

Stowey Sutton Parish Council

Placemaking Plan

Parish Character Assessment

November 2013

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Introduction

During November 2013 Stowey Sutton Parish Council worked with a number of community volunteers to survey the character of the parish, identifying a number of distinct areas within the parish with different characteristics, either open rural landscapes or sections of the built environment with common characteristics.

The eleven areas identified are:

- Woodcroft Estate
- Church Lane
- Sutton Hill & Top Sutton
- Bonhill Lane & Bonhill Road
- Cappards Estate
- Ham Lane & Stitchings Shord Lane
- The Street, Wick Road, A368
- Hillside, Parkfield & High Mead Gardens
- Sutton Park
- Stowey
- The Rural areas outside the current housing development boundary



Picture 1 Community volunteers at Character Assessment launch meeting

The Project was moderated for the Parish Council by Chairman Keith Betton and Cllr Heather Clewett. The Character assessment was reviewed and approved by full Parish Council on 4th December 2013.

Community volunteers

Emma Robinson

Wendy Sims

Katie Sengupta

Pat Smith

Wendy Bird

Carrie Edwards

Ruth Glasspool

Kate Alvis

Kathryn Miller

Nikki Flemming

Nicky Wake

Tanya Southgate

Lucy Pover

Katherine Scholtz

Vanessa Watson

Deborah Heath

Sally Monkhouse

Sarah Jane Streatfield James

Sue Heathman

Summary

The parish of Stowey Sutton, which includes the village of Bishop Sutton and hamlet of Stowey, nestles into the Chew Valley, partially washed over by the green belt and The Forest of Avon, with much of the rural part of the parish included in the Mendip Hills AONB, the Chew Valley Lake and Burledge Sites of Special Scientific Interest

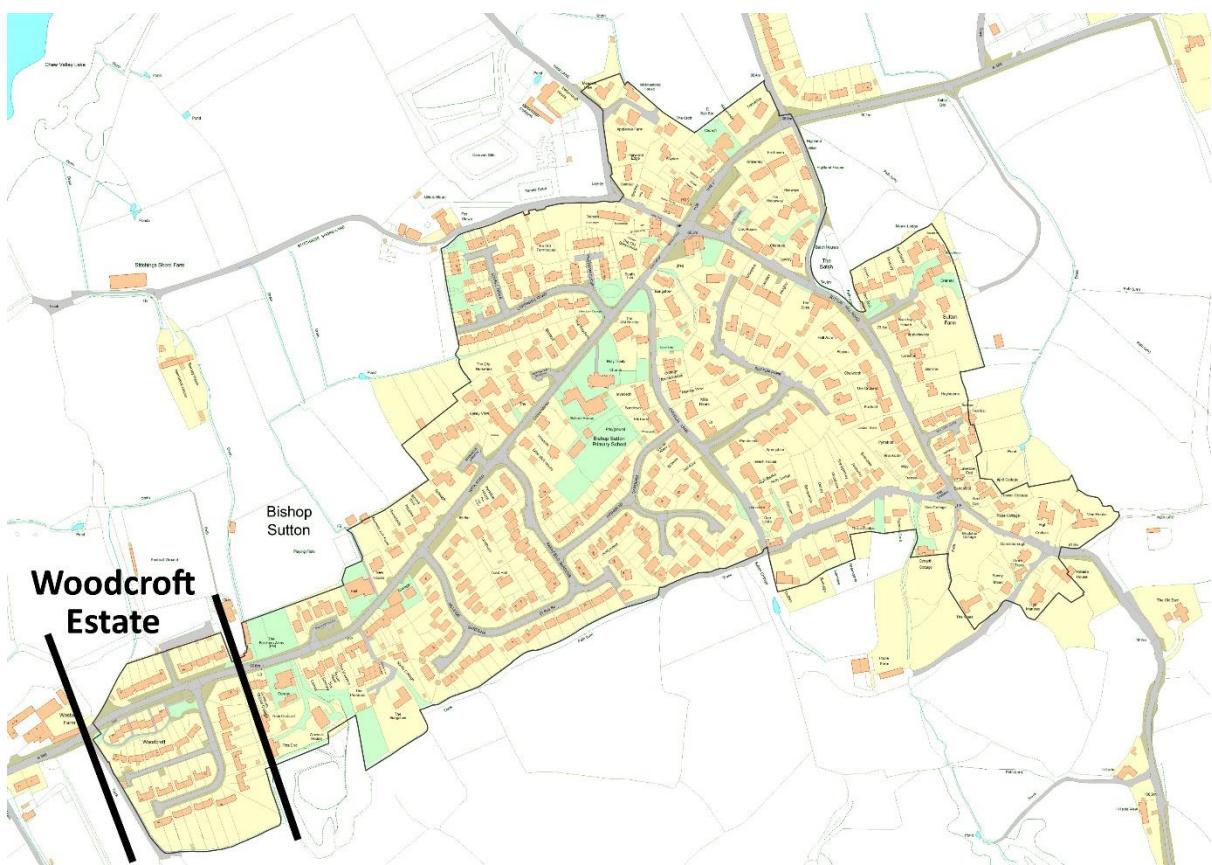
The settlements have developed slowly over a long period, with properties ranging from old agricultural and mining cottages to modern estate developments.

The two settlements predominantly comprise of well-maintained older properties which, regardless of size, are well spaced, with both front and rear gardens, generally good access roads and minimal on road parking.

The settlements have maintained a good green infrastructure, with views of mature trees visible from almost every vantage point, with the exception of one recent development, where properties are at a much higher density, with less adequate access roads and off street parking and very limited planting of trees to maintain the village's character.

It is important to ensure that future development is more appropriately representative of the overall character of the village of Bishop Sutton. This might be achievable through encouraging the application of the Forest of Avon Garden Forest design principles, as they closely match the existing built environment of these settlements.

Woodcroft Estate



Map 1 Woodcroft Estate

Character Area: Woodcroft Estate

Surveyor(s): Keith Betton and Heather Clewett

Date: 4th November 2013

Weather: Sunny and dry

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Flat.

B. Layout

An E-shaped small housing estate comprised of semi-detached houses and sheltered accommodation bungalows built by the local authority but now mostly in private ownership. Also included are the same style semi-detached houses opposite this estate along the main A368 on north side. All houses have large front and rear gardens (min 20 feet max 70 feet approximately). All houses have a minimum gap of 12 feet between.

The sheltered housing bungalows are terraced with a surrounding pathway. They have south facing small garden areas.

There is a tarmac car parking area to the east side of the bungalows along with bus stop and shelter area. Bungalows and housing which face the main road are all set back.

C. Spaces

The area has a sense of space with pavements and roads which are clear from parked vehicles. It is an in/out estate without a through road.

D. Green & Natural Features

Gardens have privet hedging or picket fencing with shrubs and plants in gardens. Some gardens have apple and fruit trees, together with other mature trees.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

No evidence.

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

There are pavements on both sides of the roads on the main estate. A pavement runs in front of the houses on the main road, this is set back from the road.

All houses on the E estate have space to park a minimum of 2 cars, either to the side or at the rear. Many have erected garages. Some houses on the main road have limited off road parking and no garaging.

G. Landmarks

None identified.

H. Views Out

Views from the south facing gardens towards the rural green hills.

I. Views In

From the hills and footpaths along Burledge.

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

Semi-detached housing and terraced sheltered accommodation bungalows of one storey.

B. Roofs

Pitched roof with tiles of a double roman design.

C. Predominant Materials

Early semi-detached houses are of large size Bath Style constituted stone brick. Later built houses are of brick and rendered finish. All are of a similar design and size with three bedrooms upstairs and kitchen/living area on the ground floor.

D. Details

The houses are of a similar design, spaced and in good order.

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

Semi-detached houses with space, greenery, gardens, off road parking, pavements – all laid out well with a sense of space.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

None identified.

4. Photos



Picture 2 Rendered finish, double roman roof tiles



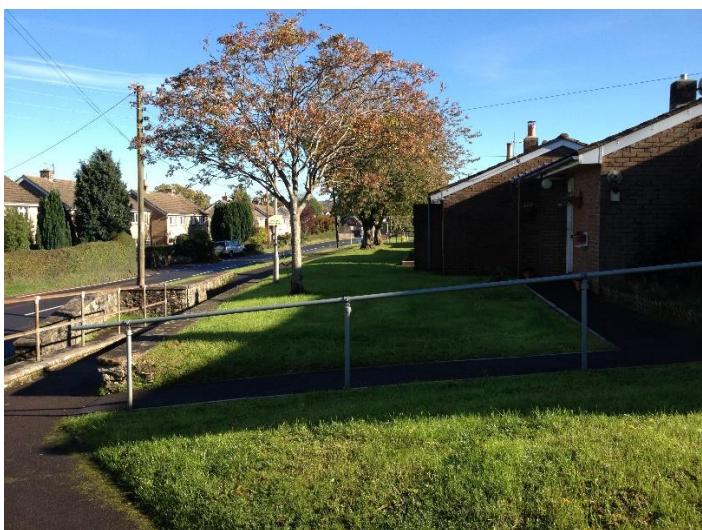
Picture 3 Rendered finish, double roman roof tiles



Picture 4 Large gardens, good spacing between houses



Picture 5 Pedestrian paths

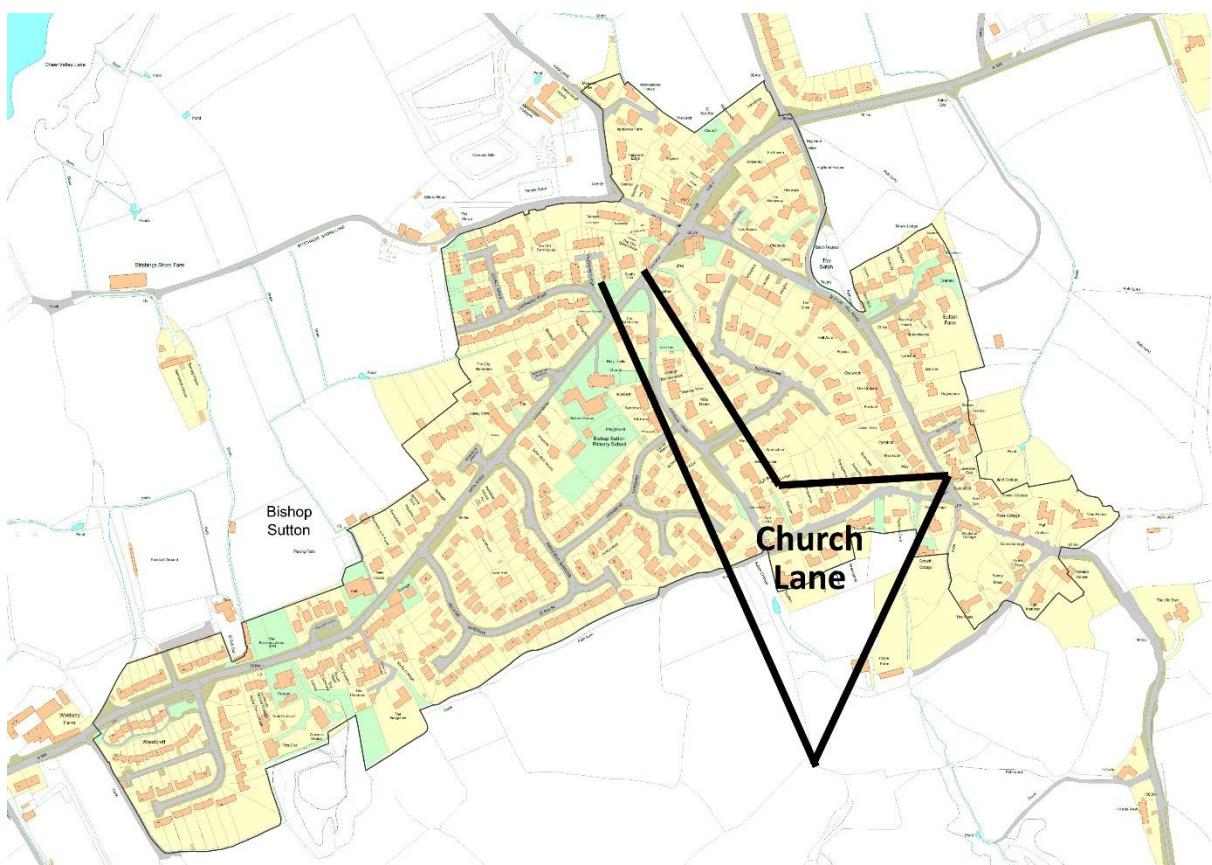


Picture 6 Wide verges, tree planting for green aspect



Picture 7 View from Burledge, showing extensive tree planting throughout the development

Church Lane



Map 2 Church Lane

Character Area: Church Lane

Surveyor(s): Sarah Jane Streatfield James, Sue Heathman

Date: 21st November 2013

Weather: Overcast

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Gentle incline and flat

B. Layout

A quiet road about 400m in length. There is a very sharp 90 degree bend in the road midway along. Approximately 40 residences in total. Properties are a mixture of very old miner's cottages, a farmhouse, large detached houses and bungalows, and semi-detached houses and bungalows. Most have front and back gardens of a good size.

The properties are well spaced and predominantly well kept. The lower part of the lane has grass verges to the front of the plots on the roadside, (privately maintained) no pavements.

C. Spaces

Church Lane has a sense of space, with houses set back from the lane by approximately 10 to 20 metres. All houses (except 2) have driveways and plentiful parking, contributing to a very quiet area with very little through traffic. Occasional use of agricultural track (on sharp bend mid-way) by farmers.

D. Green & Natural Features

Many houses have hedges or plants to the front of properties. A wide variety of vegetation, with many beautiful mature trees and shrubs visible from the road. Some large and exceptional gardens not obvious from the road but containing vegetable gardens, orchards or fruit trees and ponds to the rear of these properties.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

Foxes seen recently after dark

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

An L –shaped road, with no pavements, grass verges to the lower half of the lane. Some on street parking on top part of road. Local traffic only, very quiet but sharp bend in road with

limited visibility. Road prone to flooding at the junction of Church Lane and Sutton Hill Road, and also 20 metres further down lane (near Paysons Croft) where a small ditch carries surface water.

G. Landmarks

Plum Tree Cottage, the oldest house in the village.

The Colliers, formerly miner's public house (1785), now converted to residential use

H. Views Out

Views to Burledge Hill to the south and Chew Valley Lake to the north west.

I. Views In

From the hills and footpaths along Burledge Hill to the south.

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

Large detached houses and bungalows, semi-detached houses and bungalows, old mining cottages.

B. Roofs

Pitched roofs

C. Predominant Materials

Predominantly rendered properties, some old Bath stone. Tarmac driveways.

D. Details

A variety of well-kept properties in a quiet lane.

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

A tranquil area, properties are well spaced, with gardens to front and rear. Plentiful greenery and variety of trees and shrubs. Off-street parking and grass verges. Close to Primary School and local amenities.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

Inadequate provision of surface water runoff drainage, particularly at the Sutton Hill Road junction.

4. Photos



Picture 8 Large front & rear gardens, well set back from the road

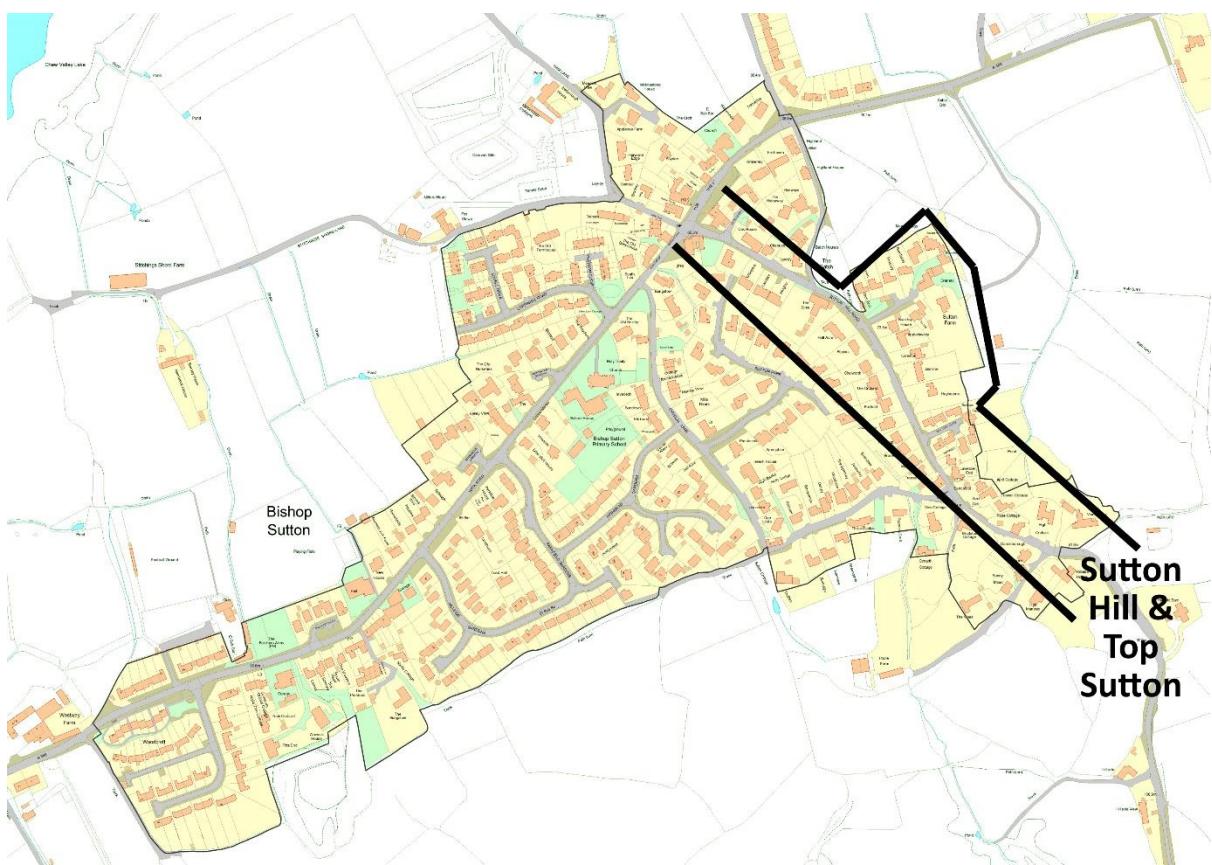


Picture 9 Rendered finish, roman roof tiles



Picture 10 Wide grass verges, houses set back & screened from road

Sutton Hill Rd & Top Sutton



Map 3 Sutton Hill Road & Top Sutton

Character Area: Sutton Hill Rd & Top Sutton

Surveyor(s): Emma Robinson, Wendy Sims, Katie Sengupta

Date: 22nd November 2013

Weather: Cold, bright sunny day

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Gentle hill sloping up out of the village

B. Layout

Winding road; buildings well set back; front and rear gardens; large spacious, wide plots; no obvious centre

C. Spaces

Large gaps between buildings; lots of green space; village events include street parties and local 10k road race; hard spaces

D. Green & Natural Features

Generally a very rural area with abundant greenery, established and varied mature trees and shrubs; large well-tended gardens wrap around houses. For 90% of the road's length, houses back straight onto fields with extended rural views and well-used footpaths

E. Wildlife & Ecology

A rural area well used by abundant local wildlife, especially birds due to proximity of nearby SSSI Chew Valley Lake and local woodlands; pheasants, deer, squirrels, foxes, badgers all regularly seen; horse riders use this route frequently

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

Partial pavement; road narrow in part (not suitable for heavy traffic) and wider at village end; well-maintained grass verges and scrubland sections with footpaths into fields beyond; 2 small cul-de-sacs; limited on-street parking; most houses have generous on-plot parking; 2 small parking courts

G. Landmarks

Community landmarks: village pub, village shop, recently restored fingerpost signs

Landmark buildings: old flour mill, The Elms (Grade 2 listed 18th century), original Colliers Arms pub dated 1785 (now cottages), Sutton Farm, former miners' cottages, 18th century Mistletoe Cottage

H. Views Out

Many houses have views across Chew Valley Lake and up towards Burledge Hill (Mendip AONB), and across surrounding fields and countryside.

I. Views In

Footpaths on Burledge Hill have views down to village

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

The predominant building style is for large detached houses with wide frontages, both 1 & 2 storey properties of various styles; varied age of properties all built in sympathy with surrounding period properties; prevalence of low stone walls

B. Roofs

Pitched roofs

C. Predominant Materials

The local pale rubble stone is the predominant material in period properties dotted throughout this area. Newer properties are a mix of stone built and brick built with render; roofs are tiled (some slate tiles); properties are largely secluded and private with distinct physical boundaries such as stone walls and mature hedges; the ground surface is a mixture of tarmac, lawns and paved areas.

D. Details

Many houses have porches and chimneys. Use of stone in houses and on the boundaries. Period properties have smaller casement windows. Houses set back from road with large frontages; large houses in large plots; abundant greenery (trees, shrubs, large hedges) in keeping with a distinctly rural area

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

A peaceful, low traffic area with a mixture of architecture characterised by rural, period stone built properties. It has a feeling of green open space with footpaths directly accessing surrounding countryside.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

The main issue is tendency to flood at junction with Church Lane which becomes impassable and in danger of flooding properties in the area, due to inadequate provision of surface water runoff drainage.

4. Photos



Picture 11 Larger properties, set back from the road, well screened by walls & hedges



Picture 12 Older properties, in local stone, well screened by trees & walls



Picture 13 Wide clear lane, grass verge, extensive planting to screen properties



Picture 14 Flooding on Sutton Hill Rd November 2012

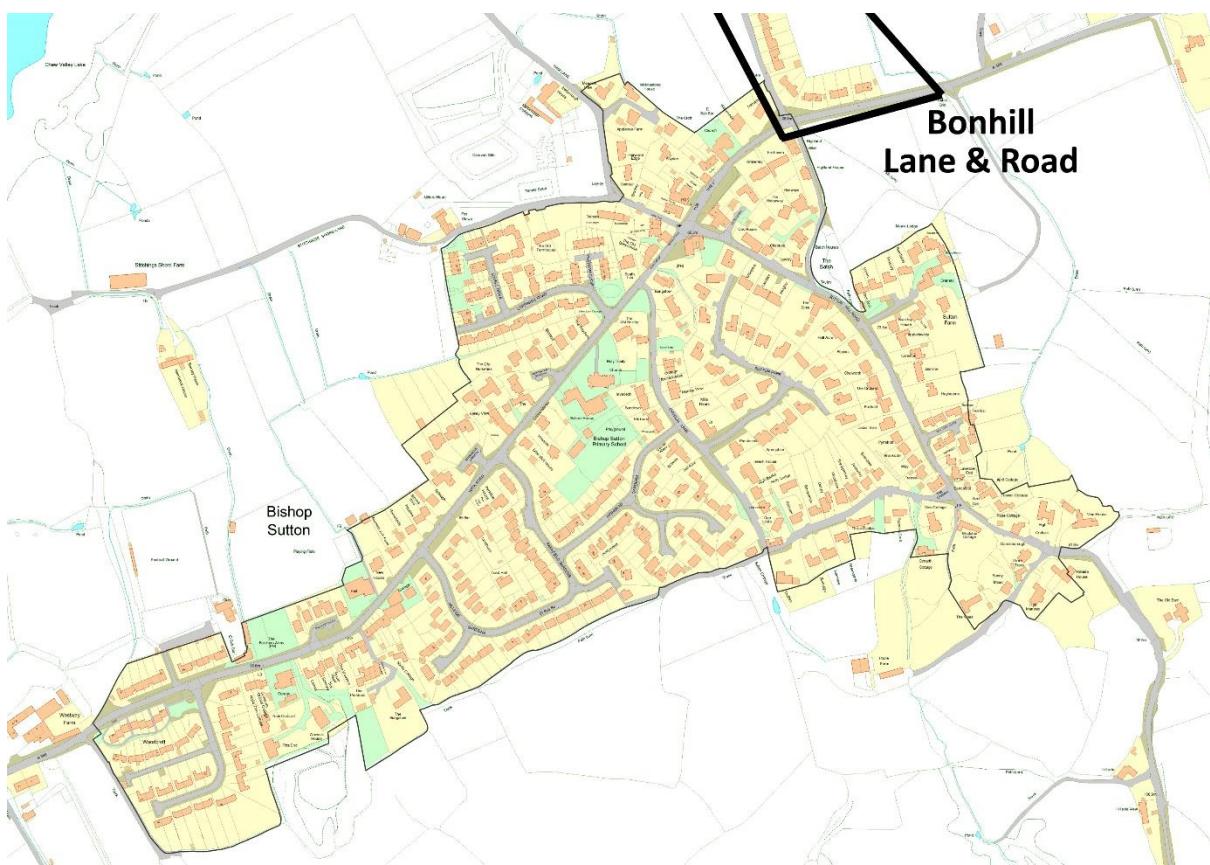


Picture 15 Older terraced properties



Picture 16 Sutton Hill Rd & Top Sutton survey team

Bonhill Lane & Bonhill Road



Map 4 Bonhill Road & Bonhill Lane

Character Area: Bonhill Lane & Bonhill Road

Surveyor(s): Pat Smith, Wendy Bird

Date: 13th November 2013

Weather: Sunny and dry

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Flat

B. Layout

Bonhill Road and Bonhill Lane form an L shape on the edge east edge of the village. The houses were formerly built by the local authority. They are semi-detached and all have a driveway, front garden and sit within their own plot with rear garden.

At the northern edge of Bonhill Road there are terraced sheltered housing bungalows. An off road layby for parking is present. All have a small front and rear garden. They are built in a small L shape.

C. Spaces

There are driveways between the houses with the exception of the bungalows.

D. Green & Natural Features

Both Bonhill Lane and Road back onto an open field with mixed hedging, trees and season brook following hedge line.

Front and rear gardens are green with shrubs etc.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

Four buzzards were seen during the survey

Deer

Foxes

Small bird's including robins and blue tits

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

Bonhill Road is narrow with insufficient room for two cars to pass. There is no pavement and traffic is especially heavy between 8.00 and 9.00 am and 3.00 to 4.00 pm with school buses and other cars travelling to and from schools.

Bonhill Road and Bonhill Lane do not have pavements.

The junction at the end of Bonhill Road with the A368 is busy, has restricted vision.

G. Landmarks

Knowle Hill is visible from the rear of the houses on the A368

Houses on Bonhill Road have views to the front over fields to other village housing.

H. Views Out

From the rear of houses on Bonhill Road there are views of countryside, trees, mixed hedge.

I. Views In

Housing is visible from Knowle Hill

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

Two storey semi-detached houses built 1939.

Terraced cottages at the far end of Bonhill Road built possibly at the turn/early 20th century

Bonhill House detached

Bungalows terraced

B. Roofs

Some extensions of low slope/flat roofs

C. Predominant Materials

Bonhill – all rendered, tiled roofs

Driveways – grass, gravel, concrete, tarmac

Boundaries – fences, walls and some hedging

D. Details

Windows are square, houses have chimneys

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

Bonhill Road is a little attractive lane (especially so when there is no traffic) It is bounded by mixed hedging

There are good long distance views from all back gardens

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

Walking along Bonhill Road without the safety of a pavement and crossing Bonhill Road to get to the main part of the village can be difficult and dangerous, particularly at busy times.

These two roads are used as high volume traffic routes serving the Chew Valley and for access to Bristol. These roads are not wide enough for two vehicles to pass whilst in motion in several places and with no formal passing places vehicles are forced onto the verge and into hedges, leading to long delays and potential accidents. This is exacerbated by the number of larger lorries and school busses that use this route.

The Junction of Bonhill Road and the A368 is already very difficult for pedestrians and vehicles to use safely. The sloping nature of the Bonhill side of the junction, coupled with the limited visibility and high volume of traffic on the A368 add to the risk factors at this junction.

The inappropriate addition of another junction within 20 metres for the new Barrett Homes estate of 41 additional dwellings will add to the volume of traffic significantly.

Traffic volumes will also be increased by the 35 new homes permitted on the Cappards Estate, just 360 metres from this junction.

Bonhill Road floods regularly between Little Bonhill House and the Chew Valley Fruit Farm, frequently becoming impassable for several hours after heavy rain, both for pedestrians and vehicles.

Any further significant development within Bishop Sutton should not be permitted without major improvements to Bonhill Lane, Bonhill Road and the junction with the A368

4. Photos

Pictures on this page courtesy of Google Streetview.

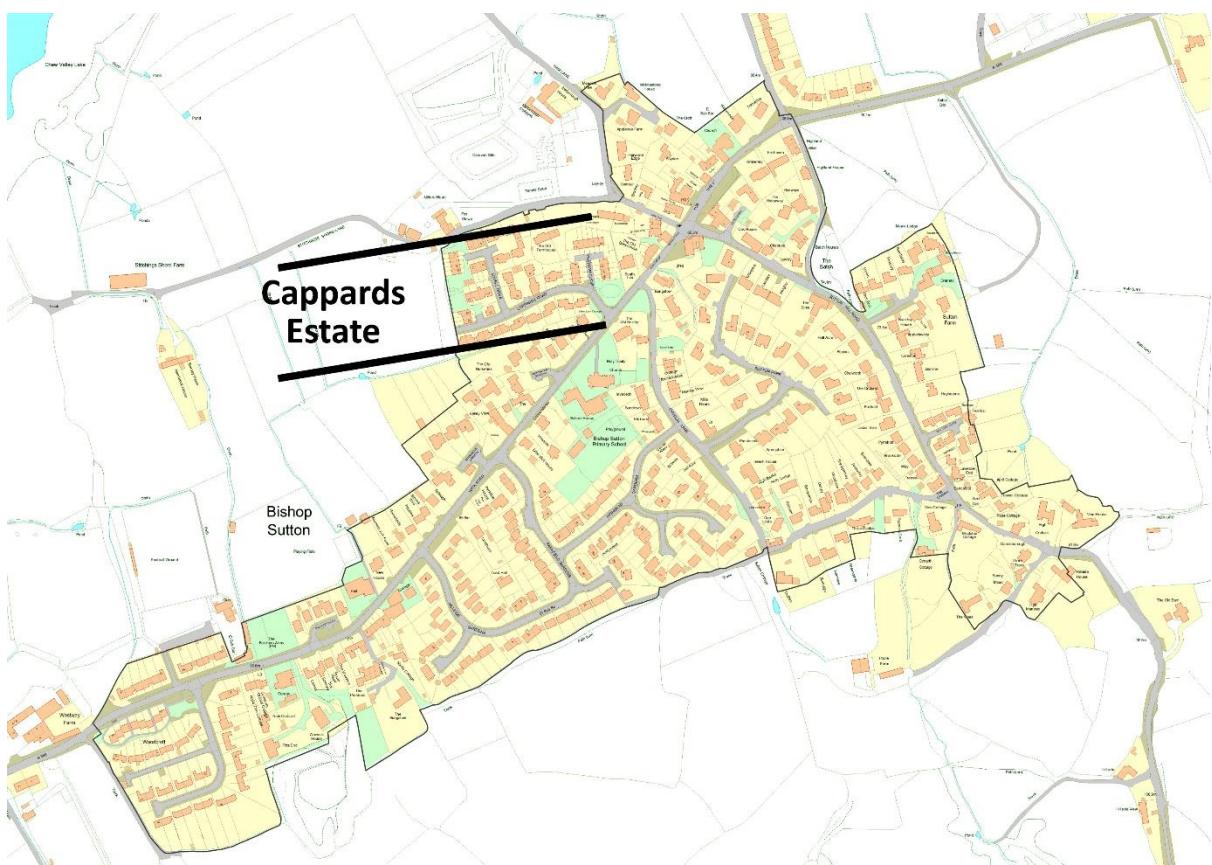


Picture 17 Bonhill Rd from A368, showing wide verges & extensive green outlook, rendered buildings with clay roman roof tiles



Picture 18 Older terraced cottages showing use of local stone & clay roman roof tiles

Cappards Estate



Map 5 Cappards Estate

Character Area: Cappards Estate

Surveyor(s): Carrie Edwards and Ruth Glasspool

Date: 12th November 2013

Weather: Bright and dry

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Flat

B. Layout

A relatively narrow winding road through various parts of the estate, including Yeatman Close: U shaped terraces; 2 courtyards of four 4-5 bedroomed houses, and both semi-detached and terraced houses following roads

C. Spaces

Well-used and maintained with a small playground which serves whole village with two swings, a climbing frame and slide, and two ride-on toys, as well as shrubbery.

Few trees, but lots of greenery in gardens and on shared areas, grass verges, all well maintained and varied.

D. Green & Natural Features

Several smaller trees within gardens, well landscaped shared areas including playground and verges.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

No evidence

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

Brick decorative pavement along one side of main route; the development is an in and out design with no through access for vehicles or pedestrians; grass verges throughout.

There is a mixture of straight and curved roads. Mixture of parking available by way of attached and detached garages, off street parking, on street parking, which can reduce access, together with designated parking areas for some housing. Main roads tarmac in soft

muted brick colour to blend with traditional renders of houses. Pedestrian access to Stitchings Shord lane.

G. Landmarks

Some homes have views of the church and hills to the south of the village.

Small playground has become a landmark for the village.

H. Views Out

Various houses have views to open fields at the end of the estate (which has planning permission for new housing development and will soon be lost).

I. Views In

From the hills at the south of Bishop Sutton (the top of Church Lane for example), it is possible to see many of the village's houses, including parts of the estate.

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

All two storey, mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced. All built in similar modern style, with slight variations but with a cohesive theme, although the social housing provided in Yeatman Close is much more cramped than other areas, with no front gardens or shared green space, poor screening for dustbins which for access reasons are generally stored at the front of properties in this area.

B. Roofs

All pitched roofs, many houses with attached garages with different heights to main house.

C. Predominant Materials

All have tiled roofs, traditional renders in a variety of muted colours, stone walls around some boundaries, wooden gates across courtyards and some drives.

Main thoroughfare has brick-coloured tarmac, with a brick pavement along one side.

D. Details

Many houses have porches, use of natural materials (including wooden doors and windows), and muted colours of render which have aged well. Houses set slightly back from the road, and built so as not to look into each other's windows where possible. Landscaping which has grown as the estate has aged into mature shrubs and a variety of trees.

The narrow frontages and low picket fences of Yeatman Close lead to a more enclosed atmosphere than the older terraced properties in the village.

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

Fantastic sense of community (recently evidenced by street parties held for both the jubilee and royal wedding).

Use of materials to ensure much of the estate blends with the rest of the community.

Safe roads for children, allowing them some freedom to visit friends without too great a risk from traffic.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

Planning permission granted for further extension, to include properties not in keeping with the theme of the first phases (inclusion of flats), and the loss of green field outlooks. This will increase traffic significantly on the, already limited, access road, and will negatively impact on the estate's quiet and safe current nature, by increasing traffic on the already limited access road.

4. Photos



Picture 19 Detached property, limited room for screening to be planted

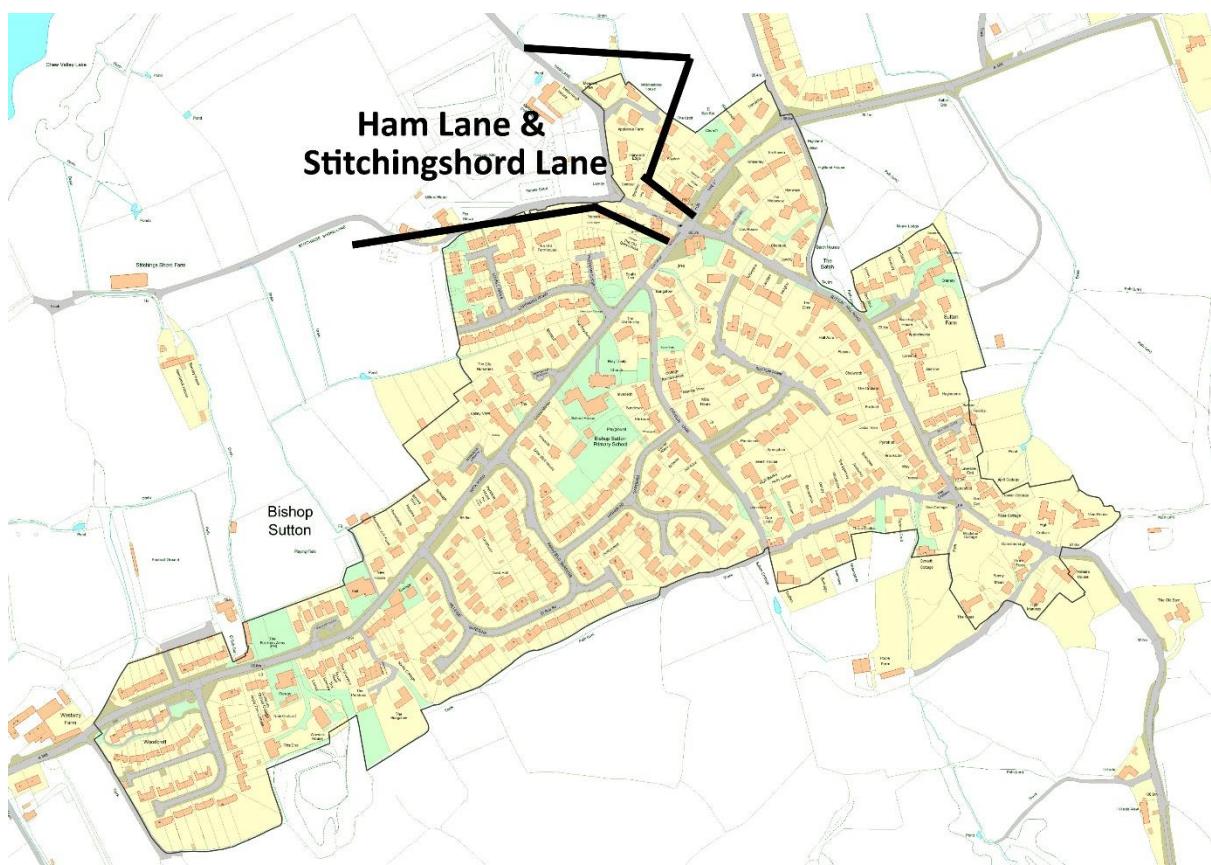


Picture 20 Modern terraced private property, off plot parking provided



Picture 21 Housing association terraced property, parking & fence design gives much less open feeling than other areas

Ham Lane & Stitchings Shord Lane



Map 6 Ham Lane & Stitchings Shord Lane

Character Area: Ham Lane & Stitchings Shord Lane

Surveyor(s): Kate Alvis and Kathryn Miller

Date: 24th November 2013

Weather: Cold and bright

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Flat

B. Layout

Winding lanes, properties well set back from the road, wide plots with front and back gardens. No obvious centre.

C. Spaces

Spacious gaps between buildings, with lots of green spaces, including paddocks and fields of grazing horses, cattle and sheep, also a small holding.

The lane is used by walkers and horse riders alike, as a thoroughfare to Chew Valley Lake and the nearby nature trails.

There are several footpaths, as well a popular, established touring caravan park.

D. Green & Natural Features

A variety of trees and shrubbery, some mature species. Large gardens, with most properties having boundary hedges. The majority of properties back onto fields/paddocks.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

Collared doves on roof tops, whilst assessing the area, with evidence of foxes, badgers and other wildlife.

This is a rural lane adjacent to Chew Valley Lake. Wildlife regularly sighted, including deer, badger, rabbits, foxes, squirrels, dragonflies, herons, ducks and other wildfowl.

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

No pavements, limited grass verges, drainage ditch, narrow, curving, through road. One cul-de-sac. Mostly on- plot parking.

Both Ham Lane and Stitchings Shord Lane are prone to flooding (Picture 25) both at their junction and further along Ham Lane close to Whatley House. This is caused both by the lack of local drains to adequately cope with surface water runoff from the immediate area as well as the inadequate capacity of the underground storm drain which is quickly overwhelmed in moderate rain, regularly leading to small fountains which escape from the manhole at the junction of Ham Lane and the A368, which continue for days after the rain subsides.

G. Landmarks

Whilst there are no specific landmarks, the agricultural use and rural nature of both Stitchings Shord Lane and Ham Lane, so close to the heart of the village, should be protected.

H. Views Out

Numerous views of Burledge Hill (AONB) and Knowle Hill, with views of Chew Valley Lake from some properties.

I. Views In

Footpaths from both Knowle Hill and Burledge Hill.

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

Predominantly large, four bedroom plus, detached properties, of 2 storeys with wide frontages.

B. Roofs

Pitched

C. Predominant Materials

Predominantly stone properties, with a few rendered. Tiled roofs. Boundaries are made up of low stone walls and mature hedges. Ground tarmac.

D. Details

Period stone built properties, including farm houses and cottages with a variety of window shapes and period features.

Newer builds, from the late 70's and early 80's are stone faced and in keeping with the surrounding area.

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

The proximity to Chew Valley Lake, an area designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI).

Well maintained, character properties, abundance of fields, footpaths and trees.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

The flood risk, both to existing houses, some of which were flooded as recently as November 2012, as well as the danger caused to vehicles and pedestrians when the road becomes impassable.

The lack of pavements and street lighting in both of these rural lanes often makes it unsafe for pedestrians due to the speed of traffic which uses Ham Lane as a local short cut to avoid the traffic jams that occur in Bonhill Road.

4. Photos



Picture 22 Ham Ln Large detached property, well set back with trees planted for screening



Picture 23 Ham Ln modern detached property, local stone finish with trees planted for screening



Picture 24 Terraced properties Stitching Shord Ln, set back & screened from road by planting



Picture 25 Flooding Ham Lane November 2012

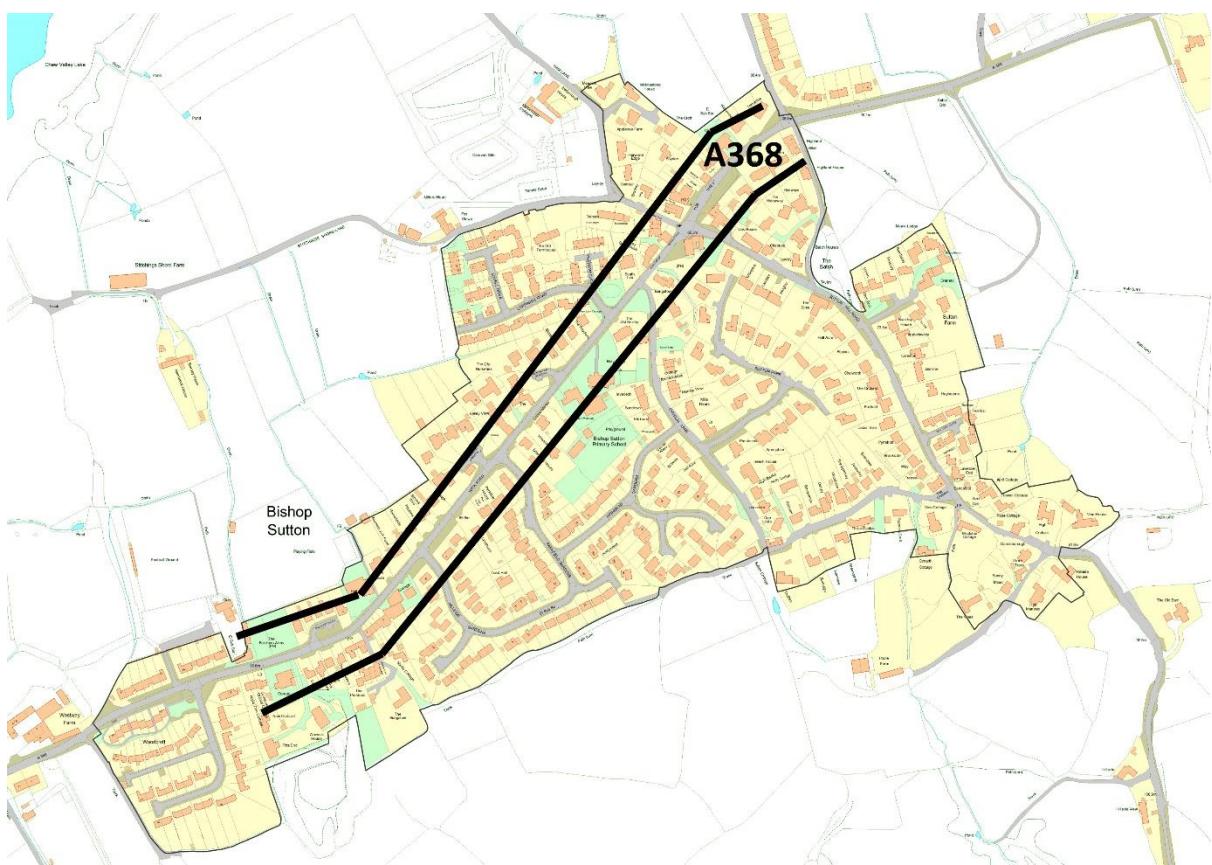


Picture 26 Flooding Stitchingshord Ln November 2012



Picture 27 Overflowing storm drain in Ham Ln after moderate rain October 2013

The Street, Wick Road, A368



Map 7 The Street, Wick Road & A368

Character Area: The Street, Wick Road, A368

Surveyor(s): Nikki Flemming, Nicky Wake, Tanya Southgate, Lucy Pover

Date: 22nd November 2013

Weather: Cold, fine & sunny

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Flat

B. Layout

Linear – buildings set well back with front and back gardens. Off street parking. A variety of plot size – some large and some smaller. No clear village centre but several landmarks along the main road.

C. Spaces

Several random green spaces along the main road – some privately owned, some attached to cul-de-sacs. A lot of detached houses with green spaces between and in front of them. Village hall with large front car park and large communal green space and play area behind. Methodist Church and hall with car park to rear. Indian restaurant and public house – both with green space and large car parks. Children's play area with benches outside. All well used. Millennium garden opposite Methodist Church – not so well used.

Behind the main road is the football field and cricket pitch – both in regular use.

D. Green & Natural Features

Lots of houses with front gardens with trees, shrubs and hedges. Variety of larger mature trees. Large rear gardens sometimes visible from the main road. There is a lot of greenery in the visual field as you look down the main road in either direction. There is general background of greenery as you can see past the single row of dwellings that front the main road towards the fields behind. On the other side of the road the houses back on to the surrounding hillsides which are obviously green.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

None noted but signs of wildlife present in the hedgerows and gardens.

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

Pavement (narrow) on one side of the road, nothing on the other side. Busy main "A" road. Straight road with small cul-de-sacs to the sides. No on street parking near houses, some noted near the school and shop. Several car parks attached to businesses (pub etc). Grassed area at the Millennium Garden and on the corner of Bonhill Lane.

G. Landmarks

Many landmarks along the route surveyed: Village Hall, Football Club, Church, School, two garages, hairdressers, Indian restaurant, pub, shop, Methodist Church and hall. Bus stops and phone box. Several post boxes. Millennium Garden. Old Somerset road signs. Children's play area, benches. Footpath signs.

H. Views Out

Rural fields and hillside to one side. Fields to the other side.

I. Views In

From along the hills and footpaths along Burledge

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

Variety of housing styles and ages. Ranging from rows of old terraced mining cottages to large detached houses and business premises. Lots of older stone built buildings. Mixture of houses and bungalows – ranging from 2 bed up to 5 bed properties. Business properties are all in old stone buildings converted to current use.

B. Roofs

Predominantly pitched roofs with occasional flat roof section to some bungalows.

C. Predominant Materials

Stone walls. Slate and tile roofs. Mixture of hedges and boundary walls. Tarmac pavement.

D. Details

Stone used in buildings. Old road signs. Big old houses with attractive sash windows. Virtually all properties have both front and rear gardens, with a very green outlook.

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

There is a good sense of space within this area. The road itself is wide and the buildings all have a decent plot size and good sized front gardens. This affords good views of the surrounding countryside and hillsides and the planting of trees and shrubs in both public spaces and private gardens leads to a very green, rural outlook.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

The A368 is a busy road with narrow, often uneven, pavements, with cars frequently parked near the school and shop. There is a general lack of crossing facilities or traffic calming in Bishop Sutton to make pedestrian journeys to school and village amenities safer. There is a school time 20 mph aided crossing facility at the Primary school (Picture 31) but none at the post office/Methodist Hall end of the village where the pre-school is held and where Chew Valley children cross in the afternoon.

4. Photos



Picture 28 Bungalows on Wick Rd, set back, space for planted screening, wide grass verge



Picture 29 Older terraced properties on Wick Rd, front & rear gardens, allowing screening



Picture 30 Older property Wick Rd, set back from road, large, well screened front & rear gardens



Picture 31 Bishop Sutton Primary School

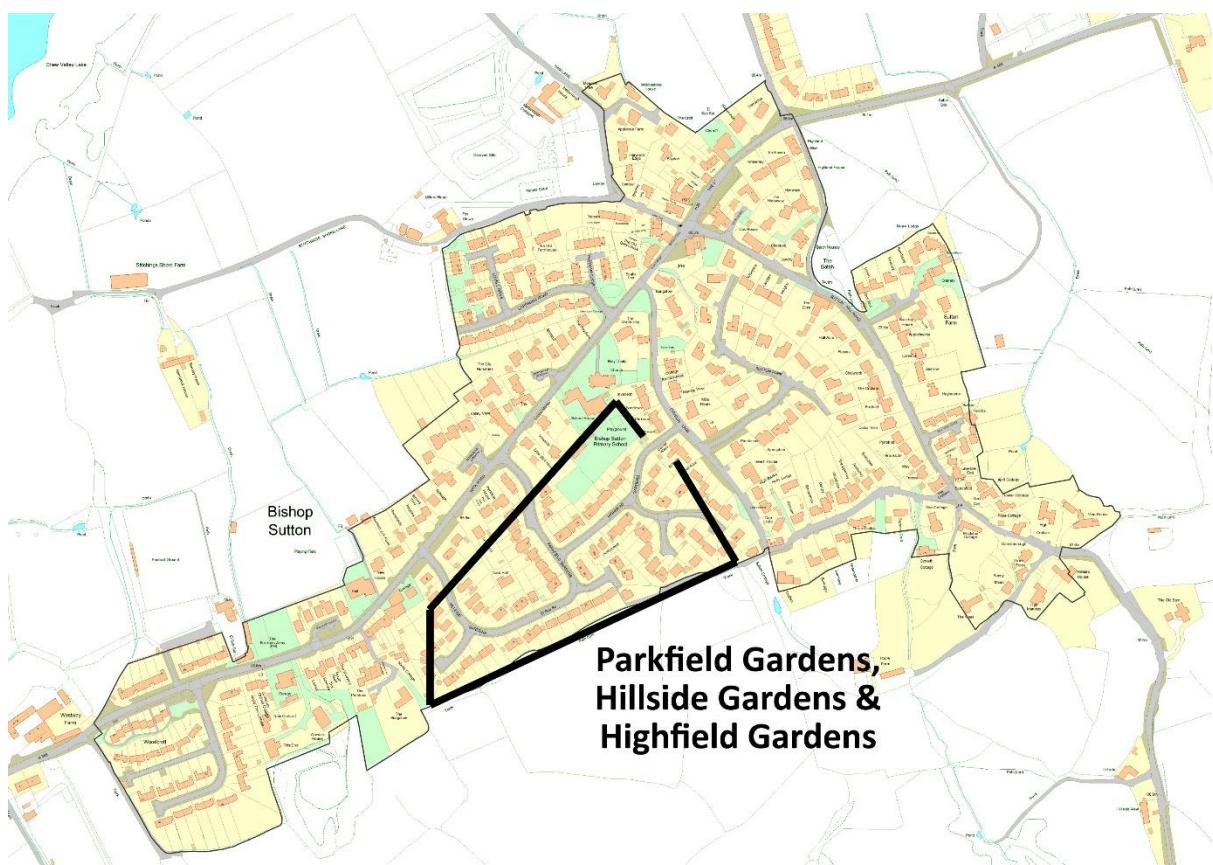


Picture 32 Brents Garage on Wick Rd



Picture 33 Village Hall on Wick Rd

Hillside, Parkfield & High Mead Gardens



Map 8 Parkfield Gardens, Hillside Gardens & Highfield Gardens

Character Area: Hillside, Parkfield & High Mead Gardens

Surveyor(s): Katherine Scholtz, Sally Monkhouse

Date: 25th November 2012

Weather: Sunny & dry

1. Pattern

A. Topography

A shallow slope in most places and flat in others.

B. Layout

Both developments are small crescent shaped housing estates, comprising mostly semi-detached houses. Some detached bungalows and several detached houses. Some are split level, due to the topography.

The estates were built in the 1970s, all privately owned and mostly freehold.

All dwellings have front and rear gardens, all of which are larger at the rear. The rear gardens are approximately 40 feet square, but some have longer and narrower rear gardens. The front gardens are the width of each property and are about 15 feet deep. These all include driveways. Most have detached garages, where the dwellings have not been altered and some have garages integrated within the ground floor of the property, which tend to also be split level, again due to the gradient upon which they have been built.

The bungalows tend to be nearer to A368 with the houses further back towards the hills and into the cul de sac areas on each end of the estates.

The developments have wide access roads, with plenty of room for 2 vehicles to pass easily, the roads are through roads, with good pavements, providing a longer, alternative route parallel to part of the A368.

C. Spaces

The area does feel spacious, due to gaps in between dwellings, which varies from the width of a footpath to up to around 10-12 feet.

D. Green & Natural Features

All front gardens have a low wall, in the same stone as the dwellings, with hedges, in the main, behind. There is some picket fencing on a few properties. Front gardens tend to be filled with a combination of shrubs, hedge, trees and lawns. With some properties

benefitting from complete privacy, due to planting in the front garden. Most are fairly open. The abundant planting both in the properties and the shared space, gives a green outlook to the streets.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

Due to the location of both estates and the occasional footpath between houses, it is inevitable that wildlife must pass through.

The local residents have mentioned the significant number of hedgehogs which are found in the gardens of this area.

There were no important plants identified on the day of the survey.

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

There are pavements on both sides of the roads on the estates and all dwellings have off road parking, some of which has been expanded.

The estates make up a crescent shape, with a cul de sac in each corner. The crescent can be accessed both ends via the main road.

All houses have garages, except where the dwelling has been modified.

The roads are wide enough for two cars to pass, in all places.

There are grass verges, but these are part of some of the front gardens.

G. Landmarks

It is possible to see hills both sides from the estates, the church tower and the lake from some areas.

H. Views Out

Views from the south facing gardens towards the rural green hills. From some of these properties it is also possible to see the lake. The houses on the north side of the street may see hills from some windows upstairs, this is possibly partly obscured in properties that are east or west facing.

I. Views In

From the hills and footpaths along Burledge (an SSSI).

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

Semi-detached housing, with some detached houses and detached bungalows. All are two storey, but some of the detached houses are split level. All have generous sized frontages.

B. Roofs

The chalet style roof, with dormer is apparent in almost all of these properties. The roofs are all tiled and some have Velux windows, especially in the bungalows.

C. Predominant Materials

All are either stone and render, or have been fully rendered and painted, with some being pebble dashed.

D. Details

Most of the semi-detached properties are of a similar design, well-spaced and in good order. The bungalows and detached properties are also similar in design.

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

The estates give a sense of space and the backdrop of the hills, with the occasional view of the lake is pleasing. There is uniformity in design and this is carried out through the stone wall that creates a continuous border along the front gardens.

Each property has its own distinct boundary and driveway with sufficient space to park at least one vehicle.

The properties and planting are mature and sit comfortably within the landscape.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

Some of the pavements and roads are poorly maintained by the local council.

4. Photos



Picture 34 Hillside Gdns, showing wide pavement, large front gardens & space for planting trees & shrubs for screening

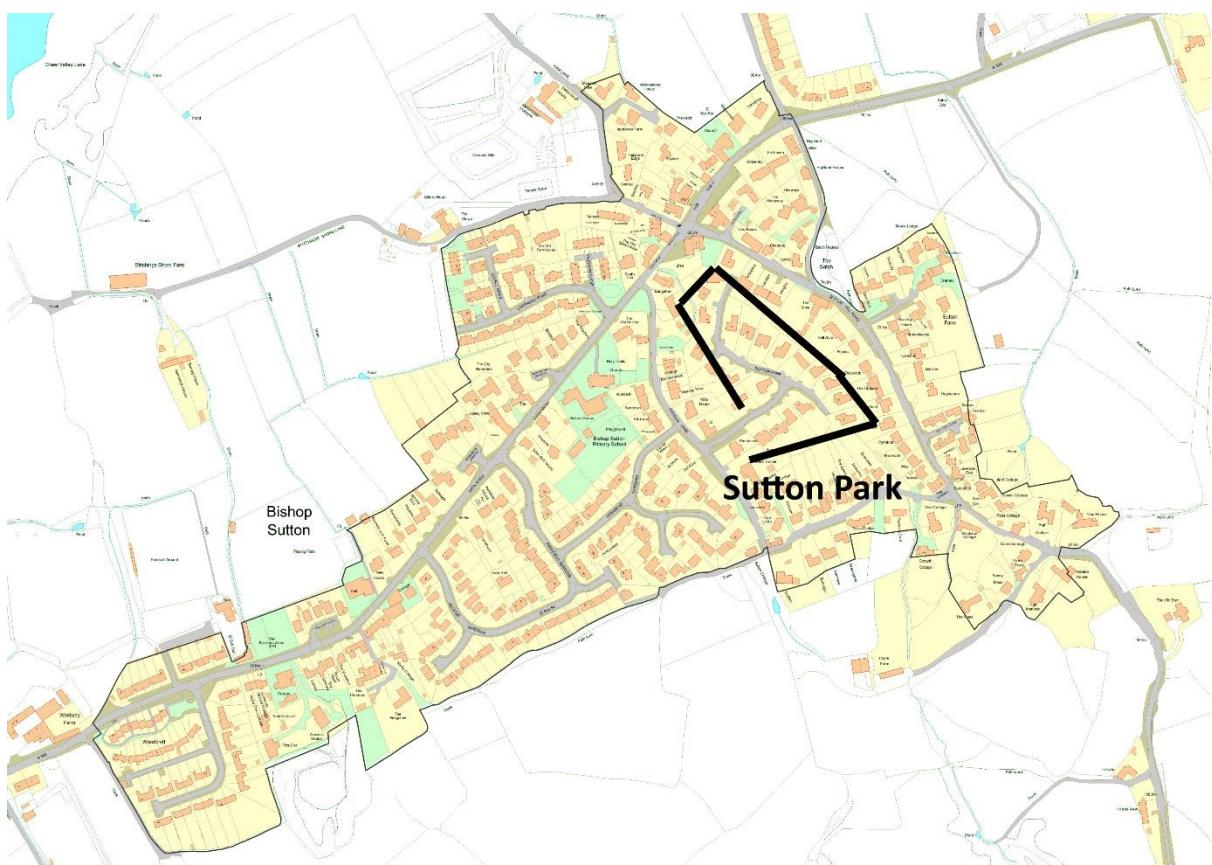


Picture 35 Parkfield Gdns, showing open aspect & extensive planting to create a green outlook



Picture 36 Highmead Gdns, wide pavements & front gardens allowing extensive planting for screening & natural aspect

Sutton Park



Map 9 Sutton Park

Character Area: Sutton Park

Surveyor(s): Vanessa Watson, Sally Monkhouse

Date: 18th November 2013

Weather: Sunny

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Flat

B. Layout

A “T” shaped small housing development comprising 21 detached executive homes. All houses have large driveways with parking for several cars as well as double garages. They have large front and rear gardens and the houses are generously spaced, with approximately 10 metres between each other.

C. Spaces

There is a “Bradstone” walled entrance to the development followed by wide, well maintained, verges (3 metres) either side of the road which continue for approximately 30 metres to the first house. It is a well-spaced area free of parked cars. The head of the T is used for street parties and social events.

D. Green & Natural Features

Many of the houses are bordered by beech hedges, laurels and various other shrubs. The gardens have mature trees varying from ash, cherry blossoms, silver birches, oaks plus many others. Many of the properties have gated entrances bordered by hedges.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

Some of the gardens are used by foxes or badgers as there are signs of pathways and holes through fencing.

A seasonal watercourse provides a corridor for wildlife and amphibians, lying on the eastern boundary (moving south to north).

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

There are pavements on both sides of the road at the entrance to the estate and then at the point of the T there is one. The road is wide enough for 2 passing cars and there are no vehicles parked in the road.

G. Landmarks

None

H. Views Out

The South West facing properties look out towards Blackdown and the Mendips.

I. Views In

From the hills and footpaths along Burledge (An SSSI).

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

Wide fronted properties which are detached with 2 storeys and a consistent design theme with individual variations. All were built by the same independent local developer one by one from 1986 with the last one being completed in 2001.

B. Roofs

All properties have pitched roofs with terracotta coloured double roman style tiles.

C. Predominant Materials

All properties have “Bradstone” walls to the front and cream render to the rear. They have tiled roofs and have mature hedges as boundaries. Some drives are tarmac and some block paved.

D. Details

The houses are similar in design but certainly not the same. They vary from 4, 5 and 6 bedrooms and are well positioned to allow for maximum privacy for each property.

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

A lovely area with plenty of space, privacy and greenery. Safe for children to play without the hazard of parked cars. Large attractive gardens and driveways to allow for visitors to park on the plots.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

None identified.

4. Photos



Picture 37 Entrance to Sutton Park, with wide pavement, grass verges & extensive tree planting

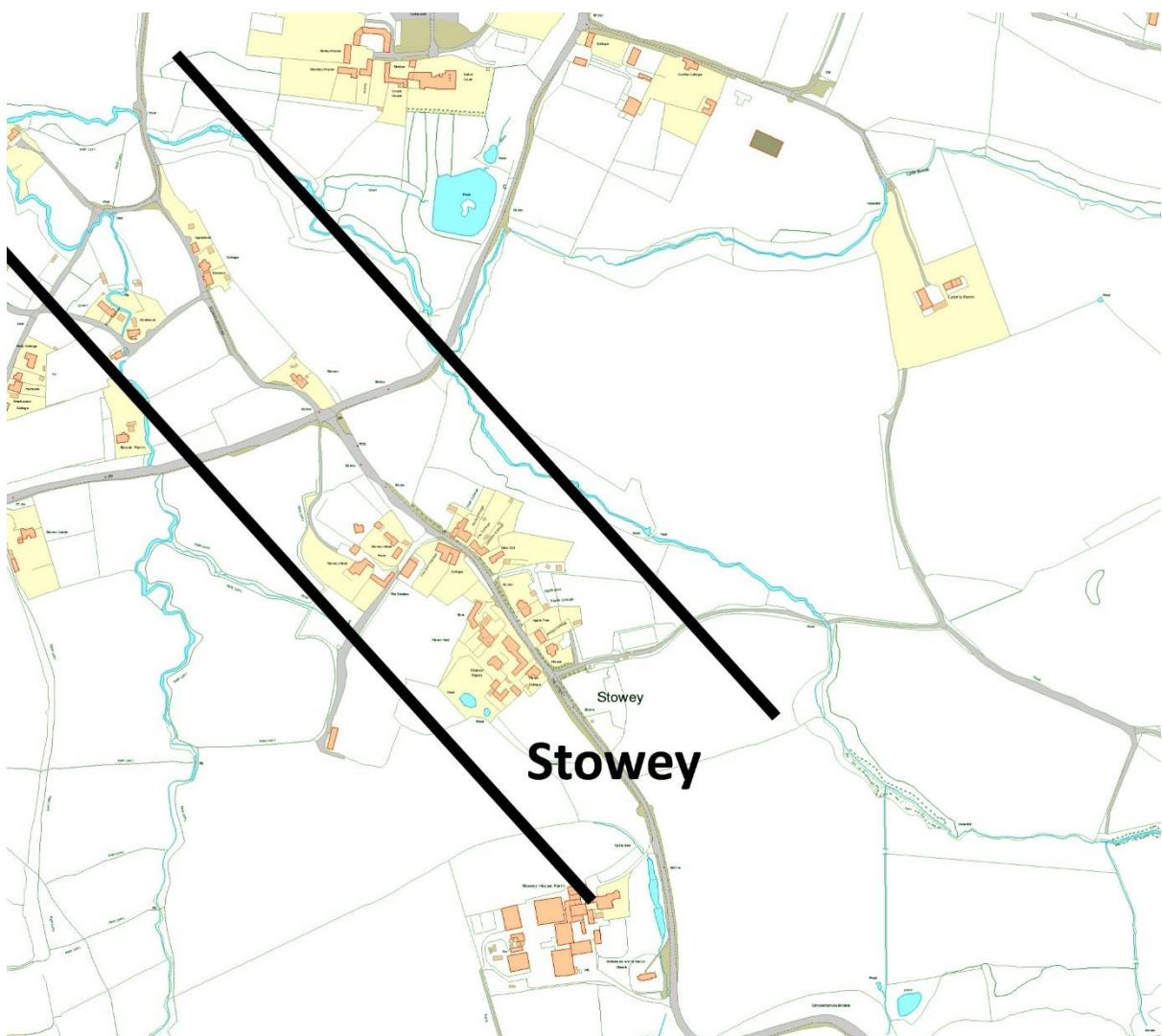


Picture 38 Detached larger properties in Sutton Park



Picture 39 Wide roadway & pavement, showing extensive street treescape

Stowey & Stowey Bottom



Map 10 Stowey & Stowey Bottom

Character Area: Stowey & Stowey Bottom

Surveyor(s): Deborah Heath, Sally Monkhouse, Heather Clewett

Date: 13th November 2013

Weather: Dry & Bright

1. Pattern

A. Topography

Gently rising from Stowey Bottom southwards towards Stowey Church where the land rises substantially to the plateau above.

B. Layout

Stowey is a mainly linear settlement which reflects cottages built in the 17th/18th century facing the road with small frontage gardens but larger gardens to the rear.

Notable developments away from the linear development include Sutton Court and it can be assumed that many of the cottages, particularly those at Stowey Bottom were built as estate cottages for workers at Sutton Court. A number of the cottages have been knocked into one and farms including Manor Farm developed.

Two new developments set back from the road are at the Byre, these are on the site of older farm buildings.

There is no obvious centre other than the main street area with raised pavements on either side. The Church stands alone beyond the cottages to the south. This street is divided by the busy Main road the A368, with Stowey Bottom being another small linear part of the village.

Redlands Lane lies to the west of Stowey Bottom. A large house built in the 1830/40's is now subdivided. There are a mix of cottages and more modern properties on Redlands Lane.

There is a former mill (The Mill, Stowey Bottom) to the north of Redlands Lane – date unknown, now a restored dwelling.

C. Spaces

All cottages now have spaces between. Local events take place at the church (dating back to the 13th century) and local houses for church and charity events.

D. Green & Natural Features

In the 18th century the village is described as largely being unseen due to stands of elm and other trees. Today the village is set completely within the green belt with trees and other greenery giving a very green outlook. It is surrounded by largely grazing fields which are mostly used for sheep.

E. Wildlife & Ecology

The area in and around Stowey and Stowey Bottom supports many different wildlife species including raptors, garden birds, and birds of passage.

Deer, rabbits, badgers; variety of rodents and insects.

A variety of wild flora due to the variety of habitats (woodland, hedges, pasture, streams).

The small ponds which are fed from the spring just to the south of Stowey Church support a variety of ducks and other water birds as well as fresh water fish.

F. Roads, Streets & Other Movement Routes

There is no pavement access for Stowey Bottom or for the adjacent Redlands area. A high level pavement starts at the Old Vicarage on the west side of the Street and continues to the church. The road is largely straight (Picture 40) and narrows outside the Old Vicarage.

Stowey Bottom and Stowey are 'cut through' by the A368 and pedestrian access between the two is not easy due to traffic both on the main road and on the Street through Stowey which is used as a route from the A368 to the A37. A 30 mile an hour speed limit is in place along the main street.

G. Landmarks

The Church and tower is visible from a distance. The area is made up of many smaller feature buildings dating back to the 17th/18th century

The Old Vicarage is thought to date back in part from the 17th Century and was extensively altered and extended in 1858. There is a former village school dating back to 1837 (built by Lord Strachey a former owner of Sutton Court, for the village) now converted to a dwelling. All are local landmarks.

The spring emerging to the south of the church is referenced by Collinson in 1791 as being exceptionally pure and provided the water supply for the village. The small man-made ponds fed by the spring are a local feature.

The wooded area on the incline to the south of the church called Castle Wood is purported to be the former site of a wooden enclosure from the Iron Age. Earth works are visible from the road.

Sutton Court is barely visible sitting within trees. It dates back to the 1600's and is now divided into separate apartments.

Stowey Mead was a former Dower house for Sutton Court and dates back to 1700's although was destroyed by a fire in the late 1800's and rebuilt on the original site.

On the lane to the north and also to the west of Stowey Bottom are two fords. Work has been recently undertaken around the ford to the east to alleviate flooding problems of local properties.

The ford directly to the north of Stowey Bottom can be dry during the summer months, but can become impassable to vehicles at times of heavy rainfall. This watercourse then passes the Old Mill before flowing into the Chew Valley Reservoir.

H. Views Out

Situated in the Green Belt means there are far reaching views across fields, valleys and beyond in all directions. The Chew Valley Reservoir is visible from the southern end of the village.

I. Views In

The village can be seen from various footpaths and other vantage points including Folly Farm (17th century farm and current wildlife centre) to the east.

2. Buildings & Details

A. Predominant Building Shape & Height

Much of the linear development dates back to 17th/18th Century; terraced cottages and other notable buildings including the Old Vicarage. Several of the cottages have been knocked into one and/or separated and all have side access and parking to the rear or side.

The predominant building stone is lias limestone probably quarried very locally.

Tiles are Roman clay tiles. One or 2 properties have been rendered.

Farms are detached and to the west of Stowey Bottom sits a detached Edwardian House with three terraced cottages (date not verified but possibly 17th/18th century).

B. Roofs

Many of the cottages would have originally been thatched. Today they are pitched with roman clay tiles.

Cottages in Stowey Bottom – notably 'Dormers' have dormer windows.

C. Predominant Materials

Lias limestone and roman roof clay tiles.

Cottages and other properties are fronted with stone walls.

D. Details

Stowey and Stowey Bottom all reflect a village character dating back to 17th/18th century. There is a sense of age and history walking around the village.

3. Summary

A. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key POSITIVE features about this area? What makes it special?

Surrounded by Green Belt this is a village of age and history and the properties reflect this. The Church dating back to the 13th century is an important feature as are other properties as referred to above.

Although there are a few exceptions, development of properties has been in keeping with the age of this village using local stone and same roof tiles and general design.

B. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for your group the key NEGATIVE features about this area? What detracts from it?

Heavy traffic through the Street. The two parts being split by the A368.

4. Photos



Picture 40 Stowey showing older terraced cottages, built in local stone, with clay roman roof tiles & survey team



Picture 41 Stowey, highlighting large pavements & gardens which permit extensive planting for screening, with survey team



Picture 42 The Street, Stowey, illustrating pavements, high grassed banks & hedges

Parish Rural Areas



Map 11 Stowey Sutton Parish boundary illustrating rural areas

Landscape Assessment: Parish Rural Areas

Surveyor(s): Sally Monkhouse, Heather Clewett

Date: 21st November 2013

Weather: Dry and bright

1. Pattern

A. Land Form

The rural area of the parish can be described as being of low level around the margins of Chew Valley Reservoir (45 to 58 m above sea level) gently rising through the villages of Bishop Sutton and Stowey/Stowey Bottom and then rising more steeply to Burledge and Folly Farm which sit on escarpments at the edge of a plateau. Approximate height 168m at highest point. Rain water which falls on the plateau runs towards Chew Valley Reservoir and in doing so valleys or 'drings' (the local name for a valley which has water flowing at different times of the year) have been formed. There are several springs which issue from the escarpment which also flow into the Reservoir, notably Barelegs Brake. Waterfalls are in evidence in particular to the east of Stowey as the stream flows towards Hollowbrook.

The land surrounding these valleys can be described as gently undulating.

The Parish extends into the reservoir encapsulating approx. two thirds of the surface area, this reflects the boundary prior to the existence of the reservoir (man made in the early 1950's and opened in 1956). The Parish is bounded by 6 Parishes Chew Magna and Stanton Drew to the north, Clutton and Cameley to the east and West Harptree and Hinton Blewett to the south.

B. Land Cover

The rural areas of the Parish are varied but predominantly made up of farmland for grazing sheep. There are wooded areas e.g. Folly Wood, Dowlings Wood, Castle Wood and Strawberry Wood which are deciduous, other wooded areas such as Broad Wood are planted with evergreen trees. Only a small area of farmland is used for agricultural purposes such as barley.

Strawberry Wood is a 'wet wood' one of a limited number in England.

The area edging the reservoir is wetland and supports water birds and wetland habitat and is designated SSSI and SPA.

C. Land Use

Mostly grazing for sheep although there is some cattle grazing and a small amount of arable farming.

D. Field Boundaries

Fields are bounded by mixed hedgerows/sheep fencing with interspersed trees.

E. Field Sizes & Patterns

The size and shape of fields varies according to terrain and usage

The small fields to the west of Cappards housing development in Bishop Sutton probably date back to the period of enclosure which took place in the late medieval period. They are small, regular with hedges preserving the outlines of the earlier strip field system.

F. Route Ways

A368 runs east/west to the northern edge of the Parish. The road from Stowey crossroads runs through Stowey village and provides a cut through route to the A37. Minor roads connect farms along with track ways such as the one on Burledge. (Picture 46)

G. Buildings & Structures

The villages of Bishop Sutton and Stowey/Stowey Bottom are the main housing areas. Farms and associated buildings are spread across the parish and vary in acreage size.

There is a group of buildings/linear development on Redlands Lane. Sutton Court is a notable large house with estate built on the site of 14th century castle with sections built in the 15th and 16th Century and then remodelled in 1858. It is a Grade II listed building as is the lodge house located on the edge of the estate alongside the A368.

Stowey House is also Grade II listed and includes 17th century gables.

Stowey Quarry is to the south east of Bishop Sutton. It was previously quarried for lias limestone (used to build many cottages in the parish). The current planning permission and licence is for the landfill of inert waste. Planning permission was sought to landfill with Stable Non-Reactive Hazardous Waste, including asbestos, this raised concern from the Environment Agency and the application was changed to asbestos only at the start of an appeal process. This permission was refused through the appeal process, with the decision announced publicly on November 25th 2013.

Folly Farm in the north east corner of the Parish is a 17th Century farm and includes 2 SSSI's. It is now a residential study centre and wedding/ conference venue. Walks surround Folly Farm some of which are accessible for wheelchair users.

Bishop Sutton had several working coal mines in the 18th, 19th and early 20th Centuries, small slag heaps can be seen to the southern edge of the village. The mines are all referenced by Strachey in his book of the 18th Century where he describes the various 'veins' of coal found in Bishop Sutton and surrounding area.

H. Water & Drainage

Chew Valley Reservoir is located at the northern end of the Parish and many streams which flow through the Parish feed into the reservoir. The Chew Valley Reservoir is a designated Special Protection Area and SSSI. It is the 5th largest artificial reservoir in the UK, the largest in the south west and, sitting in a bowl, can be seen from many of the surrounding hills.

Burledge has several SSSI areas along with designated high value meadow areas.

Drainage ditches are evident around many fields and flooding following rain is a concern in lower lying areas.

Dew ponds are evident in various locations.

Man-made ponds are evident outside Stowey Church and the stream feeding these also provides water for ponds to the rear of Manor Farm to the north of the church.

Water falls can be found on the stream leading into Sutton Court.

Kingfishers are often seen along stream edges and the presence of white clawed crayfish has been recorded by Wessex Water.

Purity of the water issuing from a spring just above Stowey Church is referenced by Collinson in his book 1791.

I. Enclosure & Scale

See previous sections

2. Views & Landmarks

A. Views

Views are extensive and sweeping from the southern escarpment looking to the north of the parish towards and including the Chew Valley Reservoir.

There are many other viewing areas from the many footpaths which criss cross the parish and sweeping views into and down valleys (Picture 43)

B. Landmarks

Castle Wood is purported to be the site of wooden enclosure from the Iron Age known as Stowey Castle.

An encampment to the western edge of Burledge is present (Scheduled ancient monument).

The church at Stowey dates from the 13th century

Cottages in Stowey/Stowey Bottom date from 17th/18th century and were former cottages of Sutton Court Estate workers.

Sutton Court dates from 15th/16th Century and there is evidence of estate waterside walks (Victorian) and other related buildings of an historic nature.

There is a former mill to the west of Stowey Bottom.

Folly Farm and Round Hill can be viewed on the skyline when looking east.

3. Summary

A. Scenic Quality

The rural areas of Stowey Sutton Parish are green and tranquil with far reaching views. Some areas have a sense of real age and of being unchanged for many centuries. Footpaths provide access to woods, fields and viewing points including the Three Peaks Walk.

B. Activities & Associations

Footpaths are well used for leisure and also provide vantage points for photography and painting – particularly of the Chew Valley Reservoir.

Local books have been written based on people's memories and the history. Bird watching and bird ringing take place at Chew Valley Reservoir where over 260 species of birds have been recorded including rare over winter migrating birds. Ringing and bird watching also take place at other locations. Sailing and fishing take place on the Reservoir.

Rare birds will often 'stop over' at the lake attracting twitchers.

Employment in the area is largely linked to agriculture. There is a busy farm shop and café, an animal and related agricultural farm shop at Stowey, a small office unit development and a sprawling fresh fruit veg delivery business to the west of Bishop Sutton. A coffee shop and small visitor centre is at Chew Valley Reservoir. Chew Valley Caravan Park in Bishop Sutton attracts many tourists to the area each year.

C. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for you the key positive features about this area? What makes it special?

Green, tranquil, views, many areas are unspoilt, sheep and cattle grazing

D. In a few words or a sentence or two, what are for you the key negative features about this area? What detracts from it?

Other than traffic and the recorded concerns re Stowey Quarry none.

4. Photos



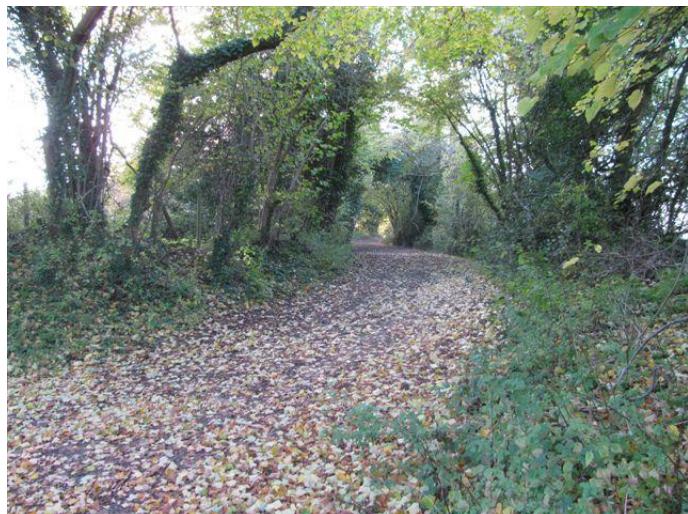
Picture 43 Views of Barelegs Brake Valley



Picture 44 Views looking west past Castle Wood



Picture 45 Views between Castle Wood & Broadwood



Picture 46 Burledge track way



Picture 47 Views of Bishop Sutton from Knowle Hill (picture by R Ward, Wikimedia Commons Licence)

