



**BIDFORD  
ON-AVON  
PARISH**  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
**PLAN**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Submission VERSION  
JUNE 2016

[www.bidfordonavon-pc.gov.uk](http://www.bidfordonavon-pc.gov.uk)

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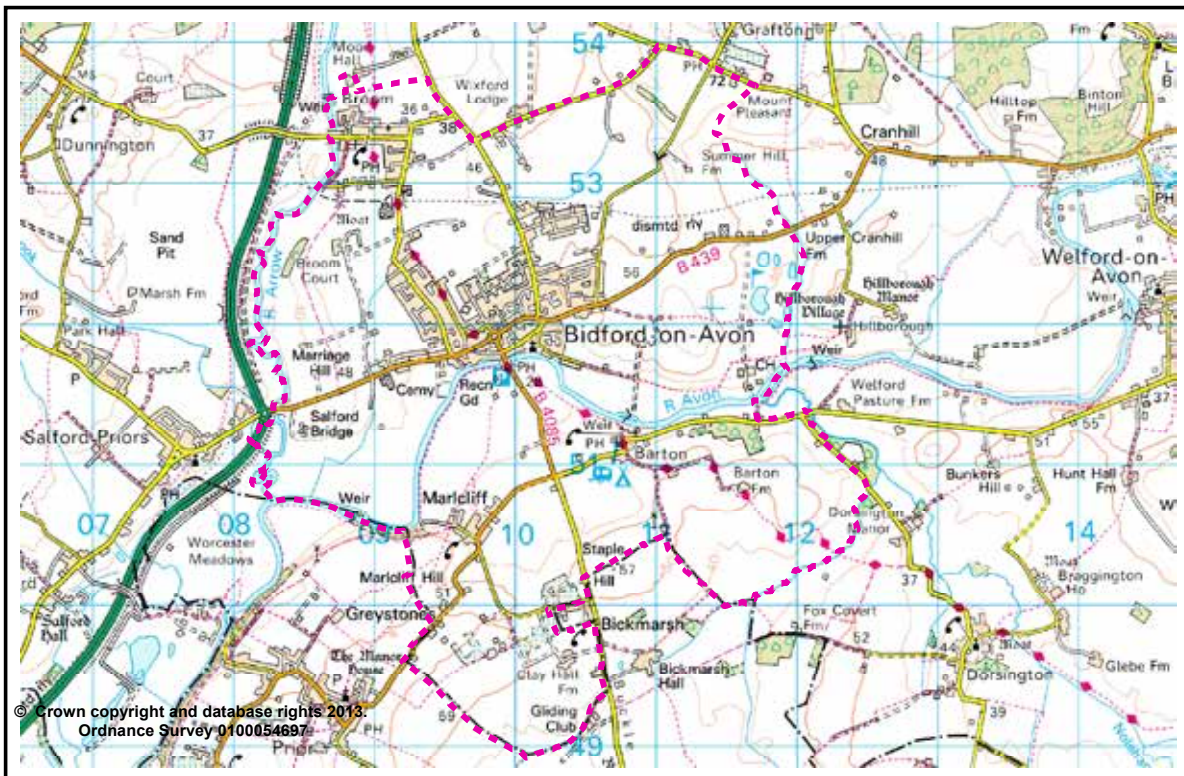
## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### The Rationale

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Planning is an important part of passing greater influence on decision making from national and local government to communities. As such our Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a community led framework for guiding future development, regeneration and conservation in our local area.
- 1.2 This NDP forms part of the statutory development plan for Stratford-on-Avon district which gives it greater weight in planning decisions than the B50 Parish Plan prepared in 2003 which was only a material planning consideration. It does not have the power to stop all development, but it is a powerful tool in shaping that development in line with local wishes and the local environment.

### The Neighbourhood Area

- 1.3 The Bidford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated by the SDC Cabinet on 10 February 2014 for the purposes of implementation of policies contained within this plan.
- 1.4 The Neighbourhood Area follows the parish boundary.



Map of Neighbourhood Area

- 1.5 The National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) makes it clear that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development means ensuring that better lives for ourselves does not mean worse lives for future generations.
- 1.6 Sustainable development is about change for the better, and not just through the built environment. Our natural environment is essential to our wellbeing, can be better looked after than it has been, and more accessible for people to experience it, to the benefit of body and soul.
- 1.7 Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives.
- 1.8 This should be a collective enterprise, yet, in recent years, planning has tended to exclude, rather than include, people and communities.
- 1.9 The NPPF changes that, introducing neighbourhood plans which allow people and communities a greater influence in the decision making process.

## **The Development Plan**

- 1.10 Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) is preparing a series of planning documents to guide development and change in the district up to 2031.
- 1.11 The most important of these documents is the Core Strategy, because it will set the course for everything to follow. It will present a vision of how the district will look and function in future years.
- 1.12 There are some big challenges facing the district, which the Core Strategy needs to address:
- Where should new homes be built and new jobs located?
  - How can we meet the housing needs of local people?
  - How can we reduce the impacts of climate change?
  - How can we make sure everyone can reach the services they need?
  - How do we protect our rich heritage and landscape?
- 1.13 The Core Strategy sets out SDC's views on land use and the environmental qualities for the district. The NDP takes this further and sets out what we are looking for across the Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.14 This NDP is in general conformity with existing strategic local plan policy , and takes account of SDC's emerging Core Strategy . The Core Strategy will determine how many new homes are built, how many new jobs are created and how people can travel to get to the things they need over the next 15 years.
- 1.15 Following the conclusion of examination hearings in January 2015, the Inspector published his Interim Report and SDC subsequently published modifications to the Core Strategy . A further series of examination hearings took place in January 2016 which was followed by the release of an updated version of the core strategy by the Inspector on 4 March 2016.
- 1.16 This NDP has had regard to the latest advice from the Inspector and the latest iteration of the emerging Core Strategy.
- 1.17 Our NDP sets out our vision for the Neighbourhood Area and contains policies to enable appropriate, sustainable development which will meet our need for houses, support job creation, safeguard existing amenities and create more.

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1. Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan Review 1996-2011 (adopted July 2006)

2. Core Strategy Proposed Submission Version June 2014

3. Interim Conclusions March 2015

4. Interim Adopted Core Strategy Proposed Modifications June 2015

5. Core Strategy as submitted September 2014 showing subsequent proposed modifications - February 2016

### **The Strategic Objectives**

- 1.18 This NDP is structured around a number of strategic objectives, which will be achieved through the implementation of a series of land use based policies contained within the NDP.
- 1.19 A summary of the strategic objections is outlined below:

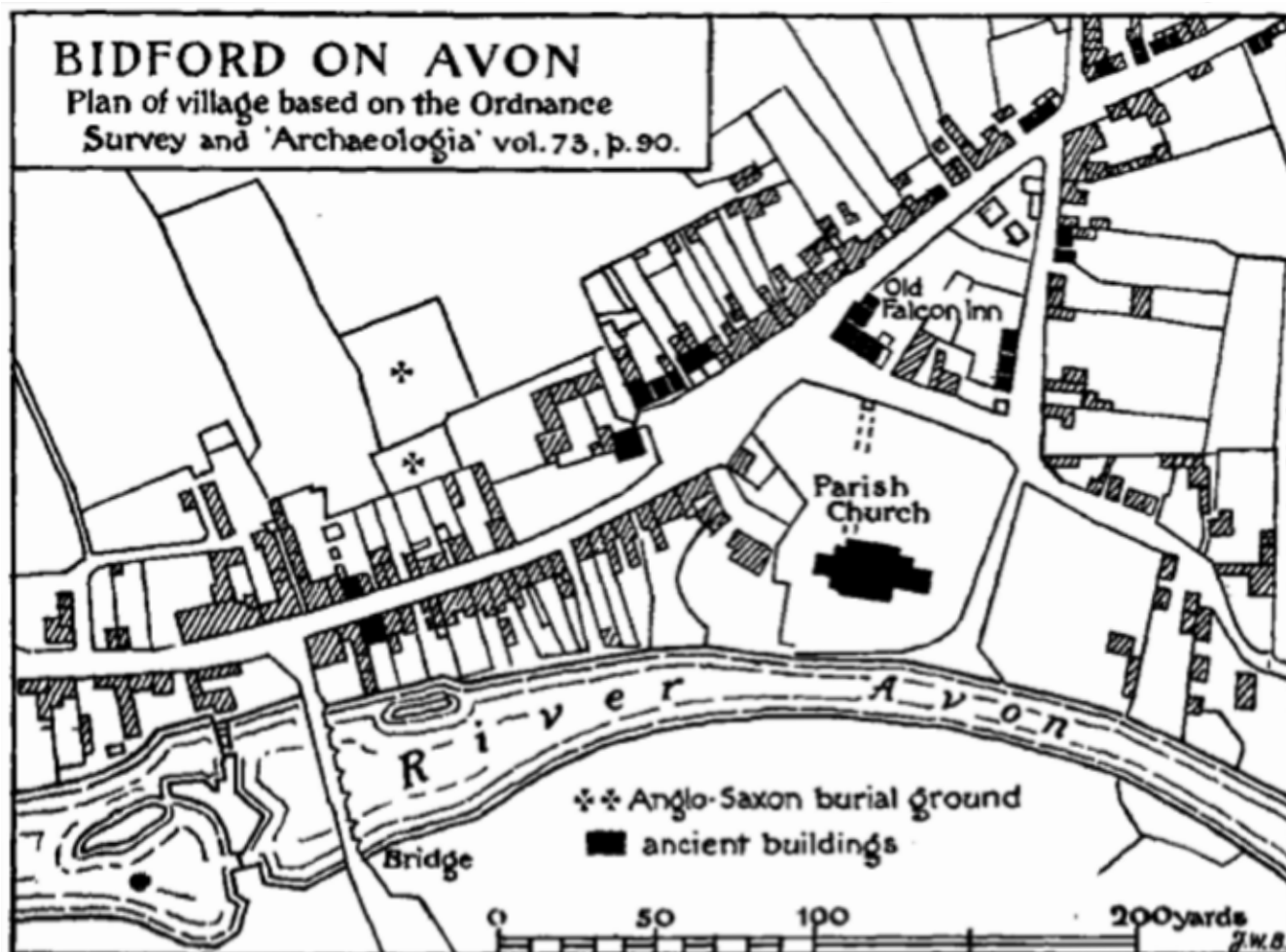
## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

<b>Housing</b>	To provide a sufficient supply and mix of dwellings to meet the needs of the community during the Plan period
<b>Economy</b>	To protect and promote jobs for local people in order to advance economic development in the Neighbourhood Area
<b>Environment</b>	To safeguard our natural environment and built heritage and enhance biodiversity whilst providing access for all, improving the well-being of the community, recognizing the importance of mitigating climate change and working towards a more sustainable future
<b>Amenities</b>	To ensure that valued community assets, local shops and services are maintained and where possible enhanced in order to promote sustainable living

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

### Bidford-on-Avon: From Rural Village to Main Rural Centre

- 2.1 The riverside village of Bidford-on-Avon is situated by the River Avon in the County of Warwickshire. To the east is Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon; to the south is the small village of Honeybourne in the county of Worcestershire; to the west is the historic town of Evesham and to the north the Roman town of Alcester. It is within Stratford-upon-Avon District Council (SDC) which is its Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- 2.2 The main character of Bidford-on-Avon lies in the central and oldest part of the village with its intimate scale, buildings and winding Main Street. It is significant that all the buildings of 17th century are within 183 m from the church.



- 2.3 Until the 20th century the village did not extend much further than the single street along the north bank of the river. In the interwar and post war years, some development spread along Victoria Road, to the west and Waterloo Road, to the east, and especially to the east of Waterloo Road in the form of sizeable Local Authority housing estates.
- 2.4 Then came the 1970s and the beginning of dramatic change. It started with the traffic congestion on the bustling High Street and the increasing demands from the local community that something be done! That something was the building of the relief road effectively, cutting the village in half! This undoubtedly started the demise of the High Street and opened the village up to large, new developments to the north of the said relief road.
- 2.5 Another decision that influenced the development in Bidford-on-Avon was being nominated one of seven Main Rural Centres by SDC: the intention being that these towns and villages would be encouraged to grow at a greater speed than smaller settlements. Those Main Rural Centres that were recognised Market Towns saw new development as business opportunities, but the smaller villages lacked the infrastructure to allow for this rapid expansion. Bidford-on-Avon was one of the latter and suffered, and continues to suffer, from this lack of investment.
- 2.6 So in 20 years, the population of Bidford-on-Avon rose from 2,822 in 1971 to 4,826 by 1991, and continues to grow. The current population of is now over 5,300 living in approximately 2,500 dwellings.

- 2.7 From being a relatively small community working locally, it has become a large village where over 75% of the working population commutes. From being a village with a cohesive community it has moved to one where a large proportion of the population come back home to eat and sleep.
- 2.8 We firmly believe that the NDP will, as a part of the statutory development plan for Stratford-on-Avon, help to establish the principle of 'sustainable development'. It aims to properly shape any further necessary development closely in line with local needs and wishes. It also has a vital role to play in maintaining and enhancing the local environment for present and future generations.



## 3.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSING

### Strategic Objective

- 3.1 This NDP acknowledges that the Neighbourhood Area is required to play its part in the supply of housing for the district and is required to be in general conformity with the strategic vision of local planning policy. This will include taking account of SDC's emerging Core Strategy as set out above.
- 3.2 Bidford-on-Avon has played a significant role already, contributing 565 new dwellings<sup>6</sup> between April 2011 - June 2016. A number of these houses have yet to be completed so are recognised in this NDP as housing commitments (see Map 1).
- 3.3 Housing policies within this NDP seek to ensure that the level of new development is commensurate with the scale of the village taking account of the development that has taken place over the last 5 years.
- 3.4 The villages of Barton, Marlcliff and Broom are not considered to be suitable for new market housing due to their inability to support sustainable development. Broom and Barton are also heavily constrained by conservation areas and neither village has the range of local facilities which would support sustainable living.
- 3.5 SDC's study of the capacity of villages to accommodate growth which takes account of national and district planning policies, physical, environmental and landscape constraints and location in relation to employment, public transport and key community facilities has been taken into account during the preparation of this plan.
- 3.6 There are a number of challenges to development in the Neighbourhood Area, which have been taken into account when considering potential new sites for development. The south of the village is heavily constrained by the River Avon flood plain which has resulted in significant growth to the north of the village.
- 3.7 Growth to the north of the village has moved development away from the historical centre of the village creating an imbalance in the location of houses to local services.

## POLICY H1 - VILLAGE BOUNDARY

The built up area of Bidford-on-Avon is defined by the Village Boundary as outlined on Map 1. New housing development within the Village Boundary will be supported in principle.

All areas outside of the Village Boundary are classed as countryside. New housing in the countryside will be strictly controlled and limited to dwellings for rural workers, replacement dwellings and new dwellings in accordance with Policy H2.

### EXPLANATION

- 3.8 87% of respondents to the NDP questionnaire<sup>7</sup> said they would prefer to see Bidford-on-Avon remaining broadly the same size. The latest version of the Core Strategy<sup>8</sup> endorsed by the Inspector does not allocate any further housing within the Parish of Bidford-on-Avon to assist in the supply of housing in the district.
- 3.9 However, small scale infill development on land within the Village Boundary will allow the flexibility to provide housing without significant damage to the character and setting of the village. This pattern of gradual organic development will ensure new dwellings contribute to the attractive appearance and character of Bidford-on-Avon and its sense of community.

6. Planning permissions granted since 2011

7. Question 4, NDP Questionnaire 2015

## POLICY H2 - RURAL EXCEPTION HOUSING

Affordable housing development will be permitted on small sites beyond, but reasonably adjacent to, the development boundaries of the villages of Bidford-on-Avon, Barton, Marlcliff and Broom where the following is demonstrated:

- a) There is a proven and as yet unmet local need, having regard to the latest Housing Needs Survey;
- b) No other suitable and available sites exist within the development boundary of the settlement; and
- c) Secure arrangements exist to ensure the housing will remain affordable and available to meet the continuing needs of local people.

Where viability for 100% affordable housing provision cannot be achieved, an element of market housing may be included within a rural exception scheme, to provide sufficient cross-subsidy to facilitate the delivery of affordable homes. In such cases, land owners will be required to provide additional supporting evidence in the form of an open book development appraisal for the proposal containing inputs assessed and verified by a chartered surveyor.

### EXPLANATION

- 3.10 The NPPF allows for the provision of affordable housing<sup>9</sup> through rural exception sites. These are additional housing sites that are used to meet defined affordable housing needs in rural areas where up-to-date survey evidence shows that local need exists. This enables small sites to be used specifically for affordable housing in small rural communities that would not normally be considered because, for example, they fall outside local plan development boundaries.
- 3.11
- For the purpose of local needs housing a local connection is defined as the following:
  - Have lived in the village for a minimum of 6 months.
  - Have previously lived in the village for 6 out of the last 12 months or 3 out of 5 years.
  - Have close family currently residing in the village and for at least 5 years\*
  - Has full or part time work (not voluntary, seasonal or casual) in the village and has been employed for at least 6 months.
- 3.12 To satisfy the local connection criteria an applicant only has to meet one of the above points, although many may have more than this.

\*A close family connection is defined as mother, father, sister, brother or adult children.

## POLICY H3 - PROMOTING AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF HOUSING

### Market Housing

Developments of 5 or more units should seek to meet the requirements identified by the most current up-to-date evidence such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the Residential Parish Survey conducted to inform this NDP or a Housing Needs Survey.

In order to meet the specific needs of the Neighbourhood Area, market housing will be provided with the following mix:

1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed	Total
10%	30%	40%	20%	100%

### Affordable Housing

Affordable housing will be provided in accordance with Policy CS.17 of the Core Strategy.

In order to meet the specific needs of the Neighbourhood Area, affordable housing will be provided with the following size mix:

1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed	Total
20%	40%	35%	5%	100%

The requirement for and provision of affordable housing within the Neighbourhood Area will continue to be monitored throughout the Plan period in order to ensure that the most up-to-date evidence is used to identify the current need. Such evidence will be used to inform the provision of affordable housing on qualifying sites.

## EXPLANATION

- 3.13 Mix will be subject to negotiation considering issues such as local need, viability and character of the area. Developers will be required to set out why they are not complying with the broad approach outlined in Policy H3 above.
- 3.14 The evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and its update indicates that the provision of a greater number of smaller market homes on development sites to help meet the identified need should be encouraged. In light of the ageing population, the provision of small market bungalows will be particularly welcomed.
- 3.15 In the recent Neighbourhood Plan Survey, 67% of respondents stated a preference to small family homes (2 and 3 bedrooms). 59% indicated a desire for low cost starter homes. This sector of market housing has been underprovided over the last 20 years so it is now time to redress this balance.
- 3.16 The NPPF sets out the definition of Affordable Housing and the associated tenure types within this<sup>11</sup>.
- 3.17 The property types, sizes and tenures of the affordable housing on individual sites will vary subject to local needs. The last Housing Needs Survey was conducted in 2012 and provided an analysis of local housing need at the time of writing. Since 2012 a significant number of market and affordable homes have been granted many of which have been built but a large number have yet to be built.
- 3.18 Affordable housing will be provided through future Rural Exception Housing schemes under Policy H2 of this NDP and through existing commitments which incorporate a proportion of affordable housing as part of a market led housing scheme.
- 3.19 A review of the local housing need will be undertaken within the first 5 years of the adoption of this NDP through an up-to-date Housing Needs Survey.

## POLICY H4 - USE OF BROWNFIELD LAND

The redevelopment of brownfield land to create new housing will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) The new use would be compatible with the surrounding uses;
- b) Any remediate works to remove contaminants are satisfactorily dealt with;
- c) The proposal would lead to an enhancement in the character and appearance of the site; and
- d) Would not result in the loss of any land of high environmental value.

## EXPLANATION

- 3.20 It would be contrary to the principles of sustainable development to allow more homes on greenfield sites than would be necessary to meet identified housing need arising in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 3.21 For the purposes of this NDP, brownfield land is previously developed land which is, or was, occupied by a permanent structure no longer in active use. It includes the authorised curtilage of the developed land but specifically excludes any residential garden land. There is no presumption that the whole of the site will be suitable for development. This would need to be proven through the planning application process.

## POLICY H5 - USE OF GARDEN LAND

Development on garden land within the defined Village Boundary, as defined on Map 1, will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that proposals:

- a) Preserve or enhance the character of the area;
- b) Do not introduce a form of development which is at odds with the existing settlement character or pattern;
- c) Preserve the amenities of neighbouring properties; and
- d) Provide satisfactory arrangements for access and parking.

8. Core Strategy as submitted September 2014 showing subsequent proposed modifications - February 2016

9. Annex 2: Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework or as subsequently amended by Government Policy or Statute.

10. Table 6

**EXPLANATION**

- 3.22 Development within the garden of existing houses can lead to inappropriate development with regard to neighbouring properties and poor means of access. Unless an adequate land area is available or can be assembled and demonstrated to be accessible and sustainable, without causing detrimental harm to the amenity of neighbouring dwellings or to the character of the area, then development will be resisted.

## 4.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD ECONOMY

### Strategic Objective

- 4.1 The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development, one of which is the economic role. The economic role is defined as “contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure”<sup>12</sup>.
- 4.2 To ensure that the Neighbourhood Area continues to have a vibrant and diverse economic make up, appropriate for its size and rural location this NDP proposes a number of economic policies with the theme of protecting and enhancing. Particular importance is placed on maintaining the commercial vitality of the Bidford-on-Avon Village Centre and the Waterloo Industrial Estate.

### POLICY ECON1 - PROTECTING AND ENHANCING EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES

Proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of land or premises identified for or currently in employment use will only be permitted where:

- 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/premises is no longer capable of meeting employment needs; or
- c) Development of the site for other appropriate uses will facilitate the relocation of an existing business to a more suitable site; or
- d) Unacceptable environmental problems are associated with the current use of the site and the proposal will remove them; or
- e) The site is located in the Village Centre and the proposed use will contribute to the vitality and viability of the Village Centre or forms part of a regeneration project; or
- f) Relocation of the employer will make better use of existing or planned infrastructure.

### EXPLANATION

- 4.3 The sustainability of Bidford-on-Avon is dependent upon the opportunity for local people to find local employment. The businesses on the industrial estate provide both work opportunities for local people and training and development. There is also an inflow of workers from outside of the neighbourhood who spend money supporting retail and other service industries within the Neighbourhood Area.

### POLICY ECON2 - PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE VILLAGE CENTRE

Proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of land or premises within the Village Centre, as defined on Map 1, will only be permitted if it would not result in the loss of a shop or commercial premise.

Proposals for new retail or commercial premises will be supported where there is no conflict with other policies in this Plan.

The change of use of retail or commercial premises in the Village Centre to residential will not be permitted unless it has been proven that there is no alternative or viable retail or commercial use. Evidence of a robust marketing exercise will be expected as evidence to demonstrate that no alternative use is likely to come forward.

### EXPLANATION

- 4.4 The Village Centre has suffered a gradual loss of trade since the opening of the B439 in 1978. Nevertheless, the Village Centre is highly valued by residents and visitors and in order for it to remain as a retail and commercial area for the Neighbourhood Area, development which would reduce the retail or employment opportunity of the centre will be resisted.

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12. Paragraph 7



## **POLICY ECON3 - PROMOTING HIGH SPEED BROADBAND**

All new residential and commercial development within the Neighbourhood Area will be expected to include the necessary infrastructure to allow future connectivity to high speed broadband.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 4.5 In an age where home based businesses and home working is encouraged in order to advance sustainable patterns of living and working, it is important that appropriate infrastructure such as high speed broadband is provided.
- 4.6 This NDP seeks to promote the future proofing of new residential and commercial development by requiring the infrastructure associated with the installation of high speed broadband to be provided at the build stage.

## **POLICY ECON4 - PARKING IN THE VILLAGE CENTRE**

Development which would adversely affect the current parking provision in the Village Centre, as defined on Map 1, will not be permitted.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 4.7 Current parking provision in the Village Centre must be maintained and, where possible, enhanced to facilitate ease of accessibility to the village centre and its businesses. Future developments within the Village Centre must provide adequate parking in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's adopted standards.

## **POLICY ECON5 - PROMOTING RIVERSIDE ACTIVITIES**

Development which promotes or enhances riverside facilities in order to facilitate and increase visitor numbers to the Neighbourhood Area and customers for its businesses will be supported.

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) receipts generated within the Neighbourhood Area will be used, where appropriate, to deliver such facilities.

Future developments must protect and where possible enhance the attraction to the river for visitors.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 4.8 Bidford-on-Avon boasts an enviable natural resource in the form of the River Avon which attracts visitors to the Neighbourhood Area benefiting many local, particularly leisure and hospitality, businesses.

## **POLICY ECON6 - HOMEWORKING AND LIVE-WORK UNITS**

### **Homeworking**

All new dwellings are encouraged to provide space to support home-working, with flexible space adaptable to a home office, and where appropriate incorporate cabling to support broadband in accordance with Policy ECON3.

### **Live-Work Units**

Proposals for small scale mixed use development (new build or conversion), comprising of commercial space and living space will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) Have suitable independent access to both uses;
- b) Have an appropriate level of off road parking to serve both uses;
- c) Layout and design ensures that residential and work uses can operate without conflict;
- d) Be in reasonably accessible locations to service facilities by means other than a private vehicle;
- e) In the case of conversions, the building should be of a permanent and substantial construction, structurally sound and capable of conversion without major rebuilding or extension; and
- f) Have an adequate residential curtilage without having a detrimental impact on the building and its rural setting.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 4.9 Many residents have adapted to modern working patterns and are either encouraged to work from home or have established their own business within part of their home. It is likely that this pattern will continue and potentially increase so new development must be able to accommodate and or adapt to the requirements of future owners to be able to home work.
- 4.10 Mixed use schemes where an occupier can work and live within the same planning unit has the benefit of removing the necessity to travel to work and therefore such schemes are a relatively sustainable form of development that would otherwise not be supported in rural locations.

## 5.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD ENVIRONMENT

### Strategic Objective

- 5.1 One of the three dimensions of sustainable development as outlined in the NPPF is the environmental role. This is defined as “contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy”<sup>13</sup>.
- 5.2 We recognise the need to safeguard our natural environment and built heritage and enhance biodiversity whilst providing access for all and improving the well-being of the community.
- 5.3 We should protect the open rural character of the landscape in which our villages are set and ensure that the identities of our separate settlements are maintained.
- 5.4 We should work towards a more sustainable future and recognise the importance of mitigating climate change, ensuring that better lives for ourselves does not mean worse lives for future generations.

### POLICY ENV1 - RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY

Development proposals relating to the production of renewable and low carbon energy will be supported providing they can be satisfactorily integrated into the character and appearance of the village and its environs. Proposals which have an adverse impact on the character of the area will not be supported.

Where appropriate, other development should demonstrate how energy efficiency measures have been maximised through the provision of high energy efficient buildings.

### EXPLANATION

- 5.5 We are all charged by our future generations to work towards a more sustainable future and recognise the importance of mitigating climate change. We recognise the need to reduce carbon emissions and the use of fossil fuels and support developments that contribute to green energy production. However, their scale and appearance must not compromise the character of our villages.

### POLICY ENV2 - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Where appropriate, development will be expected to contribute to the provision and or improvement of Green Infrastructure including the protection of mature and healthy trees and hedges. Where this is not possible, new trees and hedges must be planted to replace those lost with appropriate native species which are of nursery stock.

Developments will need to demonstrate they have been landscape led in order to avoid retrofitting of poor quality or token landscaping.

### EXPLANATION

- 5.6 Green infrastructure and provision of green space has the potential to deliver multiple benefits for both people and wildlife, including opportunities for recreation, biodiversity enhancement and access to nature.
- 5.7 We need to ensure the protection of the rural character of Bidford through the maintenance and enhancement of important landscape features such as trees, hedges and woodland.

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13. Paragraph 7

## POLICY ENV3 - BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

All development will be expected to safeguard existing rivers, streams and ponds both within and adjacent to development sites.

Development proposals which adversely affect existing rivers, streams and ponds will not be supported.

### EXPLANATION

- 5.8 Our rivers, ponds and other water bodies are significant landscape and ecological features. We need to safeguard them for their importance for biodiversity, for amenity and for water resources that we need.
- 5.9 We should maintain or improve their water quality in accordance with Water Framework Directive requirements<sup>14</sup>.

## POLICY ENV4 - REDUCING FLOOD RISK

In order to ensure that all relevant development proposals incorporate suitable and sustainable means of drainage where site conditions are favourable, the following principles will be encouraged. Where site conditions are proven to be unfavourable or unfeasible, an alternative drainage solution will need to be agreed by the council and the relevant water authority.

- a) On large-scale developments such schemes will be expected to contribute to ecological enhancement as well as sustainable drainage;
- b) The re-use and recycling of water;
- c) The use of permeable paving;
- d) Sustainable urban drainage schemes should be constructed in line with the Warwickshire Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) manual. Applicants should ensure that the design of SUDs should support the findings and recommendations of the Warwickshire Surface Water Management Plan, the Warwickshire Sustainable Urban Drainage Manual and the District Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Where SUDs are proposed, it should be supported by a groundwater risk assessment and arrangements put in place for the whole life management and maintenance; and
- e) Water efficiency measures that go beyond the current Building Regulations and non-domestic buildings should as a minimum reach 'Good' BREEAM standards.

Proposals which do not satisfactorily demonstrate secure arrangements for the prevention of fluvial and pluvial flooding will not be supported.

### EXPLANATION

- 5.10 All our villages have suffered considerably from flooding in recent years. New developments must contribute to flood alleviation through provision of sustainable drainage systems, soft landscaping and permeable surfaces where possible. Larger developments offer the opportunity to include landscape and biodiversity enhancement in sustainable drainage systems.
- 5.11 The Environment Agency considers that water resources are under 'moderate stress' in the locality with some areas under 'serious stress'<sup>15</sup>. Therefore developments should include means of re-using and recycling water where possible.
- 5.12 A further update to the Water Cycle Study<sup>16</sup> has been carried out and set out the evidence and recommendations for water efficiency measures in domestic and non-domestic buildings. This is based on evidence from Severn Trent Water 'Water Resources Management Plan' (WRMP). Stratford district and West Midlands generally is located within an area of moderate stress. The WRMP has concluded that any growth and increase in population will further exacerbate the issue. In addition, key resources of raw water (canals and rivers) supplying the district are considered to be close to their limit of water they can continue to yield for abstraction, before ecosystems and other users reliant on these resources would be adversely affected.

14. Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy

15. Halcrow, Warwickshire Sub-Regional Water Cycle Study, Final Report, March 2014

16. URS Water Cycle Study Update Final Report, September 2012

## **POLICY ENV5 - FOUL DRAINAGE**

All proposals for new residential dwellings or new commercial buildings must demonstrate that there are or will be adequate water supply and water treatment facilities in place to serve the whole development. Proposals that would result in an unacceptable risk to the quality and or quantity of a water body or water bodies will not be permitted.

Proposals to expedite the improvement and upgrade the existing foul drainage network in the village will be supported.

All developments will be expected to demonstrate that there are suitable and satisfactory arrangements in place to deal with foul water.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 5.13 Local planning authorities have a general responsibility not to compromise the achievement of UK compliance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD42) (Directive 2000/60/EC). All surface water bodies need to achieve “good ecological status” by 2015. The Localism Act 2011 enables the UK Government to require local authorities to pay if their inaction resulted in a failure to meet WFD requirements. The Localism Act 2011 also requires local planning authorities to co-operate on cross-boundary planning issues including the provision of water supply infrastructure, water quality, water supply and enhancement of the natural environment.
- 5.14 Under Section 94 of the Water Industry Act 1991, water companies have a general duty to provide effectual drainage to accommodate planned development. Furthermore, they are also required to manage their assets efficiently to minimise customers’ bills. Consequently, there will often be limited headroom as water companies do not generally provide significant amounts of spare capacity to accommodate speculative development. Where liaison through the planning process identifies a need to provide additional capacity, the required infrastructure upgrades are planned to ensure the delivery of planned development is not unduly delayed.
- 5.15 The effective management of waste water is considered critical in the pursuit of sustainable development and communities. It reduces the impact flooding can have on the community, maintains water quality and quantity and helps to enhance local amenity and biodiversity through the provision of green infrastructure.
- 5.16 Effective water management also reduces the movement of water and sewage thereby reducing energy requirements. The Parish Council will continue to work with Warwickshire County Council as lead local flood authority, SDC, the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water to achieve compliance with the WFD and aim to provide sufficient water to meet local needs.

## **POLICY ENV6 - PROTECTION OF THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND**

Development of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Classification) will not normally be supported unless it can be demonstrated that development of agricultural land is necessary and no other land of a poorer agricultural quality is available.

Operational development or changes of use directly associated with, and necessary for, agricultural activity will be considered compatible with this Policy.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 5.17 The NPPF ensures protection against the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land from significant development<sup>17</sup>.
- 5.18 Our best agricultural land should be protected both to maintain the rural surroundings of our villages and to ensure it continues to contribute to production of food.

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17. Paragraph 112



## **POLICY ENV7 - VALUED LANDSCAPES, SKYLINES AND VIEWS**

In order to maintain the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Area, all new development must have regard to the landscape character and historic landscape features and retention of important landmarks, skylines and views identified in the 'Bidford-on-Avon Parish Landscape Assessment' (February 2016).

Proposals which have an adverse impact on the landscape, skylines or important views will not be supported.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 5.19 We should protect the open and rural nature of the land surrounding built up areas of the parish to ensure the separate identities of our different settlements and retain its distinctive features, skylines and important views.
- 5.20 Applicants will be expected to have regard to the 'Bidford-on-Avon Parish Landscape Assessment' of February 2016. This identifies and describes variations in the landscape across the Parish. It identifies six Parish Landscape Character Areas (PLCAs) which exhibit unique combinations of landscape elements and features which make them distinctive. It considers key views, landmark features, important skylines and sensitive visual characteristics. It outlines land management and development considerations for each PLCA and gives development guidance for each.
- 5.21 Land management and development should pay due regard to the guidance given in the Landscape Assessment and seek to enhance the Character Areas wherever possible.

## **POLICY ENV8 - DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS**

Proposals which cause substantial harm to the special historical or architectural fabric and interest of listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments and their settings not will be supported.

Proposals, including changes of use, which enable the appropriate and sensitive restoration of listed buildings, will be supported.

All proposals must preserve the important physical fabric and settings of listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Development within and adjacent to all heritage assets will be strictly controlled. Development which fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area will not be supported.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 5.22 Our villages contain a number of listed buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments (See Map 2). We need to ensure that these buildings and structures are protected and enhanced and that they are not compromised by new developments.

## **POLICY ENV9 - PROMOTING HIGH QUALITY DESIGN**

All development proposals must demonstrate how local character has been taken into account during the conception and evolution of a design. Proposals that do not positively contribute to local character will not be supported.

All development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how the design has been influenced by the need to plan positively to reduce crime and the fear of crime and how this will be achieved.

The density of development must enhance the character and quality of the local area whilst preserving the amenity of neighbouring residential homes, being commensurate with a viable scheme and infrastructure capacity.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 5.23 The local character of our villages, including buildings and other structures made from materials of local origin and its spatial forms, should be protected, enhanced and not compromised by inappropriate new developments.

## **POLICY ENV10 - NATURE CONSERVATION**

Development should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity wherever possible. Existing ecological networks should be retained and new ecological habitats and networks are particularly encouraged. Measures to improve landscape quality, scenic beauty and tranquility and to reduce light pollution are encouraged.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 5.24 We should protect and enhance green spaces and the landscape features and habitats such as woodland, hedges, orchards, rivers, streams and ponds that support a wide biodiversity. A Local Biodiversity Action Plan is a means of ensuring this protection.
- 5.25 Until a Local Biodiversity Action Plan is completed, in considering proposals, reference should be made to existing ecological work including Phase 1 Habitat Surveys undertaken by the Habitat Biodiversity Audit of Warwickshire County Council.

## **POLICY ENV11 - MINERALS AND AGGREGATES EXTRACTION**

Where mineral extraction occurs this must be clearly time limited. Measures must be in place from the outset to minimize the impact of extraction on residential areas and local roads. Restoration to an agreed appropriate after use such as agriculture, habitat creation or informal recreation must be achieved within an agreed and reasonable clear time limit.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 5.26 Parts of the Neighbourhood Area, particularly around the village of Broom, have seen extensive mineral extraction and suffered its impacts. We should ensure that where future mineral extraction occurs it is clearly time limited, that the impact on residential areas and its roads is minimised and that restoration to suitable uses is implemented as quickly as possible.

## 6.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD AMENITIES

### Strategic Objective

- 6.1 Existing community facilities play an important role in maintaining a strong and vibrant community. The loss of existing community facilities will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer viable or that the facility is no longer in active use and has no prospect of being brought back into use. Proposals which enhance and improve existing community facilities will continue to be encouraged where they represent sustainable development.

### POLICY AM1 - PROTECTING AND ENHANCING HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES

Providing access to health care is essential in maintaining a healthy community. General population increase and a specific increase in older age groups have placed considerable strain on health care provision within the Neighbourhood Area.

Proposals which would directly adversely affect the provision and delivery of health care will not be supported.

Proposals which would enhance and expand existing health care facilities will be supported providing they do not conflict with adjoining land uses.

### EXPLANATION

- 6.2 The health centre plays an important role in the lives of our community. A large number of respondents were very or fairly satisfied with the service provided. When the health centre moved out of the village centre, it was said that other health services would be available.
- 6.3 Respondents to the 2015 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire requested additional services to be provided on the health centre site including physiotherapy, district nurses, NHS dentistry, chiropody, optometry, minor injuries, mental health support and complimentary therapies.
- 6.4 Many respondents felt that a footpath between the surgery and Bidford-on-Avon would be beneficial, because at present the safest option is to use a vehicle, given that there is only a grass verge to walk alongside the very busy road.

### POLICY AM2 - PROTECTING AND ENHANCING EDUCATION AND LIBRARY FACILITIES

Sustaining and increasing the opportunity to access education should be delivered through the protection and expansion of the existing primary school and the library but such expansion should not be at the expense of the existing play areas, sports areas and landscape.

Proposals which adversely affect the provision and delivery of education and learning in the Neighbourhood Area will not be supported.

### EXPLANATION

- 6.5 In order to accommodate the additional primary school pupils associated with the recent rapid growth in housing within the Neighbourhood Area, proposals to expand the existing school will be looked upon favourably. Future development will be expected to continue to contribute towards education facilities in accordance with the Education Authority's recommendations.
- 6.6 Around 357 secondary school pupils are bussed to schools in Alcester, Stratford-upon-Avon and Chipping Campden. A review of the transport arrangements for secondary school pupils travelling outside of the Neighbourhood Area will be encouraged.
- 6.7 The library is run by volunteers and is used by all generations in the village. Future development will assist in the contribution towards the ongoing maintenance of this important village facility through CIL receipts.

## POLICY AM3 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Existing community facilities play an important role in maintaining a strong and vibrant community.

The loss of existing community facilities will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer viable or that the facility is no longer in active use and has no prospect of being brought back into use.

Proposals which enhance and improve existing community facilities will be supported. New community facilities will be encouraged providing they are compatible with existing neighbouring uses.

### EXPLANATION

- 6.8 74% of residents expressed the view that they would like to see an upgraded village hall and indoor sports facility in Bidford-on-Avon. The Crawford Hall and Broom Village Hall provide vital indoor facilities within the Neighbourhood Area for potential recreational use. Proposals which would expand these and other important community assets to widen the range of facilities and services provided and enhance the opportunity for sports and recreational use will be supported.
- 6.9 An expansion of the Crawford Hall would supply a safe place for the younger generations to go to keep fit and active, both physically and mentally. The lack of secondary schools in the village make some after schools activities non accessible to some pupils, as bus passes are limited to one bus and parents may be unable to fetch them at later times in the day. The provision of such facilities would mean long-term improvement to individual's health and well-being.

## POLICY AM4 - LOCAL GREEN SPACE

This Plan designates the following areas of Local Green Space as defined on Map 3 (Bidford-on-Avon), Map 4 (Broom) and Map 5 (Marlcliff) at the following locations:

### Bidford-on-Avon

1. Playing Fields West of Dugdale Avenue
2. Dugdale Avenue
3. Paddock Close
4. Allotments, Sports Pitches and Cemetery, Salford Road
5. Big Meadow and Monie Meadow
6. C of E Primary School Playing Fields, Bramley Way
7. Russet Way
8. St Laurence Way
9. Chestnut Way
10. Crompton Avenue
11. The Leys, Hill View Road, Wessons Road and Jubilee Close
12. Wards Lane Play Area

### Broom

1. Millers Bank
2. Kings Lane Play Area

### Marlcliff

1. The Bank

The above designations include a range of existing formal sports and recreational spaces along with informal areas of play and open space.

Development that would harm the openness or special character of a Local Green Space or its significance and value to the local community will not be permitted unless there are very special circumstances which outweigh the harm to the Local Green Space.

Where appropriate, CIL funds will be used to enhance these designations to ensure a suitable quantum and quality of recreational and amenity space is available for the Neighbourhood Area.

## EXPLANATION

- 6.10 In accordance with paragraphs 76-78 of the Framework, local communities are encouraged to include new and robustly justified Local Green Spaces within their neighbourhood plans, where this designation does not prevent identified development needs being met.
- 6.11 Local Green Space which is of particular importance to local communities, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife will be designated for special protection.
- 6.12 Local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with policy for Green Belts.

## POLICY AM5 - ALLOTMENTS AND GROWING SPACE

Any development proposal that would result in the partial or complete loss of an existing allotment within the Neighbourhood Area will not be supported unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there would be a positive improvement to existing provision or a net increase in provision elsewhere.

Proposals for the provision of new allotments in appropriate and suitable locations will be supported. Proposals for new allotments should clearly demonstrate the following:

- a) There are no adverse impacts on the landscape or character of the area;
- b) There are satisfactory arrangements for parking;
- c) There are satisfactory arrangements for water supply; and
- d) There would be no adverse impacts on neighbouring uses.

All new dwellinghouses with 3 bedrooms or more should be designed with private and secure gardens of at least 10.5m in length in order to facilitate individual homeowners with the opportunity to grow their own food.

## EXPLANATION

- 6.13 Despite the statutory obligation on local authorities to provide allotments where there is a demand, there are still very few sites being created each year. However the trend in people wanting to grow their own food is on the rise, and currently it is estimated that over 90,000 gardeners want an allotment and are on waiting lists.
- 6.14 Trends show that during times of recession people turn back to the land, wanting to reconnect with something tangible while at the same time experiencing home-grown food, which costs less and is better for us. The Dig for Victory campaign during the 1940s coupled with the grey of the post war years saw a rise in people taking up allotments. At its height there were over 1.5million allotment plots across the UK. The 1970s with its three day week and trade union unrest saw another desire for self-sustainability, immortalised in the BBC show The Good Life. Today, with our economic uncertainty on a global scale, the desire for more space to grow food locally and experience life's simple pleasures has reignited the call for more allotments. Figures suggest there are approximately 330,000 allotment plots in the UK, but to meet the current demand we need in the region of at least a further 90,000 plots<sup>18</sup>.
- 6.15 The Neighbourhood Area has approximately 78 allotment plots of various sizes on two different allotment sites (75 Riverside Allotments on land south of Salford Road, and 2 larger sized allotments on land north of Stratford Road). Many allotment holders are longstanding and therefore plots rarely change hands. However, there are approximately 15 people on the waiting list for plots. This evidence demonstrates a significant need for additional plots within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 6.16 It is clear that we have a responsibility to protect allotments for current and future generations and address any shortfall within this Plan.

18. Source: The National Allotment Society ([www.nsalg.org.uk](http://www.nsalg.org.uk))



- 6.17 All housing developments should take into account of the health and well-being of the future occupiers of those developments. Sufficient amenity space, either private or shared, should be provided within each development and made available in perpetuity for those residents.
- 6.18 These areas of vegetable and flower production are also valuable sources for wildlife and enable parts of the community the opportunity to grow their own food, bringing a sense of well-being.

## **POLICY AM6 - PROMOTING WALKING AND CYCLING**

The Neighbourhood Area has a wealth of public routes which should be protected, enhanced, expanded and positively utilised in all new development. Where appropriate, the use of CIL funds will be used to enhance and expand these routes.

All new development must demonstrate how walking and cycling opportunities have been prioritised and connection made to existing routes.

Proposals which either adversely affect existing walking and cycling routes or fail to encourage appropriate new walking and cycling opportunities will not be supported.

### **EXPLANATION**

- 6.19 Public footpaths and bridleways are an important part of our heritage and have been used over centuries. They continue to be a key means of linking our settlements with the surrounding countryside.
- 6.20 These Public Rights of Way and walking and cycling routes within the villages which give access to schools, shops and other amenities, should be protected and enhanced where possible. The encouragement of walking and cycling is a key part of improving the health and well-being of our communities and of reducing our carbon emissions.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Bidford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan Regulation 123 List**

Regulation 123 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended) places a requirement to publish a list of infrastructure projects or types of infrastructure that the Charging Authority (Stratford District Council) intends will be, or may be, wholly or partly funded by CIL receipts received from qualifying development.

In England, communities that draw up a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order (including a Community Right to Build Order), and secure the consent of local people in a referendum, will benefit from 25% of the levy revenues arising from the development that takes place in their area. This amount will not be subject to an annual limit.

The levy can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure, including transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals, and other health and social care facilities. This definition allows the levy to be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities, academies and free schools, district heating schemes and police stations and other community safety facilities. This flexibility gives local areas the opportunity to choose what infrastructure they need to deliver their Neighbourhood Plan.

The neighbourhood portion of the levy can be spent on a wider range of things than the rest of the levy, provided that it meets the requirement to 'support the development of the area'. The wider definition means that the neighbourhood portion can be spent on things other than infrastructure. For example, the pot could be used to fund affordable housing where it would support the development of the area by addressing the demands that development places on the area.

The table below has been informed by consultation and preparation of the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan. It is important to note that inclusion in this list does not signify a commitment from the Town Council to fund the entirety (or part of) of any particular project through CIL. In addition, the order of projects in the table does not imply any preference for spend.

## APPENDIX 2

**The following document was produced prior to this, and is landscape in orientation.**

# ***Bidford-on-Avon Parish Landscape Character Assessment***



**FINAL REPORT** March 2016

Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd / The terra firma Consultancy Ltd

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### General

Bidford-on-Avon Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Group appointed Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd and the terra firma Consultancy Ltd in January 2016 to produce a *Bidford-on-Avon Parish Landscape Character Assessment* to inform the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and in particular emerging policy **ENV.7:**

### Protection of landscape, skylines and important views.

*In order to maintain the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Area, all new development must have regard to the landscape character and historic landscape features and retention of important landmarks, skylines and views. Proposals which have an adverse impact on the landscape, skylines or important views will not be supported.*

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) definition of “landscape” is:

*“ ..... an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors.”*

The Parish of Bidford-on-Avon falls wholly in Stratford District. It is not included within either a national landscape designation or one of Stratford District’s Special Landscape Areas. An Area of Restraint<sup>i</sup> lies to the south of the town and the River Avon as shown in Figure 2.

The aim of this study is to assist Bidford-on-Avon Parish in the preparation and adoption of the Bidford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Plan (BoANP). The study will form part of the BoANP’s evidence base and will assist in the housing site selection process and development control. The study will provide a robust

landscape evidence base that will be weighed with all the other evidence used in plan making and planning decisions.

The Study builds on published landscape character studies most notably the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines 1993 and takes into account the findings of the Stratford District Landscape Sensitivity Study for Larger Villages 2011 which provides some more detailed level of character assessment. A full list of documents is included in Section 4.

### Objectives of the Study

Overall the Study aims to provide a transparent, consistent, objective and robust approach to the *Bidford-on-Avon Parish Landscape Assessment*, and to provide the Parish and Local Planning Authority officers with evidence to understand where the potential landscape and visual impacts would be greatest.

The *Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Assessment* identifies and describes variation in the character of the landscape across Bidford-on-Avon Parish. It identifies six Bidford-on-Avon Parish Landscape Character Areas (PLCAs) which exhibit unique combinations of elements and features (characteristics) that make the landscape areas distinctive and makes land management and development recommendations for each PLCA.

The boundaries of these PLCAs are based on the wider landscape character types identified in the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines and detailed desk-base and fieldwork assessment. The Study also considers the visual characteristics of the Parish; key views and vistas, landmark features, important skylines and particular sensitive visual receptors.

The study takes into account the locations of ecological, heritage and recreational assets in the Parish but does not include detailed studies of these topics. However historical data from Warwickshire County Council has been

<sup>i</sup> Interim Adopted Core Strategy June 2015 policy CS.13: Land designated as an Area of Restraint makes an important contribution to the character of the settlement.



used to further understand landscape surviving patterns derived from the historic landscape.

## 2. LANDSCAPE SETTING

### 2.1 Location

The village of Bidford-on-Avon is situated on the River Avon approximately 8km from the main town at Stratford-upon-Avon to the east. The village of Welford-on-Avon lies 4km to the east and the main arterial road, the A46, runs north to south some 100-300m to the west.

The Bidford-on-Avon Parish boundary is shown in Figure 1 and extends either side of the River Avon. In the west the boundary follows the alignment of the river Arrow which flows north to south into the River Avon at the south-west corner of the Parish. The south western boundary follows the river Avon as far as the village of Marcliff but the remaining boundaries follow field boundaries, road alignments and cross country. The Parish extends to between Broom and Moor Hall in the north; to the high ground in the east of Bidford golf course at Bidford Grange in the east; to the land around Barton Farm in the south-east and just south of Bickmarsh in the south.

The main settlement is the large village of Bidford-on-Avon lying in the centre of the Parish within a rural part of the Avon Valley, on the banks of the River Avon. To the north lies the small village of Broom which is closely related to the River Arrow; to the south-west lies the small village of Marcliff, closely associated with the River Avon; and to the south-west lies the hamlet of Barton also closely related to the River Avon. Elsewhere settlement is sparse and limited to individual farmsteads and houses or small collection of buildings as at Bickmarsh.

### 2.2 Landscape Character Context (see Parish-wide Figure 2)

Bidford-on-Avon Parish falls within 3 broad landscape character types within the Avon Valley Regional Landscape Character Area identified in the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines 1993 (and shown on Parish-wide Figure 2) which are the:

- River Meadowlands
- Terrace Farmlands
- Vale Orchard Belt.

The key characteristics, sensitivities and management considerations of these types – as identified in the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines - are used as a basis for the more detailed Bidford-on-Avon character assessments to follow in Section 3 below.

### 2.3 Topography and Hydrology (see Parish-wide Figures 3 and 5)

The topography and hydrology are key characteristics of the village's setting as well as giving rise to a diversity of habitats and key influences to the historic and present day land use and settlement pattern.

The Avon floodplain Zone 2 is extensive, covering the whole of the River Meadows landscape type and a small part of the edge of the Terrace Farmlands around the allotments off Salford Road and on lower Honeybourne Road. The River Arrow and its floodplain is much narrower and flows southwards into the River Avon in the south-west corner of the Parish. The Parish also has a number of streams, the principal one of which is Small Brook which flows from its source north of George's Elm Lane in the north-east along the northern edge of Bidford to its confluence with the River Avon west of Marcliff. Elsewhere minor streams define the boundary of the Parish as at Bidford Grange and south of Barton's Farm. Natural ditches are not common but are a local feature at Marcliff.

The local topography is a defining feature of the Parish with the broad Avon Valley encircled by low ridgelines largely within the Vale Orchard Belt (see Figure 3) but also at Marriage Hill in the Terrace Farmlands. These low ridges form a series of skylines, best appreciated from the valley floor and the lower terraces. Beyond these lie a series of higher hillsides which can be seen through the gaps in the ridgelines from the valley floor or from higher ground within the Parish, forming the distant skyline. Marlcliff Hill is a particularly prominent landmark, especially visible from the B439 in both the western and eastern approaches to Bidford.

## **2.4 Vegetation and Ecology**

The Parish is largely under either arable or horticultural cultivation. Large areas of natural vegetation are uncommon throughout but the Parish has a distinctive pattern of mature scrub, hedge and tree lines along the watercourses and in hedgerows which create layers of vegetation which give the appearance of a more wooded landscape than is the case. Woodland is generally linear and found on the steep narrow slopes along the river bluffs (for example at Marlcliff and The Rookery) or at the break of slope on the ridgelines, (as for example at Summer Hill Farm). These tend to be prominent features in the landscape. Tree and shrub lines define the disused railway routes, of which south of King's Lane, Broom is the only SSSI in the Parish. [information on the local wildlife sites has not be made available].

Small areas of pasture are a key feature of the landscape setting of Broom, Marlcliff and Barton and some remnants are to be found along the rivers Arrow and Avon.

## **2.5 Historic landscape**

The relationship between the historic town at Bidford and the Avon Valley is of particular value which is recognized in the designation of the later as an Area of Restraint by Stratford District Council. A large part of this area is Big Meadow, a

In addition to the above the Parish has been a long standing location for extensive orchards which were to be found within all of the landscape character areas at one time, not just the Vale Orchard Belt. Most of these have been either built on or returned to agriculture but there are remnants scattered through the Parish, the best example being at Bickmarsh.

Ridge and furrow pasture was also once more common across the Parish and some examples, most notably at Marlcliff, do survive but many others appear to have been ploughed out.

The Parish has no Registered Parks and Gardens but Warwickshire County Council have identified a number of potential local parks or gardens of merit. These include Broom Court, the Avon House gardens and Woodpeckers at Marlcliff and possibly Broom Hall (now the pub).

The Conservation Areas at Bidford, Broom and Barton all have a close relationship with their surrounding landscape setting. Of these Broom is particularly defined by open space within the confines of the village. Listed buildings are concentrated in the main settlements but three listed farmhouses at Broom Court, Farmington Farm and Barton Farm all contribute to the character of the area in which they lie.

## **2.6 Perceptual/Experiential Landscape**

Generally the Parish has an overriding rural character of good scenic value although some of the development in the Parish is large in scale and visually intrusive.

much valued area of public open space. Smaller additional areas of locally valued open space have been identified in the Neighbourhood Plan. To the south-east the Heart of England Forest project extends into the Parish and has led to the creation of a community woodland at Dorothy's Wood.

The Parish benefits from two regional promoted long distance paths, the Shakespeare's Avon Way which follows the open countryside along the course of the river Avon, and the Heart of England Way which crosses the Parish from north to south, linking with Shakespeare's Avon Way at Barton and Bidford Bridge. Both of these are well used by locals and visitors alike. Elsewhere local footpaths cross Marriage Hill; run from Bidford to Bidford Grange and from Bidford to Marlcliff; with a few other short links across open countryside. Marlcliff and Broom both have a number of footpaths around the village.

## **2.7 Settlement Pattern**

Historically the settlement pattern developed from easy access to the rivers whilst locating buildings on the slightly higher ground of the river terraces.

Bidford has a strong well defined historic core which mainly lies between the B439 and the river Avon. Development west and east of the core south of the B439 has been limited; with an estate in the east at Icknield Close and mostly ribbon development in the west. The town has expanded considerably to the north, and continues to do so, as this part of the Parish has been considered the least sensitive to change. In places this has resulted in an exposed edge to the village and prominent built form.

The smaller villages have retained their rural character and largely absorbed small scale development in keeping with the character of these villages.

Detailed information is available from the Conservation Area Appraisals and the work undertaken by Warwickshire County Council.

## **2.8 Settlement Gaps**

Bidford-on-Avon has expanded during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, mostly to the north where development pressure remains the greatest. The village is separated from the small village of Broom to the north by a very narrow gap roughly 400m wide along the Bidford Road. This gap contains a number of horticultural buildings, typical of the rural Avon Valley landscape but introducing substantial agricultural built form into this vulnerable gap. The village of Barton to the south-east is separated from the village by a wider and more open gap of 600m which includes the river Avon and its meadows. Some of this land falls within the Area of Restraint. The village of Marlcliff to the south-west is also separated by a wider gap of approximately 975m which also includes the river Avon, its meadows and medium sized arable or horticultural fields.

The village residents consider that retaining these gaps is crucial to safeguarding the individual character and identity of the settlements particularly where the land at the edge of settlement forms part of its historic/landscape setting and/or includes areas which have cultural importance.

## **2.9 Important visual landmarks and features**

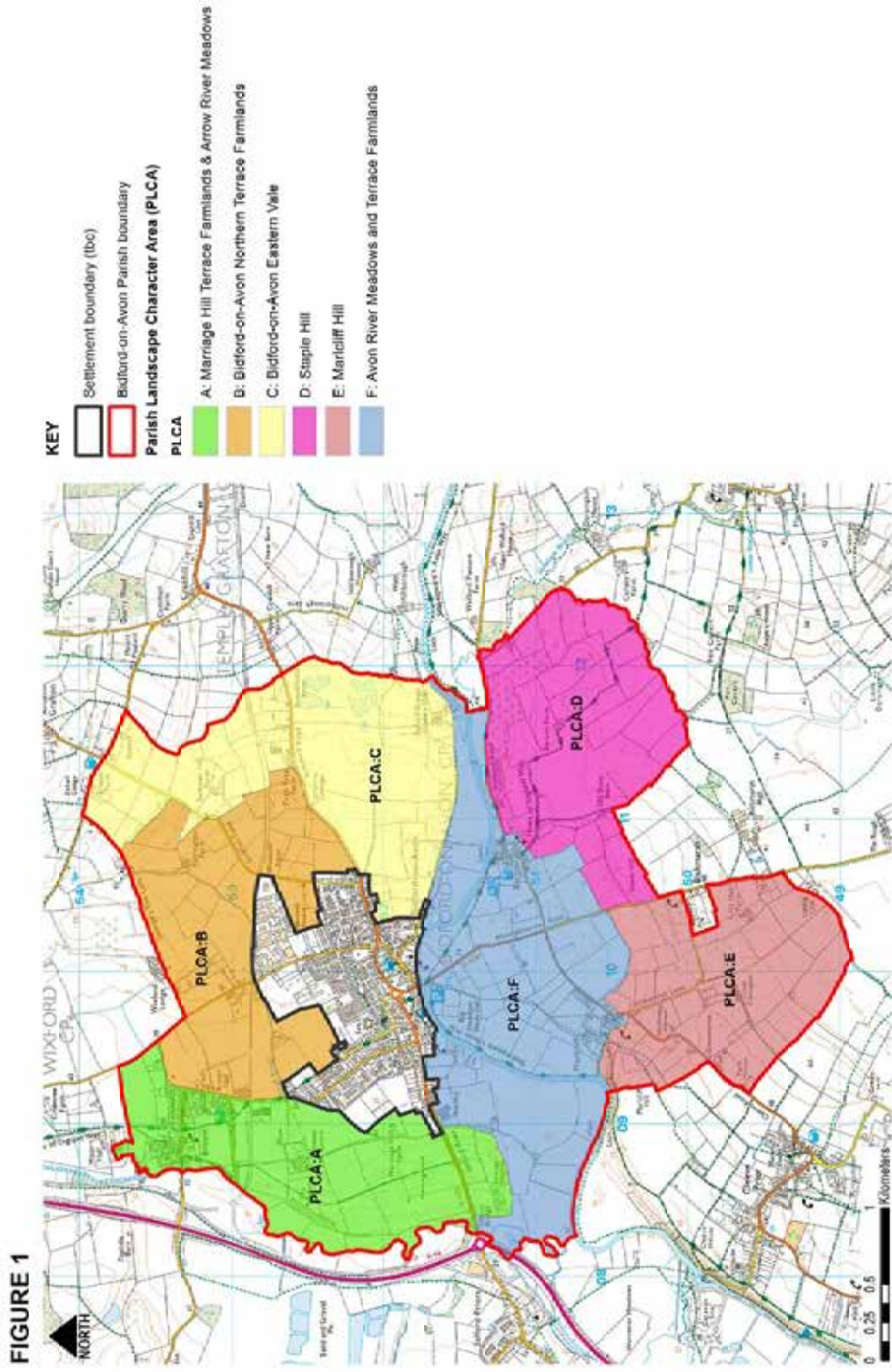
A number of key landscape features and built form within the Parish and in the surrounding area provide visual landmarks. Most historically important and prominent amongst these are the Parish Church of St Lawrence, Bidford and Bidford bridge. There are a number of other historical and natural local landmarks which are identified in Figure 4.

The ridgelines around the Parish have created a distinctive pattern of locally prominent skylines which are also defined by a line of trees or mature but gappy hedgerows along the ridge, as at Staple Hill and Bidford Grange and the golf course. Marlicliff Hill and to a lesser degree Summer Hill create a distinctive wooded skyline, whilst Marriage Hill presents a very open smooth skyline in the west. The important skylines are shown in Figure 4.

There are important views throughout the Parish as identified for each PLCA on Figure 4 and in Section 3. These vary from intimate enclosed views to long distance and 360° views, both of which enrich the enjoyment of the Parish. To date these have been of a rural landscape with the town largely contained on the lower terraces with a good cover of trees and garden space, with some exceptions where development has crept onto the higher ground in the east. Only in views from the north does the town have a more urban appearance.

### **3. BIDFORD-ON-AVON PARISH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS**

In order to provide a more detailed assessment of the Parish's landscape, the area has been sub-divided into smaller LCAs based on the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines landscape types and called Bidford-on-Avon Parish Landscape Character Areas (PLCAs) A to F, as indicated on Figure 1. Each of these is assessed below, drawing upon relevant key characteristics, sensitivities and management considerations identified in the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines and adding a new level of detail appropriate to the unique setting within Bidford-on-Avon Parish.

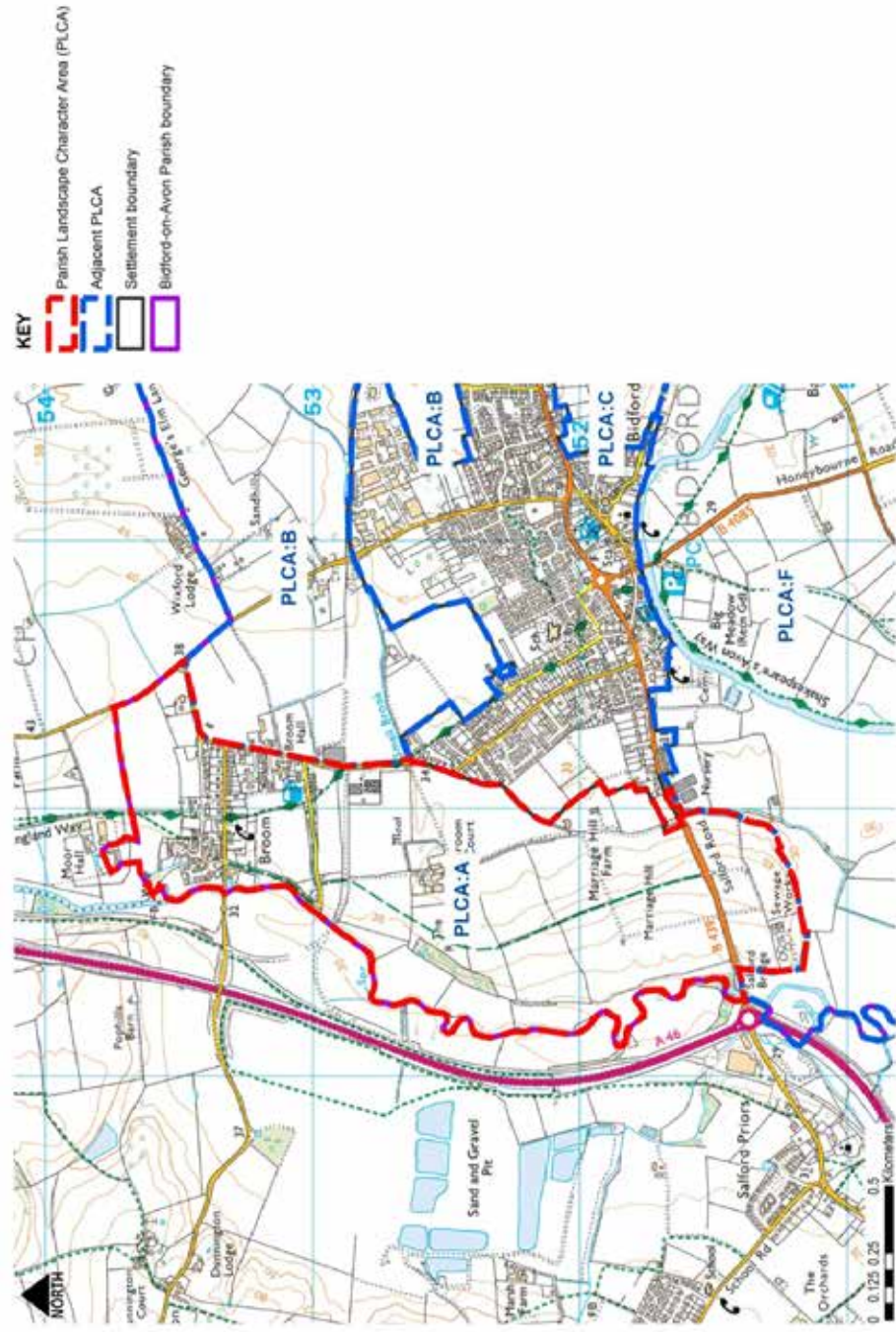


## **PARISH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS A TO F**



#### 4. Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area A – Marriage Hill Terrace Farmlands and Arrow River Meadows

Character area map:



#### 4.1 Landscape Character Area Description

Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area A (PLCA.A) includes the River Arrow and its river meadows of the River Meadowlands landscape type; the Terrace Farmlands landscape type at Marriage Hill and the small historic village of Broom which lies mainly within a Conservation Area. The River Meadows are narrow following the line of the River Arrow whilst the Terrace Meadow Farmland extends beyond PLCA.A to the north and east. The western boundary is formed by the river Arrow; the eastern boundary follows the line of Bidford Road, the settlement edge of Bidford and Small Brook; the southern boundary follows the edge of the floodplain and a line of trees and hedgerows at the base of Marriage Hill; and the northern boundary goes up to the Parish boundary south of Moor Hall.

This character area comprises mainly medium sized arable fields with a long unbroken linear field between the river Arrow and the curvilinear hedge line which defines the edge of the floodplain. Woodland is sparse and hedgerows often poor and gappy but the area has many linear tree belts along the watercourses, around farmsteads and some transport links.

The key features of the PLCA.A are the rural character of the village of Broom, the open undeveloped Marriage Hill and the riparian river corridor of the River Arrow. The key landscape features include the wide tree and shrub belt within the cutting of the derelict railway line, and its surviving bridges; the meandering River Arrow and its tree and scrub vegetation; The Rookery woodland; the surviving pattern of small fields and pasture around Broom and Small Brook and its tree cover. Secondary but distinctive features include the tree and hedgerow setting to the farmsteads; the surviving curvilinear hedgerows; and the rural approach down the B439.

The historic village of Broom lies in the north of the Parish within PLCA.A and the village of Bidford lies to the immediate east. The character area does not abut the historic core of Bidford and the settlement edge is characterised by housing estates west of Victoria Road and by linear ribbon development north of Salford Road, but the latter is changing with estate development permitted to the rear of 18 Salford Road. However in the north the open landscape wraps around the historic core of Broom and makes a significant contribution to the character of the village.

Orchards were once a feature of PLCA. A and several were to be found around the village of Broom. The gardens at Broom Court has been identified as a local historic asset recommended for local listing with remains of the moat, formal gardens and an orchard dating from Post Medieval period. There is documented evidence of ridge and furrow west of Broom Court and south of King's Lane next to the River Arrow which may survive.

#### 4.2 Relevant Integrated Key Characteristics from the River Meadowlands:

- The small River Arrow tributary of the River Avon
- A narrow meandering river corridor with flat alluvial floodplains
- Prominent steeply sloping wooded bluffs
- Steep banks and marginal vegetation
- Fringe tree and scrub cover with alders and willow

- Curvilinear hedgerows along the boundary of the floodplain
- Poorly defined field pattern
- Lack of built form

#### **4.3 Relevant Integrated Key Characteristics from the Terrace Farmlands:**

- Market gardening
- Open landscape
- Occasional low rolling hills
- Broad flat gravel terraces
- Large scale geometric field pattern
- Some smaller arable plots growing vegetable crops
- Well wooded steams
- Glass houses and other horticultural buildings
- Small nucleated villages
- Lack of hedgerows or poorer low and gappy hedgerows
- Sparse woodland but with wooded streamlines and isolated mature tree lines

#### **4.4 Key Landscape Characteristics and Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area A**

##### Natural

- Well defined meandering River Arrow with tree and scrub cover along its banks
- Alignment of Small Brook with tree cover
- Bluff woodland including The Rockery overlooking the river
- Open farmland between Bidford and Broom
- Open arable farmland along the river and over Marriage Hill; and between Broom and Moor Hall
- Scrub and grassland between the river and the village of Broom
- Wide linear tree and scrub belt (SSSI) in cutting along line of old railway line defines southern immediate setting of the village of Broom
- Small pastoral fields north of Mill Lane, Mill Close and Miller's Bank
- Open landscape containing the tree covered river bank, the recreation ground and informal pasture and scrub open space between High Street and King's Lane
- Curvilinear tree belt leading from Small Brook to Broom Court

### Cultural

- Small nucleated village of Broom in the north has a distinct historic rural character, separate from that of Bidford-on-Avon
- South-eastern boundary defined by often exposed urban edge of Bidford but with more softer edges against much older development (such as north of Salford Road) or included in new approved development;
- Linear mixed age ribbon settlement along King's Lane flanked by pasture to the south and scrub and grassland to the north
- Isolated farmsteads at Broom Court, Marriage Hill Farm, and Moor Hall (most southerly part lies in the Parish) which are part contained by lines of trees and mature hedgerows
- Prominent glass houses and other horticultural buildings south of Broom
- Limited development north of Mill Lane broken up by small fields, open grassland and hedgerows except for new housing cluster at Mill Close and Miller's Bank in the west
- Flood defenses (brick walls and grassed bunds) west of housing on Miller's Bank contrast with the flat river floodplain
- Line of former railway line with cutting and bridges still evident
- Open recreational areas between High Street and King's Lane.

### Perceptual

- Contrast between the open exposed higher ground on Marriage Hill and the enclosed landscapes around Broom
- Limited access on foot to most of area but several footpaths around the village of Broom including a stretch of the Heart of England Way
- More exposed built edge to Broom in the western approach from Dunnington at the river Arrow
- Fragmentation of the open farmland gap along Bidford Road between Bidford and Broom as a result of horticultural built development
- Open landscape separating Broom from Bidford

## **4.5 Key Visual Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area A**

### Key views into the area are afforded from:

- Marriage Hill is highly visible from all of the Parish, from the valley floor including Shakespeare's Avon Way and more elevated sections
- Open landscape of the area between Bidford and Broom visible from Bidford Road
- Rare view of open rural River Arrow at bridge crossing west of Broom
- The rural approach from Dunnington in the west
- The Heart of England Way in its approach to the village from the north past Moor Hall

### Key views out of the area to:

- Views form Marriage Hill to Bidford mainly set on lower ground

- Long views from Marriage Hill to surrounding hills in all four directions including Marlcliff Hill, Oversley Castle, Staple Hill and out with of the Parish and to River Avon meadows in PLCA.F
- From B439 Salford Road over adjacent River Avon meadows in PLCA.F in descent down Marriage Hill

Key views within the area:

- Up to Marriage Hill
- Along the small pasture fields south of King's Lane
- From Marriage Hill over farmland west of Bidford
- From the Heart of England Way into the village of Broom and its immediate landscape setting

#### **4.6 Relationship to Settlement**

- The open landscape between the river Arrow and the Bidford boundary of PLCA.A (including but not limited to Marriage Hill) forms the rural setting to Bidford
- Small Brook and its tree cover forms an edge to the settlement which will be enhanced to some extent by new planting as part of the development of 18 Salford Road
- The open landscape between Broom Court and Broom is important in maintaining the separate identity of the small village
- The small scale landscape pattern embraces the village of Broom making a major contribution to its character and appearance
- The B439 Salford Road is an important gateway approach into Bidford

#### **4.7 Summary (including extent to which PLCA:A is representative of the wider LCA)**

PLCA.A as a whole is rather untypical of either the River Meadows or the Terrace Farmlands which characterize the wider landscape setting of Bidford-on-Avon. The river Arrow and its flood plain is especially narrow and more of a local landscape feature than a broad area (such as found along the river Avon). Marriage Hill is not typical of the terrace landform but forms a locally distinctive ridgeline, more commonly found within the Vale Orchard Belt. It has a special landscape and visual relationship with the river valley landscapes of both the Arrow and Avon rivers. In this respect Marriage Hill forms part of the series of low but distinctive ridgelines that encircle the Parish containing the settlement and Avon valley floor. Like Bidford, Marlcliff and Barton, Broom is a river settlement, historically placed on the adjacent higher ground.

#### **4.8 Relevant Land Management / Development Considerations from Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines**

- The siting and design of new development should complement the historic character of the Avon towns
- Reinforce the identity and unity of the historic settlement pattern
- Conserve and enhance local vernacular character and tree cover within and around rural settlements
- Conserve the character and continuity of river landscapes

- Retain grassland along alluvial floodplains
- Identify opportunities for re-creating riverside wetland habitats
- Retain and enhance river channel meandering form, diversity and marginal vegetation
- Conserve and enhance curvilinear hedgerows defining river floodplains
- Enhance continuity of the river channel through appropriate tree and shrub planting
- Avoid development along the alluvial floodplain to retain the continuity of the open floodplain
- Enhance the structure and unity of the Terrace Farmlands through strengthening primary features including planting of hedgerow oaks
- Conserve and restore hedgerows as landscape features in the Terrace Farmlands
- Enhance woodland character of the streams
- Soften hard edges to new development through tree planting
- Encourage wide field margins along streamlines and woodland edges

#### **4.9 Land Management guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area A**

- Seek opportunities to add native tree and scrub planting along the River Arrow to soften the edge of the built form either side of the bridge
- Seek opportunities to conserve and enhance the riparian river corridor with reinstatement of pasture, appropriate tree and scrub planting and marginal habitats
- Seek opportunities to create wide non arable margins around woodland and along streams and the river
- Seek opportunities to reinstate continuity of curvilinear hedgerows along edge of the river Arrow floodplain
- Conserve small scale pastoral field pattern around the village of Broom
- Conserve existing tree and mature hedgerow cover on the edge of the settlements – identifying opportunities for Tree Preservation Orders where necessary
- Seek opportunities to replant new orchards around Broom and between Broom and Bidford
- Conserve and enhance the historic landscape features associated with Broom Court including ridge and furrow, the moat, and surviving formal gardens
- Seek opportunities to identify surviving local historic gardens and landscape features for example at Broom Hall

#### **4.10 Development guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area A**


- Development to be resisted between the villages of Broom and Bidford in order to retain the separate identity of these two historic settlements
- Any redevelopment of the existing horticultural buildings should reflect the rural character of the open landscape, should be no greater in height mass or scale than the existing built form and be commensurate with retaining the open character of the landscape between the two villages
- Any development proposals east of Small Brook should retain a significant open margin so as to retain the stream and its tree cover as a distinctive feature of the landscape
- The landscape west of Small Brook should retain its rural character
- Linear ribbon development along Salford Road to be limited to as far as Small Brook in the west in order to protect the rural approach to Bidford down Marriage Hill

- The rural undeveloped character of the river corridor along River Arrow to be conserved and any new built form resisted
- Generous linear tree lines and woodland cover should be included on the outer edge of any development
- Break up the built form with tree planting
- Open space provision as part of any new development to link physically and visually with the open countryside beyond

#### 4.1.1 Visual guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area A

- Conserve the open undeveloped skyline of Marriage Hill
- Retain sense of landscape and visual enclosure within the landscape around the village of Broom
- Avoid any visually intrusive development within the visual envelope of the key views from PLCA.A

#### PLCA:A Photographs

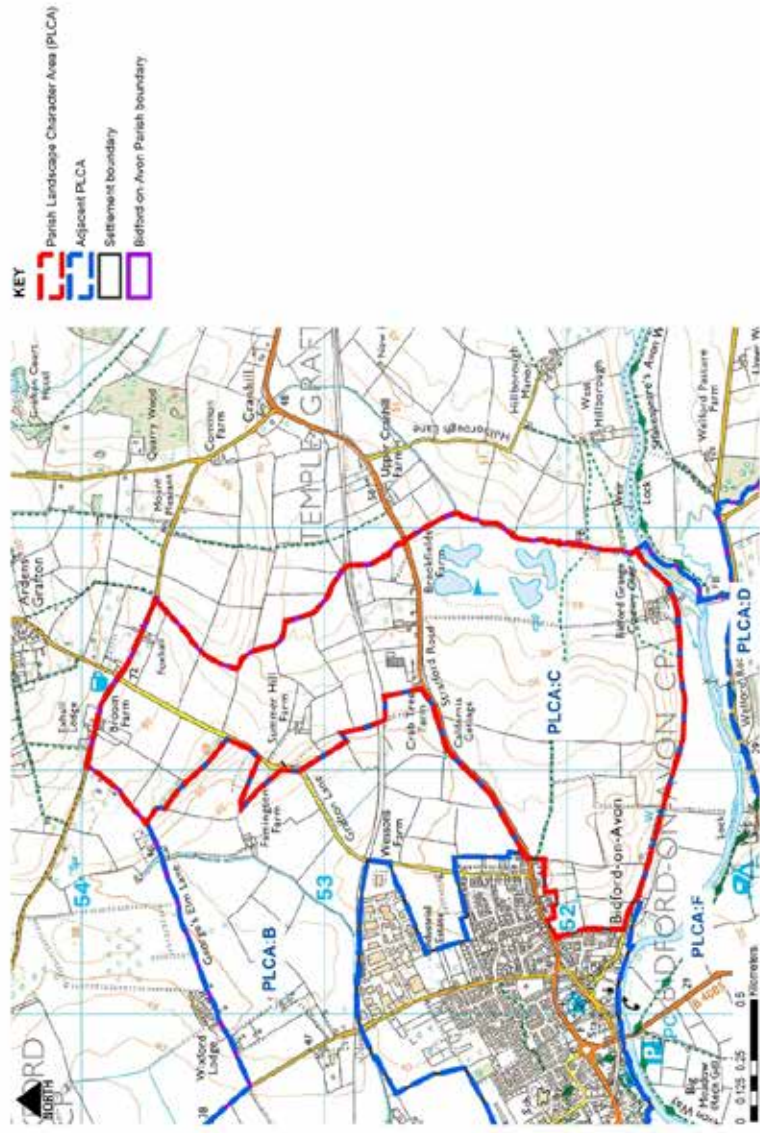
	
<p>Photo 1. View from Marriage Hill footpath looking south-east with the ridgeline at Bidford Grange on the skyline, the river floodplain and Marriage Hill nurseries in the middle ground</p>	<p>Photo 2. View from footpath from Broom to Marriage Hill looking south to Marriage Hill and The Rookery woodland with Broom Court in the mid distance</p>



	
<p>Photo 3. View from footpath from Broom to Marriage Hill looking east to the horticultural glasshouses and open landscape of the gap between Broom and Bidford with the tree and shrub cover (SSSI) along the disused railway line to the left of picture</p>	<p>Photo 4. Views from footpath south of Broom to pasture fields south of King's Lane bordered by the tree and shrub cover (SSSI) along the disused railway line right of picture</p>
	
<p>Photo 5. View from bridge on road to Dunnington looking north up the River Arrow and tree cover on the Parish boundary and to flood defences and new houses in Miller's Bank, Broom</p>	<p>Photo 6. View from Heart of England Way south over open fields to the northern edge of Broom Conservation Area and its mix of housing and open pasture</p>

## 5. Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area C – Bidford-on-Avon Eastern Vale

Character area map:



### **5.1 Landscape Character Area Description**

Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area C (PLCA.C) falls within the Vale Orchard Belt landscape type. The Vale Orchard Belt landscape comprises large scale rolling topography rising from the Avon Valley floor in the south and continuing beyond PLCA.C to the north and east. The eastern boundary follows the line of a stream flowing south into the River Avon; the western boundary follows the settlement edge of Bidford, the B439 and continues along the lower sloping landform to the Parish boundary; the northern boundary follows the Wixford Road and George's Elm Lane; and the southern boundary follows the edge of the Avon river meadows. Woodland is sparse and hedgerows are gappy and thin in places with some tree belts and trees and hedgerows around farmsteads and some transport links.

This character area comprises mainly medium to large sized irregular arable fields with the larger fields with linear boundaries and curvilinear boundaries including curvilinear line along the stream on the eastern edge. The Bidford Grange Golf course covers a large area of the sloping ground to the south with areas of ponds, scrub and tree planting. Bidford eastern settlement edge lies immediately to the south-west and to the north of the B439 there are a number of isolated farmsteads.

The key features of the PLCA.C is the rolling topography, prominent hills, steep wooded scarp and the pattern of hedgerows. The key landscape features are the steep wooded scarp and tree belts north and west of Summer Hill Farm, the wide tree and shrub belt within the cutting of the derelict railway line, the winding stream and its tree and scrub vegetation on the eastern edge; Secondary but distinctive features include the tree and hedgerow setting to the farmsteads; the surviving curvilinear hedgerows; the rural approach down the B439.

The character area abuts the eastern edge of the Bidford Conservation Area. The settlement edge is characterised by housing of mixed age including a traditional farmstead within the ribbon development of housing along the southern side of the B439. The open undulating fields on the sloping valley sides make an important contribution to the setting of village and Bidford Conservation Area.

Orchards were once a feature of PLCA. C (as the landscape type suggests) and were to be found around the isolated farmsteads including at Crab Tree Farm, Brooksfields Farm and Summer Hill Farm.

### **5.2 Relevant Integrated Key Characteristics from the Vale Orchard Belt**

- Rising ground with a large scale rolling topography
- Prominent skyline running along ridgeline in the east of the Parish
- A large scale often poorly defined field pattern
- Steep wooded scarps and associated unimproved grassland
- Varied settlement pattern of small nucleated villages and loose clusters of roadside dwellings
- Local vernacular Blue Lias stone buildings.

### 5.3 Key Landscape Characteristics and Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area C

#### Natural

- Steep wooded scarp and tree belts north and west of Summer Hill Farm
- Wide linear tree and scrub belt in cutting along line of old railway line
- Hedgerows defining large and medium scale agricultural fields
- Linear hedgerow and tree belt enclosing northern end of Grafton Lane
- Open large scale arable farmland to south of Stratford with numerous field boundaries removed by agricultural intensification
- Man-made ponds, tree and hedge planting within Bidford Grange Golf course
- Extensive areas of scrub in eastern area of Bidford Grange Golf course
- Undulating and sloping topography forming part of the northern valley slopes falling south towards River Avon valley floor
- Highest elevation (70m AOD) within the Parish at Wixford Road and notable hill at Bidford Grange Golf Course
- Winding stream with tree and scrub vegetation along much of the length of eastern boundary of character area

#### Cultural

- Far south-western boundary defined by sometimes exposed urban edge of Bidford but with softer edges provided in places by deeper gardens and contained to a degree by undulating topography
- Isolated farmsteads at Summer Hill Farm, Foxhall Farm, Broom Farm, Crab Tree Farm and Brookfields Farm (all to the north of the B439) which are generally part contained by lines of trees and mature hedgerows
- Open undulating fields on the sloping valley sides in the south-west form part of the setting of the Bidford Conservation Area.
- Ribbon development of mixed age housing including a traditional farmstead along southern side of the B439 broken up by small fields and deep gardens separate from main settlement area of Bidford-on-Avon
- Areas of glass houses and other horticultural buildings associated with plant nurseries along north side of the B439
- Bidford Grange Golf Course with prominent club house and associated buildings at Bidford Grange Country Club and Golf Course
- Potential remnant ridge and furrow north of Brookfields Farm

#### Perceptual

- Largely very open and exposed landscape
- Prominent skyline ridges
- Some enclosure provided by woodland, hedgerows and undulating topography more exposed on higher ground to east of Bidford Grange Golf Course
- No public rights of way in the southern area to the north of the B439 with two public rights of way linking Bidford-on-Avon to the Bidford Grange Golf Course and landscape to the east



- The combination of horticultural development and the Bidford Grange Golf Course and associated activities is influencing the open rural character along and to the south the B439
- Large scale Clubhouse at Bidford Grange Golf Course is a prominent building
- More exposed industrial edge of Bidford-on-Avon and housing on higher ground (next to the adjacent PLCA.B) is visible in the eastern approach along the B439

#### 5.4 Key Visual Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area C

Key views into the area are afforded from:

- Bidford Grange Golf Course, associated buildings and surrounding elevated land (including land abutting Bidford's eastern settlement edge) is visible from south-east areas of the Parish including Shakespeare's Avon Way
- River valley floor east of Bidford
- Stratford Road
- Open landscape around Summer Hill Farm, Broom Farm and Foxhall is visible from Grafton Lane, Wixford Road and George's Elm Lane
- Elevated hill and wooded scarp adjacent Summer Hill Farm is a prominent in views in the northern area of the Parish and from the B439

Key views out of the area to:

- Views to skylines
- Views from the B439 to Bidford including industrial area
- Long reaching views from high ground including to including Marlcliff Hill, Marriage Hill and Staple Hill
- Views out from public rights of way in the south of the area to Avon River and meadows, elevated ridge around Barton Farm and semi-open eastern settlement edge of Bidford

Key views within the area:

- Views to skylines
- Up to elevated hill and wooded scarp and of undulating landform adjacent Summer Hill Farm
- The Bidford Grange Golf Course and open landscape to the south-east of Bidford is visible from the B439 and from public rights of way crossing the area.
- Of undulating landform on sloping valley sides east of Bidford, including from edge of the Conservation Area

#### 5.5 Relationship to Settlement

- The open undulating valley slope landscape abutting the Bidford's eastern settlement edge is important to the village's setting and the setting of the Conservation Area
- The landscape around the B439 is an important gateway approach to Bidford from the east

- Strong contrast with the built up area

### **5.6 Summary (including extent to which PLCA:C is representative of the wider LCA)**

The area demonstrates some of the key natural, cultural and perceptual characteristics of the wider landscape but no longer retains surviving orchards and is much less wooded on the hills tops. In this respect PLCA. C has more in common with the landscape to the north and within the adjacent Terrace Farmlands. Settlement is sparse and in isolated locations.

### **5.7 Relevant Land Management / Development Considerations from Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines**

- New agricultural buildings should be sited, designed and landscaped to blend with the surrounding farmed landscape
- Conserve rural character by limiting standardized treatments during highway improvement schemes
- Protect the character and special features of country roads
- The siting and design of new development should complement the historic character of the Avon towns
- Conserve and restore old orchards as landscape features, especially those around village fringe
- Conserve and enhance tree cover within and around rural settlements
- Enhance the structure and unity of the landscape through large scale woodland planting
- Conserve and restore all primary hedgelines and manage them more positively as landscape features
- Strengthen the wooded character of streamlines and primary hedgelines through replanting or natural regeneration

### **5.8 Land Management guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area C**

- Seek opportunities to increase public access links from Bidford to the northern part of the character area (in combination with PLCA:B) linking with routes around Ardens Grafton
- Seek opportunities to create wide non arable margins around woodland and along streams
- Conserve and strengthen the existing hedge network, seek opportunities to reinstate historic hedgerow boundaries
- Conserve and extend the steep wooded scarp and tree belts north and west of Summer Hill Farm and encourage active woodland management and successional planting
- Conserve existing tree and hedgerow cover on the edge of the Bidford and around isolated farms – identifying opportunities for Tree Preservation Orders where necessary

- Encourage biodiversity enhancements at the Bidford Grange Golf Course including encouraging the planting of a mix of native tree and understory species, avoiding blocks of mono-species planting to better integrate new planting into the landscape
- Investigate and conserve and enhance potential remnant ridge and furrow north of Brookfields Farm
- Seek opportunities to replant new orchards around farmsteads.

### **5.9 Development guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area C**




- Any redevelopment of the existing horticultural buildings should reflect the rural character of the open landscape, should be no greater in height mass or scale than the existing built form and be commensurate with retaining the open character of the area
- Development should be resisted on undulating landform on the sloping valley sides east of Bidford to conserve setting of village and Conservation Area and the rural character of the adjacent river corridor
- Maintain the open and undeveloped skylines – avoid siting of buildings, telecommunication masts, power lines and wind turbines etc. on the sensitive skylines
- Ensure development associated with the Bidford Grange Golf Course is sympathetically integrated into the landscape and not visually prominent in views from the south side of the river
- Linear ribbon development along the B439 should be resisted in order to protect the rural approach to Bidford from the east
- Generous hedge and tree planting to be included on the outer edge of any development
- Break up the existing and any new built form with tree planting
- Open space provision as part of any new development to link physically and visually with the open countryside beyond.
- Conserve the rural character of Grafton Lane, George's Elm Lane and Wixton Road

### **5.10 Visual guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area C**

- Conserve the open undeveloped skylines
- Consider the impact of new development on views from the high ground

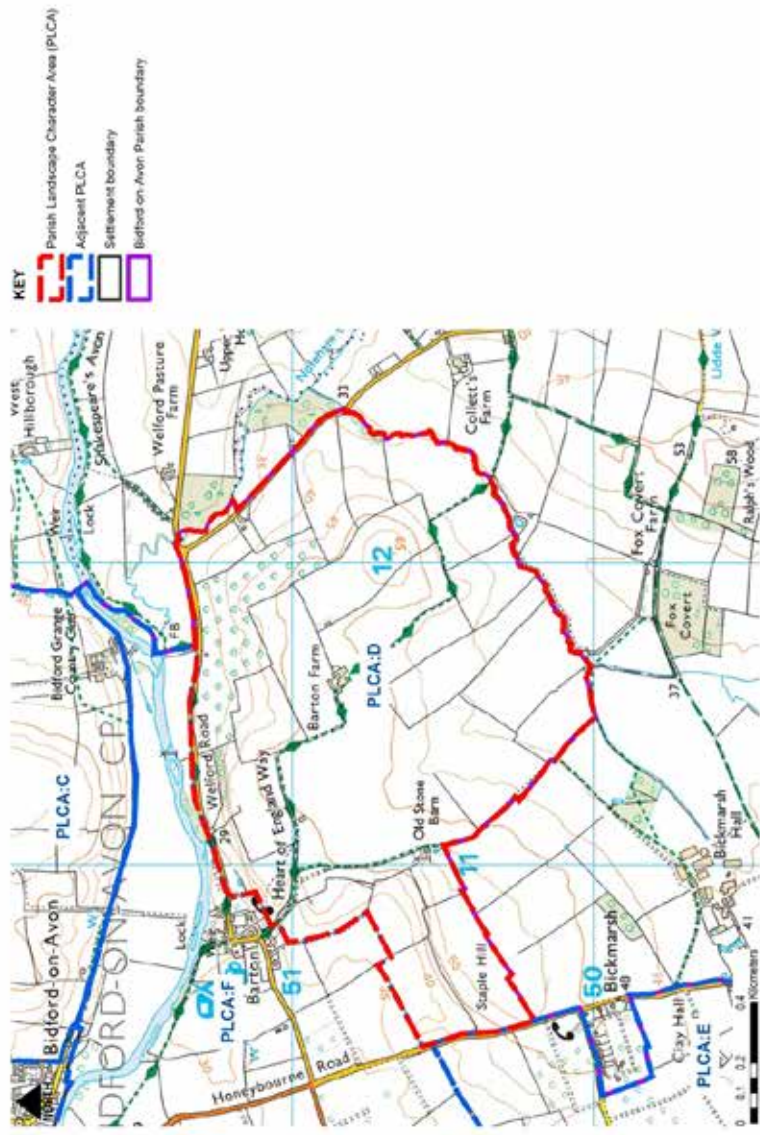


**PLCA:C Photographs**

 <p>Photo 1. Steep wooded scarp and tree belts north and west of Summer Hill Far</p>	 <p>Photo 2. Long reaching views from high ground</p>
 <p>Photo 3. Open undulating fields on the sloping valley sides forming part of the Bidford village setting</p>	 <p>Photo 4. Bidford Grange Golf course</p>

## 6. Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area D – Staple Hill

Character area map:



## 6.1 Landscape Character Area Description

Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area D (PLCA.D) falls within the Vale Orchard Belt landscape type. The Vale Orchard Belt landscape comprises large scale rolling topography rising from the Avon Valley floor in the north and continuing beyond PLCA.D to the east and west. The southern boundary follows the line of a stream and tree belts and continuing along the brow of Staple Hill; the eastern boundary follows the edge of an unnamed road; the northern boundary follows the line of Welford Road and the edge of Barton village; and the western boundary follows the line of Honeybourne Road and the lower sloping landform of Staple Hill. The area contains several woodland blocks and part of the Heart of England Forest extensive new native broadleaf woodland planting at Dorothy's Wood. Hedgerows are gappy and thin in places with some tree belts, trees and hedgerows around farmsteads/farm buildings and some roads.

This character area comprises mainly medium to large sized irregular and rectilinear arable fields with linear and curvilinear boundaries including a curvilinear line along the stream on the southern edge. To the west of Barton Farm some very large fields have been formed following the removal of numerous field boundaries for agricultural intensification. Adjacent to the south of Welford Road the Heart of England Forest extensive new area of woodland planting at Dorothy's Wood forms part of a wider area of new woodland with promoted walking routes. Barton village's southern and eastern settlement edge lies immediately to the north-west and there are a number of isolated farmsteads/farm buildings in the northern part of the area.

The key features of the PLCA.D are the rolling topography, the prominent Staple Hill, woodland blocks and the pattern of hedgerows. The key landscape features are the steep wooded scarp south of Welford Road, tree belts along the ridgelines around Old Stone Barn, woodland block to the south east of Barton Farm, the woodland (once developed) at Dorothy Wood and the winding stream and its tree and scrub vegetation on the southern edge; Secondary but distinctive features include the tree and hedgerow setting to the farmsteads/farm buildings; the surviving curvilinear hedgerows; the small pasture/paddock fields on the sloping ground east of Barton.

The character area abuts the southern and eastern edge of the Barton village the majority of which is a Conservation Area. The settlement edge is well vegetated with many houses with deep garden with mature trees. The strong vegetated edge and small pasture/paddock fields on the sloping ground east of Barton make an important contribution to the setting of village and Barton Conservation Area. The Heart of England Way, a promoted regional recreational route, runs from the village through the centre of PLCA.D towards Dorsington

Orchards were a feature of PLCA. D (as the landscape type suggests) and were to be found around the isolated farmsteads and the village of Barton.

## 6.2 Relevant Integrated Key Characteristics from the Vale Orchard Belt

- Rising ground with a large scale rolling topography
- A large scale often poorly defined field pattern
- Large orchards on hilltops and south facing slopes

- Prominent hilltop woodlands
- Steep wooded scarps and associated unimproved grassland
- Varied settlement pattern of small nucleated villages and loose clusters of roadside dwellings
- Local vernacular Blue Lias stone buildings.

### **6.3 Key Landscape Characteristics and Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area D**

#### Natural

- Woodland blocks and steep wooded scarp and tree belts south of Wellford Road
- Hedgerows defining large and medium scale agricultural fields under horticulture with curvilinear and straight boundaries
- Heart of England Forest extensive new native broadleaf woodland planting at Dorothy's Wood
- Undulating and sloping topography forming part of the southern valley slopes falling north towards River Avon valley floor
- Largely undeveloped ridge lines with distinctive lines of trees are a feature
- Small pasture/paddock fields on the sloping ground east of Barton
- Open large scale post-war fields to west of Barton Farm with numerous field boundaries removed by agricultural intensification
- Winding stream with tree and scrub vegetation along much of the length of southern boundary of character area
- Small ponds in field corners

#### Cultural

- Promoted walking routes at Heart of England Forest accessed from carpark off Wellford Road within the Parish
- Former gravel pit east of Barton
- Isolated farmsteads/barns on high ground at Barton Farm and Old Stone Barn partially contained by lines of trees and mature hedgerows
- Far north-western boundary defined by well vegetated edge of Barton
- Small sloping pasture/paddock fields and mature boundary trees contribute to the setting of Barton village

#### Perceptual

- Some enclosure provided by woodland, hedgerows and undulating topography but much more exposed on higher ground and open large scale post-war fields to west of Barton Farm
- A number of public rights of way cross the area including Heart of England Way and Shakespeare's Avon Way runs along a section of Wellford Road connecting with numerous public rights of way in the wider area
- Barn north-east of Barton Farm is a prominent building
- wide vistas over the Avon Valley from high ground

#### **6.4 Key Visual Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area D**

Key views into the area are afforded from:

- Staple Hill is highly visible from much of the Parish, both from the valley floor and more elevated parts of the surrounding hillsides and including Shakespeare's Way and the Heart of England Way
- North and western area is visible from Honeybourne Lane and Welford Road and the eastern area is visible from the adjacent road to Dorsington in the east.

Key views out of the area to:

- Long views from Staple Hill to Bidford and Barton which appears mainly set down on lower ground
- Parish Church of St Lawrence, Bidford
- Long reaching views from Staple Hill to surrounding hills including Marcliff Hill, Marriage Hill and Oversley Castle
- Views out from public rights of way in the north of the area to Avon River and meadows and elevated ground around golf course

Key views within the area:

- Up to tree lines, woodland blocks and largely undeveloped skylines of Staple Hill
- Barns set against skylines are prominent in views from roads and public rights of way in area
- Across undulating landform with limited built form visible

#### **6.5 Relationship to Settlement**

- Separated from Bidford by the Avon Valley within PLCA.F
- Sloping small pasture/paddocks fields and mature boundary trees contribute to the setting of Barton village and approach to village

#### **6.6 Summary (including extent to which PLCA:D is representative of the wider LCA)**

The area demonstrates many of the key natural, cultural and perceptual characteristics of the wider landscape which extends to the west and east. The northern lower slopes form part of the setting of the river corridor whilst the upper slopes around Barton Farm are particularly open and exposed in contrast to the Avon valley landscape and that along Noleham Brook east of the parish boundary.

#### **6.7 Relevant Land Management / Development Considerations from Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines**

- New agricultural buildings should be sited, designed and landscaped to blend with the surrounding farmed landscape

- Conserve rural character by limiting standardized treatments during highway improvement schemes
- Protect the character and special features of country roads
- The siting and design of new development should complement the historic character of the Avon towns
- Conserve and restore old orchards as landscape features, especially those around village fringe
- Conserve and enhance tree cover within and around rural settlements
- Enhance the structure and unity of the landscape through large scale woodland planting
- Conserve and restore all primary hedgelines and manage them more positively as landscape features
- Strengthen the wooded character of streamlines and primary hedgelines through replanting or natural regeneration

#### **6.8 Land Management guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area D**

- Seek opportunities to create wide non arable margins around woodland and along streams
- Conserve and strengthen the existing hedge network, seek opportunities to reinstate historic hedgerow boundaries
- Conserve and extend the steep wooded scarp, tree belts and woodland blocks and encourage active woodland management and successional planting
- Conserve existing tree and hedgerow cover on the edge of the Barton and around isolated farms – identifying opportunities for Tree Preservation Orders where necessary
- Conserve surviving areas of pasture close to the village
- Seek opportunities to replant new orchards around Barton and farmsteads

#### **6.9 Development guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area D**

- Seek to better integrate existing agricultural buildings and associated development into the landscape with tree and hedge planting, particularly on ridgelines where built form breaks the skyline
- Any redevelopment of the existing agricultural buildings should reflect the rural character of the open landscape, should be no greater in height mass or scale than the existing built form and be commensurate with retaining the open character of the area
- Maintain the open and undeveloped skylines – avoid siting of buildings, telecommunication masts, power lines and wind turbines etc. on the sensitive skylines
- Linear ribbon development along roads should be resisted
- Generous hedge and tree planting to be included on the outer edge of any development
- Break up the built form with tree planting
- Open space provision as part of any new development to link physically and visually with the open countryside beyond.
- Conserve the rural character of Welford Road



### 6.10 Visual guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area D

- Conserve the largely undeveloped skyline of Staple Hill
- Considered the impact of new development on views from the high ground

#### PLCA:D Photographs



	
<p>Photo 1. Distinctive lines of trees on ridge and isolated Old Stone Barn partially contained by lines of trees and mature hedgerows</p>	<p>Photo 2. Long reaching views from Staple Hill to surrounding hills including Marcliff Hill and Marriage Hill</p>





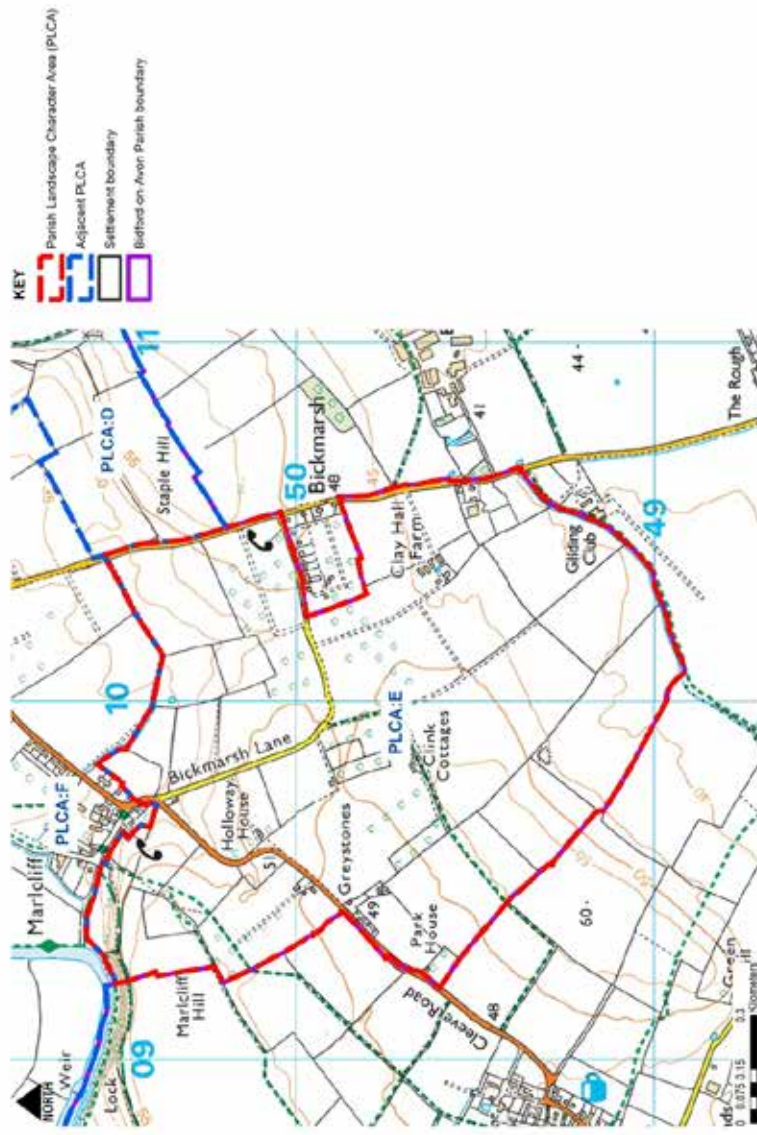
Photo 3. Sloping small pasture/paddocks fields on the edge of Barton Village



Photo 4. Woodland blocks and largely undeveloped skylines

## 7. Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area E – Marlcliff Hill

Character area map:



## 7.1 Landscape Character Area Description

Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area E (PLCA.E) falls within the Vale Orchard Belt landscape type. The Vale Orchard Belt landscape comprises large scale rolling topography rising from the Avon Valley floor in the north and continuing beyond PLCA.E to the south-west and east. The eastern boundary follows the line of Honeybourne Road skirting around the edge of Bickmarsh; the southern follows the line of a stream and tree belts; the eastern boundary follows field boundaries and crosses the brow of Marcliff Hill; and the northern boundary follows a short section of the Avon river, skirts around Marcliff village and follows the edge of a stream then continues to Honeybourne Road. The area contains several areas of orchard, horticultural and agricultural fields. Woodland is limited with a notable wooded scarp at Marcliff Hill. Hedgerows are gappy and thin in places with some tree belts; trees and hedgerows around farmsteads/farm buildings and along some roads.

This character area comprises mainly large and medium scale agricultural and horticultural fields with curvilinear and straight boundaries including a curvilinear line along the stream on the southern edge and the stream and river on the northern edge. Marcliff village's southern settlement edge lies immediately to the north-west and there are a number of isolated farmsteads/farm buildings in the area.

The key features of the PLCA.E is the rolling topography, prominent hills, the pattern of hedgerows. The key landscape features are the steep wooded scarp on the northern slope of Marcliff Hill; orchards around Bickmarsh Lane; the pattern of small pasture fields on the sloping ground around Marcliff; and the winding streams and their tree and scrub vegetation on the southern and northern edge. Secondary but distinctive features include the tree and hedgerow setting to the farmsteads/farm buildings; the surviving curvilinear hedgerows.

The character area abuts the southern edge of the Marcliff village. The settlement edge comprises a mix of building types and ages including a farmstead and post war semi-detached houses with a degree of enclosure provided by local topography and mature trees. The mature boundary trees and pattern of small pasture fields on the sloping ground around the village edge play an important contribution to the setting of village.

This character area contains the largest area of remaining orchards in the Parish around Bickmarsh Lane. Orchards were a feature of PLCA. E (as the landscape type suggests) and further extensive areas were found around the isolated farmsteads and the village of Marcliff. Ridge and furrow?

## 7.2 Relevant Integrated Key Characteristics from the Vale Orchard Belt

- Rising ground with a large scale rolling topography
- A large scale often poorly defined field pattern
- Large orchards on hilltops and south facing slopes

- Prominent hilltop woodlands
- Steep wooded scarps and associated unimproved grassland
- Varied settlement pattern of small nucleated villages and loose clusters of roadside dwellings
- Local vernacular Blue Lias stone buildings.

### **7.3 Key Landscape Characteristics and Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area E**

#### Natural

- Orchards around Bickmarsh Lane
- Tree lines of remnant orchard trees and hedgerows
- Hedgerows and tree belts defining medium scale agricultural and horticultural fields with curvilinear and straight boundaries
- Steeply rising ground at Marlcliff Hill with wooded scarp
- Undulating and sloping topography forming part of the southern valley slopes falling north towards River Avon valley floor
- Undeveloped ridge line of Marlcliff Hill is a feature
- Small pasture fields on the sloping ground around Marlcliff
- Stream with tree and scrub vegetation along part of northern and southern boundary of character area
- Small ponds in field corners

#### Cultural

- Isolated farmsteads partially contained by lines of trees and mature hedgerows
- Far north-western boundary defined by semi-vegetated edge of Marlcliff village
- Small sloping pasture fields and mature boundary trees contribute to the setting of Marlcliff village
- Evidence of some field boundary loss since the OS 1st edition
- Ridge and furrow in fields adjoining Marlcliff village to south-east

#### Perceptual

- Marlcliff Hill is an important local natural landmark
- Some enclosure provided by hedgerows and undulating topography, more exposed on higher ground
- Network of public rights of way along Marlcliff Hill providing links to Shakespeare's Avon Way and Cleeve Prior village; and public right of way near Clink Cottages.

#### 7.4 Key Visual Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area E

Key views into the area are afforded from:

- Marcliff Hill is highly visible from much of the Parish, both from the valley floor and more elevated sections and including Shakespeare's Avon Way, Heart of England Way and the Stratford Road
- Northern and eastern area is visible from Honeybourne Lane and Cleeve Road; eastern area from B4083; and much of the area visible from Bickmarsh Lane along elevated ground

Key views out of the area to:

- Long views from Marcliff Hill and elevated ground around Bickmarsh Lane to the Avon valley, with Bidford and Marcliff village mainly set on lower ground
- Parish church of St Lawrence, Bidford
- Long reaching views from Marcliff Hill to surrounding hills including Staple Hill, Marriage Hill and Oversley Castle
- Long views out from public right of way near Clink Cottages to surrounding landscape

Key views within the area:

- Up to undeveloped skylines of Marcliff Hill
- Undeveloped skylines along high ground
- Along sloping pasture fields around Marcliff
- Across horticultural land and orchards

#### 7.5 Relationship to Settlement

- PLCA.E is separated from Bidford by the Avon Valley within PLCA.F
- Marcliff Hill, the sloping small pasture fields and mature trees contribute to the setting of Marcliff and approach to village

#### 7.6 Summary (including extent to which PLCA:E is representative of the wider LCA)

The area demonstrates many key natural, cultural and perceptual characteristics of the wider landscape. Although in the same landscape type as PLCA.C and PLCA.D, PLCA.E has a more varied landscape pattern with smaller field sizes and has more scattered rural settlement along its road network. Marcliff Hill has a close relationship with Marcliff village and contains the river landscape at this point.

### **7.7 Relevant Land Management / Development Considerations from Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines**

- New agricultural buildings should be sited, designed and landscaped to blend with the surrounding farmed landscape
- Conserve rural character by limiting standardized treatments during highway improvement schemes
- Protect the character and special features of country roads
- The siting and design of new development should complement the historic character of the Avon towns
- Conserve and restore old orchards as landscape features, especially those around village fringe
- Conserve and enhance tree cover within and around rural settlements
- Enhance the structure and unity of the landscape through large scale woodland planting
- Conserve and restore all primary hedgelines and manage them more positively as landscape features
- Strengthen the wooded character of streamlines and primary hedgelines through replanting or natural regeneration

### **7.8 Land Management guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area E**

- Seek opportunities to create wide non arable margins around woodland and along streams
- Seek opportunities to replace prominent non-indigenous evergreen trees around Bickmarsh with locally appropriate species
- Conserve and strengthen the existing hedgerow network, seek opportunities to reinstate historic hedgerow boundaries
- Conserve and extend the steep wooded scarp, tree belts and woodland blocks and encourage active woodland management and successional planting
- Conserve existing tree and hedgerow cover on the edge of the Marcliff and around isolated farms – identifying opportunities for Tree Preservation Orders where necessary
- Conserve small scale pastoral field pattern around Marcliff
- Conserve and replant new orchards around Marcliff and farmsteads
- Conserve and enhance potential ridge and furrow in fields adjoining Marcliff village to south-east

### **7.9 Development guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area E**

- Seek to better integrate existing agricultural buildings and associated development into the landscape with tree and hedge, particularly on ridgelines where built form breaks the skyline



- Any redevelopment of the existing agricultural buildings should reflect the rural character of the open landscape, should be no greater in height mass or scale than the existing built form and be commensurate with retaining the open character of the area
- Maintain the open and undeveloped skylines – avoid siting of buildings, telecommunication masts, power lines and wind turbines etc. on the sensitive skylines
- Linear ribbon development along roads should be resisted
- Generous hedge and tree planting to be included on the outer edge of any development
- Break up the built form with tree planting
- Conserve the rural character of Bickmarsh Lane

#### 7.10 Visual guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area E

- Conserve the undeveloped skyline of Marlicliff Hill
- Considered the impact of new development on views from the high ground

#### PLCA:E Photographs



Photo 1. Long reaching views from Marlicliff Hill



Photo 2. Wooded scarp and small pasture fields on the sloping ground around Marlicliff





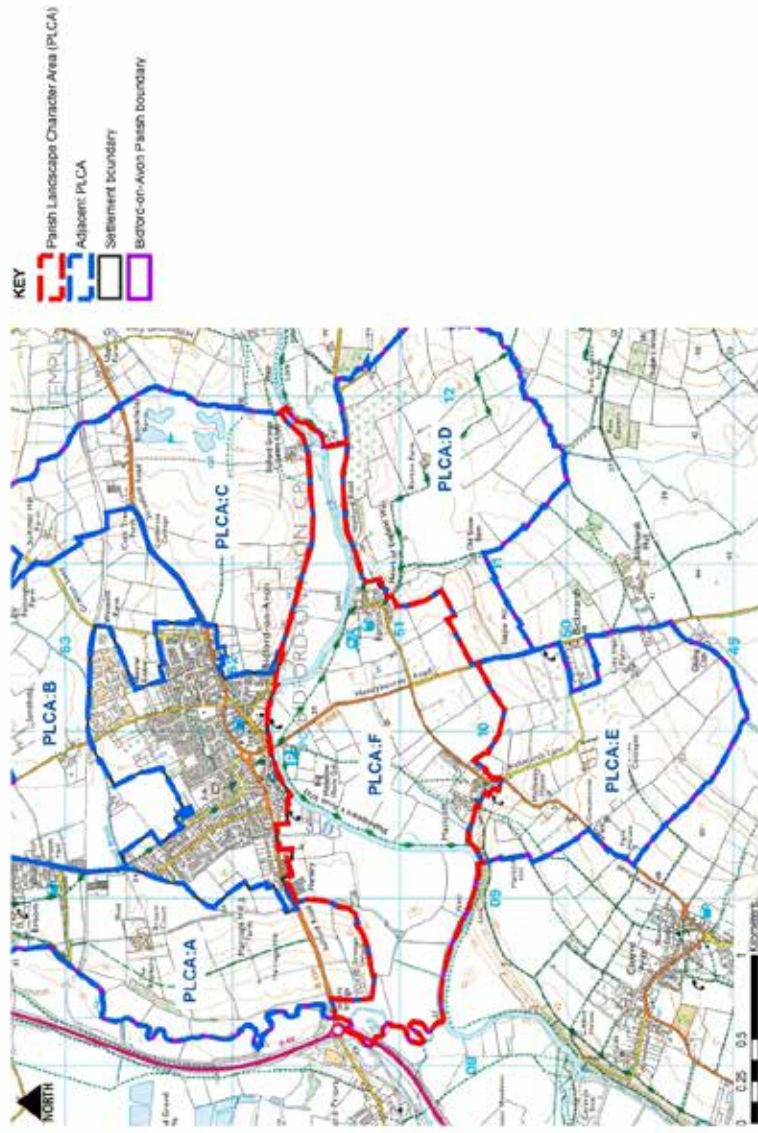
Photo 3. Tree line of remnant hedgerow/orchard



Photo 4. Orchard and undeveloped skyline

## 8. Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area F – Avon River Meadows and Terrace Farmland

Character area map:



## 8.1 Landscape Character Area Description

The Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area F (PLCA.F) includes the River Meadows landscape type which covers the River Avon and its floodplain from its confluence with the River Arrow in the west to the Barton Moorings in the east and the River Arrow and its floodplain north from the confluence as far as the B439. It also includes the lower terraces of the Terrace Farmlands landscape type where the change from the floodplain to the terrace is almost imperceptible south of the B439 and between Barton and Marlcliff. It also contains the very small floodplain villages of Marlcliff and Barton. The River Meadows here are largely a broad floodplain at around 30m AOD along the Avon Valley south of Bidford-on Avon, narrowing in the east between Welford Road and the hillside at Bidford Grange. The Terrace Farmlands included in PLCA.F are small areas of low lying terrace, typically around 35m AOD, with a high degree of physical and visual continuity with the River Meadows. This character area comprises mainly large open fields in cereal, grass or horticultural production. Close to the villages, the field sizes are much smaller and under pasture as found north of Marlcliff, south of the B439, and south of Bidford east of the B4085. The historic small villages of Marlcliff and Barton, a Conservation Area, lie in the west and east of the Parish within PLCA.F.

The western boundary of PLCA.F is the River Arrow. The southern boundary follows the River Avon to Marlcliff and then continues along the base of the higher ground to the south in PLCAs D and E (following hedelines) as far as Barton and then follows the Welford Road as far as the Barton Moorings. A short eastern boundary roughly follows the River Avon to the north-side of the river. The northern boundary is mainly defined by the settlement boundary to Bidford-on-Avon, extending westwards in part along the B439 and in part around the southern base of Marriage Hill (following hedge and tree lines) and eastwards from the village along the base of the hillside east of Bidford Grange (following a track).

The key features of the PLCA.F are as follows. The River Avon crosses the full length of the PLCA with its well-defined gently meandering course through its floodplain; its lock at Barton; its marinas at The Moorings, West Bidford, and Barton Moorings; its meadows in the east and arable fields in the west; and its intermittent groups of trees and scrub. The River Arrow is more meandering with tree and scrub intermittently along its bank and flanked by arable fields at the confluence; and pasture west of Marriage Hill. The PLCA.F contains the two most important landmarks in the Parish: the Parish Church of St. Lawrence at Bidford and the bridge at Bidford over the river Avon. Other key local landmarks include the tree avenue through Big Meadow; the lock at Barton; and the S bend past the listed buildings at Barton.

PLCA.F is particularly important as an open riparian landscape setting to the historic cores of Bidford and Barton and the Parish Church of St. Lawrence at Bidford and the bridge at Bidford within the Area of Restraint. Barton is a compact village contained by the steeply rising bluff of pasture land with trees to the south which makes a significant contribution to the setting of the village. The area between the historic core and the river unfortunately detracts from the Conservation Area and the setting of the listed buildings but the S bend in the Welford Road with views to the historic buildings gives rise to a distinctive sense of place. The landscape setting of Marlcliff includes the steep sided wooded bluff to Marlcliff Hill, the land west leading to the river, the tree cover and pastures flanking houses on The Bank and the ridge and furrow field to the north. The landscape setting to west Bidford is more mixed with allotments, a marina, pasture, the cemetery and a commercial horticultural business. These create a landscape of rural and open space land uses and built form in part reflecting the riparian and traditional horticultural use of the landscape.

The character area abuts the historic core of Bidford and the settlement edge is characterised by the openness of the landscape south of the river, views of the river setting to the village and the lack of built form. PLCA.F includes the large open space known as Big Meadow which lies south of the River Avon and the Bidford historic

core which very well used for both formal and informal recreation area. The meadow is mainly laid out as grassland for recreation with play facilities close to the bridge and a tree lined avenue walk along the Shakespeare's Avon Way. The play and other facilities are rather cluttered, slightly detracting from the character and appearance of this area. The Shakespeare's Avon Way crosses through the banks of the River Avon except where it crosses the meadow east of the B4085; and rises onto the higher ground at Marlcliff Hill in the west. The route provides extensive views of the historic town core in particular the bridge and the Parish Church of St Lawrence, the surrounding hillsides, the floodplain and settlement at Bidford. The Heart of England Way meets this route at Barton as it passes through the village historic core to the river bank. Access to the PLCA.F on foot is otherwise limited to a path linking Bidford to Marlcliff via Big Meadow. Outside of the villages, built form is sparse in PLCA.F but includes the glasshouses and horticultural buildings at Marriage Nurseries, recreational buildings at Big Meadow, modern large barns west of Honeybourne Road, and one or two individual houses and farms.

Medium sized orchards were once a feature of PLCA. F situated on the low terraces west of the allotments on Salford Road, Bidford; west of Barton on the current site of the mobile home park; north of Marlcliff on what are now gardens; and in two larger fields west of Honeybourne Road. Three gardens which originally all belonged to Avonside House have been identified as a local historic landscape asset recommended for local listing with substantial remains of the designed formal gardens from 1930s. A further modern garden at Woodpeckers, Marlcliff is also recommended for inclusion in the local listing. There is evidence of ridge and furrow north of Marlcliff.

### **8.2 Relevant Integrated Key Characteristics from the River Meadowlands:**

- Part of the prosperous rural Avon Valley
- The relatively narrow meandering river Avon corridor with flat alluvial floodplains
- The small River Arrow tributary of the River Avon
- Arable fields, market gardens, commercial horticultural development and remnant orchards
- Grazing meadows often with patches of wet grassland under permanent pasture
- Prominent steeply sloping wooded bluffs
- Some steep banks and marginal vegetation to the rivers
- Fringe tree and scrub cover with alders and willow
- Curvilinear hedgerows along the boundary of the floodplain
- Poorly defined field pattern
- Largely intact river landscape with a peaceful undisturbed pastoral character and strong sense of unity, interrupted by arable farmland close to Bidford-on-Avon
- Lack of built form
- Development and movement in the adjacent areas outside of the river corridor can be very noticeable
- River corridor forms an important green wedge running into towns in use for informal recreation

### **8.3 Relevant Integrated Key Characteristics from the Terrace Farmlands:**

- Market gardening

- Flat open landscape
- Broad flat gravel terraces
- Large scale geometric arable field pattern with commercial horticulture between Bidford and Evesham (in the west)
- Some smaller arable plots growing vegetable crops
- Well wooded steams
- Glass houses and other horticultural buildings
- Small nucleated villages
- Lack of hedgerows or poorer low and gappy hedgerows
- Sparse woodland but with wooded streamlines and isolated nature trees
- Densely settled landscape with many villages on the terrace deposits just above the river floodplain.

#### **8.4 Key Landscape Characteristics and Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area F**

##### Natural

- Well defined meandering Rivers Avon and Arrow with scattered tree and scrub cover defining the banks
- Alignment of Small Brook with tree cover close to Salford Road and leading through open arable fields to the River Avon
- Bluff woodlands in the adjoining PLCAs A, D and E overlooking the river (east of sewage works, at Marlcliff and east of Barton)
- Open arable farmland either side of the river with a curvilinear hedgerow surviving as part of the field pattern linking Marlcliff and Bidford
- Scrub, trees and grassland north of Marlcliff, west of Barton, south of Grange Road
- Open arable farmland between Bidford and Barton and Marlcliff
- Patches of wet grassland associated with the flat alluvial floodplain north of the river Avon east of Bidford
- Important areas of pasture and amenity grassland associated with the river floodplain and lower terraces
- River Avon Local Wildlife Site

##### Cultural

- Small nucleated villages of Barton and Marlcliff have a distinct rural character and are clearly separated from Bidford-on-Avon
- Northern boundary defined by often exposed urban edge of the historic core of Bidford but with more softer edges against the more modern built form west of the core;
- Lack of built form outside of the villages except for a few isolated and often exposed farmsteads and individual houses;
- Prominent glass houses and other horticultural buildings south of Salford Road, east of Small Brook
- Limited development south of Salford Road beyond the historic core broken up by small fields, open grassland, hedgerows and the community and recreational uses at the marina, cemetery and allotments
- Local flood defences (grassed bunds) west of mobile homes park at Barton contrast with the flat river floodplain

- Open recreational areas at Big Meadow with its river frontage, avenue of trees and footpaths
- River recreational facilities such as river moorings, marinas, a lock, informal car parks, seating at Big Meadow
- Well developed gardens in large plots with two notable ones at Avonside House and Woodpeckers which are recommended for listing
- Ridge and furrow at Marlcliff
- Several listed buildings within the compact Barton Conservation Area
- Listed buildings, attractive gardens, the steep topography and woodland and pasture give Marlcliff as distinct character

#### Perceptual

- Flat open landscape in contrast with surrounding low hills in PLCAs A to E
- Visually exposed landscape in views out from Bidford and from the Shakespeare's Avon Way and Heart of England Way
- Limited access on foot to most of area except for three footpath links
- Exposed built edge to the historic core of Bidford in the southern approach across the area
- Well defined physical and visual gap between Bidford and Barton (pasture, strong tree belts, arable field and flood defences on the edge of Barton)
- Well defined gap between Bidford and Marlcliff (open arable fields, hedgelines, Big Meadow) .

### **8.5 Key Visual Sensitivities specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area A**

#### Key views into the area are afforded from:

- View from the historic core, the bridge and Parish Church of St Lawrence
- Views from the River Avon
- Views from elevated hillsides at Marriage Hill, Marlcliff and Stable Hill over the valley floor
- Views from regional promoted long distance footpath routes: Shakespeare's Avon Way and Heart of England Way; and the footpath link between Marlcliff and Bidford along the historic curvilinear hedgerows
- Views of the open landscape visible from Honeybourne Road, Cleeve Road, Welford Road and from Salford Road

#### Key views out of the area to:

- Views to the surrounding skylines on the low hills of Marriage Hill, Marlcliff and Stable Hill
- Long views through gaps in these hills to higher hills on the horizon
- To the historic core of Bidford and its landmarks
- To more modern Bidford softened by layers of tree and mature hedgerow cover

#### Key views within the area:

- Across the open fields from the various public rights of way
- To the rivers and Small Brook, defined in the low level views by the bank side vegetation

- To the historic and attractive buildings within Marlcliff and Barton softened by tree cover

### **8.6 Relationship to Settlement**

- The whole area is an important open landscape setting to the town at Bidford and in particular its historic core
- The River Avon clearly defines the settlement edge at the historic core
- Indented settlement edge in the west where the soft open small areas of horticultural, recreational and community uses are an important transition from the heavily developed townscape north of Salford
- Vegetation and pasture form a well defined edge to a strong townscape character at Grange Road and Avon House and its grounds
- The small villages of Marlcliff and Barton are inward looking with the wider landscape forming a well defined rural envelope
- Important open undeveloped gateway to Bidford from the south

### **8.7 Summary (including extent to which PLCA. F is representative of the wider landscape)**

The area demonstrates many key natural, cultural and perceptual characteristics of the wider Avon landscape between Stratford and Evesham. PLCA.F makes a major contribution to the continuity of the Avon riparian landscape retaining the important relationship between the open floodplain and the lower terraces and the settlements which grew up and prospered along the river. It is typical of the pattern of arable and horticultural land uses along the valley (with surviving pockets of wet pasture, orchards and ridge and furrow) with very little settlement except in the historic villages and in isolated agricultural or horticultural buildings.

### **8.8 Relevant Land Management / Development Considerations from Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines**

- The siting and design of new development should complement the historic character of the Avon towns
- Reinforce the identity and unity of the historic settlement pattern
- Conserve and enhance local vernacular character and tree cover within and around rural settlements
- Conserve the character and continuity of river landscapes
- Conserve the diversity of unimproved flood meadows and identify opportunities for re-creating riverside wetland habitats
- Retain grassland along alluvial floodplains
- Retain and enhance river channel meandering form, diversity and marginal vegetation of the Rivers Avon and Arrow
- Conserve and enhance curvilinear hedgerows defining river floodplains
- Enhance continuity of the river channel through appropriate tree and shrub planting
- Avoid development along the alluvial floodplain to retain the continuity of the open floodplain
- Enhance the structure and unity of the Terrace Farmlands through strengthening primary features including planting of hedgerow oaks
- Conserve and restore hedgerows as landscape features in the Terrace Farmlands
- Enhance woodland character of the streams



- Soften hard edges to new development through tree planting
- Encourage wide field margins along streamlines and woodland edges

### **8.9 Land Management guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area F**

- Conserve tree and scrub cover along the river banks
- Seek opportunities to conserve and enhance the riparian river corridor with reinstatement of pasture, appropriate tree and scrub planting and marginal habitats
- Seek opportunities to create wide non-arable margins along streams and the river
- Seek opportunities to reinstate continuity of curvilinear hedgerows between Marcliff and Bidford
- Conserve small scale pastoral field pattern adjacent to the settlements
- Conserve and enhance existing tree and mature hedgerow cover on the edge of the settlements – identifying opportunities for Tree Preservation Orders where necessary
- Seek opportunities to replant new orchards around Barton and west of Bidford
- Conserve and enhance the historic open meadow landscape east of Bidford
- Seek opportunities to identify surviving local historic gardens and landscape features for example at Avon House and Woodpeckers.



### **8.10 Development guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area F**

- Avoid any further introduction of unsympathetic or over-engineered flood defenses or changes to the river or stream alignments
- Any further marina development to be small in scale and well integrated into the river corridor landscape
- Development to be resisted between the villages of Barton and Bidford in order to retain the separate identity of these two historic settlements
- Expansion of Marcliff and Barton to be resisted but seek for opportunities to enhance the built form and landscape setting to the village cores
- Any increase in the scale and mass of development in the existing isolated developed domestic and agricultural plots to be carefully assessed to ensure that there is no harm to the character and appearance of the area
- Seek opportunities for additional tree planting in keeping with the local landscape pattern around existing isolated developed plots
- Any redevelopment of the existing horticultural buildings should reflect the rural character of the open landscape, should be no greater in height mass or scale than the existing built form and be commensurate with retaining the open character of the landscape between the villages
- Development along Salford Road to be limited to as far as Small Brook in the west in order to protect the rural approach to Bidford down Marriage Hill
- The rural undeveloped character of the river corridor along the rivers Arrow and Avon and Small Brook to be conserved and any new built form resisted
- Generous linear tree lines and woodland cover to be included on the outer edge of any development
- Break up the built form with tree planting linking into existing tree cover
- Create where possible tree planting and hedgerows to better integrate and screen visually prominent agricultural or horticultural buildings
- Open space provision as part of any new development to link physically and visually with the open countryside beyond.

**8.11 Visual guidance specific to Bidford-on-Avon Landscape Character Area F**

- Conserve the views from the valley floor to open undeveloped skylines of Marcliff Hill, Marriage Hill, at Bidford Grange and at Staple Hill
- Particular care to be taken to conserve views over the valley, to the above hillsides and to the historic core and landmarks in Bidford from Big Meadow, Shakespeare’s Avon Way and Heart of England Way
- Conserve and enhance the views northwards in the gateway approach to Bidford from the south. Seek opportunities to improve the fragmented character and appearance of the recreational and other facilities at Big Meadow
- Maintain the visual separation of Barton and Bidford
- Avoid any visually intrusive development within the visual envelope of the key views from PLCA.F

**PLCA:F Photographs**

	
<p>Photo 1. View from Marcliff Hill on the border of the Parish looking north over the Avon Valley with Marriage Hill in the centre distance, Small Brook winding across the floodplain and the western edge of Bidford</p>	<p>Photo 2. View from Shakespeare’s Avon Way looking over the river and its floodplain to Marriage Hill on the skyline</p>

	
<p>Photo 3. View from Shakespeare's Avon Way down the avenue of trees in big Meadow to Bidford bridge with the Parish Church of St Lawrence in the background</p>	<p>Photo 4. View from the meadow east of Honeybourne Road from Shakespeare's Avon Way to the Parish Church of St Lawrence, historic core of Bidford and Bidford Bridge</p>
	
<p>Photo 3. View from Shakespeare's Avon Way to the River Avon and Barton Lock with the river floodplain and rising ground at Bidford Grange in the background</p>	<p>Photo 4. Views from the footpath between Bidford and Marcliff looking over ridge and furrow pasture and the village with the rising land of Marcliff Hill on the skyline</p>

<b>Infrastructure types and examples of projects that may be wholly, or partly, funded by CIL</b>  <b>(Provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of)</b>	<b>NDP Policy Reference</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>Neighbourhood Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Needs Survey's</li> </ul>	H2, H3	Rural exception schemes and the mix of affordable housing must be based on the most up to date local evidence.
<b>Neighbourhood Economy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Realm and Signage in the Village Centre</li>   <li>• Riverside Activities</li> </ul>	ECON2, ECON3  ECON5, ENV3	Investment in the Village Centre will enhance the vitality and viability for businesses and customers  Investments to the recreation ground and river corridor will enhance the vitality and viability for businesses and visitors
<b>Neighbourhood Environment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable Energy</li>   <li>• Flood Prevention</li>   <li>• Improvements to Public Realm and Landscaping</li>   <li>• Neighbourhood Biodiversity Action Plan</li> </ul>	ENV1  ENV4  ENV9  ENV10	Community renewable and low carbon energy projects will benefit public buildings and set a good example to others  Projects which are needed to alleviate and prevent the most vulnerable areas within the Neighbourhood Area from future flooding  Investment in the physical environment of the Neighbourhood Area creates a more pleasant environment which residents, businesses and visitors will feel proud of  The preparation, publishing and monitoring of a BAP for the neighbourhood area to promote and protect the most important nature conservation aspects of the Neighbourhood Area

Continued over

<b>Infrastructure types and examples of projects that may be wholly, or partly, funded by CIL</b>  <b>(Provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of)</b>	<b>NDP Policy Reference</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>Neighbourhood Amenities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Care Facilities and GP Surgeries</li>   <li>• New and Enhanced Education and Learning Facilities</li>   <li>• Recreational Space and Local Green Space</li>   <li>• Community Facilities</li>   <li>• Community Allotments</li>   <li>• Walking and Cycling</li> </ul>	<p>AM1</p> <p>AM2</p> <p>AM4</p> <p>AM3</p> <p>AM5</p> <p>AM6</p>	<p>Investment in existing health facilities commensurate with population increase and changing needs</p> <p>Investment in existing education and library facilities to meet increased demands from a growing population</p> <p>Investment in existing spaces for the health and wellbeing of a growing population including equipped and non-equipped play areas</p> <p>Built leisure and entertainment, youth clubs and groups, community groups,</p> <p>Investment in growing space to enable residents to grow their own food</p> <p>Investment in routes and paths to encourage a healthy lifestyle</p>

## **Monitoring**

Parish, Town and Community Councils must make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs (see Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972). They must have systems in place to ensure effective financial control (see Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 and Accounts). These requirements also apply when dealing with neighbourhood funding payments under the levy.

For each year when they have received neighbourhood funds through the levy, Parish, Town and Community Councils must publish the information specified in Regulation 62A. They should publish this information on their website or on the charging authority's website. If they haven't received any money they do not have to publish a report, but may want to publish some information to this effect in the interests of transparency.

There is no prescribed format. Parish, Town and Community Councils may choose to combine reporting on the levy with other reports they already produce. The levy neighbourhood funding income and spending will also be included in their overall published accounts but are not required to be identified separately in those accounts.

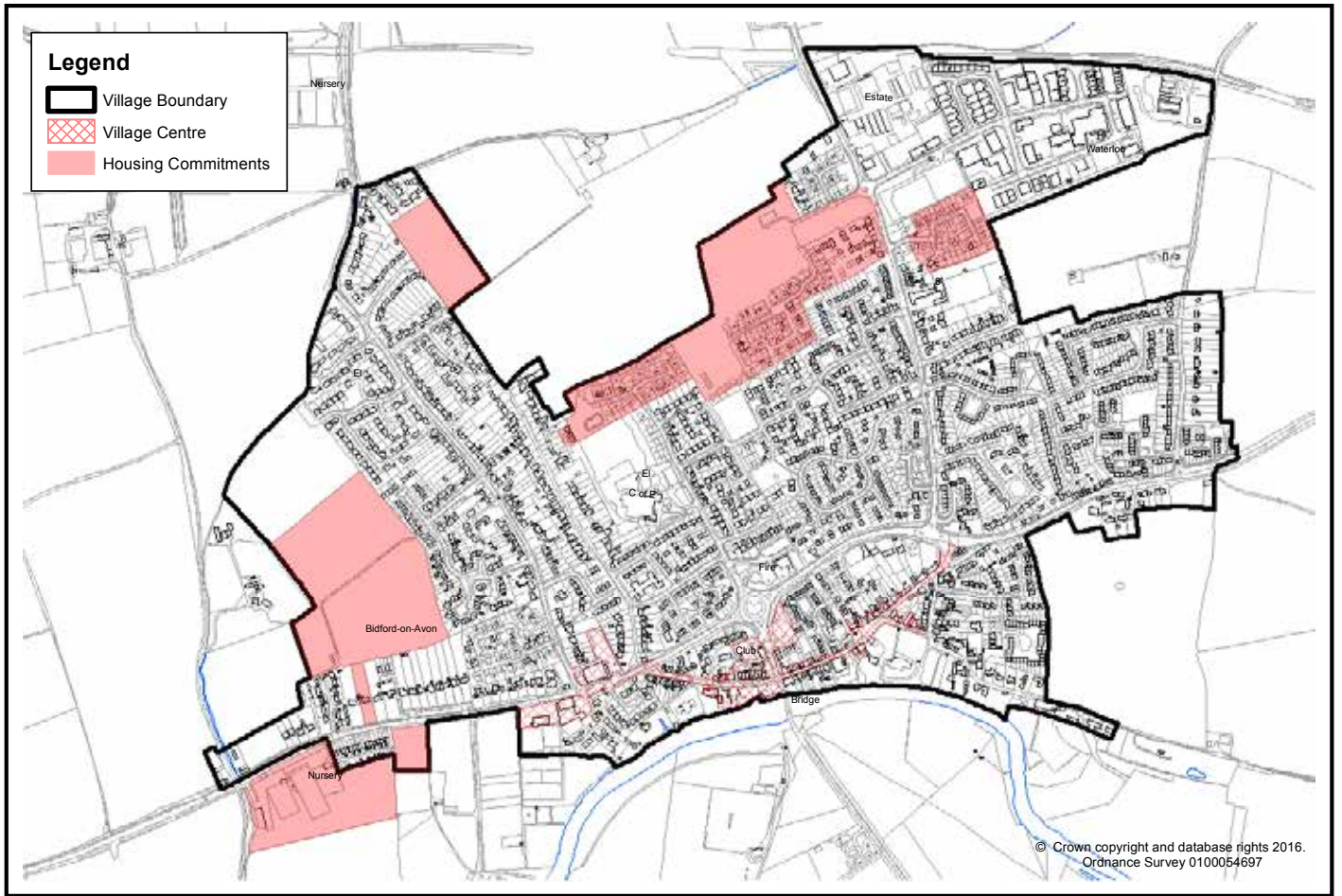
Where a charging authority holds and spends the neighbourhood portion on behalf of the local community, it should ensure that it reports this as a separate item in its own accounts.

## **Pooling**

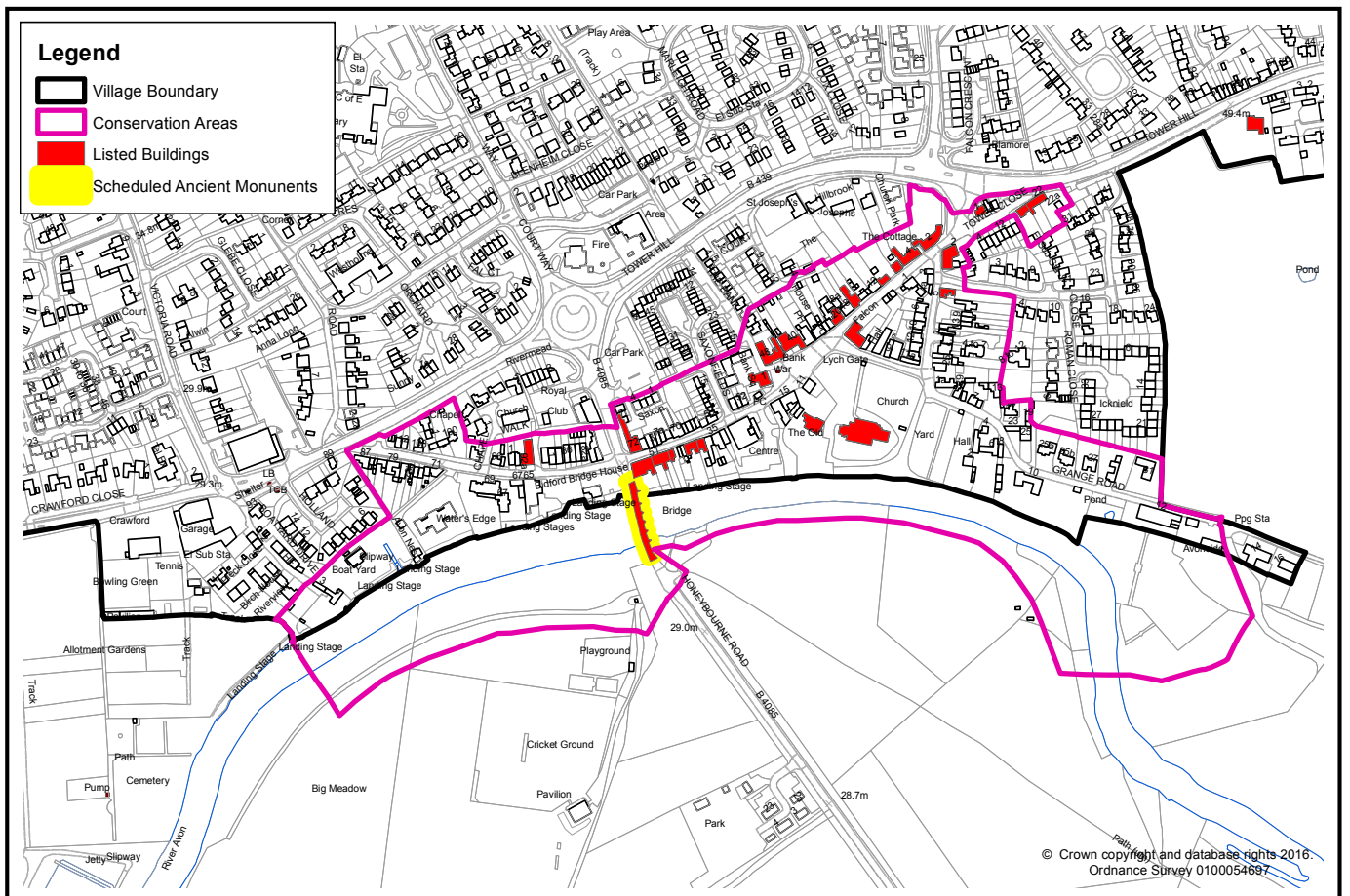
From April 2015, the regulations restrict the use of pooled contributions towards items that may be funded via the levy. At that point, no more may be collected in respect of a specific infrastructure project or a type of infrastructure through a section 106 agreement, if five or more obligations for that project or type of infrastructure have already been entered into since 6 April 2010, and it is a type of infrastructure that is capable of being funded by the levy. Where a section 106 agreement makes provision for a number of staged payments as part of a planning obligation, these payments will collectively count as a single obligation in relation to the pooling restriction.

For provision that is not capable of being funded by the levy, such as affordable housing, local planning authorities are not restricted in terms of the numbers of obligations that may be pooled, but they must have regard to the wider policies on planning obligations set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.





Map 1 - Bidford-on-Avon Village Boundary, Village Centre and Housing Commitments

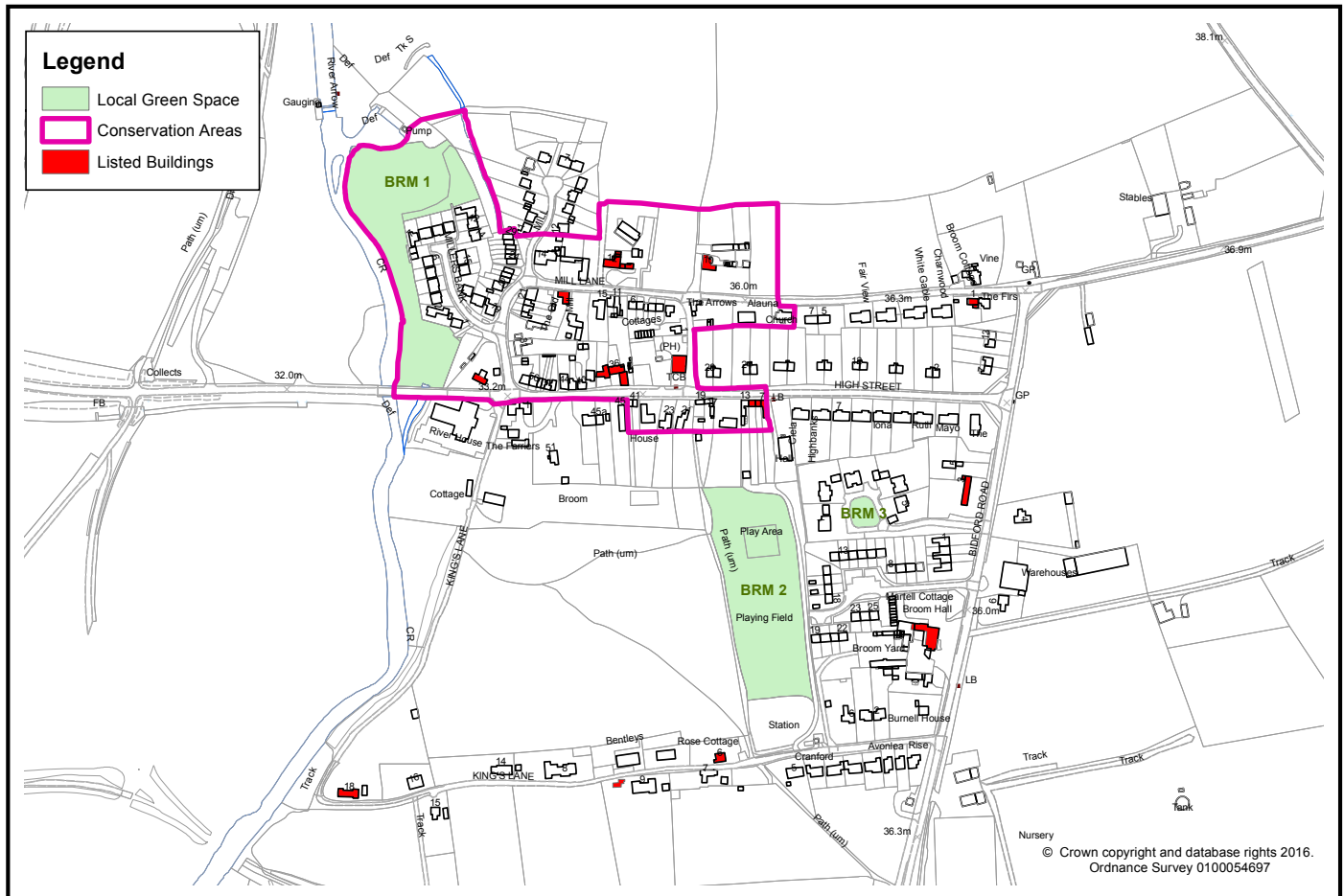


Map 2 - Bidford Designated Heritage Assets

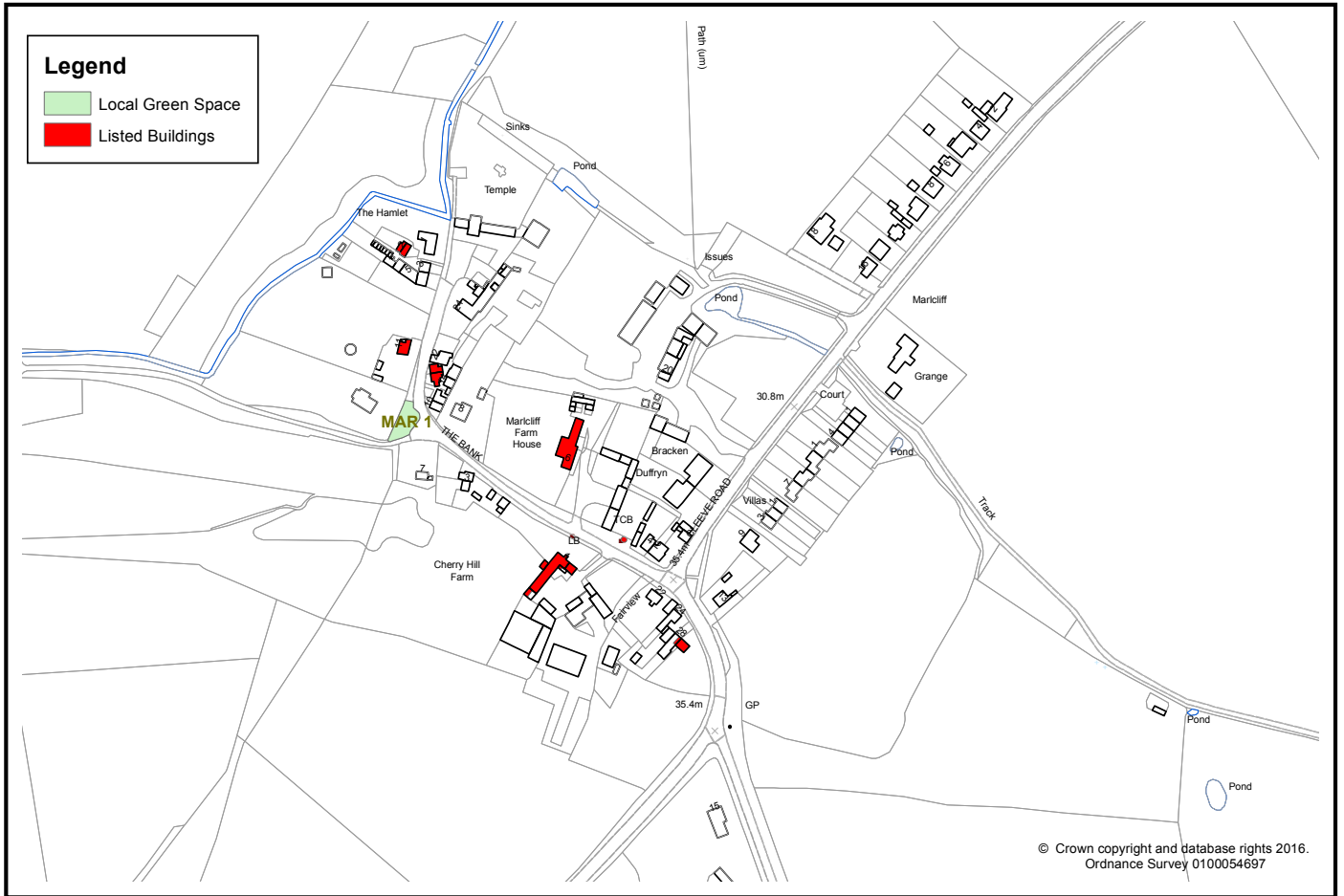




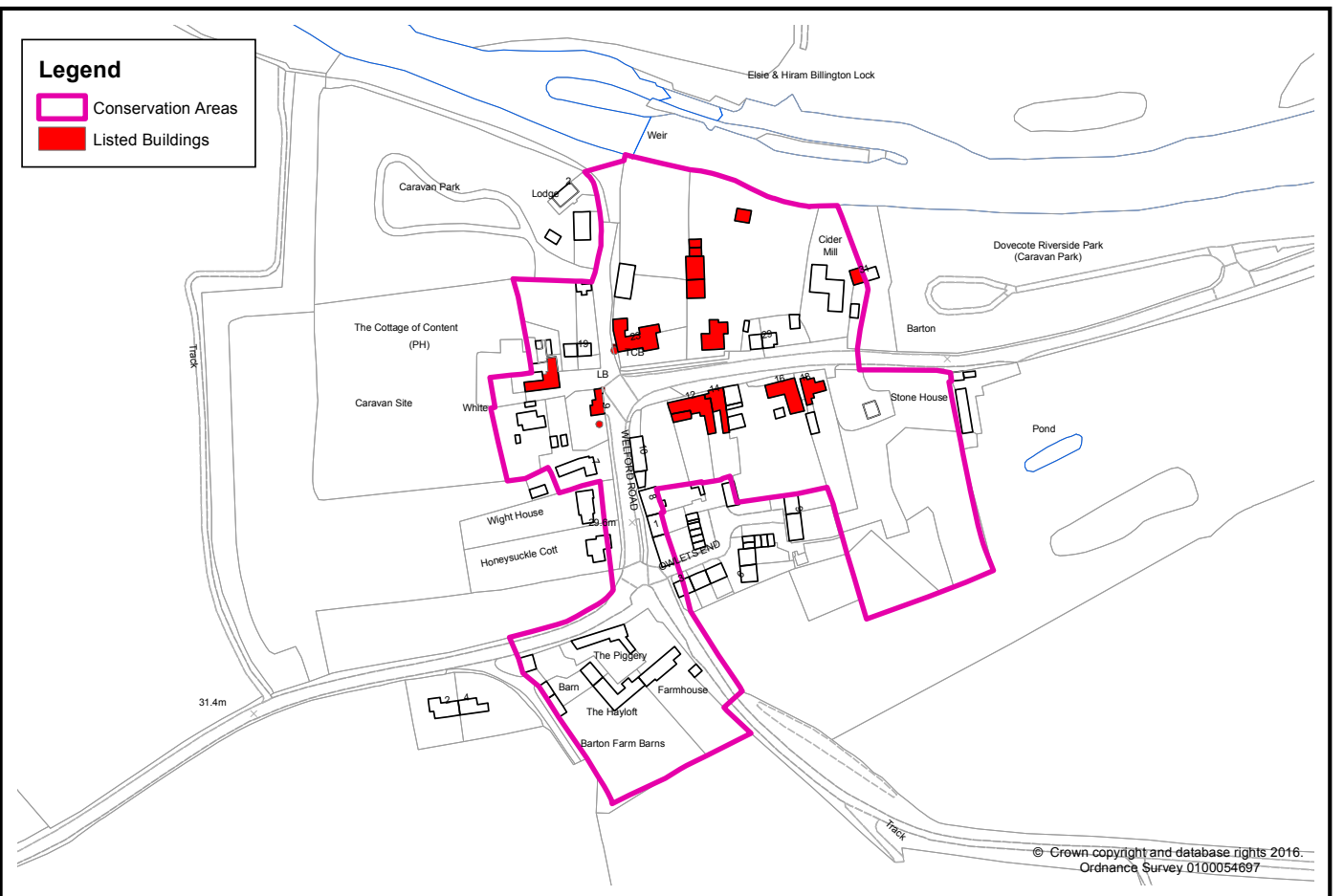
Map 3 - Bidford-on-Avon Local Green Space



Map 4 - Broom Designated Heritage Assets and Local Green Space



Map 5 - Marcliff Designated Heritage Assets and Local Green Space



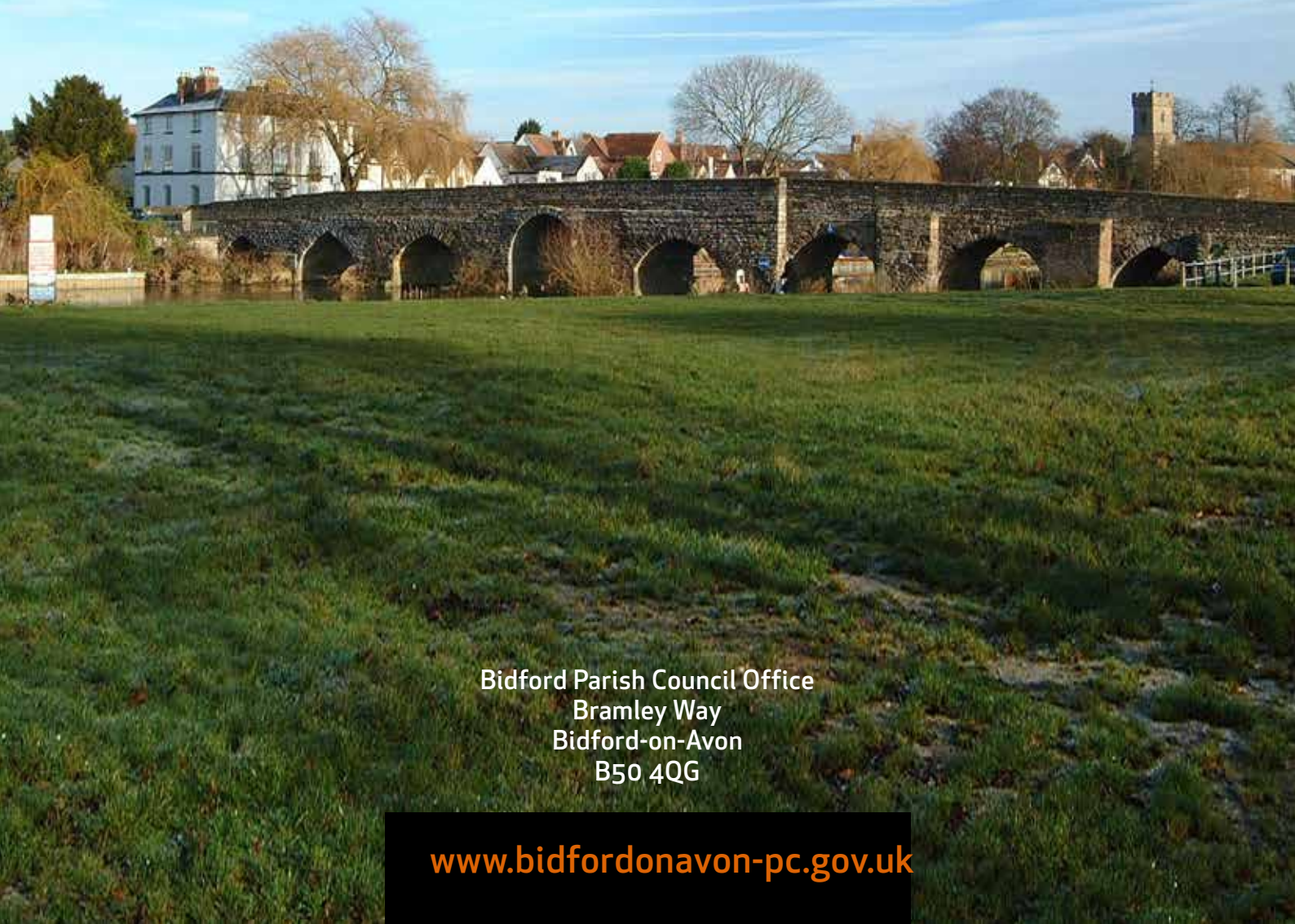
Map 6 - Barton Designated Heritage Assets

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# BIDFORD ON-AVON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



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