

Proposed Development on land north of Staplegrove Road Demonstration of compliance with Taunton Garden Town Design Checklist

1.0 Integrating into the neighbourhood

The proposals demonstrate a strong response to the Taunton Garden Town objective of integrating new development into the existing neighbourhood by prioritising connectivity and permeability. The layout incorporates a network of pedestrian and cycle routes that connect to surrounding areas, including the existing PROW, Staplegrove Recreation Area, the Bus Stops along Staplegrove Road and Hudson Way Recreation Ground. This ensures the development is outward-facing and easily accessible, supporting sustainable movement and reinforcing its relationship with the wider settlement.

The scheme is carefully structured around existing landscape features, retaining and enhancing hedgerows, mature trees, and natural boundaries.

The spatial arrangement, including a defined entrance avenue and central square, creates a legible structure that provides a clear sense of place, with landmark buildings proposed at the site entrance – P40 and at the end of the Entrance Avenue P22. Lower-density edges and varied building orientations further reduce the impact of the development.

The layout promotes social integration and safety by ensuring homes overlook streets, open spaces, and key routes, creating active frontages and natural surveillance. Public spaces are positioned to be accessible to both new and existing residents, encouraging interaction and shared use. Sustainable drainage features, such as an attenuation pond and tree pits, are integrated into the landscape as attractive and functional elements. The scheme aims to be a natural extension of the existing neighbourhood, successfully aligning with the Garden Town principles.

2.0 Creating a Place

The proposals establish a clear and legible structure with a strong sense of identity. The layout is organised around a defined hierarchy of spaces, including a primary entrance avenue, secondary streets, and more intimate shared lanes. At the heart of the development, a central square provides a focal point and social hub, helping to anchor the scheme and create a recognisable centre. This structure makes the development easy to navigate while reinforcing a coherent place identity.

A distinctive character is created through the integration of landscape and built form. The design draws on the local Somerset context, incorporating orchards, wildflower meadows, hedgerows, and native tree planting. These elements are not decorative but fundamental to the layout, shaping streets and spaces. The different landscape zones around the site—such

as the northern common, green corridors, and southern edge—each have their own identity, giving the development a varied and memorable character.

The scheme also creates a strong sense of place through well-defined public and shared spaces. The central square acts as a communal focus, while smaller incidental spaces, green corridors, and play areas provide opportunities for informal interaction and recreation. Streets are designed as social spaces rather than purely vehicular routes, with shared surfaces and tree planting helping to calm traffic and prioritise pedestrians. This approach supports a welcoming, human-scale environment that encourages community life.

The development promotes a cohesive and attractive environment through consistent design principles and active frontages. Homes are oriented to overlook streets and open spaces, providing natural surveillance and reinforcing the definition of public realm. The integration of sustainable drainage features, such as tree pits and the attenuation pond, adds visual interest and contributes to the identity of the place. Together, these elements ensure the development is not just functional, but distinctive, memorable, and rooted in its context.

3.0 Street + Home

The proposals create a clear and well-defined street hierarchy that prioritises people over vehicles. The layout is structured around an entrance avenue, secondary streets, and more intimate lanes, each with a distinct character and function. The inclusion of shared surfaces within the smaller lanes helps to calm traffic and promote pedestrian priority, while the connected network ensures ease of movement throughout the development. This approach reflects the TGT aim of designing streets as social spaces rather than purely for vehicular movement.

The relationship between homes and streets is carefully considered to create a strong sense of enclosure and definition. Dwellings are consistently positioned to front onto streets, open spaces, and key routes, ensuring active frontages throughout the scheme. Corner plots such as; P1, P3, P4, P17, P18, P23, P24, P26, P30, P31, P38 and P40 have windows / doors on front and side elevations addressing both front and side street frontages. This provides natural surveillance, enhancing safety and contributing to a lively and welcoming public realm. The variation in building orientation and plot arrangement creates visual interest and reinforces the individuality of different parts of the development.

The design incorporates landscape as an integral part of the street environment. Tree planting along the entrance avenue and within shared lanes helps to structure views, soften built form, and create a greener, more attractive setting. These elements support the Garden Town principle of multifunctional streets that combine movement, ecology, and amenity.

In terms of residential quality, homes benefit from clear access, defined boundaries, and a strong relationship to both public and private spaces. Front doors face the street, reinforcing legibility and ease of wayfinding, while rear gardens provide private amenity space. Parking is accommodated in a manner that avoids dominating the street scene, helping to maintain a high-quality environment. The proposals successfully balance movement, place, and residential amenity, delivering streets and homes that are attractive, functional, and aligned with Garden Town principles.

4.0 Climate + Planet Positive

The proposals embed environmental thinking into the structure of the site. A comprehensive green infrastructure network forms the backbone of the scheme, with interconnected open spaces, green corridors, and landscape buffers surrounding and weaving through the development. These areas—such as the northern common, western green corridor, and southern edge planting—not only enhance biodiversity but also contribute to carbon sequestration and urban cooling.

Sustainable drainage is fully integrated into the design as a visible and functional landscape feature. Tree pits and the attenuation pond at the southern edge manage surface water naturally, reducing runoff and flood risk while supporting wetland habitats. This approach aligns with climate adaptation principles by ensuring the development can respond to increased rainfall and extreme weather events, while also improving water quality and ecological value.

The layout also supports low-carbon lifestyles by prioritising walking, cycling, and reduced reliance on private vehicles. A network of pedestrian routes, shared surfaces, and a dedicated cycle path connects the site internally and to the surrounding area, including existing public rights of way and local amenities. This encourages active travel and helps reduce transport-related emissions, a key component of climate-positive design.

In addition, the extensive use of native planting—including trees, hedgerows, orchards, and wildflower meadows—enhances biodiversity and supports local ecosystems. These planting strategies provide seasonal variation, habitat creation, and long-term environmental benefits while reinforcing the site's rural character. Together, these measures ensure the development not only minimises its environmental impact but actively contributes to climate resilience and ecological enhancement, in line with the Garden Town vision.

End.