



*Our plan –
Our future*

Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan 2024 to 2038



Submission-Referendum Version

May-November 2025

Prepared by the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Much Wenlock Town Council

Foreword

Much Wenlock is a town with a strong sense of identity, history and purpose, and it has embraced the opportunity to update its existing Neighbourhood Plan. Back in 2013, Much Wenlock created the first Neighbourhood Plan in Shropshire, leading the way for communities to shape development in their parishes.

The adopted plan runs until 2026, so it is appropriate to have an interim review. As in 2013, the level of engagement by residents has been remarkable, providing the steering group with a wealth of perspectives that has shaped every aspect of this plan.

At the heart of our approach has been the delicate balance between preserving Much Wenlock's unique character and heritage whilst ensuring our town remains vibrant and fit for purpose in the 21st century. Our steering group, comprising both members of the public and Town Councillors, has worked tirelessly to craft policies that reflect the aspirations and concerns of our community. Those whose families have been here for generations and those who have moved to our town and villages more recently.

Throughout our consultations, we have consistently heard about the importance of sympathetic development that respects our distinctive architectural legacy and rural setting, protecting those qualities that make Much Wenlock special. This document represents the culmination of listening carefully to residents, landowners, community groups and a range of local organisations. We have aimed to reach balanced, practical compromises that are both viable and achievable within the planning framework.

When adopted, this Neighbourhood Plan will provide Much Wenlock, through its Town Council, with greater significant influence over proposed developments. This means we can better ensure that future growth aligns with our community's vision and meets its genuine needs. It will also secure more substantial contributions from developers towards the infrastructure required to support new development. While the powers granted through a Neighbourhood Plan are not unlimited, they do provide our community with a stronger voice in shaping our future.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this process. Your passion for Much Wenlock and commitment to its future have made this plan possible.

Cllr Dan Thomas

Chairman, Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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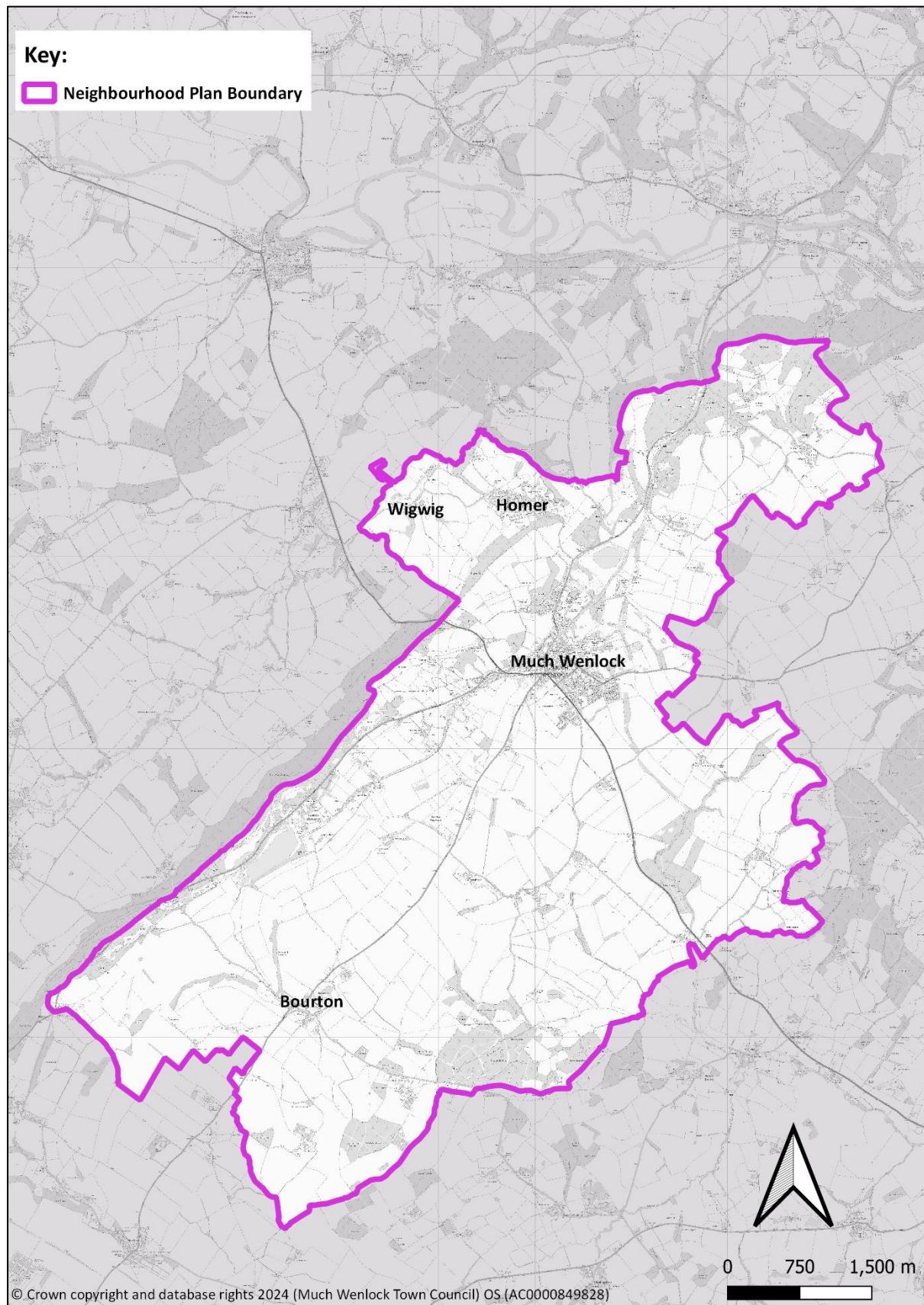
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan (MWNP). It replaces the 2013-20~~23~~³⁶ Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 It sets out planning and land-use policy for the town and wider parish, over the period 2024 to 2038, forming part of the development plan for Shropshire Council (SC). SC designated the Much Wenlock neighbourhood area on 12 September 2012. The neighbourhood area shares its boundary with that of the Parish (*Figure 1*).
- 1.3 The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Town Council, as the Qualifying Body, set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group comprising local councillors and community volunteers to lead on the preparation of the Plan. In consultation with the community, local businesses and others, the Steering Group has reviewed the vision and objectives for the future of the designated area and set out how that vision will be realised through planning land use and development change over the period to 2038.
- 1.4 The MWNP policies form part of the development plan for Shropshire Council and must be considered by any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within Much Wenlock parish. The policies also set out how land should be considered, in planning terms, locally, and alongside the policies of the local development plan, is a material planning consideration in the determination of applications.
- 1.5 The process of reviewing the MWNP has sought to reflect matters that are of considerable importance to the local community. Within each section there is a summary of what the policy seeks to achieve and a justification, providing the necessary understanding of why the policy is needed and how it should be applied. The policies themselves are presented in the green boxes and these will be used to determine planning applications. To understand the full context for any individual policy, it should be read alongside the supporting text and evidence documents that have been compiled to underpin the MWNP.
- 1.6 Beneath each policy is a conformity reference. These list the relevant strategic policies in the adopted and emerging Shropshire Local Plan documents and the paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (most recently updated in December 2024) to which the policy conforms to. Alongside some policies are Community Actions.
- 1.7 The MWNP also identifies local community projects that are not met through planning policy but which are important to the well-being of the community. Finally, the Plan sets out the Community Infrastructure Priorities and a framework for monitoring and implementation.
- 1.8 Note that the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines (Appendix C) form part of formal policy for the MWNP.

Figure 1: Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan designated area



The Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy

1.9 The MWNP has been prepared in accordance with the NPPF (most recently revised in December 2024). It states:

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies (Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area).”

“Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.”

Local Planning Policy

1.10 The policies of the MWNP must be in general conformity with the adopted strategic policies of the [Shropshire Core Strategy \(adopted 2011\)](#) and the [Site Allocations and Management of Development \(SAMDev\) Plan](#) (adopted 2015).

1.11 The Shropshire Development Plan also comprises a series of ‘made’ neighbourhood plans and other supplementary planning guidance.

1.11.12 ~~SC had been working on a review of their Local Plan, which had reached Examination stage. The Inspector wrote to SC on 17 February 2025 to set out concerns about the soundness of the plan. SC issued a letter on 13 March 2025, setting out their intention to withdraw the Plan from Examination. On 17 July 2025 SC’s Full Council made the decision to withdraw the Plan and it was formally withdrawn from examination on 25 July 2025. On 12 February 2025 SC’s cabinet agreed that the evidence base supporting the now withdrawn emerging Plan forms a material consideration in decision making on relevant planning applications, to support the implementation of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This includes planning applications for new development on sites proposed to be allocated in the now withdrawn Plan.~~

~~1.12 SC has been working on a review of their Local Plan, which had reached Examination stage. The Inspector wrote to SC on 17 February 2025 to set out concerns about the soundness of the plan. SC issued a letter on 13 March 2025, setting out their intention to withdraw the Plan from Examination, a decision which will need to be approved at Full Cabinet, likely July 2025.~~

1.13 The SC [Cabinet Committee Meeting held on 12 February 2025](#) notes agreement that “the evidence base supporting the draft Local Plan (2016-2038) is a material consideration in decision making on relevant planning applications, to support the implementation of the

presumption in favour of sustainable development. This will include planning applications for new development on sites proposed to be allocated in the submitted version of the Local Plan (2016-2038). This evidence base has been drawn on to inform policies of the MWNP.

The Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan

- 1.14 Part of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (SHNL) falls within the parish, to the west and north. The remainder of the parish contributes to the setting of the SHNL. Local authorities with land in a national landscape are legally obliged under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to produce a Management Plan. [The Shropshire Hills Management Plan 2019-2024](#) is used to guide environmental land management and assess the impact of development or other changes on the national landscape.
- 1.15 The objectives of the Management Plan have been considered in the development of this Neighbourhood Plan, as has the advice contained in the suite of documents, such as the [Agricultural Building Design Guide](#).
- 1.16 It is noted that work on a [Management Plan 2025-30](#) is underway.

Community engagement

- 1.17 Work on the MWNP Review (*Table 1*) has been guided by the need to engage with the local community. Apart from the statutory requirements for public consultation at various stages, measures to draw in a wider range of contributions included regular newsletter articles, a parish-wide survey, Plan Review exhibitions and discussions with groups and individuals in the parish. These ~~will~~~~were~~~~be~~ set out fully in the Consultation Statement, ~~which accompanied the submitted alongside this~~ Submission Version Plan.

- 1.18 Table 1: Summary timeline of activity

Date	Milestone	Key activities
2023	Much Wenlock Town Council decides to review the MWNP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding sought and consultancy support engaged• High level review of existing Plan undertaken to identify potential amendments and gaps
2024	Evidence and engagement Pre-Submission Version (Regulation 14) Plan published	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedicated webpage established• Steering Group established• Working groups established• Community Survey launched• Community exhibition on review of objectives• Housing Needs Assessment prepared• Design Guidance and Codes prepared• Initial draft plan prepared for Strategic Environmental Assessment / Habitats Regulations Assessment screenings• Regulation 14 consultation carried out

<u>2025</u> <u>2026</u>	<p>Regulation 16 Plan published</p> <p>Examination</p> <p>Referendum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission Version Plan submitted to SC for second round of formal consultation• Plan independently examined• Plan finalised for Referendum• Plan ‘made’
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Sustainability of the Neighbourhood Plan

1.19 The MWNP has been screened by SC to ascertain whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required. The screening document was subject to consultation with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency for five weeks from 18 September 2024 to 24 October 2024. The Screening Determination Statement has concluded that the MWNP is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

1.20 In addition, the screening determined that the ‘appropriate assessment’ stage of the HRA process, that ascertains the effect on integrity of any European Sites, does not need to be undertaken. This conclusion was sent to Natural England for consideration and their response is in agreement. A copy of the Screening Determination statements is available on the [Town Council website](#).

2. ABOUT MUCH WENLOCK PARISH

- 2.1. Much Wenlock is a small historic Shropshire market town with a wider rural parish area which runs from the lip of the Severn Gorge down to the south west along Wenlock Edge. Part of the western and northern areas are situated within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape, with the remainder forming part of its setting. Some areas of the parish are nationally geologically important with a high number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- 2.2. There are 2,907 residents in the parish living in 1,345 homes (2021 census, see also *Figure 2*). The main settlement is Much Wenlock itself, recognised as being associated with the origins of the Modern Olympic Games due to the meetings and correspondence between William Penny Brookes and Baron de Coubertin.
- 2.3. Smaller villages and hamlets include Bourton, Homer and Wigwig.
- 2.4. The market town has at its heart, the medieval Wenlock Priory (a Scheduled Monument) and Guildhall with several further medieval buildings in the High St. There are also numerous listed buildings including within the Conservation Areas of Much Wenlock and Bourton.
- 2.5. There is a healthy High Street, and a range of facilities including a health centre and two schools, alongside many community groups covering a wide range of interests.
- 2.6. Much Wenlock is also one of the most desirable places to live in Shropshire because of the town's qualities and especially its attractive rural location. It is convenient for the growth points of Telford and Shrewsbury and being within easy commuting distance of the West Midlands conurbation. It is split by the busy A458 and A4169 carrying rising numbers of commercial and heavy goods vehicle traffic.
- 2.7. The resulting development pressures and high house prices set a challenge to provide housing, supported by the necessary infrastructure, to meet local needs in a way that respects the quality of the town and its rural setting.



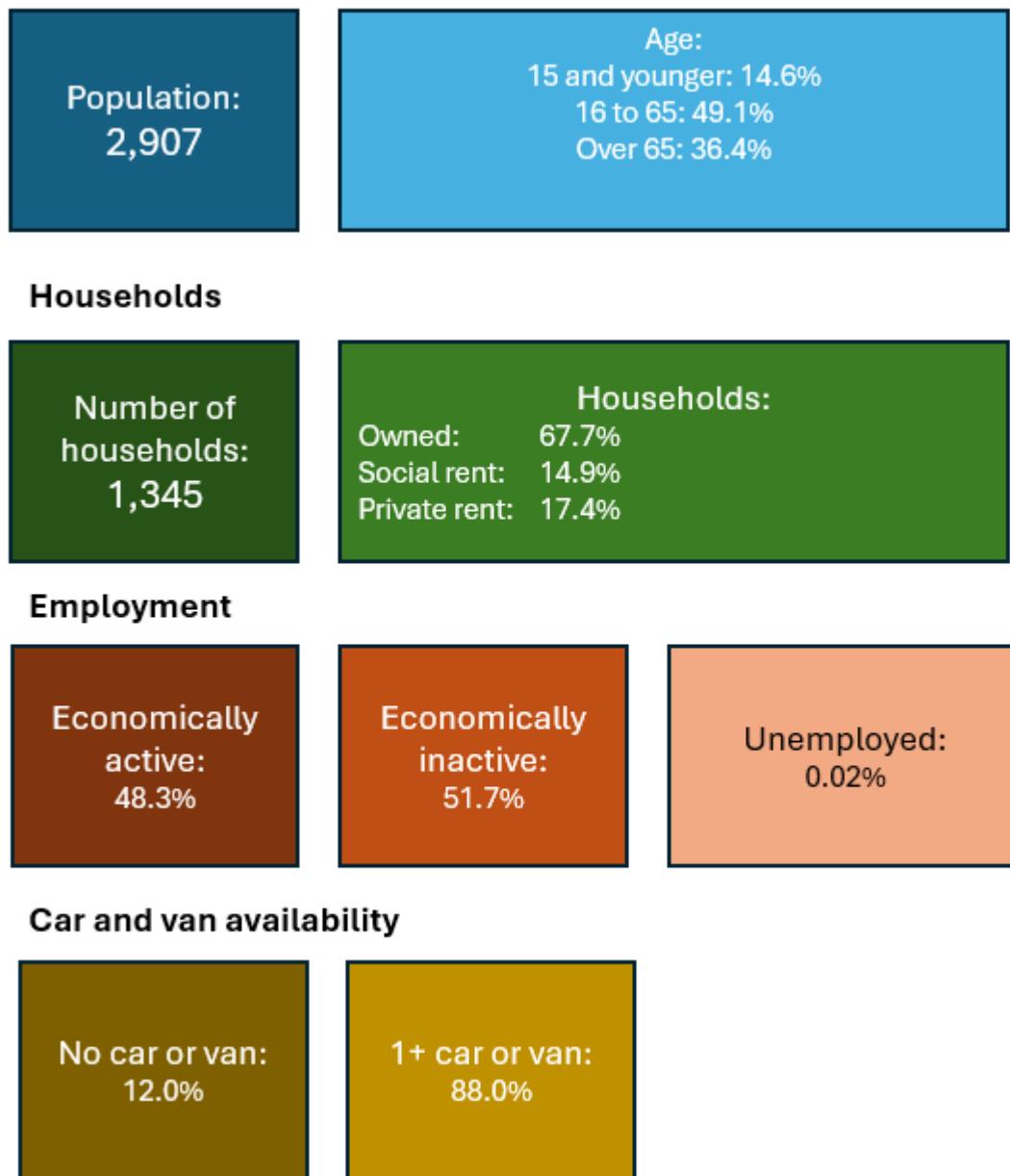
Issues and opportunities for Much Wenlock

2.8. In consultation with the community, including the town surveys and visioning and objectives workshop, the following issues and opportunities have been identified:

- There are approximately 2,900 people living in the parish. In terms of age profile, there is a higher percentage of those aged 65 years and over when compared to Shropshire as a whole. It will be important that the specific needs of older residents are considered in terms of housing provision and accessibility, access to services and local transport.
- The parish is attractive to families and there is also a high number of children aged between 5 and 18 years living locally. It will be important to ensure that there are adequate and affordable homes suited to the needs of young and growing families, and the provision of amenities required by this demographic.
- The parish suffers from significant flooding, from a range of sources, which impacts people's daily lives when it occurs. This is becoming an increasingly frequent event.
- House prices in the parish are high when compared to local incomes.
- The A458 cuts through the town, linking Shrewsbury to Bridgnorth. It meets the A1469 and B4378 at the Gaskell Arms junction, which is problematic in traffic terms. This pinchpoint junction experiences heavy traffic at peaks times, including HGVs. Whilst the MWNP has limited influence over such strategic transport matters, it is something that needs to be considered carefully as the town grows.
- The parish is rurally located and there is no railway station in the parish, the nearest ones being at Shrewsbury and Telford. Bus transport is fairly good although concerns have been raised about frequency and reliability of services. This means that most residents are inevitably reliant on their car to get around and to access services and employment. Inevitably this has led to a high car dependency, with 88% of residents owning at least one vehicle. Nevertheless, that leaves 12% of residents without a private car and therefore it will be vital that they can access services either via public transport or by foot. This is particularly the case for the smaller, more isolated settlements in the parish. Much Wenlock is theoretically very walkable for those who are willing and able. Opportunities to optimise walking routes should be sought.
- The town centre and High Street play a central role in the life of residents and need to be supported in terms of its ongoing viability and offering a mixed set of uses.
- The majority of those in employment travel outside the parish to reach their place of work. Opportunities for locally based employment should be supported where possible to reduce the reliance on out-commuting. As space for commercial development is limited space, such uses should be safeguarded and where, necessary mixed-use developments may offer a suitable solution.
- The parish benefits from a very attractive landscape environment within the setting of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. Safeguarding the landscape character, the habitats it supports and the important green spaces within it is critical.

- The parish comprises a number of settlements, each with their own identity and character. Maintaining their individuality is something that residents are keen to ensure.
- The parish is home to a wealth of heritage assets, both above and below ground. These need to be preserved and celebrated as they add to the story of the parish.
- Tourism is an important sector and should be managed in a sustainable way.

Figure 2: Some statistics about Much Wenlock parish (2021 census)



3. A VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR MUCH WENLOCK

The Community Vision and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1. The starting point for the review of MWNP was to ensure that the residents were given the opportunity to shape development and land use until the end of the Plan period in 2038. The existing vision, encapsulated by the line, '**Our Plan, Our Future**' continues to resonate locally having been defined by the desires, concerns and aspirations of local residents and other stakeholders of Much Wenlock parish.
- 3.2. The planning policies are couched within a series of overarching objectives that stem directly from the views and opinions expressed at the consultation events hosted by community volunteers and the on-line survey. The objectives are shown in *Table 2*:

Table 2: MWNP Objectives

<p>Objective 1: Spatial strategy and housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ developing collaborative partnerships with one or more Housing Associations to bring forward affordable housing on exception and other sites.✓ supporting small-scale infill sites and conversions within the wider parish.✓ actively supporting the redevelopment of brownfield sites.✓ making sure that developments include a suitable mix of housing suited to local needs, including dwellings suited to older residents and those with disabilities. This should include good access and safe or green walking to facilities within the town.
<p>Objective 2: The economy and jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ safeguarding existing commercial and employment land-uses.✓ making sure that existing employment sites are kept for employment use wherever possible and appropriate.✓ supporting new/expanded business premises in suitable locations.✓ protecting the vitality of Much Wenlock town centre.✓ supporting new mixed-use developments where an existing commercial site is demonstrated unviable, retaining an element of employment so that where appropriate, people can combine work and home life.✓ encouraging appropriate and sustainable rural tourism activities.
<p>Objective 3: Reducing flood risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ recognising the significance of the designation of Much Wenlock as within a Rapid Response Catchment subject to the Highest Category of flood risk.✓ minimising the impacts of flooding within the town's conservation area, implicit in a worst-case flood scenario, by a catchment wide flood attenuation strategy.✓ making a prior assessment, of any impact on flood risk, a key element in preparing for the implementation of each of the council's policies.

- ✓ restricting new development to locations least likely to increase flood risk.
- ✓ encouraging the development of nature-based solutions throughout the catchment to reduce runoff and to slow the flow of surface water.
- ✓ ~~keeping sufficient land that has the potential to be used to slow down the flow of surface water through engineering or natural means free from development that would prevent such use. keeping sites free from development if they have the potential to be used to slow down the flow of surface water through engineering or natural means.~~
- ✓ making sure that developments minimise the impact on water quality and subsequent health risks particularly during flooding conditions.
- ✓ protecting and improving local water quality.

Objective 4: Transport and movement

- ✓ supporting plans to improve the infrastructure for local walking, cycling and equestrian transport, in line with the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhoods.
- ✓ making sure that new developments have enough associated off-street car parking to meet current and future needs.
- ✓ safeguard existing off-street public car parking and support additional car parking to alleviate pressure in the town centre.
- ✓ supporting local and strategic traffic management proposals which reduce the number of HGV/LGV vehicles travelling through the parish in order to minimise their adverse impact.
- ✓ managing new developments so that they do not have an unacceptable traffic impact on local residents.
- ✓ ensuring that traffic impacts at pinchpoint junctions and stretches of road are minimised.

Objective 5: Community well-being

- ✓ creating new facilities for families, the elderly and young people.
- ✓ supporting developments or uses associated with a positive visitor experience.
- ✓ protecting existing community buildings and services.
- ✓ providing new public toilet provision to cater for local and visitor needs.

Objective 6: Good quality design, local character and heritage

- ✓ respecting the scale, style and setting of the historic townscapes of Much Wenlock (in particular the unique characteristics of the 'bowl' setting) and Bourton.
- ✓ making sure that in Much Wenlock and Bourton, the use of building materials is in keeping with those used in their respective Conservation Areas. Elsewhere, new developments should use materials which respect their setting and rural environment.
- ✓ ensuring that any development or change be of the highest quality design.
- ✓ ensuring that new developments will include gardens of an appropriate scale to the property.

Objective 7: Green and open spaces, local landscape and wildlife

- ✓ protecting the existing areas of green space within the parish and ensuring that their quality and or multi-functionality is improved. It is important that existing spaces be considered for retrofitting in adaptation for climate change.
- ✓ creating extra areas of high-quality green space ~~are created~~ within new developments.
- ✓ taking opportunities taken to create linkages between sites, address green and pedestrian gaps in existing networks, create of new foot and cycle routes, and wildlife biodiversity corridors.
- ✓ ensuring that new accessible and inclusive green space should exceed or at least meet Shropshire Council's standards for green open spaces, play spaces and allotments. New designated spaces will be welcomed if they meet the required standards.
- ✓ identifying opportunities to increase potential new green and open spaces for enjoyment of the local landscape and countryside are identified.
- ✓ undertaking sympathetic management of the countryside and natural outdoor environment in and around the parish is undertaken to enhance the quality of the landscape, improve local biodiversity and provide other benefits to the community's quality of life.

3.3. Underpinning the objectives is the need to ensure that all policies contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change.

4. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

OBJECTIVE 1: SPATIAL STRATEGY AND HOUSING

The Plan will provide for a limited amount of housing to meet local needs. It will do this through:

- ✓ developing collaborative partnerships with one or more Housing Associations to bring forward affordable housing on exception and other sites.
- ✓ supporting small-scale infill sites and conversions within the wider parish.
- ✓ actively supporting the redevelopment of brownfield sites.
- ✓ making sure that developments include a suitable mix of housing suited to local needs, including dwellings suited to older residents and those with disabilities. This should include good access and safe or green walking to facilities within the town.

Policy MW1: Supporting sustainable development

Purpose

4.1. This policy seeks to ensure that any development within the parish is directed to the most appropriate, sustainable locations, where there is easy access to the main town services and facilities. This will help to protect the wider sensitive landscape of the parish and safeguard against the sprawl and coalescence of the individual parish settlements. The policy supports the re-use of previously developed (brownfield) land in preference to greenfield. It also supports the concept of compact and walkable neighbourhoods to address the potential additional strains of development in the parish on road systems, particularly for developments that are furthest away from the main facilities.

POLICY MW1: SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A. Development proposals within the defined development boundaries (as shown in the most recent development plan) will be supported where they comply with other development plan policies. Development proposals must meet the following criteria:

- i. it is of a scale and nature appropriate to the character and function of the area, with particular consideration given to how the proposal will mitigate any impacts on the character, and/or visual amenity, and/or tranquillity impact on the Shropshire Hills National Landscape and its setting; and
- ii. new development must be designed to take full account of any existing flood risk, irrespective of the source of flooding in accordance with Policy MW10; and
- iii. it maintains and, where possible, enhances the natural and built appearance and character of the area; and
- iv. it is capable of connecting to the primary movement network hierarchy (see Policy MW12), to support the delivery of the 20-minute (10 minutes each way) walkable neighbourhood concept; and
- v. it improves, where appropriate, the strategic linkages from the site to the town, focussing on pinchpoints in accordance with Policy MW14; and
- vi. development growth must relate to and be in line with growth of infrastructure.

B. Development proposals outside the defined development boundary (as shown in the most recent development plan) will only be supported where appropriate consideration is given to the effect on designated sites and they where they involve:

- i. development supported in such locations in national and local planning policies; or and meet the following criteria:
- ii. the proposal is a "rural exceptions scheme" delivered in accordance with Policy MW3; or and
- iii. ~~consideration is given to how the proposal will mitigate any impacts on the character, or visual amenity, or tranquillity of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape and its setting and other designated sites (e.g. SSSIs); and~~
- iv-iii. where appropriate, it brings redundant or vacant agricultural ~~or~~ farm buildings or historic buildings of heritage value back into viable optimal use consistent with their conservation in a manner that does not cause harm in terms of additional traffic.

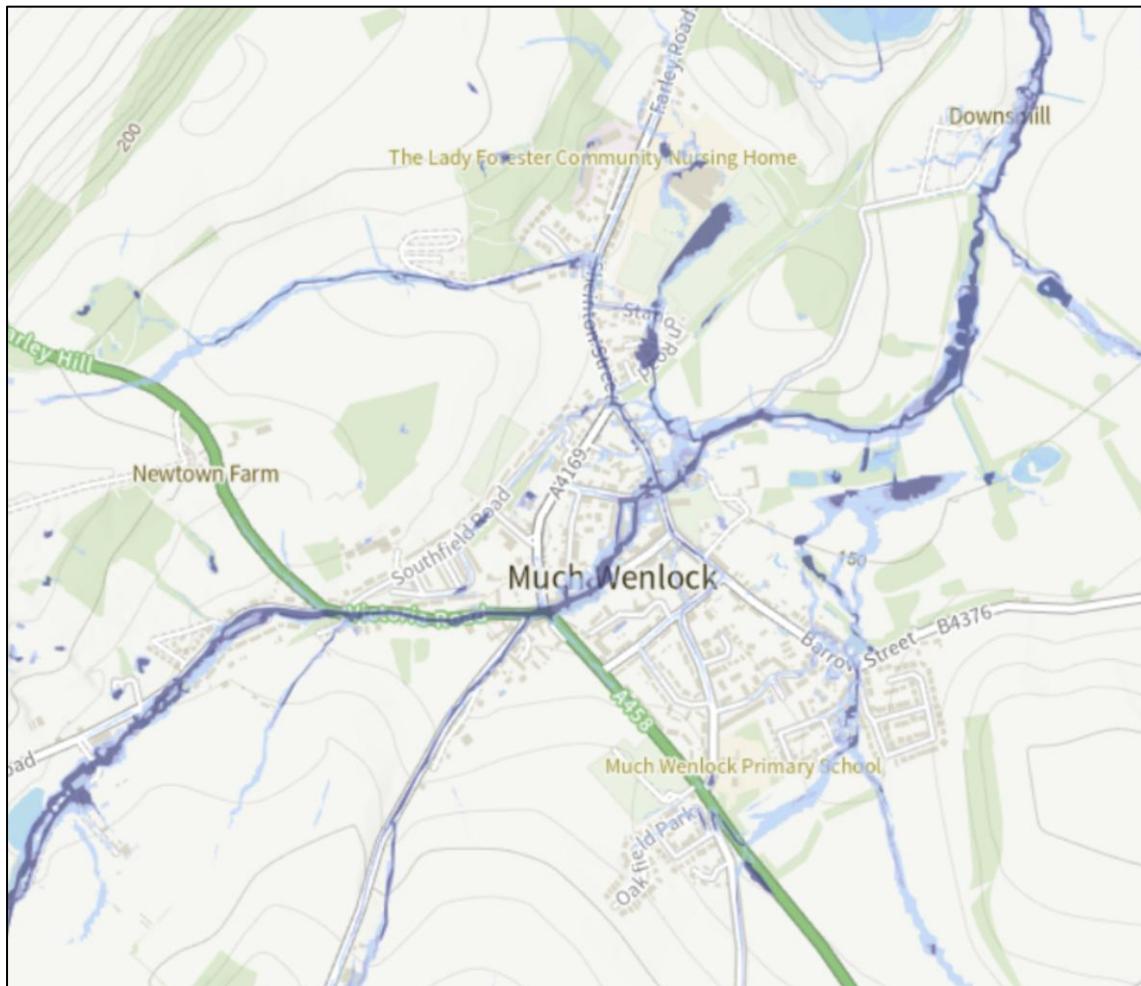
C. In determining development proposals, substantial weight will be given to the value of using suitable previously developed (brownfield) land within the development boundaries and, where relevant, in accordance with Policy MW5.

Conformity Reference: Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS1, CS3, CS4, CS5, CS8; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD1, MD7a, and b, S13; NPPF (2024): 7, 8, 29, 61, 73, 82, 83, 84, 96, 98, 111, 124, 125, 126, 129, 130, 135, 187

Justification

- 4.2. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate sites for development, a position that has been agreed with SC.
- 4.3. Policy MW1, supported by other policies in this Plan, seeks to achieve the following in terms of sustainable development:
 - focusing development to within the defined development boundaries - The adopted settlement policy boundaries are shown on *Figures 4 and 5* alongside the statutory designations in the parish. Note that minor amendments to the development boundaries may be identified in any future Local Plan Review. Much Wenlock, as the main settlement, is the focus for development. Within Bourton's development boundary, only limited infill is supported. Outside the development boundaries, new development will be strictly controlled in line with national policy and Core Strategy CS5 or its successor.
 - avoiding flood zones – Flooding is a significant problem in Much Wenlock. Development should be directed to smaller sites within the development boundary avoiding known flood zones (*Figure 3*). Development outside the development boundary will be subject to Rural Exception Site assessment. Further detail on flooding and drainage is provided in Policies MW10 and MW11.

Figure 3: Flood Risk Map (surface water)



- prioritising the use of previously developed (brownfield) land in preference to greenfield sites
 - Brownfield sites, which may be existing sites that come for redevelopment, should be used to support mixed-use development, which could comprise small-scale commercial/light industrial uses, community-scale energy regeneration, housing (notably affordable housing) and/or those working from home (i.e. space to work within a residence). There is scope within the wider countryside to bring back into use any vacant sites, including agricultural sites to optimise their use.
- a focus on smaller sites - Large-scale development is less acceptable to the community and where new housing is needed, the consensus is that it should be delivered through smaller

sites and where it can be supported by adequate infrastructure. There is an overwhelming desire to maintain the scale, style and setting of Much Wenlock and to protect the rural settlements and surrounding countryside from development.

- conserving and enhancing the historic and natural environment - The parish is home to a wide range of natural features. To the west, and partially within the parish, lies the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. There are also a series of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and some significant areas of ancient woodland. Alongside these natural features, elements of the historic environment also need protecting, including Much Wenlock and Bourton Conservation Areas, the Scheduled Monuments (notably Wenlock Priory), plus the designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- ensuring that the overall quantum of development does not put an unacceptable strain on infrastructure capacity – Much of the core infrastructure planning (e.g. schools, GPs) sits outside the scope of the MWNP as it is the responsibility of other organisations. However, the Plan seeks to ensure that any new major development (as defined in the NPPF, see Glossary) is carefully masterplanned, with early community involvement, to ensure that adequate facilities and infrastructure that meets local requirements are provided.
- ensuring that new development is well-connected to the existing movement network - Improving and adding to this network where possible, to provide accessible, safe and pleasant pedestrian and cycle links. The Town and Country Planning Association supports Walkable Neighbourhoods and a 10 minute journey time (one-way from home to destination) is considered optimal. For the MWNP, the emphasis is on connectivity and ensuring that new major development improves the strategic links within the parish, to help unlock identified pedestrian and vehicular pinchpoints. These are described more fully in Policy MW14.

4.4. *Figures 4 and 5 show the parish, the adopted settlement policy boundaries and the extent of statutory designations that exist in the Parish.*

Figure 4: Map showing development boundaries within the Parish and other key statutory designations

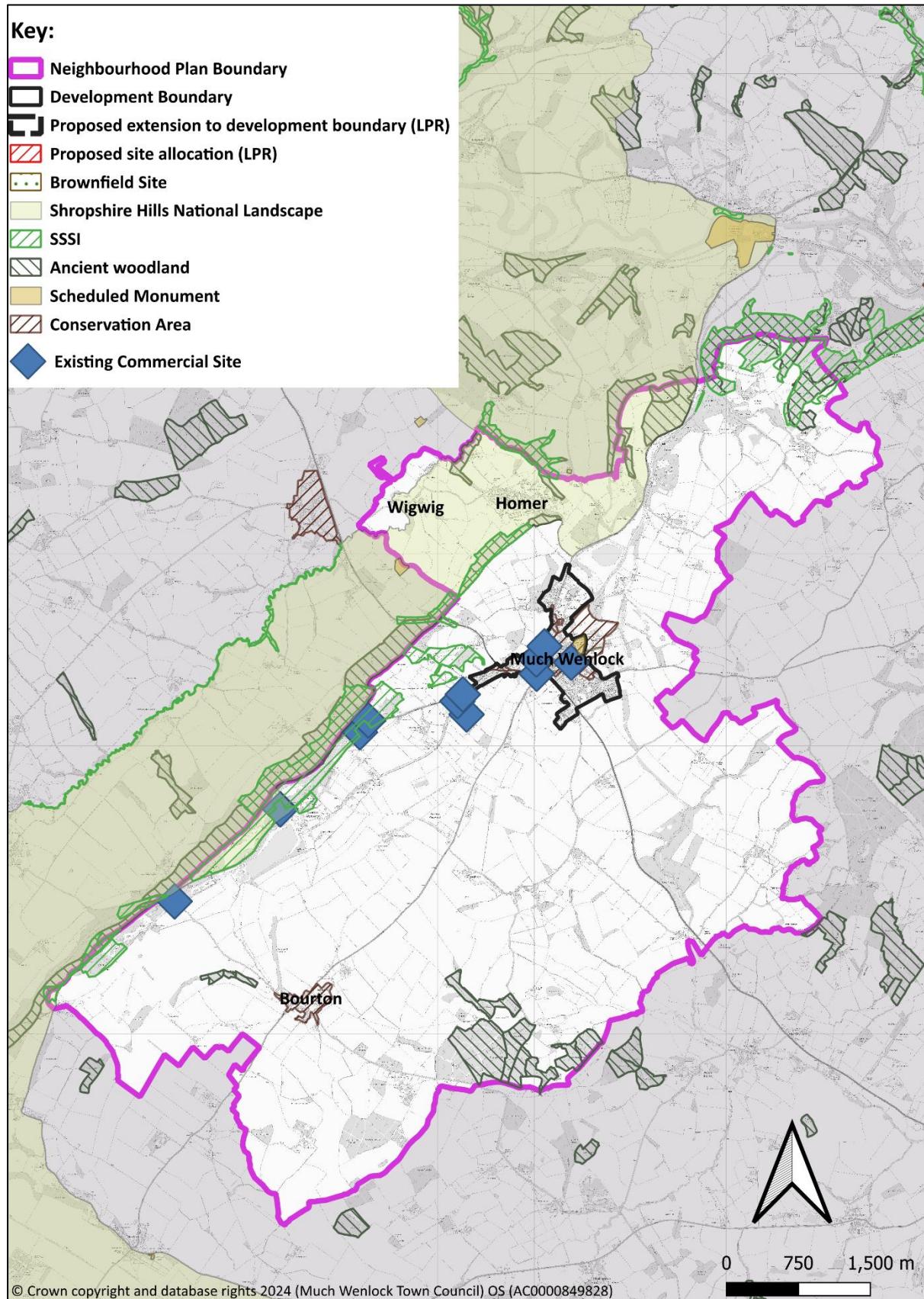
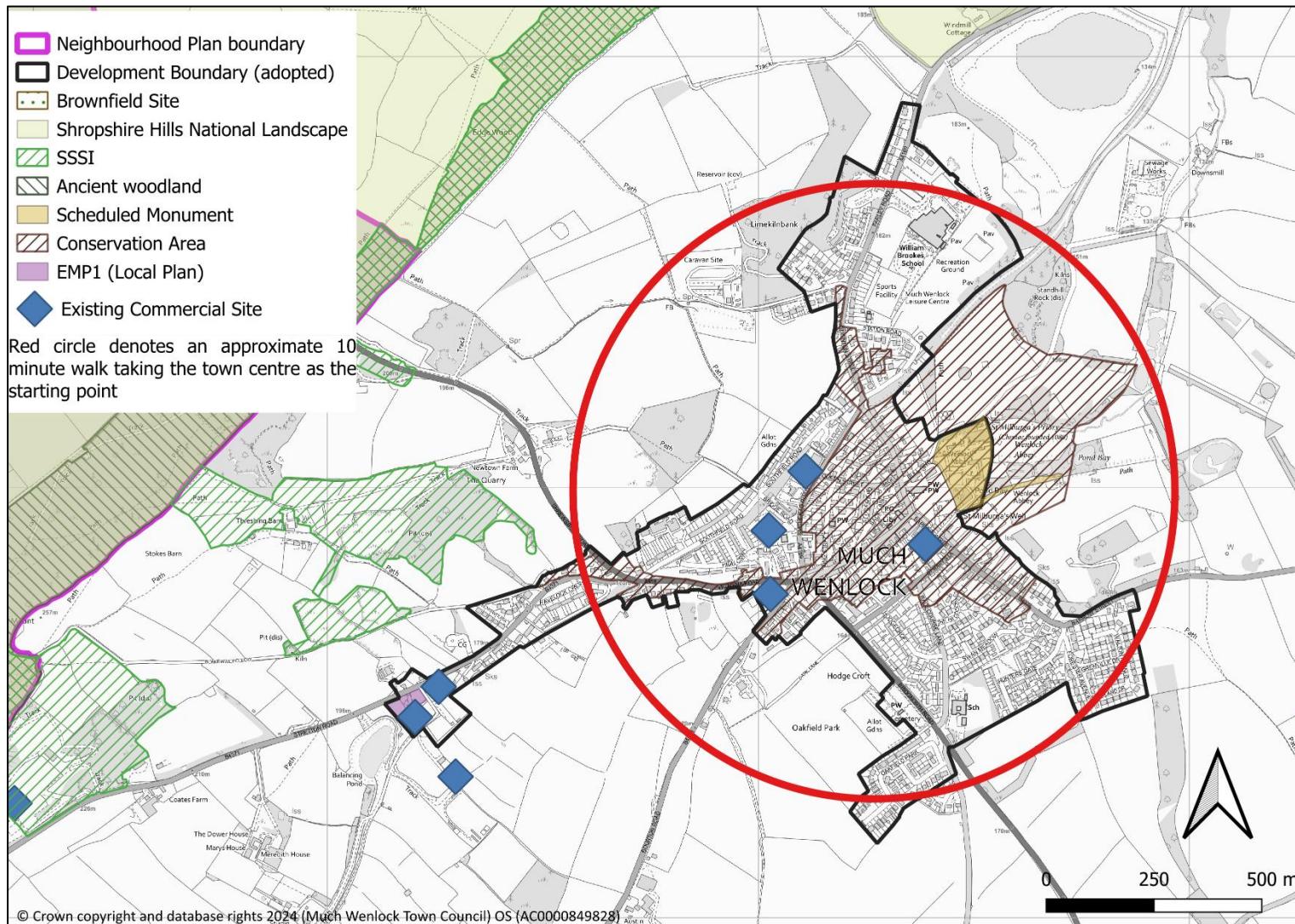


Figure 5: Map showing development boundaries within the Parish and other key statutory designations - Much Wenlock town



Policy MW2: Meeting local housing needs

Purpose

- 4.5. This policy seeks to ensure that housing delivered in Much Wenlock meets the specific housing needs of the parish in terms of size, tenure, affordability and the needs of people at different stages of their lives.
- 4.6. Definitions of the different types of affordable housing are contained in the Glossary.

POLICY MW2: MEETING LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS

- A. Other than in development designed to meet an identified specialist housing need, the mix of housing sizes, types, tenures, and affordability in proposed development should, in so far as is reasonably practicable and subject to viability, assist in meeting needs identified in the most recently available Much Wenlock Housing Needs Assessment. As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location, development proposals for residential use should respond positively to the following principles:**
 - i. new housing should focus on smaller and modest-sized dwellings (1-3 bedrooms) including accommodation that is arranged on a single level, suited to downsizers; and
 - ii. all new residential development within the neighbourhood area must provide a quantity of affordable housing in line with the requirements contained within the Shropshire Core Strategy or its successor. Affordable homes should be tenure-blind and well-integrated with market housing; and
 - iii. support proposals that enable greater affordability uplifts and prioritise those with a local connection to Much Wenlock Parish (see Glossary) and key workers (such as the use of First Homes); and
 - iv. the tenure of affordable units should meet the specific needs of the parish, reflecting a 70 (affordable housing for rent):30 (intermediate housing for purchase) tenure split.
- B. Residential development that could reasonably be expected to meet the needs of older people (by virtue of its size and location) should demonstrate how it has reflected the [Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation \(HAPPI\) principles](#) and the guidance contained in the RTPI's "[Dementia and town planning: Creating better environments for people living with dementia](#)".**
- C. All dwellings specifically designed for older people or those with disabilities or special needs will be built to the M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings) standard within Building Regulations. On sites of 5 or more dwellings, at least 5% will be built to the M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings) standard within Building Regulations and a further 70% of the dwellings will be built to M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) or higher standard within Building Regulations, unless site-specific factors indicate that step-free access cannot be achieved. Development proposals that support an uplift in this provision will be particularly supported.**
- D. Subject to the other policies of this plan, proposals for self- and custom build housing will be supported.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS11; SAMDev Plan (2015): S13; NPPF (2024): 61-66, 71, 73, 74, 82-84

Justification

- 4.7. It is important that any new residential development within Much Wenlock parish addresses local housing needs. Policy CS11 (Type and Affordability of Housing) of Adopted Core Strategy (2011) states that "*an integrated and balanced approach will be taken with regard to existing and new housing, including type, size, tenure and affordability*".
- 4.8. To understand local housing need policy, a [Housing Needs Assessment](#) (HNA), contained in the Evidence Base, was prepared for Much Wenlock in March 2024, informed by the work of the Strategic Market Housing Assessment 2020 ([Part 1](#); [Part 2](#)) at the strategic level as well as national datasets and population forecasts. In addition, feedback from local residents was gathered. The findings revealed the following:
- 4.9. **There is an imbalance of property sizes available within Much Wenlock.** Much Wenlock has a large proportion of detached homes (46.3% of the stock in 2021). Semi-detached homes account for around one quarter of the stock with terraces accounting for 20%. There is a smaller proportion of flats at 7.2%. There are approximately 190 single-level dwellings, which accounts for approximately 15% of dwellings locally or 1 in 7 homes. These represent an important resource for those wishing to downsize later in life.
- 4.10. The vast majority of dwellings within Much Wenlock have 3 or more bedrooms with 28.7% having 4 or more. Smaller 1- to 2-bedroom properties account for just over 30% of the stock, with just 7.7% 1-bedroom properties. This corresponds to a smaller stock of flats and terraces within Much Wenlock as discussed above.
- 4.11. Most households in the parish have more bedrooms than they need, notably amongst older households. This does not imply that these older households should downsize; many will be occupying homes that meet their lifestyles, including caring for grandchildren, having family stay, continuing to pursue their interests (and even working in later life and needing a space to work or study). However, some may be interested in downsizing so it is useful to consider whether there are suitable local options.
- 4.12. Equally, the lack of smaller homes makes it more difficult for first time buyers to purchase locally. This is evidenced by the fact that just 18.7% of households in Much Wenlock are families with dependent children. This compares to 21.8% in Shropshire and 25.8% in England as a whole. Much Wenlock has a relatively low share of families with children.
- 4.13. The HNA suggests that a range of dwelling sizes are needed in Much Wenlock over the plan period but with a focus on 2- to 3-bedroom sized homes (*Table 3*). This aligns to the Shropshire SHMA 2020, which also anticipated that the largest proportion of homes over the projection period in the SHMA (2016-2038) would be for 3-bedroom properties.

Table 3: Indicative dwelling size mix for Much Wenlock (overall housing on site)

Number of bedrooms	Mix in 2011	Current mix (2021)	Suggested mix 2038	Balance of new housing to reach suggested mix
1	8.2%	7.7%	7.6%	7.3%
2	23.2%	23.2%	25.8%	34.1%
3	41.4%	40.5%	43.7%	53.9%
4+	27.2%	28.7%	22.9%	4.7%

4.14. The adopted Core Strategy (2011) Policy CS11 requires 33% affordable housing. In light of the historic shortfall in affordable housing delivery in Much Wenlock, the HNA finds there to be robust evidence of need for affordable housing in Much Wenlock, and every effort should be made to maximise delivery where viable.

4.15. The HNA's indicative tenure mix for Much Wenlock is shown in *Table 4*.

Table 4: Indicative tenure for Much Wenlock

Tenure	Indicative mix
Routes to home ownership, of which	30%
• First Homes	25%
• Shared ownership	0-5%
• Rent to Buy	0-5%
Affordable Housing for rent, of which	70%
• Social rent	To be set by Registered Providers
• Affordable rent	To be set by Registered Providers

4.16. The introduction of First Homes presents an opportunity for local authorities to require higher discounts on these affordable homes (intermediate housing) for sale, where the need can be evidenced locally and where viable. Within Much Wenlock, the HNA reveals that there would be a benefit to raising discounts (up to 50% where viable) on any First Homes delivered as part of the affordable housing on the sites, to enable those in single-person median and lower quartile earnings the opportunity to enter the housing market.

4.17. Opportunities to deliver affordable homes include bringing forward a rural exception site and Policy MW3 provides detail on this.

4.18. A higher percentage of older households is expected by the end of the Plan period. The older population (age 75+) is expected to make up 25% of the population of Much Wenlock in 2038 compared to 18% in 2021. A strong response from older residents who attended the community consultation events that sheltered or housing suitable for older residents was a high priority.

- 4.19. There is a total of 60 units of specialist housing in the parish at present, with the majority available for social rent (35 homes) and the remainder for ownership (25 homes). All are described as age exclusive or retirement housing and do not have onsite care.
- 4.20. In relation to accessibility, building regulations includes three categories of dwellings:
 - a. M4(1) Category 1: Visitable dwellings.
 - b. M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings.
 - c. M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings.
- 4.21. M4(1) is mandatory for all new dwellings unless one of the optional requirements M4(2) or M4(3) applies. M4(2) and M4(3) apply where a Local Plan introduces such a requirement. Evidence that had been prepared for the (withdrawn) Local Plan Review suggested proposed specific provision requirements for these, in response to the aging population in Shropshire as a whole.
- 4.22. It is considered that such needs will be more nuanced in Much Wenlock given the age profile here when compared to Shropshire as a whole, therefore Policy MW2 supports a more prescriptive approach, and an uplift to this where possible.
- 4.23. To best meet the needs of this demographic, it should be considered whether new homes are well tailored to older people's requirements in terms of space, flexibility, quality, location and accessibility. In addition, the "[Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation \(HAPPI\)](#)" has, since 2009, developed a series of principles for good design of housing generally. Many of the principles are recognisable from good design generally - good light, ventilation, room to move around and good storage - but they have particular relevance to the spectrum of older persons' housing which needs to both offer an attractive alternative to the family home and be able to adapt over time to meet changing needs. The ten principles are:
 - Space and flexibility
 - Daylight in the home and in shared spaces
 - Balconies and outdoor space
 - Adaptability and 'care ready' design
 - Positive use of circulation space
 - Shared facilities and 'hubs'
 - Plants, trees, and the natural environment
 - Energy efficiency and sustainable design
 - Storage for belongings and bicycles
 - External shared surfaces and 'home zones'
- 4.24. Housing should be designed to support the needs of those living with disabilities. The Royal Town Planning Institute's guidance "[Dementia and town planning: Creating better environments for people living with dementia](#)" should inform planning applications.
- 4.25. The adopted Core Strategy (2011) policies also encourage the development of self-build properties for local need on suitable plots both within and adjacent to the development boundary and the MWNP supports this approach.

Policy MW3: Rural Exception Sites

Purpose

4.26. This policy provides the criteria against which rural exception sites should be considered.

POLICY MW3: RURAL EXCEPTION SITES

Proposals for small scale rural exception sites outside the development boundaries will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- i. they comprise up to 25 dwellings; and
- ii. the proposals contribute to meeting the affordable housing needs of people with a strong local connection and in accordance with Policy MW2; and
- iii. the development is subject to an agreement which will ensure that it remains as affordable housing for people with a strong local connection in perpetuity; and
- iv. the proposals would not have a significant impact on the surrounding rural landscape and the landscape setting of any settlement in the plan area; and
- v. the development is appropriate in terms of its scale, character and location with the settlement to which it is associated. Open market housing will only be permitted outside the Much Wenlock development boundary where this type of development can be demonstrated to be essential to ensure the delivery of affordable housing as part of the same development proposal. The exception would be cross-subsidy exception schemes, where 30% open market housing will be supported in order to enable 70% affordable housing.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS11; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD7a, S13; NPPF (2024): 61, 63-65,82-84

Justification

4.27. Historically, local Housing Associations have not bought sites or built homes in the parish, rather they have expanded their stock through acquisitions within market development sites. In order to meet identified affordable housing needs (as evidenced in the Much Wenlock HNA) the MWNP seeks a new way of working to bring forward small-scale social rented and affordable housing on exception sites through collaborative partnerships with local Housing Associations (or equivalent mechanisms) and Shropshire Council. This positive approach will provide greater certainty and local control over delivery to meet specific local needs.

4.28. To ensure that houses on exception sites meet local needs for people with a strong local connection, occupants will be expected to meet the requirements of Shropshire Council's SPD '[The Type and Affordability of Housing](#)' (Dec 2012, para 5.34).

4.29. Since 2013, with the adoption of the original MWNP, 26 affordable social rented and shared equity homes have been brought forward on one exception site within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Policy MW4: Infill development and conversions

Purpose

4.30. This policy sets out the criteria against which infill development and conversions of existing properties should be assessed.

POLICY MW4: INFILL DEVELOPMENT AND CONVERSIONS

Within the development boundary, and within Bourton, housing infill development will be supported where it contributes positively to local character and where it helps to meet local housing needs. Within the conservation areas of Much Wenlock and Bourton, infill development should conserve or enhance the special architectural and historic character of these settlements. Adequate off-road parking space must be provided, in accordance with Shropshire Parking Standards.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS1, CS3, CS4; SAMDev Plan (2015): S13, MD3; NPPF (2024): 61, 73, 75

Justification

4.31. Infill involves the development of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage. It usually consists of a frontage plot only and often comprises the side gardens of existing houses.

4.32. In recent years, infill sites have provided a steady supply of housing. This trend is likely to continue but the MWNP allows for the numbers to be kept under review to ensure that sufficient development is coming forward to meet local needs. A review may also be triggered by national changes in policy, updated information on housing needs or issues raised by the public, private or third sector regarding the operation of the MWNP. Much Wenlock Town Council has resolved to review the Plan within five years.

OBJECTIVE 2: THE ECONOMY AND JOBS

The Plan will help business create jobs by:

- ✓ safeguarding existing commercial and employment land-uses.
- ✓ making sure that existing employment sites are kept for employment use wherever possible and appropriate.
- ✓ supporting new/expanded business premises in suitable locations.
- ✓ protecting the vitality of Much Wenlock town centre.
- ✓ supporting new mixed-use developments where an existing commercial site is demonstrated unviable, retaining an element of employment so that where appropriate, people can combine work and home life.
- ✓ encouraging appropriate and sustainable rural tourism activities.

Policy MW5: Commercial development

Purpose

4.33. Beyond retail provision, there is only a modest amount of existing commercial/industrial space within the town and wider parish. It is important that such employment land provision remains available, if needed. The policy seeks, ideally, to protect commercial activities and employment at these spaces. Where this does not prove sustainable, the policy prioritises mixed use redevelopment, to enable the delivery of housing to meet local needs, alongside compatible commercial/employment uses.

4.34. The policy notes that 0.75ha of land at site EMP1 (Stretton Road) is allocated for employment use in the Shropshire Core Strategy. Should such a use not be viable on this site, alternative commercial space will need to be considered in any the future Local Plan to ensure that adequate commercial employment land (up to 2ha as per the strategic requirement) is provided in the parish.

POLICY MW5: COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Protecting existing employment

A. Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals for a change of use within Site EMP1, and/or an existing Employment Site and/or commercial premises (as shown on *Figure 7*) to a use and operation that does not provide any employment opportunities, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the commercial premises or land:

- i. has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and**
- ii. has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for solely employment generating uses as demonstrated through the results of:**

- a. marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least 6 months and a supplemental report evidencing the marketing undertaken and the market response; and
- b. a detailed valuation report assessing the viability of the land and buildings for employment use.

Where these criteria are demonstrated, development proposals for housing on such sites (*Figure 7*) will be supported, in accordance with Policy MW2, only where this can be achieved as part of a broader package of compatible commercial and other uses, such as community and green space.

Supporting new employment

B. Development proposals to expand existing employment premises, and/ or provide new start-up business space – including office/workshop space and start-up units on flexible terms - will be supported, including in former agricultural buildings provided that:

- i. there is no adverse impact on the character and nature of the surrounding area from visual or operational impacts or on nearby occupiers of existing premises or residential properties; and
- ii. the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the surrounding landscape and the wider setting of the town; and
- iii. the proposal would not have any significant harmful impacts on the ecological setting of the site; and
- iv. the proposal's forecast traffic generation would not have an unacceptable traffic impact on the wider town and the capacity and operation of its highway network, paying particular regard to HGVs; and
- v. the site would not cause or exacerbate flooding.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1, 2; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS13, CS14; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD9, S13; NPPF (2024): 85, 86, 88, 89, 96, 125

Justification

4.35. With no railway station in the parish, the majority of those out-commuting are doing so by car. Over a third (37.5%) of those in employment travel at least 10km to reach their place of work (2021 census). Many of these are driving to the nearby settlements of Telford, Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth, where work is more readily available.

4.36. Of those working in the parish, approximately 32% work from home, with others employed in agriculture and farming, retail and other service industries. It will be important to ensure that for those working locally, the infrastructure exists – particularly in terms of broadband and mobile availability – to serve their needs. Such provision falls outside the scope of the MWNP but work with partners including mobile and internet provides is included as a non-policy action in Section 7 of this Plan.

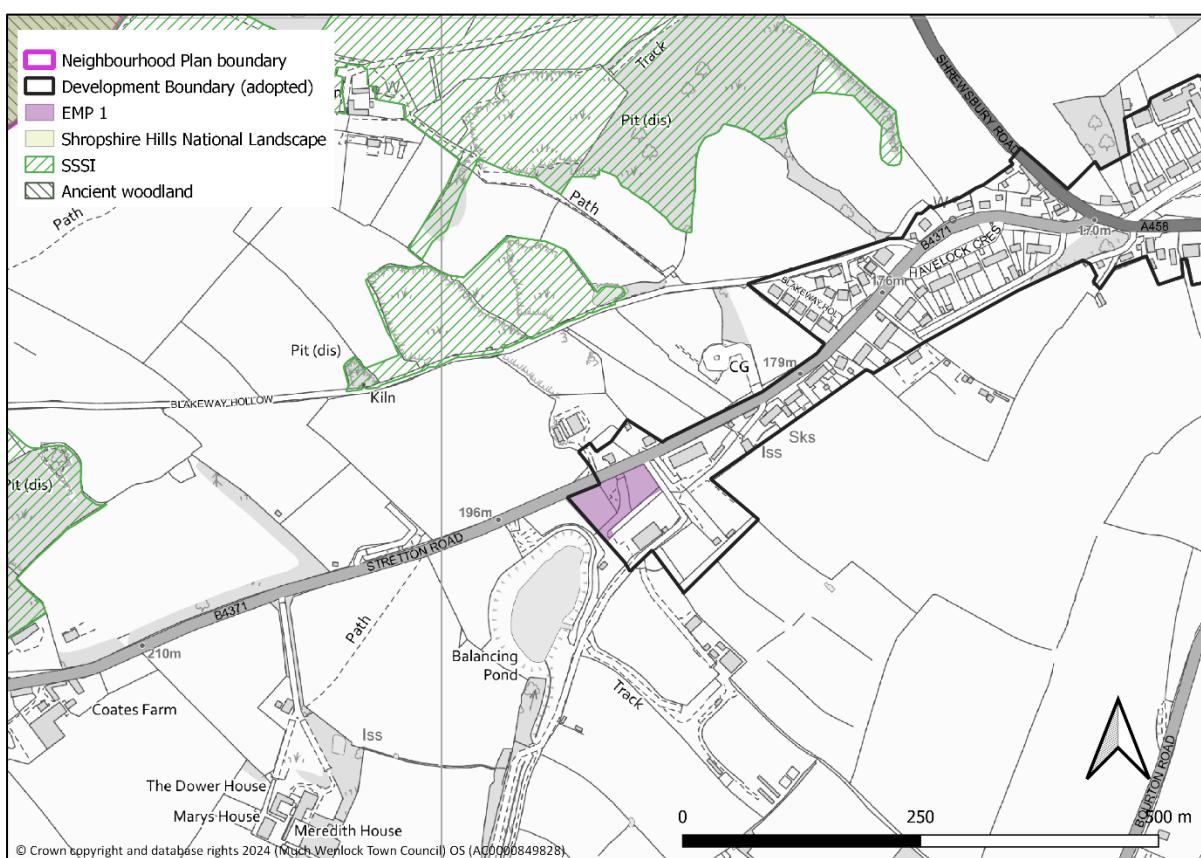
4.37. Protecting existing and providing new space for employment is considered important to ensure that there are opportunities locally for work.

4.38. **0.75 ha of land at Stretton Road:** One site of 0.75ha Land at Stretton Road, is identified in the Local Plan as commercial employment land (*Figure 6*). This is also the only brownfield site in the

parish currently listed on SC's brownfield register. The site lies immediately adjacent to an arm of an environmentally sensitive area and care will be needed to ensure that there are no adverse effects (including through lighting) and that landscaping should enhance the network where possible in line with Shropshire Core Strategy Policy CS17. Any development on previously undeveloped (greenfield) land areas of this site would be subject to an Ecological Assessment.

4.39. Should the site be redeveloped into uses that do not comprise wholly commercial space, additional commercial land should be identified in the Local Plan to ensure that there is no overall net loss of commercial employment land in the parish. This would need to be at a site suitable for such development, as expressed in the Policy.

Figure 6: Employment Site - EMP1



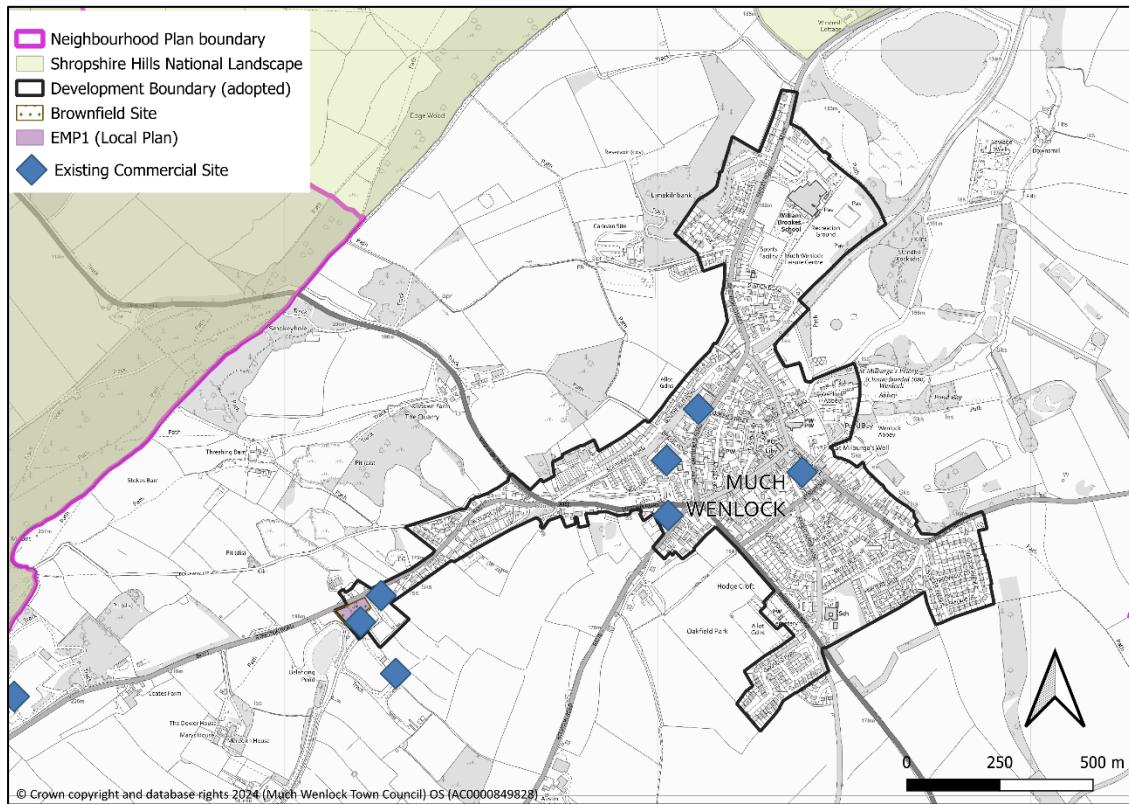
4.40. **Other commercial sites:** There are few sites, beyond agricultural uses, within Much Wenlock which are dedicated to commercial activity (Figure 7).

4.41. Development proposals on all commercial sites will need to be able to demonstrate that they do not have an unacceptable impact on traffic movements in the town, paying particular regard to HGVs. A transport assessment would be the most appropriate way of doing so. It should be noted, however, that the site was previously included in a land allocation for employment use in the Bridgnorth Local Plan in 2005, since when there has been little interest in its development. It appears, therefore, that some up-front public or private investment will be required to facilitate its use and SC's statement of intent offers assurances that this will take place. Unless this investment is made, there will be a significantly increased risk of the Core

Strategy policy failing to provide for local employment to balance housing allocations and avoid creating a town increasingly dependent on commuting.

- 4.42. Given the limited availability of land within the development boundary, brownfield sites should be prioritised for employment uses. Redevelopment proposals should focus on retaining and enhancing the existing commercial and industrial character of these areas. Where appropriate, the intensification of employment uses on brownfield sites should be explored to maximize job opportunities within the existing settlement area. This approach will help to protect and create local jobs, reduce out-commuting, and promote a sustainable local economy
- 4.43. Given the relative lack of brownfield sites within the development boundary, special consideration should be given to proposals for mixed use (employment, residential etc.), where this would optimise brownfield land use and potentially negate the need to identify greenfield sites beyond the development boundary for such uses, as per Policy MW1 (Location of Development). Mixed uses should retain an element of commercial (see Appendix A) alongside residential (notably affordable residential), and other uses compatible with work-living. The protection of an element of employment within these sites and, where appropriate, support for new employment opportunities locally will not only provide greater prospects for residents to access jobs locally but will ensure that these are sustainable in terms of the patterns of commuting that they generate.
- 4.44. Outside the settlement boundary, there are agricultural businesses, and also a number of former quarry sites, which provide valuable employment now, such as Lime Green and Edge Renewables. These should be supported. The conversion of agricultural buildings to commercial properties is supported subject to Policy MW1 and where traffic generation, notably HGV, is at an acceptable level. Any such developments need to mitigate flood impacts, as per the policies in this MWNP.

Figure 7: Map showing allocated site EMP1 and other existing commercial sites



Policy MW6: Protecting and enhancing the role and setting of Much Wenlock town centre

Purpose

4.45. This policy seeks to support uses that will enable an economically vibrant, mixed-use town centre in Much Wenlock, attracting additional footfall, enhancing its historic setting, improving accessibility and improving overall the look and feel of the public area.

POLICY MW6: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ROLE AND SETTING OF MUCH WENLOCK TOWN CENTRE

A. To secure the ongoing vitality of Much Wenlock town centre (High Street, Barrow Street and Wilmore Street: *Figure 8*), proposals which protect, enhance and promote a diverse range of town centre uses (Uses C1, E, F1 and F2 and Sui Generis) – including retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural and community - will be supported, subject to the other policies in this Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Upper floor residential

B. Proposals that offer opportunities for housing on otherwise underused upper floors will be supported, both where separate access can be achieved and where these are shown to be no longer suitable for commercial use.

Existing retail premises

C. The permanent change of use of Classes C1, E, F1, F2 and Sui Generis to other uses will only be supported where the following can be demonstrated:

- i. the proposed use will maintain the vitality and viability of Much Wenlock Town Centre;**
- ii. the premises in question have not been in continuous active use for at least 12 consecutive months; and**
- iii. the Class E retail premises have no potential for either reoccupation as demonstrated through the results both of a full viability report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least 6 months.**

Temporary uses

D. The use of Class E, F1 and F2 premises for temporary uses will be supported. Such uses include 'pop up' shops and cultural, creative and leisure uses introduced on a temporary basis or for specific events.

E. Such uses must demonstrate that they will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses, particularly residential through excessive noise and pollution.

F. Such uses will generally not be considered appropriate if the operation of the business requires such large amounts of vehicle parking in order to function unless sufficient off-street parking arrangements have been implemented.

Re-use of historic buildings

G. The reuse of historic buildings within Much Wenlock Town Centre for activities that will enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre will be particularly supported. This could include community uses, eating places, retail or business. Any associated physical alterations should be sympathetic to the historic and architectural significance and character of the building concerned.

Public realm

H. Development proposals to enhance the public realm in Much Wenlock Town Centre will be supported where this will not result in the demolition of or significant detrimental impact to existing heritage assets. Proposals which enhance the pedestrian experience will be supported including:

- i. the widening of pavements;**
- ii. the consolidation of street clutter and superfluous signage, including provision of signage that will improve pedestrian links between the retail areas along High Street and Barrow Street;**
- iii. the inclusion of cycling facilities;**
- iv. the reinforcement of the distinctive character of the area, as set out in Policy MW18 (Design and character of development) including through the use of planting, seating, and installation of public art, celebrating the heritage and history of the parish; and**
- v. the confirmation that development proposals should contribute to improved wayfinding and signage for the parish, as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, provided that they can be satisfactorily integrated within their surroundings.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 2; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS15; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD10a, MD10b; NPPF (2024): 90, 96, 98, 101, 103, 131-141

Justification

4.46. Much Wenlock's popularity as both a local centre and a visitor destination/ stop-off point means that there is a fairly significant level of footfall in the town centre throughout the year, supporting a mix of uses including shops, cafes and visitor accommodation.

4.47. A meeting with local traders operating businesses in the town centre identified the following concerns:

- Car parking – There are only a few car parks serving the High Street and these are fairly small and also expensive. This makes it challenging to those people wanting to 'pop-and-shop' or visit for the whole day. It also makes it difficult for those arriving by car to attend town events, such as the Christmas Fayre, because of the inability for people to arrive by car. Whilst it is an aim of this MWNP to promote walking (and, where possible, cycling) locally, this is not an option for everyone and certainly the majority of visitors to the parish arrive by

car due to the lack of local railway station and reliable bus routes. Additional accessible and well signposted off-street car parking provision is supported in Policy MW13.

- Active promotion of the High Street—there was a feeling that more could be done to promote the High Street to both residents and visitors. The town is very quiet on bank holidays, for example.
- Challenges in employing staff, other than students, particularly on weekdays.
- Public toilets – The facilities located in St Mary's are often broken or vandalised. There is a need to ensure fully working, accessible toilets.
- Dog fouling.
- Inadequate signage in the car parks to the main local destinations.
- Competition from neighbouring larger settlements, notably Bridgnorth, Telford and Shrewsbury, where there is a greater choice of facilities including larger supermarkets.
- Competition from online retailers, such as Amazon.

4.48. Business owners felt that hosting markets – differentiated from those selling products already available in the High Street - could assist in raising footfall. The current Made in Shropshire Markets are considered to be helpful but could be better promoted. In addition, more events aimed at a broader range of people were cited in particular to draw in families and young people.

4.49. There was also a call more generally to improve the attractiveness of the High Street, for instance the use of bunting, attractive planting (for instance in eye-catching containers) and so forth.

4.50. Looking to the future, the following priorities have been identified:

4.51. Support uses that will enable an economically vibrant, mixed-use town centre: To protect the diverse architectural, historical and environmental qualities of the town centre in Much Wenlock and promote a mix of uses that will draw footfall and reinforce the town centre as the heart of the community. Priorities include:

- Resisting the change of use of retail units, public houses and other community uses to housing, which would gradually erode the core of Much Wenlock (see Appendix A).
- Continuing to focus residential uses at first floor level and above (where this is accessible and adaptable to changing needs) provided there is no adverse impact on the road.
- Ensuring that proposals for development or alteration to retail units in the High Street conserve or enhance its historic character.
- Supporting opportunities for new or replacement tree planting in the street scene, where it can be achieved without reducing sightlines. They should be selected to reflect native species, colour etc.
- Supporting the provision of additional off-street car parking spaces.
- Supporting temporary ("pop-up") shops, which can provide a service to the growing number of home-workers as well as discouraging long-term empty units.

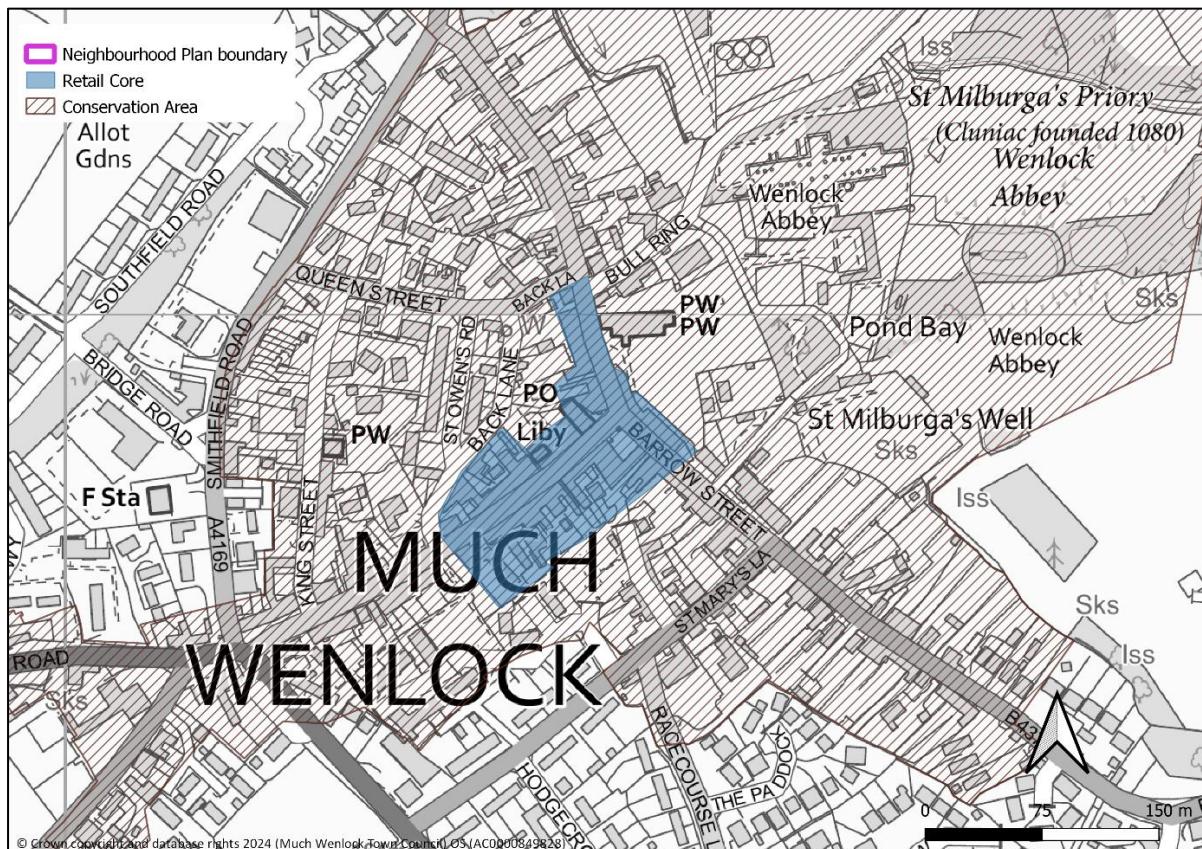
4.52. Improve the look and feel of the public areas: These need to be pedestrian-friendly, safe, accessible and attractive. Priorities include:

- Reducing the negative effects of car movements through the High Street, in partnership with Shropshire Council. This could incorporate traffic calming measures and to investigate feasibility for a “shared space” scheme to better prioritise space between cars and people.
- Provision of additional outdoor seating.
- Installing public art that reinforces the history of the parish.
- Reducing superfluous clutter in terms of bollards, bins etc. Where these are required, there needs to be a consistency in design to reflect the local character.
- Introducing additional markets to the town centre, potentially in conjunction with local suppliers, such as local produce.

4.53. Signage, accessibility and functionality: In order to encourage a pedestrian-first approach to the town centre and assist visitors arriving from further afield. Priorities would include:

- Restricting wayfinding signs to those which convey essential information.
- Signage designed to be accessible and reinforce local character. Further guidance is available from Historic England’s booklet [Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places](#).
- Promoting accessibility, for instance by applying the ~~guidance advice~~ contained in the RTPI’s guidance aimed at planning neighbourhoods for those living with dementia as well as measures to assist other disabilities.
- Considering restricting on-street parking along the High Street to disabled bays only, to improve safety along the narrow pavements here.
- Upgrading the existing public toilets to a design that would reduce vandalism. Supporting the upgrade of toilets to Changing Place requirements (see Policy MW17 and Appendix B).

Figure 8: Much Wenlock Town Core



Potential action: Shared space/ traffic calming in the town centre

In order to offer a more pleasant pedestrian experience for residents and the visitors to the town, the creation of a shared space, which would give equal priority to pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles in the lower part of the High Street, and the area by the Square, the Guildhall (Figure 9), could be explored.

This could draw from the success of this idea in other places, for instance Dawley, Poynton in Cheshire, and in similar small historic towns to Much Wenlock further afield, for example the Netherlands.

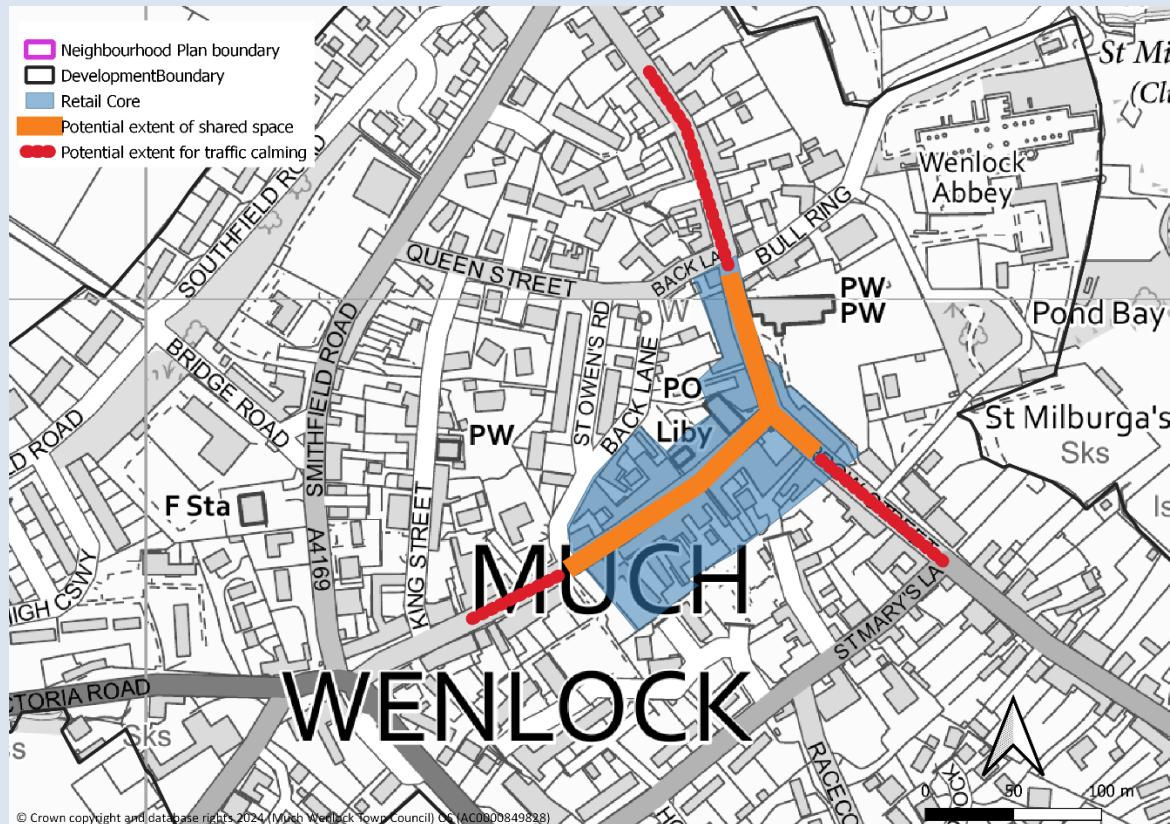
Altering the pavement and road surfaces slows vehicle traffic and ensures that all road users understand that they do not have priority and must show one another consideration.

Consideration also needs to be given to providing disabled parking in the town centre and secure, covered bicycle racks and other infrastructure for cyclists in the Square. Plans were drawn up in 2020 for cycle racks by the museum/Spar area, in space where they would not impede pedestrians and would not be visually intrusive. Such a scheme could be revisited.

To ensure road users appreciate the change in use of the road network on approach to the shared space, we suggest additional traffic calming on Barrow Street and Sheinton Street such as chicanes with traffic giving way e.g. Bridge Road. Planters and wider pavements with benches

would encourage more people to walk into town, especially from the Hunters Gate area where feedback has told us many older residents struggle with existing pavement surface, width and camber.

Figure 9: Potential for shared space and traffic calming



Policy MW7: Promoting sustainable rural tourism

Purpose

4.54. The attractive location of the parish, within the setting of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape and with its proximity to a great number of regionally and nationally significant visitor attractions, presents an opportunity for the parish to develop itself as both a destination and base for sustainable rural tourism.

POLICY MW7: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM

- A. Development proposals that support the aims of the [Shropshire Destination Management Plan](#) will be supported. This includes new or expanded sustainable rural tourism-related facilities, recreational enterprises, visitor accommodation (subject to Policy MW8), attractions, and activities to encourage day and staying visitors. The reuse of historic buildings for such activities will be particularly supported. Any associated physical alterations should be sympathetic to the historic and architectural significance and character of the building concerned.**
- B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals for tourism development (including Use Class C1 hotels and other built accommodation) should meet the following criteria:**
 - i. the proposal should seek to support and provide sustainable employment;
 - ii. the proposal should seek to promote the production and consumption of local produce and materials;
 - iii. the siting, scale and design should be informed by, and positively contribute towards, landscape character, natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and must not adversely affect the amenity, appearance, character, and historical significance of the area, including the Shropshire Hills National Landscape and its setting;
 - iv. there are demonstrable economic and social benefits to the proposals;
 - v. sufficient off-street car parking is provided, in line with Shropshire Parking standards; and
 - vi. there is no significant detrimental impact on the existing community.
- C. Proposals that would result in the loss of all or part of tourism related facilities will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that it is:**
 - i. not viable, or unlikely to become commercially viable; and
 - ii. it has been the subject of appropriate marketing for a period of at least 18 months and consideration has been given to other alternative commercial uses.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 2; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS16; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD11; NPPF (2024): 85, 88, 89

Justification

4.55. The [Shropshire Destination Management Plan](#) has the following Vision: ***"Shropshire will be a sustainably managed destination that welcomes the curious and the adventurous to explore its outstandingly beautiful natural landscapes and internationally recognised built heritage in a way that safeguards these precious assets now and for future generations. It is a place where world-changing ideas were born and are celebrated, and it continues to display a refreshing independence of thought and spirit. Its market towns and towns are alive with artisan producers, cultural practitioners and hospitality businesses that combine to create a quality environment in which visitors and residents alike are able to rethink, refresh and recharge."*** (where cultural practitioners are defined as individuals/businesses operating in the culture, arts and crafts sector).

4.56. As a visitor destination, Much Wenlock has an important role to play in delivering this vision, capitalising on its location within the Shropshire Hills, its culture and heritage and rich offering of facilities and attractions.

4.57. Approximately 200 people are employed in the tourism sector in Much Wenlock. Just over half of these are employed in accommodation and food services and the remainder in the arts, entertainment, recreation and other services. This is the equivalent of 20.3% of the total Much Wenlock workforce, which represents a higher share than for Shropshire as a whole (14.7%). 1.1% of total employment in the tourism sector in Shropshire is provided by Much Wenlock.

4.58. The town and wider parish is a popular destination with visitors attracted by its links to the modern Olympics, the Priory ruins and the geology of the surrounding Wenlock Edge.

Who is visiting Much Wenlock?

4.59. Domestic visitors to Much Wenlock come from all over the UK. A large proportion come from the West Midlands on a day trip. But there are also many visitors from overseas from a number of European countries and from as far as Australia, New Zealand and the USA. Most visitors are visiting for the first time, with 75% only visiting once. Some are passing through Much Wenlock to reach another destination and decide to stop for a break. There are also organised groups arriving, for instance walking groups.

4.60. Wenlock is seen as a pleasant day out with interesting buildings, shops, cafes and visitor attractions (including the Priory, Guildhall and Museum). For families the latter two provide free entry which visitors appreciate. Overnighters, usually couples as opposed to family groups, tend to stay at local camping and caravan sites and cottages. They use these as a base to explore Wenlock, Ironbridge, Bridgnorth, Shrewsbury, Ludlow and Church Stretton.

4.61. Much Wenlock has been featured in the national media, including the television programme, Escape to the Country, along with newspaper articles written by travel editors. Local events such as 'Made in Shropshire' increase visitor numbers as does the Christmas Fayre and Get a Word in Edgeways festival. There have been issues with availability of car parking, however, which has impacted the ability of visitors from further afield in attending these.

4.62. The majority of visitors arrive by car due to the lack of a railway station in the parish. Many are also stopping off at Wenlock on the way to somewhere else, making public transport linkages difficult to plan for in advance due to timings. Most visitors will have already looked online to find places of interest. Nevertheless, Much Wenlock Museum houses the Information Centre although their reduced opening hours (only certain days of the week) limits access. It would be helpful to have another venue that could provide visitor information during the intervening days.

4.63. A further suggestion would be for more signage relating to visitor attractions. For example the Olympian Trail map sign is very effective; a sign nearby that shows the locations of the Museum, Guildhall, and Priory would be helpful. Visitors themselves provide the following feedback:

Positive experiences	Areas to improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wonderful carvings and the historic authenticity of the Council Chamber. The list of Bailiffs and Mayors is appreciated along with the Display cabinets, information boards and the RAF Memorial. Local people pop in each month to see the latest Art Exhibition. The newly installed Children's activity table is very popular. The Guildhall Story, Music and Poetry listening post provides another source of interest. Visitors enjoy being able to purchase locally produced gifts, cards and books. Generally, visitors comment on the considerable historic importance of Much Wenlock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access for people in wheelchairs or with limited mobility. There is one local artist who has been unable to access the art exhibitions at all. Increased opening of the Guildhall. Additional cafes to be open on Sundays. Additional car parking. Better signage. Provision of toilets. Access to the Information Centre on all days. Additional cycle parking – see Transport section

Potential Action: Visitor Strategy for Much Wenlock

Some of the opportunities to promote tourism locally sit outside planning policy and one of the actions for the Town Council, in partnership with others, will be to prepare a Visitor Strategy for the parish.

Policy MW8: Visitor accommodation in rural areas

Purpose

4.64. The policy seeks to limit the development of owner-occupied second homes outside the development boundary. Any tourism-related development in the countryside will only be accepted if the design is of exceptional quality, meaning that any subsequent change from holiday use would still result in exceptionally designed development. The policy reflects the NPPF by only allowing tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

POLICY MW8: VISITOR ACCOMMODATION IN RURAL AREAS

- A. Proposals for new and extended touring caravan and camping sites should have strong regard to the cumulative impact of visitor accommodation on the natural and historic assets of the area, road network, or over intensification of the site.**
- B. Static caravans, chalets and log cabins are recognised as having a greater impact on the countryside. Therefore, in addition (to clause A) schemes should be landscaped and designed to a high quality and be at an appropriate capacity and scale.**
- C. Any holiday let development that does not conform to the legal definition of a caravan and is not related to the conversion of existing appropriate rural buildings, will be resisted in the countryside (unless it conforms to clause D below) and in accordance with Policy MW1.**
- D. Much Wenlock Town Council recognises the appeal of a holiday in a rural setting. Therefore, permanent holiday let development may be approved in countryside locations provided that it can be demonstrated that the design is of exceptional quality (as outlined in the NPPF) and in accordance with Policy MW19. Any subsequent changes to such holiday lets in these locations (such as change to residential occupation) will be resisted, as per E below.**
- E. To retain the benefit to the visitor economy, robust conditions will be applied to new planning permissions for visitor accommodation to ensure the accommodation is not used for residential occupation. Proposals for the conversion of holiday lets to permanent residential use should demonstrate that their loss will not have a significant adverse impact on the visitor economy and meet the criteria relating to suitability for residential use in Policy MW1.**
- F. For existing static caravan, chalet and log cabin sites in areas of high flood risk, positive consideration will be given to proposals for their relocation to areas of lower flood risk to ensure they are capable of being made safe for the lifetime of the development.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 2; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS16; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD11; NPPF (2024): 85, 88, 89

Justification

4.65. There have been examples of visitor accommodation built within the rural parts of the parish that have, over time, been used and converted to permanent accommodation. Concerns have been raised by parishioners about such developments, once permanent, in terms of their impact on local infrastructure.

Policy MW9: Supporting flexible workspaces and opportunities for homeworking

Purpose

4.66. This policy recognises the growing contribution of home-based and small-to-medium sized businesses in Much Wenlock and seeks to encourage opportunities for them. This would include by supporting the provision of start-up and move-on business units as well as the provision of a shared office space. This would provide a greater incentive and opportunity for local people to work locally. Homeworking has become commonplace for many in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

POLICY MW9: SUPPORTING FLEXIBLE WORKSPACES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOMWORKING

A. Proposals to provide working spaces that encourage homeworking, co-working and creative small industries, for instance through incubator/start-up business space on flexible terms, will be supported through:

- i. the provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings, within the development boundary;
- ii. enabling extensions and garden offices to facilitate homeworking;
- iii. enabling microbusinesses;
- iv. supporting the diversification of farm and rural businesses, in accordance with Policy MW1;
- v. the provision of start-up businesses by enabling low-cost facilities in cooperative clusters; and
- vi. support for improved communications infrastructure (mobile, broadband) where this can be achieved sympathetically to local character.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals for new workspaces should demonstrate the way in which they can be incorporated within their immediate locality without generating any unacceptable impact on the amenity of residential properties and on the capacity and safety of the local highways network.

B. The reuse of historic buildings for such activities will be particularly supported. Any associated physical alterations should be sympathetic to the historic and architectural significance and character of the building concerned.

Conformity Reference NP objectives: 2; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS13, CS14; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD9, S13; NPPF (2024): 85, 86

Justification

4.67. Much Wenlock has a well-qualified workforce, but its rural location in the setting of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape means that the parish is fairly limited in its ability to identify land for employment uses. A notable feature of the parish is the number of small businesses and sole traders operating locally, many from their own homes. Approximately 32% of those in employment work from home (2021 census). There is an opportunity, therefore, to explore ways to provide more space for early-stage businesses and start-ups, shared working space and opportunities to enable further homeworking. This would also potentially help to reduce number of vehicles commuting out.

4.68. To achieve, it is necessary to encourage appropriate buildings that can be rented out at sufficiently low rents to attract their use by business start-ups and existing home workers. A potential source of such space in Much Wenlock Parish is vacant farm and rural buildings, where this can be achieved in a sustainable way without compromising the landscape or adding to highway issues or flood risk.

OBJECTIVE 3: REDUCING FLOOD RISK

The Plan will aim to secure ways of reducing existing flood risk and avoiding any increase in flood risk, while also reducing water pollution throughout the parish by:

- ✓ recognising the significance of the designation of Much Wenlock as within a Rapid Response Catchment subject to the Highest Category of flood risk.
- ✓ minimising the impacts of flooding within the town's conservation area, implicit in a worst-case flood scenario, by a catchment wide flood attenuation strategy.
- ✓ making a prior assessment, of any impact on flood risk, a key element in preparing for the implementation of each of the council's policies.
- ✓ restricting new development to locations least likely to increase flood risk.
- ✓ encouraging the development of nature-based solutions throughout the catchment to reduce runoff and to slow the flow of surface water.
- ✓ ~~keeping sufficient land that has the potential to be used to slow down the flow of surface water through engineering or natural means free from development that would prevent such use. keeping sites free from development if they have the potential to be used to slow down the flow of surface water through engineering or natural means.~~
- ✓ making sure that developments minimise the impact on water quality and subsequent health risks particularly during flooding conditions.
- ✓ protecting and improving local water quality.

Policy MW10: Flood prevention

Purpose

4.69. Much Wenlock and surrounds suffers from significant flooding. The two policies in the section seek to ensure that flood risk is minimised in Much Wenlock and that adequate drainage is in place.

POLICY MW10: FLOOD PREVENTION

- A. Development proposals must be designed to take full account of any existing flood risk, irrespective of the source of flooding. Where a site, or its immediate surroundings, has been identified to be at risk of flooding, all opportunities to reduce the identified risk should be investigated at the masterplanning stage of design. The identified mitigations should be subsequently incorporated at the detailed design stage, during construction, throughout the lifetime of the development and in respect of other parts of the catchment when compared to current use, to reduce the overall level of flood risk. Sites which can deliver flood mitigation and reduce runoff to the Town alongside securing wider benefits, including but not limited to, residential development/net gains in Biodiversity/formal areas of open space, should be supported.
- B. Existing watercourses (inclusive of all ditches and land drains) should remain open, and the land safeguarded for management of existing flood risk. Development will not be supported in existing or potential flood attenuation areas where development would reduce the ability

of these areas to alleviate flooding by employment of either engineering or natural solutions.

C. It is essential that the drainage scheme proposed to support new development:

- i. protects people and property on the development site from flooding; and
- ii. does not create any additional flood risk outside of the development in any part of the catchment, either upstream or downstream; and
- iii. the proposed scheme is future-proofed to take account of climate change projections.

D. For all developments, the following approach is supported:

- i. no development shall commence until full details of the proposed drainage schemes for surface and foul water (including details of their routing, design, and subsequent management and maintenance) have been submitted to and approved by the planning authority; and
- ii. no building shall be occupied until the drainage schemes have been implemented in accordance with the approved details; and
- iii. parking spaces and driveways associated with new development will be encouraged to have permeable surfaces.

E. For major development, appropriate flood warning and evacuation plans must be in place.

F. Infrastructure provision or improvements shall be provided on-site as an integral part of the development and off-site (for instance via a S106), at the cost of the developer.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 3; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS18; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD2; NPPF (2024): 161-164, 170-182

Policy MW11: Sustainable drainage design and management

POLICY MW11: SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

- A. Development proposals must demonstrate that the sewer network can accommodate the additional demand for sewerage disposal, both from the development itself and from permitted developments in the area where this can be accommodated within the sewer network, either in its existing form or through planned improvements to the system, in advance of the construction or occupation of the development.**
- B. In accordance with the NPPF, surface water drainage on any development must not add to the existing site run off or cause any adverse impact to neighbouring properties or the surrounding environment/wildlife habitat.**
- C. Development proposals creating new drainage requirements must demonstrate that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will be effective and incorporated in any proposed**

developments. This should allow for above surface water management on site taking account of the underlying geology and seasonally high ground water table affecting parts of the parish. The concept of SuDS trains, incorporating two or three different surface water management approaches is supported.

- D. Any drainage scheme must manage all sources of surface water, including exceedance flows and surface flows from offsite, provide for emergency ingress and egress and ensure adequate connectivity.
- E. Development proposals must be supported by a drainage scheme maintenance plan which demonstrates a schedule of activities, access points, outfalls and any biodiversity and archaeological considerations. The maintenance plan must also include an indication of the adopting or maintaining authority or organisation and may require inclusion within a register of drainage features.

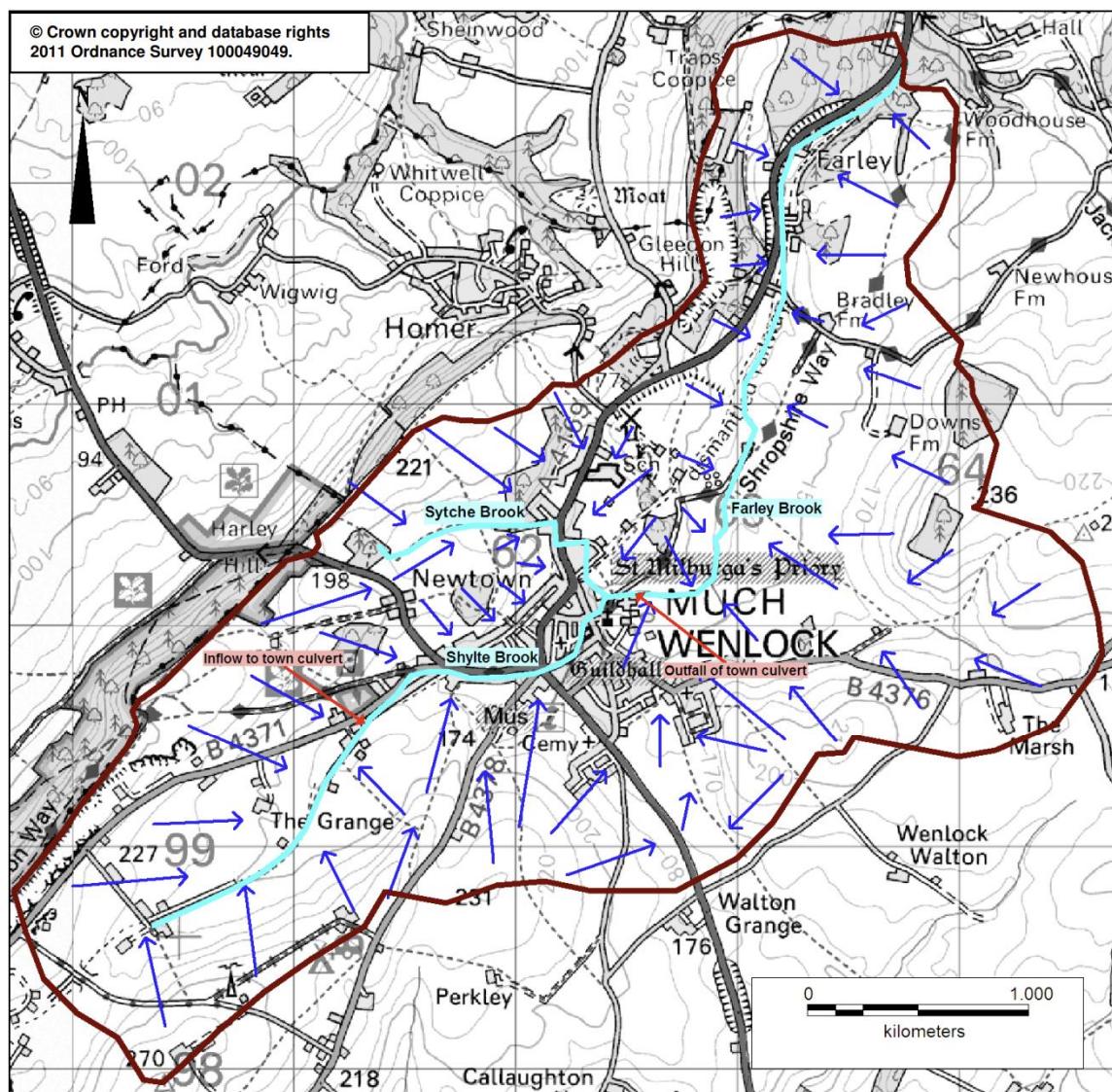
Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 3; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS16; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD11; NPPF (2024): 161-164, 170-182

Justification

- 4.70. The NPPF states that, when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should, *“...ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that: within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location; the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient; it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate; any residual risk can be safely managed; and safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.”*
- 4.71. Flooding is a significant local issue. Much Wenlock and the surrounding areas are highly susceptible to flooding. The town and surrounding settlements, are effectively situated within a ‘bowl’ in the landscape, surrounded by higher hills, from which water run-off has frequently had devastating effects.
- 4.72. The most common cause of flooding is persistent rainfall over many hours, sometimes in a season which has been quite wet. Water running off the steep slopes surrounding Much Wenlock travels rapidly into the bowl of the town, causing significant flooding. The duration and intensity of rain, hail and snow is worsening with climate change and the situation is exacerbated by the increased use of hard (impermeable) surfaces. The intense storm of June 2023, for instance, lasted no more than 30 minutes but caused terrifying flooding. It is predicted that climate change will make such floods more frequent and also more intense and long lasting, causing immense damage.
- 4.73. As a consequence, Much Wenlock is designated as a High Category Rapid Response Catchment by the Environment Agency - the only one in Shropshire – notably in relation to the Shylte Brook, which runs through the town (*Figure 10*). This means that after heavy rain or rapid snowmelt, the flow of water is so rapid that it’s not possible to prepare proper flood defences

or to give adequate warnings to residents. Risk to life, livelihood and property is therefore high. Extreme and fast flooding can occur with very little warning, and the depth and speed of flood water can increase quickly.

Figure 10: Main runoff paths (blue arrows), watercourses and whole catchment of the Much Wenlock and Farley (source: IUDMP, 2011)



4.74. Due to the frequency and severity of past flood events in Much Wenlock in 2010, SC commissioned an [Integrated Urban Drainage Management Plan](#) (IUDMP) to be prepared for the town, which explains the issues at hand. A combination of recommendations included the introduction of additional attenuation ponds and improved land practices, improved maintenance and increased number of gullies and changes to the drainage network in the Hunter's Gate area and additional attenuation ponds to avoid adverse effects downstream.

4.75. In November 2017, the Much Wenlock Flood Alleviation Scheme, which seeks to reduce flood risk to more than 140 properties, officially opened. The scheme has seen the construction of two ponds which catch and store water that could otherwise flood properties, businesses and

roads in the town. One pond is on the Sytche Brook to the north west of the town and the other is on the Shylte Brook to the south west. The ponds, which will usually be empty, fill during times of heavy rain. The collected water is then released in a controlled manner so that flood risk downstream is reduced. The ponds, which are now fully operational, will drain down sufficiently quickly so that repeat rainfall events can be stored in a similar manner. The scheme also includes the restoration of Westwood Quarry on Stretton Road. The Much Wenlock Flood Group, formed by a group of interested volunteers, has a vast knowledge of the Shylte Brook catchment and how it behaves, and will be a major part of work in the wider community regarding the flash flooding issue.

- 4.76. Despite the success of the scheme, flooding is still commonplace. The two most damaging recent floods both occurred during 2023. These floods had different origins. The first, in June 2023, arose following a sudden and relatively short period of geographically limited intense precipitation. While the attenuation ponds reduced the impact of the storm, properties in the High Street were badly flooded and traffic on the A458 was brought to a halt by the depth of the water. In October 2023 an even more extensive flood arose following a protracted period of persistent, though not intense, rainfall. Once again, it was properties in the High Street which were worst affected. Without the attenuation ponds, damage might have been even more serious. Those features were shown to be valuable though not sufficient.
- 4.77. The areas most badly affected by regular flooding lie at the heart of the Much Wenlock Conservation Area. Many of the homes are listed mediaeval buildings, central to the townscape. The Conservation Area forms an essential element in attracting visitors and its destruction would adversely affect the town's tourist economy. Changing weather patterns will only make matters worse and may require the existing IUDMP to be updated.
- 4.78. A careful analysis of the origins of the local flood risk was presented in February 2024 to the Town Council's Strategic Flood Advisory Group, at a meeting chaired by Philip Dunne MP. The findings were accepted as accurate by the representatives of the Environment Agency and SC. The nature of the landscape and geology play an important part as does the nature and distribution of existing development. While local action can aid marginally in reducing flooding, for example by regular drain clearance, the key to limiting future flooding lies in effective development management.
- 4.79. It is therefore considered critical that any new built development properly addresses the threat of flood risk and ensures, through good design, that it is capable of contributing towards the reduction of overall flood risk and can adapt the challenges posed by climate change. This would include the use of SuDS but also measures to retain water on site (both rain and grey water) to allow its reuse or subsequent release when peak flows diminish. Good design should incorporate such systems into new development.
- 4.80. The appropriate application of a Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) scheme to a specific development is heavily dependent upon the topography and geology of the specific site (and its surrounds). Careful consideration of the site characteristics must therefore be given to ensure the future sustainability of the adopted drainage system. Severn Trent Water notes that it is the responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for surface water drainage to

groundwater courses or surface water sewers. It must not be allowed to drain to the foul sewer, as this is the major contributor to sewer flooding.



Flooding at The Pound and Gaskell Arms Junction

4.81. Natural flood management and the use of SuDS: Incorporating biodiverse SuDS into new developments would assist in reducing the amount of rainwater running off into the combined sewage system. *Table 5* identifies additional natural solutions that should be considered:

Table 5: Natural drainage solutions

	<p>Planting additional trees and hedgerows in public green spaces and along verges. Soakaway crates can be installed beneath trees, which serve to capture excess water, slowing its movement until it soaks naturally into the earth or taken in by the tree. This chimes with the aspiration for a minimum 20% tree canopy across the area (Biodiversity policy). The Much Wenlock Tree Forum is heavily involved in supporting tree planting locally for this purpose.</p>
	<p>Small rain gardens along streets can be created to capture surface water before it enters the drain. The use of larger stone and cobbles can assist in removing sediment from the water.</p>

	<p>Diverting water courses in the higher hills to reduce flow speed and incorporating materials to naturally filter the water from materials that might otherwise enter the drainage network. This is an approach actively supported by the Severn Rivers Trust and can incorporate: installation of leaky dams to slow flow within the watercourses; development of wetland scrapes and similar features that can hold water during storm events and allow water to slowly seep out; reconnection of flood plain areas to the rivers to allow an increased area of land for temporary water storage; creation of woodland to increase absorption of rainfall; and development of a green finance model for nature based solutions to water resource management.</p>
	<p>The use of ponds as attenuation areas to capture surface water. Land in the surrounding area to the town could be actively safeguarded to act as attenuation areas. The Town Council will work with landowners and the Local Wildlife Trust to identify suitable locations.</p>
	<p>Parking spaces and driveways associated with new development should incorporate permeable surfaces. Existing residents will also be discouraged from contributing to increasing community flood risk by creating new hard or impermeable surfaces within their own properties.</p>

	<p>Supporting different ways of farming can encourage richer soils. This helps to preserve organic matter in the soil, which will help improve soil structure, water-holding capacity, and overall soil health. Soils with higher organic matter content can absorb and store more water, reducing the volume of water that runs off and contributes to flooding.</p>
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4.82. **Sewerage network capacity** – The current [Much Wenlock Place Plan](#) acknowledges the flooding problem immediately upstream of the main outfall sewer to the Wastewater Treatment. It is therefore recommended for SC to make any planning permission conditional upon the sewerage authority (Severn Trent Water) first taking any steps necessary to ensure that the public sewer will be able to cope with the increased load. This can be secured through the use of 'Grampian' style pre-commencement planning conditions. SC will then determine any details submitted pursuant to such conditions in accordance with any views expressed by Severn Trent Water. Such conditions would commonly be worded broadly as follows: '*No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied until works to improve the existing public foul sewerage network so that it is able to cope with the flows from the proposed development have been completed.*'

4.83. The use of Grampian-style pre-commencement planning conditions are considered to be particularly helpful in Much Wenlock, given the overall flooding issues, exacerbated by the combined sewer/drainage network. Their use by SC would therefore be welcomed. In order to inform the justification and application of such conditions, Much Wenlock Town Council will continue to work with Severn Trent Water and SC to review the capacity of the Sewage Treatment Works and assess whether applications, on an individual basis, require such a condition. This is not a policy matter but a non-policy action.

4.84. In parallel with the MWNP, it is imperative that the organisations responsible maintain drainage features, such as ditches, culverts and drains.

OBJECTIVE 4: TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

The Plan will support new ways of managing the traffic in and around the town of Much Wenlock and enabling active travel by:

- ✓ supporting plans to improve the infrastructure for local walking, cycling and equestrian transport, in line with the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhoods.
- ✓ making sure that new developments have enough associated off-street car parking to meet current and future needs.
- ✓ safeguarding existing off-street public car parking and support additional car parking to alleviate pressure in the town centre.
- ✓ supporting local and strategic traffic management proposals which reduce the number of HGV/LGV vehicles travelling through the parish in order to minimise their adverse impact.
- ✓ managing new developments so that they do not have an unacceptable traffic impact on local residents.
- ✓ ensuring that traffic impacts at pinchpoint junctions and stretches of road are minimised.

Policy MW12: Improving walking, cycling and equestrian opportunities

Purpose

4.85. This policy seeks to enhance opportunities for active modes of transport (notably walking and, where feasible, cycling, and equestrian) along routes which are most likely to encourage a shift away from the private car for short journeys in and around the parish.

POLICY MW12: IMPROVING WALKING, CYCLING AND EQUESTRIAN OPPORTUNITIES

- A. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should ensure safe pedestrian, and where possible cycle, access to link up with the existing footpath network, as defined in *Figure 12*, and the public transport network.
- B. The provision of new, or the enhancement of existing, cycle and pedestrian routes that are, where feasible, physically separated from vehicular traffic and from one another will be strongly supported. Such routes should be of permeable material and ensure that access by disabled users and users of mobility scooters is secured.
- C. Insofar as planning permission is required, the design and layout of works related to the widening of footpaths or the provision of traffic-calming measures should enhance the rural character of the town and retain and/or provide hedgerows, trees and soft verges wherever practicable. The materials used in such works should be sympathetic to local character, in accordance with Policy MW18.
- D. Proposals for new segregated bridleways will be supported wherever possible; in all new developments existing bridleways must be retained where they exist or, alternatively, new or amended bridleway links provided together with safe road crossing points that enable connectivity between the town and the wider countryside.
- E. Proposals should enable or promote the provision of community transport and car share schemes that provide accessible, affordable and responsive transport choice.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 4; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS7; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD8; NPPF (2024): 96, 105, 109, 110, 111, 115, 117, 135

Justification

4.86. The community has a high level of concern about the existing amount of traffic in the parish, notably into and through Much Wenlock town, where heavy congestion is experienced, particularly at peak times.

4.87. Many people rely on their car for a variety of reasons, for instance, they may have limited mobility, they may be transporting young children, carrying larger loads, or simply be short of time.

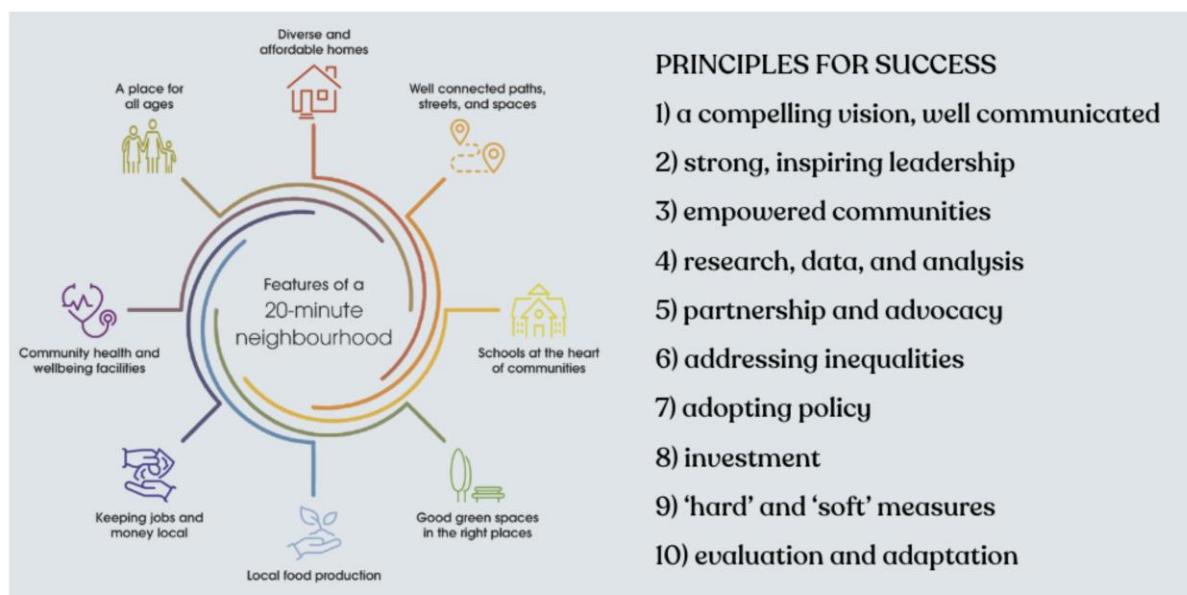
4.88. Whilst such journeys may be unavoidable, it is important that 'active travel' (i.e. walking and cycling) is enabled and encouraged, particularly for journeys within the Parish and to nearby settlements. Active travel – walking, cycling and recreational horse-riding - brings health benefits, both physical and mental, and can assist in reducing congestion and air pollution whilst freeing the roads for those who are less able to give up their cars for the reasons stated above.

4.89. Much Wenlock has no dedicated cycling routes, and the historic nature of the area will make it difficult to engineer the existing routes to create such routes. Nevertheless, there is scope to ensure that provision for cyclists is in place and this is considered in Policy M13 (Public parking provision). This includes provision for leisure cyclists that frequently visit and pass through the town.

Promoting Walking

4.90. There is greater scope when it comes to walking. An aspiration of the MWNP is to promote Much Wenlock as a 'walkable town'. This is a concept promoted by the [Town and Country Planning Association \(TCPA\)](#) whereby developments are encouraged to be no more than a 10 minute walk from key facilities (*Figure 11*).

Figure 11: Principles of the '20 minute' neighbourhood (i.e. 10 minutes each way) (source: TCPA)



- 4.91. The concept is not intended to stifle development, rather to emphasise the importance of enabling and improving connectivity by foot and by bike. New development proposals in the parish, which may be allocated in a future Local Plan for instance, should take account of the walkable town concept and provide the infrastructure to link new homes to existing facilities to encourage active travel.
- 4.92. *Figure 12* shows the areas that are walkable (one-way from home) within 10 minutes of the town centre, as a central point in the town. The concept could be applied to other community amenities and leisure facilities, for instance, that are not necessarily located in the town centre.
- 4.93. Policy MW12 does not directly comment on the 20-minute neighbourhood. It takes a more general approach in advising that development proposals should ensure safe pedestrian, and where possible cycle, access to link up with the existing footpath and cycleway network, and public transport network, as defined in *Figure 12*. Nevertheless, proposals which meet the 20 minutes neighbourhood concept will be particularly supported. This approach overlaps with that taken in Policy MW1, which focuses on new development within the Development Boundary. Plainly this approach will provide convenient access to the town centre and to the main amenities and attractions.
- 4.94. *Figure 12* also identifies how and where the walking network as a whole can be improved and better connected within the town. These improvements could form the basis for funding priorities for any developer contributions received and should be considered in partnership with Shropshire Council as the Highways Authority. The improvements are summarised in *Table 6*, where numbering corresponds to the map, which also prioritises them in order of urgency.

Figure 12: Walkable map (10 minutes each way) taking the town centre as the central point and key improvement points

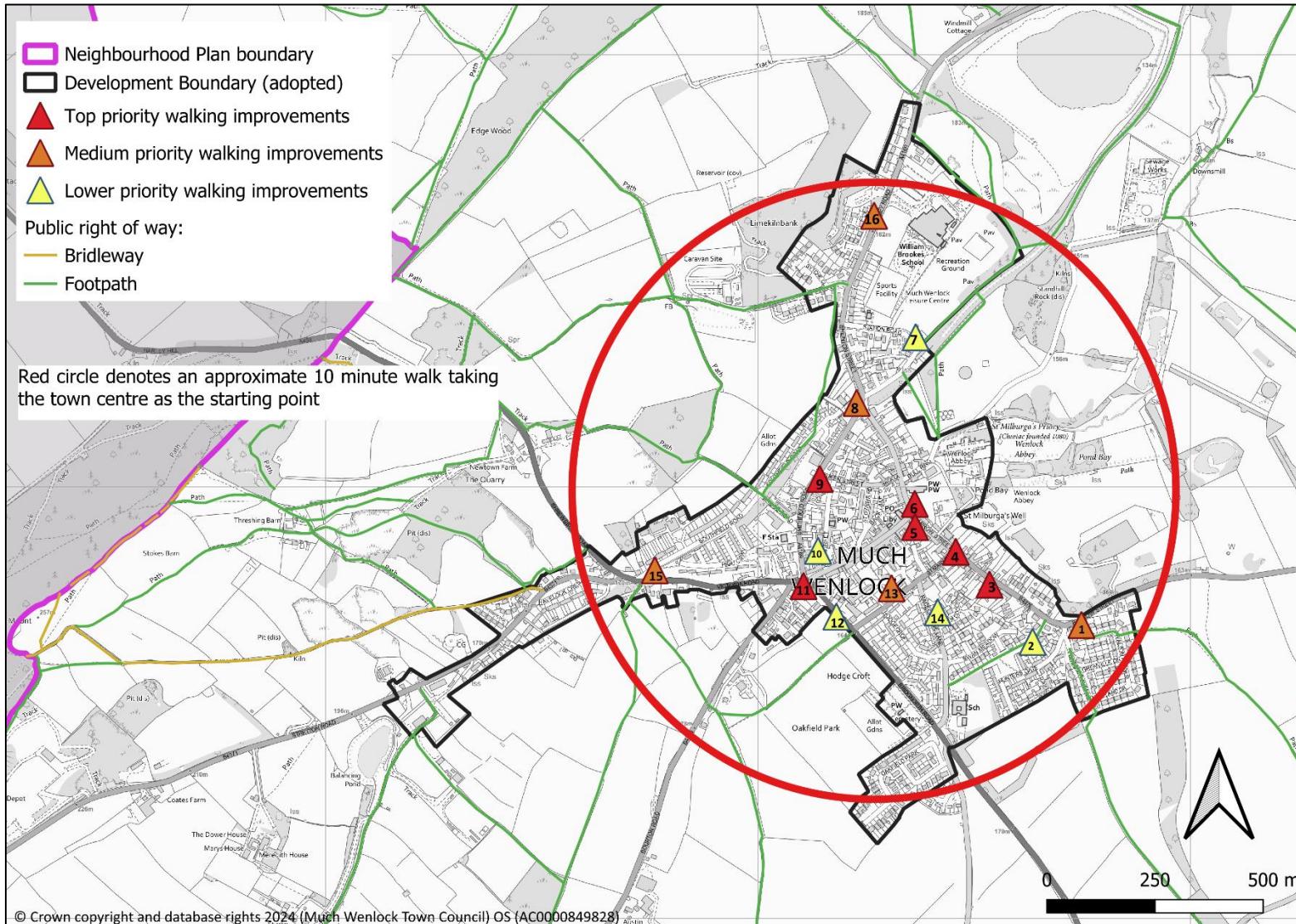


Table 6: Improvements to Much Wenlock's walking route network

	Location	Problem	Solution	Progress August 2023	PRIORITY LISTING
1.	Junction of Forester Avenue and Barrow St	Speed of traffic and poor visibility due to the bend, and in the summer vegetation growth can also obscure the view	Move 30 mph limit Cut back Vegetation	Undergrowth cut back	MEDIUM Priority
2.	Kissing Gates on Hunters Gate	Difficult for mobility scooter and buggies	<i>Open double gate for users, consider design in future</i>		LOW Priority
3.	Barrow Street	Pinch points on both sides of the road forcing people to use the road. Uneven surfaces prevent some people walking	<i>Consider design of road to create traffic calming e.g. chicanes located at pinch points to enable pavements to be widened</i>	<i>None</i>	TOP Priority
4.	Raven Junction – Barrow St / St Mary's Lane	Uneven and steep dropped kerbs. Cars and buses mount the kerb adding to the danger to pedestrians.	<i>Improvements to alignment of dropped kerbs as need to change angle of approach if on a mobility scooter.</i>	<i>None</i>	TOP Priority
5.	High St Junction and The Square	Limited dropped kerb crossing points often obliterated by parked cars	<i>Create raised table at junction, slowing traffic making it more a shared space and discouraging through traffic</i>	<i>None</i>	TOP Priority
6.	Wilmore St and Sheinton Street	Narrow pavement – pedestrians forced onto road	<i>As above</i>	<i>None</i>	TOP Priority
7.	Station Road	Uneven pavement surface	<i>Maintenance required</i>	<i>None</i>	LOW priority
8.	Smithfield Road (A4169)	Pavement switches sides with limited safe crossing places for school children or other vulnerable	<i>Install pedestrian refuges, carry out safety audit</i>	<i>None</i>	MEDIUM priority

	Location	Problem	Solution	Progress August 2023	PRIORITY LISTING
		pedestrians/scooter users.			
9.	Mardol Terrace (A4169)	Pavement tarmac is cracked No pavement from bus terminal Queen Street to Mardol Terrace	<i>Maintenance required carry out a safety audit.</i>	None	TOP Priority
10.	King St	No pavements to or from the Health Centre forcing disabled, vulnerable or people with small children to walk in the road.	<i>Consider road markings to demark safer pedestrian way</i>	None	LOW Priority
11.	Gaskell <u>Arms</u> <u>Junction</u>	No safe pedestrian access to the bus stop or across Victoria Rd.	<i>Further consideration to be given to improving pedestrian/cycle crossings at the Gaskell Arms Junction. Improve safety for pedestrians</i>	None	TOP Priority
12.	Bridgnorth Road	Very narrow and uneven footpath on the cemetery side. At the safer crossing further down the hill you have to scramble up the bank on the garage side to reach the pavement.	<i>Improve surface of pavements.</i>	<i>Safe crossing at Oakfield Park proposed</i>	LOW Priority
13.	St Mary's Road	Poor pavement surfaces for mobility scooter users, an impassable step where the driveway from Falcons Court meets the road. Few dropped kerbs.	<i>Improve pavement surface and access</i>	None	MEDIUM Priority
14.	Racecourse Lane	Overgrown hedges	<i>Cut back</i>	<i>Needs monitoring all the time.</i>	LOW Priority

	Location	Problem	Solution	Progress August 2023	PRIORITY LISTING
15	Victoria Road / Shrewsbury Road A458	The pedestrian crossing from the walkway to the old petrol station on Victoria Road has often been damaged by vehicles in the past.	<i>Needs more safety measures</i>	<i>The Keep Left signs have been renewed.</i>	MEDIUM Priority
16.	A4169 outside Lady Forester	There is no pedestrian refuge. Vulnerable residents and visitors to the care home find it difficult to cross the road	<i>Install pedestrian refuge outside care home and implement 20mph zone outside school</i>	<i>None</i>	MEDIUM Priority

4.95. The only accessible recreational footpath in the area is around the Linden Field. A second heritage trail could be developed by continuing this path from the Linden Field and along the disused railway line. Currently the railway line is only accessible to confident walkers, due to mud and tree roots etc. but a heritage walk with an accessible surface could include information boards on the history of the area. This route leads to the road to the Cavalier Centre, which provides horse-riding for the disabled.

4.96. In terms of access beyond the town itself, most recreational walks start in Much Wenlock and use the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network. Given Much Wenlock's topography, current PRoWs demand a high level of mobility to clamber up and down steep banks.

4.97. The local settlements of Bourton, Homer, Farley, Callaughton etc. have no pavements. Roads in these areas are narrow, and speed limits range from 30mph to 50mph and 60mph. This can be confusing and is not conducive to walking or cycling. Users of these recreational routes using PRoW are, at times, required to use sections of these roads, creating hazards for walkers. The worst spots are as follows:

- The top of Harley Bank on the A458
- Bourton Road (B4378) Perkley route by Bourton Westwood Farm.
- Merrywell Lane, part of a popular circular walk round the town. This increasingly busy route is an HGV and bus route and has two-way traffic on a single carriageway with passing spaces.
- The Broseley Road from the town boundary to Bellhole Cottage (a fast road with no pavement and poor visibility in places).
- The road to Homer Road from Much Wenlock, which is used by William Brookes School students, but is steep, dark, fast and narrow with no pavements.

4.98. To create better connectivity to and between settlements and to other walking routes, there are a number of 'missing links' in the PRoW network as follows:

- a connecting safe footpath is needed to link the two PRoWs at the top of Harley Bank on A458. This could be achieved by acquiring the 2-metre strip of land adjacent to highway for a distance of approximately 100 metres.

- designate an informal footpath from Edge Wood to Homer Road at Hillcrest as a PRoW to help address safety concerns of people walking on Homer Road.
- formally divert the PRoW through Farley Quarry from Sheinton Road to Severn Springs Farm, which has been closed by the landowner, and reroute using a path along Gleedon Hill on the west of the quarry.
- address the closure of the PRoW through Lea Quarry, which has been shut by the landowner and provide a new link to the east of the quarry as previously discussed which would benefit the local caravan site users.

Public Transport in Much Wenlock

4.99. In addition to the proposals set out above, there is a general desire locally to improve access to, frequency and reliability of public transport in the parish, in particular buses. The Community Surveys revealed that the community have concerns about the frequency of buses, particularly in the evenings and at weekends.

4.100. Whilst such improvements sit outside the scope of the neighbourhood plan itself, they are noted within the Non-Policy Actions section as activities for the Town Council and wider community to pursue with private operators and the highways authority.

4.101. In parallel to improving the active travel network, there are a series of factors that may help to improve the environment for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. Many are beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan but are considered in Section 7 (Non-Policy Actions). They include:

- Using design to slow-down traffic – for example through the introduction of tighter bends into side-roads, as opposed to wide openings; the creative use of planters to narrow lanes; use of modal filters, which allow the passage of some modes of transport but not others. The [Much Wenlock Design Codes and Guidance](#) addresses some of these points.
- Introducing slower speed limits in part or all of the town.
- In order to enhance the attractive heritage / conservation centre of Much Wenlock, a shared vehicle/pedestrian/cyclist space could be created in the High Street / The Square/ Barrow Street / Wilmore Street to reduce vehicle speeds and rat running thereby enhancing the safety of all users.
- Redirecting HGVs away from rural lanes – a dialogue with Shropshire Council and National Highways would help to consider ways to re-route vehicles, for instance by altering SatNav guidance provided to private companies.
- Working with Shropshire Council Highways and private operators to improve public transport provision in the parish, in terms of routes served, timings and punctuality.

Policy MW13: Publicly accessible parking

Purpose

4.102. The policy seeks to safeguard existing public car parking and support new parking in areas where parking is a challenge.

POLICY MW13: PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE PARKING

- A. Development proposals that would result in the loss of existing publicly available off-street car parking spaces will not be supported.**
- B. Proposals that enable the provision of additional, publicly accessible off-road car parking spaces will be supported subject to the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan. In particular proposals which:**
 - i. provide parking that is accessible (by foot) to the High Street; and**
 - ii. provision of parking spaces which are landscaped, ideally with native species, to minimise the visual impact of parked vehicles. They must also not exacerbate or cause additional surface-water runoff.**
- C. At existing locations and alongside any new public car parking provision, the following facilities will be strongly supported to be provided as part of that provision:**
 - i. dedicated covered and secure bicycle parking facilities, preferably with e-bike charging points; and**
 - ii. future-proofed four hour or faster electric vehicle charging points (or wireless charging facilities).**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 3; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS7; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD8; NPPF (2024): 109, 110, 112, 117

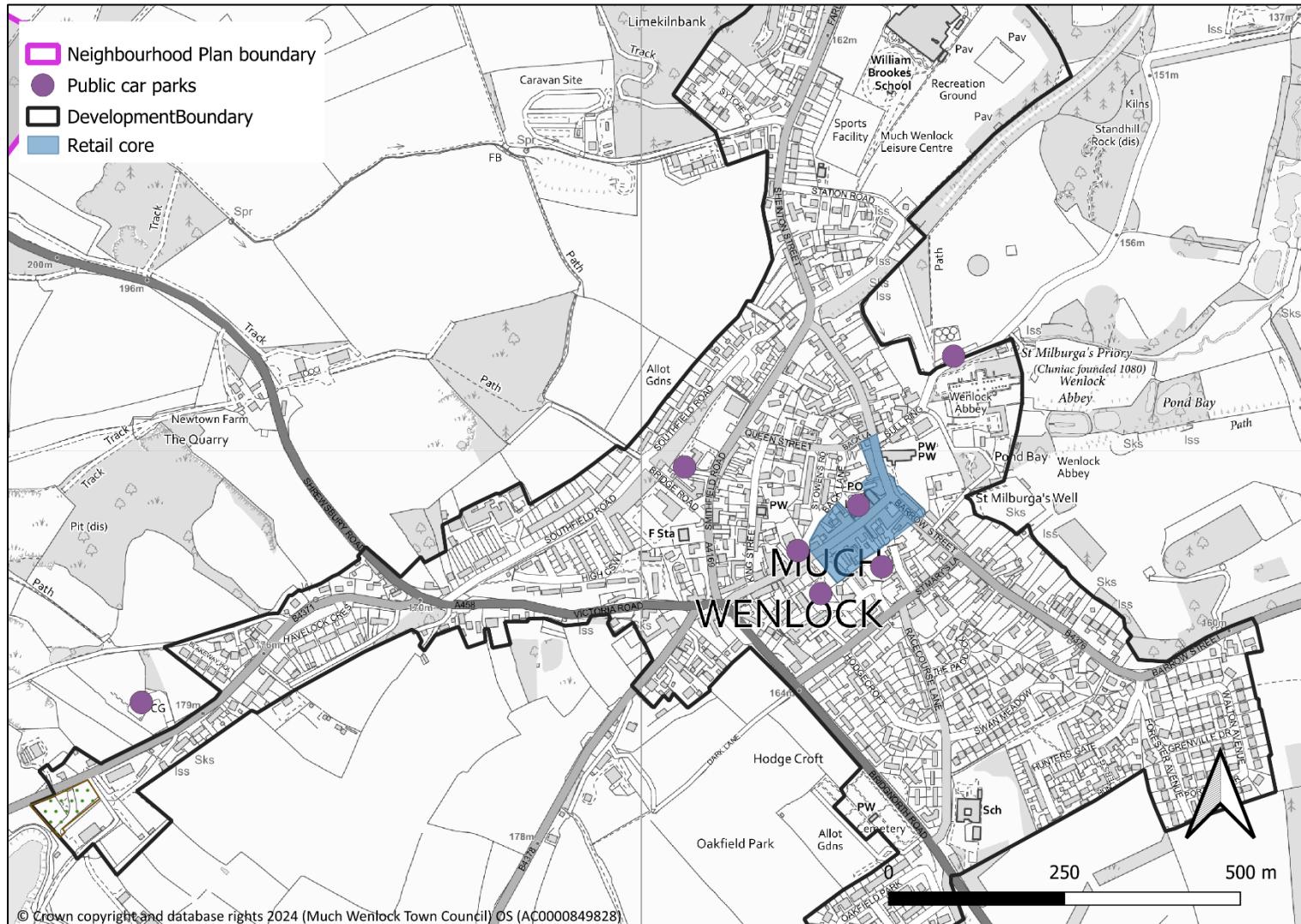
Justification

4.103. Whilst the MWNP promotes active travel (walking, cycling and equestrian), the rural location of Much Wenlock, combined with a lack of railway station and limited public transport provision, means that many residents are heavily car reliant. In addition, visitors to the town generally arrive by car, often as part of a larger journey.

4.104. There are only a few fully public car parks within the town itself (*Figure 13*), in addition to some on-street parking along the High Street. Feedback from the community and local businesses revealed a desire to safeguard existing parking and, where possible, expand on this. All public car parking should be clearly signposted to aid visitors to the area.

4.105. The provision of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points across the parish will be supported as will secure, covered cycle parking.

Figure 13: Public car parks in the town



Policy MW14: Mitigating vehicular impacts at junctions and pinchpoints

Purpose

4.106. This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals fully assess both their potential impact and their cumulative impact on the key roads and junctions in the parish that already experience congestion problems and actively seek ways to mitigate this.

POLICY MW14: MITIGATING VEHICULAR IMPACTS AT JUNCTIONS AND PINCHPOINTS

- A. Development which provides new transport infrastructure or improves existing transport infrastructure should be supported and designed to maximise use by pedestrians, those with mobility impairments and cyclists.**
- B. Development proposals should ensure that they have no unacceptable direct or cumulative impact on the following junctions:**
 - i. Sytche Close and the A4169 Farley Road
 - ii. Sheinton Street junction with the A4169
 - iii. B4371 with the A458 and Southfield Road
 - iv. A458 with the A4169, the B4378 and the High Street (known as Gaskell Arms junction)
 - v. A458 Bridgnorth Road and St Mary's Road
 - vi. A458 Bridgnorth Road and Racecourse Lane
 - vii. A458 Bridgnorth Road and Callaughton Lane
 - viii. Barrow Street and the High Street
 - ix. Barrow Street and St Mary's Lane
- C. Development proposals should be accompanied by Transport Assessments (for larger sites) or Transport Statements (for smaller sites) ('larger' and smaller' site size defined in the NPPF) and address the direct and cumulative transport impact on road junctions.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 3; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS7; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD8; NPPF (2024): 96, 109, 110, 111, 115, 116, 117, 118

Justification

4.107. The town has a number of roads and junctions that experience regular congestion, particularly at peak periods. This not only delays journeys but increases emissions and associated air pollution. A particular issue is the large volumes of traffic, including heavy goods vehicles that travel through the Gaskell Corner Arms junction leading to drivers choosing to rat-run through the Town to avoid the junction.

4.108. Approved major residential developments including in Ironbridge, Bridgnorth, Cressage and Shrewsbury will generate considerable additional traffic through the Gaskell Arms Corner junction and this, in turn, will potentially increase the volume of rat-running through the town itself.

OBJECTIVE 5: COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

The Plan will protect existing community facilities and services considered important for a vibrant community and support the development of new ones which benefit local people and visitors by encouraging:

- ✓ creating new facilities for families, the elderly and young people.
- ✓ supporting developments or uses associated with a positive visitor experience.
- ✓ protecting existing community buildings and services.
- ✓ providing new public toilet provision to cater for local and visitor needs.

Policy MW15: Improving opportunities for community and cultural facilities, sport and recreation

Purpose

4.109. This policy seeks to ensure that those living in and moving to the parish are adequately served with a range of good quality facilities and activities and that there are opportunities for residents to shape this.

POLICY MW15: IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES, SPORT AND RECREATION

A. Development proposals for new community, recreational, cultural and leisure facilities, or the improvement of existing facilities - in particular to serve the identified needs of the community as set out in this neighbourhood plan and in the Much Wenlock Place Plan - will be supported where:

- i. the proposal contributes to the setting of the National Landscape; and
- ii. the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents and the local environment; and
- iii. the proposal would not have significant adverse impacts upon the local road network; and
- iv. the proposal would not have harmful impacts on the heritage aspects, including the setting, of the facility; and
- v. the proposal does not contribute to or exacerbate flood risk.

Applicants are encouraged to engage with the community at the earliest opportunity to determine need.

B. The provision of new and upgraded play areas to serve the needs of children of all ages, in accordance with Shropshire Council's Local Plan/Open Space Study standards will be supported. Where possible, these should incorporate areas for 'natural play' (defined as play provision with natural environments as opposed to 'man-made' ones).

C. Proposals that would result in the loss of community, leisure and recreational facilities will only be supported if either the facility is surplus to requirements and there is no longer a proven need for such a facility or alternative and equivalent facilities are proposed which demonstrate by comparison to the existing facility that:

- i. the replacement will be of at least an equivalent scale, specification and located in an accessible location to the community to be served;
- ii. the reprovisioning of these facilities will incorporate adequate safeguards for delivery; and
- iii. satisfy all other relevant policy expectations of this neighbourhood plan.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 5; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS8, CS9; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD8; NPPF (2024): 96, 98, 101, 103, 104

Justification

4.110. Considering its size, Much Wenlock is well served for community facilities. The parish has traditionally had an active voluntary sector, and the community is keen that this continues. Providing good quality facilities will serve to encourage and sustain the voluntary sector.

4.111. Nevertheless, Much Wenlock's leisure and cultural facilities serve an area and population far greater and wider than the town itself and this needs to be considered in relation to the safeguarding of existing facilities and notably the provision of new or enhanced ones. This will contribute positively to physical and mental wellbeing and commercial viability within the town and surrounding areas.

4.112. The NPPF provides a clear framework for the promotion, retention and development of local services and community facilities in towns, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. The Core Strategy also includes policies to protect and enhance existing facilities and resist any inappropriate loss. In the Neighbourhood Plan area, there is a thriving community with education, health, social and leisure facilities which contribute greatly to the local quality of life.

4.113. A review of existing provision and future need by facility is provided in *Table 7*, drawing on local feedback and the Much Wenlock Place Plan, which is updated regularly.

Table 7: Audit of local facilities

Map ref.	Local Facility	Commentary
1	Much Wenlock Primary School	<p>The school has a net capacity of 168 pupils with an approved annual admission of 24 pupils.</p> <p>Football: One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch that has spare capacity discounted due to insecure tenure. Pitch is used by Wenlock Warriors FC. Action: Improve grass pitch quality through an enhanced maintenance regime</p> <p>Examining securing tenure for community users through a CUA.</p>
2	William Brookes School Incorporating the Leisure Centre which is not available for public use during school hours, some evenings and public holidays.	<p>The school has a net capacity of 948 students with an approved annual admission of 162.</p> <p>Provides a swimming pool, fitness suite and sports hall.</p>

		<p>“The Edge”; Adaptable and modern performance hall, used by the school and public, hosting many cultural and entertainment events.</p> <p>Football: One youth 9v9 pitch that has spare capacity discounted due to poor quality. Action: Improve pitch quality through an enhanced maintenance regime.</p> <p>Hockey: One standard quality full size, all-weather pitch which is not floodlit. Pitch was created in 2010. Action: Monitor pitch quality based on surface age and resurface as a hockey suitable surface when deemed necessary. Encourage use by public. Explore the feasibility of installing floodlights.</p> <p>Tennis/ Netball: Four good quality macadam courts which are floodlit. Action: Sustain court quality through appropriate levels of maintenance and seek to increase community use.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised about the possible closure of the Leisure Centre and this should be resisted.</p>
4	Much Wenlock Medical Practice	Located in King Street.
5	Much Wenlock Parish Church of the Holy Trinity	The first church on this site was Anglo-Saxon, built probably about AD680. The present church dates from AD 1100. It is open for visitors during the day.
6	Holy Trinity Church, Bourton	A small but active congregation, which has recently spent much time and effort in refurbishing the interior.
7	Much Wenlock Methodist Church	The Church has a small but active congregation. A meeting room is available to hire for £10 an hour.
8	Gaskell Recreation Ground	<p>Large, well maintained recreation area on the northern edge of the town, with good access providing a popular community space.</p> <p>Managed by a charitable trust.</p> <p>Used by several sports clubs and also William Brookes School.</p> <p>Football: large pitch that hosts Wenlock Warriors and occasional senior teams.</p> <p>Recently drained and supported by continual pitch improvements.</p> <p>Cricket: One good quality square with seven grass wickets and an NTP. Sustain square and outfield quality through appropriate levels of maintenance.</p> <p>Bowls: One standard quality bowling green rented by Much Wenlock Bowls Club. Explore opportunities to make</p>

		<p>continual improvements in order to sustain membership levels.</p> <p>Playground: Opportunities to improve the existing range of play equipment, including to meet the needs of those with disabilities should be sought. Additional undercover seating is supported.</p> <p>Continual demand for provision of public convenience and baby changing facilities.</p> <p>Identified as a town priority.</p>
9	Much Wenlock Guildhall	<p>Grade II* listed building dating from 1540 the Guildhall hosts meetings upstairs. A regular market takes place in the ground floor space.</p> <p>Plans are in development to refurbish the hall and bring it up to contemporary standards of comfort and accessibility. There may be scope for it to be utilised more fully as a public space for meetings and events and also for occasions such as weddings and other celebrations.</p> <p>This is an asset with the highest level of community value. Priority to keep the Guildhall open and accessible to the public. Potential to weather-proof the ground floor.</p>
10	Much Wenlock Museum	<p>Housed in the Memorial Hall. Run by Shropshire Council, it is a priority to establish a long-term commitment to keep the museum properly resourced and open to the public.</p>
11	Much Wenlock Allotments	<p>Located on Bridgnorth Road, behind Much Wenlock Cemetery and off Southfield Road.</p> <p>Allotment space located by the cemetery is only temporary and subject to cemetery expansion. Explore availability of permanent allotment area.</p> <p>The Southfield Road Allotments are not all “taken” and there is no waiting list for them. However, some are steep and parking/access is very restricted.</p>
12	Town Cemetery	<p>Owned and run by Much Wenlock Town Council, is close to capacity and more land (currently allotments) will be required in the next few years.</p>
13	Public toilets	<p>These are owned and run by Much Wenlock Town Council and are available in two locations: St Mary's Lane; modern, accessible and recently updated. Fees charged.</p>

		Queen Street; functional, but dated. Access is limited. No fees charged. Town Council aspires to upgrade this facility. Public demand for provision of toilets on Gaskell Recreation Ground (see above).
14	The Corn Exchange	Grade II listed building and the Town Council's office and archive room. Mary Webb meeting room which can host up to eight participants.
15	Public Library	Run by Shropshire Council Library Services, funded by Much Wenlock Town Council. Priority to retain an essential community asset.
16	Scout Hut	Formerly a youth club, now home to Much Wenlock Scouts. Owned by Shropshire Council; the building and associated grass area should be retained as a community asset.
17	Public houses	There are a number of public houses in the parish, although some have closed over the last few years and The Raven has recently been sold.
18	Old Chapel	Feasibility Plan to establish sustainable future use. Identify as a Community Asset.
19	Priory Hall	Scope to upgrade facilities for those hard of hearing.
20	Pinefields Community Centre on the High Causeway	This is used by a number of groups for meetings and other activities.
21	Edge Arts Centre	A much-valued venue in the town.

4.114. Additional activities and facilities called for in the public engagement included:

- Facilities for youths/ young people: e.g. skate park, youth club/space
- Fitness trail along the former railway line
- A gym
- Undercover seating in the Gaskell play area
- Upgrade to the children's park

4.115. Notwithstanding Core Strategy policies, over the last decade, the town has seen the loss of a number of services and facilities, including the British Legion Hall, the Roman Catholic church and two banks. The community is concerned that there should be no further loss of facilities, in particular, health services, the Post Office and library, and there is strong support for the Neighbourhood Plan to seek the improvement and retention of these vital community assets in the interests of community wellbeing and sustainability.

4.116. Before granting planning permission for a change of use or redevelopment which would result in the loss of any of these facilities, therefore, Policy MW15 requires compelling evidence that the facility is both no longer needed by the local community and is no longer commercially viable in line with the guidance attached at Appendix A.

4.117. Much Wenlock itself also serves as a centre for a much wider rural catchment area and its facilities are of value to residents living well outside the parish boundaries. Through the safeguarding of local community facilities and services and the provision of new services the Plan aims to strengthen Much Wenlock's role as a Key Settlement in line with Shropshire policy.

Policy MW16: Protection of public houses

Purpose

4.118. This policy seeks to safeguard public houses from change of use. There are limited such facilities remaining in the parish. Planning applications to change the use of public houses will only be supported if they can no longer remain viable. Proposals to expand their use will be supported if it is to provide a similar community resource (e.g. restaurant).

POLICY MW16: PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HOUSES

- A. Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals for the expansion of existing public houses in the neighbourhood area to develop appropriate community-based activities, such as a restaurant will be supported, subject to complying with other policies within the plan and provided the scale, design and materials are in keeping with the local character and reinforce the local distinctiveness of the surroundings and not having a detrimental impact on residential amenity.**
- B. Development proposals to change the use of public houses (Use Class sui generis) will only be supported if such a use is demonstrably unviable.**
- C. Development proposals which would result in the loss of a commercial use or facility will only be supported where the use is no longer viable and appropriate efforts have been made to secure an alternative commercial facility.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 5; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS8, CS9; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD8; NPPF (2024): 88, 96, 98

Justification

4.119. Public houses have a significant positive impact, creating more community cohesion in rural areas, as recognised in the NPPF.). There are a number of public houses in the parish, including in the town itself and also the Wenlock Inn on the western boundary.

4.120. Recent years, however, have seen changes in the provision of public houses in the parish and others remain under threat of conversion.

4.121. Where a development proposal would result in the loss of a commercial use or facility such as a public house or local convenience shop, the application should be supported by a viability report, prepared by a relevant professional, including financial accounts and marketing information, illustrating that efforts to promote, improve, and market the facility/property, for sale or rent (for a minimum period of 18 months), at a reasonable value which reflects the existing use and condition of the building (a minimum of two independent valuations of the building will normally be required) have not been successful, and the use is no longer viable. For public houses, the [CAMRA Public House Viability Test](#), or a similar objective evaluation method, is recommended to be employed to assess the viability of the business and the outcomes show that the public house is no longer economically viable.

Policy MW17: Provision of accessible public toilet facilities

Purpose

4.122. The policy supports the provision of adequate publicly accessible toilets to serve the town.

POLICY MW17: PROVISION OF ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TOILET FACILITIES

Proposals which deliver a publicly accessible toilet facility and, where possible, a Changing Places facility, will be strongly supported. These should be designed in a way to reduce vandalism.

Conformity Reference: NP Objectives: 5; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS8, CS9; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD8; NPPF (2024): 88, 96, 98

Justification

4.123. The need for accessible toilet facilities available for use by the public, which could ideally include a Changing Places facility, has been raised by residents, businesses and visitors to the area as a priority.

4.124. Current public toilet provision within Much Wenlock is considered inadequate and limited to facilities in St Mary's Road Car Park and at Queen Street. Provision at the Gaskell Recreation Ground was closed some years ago and many residents, via the community survey, have called for them to be reinstated. Locations identified as potentially useful for toilet provision include on the side of the town near the Linden Field or Bull Ring, or on the Stretton Road. Signage to public toilets should be in place.

4.125. A public toilet scheme, whereby local shops, restaurants and other facilities enable use of their facilities could be considered by the Town Council in partnership with local businesses, and where an existing community facility or business is able to provide an accessible public toilet facility (see Appendix B for definition of accessible toilets), this would be supported.

4.126. The design of such facilities should seek to minimise vandalism. It would be helpful to consider advice on this subject, for instance [Designing Out Crime](#) and [Secured by Design](#).

OBJECTIVE 6: GOOD QUALITY DESIGN, LOCAL CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

All future development will be well designed with the aim of:

- ✓ respecting the scale, style and setting of the historic townscapes of Much Wenlock (in particular the unique characteristics of the 'bowl' setting) and Bourton.
- ✓ making sure that in Much Wenlock and Bourton, the use of building materials is in keeping with those used in their respective Conservation Areas. Elsewhere, new developments should use materials which respect their setting and rural environment.
- ✓ ensuring that any development or change be of the highest quality design.
- ✓ ensuring that new developments will include gardens of an appropriate scale to the property.

Policy MW18: Character and design of development

Purpose

4.127. Good quality housing design can improve social wellbeing and the quality of life by improving the built environment, reducing crime, improving public health, easing transport problems and providing supportive neighbourhoods. The policy seeks to encourage development proposals within Much Wenlock parish to comply with the highest design standards, support the principles set out for the Shropshire Hills National Landscape the locally specific Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines (Appendix C) prepared for the parish. Note that the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines form part of formal policy for the MWNP.

4.128. The policy and its supporting text add greater detail to the Local Plan policies.

POLICY MW18: CHARACTER AND DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT

- A. Development proposals should incorporate a high quality of design, which responds and integrates well with its surroundings, meets the changing needs of residents and minimises the impact on the natural environment of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape and its setting. The scale, character, and siting of the proposal should respect the landscape and its features, valued views into and out of the settlement, the local streetscape and heritage assets. It should reflect the variety of architectural styles found locally, using materials that are in keeping with those used in existing buildings in the immediate locality. Innovation in design will be supported where this demonstrably enhances the quality of the built form in a local character area.
- B. Where relevant, development proposals should demonstrate how they have sought to address the following matters as they are appropriate to their scale, nature and location:
 - i. conform to the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines, the Shropshire Design Guide, the Shropshire Hills Design Guidance and the Much Wenlock and Bourton Conservation Area Appraisals;
 - ii. make a positive contribution to the visual appearance of the main highway approaches into Much Wenlock town (A4169, B4376, A458, B4371, B4378). Improvements and enhancements should include, where appropriate, additional tree planting, the

<p>enhancement of roadside green spaces (for instance through planting), the reduction/consolidation of road signs and other street furniture and wider green infrastructure improvements that are identified as being necessary;</p> <p>iii. incorporate soft landscaping and other boundary treatments including the retention and enhancement of established trees and hedgerows, or the replacement of these if not possible;</p> <p>iv. provide adequate vehicular access and space for cycle parking and vehicular off-road parking for residents, visitors and service vehicles, in accordance with Shropshire standards;</p> <p>v. respect and protect the buildings and environment of the Conservation Areas, listed buildings and the other heritage assets (including non-designated assets) of the parish;</p> <p>vi. ensure that there is no unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring uses through the loss of privacy loss of light or visual intrusion on the views and surroundings that create the backdrop to an area;</p> <p>vii. ensure that traffic generation and parking does not adversely affect vehicular and pedestrian safety;</p> <p>viii. provide off-road and off-footway bin storage areas for new and subdivided houses, facilitated by ensuring that access to any 'shut'/external passageways is retained when a dwelling is subdivided.</p> <p>C. Where development sites abut open countryside, development on the rural boundary edge should mitigate any detrimental visual impacts on the countryside. This should be achieved through the siting of lower density development at the rural boundary of the site in order to provide a gradual transition from the built form to open countryside, or by other means such as through a layout that clearly minimises the visual impact of any larger buildings on both the open countryside and existing town-scape.</p>
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Conformity references: NP objectives: 6; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS6, CS17; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD12, MD13; NPPF (2024): 96, 109, 131-141

Justification

4.129. Past generations of people and development have created the features that give Much Wenlock its identity today. This process has been gradual, taking place over many centuries, and the settlement that exists today has a distinctiveness that derives from variety. The town and wider parish contain heritage assets of all kinds, including isolated farmsteads, characterful buildings, historic landmarks and archaeological features, both exposed and still beneath the ground.

4.130. The importance of good design has received renewed attention over recent years. In October 2019, a [National Design Guide](#) was launched, forming part of the Government's collection of Planning Practice Guidance. The document sets out the ten characteristics necessary for creating a well-designed place, contributing to its physical character, a sense of community and

addressing environmental issues affecting climate. The [National Model Design Guide](#) expands on the ten characteristics and was used in the creation of the Much Wenlock Design Guidance and Codes.

4.131. Furthermore, the guide [Building for a Healthy Life 2020](#) is the Government-endorsed industry standard for the design of new housing developments. It is a tool for assessing the design quality of homes and neighbourhoods. The criteria also link to other standards for housing design, including [Secured by Design](#). It should be used to inform development proposals along with other policies contained within this plan to achieve the industry standard's 'Building for a Healthy Life' commendation.

4.132. It is important that development is designed from a landscape-led perspective and the [Shropshire Hills Management Plan](#) provides overarching advice on how this can be achieved. The [Shropshire Hills Agricultural Building Design Guide](#) provides a comprehensive set of advice, specific to the continued use of farm buildings.

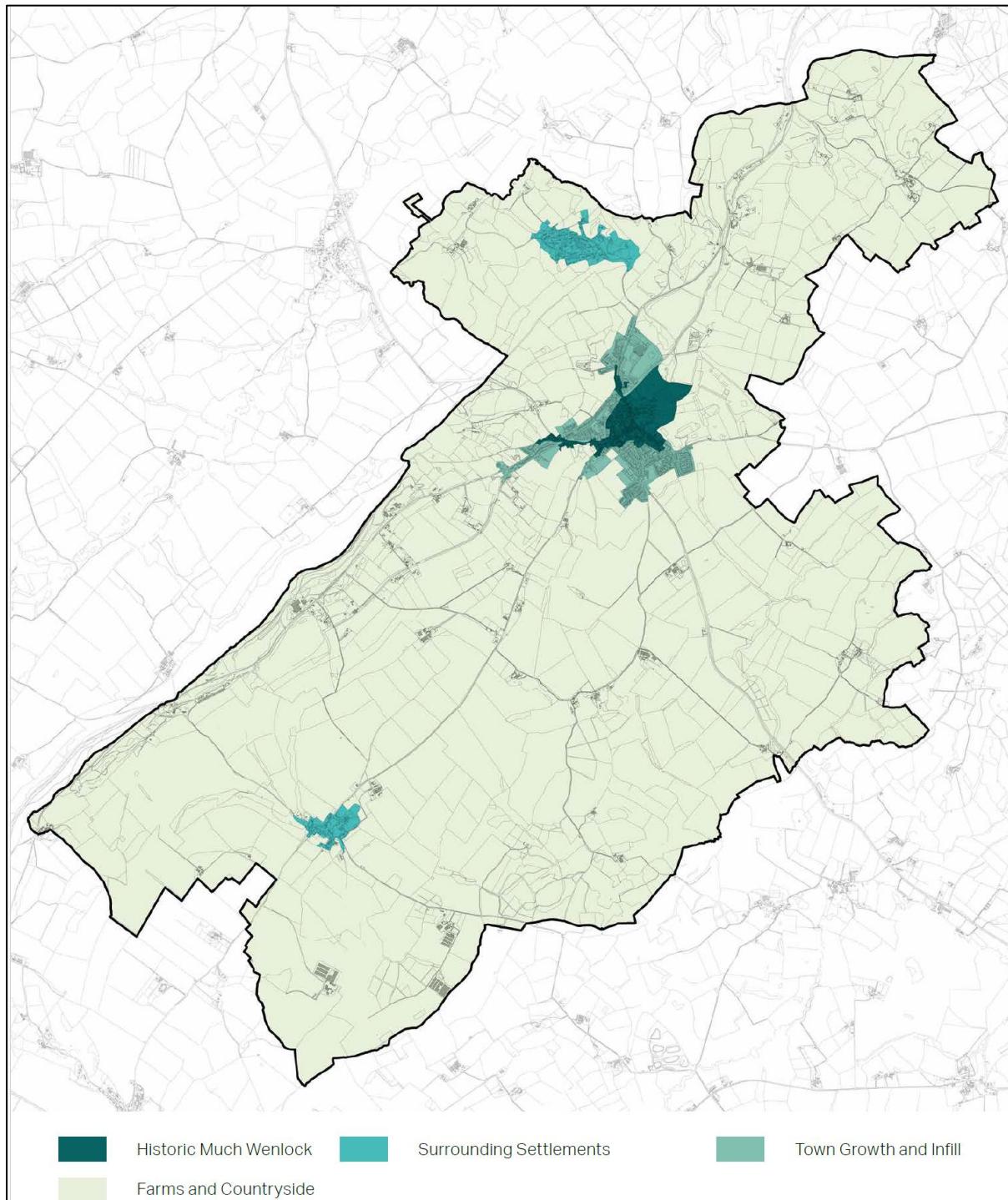
4.133. The Town Council commissioned consultants, AECOM, to develop a more localised set of design codes guiding future development in the town and wider parish.

4.134. The Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines form part of formal policy for the MWNP, to support the creation of distinctive places that are well-integrated with the existing settlement in Much Wenlock and to promote high-quality and popular built forms. The guidance draws on the other guidance available at the national, regional, and county level, and that which exists at the local level, such as the Much Wenlock and Bourton Conservation Area Appraisals. It was informed by local engagement in the form of a series of 'walkabouts' and feedback drawn from the community surveys and workshops.

4.135. The design guidance identifies four Character Areas (*Figure 14*) in the parish and defines the key characteristics of these in terms of factors such as prevailing buildings heights, architectural features, materials and use of space.

4.136. It should be applied to all development proposals in the parish including strategic site allocations.

Figure 14: Character Areas



Policy MW19: Energy efficiency and mitigating climate change

Purpose

4.137. This policy seeks to ensure that development meets the highest environmental standards in terms of its construction, materials and energy use. This will help to mitigate against climate change and contribute to achieving the national target of zero net carbon by 2050.

POLICY MW19: ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE

- A. Proposals which incorporate design and environmental performance measures and standards to reduce energy consumption, to reduce carbon emissions and climate effects will be supported, subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan.**
- B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals which incorporate the following sustainable design features will be strongly supported, where measures will not have a detrimental impact on character, landscape and views:**
 - i. siting and orientation to optimise passive solar gain.
 - ii. the use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials.
 - iii. installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing.
 - iv. incorporating on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels/tiles/glass, ground source heating and energy generation etc.
 - v. reducing water consumption using water re-use measures including rainwater harvesting, surface water harvesting and/or grey water recycling systems.
 - vi. all new dwellings will be designed to have a predicted water discharge of no more than 80 litres of water per person per day.
 - vii. providing low carbon sustainable design and avoiding or mitigating all regulated emissions using a combination of on-site energy efficiency measures (such as insulation and low energy heating systems), on-site zero carbon technologies (such as solar panels) and, only where necessary, off-site measures to deal with any remaining emissions.
- C. Proposals for the retrofitting of historic buildings, including listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets, to reduce energy demand and to generate renewable energy will be supported where they safeguard the character, appearance, features, interest, and setting of the building concerned.**
- D. Proposals for community-scale renewable energy schemes, for instance the installation of solar panels on community and public sector buildings, will be supported subject to the following criteria:**
 - i. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and
 - ii. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents; and
 - iii. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance, or create/exacerbate flood risk.

Conformity references: NP Objectives: 6; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS6; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD2; NPPF (2024): 161-169

Justification

4.138. On 12 June 2019 the Government voted to amend the Climate Change Act 2008 by introducing a new target for at least a 100% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (compared to 1990 levels) in the UK by 2050. This is otherwise known as a net zero target. This is a demanding target, which will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities to businesses and local and national government. As part of this, the government has set an interim target to cut the country's greenhouse gas emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels.

4.139. Being '2050 ready' means that new development will be required to have minimal energy use and net carbon emissions. Unlike Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans are more limited in what they can dictate in terms of environmental standards, as they must conform to the minimum requirements as set out by national policy and building regulations. The MWNP can, however, strongly encourage the design and layout of new development to maximise its potential to be as energy efficient as possible and to encourage the use of renewable energy.

4.140. The Future Homes Standard from 2025 will require CO₂ emissions produced by new homes to be 75-80% lower than those built to current standards. Homes will need to be 'zero carbon ready'. Fossil fuel heating (such as gas boilers) will be banned in new homes, with an expected shift to reliance on heat pumps and heat networks.



Examples of discreet solar panels (source: Historic England)

4.141. SC recognised the UK climate emergency in 2019 as a response to the need to act locally and in the context of climate change impacts being observed at the local level: dry riverbeds, reduced water supply, intense weather events, localised flooding and loss of habitats and species. It supports a range of projects designed to help adapt to climate change and these have informed the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.142. At the local level, feedback from the community has strongly supported measures that would contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change. Opportunities to improve and promote sustainability in the parish, which would help to deliver the government's climate change targets, include:

- following basic Passivhaus (net zero) environmental design including use of efficient and insulative materials;
- integrating renewable energy systems into new development (including existing and new public buildings) such as photovoltaics, air and ground source heat pumps;

- reducing the risk of overheating in warmer months by designing in features such as trees and shutters for shading, appropriate fenestration, orientation of development and ventilation;
- reducing water consumption including through grey water systems – the ‘made’ neighbourhood plan policy stating that ‘all new dwellings will be designed to have a predicted water discharge of no more than 80 litres of water per person per day’ has been retained. This will contribute to the delivery of Severn Trent’s [Strategic Direction Statement to 2050](#) and reflects the [Shropshire Council Water Cycle Study \(2020\)](#), which seeks to embed policies for low-water consumption design in new buildings into spatial plans.
- promoting sustainable forms of transport through priority systems for pedestrians and cyclists;
- supporting individual and community scale energy schemes; and
- supporting the retrofitting of historic buildings to Historic England’s [Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency: Historic England Advice Note 18](#) provides advice on how to reduce carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings whilst conserving their significance and ensuring they remain viable places to live in the future.

Policy MW20: Conserving heritage assets

Purpose

4.143. This policy recognises the important contribution that heritage assets – designated and non-designated – make to the local character and distinctiveness of Much Wenlock parish, both individually and collectively. Where possible, they should be conserved, enhanced and celebrated.

POLICY MW20: CONSERVING HERITAGE ASSETS

A. Designated Heritage Assets: Development proposals affecting designated heritage assets, either directly or indirectly, should conserve or enhance the significance of the asset and those elements of the setting that contribute to the significance. This could include, where appropriate, the delivery of development that will make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the heritage asset, or reflect and enhance local character and distinctiveness with specific focus on the prevailing styles of design and use of materials in a local area. These details should be explained in a Heritage Statement.

In addition, development proposals should demonstrate that they have considered the potential impact on above and below ground archaeological deposits. Where a scheme has a potential impact on archaeological remains (below or above the ground) a Heritage Statement or similar should be prepared to address how archaeological deposits will be safeguarded.

B. Non-designated Heritage Assets: The following buildings and structures as shown on *Figure 16* are identified as non-designated heritage assets:

1. Pavilion on the Bowling Green on Gaskell [Recreation Ground](#)
2. Much Wenlock Railway Station House
3. Gate Piers at the end of Station Road
4. Railway Abutment, Sheinton Street
5. Railway Goods Building, Station Wharf
6. Priory Hall
7. The Museum
8. Clock in the Square
9. Bus Shelter by Abbey Well House
10. Whymperis Well
11. Victorian Letterbox at Gaskell [Corner Arms junction](#)
12. Victoria Road Railway Abutment
13. Railway Bridge off Stretton Road
14. Havelock Well
15. Birchfield Garage
16. The Cemetery Chapel
17. Gasworks House on Barrow Street
18. Railway Cottages, Stretton Road
19. Toll House on Stretton Road
20. Bridge on Bridge Road
21. Gaskell Ground Lodge at the entrance to the Gaskell [Recreation](#) Ground

Proposals affecting the non-designated heritage assets will be determined based on national planning policy.

C. **Conservation Areas:** Development proposals in the Much Wenlock Conservation Area (*Figure 16*) and in the Bourton Conservation Area (*Figure 15*) should ensure that alterations and new developments contribute to the enhancement of the historic environment. Development within these areas and their settings should:

~~be guided by the relevant Conservation Area Management Plan; and~~

- i. be designed to a high quality and preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Areas and their settings; and
- ii. retain those buildings and other features, including trees and hedges, which make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Areas; and
- iii. protect open spaces and vistas important to the character and setting of the Conservation Areas; and
- iv. where appropriate, make provision for the enhancement measures.

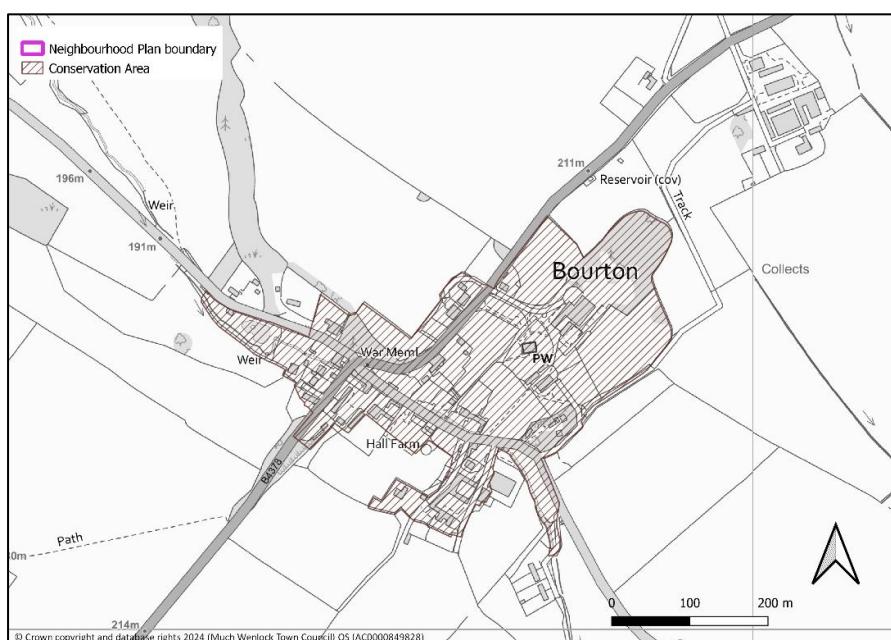
Conformity references: NP Objectives: 6; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS17; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD13; NPPF (2024): 135, 202, 203, 207, 208, 121-216, 219

Justification

Designated heritage assets

4.144. The parish is home to a wealth of designated heritage assets (*Figure 15*) including: Wenlock Priory Scheduled Monument; 104 nationally listed assets in Much Wenlock: Three of these - Church Of Holy Trinity, Wenlock Abbey and the Priory Of St Milburga (Ruins) – are Grade I listed; Two Conservation Areas: The Much Wenlock Conservation Area (*shown on Figure 16*) was designated in May 1970 and covers a large percentage of Much Wenlock town. The Bourton Conservation Area (*Figure 15*) is located south-west of Much Wenlock town along the B4378. It was designated in October 1994 and includes six Listed Buildings.

Figure 15: Bourton Conservation Area



Non-designated heritage assets

4.145. The National Planning Practice Guidance supports the identification of non-designated heritage assets through the neighbourhood planning process (Paragraph 18a-005-20190723). These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.

4.146. Such assets can be recorded by a Local Authority within their 'Local List'. As Shropshire does not yet have a Local List, in combination with a local audit, the Steering Group invited local people to nominate buildings and assets they considered to be important locally from a heritage angle. The Steering Group drew on the advice contained in Historic England's [Advice Note 7: Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage](#) to review the nominated assets and decide which had merit to become a non-designated heritage asset. The 21 assets are listed in Policy MW20, shown on *Figure 16*, with descriptions and photographs provided in Appendix [DE](#).

4.147. In addition, [Shropshire's Historic Environment Record](#) contains details of additional assets, some of which are not nationally listed. The record should be consulted by prospective developers.

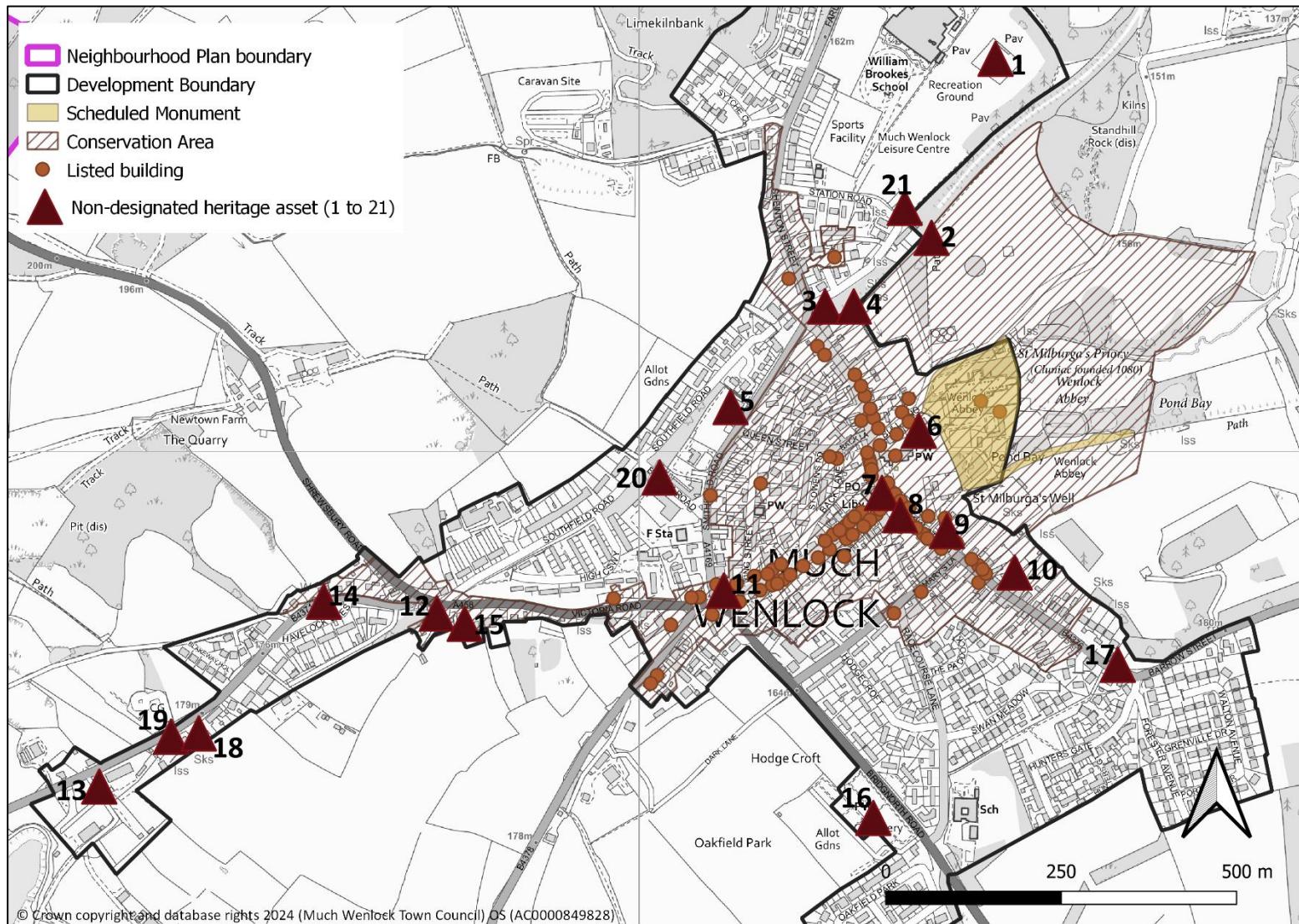
4.148. In parallel with this policy, it is proposed that the identified non-designated heritage assets are considered by Shropshire Council for inclusion on their list of local heritage assets. However, the inclusion of any building or structure on such a register is not necessary for the application of this policy.

Local Heritage at Risk

4.149. Historic England produces an annual Register of Heritage at Risk. Outside of London it does not include Grade II listings, apart from churches. There is one building in the parish on this list: the Prior's Lodging and infirmary, [part of the Wenlock Priory](#).

4.150. Opportunities to restore assets should be taken when they arise, in partnership with the owner.

Figure 16: Heritage assets in Much Wenlock (NDHA numbering as per the policy)



OBJECTIVE 7: GREEN AND OPEN SPACES, LOCAL LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

The Plan will make sure that:

- ✓ protecting the existing areas of green space within the parish and ensuring that their quality and or multi-functionality is improved. It is important that existing spaces be considered for retrofitting in adaptation for climate change.
- ✓ creating extra areas of high-quality green space ~~are created~~ within new developments.
- ✓ taking opportunities taken to create linkages between sites, address green and pedestrian gaps in existing networks, create of new foot and cycle routes, and wildlife biodiversity corridors.
- ✓ ensuring that new accessible and inclusive green space should exceed or at least meet Shropshire Council's standards for green open spaces, play spaces and allotments. New designated spaces will be welcomed if they meet the required standards.
- ✓ identifying opportunities to increase potential new green and open spaces for enjoyment of the local landscape and countryside are identified.
- ✓ undertaking sympathetic management of the countryside and natural outdoor environment in and around the parish is undertaken to enhance the quality of the landscape, improve local biodiversity and provide other benefits to the community's quality of life.

Policy MW21: Local Green Space

Purpose

4.151. The policy designates Local Green Spaces within Much Wenlock, that are demonstrably special to the local community.

POLICY MW21: LOCAL GREEN SPACE

The following are designated as local green space as shown on *Figure 17*:

1. **The Railway Walk**
2. **Windmill Hill**
3. **Gaskell Recreation Ground**
4. **Southfield Road green space**
5. **Havelock Crescent green space**
6. **Hunters Gate**
7. **Cemetery on Bridgnorth Road**
8. **Allotments on Southfield Road**

Conformity references: NP Objectives: 7; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS17; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD12; NPPF (2024): 106-108, 153-160

Justification

4.152. Open space, including gardens, allotments, recreational space, open fields, woodlands and pathways are important to us all helping to ensure physical and mental wellbeing and to mitigate the effects of climate change. Natural and semi-natural open space is highly valued by local residents not just for its recreational value but also for its landscape character, quiet enjoyment and biodiversity.

4.153. Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans can designate such spaces that are of particular importance to the community as local green spaces, protecting them from inappropriate development. The NPPF says that the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

4.154. Of the areas identified as open space in the previous MWNP, those assessed as suitable for designation as Local Green Space are:

1. **The Railway Line green space** (Railway Walks which are designated as Open Space under the Open Spaces Act. The Railway Walk has the additional designation of a QE2 field which means that it must remain a public open space in perpetuity)

2. **The Windmill Hill** (is now a designated Local Nature Reserve under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949)
3. **Gaskell Recreation GroundFields**
4. **Southfield Road green space**
5. **Havelock Crescent green space**
6. **Hunter's Gate**

4.155. The following further areas are proposed for local green space designation:

7. Cemetery on Bridgnorth Road
8. Allotments on Southfield Road

4.156. *Figure 17* shows the location of each of the Local Green Spaces. Detailed maps of each space are shown in Appendix E along with details as to how they each meet the NPPF criteria.

Figure 17: Local Green Spaces



Policy MW22: Recreational open and play space

Purpose

4.157. This policy seeks to ensure that adequate provision of recreational open space is provided within development proposals as appropriate.

POLICY MW22: RECREATIONAL OPEN AND PLAY SPACE

Subject to its scale, nature and location, development proposals should include or contribute to ensuring delivery of and future maintenance of the provision of recreational open space, in line with or above the standards set out by Shropshire Council, that is:

- i. in usable parcels of land;
- ii. safe, easily accessible and natural barriers would be preferred, where it is necessary for the space;
- iii. accessible to the general public;
- iv. creates a safe environment considering lighting and layout; and
- v. where appropriate, complemented by high quality landscaping schemes.

The provision/upgrading of additional play areas to serve the needs of children of all ages, in line with the [Shropshire Council's Quantity Standard](#) will be particularly supported. Where possible, this should incorporate areas for 'natural play'.

Conformity references: NP Objectives: 7; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS8; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD8, MD12; NPPF (2024): 96, 98, 103, 104

Justification

4.158. Despite the rural setting of the settlements of Much Wenlock, Homer and Bourton, the parish is not well served by open space provision. Adding to the list of designated local green spaces (Policy MW21) in the town will extend the opportunity for play and outdoor activities. But more is needed.

4.159. A quantitative shortfall of play provision has been identified (*Figure 18*) in Much Wenlock and Policy MW22 seeks to address this. In particular, the MWNP endorses [Shropshire Council's Open Space Interim Planning Guidance and](#) is keen to make sure that residents, and notably children, have access to high quality outdoor space to suit all ages and abilities. Natural play space is supported, which comprises play space is that, instead of the standard, cookie-cutter metal and plastic structures that make up the bulk of today's playgrounds, incorporates the surrounding landscape and vegetation to bring nature to children's daily outdoor play and learning environments.

4.160. Where developers are not able to make provision for play provision on site, financial contributions to off-site play space may be used to meet local needs, with priority given to additional provision to the south of the town.

4.161. There is a need to ensure that the MWNP can be used to support better designed play provision whilst remembering that play is not just for children. To add new equipment that provides

greater variety of play experience, to make a space more inclusive or accessible – whether that is wheeled access friendly or suitable for neurodiverse users.

4.162. The location of play areas next to spaces like allotments, can develop into social hubs and promote natural surveillance, particularly for different age ranges, inclusion and accessibility for all.

Figure 18: Shortfall of open space in Much Wenlock (source: Shropshire Council Open Space Needs Assessment) (note this is extracted directly from the Open Space Needs Assessment. There are three spelling errors: Allbrighton should read "Albrighton", Bridgenorth should read "Bridgnorth", and Ellesmere should read "Ellesmere")

Provision (all typologies) relating to population by place plan compared with County Average

Place Plan	Provision (Hectares) per 1000 population	County Average	Surplus/deficit
Allbrighton	2.1038	6.842498	-4.738698
Bishops Castle	4.4075	6.842498	-2.434998
Bridgenorth	5.8417	6.842498	-1.000798
Broseley	11.0375	6.842498	4.195002
Church Stretton	5.4927	6.842498	-1.349798
Cleobury Mortimer	2.4772	6.842498	-4.365298
Craven Arms	2.9892	6.842498	-3.853298
Ellesmere	10.3367	6.842498	3.494202
Highley	14.2512	6.842498	7.408702
Ludlow	4.5564	6.842498	-2.286098
Market Drayton	3.8012	6.842498	-3.041298
Much Wenlock	4.351	6.842498	-2.491498
Oswestry	7.9636	6.842498	1.121102
Pontesbury and Minsterley	8.098	6.842498	1.255502
Shifnal	2.8382	6.842498	-4.004298
Shrewsbury	11.2159	6.842498	4.373402
Wem	10.2527	6.842498	3.410202
Whitchurch	11.1503	6.842498	4.307802

Policy MW23: Green and blue infrastructure and delivering biodiversity net gain

Purpose

4.163. This policy seeks to ensure that the multiple benefits of Much Wenlock's green and blue spaces – including their importance in combating pressure on wildlife, habitats, biodiversity and geodiversity and in off-setting the effects of air pollution - are recognised and enhanced. This applies particularly where individual spaces have a greater collective value as part of wider chains of green infrastructure. This will serve to support the requirement to conserve and, where possible, provide a net gain in biodiversity through planning policy whilst accommodating sustainable development.

POLICY MW23: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERING BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

- A. Proposals should be designed to create, conserve, enhance and manage green and blue spaces. They should connect chains of green and blue infrastructure, as identified on the Policies Maps, with the aim of delivering a measurable biodiversity net gain of 20%, where possible, but at a minimum, a net gain of at least 10%. Where biodiversity net gain units cannot be delivered on site, they should be prioritised for use within the parish, focusing on maintaining and improving the identified biodiversity opportunity areas.**
- B. Measures to achieve biodiversity net gain, mitigation or compensation involving the creation of habitat and/or relocation of species, should include sufficient funding to support at least 30 years of post-development habitat management or land use change.**
- C. Proposals that seek to improve the connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces will be supported. Proposals that support the enhancement and management of identified Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (*Figures 20 and 21*) will be supported, including linking these to the wildlife corridors. Proposals which cause unacceptable harm to such connectivity will not be supported.**
- D. Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals for the planting of additional native, climate resilient trees and/or continuous hedgerows along streets to provide wildlife corridors and to offset the effects of air pollution and to provide cooling and shelter for people as well as habitat for wildlife will be supported.**
- E. Subject to their scale, nature and location, proposals that respond positively to the [Building with Nature 12 Standards](#) will be supported.**
- F. Disused quarry workings: Proposals for the restoration and the implementation of aftercare proposals for former quarries will be permitted where they deliver restoration for wildlife, biodiversity and public access and are consistent with other Plan policies. In particular, proposals for biodiversity restoration combined with commercial/leisure use and public access will be supported at the Lea North/Hayes/Coates quarry complex and at the Shadwell quarry.**
- G. New industrial and commercial uses will not normally be supported at Lilleshall, Coates, Westwood and Farley quarries as shown on *Figure 22*.**

Conformity references: NP Objectives: 7; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS5, CS17; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD12; NPPF (2024): 135, 136, 187-195

Justification

4.164. The parish is important from a landscape value, biodiversity interest and geology perspective.

4.165. The northern west boundary of the parish lies within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape with the prominent escarpment of Wenlock Edge providing both an important landscape feature but also affording stunning views northwards to the Wrekin and westwards to the Welsh Hills. Outside the designated National Landscape, landscape value is still high, demonstrating classic scarp and vale topography supporting traditional agriculture and woodland.

4.166. The [Shropshire Landscape Typology](#) document recognises three landscape types in Much Wenlock parish:

- **Principal Wooded Hills**, which includes the scarp slope of Wenlock Edge.
- **Wooded Hills and Estelands**, which typically comprises medium to large scale agricultural enterprises mixed with blocks of semi-natural woodland and game coverts, as found on the dip slopes of Wenlock Edge.
- **Estate Farmlands**, which occupy the lowland valley floors.

4.167. Collectively, these provide a classic rural scene of high landscape value and an important backdrop to the settlements of the parish.

4.168. The area's importance for biodiversity is reflected by the designation of four Sites of Special Interest in the parish, notified for nationally important stands of mixed broadleaved woodland, neutral grassland and calcareous grassland. The woodlands support several species of national or regional rarity including Large-leaved and Small-leaved lime, Wild service tree, Fingered Sedge, Wood Barley and Violet Helleborine. Areas of limestone grassland are now rare along Wenlock Edge and many of the best remaining examples are found in the Much Wenlock area where they support many scarce lime-loving plants including Quaking grass, Pyramidal Orchid and Yellow-wort. The disused quarries are particularly important for grassland and scrub communities, supporting plants such as Autumn Gentian and Common Gromwell, scarce butterflies including Dingy Skipper and Wall Brown and providing breeding sites for Peregrine Falcon.

4.169. Overall, the MWNP area supports at least 25 animal and plant species that are designated as Species of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (see Appendix F).

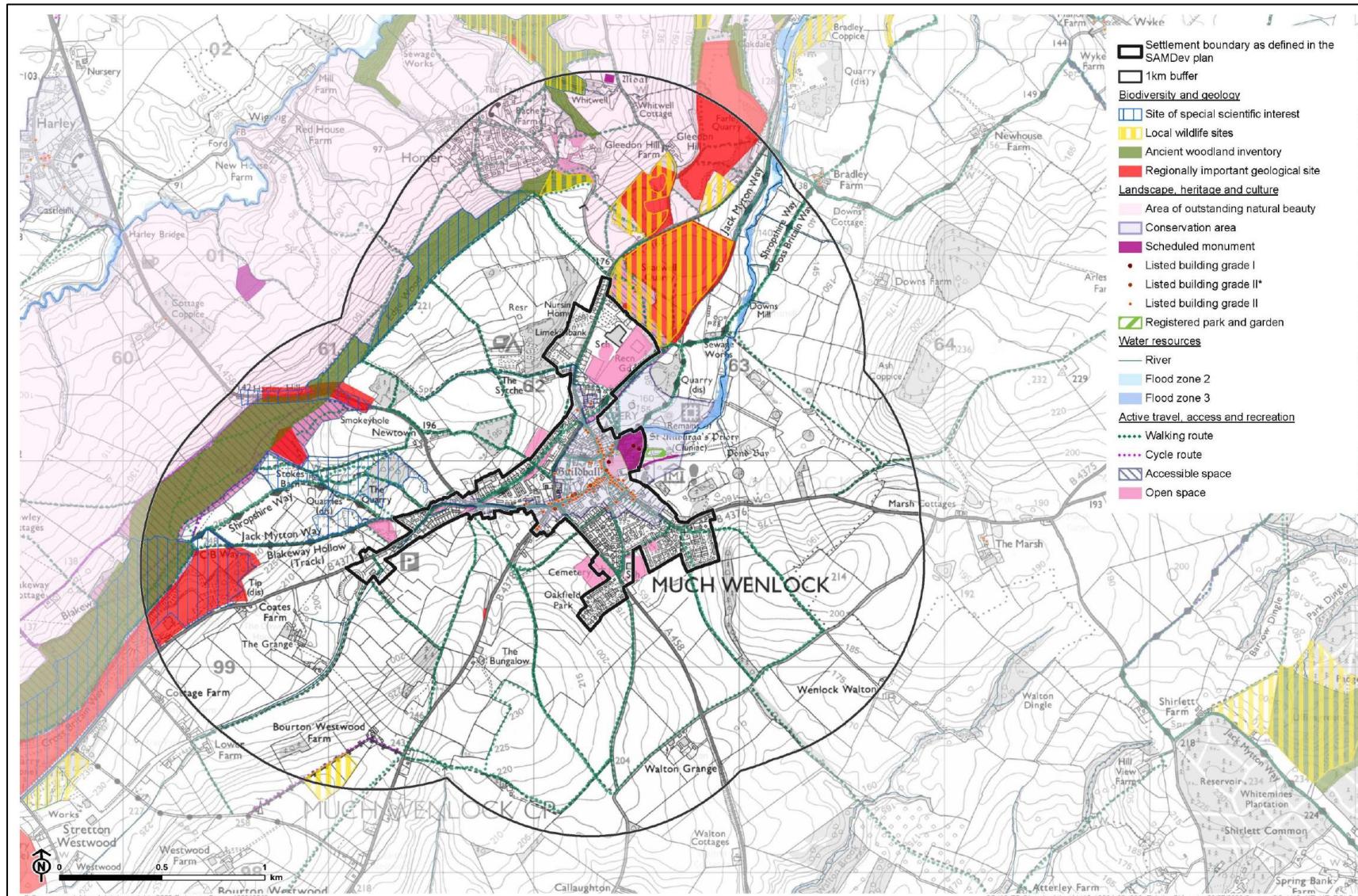
4.170. Surface water bodies include the Shyte/Farley brook, Sheinton brook and a number of ponds, many located in the old quarries, which support populations of Great Crested Newt.

4.171. The Much Wenlock area is internationally important for its geology, being the Type Locality for rocks of the Wenlock Series, i.e. these rock types were first described here and all rocks of the same age across the planet are referred to as being of Wenlockian age. The rocks which underlie the Parish are generally limestones and shales formed from sediments deposited in a warm, tropical sea approximately 430 million years ago in a period of geological time, known as the Silurian Period. They are rich in fossils of sea creatures which lived at that time, including corals, crinoids and trilobites. Three of the four SSSIs in the plan are also notified for their

geological importance. These provide good representation of the varying rock types and are all included in the Geological Conservation Review, a document which identifies all earth science sites of national or international importance in Britain.

4.172. The existing green and blue infrastructure assets of the Parish are shown on *Figure 19*. This is taken from SC's [Green Infrastructure Strategy for Much Wenlock](#).

Figure 19: Existing Green Infrastructure Assets and Key Constraints



4.173. **Biodiversity opportunity areas (BOAs):** The MWNP encourages development proposals to deliver in excess of the minimum 10% Biodiversity net gain requirement, as endorsed by the [Wildlife Trusts](#). Whilst developments are encouraged to deliver their biodiversity net gain on site, this is not always possible; equally there may be opportunities to enhance other parts of the Parish in need of attention. It is therefore useful to consider where Biodiversity Opportunity Areas might exist locally.

4.174. *Figure 20* is an extract from the [Green Infrastructure Strategy for Much Wenlock](#) identifying the following opportunities for improving and enhancing biodiversity in the parish. This is illustrated on the map at *Figure 21*.

Figure 20: Opportunities for biodiversity improvements in Much Wenlock

Summary of key opportunities	Biodiversity & Geology	Landscape, Heritage and Culture	Water Resources	Active Travel, Access & Recreation	Health & Wellbeing	Climate Change
SSSI management improvements at Whitewell Coppice to improve condition	✓	✓				✓
Link key habitats to create more contiguous network around Wenlock Edge	✓	✓				✓
Habitat creation / enhancement around Farley Quarry	✓	✓				✓
Retain and enhance visual links towards AONB (National Landscape)	✓	✓			✓	
Increase local accessibility to Much Wenlock Priory				✓	✓	✓
Include new open space (children's / teenager facilities) within proposed allocation				✓	✓	
Improve infrastructure along the long-distance footpaths to create sustainable, greened corridors through Much Wenlock	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Reinforce existing GI habitat surrounding Much Wenlock Priory with a particular emphasis on flood risk mitigation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Extension and / or enhancement of existing allotment site				✓	✓	✓
Provision of a new circular walk around the attenuation pond at Stretton Road				✓	✓	✓
Enhancements to Gaskell Park, including a new perimeter path, outdoor exercise equipment and a new pavilion				✓	✓	✓
Enhanced habitats along key transport routes including the B4371 and B4378	✓	✓	✓			✓

4.175. In addition, the consultation on the MWNP revealed the following additional opportunity areas for improving biodiversity:

- Protection of existing sites of biodiversity and geodiversity interest, as shown on *Figure 20*.
- Encouragement of new initiatives to improve biodiversity in the following locations:
 - Old cemetery
 - [Whitewell Coppice](#), Gaskell [Recreation Groundfield](#)
 - Other areas of existing green space within the town
 - Green space created as part of new developments
- Appropriate management of road verges.
- Creation of a bee corridor through the town and into the wider countryside, encouraging flowering plants along footways and within public spaces.
- Offering marginal farmland for BNG which could be used to create new areas of woodland, limestone grassland and scrub, complementing existing high biodiversity areas but also assisting with soil protection, carbon storage and flood prevention.

- Encouragement of regenerative farming to protect groundwater, improve soil health (with implications for water and carbon storage)
- The planting of trees to contribute to tree canopy coverage of a minimum of 20% of the parish.
- Identification of new corridors which could potentially provide both public access and wildlife, in dialogue with local landowners.
- Reviewing and revising guidance on future management/uses of quarries.

4.176. **Disused quarry workings:** The policy offers special protection from re-use to older disused small quarry workings where no commercial activity has taken place for more than 15 years and also to Lilleshall, Westwood and Farley quarries (*Figure 22*) because of the richness of their habitats.

4.177. The aim is to improve and enhance local biodiversity and encourage improved access to allow more local people and visitors to enjoy the unique landscape and natural environment of Wenlock Edge. This biodiversity reflects the length of time since these quarries were last worked and the natural regeneration already underway.

4.178. Note that part of the Plan area falls within an Environment Agency Surface Water Nitrate Issues Priority Area. Sub-surface water resources are also important, and part of the Plan area falls within the Shropshire Severn, Tern and Roden Drinking Water Safeguard Zone. Both have a bearing on the type of permissions allowed for quarry infilling as the porous nature of the substrate means that groundwater could easily become contaminated.

Figure 21: Green Infrastructure Opportunities

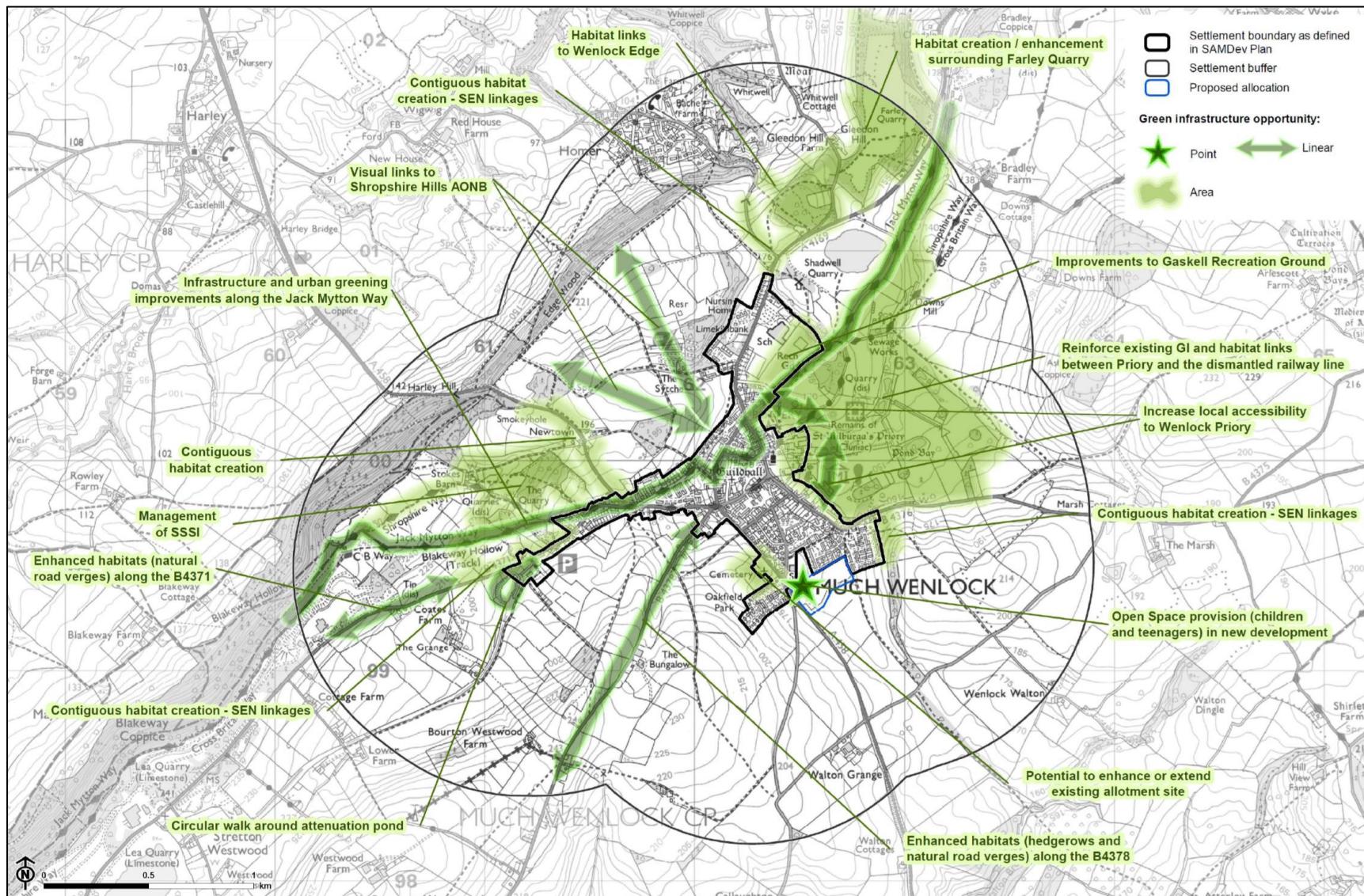
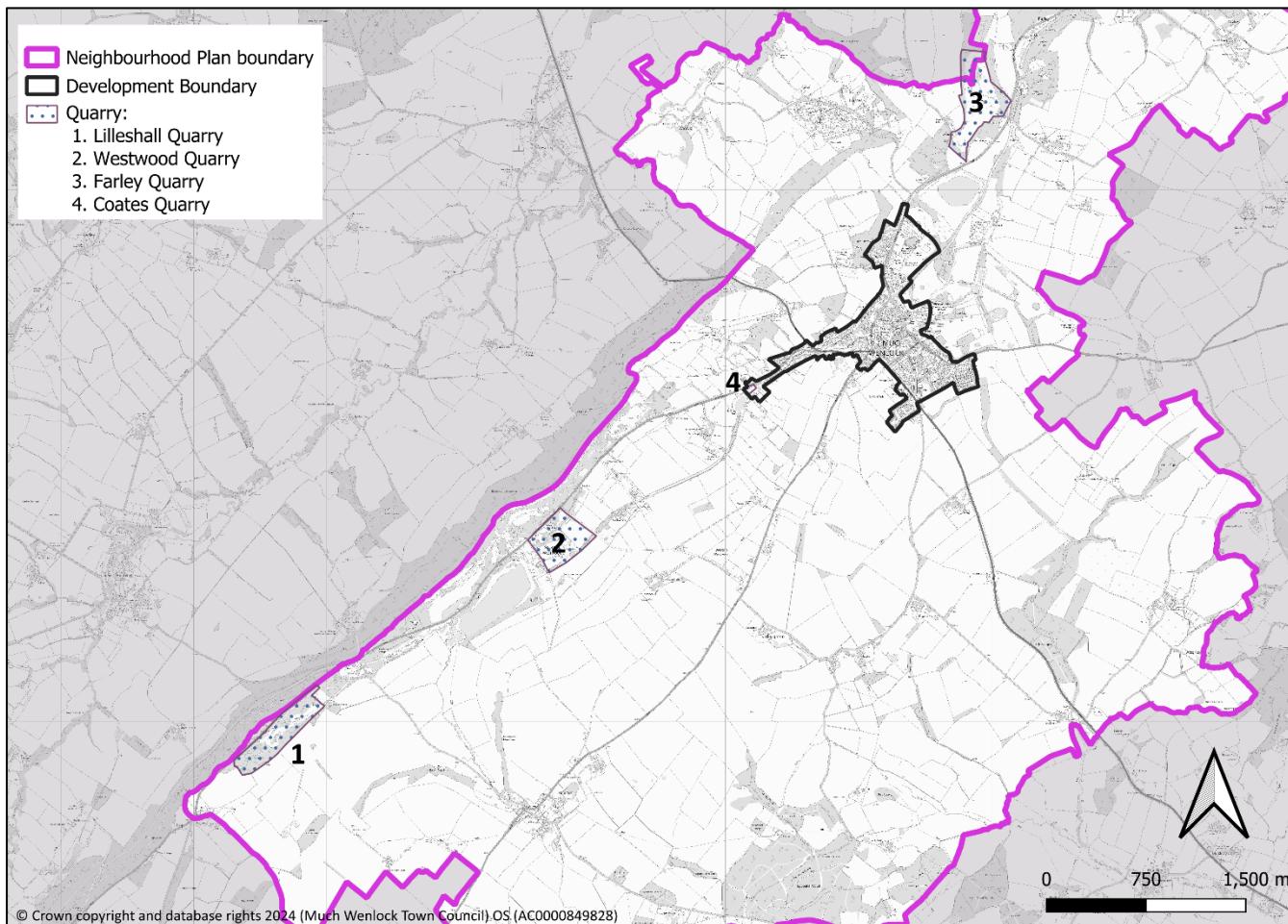


Figure 22: Map showing quarries subject to Clause G of Policy MW23



Policy MW24: Landscape and environment

Purpose

4.179. This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals have considered how they can enhance the natural environment – both flora and fauna – including the features of it that are particularly distinctive to Much Wenlock. It also seeks to ensure that development proposals contribute to the provision of wildlife friendly features within development.

POLICY MW24: LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENT

- A. Development proposals should maintain, enhance the natural environment, landscape features and the rural character and setting of the neighbourhood area. Where possible, development proposals should seek to incorporate natural features typical of the parish, for instance ponds, hedgerows and trees.**
- B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should demonstrate that they have addressed the following matters:**

Trees and woodland:

- i. contribute to the provision of a Much Wenlock town-wide minimum 20% tree canopy, with the planting of additional native trees, with a specific focus in areas with public access.
- ii. there should be no unacceptable loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodlands during or as a result of development. If notable trees must be removed, they should be replaced with trees of a similar potential size and native species elsewhere on the site, unless this is clearly not possible.
- iii. where trees and/or shrubs are replaced with new plantings, native or locally appropriate varieties attractive to insects, birds and other wildlife must be used.
- iv. all priority habitats and mature trees must have a minimum buffer of complimentary habitat of 10m, and more if required (for instance ancient woodland or veteran trees require a minimum buffer of 15m).
- v. appropriate management measures will be required to be implemented to protect newly planted and existing trees, woodlands and/ or hedgerows.
- vi. where arboricultural work is required to a veteran/mature/notable tree (as defined by the Woodland Trust), the tree should be safeguarded and maintained in a way which responds positively to the condition of the trees and its location within the overall development.

Hedgerows

- i natural boundaries (i.e. hedgerows in preference to fencing) are supported.
- ii avoid the loss of, or deterioration in the quality of, hedgerows. Where access points to new developments involve the loss of a section of hedgerow, the access should include trees at either end of the retained hedgerow to aid wildlife to cross overhead from crown to crown.

Wildlife-friendly features:

- iii provide suitable wildlife-friendly features (such as hedgehog holes in new residential fencing and bird and bat nesting boxes).

Conformity references: NP Objectives: 7; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS5, CS17; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD12; NPPF (2024): 135, 136, 187-195

Justification

4.180. The NPPF stresses that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment including requiring net gain in biodiversity. The local community too place a high importance on this, with a majority agreeing that the natural environment and its features should be protected. Natural assets afforded a level of protection in the Parish (*Figure 19*) are:

Table 8: Environmental designations in the parish

Designation	Sites
Shropshire Hills National Landscape	Wenlock Edge
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Wenlock Edge: Biological & Geological Whitwell Coppice: Biological & Geological Farley Dingle: Geological Tickwood and Benthall Edge: Biological & Geological
Geological Conservation Review sites (GCR)	Wenlock Edge Whitwell Coppice Farley Dingle
Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	Details available from Shropshire Council/ Local Wildlife Trust
Local Nature Reserves	Windmill Hill
Ancient woodland	Areas of Ancient Woodland
Local Green Spaces	As set out in Policy MW21 (Local Green Space)

4.181. There are other distinctive natural features particular to Much Wenlock that, whilst not protected through statutory designations, provide vital habitats for flora and fauna. This includes veteran and mature trees and established woodland, hedgerows, fruit orchards, ponds and streams, mature planted gardens, and green verges alongside roads. Such features form vital corridors for many animals and birds, especially those migrating, to safely navigate around their domains. In addition, they support a wide range of small mammals, amphibians, insects, and birds that make their homes in this area.

4.182. These habitats, and the species they house, have evolved in response to local geology and land use, and can take many hundreds of years to establish. As such they are difficult, often impossible, to replace in any meaningful way. Although they have no statutory protection, they need to be considered in the planning process. Notable features in Much Wenlock are shown below.

4.183. Development proposals are expected to retain, protect, and enhance these and, where appropriate, include a landscape and ecological management plan including a list of trees and native shrubs to be planted to ensure the rural and green character of the parish is enhanced and which should involve the planting of new trees and hedgerows of native species in gardens, communal areas or on roadsides where practical.

Policy MW25: Dark skies

Purpose

4.184. Parts of Much Wenlock parish provide ideal locations from which to enjoy dark skies and stargazing. These dark skies also support both nocturnal and diurnal wildlife. This policy seeks to ensure that development does not encroach on this valued aspect of parish.

POLICY MW25: DARK SKIES

Proposals for development will be supported where it is demonstrated that, if external lighting is required, it protects the night sky from light pollution, where:

- i. the lighting is necessary for operational, safety or security reasons;
- ii. any light spillage beyond the application site is eliminated, or reduced by measures such as timing and proximity controls, orientation, screening, shielding or glazing;
- iii. impact on nearby residential properties, wildlife, local heritage assets or the wider landscape is minimised; and
- iv. the guidance on lighting provided in the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Note GN01: The Reduction of Obtrusive Light (and any subsequent revisions) is adhered to. Proposals should consider carefully, and provide details of, the light source and intensity being used, the luminaire design, height, and angle, adding baffles and cut-off shields where required, and details of control mechanisms to dim or switch off lighting schemes when not required. Where appropriate, lights should be controlled by passive infrared detectors so that they only come on when needed.

Conformity references: NP Objectives: 7; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS17; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD12; NPPF: 96, 131, 135, 187, 198

Justification

4.185. Pockets of the parish remain largely unlit (*Figure 23*) for instance the significant areas of woodland away from the town. The dark night skies in these areas are predominantly unspoilt, and it is important that they are kept that way.

4.186. The benefits derived from the prevention of light pollution include:

- Enjoyment and appreciation – improving quality of life and providing creative inspiration
- Health – promoting better sleep patterns and reducing stress
- Wildlife – supporting a more natural environment for both nocturnal and diurnal animals
- Energy efficiency – reducing wastage from unnecessary or excessive lighting, thus reducing the parish's carbon footprint

4.187. The impact of light pollution is particularly harmful in the open countryside where rural character is eroded. Light pollution can also compromise the architectural and historical character of conservation areas and listed buildings or their settings. Artificial lighting has an impact on biodiversity especially for nocturnal animals and invertebrates can be seriously

affected by artificial light at even very low levels, adversely affecting their ability to feed and reproduce.

4.188. The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) produces guidance on light pollution, and this should be consulted when preparing development proposals. In particular the [Guidance Note 01 The Reduction of Obtrusive Light](#), and [Guidance Note 08 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK](#), which was updated in 2023. This guidance is summarised in criterion iv of Policy MW25.

Figure 23: Dark Skies map for the Parish and surrounding areas (Source: CPRE)



Night Lights



Policy MW26: Renewable and community energy

Purpose

4.189. This policy sets out the criteria against which proposals for renewable energy projects should be considered.

POLICY MW26: RENEWABLE AND COMMUNITY ENERGY

A. Development proposals to generate energy from renewable and low carbon sources at a medium to large scale will only be supported where it meets the requirements of the adopted Local Plan and:

- i. the applicant can demonstrate that any harm to the local landscape (including the setting of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape) and heritage (including the Conservation Areas and their settings) will be minimised and, where necessary, mitigated. Applicants should use the relevant landscape descriptions contained within the [Shropshire Landscape Typology](#) to inform their landscape and visual impact assessment; and
- ii. the applicant can demonstrate that the proposals do not adversely affect residential amenity through noise generation or overbearing visual impact. Proposals should seek to screen installations naturally, taking into account the setting of Much Wenlock and smaller settlements within the landscape and long-distance views of Wenlock Edge and Dales, in particular the Corvedale; and
- iii. existing rights of way are retained. Where not possible, redirection within the site will be considered. Opportunities will be sought to enhance access for walking, cycling and equestrianism within and across the site to provide linkages to local amenities and neighbouring settlements; and
- iv. there are opportunities to provide a net gain in biodiversity in accordance with Policy MW13; and
- v. the benefits of renewable energy can be proven to outweigh the landscape and environmental impacts; and
- vi. it demonstrates in particular how land beneath or surrounding the panels will be managed and how the applicant has avoided land with high potential for agriculture ('Best and Most Versatile Land'). Proposals should prioritise low yield agricultural land and rooftops, where appropriate.

B. Proposals for individual and community-scale energy from hydroelectricity, solar PV panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestion and wood fuel products will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- i. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and
- ii. there is suitable road access, and traffic generated is appropriate for the rural setting; and
- iii. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenity of local residents; and
- iv. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 7; Shropshire Core Strategy (2011): CS1, CS6, CS17; SAMDev Plan (2015): MD8; NPPF (2024): 105, 161–169, 187

Justification

Renewable energy

4.190. Renewable energy is a source of power that comes from clean and natural resources. This means that it does not harm the environment around it, nor will it ever run dry. The parish is starting to attract interest from renewable schemes.

4.191. The parish is located partially within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. It is important that the scale of any proposed renewable energy developments does not detract from nor negatively impact the setting of the villages and expansive views towards Wenlock Edge, the Dales and wider landscape.

4.192. From a solar perspective, the Shropshire Hills Landscape Management Plan provides broad guidance. Particular attention will need to be paid to proposals for field-scale renewable and low carbon initiatives such as solar farms in order to prevent a significant adverse effect on this designated landscape. From wind power, generally speaking, large scale wind turbine developments will be unacceptable in the National Landscape and its setting.

4.193. The challenge for larger schemes is that not all will be decided using the policies of the local development plan. Above a threshold (set out in Section 15 of the *Planning Act 2008*) of more than 50MW for onshore and more than 100MW for offshore generation, solar installations will be treated as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (these thresholds are under consultation), for which a DCO must be sought from the Secretary of State. Below this threshold, schemes are determined by local plan policies.

4.194. Regardless of which planning route is used to determine such schemes, the following (where relevant) should be considered in parallel with the advice contained in the [Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan](#) and the [Shropshire Landscape Typology](#):

- The local community should be fully engaged to assist in shaping proposals.
- Schemes that offer direct community benefits, for instance community energy schemes or contributions to electric bus schemes, would be welcomed.
- The height, scale, orientation, and density of the panels should be designed to optimise solar gain while minimising impacts on the grazing capacity within a site, on biodiversity (if for instance less light can filter through) and on the visual impact from neighbouring properties and viewpoints further afield.
- Natural screening should be used to minimise visual and noise impacts. This could include the planting of trees and hedgerows and also the provision of green buffers to the edges of installations. Consideration should be given to how the site will be viewed from all parts of the parish, notably within the landscape and long-distance views of Wenlock Edge and Dales (in particular the Corve ~~D~~dale). If fencing is to be used, it should be camouflaged with natural planting to blend into the natural environment, where possible using natural materials and suitable colours if man-made. Industrial fencing will not be acceptable.
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are the responsibility of SC. Where they cross proposed sites, they must be safeguarded. Rerouting of PRoWs (suitable for use by those on foot,

bicycle or horseback) or the creation of additional new PRoWs (ideally as bridleways) would be supported where this offers benefits in reaching community facilities, nearby villages and the wider countryside. SC's Countryside Access Improvement Plan provides an opportunity to enshrine these routes in policy and ensure that they are safeguarded and well maintained.

- Opportunities to improve biodiversity must be taken and, where possible, to create and improve connectivity of habitats. Improvements should be accompanied by a management plan for the lifespan of the scheme and a system to measure that the improvements have happened over that period.
- Renewable schemes which involve the loss or degradation of productive agricultural land (BMV) should be avoided in preference to long-term local food security.

Community energy

4.195. Community energy refers to the delivery of community-led renewable energy, energy demand reduction and energy supply projects, whether wholly owned and/or controlled by communities or through partnership with commercial or public sector partners. Community energy puts people at the heart of the energy system.

4.196. There could be scope for some community renewable energy projects, for example utilising waste from farming and land management together with local food waste to power an anaerobic digester, producing gas to power a community heat facility. This would be most cost-effective when a residential or small industrial development is being designed and built. Exemplar renewable energy projects in the neighbourhood area, which would benefit the community, relate well to its character and complement existing economic activities, would be supported.

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND PLAN REVIEW

- 5.1. Much Wenlock Town Council is the qualifying body responsible for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.2. Once the Plan has been 'made', there will be a series of actions that need to be undertaken to ensure that the policies within the MWNP are being interpreted and used in the way intended. It will also be necessary to maintain a watching brief on changes to the planning policy landscape, both at the national and local planning authority levels, which may have an impact on the Plan's policies. Finally, any non-planning-related projects and activities that were identified will need to be prioritised for delivery, in partnership with other organisations.
- 5.3. Specific actions to be undertaken are as follows:
 - Pursuing the projects and activities that are not policy-based, but nevertheless contribute to the delivery of the Plan - these are set out in Section 7, divided into priorities towards which developer contributions may be directed and broader, community projects, which have been collated throughout the process, but which sit beyond planning policy. A range of organisations may be involved in delivering these projects and there will be a need for a co-ordinated approach. Many will require funding and therefore it would be helpful to consult with the community to understand the potential costs and achievability of each. Funding may be sourced from developer contributions or tailored funds, such as the Big Lottery Fund.
 - Commenting on planning applications or consultations relating to the neighbourhood plan area – the Town Council has a role in ensuring that the MWNP policies are being adequately considered, where relevant, in decisions to determine the outcome of planning applications in the Parish. A meeting between local councillors, planning committee members and the supporting planning officers at SC would be a useful step in ensuring that the purpose and application of the policies is fully understood by all parties. This will assist in ensuring that policies are interpreted and applied in the way intended.
 - Monitoring the application of the MWNP policies to ensure they have been applied consistently and interpreted correctly in response to planning applications – there is scope to identify indicators to measure the effect that each policy is having and the extent to which this is delivering against the associated objective. As a minimum, the Town Council would wish to maintain a log of planning applications relating to the neighbourhood area, detailing which Neighbourhood Plan policies have informed the Town Council response and the outcome of the decision. This will assist in understanding whether the policies have been used in the manner intended or whether changes may be required, for instance in any future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - Maintaining a dialogue with SC regarding the timing and content of the new Local Plan – it will be important to consider the policies in the emerging document and how these may impact the MWNP policies. The adoption of a new Local Plan may trigger a light-touch review of the MWNP.
 - Maintaining a dialogue with SC and the promoter/developers of the strategically allocated sites.

- 5.4. Maintaining a watching brief on the national policy landscape – changes at the national level may impact on the policies contained in the Development Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore important to keep abreast of this, as this could also provide a trigger to undertake a light-touch review of the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - Maintaining a dialogue with neighbouring parishes on cross-boundary projects.
 - Maintaining a dialogue with the local community on the plan implementation – ensuring that all records of how the plan has been used should be made public. It is also recommended that a regular update – for instance at the Annual Town Meeting – is provided, to feed back to the community on progress about both the effectiveness of the policies and the pursing of the projects.
- 5.5. Considering gaps in the Neighbourhood Plan – local issues, concerns or opportunities may arise during the lifespan of the Plan that trigger the need for the inclusion of a new policy. Such issues can be most effectively understood by maintaining open dialogue with the community and other partners.
- 5.6. Whilst it is not a legislative requirement to review a Neighbourhood Plan, it is good practice to do so periodically. This may be because of any of the points noted above. A light-touch review will enable the Town Council to keep the Neighbourhood Plan up to date in general terms, and to ensure that it remains in general conformity with the wider development plan. Any review should be undertaken in partnership with and ensuring the engagement of the wider community.
- 5.7. The Town Council will consider how best to progress these actions.

6. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND PROVISION

- 6.1. The Town Council is keen to influence the way in which developer contributions are spent in the neighbourhood area to the full extent of their powers under national legislation and planning guidance.
- 6.2. There are different types of contributions arising from section 106 agreements, section 278 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):
 - A section 106 agreement (based on that section of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act) or planning obligation is a private agreement made between local authorities and developers and can be attached to a planning permission to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.
 - A section 278 agreement refers to a section of the Highways Act 1980 that allows developers to enter into a legal agreement with the local authority to make alterations or improvements to a public highway as part of a planning application.
 - The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), if adopted by SC, would be a non-negotiable charge on development based on a fixed rate per square metre of net additional development on a site, and levied by the Borough Council. Different charge rates would apply for different types of uses and in different areas. The levy is intended to fund the provision, improvement, replacement or maintenance of infrastructure required to support development in an area as set out in its local plan. With a 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan, the local community would benefit from an uplift in the level of CIL received, from 15% (capped at £100 per existing property) to an uncapped 25% of CIL receipts from neighbourhood area.
- 6.3. Spending and infrastructure priorities for Much Wenlock Parish are included within the SC Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and within the emerging SC Local Plan.
- 6.4. The Town Council intends to regularly review its spending priorities. Any proposed changes to spending principles or priorities will be published for comment by the community and other interested parties. Once finalised, any updated list will be published on the Town Council website and in relevant literature.

7. NON POLICY ACTIONS

Ref.	Issue	Possible Actions	Lead agencies / partners
Spatial Strategy and Housing			
1.	Understanding local housing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to undertaking a regular review of the Housing Needs Assessment prepared for the parish. This provides a long-term perspective on likely housing needs. 	MWTC
2.	The need for additional affordable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider commissioning a Housing Needs Survey, which provides a 'snapshot' of housing need, including those seeking affordable homes locally. Pursue a rural exception site. Explore merits of setting up a Community Land Trust. 	MWTC, local community, landowners
The economy and jobs			
3.	Supporting sustainable tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a visitor strategy and marketing plan for the town and wider parish. Initiate a local Welcome Host scheme to improve visitor skills and customer service. Establish a local guide scheme to provide local tours and advice to visitors. 	MWTC, SC, visitor attractions, accommodation, retailers, residents, regional tourist board
4.	Communications infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with providers to ensure good coverage (mobile, broadband) across the parish. 	MWTC, providers
Reducing flood risk			
5.	Monitoring risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare update to the Integrated Urban Drainage Management Plan. 	MWTC, Flood Action Group
6.	Natural solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with landowners to identify ways to deliver activities suggested in <i>Table 5</i>. 	MWTC, SC, Severn Trent Water, landowners

Ref.	Issue	Possible Actions	Lead agencies / partners
Transport and Movement			
7.	Traffic management in the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the pros and cons of designing a shared space/ traffic calming measures within the High Street. Seek funding as appropriate. 	MWTC, SC, local businesses
8.	Traffic speed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging any major schemes to use design to slow-down traffic, for example through the introduction of tighter bends into side-roads, as opposed to wide openings; the creative use of planters to narrow lanes; use of modal filters, which allow the passage of some modes of transport but not others. Introducing slower speed limits in part or all of the town. Redirecting HGVs away from rural lanes. 	SC, Satnav providers
9.	Public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with SC Highways and public transport providers to explore ways to improve the overall provision. 	MWTC, SC, private operators, schools
10.	Pavement safety for school children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out audits for the Primary and Secondary Safe Routes to School, in terms of provision of footpaths, crossing points, safe parking provision for drop-off, lighting etc. 	MWTC, SC, schools
11.	Dropped kerbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of dropped kerbs in the town, which enable disabled access. 	MWTC
12.	Pavement quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair uneven surfaces and pavements. 	SC
13.	Inconsiderate car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with SC to ensure that adequate parking enforcement is in place. 	SC
14.	Wayfinding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a local signage audit to ensure that local facilities and key routes (walking) are well-marked and easy to find. 	MWTC
Community well-being			
15.	Additional youth facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with youth groups locally to understand specific needs that might be delivered, for instance, through a strategic allocation or funded via developer contributions 	MWTC, schools, youth groups
16.	Utilities traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with SC to explore ways to minimise impacts (noise) from utilities traffic, for instance refuse lorries. 	MWTC, SC

Ref.	Issue	Possible Actions	Lead agencies / partners
17.	Support local community events and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant community facilities as “Assets of Community Value”. Encourage successful businesses to continue to “give back” to community. Promotion of additional events/ markets. 	MWTC, businesses, residents
Design, Character, heritage			
18.	Celebrating local heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore funding available to those with heritage at risk. Extend the <u>Olympianes</u> Trail to include disabled access. 	MWTC, SC, Historic England
19.	Supporting high quality design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Local Design Panel to advise the Town Council on the 'technical' aspects of planning applications of all types, using the Design Guidance for Much Wenlock. Provide advice to parishioners about lighting of homes and how this can be achieved without compromising dark skies or impacting neighbour amenity. 	MWTC, residents
Wildlife and environment			
20.	Biodiversity opportunity areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with landowners and SC to identify potential areas to ‘bank’ as biodiversity opportunity areas within the parish. Supporting and inputting into the work of the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Nature Recovery Network. 	MWTC, SC, landowners, residents
21.	Wildflower planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage homeowners and others to plant wildflowers to attract pollinators. 	Residents, landowners, MWTC
22.	Tree canopy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the locations for tree planting to enhance the road scenes throughout the Parish. Consider an ‘Adopt a Tree’ scheme. 	MWTC
23.	Supporting local producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to set up a <u>Community Supported Agriculture Scheme</u> in the Parish. 	MWTC, agricultural businesses

8. POLICIES MAPS

Key to Policies map:

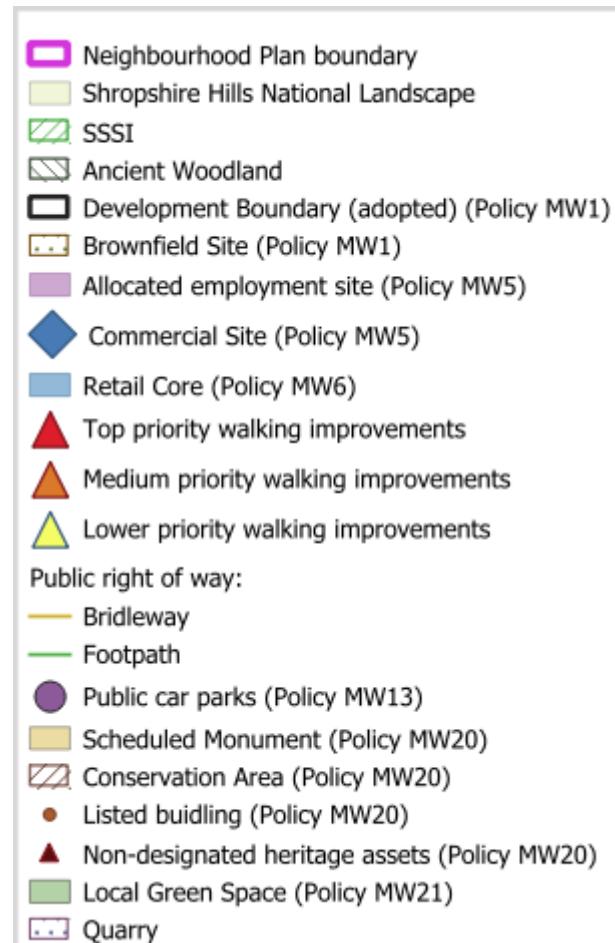


Figure 24: Policies Map - parish-wide

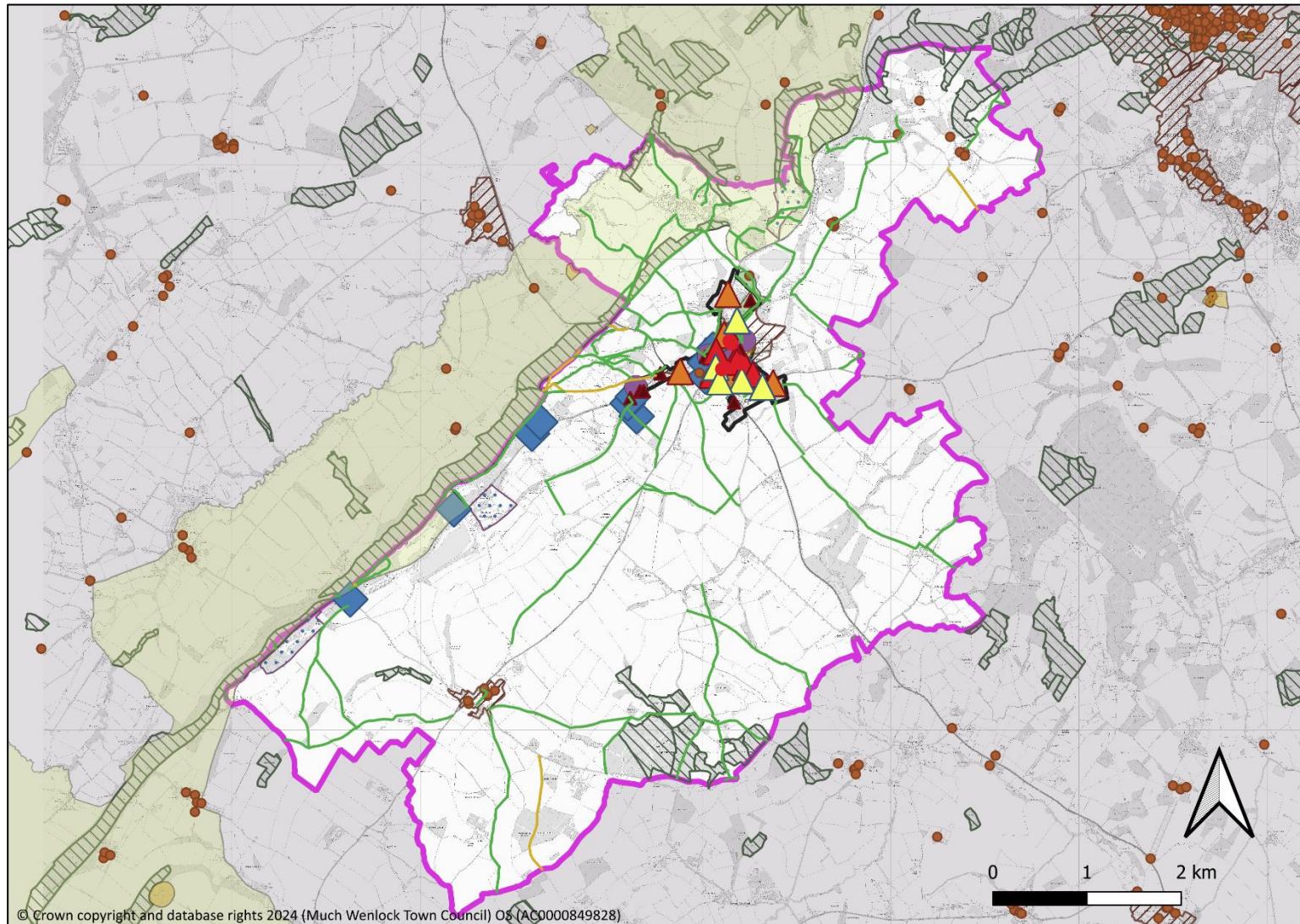


Figure 25: Policies Map - Much Wenlock town

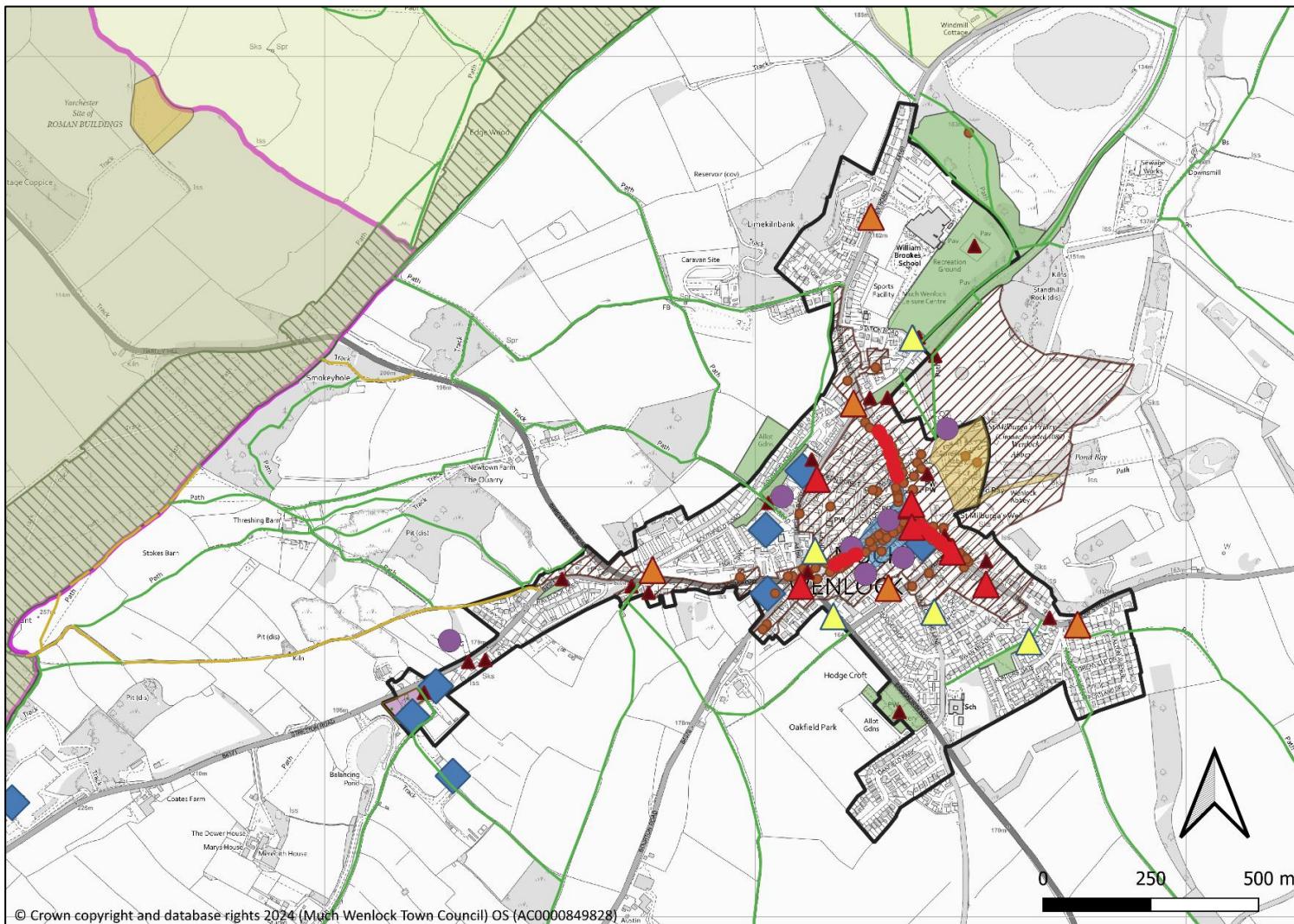


Figure 26: Policies Map - centre of Much Wenlock

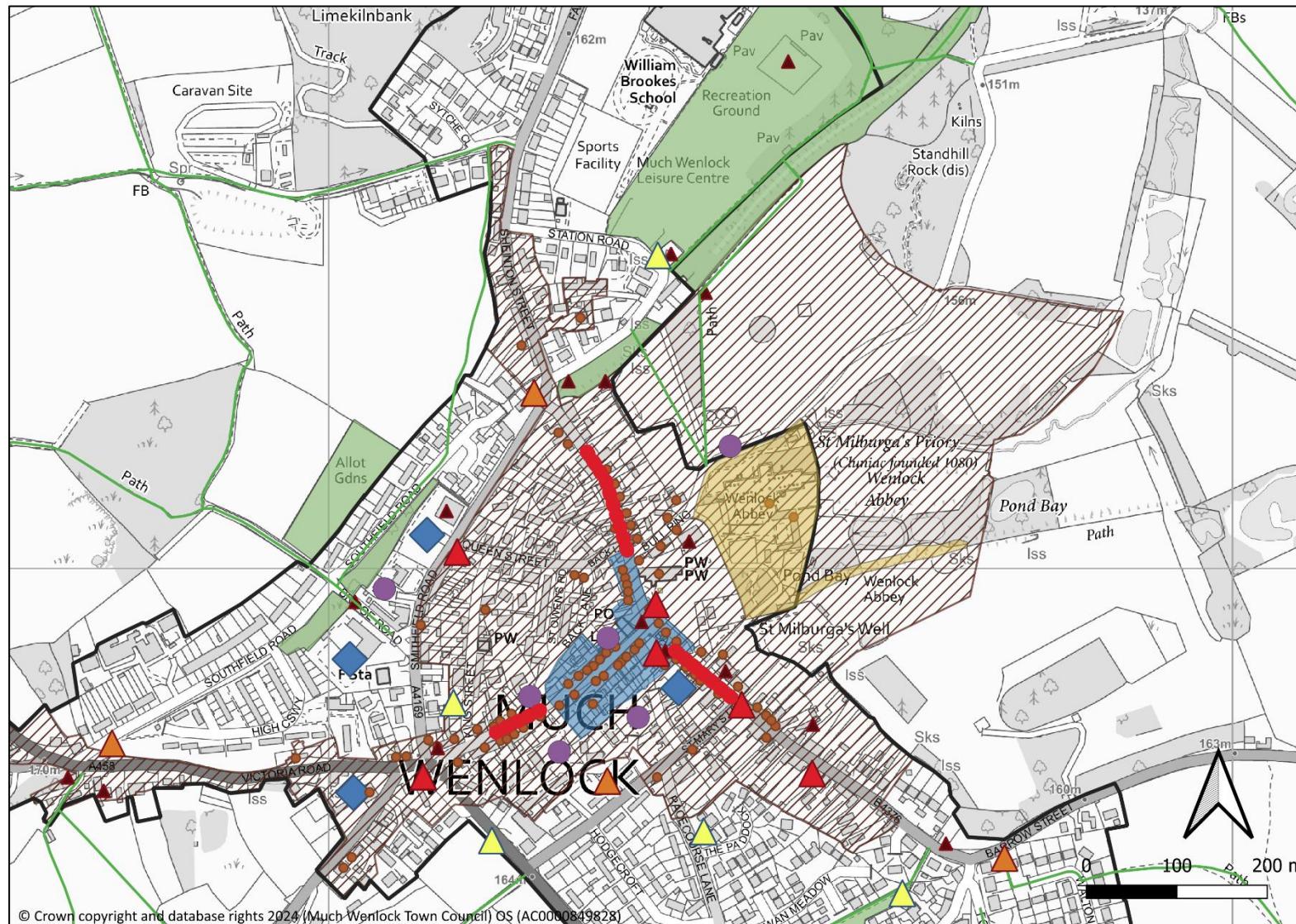


Figure 27: Policies Map - south Much Wenlock

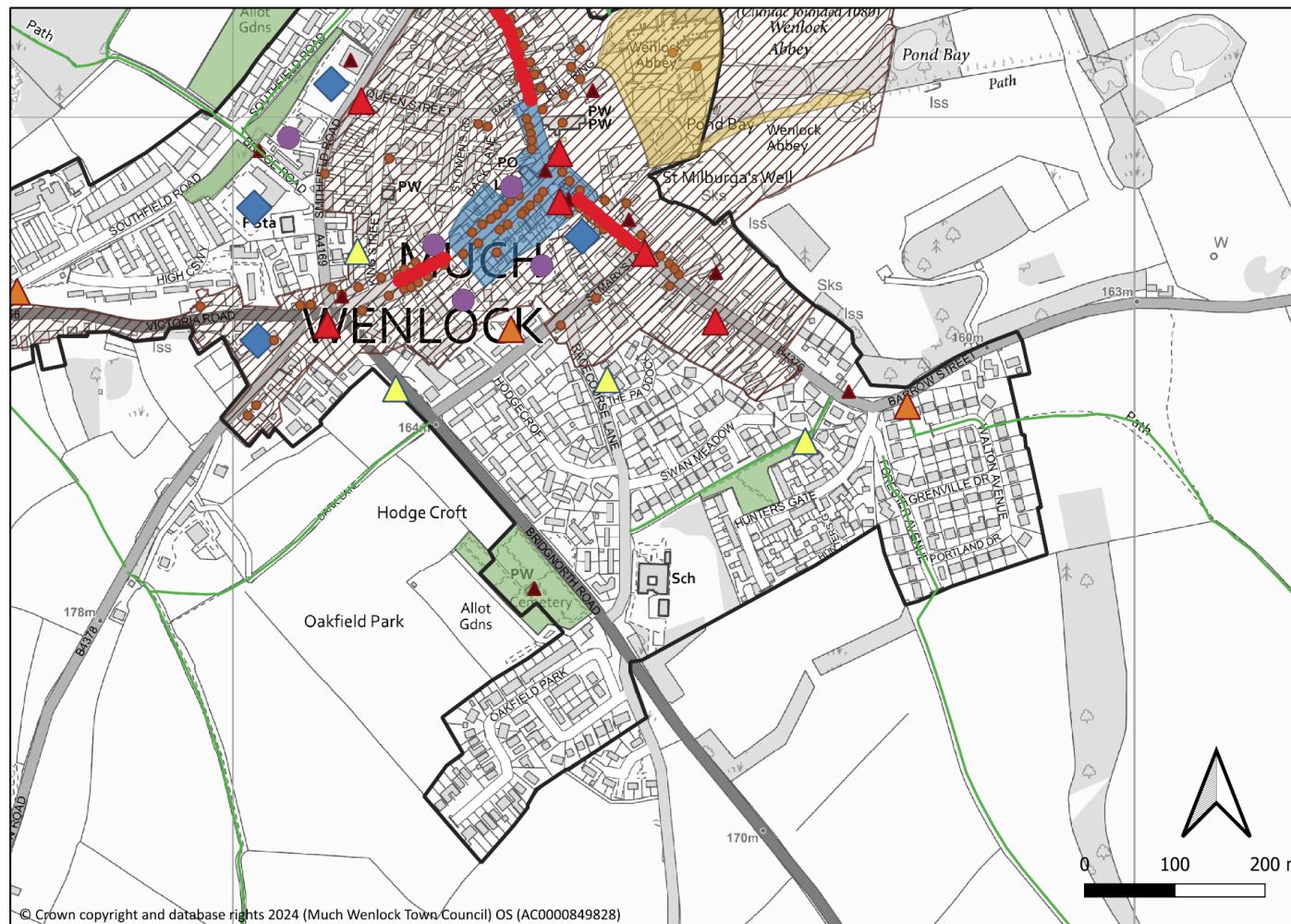
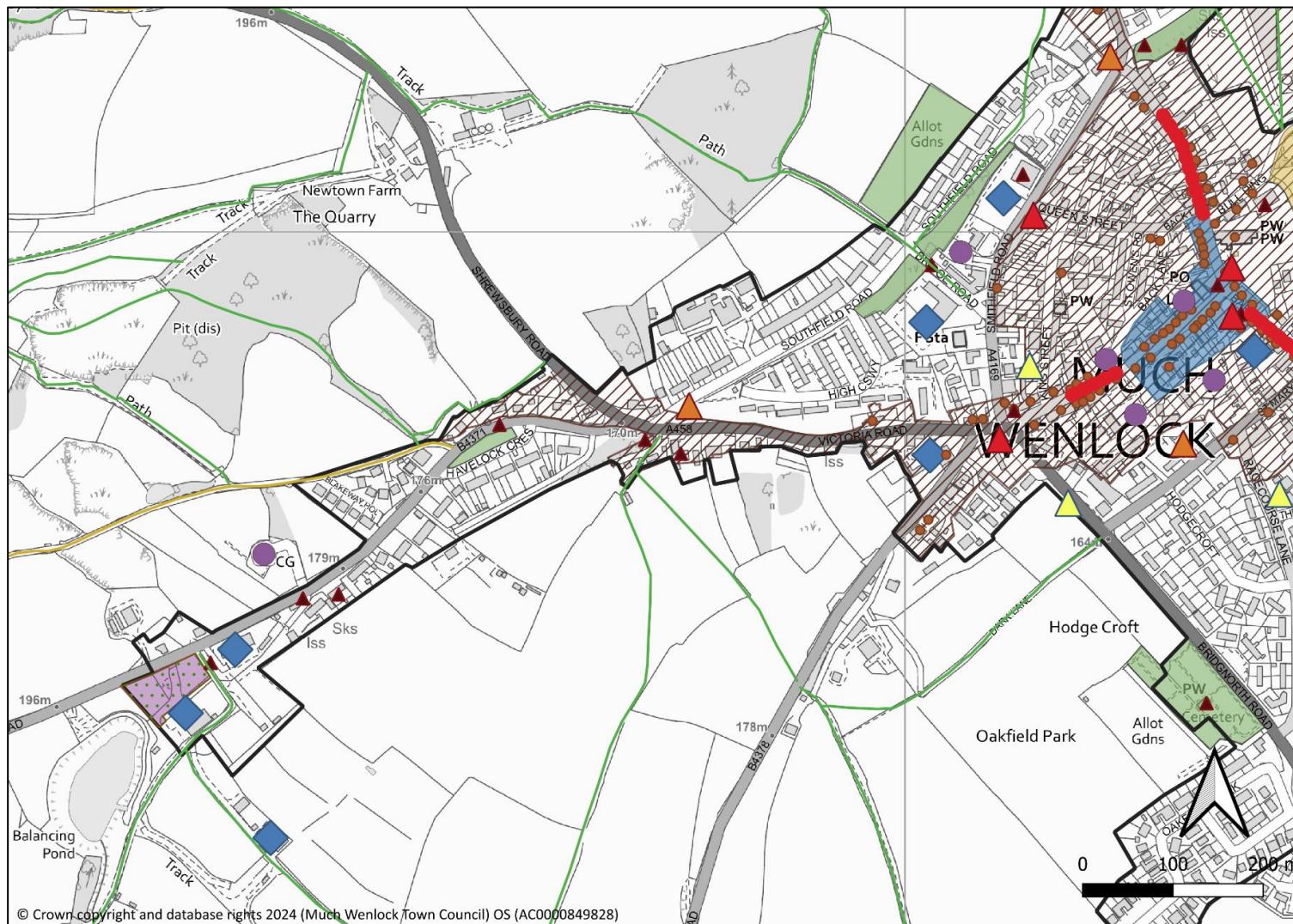


Figure 28: Policies Map - west Much Wenlock



9. GLOSSARY

- **Active travel:** Walking or cycling as a means of transport, in order to get to a particular destination such as work, the shops or to visit friends. It does not cover walking and cycling done purely for pleasure, for health reasons, or simply walking the dog (Welsh Government (2014) Active Travel: Walking and Cycling www.gov.uk/government/statistics/active-travel-financial-year-ending-march-2015)
- **Affordable housing:** housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:
 - a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
 - b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.
 - c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
 - d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.
- **Ancient or veteran tree/tree of arboricultural value:** A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.
- **Archaeological interest:** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- **Blue infrastructure:** Blue infrastructure refers to water elements, like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities, etc. Green infrastructure refers to trees, lawns, hedgerows, parks, fields, forests, etc. These terms come from urban planning and land-use planning.
- **Change of Use:** A change in the way that land or buildings are used (see Use Classes Order). Planning permission is usually necessary to change a "use class".

- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made by new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and would
- **Conservation area:** an area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.
- **Designated heritage asset:** A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
- **Development boundary:** These identify the areas of primarily built form, rather than countryside. They identify areas within which development of brownfield land may normally be appropriate, including infilling, redevelopment and conversions in accordance with Government Policy and Guidance (NPPF and NPPG). They do not include a presumption for the development of greenfield land such as playing fields and other open space. Identified built-up area boundaries do not necessarily include all existing developed areas.
- **Disability:** There is no single definition for 'disability'. Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is defined as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.
- **Grampian Condition:** A Grampian condition prohibits development from commencing until a specified action is taken on other land.
- **Green and blue infrastructure:** A network of multi-functional green (land) and blue (rivers, ponds, streams etc.) space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
- **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. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- **Local connection:** For the purposes of allocating affordable homes, housing shall be occupied in accordance with [Shropshire Council's standard allocation procedures](#) with priority given to applicants who can demonstrate that they have a local connection to the parish of Much Wenlock at the time of occupation.
- **Local housing need:** The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance.
- **Local Plan:** Local Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design for the area they cover. They are a critical tool in guiding decisions about individual development proposals, as Local Plans (together with any Neighbourhood Development Plans that have been made) are the starting point for considering whether applications can be approved. It is important for all areas to put an up-to-date Local Plan in place to positively guide development decisions.
- **Major Development:** For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** the national planning policy document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- **Nature Recovery Network:** An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing

network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.

- **Non-strategic policies:** Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.
- **Older people:** People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.
- **Permitted development:** Permitted development rights are an automatic grant of planning permission which allow certain building works and changes of use to be carried out without having to make a planning application. Most houses have permitted development rights, but flats and maisonettes do not, so planning permission is required. A further example is the conversion of offices, for instance to flats, without the need for planning permission.
- **Previously developed land/ brownfield land:** Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.
- **Section 106 agreement:** A mechanism under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable.
- **Shropshire Council:** The county-wide authority has responsibility for strategic matters including waste and minerals planning, maintaining the public rights of way network, education, libraries and roads.
- **SMEs (Small to medium-sized enterprises):** The UK definition of SME is generally a small or medium-sized enterprise with fewer than 250 employees. While the SME meaning defined by the EU is also business with fewer than 250 employees, and a turnover of less than €50 million, or a balance sheet total of less than €43 million. Within this umbrella there are three different categories: medium-sized, small, and micro-businesses. These categories are defined by turnover and number of employees.
- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):** Supplementary Planning Documents may cover a range of issues, both topic and site specific, which may expand policy or provide further detail to policies contained in a Development Plan Document, where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery.
- **Use Classes Order:** The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended in 1995, 2005 and 2013) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.

10. LIST OF EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS

All links correct at November 2024. Evidence documents relating to the engagement activities that took place are also available on the Much Wenlock Town Council website.

Document/ Evidence	Author	Year
The 20 Minute Neighbourhood	Town and Country Planning Association	ongoing
Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency: Historic England Advice Note 18	Historic England	2024
Advice Note 7: Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage	Historic England	2021
Ancient tree guide 4: What are ancient, veteran and other trees of special interest?	Woodland Trust	2008
Agricultural Building Design Guide	Shropshire Hills National Landscape	2010
Allocations Policy and Scheme	Shropshire Council	2023
Biodiversity metric	Defra	2021
Building for a Healthy Life 2020	Design for Homes	2020
Building with Nature	Building with Nature	ongoing
CAMRA Public House Viability Test	Campaign for Real Ale	2019
Census	Office for National Statistics	2011
Climate Change Act 2008	HM Government	2008
Designing Out Crime: A Designer's Guide	Design and Technology Against Crime	2011
Environment Act 2021	HM Government	2021
Green Infrastructure Strategy	Shropshire Council	2020
Heritage at Risk Register	Historic England	ongoing
Historic Environment Record	Historic England in partnership with ALGAO and IHBC	ongoing
Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI)	Housing LIN	2012
Housing Standards Review	HM Government	2012 (and amended)
Integrated Urban Drainage Management Plan	Shropshire Council	2010
Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy (Consultation)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities	Published December 2022
Localism Act 2011	HM Government	2011
Much Wenlock and surrounding area Place Plan	Shropshire Council	2019
Much Wenlock Housing Needs Assessment	Much Wenlock Town Council	2024
National Design Guide	Department for Levelling Up, Housing &	2021

Document/ Evidence	Author	Year
	Communities and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government	
National Heritage List for England (NHLE)	Historic England	ongoing
National Model Design Code	Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government	2021
National Planning Policy Framework (amended July 2021)	HM Government	Amended 2021
Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act	HM Government	2006
Neighbourhood Development Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended)	HM Government	2012
Much Wenlock Local Housing Needs Assessment	AECOM	2024
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	HM Government	2004
Secured by Design	UK Police Service	various
Shropshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD)	Shropshire Council	2011
Shropshire Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment: Part 1 and Part 2	Shropshire Council	2020
Shropshire Hills Management Plan 2019-2024	Shropshire Hills National Landscape	2019
Shropshire Council Water Cycle Study (2020)	Shropshire Council	2020
Shropshire Landscape Typology	Shropshire Council	2006
Shropshire Destination Management Plan	Shropshire Council	2022
Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan	Shropshire Council	2015
Strategic Direction Statement to 2050	Severn Trent	No date
Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places	Historic England	2018
Submission Local Plan 2020 to 2038	Shropshire Council	Submitted October 2021
Town and Country Planning Act 1990	HM Government	1990
Type and Affordability of Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Shropshire Council	2012
Urban Air Quality	Woodland Trust	2012
Use Classes	Planning Portal	2021

Appendix A - Demonstrating Viability

Viability: Community facilities

The release of any community facilities to other uses must be fully justified in terms of their contribution and viability. Shropshire Council will require any application involving the loss of a facility to be supported by written evidence that the facility is no longer needed and/or no longer viable.

The level of evidence required to be submitted will vary according to the level of access to alternative facilities in the area and the extent to which the facility contributes towards sustainable communities, but would be expected to include such evidence as:

- The current and projected patterns of community use;
- The nature and condition of the building and the cost of repairs, renovations or improvements needed to allow the facility to continue in operation;
- The extent of the local catchment including the location of the premises in relation to the local settlement pattern and accessibility;
- The nature and location of comparable facilities;
- The potential to relocate the use into other premises in the community;
- Evidence of the marketing of a site should include sales literature, details of approaches and details of offers and show that it has been offered as a whole and that parts have not been identified for separate sale;
- Evidence that the local community has been notified of the intention to close the facility and has not, within a period of one year come forward with a realistic proposal to assume operation of the facility, including proposals to finance and operate the facility.

The importance of particular facilities will vary, and it is essential that the community is involved in considering the merits of any facility and the suitability of any proposals for alternative forms of community use should their continued viability of operation be in doubt. Applicants proposing to redevelop or convert facilities valued by the community will be expected to consult local communities about the relative importance of the facilities which could be lost.

Not all facilities satisfactorily meet the needs of local communities, and it may be that combining or rationalising facilities might be more appropriate.

Support will be given to the provision of new facilities where these will enhance the sustainability of community life and will meet the needs of an existing or growing and changing population.

Viability of employment sites and retail premises: Evidencing non-viability

It is important that the potential for all employment uses is considered on the site before planning applications are made for non-employment uses. Where a business is coming to the end of its economic life or has ceased trading altogether, applicants will be expected to submit a Viability Statement as part of the planning application. The Viability Statement should provide proof of marketing and demonstrate that there is no realistic prospect of retaining or re-using the site in its current use. The viability case will be considered along with other policy considerations. Proof of marketing should include all of the following criteria:

- i. The land/premises has/have been widely marketed through an agent or surveyor at a price that reflects its current market or rental value for employment purposes, and no reasonable offer has been refused. The period of marketing should be 18 months for commercial / industrial, 6 months for retail.
- ii. The land/premises has been regularly advertised in the local press and regional press, property press, specialist trade papers and any free papers covering relevant areas. This should initially be weekly advertising for the first month, followed by monthly advertising for the remainder of the marketing period. Advertisements should be targeted at the appropriate target audience.
- iii. The land/premises has been continuously included on the agent's website, the agent's own papers and lists of commercial/business premises for the marketing period.
- iv. There has been an agent's advertisement board on each site frontage to the highway throughout the marketing period.
- v. Evidence that local property agents, specialist commercial agents and local businesses have been contacted and sent mail shots or hard copies of particulars to explore whether they can make use of the premises.

The Viability Statement should also detail the following information:

- i. Details of current occupation of the buildings and where this function would be relocated;
- ii. Details as to why the site location makes it unsuitable for existing uses;
- iii. Any physical constraints making the site difficult to accommodate existing uses;
- iv. Environmental considerations/amenity issues; and
- v. Consideration, firstly, for a mixed-use scheme involving the existing use and other compatible uses, secondly, for other employment generating uses such as those relating to tourism, leisure, retail and residential institutions and, thirdly, of the viability of providing affordable housing on the site, which could meet a specific local need, before consideration of market housing.

In certain cases, for example, where a significant departure from policy is proposed, the Council may seek to independently verify the Viability Statement, and the applicant will be required to bear the cost of independent verification.

APPENDIX B – Definitions of accessible toilets

Definitions taken from: <https://www.independentliving.co.uk>

Changing Places are designed so that they are completely accessible and provide sufficient space and equipment for people who are not able to use the toilet independently. They must be an extra facility, in addition to the accessible toilets for independent use.

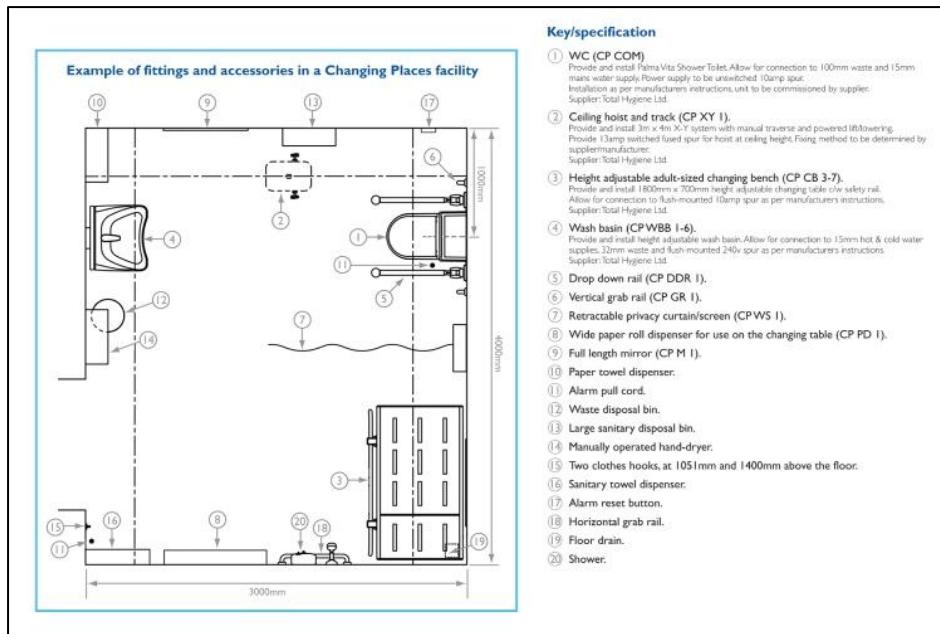
To start, there must be adequate space in a Changing Places: three metres by four metres is the recommended minimum, with a ceiling height of at least 2.4 metres.

Equipment that should be included:

- **Changing bench**, adult sized (minimum 1800 mm long by 800 mm wide). This should be height adjustable and can either be freestanding or wall-mounted.
- **Hoist** providing access between changing bench, basin and toilet. Ideally, ceiling or wall mounted, but a mobile hoist is acceptable if a track-mounted lifter is not possible. Hoist should comply with BS EN ISO 10535.
- **Toilet** must be a peninsular installation, with at least one metre of clear space on each side. It can be an automatic wash and dry toilet or a standard manual one, and in either case, the seat height should be 480 mm.
- **Washbasin**, which can be a standard model, or height adjustable. If it can't be adjusted in height, it should be fitted at between 720 and 740 mm from the floor.
- **Curtain or screen** to provide privacy for the user and carer(s)
- **Non-slip flooring**
- Wide tear-off **paper roll** in a dispenser close to the changing bench
- Large **waste bin** for disposing of pads, etc

These features are to be included with those of a standard accessible toilet:

- **Grab rails** where appropriate to provide necessary support
- **Emergency alarm** to summon help if necessary. Make sure that the red cord always hangs loose so that it can be used immediately.



Relevant British Standard for Changing Places: Update July 2020: [Changing Places to be compulsory, rather than simply desirable](#)

Building Regs and British standards updated at the beginning of 2018

A Changing Places toilet is 'desirable' under Building Regulations Approved Document M and BS8300:2009 for all new build and refurbishment projects involving buildings to which numbers of the public have access.

A new clause has been added to the guidance, concerning the types of buildings that should include these facilities. This specifies visitor attractions, such as theme parks, monitored beaches and parks. Faith centres have been added, and the retail clause has been extended to include large commercial retail premises. The standards say that "Changing Places toilets should be provided in larger buildings and complexes, such as:

- a. major transport termini or interchanges, e.g. large railway stations and airports
- b. motorway services
- c. sport and leisure facilities, including large hotels
- d. cultural centres, such as museums, concert halls and art galleries and faith centres
- e. stadia and large auditoria
- f. large commercial retail premises and shopping centres
- g. key buildings within town centres, e.g. town halls, civic centres and main public libraries
- h. educational establishments
- i. health facilities, such as hospitals, health centres and community practices
- j. other visitor attractions, such as theme parks, monitored beaches and parks"

The Changing Places Standard is based on the BS8300:2009. The requirements listed above should not be regarded as a substitute for the comprehensive information included in the British Standard.

Information on standard features needed in an accessible toilet is published in Approved Document M (England), Document T (Scotland), Document R (Northern Ireland) of the Building Regulations.

Appendix C – Much Wenlock Design Guidance and Codes

The Design Guidance and Codes for Much Wenlock form an integral part of the MWNP Neighbourhood Plan, underpinning a number of the policies.

Due to its size, the document is in a separate appendix and can be accessed on the Town Council website.

Appendix D - Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The following buildings and structures are identified as non-designated heritage assets.

Ref	Name and why important
1	<p><u>PAVILION ON THE BOWLING GREEN - ORIGINAL TEMPORARY RAILWAY STATION TICKET OFFICE</u> <u>BOWLING GREEN CLUB HOUSE</u></p> <p>Address: Linden Field, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Much Wenlock Bowling Club</p> <p>Age: 1860s</p> <p>Type: Public building</p> <p>Description: Decorated wooden single-story building.</p> <p>Historic Significance: Original temporary Railway Station ticket office from the Much Wenlock Railway Company Goods Yard resited onto the Linden Field for the use of Much Wenlock Bowling Club</p> <p>Architectural Significance:</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Community asset for sport and recreation.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: Landmark on the Linden Field.</p> 

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Ref	Name and why important
2	<p>MUCH WENLOCK RAILWAY STATION HOUSE</p> <p>Address: Station Road, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: private</p> <p>Age: 1864/66</p> <p>Type: private dwellings</p> <p>Description: Private dwellingss previously the Station Building for the Much Wenlock and Severn Junction Railway Company and Much Wenlock Railway Company.</p> <p>Historic Significance: The Railway Station for the town of Much Wenlock for 100 years until the line closure in 1963. Spectators and competitors alighted to attend the historic Wenlock Olympian Games on the nearby Linden Field.</p> <p>Architectural Significance: Victorian building housing the “WEN” inside a lock logo, the only one on the external facade of a building in the town. Designed by engineer Joseph Fogerty CE in Gothic Revival style. In an article published in The Engineer January 1868 it was extolled for its attractiveness, adaptability and comparatively low cost.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance:</p> <p>Townscape Significance: A marker for the existence of a railway in the town and the public footpath on the nearby redundant railway track.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">© Howard Horsley</p>

Ref	Name and why important
3	<p>PAIR OF GATE PILLARS</p> <p>Address: Station Road, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: unknown</p> <p>Age: 1860s-70s</p> <p>Type: Street furniture</p> <p>Description: Pair of brick pillars marking the entrance to Station Road leading to the Station Building for the Much Wenlock and Severn Junction Railway Company and Much Wenlock Railway Company.</p> <p>Historic / Townscape Significance: Mark the approach to the Railway Station of the town of Much Wenlock.</p> 

Ref	Name and why important
4	<p>RAILWAY ABUTMENT SHEINTON STREET</p> <p>Address: Corner of Sheinton Street and Station Road</p> <p>Ownership: Highways</p> <p>Age: 160 years old</p> <p>Type: Remaining abutment of railway viaduct with inscriptions</p>

Description: Large machine cut limestone retaining wall built at the end of a raised section of the former railway line. It was built as the East side of the viaduct carrying the railway over Sheinton Street between the later passenger station and the goods yard.

Historic Significance: 23rd OCTOBER 1861 the first unofficial passenger train ran over this abutment to the temporary platform in what became the goods yard between New Road and Southfield Road. On the same occasion Miss Wayne and others assembled NW of the temporary platform to cut the first sods of the extension of the railway to Craven Arms. The passengers had come to the Olympian Games held on the Linden Field. The railway opened officially on 11th February 1862.

Architectural Significance: It defines the entrance to the town from the Telford direction

Social and Economic Significance: Stone now indistinct on top left corner laid by Lt Col. Benjamin Edwards 4th November 1860. "SUCCESS TO THE RAILROAD AND STRENGTH TO THE BRIDGE MAY MONEY PASS OVER HEAVILY TIME LIGHTLY AND MEN AND WOMEN SAFELY".

Townscape Significance: Prominent landmark at the entrance to the central area of the town



Ref	Name and why important
5	<p><u>RAILWAY GOODS TRANSHIPMENT BUILDING</u></p> <p>Address: Flats Station Wharf Southfield Road Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Housing Association</p> <p>Age: 160 years. It was built between the building of the first part of the line from Buildwas to Much Wenlock in 1860 and the completion of the adjacent Engine Shed, now demolished, and the permanent passenger Station by the Linden Field in 1866</p> <p>Type: Building – now flats - belonging to housing association.</p>

Description: Railway goods transhipment building now flats. Rectangular limestone building with brown painted bricked in entrance to each end. Prominent lintel. Four windows set in a square. Formerly this was the route a section of rail track in the goods yard took through the building. See below

Historic Significance: Dr William Penny Brookes and his brother Andrew were closely involved in bringing the railway to Much Wenlock in an effort to boost the local economy. The goods platform began in front of this building and continued inside it. A section of track went straight through the building so that trucks could be easily accessed from the internal platform aided by a 30cwt crane. Local businesses like coal merchants, animal feed suppliers and builders' merchants would have had wharves in the goods yard. The exterior platform as it continued to the west of the building was the location of the temporary wooden waiting room and ticket office used when the railway first opened. After the brick station was built in 1866 the temporary waiting room was relocated to the Gaskell [Recreation GroundField](#) and finally to the Bowling Green. Large amounts of bark for the local tanning industry was offloaded at the wharves.

Architectural Significance: Good example of reuse rather than demolition and rebuild of an industrial building. Original openings respected in the conversion to indicate previous use.

Townscape Significance: A lone reminder in the town of the economic importance of the railway to the commercial rather than passenger traffic carried on the Wellington, Much Wenlock and Craven Arms Railway.



Ref	Name and why important
6	<p>PRIORY HALL</p> <p>Address: Bull Ring, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: The building is owned by Wenlock Estates. The building is managed by the charity.</p> <p>Age: 1847</p> <p>Type: Public building</p> <p>Description: Stone Victorian School originally</p> <p>Historic Significance: Built to house Much Wenlock National School 1847. Linked to the work of Dr William Penny Brookes on the benefits of physical education for children.</p> <p>Architectural Significance: ARCHITECT: S. Pou<u>n</u>tney Smith.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Much Wenlock Community Centre hosting a variety of meetings and events.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: Sits in the curtilage of Much Wenlock Priory behind the remaining 13c gate tower.</p> 

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Ref.	Name and why important
7	<p>MUCH WENLOCK MUSEUM AND TOURIST INFORMATION</p> <p>Address: High Street, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Much Wenlock Town Council</p> <p>Age: 150 years (1870s)</p> <p>Type: Building, publicly owned</p> <p>Description: Built in limestone with a prominent central mock timber framed dormer window, 2 smaller dormers with open front below, originally used as market hall. Later extended to the front and closed in as 1914-1918 war memorial. Ground floor windows and door are arched with hood moulds above.</p> <p>Architectural Significance: “Market Hall (now tourist information) 1879 by S. Pountney Smith as the Guildhall’s little brother” (Newman J Pevsner N (2006) The Buildings of England Shropshire, p.430). One of several buildings commissioned by the then Borough to provide improvements in the public realm. (The Corn Exchange and former School also by Pountney Smith are Listed Buildings).</p> <p>Historic Significance: Built as Market Hall, extended and dedicated as a War Memorial, later used as Cinema and then used as a museum.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Museum exhibiting the connection of the town with the reestablishment of the Olympic Games as well as the geologically significant Wenlock Edge. Part of the tourist offer in the town.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: Prominent position opposite the town square and the Guildhall.</p> 

Ref	Name and why important
8	<p><u>CLOCK IN THE SQUARE</u></p> <p>Address: The Square, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Much Wenlock Town Council</p> <p>Age: 125 years old</p> <p>Type: Street furniture</p> <p>Description: Small rusticated limestone clocktower approximately 3.5 meters high. Clock faces on three sides. Clock in painted black and gold metal topped by delicate gold crown and small orb finial. Includes polished marble drinking fountain, two niches at ground level maybe drinking stations for small animals - defunct. Several stone plaques. Small door under blank face to access the mechanism – now electrified</p> <p>Historic Significance: Given by Mayor Thomas Cooke who had the shop opposite – now Spar. Plaques below the clockface commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897 and the clocks restoration for the 40th anniversary of the succession of Queen Elizabeth in 1993</p> <p>Architectural Significance: Prominent structure at the centre of the town</p> <p>Townscape Significance: Very prominent position on corner of the square facing the Museum and the Guildhall.</p>



Ref	Name and why important
9	<p><u>BUS SHELTER</u></p> <p>Address: Next to Abbey Well House Barrow Street, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Ownership not yet clarified. (If it belongs to Abbey Well House might be more suitable registered with SCC as asset of community value).</p> <p>Age: Approx. 50 years (1970s)</p> <p>Type: Building. Built as part of the planning conditions when Abbey Well House was built so that an adjacent bus shelter could be demolished.</p>

	<p>Description: A square pavilion built in the local vernacular coursed rubble limestone, tile roof with finial. Open on two adjacent sides, slatted wooden seat. The asset is still in use.</p> <p>Architectural Significance: Built as part of the prominent architect designed Abbey Well House in the 1980s. A modern building of its time but built from traditional local materials.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Built as a bus shelter but now rarely used for that purpose. It provides an attractive shelter with a seat for visitors to the town as well as townsfolk taking a rest.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: A small attractive pavilion which enhances its site. St. Milburga's Well is immediately behind it. The driveway beside it leads to the entrance to the Priors Lodging.</p> 
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Ref.	Name and why important
10	<p>WHYMPERIS WELL</p> <p>Address: St Milburga Row, Off Barrow Street Much Wenlock (between the road and the front of a private house).</p> <p>Ownership: Not known</p> <p>Age: 150 years plus (1870s or earlier)</p> <p>Type: Well and superstructure above it</p> <p>Description: It is a small stone structure covering a well. The walls and roof are built in stone. It has a wooden door set in an pointed/two-centre arched surround.</p> <p>Architectural Significance: Distinctive freestone rather than course rubble limestone building</p>

	<p>with two-centre arched doorway.</p> <p>Historic Significance: It is one of a number of wells in the town, apparently the one with the most complete superstructure.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Wells provided water before it was piped to the town. An adequate water supply facilitated an active tanning industry in the 19th century.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: St Milburga Row is an attractive small cul de sac off Barrow Street. There is a converted building on one side used as a factory during WWII. A terrace of brick cottages on the other. At the end the well features in front of the final house.</p> 
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Ref	Name and why important
11	<p><u>VICTORIAN LETTERBOX</u></p> <p>Address: Gaskell <u>Arms</u> <u>Junction</u>, top of High Street</p> <p>Ownership: Royal Mail</p> <p>Age: Pre-1900</p> <p>Type: street furniture</p> <p>Description: Victorian letterbox encased in wall of No 42 High St</p> <p>Historic Significance: The only letterbox of this age in the town</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: As above</p> <p>Townscape Significance: Contributes to streetscape character</p>



Ref	Name and why important
12	<p>RAILWAY VIADUCT ABUTMENTS</p> <p>Address: Junction of Victoria Road (A458) and Southfield Road</p> <p>Ownership: Shropshire Highways</p> <p>Age: c1865</p> <p>Type: former infrastructure</p> <p>Description: Large machine cut limestone retaining walls built at the end of the facing raised sections of the former railway line. They carried the railway line from the end of Southfield Road towards Church Stretton.</p> <p>Historic Significance: It marks the final stage of the railway to be built towards Craven Arms in 1865.</p> <p>Architectural Significance: It defines the entrance to the town from the Shrewsbury direction.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: The main function of the final section of the railway was to carry goods traffic. There was a goods yard at Longville in the Dale which continued in use after passenger traffic ceased.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: Prominent feature at the entrance to the town.</p>



Ref	Name and why important
13	<p><u>RAILWAY BRIDGE</u></p> <p>Address: Off Stretton Road by industrial units</p> <p>Ownership: unknown</p> <p>Age: 1860s</p> <p>Type: Bridge carrying unmade but well-used road over former railway</p> <p>Description: The arched limestone structure carries vehicular access to an industrial unit, the attenuation pond, Cuan Wildlife Rescue and residential properties. The underside of the arch is blocked by a metal fence and the structure itself is almost entirely covered by ivy.</p> <p>Historic Significance: Railway relic.</p> <p>Architectural Significance: The bridge is of a type widely used in the midlands and elsewhere to carry road traffic over railways.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: The railway formed part of the critical infrastructure of Wenlock in the 19th century.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: Lying on the very edge of the town this attractive structure still performs an essential function.</p>



Ref	Name and why important
14	<p><u>HAVELOCK WELL</u></p> <p>Address: Set in retaining wall at No 3 Stretton Road.</p> <p>Ownership: unknown</p> <p>Age: Thought to be 17th century.</p> <p>Type: Ancient structure embedded in wall</p> <p>Description: The well-head is constructed within a limestone retaining wall and has an covering arch with keystone.</p> <p>Historic Significance: The location of Much Wenlock in a bowl surrounded by hills creates outlets for water runoff. In pagan times wells were considered sacred and therefore spiritual significance has accrued to several of these springs</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Linked to the social history of the town as a water source.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: Contributes to and emphasizes the historic limestone infrastructure of the town.</p> 

Ref	Name and why important
15	<p>BIRCHFIELD GARAGE</p> <p>Address: Victoria Road</p> <p>Ownership: private</p> <p>Age: thought to be 1950s</p> <p>Type: Extant 1950s petrol pumps outside former garage.</p> <p>Description: The petrol pumps have recently been cleaned and re-painted by the owners.</p> <p>Historic Significance: This assemblage, at what remains the entrance to the town, is a charming remnant of mid-20th century motoring.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: As above.</p> 

Ref.	Name and why important
16	<p>THE CEMETERY CHAPEL</p> <p>Address: Bridgnorth Road, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Much Wenlock Town Council</p> <p>Age: 150 years (1870s)</p> <p>Type: Building, publicly owned.</p> <p>Description: Chapel built out of Much Wenlock Limestone, tile roof, with pairs of two light shallow ogee leaded light windows, pointed arch entrance door. Stone trefoil arch on roof line for bell (not present) the arch has castellated finials. Elaborate stone and timber porch with gabled roof. Well-built stone and tile lean to at the rear.</p>

	<p>Architectural Significance: Stone built mortuary chapel with prominent porch in the Arts and Crafts style. Architect well known Shrewsbury Architect Lloyd Oswell.</p> <p>From article in Wellington Journal about Bishop of Hereford consecrating the Burial Ground.</p> <p>Historic Significance: One of several buildings commissioned by the then Borough to provide improvements in the public realm.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: The chapel is the centrepiece of a typical 19th century town cemetery. Publicly accessible open space is limited in the town (Report Appendix C by LUC 2020 for Shropshire Council). The now closed cemetery is looked after by a small group, who seek to improve its biodiversity whilst keeping it tidy and attractive to people who still visit family graves or sit and enjoy the view over the town.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: It has a prominent position on the Bridgnorth Road.</p> 
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Ref	Name and why important
17	<p><u>MANAGERS HOUSE GASWORKS</u></p> <p>Address: Barrow Street, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Private</p> <p>Age: Gasworks est. 1856</p> <p>Type: Private building</p> <p>Description: Brick built house on site of the Much Wenlock Gas Works</p> <p>Historic Significance: Only remaining structure on the site of the town's Gas Works since 1856.</p>



Ref	Name and why important
18	<p><u>BLOCK OF FOUR HOUSES BUILT FOR RAILWAY STAFF</u></p> <p>Address: Nos 20 -23 Stretton Road Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Private</p> <p>Age: 1860</p> <p>Type: Private houses</p> <p>Description: The four houses are built of brick with yellow brick dressings, the two end ones facing away from each other and projecting slightly.</p> <p>Historic Significance: Built for employees of the railway, which until the 1960s ran on raised ground to the rear of the houses</p> <p>Architectural Significance: The block is comparable to other groups of houses built for public officials. It has some architectural pretension with yellow brick quoins and corbel table under the eaves. All four retain their sash windows.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Connection to the railway.</p>



Ref	Name and why important
19	<p><u>TOLL HOUSE</u></p> <p>Address: 26 Stretton Road</p> <p>Ownership: Private</p> <p>Age: 1800</p> <p>Type: private house.</p> <p>Description: The limestone cottage faces east and has a 'gothick' style window</p> <p>Historic Significance: Much Wenlock has several remaining toll houses located on routes out of/into the town. They date from the end of the nineteenth century when Shropshire roads were 'turnpiked'.</p> <p>Architectural Significance: This cottage represents a type found elsewhere in the county from a period when the Picturesque Movement favoured revival of gothic features. Like the others it faces oncoming traffic and would have controlled a barrier.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Tolls were collected to cover costs of highway maintenance.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: This building forms part of a group of late eighteenth-century early nineteenth century limestone cottages at the western edge of the town.</p>



Ref	Name and why important
20	<p><u>BRIDGE OVER THE FORMER RAILWAY</u></p> <p>Address: Bridge Road</p> <p>Ownership: Highways.</p> <p>Age: c. 1865</p> <p>Type: Infrastructure</p> <p>Description: Bridge over the course of the former railway. Abutments in stone, brick parapet on iron lintel carries the road up to Southfield Road.</p> <p>Historic Significance: Some years ago, there was a proposal to demolish it. Dr Mark Horton a resident and an archaeologist much involved with Coast and Time Team (The first episodes were made around Wenlock) made a case to the Council to keep it. The viaducts at the top of Sheinton Street and across the A458 had already been demolished. He argued it was the last bridge over the railway in the town itself and one of the last remaining remnants of The Wellington Much Wenlock and Craven Arms Railway.</p> <p>From the former viaduct across Sheinton Street to the houses below this bridge was the goods yard and the site of the first passenger platform.</p> <p>Social and Economic Significance: Once a short cut to Southfield Road from the town.</p> <p>Townscape Significance: It adds context to the long narrow grass strip which runs along the south side of Southfield Road. It is a reminder this neatly mown stretch of grass and trees was once a railway line running immediately opposite the houses.</p>



Ref	Name and why important
21	<p>GASKELL RECREATION GROUNDFIELD LODGE</p> <p>Address: Station Road, Much Wenlock</p> <p>Ownership: Much Wenlock Town Council as Trustees of the Playing Field</p> <p>Age: c.1935</p> <p>Type: House belonging to the Gaskell <u>Recreation Ground</u>Ground Playing Fields</p> <p>Description: Double fronted brick and tile one and a half storey lodge with a prominent central dormer and lead roofed porch the latter resting on decorative wooden supports. Brick relieving arches over the ground floor windows. A commemorative plaque towards the top of the dormer.</p>

Historic Significance: The plaque on the house records the gift of the playing fields to the town. Playing Fields Presented by Mrs Mary WardLady Catherine Milnes Gaskell To Commemorate The Silver Jubilee of HM George V 1935.

Architectural Significance: Small house with architectural detail to reflect its location and purpose.

Social and Economic Significance: Rent contributes to Town Council income including for the upkeep of the playing field.

Townscape Significance: Prominent position at the entrance to the Gaskell Location of the Much Wenlock Olympian Games and opposite the former Railway Station building.



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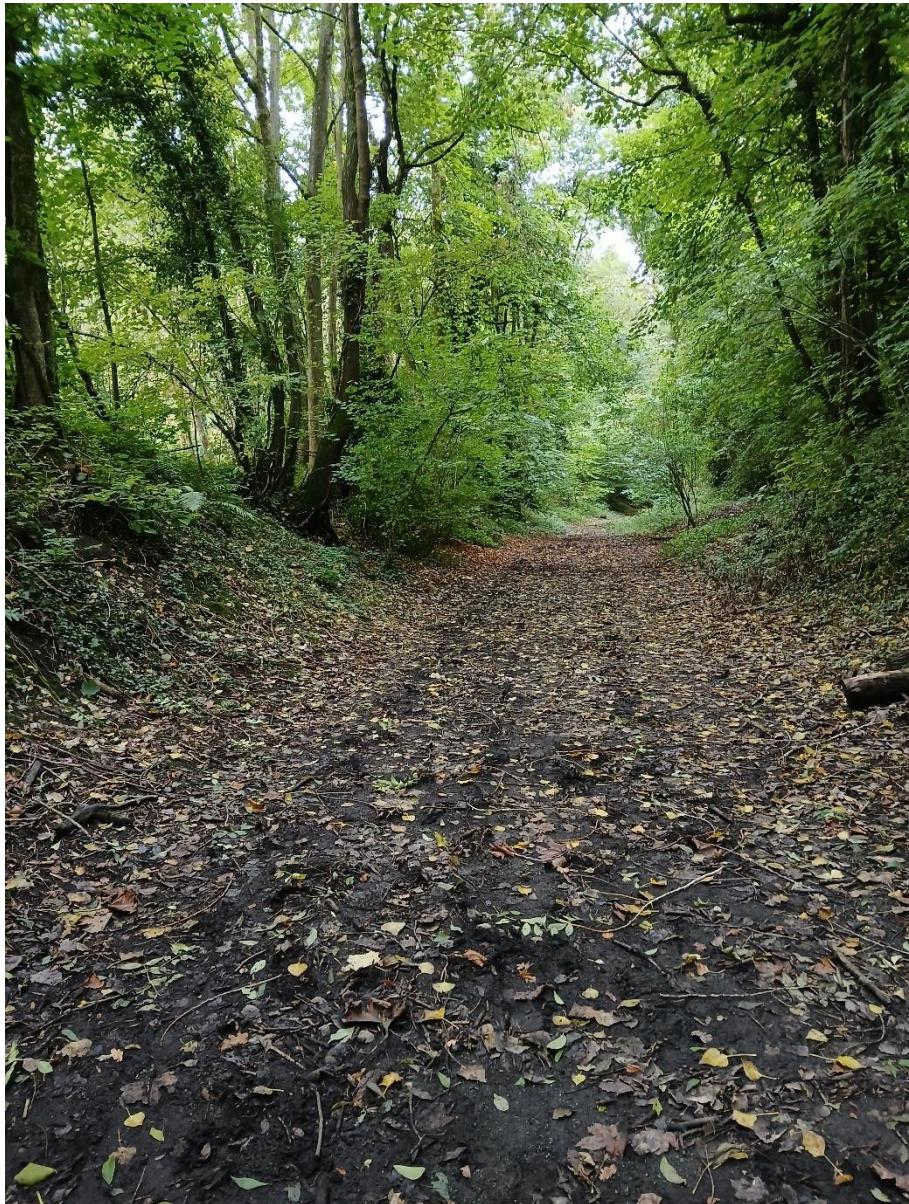
APPENDIX **EF** – Local Green Spaces

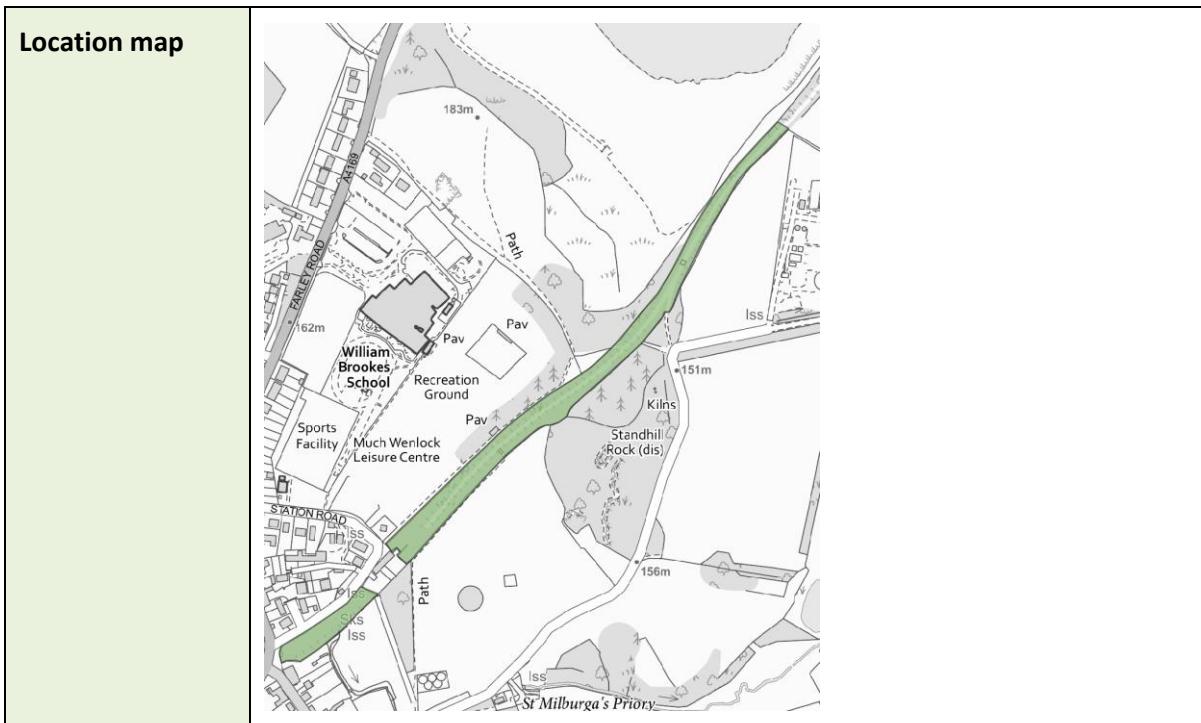
The list of Local Green Spaces (LGS) has been developed and tested following the Locality guidance “[Making local green space designations in your neighbourhood plan](#)”.

LGS1: Railway Walk

Address and location	Railway Walk. Beginning Station Road, South West of the Gaskell Recreation Ground ending some 200 yards along the old railway line.
Ownership details	Shropshire Council
Description and purpose / current use	Part of the old railway line which ran from Much Wenlock to Ironbridge. It is a flat tree lined walk which cuts through rocky out crops. It is well used by local residents as it also forms part of a circular walk with the Windmill Hill and the Gaskell Recreation Ground. It is a disabled access space with benches for resting.
Any designations	It is designated as Open Space under the Open Spaces Act. The Railway Walk has the additional designation of a QE2 field which means that it must remain a public open space in perpetuity, it also forms part of the Jack Mytton Way.
Site allocations in Local Plan	The location forms part of the Green Infrastructure strategy within the Key Centre of Much Wenlock.
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	There is public access at several points from the base of the Windmill Hill and the Gaskell Recreation Ground Linden Walk. Station Road is situated at the northwest end of the conservation area and is in close proximity to those who live in or around the town centre but less so to residents in the south of the town.
Demonstrably Special?	Recreation: Quiet, flat walking and used by disabled carriages and push chairs, dense surrounding woodland habitat with mosses on rocky outcrops. Wildlife: Habitat which attracts many species of bird with the attendant birdsong in spring.
Local in character?	Yes, part of the old railway line.

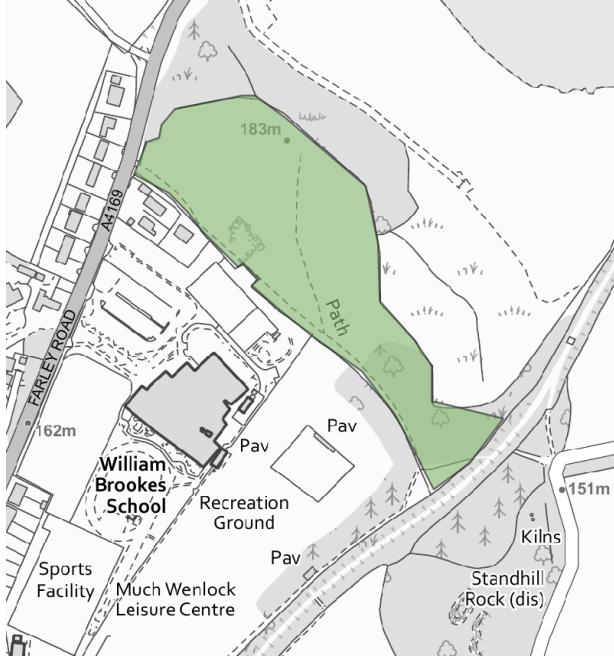
Photo





LGS2: Windmill Hill

Address and location	Windmill Hill, North end of the Gaskell Recreation Ground with access from the Farley Road, the Railway Walk, the Gaskell Recreation Ground and the Railway Walk.
Ownership details	Leased by the Windmill Hill Trust from Wenlock Estate ^s .
Description and purpose / current use	Limestone hill with Victorian windmill at summit, surrounded by grass land formed as the final rise of Wenlock Edge. Woodland habitat at base. Open space for walking.
Any designations	Designated Local Nature Reserve under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
Site allocations in Local Plan	The space is identified as an Open Space Green in the infrastructure strategy within the key centre of Much Wenlock
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	There is access at several points from the Gaskell Recreation Ground and Railway Walk. Station Road is situated at the northwest end of the town and is in close proximity to those who live in or around the town centre but less so to residents in the south of the town.

Demonstrably Special?	Wildlife: Nationally important geology and fossil record. Limestone wildflower and grassland area with several species of orchid.
Local in character?	Yes. Locally part of the historic quarrying for limestone in the area.
Photo	
Location map	

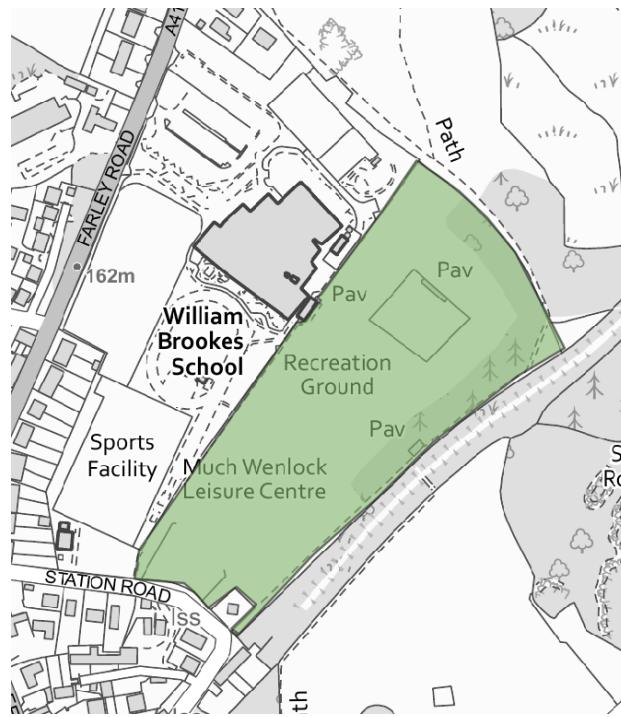
LGS3: Gaskell Recreation Ground

Address and location	Gaskell Recreation Ground, Station Rd.
Ownership details	Much Wenlock Town Council
Description and purpose / current use	Large open green space with bowling green, football and cricket pitches, and children's play area. Surrounded by trees including the Linden Walk which are nationally rare in public spaces. Picnic areas at the north end. Regularly used by many people in the town. Is the home of the Wenlock Olympian Games which are staged every year and go back to the 1860s and William Penny Brookes, internationally important because of this link.
Any designations	Tree Protection Orders on all trees. Given in trust to the Much Wenlock Town Council for the people of the town in perpetuity by <u>Mrs Mary Ward</u> Lady Milnes-Gaskell .
Site allocations in Local Plan	The space is identified as Open Space Green in the infrastructure strategy in the key centre of Much Wenlock.
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	There is access at several points from the Windmill Hill and Railway Walk. Station Road is situated at the northwest end of the town and is in close proximity to those who live in or around the town centre. It is the only recreation ground in the town and is farther than the recommended walking distance from residents at the south side of the town.
Demonstrably Special?	Historic: Is the home of the Wenlock Olympian Games and go back to the 1860s and William Penny Brookes, internationally important because of this link. Recreation: For informal and formal play.
Local in character?	Yes, the ground provides something for everyone in the town.

Photo



Location map



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LGS4: Southfield Road Green Space

Address and location	Southfield Road
Ownership details	Shropshire Council
Description and purpose / current use	Long strip of green running the length of Southfield Road on the North side of town, in some areas it is a narrow strip in others it widens out to become suitable for play by young residents. It is the home to the community orchard.
Any designations	None
Site allocations in Local Plan	Included in the Green infrastructure strategy in the key centre of Much Wenlock.
Planning permissions?	None
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Access from any point along Southfield Road, serves all residents along Southfield Road but not used much by other residents.
Demonstrably Special?	Recreation: The space is used for informal play by nearby residents. Wildlife: The space houses the community orchard. Overall, the space is an important part of the local green infrastructure network.
Local in character?	Yes, it is formed from the embankment of the old railway line.

Photo	
Location map	

LGS5: Havelock Crescent Green Space

Address and location	Havelock Crescent, <u>west</u> <u>east</u> of the town centre
Ownership details	Shropshire Council
Description and purpose / current use	Green space in front of housing forming a crescent with some trees.
Any designations	None
Site allocations in Local Plan	Features in the Green infrastructure strategy in the key centre of Much Wenlock.
Planning permissions?	None
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Open access to all, close proximity to Havelock Crescent residents.
Demonstrably Special?	Recreation: The space is used informally by local residents.
Local in character?	Yes.

Photo	
Location map	

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LGS6: Hunters Gate

Address and location	Hunters Gate, south of Town Centre
Ownership details	Shropshire Council
Description and purpose / current use	Open space with trees shrubs and benches in centre of housing development. Used primarily by residents of Hunters Gate, sometimes for social occasions.

Any designations	None
Site allocations in Local Plan	Yes, Green infrastructure strategy key centre Much Wenlock
Planning permissions?	None
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Access from all properties on the housing estate.
Demonstrably Special?	Recreation: The space is used by local residents in Hunters Gate as a space for informal recreation and social gatherings.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	



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LG57: Cemetery on Bridgnorth Road

Address and location	Old Cemetery, Bridgnorth Road
Ownership details	Much Wenlock Town Council
Description and purpose / current use	Large open space for burials with headstones dating from 1868, no new burials. Wildlife and ecology friendly management, mature and new tree planting. Open space for visiting and walking the paths. Quiet and tranquil with benches to look at the view or contemplation. War graves with small peace garden planting. Chapel currently used for storage.
Any designations	None
Site allocations in Local Plan	Identified within the Green infrastructure strategy in the key centre of Much Wenlock
Planning permissions?	None
Access & proximity including how close to the	Open access to all, close only to south side of the town, one of only two open spaces in that part of the town the other being Hunters Gate.

community it serves	
Demonstrably Special?	<p>Historic: The space contributes to the social and community history of the town.</p> <p>Wildlife: The space provides an important habitat supporting a range of flora and fauna.</p> <p>Tranquillity: A quiet space for reflection away from the more built up areas of the town.</p>
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	 A photograph showing a field of tall, green grass in the foreground. In the background, there is a small, old stone building with a tiled roof, possibly a church or a cemetery. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.

	
Location map	

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LGS8: Allotments on Southfield Road

Address and location	North of Southfield Road
Ownership details	Wenlock Estates
Description and purpose / current use	Community use land used for allotments by consent of owner. Not open access, open only to allotmentees.
Any designations	None

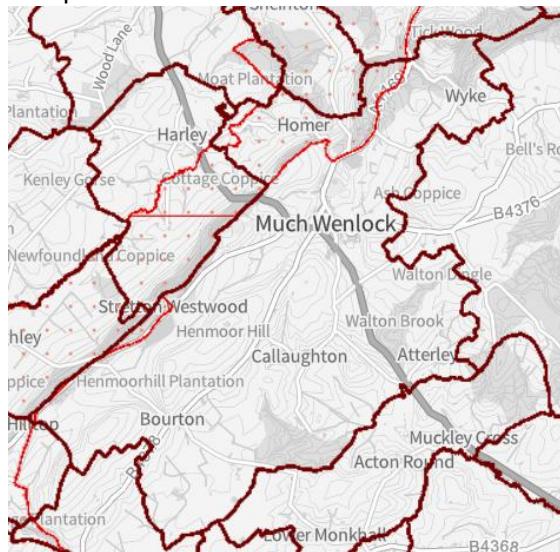
Site allocations in Local Plan	Yes - Green infrastructure strategy key centre Much Wenlock
Planning permissions?	None
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	One access behind Southfield Road, users can be resident anywhere in the town
Demonstrably Special?	Recreation: The allotment provides an important space for those wishing to grow food and other plants. It can also be a sociable space. Wildlife: The space has been used as an allotment for some years and as such provides an important habitat for a range of flora and fauna.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	



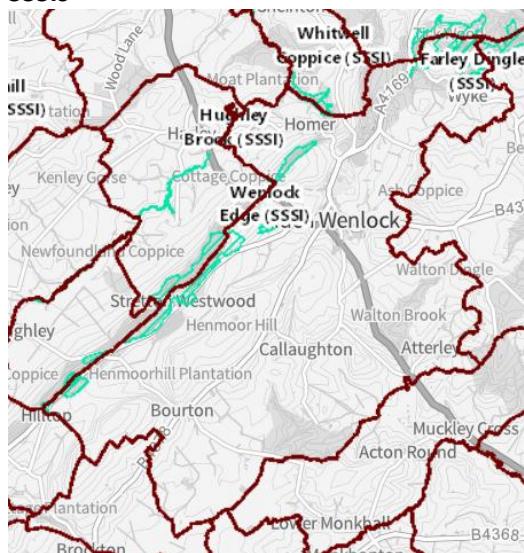
APPENDIX **FG** - Landscape, Biodiversity and Earth Science Designations

National Landscape

Shropshire Hills



SSSIs



Wenlock Edge SSSI (pt)

Total area: 139 ha

SSSI Features: Broadleaved, mixed & yew woodland; calcareous grassland; earth heritage

Whitwell Coppice SSSI (pt)

Total area: 15.44 ha

SSSI Features: Broadleaved, mixed & yew woodland; earth heritage

Farley Dingle SSSI

Total area 0.24 ha

SSSI Features: Earth heritage

Tick Wood & Bentall Edge SSSI (pt)

Total area: 145.3 ha

SSSI Features: Broadleaved, mixed & yew woodland; neutral grassland

Nature Conservation Review sites

Tick Wood & Benthall Edge

Geological Conservation Review sites

Wenlock Edge SSSI

Whitwell Coppice SSSI

Farley Dingle SSSI

Ancient Woodland Inventory sites

Novers Coppice, Bourton

Blakeway Coppice

Spoonhill Woods

Wigwig Wood

Whitwell Coppice

Traps Coppice

Farley Coppice

Tick Wood

Benthall Edge Wood

Local Nature Reserves

Windmill Hill

Local Wildlife Sites

These are held by the Local Wildlife Trust. Their boundaries can change so please contact the Wildlife Trust for further information

Drinking Water Safeguard Zone

Shropshire Severn & Roden

Species of Principal Importance in England

As designated under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act.

Species of Principal Importance in England

As designated under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act.

Common Toad	Bufo bufo	
Great Crested Newt	Triturus cristatus	
Sky Lark	Alauda arvensis	
Common Cuckoo	Cuculus canorus	Not recent
Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella	
Reed Bunting	Emberiza schoeniclus	
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	
Tree Sparrow	Passer montanus	
Dunnock (Hedge Accentor)	Prunella modularis occidentalis	
Bullfinch	Pyrrhula pyrrhula pileata	
Starling	Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris	
Song Thrush	Turdus philomelos clarkei	
Dingy Skipper butterfly	Erynnis tages	
Wall butterfly	Lasiommata megera	
Hedgehog	Erinaceus europaeus	
Brown Hare	Lepus europaeus	

Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	
Dormouse	<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>	
Noctule bat	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	
Soprano Pipistrelle bat	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	
Brown Long-eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	
Ghost Moth	<i>Hepialus humuli</i>	
Cinnabar Moth	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	
Slow-worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	
Common Lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	