

# Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan

A Plan for Our Village

2013 to 2028

Examination version – **draft v6 17<sup>th</sup> Nov 13**



**St Peters Church c. 1330-1340**

Note: Updates in blue

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## Introduction

This document has been prepared by Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, which was established by Welford on Avon Parish Council on the [xxx].

The Welford on Avon Neighbourhood plan (the Plan) is a new type of planning document that will set out the direction for development in the Parish of Welford on Avon from 2013 to 2028. It is part of the Governments new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the Localism Act which came into force in April 2012.

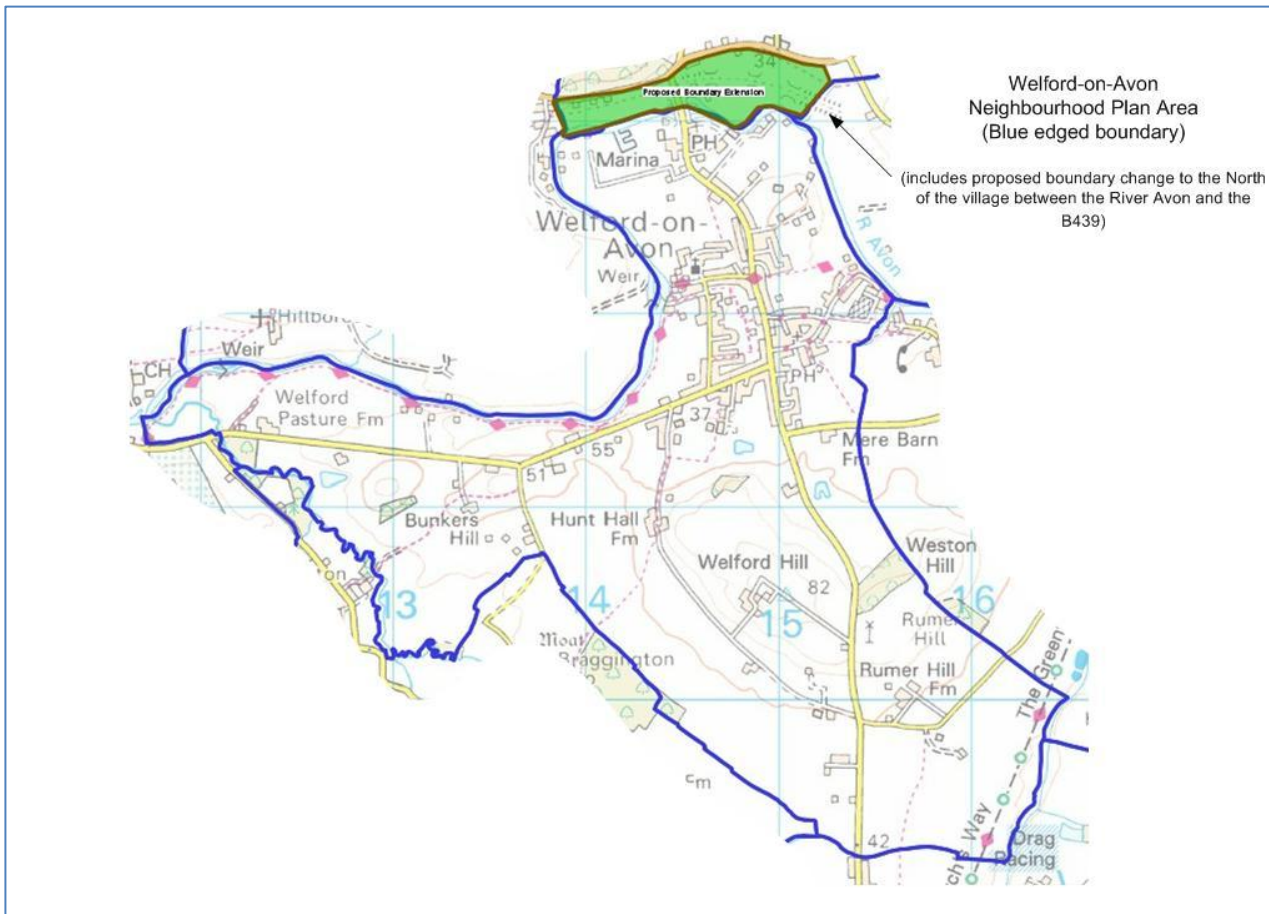
The whole Parish of Welford on Avon (See Figure 1) has been formally designated as the Neighbourhood Plan area through an application to Stratford District Council (SDC) on the [xxx] under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (part 2 S6). This was approved by Stratford District Council on the [xxx].

Stratford District Council and the Boundary Commission.

This plan provides a Vision and Objectives for the future of the Parish community and sets out clear policies to deliver the Vision and Objectives. The plan has been developed through extensive consultation with local people, businesses and community groups, Stratford upon Avon District Council and other regulatory bodies.

This Plan provides an opportunity for local people to influence and take more control over the use of land within the Parish and to protect the Parish from uncoordinated and speculative developments inappropriate to the character and scale of the village.

**Figure 1: The approved Parish boundary for this Neighbourhood Plan**



The Parish was extended to include the North side of the river Avon up to the B439 in early 2013. This change was agreed and ratified by

## How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning system



To be filled with the policy matrix

The Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their towns and villages, the Localism Act 2012 sets out some important laws.

One of these is that all Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy. That is Neighbourhood plans must be in line with European law covering strategic environmental assessments and habitats, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Stratford upon Avon Local Core Strategy.

All Neighbourhood Plans are subject to independent examination and a local referendum where a simple majority will determine the outcome. Once accepted the Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of SDC's local planning framework.

This means the Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan and SDC's Core Strategy become the formal documentation that all new planning applications are assessed against.

*[Stratford upon Avon's Core Strategy requires the Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan to provide between 51 and 75 additional new houses between 2013 and 2028.*

*SDC Core Strategy planning policies CS16 and CS 17 outline the need and it should be noted that the Localism Act allows a Neighbourhood Plan to accept more housing but it doesn't allow for there to be less.*

*Although planning applications will still be determined by Stratford District Council the production of the Neighbourhood Plan empowers the Parish Council to direct where new housing developments will be and what additional facilities are provided, ensuring village development is guided by residents of the Parish.] **[Do we allocate sites for development or not ? – will impact the above 3 paras – need to discuss & decide]***

[Add Policy alignment matrix](#)

[SDC Policy](#)

[NP Policy](#)

## What is in the Neighbourhood Plan

Although the principal reason for producing a Neighbourhood Plan is associated with housing, it also has an important part to play in other areas. The Neighbourhood Plan is a plan for the whole village and all its current and future activities. The plan makes reference to:

- Housing development
- **Transport and traffic management**
- **Employment**
- **Leisure and Wellbeing**
- **Environment and Heritage**

## Sustainability Appraisal

The Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan aligns with the NPPF and the SDC Core Strategy to ensure that all new developments and changes to the village meet the three tests for 'sustainable development' as outlined in the NPPF. These are:

- **Economic sustainability**
- **Social sustainability, and**
- **Environmental sustainability**

Conformity between plans is required by law to ensure that development takes place in the right quantity, in the right locations, in the right timescales and meets with the local housing needs in terms of tenure.

## Community engagement and consultation

The Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by a committee of local people interested in the long term wellbeing of the village. It has been developed from the views and aspirations of local people expressed through whole village surveys, village hall meetings, Parish Council meetings, road shows and on-line. All material at all stages of development has been posted on the 'Welforward' website for public consumption and feedback.

In addition to local residents, a wide range of groups and organisations have been consulted and invited to take part in the Plan development. Specifically, we have surveyed local businesses and community groups to feedback their needs and aspirations.

The community survey was carried out in April 2013 and the results published on the 'Welforward' website, discussed at open meetings held in the village hall and hard copies made available in the local shops, pubs and notice boards.

The survey could be completed on-line or by returning the hand delivered survey questionnaire.

More.....?? Some feedback stats maybe ?

*Reference to Matthew Stead, SDC Caravan Licensing*

The 2011 census shows that Welford Parish has a population of 1420 living in 605 households. The age profile of the village is:

0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49
10.1%	10.3%	9.9%	10.6%	15.4%

50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90 +
14.0%	14.5%	9.2%	5.0%	1.1%

The average age is higher than Stratford District as a whole with a median age of 51 compared with 46 for the District. The percentage of residents over 65 is 29.0% compared with 22.0% for the District, and the proportion of households comprising a single person households over 65 is 16.7% compared with 14.4%. However, the proportion of children and young people age 19 and under is similar to the District with 21.7% compared with 21.4%.

Housing by tenure and type are shown below in **tables 1 and 2:**

**Table 1: Tenure**

Housing	Welford	Stratford District
Owned outright	55.2%	39.1%
Owned with mortgage	26.1%	32.7%
Share ownership	2.1%	1.1%
Rented - social	8.8%	12.9%
Rented - private	5.6%	12.7%
Rented - free	2.1%	1.5%

**Table 2: Type**

Housing	Welford	Stratford District
Detached	55.1%	36.8%

## Demographics

*Reference to Warwickshire Observatory produced by Warwickshire County Council*

Semi-detached	23.6%	30.3%
Terraced	8.9%	19.4%
Flat	1.4%	11.7%
Caravan/ mobile home	11.0%	1.9%

Housing tenure is based on 605 dwellings across the Parish with at least one resident whilst housing type is based on 661 'dwelling spaces', 56 of which have 'no usual resident'. This difference, and the high proportion of caravan/mobile homes, may be explained by caravans used for holiday purposes but reporting in the census.

In addition to the 26 park homes licensed at Long Cast, Hunt Hall Lane which are permanently occupied, 148 holiday caravan are licensed in Welford. **Table 3** below outlines the sites:

**Table 3: Caravan / Park homes**

Avonside	Binton Bridges (S of river)	30
Millfield	Mill Lane	12
Welford Park (formerly West View Park)	Barton Road	67
Welford Riverside	Binton Bridges (N of river)	39
<b>Total</b>		<b>148</b>

**Childrens play area next to Welford on Avon Primary School**



**The Maypole at 65ft is one of the tallest in England**



**Vision and Objectives for the**

## period 2013 - 2028

### Summary of key issues:

The views expressed by local residents at the various consultation events reflected and reinforced much of the evidence gathered through the 'Evidence Base'. In addition guidance has been sought from existing documentation prepared for the village eg: The Parish Plan, Housing Needs Survey and Village Design Statement.

Of particular concern to residents is the impact of new housing on the local road network, the water and sewerage infrastructure and local facilities and services, especially the primary school. Leading on from these concerns **Our Vision** for Welford on Avon through until 2028 is:

The key issues that the Welford on Avon

To have a thriving community village which supports a wide range of village activities including small businesses through good quality community infrastructure such as village meeting places, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and high speed communications.

Housing developments will have been sympathetically integrated into the village environment such that the character of the village and the street scene has been maintained. New housing should support home working so as to minimise car travel & improve environmental sustainability.

Local infrastructure will have been upgraded to eliminate existing issues and support village growth and the flooding issues will have been resolved.

Traffic issues will have been controlled ensuring the village roads are safe for all residents and public transports connections will have been improved.

Green buffers will have maintained the identity of the Welford and the adjacent villages of Weston on Avon and Long Marston.

Neighbourhood plan needs to address are outlined below:

### Housing:

Housing development in Welford on Avon has followed Stratford Upon Avon District Council planning guidance over the last few years and has resulted in some small scale development within the Parish.

Significant numbers of new houses will over burden the existing utility infrastructure especially the local sewerage and drainage systems.

There are significant concerns that the conservation area will be harmed by the introduction of inappropriate new buildings upsetting the character and distinctiveness of the village.

Multiple surveys including Stratford District Council research (Strategic Housing Market Assessment – January 2013) and the survey conducted for this Neighbourhood Plan in April 2013 indicate a need for 2 bed, 3 bed and bungalow properties. The village also supported the development of affordable homes targeted at local people and sheltered accommodation that together with more bungalows would enable the elderly to remain close to friends and relatives.

The Neighbourhood Plan survey also identified that 99% of respondents thought there were sufficient or too many residential caravans in the village.

There is an urgent need to mitigate the actual flood risk to some properties in the village, ensure new development does not aggravate the current position and that new properties are not exposed to the same danger.

### Transport and traffic management:

Speeding through the village is a major concern for residents. The 30 mph zone has been extended to all roads within the village however on the High Street it remains a significant issue especially at the two single lane pinch points;



one by The Bell pub and the other at the weight restricted Grade 2 listed Binton bridges.

These pinch points are likely to present a cumulative constraint on development in Welford, Long Marston storage area and villages to the South. Access to the B439 at rush hour is likely to be an increasing safety concern.



Entrances to the village from Long Marston and Barton are both downhill with vehicles entering the 30 mph zone at significantly high speeds.

Many of the village roads are single track with poor if any road markings, making some junctions quite dangerous.

Although within the Vale of Evesham HGV Control Zone, HGV traffic along Barton Road and Long Marston Road creates a potential danger for school children and road users especially at Headland Road and at the junction of Barton Road and the High Street.

In addition, HGV and farm vehicles of excessive weight present a real problem crossing the listed single track Binton bridges.

Public transport through the village is poor with access to the main employment centre of Stratford Upon Avon very infrequent. Other main rural centres are not serviced by public transport.

Parking at the Maypole area of the village is also an issue in relation to volume and speed of traffic.

There are no street lights within the village and none of the surveys undertaken to date indicate

there is a need or desire to have them.

### **Employment:**

The rural nature of the village means the main employment centres are based on agriculture and greenhouses making some new housing more sustainable.

#### **Greenhouse picture here**

There are a significant number of people who work from home or who have small businesses within the Parish.

Connecting these businesses to the 'outside world' via the internet is an important priority for many. Thus improving availability and connectivity speeds will be a priority. Failure to achieve this would be a clear threat to rural employment and the retention of younger people in the village.

The main employment areas are farther afield in Stratford upon Avon, Warwick, Leamington Spa and Birmingham.

### **Leisure and Wellbeing:**

The existing sports facilities on Synder Meadow are prone to flooding, resulting in the local football and cricket teams having to use other grounds in adjacent villages and towns quite frequently and certainly during the winter period.



The school playground is small and though safe could be improved. In addition, there are no indoor sports facilities for younger people & teenagers within the village.

With over 9 miles of footpaths within the village they constitute a significant feature and



must be protected and enhanced where possible. The Avon Valley Way also traverses the village and passes through Parish land at Cress Hill and is a popular walker's route.

The protection of publically accessible open spaces such as Cress Hill, Synder Meadow, the Greenway, Allotments, Millennium project area and the river meadows is also a priority for the village.

St Peters church and the Methodist Chapel provide traditional village activities for example Bell Ringing at the Church and there is also a golf course and indoor bowling green in the Parish.

The main sporting and leisure venues are in Stratford upon Avon and further afield resulting in those without independent transport being very restricted due to the in frequency of local public transport.

### **Environment and heritage:**

Protection of the Conservation Area and its immediate surrounds is important to the village as it epitomizes its distinctive character. With c.65 listed buildings within the conservation area there are only a few areas where new development would be acceptable.



### **Church Street**

Views of the Grade 1 listed St Peters Church, are seen from all parts of the Parish and especially Cress Hill and Welford Hill. These views are to be protected to maintain the rural

scene and character.

The historic nature of Welford on Avon, mentioned in the Domesday Book, and its surroundings means that there are many historic and archeological areas with a high or medium sensitivity to development.

Local wild life sites, green corridors and sites special scientific interest will be protected.

Agricultural land surrounding the village is categorised as 'best and most versatile' by Natural England and will be protected. The NPPF and SDC Core Strategy also support this definition.

A green buffer between the villages of Welford on Avon and Weston on Avon will be maintained.

### **Core Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan**

The Vision and objectives of this plan are based on key issues raised by local people and businesses within the village. These have been summarized and refined by the Steering Committee to form the basis for the Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan.

In accordance with the NPPF, new developments would need to accord with the principles of 'sustainable development'. This might be through:

- **Economic sustainability:** property being developed to house existing/prospective owners/workers of local businesses; new/refurbished business premises concomitant with the character of the village; exploit public transport; mixed use sites
- **Social sustainability:** developments are in accordance with the ability of village facilities to meet increased demand on, for example, the primary school, shops, clubs and societies
- **Environmental sustainability:** this could be through the use of brown field sites, low energy housing, minimising environmental impact (eg: trees and

shrubby), water harvesting, high quality design appropriate to locality, support biodiversity, enhancement of public open spaces.

The delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will have the following objectives at its core:

1. *Accommodate between 51 and 75 new homes within the Parish between 2013 and 2028 as outlined by SDC Local Service Village distribution methodology (CS.16). Large scale speculative developments will not be supported. [link to page 4 col 1 paras 5-7]*
2. All new development should be phased across the Plan period as described by SDC Core Strategy Housing Trajectory (CS.17) to ensure local services and facilities are not overburdened and the Primary School can accommodate local children.
3. Developments which required primary school age children to be educated outside the village would not be supported.
4. New development should be within the curtilage of the village so as to protect as far as possible the open countryside in the wider Parish. [Note: site allocations needed !]
5. New developments should be a broad mixture of affordable and market houses and preferably the affordable housing elements should be restricted to local people or those with local connections.
6. Developments should be “small scale sites of up to [10-15] houses” and be 'pepper potted' through the village rather than grouped in one particular area.
7. Back and/or side garden developments are excluded as previously used land ie: 'brownfield' by annex 2 of the NPPF. Each application for such development will be assessed on its impact on the distinctive character of the village and alignment with

the Village Design Statement.

8. Developments which place undue strain on village infrastructure such as roads, drains and electricity supplies are not considered to be sustainable. The cumulative impact of new housing developments on local infrastructure will be factored into planning decisions.
9. The cumulative effects of new housing and commercial developments, within and outside, the village on traffic type and quantity will be a material consideration when considering future planning applications.
10. Speed within the Parish is an issue for many residents with speeding at the two pinch points on the High Street and Binton Bridges and traffic movements around the Maypole and the junction of Barton Road and the High Street are of particular concern. An improvement to these areas of concern is needed to accommodate further housing development.
11. Proposals that meet the Governments aspiration to improve rural Broadband reach and speeds will be essential to meet the Vision for a thriving community in 2028.
12. Proposals and Neighbourhood Development Orders which facilitate the development of new Parish facilities such as a new village / sports hall, sports facilities and social centre within the village would be positively supported and encouraged. [See appendix xx]
13. The Conservation Area, publically accessible green spaces, local wild life areas and sites of special scientific interest will be protected. [See Figure 2].
14. Further development in flood zones will be resisted. [Not sure we can change this one; SDC Core strategy talks about restoring flood plains]
15. Develop proposals that link the villages of Welford on Avon and West on Avon will

be rejected.

16. Developments should conform wherever possible with the Village Design Statement and also to the specific requirements for developments to Listed Buildings and in Conservation areas (CS.9 and CS.10).
17. Agricultural land surrounding the village is defined by the NPPF as 'best and most versatile' and will be protected. To the east and west of Welford is category 2, defined as 'very good', and certainly better quality than most in SDC. ALC features in paragraph 112 of the NPPF and policy AS.10 of SDC's core strategy - 'avoid development on best and most versatile agricultural land'.

This Neighbourhood Plan fully accords with the requirements of the Localism Act, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Stratford upon Avon Core Strategy and other relevant National and European legislation.

Details of the consultation have been recorded in a report called the 'Consultation Report' which included as an appendix to this Plan.

The delivery of actions in this plan will be monitored by the Parish Council who will report annually on progress.

Every 5<sup>th</sup> year the Parish Council will appoint a broadly based group to advise the Parish Council on whether changes are required to the Neighbourhood Plan, thus ensuring its always up to date.

A year before its expiry, the Parish Council will appoint a broadly based group to produce the next Neighbourhood Plan for the village or its successor.

A copy of this Neighbourhood Plan can be downloaded from the Welford on Avon Parish Council website. ([www.welfordonavon-pc.gov.uk](http://www.welfordonavon-pc.gov.uk)):

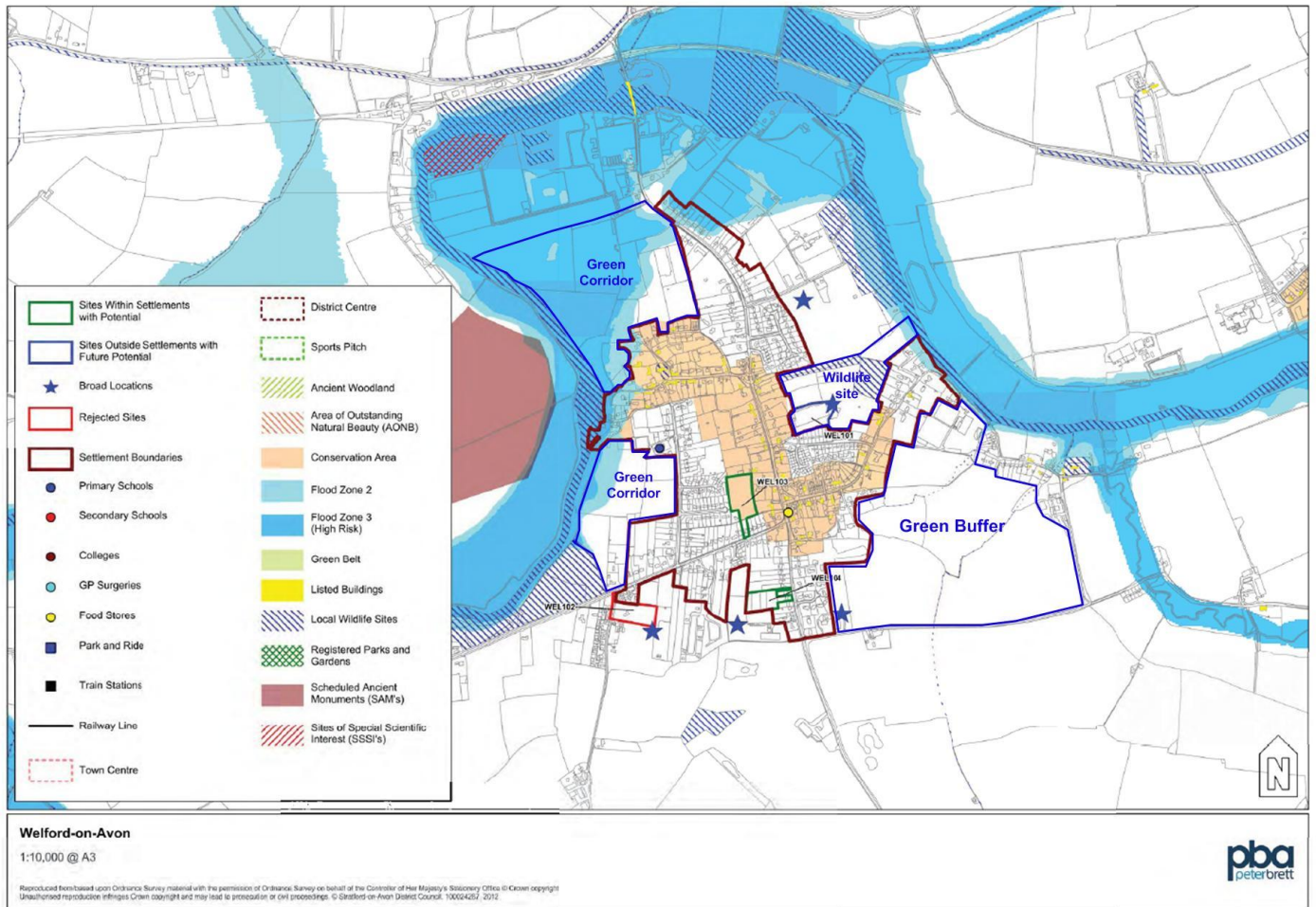


**An aerial view of the village centre**

## **The future Vision for Welford on Avon**

The following map (Figure 2 overleaf) is taken from Stratford upon Avon's updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and shows the extent of the village boundary in red and the areas of protection in blue. In addition, the green land buffer between Welford on Avon and Weston on Avon is also shown.





**Figure 2: Land Availability Assessment**

(Update map)

## **Welford Neighbourhood Plan: Planning Policies**

Notes: I've listed the objectives in each policy area for information; these need converting into policies as listed. I think each policy area however might have a number of sub elements eg: PP1 may have a sub policy for housing numbers and phasing, another for housing mix, another referring to where ie: within the village boundary etc etc. Each area may need more adding to it when you get into it eg: employment.

Suggested Policy format could be:

**Key issues identified from vision & objectives and village consultation as introduction:**

**Overall objective of the policy:**

**Policy statement (s):**

**Justification:** reference to Core Strategy, NPPF, English Heritage, Traffic surveys etc etc

### **PP1 - Housing**

*Accommodate between 51 and 75 new homes within the Parish between 2013 and 2028 as outlined by SDC Local Service Village distribution methodology (CS.16).*

*All new development should be phased across the Plan period as described by SDC Core Strategy Housing Trajectory (CS.17) to ensure local services and facilities are not overburdened and the Primary School can accommodate local children.*

*Developments which required primary school age children to be educated outside the village would not be supported.*

*New development should be within the curtilage of the village so as to protect as far as possible the open countryside in the wider Parish.*

*New developments should be a mixture of affordable and market houses and preferably the affordable housing elements should be restricted to local people or those with local connections.*

*Developments should be "small scale sites of up to [10-15] houses" and be 'pepper potted' through the village rather than grouped in one particular area.*

*Back and/or side garden developments are not defined as brown field development by DCLG. Each application for such development will be assessed on its impact on the distinctive character of the village and alignment with the Village Design Statement.*

*Developments which place undue strain on village infrastructure such as roads, drains and electricity supplies are not considered to be sustainable. The cumulative impact of new housing developments on local infrastructure will be factored into planning decisions.*

### **PP2 – Transport & Traffic Management**

*The cumulative effects of new housing and commercial developments, within and outside, the village on traffic type and quantity will be a material consideration when considering future planning applications.*

*Speed within the Parish is an issue for many residents with speeding at the two pinch points on the High Street and Binton Bridges and traffic movements around the Maypole and the junction of Barton Road and the High Street are of particular concern. Improvements to these areas of concern will be needed to enable further development.*

### **PP3 - Employment**

*Proposals that meet the Governments aspiration to improve rural Broadband reach and speeds will be welcomed.*

### **PP4 – Leisure & Well Being**

*Proposals and Neighbourhood Development Orders which facilitated the development of new Parish facilities such as a new sports hall, sports facilities and social centre within the village would be supported and encouraged.*

### **PP5 – Environment & Heritage**

*The Conservation Area, publically accessible green spaces, local wild life areas and sites of special scientific interest will be protected. [See Figure 2].*

*Further development in flood zones will be resisted.*

*Develop proposals that link the villages of Welford on Avon and West on Avon will be rejected. Developments should conform wherever possible with the Village Design Statement and also to the specific requirements for developments to Listed Buildings and in Conservation areas (CS.9 and CS.10).*

*Agricultural land surrounding the village is of a high grade and will be protected. To the east and west of Welford is category 2, defined as 'very good', and certainly better quality than most in SDC. ALC features in paragraph 112 of the NPPF and policy AS.10 of SDC's core strategy - 'avoid development on best and most versatile agricultural land'.*