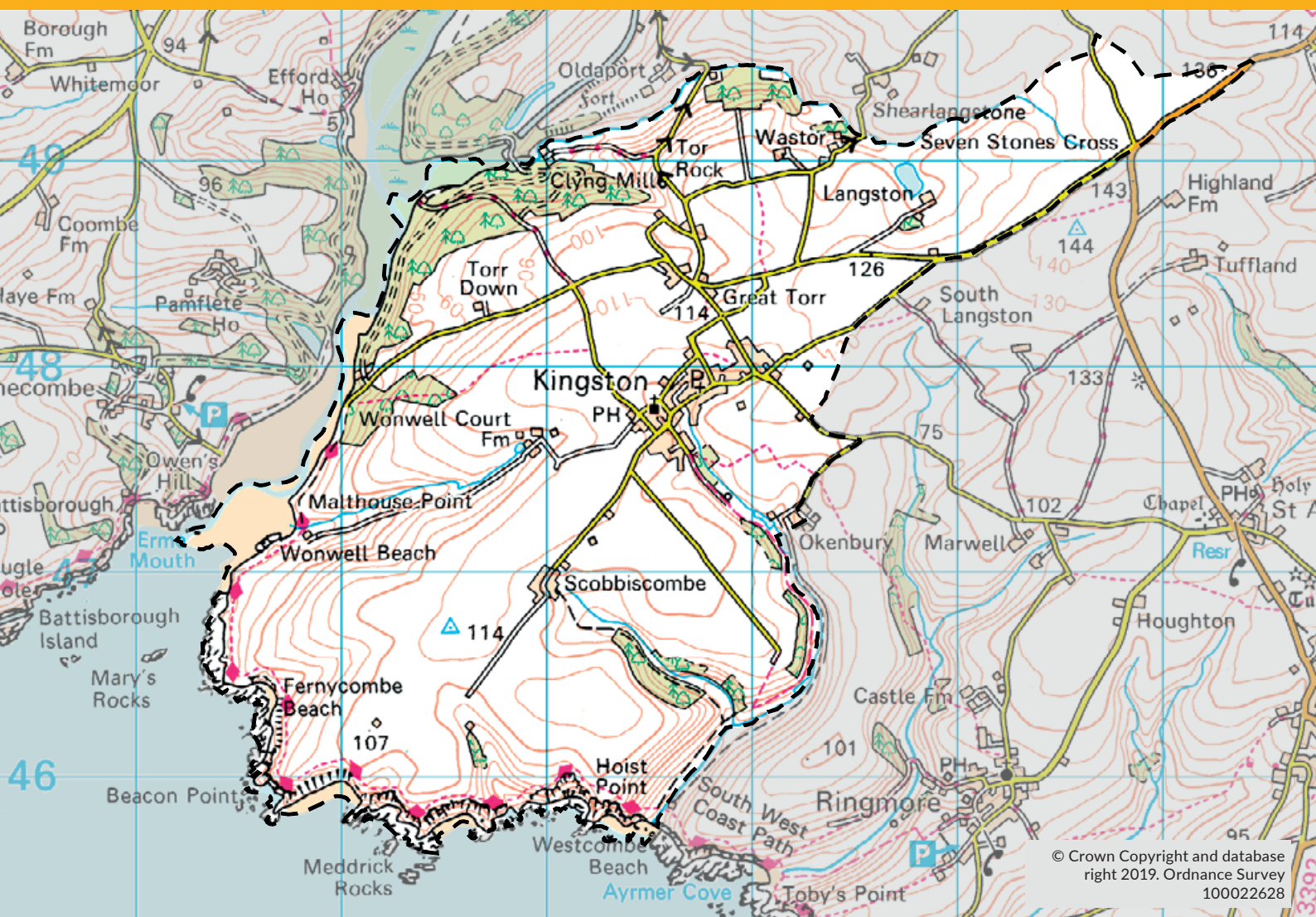




Kingston Neighbourhood Plan

Consultation Draft Version

Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012



Prepared by Kingston Neighbourhood Plan Task Group

www.kingstonplan.org

for Kingston Parish Council

www.kingstonparishcouncil.co.uk

June 2019

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Foreword

Welcome to the draft consultation version of the Kingston Neighbourhood Plan. Shaped by the community, this is YOUR plan and we hope that you will support it.

You have told us that Kingston is a very special place to live with a unique character. In 2007 Kingston Parish Plan established an agreed framework for maintaining a sustainable community, much of which remains relevant today. In 2019, the Neighbourhood Plan and the policies within it set out how you as a community wish to see the Parish change and develop over the next 15 years.

This Plan could not have been written without the huge support of the Kingston community. You identified a series of broad themes at the Village Drop-In day in late 2016 including: a commitment to affordable housing for local people; the sense of a strong community spirit; an appreciation of the beautiful rural and coastal countryside we live in and the importance of the AONB. The Community Questionnaire, distributed to every home in the Parish, built on these themes. 86% of residents, 11yrs and over responded. A separate Very Special Questionnaire was included for children from 4-10yrs.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the preparation of the Plan, in particular: the Neighbourhood Plan Task Group, including 4 residents and 2 Parish Councillors; Bob Musk for providing the photographs and presenting the mass of data from the Community Questionnaire; My Locality and the Devon County Council/South Hams District Council Locality Grant for the funding to support the work; the team of residents who trialled, distributed and collected questionnaires and carried out the second home survey; our Parish Clerk, Sue Green for her continuing help and support; Lee Bray our consultant for pulling it all together, and especially to all of you who took the time to respond so fully to the Questionnaire, at the Drop-In event and to the website blog, www.kingstonplan.org. The Task Group has done its best to represent your views and aspirations for Kingston.

Once the Plan has been submitted to SHDC and independently inspected you will be asked to vote on it. If approved by 50% of the voters it will then become a legal document which forms a part of the planning process up to 2034 and beyond.

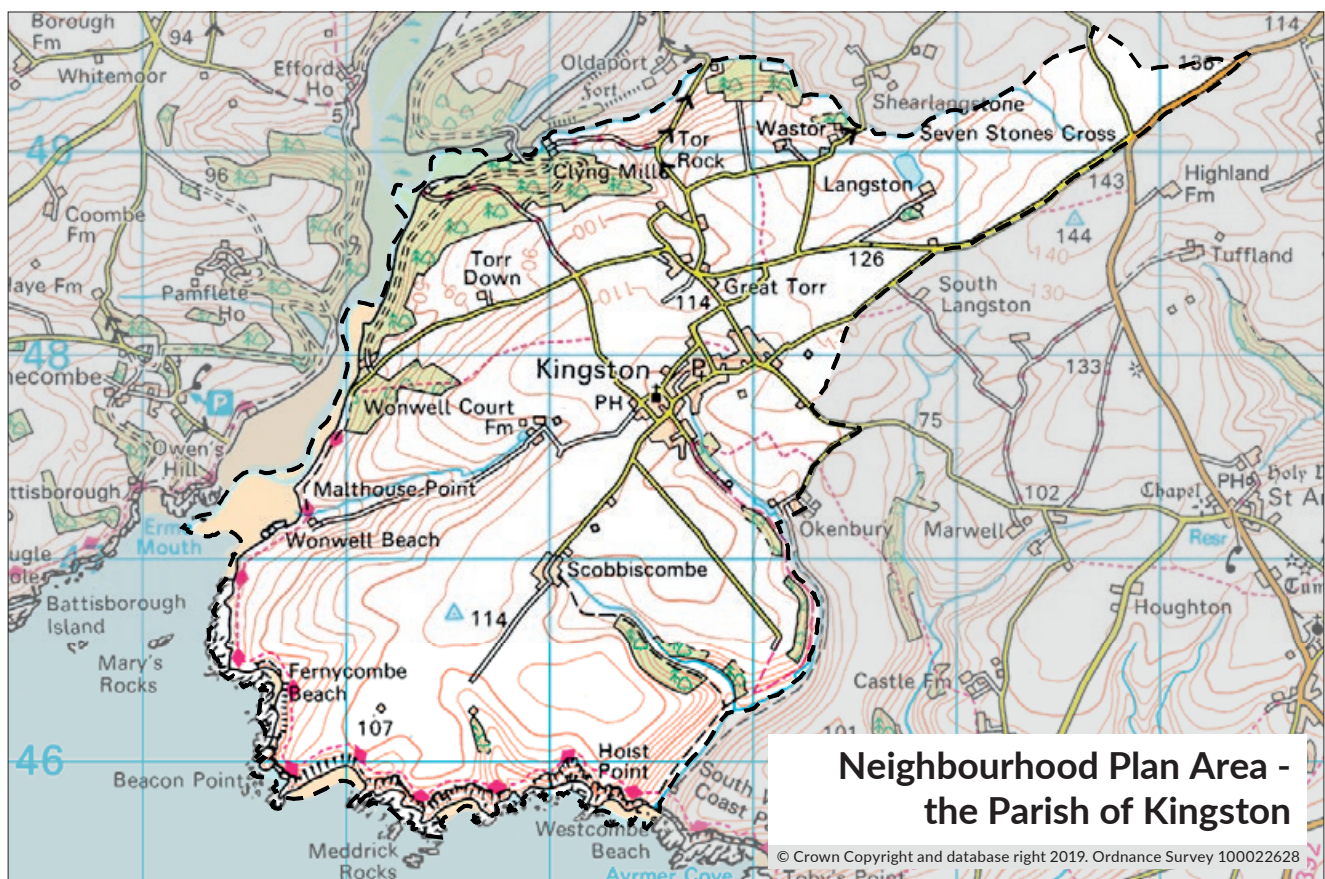
Judy Alloway
Chair of Kingston
Neighbourhood Plan Task Group

Eve White
Chair Kingston Parish Council

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Welcome to the plan for the future of Kingston. Shaped by the local community – this is your plan. It covers the whole parish.

- 1.2 A neighbourhood plan gives a local community a greater say over how its area will develop in the future. It is put together by the local community, tested by public consultation and independent examination and referendum and ultimately becomes part of the local development plan, helping to guide decisions about development in the area. This neighbourhood plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 by Kingston Parish Council, which is a qualifying body as defined in the Act. It has been prepared in line with the regulations and meets the basic tests (shown at paragraph 1.6 below). Greater detail is set out in the Statement of Basic Conditions which accompanies the plan.
- 1.3 The plan making process began late in 2016 with approval of the principle by South Hams District Council and the formation of a neighbourhood plan steering group to guide the process locally. Surveys and consultations were carried out during 2016-18 as the plan took shape. In particular, a drop-in day took place and a community questionnaire was circulated to every household in the parish, eliciting an 86% response rate. Greater detail about the process is set out in the Statement of Consultation which accompanies the plan.
- 1.4 This is the draft version of the plan issued for public consultation over a statutory six-week period. When responses to the plan have been analysed and any necessary amendments made it will be submitted to the local planning authority (South Hams District Council) which will arrange for its independent examination prior to a local referendum.





Kingston village set within the surrounding South Devon AONB

- 1.5 The plan complies with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 and adopted plans for the area. In particular, it complies with the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) with which it shares the same time horizon (2034 and beyond).
- 1.6 To meet the basic conditions at examination a neighbourhood plan must:
 1. be appropriate having regard to national policy;
 2. contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 3. be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan; and
 4. be compatible with human rights requirements and EU obligations.
- 1.7 When the plan has been finally approved, it will be “made” and become part of the development plan for the area. This will mean that it will be used alongside other local and national planning policies to help make planning decisions and to guide and manage future development in the area. It will become a reference point for the local planning authority (South Hams District Council), planning inspectors and decision makers of all kinds – investors, developers, funding bodies, the Parish Council, community groups and existing and future residents. Its delivery will be the responsibility of us all.
- 1.8 The plan and its policies will be monitored to judge their effectiveness over time. A simple Monitoring Framework accompanies the plan. There may be a need to review the plan, (or a part of the plan), in future and regular monitoring will help to assess this.



The Dolphin Inn



Chapel Row



Firestation and crews 1949-2009



Kingston Reading Room



Kingston Reading Room - 2019

2. Local Context, Vision and Objectives

- 2.1 Kingston is an isolated coastal parish set on the South Devon coast and lies entirely within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The parish is also bounded by the Heritage Coast and the Undeveloped Coast and lies alongside the unspoilt Erme estuary, which includes a Site of Special Scientific Interest and an extensive estuarine Marine Conservation Zone. The area is popular with holidaymakers and the local economy rests primarily on tourism and agriculture. The parish is home to about 380 people, the majority of whom live in the village. That population figure has changed little in the past two hundred years, although there have been at least 65 new homes built in the village itself since 1945.
- 2.2 Kingston village lies at the heart of the parish and is only approached through a network of single-track lanes with passing places. Any significant increase in traffic flow will have an adverse impact on the village and on the local area. It includes two Conservation Areas with several listed buildings. The village supports only a few local facilities including the ancient St James the Less Parish Church, the popular Dolphin Inn, a small village hall (the Reading Room), a well-equipped Recreation Ground and remarkably, a volunteer fire station, of which only two remain in Devon.
- 2.3 In spite of its isolated position, no school, shop or post office and a public transport service limited to one shopping bus a week to Plymouth, Kingston is a desirable place to live, especially for those who are retiring or looking for a second home. Consequently, the price of most homes is beyond the reach of local families on average wages and first-time buyers. The average house price in Kingston over the last 5 years is over £365,167. Of the 213 homes in the parish, 21% are second homes/holiday lets and 16.5% are social housing properties.



- 2.4 Employment opportunities in Kingston and the surrounding area are few and wage levels are below average. This, coupled with the very high house prices, makes it hard for local people, especially the young, to afford to stay. Kingston Parish Council is committed to supporting any proven need for affordable housing for local people, who would otherwise be unable to live in the village. The plan aims to address such issues and to continue to involve the local community in making sure that change and development in future are for the good of the parish.
- 2.5 The South Devon AONB is our greatest asset and critical to the local economy. The parish is made up of rugged cliffs and sandy coves; rural rolling patchwork landscape, colourful hedgerows; significant habitats and species; an ancient network of narrow lanes, paths and bridleways; a secluded estuary; peace and tranquillity with natural nightscapes and a picturesque village with a wealth of historical features; all of which exemplify the AONB that residents and visitors love.
- 2.6 The local plan (the JLP) gives the AONB *'the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty'*, where major development *'will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it is in the public interest'*. Further development that would have a detrimental effect on *'the unspoilt character, appearance or tranquillity of the Undeveloped Coast, estuaries and Heritage Coast'* will not be permitted except under exceptional circumstances. Any development must be carefully balanced against potential impacts on the environment and the quality of life of this and future generations. The impact of inappropriate development would be irreversible and would not contribute to sustainable development.
- 2.7 The JLP establishes a basis to create strong and sustainable communities through its policies. In particular Policy TTV25 gives support to the preparation of neighbourhood plans. This neighbourhood plan seeks to protect and enhance local assets and to foster a vibrant, healthy and prosperous future for Kingston.

2.8 The local community, through the Village Drop-in Day, November 2016, and the Community questionnaire, December 2017, has indicated that it expects the plan to:

- protect the beauty, special character and heritage of the parish;
- prioritise the needs of young and lower/middle income locals in future development;
- maintain and enhance community spirit and balance; and
- safeguard local facilities and encourage new appropriate employment opportunities.

2.9 The vision for Kingston, set by the local community, is:

Kingston must maintain its character as a living country village in an area of outstanding natural beauty.

2.10 Kingston is a place where residents of all ages enjoy a good quality of life, within a beautiful iconic Devon village. This quality of life, for both individuals and the community, will be maintained by ensuring:

- a mixed community in age, income and occupation
- easily accessible services especially for the elderly and vulnerable
- a range of groups and activities for all ages
- a good mobile phone and internet system across the parish
- a sufficient number of principal residences, more second homes will reduce the active population
- more work opportunities for local people
- good facilities in regular use
- a safe environment without undue traffic impact and danger on our roads
- good community spirit and care for individuals in time of need



2.11 The plan aims to create a place where the following objectives are achieved:

- New development is in scale and keeping with the village and the locality;
- Support for small scale housing development, which prioritises the needs of local people, is in keeping with the locality and will contribute to a sustainable future for the parish, including:
 - Open market housing for young families on lower/middle incomes to buy or rent, and
 - Affordable community housing for people with local connections, who cannot afford to buy or rent open market housing
- Opportunities for existing business to flourish and provision of new employment for local people, which promotes sustainable growth in the local economy appropriate to the character and position of the parish within the South Devon AONB;
- Respect, conserve and enhance the very special qualities of Kingston's natural environment for future generations, including protection of the exceptional view of the dark night sky;
- Protect the historic environment of the parish by conserving and enhancing heritage assets which are of special local interest;
- Support for the delivery of appropriate small-scale technology for generating renewable energy for local use;
- Promote a healthy, mixed community by enhancing and protecting Kingston's green spaces, sport/recreational /leisure facilities and services which support community wellbeing and resilience
- Seek opportunities to improve infrastructure to make the parish more sustainable for existing and future residents

2.12 The policies and proposals which follow are laid out under the following main headings:

1. Development, Design and Construction
2. Housing
3. Environment and Heritage
4. Community amenities
5. Business and employment

3. Development, Design and Construction

NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Kingston is an ancient coastal village set in outstandingly beautiful rolling countryside, protected by AONB, Heritage Coast, Undeveloped Coast and Conservation Area designations and valued by residents and visitors alike. The village is only accessible through single track lanes with passing places. There is no school, post office or shop and public transport consists of one shopping bus per week to Plymouth.
- 3.2 Some development will help to meet local needs and sustain the local community. The previous South Hams Local Plan established a boundary for the village, which has now been in place for over 25 years and served to contain its growth to within reasonable limits. This plan reaffirms the same approach, drawing the same settlement boundary tightly around the village, in order to limit development to that which will be in scale and character with Kingston and the AONB.
- 3.3 The boundary generally follows the ancient outline of the main village, which sits characteristically in a 'bowl' surrounded by higher ground. It is largely based on clearly defined physical features, eg. lanes, field boundaries, hedgerows etc. Free standing individual or groups of buildings, farm buildings, or other structures peripheral to the built form of the settlement were excluded.
- 3.4 Different criteria-based planning policies apply either side of the boundary. Within the boundary suitable new development will generally be acceptable providing detailed considerations are satisfied. Outside the boundary development will be tightly controlled and only permissible where it is essential in order to meet agricultural, forestry or other essential, small-scale and exceptional local development needs which cannot be met within the village. This aligns with JLP Policy TTV26.

Kingston Village Settlement Boundary



The Community said:

99% of 316 respondents` agreed that the special qualities, distinctive character and key features of the local landscape and seascape should be conserved and enhanced.

94% of 311 respondents agreed that Kingston's remote rural character is its most important asset.

Community questionnaire, December 2017

POLICY KNP1: DEVELOPMENT AND THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

1. Development will be permitted inside the village settlement boundary shown in the plan, provided it is in scale and character with the site and surroundings, is of an appropriate density, and will cause no significant adverse impacts on the AONB, natural or historic assets, local amenity, traffic, parking or safety.
2. Elsewhere in the parish development will be strictly controlled and permitted only where it can be delivered sustainably and requires a countryside location or will meet a proven local need which cannot be met inside the settlement boundary.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- 3.5 New development will be expected to display good, sensitive design, in harmony with the locality. Designers must pay careful attention to the local vernacular, landscape character, local setting, views and skylines.
- 3.6 The AONB Management Plan notes the need to protect the character of skylines and open views into, within and out of the AONB including protection against visually dominating buildings which are inconsistent with landscape character. Development must not have an adverse impact on the AONB, the Heritage Coast or the Undeveloped Coast.
- 3.7 Suitable building techniques and technology must be adopted to deliver sustainable buildings and ensure that development, in both its public and private areas, is safe, inclusive and accessible for all.
- 3.8 National standards for sustainable construction change over time. Development must at least meet current national standards. Designs will be particularly welcomed which strive to surpass the basic standards and deliver greater energy efficiency, achieve greater carbon reductions, further reduce use of non-renewable resources, or employ other innovative eco-friendly building techniques.

POLICY KNP2: DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

All new development should:

1. be of high design quality clearly derived from the site context,
2. respect and enhance local heritage, character and vernacular and safeguard local distinctiveness,
3. be in scale and keeping with its setting and protect locally important views and skylines,
4. retain and enhance local landscape character, including significant field patterns, hedgerows, trees and woodlands, and incorporate suitable features to integrate development with the landscape,
5. protect biodiversity and improve habitats and micro-climate,
6. use only stone for boundary walls, in keeping with local stone buildings and laid on its natural bed,
7. use only mixed native species for hedges and traditional laid Devon hedgebanks wherever boundaries abut open countryside,
8. exclude street lighting and minimise security and external lighting,
9. incorporate meters, bin storage and other features appropriately, conveniently and so as not to clutter the street scene,
10. wherever possible incorporate modern technologies to maximise sustainability and energy efficiency and meet the challenges of climate change and use only sustainable building materials,
11. wherever possible minimise use of non-renewable resources, contribute to reducing carbon emissions and maximise solar gain,
12. be safe, attractive, inclusive and accessible, reducing opportunities for crime and the fear of crime,
13. provide for its own car parking requirements. For residential development there should be at least two dedicated car parking spaces per 2-bedroom dwelling and three spaces for 3-bedroom or more
14. not cause unnecessary noise, light or other pollution and safeguard against risks of contamination and erosion.

The community said:

- Safety and the low local crime rate are valued and should be protected. Low crime was cited as one of the 'good things' about Kingston, Village Drop in November 2016. Annual police reports to the Parish Council confirm a low crime rate.
- However 150 people cited crime as a cause for concern, Community questionnaire December 2017. The isolation of the village and especially of outlying homes must underpin this view.



The community said:

- Car parking, especially in summer, is a growing problem: 20% of 330 people now park a vehicle on the roads, a total of 50 vehicles. Community Questionnaire December 2017.
- Car ownership is increasing. A number of older homes were built with no/inadequate parking space and some homes open directly onto the highway. Car obstruction is an increasing problem in the summer months when visitors are seeking access to the coast path. This exacerbates the danger to pedestrians and prevents access for emergency and essential service vehicles

The community said:

- Design should suit the locality: 88% of 309 people agreed that new housing should be of good traditional design suited to the locality.
- Protection of landscape and views: 88% of 320 people highly value views across the countryside and 74% of 320 people, views of the village from the surrounding countryside. 89% of 316 people highly value the special qualities and distinctive character of the local landscape.
- Traditional Devon hedgebanks are a key local characteristic: Devon hedgebanks, (81% of 320 people) and woods, (87%) are highly valued
- The estuary, beaches, cliffs and coastline are the 'crown jewels' of the environment of the parish: These natural features were overwhelmingly rated as highly valued (estuary and beaches 99% of 320 people; cliffs and coastline 98% of 320 people).

Community questionnaire December 2017

FLOOD PREVENTION AND SEWERAGE

- 3.9 Both flooding and leaking sewage are causing problems in the village after heavy or persistent rainfall. The long-term shift in weather patterns has led to more extreme weather events. For example, the guttering and downpipes put up on St James the Less Church at the beginning of the 20th century have had to be replaced by larger versions able to cope with heavier more prolonged rainfall. The plan requires that new development shall be designed not only so as not to give rise to flooding, but also wherever possible to contribute to the alleviation of existing difficulties.
- 3.10 The plan also seeks to minimise the burden on the sewage treatment system through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems and alternative technologies for treating foul sewage.

POLICY KNP3: FLOODING AND SEWERAGE

1. Surface water drainage from new developments shall not be connected to the village sewerage system. Any new development shall incorporate a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) that at least meets current standards.
2. Foul sewage from any new development must, unless the capacity of the sewage treatment works is suitably improved, be treated on site using a packaged sewage treatment plant that meets the current standards.
3. New development shall be designed so as to ensure satisfactory water drainage, not give rise to flooding and wherever possible and reasonable also assist in the alleviation of existing and historic flood problems

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 3.11 Renewable energy is a critical factor in helping to address the challenge of climate change and the government has set a target to deliver 20% of our energy from renewable sources by 2020. The local community supports this aim but at the same time is keen to protect farmland and the natural beauty, heritage, biodiversity and tranquillity of the area.
- 3.12 Renewable energy development proposals will be considered in relation to the impact they would have upon matters of local, regional or national interest, particularly landscape, heritage and wildlife. In particular, there should be no adverse impact on the AONB, Heritage Coast and Undeveloped Coast and the unspoilt Erme estuary. The priorities in the AONB Management Plan include protection against intrusive energy generation.
- 3.13 Small scale schemes and community led initiatives to deliver renewable energy which could also contribute to the local economy and community, will be welcomed. However, it is considered that large scale renewable energy developments would cause unacceptable impacts on the parish and, therefore, that no scope will be found for such developments.
- 3.14 Solar panels on historic buildings will be acceptable if there will be no harm to the appearance, character or value of the building. This may be achieved by the use of appropriate low visual impact solar tiles or solar slates.
- 3.15 Ground-mounted solar panels or single wind turbines will be welcomed where the purpose is to generate power for use within the parish, there will be no unacceptable landscape, heritage biodiversity, species or amenity impacts, they are of an acceptable scale and the land will be restored after the use ceases.

- 3.16 It is recognised, however, that renewable energy infrastructure, desirable in principle, has the potential to be visually intrusive and a source of nuisance from noise. For this reason, ground-mounted solar panels and wind turbines will not be acceptable within the Erme Estuary SSSI, (Site of Special Scientific Interest), a Conservation Area, the curtilage of a listed building or scheduled ancient monument.
- 3.17 Many visitors use the South West Coast Path to appreciate the beauty and tranquillity of the unspoilt coast of the parish and this is an important tourist asset for the whole of the South Hams. In order to protect views and sightlines from the Coast Path, ground-mounted solar panels and wind turbines will also not be permitted in any location where they may affect views from the Coast Path, or from the navigable waters of the estuary (see also KNP 8).

POLICY KNP4: RENEWABLE ENERGY

1. Proposals for small scale renewable energy developments will be welcomed where the purpose is to generate power for use within the parish and if they can be shown to have no unacceptable impacts, particularly on landscape, views and skylines, biodiversity or local amenities. Proposals for large scale renewable energy developments would have unacceptable impacts and will not be permitted.
2. Proposals for individual or community scale renewable energy schemes, such as solar voltaic panels, biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products, will be welcomed providing they will:
 - a. be appropriate in siting and scale to the local setting and the wider landscape,
 - b. create no unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents, and
 - c. have no unacceptable impact on any important natural or biodiversity feature.
3. The installation of solar panels on a listed building or building within a Conservation Area will be supported only if it can be shown that there will be no negative effect on the appearance, character or historic value of the building.
4. Proposals for solar arrays or wind turbines on open farmland would have unacceptable impacts and will not be permitted.
5. Proposals for solar arrays or any wind turbines will not be permitted within the Erme Estuary SSSI, a Conservation Area, the curtilage of a listed building or scheduled ancient monument. In order to protect views and sightlines from the Coast Path, solar panels and wind turbines will also not be permitted in any location where they may affect views from the Coast Path, or from the navigable waters of the Erme estuary.

Key Evidence: South Hams Local Plan (Part 5: Modbury Area, Section M8 Kingston); Drop-in Report: Community Questionnaire; South Devon AONB Management Plan 2019 - 24; Kingston Plan Area Character Assessment.

The community said:

90% of 322 people support solar panels on farm buildings and 80% support small scale wind turbines, but 44% do not support solar panels and 53% do not support wind turbines on open farmland.

Community questionnaire December 2017.

4. Housing

EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

- 4.1 The parish population, of around 380, has remained much the same for two hundred years, but in addition to a number of single houses and barn conversions, eight new developments have been built, seven post war. There are now around 213 homes across the parish, of which 43 are holiday or second homes, 12 are long term private rental, 34 are Housing Association properties and 117 are owner occupied. The majority of these homes are in the main village with a small number of outlying farms and single properties.
- 4.2 There are 6 pre-war Council houses in Kingston village and at least 65 new homes were built from 1945 – 2017, of which 36 were Housing Association properties. Eight social housing properties have been sold under the Right to Buy initiative and of the remaining 34, there are 2x2 bed bungalows for the elderly, (one of which is converted for use by people living with disability,) 13 x 2 bed houses and 19 x 3 bed homes. The original 22 Council properties in Yellands come under the Devon Covenant and can be sold-on only to those who have lived or worked in Devon over the last 3 years, leading to lower prices than in the fully open market.
- 4.3 A house by house check carried out by a team of residents, each covering their local area, established tenure for all homes in the parish. This showed that 21% of the 213 homes in the parish are currently holiday or second homes.

KINGSTON LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN

- 4.4 The 2007 Parish Plan states that Kingston Parish Council is committed to supporting any proven need for affordable housing for local people who would otherwise be unable to live in the village.
- 4.5 In 2009 a local lettings plan was introduced specifically for Kingston Parish by South Hams District Council in partnership with the Parish Council and the two housing associations which managed social housing in the parish. This plan ensures that priority in the allocation of social housing is given to those with a local connection and has enabled those who live and/or work in the parish, have relatives in the parish or who wish to move back to the parish, to find a home here.

HOUSING NEED

- 4.6 In 2017 the average price of a house in Devon was about £300,000, in South Hams about £350,000. The average house price in Kingston over the last 5 years is over £365,000, based on the sale of 34 properties. This includes six 2-bed properties at an average price of £256,500 and eleven 3-bed properties at an average of £302,300.
- 4.7 Such high house prices create a need for affordable and entry level homes for local people, and the plan makes this a priority. There is also a significant imbalance in housing stock with more expensive properties than cheaper homes. A breakdown of Council Tax bandings shows

there are 45 properties (23% of all homes) in the lower two bandings of properties in the village. These two bandings represent entry level properties. This imbalance in housing stock contributes to an imbalance in the residents' age and income levels which directly affects the sustainability of the community.

- 4.8 The provision of affordable housing will be welcomed in Kingston, providing it has the clear support of the local community and is occupied as a priority by people with a local connection. There may be scope for a suitable rural exception site to be brought forward to provide up to 100% affordable housing.
- 4.9 In 2016 an housing needs survey eliciting a 74% response rate showed that there were six households in Kingston needing social housing in the next five years and having a local connection. Most of these have found homes and demand on the Devon Home Choice housing list remains fairly stable. Turnover of social housing in the parish from 2013 to 2018 was 1.4 houses per year and of privately-owned housing 14.5%. Indications are this will continue and it seems reasonable to assume that no more than 6-8 new houses will be required during the plan period to 2034 to meet local need. Three new open market homes will already have been completed in the period 2016-2020.

NEW HOUSING

- 4.10 Kingston is in a highly sensitive rural location. However small scale new housing will help to maintain the sustainability of the community, address age imbalance and maintain the viability of services and facilities. Local residents are keen to support new homes, especially affordable homes, for local people who are currently priced out of the open market.
- 4.11 Locals also treasure and want to preserve the small-scale rural character of the village, largely preferring new build to be either single dwellings or small developments. Therefore, to protect and preserve the rural character and small-scale nature of the village, only small sites will be acceptable and new housing should be designed as terraces and semi-detached dwellings to reduce both selling price, land use and adverse impact on the surroundings. Around 55-60% of homes in Kingston are detached houses or bungalows, with 40% being semi-detached or terraces.
- 4.12 In order to address the most pressing housing needs in the parish the plan includes:
1. A requirement that open market housing shall be of smaller homes, particularly 2-bedroom, suitable for young people/first time buyers on low and middle incomes to be able to afford.
 2. A requirement that open market housing diversify the housing mix in the parish through provision of smaller homes built as terraces and semi-detached dwellings, to correct the over provision of detached 3-4 bedroom homes with high land use.
 3. A welcome for some affordable homes for local people who cannot afford to buy or rent on the open market.
 4. A welcome for a suitable small exception site or sites for affordable housing (outside the settlement boundary) which has the support of the local community, meets proven housing need and prioritises people with local connections.
- 4.13 It is also hoped that the design of new homes will incorporate innovative low carbon construction techniques, sustainable use of resources and high energy efficiency.

SITE ASSESSMENTS

- 4.14 In 2017 a call for suitable development sites was made through the village newsletter and Facebook page and by contacting landowners/known developers directly. Sites included were those promoted by local landowners, those already advanced by developers, those identified by the task group and those which had come forward through the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), linked to the JLP. Eleven sites were identified, each outside the settlement boundary, and meetings were held with landowners/developers to ascertain their plans/ideas for these.
- 4.15 There was very significant community opposition to each of the larger sites, both seen as major developments in excess of village housing needs. Concerns about adverse impacts on the AONB, increasing traffic down the narrow lanes into and through the village and inappropriate design which did not address the specific needs of the parish for smaller homes and low land use, were not addressed.
- 4.16 A sites assessment, produced by an independent consultant, rated the appropriateness of each site for development, considering their suitability, availability and viability.
- 4.17 Only three sites were considered acceptable. One of these has since been granted planning permission for a single house. Another has withdrawn an application pending archaeological investigation. The remaining site can only be accessed through the main village which would introduce additional traffic to the narrow street, presenting difficulties to the large farm vehicles which have to pass that way. Both of the latter sites are on raised ground, and their development could affect views across the AONB and to listed buildings.
- 4.18 Following the completion of the site assessment, changes were made to the then emerging JLP to give greater recognition to the importance of the AONB and removing the requirement for Kingston to make any specific development site proposals. Against this backdrop, and given the outcome of the site assessments, this plan does not propose any site allocations, but establishes clear criteria for any new build outside the Settlement Boundary, which must meet a proven local need.
- 4.19 The Plan is not anti-development, but it will only support development based on proven local need, that is the right type of development in the right location, which contributes to our community vision, (2.9), and to sustainable development for the parish.
- 4.20 The plan aims to deliver sustainable development and the continuing evolution of the village, by promoting small scale development on suitable small sites, including exception sites, with an emphasis on smaller and affordable homes, built as terraces and semi-detached dwellings.

POLICY KNP5: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

1. Housing development sites in Kingston shall be limited to single buildings or a small sites in order to ensure that growth is at a scale in keeping with the special qualities of the village and the AONB.
2. To help balance housing stock, new developments should be of smaller units, primarily 2 bedroom, as terraces and semi-detached dwellings
3. Extensions to existing dwellings should be in keeping with and consistent in scale and form to the existing dwelling.
4. Affordable homes for local people will be particularly welcomed, including a suitable exception site or sites.
5. The provision of affordable homes on a suitable exception site or sites in the parish will be welcomed where the site meets proven housing need, is occupied by people with a Local Connection and has the clear support of the local community.
6. New homes shall be designed to meet at least the latest standards, preferably to exceed these, and to incorporate innovative low carbon construction techniques, sustainable use of resources and high energy efficiency.

The community said:

At the Village Drop-In Day, which introduced the development of a Neighbourhood Plan, the vast majority of respondents made clear their view that Kingston should maintain its special character as a rural community in the middle of the South Hams AONB.

However residents were keen to support some new build through infill and smaller developments, especially of affordable property, both low cost and for rent, for local people, who are currently priced out of the open market.

Young families are more likely to afford 2-3 bed properties and priority should be given to these, building up a future stock of smaller homes.

These views were confirmed through a detailed Community Questionnaire, which went to all homes in the parish and elicited an 86% response.

- 61% of 312 people preferred new build to be a mixture of single houses or small developments,
- 51% of 302 people thought priority should be given to 2-bed homes
- 95.5% said all new Housing Association properties should come under the Local Lettings Plan.

Community Questionnaire December 2017.

SECOND HOMES AND HOLIDAY HOMES

- 4.21 Tourism is a major employer in the area and visitors are welcomed to Kingston. It is also recognised, and appreciated, that a small number of second home and holiday let owners do get involved in the community offering some support to village activities and facilities, but this support is limited and intermittent.
- 4.22 However, the high percentage of second homes and holiday lets, 21%, nearly a quarter of available houses in Kingston, has a significant impact on community sustainability, the local housing market and housing affordability. The average across the South Hams is 15%, (2011 Census).
- 4.23 House prices are generally well beyond the reach of local first-time buyers, who are therefore unable to compete in the market and often forced to move away. New 2-3 bedroom housing, designed to be affordable to young families and those on a low or middle income, would make attractive second homes and may therefore fail to meet the needs of the community. Second or holiday homes can help support trades and local businesses, but this is seasonal and does not contribute to the year-round activity and vitality of the community, for example participation in local clubs and societies, regular usage of the Dolphin Inn and the ongoing active support needed to maintain the Reading Room, church and recreation ground, all of which are essential to sustainable village life. The small scale of the village and its isolation from social and leisure amenities, exacerbates this problem, with only 164 homes, remaining as principal residences.
- 4.24 The recent case of R. (on the application of RLT Built Environment) v Cornwall Council and St Ives Town Council (2016) EWHC 2817 (Admin) confirmed that a principal residence requirement on new open market housing is legally enforceable, where it can be shown that further development without the restriction would be unsustainable and that such a requirement would contribute towards sustainable development.
- 4.25 Restricting further growth of second homes and holiday homes across the parish is considered necessary for the economic and social wellbeing of the community as a living village within the South Hams AONB, rather than as a holiday park. The plan addresses this issue by requiring that any new housing be restricted to occupancy as a principal residence. Occupiers of homes with a principal residence condition, if required to do so by South Hams District Council, must be able to prove that they are meeting the obligation or condition. Proof of principal residence could be inclusion on the local electoral register, or being registered for and attending local services (such as healthcare, schools etc).

POLICY KNP6: PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

1. New housing, excluding replacement dwellings or those managed by a registered social landlord, will be supported only where there is a restriction to ensure its occupancy as a principal residence.
2. This must be guaranteed through a planning condition or legal agreement.
3. New unrestricted second or holiday homes will not be supported at any time.
4. Where proposals for the replacement of existing dwellings, by more than the number of dwellings to be demolished, are approved, the additional properties will be subject to a planning condition or legal agreement to ensure occupancy as a principal residence.
5. A principal residence is defined as one occupied as the residents' sole or main residence, where the resident(s) spend the majority of their time when not working away from home, and the condition or obligation on new open market homes will require that they are occupied only as the principal residence of those persons entitled to occupy them.

Key Evidence: Kingston Parish Plan 2007; Housing Needs Survey SHDC 2016; Devon Home Choice housing list; Zoopla Property Archive; Village Drop-In Report; Approved Judgement 2016 Mr Justice Hickinbottom between: The Queen on the application of RLT Built Environment Limited and the Cornwall Council and St Ives Town Council; Community Questionnaire Report 2017; Site Assessment Report 2017; Census 2011, Local housing tenure survey 2018; South Devon AONB Management Plan 2019-24.

The community said:

While recognising the contribution brought by second homes and holiday lets, people feel that overall, they undermine village character and local services.

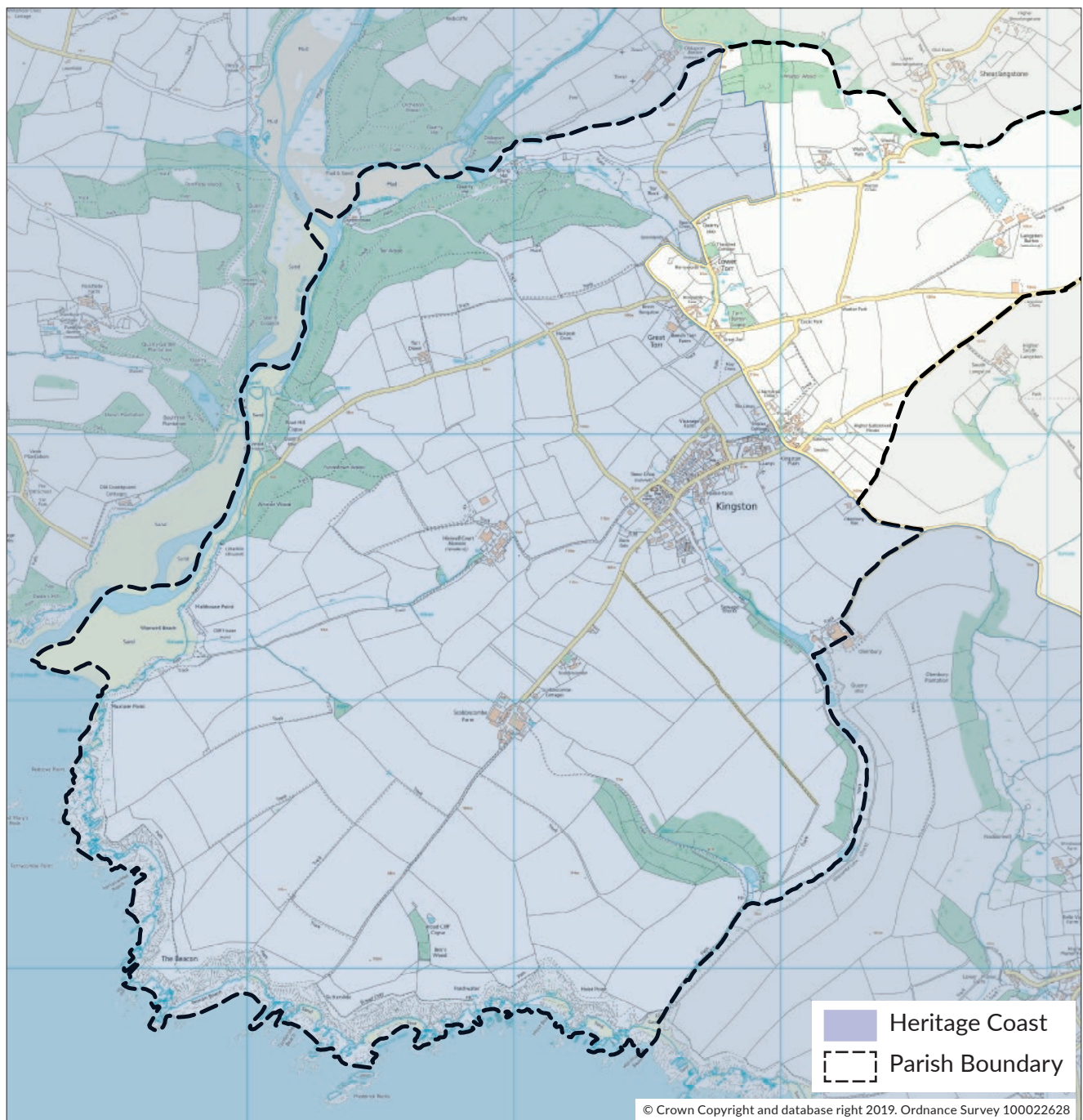
- 64% of 309 people agreed that second homes and holiday lets are undermining local services and village character.
- 49% of 307 people do not agree that second homes and holiday lets help to sustain the village,

Community questionnaire December 2017.

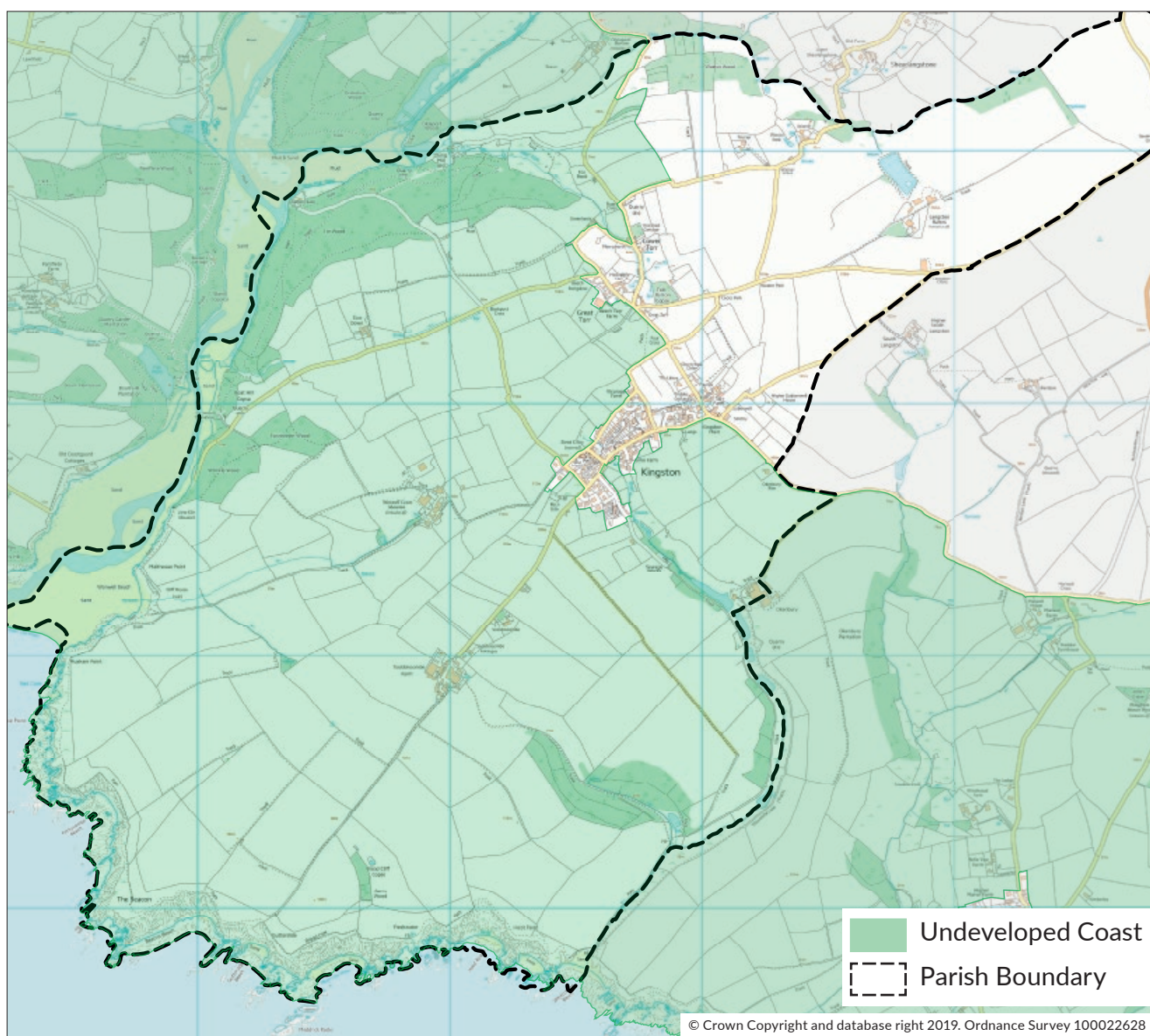
5. Environment and Heritage

COUNTRYSIDE AND COASTLINE

- 5.1 The parish of Kingston lies within the historic landscape of the South Hams of Devon that is highly valued for its productive farms, scenery, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities. The parish includes an exceptional stretch of undeveloped coast.



Heritage Coast boundary

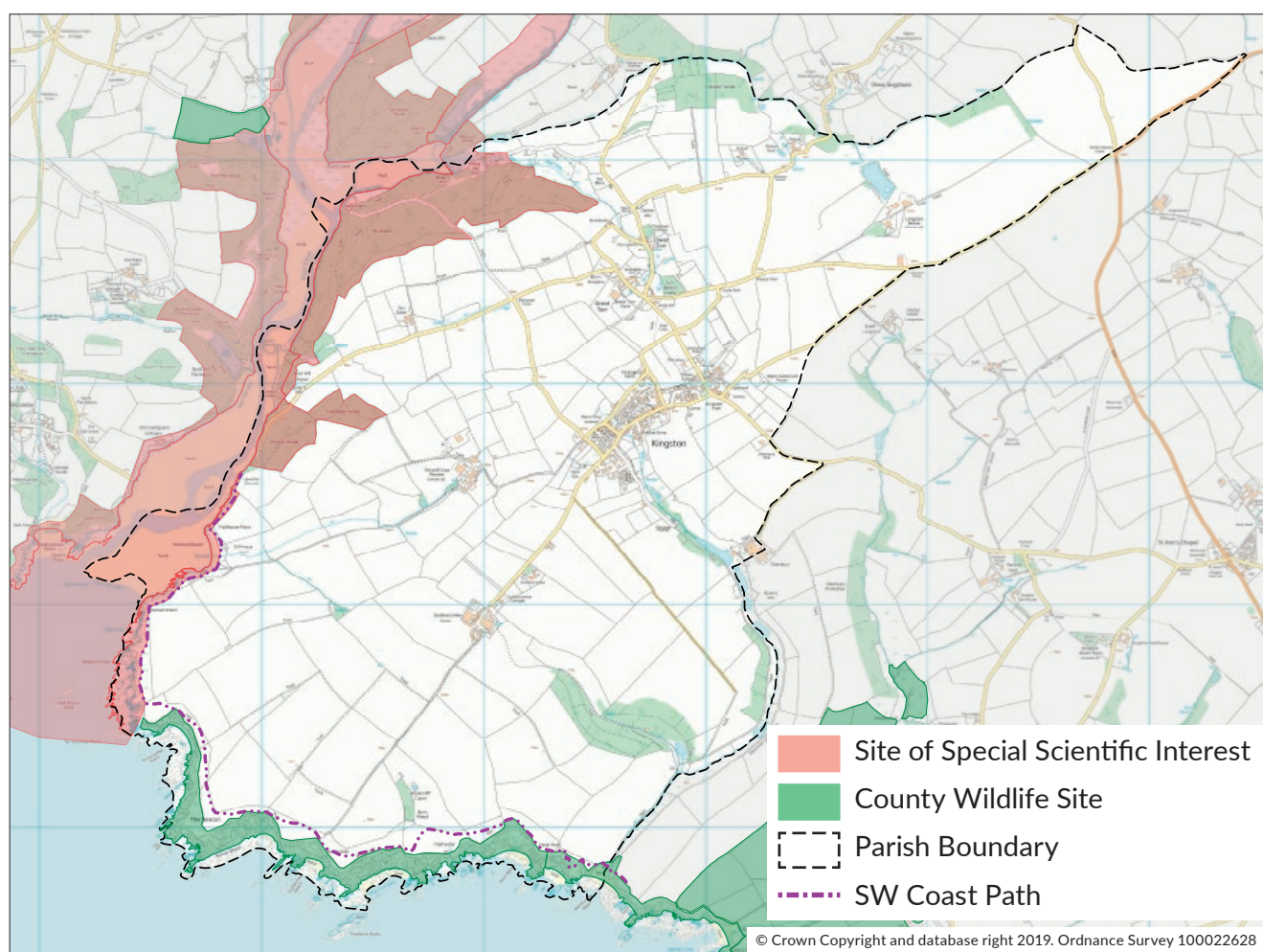


Undeveloped Coast boundary

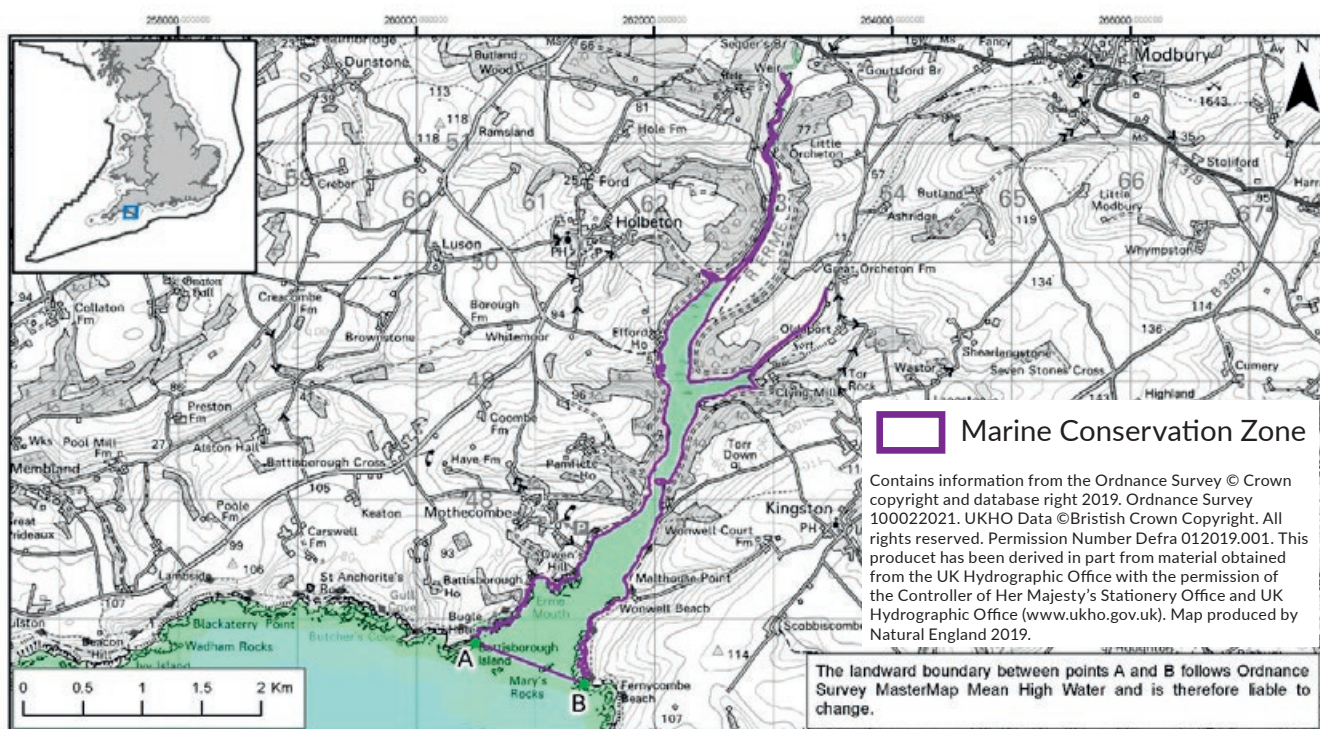
- 5.2 The outstanding agricultural and coastal landscape is highly valued by residents and visitors alike. Key local assets include the River Erme estuary, the cliffs, coves and secluded beaches of the coast, and the mixed farmland with its ancient hedgebanks and sunken lanes.
- 5.3 The high value of the landscape and associated wildlife habitats is reflected in a number of important designations:
- The whole parish lies within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
 - The coastline and much of the parish, including the village, lie within the South Devon Heritage Coast (and the Undeveloped Coast defined in the JLP).
 - Most of the coastal area is a County Wildlife Site and the South West Coast Path runs along its length.
 - The Erme estuary is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and its tidal waters have been designated as a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).



River Erme Estuary



Parish and SSSI boundaries, County Wildlife sites and SW Coast Path



Erme Estuary Marine Conservation Zone boundary

5.4 A report produced by the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre in 2017, found that the parish of Kingston contains representatives of all of the wildlife habitats typical of the South Hams, as well as sites and species of national importance. Highlights of the wildlife resources of the parish include:

- The estuarine, saltmarsh and woodland habitats of the Erme estuary SSSI. These are home to an important breeding bird community and fish nursery. Much of the oak woodland is included in the Devon Ancient Woodland Inventory.
- Over 20 species of wild animals and plants recorded in the parish have Developmental Control Species status, including eleven species of bat.
- A number of ancient trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- The nationally rare cirle bunting is increasingly seen along the coast path, as a result of conservation efforts by the National Trust.
- Most of the parish lies within a Great Crested Newt consultation zone.



5.5 The outstanding countryside and the coastline of the parish have consistently been identified by residents as key elements that make Kingston a special place to live. Throughout the consultation process, the community has confirmed that the countryside and its wildlife are greatly valued and should be preserved and protected.

- 5.6 Farming underpins the local economy and it is important that good quality agricultural land remains in production. The agricultural landscape and coastline make a further significant contribution to the local economy, by attracting visitors and holiday makers who come to enjoy the scenery, wildlife and opportunities for recreation.
- 5.7 Insensitive development could damage these precious local assets and so the plan's policies aim to protect against such harm. In this respect, the plan reflects the requirements of the NPPF to conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs and to protect areas defined as Heritage Coast. It also supports and is consistent with the South Devon AONB Management Plan.
- 5.8 Development must be designed to respect and conserve the landscape and local landscape assets and features must be protected and conserved as an intrinsic part of development. The best and most versatile agricultural land, especially that classified as grade 1,2 and 3a, should also be protected.
- 5.9 Devon hedgebanks are a particular landscape asset of the parish and a special quality of the AONB. Although many hedges were removed in the 20th century in response to changing agricultural practices, many remain and mark the boundaries of the ancient field system of the parish. Almost all of the remaining hedges can be traced as field boundaries on the 1839 Tithe Map of Kingston, showing how old they are. See: (<https://new.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/tithe-map/kingston/>). Hedges that were part of a field system that existed before 1845 (ie are shown on the Tithe Map) are classified as 'important' under The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 and should be protected.



POLICY KNP7: PROTECTING THE LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY

Development, either individually or cumulatively, shall not harm but should conserve and enhance the landscape and biodiversity by:

1. having regard to national and local strategic policies for the AONB, the coast and protected landscapes, and to the South Devon AONB Planning Guidance;
 2. having regard to national and local strategic policies for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), wildlife, species and habitats;
 3. conserving the skyline and important views, including those identified in Appendix IV;
 4. safeguarding and conserving local features that make a positive contribution to the landscape, particularly Devon lanes and hedgebanks, green lanes, green spaces and important trees;
 5. retaining and not harming any ancient Devon lane, hedge, hedgebank or green lane, which is shown in the 1839 Kingston Tithe Map, apart from essential minor works: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/tithe-map/kingston/>; and
 6. retaining and preserving important trees, including all those subject to Tree Preservation Orders and those identified in the plan at Appendix II.
- 5.10 The residents of Kingston have consistently identified the estuary, beaches, cliffs and open coast as the 'jewels in the crown' of the parish environment. 98% of respondents to the questionnaire valued the estuary and open coast 'highly' and these were repeatedly flagged in the drop-in sessions as features that make Kingston a great place to live.
- 5.11 The unspoilt coast, with its superb opportunities for recreation and quiet relaxation, is undoubtedly the main draw that attracts visitors to the area and its protection is vital to the local tourist economy.
- 5.12 The Kingston (eastern) side of the estuary is particularly tranquil and the absence of any car park or other facilities (eg. shops, toilets, camp sites, cafes) undoubtedly contributes to the sense of unspoilt calm. Vehicle access from the village is down a narrow single-track lane from Blackpost Cross to Wonwell. There should be no development that compromises the existing character of the estuary or increases road traffic down this access lane.
- 5.13 No development should affect coastal and estuary views and this is likely to preclude development within a corridor approximately 500m inland of the Ordnance Survey mean high tide level. Any development proposal close to the coast should be supported by a landscape / topographical analysis to prove that what is proposed will not affect views from the coast path or from the navigable waters of the estuary (Note: this requirement also applies to proposals for renewable energy – see Policy KNP4).
- 5.14 The views of residents and visitors, and this neighbourhood plan, are entirely consistent with the objectives and policies of the South Devon AONB Management Plan (2019 – 2024), which identifies the '*fine, undeveloped, wild and rugged coastline*' and '*iconic wide, unspoilt and expansive panoramic views*' as special qualities of the AONB. A number of Management Plan policies focus on conserving and enhancing the coastline, including:
- **Policy Lan/P6 Seascape** - The open undeveloped seascape seen from the coast forms a defining setting for the South Devon AONB; the long uninterrupted views, wild character and natural horizons will be protected and sustained.
 - **Mar/P1 Coastal character** - The tranquil and undeveloped character of the coast will be protected.

POLICY KNP8: PROTECTING THE ERME ESTUARY SSSI AND THE COAST

1. In addition to the protection afforded by national and local strategic policies, proposals for the development of any new building, track or road, vehicle park, communications mast/dish, wind or solar panel array will not be permitted within the boundary of the Erme Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest.
 2. Development should not affect the existing tranquillity of the estuary or result in an increase in traffic along the Blackpost Cross to Wonwell beach lane.
 3. Development close to the coast will not be permitted unless it can be shown, using accepted landscape analysis technique, that the proposal will not affect views from the coast path or from the navigable waters of the Erme estuary.
- 5.15 The Plan seeks to protect valuable agricultural land classified as Good Quality (Grade 3a) and above, which contributes to the sustainability of the area given the importance of farming to the economy of Kingston and the contribution of the surrounding farmland to the village's setting.
- 5.16 Planning applications for development of agricultural land may need to include an updated survey of land quality in accordance with current guidelines, (conforms with NPPF 170).

POLICY KNP9: PROTECTING AGRICULTURAL LAND

Development should, wherever possible, avoid building on good quality agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a) and, unless there is no practicable alternative and the benefits of the development to the community outweigh the need to protect it, also on grade 3b agricultural land.

Key Evidence: South Devon AONB Management Plan 2019-2024; Kingston Plan Area Character Assessment; Devon Biodiversity Records Centre Wildlife site resource map and species information report for Kingston. Report on village 'Drop In' Day; Report on 'Young Kingston' Drop-In sessions; Questionnaire Survey Report.

The community said:

The Erme estuary, cliffs and beaches are especially prized by both residents and visitors.

- 99% of 320 people stated that they value these features 'highly'.
- 93% also 'highly' rated the wild flowers, birds and other wild animals of the parish.

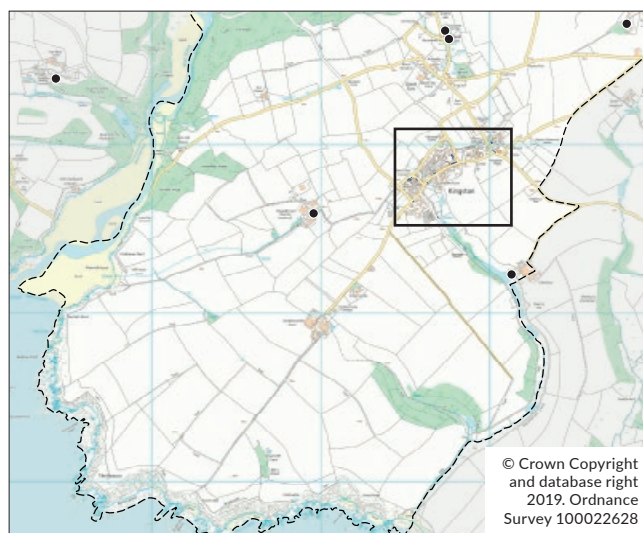
Community questionnaire December 2017



Conservation Areas

HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

- 5.17 Kingston is a very attractive parish with a long and rich history. This local heritage underpins the parish's identity, with the historic village fabric set amongst ancient farmland that contains a range of archaeological features and artefacts.
- 5.18 A variety of local features combines to create Kingston's distinctive local character, some of these features are officially designated and enjoy strong legal protection. These include:
- Two Conservation Areas in the village centre
 - Twenty-three Listed buildings and other features across the parish (including St James the Less Church, the Dolphin Inn, the War Memorial, several farms and several thatched properties)
 - A Registered Park and Garden at Flete (partially within the parish)
- 5.19 A range of archaeological finds and other historic features around the parish has been designated with a Monument UID (Unique Identifier) by Historic England, but these lack clear legal protection.
- 5.20 A variety of other non-designated heritage assets, that make a positive contribution to the special character of the parish, has no official designation whatsoever. These assets include: the Gabberwell, the cobbled access to the back gate of the St James the Less Church and Vicarage Lane Steps. Further information and maps are given in Appendix 1.



Listed buildings in the village (left) and the parish (right)

- 5.21 The plan aims to safeguard Kingston's historic and architectural character for present and future generations. It recognises the value of local heritage assets, both designated and un-designated, and seeks to protect and enhance them. The identification of heritage assets has been guided by and is consistent with the latest advice provided by Historic England.

POLICY KNP10: HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

1. Development shall not harm but conserve and enhance designated and non-designated historic and heritage assets and their settings, including archaeological features and historic field boundaries and structures, particularly, but not exclusively in the Conservation Areas. Non - designated heritage assets are described at Appendix 1.
2. Development at, or adjacent to, a Listed building or feature should have no adverse impact upon it and will be supported only where the design respects the Listed building or feature and its setting with regard to scale, height, massing, alignment and use of appropriate materials. Development shall retain the spaces between buildings, the grouping of buildings and the elements of the landscape and/or street-scene which form the setting of Listed buildings and features.
3. Development in the Conservation Areas must preserve or enhance the special character of the area and be designed to respond to existing scale, height, form and massing, respecting the traditional street-scene and pattern of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, detailing and materials. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Areas.

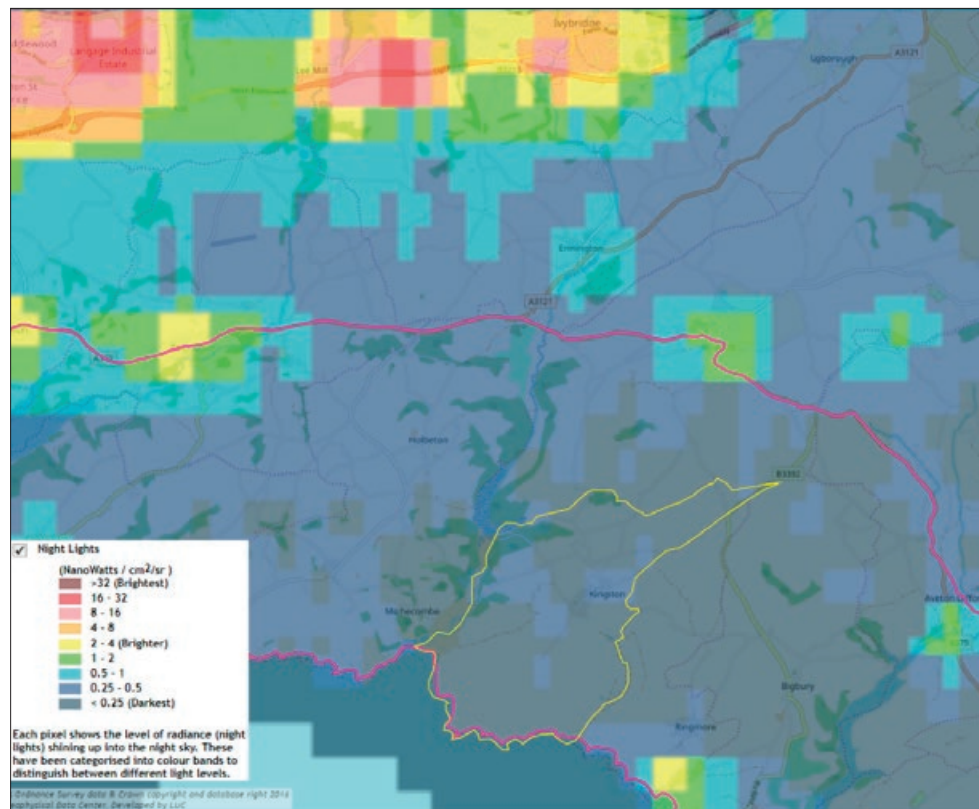
Key Evidence: Kingston Plan Area Character Assessment; Report on village 'Drop In' Day; Questionnaire Survey Report; Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment HEAN11 (Historic England).

The community said:

The need to protect the unique character of Kingston, is a recurring theme that has emerged from the community drop-in event and questionnaire responses. People greatly value the sense of place and continuity which comes from being part of a long, on-going history. A significant majority of respondents to the Community questionnaire 'highly' valued the historic buildings and cultural features of the parish. There is also considerable support for extending, and possibly combining, the village Conservation Areas, with over 40 comments and suggestions received on this topic.

DARK SKIES AND TRANQUILLITY

- 5.22 Kingston is a quiet and tranquil place with little to disturb the peace apart from the increasing traffic, especially during holiday periods. There are no street lights in the village and few other sources of light pollution and the parish affords residents and visitors good views of the night sky.
- 5.23 The Institute of Lighting Professionals notes that 'obtrusive light', or light pollution can present serious physiological and ecological problems. *'Obtrusive light, whether it keeps you awake through a bedroom window or impedes your view of the night sky, is a form of pollution, which may be a nuisance in law and which can be substantially reduced without detriment to the lighting task'*. Artificial light has, since 2006, been on the list of possible Statutory Nuisances in England, Wales and Scotland. Not only a nuisance it can waste money and energy.
- 5.24 Artificial light affects the behaviour (such as foraging, roosting and drinking) and safety from predation of many species, but most importantly of the eleven species of bat that have been recorded in Kingston.
- 5.25 The Management Plan for the South Hams AONB 2019-2024 notes a key policy objective to maintain and where practicable enhance levels of tranquillity throughout the AONB and specifically to protect against night time scenic intrusion from external lighting.
- 5.26 The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) advises that AONBs should be "Intrinsically dark" and as such, lighting installations should emit no upward light at any time and be turned off after 2300 hrs.



CPRE Dark Skies map of Kingston and surrounding area

- 5.27 The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) uses satellite imaging to measure and map the UK's night skies. The results show that Kingston has an unusually low level of light pollution and distinctively dark night skies. The Plan seeks to maintain and enhance this unique feature of the parish.
- 5.28 'Dark night skies', 'No street lighting', 'Quiet and tranquillity' were repeatedly flagged at the village drop-in event as elements of what is good about Kingston at the village drop-in event. The plan aims to protect these aspects of life in Kingston. Development involving street lighting, over bright and poorly controlled security and external/ driveway lights, large areas of glazing or significantly increased traffic volumes could cause serious harm and the plan requires that development shall not include such aspects.

POLICY KNP11: DARK SKIES AND TRANQUILLITY

Development shall not cause any undue disturbance, noise or light pollution.

1. There shall be no street lights in the parish.
2. Proposals for any necessary external lighting should comply with the current guidelines established for the South Devon AONB and for other Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty by the Institution of Lighting Professionals.
3. Security and external lighting installed as part of any development shall not be permanently switched on, (be normally switched off at 23.00hrs), or unnecessarily bright, (i.e. above 800 lumens.)

Key Evidence: Kingston Plan Area Character Assessment; Report on village 'Drop In' Day; Questionnaire Survey Report, Bats and artificial lighting GN08:2018 by ILP, Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011 by ILP; Management Plan for the South Devon AONB 2019-2024: CPRE maps of light pollution and night skies: www.nightblight.cpre.org

The community said:

- 'Dark night skies', 'No street lighting', 'Quiet and tranquillity' were repeatedly flagged as elements of what is good about Kingston at the village drop-in event September 2016.
- 93% of 320 people valued Dark Night Skies 'highly',

Community Questionnaire December 2017.

6. Community amenities



Recreation Ground - showing the play area

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 6.1 Kingston is a very attractive place to live but has relatively few local facilities. The village school, shop and post office all closed some years ago and the parish is poorly served by public transport. There exists, however, a strong self-help ethos and residents have worked hard to improve and maintain the Reading Room, the Grade2* St James the Less Parish Church and the Recreation Ground. The Dolphin Inn is a registered Asset of Community Value.
- 6.2 The plan aims to safeguard local facilities for present and future generations. Their retention and prosperity are important to local well-being. St James the Less Church, the Dolphin Inn, the Reading Room, the volunteer fire station and Recreation Ground are highly valued.



Annual Funday on the Recreation Ground

- 6.3 Any new local facilities and services will be welcomed and the plan promotes improvements to meet local needs, particularly including:
- minimising the burden on the sewage treatment system through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems and alternative technologies for treating foul sewage;
 - additional car parking to meet the needs of visitors to the coast path;
 - improved public and community transport;
 - facilities for young people, children and families;
 - provision for the needs of the elderly or vulnerable; and
 - a review of the village Conservation Areas with a view to their extension.
- 6.4 A Community Action Plan accompanies the plan to both support and encourage village groups and committees to take relevant activities forward.
- 6.5 All roads in the parish are small country lanes, many are single track and some, including in the village itself, are very narrow indeed. Poor driving with insufficient concern for pedestrians, especially children and older people is a concern and there are times when the village is surprisingly congested, particularly in the holiday periods when visitor parking adds to the difficulties. A traffic survey carried out by Devon Highways did not find any evidence to support a 20mph limit.
- 6.6 The village is poorly served by public transport. There is a single weekly bus service which runs once to Plymouth and back on Fridays, lifts to medical appointments can be booked through a local charity and a very limited shared community taxi service (Fare Car) is available to Kingsbridge and Ivybridge. Any improvements in services or local initiatives for community transport or car sharing will be welcome.
- 6.7 There have been no appraisals or management plans prepared for the two Kingston Conservation Areas since they were established in the 1960s. This plan recognises the depth of local support for protecting and possibly extending the Conservation Areas, and that review of the Conservation Areas is long overdue. Any proposals for undertaking such a review will therefore be supported.

The community said:

- 12% of 325 people reported a health problem/disability which affects their day to day living. 53.8% of 329 people are aged 60 and over. (40% in 2011 Census)
- 39% of 321 people have lived in the parish for more than 20 years.
- 20% of 317 people would use both Saturday link bus to Modbury and a bus to Ivybridge for shopping and/or onward travel on a weekly or monthly basis.

Community questionnaire December 2017.

The Children's questionnaire, December 2017, identified a lack of swings for older children on the Recreation Ground. The young people in the village, supported by private donations, raised half the cost, which was then matched by the Parish Council. An exciting double swing was installed in May 2018.

POLICY KNP12: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Development that will support the vibrancy and vitality of the village and wider community will be supported provided it complies with national and local strategic policies and the other policies of this plan.
2. Proposals for additional community facilities and infrastructure will be supported, providing they include appropriate design, adequate access and parking arrangements and will not lead to traffic danger or congestion or generate unacceptable noise, smell, loss of privacy or nuisance to neighbours.
3. The following priorities for the provision or enhancement of local facilities have been identified: improved sewage treatment capacity, additional public car parking, improved facilities for young people, children and families; and provision for the elderly and/or vulnerable. New development where appropriate will be required during the life of the plan and where the requirement arises directly from any proposed development, should contribute to these priorities through a S106 obligation or Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL), in accordance with adopted standards.
4. In order to help safeguard the sustainability of the local community, development that would result in the loss of or significant harm to a local community facility or asset, particularly St James the Less Parish Church, the Dolphin Inn, the Reading Room, the Recreation Ground and the Allotments will not be permitted unless there is adequate alternative provision in the parish or it can be shown that the facility is no longer viable.

OPEN SPACES

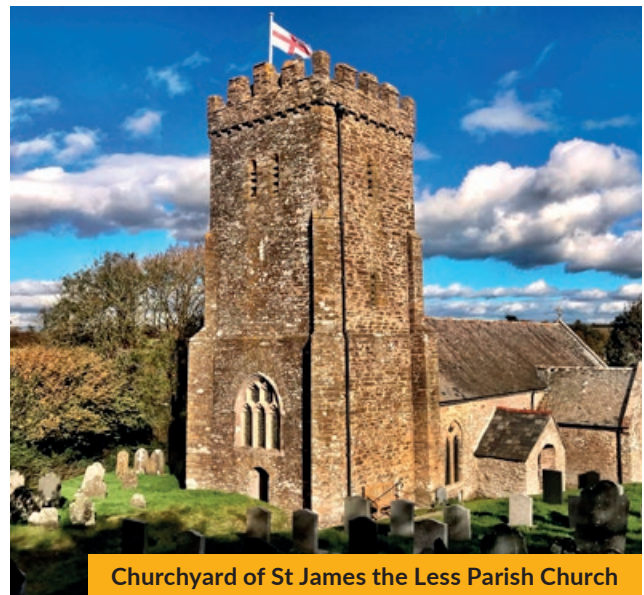
- 6.8 Local green spaces provide valuable opportunities for access and recreation and are highly valued by the local community. In 2005 the De Mulder family dedicated two acres of Middle and Lower Townsend Park, (linking Lower Road, Long Lane and Scobbiscombe Lane) as open access land through an Access Agreement under Part 1 of the CROW Act 2000, as stated in a section 16(1) Dedication Instrument. The dedication is irrevocable and binds successive owners and occupiers. The space is subject to CROW access rights, but the dedication instrument specifically provides for access to the land on horseback or pedal bicycle.
- 6.9 This plan protects the most important of the other open spaces in the parish. Only development necessary to improve their enjoyment by the general public will be permitted.
- 6.10 All the designated spaces are highly valued by the local community and conform to the following criteria:
- they are in close proximity to the main village;
 - they are special and/or hold a particular significance to the local community because of their historic significance; recreational value; tranquillity or richness of wildlife; and
 - they are locally situated and not an extensive tract of land.

All are capable of being managed and protected beyond the plan period. Further details and maps are given in Appendix III.

POLICY KNP13: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

1. The following areas are designated as green spaces in the plan:
 - the Recreation Ground,
 - the churchyard of St James the Less,
 - the allotments,
 - the entrance to Westentown
 - the open area south of Morgan's Row.
2. These local green spaces, (described in Appendix III), will be safeguarded from development. Any development that would result in the loss of any part of these green spaces or that results in any harm to their character, setting, accessibility, appearance, general quality or amenity value will not be permitted. Only minor non-residential development directly associated with and necessary for the public enjoyment of the green space will be permitted.

Key evidence: Drop-in Report; Community Questionnaire, PC traffic surveys; NPPF Section 100; SHDC Green Space Assessment Criteria; Children's Questionnaire.



7. Business and Employment

LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 7.1 The limited local employment in Kingston is mainly provided by the Dolphin Inn, local farms, servicing and maintenance of holiday properties and servicing residents' homes. The 2011 census shows 61% of the population to be economically active with 21% self-employed.
- 7.2 The Community Questionnaire identified 48 businesses run in or from Kingston, 9 of which employed others. Many workers commute out of the parish to their workplaces, as is common in rural areas, but the 2011 Census and the Community Questionnaire show that 28% work from home or in the parish. A further 27% commute within the South Hams, but only 12% commute to Plymouth and 16% to elsewhere in Devon.
- 7.3 The plan aims to foster conditions for local economic prosperity and business growth in scale and keeping with the area, geared to meeting local needs for services and employment and with particular emphasis on improved electronic communications infrastructure.
- 7.4 There is a number of farm buildings in the parish that are no longer used and many are falling into disrepair as they are no longer suitable for modern farming practice. New business development which uses these buildings will be encouraged, where it is in keeping with the surroundings and the existing structure is maintained. There should be minimal alteration to any building or its footprint.
- 7.5 Consents granted to farmers who apply for conversion of farm/rural buildings to holiday accommodation specifically, must be subject to a condition limiting the use to holiday accommodation. If they subsequently wish to convert the holiday accommodation to general residential use then this would require separate planning permission and if that change of use were deemed acceptable a principal residence condition would apply.

POLICY KNP14: NEW BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

- 1. New business development will be welcomed providing it will:
 - a. be in keeping with the locality, causing no harm to local character and amenity;
 - b. not increase traffic through the village centre;
 - c. provide safe access from the existing highway and incorporate sufficient parking for employees and delivery vehicles; and
 - d. cause no nuisance to neighbours, particularly in cases of home working or home-based business.
- 2. Change of use of redundant farm buildings to other employment uses will be supported where these will provide additional ongoing businesses and employment opportunities and will:
 - a. involve no more than minimal alteration to the existing structure or building footprint;
 - b. not compromise the rural setting of the building; and
 - c. meet the requirements of clause 1 above.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS, BROADBAND AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- 7.6 Kingston has good mobile phone coverage and the great majority of the parish also enjoys superfast broadband connectivity. The plan aims to build on this, helping to redress business disadvantages faced in a rural area by securing good broadband and telecommunications infrastructure in association with new development and by encouraging improvements to connections in those parts of the parish that are less well served.
- 7.7 Broadband provision to the village was upgraded to provide speeds up to 72Mbps by BT Openreach in January 2016. At the time of the questionnaire in September 2017, 89 households had upgraded and 73 had not. 10 households said they were outside the main village with no access to the faster service.

POLICY KNP15: BROADBAND AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Proposals to expand electronic communications and broadband are encouraged and will be supported providing:
 - a. apparatus is erected on existing buildings or structures wherever possible;
 - b. apparatus is kept to the minimum necessary for efficient operation; and
 - c. apparatus is sited to minimise impacts on the AONB.
2. Proposals for housing must include a Connectivity Statement and provide for suitable ducting to enable service providers to install appropriate connections.

Key evidence: Community Questionnaire; Census 2011; South Devon AONB Management Plan.

The community said:

- 40% of 260 people agreed there was a need for employment opportunities in Kingston
- Individual comments in the Community questionnaire indicate support for some local employment to support local people: 'more local jobs -', 'build small work units', 'encourage small scale enterprise from home'

8. Delivery and Monitoring

- 8.1 Many of the plan's proposals will happen only with private sector investment, but this does not remove Devon County, South Hams District and Kingston Parish Councils or other public bodies from their responsibilities for infrastructure and services. The plan's policies aim to steer and shape development, but it is expected that developer contributions will be gathered through S106 agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL), or similar order to address any specific mitigation required and to offset the broader impacts of any new development.
- 8.2 The policies of this plan and the JLP are complementary, together providing a firm platform for all parties to cooperate in promoting, enabling and delivering beneficial developments and improvements of all kinds. Conformity between plans will be key to unlocking funds to support this plan's delivery, and it is hoped that Devon County, South Hams District and Kingston Parish Councils will take a proactive role in this regard.
- 8.3 Once the Neighbourhood Plan is formally adopted by South Hams Council it will become part of the local development plan. This means that it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Council will therefore assess development proposals against the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan alongside the JLP and any related implementation plan to ensure that the aspirations of the community are being met.
- 8.4 Monitoring may require the plan to be reviewed in due course to keep it up-to-date and relevant. A monitoring framework has been prepared to help judge the effectiveness of the plan's policies. Any formal amendments to the plan will have to follow a similar process as was used to prepare the original plan.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets

Appendix II: Notable non-designated trees

Appendix III: Local Green Space

Appendix IV: Distinctive skylines and views

Appendix V: Submission Documents

Appendix I: Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets

Many of the heritage assets in the parish of Kingston have been officially designated and may also enjoy some measure of statutory protection. These include listed buildings and other features that have been assigned a Monument UID (Unique Identifier) by Historic England. These assets are recorded in the National Heritage List for England (see: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>)

There are a number of features within the parish that have no official designation but which are, nevertheless, special to the community. These features also merit protection through the planning process.

POLICY KNP10 (Heritage and Conservation) seeks to protect the following non-designated heritage assets from harm. These assets have been selected following consultation with the community and drawing on the guidance provided by Historic England. Key criteria used in selecting the assets have been:

- age and rarity, for example reflecting distinctive local characteristics or building traditions;
- aesthetic interest;
- archaeological and archival interest;
- landmark status, e.g. has strong communal or historical associations;
- Social and communal value of the asset, e.g. places perceived as a source of local identity, distinctiveness and coherence.

Cobbled access area to the back gate of the Parish Church of St James the Less (SX 635477)

This area is one of the traditional access points to the churchyard and church. It is almost certain that this access has been used by worshippers and for christenings, weddings and funerals for hundreds of years.



Cobbled path to west gate of the Parish Church of St James the Less

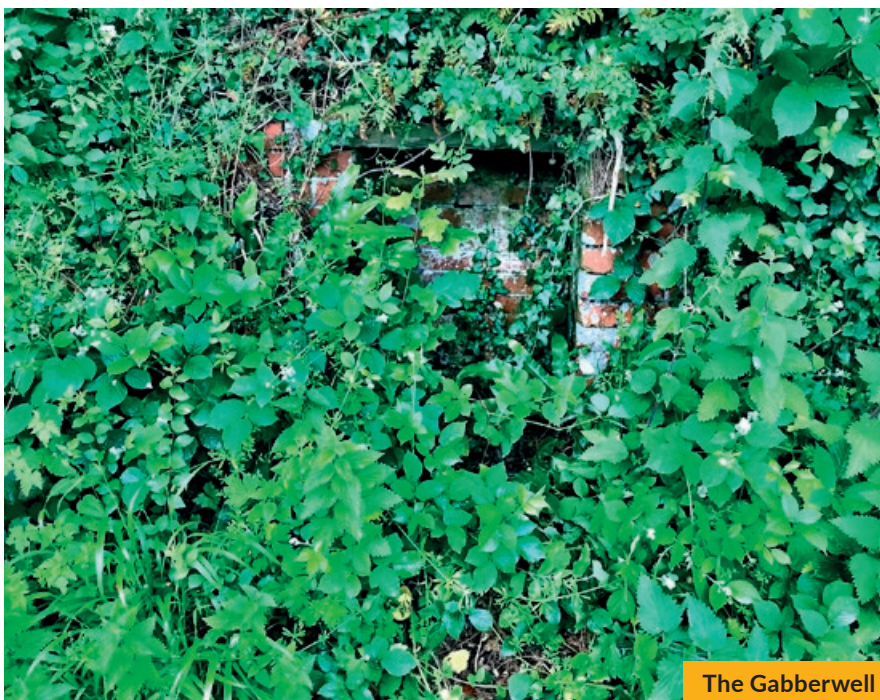
The cobbled surface and other stonework are undoubtedly very old and should be considered as an integral part of the ancient fabric of the church and churchyard.

The legal ownership of this piece of land cannot be determined, but in the widest sense it belongs to the community.

The Gabberwell (SX 642481)

Kingston was served by a number of public wells. Before the arrival of mains water (as recently as the late 1940s) these were vital in sustaining day-to-day life in the community by providing good quality water for drinking, cooking and cleaning. A number of the wells were in active use up until and beyond the Second World War.

One such well, the Butterwell, has Grade II listed status because of its good state of preservation in the centre of the village and, as stated in the listing: *'this is an interesting reminder of the earlier life of the village'*.



The Gabberwell

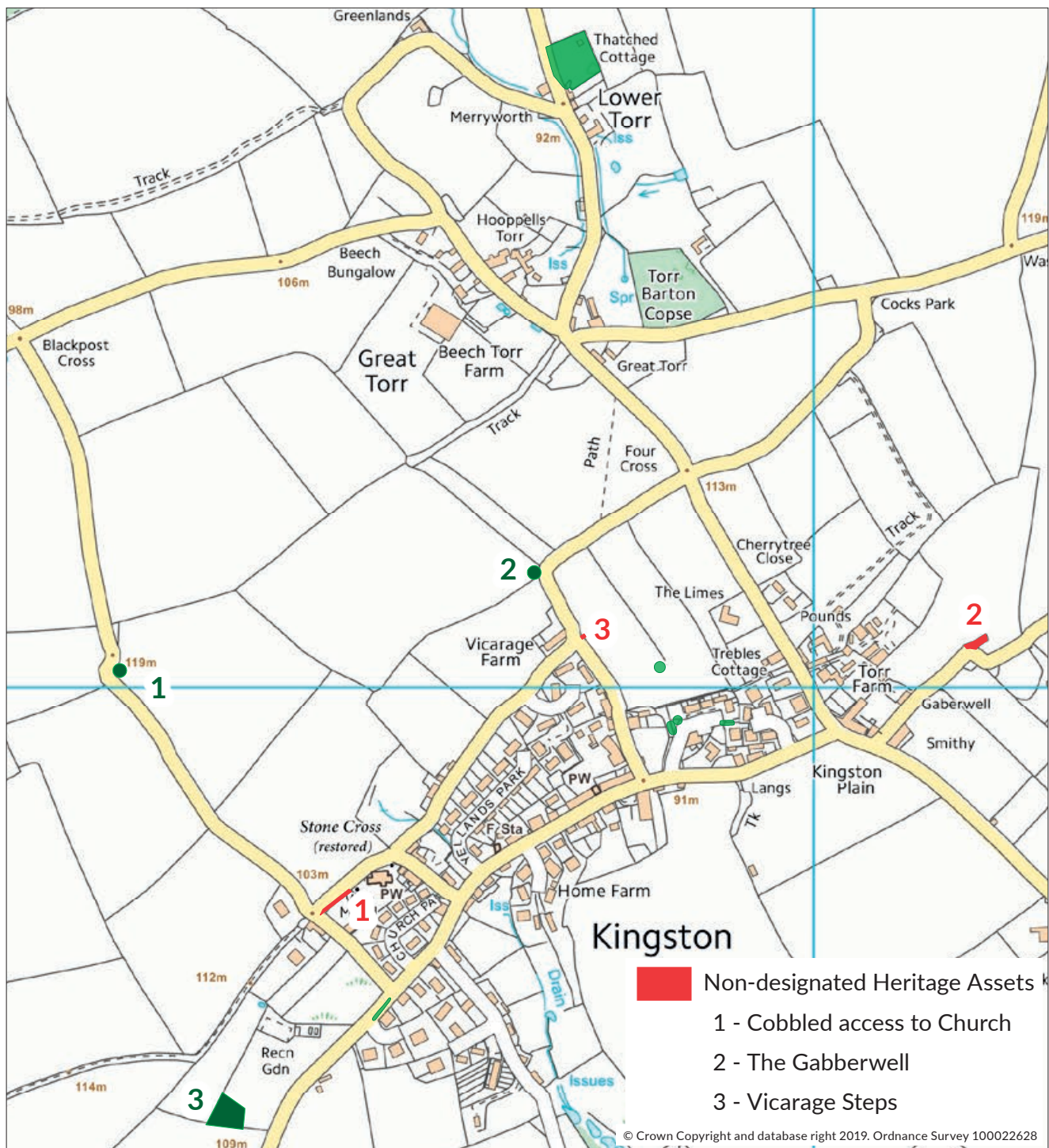
The Gabberwell is a substantial well situated on the eastern edge of the village. The well had an imposing structure (now dilapidated) and was undoubtedly an important source of water. This is reflected in the naming of this corner of the village ('Gabberwell') and adjacent dwellings ('Gabberwell Cottages'). This well, therefore, has strong communal and historical associations and should be protected.

Vicarage Steps (SX 637481)

An ancient footpath, possibly of Saxon origin, helps to connect one end of the village (Kingston Plain) with the Parish Church and Dolphin Inn. This footpath drops down a steep bank into the lane opposite Vicarage Farm via a set of substantial stone steps. Although the steps have been refurbished in modern times, they are known to be of very considerable age. The footpath and steps are still in daily use by villagers, as they probably have been for hundreds of years.



Vicarage Steps



Non designated Heritage Assets, Special Trees and TPO trees

Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 1 - Cobbled access to Church
- 2 - The Gabberwell
- 3 - Vicarage Steps

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

Kingston Special Trees

- 1 - The Lone Pine
- 2 - Ancient Ash
- 3 - Recreation Ground Copse



Appendix II: Notable non-designated trees

Several special trees in Kingston parish are protected by statutory Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Certain other trees, which may not satisfy the strict TPO criteria, are also distinctive or important to the community.

POLICY KNP7 (Protecting the Landscape and Biodiversity) seeks to preserve these non-designated trees from development impacts. These trees have been selected following consultation with the community and drawing on the experience and guidance of the parish Tree Wardens.

Tree	Location
1. The Lone Pine Tree at Headless (Pinus sylvestris) and surrounding copse	Halfway along the lane between Wonwell Gate and Blackpost Cross. SX 632480
2. Ancient Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	On the corner of the lane leading to the church 200m west of Four Cross. SX 637481
3. Recreation ground copse (various species)	On the western edge of the Recreation Ground. SX 63347

1. The Lone Pine Tree at Headless

This tree is a distinctive landscape feature that sits on the skyline above the village. It has become an emblem of the village and a silhouette of the tree is widely used as a badge on Kingston Parish publications and on the village web-sites.

2. Ancient Ash

A superb old tree that sits above the village and is a prominent landmark entering the village on the direct route from Four Cross to the church. Reputed to have been an ancient meeting point for village residents.

3. Recreation Ground copse.

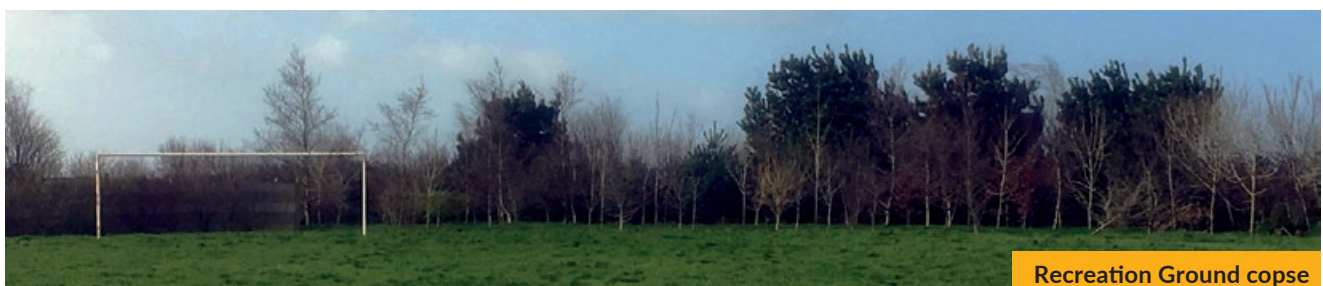
A recent planting, 2010, by the community with high amenity value. Regularly monitored through the Recreation Ground Parish Council Sub-committee and maintained with support from community volunteers.



The Lone Pine Tree



Ancient Ash



Recreation Ground copse

Appendix III: Local Green Space

POLICY KNP13 (Local Green Space) seeks to protect a number of green spaces for the continued benefit of the community. These Green Spaces have been identified through consultation with the community, and have been assessed for their suitability using the assessment criteria suggested by South Hams District Council (consistent with Section 100 of the NPPF):

Green Space Assessment conditions:

- 1. Does the green space have existing planning permission?**
(LGS will rarely be appropriate for land which has planning permission)
- 2. Is it already designated?**
(For example: SSSI, Registered Common Land, Local Nature Reserve, etc. If so, need to make a case for what additional benefit an LGS designation would have)
- 3. Size limits.**
(Sites should be 'local in character and not an extensive tract of land')
- 4. Is it shown to be of local significance?**
(Is there a convincing case on the grounds of beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity and/or richness of wildlife?)
- 5. Is it local in character and close to the local population?**
(Typically, should be within easy walking distance. Note that public access is not a prerequisite for designation, e.g. if value is for historic significance, wildlife or beauty)
- 6. The LGS must be capable of lasting beyond the Joint Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan period**
(Is there evidence that the space will be protected and managed into the future, e.g. via a Management Plan or Friends of Group)

The results of this assessment are shown in the table below, for the sites that have been selected for designation as Local Green Space. This is followed by supplementary information about each site.

	Criteria:						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
SELECTED GREEN SPACES	Existing Planning Permission	Already designated	Size	Local significance	Walking distance	Capable of lasting	CONCLUSION
1. Recreation Ground	NO	NO	OK	YES	YES	YES	Meets all criteria
2. Churchyard of St James the Less	NO	NO	OK	YES	YES	YES	Meets all criteria
3. Allotments	NO	NO	OK	YES	YES	YES	Meets all criteria
4. Open area to the south of Morgan's Row	NO	NO	OK	YES	YES	YES	Meets all criteria
5. Entrance to Westentown	NO	NO	OK	YES	YES	YES	Meets all criteria



Local Green Spaces

1. Recreation Ground (SX 634476)

2.5 acres of land were gifted to the parish in 1953 by the Honourable Helen W. White of Mothecombe, for recreational use. The field now includes a sports pitch, skate park, fenced children's play-area, zip wire and extensive play equipment for older children, as well as a copse planted by local families and several individual trees. This is a highly valued space used regularly by all sections of the community for a variety of recreational activities. It is also the focus for important community events such as the annual Kingston Fun Day.

2. Churchyard of St James the Less (SX 635478)

The churchyard is a very significant area at the heart of the village, with emotional connections for many families. It contains Kingston War Memorial and the restored remains of a medieval preaching cross, both Grade II listed. On rising ground and surrounding the Grade II* listed church, it also makes a strong contribution to the visual and historic character of the centre of the village. The Kingston Parochial Church Council and the Diocese of Exeter both support Green Space listing.

3. Allotments (SX 635477)

The allotments, owned by the Parish Council on behalf of the parish, are well used by many families in the community especially those who do not have access to sufficient land of their own for growing vegetables, fruit and flowers. The allotments are also an important point of social focus within the community and are a visually attractive part of the village centre.

4. Open area to the south of Morgan's Row (SX 638479)

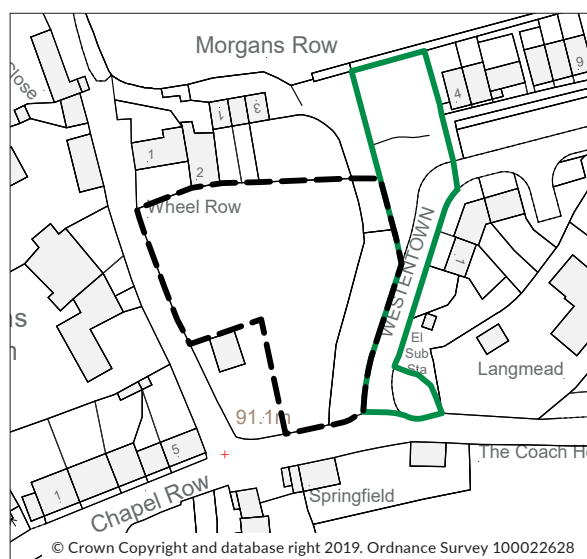
This area of land was traditionally the site of the village allotments and was known as 'Coytes Hay' or 'Cuthay'. It is now a private garden and there is no public access. It represents, nevertheless, an important open space within one of the village Conservation Areas and undoubtedly contributes to its character.

The SHDC Saved Policy: South Hams Local Plan 1989 – 2001. Part 5: Modbury Area MP11: Kingston, states:

'The open area to the south of Morgan's Row, shown as a Policy Area on the Proposals Map, Inset M9, should be retained as open space in order to maintain the contribution it makes to the visual character of the area.'

5. Entrance to Westentown (SX 639479)

The green area at the entrance to the Westentown cul de sac, including the grassed areas on either side of the road entrance extending into the grassed area at the entrance to Vicarage Park field which includes three TPO protected trees and ancient hedgerow. Westentown has been designed for young families and as a cul-de-sac these grassed areas allow excellent visibility for vehicles and provide a safe play area for children.



South Hams Policy Area to the south of Morgan's Row and entrance to Westentown



Allotments in the field called Cuthay with Robins Farm and Morgans Row beyond (from Kingston History Society)



Aerial view of the open area to the south of Morgan's Row

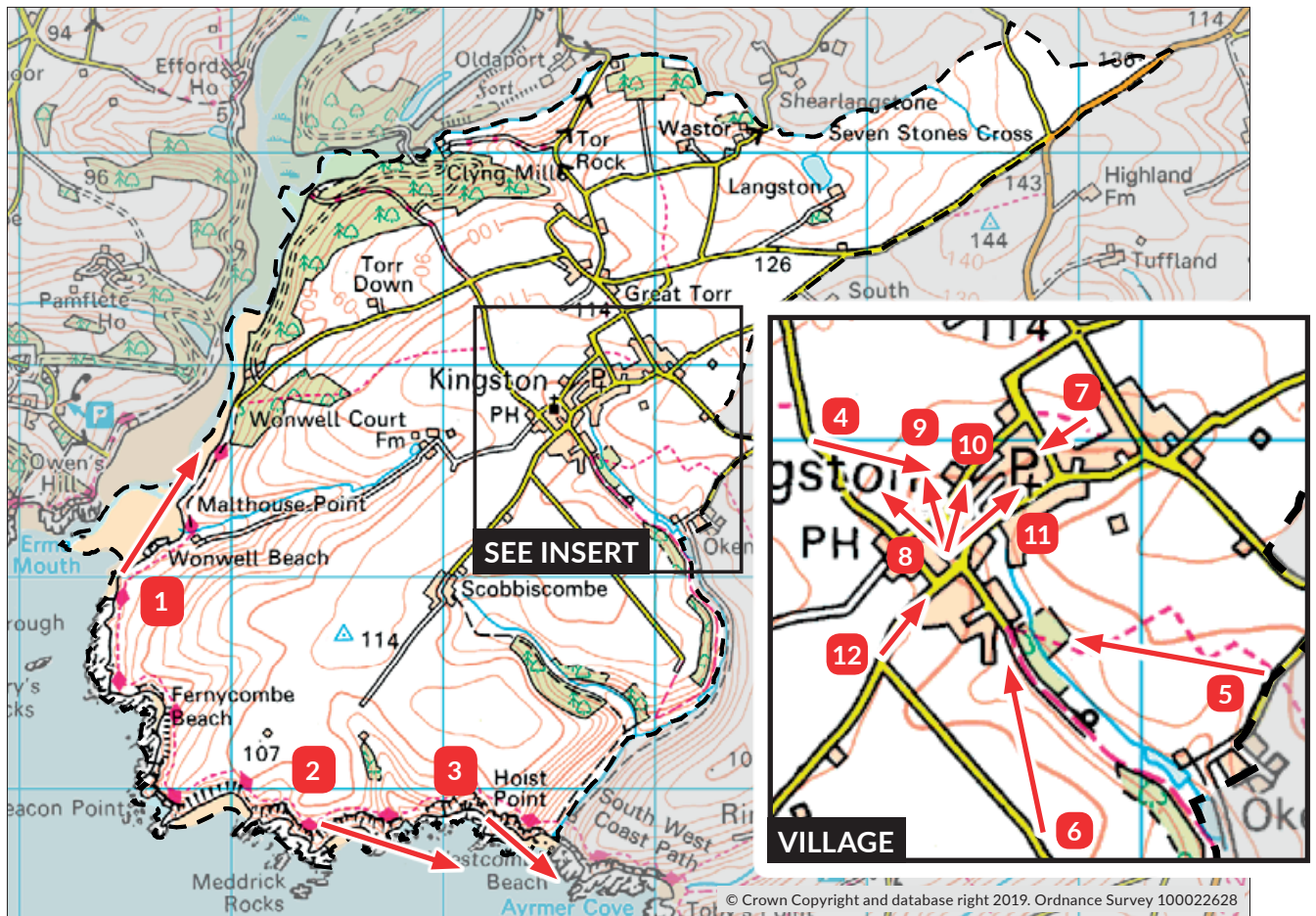


View of the entrance to Westentown



The TPO protected tree at the entrance to Westentown

Appendix IV: Distinctive skylines and views



The Erme and coastal views



Views of the village from the fields



The countryside from the village

The outstanding agricultural and coastal landscape of the parish of Kingston creates distinctive skylines and views across the countryside and the village. These are highly valued by residents and visitors and reflect the special qualities of the South Devon AONB.

POLICY KNP7: (Protecting the landscape and biodiversity) aims to protect the most distinctive skylines and views from the impact of inappropriate development.

Candidate skylines and views, that have the potential to be included on the proposals map under KNP7, are described below. Note that these can all be seen from publicly accessible viewpoints, for example from lanes and footpaths.

These candidates have been selected following consultation with the community. The South Devon AONB Management Plan has identified a set of '*Distinctive Characteristics*' of the AONB landscape, and this guidance has also been used to select the vistas which give Kingston its particular sense of place (see points in *italics* below).

Candidate skylines and views

1. The Erme Estuary

Views of the estuary and open coast are perhaps the most valued by residents and visitors.

- *The smells, tastes, sounds and movement of the coast*
- *Estuary character changes with the state of the tide and weather conditions*

2. The Open Coast

- *A natural, dynamic and evolving coastline*
- *The coast provides a powerful experience of exposure to the elements, whether from steep vertiginous drops along cliff sections, the sound of waves, or during periods of strong winds*

3. Secluded beaches

- *Striking and prominent headlands, secluded coves, bays and beaches providing both scale and contrast*
- *A richly diverse intertidal area of sand, shingle, rock and extensive rocky reefs*



4. The village

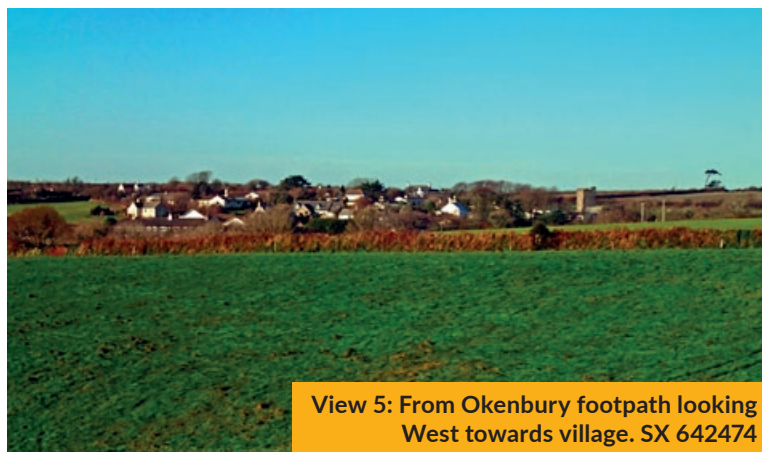
The village of Kingston still conforms quite closely with its medieval boundary, nestling in a depression within the contours of the coastal landscape of the AONB. From several viewpoints, the village is almost invisible and only the top of the church tower and some of the higher buildings may be seen above the surrounding land. This feature is recognised as being historically and regionally significant.

From some viewpoints the village is framed dramatically against the backdrop of Dartmoor.

- *The sparse but clustered settlement pattern, farmstead layouts and local vernacular building materials make a significant contribution to a distinctive sense of place*
- *Complex views inland towards southern Dartmoor*



View 4: From Lone Pine at Headless lane looking East over the village. SX 632480



View 5: From Okenbury footpath looking West towards village. SX 642474



View 6: Village with backdrop of Dartmoor from Long Lane. SX 637471



View 7: From Vicarage footpath looking up the village. SX 639480

5. The countryside from the village

The rim of the bowl that the village sits within, defines a skyline of open countryside, that can be glimpsed from many points all around the village. This ridgeline provides an important sense of place that should not be broken by careless development.

- *Elevated land with a pleasing rolling topography*
- *Glimpsed views through gateways*



View 8: Farmland from the churchyard. SX 635478



View 9: Glimpse of farmland from the churchyard. SX 635478



View 10: Glimpse of skyline behind the village (from the churchyard). SX 635477



View 11: Skyline beyond the village from Church Park. SX 635477



View 12: Skyline beyond the village from the entrance to the Recreation Ground. SX 635476

Appendix V: Submission Documents

The following documents have been prepared to support the Kingston Neighbourhood Plan and are available on www.kingstonplan.org

- **The Basic Conditions Statement** - addressing each of the four 'basic conditions' required by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and explaining how the neighbourhood plan meets the requirement of paragraph 8 of schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.
- **The Statement of Consultation** - setting out the community engagement and consultation undertaken from the outset of the process.
- **The Monitoring Framework** - outlining a framework of performance indicators against which the effectiveness of the plan's policies can be assessed
- **The Evidence Schedule** - listing the key sources for evidence to underpin the plan.

