

Bath & North East Somerset

Local Plan (Core Strategy /Placemaking Plan) 2011-2029

Partial Update

Draft Plan (Reg 19) Consultation

August 2021

**Topic Paper: Policy GB2 Development in
Green Belt villages**

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

Improving People's Lives

Topic Paper: Policy Update GB2, Development in Green Belt Villages

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Topic Paper explains the background to the proposed policy approach to the update of policy GB2, development in Green Belt villages as part of the Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU).
- 1.2. Policy GB2 relates to infill residential development in villages within and 'washed over' by the Green Belt. Following the LPPU Options Consultation, the approach of defining infill boundaries for Green Belt villages was favoured and has therefore been taken forward. This has included, for relevant villages, reviewing and redefining existing Housing Development Boundaries (HDBs) as Infill Boundaries and for other villages with no HDB currently, assessing and defining an Infill Boundary if appropriate.
- 1.3. This Topic Paper outlines:
 - a. Policy Context
 - b. Methodology for defining Infill Boundaries
- 1.4. A series of consultations with Parish Councils and B&NES Councillors on the Local Development Framework (LDF) Steering Group has taken place through the process of updating policy GB2.

2. Policy context

- 2.1. The update to policy GB2 is required to be more in line with the NPPF, which states that development within the Green Belt is considered inappropriate, with the exception of 'limited infilling in villages' (paragraph 149.e).
- 2.2. The current GB2 policy is as follows:

“Development in villages in the Green Belt will not be permitted unless it is limited to infilling and in the case of residential development the proposal is within the defined Housing Development Boundary”
- 2.3. The current policy relies on HDBs and also separates residential development from other development. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF does not rely on or reference HDBs, nor does it specify residential development. The policy is therefore required to be updated.
- 2.4. A recent court of appeal judgement has also led to the need to update policy GB2. The decision concluded that the assessment of whether development is 'infill' is one of planning judgement. A defined settlement boundary is found to not be determinative in assessing what constitutes infill development. There is therefore a need for infill boundaries to be defined to give a clear indication as to where infill

development could be acceptable, but that the policy also requires development to meet the definition of infill (see para 2.6 below).

- 2.5. The proposed policy approach will define infill boundaries for all villages washed over by the Green Belt and will state that new development in villages in the Green Belt will not be permitted unless it is limited to infilling (see below) and is within the defined Infill Boundary.
- 2.6. Any proposed infill development within an infill boundary will have to meet the definition of infill as defined in the Core Strategy to be considered acceptable. The definition includes:
- a) The building of one or two houses on a small vacant plot in an otherwise extensively built-up frontage
 - b) The plot will generally be surrounded on at least three sides by developed sites or roads

2.7. Proposed new GB2 policy wording:

“New buildings in villages in the Green Belt will not be permitted unless it is limited to infilling and is located within the defined Infill Boundary.”

2.9 The new policy wording removes reference to HDB's and also encompasses all 'new buildings' as per the NPPF wording.

3. Methodology

- 3.1. The methodology devised for defining infill boundaries for the update to Policy GB2 covers both redefining HDB's as infill boundaries, and the assessment of other Green Belt settlements in order to determine whether they constitute a village and whether an Infill Boundary would be suitable.
- 3.2. Villages within the Green belt with an existing HDB were identified. The boundaries were reviewed against the existing criteria for defining HDBs in order to take account of any changes in circumstances since they were last defined through the adopted Placemaking Plan and then in terms of identifying and delineating infill opportunities (see below). The HDB criteria include:
- a) Tightly defined around housing, excluding non-housing uses on the edge of the settlement
 - b) May be appropriate to define two or more separate boundaries – exclude small clusters of housing (less than 10 dwellings)
 - c) Include existing housing commitments
 - d) Include land within residential curtilages, except large gardens or other open areas which are visually detached from settlement
 - e) Exclude playing fields or open space at settlement edge
 - f) Exclude large gardens or other areas at the settlement edge where development or intensification would harm character
 - g) Exclude developments which are visually detached from the settlement (including farm/agricultural buildings which relate more to the countryside)

- h) Exclude holiday accommodation or other housing permitted through farm diversification schemes
- i) Exclude significant employment sites at the settlement edge

3.3. Further to the above review, opportunities for infill development were then identified and assessed to ensure they will delineate only those parts of the village where infill opportunities exist and exclude areas where development would not be infill.

3.4. The Green Belt villages with HDBs which were reviewed and redefined as infill boundaries, as well as a brief description of the HDB changes proposed are set out in Annex 1.

3.5. In order to identify villages in the Green Belt that do not have an existing HDB where an infill boundary might be suitable, heat mapping was used to initially identify clusters of residential housing which include 10 or more dwellings. These settlements were considered as 'candidate villages' for an infill boundary.

3.6. The next stage is to consider whether these housing clusters constitute a village and therefore, whether an infill boundary could be defined.

3.7. Within a recent planning appeal (APP/B3438/W/18/3211000) an Inspector considered what constituted a village, and the difference between a village and a hamlet, using the Oxford Dictionary definition. The inspector stated:

"The Oxford Dictionary defines a village as a group of houses and associated buildings, larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town, situated in a rural area. It defines a hamlet as a small settlement, generally one smaller than a village and strictly (in Britain) one without a Church"

3.8. The approach to defining a village as part of the update to GB2 has therefore been influenced by this appeal judgement. Each candidate village has been reviewed to identify whether an active place of worship is located within the settlement. If so, the settlement is considered to be a village and therefore will have an Infill Boundary.

3.9. In addition to this an active village or parish hall has also been used as a determining factor when assessing whether the settlement constitutes a village. The settlement must therefore have an active place of worship, and/or an active village hall in order to be considered a village.

3.10. Those settlements recognised as villages have been assessed against the criteria noted in paragraph 3.2. All proposed infill boundaries are tightly defined around the village edge to avoid village expansion, and to allow small scale development to come forward when limited to infilling.

3.11. Parish councils have been informally consulted on the proposed boundaries prior to formal consultation. Parish councils were invited to view the proposed infill boundaries and discuss these with officers.

3.12. Some minor amendments were made to in response to comments raised by parish councils.

3.13. All candidate settlements and their assessment of whether they are considered to be a village and suitable for an infill boundary are noted within Annex 2.

3.14. All new and redefined Infill Boundaries are located within Annex 1 & 2, along with maps within Annex 3 and 4.

Annex 1: Proposed HDB changes in defining an Infill Boundary

| Village | Details of change |
|---------------------|--|
| Chew Magna | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal land to the rear of dwellings on the east of Chillyhill Lane • Removal of land to the east of Rookston House • Removal of land to the south of 22 High Street |
| Chew Stoke | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of land to the north west of Mill House |
| Claverton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General realigning with site boundaries • Removal of site to the west of The Vinery |
| Combe Hay | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of land west of Brook House |
| Corston | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of lead to the north of St Teresa's Nursing Home • Removal of land to the north of School House and west of Greystones |
| Englishcombe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of land to the north and west of Blakes Farm • Removal of land to the south east of Nursery Views |
| Freshford | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change |
| Hinton Charterhouse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change |
| Kelston | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change |
| Limpley Stoke | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change |
| Marksbury | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change |
| Monkton Combe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of land north west of Eddystone • Removal of land south east of Woodbine Cottage |
| Newton St Loe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of whole site east of Newton Farm |
| Pensford | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change |
| Priston | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General realigning with site boundaries • Separation into a west and eastern boundary • Inclusion of Walnut Tree Hill • Removal of land east of The Calf House |
| Sharpstone | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of the Broadfields site and the Woodwyck House • Removal of north of Little Mead • Removal of land north of Tying House • Separation to a west and east boundary |
| Shoscombe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of site north east of Glencoe • Inclusion of site south of Chapel House • Alignment with boundary south of properties on St Julian's Road • Alignment with boundary of properties Tanquery, Bluebell Cottage and Wellaway • Inclusion of sites north east of Green Acres |
| South Stoke | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General realigning with site boundaries |
| Stanton Drew | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of St Mary's Church and Church Farm |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Tunley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of housing to West (Overdale and Tunley Farm), requested by Parish Council |
| Upper Swainswick | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General realigning with site boundaries |
| Wellow | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General realigning with site boundaries to south |

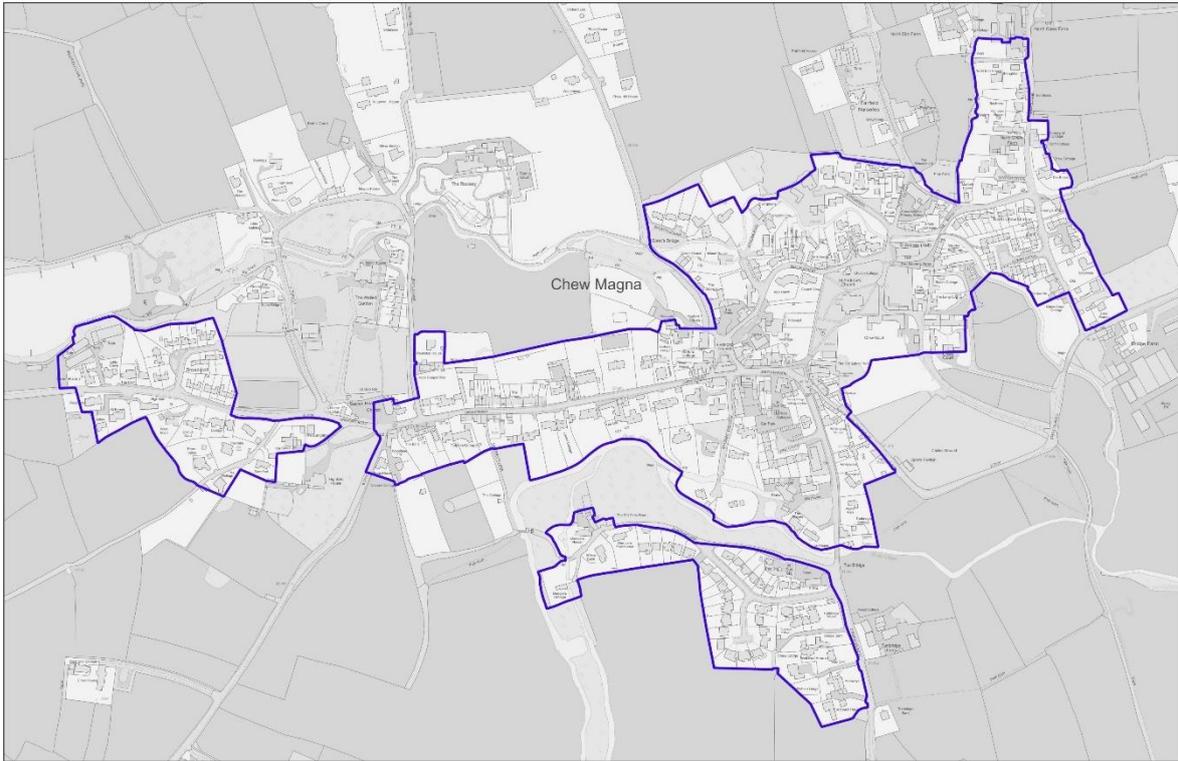
Annex 2: Candidate Villages

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Belluton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |
| Burnett | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church – St Michael’s Church. • Infill Boundary defined. |
| Chelwood | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church – St Leonard’s Church. • Village Hall • Infill Boundary defined. |
| Chew Stoke (South) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |
| Compton Dando | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church – St Mary’s Church. • Village Hall • Infill Boundary defined. |
| Dunkerton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church – All Saints’ Church. • Parish Hall • Infill Boundary defined. |
| Hunstrete | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |
| Hursley Hill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |
| Inglesbatch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |
| Midford | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |
| Nempnett Thrubwell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet • Village Hall not within clustered settlement, visually separated. • No infill boundary defined |
| North Stoke | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church – St Martin’s Church. • Infill Boundary defined. |
| Norton Hawkfield | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |
| Norton Malreward | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church – Holy Trinity Church. • Village Hall • Infill Boundary defined. |
| Queen Charlton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church – Church of St Margaret. • Infill Boundary defined. |
| St Catherine | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church identified but settlement is dispersed (no cluster). No infill boundary defined. |
| Stanton Prior | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church – Church of St Lawrence. • Infill Boundary defined. |
| Stanton Wick | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |
| Stowey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active church identified to south but not within clustered residential area - No infill boundary defined. |
| Woollard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No church – considered to be a hamlet |

| | |
|---------|---|
| Woolley | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active church – All Saints Church.• Infill Boundary defined. |
|---------|---|

Annex 3: Redefined Housing Development Boundaries to Infill Boundaries

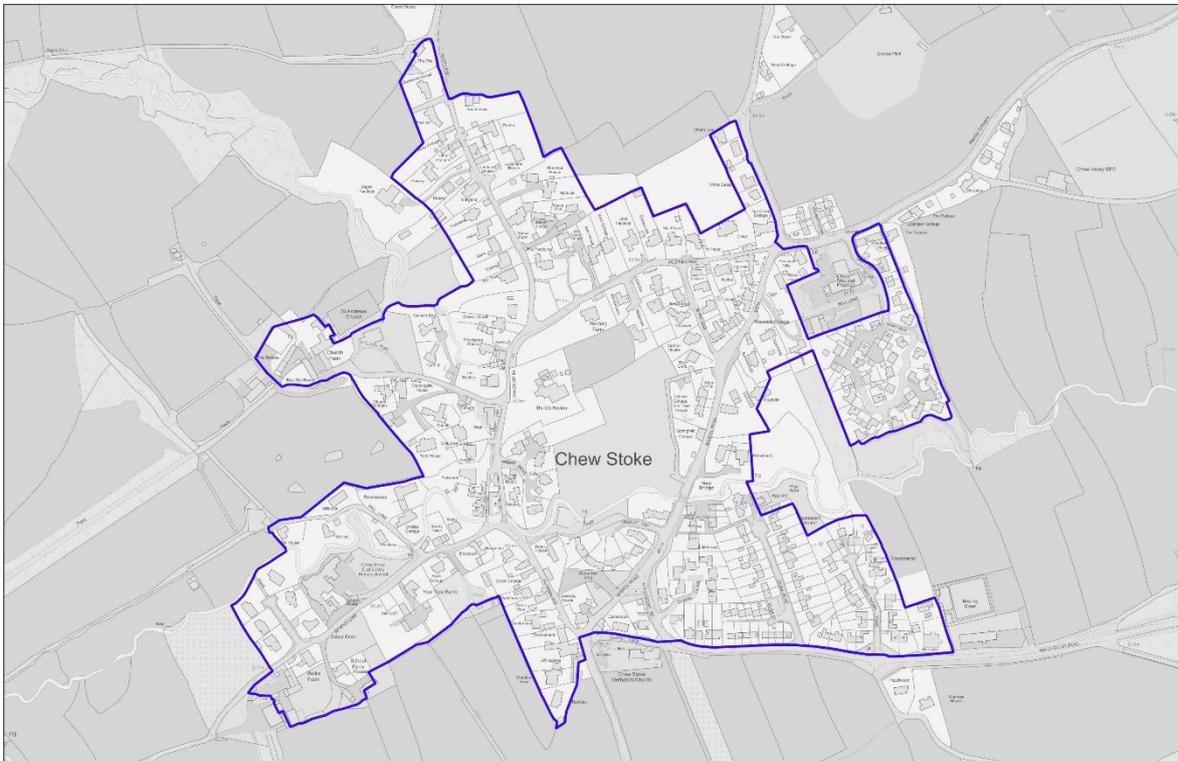
Infill Village Boundary - Chew Magna
Local Plan Partial Update - August 2021



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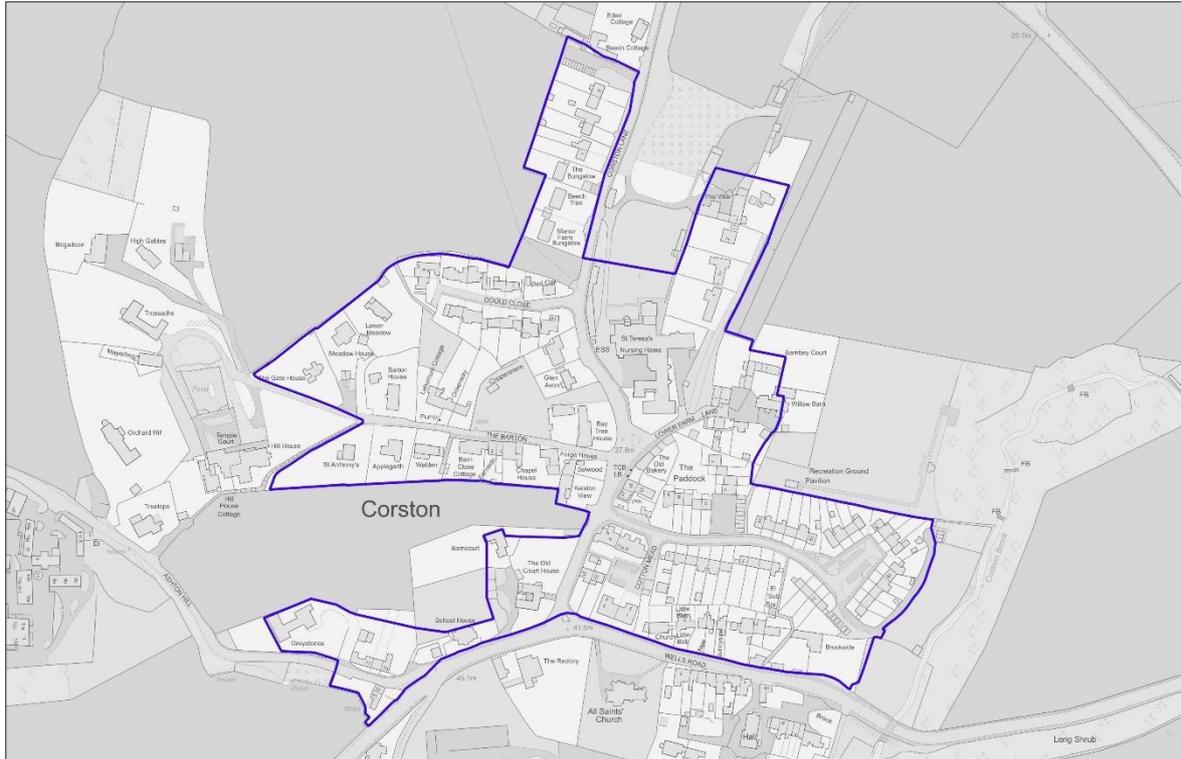
Infill Village Boundary - Chew Stoke
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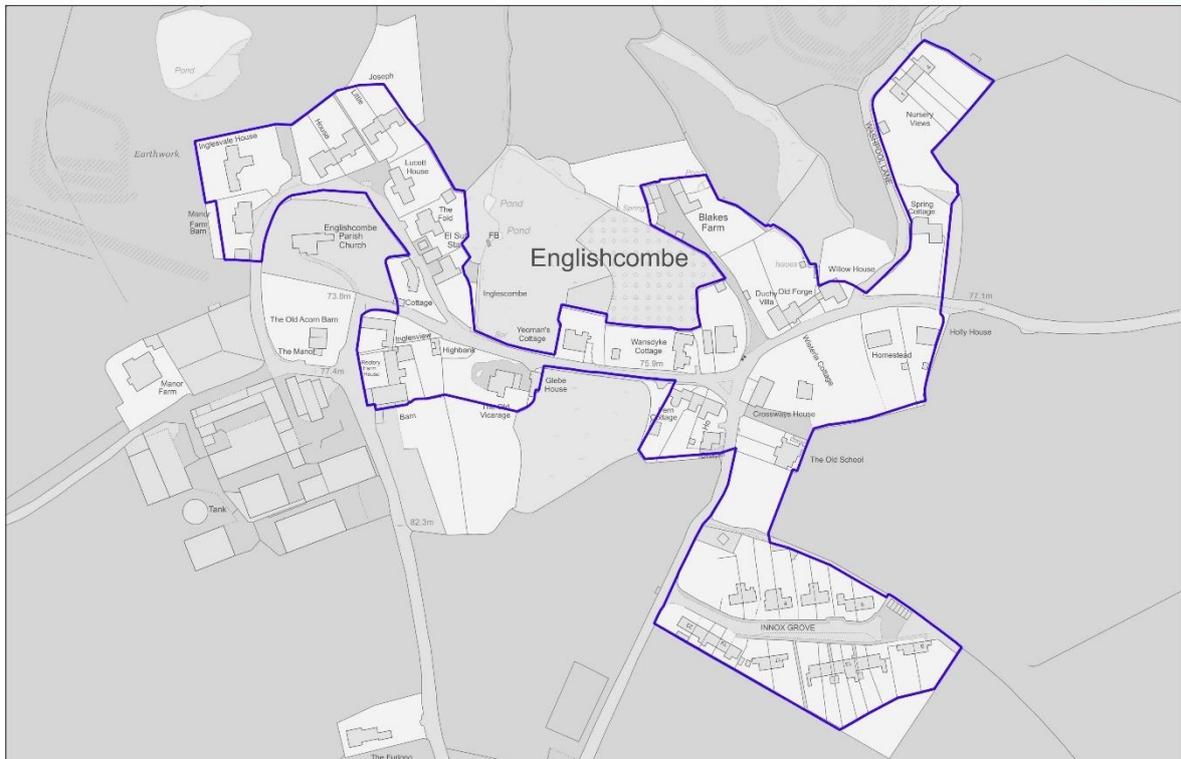
Infill Village Boundary - Corston
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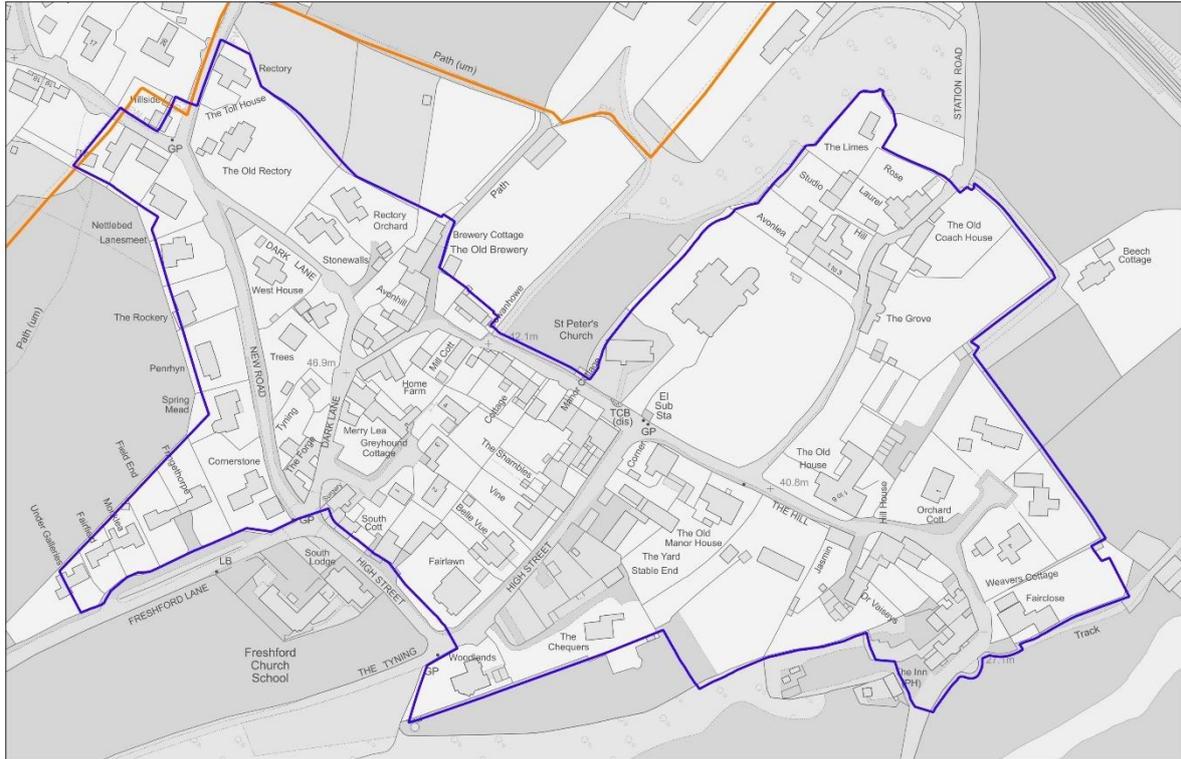
Infill Village Boundary - Englishcombe
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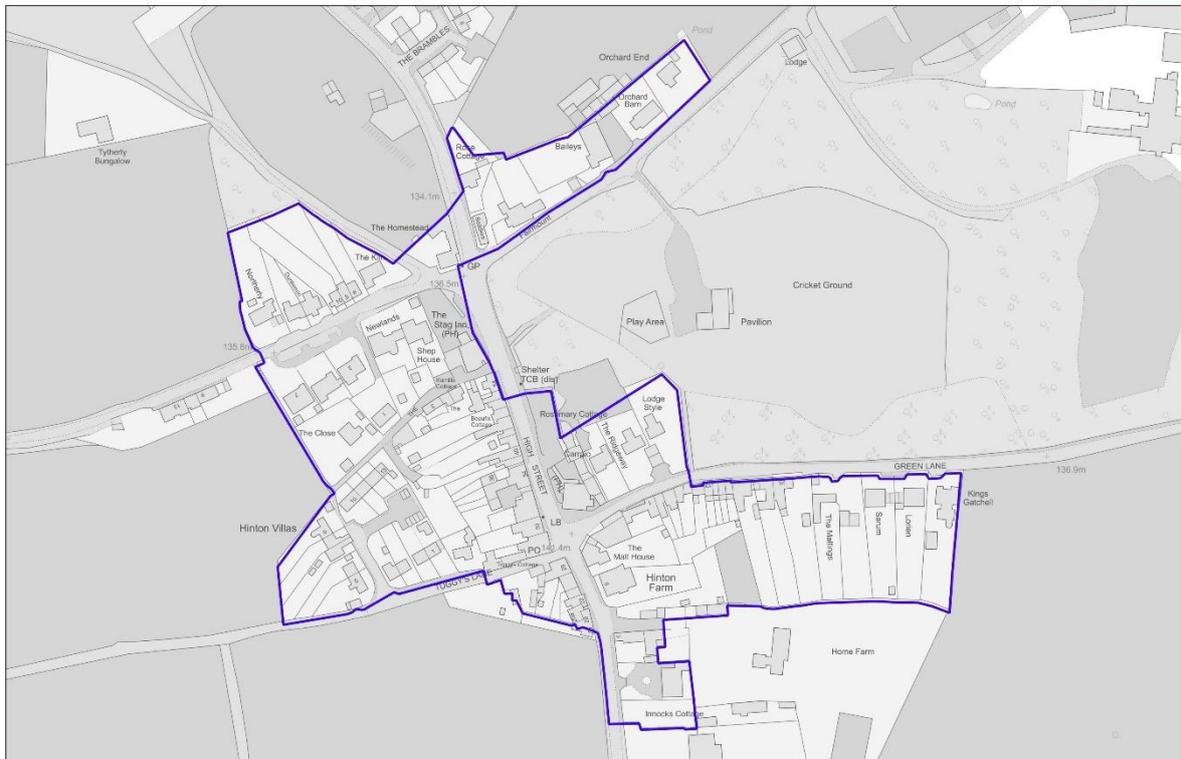
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Infill Village Boundary - Freshford
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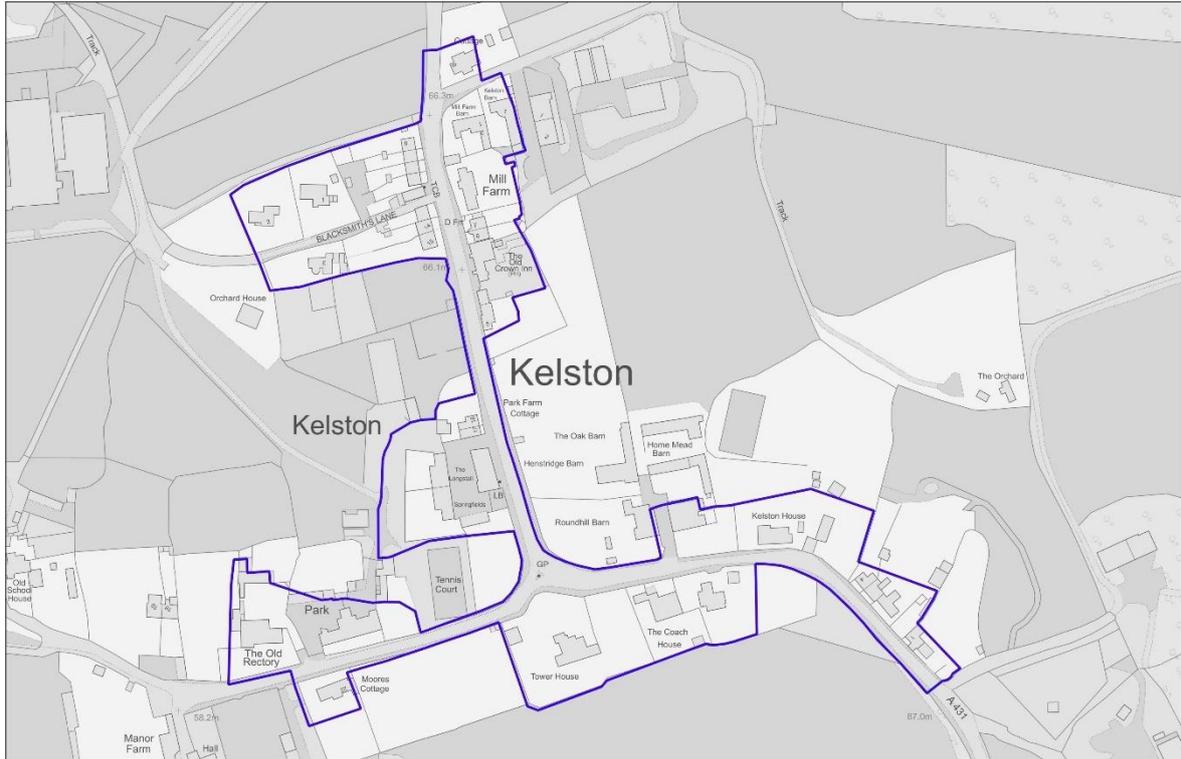


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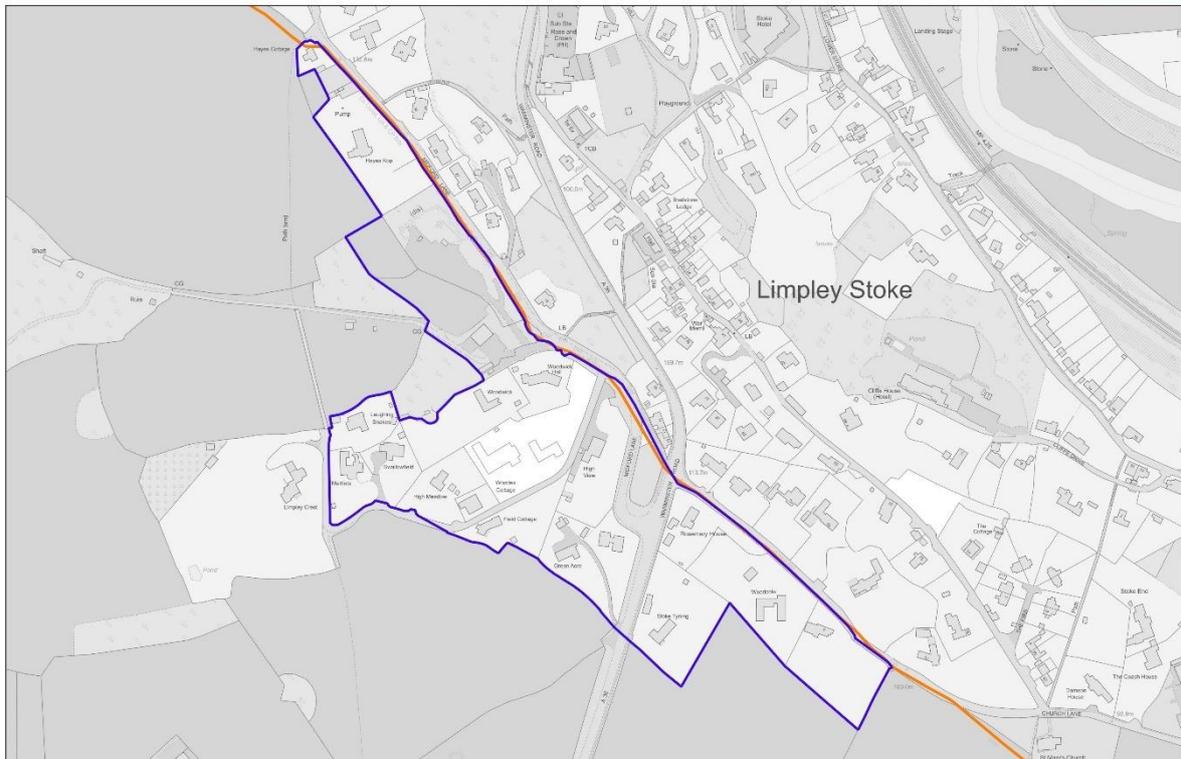
Infill Village Boundary - Hinton Charterhouse
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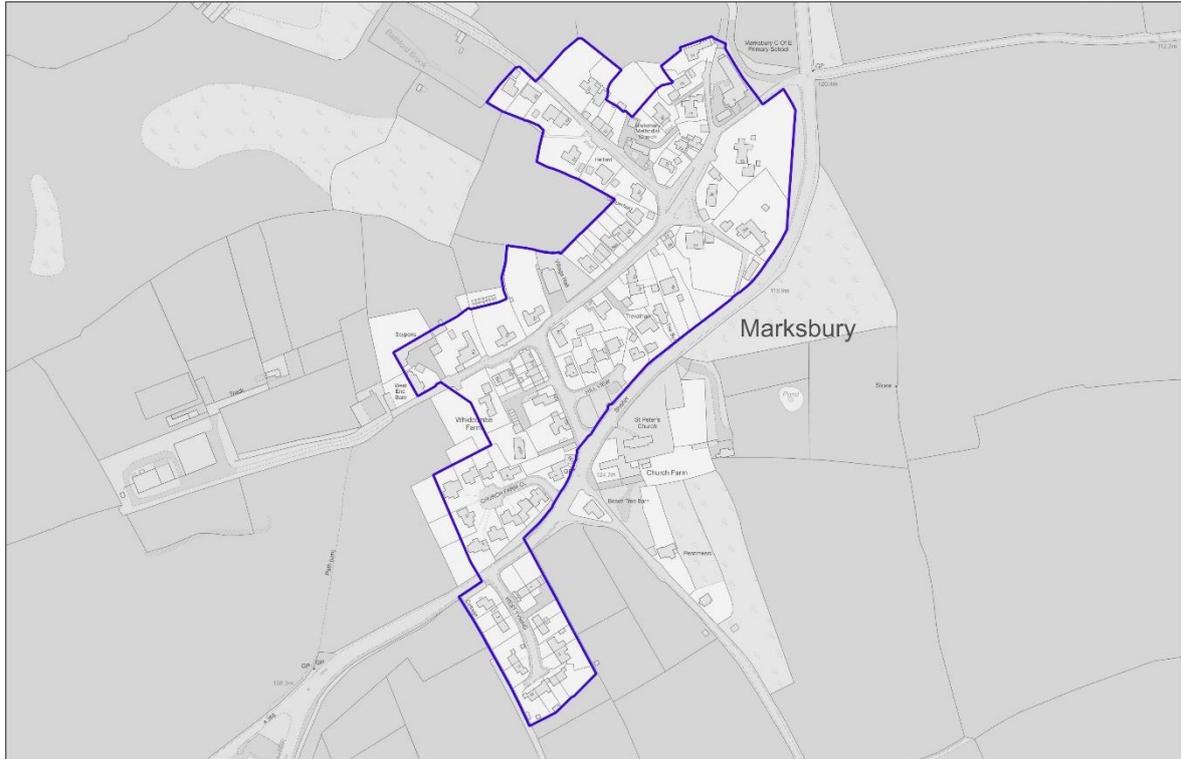


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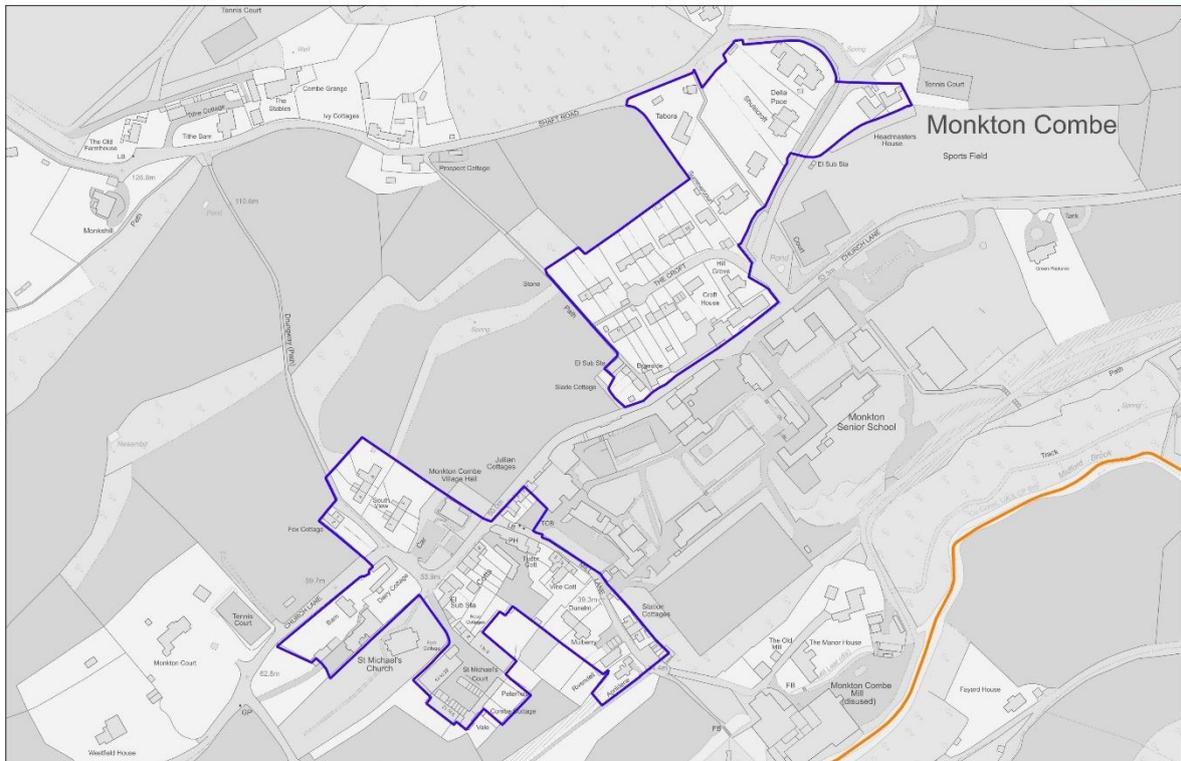
Infill Village Boundary - Marksbury
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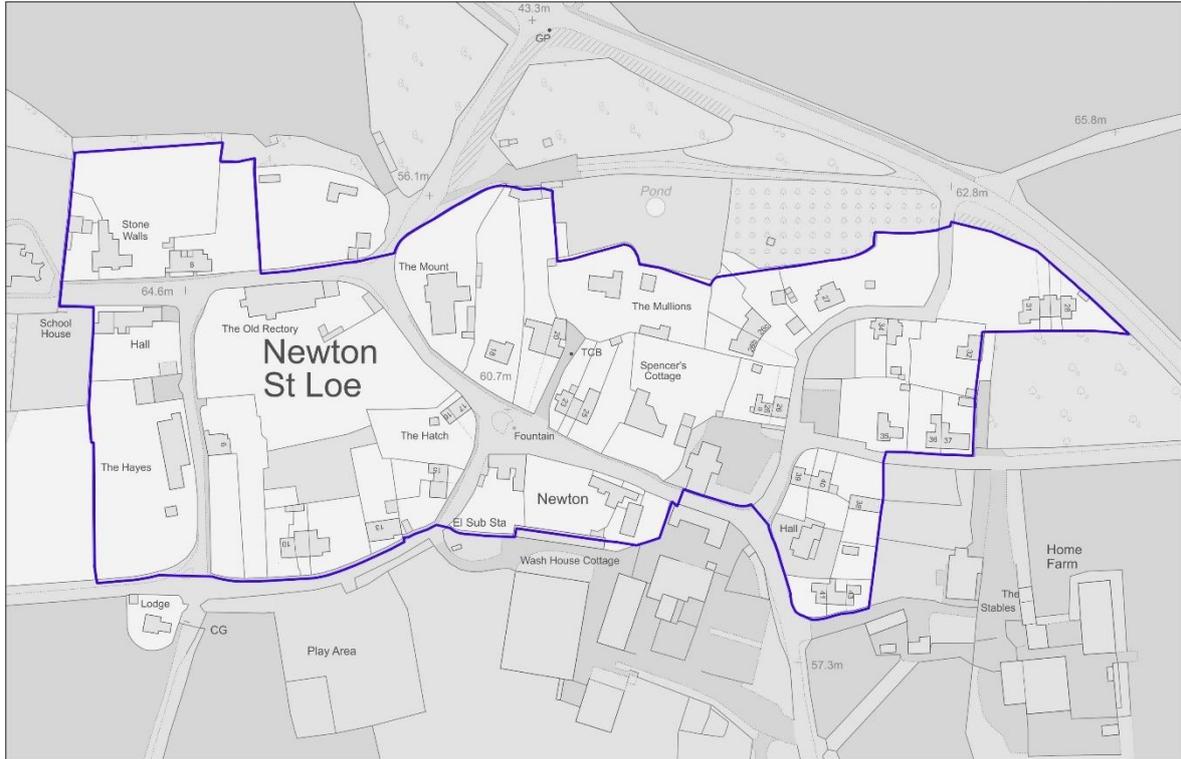
Infill Village Boundary - Monkton Combe
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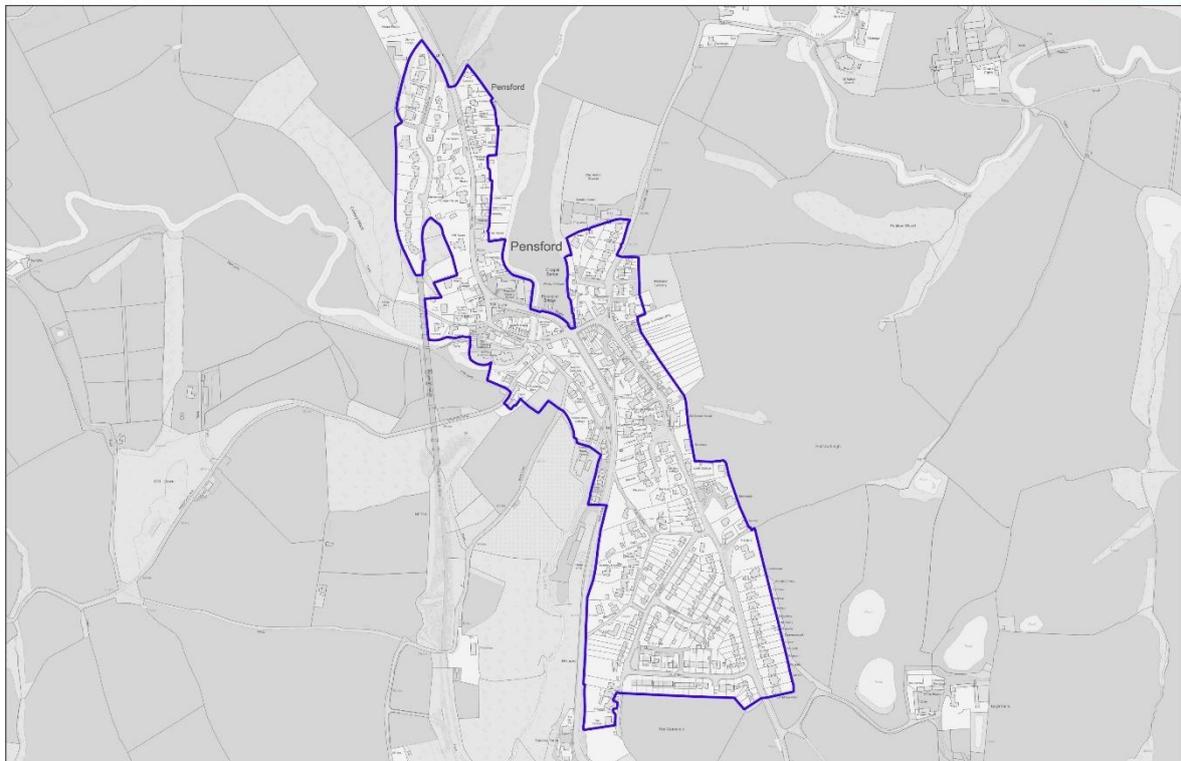
Infill Village Boundary - Newton St Loe
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Urbanorama 20XK2201

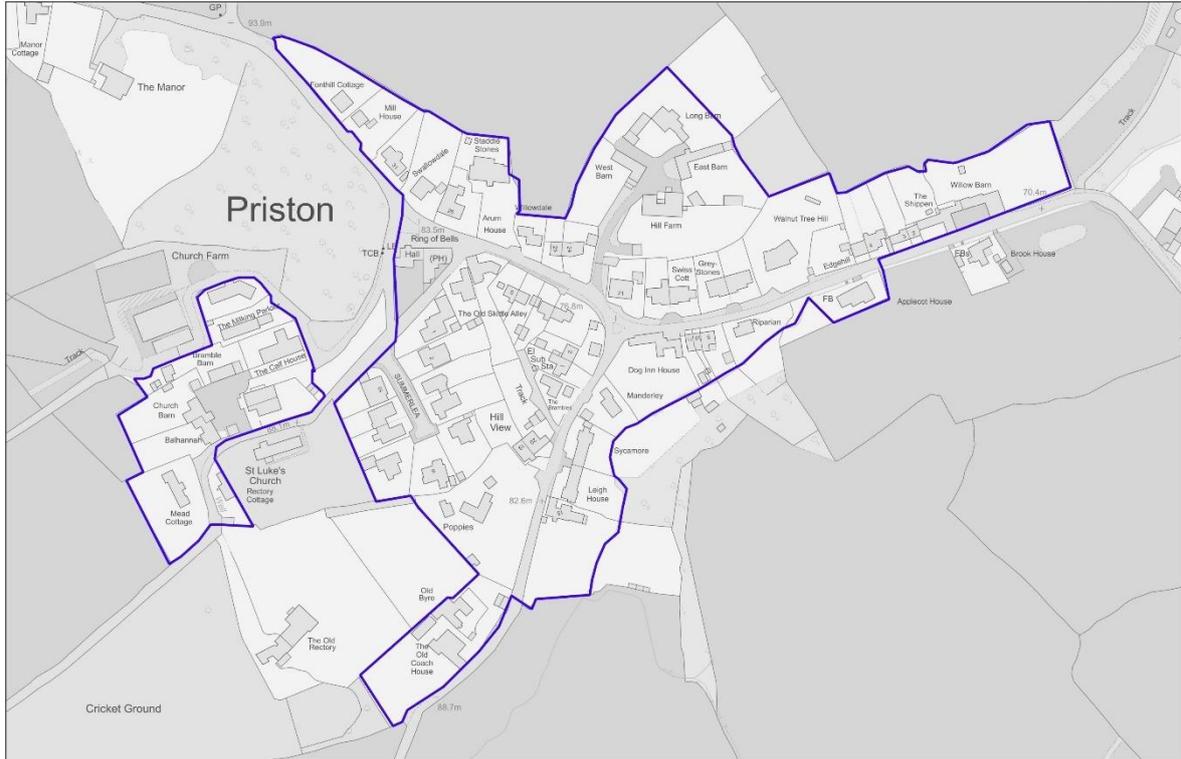
Infill Village Boundary - Pensford
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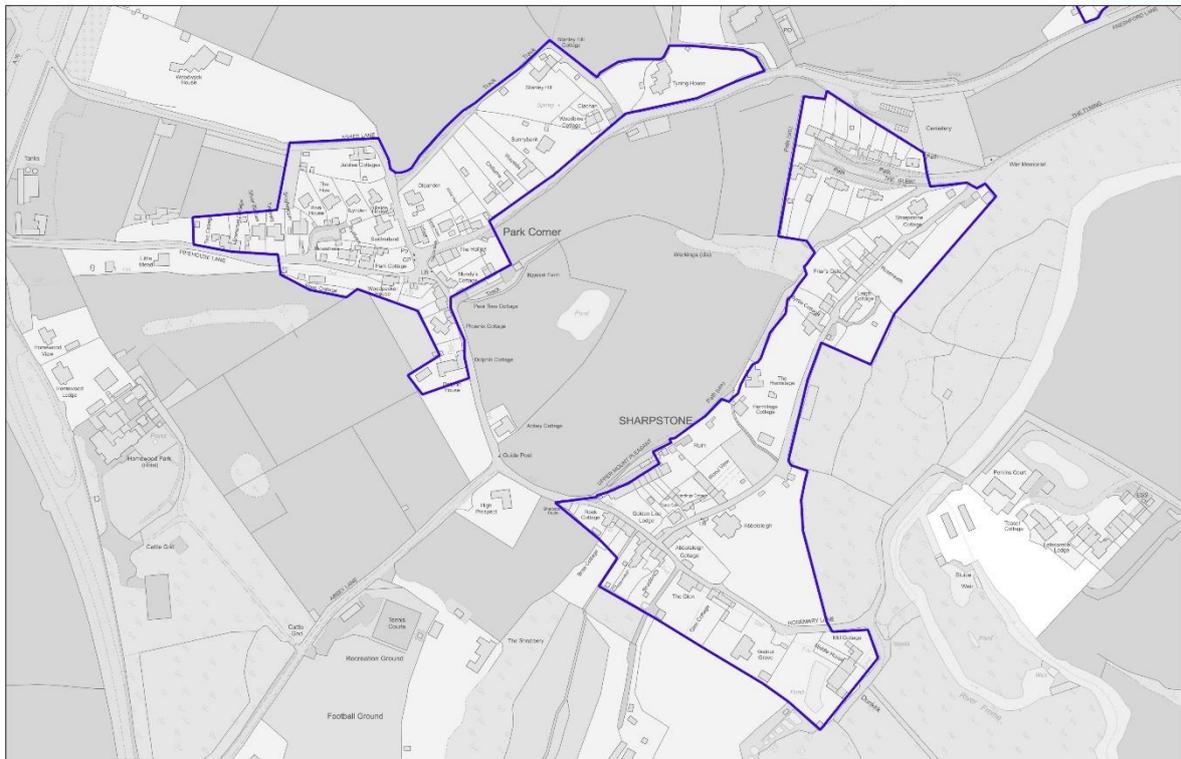
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Infill Village Boundary - Priston
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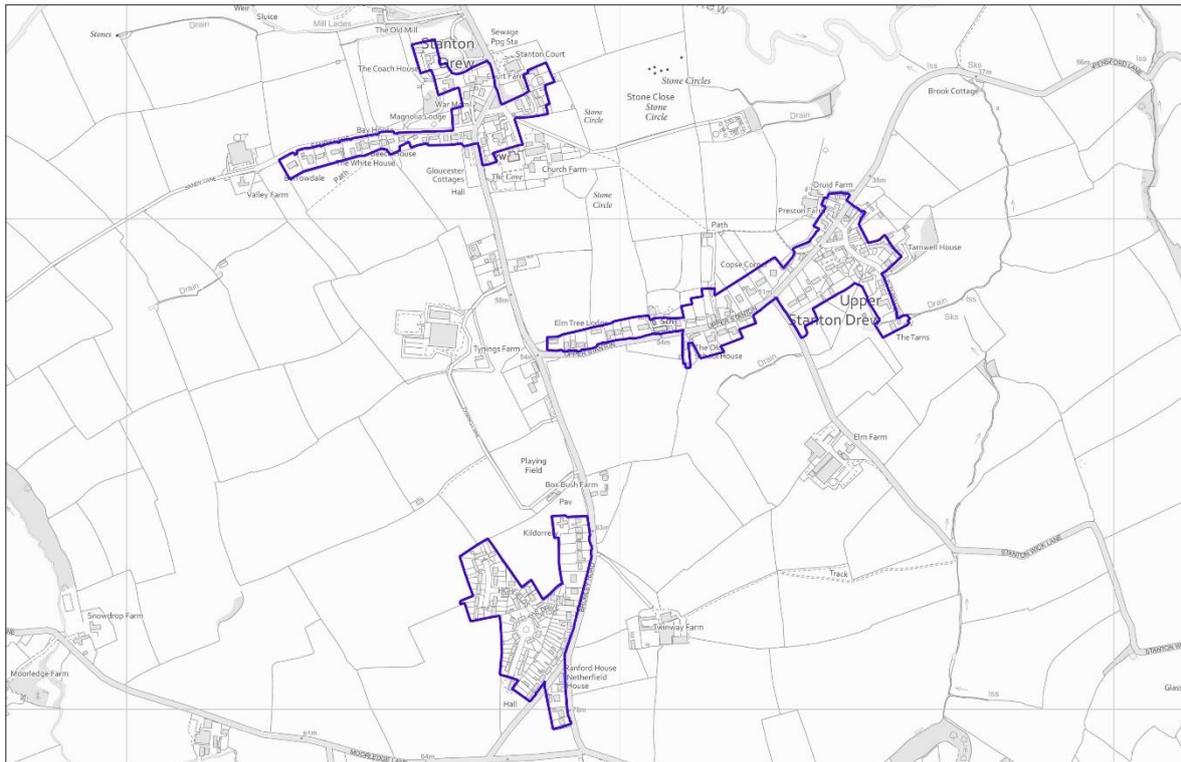
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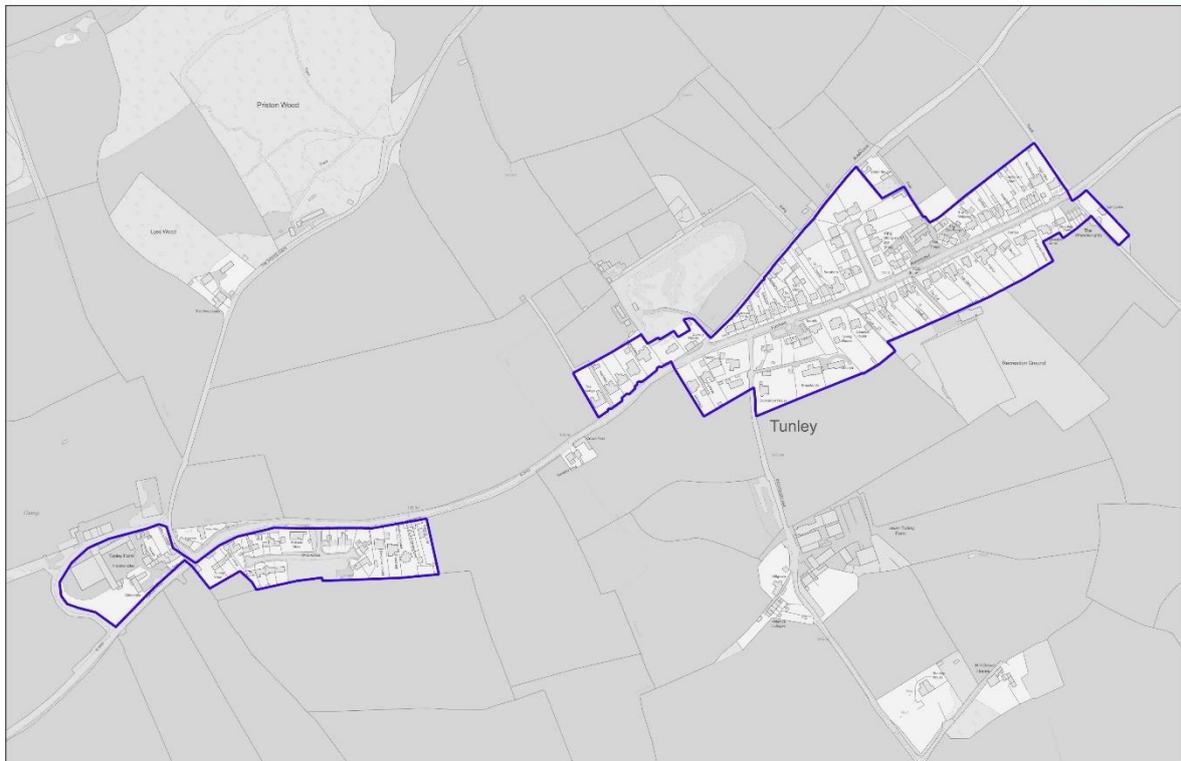
Infill Village Boundary - Stanton Drew
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Infill Village Boundary - Tunley
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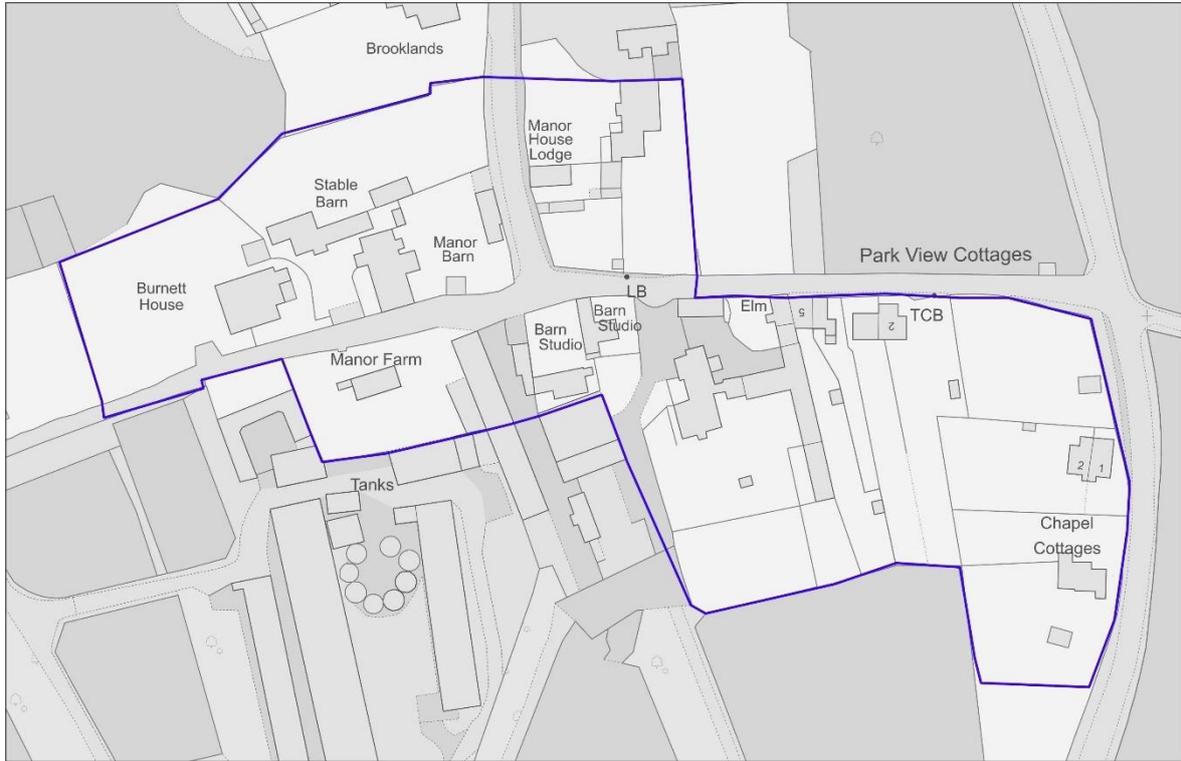


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Annex 4: New Infill Boundaries

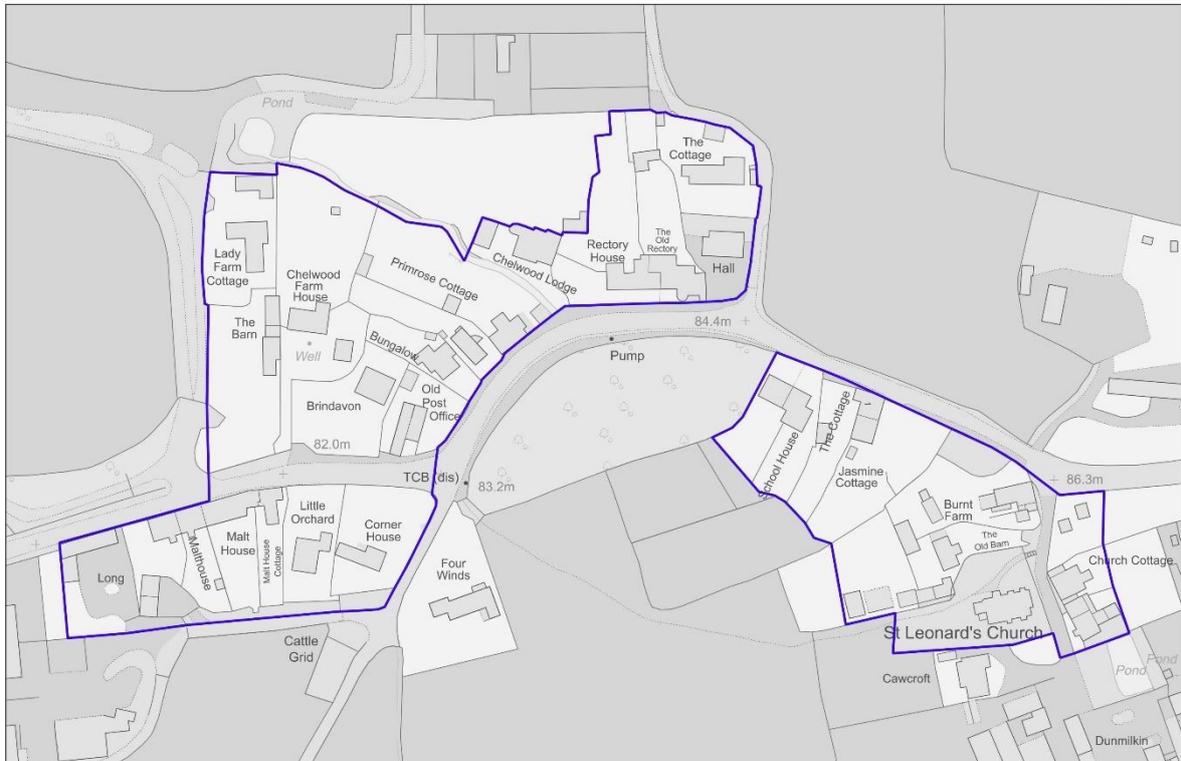
Infill Village Boundary - Burnett
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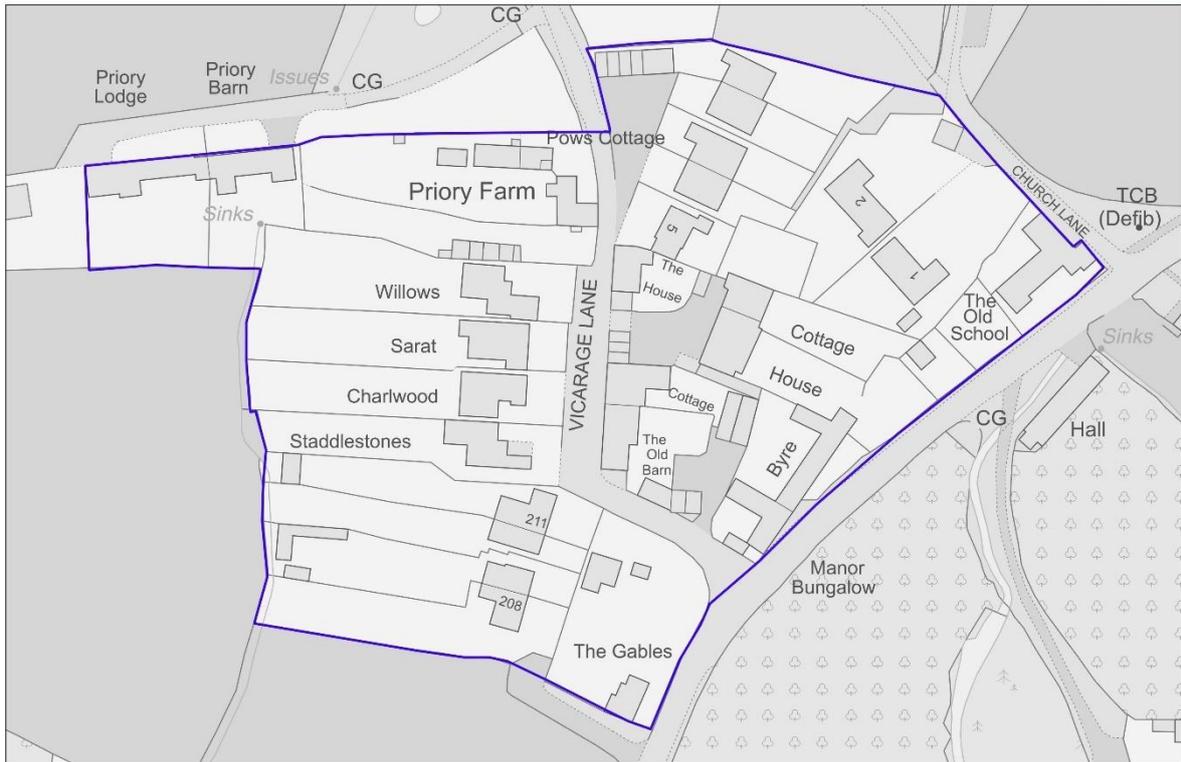
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Infill Village Boundary - Chelwood
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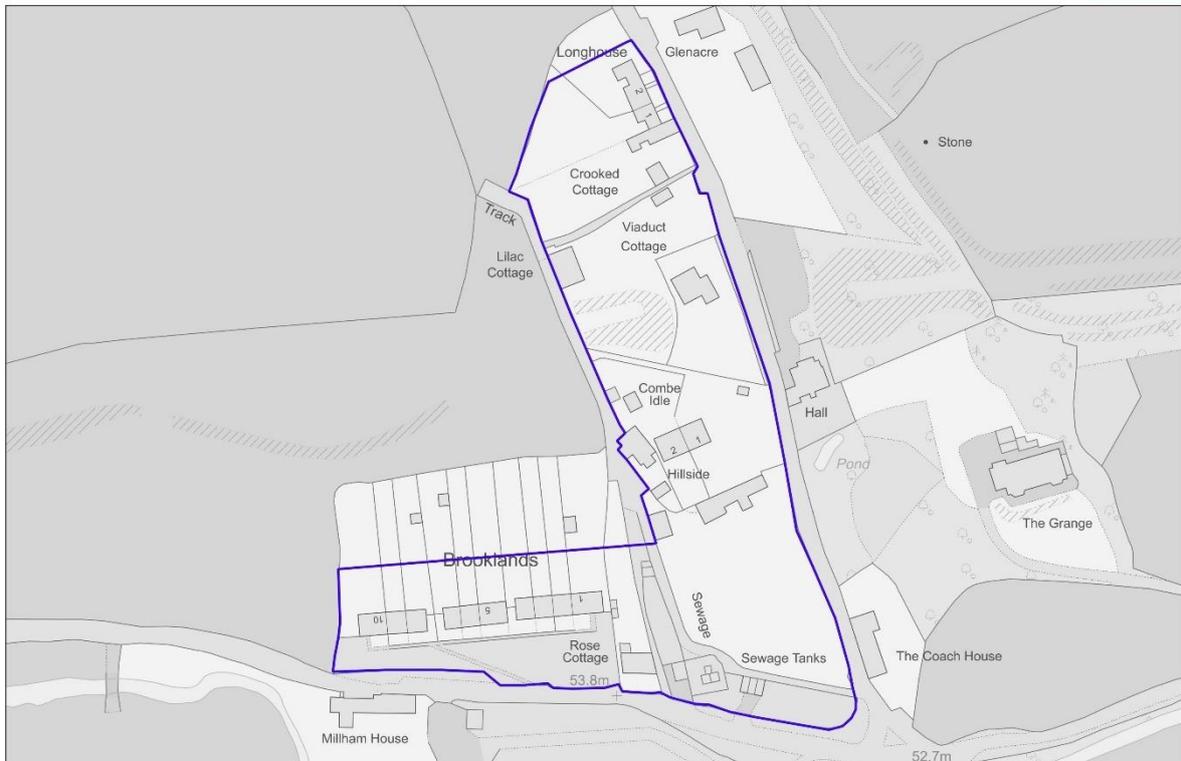
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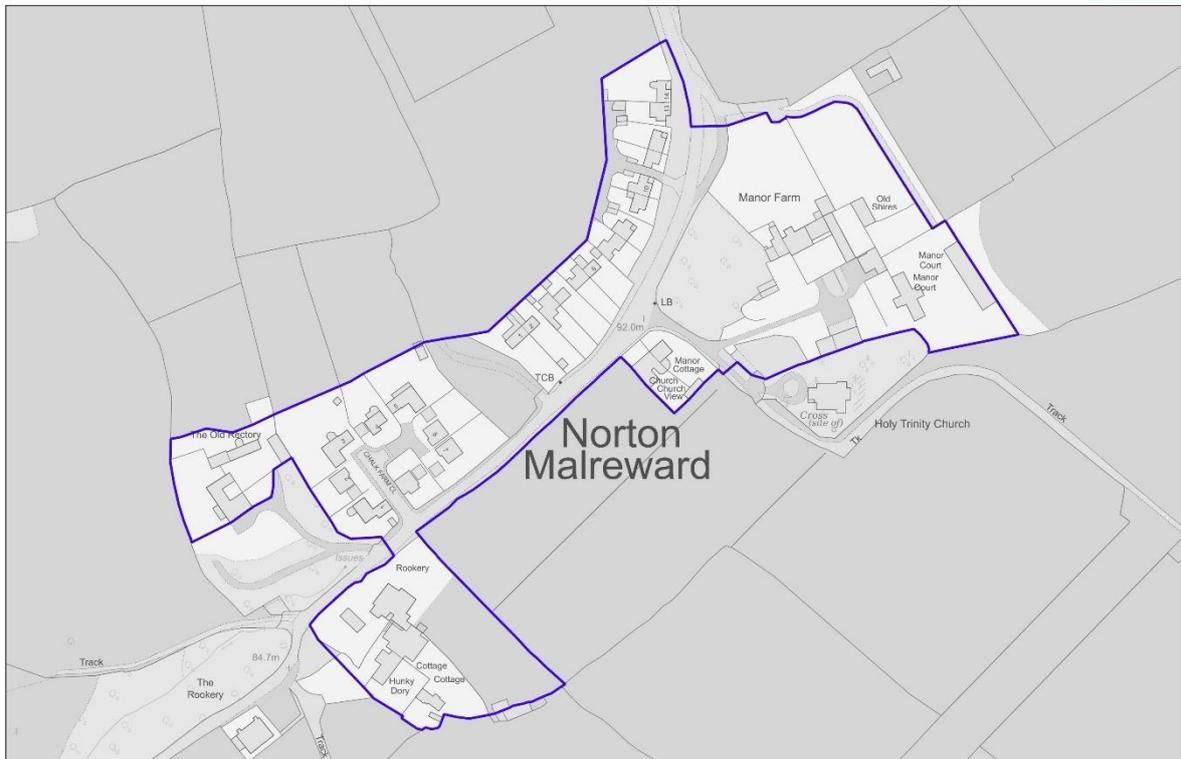
Infill Village Boundary - North Stoke
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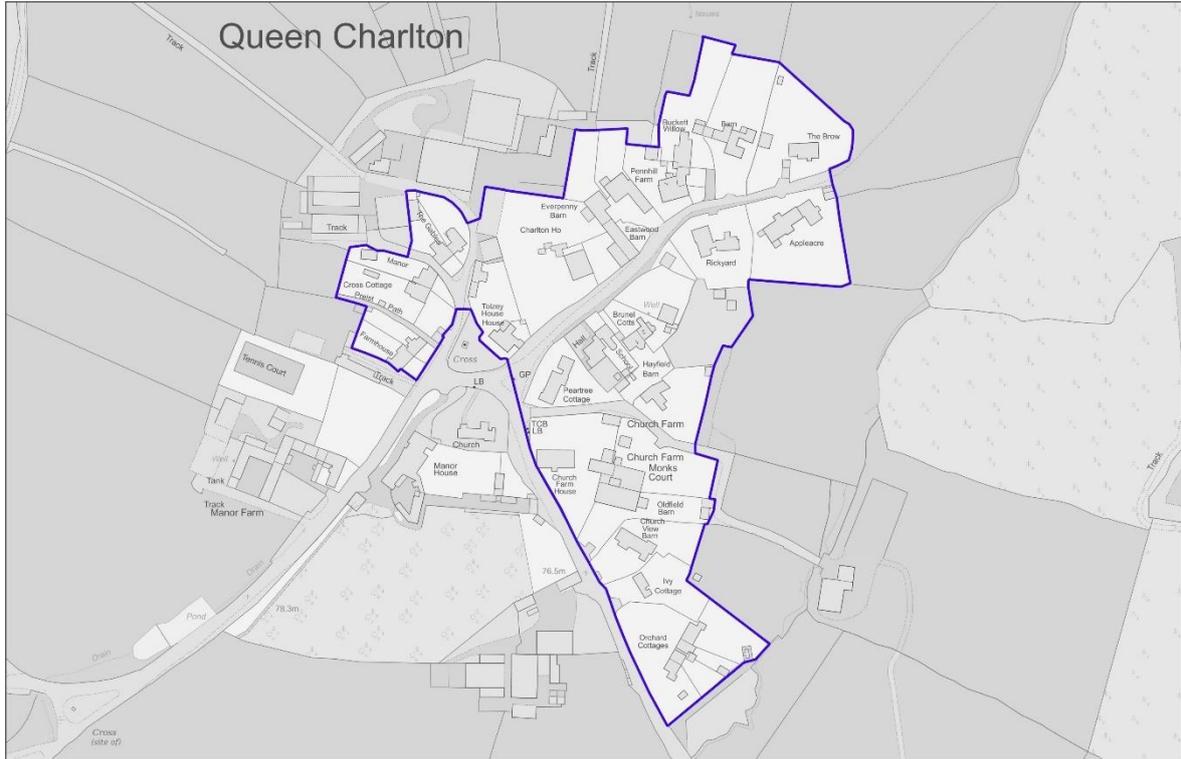
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Infill Village Boundary - Norton Malreward
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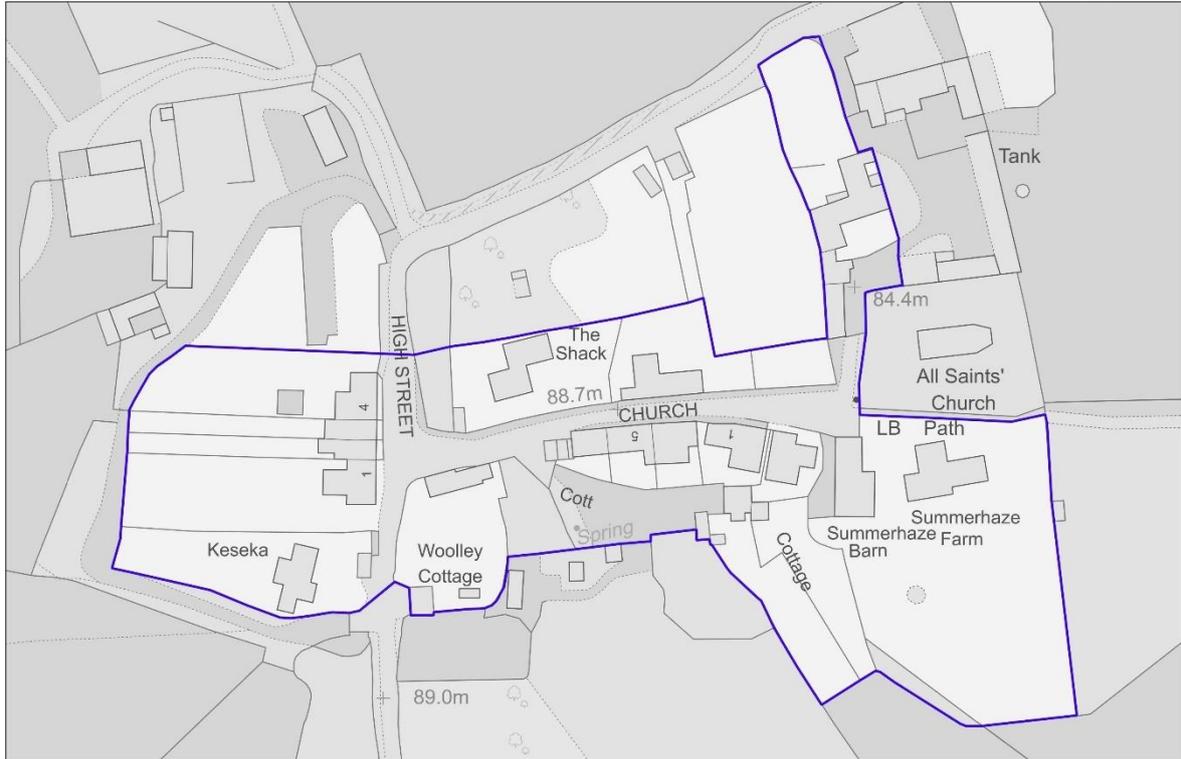
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