

BRADFORD ABBAS & CLIFTON MAYBANK

- NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN -

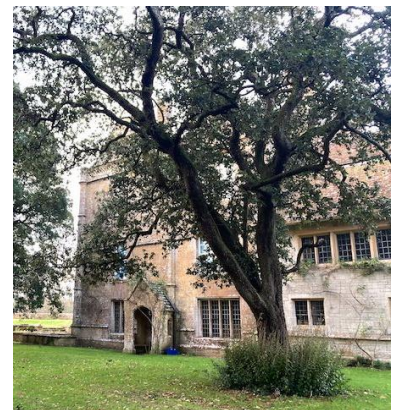
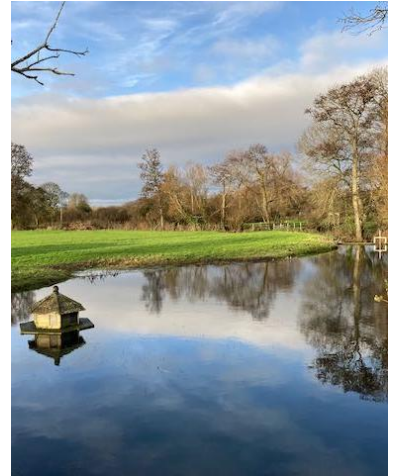


2024 - 2039

Submission Draft

April 2026

Produced by: Bradford Abbas Parish Council



Foreword

Our community of Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank is an oasis of Dorset rural beauty hidden between Sherborne and Yeovil. This Plan is intended to identify what we need to protect and preserve what we cherish; as well as support any necessary change that is needed. Modern pressures give rise to the requirement to sustain the services and special character of where we live. A vision and plan for how parishioners can be better served and protected is ever more urgent.

Since the first thinking about a Neighbourhood Plan, much has been discussed, analysed and written in formulating a clearer vision for the future of our community. The result of all those meetings, surveys, research and feedback is contained within this Plan. It is hoped that in doing this we will protect our ecology, archaeology, valued green spaces and assets that make our community a special place to live and work. This will further strengthen ties between residents and bring us closer together.

So it is in memory of all those who have gone before, and in support of present residents as well as those yet to come, that this Plan serves as a reminder of all that is great and good, and the work still yet to be done.

Thank you to all those who have contributed and supported the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, Bradford Abbas Parish Council, Clifton Maybank Parish Meeting in the production of the Plan. This document provides a framework within which future developments can be informed, decided, measured and monitored in order that our community can continue to evolve.



Neighbourhood Plan Timeline

BRADFORD ABBAS & CLIFTON
MAYBANK



Nov - 21

Inaugural meeting with Bradford Abbas village held



Feb - 22

Bradford Abbas Parish Council agreement to proceed with Neighbourhood Plan - Steering group formation



June - 22

Clifton Maybank residents invited to work in partnership on Neighbourhood plan



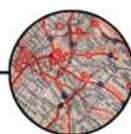
Jan - 23

Feedback from surgery assessed and survey development commenced



Nov - 22

Public surgery held in Village Hall



Sept - 22

Proposed area of Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank designated by Dorset Council



July - 22

Application to Dorset Council for designation of Neighbourhood Plan area



Jul - 22

Neighbourhood Planning Grant and Technical Support Application submitted



Mar - 23

Residents household survey



May - 23

Survey results analysed & AECOM Visit to village to commence work on design guidance



Aug - 23

Neighbourhood plan drafting commenced



Sept - 23

AECOM draft design guidance report received for comment



Dec - 23

AECOM final design guidance report received



Sept-Dec - 25

Regulation 14 consultation with residents & statutory consultees for consultation



Aug - 25

Neighbourhood plan draft completed



May - 25

Presented progress to Parish Council



May - 24

Consultation with local businesses, services and landowners



Jan - 24

Neighbourhood plan draft reviewed - amendments required



Dec - 25

Neighbourhood plan amended based on feedback



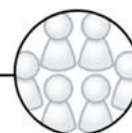
Mar - 26

Consultation with local green space landowners



Mar - 26

Neighbourhood plan agreed by Parish Council



Apr - 26

Neighbourhood plan submitted to Dorset Council to arrange for its examination



May - 26

Further consultation for comments to be considered by the Examiner



Dec - 26

Neighbourhood plan officially made part of the development plan



Nov - 26

Referendum held



Sept - 26

Examiners recommendations considered and plan modified as necessary



Aug - 26

Examiners report and recommendations received



Jul - 26

Examination starts

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

1.1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Scheme began in 2011 and is a way in which residents can shape the decision making and future of their local area.

1.1.2 Through a shared vision allowing residents, as a community, to influence what happens in a parish in the future, neighbourhood plans play an important part.

1.1.3 The Plan has a range of different policies, including:

- Policies to safeguard the intrinsic beauty of our countryside, important green spaces, wildlife areas, key views and the character and style of important buildings and houses.
- Policies to make sure that any development is in keeping with local building styles and materials.
- Policies to protect the key community facilities that are so important to residents and to endeavour to make sure that these continue to thrive.

1.1.4 The Plan also includes projects, which are actions that the Parish Council has identified to take forward to help address issues that do not directly relate to planning decisions.

1.1.5 Following consultations with the community the Plan is compiled by a group of volunteer residents, with advice from a specialist neighbourhood plan consultant. The Plan must be approved by the Parish Council and an independent examiner. Consultation with residents takes place at all stages and changes are made. The Plan looks ahead from 2024 to 2039 (the 'plan period') but can be reviewed before the end. The examiner and consultant are government funded.

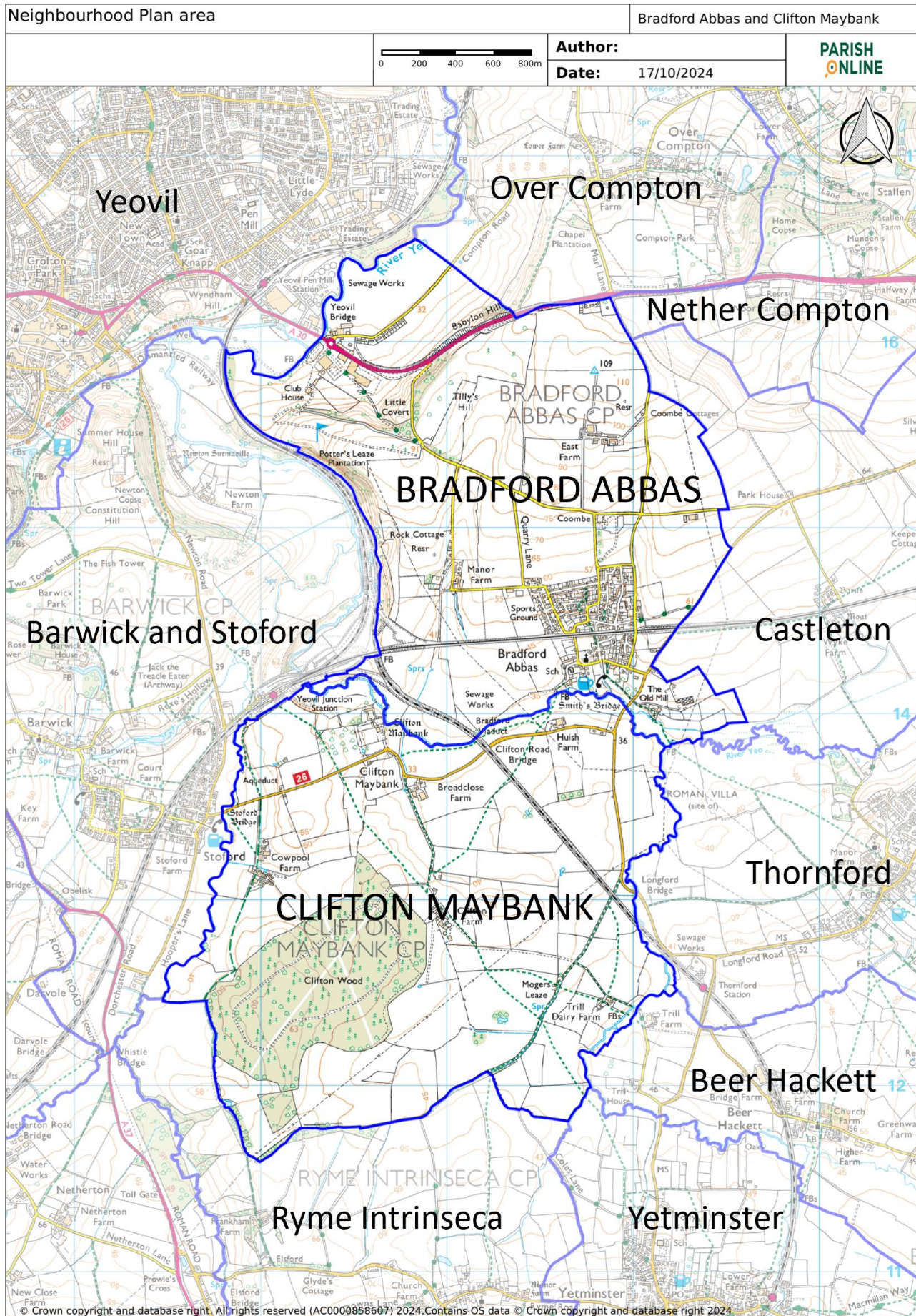
1.1.6 The final step is the referendum, where all residents in the parishes who are on the electoral roll, get the chance to vote yes or no to the Plan being adopted officially. The final Plan is then officially 'made' part of the development plan for the area when it is approved by, in our case, Dorset Council.

1.2 Characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan area

1.2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan area comprises two adjoining parishes located in Dorset, in the south-west of England. Bradford Abbas is a civil parish and village located to the north of the area, while Clifton Maybank is a civil parish and hamlet to the south. The area's population as recorded in the Census in 2021 was 975.

1.2.2 Both parishes are located southeast of the town of Yeovil and west of Sherborne. The River Yeo runs east-west through the centre of the Neighbourhood Plan area and down the western flank of Clifton Maybank parish. Bradford Abbas Parish is crossed to the north by the A30 running east-west that historically was a principal route from London, via Sherborne and Yeovil, to Land's End in Cornwall. The nearest railway stations are located just outside the Plan area. Yeovil Junction to the west of Bradford Abbas, and Sherborne Station to the east, are on the Exeter to Waterloo London line. Yeovil Pen Mill Station to the northwest and Thornford Station to the south provide access to Bath and Bristol to the north, and Dorchester and Weymouth to the south (see Map 9).

Map 1. The Neighbourhood Plan area and civic parish boundaries



1.2.3 The northern part of Bradford Abbas parish is mainly sandstone, but the village stands on limestone which covers the whole of the Yeo valley in this area. It produces fertile soil well suited to arable farming, with the lower lying riverside areas being used for mainly dairy cattle.

Bradford Abbas

1.2.4 The name Bradford Abbas derives from the “Abbot’s broad ford” on the River Ivel, the Abbot in question being that of Sherborne; the land was given to Sherborne Abbey by King Athelstan in the 9th century.

1.2.5 Historic maps demonstrate that the village developed in a linear settlement pattern alongside Church Road, North Street, Churchwell Street and Westbury. Development was concentrated along these lanes with many dwellings having large gardens, orchards or smallholdings extending up to Back Lane to the east and Westbury to the west. The village expanded to the west with large, planned developments in the 1960s. The area around the junction of Churchwell Street and Church Road is the main focal point for activity, with the presence of several local amenities such as the Rose & Crown pub, Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank village hall, St Mary’s Church and St Mary’s Primary School.

Clifton Maybank

1.2.6 Clifton Maybank is recorded in the Domesday Book as Clistone, held by William Malbank, a tenant of Hugh, Earl of Chester, in 1086, and it is from Malbank that the “Maybank” suffix derives.

1.2.7 Clifton Maybank is a small hamlet, sparsely populated and primarily rural with a dispersed settlement pattern concentrated along Clifton Hill where Clifton Maybank House is situated. The house was once the site of a chapelry dependent of Yetminster and home to the Horsey family where Sir Thomas Wyatt spent his final days before his death. Historic maps show that much of the landscape has survived relatively untouched, with field boundaries and woods remaining. Most of the buildings recorded on historic maps are still there, with some additions to the farms such as modern outbuildings. There have also been changes to Clifton House over the years, the most notable being the demolition of part of the building in the late 18th century, which was re-erected to form the East Wing at Montacute House.

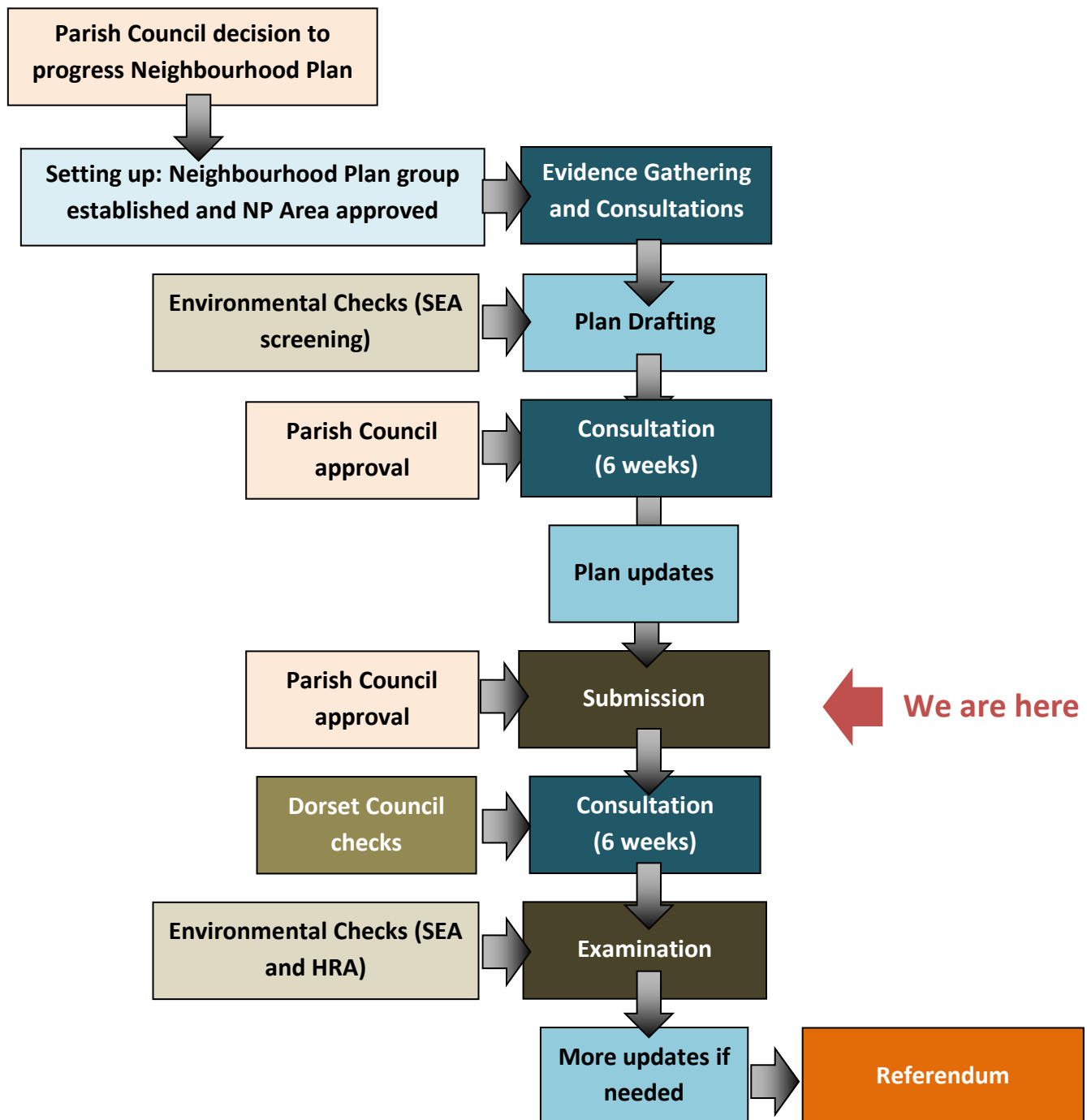
1.2.8 In May 2021 Dorset Council granted permission for a 120-acre (55 hectare) solar park in over seven fields at Clifton Farm, which is expected to produce 35MW of renewable energy a year.

1.3 Our Vision

Our vision is that the residents of Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank will continue living in a beautiful, well cared for, supportive, active community which values its historic and rural setting and distinctive character supported by the Neighbourhood Plan. Through its variety of housing, community facilities, and business opportunities, people’s needs will be met, and the environment will have been retained and enriched. Any changes will reflect and strengthen the distinctive character of the two parishes, making a genuinely positive contribution to the community as a whole.

1.4 Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan

1.4.1 The diagram below explains the key milestones of consultation and how the residents' opinions formed the plan.



2. Environment and Heritage

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan area is not part of a nationally designated landscape, it is a beautiful place in which to live, with many fine features. Land either side of the River Yeo to the south side of Bradford Abbas Village was designated as an important local landscape in the adopted Local Plan, linking through to Church Road via the site opposite the pub.

2.1.2 Clifton Wood is designated as a locally important wildlife site (a Site of Nature Conservation Interest) and is included within Natural England's inventory of ancient woodland. There are several areas identified as priority habitats in the two parishes, primarily small areas of deciduous woodland, but also two small areas of traditional orchards in Clifton Maybank. The river and stream corridors and railway embankments / cuttings are also important wildlife corridors. The Bradford Abbas railway cutting to the east of the village is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) of geological importance, as are parts of Underdown Hollow and the exposures by the layby on Babylon Hill.

2.1.3 Views expressed as part of the initial household survey reinforce the importance of retaining and enriching the historic and rural character, which is reflected in the descriptions contained in the landscape character assessments for the area. There are many outstanding open views enjoyed by residents from the rural lanes and rights of way. The lanes and footpaths are very important to local residents allowing them to enjoy fresh air, the beautiful scenery and views of the countryside in which they live, and are essential for good health and wellbeing. The two parishes are particularly blessed by their wealth of historic buildings and other heritage assets, which are detailed in Appendix 2.



View of church from the bridge on Back Lane

2.2 Landscape Characteristics

2.2.1 The landscape character assessments of the area, supplemented by local knowledge, highlight the following key characteristics:

- generally undeveloped and tranquil character
- a settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and villages
- strong influence of local limestones in building materials
- rural character of the narrow lanes and dense species rich hedgerows, particularly along the valley floors – the roadside hedges are often set back behind a wide grass verge, with a ditch immediately in front of the hedge
- the irregular patches of broadleaf woodland, and more wooded nature of the limestone slopes
- important influence of the streams, river corridors and historic river crossings
- expansive views across the Yeo Valley from the higher ground above the village.

2.2.2 The household survey in 2023 helped highlight other landscape features that are locally important to the community, including the area's farming legacy, the traditional farmyards and buildings, historic field boundaries, existence of orchards, and the hedgerows and trees in gardens helping 'green' the character of the more built-up areas.

2.2.3 Another feature of the area are the holloways. These are historic routes that, due to their age and local geology, are lower than the surrounding land and are often enclosed by vegetation. Fanny Brooks Lane, leading from Back Lane (pictured below left) is a fine example of a Dorset holloway where the sandstone has been slowly eroded away to form a sunken pathway under a canopy of overarching trees and bushes. The cool, damp, shady environment has created its own ecosystem of ferns, mosses, fungi and insect life, with badgers and rabbits making their homes in the steeply sloping sides. Another spectacular example (pictured below right) is the Bradford Hollow leading up from The Peel Centre towards Underdown Hollow.



Examples of holloways - left on Fanny Brooks Lane, right Underdown Hollow leading to the Peel Centre

2.3 Access to the countryside

2.3.1 The household survey also showed how important the existing network of footpaths and green spaces are to the community as these provide access to and views across the countryside. This network is much more prevalent within Clifton Maybank parish, and greater access to the countryside in the northern part of the Plan area would be very much supported.

2.3.2 This network provides multiple benefits in terms of health (physical and mental well-being), bringing people in touch with nature and tranquillity. They can also function as wildlife corridors. However, some can be too narrow or poorly managed, making access extremely difficult for walkers, and often impassable in the winter months when they become waterlogged and muddy (particularly for residents that are less mobile).

2.3.3 The Parish Council has been working to ensure that existing routes are protected. Not all routes that have been used in the past are recorded on the definitive map of public rights of way (held by Dorset Council). In such circumstances, it is possible to apply for that path to be added. Dorset Council must then investigate the claim, examine the evidence and decide whether the claimed rights exist. The public footpath at East Farm, linking the top of Greenway Lane with Compton Road, was closed to the public in 2007. Following applications to re-open the footpath as a right of way,¹ a public inquiry took place in December 2024². Having reviewed all the evidence and interviewed witnesses, the Inspector concluded that it is a public footpath and therefore should be reinstated as such. There are several outstanding applications to add further routes to the definitive public rights of way map which have yet to be determined³. The application to reinstate the footpath at Gollops Ground that ran along the river through the field west of Smith's Bridge has been a matter of considerable concern to local residents and its reinstatement has now been confirmed. Other applications include formalising the route known as Fanny Brooks Lane (which runs from Back Lane eastwards to the junction with the C35 and is a prime example of a Dorset Holloway) as a byway. Also the Green Lane known as Bradford Hollow that runs from Underdown Hollow to the Peel Centre on Babylon Hill as a byway. Changes to the status of some routes in Clifton Maybank have been sought also to allow them to be used by horse-riders.

2.3.4 Through this Neighbourhood Plan, the provision of further routes to add to the existing network can be encouraged (although this is dependent on whether landowners are willing).

2.4 Dark Skies

2.4.1 The village of Bradford Abbas does not have street lights, resulting in a low level of light pollution allowing a clear view of the night sky from within the village and outlying areas (see Map 2 below). In the Householder survey local residents expressed their wish to ensure this is retained, and guidance on this is included in Section 6 and the accompanying Design Guidance. Village householders are also encouraged to consider how existing security and other external lights are set up, to reduce light spillage and avoid these from being triggered unnecessarily (such as by people walking past in the road).

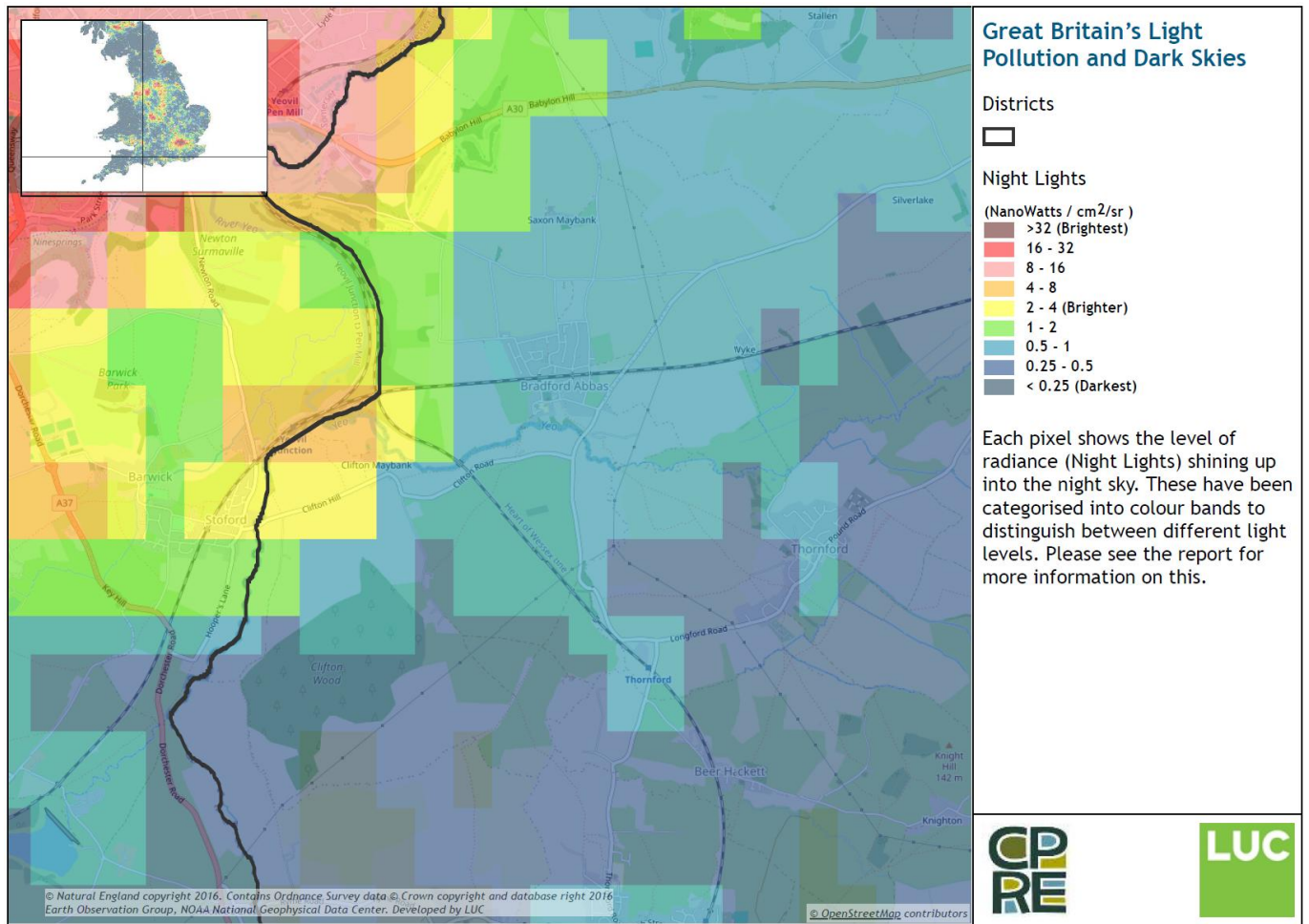
¹ <https://gi.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/rightsofway/definitivemap/register/Details/T474>

² Inspectorate ROW/3323995: Footpath 8, west north-west of East Farm, DT9 6JN

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d077d9299d44ed3590d74c/row_3323995_on.odt

³ Register of Definitive Map Modification Order applications: <https://gi.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/rightsofway/definitivemap/register>

Map 2. Light Pollution Map (courtesy of <https://www.cpre.org.uk/light-pollution-dark-skies-map/>)



2.5 Locally Important Views

2.5.1 The intrinsic beauty of the countryside is enjoyed by many residents from the highways and rights of way in both parishes. Some views are particularly valued, and the impact of development on these views (whether in the foreground or distracting or otherwise detracting from those features that make the view special) would be a relevant consideration in determining planning applications.

2.5.2 The following table describes the most important views, as identified in consultation with the community as part of the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan. The map also shows the views identified through the Conservation Area Appraisal work.

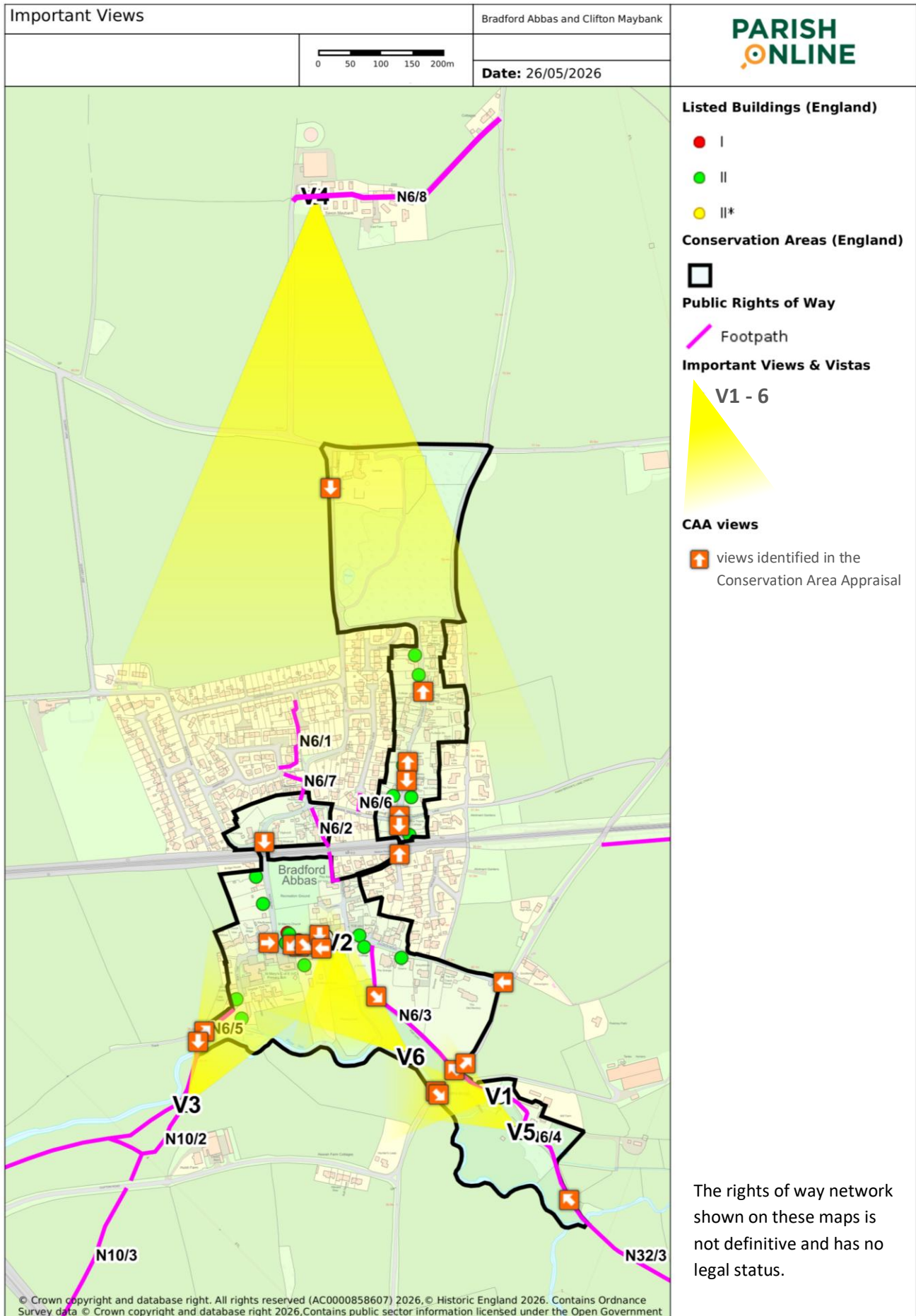
Table 1. View Descriptions

Ref	Location / Direction	Description / landmarks
V1	View of Smith's Bridge looking west from Mill Farm footpath (N6/4)	This historic Tudor bridge over the River Yeo, constructed in the late 16th Century, has grade II* listing. It is a significant feature within the landscape lying between Clifton Maybank and Bradford Abbas and can be best viewed from the footpath at Mill Farm. 
V2	View out to the countryside from Church Road and the garden at the Rose and Crown pub.	The views across this significant green space connect the heart of Bradford Abbas village (Church Road – where the church, pub, village hall and school are all situated) with the countryside. The view from the pub garden looking south over 'the small field opposite' is specifically mentioned in the Conservation Area Appraisal as an important view. 

Ref	Location / Direction	Description / landmarks
V3	View of St.Mary's Church looking north-east from the river-valley footpath that connects Clifton Maybank to Bradford Abbas (N10/1)	Parishioners can enjoy stunning rural views when walking along the river-valley footpath that connects Clifton Maybank to Bradford Abbas, including this spectacular view of St. Mary's Church tower. 
V4	View of Coombe House and the five church towers looking south from the footpath through East Farm (N6/8) Similar views of this landscape can be seen from other vantage points in and around Bradford Abbas.	This dramatic view above Bradford Abbas, with Coombe House in the foreground, spans the western end of Blackmore Vale, with Melbury Bubb and Batcombe Down in the distance. On a clear day the church towers of Yetminster, Ryme Intrinsica, Beer Hackett, Thornford and Bradford Abbas can be seen. 
V5	View looking west across the Millpond at Mill Farm.	The footpath past Mill Farm, that ultimately leads to Thornford, offers walkers striking views of the Yeo river-valley countryside. The mill

Ref	Location / Direction	Description / landmarks
		pond at Mill Farm attracts a range of bird life, including herons, egrets, coots and kingfishers, and can be viewed from the ancient footbridge that spans the tributary. 
V6	View looking west across Gollops Ground with St Mary's Church tower in the distance	Generations of villagers have enjoyed this important green space, with its riverside walk, abundant wildlife and views of the surrounding countryside with St Mary's Church tower in the distance. In 2021 access to most of the field and the riverside was fenced off, but in February 2026 a modification order was confirmed requiring the reinstatement of the footpath alongside the river, from where the view of the tower is best appreciated. 

Map 3. Locally Important Views



2.5.3 There is also a much-valued view from the eastern side of the Parish, from the start of the footpath between Bradford Abbas and Sherborne (N7/16), which offers spectacular views from the eastern boundary of the parish across the historic river valley to the hills beyond. Prominent features include the Grade II* listed moated manor house and medieval tythe barns at Wyke which are and Grade II* listed and scheduled. However, as this is primarily across land outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area, it is not possible for this plan's policies to safeguard this view. At the time of writing a renewable energy provider (RWE) have indicated their intent to construct a large solar farm in these fields, covering a 175-hectare site⁴, which would result in the loss of much if not all this view. Whilst not included in this Neighbourhood Plan, it is an issue that can be raised by the Parish Council and residents responding to the consultation on a future planning application.

Wyke Farm, just outside the parish boundary



2.6 Heritage Features

2.6.1 A large part of the village of Bradford Abbas, including North Street, much of Church Road and the southern section of Westbury, is designated as a Conservation Area, broadly reflecting the extent of the built up area at the turn of the 20th century. This was last appraised in 2013 when the boundary was extended to include the Coombe and land at Mill Farm, and highlighted the following key characteristics and influences:

- The outstanding Parish Church with its past connection to Sherborne Abbey. St Mary's Church is Grade I listed, and the church tower is an important local landmark featured in several views. The Preaching Cross stands to the west of the Church and is Grade I Listed in its own right;

⁴ <https://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/24593171.new-solar-farm-battery-scheme-proposed-dorset/>

- Church Road was part of a medieval road (via Lenthay Common) that once connected the village to its owner Sherborne Abbey. The Cross (the crossroads of North Street, Bakehouse Lane, Higher Westbury and Churchwell Street) at one point in the settlement's history acted as the village centre / marketplace, and would have been an important meeting place which is still appreciable today given its width;
- The important influence of the area's historic farming practices, such as the tofts and crofts evident on both sides of Church Road, former orchards, farmhouses, yards and farm buildings, hedgerows and banks;
- The important influence of the river and access to it – in particular the Mills and bridges;
- The important influence of the arrival of the railway in 1860, which has shaped the settlement layout and how the two sides are connected via over and under bridges;
- The intricate nature of the road and plot patterns, and generosity of land plots, with several significant spaces and gardens in and around Church Road and Westbury contributing to a feeling of spaciousness; The characteristic stone boundary walls, and a legacy of ironwork (used primarily on gates);
- The many locally important buildings, including those that are nationally Listed, and that relate well to other former important building groups. These include terraced and detached vernacular cottages, as well as some statement houses which adopted the fashionable architectural style of that time;
- The use of Inferior Oolite limestone as the principle, traditional building stone (with Hamstone used on prestigious buildings), with slate, plain tile and thatch roofs. Chimneys are an important feature and mostly built of brick. Timber boarded doors and sash or multi paned, casement windows predominate, as does the use of metal rainwater goods;

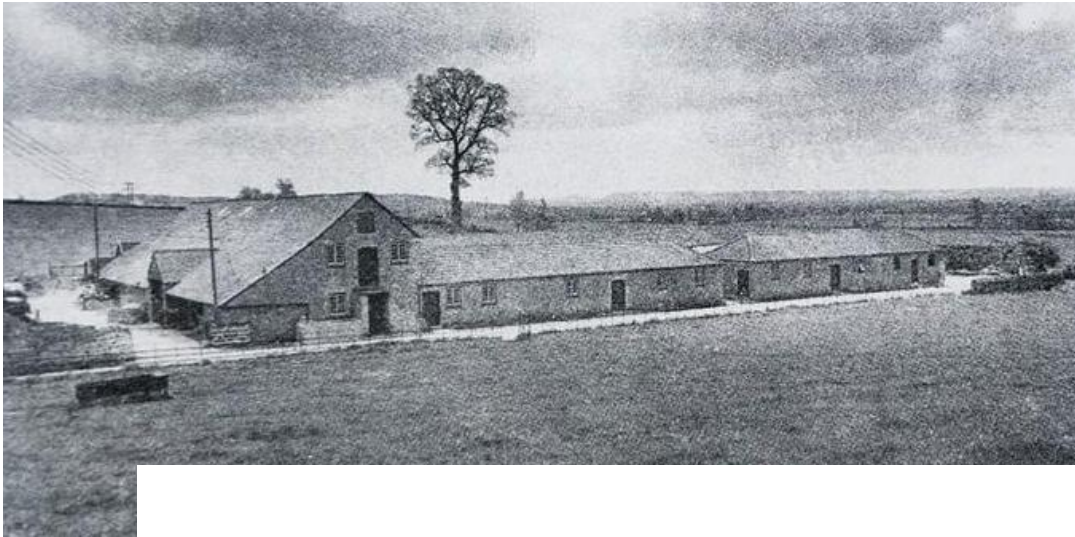
2.6.2 The Gardens and Designed Landscapes of Clifton Maybank House were added to Dorset Council's Local Heritage List in March 2026. The House is approached via a tree lined drive from the south, terminating on a terraced area linking the house and river, with the extensive gardens include a two storey summer house, raised walkways and the remains of formal tree-lined avenues, as well as a string of ancient fishponds. The gardens add to the grandeur of the Grade I House and highlight the strong influence of the various characters who lived there on this part of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

2.6.3 Whilst there are no visible remains, the area east of Yeovil was the scene of the first recorded battle in the English Civil War between the Parliamentary Roundheads and Royalist Cavaliers – known as the Battle of Babylon Hill. The Cavaliers had been observing the Roundheads guarding the bridge over the River Yeo at Yeovil from the vantage point on Babylon Hill, and were unaware that the Roundheads were advancing along Bradford Hollow from where they were able to launch a surprise attack⁵. The battle was re-enacted by enthusiasts in 1977, and a stone commemorating the Battle was erected in 1992 by the English Civil War Society.

⁵ For more details on the history visit <https://www.yeovilhistory.info/babylon.htm>

2.6.4 Also of note is the Roman legacy relating to the area north of the village, where there are two sites designated as scheduled monuments, one a Roman villa (on land South-East of East Farm⁶), the other a Roman temporary camp (at East Farm⁷). Whilst there are no remains above ground, these sites are of national importance and provide valuable insight into our past.

2.6.5 Some of the scattered farmsteads may qualify as non-designated heritage assets. Manor Farm to the north west of the village is one such example - the group of buildings comprising the farmhouse, farm cottages and farm buildings were built in about 1858 by William Clayton Clayton⁸ and have changed little over the years, helping new residents to better understand the area's farming legacy.



*Manor Farm
Buildings c. 1860
(source: Bradford
Abbas, The History
of a Dorset Village
by Eric Garrett), and
as photographed in
June 2024*



2.6.6 As referenced under landscape character, the holloways are also a feature of this area and given their age and interest may qualify as heritage assets. Bradford Hollow is already recorded on the Dorset Historic Environment Records, with reference to the Dorset County Council Countryside Treasures in Dorset series produced in 1978 (West Dorset District. 1. 17)⁹.

⁶ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1002414>

⁷ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1456547>

⁸ source: Bradford Abbas, The History of a Dorset Village by Eric Garrett

⁹ https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?resourceID=1012&uid=MDO369

2.7 Local Green Spaces

2.7.1 Neighbourhood Plans can designate local green spaces for protection. These need to be demonstrably special to the local community for reasons such as their landscape or recreational value, well related to the settlement and not extensive in size. They are not necessarily public open space, and their designation does not give any additional public rights of access to these areas.

2.7.2 Local Green Space policy is required to be consistent with the policy for Green Belts. This provides a strong level of protection, as the construction of new buildings is generally seen as inappropriate and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

2.7.3 As part of the Household Survey in 2023, residents were asked whether they thought that certain spaces in the parish were important to them¹⁰. These areas were then checked against the Local Green Space criteria as set out in national planning policy, and the following decisions made (see chosen green spaces in table 2 below) as to whether they should be proposed for Local Green Space (LGS) designation.

What types of development could be allowed in a Local Green Space?

Based on Green Belt policy, this could include buildings for agriculture and forestry; the replacement, extension or alteration of a building (if these are not disproportionate); and limited affordable housing for local community needs. Some other forms of development are also possible but only if they can be accommodated without harming the area's openness or conflicting with the purposes of designation, such as the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments. Whilst Green Belt policy also includes provision for limited infilling in villages, this is more linked to the strategic nature of Green Belts and is unlikely to apply to Local Green Spaces for this reason.



Gollops Ground in the Snow

¹⁰ This included: the Allotments; the Churchyard; Clifton Maybank Wood; the field opposite pub; Gollops ground (the field by river); the pub garden; the pub car park; the recreational ground, the Roman marching camp, the School playing fields; School playground; and the Sports club field.

Table 2. Review of Green Spaces - **proposed**

Green Space	Public Support	NPPF criteria checks / consideration
Gollops Ground, Bradford Abbas, ST589141	86%	This field lies to the south of the village and is crossed by footpath N6/3. The community previously had wider use of the field to access the river Yeo, and whilst this has been changed as a result of the change in ownership, the route along the river has now been added to the definitive map. The field contributes considerably to the character of the village. Views down to the river and up to the parish church are important, and the river banks support wildlife.
Recreation ground, Bradford Abbas, ST587143	95%	Important recreational space reasonably centrally located within the village, owned by the Parish Council and used for sports, village events etc
Rose and Crown Pub Garden, Bradford Abbas, ST587142	91%	An important recreation space linked to the use of the pub and its continuing success. There are views out from the garden across the paddock and countryside beyond, and important for the setting of the historic Grade I church and the pub (which would qualify as a non-designated heritage asset).
School playing fields and field opposite pub, Bradford Abbas, ST588141	78% / 96%	This is an important and historic green gap within the Conservation Area, linking the heart of the village from Church Road to the River Yeo, and contributing to the distinctive character of this part of the village. The playing fields, whilst limited to school use, are well used and enjoyed by both the attending children and by parents on Sports Days etc.
Sports Club Field, ST586143	94%	Extending to approximately 3.5ha, the sports club field is much valued by the community for its recreational use and also is enjoyed for the views it affords across the Blackmore Vale (similar to but not as impressive as V4).
St Mary's Churchyard, Bradford Abbas, ST587142	94%	An important space within the village of historic importance, forming the setting of the Grade I Listed church and much valued as a tranquil space for quiet contemplation. This is also the location of the Grade I Preaching Cross.

Table 3. Review of Green Spaces – **excluded as not meeting required criteria**

Green Space	Support	NPPF criteria checks / consideration
Bradford Abbas Allotments, ST590143	93%	These community allotment gardens, either side of the railway line, are privately owned. Whilst much valued, their allotment use is the main reason for designation and is not necessarily tied to this site, and as such these are more appropriately protected as a community facility.
Clifton Wood, Clifton Maybank, ST573125	71%	This area of land is approximately 80ha in size and therefore, whilst valued by the community, is considered to too extensive to qualify as a Local Green Space.
Roman marching camp, north of Underdown	58%	This area is part of a scheduled ancient monument, and its heritage interest is therefore sufficiently protected under that

Hollow, ST586151		designation.
Rose and Crown Pub car park, ST588142	84%	Not demonstrably special as a green space, more appropriately protected as a community facility.
St Mary's Primary School playground, ST587142	98%	Whilst much valued their recreational use is limited to the school attendees, and this area is more appropriately protected as a community facility. Should the school relocate then there may be potential for this site to be re-used in relation to the village hall.

2.7.4 Before finalising the Plan, we contacted the landowners to consider what they may have to say about the designation and have taken their responses into account in finalising the list of proposed spaces.

Map 4. Proposed Local Green Spaces



2.8 Local wildlife site and habitat enhancement opportunities

2.8.1 Data from the Dorset Environmental Records Centre highlights that a range of protected species have been found in the two parishes, including deer, otters, badgers, hedgehogs, water voles and various species of bats, birds, moths and butterflies. With careful consideration and planning, it should be possible to create a more robust network of habitats that allow such species to thrive. This can be achieved at both large and small scales, from the management practices on the farms, waterways and

woodlands, down to the inclusion of wildlife-friendly features in our gardens and buildings, and should aim to:

- increase the ecological value of the River Yeo, including its banks and floodplains, with a particular focus on supporting the otter and kingfisher populations;
- increase wildflower areas / support pollinators (such as bees, butterflies, hoverflies and beetles) through the management of our hedgerows, ponds, roadside verges and other marginal spaces (such as around the Sports Ground and within the churchyard);
- increase native tree cover across the two parishes where this is compatible with the landscape character of the area, including replacement planting for lost Ash and Elm trees in the hedgerows.

2.9 Somerset Levels and Moors

2.9.1 Natural England has advised that, in light of the unfavourable condition of the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site, before determining a planning application that may give rise to additional phosphates within the Ramsar Site catchment, competent authorities (the local planning authority) should undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This is to ensure mitigation measures are in place to address nutrient neutrality so the local planning authority is satisfied that the requirements of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) are met.

2.10 Environment and Heritage - Policies and Projects

Neighbourhood Plan Objective: *To protect and enhance the natural, agricultural and built environment of the parishes with particular regard to their historic and landscape features that contribute to their distinctive character, dark night skies, the network of sites that support local wildlife, the importance of the river and rail corridors, locally significant green spaces, and network of rural lanes and public footpaths enabling access to and views across the wider countryside.*

Policy 1. Local Landscape Character

Development will respect and where possible enhance the rural character of the local landscape. The following characteristics should be retained and used to guide any further development:

- the generally undeveloped and tranquil character of the countryside;
- the established settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and villages, and prevalence of smaller fields and paddocks at the fringes of the settlements;
- the area's farming legacy, including the traditional farmyards and buildings, historic field boundaries and orchards;
- the influence of and access to local watercourses and historic river crossings;
- the prevalence of local limestones in building materials and boundary walls;
- the hedgerows and trees in gardens that help to soften and 'green' the settlements;
- the rural character of the narrow lanes and dense species rich hedgerows,
- the irregular patches of broadleaf woodland, and more wooded nature of the holloways and railway corridors.

Policy 2. Locally Important Views

The important views, as described in Table 1 and shown on Map 3, are to be respected. Development that would significantly intrude and impact on their enjoyment of the Plan area, by virtue of scale, massing, design or location, will be resisted.

Policy 3. Dark Night Skies

Development should be designed to retain the dark night skies, through minimizing exterior lighting / illuminations and including measures to control light spillage and glare.

Policy 4. The importance of recreational access to the countryside

The improvement and expansion of the existing public rights of way network, permissive paths and open access land within the two parishes is encouraged, and should aim to create a joined-up network of paths and spaces that provide a wide variety of options in terms of circular routes, including options that are suitable for use of people with mobility difficulties, wheelchairs or buggies.

Development that would adversely impact on access to and the enjoyment / benefits of, the public rights of way network in the parish will not be supported.

Policy 5. Protecting Our Historic Environment

Development should preserve the historic character of the area, having regard to the findings of the Bradford Abbas Conservation Area Appraisal and the significance of the many designated and non-designated heritage assets (including those recorded in the Dorset Historic Environment Record and Appendix 2 of this Neighbourhood Plan), and taking into account the approach to conserving heritage assets set out in national policy. This should include appreciation of the following elements in creating the area's distinctive historic character and interest:

- the role and focal point of the Parish Church;
- the influence of the railway, river and historic road network in shaping the village form;
- the interest and vernacular created by the many surviving historic buildings, including those noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal, and the historic farmhouses, farm cottages and farm buildings in the wider rural area;
- the influence and legacy of the owners of Clifton Maybank House; and
- the 'hidden' history such as the Roman legacy and Battle of Babylon Hill.

Proposals should seek to better reveal and allow the appreciation of the area's history and distinctive characteristics.

Policy 6. Important Local Green Spaces

The following areas as shown on Map 4 and described in Table 2 are designated as Local Green Spaces. Other than in very special circumstances, these spaces will be protected from inappropriate development that would reduce their open character or otherwise harm their reason/s for designation:

- St Mary's Churchyard
- Gollops Ground

- School playing field and field opposite pub
- Rose and Crown Pub Garden
- Recreation ground
- Sports Club Field

Project P1. Investigating new and improved recreational routes and accessible green spaces

The Parish Council will work with local landowners to investigate potential options to provide new and improved recreational routes and accessible green spaces, including land with river access for public use.

Project P2. Improving local biodiversity

The Parish Council will work with Dorset Council Highways, Network Rail and local landowners to produce further evidenced information to inform decisions on options to support and enhance local wildlife habitats, including opportunities to enhance the wildlife value of verges in the parishes. Wildflower planting schemes will be encouraged.

3. Climate Change – Renewable Energy and Flood Risk

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 For some time both the UK Government and Dorset Council have recognised the need to address issues relating to climate change. As part of the work on this Neighbourhood Plan, the potential use of renewable energy and need to understand flood risk have been considered.

3.1.2 Communities are encouraged, through both government policy and rising energy costs, to reduce their reliance on energy produced from non-renewable sources.

3.1.3 The topography of the Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank parishes significantly influences their flood risk profile. The area's flat and gently sloping terrain, combined with frequent heavy rainfall and land use changes, contributes to varied flood risks across the area. The proximity to the River Yeo and Wriggle River exacerbates vulnerability to flooding. As the impacts of climate change become more evident, from increased rainfall to shifting weather patterns, it is essential that the parishes take steps to protect against flood risk, which impacts on properties, access and soil degradation.

3.2 Renewable energy generation

3.2.1 An application for a large (55ha) solar farm on land at Clifton Farm, Clifton Maybank was granted in ¹¹May 2021¹¹ and started construction in the Spring of 2023. The solar park is relatively well screened from the surrounding landscape and expected to provide renewable energy for the equivalent of 10,605 homes a year. A larger area of land at Wyke Farm (175ha), east of Bradford Abbas in Castleton Parish, is also being considered for a solar farm, but has not yet progressed to a planning application¹². The Parish Council is aware of a groundswell of public opinion from parishioners regarding this proposal.

3.2.2 Results from the community consultation indicate that while there is a majority backing for certain renewable energy sources, such as ground source heat pumps and roof-top solar panels, the overall support remains divided. There is no overwhelming consensus either for or against the allocation of land for renewable energy production at this stage. When surveyed, there was a notable split in support regarding the allocation of land for different types of renewable energy production for use within the parishes (i.e. a community-based renewable energy project). The survey results were as follows:

- 55% in support of ground source heat pumps to power the parishes
- 54% in support of solar panels to power the parishes
- 47% in support of wind turbines to power the parishes
- 34% in support of a biomass facility to power the parishes

3.2.3 Given the current level of division, it seems appropriate to rely on the existing policies within the Local Plan rather than seek to define a bespoke policy within our Neighbourhood Plan at present. This does not prevent individual households and businesses from seeking to adopt more energy-efficient

¹¹ <https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=85735>

¹² <https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=408349> provides details of the EIA Screening Opinion including location plan and potential size (175ha) of the proposed solar farm

practices and explore the potential of small-scale renewable energy solutions to power their premises. Nor does it prevent further work being done to investigate the potential for a community-based renewable energy project, should there be volunteers willing to take such a project forward¹³.

3.3 Known flood risks and challenges

3.3.1 During periods of heavy and prolonged rain, the Neighbourhood Plan area suffers from both river flooding and surface water runoff from fields. At such times the Rivers Yeo and Wriggle can burst their banks, and surrounding land becomes inundated with flood water, and mud and water run down local roads from fields caused by poor, inadequate and blocked drainage, agricultural practices, and climate change.

3.3.2 Flooding in the Plan area significantly impacts both residents and property, including agricultural land. Luckily, no residential properties within the Plan area are known to flood. Flood water from the Rivers Yeo and Wriggle regularly disrupts traffic movements particularly to the south of Smith's Bridge, and the Clifton Road (as you travel towards Stoford from Bradford Abbas, close to Clifton Maybank House). These areas are inundated on multiple occasions over the course of a year resulting in the roads being impassable and vehicles regularly being submerged and trapped in the flood water. Footpaths in the area also become submerged. Apart from the inconvenience of the roads being impassable and vehicles becoming stranded, there is also the potential danger to life.

3.3.3 Consultation with the community has confirmed the widespread frustration about the recurring flooding. Residents report that, during winter months, flooding can severely impact on daily life, making it difficult to travel between settlements as roads become impassable, disrupting commutes to work, school, medical appointments, and social activities, as well as delaying deliveries. Access to essential services, such as GP surgeries and Yeovil Hospital, is particularly challenging during times of severe flooding. This flooding also has a significant impact on local agriculture with fields used for grazing animals being cut off, and businesses becoming inaccessible.

3.3.4 The stretches of both the River Yeo and Wriggle River through the Plan area are classified as 'main river'. The Environment Agency, using its permissive powers, can carry out maintenance,



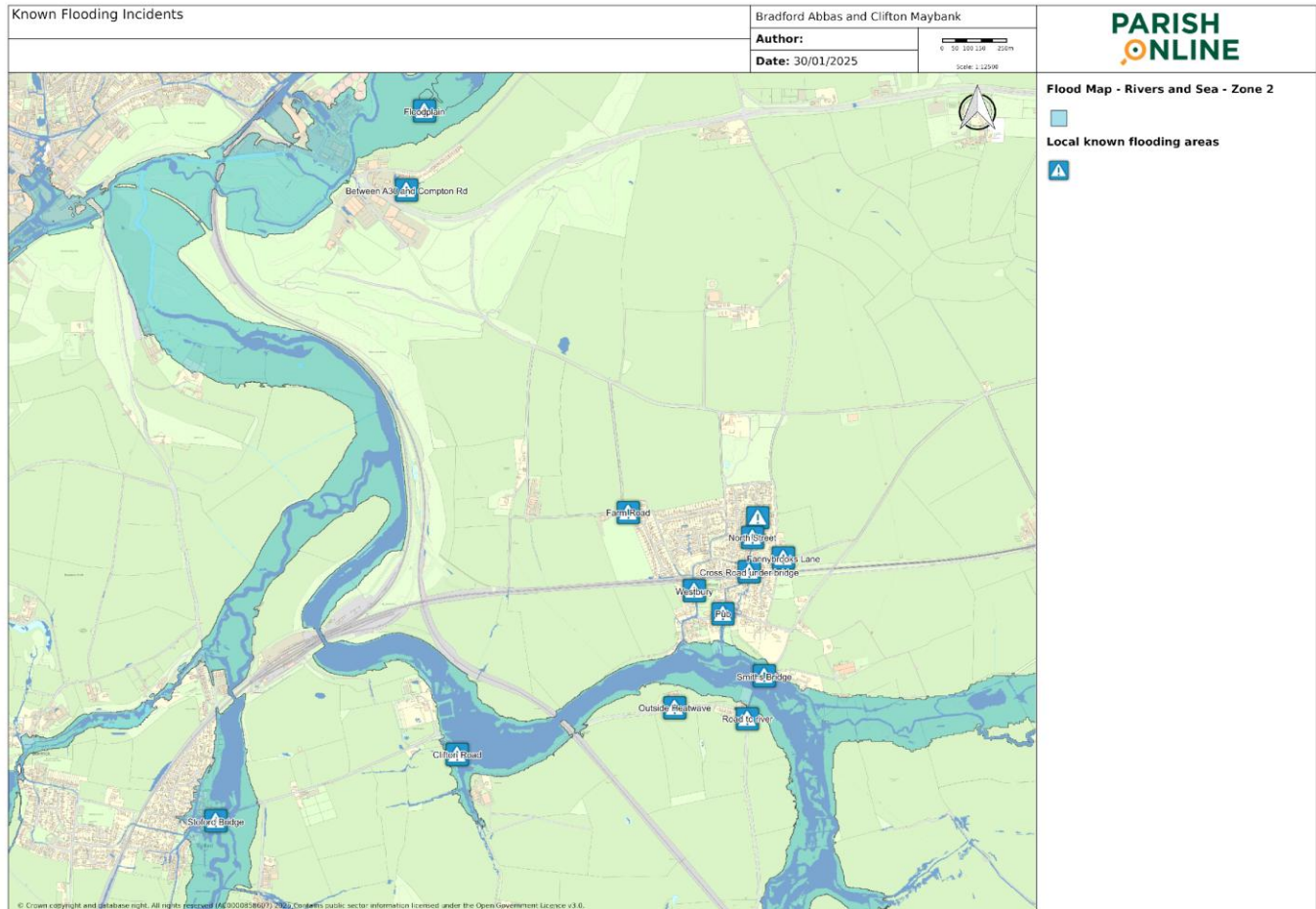
Examples of flooding on the road near Smiths Bridge, and south of Gollops Ground



¹³ The Centre for Sustainable Energy website provides a useful source of information on community renewable energy projects <https://www.cse.org.uk/my-community/community-projects/>

improvement, or construction work on main rivers to manage flood risk and protect the environment. It has been reported that some parts of the rivers in the Plan area contain fallen trees and straw bales causing obstacles to the flow of the river and flood water. This build-up of debris in the rivers needs to be monitored and cleared to avoid the potential to exacerbate the local flooding problem. It is also suggested that the flooding in the valley is worsened by landowners further upstream, and this needs to be investigated too, and possible solutions sought.

Map 5. Areas at risk of flooding – Local Knowledge



3.3.5 Being located on sloping land on the side of the Yeo Valley, Bradford Abbas village also suffers increasingly from high levels of surface water run-off from land to the north and east of the village resulting in water rushing down through the village roads to the centre of the village. The year-on-year growing of maize in these fields over the past five years has exacerbated the problem. Surface water run-off can result in large stretches of standing water on roads, which can also on occasion cause disruption to traffic, for example on Farm Road at the junction with Quarry Lane, The Cross at the bottom of North Street, and on Clifton Road near Heatwave. This issue has become more of a problem in recent years particularly with the flood water carrying large quantities of mud and debris from surrounding fields along local roads during periods of heavy rainfall. Dorset Council has also changed their policy in respect of maintaining drains and will only respond to unblock drains when they are reported.

3.4 Future water management challenges

3.4.1 There are a few possible approaches to address and improve the impacts of flooding resulting from surface water run-off. Of paramount importance is the need to improve land drainage by managing the drainage system adding drains where necessary, ensuring the drains are kept clear, and encouraging permeable surfaces whenever possible. A new drain at the top of North Street has improved the situation there, but another new drain has also been agreed with Dorset Council in Cross Road and is awaiting installation. Also, the Parish Council has begun the process of communicating with the landowners and the farm management company regarding the surface water runoff from the fields that slope down towards the village by writing to them and will continue to maintain a constructive dialogue.

3.5 Renewable Energy and Flood Risk - Policies and Projects

Neighbourhood Plan Objective: *To ensure that the cumulative impact of development is designed and implemented in a manner that mitigates flood risk, and to ensure that it does not exacerbate existing flooding issues or create new ones. To seek opportunities to improve current levels of disruption caused by flooding.*

Policy 7. Flooding considerations

All new development within the parishes must be located and designed in line with national policy to avoid exacerbating existing flood risks or creating new ones, having regard to the known flood risks and challenges identified in sections 3.3 and 3.4. Developers are required to integrate effective drainage solutions, adhere to established flood risk management protocols, and assess the cumulative impacts on local water management systems to ensure that development does not negatively impact flood resilience.

Project P3. Flood Alert System

The Parish Council will investigate new ways to establish a flood warning system to alert residents to any current flooding issues, and the feasibility of a community flood risk team.

Project P4. Drainage Monitoring and Reporting System

The Parish Council will encourage and support the establishment of a system to regularly monitor drains, unblock them where possible, report problems to Dorset Council, and recommend to Dorset Council when new drains are considered necessary. Similarly, to establish a system to monitor rivers and report fallen trees and obstacles to the Environment Agency.

Project P5. Better Collaboration with Local Farmers to Reduce Surface Run-off

The Parish Council will encourage and where possible support local farmers and landowners to implement sustainable farming practices that reduce surface run-off, such as improved soil management, the use of buffer strips, and reduced tillage, with the aim of enhancing water infiltration, reducing soil erosion, improving water quality and mitigating flood risks in the parishes.

Project P6. Community-based Renewable Energy

The Parish Council will support the community to investigate a community renewable energy project to serve the parishes if sufficient volunteers come forward.

4. Community Services & Facilities

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank together have a range of local services and facilities, either provided by the Parish Council, by community groups or run commercially (such as the pub). Most of these are in or adjoining the main village of Bradford Abbas.

4.1.2 The availability of the Church, Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank Village Hall and the Bradford Abbas Sports and Recreational Club means that many clubs, societies and events are organised and supported by all age groups, helping maintain a vibrant community. This includes activities such as the Saturday coffee mornings, a bridge group, chatty crafters, skittles, friendship club, camera club, a variety club, weekly Yoga and Pilates classes, a pop-up market, a calligraphy group, weekly bingo, and a variety of sporting and musical events.

4.1.3 The neighbouring towns of Sherborne and Yeovil, and villages of Thornford and Yetminster, have many additional facilities such as doctors and dental surgeries, supermarkets, shops, banks, post offices, library, restaurants, cafes, ten pin bowling alley, multiplex cinema, health and fitness centres.

4.1.4 In May of 2021 most of Gollops Ground was fenced off, preventing any public access to the banks of the River Yeo in this area. This has been a great loss to the residents, who had enjoyed uninterrupted access to the riverbanks for generations, and considered the area part of the village's recreational spaces. The Parish Council submitted an application for a Definitive Map Modification Order to Dorset Council in 2022, seeking to include the footpath along the river on the definitive map, and in February 2023 it was placed on Council's priority list to investigate. The application was successful, and in February 2026 the Order to add a footpath along the River Yeo at Bradford Abbas to the Definitive Map was confirmed¹⁴.

4.1.5 Sadly, the Post Office and Village Shop shut its doors in 2022. In 2023 the new owners of the property applied and were granted permission for a change of use, and it is now a residential property. The sealed GR post box dating back to 1934 is still in situ in the wall, and a new post box is now situated further up Church Road.

4.2 Our community facilities

4.2.1 The following community facilities exist within the Plan area (as at 2025) and are shown on Map 6 and described in more detail below.

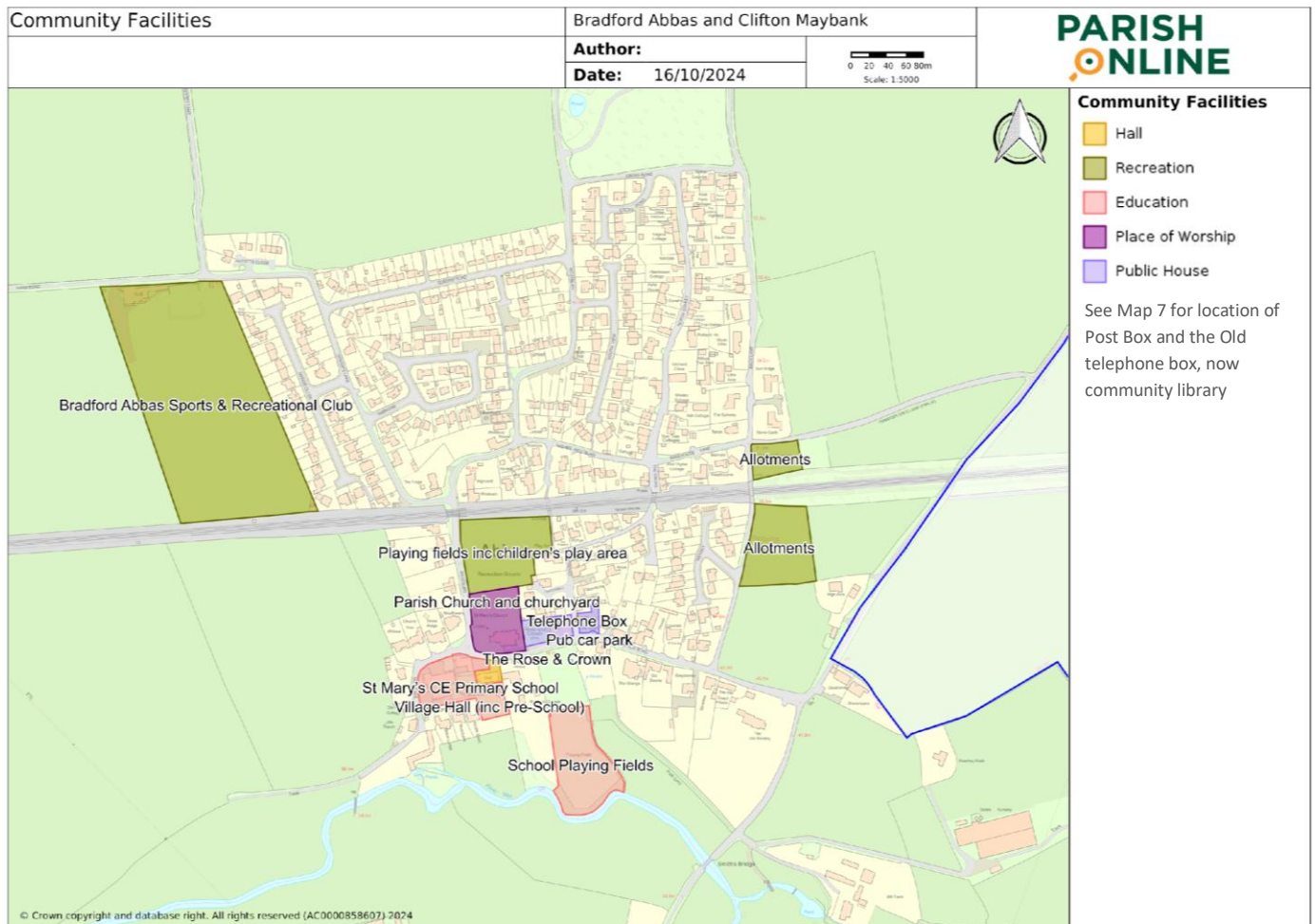
- Allotments
- Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank Hall (including Pre-School provision)
- Bradford Abbas Sports and Recreational Club
- Playing fields and children's play area
- St Mary's CE Primary School and school playing fields
- St Mary's Parish Church and churchyard
- The Rose & Crown Public House
- The telephone box 'lending library'

¹⁴ <https://gi.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/rightsofway/definitivemap/register/Details/T725>

4.2.2 The 2023 household survey showed that most local people are very satisfied with the facilities on offer. Responses to the survey suggest that the village hall is the most important facility essential to the community, and the Church is also viewed as a particularly important asset to retain.

4.2.3 There were several ideas suggesting that the Plan area needs more open green spaces, safe areas to walk dogs, and a village/farm shop. Many also felt there should be more organised activities locally for young people / teenagers to help them pursue their interests and for them to make a positive use of their leisure time.

Map 6. Community Facilities (2024)



Allotments

4.2.4 The allotments have been on the current site since 1962. The Parish Council leases from Winchester College the four fields that straddle the railway line to the east of the village. The field to the south of the railway is managed by the Bradford Abbas Allotment Holder Association, and a local resident leases the remaining area to the north of the railway line.

Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank Village Hall

4.2.5 The village hall is located on Church Road, Bradford Abbas, next to the Primary School. It has been on the same site since 1911 when the first hall was erected but was rebuilt in 1920 after a fire. The current hall was rebuilt for a second time in 1982 to provide a more modern facility to meet the needs of the community.

4.2.6 The village hall is managed by the Trustees representing regular groups and organisations who use the facility. It is used as the base for the Bradford Abbas Pre-School which operates during term time from 9am to 3pm most weekdays. The hall is otherwise for hire at weekends / school holiday periods and late afternoon / evenings, when it is typically used for parties, meetings, lectures and other entertainment. There are many local clubs and societies currently using the hall outside Pre-School hours, and is generally at capacity during term time, but slightly underused during the summer holiday period. A defibrillator was installed on the front of the building and is now overseen by the Parish Council.

4.2.7 Users of the hall, especially the pre-school, have suggested it would be beneficial if there were some green spaces associated with the Village Hall, if any land were to become available. There have also been discussions about the possibility of more efficient heating / electricity such as using roof solar panels to reduce the running costs and make the hall more sustainable.

Bradford Abbas Sports & Recreational Club

4.2.8 The Bradford Abbas Sports & Recreational Club was made possible by obtaining the land from a local farmer, grants, and the hard work of many local volunteers. The building and land is held within a Trust, and managed locally, and registered as a Community Amateur Sports Club. The deeds require that the land remains a green recreation facility for the benefit of the village.

4.2.9 The clubhouse was opened in 1979 and the 9 acres of land provide ample space for football and cricket pitches that are still going today, with space for parking also available. Examples of activities that the clubhouse supports include: skittles, cribbage, a bingo night, the Pétanque Group, billiards and cycling club. There is a defibrillator located at the clubhouse.

Playing fields and children's play area

4.2.10 Land immediately north of St Mary's church, running up to the railway line is used by the community for informal sport, play and village / community events. There is an area with play equipment for children. The site is owned and managed by the Parish Council.



Play area north of St Mary's church

St Mary's CE Primary School and school playing fields

4.2.11 St Mary's Primary School is a co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of 4 and 11 years old, and is part of the Sherborne Area Schools' Trust Academy. The core catchment area is Bradford Abbas with some children coming from the surrounding villages, and in recent years a growing proportion of pupils are from Yeovil.

4.2.12 The oldest school building was opened as the village school on Easter Monday in 1856, although a school had existed in the village for many years before that (probably from the 1730s). What is referred to as "the new building" was opened in July 1966, the same month England won the football World Cup. At present the school has 4 classrooms. The school site is owned by the Salisbury Diocesan and Board of Education. The school playing fields, owned by Dorset Council, are separate from the school site, and are situated on land adjoining the river and accessed via the footpath to Gollops Ground (N6/3). This arrangement is far from ideal, but has been operating this way for many years.

4.2.13 Traffic problems linked to school traffic movements are referred to in the Transport Section.

St Mary's Parish Church and churchyard

4.2.14 The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin lies at the heart of Bradford Abbas at the junction of Church Road and Westbury. The Church is Grade I listed. It is relatively large for a village church and its lofty and magnificent West tower contributes greatly to its impressive appearance. The three-stage tower is large for a Dorset church and incorporates unusual corner buttresses and several niches on the west front, two of which still contain carved figures.

4.2.15 To the west of the church, close to the tower are the remains of a 15th Century preaching cross, comprising a large carved stone base and a truncated shaft. It is Grade I listed in its own right.

4.2.16 The exact origins of the church are uncertain, but the present chancel is said to date from the 12th Century whilst the nave, south chapel, porch and north aisle of the Church were rebuilt in the perpendicular style in the 15th Century. The north aisle was extended and the tower added shortly afterwards. The chancel incorporates a 14th Century window reset into the older walls, and the main body of the church fabric also contains some earlier elements. The walls are of local stone rubble with ashlar facings externally and hamstone dressings. Stone slates and lead cover the roof.

4.2.17 Within the church other features of note include the carved stone 15th Century font, the interesting carved wooden pulpit dated 1632, ancient carved wooden bench ends, painted ceiling panels in the nave and painted carved 'corbel' wooden angels thought to date from 1485. The latter were formerly set in the ceiling of the roof but removed during extensive restoration work to the nave carried out in 1890, replica angels replacing them. On the north wall the family crest to the Horsey Family can be found.

4.2.18 The Church holds regular services, and a Saturday Coffee Morning that is well attended by many parishioners. It also holds many community events such as concerts throughout the year ranging from a Welsh male voice choir to a late-night rock band during St Mary's Week.

4.2.19 Fundraising events are essential to allow the church to serve the community. The Grade I listed property needs a new heating system. Volunteer groups have been formed to help with raising money to pay for the new heating system and for churchyard maintenance.

The Rose & Crown Public House

4.2.20 The Rose and Crown Pub is in the heart of the village on Church Road in Bradford Abbas and is next to St Mary's Church. It dates to the 14th century and is a former Monk's cottage that is now a relaxed and busy village hub. The pub provides residents with music from local singers and bands, pub quizzes, pool competitions, and a home for the skittles teams. It is well supported and widely valued by the local community. The pub site includes an attractive and well used garden on its west side adjacent to the church. This is an important communal space which is slightly elevated above the road, allowing pub users to enjoy far reaching views out to the countryside to the south. The large pub car park to the east (on the opposite side of Churchwell Street) ensures that those visiting the pub by car can park safely, and is also made available to parents dropping their children off to school, as well as providing space for larger recycling facilities such as a clothes bank. However, the extensive tarmac surface does not make a positive visual contribution to the street scene. The local War Memorial (Grade II Listed) lies to the front of the car park, and some further planting along this frontage or within the car park could further enhance this space.

The telephone box 'lending library'

4.2.21 Purchased by the Parish Council following its closure by BT in 2020, the red telephone box in Bradford Abbas is used by residents to exchange books and jigsaws, run by the volunteer "telephone box team". A wide selection of fiction and non-fiction books are available for adults and children. There is a bench and planters nearby, and altogether this space provides a useful place to socialise and is often used by older children in the evenings. It is also used as a focus of topical displays, such as the time it was transformed into a golden coach to celebrate the coronation in May 2023¹⁵.

4.3 Future challenges and potential

4.3.1 Whilst there is no reason to think that any of these facilities are likely to close, their upkeep does rely on generating sufficient income, and someone (or an organisation of some sort) to manage them. It is therefore important that these facilities are allowed to adapt to ensure that they can continue to run, with opportunities for the community to help if necessary.

4.3.2 With the closure of the village shop and post office, the provision of a new shop (either on a new site or combined with an existing facility) would appear to have a lot of local support. However, this requires a community group or individual to come forward with proposals that are likely to be financially viable. More flexible solutions could be considered, for example a dedicated space to allow for visiting markets and food / goods vans. Any marketing of such a property should last for 12 months, and be widely advertised at a suitable price that has been verified by three valuations.

4.3.3 The current use of the village hall by the pre-school group provides a steady income to the hall, but site constraints mean that there are no adjacent external areas that can be readily used by the children. Should land be made available in close proximity to the hall, that could be used by the pre-school, then this would help support the continued success of the pre-school. Similarly the school playing fields used by the Primary School are not ideally situated and require the children to walk to and from the playing fields via Church Road.

4.3.4 Whilst Bradford Abbas is of a size that almost every point in the village is within a 10 minute walk, most of the important village community buildings such as the church, school, village hall, pub, and until recently the village shop and post office, are clustered along Church Road, which in many ways performs as the village centre or high street. These also act as a focus for residents of Clifton Maybank. The village pump was also located here and at one time there was also a bakery (Old Downs), and a shop (on the site now occupied by the war memorial) here. Whilst this area no longer functions as it used to, and most traditional trades and businesses are long gone, the remaining community facilities give this location a special significance. Should there be interest in setting up a new venture, it makes sense to encourage additional services and facilities to consider locating along or otherwise linked to this stretch of road in order to benefit from their co-location and reinforce the identity of this core area. Depending on the scale and nature of any new ventures, there are potential opportunities through the re-use of existing buildings or through sensitive infill that could be considered. 'Small-scale' is typically interpreted as below 280m² gross floorspace, as this is considered to be of a scale that would not require any sequential or impact assessment (based on the recommendations of the 2022 update to the Dorset

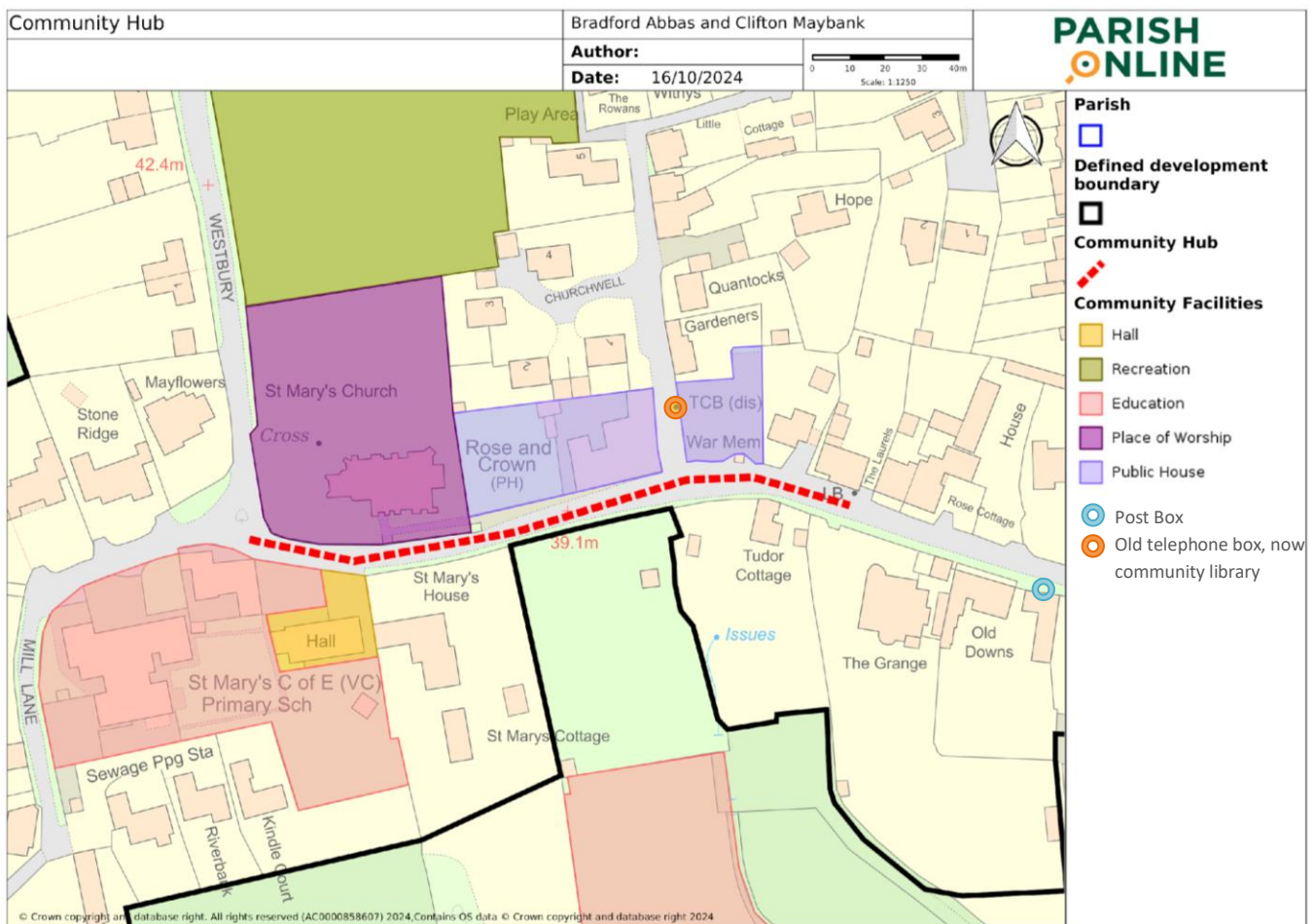
¹⁵ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-65441503>

Retail & Leisure Study) and therefore appropriate to a rural area – however realistically the scope for anything close to this size is likely to be severely limited.

4.3.5 Opportunities to improve and enhance this area as the heart of the village may be looked upon favourably. For example:

- the pub car park would benefit from some landscaping to improve the appearance and create an attractive place to hold events or to meet;
- buildings at the rear of the pub could accommodate other compatible uses as part of a diversification scheme;
- land opposite the Rose and Crown Pub could be used to establish a village green and communal orchard, potentially linking down to the river;
- sensitively designed traffic calming measures on Church Road could also create a sense of place at this key point in the village, and promote opportunities for events and to enliven and put this area to good use, improve its appearance, and enhance the overall environment and setting for neighbouring historic buildings.

Map 7. Cluster of facilities along Church Road



4.3.6 In order to better safeguard the existing facilities, Assets of Community Value (ACV) can be registered by Dorset Council. This is only possible if the land or building is currently, or has recently been, used to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community (and this use is not an ancillary use), and it is realistic to think that there could be a future community use of that land or building going forward. If registered, this gives the community more time to bid for the asset if it is being sold, though it does not mean that the asset has to be sold to the community. The Parish Council or other community groups with a local connection to the area can nominate assets for consideration, and if registered they will remain on the list for an initial period of 5 years. Both publicly and privately owned land can be considered to be an Asset of Community Value, but these cannot include homes or hotels, and may not be applicable in other certain circumstances, such as redundant churches¹⁶.

4.4 Community Services and Facilities - Policies and Projects

Neighbourhood Plan Objective: *To preserve the long term future of the area by retaining and enhancing local services, infrastructure and facilities, promoting a safe and healthy community that supports the needs of the villagers.*

Policy 8. Important Community Facilities

Community facilities (as listed in section 4.2 and shown on Map 6) are important to residents and should be retained. The loss or reduction of such facilities will only be supported if, after involving the local community in assessing potential solutions to retain the facility, and appropriate marketing, it is clear that their retention would be unreasonable on the grounds of viability, and the service provider / site owner has pro-actively worked with the local community and relevant authorities to investigate potential solutions to retain the facility, or the change proposed provides clear community benefits and has the community's backing.

Proposals for new facilities, and to modernise and adapt existing facilities, to better meet local needs, promote healthy lifestyles and the well-being of residents, will be supported, subject to:

- suitable access including parking provision;
- minimising adverse impacts on residential amenity to an acceptable level;
- avoiding significant harm to heritage assets and the landscape character qualities of the area.

The community hub lies either side of the western end of Church Road (as indicated on Map 7), and any development within this area should support its role as an important focus point for the village. Small-scale retail and other E class or similar sui generis uses appropriate to a local centre are encouraged within or immediately adjoining this area, providing that such uses and any associated development would conserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings and be compatible with the adjoining land uses.

¹⁶ See <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2421/made#f00020>

Project P7. Assets of Community Value

Bradford Abbas Parish Council will consider nominating the following sites for the assets of community value register, given the extent to which these are appreciated by the community:

- Allotments
- Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank Village Hall
- Bradford Abbas Sports & Recreational Club – prohibitive deed
- Playing fields and children's play area – Parish Council owned
- The Rose & Crown Public House
- St Mary's CE Primary School
- St Mary's CE Primary School Playing Field (separate from the school buildings)
- The field opposite the Rose & Crown Public House
- Gollops Ground

Project P8. Community Shop

The Parish Council will support the local community to investigate and if feasible establish a 'community shop' in a suitably central and/or accessible location that is unlikely to harm the rural character of the area or create issues through increased traffic on the local road network.

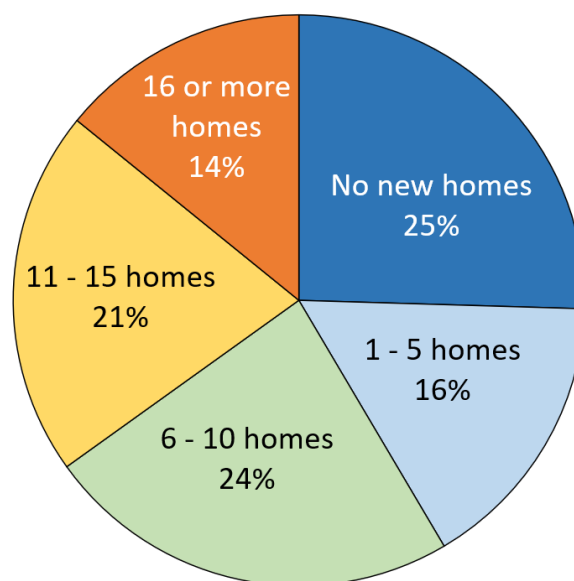
5. Housing

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The latest available Census information dates from 2021¹⁷, when there were 975 people living in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The average household size was 2.3 people (typical for Dorset), with less than 5% of households having more than 4 people living together. There are no communal establishments (such as care homes) and therefore slightly fewer residents over 80 years than typical. In terms of the current housing stock, the main house types are semi-detached or detached homes (accounting for 48% and 43% of the stock respectively), with very few terraced properties (8%) and no flats / apartments. The lack of terraced homes, flats / apartments is reflected in the lower proportion of dwellings with only one or two bedrooms, with 75% of properties having three or more bedrooms (compared to 64% in Dorset). There are also few homes being rented, with 80% of houses either mortgaged or owned outright.

5.1.2 The need for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan Area was assessed, based on the requirement of the adopted Local Plan for the area, the first draft of the Dorset Council Local Plan, the Housing Register, and the Household Survey carried out in March 2023 (which had 111 responses, representing just over 26% of households). This found:

- Both the adopted Local Plan, and the first draft of the new Local Plan, made no site allocations for housing development in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- A method for calculating a housing requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan area was proposed in the Dorset Local Plan options consultation document January 2021 (in Section 2.10 and Appendix 2). Based on this method, the Council officers confirmed that the minimum housing requirement figure for the combined Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank area would equate to 2 dwellings in the 15-year period up to 2038, reflecting the past rate of windfall development.
- The Household Survey (March 2023) indicated that most residents would support a modest level of housing to assist the viability of local community services. Whilst a quarter of those responding did not support the development of any new housing over the next 10 – 15 years, the majority would accept some housing, with the ‘median’ value likely to gain consensus being 6 – 10 homes.
- About a quarter of those responding to the survey were expecting to move or require an additional home within the local area in the next 10-15 years. Of these, the main need was for two-bedroom homes, which were either



Household Survey results: respondents views on how much new housing should be built in the area

¹⁷ The Neighbourhood Plan area statistics are taken from three Census Output Areas E00103911-13, which collectively cover the two parishes. Data source <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/select/getdatasetbytheme.asp?opt=3&theme=&subgrp=>

affordable (to buy or rent) or more suitable for health reasons (such as a bungalow or with adaptations for a person with limited mobility).

- The Housing Register (April 2024) had 11 households registered who were in need of rented accommodation with a local connection to Bradford Abbas (an increase of 1 household since the Register was checked in April 2023). The primary demand (by 7 of the 11 households) was for small (one or two bedroom) homes. There were no households on the register with a local connection to Clifton Maybank.

5.1.3 In the light of this information, it was agreed to focus the Neighbourhood Plan on conserving the existing settlement of Bradford Abbas and its rural setting, whilst also recognising and addressing changing demographics and social requirements by meeting local housing needs (including smaller and more affordable housing) within the Plan period.

5.2 Planning Context

5.2.1 Under the existing Local Plan policies, new housing in the area is limited to development of infill sites within the existing Defined Development Boundary (DDB) of Bradford Abbas, and through the development of affordable housing exception sites outside, but adjacent to, the DDB. In the wider countryside new dwellings with an agricultural occupancy condition may also be allowed where there is a clear need for a farm worker to be present on site. There is also the potential for the conversion of agricultural and other rural buildings, either under permitted development rights or in line with the Local Plan (Policy SUS3). In some cases, conversion to employment may be possible, and potential sites are discussed in section 6.3.

5.2.2 In its last review of the DDB for Bradford Abbas, the adopted Local Plan recognised that the village of Bradford Abbas is "compact in form with clearly defined boundaries to the east, north and west. [To the south] the open land alongside the River Yeo is designated as Land of Local Landscape Importance due to its contribution to the character and setting of the village and Conservation Area, and the link it provides between village and open countryside."¹⁸ The area is further constrained by flood risk.

Policy SUS 2 of the adopted Local Plan (2015) is a key strategic policy, and includes the following points regarding the distribution of development:

Development in rural areas will be directed to the settlements with defined development boundaries, and will take place at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement. Settlements with no defined development boundary may also have some growth to meet their local needs.

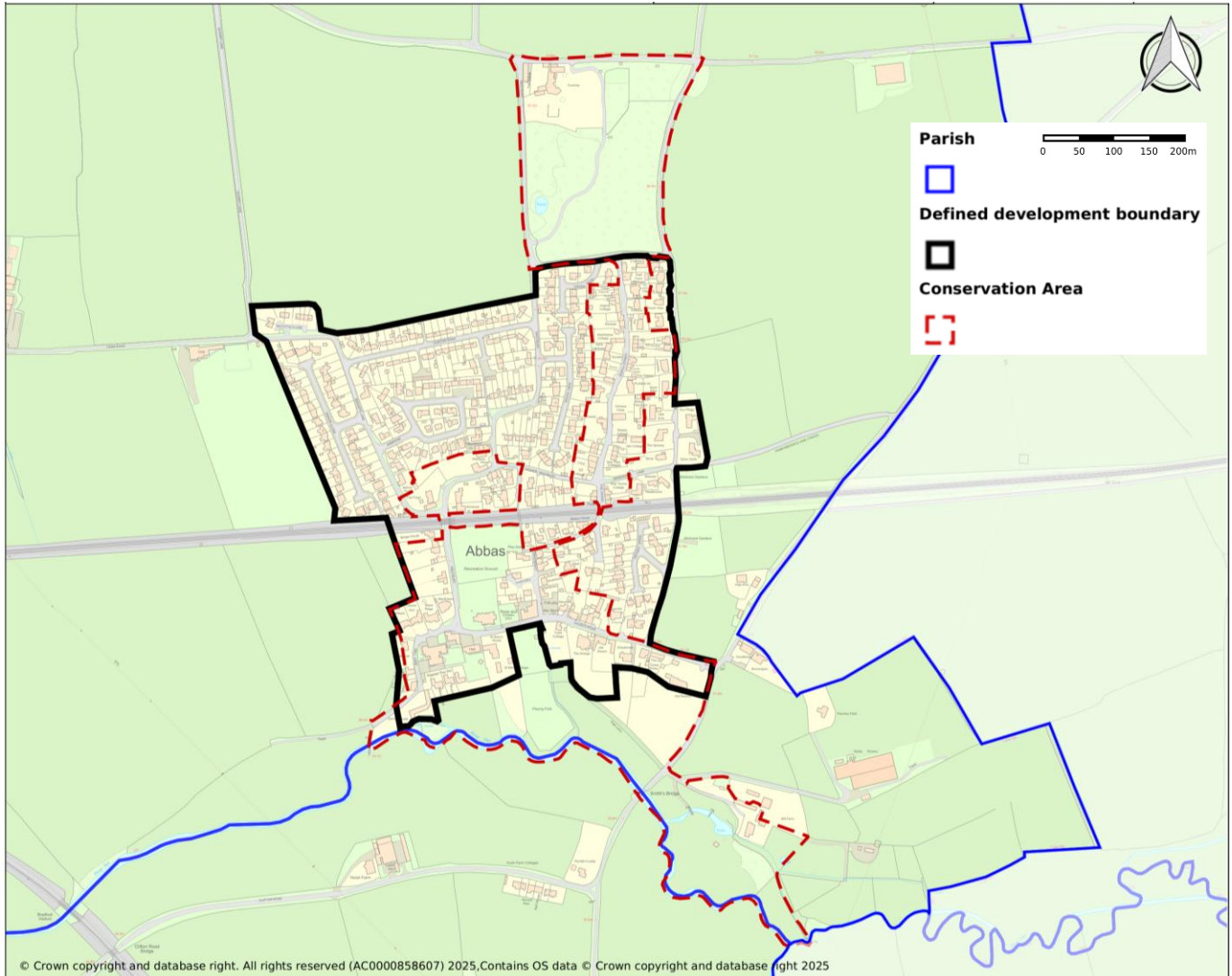
Within the defined development boundaries residential, employment and other development to meet the needs of the local area will normally be permitted.

Outside defined development boundaries, development will be strictly controlled, having particular regard to the need for the protection of the countryside and environmental constraints.

¹⁸ West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policies Maps - Background Document, 2015

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/327480/Policies+Maps+Background+Document.pdf/fc7815fc-0e67-2650-5ff7-d3080c7b20d1>

Map 8. Defined Development Boundary and Conservation Area boundary for Bradford Abbas village



5.2.3 Under the Local Plan policy HOUS2, 'Exception Sites' are solely for affordable housing on small sites adjoining a settlement. Whilst settlement isn't defined, given the need to access local services and facilities, the only appropriate settlement in the area for such a scheme would appear to be Bradford Abbas. A Community Land Trust has been set up to identify an appropriate site in discussion with local landowners and the wider community¹⁹, and whilst it is possible to provide a greater



Pettitts Close, an example of a rural affordable housing exception site

¹⁹ <https://www.baclt.org.uk/>

incentive to landowners by allowing a small proportion of open market housing on such sites, this has not been evidenced as necessary in our area.

5.2.4 Some new homes may also continue to come forward through infilling or the redevelopment of sites within the DDB. Given the limited scope for such development these are likely to be more suited to smaller dwellings and could include the subdivision of larger properties.

5.2.5 The Local Plan states that Neighbourhood Plans can both amend the DDB (and even define new boundaries around settlements that do not have them), and/or identify specific sites for new development. However, having considered the above constraints and limited demand which is mainly focused on affordable housing and down-sizing, it is likely that most local needs for housing may be best met through using an exception sites policy.

5.2.6 It is possible that a future update to the Local Plan may remove the DDB in locations such as Bradford Abbas and replace this with a flexible settlement strategy that allows small to medium sites to be developed on land adjacent to the edge of the built-up area. Whilst this may provide some affordable homes, it may significantly diminish the likelihood of a landowner progressing a rural exception site for affordable housing. If this were to happen, the Parish Council would need to consider reviewing the Plan to ensure the most appropriate strategy for delivering homes is supported, which could mean allocating one or more affordable housing exception sites, and reinstating the DDB.

5.3 Review of the Bradford Abbas Defined Development Boundary (DDB)

5.3.1 The Local Plan states that Neighbourhood Plans can both amend the DDB (and even define new boundaries around settlements that do not have them), and/or identify specific sites for new development. Therefore a review of the DDB for Bradford Abbas was undertaken as part of the work on the Neighbourhood Plan. The review considered whether it may be appropriate to make any changes to the DDB, either due to the expansion of the village since the DDB was first adopted, or identify the potential to expand the village to allow further development in the future, bearing in mind the consultation on the review of the Dorset Council Local Plan in August - October 2025 which suggested that DDBs in locations such as Bradford Abbas may be removed and a flexible settlement strategy introduced that would allow small to medium sites to be developed on land adjacent to the edge of the built-up area.

5.3.2 The review of the DDB identified the following constraints – although further investigation may highlight other factors:

- Land to the south side of the village is relatively constrained given the areas prone to flooding and rural setting of the River Yeo and views into the Conservation Area. The site opposite the Rose and Crown was put forward for residential development in the 1980s and refused (planning reference 1/N/82/000059²⁰), where the reasons for refusal were based on the importance of the gap as the last remaining open space along that street, the origins of which lie in medieval times. A further attempt to develop this space in 2017 was also refused (planning reference WD/D/17/000077²¹), similarly on the basis of the importance of the open, undeveloped nature

²⁰ <https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=112041>

²¹ <https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=75537>

of the site in terms of its positive contribution to the setting of a number of heritage assets, local landscape character and local distinctiveness of the area.

- Land south of the railway line to the east of the village, bounded by Back Lane and Church Road, is relatively well related to the village core, however it is difficult to access, given the sunken nature and narrowness of the lanes and mature hedgerows. A historic herringbone wall that runs along the southern boundary is also a constraint. Land on the corner of Church Road and Back Lane was put forward for residential development in the 1980s and refused (planning reference 1/N/85/000272²²), where the reasons for refusal included the inadequacy of the road network and the land was elevated and exposed. The allotments do have an established vehicular access.



The herringbone wall along Church Road, and (below) Cross Road looking towards Back Lane



- Further up Back Lane, north of the railway line, there are two bungalows to the east side, but these are cut into the bank and illustrate the elevated nature of the farmland in that direction. Again, development in this location would be difficult to access, given the sunken nature and narrowness of the lane. This land was put forward for residential development in the 1980s and refused (planning reference 1/N/80/000186²³), where the reasons for refusal included the unacceptable spread away from the village centre and divorced from the settlement pattern of the area, its elevated nature and prominence, as well as the restricted width of the lane.
- Land south of the railway line to the west of the village, is difficult to access, with Mill Lane being constrained and unsuited to additional traffic and no obvious access points from Westbury Road.

²² <https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=113319>

²³ <https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=111207>

- The Sports and Recreational Grounds provide a clear constraint to developing land to the west of the village north of the railway line. The deeds require that the land remains a green recreation facility for the benefit of the village.
- Land to the north side of Farm Road is slightly elevated compared to the main settlement, and there is an established access point for its agricultural use. This is also where Pettitts Close (a previous rural exceptions site scheme) was built in the 1990s (planning application reference 1/N/91/000203 and 1/N/93/000072).
- Properties along Queens Road back onto the countryside, and there are no obvious access points given the limited gaps between buildings, unless a larger gap could be created.
- Land to the north side of Cross Road within the curtilage of Coombe is part of the Conservation Area, and the grounds are managed for wildlife interest and include many deciduous trees and a pond, and previously opened to the public during the Open Gardens day events.

5.3.3 Having considered the above significant constraints, and taken into account the low level of housing need (which is mainly focused on affordable housing and down-sizing), it is likely that the majority of local needs for housing may be best met by bringing forward an exception site (on a site outside but close to the DDB). Therefore changes to the boundary are not considered necessary.

5.4 Housing - Policies and Projects

Neighbourhood Plan Objective: *To seek to address local needs for housing and maintain the vibrancy of the community by ensuring there are opportunities for people living in the community to continue to live locally in an appropriate home, whilst conserving the countryside and built form largely as it currently exists, and not harming the important views and local green spaces identified in this Plan and accompanying Design Code. The focus for new housing will be on providing small homes for first time buyers and people wishing to downsize at the existing settlement of Bradford Abbas.*

Policy 9. Meeting Local Housing Need

The size and type of the new dwellings should reflect the need for affordable housing, and need for smaller homes (typically 2 bedroom, which may include some 1 and 3 bedroom properties) suitable for couples and individuals looking to downsize in older age, and for first time buyers including individuals, couples and young families.

Outside the defined development boundary small scale site/s for affordable housing adjoining the settlement of Bradford Abbas will be supported provided:

- the proposal is for affordable housing, to meet an identified and current need for households with a local connection to the parishes of Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank;
- the scheme is of a character, scale and design appropriate to the location, taking into account the design guidance and other policies of this plan;
- secure arrangements are put in place to ensure that the benefits of affordable housing will be enjoyed by subsequent as well as initial occupiers, giving preference to those with a local connection to the parishes of Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank.

6. Business Services and The Economy

6.1 Introduction

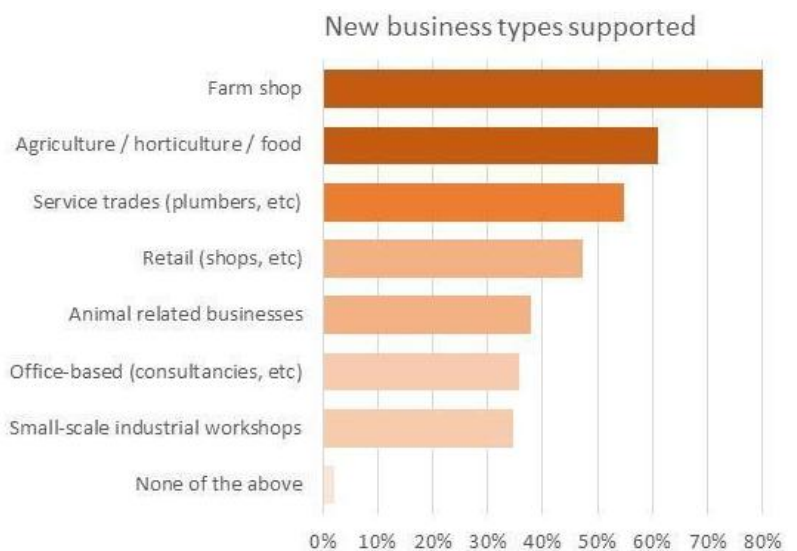
6.1.1 Whilst historically much of the employment in the area was linked to agriculture, like many rural areas this has reduced over time, and most of the working-age population tends to commute to jobs in the nearby urban areas of Yeovil, Sherborne and Dorchester. Employment levels are fairly typical of Dorset. There are relatively few commercial business addresses, other than the retail warehouses in the Peel Centre on Babylon Hill and businesses in the Norway Business Centre opposite, on the edge of Yeovil, the former garage site further along the A30, and the various leisure / holiday accommodations including the Saxon Maybank holiday park (a former dairy farm), Mill Farm Studios which has its own recording studio and indoor events venue, and the Yeovil Golf Club. Heatwave Mechanical Services is run from Clifton Barn at Huish Farm, and of course the pub, school and pre-school offer local employment opportunities.

6.1.2 The Household Survey in 2023 did not highlight any substantial need to expand or develop new business – whilst four respondents indicated that they would like to start up or relocate their business to the area, no details of what type of site or premises were provided, and there was very little interest in meeting and discussing local business needs with the neighbourhood plan working group and other local business providers within the parishes.

6.1.3 Residents were asked for their view as to what business activity should be encouraged over the next 15 years, and based on the options, trades such as farm shops, agricultural /

Above: Saxon Maybank Holiday Park

Below: Heatwave, Clifton Barn, Huish Farm



food-based businesses and service trades were generally supported, and there was also broad support for home-working. There was less appetite for offices and small-scale workshops.

6.1.4 The general consensus within the community is that maintaining existing services, such as the village pub, is a priority, and that major development is not required. In rural areas, business growth is most likely to be achieved through supporting small, start-up enterprises generated from within the local community, typically sole traders, some of which may initially start from people's own homes, and ideally providing services or produce that will be used locally. The lack of flexible, small scale business units is a possible impediment to this.

6.2 Planning context

6.2.1 Under the existing Local Plan policies, new employment provision is supported in principle: within or on the edge of the village of Bradford Abbas (albeit opportunities may be limited given the nature of the village); through the intensification or extension of existing premises or the re-use or replacement of an existing building; as part of a farm diversification scheme; or where a rural location is essential for that type of business (for example, a golf course or riding school). Permitted development rights also exist that allow the conversion of a range of business premises (including retail units, offices and light industrial units) into dwellings, subject to certain checks.

What is meant by local businesses, services and facilities?

For the purpose of this Plan, this would include local shops, cafes, offices, workshops and similar premises that typically provide goods or services that local residents may use, or that would typically be used by visitors to the area, such as rural leisure and tourism facilities, as well as agricultural and other land-based businesses.

6.3 Employment Opportunities

6.3.1 Potential development sites and buildings are limited, with no sites being promoted for employment uses via the Local Plan call for sites²⁴. Local landowners of the farm buildings that appear to be redundant / underused were approached as part of the early consultation on the plan, and the findings are summarised briefly below:

- **Toll Bridge Farm Buildings / Colebridge Farm** (ST57431605) – the redundant farm buildings off Compton Road near the A30 roundabout have been up for sale since early 2021. The site extends to 0.36 hectares and could be considered for employment use under the following policy. Any development of this site would need to respect the setting of the nearby Grade II Listed Toll House.
- **Manor Farm** (ST58051470) - the existing complex of farm buildings at Manor Farm to the west of the village date back to the latter part of the 19th century and make a positive contribution to the character of the area, and would lend themselves to conversion for business use, or potentially housing. Given the age of these buildings they potentially qualify as non-designated

²⁴ land to the north side of Babylon Hill (off Compton Road) was submitted for residential development and has been assessed as unsuitable by Dorset Council <https://wa.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/ShelaaWebsite/pages/Site.aspx?i=908>.

heritage assets, and their retention (as opposed to replacement) would be sought. At the time this Plan was drafted the landowners did not have any specific plans for this site.

- **Huish Farm (ST58601395)** – some of the former farm buildings east of the farmhouse are already in business use (by Heatwave), but the redundant ‘piggery’ sheds on the eastern perimeter remain unused and may lend itself to redevelopment for employment. At the time this Plan was drafted the landowners did not have any specific plans for this site.
- **The Old Barn, Parsons Yard (ST576137)** – an historic barn abutting the roadside opposite the entrance to Clifton House with shared access via The Cottage, which potentially could be reused for employment or housing, subject to addressing potential flood risk issues. This barn and the adjoining paddock were sold at auction in September 2025.

6.3.2 It was also noted that the former **Forward garage site on the A30 (ST58771617)** comprising a workshop and yard was available for let as a light industrial facility (July 2025)²⁵.

6.4 Employment - Policies and Projects

Neighbourhood Plan Objective: *To improve employment opportunities and support the provision of local facilities and services where feasible, through supporting small-scale enterprises that are compatible with the rural and historic character of our area.*

Policy 10. Local employment opportunities

Development that will support new business start-ups, the expansion of existing businesses, the provision of apprenticeship and training opportunities in local businesses, or the provision of local services and facilities, is encouraged. Any new employment proposals should meet the following requirements:

- any new or expanded premises should be of a modest scale compared to other buildings in its immediate vicinity, retain sufficient space within the site for parking and landscaping requirements, and be of a design that is appropriate to the rural character of the area;
- the site should be well-related to the village or comprise previously used land (including redundant farm buildings/yards);
- the site can be safely accessed, and the likely increase in vehicular traffic would not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety or the rural character of the local highway network;
- any lighting requirements, parking and external storage are carefully considered to ensure these are not be unduly prominent from wider public views or likely to harm important wildlife corridors;
- noise levels likely to arise from the development would not unduly impact on the tranquil nature of the area or residential amenity; and
- there would be no significant adverse impact upon local landscape character, wildlife or heritage assets as a result of the development or proposed use, with any harm being clearly outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.

²⁵ https://www.rightmove.co.uk/properties/124198031#/?channel=COM_LET

The extension of existing homes and provision of outbuildings to support expanded home working will be supported, provided:

- the scale and design of the development is sympathetic to the character of the existing buildings and surrounding area;
- the outbuilding or extension will remain available for business use ancillary to the primary use as a dwelling;
- the development would not result in a significant adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity or cause harm by increased traffic movements.

Project P9. Directory of local businesses

The Parish Council will support the setting up and maintenance of a local business and community facilities directory.

The Parish Council will support the setting up of local shops, including farm shops, and pop-up markets.

7. Traffic Road Safety and Transport

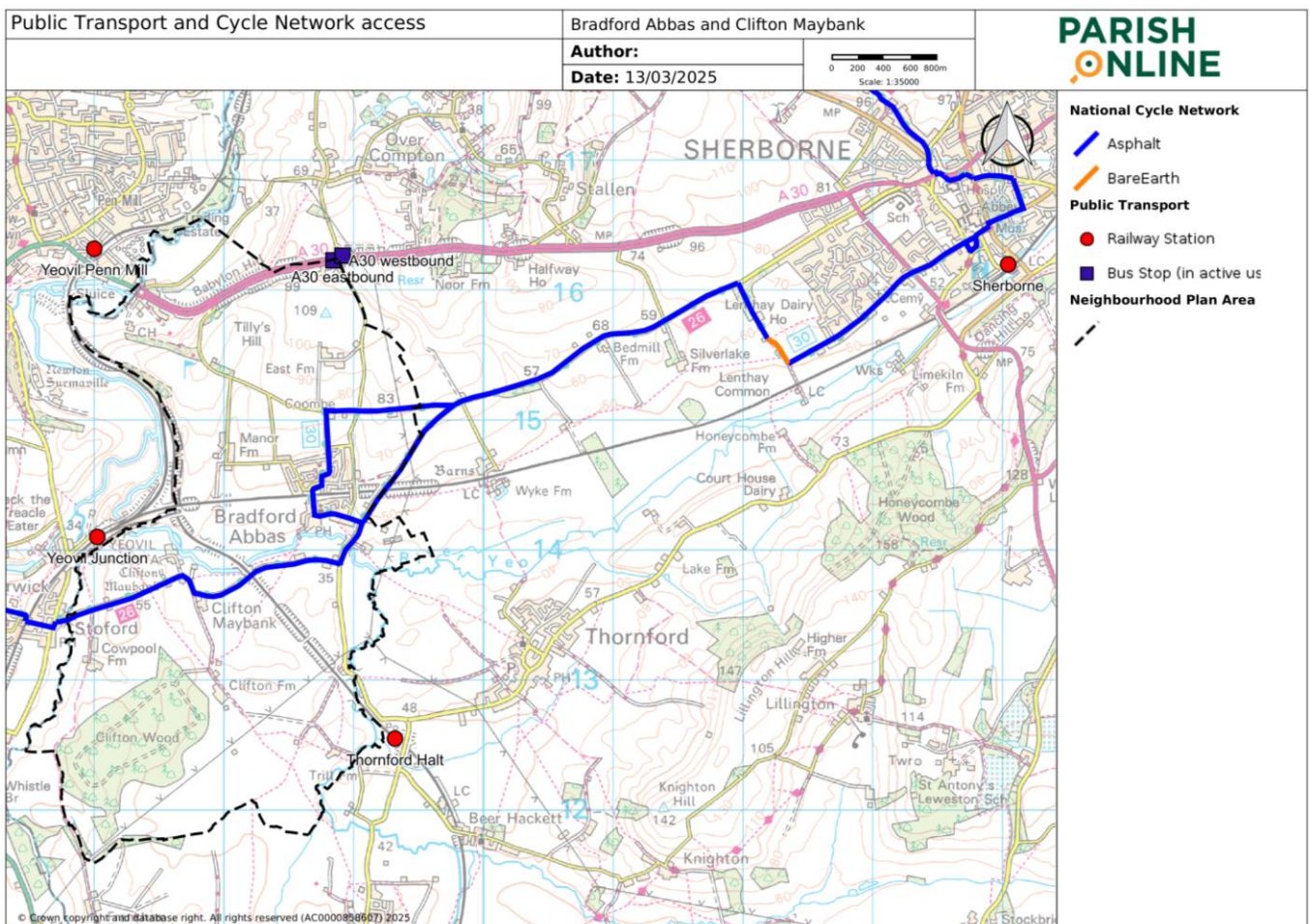
7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 People living in the Neighbourhood Plan area tend to walk or drive to reach their destination. Road safety in the parishes is taken seriously. Both the village of Bradford Abbas and the properties in Clifton Maybank feed onto old, rural roads which are narrow, down to single track with passing places, often winding, and within the village there are only intermittent pavements. Such roads are not designed for vehicles travelling at high speeds or for lorries and larger agricultural machinery. The general expectation is that road users remain vigilant, especially in areas where visibility may be limited. The current traffic volumes and increasing size of these vehicles give rise to safety concerns from many of our residents, particularly in the vicinity of the school and similar locations where residents congregate (such as the church, village hall, pub and sports club).

The 2023 Household Survey asked whether residents would use public transport if it was available. 60% of respondents said they would use it, and 8% said that they would be likely to use it on a daily basis.

A Wriggle Valley Bus Project is being trialled from late 2024. This is proving very popular and provides a weekly service between Yeovil and Sherborne. There is also a Good Neighbours Scheme based in Sherborne to help people without transport get to their medical appointments, and such community initiatives could be expanded.

Map 9. Public Transport and Cycle Network access



7.1.2 There are no regular bus services to Bradford Abbas village or Clifton Maybank, with the nearest serviced bus stops being on the A30 or at Yeovil Junction station in Stoford. The Neighbourhood Plan area is criss-crossed by two railway lines, the London (Waterloo) to Exeter line (which stops at Yeovil Junction and Sherborne) and the Weymouth to Gloucester line. The Weymouth to Gloucester line has two stops just outside the Neighbourhood Plan area in Thornford parish and at Penn Mill in Yeovil.

7.1.3 The National Cycle Network 26 (a signed route) runs east – west through the Plan area along the C35, linking Bradford Abbas to Sherborne, and the southern edge of Yeovil, before heading south towards Dorchester, and is part of the on-road advisory cycle network identified by Dorset Council. A cycle journey from the centre of Bradford Abbas to Sherborne town centre would typically take about 20 – 25 minutes (4 miles), but given the nature and speed of traffic on these roads, the route may not be considered safe by some potential users.

7.1.4 The indices of deprivation (last updated in 2019) show that the Neighbourhood Plan area (and including Thornford²⁶) is amongst the top 30% most deprived in the country in terms of the physical proximity of local services (based on the road distance to a post office, primary school, general stores and GP surgery) – which is about average compared to other rural areas in Dorset.

7.2 Road safety concerns

7.2.1 The Household Survey highlighted how road safety is a concern for local residents. More than 4 out of 5 (83%) survey respondents expressed concern regarding road safety about speeding traffic, and a similar proportion (82%) also expressed concern about road safety regarding dangerous bends, junctions, vehicle size and in relation to the narrowness of some of the roads and bridges. These issues are compounded by the lack of pavements in parts of the parish, on-street parking that limits forward visibility and forces pedestrians into the highway, and the erosion of the roadside into the verges / hedgerows, and levels of mud on roads throughout the year. The temporary closure of Stoford bridge and other bridges, both in the Neighbourhood Plan area and in the surrounding areas, significantly impacts on access to jobs, schools and services outside of the parishes. These ancient bridges were not built to withstand use by large and heavy vehicles.



²⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> and based on West Dorset 002, and the Geographical Barriers Sub-domain

7.2.2 Whilst the reported data on road safety collisions does not show a high level of road traffic accidents, the recent fatal collision on the south side of the railway bridge on Grants Hill, and two serious accidents on the Bradford Road into Sherborne (along which cyclists are directed), highlight the need for caution on what is the main vehicle and cycle access connecting to Sherborne. There have also been recent fatalities on the A30 (notably at the junction crossing to Over Compton)²⁷ and Dorset Council subsequently agreed to install three average speed cameras along the dual carriageway between Yeovil and Sherborne²⁸, and is testing banning all right-turn, U-turn, and straight-over movements at the junction crossing²⁹.

7.2.3 Parking on the highway, particularly around the school in Bradford Abbas, and outside the church and pub, cause congestion and danger at certain times, although this can also act as a form of traffic calming and speed constraint. Whilst there are no obvious solutions to tackle these localised issues, as there are no obvious sites that could provide alternative parking provision (and ideally include a space for electric car charging), care should be taken to ensure that future developments do not repeat or compound this issue.

7.2.4 Map 10 provides an overview of the locations where these issues have been observed by local residents.

7.2.5 Whilst planning cannot control vehicle routing, the impact of vehicles on the highway network is a material consideration, and conditions can be imposed on how construction traffic is managed where appropriate and necessary. From local experience large vehicles accessing Bradford Abbas should avoid using Back Lane and The Hollow, and should generally be routed from Sherborne along Grants Hill, turning right into the village (and exiting via the same route). The 2023 household survey indicated strong support (with 81% in favour) for exploring options to provide safe off road bicycle routes to surrounding areas and towns.

7.2.6 In summary, concerns about road safety relate to:

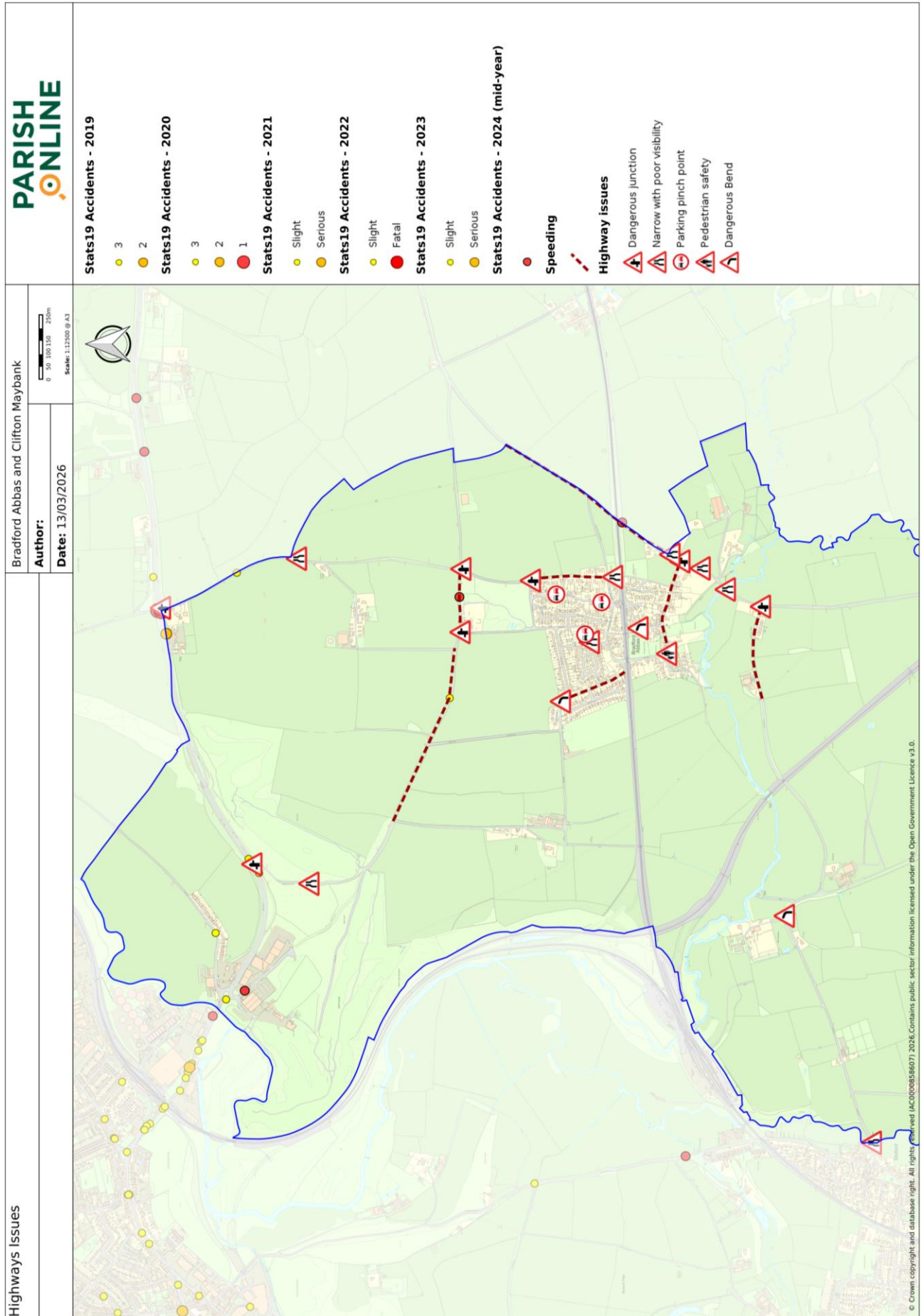
- Traffic speeding in relation to road conditions. This is exacerbated by potholes and muddy road conditions as verges become damaged by very large farm vehicles;
- Narrow, difficult bends, with poor forward visibility – this can make the roads difficult for pedestrians to cross safely (such as outside the primary school), and delivery vehicles have become stuck in places (such as the sharp bend on Churchwell Street, and on the junction of Back Lane and Church Road);
- Lack of pavements, including most of Bradford Abbas and the whole of Clifton Maybank, means that pedestrians share the road with vehicles at all times of day, including dog walkers, those with walking aids, parents with pushchairs, children walking down through the village to reach the school and also older children walking to catch the school bus. The front doors of some of the older properties open straight onto the road;

²⁷ <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/roads-highways-maintenance/road-safety/road-traffic-collision-map>

²⁸ <https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=19552>

²⁹ these movements have been prohibited under a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order and monitoring in place to ensure the changes are effective and do not create new risks elsewhere <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/improving-safety-at-loscombe-crossroads-a30-over-compton>

Map 10. Highway Safety Issues



- Parking difficulties (where there is inadequate off-street provision), meaning that vehicles can be parked inconsiderately on the highway, and sometimes dangerously in contravention of the highway code³⁰;
- Underdown Hollow and Grants Hill are often used as “rat runs” for motorists looking to avoid queuing traffic on the A30, or to avoid Yeovil to link to the A37. Underdown Hollow is a narrow road with blind dips. The width of Grants Hill falls to below 4.5m in places, which is below the suggested minimum width for a bus or HGV travelling at 20mph to safely pass a cyclist³¹, and less than a typical carriageway needed for a car and a bus or HGV to pass³².

7.2.7 It is not possible to remedy all of these issues given the historic nature of the village and limited funding for highway improvements at a county level. The area is also unlikely to benefit from significant developer funding, partly because the highway network would require significant investment to accommodate more traffic compared to more sustainable locations. However should funding become available, a possible scheme to improve road safety (and encourage more people to walk or cycle) might include:

- Measures to reduce speeds in areas where people are most likely to be walking / cycling on the highway – these may include:
 - a 20mph area for the village (subject to camera / SID checks),
 - traffic gates / single file / priority signs on Grants Hill as you enter Bradford Abbas
 - traffic calming measures at key locations, e.g. along Church Road by the junction to Churchwell Street; outside the school; on the approach to the village from the north-west (past the entrance to Pettitts Close); and along Back Lane on the approach to Cross Road heading north out of the village; and
 - a 30mph limit between Huish Farm on Clifton Road into Bradford Abbas;
- Consideration of warning / slowing measures at the bottom of Underdown Hollow;
- The creation of other off-road footpaths connecting Clifton Maybank and Bradford Abbas;
- The creation of an off-road cycle route from Bradford Abbas to Sherborne and Yeovil;
- Vehicle weight/width restrictions over key access points such as vulnerable bridges, in particular Smith’s Bridge which is Grade II Listed, and Stoford Bridge (also Grade II Listed) on the parish boundary³³;

³⁰ For example, parking within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, and on a bend

³¹ Para 8.6.8 of Manual for Streets 2 <https://www.ciht.org.uk/media/9351/manual-for-streets-2.pdf> states that the ideal minimum width for vehicles to overtake cyclists in comfort is 3.8m for cars passing at 20mph, 4.3m for cars passing at 30mph, 4.6m for buses / HGVs passing at 20mph and 5.05m for buses / HGVs passing at 30mph.

³² Figure 7.1 of Manual for Streets <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e0035ed915d74e6223743/pdfmanforstreets.pdf> shows a width of 4.8m is required for an HGV and car to pass, and 5.5m for two HGs to pass, although other factors such as curvature and likely vehicle speeds should also be taken into account.

³³ Barwick and Stoford Parish Council have lobbied the Councils to widen Stoford bridge, it is unclear how this would be achieved given its Grade II listing and likelihood that such widening would harm its historic interest – although it is acknowledged that there are considerable public costs incurred due to the frequent need for repairs due to it being damaged by too wide vehicles, and associated bridge closures.

- Community media notification channel to update residents on local flooding/road closures in real time.

7.3 Rural Roads Protocol

7.3.1 Any development should adhere to the Rural Roads Protocol³⁴, which has been adopted by Dorset Council and seeks to:

- Balance the safety and access needs of users with care for the environment and the quality of the landscape and settlements;
- Use local materials with designs sympathetic to the character of the rural settlements;
- Consider the landscape adjacent to the road, address ecological and historical needs and interests;
- Address sustainability and consider the potential impacts of climate change, ensuring that the management of rural roads and streets does not create or contribute to foreseeable environmental problems in the future;
- Keep signs, lines and roadside furniture to the minimum and remove intrusive roadside clutter where this can be achieved without unduly compromising road safety;
- Where signs and markings are needed, their design should fit with local surroundings;
- Encourage and test innovative approaches and make full use of the flexibility in national regulations, standards and codes of practice.

7.4 Traffic and Transport - Policies and Projects

Neighbourhood Plan Objective: *To support a safer highway network within the parishes for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, and ensure pressures for on street parking are not exacerbated where this would obstruct walkers and cyclists or create road safety issues.*

Policy 11. Support a safer highway network

Proposals should contribute to the connectivity, safety and attractiveness of the pedestrian and cycle routes where feasible, to encourage people to walk or cycle rather than drive locally. Within and adjoining the village, highway improvements will be supported to keep vehicle speeds below 20mph. Any new paths and highway improvements should be designed in a manner in keeping with the rural character of the area. Any highway schemes should adhere to the Rural Roads Protocol.

Development should be designed to accommodate and retain sufficient off-road parking to avoid overflow parking where this cannot be accommodated on the highway without adversely impacting on the shared use of the highway by pedestrians and cyclists. As a guide, a minimum width of 4.6m is needed for larger vehicles to safely pass a cyclist, and 3.8m for cars passing at 20mph.

Transport assessments or statements, where required, should demonstrate:

³⁴ <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/rural-roads-protocol>

- an understanding of the likely increase in traffic resulting from the proposed development, in conjunction with other planned developments in the wider area. This should consider the volume of HGVs anticipated during and post construction, and how these will be distributed across the local road network; and
- how the adequacy of the routes (in terms of their functional width and shared nature of the highways) has been taken into account in assessing safety and traffic flows.

Project P10. Road Safety Improvement Schemes

The Parish Council will seek to work with Dorset Council Highways (and Somerset Council Highways if appropriate) to improve road safety in the parishes, and highlight potential projects for inclusion in the Local Transport Plan and Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan. This is likely to include proposals to introduce 20 mph areas in the Neighbourhood Plan area to reduce the risk of accidents and keep our pedestrians, both children and adults, safe.

Residents will be encouraged to report road safety issues to the Parish Council and Dorset Council Highways (and Somerset Council Highways if appropriate).

Westbury looking north from Cross Road



8. Design Guidance

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The Household Survey of 2023 suggests that the vast majority of local residents feel it is important that any new development is built to reflect the traditional character of the two parishes.

8.1.2 Through the Government's Neighbourhood Planning Programme, AECOM was commissioned to provide design guidance and codes based on the character and local qualities of the parishes, and to help ensure future development, particularly housing, complements and enhances the Neighbourhood Area's existing character. This work was completed in December 2023 and has informed Policy 12 and the following guidance in 8.2. The AECOM document sets out design guidance and codes based on the existing features of the area, and although it does not have the same status as a development plan document, it is intended to sit alongside the Neighbourhood Plan and provide more detail assisting in the application of the policy where necessary.

8.2 Design Guidance and Codes

8.2.1 Proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Plan area should demonstrate how the following design guidance and codes has informed their design or been complied with. The word "should" does not imply that the matter is optional, and developers are expected to use their best endeavours to comply with such requirements unless they are clearly unreasonable in those specific circumstances. Applicants who consider that their case is an exception must include information explaining the reasons why they consider such an exception should be made. As the following guidance is summarised from the document produced by AECOM for our Neighbourhood Plan area, for further explanation please refer to that supporting document.

Settlement pattern

8.2.2 Future development at Bradford Abbas should not branch out of the village boundary so as to significantly alter the density and historic settlement pattern of the village and infringe on the surrounding landscape. Densities should reflect the settlement's rural character and low density, to ensure a cohesive built environment that respects the historic village setting. Development should incorporate gaps between buildings, to provide opportunities for greening and allow for visual

connections to the surrounding landscape, as well as adequate separation distances of 15-20m between facing windows to ensure privacy is maintained.

8.2.3 Development on the edge of the village, where permitted, should gradually transition to the surrounding countryside by incorporating a landscape buffer along that edge. Abrupt edges with little vegetation or landscaping on the edge of the settlement should be avoided. Long rear gardens will be preferable in these areas. Within Bradford Abbas village, careful consideration of landscape design should be taken with any development occurring along Back Lane, Queens Road, Manor Close, Westbury, Mill Lane and Church Road.

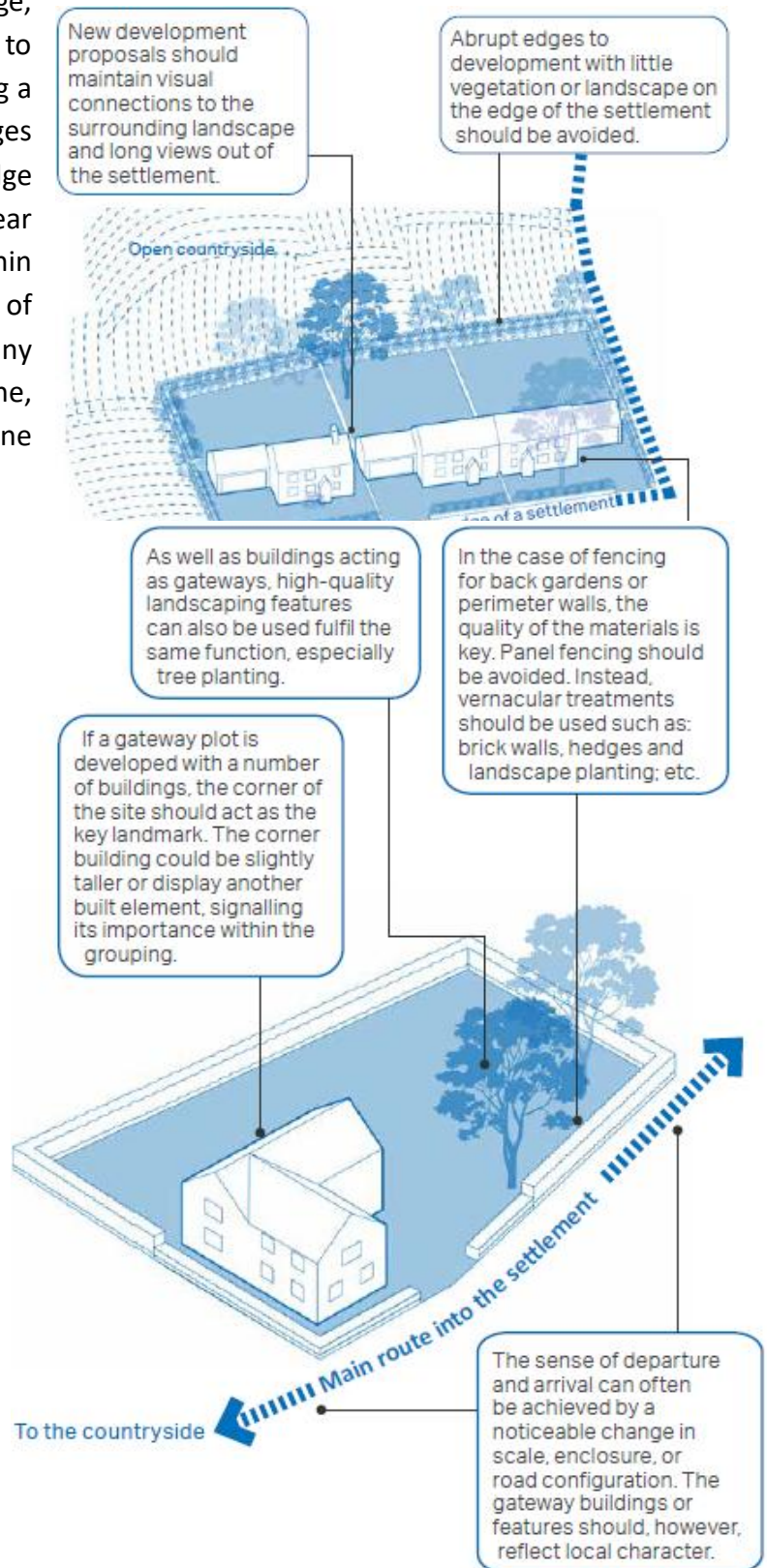
8.2.4 The design of any approach into the village should give careful consideration to how the gateway / arrival point is marked, and viewed from further out. This should create a noticeable change in scale, enclosure, or road configuration, but the gateway buildings or features should still reflect local character.

8.2.5 Clifton Maybank has a more agricultural atmosphere due to the sparse development and presence of multiple functioning farms. Dwellings are located sporadically with varying setbacks from the road. Future development should preserve this scattered settlement pattern of significant gaps between farmhouses and avoid any development that resembles ribbon development.

Building line and orientation

8.2.6 New developments should reflect the informal layout typically found in the area, generally through adopting slightly staggering setbacks, with dwellings oriented so that the main facade is street-facing.

However, where new development would require a different orientation so as to best benefit from solar gain, the street-facing elevation should nonetheless be active and positively contribute to the street



scene. The potential to include front gardens for dwellings, to enhance the green character of the village, should be considered.

8.2.7 Elevations should also have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions to add variety and movement along the lanes, but should largely respect the existing setback if there is a standard street edge. The building mass of any new development should respect the existing surrounding context and not dominate the street scene.

8.2.8 Infill proposals set to the rear of the existing buildings should not be obtrusive in character or otherwise overbearing, or completely compromise an existing visual connection out to the countryside. The need to respect neighbours' privacy and access to light is also likely to be critical. Infill development of multiple dwellings behind the building line should avoid having a large number of homes served by a single access point, with consideration of the consequent issues of traffic flow and pedestrian movement that could result from this.

Boundary treatments

8.2.9 The traditional form of boundary treatment in the village uses freestanding natural stone walls. Those that remain are a significant feature of the village and as such should be sympathetically preserved. New boundary treatments should reflect locally distinctive forms and materials, such as stone walls, open timber fencing and well defined hedgerow. Stone walls should remain under 1.5m in height, and may be topped by stone "teeth", to balance the need for privacy with retaining visual connections. The use of native trees and hedgerows, sometimes combined with low boundary walls, or open timber fencing with planting, can be used to reinforce an area's rural character. Tall fences that create a sterile and monotonous street scene should be avoided.

Landscaping

8.2.10 Landscape schemes should be designed with biodiversity and flood risk management in mind. Native tree species such as oak, ash (using ash die-back tolerant stock) and in wetter areas alder are

Stone walls of Bradford Abbas



Separate stone walls surrounding neighbouring properties.



Rounded mortar capped wall enclosing the dwellings whole curtilage area.



High stone wall creating a sense of enclosure on the street with the opposite hedgerow.



Stone wall with lime mortar topped with larger 'cock and hen' cap stones.



Stone wall combined with well-defined hedgerow to soften the hard landscapes.

preferred where space allows, particularly as such larger tree species can have a greater impact on the green character of the area, and provide shaded spaces. Where possible landscaping should be laid out to create connecting wildlife corridors.

Hard surfacing

8.2.11 New development should use permeable paving finishes such as loose stones and gravel, or plastic grid systems that allow grass to grow through, to reduce extensive areas of hard surfacing.

Lighting

8.2.12 External lighting should be avoided unless necessary for safety. The design and brightness of any lighting that is required should seek to minimise adverse impacts on the occupants of neighbouring dwellings, with low level / down lighting preferred. Security systems and external lighting additions should be placed discretely to minimise their impact on the streetscene. If posts are used, these should be timber or wrought iron.

Architectural variety

8.2.13 The built form, types and style of all new developments should conserve and enhance the distinctive local character and heritage of the area, complementing the variety of building types and reinforcing this variety in a manner that respects its immediate context.

8.2.14 The design of facades that are visible from the highways and other public spaces should be sufficiently detailed to minimise the bulk and scale of buildings and provide visual interest. Development involving multiple buildings should ensure a variety of detailing is used across the development to provide visual interest and avoid homogeneous building designs and forms, although it may be appropriate to use consistent colour, thickness of frame and pane detailing where these are intended to be read as a group.

Materials and Detailing

8.2.15 New development should reflect locally sourced materials, the resulting colour palette, locally distinctive detailing and building techniques (as referenced below and in section 8.4)

8.2.16 For walls / facades, this is typically local stone laid in a random pattern, sometimes coursed, and sometimes with white render over, although the use of beige/yellow coloured brick or reconstituted stone is more acceptable for modern properties. Brickwork is not vernacular to the older parts of the village as a walling material, but is used in detailing and chimneys.



8.2.17 Window frames are traditionally timber (and occasionally iron), but outside the Conservation Area there are examples of powder coated aluminium and more modern plastic windows. Many mid 19th

century builds have openings with arched brick heads and stepped quoins with bullnose brick cills. Others have stone mullions, timber lintels and stone hood moulds. Window and door openings in older buildings tend to have lintels and quoins. Window frames are flush side-hung casements of a traditional design, typically set back approximately 75mm, adding relief to the facade. Storm proof or lipped casements should be avoided, particularly in older properties (i.e. pre 1940) within the conservation area. The proportion, size, symmetry, profile, and rhythm of the fenestration should complement that found within the local area and be appropriate to the style of the building.

8.2.18 Dormers are not typically found, but where used should be aligned with the windows underneath and of a scale that is not overbearing to the roof. These should preferably have lead lining to cheeks, jambs, and roof (if flat).

8.2.19 Porches are a prominent feature of historic houses within the village and are a welcome addition to new development. These should reference what is existing in neighbouring dwellings and illustrated in section 8.4. Typically these porches are of a timber frame with a gable roof supported by wooden posts. The roof tiling should reflect the material and colour of the original roof.

8.2.20 Roofs tend to be made of natural slate, handmade clay tiles, double roman tiles and thatch. New development should aim to use these materials too, and especially the traditional colour palette (see 8.4). Many roofs in the village are gabled (typically with the gable end facing the street), with some featuring hipped roofs and cross gables. The roof pitch should be suitable to the roofing



material (e.g. thatched roofs are likely to be steeper than slate roofs) with the scale and pitch not markedly different to neighbouring dwellings - roof pitch of 45-50 degrees are fairly typical. Chimneys should be incorporated in dwellings, particularly within the Conservation Area, to provide a consistent and rhythmic pattern of chimneys to the roofline. Overhanging verges that expose the end of the purlins and the outer rafter (as illustrated in the photo here), and lining the underside of the overhanging verge with a soffit of timber boarding laid diagonally, are distinctive features to the area.

8.2.21 Within the Conservation Area metal or steel rainwater gutters and downpipes should be used, and selected either in 'heritage' profiles unless a more contemporary design is being followed.

Sustainability and energy efficiency

8.2.22 The following principles should be incorporated at the early design stages of development where heating is required (typically dwellings and some forms of business premises) with external elements designed in keeping with the property. These are:

- highly insulated envelopes,
- airtight construction,
- high performance glazing (which can be assisted by controlling daylight through louvres, blinds or porches and utilising natural shading and cooling such as through trees and shrubbery),

- thermal-bridge-free detailing, and
- heat recovery ventilation.

8.2.23 The aspect and orientation of a building is important as it can maximise solar gain. For that reason, one of the main glazed elevations should be within 30° due south to benefit from solar heat gain. Any north-facing facades might have a similar proportion of window to wall area to minimise heat loss on this cooler side.

8.2.24 Solar panel integration should be designed from the outset, as this may influence the selection of roof material, roof form and supports to ensure that their integration is in keeping with the character of the building.



8.2.25 The placement of mounted electric vehicle charging points and associated services should be considered. These should be placed discretely to the rear or side of the plot and within garages or car ports where possible.

8.2.26 Rainwater should be stored and reused as grey water to manage surface water and reduce demand on main supplies, such as through water heating through underground pumps. Where infiltration and/or rainwater attenuation systems are proposed, preference should be given to vegetated systems, using natural processes to slow and clean the water whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area.

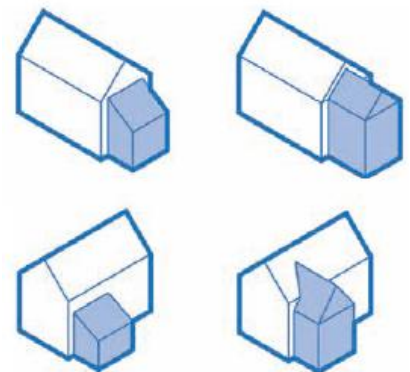
8.2.27 Buildings should incorporate a range of small-scale biodiversity improvements which may include: nest boxes, bat boxes, bee bricks etc.

8.3 Extensions and alterations

8.3.1 Proposals to modify existing dwellings (including garages, car ports, and other outbuildings) should seek to complement and enhance the host building and its surrounding context. Extensions do not need to mimic the existing styles, but their scale, massing and layout should complement the host dwelling.

8.3.2 The original building should remain the dominant element of the property, in terms of scale and form, regardless of the number of extensions. If there is a dominant feature of strong historical character on the original building, the addition should be more modest and accentuate this feature. Overly

Side extension examples:



complicated extensions and associated roof forms that may overshadow the character of the original building should be avoided.

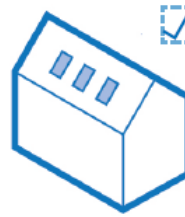
8.3.3 Extensions and outbuildings are best located to the rear of the buildings to sensitively integrate with the existing distinctive proportions established within the area, but will need to consider potential impacts on neighbouring properties, such as blocking daylight. When placed to the site, these should be set back from the front of the main buildings and any extension should retain the proportions and detailing of the original building.

8.3.4 The roof ridges to all extensions and outbuildings should be lower than the existing roof ridge, to avoid harming the established roofline and to reduce the overall massing.

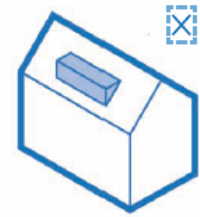
8.4 Typical Design and Features found in the area

8.4.1 In coming up with the detailed design guidance, an appraisal of the typical characteristics of the vernacular 17th and 18th century cottages found in the area was undertaken, together with examples illustrating the material palette and vernacular features found in the Neighbourhood Plan area, and these are reproduced on the following pages.

Design treatment in case of dormer extension:



roof that incorporates skylights.



Dormer extension incorporating a long shed dormer which is out of scale with the original building.



Dormer extension incorporating gable dormers with consideration to the building facade.



Loft conversion incorporating gable dormers which are out of scale and do not consider existing window rhythm or frequency.



Figure 19: Dove Cottage: Located on North Street, the front-facing facade is oriented to the south and the side facade directly fronting the road. This allows for a yard and driveway located to the side with a gate entrance from the road.



Figure 20: Wisteria Cottage: located between Glynn Cottage and Cross Cottage, it is the centre dwelling of the Grade II listed three cottage terraced block.



Figure 21: Yew Tree Cottages: Row of three Grade II listed terraced cottages featuring a coursed rubble-stone wall, thatched roof with gable ends, wooden casement windows and glazing bars and prominent protruding chimneys at either end.



Figure 22: Chantry Cottage: Grade II listed detached cottage featuring a rubble-stone wall, thatched gable roof, thatch porch canopy with wooden posts and windows with hollow-chamfered stone mullions and iron casements.



Figure 23: 1 & 2 East Farm Cottages: Two attached cottages directly fronting North Street with varying fenestration detailing and a continuous Roman interlocking roof tile distinct from other cottage vernaculars from the 17th C within the area.



Figure 24: Tudor Cottage: Grade II listed detached cottage on Church Road. This cottage is unique to the area in that its front-facing orientation is turned away from the street with the gable end wall defining the street scene.



Figure 25: Virginia Cottage: The end dwelling of a terraced row of Grade II listed cottages including Bumblebee Cottage, Hollyhocks and The Old Chapel. These have a continuous thatched roof but irregular fenestration detailing.



Figure 28: 5 & 6 North Street: (back-right) featuring varied setback with that of Glynn Cottage (front-left) and a low-rise stone wall boundary treatment with timber fenceings at the entrance and between properties.



Figure 29: Greenfields, Bankside and Wild Thyme Cottages: a row of three Grade II listed terraced buildings featuring coursed rubble-stone walls, thatch roof with gable ends, wooden casement windows and cambered brick arched lintels.



Figure 26: 3 & 4 Westbury: Grade II listed semi-detached cottages featuring a coursed local lias stone facade with ashlar dressings, windows with metal casements and hood moulds, hipped slate roof and attached side ranges on each end.



Figure 27: The Forge: Located at the intersection of Bishop's Lane and Westbury, featuring a distinct setback comparably far from the street. Source: Geograph.co.uk - Copyright Roger Cornfoot and licensed for reuse under Creative Commons Licence.



Figure 30: Westbury House (right), Kenlea (left-white render) and Three Steps (left-stone facade): The former two buildings feature distinctive vernacular detailing including a higher-rise stone wall and ivy covered facade (Westbury House) and a protruding front porch in front of the building line (Kenlea)

18th Century

19th Century

Material palette

Facades



Coursed rubble-stone wall



Mixed material red brick, stone and white render



Reconstituted beige / light yellow stone



Light coloured render over rubble-stone walls

Window and door openings



Painted timber casement window with stone lintel



Iron casement window with chamfered stone mullions



Leadlight glazing set in door, timber lintel and brick cills



Plank door set within a stone dressing

Roofs



Simple handmade clay roof tiles topped with ridge tiles



Thatched roof



Natural grey slate roof tiles



Double Roman interlocking roof tiles



ochre



beige



blue grey



rouge



deep brown

Colour palette

Vernacular features

Facade detailing



Continuous brick course and dressing across dwellings



Window set back into wall adding relief to the facade



Stone hood moulds consistent over all windows



Cut stone lintel and quoin surrounding a doorway



Varied window sizes with consistent style and alignment

Fenestration



Hipped roof dormer aligned with lower level windows



Gable wall dormer with side hung casement window



Timber gable porch canopy with two wooden posts



Timber casement windows flush with the outer wall



Thatched eyebrow wall dormers

Roof detailing



Gable end thatched roof with red brick chimney stack



Slate hipped roof with integrated side range



U-plan thatched roof with gable ends



Overhang verge with a soffit of diagonal timber boarding



Skillion roof projecting from dwelling's side gable end

8.5 How to incorporate contemporary architecture

8.5.1 Contemporary architecture has the potential to introduce creative and innovative new design to the area as well as enhance the existing heritage features of traditional buildings. Such an approach does require careful consideration of the surrounding context and of the original building. Developments which combine local vernacular details and materials but with a contemporary leaning can enhance and maintain the character of the area providing that these are well conceived and imaginatively designed. The following pages include examples and associated guidance.



The original building was a mid-century bungalow with features commonly seen in vernacular associated with that period. The structure of the original building, which has retained the roof slope, can still be observed in the contemporary design. Other features, such as some of fenestration placement, has also been preserved. This not only moderates the cost and environmental impact of the construction, but also preserves the orientation and setback as well as providing a point of reference for new features such as height, mass and scale

This double-storey addition to the front of the building is the most significant contemporary change to the dwelling. Most notably, the flat, white render facade with dramatic glazing and thin black frames and glazing bars. These are centred and aligned to all the other fenestration with a consistent colour and material use. The orientation of these is also significant as it frames the scenes of the surrounding landscape.

The boundary treatment has been preserved with the new development which consists of a low-level stone wall and light landscaping behind it. This is fitting with the surrounding context of Bradford Abbas that is largely occupied by stone walls and also compliments the design of the new building by ensuring it's view is not obstructed from the street.

The form, placement and roofline of the addition should compliment the main building. This outbuilding utilises a gabled roof with grey slates which is a common feature seen throughout Bradford Abbas, particularly in the Conservation Area. The small scale ensures the original building will not be demoted in status and the orientation provides a function by shielding the view of personal vehicles for on-plot parking.

The mix of contemporary and non-contemporary materials provides interest to the streetscene and also separates the building stylistically from the original so as to promote the historical status of the original building. These were also chosen carefully to complement the colour and material palettes of Bradford Abbas.



High-quality material use that references the material of buildings in the Conservation Area is a good option for facade design, such as this reconstituted beige / light yellow stone which refers to the local yellow hamstone that is commonly found throughout the wider village. Additionally, external add-ons, such as these black metal gutters, should be of a high-quality.

Additions which are not very common in the Conservation Area, such as these gabled dormer windows, can be integrated into the building design by ensuring that these are appropriate in scale to the surrounding context and incorporates elements of existing traditional design, such as these timber casement window frames.

Contemporary features to the building facade, such as this horizontal timber cladding, complement the colour palette of historic buildings in the area (see **Figure 53**). The use of this material on different parts of the facade, such as on parts of the wall aligned to the fenestration and on the dormer windows, integrates it into design and breaks up the mass of the building.



Traditional facade detailing, such as these brick lintels (in a style commonly observed in the Conservation Area which has a two-course header with a three-course 'springer' on each side) references local design and helps to integrate the building with its surrounding context. Other examples here include the window frame being slightly set back into the wall and the timber lintel over the further left windows.

Added boundary treatments need to complement the surrounding context. These should not exactly replicate the historic treatment, such as the free-standing high stone walls, which might reduce the significance of the original structure and block key views. Instead, boundary treatment should be low-rise and of a complementary material, even if this is not as traditional, such as this defined hedgerow.

Street-facing facades should never be blank. If a building is oriented perpendicular to the street, such as seen in with this building, the street-facing facade should be broken up by fenestration and facade detailing. Many times, this orientation is preferable for passive solar gain and also for amenity space, which can also be observed in multiple traditional dwellings in the village.

The roof pitch should reference the existing dwellings in the surrounding context. Most traditional dwellings have a pitch of 45-50 degrees which should be referenced in new contemporary development so as to not disrupt the established roofline. The skylights here are useful for solar gain and break up the mass of the building.

Contemporary wide windows can incorporate traditional features such as being flush to the outer wall (or slightly set back such as seen in the Conservation Area), being of a similar material to fenestration in traditional buildings such as timber or iron, and having a complimentary colour palette to what is found in the village.

This example is a building in a nearby village just outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area



Boundary treatments should always be of a low-rise or structured in a permeable manner so as to not obstruct views through the village and create blank facades and a sterile environment. Soft landscaping techniques should also be integrated into the front plot.

High-quality facade material should be integrated into the building facade and reference locally sourced traditional materials such as the local hamstone that is found on many of the historic buildings in the village.

8.6 Design Guidance - Policies

Neighbourhood Plan Objective: To preserve the traditional character of the two parishes.

Policy 12. Design Guidance

The design and layout of new buildings, extensions and alterations should respect the rural and historic character of the area, ensuring that all components (buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space) are well related to each other, and have full regard to the guidance contained in sections 8.2 – 8.5 of this Plan (and as expanded on in the Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank Design Guidance and Codes, December 2023), relating to:

- Settlement pattern
- Building line and orientation
- Boundary treatments
- Landscaping
- Hard surfacing
- Lighting
- Architectural variety
- Materials and detailing
- Sustainability and energy efficiency
- Extensions and alterations

Services and drainage infrastructure should be incorporated with sensitivity to not adversely impact on the overall character and design of the development.

Where appropriate to the surrounding context, opportunities for innovative design and eco-friendly buildings will be supported.

Appendix 1 – List of Supporting Evidence

2021 Census data (online resource) <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank - Characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, prepared on behalf of Bradford Abbas Parish Council by Dorset Planning Consultant Limited, March 2023

Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank - Design Guidance and Codes, prepared on behalf of Bradford Abbas Parish Council by AECOM Limited, December 2023

Bradford Abbas Conservation Area Appraisal, Dorset Council, December 2013

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/conservation-areas-west-dorset>

Bradford Abbas, The History of a Dorset Village, Eric Garrett, 1989 ISBN 1850105472

Dorset Council planning applications (online resource) <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/planning-application-search-and-comment>

Dorset Explorer (online resource), Dorset Council <https://gi.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorsetexplorer/>

English indices of deprivation 2019 (online resource), Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Heritage Gateway (online resource), ALGAO, Historic England and IHBC partnership initiative <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/>

Light Pollution and Dark Skies map (online resource), CPRE <https://www.cpre.org.uk/light-pollution-dark-skies-map/>

Manual for Streets 2, Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation, September 2010, <https://www.ciht.org.uk/media/9351/manual-for-streets-2.pdf>

Manual for Streets, Department for Transport, and Communities and Local Government, 2007 <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e0035ed915d74e6223743/pdfmanforstreets.pdf>

National Heritage List for England (online resource), Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, prepared on behalf of Bradford Abbas Parish Council by Dorset Planning Consultant Limited, draft for consultation: February 2025

West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council, October 2015 <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/adopted-local-plans/west-dorset-weymouth-and-portland-adopted-local-plan>

Appendix 2 – History and Heritage

Historic Overview of Bradford Abbas

The following history has been produced with the help of the Bradford Abbas History Society and historic Census records³⁵.

The original settlement of Bradford Abbas started as a Hilltop settlement about 3,500 years ago on the high land to the North of the present village. This settlement was still in occupation when the Romans arrived here in 43 AD. Excavations and field walking surveys have been carried out on two Romano/British settlements. The first at the cross road at Coombe and the second site to the rear of Manor Farm bordering the golf course. Excavations have confirmed that the buildings were Roman and occupied by serfs or workers. When the Romans left in the 5th century, occupation continued for a couple of centuries until the hilltop settlers decided to resettle in more sheltered spots, one of these being the Broad Ford that would have been an important crossing point of the river, and which gave us the first part of the village name “Bradford”.

The first lowland settlement would have centred on the higher land near the ford, with the Church on the highest plot. This would have been during the period when King Athelstan granted lands at Bradford to Sherborne Abbey – and Bradford and Clifton are both mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086. Back then, the properties would have been timber framed buildings with wattle and daub panels. Around that time the chancel of the church was rebuilt in stone and likely to have replaced a previous timber framed structure on the same site. From about 1400

839–858	King Athelstan granted land in Bradford Abbas to Sherborne Abbey
1086	Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank settlements recorded in the Domesday book
1100s	Chancel of the Church of St Mary Constructed
1484	Church of St Mary extended
1540	The manor of Bradford Abbas sold by Henry VIII to Sir John Horsey of Clifton Maybank
1500s	Clifton House constructed
1642	Battle of Babylon Hill (English Civil War)
1786	Parts of Clifton House were demolished and redesigned
1831	The population of Clifton Maybank is recorded as 60, and Bradford Abbas is 595
1824	The former church in Clifton Maybank was demolished
1857	Bristol/Weymouth railway line is opened
1860	Sherborne/Yeovil section of the Exeter to London railway opened
1891	Four cottages destroyed by fire, caused by steam engine spark
1931	The population of Clifton Maybank is recorded as 69, and Bradford Abbas is 348
1930s	Rural council houses built at Emlet, Queens Road, and North Street
1938	Four further cottages destroyed by fire
1971	The population of Clifton Maybank is recorded as 70, and Bradford Abbas is 1,003
1972	Bradford Abbas Conservation Area designated
2021	The combined population of both parishes is recorded as 975

³⁵ <https://bradford-abbas.uk/user/35> and <https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/>

onwards most properties would have been built of stone – with a few of these earliest buildings still in the village today. The Church was extended significantly in 1484 to more or less of what we see today, and the village expanded uphill from the church up to the Cross and further up North Street.

Bradford would have been an important village prior to the reformation as it was strongly connected to the Abbot of Sherborne, giving it the second part of its name “Abbas”. This is confirmed by the presence of the massive Tithe barn at Wyke, which was in fact the Abbot’s bank or counting house. The barn was the store of the Tithes from their tenants, equating to 10% of the tenant’s own produce. Therefore the Chancellor or accountant for the Abbot would have lived for part of the year at Wyke Manor House. Our manorial courts were held there for a period of time. The village stayed under the control of the Abbot of Sherborne until the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539. Further evidence of our former importance to the Abbot is the grandeur of the West Tower of the Church which is said to be one of the finest in Dorset. This additional expenditure would have reflected our favoured position within their hierarchical system, and which has survived the reformation and the puritan unrest of the Civil War period.

Prior to the reformation of 1540 Sir John Horsey, who was a favourite of Henry VIII and readily accepted within the court of his Majesty, was extensively involved with the organisation, administration and valuations of the ecclesiastical and monastic properties in this area on behalf of the King. His country seat at Clifton Maybank was said at the time to be one of the three best and most impressive properties in the County and his estate extended to include Bradford Abbas and Yetminster. Clifton House remained within the family for the next five generations, up until 1634, when it was purchased by Sir John Hele from Devon. It was then sequestered by the Cromwellian Government in 1647/8 in payment for his freedom (having been captured whilst acting as a Colonel in the service of the King). The Manors of Clifton and Bradford Abbas were subsequently sold to the Harvey Family in 1650, and Clifton House remained in that family until 1745, and was then acquired by Lord Paget in the early 1780s. He subsequently auctioned off a large section of Clifton Maybank Manor House to Mr Edward Phelps in 1784, who demolished and re-erected part of the building to form the East Wing at Montacute House.

Coombe House, a large Victorian mansion built in 1860, set in extensive gardens with woodland of mature trees and abundant wildlife, is situated on the northern edge of the village. The first resident of the house was Professor James Buckman, a pioneer of modern farming methods which he trialled on the land he farmed in the area. His grave is in the village churchyard. He is credited with breeding the modern parsnip, turning what was a multi-rooted crop fit only for animal fodder into its single main root that we know today. He was also a keen archaeologist and geologist and gathered a large and varied collection of geological samples from the highly fossiliferous beds at Bradford Abbas. His son, Sydney Buckman, was also a renowned geologist. The house is now owned by the Haynes family. John Haynes was the publisher of the Haynes Owners Workshop manuals and founded the Haynes Motor Museum at Sparkford, donating his own collection of cars.

Listed and Locally Important Buildings

There are 28 entries in the Listed Buildings Register for the two parishes. This includes three Grade I properties (Clifton House, the Parish Church of St Mary, and a churchyard cross within its grounds),

and two Grade II* properties (Smith's Bridge, and the Library buildings at Clifton House). The remainder are all Grade II, including many cottages and houses from various periods (Tudor, Elizabethan, Stuart and Georgian), but also bridges, the war memorial, churchyard monuments and a water pump. The Old Mill House, Tudor Cottage and St Mary's House are also considered 'key' in the Conservation Area Appraisal. A full list with links to their descriptions is given below:

Location	Parish	Grade	Listing #
4 Monuments adj Churchyard Cross, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119367
War Memorial, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119368
St Mary's House, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119369
Tudor Cottage, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119370
Old Downs, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119371
Bankside / Greenfields / Wild Thyme Cottage 2 – 4 The Cross	Bradford Abbas	II	1119372
Bradford Abbas Mill and attached outbuilding, Mill Lane	Bradford Abbas	II	1119373
Yew Tree Cottages, 1 2 And 3 North Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119374
Cross, Wistaria and Glynn Cottages, North Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119375
Toll-House on county boundary with Somerset, Yeovil Road	Bradford Abbas	II	1119376
Clifton House	Clifton Maybank	I	1119383
Two Sets Of Gate-Piers and Garden Walls, Clifton House	Clifton Maybank	II	1119384
Smith's Bridge, River Yeo	Clifton Maybank	II*	1119407
Abbott Monument, Church of St Mary, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119408
Monuments west of Church of St Mary, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1119409
Chantry Cottage, North Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1153860
Bumblebee, Hollyhocks, Old Chapel & Virginia Cott, North St	Bradford Abbas	II	1153863
Stoford Bridge, Clifton Hill	Clifton Maybank	II	1153982
Building 10m south of Clifton House (The Library)	Clifton Maybank	II*	1304043
Parish Church of St Mary, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	I	1323858
Monuments, 4m south of Church of St Mary, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1323859
Churchyard Cross NW of Church of St Mary, Church Street	Bradford Abbas	I	1323880
Kandala And Squirrel Cottage, North Street	Bradford Abbas	II	1323881
Summer-House in SW corner at Clifton House	Clifton Maybank	II	1323887
Little Thatch Cottage	Bradford Abbas	II	1390871
Accommodation Bridge over Railway Line, Yeovil Junction Stn	Bradford Abbas	II	1393426
1 and 2 Westbury and associated Water Pump, Westbury	Bradford Abbas	II	1393472
3 and 4, Westbury	Bradford Abbas	II	1393582

Both the church and Clifton House are mentioned in the Highways and Byways of Dorset (Frederick Treves, 1906) as being particularly noteworthy – the former for its graceful tower richly decorated west front, the latter as the sole surviving wing of the great mansion of Clifton Maybank, which was

the seat of the Horseys from the time of Richard II. The latter's gardens were added to the Local Heritage List in early 2026.

The Conservation Area Appraisal, and the Dorset Historic Environment Register, also records various buildings as of local historic interest, and these include:

- Chapel, Clifton Maybank
- Coombe House (including The Stables)
- Dove Cottage, 10 North Street
- Gardeners Cottage
- Greystones
- Heartsease Cottage, 11 North Street
- Little Orchard, Churchwell Street
- Mill Farm
- Milworth, Mill Lane
- Nos 1 & 2 Coombe Cottages, North Street
- Nos 1 & 2 East Farm Cottages
- Nos 1 & 2 The Cross
- Nos 5 & 6 North St
- Old Mill Cottage, Mill Lane
- Orchard Close, North Street
- Post Office and shop, Church Road
- Rose and Crown Inn, Church Street
- St Mary's Primary School
- The Cottage, Clifton Maybank
- The Forge, Westbury
- The Grange
- The Laurels and Rose Cottage, Church Rd
- The Old Coach House, Grant's Hill
- The Old Rectory, Grant's Hill
- The Old Schoolhouse & The White Cottage, Churchwell Street
- Thistledo, Three Steps & Kenlea, Westbury
- Wesleyan Methodist Church, North Street
- Westbury House

Ancient Monuments and Archaeology

There are three scheduled monuments in the Neighbourhood Plan area, all in Bradford Abbas parish. One of these is within the church grounds (a medieval standing cross), the other two are Roman remains, to the north of Bradford Abbas village in the area around East Farm. Whilst there are no surviving remnants of the Roman sites above ground, the buried remains of the monuments can be seen from aerial photographs³⁶. There is a further Roman site just outside the parish boundary in Thornford parish.

Roman villa South-East of East Farm³⁷

A Medieval standing cross 6m North West of the West front of St Mary's Church³⁸ - also Listed

A Roman temporary camp at East Farm³⁹

The Dorset Historic Environment Register also records a range of local sites and finds, including several quarries and kilns, watermills, saw pit and timber yard, a holloway and historic allotment sites.

Other Historic Associations

There may be other areas within the two parishes that are not formally designated but could nonetheless be of heritage value. For example, whilst not a formally registered battlefield, Babylon Hill

³⁶ As reported in A Roman Camp At Bradford Abbas, Dorset - Aerial Investigation And Mapping Archaeological Report by Helen Winton and Damian Grady, 2013, English Heritage <https://bradford-abbas.uk/sites/default/files/2020-06/Aerial%20Investigation.pdf>

³⁷ <https://HistoricEngland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1002414>

³⁸ <https://HistoricEngland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1015039>

³⁹ <https://HistoricEngland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1456547>

is understood to be the site of the Battle of Babylon Hill, which took place during the English Civil War. The battle was between the Earl of Bedford's Roundheads and Sir Ralph Hopton's Cavaliers, the latter who had to withdraw to Sherborne (source: Wikipedia and Somerset: The Complete Guide, R. Bush, 1994⁴⁰). The old farm buildings at Manor Farm may also qualify as non-designated heritage assets (see section 2.6).

Commemorative Stone – “Babylon Hill - This stone commemorates the Battle on 7 September 1642 Erected in 1992 by the English Civil War Society, their friends and the Don Stratford Memorial”



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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylon_Hill