Shipston on Stour Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031

October 2018

Document 1: Neighbourhood Plan

Document 2: Consequent Local Projects

Shipston's neighbourhood plan
Our town, our plan, our future.

Box 1: Summary

This Neighbourhood Plan has been produced over the last 4 years by a team of community volunteers. There has been comprehensive engagement with residents, businesses and the owners and developers of land in and around the town. A formal process has been followed, as is required by the relevant planning regulations.

In January 2018 an independent examination of the submitted plan was held. The examiner reported that subject to some modifications the plan could proceed to a referendum for residents of the Parish. That referendum was held in September 2018. The outcome was a significant majority vote in favour of the plan. Stratford-on-Avon District Council formally adopted the plan on 15 October 2018.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides a set of planning policies to inform decisions on future planning applications. There will be enhanced Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL] payments for upcoming improvements to local infrastructure and community facilities. The plan will also stimulate action on several priority on-the-ground projects to make some important improvements.

The heart of the plan is the set of planning objectives and policies. These cover 5 topics: creating a stronger local economy; improvements to infrastructure and community facilities; dealing better with flooding risks; protecting a valued landscape and town heritage; and meeting future housing requirements. Section 2 of the plan covers these objectives and policies, and clear explanations are given as to why they are required and what can be achieved by applying the policies.

The plan's policies closely match the expressed local concerns. They respond to a sharp decline in local jobs over recent years, by safeguarding and enhancing commercial property and the town centre so local businesses can prosper and tourism can grow. Some essential infrastructure and community facilities upgrades are identified. Measures to better deal locally with flooding events are proposed. Future housing requirements are addressed, notably the need for affordable housing, and two additional development sites are allocated. A constant local concern has been the protection of the landscape setting of the town. The policies include a local designation to both protect and better access the river corridor.

Of the 'stand out' policies two aspects are notable. First, with an ageing population planning needs to foster wellbeing, and the plan includes positive measures to encourage physical activity. Second, the local economy needs more attention and support, retaining and creating jobs, and making more of the town's location and offer as a visitor destination. Both these themes figure very prominently in the plan.

This adopted Neighbourhood Plan document should be read in conjunction with the supporting evidence documents, and the separate Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement documents. Though not formally part of the plan the list of consequent local projects that flow from the policies is included for information as Document 2.

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Consequent Local Projects

Community Priorities: Conserving the local environment

1. Creating the plan

1.1 Neighbourhood Plans: what they are about, the procedure

1.1.1 Why the plan is important

1.1.11 A 'Neighbourhood Plan'[1] guides the future development, regeneration and conservation of a designated neighbourhood area, in this plan the Parish of Shipston-on-Stour. See the map at Figure 1 showing the area covered. The plan deals with land, buildings and related physical infrastructure.

1.1.1.2 The plan adds the local dimension to the adopted District-level 'Core Strategy'[2] plan. The local policies have resulted from thorough community engagement, to establish what matters, and why. When effectively applied, as part of the Development Plan, to the consideration of future development proposals, the local policies in this plan will make a difference.

1.1.1.3 The policies in the plan will also stimulate on-the-ground projects to bring about some important local improvements.

1.1.1.4 An adopted plan brings with it an enhanced amount of funding through the Community Infrastructure Levy[3], to be spent locally upgrading relevant infrastructure and community facilities.
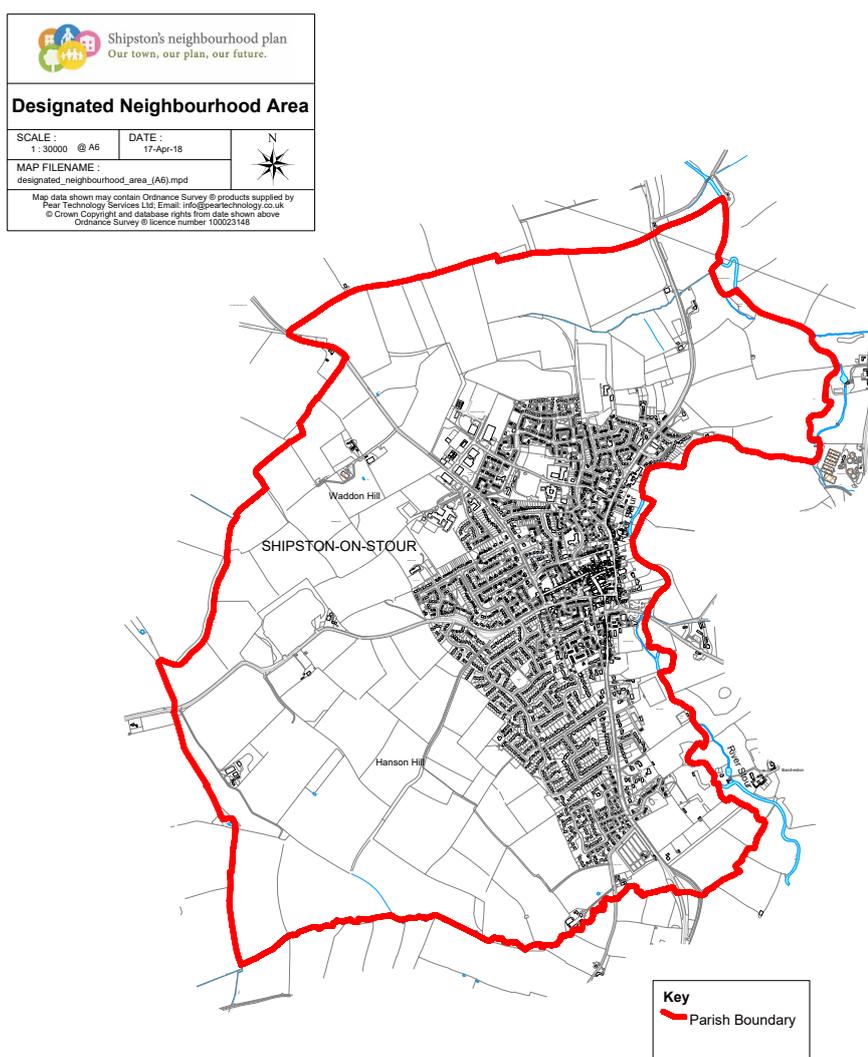
Figure 1. - Designated Neighbourhood Area

Box 2: Community Priorities:

- Maintaining the economic vitality and local employment potential of the town, especially the town centre shops and services;

- Creating the right amount, types and tenures of housing, particularly affordable housing, to meet local needs;

- Better infrastructure and social facilities to match the needs of the community and local economy; and

- Conserving the local environment whilst making it more accessible for well-being and recreation

Community Priorities: Economic vitality

Community Priorities: Better social facilities

Community Priorities: Housing to meet local needs

1.1.2 The set of documents

1.1.2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is a set of three documents. Document 1 is the 'statutory' Neighbourhood Plan.

1.1.2.2 Some locally important 'on-the-ground' projects derive from the Neighbourhood Plan, these are outlined within Document 2. They are not part of the formal Neighbourhood Plan. But it is useful to read about those consequent projects alongside the Neighbourhood Plan so Document 2 is bound in with Document 1.

1.1.2.3 Document 3 separately contains the mandatory supporting documents for the Neighbourhood Plan, including a Consultation Statement and a Basic Conditions Statement.

1.1.2.4 The Neighbourhood Plan starts in section 1 with an explanation of the purpose, procedure and product. There is a detailed explanation of how evidence was gathered, policies were identified and assessed and future objectives were set. Section 2 contains the plan's objectives and policies, the heart of the plan. There are explanations as to why policies are appropriate, and the differences they will make when applied.

1.1.3 A thorough process

1.1.3.1 The decision to produce the plan was taken by Shipston-on-Stour Town Council [the Town Council] in November 2012. After approval by Stratford-on-Avon District Council [the District Council] of the plan-making proposal, the Town Council became in April 2013 the 'qualifying body' responsible for the plan. The plan-making was delegated by the Town Council to a team of community volunteers. The Town Council, as the 'plan sponsor', provided oversight, funding and professional support including project management.

1.1.3.2 A process has been followed. See Figure 3, page 12, a diagram showing the sequence of actions and the programme up to October 2018, an adopted plan. To get this far has involved a lot of effort, and has taken over four years. This may with hindsight seem slow progress but it very much reflects a methodical and thorough approach. Appendix 3.2 lists the most important reference documents. These and the many related published reports and notes should be referred to by those seeking greater detail.

1.1.3.3 Policies are derived from systematic research, effective community engagement, and objective analysis. Some supplementary studies and surveys were commissioned to inform important issues such as the strength of the local economy, local housing needs, and the value and significance of the local landscape. Much use was made of research commissioned by the District Council during 2012 to 2015 as evidence for the then emerging draft Core Strategy.

1.1.4 Engaging with the community

1.1.4.1 There has throughout been a serious and effective effort to engage with the local community: to find out what matters to them, why, and what they think are the big issues and opportunities. As the policies emerged there was in-depth contact by way of events, surveys, and contact with stakeholders, such that individuals and organisations have contributed and endorsed the directions being taken and the views that have been formed. The work has been open to scrutiny, with written records of meetings and the main documents published on a dedicated website, and made available in hard copy by the Town Council.

1.1.5 Plan-making requirements

1.1.5.1 There are certain legal and technical requirements to be met, including the 'basic conditions' [4], and there must be proof that those requirements have been met. This is covered within the companion Document 3.

1.1.5.2 The District Council checked that the submission draft plan met the procedural requirements. They advertised the plan so that interested parties might comment. They appointed an independent professional examiner who considered whether the plan met the required basic conditions.

1.1.6 A local referendum

1.1.6.1 Following the successful examination, and taking on board the recommended modifications, the plan was put to residents on 06 September 2018. A significant majority approved, and consequently the plan was formally 'made' [i.e. adopted] by the District Council on 15 October 2018, so becoming part of the Development Plan [6] for the District. It sits alongside the strategic objectives and policies within the adopted Core Strategy.

1.1.7 Conforming to the Core Strategy

1.1.7.1 This plan provides the bottom-up local policies, mindful of what matters most to the local community. The Core Strategy provides the top-down District wide policies, and a link to National planning policies [7]. The examination checked, amongst other matters, that there was general consistency or 'conformity' between the different levels of policies.

1.1.7.2 This plan includes what are known as 'site allocations'. It was felt by the group creating the plan that this task should be included, rather than left to a District-wide site allocations development plan [8]. When adopted the Neighbourhood Plan site allocations will provide a local inset for the District-wide site allocations development plan. The housing policies identify two additional housing sites where for stated reasons the principle of development is accepted, subject to other relevant policies being adhered to.

1.1.8 Meeting community expectations

1.1.8.1 The Neighbourhood Plan had to deal with considerable and continuing local concern about the scale of development in the last few years, particularly about major new housing proposals. The plan-making has had to accept planning decisions as and when they were made, and throughout to take an objective stance. The resulting policies reflect the probable further substantial growth of population, more dwellings, possibly more commercial development, and a consequent increased demand on infrastructure and community amenities. See the map at Figure 2 showing the location of these planning commitments.

1.1.8.2 As well as the above noted community concerns there were also strongly expressed and recurrent opinions about such as a need for a new supermarket, a new fuel filling station to replace the one that closed after serious floods in 2007, a new medical centre, and improvements to bus services and broadband speeds. The latter are not land-use matters, and such as more retail capacity and a new healthcare facility have indeed figured in developments already granted planning permission, regarded as 'commitments' in development planning terms within this Neighbourhood Plan. Whether those developments happen will primarily be down to financial and commercial considerations, which are not land-use or planning matters and as such are outside the scope of this plan. Many representations received from the community were about such considerations, and whilst what was said and written has certainly not been ignored it was not possible include them in the plan-making work. See the Consultation Statement for a full record of the community engagement.

Shipston's neighbourhood plan
Our town, our plan, our future.

**Development since 2011 &
outstanding commitments at 01.04.2018**

SCALE :
1 : 15000   @ A4

DATE :
17-Apr-18

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MAP FILENAME :
referendum_draft:_committed_development_(A4).mpd

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Waddon Hill

SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR

Site for new
Medical Centre

Hanson Hill
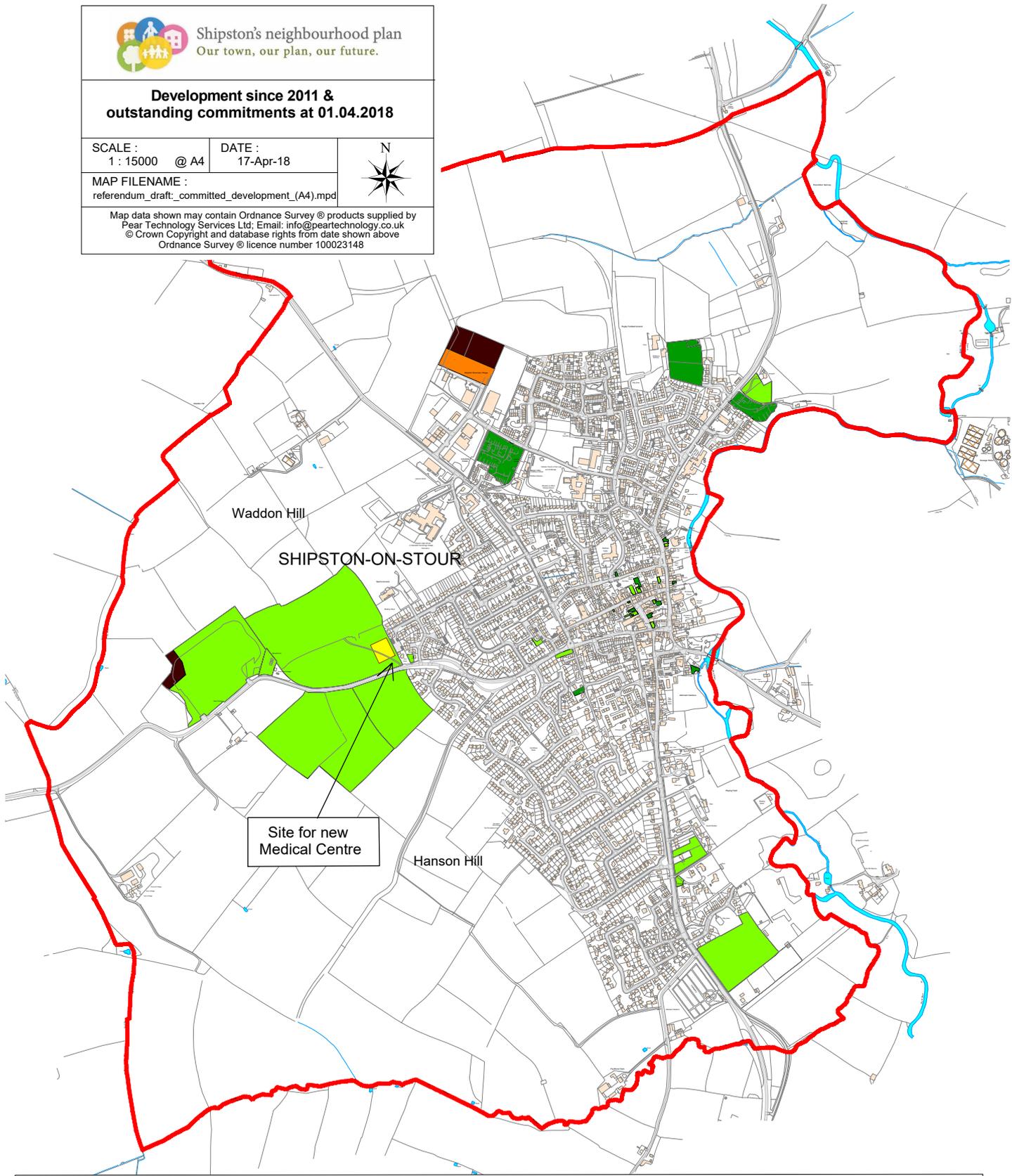
Key

Housing development completed since 2011

Committed housing development

Development for employment completed since 2011

Committed development for employment

Committed retail development

Designated Neighbourhood Area

Figure 2. – Committed developments

1.2 The town: an overview past and present

A long history

1.2.1 The town dates to the 10th Century and a grant of land by the then King Edgar to the monks of Worcester Cathedral. Until the 1930s the town and parish remained an outlier of Worcestershire, with undeveloped land to the east across the river being in Warwickshire. This explains the one-sided geography of the town, with the river on the eastern boundary.

1.2.2 The town name means 'sheep wash' reflecting the local importance of sheep farming in the rural economy. Also of note is the past importance of the town on a main route between Stratford-upon-Avon and Oxford, in time an important staging post with coaching inns, some such as The George remaining to this day. The town has a notable and distinctive central area with many fine old buildings and the old street pattern very evident.

Serving a large rural area

1.2.3 Located about 10 miles south of Stratford-upon-Avon in the Stour Valley, at the northern end of the Cotswolds, the town is at the heart of the most rural area of the District. A considerable number of nearby villages use the excellent range of shops, services and community facilities. This includes some nearby villages and hamlets in Gloucestershire, the county boundary being not far away. The designated Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB] is close by and the town is a gateway to that area, with leisure and tourism implications.

A distinctive landscape

1.2.4 The Stour Valley riverside and landscape is very attractive and much valued locally, with the town fringed to the west and south by prominent slopes and hilltops that open out towards the adjacent Cotswolds. To the north and east is the Feldon landscape, the less wooded, more upland equivalent of the better-known Arden area. The town's landscape setting, where Cotswolds meets Feldon, is certainly distinctive, and it has local characteristics that are recognised and seen as worth conserving.

Flooding

1.2.5 The topography and riverside setting do however have consequences. This is due to a large upstream catchment, with some steep slopes, and clay soils in the valley. Heavy rainfall means rapid runoff, a lot of water quickly accumulates, and the river rises rapidly and floods. Measures to improve flood resilience are very much on the local agenda.

Population growth and implications

1.2.6 The 2011 Parish population was just over 5000, which was a 62% increase since 1981. Perhaps more important has been the doubling in the number of dwellings over that time. This was the largest such increase of any settlement in the District. The town population has, in common with national and District trends, become on average older – 50% aged over 50. There are health implications, such as a growing need for care accommodation, and the importance of fitness and wellbeing facilities.

A weakened local economy

1.2.7 The local economy has changed greatly in recent years. At the time of the 2001 Census the town had the highest proportion at 44% of people living and working in the same Ward of all the Main Rural Centres in the District. It was relatively self-contained in employment terms. That has changed significantly. By the 2011 Census date 35% of employed residents worked in the town. Several manufacturing facilities that were major local employers have closed in recent years. Whilst the town's role as a shopping and services centre has been maintained, the need for those in employment to travel to jobs some distance away has increased substantially, as has the distance they travel. This mismatch between local jobs and a rising population is an important issue for the plan.

Supporting local businesses

1.2.8 The relatively remote location of the town does not meet the commercial requirements of major employers. They typically need excellent transport accessibility and substantial sites for expansion or new facilities.

Within the town some employment sites and buildings are available, and there are some good quality rural business parks nearby, but the economic reality is that a substantial uptake of large sites is unlikely to happen. This has several implications for the plan. The employment sites that remain need to be maintained, enhanced and promoted. Where there is demand from certain sectors or business types the provision of additional suitable and affordable business space needs to be encouraged. The town's shopping and services centre function needs to be strengthened and the retail offer improved, not least to meet the needs of more leisure and tourism visitors and an increasing local population.

Re-using large sites

1.2.9 A further consequence of the business closures has been the availability for re-use of some large sites. Of especial note are the large Norgren and Turbine Blading sites. The evident absence of demand for employment users has created opportunities for new housing, and in one case a retail development. These developments, and ones off Campden Road adjoining or near the Norgren site, will continue the upwards trend in population, but not local employment. The implications figure heavily in the plan.

Implications for local services and infrastructure

1.2.10 The trends as noted, especially the increase in population and dwellings, have marked consequences for the infrastructure and community facilities and amenities in the town. The prevailing community view at the outset of work on the plan was that there was great pressure and this would get worse. Establishing the facts has been very important. The findings proved interesting. Some infrastructure, facilities and amenities are underprovided in capacity and quality now, let alone meeting increased demands from new developments in the pipeline. Other facilities and services are, when the facts are checked, less stressed than the popular view indicated.

The matters of most concern

1.2.11 There were regular requests for community views on what were thought to be the main issues and opportunities for the town. The first such commentary was in late 2012 when the merits of creating a plan were being considered. As the evidence was subsequently gathered, and the policies and proposals emerged, regular checks were made with the community to ensure that new issues were not being missed, and that the direction and emphasis was right

1.2.12 It was evident from the ongoing community consultation that the main concerns that the community very much wanted the plan to address, as in text Box 2, have been effectively tackled. Those concerns have not shifted over the duration of the plan-making. In fact, if judged by the April 2016 Household Questionnaire feedback those expressed concerns had intensified. This is reassuring. It demonstrates the focus of the plan-making work has been good, and what the community expected to be addressed has been addressed.

1.2.13 For each topic – environment, housing, economy, infrastructure and flooding - there was a thorough fact-finding exercise, an audit. The resulting information was then assessed and a written commentary made on the main issues that had emerged from the fact-finding. This set of 'audit and issues reports' is the most important documented basis for the plan

Market Place: 1930s

1.3 The plan-making process

1.3.1 There have been three main aspects of the work:

- Meeting the legal and procedural requirements as set out in the regulations and guidance;

- Gathering and assessing evidence, converting that information into policies and proposals, and writing-up the plan; and

- Throughout engaging effectively with the community and stakeholders such as property owners [see the Consultation Statement within Document 3 for full details].

Figure 3 shows the process that has been followed.

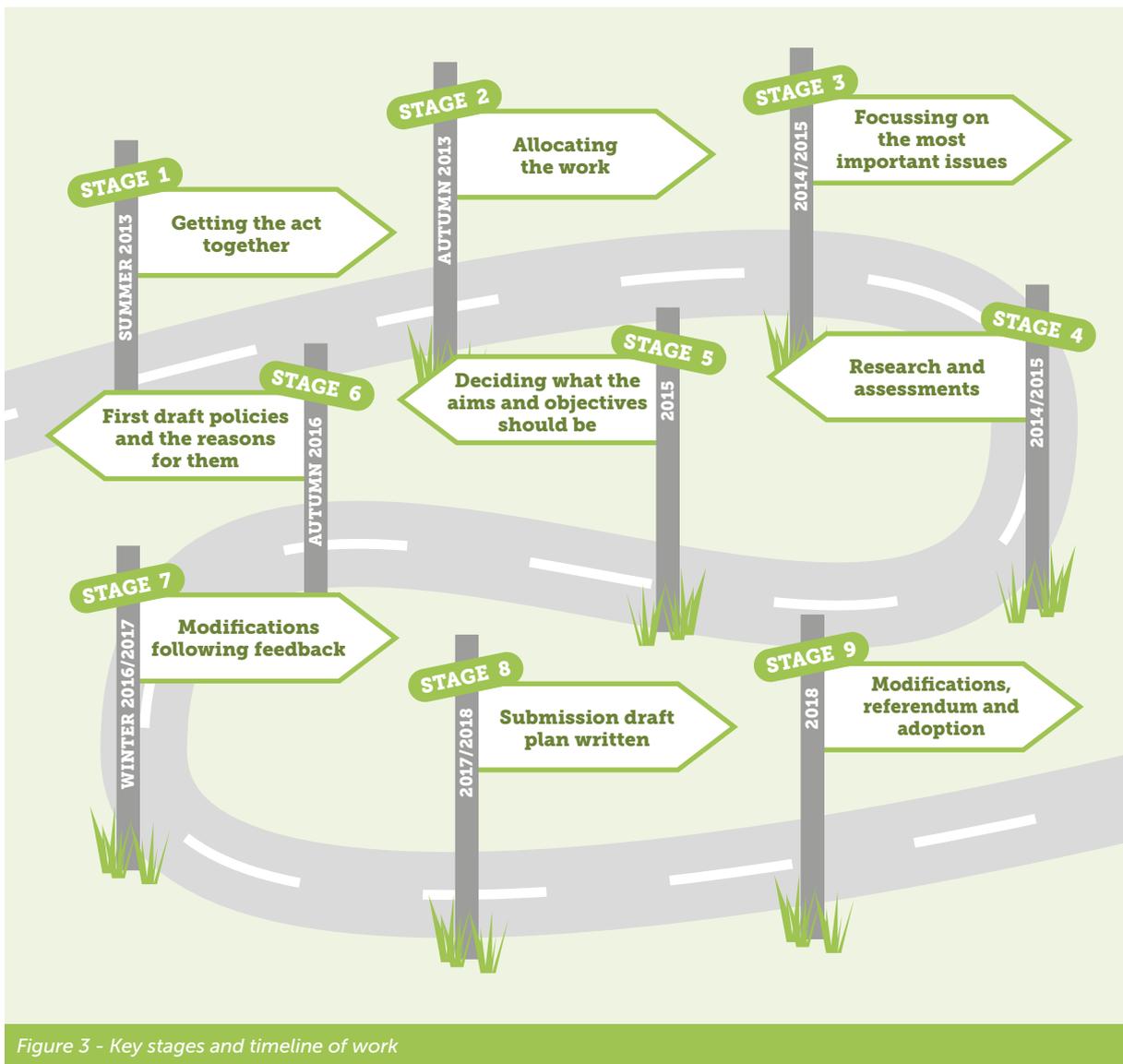**1.3.2 To date there have been nine key stages:**

Figure 3 - Key stages and timeline of work

1.3.2.1 Stage One: Getting the act together

The first stage was from 'Getting Started' up to 'Neighbourhood Area' designation. This happened in late 2012 up to June 2013. The Town Council recognised the opportunity to create a plan, and sought community views as to what they thought were the important issues, and whether producing a Neighbourhood Plan would be worthwhile. Some work was also done to clarify what would be involved, what it would cost, and what funding support would be available. Community views were positive, and the Town Council in November 2012 considered a 'scoping report' [9] and decided to sponsor the plan-making work. An application was put to the District Council and approval was given in April 2013 to commence work.

Box 3: The Town Council's published aim was:

"A Neighbourhood Plan is in progress. Once completed and agreed it will allow the Town Council to give a more informed contribution to the future development of the area and will also have the added benefit of funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy. These funds can be used for projects highlighted as needs within the Neighbourhood Plan".

1.3.2.2 Stage Two: allocating the work

The next stage was to seek help from the community and to get volunteers together. This happened between May 2013 and September 2013, starting with a launch announcement at the 2013 Wool Fair event. Project direction and management arrangements were also put in place. A Steering Group was set up by the Town Council to deal with management, funding, and ensuring the work and the way it was done met appropriate standards.

1.3.2.3 Stage Three: focussing on the most important issues

The volunteer community group agreed that they would sub-divide the work into four topics: environment; economy; community infrastructure and facilities; and housing. Topic leaders were identified for each theme. It should be noted that in late 2015 the community group added a separate flooding topic in recognition of the importance of that issue as had emerged during the ongoing work.

1.3.2.4 Stage Four: research and assessments

The big task was to build what is called the 'evidence base' [10]. In simple terms this was the gathering and in-depth analysis of the main facts and considerations: finding out what locally has been happening, and understanding what such trends would mean over the plan period and a bit beyond. This task took about 18 months to complete. In part this was because some supplementary research had to be commissioned, such as a survey of local businesses, and a Housing Needs Survey. In part it was because ongoing work on the evidence base for the emerging Core Strategy was providing important information. Mostly it was because there was a lot to find out, and engaging with the many local interests and organisations took time. The important thing is that this work was done rigorously, it was well organised, and thorough. The main published output from that work was a set of Audit and Issues Reports [11] covering the four working topics including the added flooding topic, which were published at different times over the period May 2015 to September 2015.

1.3.2.5 Stage Five: deciding what the aims and objectives should be

Overlapping with the concluding actions on the evidence base was work by the community group to consider the strategic aims that would guide the policies and proposals. In large part this came down to considering the expressed opinions of the wider community in the light of the emerging facts, issues and opportunities. Of note were open session community workshops in February 2015 and March 2015 to review priority issues and define a 'vision' for the development of the town.

1.3.2.6 Stage Six: first draft policies and the reasons for them

The published Audit and Issues Reports then formed the basis of a set of open session workshop meetings for the topic groups in September and October 2015 to identify the most important findings and implications within and across the themes. There was due consideration of the previously defined vision and strategic aims to ensure that what was emerging as draft policies and proposals was relevant, and would make a difference if applied. The product from each topic leader after those team workshops was a concise document setting out first draft policies, with preliminary objectives, and explanations as to why the policies were appropriate.

1.3.2.7 Stage Seven: initial modifications following feedback

During 2016 the community team modified, as and where required, the first draft policies and proposals in the light of the wider community and stakeholder feedback. The opportunity was taken to get initial feedback from the District Council about the emerging draft policies, partly to check that there was no inappropriate content, partly to cross-check against the emerging Core Strategy and the ongoing outcomes of the examination-in-public of that development plan. There was also some supplementary work for the community team to do on the housing and environment draft policies and proposals. This included checking the highways access feasibility of some of the potential site allocations, and commissioning a professional report on landscape sensitivities and using that report to build a case for Local Green Space [12] designations.

1.3.2.8 Stage Eight: modifications and submission draft plan

Updated draft policies were converted in October 2016 into a Pre-Submission Draft Plan document. This was publicised by the Town Council over eight weeks in November and December 2016. Written representations were submitted about the publicised draft plan. These were assessed by the community team during January to April 2017. Some of the representations required follow-up meetings to clarify the submitted information and comments. Justifiable modifications were made to the pre-submission draft plan. The pre-submission draft plan was acknowledged by the District Council, and written comments were provided on draft policies, with specific advice on the proposed housing policies. The District Council also at this stage confirmed, through an independent professional opinion from an environmental consultant, that a Strategic Environmental Assessment would not be required. The outcome of the various modifications was the October 2017 Submission Draft Plan. This document was approved for submission by the Town Council at their monthly meeting on 09 October 2017.

1.3.2.9 Stage Nine: referendum and adoption

The plan as submitted in Stage Eight was examined in January 2018 by an independent planning professional reporting to the District Council and Town Council. The examiner recommended that subject to some modifications the plan could proceed to a referendum. That event took place on 06 September 2018. The outcome was a substantial majority vote in favour of the plan being adopted, and the plan was formally 'made' [i.e. adopted] by the District Council on 15 October 2018.

1.4 Strategic aims and creating policies

1.4.1 Vision and aims

1.4.1.1 The benefit of having a long and ambitious community actions list from the preliminary engagement was twofold. Based on the feedback the list summarised the expressed hopes and concerns. The list also gave structure to the gathering and assessment of the evidence. This is best seen by reading the published set of Audit and Issues Reports.

1.4.1.2 Community workshop meetings were held in February and March 2015 to assess the community feedback to date and agree a preliminary future vision of the town in 2031. The idea was to provide strategic direction for the emerging policies and proposals. A set of working aims and objectives for the plan was also agreed. Based on the evidence gathered and the issues as were assessed, due consideration was given as to how best to achieve the vision and aims. A working draft 'vision' was published in April 2015.

Box 4: The 2031 Vision

"By 2031 Shipston on Stour will have become a sustainable and distinctive market town which will have retained its rural setting and historical character. It will have realised its full potential for the benefit of the community and visitors with supporting infrastructure and community facilities especially schools, services and healthcare. Flooding will have been contained and risks minimised. Housing growth will have primarily, but not exclusively, met the local needs of the community"

Workshop meeting - March 2015

1.4.1.3 After the evidence had been assessed initial thoughts were given to potential polices. The vision statement was re-visited and made shorter and precise. See text Box 4. This improved version was issued in December 2015, alongside the first draft policies and the supporting evidence from which those policies were derived. This was the basis of the first draft plan for the upcoming main community and stakeholder engagement phase.

1.4.1.4 The underlying strategic aims as settled by September 2015 were:

- Develop the strong sense of place, community and local identity, sustain character and setting as an historic riverside market town;

- Maintain and strengthen the role and competitiveness as a Main Rural Centre serving the town and surrounding area and a wider catchment, with a strong retail offer and a broad mix of local and visitor services, amenities and facilities;

- Champion business growth, employment opportunities, new economic activity and economic diversification whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment and heritage assets;

- Enhance, exploit and celebrate the riverside setting and the historic cultural, economic and amenity role that the River Stour has had in shaping the town's development;

- Manage growth whilst protecting the town's integrity, its valued rural setting and green surroundings, and ensure that development respects and enhances the setting, visual identity, and the wider environment;

- Define a settlement boundary around the town to accommodate growth but conserve the landscape and riverside setting;

- Reduce flood risks to people and property from all sources across the whole plan area;

- Address the challenges of an ageing population, provide better opportunities and amenities for younger people, and foster a sense of community wellbeing;

- Ensure that future housing needs are met in a managed, balanced and well designed way, and that local needs and affordability are priorities;

- Retain and add to the wide range of excellent services the town currently hosts, and address the challenge that rapid housing growth is bringing about for the physical and social infrastructure; and

- Improve connectivity within the town, with the surrounding communities, and the wider region.

Wool Fair public consultation

1.4.2 Converting evidence into objectives and policies

1.4.2.1 The Audit and Issues Reports

1.4.2.1.1 The most important evidence findings are set out in detail within the published set of 'Audit and Issues Reports'. These documents were completed and published between May and September 2015. There are reports for each of four topics. Flood risk had not at that time been promoted to become a stand-alone topic, having been covered within the Infrastructure and Environment topic reports.

1.4.2.1.2 Each topic report contains references to the source material. This source material was a mix of already published information within the evidence base for the emerging Core Strategy; relevant recent locally published information such as the draft Town Design Guide[26]; new research done by the topic teams; and commissioned surveys about the local economy, local ecology and housing needs. The topic reports also identified the need for some supplementary research in some important areas and recommended how this could take place. This mainly applied to the Environment topic and making a sound case for policy-based area designations to conserve the distinctive and valued landscape setting[27].

1.4.2.1.3 The main issues and opportunities identified from the assessed evidence were then summarised and listed. This was an important action, being the link between the evidence and the emerging draft policies and proposals. A matrix[28] setting out the issues, opportunities and priorities within and across the topics was prepared and published. This document was used as the basis of topic workshop meetings held in September and October 2015. The matrix is shown in text Box 5, on page 18.

1.4.2.2 Creating first draft policies

1.4.2.2.1 The September and October 2015 topic group workshop meetings identified the priority objectives that the policies would need to tackle and deliver.

1.4.2.2.2 A list was also made of 'essential supporting actions'. Some of the listed supporting actions would figure as policies. Some were markers for projects that would follow from the policies. See text Box 6 for a summary of the priority objectives; the essential supporting actions are in Box 7.

1.4.2.2.3 The outcome of the meetings in February and March 2015 to set a development vision for the town and a set of strategic aims was re-visited. The topic leaders used the outputs from the topic workshops to create the first draft policies and proposals document. This was published and formed the basis of well-publicised community Open Day events held in December 2015 and January 2016.

Box 5 - Issues, opportunities and priorities				
Topic 1	**Topic 2**	**Topic 3**	**Topic 4**	**Policy Subjects**
Economy	**Housing**	**Infrastructure**	**Environment**	**Actions priorities**
The priority is as a minimum sustaining but better increasing trading so measures must achieve this; identify central site for tourist information centre	Opportunities for additional town centre dwellings over retail and services units and through re-use	Any solution needs to marry better traffic flows and parking capacity with pedestrian safety and an improved visual experience and top quality 'town brand'	Any solutions must be compatible with heritage assets conservation; an opportunity to raise the environmental quality of the town centre.	1. Create a more vital and functional town centre with improved pedestrian safety and better traffic management as the heart of the local economy
Leading topic priority as creating and keeping local jobs is key to sustainability	Locate new business space where compatible with residential areas	Meet business requirements for broadband and other services	n/a	2. Retain and create more and better business space to help start-ups and growth
Major opportunity to create a visitor attraction reflecting the town's heritage and history	n/a	Improved flood resilience and performance of the town's surface water drainage is paramount	Can be a much improved and accessible amenity and green space asset and the town's eastern gateway	3. Make the riverside a more functional, valued and useful amenity asset for residents and visitors
Ensure that changes will put the town more on the destination map and is a better visitor experience	Need for significant additional visitor accommodation in hotels, B&B's and hostels	Parking, signage, pedestrian connexions must all work 'as a piece' to attract and impress	Keeping and enhancing the Stour Valley green setting and North Cotswolds gateway location is vital	4. Strongly push the tourism development agenda to create local employment
Extend, modernise and upgrade the available infrastructure and services to give the long term capacity for business growth	Ensure existing and additional housing is protected against flood risks and an holistic capacity approach is adopted	A 'must do' priority as additional dwellings and rising population will further overload the deficient existing infrastructure	Ensure engineered changes are fully consistent with progressive environmental aims and standards	5. Improve and update the town's infrastructure and community facilities to better meet current and future needs
This provides the landscape and amenity backcloth and is the town's 'North Cotswold' setting and tourism context	Scope for additional dwellings in and around the town centre but good design is essential	Solutions must be compatible with environmental conservation especially flood mitigation measures	The number one priority in this topic – no second chance if the physical environment is ruined.	6. Conserve and manage the town's river valley setting and historic heart

Economy	Housing	Infrastructure	Environment	16 Supporting Actions
n/a	n/a	Create and maintain public rights of way where required	Response to deficit in public amenity land and strengthens edge-of-settlement landscape and town setting	1. Designate northern and southern community amenity zones with structural landscaping and excellent access
Retain and promote use of existing employment sites	n/a	Ensure infrastructure and services are available	n/a	2. Conserve existing employment site allocations
Ensure town centre trading is not fettered	Make better use of existing residential space and encourage more town centre dwellings	n/a	Add local dimension to Core Strategy heritage assets policies with due regard to sustaining function and vitality	3. Publish clear and specific to the town design guidance to support and enhance conservation area purpose and aims
Meet requirements of businesses and visitors	Meet requirements of town centre residents	Add capacity and make better use of existing sites	Ensure car parks are well landscaped	4. Create more and better town centre car parking
Improve trading area 'footfall' by linkages, signage and upgrades between housing estates, car parks and town centre	Make sure new developments are properly linked to the town for pedestrians and cyclists	Create and maintain public rights of way where required	Create cross town routes to access adjacent countryside and link with designated community amenity zones	5. Better, safer and more obvious pedestrian and cyclist connexions between town and country and within town
n/a	n/a	Create and maintain public rights of way where required	Work with land owners to enhance the landscape and encourage responsible public use and enjoyment	6. Designate 'Local Green Spaces' to protect the valued slopes and hills around the town
n/a	n/a	Create and maintain public rights of way where required	Work with land owners and managers to encourage public access and active use and enhance the landscape within the zone	7. Designate a community buildings and green space amenity zone [SB Hub + High School + Leisure Centre]
Commercial development potential to be considered to increase local employment	Potential additional housing sites	Ensure infrastructure and services are available	Ensure compatibility with edge-of-settlement landscape conservation and designated community amenity zones	8. Designate edge-of-settlement 'areas of opportunity' for limited additional, suitably located and well-designed development
Adds to town centre vibrancy and should improve trading levels	Potential additional housing sites especially for older persons and affordable housing	Reinforces measures to create a more functional and valued town centre	More active use can be consistent with conservation aims	9. Encourage well designed intensification and mixes of use of the existing built areas especially in and around the town centre
n/a	Identify and allocate suitable sites	Ensure infrastructure and services are available	n/a	10. Need for an increased and continuing supply of affordable housing to meet local needs
n/a	Identify and allocate suitable sites	Ensure infrastructure and services are available	n/a	11. Need for an increased and continuing supply of older persons' housing
n/a	Identify and allocate suitable site	Access and car parking must be provided	n/a	12. Need for an new and enlarged medical centre in short term
n/a	n/a	Access and car parking must be provided	n/a	13. Possible need for an enlarged primary school in medium term
n/a	n/a	Create and maintain public access where required	Identify sites to reduce the current deficit and create linkages to adjacent countryside	14. Increase significantly the area of leisure and amenity green spaces within the town to meet national space standards
Consult TB and adjoining site owners to clarify aims view to continuing employment use	Create more housing if scope for residential re-use or mixed-use including residential assess	Ensure infrastructure and services are available	n/a	15. Consider the beneficial re-use of the vacant Turbine Blading and adjoining still active employment sites including mixed-use possibilities
n/a	n/a	n/a	Work with conservation trust to create, promote and manage sites	16. Designate local wildlife and local nature reserve sites

Box 6 – The main objectives

1. Create a more vital and functional town centre as the heart of the local economy, with improved traffic management and better pedestrian safety

This ambitious objective is supported by robust policies in the adopted Core Strategy, and a substantial consequent local project. That project will require effective leadership, adequate funding, and will need the collaboration of local businesses, their representative groups, and technical and management actions from the Highways Authority, and both the District and Town Councils. This project is also very important to priority 7 below.

2. Retain existing business space, and create more and better business space to meet local needs and especially help start-ups and small business growth.

This objective will be supported the by the application of positive policies, and will encourage the commercial re-use and creation of business space meeting identified local needs. Realism will apply. There are limitations to the scale and nature of the future local economy. That said local opportunities must be grasped to reduce the need to travel to work. There will be a strong overlap with priority 7 below.

3. Improve flood resilience and the performance of surface water drainage.

This objective will be supported by the application of policies and infrastructure commitments within the adopted Core Strategy. A future local project is identified: a technical survey so that the ownerships, capacity and condition of the surface water drainage system is confirmed. The baseline information can then inform emerging development proposals, and help to assess the adequacy of what is proposed when planning applications are considered.

4. Make the riverside a more attractive, valued and functional community asset.

Meeting this objective will require a consequent project, in support of related objectives and policies. There is overlap too with supporting action 1 as below. As the river is on the Parish boundary there will need to be collaboration with land owners in neighbouring Parishes. Leadership may well come from enlarging the existing 'riverside walk' Working Group of the Town Council.

5. Improve and update the town's infrastructure and community facilities to adequately meet current and future needs.

This objective will be supported by the application of policies and consequent infrastructure commitments within the adopted Core Strategy. The local task is to monitor those commitments and to ensure that funding and delivery meet expectations. This will require the Town Council to make appropriate representations about planning applications. Monitoring will be required to ensure agreed developer contributions are spent making the infrastructure upgrades, at the right times. This will include dealing with a backlog of improvements as identified in this plan and the Core Strategy.

6. Conserve and manage the town's historic heart and the river valley landscape and setting.

This is a set of objectives all to do with managing development pressures without unduly compromising the fine heritage and landscape assets of the town. Protection for the historic town centre comes from applying the appropriate policies in the adopted Core Strategy and established conservation planning safeguards. This will be locally bolstered by the completion and adoption as supplementary planning guidance of a Town Design Statement. When consequent projects are undertaken, notably as 1 above, meeting conservation requirements will figure large in the changes being considered. The town's landscape and setting will be protected and managed by strong local policies and a Local Green Spaces designation. Expansion of the built-up area has reached the point where further outwards growth will unacceptably compromise the adjoining fine landscape, especially to the west. The policy and designation in this plan is based on detailed research and technical assessments, and clear evidence that the community uses and values the countryside that adjoins the town. The recorded shortfall of public amenity land within the town, and very few opportunities to increase it, makes the greater use of the adjacent countryside an imperative. If that countryside is compromised or under threat that would be an own goal. There will be consequent projects in support of this objective, see supporting actions 1, 3 and 4.

7. Strongly push the tourism development agenda to create local employment.

This objective will be achieved by applying both the robust policies in the adopted Core Strategy and reinforcement by local policies within this plan. There is some overlap with priority 1, and the potential to make the town a more attractive and functional destination for leisure and tourism visitors is recognised. More visitor accommodation will be encouraged, building on recent and ongoing investments in the town centre. Several of the consequent projects bear on this objective, in particular by supporting actions 1, 4 and 5.

Box 7 – Twelve essential supporting actions.

The method by which each action will be achieved is listed. The options are a) through the application of policies and designating areas [as shown on the policies map], or b) by consequent projects [not part of the formal plan]. The options a) or b) are stated in the list below. In some instances both options apply.

1. Designate northern and southern public amenity 'wellbeing zones' (b)
The existing community facilities in these localities will be improved and made more accessible with additional structural landscaping, to encourage recreation and active enjoyment. This objective will be realised within two defined land areas as shown on the consequent local projects map. Both areas are already mostly in public ownership, and public access will be increased through access and use agreements with the owners and operators.

2. Publish clear and town-specific design guidance to support and enhance conservation aims (b)
This objective will be delivered by a project for the resumption and conclusion of work on a Town Design Statement resulting in adoption of the publication as supplementary planning guidance, and the main features being embodied within an updated Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Create more and better town centre car parking and improved traffic management (b)
This objective will be realised through a technical project most likely created and managed by a community action group working in collaboration with the County Council and the District Council. It will be closely linked to actions from Priority 1.

4. Achieve better, safer and more obvious pedestrian and cyclist connections (b)
This objective applies to the many existing connections within town, also to the public footpath and bridle way links from the town to the nearby countryside. Improvements will be achieved by a project.

5. Designate a 'Local Green Space' to protect the valued riverside around the town edge (a)
This objective will require a policy and the formal designation of a Local Green Space as defined on the policies map. There will be a consequent project to improve and maintain community access by public footpaths and bridle tracks across the designated area in conjunction with the land owner and the County Council.

6. Designate edge-of-settlement areas for limited additional development that is suitably located and well designed (a)
This objective will be met through the allocation of the identified sites on the policies map and consequent actions by landowners and developers.

7. Encourage the more intensive and mixed-use of the existing built areas [especially in and around the town centre and in and adjoining Tilemans Lane (a) and (b)]
This objective will be met by a policy and a project, the latter being informed by action 2 as above. The project will take place during 2019 and be concluded in time to inform an update of the Neighbourhood Plan. A Development Brief will be prepared and adopted as supplementary planning guidance for this locality by reviewing the needs, constraints and opportunities to identify the future optimal and compatible land-uses. Subject to their agreement this work might be led by the District Council working in collaboration with the Town Council, land owners, tenants and residents.

8. Respond to identified future local needs for a continuing supply of affordable housing (a) and (b)
This objective will require the periodic updating and application of the Housing Needs Survey. The survey findings will influence decisions on future housing development proposals. There may also be a consequent future need to revise allocated development areas to ensure the capacity exists.

10. Increase and continue the supply of a range of housing meeting the needs of older persons (a)
This objective will be achieved by applying a policy.

11. Support short term actions to provide a new and larger medical centre (b)
This objective may well be achieved as an outcome of the planning obligations relating to ongoing mainly residential developments in Campden Road. If not, an alternative solution will be required.

12. Respond to the possible medium term need for an enlarged primary school (b)
Should a definite case be made for an enlarged school, a site will have to be identified. Meeting this requirement may figure in a future update of the Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Policies

2.1 Context and conformity

2.1.1 This section contains the local policies that will influence and help to manage development over the plan period, covering the range of topics as explained in Section 1.3.2.3. Each policy is introduced with an objective, and concluded by an explanation of why the policy is appropriate given local circumstances. Some policies require localities or specific sites to be shown on a policies map. Reference should be made to the 12 essential actions listed in text Box 7 on page 21, as these actions drive the selected policies.

2.1.2 Some policies provide the basis for subsequent projects, future actions that will make a big difference locally, and bring about changes in line with the directions the plan is taking. Document 2 is about those projects: it is not a formal part of the plan.

2.1.3 Each set of policies opens with a text box summarising the position with the high level National Planning Policy Framework [the Framework]. The numbers in brackets reference the Framework paragraphs. Policies within the adopted Core Strategy are similarly referenced. The local policies are in general conformity with the policy context, and respond to the local circumstances as explained.

> ### The adopted Core Strategy contains a vision of Shipston-on-Stour by 2031:
>
> "...the town will have strengthened its local economy with the expansion of existing companies and the attraction of new business. The town's proximity to both Stratford-upon-Avon and the Cotswolds AONB will have contributed to its enhanced retail, tourism and visitor role. Enhancements will have been made to the quality of the built environment of the town centre."

2.2 Creating a stronger local economy

2.2.1 The headlines start with manufacturing plant closures over the last 10 years, and a considerable reduction in local jobs. This means that more of those in employment must travel to their place of work, and travel quite some distance. Stratford upon Avon is 10 miles; Warwick and Leamington over 15 miles; Evesham 16 miles; Banbury 13 miles; Gaydon 12 miles.

2.2.2 A thriving town centre with excellent shops and services and community facilities meets the needs of town residents and a wider rural catchment. More should be done to support the retail offer, improve traffic movements and parking, and uplift the central area's appearance. This will attract more visitors, and encourage them to stay longer, and spend more. This particularly applies to leisure and tourism visitors: this sector locally offers good potential, and more attractions and accommodation could be provided.

2.2.3 Existing businesses in the town centre and in the main business areas can be better supported, and the shortfall in accommodation needed for start-ups and growing small businesses needs attention. Not much land is locally allocated for employment in the Core Strategy, the relative remoteness of the town for large scale businesses is cited. This raises questions of how much employment land will be required in future, and the quality as well as quantity of commercial property, and how best to locally meet the needs of the sectors that do offer potential.

Higher level policies

Relevant aims within the National Planning Policy Framework are [refer to numbered paragraphs as below]:

- Building a strong, competitive economy [18-22];
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres [23-27]; and
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy [28].

The most relevant policies within the Core Strategy are:

- CS.22 retaining employment sites in commercial use unless such use is proven unviable;
- CS.23 larger retail proposals to be within the commercial core of the town;
- CS.24 support for more tourism and visitor attractions and accommodation; and
- AS.6 diversify the local economy, promote the role of tourism, support new local enterprises, and sustain the vitality of the town centre.

2.2.4 Policy EC1 Keeping land available for employment uses

Objective: retain in employment use the undeveloped commercial land and vacant commercial buildings within the upper and lower Tileman's Lane business areas of the town.

Policy: Proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of land or premises identified for or in employment use (including vacant sites which have a lawful use which provides employment) will not be permitted unless:

a) There is a sufficient supply of sites for a range of employment uses to meet both immediate and longer term requirements over the plan period; or

b) The applicant can demonstrate that the site or premises is no longer capable of meeting employment needs or where there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes; or

c) Unacceptable environmental problems are associated with the current use of the site and the proposal will remove them; or

d) The proposed use will contribute to the vitality of the town centre or forms part of a regeneration project.

Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the employment use planning applications for alternative uses will be treated on their merits and in accordance with statutory planning policies.

Explanation: the small area of land in the town identified in the Core Strategy for employment use provides little local opportunity for additional business growth. Existing vacant commercial plots and buildings should as first choice be retained in business use. Measures to enhance and promote these commercial areas need to be considered by way of public intervention and support. Re-use proposals for other than employment use that meet local needs and the policy requirements identified within this plan may be supported subject to a compelling case being made. Documentary evidence provided by professional sources, such as Chartered Surveyors will often be necessary to demonstrate a site is no longer capable of employment use or that it has been properly marketed for employment use with no success.

The Tileman's Lane business areas and adjoining undeveloped land will in 2019, assuming the owners and occupiers participate, be the subject of a planning project to identify by way of a development brief [13] the most appropriate and optimal future land-uses for the locality. See Document 2 section 2.9 for more details. The scope of the project will include the potential for establishing a business hub or centre which could act as the first step for new and home-based businesses into a commercial environment.

2.2.5 Policy EC2 Creating more space to meet local employment needs

Objective: create additional business space to meet the needs of growing small businesses and business start-ups.

Policy: proposals that create additional business space by new build, extensions, or conversions will be strongly supported, particularly so if re-using previously developed land or existing buildings.

This policy relates to all business proposals including Classes B1, B2, and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and any subsequent amendments. It does not include main town centre uses as defined in the NPPF as follows:

Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

The above town centre uses will be considered in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework and policy CS.23 in the Core Strategy "Retail Development and Main Centres".

Proposals will have to conform to other statutory planning policies and development management considerations particularly those relating to protection of residential amenity and highway safety.

Explanation: a key finding of commissioned research for this plan was identifying a limited existing amount of affordable business space locally meeting the needs of small businesses and home workers who need larger workspaces. This research looked at the Parish area. It should be noted that nearby business parks were and remain currently full, and void property is rare. Changes of use including permitted development, typically the re-use of commercial buildings as dwellings, has been reducing the commercial space available to such businesses. Proposals for creating additional business space, particularly in and around the town centre, will be welcomed. Main town centre uses of limited scale may be acceptable but are governed by specific locational criteria in Core Strategy policy CS.23, which primarily seeks to limit their location to the defined town centre.

2.2.7 Policy EC3 Encouraging employment uses on the former Turbine Blading site

Objective: encourage a significant business space component within the redevelopment of the vacant former Turbine Blading site.

Former Turbine Blading site re-use

Policy: proposals for the redevelopment of the former Turbine Blading site, including a mixed use, will be supported if a minimum of 50% of the floor space of the scheme is in an employment creating use as described in policy EC2. An exception may be allowed if the redevelopment proposal satisfies a local need and is in conformity with other statutory local and national planning policies. Development shall conform to any planning brief which has been prepared for the site.

Explanation: Turbine Blading was a major local employer that ended operations. The facility has been decommissioned, and the site marketed. Given the identified lack of business space, and the limited employment land allocation in the Core Strategy, it is desirable that the site is at least in part retained in employment use. An exception would be a redevelopment proposal for other than commercial use that meets local needs and in doing so will become a substantial local employer. It is noted that planning permission was granted in March 2017 for care home accommodation, which met the above exception. If that development does not take place the policy EC4 will apply to future proposals. It is intended that a development brief be prepared for the site and locality, see Document 2, paragraph 2.9.

Church Street redevelopment site

2.2.8 Policy EC4 Encouraging live/work [14] format developments

Objective: encourage the development of flexible and business-friendly live/work format accommodation meeting the needs of home workers, crafts persons, and small business start-ups.

Policy: development proposals for new build or conversions providing live/work space will be supported, subject to the following criteria:

a) Suitable independent access to both uses;

b) an appropriate level of off-road parking to serve both uses;

c) independent facilities (e.g. kitchen, toilet etc.) for the workspace that do not rely on the living space;

d) in the case of a conversion the building should be of a permanent and substantial construction, structurally sound and capable of conversion without major rebuilding or extension;

e) the layout and design ensures that residential and work uses can operate without conflict; and

f) secure arrangements are in place via a planning condition to tie the two elements together to prevent future separation.

Explanation: surveys of local businesses and the existing availability of workspace indicated a lack of affordable, small units. Live/work units [14] can provide such employment accommodation and would add to the local choice. Such a format may well be suited to a town centre location, subject to good design practice and developments fitting in with heritage assets.

More workplace for small businesses is required

Visitor Information Centre to promote and inform

2.2.9 Policy EC5 A better location for visitor and tourism information

Objective: to improve the location, accessibility and availability of visitor and tourism information by co-location with an improved town heritage centre.

Policy: development proposals that singly or jointly create new town centre facilities for providing visitor and tourist information and a town heritage centre will be supported within the town centre boundary highlighted on the policies map.

Explanation: expanding the leisure and tourism role of the town is a priority. Despite good highways links and proximity to widely recognised destinations such as the Cotswolds, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Oxford, the town is not prominent on the tourism map. There is some visitor accommodation, with recent investment evident. But the capacity is low, and the range offered quite limited. More and a bigger range of attractions and overnight accommodation will encourage people to visit, stay and spend. This will add to the vibrancy of the town centre and will strengthen the local economy, in accordance with the Core Strategy policy CS.24 Tourism and Development.

A more obviously signposted visitor information centre located in or very close to the High Street is desirable. The current facility is not well located or signed. Getting visitors into the town centre and providing services and information will increase local expenditure. The existing town heritage centre would arguably be improved by relocating it with or near to a visitor information centre.

2.3 Adequate infrastructure and community facilities

2.3.1 One of the main community concerns throughout the plan-making work was the considerable strain placed on current infrastructure and community facilities and amenities. With the town population and dwelling numbers having grown so much over the last 30 years the perception was that there was already a significant overload, and that the upcoming further growth as several additional major housing commitments are built-out over the next 5 or so years will pile on even more pressure.

2.3.2 The research and analysis has indeed identified there is some overload and pressure particularly on schools, healthcare, leisure, public open spaces and certain recreation facilities, and physical infrastructure such as car parking capacity. As the town's facilities also meet the needs of a large catchment area, with a growing population, the source of the pressure is not just from within the town. Further important considerations are meeting the needs of an ageing population, and ensuring there are local opportunities to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

2.3.3 A summary of the town's infrastructure needs is given within the Core Strategy [15] Schedule of Infrastructure Projects. That list is confirmed by the in-depth evidence for this Neighbourhood Plan. The following policy and the consequent projects will help to deal with the backlog, and to ensure that the upcoming developments fully contribute to meeting the further loads they impose.

2.3.4 Developers will need to make contributions to support Local Infrastructure via the Community Infrastructure Levy and the requirements of Core Strategy policy CS.27 Developer Contributions.

Improved and landscaped 'Eastern Gateway' needed

Higher level policies

Relevant aims within the National Planning Policy Framework are [refer to numbered paragraphs as below]:

- Supporting high quality communications infrastructure [42-45];
- Retaining and developing local services and community facilities [28];
- Securing a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by responding to the impact of climate change [93, 95]; and
- Protecting and enhancing public rights of way and access [75].

The most relevant policies within the Core Strategy are:

- CS.2 development will include measures to mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change;
- CS.4 enhancing and protecting the water environment including efficient use of water;
- CS.27 CIL and planning obligations for developer contributions to infrastructure and community facilities; and
- AS.6 improved and additional community facilities and local economy supported by physical improvements in the town centre.

2.3.5 Policy INF1 Pedestrian and cyclist access

Objective: to improve and make safer the pedestrian and cyclist connections within and between the different areas of the town, and from the town to the adjoining countryside and the surrounding network of public footpaths and bridle ways. This particularly applies to the needs of older persons and those with disabilities.

Policy: Where possible development shall provide effective links to pedestrian and cycle networks and to and from the town centre and community facilities. This will include improvements to existing such linkages, or the creation of new linkages to and within older developments where such infrastructure was not originally put in place.

Explanation: there are three reasons for this policy. It will ensure that new developments, most of which are towards the edge of the town and distant from services and facilities, are well and safely connected for pedestrian and cyclists. It will fund works to upgrade and make safer and easier to use some of the well-used but very old pedestrian linkages in and around the town centre. This will, for example, make it easier and safer to use the many alleyways connecting car parks and shops and other businesses. The shortfall in public open space within the town is an issue, and the scope to find additional public spaces is very limited hence making a need for more and better public access to the adjoining fine countryside with recreation and wellbeing use foremost in mind. The problem is the condition and disconnection of the existing public footpaths and bridle ways. It will not be difficult or costly to make necessary improvements and create some new public paths. A good example is the public right of way leading west out of town to the high ground of Hanson Hill and beyond.

2.4 Dealing better with flooding risks

2.4.1 Of the 40 riverside settlements in Warwickshire the town has the second highest flooding risk from surface water run-off during rainfall events. Environment Agency data indicates the flood risk is significantly increasing in parts of the town. Climate change forecasts show a considerable increase in the prospect of more intense rainfall in the area which will worsen flood risk. The prognosis is not good and indicates action is essential.

2.4.2 This action must quickly introduce effective measures in the town and the wider catchment area. This plan is concerned with such improvements within the Parish but is mindful of the holistic approach that is needed. The key point is that adopting a 'flood neutral' stance based on historic data will not do the job. Local circumstances require better than that. There needs to be a combination of playing catch-up with the overhaul of poorly performing surface water drainage, and getting ahead of the game by adopting bold measures to modify the river and catchment area so that it can better cope with the future increases in rainfall.

2.4.3 The community has shown it is strongly in favour of this plan including policies that will contribute to rapidly attaining a 'better than flood neutral' position. There is certainly, given special circumstances, a strong justification to locally apply very rigorously the higher level strategies and policies at District and national levels.

Higher level policies

A relevant aim within the National Planning Policy Framework [refer to numbered paragraphs as below] is:

- Meeting the challenges of climate change and flooding risk [99-104]

Within the Core Strategy the key policies are:

- CS.2 require proposals to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change by including SuDS [sustainable drainage] and not compromising flood plains;
- CS.4c enhancing and protecting the water environment to reduce and mitigate flooding risks; and
- AS.6 minimise the risk of flooding in the town and ensure land required for flood alleviation measures is kept undeveloped.

2.4.4 The Town Council fully supports the flood prevention policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and expressed in more detail in Core Strategy policy CS.4 Water Environment and Flood Risk. The aim [16] of those policies is to encourage future developments that attain a 'better than flood neutral' position by reducing the overall level of on-site and off-site flood risk from surface water run-off. This will ensure that current surface water drainage deficiencies and the flood risk consequences are not compounded by additional development, and that future increased flood risks are anticipated and a provision is made.

2.4.5 It is important in accordance with Core Strategy policy 'CS.4B Water Environment and Flood Risk – Surface Water Run-off and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' that watercourses and ditches are kept as open channels and where possible opened up in order to help provide flood alleviation and less opportunity for blocked culverts. Furthermore, the open river environments are a valuable amenity for recreation and supporting wildlife.

Improved flood resistance is essential

2.5 Protecting a valued environment

2.5.1 The plan-making considered several important aspects of the built and natural environments, including the crossover into the health and wellbeing of residents, and the backcloth to the growing importance of leisure and tourism in the local economy. Three main features of the environment emerged as community priorities:

- ensuring the striking landscape setting of the town, notably the slopes and ridge to the west and north west, is not spoiled by encroaching development;

- making more of the riverside as an amenity and feature; and

- offsetting the shortfall in public open spaces within the town by adding and improving public rights of way that connect with the adjoining countryside, so making it more accessible.

2.5.2 Other significant expressed concerns have been about protecting the heritage assets in the town centre, and the need for good design. This applies especially to sensitive locations such as the designated Conservation Area and where edge-of-settlement development meets the open countryside.

2.5.3 The landscape setting for the town comprises two prominent features: the 'bowl like' topography with tight enclosure on the north, west and south, most prominent being land rising to about 120 metres AOD [Above Ordnance Datum] at Hanson Hill and Waddon Hill; and the meandering River Stour corridor along the eastern boundary. The Parish lies at the junction of the Cotswolds and the Feldon, both recognised as significant landscapes. It is being at this overlap that is important in terms of the local landscape characteristics. The town lies in the valley bottom, and up the adjacent lower slopes. The geographical point is that as the town has expanded outwards the built area has encroached upon those slopes, to the point where the 'bowl like' setting has arguably been compromised. It is hard to identify locations for further upslope development that would not harm the character and setting of the town. The poor design and pale materials of peripheral buildings has not helped as some are widely visible.

2.5.4 The riverside area is, given the proximity to the town centre and easy access, not made much of. It is simply there, rather than regarded as an attraction or a valued feature of the landscape. Whilst the need to deal better with flood risks is a factor in what might be done to get more from the riverside, it should be possible to make enhancements in line with drainage improvements. Part of the seemingly low esteem for the riverside may be due to the river being the east boundary of the Parish, it is literally peripheral. A clear community resolve to make the riverside more attractive and a landscape asset and amenity is evident.

2.5.5 There is a substantial shortfall of recreational public open space in the town [17] as identified in the Core Strategy policy AS.6 with respect to issues in the Plan area. The scope to find more is very limited. Making more of the nearby countryside for recreational use is desirable. Access is limited. There are not many public rights of way. Those there are in some cases are in poor condition, and are badly waymarked. The continuing outward expansion of the town is not always enhancing or adding to these countryside connections. A strong theme of the plan has been seeking opportunities to improve this network of public rights of way. This reinforces the related aim of conserving the upper slopes and hilltops. It is no good better connecting if the destination value has been lost or diminished.

2.5.6 Another strong theme has been the need for better design. This particularly applies to two locations: a) development in and around the town centre and the designated Conservation Area; [18] and b) to edge-of-settlement development, where the built area should seamlessly merge with the adjoining countryside and not present a harsh and overly visible edge. It is noted that the Core Strategy has robust policies relating to good design practice and the protection of heritage assets, so these will also serve at the local level. It is also hoped that work on the draft Town Design Statement will be completed so this can be adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

Higher level policies

Relevant aims within the National Planning Policy Framework [refer to numbered paragraphs as below] are :

- Requiring good design practice [56-58];
- Promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness [60];
- Successful integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environments [61, 126];
- Ensuring good access to high quality open spaces and their use for recreation and sports so contributing to health and wellbeing [73, 74];
- Protecting and enhancing public rights of way and access [75];
- Identifying for special protection green landscape areas of local significance and value [76, 77,109]; and
- Sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation [126, 131,132]

Key policies in the Core Strategy:

- CS.5 maintaining the rural landscape character and quality, including taking account of the cumulative impacts of development;
- CS.6 and AS.6 support for the designation of local wildlife sites;
- CS.8 and AS.6 promote, protect and enhance the historic town centre;
- AS.6 enhance the attractiveness of the River Stour corridor;
- CS.25 and AS.6 provide additional natural accessible greenspace and better access to the countryside to improve community wellbeing;
- CS.9 ensure high quality design consistent with local character and distinctiveness; and
- CS.13 'Areas of Restraint' protects the landscape and visual amenity in the Stour Valley east of the town.

2.5.7 Policy ENV1 A defined Built-Up Area Boundary

Objective: this policy has two main objectives. First it identifies a justifiable built-up area boundary [BUAB] for the settlement over the plan period, mindful of current planning commitments and a strongly expressed community desire for outwards expansion into open countryside to be moderated and nearby valued landscape conserved. Second, this boundary definition will encourage the more intensive use by redevelopment of land and buildings within the urban area, and make a clear planning statement that such development is locally preferred to more sprawl.

Policy: a boundary at the edge of the built-up area of the settlement is identified and shown on the Policies Map at Page 44. Development will take place within this Built-Up Area Boundary on sites identified and allocated in this plan and more generally through the re-use of suitable land and buildings. Development outside the boundary will be limited in accordance with Core Stategy policy CS.15 'Distribution of Development'.

Explanation: as a Main Rural Centre the town is identified within the Core Strategy as a suitable location for housing and business development and the provision of local services. Policies CS.15, CS.16 and AS.6 apply. Meeting this objective requires a definition of the settlement boundary mindful of some very important local factors. Current planning commitments, mostly for additional dwellings on large edge-of-settlement sites, must be included within such a boundary. The known scope for the re-use and more intensive development of some suitably located sites within the built-up area is to be accepted, and there will likely be further such opportunities, to be encouraged as good planning practice as opposed to further outward development pressures. Resisting such further outwards growth has figured very strongly in this plan as a community aim, hence policies to conserve the valued nearby landscape and make much better and active use of it for recreation and wellbeing. A clear definition of a built-up area boundary is a prerequisite for several interlinked objectives and policies in this plan, and meeting the Core Strategy spatial strategy objectives. Development outside of the boundary will be limited in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS.13 'Areas of Restraint' and CS.15 'Distribution of Development' which is concerned to protect landscape character and avoid the coalescence of settlements. Hence this policy ENV1. Reference should be made to ENV1 when reading the Economy and Housing policies in this plan.

Warwickshire County Council's public health guidance promotes healthy, active communities through the neighbourhood planning process:

"good quality landscapes, including urban spaces as well as the wider countryside, have huge potential to improve our health and wellbeing, often offering a more cost-effective solution than clinical interventions."

Source: Neighbourhood Development Planning for Health. Evidence and guidance for promoting healthy, active communities through the neighbourhood planning process. Published 2016 by Warwickshire County Council.

2.5.8 Policy ENV2 Conserving the adjoining countryside

Objective: to locally secure the District-wide strategic aim of maintaining and enhancing rural character and local distinctiveness. A priority is conserving an unspoiled and quiet wetlands and river area where the town is separated from the nearby hamlet of Barcheston.

Policy: the following area is designated as Local Green Space [LGS] as shown on the Policies Map:

- LGS1: Land close to the River Stour near Barcheston

Proposals for any development on this land will be resisted other than in very special circumstances, for example to meet essential utility infrastructure needs and where no alternative location is feasible. All development shall be designed to minimize its impact on the green space and it's setting.

Explanation: this designation protects countryside that is highly important to the character and setting of the town, and through existing and improved access on public rights of way affords recreational opportunities helping the wellbeing of residents.

LGS1 will add near to riverside amenity open space, and potentially longer term a permissive public footpath connection over the river to the Shakespeare's Way public footpath. Note that the designated area is within the Parish boundary. The land owner has offered for public ownership and access this designated land, plus the small adjacent area up to the river bank that is outside the Parish.

The LGS designation criteria within paragraph 77 of the Framework has been applied to LGS1. See the explanation and account of the assessment methodology as outlined in text Box 8.

Box 8: Local Green Space Designation

The designation is based on criteria in paragraph 77 of the NPPF which states: 'This designation should only be used where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land'.

Policy ENV2 seeks the designation of a Local Green Space [LGS]. LGS1 is land close to the River Stour at the southern edge of the town. A sound planning case must be made for such designations. The objective is protection of such green spaces as much valued landscapes.

Also of significance is the written acceptance of the land owners. For LGS1 the land owner wishes to 'gift' the land to the community, and there will be full public access.

For more information about the planning case for a LGS designation refer to the Environment 'Audit and Issues Report' evidence document.

2.5.9 Policy ENV3: Ensuring development respects the local landscape and townscape

Objective: to ensure that development respects the landscape and townscape characteristics that give the town its local distinctiveness. Excellent design and materials specification is required to blend new buildings with both the adjoining open countryside and the historic heart of the town.

High Street: 1920s

Policy:

(1) Design and character

All development in the Neighbourhood Area should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.

(2) Responding to local character

All development proposals must demonstrate how the requirement to positively contribute to local character has been embedded during the design process, in accordance with the following principles:

a) Be compatible with the distinctive character of the area, respecting the local settlement pattern building styles and materials whilst taking a positive approach to innovative, contemporary designs that are sensitive to their setting. Existing open green spaces within the settlement should be retained where they make an important contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the area;

b) Be of a density and scale that is in keeping with the character of the surrounding development and landscape;

c) Preserve or enhance heritage assets including listed buildings and the designated Conservation Area;

d) Protect or enhance landscape and biodiversity by incorporating landscaping consistent with the published Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines prepared by Warwickshire County Council;

e) Sustain key landscape features such as ensuring views to and from higher slopes and across the wider landscape are maintained free from intrusive development;

f) Have regard to the impact on tranquillity, including dark skies;

g) Not increase the likelihood of surface water flooding within the town or exacerbate foul drainage capacity problems;

h) When there are archaeological deposits which may be affected or it is considered there may be such deposits in the vicinity then a full survey shall be carried out and adequate protection afforded where necessary.

(3) Use of Design Codes
a) All proposals for large scale development [10 or more dwellings or 1000 square metres or more of non-residential floor space] will be expected to demonstrate design rationale through the appropriate use of design codes and master planning.
b) All large-scale housing developments should be accompanied by a master plan [for outline applications] or a contextual plan [for detailed applications] which demonstrates how the development integrates with the existing community by encouraging social cohesion and how it delivers the necessary infrastructure to support the development.
c) The master plan or contextual plan should include consideration of existing or proposed developments in the locality to enable a holistic approach to be developed wherever possible.
d) The plan must include consideration of means to mitigate the additional demand that the development would place on the highway system, and on services such as schools and medical facilities, as well as the need to provide public open space and environmental improvements.
e) Development will not be supported if detrimental impacts on existing infrastructure cannot be mitigated.

2.5.10 Protecting designated heritage assets

The Town Council is concerned that the NPPF policies and the Core Strategy policy CS.8 'Historic Environment' are closely adhered to.

The historic heart of the town includes an extensive designated Conservation Area with many listed buildings and structures, and retains important historic characteristics such as a distinctive network of streets and alleys. The town centre contains many businesses and community facilities as well as a surprisingly large number of dwellings. The requirement is to successfully maintain the functions and vitality of the town centre whilst modernising and adapting buildings and improving public spaces.

Maintaining the viability and vitality of town centres is at the forefront of higher level planning policy aims. So too is the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and heritage assets including the Conservation Area and many individual listed buildings. A balance is required. Locally the mix and range of uses in what is a distinctive and historic town centre will continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of a rising population, to enable investment in new and updated properties, and to accommodate different ways of doing business. Making more of the town centre as a visitor and tourist destination is also important. When new buildings or modifications are proposed this puts particular emphasis on the need for good design solutions, with due attention to the essentials of layout, scale, mass, and materials. Applicants will be expected to show that they are using the available local design guidance to good effect, and to submit design statements to demonstrate sound design solutions.

2.6 Meeting housing requirements

2.6.1 The Parish population, now more than 5000 people, has grown faster than in other comparable settlements in the District, trebling since 1951. By 2013 about 50% of that population was aged over 50 years, and well over 25% were aged over 65 years, twice the national average. The main trends, therefore, have been a very rapid growth in the number of residents, and an increasingly aged population.

2.6.2 In 2011 there were 2405 dwellings in the town. Since then planning permission has been granted for around a further 660 dwellings, mostly on several large sites on the edges of the town. Of that number around 120 have been built or are under construction. Many additional dwellings are being built, or are planned and on the way. These sites should be regarded as 'commitments'.

2.6.3 A complication for the analysis of what is locally required is that accommodation to meet the needs of the elderly, particularly those requiring varying levels of care, falls into a different Use Class category. The projected housing requirements within the Core Strategy deal separately with such care accommodation, specifically the Extra Care [19] format, from the general category of housing. The point is that locally meeting housing needs requires thought about meeting both the general housing category and the more specialised care housing category. With the latter, 138 units of Extra Care were granted planning permission from 2011 to 2016. A proposal on the former Turbine Blading site for an additional 60 bed care facility together with 10 Extra Care units was granted planning permission in March 2017.

2.6.4 A further very important factor is considering how affordable and available housing is locally, thus meeting the requirements of young persons, families, and for those employed in the town who wish to live near their place of work.

2.6.5 The Core Strategy was adopted in July 2016, after the examining Inspector had submitted a concluding report in June 2016 with recommended Main Modifications. In relation to housing matters the summary position for the town is that the now accepted overall District-wide requirement for the plan period 2011 -2031 is to provide 14600 additional dwellings. By May 2017 over 16500 additional dwellings have already been provided for.

2.6.6 This growth will be dispersed across the District, with 22% of it on several major sites within Stratford-upon-Avon, about 15% and 13% respectively within major planned developments at Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath and Long Marston Airfield, 13% at Long Marston Depot, and 13 % in various categories of Local Service Villages with adequate local facilities.

2.6.7 The Core Strategy allocates approximately 3,800 homes to be provided in Main Rural Centres such as Shipston. It states further in paragraph 6.6.21 that based on the strategy set out in Section 5 for distributing housing development in the District, and taking into account the number of dwellings built and granted planning permission since 2011, an indicative figure of a minimum of 510 homes are to be provided in Shipston over the plan period.

2.6.8 Since the Core Strategy was adopted this figure has been slightly revised by SDC in 2017, on account of the latest figures for dwellings completed, dwellings under construction and planning permissions granted for dwellings since 2011. It is now envisaged that Shipston will provide an indicative minimum figure of 516 dwellings which excludes extra care units specialising in provision for the elderly.

2.6.9 The policies that follow will meet local needs, and take forward a reserve housing land provision that can confidently be identified, consistent with the overall objectives and other policies of the plan. A rigorous site selection process has been used, including in-depth community engagement, dialogue where required with land owners and developers, and technical studies about site access and the potential landscape and visual impacts of the site options. The outcome is that two sites with a combined capacity of about 45 dwellings have been identified.

2.6.10 Attention is also given to meeting local needs for affordable housing and low cost market housing, as is meeting the local needs of an ageing population through commitments and potentially additional schemes that will deliver care accommodation, including that to the Extra Care [19] format.

Higher level policies

Relevant aims within the National Planning Policy Framework [refer to numbered paragraphs as below] are:

- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes, wider opportunities for home ownership, and creating sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities [47 - 55], and
- Mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, and active street frontages which bring people together [69]

The National Planning Policy Guidance (Paragraph 001 Reference ID: 55-001-20150318 to

Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 55-012-20150318) offers advice on provision of starter

homes on sites which are no longer viable for industrial or commercial use

Key policies within the Core Strategy are:

- CS.15 role of Main Rural Centres [MRCs] as suitable locations for housing and business development and provision of local services;
- Note that varying amount of development is proposed in MRCs reflecting specific constraints and opportunities and the importance of retaining their individual character and distinctiveness;
- CS.16 housing development numbers and trajectory for MRCs including Shipston-on-Stour;
- CS.18 thresholds for Use Class C3 housing development above which an affordable housing component will be required, to provide additional rented or intermediate housing where the market is not meeting local needs;
- CS.19 achieving a mix and range of types of housing from developers, housing associations and other providers;
- CS.20 adding to the housing stock by conversions subject to retaining ground floor commercial space.

2.6.11 Policy HSG1 Ensuring a supply of affordable [20] homes

Objective: to locally maintain an adequate supply of affordable rented, intermediate rented and shared equity owned dwellings throughout the plan period.

> **Policy:** Development proposals of exclusively affordable homes will be supported within and adjacent to the built-up-area boundary and where they are seeking to meet needs identified in the most recent local housing needs survey. These proposals shall conform to Core Strategy policy CS.15 "Distribution of Development". Such housing shall be occupied by persons with a local connection in a cascade system as described in section 3.2 below which gives priority to local people. This housing shall remain affordable in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS.18 Affordable Housing

Explanation: a Housing Needs Survey was commissioned in 2013 as part of the gathering of evidence. This survey showed a requirement at that time for 26 affordable homes in the town [24 to rent and 2 for shared ownership]. The District Council's July 2014 housing waiting list included 159 households in the CV36 postcode [Shipston-on-Stour and surrounding area] 17 of which were listed as medium to high priorities. Since the end of 2013 14 affordable homes have been completed and there are outstanding planning permissions [some of them granted before 2013] for a further 132. Some of those commitments are now being built and all are expected to have been completed by 2021. In the subsequent 10 years to 2031 there will likely be an ongoing need from those with local connections for affordable homes of appropriate types and tenures. A supply of affordable rented, intermediate rented and shared equity owned homes should be sustained. The numbers and timings of such requirements will be identified by periodic surveys of local housing needs, such surveys to be conducted at least every 5 years.

The term local connection is defined in section 3.2 below. The housing shall remain [21] affordable and available to persons with a local connection [22]. In exceptional cases it may be possible to allow a relaxation from the affordability requirement, for example in respect of shared ownership 'staircasing' and 'mortgagee protection' clauses.

2.6.12 Policy HSG2 Ensuring a supply of low cost market housing [23]

Objective: to encourage schemes that will maintain a supply of low cost homes for purchase particularly by younger persons and those locally employed as this will help to boost the local economy and will reduce the need to travel.

> **Policy:** Development proposals will be supported where they are within and adjacent to the built-up-area boundary and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS.15G "Distribution of Development". The housing shall meet the needs identified in the latest housing needs survey at a price lower than the normal market value and be for those with a local connection, as defined in section 3.2 of this Plan.

Explanation: new market housing is often priced beyond the means of the existing local community. The 2013 Housing Needs Survey identified an unmet need at that time for at least 24 low cost market homes and such needs are likely to increase during the plan period. The numbers and timings of such requirements will be identified by periodic surveys of local housing needs, such surveys to be conducted every 5 years from 2016 onwards. Low cost market homes could be provided through Local Needs Schemes or by registered Social Landlords, or by a commercial developer as a component of a general market housing scheme. The term 'local connection' is defined in the explanation of the preceding policy HSG1.

Policies in the National Planning Policy Guidance regarding Starter Homes for persons of less than 40 years old at lower than average prices have overlaps with this policy. Starter Homes are encouraged on "exception sites" and are expected to be on land that has been in commercial or industrial use, and which has not currently been identified for residential development. Suitable sites are likely to be under-used or no longer viable for commercial or industrial purposes, but with remediation and infrastructure costs that are not too great so as to render Starter Homes financially unviable.

More low-cost and affordable housing is required

2.6.13 Policy HSG3 Meeting the housing needs of persons of more than 55 years of age

Objective: to maintain a supply of accommodation meeting the needs of those aged 55 plus living in the town and in nearby villages, providing a range of types and tenures, and including an appropriate amount of care accommodation of different formats.

Policy: Development of Extra Care [19] or Sheltered Housing [19] for persons of over 55 years of age will be supported on sites within and adjacent to the built-up-area boundary and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS.15G "Distribution of Development". The housing shall meet the needs identified for older persons in the latest housing needs survey and be for those with a local connection, as defined in section 3.2 of this Plan. The policy only relates to Extra Care Housing and Sheltered Housing as defined in section 3.2 of this Plan.

Explanation: a special provision is required to cater for the housing needs of the increasingly elderly population of the town and surrounding rural Parishes, and to help free-up affordable and general market housing for other households. Warwickshire County Council estimated in 2013 that there was a then shortfall of 162 Extra Care format units in the town and surrounding rural Parishes. The identified needs were 25% for social renting and 75% for private sale. It is preferable to locate such units in settlements with healthcare, retail and other services and facilities rather than in smaller villages. The plan accordingly provides for an adequate amount of such housing within Shipston-on-Stour. Planning permissions as of June 2017 are likely at most to provide around 200 such units and demand is very likely to increase significantly over the plan period to 2031. Further Extra Care developments will be required to meet that projected need. The amount and timing of requirements to be met by this policy will be informed by the proposed periodic updates of surveys of local housing needs. The term 'local connection' is defined in the explanation of the preceding policy HSG1.

Additional accommodation is needed for older persons

2.6.14 Policy HSG4 Development on windfall [24] sites

Objective: to encourage housing development on 'windfall sites' as a contribution to meeting housing requirements.

Encourage appropriate development on windfall sites

Policy: proposals to develop housing on windfall sites within the built-up area boundary will be supported, subject to meeting other policy requirements in this plan.

Explanation: Windfall sites are those which have not previously been specifically identified as available during the plan period. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available. Some opportunities may arise through the more intensive use of existing plots. Windfall sites provide local opportunities to contribute to meeting the District-wide requirement for new dwellings.

2.6.15 Policy HSG5 Allocating housing land to contribute to strategic housing requirements

Objective: to identify and allocate an adequate reserve provision of housing land that will assist in meeting the town's contribution to future District-wide strategic housing requirements from 2021 onward.

> **Policy:** A site on land south of Oldbutt Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated as a reserve housing site which should accommodate 25 to 30 dwellings. It will be released after 2021 if it is required to meet the housing requirements set out in Part D of the Core Strategy policy CS.16. The development of the land is subject to meeting other planning policy requirements and the achievement of satisfactory access arrangements which, if necessary, should be phased in connection with the development of the site to the north.

Explanation: To respond to the Core Strategy requirement that a suitable housing land reserve is locally identified, a 'call for sites' was made, and technical assessments carried out to confirm the suitability of the possible sites and the likely capacity. The possible sites were subjected to community consultations in March/April 2016. A viable site, in an edge-of-settlement location adjoining two large commitments sites with planning permission, as shown on the Policies Map, was identified by this work and the pre-submission draft plan consultations.

The identified site is subject to a requirement that it's development be phased in accordance with the development of sites to the north, in particular to achieve a satisfactory access provision.

The provision of reserve housing sites to meet the housing needs as expressed in the Core Strategy will continue to be reviewed throughout the plan period, at least every five years.

2.6.16 Policy HSG6 Allocating housing land to meet currently identified local needs

Objective: to allocate housing land that can be developed during 2018/2019 to meet current identified local housing needs.

> **Policy:** an edge of settlement site at land at Ridgeway, east of London Road, as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for a community-led housing development to meet currently identified local housing need in accordance with latest housing needs information. This shall contain a mix of open market, affordable and homes with a specific local connection in accordance with the provisions of section 3.2 of this Plan. The scheme shall involve the provision of local green space with pedestrian access as shown on the Policies map and in accordance with details to be agreed with Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

Explanation: development progress with the five major housing developments with planning permission has been slow, with little prospect of many new dwellings until 2018 or later. This lack of progress means that affordable housing to meet local needs is also being delayed, yet demand for affordable housing remains strong. An interim development can assist in meeting some of the shortfall of required affordable housing. The 'call for sites' screening identified this edge-of-settlement opportunity, adjoining one of the commitments sites with planning permission. A mix as proposed of open market homes, local market homes, and affordable homes is a reasonable balance, both ensuring viability and meeting local housing needs. The local market and affordable homes should be reserved for people with a local connection to Shipston-on-Stour, in accordance with procedures and criteria to be set out in a planning obligation. A developer has expressed a strong interest in providing a scheme directed at local housing needs and provision of green space which will be viable.

2.6.17 Policy HSG7 Encouraging custom and self-build housing [25] opportunities

Objective: to expand the supply of affordable housing to meet identified future local needs by encouraging and creating opportunities for custom and self-build housing construction.

Policy: to support prospective custom and self-builders on sites of more than 20 dwellings. Developers will be encouraged to supply at least 5% of dwelling plots for sale to custom and self-builders, which dwelling plots will be controlled by the following means:

- The resulting custom and self-build development will conform to an agreed design code;

- Where plots are marketed appropriately for at least 12 months and have not sold such plots may either remain on the open market as custom or self-build plots or revert to the developer to be built out.

- In the case of a fractional requirement the provision of a self-build plot will be rounded upwards in any circumstance.
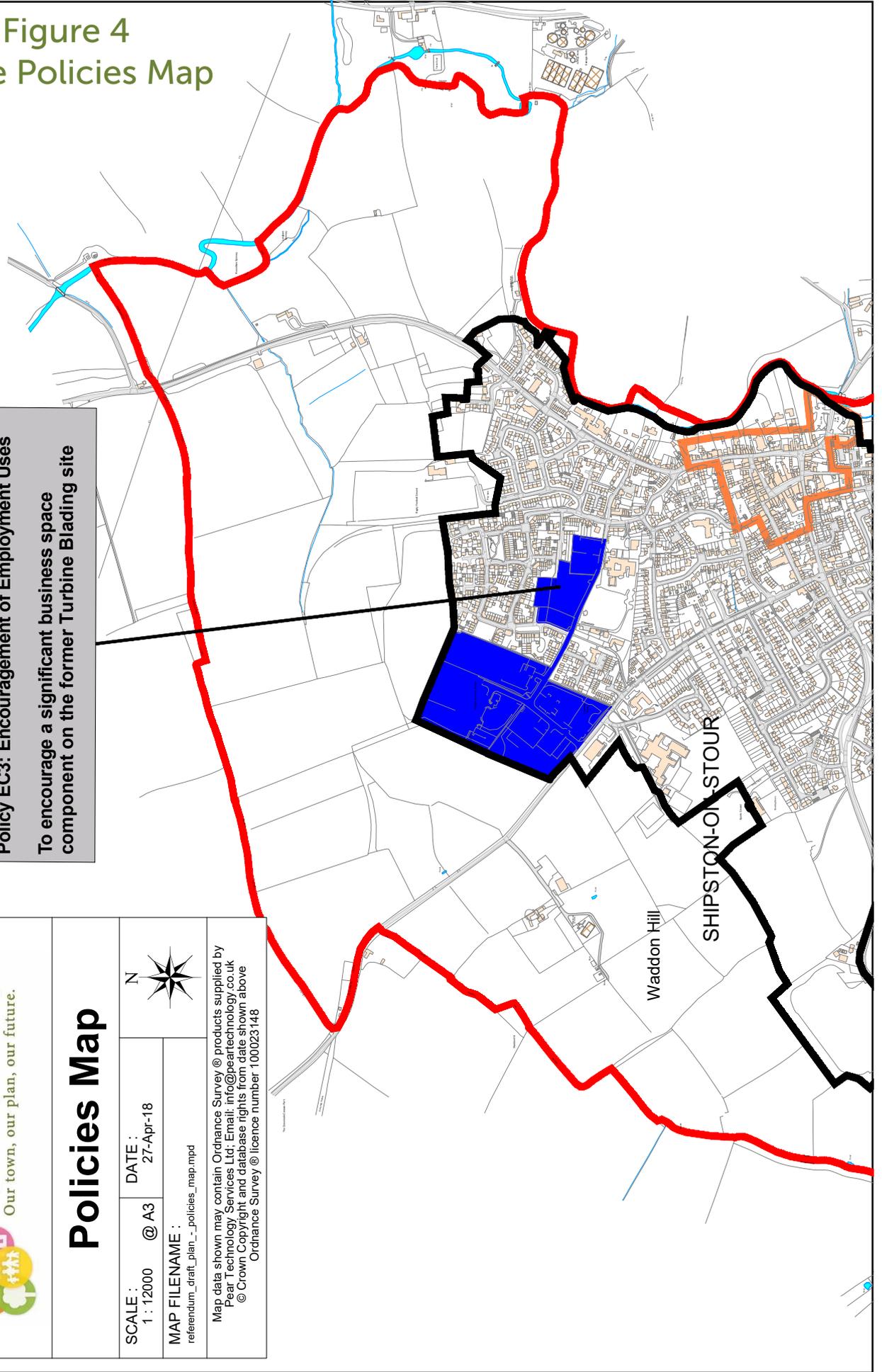
Development proposals for custom or self-build on smaller sites with a capacity of less than 20 dwellings will be strongly supported, subject to meeting the other relevant policy requirements within this plan.
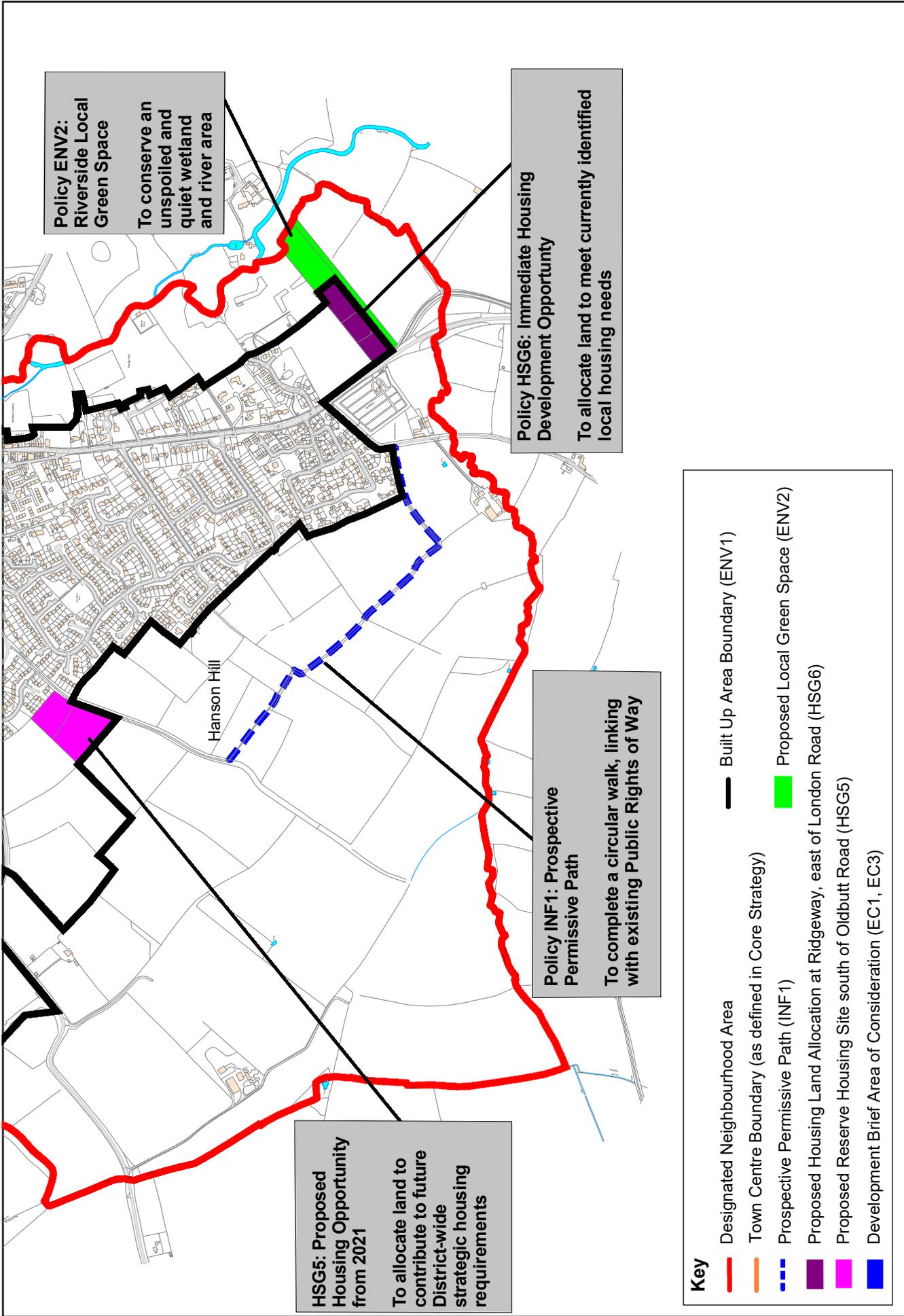
Explanation: custom and self-build development can locally contribute to meeting the identified needs for affordable housing. This role is recognised in the Framework with a specific reference in paragraph 50. There has been Government funding for local authorities to pursue this objective. There are incentives such as CIL levy exemption applied to self-build housing. Some local planning authorities have introduced policies to support the delivery of affordable housing by this method. In anticipation of that potentially happening locally this plan contains such a policy, applicable to larger sites. There may also locally be opportunities for small-scale custom and self-build development, typically the re-use of previously developed land or buildings. This plan positively welcomes and supports such projects for smaller sites, subject to compliance with other relevant policies within this plan. If suitable small sites do become available, and there is a sound case for intervention to facilitate a custom or self-build project, the Town Council will actively encourage the District Council and other bodies such as Warwickshire Rural Community Council to investigate and consider what can be made possible.

2.7 Figure 4
The Policies Map

Policy EC3: Encouragement of Employment Uses

To encourage a significant business space component on the former Turbine Blading site

Shipston's neighbourhood plan
Our town, our plan, our future.

Policies Map

SCALE :
1 : 12000 @ A3

DATE :
27-Apr-18

MAP FILENAME :
referendum_draft_plan_-_policies_map.mpd

N

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SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR

Waddon Hill

Policy ENV2: Riverside Local Green Space

To conserve an unspoiled and quiet wetland and river area

Policy HSG6: Immediate Housing Development Opportunty

To allocate land to meet currently identified local housing needs

Hanson Hill

Policy INF1: Prospective Permissive Path

To complete a circular walk, linking with existing Public Rights of Way

HSG5: Proposed Housing Opportunity from 2021

To allocate land to contribute to future District-wide strategic housing requirements

Key

- Designated Neighbourhood Area
- Town Centre Boundary (as defined in Core Strategy)
- Prospective Permissive Path (INF1)
- Proposed Housing Land Allocation at Ridgeway, east of London Road (HSG6)
- Proposed Reserve Housing Site south of Oldbutt Road (HSG5)
- Development Brief Area of Consideration (EC1, EC3)
- Built Up Area Boundary (ENV1)
- Proposed Local Green Space (ENV2)

3. Appendices

3.1 Glossaries of terms

Explanations of the planning and technical terms within the Neighbourhood Plan can be found by reference to glossaries within three publications, by using the following links:

In the first instance see the very comprehensive glossary of terms at pages 231-242 of the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy 2011-2031 published in July 2016 by Stratford-on-Avon District Council. Use the link:

https://stratford.gov.uk/templates/server/document-relay.cfm?doc=173518&name=SDC%20 CORE%20STRATEGY%202011%202031%20July%202016.pdf

For explanations of terms used at the national level of planning policy see the glossary at pages 50- 57 of the National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012 by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Use the link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

A further useful and more general glossary of terms is found at pages 56-61 of the Locality Roadmap Guide published in 2013. Use the link:

http://www.communityplanning.net/neighbourhoodplanning/pdfs/Roadmap.pdf

3.2 List of footnote references

[1] A Neighbourhood Plan is a plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood 1 Forum for a designated neighbourhood area made under the Planning and Community Purchase Act 2004.

[2] The Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy 2011-2031 was adopted in July 2016 and is part of the development plan for the whole District. It sets out a vision and strategic policies for that period. Neighbourhood Plans must conform to those policies. The alternative term Local Plan is used by some local planning authorities.

[3] The Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL]: A charge or levy that Local Authorities in England and Wales are empowered but not required, to charge on most types of new development in their area. CIL charges are based on simple formulae that relate the charge to the size and character of the development paying for it. This allows Local Authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area which can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure needed to support the development of the local area.

[4] See page 38 of the Locality Roadmap Guide for an outline of the five basic conditions to be met, use the link in Section 3.1

[5] Neighbourhood Plans are made by a referendum of the eligible voters within a neighbourhood area, in this case the Parish of Shipston-on-Stour

[6] This includes adopted Local Plans [or Core Strategies], Neighbourhood Plans, and the London Plan, and is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Community Purchase Act 2004.

[7] See the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, use the link in Section 3.1

[8] A plan which identifies sites within the plan area on which certain kinds of development are proposed, e.g. residential development.

[9] 'Producing a Neighbourhood Plan', a scoping report for consideration by the Town Council published in November 2012 and the basis of the Town Council's decision to proceed.

[10] The evidence upon which a development plan is based, principally the background facts and statistics about an area and the material views of stakeholders.

[11] A set of four 'audit and issues' reports prepared and issued in mid-2015 by 11 the leaders of the teams researching the local economy, infrastructure, housing and environment topics. These reports were the basis of the draft policies that emerged in late 2015.

[12] See paragraphs 76 and 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework, communities are able to designate green areas of particular local significance as Local Green Spaces.

[13] Guidance on how a locality or site should be developed in terms or uses, design, linkages, conservation etc.

[14] The dual use of a purpose built or converted building as a combination of dwelling and business space as defined by Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. The ratio of uses in floor space terms must be relatively equal.

[15] See Section 7 of the July 2016 adopted Core Strategy using the link in Section 3.1 above.

[16] The aim is to implement flood mitigation measures that both deal with the current inadequacy and put in place a reasonable element of 'future proofing' in anticipation of the longer term impact of climate change.

[17] See Policy AS.6 in July 2016 adopted Core Strategy and the related evidence base document by Arup Consultants.

[18] An area of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which are preserved and enhanced by listings and local planning policies and guidance.

[19] Extra Care and Sheltered Housing comprises self-contained homes with design features and varying levels of care services but essentially to enable self-care and independent living. It is for people whose disabilities, frailty or adverse health makes ordinary housing unsuitable but who do not need to or want to move to long term residential or nursing home care facilities. This type of accommodation does not include institutional residential or nursing care described as Class C2 in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or any subsequent re-enactment.

[20] Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing.

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as low cost market housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes. See also definitions for General Needs Housing, Low Cost Market Housing and Specialised Accommodation.

[21] In respect of housing remaining affordable see Examiners report Para 134. "SDC has some concern that in the context of this housing remaining affordable it needs to be acknowledged that exceptionally there is a need for waivers from this requirement, for example in respect of shared ownership "staircasing" and standard "mortgagee protection" clauses. It is important that this approach which is referred to in the Core Strategy policy CS.183C regarding "Affordability and Tenure"."

[22] The local connection criteria for affordable housing, low cost market housing, extra care and sheltered housing are stated and explained within the October 2016 Addendum Note to the Housing Audit and Issues Report. The wordings were provided by Housing Topic lead Ed Jackson after consulting District Council officers and reflect definitions in the Core Strategy CS.15, CS.18 and page 238 Rural Exception Sites.

For affordable rental and shared equity housing, a local connection is defined as:

• having lived in the parish of Shipston (by choice) for a minimum period of two years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having been in permanent, paid employment for a minimum period of six months, within the parish of Shipston, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having a close family member (mother, father, sister, brother, or adult child aged 18 and over) living in the parish of Shipston and their having done so for a minimum period of five years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having lived in the parish of Shipston for three out of the last five years immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having a local connection as a result of special circumstances (as defined in Stratford District Council's Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy 2015).

If sufficient occupants cannot be found who meet at least one of these criteria, then the affordable homes may be occupied by those:

• having lived in Shipston or one or more of the adjoining parishes of Tredington, Stretton-on-Fosse, Tidmington, Honington or Barcheston & Willington (by choice) for a minimum period of two years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having been in permanent, paid employment for a minimum period of six months, within one or more of those parishes, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having a close family member (mother, father, sister, brother, or adult child aged 18 and over) living in one or more of those parishes and their having done so for a minimum period of five years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having lived in one or more of those parishes for three out of the last five years immediately prior to the application for accommodation.

If sufficient occupants cannot be found who meet at least one of these criteria, then the affordable homes may be occupied by those:

• having lived in the area of Stratford District Council (by choice) for a minimum period of two years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having been in permanent, paid employment for a minimum period of six months, within the area of Stratford District Council, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having a close family member (mother, father, sister, brother, or adult child aged 18 and over) living in the area of Stratford District Council and their having done so for a minimum period of five years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or

• having lived in the area of Stratford District Council for three out of the last five years immediately prior to the application for accommodation.

If sufficient occupants cannot be found who meet at least one of these criteria, then the affordable homes may be occupied by those:

- having lived in the Coventry and Warwickshire Strategic Housing Market Area (by choice) for a minimum period of two years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having been in permanent, paid employment for a minimum period of six months, within the Coventry and Warwickshire Strategic Housing Market Area, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having a close family member (mother, father, sister, brother, or adult child aged 18 and over) living in the Coventry and Warwickshire Strategic Housing Market Area and their having done so for a minimum period of five years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having lived in the Coventry and Warwickshire Strategic Housing Market Area for three out of the last five years immediately prior to the application for accommodation.

[23] Low Cost Market Housing: Low cost market housing is sold at a price lower than the normal market value. By definition, although it is more 'affordable' to potential purchasers, low cost market housing does not fall within the planning definition of affordable housing as set out in the NPPF.

[24] Windfall Sites: Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Development Plan process. They normally comprise a small, previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available and are suitable for certain forms of redevelopment.

[25] Self-build and custom housebuilding means the building or completion by individuals, associations of individuals, or agents for individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. The definition is from the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 as amended.

[26] An illustrated document, typically prepared by Parish or Town Councils, that outlines the desirable design characteristics of development, such as townscape features, scale, landscape design and appearance. This information helps applicants for planning permissions and the subsequent appraisal of applications.

3.3 Acknowledgements

This draft plan has been produced through the effort of a community team working on a voluntary basis, contributing considerable time, knowledge and expertise over the last four years. Especial thanks go to the topic team leaders: Phil Sykes [environment]; Ed Jackson [housing]; Alison Henderson [economy]; Richard Taylor [infrastructure and community facilities]; and Phil Wragg [flooding]. Those individuals were the mainstay of the plan-making actions. Paul Kelly recorded the various consultations that were undertaken, and has written the Consultation Statement. Ed Jackson has produced the set of maps.

Thanks must also go to a large number of people who volunteered their time and knowledge, helping with consultation events, gathering and assessing evidence, and commenting on draft documents to improve them.

As well as being the Plan Sponsor the Town Council has provided practical support by way of meeting rooms and back office facilities, the use of their mapping tool, and hosting a dedicated website. Town Councillors Brian Cooper and Martin Ferrier have been much involved, their roles including financial management, orchestrating a community questionnaire, and steering group guidance. District Councillors Richard Cheney, Chris Saint, and Jo Barker have also participated and offered support and information.

Specialist professional inputs have been provided by Catherine Martin Communications, Warwickshire Rural Community Council, and latterly Shipston-on-Stour based NPD Design Consultants with graphics support for the preparation of the submission documents.

Finally, thanks are due to the wider community who have made valued and substantial inputs by providing local information, and responding in large numbers when consulted by way of events and the questionnaire. This has helped the plan-making team to understand local concerns, and come up with the set of policies that will make a difference and can appropriately guide the future development of the town.

3.4 Tadpole Planning © Statement

This document has been produced by Tadpole Planning for Shipston-on-Stour Town Council as a supporting action for the community team producing the Neighbourhood Plan. There are limitations that should be borne in mind when considering the contents of the document. No party should alter or change this document whatsoever without written permission from Tadpole Planning. The document contents are based on the best available information, including information that is publicly available. No attempt to verify these secondary data sources has been made and they are assumed to be accurate as published. The submission document was produced between July and October 2017 and modified in May 2018 and is subject to and limited by the information available at that time. The document has been prepared with reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the contract with the client. Tadpole Planning accepts no responsibility to the client and third parties on any matters outside the scope of this document. Third parties to whom this document or any part thereof is made known rely upon the document at their own risk.

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Document 2: the Consequent Local Projects

1. Background

1.1 This document outlines ten local projects that will be implemented over the plan period 2016 – 2031. These projects are not formally part of the plan, but they are indicated by several of the plan's policies. Footnoted references are in Section 3.2 of the Neighbourhood Plan document.

1.2 There is no priority indicated by the list below, though some of the projects would need to happen sooner rather than later, and the plan indicates some will make very significant changes. As the plan moves forward to adoption there will be time to scope and prioritise the projects.

2. Descriptions of the projects

2.1 A more vibrant and functional town centre

This project will achieve two main things. Traffic management and parking access will be significantly improved. There will be related changes to the street furniture, paved areas, and signage, improving the appearance of the Market Street and High Street area and possibly the wider area including part of Church Street and lower Sheep Street. The town centre will become more attractive and functional for regular use of shops and other businesses, and specialist events such as markets and the Wool Fair, and generally encouraging more visitors and expenditure. Due regard will be given to heritage assets within the Conservation Area, and the need for good design practice.

There is strong community support for the proposed measures. This is a consequence of a growing problem with traffic movements and car park capacity, especially the short stay spaces in High Street. A quite small public space with multiple conflicting demands raises safety issues for pedestrians and drivers, and hinders deliveries to businesses. Technical work was done by the County Council in 2010, which included community consultations. Options were published. The community's clearly preferred option now is to introduce one-way traffic and to modify but not reduce the number of parking spaces. Some related hard landscape improvements would be made, and better signage and street furniture put in place. The improvements will make the town centre function better, and a more attractive and pleasant place to visit, live and invest in.

The starting point is to re-visit a technical assessment by Warwickshire County Council, including options for one-way traffic and making the existing parking spaces easier and safer to use. See the attached map showing one of those options. Access to businesses for deliveries must be retained, and improved where possible. When a better traffic solution has been identified the related changes to improve the function and appearance of the area can be reviewed.

This project must be based on collaboration with businesses, including representative organisations, and town centre residents. There will be key roles for the County Council as highways authority, and the District Council as lead for economic development and parking manager. The Town Council is instrumental in facilitating regular events in the town centre space. The initial step will be identifying all the potential stakeholders and inviting suggestions as to the scope and leadership of the project.

The funding for the project management, design and works would likely come from the Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL] and Planning Obligations.

Figure 5 - Consequent local projects - locations

Shipston's neighbourhood plan
Our town, our plan, our future.

Consequent Local Projects

SCALE : 1 : 15000 @ A4
DATE : 26-Apr-18
MAP FILENAME :
referendum_draft:_consequent_local_projects_(A4).mpd

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Plan Area Wide Projects

Para 2.2: Secure funds for essential new infrastructure and community facilities

Para 2.5: Better, safer and more obvious pedestrian and cyclist routes and connections

Para 2.6: A technical survey of the surface water drainage system

Para 2.7: Complete a Town Design Statement

Para 2.9: Produce a Development Brief for the upper and lower Tileman's Lane areas

Para 2.10: Create a Northern Wellbeing Zone: primarily active recreation

Para 2.1: A more vibrant and functional town centre

Para 2.3: Provide a combined tourism information and town heritage centre

Para 2.4: Create more and better car parking capacity

Para 2.8: Make the Mill Street riverside a more attractive and functional area

Para 2.5: Create better pedestrian routes and connections

Para 2.10: Create a Southern Wellbeing Zone: primarily passive recreation

Waddon Hill

SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR

Hanson Hill

Key
Wellbeing Zone
Development Brief
Prospective Permissive Path
Town Centre Boundary
Riverside Improvement
Designated Neighbourhood Area

Figure 5 - Consequent local projects - locations

Figure 6 - Town centre traffic proposals
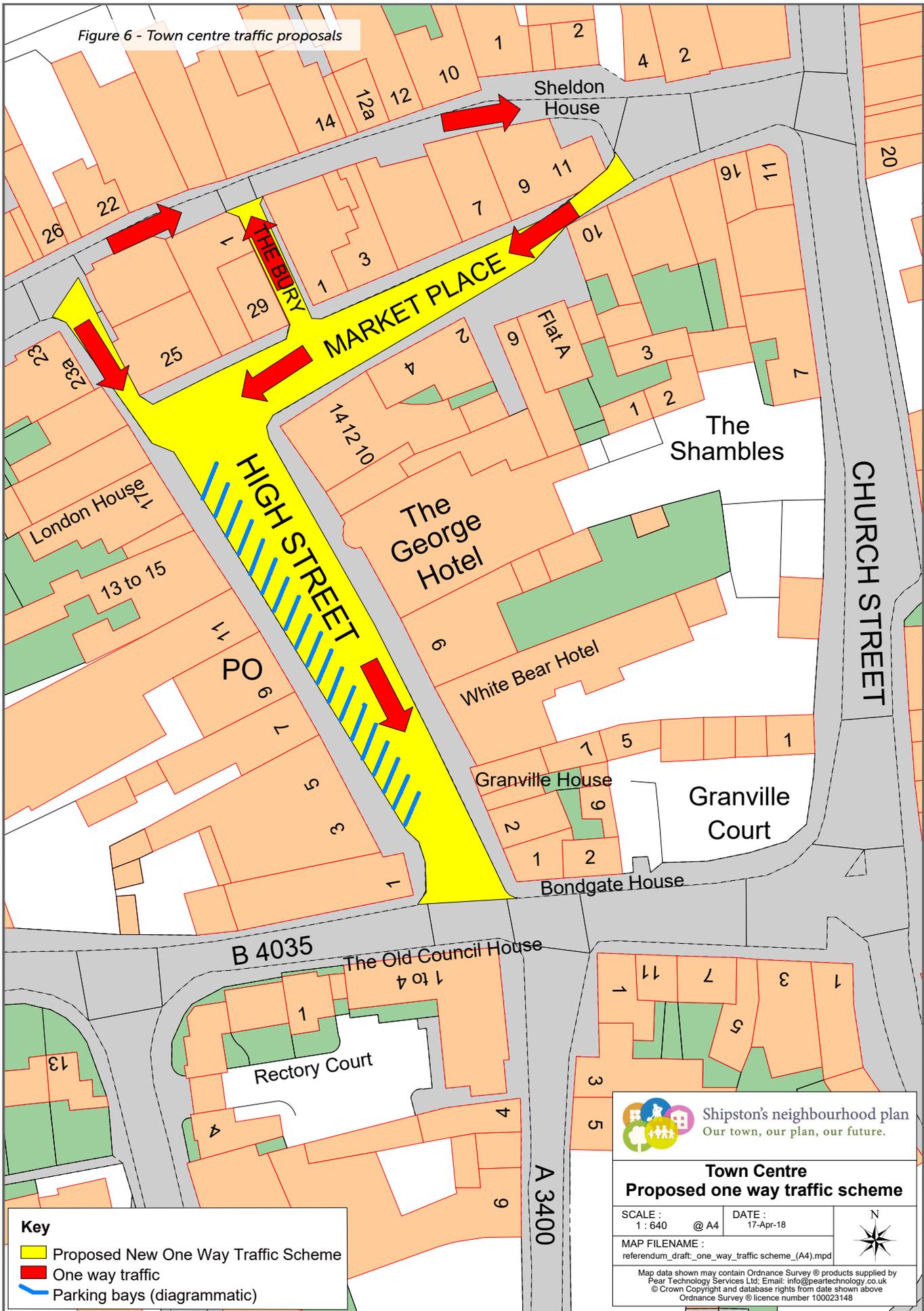
Key

- Proposed New One Way Traffic Scheme
- One way traffic
- Parking bays (diagrammatic)

Shipston's neighbourhood plan
Our town, our plan, our future.

Town Centre
Proposed one way traffic scheme

SCALE : 1 : 640 @ A4

DATE : 17-Apr-18

MAP FILENAME : referendum_draft:_one_way_traffic scheme_(A4).mpd

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2.2 Securing funds for essential new infrastructure and community facilities

Securing funding and spending it to maintain, enhance and add the essential infrastructure and community facilities to meet the needs of the town residents, support local businesses, and the needs of those from the wider catchment area dependent on the town's infrastructure and facilities is a priority.

There is evidence of current pressure on certain infrastructure and community facilities. This will increase as upcoming major housing developments are built and occupied. In addition, as explained in the commentary on policies for the local economy there is a need to locally retain and create more jobs. This means making improvements to better support local businesses, including attracting more visitors and tourists. Adding the listed requirements will support both parts of the above objective.

Development proposals will be supported when related tariffs and obligations trigger financial contributions through the Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL] and applicable other mechanisms. Contributions will be required as appropriate from each developer to fund additional healthcare, education, leisure facilities, green infrastructure, highways and transportation, and measures to improve flood resilience. Upgraded or additional local facilities or services [no priority is implied by this list which will vary over time] to be provided are:

- High School expansion
- Primary School expansion
- Flood mitigation measures
- Town centre traffic management improvements and related public realm upgrades
- Support for public transport services
- Additional car parking capacity
- Additional sports hall capacity
- Works to the Townsend Hall
- Additional Medical Centre healthcare capacity
- More recreational public open space
- Conservation of the natural environment, and
- The creation and maintenance of riverside and countryside public footpaths.

2.3 Providing a combined visitor information and town heritage centre

The Town Council operates from New Clark House in West Street and owns a currently void nearby building that was formerly used as their offices and council chamber. The town's History Society is custodian of a significant collection of local artefacts and documents about the town and local area. This collection can potentially be relocated and more fully displayed if a suitable building is found. The existing location of tourism information is in the public library, a service is available during limited opening times.

It might well be possible for the town heritage collection and the tourism information service to be co-located in the void building noted above. The Town Council wishes to consider this and the funding implications, view to creating a combined facility. This would implement local economy policy EC5 within the Neighbourhood Plan, and also locally support policy CS24 within the adopted Core Strategy. Overall this project would assist with sustaining and perhaps increasing the vitality of the town centre economy.

2.4 Creating more and better car parking capacity.

The existing capacity, convenience and quality of car parking has been an issue for the Neighbourhood Plan. The current capacity is barely adequate. With the scale of development commitments adding perhaps 500+ additional dwellings over the plan period it is likely that a lack of capacity will become a greater problem. There would also be a deterrent effect for visitors and tourists.

It will not be easy to add capacity. But an improvement may be possible by making better use of the existing car parks, and some small extensions.

Most likely this project will be included within the scope of 2.1. In late 2017 the Town Council commissioned a study of parking in the town centre. The findings provide a useful factual update on the parking capacity, a good first step to making improvements.

Town centre traffic and parking needs improvement

2.5 Creating better, safer and more obvious pedestrian and cyclist routes and connections.

There are two main reasons for doing this. It will offer an alternative to the car for short trips. It will add and improve linkages, making them easier and safer to use.

Many of the existing connections reflect the historic pattern of street and alleys. Also they reflect the self-contained design of housing estates built before the need for pedestrian and cyclist connections figured widely in planning and design; this only became a requirement from the 1980s onward.

A number of the public rights of way that connect the town with the adjacent countryside, and offer rural walks, need to be improved. This is likely to be achieved by the efforts of volunteers as this is not a priority for the Highways Authority. A first step with this project is to survey and assess the appropriate improvements.

Most likely the urban aspect this project will be included within the scope of 2.1. For the rural connections aspect there is overlap with the 'wellbeing zones' as listed in 2.10 below.

Improvement of Hanson Track is required

2.6 A technical survey of the surface water drainage system.

This project is important to the mitigation of flooding. As flood mitigation is a clear priority it is likely the project will happen sooner not later. From what is already known there are some issues with the system. It is likely that inadequacies contribute to flooding events.

The technical survey will record and assess the ownerships, capacity and condition of the existing surface water drainage system. It may be a two stage project, with a desk study of existing plans and ownership information, followed by intrusive investigations using such as CCTV probes to confirm the condition of the drains and channels. The survey will need to take into account prospective changes to the river and wider area catchment.

As a first step the Town Council might invite the Flood Action Group to consider the scope of the survey, the agencies and organisations that have an interest, and the sources of funding. The latter may include Planning Obligations or future CIL funds as there is an overlap with the infrastructure upgrades scheduled within the Core Strategy. The survey will need to be conducted with inputs from Severn Trent and the Highways Authority and possibly other agencies with interests and responsibilities.

2.7 Completing a Town Design Statement

In 2011 the Town Council sponsored the production by a volunteer team, with a local Architect helping, of a design statement [26] to guide development proposals and inform the consideration of planning applications. The work by the team took this as far as a working draft, which was submitted for consideration by the District Council, view to eventual adoption as supplementary planning guidance.

The factual content of the draft design statement has been used as evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan. A number of policies relate to good design practice, and they will guide development proposals and the consideration of planning applications.

The project will entail the completion of the design statement, and a submission to the District Council to get the statement adopted as supplementary planning guidance. The guidance will then sit alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, and will carry some influence and weight if used effectively.

This project ought to happen sooner rather than later so the factual contents in the unfinished draft do not become outdated. Very likely the project would take 12 months to complete. There may well be merit in running the project at the same time as Project 2.9 as many of the required skills overlap.

2.8 Making the Mill Street riverside a more attractive and functional area

This is a fairly small scale project, an 'easy win'. Between the Mill Street car parks and the river are two neglected areas that could be suitably landscaped and made more appealing. This would add some useful public open space, and improve the look of the town's eastern gateway. The works would have to be durable and appropriate given the periodic flooding.

There is also a heritage angle as this was the location of the sheep wash from which the town name is taken.

Ideally there would be collaboration with the owners of the east bank land so comprehensive changes can be made. The east bank is outside the Parish so cannot figure in the Neighbourhood Plan, but it can be included in this project if the owners indicate they are willing.

As a first step the Heritage and Leisure Working Group of the Town Council might prepare a scoping report.

2.9 Producing a development brief for the upper and lower Tileman's Lane areas.

This project should take place in 2019 to inform the first review and updating of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Of all the sub-areas within the town this locality is the most subject to changes of land-use. The economy policies in the plan call for the retention of employment land and business space, both that currently in such use and that allocated but undeveloped. But the future commercial demand for such property and capacity is unclear, will it remain in those uses or be otherwise redeveloped? Will the site re-use trend lately seen at the former Turbine Blading site continue?

The project is also an appropriate and timely way to re-visit undeveloped land accessed by the Tileman's Lane spur road. This potential development site was identified in 2015 by the community plan-making team as an option for a limited amount of sensitively designed and sited edge-of-settlement housing development. It was one of four such possibilities, put twice to the community and stakeholders for comments, firstly at a December 2015 public exhibition of emerging ideas and proposals, then again in March 2016 in a community questionnaire sent to all households in the Parish. There was a good level of community backing for the site, becoming one of two to be more fully considered. However, a subsequent technical check on highways access revealed shortcomings, and consideration of the site ceased. This highways access limitation has changed, with new information in March 2017 from the site owner. A technical assessment by the Warwickshire County Council Development Group has confirmed highways access is feasible via the Tileman's Lane spur road. Given the confirmed level of 'in principle' community support, and a need for the neighbourhood plan to seek additional housing land to meet future District-wide requirements, it is appropriate to resume consideration of this site. This intention in no way indicates the site will necessarily become a future site allocation, that depends on the study outcome, and the subsequent process of reviewing and updating the neighbourhood plan, as informed by the study and resulting development brief.

The intention is to seek the collaboration of residents, land owners, tenants and business operators. The aim is to assess what the most realistic and desirable future for the locality is in terms of land-use. Within this mix of land-uses will be a suitably sized and located site for a new Baptist Church, this reflects representations made and the known support of the Town Council. The study will require a multi-discipline mix of economics, design, valuation and technical skills. A lead role for the Town Council is possible, working very closely with the District Council. The outcome will be a development brief to be effectively applied through area policy AS.6 in the Core Strategy and the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, as updated and amended. Ideally the development brief will be adopted as supplementary planning guidance, not least as this will require the study process to demonstrate a high level and quality of community and stakeholder engagement meeting the District Council's adopted protocols.

2.10 Creating two extensive 'Wellbeing Zones' [WBZs]

This project is large scale, ambitious, and has the potential to make a huge difference. It is central to locally delivering the 'healthy communities' agenda. It will require very effective leadership, and is mostly about modifying what already exists, adding a few links by agreement with land owners, and putting some long term management in place. The costs, both capital and revenue, will be relatively low compared to the benefits.

Wellbeing Zones [WBZs]

The planning case for doing this starts with the recognised health and wellbeing benefits of public access to good quality open and green spaces. Such land is in short supply in the town, and there is little prospect of adding to it. An alternative approach is to collaborate with the owners and users of recreation land such as the High School and Leisure Centre grounds and the London Road Sports Club. The aim is to increase public access on a limited and managed basis by way of permissive rights of way. It should be possible to do this and to address concerns about safety and security.

Relevant to the planning case is published Warwickshire County Council guidance. This notes that people living in areas with large amounts of green space are three times more likely to be physically active than people living in areas with little green space. With 50% of the town population aged upwards of 50 years, an increasing trend, the health and wellbeing benefits for all age groups but especially older persons are obvious. Providing better access for active use is therefore an important component of the plan, such access to be into and through the two WBZ areas, to the designated Local Green Space, and generally into the adjoining countryside using public rights of way.

Evidence produced by Arup for SDC in 2014 for the then emerging Core Strategy indicated a shortfall of public open spaces and recreation land measured against the relevant national standards. NPPF objectives [Paragraph 73] apply via related NPPG guidance on open spaces, sports and recreation facilities, public right of way and local green spaces. The 2014 Arup report also applied 2013 Sport England guidance on assessing the need for sports and recreation facilities. This is particularly so in the older areas of the town. More recent developments from the 1980s onward have as matter of course included such facilities as play areas, and future developments will provide these facilities. The issue is to do with the older areas of the town, and a lack of opportunities therein to retrospectively provide such public land. There are several possible responses. There may be some limited and local opportunities in the town's older areas to create and manage small recreation and play areas where land is currently just grassed open space or shrubbery. Policy ENV2 will create additional public recreation land. Creating better public access to the adjoining countryside opens up recreational use, Policy INF1 introduces this action. It will be possible to negotiate greater public access to three extensive areas of land used as sports pitches: land adjoining Sheldon Bosley Hub; the rugby club; and the London Road sports ground owned by the Town Council and very actively used by several clubs and for occasional public events.

Improving play areas , parks and open spaces

The idea is to create a northern zone primarily about active recreation, and a southern zone about passive recreation. The basics already exist. It is a case of modifying, adding, and above all improving public access to get the most out of the zones.

The northern zone includes the Sheldon Bosley Hub, adjacent bowling green and football pitch. It will also include the High School grounds and facilities, the adjacent unused County Council land, and the Leisure Centre. In respect of the Sheldon Bosley Hub the Town Council will, in conjunction with the freehold owner, the managing tenant, and the District Council, consider a community-right-to-buy approach to ensure the long term future of this well used community facility as a key component of the northern wellbeing zone.

The southern zone includes the London Road sports club and pitches, the bowling green, the unused former junior football pitches area, the Guides camping field, an attractive area of land potentially to be gifted as public open space, and across London Road the cemetery and adjacent allotments. The land to be gifted extends into the adjacent Parish but is within one ownership, so a cross-boundary project is possible.

Within both zones the idea is to collaborate with land owners and existing operators and clubs, to agree better public access along well-defined and waymarked permissive paths. There will be connections to the wider network of public rights of way. There are opportunities for structural landscaping, the large scale planting of trees and shrubs to enhance the setting of the town and deal with a harsh and overly visible edge-of-settlement in a few locations.

This approach is very much consistent with the designation of Local Green Space in the plan. The shortage of public amenity space within the town is an issue, so using what adjoins nearby is the way to go, and accessing some and protecting other such areas to derive wellbeing makes good sense.

The October 2016 addendum report to the Environment Topic 'audit and issues report' published in September 2015 explains the basis of the WBZs project.

Taking this forward will require primarily the buy-in and support of the land owners, most of whom are public bodies. The project is akin to creating and managing a country park or similar, the required skills will most likely be found within the County Council and the District Council. A potential way forward is for the community group that created the Neighbourhood Plan to produce a scoping report.