

**BOURTON – DORSET
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

2016 - 2031

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1. Bourton Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031.

1.1. Welcome.

Welcome to the plan for the future of our village. I feel that it has been a considerable achievement to complete the processes required to take advantage of the opportunity, offered in the Government's Localism proposals in early 2011, and to arrive at this full-scale consultation.

The Neighbourhood Planning Group was set up with one aim - to prepare a plan that will deliver the long term goal of a balanced and vibrant neighbourhood in accordance with the aspirations of the community. It has been produced thanks to the expertise, experience and enthusiasm of the members of the Planning Group and the many volunteers who collected the information on which to base the Policies, including all those who delivered and collected questionnaires.

The Group has benefitted from support and advice from officers at North Dorset District Council, Planning Aid England and Locality.

Simon Firbank, Chairman, Bourton Parish Council.

1.2. Introduction.

It has taken four years of evidence-gathering and consultation to put this Plan together but it has been made as succinct and focused as possible, given the importance of the policies it contains. It draws heavily on the detailed and comprehensive Village Design Statement, which was adopted in September 2011, and is distilled from the analysis of 780 returned questionnaires, the outcome of discussions within five Focus Groups, the views expressed in 15 interviews with individual landowners, the responses to personal letters sent out to 12 businesses and stakeholders and feedback from public meetings. It is also in general conformity with the strategic policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Local Policies published in the North Dorset Local Plan.

In addition, we have provided significant input for a 52 page Scoping Report and a 25 page Strategic Environmental Assessment in support of the new village hall project.

Documentation pertaining to the evidence collected during the above process has been collated and retained and will be available in hard copy and online. This represents the evidential database on which the policies are based.

We hope that you will agree that the policies stated in this Plan do represent the aspirations of the community for the management of development and the preservation of the village's rural character and that you will endorse the Plan.

Mike Withers, Chairman, Bourton Neighbourhood Planning Group.

2. Why Bourton Needs a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan is a new way in which members of the local community can establish both general and detailed planning policies for the area in which they live and work. Bourton Neighbourhood Plan builds on our Village Design Statement (VDS), which was adopted by North Dorset District Council (NDDC) as a Supplementary Planning Document on 30 September 2011, and takes forward recommendations made therein.

Although the VDS provides a very full account of the village and its potential, it does not carry the statutory weight of the Neighbourhood Plan, which considerably strengthens our ability to guide development in Bourton in a way that reflects the priorities and needs expressed by the majority of those who live in the parish. The Government wants local people to take a proactive role in shaping the future of the communities in which they live, finding creative and imaginative ways to overcome the pressures that development can create for conservation, local services and amenities.

The Plan has been subjected to a continuous consultation process with residents, businesses and interested organisations and groups; it has been developed by the village for the village and is hereby presented for submission to the Local Planning Authority, examination by an independent Examiner and then, if passed to that stage, a referendum of those who live in the village. Once in place, the Plan will provide the framework for change in Bourton until 2031.

3. How the Plan was Prepared.¹

In January 2012, the Parish Council asked Mike Withers to take the lead on the Neighbourhood Plan project. In the Spring of that year the Parish Council agreed on a constitution for a Neighbourhood Planning Group (NPG) and a team was assembled comprising volunteer residents. Since then this Group has met at least once a month to discuss the many and varied aspects of Neighbourhood Planning and to resolve the issues which were encountered during the process. The Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA) was defined as the Parish of Bourton (see Map 1) by resolution of NDDC dated 10 December 2012.

Questionnaires were distributed to all households in both 2013 (NPQ1) and 2014 (NPQ2). The results of these were analysed to determine village opinion on issues which had emerged, or where circumstances had changed, since the production of the VDS. The responses to both of these were encouraging in terms of both volume (over 70% in each case) and content. Public Meetings and two drop-in sessions were held to explain the work of the NPG and the results of the questionnaires. Volunteer Focus Groups discussed specific aspects of the Plan and meetings were also held with landowners, local businesses, interest groups, the Village Hall Management Committee and the headmaster of St George's Church of England School.

Monthly reports made to Bourton Parish Council by the NPG Chairman, were included in the Council minutes which are published on the Village Website. The minutes of all NPG meetings can also be found on this site.

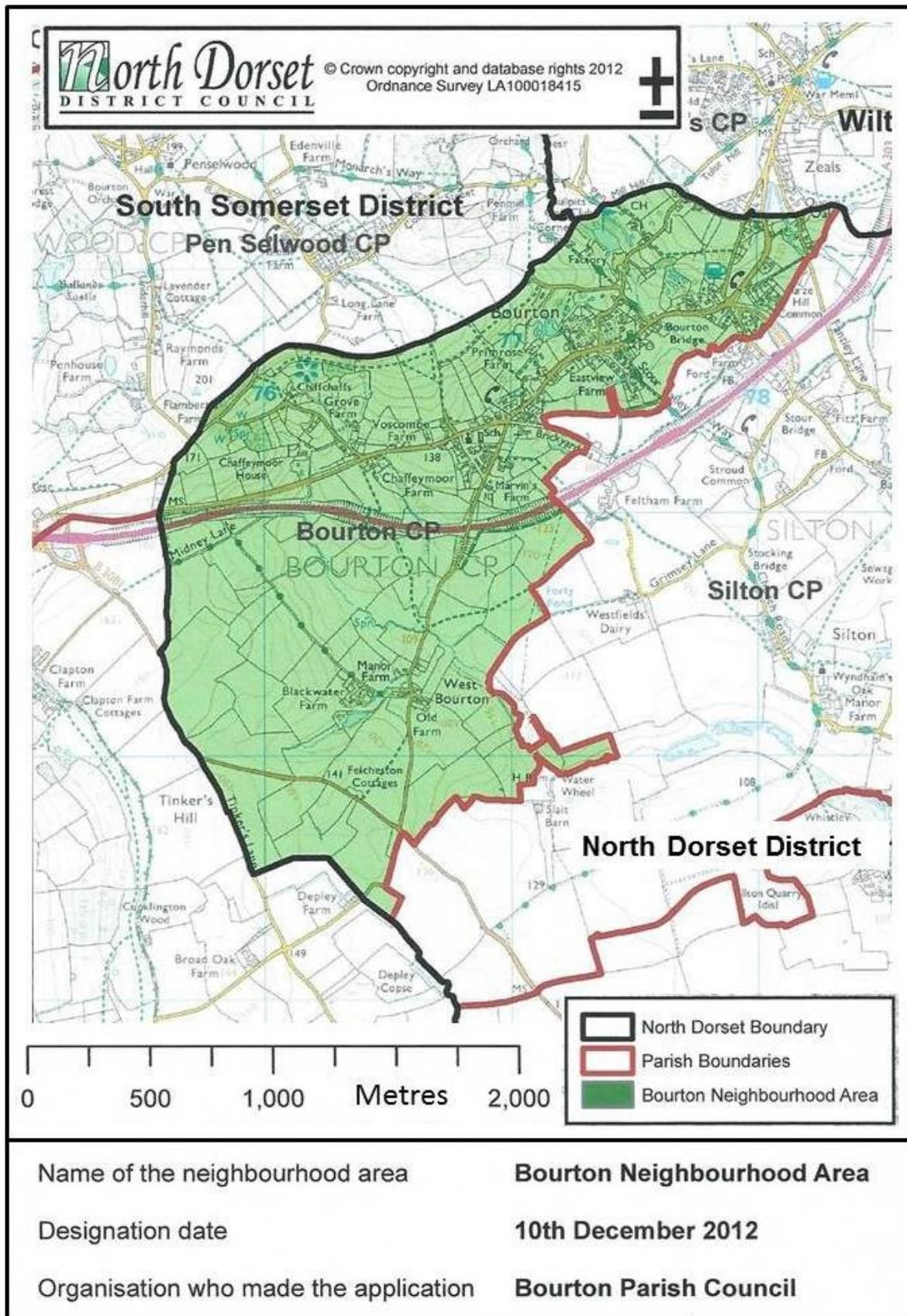
3.1. The Vision.

To further develop a vibrant, friendly, safe and inclusive community, while preserving the distinctive rural atmosphere of Bourton and promoting the health and well-being of all residents, in the context of a shared and sustainable future.

Bourton will be a great place to live and work and will be known for its rich rural character, attractive green spaces and thriving natural environment. It will be safe and enjoyable to move around on foot, horseback and bicycle.

¹ Details may be found in the Consultation Statement.

Map 1 - The Neighbourhood Plan Area.



3.2. What the Plan Aims to Achieve.

- To consider the need to bring forward development opportunities to meet the current and future needs of the community, consistent with Bourton's distinctive rural atmosphere and important views (see Map 2).²
- In case of need, to provide designated locations³ for appropriate, high quality residential development, including provision for people who currently find it difficult to secure appropriate accommodation in Bourton, e.g. families, older people and first time buyers seeking good quality sustainable housing.
- To ensure that any new development is designed to reflect the character of the village sympathetically, in accordance with the parameters set down in the Neighbourhood Plan and the Village Design Statement.
- To support and improve the sustainable growth of local businesses and essential services, including health and education.
- To sustain and improve the local provision of recreation and community facilities to enable everyone in Bourton to have a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a range of cultural pursuits.
- To maintain and improve the natural environment of Bourton for the benefit of its wide range of native flora and fauna and for the enjoyment of the community.
- To protect and enhance all green spaces and habitats within the area.
- To encourage the development of a stronger community spirit, with more members of the community sharing the load and participating in village life.
- To encourage walking, horse-riding and cycling and, where possible, to support public transport in order to ensure that the environmental quality of the area is protected.

4. Delivering the Plan.

To ensure that planning and development decisions take into account the views of the community, policies have been prepared which are based on the expressed wishes of the community and conform with North Dorset District Council's Adopted Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (NDLP⁴) and National policies (NPPF 2012). Following the success of the Neighbourhood Plan at referendum, these policies will form part of the development plan for North Dorset and will influence the delivery of all planning policy relevant to Bourton. They will guide decision makers in North Dorset District Council, Dorset County Council (DCC), the Planning Inspectorate and potentially the Secretary of State, when they are considering development proposed within Bourton.

It is recognised that Dorset County Council, as the Highways Authority, has considerable powers to implement changes to traffic infrastructure and transport systems. The principal means by which transport issues will be influenced is through negotiation and co-ordination with DCC and NDDC.

2 Map 2 and VDS Map 7, p23

3 NPQ2 pp 7 & 8

4 See Notes to Appendix 2.

5. Monitoring the Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan is a living document concerning an active, evolving community. It is therefore important that it is reviewed at regular intervals. It is particularly important that it is reviewed whenever its policies might be invalidated by a change in the circumstances on which they were based, e.g. housing demand or housing provision.

Note that it is not possible to update a Neighbourhood Plan so if, after review, it is considered necessary to introduce changes, the Parish Council may make a proposal for the existing plan to be replaced by a new one. The process for the making of the replacement plan is the same as the process for the making of the existing plan.

6. Development in Bourton.

6.1. Introduction.

6.1.1. The Principles of Sustainable Development.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) set out the Government's planning policy with which all plans and proposals for development should comply. The NPPF includes, at its heart, a "presumption in favour of sustainable development". It is important to understand what that means for the Neighbourhood Plan as it sets the parameters within which proposals can be made and policies set.

Decisions on proposals for development should be approved without delay where they accord with the development plan⁶ and, where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted.

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

Neighbourhood plans should reflect these Local Plan policies and plan positively to support them, while not promoting less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermining its strategic policies. Outside of strategic policies, neighbourhood plans are encouraged to shape and direct sustainable development within their area.

The Basic Conditions Statement (to be submitted for Examination alongside the Plan) will demonstrate how the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development and how it meets sustainability tests.

6.1.2. The Local Plan and Housing.

While the NPPG was putting together the NP, NDDC was in the process of producing a new Local Plan. Part 1 of this was adopted in January 2016 on condition that it was immediately subjected to a thorough review. As a result North Dorset District Council is currently producing a new Local Plan for the district, which will replace both the Local Plan (adopted in January 2003) and the Local Plan Part 1 (adopted in January 2016).

The production of the new Local Plan had consequences for the NP.

a) The pre-submission draft of the Local Plan, proposed to delete Settlement Boundaries for Stalbridge and the larger villages (which includes Bourton). However this was not accepted at examination and in the adopted version they are retained. An important consequence of this decision is that infill development will continue to be possible (subject to

⁶ The development plan is a set of documents that set out the local authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in their area. In the case of Bourton this includes, amongst others, the North Dorset Local Plan and, once adopted, the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan.

normal planning procedures). An examination of the Settlement Boundaries is part of the current review and there is a possibility that they could, as a result, be modified.

b) NDLP calls for the provision of 825 new dwellings in Stalbridge and the larger villages of which Bourton is one. There are currently planning consents for 50 dwellings in the NP area. NDLP also retains the Settlement Boundary from the previous Local Plan. It is considered that current extant permissions and limited infill development should meet any future specific housing allocation for Bourton within the life of this NP, and therefore no housing allocations are made in this Plan. It is understood that the housing targets may be adjusted during the current review.

It should be noted that in case of conflict between the Local Plan and a Neighbourhood Plan it is the document most recently published which takes precedence. The reviewed Local Plan is expected to be adopted in 2018.

6.1.3. The Village Design Statement.

The Bourton Village Design Statement was adopted by North Dorset District Council as a Supplementary Planning Document on 30 September 2011.

It offers a framework for engaging local people in the debate about how new development can fit into the existing pattern and surroundings of both the local built and natural environments. It contains evidence and guidance which can help developers understand local people's views and perceptions at the outset of the design and development process.

Some of the guidance is reflected in the policies below. All of it remains valid and is a material consideration in the determination of Planning Applications.

6.2. The Built Environment.

The Policies which follow are intended to encourage development in line with the needs of the community while respecting the peacefulness, views and rural atmosphere of the village.⁷

6.2.1. Policy 1. Landscape Setting.

Intention.

To maintain the setting of the village in the rural landscape and to safeguard the atmosphere and appearance of the village and its rural context, (See Photos 1 and 2.)

Policy 1: Landscape Setting.

- a) All new development adjoining or close to the rural edges of the village shall be planned and designed to create a sensitive transition between village and countryside. Development shall take place within the existing Settlement Boundary or on allocated sites.
- b) Development shall not have a significantly adverse effect on important views of the countryside from the village or those towards the village, especially those identified on Map 2.⁸
- c) The “Green Fingers”, which contribute significantly to the rural character of the village, are formally identified (see Map 6) and will be protected by the Local Plan’s Countryside Policy 20 and Policy 10 of this plan.
- d) Hard and soft landscaping shall be provided, where appropriate to enable development to be integrated successfully into the local environment.

Justification.

The main evidence for this policy is contained in the VDS whose aim is to protect, maintain and enhance the village environment, its surroundings and the quality of life for the residents. The VDS defines a series of guidelines which are applicable to new development.

Map 6 illustrates an important characteristic of the village which is that groups of buildings tend not to be on both sides of the old main road and opposite each other, thus creating the ‘Green Fingers’ (see Policy 10) which contribute to the feeling of space and afford the views across the Vale to the south, towards the tree lined ridges to the north and Mere Down to the east. The designation of four Local Green Spaces will complement this rural aspect (see Policy 9).

7 VDS, p 7 & pp 39 - 41
8 Map 2 VDS Map 7, p23

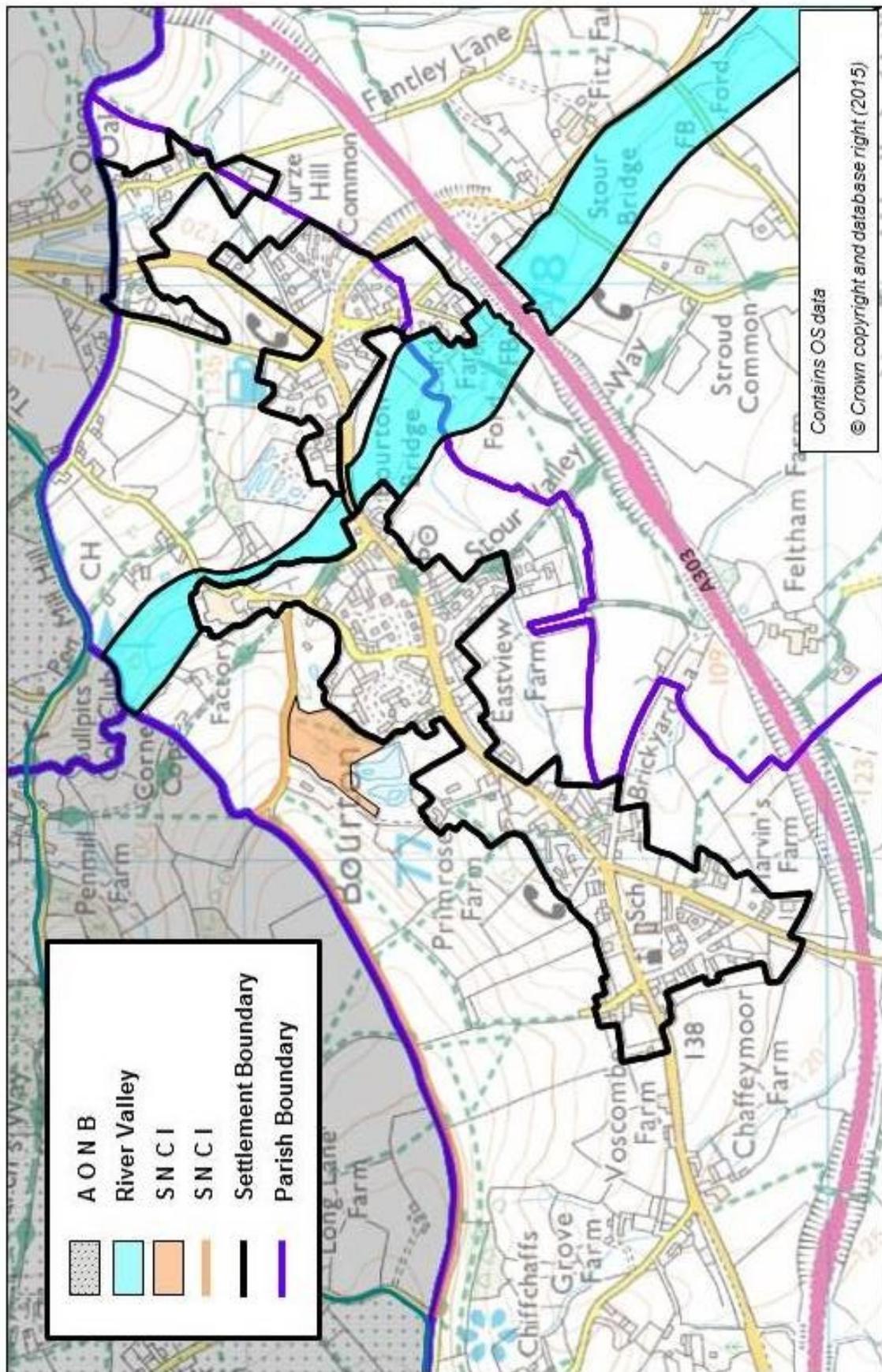


Photo 1 - The Church, Looking South.



Photo 2 - Looking North to the Church and the Ridge Beyond.

Map 3 – Characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan Area.



6.2.2. Policy 2. Settlement Pattern and Character.

Intention.

To safeguard the rural landscape setting of the village and its spatial qualities.

Policy 2: Settlement Pattern and Character.

Development proposals will maintain the settlement pattern and character and:

- a) Development proposals which are likely to alter, remove or otherwise have a detrimental impact on trees, hedges and open spaces should be resisted. Such proposals should consider the likely impact on the amenity value of trees, hedges and open spaces and an assessment of their contribution to their immediate and wider setting should be included at the commencement of any development proposals.
- b) All new development shall have regard to the spatial characteristics of the locality and shall secure adequate space and planting. Visually important open space between buildings and groups of buildings will be required to maintain an open aspect.
- c) Changes to existing boundaries and the creation of new ones shall reflect the streetscapes, materials and heights of boundaries in the vicinity and be of high quality. Hedges are the preferred method of delineating boundaries. The omission of boundary fences, walls or hedges from new development in order to create an 'open plan' environment shall be resisted.

Justification.

This policy also draws on the evidence and requirements of the VDS and NPQ1 which aim to identify and protect Bourton's local identity in the design of new development in line with the requirements of paragraphs 58 and 60 of the NPPF.

Open spaces between buildings should not be encroached upon if this would diminish the relationship of the built environment visually with the surrounding countryside or within the village. Many gardens and other open areas contribute to the spatial characteristics and appearance of the NPA.

6.2.3. Policy 3. Building Design and Form.

Intention.

To ensure that all development respects the guidelines in the VDS and is of high quality and sits well within its environment.

Policy 3: Building Design and Form.

- a) The scale, form and massing of new development or alterations to existing buildings shall reinforce the underlying vernacular or character of its particular context.
- b) All new development shall be of high quality and respect the surrounding environment, both built and natural.
- c) All alterations or new development shall complement the character and appearance of surrounding properties in terms of height, scale and density.
- d) All new development shall reflect or reinforce the existing road frontage where a clear historic building line has been established.
- e) External security lighting shall be sited so as to prevent light pollution or inconvenience to neighbours or pedestrians.

Justification.

This policy is particularly concerned with the details of the built form of any new development and aims to ensure that the existing local character and attractiveness is reinforced.

Bourton does not have an historic core and has developed from the amalgamation of a number of small hamlets with subsequent infill of later development. However, surveys carried out for both the Village Plan and the VDS show that the village does have a valued heart and residents especially cherish the location, surrounding countryside, peacefulness and rural character of the village. Future development should be sensitive to anything which affects these values and, in any proposal to alter or extend an existing building or create a new one, the opportunity should be taken to safeguard or reinforce those elements identified as being important, such as the use of materials, scale, form and spatial relationship within its context.

Building lines vary considerably within the NPA but any new development should seek to respect and reinforce established building lines whether they are at the pavement edge or set well back.

See also the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire AONB Good Practice Notes and Management Plan.

6.2.4. Policy 4. Traffic and Parking.

Intention.

To ensure that traffic generated by new development can be safely accommodated by the surrounding road network and to avoid parking, which is associated with development, becoming highly intrusive, resulting in a general degradation of the rural village atmosphere.

Policy 4: Traffic and Parking.

- a) The impact of increased traffic resulting from development proposals should not detract from the village character and the rural ambience of roads and lanes and is a material consideration in the determination of Planning Applications.
- b) The provision of off-road parking shall continue to be a requirement in all new development proposals.
- c) Any new development or alteration shall ensure that frontages do not become dominated by hard surfacing and parked vehicles.

Justification.

This policy complies with the parking and traffic standards referred to in NDLP Policy 23, and is based on evidence and guidance in the VDS.

6.2.5. Policy 5. New Village Hall.

Intention.

To provide a new village hall with amenity land while respecting the policy requirements for a village in the countryside. Consultation revealed strong support from the community for negotiating the donation of a suitable site from a local landowner in exchange for the allocation of part of the site for a small housing development.⁹ The Site Appraisal and Selection Document describes the rigorous selection process employed, at the end of which two broadly similar sites emerged. Both sites are outside the Settlement Boundary and go forward in this Plan, which confers no status on the site which is not used for the purpose set out in this policy.

Policy 5: New Village Hall.

- a) Either of the two sites indicated on the proposals map is deemed to be suitable for the development of a village hall and the provision of associated amenity space. A small housing development may also be provided on the site in order to make the release of the land viable for the use of a village hall and associated amenity space.
- b) The permitted site shall provide an area of at least 2.1 ha to be apportioned as follows:
 - approximately 0.3 ha to the village hall and a parking and manoeuvring area, and;
 - approximately 1.5 ha to amenity space of a reasonably level gradient and quality immediately adjacent to the village hall building, and;
 - approximately 0.3 ha to the housing development.
- c) The land for the village hall and amenity space, as specified in criterion b) above if not already transferred to the ownership of the Parish Council shall prior to any grant of planning permission on any part of the site for any aspect of the proposed development be transferred to the ownership of the parish Council as part of a S106 agreement or similar legal instrument. This process will be subject to an open table discussion between the LPA, the Parish Council and the applicant.
- d) The land to be transferred to the Parish Council shall be transferred in a cleared state with services and access road provided to the site entrance point or there shall be a legal agreement on such provision.
- e) Development proposals for this site are required to include:
 - screening, using native species planting to lessen visual impact and to limit the impact of noise on neighbouring households;
 - the augmentation of ecological value on the site as discussed in the relevant Ecological Impact Assessment;
 - housing consisting mainly of small family homes: ¹⁰
 - measures that protect heritage assets and their setting.
- f) The decision-making process on Planning Applications for the proposed site options will be carried out by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with this policy as part of the plan-led process and having taken into account any other material considerations, including the identified planning considerations of the residents as expressed through the Parish Council.

9 See NPQ2 p5

10 See NPQ1 Q2.06

Justification.

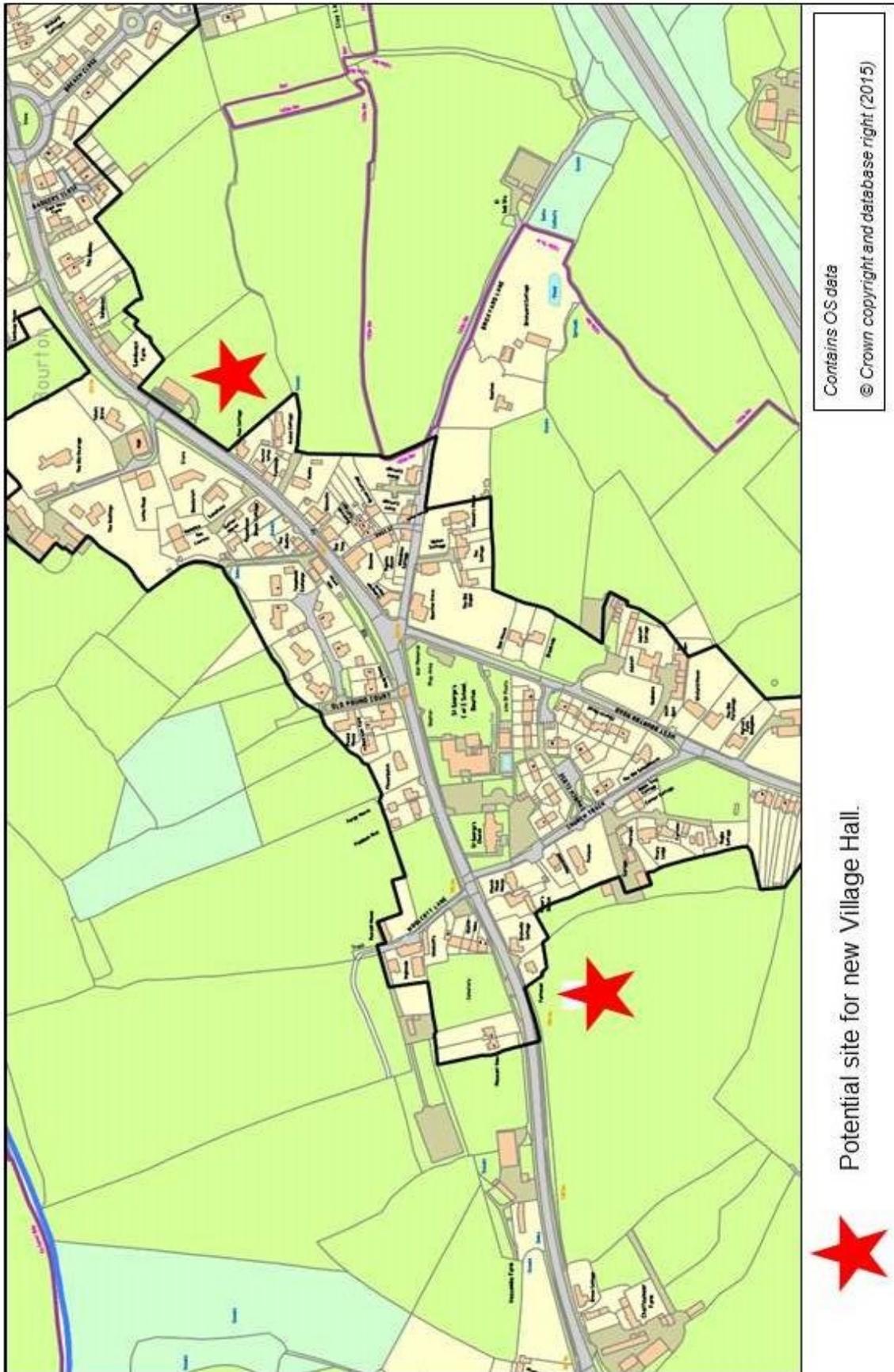
In order to fulfil its aspirations for the future, the village has need of a well-designed, energy-efficient hall with modern facilities, level access and adequate parking. It is seen as a centre for education, both formal and informal, meetings and social functions, both public and private. Surrounding amenity land will encourage outdoor functions and will provide space for informal sports and games. The hall and its facilities must cater for the needs of the village's ageing population and the disabled but also reach out to the wider community.

The existing hall, built in the 1970s, although a much used facility, has many limitations. It is a concrete frame construction with asbestos cement cladding externally. A survey considers it to have a limited economic life and the existing lease has only 19 years to run. High energy consumption and heat loss from the building are a significant disadvantage. Other problems include lack of parking, difficulty of access, particularly for the disabled, and inadequate toilet and kitchen facilities.

Accepting a small amount of housing as an enabling development has a number of advantages. It significantly reduces the financial burden of providing the new facilities, it will provide informal surveillance of the hall and, in a situation of national shortage, will provide some additional housing.

In this context, it is also proposed that the effects of the construction of the new village hall and associated housing may be mitigated by the creation of a small Area for Nature on the amenity land. This may be developed, under the auspices of the Parish Council, by the Bourton Wildlife and Habitats Group, in conjunction with Dorset Wildlife Trust.

Map 4 - Proposals Map: Selected Options for Village Hall Site.



6.3. The Natural Environment.

National and Local policies and the local community propose to protect and enhance the natural environment.¹¹

6.3.1. Policy 6. Biodiversity.

Intention.

To increase biodiversity by maintaining and improving the conditions and habitats for flora and fauna and the corridors which link them.

Policy 6: Biodiversity.

Development proposals must ensure that local biodiversity will not be harmed either directly or indirectly. Where opportunities exist, new habitats should be created to enhance the ecological network. In exceptional circumstances, where some impact is unavoidable, developers shall demonstrate that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation will be provided and will aim to achieve a net enhancement to biodiversity in the NPA.

Permission will not be supported if significant harm resulting from development cannot be avoided.

Justification.

National and Local policies indicate that positive plans should be adopted to create, protect, enhance and manage networks of biodiversity. The NPPF para 109 sets out the Government's requirements in this regard. This policy also conforms with NDLP Policy 4.

11 NPPF 2012. NDLP NPQ2 p11.

6.3.2. Policy 7. Protection of Habitats.

Intention.

To protect existing wildlife habitats and linking corridors and seek to enhance and extend them.

Policy 7: Protection of Habitats.

- a) Wildlife habitats and linking corridors, including woodland, wetland, open spaces, hedgerows and sunken lanes, will all be protected. Where opportunities exist, new habitats shall be created to further enhance this network.
- b) In this context, the Stour River Valley is an important feature (see Map 3) and provides a habitat for wetland flora and fauna. Development will not be permitted where the wildlife and their habitats, the vegetation and the landscape of the river valley would be adversely affected.
- c) There are two Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), designated by the Dorset Wildlife Trust, in the NPA (see Map 3). These areas of undisturbed habitat form a valuable reservoir of wild/plant life and, although they do not have statutory protection, should not be harmed by development. The designations are material considerations in determining Planning Applications.

Justification.

A large majority of residents supported the preparation of a local initiative to protect and enhance wildlife by creating a network of habitats and linking corridors.¹² This policy also accords with National and Local policies.

The policy of the Local Plan 2003, pertaining to river valleys, which aims to protect water quality, wildlife, habitats, vegetation and landscape from the undesirable effects of development, has been retained in NDLP.



Photo 3



Photo 4

Wetland Habitats.

12 NPQ2 p11

6.3.3. Policy 8. Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change.

Intention.

To accord with National Policy guidance in relation to the effect of any new development on global warming.

Policy 8: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change.

All new development within Bourton shall seek to achieve high standards of sustainability and, in particular, demonstrate in proposals how design, construction and operation has sought to:

- a) Reduce the use of fossil fuels.
- b) Promote the efficient use of natural resources, the re-use and recycling of resources, and the production and consumption of renewable energy.
- c) Adopt and facilitate the flexible development of low and zero carbon energy through a range of technologies.
- d) Adopt best practice in sustainable urban drainage.

Justification.

National and Local policies require that any new development should achieve high standards of sustainability and seek to minimise the effect on global warming (NPPF paras 93 – 97) .

6.4. The Green Infrastructure.

The Green Infrastructure consists of traditional open spaces and the network of features, such as woodland, wetland, hedgerows and rivers which encourage biodiversity in the local area (see Policies 6 & 7) and which characterise the open, rural nature of the village.

6.4.1. Policy 9. Local Green Spaces.

Intention.

To ensure that important and unique green spaces are preserved and their features protected.

Policy 9: Local Green Spaces.

The following sites (see Maps 5 and 6) are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- a) The cemetery.
- b) The paddock opposite the Church (the new cemetery).
- c) The school field.
- d) The proposed Mill River Walk.

Inappropriate development will not be approved in these areas except in very special circumstances.

Justification.

These sites, which were all defined as “Important Open or Wooded Areas (IOWAs)” in the North Dorset Local Plan 2003, are retained in NDLP and are long established as areas of important green space in the village.

They meet the NPPF criteria for Local Green Spaces (NPPF paras 76-77) as they are limited in size, in close proximity to the community and, in addition, have been described as “special” by a significant proportion of questionnaire respondents.¹³

- a) The cemetery is a tranquil area of particular local significance. (See Photo 5.)
- b) The paddock opposite the church (the new cemetery) provides a visually important green space as part of the setting of the Church and the adjacent Listed Buildings and enhances the beauty of this part of the village, affording views to the fields beyond.
- c) The school field is a valued and much-used open space and recreational facility for everyone, which needs to be retained in its current accessible location. It provides a relaxing environment with a fine view of the nearby Church. An area immediately adjacent to the school buildings has been excluded from the designation to allow for reasonable extension to the classrooms, if required. (See Photo 6)

13 VDS p24, NPQ2 pp 9,10.

- d) The proposed Mill River Walk is an undisturbed habitat for wetland flora and fauna on the banks of the River Stour.

6.4.2. Policy 10. Green Fingers.

Intention.

To define and protect the open spaces which separate the various hamlets that constitute the village of Bourton and in so doing retain the open, rural aspect of the village which is so much appreciated by the inhabitants,¹⁴ and enhance the Green Infrastructure.

Policy 10: Green Fingers.

- a) A number of fields which are outside the Settlement Boundary and, with one exception, are immediately adjacent to the Main Road, are designated as Green Fingers (see Proposals Map 6).
- b) Every effort shall be made to ensure that the green spaces between housing and the views into the countryside, which the Green Fingers provide, are preserved to retain the intrinsic character of the settlements identified in the VDS.

Justification.

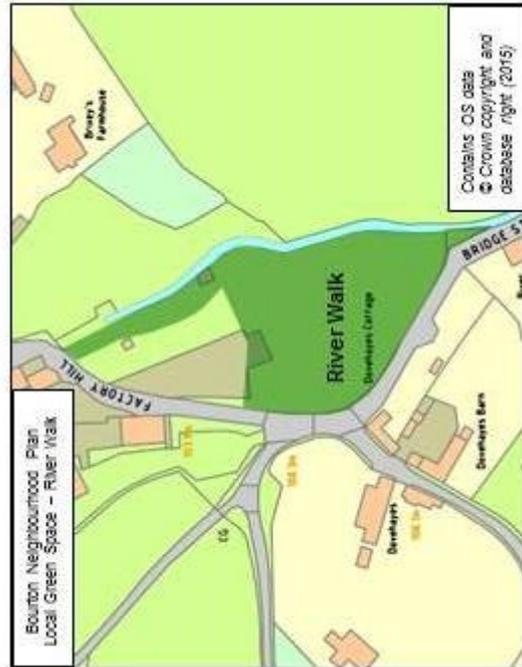
The village of Bourton is an amalgamation of a number of hamlets. When the current Settlement Boundary was introduced it was deliberately designed to maintain gaps between these hamlets and prevent the village becoming a strip development. As a consequence, there are a number of open areas along the main road which are outside the Settlement Boundary. The fields which constitute these open areas are classified as Countryside for planning purposes. They provide green spaces between the buildings, afford far-reaching views into the countryside and contribute significantly towards the rural character of the village, which the community wishes to preserve (See Photos 7 & 8). The protection of these green spaces and the wildlife corridors between them, such as the river, hedgerows, banks and verges, will also contribute towards the enhancement of the Green Infrastructure within the NPA.¹⁵ This policy also accords with National and Local policies.¹⁶

14 NPQ1, Q3.07, Q3.08

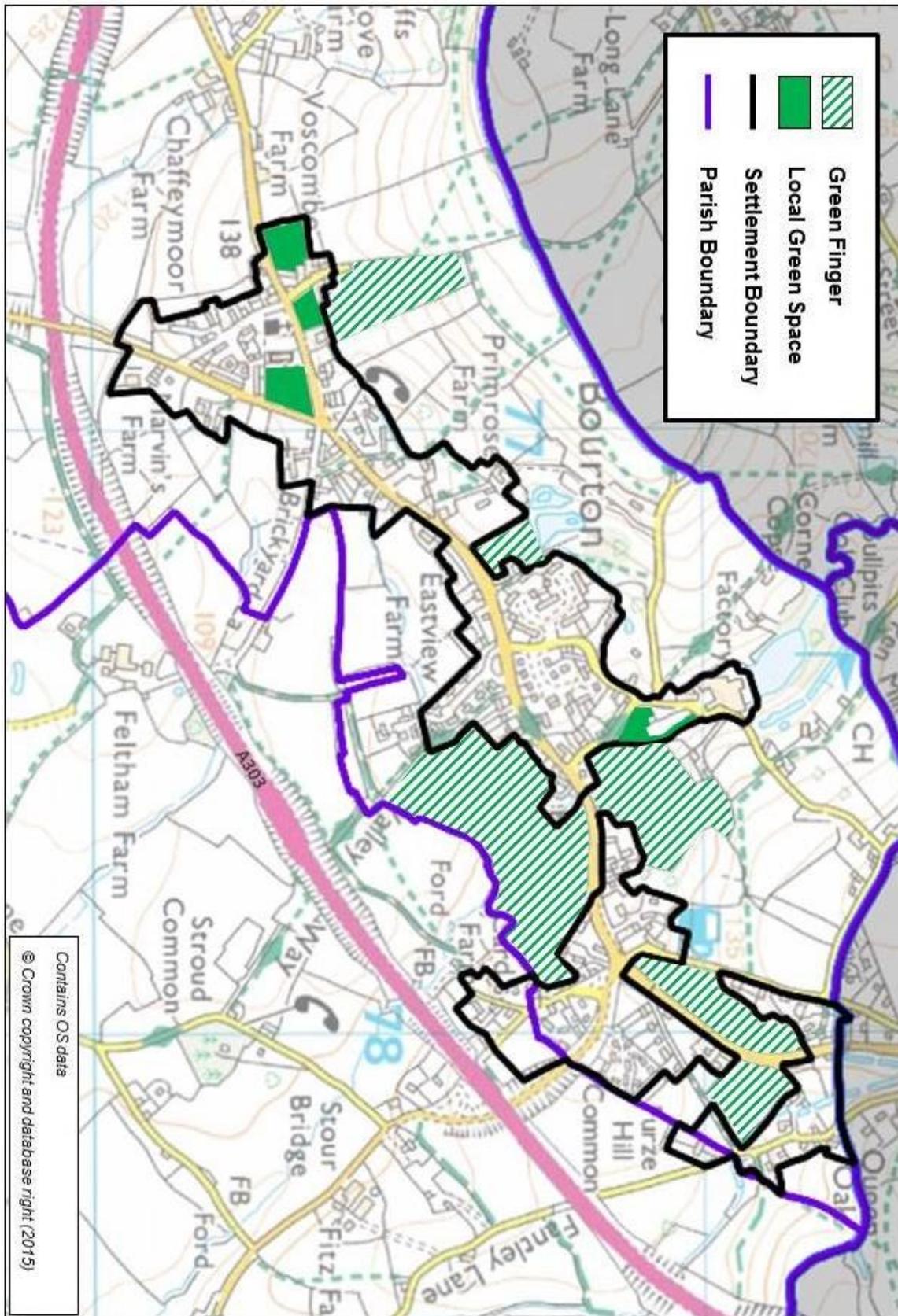
15 SEA p16 Para 3.4

16 NPQ1, Q3.07, Q3.08, NPPF, NDLP.

Map 5 – Proposals Map: Local Green Spaces.



Map 6 – Proposals Map: Local Green Spaces and Green Fingers.



Examples of Local Green Spaces



Photo 5 - The Cemetery.



Photo 6 - The School Field and Playground.

Examples of Green Fingers



Photo 7 - Behind the New Cemetery.



Photo 8 - Bourton Bridge.

6.5. Health and Wellbeing.

6.5.1. Policy 11. Footpaths and Bridleways.

Intention.

To promote a strong, vibrant and healthy community. To help create a healthy living environment and to encourage physical activity. To create places and spaces, accessible to all, in support of community activity and social events for all age groups.

Policy 11: Footpaths and Bridleways.

Development proposals shall respect the importance of footpaths and bridleways and ensure that their accessibility, general quality and amenity value are not compromised. Where possible development shall improve and extend the rights of way network (see Map 7).

Justification

The area has an extensive network of rural footpaths and bridleways which provide an important resource for physical activity and afford excellent access to the countryside. They are much valued by the community and need to be preserved and, where possible, extended. (See Photos 9 & 10.)

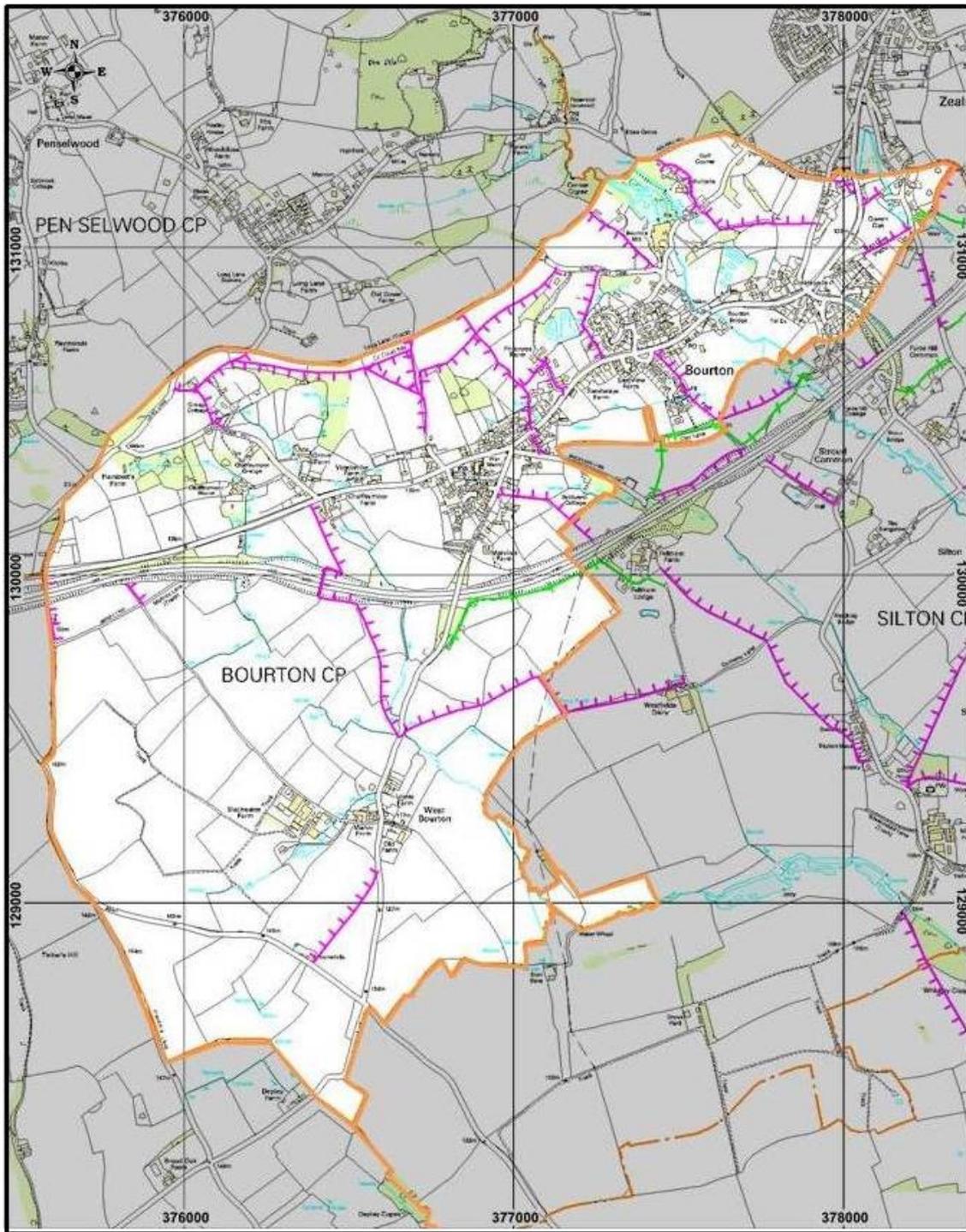


Photo 9 - Footpath N57/10, looking South.



Photo 10 – Junction of footpaths N57/8 and N57/10, looking South East.

Map 7 - Rights of Way in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.



<p>BOURTON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY</p>	PARISH BOUNDARY	<p>Scale 1:15000</p> <p>Cent X: 376923 Cent Y: 129870</p>	<p>Contains OS data</p> <p>© Crown copyright and database right (2015)</p>
	FOOTPATHS BRIDLEWAYS		
<p>THIS MAP IS NOT DEFINITIVE AND HAS NO LEGAL STATUS</p>			

6.6. Business and the Economy.

6.6.1. Policy 12. Support for Local Business.

Intention.

To support existing businesses, encourage new businesses, home working and social enterprises that benefit the community, and help to move Bourton towards a low carbon economy by encouraging local employment and enterprise.¹⁷

Policy 12: Support for Local Business.

Proposals that support working from home, local tourism, the development of small scale social enterprises and other businesses that meet the needs of the community, such as the creation of live-work units, will be supported provided that they would:

- a) Not involve the loss of dwellings.
- b) Contribute to the character and vitality of the local area.
- c) Protect residential amenity.
- d) Not adversely impact upon road safety.
- e) Conform to the environmental and other policies in this plan.

Justification.

The provision of jobs within the area will lead to reduced commuting and to additional support for existing local services. Local tourism facilities will enhance local prosperity.

17 VP, pp 5, 8, 14 & 19, VDS, p 53, NPQ1, pp 12, 20-25.

7. Appendices.

7.1. Appendix 1. Action List.

During the consultation which supported the formulation of the Neighbourhood Plan, a number of matters arose which are outside the remit of the Plan and are therefore not suitable for inclusion as policies but which, nevertheless, should not be forgotten. The following is a list of the principal issues with the action taken or proposed, a reference to the justification, the body responsible and the current status.

7.1.1. New Village Hall.

The village needs a new village hall and steps are being taken to provide one. The project is being managed by the Village Hall Management Committee in conjunction with the Parish Council. The first stage of the project is the acquisition of a suitable site and this is recognised and supported by Policy 5.

Justification: PC decision to support VHMC intention to provide a new village hall.
Action: Bourton Village Hall Management Committee.
Status: Ongoing.

7.1.2. The Wildlife and Habitats Group.

The Wildlife and Habitats Group (WHG) is an informal group of volunteers who came together as a result of the deliberations of the NPG Natural Environment Focus Group. Its purpose is to take positive action to protect and enhance wildlife habitats and, wherever possible, to create conditions in which native plant life will flourish. It will seek opportunities to plant native trees in public areas and encourage tree planting on private land. In addition to its other activities, it is proposed that the WHG may develop a small Area for Nature on the amenity land associated with the village hall development (see Policy 5).

The Group reports informally to the Parish Council and seeks its co-operation and/or approval, for all its activities.

Justification: 79% support a local initiative to protect and enhance wildlife and habitats.
Action: The Wildlife and Habitats Group.
Status: Ongoing.

7.1.3. Footways.

- a) The condition of footways should be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are safe for less able users and any problems reported to DCC for remedial action.
- b) The requirement for drop-kerbs at road junctions to facilitate the use of mobility scooters should be regularly reviewed and new requirements reported to DCC for action.

Justification: Focus Group discussion.
Action: Bourton Parish Council.
Status: Activated as necessary.

7.1.4. Footpaths and Bridleways.

The network of footpaths and bridleways should be regularly reviewed to ensure that it offers the best possible accessibility. Footpath 11 has been cleared and brought back into service.

Justification: 44% rate footpath and bridleway improvements important or very important.
Action: Bourton Parish Council, The Wildlife and Habitats Group.
Status: Activated as necessary.

7.1.5. Noise from the A303.

A petition to Central Government and the National Highways Agency has been organised in conjunction with neighbouring villages to request resurfacing of the A303 and implementation of noise reduction measures.

Justification: 76% are adversely affected by road noise from the A303.
Action: Bourton Parish Council.
Status: Ongoing.

7.1.6. Allotments.

Bourton has no allotments. Responses to NPQ1 indicated that 31 residents would be interested in acquiring an allotment. However, when asked to contact the NPG with a view to taking appropriate action, only one person applied. The NPG found a suitable allotment in the adjoining parish of Zeals.

Justification. 31 people expressed interest in an allotment.
Action: NPG.
Status: Completed.

7.1.7. Traffic speed.

A Speedwatch Group has been established, trained and equipped.

Justification: 64% consider speeding to be a problem on the main road.
Action: Approved by Dorset Police and supported by the Parish Council.
Status: Ongoing.

7.1.8. Communication.

A new village website has been implemented. It provides a broad range of information about, and/or provided by, Local Government sources, village organisations and local businesses. The NPG has made regular reports to the Parish Council whose minutes are available on the website, posted its own minutes on the website and distributed information as inserts in the Parish magazine.

Justification: See NPQ1 Page 20.
Action: The Parish Council.
Status: Ongoing.

7.1.9. Street Lighting.

Following action by the Parish Council street lighting is now extinguished between 01:30 and 05:30.

Justification: 59% consider lighting should be turned off between midnight and dawn.

Action: The Parish Council.

Status: Completed.

7.2. Appendix 2. Abbreviations.

DCC	Dorset County Council
IOWA	Important Open or Wooded Area
LOCALITY	A nationwide network of development trusts, community enterprises, settlements and social action centres. See: http://locality.org.uk
NDDC	North Dorset District Council
NDLP	North Dorset Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (see Notes below)
NP	Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
NPA	Neighbourhood Plan Area (defined as the Parish of Bourton)
NPG	Neighbourhood Planning Group
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPQ1	Bourton Neighbourhood Plan – 1 st questionnaire (March 2013)
NPQ2	Bourton Neighbourhood Plan – 2 nd questionnaire (June 2014)
VDS	Bourton Village Design Statement – September 2011
VP	Bourton Village Plan - 2008

Note 1. North Dorset District Council is currently producing a new Local Plan for the district, which will replace both the Local Plan (adopted in January 2003) and the Local Plan Part 1 (adopted in January 2016).

Note 2. “Policies contained within LP1 (adopted in January 2016) replace a large number of the policies set out in the local plan that was adopted in 2003 (Appendix A in LP1 provides a schedule on this matter). However, some of the 'saved' policies in the Local Plan (2003) have not been replaced by policies in LP1 and are, therefore, still extant. These 'saved' policies that remain extant are also outlined in Appendix A to LP1. Both LP1 and the 'saved' policies in the Local Plan (2003) that remain extant form part of the 'development plan' for North Dorset and all planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless 'material considerations' indicate otherwise.”