



Shipston's neighbourhood plan

Our town, our plan, our future.

DRAFT POLICIES

Our Neighbourhood Plan expresses a community vision for how Shipston-on-Stour will develop in the coming years.

Key to the Plan's success and viability are its having coherent and effective policies which 'map out' how our community will respond to the challenges of the future, especially as regards the use of land.

This document contains *drafts* of the policies the Neighbourhood Plan team have prepared, after months of surveys and public consultations, grouped into five crucial topic areas: **Housing, Environment, Infrastructure, Flooding** and **Economy**.

DISCLAIMER

Please note that these are only draft policies and proposals for discussion at this stage. Nothing has been finalised yet.

Environment Policies

Introduction

The Settlement of Shipston on Stour lies within the Feldon parklands landscape. Guidelines for the Feldon Parklands note the “nucleated settlement pattern of the region” and the need to reinforce the existing pattern of small rural towns and villages. Shipston also acts as a gateway to the AONB of the Cotswold Hills.

The NP Environment Policy ENV 1 seeks to embrace and support these special landscape qualities as referenced in Policies CS.5 & CS.11 of the LPA Core Strategy.

The economy of the Settlement has also changed as industrial employers have moved away to be replaced with tourism and commuters to the major employment centres to the north and west. The setting of the town therefore assumes even more importance as key heritage asset.

As the town has expanded outwards, new development has not always been well-designed or located, especially in terms of landscape and visual impact. Some of the peripheral developments, including some housing and particularly commercial units on the north-west of the town, do not sit or look well where merging with the countryside is an important, if not overriding, requirement.

Objectives

- Manage growth whilst protecting the town’s rural setting, ensuring that development is well-designed and respects and enhances the established character and appearance of the settlement.
- Enhance, exploit and embrace the riverside setting and related heritage, increasing amenity and environmental opportunities.
- Manage the pressures on edge-of-settlement areas to effectively reconcile limited growth opportunities with conserving, accessing and utilising the amenity value of the surrounding countryside.
- Maintain the distinctiveness and heritage value of the townscape to conserve and enhance its unique sense of place and character.

Policies

ENV. 1

Conserve and manage the historic and distinctive ‘bowl-like’ river setting of the Town, including designation of hillside Local Green Spaces.

- a. The natural boundaries in which the settlement lies are defined to protect the heritage asset setting.**
- b. The upper slopes of the western backdrop are designated as Local Green Spaces together with the open land which forms the southern gateway to the town.**
- c. The green spaces to the south and west and associated PROWs serve to emphasise the rural nature of the settlement by providing ‘green fingers’ to bring the surrounding countryside into the developed area.**

The Core Strategy stresses the need to maintain and enhance the rural character and local distinctiveness of the landscape together with the importance of recognising special and particular features. For Shipston these include the landscape setting with the town nestled within the river valley, the riverside corridor and the network of streets, passageways and historic buildings in and around the town centre.

The backdrop of hills and open countryside in arcs to the south and west are integral to this rural setting. The arc to the northwest and north, whilst less sensitive in terms of backdrop does form the 'rim' of the bowl-like setting of Shipston and boundary considerations need to protect this heritage asset if the nature of the town is to be retained and preserved.

To the East, the River Stour and its corridor forms the natural boundary to the settlement and completes the heritage setting. The importance of this is included in Policy AS.6 of the LPA Core Strategy.

Policy ENV.2

Ensure development in edge-of-settlement locations is effectively and sensitively designed to reflect the overlap of town and country.

- a. Closer supervision and local considerations are key to ensuring the level of sensitivity required is adhered to and respected by both the developer and the LPA. A process of closer and formal dialogue between these parties and local representation is proposed.**

Much of the detail for the protection of the character and distinctiveness and visual impact at the fringes of the built settlement is embedded in the Reserve Matters of relevant Planning Applications. There are sufficient examples to demonstrate the fragility of this process once developments are undertaken.

Provision and care must be applied to provide a merged transition between the built and natural environments.

Policy ENV.3

Ensure development in and around the historic heart of the town respects and enhances the heritage assets of both the built form and landscape setting.

- a. The density of housing developments at the edge of the settlement should be low and use made of single storied dwellings on the periphery.**
- b. Commercial development, particularly on rising ground in the Tilemans Lane industrial area should make extensive use of earth shade cladding (brown or green) and 'sky-merge' techniques with height restrictions preserving the skyline.**
- c. Connections to the countryside should be established through open space and PROWs, with 'green fingers' providing a gentle transition between built and natural environments.**

Shipston on Stour is a town of Anglo-Saxon origin which has been allowed to grow from around 1500 inhabitants in 1951 to its current size of over 5000. Its setting, distinctiveness and townscape are a key heritage asset which provides the town with a unique sense of place and purpose. The town is home to a rich historic environment, including a several Medieval and Georgian buildings. The heritage of the Town Centre is reflected in the designation of an extensive Conservation Area and the presence of numerous Listed Buildings. Despite the Conservation Area status there are a few examples, such as the Old Bakery, where the character of the built form has clashed alarmingly with the surroundings. Equally there are examples, such as Brindles Alley and Old Brewery Close, where design and materials have been excellent.

Development outside the Conservation Area has been of variable design quality and largely reflects commercial developers' ideas of the relevant decade. Some otherwise acceptable developments have been spoilt by a lack of attention to critical design detail at the post-outline planning stage.

The character and heritage value of the historic heart need to be well-protected. That protection needs to be locally strengthened by ensuring both re-development and new buildings, listed or not, respect the character and appearance of this part of the Settlement. Where development proposals will improve the vitality and commercial well-being of the town, a compromise with heritage concerns will be required.

The industrial area of the town is on rising ground to the north-west of the centre with many buildings of the 'warehouse' type being inevitably near the edge of the settlement. It is unfortunate that some of these have been allowed to use white cladding material which does nothing to blend in with the rural surroundings and backdrop.

Policy ENV.4

Ensure that the riverside setting is developed as a more useful, accessible and attractive amenity to serve the community and visitors and in doing so ensures the primacy of flood mitigation measures.

- a. Following flood alleviation work at the historic road bridge, the re-formed banks have the capability to be developed as a recreational area immediately adjacent to the river whilst retaining their role in terms of flow regulation.**
- b. Existing public rights of way (PROWs), including a long distance footpath, provide possibilities for the eastern river bank to be further developed as a recreational area associated with the settlement.**
- c. A riverside amenity area at the southern edge of the settlement would provide an attractive area on an otherwise undeveloped flood meadow area to the benefit of residents and visitors and would be supportive of Core Strategy Policy C.24 (Healthy Communities).**
- d. Re-instatement of the footbridge at the end of PROW SS120a, (a spur off the Shakespeare Way long distance footpath) would enhance access to this area and form part of a circular walk around the settlement boundaries taking in the river, the ridge at Hanson Hill overlooking the settlement and the broad existing PROW 'green finger' of the Hanson Track into the Town.**
- e. A policy to sympathetically develop riverside pathways on the western bank adjacent to the sports ground area to a wheelchair/mobility scooter standard would provide amenity benefits for less able members of the community.**

The River Stour is a unique asset to the Town, yet it remains under-utilised both in terms of its ability to contribute to the economy (through tourism) and to the well-being of residents. These sentiments are also expressed in the LPA Core Strategy in Policies AS.6 & CS.24.

Proposals to extend and develop existing PROWs on the eastern bank of the river are being evaluated and progressed by a community group.

Policy ENV.5

Derive full benefit from the existing in-town amenity green spaces and where possible create additional areas.

Respond to the shortfall in amenity green spaces by protecting and enhancing public access to the open countryside adjoining the settlement including the designations of two 'public recreational zones'.

Improve, maintain and expand public footpath connections to and within the Town.

- a. A key strategy is to 'open-up' access to the most attractive countryside surrounding Shipston in support of CS.24 and AS.6; achieving this by primarily using existing PROWs and extending these to provide connectivity between existing and future developments. New PROWs would form a positive feature of these new developments.**
- b. The policies of 'green fingers' and Local Green Spaces (ENV.1) would serve to integrate the countryside into the built area and provide a 'soft edge' to the settlement.**
- c. An increase in public allotment space to meet the standards set within the District would be sought.**
- d. Through collaboration with landowners and developers, key parts of the existing PROW network will be improved and these improvements sustained to embed the PROWs as a valued asset to the community. Improved and new signage will form part of the new and improved connections to the countryside, together with visitor information to maximise the heritage asset value.**

It is clear that Shipston would be very unlikely to be able to provide any substantial area of public park or green space within the current settlement area. Whilst small windfall sites may become available in the future, these will compete with the need to allocate to housing in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS.16. There is a currently a shortfall of 2.13 hectares of amenity green space when measured against the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CS.24.

With 45% of the population over 50 years old, there is a need to reflect this in public open space considerations.

In support of CS Policy CS.24 is the concept of two 'amenity zones'. Any development within these zones would have to be seen to contribute in a positive manner to this concept. A southern zone would extend south along the river corridor providing edge of settlement green space and facilities for the benefit of residents and visitors. A northern zone would provide a focus for open and sporting recreation, predominantly for residents, extending in a north-west sweep to encompass the Sheldon Bosley Hub with adjoining football field and bowling green through to the High School and Leisure Centre.

There are currently two allotment sites within the parish: Shoulderway Lane on the south edge of the settlement has 27 plots and Mill Street adjacent with 54 plots. These total 1.15 hectares. Demand generally exceeds supply by about 10%. Average wait time is about 6 months. Shortfall set against standards in CS.24 is 1.45 hectares.

Policy ENV.6

Ensure that the native wildlife and natural habitats immediately surrounding Shipston are protected, sustained and managed to be appreciated and enjoyed by the community, visitors and inhabitant wildlife.

- a. The encouragement of wildlife close to the town has been achieved through the designation of a Protected Local Wildlife Site at Mount Pleasant Orchard on the western fringe of the settlement. This has now been established on a 1.35 hectare site in one of the oldest orchards in the District. As is normal with LWS, there is no public access as the primary beneficiaries are the flora and fauna that can thrive undisturbed. However an established PROW skirts the western edge of the site so it is likely that the benefits of the site in terms of fauna can be enjoyed by a wider public.**
- b. A site for a Local Nature Reserve was identified as an outcome of a 2013 Ecology Report carried out within the western and southern area of the settlement. This has been pursued in accordance with a recommendation in the LPA Core Strategy Policy AS.6. It meets the requirements for a LNR in that it has public access and has a varied ecology to encourage a wide variety of species within a small area. The site is of 1.10 hectares is also on the route of the circular walk referenced in ENV.3. The landowner is positive and supportive. Advice and guidance have been given by Warwickshire CC Principle Ecologist.**

Surveys and discussions with residents indicate that high value is placed on the proximity of Shipston to the attractive open countryside on the edge of the Feldon and Cotswold fringe Special Landscape Areas as defined in the LPA Core Strategy CS.12.

With 45% of the population of the parish over 50 years old and 25% retired, it is important to recognise that this trend may continue. As such, policies to accommodate more diverse forms of open space and recreation provision are desirable as suggested in Core Strategy Policy CS.24.

Housing Policies

(terms *in italics* are defined in the Glossary)

Introduction

The population of Shipston has been growing at a faster rate than any other settlement in Stratford District. It has more than trebled since 1951. In particular, the proportion of the population which is of pensionable age has been rising much faster than in other areas, so that by 2011 well over a quarter of the town's inhabitants were pensioners (50% higher than the national average). That proportion is expected to continue to increase in the future. There were 2405 dwellings in the town in 2011 and planning permission has been granted for nearly 640 more since then. They should be more than sufficient in numerical terms to meet the *Core Strategy's* allocation for housing growth in Shipston until 2031, though they may not provide a sufficient number of homes cheap enough for the local population to afford to rent or buy, or the *specialised accommodation* for the elderly that is likely to be needed.

Objectives

The plan's policies seek to:

- Address the challenges of housing and caring for a larger and older population, and of providing more homes that younger persons and families can afford to rent and to buy
- Sustain the town's strong sense of place, heritage and local character, including by resisting new housing development on unsuitable *greenfield sites*
- Ensure that the future housing needs of the town's population are addressed in a managed, balanced and well-designed way.

Policies

Policy H1 Determining housing needs

The Town Council will commission a *Local Housing Needs Assessment* at least every four years.

Carrying out a survey of housing needs regularly throughout the Plan period will enable the Town and District Councils to assess the current level of need locally for *affordable*, *Extra Care* and *low cost market housing*. This can then be used to help to determine whether any further planning permissions should be granted for such schemes.

Policy H2 Affordable homes

- Proposals for affordable housing on suitable sites (see Policies H5, H6 and H7) for rental or shared ownership by those with a *local connection* whose housing needs are not met by the market, will be supported.**
- Such housing schemes should include provisions to ensure that the homes remain at an affordable price in perpetuity for future eligible households with a local connection.**

A Housing Needs Assessment carried out specifically for this Neighbourhood Plan at the end of 2013 showed a requirement at that time for 26 affordable homes in Shipston (24 to rent and two for shared ownership). In July 2014 Stratford District Council's Housing Waiting List included 159 households with a CV36 postcode (Shipston and the surrounding villages), 17 of which were classified as being high or

medium priority requirements. Five affordable homes have been completed since the end of 2013 and planning permission has already been granted for a further 142. Some of these are now under construction and all will probably have been completed by the early 2020s. However, there will almost certainly be new demands arising for affordable homes throughout the period to 2031 by people with a local connection to Shipston. There is therefore likely to be a need for further permissions to be granted for affordable housing in order to maintain a supply of *affordable rented, intermediate rented and shared equity owned homes* throughout the Plan period.

Policy H3 Low cost market housing

- a. Proposals for the following types of housing will be supported on suitable sites (see Policies H5, H6 and H7):**
- **schemes, including small-scale community-led developments, comprising low cost market housing specifically for sale at a price lower than the normal market value to those with a *local connection* whose housing needs are not met by the market;**
 - **self-build housing developments;**
 - **the conversion or change of use of existing buildings (subject also to the provisions of Policies H5, ECON2 and ECON3).**
- b. Low cost market housing schemes should include provisions to ensure that the homes remain at a price below normal market value in perpetuity for future eligible households with a local connection.**

New market housing in Shipston is often priced beyond the means of the existing local community. The 2013 Housing Needs Assessment revealed an unmet need at that time for at least 24 low cost market homes. This Plan therefore encourages schemes which will maintain a supply of low cost homes, particularly for younger workers in the town so as to help to boost the local economy.

Policy H4 Housing for the elderly

- a. Proposals for the following types of accommodation will be supported on suitable sites (see Policies H5, H6 and H7):**
- **Care Homes (providing personal care and/or nursing care);**
 - **'Extra Care' housing for those with a local connection;**
 - ***Sheltered housing* for those with a local connection;**
 - **Other accommodation specifically designed for the elderly.**
- b. 'Extra Care' and sheltered housing schemes should include provisions to ensure that the homes remain available in perpetuity for future eligible households with a local connection.**

In order to cater for the housing needs of the increasingly elderly population of Shipston and its surrounding rural parishes, and to help to free up affordable and general market housing for other households, special provision will need to be made. Warwickshire County Council estimated at the end of 2013 that there was then a current shortfall of 162 Extra Care units in Shipston to meet the needs of the town's residents and those living in the surrounding rural parishes (25% of them for social renting and 75% for private sale). Outstanding planning permissions are likely to provide, at most, 130 such units, and demand is only expected to increase over the next 15 years. Further permissions for Extra Care accommodation will be required if efforts are to be made to meet that need.

Policy H5 More intensive use of land for housing within the existing built-up area

- a. **Proposals for the creation of additional residential accommodation within the existing built-up area of Shipston through change of use, conversion, infilling and small-scale redevelopment will be supported provided that they do not adversely impact on other policies within the Plan, particularly those that relate to environmental and design quality and to maintaining a supply of sites to provide new employment opportunities.**
- b. **Proposals for the conversion to residential use of space above ground floor level in commercial premises in the town centre will be supported provided that the ground floor remains in commercial use.**
- c. **The density of any development under this policy should create a character that is appropriate to the site's context, and house design should be in keeping with the scale of the immediate surrounding area.**
- d. **To ensure that developments under this policy provide the types and tenures of accommodation that are most needed in the town, applicants should demonstrate that account has been taken of the most recent Local Housing Needs Survey.**

To provide additional homes under Policies H2, H3 and H4, as well as increasing the stock of private rented accommodation for those who cannot afford to buy, without encroaching on greenfield sites it will be important to make the most effective use possible of development opportunities within the existing built up area. However, it will be important that such developments, especially proposals for housing in private residential gardens, are sensitively designed so as not to alter the character of the area in which they are located. It is considered that the reintroduction of residential accommodation in the upper floors of commercial properties will help to safeguard the vitality of the town centre.

Policy H6 Redevelopment of previously developed land

- a. **Proposals for the redevelopment of previously developed land within the built-up area of Shipston will be supported (subject also to the provisions of Policies ECON1, ECON2 and ECON3).**
- b. ***Mixed use* development of such sites will be encouraged, and opportunities should be taken in particular to remedy deficiencies in physical, social and *green infrastructure* identified elsewhere in this Plan.**
- c. **The potential mixed use site in Tileman's Lane, as shown on the Site Allocation Plan, should be considered for a combination of at least two, and preferably all, of the following uses:**
 - **Small business units (possibly including live/work units)**
 - **Community facilities (possibly including a Baptist Church)**
 - **Extra Care Housing**
 - **Public open space**
 - **Expansion of Shipston Primary School (such as shared car parking or other facilities shared with the community).**

Redevelopment of previously developed land is almost always preferable to greenfield development. Such sites may provide opportunities for a change of use, and sometimes for a mix of uses. A number of plots in Tileman's Lane, two of which are currently undeveloped (one of them having originally been set aside for a community facility) could provide an opportunity for a mixed use development, should the landowners agree.

Any such scheme should retain some of the area in employment use but could also:

- reduce the number of heavy lorries in the vicinity of the Primary School
- reinstate a footpath along the north side of Tileman’s Lane
- provide a safe off-road place for children to be dropped off for and collected from the school
- assist the expansion of the school, which is likely to be necessary in the 2020s
- provide new community facilities
- accommodate Extra Care housing relatively close to the town centre.

Any redevelopment of the Tileman’s Lane site should be subject to a Development Brief prepared by Shipston Town Council and/or Stratford District Council.

Policy H7 Additional housing land

- a. The sites at the edge of the built-up area set out in Table 1 and shown on the Site Allocation Plan are allocated for housing development from 2022 onwards, where the development comprises one or a combination of the types of homes supported by Policies H2, H3 and H4.**
- b. Proposals for the provision of general market housing on these or any other greenfield sites outside the existing built-up area will not be acceptable.**
- c. The mix of types and sizes of homes proposed on each site should demonstrate that account has been taken of the most recent Local Housing Needs Assessment. Large areas of uniform type and size of home will not be acceptable.**

Table 1

Site	Allocated housing numbers
Site A	35 homes
Site B	35 homes
Site C	48 homes
Site D	6 homes
Total	124 homes

It is not possible to forecast the number of additional affordable, low-cost market and Extra Care homes that are likely to be needed in Shipston in the second half of the Plan period. All we can say is that new demands from people with a local connection are likely to continue arise throughout the 2020s. In order to assist the provision of such accommodation throughout the second half of the Plan period, four small sites have been identified which have potential for accommodating housing development without undue impact on the landscape setting of the town.

The latest proposed modifications to the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy require 487 homes to be built in Shipston between 2011 and 2031. In addition, a further 720 homes are to be provided on large sites between 2016 and 2024 in Stratford-upon-Avon and the eight Main Rural Centres (MRCs), of which Shipston is one; and 110 on windfall sites between 2020 and 2031 in the MRCs. Permissions in Shipston since 2011 already amount to nearly 640; the 124 dwellings allocated above would take this total to over 760, excluding any windfall sites which become available under policies H5 and H6. That total would be sufficient to provide not only the 487 homes specifically allocated to Shipston but also a third of the unallocated 830 dwellings that need to be accommodated in Stratford-upon-Avon and the eight MRCs in the period up to 2031. A significant number of homes that will also count towards that figure have been granted permission in other MRCs during the past few months. It is assessed, therefore, that

no additional general market housing needs to be permitted in Shipston during the Plan period to meet the allocations specified for Shipston in the Core Strategy, and so these will be resisted.

Policy H8 Tourist accommodation

Proposals to provide visitor accommodation, either by change of use or by new construction, will be supported (subject also to the provisions of Policy H5, ECON2 and ECON3).

This policy is designed to help to boost tourism in the town, in support of Policy ECON2.

Glossary

Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as low cost market housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households. See also definitions for Affordable Rented Housing, General Needs Housing, Intermediate Housing, Low Cost Market Housing, Social Rented Housing and Specialised Accommodation.

Affordable rented housing: This is housing let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing at a rent below market levels to households who are eligible for social rented housing.

Core Strategy: A development plan document forming part of a local authority's Local Plan, which sets out a vision and core policies for the development of an area.

Extra-care Housing: 'Extra care' housing developments comprise self-contained homes with design features and support and care services available to enable selfcare and independent living. Each household has its own front door. It is for people whose disabilities, frailty or health needs make ordinary housing unsuitable but who do not need or want to move to long term care (residential or nursing homes).

General Needs Housing: All housing of any tenure other than that which is specialised housing. See also definition of Specialised Accommodation.

Greenfield land: Land that has not been previously developed, including land in agricultural use, private residential gardens and parks, playing fields and allotments.

Green Infrastructure: A network of high quality, multi-functional green spaces and other environmental features, urban and rural, including areas such as parks, gardens and amenity green space, accessible natural and semi-natural green space, allotments and community orchards. The greatest benefits will be gained when it is designed and managed as a multifunctional resource which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Housing Needs Assessment: An assessment of housing needs in the local area. This assessment plays a crucial role in underpinning the planning policies relating to affordable housing. In addition, the information on local needs is required to determine the location of such housing and guide new investment.

Intermediate housing: This comprises homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Local Connection:

a. For **affordable housing**, a local connection is defined as:

- having lived in the parish of Shipston (by choice) for a minimum period of two years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having been in permanent, paid employment for a minimum period of six months, within the parish of Shipston, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having a close family member (mother, father, sister, brother, or adult child aged 18 and over) living in the parish of Shipston and their having done so for a minimum period of five years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having lived in the parish of Shipston for three out of the last five years immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having a local connection as a result of special circumstances (as defined in Stratford District Council's Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy 2015).

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

- having lived in Shipston or one or more of the adjoining parishes of Tredington, Stretton-on-Fosse, Tidmington, Honington or Barcheston & Willington (by choice) for a minimum period of two years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having been in permanent, paid employment for a minimum period of six months, within one or more of those parishes, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having a close family member (mother, father, sister, brother, or adult child aged 18 and over) living in one or more of those parishes and their having done so for a minimum period of five years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
- having lived in one or more of those parishes for three out of the last five years immediately prior to the application for accommodation.

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

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

b. For **low cost market housing** a local connection is defined as:

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

- having a local connection as a result of special circumstances (as defined in Stratford District Council’s Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy 2015).
- c. For **‘Extra Care’ and sheltered housing**, a local connection is defined as:
- having lived in the one or more of the parishes of Shipston, Whitchurch, Ilmington, Tredington, Stretton-on-Fosse, Tidmington, Idlicote, Honington, Barcheston & Willington, Burmington, Sutton-under-Brailes, Brailes, Cherington, Stourton, Whichford & Ascott, Great Wolford, Little Wolford, Long Compton, Barton-on-the-Heath or Little Compton (by choice) for a minimum period of two years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
 - having been in permanent, paid employment for a minimum period of six months, within one or more of those parishes, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
 - having a close family member (mother, father, sister, brother, or adult child aged 18 and over) living in one or more of those parishes and their having done so for a minimum period of five years, immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
 - having lived in one or more of those parishes for three out of the last five years immediately prior to the application for accommodation; or
 - having a local connection as a result of special circumstances (as defined in Stratford District Council’s Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy 2015).

Low Cost Market Housing: Low cost market housing is sold at a price lower than the normal market value. By definition, although it is more ‘affordable’ to potential purchasers, low cost market housing does not fall within the planning definition of affordable housing.

Mixed Use: The development of a single building or site with two or more complementary uses

Previously Developed Land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes:

- land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings;
- land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures;
- land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and
- land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Sheltered Housing: Accommodation for elderly or disabled people consisting of private independent units with some shared facilities and a warden.

Social Rented Housing: This is housing owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It is available to rent at below market levels. Lower rents are possible because the Government subsidises Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in order to meet local affordable housing needs.

Specialised Accommodation: Specialised accommodation is housing for any age group that is purpose designed and designated in a planning obligation for a specific client group. The delivery of support or care will not result in the categorisation of housing as specialised accommodation if the housing is not purpose designed and designated.

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

Infrastructure Policies

Introduction

Shipston on Stour has grown dramatically over the last 20 years with a near 40% increase in housing from 1991 to 2011 and projected growth by a further 26% assuming all approved developments take place, and 30% if imminent applications are approved. While earlier growth has been largely linear the projected future growth represents a far faster rate of expansion. We are concerned that such existing and projected growth has not been and will not be matched by an adequate rate of infrastructure provision which ensures that the town's facilities and amenities are 'Future Proofed' and that such growth without matching infrastructure will result in a loss of vital services.

There is an opportunity to improve the Town Centre in terms of both access and shopping, and to make better provision in education, health and leisure facilities over the next 15 years.

The following Objectives and Policies seek to address these concerns and issues.

Objectives

The plan's policies seek to:

- Reduce the wide scale flooding harm of past years - we have formulated a separate group of policies to address this issue
- Moderate water consumption to help maintain the town's water supply at a sustainable level
- Ensure the statutory services are safeguarded and capacities are increased in line with future requirements
- Improve the public space in the Town Centre, making it more attractive, economically viable and safe by reviewing the traffic and parking
- Improve and make safer the various access routes for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the town
- Retain existing community amenities and provide more and better facilities for education, schools, healthcare, leisure and other services.

Policies

Policy INF 1 Sustainable drainage

We will require developments to exceed the DEFRA 2015 technical standards for sustainable drainage systems or subsequent adopted technical standards. Developers will be encouraged to link sustainable drainage systems to green infrastructure, enhancing biodiversity together with social and recreational value.

In view of the increasing potential for flooding of the River Stour arising from surface water discharges from new developments it is our objective that developers should install and maintain sustainable surface water management measures on new developments which will improve flood resilience compared with the existing land use.

Policy INF 2 Reducing water consumption

Development proposals will be required to meet the optional requirements for water efficiency of 110 litres/person/day consumption.

Water resources in Warwickshire are under 'moderate stress' – see footnote (1) - and the effects of climate change are likely to reduce supply further and could increase demand. Hence it is necessary to limit the demand consistent with future available water resources.

Policy INF 3 Statutory services

Where there are identified deficiencies in Statutory Services these need to be upgraded now and the right capacities put in place ahead of the future growth in demand. This includes high speed Broadband which infrastructure and service providers and developers should install and upgrade to adequately connect new residential and commercial developments.

Statutory services providers are under an obligation to keep supplies to a satisfactory level; however, because the level of approved development is far in excess of that of past years, and because planning for extra supply spans a period of years, there is concern that there could be a shortage of services.

Policy INF 4 Town Centre improvements

Support proposals for physical improvements especially to the Market Place, High Street and adjacent town centre areas, to make this locality more attractive and functional, economically viable and vibrant. This will include better traffic management, safer pedestrian and disabled persons' access, car parking, and adequate goods vehicle delivery provision.

This will enhance the physical infrastructure of the town centre and the immediate surrounding areas in relation to demands from future growth and sustaining the local economy, in particular consider improvements with the traffic flow, access and parking as reviewed by the County Council in 2010.

Options (combinations are possible) include:

- 1. One way traffic flow**
- 2. Shared space - see footnote (2)**
- 2. Pedestrianisation**
- 4. No changes**

Policy INF 5 Pedestrian and cyclist access

Development proposals must include appropriate pedestrian and cycle route linkages within and between new developments, and to and from the town centre and peripheral areas; and where similar opportunities arise within the existing developed areas, the creation of similar linkages will be encouraged.

Improved connections, routes and accessibility within and between the existing and future built-up areas will encourage the safer and greater use by cyclists, pedestrians and in particular disabled persons.

Policy INF 6 Community facilities

Encourage and support proposals which retain, enhance and add significant capacity to indoor and outdoor community facilities, including but not limited to education, healthcare, sports and leisure, community halls and places of worship, to meet the needs of the growing population and particular age groups. Land with the potential to accommodate expansion of existing facilities will be safeguarded.

The intention is to retain and enhance the many valued community facilities, both buildings and related land, to better meet the current and future needs of residents and visitors. The High School is at maximum capacity and is carrying out a phased programme of redevelopment, the Primary School is already at full capacity, and will be needing additional classrooms in the next few years, the Medical Centre is looking for new premises and parking, the Sheldon Bosley Hub and associated land which is a valuable asset to the community should be retained, and there is a need for extra sports facilities.

Policy INF 7 Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL] contributions

- a. Financial contributions will be required as appropriate from each developer to fund additional infrastructure such as schools, healthcare, leisure facilities, green infrastructure, highways, and flood management measures.**
- b. Specific identified community priorities for additional local facilities to be provided as a result of new development are:**
 - 1) High School expansion**
 - 2) Primary School expansion**
 - 3) A larger capacity Medical Centre**
 - 4) Flooding reduction and mitigation measures**
 - 5) Town Centre traffic management, signage, and public realm upgrades**
 - 6) Additional sports hall capacity**
 - 7) Conservation of the natural environment.**

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy that Local Authorities in England and Wales are empowered, but not required, to charge on most types of new development in their area. CIL charges are based on simple formulae that relate the charge to the size and character of the development paying for it. This allows Local Authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area which can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure and community facilities needed to meet demand within the local area. It is important that targets, standards or requirements for such funding do not impose unreasonable burdens on applicants or make developments unviable.

Footnote 1 ref Warwickshire Sub-Regional Water Study Stratford upon Avon District Council Final Report March 2010

Footnote 2 Shared space is where there are no defined streets and footpaths; people and traffic all use the same areas (refer 'Street Design For All' by Department for Transport, 2014)

Flooding Policies

Introduction

Shipston on Stour and surrounding villages were badly affected by flooding in 1998 and 2007, with near misses in 2012/13. These were caused both by surface water run-off in the town and flooding from the river. The Environment Agency (EA) models suggest a 50/50 split between them. Some 80 properties, both private and commercial, were flooded and at least 3 businesses were closed for good. It took up to 2 years for the affected properties to be renovated and many (but not all) owners installed flood protection measures at the same time.

Public meetings post the 2007 event expressed strong views that inadequate protection against flooding was afforded to Shipston and that major development should be restricted until solutions to reduce the risk of flooding were put in place. This has not happened and since then over 500 houses and commercial developments have been built or approved under the Government's more relaxed planning regime. These could further load the existing road and waste water drainage infrastructure, particularly on the western slope of and through the town centre.

Objectives

This Plan will facilitate both existing and new ways of reducing flood risk and water pollution which is damaging to the infrastructure throughout the parish by:

- Supporting the implementation of Shipston Area Flood Action Group (SAFAG)'s plans to hold back water discharged by run-off into the tributary watercourses above Shipston at times of heavy rainfall by means of upstream natural flood defence measures such as dams, ponds and tree planting
- Supporting SAFAG's efforts to persuade the EA to reduce hindrances to river flow through Shipston such as overhanging trees and intrusive sandbanks
- Supporting SAFAG's work with relevant agencies (Warwickshire CC, Severn Trent, Stratford upon Avon DC) to ensure that the road and waste water drainage infrastructure is fully functional and properly maintained.
- Supporting Shipston Town Council's and SAFAG's work with developers to exceed National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and DEFRA standards on surface water run-off and waste water discharge from new developments. This will help address apparent under capacity issues with existing drainage systems.
- Ensuring that there is no further development on the existing flood plain where it provides excess water containment in time of heavy rainfall.
- Advising residential and business property owners at risk of flooding in the installation of flood defence measures (where not already done) at their properties.
- Supporting the maintenance and regular updating of the Shipston on Stour Flood Resilience Plan and the Residents Flood Emergency Plan.
- Protecting and improving water quality, wildlife habitat and community access to the riverside.

Policies

Policy F1

- a. All developments including minor housing and commercial extensions within the Shipston parish should be designed and constructed to reduce the overall level of flood risk both on the site, from waste water discharge and from surface water run off compared with current land use.**
- b. Access roads, driveways and other paving created as part of any new development should be required to be permeable and maintained as such in perpetuity.**

This is more specific than the Core Strategy and NPPF guidelines in that it aims for flood risk 'betterment'.

Policy F2

The creation of new culverts (unless essential for access) that would result in the loss of an open watercourse should not be permitted.

This aims to maintain existing open watercourses which have better flood alleviation properties than closed culverts which require maintenance and can become blocked.

Policy F3

Development should not be permitted in existing flood water containment areas within the River Stour flood plain including in the parish of Barcheston where it bounds Shipston. See Topography and Flood Risk map.

This is to ensure that the flood plain maintains its current capacity for flood water containment as a minimum as recommended by the Environment Agency and adopted in the Core Strategy.

Policy F4

Work with WCC, SDC and Severn Trent to ensure that the town's system of drains and culverts is made fully functional (as designed) and is properly maintained to that standard.

Policy F5

Promote SAFAG's flood alleviation policies, plans and actions to residents, businesses and other stakeholders through community communications channels and advise on property flood protection measures and contractors that are available.

This is to keep property owners informed and enable them to protect their own properties and themselves.

Explanations of our Policies

The NPPF gives clear guidance that local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk and water supply and demand considerations. The Core Strategy seeks to avoid flood risk and to minimise the impact where it does occur although at this stage SDC has few resources to address this responsibility. These higher level

strategies provide a clear context for the Neighbourhood Plan's policies in relation to reducing flood risk. The particular circumstances which apply in and around Shipston on Stour suggest that a more local interpretation of these policies is appropriate.

Further, besides the Core Strategy's identification of the need to alleviate flood risk, Warwickshire CC as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is developing a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2nd draft, Sept 2015) which identifies Shipston on Stour as having the second highest flooding risk from a rainfall event on a list of 40 settlements in the County. (SWMP Para: 6.12).

Finally, the EA consider that the risk of flooding in parts of Shipston is now greater than a 1 in 50 year event (pre 2007 it was considered less than a 1 in 100 year risk).

The community is strongly in favour of taking the opportunity in the Plan to support comprehensive flood alleviation measures both from the main river and from surface water run-off into the town.

RELEVANT STRATEGIC POLICY REFERENCES - to follow

Glossary:

NP	Neighbourhood Plan
EA	Environment Agency
SAFAG	Shipston Area Flood Action Group
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
WCC	Warwickshire County Council
SDC	Stratford upon Avon District Council
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
DEFRA	Department for Farming and Rural Affairs

Economy Policies

Introduction

In recent years Shipston has seen the closure of several large employers, with a consequent loss of 25% of local jobs in the period 2007-14. The town centre has largely regained its vibrancy since the severe damage wreaked by the 2007 flood, through the efforts of business owners and the introduction of popular street markets and festivals which have increased visitor footfall. The presence of a thriving Post Office and one remaining bank also contribute to the town's vitality. The decline of industrial activity however remains of concern if we are to offer the diversity of employment necessary to deliver sustainable economic growth. Within Shipston there still exist unexploited opportunities to develop tourism, not least in making the most of its riverside setting. The following Economy policies aim to redress these imbalances.

Objectives

Our policies seek to:

- Retain existing employment sites in that use; support mixed-use proposals with a strong employment component; and support proposals creating more business space, including some to meet the requirements of business start-ups and home workers;
- Maintain and strengthen the town's role as a Main Rural Centre serving residents and the wider catchment area, with a specialist and distinctive retail offering combined with the provision of a broad mix of local and visitor services and amenities;
- Encourage proposals for tourism attractions and accommodation, including making better use of the town's heritage and riverside area and putting Shipston on the Cotswolds' tourism map
- Promote Shipston-on-Stour to a wider regional business community as an attractive, prosperous and well-serviced place for business development

Policies

EC1 Retention of existing employment sites and creation of new business space

- a. Safeguard vacant and undeveloped allocated employment land in the Tileman's Lane and 'Business Village' estates**
- b. Support and encourage re-development of the vacant Turbine Blading site for employment purposes**
- c. Ensure that the employment designated elements within new developments are retained**
- d. Support proposals that contribute to the creation of additional business space in and around the town centre**

The Core Strategy (AS.6.C.) acknowledges the need to support the business uses of land available for development on Tileman's Lane and in the 'Business Village'. As a general principle (CS.21) it seeks to encourage "a wide range of employment-generating uses [] on existing industrial areas". Moreover, a survey of local businesses (Shipston on Stour Business Report 2014) - and in particular the responses of those planning expansion in the coming years - identified a need for more business space in the area. There is no potential for the development of further sizeable employment sites within the settlement

area; hence the imperative to retain existing ones, consistent with NP policies ENV 3 and H6, and via constructive dialogue with landowners.

Where new (including approved but yet to be built) developments make or have made provision for the inclusion of small industrial units, closer supervision will be exercised over the conservation of the mixed-use aspect of these sites. The Town Council will work with the LPA to ensure developer commitments are delivered, consistent with Policy ENV 2 (under Proposals, para 1).

EC2 Promote the town centre as a place where businesses and tourism can thrive

- a. Support physical improvements facilitating ease of circulation and access to businesses (ref. INF4), increasing visitor footfall**
- b. Support developments that make the most of the town's character and attractiveness to foster tourism including the provision of a town heritage centre and clear and accessible tourist information**
- c. Support developments e.g. conversions which augment the supply of visitor overnight accommodation (ref H8)**
- d. Resist proposals for changes of use away from commercial other than those occurring as permitted developments (ref H5 b.)**
- e. Support the provision of a Business Information Centre in or near the town centre**
- f. Support retail development outside the town centre only where it complements the existing provision and enhances consumer choice**

The Core Strategy (AS.6.C) encourages supporting the vitality of the town centre along with the promotion of the role of tourism in the town and surrounding area. Shipston on Stour boasts its own quirky urban landscape: a wealth of medieval and Georgian buildings, and a panoply of lanes and alleyways connecting various parts of the town and leading to unexpected vistas and discoveries. It is not on the tourist map for the Cotswolds: however, its location in close proximity should make it more of a tourist destination as a launch-pad and as an interesting place to explore in its own right, both of which should be better exploited.

Our policies will support the expansion of tourist accommodation and receptiveness, and will seek to conserve vacant ground floor sites in the town centre for commercial use.

It could be argued that the town's retail offering constitutes a visitor attraction in its own right, and groups such as 'Totally Locally' will continue to be supported in their efforts to persuade consumers to devote part of their 'weekly spend' to Shipston town centre shops.

EC3 Promote inward investment and encourage local start-ups

- a. Encourage the provision of live-work units with suitable connectivity in new developments**
- b. Engage with BT to insist on their bringing high-speed broadband into new estates; require developers to equip new houses/units accordingly**
- c. Support proposals for business or mixed-use development on brownfield sites**
- d. Engage with existing business organisations and their networks to broadcast available investment sites**
- e. Use social and other media to market Shipston's suitability for business investment**

Shipston on Stour is an attractive place where people can live and work, as attested by the growth in its population (triple that of 1951) and the fact that, although a disproportionate number of the town's inhabitants are pensioners, of those economically active almost 20% are employed locally or are home workers¹.

Our Plan's focus will be on facilitating the growth of 21st century and artisanal businesses which rely less on physical links and more on modern technology. New employment opportunities are likely to arise in the service sector (e.g. care workers, consistent with Policies H4 and H6). Inasmuch as Shipston has proved a magnet for incomers' and retirees, it could just as easily attract new start-ups and other inward investment, and its appeal to such enterprises should be widely and effectively marketed.

EC4 Exploit the town's heritage and riverside area as visitor attractions

Encourage initiatives which increase use of the town's river setting and heritage as a visitor attraction and shared amenity

Currently no economic benefit is derived from the River Stour which gives the town its name. Ways in which the riverside setting could be more profitably and enjoyably exploited are amply covered in ENV.4 and the aspiration to do so endorsed in the Core Strategy AS.6 and CS.24.

Judicious management and landscaping of the riverbank area will attract visitors and enable visitors and residents alike to spend more of their leisure time at this important local asset in close proximity to the businesses of the town centre.

¹ 'People & Places', Shipston on Stour Business Survey Report 2014, and 'Towns Alive', Shipston Neighbourhood Plan Homeworkers' Business Report August 2011

Shipston-on-Stour Neighbourhood Plan

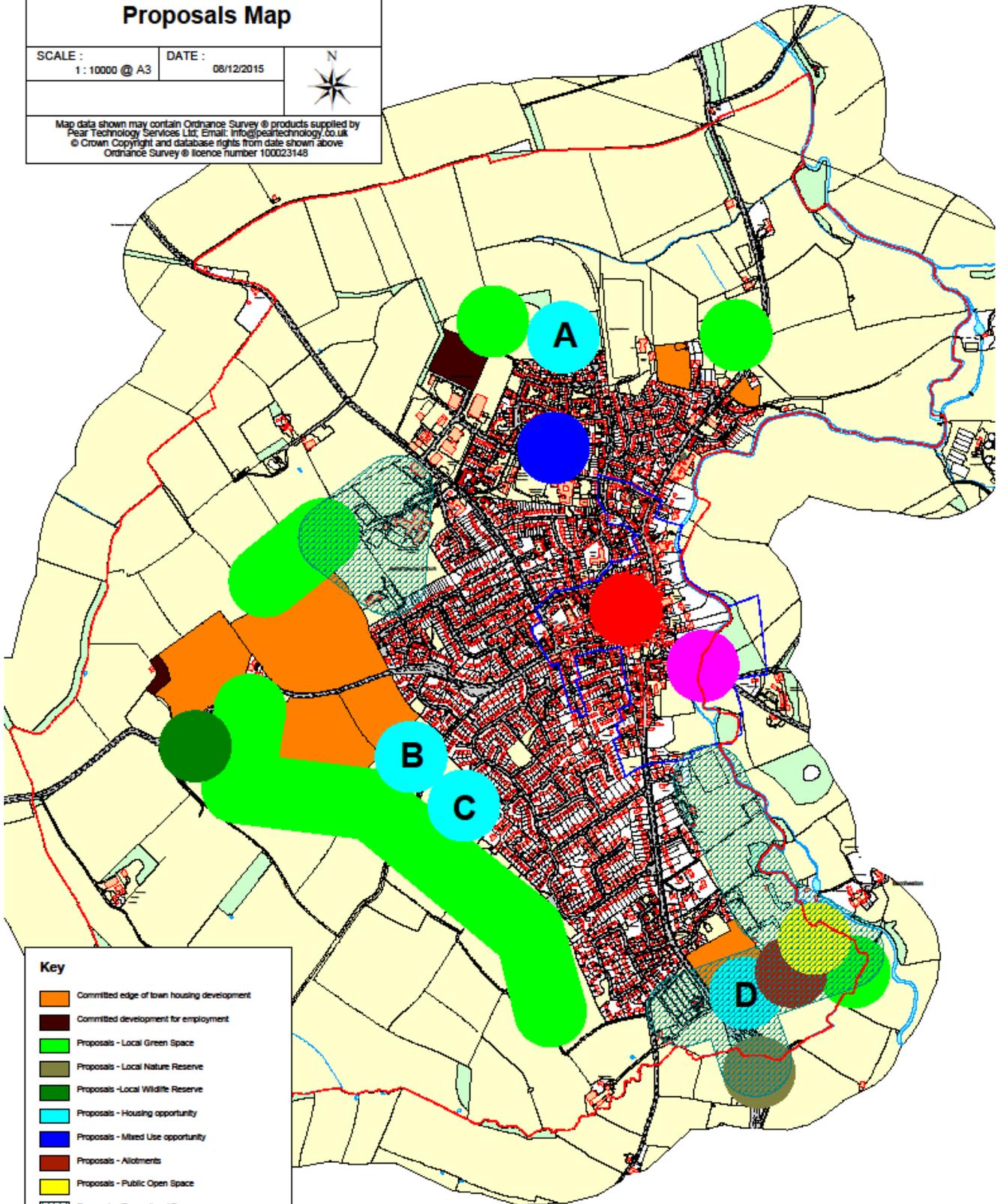
Proposals Map

SCALE :
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DATE :
08/12/2015



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Key

- Committed edge of town housing development
- Committed development for employment
- Proposals - Local Green Space
- Proposals - Local Nature Reserve
- Proposals - Local Wildlife Reserve
- Proposals - Housing opportunity
- Proposals - Mixed Use opportunity
- Proposals - Allotments
- Proposals - Public Open Space
- Proposals - Recreational Zone
- Proposals - Town Centre Improvements
- Proposals - Riverside Improvement
- Conservation Area boundary
- Shipston on Stour Boundary