

This 'Village' specific section forms part of a wide-ranging consultation on the Local Plan Part II. It is therefore strongly recommended that you first read the 'Mendip' section to gain a wider understanding of the issues and options relating to the district as a whole.

Wookey Hole (Secondary Village)

Wookey Hole is a small village of less than 200 homes which forms part of the St Cuthbert Out Parish. Whilst connected only by minor roads, the village is only 3km from the City of Wells.

Wookey Hole is home to the popular Wookey Hole Caves tourist site and the Monarch's Way and Mendip Way long-distance footpaths pass through the village. The area borders an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is of great environmental significance, including forming part of an important habitat for bats.

The age profile of the village is in line with that of Mendip as a whole although there are a larger proportion of residents in the 45-75 year bracket and comparatively fewer young people. A significant proportion of workers are in professional and managerial jobs (37%).

Planning for Wookey Hole...

- Wookey Hole is designated in the Local Plan Part I as a Secondary Village.
- It was expected to deliver at least **15** new homes over the Local Plan period 2006-2029 a comparatively low figure on account of its environmental sensitivity.
- However **16** houses have either been built or granted conditional planning permission. It is not therefore expected that the Local Plan Part II will seek to allocate any further housing sites in the village to 2029.
- However, we need to explore whether there are any reasons why further housing should be planned e.g. to respond to a need identified by local people.
- At present no sites have been put forward by landowners for us to look at to see which may be the most suitable.

What you have said about Wookey Hole...

St Cuthbert Out Parish Council is currently working on a Neighbourhood Plan which covers Wookey Hole. This plan is not envisaged to include specific site allocations.

What does this mean for the village?

- ❖ We do not expect to make further allocations of land for housing development in Wookey Hole. However, we need to explore whether there are any reasons why further housing should be planned e.g. to respond to a need identified by local people.
- ❖ Consideration could also be given to any other facilities/infrastructure needed in the village.

KEY FACTS

Parish population (St Cuthbert Out Parish):
3749

Age profile:	Mendip average
18% 0-15 yrs	19%
10% 16-24 yrs	10%
20% 25-44 yrs	23%
42% 45-74 yrs	39%
10% 75+ yrs	9%

Approximate housing stock of village: **195**

Data sources:
ONS Census Statistics 2011
MDC Rural Settlement Role & Function Study 2012

Key Facilities

Our most recent records show the village has the following facilities:

- **Journey to work bus service**
- **Post office**
- **Shop**
- **Pub**
- **Village hall**
- **School**
- **Church**

Is this still correct? Are there any that we have missed?

Have your say...

The following appendix has information on the designations in and around the village as well as the sites that have been put forward for consideration by landowners. To ensure that the views of local communities and stakeholders are reflected in the Local Plan Part II we would welcome views on a number of issues. Please answer as many (or as few) of the following questions as you wish:

Local Distinctiveness and Character

WOOKHQ1: What makes Wookey Hole special? Are there any specific areas, features or characteristics that should be protected or improved? In the event that future development is needed, are there any broad areas of the village where this should be preferred – or avoided? *Please answer in general terms – you can comment in detail on specific sites below.*

Housing

WOOKHQ2: Although Wookey Hole has met and exceeded its minimum housing requirement as set out in the Local Plan Part I, are there any reasons why we should consider identifying further sites for housing in the Local Plan Part II?

WOOKHQ3: If a need for further development is identified, are there any specific sites in the village that would you support / not support? Please include information on the site's location and have regard to the constraints outlined in Tables A and B in explaining your reasons.

WOOKHQ4: If further development is needed, what types of development would you like to see on any of the site(s) identified e.g. housing of a particular size or type, affordable housing, custom build or mixed use schemes?

Employment

WOOKHQ5: Are there any existing employment or commercial sites in or around the village that may be suitable for redevelopment? If so, where and for what type(s) of development?

WOOKHQ6: Are there any existing employment or commercial sites in or around the village that you feel should be retained in their current use if at all possible? If so where and why?

WOOKHQ7: Is there a need for any additional land for employment/commercial development? If so, what types and where could such development take place?

Development Limit

WOOKHQ8: Does the current Development Limit reflect the existing and likely future built up area(s) of the village?

WOOKHQ9: Do you feel the current Development Limit should be changed? If so where and why?

Infrastructure/Facilities

WOOKHQ10: Is there a need for further infrastructure or facilities in the village e.g. open or recreation space, meeting place, car park? If so, please specify what and where.

Open Areas of Local Significance/Local Green Spaces

WOOKHQ11: Looking at the Open Areas of Local Significance/Local Green Space criteria (see Mendip Section Appendix 2), do you think all of the sites listed still warrant designation? If so, why are they special?

WOOKHQ12: Are there any sites from which you feel the designation should be removed? If so which one(s) and why?

WOOKHQ13: Are there any new areas of land that you feel merit designation? If so please provide details of where and why.

Other Matters

WOOKHQ14: Are there any other planning issues in Wookey Hole that you feel should be addressed in the Local Plan Part II?

WOOKHQ15: Is any of the information presented incorrect or in need of updating (e.g. existing facilities and services)? If so, please specify?

Wookey Hole Appendix

Table A: Key designations and other relevant planning information

Constraint	Information	Implications for Local Plan Part II
Agricultural Land Classification	There is a narrow band of Grade 2 land in the south of the village, but all other surrounding land is Grade 3.	In choosing development sites, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality agricultural land in preference to that of a higher quality. The grades of agricultural land range from best and most versatile to poor.
Ancient Woodland	There are large areas of Ancient Woodland (Ebbor/ Durston and Smokham Woods) to the north of the village and Folly Wood to the east.	Ancient woodlands are an irreplaceable natural habitat and development should avoid their unnecessary loss or deterioration.
Areas of High Archaeological Potential and Interest	There is a large AHAP which covers the northern tip of the village and an area of archaeological interest lies to the north west of the village.	Any development within an area of known or potential archaeological interest will have to take into account this archaeological potential.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	The village borders the Mendip Hills AONB to the north.	Development within an AONB is more strictly controlled and must be designed in a way which will not negatively impact upon the characteristics of the AONB.
Coal Consultation Zone	None.	The Coal Authority will need to be consulted on potential sites to see whether there are any possible issues from old coal mining works.
Conservation Area	None.	Any development within the Conservation Area will need to be sympathetic.
Flood Zones	A band of Flood Zone 2 and 3 runs through the centre of the village (along the river).	Development should generally be directed away from areas designated as at most risk from flooding (Zones and 2 and 3).
Green Belt	None.	Development in the Green Belt should be resisted in line with Chapter 9 of the NPPF.
Groundwater Source Protection Zone	None.	Particular care is needed in such areas to ensure development in such areas does not adversely affect the quality of groundwater.
Historic Parks & Gardens	None.	Recorded by English Heritage in recognition of their special historic significance. Any proposed development should be considered against whether it would be likely to impact on the special character of any

		Historic Park and Garden.
Landfill sites	None.	Areas of land which are, or have been subject to landfill may be contaminated and/or lead to abnormal development costs.
Listed Buildings	There are several Listed Buildings in the village, mostly of Grade II and include the Paper Mill.	Listed buildings are protected by national policy and development policy 3 of the Local Plan Part 1. Any development will need to ensure the integrity of these listed buildings.
Local Wildlife Sites	There are two Local Wildlife Sites around Wookey Hole: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wookey Hole Road to the south of the village • Arthur's Point and Round Wood 200m to the east of the village 	Development should be directed away from these sites to ensure no negative impact upon the potential biodiversity there.
Mendip Bat Consultation Zone	The whole village lies with the Mendip Bat Consultation Zone.	Any development within this area will need to take account of the potential for bats.
Mineral Consultation Areas	None.	MCAs identify where mineral reserves exist which potentially could be needed at some point in the future.
National Nature Reserves (NNRs)	The Ebbor Gorge National Nature Reserve lies approx 400m north of the village.	National Nature Reserves are statutorily protected for their ecological and biodiversity value. Development should be directed away from such sites to ensure any adverse impacts.
Open Areas of Local Significance/Local Green Spaces	There are five areas designated as OALS/LGS in Wookey Hole (see Table C for details).	These areas are protected from development under development policy 2 of the Local Plan Part I. However all of the areas designated as Local Green Spaces are being reviewed as part of the Local Plan Part II. More details can be found below.
Protected Recreation Areas	There is one Protected Recreation Site (The Cricket Ground on Titlands Lane).	These areas are protected from development under development policy 16 of the Local Plan Part I, therefore any development here will be resisted.
Quarries – SMLP Quarries	None.	The existence of a quarry site may constrain the development of nearby sites due to noise etc...
Ramsar Sites	None.	A Habitats Regulations Assessment will have to be carried out to look at the possible impact of potential future development sites on the integrity of the Ramsar site.
Regionally Important	None.	RIGS are locally designated areas of importance for geology or

Geological/ Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)		geomorphology. Any new development would need to be assessed against whether there would be likely to be any adverse effects on such areas.
Rights of Way	There are a number of Rights of Way radiating out from the village, including the West Mendip Way and other paths into the Ebbor Gorge Nature Reserve.	Routes over which the public enjoy a legal right to access by foot and sometimes other means. All public rights of way would need to be incorporated into, or reasonably diverted around, new development.
Road Infrastructure	Served only by minor roads.	The standard of local roads may dictate the scale of development a settlement can accommodate.
Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)	None.	Any development to the west of the village must ensure that the integrity of the SAMs is not damaged.
Sewage Treatment Buffer Zones	None.	Buffer Zones may constrain areas which are capable of being developed for housing in particular.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	There are two SSSI sites to the north of the village: The Ebbor Gorge and Wookey Hole sites.	Development should be directed away from these areas and from sites which may have a negative impact upon the integrity of these designated areas.
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	Two Special Areas of Conservation lie to the north of the village: The Ebbor Gorge Woodlands and part of the North Somerset & Mendip Bats SAC.	A Habitats Regulations Assessment will have to be carried out to look at the possible impact of potential future development sites on the integrity of the Special Area of Conservation.
Special Landscape Feature	There is one Special Landscape Feature (Underwood) to the south east of the village.	Any new development should not have a negative impact upon the special landscape feature and should ideally be located away from it.
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	None.	A Habitats Regulations Assessment will have to be carried out to look at the possible impact of potential future development sites on the integrity of the Special Protection Area.
Traditional Orchards	There are no traditional orchards identified in the village.	Traditional Orchards are an important rural feature and habitat and development should avoid their unnecessary loss or deterioration.
Tree Preservation Orders - Areas and Trees	There are TPOs on two individual trees and one area.	Any new development should take account of these areas and ensure that there is no negative impact upon them.

Table B: Sites put forward by Landowners for Consideration

At present no sites have been put forward by landowners for us to look at to see which may be the most suitable.

Table C: Open Areas of Local Significance / Local Green Spaces

Site Reference	Size of Site (in ha)	Description	Notes
OALSWOOKH001	0.11	Densely wooded "wedge" on steep slope above the village. Enclosed by stone walling. Not accessible. Footpath runs alongside one edge.	Not covered by any other designations.
OALSWOOKH002	0.14	Hard standing picnic area and play area.	Not covered by any other designations.
OALSWOOKH003	0.94	Large area encompassing two private gardens (Wookey House and Ebbor House) enclosed by high stone walls.	Not covered by any other designations.
OALSWOOKH004	4.78	Extensive site including the campsite, car park, river and a number of small grassed areas.	Not covered by any other designations.
OALSWOOKH005	0.23	Church and Churchyard of St Mary Magdalene's Church.	Not covered by any other designations.