



Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan - Referendum Draft 2016-2031



October 2017



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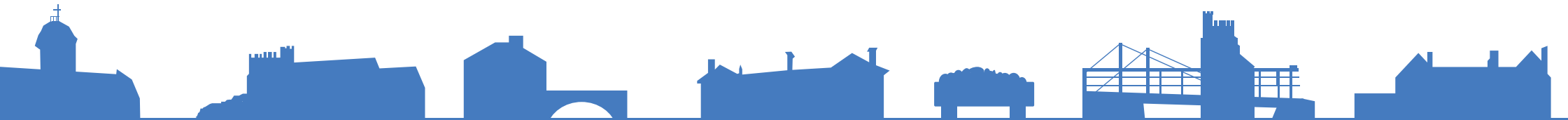
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Foreword

Councillor Theresa Watt | Mayor | Stonehouse Town Council



Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan takes the opportunity offered by The Localism Act 2011 to create a statutory plan which will shape, protect and enhance Stonehouse for the next decade and a half.

This Plan aims to ensure that the development of the town will contribute to what residents most value about Stonehouse: a strong, friendly community, a distinctive thriving town in a beautiful rural setting with excellent transport links and employment opportunities. All planning applications will have to pay regard to and conform with this Plan through to 2031.

The Plan is based on extensive public consultation; it was prepared by the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, an independent group of volunteers including both

residents and town councillors.

On behalf of Stonehouse Town Council, I would like to thank all members of the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Working Group for their hard work and tenacity in developing this plan over the past three years.



This Plan aims to ensure that the development of the town will contribute to what residents most value about Stonehouse...





Acknowledgements

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All photos provided by Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Group except for those on pages 30 and 67.





1: Introduction and background

1.1 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape development in their local area by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) sets out the community's vision and priorities for the future of the town in the coming years. It provides local planning policies which will be taken into account as and when any proposals for development come forward. It will influence the type, quality, design and location of future development, ensuring that any change brings with it local benefit.

The content of the Plan builds on the Stonehouse Community Plan produced in 2008 and updated in 2011, and on the Stonehouse Design Statement which was successfully adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by Stroud District Council in 2005. However, once made, the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan will be a statutory development plan and will form the local tier of planning policy in the town. This gives it far more weight than these previous documents in shaping the development of the town.

The Plan's aims and objectives have been developed from local consultation and analysis of other evidence. However, the Plan does not cover every issue identified as being important to the community. It has (and must have by law) a focus on responding to proposals for development and the appropriate use of land. Other issues raised in the Plan-making process which are not related to planning or land use will help to inform the future priorities of Stonehouse Town Council and its on-going work to meet community needs.

For each local planning policy the Plan sets out:

- The policy
- The justification for the policy
- The other planning policies in national and district-wide planning documents which relate to that policy

The policies in the Plan are designed to provide a framework which will be used, alongside district and national planning policies, by local authority development management officers and Councillors (elected members) when considering planning applications for development. Those proposing development in Stonehouse will also need to refer to them to understand the local policy parameters against which their proposal will be tested.

As required by the basic conditions that neighbourhood plans must meet, the policies in this Plan are in accord with higher level planning policy. Once adopted, this Plan will sit alongside the Stroud District Local Plan (2015) and the Minerals and Waste Plans, which are also statutory development plan documents, and underneath the umbrella of national planning policy including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). Another relevant strategic planning document, although not part of the development plan, is the Local Transport Plan (LTP), which is produced at county-



wide level. The purpose of the policies in this neighbourhood plan is to add finer detail to these strategic planning policy documents, reflecting the wishes and aspirations of local people for their town, identified during the Plan-making process.

The Plan covers the period between 2016 and 2031 and is therefore in sync with the Local Plan adopted by Stroud District Council, the local planning authority, in 2015.

1.2 How the Neighbourhood Plan was developed

The Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by residents and members of Stonehouse Town Council working as part of a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. The group has been open to anyone with an interest and notice of meetings and the minutes were published on the Stonehouse Town Council website.

It was recognised at an early stage that for the Plan to be representative of the planning issues of relevance in the town, the Working Group would need to conduct thorough engagement with those who live and work in Stonehouse. Also, it was acknowledged that the Plan could not be properly developed without the input of organisations and agencies with a district, county, regional or national remit.

The development of the Plan has been informed by a desire to be open and to encourage comments and contributions from all quarters with the aim of achieving a consensus about the priorities for the town but also to have debates about issues where the community was divided in its views.

Neighbourhood Plan policies must be based on robust evidence. Throughout the Plan-making process, the Working Group have gathered evidence, for example, by compiling data on housing needs, potential development sites and carrying out a call for sites.

The process has involved a number of key steps set out below.

Designation

In September 2013 Stonehouse was designated as a Neighbourhood Area (see Map 1) and Stonehouse Town Council was given the power to act as the relevant body for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Early consultation and awareness raising

The Working Group decided to raise awareness of the Plan using the theme of Shape, Protect and Enhance Stonehouse and ensured that there was local publicity and regular articles in the



The Plan's aims and objectives have been developed from local consultation and analysis of other evidence. However, the Plan does not cover every issue identified as being important to the community



Stonehouse News which is delivered to every household. The initial consultation asked people what they liked and disliked about the town and how they would like to see it evolve. Consultation included:

- An initial online residents survey (January-February 2014).
- First public consultation event, May 10 2014, on issues: likes, dislikes and aspirations for Stonehouse.
- Second major consultation event in July 2014 at Park Junior School, as part of Stonehouse Community Partnership Arts Festival to seek further information on issues raised at the first consultation.

From these events the Working Group identified what people liked about Stonehouse is that it is a friendly community with good town centre facilities for shopping, health care, education and recreation. It is in a well-placed location with good transport links and access to the countryside. What people did not like about Stonehouse is that there is too much through traffic on High Street, congestion from motorways and factories, parking on High Street, lack of choice on High Street, lack of night life, and concern regarding threats to the library and loss of amenities.

Defining the vision and objectives

Analysis of the findings of the initial consultation and local evidence was carried out by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) and enabled the Working Group to draft a vision and set of objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Consultation on the draft vision and objectives took place through the Town Council website from September 2014, at an Investigating Stonehouse event (September 2014) at the Goodwill Festival (December 2014) and through an online survey (December 2014 to January 2015) which received largely positive responses.

To ensure the consultation process was as inclusive as possible the Working Group also sought the views of particular stakeholder groups including:

- A consultation event for business held at the Town Hall in October 2014 was attended by representatives of local businesses.
- Consultation meetings have been held with local youth clubs, schools, the British Legion, Wycliffe College, Gloucestershire LEP, Stonehouse Children's Centre and Stonehouse History Group.
- National and regional agencies: Natural England, Environment Agency, Historic England, Network Rail, Great Western Railway, Gloucestershire County Council.

Draft Plan

In 2015 the vision, aims and objectives, together with responses to community engagement exercises and relevant evidence were used to begin the process of producing the draft Plan.

The five main themes for the Plan were identified as **amenities and facilities, travel and transport, housing, employment and environment**. The Working Group held regular workshop sessions to develop the detailed policies for each theme by considering the available evidence and the consultation outcomes.

A further consultation event was held in October 2015 to promote and disseminate the emerging policies in the Plan and responses were overwhelmingly positive from the many attendees.

An experienced consultant, Stuart Todd, was appointed in January 2016 to support the final stages of writing policies and drafting the Plan.

The first draft of the Plan was shared with the community and other stakeholders for initial consultation in July to August 2016. The Plan was then revised to reflect comments received before progressing through the regulatory framework. This will include formal submission to Stroud District Council and public



examination of the Plan by an independent examiner.

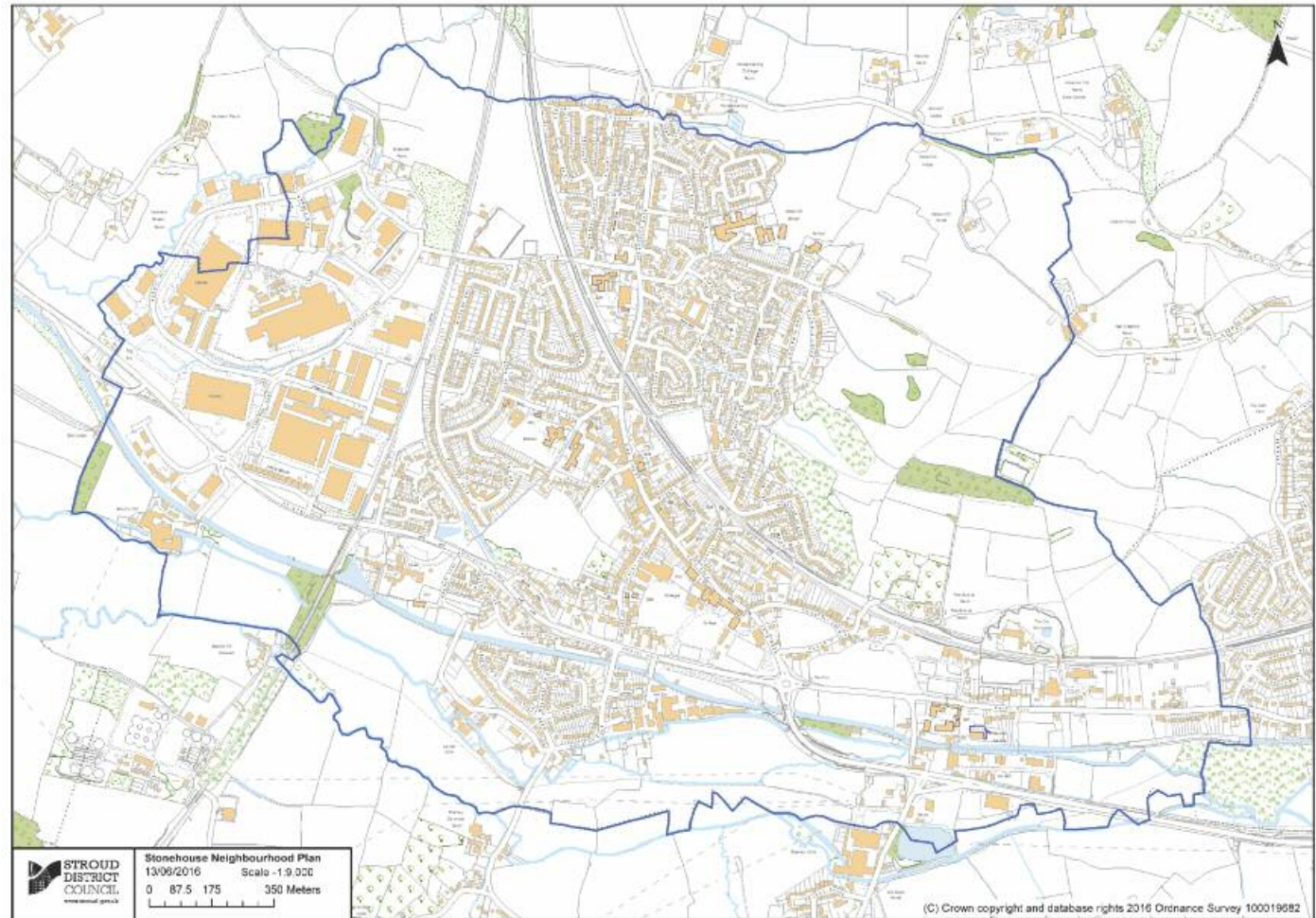
Subject to a successful examination outcome, the Plan will proceed to a local referendum where the community of Stonehouse will be asked whether it wants Stroud District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in the Plan area. If majority of voters agree, the Plan will become part of the statutory 'development plan' for the area and, with the Local Plan, become the framework for deciding planning applications in Stonehouse.

1.3 About Stonehouse and the Plan area

Stonehouse is located in Stroud District in the county of Gloucestershire. It is about 30 miles north of Bristol and immediately south of Gloucester and Cheltenham. The Plan area corresponds with the boundary of Stonehouse parish.

Stonehouse is flanked by the parishes of Standish (one of the most sparsely populated parishes in Stroud District) and Eastington (where a major new housing development is planned) to the west, Leonard Stanley and Kings Stanley which are amongst the District's larger villages to the south, and Ebley, Cainscross and beyond them Stroud to the east.

Stonehouse has excellent transport links and is easily connected to nearby towns and cities by the M5



Map 1: Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Area



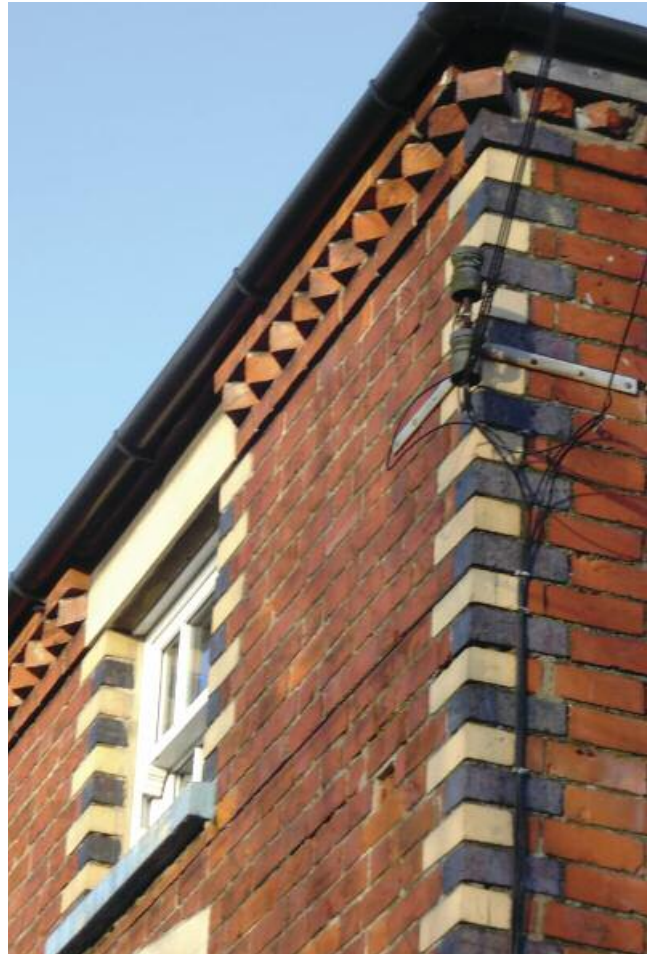
motorway. The town also benefits from a mainline railway station that connects it to Gloucester, Cheltenham and the north of England in one direction and to Stroud, Swindon, Reading and London in the other. The main line to Bristol also runs to the west of the town, but the station is no longer operational. The Stroudwater Navigation canal, which is currently being restored, and the river Frome both run to the south of the town centre.

The Cotswold escarpment provides a dramatic landscape backdrop to the town, with views of the Cotswolds AONB easily visible from the High Street. The Cotswold Way passes through the outskirts of Stonehouse and the stunning countryside setting of the town is one of its distinguishing and highly valued features. Doverow Hill, topped by six acres of woodland, is a well-known and loved Stonehouse landmark, with panoramic views across the Severn estuary to the Forest of Dean and the Malvern Hills.

Unlike neighbouring Stroud, Stonehouse is relatively flat, particularly the main High Street, and this makes it attractive and accessible to elderly and less mobile people.

History

Stonehouse is mentioned in William the Conqueror's Domesday Book of 1086 under its Old English name 'Stanhus' – so called, it is believed, because the Manor House was built of stone rather than the usual wattle



Detail of brickwork on a house in Gloucester Road

and daub. Stonehouse Court Hotel now stands at the Manor House site next to St Cyr's Church by the Stroudwater canal and the River Frome. In medieval times the Manor lands included a great deer park, a vineyard, and the manor corn mill at Lower Mill. Upper Mill also probably existed in 1086, and later became a cloth mill, joined by several others including Bond's Mill. These mills continue today as commercial centres.

St Cyr's Church is one of the oldest buildings in Stonehouse, the tower dating from the 14th century. The churchyard contains an impressive array of 17th and 18th century monuments.

The woollen industry was an important part of Stonehouse's history. The small mills of the 17th and 18th century supported work at home for the growing population of the village, later changing to a factory system. As the textile industry declined, Stonehouse remained a thriving place as smaller businesses took over. Stonehouse was ideally located for developing trade with the canal and railway connecting it to the River Severn, key towns and markets which in turn attracted people with money. In the 19th century Stonehouse became an educated and prosperous place, with money donated by residents to build one of the first national schools in the country in 1830. The Stonehouse Brick and Tile Company was established in 1890 and remained an important



Maidenhill School

employer for over 70 years and many houses in the town are built with high quality red Stonehouse bricks.

The Second World War brought engineering companies such as Hoffmann's and Sperry Gyroscope, based on a modern industrial estate on the western edge of the town. By the early 1960s, Stonehouse had been transformed from a rural village to a small industrial

town and Stonehouse Parish officially became Stonehouse Town in 1990. However, farming continues alongside industry on the rural fringes of the town.

Stonehouse today

Stonehouse is a thriving town, with a good range of services and retail shops at its centre and low vacancy rates on the High Sreet. A total of 74 businesses have a

frontage along the main route through the town, and a further 13 are visible in the adjoining roads of Regent Street, Queen's Road and Elm Road. A total of 87 businesses operate in walking distance of the town centre, including food stores, banking and postal services¹. For a small town, Stonehouse has good facilities including five schools, three doctors' surgeries, four dentists and two opticians. The town also has a library, a youth centre, a skatepark, a football club, Maidenhill Sports Centre and a number of other community buildings.

Stonehouse is identified in Stroud District Council's Local Plan (2015) as a major employment centre. On the western edge of Stonehouse lies the Oldends Lane industrial estate, which provides jobs for over 4,000 people and is home to a number of prestigious national and international companies including Renishaw, Muller, Schlumberger and ABB. Stonehouse has three other employment areas: Bonds Mill, Stonehouse Business Park and Upper Mills.

Stonehouse has 7,725 residents (census 2011), making it the District's second most populous town. About 15% of the population in Stonehouse are over 65 and about 23% under 16. The population has grown rapidly, increasing by 26.4% between 1981 and 2001.



Traffic congestion is an issue in the town centre and by Oldends Lane industrial estate at peak times with thousands of workers coming and going. There is an extensive network of footpaths, and bridleways in and around the town. National Cycle Network route 45 passes through Stonehouse close to the canal and the Cotswold Way.

In 2011 a major refurbishment of the High Street was completed and part of it was converted to become a 'share space'. At the same time a 20 mile per hour zone was created through the High Street and speed bumps installed to reduce the speed and address road safety concerns. Tree planting has helped to improve the look of the High Street and make it more attractive for shoppers and visitors. The Town Greens in the heart of the town centre also add to the visual appeal of Stonehouse. In 2015 the town entered the Britain in Bloom competition for the first time and was awarded a silver medal.

Stonehouse is a vibrant community with many active local clubs and societies and a strong community spirit.

74% of the town's residents (4154 residents) were economically active at the 2011 census and just 184 people were unemployed. An area to the west of the town is ranked 8,640 out of 32,844 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England in the 2015 indices of

multiple deprivation, which places that part of town amongst the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country². Stonehouse has above average numbers of people with low or no formal qualifications³. This means that the largest proportion of employment opportunities in the town are elementary roles and residents gain skills through 'on the job' training. The majority of people in Stonehouse travel less than 2km to work.

At the time of the 2011 census there were 3193 households, of which 67% (2143) were owned by the occupiers. Semi-detached and terraced housing accounts for 67% of the housing stock, a higher proportion than the national average. Stonehouse has several estates of social housing and at July 2015 had 696 affordable homes, around 22% of the total housing stock and a higher proportion than for Stroud District as a whole where social housing makes up 15.5% of the total number of homes⁴. The town has a growing number of residential care facilities. There is strong demand for social housing in Stonehouse. In 2015 there were 359 applicants on the waiting list for social housing who chose Stonehouse as their first choice of area they would like to live in⁵.

1.4 The evidence base

To inform the content of the Plan an evidence base has been developed to ensure that the policies are underpinned by clear reasoning and justification. This has been done in two

ways. Firstly, by undertaking local consultation (documented in the Consultation Statement which will be submitted alongside the Plan for examination) and considering the results of consultation carried out for the Stonehouse Design Statement (2005) and the Stonehouse Community Plan (2008). Secondly, by compiling and referencing the written evidence that already exists and commissioning new evidence where needed. A list of the evidence collated can be found on Stonehouse Town Council's website.

1.5 Sustainability

Sustainable development

The NPPF and NPPG set out the government's planning policy to which all plans and proposals for development should comply. The NPPF include, at its heart, a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

This means that when taking decisions on proposals for development, proposals should be approved where they accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted.



The NPPF states that neighbourhood plans should “... support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development...” and “...plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan”. It goes on to say that “The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.”

Therefore this Plan reflects Local Plan policies and positively supports them whilst not promoting less development than set out in the Local Plan, or undermining its strategic priorities.

Sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment

The Plan is subject to testing as it is developed to help determine the Plan’s positive or negative impact on the social, environmental and economic character of the town and to assess its contribution to the achievement of sustainable development. An assessment of the draft neighbourhood plan’s contribution towards achieving the sustainability objectives set out by the Sustainability Appraisal of the Stroud District Local Plan has been carried out by



The view over Stonehouse from Doverow Hill

Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Group (documented in the Assessment of the contribution of the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan to the achievement of sustainable development which will be submitted alongside the Plan for examination).

Stroud District Council undertook a screening exercise and provided a screening opinion in June 2016. This opinion was sent to three relevant statutory agencies who provided responses. The District Council published its Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) determination on 18 November 2016; this states that the draft Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects which would require an SEA or a HRA. It is needed to assist with meeting the basic condition that a Plan must be compatible with EU obligations.

1.6 Stroud District Council’s Local Plan and Stonehouse

Stonehouse is identified by Core Policy CP3 within Stroud District Council’s Local Plan as a First Tier settlement and an Accessible Local Service Centre which means it is one of the District’s main towns which are the ‘primary focus for growth and development’⁶. The Local Plan looks at Stonehouse within a cluster of other settlements and identifies Stonehouse as continuing ‘to



be a major employment focus for the District⁷.

Conservation and restoration work around the canal and river associated with the Cotswold Canals project are identified as having the potential to benefit the local environment and economy. A guiding principle for the Stonehouse cluster is to: “avoid physical and visual amalgamation by resisting development at key ‘gaps’, such as west of Ebley/ Ryeford.”⁸

There is a significant site allocation within the Stonehouse cluster, Site Allocations Policy SA2, West of Stonehouse, for a development which includes 1,350 dwellings, 10 hectares of employment land and various community facilities. The eastern edge of this site allocation borders the Oldends Lane industrial estate and includes some land within the parish of Stonehouse, although it is largely outside the parish boundary. The development will have a significant impact on the town and the transport infrastructure in the area. Vision 1.2 in the Local Plan states the development at the West of Stonehouse will lead to “improved links to the town centre and opportunities for all to make use of pleasant and safe ‘green links’ on foot or cycle.”

The main pedestrian link between West of Stonehouse and the town is through the Oldends Lane level crossing. This is also the shortest walking route to Stonehouse’s Maidenhill secondary school from the new

development and the main pedestrian access point for anyone from the new development wanting to come to Stonehouse for work, shopping or leisure. Various documents in Stroud District Council’s Evidence Base for the Local Plan recommend improvements in connections between Stonehouse and West of Stonehouse some with specific reference to the Oldends Lane level crossing. For example, the Sustainable Transport Audit, Atkins, May 2015, gives a number of Sustainable Infrastructure Requirements for the West of Stonehouse site including: “In order to improve the

sustainable transport provision at the site, significant improvements are required to the existing walking and cycling connections to local amenities. In particular, the constriction caused by the level crossing on Oldends Lane needs to be addressed.”⁹

Although not a planning condition, an informative to the outline planning permission granted for the site states that “reasonable endeavours shall be undertaken to seek improvements to the pedestrian facilities at the Oldends level crossing.”¹⁰



The level crossing on Oldends Lane – a cause of constriction



2: What the plan aims to achieve

2.1 Our vision for Stonehouse

Over the next 20 years the strong, friendly community of Stonehouse will continue to develop as a distinctive, thriving town set in beautiful countryside with excellent transport links and employment opportunities.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Theme 1: Amenities and facilities

Aim 1: To meet the recreational aspirations, the health and wellbeing and the practical needs of the community, whilst retaining the distinctive character of Stonehouse.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Continue to grow as a thriving and diverse town centre with independent traders and businesses.
- 1.2 Increase the range and improve the quality of meeting spaces and sporting facilities to meet the needs of all age groups.
- 1.3 Increase the opportunities for formal and informal play and indoor and outdoor recreation within the town.
- 1.4 Support the retention and improvement of services that people rely on, for example: library, doctor, dentist, post office, banks, youth club, and opticians.
- 1.5 Support the development of the night-time economy of Stonehouse to offer a range of social activities.

Theme 2: Travel and transport

Aim 2: To ensure Stonehouse is accessible and people can get around easily and conveniently by foot, mobility scooter, bicycle, public transport and private motorised transport, encouraging more sustainable travel and a consequent reduction in traffic congestion.

Objectives:

- 2.1 Support safe and convenient routes for pedestrians (including for the less able bodied), wheelchairs, pushchairs and mobility scooters.
- 2.2 Support the extension of the network of safe and convenient cycle routes for all abilities.
- 2.3 Support improved bus services.
- 2.4 Protect and improve the current railway station and support the re-opening of Bristol Road station.
- 2.5 Support major development where it is, or will be made, accessible to the town centre on foot and by cycle.
- 2.6 Support improvements to on-street parking in Stonehouse, creating a safer environment for all road users.
- 2.7 Increase the number of conveniently placed cycle racks as the opportunity arises.
- 2.8 Support improvements to the links between the town and the canal.





Theme 3: Housing

Aim 3: To retain strong family and community ties, a mix of housing types will be supported to meet future requirements and the needs of all ages, income and varied needs.

Objectives:

- 3.1 Housing appropriate for older people and those with accessibility issues.
- 3.2 Smaller units – catering for single people, single parents and those wishing to downsize.
- 3.3 Housing that is less expensive to buy/rent and to run.
- 3.4 Energy efficient buildings.

Theme 4: Employment

Aim 4: To support employment opportunities and secure a prosperous economic future for Stonehouse.

Objectives:

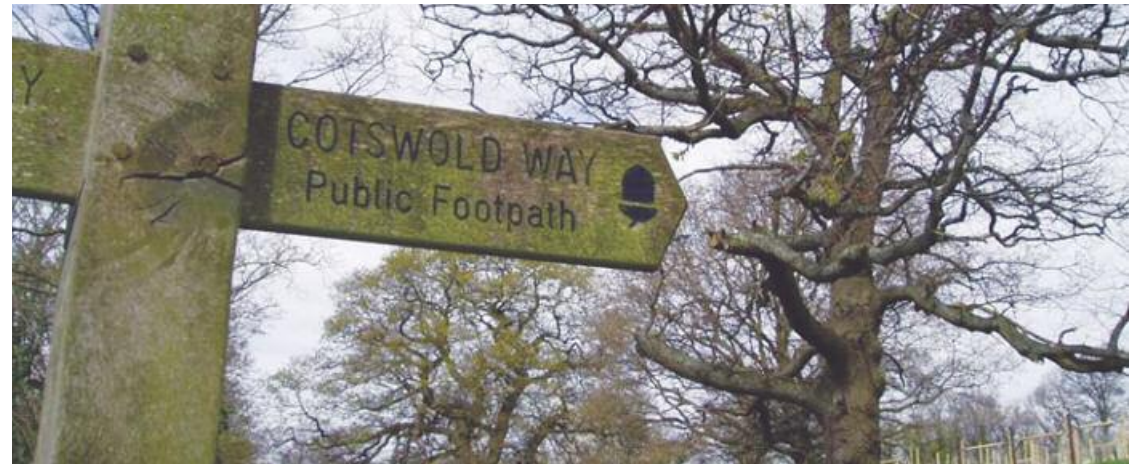
- 4.1 Protect, support and improve existing employment sites.
- 4.2 Support improvements to the relationship and links between existing employment sites and the town centre.
- 4.3 Support more high quality jobs accessible to Stonehouse residents.
- 4.4 Seek new employment sites that support small and medium-sized businesses.

Theme 5: Environment

Aim 5: To protect and enhance access to green spaces both within the town and the surrounding countryside.

Objectives:

- 5.1 Minimise the visual impact of new development on views out of and views into the Stonehouse settlement.
- 5.2 Support improvements to the links between the canal and Stonehouse town centre.
- 5.3 Protect and enhance green spaces and support their recreational use.
- 5.4 Protect and enhance the heritage and wildlife assets of Stonehouse, allowing them to be appreciated by residents and visitors.
- 5.5 Move toward a greener Stonehouse.





3: Policies

THEME 1: Amenities and facilities

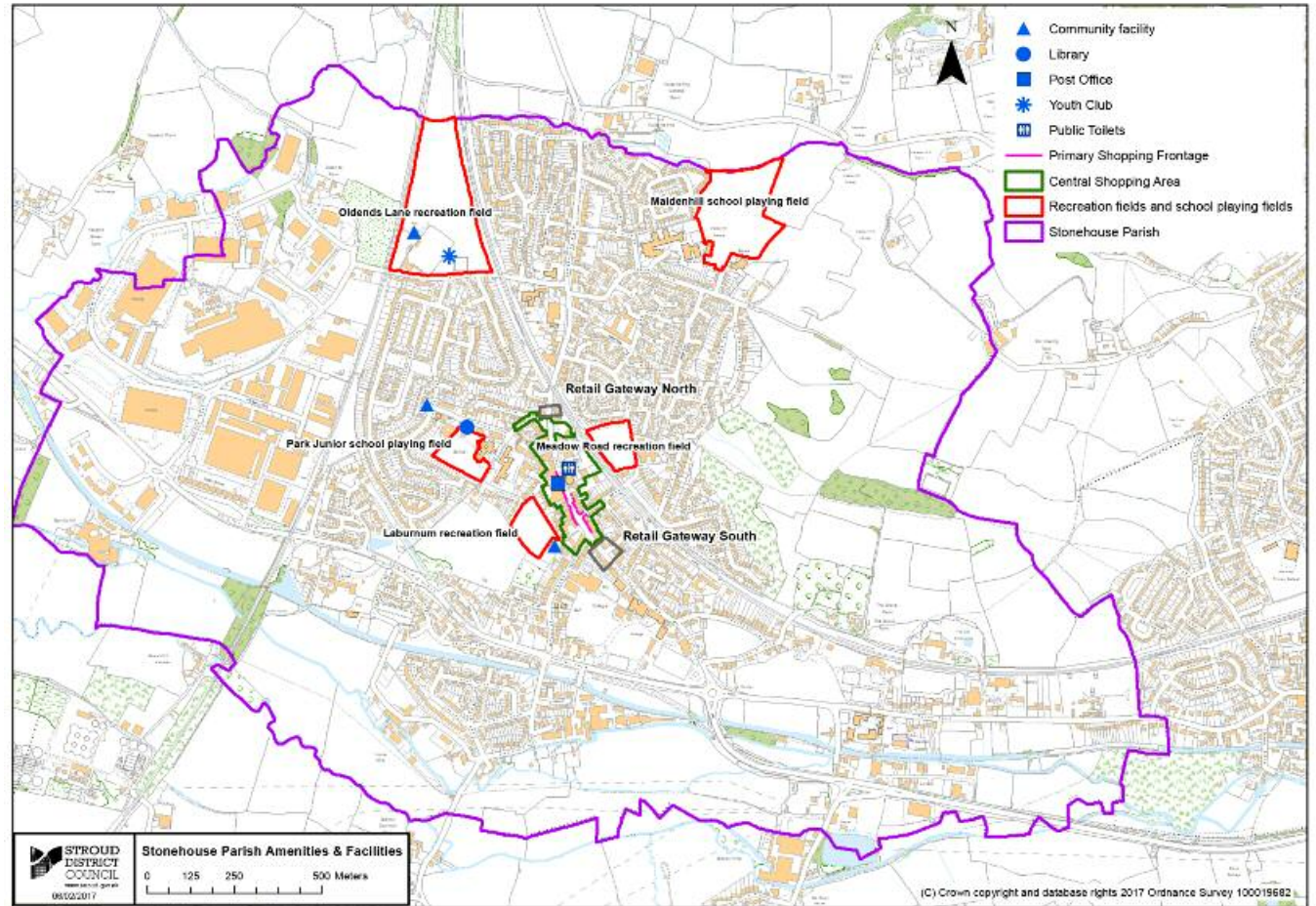
Theme introduction

Stonehouse is a thriving community with education, health, social and leisure facilities which contribute greatly to the local quality of life.

The town has a number of valued and well-used community buildings and facilities which support a wide range of community activities. The town has a variety of community buildings – the Town Hall, Stonehouse Community Centre, All Pulling Together and Douglas Morley Hall are in or near the town centre, whilst Stonehouse Scout Hut, Oldends Lane Pavillion, the



Oldends Lane Pavilion



Map 2: Stonehouse Amenities





Youth Centre and the Magpies sports and social club are all to the east of the town near Oldends Lane playing fields. A recent informal survey by the Town Council found that some of these community buildings, such as the community centre, are fully booked and have very little spare capacity.

The consultation carried out for the Plan identified that there is a need for a large, high quality community hall, with parking and, ideally, a bar that can be used for large community events and celebrations such as weddings. Currently no such facility exists in Stonehouse. The Town Council is working in partnership with the Magpies sports and social club and Stonehouse Football Club to explore the possibility of such a facility being developed at Oldends Lane.

The Town Council has a recreation working group that has been seeking to improve the range of sport and recreation facilities in the town. The Stonehouse Football

Club is based at Oldends Lane and Maidenhill sports and dance centre, run by Stroud District Council, has a gym, indoor sports hall and dance studio where a range of exercise classes and sports such as badminton are played. More recently the town has benefitted from a new skatepark, a boules court, an outdoor gym and two outdoor tennis tables. However, it does not have tennis courts, a swimming pool, rugby, netball or athletics facilities – all things that residents said they would like in the Plan consultation.

There is a strong community spirit in Stonehouse. The town has a wide range of clubs, societies and charities that meet regularly and cater for different age groups and special interests - from the Stonehouse Wheelers cycling club to the WI, Stonehouse Fair Shares and Stonehouse History Group. There are lunch clubs for older people and playgroups for toddlers.

Recent work by Stonehouse Community Partnership has

been effective in developing the cultural life of the town, linked to a successful annual arts festival with participation from a wide cross-section of the community. As well as Wycliffe Choral Society, Stonehouse now also has a community choir. There are two active youth dance groups and a youth theatre group in the town.

The High Street and retail facilities in the town are important to the community. Stonehouse has a good range of services and shops at its centre and High Street vitality is good, with historically low vacancy rates. Residents' value being able to buy most things that they need in the town. They want to continue to enjoy, and, wherever possible, enhance the town's retail offerings, both in relation to the variety of goods and retail outlets available and also to develop the 'market town' character of the provision.

Stonehouse now has two pubs (several have closed in recent years) and two sit-down restaurants in the town centre, together with a number of cafes and take away



Oldends Lane Youth Centre



Magpies Social Club



The town's new skate park



The boules court in Laburnum Recreation field

and fast food restaurants. The development of a more diverse and vibrant night time economy which offers a wider range of social activities in the evenings is an aspiration for some, but not all, Stonehouse residents.

The town has three GP surgeries, one pharmacy, four dental practices, and two opticians. There is a building society, but all bank branches have recently closed; banking facilities are available in the Post Office. The facilities which are particularly valued include the library (the County Council is committed to retaining a library in Stonehouse but not in its current building, which is a poor state of repair), the Post Office, the youth club and a number of green spaces and playing fields that are important for outdoor recreation. The town has four main childrens' play areas at Meadow Road, Laburnum



Fresh air and exercise... the Green Gym, Laburnum Recreation field



Stonehouse pubs: The Woolpack Inn...

Walk, Oldends Lane and Bridgend, beside the canal, plus smaller play areas on housing estates.

Stonehouse has five churches – St Cyr's Church, St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Bethel Church Stonehouse, Stonehouse Baptist Church and Stonehouse Methodist Church. These are all part of the vibrant community fabric and some provide specific activities for children and young people.

Stonehouse has good educational facilities including a Children's Centre, 1st Dibbs Day Nursery, an Infant School, a Junior School, Maidenhill Secondary School, the Shrubberies Special School, Hopelands Preparatory School and Wycliffe College (independent day and boarding school). The schools are a central to the community, providing both physical facilities, such as



...and the Globe Inn

playing fields, and helping to strengthen the sense of community spirit and participation locally.

The town also holds a number of well-supported community events and celebrations each year including an arts festival, a horticultural show, a town traders' event and a goodwill evening. These events require the retention of community facilities in order to continue. They bring local residents together and help to develop community cohesion, a shared sense of 'looking out for each other' and a strong charitable ethos, evident in the support for fundraising during annual town events such as goodwill. They also generate a high degree of local pride resulting in a community that is keen to maintain the quality of the environment, as evidenced by increasing participation in the regular litter picks organised by the Town Council.



The library in Elm Road

It is to be expected that residents of the planned development at West of Stonehouse will access the facilities in Stonehouse. This policy set seeks to further enhance existing provision wherever possible, in anticipation of increased demand in future from people living in new housing near, but outside, the parish and the Plan boundary.

The policies in this section take account of national and local planning guidance. The Stroud District Local Plan identifies Stonehouse as a key retail centre for the District and CP12 states that 'the vitality and viability of all the District's centres will be maintained and enhanced, as will their existing range of uses, including local markets. This will involve widening the range of uses and encouraging convenient and accessible shopping, service and employment facilities to meet the day-to-day needs of residents'.



Relevant aims and objectives

Aim 1: To meet the recreational aspirations, the health and wellbeing and the practical needs of the community, whilst retaining the distinctive character of Stonehouse.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Continue to grow as a thriving and diverse town centre with independent traders and businesses.
- 1.2 Increase the range and improve the quality of meeting spaces and sporting facilities to meet the needs of all age groups.
- 1.3 Increase the opportunities for formal and informal play and indoor and outdoor recreation within the town.
- 1.4 Support the retention and improvement of services that people rely on, for example: library, doctor, dentist, post office, banks, youth club, and opticians.
- 1.5 Support the development of the night-time economy of Stonehouse to offer a range of social activities



Facilities for children in Oldends Lane play park



■ POLICY AF1: PROTECTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Fun for youngsters in Laburnum Recreation Field play area

Existing community facilities should be safeguarded and protected.

Where planning permission is required, proposals which would involve the loss of existing community facilities will only be supported where they satisfy the various criteria in policies E16 (community buildings) and ES13 (Open spaces) of the Stroud Local Plan.

Justification

Community facilities are essential for a vibrant and flourishing town. They provide services and amenities which are necessary for local people and which enhance the quality of life in the town. Stonehouse has a good range of amenities and facilities which are highly valued, well used and should be protected, and if possible, enhanced.

Policy AF1 sets out the Plan's approach to this important matter. It reflects the approach already adopted in the Stroud Local Plan. Community consultation has highlighted eight facilities in the town that are considered to be particularly locally valued community facilities as follows:



Oldends Lane play facilities

- i) The library;
- ii) The post office;
- iii) The youth club;
- iv) Maidenhill school playing field
- v) Park Junior school playing field
- vi) Laburnum Recreation field and play area
- vii) Meadow Road Recreation field and play area
- viii) Oldends Lane Recreation field and playfacilities.

Consultation during the Plan-making process provided evidence of concerns about the loss or reduction of facilities, such as the closure of the multi-use church hall and restriction in the provision and opening times of toilet facilities.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP7, E16
- NPPF 28, 70



■ POLICY AF2: ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Development proposals for new and/or improved community facilities will be supported where:

- i) the proposal would not have significant harmful impact on the amenity of surrounding residents; and,
- ii) the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the surrounding local environment (with regard to biodiversity, wildlife habitat and landscape character where appropriate); and,
- iii) the proposal would not have significant detrimental impacts on the local road network (with regard to additional traffic volume / congestion, demand for parking, and pollution levels); and,
- iv) The proposal would not have significant detrimental impacts on surface water run-off, water quality or flood risk in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Justification

There is a desire to enhance both the range and/or quality of community facilities on offer in Stonehouse. In particular there is a need for more meeting and event spaces, sporting facilities and indoor and outdoor play and recreational facilities.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP7, 8, CP14(4), ES3(4) & ES4
- NPPF 28, 70, 94



Clockwise from top left: Oldends Lane Recreation field 'assault bars';

Oldends Lane multi use games area;

Laburnum Walk Community Centre



■ POLICY AF3: DESIGN AND QUALITY IN THE TOWN CENTRE

Development proposals in the defined town centre primary shopping frontage for additional retail units, alterations to existing retail frontages and change of use from retail to other uses where above ground floor level (where planning permission is required) will be supported where they:

- i) subject to proximity to the edge of the defined primary shopping frontage area, maintain and enhance the appearance of the 'gateways' to the town centre;
- ii) maintain and enhance the quality of streets and civic spaces in the town centre;
- iii) maintains and enhances the built and historic character of their setting and the town centre; and,
- iv) they comply with Local Plan Policy EI7 and
- v) there is no significant adverse impact on residential amenity, traffic generation, noise and light pollution.

Insofar as planning permission is required proposals which would increase the diversity of the retail provision in the town centre will be supported.

Insofar as planning permission is required proposals for the use of upper floors in the town centre will be supported where they comply with the criteria set out in the first part of this policy.

Justification

Stonehouse has a vibrant High Street with high occupancy rates. However, there is feedback from some local traders that they are struggling and that competition from online retail offers is having an impact on their businesses. Evidence suggests that successful High Streets provide a 'shopping experience' as well as simply shops. Improvements over recent years such as the shared space, tree planting and hanging baskets have ensured an attractive and pleasant shopping environment and this needs to be maintained and further improved.



Stonehouse retail gateway north...



... and south

Consultation for the Plan clearly defines that residents value the services and local shops available and wish to at least retain the breadth and variety of retail on offer and also to increase both the variety of goods available and the quality of the retail environment.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP12, ES10
- NPPF 23



THEME 2: Travel and transport

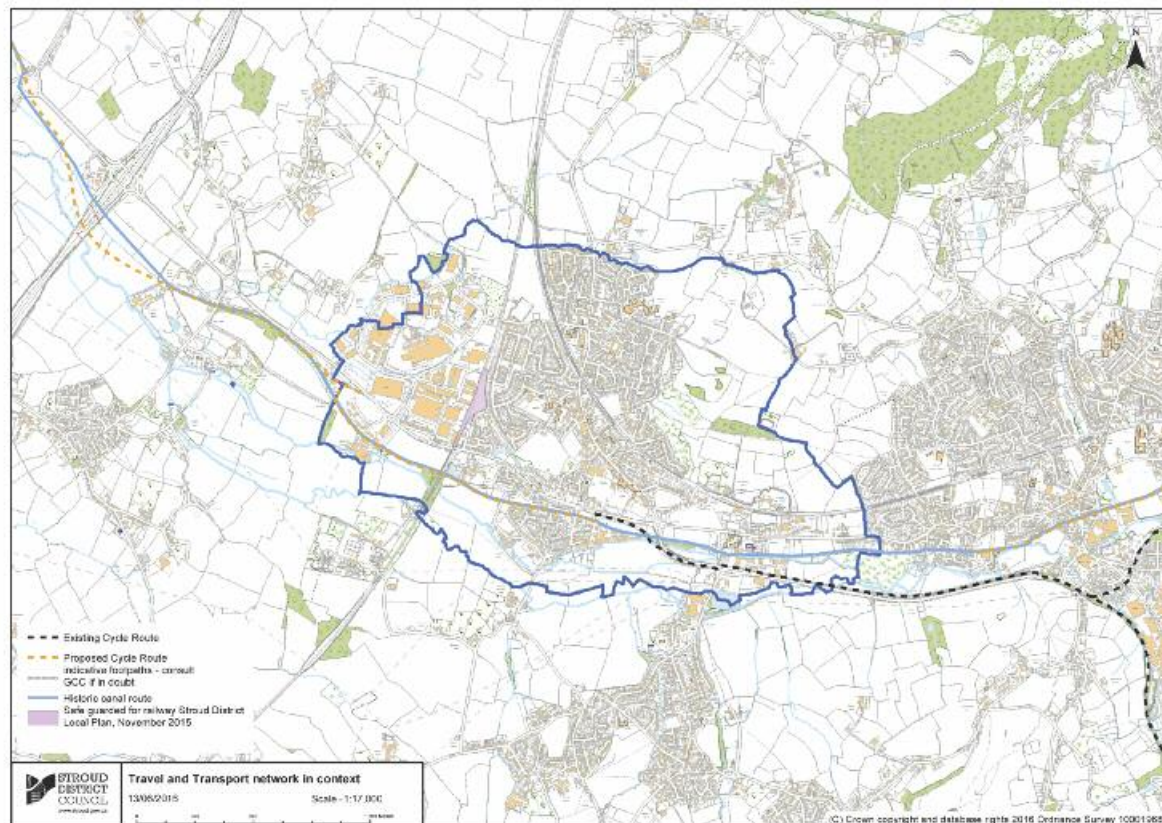
Theme introduction

Stonehouse is situated on, or close to, important transport routes for both road and rail. Situated about 2 miles east of the M5, Stonehouse commands the entrance to the Stroud Valleys. The A419, which passes through the southern edge of Stonehouse, connects Stroud to Junction 13 of the M5 and the B4008, a narrow, winding road and the subject of a weight limit, connects Stonehouse to Junction 12.

The A419 is nearing capacity and comes to a standstill in rush hour when workers are travelling to and from the Stonehouse industrial estates. The B4008 in the town centre would also benefit from less through traffic, making the centre a more pleasant environment. Planning permission has recently been given for 1,350 houses to the west of Stonehouse adjacent to the A419.

Stonehouse has a station on the Gloucester to Swindon line, providing access to London with a journey time of approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes. The Gloucester to Bristol line also passes through the town but there is no longer a station on this line, with the result that reaching Bristol and the South West by rail involves an initial journey either north to Gloucester or Cheltenham or east to Swindon.

Whilst the roads and railway lines facilitate access to and from Stonehouse, the A419, and the Bristol railway line in



Map 3: Transport - Stonehouse in context

particular, also act as barriers to travel around Stonehouse.

The Stroudwater canal, which is being restored, passes through the southern edge of Stonehouse as does Sustrans Route 45. The Cotswold Way passes through the eastern end of the parishes.

The town centre car park is nearing capacity and there is

little scope for increasing town centre parking space. The station is very short of parking, leading to parking on residential streets and complaints from residents of inconsiderate parking.

The High Street is a 20mph zone, where cars are encouraged to share space with pedestrians.



The level crossing on Oldends Lane

Sustainability and the transport hierarchy

A sustainable transport system needs to tackle the increase in private motorised traffic and its effects on congestion, health and social inequality, and move towards more sustainable means of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport. Walking and cycling routes can also double as wildlife corridors.

Hence the policies in this chapter aim to achieve:

- A more sustainable environment by:
 1. Improving air quality
 2. Reducing carbon dioxide emissions
 3. Providing corridors for wildlife alongside footpaths and cycleways
- A more sustainable and healthier community by:
 1. Encouraging active travel, hence improving the health of the population
 2. Improving access to health facilities

3. Ensuring access for emergency vehicles
4. Improving access to community facilities and to the canal, improving quality of life and social cohesion
5. Improving access for wheelchairs and buggies, improving quality of life for people with mobility difficulties and for young families

■ A more sustainable economy by:

1. Facilitating access to the town centre, thus helping local businesses
2. Reducing congestion on the roads and facilitating access to the industrial estates

The policies below are arranged in accordance with the Travel Hierarchy as presented in Manual for Gloucestershire Streets (p.24).

Consider First



Pedestrian
Cyclist
Public transport users
Specialist Service Vehicles
(Emergency Services, Waste etc.)
Other motor traffic

Consider Last

Relevant aims and objectives

Aim 2: To ensure Stonehouse is accessible and people can get around easily and conveniently by foot, mobility scooter, bicycle, public transport and private motorised transport, encouraging more sustainable travel and a consequent reduction in traffic congestion.

Objectives:

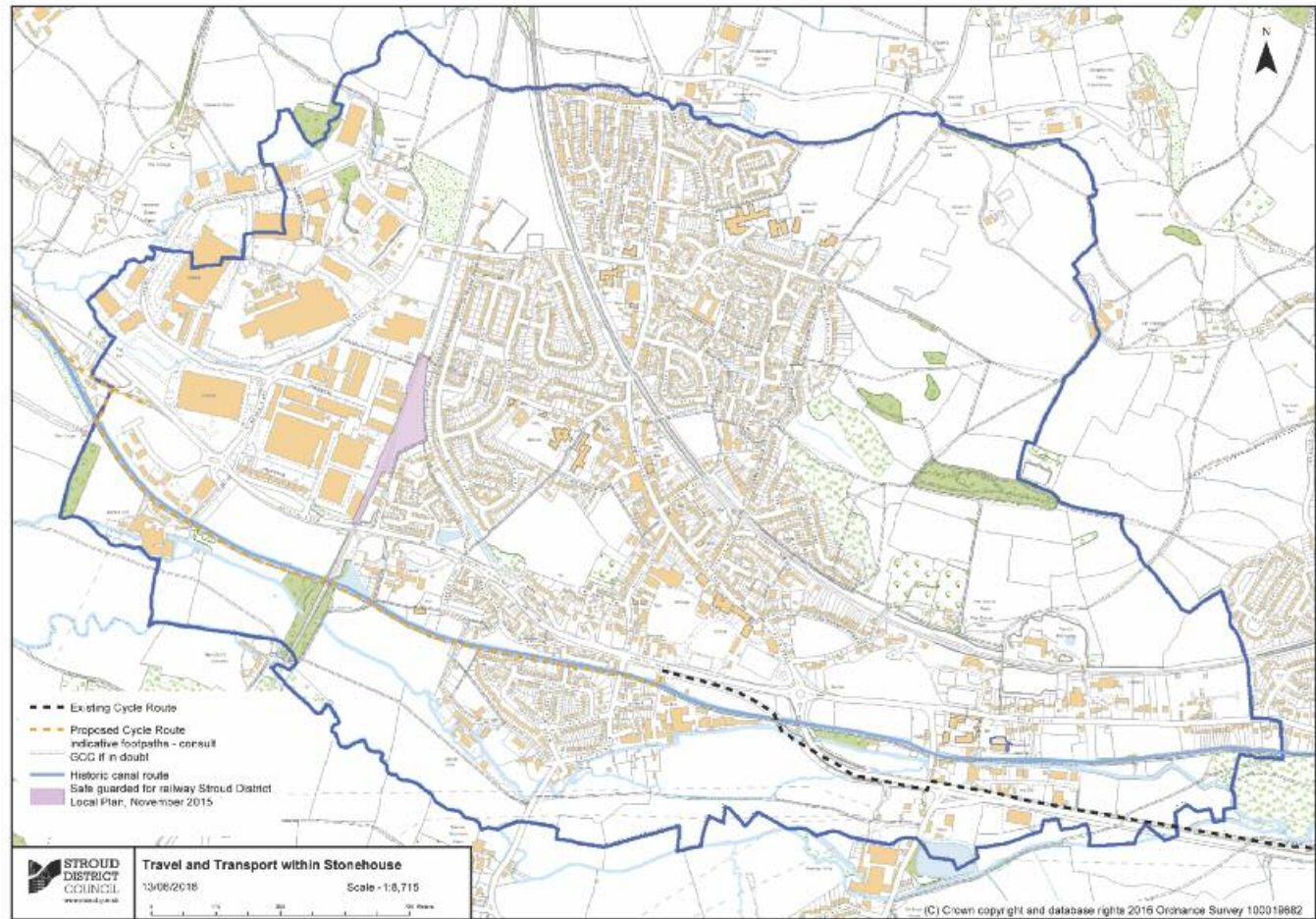
- 2.1 Support safe and convenient routes for pedestrians (including for the less able bodied), wheelchairs, pushchairs and mobility scooters.
- 2.2 Support the extension of the network of safe and convenient cycle routes for all abilities.
- 2.3 Support improved bus services.
- 2.4 Protect and improve the current railway station and support the re-opening of Bristol Road station.
- 2.5 Only support major development where it is, or will be made, accessible to the town centre on foot and by cycle.
- 2.6 Support improvements to on-street parking in Stonehouse, creating a safer environment for all road users.
- 2.7 Increase the number of conveniently placed cycle racks as the opportunity arises.
- 2.8 Support improvements to the links between the town and the canal.



Introduction to walking policies

Stonehouse is small enough that the majority of residents can access facilities such as shops and medical and social facilities on foot. Encouraging and facilitating walking reduces traffic as well as encouraging healthy activity. However, as one of the few fairly flat towns in the Stroud District, Stonehouse contains a high proportion of sheltered housing. Consequently, it is important that walking routes are accessible to wheelchairs and invalid buggies.

Existing walking routes are of variable quality with some paths being narrow and overgrown. Railway crossings, often involving steps, present problems for the less able bodied. The need for improvements to walking and cycling routes was one of the key themes emerging from the Neighbourhood Plan consultation.



Map 4: Transport - within Stonehouse





■ POLICY T1: PEDESTRIAN ROUTES

Existing public rights of way and other pedestrian routes should be protected and their quality improved where opportunities arise.

Improvements to existing walking routes to the town centre, the schools and the canal will be supported.

Where public footpaths or bridleways are routed or realigned through new development, where possible, they should be designed as part of landscaped wildlife corridors rather than being routed along estate road pavements as part of the highway network and should be accessible to all including wheelchair users.

As one of the few flat towns in the Stroud District, Stonehouse has a number of sheltered housing schemes and is suitable for people with mobility difficulties. As a result, it is important that access for wheelchairs and mobility scooters is facilitated both on pavements and, as far as possible, on off-road footpaths. A net improvement is defined as an improvement in the directness of a route and/or of its width or surface and/or the removal of any obstructions.

Justification

Pedestrian routes serve a dual purpose. Many footpaths, especially in the rural areas, are used mainly for recreational purposes. These are important for the health and wellbeing of local residents. They are protected (and improved where the opportunity arises) through the Gloucestershire Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-2026.



Stroudwater canal

Utility walking routes (routes used by residents to get from A to B) comprise pavements as well as footpaths and are also important both for health and well being and to help facilitate the move to a more sustainable transport system. Stonehouse is small enough and flat enough for most residents to access facilities on foot in line with the transport hierarchy. In Strategic Objective SO4, the Stroud District Local Plan stresses the importance of more active transport both to improve health and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Encouraging walking has the potential to contribute to the health of the population and to ease traffic and parking congestion as well as reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The draft Local Transport Plan also recognises the importance of walking as a means of transport in Policy PD 4.8.

The Stroudwater canal is being restored and is increasingly providing both a leisure facility and a sustainable transport route to the south of Stonehouse. As the restoration progresses, walking routes that link the town centre to the canal will become increasingly important to facilitate both access to the canal for residents and access to the town centre for canal users.

Related district and national policies

- LP SO4, CP13, ES3
- LTP PD 4.8
- NPPF 35,75,69



■ POLICY T2: NEW DEVELOPMENT AND PEDESTRIAN LINKS TO THE TOWN CENTRE

New developments will be supported where they provide safe, convenient and pleasant pedestrian routes to the town centre and to principal facilities including local schools, including safe and convenient crossings of roads and railway lines, where possible and deliverable and where the location of the proposal suggests a need for such routes.

Where possible, these routes should:

- i) be accessible to pushchair and wheelchair users;
- ii) be designed to act as wildlife corridors; and,
- iii) meet the requirements set out in the most up-to-date Manual for Gloucestershire Streets and / or Highways Authority Standing Advice.

Justification

The Plan consultation highlighted the need to improve walking routes, as well as the need for improvements to disabled access. Providing safe, convenient and pleasant routes to schools, the main shopping area and other facilities is particularly important and necessitates safe and convenient crossings of main roads and railway lines. Policy T2 of this Plan provides a local delivery tool to Policy EI12 of the Local Plan. It reflects the geography of the town.

Whilst development near the centre of town is preferable from an accessibility point of view, there is very little space for such development, and it is likely that any development will be on the edge of town. The strategic allocation identified in the Stroud Local Plan (Land to the west of Stonehouse Policy SA2) for new residential and employment development was granted outline planning permission in April 2016. It includes its own proposals for pedestrian and cycle access. These

details will be clarified as the District Council makes decisions on the various reserved matters applications.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP8, CP13, EI12, ES12, ES3
- LTP PD 4.8
- NPPF 35, 69



The canal at the old Ship Inn site



■ POLICY T3: DESIGN OF OFF-ROAD PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTES

Any new or improved cycle and pedestrian routes that are provided or incorporated within development proposals should be designed, where feasible and viable, to:

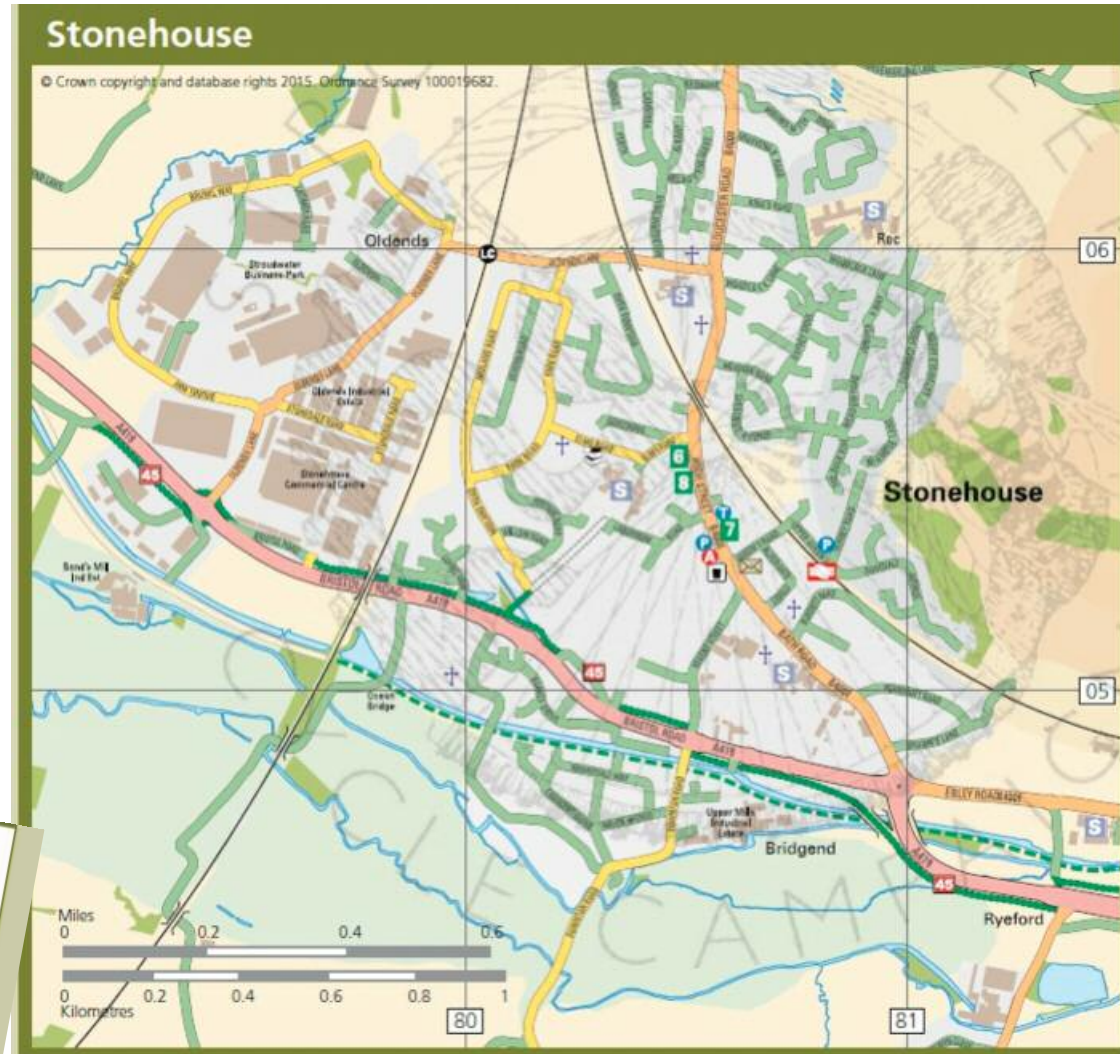
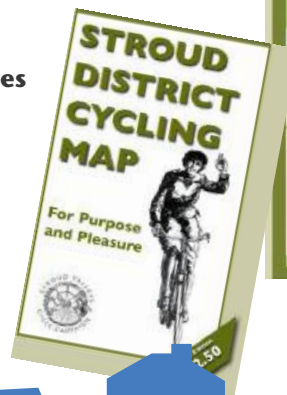
- i) meet the requirements set out in the most up-to-date Manual for Gloucestershire Streets and / or Highways Authority Standing Advice;
- ii) be accessible for safe use by those using mobility scooters; and,
- iii) be designed to act as wildlife corridors.

Justification

Off-road pedestrian and cycle routes will only be used when they are, and are perceived as, safe and convenient. In order to be safe and convenient for wheelchair users, paths must be level from side to side as well as not too steep, evenly surfaced and wide enough for two pushchairs/wheelchairs to pass. Manual for Gloucestershire Streets recommends a minimum width of 2 metres and a maximum gradient of 5% with a crossfall not exceeding 1:40.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP8, CP13, EI12 ,ES6, ES12
- NPPF 35



Extract from
Stroud District
Cycling Map

Image: Stroud
Valleys Cycle
Campaign



■ POLICY T4: ACCESSIBILITY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT TO FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Where appropriate new development should be designed to enhance accessibility to local facilities and services. Particular attention should be paid to:

- i) the travel hierarchy considering sequentially: 1. pedestrian, 2. cyclist, 3. public transport users, 4. specialist service vehicles (emergency services, waste, etc.) and 5. other motor traffic;
- ii) the creation of 'walkable neighbourhoods', for example, accessibility to new and existing community facilities by residents within a 10 minute / 800m walking distance;
- iii) new community facilities being located on, or within a reasonable walking distance to public transport routes; and, easily accessible children's play areas.

Justification

Encouraging active travel (cycling or walking) contributes to a reduction in traffic congestion and associated pollution (including of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change) as well improving the health and wellbeing of residents. In order to encourage active travel it needs to be facilitated in the design of new

development and also for the distances travelled to be relatively short.

'Walkable neighbourhoods' also contribute to social cohesion through encouraging social interaction. Children's play areas need to be close enough and the routes to them need to be safe enough for children to reach them without supervision from adults.

Where new community facilities are to be accessed by people outside the immediate area, they should be

situated within walking distance of a public transport route.

In circumstances where a design and access statement or a travel plan is required as part of a planning application the documents concerned should address the issues in this policy.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP8, CP13, EI12, ES12
- NPPF 35, 38, 69



Traffic in Stonehouse High Street, March 2016



Introduction to cycling policies

As one of the flattest towns in the Stroud District, Stonehouse should be a good place for cycling. Stonehouse is intersected by two railway lines and a major road (the A419) as shown in Map 4 (p.27). While these are important as transport corridors, they can also act as barriers to movement across the town, including for cyclists. The planned West of Stonehouse development, which will be separated from the town centre and associated facilities by the Bristol/Gloucester railway line, has the potential to exacerbate this problem.

Sustrans Route 45 follows the A419 through the southern part of Stonehouse. Mostly, this is a safe and convenient route, the only dangerous section being the crossing of the A419 and two smaller roads at the southern end of Oldends Lane. It is also possible to cycle along the canal towpath as far as Ocean Bridge. It is hoped that the regeneration of the canal will result in this cyclable section of the towpath being extended to the west.

The direct route to Stroud via Ebley Road is made harder by the two large roundabouts at The Horsetrough and Cainscross. The B4008 to Gloucester is a narrow, winding road on which most people do not feel safe cycling.





■ POLICY T5: EXISTING CYCLE ROUTES

Development proposals for new and amended cycle routes will be supported where:

- i) There is no net loss to the effectiveness of the existing cycle network;
- ii) Provision is made for accessibility to motor scooters; and
- iii) They have been designed or adapted to act as wildlife corridors (where feasible and viable).



Justification

Paragraph 5.6.9 of the Local Plan says: 'As part of an integrated transport policy, the Council is keen to make sure that short journeys by cycle are facilitated by convenient and safe networks that are available to residents, workers and visitors alike.' In addition to Strategic Objective SO4 and Policy EI12 of the Local Plan, Policy EI13 specifically supports protecting and extending cycle routes, as does Policy PD2.1 of the draft Local Transport Plan.

Cycle routes are only useful if they are (and are perceived to be) safe and reasonably pleasant. They need to take a reasonably direct route from where people start from (usually their home) to where people want to be. A net improvement to cycle routes would bring them closer to meeting these criteria.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP13, EI13, ES6
- NPPF 35, 75, 69





■ POLICY T6: NEW DEVELOPMENT AND CYCLE LINKS TO THE TOWN CENTRE

Where appropriate new development will be required to provide safe, convenient and pleasant cycle routes either on quiet roads or off-road. Where possible and deliverable, and where the location of the proposal generates a need, routes should be provided to the town centres and to principal facilities including local schools. Routes should include safe and convenient crossings of roads and railways where necessary.

Where they are off-road they should be:

- i) accessible to mobility scooters;
- ii) accessible to pushchair and wheelchair users;
- iii) designed to act as wildlife corridors (where feasible and viable); and,
- iv) meet the requirements set out in the most up-to-date Manual for Gloucestershire Streets and / or Highways Authority Standing Advice.

Justification

Gloucestershire County Council Cycle Facilities Guidelines says: "Most cycling takes place on the road, and this will continue to be the case. It is therefore essential that the road network is made suitable for cycling. Segregated cycle routes and networks will play an important role in some areas, but they will be of limited use if cyclists are

unable to use ordinary roads freely." (p. 4). Options for Enabling and Encouraging Cycling in Stroud District (2010) details obstacles to cycling in the Stonehouse area and suggests possible solutions.

Whilst Sustrans Route 45 and the canal towpath provide scope for leisure cycling around Stonehouse, and has some use for utility cycling, most utility cycling takes place on roads. Many people are deterred from utility cycling by the real or perceived dangers of the road network. In particular, the Horsetrough Roundabout presents a barrier on the direct route towards Stroud along the B4008 Ebley Road.

The Plan consultation process supported improved cycle



The Horsetrough Roundabout presents a barrier on the direct route towards Stroud

routes. There were also some complaints about cycling on pavements, which often results from cyclists feeling unsafe on the roads.

Policy T6 sets out a context within which strategic policies can be implemented in the neighbourhood area. It has been designed to be applied in a flexible way to reflect the scale of the development concerned and the opportunities that exist for its connection to the town centre and other facilities.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP8, CP13, EI12, EI13, ES6, ES12, ES3
- NPPF 35, 69



■ POLICY T7: CYCLE PARKING

The provision of additional cycle parking will be supported at public transport nodes (such as Burdett Road station), and at community, education and social facilities (such as the Childrens' Centre, schools, doctors' surgeries and community halls).

Development proposals which seek to remove cycle parking will only be supported where either:

- i) adequate replacements are provided; or,
- ii) it is demonstrated that the existing provision is surplus to requirements.

Justification

Gloucestershire County Council Cycle Facilities Guidelines says: "Good quality cycle-parking can encourage the use of cycles especially if provided at key locations near shops and other businesses, railway and bus stations. It is often the lack of parking facilities that deters many potential cyclists from using their machines for commuting or shopping because of the fear of having them stolen."

Related district and national policies

- LP CP13, E113
- NPPF 35





■ POLICY T8: IMPROVING KEY PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS

Development proposals for the improvement of pedestrian and cycle access which better connect the locations and routes identified below, either by improving existing links or creating new ones, will be supported:

- i) Linking the town centre with the Oldends Lane industrial estate, including an improved railway crossing;
- ii) Linking the town centre and residential areas with the canal;
- iii) Linking the town centre with Ebley Road, avoiding the Horsetrough roundabout;
- iv) Linking residential areas with Maidenhill School, with Park Junior and Infant Schools and with the High Street; and,
- v) Links to Burdett Road Railway station or the site of the proposed Bristol Road Railway Station.

Proposals should be in accordance with the standards set out in the Gloucestershire Manual for Streets and Gloucestershire County Council Cycle Facilities Guidelines.

Justification

Whilst pedestrian and cycle links are important throughout the parish, links to schools, local facilities and transport hubs are particularly important. Additionally, there are some areas of particular concern:

- Links with the canal
- Links between the industrial estate and the proposed development West of Stonehouse and the town centre
- Cycle links to Ebley Road avoiding the Horsetrough Roundabout

Related district and national policies

- LP CP8, CP13, EI12, EI13
- LTP PD 2.1
- NPPF 35, 69





Introduction to public transport policies

Stonehouse has good bus connections to Stroud and Gloucester during the day on weekdays and Saturdays, with a much reduced service evenings and on Sundays. The Plan consultation revealed a number of concerns relating to bus services. Most concerned the frequency and timing of services. There was also a request for better information and seating at bus stops and for more accessible buses for wheelchair and scooter users. However, the service is profit making so not covered by the Local Transport Plan which deals only with subsidised services and is not within the remit of Neighbourhood Plans.

Stonehouse has good rail connections with Swindon and London and Gloucester and Cheltenham. Burdett Road station is a much valued asset and has been improved recently with a new shelter and footbridge and more improvements are planned. However, there is no disabled access between the platforms without a long journey round by road (see Map 5, p.38) and it is difficult for elderly and disabled people to get on and off trains due to the difference in level between the trains and the platform. Also there is a shortage of parking at the station, causing spillage onto nearby roads.

There are no direct public transport connections to Bristol despite the Gloucester to Bristol railway line passing through the town. As a result many residents who work in Bristol either have to drive or drive or cycle to Cam and Dursley station to commute to Bristol.



Burdett Road railway station



■ POLICY T9: RAILWAY STATION

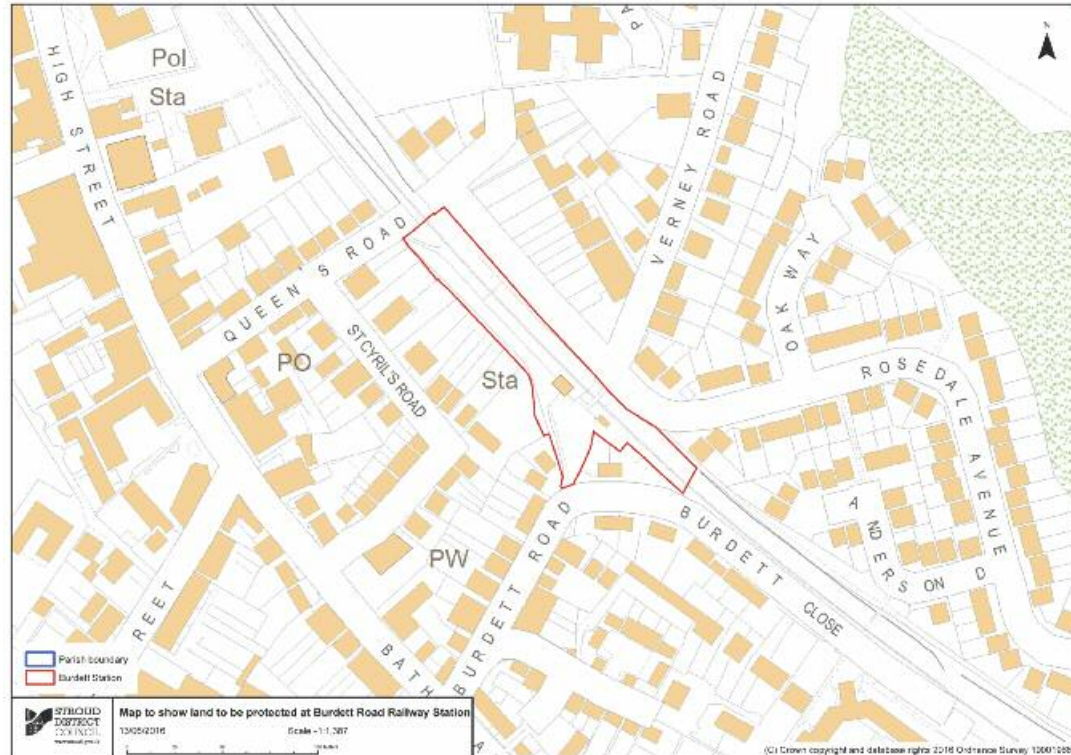
Proposals for additional station amenities and for improved access at the Burdett Road railway station and its associated land as shown on Map 5 will be supported.

Development proposals for additional off-street parking to serve the station will be supported.

Justification

The Plan consultation showed support for Stonehouse station and the importance of having a station in town was emphasised. The station is an important link for Stonehouse, taking traffic off the road and potentially contributing to economic development. It has the potential to provide a link to the Cotswold Way and, when it is restored, to the canal, so contributing to the development of leisure and tourism in and around Stonehouse.

However, access to the station and the amount of parking provided is constrained by the lack of space around the station as can be seen on Map 5. Disabled access between the platforms is particularly difficult, necessitating a long journey round by road to avoid steps. There is considerable potential to introduce additional station amenities and to improve accessibility. In particular the station would benefit from having improved access for people with disabilities and for cycle parking.



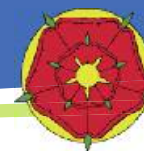
Map 5:
Stonehouse
Neighbourhood
Plan – Network
Rail land at
Burdett Road
Railway Station

The Plan strongly supports the re-opening of Stonehouse Bristol Road Railway Station in line with Delivery Policy EI14 of the Local Plan. A new station at the old station site, Stonehouse Bristol Road, was the most supported suggestion in the Plan consultation. In providing a direct link to Bristol, it would remove traffic from the A419, help local businesses and contribute to the quality of life of local people.

The land for the station is protected in Local Plan Policy EI14 and the area protected is shown on the Local Plan Policies Map. Consequently, Policy T8 of this document supports improved cycle and pedestrian links to that site.

Related district and national policies

- LP EI14, EI16
- NPPF 35



Introduction to traffic and parking policies

Traffic on the A419 is an increasing problem, especially in the rush hour. There are plans to make alterations to the junctions along this road in association with the planned development of 1350 houses and 10 hectares of employment land to the west of Stonehouse. We have concerns that these changes will make active travel harder

Year	Fatal accidents	Serious accidents	Slight accidents	Total accidents
2000	0	1	5	6
2001	0	0	4	4
2002	0	0	4	4
2003	0	0	6	6
2004	0	0	3	3
2005	0	0	6	6
2006	0	1	2	3
2007	0	1	4	5
2008	0	1	2	3
2009	0	0	2	2
2010	0	1	2	3
2011	0	0	4	4
2012	0	0	3	3
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0

Casualty data for Stonehouse (between the railway bridge and Wycliffe College)

Source: GCC Road Safety Partnership



Parking in the High Street was the subject of a variety of comments in the Plan consultation

and make the road into more of a barrier cutting off the southern part of the town.

The B4008 is less busy but there have been complaints about its use by lorries, in spite of the weight limit. It is a narrow windy road and is subject to a 20mph speed limit and traffic calming where it passes through the centre of Stonehouse, becoming the High Street. There are differences of opinion on the success of the shared space scheme but the figures show a reduction in accidents since the scheme was implemented in the Autumn of 2011, with no recorded accidents since 2013.

Parking in the High Street was the subject of a variety of comments in the Plan consultation. There is a problem of limited visibility due to parked cars when emerging from some of the side turnings and, at the time of writing, the High Street is part of a parking review by Gloucestershire County Council. There were also complaints about parking on double yellow lines and on pavements. The town centre car park is limited in space and there is little scope for extending it. This could become a problem in the future.



■ POLICY T10: LOSS OF PARKING CAPACITY

Development that results in the loss of existing off-street town centre car parking will only be supported where suitable and accessible replacement facilities are provided, or where it can be demonstrated that the parking spaces proposed to be lost are no longer needed.

Justification

As has been argued above, sustainable development necessarily involves a substantial move away from the private car. However, whilst it is possible for many Stonehouse residents to reach the High Street and other town centre facilities on foot, there are many who need

to drive and others who shop on their way to and from another destination.

The vitality of town centre businesses depends in part upon the availability of short stay parking for both these groups. Most of the shops have very little parking and the only public car park in the town centre is in danger of reaching capacity in the near future. At the same time on-street parking presents problems of safety for vehicles and pedestrians. There is also a need for more long-stay parking for users of the station. As a result, it is important that the car park is protected and if possible extended as the need arises.

Related district and national policies

- LP E12



The only public car park in the town centre is in danger of reaching capacity in the near future



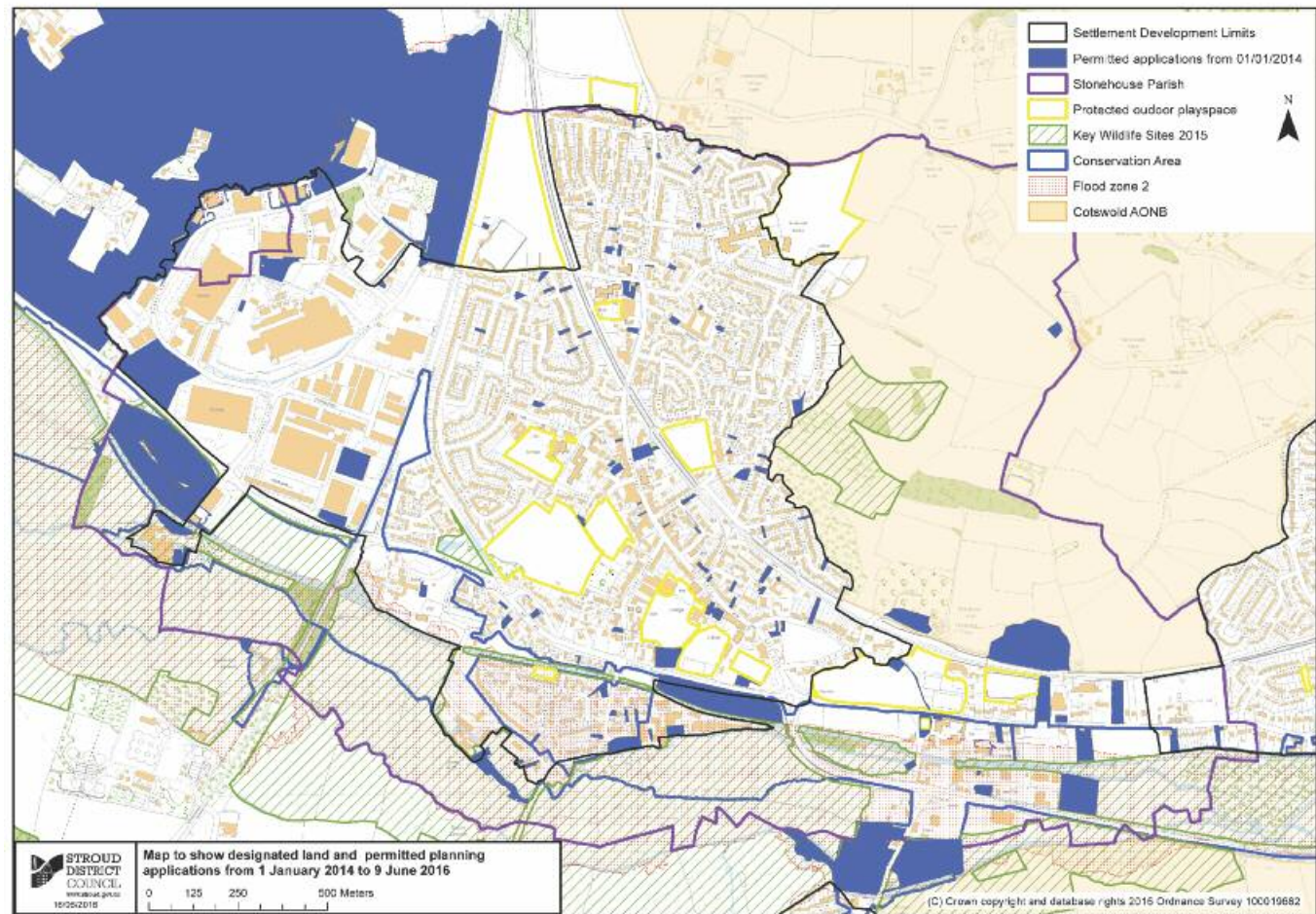
THEME 3: Housing

Theme introduction

Stonehouse initially developed as a village and has experienced three main population increases over the centuries, firstly with the arrival of the canal and railways, then doubling during the Second World War with the relocation of aircraft factories and housing for the workers, then since the 1950s with the provision of local authority and private housing estates. Stonehouse became a town in 1990.

Stonehouse is identified by Core Policy CP3 within Stroud District Council's Local Plan as a First Tier settlement and an Accessible Local Service Centre which means it is one of the District's main towns which are the 'primary focus for growth and development'. Stonehouse is the second largest settlement within Stroud District Council's area with a population of 7725 (Census 2011) and over 4000 people are employed in the town. In 2015 Stonehouse had 3195 households, 30% of which were rented.

Stonehouse is surrounded to the east and south by the Cotswold escarpment with flat plains just above sea level to the west and north. Stonehouse has developed around natural and man-made elements, including the River Frome, the Stroudwater canal, the Bristol and



Map 6: Stonehouse: designated land and land with planning permission granted between 1 January 2014 to 9 June 2016



London railway lines and the road network with the A419 running east/west to the south and the north/south B4008. The town centre, unlike much of the Stroud district area, is flat and follows either side of the B4008 with other primary shopping areas adjacent along Regent Street, Queens Parade and Elm Road. The vistas from and to the settlement from the Cotswold escarpment are a much-prized asset of Stonehouse. (See Map 1, p.9).

Stonehouse has a unique character and atmosphere combined with a strong sense of its own identity, with families having settled for generations in the area. Stonehouse is separated from its neighbouring parish Standish to the north by a band of open countryside with numerous hedgerows and mature trees that screen the settlements from each other, and this should be maintained.

Stonehouse's buildings are in a range of styles and materials. Older housing from the 16th to 19th century tends to be constructed from limestone. The town had two brickworks from the 19th to 20th centuries and terraced red brick housing is characteristic of the town, along with larger detached brick houses for the more affluent.

Estates built in the 20th and 21st centuries each have distinctive styles, from white washed local authority built housing of the 1950s on the Park Estate, to the yellow brick of Little Australia with numerous single storey homes, to the red brick of Arrowsmith Drive, the



*Clockwise from top left:
Regent Street, 1800s
Gloucester Road, 1800s
Severn Road, 1950s
Brisbane, 1990s
Arrowsmith Drive, 2000s*



antique brick of Court View through to the latest large development at Foxes Field. The Town Character Assessment carried out to inform the Plan gives more detail on the character of different areas of the town.

Stroud District Council's Local Plan looks at Stonehouse within a cluster of other settlements. There is a significant site allocation within the Stonehouse cluster, Site Allocations Policy SA2, West of Stonehouse, for a development which includes 1,350 dwellings. This site allocation includes some land within the parish of Stonehouse, although it is largely outside the parish boundary.

Research by Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Working Group identified that 226 homes were delivered between April 2006 and September 2015 within Stonehouse parish, with an additional 211 granted consent in the wider Stonehouse cluster. Together with the West of Stonehouse site allocation (1,350 dwellings) this means that the Stonehouse cluster has already provided or committed to provide 1,787 dwellings, over 15% (1,710) of the target of at least 11,400 dwellings provided between 2006 and 2031 identified in the Local Plan.

During the development of this plan a call for sites was undertaken with no suitable sites being put forward. Local landowners were also consulted, for example Wycliffe College, and none were found planning on releasing land they own for building homes in the Plan period.

Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Working Group's research showed there is little land available for development. Much of the undeveloped land in the parish is either protected play space within the Local Plan or part of the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

A large number of dwellings have been built or granted consent since 2006 within Stonehouse and the Stonehouse cluster (see Map 6, p.41). Future development is likely to be on smaller sites and windfall sites. These policies therefore aim to influence the type of housing provided in line with the evidence on predicted population change up to 2031 and on current housing stock. This evidence indicates that accessible housing suitable for the elderly and others with limited mobility, affordable housing and more bungalows and flats are needed.



Much of the undeveloped land in the parish is either protected play space within the Local Plan or part of the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Relevant aims and objectives

Aim 3: To retain strong family and community ties, a mix of housing types will be supported to meet future requirements and the needs of all ages, income and varied needs.

Objectives:

- 3.1 Housing appropriate for older people and those with accessibility issues.
- 3.2 Smaller units – catering for single people, single parents and those wishing to downsize.
- 3.3 Housing that is less expensive to buy/rent and to run.
- 3.4 Energy efficient buildings.



■ POLICY H1: LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING (DWELLING SIZE AND TYPE)

To help ensure a locally appropriate supply of dwelling types and sizes, development proposals which demonstrate (across tenures) how they meet the local needs, demand and demographic profile of Stonehouse parish will be supported. These include:

1. Bungalows which meet the particular needs of Stonehouse's ageing population.
2. Smaller dwelling units which meet the particular needs of younger people seeking to move into their first owner occupied, shared equity or private rented property.

Justification

Stonehouse's retirement-age adults are predicted to have by far the largest increase in population of any age group up until 2031 (from 1,281 at the 2011 census projected to rise by 848 to around 2,129 by 2031)¹¹. Therefore there is likely to be a need for additional housing that meets the needs of this population group. Stonehouse is an attractive location for elderly people or people with disabilities as the Parish is mainly level with a comprehensive range of services and shops. Detailed information on Stonehouse's demographic profile and housing need and demand can be found in:

- *Rural community profile for Stonehouse (Parish), Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project, October 2013*¹²
- *Stroud District Settlement Role and Function Study December 2014*¹³
- *Stonehouse Housing Report, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC), July 2015*¹⁴
- *Stonehouse NDP housing and population evidence (May 2016)*¹⁵.

Stonehouse has a housing stock predominantly made up of houses, and in particular a high proportion of terraced and semi-detached houses with few flats or bungalows, suggesting a need for more of the latter types of housing. Only 2 bungalows have been



Bungalows in Willow Road



Flats on Park Estate



Terraced houses in Regent Street

constructed since April 2006. There is an identified national under supply of bungalows over the last 25 years. There is a higher proportion (40.6% of dwellings) of semi-detached housing than the national (30.7%) or county (33.8%) average. There is a lower proportion of flats both purpose built (9.2%) and other (3.1%) than the national and county averages¹⁶.

Housing for the elderly or those with limited mobility, starter homes, housing for young families and affordable housing were the most popular responses to consultation on local housing need Stonehouse making up around a quarter (23%) of all comments received on housing for the Plan.

Although Stonehouse has a higher proportion of social housing than the District as a whole¹⁷, there is still a need for affordable housing given the limited availability of rented property and the high affordability ratio¹⁸ for those looking to buy property.

Affordability is an issue for people looking to buy or rent in Stonehouse. Research carried out to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan showed that there was a limited availability of properties to rent privately and to afford the cheapest property available a tenant would need to have an above average salary. For people looking to buy a property, despite a relatively wide availability the affordability ratio was still extremely high requiring above average salaries plus a considerable deposit.

Demand for affordable housing was identified during consultation for the Plan.

The policy applies only to new development that may come forward within the Plan period. It does not affect the existing outline planning permission on land to the west of Stonehouse.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP7, CP8, CP9, HC1
- NPPF 50



Research carried out to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan showed that there was a limited availability of properties to rent privately and to afford the cheapest property available a tenant would need to have an above average salary



■ POLICY H2: EASE OF ACCESS IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for housing development should provide off-street car parking spaces to meet current Stroud District Council parking standards.

Proposals should demonstrate that they comply with advice and standards given in the Gloucestershire Manual for Streets in relation to access and residential street design.

Developers should arrange the design and layout of development so as not to compromise clear and safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles by paying particular attention to:

- i) off-street parking provision which is adequate to serve households and dwelling size; and,
- ii) roads being of sufficient width and an appropriate layout to ensure easy two-way vehicular access, without compromising the safety of pedestrians or cyclists.

Justification

Policy H2 seeks to reduce on street parking and improve road safety and to mitigate the problems being experienced on new build sites within the District and neighbouring areas where road widths are causing serious congestion issues. Local concern on this issue was identified during consultation.

Related district and national policies

- LP HC1, CP8, CP13, E112
- NPPF 69



A narrow and congested road at Court View



■ POLICY H3: PLAY AREAS IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Development proposals for new residential development should provide play space to meet the standards set out in policy ES15 of the Stroud Local Plan.

Where the achievement of this standard is unrealistic or inappropriate within the boundaries of the development site a financial contribution will be sought in lieu of on-site provision. When new provision is provided appropriate measures will be sought to ensure the future satisfactory maintenance and management of the open space.

Justification

The policy seeks to enable young children to play safely within the immediate area where they live and to improve their health and well-being through physical activity.

Policy H3 sets out the Plan's approach to the need for play space. Ideally it should be provided within the boundaries of the site itself. However, there may be circumstances where the site is too small or where it would otherwise be inappropriate to provide play space on site. As such the policy sets out the opportunities for off-site contributions. These should be applied to the improvement or consolidation of existing play spaces



Play area in Blackwell Close

that would be within realistic walking distance of the proposed residential development.

An example of best practice is Blackwell Close where facilities include the elements of swinging, climbing and sliding in a fenced area on a soft surface.

Related district and national policies

- LP ES14, ES15
- NPPF 69, 70



THEME 4: Employment

Theme introduction

Stonehouse contains almost a third of the District's commercial floor space, concentrated in a major industrial and business area to the west of the town.

The proximity to the M5 (Junction 13), A419 corridor and residential areas combine with the quality of premises to make Stonehouse a significant location for creating and sustaining jobs and economic prosperity

at a local, district and county level and it is identified as an 'employment hotspot' in the Stroud Local Plan.



The offices of international employer Schlumberger in Stonehouse Technology Park, Brunel Way



There are a number of international and national employers here for example, Schlumberger, Delphi and Sartorius. A business consultation event identified that they were drawn to Stonehouse by the wider surroundings – the Cotswolds – the quality of premises and good transport links.

A recent parish profile identified 4,154 people (74.2% of the population) in Stonehouse as economically active – that is, working or unemployed. While claimant data shows Stonehouse is performing well against the national average for those on Job Seekers' Allowance or Employment Support Allowance and the number of claimants stands at 2.6% against the English average of 3.6%.

The majority of people in Stonehouse travel less than 2km to work. However, Stonehouse has average or above average numbers of people with low or no formal qualifications. This means that the greatest proportion of employment opportunities in Stonehouse are within elementary roles or those with skills gained through 'on-the-job' training.

The Employment Land Review (2013) undertaken for the preparation of the Stroud District Council Local Plan identified:

- The town is a focus for continued demand for modern space on a sub-regional level.



Units at Bonds Mill Estate



- Stonehouse Business Park is the only location in the District providing 'an appropriate offer' in terms of modern space provision, competing with the substantial markets of Gloucester, Cheltenham and North Bristol.
- Stonehouse is the only location with multiple protected employment sites in the District. These being Stroudwater Industrial Estate, Stonehouse Park and Bonds Mill Industrial Estate.
- Given there is continuing demand for freehold industrial units from owner-occupier sites should be set for development plots. As such delivery is more likely where land is in public sector ownership, it is recommended consideration is given on part of the County Council owned land at Stonehouse.
- Stonehouse has an acknowledged cluster of advanced manufacturing business.
- Stonehouse is overly dependent on manufacturing employment making it potentially more vulnerable to the downsizing in the sector.
- The level of education, skills and training in Stonehouse is low compared to England as a whole.

In acknowledgement of this the adopted Stroud District Local Plan has identified 10 hectares of B1, B2 and B8 land to the West of Stonehouse which is predicted to

provide up to 2000 jobs by 2013. However, it is important that over the Plan period that existing employment, and any new employment sites that come forward, maintain and provide jobs and economic prosperity for Stonehouse.

The Müller factory at Oldends Lane



Relevant aims and objectives

Aim 4: To support employment opportunities and secure a prosperous economic future for Stonehouse.

Objectives:

- 4.1 Protect, support and improve existing employment sites.
- 4.2 Support improvements to the relationship and links between existing employment sites and the town centre.
- 4.3 Support more high quality jobs accessible to Stonehouse residents.
- 4.4 Seek new employment sites that support small and medium-sized businesses



■ POLICY EM1: SAFEGUARDING KEY EMPLOYMENT SITES

Development proposals for employment use on the employment sites identified on Map 7 will be supported where they:

- Make more effective or efficient use of the site as employment land; or
- Provide complementary ancillary uses which improve the attractiveness of the employment sites; or
- Propose the expansion of existing premises; and
- Have no adverse impacts on the surrounding built character of the employment site concerned or its wider landscape setting; and
- Meet the requirements of relevant development plan policies

Justification

The current settlement boundary coupled with proposed and future development associated to Stonehouse cluster has meant that the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan has a finite supply of land and premises to provide employment growth opportunities for the residents of Stonehouse. In line with national planning policy, EM1 seeks to ensure sufficient land (and premises) of the right type is available in the right places and the right time to support growth.

The existing key employment areas in Stonehouse are identified on Map 7 (see Appendix 2: Maps p.80). They are:

- Bonds Mill Industrial Estate
- Stonehouse Park
- Upper Mills Industrial Estate
- Oldends Lane Industrial Estate
- Ryeford Industrial Area

These sites are protected as Key Employment Sites in Local Plan Policy E11. This protection recognises that the

five sites provide significant employment opportunities for the Stonehouse Cluster, the wider District and the M5 corridor from Bristol to Gloucester and Cheltenham.

Policy EM1 recognises that in order to provide employment opportunities commercial land and premises should be acknowledged and protected in the Neighbourhood Plan for future commercial activity and not lost to other uses.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP3, CP11, E11, E13, E14
- NPPF 17, 19, 21, 28, 37



Stonehouse Business Park



■ POLICY EM2: RESISTING LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT SPACE OUTSIDE OF DESIGNATED EMPLOYMENT SITES

Development proposals that would result in the loss of employment land outside that identified in the Key Employment Sites shown on Map 7 will be supported where:

- i) It can be demonstrated that the use of the site or premises concerned solely for employment is no longer viable; or,
- ii) It is to be replaced with employment space of an equal or higher quality on the same site or another appropriately located site within the parish.

Justification

Stonehouse has a number of small-scale employment sites across the town, these provide an important resource supporting SME business that contribute to the broad range of retail, professional services and other commercial activities present in Stonehouse commensurate to the tier one status of Stonehouse.

In many comparable towns these smaller versatile sites and premises have been lost to housing development to the detriment of local employment opportunities and services easily accessible by residents and visitors. In line with national planning policy, Policy EM2 seeks to ensure sufficient land (and premises) of the right type is

available in the right places and the right time to support growth.

The policy sets out two circumstances in which the loss of employment sites or premises will be supported. In relation to the first point on viability any such planning application will be expected to demonstrate that a 12-month active marketing exercise has taken place for employment purposes on the open market at a realistic price and that no reasonable offers have been submitted.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP3, EI13
- NPPF 17, 19, 21, 28, 37





■ POLICY EM3: SUPPORTING SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED BUSINESS

Development proposals which enable the start-up and growth of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) through the provision of small, 'hot-desk' and incubator offices or units will be supported where there is no significant adverse impact on:

- i) the character of the built environment;
- ii) the character of the natural environment and setting;
- iii) residential amenity;
- iv) traffic generation;
- v) noise; and,
- vi) light pollution.



Justification

Across all business sectors Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) comprise some 95% of business in the UK providing significant white and blue collar employment opportunities. The business parks, including mill complexes in Stonehouse, are well suited to serve the needs of SME business in Stonehouse and the District.

The Plan recognises the importance of providing a range of premises to meet the needs of these SME business in order to provide the widest range possible of employment opportunities for residents of Stonehouse.

One example of a small and medium business type which is needed in Stonehouse was identified during consultation with the local Children's Centre; there is a shortfall in the current provision of all kinds of early years child care.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP3, CP4, CP11, E14, E15
- NPPF 17, 19, 21, 28, 37



■ POLICY EM4: CONNECTIVITY AND COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE

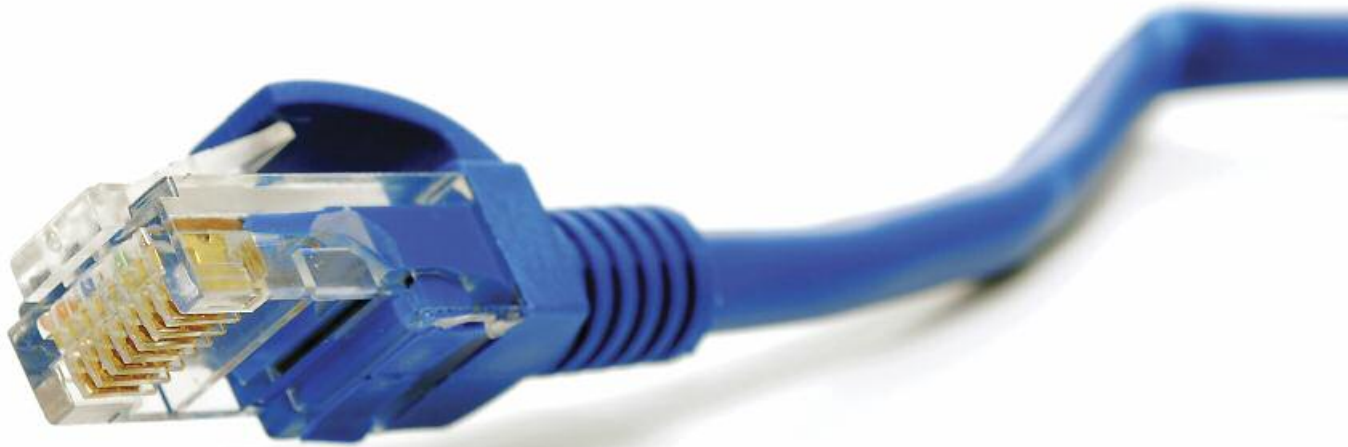
Development proposals that improve broadband, telecommunications and ICT connectivity (which require planning permission) will be supported where they do not adversely impact the character of the built or natural environment or mitigate against such impacts if unavoidable.

Justification

The Plan recognises the increasing role of telecommunications, particularly for data transfer, for successful business. Factors around connectivity are increasingly playing a factor in the commercial viability of locations – with poorly connected business parks losing out to other areas with better broadband.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP6, CP11
- NPPF 20, 42, 43





THEME 5: Environment

Theme introduction

Stonehouse is set in an area of great natural beauty, rich in both natural and heritage assets. Part of the parish is within the Cotswolds AONB and there are many impressive views towards the Cotswold escarpment, the Stroud Valleys, the River Severn and the Forest of Dean. Stonehouse supports a range of distinctive and important habitats including nationally and locally rare species of wildlife and flora and fauna. A variety of interesting historic buildings, some nationally listed, add to the distinctive character of the town. The area near the canal is part of the Stroud Industrial heritage Conservation Area and is particularly rich in listed heritage assets. The natural and historic environment of the parish is an inspiration and attraction to those who live, work in and visit Stonehouse and contributes significantly to local residents' quality of life.



Verney Fields

The Stroud Local Plan states that it will support measures protecting and improving those aspects that make the Stonehouse cluster a pleasant and viable place to live. Consultation for the Plan showed that Stonehouse's green spaces, whether recreation grounds and greens or more informal, rural spaces, are highly valued by residents. These green spaces contribute greatly to the quality of life both for local residents and wildlife. Therefore, the aim for the environment theme is to protect and enhance access to green spaces both within the town and the surrounding countryside.

These policies support the aspiration that Stonehouse will be a thriving green town, using renewable energy and energy efficiency measures, with easy access by foot, bicycle or buggy through wildlife corridors that enhance biodiversity.



Stonehouse Rest Garden

Relevant aims and objectives

Aim 5: To protect and enhance access to green spaces both within the town and the surrounding countryside.

Objectives:

- 5.1 Minimise the visual impact of new development on views out of and views into the Stonehouse settlement.
- 5.2 Support improvements to the links between the canal and Stonehouse town centre.
- 5.3 Protect and enhance green spaces and support their recreational use.
- 5.4 Protect and enhance the heritage and wildlife assets of Stonehouse, allowing them to be appreciated by residents and visitors.
- 5.5 Move toward a greener Stonehouse



Ocean Bridge



■ POLICY ENV1: MAINTAINING AND PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Development proposals, and associated landscape schemes, should conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the biodiversity, habitats and landscape of the natural environment including, but not limited to, the Key Wildlife Sites identified on Map 8 and the Priority Habitats identified on Map 9.

Where appropriate, development proposals should include information which demonstrates how any adverse impacts are satisfactorily mitigated through appropriate landscaping, habitat creation, protection or creation of corridors for wildlife movement or replacement and natural planting or other mitigation measures as appropriate to the particular proposal..

Justification

The purpose of this policy is to reinforce the protection to the natural environment given by Local Plan policies. There is widespread community support for preserving and enhancing green spaces and recognition of the importance of green spaces for wildlife habitats, active recreational activities, mental well-being, and public enjoyment. Map 8 (Appendix 2, p.81) shows some of the most significant natural environmental assets within Stonehouse. Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust have also



Stonehouse's Newt Ponds, home of the Great Crested Newt, with information panel in the foreground

provided Map 9 (Appendix 2, p.82) showing priority habitats within the area. This policy is intended to cover the natural environment across the parish, not only those areas already recognised through a national or local designation. a national or local designation.

Related district and national policies

- LP ES6, ES7, ES8, ES13
- NPPF 69, 70, 109, 117



■ POLICY ENV2: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

Development proposals that maintain and enhance the locally valued green and blue infrastructure network, as identified in Map 10, will be supported.

Justification

A network of connected green and blue infrastructure in Stonehouse is key to achieving some of the objectives of this Plan. Our valued green and blue infrastructure is identified on Map 10 (p.58). These corridors connect designated local sites and areas identified in policies AF1 Protecting Community Facilities, ENV3 Local Green Space and ENV5 Protecting and Enhancing Stroudwater canal. They provide essential connectivity corridors for recreation / leisure; access to and from the town and across the parish; support wildlife; and support biodiversity beyond specific sites and aid natural flood prevention.

This policy also supports key aims of the Plan under the themes of amenities, travel and transport and employment as its impact will not only be on the environment. The policy supports meeting the recreational aspirations of residents, enhances health and well-being opportunities, and creates an accessible Stonehouse where people can get around easily, as well as protecting and enhancing access to green spaces.

A good blue and green infrastructure network contributes to making Stonehouse an attractive place to live and work



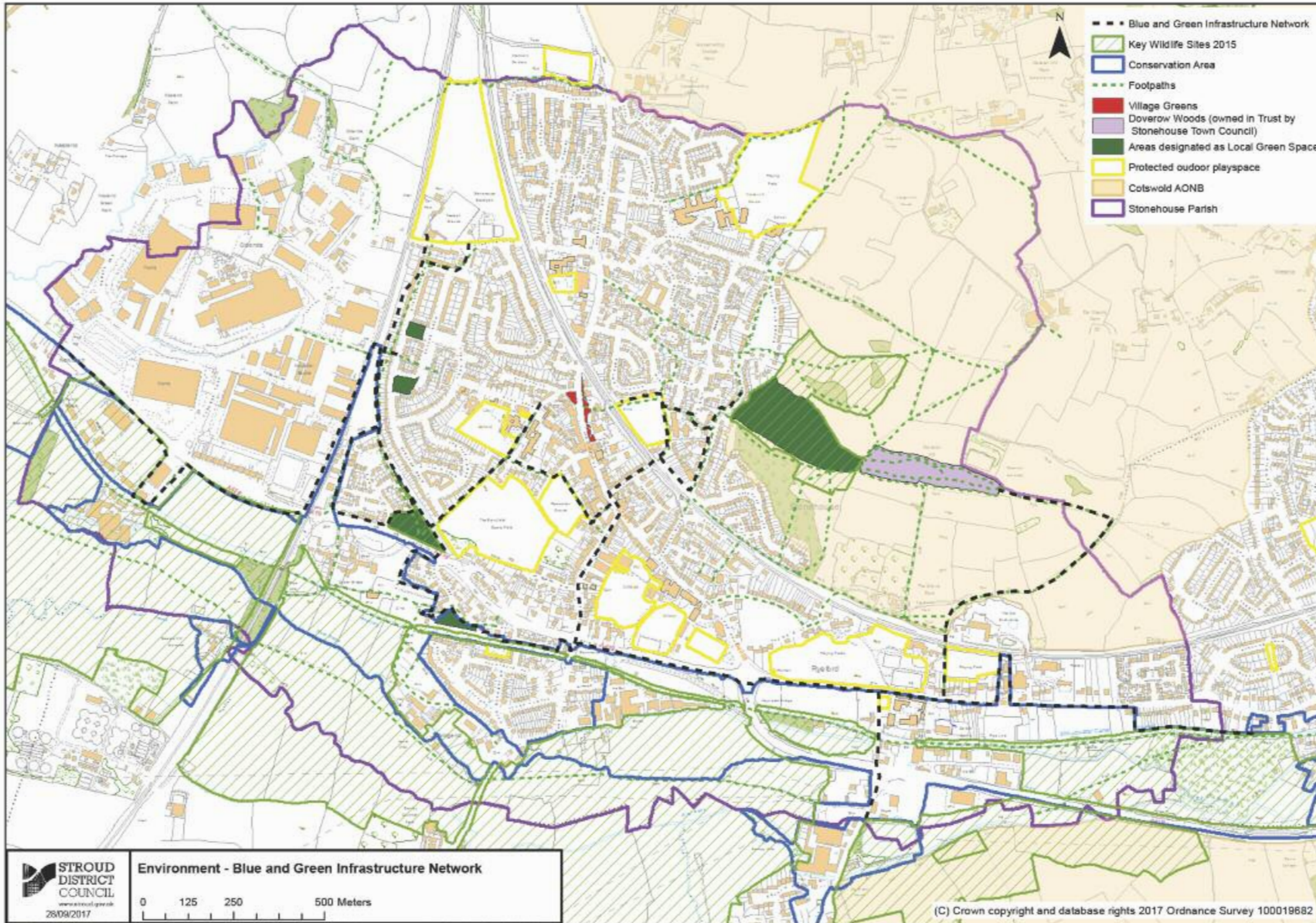
Doverow Woods

as well as supporting biodiversity and delivering benefits for people and wildlife. Connections between recreation grounds, green spaces and the canal area, with its recently restored towpath, will provide healthy and enjoyable recreation for residents and visitors. As the canal restoration project continues it is likely to attract more visitors; good, attractive connections from the canal to the rest of the town may encourage visitors to use facilities and businesses

within the town, thus enhancing its prosperity. Consultation showed that pockets of green spaces and recreational facilities are much valued by residents.

Related district and national policies

- LP , ES6, ES7, ES11, ES13
- NPPF 61, 69, 70, 74, 109



Map 10:
Stonehouse
Neighbourhood
Plan – Green
Infrastructure





■ POLICY ENV3: LOCAL GREEN SPACE

Local Green Spaces are designated at the following locations as shown on Map 11:

- Severn Road Park Estate Green
- Midland Road Park Estate Green
- Boakes Drive Green
- Verney Fields
- Court View Ponds

These areas will be protected for the reasons and uses set out. Development proposals on or likely to impact on the sites will only be supported where they:

- i) maintain or enhance the existing use and amenity value of the site;
- ii) enhance the access to and use of the site where used for recreational purposes; and
- iii) have no adverse impact on the landscape or biodiversity of the site or (where unavoidable) satisfactorily mitigate such impact.

Justification

National policy allows for the designation of Local Green Spaces which provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to the community. Such designation can only be made in specified circumstances and the designation has a similar effect on the management of the land to Green



*Midland
Road
Green*

Belt policy. The five areas identified in Policy ENV3 meet the relevant criteria. Consultation for the Plan showed that open green spaces are highly valued by residents of Stonehouse for recreation, children's play and enjoyment of the outdoors.

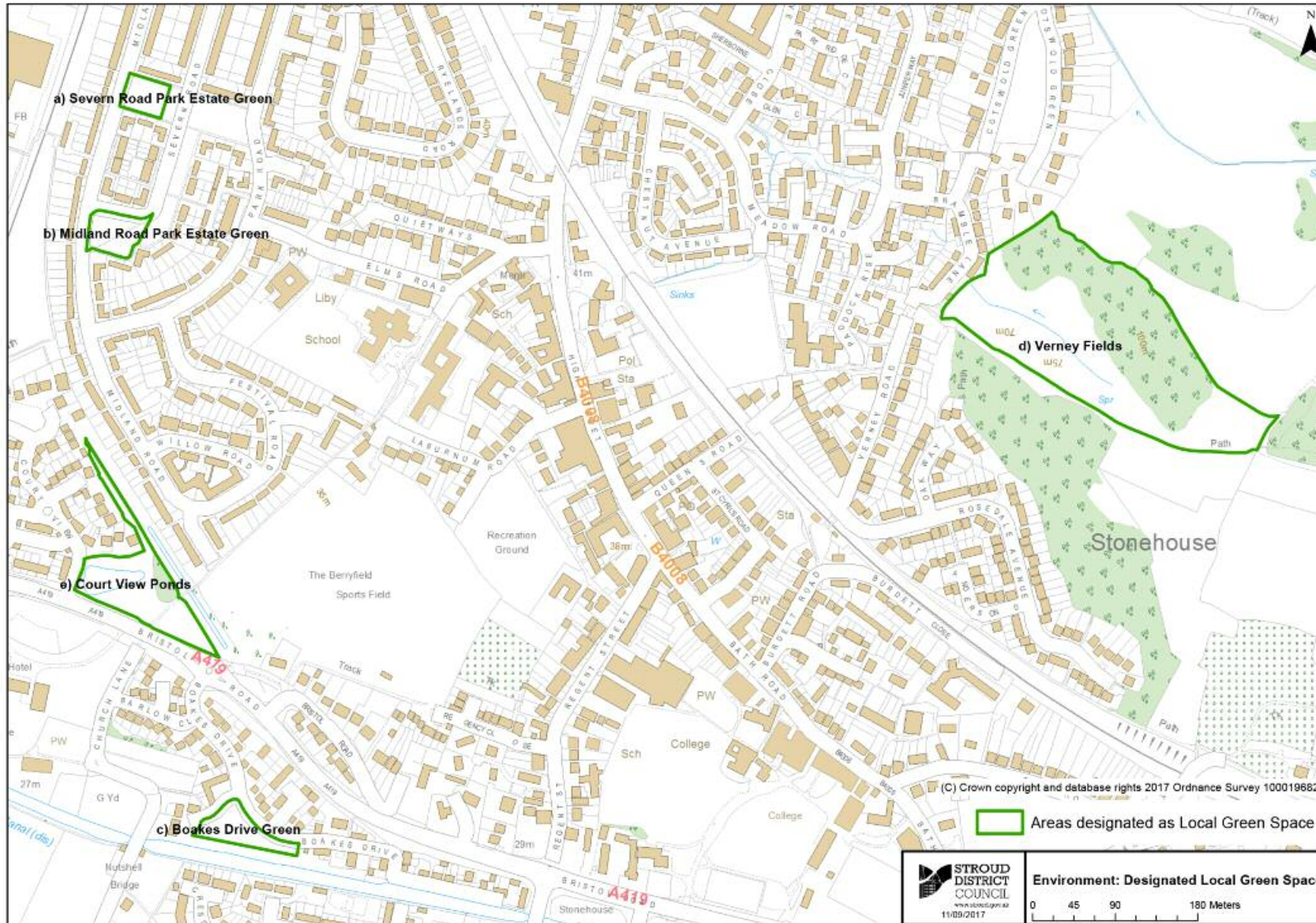
Five local green spaces are designated as follows. The reasons for their designation is shown in brackets. Further detail on the designation of the sites is included in the Plan's evidence base.

- a) Severn Road Park Estate Green (used for recreation and community events)
- b) Midland Road Park Estate Green (used for recreation and community events)

- c) Boakes Drive Green (used for recreation and community events and noted for important wildlife)
- d) Verney Fields (part of) (local significance due to beauty, historic landscape features, tranquillity, wildlife; a rural, recreational amenity close to town centre)
- e) Court View Ponds (important wildlife)

Related district and national policies

- LP ES6, ES13
- NPPF 70, 76, 77, 74



Map 11: Environment - Designated Local Green Space



■ POLICY ENV4: IMPORTANT CHARACTER BUILDINGS

The buildings identified in Appendix 3 and on Map 12 are identified as important character buildings.

Proposals for the demolition, redevelopment or substantial alterations to the important character buildings should demonstrate the consideration that has been given to retaining:

- The character building itself;
- Its most distinctive and important features;
- The positive elements of its setting and its relationship to its immediate surroundings; and
- The contribution that the building and its setting makes to the character of the local area.

Justification

Stonehouse has many fine historic buildings and structures. Listed buildings, which are recognised as of national significance include landmarks such as Stonehouse Court Hotel and St Cyr's church, but also smaller survivals such as a milestone and a railway boundary marker. Part of the Stroud Industrial Conservation Area falls within the Plan area; the District



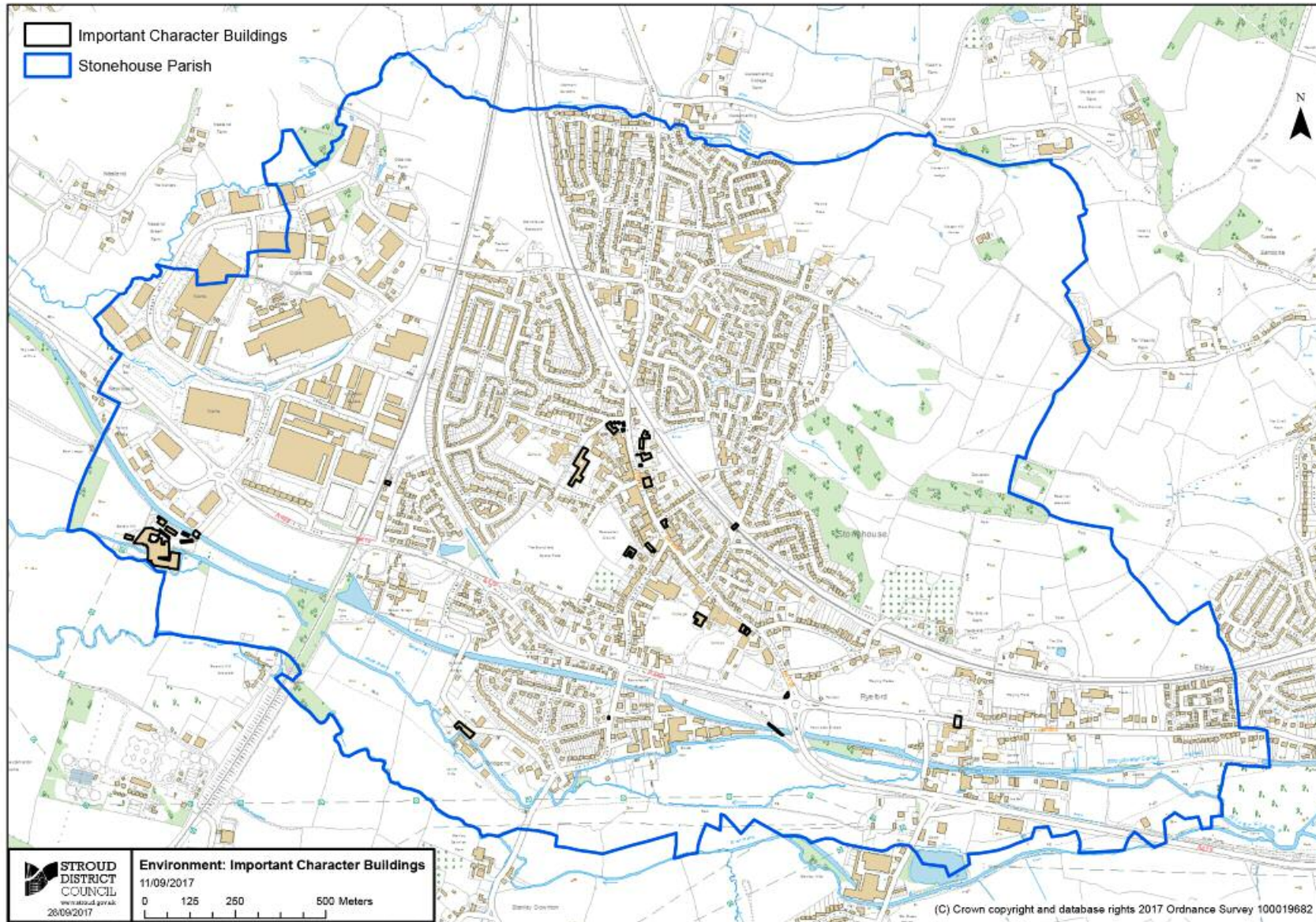
Stonehouse Court Hotel

Council documents referred to in the policy elaborate on what makes this area special and how it should be preserved and enhanced. Map 13 (Appendix 2, p.85) shows designated heritage assets within the parish. Whether designated or not, heritage assets provide a link with the past life of the town. They give the area character and distinctiveness, making Stonehouse an interesting place to live, work and visit.

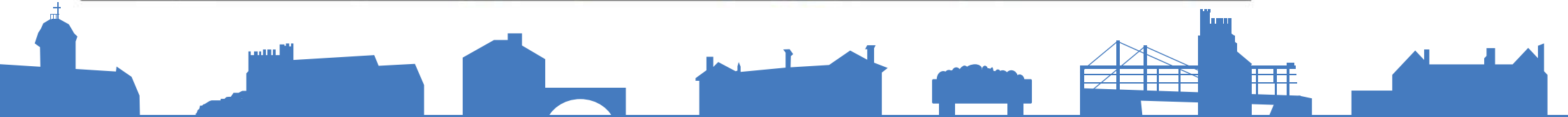
It is important that all development respects the historic character of Stonehouse. The Stonehouse Town Character Assessment identifies a number of important character buildings. These buildings are shown in Appendix 3 of this Plan and on Map 12. They add to the attractiveness of the town but are not protected by statutory listing. The identification of these important character buildings does not constitute a local list of non-designated heritage assets. Stroud District Council is considering the preparation of such a local list for the wider district. Once that process begins the character buildings in Appendix 3 of this Plan can be assessed for inclusion in that District-wide list on the criteria used as part of that exercise.

Related district and national policies

- LP ES10
- NPPF 126



Map 12: Important Character Buildings





■ POLICY ENV5: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING STROUDWATER CANAL

Opportunities to develop and improve the canal and its towpath as a travel corridor for pedestrians, mobility scooters, cyclists, and boaters will be supported.

Proposals for moorings will only be supported where they:

- a) Do not restrict access to the water by wildlife;
- b) Do not adversely impact on the biodiversity, habitats or ecology of the canal or canal-side; and,
- c) Where adverse visual or landscape impact is unavoidable, use tree and hedgerow planting where necessary (using species local to its setting) to mitigate this impact.

The provision of temporary moorings will be supported where it can be demonstrated that such expansion would benefit Stonehouse by means of increased tourism, commerce and leisure activity.



Nutshell Bridge on the Stroudwater canal



■ POLICY ENV5: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING STROUDWATER CANAL (2)

Justification

The Stroudwater Navigation canal and the River Frome are distinctive, attractive and well-used features of the south side of Stonehouse. The canal corridor's historic importance is recognised by Industrial Heritage Conservation Area designation (Map 13, Appendix 2, p.85).

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the wider ambitions of the Cotswold Canals Trust. This seeks to establish a navigable through route to the Rivers Thames and Severn. The policy provides a local context to assist this project and specifically to improve accessibility to the canal in Stonehouse.

The canal and river are also habitats for locally valued plants and animals and parts of the meadows beside them are Key Wildlife Sites. These areas need to be protected and, if possible, enhanced.

The canal towpath is a beautiful and popular place for walking, running and cycling and provides an important accessible recreation area for people with mobility issues and wheelchair and motorised buggy users. However, there is a lack of facilities for canal users, including canoeists, and the provision of amenity space beside the canal with facilities for canal users, visitors and residents was supported by consultation respondents who were in



Nutshell Bridge

favour of enhancing the canal and would appreciate more places to sit and enjoy the views.

Related district and national policies

- LP ES11



■ POLICY ENV6: PROTECTING VIEWS AND VISTAS

The views and vistas important to Stonehouse (identified by the Town Character Assessment) are set out on Map 14 (Appendix 2, p.86) and should be conserved from any significant adverse impact of new development (such as detracting from or obstructing vistas and views). These views and vistas are:

- i) within Stonehouse, those of St Cyr's Church, Nutshell Bridge and the Ocean;
- ii) from Stonehouse to the open countryside over

the canal (and in particular from the Ebley Road)

- iii) from Stonehouse south, west and east to surrounding Cotswold escarpment, and to the landmarks of Selsey Common, Selsey Church, Stanley Mills, Penn Woods and Coaley Peak and Cam Long Down.
- iv) to and from Stonehouse from the Doverow Hill escarpment; and,

- v) from Stonehouse to Haresfield and Standish hills to the north and east.

Development proposals should demonstrate that their design, scale, height and massing does not adversely impact these existing views and vistas, and positively enhances them where possible. Where a Design and Access Statement or a Planning Statement Plan is required by the planning authority, that document should demonstrate compliance with this policy.

Justification

The setting of the town in a valley below the Cotswold escarpment, with views of the commons, hills and Severn Vale visible from many parts of the town, is an important characteristic of Stonehouse which is highly valued by the community. It will be important for development to have regard to the importance of such views to the setting of the town.

Related district and national policies

- LP ES7, ES13
- NPPF 17, 58, 64, 109

See Map 14: Environment – Important Views (Appendix 2: Maps, page 86)



The canal path opposite St Cyr's Church with Ocean Bridge in the background



■ POLICY ENV7: HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

Development proposals will be supported where they have demonstrated that they are of high quality design, complementing the local vernacular, will enhance visual amenity and minimise any adverse impacts on the built environment. Where a Design and Access Statement or a Travel Plan is required by the planning authority, that document should demonstrate compliance with this policy.

The design of all new buildings should take into account the Stonehouse Town Character Assessment, Stonehouse Design Statement, Stroud Design Guide and the Gloucestershire Manual for Streets, and particular attention should be paid to:

- i) ensuring that the size, height, density, scale and location of the development respect its setting and the character of the area;
- ii) ensuring that materials and design of the development are sympathetic and complementary to its setting and character of the area;
- iii) ensuring that it is designed in such a way as to minimise its impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding

landscape, on views of the proposed development and on the natural environment and mitigating any adverse impact using landscaping where necessary;

- iv) enhancing biodiversity;
- v) opportunities for 'greening' the built environment through natural planting of shrubbery and trees;
- vi) preserving or enhancing the Conservation Area and heritage assets in the parish;
- vii) using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to minimise the impact of surface water flooding and wider flood risk;
- viii) ensuring that footpaths, cycle paths and access roads throughout the development are provided to the standards set out in the Gloucestershire Manual for Streets to ensure good and safe access to all dwellings for residents, visitors, delivery and service vehicles and the emergency services; and,
- ix) ensuring that adequate car parking and secure cycle storage is provided in accordance with Local Plan policy EI12.

Justification

Good design is seen in the NPPF as 'a key aspect of sustainable development' which 'should contribute positively to making places better for people'. Good quality design of buildings was supported during consultation. The purpose of the policy is to enhance the appearance of the town, preserve and enhance natural and heritage assets and ensure Stonehouse is welcoming and accessible to residents, workers and visitor whether they are traveling on foot, bicycle or in a vehicle.

Related district and national policies

- LP HC8, EI10, CP14, ES1, ES3, ES4, ES6, ES8, ES10, ES12
- NPPF 17, 57, 58, 61, 69, 70



The Tudor Tandoori in Stonehouse High Street



■ POLICY ENV8: PROVISION OF PRIVATE OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS

New residential development proposals should demonstrate, through a design and access statement or planning statement, that adequate well-located private amenity space is provided of an appropriate size and type for reasons of good quality design, amenity of residents, accessibility, privacy, enabling adequate light (sunshine) and the provision of healthy living environments. This should normally be provided as rear garden space.

Such provision should be made in accordance with standards set out in the Stroud Design Guide. New dwellings should have a minimum of 20 m² of useable private garden (amenity) space, where feasible.

Amenity spaces should be well-designed and fit for purpose and therefore:

- i) be practically shaped, having a useable area and be accessible and well planned in relation to the dwelling's living spaces;
- ii) provide a private 'sitting out area';
- iii) be secure; and,
- iv) receive direct sunlight for part of the space for at least part of the day.

Justification

Gardens are an important part of the wildlife corridors that support the Blue and Green Infrastructure networks throughout Stonehouse. Gardens enable wildlife to move between key sites and can help to protect species, such as hedgehogs, which are under threat from lack of habitat.

The Stonehouse Character Assessment provides details of existing garden spaces and designs and this should inform the provision of gardens in new developments. Gardens enhance the quality of life of residents, providing play space for children and outdoor space for adults and children to help maintain their well-being and privacy.

Related district and national policies

- LP HC1, ES12, ES14
- NPPF 17, 57, 58





■ POLICY ENV9: ALLOTMENTS

Development proposals for the provision of additional allotment sites will be supported where they demonstrate:

- i) that there is sufficient demand for the use and scale of the site / area proposed;
- ii) that there are no adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring land uses or nearby residents;
- iii) that there is suitable vehicular access and adequate parking; and,
- iv) that there is no adverse impact on landscape character.

Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, for the proposal to be acceptable, such impacts should be mitigated.

Justification

At present there are no allotments within the parish boundary and there is a waiting list for the one used by Stonehouse residents, in the adjacent parish of Standish. Allotments contribute to future food resilience and security and to lowering food miles and would, therefore, help to create a more sustainable Stonehouse.

Related district and national policies

- LP CP14
- NPPF 69



Stagholt Allotments





4: Priority Projects

4.1. Possible Projects for CIL/s106 funding

Introduction

In areas where there is a made Neighbourhood Plan, a parish receives 25% of CIL receipts, compared to 15% of CIL receipts in an area without a Neighbourhood Plan. Parishes can spend neighbourhood CIL on a wide range of projects, including the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure, or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands development places on an area.

A number of infrastructure improvements were identified during the development of the Plan, many as a result of public consultation. Whilst some of these are major projects more suited to funding by the District or County Council, a list of priority projects as identified by the Neighbourhood Plan is included below. This list will inform a list of priority infrastructure projects held and updated as necessary by the Town Council.

Priorities and opportunities regarding infrastructure and projects supporting the development of the area are likely to change over the Plan period. Therefore, Stonehouse Town Council is the appropriate body to hold a list of priority infrastructure projects which can be easily and regularly reviewed.

Developer contributions which are generated from section 106 planning obligations (before a CIL policy is adopted by the District Council or when a provision is integral to a development site) or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should contribute towards the following local priority projects:



The site of the former Bristol Road Station

Photo: Peter Lawson/ Bristol Railway Archive



Priorities and opportunities regarding infrastructure and projects supporting the development of the area are likely to change over the Plan period.

Therefore, Stonehouse Town Council is the appropriate body to hold a list of priority infrastructure projects which can be easily and regularly reviewed.



Priority amenity and facility projects

- i) Tennis court(s)
- ii) Running track and other athletics facilities
- iii) Netball court
- iv) A larger, multi-purpose youth and community activity centre
- v) Cinema
- vi) Swimming pool
- vii) More play areas close to housing without having to cross busy roads

Priority transport and travel projects

- i) The reopening of Stonehouse Bristol Road station
- ii) Improvement of pedestrian and cycle links between the industrial estates and the proposed West of Stonehouse development and the town centre and schools
- iii) Improvement of pedestrian links between the town centre and residential areas and the canal
- iv) Improvement of access to Burdett Road station, particularly for those with restricted mobility
- v) Improved cycle access to Ebley Road, bypassing the Horsetrough Roundabout

Priority economic development projects

- i) Study into expansion/intensification of existing employment to ensure Stonehouse maintains its commercial attractiveness, particularly to uses other than B8
- ii) Developing schemes for local employability, linking local employers to skills and employment training for local residents
- iii) Assist the establishment of flexible serviced/managed co-working space.

Priority environment projects

- i) Court View Newt Ponds management
- ii) Renovation of Stroudwater Navigation Canal with visitor and canal user facilities
- iii) National Cycle Route 45 improvements
- iv) Green burial site
- v) Allotments

The use of CIL receipts awarded to the Town Council will be considered on the basis of the priorities listed in this Plan, appropriate timing in terms of the use of the funding and their deliverability (for example, whether the total amount of funding required to deliver the project is in place).

The priority list of local projects identified in this and other policies in this plan should also be used to help guide appropriate use of the local authority CIL receipts where they align with the infrastructure and facilities identified in the local authority's Regulation 123 schedule.

4.2. Other Priorities

This section deals with issues which have been brought to our attention but do not form part of the formal Plan. In most cases this is because they are not land-use issues.

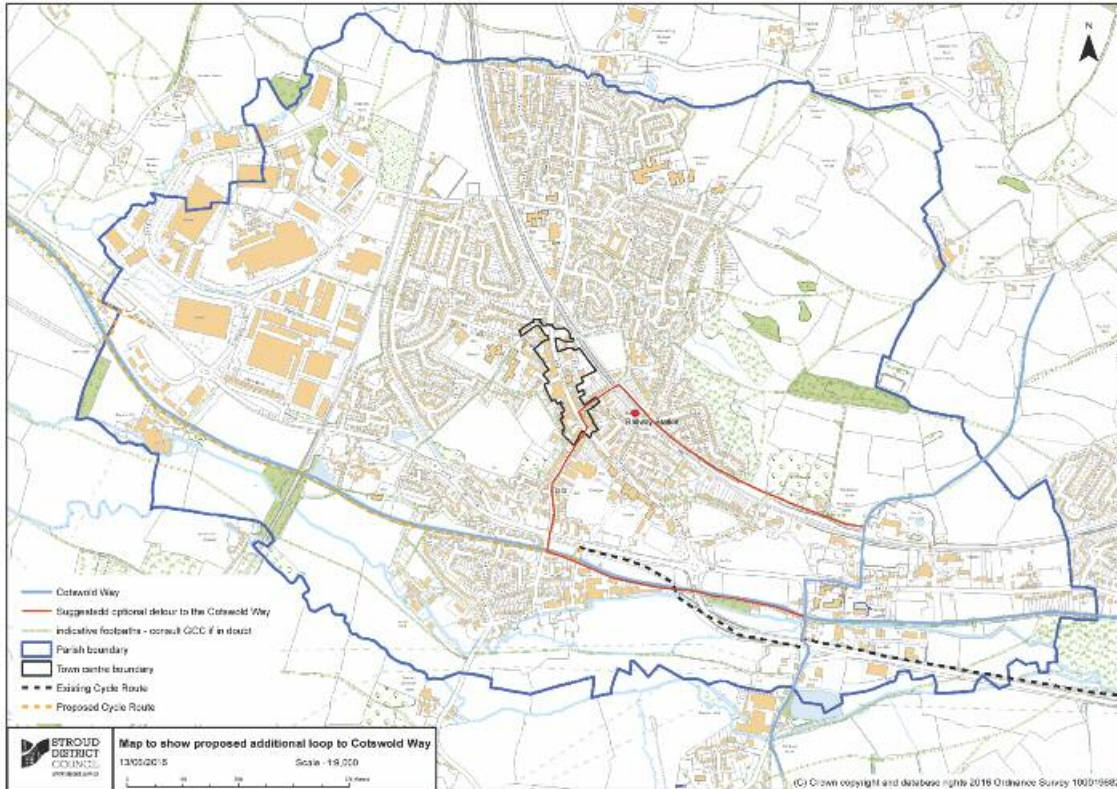
1. Maintenance of footpaths

It is important that footpaths and pavements within the town are maintained to a high standard, allowing passage by invalid buggies, wheelchairs and pushchairs.

2. The introduction of an additional loop of the Cotswold Way into Stonehouse

The existing route of the Cotswold Way passes through the eastern end of the parish as can be seen on Map 15. An alternative route along the northern edge of the railway line, down Queens Road into the town centre and down Regent Street to join the canal would provide cafe, toilet and shopping facilities for walkers as well as contributing to the vitality of the town centre. In addition, Burdett Road station provides easy access to the Cotswold Way, facilitating Stonehouse as the beginning/ end of a section of the walk.

Hence, the introduction of an additional loop to the Cotswold Way through Stonehouse will be encouraged and supported. Better signposting to and from the Cotswold Way should also be encouraged.



*Map 15:
Proposals for an
additional loop
to the Cotswold
Way through
Stonehouse*

3. The protection and improvement of cycle routes

Existing off-road cycle routes should be protected and their quality improved where opportunities arise. Cycle routes should wherever possible conform to the recommendation in Gloucestershire County Council Cycle Facilities Guidelines. It is equally important that roads are (and are perceived as) safe and convenient for cycling and the needs of cyclists and pedestrians need to

be taken into account at an early stage when designing new roads and changes to existing roads.

4. Improvements to Oldends Lane

Oldends Lane forms an important link between the industrial estate and the proposed West of Stonehouse development and the town centre and facilities such as schools and doctors surgeries. It also separates residential areas from the Oldends Playing fields and

social facilities, which include a skatepark and youth centre. As such, it is badly in need of some form of pedestrian crossing and/or traffic calming.

5. Burdett Road station

We strongly support continuing improvements to Burdett Road station. In particular we would like to see:

- Extended platforms
- Raised platforms, reducing the gap between the platform and the trains
- Improved disabled access
- Real-time train information boards

6. Local needs housing

We strongly support the provision of housing to meet the needs of local people. In particular we support:

- social housing
- housing meeting current Building Regulation part M4(2) standards regarding accessibility.

7. Canal related facilities

The proposed restoration of the Stroudwater canal to meet the Gloucester Sharpness canal at Saul junction presents significant opportunities for Stonehouse, both recreationally and economically. But those opportunities will only be fully realised if canal side facilities can be provided at a suitable site near the town centre.

8. Urban edges and gateways

We support the enhancement of urban edges and, in particular of 'gateways' to Stonehouse.



5: Monitoring and review

Introduction

This Plan has been produced by a Working Group consisting of Town Councillors and local residents. However, it is important that the monitoring and review of the Plan is entrusted to a permanent body. Hence the Regeneration and Environment Committee of the Town Council will be responsible for ongoing monitoring of the Plan.

The indicators that follow are based upon the objectives of the Plan and will be

monitored on a quarterly basis by the committee who in turn will report to the Annual Town Meeting. Most of these indicators are qualitative rather than quantitative and are not intended to provide a single figure measurement of progress. Rather, they are intended to show in which areas progress is being made and in which areas further investigation and perhaps an alternative approach is required.

THEME	POLICY	INDICATOR
1. Amenities and facilities	AF1: Protecting community facilities	Any community facilities during the period
	AF2: Additional community facilities	Any new community facilities
	AF3: Design and quality in the town centre	Changes in retail facilities in the town centre

THEME	POLICY	INDICATOR
2. Transport and travel	T1: Pedestrian routes	Changes in condition of pedestrian routes Any loss of pedestrian routes
	T2: New development and pedestrian links to the town centre	Pedestrian links between any new development and the town centre
	T3: Design of off-road pedestrian and cycle routes	Extent to which any new routes meet the standards required
	T4: Accessibility of new development to facilities and services	Extent to which any new development meets the criteria



THEME	POLICY	INDICATOR
2. Transport and travel	T5: Existing cycle routes	Improvement or deterioration of existing cycle routes (including roads used by cyclists) Any loss of off-road cycle routes
	T6: New developments and cycle links to the town centre	Ease of cycling from any new development to the town centre, schools and other facilities
	T7: Cycle parking	Loss of cycle parking Additional cycle parking
	T8: Improving key pedestrian and cycle links	Improvements to key pedestrian and cycle links
	T9: Railway stations	Improvements to Burdett Road station and/or access to the station. Progress towards reopening Stonehouse Bristol Road station
T10: Loss of parking capacity	Loss of town centre car parking unless it contributes to road safety or is shown not to be needed	

THEME	POLICY	INDICATOR
3. Housing	H1: Local needs housing (dwelling size and type)	Balance of new housing eg number of bedrooms, houses, bungalows or flats? Percentage of affordable housing in new development
	H2: Ease of access in new residential development	Design of new developments
	H5: Play areas in new residential developments	Provision of play space in new developments

THEME	POLICY	INDICATOR
4. Employment	EM1: Safeguarding Key Employment Sites	Any loss of employment sites
	EM2: Resisting loss of employment space outside of designated employment sites	Change of use permission given for existing employment space outside of designated employment sites
	EM3: Supporting small and medium sized business	New small, incubator and 'hot desk' facilities
	EM4: Connectivity and Communication infrastructure	Improvements in connectivity and infrastructure



THEME	POLICY	INDICATOR
5. Environment	ENV1: Maintaining and protecting the natural environment	Effect of new development on the natural environment
	ENV2: Green infrastructure network	Loss of blue and green infrastructure
	ENV3: Local Green Space	Loss of local green space
	ENV4: Important Character Buildings	Any damage to important character buildings
	ENV5: Protecting and enhancing Stroudwater canal	Improvements to the canal and environs
	ENV6: Protecting views and vistas	Effect of new development on views and vistas
	ENV7: High quality design	Extent to which new development meets the design criteria
	ENV8: Provision of outdoor amenity space in new developments	Amenity spaces provided on new developments
	ENV9: Allotments	New allotments provided

Review of the Plan

The Regeneration and Environment Committee will consider annually whether the plan needs to be reviewed. If it needs minor review the committee will suggest changes which will be taken to a meeting of the full Town Council. Any changes to the Plan will be reported to the next Annual Town Meeting. Projects identified for CIL funding will be reviewed and updated annually by the Town Council.

If the Regeneration and Environment Committee or the Town Council believe that a major review is necessary, the Town Council will set up a working group which local residents will be invited to join for this purpose.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Glossary

Access – usually used to describe the physical access of a space or road or building.

Accessibility – handiness; the quality or extent of being at hand when needed.

Adoption – the final confirmation of a development plan or local development document status by a local planning authority (LPA).

Affordable Housing – social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Allocated – land which has been identified in the development plan for a specific form of development.

Amenity – those qualities of life enjoyed by people that can be influenced by the surrounding environment, in which they visit, live or work.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – a statutory landscape designation to recognise, conserve and enhance landscape of national importance.

Article 4 Direction – a direction which withdraws automatic planning permission granted by the General Permitted Development Order.

Biodiversity – the range of life forms which constitute the living world, on land, in water and in the air, the habitats in which they live and the relationship between them.

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) – a plan or program to conserve or enhance biodiversity, which sets out detailed action on how it will be achieved, either nationally or locally.

Blue Infrastructure – Green infrastructure such as streams, canals and other water bodies. See **Green Infrastructure**.

Built Environment – comprises human-made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, ranging in scale from buildings and parks or green space from neighbourhoods to cities. It can often include their supporting infrastructure, such as water supply, or energy networks. The built environment is a material, spatial and cultural product of humans that combine physical elements and energy in forms for living, working and playing on a day-to-day basis.

Change Of Use – the use of a building or other land for a different purpose. In considering a change of use it is normally necessary to establish whether the change is ‘material’ and whether by virtue of the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Order 2005 development requiring planning permission is involved.

Climate Change – climate change refers to the build-up of man-made gases in the atmosphere that traps the sun's heat, causing changes in weather patterns on a global scale. The effects include changes in rainfall patterns, sea level rise, potential droughts, habitat loss, and heat stress.

Community and Cultural Facilities – services available to residents in the immediate area that provide for the day-to-day health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. Includes village halls, post offices, doctors and dentists' surgeries, recycling facilities, libraries and places of worship.



Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – levy on development to fund infrastructure to support housing and economic growth.

Commuted Payment/Sum – either a payment made by a developer to the local planning authority (usually secured by means of a planning obligation/s 106 legal agreement) to fund provision of a facility needed to serve a development, but to be built or provided elsewhere or in some way other than by the developer, or a one off payment by a developer to another body to enable it to adopt a facility.

Conditions – clauses attached to a planning permission considered necessary, relevant, enforceable, precise and reasonable to enable a development to proceed where it might otherwise be necessary to refuse permission.

Conservation Area – is an area of special historic and/or architectural interest which is designated by the local planning authority as being important to conserve and enhance. Special planning controls apply within these areas.

Cotswold Canals Project – a project to restore and connect two waterways – the 29 mile (46 km) Thames & Severn Canal and the 7 mile (13 km) Stroudwater Navigation. When restored, the Cotswold Canals will form a continuous waterway

from Saul Junction on the Gloucester & Sharpness canal to the River Thames at Lechlade.

Design and Access Statements (DAS) – a report accompanying and supporting a planning application. A DAS provides a framework for applicants to explain how a proposed development is a suitable design response to the site and its setting, and to demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users. The access component of the DAS relates to access to the development and does not extend to the internal treatment of individual buildings. It needs to cover both vehicular and transport links and inclusive access. The statement should provide information on consultations carried out, such as with community groups or technical specialists including highway engineers or urban designers. The DAS must explain relationships with the existing highway network, including paths.

Design Statements – a document that describes the distinctive characteristics of the locality, and provides design guidance to shape the form and character of new development.

Development – defined in planning law as ‘the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over, or under land, or the making of a material change of use of any building or land’ (see also Permitted Development).

Employment Land – land used, with planning permission, or allocated in a development plan for employment uses. Enabling Development – is development which enables the Council to secure a planning benefit which would not otherwise be immediately forthcoming.

Evidence Base – is the information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the ‘soundness’ of the policy approach, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.

Flood Risk Assessment – is an assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

Frontage – the ground floor public front of a building usually facing onto a street or pedestrianised area.





Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) – is the rural community council for Gloucestershire. It is dedicated to enriching the lives of people living in Gloucestershire by supporting them through change and by enabling them to determine, shape and develop their own communities. It provides support for neighbourhood planning in the county.

Green Infrastructure (GI) – is a network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It needs to be planned and delivered at all spatial scales from national to neighbourhood levels. The greatest benefits will be gained when it is designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits (ecosystem services) for local communities. Green Infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, streams, canals and other water bodies, river and canal corridors, allotments and private gardens. See also **Blue Infrastructure**.

Heritage Asset – a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic Environment – All aspects of the environment that result from the interaction between people and places through time, including surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscape and planted or managed flora.

Housing Needs Survey or Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) – an assessment of housing needs in the local area. This plays a crucial role in underpinning the planning policies relating to affordable housing and housing location.

Infrastructure – the network of services to which it is usual for most buildings to be connected. It includes physical services serving the particular development (e.g. gas, electricity and water supply; telephones, sewerage) and also includes networks of roads, public transport routes, footpaths etc.

Key Wildlife Site – a Gloucestershire wildlife habitat identified and designated as being of particular local interest or importance but is not of sufficient national merit to be declared as an SSSI.

Key Employment Site – is a Stroud District Local Plan designation for sites that will be retained for B Class Uses. (See also Use Classes Order).

Town or Landscape Character Assessment – identifies areas with similar features or qualities, mapping and classifying them and describing their character. It is based on an understanding of landscape character and of the natural, historic and aesthetic factors that combine to create local distinctiveness.

Listed Building – a building of special historical and/or architectural interest considered worthy of special protection and included and described in the statutory list of such buildings.

Local Green Space – Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. Local Green Space designation is for use in Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans.



Local Plan – The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan. The term includes old policies which have been saved under the 2004 Act.

Local Planning Authority (LPA) – is the local authority or council that is empowered by law to exercise statutory town planning functions for a particular area of the United Kingdom.

Local Transport Plan (LTP) – is a five-year integrated transport strategy, prepared by local authorities in partnership with the community, seeking funding to help provide local transport projects. The plan sets out the resources predicted for delivery of the targets identified in the strategy.

Major Development – in respect of residential is 10 or more dwellings or a site area of 0.5 hectares or more. For other uses– the floorspace to be built is 1000 square metres or more, or where the site area is 1 hectare or more.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – this sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was produced in 2014 and comprises 42 pieces of guidance. The National Planning Practice Guidance adds further context to the National Planning Policy Framework and it is intended that the two documents should be read together.

Policies – those parts of the Plan which must be taken into account by anyone proposing development and which will be used by Stroud District Council to help them decide planning applications.

Primary Shopping Area (PSA) – area within town centres where retail is concentrated, comprising the primary and secondary frontages.

Protected Species – any species (of wildlife etc.) which, because of its rarity or threatened status is protected by statutory legislation.

Section 106 Agreements (S106) – allow a Local Planning Authority to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation, with a land developer over a related issue (often to fund necessary improvements elsewhere).

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – site or area designated as being of national importance because of its wildlife plants or flower species and/or unusual or typical geological features. SSSIs are identified by Natural England and have protected status.

Soundness – to be considered sound, a Development Plan Document must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – a generic term used to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The European ‘SEA Directive’ (2001/42/EC) requires a formal ‘environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use which have a significant effect on the environment.’



Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – additional advice issued by the local planning authority to explain how policies will be implemented. It is a material consideration when adopted and is subject to community and stakeholder consultation. It must be linked to policies or proposals in the Local Plan but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – an appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process to allow decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.

Sustainable Development – is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The NPPF states sustainable development is about positive growth – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations.

Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) – efficient drainage system which seeks to minimise wastage of water including the use of appropriate groundcover to enable maximum penetration of clean water run-off into the ground and, where appropriate, recycling grey water within the development. Designed to minimise the impact of development on the natural water environment.

Sustainable Transport – are all forms of transport which minimise emissions of carbon dioxide and pollutants. It can refer to public transport, car sharing, walking and cycling as well as technology such as electric and hybrid cars and biodiesel.

Sustrans – is a charity which promotes sustainable transport. The charity is currently working on a number of practical projects to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport, to give people the choice of ‘travelling in ways that benefit their health and the environment’.

Town Centre – Area defined on the local authority’s proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

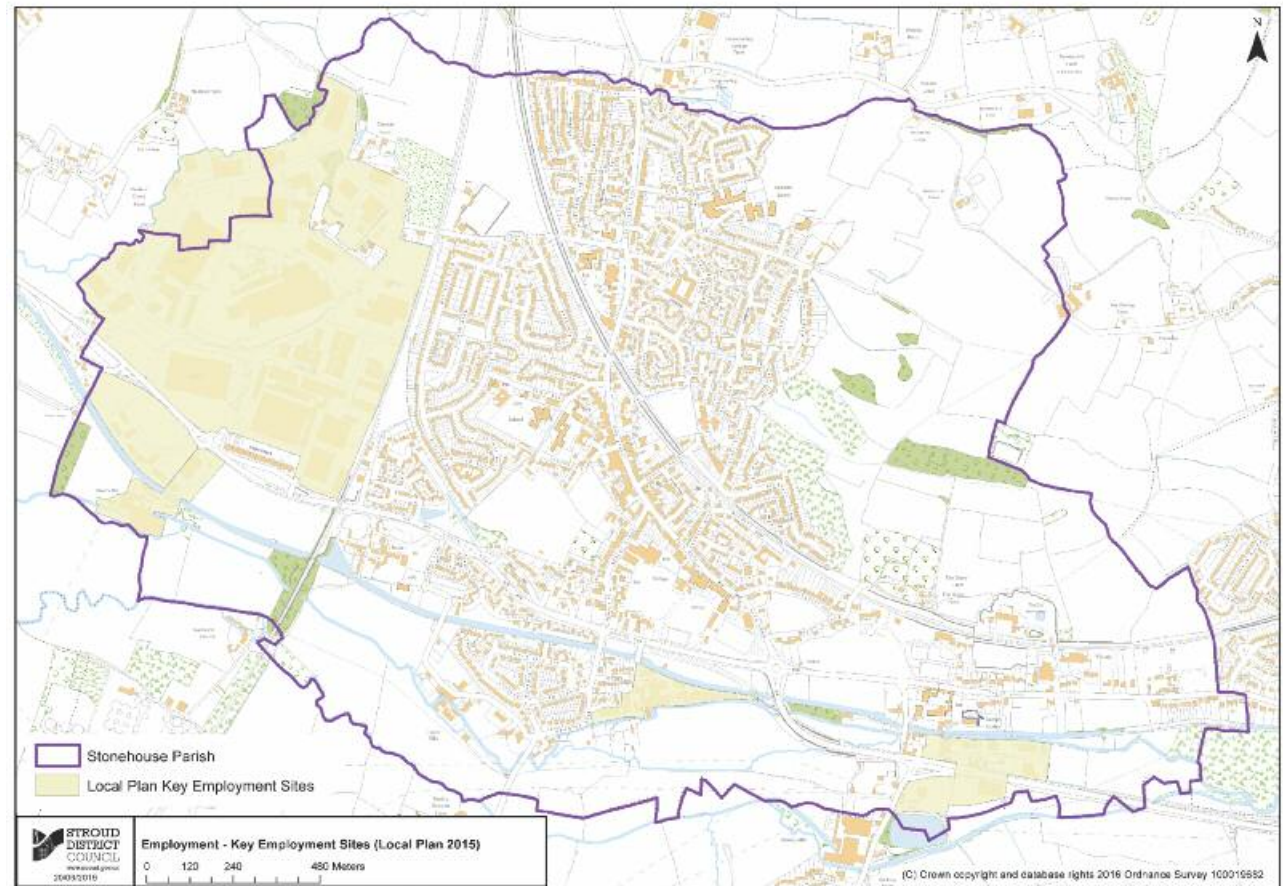
Tree Preservation Order (TPO) – statutory protection for individual trees, groups, areas or woodlands. Any works to preserved trees require the consent of the local planning authority.

Viability – an objective financial viability test of the ability of a development project to meet its costs including the cost of planning obligations, whilst ensuring an appropriate site value for the landowner and a market risk adjusted return to the developer in delivering that project. Essentially it is the ability to attract investment and business.



Appendix 2: Maps

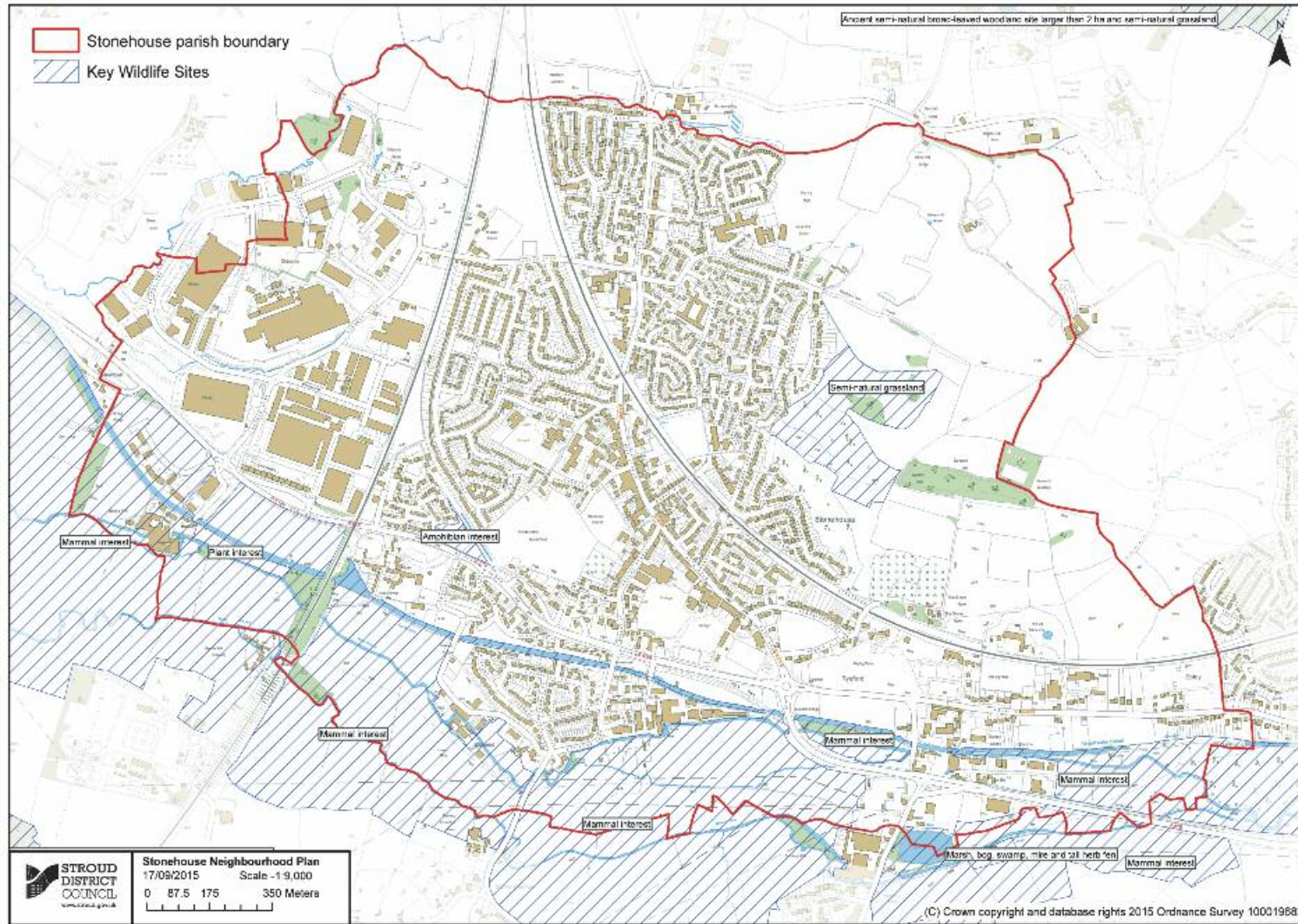
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Map 15: Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan – proposed additional loop to Cotswold Way	p.71



Map 7: Employment - Key Employment Sites (Local Plan 2015)



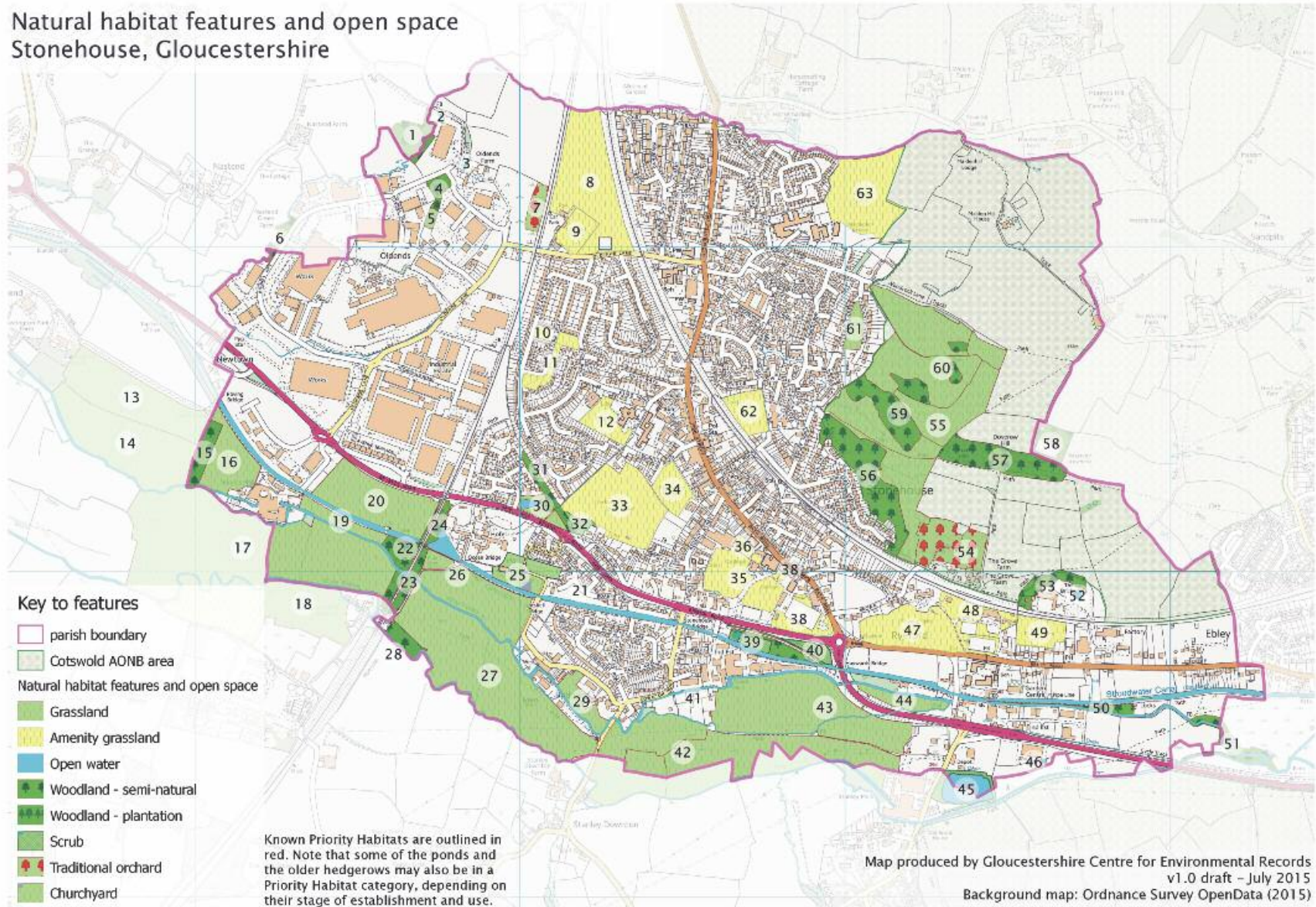
Map 8: Environment – Key Wildlife Sites





Map 9:
Environment –
Natural habitat
areas and open
space

Natural habitat features and open space
Stonehouse, Gloucestershire





Key to Map 9: Natural habitat areas and open space

Label	Name	Type	Status
1		Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
1		Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
2		Open water	
3	Oldends Farm pond	Open water	
4		Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
5		Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat (part)
6		Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
7		Traditional orchard	Priority Habitat
8	Oldends Lane Recreation Ground		Amenity grassland
9	Magpies football ground	Amenity grassland	
10	Midland Rd amenity grassland	Amenity grassland	
11	Severn Rd amenity grassland	Amenity grassland	
12	Park Junior School playing field	Amenity grassland	
13	Eastington Park	Floodplain grassland	Priority Habitat
14		Floodplain grassland	Priority Habitat
15	River Frome KWS corridor	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat; Key Wildlife Site (part)
16	River Frome KWS corridor	Floodplain grassland	Priority Habitat; Key Wildlife Site (part)
17	River Frome Meadows - Bonds Mill	Floodplain grassland	Priority Habitat; Key Wildlife Site (part)
18	River Frome woodland nr. Beard's Mill	Floodplain grassland	Key Wildlife Site and Priority Habitat
19	Floodplain grassland	Floodplain grassland	Priority Habitat
20		Grassland	Priority Habitat (part)
21	Stroudwater Canal	Open water	Priority Habitat

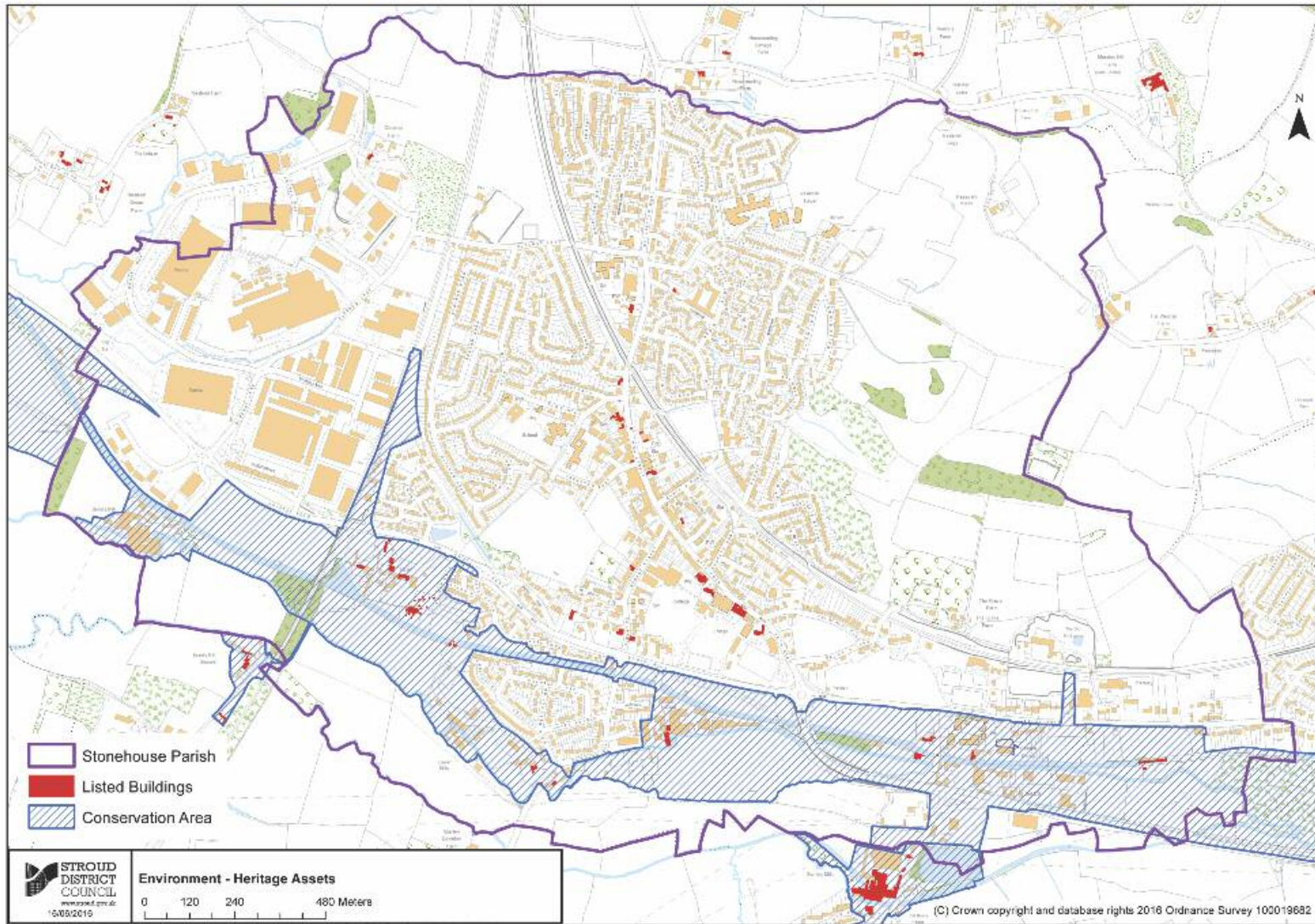
Label	Name	Type	Status
22	Railway embankment nr. Beard's Mill	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat; Key Wildlife Site (part)
23	Railway embankment nr. Beard's Mill	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat; Key Wildlife Site (part)
24	Railway embankment nr. Beard's Mill	Deciduous woodland	Key Wildlife Site and Priority Habitat
25	St Cyr's churchyard	Churchyard	
26	River Frome KWS corridor	Floodplain grassland Wildlife Site (part)	Priority Habitat; Key
27	River Frome Meadows - Bridgend	Floodplain grassland	Priority Habitat; Key Wildlife Site (part)
28	River Frome woodland nr. Beard's Mill	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat; Key Wildlife Site (part)
29	River Frome KWS corridor	Grassland	
30	Stonehouse Newt Ponds KWS	Plantation woodland	Key Wildlife Site
30	Stonehouse Newt Ponds KWS	Open water	Key Wildlife Site
30	Stonehouse Newt Ponds KWS	Grassland	Key Wildlife Site
30		Grassland	Key Wildlife Site
31		Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
32		Scrub	
33	Berryfields sports field	Amenity grassland	
34	Laburnum Walk recreation ground	Amenity grassland	
35	Wycliffe School sports field	Amenity grassland	
36	Wycliffe School sports field	Amenity grassland	
37	Wycliffe School grounds	Amenity grassland	
38	Wycliffe School grounds	Amenity grassland	



Key to Map 9 continued

Label	Name	Type	Status
39	Upper Mills cycle track to Skew Bridge	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
40		Scrub	
41	River Frome	Open water	Key Wildlife Site and Priority Habitat
42	River Frome KWS corridor	Grassland	Key Wildlife Site (part)
43	River Frome KWS corridor	Grassland	Key Wildlife Site (part)
43	River Frome KWS corridor	Grassland	Key Wildlife Site (part)
44	River Frome KWS corridor	Grassland	Key Wildlife Site (part)
45	Stanley Mills millpond	Open water	Key Wildlife Site
45	Stanley Mills millpond	Scrub	
46		Open water	
47	Wycliffe playing fields (Brown's Lane)	Amenity grassland	
48	Wycliffe School grounds (Tyndale House)	Amenity grassland	
49	Wycliffe School grounds (Tyndale House)	Amenity grassland	
50	Canal/R Frome woodland Ryeford	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
51		Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
52	Old Brickworks pond	Open water	
53	Old Brickworks	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
54	The Grove Farm - old orchard	Traditional orchard	Priority Habitat
55	Doverow Hill KWS	Lowland meadow and Grassland	Key Wildlife Site, Priority Habitat (part)
56		Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
57	Doverow Hill Quarry	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
58	Doverow Hill covered reservoir	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat

Label	Name	Type	Status
59	Doverow Hill KWS	Deciduous woodland	Key Wildlife Site, Priority Habitat
59	Doverow Hill KWS	Deciduous woodland	Key Wildlife Site, Priority Habitat
60	Doverow Hill KWS	Deciduous woodland	Priority Habitat
61	Cotswold Green	Grassland	
62	Meadow Rd recreation ground	Amenity grassland	
63	Maidenhill School playing field	Amenity grassland	



Map 13:
Environment – Designated
Heritage Assets





Map 14: Environment – Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan: Important Views

Background map supplied by Stroud District Council

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Appendix 3: Important Character Buildings identified in Stonehouse Town Character Assessment, 2016

West of High Street	East of High Street	Town Centre	Canal Zone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Park Infant School and Children's Centre ● Community Centre ● Midland Railway Bridge and Former Nailsworth Branch Railway line ● Old Station House, former Bristol Road Station ● The Horsetrough ● Wycliffe College buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bridge at Stonehouse railway station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Woolpack public house ● Town Hall and former Post Office ● Old Police Station ● Surgery (former Anchor and Crown public house), Town Green. ● World War II memorial ● Millennium Stone ● Town sign ● Old water pump, Memorial Green ● Flagpoles, Town and Memorial Greens ● Groups of historic buildings around Town Greens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Town Green: Surgery, Pharmacy, Assembly Rooms, Cottages, Globe Inn ■ Memorial Green: Orchard House, other cottages ● The Globe public house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bond's Mill ● Bond's Mill Bridge ● Paper Bag Mill, Ryeford ● Telephone box, Downton Road ● Ebley Road footbridge



End notes

- 1 Re Residential, retail and amenity land survey, Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Group (April 2014)
- 2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015>
- 3 Rural community profile for Stonehouse (Parish), Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project, October 2013, p.26
- 4 Stonehouse Housing Report, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC), July 2015, p.6
- 5 Stonehouse Housing Report, GRCC, July 2015, p.7
- 6 http://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/1455/stroud-district-local-plan_november-2015_low-res_for-web.pdf, p.30
- 7 http://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/1455/stroud-district-local-plan_november-2015_low-res_for-web.pdf, p.52
- 8 http://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/1455/stroud-district-local-plan_november-2015_low-res_for-web.pdf, p.54
- 9 Sustainable Transport Assessment Local Plan Evidence Base May 2015
http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/plan_strat/lpreps/PS2B06a.pdf, p.76
- 10 <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/apps/binary.ashx?URL=%2FWAM%2Fdoc%2FDecision-1811785.pdf?extension=.pdf%26id=1811785%26appid=1001%26location=VOLUME3%26contentType=application%2Fpdf%26pageCount=1>, p.9
- 11 https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/2816/final-settlement-role-and-function-study_december2014.pdf, p.11
- 12 http://www.stonehousetowncouncil.com/docs/Neighbourhood_Plan/Evidence_base/Rural_Profile_Parish_Stonehouse_ACRE_2013.pdf
- 13 https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/2816/final-settlement-role-and-function-study_december2014.pdf,
- 14 http://www.stonehousetowncouncil.com/docs/Neighbourhood_Plan/Evidence_base/Stonehouse_Report_on_Housing_Stock_July_2015_V3_GRCC.pdf
- 15 http://www.stonehousetowncouncil.com/docs/Neighbourhood_Plan/Evidence_base/Stonehouse_NDP_Housing_and_population_evidence_May_2016b.pdf
- 16 Rural community profile for Stonehouse (Parish), Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project, October 2013, p.29
- 17 Stonehouse Housing Report, GRCC, July 2015, p.6
- 18 Stonehouse Housing Report, GRCC, July 2015, p.13







Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan - Referendum Draft 2016-2031

October 2017

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