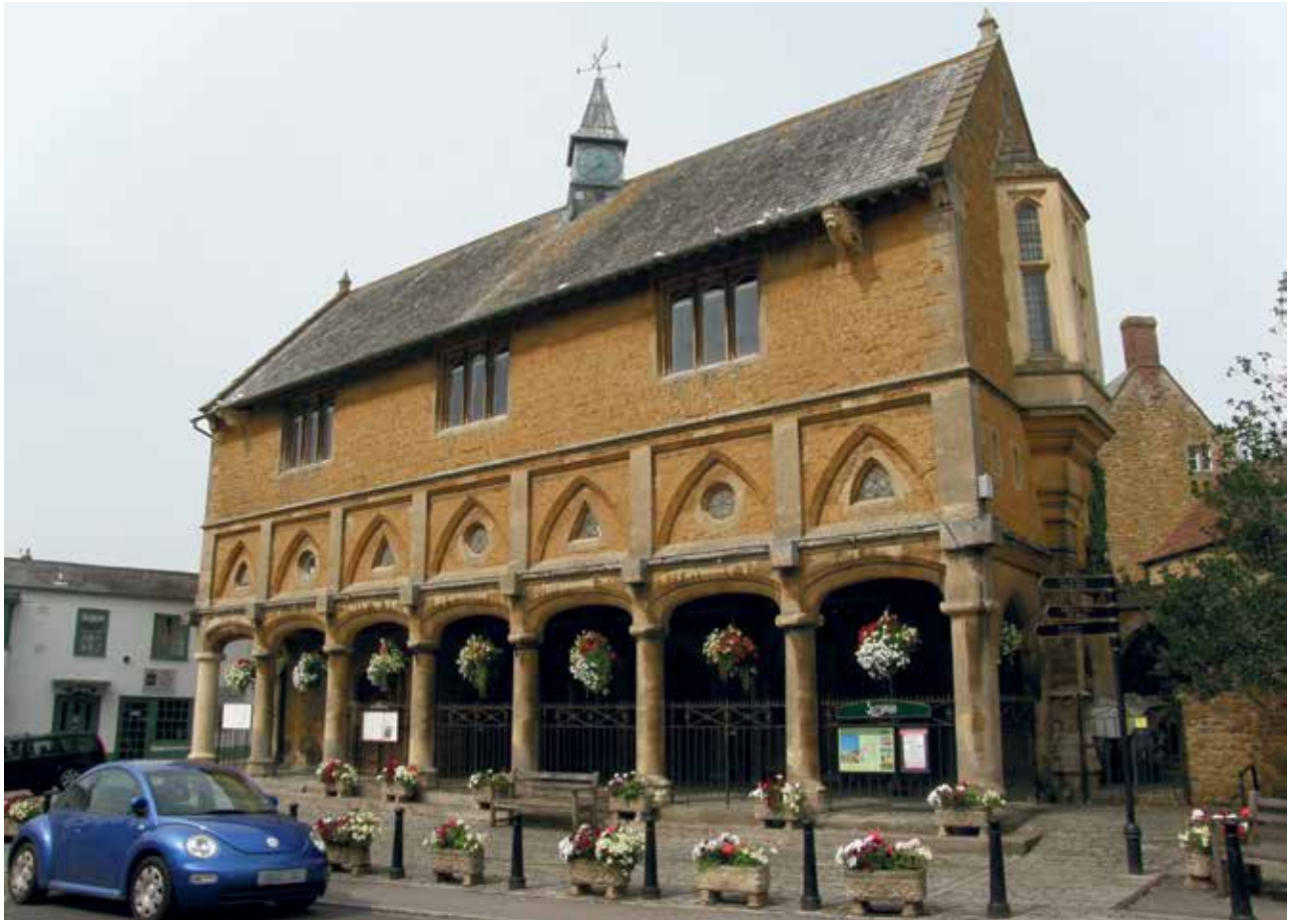
CASTLE CARY & ANSFORD
Neighbourhood Plan
2016–2028

Modified in accordance with the recommendations of the Independent Examiner for submission to local referendum
June 2019

Our Vision

Our vision for Castle Cary and Ansford is to allow for sustainable growth in housing and employment, together with community facilities to meet local needs, whilst promoting an attractive environment that continues to protect and enhance the unique character and heritage of the town.

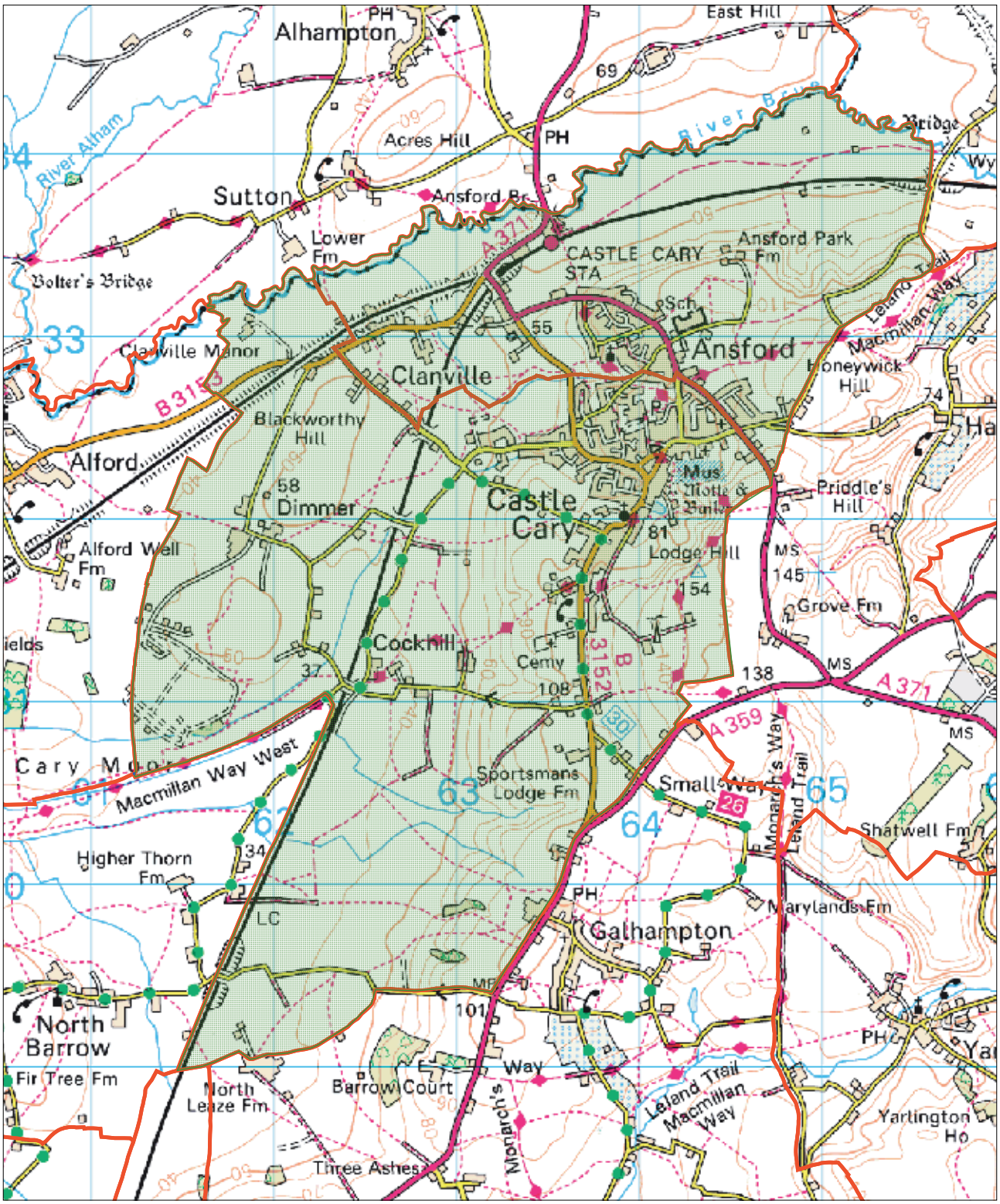


1. Contents

	Map of Neighbourhood Plan Area	2
1.	Introduction	3
2.	Castle Cary & Ansford today	5
3.	The Future – Issues facing the Town	11
4.	Designing for the Neighbourhood	14
5.	Housing	19
6.	Employment & Enterprise	25
7.	Tourism	28
8.	The Town Centre	30
9.	Transport Infrastructure & Accessibility	33
10.	Education, Social & Community Assets	38
11.	The Natural & Built Environment	43
12.	Monitoring and Review	48
	Map of Neighbourhood Plan Policies	50

Appendix A	Castle Cary & Ansford Community Assets
Appendix B	Main Town Centre uses
Appendix C	The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
Appendix D	Glossary of abbreviations

The Old Fire Station



Map of Neighbourhood Plan Area: the parishes of Castle Cary and Ansford

1. Introduction

1.1 This is the first Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for the parishes of Castle Cary and Ansford, and has been prepared on behalf of Castle Cary Town Council and Ansford Parish Council by a working group of local people. It covers the period up to 2028 (in line with the South Somerset Local Plan adopted in 2015).

1.2 When the process is complete and the plan is 'made', the NP will sit alongside the Local Plan (LP) as a part of the statutory development plan for our area and provide guidance to developers and others on what we seek to achieve in and for our neighbourhood.

1.3 The NP gives the local communities direct power to develop a shared vision for Castle Cary and Ansford, and to shape the economic, social and environmental development of the area. It establishes a template to ensure that local people get the right type of development for their community, encouraging the types of growth the community needs and discouraging inappropriate development.

1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of two consultation stages, in accordance with the NP regulations. Numerous responses were received, as recorded in the relevant reports, and the plan was submitted for formal independent examination in November 2018.

1.5 The examiner's report was published in May 2019: she concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in the report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and recommended that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to Referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

1.6 This document incorporates all the modifications recommended by the examiner and the way is now open for a local referendum, following which the NP attains the same legal status as the Local Plan – it becomes part of the statutory development plan and must be taken into account during the consideration of all planning applications.

1.7 We start with a brief look at the town as it is today, considering the main issues facing us and setting out the overall aims for the plan. Subsequent chapters provide explanation and justification for the policies relating to different topic areas.

Fore Street

2. Castle Cary and Ansford Today

2.1 Castle Cary and Ansford together form a thriving local market town with a population of some 3,360 people and 1,640 dwellings (2011 Census). Residents have many different views on why people like living in the town but whether people have been here for generations or for just a few years it is held in high regard and seen as a desirable place in which to live.

Housing and Employment Opportunities

2.2 There is a strong housing market, particularly for higher and mid-cost dwellings, but a shortage of affordable and social housing, particularly for local young people.

2.3 Employment opportunities in the area cover a wide range: retailing, agriculture, services, manufacturing, tourism, education and social work are all represented. Industrial employment is largely centred on the Torbay Road light industrial site on the west side of the town. Current occupiers include Centaur Services, Crown Pet Foods and Tyre Renewals Ltd, as well as a range of smaller businesses.

2.4 There are also many dairy farms and diverse technical support services within the wider local area. Local people employed in agriculture are mainly contractors: using complex equipment and machinery or skills; in livestock management; production of food at source e.g. cheese and cider making; agricultural engineering and veterinary support.

2.5 Census data on travel to work shows that some 1900 people were in employment in the NP area, with 11% working from home, and 47% travelling less than 20km to their place of work. This is consistent with the general pattern prevailing in South Somerset and suggests that, on this criterion, the town is slightly more 'self-contained' than the national average (54% working at home or within 20km).

A Thriving Town Centre

2.6 The town centre with its weekly market and strong retail presence is the hub of the local area, and known locally as a good shopping destination with a pleasant and friendly market town atmosphere. As an attractive historic centre with many independent shops and supporting services, it draws trade not only from residents, but from outlying villages and, increasingly, visitors from further afield. At the same

time, the centre provides employment for many local people and the market house, library and museum represent the administrative and community hub of the town.

2.7 The two free car parks within walking distance of the town centre, and free on-street parking spaces on and around the High Street, are seen to be crucial in attracting people into the town centre to shop.

2.8 However, the main route through the town centre (High Street and Fore Street) is noted for its traffic congestion, exacerbated by the narrow roads and on-street parking. While some take the view that this helps to create a busy and bustling atmosphere, it can make it less easy for pedestrians to move through the centre.

Good Education and Community Facilities

2.9 The town has a rich and varied social and cultural life, from sports clubs and carnival clubs to amateur dramatics and craft groups.

2.10 The town is well served by primary and secondary schools, and there is a range of good pre-school and nursery facilities, as well as long-established independent schools nearby. The Castle Cary Community Primary School is centrally located and has a very good reputation locally. It is close to capacity, some of which is provided by 'temporary' accommodation (now 20 years old). Secondary education is provided by Ansford Academy, at Maggs Lane on the north edge of the town, with further education provided through colleges in Yeovil, Street or Bruton. The Academy has a good reputation locally, and is not expected to exceed its capacity.

The Tuesday market

2.11 Caryford Community Hall, in Maggs Lane, is the principal community hall serving the settlements of Castle Cary and Ansford, providing the only multi-purpose community facility in the area and the only venue capable of accommodating large numbers, and with significant dedicated car parking provision. There is a range of other venues including three churches and a modern sports/leisure centre.

2.12 Caryford Community Hall, the Market House, Ansford Academy and the Methodist Schoolroom all offer venues for WEA, U3A and other courses for adults. The Town Council's 'Learning at the Market Place' initiative (LAMP), has an extensive and thriving variety of courses/classes for adults. The Carymoor Environmental Trust has carried out pioneering land restoration and habitat creation work on 100 acres of capped landfill at Dimmer, and their Environmental Education Centre provides inspirational outdoor learning for schools and community groups.

2.13 The Donald Pither Memorial Field provides a large open space, football and cricket pitch plus clubhouse and a children's play space. Adjoining these playing fields is the town's bowls club. The Ansford Academy has its own sports pitches and there is a further football pitch adjoining Caryford Hall. The town's rugby club has its own ground and club house approximately ½ mile north of the railway station (just outside the NP area). Allotments are available ½ mile south of the town.

2.14 Fairfield, recently acquired by the Town and Parish Councils, has now become available for public recreation purposes, with paths, pump-track, meadow gym, sensory garden, adventure trail and open grass areas for community events such as the annual fair.

Fairfield pump-track

A Reasonable Transport Network

2.15 The area is fortunate in having a railway station within one mile of the town centre, with good access to the national rail network (Paddington to Penzance), and also to the regional network with direct services to Bristol, Bath, Trowbridge, Yeovil, Dorchester and Weymouth. However, there is insufficient parking at the station and the rail services available are often not conducive to daily commuting in the immediate area, with the first direct train to the county town of Taunton not leaving until 10.32am.

2.16 Bus services currently connect to Shepton Mallet, Yeovil, Wells, Wincanton and Street and there is a C.A.T. bus (Community Accessible Transport – ring and ride) for use by the elderly and disabled. Again, timetables are rarely convenient for journeys to and from work.

2.17 Enhancement of the A303, the principal traffic route west-east through South Somerset, will ultimately lead to better access on a regional basis. The A371 passes through Ansford and serves as the main route north to Bath and Bristol and south to Wincanton and the A303. The road is the main route for HGVs to Shepton Mallet and Evercreech and also serves the industrial and commercial operations on Torbay Road industrial estate. Nevertheless, in spite of its status as part of the major road network, it has a major 'pinch-point' requiring traffic light control at Ansford, and a severe bend at the Castle Cary railway bridge which often requires large vehicles to use both sides of the carriageway.

2.18 Of the minor roads, the B3153 is also heavily used by HGVs for the Torbay industrial estate, the landfill site and recycling

Castle Cary station

centre at Dimmer. This is a narrow road, with many sections too narrow to allow large vehicles to pass safely, and has no footway for much of its length; the nature and speed of traffic and the potentially dangerous conditions experienced by drivers, pedestrians and cyclists continue to cause serious concerns for local residents, particularly at Clanville.

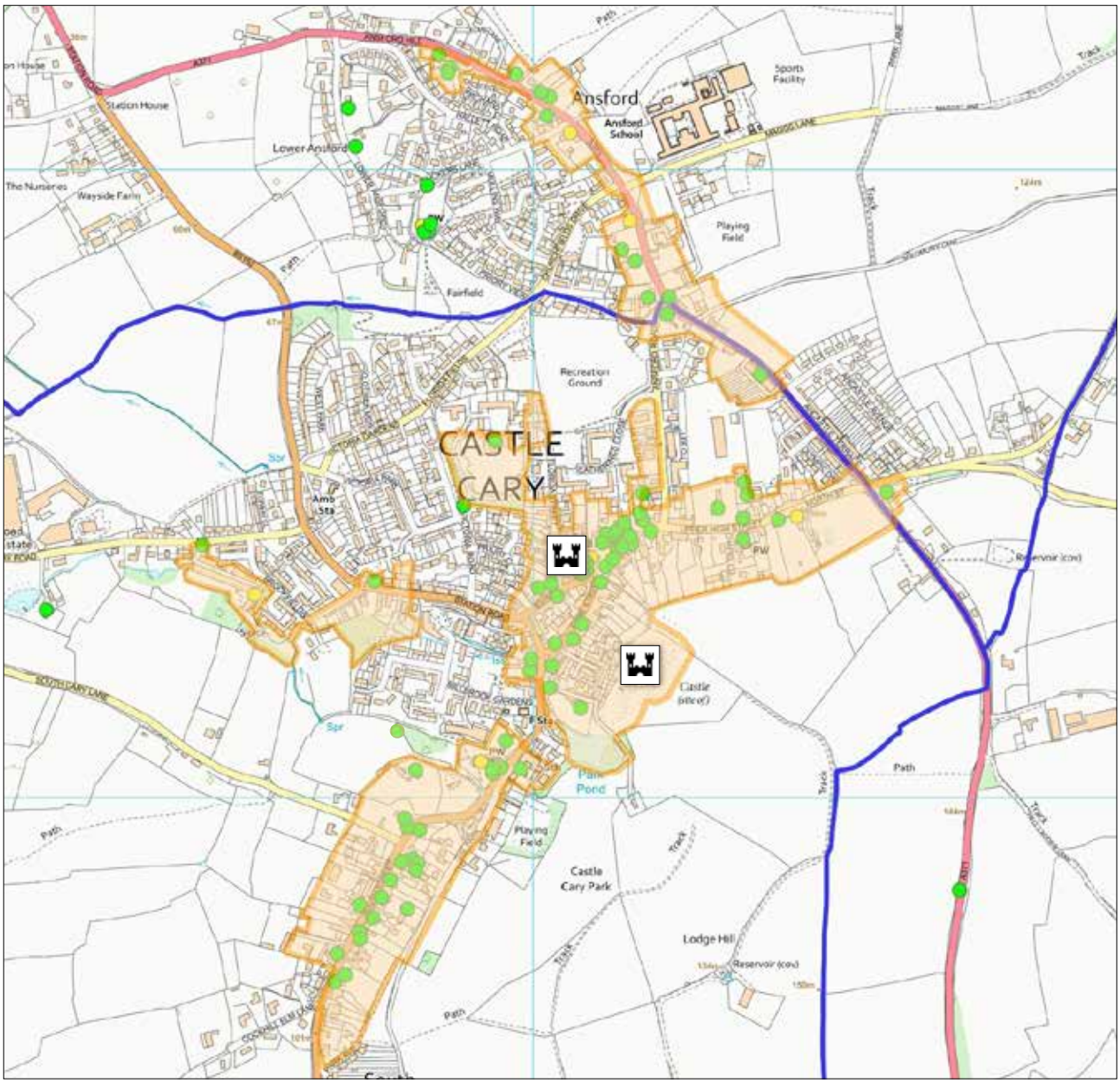
2.19 The town currently has no specifically defined pedestrian, cycle or wheelchair routes or facilities either into and out of the town centre or to places of employment, education or recreation. Pedestrian access to the rail station is along an unlit footpath which is poorly signed and marked.

A Distinctive Setting – the Built and Natural Environment

2.20 Castle Cary and Ansford benefit from the excellent building that took place during periods of prosperity. Many of the older buildings are constructed from the honey-coloured limestone from the nearby quarry at Hadspen; no other town is so dominated by historic, and later, buildings constructed from this particular material, which gives a strong and locally distinctive character to the town. The NP has 2 scheduled monuments (the Motte and Bailey Castle and Round House lock-up), 4 Conservation Areas, as illustrated on the map overleaf, and some 112 Listed Buildings and structures.

2.21 Apart from the incursion of the railway in the second half of the 19th century the wider countryside retains much of its early landscape – in contrast to what has happened in many other parts of the country. The farmland is also of high quality, with many areas graded 1, 2 or 3a (and therefore amongst the best and most versatile in the country).

The town centre from Lodge Hill



Map showing key heritage assets

Conservation areas

Scheduled monuments

Listed buildings:

Grade II

Grade II*

Parish boundaries

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3. The Future – Issues facing the Town

3.1 Local residents (and the evidence we found) have told us that:

a. there is concern that many potential development sites within the existing boundaries of the town have lain vacant and undeveloped for some years; we feel that priority should be given to resolving the issues which need to be addressed to enable such sites to come forward and provide new housing and employment close to the town centre and other facilities

b. while we accept the need for some additional housing within the 'Direction of Growth' identified in the Local Plan, permissions have already been granted for a very substantial number of new dwellings here, and there is a good supply of available brownfield sites. Any further release of greenfield sites for housing should be paused pending a review of recent permitted development and longer term housing requirements

c. if not matched by increased employment and improvements to infrastructure and the town centre, significant housing developments could undermine the sustainability or self-containment of the town

d. future development needs to be carefully planned if the town is to keep its reputation as a classic, historic market town situated in beautiful rolling countryside; new development needs to have good access to the town centre, the many local attractions and events, and the wider transport network

South Street

e. attracting new investment and businesses to the area should be supported through the provision of new employment sites, better infrastructure and maintenance of existing employment sites; this would help to reduce the proportion of local residents travelling long distances to work

f. there is concern that large volumes of heavy goods vehicles have disproportionate adverse effects: therefore not all types of business will be seen as suitable unless the road network can be improved

g. tourism is important to Castle Cary's economic prosperity and should be supported

h. the primary school is at capacity and will need to expand, ideally on its existing site. However, opportunities for expansion there are very limited and a new primary school is planned within the Direction of Growth

i. the rail connection is a significant benefit to local people and the local economy, but the timetabling of local services, parking and access to the station for those without a car, all need to be improved

j. new development should respect the distinctive character and historic charm of the area, and the important green spaces and corridors linking to the countryside – as these are enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike.

At work in the Horsehair Factory

3.2 Taking account of these issues in the context of the historic character of the area, we have established the following series of main aims to form a framework for this Neighbourhood Plan.

Main Aims

- to ensure that all new development respects the special character of the market town of Castle Cary and the parish of Ansford, in particular that new housing developments are of good quality, are energy efficient and have as low an environmental impact as possible
- to support the level of new dwellings required by the South Somerset Local Plan, giving priority to the sites committed for development within the Direction of Growth, the re-development or re-use of brownfield sites within the existing urban area and to affordable and social housing to meet local needs, with a mix of shared ownership/tenancy types
- to broaden the employment base of the town by supporting an environment in which enterprise can flourish, attracting new employers and creating new jobs for local people of all ages
- to ensure that the growing community is supported by the necessary infrastructure, with new housing provision, employment growth and provision of roads and additional community facilities progressing in an integrated manner
- to support increased tourism to the town and the wider area by preserving and promoting the area's heritage and retaining its special character
- to support, encourage and promote a range of shops and businesses in the town centre, protect the market, and maintain the free parking and public toilets
- to promote and support safe travel for all, by better management of traffic movements into and through the town centre; seeking improvements to public transport, cycle paths, footpaths and rights of way, parking provision; and improving links to town centre shops, schools and the railway station
- to foster and promote opportunities for education, training, sporting activities, cultural stimulation and fun – for people of all ages
- to maintain and enhance the urban green spaces and the natural environment within the countryside surrounding both parishes, for the enjoyment of all.

4. Designing for the Neighbourhood

Maim Aim

- to ensure that all new development respects the special character of the market town of Castle Cary and the parish of Ansford, in particular that new housing developments are of good quality, are energy efficient and have as low an environmental impact as possible.

4.1 The NP councils give the greatest importance to the detailed design of new development, based on the need to maintain and enhance the unique character of the town and its attractiveness as a place to live, a place to work and a destination for tourists. The following policy reflects the importance placed on this aspect of planning for a sustainable community; whilst primarily focussed on housing developments, the principles are applicable to the design of new buildings of all types and the NP councils will seek early consultation with developers on all such matters. Good design is essential for good planning and making places better for people. However, development can take many forms, and should not be subject to an onerous set of requirements that may hold back necessary and affordable development. The following principles will be applied to secure high quality in the built environment, but also having regard for development to meet functional requirements, achieve secure and safe environments, and be viable.

The George Hotel, Market Place

Policy DP1

The NP councils will expect all new development to be designed to the highest standards and to respect the unique character of Castle Cary and Ansford. The design principles set out below identify the criteria which will be used to assess all types of new development.

Design Principles

Character and Setting

a. The design of new development should take into account neighbouring uses, and particular regard should be given to how the physical aspects of the site, such as changes in level, are considered.

b. Historic street patterns and the grain of the surroundings should be respected. The materials used should also relate to surrounding building and be of high quality and in harmony with the colour palette generally used in the Castle Cary area.

c. Regional materials and vernacular architectural styles are to be utilised and reflected in the fenestration, detail and design of buildings, and local forms used to reinforce its geographical distinctiveness. If a contemporary approach is used, the design and build should be informed by surrounding townscape or landscape.

Bridgewater Buildings on Mill Lane

d. Large-scale developments should be designed to produce separate areas or 'places' with their own identity, and avoid the appearance and feel of large suburban-style estates. Rows of garages look poor and lack identity; small groups or courts are to be preferred.

e. Existing trees and hedges are to be retained wherever possible and can be used to delineate the boundaries of the development so that the whole forms a harmonious composition which relates well with the existing landscape. Other features such as ponds and streams should be retained and used to help reinforce interest and local identity, and planted areas or community buildings used to create focal points where no natural features are evident.

Security and Safety

a. Private, semi-private and public spaces should be clearly defined using walls, fences, gates and changes in surface. New housing adjoining public spaces and footpaths should be laid out with regard to securing good surveillance particularly where high fencing or hedging is used to protect residential amenity. Parking courts should, where possible, be overlooked.

b. The design of developments should encourage resident interaction, but also include private amenity space.

c. Developments should provide housing suitable for people of a variety of ages and types of residents, where the scale and site characteristics allow, to encourage 'passive surveillance' throughout the day and night.

d. Gated estates are not appropriate and will be resisted.

New housing faced in Cary stone

Access and Movement

a. The road network should not necessarily be the dominant factor in any layout design: roads should be designed to provide open spaces as well as to give access. Buildings should relate well to the road to ease accessibility and general surveillance. Cul-de-sacs, especially those without through access for pedestrians and cyclists, are to be avoided.

b. Carriageways, footpaths and verges often define the setting of new estates and should therefore be designed not only to provide inclusive accessibility, but also an attractive setting with its own distinctive identity. This needs to avoid repetitive monotony and to utilise a variety of surface textures.

c. Where practical, cycleways and footpaths should be segregated from roadways. These footpaths and cycle paths should be designed so that they can be used by mobility scooters and double buggies and lead directly to the town centre or link to routes that do. Opportunities should be taken to link such routes into adjoining areas and to provide ease of access to the surrounding countryside.

d. All such foot and cycle routes are to be discussed by developers, SSDC and the NP councils before construction starts.

e. Sufficient car parking and storage for bicycles and mobility scooters should be integrated and designed as unobtrusively as possible. Electric car charging points should be provided as part of developments to cater for future demand.

A footpath in Ansford

Environmental Footprint

a. Consideration should be given to how high standards of environmental performance can be integrated into the design. Passive and renewable energy sources, use of locally sourced materials and porous hard standing surfaces are examples.

b. The impact of sunlight, wind, views and privacy should also be considered in the design and layout of new developments. For example, developments should be appropriately orientated to maximise the use of solar gain and light and minimise exposure to prevailing weather.

c. We expect all new housing to achieve the highest standards of energy conservation ideally being carbon neutral both in construction materials/methods and function, but as a minimum complying with Government Building Regulations.

d. Opportunities should be sought to secure homes that are adaptable to the needs of a range of users – such as those working from home, or those with less mobility.

Recreation and Wellbeing

a. Open recreational spaces should be designed into new larger developments so that they are available to serve the whole community.

All Saints' Church

5. Housing

Main Aims

- to support the level of new dwellings required by the South Somerset Local Plan, giving priority to the sites committed for development within the Direction of Growth, the re-development or re-use of brownfield sites within the existing urban area and to affordable and social housing to meet local needs, with a mix of shared ownership/tenancy types
- to ensure that the growing community is supported by the necessary infrastructure, with new housing provision, employment growth and provision of roads and additional community facilities progressing in an integrated manner.

5.1 Policy SS5 of the adopted Local Plan (LP) sets a target for Castle Cary and Ansford of at least 374 dwellings from 2006 up to 2028; the LP provides for a 'direction of growth' (DofG), to the north-west of the town beyond the existing development area boundary, within which 'a permissive approach will be taken when considering housing proposals . . .'. The LP states (para 5.67) that the overall scale of growth (ie. 374 homes) and the wider policy framework will be key considerations 'with the emphasis upon maintaining the established settlement hierarchy and ensuring sustainable levels of growth'.

5.2 The LP does not provide for an overall masterplan to be prepared for the DofG, or require prospective developers to

North Street

prepare one. Consequently, there has been no specific guidance on any of the following points:

a. Phasing and the sequential release of sites, and how the acceptability of development proposals, either within or in excess of the minimum target, should be assessed in relation to matters such as:

   i. impact on the settlement hierarchy

   ii. impact on the level of self-containment of the town

   iii. impact on local infrastructure capacity

b. The protection of areas of higher visual sensitivity, including views of and from the Grade II Listed St Andrews Church

c. The need for pedestrian, cycle and other types of access to the town centre, railway station and other parts of the town

d. The need for green infrastructure, wildlife and recreational corridors connecting between the centre of the town to the station, employment sites and wider countryside.

5.3 The LP was formally adopted in March 2015, following which there has been significant interest shown in residential and other forms of development within the DofG. Planning permissions have now been granted on five large sites within this area for a total of 477 dwellings; construction work has started on two of these sites. In addition, there are still permissions on brownfield sites for some 88 dwellings, most of which have yet to be started. The table below summarises the current housing development pipeline.

5.4 With over 650 dwellings either completed or with permission, the available supply is substantially in excess of the minimum requirement of 374 in the LP period – by almost 75%. At the same time, it is evident that the average rate of completion during the first 11 years of the period was only 6 dwellings per annum, compared with an average rate of 17 per annum required to achieve 374 dwellings over the whole plan period.

5.5 With 68 dwellings completed, it would be expected that the NP area should now be looking to provide another 306 in the remaining 11 years of the plan period, or about 28 per annum; permissions granted now amount to 565 dwellings which is equivalent to just over 20 years supply at this rate.

5.6 This situation, of a very high number of committed dwellings in the NP area, has to a significant extent arisen as a result of the failure of SSDC to secure a five-year supply of housing land over the district as a whole, in particular on large sites

Table 5.1: Housing completions and permissions as at April 2017

Site	Dwellings	Notes
Nursery site	24	
Hillcrest School	24	
Constitutional Club	8	
The Priory	13	Under construction
Other sites (various < 5)	19	6 under construction
All brownfield sites	**88**	**Permitted**
Torbay Road	165	OPP 21.06.2016
West of Station Road	75	OPP 2016, RM approved 21.10.2016
Well Farm	37	Under construction 2017
Wayside Farm	125	OPP on appeal 12.01.2017
East of Station Road	75	Under construction 2018
All sites in Direction of Growth	**477**	**Permitted**
Current committments	565	with Planning Permission
Completed in period 2006–2017	68	
Total contribution to 2006–2028 LP Housing Requirement of 374	**653**	

OPP: outline planning permission RM: reserved matters
Sources: SSDC *Five-year Housing Land Supply Paper*, 09.2017; SSDC *Annual Monitoring Report*, 09.2017

at Yeovil and to a lesser extent at Chard and Crewkerne. The outcome has been that, even though Castle Cary and Ansford are 'doing their bit' for housing supply, there is a perception that the 'direction of growth' is being interpreted as an 'area of growth' to solve issues of housing shortage which are actually occurring elsewhere in the district.

5.7 Such a situation has caused understandable concern for local people: the census of 2011 showed 1643 dwellings in the combined parishes; the addition of another 650 represents an increase of almost 40%. Whilst that scale of increase might be

acceptable over 20 years, the prospect of it occurring over a much shorter period generates local concerns about the types of change that might occur to the special character of the town, and resentment at apparently unfair treatment by the planning system.

5.8 In addition to the above, there is still one significant undeveloped brownfield site, the former BMI site at Cumnock Road, which is potentially capable of providing a further 80 dwellings (at the time of writing, this is subject to an application for a development of 81 dwellings). Overall, therefore, the potential for additional housing within the settlement boundary is far from being exhausted, current permissions and additional potential amounting to approximately 168 dwellings, or about 45% of the total minimum requirement for the Local Plan period. This reinforces concerns over high numbers of permissions for houses on greenfield sites in the direction of growth, moreover that these will cause investment to be diverted away from brownfield sites which have lain dormant and unsightly for many years.

5.9 Furthermore, although substantial numbers of new dwellings have been approved, such permissions have not been accompanied by equivalent permissions for employment development. While it is accepted that there can be little control over the choices people make for their workplace, there are concerns that substantial housing provision without appropriate local employment opportunities will lead to a reduction in the self-containment of the town and additional traffic on the local highway network.

The BMI brownfield site

5.10 The NP councils do not accept that by simply granting more and more planning permissions, the outcome will be to increase the short-term supply of housing in their area. Indeed, this is precisely the conclusion reached by the inspector who determined the two appeals which resulted in permissions being granted for development of a total of 200 dwellings in the DofG in January 2017. Whilst he did allow the appeals, he made the point that 'the granting of permissions for either of these two schemes, in addition to those recently granted by the Council are, in my view, unlikely to add significantly to the rate of housing delivery at A/CC in the next five years, if indeed any more are delivered. They would be unlikely to boost the supply of housing in South Somerset now, although they could contribute significantly in the years thereafter' (Appeal refs 3035753 para 51 and 3121541 para 52).

5.11 In the light of all these factors, with over 550 dwellings now approved and the great majority yet to be started, combined with significant brownfield sites still to come forward, the NP proposes a two-pronged approach: to place a clear emphasis on encouraging the early development of available sites within the settlement area boundary, especially those which have remained derelict or unsightly for many years; and, for the time being, to pause further release of greenfield sites in the DofG unless clear justification, based on strictly local circumstances, can be shown. The delivery of housing schemes listed in Table 5.1 within Ansford/Castle Cary will be monitored. A review of the neighbourhood plan within the next five years will include assessment of the impact of ongoing development on the town's infrastructure and role as a smaller local market town. The review will consider the need for additional development within the DofG, for example to compensate for any non-delivery of the schemes in Table 5.1.

Actions

5.12 The NP councils will work with SSDC and local landowners to help 'unlock' and bring forward the earliest possible development of brownfield sites to help meet the remaining housing land supply requirements to 2028.

5.13 The NP councils will work with local service providers to help highlight and resolve any phasing issues that need to be considered in the delivery of housing, employment and infrastructure.

5.14 The NP councils will work with SSDC and local landowners to monitor progress on the delivery of new housing in Castle Cary and Ansford, and monitor compliance with emerging housing policy in the South Somerset Local Plan 2016–36.

Policy HOU1

Housing development within the settlement area

The NP councils will encourage and support early development or redevelopment for housing purposes of brownfield sites within the settlement area, in particular:

- Nursery site
- Hillcrest School
- Constitutional Club
- BMI site
- Red House.

Policy HOU2

Housing development in the Direction of Growth

While there remains a substantially greater supply of permissions for housing development within the NP area than the LP minimum requirement, further proposals for housing development within the direction of growth will be paused unless there is clear evidence that the additional housing will help meet a clearly identified local need for affordable or social housing (that need arising from within the NP area and its hinterland) that is not capable of being met elsewhere. Whilst additional sites to those already committed for development are available within the Direction of Growth, these will not be brought forward for development unless the emerging South Somerset Local Plan requires their release, and it can be demonstrated that further housing development would not have a significantly adverse effect on the character of this modest market town and its infrastructure.

The brownfield site at Hillcrest School

6. Employment & Enterprise

Main Aims

- to broaden the employment base of the town by supporting an environment in which enterprise can flourish, attracting new employers and creating new jobs for local people of all ages
- to ensure that the growing community is supported by the necessary infrastructure, with new housing provision, employment growth and provision of roads and additional community facilities progressing in an integrated manner.

6.1 The LP target is to see about 19 hectares of employment land developed up to 2028, which should support the provision of around 270 jobs. The latest District Council monitoring report (September 2017) shows that between 2006 and 2017 the net gain in employment land was just under 9ha, and approximately 16,000sq.m of floorspace, with a small area (500sq.m and 0.2ha) under construction. The report notes that by far the most significant element of the gain was due to a single development – the Royal Canin petfood factory (13,500sq.m on 8.1ha, a relatively small amount of floorspace on such a large area of land).

6.2 As part of the proposals for adjoining land north of Torbay Road a further 2 hectares of employment land received outline planning permission in 2016 (Ref 15/02347/OUT, 21 June 2016). Land to the North-West of this site alongside the

At the Torbay Road trading estate

railway line appears to be ideally suited to provide longer term opportunities for employment uses, particularly as development here is unlikely to impact on nearby homes or other sensitive uses.

6.3 It is important for the continuing self-containment of the town that sufficient employment land is provided to correspond with the development of new housing. Further opportunities for smaller-scale employment development may also exist, such as the former BMI site to the north of the High Street, and land adjacent to the railway station where there is already some small scale developed employment land on the north side of the station. Any such development should not prejudice the provision of sufficient parking for rail users.

6.4 All types of employment-generating development are welcomed. However, in order to reduce the reliance of the area on a small number of large-scale employers, the NP councils will give particular encouragement to:

a. small and medium scale enterprises of all kinds, especially those able to provide apprenticeships

b. light industrial and high tech occupiers within Class B1

c. businesses related to agriculture

d. nursery units suitable for small-scale and micro-businesses

e. small scale office development.

Policy EMP1
Delivery of further employment land

The development of land for employment uses, particularly those falling within Use Classes B1 and B2, will normally be supported, provided that this can be accommodated without significant visual or environmental harm or adverse impact on the local road network.

Policy EMP2
Expansion of existing employment premises

The NP councils will normally give support to proposals for the expansion of existing employment premises, particularly those which maintain or increase the level of employment opportunities.

6.5 Large-scale warehouse and logistics uses (Use Class B8) give rise to particular local concerns regarding the number of very large heavy goods vehicles which are frequently generated by such uses and the routes which they are forced to take through the NP area using roads which are not suited to their size and weight. This issue is addressed further in the Transport chapter and Policy TRA2.

Actions

6.6 The NP councils will work with Somerset County Council (SCC), SSDC and the emerging Chamber of Commerce to promote Castle Cary and Ansford as a location for modern employment development.

6.7 The NP councils will encourage SSDC to improve the infrastructure and layout of the Torbay Road site (which is owned by the District Council) and facilitate its future expansion.

At work on the farm

7. Tourism

Main Aim

- to support increased tourism to the town and the wider area by preserving and promoting the area's heritage and retaining its special character.

7.1 Castle Cary lies in the South Somerset countryside, shaped over the centuries not by great and powerful landowners but largely by farming and associated industries and markets. Its history is still reflected in its present layout, buildings, open spaces and its people.

7.2 It is not surprising that the area is a popular tourist destination with both day trippers who come for a special event or are passing through, and tourists who have booked accommodation and stay for one or more days.

7.3 Local attractions include the town itself, with its own rural life museum, together with the surrounding countryside and its extensive network of footpaths and bridleways (many of which link to national trails), and numerous historic buildings, museums and other destinations and events. Long-established tourist destinations have more recently been supplemented by Hauser & Wirth Somerset and will shortly be joined by Emily Estate at Hadspen House, expected to open in spring 2019.

7.4 The Town Council's recent development of an excellent website and a Facebook page provide a valuable source of information about local events and accommodation. Good quality brochures and maps of the neighbourhood are widely available, some sponsored by local businesses. Further publicity and attractive and helpful signage on access routes into the town, and to places of interest within the town itself, can also help maintain the area's profile as a popular tourist destination.

7.5 The NP councils see the encouragement of tourism as bringing about a wide range of benefits, in particular by supporting employment and economic activity in areas such as visitor accommodation, restaurants and pubs, retail and other town centre activity.

Actions

7.6 The NP councils will work with SCC, SSDC and local attractions to support and enhance Castle Cary and Ansford as an attractive and accessible destination for tourists, using active and imaginative marketing of the area, and improved signage into and within the town.

7.7 The NP councils will encourage the organisation and promotion of local events, investment in the provision of accommodation and catering, and the protection and improvement of the network of country footpaths in the area for walkers.

7.8 The NP councils will work with SCC and local landowners to keep all current footpaths open for ramblers.

Policy TOU1
New and enhanced tourist facilities and visitor accommodation

The development of new or enhanced tourist facilities and visitor accommodation will be supported provided they are of a scale appropriate to the size and function of Castle Cary/Ansford as a local Market Town, do not harm the Town's environmental, cultural or heritage assets and, where appropriate, are accessible through sustainable modes of travel including rail, cycling and walking.

The Round House lockup

8. The Town Centre

Main Aims

- to support, encourage and promote a range of shops and businesses in the town centre, protect the market, and maintain the free parking and public toilets
- to promote and support safe travel for all, by better management of traffic movements into and through the town centre; seeking improvements to public transport, cycle paths, footpaths and rights of way, parking provision; and improving links to town centre shops, schools and the railway station.

8.1 The LP defines Castle Cary/Ansford as a Local Market Town on the basis of its strong employment, retail and community role. In this Plan we seek to maintain and promote this position, especially with tourism becoming increasingly important. Meetings with local businesses and the local community have clearly shown that the town centre is at the social heart of the town and forms an important part of the local economy. The town centre provides quality shopping with many niche and independent traders and a range of supplementary services.

8.2 The town centre boundary is defined in the LP and is based around the High Street, Market Place, Bailey Hill and Fore Street. There are some sixty-nine outlets, of which seven were recorded as vacant in January 2017, though observation shows that the number and location of vacancies is constantly changing. The wide range of outlets, most of which are privately owned and managed, provide an important source of local employment. Town centre shopping is supplemented by the weekly Tuesday morning market, which was revived in 2014.

8.3 There are two free car parks within walking distance of the centre and free on-street time limited parking spaces. These parking facilities are seen to be crucial to the town centre retailers in terms of maintaining footfall and the number of available spaces will need to be increased as the town grows.

8.4 A key issue for the town centre concerns the conflict between: the attractive and inviting character created by its conservation area status and numerous historic buildings; and the restrictions which such historic buildings impose on the

A view up the High Street

requirements of modern retailing. The result is that there is virtually no existing space suitable for retailers requiring larger display and sales areas.

8.5 The South Somerset Retail Study (GVA Grimley for SSDC, 2010 update) highlights the combination of narrow pavements and traffic congestion in some parts of the centre, suggesting that this is compounded by on-street parking and the absence of pedestrian crossing points and pedestrianised areas, and makes it difficult for shoppers to move around the centre. By contrast, however, some local traders have suggested that a level of traffic congestion contributes to a vibrant, bustling atmosphere and makes it easier for pedestrians to negotiate the shopping streets.

8.6 The South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study (Lichfields for SSDC, 2017) suggests that there is some scope for additional food retail space to be provided in the town, suggesting a figure of 737sq.m, approximating to the size of a small supermarket or convenience store. However, there appears to be little scope for any significant expansion of the centre beyond its existing boundaries to respond to demands for new retail space caused by increases in population. In a situation where the NP councils are presently unable to identify any specific retail development opportunities, they rely on national and LP policy which indicates a clear preference for new retail development to be located within or immediately adjacent to the existing town centre.

8.7 At a time when new housing is being encouraged and significant permissions have already been granted, the absence

of significant scope for town centre expansion points to a need to ensure the retention of all existing shop and related town centre uses in the town centre. Consequently, when responding to situations where planning permission is required, the NP councils will resist proposals for changes of use within the town centre which involve the loss of any type of main town centre use (as defined in Appendix B).

Actions

8.8 The NP councils will work with SCC to investigate innovative traffic management and parking solutions to improve the experience of those visiting or using the town centre and better manage and control through traffic.

Town Centre Policies

8.9 As discussed above, policy TC1 seeks to avoid loss of all existing retail and related uses where an application for planning permission is required. This is intended to apply to all Class A uses together with other main town centre uses (as defined in Appendix B), which provide shop window frontages contributing to town centre vitality.

8.10 The main purpose of policy TC2 is to make sure that development in the Town Centre does not reduce the availability of shopper parking, through the under-provision of on-site parking or the reduction in the number of available spaces.

Policy TC1
Loss of retail or similar premises

The NP councils will not support any proposals for change of use within the town centre which involve the loss of floorspace used for main town centre uses, as defined in Appendix B.

Policy TC2
Town Centre Parking

Development which would either directly or indirectly reduce the public car parking provision in the Town Centre will not be supported.

9. Transport Infrastructure & Accessibility

Main Aims

- to promote and support safe travel for all, by better management of traffic movements into and through the town centre; seeking improvements to public transport, cycle paths, footpaths and rights of way, parking provision; and improving links to town centre shops, schools and the railway station.

9.1 Managing the impact of new development on the road network is a key issue for the local highway authority, not only in terms of increased capacity and potential safety issues, but also from a sustainability objective to ensure that there are reasonable alternatives to the car for people living, working and visiting the area. Many local roads are used by more than just local traffic, and many local businesses and services cater for a much wider area. Many of the existing roads are unsuitable for HGVs, and there are known 'local highway hotspots' where the impact of very large vehicles is a cause for concern on traffic and environmental grounds:

a. the B3153 at Clanville where the road narrows to a point where the central white line has been removed to acknowledge that two large vehicles cannot pass each other; this is a location where there is no pedestrian footway and residential property is in close proximity; HGV traffic from Torbay Road and Dimmer is forced to use this route because of the low bridge just to the west.

b. the A371 at Cumnock Road, Ansford, where the road is so narrow that signal control has been in operation for many years. Whilst various improvements have recently been carried out, there remain concerns about the proximity and speed of large vehicles and their relationship with residential property.

c. the A371 at Ansford Hill, between Tuckers Lane and Elms Lane, another 'pinch point' where the road narrows to an extent where the central white line has been removed: lorries are known to clash with each other here and, again, there is no pedestrian footway.

d. the Ansford railway bridge on the A371, where HGVs coming south have to use the entire width of the road as they come over the bridge at the junction with the B3153.

9.2 The town also lacks a comprehensive network of safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists travelling into and out of the town centre and to places of employment, education or recreation.

9.3 Policy LMT1 of the LP requires that, as part of any expansion within the direction of growth, a road will be expected to be provided between Station Road and Torbay Road prior to completion of the expansion. The stated purpose of this road (LP para 7.120) is 'to improve access and egress to new and existing employment and better integration of the development within the town'. A planning permission (reference 15/02347/OUT) has been granted for 165 dwellings and 2ha of employment land off Torbay Road, and while this includes a condition requiring construction of a link road by the developer, no firm alignment has yet been approved. Illustrative plans show a road which is superficially in accordance with the LP policy, but the NP councils remain concerned that it would not achieve adequate traffic and environmental benefits and, in the event of further planning applications being made, will continue to press for a route which removes the need for HGV traffic to use Clanville and Blackworthy Road.

9.4 Key points that came through the local consultations were the need to:

a. investigate innovative traffic management and parking solutions to improve the experience of those visiting or using

The B3153 at Clanville

the town centre and better manage and control through traffic (this is included under the Town Centre section above)

b. provide safe pedestrian and cycle routes within the town and connecting to the employment sites, schools and railway station – these should be suitably signed and lit, accessible by wheelchair users, and with convenient crossing points or segregated from traffic (where vehicles numbers are high).

c. investigate the scope for a bus service connecting the town centre to the railway station, and maintain and improve bus services in general.

d. work with Great Western Railway on the provision of additional car parking spaces at the train station and the provision of additional services for commuters and visitors.

9.5 Castle Cary railway station to the north of the town is the most used railway station in South Somerset. However, the current lack of car parking capacity is constraining growth at this station, not only in terms of limiting the potential for more users but also by limiting the stopping patterns for trains at the station – as already indicated, the first train westbound to Taunton currently departs at 10.32, far too late for most journeys to work. Increasing car parking at the station would facilitate better stopping patterns for trains and subsequently better opportunities for local people and visitors to use rail transport for all types of journeys. Extending the car park has the support of Network Rail and the Train Operating Company (GWR). The latter has applied to the LEP for a contribution to expand the car park. Increasing car parking capacity has been identified as a key piece of infrastructure in the South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) *[South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015/16 page 25 para 8.3. Priority 2 = infrastructure that is required to support new development proposed in the Local Plan, but the precise timing and phasing is less critical and development can commence ahead of its provision]*.

9.6 As noted above, there are significant local concerns about the environmental and road safety implications of HGV traffic on the B3153 at Clanville, and at three separate places along the A371 through Ansford – these are shown as 'Highway hot-spots' on the policies map, and Policy TRA2 below will be applicable to any development requiring a transport assessment. Local concerns relating to HGV traffic at Clanville have already been recognised in three separate appeal decisions between 2014 and 2018 (appeal references 2210452, 3024073 and 3186158).

Actions

9.7 The NP councils will work with SCC and local landowners to provide an improved network of pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the town and connecting to the railway station and the wider area, for both everyday and recreational use. Particular priority will be given to improving the footpath from Ansford Hill to the railway station.

9.8 The NP councils will work with SCC and local transport providers (bus and rail) to improve local services and facilities to maximise the potential to use public transport. Particular emphasis will be placed on improving the car parking capacity at Castle Cary railway station. The NP councils recognise the importance of Community Accessible Transport for those without access to their own vehicle and will seek to ensure that this service is maintained.

9.9 The NP councils will continue to press for a link road between Torbay Road and Station Road, liaising with SCC as local highway authority and SSDC, to deliver Policy LMT1 of the Local Plan which expects a link road to be provided prior to the completion of growth in housing, employment and education in the area. The alignment of the new road should remove the need for HGV traffic to use Clanville and Blackworthy Road. A preferred route is shown on the policies map.

Dangerous bend on the A371 Ansford railway bridge

Transport Policies

9.10 Policy TA5 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that all new development addresses its own transport implications and is designed to maximise the potential for sustainable transport. What the following policies do is raise awareness of local issues and opportunities, so that these are taken into account in assessing development proposals and prioritising future investment in the transport infrastructure.

Policy TRA1
Opportunities to improve the transport network

Development proposals should provide or maintain a safe and convenient highway network that, where appropriate, meets the following requirements:

- the provision of new or improved links to the existing highway network to promote a choice of reasonably direct and safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists into the town centre, main employment sites, and to the railway station, linking to the key route network
- the provision of opportunities for enhanced, attractive walking and cycling routes linking to the wider rights of way network into the countryside.

Policy TRA2
HGV traffic at Local Highway Hotspots

Transport assessments associated with applications for employment and similar development should make specific reference to the environmental and road safety implications of HGV and other traffic at the local highway hotspots identified on the policies map: B3153 at Clanville; A371 at Cumnock Road, Ansford; A371 Ansford Hill between Tuckers Lane and Elms Lane; A371 railway bridge at the junction with B3153.

10. Education, Social & Community Assets

MAIN AIMS

- to foster and promote opportunities for education, training, sporting activities, cultural stimulation and fun - for people of all ages
- to ensure that the growing community is supported by the necessary infrastructure, with new housing provision, employment growth and provision of roads and additional community facilities progressing in an integrated manner.

10.1 Any significant development of housing within Castle Cary and Ansford or in the surrounding rural parishes that depend on the town for their services, will inevitably have an impact on local service provision. At public consultation meetings residents have consistently expressed strong views on the retention and enhancement of the town's social and community infrastructure, with the various social clubs and public facilities such as the community halls, churches, library, post office and meeting rooms, being seen as vital to the well-being and vitality of the town.

10.2 Planning permissions granted for significant housing and other developments have all been accompanied by planning obligations (Section 106 agreements) setting out the contributions which developers have agreed to pay towards local infrastructure. Full details are set out in the annual 'Parish Account' issued by SSDC, but the following list provides a summary of potential capital contributions in different categories as at March 2017 (all figures are rounded and subject to index-linking when the relevant contribution becomes payable):

Community halls	£240,770
Youth facilities	£81,156
Sports pitches	£202,878
Changing rooms	£379,311
Equipped play areas	£349,663
Primary education	£2,801 per dwelling

Source: SSDC 2017

10.3 Education is critical in making sure local people have the skills and training to reach their own individual potential, understand the world in which we live, and to support a

prosperous local economy. This should stretch from pre-school/ nursery right through to further education opportunities, many of which are already provided in town.

10.4 **Castle Cary Community Primary School** Additional accommodation is likely to be needed to correspond with the amount of housing that has already been approved; a guideline formula for providing new school places when new houses are built suggests:

- Early years 5 pupils per 100 dwellings
- Primary 32 pupils per 100 dwellings
- Secondary 14 pupils per 100 dwellings

Source: Somerset County Council 2019

In virtually all cases, currently approved housing developments are accompanied by planning obligations requiring developers to provide funds to be allocated for primary school education.

10.5 The provision of a new primary school to the west of the town, is included as a reserved site in the outline planning permission for 165 homes and other development off Torbay Road (reference 15/02347/OUT). Even though provision in that location is not supported by all the local community, Somerset County Council schools commissioning team has undertaken feasibility studies which demonstrate that the current school site will not be satisfactory for the future. The proposed new site in the Direction of Growth, granted planning permission in June 2016 (Ref: 15/02347/OUT), will accommodate an appropriate sized school with adequate hall, sports facilities and other requirements. Any suggestion that primary age children could be bussed to surrounding village schools would be strongly resisted.

Castle Cary Community Primary School

10.6 **Ansford Academy** in Maggs Lane provides secondary education up to GCSE level. The school can accommodate 720 pupils and currently has in the region of 600. The buildings date from 1939 and are on a spacious site which could allow for future expansion if required.

10.7 The recent loss of the **Constitutional Club** as a venue has made the need for improvements to Caryford Community Hall a matter of some urgency. Additional meeting rooms, and improved toilets, kitchen and bar are being planned and funding sought. Planning obligations already require developers of major housing schemes to provide funds to be allocated to community hall provision, and the NP councils consider that priority should be given to appropriate improvements at Caryford when these funds become available.

10.8 There is an urgent need for new premises for a youth club and the premises used by the Scouts and the Army and Air Cadets are far from ideal. The **Swainson Building** (owned by SCC) was previously used by the youth club but is now largely occupied by the ToyBox Pre-school, leaving little space for any other activities. Our preferred option is for a site to be found within the Torbay Road development area, as indicated on the policies map. Alternatively, in the event of the existing primary school being vacated, consideration should be given to use of part or all of the building for youth and community facilities. Planning obligations already require developers of major housing schemes to provide funds to be allocated for the provision of youth facilities, and the NP councils will press for these to be allocated towards appropriate services in the area.

Ansford Academy

10.9 The potential to expand the town's leisure facilities including indoor and outdoor sports courts and pitches, and a swimming pool, will also need to be considered. In particular, further equipped play areas may need to be included within larger housing development to provide a reasonable choice and distribution around the town.

Education, Social & Community Infrastructure policies

10.10 The District Council as the local planning authority secures the provision of (or financial contributions towards) education, social and community facilities that are necessary to enable new development to proceed, and is committed to working with various service providers to ensure these are delivered in a timely fashion. LP policy LMT1 allows for the provision of education within the Direction of Growth and that is provided under the following policy.

10.11 The LP includes policy EP15 to resist the loss of local shops and post offices, public houses, community or cultural facilities and other services that contribute towards the sustainability of a local settlement. Appendix A makes clear the current facilities within the NP area which the local community sees as contributing most significantly to the character and sustainability of the town and enhancing its market town status. Thus far it has not been seen as necessary or appropriate to designate them formally as 'Assets of Community Value' under the Localism Act 2011. However, the NP councils will take action to see that these are maintained and protected.

The Environmental Centre, Carymoor

Action

The NP Councils will continue to work on the identification of important social and community facilities, and seek their listing on the SSDC register of Assets of Community Value where appropriate. The NP Councils will seek to ensure that important facilities are maintained and protected.

Policy INF1
Primary School provision

The NP councils will seek to ensure that future growth of primary school provision takes place at the selected site in the Direction of Growth to meet the needs of the Ansford/ Castle Cary community.

Policy INF2
Youth facilities provision

The NP councils will liaise with SSDC and seek funding where possible from relevant s106 and CIL sources to be allocated towards appropriate youth facilities.

Policy INF3
Community Hall provision

The NP councils will liaise with SSDC and seek funding where possible from relevant s106 and CIL sources to be allocated towards local community hall provision, giving priority to improvements at Caryford Community Hall.

Market House Undercroft leading to the Shambles

11. The Natural & Built Environment

Main Aim

- to maintain and enhance the urban green spaces and the natural environment within the countryside surrounding both parishes, for the enjoyment of all.

The Natural Environment

11.1 The South Somerset Local Plan defines green infrastructure as the mosaic of natural landscape features, spaces and corridors that lie within and between developed areas. They are essential elements of the character and appearance of an area and contribute positively to cultural heritage, the health and well-being of the local community and the general quality of life. In addition to enriching visual amenity they offer opportunities for informal recreation and provide wildlife habitats and the connectivity between them.

11.2 Castle Cary and Ansford is a compact settlement surrounded by countryside with a number of green links from the town centre to the surrounding countryside. A particularly important connection between the town and its surrounding countryside is via the Donald Pither Memorial Field, Fairfield and the land between Well Farm and the approved Well Farm housing area, which then opens out onto the fields to the east of Station Road up to the A371. The fields to the east of Station Road with their hedgerows, trees and old orchards provide a prominent

Cary Moor Drove on the Macmillan Way

and important part of the local landscape alongside Station Road, one of the main entrance routes to Castle Cary. With the other approved housing developments to the west of Station Road and north of Torbay Road the maintenance of this green corridor and green gateway to the town centre becomes more important.

11.3 In public meetings and presentations the local community has clearly stated that it wishes to see footpaths and tracks kept open and in a usable state, and that the countryside around the town is highly valued by the residents, it provides the unique setting for Castle Cary and Ansford and is used by walkers, cyclists, birdwatchers and horse riders. As such, the countryside, trees, hedgerows and limited woodland around Castle Cary and Ansford need protecting, as do the green spaces within the town and green links to the countryside. The NP councils' purchase of Fairfield for retention as open space is widely supported.

11.4 National policy (NPPF para 77) allows local communities, through neighbourhood plans, to designate sites as 'Local Green Spaces'. Such spaces are required to be well-related to the community that they serve, not to be extensive tracts of land, and must be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance, for example because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of wildlife. The open areas listed below are considered to comply with these criteria; none are extensive areas, all are well related to the community and each has a particular local significance:

Sheep at Cockhill

a. **Donald Pither Memorial Playing Field** and adjoining playground to the south – occupying land donated to the town by the parents of a man who died in the second world war, this is the central open space in the town and its most important playing field and play-space

b. **Fairfield** – recently purchased jointly by the NP councils, the traditional location for the annual fair has now been transformed into a place for all types of public recreation purposes, with paths, pump-track, meadow gym, sensory garden, adventure trail and open grass areas for community events

c. **Moat Garden** – a small community garden created with the help of lottery funding and now owned by a local charitable organisation, this provides a place with wildlife interest for quiet relaxation close to the town centre

d. **Millennium Wood** – former glebe land associated with the parish church, planted as part of the millennium celebrations with trees donated by local people

e. **EatCary community garden** – a community venture dedicated to sharing horticulture, gardening, cooking and healthy eating

f. **Jubilee Garden, Ansford** – formerly the site of the Ansford war memorial, now a small landscaped garden.

The Donald Pither Memorial Field

11.5 Castle Cary and Ansford are linked settlements: Castle Cary is a beautiful small market town with many fine buildings integrated into an informal meandering street pattern with a central Market House and cobbled apron; Ansford is an enlarged village with a conservation area at its core and sporadic traditional former farmhouses set amongst newer detached housing and small estates of 30–40 year old properties.

11.6 The LP recognises that the historic environment is a valuable part of South Somerset's cultural heritage and contributes significantly to the local economy and identity of the district, adding to the quality of life and well-being of residents and visitors. Whether in the form of individual buildings, archaeological sites, historic market towns or landscapes, the conservation of this heritage is important for the present and future generations. All new development should respect this heritage, and seek to reinforce the distinctive local character through, for example, the use of local materials where appropriate. The community consultations clearly highlighted the very strong desire to protect the local historic environment and setting of Castle Cary and Ansford, and the desirability of repairing and bringing empty and derelict listed buildings back in to full use as soon as possible.

Setts on the Pitching

Actions

11.7 The NP councils will work with the owner of the land between Well Farm and the Well Farm housing development (and excluded from the development area) to maintain that land as open space providing the green link between the town centre and the open fields running out to the A371.

11.8 The NP councils will encourage SSDC to enforce the repair, refurbishment and appropriate use of vacant and dilapidated listed buildings.

Natural and Built Environment policies

11.9 The following policies add to the Development Management advice and guidance and highlights those particular green spaces, features and views that are locally valued.

Policy ENV1
Protection of green corridors and natural environment

The NP councils will seek to protect existing green corridors, footpath links, hedgerows and other natural features of the local environment, and to institute new or replacement features as opportunities arise.

Policy ENV2
Local Green Spaces

The following locations are designated as Local Green Spaces where development will only be permitted if it would maintain or enhance their use as a local green space:

- Donald Pither Memorial Playing Field and adjoining playground to the south
- Fairfield
- Moat Garden
- Millennium Wood
- EatCary community garden, Ansford
- Jubilee Garden, Ansford

12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 The NP will run concurrently with the South Somerset Local Plan and apply until March 2028. It is, however, a response to the needs and aspirations of the local community as understood today, and it is recognised that current challenges and concerns are likely to change over the plan period. It is, therefore, essential for the long term success of the Plan that developments in the NP area are monitored and reviewed against the Plan's Aims and Policies.

12.2 It is expected that SSDC will continue to monitor progress relating to the number of dwellings including affordable homes which are delivered during the Plan period. Hence, monitoring of Policy HOU2 will be achieved by reference to SSDC's series of annual monitoring reports and housing land availability reports.

12.3 The NP Councils will liaise with SSDC and other stakeholders to monitor progress on employment and other development, as well as housing, in Castle Cary and Ansford. In particular, progress on a new link road and primary school in the Direction of Growth will be monitored.

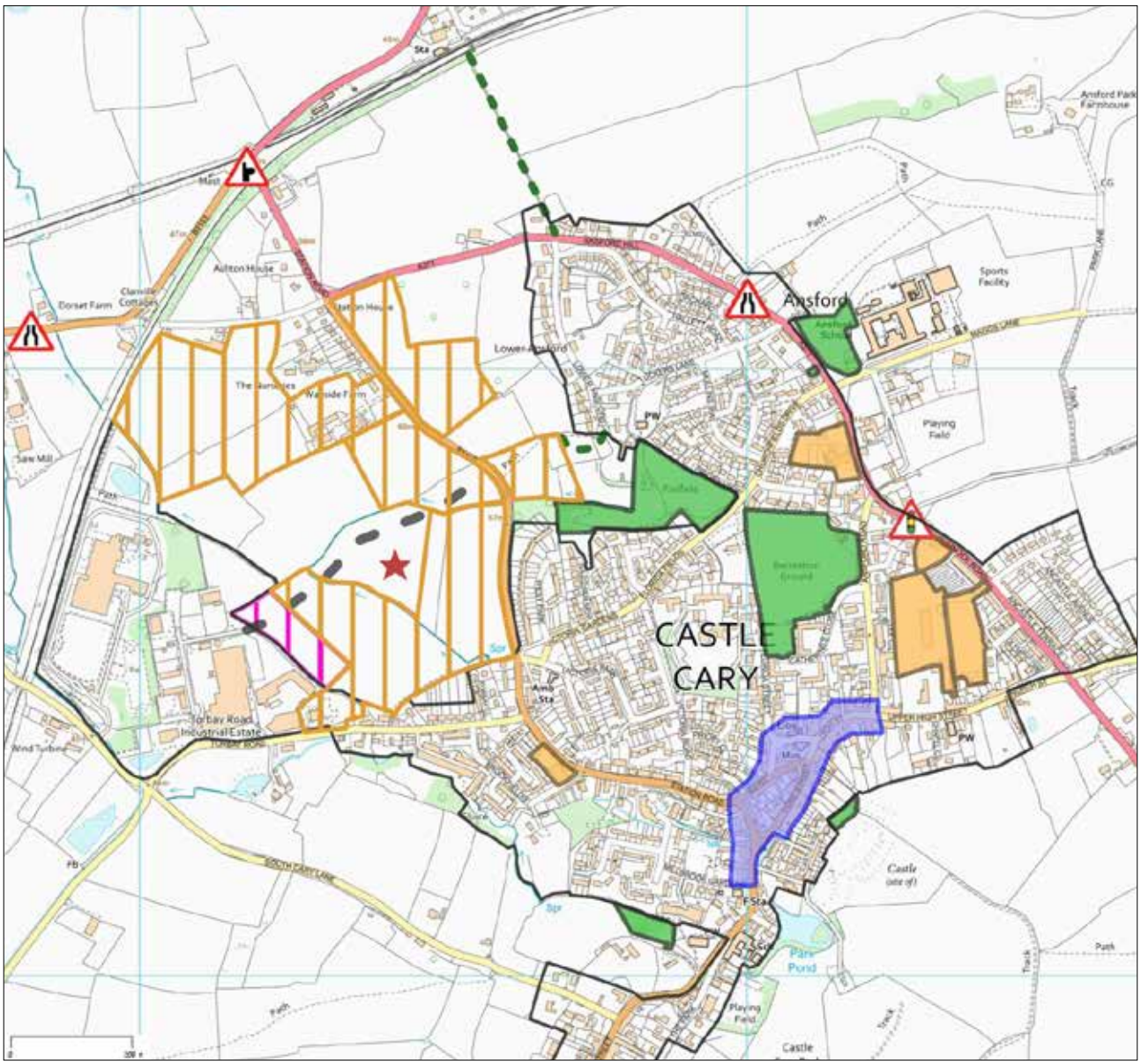
12.4 The NP Councils will liaise with SSDC and SCC to monitor the impact of new development on:

- The self-containment of the area (which may be eroded if new housing development outstrips the creation of new employment space and jobs);
- Transport infrastructure, bearing in mind the identified hotspots on the A371 and B3153 and the limitations to public transport in the area;
- The vitality of the town centre with its diversity of retail outlets and other community facilities;
- The historic character and appearance of the old market town in a rural setting.

12.5 The NP Councils in liaison with SSDC will consider the case for further development within the Direction of Growth following review of the current NP.

12.6 At a more general level, the NP Councils will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance to current community needs. It is intended that a review of all the issues and needs of the community will take place every 5 years. However, SSDC are in the process of preparing a Local Plan Review to cover the period up to 2036, and in order to achieve general conformity with strategic policies, it may be necessary to review the NP before the end of the 5 year timescale. The NP councils will monitor progress on the revised LP, particularly once it has become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, and will commence review of the NP if it becomes clear that updating is required. We note that SSDC currently anticipate the following timescale for preparation of the revised LP:

- Public consultation on preferred options: mid-2019
- Public consultation on publication plan: early 2020
- Submission to Sec of State: late 2020
- Examination of plan: 2021
- Adoption of plan: 2021.



Map of Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Policies

		Development Area defined in Local Plan
	HOU1	Brownfield housing sites for early development
	TC1, TC2	Town Centre
	TRA1	Pedestrian and cycle links for improvement
	TRA2	Highway hotspots:
		Sharp bend
		Narrow road
		Narrow road with signal control
	INF1	Preferred location for new primary school
	ENV2	Local Green Spaces

For information

	Housing development approved in LP Direction of Growth
	Employment development approved in LP Direction of Growth
	Preferred route for Link Road

Scale: 1:10,000

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Appendix A

Castle Cary & Ansford Community Assets

Castle Cary Town Centre

- The Market House – Shambles, Undercroft, Clerk's office, Public information point
- The Market House – Museum
- The Post Office, Bailey Hill
- The Round House, Bailey Hill
- The Library, Bailey Hill
- The Fire Station
- Castle Cary Medical Centre, Millbrook Gardens
- Bramcote Dental Practice, Woodcock Street
- Castle Cary Community Primary School
- All Saints Church
- The Methodist Church and Schoolroom
- The George Hotel, Market Place
- The White Hart (PH)
- The Horsepond Inn (PH)
- The Bay Tree (PH)
- Scout Hall
- Cadet Hall
- Public toilets – Millbrook Gardens and Catherine's Close

Ansford

- St Andrew's Church
- Caryford Hall
- The Swainson Building
- Ansford Academy
- 1610 Fitness and Leisure

Outdoor spaces

- Cobbles & pitching outside the Market House
- Lodge Hill – site of castle and observation point
- Cemetery and Cemetery Chapel
- Fairfield
- Moat Garden
- Millennium Wood
- The Horsepond and War Memorial
- Donald Pither Memorial field and childrens'playground
- Coombe Bottom (Ansford)
- Castle Cary football field (Ansford)
- Jubilee Garden (Ansford)
- EatCary Community Garden (Ansford)
- Carymoor Environmental Centre
- Castle Cary allotments
- Cary Marsh Nature Reserve

Appendix B

Main Town Centre uses

The following definition is adapted from that in the NPPF:

Retail development; leisure, entertainment facilities and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs); offices (including financial and professional services falling within class A2); and arts, culture and tourism development.

Appendix C

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

The Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan group was formed in April 2015 as a result of a Castle Cary Town Council Planning meeting in the Methodist Church Schoolroom which was attended by around 80 members of the public who had come to protest against a development of 165 houses off Station Road. Volunteers from the community offered their services to help the Town Council (and Ansford Parish Council) to write a Neighbourhood Plan.

The volunteers were:

- Major General (retired) Barry Lane – Former Chief Executive of Cardiff Bay Development Corporation.
- David Holt – a Chartered Surveyor with some 40 years property experience. (Left the group in May 2017)
- Rob Angell – a consultant specialising in decision making through problems structuring, facilitation and negotiation.
- Michael Bainbridge – a manager in the NHS with many years' experience of public sector planning and infrastructure
- Graham House – a retired town planning consultant with over 40 years' experience in both public and private sectors (Joined the group in March 2017)

From Town and Parish Councils

- Liz Stokes – Chair of Castle Cary Town Council – retired January 2017
- Nigel Begg – Ansford Parish Council. Architect
- Pek Peppin – CCTC Chair of Planning

We acknowledge support, advice and assistance from Pam Williams, Neighbourhood Development Officer, SSDC.

The team would like to thank the following for providing photographs: Rob Angell, Nigel Begg, Peter Biggenden, Justin Birch, Colin Kay, Judi Morison, Richard Lansdell, Pek Peppin, Angela Piggott and Sally Snook; and we offer apologies to anyone who has been accidentally omitted from this list.

Appendix D

Glossary of abbreviations

NP	Neighbourhood Plan
LP	Local Plan – in this document referring to the South Somerset Local Plan 2006–2028, adopted March 2015
CCTC	Castle Cary Town Council
APC	Ansford Parish Council
NP councils	Castle Cary Town Council and Ansford Parish Council
SSDC	South Somerset District Council
SCC	Somerset County Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
HGV	Heavy goods vehicle
DofG	Direction of growth
OPP	Outline planning permission
RM	Reserved matters

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