green Wedge

