

KINGTON ST. MICHAEL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

HOUSING ALLOCATION SITES ASSESSMENT REPORT NOVEMBER 2024

SECTION 1 | BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

This report assesses options for potential site allocation for housing developments in the Kington St. Michael parish. It is part of work preparing the Kington St. Michael Neighbourhood Plan. It is a technical assessment to inform the possible housing allocation site(s) within the Kington St. Michael Neighbourhood Plan. Its findings will form part of the evidence base supporting the Neighbourhood Plan's approach to housing site allocation. Its findings inform and do not represent a recommendation to allocate. Further detail on next steps are set out on page 7.

1.2 Housing Requirements and Need in the Parish

The latest assessment of housing requirements in the parish came in the 'Rural Housing Requirements 2023'¹ paper from Wiltshire Council as evidence for the Council's Submission Draft Local Plan. This reconfirmed an overall Neighbourhood Plan requirement of 38 houses, which is reduced to a residual requirement of 34, taking account of 4 completions in the Parish. This represents an addition of approx. 5% to houses in the parish, the vast majority of which are in the main village itself (see Figure 1 on the next page). 5% is a figure used commonly for large villages across the county.

A local Housing Needs Study was prepared for the Parish of Kington St. Michael in 2019 by Wiltshire Council. As people's needs change, these assessments are considered to be valid for about 3 years and so the current assessment is out-of-date. However, it can provide a guide as to local housing need given the supply of housing since c2020 has been low. It suggests a need for 6 dwellings, specifically:

- 3x two-bed homes
- 3x one-bed homes,

1.3 Local Constraints: Landscape Setting

There are no formal designations to the landscape around the village. The village currently has a very tightly drawn settlement boundary as shown on the next page.

The Parish of Kington St. Michael is within a Limestone Lowland' the Landscape Character area. The Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment² describes key characteristics of this area as a whole as;

- Gently undulating lowland farmland. In general, the landscape around the village is effectively flat, with slight dips to the north and south of the village. These dips act as important signifiers of the north and south entrance points to the village.
- Numerous rivers forming shallow valleys, with the watercourses. Streams run across the main road just north and just south of the main village.

¹ https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/12017/Rural-Housing-Requirements-2023/pdf/Rural_Housing_Requirements_2023.pdf?m=1695745988247

² <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-landscape-conservation> - Wiltshire Character Assessment 2005

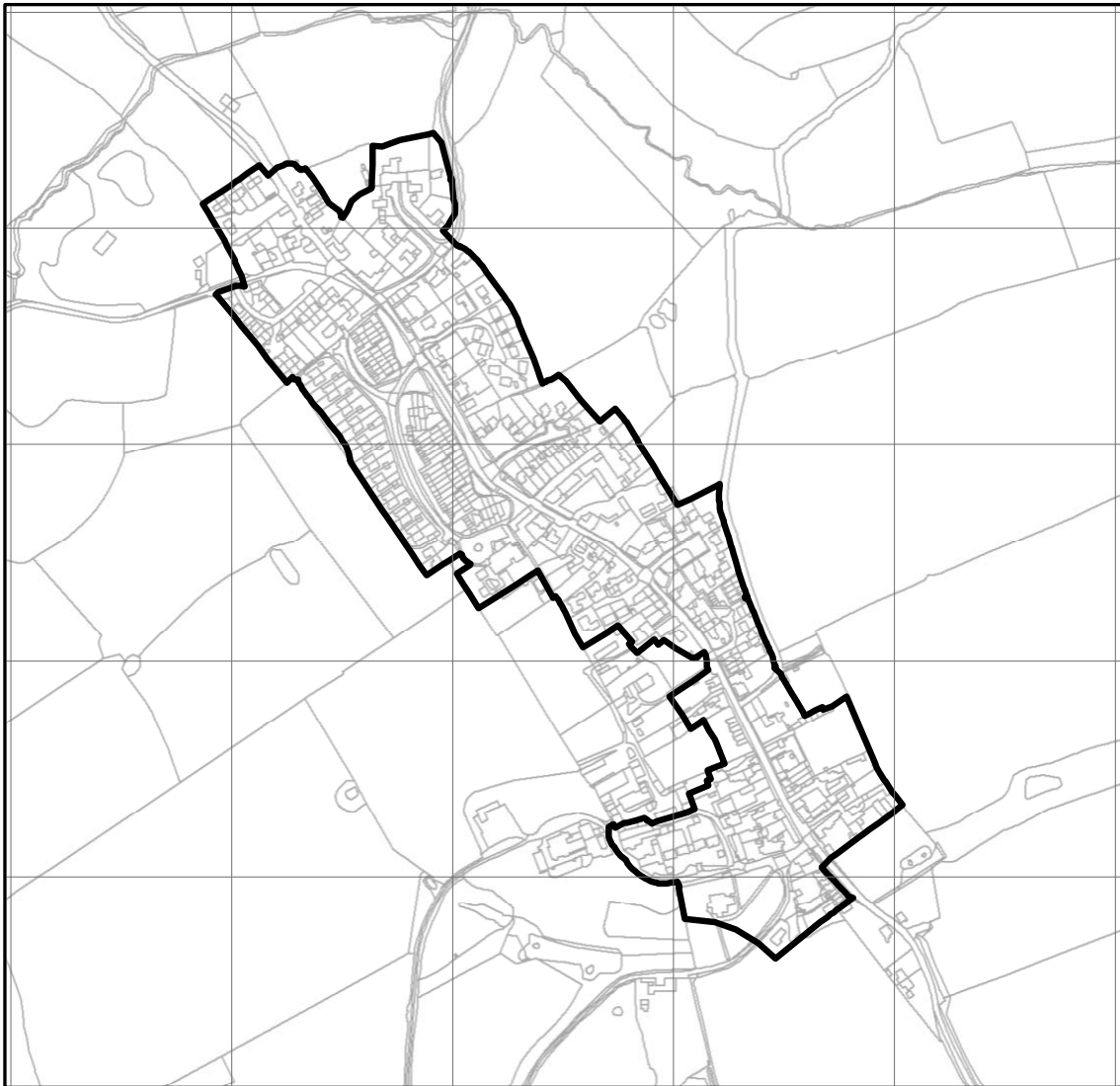
- A peaceful and rural landscape with subtle variations in character
- Strong network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees.
- Dry stone wall field boundaries in some areas and around settlements.
- Field pattern: predominantly large geometric fields with small scale irregular fields close to settlements.

1.4 Local Constraints: Settlement Form and Boundary

The basic pattern of the village reflects its origins as an agricultural community and, later, linear settlement either side of the old road from Chippenham to Malmesbury. 20th century, developments have largely kept to this basic linear pattern. This is then reflected in the distinctive settlement boundary defined by Wiltshire Local Plan.

Figure 1: Kington St. Michael Settlement Boundary (source Wiltshire Council Housing Site and Allocations Plan)

The purpose of settlement boundaries, is to define the limits of a settlement and prevent



sprawl. Allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan can be made outside the Settlement Boundary (and would result in an amended Settlement Boundary) and as a result should be

adjacent to the Boundary. Housing development in the wider parish of Kington St. Michael not linked to the settlement boundary of the main village would not be in accordance with the policies of the adopted Development Plan.

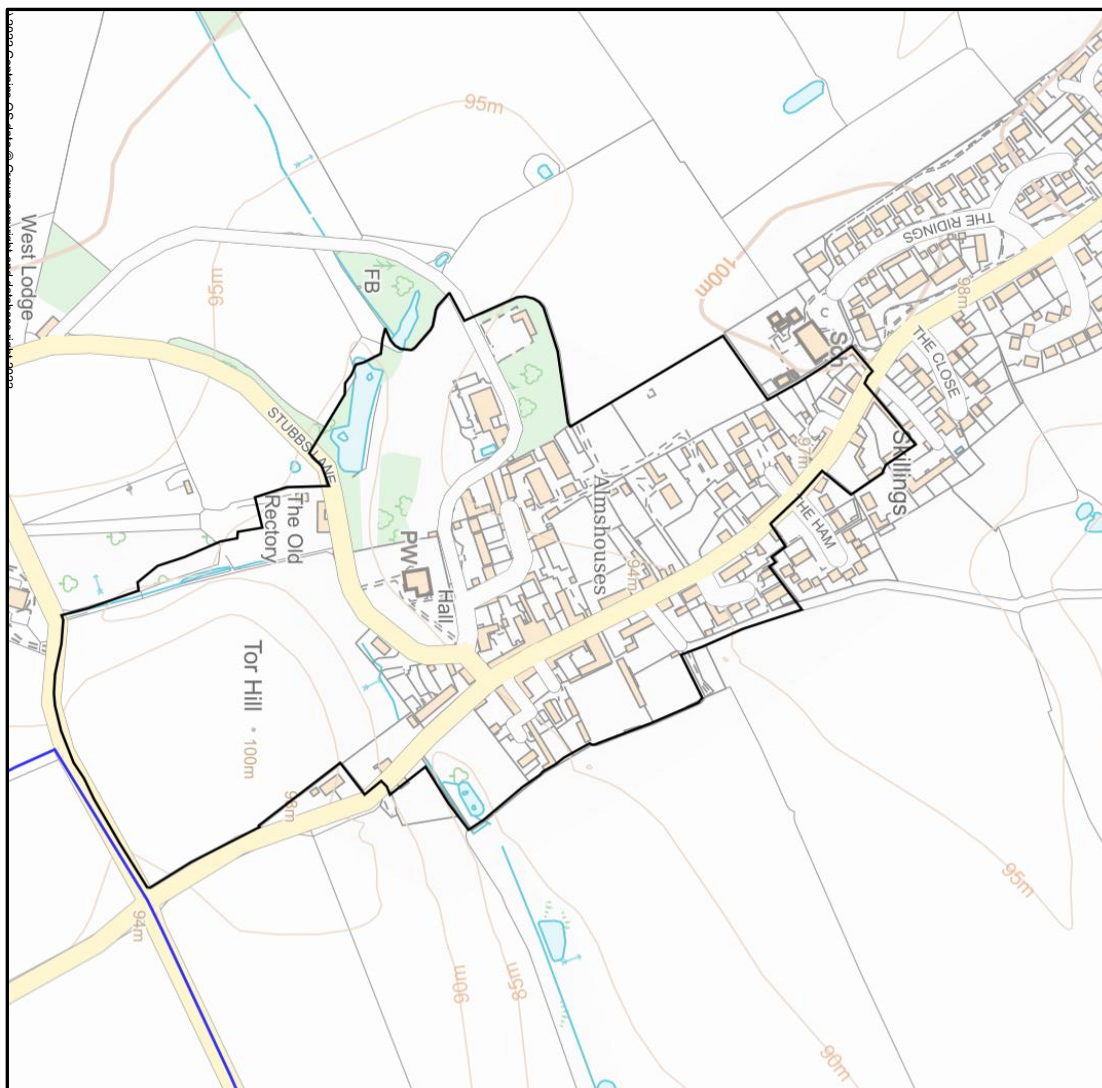
The Settlement Boundary as a policy tool helps to define a highly distinct pattern to the village in its landscape. The boundary to the east is very clear and consistent from north to south. In visual terms from a distance, it is almost straight. The boundary to the west is also clear if with an indent immediately south of the Primary School. Tor Hill to the south has rightly been included in the Conservation Area because it provides an important setting to the church of St. Michael and All Angels. These issues are important in the search for potential sites.

1.5 Local Constraints: Conservation Area & Heritage Assets

The High Street forms the spine of the Conservation Area as shown below on figure 2.

Figure 2. Kington St. Michael Conservation Area Boundary

This linear nature of the road, the often narrow pavements and the fact that many of the village community facilities are in this area all encourage social interaction between residents.



At the south and the boundary of the Conservation Area, the entrance to the village is signified by a dip in the landscape. Tor Hill is an important green space forming a large part of the south of the Conservation Area. There are key views out to Tor Hill from along the High Street looking south.

The significant exception to the built flanks of the street is the green space opposite the entrance to Paddock End, which also creates a view up to a large detached house and beyond to the surrounding landscape (This area is proposed for designation as a Local Green Space.).

There are also a few views out towards the surrounding countryside to the east from within the Conservation Area. This is glimpsed through Manor Farm from the High Street, and then more expansive views can be appreciated from the western end of the bridleway to the south of no. 23.

1.6 Sites Identification

Map (fig. 3) shows 6 of the sites considered during the work to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. They emerged as follows:

Wiltshire “SHELAA” Sites

In allocating sites within the Wiltshire Sites Allocation Plan (2019) Wiltshire Council assessed sites put forward through its own Strategic Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment. The Wiltshire SHELAA was updated as part of sites proposed for allocation within Wiltshire Local Plan 2020-2038. Wiltshire Local Plan does not propose to allocate land within villages. SHELAA sites have been included within the neighbourhood plan initial sites assessment. Promoted SHELAA Sites:

- SHELAA Site 797 – Manor Farm
- SHELAA Site 3089 – Manor Farm South
- SHELAA Site N/08/01108/COU – The Old Rectory

Locally Promoted and Identified Sites

A local call for sites was undertaken in 2022. It was widely advertised locally and used a standard Call for Sites submission form. Six sites were submitted through the call.

Following initial assessment of the 6 sites promoted sites, further sites that were considered worthy of assessment by Steering Group Members, but were not initially promoted, were identified. Owners were prompted to respond to the KSMNP sites assembly process. Land at Kington Farm was put forward by the landowner following dialogue with Steering Group Members. **Locally Promoted Sites:**

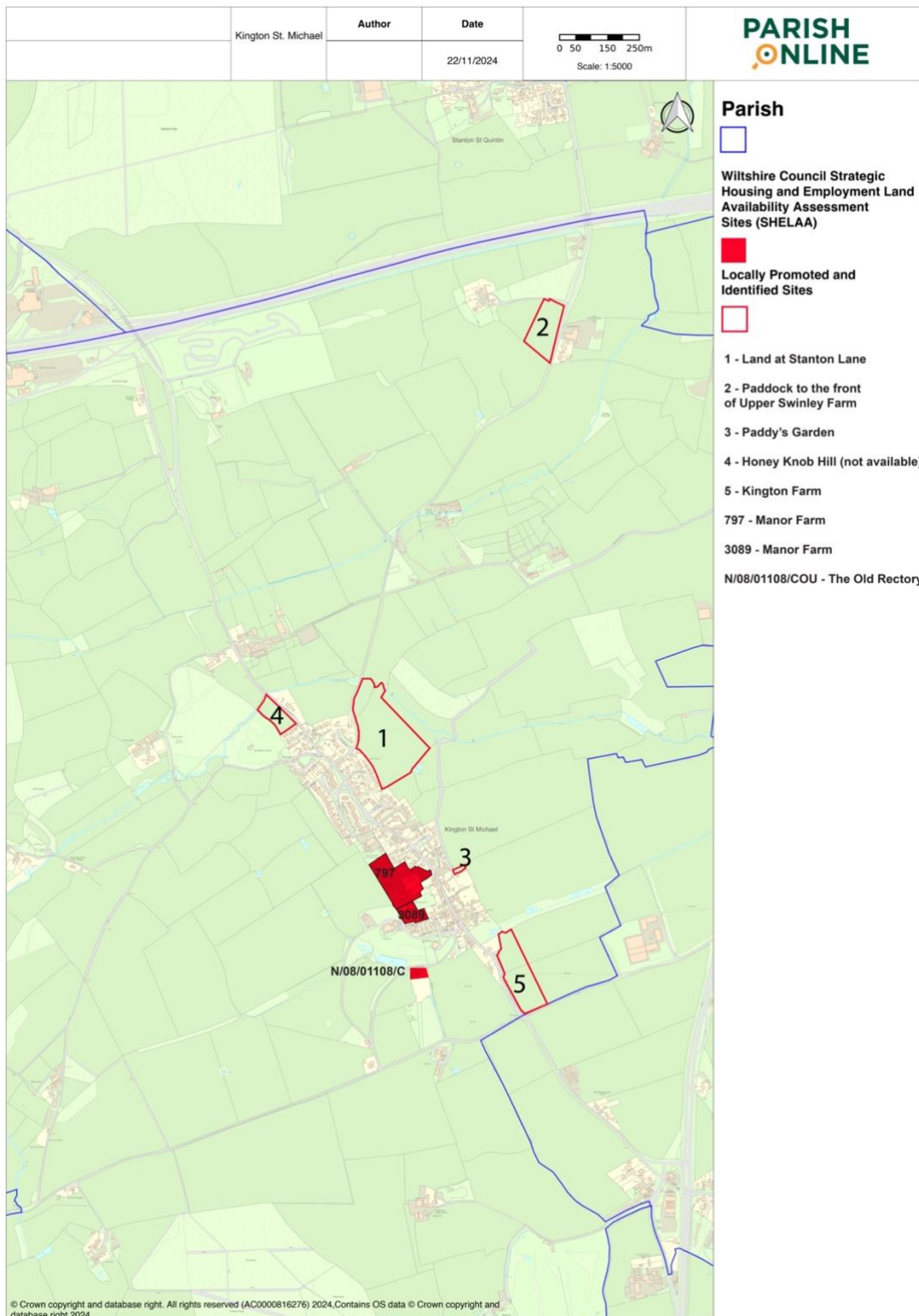
- Site 1 – Stanton Lane
- Site 2 - Upper Swinley Farm
- Site 3 – “Paddy’s Garden” Paddock End

Locally Identified Sites:

- Site 4 - Honey Knob Hill*
- Site 5 - Kington Farm

*this site was suggested by a local landowner, but a formal response and a Sites Submission form was not received. The site is therefore considered to be unavailable.

Figure 3 – Identified Sites



1.7 Site Assessment Methodology

All sites were assessed by the Place Studio team. The approach to site assessment is based on the Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (Housing and Economic Land Availability

Assessment and Neighbourhood Planning) and Locality's Neighbourhood Planning Site Assessment Toolkit.

These all follow an approach of assessing site allocation options based on whether the site is:

- Available: is made available for development within the NP period
- Suitable: is sustainable and appropriate to for the proposed development
- Achievable: is feasibly and viably developed within the NP period

The identified sites have all been assessed using a site appraisal proforma based on the documents referenced above. The proforma enables a consistent evaluation of each site against an objective set of criteria.

Assessments initially excluded those sites that were not reasonably available. This included;

- (I) Sites that are not available for allocation in the neighbourhood plan or their availability is not confirmed by the owner. These cannot be allocated.
- (II) Sites that are located outside of the defined settlement boundary and that are distinct and separated from the edge of the village. These are not considered suitable sustainable sites for housing allocation in principle due to their separation from local facilities and their impacts on the character of the open countryside and setting of Kington St Michael.

Available sites that are outside but immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary, are reasonable alternatives in principle due to their closer relationship with and potential to connect to the village and facilities. These have been the subject of detailed assessment.

The summary conclusions on each site assessment forms section 2 of the report, below. The completed proformas of sites that are reasonable alternatives form section 3 of the the report.

The judgement on each site is based on whether or not the site is available for allocation, potentially suitable and achievable. Where this is the case it will be an appropriate candidate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan for development in the Plan Period. However, some sites may present constraints that would need to be addressed if they were to be suitable and achievable allocations.

This report summary uses a traffic light rating.

'Green' for sites that show no or very few constraints and could be taken forward to community consultation as site allocations to include in the Neighbourhood Plan, 'Amber' for available sites which are potentially suitable if constraints can be resolved 'Red' for sites which have significant constraints are not considered currently to be available, suitable or achievable

SECTION 2 | SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENTS

2.1 Summary table

The table below summarises the results of the technical assessment of all potential sites assembled through the local call for sites process and the Wiltshire SHELAA. Full assessments proformas of sites that were not initially excluded are in Section 3 below.

Site	Comment	Rating
1	SHELAA Site 797 – Manor Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excluded from detailed assessment. The site is not available for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.
2	SHELAA Site 3089 – Manor Farm South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed Assessment Significant access and heritage constraints. The site is not considered suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.
3	SHELAA Site N/08/01108/COU – The Old Rectory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excluded from detailed assessment. Site not connected to village in open countryside. Significant access, landscape and heritage constraints. The site is not considered suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.
4	Site 1 – Stanton Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed Assessment Significant Landscape Constraints. The site is not considered suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan (Planning history noted: Planning application PL/2023/08833 rejected Appeal APP/Y3940/W/23/3334572 dismissed)
5	Site 2- Upper Swinley Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclude from detailed assessment. Site separated from village in open countryside. The site is not considered suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.
6	Site 3 – “Paddy’s Garden” Paddock End	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed Assessment The site is not considered large enough to allocate in the Neighbourhood Plan.
7	Site 4 Honey Knob Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excluded from detailed assessment as the site is not available.
8	Site 5 Kington Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed Assessment. Significant access constraints. The site is not currently considered suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan due to the need for more information.

2.2 Next Steps

Owners/promoters of the assessed sites have been consulted to fact-check the assessment report findings by the Steering Group. However, no new evidence has been provided that may be material to the assessment and selection process, such as a commitment to measures that could adequately remove or mitigate identified constraints and impacts.

It has therefore been concluded by the Steering Group and the Parish Council that no sites will be included for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, it is accepted and anticipated that further sites will come forward through the planning applications process. Any sites will need to demonstrate how they comply, or justify why they do, with the Neighbourhood Plan policies and the Character Assessment and Design Code (part 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan).

SECTION 3 | DETAILED SITE ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

3.1 Section 3 provides detailed assessments of those sites that were considered available and that had a direct relationship with the settlement boundary.

3.2 SHELAA SUBMISSION: MANOR FARM SOUTH



1. SITE DETAILS

Site reference/name	Manor Farm South
Site Address/location	Stubbs Lane, Kington St. Michael
Gross site area	0.38 ha
SHELAA reference	3089
Existing land use	Farmyard, not currently in full use.
Land use being considered	Housing
Development capacity	SHELAA: 17 dwellings.
Site ID source	Submission during SHELAA process
Planning history	None
Neighbouring uses	Recent housing to immediate south. Large listed Manor and woodland to west. Allotments to east. Housing just off to south east.

2. ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS	
Within/adjacent to areas with statutory designations?	Within the Kington St. Michael Conservation Area.
Within/adjacent to areas with non-statutory designations?	None.

	However farm buildings may be considered non-designated heritage assets within conservation area. A heritage impact assessment would be required.
Site falls within a habitats site which may require nutrient neutrality, or is likely to fall within its catchment?	No
Wholly or partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3?	No
At risk of surface water flooding?	No
Grade 1,2 or 3a agricultural land?	No
Including areas with priority species or wildlife-rich habitats?	The existing barn structures may provide habitats for protected species. A habitats assessment will be required as part of any development proposal. The site is adjacent to hedgerow on north-eastern boundary. Hedgerow (UK BAP Priority Habitat) should be retained and enhanced.
Mainly or wholly in an Air Quality Management Area?	No
PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS	
Topography of site?	Flat
Existing or potential vehicle access?	The Wiltshire Council Highways Department opinion is that vehicular access is not currently feasible.
Pedestrian access?	Good
Cycle access?	Good
Any Public Rights of Way across site?	A PROW passes through the site north-south.
Any Tree Preservation Orders on site?	No
Any veteran/ancient trees on site or adjacent?	None known
Any other significant trees on site or adjacent?	Recorded woodland directly west of the site.
Potential ground contamination?	Possibly
Power or pipelines across the site?	No
Would development result in loss of social, amenity, community value?	Loss of agricultural use and farm setting. The PROW could be retained.
ACCESSIBILITY	
Distance to shops	Approximately 150m
Distance to bus	Approximately 100m
Distance to train	Chippenham Station is the closest
Distance to primary school	100m along PROW, 250m by road
Distance to secondary school	In Chippenham
Distance to open space/recreation facilities	Around 300m by PROW to the recreation ground. Allotments are adjacent to the site.
LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE CONSTRAINTS	

Landscape and Visual Constraints	The Landscape Character of this site falls within the limestone lowland typology (Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands). The strategy for this type of land is set out by the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment as 'conserve and strengthen'. The site is well contained by existing buildings and mature woodland to the east.
Sensitivity in terms of landscape	Very low
Sensitivity in terms of visual amenity	Removal of dereliction would make a visual improvement.
Would development harm any designated heritage asset?	The site falls inside of the Kington St Michael Conservation Area. There are also a number of listed buildings close to the site, perhaps most significantly, grade II listed Kington Manor, though the site is not within the immediate setting of that building, development of this site may cause some limited harm to the wider setting. Further heritage professional assessment and Historic England advice would be needed if this site were to be progressed.
Would development harm any non-designated heritage asset?	The agricultural buildings on this site could be considered to be of some importance in non-designated heritage.
PLANNING CONSTRAINTS	
Planning Policy Constraints	Abutting settlement current boundary. In the Conservation Area.
Is the site in the Green Belt?	No
Is the site already allocated?	No
Are there any other relevant planning policies for the site?	From current Wiltshire Core Strategy: Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment.
Is the site greenfield etc.?	Previously developed land for agricultural purposes
Is the site within the settlement boundary?	Outside but adjacent
Would development result in settlement merging?	No
Would development change the settlement character?	Yes. It would remove an agricultural use within the setting of the settlement.

3. ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY

Available for development?	Yes Submitted to the SHELAA. Local discussions with landowners as part of the local call for sites confirm the availability of this site.
Known legal/ownership issues?	None known
Likely time frame for availability?	Potentially immediately

4. ASSESSMENT OF VIABILITY

Likely liability for abnormal costs?	Possible retention and conservation of two old farm buildings. The importance of a heritage led approach in this sensitive location.
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5. CONCLUSIONS

Expected development capacity?	Between 4 -17 dwellings subject to conservation of existing farm buildings.
Likely timeframe for development?	3-5 years
Overall rating? Is the site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suitable and available • potentially suitable, and available • not currently suitable, and available 	<p>Not currently suitable</p> <p>Whilst outside the settlement boundary, the site is well-located in relation to village facilities and connected on-foot of cycle, however vehicle access is not currently feasible</p> <p>It semi-derelict and under-used condition could be addressed through sensitive development. However, residential development would result in loss of an historic agricultural use and potentially structures in the Conservation Area. Conservation would severely limit potential to contribute to affordable housing need.</p>
Summary	This site is not currently considered suitable or achievable for allocation.

At risk of surface water flooding?	Very low risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of less than 0.1% each year.
Grade 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land?	Shown as Grade 3 (provisional) on Parish Online mapping.
Including areas with priority species or wildlife-rich habitats?	No. But deciduous woodland to the north east which is a priority habitat.
Mainly or wholly in an Air Quality Management Area?	No
PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS	
Topography of site?	Sloping down from the western boundary,
Existing or potential vehicle access?	Potential access off Stanton Lane almost opposite The Orchard, currently a gate entrance. Other access options possible.
Pedestrian access?	Currently poor – pavement on opposite side of road up to opposite the gate above. None on the site side of Stanton Lane.
Cycle access?	Poor on narrow road
Any Public Rights of Way across site?	No
Any Tree Preservation Orders on site?	None recorded.
Any veteran/ancient trees on site or adjacent?	None recorded.
Any other significant trees on site or adjacent?	Area of woodland just beyond north east of site boundary.
Potential ground contamination?	Not known. None anticipated.
Power or pipelines across the site?	Yes, from close to no.1 Stanton Lane to top corner of site.
Would development result in loss of social, amenity, community value?	No
ACCESSIBILITY	
Distance to shops	c.800m
Distance to bus	c.250m
Distance to train	N/A
Distance to primary school	c.250m
Distance to secondary school	In Chippenham
Distance to open space/recreation facilities	Some 100m, main 400m
LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE CONSTRAINTS	
Landscape and Visual Constraints	High. There are important public views across the gently rolling landscape to the village settlement from the east.
Sensitivity in terms of landscape	As with the whole parish, the site is within the Malmesbury-n Limestone Lowlands Character Area (16a) as identified in the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment 2005. This is not a designated landscape. The development would alter the current and very distinct settlement/landscape pattern.
Sensitivity in terms of visual amenity	The site is in a sensitive, transitional position at the eastern gateway to Kington St Michael with a strong rural character with the adjacent and mature hedgerows.

	It is sloping and partly elevated forming part of the rural setting to the village. The main immediate receptors are those who live on Kyneton Way, and users of Stanton Lane with glimpsed views through hedgerow gaps and potential views from PROW KSMM4. These are local routes and not regional or national trails.
Would development harm any designated heritage asset?	The is some distance from the Conservation Area, there are two grade II listed buildings around 80m to the west. However, this part of the village is a 20 th century extension of the historic core and the site itself is set behind development of houses from around the 1990s.
Would development harm any non-designated heritage asset?	No
PLANNING CONSTRAINTS	
Planning Policy Constraints	Open countryside, outside but adjacent to the settlement boundary, Landscape impacts.
Is the site in the Green Belt?	No
Is the site already allocated?	No.
Are there any other relevant planning policies for the site?	See constraints above.
Is the site greenfield etc.?	Yes. Agricultural land
Is the site within the settlement boundary?	No
Would development result in settlement merging?	No
Would development change the settlement character?	The settlement is linear and development of this site would conflict with that pattern. Development would extend the built form to the north-east.

3. ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY

Available for development?	Submitted during the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites.
Known legal/ownership issues?	None known
Likely time frame for availability?	Potentially immediately

4. ASSESSMENT OF VIABILITY

Likely liability for abnormal costs?	No
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5. CONCLUSIONS

Expected development capacity?	Suggested capacity from the local Call for Sites information of 30-35 across 3.19ha is extremely low and does not represent efficient use of land, unless only part of the site were to be developed. A more standard density of c30DPH would suggest around capacity of c100 across the whole site, which is a disproportionate addition.
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	Development of c3-% of the upper section of the site, adjacent to the village would be within the most visually intrusive elevated section.
Likely timeframe for development?	Medium term
Overall rating? Is the site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suitable and available • potentially suitable, and available • not currently suitable, and available 	Not currently suitable for allocation Whilst the site has capacity to contribute to affordable housing need it is located in elevated open countryside outside but adjacent to settlement boundary. Development could cause significant harm to the settlement setting and rural character. Access to the site is limited with poor pedestrian footway connections with some village facilities being remote.
Summary	This is not a suitable allocation site.

3.4 CALL FOR SITES: SITE 3: PADDY'S GARDEN; PADDOCK END



1. SITE DETAILS

Site reference/name	'Paddy's Garden' Paddock End
Site Address/location	Off Ham Lane
Gross site area	Approx. 0.14 (acre or ha?)
SHELAA reference	N/A
Existing land use	Farmland? Not currently in obvious use.
Land use being considered	Housing
Development capacity	'1 cottage' proposed in submission.
Site ID source	Submission during Call for Sites
Planning history	None
Neighbouring uses	Open fields to north east and south east. House and garden to south. Back gardens then houses to west.

2. ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS	
Within/adjacent to areas with statutory designations?	Abutting the Kington St. Michael Conservation Area.
Within/adjacent to areas with non-statutory designations?	No
Site falls within a habitats site which may require nutrient neutrality, or is likely to fall within its catchment?	No
Wholly or partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3?	No
At risk of surface water flooding?	No
Grade 1,2 or 3a agricultural land?	No

Including areas with priority species or wildlife-rich habitats?	No
Mainly or wholly in an Air Quality Management Area?	No
PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS	
Topography of site?	Flat
Existing or potential vehicle access?	Ham Lane is a gravel track with one house accessed off it. Exit onto the High Street severely constrained by stone walls immediately to both sides.
Pedestrian access?	Good
Cycle access?	Fair (unmade-up track)
Any Public Rights of Way across site?	No
Any Tree Preservation Orders on site?	No
Any veteran/ancient trees on site or adjacent?	No
Any other significant trees on site or adjacent?	No
Potential ground contamination?	No
Power or pipelines across the site?	No
Would development result in loss of social, amenity, community value?	No
ACCESSIBILITY	
Distance to shops	100m
Distance to bus	100m
Distance to train	N/A
Distance to primary school	250m
Distance to secondary school	In Chippenham
Distance to open space/recreation facilities	Some 100 - 250m
LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE CONSTRAINTS	
Landscape and Visual Constraints	Low. Site outside but adjacent to the current settlement boundary. The site sits within the general frame of the village settlement as seen from the east,
Sensitivity in terms of landscape	Medium. The site is part of the boundary edge between the settlement and the agricultural landscape but a two storey or poorly designed and located house could intrude visually.
Sensitivity in terms of visual amenity	Medium. A one storey building, well screened and with appropriate materials, may not intrude visually.
Would development harm any designated heritage asset?	It is adjacent to the Conservation Area boundary, and in close proximity to two grade II listed buildings therefore some impact is anticipated that would need to be mitigated.
Would development harm any non-designated heritage asset?	No
PLANNING POLICY CONSTRAINTS	
Planning Policy Constraints	Development outside settlement boundary.
Is the site in the Green Belt?	No
Is the site already allocated?	No

Are there any other relevant planning policies for the site?	Heritage (as noted above) – Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
Is the site greenfield etc.?	Yes
Is the site within the settlement boundary?	No
Would development result in settlement merging?	No
Would development change the settlement character?	Not if done carefully, see above.

3. ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY

Available for development?	Submitted during the Call for Sites.
Known legal/ownership issues?	None known
Likely time frame for availability?	Potentially immediately

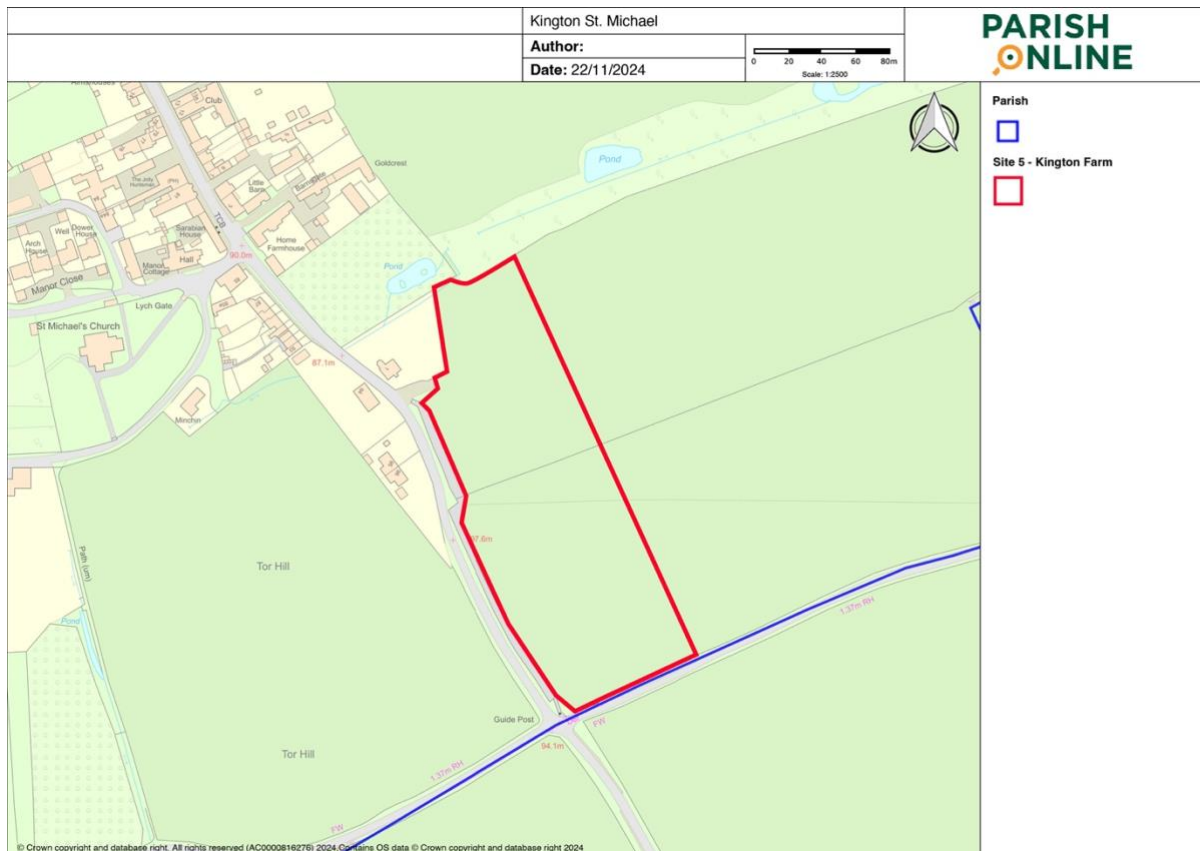
4. ASSESSMENT OF VIABILITY

Likely liability for abnormal costs?	No
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5. CONCLUSIONS

Expected development capacity?	1 house
Likely timeframe for development?	Short term
Overall rating? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suitable and available • potentially suitable, and available • not currently suitable, and available 	<p>Not currently suitable (too small for allocation)</p> <p>The site has restricted vehicle access and is only capable of accommodating one dwelling. It is not a site suitable as an allocation because of its site. The site is outside but adjacent to the settlement boundary. However, any development could harm the strong landscape setting at the eastern edge to the village. This may be minimised by single storey development.</p>
Summary	<p>This is potentially a suitable site for a single storey house.</p> <p>This is not suitable as a site allocation.</p>

3.5 CALL FOR SITES: SITE 5: KINGTON FARM



1. SITE DETAILS

Site reference/name	Kington Farm Strip
Site Address/location	East of road south from village
Gross site area	c.1.8 ha
SHELAA reference	N/A
Existing land use	Grazing land
Land use being considered	Housing and car park
Development capacity	At 30dph: c. 52 if all used
Site ID source	Owner
Planning history	Part of an extensive application for development of a solar farm of up to 40MW ac of export capacity, comprising the installation of solar photovoltaic panels, associated infrastructure and associated works including grid connection. PL/2023/08481
Neighbouring uses	Predominantly agricultural, three houses adjacent in west and north

2. ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS	
Within/adjacent to areas with statutory environmental designations?	SSSI Impact Risk Zone. Would need to consult Natural England for residential development of 50 units or more.
Within/adjacent to areas with non-statutory environmental designations?	No
Site falls within a habitats site which may require nutrient neutrality, or is likely to fall within its catchment?	No
Wholly or partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3?	No. Flood Zone 1: Low Risk
At risk of surface water flooding?	Potentially to northern part
Is the land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 or 3a)?	Grade 3b and 4
Including areas with priority species or wildlife-rich habitats?	The site is bordered by hedgerows. Hedgerow (UK BAP Priority Habitat) should be retained and enhanced, and should not form domestic curtilage to ensure its long-term protection and viability.
Mainly or wholly in an Air Quality Management Area?	No
PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS	
Topography of site?	Slightly rising from south to midway, then sloping down to northern boundary.
Existing or potential vehicle access?	An informal Wiltshire Council Highways' opinion is that vehicular access is only possible from the north west corner, and then only for up to 5 houses. Access from the lane at the south might be possible although this would require the removal of a length of hedgerow and widening of the lane. That access is also likely to have a limit to the number of possible houses.
Pedestrian access?	Off-road path on western site boundary. Ends c.40m short of next safe footpath in main part of village; unsafe between the two. This would need to be addressed. It has been discussed as a location to consider a small village car park. However, if this was located to the north of the site, the distance and poor pedestrian access to the village centre would make it unlikely to be well used. If the car park was to the south of the site, this problem would be significant.
Cycle access?	Same as for vehicular and pedestrian access.
Any Public Rights of Way across site?	Two PROWs across site, roughly east/west KSTM38 and KSTM39. The path on western edge of site is not a PROW.
Any Tree Preservation Orders on site?	No
Any veteran/ancient trees on site or adjacent?	No.

Any other significant trees on site or adjacent?	Significant hedgerow along road edge, no other planted boundaries.
Potential ground contamination?	Not known. none anticipated.
Power or pipelines across the site?	No
Would development result in loss of social, amenity, community value?	The PROWs are of amenity value. Development of the site may lead to a need for these to be re-routed.
ACCESSIBILITY	
Distance to shops	c.350m
Distance to bus	c.200m
Distance to train	N/A
Distance to primary school	c.1200m
Distance to secondary school	In Chippenham
Distance to open space/recreation facilities	Some 100m, some c.1200m
LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE CONSTRAINTS	
Landscape and Visual Constraints	As with the whole parish, the site is within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Character Area (16a) as identified in the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment 2005. This is not a designated landscape.
Sensitivity in terms of landscape	The site is in a sensitive, transitional position at the southern gateway to Kington St Michael with a strong rural character with the adjacent Tor Hill and mature hedgerows.
Sensitivity in terms of visual amenity	The site is elevated with long distance views to the east. The main immediate receptors are users of the PROW. These are local routes and not regional or national trails.
Would the development of the site cause harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting?	It is adjacent to the Conservation Area boundary, therefore some impact is anticipated though considered to be fairly low given that for the most part there is separation by the road and mature hedgerow boundaries to the site. Enhanced boundary screening would reduce impact.
Would the development of the site cause harm to a non-designated heritage asset or its setting?	No
Would development change the settlement character?	The settlement is linear and this would continue that pattern, however development of the site would not directly physically or visually link into the settlement. Development would extend the built form to the south but the site as currently proposed would ensure that the eastern edge continued the well-defined boundary to the village to the north.
PLANNING POLICY CONSTRAINTS	
Planning Policy Constraints	Outside settlement boundary. May be seen to be in open countryside.
Is the site in the Green Belt?	No
Is the site already allocated?	No
Are there any other relevant planning policies for the site?	Heritage (as noted above) – Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

Is the site greenfield etc.?	Yes
Is the site within the settlement boundary?	Outside the settlement boundary, separated at its closest point by an enclosed orchard.
Would development result in settlement merging?	No

3. ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY

Available for development?	Yes. Call for sites form submitted to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Known legal/ownership issues?	Non known
Likely time frame for availability?	Immediately available

4. ASSESSMENT OF VIABILITY

Likely liability for abnormal costs that could affect viability, such as demolition, land remediation or relocating utilities?	Unlikely given the evidence in this assessment.
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5. CONCLUSIONS

Expected development capacity?	The landowner outlines potentially 45-50. However, Wiltshire Council highways department considers the site to be suitable for only around 5 dwellings.
Likely timeframe for development?	Within plan period
Overall rating? Is the site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suitable and available • potentially suitable, and available • not currently suitable, and available 	<p>Not currently suitable for allocation.</p> <p>Development of the site would continue the linear development form of the village. However, this must be balanced with constraints.</p> <p>Safe pedestrian connection between the site and village is currently not achievable as there is no pavement at the southern village gateway. This constraint would need to be overcome with a safe and convenient walking/cycling connection if the site can be considered potentially suitable.</p> <p>Landscape impact is a key issue due to the elevated and open nature of the site and the importance of the site as a gateway to the village. Therefore a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment is needed.</p> <p>Being adjacent to the Conservation Area, a Heritage Impact Assessment is also needed.</p>
Summary	This is not currently a suitable site for allocation.

Note:

All maps used in the report are sourced from Parish Online.

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APPENDICES (following pages)

APPENDIX 1

LOCAL CALL FOR SITES FORM

APPENDIX 2

WILTSHIRE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY COMMENTS