

A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR FROME 2008-2028

Frome Town Council

In consultation with

Vision4Frome

Chamber

Citizens Panel

Sustainable Frome CIC

Friends of the River Frome

Frome Cohousing CIC

Mendip District Council

Somerset County Council

Tetlow King Planning Consultants

And the residents and businesses of Frome

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| L. Planning Brief for Saxonvale 2005 |
| M. Frome Station – A Report for Frome Town Council - April 2012 |
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A Neighbourhood Plan For Frome / Version 3 / September 2014

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1.0 FOREWORD

This Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to enable Frome to pursue a new approach to the development of the town. It will enable the community of Frome to take greater control of the type and scale of development and land use.

This is important from the point of view of the resilience of the community – the ability of local people not only to absorb shocks, such as the current financial crises, rising energy prices or changing weather patterns but also to adapt and thrive. It assumes a more holistic and regenerative approach and builds on the capacity of the community to deal with change.

There are signs that such resilience is beginning to be built with the growth in the independent economy characterised by independent shops and markets, local growing and the commitment to establishing a Frome Community Energy CO-Op with a view to meeting some local energy needs. However, there is still an underlying vulnerability owing to the lack of choice and affordability in housing, the dependence on nearby towns and cities for employment and some shopping facilities, and the dependence on the car to get around the town.

This Plan has a particular focus on:-

- Encouraging small businesses to start and grow
- Enabling people to build their own homes, live more affordably in a more energy efficient way and play a more active part in the community.
- Making it easier for people to get around the town on foot and by bicycle.
- Regenerating the town centre so that it functions better as a place to live, work, meet, shop and visit.
- Making the most of the River Frome corridor as an environmental and recreational asset.
- Ensuring future development does not damage Frome's unique character.

The town's character is influenced strongly by its geography of hills leading down to a river, the town has been built around this in different ways through the ages. The town's history, and associated past development in many of its locations, now places significant constraints and challenges on such things as building and design options, road and car parking layout, and traffic management not least public transport options.



FIGURE 1. FROME'S UNIQUE CHARACTER



20 THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

“Sustainable means ensuring that better lives for us doesn’t mean worse lives for future generations.”

Greg Clarke MP Minister for Planning

2.1 THE LOCALISM ACT

The 2011 Localism Act gives local communities the power to produce their own neighbourhood plans which will influence future development in their local area.

Such plans are focused on shaping the built environment and can:

- Identify a shared vision and common goals for a neighbourhood.
- Define where new homes, shops, offices and other development should be built.
- Identify and protect local green space.
- Influence what new buildings should look like and set design standards.



FIGURE 2. FROME TOWN CENTRE

2.2 NATIONAL POLICY - DCLG

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Government's planning policy for England is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The focus of this policy is to achieve the right balance between *sustainability* and *growth* to ensure that development is carried out in a way that makes a positive contribution to our lives but also leaves a lasting legacy for our children.

It identifies three distinct planning roles and objectives:

Economic - Contributing to building a strong economy: ensuring that sufficient land is available in the right places and at the right time.

Social - Providing homes that will meet the needs of future generations and supporting the community's health, social and cultural well-being.

Environmental - Protecting our environment: using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating climate change.

2.3 DISTRICT POLICY - MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL PLAN

Mendip District Council is the Local Planning Authority and holds responsibility for setting local policy and determining local applications, with the exception of County Matter applications, i.e. those relating to minerals and waste and education facilities. The district-wide planning policy for the period 2006-2028 is set out in their emerging 'Local Plan' which may be subject to change throughout the forthcoming public examination.

A Neighbourhood Plan must be in compliance with

both the strategic policies set out in the NPPF and the district-wide policies of the Local Plan.

Key elements of the emerging Local Plan that will influence Neighbourhood Plan policy in Frome over the Plan period are:-

- The delivery of 2300 new homes, of which 1300 already have planning consent
- The creation of (2700) new jobs
- The provision and protection of open space

2.4 LOCAL POLICY - FROME TOWN COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

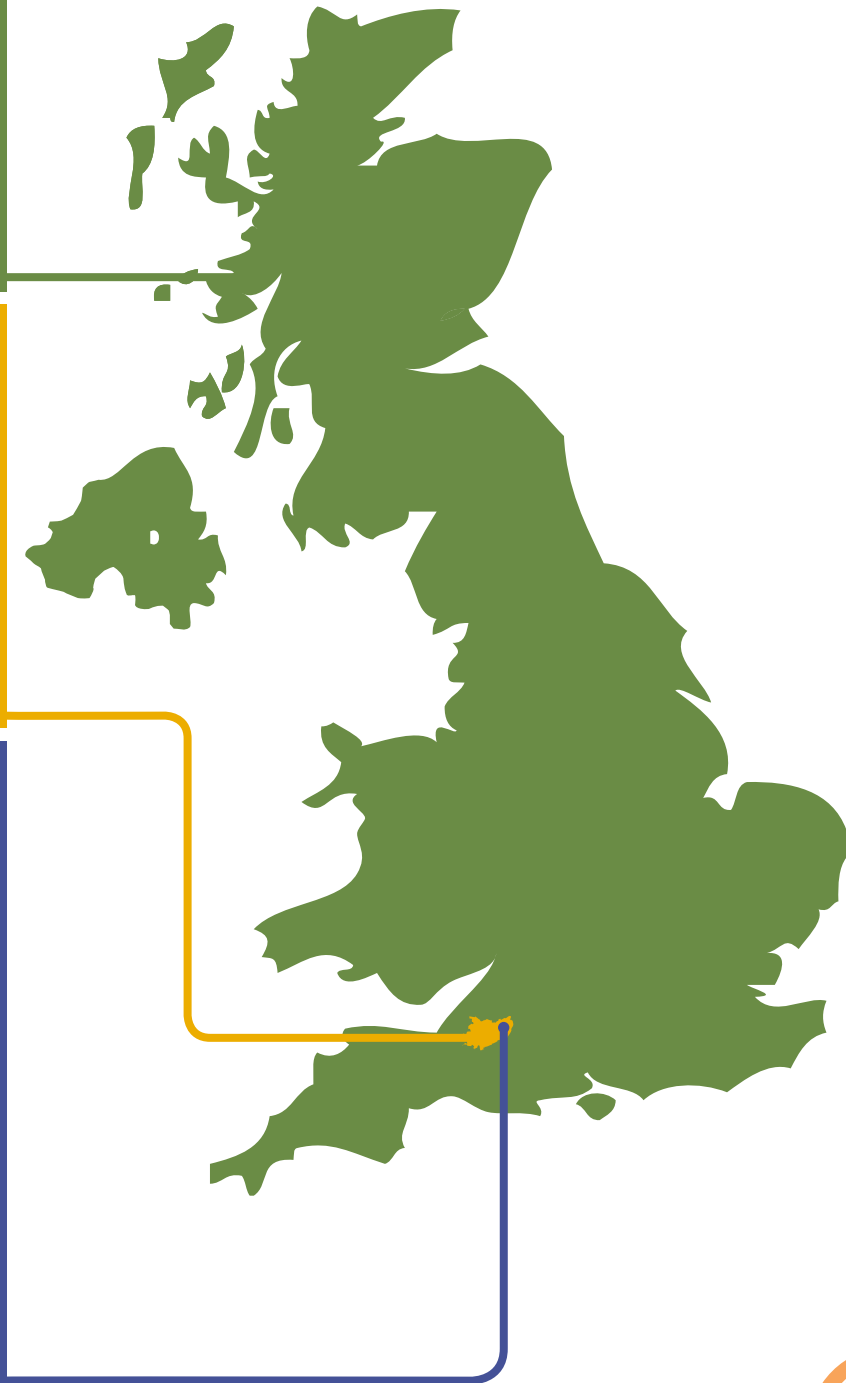
Frome will be one of the first Towns in the UK to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. It will enable local residents and businesses to have a greater say in the strategic planning and development of the Town and will set out a vision for Frome until 2028.

A neighbourhood plan attains the same legal status as the Local Plan once it has been agreed at a referendum and is made (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority. At this point it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The development of the Plan is being led by your local Town Council who have been consulting with the local community and asking their views on why they chose to live, work or visit Frome, and what they consider should be the key aims and objectives over the next fifteen years.

A Citizens Panel has been drawn from a representative cross section of the local community. The Panel has examined the priorities within the 'Vision4Frome Frome Community Plan 2008-2028' and those identified within the draft 'Mendip Local Development Framework Local Plan 2006 - 2028'. Further, through 'World Café' meetings and 'Build Frome' exercises, the Panel has generated an overall vision, objectives and policy options.

You can read a more detailed account of the consultation in the Statement of Community Consultation annexed to this report. Specific areas of concern that emerged from these discussions were Housing, Transport, Town Centre Improvements, Open Spaces, and the Economy. There was also a strong overarching desire for the Town to be more sustainable, and future development to be low impact in terms of its carbon footprint.



2.5 THE STEPS WE NOW NEED TO TAKE

The Neighbourhood Plan only becomes effective when formally adopted as a planning policy document. The consultation with stakeholders and the community has helped us frame the priorities, objectives and draft policies in the Draft Plan. This will be subject to a further six week public

consultation followed by a similar consultation by the District Planning Authority and then examination by an Inspector. Finally there will be a referendum to determine whether the plan has majority support from local residents. If approved it is anticipated the Plan would take effect early in 2014.

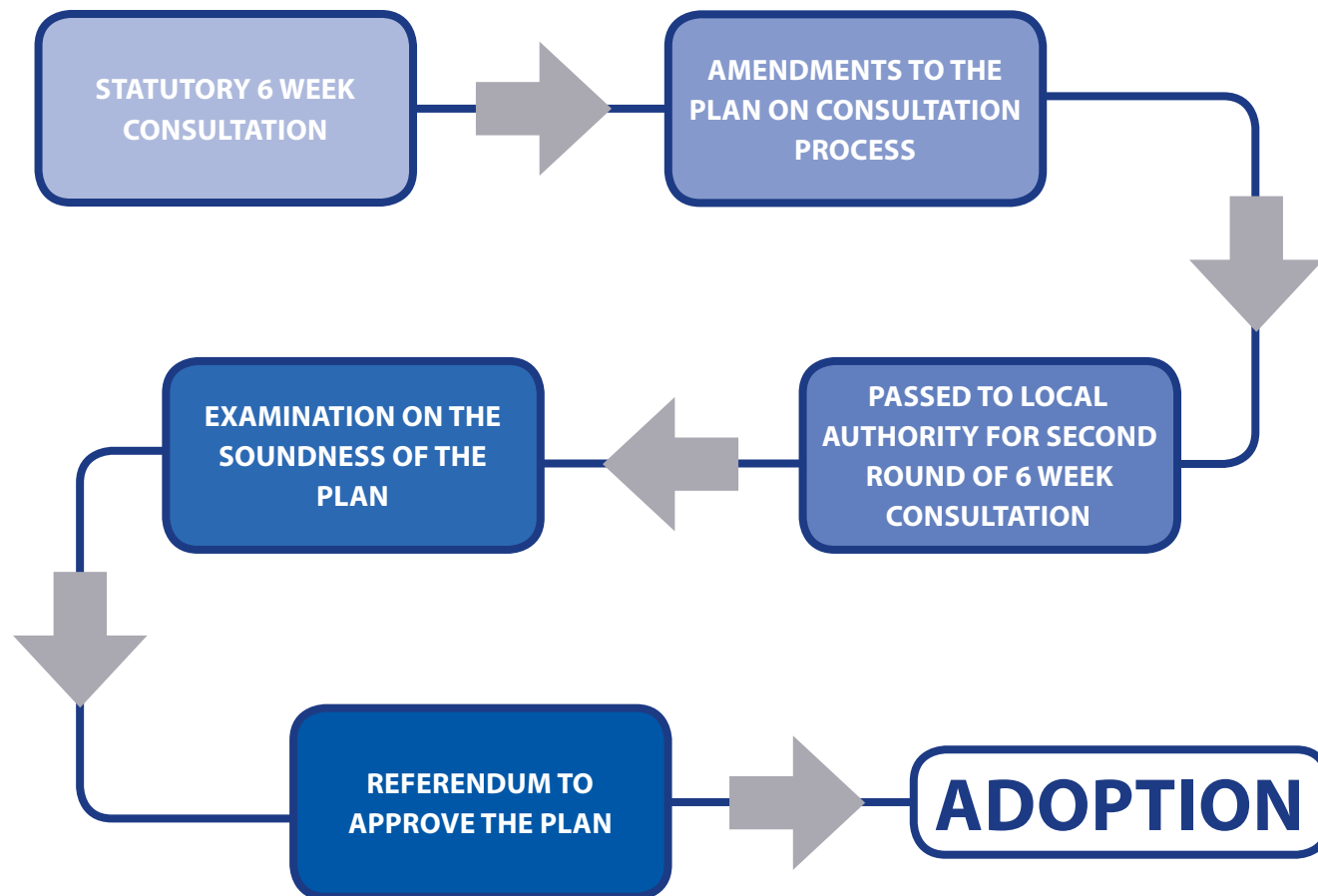


FIGURE 3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

2.6 EVIDENCE BASE

The policies within this plan are based on a significant body of evidence. This is made up of documents which were produced by the Town Council as well as evidence produced by the District Council for the Local Plan.

This includes:-

- A. Town Centre Traffic Management Assessment – July 2013
- B. Employment Land Study – November 2012
- C. Frome River Strategy – November 2012
- D. Town Design Statement
- E. Open Spaces Strategy (FTC)
- F. Market Town Benchmarking Frome Report – 2012
- G. Frome Community Plan (2008 - 2028)
- H. Frome Town Centre Remodelling Feasibility Study – December 2012
- I. “The Case for Self Build”
- J. Strategy for Success (FTC 2011-15)
- K. Carbon Audit 2013
- L. Planning Brief for Saxonvale 2005
- M. Frome Station – a report for Frome Town Council April 2012
- N. Mendip District Council Draft Local Plan 2006-2028
- O. Mendip District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1)

Copies of these documents can be found in the appendices and the Town Council website www.frome-tc.gov.uk



3.0

VISION AND CORE OBJECTIVES

To build a community that is resilient in its capacity to support the needs of residents in the face of global shocks such as economic downturns, rising energy prices and climate change.

3.1 CONTEXT

Frome has a rich heritage as a thriving Mill Town and yet, rather than identifying itself by past achievements, the town today is forward-looking with a reputation for innovation, industry and self-reliance. The Town Council and supports many independent shops and businesses, along with a thriving twice-weekly market that highlights the diversity and ingenuity of local traders and crafts people.

There is a strong sense of pride of place and social cohesion in Frome. In The Times in March 2013, Frome was voted the sixth coolest place to live in the UK. The life and vitality of the Town is perhaps best reflected in the markets, the art and music festivals, parades and many other social, spiritual and cultural events that bring people out onto the streets.

Frome's population was recorded at 26,203 in January 2013 and is forecast to grow by 25% by 2028. Such growth brings both challenges and opportunities, but this needs to be planned in a way that supports the character, life and vitality of the Town. The Plan needs to take account of a changing world and our responsibility to tackle global issues such as climate change and above all it needs to respect the wish of residents to have a say in its future development and management.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that future development makes a positive contribution to the Town and fits within a structured growth plan.

The basis for the Visions & Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan have been taken from the Frome Community Plan 2008 -2028, produce by Vision for Frome. The Community Plan is recognised as a valuable document and has contributed greatly to the Neighbourhood Plan.



FIGURE 4. MUSIC ON CHEAP STREET

3.2 THREE GOLDEN THREADS

Three overriding themes frame the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan with the aim of achieving sustainable development.

VCO 1 - VITALITY

Vitality is a sign of health and wellbeing and it is recognised that optimum conditions exist when there is: a balanced community of people of different ages, aspirations and circumstances; a balance between the security of wealth and employment on the one hand and the time and opportunity to relax and enjoy life on the other.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to create opportunities for people to make choices as to how they live, work and spend their leisure time. To strengthen the community by providing opportunities for individuals and communities to participate.

Planning applications for major development should identify the impact of such development in terms of social integration and economic benefit to the Town using the 10 Principles of One Planet Living as a guide.

See appendix C for supplementary guidance "Definition of major

developments".

VCO 2 - SUSTAINABILITY

To provide the framework for a town-wide transition to a low carbon economy.

It is recognised that the term sustainability extends well beyond the energy efficiency of buildings. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future sets out five features of sustainable development: living within the earth's environmental limits, ensuring a strong, healthy and just society, achieving a sustainable economy, promoting good governance, and using sound science responsibly.

In order to provide clarity and policy guidance on future development, the Council is proposing to adopt an overarching sustainable development objective based on One Planet Living as defined by Bioregional and Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

One Planet Living (OPL) is a simple concept. We have only one planet and collectively we have a responsibility to



FIGURE 5. VITALITY

live within its capacity. At present, within the UK we are consuming natural resources at a rate that would require the equivalent of three planets if everyone shared our lifestyle.

Ten clear principles have been developed to promote happy, healthy and sustainable communities, and these have been translated below into a management model for development.



3.2 THREE GOLDEN THREADS

Zero carbon

Making buildings more energy efficient and delivering all energy with renewable technologies.

Zero waste

Reducing waste, reusing where possible, and ultimately sending zero waste to landfill.

Sustainable transport

Encouraging low carbon modes of transport to reduce emissions, reducing the need to travel.

Sustainable materials

Using sustainable healthy products, with low embodied energy, sourced locally, made from renewable or waste resources.

Local and sustainable food

Choosing low impact, local, seasonal and organic diets and reducing food waste.

Sustainable water

Using water more efficiently in buildings and in the products we buy; tackling local flooding and water course pollution.

Land use and wildlife

Protecting and restoring biodiversity and natural habitats through appropriate land use and integration into the built environment.

Culture and community

Reviving local identity and wisdom; supporting and participating in the arts.

Equity and local economy

Creating bioregional economies that support fair employment, inclusive communities and international fair trade.

Health and happiness

Encouraging active, sociable, meaningful lives to promote good health and well being.

The charity The Converging World has been commissioned to undertake a carbon audit which will provide a baseline study of CO₂ emissions and energy use in Frome and assess the potential resources available for renewable energy production in the future.

The principles of One Planet Living and the definition of sustainable development, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework should inform all future development in Frome.

VCO 2 - PARTICIPATION

To respect the underlying principle that the community has the right to participate in the process of development.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to offer a mandate for local people to be fully engaged and represented (as opposed to being simply consulted) on future development and encourage people to play an active part in their communities and life of the town.

Planning applications for development should be supported by appropriate evidence of local community consultation and engagement. See Appendix D for supplementary guidance on Community Consultation and Engagement.



4.0 HOUSING

“The impact of housing on the overall wellbeing of the community is hard to overestimate. Good quality homes in desirable and sustainable neighbourhoods have a major impact on the health, educational achievement and welfare of the people who live in them and the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the communities in which they are located. Suitable housing is vital to enable people to meet their full potential, to live independently and to integrate with the community”

Mendip District Council Housing Strategy 2010-2015

4.1 CONTEXT

When the capital markets collapsed in 2007, new housebuilding all but stopped and has been slow to recover. It is still not keeping pace with demand. A housebuilding industry dominated by large corporations funded by shareholder capital and bank loans is susceptible to such financial shocks.

The Neighbourhood Plan's focus on resilience invites us to think about how we might respond from a local perspective; how we might take a direct involvement in the development of our Town's housing stock using local skills, labour and capital, and how we plan for future growth in a way that meets current needs but leaves it in good hands for future generations.

Key to the successful delivery of the Housing policies laid down under the Local Plan will be the development of the strategic sites at Saxonvale and Southfield Farm. The importance of providing affordable housing and particularly homes for the young and the elderly as well as family houses and accommodation for rural workers is also recognised.

There is a local view that recently constructed housing estates which have sprung up on the edge of the Town have contributed little of value and further development of this nature should be more rigorously controlled.

Notably there is strong support for self build and community-led development and a wish to see more sites made accessible for self-build and cohousing.

Interest in self-build and custom-build housing has grown enormously in recent years thanks to TV programmes such as Grand Designs and is now actively supported by Government. Such housing is likely to be more sustainable, affordable and community focused than conventional development, however competing for sites and finding the resources to undertake the development can be a difficult task. The supplemental report "The Case for Community Development" highlights some of these issues.

4.2 KEY OBJECTIVES

- To support the delivery of housing to meet the demand of a growing population
- To ensure new housing is available, appropriate and accessible to people of all ages and circumstances in order to maintain a balanced and diverse population.
- To promote good urban design that contributes positively to the fabric of the Town and to prevent further proliferation of pattern book housing estates.
- To support the development of the strategic sites of Saxonvale and Southfield Farm within the Plan period
- To require the highest sustainable standards in housing design and construction and to ensure all new development meets the general design guidelines as set out in the Frome Town Design Statement
- To permit cohousing and community development to take place on suitable exception sites providing that long term affordability is secured.
- To recognise and manage development in light of emerging climate change impacts with particular regard to the location of new development away from areas of flood risk and developments that would increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, in line with the Mendip District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1) and encourage the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

4.3 ACHIEVED BY

- Setting out clear delivery mechanisms and seeking partnership with landowners, developers, agencies and funders along with the people and organisations of Frome to deliver these objectives.
- Identifying suitable sites and opportunities for self builders and maintaining a register of sites and interest.
- Working in collaboration with Frome Cohousing CIC, housing associations and other partner organisations.
- Making best use of public assets in the delivery of strategic objectives
- Identifying opportunities for local private investment, community share issue and/or crowd funding to finance local housing schemes.

FIGURE 7. RECENT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

4.4 HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

H1 - PLANNING FOR GROWTH

OBJECTIVE 1

To support the delivery of housing to meet the demand of a growing population

Development is not only needed to provide homes but also to help establish a sense of place and community. It offers the opportunity to adapt and innovate and it demonstrates a sense of purpose and confidence in the future.

The Council will support proposals that address current and future housing need within the plan period, providing housing in line with MENDIP DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN - Core Policy 2: Supporting the Provision of New Housing.

H2 - BUILDING A BALANCED COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE 2

To ensure new housing is available, appropriate and accessible to people of all ages and circumstances to maintain a balanced and diverse population.

A healthy and vibrant community is one that encompasses a population made up of people of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances. The Council supports diversity and encourages full participation in the community by people of different financial means and social and ethnic backgrounds.

Central to the strategy to support a healthy and balanced population will be the need to provide suitable accommodation for young people and working families.

Central to the strategy to support a healthy and balanced population will be the need to provide accommodation suitable for the whole community, from single young people, to families, to the retired and older people.

With house prices above the national average, there are many, particularly amongst younger age groups, who may not have the necessary means to purchase a home in the Town and yet are unlikely to qualify for assisted housing. Positive support in the provision of both affordable and good quality private rented housing is therefore required to help maintain a healthy population balance.

There are many ways in which the Council can help reduce housing costs such as:

- Reducing development land costs by allocating exception sites specifically for affordable homes.
- Minimising annual running costs by specifying high energy efficiency in new homes and encouraging energy improvements to existing stock.
- Working with not-for-profit partners and community housing organisations, and supporting the allocation of affordable housing through development agreements with private developers.
- Encouraging diversity and innovation in design.

- Land at The Mount is identified in the Draft Mendip Local Plan as a future growth area. When this site is required, Frome Town Council will work to ensure the site is brought forward in accordance with the principles of this plan.
- Encouraging the provision of live/work properties.

The emerging Local Plan predicts a rise in the proportion of people beyond retirement age across the Mendip District by 70% over the Plan period.

Support for the elderly is a natural function of a caring community, and developers should be encouraged to provide homes suitable for future adaptation to enable residents and family members to remain and play an active part in the community as long as they wish to and are able to do so.

Add at end of last para. Consideration should also be given to incorporating features into new build and retro fitted buildings which are beneficial to wildlife such as built in swift boxes.

POLICY H2 - BUILDING A BALANCED COMMUNITY

All new residential development should maintain, provide or contribute to a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities in the Frome Neighbourhood Plan area.

Planning applications for 10 or more homes should:

- ***Address affordable housing need and housing demand in line with Mendip District Local Plan 2006-2028 Policy DP11: Affordable Housing.***
- ***Contribute to the diversity of housing in the local area and help to redress any housing imbalance that exists.***
- ***Employ design solutions that promote strong neighbourhoods.***
- ***Enable future flexibility and adaptability.***

4.4 HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

H3 - BUILDING BY DESIGN OBJECTIVE 3

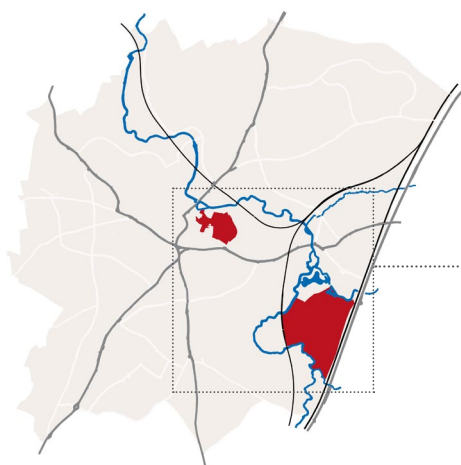
To encourage good urban design that contributes positively to the fabric of the Town and to prevent further proliferation of estate housing. To enhance the town, housing developments must have good pedestrian access to the town centre facilities.

People come to Frome to live, shop, eat, work, or simply to visit. This is a historic market town with a rich heritage and diversity of buildings and open spaces catering for a wide range of interests and activities. Diversity in design is part of the essential character of the Town, but quality and context should not be compromised.

Section 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out design parameters with reference to the Town Design Statement.

POLICY H3 - BUILDING BY DESIGN

Quality of design is a key consideration for residential development. Proposals which fail to take the opportunities available to enhance the local character and quality of the area and the way it functions or fail to comply with the Town Design Statement will be refused



KEY PLAN



FIGURE 8. MAP OF SOUTHFIELD FARM (WALLBRIDGE) AND SAXONVALE

4.4 HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

H4 - DELIVERING MAJOR PROJECTS

OBJECTIVE 4

To support the development of Southfield Farm (Wallbridge) and Saxonvale within the plan period

There are two key sites expected to come forward for development within the Plan period: Saxonvale, a 3.8 ha mixed use site in the Town Centre and Southfield Farm a 22ha site on the Eastern outskirts. Between them is the capacity to build 700-800 new homes, the majority of the designated housing allocation under this current Plan.

The development of these strategic sites will be critical in delivering the housing strategy and affirming the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Saxonvale is subject to an adopted development brief and the regeneration of this site is expected to deliver major improvements to the Town Centre. (see also section 6 “The Town Centre”)

Southfield Farm was allocated for housing in the 2001 Mendip Local Plan and is being reallocated in the new Local Plan. The Local Plan proposes that this site will deliver around 400 new homes, a new primary school and other community facilities and provide footpath links crossing the river & railway with landscaping and open space that contributes to the wider River Frome corridor initiative.

This is an opportunity to address concerns of the Citizens Panel about the quality of urban extension development in the Town, and establish this as an area that offers interest and variety along with improved amenity and access. The site borders the river and careful consideration will be needed to reflect the value and use of this amenity

A contingency site to the South of The Mount will be allocated if sites within the settlement boundaries do not deliver sufficient numbers to meet Frome’s housing requirement set out in the current Local Plan.

POLICY H4 - DELIVERING MAJOR PROJECTS

Any development which, as a whole or by the sum of parts provides over 100 houses are essentially creating a new community and as such shall be regarded as a community development, and as such developers will be required to set out a management plan detailing how members of that community will interact with each other and the wider Frome population.

Planning applications will be expected to include:

- *A clear statement of the intended composition of the proposed community and a future asset management plan.*
- *Clear and deliverable objectives in terms of meeting the Town’s sustainable objectives of One Planet Living (as outlined in VCO2 of this Plan).*
- *A variety of housing in terms of size, form and tenures including provision for home-working.*
- *A statement on access and integration that shall include pedestrian and cycle links between the new development and the existing Town community and neighbourhood facilities. (In the case of Southfield Farm, this must include a pedestrian link across the river to Adderwell).*
- *Provision for serviced plots to be made available for self build or custom build housing*1 equivalent in number to at least 5% of the total housing numbers.*

**1 (as defined as a development where the future owner or occupier has a direct or indirect influence on the design, planning and construction of the property.)*

4.4 HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

H5 - ENERGY EFFICIENT AND LOW CARBON HOMES

OBJECTIVE 5

To require the highest sustainable standards in housing design and construction and to ensure all new development meets the general design guidelines as set out in the Frome Town Design Statement.

Tackling housing affordability is not only about reducing the cost of rent or mortgage payments but also annual running costs. Domestic energy costs are expected to rise by an average of 8% per annum, well in excess of inflation, and this raises concerns that significantly more people will move into fuel poverty. Not all new developments are connected to mains gas further increasing the household energy costs. Developers are encouraged to connect to all mains services where possible.

The Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) sets out national standards for the design and construction of new homes. It aims to reduce carbon emissions by creating homes that are more efficient to heat and light; better insulated and built from natural and recycled materials. All new homes are currently required to meet Code Level 3 (2013) but it is intended this will progress towards a zero carbon rating (code 5 and 6) by 2016.

For areas with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan the Charging Authority (Mendip District Council) are required to provide the community with 25% of CIL receipts secured in the Neighbourhood Plan area, compared to 15% in areas without a Neighbourhood Plan. The way in which these funds are then spent is a matter for determination by Frome Town Council which provides scope for a proportion of this 25% to be returned to the developer for providing improved eco-standards.

The Council is committed to supporting and encouraging new homes and mixed use developments to match or exceed the current codes for sustainable homes standards.

The aims identified in the Frome Community Plan are: to promote economy, resilience and self-reliance in the provision and use of energy locally.

POLICY H5 - ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES

The Town Council encourages the development of homes that exceed the minimum Code for Sustainable Homes requirements from the development plan

Where it can be verified that new residential developments have exceeded (verified post occupation) the requirements of Building Regulations part L1A (conservation of heat and power, new dwellings) Frome Town Council will provide an appropriate refund of Community Infrastructure Levy based on the funds it receives through that process from that development.

H6 - SUPPORTING SELF BUILD AND COMMUNITY HOUSING

OBJECTIVE 6

To permit cohousing and community development to take place on suitable exception sites providing long term affordability is secured.

The reasons for encouraging cohousing and community housing are many. Such houses are likely to be more affordable and energy efficient than those produced by the volume housebuilders. They are built to the needs and wishes of the resident, often incorporating new design ideas and create therefore interesting variety of form.

Collective or community-led development that enables future residents to participate in the design, planning, construction and future management of their homes offers additional social and environmental benefits as we see from a number of award winning schemes such as Lilac, Leeds, Threshold Centre, Dorset and Springhill Stroud.

Whilst demand from those interested in a collective housebuilding project is predicted to grow, it is recognised that generally levels of knowledge and understanding are currently low and support and facilitation is needed to help community builders and cohousing groups secure sites, obtain finance and professional support and also gain information and confidence.

The policy approach to sustainable construction is currently under review by the Government and all or some elements of this policy may be superseded

by the changes. In this eventuality the application of this policy would be assessed in accordance with the latest Government policy. But the aim of the policy will continue that proposals that exceed the minimum requirements will be eligible for the refund in line with the incentive scheme by the Town Council in response to the proposal.

POLICY H6 - SELF BUILD AND COMMUNITY HOUSING

As an exception to normal policy for the provision of housing set out in Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Mendip District draft local plan, Community Housing may be permitted adjoining the existing development boundary of the town on sites where development would not otherwise be permitted providing:

- a) The development will provide collective land ownership and shared management responsibility.*
- b) The development provides an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes reflecting identified local need and meets demand based on the current Local Housing Needs Assessment or evidence from local Community Housing Groups and the town council.*
- c) The development is energy efficient, and will not have a significant adverse impact on the character of the area and local landscape setting.*
- d) Such proposals should not have an adverse or harmful impact on statutorily protected species or habitats.*
- e) Prospective residents can demonstrate, through a development management plan, professional and financial capacity and competency in undertaking and completing the development.*
- f) The land is held in trust as a community asset in perpetuity.*
- g) Housing costs are made affordable by reference to capital costs or rent being no more than 80% of open market value and such discount is protected through succession.*



BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Our aim is to ensure that the right premises, sites and other infrastructure is in place to support the start-up and growth of local businesses and employment.

5.1 CONTEXT

The Draft Local Plan identifies the need to create between 2700 and 2900 new jobs in Frome over the Plan period. This is the highest level of job creation to be achieved in all of the settlements in Mendip district. To facilitate this the District Council has identified that 24,600sqm new net floorspace and 20.2 hectares of employment land will be required.

Frome Town Council's 'A Strategy for Success 2011-15' sets the context for economic development in Frome, and identifies the development of a 'resilient economy' as a key goal. Promoting resilience is in this context about encouraging diversity and innovation, avoiding reliance on one single employer, sector or skill base.

In line with National trends the employment profile in Frome has shifted in recent years from an industrial economy to the service and retail sectors. Unemployment remains low, and economic activity rates are high. Nobody in Frome lives amongst the bottom 20% most deprived areas in England.

Whilst it is important to ensure that there is land and premises to support local manufacturing and distribution it is recognised that a greater proportion of new start-up businesses will be in industries such as media, arts, technology, design or social enterprises, than in traditional in manufacturing. Such businesses are attracted to places offering a range of social, cultural and business facilities, a skilled workforce, a range of housing and an attractive and stimulating environment.

The success of creative/media hubs such as the Silk Mill and the Old Church School which offer flexible and affordable workspace suggests there is further demand for such accommodation in the town centre.

A thriving independent retail sector and increasingly lively and popular markets are important drivers for the local economy, and yet a shortage of comparison goods and fashion outlets inevitably means that consumer spend is leaked to centres such as Bath and Trowbridge.

PJK Chartered Surveyors and Mark Brunson, Property Consultant were appointed by Frome Town Council to undertake a study to:-

(a) Provide a brief overview of future demand for industrial premises in Frome based on existing studies, data sources and knowledge of the local market.

(b) Undertake a SWOT analysis of a range of existing B1, B2 and B8 employment sites in Frome, approximately 25 sites

(c) Present conclusions regarding the feasibility of retention of those sites and/or conversion of the buildings to enable continued employment use (not just B1 light industrial, B2 and B8, but also other B1 uses) in the period to 2028. This should be in the light of the SWOT analysis and projected trends in terms of the demand for such sites/buildings.

(d) Assess whether Marston Trading Estate and/or Commerce Park are capable of being expanded to help meet the need for a further 4.7 ha. of land in Frome and present recommendations.

The recommendations of that report are:-

Marston Trading Estate and Commerce Park are the two key trading estates in Frome with further industrial estates at Vallis, Wallbridge and Station Approach. Whilst there is available land for development at Commerce Park, Marston has limited allocated expansion land.

Average annual take up for the past six years is 5,700 m² of floorspace of which approximately 2,000 m² is new build, the balance being churn on second hand stock. This new build equates to approximately 0.67ha per annum which we recommend is increased to 1 ha per annum over the Plan period, as the past 6 years includes an economic downturn, and the take up data will be incomplete as not all developments would have been picked up by Focus the commercial property data source.

There are 10.6 ha of serviced consented land at Commerce Park and 0.42 ha allocated at Marston leading to an outstanding requirement to allocate a further 5 ha over the Plan period. We recommend that this additional supply is allocated at Marston/Wessex Fields where there is virtually no remaining allocated development land.

An existing application, if successful, at a site adjacent to

Wessex Fields for the development of an office park would extend the allocated area at Marston by a further 1.46ha, and land further to the south of this site would appear to have potential to satisfy future demand whilst being able to take advantage of moderate infrastructure costs adjacent to existing development as opposed to allocating new employment sites.

We also recommend considering what potential there may be to provide capacity for a further phase at Commerce Park when existing allocated land is developed out in order to maintain its momentum and position within the sub-regional hierarchy.

Additional concerns identified in the Employment Land Study (2012) include:-

- The outward migration of workers to areas such as Bath
- The loss of employment land to higher value residential development.
- The lack of modern business and retail facilities in the Town Centre.

Conclusions regarding potential losses:

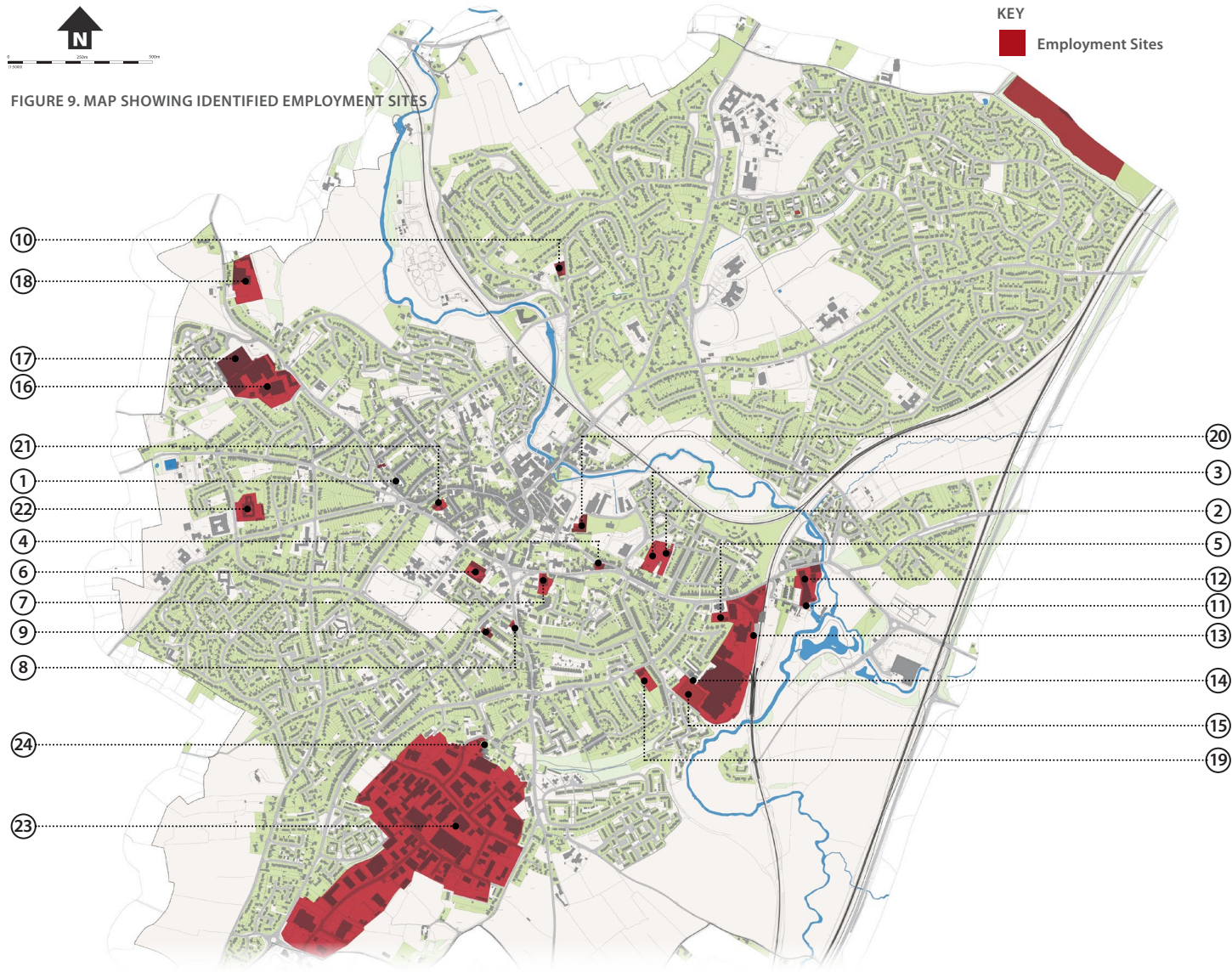
Within the study area we have identified that of the 77ha of existing employment land up to 4.67 hectares (BTD and Caxton Road) is potentially at risk during the Plan period.

There are a variety of reasons why certain sites may be subject to review during the plan period and it is conceivable that some businesses will continue to operate from their existing sites well beyond 2028.

The identified sites that make up the 77ha of existing employment sites are shown below

Since completing the Employment Land Study in 2012, four of the identified sites have gained planning permission for mostly residential re-development. These sites are No7. Eastgate Buildings, No.14 Butler Tanner & Dennis, No.18 T H Whites and No. 19 T.Bos. An application for No.22 The Police Station is currently pending decision for residential development.

5.1 CONTEXT



| EMPLOYMENT SITES | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------|
| Location | Acres | HA | Grading |
| ① Baker Street | 0.07 | 0.03 | * |
| ② Snelgroves | 0.68 | 0.28 | ** |
| ③ Minty's Nursery | 1.32 | 0.53 | ** |
| ④ H&B Tyres | 0.14 | 0.06 | ** |
| ⑤ Rear of Petrol Filling Station | 0.48 | 0.19 | *** |
| ⑥ Wesley Close | 1.04 | 0.42 | ** |
| ⑦ Eastgate Buildings | 0.67 | 0.27 | ** |
| ⑧ Linwood Motors | 0.09 | 0.04 | ** |
| ⑨ Rear of Highpoint | 0.19 | 0.08 | ** |
| ⑩ The Welsh Mill | 0.52 | 0.21 | ** |
| ⑪ Wallbridge Mill | 3.01 | 1.22 | ** |
| ⑫ Wallbridge | 1.96 | 0.79 | *** |
| ⑬ Station Approach | 5.44 | 2.20 | *** |
| ⑭ Butler Tanner Dennis | 6.05 | 2.45 | ** |
| ⑮ BTD Depot | 4.10 | 1.66 | ** |
| ⑯ Vallis Trading Estate | 8.08 | 3.27 | *** |
| ⑰ Weston Vinyls | 4.13 | 1.67 | ** |
| ⑱ TH White (Estimated) | 1.95 | 0.79 | ** |
| ⑲ T Bos | 0.70 | 0.28 | ** |
| ⑳ Silk Mill | 0.20 | 0.08 | ** |
| ㉑ Somerset Smithy | 0.26 | 0.11 | ** |
| ㉒ Police Station | 2.22 | 0.90 | ** |
| ㉓ Marston | 84.17 | 34.06 | **** |
| ㉔ 37 Lower Keyford | 0.08 | 0.03 | ** |
| TOTAL | 127.55 | 51.62 | |

*All sites graded ** and above will be regarded as valuable employment sites, which are outlined on the map below.*

Each location has also been assessed using the:
 Assessment, Definition, Relevant action

***** - Best in Class, highest quality business areas that are regionally significant due to their scale, location and environment. Suitable for progressive/aspirational indigenous businesses as well as inward investors

Rigorously protect and seek to expand

**** - Good grade employment sites due to scale location and environment, that is capable of competing in the sub-regional marketplace. Will appeal to some inward investors

Protect, support and expand

*** - Key Employment sites within the District but primarily populated by local businesses

Protect and Support

** - Poorer quality stock in inappropriate locations with poor access or environmental issues

Protect but review during Plan period

* - Poorest stock, one off sites in residential areas with high levels of vacancy and/or dereliction

Regenerate or promote redevelopment for alternative uses

5.2 KEY OBJECTIVES

- To meet the Local Plan target of creating a further 2700 new jobs.
- To provide a range of land, buildings and employment facilities for start-up and grow-on businesses.
- To protect 'valuable employment sites' from redevelopment other than for employment uses.
- To promote Frome as a Town that supports enterprise, innovation, and ideas.
- To promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generation and encourage compliance with BREEAM excellent rating.
- To reduce the environmental impact of travel to work by identifying options for getting to work other than by car.
- By identifying options for getting to work other than by car.



FIGURE 13. FLEXIBLE WORKING SPACE



FIGURE 12. OFFICE BUILDINGS IN FRO



FIGURE 10. THE SILK MILL STUDIO

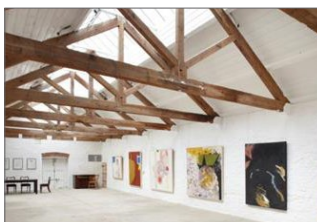


FIGURE 11. GALLERY WITHIN THE SILK MILL STUDIOS

5.3 ACHIEVED BY

- The allocation of a minimum of 1ha per annum of new employment land, equating to 16ha over the plan period
- Supporting the development of further incubator space in the Town Centre for new businesses to seed and grow.
- Including within the development brief for Saxonvale plans for a new hotel, café/restaurants, retail and studio space, along with a business enterprise hub.
- Establishing a Local Renewable Energy Company (supported by Bath & West Community Energy, Frome Town Council and Sustainable Frome).
- Celebrating Frome's business successes.

BE1 - SUPPLY OF SUITABLE LAND AND BUILDINGS

5.4 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

OBJECTIVE 1 AND 2

To provide a range of land, buildings and employment facilities for start-up and grow on businesses.

POLICY BE1

In collaboration with Mendip District Council, through the Local Plan Part II - Site Allocations allocate an additional 5ha of Employment land over the Plan period.

BE2 - PROTECTION OF 'VALUABLE EMPLOYMENT LAND' OBJECTIVE 3

To protect 'valuable employment sites' from redevelopment other than for employment uses.

POLICY BE2 - PROTECTION OF EMPLOYMENT LAND

In addition to Local Plan Policy DP20, the redevelopment of 'Valuable Employment Sites' shown on map on pg 21 for non-employment uses will be resisted. Such development would only be granted in the exceptional circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated that no demand exists within this area for B1, B2 or B8 uses and an alternative and equal provision is made elsewhere in Frome, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not possible or viable.

BE3 - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES 4, 5 AND 6

To promote Frome as a Town that supports enterprise, innovation, and new ideas.

To promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generation and encourage compliance with BREEAM excellent rating

To reduce the environmental impact of travel to work by identifying options for getting to work other than by car.

POLICY BE3

The Town Council encourages development that exceeds the BREEAM standards, where it can be verified that new development will exceed the requirements of Building Regulations part L2a (conservation of heat and power, new buildings other than dwellings) Frome Town Council is considering an incentive scheme, details of the scheme are available on the Town Council website <http://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk> willing to negotiate an appropriate reduction in Community Infrastructure Levy

Note: The policy approach to sustainable construction is currently under review by the Government and all or some elements of this policy may be superseded by the changes. In this eventuality the application of this policy would be assessed in accordance with the latest Government policy. But the aim of the policy will continue that proposals that have exceeded (verified post occupation) the minimum requirements will be eligible for the refund in line with the incentive scheme by the Town Council in response to the proposal.

A blue-tinted illustration of a town street. The scene shows a row of buildings with windows and doors. A street lamp stands on the right side of the street. A sign with a bicycle symbol is visible on a pole. The overall atmosphere is quiet and urban.

6.0 THE TOWN CENTRE

Our aim is to develop an attractive centre that is pedestrian and cyclist friendly and encourages people to visit, shop, invest, live and work there.

6.1 CONTEXT

The Historic core of the Town Centre, characterised by areas of historic buildings connected by cobbled streets, including Cheap Street and Catherine hill, elevated walkways and alleys winding up and down the town's steep hills, has great charm and attracts visitors and new residents to the Town.

However, getting around the Town Centre on foot can be hampered by heavy traffic and a lack of safe crossing places, especially in Market Place and Bath Street. Narrow pavements and limited seating areas impact on the town's attractiveness as a place to socialise, shop and visit.

Plans to remodel the town centre will include improvements to public areas with better signage and information; plans for effective traffic management that gives priority to pedestrians and cyclists and extended use of the River corridor as a natural linear park linking different areas of the Centre.

Whilst many market towns have suffered from a national decline in High Street spending, Frome's niche retailing offer based largely on local and independent traders and local markets has meant that the Town has weathered the economic storm better than many. The vitality of the Town Centre depends on such traders who create interest and variety alongside other attractions that mark Frome out as a place to live and visit.

The historic character of Frome and the promotion of cultural and live music events at venues such as the Cheese & Grain, encourage thousands of people to visit Frome each year, and it is recognised that additional restaurant, hotel and guest house accommodation is required within the Centre to extend the active life of the Centre into the evening.

The public consultation identified other areas of concern:-

- Limited range of shops especially fashion and comparison goods (goods that are likely to be subject to comparison between suppliers before purchase e.g fridges, TV's and clothes etc.)
- Poor first impression of the Town from the entrance points and car parks
- Limited access to the River
- To increase the number of visitors, footfall and dwell time in the town centre
- To safeguard community facilities in line with Local Plan Policy DP17
- To Encourage and support all kinds of local producers, by promoting the town to producers. Providing business support, training, and business-to-business services

6.2 KEY OBJECTIVES

- To make the town centre a more pedestrian-friendly environment whilst allowing traffic to continue to flow through it.
- To support independent retailing (including the successful street markets) to enable people to source local produce and to encourage visitors to the town.
- To broaden the comparison retail offer of the town centre through sensitive new development that complements the existing offer.
- To make the main visitor car parks more attractive in terms of tree planting, public realm and the ability for drivers to pay on departure.
- To promote a comprehensive and sustainable regeneration plan for Saxonvale.
- To encourage greater evening activity including restaurants, clubs, and hotel accommodation.
- To provide suitable facilities for new businesses to be incubated and grown in the town centre to encourage greater local job creation and support creative industries such as art, media, technology, design, food, etc.
- To support sustainable living with opportunities for homeworking, cycle storage, access to local shops, cafés, public services and public transport.



FIGURE 14. FROME MARKET PLACE 2013

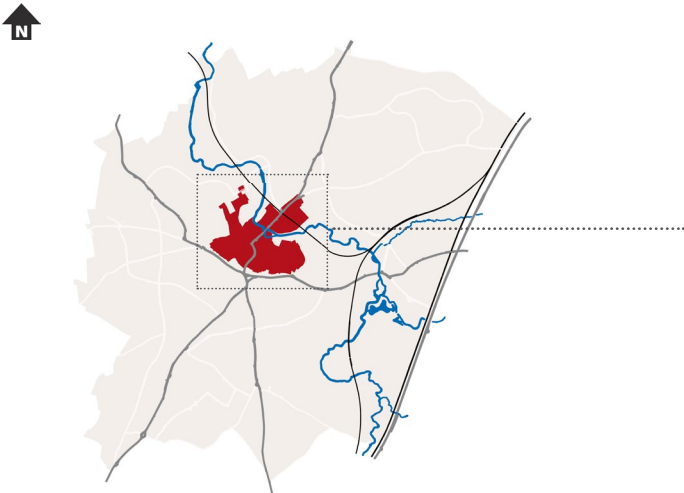
The Town Centre is the beating heart of Frome and its future success depends on it being able to adapt to offer a range of housing; goods and services and employment opportunities and provide a valued experience for visitors. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to create the right framework for these activities to coexist.

6.3 TOWN CENTRE POLICIES

TOWN CENTRE ZONES

This plan identifies the following town centre zones. These areas conform with those identified in the 2012 Town Design Statement:

- Area 1 - The Historic Core (TDS Character Zone 1)
- Area 2 - The Northern Historic Core (TDS Character Zone 2)
- Area 3 - Saxonvale (TDS Character Zone 4)



KEY PLAN

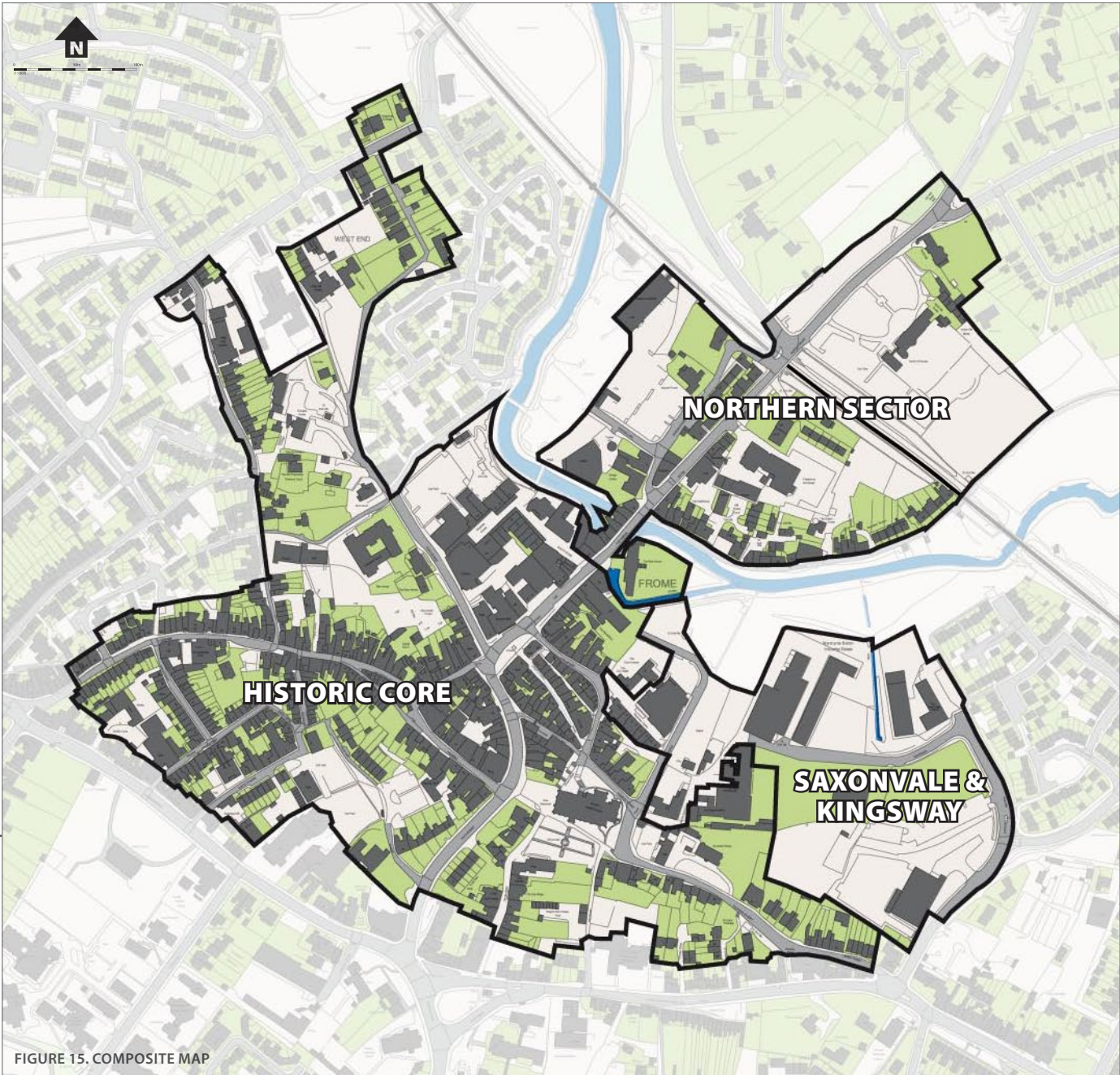


FIGURE 15. COMPOSITE MAP

6.3 TOWN CENTRE POLICIES



FIGURE 16. HISTORIC CORE INSET

AREA 1 - THE HISTORIC CORE

To the South and West of Market Place this zone has a largely medieval street pattern characterised by areas of historic buildings connected by cobbled streets, elevated walkways and alleys. Bath Street and Market Place are particularly busy roads carrying most of the through traffic across the Town Centre from North to South.

TC1 - REMODELLING

OBJECTIVE 1

To make the town centre a more pedestrian friendly environment whilst allowing traffic to continue to flow through it

The Community Plan highlighted the high volume and speed of traffic passing through the town centre as a key problem, which often makes it difficult to cross the main roads easily. This also gives the town centre the feeling of a thoroughfare which prioritises vehicular movement at the expense of pedestrians. At times the layout and on-street parking arrangements also create conflict and congestion and impact on air quality.

In 2012, a feasibility study into ways in which the town centre environment might be remodelled was commissioned and a number of recommendations were made focusing on traffic calming in Market Place and North Parade, the historic centre of the Town, and Bath Street.

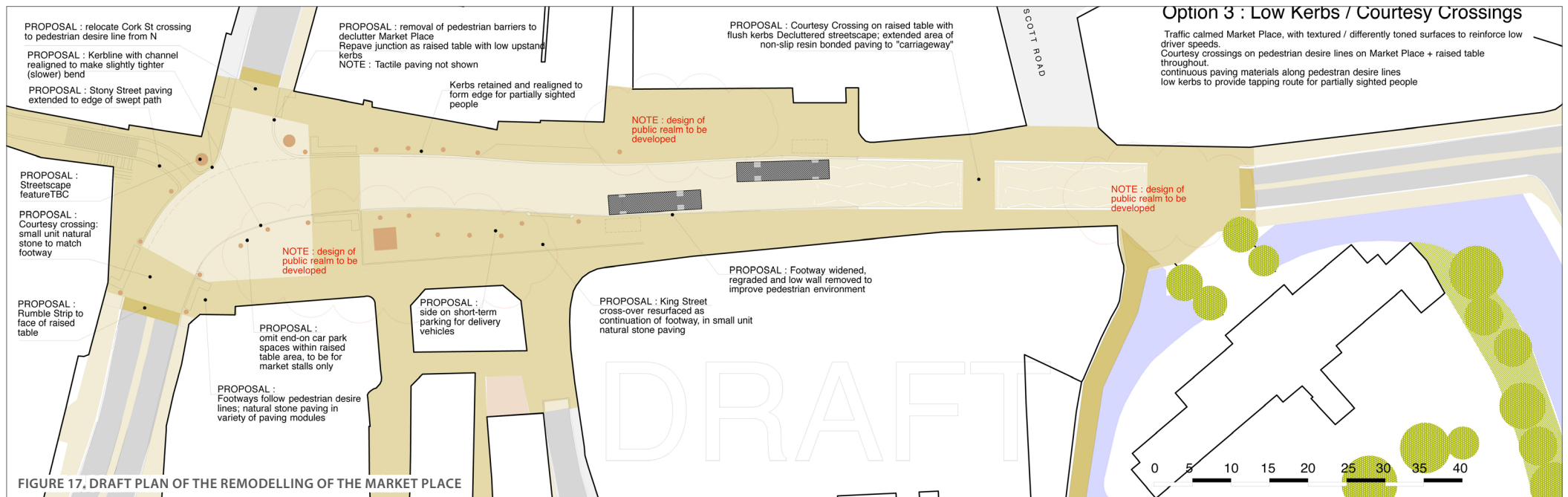


FIGURE 17. DRAFT PLAN OF THE REMODELLING OF THE MARKET PLACE

6.3 TOWN CENTRE POLICIES

ACHIEVED BY

Funding through S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions. Given the number of objectives for enhancing the town centre environment this project would help to achieve, the Neighbourhood Plan supports the remodelling of the Town Centre within the area shown in the map opposite.

POLICY TC1 – TOWN CENTRE REMODELLING

The Town Council, in collaboration with Mendip District Council and Somerset County Council, will, as a priority, seek to implement the scheme identified by the Frome Town Centre Remodelling Feasibility Study subject to funding.

Remodelling the Town Centre should provide improvements to the public realm. Proposals should be based on significant levels of community involvement which will contribute to the final design. Remodelling of the Town Centre within the area shown on the map which accords with the following principles will be permitted:

- *Improve the town centre environment for pedestrians.*
- *Reduce the impact of traffic movement from vehicles and re-order the priorities between motorised vehicles, cycles and pedestrians.*
- *Remodelling proposals that alter flows or speeds of traffic will be assessed for their impact on air quality*
- *Enhance the character and appearance of the town centre, taking into account the principles of the Town Design Statement relating to this area*
- *Provide an improved setting and location for the markets*
- *Demonstrate that it will cause no deterioration in air quality*

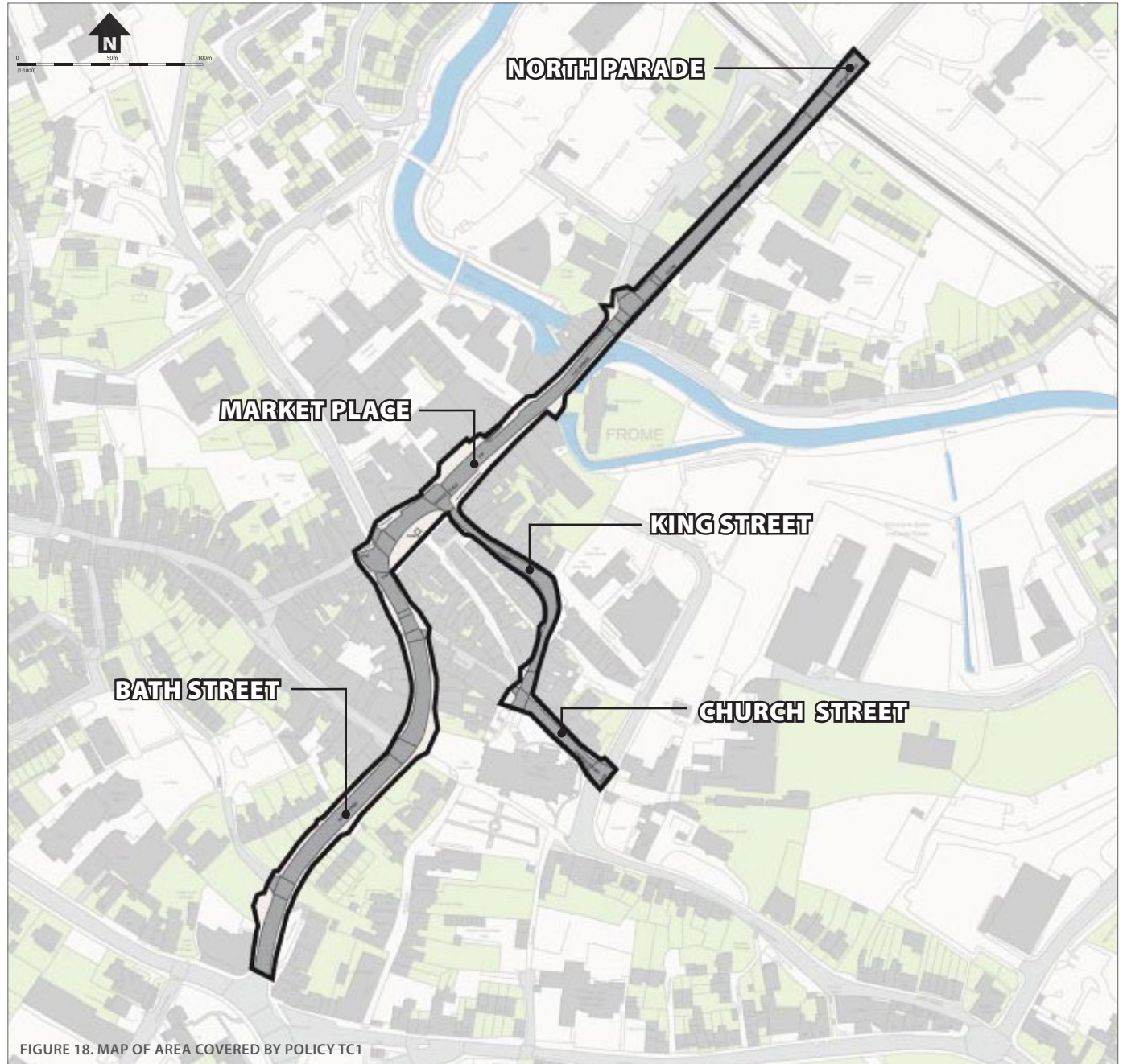


FIGURE 18. MAP OF AREA COVERED BY POLICY TC1

6.3 TOWN CENTRE POLICIES

TC2 - ST CATHERINE'S & BADCOX AREA

OBJECTIVE 2

To support independent retailing (including the successful street markets) to enable people to source local produce and to encourage visitors to the Town.

St. Catherine's (Paul Street, Stony Street, Palmer Street and Catherine Hill) and Badcox are typical of the historic core. They have become the focus of important town events such as the Artisan's Market and bicycle race known as the 'Cobblewobble' and more recently the Frome Super Market, a street market that fills the town centre on the first Sunday in every month from March to December.

This is Frome's independent shopping quarter, a magnet for visitors and an 'incubator' for new businesses. The variety and vitality of shops and small businesses is an essential part of the area's character, and steps will be taken to ensure that active shopping frontages are not interrupted by financial and professional services.

Mendip District Local Plan 2006-2028 Policy DP21 – Managing Town Centre Uses, identifies Stony Street and the row of shops, 3 – 23 as a Primary Frontages. Catherine Hill is identified as a Secondary Frontage.

Primary and Secondary frontages are described as follows:

- Primary Frontages - those street frontages in town centres where there is a predominance of shopping premises. Typically these are the principal 'high streets' where there is a dense mixture of national and independent retailers, punctuated to a very limited degree by banks and some food establishments.
- Secondary Frontages - those parts of town centres surrounding primary frontages described above where there is some shopping activity but the diversity of other commercial uses, like financial services, professional offices, pubs, bars, takeaways, is more apparent.

To further protect retail frontages in line with the existing uses in the St Catherine's & Badcox Area, the Town Council will apply for an Article 4 direction to restrict the permitted change to uses falling within Use Class A2 as defined by The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) to no more than 4%, (except in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated there is a need for additional A2 units) of the total retail units within the area shown on the map opposite.



FIGURE 19 & 20 IMAGES OF ST. CATHERINE'S

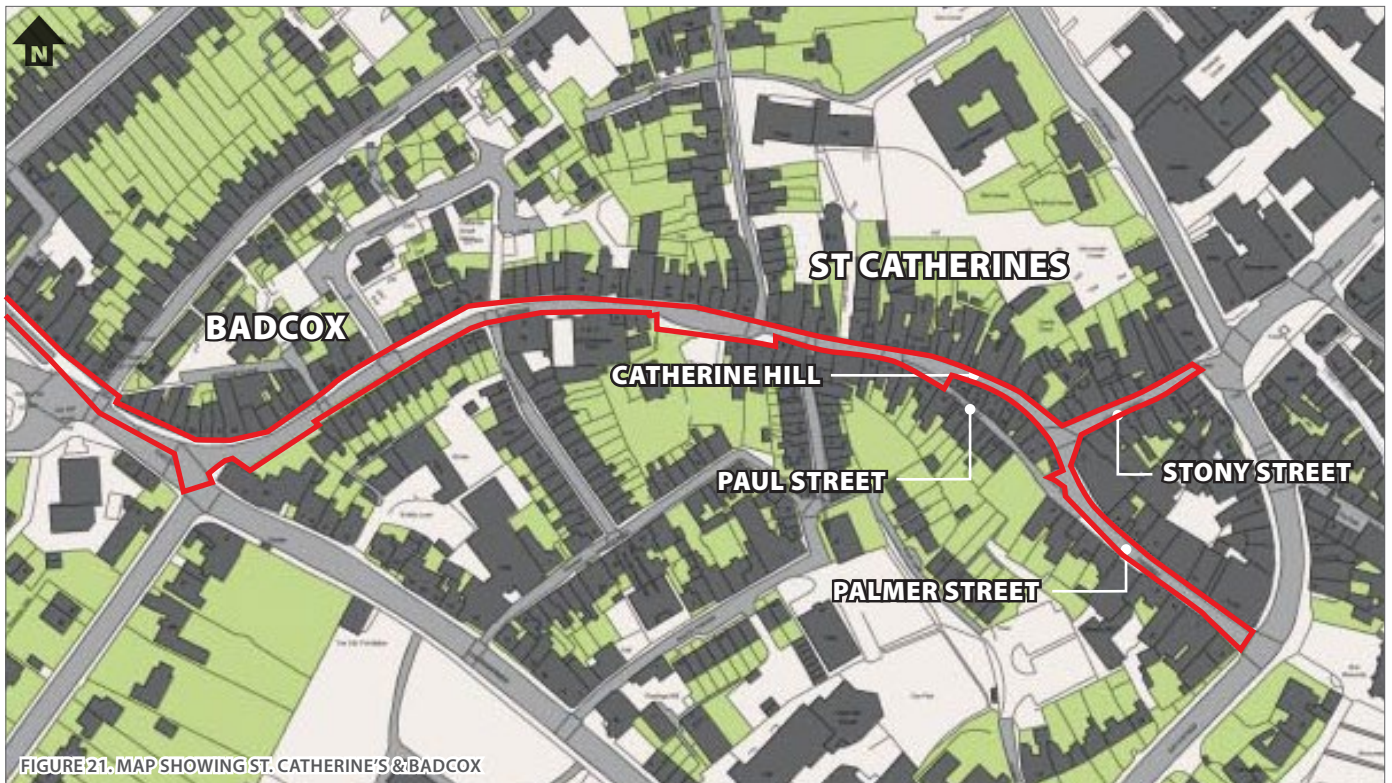


FIGURE 21. MAP SHOWING ST. CATHERINE'S & BADCOX

6.3 TOWN CENTRE POLICIES

TC3 - THE WESTWAY CENTRE OBJECTIVE 3

To broaden the comparison retail offer of the town centre through sensitive new development that complements the existing offer.

In character terms, the Westway Centre is the exception in the Historic Core. Frome's only purpose-built "shopping centre" was constructed in the 1970s.

POLICY TC3 - WESTWAY CENTRE

Redevelopment or expansion of Westway shopping centre will be permitted subject to.

- *Public realm improvements including access to the Frome River and tree planting.*
- *Sufficient car parking and space for buses being included within the redevelopment to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the vitality of the town centre.*
- *The design reflects the aims and objectives of the Town Design Statement and policy BE3 relating to any scheme in excess of 1000m².*
- *There will be no harmful of adverse impact on the biodiversity or protected species.*



FIGURE 22. WESTWAY CENTRE

6.3 TOWN CENTRE POLICIES



FIGURE 23. NORTHERN SECTOR INSET

AREA 2 - NORTHERN HISTORIC CORE

A River and Rail Crossing converging on the Town's largest car park and bus stops make this one of the most traffic congested areas in Frome.



FIGURE 24. FROME MUSEUM

Lying to the north of the River this zone includes a range of cultural attractions and facilities including Frome Museum, Black Swan Arts, Frome Library, Frome Information Centre and the Cheese & Grain arranged around the Cattle Market Car Park.

As the largest of the town's car parks, the Cattle Market site is an important arrival point for people arriving in Frome by car, bicycle or public transport. However, it lacks any significant soft landscaping or signage that might connect the various cultural attractions and facilities in this part of the town. The pay and display tariff in the car park has the effect of limiting people's length of stay and pay on exit or by mobile phone would be a significant improvement.

This is seen as an important area for future development and regeneration within the town centre, as it offers potential to meet the demand for a larger footprint of shopping, employment, leisure development and possibly improved bus and coach facilities. Such development could also support improvements to the River Corridor.

The Town Council, in collaboration with Mendip District Council will seek to scope out a plan for the short term management and longer term development options for the Cattle Market site.



FIGURE 25. CATTLE MARKET CAR PARK

TC4 - IMPROVEMENT TO TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS OBJECTIVE 4

To make the main visitor car parks more attractive in terms of tree planting, public realm improvements and the ability for drivers to pay on departure.

POLICY TC4 – THE CATTLE MARKET CAR PARK

Landscape and infrastructure improvements to the Cattle Market Car Park that improve this arrival point and enable this area to develop as a cultural destination will be supported.

6.3 TOWN CENTRE POLICIES

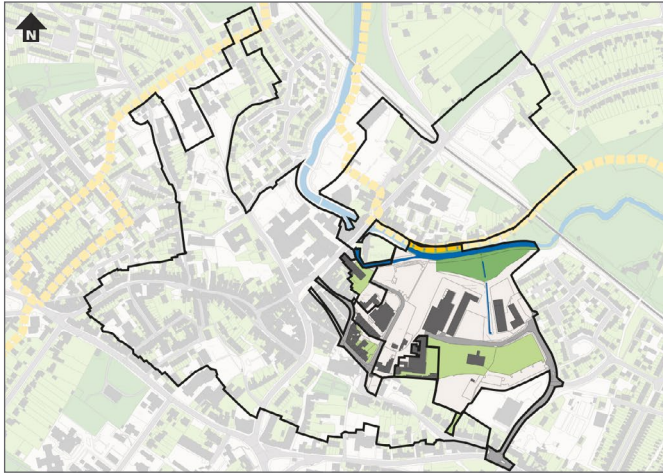


FIGURE 26. SAXONVALE INSET

AREA 3 - SAXONVALE

The development of Saxonvale, a site of 3.8 hectares to the east of the historic core, will be key to delivering the housing strategy and regenerating the Town Centre, providing new accommodation for shops and businesses and opening up and extending the River Corridor.

The site running down from St John's Parish Church to the River Frome was formerly a mixed industrial area known as Merchants Barton occupied by Notts Industries. A recently restored Mill on the site offers workshop and gallery space for creative businesses, but much of the site has been unoccupied for some years.

To the West of the site is the secondary Kingsway shopping mall that connects the site to Market Place. This includes the M&S Simply Food store and car park.

The Regional Development Agency previously funded a comprehensive Development Brief for the Saxonvale and Garsdale area which was adopted by Mendip DC and remains the main planning guide for the development of this site. The Brief sets out plans for a mix of uses including:

3-400 new homes, workspace, retail and leisure development and open space.

The Town Council see this as an opportunity to reprioritise traffic movements through the Centre and support a development that is an exemplar of modern sustainable living with energy efficient homes and easy access to work, social and recreational facilities and public transport.

TC5 - SAXONVALE

Key Objectives

- To promote a comprehensive and sustainable regeneration plan for Saxonvale.
- To encourage greater evening activity including restaurants, clubs, and hotel accommodation.
- To provide suitable facilities for new businesses to be incubated and grown in the town centre to encourage greater local job creation and grow creative industries such as art, media, technology, design, etc.
- To support sustainable living with opportunities for homeworking, cycle storage and showers and access to local shops, cafés, public services and public transport.

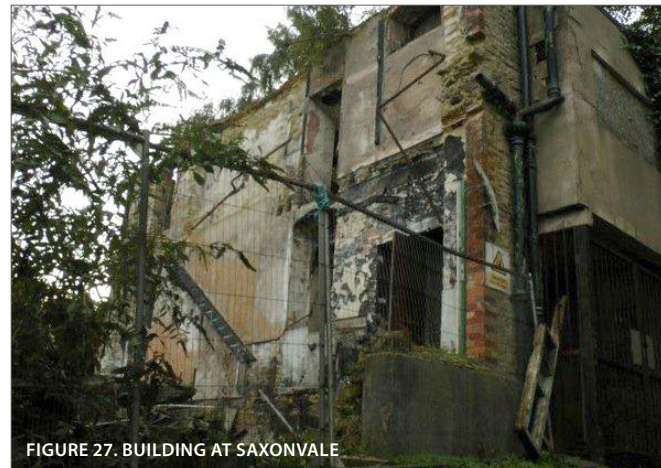


FIGURE 27. BUILDING AT SAXONVALE

POLICY TC5 - SAXONVALE

Plans for the redevelopment of Saxonvale should seek to achieve the overall vision for the redevelopment of the site based on the 2005 Planning Brief

The development of Saxonvale is expected to deliver:

- *An exemplar model of low impact and low carbon living.*
- *300+ new energy efficient homes of mixed price and tenure.*
- *New incubator and grow on space for small and medium sized businesses.*
- *Integrated retail, hotel and leisure facilities.*
- *Replacement training facilities for Somerset Skills and Learning.*
- *Artisan workshops and creative studio space.*
- *An urban park alongside the River .*
- *Improved traffic management in Vicarage street, Christchurch Street East and the surrounding road network.*

Plans for the development of this site will meet the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan policy for major development.



RIVER CORRIDOR AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The river corridor will be seen as the central open space in the town's network of green infrastructure providing a string of inter-connected open spaces for visitors and residents to enjoy.

7.1 CONTEXT

Frome has a wealth of green open spaces throughout the town providing valuable areas for sport and outdoor recreation. They provide many cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits, and contribute positively to physical and mental health and a better quality of life. Everyone should have easy access to open space and the opportunity to participate in sport and outdoor recreational pursuits. Consultation with sports clubs and other groups has indicated that there is a shortage of suitable facilities for sports participation in the town.

The River Frome is an important but underused asset within the town. The local community have highlighted better use of it as a key priority in the Community Plan and the Citizens Panel. The River Corridor is not managed strategically, either as an environmental or amenity resource, the riverbanks are not managed optimally and public access is at best intermittent. It feels as though the town has turned its back on the river which seems to be viewed as a hazard and nuisance rather than the green heart of the town.

Consultation feedback suggests that local people see the river corridor as an under-utilised resource for recreation, wildlife and want to see it opened up as an informal transport corridor for walking and cycling.



FIGURE 28. THE RIVER CORRIDOR



KEY PLAN

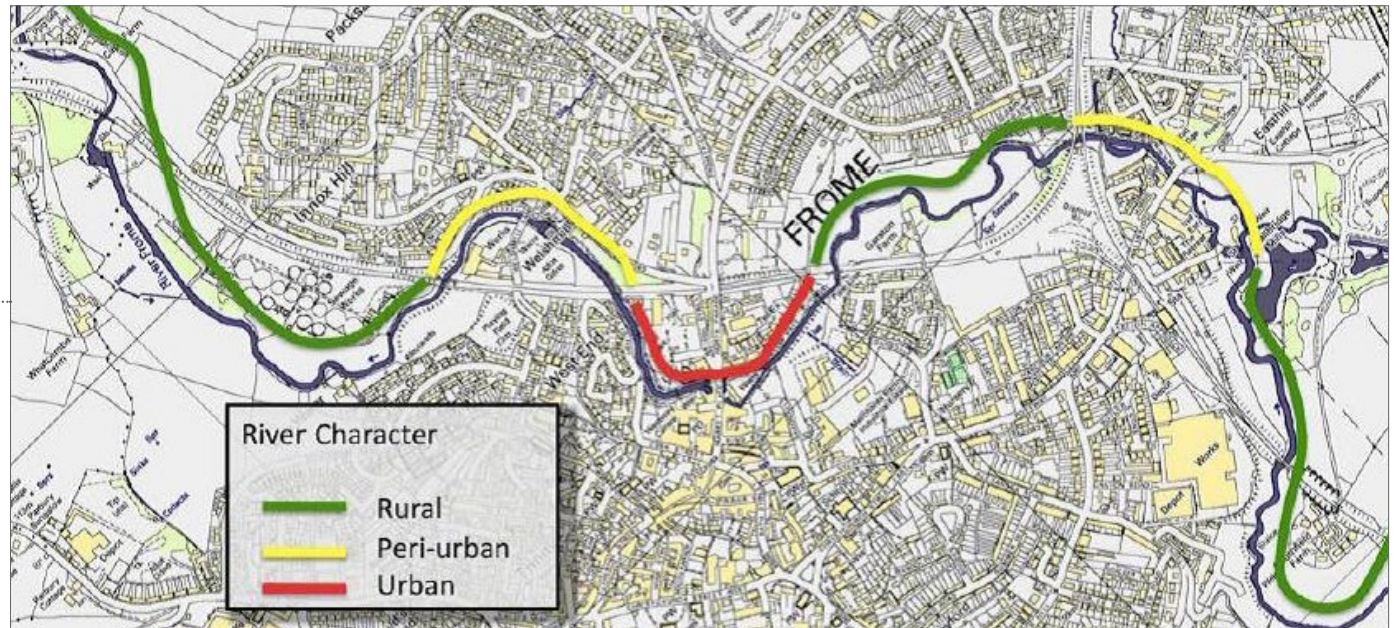


FIGURE 29. RIVER CHARACTER MAP FROM THE FROME RIVER STRATEGY 2012

7.2 THE RIVER CORRIDOR

POS1 - THE RIVER CORRIDOR

Key Objectives:

- To ensure the green infrastructure associated with the Frome River Corridor is maintained and enhanced, for benefit of people and wildlife
- To improve access in a way compatible with protecting the river environment, that will enable residents to walk or cycle in relative peace and safety through the town

Achieved By:

- Implementing the River Corridor Strategy.
- Funding through S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions.

7.3 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

POS2 - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Key Objectives:

- To protect natural landscapes and prevent development of public open space.
- To provide informal recreation areas.
- To provide additional sports and leisure facilities to meet local needs.
- To promote use of parks, open spaces and allotments.
- To manage public open space in a sustainable manner to protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity.

To Be Achieved By:

Producing a Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) jointly with Mendip DC and other partners as set out in Core Policy 6 of the Local Plan.

Seeking funding through CIL, the New Homes Bonus legacy fund and Section 106 contributions from development.

POLICY POS2 - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

- *Development of public open space will not be permitted unless it is to promote access, use and enjoyment of public land and buildings*
- *Development that would materially harm the contribution of the distinctive local character or accessibility of identified areas of open space/areas of visual significance or cause the loss of such areas will be refused.*
- *Plans for Major Developments (over 100 homes or 1000m2 of commercial floorspace) will be required to include details of plans to safeguard the future management and maintenance of open space and the protection of wildlife habitats within and adjoining the development site.*
- *Frome Town Council will work with Mendip District Council and other partners to produce a Supplementary Planning Document on Green Infrastructure that will identify and address deficiencies in Parks, sports, leisure and open space provision that will be a significant material consideration in the determination of planning applications and the funding raised from development.*

POLICY POS1 - THE RIVER CORRIDOR

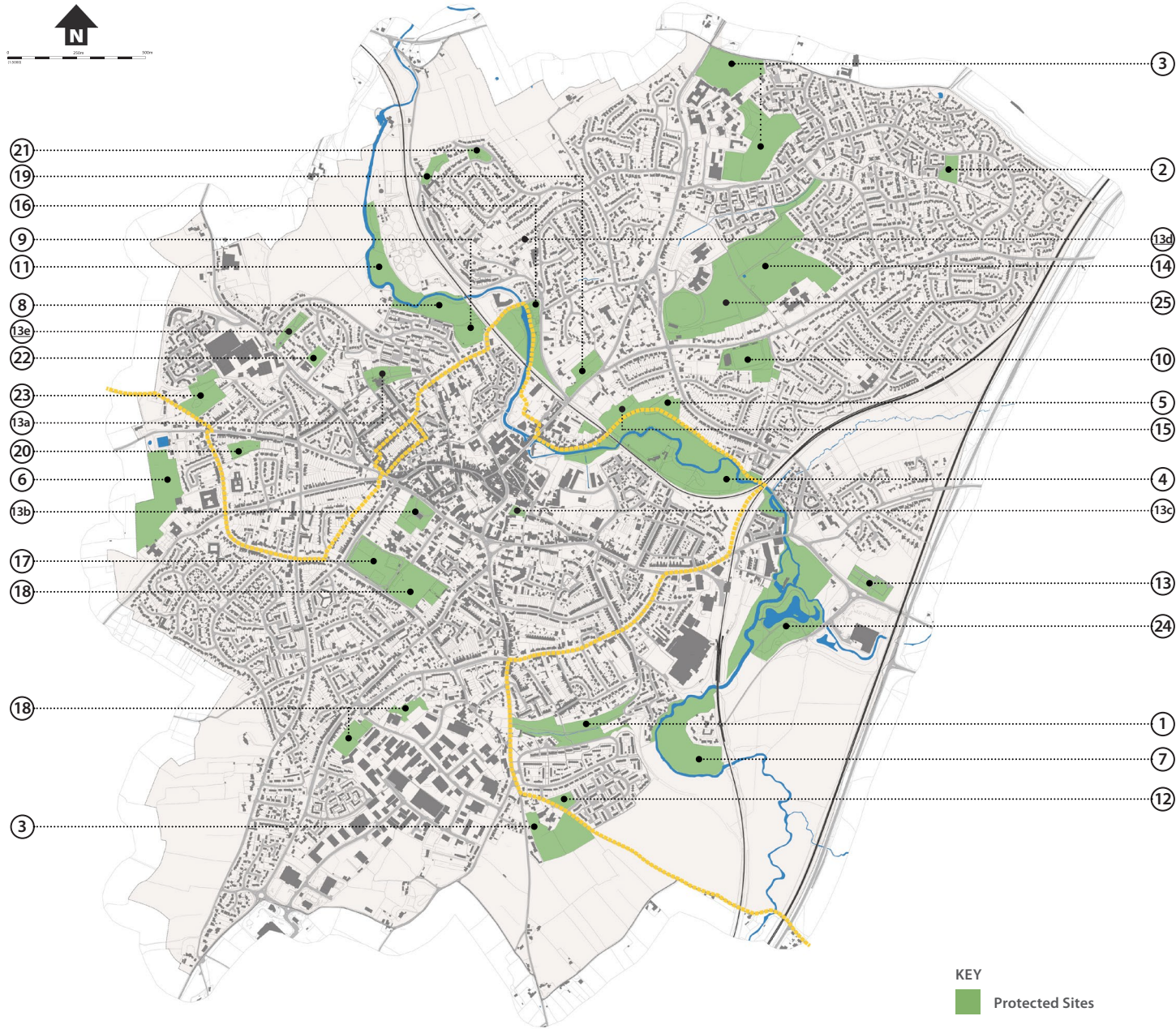
Otherwise acceptable planning applications that are closely related to the River Corridor environment and approaches to it will be supported where they take advantage of opportunities to improve the River Corridor environment, including access, subject to suitable ecological assessment. Development proposals that fail to take advantage of opportunities to improve the River Corridor environment, including access, will be refused

Development proposals that fail to take advantage of opportunities to improve the River Corridor environment, including access, will be refused.



FIGURE 30. THE RIVER CORRIDOR

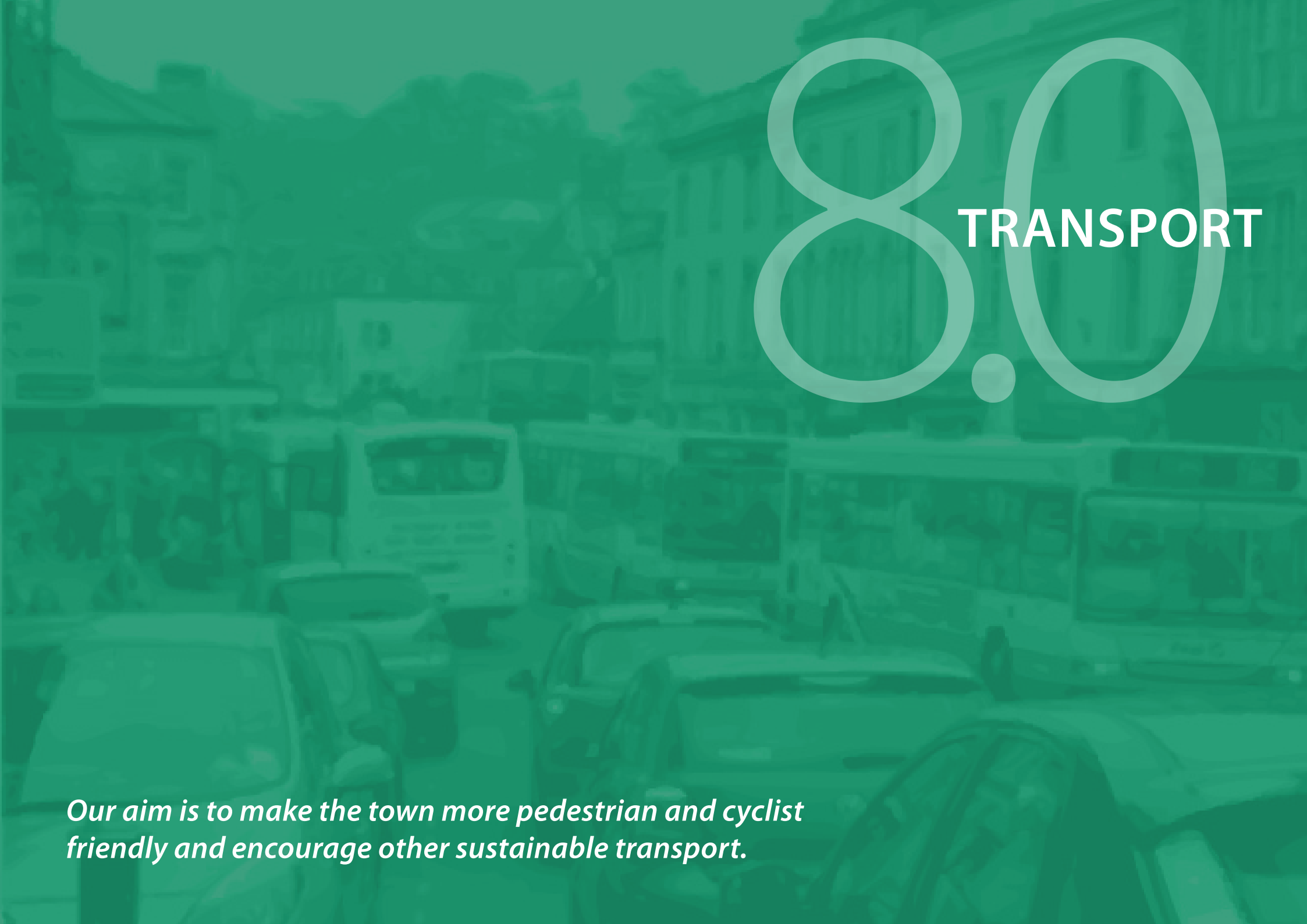
7.3 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE



- ① The Dippy (priority site)
 - ② Brunel Way open space (priority site)
 - ③ School Playing Fields (priority sites)
 - ④ Rodden Meadow (priority for protection)
 - ⑤ Other Rodden Meadows (priority for protection)
 - ⑥ Fields beyond Trinity/Critchill Sch (priority for protection)
 - ⑦ Fields at The Retreat, Adderwell and Watcombe Skips (priority for protection)
 - ⑧ Weylands (priority site)
 - ⑨ Playing field above Weylands (priority site)
 - ⑩ Play area behind Frome Town FC (priority site)
 - ⑪ River Corridor (priority project)
 - ⑫ The Mount Community Garden
 - ⑬ Closed cemeteries / churchyards
 - a. Holy Trinity Church
 - b. Christchurch
 - c. St John Church
 - d. St Mary's
 - e. Dissenters Cemetary
 - ⑭ Football / cricket / rugby clubs
 - ⑮ Millennium Green
 - ⑯ Welshmill Play park
 - ⑰ Victoria Park
 - ⑱ Mary Baily Playing Field
 - ⑲ Allotment gardens
 - ⑳ Old allotments behind police station
 - ㉑ Pedlars Grove play areas (MDC)
 - a. Chapman's Close
 - b. Packsaddle Way
 - ㉒ Vallis Youth Centre field
Egford lane Play area
 - ㉓ Asda field and nature reserve
 - ㉔ Showground
- Routes**
- ㉕ Sustrans route (priority project)

KEY
 Protected Sites
 Sustrans Route

FIGURE 31. MAP SHOWING LOCALLY PROTECTED SITES



8.0 TRANSPORT

Our aim is to make the town more pedestrian and cyclist friendly and encourage other sustainable transport.

8.1 CONTEXT

Throughout Britain, we live in an age where most people's first instinct when faced with the need to get somewhere, is to head for the car. Car users are, however, facing increasing fuel costs, parking charges and congestion.

Those living in the rural hinterland of Frome principally rely on the car, as there are often few other options to get to and from home. However, the town centre is suffering increasing congestion and its narrow streets are unsuited to heavy traffic. A change in priority is required to improve pedestrian access and encourage more people to walk and cycle and use public transport. The railway station and buses are important, but are currently underused and poorly linked to other options and information.

The consultation feedback on the Frome Community Plan stated :-

- For a rural town with half its working population commuting out, transport is essential. Public transport is frustratingly slow and disjointed, so the majority use cars, driving distances averaging 14 miles daily. The rising cost of fuel is starting to have an impact, which may become an opportunity for more sustainable practices.
- For a population set to reach 30,000 in the near future, an efficient train service will be vital. Rail users and businesses feel that a mainline station is needed.

Policy MT8 in the Town Design Statement also identified that there was a need for the railway gateway to be enhanced. "Frome Station" a report for Frome Town Council by architect Joe Holyoak 2012, sets out proposals for how the station can become a welcoming and distinctive place with an identity. And how to improve access links to the town centre for both pedestrians and cyclists.



FIGURE 32. CONGESTION IN TOWN CENTRE



FIGURE 33. FROME RAILWAY STATION



FIGURE 34. SKETCH PROPOSALS

8.2 KEY OBJECTIVES

- To give priority in the Town Centre to pedestrians and cyclists
- To improve air quality in the Town Centre
- To open up the River Corridor for cross-town cycle and pedestrian access.
- To improve the environment around Frome rail station and access to the Town Centre, as identified in policy MT8 of the Town Design Statement
- To provide better information for visitors
- To promote an effective transport hub with bus, train, coach, cycle, and taxi links
- To identify a safe area for coaches to drop off and collect passengers.
- To complete the Cycle network providing links to Bradford on Avon, Bath and Bristol

8.3 ACHIEVED BY

- Implementing the recommendations of the Town Centre Remodelling Feasibility Study
- Bringing forward plans for a new integrated transport hub in Frome. To this end the Town Council will collaborate with Rail operating companies, Network Rail local bus companies and Somerset County Council Highways
- Funding through S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions
- Implementing the proposals set out in "Frome Station" a report for Frome Town Council by architect Joe Holyoak 2012
- Producing a "Transport Plan" for Frome which will inform all new developments

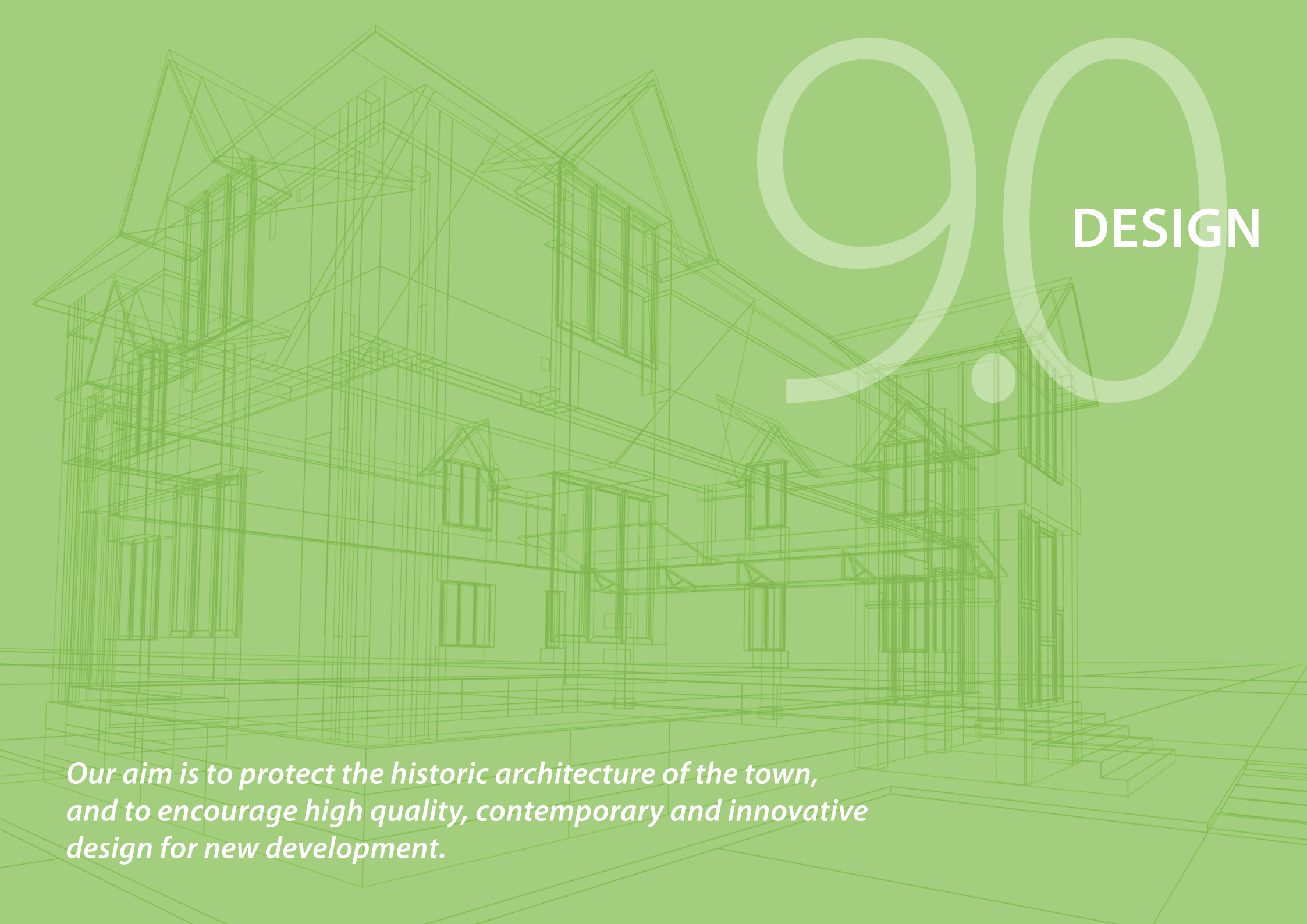
POLICY T1 - INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The delivery of integrated sustainable transport options is a key aim of the Frome Neighbourhood Development Plan. The priorities for delivering these are:

- *Completing Frome's Missing Links in the National Cycle Network 24 (shown on map). (Any detrimental impact through extension to Frome's 'Missing Links' in the National Cycle Network will be appropriately mitigated to prevent any impacts upon the Mells Valley EZI and foraging areas for bats.)*
- *Improving access to and along the River Corridor, in line with the Frome River Strategy (shown on map).*
- *Enhancing the environment around and access to Frome Railway Station*
- *Providing safe and accessible bus and coach stops*
- *Identifying clear and safe routes for pedestrians and cycling as part of the remodelling of Frome Town Centre and residential developments over 10 units.*

POLICY T2 - TRAVEL PLANS

Residential schemes of more 10 units, new employment and mixed use developments over 1 ha., schools and colleges, health centres, leisure centres and public buildings will be expected to provide a travel plan with their application explaining how their developments will encourage the use of integrated sustainable transport options and (where appropriate) safe routes to schools.



90

DESIGN

*Our aim is to protect the historic architecture of the town,
and to encourage high quality, contemporary and innovative
design for new development.*

9.1 DESIGN

D1 - CONSERVATION & DESIGN

The historic architecture and urban design of the town is considered by the local community to be an asset of considerable value that should be protected. This has been highlighted by consultation through the Community Plan and Citizens Panel.

Most of the town centre falls within a conservation area and the Town Design Statement (TDS) and Conservation Area Character Appraisal set out a number of recommendations which it encourages new development to meet. It is proposed that the Town Design Statement is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Pastiche architecture should however be avoided and high quality contemporary and innovative design encouraged. All major developments should be referred to a design Review Panel for advice and guidance and assessed against Building for Life 12 (BfL 12).

Mendip District Council, in association with Frome Town Council, is preparing a District wide inventory of buildings and other features of local architectural and historic interest and these will be included in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) linked to the Local Plan. The Town Council supports the preparation of this Local List and the protection that the SPD will give in guiding decisions on planning applications affecting buildings of local interest in the town.

POLICY D1 - DESIGN IN URBAN LANDSCAPES

Development that fails to take account of the design recommendation of the Town Design Statement or Conservation Area Character Appraisal will be refused.

9.2 GATEWAY SITES

D2 - GATEWAY SITES

The Town Design Statement (TDS) identifies five important gateway sites to the Centre that are of poor quality.

- Top of Vicarage Street
- Gorehedge
- Badcox
- North Parade
- Railway Station

These are highlighted in figure 35 below.

These important 'Town Centre Gateway Sites' create a poor first impression of Frome for visitors. In some cases they include eyesore buildings, in others the layout is confusing and unwelcoming.

The Town Design Statement sets out in more detail how these sites can be improved. Improvements may take the form of new development, refurbishment or adaptation of existing buildings or improvements to the public realm supported by developer contributions.

New developments on these sites, or in close proximity to them, should ensure that they either take the opportunity to improve these areas in line with the principles in the Town Design Statement, or at the very least, do not frustrate any future opportunities to improve them.

POLICY D2 - GATEWAY SITE IMPROVEMENTS

Developments that fail to take account of the recommendations of the Town Design Statement or do not take advantage of opportunities to improve these Gateway sites will be refused.



FIGURE 35. GATEWAY SITES

9.3 SKYLINE DEVELOPMENT

D3 - SKYLINE DEVELOPMENT

The urban edge of the town is visible from a number of locations in the surrounding countryside. Following the Chris Blandford Associates Study (1996) the Community Strategy and Citizens Panel agreed that a series of 'Skyline Sites' are worthy of protection.

| SITE | VIEW ACROSS TO | VIEWED FROM | GRID REF OF VIEW POINT |
|------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| A | Vallis Road Estate | A362 to Buckland Dinham | 75977 - 50187 |
| B | Critchill | A361 Marston Road | 75829 - 45618 |
| C | town centre/West End | Lidl's Car Park | 77927 - 47869 |
| D | Market Place | North Parade | 77891 - 48290 |
| E | St Johns Church | North Parade | 77881 - 48309 |
| F | St Johns Church | Outside Cheese & Grain | 77735 - 48293 |

The urban edge of the town is also visible from a number of locations in the surrounding countryside, these have been classified as 'highest quality landscape setting essential to the setting of the town' these areas are detailed in the landscape setting plan produced by MDC, shown overleaf.



FIGURE 36 SKYLINE SITES

9.3 SKYLINE DEVELOPMENT

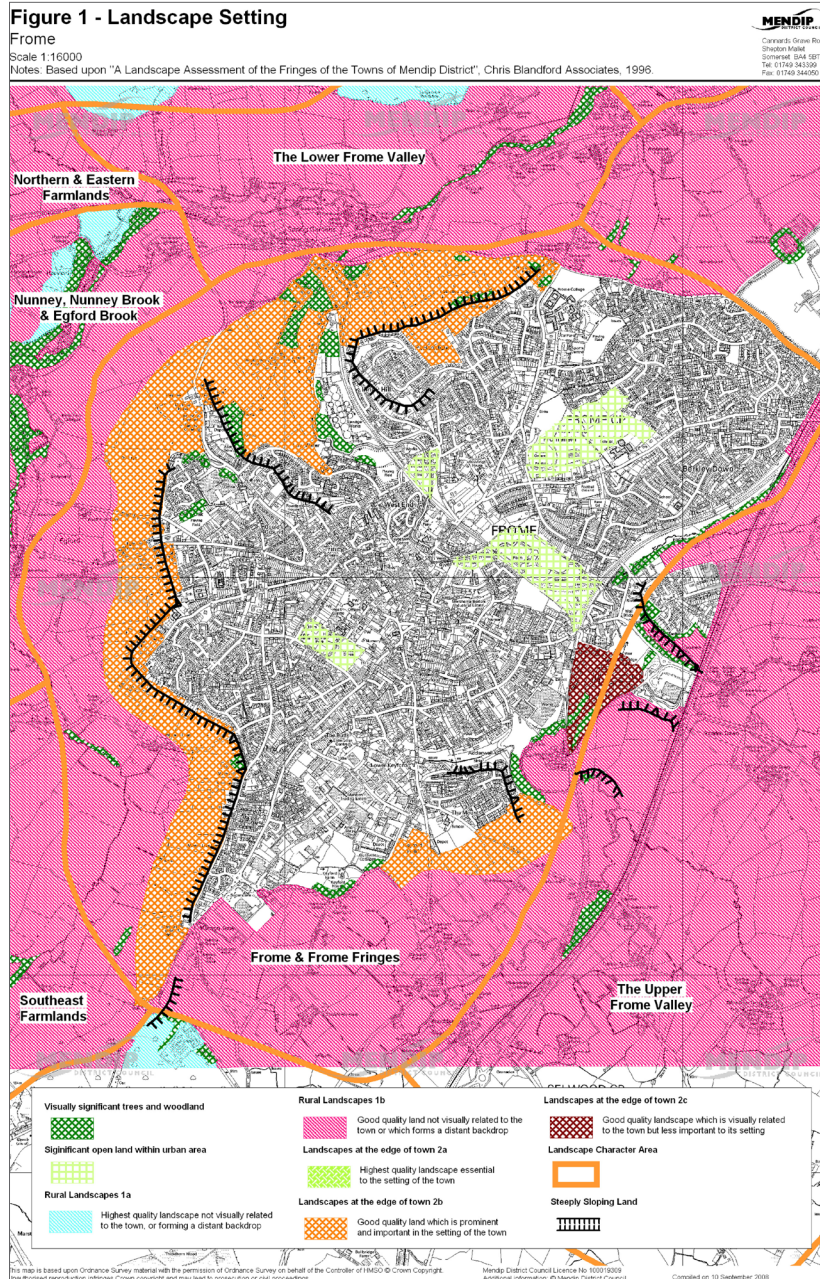


FIGURE 37. LANDSCAPE SETTING PLAN PRODUCED BY MDC

9.4 TREE PLANTING AND LANDSCAPE PROTECTION

PROTECTION

There is a clear intention to protect natural landscapes, both within and surrounding the town, and also to increase the number of trees that will not only increase the visual attractiveness of the Town but will also offer natural habitats and food for wildlife; offer cool shade in the summer and absorb carbon dioxide emissions.

POLICY D3 - VISUAL IMPACT ON SKYLINE

Applications for new buildings and highly visible extensions to existing properties in the identified area will be required to demonstrate there will be no detrimental impact on the skyline in this location. It is expected this will be achieved through the production of photomontages or elevations of any proposed building or tree works within the context of the skyline as viewed from locations A-F above. Designs that are inappropriate for the area should be refused.

D4 - TREE PLANTING AND LANDSCAPE

POLICY D4 - TREE PROTECTION

1. Permission for development will be granted providing that:
 - a) there is no unacceptable loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodlands during or as a result of development;
 - b) adequate tree survey information is provided as part of planning applications;
 - c) trees not to be retained as a result of the development are replaced at a ratio of at least 2:1; and
 - d) additional, new, trees shall be planted at a minimum of:
 - i. 3 trees for each dwelling for residential development to include street trees; or
 - ii. for non-residential development, whichever is the greater of 1 tree for each parking space; or 1 tree per 50m² of gross floorspace
2. Where it is not possible to secure this new or replacement tree planting within the site, the trees should be planted at a suitable location outside the site unless a reasoned justification is made on why off site provision is not possible.
3. Planning conditions or legal agreements will be used to secure the above.



APPENDICES

STONY ST

Frome Neighbourhood Plan Supplemental report on Housing Policy

The Case for Community Housing and Self Build

“Localism will mean an end to a top down approach to house building”

Colin Molton HCA executive Director for the South West

The problem of housing a growing population is not a new one. When I started out as a property professional back in the 1970's most Local Authorities were building and managing their own housing stock and a 'Council Estate' could be found in every corner of England. Local Authorities still have responsibility for housing but few today are building new homes. Housebuilding has principally become the preserve of the large volume housebuilders and the development of private housing estates is their stock in trade.

Despite exciting advances in building systems and technology most houses in the UK continue to be built to a formula based on tried and tested traditional construction methods. These are commodities created for a mass market by corporate housebuilders focused on feeding profits back to external shareholders. Such housing is functional and unimaginative.

Over those 40 years houses have got smaller and, relative to earnings, more expensive. We now build the smallest houses in Europe. The RIBA in their report *The Case for Space 2011* highlighted a general dissatisfaction with homes built by the volume housebuilders and cite the main concerns as rooms being too small; a lack of style and a lack of outside space. Sadly most new housing in the UK is built to this “off the peg” model



The formulaic approach too often has little regard for social infrastructure, environmental impact or future management and often offers only limited engagement with the local community. This was a particular concern of Frome Citizens panel and one that the Town Council seeks to address in drafting the Neighbourhood Plan.

Frome Town Council have asked how the Neighbourhood Plan might be framed to support delivery of the housing allocation target to provide a further 1000 homes within the Plan period but at the same time encourage greater diversity in design, social cohesion and environmental responsibility.

The Council also recognise the need for further affordable housing particularly to enable young families and key workers to be able to afford to live in the area. For the year 2012-13 only 113 new affordable homes are expected to be built within Mendip District where there are currently over 2500 families registered on the housing waiting list.

Last year house prices in Frome ranged from £165,000 for a terraced property to £280,000 for a detached house, an average value of £185,000, showing an increase of 4% on 2011/12¹. Whilst house prices in Frome are considerably cheaper than outlying areas such as Bickington and Rode (average price £350,000) or Bath (£325,000), prices are nevertheless 8.45 times higher than local earnings which for some will put homeownership beyond reach. It is important therefore to be able to offer a range of prices and tenures.

¹ Sourced from Rightmove.co.uk

The fall in recent years in home-ownership largely reflects the difficulties prospective new homeowners have found in getting access to the market as a result of tight constraints on the money supply. In contrast those with existing homes and equity have been able to take advantage of relatively cheap finance to invest in the buy-to-let market. This has the effect of increasing the social and financial divide.

The intention is to look at ways in which sustainable and affordable private rented housing can be made available through partnership with local Housing Associations and local investment schemes.

These are some of the issues we have sought to address in considering an appropriate housing policies in the Neighbourhood Plan:-

1. Recognising that the development of sustainable communities is an overarching objective the Town Council intend to adopt the principles of One Plant Living to help guide future development of the Town.
2. Recognising the benefits of prospective homeowners being directly involved in the design, building and management of their homes we are making specific provision for certain exception sites to be set aside for affordable self build and community housing development.
3. Recognising the wish to see greater community involvement in the design of major development sites and provision for their long term management there will be specific provision for such proposals to be subject to sustainable and community management plans. Furthermore there will be a requirement that serviced plots are offered for self build or custom build development.

A Case for Self Build and Community Development

The UK has the lowest proportion of self build homes in Europe accounting for only 10% of our new housing and yet according to a Building Societies Association survey over 50% of the population would like a self build home at some stage in their lives. Self build homes are likely to be more affordable and sustainable than those produced by the volume housebuilders.

As the popularity of TV programmes such as *Grand Designs* suggests interest in self build is growing and this is no longer seen as just the preserve of the wealthy entrepreneur. Housing groups and community land trusts are seen as a way by which people can collectively become involved building their own home and do so as a community project, developing skills and relationships along the way.



Under the National Planning Framework Local housing authorities are now required to identify local demand from self builders which is a strong indication of the Governments commitment to support the sector. Grant Shapps MP, when housing minister, announced the intention to double the proportion of self build and custom build development in the UK by 2020.

The National Association of Self Builders (NaSBA) is the leading support organisation in the UK and principle advisor to Government on policy in this area. They have published a number of useful reports for the benefit of private housebuilders, local authorities, and developers which can be downloaded from their website <http://www.nasba.org.uk/information>

Jargon Busting

Here is a brief summary of terms commonly used to describe different procurement routes:-

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Self build</i> | is a term that covers a wide spectrum of people building bespoke housing individually or in groups. It is a common misconception that self builders physically build their own homes. In the majority of today's self build schemes the role of the self builder is to project manage the development. |
| <i>Community Housing</i> | is frequently used to describe development by a group who build on land that is held in common ownership or trust for the benefit of the residents |
| <i>Custom build housing</i> | was introduced in the Government's Housing Strategy for England ² and is a term used describe a collective housing project where a specialist developer co-ordinates the whole process for the people involved |
| <i>Cohousing</i> | is a form of community development where the residents jointly design build and manage the project rather than individuals building their own homes. The design may include shared facilities such as common house or workspace and land for allotments and recreation space. Such developments would typically range from between 8 to 30 units and may offer a mixture of tenures. |

Housing projects such as Lilac in Leeds, Springhill in Stroud and The Yard, Bristol are amongst a number of privately funded community and co-housing projects that have received both awards and media attention.



The Yard, St Werburghs, Bristol

Such schemes provide the opportunity to see at first hand the many benefits that residents enjoy that may include lower cost housing, allotments, a healthy lifestyle, and a strong sense of wellbeing.

Self build can also provide a platform for skills training. Over the last 30 years there have been about 20 multi-unit self build projects delivered by Housing Associations or councils, working in partnership with the Community Self Build Agency (CSBA) and often with the long term unemployed.

Frome has an active local Cohousing group and a recent survey by the Town Council strong interest in self build communities from within and outside the area. The difficulties such groups encounter in securing suitable sites, resourcing finance and professional skills and building capacity is recognised.

It is therefore the intention to make specific provision for the development of community housing on exception sites on the edge of the Town where there will be a presumption in favour of community development. It is envisaged a price discount on the land will help offer long term housing affordability.

Community development as a regeneration tool

No matter how much you are committed to and think you have a clear view of a course of action there is nothing quite like seeing it in operation to take your breath away.

Gabriel Scally then SW director of Public health on his first visit to Freiburg in 2008

Examples from Europe such as the self build community at Almere in Holland or the sustainable Vauban district of Freiburg in Germany have inspired some new thinking in the UK into how self build and community led development can function at scale.



Such developments have been made possible through the leadership and ambition of Local Councils working with local residents and strategic partners to lay out a masterplan and provide the essential infrastructure framework within which individuals, groups and developers have been able to create a range of housing, shops, workspace and social and community facilities.

The defining feature of such a development is the partnership approach. The flexibility of a framework design enables a more organic approach to development parts of which are designed procured and funded through different organisations.

The development of Vauban has not only produced a range of housing models and styles (most of them designed and built by their residents) but it has also created a strong platform for sustainable living. The houses are all highly energy efficient and there is little car traffic in this district as the residents can access local shops and facilities easily on foot or bike and for longer journeys rely on car pools and public transport. 70% of households live car free.

Frome can learn from such examples and has the ambition to also lead by example. There is a collective appetite in Frome, as a Neighbourhood Plan frontrunner, to learn from the mistakes of the past and not repeat them in the future; to tackle head-on big issues such as climate change, housing affordability and social welfare from a local perspective; and to ensure that regeneration opportunities such as Saxonvale become exemplar projects that will put Frome at the forefront of good design and practice.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out a framework within which new development solutions will be encouraged and enabled. The policies are intended to promote collaboration, creativity and innovation in designing and planning our homes and to ensure that Frome continues to welcome people from all walks of life to participate in the future of it's community.

David Parkes, the author of this report, has been a chartered surveyor and private development consultant for 30 years practicing in the Bristol and North Somerset Area. He has a special interest in self build and community development.

| Category | Issues | Evidence | Objective | Policy Ref | Policy | Page Number |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------|--|------------|--|-------------|
| 3.0 VISION AND CORE OBJECTIVES | | | | | | |
| Participation | The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to offer a mandate for local people to be fully engaged and represented | | To encourage community participation in the process of development. | | Planning applications for development should be supported by appropriate evidence of evidence of local community consultation | 12 |
| Vitality | The health and wellbeing of its people should be at the heart of policy to build a strong and resilient community | | To recognise that land and buildings provide the supporting infrastructure within which a range of interconnected activities take place: work, play, eating, sleeping, shopping, socialising, etc. | | Planning applications for major development should identify the impact of such development in terms of social integration and economic benefit to the Town | 11 |
| Sustainability | New development should be undertaken in a way that will make a positive contribution to preserving scarce resources and promoting greater harmony with the environment | | To provide the framework for a town-wide transition to a low carbon economy. | | The principles of One Planet Living should inform all future development in Frome | 11 |

| Category | Issues | Evidence | Objective | Policy Ref | Policy | Page Number |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|------------|---|-------------|
| 4.0 HOUSING | | | | | | |
| Planning for Growth | New homes are required to meet the demands of a growing population | Mendip District Housing Supply at 31st March 2011 | To support plans for the development of new homes required to meet the provision set out within the Mendip District Council Local Plan 2008-2028 within the Plan period | H1 | The Council will support proposals that address current and future housing need within the plan period. | 15 |
| Building a balanced community | There is a need for greater choice and variety of homes. | a) Mendip District Housing needs assessment (March 2012) | To ensure new housing is available, appropriate and accessible to people of all ages and circumstances to maintain a balanced and diverse population | H2 | All new residential development should maintain, provide or contribute to a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities in the Frome Neighbourhood Plan area. | 15 |
| | | b) Identified as an aim in Vision for Frome Community Plan 2008:28 | | | Planning applications for 10 or more homes should: | 15 |
| | | c) Mendip - Strategic Housing Market Assessment | | | Address affordable housing need and housing demand in line with Mendip District Local Plan 2006-2028 Policy DP11: Affordable Housing. | 15 |
| | | | | | · Contribute to the diversity of housing in the local area and help to redress any housing imbalance that exists | 15 |
| | | | | | · Employ design solutions that promote strong neighbourhoods. | 15 |
| | | | | | · Enable future flexibility and adaptability. | 15 |

| Category | Issues | Evidence | Objective | Policy Ref | Policy | Page Number |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|------------|--|-------------|
| 4.0 HOUSING | | | | | | |
| Building by design | Good building design should add to the interest and amenity value of a place | Frome Town Design Statement 2011 | To encourage good urban design that contributes positively to the fabric of the Town and to prevent further proliferation of uniform estate housing | H3 | Quality of design is a key consideration for residential development. Proposals which fail to take the opportunities available to enhance the local character and quality of the area and the way it functions will be refused. | 16 |
| Delivering Major Projects | The potential impact of larger schemes mean that special care is needed to ensure that a comprehensive plan is brought forward for both the development and future management | A Identified as an aim in Vision for Frome Community Plan 2008:28 | To support the development of Southfield Farm (Wallbridge) and Saxonvale within the plan period | H4 | Any development which as a whole or by the sum of parts provides over 100 houses shall be regarded as a community development and as such developers will be required to set out a long term management and agree both the community objectives and long term management plan detailing how members of that community will interact with each other and the wider Frome population | 17 |
| | | | | | Planning applications will be expected to include:- | 17 |
| | | | | | a) A clear statement of the intended composition of the proposed community and a future asset management plan. | 17 |
| | | | | | b) Clear and deliverable objectives in terms of meeting the Town's sustainable objectives of One Planet Living (as outlined in VCO2 of this Plan) | 17 |
| | | | | | c) A variety of housing in terms of size, form and tenures including provision for home-working. | 17 |
| | | | | | d) A statement on access and integration that shall include pedestrian and cycle links between the new development and the existing Town community and neighbourhood facilities. (In the case of Southfield Farm, this must include a pedestrian link across the river to Adderwell) | 17 |
| | | | | | e) Provision for serviced plots to be made available for self build or custom build housing*1 equivalent in number to at least 5% of the total housing numbers | 17 |
| | | | | | *1 (as defined as a development where the future owner or occupier has a direct or indirect influence on the design, planning and construction of the property.) | 17 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|------------------|---|-----------|
| <p>Providing Energy Efficient Homes</p> | <p>New homes should be built to minimise use of fossil fuels and reduce energy use and cost.</p> | <p>The aims identified in the Vision for Frome Community Plan are to - promote economy, resilience and self-reliance in the provision and use of energy locally</p> | <p>To require the highest sustainable standards in housing design and construction and to ensure all new development meets Frome's Town Design Standards</p> | <p>H5</p> | <p>The Town Council encourages the development of homes that exceed the minimum Code for Sustainable Homes requirements from the development plan.</p> <p>Where it can be verified that new residential developments have exceeded (verified post occupation) the requirements of Building Regulations part L1A (conservation of heat and power, new dwellings) Frome Town Council will provide an appropriate refund of Community Infrastructure Levy based on the funds it receives through that process from that development.</p> | <p>18</p> |
| <p>Supporting Self Build and Community Housing</p> | <p>There is evidence of demand in Frome from those willing to build their own homes and communities</p> | <p>Frome Community Build survey May 2013</p> | <p>To permit cohousing and community development to take place on suitable exception sites providing long term affordability is secured.</p> | <p>H6</p> | <p>As an exception to normal policy for the provision of housing set out in Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Mendip District draft local plan, Community Housing may be permitted adjoining the existing development boundary of the town on sites where development would not otherwise be permitted providing:</p> | <p>18</p> |
| | | | | | <p>a) the development will provide collective land ownership and shared management responsibility</p> | <p>18</p> |
| | | | | | <p>b) the development provides an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes reflecting identified local need and meets demand based on the current Local Housing Needs Assessment or evidence from local Community Housing Groups and the town council</p> | <p>18</p> |
| | | | | | <p>c) the development is energy efficient, in and will not have significant adverse impact on the character of the area and local landscape setting</p> | <p>18</p> |
| | | | | | <p>d) Such proposals should not have an adverse and or harmful impact on statutorily protected species or habitats</p> | <p>18</p> |
| | | | | | <p>e) prospective residents can demonstrate through a development management plan professional and financial capacity and competency in undertaking and completing the development</p> | <p>18</p> |
| | | | | | <p>f) the land is held in trust as a community asset in perpetuity.</p> | <p>18</p> |
| | | | | | <p>g) housing costs are made affordable by reference to capital costs or rent being no more than 80% of open market value and such discount is protected through succession</p> | <p>18</p> |

| Category | Issues | Evidence | Objective | Policy Ref | Policy | Page Number |
|------------------------------------|--|---|--|-------------|---|-------------|
| 5.0 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT | | | | | | |
| Preventing job migration | Shortage of local jobs | Workforce supply data (Mendip District Council) | To meet the Local Plan target of creating a further 2700 local jobs | BE1 | In collaboration with Mendip District Council, though the Local Plan Part II - Site Allocations allocate an additional 5ha of Employment land over the plan period. | 22 |
| | New employment land allocation | Mendip Employment Land Study 2012 | | | | 22 |
| | Need for investment in premises suitable for todays businesses | Mendip Economic Development Strategy 2013-2016 | To support the development of new start up businesses through the provision of homeworking facilities along with modern workhub and incubator workspace. | | | 22 |
| Protection of Employment Land | Loss of Employment Land to residential development | FTC Employment Land Study 2012 | To protect 'valuable employment sites' from redevelopment other than for employment uses. | BE2 | In addition to Local Plan Policy DP20, the redevelopment of 'Valuable Employment Sites' shown on map below for non-employment uses will be resisted. Such development would only be granted in the exceptional circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated that no demand exists within this area for B1, B2 or B8 uses and an alternative and equal provision is made elsewhere in Frome, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not possible or viable. | 22 |
| | Re-use or further development of employment land | FTC Employment Land Study 2012 | To support maximum utilisation of employment land. | | | 22 |
| Sustainable Development | | | To promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generation and encourage compliance with BREEAM excellent rating | BSE3 | The Town Council encourages development that exceeds the BREEAM standards, where it can be verified that new development will exceed the requirements of Building Regulations part L2a (conservation of heat and power, new buildings other than dwellings) Frome Town Council is considering an incentive scheme, details of the scheme are available on the Town Council website http://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk willing to negotiate an appropriate reduction in Community Infrastructure Levy. Note: The policy approach to sustainable construction is currently under review by the Government and all or some elements of this policy may be superseded by the changes. In this eventuality the application of this policy would be assessed in accordance with the latest Government policy. But the aim of the policy will continue that proposals that have exceeded (verified post occupation) the minimum requirements will be eligible for the refund in line with the incentive scheme by the Town Council in response to the proposal. | 22 |
| | | | To reduce the environmental impact of travel to work by identifying options for getting to work other than by car. | | | 22 |

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| 6.0 The TOWN CENTRE | | | | | | |
| Zone 1 The Historic Core (Market Place; St Catherines and Badcox) | Frome's main shopping area has a range of independent shops but a relative shortage of comparison and fashion goods | | | | | |
| | Traffic congestion gives rise to noise and loss of air quality and restricts freedom of movement. | Town Centre Remodelling Feasibility Study 2012 | To make the town centre a more pedestrian friendly environment whilst allowing traffic to continue to flow through it | TC1 | <p>The Town Council, in collaboration with Mendip District Council and Somerset County Council, will, as a priority, seek to implement the scheme identified by Frome Town Centre Remodelling Feasibility Study subject to funding</p> <p>Remodelling the Town Centre should provide improvements to the public realm. Proposals should be based on significant levels of community involvement which will contribute to the final design. Remodelling of the Town Centre within the area shown on the map which accords with the following principles will be permitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improve the town centre environment for pedestrians. •Reduce the impact of traffic movement from vehicles and re-order the priorities between motorised vehicles, cycles and pedestrians. •Remodelling proposals that alter flows or speeds of traffic will be assessed for their impact on air quality •Enhance the character and appearance of the town centre, taking into account the principles of the Town Design Statement relating to this area •Provide an improved setting and location for the markets •Demonstrate that it will cause no deterioration in air quality | 27 |
| | Shopping centres are "dated" | Frome Community Plan 2008 - 2028 (Economy) | To broaden the comparison retail offer of the town centre through sensitive new development that complements the existing offer | TC3 | <p>Redevelopment or expansion of Westway shopping centre will be permitted subject to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public realm improvements including access to the Frome River and tree planting • Sufficient car parking and space for buses being included within the redevelopment to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the vitality of the town centre. • The design reflects the aims and objectives of the Town Design Statement and policy BE3 relating to any scheme in excess of 1000m² • There will be no harmful or adverse impact on the biodiversity or protected species | 29 |

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| Zone 2 The Northern Sector | the River Crossing and gateway to the Town Centre | | | | | |
| | Old Cattle Market car park is poor environment as a gateway to the Town Centre and pay and display tariff deters longstay visits | Frome Community Plan 2008 - 2028 (Getting Around) | To make the main visitor car parks more attractive in terms of tree planting, public realm and the ability for drivers to pay on departure | TC4 | Landscape and infrastructure improvements to the Cattle Market Car Park that improve this arrival point and enable this area to develop as a cultural destination will be supported. | 30 |
| Zone 3 Saxonvale and Kingsway | A comprehensive development brief sets out the regeneration objectives for this key Town Centre development area. | | To promote a comprehensive and sustainable regeneration plan for this site. To encourage greater evening activity including restaurants, clubs, and hotel accommodation. To provide suitable facilities for new businesses to be incubated and grown in the town centre to encourage greater local job creation and grow creative industries such as art, media, technology, design, etc. To support sustainable living with opportunities for homeworking, cycle storage and showers and access to local shops, cafés, public services and public transport | TC5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for the redevelopment of Saxonvale should seek to achieve the overall vision for the redevelopment of the site based on the 2005 planning brief <p>The development of Saxonvale is expected to deliver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exemplar model of low impact and low carbon living • 300+ new energy efficient homes of mixed price and tenure • New incubator and grow on space for small and medium sized businesses • Integrated retail, hotel and leisure facilities • Replacement training facilities for Somerset Skills and Learning • Artisan workshops and creative studio space • An urban park alongside the River • Improved traffic management in Vicarage street, Christchurch Street East and the surrounding road network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for the development of this site will meet the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan policy for major development | 31 |

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| 7.0 RIVER CORRIDOR AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE | | | | | | |
| Frome River Corridor | The Frome River Corridor is recognised to be an underused asset | Frome River Strategy Nov 2012 | The river corridor will be seen as the central open space in the town's network of green infrastructure. To open up the Frome River Corridor to provide the means to move sustainably through the Town | POS 1 | Otherwise acceptable planning applications that are closely related to the River Corridor environment and approaches to it will be supported where they take advantage of opportunities to improve the River Corridor environment, including access, subject to suitable ecological assessment. Development proposals that fail to take advantage of opportunities to improve the River Corridor environment, including access, will be refused Development proposals that fail to take advantage of opportunities to improve the River Corridor environment, including access, will be refused | 35 |
| Public Open Space | There is a desire to promote better use and protection of public open space | Frome Community Plan 2008 - 2028 (Land Use, Food, Energy & Waste) | To protect natural landscapes and prevent development of public open space | POS 2 | Development of public open space will not be permitted unless it is to promote access use and enjoyment of public land and buildings | 35 |
| | | | To provide informal recreation areas and manage and maintain public open space in a sustainable manner to protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity. | | Development that would materially harm the contribution of the distinctive local character or accessibility of identified areas of open space/areas of visual significance or cause the loss of such areas will be refused | 35 |
| | Major Development can enable improvements to local infrastructure | | | | • Plans for Major Developments (over 100 homes or 1000m ² of commercial floorspace) will be required to include details of plans to safeguard the future management and maintenance of open space and the protection of wildlife habitats within and adjoining the development site. | 35 |
| | A Green Infrastructure Plan is required to identify priorities | Identified in the Mendip Distric Council Draft Local Plan | To promote better use and management of parks, open spaces and allotments including better information and signage | | • Frome Town Council will work with Mendip District Council and other partners to produce a Supplementary Planning Document on Green Infrastructure that will identify and address deficiencies in Neighbourhood Park, sports, leisure and open space provision that will be a significant material consideration in the determination of planning applications and the funding raised from development. | 35 |

| Category | Issues | Evidence | Objective | Policy Ref | Policy | Page Number |
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| 8.0 TRANSPORT | | | | | | |
| Integrated Transport Strategy | Delivering Infrastructure Improvements to the Town Centre and Travel routes to and from the Town | a) Town Centre Re-modelling Feasibility Study 2012 b) Frome Station, a report for Frome Town Council, April 2012 | To give priority in the Town Centre to pedestrians and cyclists to reduce congestion and improve air quality and to open up the River Corridor for cross-town cycle and pedestrian access. To improve the environment around Frome rail station and access to the Town Centre • To identify a safe area for a new coach/bus park. | T1 | The delivery of integrated sustainable transport options is a key aim of the Frome Neighbourhood Development Plan. The priorities for delivering these are: | 39 |
| Cycling | | Frome's Missing Link http://www.fromesmissinglink.org.uk/ | To complete the Cycle network providing links to Bradford, Bath and Bristol | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing Frome's Missing Links in the National Cycle Network 24 (shown on map). (Any detrimental impact through extension to Frome's 'Missing Links' in the National Cycle Network will be appropriately mitigated to prevent any impacts upon the Mells Valley EZI and foraging areas for bats.) • Improving access to and along the River Corridor, in line with the Frome River Strategy (shown on map). • Enhancing the environment around and access to Frome Railway Station • Providing safe and accessible bus and coach stops • Identifying clear and safe routes for pedestrians and cycling as part of the remodelling of Frome Town Centre and residential developments over 10 units | 39 |
| Green Travel Plans | | To strengthen DP9 in the Mendip Draft Local Plan | To promote alternatives to car use for all major development projects | T2 | Residential schemes of more 10 units, new employment and mixed use developments over 1 ha., schools and colleges, health centres, leisure centres and public buildings will be expected to provide a travel plan with their application explaining how their developments will encourage the use of integrated sustainable transport options and (where appropriate) safe routes to schools. | 39 |

VC01 - APPENDIX C

Planning applications for major development should identify the impact of such development in terms of social integration and economic benefit to the Town

DEFINITION OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

Dwellings 10 or more dwellings, or where the site exceeds 0.5ha if the number of dwellings is not specified.

Offices / R&D / Light Industry (1,000 sqm or more, or where the site exceeds 1 hectare)

General Industry / Storage / Warehousing (1,000 sqm or more, or where the site exceeds 1 hectare)

Retail, Distribution and Servicing (1,000 sqm or more, or where the site exceeds 1 hectare)

Gypsy and Traveller Pitches (10 or more pitches)

Any other development which comprises 1,000 sqm or more, or where the site exceeds 1 hectare)

VC02 - APPENDIX D

Planning applications for development should be supported by appropriate evidence of local community consultation and engagement

APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Every development, no matter how large or small, can benefit from effective engagement. Talking to a neighbour before submitting an application for a house extension, listening to any views they may express and responding to comments always helps. This applies equally to a new supermarket or major residential development. However, the approaches used, the time taken and the resources invested in consultation will be different, and should be in proportion to the size and impact of the development. A guide to what would be considered would be appropriate is given below.

SMALLER/HOUSEHOLDER SCHEMES

Smaller schemes such as a change of use or a householder application require community consultation. Neighbours are notified by the local authority once an application has been submitted. However, talking to neighbours and showing them the plans before an application is submitted will often save time, reduce risks and can result in a better scheme.

Major Schemes (10-199 dwellings, up to 9,999m² commercial, or larger majors where there is limited impact)

For major schemes as identified above, as standard, the town council expects at least:

- Town and Council involvement
- Frome Ward member consultation (Including, Town, District and County (Division) Councillors)
- Neighbourhood Forum and Community Groups

involvement (where they exist)

- Public exhibition Questionnaire and feedback form
- Information sheets/leaflets
- Statement of community consultation and engagement

Developers should be mindful that whilst the standard requirements identified above are appropriate in the majority of cases, a proposal may warrant more or less community involvement depending on the development. Context is the key, a small development may have an impact on its immediate neighbours or community and therefore more engagement would be needed. Conversely, a large scale development may not have a significant impact and fewer consultation activities may be needed. Whatever community engagement takes place should be proportionate to the proposal and this decision will be reached in conjunction with the town council, the developer and the planning officer at the district council.

ADDITIONAL ENGAGEMENT (VERY LARGE OR SIGNIFICANT SCHEMES)

Additional requirements and more demanding engagement is required on schemes where there is likely to be significant impact on local communities and the area and where development takes place over an extended period of time. This type of engagement involves in depth collaboration at the earliest stage on the design and development of the proposal. On very large or significant schemes, community forums may be set up which tap into local knowledge and networks and where a commitment to build up long lasting relationships with the community is made.

Developers could also give consideration to the creation of a bespoke website and the use of Social Media as this is an effective way of presenting information and reaching other parts of the community. High levels of commitment,

time and resources are needed to make this approach meaningful, but the benefits are immeasurable in terms of community buy in, reduced risk of challenge and delays.

The council promotes a collaborative approach to developing meaningful community engagement programmes, which utilises expertise and local knowledge about the area and local communities. Therefore, the starting point is to contact the town council and the district council planning officer, who will provide assistance and advice on the timing, level and amount of engagement required for particular schemes.

The Statement of Community Consultation and Engagement

Every application should be supported by a statement of community consultation and engagement, the statement should include:

- Details of the consultation undertaken, including organisations/interest groups contacted
- A commentary on the events held (format, location and duration)
- Summary of all comments made
- How the developer/applicant responded to community views including if, and to what extent, the proposals may have changed as a result of the consultation and if expressed views did not result in a change, the statement should explain why

For smaller and householder schemes a written statement confirming that you have discussed the proposals with your neighbours, and the outcome of those discussion will be sufficient.

In addition to the above developers should refer to the - Mendip District Council Statement of Community Involvement November 2013

