



*Our plan – Our future*

# **MUCH WENLOCK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROPOSED OBJECTIVES**

including supporting evidence

# 1. Our objective for the local economy and jobs

The Neighbourhood Plan will facilitate opportunities for new and existing businesses to create employment growth and it will do this through:

- the designation of additional land
- the approval of new premises in appropriate location(s)
- allowing new mixed-use development so appropriate businesses can operate from homes and dwellings and
- by resisting the change of use of sites currently designated for employment purposes

## Why have we proposed this Objective?

The responses to both the Residents Survey and the Business Survey indicated strong community support for encouraging the local economy and local employment.

The responses to both surveys showed a clear preference for the types of site that should be allocated for employment purposes; the Plan should consider the use of quarries and existing buildings and employment land before green field sites.

The scale of employment development that the community wants is less certain but over 30% of respondents to the Residents Survey indicated that a family member might be seeking local employment opportunities within the next five years.

## What issues and options should the Plan consider now?

- Locations:** The current designation (from the old Bridgnorth District Local Plan) of land for employment uses is at Stretton Road. Should the Plan confirm the site's designation? Does the Plan need to allocate another site or sites of a similar size?
- Quarries:** If the quarries could also be employment sites, should the Plan specifically support the proposals for tourism and recreation uses of the quarries being proposed by the National Trust? Should we aim to integrate new uses with these proposals and if so, how?
- Flexibility:** Should the Plan be flexible in allowing the change of use of some existing employment land provided it is offset by the creation of other land or premises?
- Types and Quality:** What quality of employment development should we be most concerned about? Are there uses we should resist? What conditions on the quality of development should we specify in the Plan to ensure it doesn't cause nuisance?
- Infrastructure:** What are the requirements needed to support new employment development? To allow mixed-use schemes, should we insist on improved broadband services being provided first?

## Annex – Local Economy & Jobs

### **What do our Surveys and the National Planning Policy Framework and Shropshire Council Core Strategy say that is relevant to our local economy?**

Please note that wherever we refer to the survey responses, the numbers and percentages are based on the responses received to specific questions and not the number of responses to the surveys as a whole.'

#### **Relevant Residents and Business Survey responses;**

**Residents Survey - Q B2:** Should the Neighbourhood Plan allocate more land to encourage employment? Yes = 446 (67.2%), No = 217 (32.8%)

**Business Survey - Q A2:** Should the Neighbourhood Plan allocate more land for employment purposes? Yes = 14 (63.6%), No = 5 (22.7%), Don't know = 3 (13.6%)

**Business Survey - Q B7:** Is anyone in your family likely to seek local employment in the next 5 years? Yes = 222 (32.6%), No = 457 (67.4%)

**Residents Survey Q B8:** What would encourage new businesses to locate in Much Wenlock parish?

Response: 299 respondents ticked the box for 'More purpose-built premises.'

**Business Survey Q A7:** What would encourage businesses to locate in the Much Wenlock area?

Responses included more suitable premises and sites (including for expansion), flexible space

**Business Survey Q B3:** What additional space will your business require over the plan period to 2026?

The responses showed an estimated 17 requirements for additional space during the plan period (these included workshops, offices, retail space and storage space)

**Residents Survey Q B5:** Should existing employment sites be protected from changes of use?

Response: Yes = 368 (56.4%), No = 283 (43.6%)

**Business Survey Q A5** Should existing employment sites be protected from changes of use?

Response: Yes = 9 (40.9%), No = 10 (45.5%), Don't know = 3 (13.6%)

**Residents Survey Q B6:** Should the Neighbourhood Plan include policies which encourage working from home?

Response: Yes = 585 (89.9%), No = 66 (10.1%)

**Business Survey Q A6:** Should the Neighbourhood Plan include policies that encourage working from home?

Response: Yes = 17 (77.3%), No = 2 (9.1%), Don't know = 3 (13.6%)

#### **The National Planning Policy Framework**

The **National Planning Policy Framework** includes 12 policies. Whilst many are directed at local planning authorities, some are relevant to Much Wenlock's local economy, including

- Policy 1. Delivering sustainable development, which includes:
  - Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing. (para 21)
  - Planning policies should avoid the long-term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. (para 22)
- Policy 2. Ensuring the vitality of town centres, which includes:
  - Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;
  - retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive;
  - allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres.
- Policy 3. Supporting a prosperous local economy. The NPPF states: To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:
  - support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;
  - promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
  - support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres;
  - promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

## 2. Our objective for infrastructure for community well-being

**The Plan will promote flood risk improvement measures along with minimising the pollution to the water courses in the parish of Much Wenlock.**

**It will do this through:**

- **Designating and protecting from development, land as green flood attenuation areas**
- **Ensuring all developments in the ‘bowl’ of Much Wenlock and in Bourton lead to a reduction in the amount of water entering water courses and sewers compared to the current use of the land**
- **Requiring that all new homes connecting into combined sewers use less than 80 litres per person per day**
- **Supporting the use and/or enlargement of containment ponds downstream from the treatment works at Farley**

### **Why have we proposed this Objective?**

The Residents Survey reflected the on-going concerns of many over the established risk of flooding in and around the town of Much Wenlock and Bourton. The community has previously expressed its’ view in Town Council policies and through a referendum that development should be restricted until solutions to the flooding are implemented.

Since the damaging floods in 2007, the community has worked closely with statutory agencies on understanding and finding solutions and much survey information is now available to inform our decisions. Shropshire Council is currently managing development through ‘surface water interim guidance for developers’ that aims to ensure any development does not worsen the situation and preferably improves it. Shropshire Council’s Integrated Urban Drainage Management Plan sets out actions which may be implemented from 2014 (subject to the funding being available) and this will reduce the risk of flooding from around a 1 in 8 year’s event to approximately a 1 in 30 year’s event.

We think the Neighbourhood Plan needs to complement these flood prevention objectives and propose to do this in two ways. Protecting and designating flood attenuation green areas will help reduce the risk of surface water flooding further. Limiting the discharge levels from new development according to higher standards (for sustainable homes) will reduce the strain on the combined sewers (foul and surface water) in the town.

It is acknowledged that the current system of combined sewers and the sewage treatment works adjacent to the Farley Brook are inadequate. Until such time as Severn Trent can reduce the levels of discharge into the Farley Brook – Much Wenlock’s main watercourse - the Plan needs to support and encourage ways of reducing the amount of sewage. The Code for Sustainable Homes (Department of Communities & Local Government) sets out higher standards for water use that we think are relevant for Much Wenlock.

### **What issues and options should the Plan consider now?**

- a) **Land designations:** Is it clear from the survey work undertaken for Shropshire Council, how much land we could consider designating and protecting to improve flood alleviation within the parish? Which are the best sites?

- b) **Encouraging other community uses:** In protecting potential green areas for flood alleviation, can we link these together and make them multi-functional, to promote management of local wildlife and provide accessible green spaces for the community?
- c) **Implications for new housing:** Will the requirement for higher standards of housing design under the code for sustainable homes be a barrier for the delivery of affordable housing?

## Annex - Infrastructure

***What do our Surveys and the National Planning Policy Framework and Shropshire Council Core Strategy say that is relevant to our infrastructure and flooding?***

### Relevant Residents and Business Survey responses:

***Residents Survey - Q A8: Are there any locations where houses should not be built?***

Potential flood risk areas - 24

***Residents Survey - Q A9: Other comments on housing?***

Concerns about flooding risk / problems with current drainage – 36

New drainage and sewage systems required first – 19

***Residents Survey - Q C3: Should the Neighbourhood Plan aim to promote the following?***

Improved flood prevention measures – 545 (78.4%)

Positive management of the varied local wildlife – 462 (66.5%)

Increased provision of green space – 353 (50.8%)

***Residents Survey Q C5: Comments on protecting the environment.***

Flood prevention and warning measures needed – 92

Improvements needed to drainage and sewage treatment - 42

Reduce pollution into the rivers - 3

***Residents Survey Q E5: How could the Neighbourhood Plan encourage more walking or cycling?***

Green routes to town - 8

***Residents Survey Q G3: Further comments about anything that has not been covered in the survey?***

Flooding being a concern - 4

### Other key evidence?

Much Wenlock Integrated Urban Drainage Plan to be found:

[http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/environmentmaintenance.nsf/viewAttachments/DCLN-8P4KEA/\\$file/much-wenlock-IUDMP.pdf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/environmentmaintenance.nsf/viewAttachments/DCLN-8P4KEA/$file/much-wenlock-IUDMP.pdf)

Shropshire Council's Surface Water Management Interim Guidance for Developers:

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/environmentmaintenance.nsf/open/B86508E244CD0B78802579D1004A829D>

Department of Communities and Local Government's Code for Sustainable Homes can be found:

[http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/code\\_for\\_sust\\_homes.pdf](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/code_for_sust_homes.pdf)

### 3. Our objective for traffic management and community well-being

The Plan will facilitate measures for managing traffic in and around the town of Much Wenlock.

It will do this through:

- Encouraging measures leading to a reduction in traffic volumes and speeds which endanger pedestrians
- Ensuring sufficient on-site parking in new development to meet current and future car ownership and use
- Supporting parking areas close to the town centre for cycles

#### Why have we proposed this Objective?

The Residents Survey showed strong community concern towards traffic management and the risk to pedestrians, cyclists and other road users. The survey highlighted areas of town worst affected by traffic issues and brought forward ideas for improvement.

Secure parking for cycles was identified as one of the ways that cycling could be encouraged along with better management of the traffic. This would complement the need for better pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre.

We must acknowledge that the Neighbourhood Plan is limited in what it can do to manage traffic and public transport. The Plan can help steer the future levels and type of traffic generated from *within* the parish through its policies on land designations and the nature of development. Whilst it cannot directly steer highways and public transport works, the Plan can set out the nature of improvements we think are required if development takes place.

Shropshire Council's 'Place Plan' for Much Wenlock will also be the appropriate document for setting out the community's suggestions for public transport and traffic management and other possible infrastructure investments – which are outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan - that is needed for the town and parish.

#### What issues and options should the Plan consider now?

- a) **Clarity about priorities:** Which specific schemes would best help in managing traffic and improving safe access for pedestrians (including disabled people) and cyclists? How much cycle parking is needed?
- b) **Public transport:** If we are to reduce our carbon emissions, what nature of improvements – new bus or coach parking, bus stops etc - might the Plan promote?

## **Annex- Traffic Management**

***What do our Surveys and the National Planning Policy Framework and Shropshire Council Core Strategy say that is relevant to traffic management?***

**Relevant Residents Survey responses:**

***Residents Survey - Q D1: Which of the following do you think that the Neighbourhood Plan should aim to improve ?***

Vehicle parking facilities – 477 (67.3%)

Road safety measures – 286 (40.3%)

***Residents Survey - Q D4: If vehicle parking facilities need improving tell us where this could best be achieved.***

Park and ride service - 17

Free or cheaper parking – 74

More parking needed – 15

No additional parking needed - 11

***Residents Survey - Q E2: Which of the following aspects of road traffic in Much Wenlock give you concern?***

Excessive traffic speed – 422 (71.3%)

Traffic danger to pedestrians – 357 (60.3%)

Excessive traffic volume – 338 (57.0%)

Plus additional Other comments

***Residents Survey - Q E3: In which area of Much Wenlock do the traffic problems you specified above need the most urgent attention ?***

Table 14 of the survey summary shows the top 5 areas

***Residents Survey - Q E4: If you consider traffic in Much Wenlock to be a problem what would you suggest the Plan should do to improve the situation ?***

A number of solutions were identified by residents – 400

**Other key evidence?**

Shropshire Council's Draft Parking Survey Report (TR4/48) August 2007

## 4. Our objective for community facilities

The Plan will support the provision of facilities considered important for a vibrant community and its many visitors.

It will do this through:

- **Facilitating the provision of facilities for the elderly, those with families and young people**
- **Promoting those facilities associated with a positive visitor experience**
- **Protecting those facilities already in place**
- **Promoting appropriate numbers of public toilet facilities needed to adequately cater for all visitors.**

### Why have we proposed this Objective?

There was considerable support for facilities for young people in the Residents Survey, with a wide range of ideas as to how this could be achieved.

The survey also showed that there was a desire to improve community services and that a significant number of residents were concerned with a lack of community facilities.

The provision of public toilets is regarded as an important service for tourists and visitors to Much Wenlock. The Plan may be able to influence the number and location but not the management of these facilities. Shropshire Council is looking to get rid of its responsibilities for providing public toilets when its current management contract ends in 2013. If new facilities are provided there might be a requirement for the local Council Tax payer to fund on-going management.

### What issues and options should the Plan consider now?

- a) **Protecting existing community facilities:** Are we clear on which existing facilities are regarded as important to the community? Should the Plan list these as key community assets?
- b) **Priorities for new facilities:** What new facilities should the Plan encourage for the benefit of the community as well visitors.
- c) **Toilets:** If these are seen as crucial to the community and visitors, can we agree on the number and location of public toilets that the Plan should specify?

## **Annex – Community Facilities**

### ***What do our Surveys and the National Planning Policy Framework and Shropshire Council Core Strategy say that is relevant to community facilities?***

#### **Relevant Residents Survey responses:**

**Residents Survey - Q D1:** *Which of the following do you think that the Neighbourhood Plan should aim to improve ?*

Facilities for young people – 404 (57.0%)

**Residents Survey - Q D2:** *If improved public toilet facilities are needed tell us where.*

Gaskell Field – 368 (64.8%)

Car parking areas – 360 (63.4%)

High Street – 182 (31.9%)

**Residents Survey - Q D5:** *If you think better leisure and recreational facilities are needed please tell us how and where this could be achieved.*

Various facilities were suggested

**Residents Survey - Q D6:** *If facilities for young people need improving say how and where this could be achieved.*

Youth club/centre revival and funding – 56

More places/areas to socialise, day and evening – 31

Better access and availability at the school - 21

Youth cafe/drop in/internet cafe in centre of town - 18

**Residents Survey - Q D7:** *Comments on improving community services.*

Variety of different comments

**Shropshire Council's Core Strategy** includes the following policies in its sections titled *Creating Sustainable Places and Environment*:

- CS 6 - Sustainable Design Principles

*'To create sustainable places, development will be designed to a high quality using sustainable design principles, to achieve an inclusive and accessible environment which respects and enhances local distinctiveness and which mitigates and adapts to climate change. This will be achieved by:*

- *Requiring all development proposals, including changes to existing buildings, to achieve applicable national standards, or for water use, evidence based local standards as reflected in the minimum criteria set out in the sustainability checklist'.*

- CS 7 – Communications and Transport

*'A sustainable pattern of development requires the maintenance and improvement of integrated, accessible, attractive, safe and reliable communication and transport infrastructure and services. This will be achieved by:*

- *Protecting and enhancing strategic and local cycling, footpath, bridleway and canal networks as local transport routes and for recreation and leisure use'.*

- CS 8 – Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Provision

*'The development of sustainable places in Shropshire with safe and healthy communities where residents enjoy a high quality of life will be assisted by:*

- *Protecting and enhancing existing facilities, services and amenities that contribute to the quality of life of residents and visitors;*

- *Preserving and improving access to facilities and services wherever possible, ....*

- *Facilitating the timely provision of additional facilities, services and infrastructure to meet identified needs, as outlined in the LDF Implementation Plan whether arising from new developments or existing community need, in locations that are appropriate and accessible'.*

- CS17 – Environmental Networks

*'Development will identify, protect, enhance, expand and connect Shropshire's environmental assets, to create a multifunctional network of natural and historic resources. This will be achieved by ensuring that all development:*

- *Protects and enhances the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire's natural, built and historic environment, and does not adversely affect the visual, ecological, geological, heritage or recreational values and functions of these assets, their immediate surroundings or their connecting corridors;*

- *Contributes to local distinctiveness, having regard to the quality of Shropshire's environment, including landscape, biodiversity and heritage assets, such as the Shropshire Hills AONB'...*

- CS18 – Sustainable Water Management

*Developments will integrate measures for sustainable water management to reduce flood risk, avoid an adverse impact on water quality and quantity within Shropshire, including groundwater resources, and provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation, by ensuring that:*

*'All developments, including changes to existing buildings, include appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) to manage surface water. All developments should aim to achieve a reduction in the existing runoff rate'...*

*'New development enhances and protects water quality, including Shropshire's groundwater resources;*

*' New development, including changes to existing buildings, incorporate water efficiency measures, in accordance with the sustainability checklist in Policy CS6, to meet the water efficiency objectives within the Shropshire Water Cycle Study to protect water resources and reduce pressure on wastewater treatment infrastructure.*

## 5. Our objective for meeting local housing needs

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

- **Allowing small scale mixed developments to include houses for sale on the open market, affordable social rented dwellings, and sheltered housing**
- **Ensuring that developments will include a range of house types; including a mix of two and three bedroom homes with a significant percentage of single story homes on level sites suited to older residents**

### Why have we proposed this Objective?

The responses to the Residents Survey demonstrated that the community has aspirations towards home ownership on an affordable level which suits the needs of an aging population, first time buyers and young families. The consultation also showed a need to increase the social rented housing stock to provide homes for lower income families.

The Residents Survey showed that large scale development was not acceptable to most people and that there is an overwhelming desire to maintain the scale, style and setting of the town. The community supports development, both within and outside the town boundary and in the outlying hamlets, provided it is at an appropriate scale. The sense of the appropriate scale of development for the town is that the Plan should identify sites that will not exceed around 25 houses per development scheme and in overall terms the Plan would limit the scale of development so that no more than 100 houses will be built between now (2012) and 2026.

As well as the views of local residents, the Plan must be mindful of the requirements of Shropshire Council's Core Strategy for levels of development. The Core Strategy (policy CS3) sets the level of housing development for Much Wenlock at 'less than 500 dwellings' between 2006 and 2026. The scale of development since 2006 is such that over 80 dwellings have already been permitted and/or built in the town, mostly on 'windfall' sites that were not designated. For the purposes of meeting the strategic housing targets in the Core Strategy, the Plan does not need to allocate any further housing sites. In drafting the Neighbourhood Plan objective, the Steering Group has recognised the importance of addressing unmet local housing needs. We have also assumed that resident's responses on the total numbers of new houses have started from the basis of what the town looks like now rather than the technical starting point of 2006.

The housing needs section of the Residents Survey indicated that some 9 people would be looking for affordable homes rented from a housing provider. It also identified an aspiration towards home ownership by those who will be seeking housing over the next five years; half of the respondents wanted to buy whilst half wanted to rent. Two bedroom dwellings are most sought after.

Further information on housing needs and supply has also come from some of the Housing Associations and Shropshire Council with property holdings in Much Wenlock and in the parish. The HA's have historically not bought sites and built homes, expanding their stock through acquisitions within market development sites. Shropshire Council would favour the development of exception sites (small sites for one or two dwellings) for affordable housing and this might be very relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan given the limited amount of development envisaged.

The current affordable housing stock in Much Wenlock is 192 dwellings, of which, on average, 7 are re-allocated each year. This means that the current housing stock, if allocated only to those with a 'local connection', would meet the current local needs. Further housing data is on the Plan web site.

**What issues and options should the Plan consider now?**

- a) **Defining local needs:** The steering group's view of this is that we will need to explore further with Shropshire Council and social housing providers to define local needs requirements and, also with them and land owners, to agree how we can deliver the objectives.
- b) **Scale of development:** Is the objective right in saying the Plan will allow further housing development of up to 100 more houses to meet local needs?
- c) **Size of sites for the town:** Should the Plan identify four or five bigger sites and if so, where? Or, should it simply allow a greater number of smaller ones to come forward as 'affordable housing exceptions' or windfall sites? Would this provide enough?
- d) **Villages and hamlets:** For Bourton and other small settlements in the parish, should the Plan confirm that it will rely on 'affordable housing exceptions sites' to meet local needs?
- e) **Meeting local needs:** How should the Plan ensure that housing that is developed really meets local needs? Should it make changes to the Shropshire Council allocation policy for affordable homes to give exclusive rights to applicants with local connections? Or should it continue with the present policy which gives priority to those 'in housing need' rather than exclusive rights to applicants with local connections?
- f) **Percentage of affordable homes on market sites:** Given the generally higher prices of housing in Much Wenlock, should the Plan make the case for a higher percentage rate of affordable homes within market-led development sites?

## **Annex – Housing Need**

### ***What does our Residents Survey and the Shropshire Core Strategy say about Much Wenlock and housing needs?***

#### **Relevant Residents Survey responses;**

**A1** Allocate land for affordable Housing - majority - 586 (84.4%)

**A2** Allocate land for open market development (i.e. growth) - 354 (52.7%) small majority with 318 (47.3%) against

**A3** Scale of individual housing schemes: - majority – 547 (82.2%) up to 25 houses with a minority (197 – 29.6%) wishing for up to or over 50 houses

**A4** Type of homes: majority (676) houses to let or sheltered accommodation. to buy/let and a minority (475) for market or shared equity

**A5** How many homes should be built in total until 2026 : Majority (526 – 78.9%) no more than 100 and a minority (175 – 20.1%) up to 500 dwellings

**A6** Within or without the boundary of the town: majority (344 – 54.1%) outside the town and a minority (292 45.9%) within the town

#### **The Core Strategy**

The key policies for delivery are CS1, CS4, CS9, CS10, CS11, and CS12'

These policies provide for a mix of good quality, sustainable housing development of the right size, type, tenure and affordability to meet the housing needs and aspirations of all sections of the community, including provision for specialist needs and the elderly.

Core Strategy Policy CS3 says: "Much Wenlock will have limited development that reflects its important service and employment centre role whilst retaining its historic character." The Policy also says that the level of housing development for Much Wenlock should be set at 'less than 500 dwellings' between 2006 and 2026. [NB. The scale of development since 2006 is such that over 80 dwellings have already been permitted and/or built in the town. For the purposes of the strategic housing targets of the Core Strategy, the Plan does not need to allocate any further housing sites].

Policy CS11 also sets out a positive approach to the development of 'exceptions' schemes of 100% affordable dwellings. Subject to the suitability of sites, scheme justification based on evidence of local need and mechanisms to ensure that the housing remains as affordable housing for local needs in perpetuity, the policy permits schemes within and adjoining Shrewsbury, the Market Towns and Other Key Centres, Community Hubs and Community Clusters, and in other recognisable named settlements in the countryside. Exceptions schemes include sites for groups of dwellings and for single plots in accordance with the Council's detailed criteria and conditions. These sites can be different to 'windfall sites' that may be proposed within the built-up area of the town or villages.

## 6. Our objective for helping to achieve a more sustainable community and address climate change

The Plan will encourage a move towards a low- carbon economy which includes local food production and the generation of renewable energy. We will do this through:

- **Permitting the allocation of land within the parish to support food production that meets local needs and the local market**
- **Responding positively to proposals for sites for hydro-electricity, anaerobic digestion or wood fuel projects and encourage their use in the local community**

### Why have we proposed this Objective?

The Plan can help Much Wenlock become more sustainable by aiming to provide local housing and local employment opportunities which will reduce the need for people to travel. It can also aim specifically to permit more uses of land that will lead to a more sustainable lifestyle for its residents. The results of the Resident's Survey demonstrate that there is strong support in the Much Wenlock area to address the issues of how we use finite natural resources and make a greater use of renewable resources. In turn this objective will help us contribute to national and Shropshire-wide targets.

In particular, there is strong support for more local food production, which can meet people's local needs and local markets and reduces food miles. The success of the recent additional supply of allotment spaces demonstrates demand. Of course, the Plan cannot and should not steer types of crops or agricultural practices but it can influence changes of use of land which may be needed to encourage new local food production enterprises. There may also be consequent economic opportunities for food processing locally.

The Residents Survey asked people for their views on a list of possible renewable energy sources. Some, such as wind power, were not well supported but others received positive backing. The Plan seeks to support schemes that might come forward from developers or landowners.

### What issues and options should the Plan consider now?

- a) **Scale of development:** In supporting local food or energy production should the Plan limit schemes to relatively small scale activity and be clear that the intent is to reduce the community's impact on the local and global environment?
- b) **Location:** Should the Plan steer larger scale economic activity in food processing or renewable energy to any employment sites that are designated?

## Annex – Sustainable Community & Climate Change

### What do our Surveys and the National Planning Policy Framework and Shropshire Council Core Strategy say that is relevant to creating a sustainable community?

#### The National Planning Policy Framework

The Framework contains 12 core planning principles, which include statements that planning should:

- Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change..... and encourage the use of renewable resources
- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.
- Promote mixed use developments and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage or food production).
- Take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all.

The NPPF also contains sections on meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding, etc which state that local authorities should:

- Plan for new development in locations and ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings
- Have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable or low carbon sources.
- Support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy.

The Department for Communities and Local Government has recently published further guidance on green spaces, with specific references to local food production '**Get the green space you want: How the Government can help**' (22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012). It refers to the Localism Act and the NPPF as being strong in supporting community ambitions in this respect.

#### What does the Core Strategy say about sustainability?

The Core Strategy recognises that climate change is possibly the greatest threat facing the world today with impacts that have been identified for Shropshire including higher temperatures, increased winter rainfall and decreased summer rainfall. The Core Strategy Vision for Shropshire includes the following statements:

- Shropshire will be recognised as a leader in responding to climate change;
- Working with communities to prepare for and adapt to the issues that climate change may bring and ensure the rich varied environment is valued, protected and enhanced;
- Natural resources, waste and water will be managed efficiently and we will adapt our needs to meet the changing demands of the climate.

Policy CS6 requires all development proposals to achieve applicable national standards, including energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.

Policy CS13 recognises the continued importance of farming for food production and supporting rural enterprise and diversification of the economy, including the promotion of local food and supply chains.

#### Relevant Residents Survey responses;

**Residents Survey Q E1:** Which of the following ways of producing local renewable energy should the Plan encourage?

Use of farm slurry to generate energy (anaerobic digestion)	Yes = 343 (59.7%)
Hydropower from local streams	Yes = 287 (49.9%)
Using land for local wood for fuel production	Yes = 232 (40.3%)
Photovoltaic solar 'farms' to generate electricity	Yes = 230 (40.0%)
Commercial wind turbines powering many homes	Yes = 137 (23.8%)
Domestic wind turbines powering a single home	Yes = 112 (19.5%)

**Residents Survey Q E6:** Should the Neighbourhood Plan aim to allocate land to encourage growing local food?

Yes = 516 (86.4%)      No = 81 (13.6%)

## 7. Our objective for protecting our local environment through well-designed development

The Plan will ensure that all future development in the Much Wenlock area

- respects the scale, style and setting of the historic townscape of Much Wenlock (in particular the unique characteristics of the 'bowl' setting) and Bourton;
- respects the quality of the local environment by employing the use of building materials in sympathy with those used in the Conservation Areas of Much Wenlock and Bourton
- is of the highest quality design, referring to the existing traditional styles and proportions of the settlements, avoiding frontages that are visually dominated by garages and tarmac drives and which prioritise the amenity of residents

### Why have we proposed this Objective?

The Residents Survey showed that the local community feel very strongly that future development should be in keeping with the town's character. Bourton and Much Wenlock Conservation Areas already benefit from protection due to their designated status and the Plan does not need to repeat this protection.

However, there are numerous historic examples of development which people refer to as being of poor quality. This objective aims to provide a clear statement that high quality development will be the norm within the parish. It especially aims to protect the unique setting of Much Wenlock within its natural landscape bowl.

The Plan can also make a strong reference to the '**Much Wenlock Design Statement (2000)**' given it has already been adopted as supplementary planning guidance for the design of new development in the town.

### What issues and options should the Plan consider now?

- a) **Encouraging exciting modern designs:** Good modern design can add to the quality of townscapes, so should the Plan also explicitly encourage modern designs alongside traditional types?
- b) **Strength of policies:** Should the Plan set out any specific types of design of residential and other development that we would wish to encourage or avoid?
- c) **Much Wenlock Design Statement:** Is it still fit for purpose for the town? Do we need to refresh this document in the light of our experience over the last 12 years? Should we insist on all proposed development sites having a design brief before development comes forward? Do we need a design statement for Bourton?

## **Annex – Design of Development**

### **What do our Surveys and the National Planning Policy Framework and Shropshire Council Core Strategy say that is relevant to the built environment and protecting our local environment from poorly designed development?**

#### **Shropshire Core Strategy**

Policy CS3 says that Much Wenlock will have limited development that reflects its important service and employment centre role **whilst retaining its historic character**.

Policy CS6 says that all development protects, conserves and enhances the natural, built and historic environmental and is appropriate in scale, density, pattern and design taking into account the local context and character, having regard to national and local design guidance, landscape character assessments and ecological strategies where appropriate.

#### **Relevant Residents Survey responses;**

**Residents Survey Q C1:** Do you think that any future development in Much Wenlock should be in keeping with the town's character and landscape setting?

Response: *Yes = 683 (97.6%), No = 17 (4%)*

**Residents Survey Q C2:** Should the Neighbourhood Plan aim to protect and enhance the quality of the built environment by promoting the following?

Design that respects the scale of the existing townscape *Yes = 611 (87.7%)*

Use of traditional local building materials *Yes = 539 (77.3%)*

Traditional styles and scale of shop fronts *Yes = 507 (72.7%)*

Signage, advertising and street furniture that respects locality *Yes = 359 (51.5%)*

## 8. Our objective for protecting and improving local green and open spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan will ensure that

- existing areas of open and green spaces within the parish are retained and their quality is improved
- additional areas of open and green spaces are created within new developments
- the provision of accessible open space meets or exceeds [Shropshire Council] standards for green and play spaces and allotments
- new developments will include gardens of appropriate scale to the property

### Why have we proposed this Objective?

In the Residents Survey, 70% of respondents felt that it was important to protect existing areas of green space within the town and half believed that the provision of green space should be increased. There was also strong support for positive management to aid local wildlife.

Open space, which includes gardens, allotments, recreation areas, informal areas of grassland/woodland and green pathways is important to all of us. Open space improves landscape quality and personal well-being and contributes to a high quality natural environment and greater opportunities for wildlife. Currently the only area of open space in Much Wenlock designated for recreational purposes is the Gaskell Recreation Ground which does not lie within the required walk time of existing development in the south of the town.

Shropshire Council's standards for **amenity green space** 0.33ha per 1000 population within a 10 minute walk time, **provision for children** 0.075ha per 1000 population within a 10 minute walk time **and allotments** 0.21ha per 1000 population within a 10 minute drive time, will form the minimum baseline for the Plan.

### What issues and options should the Plan consider now?

- a) **Designation of a new Local Green Space:** National planning policy allows us to designate *new* areas of land which are important for the community as green space for local use. Should we do this? Which land should we choose?
- b) **Protecting open spaces in the town:** Should the Plan be clear that we expect all existing areas of open space within Much Wenlock to be protected from development because of their value in the townscape?
- c) **Specifying important sites:** Should the Plan list or map those sites which are already recognised as special for their visual or historic characteristics, such as the Gaskell Field or Windmill Hill, so we re-affirm their protection?

## **Annex – Open and Green Spaces**

### **What do our Surveys and the National Planning Policy Framework and Shropshire Council Core Strategy say that is relevant to improving and protecting our local green spaces?**

#### **Relevant Residents Survey responses;**

**Residents Survey Q C2:** Should the Neighbourhood Plan aim to protect and enhance the quality of the built environment by promoting the following?

The green space and gardens within the settlements Yes = 489 (70.2%)

**Residents Survey Q C3:** Should the Neighbourhood Plan aim to promote the following?

Increased provision of green space Yes = 353 (50.8%)

Positive management for local wildlife Yes = 462 (66.7%)

**Residents Survey Q D1:** Which of the following should the Neighbourhood Plan aim to improve?

Allotments Yes = 239 (33.8%)

Public footpaths Yes = 265 (37.5%)

#### **Shropshire Core Strategy**

- Policy CS6 says that all development should contribute to the health and well-being of communities..... including the provision of quality of open space, sport and recreational facilities.
- Policy CS16 says that emphasis will be placed on promoting connections between visitors and Shropshire's natural, cultural and historic environment, including through active restoration, access to heritage trails and parkland..
- Policy CS17 says development should not adversely affect the visual, ecological, geological, heritage or recreational values and functions of these assets.
- Core Strategy Policy Directions PPG17 identify "a level of Open Space provision which has not been attained through planning decisions taken in relation to Much Wenlock since 2003 and is unlikely to be achieved in the future because of the lack of available land space in close proximity to the population centre".

#### **Other key policy documents**

- Shropshire Council Public Open Space Recommended Standards
- Children and Young Peoples Plan for the County of Shropshire 2006-09
- Play Strategy for Bridgnorth District 2006 2009
- BDC Open Space Strategy 2004 -2009
- Get the green space you want: How the Government can help. (Department for Communities and Local Government, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012). Contains further guidance on creating local green spaces.

## 9. Our objective for improving and protecting the local landscape and wildlife

**The Neighbourhood Plan will encourage sympathetic management of the countryside around Much Wenlock to enhance the high quality landscape, improve local biodiversity and other benefits to the community as part of our 'green infrastructure'**

### **Why have we proposed this Objective?**

A very high proportion of respondents to the Resident's Survey wanted to see enhanced protection of local natural features and their positive management for wildlife.

Much Wenlock is situated in an area of high landscape quality. Part of the Neighbourhood Plan area (including Homer but excluding the settlements of Bourton & Much Wenlock) lie within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); this is a national designation with the principal purpose of 'conserving and enhance natural beauty'. The AONB is also of national importance for its wildlife and geology with 140ha designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

These environmental assets, alongside the attractive and historic environments of our town and villages, are an important economic asset as well as a source of community pride. Much work has been done in recent months to improve the local footpath network as part of the preparation for 2012 and the town now has 'Walkers are Welcome' status.

The Plan can have an influence on development that is proposed both within and outside of the designated AONB. This objective is included to signal that we want to ensure the quality of the landscape and wildlife is managed and improved and continues to provide benefits to local people and visitors.

Our objective on flooding recognises the importance of protecting local green spaces as possible solutions for flood attenuation and government guidance is encouraging the designation of locally important green spaces. It will be important to also ensure that wildlife sites are linked and do not become fragmented. We have the opportunity in the Plan to identify the kind of 'green infrastructure' that we think the town and parish needs.

### **What issues and options should the Plan consider now?**

- a) **Ecological value of the Wenlock Edge quarries:** How do we reconcile the desire to restore disused quarries for wildlife and recreation with the suggestion that new industry should be located in disused quarries?
- b) **Creating a network of green spaces:** What would a map of our local 'green infrastructure' look like? What opportunities are there to combine access to the natural environment with biodiversity, flood alleviation, the production of wood fuel?

## **Annex – Landscape and Wildlife**

### **What do our Surveys and the National Planning Policy Framework and Shropshire Council Core Strategy say that is relevant to improving and protecting the local landscape and wildlife?**

#### **Relevant Residents Survey responses;**

##### **Residents Survey Q C3: Should the Neighbourhood Plan aim to promote the following?**

- Enhanced protection of historic and natural features *Yes = 595 (85.9%)*
- Positive management for wildlife *Yes = 462 (66.7%)*
- Enhanced protection of the landscapes of disused quarries *Yes = 328 (47.3%)*

#### **Shropshire Core Strategy**

- Policy CS6 says development should make the most effective use of land and safeguards natural resources including high quality agricultural land, geology, minerals, air, soil and water.
- Policy CS17 says development should not have a significant adverse impact on Shropshire’s environmental assets and does not create barriers or sever links between dependent sites.

#### **Other key evidence - Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan**

- Policy 15 states that broadleaved woodland comprising native species should be expanded, and especially restored on Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and Plantation on Wood Pasture (PWP).
- Policy 16 says that where woodland and forestry felling is taking place, opportunities should be sought to improve design and landscape sensitivity of plantations. Reversion to open habitat should be targeted to locations where landscape benefits and potential for high value habitat (e.g. heathland) are greatest.