

Wootton Wawen
Neighbourhood Development Plan
2016 - 2031



Pre-Submission Consultation
November 2015

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1.0 Introduction

The Rationale

Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP's) are an important part of passing greater control over plan making and place shaping from local government to communities. As such our Plan is a community led framework for guiding future development, regeneration and conservation in our local area.

The NDP forms part of the statutory development plan for Stratford-upon-Avon district which gives it far more weight than other locally prepared documents. 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 Context

The National Policy Planning Framework 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.

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.

Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives.

This should be a collective enterprise, yet, in recent years, planning has tended to exclude, rather than to include, people and communities.

The National Policy Planning Framework changes that, introducing neighbourhood planning and allowing people and communities a greater influence in the decision making process.

The Core Strategy

The District Council is preparing a series of planning documents to guide development and change in the district up to 2031. They 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.

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.

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?

The Village

Wootton Wawen is an independent community with a long and impressive history, strategically located on a main trunk road between Birmingham in the West Midlands conurbation to the north and the rapidly expanding town of Stratford upon Avon to the south. The village lies within the Stratford upon Avon District and has been categorized within this Council's Draft Plan/Core Strategy as a village with most of the necessary services needed for future development. It lies within the Green Belt and the Arden Special Landscape Area demanding careful consideration as to how such development might take place.

The area covered by the plan is that lying within the Civil Parish boundary, as approved by the District Council on 16 June 2014.

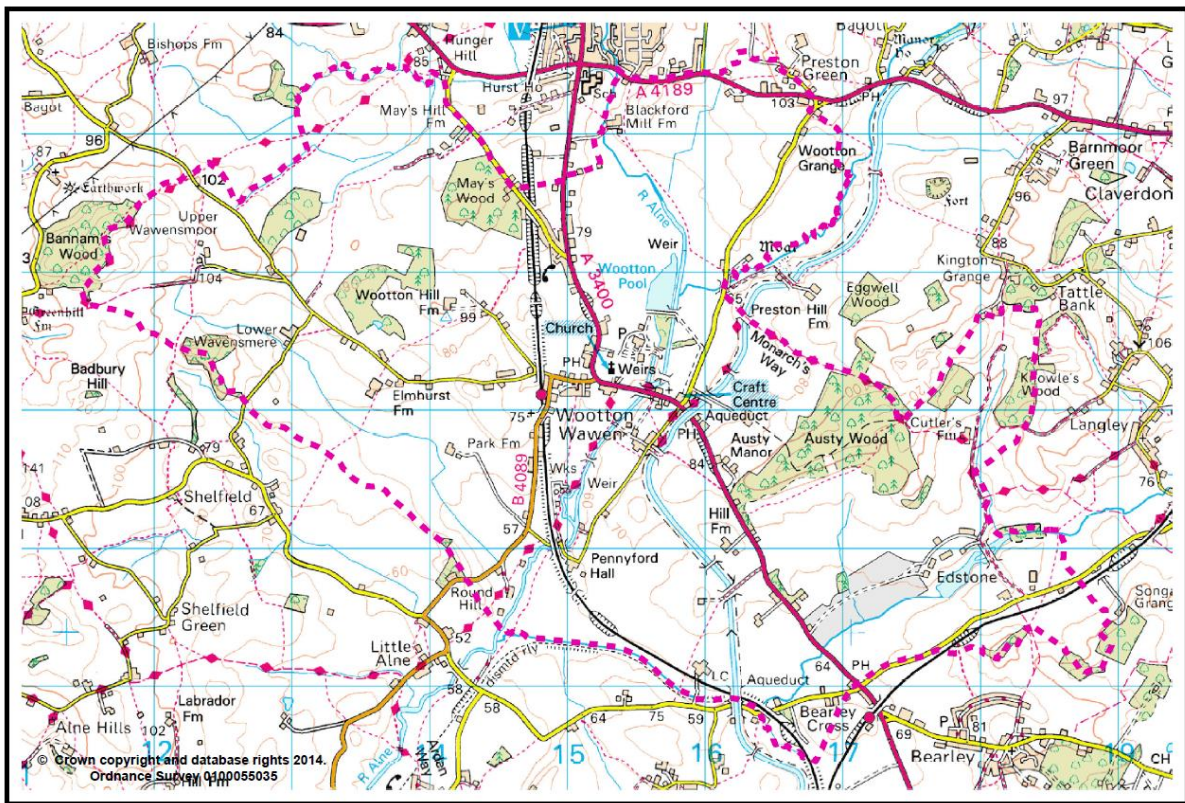


Figure 1 - The Neighbourhood Area

Most of this area is agricultural land and protected from development by its Green Belt status. The landscape is generally open with important views in many locations. Wildlife is varied and plentiful, with the River Alne and the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal vital contributors to diversity. Much of the land adjacent to the river is part of the 'Flood Plain'. The population of the village is approximately 1500 with almost 50% living in 'Park Homes' within the Wootton Hall Estate. Housing development has been limited over the past 50 years to single in-fill units. There was a period between 1950 and 1965 which saw the construction of new houses close to the village school/railway station and small developments on other restricted sites.

The heart, and oldest part of the village, is a designated Conservation area and contains 18 listed buildings - the most important being St. Peter's Church with its Saxon origins. The revised (but, at the time of preparing this plan, not fully approved) Stratford District Council Local Plan/Core Strategy recognizes the need to restrict development in the village and suggests that it should be limited to in-fill within the village boundary (See Policy H1).

Importantly, both the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework stipulate that development should be based on agreed local needs which could additionally permit possible schemes, such as affordable housing, on suitable sites outside this boundary.

The plan sets out a vision for the next 16 years together with objectives/policies which support and deliver that vision. This is a plan which promotes growth alongside the retention of those features and attributes most valued by its residents. It is designed to maintain and enhance the character of the plan area and enable improvements where they are needed. To actively discourage growth and change would be to put at risk the very features, facilities and employment opportunities on which the character and future sustainability of Wootton Wawen depend.

Background to the Plan

Consultation with residents has been actively promoted by the Parish Council over the past two decades. A 'Parish Appraisal' was completed in 2001 and a 'Parish Plan' in 2010 – both aimed at identifying what was important about living in Wootton Wawen, what should be retained and what improvements were needed to sustain the community in the longer term. Clearly residents do regard the village as a 'special place' to live in and they wish to retain its character. Further consultation exercises (surveys and open meetings) carried out as the basis for this plan have confirmed this and have provided a clear indication of priorities for future development.

Work on the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been coordinated by a Steering Group formed early in 2014, composed of 3 Parish Councillors and 3 volunteers from the wider community. Other individuals and groups have been consulted through resident and business surveys along the way. Initially, group discussion and consultation events were focussed on major potential housing development as proposed in the emerging District Council Core Strategy¹. This suggested a target of 51-75 new homes over the plan period for Wootton Wawen as a Category 2 village. Early in 2015, the group commissioned an assessment of possible development sites by a Planning Consultant which highlighted the difficulty of finding suitable, accessible, sites within the plan area due to its Green Belt designation. Subsequently, after analysis of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy by an independent examiner², the District Council removed the prescribed housing targets in villages, such as ours, that are washed over by the Green Belt.

This Plan is based on the latest iteration of the emerging Core Strategy³ and highlights the challenge between sustainable development and character retention.

Key Issues Guiding Plan Preparation

1. The desire, expressed by the vast majority of residents, to have no expansion of the village beyond current developed land and natural boundaries such as the railway line and canal;
2. Retention of and support for thriving, well managed agricultural enterprises, farmland and associated areas;
3. Support for and retention of key local facilities – post office, village hall, shops, railway station/services, bus services, school, churches, small businesses serving the community etc.;
4. Protection and enhancement of the open landscape which is a key feature of the village – including its many special views;

¹ Stratford-on-Avon District Council Core Strategy Proposed Submission Version (June 2014)

² Examination of the Stratford-On-Avon Core Strategy - Inspector's Interim Conclusions (March 2015)

³ Interim Adopted Core Strategy Proposed Modifications June 2015

5. Ensuring that any possible housing development serves the community by prioritising affordable homes for people with local connections and housing for young families, with the long-term aim of reducing the average age of the community; and
6. Avoidance of any development within the flood plain and ensuring that new housing does not increase, and ideally reduces, surface water run-off.

The Vision

Recognising that Wootton Wawen is a special place to live and visit, we aim to protect those features most valued by the community whilst working to achieve organic growth and seeking and seeking to encourage change which will enhance the long-term sustainability of the village.

The Vision will be supported by the following Strategic Objectives:

Strategic Objectives	
Housing	To provide a sufficient supply and mix of dwellings to meet the needs of the community during the plan period and address the current imbalance in the population profile
Economy	To protect and promote jobs for local people in order to advance economic development in the Neighbourhood Area
Environment	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
Amenities	To ensure that valued community assets, local shops and services are maintained and where possible enhanced in order to promote sustainable living

2.0 Neighbourhood Housing

Strategic Objective

The 2011 Census confirmed that Wootton Wawen has a population age profile, which is skewed towards the more elderly. Over 25% of the population is over 80 years of age compared to Stratford District Council (SDC) figure of 15% with only 16% under the age of 20 compared with the SDC average at 21%. There is recognition that an influx of younger people is required to redress this imbalance which is necessary if the community is to be sustainable.

The challenge here is to create affordable housing in the Neighbourhood Area without losing the environment which the residents hold dear. Due to the Green Belt status of the Neighbourhood Area, new market housing will be restricted to limited infilling within the village boundary (Figure 2) or the redevelopment of previously developed (brownfield) sites where the openness of the Green Belt is not compromised.

Policy H1 - Village Boundary

All new housing developments will be confined to within the Village Boundary, as defined on the Proposals Map unless supported by other policies in this Plan.

Proposals for new housing outside of these built up area boundaries will not be supported.

Explanation

The Neighbourhood Area is heavily constrained by the Green Belt, which washes over the village, locally and nationally important heritage assets, sensitive landscapes and active flood plains.

Consequently, the District Council Core Strategy does not expect Wootton Wawen to play a significant role in contributing towards the supply of housing for the district.

Any new development will therefore be restricted to limited infilling within the village boundary (Figure 2). This will have the effect of focussing any new development towards the most sustainable location within the Neighbourhood Area.

Small infill development on land within the Village Boundary will provide housing without significant damage to the character and setting of the village and conflict with Green Belt policy. This pattern of gradual and organic development will ensure new dwellings contribute to the attractive appearance and character of Wootton Wawen and its sense of community.

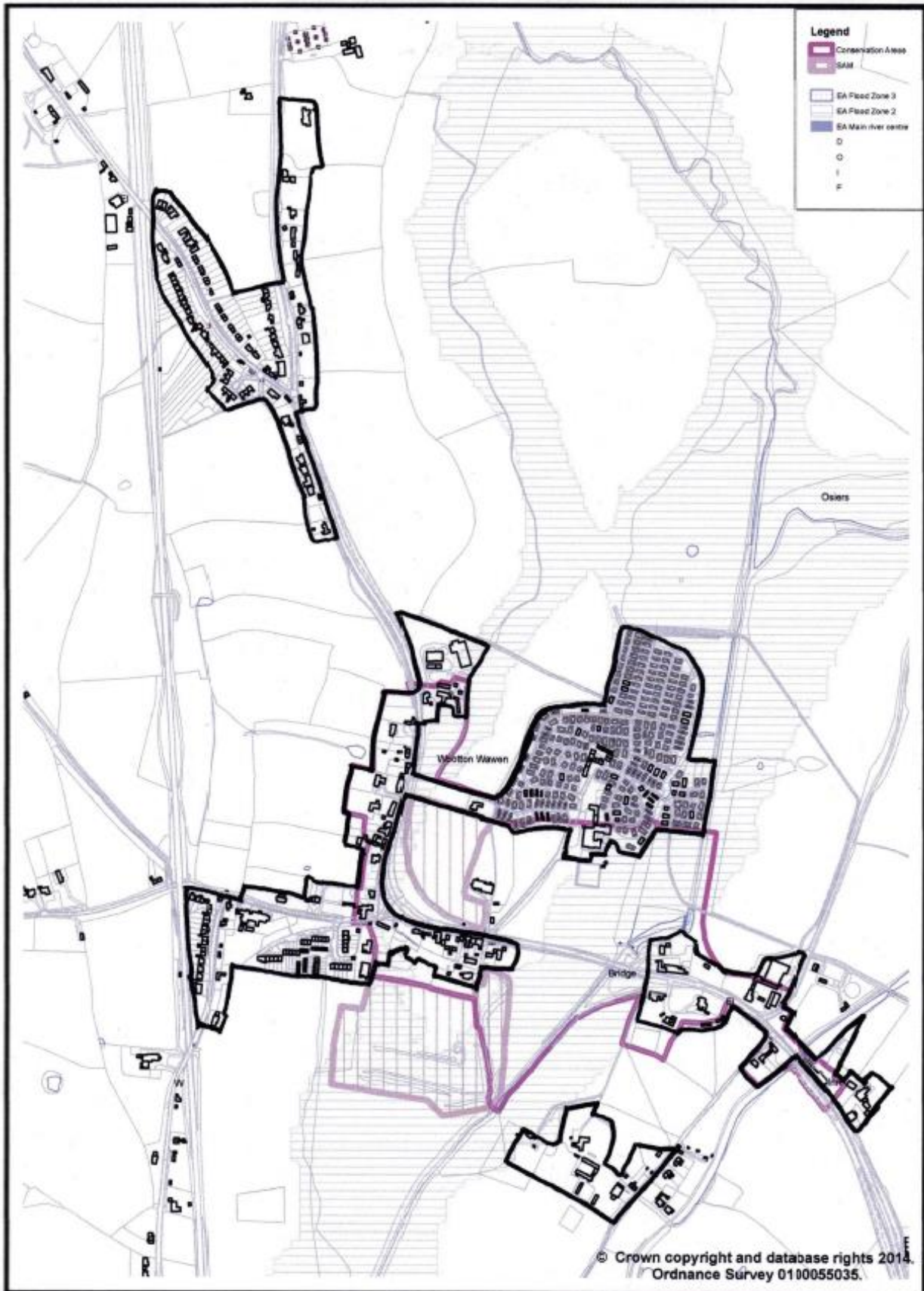


Figure 2 - Village Boundary

Policy H2 - Affordable Housing

This Plan supports the provision of small scale affordable housing on rural exception sites adjacent to the Village Boundary in accordance with the needs of the local community as identified through a Housing Needs Survey.

All development must demonstrate how the latest Housing Needs Survey or other relevant local evidence has been taken into account when determining housing mix.

The 2011 Housing Needs Assessment highlights the following need across the Neighbourhood Area:

Housing Association Rent:

4 x 2 bedroom houses
5 x 2 bedroom bungalows
1 x 3 bedroom house

Shared Ownership:

2 x 2 bedroom houses
2 x 2 bedroom bungalows

Any new homes that are intended to meet needs described in Section 7 of the Wootton Wawen Housing Needs Survey (January 2011) should be accompanied by an appropriate planning obligation to restrict occupancy of the homes to people with a local connection, as described in Section 3 of the survey.

Explanation

Due to its status as a Green Belt village, new residential development within the Neighbourhood Area will be limited to infilling. It is therefore unlikely that such developments will be of a scale which attracts a proportion of affordable housing.

Rural exception sites are small sites used solely for affordable housing on land adjoining existing villages such as Wootton Wawen which would not otherwise be released for general market housing because it is subject to policies of restraint such as Green Belt. Such sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Rural exception sites are supported under paragraph 54 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

In order to ensure that this Plan facilitates growth in the affordable housing sector, Policy H2 facilitates the development of affordable homes under 'rural exceptions' for occupation by people originating from or with a clear connection to the Parish of Wootton Wawen in accordance with the needs identified in the Wootton Wawen Housing Needs Survey 2011. This Plan supports the need for affordable housing and promotes homes in sustainable locations, unless special circumstances exist e.g. rural workers accommodation.

The age profile of the population in Wootton Wawen is heavily skewed towards older people (over 50) as identified in the survey of residents in 2014. If the village is to remain a sustainable entity it is vital that this age imbalance be addressed.

This Plan supports the need to update Housing Needs Surveys on a regular basis in order to ensure that the needs of the community are properly captured.

Policy H3 - Use of Brownfield Land

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

- a) The new use would be compatible with the surrounding uses;
- b) Any remedial works to remove contaminants are satisfactorily dealt with;
- c) The proposal would lead to an enhancement in the character and appearance of the site;
- d) Safe and suitable access and parking arrangements; and
- e) The proposal would not conflict with any other policies in this Plan.

Unless specifically allocated in this plan, there is a general presumption against the development of greenfield land. Proposals for development on greenfield land must clearly demonstrate exceptional circumstances before proposals will be looked upon favourably.

Explanation

For the purposes of this Plan, brownfield land is previously developed land which is, or was, occupied by a permanent structure. It includes the curtilage of the developed land but specifically excludes any residential garden land and agricultural/horticultural 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 H4 - Use of Garden Land

Development on garden land within the defined Village Boundary, as shown in Figure 2, will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that proposals:

- a) Preserve or enhance the character of the area (see Character Assessment at Appendix 1);
- 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 safe and suitable access and parking arrangements.

Explanation

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.

Detrimental harm to the amenity of a neighbouring property includes; loss of daylight and sunlight (overshadowing), intrusive or overbearing development and loss of privacy (overlooking).

Policy H5 - Effective and Efficient Use of Land

All development proposals must demonstrate an effective and efficient use of land. The effective use of land can assist in delivering sustainable development.

Density should enhance the character and quality of the local area (see Character Assessment at Appendix 1) whilst preserving the amenity of neighbouring residential homes, commensurate with a viable scheme and infrastructure capacity subject to no conflict with other policies in this Plan.

Explanation

It is essential that the rural aspect of the village is maintained. In an effort to build new properties there is a risk that new infill development will be “squeezed” into an inappropriate area. Preservation of the character of the area must be weighed against the need for new organic infill dwellings in the village.

Paragraph 47 of the National Policy Planning Framework encourages a local approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances.

While there is no rigid design density set for the Neighbourhood Area, in all cases development will be expected to respond to local character. Higher densities close to the village centre where there is a higher level of accessibility may be acceptable whereas lower densities will be more appropriate on the periphery of the village. Densities would not normally be above 25-30 dwellings per hectare.

The height, scale and massing of new buildings should have regard to the context of the individual site and the surrounding area (see Character Assessments in Appendix 1). Building heights should be lower towards the edge of the village to assist in the assimilation of new development into the surrounding countryside/landscape.

3.0 Neighbourhood Economy

Strategic Objective

The National Planning Policy Framework 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”⁴.

To ensure that the Neighbourhood Area continues to have a vibrant and diverse economic make up, appropriate for its size and rural location this Plan proposes a number of economic policies with the theme of protecting and enhancing.

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 not be supported unless:

- a) The applicant can demonstrate that the site/premises is no longer capable of meeting employment needs; or**
- b) Development of the site for other appropriate uses will facilitate the relocation of an existing business to a more suitable site; or**
- c) Unacceptable environmental problems are associated with the current use of the site and the proposal will remove them; or**
- d) 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**
- e) Relocation of the employer will make better use of existing or planned infrastructure.**

Explanation

Wootton Wawen has diversified from a farming community to one which encompasses the use of traditional farm buildings for alternative purposes. These range from the traditional office environment with many of the businesses IT based, to retail outlets and even a flight simulator. Many of the businesses in the village are the traditional “self-employed” working out of their home premises. A list of the employments sites is contained in Appendix 2 of this Plan.

⁴ Paragraph 7, NPPF

Policy ECON2 - Leisure and Tourism

Proposals for leisure and tourism based services and facilities within the Neighbourhood Area will be supported providing they do not conflict with other policies in this Plan.

Existing leisure and tourism facilities shall be protected unless there is evidence that such services are no longer viable or needed.

Explanation

There are several notable landmarks in the village, including St. Peter's Church (of Saxon origin, and the oldest Church in Warwickshire), Wootton Hall, The Bulls Head and Navigation Public Houses and some fine individual houses from past centuries.

The historic Stratford-upon-Avon Canal passes through the Neighbourhood Area and is carried on a 200 year old cast iron aqueduct over the main road. It provides the opportunity to hire a narrow boat for cruising (from Anglo-Welsh Waterways) and is one of the locations for fishing.

Yew Tree Craft Centre started as a farm-shop with an outlet for garden furniture and is now a retail outlet of some 20 shops selling “non-standard” items, many being a local craft.

Planning permission has been granted for the development of a marina⁵ just outside the village en-route to Stratford.

Wootton Park comprises a mix of leisure and business uses with a facility to cater for weddings and conferences alongside office based occupations. The latest project is to build a wakeboard lake which has recently received planning permission⁶.

It is essential that these opportunities are developed to help bring passing trade and creating further employment.

Proposals for new leisure and tourism based facilities must respect the Green Belt designation washing over the Neighbourhood Area.

Policy ECON3 - Promoting High Speed Internet Access

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

Explanation

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.

⁵ Planning application reference 12/02478/FUL

⁶ Planning application reference 14/03556/FUL

This Plan 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

Development proposals that facilitate additional parking outside the village general stores or the railway station will be supported.

Explanation

The village store is situated on the main trunk road (A3400), which is a source of much of its business, in addition to local residents. As the store is in a terrace of properties there is limited space for customer parking. Passing traffic and locals in their cars may often be discouraged from stopping by the lack of parking. The store is an essential asset to the village and if it can be achieved more parking would help support its future.

There is a regular train service from the village to Birmingham and Stratford. However, the station is adjacent to a narrow country lane with little space for parked cars. Safety and convenience would be achieved with additional parking by the station.

Policy ECON5 - Homeworking and Live-Work Units

All new dwellings must include space to support home-working, with flexible space adaptable to a home office, and incorporate cabling to support broadband in accordance with Policy ECON3.

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) Have independent service facilities (e.g. kitchen, toilet etc.) for the workspace which do not rely on the living space;**
- 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

Many residents have adapted to modern working patterns and are either employed 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.

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.

4.0 Neighbourhood Environment

Strategic Objective

One of the three dimensions of sustainable development as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework 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”⁷.

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. We should also protect the open rural nature of the landscape in which our village is set and ensure that the identity of our settlement is maintained.

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 Energy

Development proposals relating to the production of green energy will be supported providing they can be satisfactorily integrated into the character and appearance of the village and its environs.

All proposals must have regard to Green Belt policy as outlined in Chapter 9 and in particular paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Proposals which fail to preserve or enhance the established character of the Neighbourhood Area will not be supported (see Character Assessment at Appendix 1).

Explanation

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 village.

In particular, renewable schemes that demonstrate evidence of community consultation at early stages in the development – especially when this leads to a tangible benefit to the community – will receive support. An example would be a hydroelectricity scheme located adjacent to the weirs on the River Alne.

⁷ Paragraph 7, NPPF

Policy ENV2 - Green Infrastructure

Development will be expected to demonstrate a high level of sensitive landscaping and native tree/hedge planting where possible.

All development will be expected to protect existing 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.

Explanation

We need to ensure the rural character of the Neighbourhood Area is protected through the maintenance and enhancement of important landscape features such as trees, hedges and woodland.

Attractive landscaping within, and appropriate screening of, new development will assist in achieving the protection and enhancement of the landscape character and setting of the Neighbourhood Area. This will also increase the biodiversity value of the neighbourhood environment by maintaining existing and introducing new habitats.

Policy ENV3 - Blue Infrastructure

All developments 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

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.

We should maintain or improve their water quality in accordance with Water Framework Directive requirements⁸.

⁸ 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

Policy ENV4 - Drainage and Flooding

All development proposals must incorporate suitable and sustainable means of drainage where site conditions are favourable. 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.

The re-use and recycling of water within developments will be encouraged.

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

Explanation

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.

The Environment Agency considers that water resources are under 'moderate stress' in the locality with some areas under 'serious stress'⁹. Therefore developments should include means of re-using and recycling water where possible.

Policy ENV5 - Protection of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

Development which would result in the complete or partial loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land will not be supported.

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

Explanation

The Agricultural Land Classification system¹⁰ was devised and introduced in the 1960s and forms the basis for advice given on land use planning matters. It categorised agricultural land into 4 'grades' (1, 2, 3 and 4). Following a review of the system¹¹ grade 3 was sub-divided into 3a and 3b. Grades 1, 2 and 3a represent the best and most versatile agricultural land.

The National Planning Policy Framework ensures protection against the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land from significant development¹².

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.

⁹ Halcrow, Warwickshire Sub-Regional Water Cycle Study, Final Report (March 2014)

¹⁰ Technical Report 11 (MAFF, 1966)

¹¹ Technical Report 11/1 (MAFF, 1976)

¹² Paragraph 112, NPPF

Policy ENV6 - Protection of Landscape, Skylines and Important Views

In order to maintain the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Area (see Character Assessment at Appendix 1), 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.

Explanation

We should protect the open and rural nature of the land surrounding built up areas of the parish to ensure the separate identity of our settlement and retain its distinctive features, skylines and important views.

In order to support the implementation of the policies in this Plan, a Character Assessment has been prepared for the village of Wootton Wawen. The Character Assessment can be found at Appendix 1 of this Plan.

Policy ENV7 - Preservation of Heritage Assets

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

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

All proposals must as a minimum 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

All heritage assets are afforded statutory protection¹³ and national policy¹⁴ makes it clear that the Government places great weight of the preservation of heritage assets.

Our village contains 18 listed buildings within the designated Conservation Area, together with an important architectural fabric. We need to ensure that these buildings and structures are protected and enhanced and that they are not compromised by new developments.

¹³ Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)

¹⁴ Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework

There are three Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Neighbourhood Area:

1. Earthworks west of St Peter's Church (SAM 175)
2. Ponds south-west of Wootton Bridge (SAM 176)
3. Aqueduct over A3400 (SAM 132)

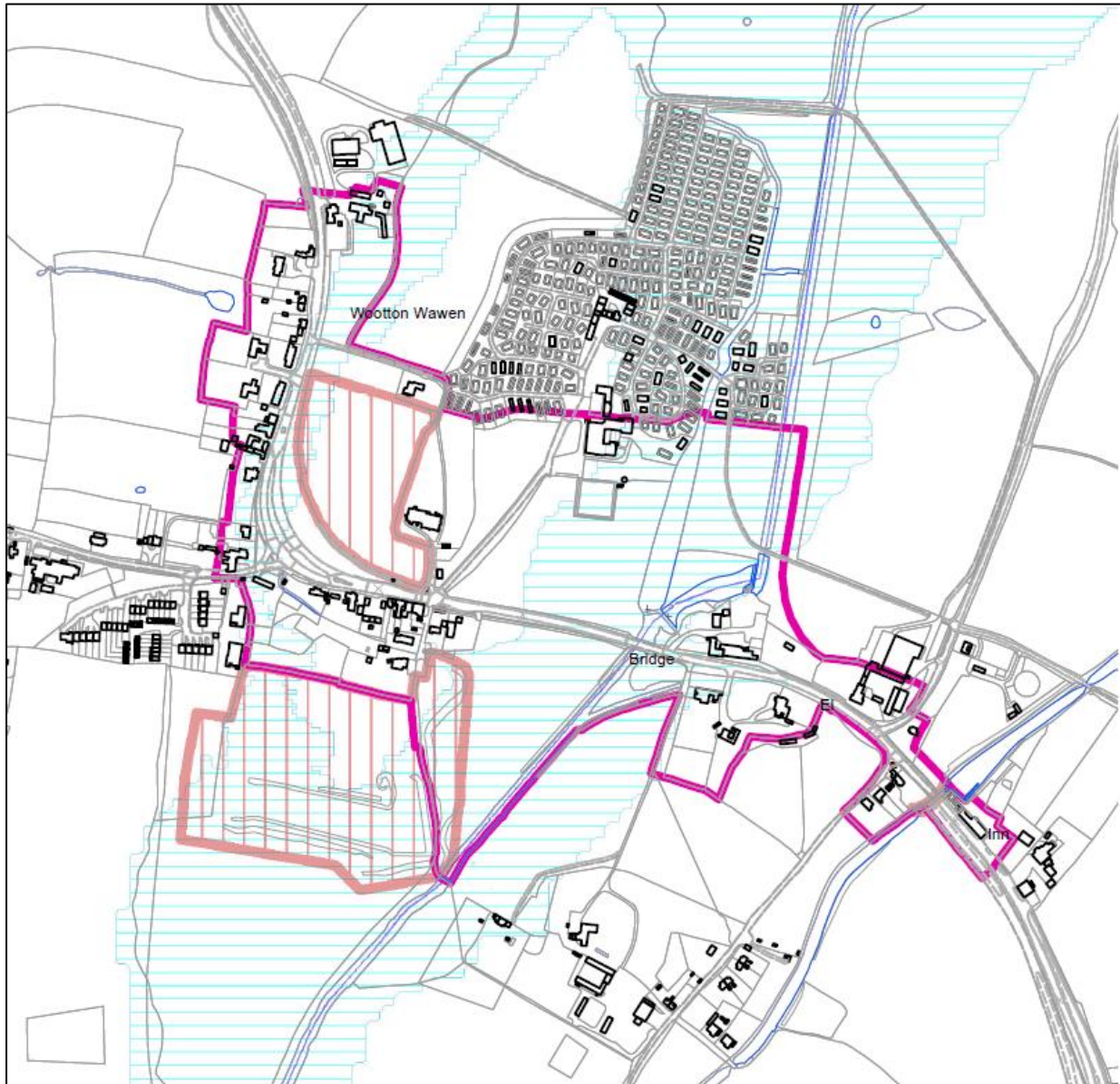
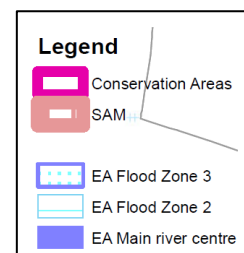


Figure 3 - Heritage Assets and Flood Zones



Policy ENV8 - Promoting High Quality Built Design

All development proposals must demonstrate how local character (see Character Assessment at Appendix 1) 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 following important design principles should be addressed by all development proposals across the Neighbourhood Area:

- 1) Provision of space between buildings or groups of buildings to preserve views;
- 2) Arrangement of buildings to follow established building lines and road hierarchy;
- 3) Reflecting traditional building form and shape with roof pitches of generally 40° or more with varied ridge and eaves lines and heights; and
- 4) Sensitive siting of PV and solar panels particularly when in close proximity to listed buildings or views into and out of the conservation area.

The above policies should not necessarily discourage the very highest quality modern design.

Explanation

A detailed Character Assessment of the village has been undertaken and is included at Appendix 1. The Character Assessment includes 3 character areas which include:

1. The original part of the village lying between the canal to the southeast, the village hall to the west, School Hill to the north and including Wootton Hall estate to the east;
2. The Alcester Road area southwest of the railway line; and
3. The Mayswood Road, Stratford Road area north of School Hill up to the boundary with Henley-in-Arden.

The overall design, layout and architectural features of any new buildings erected within the village should be consistent with the adjacent properties. Similarly any alteration to existing properties, particularly those within a designated conservation area, should employ building materials and design characteristics which are in harmony with the original and adjacent properties.

Policy ENV9 - Nature Conservation

Development should protect, and where possible enhance, the natural environment including important landscapes, natural features and areas of biodiversity. Development will not be permitted that will destroy or adversely affect:

- 1) Natural ponds;
- 2) Brooks and streams;
- 3) Woodland and copses;
- 4) Mature trees and hedgerows; and
- 5) Protected, rare, endangered or priority species.

Development should ensure that the natural features and functions of watercourses and their wider corridor are retained, and where relevant reinstated, and that appropriate habitat buffers are established. In all cases development should not:

- a) adversely affect the integrity of the watercourse structure;
- b) adversely affect the quality of the water;
- c) result in pollution due to unauthorised discharges and run off or encroachment; or
- d) adversely affect the ecological quality and character of the waterways.

Explanation

Many important species are protected under legislation and regulations but often habitats are not. This policy recognises the importance of preserving and enhancing habitats to ensure that wider biodiversity is protected.

Landscape features and habitats such as woodland, hedges, orchards, rivers, streams and ponds support a wide variety of biodiversity.

5.0 Neighbourhood Amenities

Strategic Objective

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 - Health Opportunities

Development proposals that support the provision of new health facilities in the Neighbourhood Area will be supported.

Explanation

Given the age profile of the village it is not surprising that there is an on-going demand for medical facilities. This is currently, mainly, provided by the doctors' practice in Henley-in-Arden, which is already struggling to meet demand. Many of the older residents find it difficult to make the journey into Henley even though it is only just over 2 miles.

It is an aspiration of this plan to obtain better access to medical facilities and the introduction of a satellite service in Wootton Wawen would improve the ability of the less mobile patients to get access.

Policy AM2 - Protecting and Enhancing Education Facilities

Sustaining and enhancing the opportunity to access education will be delivered through the protection and expansion of the existing primary school or a new replacement school within the village.

Whilst the school currently has vacancies for new pupils, any increase in primary school age pupils could see that situation change. This plan seeks to ensure that local children can get their primary education at the local school.

This Plan supports the review of transport arrangements for secondary school pupils travelling outside of the Neighbourhood Area for access and safety.

Explanation

Success for this plan should see the demand for spaces at the school increase. The current building is around 50 years old and starting to need significant repairs. Development proposals which would see the refurbishment or replacement of the existing school either on its existing site or a new site should be looked at favourably.

Policy AM3 - 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.

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

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.

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. A key component is the tow-path that runs alongside the Stratford-Coventry canal.

Policy AM3 - Neighbourhood Community Assets

Existing community facilities play an important part in maintaining a strong, 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 and supported providing they are compatible with existing neighbouring uses.

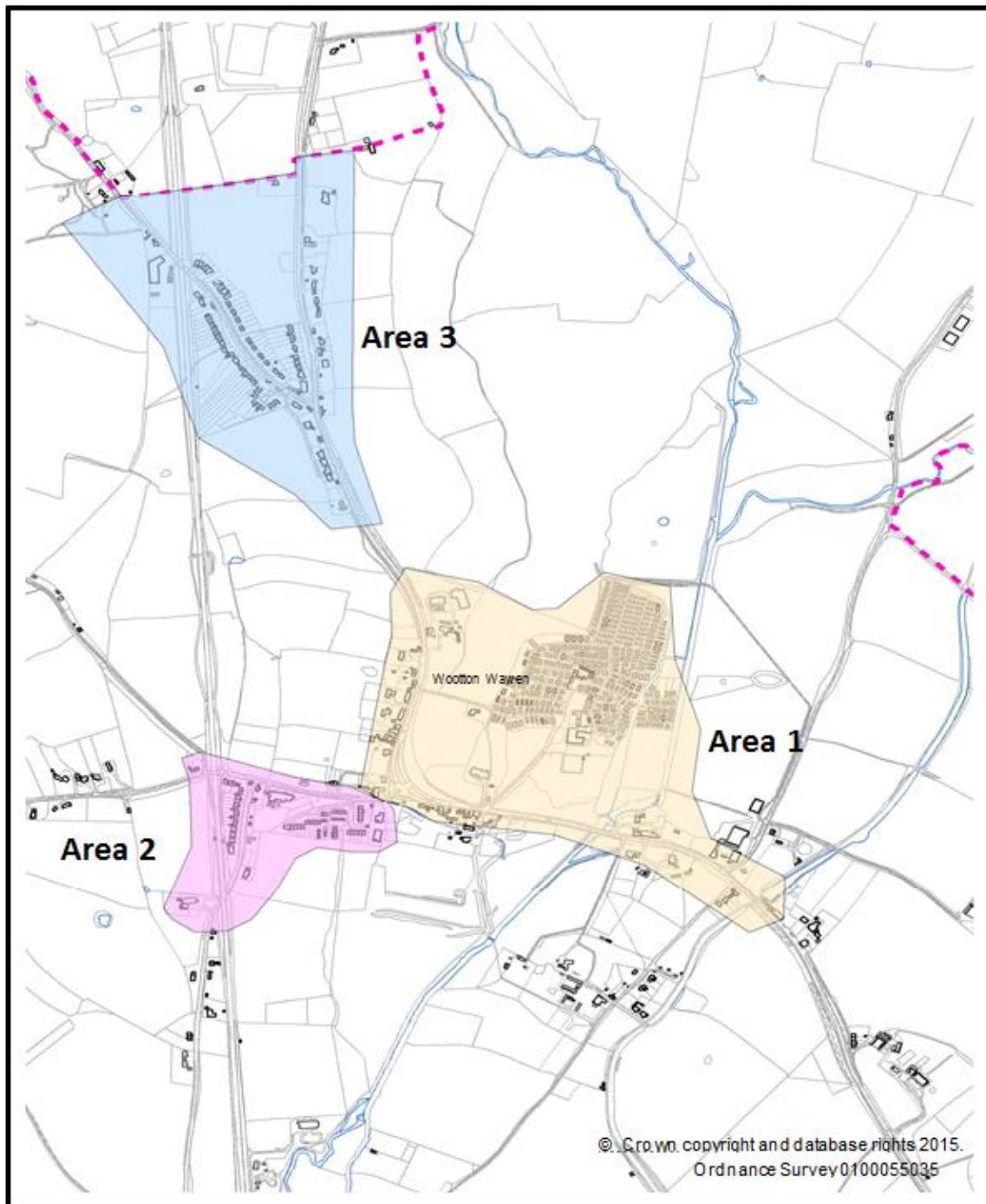
Explanation

There is a presumption in favour of retaining existing community facilities which support a strong, vibrant and cohesive community. Such facilities will be protected from inappropriate forms of development which may cause harm either directly or indirectly through new development, redevelopment or changes of use.

A list of community assets can be found in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

Appendix 1 - Village Character Assessment

A Village Character Assessment has been undertaken to inform certain policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment has been broken down into 3 Areas (see map below). The Village Character Assessment is contained within a separate document (appendix 1) to this Plan.



Appendix 2 - List of Neighbourhood Businesses

1. Allens Caravans - Head Office for a number of park-home estates across the country and sales of park homes
2. Anglo-Welsh Waterways Holidays - Canal basin adjacent to Navigation public house, with parking access and narrow boats for hire
3. Arden Auto Valet - Hand washing of cars and vans
4. Blackford Mill Business Centre - Currently 5 businesses on site
5. The Bulls Head public house & restaurant
6. Cutlers Farm Business Centre - Between 5 and 10 businesses on site, mostly office based
7. Henley Water Gardens - Outlet centre for aquatic gardens
8. Lower Wawensmere Business - Single business site
9. Mayswood Garage - Local facility for maintenance of cars and vans
10. Navigation Garage - Local facility for maintenance of cars and vans
11. Navigation Public House & Restaurant
12. Newhouse Farm Business Centre - Between 5 and 10 businesses on site, mostly office based
13. Wootton Hall Post Office and shop
14. Upper Wawensmere Business Centre - Approximately 10 businesses on site, mostly office based
15. Village Store
16. Wootton Park Business Centre - Over 10 businesses on site, mostly office based plus conference facilities for meetings & wedding receptions
17. Yew Tree Craft Centre - Approximately 20 retail outlets with different/unique products including the Farm Shop, café and hair dresser and locally produced craft products

Employment sites do not include single person businesses working from home.

Appendix 3 - List of Neighbourhood Community Assets

1. Wootton Wawen Village Hall, Alcester Road
2. Wootton Wawen Sports and Social Club, Alcester Road
3. 'The Patch' Village Green, Poundfield
4. Navigation Inn Public House, Stratford Road
5. The Bulls Head Public House, Stratford Road
6. Community Allotments, Alcester Road
7. Wootton Hall Country Club
8. Wootton Hall Bowling Club
9. Wootton Wawen Post Office and shop, Wootton Hall
10. Village General Stores, Stratford Road
11. Yew Tree Craft Centre, Stratford Road
12. St Peters Church of England Primary School, Alcester Road
13. St Peters Church and graveyard
14. St Benedict's Church and cemetery
15. Navigation Garage, Stratford Road
16. Mayswood Garage, Mayswood Road