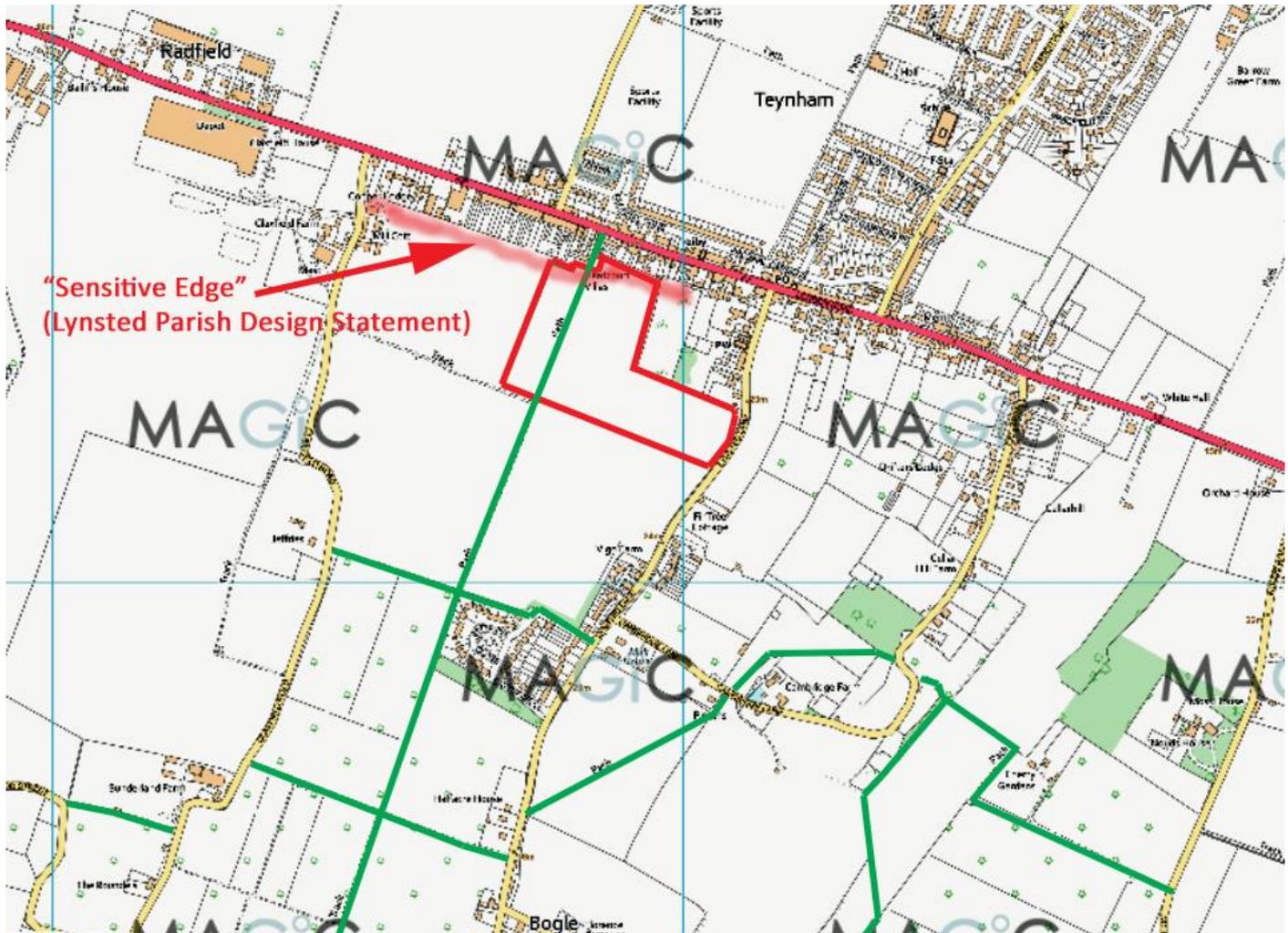


For Attention of Aaron Wilkinson, Planner. Email: [aaronwilkinson@swale.gov.uk](mailto:aaronwilkinson@swale.gov.uk)

**Call for sites to be submitted for consideration as proposed Local Green Spaces:  
Land south of London Road, and east of Lynsted Lane, Lynsted**

The site:



This site is to the south, and immediately behind the houses of London Road (Lynsted) and lower Lynsted Lane. There is direct access to it via the centuries old Coffin Path that joins London Road and Lynsted Village. This important **Coffin Path Gateway** provides the **only direct and safe access** to the wider rural landscape of the Parish, including connections east and west between Batteries Close, Claxfield Lane and upper Lynsted Lane. The value of this **Gateway**, adjacent to the A2 and wider built-up area, is most important to the elderly, infirm and those with children – this has been particularly strongly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic. The **Gateway** and its access to wider networks of footpaths have been marked on the site plan above.

The importance of this site is further supported by the **“sensitive edge” identified in the Lynsted Parish Design Statement** that was published in 2002 through a democratic process involving Lynsted Parishioners, agreed and adopted by Swale Borough Council as Planning Guidance in April 2002. In particular, I refer you to Lynsted Parish Design Statement page 18 and sections 24 & 25 (Development Patterns), 35 (Landscape), and 36 (Landscape safeguarding). The “sensitive edge” concept is complementary to the more recent “Green Spaces” concept as it represents a key feature of the rural Parish of Lynsted at its northernmost edge and offers important countryside access to Teynham village and Lynsted Parishioners living along the A2. We should stress that the principle of the Sensitive Edge predates by several years the current development proposals that is largely irrelevant to the Greens Spaces argument.

The welcome Green Spaces initiative has crystallised the importance of this **“Gateway” to all the communities along the A2 and the village of neighbouring Teynham**. In general, Lynsted Parish follows historic patterns of development at one building deep along the A2 and country lanes. This historic pattern of development reflected the value of the land for agricultural purposes that is even more important today as population pressure increases. The contrasting urban/industrial evolution of neighbouring Teynham Parish (between the railway and the A2) reinforces the importance of ready access to open spaces (amenity value) most pronounced for elderly, infirm and young families. The continuing urbanisation of Teynham village to the north of the A2 reinforces the argument for preserving the Green Space to the south of the A2 – see the map in the Lynsted Parish Design Statement held by Planning Services. You will know that Teynham’s only other readily available Gateway is to the north, past the Sewage treatment works or through Barrow Green and the lanes. Lanes on which there is regular dangerous driving.

**Importance of the site to our local communities:**

1. Loss of agricultural land

The neighbouring Teynham village has lost large tracts of agricultural land on its edges and in-filling of a large field off Frogmal Lane. Villagers there have identified the importance to them of access to this accessible green space for safe exercise for all and for dog walking. This is a constant theme in recent comments by the residents of Teynham on recent planning applications for development south of the A2.

2. Safe exercise and enjoyment of rural paths

This arable ‘buffer’ is in regular use for e.g. dog walkers and those taking exercise for their own health and well-being. It allows safe access to other parts of the Parish away from our busy and polluted roads and the narrow lanes that present dangers to walkers and cyclists. Large housing development in rural areas mostly means that residents face the loss of access to amenity space. The countryside is our “amenity space” as we do not have the luxury of parks and parkland. A play area and/or a football pitch is not enough!

The populations of Teynham and those living along the A2 are under increasing health risk from vehicle pollution. Easy access to our rural landscape provides welcome relief to those wishing to maintain their health and well-being. The current Covid19 crisis has demonstrated how important this space has been for everyone but, especially, the elderly, infirm and accompanied children for exercise. Social distancing along London Road can only be achieved by stepping into the busy road, which you do at your peril!

3. Education

This site has acted as an informal classroom for the education of our children who are fast losing their understanding of our roots in food production. We are not alone in having used this space to teach the next generation to appreciate the connection between food production, agriculture and the farming year. This has been highlighted by the current pandemic when we have witnessed families taking their exercise together through this site, frequently stopping to point out bird and animal activity.

This open aspect has led us to identify many forms of wildlife that have helped us inspire the next generation to recognise its importance, its seasonality and the onus on us to protect it.

The close relationship between the open countryside, hedgerows and homes along the northern edge of the Parish has supported a rich mix in wildlife being brought into our gardens to the benefit of us all.

To date we have identified on/from this site:

<p><b>Bird species identified on proposed site:</b> <b>Red indicates inclusion of the RSPB endangered list</b></p>	<p><b>Attracted to garden</b></p>	<p><b>Breeding in garden</b></p>
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Barn owl	✓	
Black cap	✓	
Black headed gull	✓	
Blackbird	✓	✓
Blue tits	✓	✓
Brambling	✓	
Carrion Crow	✓	
Chaffinch	✓	
Collared dove	✓	✓
Common kestrel,	✓	
Common pheasant	✓	✓
Cuckoo		
Dunnock	✓	✓
Fieldfare	✓	
Goldcrest	✓	
Goldfinch	✓	
Great tits	✓	✓
Greater spotted woodpecker	✓	
Green woodpecker	✓	
Greenfinch,	✓	
Grey Heron	✓	
Grey partridge		
Hawfinch	✓	
Herring gull	✓	
Honey Buzzard	✓	
House sparrow	✓	✓
Jackdaw	✓	
Jay	✓	
Lapwing	✓	
Little owls,	✓	
Long tail tits,	✓	
Magpie	✓	
Mistle thrush	✓	
Nightingale*		
Pied wagtail,	✓	
Red kite		
Robin,	✓	✓
Rook	✓	
Skylark		
Song thrush	✓	
Sparrow hawk,	✓	
Starling	✓	
Stock dove	✓	
Swallow		
Swift		
Tawny owl	✓	
Turtle dove	✓	
Wood pigeon	✓	✓

Wren	✓	✓
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\* Over the past two years we have heard nightingales nearby. However, on their arrival we were unable to get expert identification before they migrated. This year, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, we were unable to invite experts to confirm identification. They have been identified by several residents.

<b>Mammal and reptile species identified with the proposed site:</b>	<b>Attracted to garden</b>	<b>Breeding in garden</b>
Bank vole	✓	
Brown rat	✓	
Common frog. Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981	✓	
Common toad Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.	✓	
Common shrew Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.	✓	
Field vole	✓	
Grey Squirrel	✓	
Harvest mouse Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.	✓	
Hedgehog Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.	✓	✓
Mole	✓	
Pigmy shrew Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.	✓	
Rabbit	✓	
Red fox	✓	
Slow-worm Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.	✓	✓
Woodmouse	✓	✓

In addition, there are a myriad of insects and invertebrates to witness, the list of which is endless.

## Conclusion

The Green Spaces initiative has crystallised thinking around the question of access for disadvantaged groups in the local communities to safe enjoyment of the Gateway and opportunities to explore the natural world. It is important to protect the view over open countryside the many historic houses in their proper setting.

The Coffin Path Gateway is of particular importance because of the easy/safe access it gives to open countryside and relief from urban pressures along the A2 and Teynham Parish. The value is widely evidenced by its use by its immediate neighbours, but it is equally important to others from neighbouring Teynham Village as well as communities within Lynsted with Kingsdown Parish.

The owner of this site is Wienerberger Ltd., who are associated with Smeed Dean Works.

Nigel and Lis Heriz-Smith

138 London Road

ME9 9QH

29<sup>th</sup> August 2020