

Bishops Frome Neighbourhood Plan



**Submission Draft—
APRIL 2017**

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Group on 28th February 2017

BISHOPS FROME AND FROMES HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-2031

Submission Draft APRIL 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Bishops Frome Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document introduced by the Localism Act 2011. For the first time local communities can have a direct input into the planning process and have an influence on the shaping of the future of their community based on the views expressed through surveys of the local population and businesses.

This does not give the community the ability to resist any development since the Neighbourhood Plan is a tool for guiding where development can go rather than stopping it altogether. It has to broadly conform to national planning policy as laid down in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Herefordshire's Core Strategy (the Local Plan) but it does give local communities the ability to have a say on the scale, type and location of new developments informed by local knowledge and an intimate familiarity with the local environment. It has to demonstrate that the local community has been fully involved in its preparation and decision making.

This Plan has been prepared on the basis of extensive evidence gathering, community surveys and formal consultation with local people and key stakeholders. Further information on this process is set out in Section 2.

Herefordshire Council will arrange for this version of the Plan to be published for six weeks, during which time various statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency, Historic England and Welsh Water will be consulted. Following this period the Plan will be assessed by an independent examiner who may make amendments or choose to recommend it proceeds to a public referendum. A referendum is the final opportunity for the community to endorse the Plan as a document used to decide planning applications in the Parish. The final stage is adoption of the Plan when it is formally 'made'. Once approved and made the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory suite of planning documents used by the Local Planning Authority to make decisions on any new developments in the Parish and will give legitimacy to requests made for financial contributions towards a broad range of benefits to the community.

The steering group wishes to present a Plan which is as easy as possible to follow but acknowledge that the Plan contains references to things that may need some explanation. As an aid to understanding a glossary of terms has been attached.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced in the Localism Act of 2011 as a device by which local communities could engage in the statutory planning process for the first time. The legislation gives Parish and Town councils the power to influence planning for their areas by consulting their communities and formulating proposals arising from a genuine local set of objectives.

The precursor to the Neighbourhood Plan was the Parish Action Plan. The Parish Plan Steering Group was formed during 2011 comprising a Parish councilor, five residents from Bishops Frome and one from Fromes Hill.

Two 'Planning for Real' events were held in the Spring of 2012 and residents invited to come and give their ideas on the future of the villages. The events were held at Bishops Frome Village Centre and at the Wheatsheaf on Fromes Hill. The wide range of issues resulting from this exercise was translated into two questionnaires, one for young people and one for adults. The questionnaires were delivered to every household in the Parish and completed returns were sent to Herefordshire Council for analysis. The results were published in a Parish Action Plan in February 2014 under the headings of housing, facilities and services, roads and road safety, crime and safety, work, training and local economy, leisure and tourism and environment and sustainability.

Action points were identified for each category. Many of these represented aspirations that are not capable of translation into land use planning policy but nevertheless have proved a useful guide for the activities of the Parish Council. The principle issues in the Parish Action Plan are outlined below:-

Housing

A majority (60%) was in favour of some new housing but within strict limits, with a majority again favouring family homes but half the respondents thought affordable housing or starter homes were needed.

Facilities and Services

The Village Hall and Community shop are highly valued and there was considerable support for other initiatives such as a farmers market, community cafe, community gardens and a bulk buying fuel club.

□ **Roads and Road Safety**

Speeding is a major concern in the Parish, particularly on the B4214 through Bishops Frome and the A4103 through Fromes Hill, leading to a desire for slow down signs, speed indicator devices and speed cameras. 86% of respondents thought the maintenance and condition of roads in the parish was very poor or fairly poor. There was also concern about on street parking causing road safety problems entering the village from the Ledbury direction and from the Burley Gate road. 82% said they never used local bus services due to limited routes and inconvenient timetabling.

□ **The Local Economy**

80% supported the growth of small business units to support a healthy local economy but were opposed to large industrial developments.

□ **Environment and Sustainability**

There was unanimous support for maintaining the rural nature of the parish and the protection of the local environment, with a desire to retain and improve hedgerows and rights of way and to reinstate hedgerows and ponds and to create wildlife friendly habitats. A clear majority were against the erection of industrial scale wind turbines.

□ **Leisure and Tourism**

Open spaces and playgrounds are greatly valued, with a desire to create a playground facility at Fromes Hill.

This Neighbourhood Plan is a natural extension of this earlier work. It builds on the Parish Action Plan and supports the delivery of some of the main concerns expressed in that document. The options to produce a Parish Plan or Village Design Statement were considered but the community was strongly of the opinion that development issues raised in the consultation exercise were such that local concerns could be better expressed through a planning document that could become part of the statutory planning process. The community of Bishops Frome wish to take advantage of this new ability to control the location and design of new developments for housing, employment and recreational facilities and to ensure that when new developments take place they are of a scale that is appropriate and within the capacity of the amenities and infrastructure of the villages to absorb them.

The Parish Council decided to proceed to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in February 2014 and a Steering Group was formed to register the Neighbourhood Planning Area with Herefordshire Council. The intention to prepare a NP was advertised in the local free Frome Valley News which goes out to all households in the parish and all residents and businesses were invited to a launch meeting in the Village Hall.

A comprehensive questionnaire was devised covering the main themes arising from public discussion and all residents and businesses were given the opportunity to complete a form giving their views on village identity, environmental and sustainability issues, housing, traffic and transportation. 465 questionnaires were delivered by hand to all residents of the Parish in July 2014. 299 were completed giving a 64% return which represents a good cross section of village opinion over all age groups.

The questionnaire results have been subject to a detailed analysis which forms the basis of the evidence used to prepare this Plan. The detailed responses to the survey can be viewed on the website - <http://www.bishopsfromeparishcouncil.co.uk>

A further consultation exercise took place in December 2015 to test the vision and objectives of the Plan and to obtain public reaction to various options for development and policy making. All households in the Parish were circulated with an invitation to an open day in the Bishops Frome Village Centre on 22nd December and 61 people attended. Comments received have been analysed and minor changes incorporated in this draft.

The draft Plan (Regulation 14) was issued for consultation on 4th July 2016, and 10 organisations and individuals responded in the six week consultation. The comments were collated and considered by the Steering Group in drawing up this revised Plan.

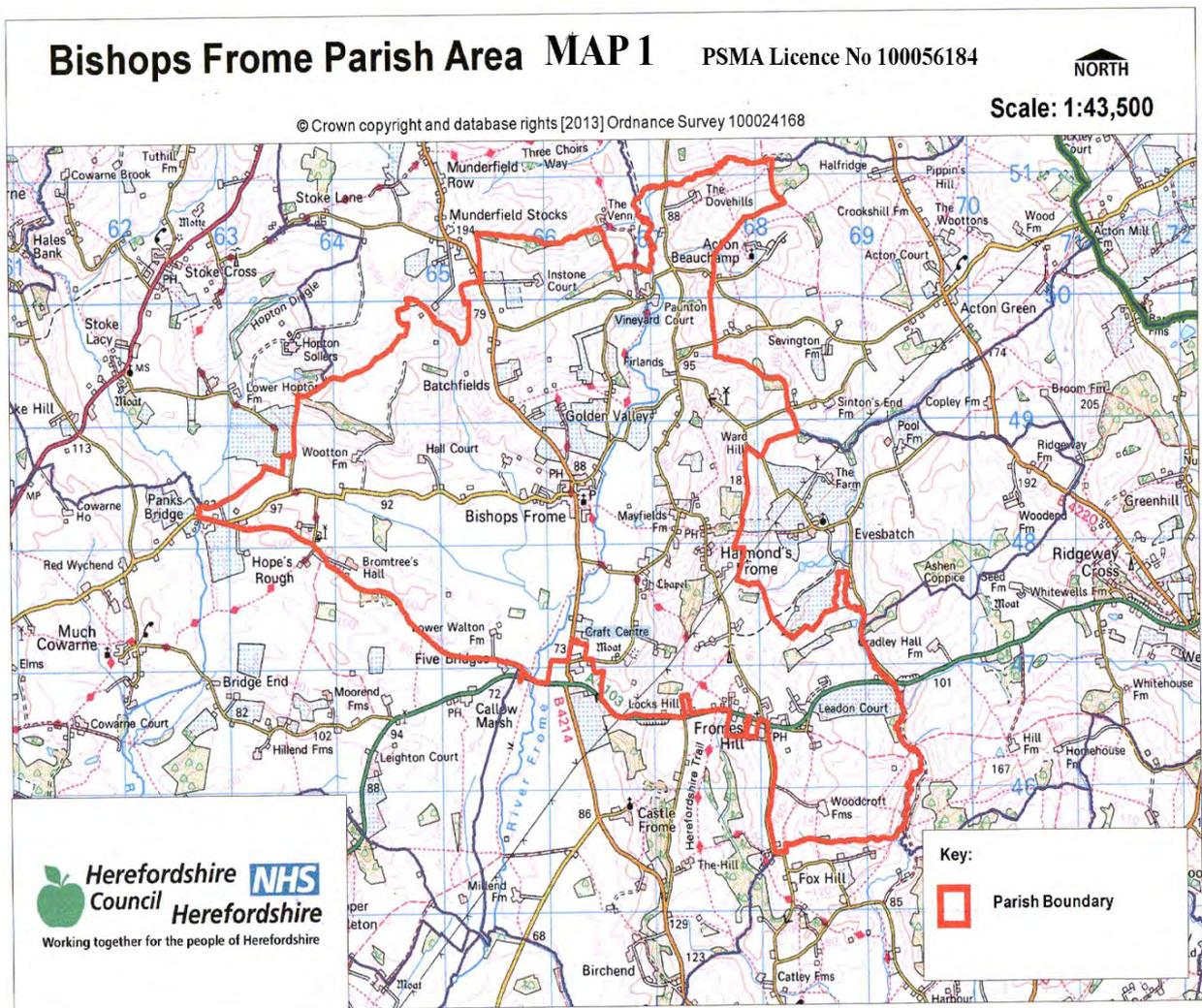
The Plan will of necessity conform to national planning policy (the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF]) and the Herefordshire Core Strategy and Local Plan in order to be able to be considered as part of the statutory plan that received approval on 16 October 2015.

The policies will support the wider aims of the Herefordshire Local Plan/Core Strategy by guiding development in a manner that has been informed by widespread consultation with local residents, businesses, landowners and developers and which will lead to a more sustainable long term future for the area based on a thorough understanding of local issues. In this way planning applications in the plan area will be assessed against both the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan and decisions made taking into account local conditions and aspirations as well as the whole panoply of County and National planning policy.

3. HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND THE VILLAGES TODAY

The Parish of Bishops Frome contains two main settlements, the village of Bishops Frome itself and Fromes Hill which lies astride the A4103, 178 metres above sea level. The remainder of the population is in scattered isolated homes and farms, with a concentration in the hamlet of Halmonds Frome. The Neighbourhood Plan area is shown on Map 1 below.

Map 1 – The Neighbourhood Plan area



Bishops Frome

Bishops Frome lies in the valley of the River Frome four miles south of Bromyard and 9 miles north of Ledbury.



In the Domesday Survey of 1086 the Manor was in the hands of the Bishop of Hereford, whence came the name Bishops Frome. The Manor consisted of ten hides, one of which was held by the Bishop's Chaplain, and one virgate by the village priest.

The Church of St. Mary (Listed Grade 2*) sits on a raised mound of a probable previous Saxon stronghold and is Norman in origin although much altered in the Nineteenth Century frenzy of church restoration. There is a fine Norman Font and carved beasts on the priest's door in the Chancel in the Herefordshire School of Romanesque carving.

There is ample evidence of the Civil War in the area and many cannonballs have been found. Royalists were garrisoned at nearby Canon's Frome, and Parliamentarians at Bosbury. A field on the slopes of nearby Ward's Hill was known as 'The Bloody Verlands' presumably arising from a skirmish in the vicinity.

Until recently most of the Frome Valley was planted with hops and in the heyday of the hop-picking era the population of Bishops Frome could swell to over 5000 with the influx of temporary labour from South Wales and the Black Country and the arrival of Romany travellers in their traditional caravans.

Agriculture remains an important occupation of the village and surrounding area. Hops are still grown despite the decline of the industry and cider fruit orchards and vineyards support a cider making and wine making industry.



The village has two pubs, the Green Dragon Inn and the Chase Inn, which were the centre of entertainment during hop picking. The Major's Arms public house lies to the east in Halmonds Frome.

There is also a well-used Village Hall, a community shop and post office and a garage. There is a children's' playground and recreation ground in the centre of the village and a sports field with football pitches and a cricket pitch on the western edge of the village.



A mile to the south is the Hop Pocket Craft Centre, a collection of shops in converted hop drying barns, which attracts people from all over the region. Bishops Frome Technology Park on the edge of the village is an important employer.

Fromes Hill

Fromes Hill is a small hamlet of approximately 86 households on high ground on the A4103 south east of Bishops Frome 11Km (7 miles) north of Ledbury, 24Km (15 miles) east of Hereford and 29Km (18 miles) west of Worcester.



As well as St. Matthews Church it has a pub, the Wheatsheaf, an army surplus store, a cafe, a motorcycle garage and a hairdresser. Local agriculture includes apples, wheat, grains, hops and cider making.

The high vantage point affords long distance views to the west across to the Black Mountains and Hay Bluff.

These are working communities with a strong rural tradition set within the wooded and pastured slopes of the Frome Valley. The parish contains 68 listed buildings.



The Parish had a population of 831 in the 2011 census, formed of 323 households. For the purposes of calculating minimum growth figures to 2013 an updated figure of 343 households is now quoted by Herefordshire Council. The age structure of the Parish is identical to Herefordshire with a mean age of 43 and the age profile is evenly balanced with 198 under the age of twenty and 215 over 60 (Age Structure 2011 census). Of 604 residents between the ages of 16-74 409 were economically active, a percentage of 67% compared to 65.6% for Herefordshire and 62.1% for England as a whole. Unemployment levels are very low at 1.8%. Agriculture still remains an important occupation relative to the rest of the country, accounting for 9.6% of the population as compared to 5.4% for the County and 0.8% for England. Manufacturing occupies 9.3% of the working population, wholesale and retail activities 18.4% and education, social and health occupations account for 19% of the workforce. 10% of occupations fall within professional and scientific professions.

71% of property is owner occupied and 25.7% rented the remainder in rent free or shared accommodation.

4. CONFORMITY WITH THE NPPF AND LOCAL PLAN

The Neighbourhood Plan will be in general conformity with the NPPF and will interpret in more detail the policies of Herefordshire's Core Strategy. The overriding principle remains one of sustainable and positive development to continue the role of rural villages as accessible and sustainable centres providing rural businesses, housing (including affordable housing), recreational facilities and a focus for social activity.

The Parish lies within the Ledbury Housing Market area as defined in the Core Strategy, one of seven in the County which was defined using common market characteristics such as tenure, house type, incomes and affordability and house prices, as well as travel to work patterns, although the Parish has always had greater affinity with Bromyard as its nearest market town. The Rural Housing Background Paper March 2013 has developed policy derived from the work on the Ledbury HMA which identifies Bishops Frome as a group of villages where a growth of 14% can be expected to contribute towards a housing target for the HMA of 565 dwellings between 2011 and 2031, and this is confirmed in Policy RA1 of the Core Strategy. This target is intended to be indicative and is a starting point for detailed Neighbourhood Plans which may recommend a scale of development exceeding the indicative target.

Within the Ledbury HMA Bishops Frome is considered to be the third largest settlement after Colwall and Cradley in terms of population size and facilities and has public transport connections with Bromyard, Ledbury and Hereford. In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan it may come under pressure to accept more development than it has the capacity to absorb and this underlines the need to be clear about its special characteristics and identity.

5. KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY CONSULTATION

The consultation exercise identified a number of key issues which form the background to the development of the Plan's vision and objectives and to its detailed policies and allocations.

Character and Identity

As might be expected in a small community the quality of village life is of great importance. In particular the community cohesion and village activities, the rural atmosphere and proximity to the countryside and working farms, the overall balance of population and facilities, tranquillity and green spaces in and around the village. The key issue is therefore to achieve a strategy which maintains a balance between population growth and the continuation of these prized features.

Housing

Issues centre around the amount of new housing, its location, type and design, affordability and energy conservation and the need to have a robust plan in order to give clear guidance on the appropriate level of new housing to the end of the plan period in 2031. In particular there is a need for starter homes for families and homes capable of providing for a lifetime of occupation to serve the needs of an ageing population.

The need for high design standards in new developments

Bishops Frome has not been well served in the past in the design of new developments and it is important that any new development should respect its setting in terms of scale, materials, detailed design, massing and landscaping, such that development enhances the character and identity of the villages rather than detracting from it.

Flooding, waste water treatment and surface water

An important issue concerns the sustainability of new development and the capacity of services such as sewerage, drainage, water supply and highway drainage networks to cope with it. Problems have been identified with surface water run-off and inadequate highway drainage leading to flooding. The existing water treatment plant has no capacity for further developments and further investment is needed before any additional housing can be accepted.

Transport, traffic, roads and road safety

Key issues are the speed of traffic on the B4214 through Bishops Frome and the A4103 through Fromes Hill, on street parking problems caused by a lack of off street parking in new developments in Bishops Frome and safety issues caused by a combination of on street parking and lack of footways and general poor road maintenance. There are problems with accessibility and the usual form of transport is the private car. Local bus services are not well used due to infrequency of the service and inconvenient timetables.

Environment, open space and community facilities

Residents highlighted the importance of maintaining and protecting open and green spaces and community facilities such as Bishops Frome Village Centre. Maintenance of the rural setting of the village, hedgerows and rights of way was also seen as important.

Employment and Business

There is a desire to maintain and develop a good range of local employment opportunities through the introduction of new small rural businesses rather than large industrial estates. The provision of high broadband speeds is crucial to the future growth of small and medium sized businesses and Bishops Frome must benefit from the investment in faster broadband in the County.

6. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

THE VISION

'By 2031 Bishop`s Frome and Fromes Hill will have continued to develop as a thriving rural community. New development will have contributed to the provision of housing to suit peoples` needs without compromising the Frome valley`s pastoral essence.

Historical problems of parking, access and poor drainage will have been resolved, and the provision of high capacity broadband will all have enhanced the villagers` experience along with improved job opportunities in local, small scale businesses. Retail and leisure facilities will have grown and strengthened the cohesiveness of the community. Renewable energy initiatives utilising community power, having minimal environmental impact will have been installed. Road safety will have been improved as the result of traffic calming measures, and there will have been improved maintenance of roads and footpaths. Existing green and open areas will have been protected and new recreation space provided. The area`s rural heritage will have continued to grow with the preservation of historic buildings, and the protection of woodlands, rivers and hedgerows.'

THE OBJECTIVES

Overall Objective

To ensure a sustainable future through the implementation of Core Strategy policies which encourage appropriate growth of rural businesses and housing, facilities and services and access to sustainable transport.

THE OBJECTIVES

Specific Objectives

Objective 1

To protect and enhance the special character of the landscape, natural and built environment of the villages and the surrounding countryside.

Objective 2

To develop policies to identify the criteria for small scale housing developments of three to four houses to meet the requirement for growth identified in the Core Strategy in Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill up to 2031 to meet local needs. The preferred sites will be appropriate in terms of size, scale, design and sustainability and the ability of services and facilities to support them.

Objective 3

To encourage the development of small scale businesses that will contribute to local employment opportunities and promote the introduction of faster broadband and other technological aids for rural businesses.

Objective 4

To support existing and promote new community facilities

Objective 5

To protect and enhance open spaces, recreational facilities and areas of informal green space and create new recreational facilities where a need is expressed.

Objective 6

To ensure that adequate provision is made for the necessary highway, footway and public transport improvements required for any new development and that necessary traffic and road safety provision is made.

Objective 7

To ensure that essential infrastructure and services are adequate to cope with future growth

Objective 8

To promote initiatives for renewable energy to reduce carbon emissions.

7. BISHOPS FROME NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

The following policies have been devised to reflect the opinions of the community derived from the Planning for Real exercise and the comprehensive questionnaire survey carried out in 2014. They are designed to augment and/or emphasise policies contained in the Core Strategy by injecting an element of local knowledge and aspiration based on the evidence gathered in the consultation exercise to add to the evidence base of the Local Plan.

They are arranged by Policy Area based on the main concerns of the community and in many cases are a local interpretation of relevant Core Strategy policies which will allow decision makers to apply a finer level of detail to the consideration of applications for development made by private developers and also assist in the investment decisions of Herefordshire Council, the Parish Council and public agencies. Each policy is accompanied by a supporting statement explaining options considered where appropriate and the background to the development of the policy backed by evidence gathered from consulting the community and from the extensive evidence base of the emerging core strategy.

Where issues and policies have been fully covered in the Core Strategy it has not been considered necessary to duplicate them in this Plan. County wide policies relevant to this Plan are set out in the Appendix.

Policy Area 1 – Character and Environment

Objective 1 - To protect and enhance the special character of the landscape, natural and built environment of the villages of Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill and the surrounding countryside.

The results of the public consultation revealed a strong desire to protect the rural character of the villages and the surrounding scattered settlements and agricultural land. This includes the historic built environment and the numerous listed buildings, local habitats and wildlife, trees and hedgerows. In responses to the Community Led Plan 97% thought it important to protect the local environment and 98% wanted the Parish to remain a predominantly rural area. More than 65% of villagers rated easy access to the countryside, a rural atmosphere and the presence of working farms around the village as very important.

The County Landscape Character Assessment describes the area as having riverside meadows, timbered farmlands and timbered plateau uplands, and the surrounding agricultural land central to the Parish is classified Grade 1 (excellent) with other land being Grades 2 and 3. This is an ancient landscape with scattered manorial farms (courts) at Leadon Court, Cheyney Court, Hall Court, Instone Court, and Paunton Court. The Parish contains 11 ancient woodlands, Hanging Covert, Rough Coppice, Cheyney Court Wood, Bromtrees Coppice and parts of Merrells Wood, Beacon Hill, Fishpool Wood, Camp Coppice, Ashen coppice, Penshill Coppice and Court Coppice. Many of these woods are also among the designated 15 Special Wildlife sites in the parish.

The River Frome and its valley forms the spine of the parish with rising ground on either side forming one of the most attractive landscapes in the County. Within this setting are historic groupings of farm buildings at Halmonds Frome, Cheyney Court and Paunton. There are no conservation areas in the Parish but there are 68 listed buildings.

The long distance Herefordshire Trail runs through the centre of the Parish from Paunton in the north to Fromes Hill in the south, passing through Bishops Frome, and Walk 6 in the series 'Walks around Bromyard' promotes a circular walk from Paunton down to Bishops Frome and back up to Acton Beauchamp.

The River Frome is a principal feature and is the cause of flooding in part of the village and particularly at the southern end of the parish in the vicinity of Five Bridges and the Hop Pocket Craft Centre.

In order to protect and enhance the qualities of the rural character of the Parish any new development should be particularly sensitive to the historic built environment and the rural landscape. Therefore the following policies apply:-

POLICY BF1 – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE CHARACTER OF THE RURAL LANDSCAPE AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:-

- (a) ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD MAINTAIN OR CONTRIBUTE TO A POSITIVE IMPROVEMENT TO THE BISHOPS FROME AND FROMES HILL AREA'S RURAL CHARACTER BY SENSITIVE DESIGN OF BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPING AND**
- (b) PROTECT THE EXISTING ECOLOGICAL BIODIVERSITY OF SITES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR POSITIVE IMPROVEMENT**
- (c) PROTECT VALUED LANDSCAPES, TREES, HEDGEROWS, WOODLANDS, WATER COURSES AND FLOOD PLAINS**
- (d) RETAIN THE CHARACTER AND SETTING OF TRADITIONAL AND HISTORIC RURAL BUILDINGS AND THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE.**

Policy Area 2 – New Housing Development

Objective 2 - To develop policies to identify the criteria for small scale housing developments of three to four houses to meet the requirement for growth identified in the Core Strategy in Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill up to 2031 to meet local needs. The preferred sites will be appropriate in terms of size, scale, design and sustainability and the ability of services and facilities to support them.

Core Strategy Policy RA2 identifies Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill as locations where new housing development will be supported. This Policy requires that new housing should be located within or adjacent to the main built up area. The Core strategy recommends that the main built up area is defined by a settlement boundary or equivalent Policy tool.

Policy RA2 requires that the Parish accommodates at least a 14% growth in housing between 2011 and 2031 as a contribution towards an overall increase of 565 dwellings for the Ledbury HMA as a whole. The adopted Core Strategy translates the 14% increase into a figure of a minimum of 48 additional dwellings up to 2031 spread between the two settlements and the surrounding rural Parish. There is no strict demarcation between the settlements in the distribution of new homes, so that the overall target can be achieved by development in either settlement, and through development in the wider rural area.

Between 2011 and 2014 there had been 26 homes completed and a further 25 with the benefit of planning permission, already meeting the Core Strategy minimum target and exceeding it by three homes. Since that date, further planning permissions have been granted including:

- Two dwellings at Broadfield Close, Bishops Frome (ref P14/0377/F). Now completed
- Two houses behind the Olde Shop, Bishops Frome (ref no.P143683/F). Currently under construction
- One house at Dovehills, Bishops Frome (ref no. P14095/F). Currently under construction
- Twenty houses to the rear of the Wheat Sheaf Pub, Fromes Hill (ref no. P150473/F).
- One dwelling at Vine Tree (ref no. P160146/PA4). Currently under construction.

These planning permissions will provide a further 26 homes and even after allowing for some of these permissions to lapse, the Core Strategy target has been met and exceeded by at least 29 homes. To this figure may be added a minimum of an additional 5 dwellings that may be expected to be built based on past historical rates of windfall development, often through the residential conversion of farm buildings.

The Core Strategy objectives for the rural areas of the county are based on the promotion of villages as sustainable centres for employment, affordable housing, facilities and services, access to sustainable transport and community cohesion. The Parish is positive about a moderate growth of Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill to strengthen their role as centres of economic and social activity for the surrounding area but is concerned about excessive uncontrolled expansion.

The Core Strategy target is however intended to be indicative only and is to be considered a minimum figure. Some flexibility in planning growth to 2031 is both inevitable and desirable. Results of the residents' survey showed majority support for some new housing but within strict limits, with a clear majority rejecting development of more than ten houses in total. Recent housing growth in the village has not been accompanied by improvements to drainage or sewage capacity or improvements to footways and car parking. The policies contained in this Plan have a consistent theme emphasising the need for infrastructure and services to keep pace with housing and population growth.

Although the combined villages have a shop, post office, village hall and bus services there is no Primary School and pupils travel to a variety of equidistant schools at Burley Gate, Bromyard, Brockhampton and Bosbury, all over 6 kilometres distant. There are also already difficulties in the provision of electrical supply, broadband, waste water treatment and surface water drainage. This indicates that any future development should be restricted to small scale infill developments. During public consultation 94% of respondents rejected the provision of housing in large estates, with 85% in favour of individual released plots and 68% favoured a number of smaller developments. In terms of location of new development the clear preference was for sites within or on the edge of the village.

Results of the consultation exercise broadly reflect the principles set out in the Core Strategy which state that new developments should reflect the character of the village and its surroundings, give priority to brownfield sites, be sympathetic to the size and function of the villages, be well related to existing built development and deliver a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community. The villages need to grow incrementally and at a pace where services are capable of absorbing the additional population. The community will not support the development of large housing estates on the outskirts of the villages.

Development of Options for new housing

As part of the survey of opinion in the parish, Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill residents were asked to consider potential sites for additional housing and express an opinion on their suitability for development. This exercise provided valuable information on the preferred locations for any new development and was an important consideration in shaping the settlement boundary options. Descriptions of the sites considered and rankings in order of preference is set out in the Housing Sites Report which can be viewed via the Neighbourhood Plan website - <http://bishopsfromeparishcouncil.co.uk/bishops-frome-neighbourhood-plan/>. The preferred sites identified in the Housing Sites consultation are all located within the settlement boundary and are small in scale. This Neighbourhood Plan follows standard practice of not identifying development sites of less than ten homes – instead relying on planning policies to guide the form and scale of new development.

A number of options for controlling new development were considered.

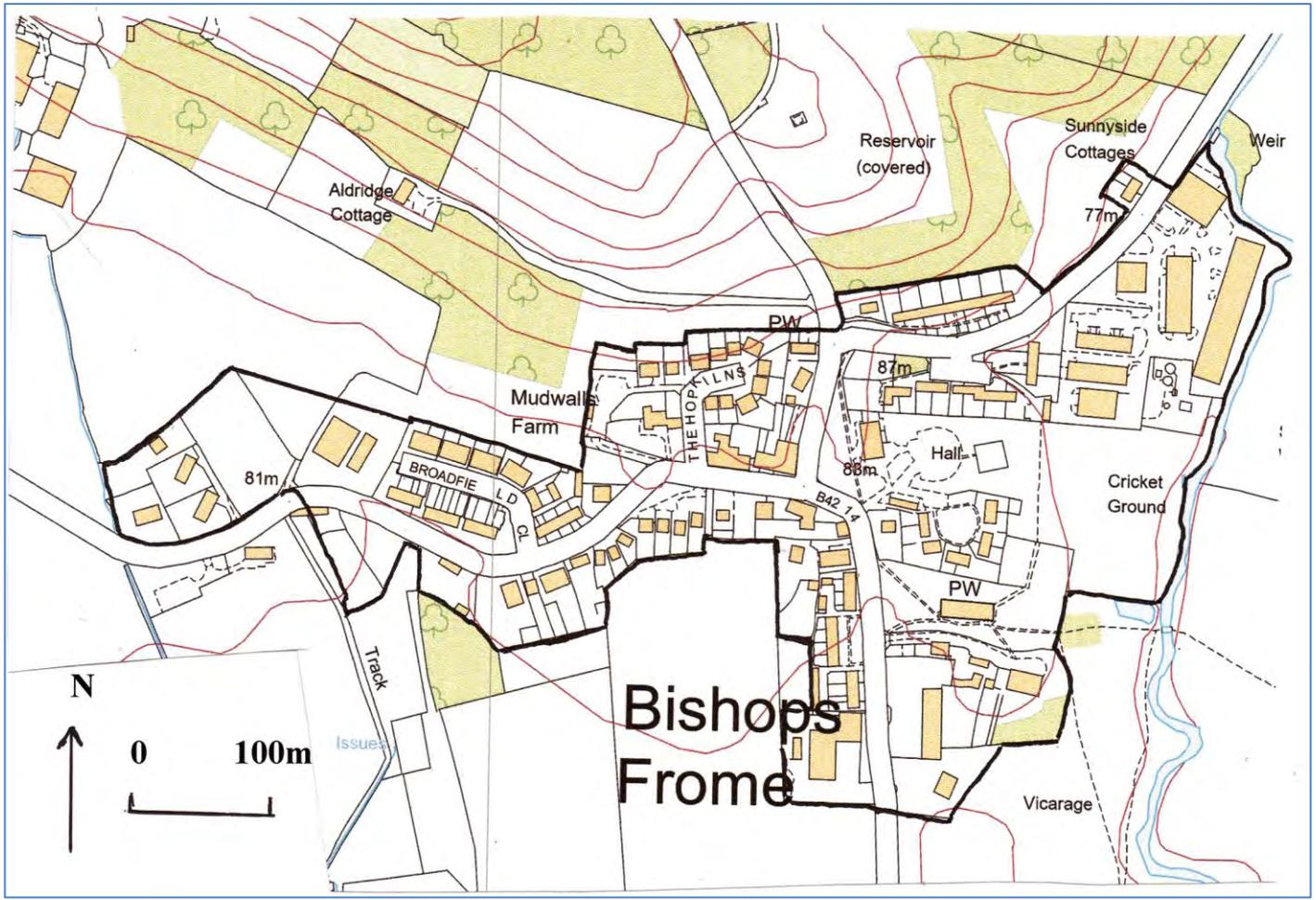
Bishops Frome

The former Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP) established a settlement boundary for Bishops Frome. This boundary has been ‘breached’ by development outside the boundary and is not suitable to be simply carried forward into this Neighbourhood Plan. The community survey sought views on what approach should be taken to establishing a new settlement boundary and three options were identified:

- Option 1 is to define a new settlement boundary allowing for some limited new development.
- Option 1A is to allocate specific sites within the new boundary to direct development to preferred locations
- Option 2 is to dispense with a boundary and not identify specific sites but rely on criteria based policies to control development guided by the comments received on preferred sites.

Option 1 was selected as the preferred Option of the degree to which the housing target has been met and exceeded, but also to allow for some limited infill development to take place within the settlement boundaries. The settlement boundaries are shown on Maps 2 and 3 below.

Map 2 – Bishops Frome settlement boundary



Fromes Hill

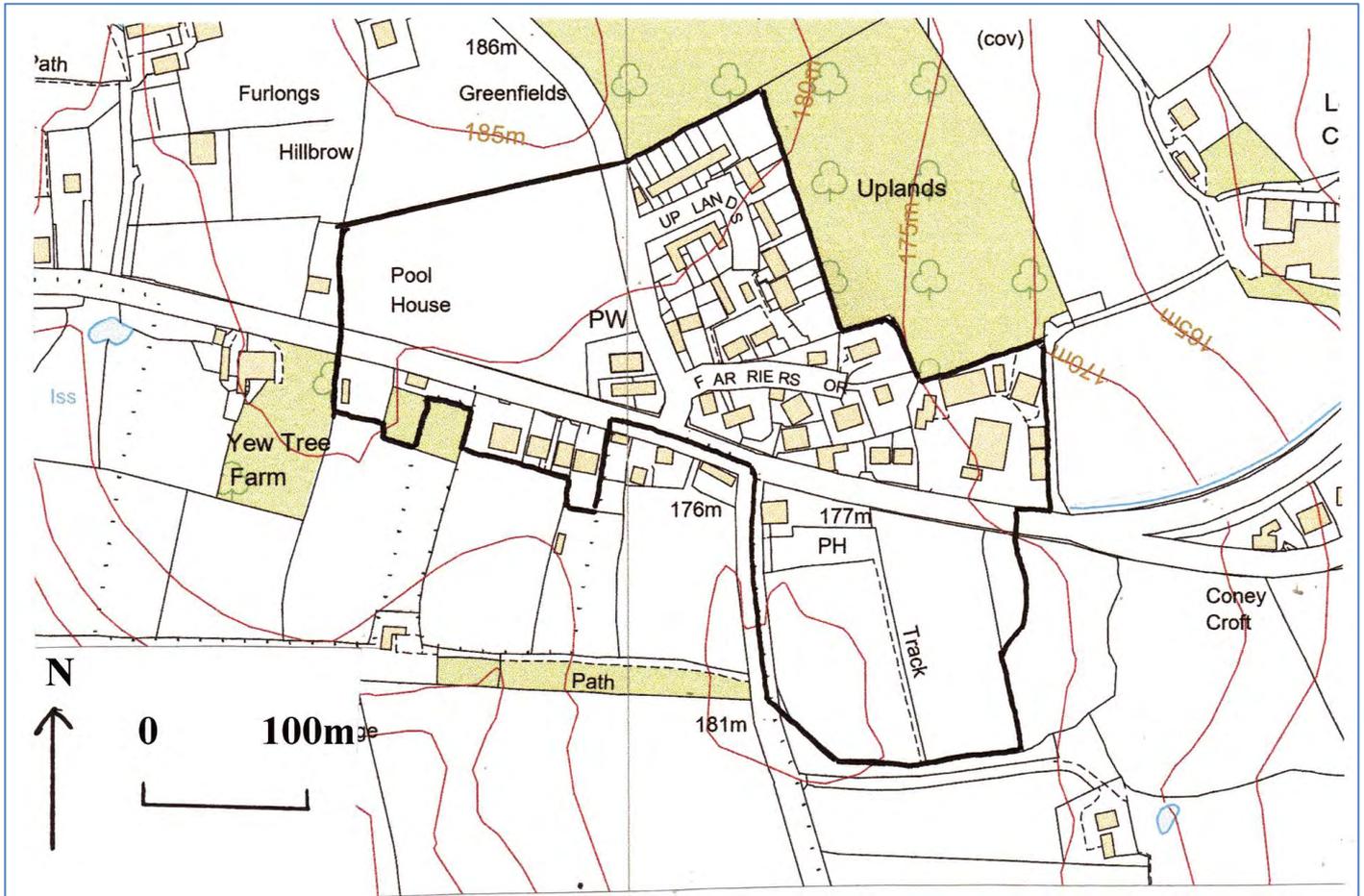
The Herefordshire UDP did not identify a settlement boundary for Fromes Hill since the size of the settlement did not warrant one being drawn at that time. The options for a new settlement boundary were therefore similar to those of Bishops Frome:

- Option 1 - To create a new settlement boundary and allocate sites within it
- Option 2 - To control development through criteria based policies.

A development of twenty houses to the rear of the Wheat Sheath pub was approved in September 2015, a significant contribution to the size of the settlement.

The Plan defines a settlement boundary around the scattered groupings of houses that make up Fromes Hill and allows for further limited development within the settlement boundary as shown on Map 3.

Map 3 – Fromes Hill settlement boundary



The scope for further development within the new boundaries provides sufficient flexibility up to 2031 subject to regular review.

Within the settlement boundaries policies to control new housing development are set out below.

POLICY BF2– THE SCALE OF NEW HOUSING

THE PLAN WILL PROVIDE FOR A MINIMUM OF 55 NEW HOMES TO MEET DEMONSTRATED LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUPPLY OF NEW HOMES TO SERVE THE WIDER HOUSING MARKET OVER THE PLAN PERIOD 2011-31.

THIS WILL BE MET BY:

- 1. AROUND 50 NEW DWELLINGS CONSTRUCTED OR WITH PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED BETWEEN APRIL 2011 AND APRIL 2017;**
- 2. WINDFALL DEVELOPMENT OF SITES WITHIN THE DEFINED SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES OF BISHOPS FROME AND FROMES HILL AS SHOWN ON MAPS 2 AND 3 SUBJECT TO POLICY BF3;**
- 3. APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AS SET OUT IN CORE STRATEGY POLICY RA3**

POLICY BF3 – NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN BISHOPS FROME AND FROMES HILL

APPLICATIONS FOR NEW HOUSING IN BISHOPS FROME AND FROMES HILL WILL BE SUPPORTED IF THEY MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

- (a) THEY ARE LOCATED WITHIN THE MAIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES DEFINED ON MAPS 1 & 2.**
- (b) THEY ARE WELL RELATED TO EXISTING VILLAGE FORM EITHER BY INFILL OR BY SYMPATHETIC ADDITION TO THE EXISTING BUILT DEVELOPMENT**
- (c) PRIORITY IS GIVEN TO REDEVELOPMENT OF BROWNFIELD SITES AND/OR RE-USE OF REDUNDANT BUILDINGS.**
- (d) DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY IN TERMS OF NOISE, DUST OR OTHER NUISANCE OF EXISTING RESIDENTS AND THAT THE AMENITY OF ALL NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IS NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY EXISTING INDUSTRIAL OR COMMERCIAL USES.**
- (e) THAT DEVELOPMENTS OF FOUR OR MORE HOUSES SHOULD PROVIDE FOR A MIX OF DWELLING TYPES IN ACCORDANCE WITH CORE STRATEGY POLICY H3**
- (f) THAT DESIGN AND MATERIALS ACCORD WITH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICY BF4.**
- (g) ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD ALSO ENSURE THAT IT DOES NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS OR THEIR SETTING.**

Design and Materials

Existing housing stock in Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill is of a mix of ages, architectural types and styles but it is important that any new housing should respect the scale and character of the village setting and opportunity taken to enhance the quality of the built environment. Surveys of residents indicated that great importance is attached to the appearance of new housing in the use of traditional materials and the ability to blend in with existing development, with a clear preference for single or two storey developments. The provision of adequate off street parking, integral renewable energy installations and adequate amenity space also feature highly as desirable design features.

91% of responses in Bishops Frome and 100% in Fromes Hill preferred the design that respects the scale and style of existing buildings, while 88% in Bishops Frome and 100% in Fromes Hill supported the use of traditional building materials.

POLICY BF4 – DESIGN AND MATERIALS

NEW HOUSING PROPOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY BF2 WILL BE SUPPORTED IF IT MEETS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

- (a) PROPERTIES AND EXTENSIONS REFLECT THE CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS IN TERMS OF SIZE, SCALE, DENSITY, LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPING. DEVELOPMENT OF OVER TWO STOREYS IN HEIGHT IS UNLIKELY TO BE APPROPRIATE.**
- (b) NEW DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD RETAIN AND INCORPORATE NATURAL FEATURES SUCH AS TREES AND HEDGEROWS WHERE APPROPRIATE.**
- (c) SUFFICIENT PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR ADEQUATE OFF STREET PARKING AND AMENITY SPACE.**
- (d) MATERIALS USED IN CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BLEND IN WITH SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT BY THE USE OF LOCAL TRADITIONAL MATERIALS OR APPROPRIATE ALTERNATIVES.**
- (e) RENEWABLE ENERGY INSTALLATIONS IF PROPOSED SHOULD BE INTEGRAL WITH THE DESIGN AND NOT BE PROMINENT DISCORDANT FEATURES.**

Housing types and affordable housing.

Overall guidance for the Ledbury Housing Market Area indicates that the main requirement is for 3 bed houses with no requirement for larger properties. In the affordable sector smaller 1 and 2 bed properties as well as 3 bed houses are required. Local need as expressed through consultation is for smaller houses, family and starter homes and homes for people with a local connection. With an ageing population the housebuilding industry should be considering giving lifetime homes greater priority.

A Local Affordable Housing Needs Survey was undertaken in 2009, earlier than much of the Core Strategy evidence base, and indicated a requirement for 7 affordable homes in the Parish. The planning permissions granted since 2011 provide for 12 affordable homes and so the anticipated need identified in the 2007 Survey has been met. In any case, in Bishops Frome provides a mix of housing types including small low cost accommodation, and 44% of properties in the Parish as a whole fall within Council Tax Bands A to C. In the Community Led Parish Plan 51% of respondents thought any new housing should be affordable, although this was not a question carried forward into the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire.

Therefore it is considered that the Neighbourhood Plan should not carry a specific policy on affordable housing but instead rely on policies contained in the Core Strategy (Policy H1) which specifies an indicative target of 40% affordable provision in new developments of over ten homes in this housing market area based on housing need. The Parish Council will work with Herefordshire Council to regularly review the need for further affordable housing over the Plan period.

Outside the main settlements of Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill any proposal for new housing will be tested against Core Strategy Policies on Herefordshire's countryside, rural exception sites and re-use of rural buildings as set out in policies RA3, RA4 and RA5.

Policy Area 3 – The Local Economy, Business and Tourism

Objective 3 - To encourage the development of small scale businesses that will contribute to local employment opportunities and promote the introduction of faster broadband and other technological aids for rural businesses

Despite the decline in traditional agriculture as a major employer the area still retains a strong tradition of food and drink production supporting hop growing, cider and wine making and high quality meat and vegetable products serving a growing demand for locally sourced food. Unusually for a small village Bishops Frome has a large Technology Park, advertising itself as quality commercial space in a tranquil rural setting and providing accommodation for manufacturing industries employing advanced technologies.



In addition the Parish is home to a range of other service industries and home working businesses, village shop, public houses with accommodation, cafe and farm diversification enterprises.

The Hop Pocket Craft Centre attracts visitors from across the region to its range of quality shops and cafe and walkers are attracted to the tranquillity of the countryside experience provided by the Herefordshire Trail and other local footpaths and bridleways. Visitor accommodation businesses cater for demand for peaceful rural retreats.



There is a desire to encourage further growth in small scale business enterprises to boost local employment which are sensitively designed to fit into the rural environment. The most appropriate types of enterprise would be those related to agriculture, food and drink, tourism, creative activities, services and new technologies. Consultation revealed an opposition to large scale industrial developments. In the Community Led Plan 80% were in favour of allowing small business units and 81% opposed to large industrial developments, with 63% supporting the introduction of high speed broadband.

The availability of fast broadband is a key issue for local business retention and expansion. The planned implementation of superfast broadband for the County's rural areas is scheduled for 2016 and its introduction is seen as a high priority. In the meantime new businesses will continue to be deterred by slow broadband speeds and poor mobile phone reception which are essential for business enterprises relying on new technologies.

Therefore the Plan supports employment proposals for new business enterprises, farm diversification, home working and new technologies of a scale that can be successfully integrated into the rural environment in accordance with Policy RA6 of the Core Strategy. The Bishops Frome Technology Park already caters for larger enterprises so the Plan seeks to encourage any new businesses to be small in scale by supporting businesses in converted farm buildings, home working and live-work arrangements. These can help to create a more balanced and sustainable community by providing local employment opportunities and reducing the need for the working age population to leave the area or to resort to long distance commuting.

In considering how to support new employment proposals two main options were put forward in the community survey:-

- Option 1 - allocate sites for new employment uses
- Option 2 - support small scale enterprises to set up or expand within policy guidelines

Results from the consultation exercise clearly indicate that option 2 is the preferred approach.

POLICY BF5 – BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

NEW BUSINESS ENTERPRISES AND THE EXPANSION OF EXISTING ENTERPRISES WILL BE SUPPORTED WITHIN THE VILLAGES AND IN REDUNDANT FARM BUILDINGS IN THE PARISH PROVIDED THAT:-

- (a) THEY ARE SMALL IN SCALE, AND DO NOT LEAD TO LOSS OF AMENITY FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS**
- (b) THEY DO NOT LEAD TO PROBLEMS WITH ACCESS, CAR PARKING AND IMPACTS ON THE LOCAL HIGHWAY NETWORK AND;**
- (c) THEY DO NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENT AND THE RURAL TRANQUILLITY OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS.**

THE PROVISION OF HIGH SPEED BROADBAND TO ENCOURAGE NEW BUSINESS SET UPS AND TO ASSIST IN THE VIABILITY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES WILL BE SUPPORTED.

Any re-use of redundant farm buildings should be in accordance with Policy RA5 of the Core Strategy which emphasises the importance of retaining heritage assets, good design, compatibility with neighbouring uses, the conservation of habitats and the need to avoid harmful impacts on the landscape setting. Any proposals for home working should conform to Core Strategy policy E3 and not change the appearance of the building, cause noise disturbance to neighbours or increased traffic generation.

Policy Area 4 – Community facilities

Objective 4 - To support existing and promote new community facilities

The two villages and the surrounding area have a range of community facilities including a village hall, two churches, four public houses, children's playground, recreation ground, sports pitches, garage, village shop and part time post office. Fromes Hill also has a cafe, army surplus store and motor cycle garage benefiting from passing trade on the A4103. These facilities are highly valued by the community and a modest growth in households would help to maintain their viability for the future. 85% in Fromes Hill and 67% called for an improvement in village facilities.

The greatest asset for the community is the Bishops Frome Village Centre, run by a volunteer committee, and which provides space for a wide range of activities and clubs including the provision of function and meeting rooms, mums and tots, dance classes, lunch clubs, bingo and pilates. However the villages lack a primary school and children have to travel to schools in Ashperton, Burley Gate, Bromyard, Brockhampton and Bosbury. This presents a very big problem for new families setting up home and is a factor in the desire to limit new housing growth.



The availability of services and facilities is vital to the future sustainability of the villages, which otherwise in common with all other rural areas will continue to suffer from the increasing concentration of such services into larger centres. Against this background the Village Centre assumes an even greater importance as the hub of village life, and its development in 1999 through a variety of funding sources has contributed enormously to the quality of life and opportunities for social, leisure and recreation in the community. The Herefordshire Community Strategy identifies the retention and improvement of services and facilities as a key issue for the County. This is expressed in Policy SC1 of the Core Strategy, which states that development proposals which protect, retain or enhance existing social and community facilities will be supported and that new development creating a need for additional facilities will be expected to meet additional requirements through new, or extension of existing provision or by developer contribution.

The objective therefore is to retain and improve community facilities as an important element in strengthening social cohesion. The Localism Act 2011 now gives local communities a positive opportunity to make a bid to buy any property considered to be an asset to the community if it is put up for sale and potentially lost as a community asset.

Typically this applies to village shops, post offices or public houses. Local Authorities are required to keep a list of 'assets of community value'. If an owner of such an asset wants to sell it they have to notify the Local Authority, which in turn alerts the Parish Council giving a six month pause allowing time to raise funds to purchase the asset.

POLICY BF6 – RETENTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES WILL BE RETAINED AND OPPORTUNITY TAKEN TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE PROVISION THROUGH THE USE OF SECTION 106 CONTRIBUTIONS, COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES.

CHANGE OF USE TO ALTERNATIVE USES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS THE NEW PROPOSAL PROVIDES EQUIVALENT ON SITE FACILITIES OR REPLACEMENT PROVISION IN THE NEAR LOCALITY.

WHERE SERVICES ARE THREATENED WITH LOSS OF VIABILITY, PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE OF USE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNTIL THE COMMUNITY HAS HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP THROUGH THE 'COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID' PROCESS.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW COMMUNITY USES WILL BE SUPPORTED PROVIDED THAT:-

- THEY DO NOT CAUSE UNACCEPTABLE DISTURBANCE TO NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTIAL AREAS;**
- THEY DO NOT CREATE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS ARISING FROM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, EFFECTS ON THE LOCAL HIGHWAY NETWORK OR CAR PARKING**

Policy Area 5 – Open Space and Recreation

Objective 5 - To protect and enhance open spaces, recreational facilities and areas of informal green space and create new recreational facilities where a need is expressed.

Bishops Frome is well served with recreation facilities, with a central recreation ground and children's playground and 0.8 hectares of sports pitches on the western edge of the village with a pavilion and changing rooms. The playground in Bishops Frome is in relatively good condition but is in need of renewal in the near future.

Easy access to open spaces, sports and recreation is an important part of village life to promote a healthy lifestyle and social activity. Therefore the community wishes to protect and improve its existing facilities and create new ones where the opportunity arises. In order to achieve this, the Parish will take advantage of developer contributions where appropriate.



In addition to formal open space the villages have informal green space which is valued by the community and which requires protection. 71% of respondents in Bishops Frome and 74% in Fromes Hill categorized green spaces as a high priority. The NPPF advises that 'local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances'. In Bishops Frome these are:

- the green space in the centre of the village surrounding the Village Centre,
- the community garden in Summerpool which showcases organic gardening and biodiversity
- the two small green areas at Mudwalls on the Burley Gate Road.
- The Old Cricket Ground
- The Sports Field

When asked what leisure facilities the Parish needed the results from the Community Led Parish Plan 76% called for more playgrounds for children, while 22% wanted tennis courts. At Fromes Hill residents asked for children's play areas for under 5's and 6-12 year olds. Other requests were for allotments.

Fromes Hill does not as yet have any recreation space but there is an ambition to create a new recreation field in the centre of the village adjoining St. Matthews Church providing an opportunity to create a playground, playing field or allotments subject to further consultation with residents.

Two main options were considered:-

- Option 1 - reliance on Core Strategy policies to protect existing open space and recreation facilities
- Option 2 - positively identify areas to be protected from development together with a desire to enhance facilities and proposals to create new facilities.

The community clearly values its open spaces and it is therefore considered desirable to continue a policy of positively identifying areas for protection as established in the UDP (Option 2).

POLICY BF7 – RETENTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

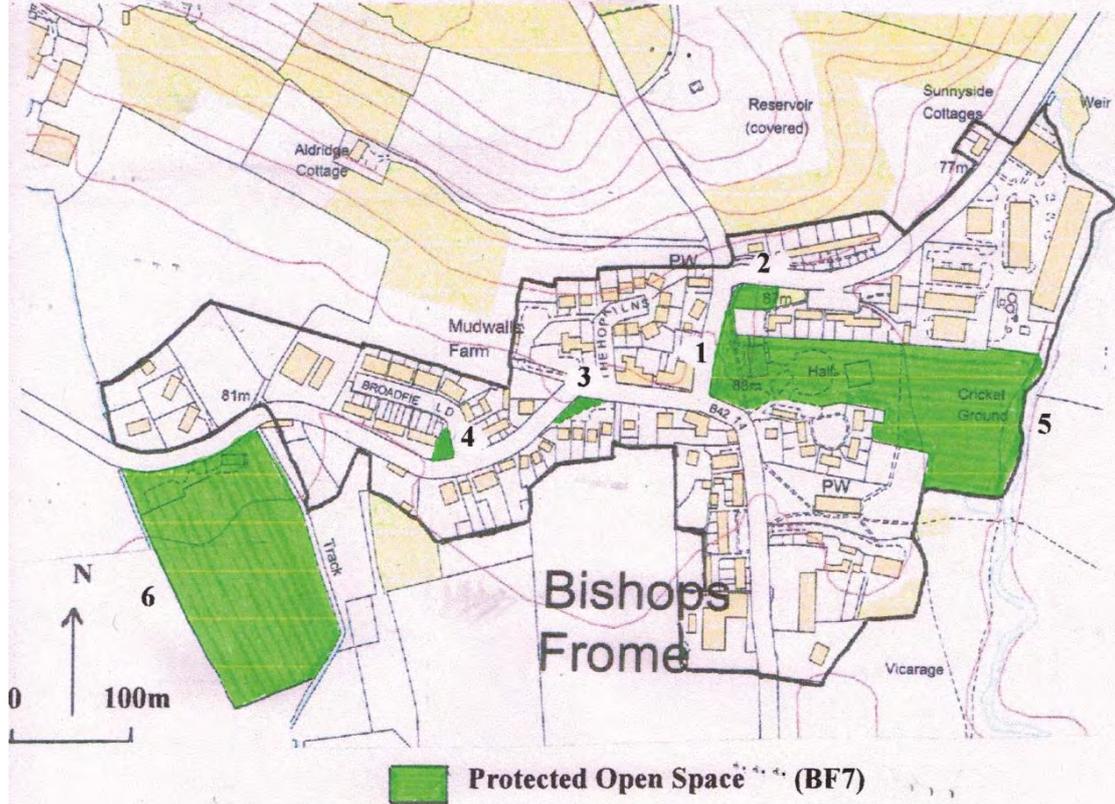
THE FOLLOWING LOCAL GREEN SPACES IN BISHOPS FROME VILLAGE AS SHOWN ON MAP 4 WILL BE PROTECTED FOR THEIR BEAUTY, HISTORIC VALUE, SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OR RECREATIONAL VALUE:

- 1) THE GREEN SPACE IN THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE SURROUNDING THE VILLAGE CENTRE,**
- 2) THE COMMUNITY GARDEN IN SUMMERPOOL WHICH SHOWCASES ORGANIC GARDENING AND BIODIVERSITY**
- 3) THE GREEN AREA OPPOSITE MUDWALLS COTTAGE**
- 4) THE GREEN AREA ADJACENT TO BROADFIELD CLOSE**
- 5) THE OLD CRICKET GROUND**
- 6) THE SPORTS FIELD**

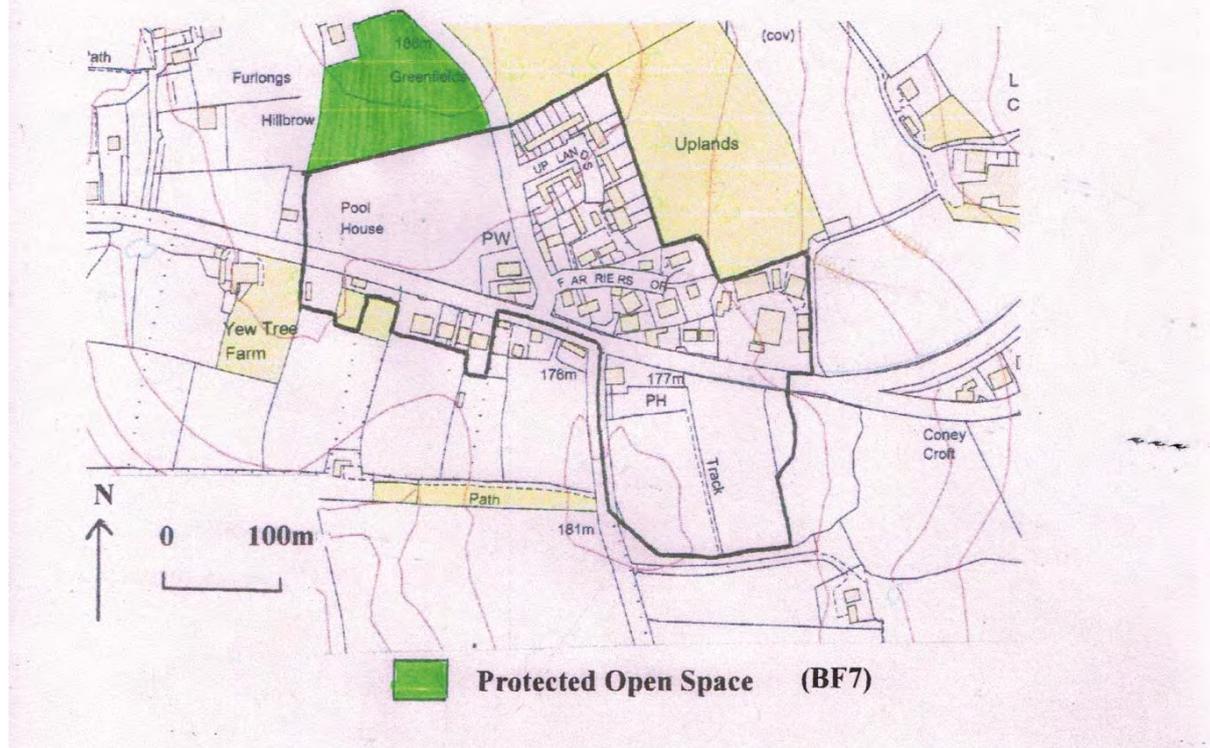
OPPORTUNITY WILL BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE EXISTING FACILITIES AND CREATE NEW OPEN SPACE BY A COMBINATION OF FUNDING SOURCES INCLUDING SECTION 106 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY.

A NEW RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE IS PROPOSED IN FROMES HILL AND AN AREA OF SEARCH IS IDENTIFIED ON MAP 5

MAP 4 Bishops Frome Village



MAP 5 Fromes Hill



Policy Area 6 – Rights of Way

Villagers also valued connections to the surrounding countryside on country lanes, footpaths and bridleways and wanted better maintenance of rights of way. The maintenance of rights of way is a statutory duty of the Local Authority but in a time of austerity heavy reliance is placed on voluntary policing of footpaths and bridleways by the designated parish footpaths officer.

POLICY BF8 – RIGHTS OF WAY

ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE ENHANCED BY THE PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE ACCESS BY ACTIVE TRAVEL

Policy Area 7 – Traffic and Transportation

Objective 6 - To ensure that adequate provision is made for the necessary highway, footway and public transport improvements required for any new development and that necessary traffic and road safety provision is made.

The major concerns in the Parish centre around speeding traffic, poor maintenance of roads, the inadequacy of public transport services, car parking and road safety. The private car accounts for the overwhelming majority of journeys to work, reflecting the relative inaccessibility of the parish to main sources of employment. 7.3% of people work from home and less than 1% use public transport. (Source: 2011 Census).

76% of replies were critical of the condition of roads in the Parish and 69% were concerned about traffic speeds on the B4214 through Bishops Frome and the A4103 through Fromes Hill. 56% believed a good bus service was a high priority due to their infrequency and inconvenient destinations, and 56% thought car parking to be a problem, particularly in the centre of Bishops Frome. There is a large central car park associated with the Village Centre but difficulties are caused by inadequate off street parking at the Ledbury entrance to Bishops Frome and by activities generated by the Transport Yard on the Burley Gate Road, compounded by parking for the Green Dragon public house.

Suggestions for improvements included speeding restrictions and gateway restrictions at the entrances to the villages.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) highlights the difficulties in maintaining access to public transport in sparsely populated rural villages but is adopting a strategy of encouraging community based services such as community transport, home to school transport and adult social care transport. The LTP can also be the agent for road safety improvement schemes and the implementation of speed indicator device programmes. The Local Planning Authority has the power to require adequate car parking, safe environments and pedestrian routes in new development schemes.

The National Byway runs through the Parish and is a long distance cycle route. The route runs Tewkesbury to Chester and runs across the north eastern corner of the county passing through Ledbury and Leominster. Being on a river valley in a relatively hilly area, there are a number of lanes which offer quieter alternatives to the main roads routes suitable for cycling in the vicinity too, linking the village not only South East to Ledbury and North West to Leominster as indicated above, but North East to Bromyard/Whitbourne; South West to Canon Frome / Yarkhill and West to Moreton Jeffries.

POLICY BF9 – TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

MEASURES TO IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND REDUCE OBSTRUCTIONS CAUSED BY ON-STREET PARKING WILL BE PROMOTED

NEW DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO MINIMISE EFFECTS ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK AND NOT ADD TO EXISTING PROBLEMS FOR CAR PARKING AND ROAD SAFETY BY PROVIDING ADEQUATE ON-SITE PARKING PROVISION FOR RESIDENTS AND ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR VISITORS. MITIGATION MEASURES WILL BE USED TO OFFSET DETRIMENTAL IMPACT CAUSED FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT.

PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE IMPROVED SAFER WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES INCLUDING THE NATIONAL BYWAY WILL BE SUPPORTED THROUGHOUT BISOPS FROME NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

PROPOSALS TO RESTRICT TRAFFIC SPEEDS ON THE B4214 AND A4103 THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GATEWAY SCHEMES AND HIGHWAY DESIGN WILL SUPPORTED AND PROMOTED

DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY PAYMENTS WILL BE SOUGHT TO IMPLEMENT TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Policy Area 8 – Flood Risk, Drainage and Waste Water

Objective 7 - To ensure that essential infrastructure and services are adequate to cope with future growth

Consultation during the preparation of the Parish Plan identified flood risk as a significant problem, with 58% of parishioners citing flooding as a problem in the Parish. 23% reported suffering from surface water flooding and 12% had experienced sewer overflow. The River Frome is the principal source of flooding risk, affecting the whole length within the Parish but particularly the eastern parts of Bishops Frome and areas south of the village in the vicinity of the Hop Pocket Craft Centre. The Middle Frome is classified as one of the highest areas at risk for flood reports in the County and has a poor ecological status.

Surface water runoff has in the past led to localized flooding in the vicinity of Broadfield Close and Summerpool in Bishops Frome and concerns have been raised about inadequate highway drainage capacity. As a result there is a strong desire to ensure that new development does not exacerbate surface water flooding and to introduce measures that improve the situation.

New development should embrace the principles of sustainable water management. Residents also raised problems with sewer capacity and Welsh Water have stated that the water treatment works in Bishops Frome are relatively small and do not have any capacity to accept further development without investment in new plant. Overloading of water treatment capacity will lead to unacceptable increases in pollution in the Frome and onwards in the Lugg and the Wye. Phosphate levels in the Frome are already exceeding acceptable levels and new development should not undermine the ability to reduce discharges to more acceptable levels. Additional foul flows cannot be accepted until improvements are undertaken.

Planning applications must address the implications for flood risk and install sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) to reduce surface water runoff problems where necessary.

POLICY BF10 – PREVENTION OF FLOODING AND IMPROVEMENT OF WATER QUALITY

DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD RISK ZONES 2 AND 3 SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE SEQUENTIAL TEST AND (WHERE APPROPRIATE) THE EXCEPTION TESTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL GUIDANCE. PROPOSALS SHOULD ALSO HAVE REGARD TO THE 2009 STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT (SFRA) FOR HEREFORDSHIRE.

ALL NEW DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD AIM TO REDUCE THE OVERALL LEVEL OF FLOOD RISK THROUGH THE OVERALL LAYOUT AND FORM OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND THE APPLICATION OF SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CORE STRATEGY POLICY SD3.

PROPOSALS SHOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT WATER QUALITY THROUGH POLLUTION OF GROUNDWATER OR OVERLOADING OF WASTE WATER TREATMENT WORKS

Policy Area 9 – Renewable Energy

Objective 8 - To promote initiatives for renewable energy to reduce carbon emissions.

Community consultation revealed an interest in promoting renewable energy initiatives with over 70% supporting renewable energy by solar or water power or biomass heating. A majority were opposed to wind power. 73% in Bishops Frome and 71% in Fromes Hill thought that new homes should exceed current energy standards. The wish to promote renewable energy can best be achieved through small scale community power initiatives and there is a strong resistance to industrial scale wind generation or large solar panel farms.

Many energy saving initiatives can be installed within permitted development rights but there is a need to control the potential adverse impact of schemes that require planning permission. Developers of new houses, conversions of existing buildings or farm diversification schemes should demonstrate that they have adopted best practice in energy conservation measures to reduce CO₂ emissions and that such measures are designed to be integral with the building design to limit any detrimental impact on the building or its surroundings. Developments should maximise the benefits of solar gain in site layouts and orientation of buildings.

It is considered that industrial scale power generation through the installation of wind turbines above 15 metres in height and solar panel farms would be incompatible with Policy BF1 which seeks to protect sensitive rural landscapes from developments which would cause harm to their character.

POLICY BF11 – RENEWABLE ENERGY

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THAT PROMOTE RENEWABLE ENERGY INSTALLATIONS WILL BE SUPPORTED PROVIDED THAT:-

- (a) THEY ARE OF A SCALE SUITABLE TO A RURAL VILLAGE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS**
- (b) THEY DO NOT AFFECT RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**
- (c) THEY DO NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OR THE HISTORIC AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

PROPOSALS FOR LARGE SCALE WIND OR SOLAR POWER GENERATION IN THE BISHOPS FROME NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA WILL NOT BE SUPPORTED

8. COMPATIBILITY WITH THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This Plan has had reference to the scoping report on Strategic Environmental Assessment prepared by Herefordshire Council in October 2014.

This report sets out a wide range of plans and programmes, both local, national and transnational that the Neighbourhood Plan must comply with to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to ensure that environmental issues are properly considered in the preparation of the Plan with a view to promoting sustainable development. This is a comprehensive check list covering themes of social progress, protection of the environment, prudent use of natural resources and economic growth.

As part of the process Herefordshire Council has consulted with Natural England, English Heritage, the Environment Agency, the Highways Agency and Welsh Water to be satisfied that the SEA is sufficiently robust to support the Neighbourhood Plan as it progresses through to its final form.

At this stage of the Neighbourhood Plan process it is considered that the policies put forward for consideration are compatible with the NPPF, the Core Strategy and the environmental principles outlined in the SEA. Assets listed in the SEA such as listed buildings, ancient woodlands and special wildlife sites are not affected by the policies and proposals and the Plan contains policies which protect water quality and reduce flood risk. Policies contained in the Plan are in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

9. DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The policies of the Plan will be delivered through a combination of public and private investment.

Public investment will primarily be implemented through the Core Strategy and the Local Transport Plan and through the Parish council precept. Other public investment may be forthcoming by other public agencies such as Welsh Water or the Environment Agency.

Private investment will be directed by the policies contained in this Plan and in the Core Strategy. Contributions towards the objectives of the Plan will be sought from planning obligations attached to new developments and by use of the Community Infrastructure Levy. Given the anticipated limited scale of new development over the plan period it is unlikely that such contributions will deliver large sums but it is important that every opportunity is taken to access sources of finance to implement the Plan objectives.

Bishops Frome Parish Council will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan's policies over the plan period in order to determine the need for any future review. This will be particularly focused on the success or otherwise of policies to extract developer contributions and the recording of where monies are allocated.

APPENDIX 1: CORE STRATEGY POLICY RELEVANT TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Vision, Objectives and Spatial Strategy

SS1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

SS4 – Movement and Transportation

SS6 – Environmental quality and local distinctiveness

Place Shaping Policies

RA1 – rural housing strategy

RA3 – Herefordshire’s countryside

RA4 – Agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings

RA5 – re-use of rural buildings

RA6 – rural economy

General policies

Social Progress

H1 – affordable housing – thresholds and targets

H2 – rural exception sites

SC1 – Social and community facilities

OS3 – Loss of open space, sport and recreation facilities

MT1 – Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel

Economic Prosperity

E1 – Employment provision

E2 – Redevelopment of existing employment land and buildings

E3 – Homeworking

E4 – Tourism

Environmental Quality

LD1 – Landscape and Townscape

LD2 – Biodiversity and geodiversity

LD3 – Green infrastructure

LD4 – Historic environment and heritage assets

SD1 – Sustainable design and energy efficiency

SD2 – Renewable and low carbon energy

SD3 – Sustainable water management and water resources

SD4 – Waste water treatment and river water quality

ID1 – Infrastructure delivery

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE PLAN

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing describes homes that are subsidised to enable those who cannot afford to rent or buy homes available on the open market. A house is not considered affordable if it takes more than 33% of gross earnings or if the mortgage needed is more than 2.9 times joint gross earnings or 3.5 times single gross earnings.

According to the NPPF (see below) affordable housing is 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 or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Herefordshire considers affordable housing for **local** people to be: 'housing provided at below market prices and allocated on the basis of need to people who live and work in Herefordshire or need to move to Herefordshire to receive/provide support and who are unable to purchase or rent houses generally available on the open market without financial assistance, as their only home.'

Brownfield Land

Land which has been previously developed.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a new levy that Local Authorities can charge on new developments in their area. The money can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the Council, local community and neighbourhoods may want (e.g. road improvements, water treatment works, schools, recreational facilities and open spaces). It is designed to work alongside but not completely replace section 106 agreements. 25% of CIL money will be passed to Parish Councils if they have an adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

Community Right to Bid

The Community Right to Bid was introduced in September 2012 as part of the Localism Act. It gives local communities a chance to save assets that are important to them. This could include a village shop, pub, community centre, allotments and recreation grounds. The right covers private as well as public assets.

Local Authorities are required to keep a list of all these 'assets of community value'. If an owner of a listed asset wishes to sell it they have to notify the Local Authority which then has to notify interested parties such as the parish council. If the community wants to buy the asset they can use the Community Right to Bid to 'pause' the sale for six months giving them time to raise funds to bid for the asset before it goes on open sale.

Draft Plan

A series of policies and proposals put out for consultation with the general public and various agencies with the aim of inviting comment so that the Plan can be amended to include corrections or additions before proceeding to formal adoption.

Flood Risk Zones

Flood Risk Zone 2 describes a risk of river flooding as between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability. Zone 3a has a high probability of 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of flooding, while Zone 3b is the functional floodplain where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.

Housing Market Area

The housing market refers to the supply and demand for houses, usually in a particular country or region. The housing market within Herefordshire varies spatially and the county can be divided into seven areas based upon common housing market characteristics including:-

- tenure
- house type profile
- incomes and affordability
- house prices
- geographical proximity
- patterns of household movement (migration)
- travel to work patterns that demonstrate the functional relationship between where people live and work

Infill Development

Infill development is development within an established residential area by developing vacant land between existing houses or by erecting new houses in the grounds of existing dwellings or behind the frontage of existing dwellings.

Landscape Character Assessment

The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how this is perceived by people. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement. It creates the particular sense of place of different areas of the landscape.

Lifetime Homes

Lifetime homes are accessible homes that will meet the differing and changing needs of households as they experience life events by being flexible, adaptable and accessible.

Listed Building

A building or structure that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest maintained by English Heritage. A full list can be seen at www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/herefordshire/bishop's+frome

Live-work Homes

New build schemes can incorporate dedicated work zones with space saving furniture and storage systems and can be a community based 'green' answer to global warming concerns.

Localism Act

The Localism Act of 2011 has four main measures promising:-

- new freedoms and flexibilities for local government
- new rights and powers for communities and individuals
- reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective
- reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally

The intention is to shift power away from central government and towards local people.

Local Transport Plan

Forward looking plan for all matters relating to transport in the County setting out objectives for the next five years and outlining bids for funding from the Department for Transport to realise those objectives.

Material Planning Consideration

Material planning considerations can be any issue taken into account when determining a planning application. These might include noise or disturbance, loss of sunlight, highway issues, layout and design of buildings. Loss of property value or loss of view is not considered material.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF came into force in March 2012 and is a much simplified set of policies providing guidance for Local Authorities and decision makers for drawing up plans and making decisions about planning applications, distilling 1500 pages of guidance down to 65. There is a strong thread running through the Framework of a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy is generally defined as energy that comes from resources which are naturally replenished on a human timescale such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves and geothermal heat.

Section 106 Contributions

Section 106 contributions or obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are a mechanism making a development proposal acceptable by mitigating its impact. This may take the form of financial contributions to secure affordable housing, highway improvements, provide open space or play areas or contribute to increasing the capacity of local schools.

Special Wildlife Site

Special wildlife sites represent the best natural places in the neighbourhood and have been selected for their special wildlife habitats and geological features. Although not protected by statute they are a valuable part of the County's 'green infrastructure'.

Statutory Plan

Plan prepared under the Planning Acts which has a legal force in the regulation and management of changes to land use and development.

Sustainable Development

The most accepted definition of sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

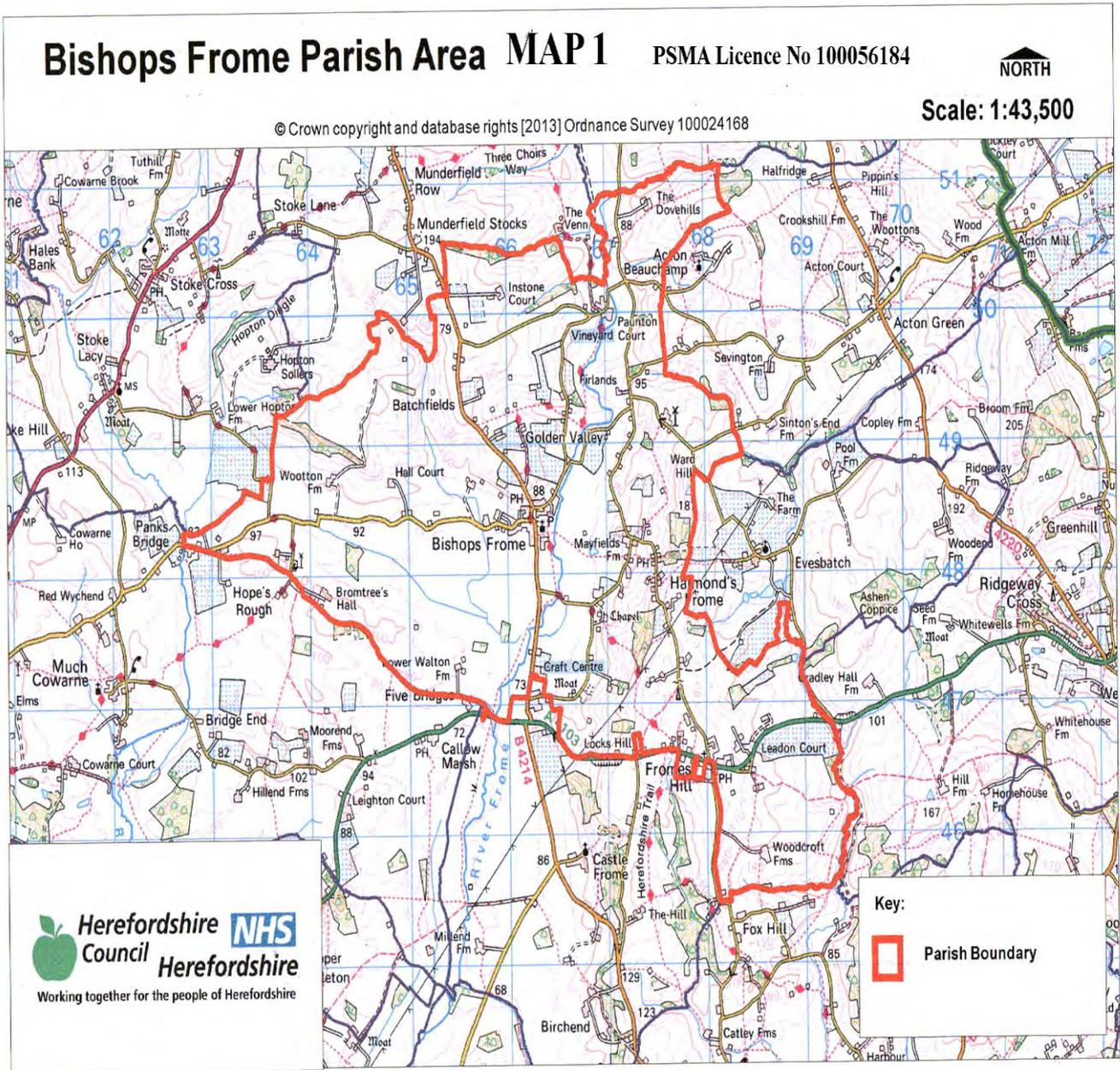
Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) are a system of water management designed to drain surface water in a way that has less impact on the environment than conventional practice of directing surface water run-off through pipes to the nearest watercourse. This may take a variety of forms such as permeable surfaces, filter trenches, underground storage, wetlands and ponds, with the aim of slowing down rates of run-off.

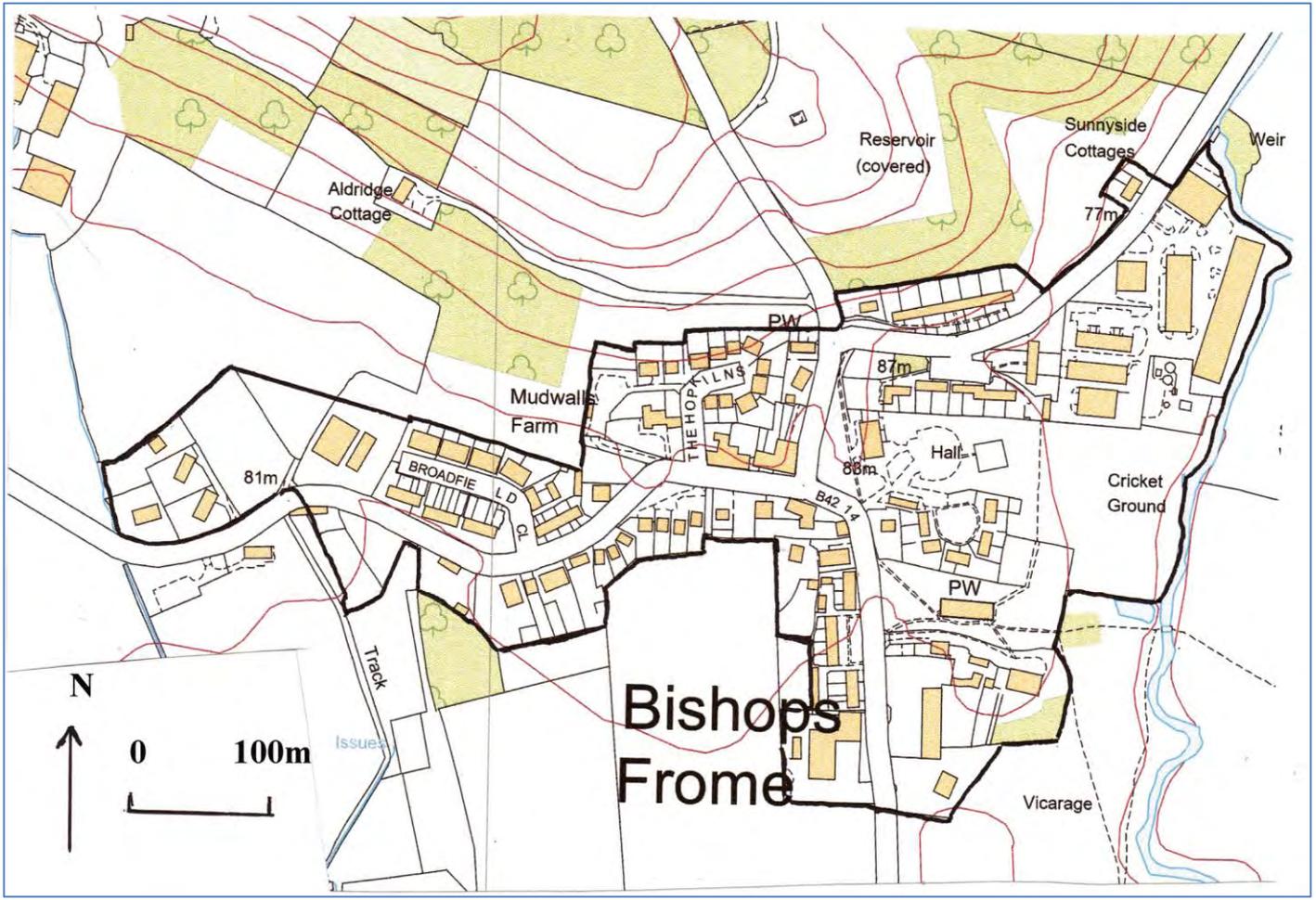
Village Envelope

The village envelope defines the boundary of the settlement built up area within which limited infilling can take place.

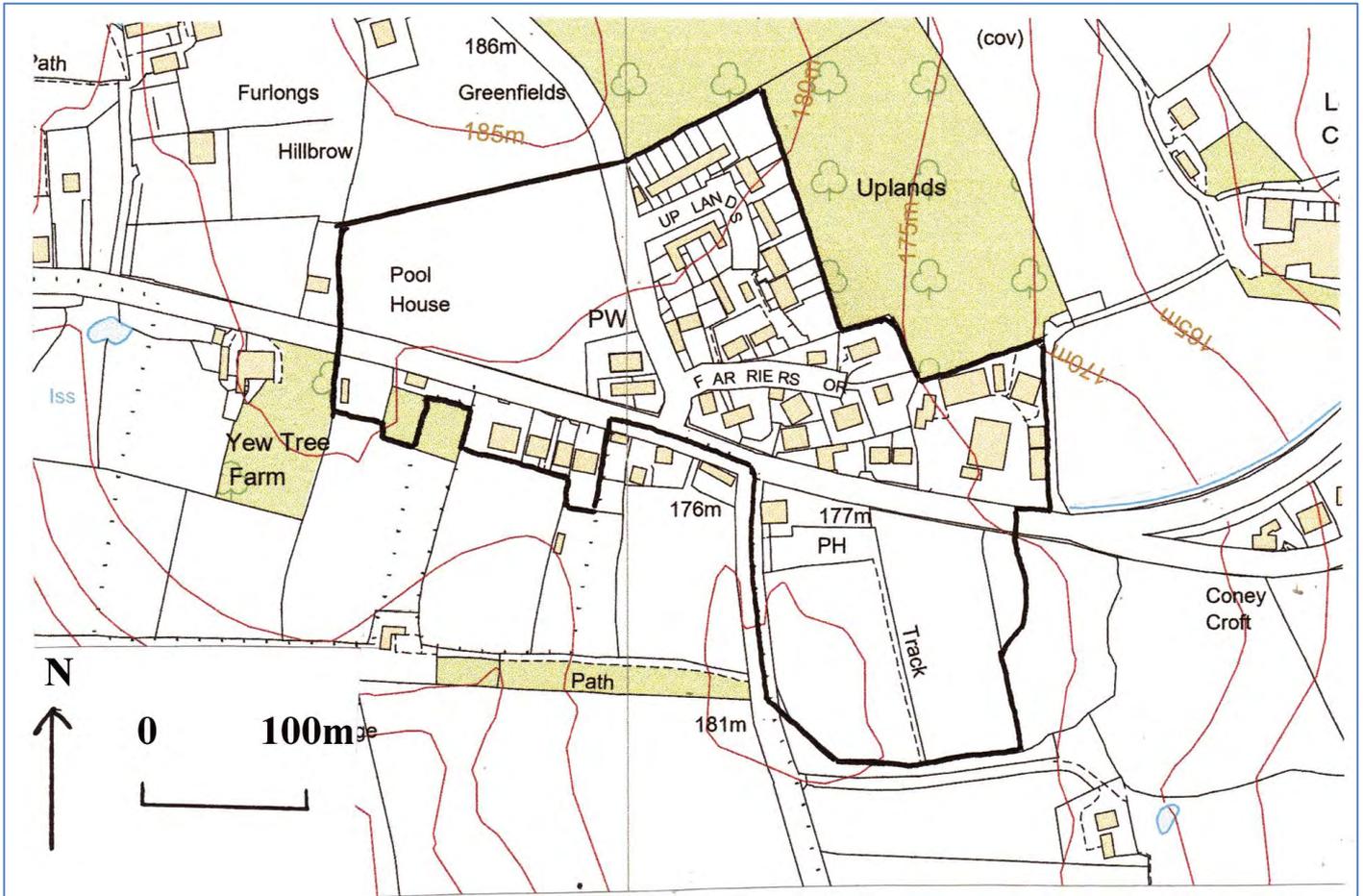
MAP 1 BISHOPS FROME PARISH AREA



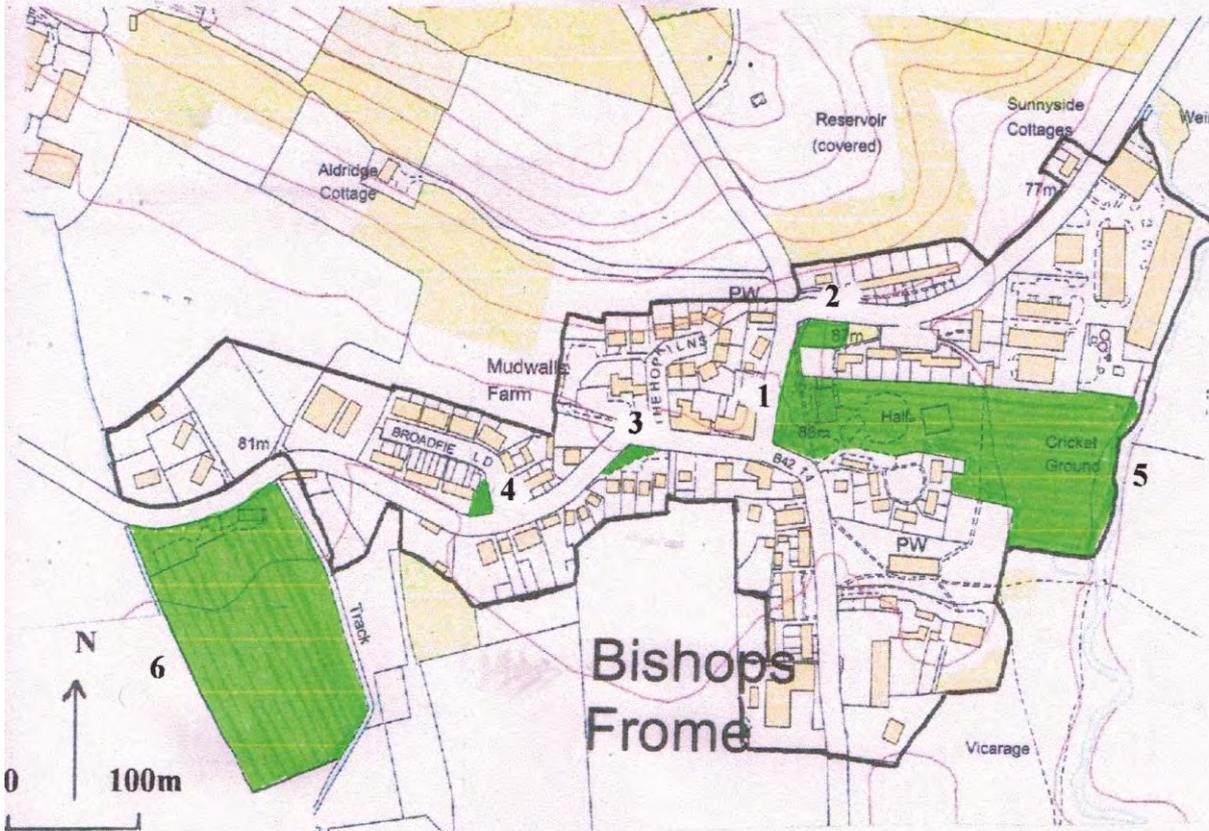
Map 2 BISHOPS FROME SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY PLAN



MAP 3 FROMES HILL SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY PLAN

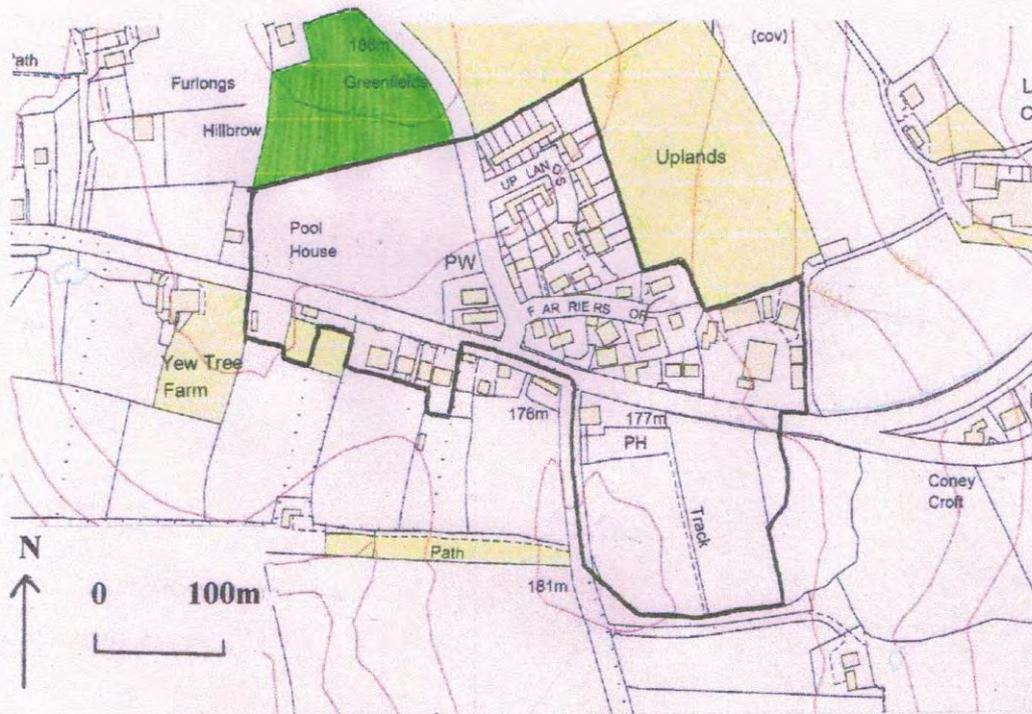


MAP 4 Bishops Frome Village



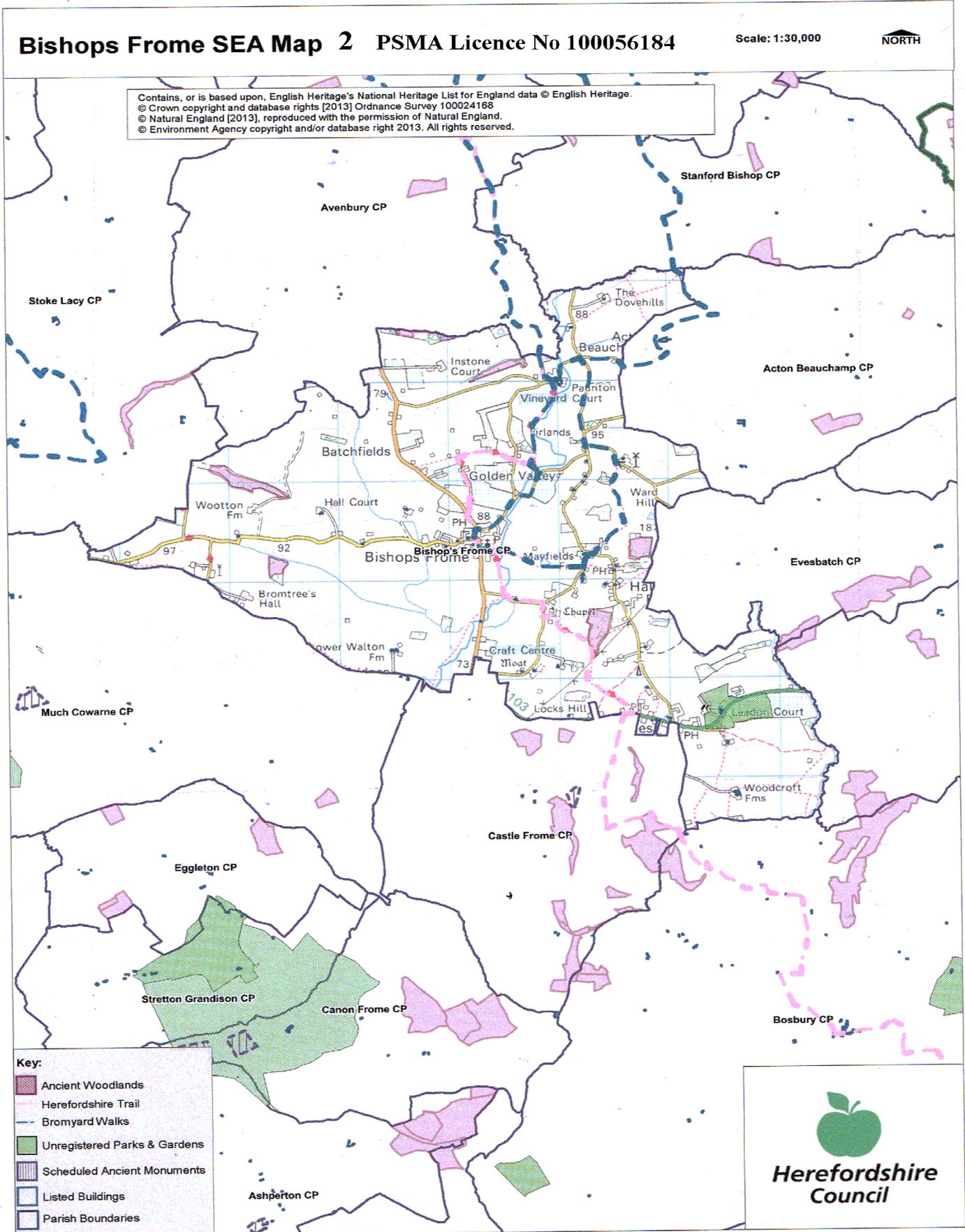
Protected Open Space (BF7)

MAP 5 Fromes Hill



Protected Open Space (BF7)

MAP 6 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT MAP 1 – ancient woodlands, listed buildings, rights of way.



MAP 7 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT MAP 2 – flood zones, mineral sites, special wildlife sites.

