DRAFT

SEEND PARISH

Character Statement

Draft for Consultation 2019

Seend Parish Character Statement

DRAFT Version Reg14 2019

This document has been prepared by the Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and their Plan consultants Place Studio. It is a Consultation DRAFT version for comment, and together with its associated documentation is to be used for its intended purpose only.

Photos by the Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Liz Simes, Colin Waldeck and Place Studio.

Landscape Analysis work based on work undertaken by Liz Simes BA(hons) DipLA Dip UD CMLI

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The Kennet & Avon Canal as it passes through the Parish

1 Introduction

This Character Statement has been prepared as part of the evidence base for the Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan with support from consultants Place Studio. Its preparation and content follow an established format for preparing and presenting Character Statements.

A Character Statement is a description of local character produced by the residents of a Parish area. The Parish as a whole is also the designated area for the Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan (hereinafter also referred to as NDP).

The core of this document is a description and analysis of what we believe to be the important and locally distinctive features of the Parish as a whole and the distinctively different settlements, principally: Seend Village, Seend Cleeve and Sells Green. It also incorporates design guidelines to inform the design of any new development in the Parish, including alterations to existing buildings.

Although this Character Statement stands alone as a document, it is (or will be) linked directly to policies in the Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan which require applicants to demonstrate how they have taken its analysis and guidance into account in their planning applications.

Seend Village is a designated Conservation Area, and a formal Conservation Area Statement was produced in 2005. This Character Statement takes appropriate and proportionate account of the Conservation Area Statement, and adds further description and analysis.

There are many listed buildings in the Conservation Area, and also throughout the wider Parish - see Map 4 on page 7.

How has it been produced?

Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, together with consultants Place Studio, have worked together to draft this document. Advice and guidance has come from Wiltshire Council and draft versions of this Statement were produced, then shared with the Steering Group and others in the community, as well as with the Parish Council during the process of drafting. A draft version of this document will be included in the formal consultations of the overall Neighbourhood Plan to which it is linked. Any comments on the draft version will be considered when preparing the final version.

How will it be used?

The Seend Parish Character Statement is a tool for our Parish to use in the consideration of any planning or other applications. It is for Parish residents, businesses and landowners who may wish to improve or add to their homes and gardens, or business premises. It is also for designers, developers and planning professionals (including the local planning authority and Parish Council) involved with new build developments.

It does not focus on whether or where developments should take place; its focus is the design of any future developments in the Parish.

Why produce a Character Statement for Seend Parish?

The objectives are to:

- complement and inform our Neighbourhood Plan;
- encourage early pre-application involvement of our community by prospective developers;
- inform the design process of any new development.

This Character Statement alone cannot ensure the best quality design. That can only come through meeting and talking with those proposing changes or developments, and doing this early enough to have a constructive influence, exactly as is encouraged in the 2019 revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

"*Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties*".

The NPPF (MHCLG 2019) illustrates how the government attaches great importance to 'local character' in the design of new development: "*Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics*".

To reinforce the NPPF at a local level, potential applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the Pre-Application Community Involvement Protocol that is also (will be) the subject of a policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. Anybody considering a change or a development is encouraged to contact the Parish Council to discuss their proposals in line with the **Seend Parish Pre-Application Community Involvement Protocol**. Contact the Clerk to Seend Parish Council as a first step, via the Parish Council website:

www.seendparishcouncil.co.uk

This Character Statement is intended to form part of the evidence base for Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan which will include policies to ensure the character of the Parish is protected and reinforced in the future.

1 Pre-application Engagement

Seend has an extraordinarily rich and diverse environment, loved by its community. The Parish Council wish to help residents, stewards and investors achieve the best outcomes. Whether a proposal is to carry out minor works to a historic building or to develop an extension or new buildings, having an early conversation with the Parish Council will help ensure the scheme design benefits from local knowledge and advice from the outset. This will maximise the likely positive contribution the scheme makes to the quality and character of the Parish and minimise the likelihood of issues being raised later in the process.

Parties considering development proposals should engage in early dialogue with the Parish Council, as set out in the Parish Council's adopted Pre-application Community Involvement Protocol which is available on the Parish Council website: www.seendparishcouncil.co.uk

2 Seend Parish Character Statement and Development Principles

The combination of Seend Parish's distinctive rural setting and its diverse settlement pattern as well as building forms, require that development proposals to demonstrate a refined response to the overarching settlement characteristics, together with the immediate character area and neighbouring settings.

This Character Statement has been produced to assist all those engaged in shaping the environment of the Parish. It should be used in conjunction with the adopted development plan(s) for this Parish, and in Seend Village together with the Seend Conservation Area Character Statement, to inform the design and specification of proposals to meet this expectation.

Proposals should be supported by analysis and evidence, including advice within this Character Statement, to demonstrate how proposals contribute to conserving and enhancing Seend Parish's distinctive character. Proposals that are considered to achieve this will be supported.

2 Settlement Development

Seend Parish is located about 3 miles (5 km) southeast of the market town of Melksham, Wiltshire, England. It lies about 3.5 miles (6 km) west of Devizes and 5.5 miles (9 km) miles northeast of the county town of Trowbridge. The main route through the village (the A361) runs east-west and there are secondary links north-west to Melksham and south to Bulkington, Worton and beyond.

The earliest records of Seend relate to several Neolithic flint tools discovered to the north and south of the village. In addition, two Romano - British coins have been uncovered in the garden of Beech House. The village itself has Medieval origins, being first recorded as Sinda in 1190, meaning ‘a sandy place’.

Early water supplies were taken from wells located on either side of the High Street (houses on the both sides of the High Street have internal wells) and an adequate supply of water would have been important in the decision to locate a settlement on the ridge.

In 1857 Seend railway station opened and was located where the road down Bollands

Maps 1 & 2: Seend Village 1844 - 1888 OS 25” 1st Edition | 1898 - 1939 OS 25” 3rd Edition

Map Credit: Wiltshire & Swindon Archives.

Lane crossed the line. It was used primarily to transport the iron ore that was mined in the Parish and the coal required for the smelting process. The railway closed in 1966 and the line was dismantled. The site of the station yard now has a commercial use.

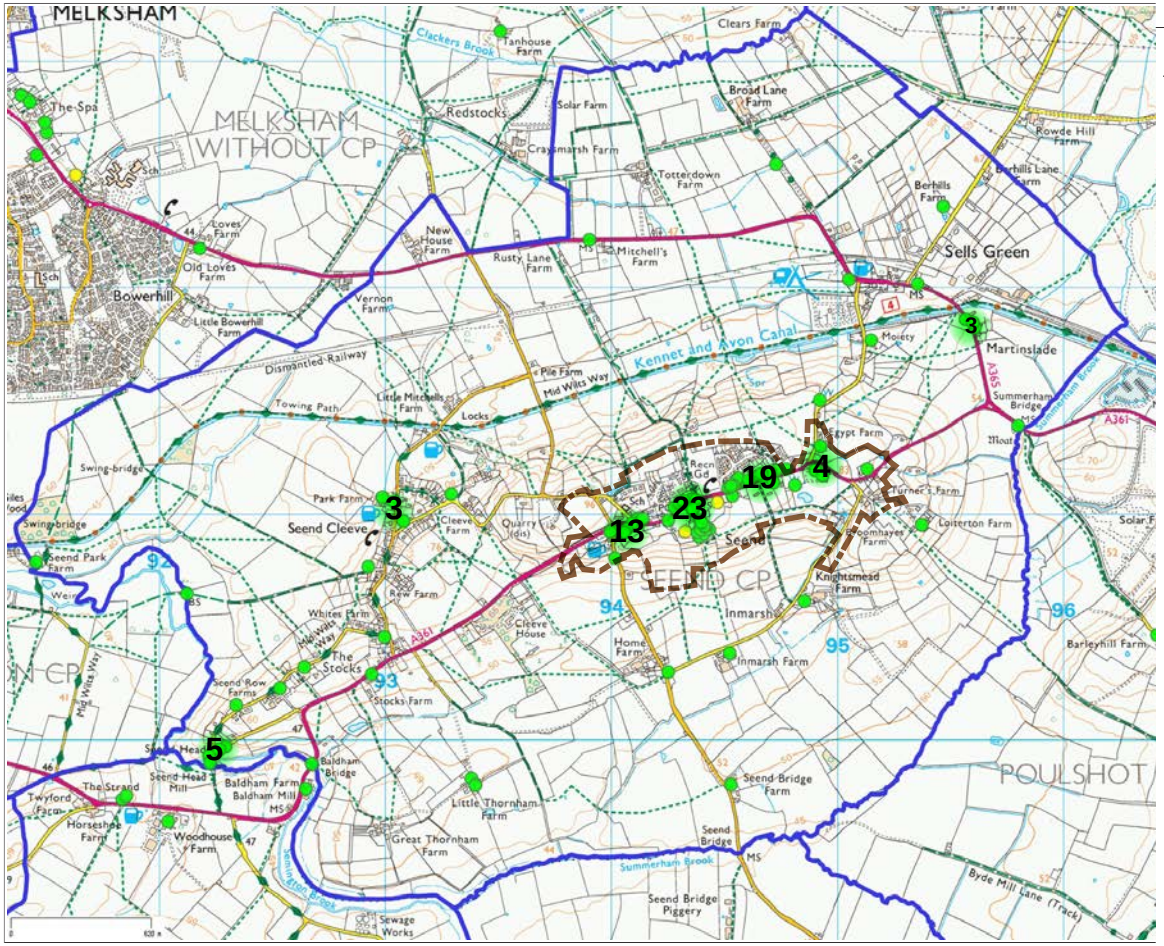
Seend Cleeve Quarry was a source of brown haematite. The site was an iron ore quarry and a steel mill, with the coal being delivered via the Kennet and Avon Canal. It also had its own on-site branch of the railway, as can be seen on the adjacent map. None of these facilities has been preserved; the site is now pasture. The site is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

There were two local brickworks, one in Seend Cleeve between The Barge and The Brewery Inns which closed in about 1850, and Sainsbury's brickworks at Sells Green (later the Devizes Brick and Pottery Company) that closed in 1915.

A full history of the village of Seend, can be found in 'Seend ~ A Wiltshire Village Past and Present' by Edward Bradby: Alan Sutton 1981.

Map 3: Seend Cleeve 1844 - 1888 OS 25" 1st Edition Map Credit Wiltshire & Swindon Archives

Map 4: Listed Buildings and Structures in the Parish



Date Created: 24-10-2018 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 394071 / 161176 | Scale: 1:23462 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (0100060042) 2018 © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2018 © English Heritage

Seend CP N

Legend

Listed Buildings

II

*II**

Conservation Area

Cluster of Listed Buildings

There are 92 listed buildings and structures in Seend Parish from Grade 1 (Church of the Holy Cross) to Grade II* with the majority being Grade II listed.

3 Seend Conservation Area

A Conservation Area is, in law, an area of special architectural and historic interest. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Planning Authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of 'preserving or enhancing the character or appearance' of a Conservation Area, or in the case of listed buildings, to have special regard for their preservation in the exercise of their powers under the Planning Acts. Any proposed development which conflicts with these objectives should normally expect to be refused.

The Seend Conservation Area was designated in 1973, and is shown on Map 5. It covers almost all of Seend Village extending from the Bell Inn on the western boundary of the village to Turner's Farm in the east. To the north the boundary includes the school and the Lye Field Recreation Ground and encompasses the modern housing developments of Dial Close (1970, further extended in 1990) and The Lye (1950). The church and churchyard, the houses and their gardens on the south side of the High Street and parts of the open fields are included.

Map 5: Conservation Area from the 2005 Conservation Area Statement showing the extent of the Area in green with a blue line boundary, and listed buildings and structures in red.

A Conservation Area Statement drafted in 2005 by Kennet District Council remains relevant and contains a sound appraisal of the area. The focus of the Statement is on the historic core of the High Street with brief references to the post war development such as the housing estates of Dial Close and The Lye. The Conservation Area Statement identifies and records in detail the historic core of the village and the special qualities that make up it's distinct architectural and historic character.

Seend Conservation Area: Summary

Character and Distinctiveness

- Trees, verges and other landscape features that are important to the immediate setting of the Conservation Area as well as from surrounding areas.
- The built-up area of the village is visually contained.
- Though there are many fine individual buildings along the High Street, it is the collective view that is noted as being especially attractive.
- The High Street has a distinct sense of enclosure created by the alignment of the road with enclosures at each end. The prominence of some of the buildings close to the road, and extensive brick walling and groups of trees also add to the sense of enclosure.
- Boundary walls are an especially important feature in Seend, particularly on the High Street.
- Open spaces, such as the gardens of large houses south of the High Street, which are part of an 'open grain' to the settlement and should not be seen as development opportunities.
- Careful maintenance of historic buildings, both listed and unlisted, will be necessary in order to protect the character of the Conservation Area.

Key Issues and Enhancement Priorities

- Speed and frequency of traffic through the Village is noted as 'disturbing' in the Conservation Area Statement. HGV traffic contributes to environmental degradation in the conservation area through noise, air pollution and vibration.
- The introduction of elements that are unnecessarily obtrusive, urban or sub-urban in character should be avoided. Modern boundary walls and fences, paved surfaces and high intensity street or security lighting would fall into this category.
- Little in Seend Village is noted as being out of keeping with the character and the scope for enhancement is considered to be limited by the Conservation Area Statement.
- Where changes are proposed in any part of the Parish they should be designed to reflect the intrinsic character of the area they are located in, using materials and details that maintain and enhance character.
- The identification of significant unlisted locally important heritage assets across the Parish.

The green verges, trees and high brick walls are key elements in the collective character of the High Street

3 Conservation Area and Parish Heritage Assets

The character and appearance of the Seend Conservation Area is described in the Seend Conservation Area Statement (2005). Whilst Seend Village is almost entirely designated as a Conservation Area containing many fine historic buildings, the rural landscape setting, neighbouring settlement character and the appropriateness of newer development and change make a vital contribution to the heritage of the whole parish.

Development and environmental management and infrastructure proposals within the Conservation Area will be expected to demonstrate how they have referenced both the Seend Character Statement and the Seend Conservation Area Statement to produce schemes that conserve and enhance its character and fabric.

Proposals for development in the wider Parish will be expected to conserve heritage assets recorded on the site and the setting of heritage assets immediately adjacent to the proposal site.

4 Landscape Setting

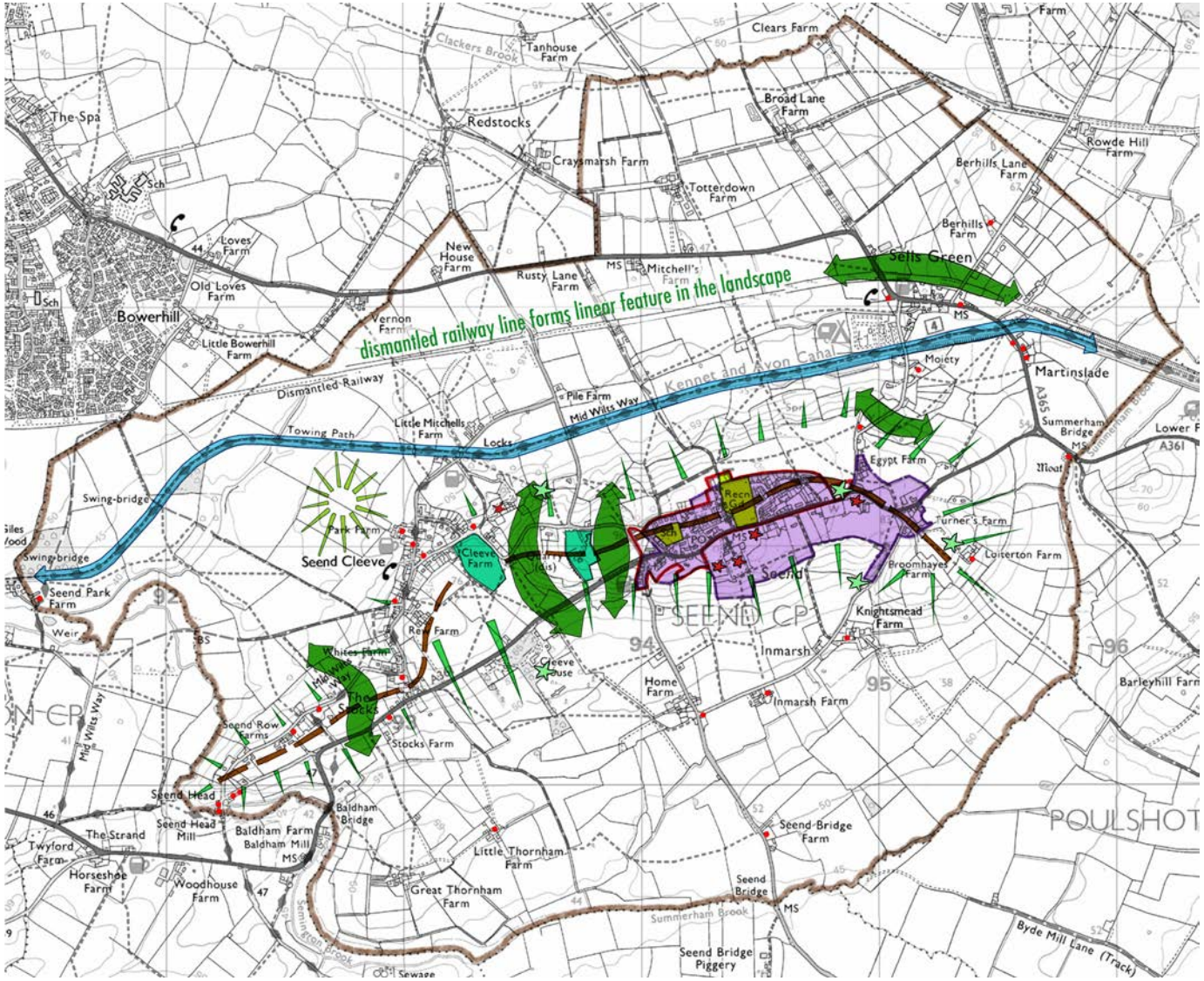
A special feature of the Parish is the ridge-top position of the main village of Seend bounded by footpaths to the north and south with extensive rural views. No higher ground interposes between the footpath at the south of the church and the escarpment of Salisbury Plain some 5 miles away. From the footpath on the north side the view is over the Avon Vale to Melksham, Sandridge, and Roundway Hill. Dark skies contribute to the rural tranquility which light pollution from Melksham and the lighting along roads and in the villages impact on (see map in section 8).

The canal is a key landscape feature of the Parish and its towpath provides a physical connection and means of movement between the settlements. The landscape beyond the villages is set within the valley and the valley slopes. It is predominantly agricultural with hedgerow field boundaries and dispersed individual dwellings and farmsteads.

Approaching Seend from the south some of the fine houses and the church can be seen on the ridge; conversely when approaching from the Vale the skyline barely gives away the existence of a settlement.

Expansive views across the valley towards Salisbury Plain are visible from along the footpath on the southern edge of the village

Map 6: Seend Parish Landscape Analysis Plan



Legend

- Parish boundary
- Settlement Boundary
- Extent of the Conservation Area
- Protected Recreation Sites
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (former quarries)
- Listed buildings beyond the Conservation Area
- Ridgeline
- Kennet and Avon Canal and National Trail path
- Visually open and significant slopes
- Prominent buildings
- Significant groups of trees / landscape features
- Landscape gap between village and outlying dwelling clusters (combination of fields and step topography)
- Footpaths
- Bridleways
- Small hill in wider valley landscape

The Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment highlights landscape sensitivities. Those that apply to Seend Parish include:

- rural tranquillity;
- hedgerow pattern;
- watercourses and streamside willows and other riparian vegetation;
- woodlands of ecological value;
- wide open views / views to the scarp slopes of the adjacent chalk downlands, and
- settlement pattern of nucleated villages with a variety of vernacular building materials.

The Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment highlights both positive and negative 'forces for change' for the landscape. Those that apply to Seend Parish include:

- Solar farms which can be seen in the views from the north.
- Loss of hedgerow boundaries and particularly mature hedgerow trees plus poor management of remaining hedgerows.
- There is pressure for further expansion of settlements and new development;
- Increasing road use which will further diminish the rural tranquillity of the vale landscape.
- There is pressure to upgrade roads to accommodate an increase in traffic volume, which includes HGV traffic which is considered to contribute to environmental degradation in the conservation area through noise, air pollution and vibration.

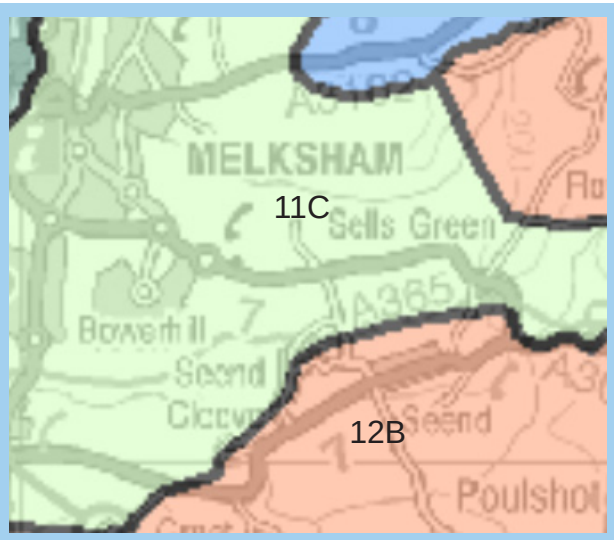
Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape Character Assessments (LCA) classify and describe landscapes and set out what makes one place different from another, by identifying features and characteristics that contribute to a particular 'sense of place'. LCAs help to manage the future development of an area by informing how the landscape can be protected and enhanced. LCA coverage starts at a national level, and comes down to district - and in some cases Parish - level.

The relevant LCAs for Seend Parish are:

- Natural England National Character Area Profile 117, Avon Vales.
- Wiltshire LCA Character Areas 11C Trowbridge Rolling Clay Lowland / 12B Avon Open Clay Vale (see map extract to the right)

These existing LCAs are a key source of information in gathering an evidence base for this Character Statement and our Neighbourhood Plan. See References for further information.



Landscape Setting: Summary

Character and Distinctiveness

- The distinct form of the ridge in the centre of the Parish, which Seend Village sits on top of, affords wide open views to the surrounding landscape.
- The tranquil rural setting of the wider Parish with many heritage assets, including the canal and historic farmsteads.
- Three main settlements, interspersed with hamlet groupings and farmsteads.
- An extensive footpath network to the north and south, containing ecologically valuable watercourses, woodland, hedgerow, roadside verges and former quarries that have become designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- Strong industrial heritage, including iron ore mining, smelting and brick production associated with the canal and former railway which forms a strong linear feature in the landscape.
- A strong community life and distinctive cultural calendar including Seend's annual summer fete and Flower Show held in community buildings and the large recreation ground The Lye, as well as the 'Open Gardens' event held every other year in June, which draws visitors from across the wider area.

Key Issues and Enhancement Priorities

- Recording and protecting locally valued views to be taken account of in any development proposals.
- Resisting harm to rural tranquility and character from traffic volume, speed and associated damage to public realm heritage assets through inappropriate highway maintenance and improvements.
- Promoting a sensitive integration of the built and natural environment.
- Reversing loss of existing hedgerows, trees and woodlands and their associated ecological value through the promotion of new planting and habitat conservation schemes, including the enhancement of the biodiversity value of watercourses and associated riparian vegetation.
- Proposals for artificial lighting in any public areas and for roads should be minimal and down-facing to avoid light pollution and any erosion of the local 'dark skies'.

4 Protection of Seend Parish Rural Landscape

The settlements of the Parish sit within a distinctive, diverse, historic and tranquil rural environment. The landscape characterisation work highlights the key features of the Parish landscape that contribute to a sense of place and the role it plays for different communities from agriculture and leisure to wildlife and biodiversity. As such, its protection and enhancement is important to the Parish.

Proposals for development within the Parish should demonstrate how it contributes to the conservation or enhancement of the character and local distinctiveness of the Parish landscape.

Where possible, key issues anf enhancement priorities should be addressed.

5 Settlements in the Landscape

There are a number of settlements in the Parish, with the three main settlements identified as Seend Village, Seend Cleeve and Sells Green.

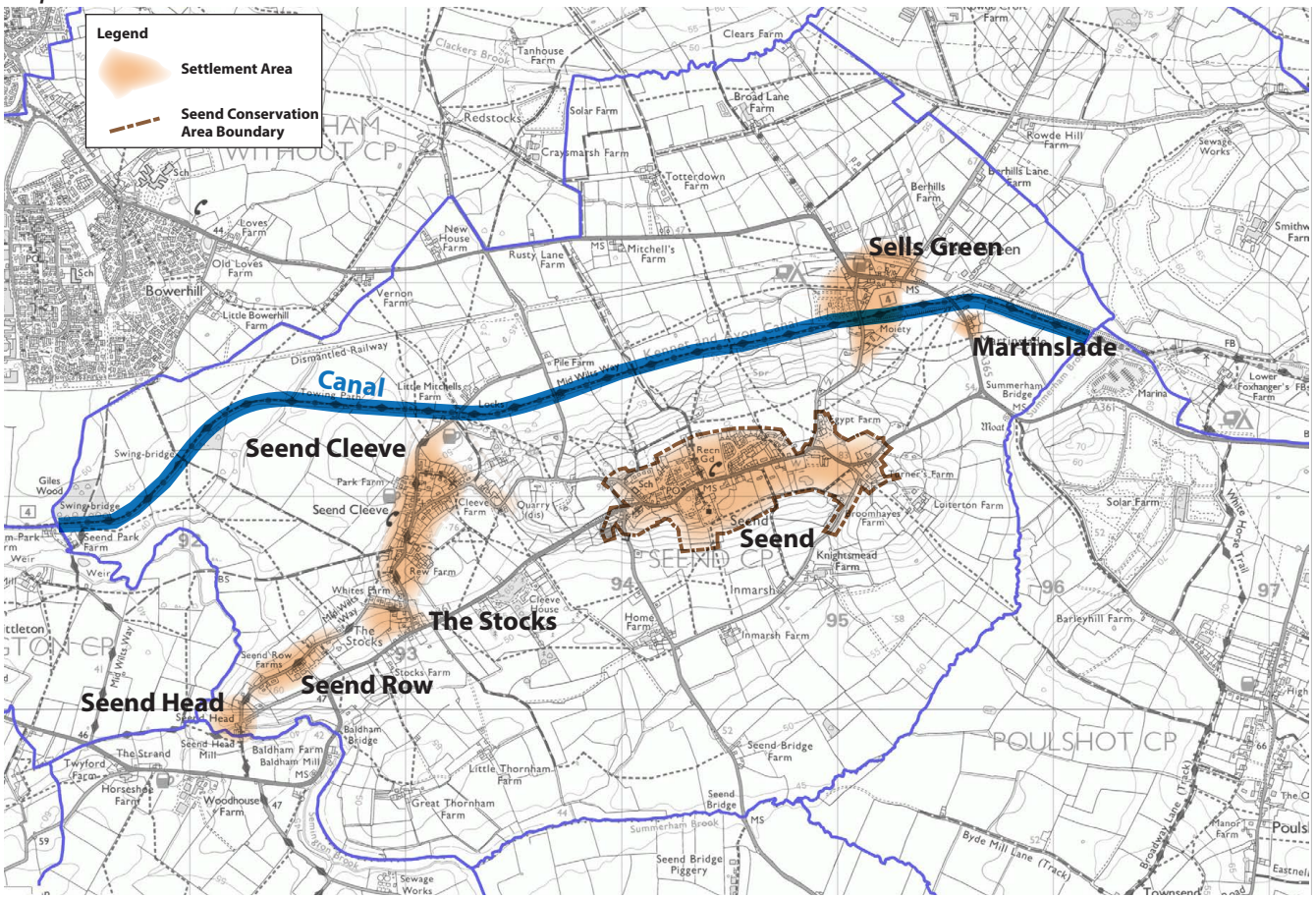
The village of Seend is the largest settlement in the Parish and the focus for Parish life with a number of important facilities. It is the only settlement with an identified boundary as defined in the Wiltshire Local Development Plan. Three-quarters of a mile west of Seend Village and almost at the foot of the hill is the 'small village' (as defined by Wiltshire policy) of Seend Cleeve and a mile farther, Seend Row.

The hamlet called The Stocks lies between them. Still farther west, lying close to Semington Brook, is Seend Head. South of Seend Head, Semington Brook is crossed by Baldham Bridge.

Sells Green lies to the north of the canal and straddles the A365. It is connected to Seend village via the narrow Spout Lane and its hump back bridge over the canal.

There are also a number of buildings outside the main settlement groupings, in particular many farmsteads. The terraced houses (New Buildings, which were associated with the iron mining works) past Little Mitchells Farm to the east of Seend Cleeve, are an unusal grouping of buildings outside of the main settlements in the Parish.

Map 7: Settlement Areas in Seend Parish



The two main settlements of Seend Village and Seend Cleeve are distinctly different in their landscape setting, and the edges between the built and natural environments:

Seend Village

- The village is generally contained within the flat land at the top of the ridge and is compact with clear edges.
- This ridge stands at around the 75 metre contour and is between 20 and 50 metres above the surrounding clay vale.
- The historic core of the village has a linear grain with houses built either side of the ridge top High Street.
- To the south there is an open grain to the settlement with large gardens and houses, which have expansive views across the valley towards Salisbury Plain.
- To the north, the grain is more compact, but generally still open.
- To rear of the historic High Street, houses are arranged in estates.
- There are no clear gateways to the village but key buildings and road alignment do mark thresholds into the village.

Map 8: Seend Village Settlement Form

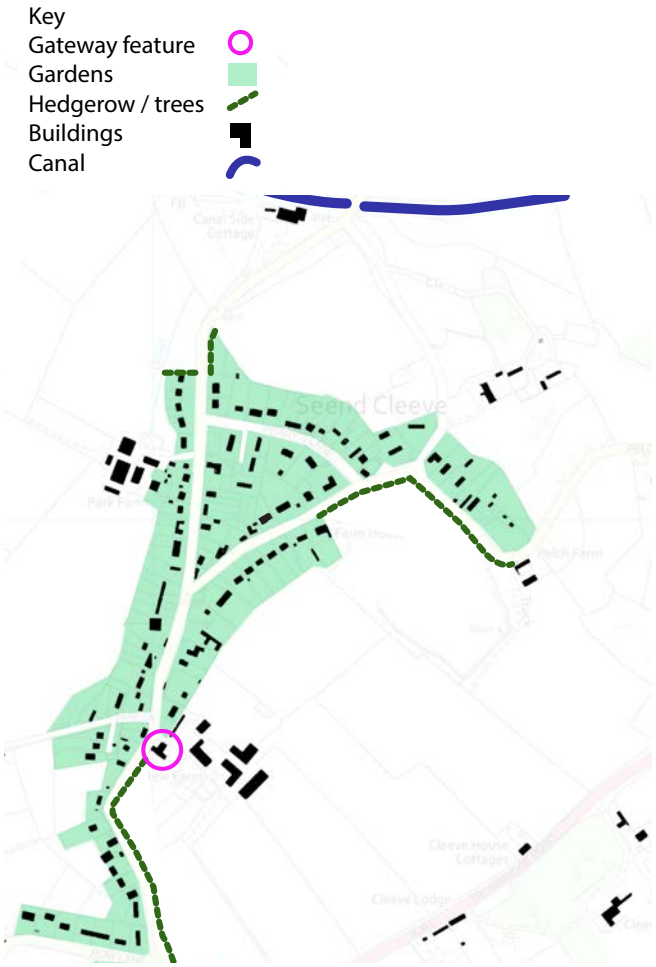
Looking north towards the edge of The Lye from the High Street

Seend Cleeve as seen from the canal

Seend Cleeve

- The settlement lies predominantly on the north and west facing slopes of the major ridgeline, where dwellings, rooflines and trees form a skyline element in views from the north.
- Views over the Avon Vale towards Melksham can be glimpsed between buildings on higher ground to the south west.
- The settlement is linear in form and compactly arranged, but the organic nature of the grain affords glimpsed views between houses over the Avon Vale and lends a rural informality to its character.
- There are no clear gateways to Seend Cleeve. From the south, Rew Farm is a landmark building with a stone wall inset post box which marks a point where development begins on both sides of the road. To the north, the settlement edge is clear but not well defined.
- Routeways are narrow, with no road markings and lined by hedgerows and trees in places.

Map 9: Seend Cleeve Settlement Form



5 Protecting and Enhancing the Character of Settlement Edges

Settlements in the Parish have direct relationships with the countryside, in some cases in long views. Where development abuts the countryside, the Parish wishes to ensure that the locally distinct hedgerows and trees are deployed to contain and soften the transition between settlement and countryside.

- ***New development and alterations to buildings, infrastructure and landscape will be expected to conserve and enhance the rural character, biodiversity and tranquility of Seend Parish.***
- ***Development affecting the transitional edges between the settlements and countryside will be expected to protect and enhance the quality and biodiversity of the settlement boundary and appearance of the settlement when viewed from the surrounding landscape.***
- ***Proposals should include boundary landscape that conserves and reinforces existing boundary hedgerow and trees, and, where deemed necessary, plant new hedgerow and boundary trees to create green connections with existing hedgerows or wooded areas in the surrounding countryside.***
- ***Proposals for development that creates a new settlement boundary will be expected to commit to manage and maintain the rural edge landscape in perpetuity.***

5 Parish Settlements

Seend Village

The Lye Field occupies a central and dominant position in Seend Village and is a key green space along the High Street. Seend Village is the largest settlement in the Parish and is classified as a 'Large Village' by Wiltshire Council in the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Large villages are settlements with a limited range of employment, services and facilities.

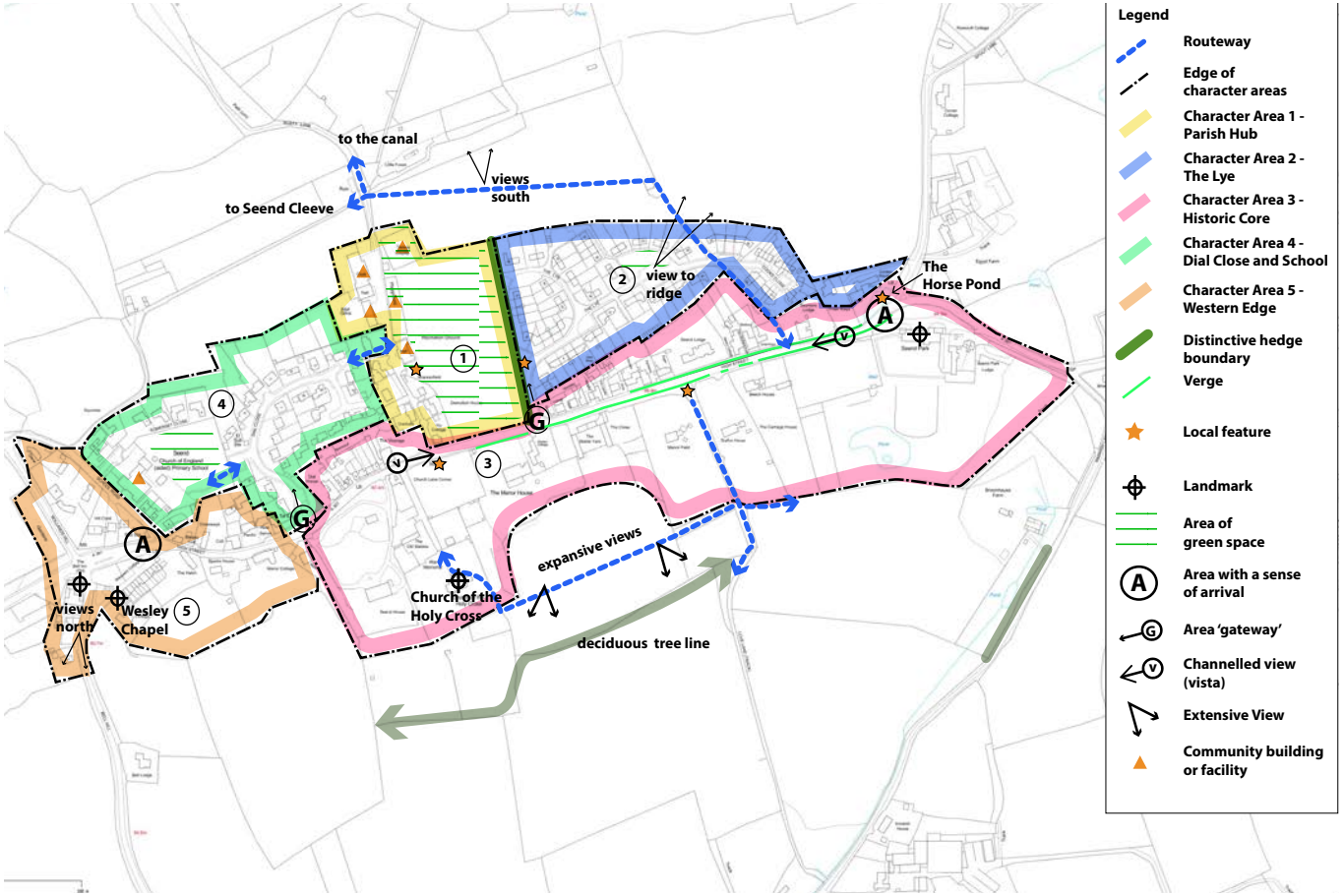
In addition to the Parish Church, the village retains a Primary School, the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, a licensed Community Centre, the Irene Usher Memorial Pavillion and the Village Stores and Post Office.

The annual village fete and sporting events are held on the Lye Field, together with other events including a Beer Festival in the Community Centre nearby, and the annual Flower Show.

Seend Village: Character Areas

- Seend Village sits along a ridge of iron-bearing Lower Greensand, which runs for approximately 1 mile.
- Almost all the Village is in the Conservation Area, though there are areas of distinctly different character.
- Two modern developments are both cul-de-sacs lying to the north of the A361.
- The buildings in these more recent areas are hidden from the High Street by the older frontage buildings.
- Dial Close and The Lye are rather suburban in their nature with buildings set in generous plots. Dial Close in particular is very green with a large number of mature trees in the older part of the cul-de-sac.
- Both these cul-de-sac areas are connected to the wider settlement via footpaths as well as roads.
- The western edge of the Conservation Area includes Factory Row, Bell Hill and School Lane and the character here is different from that of the main village, being mainly terraced or semi-detached homes.

Map 10: Seend Village - Character Areas



Seend Village Character Area 1: Parish Hub

- The Lye Recreation Field.
- Sports and recreation facilities, including the play area and tennis court.
- The collection of community buildings including the licensed Community Centre and the Irene Usher Memorial Pavilion, regularly used by local groups.
- The corrugated iron Women's Institute (WI) Hall, currently used for storage by other organisations.
- The allotments to the rear of the WI Hall.
- The narrow access of Rusty Lane, which becomes a green lane towards the north of the settlement edge and is a historic routeway for the farmers' fields to the north east.
- The southern part of the lane has a narrow, more residential character which changes as it goes north, with the large community buildings and the wider road space (unmade in parts) for parking.
- Mature trees around The Lye.
- The Millennium Garden to the side of the Irene Usher Memorial Pavilion.
- A low beech hedge provides a strong edge between The Lye Field and the housing estate.

The Irene Usher Memorial Pavillion as seen from across The Lye

WI Allotments

Seend Village Character Area 2: The Lye

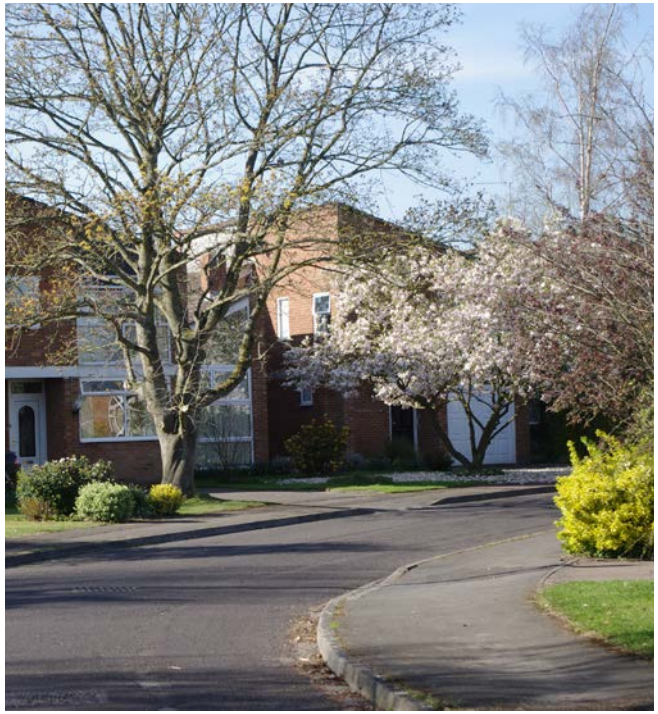
- 1950s estate of houses by Devizes Rural District Council on north side of the High Street.
- Although most of The Lye estate cannot be seen from the High Street, the houses at the edge of the Lye Field face onto the field, integrating into the wider village.
- A low beech hedge provides a strong green edge between The Lye Field and the housing estate.
- Houses are set within generous, linear plots with large back gardens and smaller front gardens.
- Some personalisation and extension of buildings has taken place, such as the introduction of porches with the event of ownership.
- There is a mixture of boundary materials ranging from hedgerows, to walls, open fences and a few closed board fences. In places the front gardens have no boundaries.
- Almost all of the boundaries are low, lending a sense of openness to the layout.
- There are a number of green spaces, though few trees (with the exception of a significant mature tree to the north west corner).
- There are a number of pedestrian links into the area, including links to The Lye field, PROWs to the north and through to the High Street in the east.
- To the east is Cooks Close where development of 1990s two storey housing and some further bungalows ends in a cul-de-sac.
- The open grain of the estate affords views out to the east, towards Roundway Down.

Seend Village Character Area 3: Historic Core

- The sense of enclosure and the vista created down the High Street, formed by the alignment of the street, with enclosure at each end and the prominence of some of the buildings close to the road, extensive brick walling and groups of trees.
- The different character of either side of the High Street; walls and manor houses set back behind walls on the south side, and buildings set close to the road on the north, with the exception of Seend Lodge and its high wall.
- The open space of The Lye to the north, with its mature trees part of the recreation field's edge to the High Street, together with the wide green verges that run mainly along both sides of the High Street are important green elements in this character area.
- The wide grass verges on either side of the High Street also provide an important function in terms of setting for the various built elements and also contribute to the sense of space.
- Well used footpaths run to the south and north of the east/west ridge. There is also a green lane (Love Lane) running south, and Rusty Lane running north at right angles to the A361.
- The fields and parkland along the southern slope of the village through which a PROW runs affords views back towards the rear of the manor houses together with extensive views to the south.
- Mature trees, many protected individually by Tree Preservation Orders are an important feature, notably:
    - The woodland, and parkland at (Seend Park Lodge) and Seend Park.
    - The lime trees and Horse Pond at Threeways.
    - The small copse opposite Threeways at Egypt Farm together with the hedgerows around the paddocks.
    - Mature trees in the grounds of the manor houses on the south side, the Holm Oaks at Beech House.
    - On the north there are also key trees including, the large Copper Beech at Seend Lodge and a Cedrus Libani at the entrance to the Lye.
    - The Oak at the top of Love Lane with a bench around the trunk.

High Street, Seend Village

The edge of The Lye field at the High Street

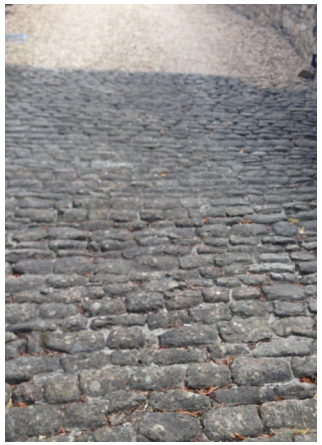


Seend Village Character Area 4: Dial Close & Seend Primary School

- 1970s development of 17 houses in the first part of Dial Close.
- Detached brick built buildings with distinctive sloping rooflines and large windows.
- The buildings are set within generous plots with front and rear gardens.
- The large front green gardens are not enclosed and many have mature plants and trees lending a sense of openness and greenery to the area.
- Cars are generally parked off street in the front of the houses.
- Many of the buildings have been adapted and personalised over time. Changes to the large and unusual fenestration are particularly noticeable.
- The school playing field is open to access from the east.
- The gently curving road turns to the east and towards Rusty Lane where the character of the area changes, with newer housing (mid 1990s) fewer trees, smaller front gardens and the introduction of boundary features in places.
- Pedestrian access through to Rusty Lane.

Seend Village Character Area 5: Western Edge

- The crossroads of Bell Hill, Bollands Hill and the A361 is a dominant feature, which together with the Bell Inn building, mark the western edge of the settlement.
- Wesley Cottage marks a gateway to the High Street and the village as a whole changes from the west as the road alignment shifts and narrows.
- Narrow pavement to one side of the High Street and a brick wall to the other side creates a sense of enclosure.
- Traffic speed and noise is a dominant feature at the pinch point space of the High Street.
- There are a number of distinctive historic buildings in this area, notably along the quiet Factory Row, with its distinctive three storey brick built houses of around 1815 and the Methodist Chapel of 1774.
- There are historic features intact, such as cobbles and signage.



Seend Village Summary

Character and Distinctiveness

- An elevated ridgetop village with long and extensive views in all directions.
- Visually contained by mature trees and landscape, which form an extremely important part of the setting of both the village and individual properties.
- The High Street's distinct sense of enclosure created by the alignment of the road at each end and extensive brick walling and groups of trees.
- The large open spaces, gardens and open setting of Seend's 20th Century housing create a distinctly contrasting 'open grain' to parts of the village beyond the High Street.
- The outstanding collective value of Seend High Street historic buildings.
- Varied, authentic and well designed building forms and styles enable a distinctly legible development morphology.
- Common use of a mix of brick, painted brick and render, simple pitched roofs with gable ends and stone window surrounds and quoins.

Issues and Enhancement Priorities

- Whilst little in Seend Village is noted as being harmful to its character and the scope for enhancement considered limited, where changes are proposed they should be designed to reflect the intrinsic character of the relevant character area of the Village using materials and details that maintain an enhance positive characteristics.
- Measures to reduce the impact of traffic volume and speed on the local environment, notably HGVs, using the High Street A361, especially in the western end before entering the main straight section of the High Street. There are no strong gateway features or cues to slow drivers when entering the village.
- Removal of obtrusive electricity and telephone wires across streets harmful to conservation area setting.
- Resist loss of distinctive hedge and stone boundary treatments with inappropriate materials such as close-board fencing (potential for guidance).
- Prevention of erosion of the green verges by parking.

Parish Settlements

Seend Cleeve

Seend Cleeve is classified by Wiltshire planning policy as a ‘Small Village’ in the Wiltshire Core Strategy. It was once briefly the focus of much industrial activity. The Seend section of the Kennet and Avon canal runs to the north of the settlement which is a key asset of the Parish. A wharf was located west of the village where the Barge Inn now stands.

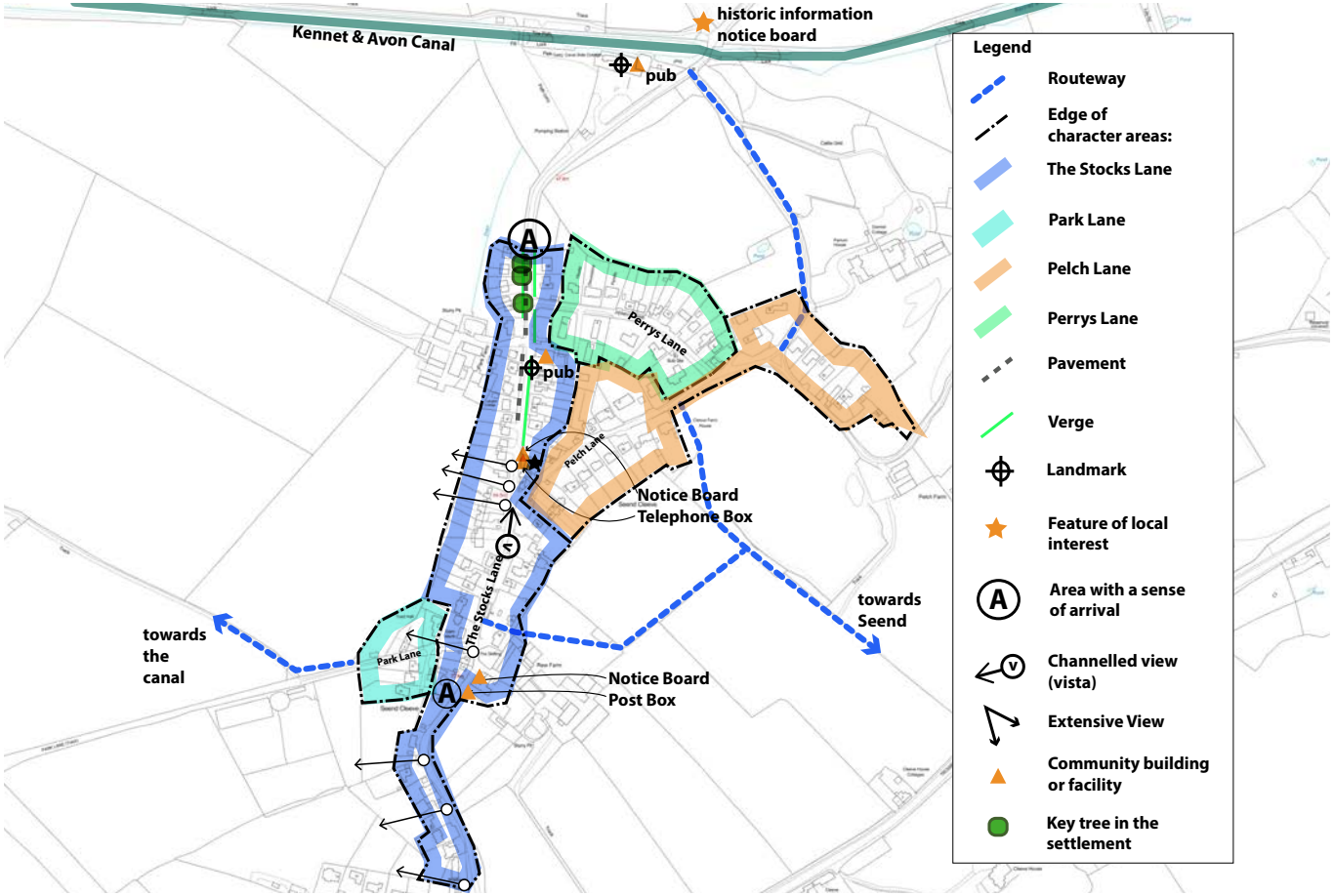
The Seend Cleeve Quarry was a source of brown haematite and since 1987 the quarry has been a Geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

It lies on the north facing slopes of the major ridgeline. A series of footpaths connect the village with the wider landscape and provides opportunities for a network of circular routes. Views from the perimeter footpaths are extensive over the surrounding valleys.

Seend Cleeve: Character Areas

- Four Character Areas have been identified within Seend Cleeve, shown on Map 11.
- It is separated from Seend Village and Seend Head by a series of landscape gaps.
- Unmarked narrow lanes are a key feature of Seend Cleeve and there is only one pavement (at the northern part of The Stocks Lane).
- Low stone walls and hedges are common boundary features. Spoil from the iron ore smelting process can be seen in some of the walls which line the road.
- The houses are close together generally in narrow, long plots.
- A prominent large house just to east of Seend Cleeve, Ferrum House, over-looked the iron works. It was built in the mid 19th Century and remodelled in the 20th Century.
- There is a mixture of materials, but the most usual material is brick and there is a common theme of stone quoin detailing.
- Buildings are mainly residential and two storey or 1.5 storey, a mixture of ages, but mainly 19th and 20th Century, detached and semi-detached in narrow, long plots.
- There are two public houses: The Barge Inn on the Kennet and Avon Canal and the listed Brewery Inn, located within the small village, which are patronized by local people as well as people from the boating community and the surrounding area.

Map 11: Seend Cleeve - Character Areas



Character Area 1: The Stocks Lane

- The dwellings at 'The Stocks' straddle the A361 forming the southern edge of the village and are evident in views from the south.
- A linear settlement with houses on the west side of The Stocks Lane generally set back and lower from the road level.
- Views over the Avon Vale towards Melksham can be glimpsed between buildings on higher ground to the south west.
- There are some distinctive buildings here including narrow brick houses, and the Methodist Chapel and Sunday school. It was rebuilt in 1849 in red brick with ashlar quoins. The chapel closed in 1979 and is currently being converted into a private house.

Character Area 2: Perry's Lane

- Perry's Lane is an unmade lane sloping down the ridge east to west. Dwellings are more concentrated on the north side and the lane has a distinct 'green' and organic character.

Character Area 3: Pelch Lane

- The western part of the lane has an enclosed feeling with buildings close to the road on the north side and cars parked along the lane.
- The character becomes increasingly rural as you progress eastwards, with houses along one side only bounded by low stone walls with hedgerows to the other side.

Character Area 4: Park Lane

- A small self contained area of 20th Century housing.

Seend Cleeve, looking south towards Brewery Inn

Seend Cleeve, looking north with Pelch Lane on the right

Seend Cleeve: Summary

Character and Distinctiveness

- A series of footpaths connect the village with the wider landscape and provides opportunities for a network of circular routes.
- Views from the perimeter footpaths are extensive over the surrounding valleys.
- Views to and from the canal.
- Unmarked narrow lanes contribute to a strong rural character.
- Linear settlement form that is compactly arranged in often long and narrow plots, with glimpsed views between houses over the Avon Vale.
- There is no clear focal point, though the listed building of the pub is a key building.
- Nearby Seend Cleeve Quarry is a Geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Key Issues and Enhancement Priorities

- Management of on street parking along Pelch Lane, The Stocks Lane and Seend Cleeve which make walking unsafe and driving difficult.
- Retaining public access to the right of way between Seend Cleeve and the canal and community.
- Retaining glimpses to the wider landscape between buildings to the east.
- There are no clear gateways to Seend Cleeve and to the north, the settlement edge is clear but not well defined and suburban in nature with the street lighting, pavement together with the style of buildings at the edge. This is though softened with the mature trees.
- The relationship to the nearby canal is important.
- Speed and volume of traffic going through the settlement, much of which is to the Barge Inn.

Looking north towards the southern edge of Seend Cleeve

Parish Settlements

Sells Green & Martinslade

Like Seend Cleeve, Sells Green is situated at the base of the escarpment in the Avon Vale. This small settlement is built mainly close to the canal and along the A365. The settlement pattern is clustered around the road corridors with parking being a combination of on and off street.

It is connected with Seend Village via the narrow Spout Lane and its hump back bridge over the canal.

The tourist trade is significant and serviced by a caravan site that is open all year, together with a small shop.

Two bus services stop on the A365 close to the centre of habitation. There is also a school bus service to the secondary school in Melksham.

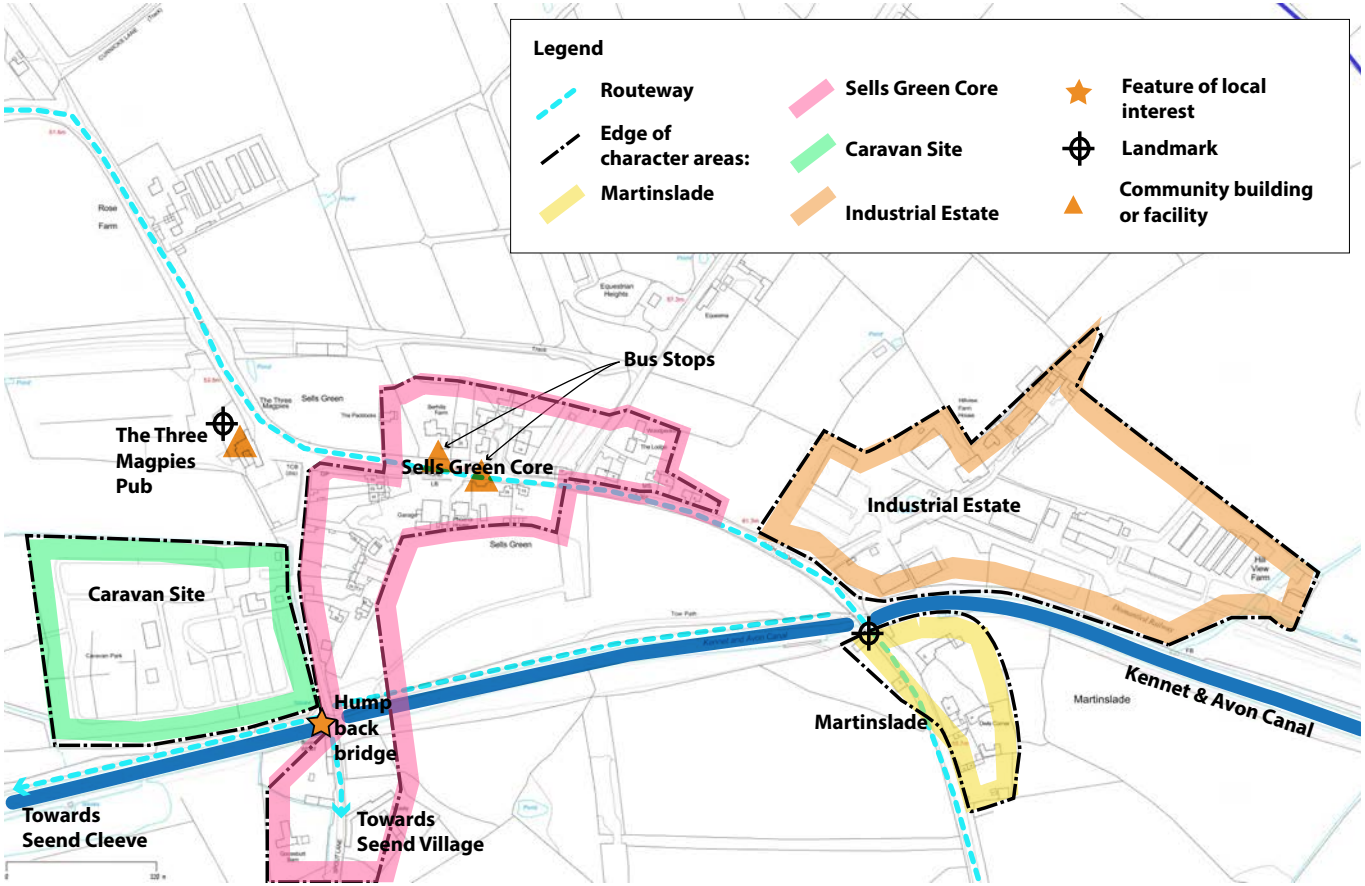
Agriculture is a dominant activity, but there is also some industry located in an industrial estate along the A365 which is a designated freight route.

As in many parts of Britain the canal and railway run next to each other along valleys, the railway having replaced the canal's function. This is true of Sells Green where both passed through a farm. When the canal fell into disuse and the railway was later axed, uses had to be found for the railway station site (Bromham and Rowde station), the adjacent sawmill and the cattle loading shed.

There are four distinct character areas, but it is predominantly a cluster of dwellings and business premises straddling the A365 and related to the canal.

The Three Magpies pub is a listed building and forms a key landmark building in views along the A365 from the west.

Map 12: Sells Green and Martinslade - Character Areas



Sells Green Character Area 1: Industrial

- A general industrial site.
- Several companies are now located on the site, some with new buildings typical of any industrial site and some making use of old farm and early industrial buildings and temporary facilities such as old containers.
- Some agriculture is still practised on the site, some modern industry and some industry which is definitely not modern.
- There is land between the old railway embankment that is a wonderful haven for wildlife.
- An excellent amenity for walking and riding, and the disused civil engineering works is of interest to canal and railway students.
- The canal towpath running along the side of the canal is also used for walking, cycling and fishing.
- An important area with significance in the heritage, wildlife and future industry of the Parish.

Sells Green Character Area 2: Caravan Site

- The caravan site accessed off Spout Lane is key tourist destination and is well contained in the valley landscape, due to the perimeter tree belts.

Sells Green Character Area 3: Sells Green Core

- The busy A365 runs through the core of this area where pavements, bus stops and The Three Magpies pub, together with small number of houses are located.
- The small number of houses along the A365 are arranged in different formations, from a small cul-de-sac, to a row of terraces, to individual gable ends and closed board fencing.
- There is also an industrial building with a car park to the front and signage which is a key building along the road.
- To the south of the A365 is Spout Lane, which is a narrow lane rural in character with much vegetation.
- A timber framed house, Moiety, dating to before 1450 is one of the oldest houses in the Parish, and is located just off Spout Lane.
- The houses on the south side of the A365 have a more organic layout, with gardens backing onto Spout Lane. The frontage of houses here does not face the lane.
- The hump back bridge that goes over the canal is a key feature here, from which views down and along the waterway can appreciated.

Sells Green Character Area 4: Martinslade

- A small and distinct area along the A365.
- Houses are set within big plots with trees and gardens bounded by low walls
- Low walls also define the bridge which crosses the canal, both sides of which can be accessed by pedestrians.
- Two houses have direct access to the canal.

Sells Green & Martinslade: Summary

Character and Distinctiveness

- Distinct hamlet within Avon Vale topography with strong canal-side relationship.
- The canal is as a key element on Green Infrastructure threading through Sells Green.
- Rich and interesting industrial heritage linked to the canal and former railway line.
- Significant tourist trade and caravan site that is open all year.

Issues and Enhancement Priorities

- Harmful impact of traffic on the A365, which is a designated freight route and the main route connecting Melksham to Devizes and beyond, may be worsened as a result of increased house numbers in Melksham.
- The industrial sheds and equipment harms the character of the canal-side.
- Spout Lane is liable to be treacherous in winter, due to the persistent run off from a Spring. Gullies need to be maintained and improved.

6 Character Areas

This Statement identifies areas of shared characteristics and sense of place.

Development should reflect and reinforce the sense of place in its Character Area drawing on identified cues such as settlement pattern, architectural details and relationship to the landscape.

7 Approporiate Building Form and Materials

Whilst there is much variety expressing the various stages of settlement development across the Parish, the palette of materials is limited to brick, stone, render and tiles, and buildings are generally two storey with simple roof forms and chimneys.

The choice of building massing, appearance and materials should be demonstrated to reference this guidance and complement and enhance the quality and character of the neighbouring character areas.

Orange brick laid in an English Garden Wall bond. A common colour and bond, particularly in Seend Cleeve

Stone quions dress the corners of many buildings of differnet ages across the Parish

Stone architraves also form part of the palette of detailing acros the Parish

Painted brickwork

Decorative brickwork (in a Flemish Bond) with bricks used to define scale and details on the windows and chimney

Brick quoin and architrave detailing to stone buildings

Dressed stone features in Seend especially for the larger buidings, togther with the more common combination of brick and stone

Simple roof form, with stone detailing to building corners and windows are also seen in more recent buildings

Semi-detached houses, again with simple roof forms, using brick and stone

8 Maintaining and Conserving Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments vary across the Parish and within settlements, from enclosed with high brick walls, to open and landscaped front gardens. Together with building siting, the boundary treatment is therefore extremely important in defining the distinct character areas within settlements.

Boundary treatments and landscape should respond to and reinforce the distinct approach of the character area it is located within.

9 Contemporary Design

Seend Parish's diversity of built form reflects its development throughout its history. New development proposals need not imitate earlier architectural periods or styles.

Proposals that demonstrate the use of contemporary design employing high quality materials found locally, such as stone and brick in innovative ways, will be encouraged.

Boundary walls in Seend Cleeve feature slag and mill stones

Brick and stone walls are common throughout the parish

Stone walls contribute to a rural sense of place

Tall brick walls of the High Street in Seend Village are a key defining characteristic

Trees, together with boundary walls play a key role in settlement character

In some character areas, a different approach to private space brings a distinct sense of character

Dressed stone features in Seend especially for the larger buidings, togther with the more common combination of brick and stone

Buildings which belong to distinct architectural eras can be found in Seend - the layout and materials still sensitive to the setting

Though the roof form is not a common characteristic, this newer building in Seend still nods to the common pallet of materials

6 KENNET AND AVON CANAL

The Kennet and Avon Canal is a key feature of the Parish. Many canal boats pass along this popular route, and are moored at points along the Seend Parish stretch. It is also popular with walkers and cyclists as part of the National Cycle Network 4 and the West Wiltshire Way.

Routeways from the wider Parish link to and over the canal with swing bridges, which afford good access to both banks of the canal and local amenities.

There are a number of facilities near the canal for visitors and the communities who live on or near this important waterway. In this Seend stretch, important boating facilities are provided by the Canal and Rivers Trust located near the Barge Inn and the Caravan Park, which include refuse and recyling, water and elsan points, as well as moorings.

Only three buildings are located directly on the banks of the canal; the Barge Inn, Lock Cottage and the cottage adjacent to the Spout Lane bridge. The predominant character of the canal in Seend Parish is an open one with expansive views of the

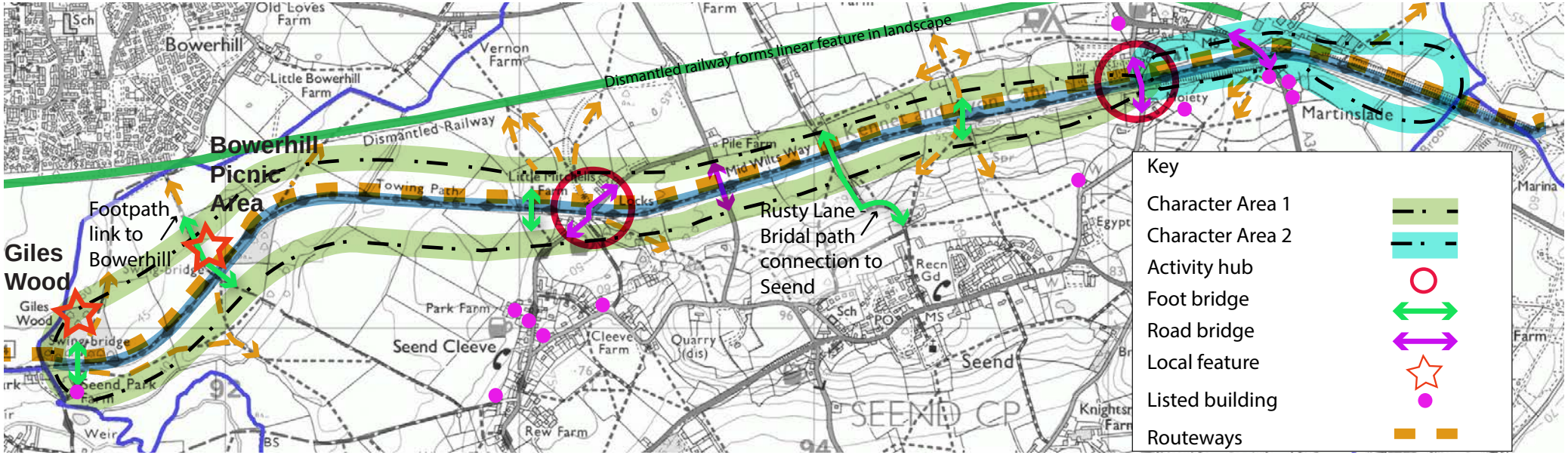
The canal from near Bowerhill Residents Picnic Site with an open character and expansive views towards Seend Cleeve

countryside, though there is a more enclosed and intimate character in the east.

Along with an 'Activity Hub' at the Barge Inn, two distinct areas of character have been identified:

- Canal Character Area 1: Giles Wood to Sells Green
- Character Area 2: Sells Green to Martinslade

Map 13: Kennet and Avon Canal - Character Areas



Canal Character Area 1: Giles Wood to Sells Green

This section of the canal is characteristed by its open and panoramic views and by wide, well-maintained footpaths for both pedestrians and cyclists. There are only three places where buildings are directly adjacent to the canal; the Barge Inn at Seend Cleeve, Lock Cottage off Bollands Hill and the cottage adjacent to the hump bridge on Spout Lane. Seend Park Farm is located close to the canal, and the listed farm building can be seen from the canal.

Open views especially to the south aspect afford panoramas towards Littleton, Seend Cleeve, and where the hedges have gaps north towards Melksham.

Many rights of way link into the canal towpath and to the surrounding landscapes and residential areas. This, together with the frequent pedestrian bridges, affords good access to both banks of the canal and local amenities. This includes recreational areas such as Giles Wood and Bowerhill Residents Picnic Site which are rich in diverse habitats and popular with locals and tourists. Signage is good towards local amenities and settlements.

An activity hub surrounds the Barge Inn, where together with the pub, facilities for people who holiday or live on barges can be accessed. There is also a car park and information boards about Seend's industrial heritage.

Other significant heritage assets include remnants of WWII pillboxes, which can be seen along this section of the canal.

The Caravan site, which lies between Sells Green and the canal is well screened by vegetation.

Seen from the bridge crossing the canal, this area is an activity hub with the Barge to the left and boater facilities to the right

Frequent pedestrian bridges link both sides of the canal

Good signage links the canal to the rest of the Parish

Character Area 2: Sells Green to Martinslade

This area starts as you go through the tunnel under Spout Lane and runs east to the Parish boundary.

The footpath becomes narrower to the east of the Spout Lane Bridge and less well maintained. This section is initially more enclosed by trees and hedges and has a more secluded atmosphere.

Some properties border the canal to the south bank. On the north bank between Spout Lane and Hill View Farm, there are commercial enterprises adjacent to the footpath. Here the industrial edge detracts from the positive character of the canal with a metal fence, scrubby vegetation and views through to machinery and industrial units.

After Hill View Farm the views again open up towards Seend, Devizes and Roundway Down. The Parish boundary stops just before the New Caen Hill Marina which can be seen on the south of the canal.

Cultivated areas where private gardens extend to the canal's edge

Looking towards Martinslade from Spout Lane, mature trees and hedges enclose the space. The footpath is much narrower here

Once past the industrial estate the canal once again opens up with views along the canal and beyond

Abrupt edge of the industrial estate does not contribute positively to the canalside character

Kennet and Avon Canal: Summary

Character and Distinctiveness

- Generally open in character with frequent extensive views to the surrounding landscape.
- Buildings, structures and vegetation enclose the canal in a few places.
- The footpaths on the sides of the canal are part of national routes for both pedestrians and cyclists which are well-maintained and accessible.
- Crossing points are frequent.
- It is a focus of activity for different communities.
- This section of the canal provides important facilities for both holiday makers and people who live on the canal.

Issues and Enhancement Priorities

- The setting, or the surroundings in which the canal is experienced, is also important to bear in mind when considering issues or enhancement priorities. Topography is a key consideration when thinking about the setting of the canal in Seend Parish: the canal sits a low lying part of the Parish (between 60 and 50m contour lines; to the south the ridge of Seend rises up steeply to over the 90m line; to the north the land is relatively flat and low lying. As such the 'setting' of the canal could be considered to extend as far as high ground of the Seend ridge to the south and to the old railway line to the north. The extent of the setting is not fixed however and may change over time. The contribution made by elements of the setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the character of canal.
- The abrupt industrial edge on the north bank of the canal Character Area 2 is obtrusive and makes a negative contribution to the overall positive character of the canal corridor.
- Protection and enhancement of the historic and biodiversity assets associated with the canal are needed to optimise its ecological value and manage pressure from tourism.
- Access to and along the canal should be maintained and potentially improved where opportunities permit.

10 The Canal

The Kennet and Avon Canal is a historic and beautiful thread passing through the Avon Vale. Its landscape and biodiversity are key assets to the Parish as is the life and economy that the canal brings. Change and investment along this heritage route is delivered in a sensitive and appropriate form that enhances the environment for people and wildlife and makes the canal accessible.

Development along the canal should:
(i) respect, improve and where possible enhance the Canal's character, setting, biodiversity and historic value;
(ii) maintain or improve access to and along the Canal which encourages use for transport, sport, leisure and recreational purposes; and
(iii) not result in the loss of any buildings, locks or other structures originally associated with the Canal.

7 Summary

1 Pre-application Engagement
Parties considering development proposals are expected to engage in early dialogue with the Parish Council, as set out in the Parish Council's adopted Pre-application Community Involvement Protocol which is available on the Parish Council website.

2 Conserving Seend Parish's Distinct Qualities
Proposals should be supported by analysis and evidence, including advice within this Character Statement, to demonstrate how proposals contribute to conserving and enhancing Seend Parish's distinctive character. Proposals that are considered to achieve this will be supported.

3 Conservation Area and Parish Heritage Assets
Development and environmental management and infrastructure proposals within the Conservation Area will be expected to demonstrate how they have referenced both the Seend Parish Character Statement and the Seend Draft Conservation Area Statement to produce schemes that conserve and enhance its character and fabric.

Proposals for development in the wider Parish will be expected to conserve heritage assets recorded on the site and the setting of heritage assets immediately adjacent to the proposal site.

4 Protection of Seend Parish Rural Landscape
Proposals for development within the Parish should demonstrate how it contributes to the conservation or enhancement of the character and local distinctiveness of the Parish landscape.

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Character of Settlement Edges
New development and alterations to buildings, infrastructure and landscape will be expected to conserve and enhance the rural character, biodiversity and tranquility of Seend Parish.

Development affecting the transitional edges between the settlements and countryside will be expected to protect and enhance the quality and biodiversity of the settlement boundary and appearance of the settlement when viewed from the surrounding landscape.

Proposals should include boundary landscape that conserves and reinforces existing boundary hedgerow and trees, and, where deemed necessary, plant new hedgerow and boundary trees to create green connections with existing hedgerows or wooded areas in the surrounding countryside. Proposals for development that creates a new settlement boundary will be expected to commit to manage and maintain the rural edge landscape in perpetuity.

6 Character Areas
Development should reflect and reinforce the sense of place in its Character Area drawing on identified cues such as settlement pattern, architectural details and relationship to the landscape.

7 Appropriate Building Form and Materials
The choice of building massing, appearance and materials should be demonstrated to reference this guidance, and complement and enhance the quality and character of the neighbouring character areas.

8 Maintaining and Conserving Boundary Treatments
Boundary treatments and landscape should respond to and reinforce the distinct approach of the character area it is located within.

9 Contemporary Design
Proposals that demonstrate contemporary design employing high quality local materials, such as stone and brick in innovative ways, will be encouraged.

10 The Canal
Development along the canal should:
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8 REFERENCES

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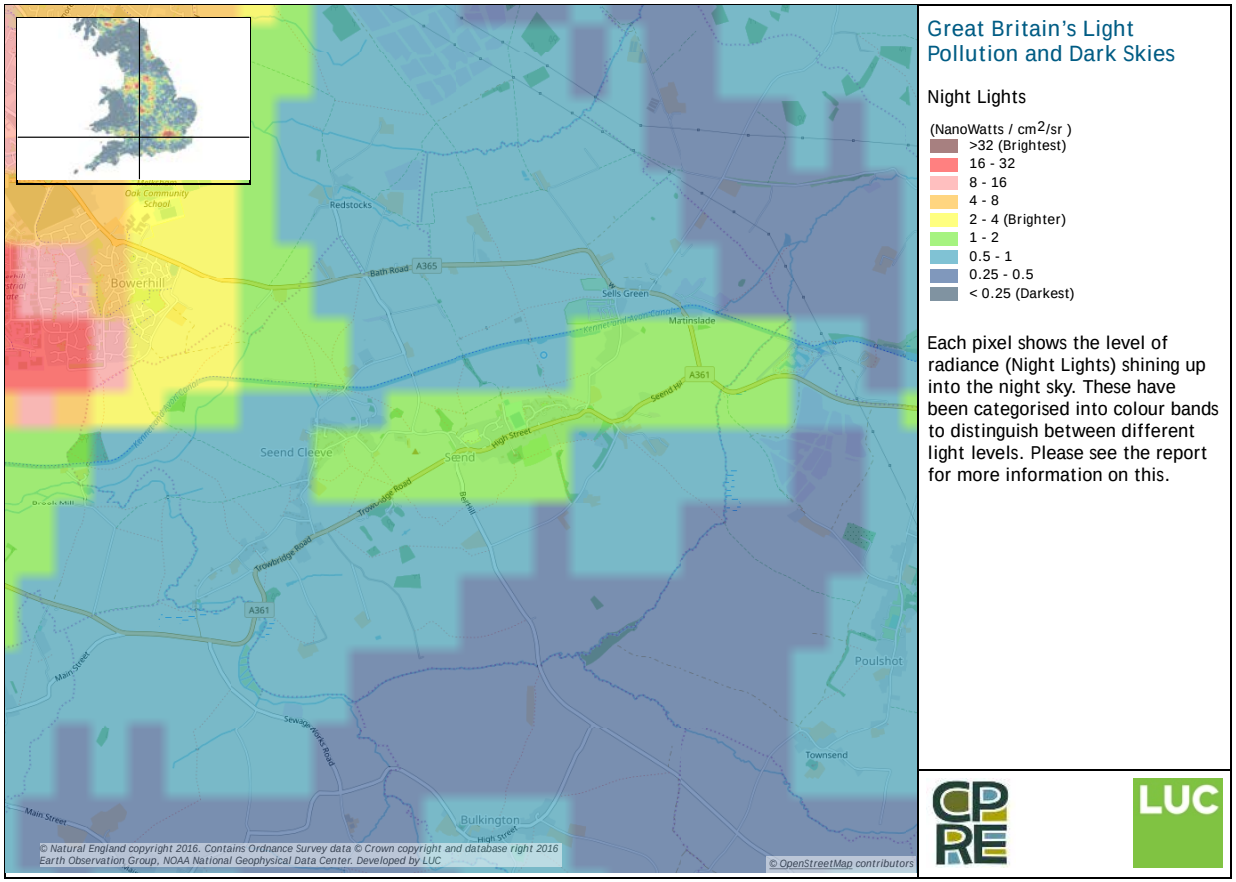

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