

APPENDIX 6

Monkton Heathfield: Land South of Manor Farm, Langaller – Design Guidance and Masterplan Framework

Responses to Public Consultation

Name of Contributor	1. If you wish to make general comments on any aspect of the Design Guidance and Masterplan Framework document please set out your comments below:
Creech St Michael PC	Officers are in the process of sourcing a copy of this representation.
West Monkton PC	Due to the size of this representation it has been attached in full at the end of this table.
Greenslade Taylor Hunt	<p>Please refer to correspondence sent for the attention of Mr A Penna on 5th June 2020 on behalf of our client, for a full response to be considered as part of this consultation relating to Manor Farm and the land to the south.</p> <p>Key comments relating to the Framework Plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The proposed employment area is likely to generate longer journeys, higher traffic flows and make sustainable modes of travel less desirable. -The proposed siting of the employment uses would become out of reach of the rest of Taunton, with phase 1 of Monkton Heathfield only just within 800m which is considered to be the benchmark for a walkable neighbourhood. -The employment uses also have particular activities associated with them, and the relationship between these and the adjacent green wedge and green necklace will be stark with a lack of natural surveillance outside working hours. - Other than the immediate land of Manor Farm indicated as employment use, the remainder of our client's land is indicated as a substantial part of the 'Green Necklace' buffer to the M5 motorway to provide 'significant' recreational opportunities. Noting the significance of its delivery, there has been no direct engagement with our client to ensure the proposals are realistic and deliverable, especially as there is a concern that other areas will benefit from building at higher densities due to the extent of greenspace proposed. -Overall we admire the ambitions set out within the recently consulted Design Guidance and Masterplan Framework (DGMF), and the Framework Plan to support the delivery of a garden community to complement the development carried out to date and we hope that our points in our correspondence relating to transport, design, sustainable development and mixed use potential are constructive to help towards achieving this. -We can confirm that our client is willing to consider the provision of strategic green space, however, the land in their ownership is also suitable for some residential development. In particular, a well designed residential development would offer an enhanced setting for the Listed farmhouse than a commercial business park as currently proposed. -It is noted that our client's involvement is critical to the successful delivery of this key strategic allocation to ensure sufficient public open space provision is secured. If these significant areas of public open space cannot be secured, it would undermine the delivery of the wider strategic allocation as well as the Council's Garden Town Vision. This highlights the importance of joint working with our client to help ensure a comprehensive and deliverable masterplan is developed. <p>The full representation has been attached in full at the end of this table.</p>

Jo Pengelley	<p>I have 2 major concerns regarding the proposals.</p> <p>Firstly, the proposed access from the Industrial Estate to Hyde Lane. Hyde Lane is already a dangerous rat run down a road wholly unsuitable for the volume of traffic using it, even with road improvements it is unsuitable for industrial traffic which would be using it if this junction is included. Furthermore, the traffic would then travel through CSM to the A358. Most worryingly this will push more traffic past the school putting the children in yet more danger and add to the traffic problem in CSM caused by MH1.</p> <p>Secondly, I do not think that it is appropriate to have industrial use so close to residential. Post Covid 19 many many more people will work from home so the need to be able to walk/cycle to work is reduced - in any case it is unlikely that the residents will have jobs on the industrial estate near to their homes. It has been noted that the council recognises that there is now a reduced need for industrial units, perhaps it would be better to push any required additional industrial units up to Walford Cross (where there is existing industry) and develop this entire site as residential? It would be much more pleasant for the residents and makes sense that all industrial should be at Walford Cross which has good access in various directions.</p> <p>It is encouraging to read the importance has been placed on plentiful and diverse planting. I would like to see that this is a priority so we can ensure that our wildlife, environment and wellbeing are all supported.</p>
Julie Dines	<p>Page 27 of Part 2 shows a 'key building subject to relocating existing SUDS area'. Langaller is in danger of surface water flooding, as is apparent from Environment Agency maps of the area. Having almost been flooded in the winters of 2013/13 and 2013/14 (sandbags required at my property, Langaller Cottage) I am concerned about any changes to flood mitigation measures.</p> <p>There is passing reference to Manor Farmhouse as it is a listed building, but no proposals as to what will become of it. When will be informed about this?</p>
Lorraine Thrussell	<p>I don't agree to the development as the impact on the safe route that has been built will no longer be safe. This will be due to the extra traffic due to the development and the impact it will have on our village Creech st Michael as it is currently used as a rat run and the extra traffic past the village school will make that area more congested as it is. This is also not in the Creech st Michael neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>It will also put more strain on the now oversubscribed schools and GPs surgery to take on more patients and pupils in all the nearby schools as everywhere is getting overdeveloped and taking away our green countryside and affecting the wildlife so therefore I am against this development.</p>
Amanda Davies	<p>These plans make a mockery of the 'safe route' which has been created for the protection of our children who have to travel through this area to access Heathfield Community School. I have an older child who attended Heathfield before this route was built and one of his school friends was knocked off of his bike by a Range Rover, thankfully the child was saved by their cycling helmet and a very full rucksack.</p> <p>For once please consider the safety of our children rather than just profits and revenue for the council.</p>
Sam Horder	<p>Enough already!!! How many houses do we need? We have no real police station, Musgrove can't cope with what it has, we have a massive nationwide teacher shortage, the road infrastructure in Taunton is terrible and the J25 project won't help with all these extra vehicles (for every 1 house, there will be at least 2 cars). And where is the wild life going to go, extinct probably? For example, I used to see many dozens of Swallows and Sky Larks over the fields, now within just a year or 2, I only see a small handful. Sorry for the rant, but I am totally against any further development. It is not needed. [A final comment has been removed as it is considered inappropriate for the context].</p> <p>Your Carbon neutral is also a load of bull! The tiny little trees you plant won't come anywhere near to how good the current tree's are, they'll take decades of growing to get even close. And again, regarding the hedgerows.. same thing regarding the wildlife.</p> <p>Please reconsider and stop lining your pockets.</p>
Charlie Cudlip	<p>I still have to finish my analysis of these documents, and will no doubt comment further, but at first past you have totally ignored all comments made by the parish councils. Consultation is pointless if you do-not take note of what is said. We have obviously wasted many hours putting together Neighbourhood Plans and having joint Parish meetings for you to disregard our views. If this is meant to be the guidance framework for</p>

	<p>the developers to follow, that we do not agree with, then we are doomed to have another estate with NO local input that is not in keeping with the RURAL area it is built in.</p> <p>I have now prepared a report based on the three Design Guide documents for the CSM PC. Although most of the content is well presented and has some merit. I am worried that the aspirations for a mainly rural area as it stands is being completely urbanised far beyond the need. You are designing something that people will buy into, a way of life a new vision from the norm. Mostly this is achieved, but with some glaring exceptions. Three story buildings have no place in a community like this, and most certainly not as so called "statement buildings", whose only purpose appears to be to "add some interest" to what could be a pleasant layout of buildings if multiple materials usage was applied rather than height. The employment land that will be accessed from the roundabout on the A38, disturbingly has an exit onto Hyde Lane. This is a traffic disaster for Hyde Lane, the safe route to school and Creech St Michael Village as a whole. Lorries ,vans and cars will be using this entrance if they come from the A358 or the M5 Junction and will "Rat Run" through the village adding to the already unbearable volume of traffic using the road currently. This entrance MUST be removed from the plan forthwith.</p> <p>The document also states that local consultation will be part of the process. I argue that consultation has been at best POOR. I am on the CSM Parish Council, Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee and sit on a Joint Panel for the MHUE2 development. Meetings with SWaT have been sparse and difficult to arrange. In honesty it feels that we are only given lip service, as any documents we produce for you or meeting that we actually do get, our recommendations or local knowledge etc are seemingly completely ignored.</p> <p>The issue of local traffic is fast becoming a dangerous nightmare for the local community. It was the number one concern on our NP survey, yet it is being ignored totally in the MHUE2 development planning, and only gets a mention in this Design Guide. We have had many village walk through's, with Highways, SwaT and TDBC over the last couple of years, so our concerns are nothing new, yet they get given very limited weight in this DG.</p> <p>Thank you for reading, please take notice of local opinion!</p>
Neil Titley	<p>This consultation seems to be very subtle and by stealth, with the added complexity of a password required to access the feedback form. This is inadequate and does not constitute proper consultation that is easily available to the public.</p> <p>Bathpool and Creech St Michael have traditionally been closely linked via Hyde Lane; the proposals appear to cut off this important road network, which is a disgrace and will isolate the two communities. Specifically, children who school in Creech St Michael via be cut off and will need to divert a substantial distance around the site.</p> <p>One of the fields proposed for housing is used by the traveller community and the consultation needs to reach these less accessible individuals and consider their needs.</p> <p>There are important hedges and ecosystems in these fields; any development should deliver net biodiversity gain within the site.</p> <p>The school children and local people currently access the fields daily for walking - there are well worn paths across the fields north of Hyde Lane. These will have been accessed for >7 years and should be declared open access.</p> <p>These fields are a small belt of remaining open space between Monkton Heathfield / Bathpool and Creech St Michael; to build on it would be a travesty.</p> <p>The spine road through the existing new development already cannot cope with the traffic flows during peak hours (before the pandemic), with tail backs from the Creech Castle lights all the way to Manor Farm between 0800 and 0930. These additional homes will worsen the situation and will effectively be locked into their own estate in peak hour.</p>
Lynn Gates	<p>Have you actually read the Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Plan? Can I suggest that you do. Then go back to the drawing board because your current plans totally ignore most of it!</p>

Tina Kerley	The children need a safe area to walk along hyde lane without walking on the road, and without extra traffic being attracted without the road being extended from a lane to two lanes, the children need pavement off the road
Lorna Clark	Hyde Lane Cottages will benefit by becoming a cul de sac. Important that the green buffers and walks and cycleways on the plan are implemented. I think that there should be no vehicular access along Hyde Lane from the development (motorway bridge) into Creech st Micheal in order to enhance pedestrian/cyclists safety and to prevent potential rat run from/to main road into village. It reduces traffic over vulnerable canal bridge. House construction should make for a desirable place to live, such as Lindon Homes - Sweeting Close development off Hyde Lane.
Danni Richards-Loveridge	Please don't take anymore green space away. There already has been so much removed from what was a village surrounded with greenSpaces and wildlife to a village surrounded with houses, meaning more cars, more pollution and noise. My kids felt save here but bringing more cars and people means it's wont be that safe place. So much development has happened in and around Bathpool/ Monkton And creech. There is no need for anymore. If I wanted to live in a town I would have moved to the town centre! It effects house prices and much more. Leave the green space alone!
Yamina Guest	I have big concerns around the relief road feeding into hyde lane, this will cause more traffic feeding into the village which will have no option but to pass the primary school. This will potentially cause a rat run and at keytime it will also affect the safe walking route for the secondary school. Why do you never seem to consider these issues?
Steve Rushen	Very concerned about the road entrance onto Hyde Lane. This a narrow road through residential housing and past a school already used as a rat run by many. The fact that this would now connect to additional housing and industrial units is a big concern as this will increase traffic along Hyde Lane.
Steph Curry	The proposed development shows an entrance from the industrial land onto Hyde Lane cutting across the new and long fought for 'safe route to Heathfield School'. This needs addressing urgently and the development modified to ensure pedestrian and walker safety. The development will also bring more vehicles onto Hyde Lane and into Creech - a village already busy with traffic using it as a cut through to avoid other busy roads.
Steve Greenhalgh	Having read the proposed layout and entry/exit to the industrial park, I find it hard to believe that you are considering an entry from Hyde Lane. This road if you travel from the A38 at Bathpool it is a single track road with few passing spaces and a narrow canal bridge to pass over, also there are no footpaths in place. If entry was from the village of Creech all traffic would have to pass through a busy residential street with a pre school nursery and primary school holding a total of nearly 300 young children. As a road safety officer for Somerset County Council I feel that access to the site for motorised vehicles should not be permitted, there is also a 2m width restriction in place throughout Creech and an 18T weight limit on the railway bridge.
William Thorpe	It there are some valuable character buildings, that reflect the true historic character of the area in and around the "langaller farm area". And these would be eclipsed by the proposed industrial (employment) areas proposed in that area. It would be far better to continue residential areas northwards from "land south of the manor farm" up towards the monkton phase 2 development. Creating a familiar link for commuters and school children to access the proposed facilities there. This would result in residential use of land around listed buildings, which will uplift the character of the area immeasurably. As planned residents of "land south of the manor farm" will be forced either through convoluted streets of Phase 1, along A38 or through proposed industrial. They will no doubt drive instead, faced with these poor active transport choices.

	<p>A traffic free central boulevard could be created that links areas of residential development running through entire length of Phase 1 and Phase 2, enjoying character of listed buildings, and green areas, and culminate in green necklace around school.</p> <p>Case studies have shown that if an off road route is provided for active transport that is pleasant, and uninterrupted it will be used beyond modelled expectations. For example Bristol > Bath cycle way.</p>
Stephanie Essex	<p>Regarding Langallor Manor Farm site (nb: not Langallor Farm):</p> <p>Plans with industry are not a good fit with the farm</p> <p>Industry not suited to the site</p> <p>Restoring of the farmhouse, outbuildings and barns would be far more suitable</p> <p>Addition of Residential housing on earmarked industry site would be better fit and greatly needed</p> <p>Industry totally unsuitable to be so close to the farmhouse</p> <p>Major changes to plan needed:</p> <p>Restoration of once beautiful Langallor manor farmhouse</p> <p>Conversion of outbuildings and barns to make the listed farmhouse the focal point of the site</p> <p>This area desperately needs residential housing so conversion of outbuildings and barns would be far more suitable</p> <p>Current plans - ridiculous to have green necklace so close to industry, who will want to walk there?</p> <p>Plans need to coordinate with the listed farmhouse and reflect its restoration</p>



Land South of Manor Farm, Langaller Consultation Response

West Monkton Parish Council welcomes this consultation and the opportunity to put forward its comments in relation to the proposals.

This response is made up in five sections, as follows:

1. A statement from Cllr Haskins, Chair of West Monkton Parish Council
2. Structured comments on the proposals
3. Comments in relation to Part 1: Background, Policies and Requirements for Future Applications
4. Comments in relation to Part 2: Context Appraisal Concept and Masterplan
5. Comments in relation to Part 3: Masterplan Detailing and Detail Design
6. Copies of the statements made at the Somerset West and Taunton Council Executive Meeting on 28th January 2020.

Section 1: A statement from Cllr Stuart Haskins, Chair of West Monkton Parish Council

Having been a Councillor of West Monkton Parish for 10 years and the Chairman for the last 3 years I have seen MH1 progress from the planning Stages to the near completion of the build.

During that time, as a Parish Council we have endured numerous frustrations and considerable stress as the development was changed, plans were amended, key deliverables and trigger points were not met, and important dates were missed.

The failure to ensure the development progressed and delivered basic amenities to the new residents is a lesson learnt and one that must not be repeated on this or future developments, for example the provision of public transport from first occupation, recreation spaces or shops. The new residents of this development should not have to wait for years to have the basic qualities of life at the expense of developer financial games and pressure.

The approving bodies must ensure that suitable clauses, trigger points and controls are correctly put in place and not compromised or sold away to deliver other unplanned requirements.

This development and others that follow must exercise “a get it right first time” culture so that the Garden Town vision is truly delivered.

Section 2: Structured comments on the proposals:

Overall

The Parish Council seeks written assurance on agreeing realistic trigger points and implementation plan and to be consulted on these. If any renegotiation is subsequently required, the Parish Council should be involved in the decisions being taken. A series of trigger point should also be agreed to ensure that the industrial units are built in line with the number of houses.

Employment Land

Units on the Industrial site should be limited to category B1 and B2 (not B8) given the lorry and van traffic B8 generates and the look of the site adjacent to housing.

Vehicle access as proposed from the industrial estate onto Hyde Lane should be removed and only pedestrian and cycle access should be provided. Pupils would have to cross this access to get to School on their safe route to School. If vehicular access is not removed it would encourage vehicles to use Hyde Lane; a narrow road on which SCC are about to rollout a calming scheme in view of the parking difficulties and danger to school pupils and health centre users alike.

Connectivity

In addition to the traffic calming, it is proposed that Hyde Lane will become a cycle/footpath but there is a need to upgrade the surfacing over the motorway bridge as this is currently unwalkable (they were not designed to be pavements), neither do they meet the requirements to be a cycleway and the bridge parapets need heightening by Highways England.

The access from the Hardys Road roundabout on the ERR into the site should reflect the road layout already consented in the planning permission for the sports pitches. If the access road takes the route proposed the car park provision for the sports pitches will be removed.

Part of the planned cycleway along the side of the Hyde Lane Cottages (i.e. over the bund) should be removed to avoid overlooking.

Bus Services should be available from day one of the build in order to ensure / embed bus use. Both "rapid" buses direct into Town and "Hopper" buses that run through the estates. The Parish Council would welcome more discussion on the plans for buses.

Design

Sufficient parking spaces should be provided with each house and grass cretes used to enable better on street parking. Where there are grass verges which are not suitable for parking, bollards should be included to prevent parking on grass verges. Knowledge and experience from MH1 should be considered and taken into account in these proposals. Estate roads in MH1 have become impassable to emergency vehicles, refuse wagons, and domestic delivery vehicles when cars are parked on both sides of the street. This has been documented and reported in Roys Place.

Experience of MH1 also demonstrates that courtyard parking is largely not used with the result that on road parking occurs with the subsequent problems of access that creates.

Buildings in the proposal are typically 1 or 2 floors with only some 2 ½ and 3. It is accepted that three-storey buildings will need to be included in the proposals, but these should be within the development rather than an iconic fringe building.

Bungalows should be included in the proposals at 10% of the build at open market value.

The Parish Council is keen to have houses with good design with chimneys, bay windows, balconies etc.

Boundaries should be stone or brick walls and not panel fencing to support the Garden Town feel.

Houses should be orientated to get solar gain.

Houses should have solar panels. To be supplied with invertors and batteries so residents' benefits and only surplus is fed into the grid. Homes should also have accessible charging points for cars. Any boilers installed in new houses must be capable of conversion to an alternative fuel, such as hydrogen to achieve zero emissions, in combination with solar power and other local power source initiatives.

Lighting (LED) should be suitably positioned to avoid solar glare.

Homes should have highspeed internet available from day one.

Community Facilities and Open Space

The proposed provision of allotment plots should be increased to 50 plots.

The proposal should include playgrounds with quality and challenging equipment (LEAP and NEAP).

Further consideration of actions that will enable a sense of community to be established in the development should be included in the proposals beyond green open spaces. Further community infrastructure could be included for example a community building for scouts or guides which there is a need for within the local community. This could be located next to the sports pitches.

The recreational park in Hyde Lane is the closest main Park/Recreational Ground. Good access to it should be ensured with good footpaths/ cycleways.

Proposed tree planting should include heavy standards not whips.

A scheme should be implemented for tree planting along both sides of the motorway in order to screen and reduce noise.

Clarity is sought over management arrangements for the open spaces and these need to be set out within sale contracts. The option to transfer the open space to the Parish Council should be included within the S106 agreement.

Education Provision

It is not clear from the proposals what school provision is being made. There should be sufficient s106 money made available to provide additional classrooms at current local schools already full. As all local schools are full there this will create management issues for the schools and adversely impact on pupils.

Section 3: Comments in relation to Part 1: Background, Policies and Requirements for Future Applications

Page 5 Suggest expand definition of green necklace as per italics

The 'Green Necklace' is a multi-purpose belt of landscaping around the Monkton Heathfield development which provides a buffer to and follows the M5 Motorway corridor *to the south, and to the north provides links to the Quantocks, Hestercombe, Somerset Wood and Maidenbrook Country Park.*

Page 14 between 5.3 and 5.4 may wish to add, West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parishes both declared Climate and Ecological Emergency in December 2019 and are seeking to include appropriate revisions to reflect this statement in the review of the joint NP review currently underway. The revisions to the NP will sit within the policy documents produced by SWTC and SCC.

Page 14 5.6 Listed actions, see below. Is anything further needed to ensure delivery of the listed actions?

- Transport

Suggest that the only way for public transport to be adopted as a genuine better alternative to the car is to have subsidised 'hopper' buses running round the estate every 10 minutes or so as soon as possible after the occupation of, say, the first 10 houses – to set the pattern, so that car use becomes a poor second. See also 7.15 -7.20.

- Energy

Suggest the area is compact enough to consider a district heating scheme. Orientate houses to maximise solar gain, so may have to adjust road layout. In addition any boilers installed in new houses must be capable of conversion to an alternative fuel, such as hydrogen to achieve zero emissions, in combination with solar power and other local power source initiatives.

- Built environment

May wish to include reference to SCC Somerset Pollinator Policy

- Natural Environment

Suggest addition of text in italics

- Empowering residents and communities to deliver local wildlife projects. *This could be achieved by a determination to hand over ownership and management of public open spaces to the Parish Council at the earliest opportunity, for PC to be involved during construction and delivery of POS, design in areas for future use as community gardens (allow community to grow and assume initiative, rather than delivering 'ready-made').*

- Water

Water butts in all gardens (part of WM & CF NP policies). Grey water schemes for recycling (and not to accept argument put forward by developer that grey water scheme not required because they fit smaller toilet cisterns).

Page 21 Tree Planting

'7.12 The Council recently committed to prioritise the planting of new trees and considers this an important aspect in the future for many reasons which include the sequestration of CO2 and the positive aspects of urban shading and cooling to the climate. The aim is to provide tree species in locations suitable for the development and the trees themselves. New woodlands should contain a variety of species to avoid the creation of areas of monoculture'

Suggest that very sadly also need to define preparation of ground, watering, mulching, feeding, staking, and details of a regular maintenance regime (e.g. weekly watering) and any other factors necessary to ensure the establishment of the trees – witness MH1 tree losses.

Page 21 7.13 A better quality of life

Suggest include communal gardens for apartment blocks to ensure residents have some private open space to sit outside and enjoy nature. Also need to include balconies, or if not whole balconies then as a minimum a Juliet balcony for health and well-being of residents.

Page 22 7.17 Transport

Reference made to 'existing bus stops'. Suggest may need to cross reference with J Perrett SCC who is administering the s106 subsidised bus service in MH1. Suggest it might be preferable to aim for an improvement on the current offering. In particular, include a requirement that any bus stops included in this site should be built as bus shelters with a perch rail, and supplied with suitable electrics to run an electronic information board inside the shelter informing when the next bus is due. This may seem expensive but use of the bus must become a more attractive offering than a car, and this may go some way to address this. See public transport systems in Cardiff and on the Wirral.

7.18 Rapid Transport system

Suggest the need to travel would be reduce if the Local Centre and the District centre for MH1 and MH2 respectively are delivered – otherwise residents will use a car to go to Aldi's or Sainsburys.

'7.20 Furthermore, the development is proposed to encourage local scale employment rather than a strategic employment location to reduce the use of cars within the area'

Suggest only deliverable if the units are marketed in a meaningful way that gets results.

Observation: defining delivery of the site should also be followed up by Enforcement actions in the event of non-delivery, therefore could planning conditions be drafted to reflect this? S106 agreements should be index linked to ensure they can be delivered.

Suggest – District Rangers to support local policing, place making, community initiatives, delivery of Travel Plans, supervise community gardens/public opens space.

Page 27 Observation

'The development will incorporate the Secured by Design Principles. These principles encourage the adoption of crime prevention measures in the design of development. The local Police Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO) will be consulted to ensure that principles are properly adhered to'.

Suggest comments from Police ALO need to be given more weight. During consultation on MH1, the Police were consulted on a number of parcels and received either 'no report' or a document that developers ignored.

Page 29 11.2

'The Councils preferred approach is the submission of a single Outline or Full Planning application for the whole site, which includes a Masterplan, and is granted subject to a planning legal agreement ensuring the phased delivery of the housing and employment areas, together with the green infrastructure identified in this document'.

Suggest – *and Highways Infrastructure with implementation schedule.*

Page 29 11.3

‘Standalone proposals for housing which do not deliver employment development will be regarded as piecemeal and will not be approved. The Council would favourably consider standalone employment development provided proposals could demonstrate that they were in conformity with the design guidance set out in this document and would not prejudice the implementation of the of this Masterplan and Development Guide’.

Suggest Design Review Panel reports may be available on request, so PCs can see where developers are up to (long shot!)

Page 31 11.27

‘The likely ‘Heads’ of a S106 will relate to affordable housing, open space including children’s play, and provision of a Travel Plan and transport mitigation measures as required. Other heads may relate to flood risk and SUDS, public art, and such other matters as required to ensure the comprehensive delivery of the site’.

Suggest include *delivery of employment areas and District/Local Centres*.

Section 4: Comments in relation to Part 2: Context Appraisal Concept and Masterplan

Pages 5-18 Disappointing that a photo shot and analysis of The Street, West Monkton was not included (or any other parts of the 'old' village). Was there a Design reason for excluding it?

Page 18 2.2

'The site is located south of the MH1 and south east of the "The Hatcheries"'

Observation: the term 'The Hatcheries' (also used elsewhere in this document) is no longer correct. The name applied to the chicken rearing unit that was based on the site where Canal View is now built. For ease of reference and clarity it is suggested that the term 'Canal View' is used.

Page 20 3.1

Suggest removal of reference to the '...Local Centre under construction' as it is a part of MH1 that the developers have apparently failed to deliver.

Page 24 5.3

Bullet 4

'A small part of the employment area is proposed to be accessed via Langaller Road to minimise the amount of traffic created along this road. This area is suitable for employment generating uses beyond traditional B1 uses'

Suggest the 'uses beyond B1' should be spelled out at the earliest opportunity to the community and all consultees. The delivery of a large B8 'shed' type unit off Hardys Road came as a total surprise to local residents, (they were expecting B1) including particularly those who had purchased houses now overlooked by the B8 shed.

Bullet 6 delete reference to the 'Local Centre' for reasons given on para: Page 20 3.1

Bullet 12

'Just north of Hyde Lane Cottages and part of the Green Wedge and Green Necklace, this green space is primarily intended to retain the 'green' setting of the cottages. It will provide significant areas of native woodland and footpath links between the new development, the MH1 site and the new recreation ground'.

This area is outside the red line of the site, so who will deliver it and maintain it as part of Land south of Langaller Manor Farm development?

Page 26 6.3

'6.3 A style of architecture needs to be adopted which gives clear identity to the development, one which uses materials and elements drawn from precedents in and around Taunton'.

Observation: The start of this document uses a number of different architectural styles found in Taunton and the parishes beyond as exemplars. Regrettably, there are no examples shown for either of the Conservation Villages of Cheddon Fitzpaine or West Monkton (see note: para1 at beginning of this document). Was there a design reason not to reference typical Quantock villages close by?

This para 6.3 is played out in Document 3 where a number of different architectural styles are used to identify separate areas within the site.

Page 26 6.6

‘The Green Wedge / Green Necklace area are proposed to be ecological areas which enhance the wildlife and biodiversity and are designed for largely daytime use. This will limit the need for lighting within the area during night-time’.

Suggest this statement may need to be reviewed when the routes through the green necklace have been finalised. In winter it can remain dark until 8.00am and daylight can end close to 4.00pm in the late afternoon. If the routes through the green necklace are determined to be useful through routes for pedestrians then it might be in the interests of pedestrian safety to install low/ground level, suitable LED warm white light, possibly motion sensitive lighting just so that users can see where the path is going.

Page 27

Suggestion that the Illustrative Masterplan includes how a District Heating scheme would be included and delivered within this site.

Page 27 Indicative plan for Land south of Langaller

‘Key building (subject to relocating existing SUDs area)’

More detail is required to explain what underlies this small label on the indicative masterplan. The attenuation pond has been built, has it been connected to a drainage system already in place, where will the infill come from and what settlement issues are likely, where will the replacement SUDs engineering and attenuation pond be located?

Is there a function in mind for the ‘key building’? generally speaking, the buildings identified as ‘iconic’ buildings in MH1 are not regarded at the least bit iconic, and some more imaginative design would be required for the ‘key’ building suggested .

Page 30 Bullet 4

‘Providing the potential to create additional sport facilities to the west of the site in tandem with playing fields /pavilion’

It is noted that that this is related to undelivered S106 relating to provision of sports pitches for MH1. The indicative plans show that some of the area designated as sports pitches will be removed to make way for the road: how will this be compensated, as it will mean that the quota of open green space for MH1 will not have been delivered?

Page 30 Bullet 5

‘Providing a wooded landscape setting within the Green Necklace which will include considerable tree planting. Key views towards the Blackdown Hills AONB will be protected’.

Suggestion: maybe include a reference to requirements for ground preparation, planting, mulching, staking, top dressing, watering, and any other measures to ensure successful establishment, ongoing maintenance and management of the plants so that eventually there will be a ‘wooded landscape setting’.

Page 31 Pocket Parks

‘8.9 The spaces should be designed to benefit the new community by creating 'gathering hubs' for socialising, relaxing and reflecting’.

Suggest therefore that developers are required to install suitable *high quality* street furniture, whether it be benches of wood or stone, or seats of recycled materials, beside which are located litter bins, and intermittently dog bins, complemented by imaginative planting.

Page 32 Public Transport

‘9.1 The development is located adjacent to the MH1 development which is served sufficiently by bus routes connecting the area with the surrounding including Taunton and Bridgwater. Additionally, the future Bus&Ride provisions proposed in connection with the MH2 development will create an alternative rapid bus service in walkable distance from the site.

9.2 The residential area of MH1 to the north of the site incorporates a bus route connecting to the centre of Taunton to the west and Bridgwater to the east.

9.3 With the exception of a limited number of units along the Green Necklace edge, the majority of new dwellings within this site will have access to a bus stop located no more than 400m away.’

Observation: many local users of routes in Monkton Heathfield will disagree with this halcyon picture of public transport. Suggest that serious negotiation with commercial provider and/or provision made privately or with SCC is paramount to successfully deliver a system that results in the car being the poor alternative. Hopper buses every ten minutes. Take the example from cities where public transport is a successful alternative to the car. Experience suggests that MH1 public transport/Travel Plan is lip service only. Suggest do not build bus stops (Flag type) but bus shelters so people can wait for a bus without getting wet, and have somewhere to perch whilst waiting, with wiring to the shelter to allow electronic information boards to be installed.

Page 33 Cycle paths

‘Within low speed or traffic calmed ‘safe routes’, cyclists would be able to mix with vehicles with minimal hazard. Also, there will be a dedicated cycle route along the downgraded part of Hyde Lane connecting to the east with Creech St Michael and to the west with the proposed new sport facilities’.

Suggest delete or rephrase ‘proposed new sports facilities’ because it is misleading. Suggest that cycle routes should be planned to link with existing routes to allow easy access to Nexus, and other employment sites, e.g.at Walford Cross (WM & CF NP policy T1).

Page 33 Cycle paths

‘Cycle paths will require:

- Clear entry/exit points with good surveillance.
- The adoption and maintenance by the Local Authority (where required)’.

Responsibility for maintenance should be defined, will it rest with SCC or SWTC?

Section 5: Comments in relation to Part 3: Masterplan Detailing and Detail Design

Page 4 Garden gateways

“Garden Town Gateways’ 1.4 The site’s location on one of Taunton’s key entry points calls for landscape treatment which exemplifies the garden community theme’.

The Parish Council has a strongly held preference that the ‘Gateways’ are not white picket fence as per the approach into Somerton (from the Langport direction) but something reflective of the local area history, for example an agriculturally based piece of architecture/stone troughs/ rocks.

Page 7 2.2 Making our public realm & transport work harder for us

“The layout of routes addresses strategic vehicular and pedestrian/cycle connections to the town centre, to existing and future residential neighbourhoods nearby and to local facilities. Careful consideration has also been paid to the treatment of Hyde Lane to maintain it as a through-route, whilst treating it so as to discourage rat-running’.

Suggest layout of routes should include bus routes, with bus shelters, cycle routes delineated from pavements (take the example of the Netherlands and Northern Germany).

Page 8 Primary Street

‘• Street trees within verge on one side of the street, where there are no street trees front garden boundaries must be provided in the form of tall native hedges’;

Observation: great idea but how tall is tall? How close to house front windows/ how much light excluded from front rooms of houses?

Page 9 Primary Street – Landscape/public realm

‘• Street art and furniture are generally provided within the key spaces. They should be located along desire lines but should avoid obstructing opening or footpaths. Seating facilities should also be regularly spaced along pedestrian routes to allow elderly and disabled people to rest’;

Suggest litter bins beside all seats and intermittently spaced dog bins.

Page 9 Primary Street- Built form

‘• 3 storey tall buildings to function as key or focal building’

Understand the need for ‘iconic buildings’ as reference points for successful place making, but a serious review of the architectural design is needed as the current offerings in MH1 do little to inspire, and do not live up to the title ‘iconic buildings’.

Page 9 Primary Street – Parking

• Parking courts to the rear of apartment buildings provided;

Suggestion, there needs to be an assurance that provision of parking courts will not interfere with freedom to orientate apartment blocks so that private communal gardens are provided for apartment dwellers that are sensitively placed and not in deep shade all the time.

Generally speaking, courtyard parking is not favoured by residents of MH1 who have them as their parking provision, which results in on street parking. The Police Architectural Liaison Officer may also have a view on them.

Page 11 Garden streets – Landscape/public realm

‘• Where green verge widths allows for it, verge zones can be provided and paved for on-street parallel parking ‘

Suggestion to use grasscrete paving materials rather than regular paving – will look green and be better for the environment.

2.5 Traffic calming

Observation from MH1 that where traffic calming is attempted by use of different surfacing and pinch points, all good design ideas, the reality is that absence of road markings causes driver uncertainty as to who has right of way, and speeding through unmarked streets. ‘Removal of clutter’ and ‘reliance on eye contact’, in the experience of those living in the area around Community Square in MH1, doesn’t work in these circumstances.

It is appreciated that design of street types and their hierarchy is subject to government guidelines (Manual for Streets), but the practical experience of MH1 is relevant. Some roads in MH1 are at times virtually impassable because courtyard parking is not used in the way anticipated, turning circles and visibility splays can be jeopardised by parked cars, meaning that the actual road width is insufficient for delivery vehicles, buses and emergency services to get through.

Page 16 Car Parking

‘3.3 Preferably, all allocated parking spaces should be provided with electric charging points’.

Suggest remove the word ‘preferably’, because if its preferable i.e. involves an element of choice, a developer is less likely to install it.

For the same reason

‘3.6 A significant proportion of parking should be on permeable surfacing’

‘significant proportion’ needs to be more closely defined.

For the same reason

‘3.7 Following the Council’s climate emergency declaration developments should offer opportunities to provide allocated parking spaces and/or garages with electric charging points, communal charging stations or serve dwellings with the necessary wiring to accommodate charging infrastructure in the future’

Because as it is written as an option, it is likely that only wiring to the dwelling will be installed.

The three comments above based on experience in MH1, where streetlights were installed, but without any wiring to provide power.

Page 21 Figure 20 Spaces Location Plan.

Suggest block 1 is redrawn to reduce its size, currently it is showing areas not within the red line and it gives an incorrect impression.

Page 22 6.6 Hyde Common

‘Hyde Common to be designed and landscaped at later stage’

Another small label on an indicative plan. Suggest that if Hyde Common is to serve the function described on page 22 it needs to be designed and landscaped right alongside the houses being built. Otherwise there is a strong possibility it will be used as a site for storage of builders materials and waste, leading to land compaction and contamination, and as seen in MH1, effective removal for a long period of significant open space for health and wellbeing of residents of surrounding properties who will have been sold their house with the promise of Hyde Common being in front of them. See illustration on page 22.

The design guidance states that it 'fosters community' but provision of green open spaces isn't quite the same as fostering community. There is no school provided, and no building for community use. The area of Hyde Common should be kept as open space, so there would seem little opportunity on the site to include a community building or other place where people may gather, although provision of allotments within the green necklace will go some way to address this.

Page 23 Hyde Common area 6.10

'Architecturally the more formal buildings should reflect the Edwardian period evident in many parts of Taunton including Staplegrove Road and Richmond Road.'

It should be noted that WM&CF Neighbourhood Plan Policy H2 supports the use of local styles and materials.

Housing Policy H2: External Materials for Residential Development Residential developments must incorporate the use of appropriate local and traditional external building materials, such as red sandstone* (or suitable equivalent) and natural slate/natural clay roof tiles (or suitable equivalent), particularly with respect to the use of traditional materials on prominent entrance and corner buildings).

Page 30 Northern Avenue 6.3

It is noted that in the Proposed Illustrative Masterplan, there are a number of houses shown at the top end of Northern Avenue which are parallel with the A38 Eastern Relief Road and separated from it by hedges. Acoustic fencing is used further down the ERR to protect houses of MH1 - on the left-hand side travelling towards Bridgwater between Hardys Road roundabout and the Cricket Club roundabout. What plans are in place to protect the residents of those houses from noise pollution from the ERR?

Section 6: Copies of the statements made at the Somerset West and Taunton Council Executive Meeting on 28th January 2020.

Three relevant statements were made at the SWT Executive Meeting on 29th January in relation to these proposals. The Parish Council would like these statements considered as part of this consultation. The statements were made by Cllr Alan Hall, Cllr Mark Besley and Michael Lind from Monkton Elm Garden Centre. The statements made are included below.

Cllr Alan Hall

As Vice Chairman to West Monkton Parish Council and to the Joint Committee and a resident of MH1 for last 5 years, there are major lessons to be learnt which cannot be ignored moving forward with the 2 planning presentation before you this evening.

The spine road through MH1 has caused controversy from day one, firstly it is not wide enough to have street parking and also a bus route. Although parking for some residents is in courtyard parking this is ignored. If emergency vehicles need to get through there will be problems at certain times of the day. Additional radius zones on some of the bends to allow buses through are being used as parking. Parking recesses along the pavement would solve some of the problems as has been done on other developments around Taunton.

The road network needs to be phased and adopted by SCC as soon as a phase is completed so that road signage, speed reduction signs and road markings can be put into place. For 5 years we have been lucky that no serious accidents have happened. Thus, highlighting the need for tighter contracts with developers on phased completion. Road designs around a square in MH1, which is a children's play area, although conforming to radius guidelines when assembled together as a chicane to reduce speed, drivers cut across the junctions forcing other drivers to brake. Look at Google earth to show the problem it highlights the track of tyre marks.

Rear parking courtyards are a "throwback to the 1960's and, significantly under the POLICE "Secured by Design Guidelines" are discouraged for the following reasons – "They introduce access to the vulnerable rear elevations of dwellings where the majority of burglary is perpetrated. In private developments they are often unlit and therefore increase the risk of crime. Ungated courtyards provide areas of concealment which can encourage anti-social behaviour." Resident's vehicles from the flats are parked on the road all the way up to the A38 Langaller roundabout. As a whole, planning only deals with what is in front of them, here we have a different situation and I highlight this with this overall plan of the area which needs understanding by the planning/executive committee.

Design of the total road structure needs the local experts to be involved at early design stage and not end up with a predesigned plan with no input early enough to safeguard the community i.e. Parish Councils. The Parish Councils, representing the residents, have the local knowledge and expertise to work hand in glove with planning/developer and enable a concise thought out plan to move forward to scrutiny. I do not see what the reluctance is to have meetings very early on and not end up with a presented plan a week before it is presented to the executive.

The situation is that we have reached an agreement with Planning at the presentation on 20th January. and wish it to be duly recorded that Creech St Michael and West Monkton joint panel are to draw an overlay plan to the local road network that will work for all concerned, local current employers included, and still maintain the link for walking/cycling between developments and eliminate the rat running that is now occurring and safeguard Monkton Elm garden centre, Proctors farm and other local businesses. This is will take into account MH2 proposals and future planned developments.

Employment land development for Langaller site needs to be for start-up business only and not end up as the development allowed on MH1 where properties alongside this are fighting to keep the value of their properties. The size of buildings was well over the perception of the local community and should never have been allowed. The road access is designed incorrectly, and vehicles have to go across to the wrong side of the

road to be able to turn in to the site. The building size was not controlled and were allowed to be 1m higher than specified.

I urge you to take note of all the written submission sent into this assemble, as we have to deal with the consequences of your decisions.

Cllr Mark Besley

Good evening members of the Executive my name is Mark Besley, I am the highways officer for West Monkton Parish Council. I live at Prockters Farm and would like to represent local businesses (including the Monkton Inn pub, local farms, and businesses at Prockters) who would be affected by the proposed highways design for Monkton Heathfield phase 2 development.

Mike Lind a director of Monkton Elm garden centre will speak separately regarding his concerns. I would like to implore you, the Executive Committee to require that the Highways Authority and the Council reconsider the closure of the main road between the Cricket Club and Langaller roundabouts. It's very disappointing that the concerns already identified by the parish council regarding the road closure and communicated to the town council on the 25th of April 2019 have not been addressed by this Concept Plan (I have a copy of that communication here if any-one would like to see it).

At Prockters we have 15 independent businesses on site including which rely on access to their businesses by an adequate road system. The farm has 220 acres of land to the east that as the plan stands could only be accessed using unsuitable 'estate type' roads – we regularly transport hay, silage, manure, cattle and sheep using 30 foot tractor and trailers and articulated commercial 55 foot long lorries.

We also operate a car boot sale at Prockters (which has full planning permission) and regularly generates over 4,500 car movements between 7am and 2pm on a Sunday. The fields which hold the car boot sales are not in our ownership, but we have an agreement that they will not be developed for at least the next four years. The combined businesses at Prockters employ 55 people and contribute between £10–15,000 in business rates per year.

The effects of forcing Coaches, Milk Tankers, Agricultural Vehicles and Articulated Lorries accessing local farms and businesses and the thousands of visitors to Monkton Elms and Prockters has not been thought through by this plan. The District Centre has 90-degree bend and is marked as a 'node' or joining point and is likely to have a high pedestrian use.

My understanding is that there has been no traffic modelling carried out to see the effects of this highway design on car flows it seems incredible that no real analysis of traffic flows was made prior to the Plan being published – now is the time to get the Plan redesigned.

The aim of the pedestrianisation of the road is (as we have been told) to link the two phases of the development together – there is sufficient space as it stands for the existing road between the roundabouts to be made much more attractive and achieve this objective – traffic can be calmed considerably – the road made into a tree-lined open boulevard with pedestrian crossings and bus stops. Forcing all traffic through the District Centre will detract from the 'Garden Town' ethos of the development.

I think it's fair to say that the community feel very let down by both developers and the authorities regarding MH phase 1 – assurances, indeed legal agreements have been reneged upon or diluted so that what has been delivered in MH1 bares little relationship to what the community was promised. Without going into detail now on MH1 the density of housing has increased significantly, employment land has not been delivered, retain units are likely to become residential, the social housing element has been significantly reduced, relief roads have not been built and Phase One local centre has been greatly reduced in size.

Members of the Executive Committee I would like to request that you insist that the highways design shown is changed and not just make a commitment to 'look at the design' – we are asking for your help as the Executive of this Council- the road should be kept open albeit changed in design and the wishes of the parish councils, local residents and local businesses respected.

Thank you.

Michael Lind, Monkton Elm Garden Centre

Good Evening. Thank you for the opportunity to address you. My name is Michael Lind. I am a solicitor and the Managing Director of Monkton Elm Garden Centre, a family run business approaching its fourth decade serving residents of Taunton and neighbouring local communities.

I briefly wanted to address three points:

1. Our business and its role in the community
2. The impact of the proposed highways design for Monkton Heathfield phase
3. Confirm our intention to work with SWT Executive Committee to address these challenges

Our site has been part of the local community for more than 100 years. Currently, we are a 'bricks and mortar' business where customers choose to visit in their quest to find specific products or services. As a green, environmentally conscious business, we help keep Taunton's gardens, schools, and green spaces full of healthy flourishing trees and plants. We are helping Taunton to reduce its carbon emissions. Hands-on educational activities and events are run throughout the year and we also act a meeting space for local residents, care homes and individuals with special needs. Our restaurant provides a range of food and drinks all day – many of whom do so by bus or pedestrian routes from MH1.

We are (possibly) the largest employer in the area with over 120 loyal and long-serving members of staff. In some cases, third generation family members work with us. Importantly, we also employ a number of older members of staff who normally find it challenging to travel great distances and hold down jobs. We also support and work with a number of local businesses and growers – we are proud to be part of a thriving Somerset business community.

Central to our ability to continue to serve our community and remain a sustainable and viable business is the essential requirement of appropriate access to the national road infrastructure. This impacts staff, customers, and delivery access to the property.

Madam Chair and members of the Executive Committee: The proposed highways design plan for MH2, if implemented as is, will have a significant and detrimental effect on our business, the staff we employ, the customers who visit us as well as numerous local businesses and south west regional suppliers who are dependent on our viability. The effects are numerous but for the purposes of this evening, I will only focus on three:

Pollution. The proposed plans will increase journey time for staff, customer and delivery vehicle movements arriving from north of the garden centre, who will be required to go into Taunton and back up the A3259 to the garden centre. This will result in an increase of carbon emissions and resultant air pollution.

Congestion. Delivery vehicles, whether arriving from the south or the north, will be required to travel into Taunton and back up the A3259 to the garden centre. These vehicle movements will impact traffic volumes in and around Creech Castle, the Toneway Roundabout and Obridge, in addition to the residential zones created in MH1.

Employment. Monkton Elm will be more difficult to visit as a result of these plans. This will directly impact the viability of the business to continue to trade and employ staff.

Whether it's once in a generation, once a year or every day, it is not enough to just build houses to meet government targets, we have to plan for and create sustainable, vibrant environments. Households generate demand for goods of all types from cars to coffee to plants to clothes, the design needs to accommodate

these and also focus on how an established community centric business can contribute to your climate change policies.

The South West has just under 2.5 vehicle movements per household per day. For the projected 1,500 homes in Monkton Heathfield Phase 2, that amounts to 3,750 vehicle movements per day, not taking into account existing daily commuter movements from north of Taunton, deliveries/failed deliveries and return logistics which are set to increase significantly with the growth of online retailing.

We therefore request the Committee reviews the plan to pedestrianize the A38, particularly the section between the roundabout adjacent to the cricket ground and the Langaller roundabout at the base of the new Eastern Relief Road. It cannot be sustainable to funnel all the traffic through the new District Centre. We also seek the Council's assurance that they will commission a comprehensive transport study to understand the wider infrastructure requirements to meet the needs of the proposed Monkton Heathfield Phase 2 developments taking into account the changes in consumer behaviour.

Monkton Elm has the capacity to continue to be part of a wider, environmentally sustainable solution, which can also help address some of the wider climate change needs of the local community:

- As a community meeting place
- Through the sale of relevant local products (reducing the need to unnecessary car journeys and encouraging carbon off-setting)
- As a local employer supporting over 120 families

Monkton Elm welcome the opportunity to engage with the Somerset West and Taunton Council together with other authorities, and the Monkton Heathfield Parish Council, to address the above and find a workable solution to the wider the challenges faced by the development of MH2.

Thank you.

Your Ref:
Our Ref: AM/Langaller
Date: 2nd June 2020

Mr A Penna
Garden Town Co-ordinator
Somerset West and Taunton
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Belvedere Road Taunton
TA1 1HE

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Dear Mr Penna

DESIGN GUIDANCE AND MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION RESPONSE

We act on behalf of our client Mr B Jeffery, who is the owner of Land at Langaller Manor Farm, Langaller, Taunton TA2 8DA. The purpose of this letter is to comment on the draft Design Guidance and Masterplan Framework (DGMF). We understand that the deadline for the submission of consultation responses is 5pm on Friday 5th June, and we therefore trust that the following comments will be taken into consideration to inform any necessary revisions in light of the comments made.

The Site

The Land in our client's ownership is outlined indicatively below white (referred to as 'The Land' hereafter). The Land comprises of 13.8 acres of agricultural land that is split by the M5 motorway. The majority of the site is accessed from the west side in close proximity to the relief road constructed as part of the Monkton Heathfield development.



Figure 1- Aerial image of The Land in client's ownership (indicatively outlined in white for reference).

Policy and planning history background

Critical to understanding the possible implications of the DGMF on The Land, is understanding the relevant planning policy and application background. The Taunton Deane Core Strategy (adopted September 2012) sets out the spatial planning concepts of the land south of Langaller and the policy requirements for development proposals. The concept plan below indicates the suggested employment area which was later consolidated as part of the strategic site allocation SS1 as mixed use in the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (adopted December 2016). The Land forms part of this allocation.

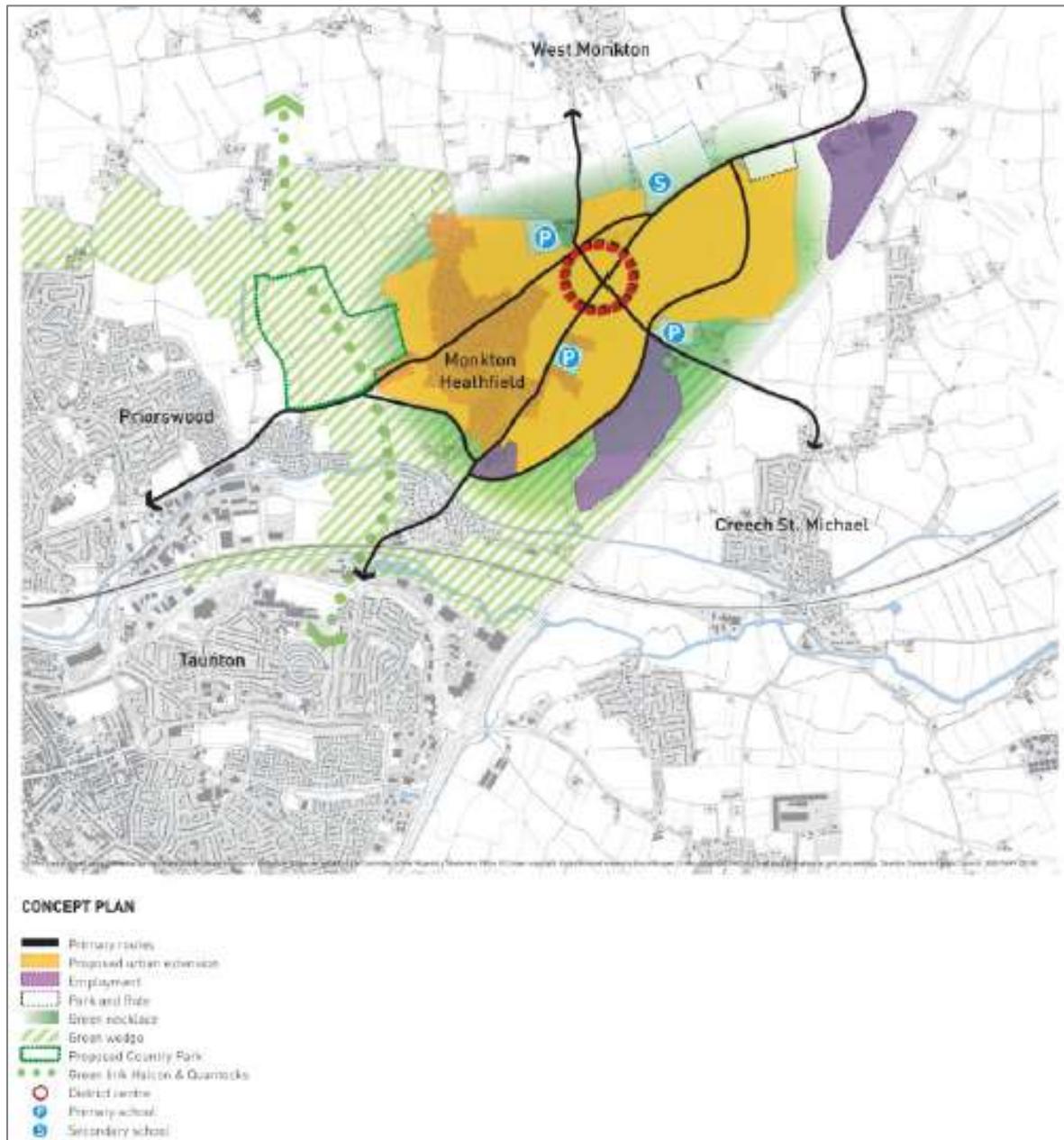


Figure 2- Concept Plan from Taunton Deane Core Strategy 2011-2028. Shows our client's site as employment use in purple.

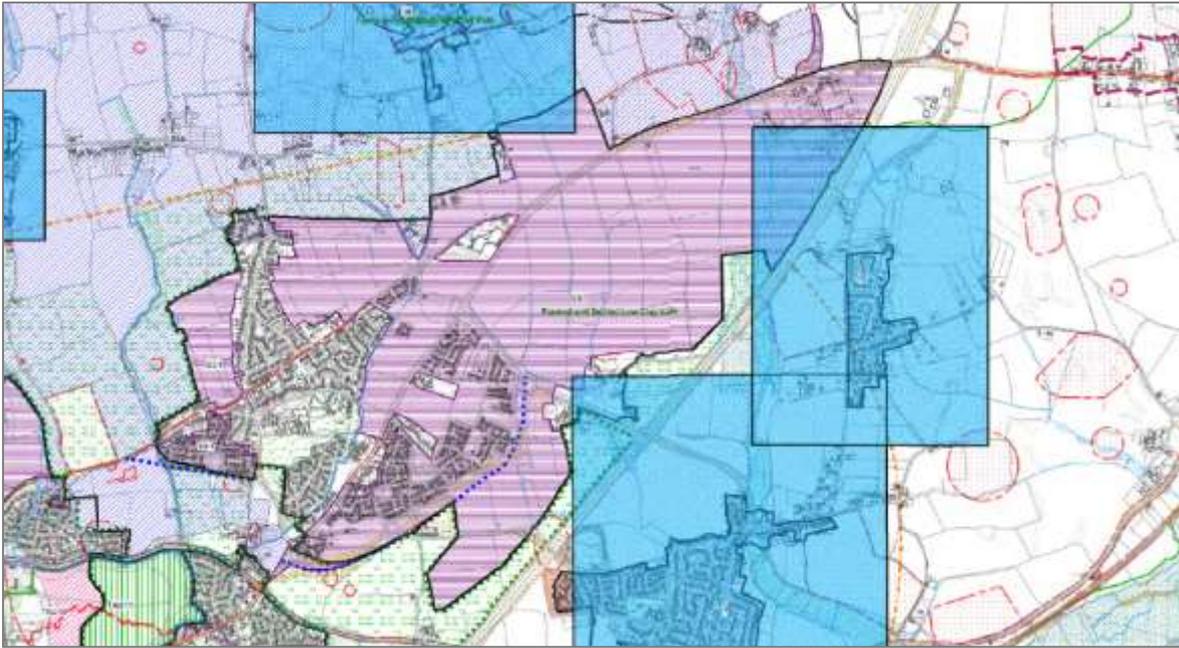


Figure 3- Extract from Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2016.

Policy SS1 within the Core Strategy sets out the policy requirements for the land to deliver “**a new sustainable neighbourhood** [...] **through a coordinated and comprehensive approach**”. The following requirements are noted for reference:

- “22.5 hectares of additional employment land for research and development (B1 (b)), light industrial (B1 (c)), general industrial (B2) and storage and distribution (B8) **to be provided in the first phase of development**, of which, 3 ha to be at and adjacent to The Hatcheries and **19.5 hectares south of Langaller**. A further 10 ha shall be reserved for longer term release around Walford Cross;
- A multi-purpose ‘green necklace’ of landscape and public open space surrounding the settlement providing allotments, outdoor recreation and wildlife habitat. This will also include:
 - A 20m wide buffer of woodland planting around the boundaries facing bat activity from Hestercombe House SAC;
 - Off-site offset woodland habitat in accordance with the recommendations of Hestercombe House SAC Appropriate Assessment to compensate for the loss of habitat of lesser horseshoe bats. The off-site offset habitat should be functional prior to the commencement of any development north of the A3259; and
 - **A belt of landscaping between the motorway and the development areas**” [text underlined by author for emphasis].

This was with the intention to utilise the employment land “to provide local employment opportunities in line with housing growth, reducing the need to travel and assisting self-containment”, as per paragraph 5.13 of the Core Strategy.

This was originally accommodated within the Outline planning application 48/05/0072 that was allowed at appeal on 22nd October 2008 (ref: APP/D3315/A/07/2055995). The appeal decision states masterplan drawing No. ACD5294/001 Revision A within the additional documents that supported the allowed appeal. The below extract from the masterplan details the envisaged uses associated with

phase 1 of the Monkton Heathfield Development that includes employment use along the east side of the relief road.



Figure 4- Extract from masterplan for application ref: 48/05/0072.

Draft Design Guidance and Masterplan Framework

Taking the above into consideration a clear shift can be seen that has moved the employment need from the original site that obtained Outline planning permission (ref: 48/05/0072) to the north of the site, as indicated on the illustrative masterplan in Part 3 of the DGMF shown below.



Figure 5- Illustrative masterplan from Part 3 of the DGMF.

Transport impacts

The DGMF acknowledges that the original housing targets for the area allocated under Policy SS1 are no longer achievable, hence the release of previously allocated employment land to residential. A new approach should not, in our view, sterilise the ability of our client to deliver residential development on The Land.

Revisiting paragraph 5.13 of the Core Strategy and the justification of the site to provide much need employment uses to reduce the need to travel and support self-containment, raises the following points:

- Moves the proposed employment site further away from the centre of Taunton which is a key source of prospective employees.
- Is further away from key highway infrastructure links such as the M5 and Creech Castle Junction on Toneway.

This is likely to generate longer journeys, higher traffic flows and make sustainable modes of travel less desirable. This is even if the proposed Park and Ride site comes to fruition given the difficulties encountered with maintaining existing sites. Bearing in mind the ongoing developments of Nexus 26 and Bridgwater Gateway as well, emphasises the importance of striking the right balance in sustainable development terms.

The above is also at odds with the rationale set out in the Constraints and Opportunities Plan in Part 2 of the DGMF, as shown below, that highlights the potential for Manor Farm to provide a point of access into the phase, with the Concept Masterplan in chapter 5 stating that a small part of the employment area will be accessed at this point to minimise traffic created along this road, yet is further away from key strategic traffic routes.



Figure 5- Extract from Constraints and Opportunities Plan.



Figure 6- Extract of Concept Masterplan.

Well-designed sustainable neighbourhoods

These points contradict the promotion of mixed-use neighbourhoods with interconnected street patterns to help ensure daily needs are within walking distance of most residents, as promoted in *Manual for Streets*. The proposed siting of the employment uses would become out of reach of the rest of Taunton, with phase 1 of Monkton Heathfield only just within 800m which is considered to be the benchmark for a walkable neighbourhood.

The employment uses also have particular activities associated with them, and the relationship between these and the adjacent greenspace will be stark with a lack of natural surveillance outside working hours. This may create unattractive spaces prone to vandalism to undermine the vision of the Council. This could be better addressed with mixed uses promoted throughout the site.

We suggest that residential development on The Land be considered further in order to create a truly mixed use community for the future. This would complement the more sensitive landscape setting of the site in contrast to the larger office blocks such a site would likely attract, to help create a finer grain of built development along the fringes.

The siting of these large office blocks will undoubtedly have an effect on the setting of the farmhouse, which is Grade II Listed.

We also question what benefit the strategic green space will have for future residents when it is so distant from the proposed residential development. Greenspace should be better related to residential development such that future residents utilise the space as best as possible. Residential development on The Land, particularly to the north, would assist.

This may provide an opportunity to re-evaluate the role of The Land as an opportunity to contribute positively towards the Council's housing supply to mitigate the under delivery of phase 1.



Figure 7- Extract of masterplan for employment area from Section 7 of The Guidance.

Strategic greenspace

Other than the immediate land of Manor Farm indicated as employment use, the remainder of The Land is indicated as a substantial part of the 'Green Necklace' buffer to the M5 motorway to provide 'significant' recreational opportunities. This includes a wooded landscape setting to provide one of a number of large open spaces as set out in paragraphs 8.5 to 8.7 of the DGMF.

In comparison to the phase as a whole, The Land is a substantial portion of this strategic greenspace. Given Policy SS1 of the Core Strategy states that the development should be co-ordinated with a comprehensive approach, and that chapter 6.6 in Part 3 of the DGMF re-iterates this stating that it should *"be designed as an integral part of the overall landscape and open space framework"*. It is acknowledged that several of the masterplan diagrams have a redline that excludes the majority of The Land despite the above.

It is our understanding that our client's land is critical to the delivery of this green infrastructure but has not had any engagement prior to this. This raises a concern regarding the overall deliverability of the development based on the proposals as they stand with other landowners likely to benefit from the ability to develop at higher densities for employment and housing needs. This would be at the expense of our client's land that is aspired to provide important open space provision that is critical to offsetting these developments and providing a sustainable neighbourhood.

A minor point we wish to raise relates to the publicity of the consultation especially as the guidance will become a material consideration in the assessment of future planning applications for 'Land South of Manor Farm, Langaller', yet is not available on the Council's consultation portal for what will be a critical supplementary planning document to the District. On behalf of our client, we will be happy to engage to overcome the concerns raised.

Conclusion

Overall we admire the ambitions set out within the DGMF to support the delivery of a garden community to complement the development carried out to date and we hope that our points relating to transport, design, sustainable development and mixed use potential are constructive to help towards achieving this.

We can confirm that our client is willing to consider the provision of strategic green space on part of The Land, however, The Land is also suitable for some residential development. In particular, a well-designed residential development would offer an enhanced setting for the Listed farmhouse than a commercial business park as currently proposed.

In its current form, the masterplan fails to achieve a reasonable value for our client.

It is noted that our client's involvement is critical to the successful delivery of this key strategic allocation to ensure sufficient public open space provision is secured. If these significant areas of public open space cannot be secured, it would undermine the delivery of the wider strategic allocation as well as the Council's Garden Town Vision. This highlights the importance of joint working with our client to help ensure a comprehensive and deliverable masterplan is developed.

We would therefore be happy to discuss these points in greater detail to help ensure The Land fulfils the aspirations set out in the DGMF. In the meantime, if you have any queries or would like to discuss the proposals in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A Muir

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Planning Consultant**

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