Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan

Draft approved by Parish Council for public consultation

October 2022

Foreword

Welcome to the Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan.

We are lucky enough to live in a friendly and attractive neighbourhood with excellent local schools, convenient local shops and rich biodiversity and green spaces, framed by the dramatic Cotswold escarpment at Leckhampton Hill. We enjoy relatively low levels of deprivation compared even to the rest of Cheltenham.

But we still have our challenges. An older population in Warden Hill has higher levels of ill health and disability. Housing affordability is a real problem in Leckhampton. We have concerns about flooding and the traffic that often blocks our roads and threatens our air quality and wellbeing. And the prospect of new development means we have to balance the need for new homes and more educational facilities with the impact of extra people and cars. We need to protect our treasured local environment while addressing the twin global crises of climate change and species loss. And we need to make sure our new residents will also be able to safely get to school and to a GP surgery and to nearby shops.

This plan, developed in consultation with local people and ultimately voted on by them, is our attempt to address these issues alongside the National Planning Policy Framework, the Cheltenham Gloucester & Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy and the Cheltenham Plan. It provides another important tool for decision-makers at all levels that allows local people's voice to be heard on the decisions that affect them.

I would like to thank earlier Neighbourhood Plan working group chair and co-chair former councillors Ian Bickerton and Graham Beale for their work in getting the plan to this stage, our parish clerk Arlene Deane and assistant clerk Kim Riley for their patient support and assistance, our lead consultant Lee Searles of Andrea Pellegram Limited and Rebecca Gregory of Lepus Consulting who prepared the important and authoritative evaluation of local landscape value, and many other local people and parish and other councillors for their comments and contributions, particularly Dr Adrian Mears, Stephen Cooke, Ian White, Margaret White, Viv Matthews and Alan Bailey.

Councillor Martin Horwood
Neighbourhood Plan working group chair
September 2022

Acronyms & abbreviations

AONB Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (as in 'Cotswolds AONB', also known as the Cotswold National Landscape)

BEIS Department for Business Enterprise & Industrial Strategy (UK government)

CBC Cheltenham Borough Council

CP County parish (as in 'Leckhampton CP')

DWP Department for Work & Pensions (UK government)

GCC Gloucestershire County Council

ha Hectares (1ha = 2.47 acres)

HRA Habitats Regulation Assessment

JCS Joint Core Strategy (joint Cheltenham Gloucester & Tewkesbury strategic local plan)

KWh Kilowatt Hours (units of energy used)

LGS Local Green Space (a designation in the NPPF, in our case used by CBC to protect the Leckhampton Fields)

LPA Local Planning Authority, in our case Cheltenham Borough Council

LWH Leckhampton with Warden Hill (so Policy LWH1 is the first policy in the Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan)

MD4 Mixed development policy 4 (in the Cheltenham Plan, a policy covering Leckhampton)

MHCLG Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (UK government, currently called the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities)

NHS National Health Service

NP Neighbourhood Plan

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

OCSI Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion

ONS Office for National Statistics

PROW Public Rights of Way

SEA Strategic Environmental Assessment

Contents

Foreword 2
Acronyms & abbreviations 3
Neighbourhood Planning Area 6
The Role and Scope of Neighbourhood Plans 8
Neighbourhood Plan Period 10
Strategic Environmental Appraisal 11
Sustainable Development....12
Consultation with the Community 14
Profile of Neighbourhood Area 16
Key Challenges, Vision and Objectives 19
Shopping And Community Facilities 24
Walking, Cycling and Sustainable Travel....34
Local Green Space 40
Green Infrastructure....42
Valued Landscape....45
Local Heritage....52
Flood Risk 55
Monitoring and Review 58

Figure 1 - Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan Area Boundary 6
Figure 2 - Areas added to the Parish in 2018 (red outline)....7
Figure 3 - Neighbourhood Centre (as designated by Cheltenham Plan) 24
Figure 4 - 1,000 metre radius from shops serving the Neighbourhood Area 26
Figure 5 - 800 metre radius from shops serving the Neighbourhood Area 26
Figure 6 - Parts of the Neighbourhood Area reliant on one shop within 800m (hatched) and parts not served by shops within 800m (yellow) 27
Figure 7 - The High School Leckhampton Priority Area for Admissions....34
Figure 8 – Local Footpaths....35
Figure 9 - Local Cycle Routes 36
Figure 10 – Priorities for improved walking and cycling connections 37
Figure 11 – Leckhampton Local Green Space, from Cheltenham Plan 2020 Proposals Map 39
Figure 12 – Green Infrastructure Sites....42
Figure 13 – Landscape and Visual Appraisal Recommendations....47
Figure 14 – Existing Buildings of Local Importance 51

Table 1 – Achievement of Sustainable Development objectives 11
Table 2 – Local Community Facilities 28
Table 3 – Landscape and Visual Appraisal Recommendation and Implementation 41
Annex 1....Report from Regulation 14 public consultation 2021
Annex 2 ....A brief history of Leckhampton and Warden Hill

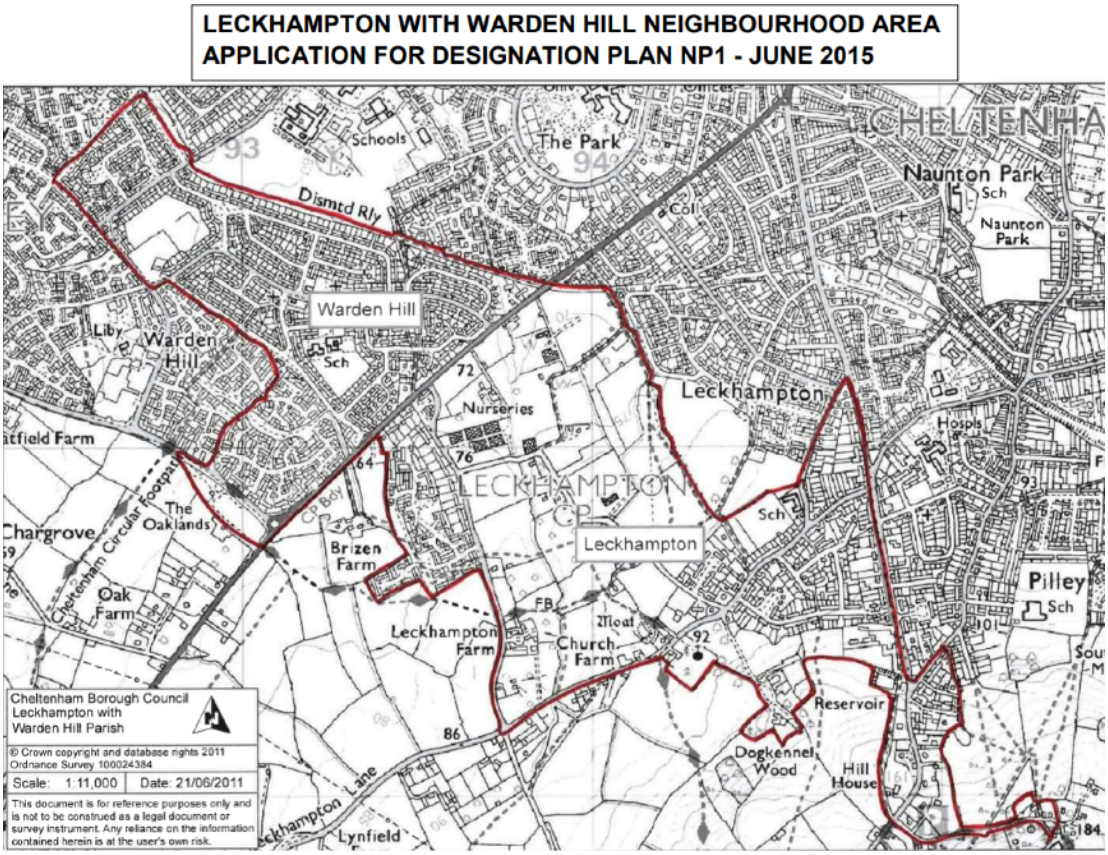
Annex 3 .....Demographic, social and economic profile
Annex 4.....Landscape Character Assessment update and evaluation of Landscape Value 2022
Annex 5 .....Designated heritage assets (listed buildings and scheduled monument)
Annex 6.....CBC Engaging Communities Project Report (Leckhampton with Warden Hill)
Annex 7 .....previous draft Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 1 .....Strategic Environmental Assessment screening
Appendix 2 .....Transport and travel plan
Appendix 3 .....Green infrastructure list
Appendix 4 .....Statement on valued landscape
Appendix 5 .....Non-designated heritage assets

Neighbourhood Planning Area

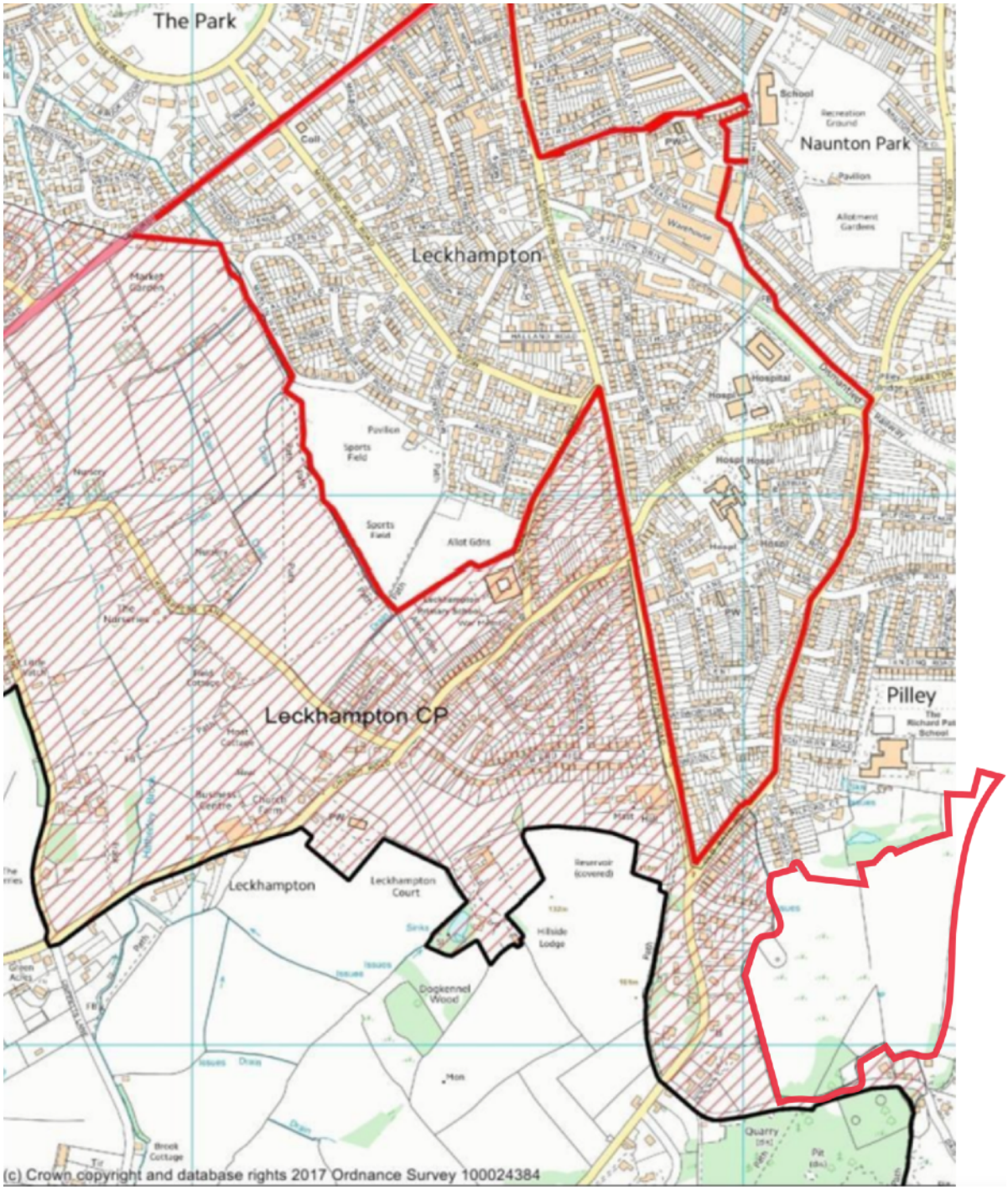
1. Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council applied for designation of the Neighbourhood Plan Area for its Neighbourhood Plan in June 2015 with an area based on the whole of the Parish, and with Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council as the Qualifying Body. This was approved by Cheltenham Council on 15 September 2015 Council. The Neighbourhood Plan Area is set out in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1 - Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan Area Boundary



2. The Cheltenham Borough Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) (Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish) Order 2018 later altered the boundaries of the parish, making it significantly larger (see **Figure 2** which shows the areas added to the parish). Given the advanced state of technical work supporting Neighbourhood Plan preparation, Leckhampton with Warden Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body, decided to proceed to progress the Neighbourhood Plan on the basis of the existing Neighbourhood Plan Area, without modification. The Parish Council has committed to consult the whole Parish on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and will recommend to the Examiner of the plan that the whole Parish be allowed to vote in the referendum at the end of the process.

Figure 2 - Areas added to the Parish in 2018 (red outline)



3. In the longer term, the Parish Council has also committed to seek designation of the whole new parish for future iterations of this Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council intends this Neighbourhood Plan on the former parish boundaries, and the principles and policies contained within it, to provide the basis for the development of the future Neighbourhood Plan incorporating the whole new parish.

The Role and Scope of Neighbourhood Plans

4. Neighbourhood Plans must operate in accordance with the guidance set out in the NPPF which says that succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings. This applies to plans at all levels and so Neighbourhood Plans should play their part in the planning system in the same way.

5. A role of neighbourhood planning is set out in Paragraph 29 of the NPPF. Here, it says Neighbourhood Plans give communities the power to develop a shared vision for their areas and through them shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.

6. NPs are required to meet Basic Conditions and other legislative requirements. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to Neighbourhood Development Plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The basic conditions are:

   a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan).

   b) having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, it is appropriate to make the order. This applies only to Orders.

   c) having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area, it is appropriate to make the order. This applies only to Orders.

   d) the making of the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

   e) the making of the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).

   f) the making of the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan) does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

   g) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan

   Following the UK's departure from the European Union we can assume that f) above will apply to any successor legislation.

7. Importantly, Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies. A key requirement is that Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.

8. At a later stage, this Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to an independent examination to assess whether it has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements. Key elements of this examination will be to confirm the plan:

    a) Has been positively prepared

    b) Is justified

    c) Is effective

    d) Is consistent with national policy

9. Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been brought into force, its policies will be considered alongside Local Plan policies under section 38(6) of the 1990 Act unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

Neighbourhood Plan Period

10. The time period for the Neighbourhood Plan is informed by the status of adopted and emerging local plans.

11. The current version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. The NPPF sets out national planning policies in a single document and in so doing sets the framework for plan-making and decision-making on development proposals. The Framework explains the relationship between the NPPF, Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. This influences how local planning authorities approach the development of local plan policies and how they regard policies as strategic or non-strategic in nature. The NPPF identifies matters on which the government thinks local communities through Neighbourhood Plans can contribute to the achievement of national policy goals and also express their own ambitions and objectives.

12. The adopted local plan for the area is made up of the following development plan documents:

    - The **Joint Core Strategy**, adopted in adopted in 2017. This plan runs until 2031.
    - The Adopted **Cheltenham Plan**, adopted in 2020. This plan runs until 2031
    - Saved policies from Cheltenham Local Plan, 2006
    - The Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy 2012-2027
    - Saved Waste Local Plan Policies
    - Minerals Local Plan 2018-2032
    - Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan, 2018-2023 (relating to the Cotswold National Landscape).

13. In view of the adoption of the Cheltenham Plan in 2020, and the more recent work undertaken to prepare an updated Neighbourhood Plan for a repeated Regulation 14 Consultation, it makes sense to set the time period for the Neighbourhood Plan from 2022 until 2031 in alignment with the Local Plan and Joint Core Strategy.

Strategic Environmental Appraisal

14. The NPPF says that neighbourhood plans may require Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), but only where there are potentially significant environmental effects. The area covered by the Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan includes Green Belt land and the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (now commonly referred to as the Cotswold National Landscape), so the potential for impacts on sensitive landscape receptors arising from development is clear. On the other hand, the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan do not propose additional development to that already set out in adopted plans and do not seek to allocate new land for development, which limits the potential for such impacts. Most policies within the Neighbourhood Plan are geared to protecting and improving key elements of local character which provide an important setting for the Cotswold AONB, or seek to reduce the traffic and other impacts associated with development which would also contribute to AONB and Green Belt.

15. Nevertheless, in view of the proximity of sensitive sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area, a request for a screening opinion on whether SEA is required was prepared on behalf of Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council and submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its formal opinion. A request for a Screening Opinion was made on 3 August 2022 and it has been confirmed that SEA is not required.

16. A request was also submitted at the same time for a formal screening opinion on the need for a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). Confirmation was received that a HRA is not required.

17. The Written Request for the Screening Opinions from Cheltenham Borough Council (and its response) is included in **Appendix 1**.

Sustainable Development

18. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that plans seek to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through meeting economic, social and environmental objectives (set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF). The Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with these requirements in mind. **Table 1** below demonstrates how each of the policies within the plan contribute to the achievement of one or more of the overarching objectives which mutually support the achievement of sustainable development.

Table 1 – Achievement of Sustainable Development objectives

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Economic objective	Social Objective	Environmental Objective
LWH1 - Local Commercial and Community Facilities	Promotes more economic activity locally	Seeks to retain facilities providing valuable social function	Encourages local facilities so that car use can be reduced.
LWH2 - walking and cycling links	Promotes home-working and locally based employment opportunities accessible on foot and by bike	Promotes good quality and safe links to facilitate wider use of walking and cycling routes	Encourages more walking and cycling in order to reduce the need to use the car for local journeys
LWH3 Local Green Space		Promotes access for the community and social benefits from better use of Local Green Space	Seeks to promote biodiversity in management of Local Green Space and complement provision on adjacent sites.
LWH4 green infrastructure	Seeks to establish better quality environment in key economic locations	Better quality green infrastructure promotes more use by all sections of the community	Connected habitats and green management practices will improve the area for wildlife
LWH5 Valued Landscape		Maintenance of the role of Valued Landscape will deliver social benefits arising from a stronger sense of place, mental and physical health, and a socially-valued setting.	Complementary measures to provide green infrastructure will generate environmental benefits
LWH6 local heritage	Retaining and improving local heritage assets can provide economic benefits by improving the quality of the built environment	Generating a better understanding and appreciation of local heritage assets generates important social benefits	
LWH7 flood risk			Improvements in local flood avoidance and resilience measures will contribute to environmental benefits through avoidance of flooding.

Consultation with the Community

19. Engagement of the local community is regarded as essential in developing a vision and objectives for the future development of neighbourhoods and to provide the detailed information to support non-strategic policies that can make a difference to localities.

20. The Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan has been supported by engagement and consultation in a variety of forms over the period of its development. These are detailed below. Responses received during consultation on the Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood Plan, are detailed in a separate Consultation Report. The results of the Regulation 14 Consultation have directly informed changes to the draft Neighbourhood Plan to respond to issues and views raised.

21. Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council engagement with the community is detailed below:

2013 Concept Statement and Local Green Space Application

22. A concept statement and Local Green Space application was compiled in 2012/13 and submitted to Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils in July 2013, this document was countersigned by Shurdington Parish Council. This Concept Statement was prepared by the Neighbourhood Forum. In responding to significant local concerns over traffic congestion and traffic generation, the Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council undertook extensive traffic surveys and traffic modelling of traffic flow on the A46 in order to understand the scale of the existing peak workday periods of congestion.

2014 The Cheltenham Partnership – Connecting Warden Hill

23. A survey was conducted in 2014, with a Task and Finish Group delivering to approximately 850 homes of over 50s and receiving responses from 55 in total. The survey aimed to explore people's interests and skills with a view to enabling setting up of more activities for over 50s in the ward and encourage volunteering. Questions also explored extent of loneliness and feelings of personal safety. This was an initiative by Cheltenham Borough Council, Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council and local churches in Warden Hill to strengthen the local community.

Summer 2015 Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Survey

24. A survey was undertaken by Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council to ask residents what their priorities were for the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. The survey and the results were set out in full in the Cheltenham Borough Council Engaging Communities Project Report prepared by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, published in January 2017 (see **Annex 6**). The survey informed development of the draft Neighbourhood Plan consulted upon in 2021.

September-November 2021 Regulation 14 Consultation on Draft Neighbourhood Plan

25. The previous draft Neighbourhood Plan (included at **Annex 7**) consultation period ran from 1 September 2021 to 15 November 2021, meeting the requirement for a consultation period of at least six weeks. A consultation survey was made available online. This could be completed online or printed, completed by hand and posted to the Parish Council offices. All

residents in the Parish were written to regarding the consultation and residents within the Neighbourhood Area were posted information a second time also.

26. Two public consultation events were held during the consultation period. Postcards were produced and distributed to the whole parish to advertise the two events. Across the two events, over 50 people attended with some leaving comments at the venue and others taking away survey forms to complete separately. Other consultation activities included the following:

    - Consultation posters were printed and put on the Council's noticeboards and in shops, schools, doctor’s surgeries and other public places.
    - Large banners were produced and placed in prominent places locally such as the Norwood Arms and the Multi-Use Games Area in Warden Hill.
    - The consultation and the online link were promoted on the council's website and the Cheltenham consultation website itself which hosted the online survey.
    - It was also publicised on the council's Twitter and Facebook accounts.
    - All councillors were encouraged to promote the consultation through their own channels
    - Including at least one councillor’s local free literature distribution of circa 5,000 as well as via Twitter (13.6k followers).

27. 272 responses to consultation were received via the survey and 8 further written submissions were made. The Consultation Report included at **Annex 1** summarises the issues raised in responses to consultation.

28. These have informed an update to the Vision and Objectives in a revised draft Neighbourhood Plan published for a further Regulation 14 consultation.

Profile of Neighbourhood Area

29. The Neighbourhood Area within Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish is a mature residential and fairly rural area to the south of Cheltenham town centre. It is one of five parishes in Cheltenham Borough. It is the southernmost part of the Borough, adjoining Shurdington Parish to the south (within Tewkesbury District), Up Hatherley to the west, Charlton Kings to the East and the unparished centre of Cheltenham to the north).

30. This section of the Neighbourhood Plan describes the history and socio-economic profile of the Neighbourhood Area. Local volunteers have provided the historical perspective and an updated socio-economic profile of the Neighbourhood Area has been prepared by Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI).

History of Leckhampton with Warden Hill

31. Settlement in Leckhampton dates back to Anglo-Saxon times and there are many surviving historic buildings and features. The area was a market gardening area which gave rise to its distinctive village and field development, the remaining agricultural landscape of which makes a significant contribution to Valued Landscape and a setting for the Cotswold Escarpment. Warden Hill is a more modern community dating back to the 1950s complete with planned community centre in Salisbury Avenue. A fuller account of the historical development of both Leckhampton and Warden Hill is provided in **Annex 2**.

Demographic, social and Economic Profile

32. A fuller profile is included in **Annex 3** based on 2022 reports supplied by Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) using the census data and additional government, NHS, Police and ONS data. It is based on the boundaries of two Census Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that approximate to the Leckhampton and Warden Hill wards of the former parish respectively and, in combination, to the Neighbourhood Plan area. It includes data on age and gender, household type, ethnicity and origin, religion and belief, income, health, education and crime.

33. Census data presented in the profile uses 2011 Census information and so this remains relevant until publication of 2021 Census parish level information (expected in 2023) after which the profile will be updated. Initial data from the 2021 Census has been published at Local Authority level and is not yet available at the parish or output area level to enable more up to date information to be presented here. The government, NHS, Police and ONS data in the profile is more up to date, in some cases 2022 data.

34. The profile reveals that, overall, Leckhampton and Warden Hill are enjoy higher incomes, lower unemployment, better health and better educational outcomes than the rest of England and even the rest of Gloucestershire. 52.3% of people were in managerial or professional occupations compared with 41.2% for England, rising to 62.2% in Leckhampton. The largest employment sector in Leckhampton was education. In Warden Hill it is health & social work.

35. But there are significant variations within that fortunate overall picture. Minorities are vulnerable to poverty, ill health and disability and energy use is higher than the national

average. Housing affordability in Leckhampton is four times worse than the national and Warden Hill estimates.

36. The over 65 population is higher than the national average, particularly in Warden Hill. This may also contribute to Warden Hill's relatively high levels of ill health and disability and lower levels of degree level education and qualifications generally.

Population

37. The approximate Neighbourhood Plan area was home to 4,610 people in 2011. The population under 15 and of working age was rather below the England and county averages. The proportion over 65 was well above the England average at 30.7% and even higher in Warden Hill. 35.5% of households were pensioner households - 39.4% in Warden Hill - compared with 20.7% nationally.

38. The area had numbers of one person households and lone parent families well below the England average. Nearly 95% were white British, well above the England average.

39. The population was 48.2% male and 51.8% female.

Vulnerability

40. Far fewer than the England average were claiming unemployment, housing or incapacity benefits or Universal Credit although the levels were higher in Warden Hill than Leckhampton.

41. Levels of disability benefit claims in Leckhampton were also lower than average but higher in Warden Hill and the percentage claiming Attendance Allowance in Warden Hill was higher than the England average.

42. 28 households (4.6%) had children living in low income families, much lower than the England average. While still low, Warden Hill's rate was nearly double that of Leckhampton.

43. Based on 2017/18 data, 120 households (7.9%) were already living in fuel poverty and the percentage was higher in Warden Hill.

Income and Deprivation

44. Overall, the data shows that both Leckhampton and Warden Hill are amongst the least deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in England according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation. But there are significant variations within that overall picture.

45. Leckhampton had the higher average income at £50,800 while Warden Hill's was just above the England average at £44,600.

46. Warden Hill was slightly worse off for employment, and Leckhampton much worse off for housing affordability – in the fourth decile nationally. The 'affordability gap' between the cost of local houses and the average amount residents can borrow is higher than the England average in Warden Hill at £52,910 but in Leckhampton it is £226,948.

Educational Achievement

47. Leckhampton had a much higher proportion of adults with a degree-level qualifications, almost double the England average, and a lower-than-average proportion of people with no qualification at 7.9% compared with 22.5% nationally. 25.3% of people in Warden Hill had degree-level qualifications and 25% had no qualifications, probably reflecting its older profile and the relative rarity of degrees amongst older generations, amongst whom it was also less common for women to have qualifications.

48. Both Leckhampton and Warden Hill children have better than the England average progress against Early Learning Goals and better attainment at Key Stage 4. Warden Hill children show slightly better progress in early years while Leckhampton's attainment statistics are better by Key Stage 4.

Crime

49. Recent Police crime data show both Leckhampton and Warden Hill well below the England average at 30.7 recorded crimes per 1000 population. Reported crime was higher in Leckhampton than Warden Hill, particularly in the category of anti-social behaviour.

Employment

50. The Neighbourhood Area is almost exclusively residential and therefore has few employment opportunities within it, with people travelling to work outside the area. The data shows 52.3% of people in managerial, professional or associated professional occupations (compared with 41.2% for England) .

51. The largest employment sector in Leckhampton is education. In Warden Hill it is health and social work.

Key Challenges, Vision and Objectives

52. This section of the Neighbourhood Plan outlines the key challenges as raised by the local community during the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. It then sets out the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives.

Key Challenges in the Neighbourhood Plan Area

53. The issues raised by the local community in response to surveys and consultation go wider than the remit of a Neighbourhood Plan, which is primarily about the use and development of land and buildings. Nevertheless, a Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to set the wider framework of parish council and partners' actions to deliver on the concerns of local people to show how, alongside planning policies, further initiatives will be explored.

54. The accumulation of community activism to respond to development pressures from local plans and major housing applications over many years has been combined with specific engagement and consultation to develop an understanding of how local residents want the see development in the neighbourhood managed.

55. **Local Green and Open Spaces**. From the development of the Concept Statement in 2013, there was a clear commitment to secure a designation of the Leckhampton Fields as Local Green Space in support of the local environment and landscape, the mental and physical wellbeing of local people and to make a local contribution to the twin global crises of climate change and species loss. A submission was made in 2015 to Cheltenham Borough Council requesting designation. Leckhampton was removed from the Joint Core Strategy list of strategic allocations following examination which addressed this specific issue. The Cheltenham Borough Plan adopted in 2020 duly provided this designation for a part of Leckhampton Fields totalling around 26 hectares. In the light of this, a key task for the Neighbourhood Plan is to identify how a clear set of principles that would manage and enhance the Local Green Space will be developed. The Cheltenham Plan already identifies and protects some other open spaces and this Neighbourhood Plan sets out to identify more green infrastructure and open spaces that need to be considered in development decision-making.

56. There is a desire to explore the provision of additional allotments within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Neighbourhood Plan will seek to secure allotments through new development where appropriate.

57. **Climate change, global warming and changes to weather patterns in the UK**. Climate change will likely bring extreme summer temperature to the UK, increased flooding and severe weather events. UK homes are not suited to high summer temperatures being built mainly of brick and concrete which retain heat readily. Clearly, we are limited in what can be done to protect vulnerable people and families living in older properties.

58. In comparison to the older parts of Leckhampton Village, the newer parts of Leckhampton have fewer trees in the public realm and so do not benefit as much from cooling and shading that trees bring. Opportunities to plant trees in this area will be explored to provide shade and cut pollution levels for residents. The community would support planting to combat climate change and reduce pollution. The Parish Council could play a role in offering advice

on which types of trees are best for the garden, trees requiring low maintenance of the right size and with a low risk of causing subsidence.

59. **Traffic Congestion and Air Quality**. The development of allocated sites for housing, other consented housing developments and the new school are likely to significantly increase car traffic on roads throughout the area. Over the course of ten years, local community groups working closely with Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council have carried out significant technical work to better understand existing and likely future traffic conditions in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This work was originally focused on influencing emerging local plans and responding to significant development proposals but has continued as part of an ongoing commitment to monitor and protect air quality .

60. Highways impact matters have now been fully considered by Gloucestershire County Council and Cheltenham Borough Council who have determined in an adopted local plan that allocated sites are deliverable, subject to consideration of detailed consideration of traffic impacts. Planning applications have been consented involving traffic generation. Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan has no scope to question these allocations or to reopen debate on consented applications, the local community is clear that action is needed to do as much as possible at the local level to minimise these impacts.

61. The Neighbourhood Plan includes a transport and travel plan to encourage action by all stakeholders and identifies key walking and cycling connections that will be supported to maintain and improve opportunities for a more sustainable travel network so that more local journeys can be undertaken without the car, and which provide independence for young people to travel safely to school.

62. **Improving Health and fitness** is linked to the provision of better walking and cycling routes and to the improvement of Local Green Space and other green infrastructure. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to capitalise on the area's green resources to ensure that their role in providing a green infrastructure is maintained and enhanced, and links to efforts to improve resilience against flood risk and encourage healthy, active lifestyles.

63. Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council has sponsored walks around the Leckhampton Fields and on Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common, providing some funding and effort for footpath maintenance. The Leckhampton Local History Society have produced free leaflets providing information on local walks and routes. The Council aims to add to its website descriptions of local walks to encourage more people to walk in the countryside. The Cotswold Voluntary Wardens and the Ramblers organize regular local walks. The local footpath infrastructure is maintained by the Friends of Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common (FOLK), by the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens, by the parish councils and by the County Council.

64. **Housing**. Leckhampton and Warden Hill are well-established residential communities where there is a natural cycle of households moving into and out of the area. Like many areas there is an issue of an ageing population. This is due not only to people living longer but also to a net inward migration of people in the over-60 and over-75 age groups and by net outward migration of younger people and loss of local employment. Higher house prices are making this cycle more difficult to sustain, especially in Leckhampton, and there is a need for people living locally to access affordable and social housing, or to downsize to smaller housing. New housing development must deliver on these needs and work on this is being led by

Cheltenham Borough Council through its adopted Cheltenham Plan and decision-making on planning applications and target of 40% affordable housing in new developments.

65. **Shopping and Community Facilities**. The Neighbourhood Plan Area relies on shopping centres both outside the Neighbourhood Plan Area (such as at Bath Road) and inside the area, such as local shops on Leckhampton Road and at Salisbury Avenue. The village hall in Church Road is very well used and is well supported financially by local people. A large hall is available at Leckhampton Primary School able to take public meetings of over 300 people and we hope the new High School Leckhampton will also provide valuable community facilities. St Peter's is sometimes used for concerts and the Glebe Cottages provide a room and facilities for small events.

66. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a need to retain existing shopping and community facilities and to ensure that new developments provide facilities where appropriate.

67. **Youth facilities and Unemployment**. Whilst there are sufficient facilities for youth work, cuts in funding have reduced the availability of youth leaders. Some facilities which play a valuable role in the providing social and community space and interaction, need improvement. The scout hut in Leckhampton needs a major upgrade. The Brizen Young People's Centre is relatively new and is available for general use as well as for youth work. The local schools also provide activities. Revenue funding is needed to make the most of these facilities and support professional youth workers and volunteers.

68. **Supporting local businesses**. The cycle of change in the neighbourhood relies to some extent on the availability of local employment to incoming younger residents. Providing a more sustainable neighbourhood where people need to drive less in order to live their lives daily, could benefit from greater places of local employment which people can access on foot. Rapidly advancing communications technology means that for many enterprises there is increased flexibility for working from home and from local premises. The Covid-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021 has given society a firm nudge in the direction of greater home working. All of this could lead to changing requirements for the design of homes to provide space for home working. It could support the development of neighbourhood shared-serviced employment spaces. Existing local businesses may need to develop to maintain their competitive

69. **Landscape**. The Neighbourhood Plan Area includes an area of Valued Landscape of some 60 hectares that is bounded to the south by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, now called the Cotswolds National Landscape. The application of the Valued Landscape concept in the local area was developed during the period of preparation of the Concept Statement and of this Neighbourhood Plan. Work to support the concept was presented during the preparation of the adopted Joint Core Strategy and adopted Cheltenham Plan 2020, and in major planning applications including in 2016 when its status as non-designated Valued Landscape was confirmed by the Secretary of State. As such the position of Valued Landscape in the consideration of development impacts on sensitive landscape receptors is established.

70. The baseline for the consideration of landscape and visual appraisal underpinning Valued Landscape policy continues to evolve. The Neighbourhood Plan sets out updated policy based on a 2022 evaluation of Landscape Value and technical update of the earlier 2017 Landscape and Visual Appraisal by Lepus, attached as **Annex 4**, primarily to consider recent

allocations, decisions and developments in setting an updated Baseline. Lepus' compilation of previous planning inspectors' comments and conclusions over time in relation to local landscape is also attached as **Annex 8**.

71. **Maintenance of the Local Area**: Local residents want the Neighbourhood Plan Area to present a high quality and attractive environment. To achieve this, the basics need to be got right – maintaining roads and pavements, gardening the public spaces, cleaning up litter, avoiding dog fouling, reducing fly-tipping, and ensuring that lampposts, bins, benches, fences, signposts and the whole range of paraphernalia in the public realm are properly maintained and kept tidy.

72. The community needs to play its part and is doing so. FOLK has frequent volunteer working parties that keep Leckhampton Hill pristine. Cheltenham Borough Council and volunteers maintain the flower bed across the area with funding support from the Parish Council. In Warden Hill there has been strong volunteer activity through 'In Bloom for Warden Hill' maintaining the attractiveness of the area. More volunteer effort like this is going to be very important.

73. The area has a considerable number of non-designated heritage assets and building of local interest. These are not protected by statutory heritage protections and so are at risk of loss or harm from new development, and from neglect.

74. The Neighbourhood Plan can support and encourage good quality design and ask that new developments have appropriate arrangements in place to manage and maintain public spaces and infrastructure. The plan can also ensure that the importance of local non-designated heritage features and buildings of local interest is recognised in planning decisions.

75. **Increased Flood Risk in Leckhampton and Warden Hill**. The community have highlighted their concern that the area is experiencing an increasing flood risk owing to changes in rainfall patterns compounded by surface water runoff due to the close proximity of Leckhampton Hill and the clay soil conditions south of Farm Lane. Localised flood events have occurred several times across the Neighbourhood Plan area in particular in Warden Hill and across the Leckhampton Fields.

76. Site Allocations in the Cheltenham Plan and subsequent planning permissions have deemed further development on some open areas to be safe in terms of flood risk from surface water run-off and in relation to flood risk from the Hatherley Brook and Moorend Stream.

77. Locally, the community want to ensure that remaining open areas can continue to provide valuable flood storage functions. They want development to adopt design principles which reduce the risk of run off. They want a clear commitment to a strategic approach to the maintenance of flood defence systems from a multiplicity of developments and a commitment to monitoring their operation and effectiveness.

Vision and Objectives

78. From the challenges discussed above, a vision and objectives are proposed for delivery through the Neighbourhood Plan.

79. The Vision underlying this Plan, which has guided the development of the Neighbourhood Plan since 2012 is set out below:

By 2031, the Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan Area will look and feel better than it does today. Essential valued landscape and visual characteristics of the area will remain in place, whilst the area will be greener, more sustainable and better protected from flood risk. More people will be able to find a home that meets their needs. More people will work locally. They will be able to walk and cycle to a good network of local shops and community facilities. People will be able to live healthier lives.

80. To achieve this Vision the following objectives have been set for the Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan.

LWH OBJECTIVE 1 To promote a good quality of life for all of the area's residents.

LWH OBJECTIVE 2 To make sure new housing development delivers housing of a size and type and level of affordability which meets the needs of people living in the area.

LWH OBJECTIVE 3 To protect and enhance local green space to secure a range of benefits including the tackling of climate change, physical and mental well-being, flood resilience, cleaner air, Valued Landscape and improvements to habitats.

LWH OBJECTIVE 4 To seek ongoing improvements to travel and transport to reduce traffic congestion and promote alternatives to the use of private cars by providing safe walking and cycle routes.

LWH OBJECTIVE 5 To involve local people in an ongoing basis in the process of place-making, monitoring and delivery of development

81. As discussed earlier, the work undertaken to support this Neighbourhood Plan began and has been focused on responding to the specific issues arising from the development pressures felt within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Whilst consultation in 2021 has revealed a wide range of additional matters that the Neighbourhood Plan could address, and some are addressed within the plan, these would be best examined across the wider area in a future Neighbourhood Plan for the whole parish and the Parish Council has agreed to this as future objective. This would require a new consultation and engagement process tailored to the wider area and the wider population of the whole parish. Matters for future inclusion within the Neighbourhood Plan would include support for the local economy and more actively responding to climate change which would need to be supported with relevant work to inform local policies.

Shopping And Community Facilities

82. To maintain and improve the provision of local shopping and community facilities is an important challenge expressed in LWH Objective 1 which seeks to promote a good quality of life for all residents in the area. A good quality of life means being able to access local shops for daily food and other needs, and to access community facilities for shared activities, socialising, health and fitness and other important personal and community needs.

83. Within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the pattern of grocery shopping and community facilities that are available to meet local residents' daily needs is important to fulfilling complementary objectives to promote more walking and cycling and less driving in cars, contributing to better health, loess pollution and the tackling of climate change. If people walk and cycle more, then by and large, healthier lifestyles are promoted. The need to make walking and cycling routes attractive provides further complementary benefits to the look and feel of the local built environment and potentially supports the connection of green spaces to form green space network. In turn, these are better connected habitats for local wildlife. At a neighbourhood level, such things are inter-connected.

Grocery Shopping Facilities

84. Feedback from local community consultation on the development of the Neighbourhood Plan has highlighted strong support for local policies which can safeguard and promote new essential facilities and services which help to sustain walkable, liveable neighbourhoods. A general yardstick is that for local amenities to be accessible on foot, they should be located within 800m[1] of their customers or users.

85. The Government's permitted development rights order was updated in 2020 and has changed how retail provision is viewed in development terms. All retail and high street non-retail uses are now placed within one Commercial Use Class E and it is possible to change from this class to a mixed use within Class E and up to two flats without planning permission (which may be supported if located above shops). Change to Class MA Housing is also permitted subject to prior approval. This means a shop can change to a house under permitted development, subject to prior approval from the Local Planning Authority.

86. There are some exceptions. A shop with not more than 280 square metres of floorspace, mostly selling essential goods, including food, where there is no other such facility within a 1000 metres radius of the shop's location is regarded as a Class F2 Local Community Use, from which there are no permitted development rights changes to other use classes.

87. Saved policy RT 8 from the 2006 Cheltenham Plan covers individual convenience shops and supports proposals for new retail floorspace of up to 100 square metres outside defined shopping areas. Predating recent changes to permitted development rights, it sought to protect existing shops outside the defined shopping areas from change of use, except where the continued use of the building or land is not viable or there are other shops within a walking distance of 500 metres. It is notable that the 2006 policy adopts a much shorter distance for the availability of local convenience shops.

---

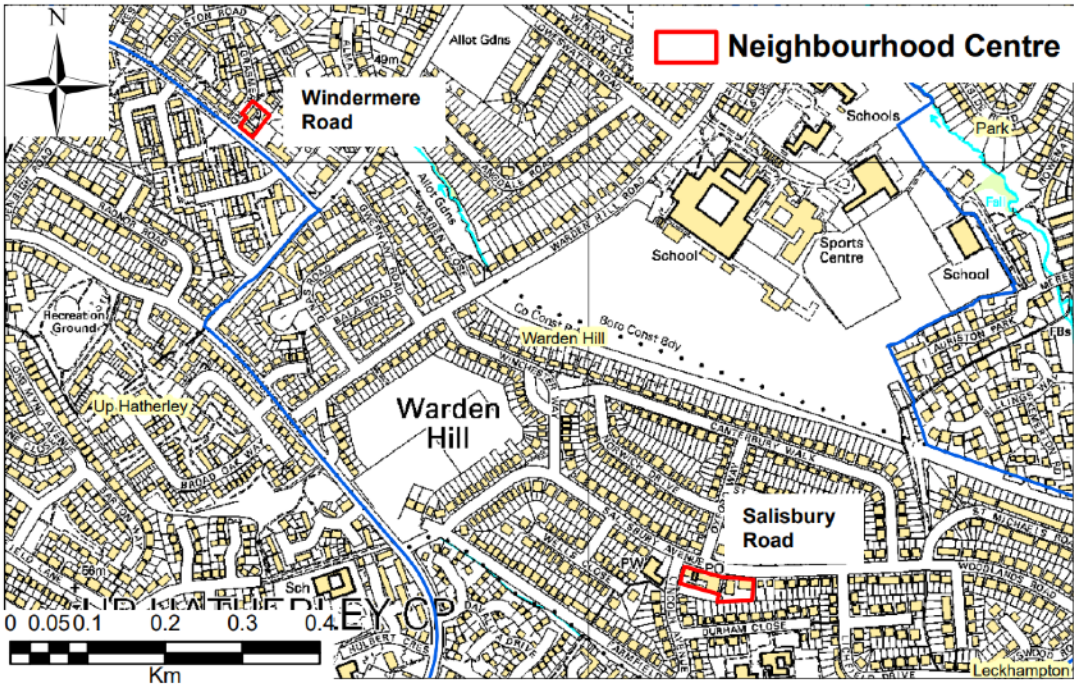
[1] Walkable Neighbourhoods (Sustrans, May 2022), 20-Minute Neighbourhoods (TCPA, March 2021), Planning for Walking, (CIHT, March 2015)

88. The 2006 Plan designates Salisbury Avenue as a Neighbourhood Centre within the Neighbourhood Area. The boundary of the Neighbourhood Centre (shown on **Figure 3**) does not accord with the current extent of the centre, given the development of the Co-op store and post office on the opposite side of the road outside the centre boundary. Also, the centre boundary is retail-based and is not reflective of modern policy objectives to plan for wider activities in centres - the community facilities and services provided at the United Reformed Church and St Christopher's Church are both located just outside the boundary of the neighbourhood centre. Windermere Road centre is located outside the Neighbourhood Area. The map below shows the location of the current Neighbourhood Centre at Salisbury Avenue (incorrectly labelled Salisbury Road in the 2006 Plan) in Warden Hill.

89. The centre contains a mix of businesses mixing retail and services and community services including post office, co-op food store and ten other commercial units. Additionally, there is Veterinary Clinic, and outside the boundary two churches, a multi-use games area and a children's playground. Flats are located above shops. This area is served by bus services and contains 43 off street parking spaces to the rear, 14 serving the co-op and 29 on street spaces (not including parking for St Christopher's).

Figure 3 - Neighbourhood Centre (as designated by Cheltenham Plan)

APPENDIX 6: NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES (WARDEN HILL)



Ordnance Survey Crown copyright all rights reserved Cheltenham Borough Council, 100024384 2007

STRENGTH OF LOCAL GROCERY SHOPPING PROVISION

90. The aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to understand the level of provision in the local area based on the Government's threshold and against the Government's walkable neighbourhoods objectives. The maps below show grocery shop provision serving the Neighbourhood Area, using the Government's 1,000m catchment (**Figure 4**), a walkable

Neighbourhood's 800m catchment (**Figure 5**) and areas outside an 800m walk to the nearest shop, or reliant on just one shop (**Figure 6**).

91. A 1,000m catchment is considered as a worst-case scenario as this is 200m more than the generally acceptable 800m walking limit and is also based on straight line distance whereas people must walk on streets and paths which tend to elongate routes.

92. The intention is to measure what existing local grocery shopping facilities are available to support a walkable neighbourhood, to understand the effects if they were to be lost, and to identify areas within the plan area which lack provision. Because the focus is on shopping for grocery essentials on foot, other types of shop, or cafés, pubs and restaurants are not shown on the map.

93. The adopted Cheltenham Plan proposals maps shows a retail facility located at the Leckhampton Convenience Stores, 149 Leckhampton Road, GL53 0AD. This shop has permanently closed and has changed use to a dwelling house (Shown on the map with magenta dot).

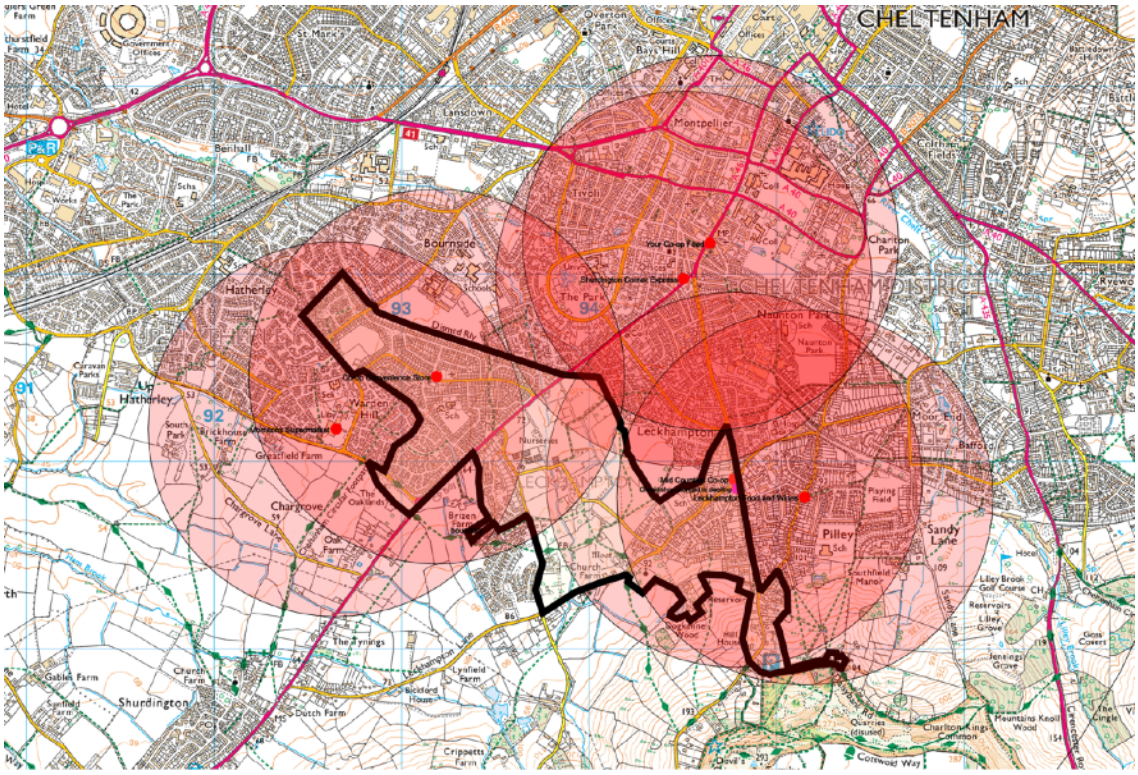
94. Apart from the Mid-Counties Co-op on Leckhampton Road and another Co-op Convenience store at Salisbury Avenue, the Neighbourhood Area is reliant on grocery shops located outside the plan area (and also outside the Parish – Shurdington Corner Express at 17 Shurdington Road and Leckhampton Food and Wines on Old Bath Road are just outside the boundary in adjacent parishes and wards, with the Bath Road district centre and Morrisons also located outside the Parish).

95. The Catchments of available facilities therefore extend into the Neighbourhood Area, based on the following shops identified on the maps which follow with red dots:
    - Leckhampton Food and Wine (formerly Everest Stores), 254 Old Bath Rd, Cheltenham GL53 9AP - open
    - Mid-Counties Co-operative, 43 Leckhampton Road, Cheltenham GL53 0DQ – open
    - Co-op, 192 Bath Rd, Cheltenham GL53 7NE – open
    - Shurdington Corner Express, 17 Shurdington Rd, Cheltenham GL53 0JA – open
    - Morrisons Supermarket and Pharmacy, Caernarvon Rd, Cheltenham GL51 3BW – open

96. No other Bath Road grocery shops are within 1000m of the Neighbourhood Plan area. Even the Co-op and Shurdington Corner Express on Shurdington Road barely come within 1000m of the northernmost tip of the Neighbourhood Area and neither are within 800m of any of its actual households. So the shops in the Bath Road area do not serve the Neighbourhood Area if a Walkable Neighbourhoods catchment of 800m walking distance is used.

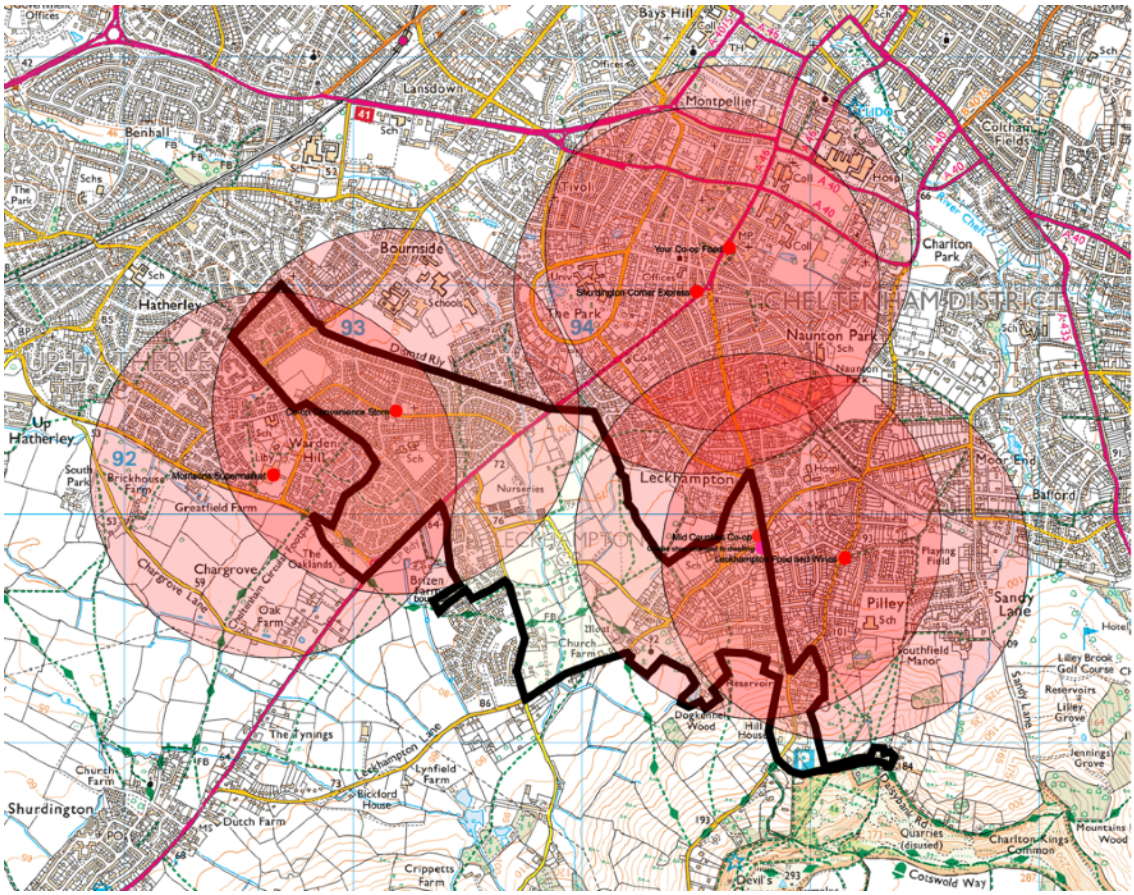
97. Two other local facilities sell food to the public, but these are incidental to other operations and in one case only for limited hours, so are not mapped:
    - Padstow Fish, Burley Fields Lake, Shurdington GL51 4XT – open.
    - Collicutt Meats Limited, Leckhampton Dairy, Church Road, Cheltenham GL53 0QJ – open.

Figure 4 - 1,000 metre radius from shops serving the Neighbourhood Area



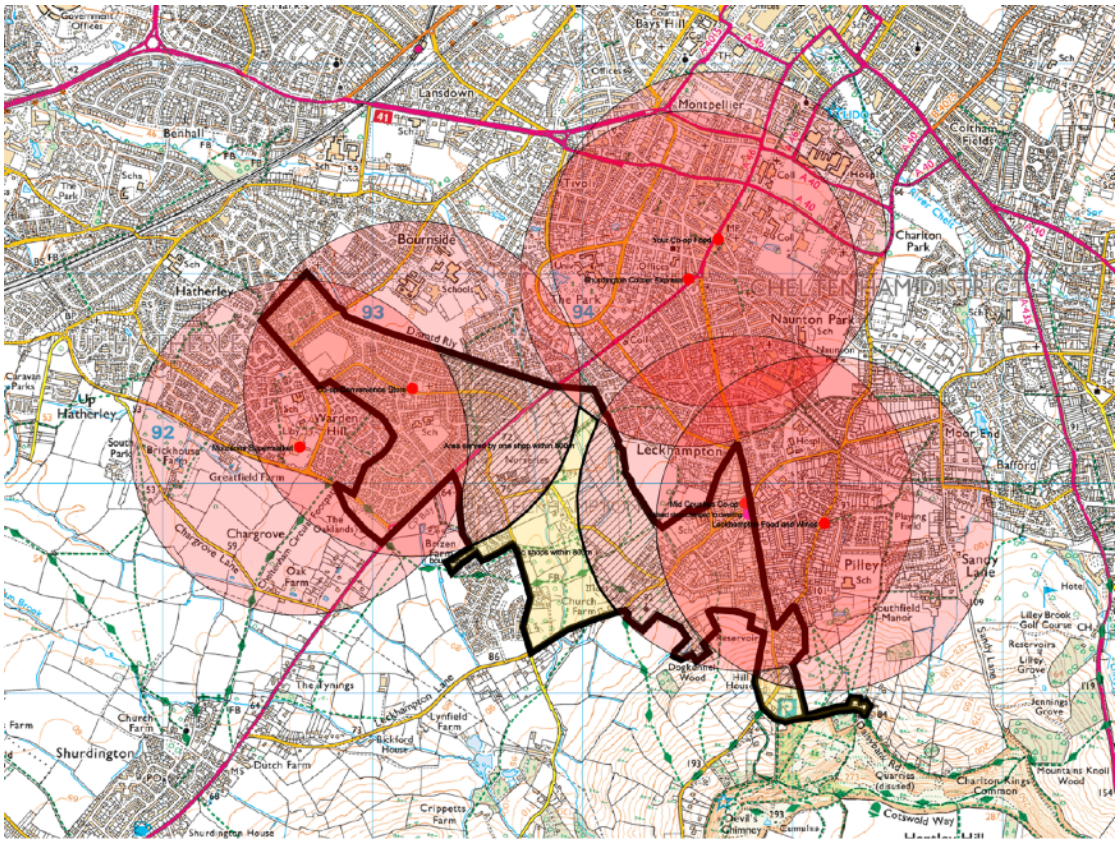
SOURCE: ANDREA PELLEGRAM LTD, JULY 2022

Figure 5 - 800 metre radius from shops serving the Neighbourhood Area



SOURCE: ANDREA PELLEGRAM LTD, JULY 2022

Figure 6 - Parts of the Neighbourhood Area reliant on one shop within 800m (hatched) and parts not served by shops within 800m (yellow)



SOURCE: ANDREA PELLEGRAM LTD, JULY 2022

ASSESSMENT

98. This section examines the available provision, its strength and the nature of provision.

99. **Shops within reach** – the first part of this analysis comments on the availability of shops within 1,000m.

100. The Warden Hill area and development at the western end of Farm Lane are reliant on Morrisions and the Co-op store at Salisbury Avenue for grocery provision with 1,000m and also within 800m giving a reasonable level of provision to the west of the A46.

101. Leckhampton Village is reliant on the Mid-Counties Co-op and Leckhampton Food and Wines. The northern tip is within the catchment for shops on or near Bath Road including Shurdington Corner Express, but the Co-op at Bath Road is beyond 1,000m. Bath Road is unable to serve this part of the Neighbourhood Area if adopting a Walkable Neighbourhoods catchment of 800m.

102. In the central area, the developments along Farm Lane are not served by grocery shops within 1,000m. Another application site at the eastern end of Farm Lane is similarly not within 1,000m of the nearest grocery shop.

103. The Allocation site (MD4 in Cheltenham Plan) lies on the outer fringes of 1,000m catchments for Morrisons, the Shurdington Corner Express and the Mid-Counties Co-op. Some parts of this area, including the nurseries, are not within 1,000m of a grocery shop.

104. If walkable neighbourhood limits of 800m were applied using on the ground routes, then the central parts of the neighbourhood area would be seen to have a clear lack local grocery shop provision. These areas have traditionally been open land and so the lack of established provision is understandable. However, significant development has occurred (much of it just outside the parish) without new provision. Based on a 500m catchment set out in saved policy RT 8, significant gaps in provision would exist through the Neighbourhood Area.

105. To meet future objectives for more sustainable, walkable neighbourhoods with opportunities to minimise car use, then some grocery retail provision amongst all the new residential development still to come forward in this area should be secured.

106. **Strength of provision** – The map shows how the catchments of different facilities overlap to indicate strength of grocery shop provision.

107. Whilst Warden Hill is reliant on two shops, Morrisons is a strategic facility providing a range of services and is likely to remain a strong local provider for the foreseeable future. The Co-op has a strong network of convenience stores in the immediate and wider areas. There is no reason to suppose it is vulnerable to loss.

108. The position in Leckhampton Village is somewhat different. There are two local shops, one of which also a Co-op convenience store lying just within the Neighbourhood Area and another local shop outside it. The Co-op store in this location may experience practical operational constraints including parking availability, access, shopfloor space, storage etc. It is understood Mid-Counties Co-op are reviewing the site at Leckhampton Road. If that store closed, then unless another shop took its place, local grocery provision in this part of the area would be wholly reliant on the Leckhampton Food and Wine shop, and more parts of the central area (MD4 Allocation site) would lack local provision.

109. **Quality of provision** – Quality is a subjective term but applied to local grocery shops might include consideration of the number and breadth of products offered, price, quality of premises, opening hours and financial strength/durability. No data has been collected on this.

110. There are three types of shop serving the Neighbourhood Area as a walkable neighbourhood, each providing a different function:

- Supermarket – Morrisons outside the Neighbourhood Area.
- Supermarket express/mini mart – Co-op at Salisbury Avenue, Co-op on Leckhampton Road, Co-op on Bath Road (just, on the limit)
- Traditional Corner Shop – Shurdington Corner Express, Leckhampton Food and Wine both outside the Neighbourhood Area

111. As discussed above the durability of different types of shop will depend on a number of factors specific to the business and to the location/premises/plot. However, it would be generally accepted that the order presented above would be considered a descending order

of quality/choice. That said, some corner shops stand the test of time whilst express/mini marts come and go.

112. Based on the above, the Warden Hill area appears well served by two strong high quality grocery stores. The Leckhampton Village part of the area is well served by two shops, both of which could be considered more vulnerable either owing to matters that have been discussed or because of the ease with which they could change use.

113. The central part of the area is less well served and is also reliant on the same facilities available to the residents of the village.

Wider Support for local shops

114. The Neighbourhood Plan can also foster a supportive environment for local businesses and provide an attractive physical location where they are situated. This means wider action to ensure that shopping parades are kept tidy, made attractive through planting schemes, signage schemes and the like. A wider variety of uses could be promoted in vacant premises to create more reasons to visit shopping parades. Developing good quality walking and cycling routes to, and of parking at, shopping destinations is also important.

115. It is also important to maintain an active view of the health of local shopping facilities and to be ready to provide support when premises become vacant to encourage other uses to come in. In future, current shopping locations may need to provide a mix of activity of which retail is only a part. Residents have called for greater provision of gyms as an example. Community uses such as libraries are another example.

Policy implications

116. The aim of the neighbourhood plan is to respond to national and local objectives, arising strongly in local consultation, to reduce traffic pressures and to encourage more walking and cycling. There is a social dimension that local people should be able to access essential services without recourse to a car. The aim is to plan positively for grocery shops to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments (as urged in paragraph 93(a) of the NPPF).

117. Some parts of the Neighbourhood Area, furthest away from available facilities, are subject to significant development pressures. New developments should contain local grocery retail provision on site to support objectives to promote sustainable, walkable neighbourhoods.

118. Separately, the Neighbourhood Plan should be supportive of proposals for new grocery retail provision within the Neighbourhood Area to strengthen local retail provision accessible on foot providing this does not conflict with other important local policies such as the protection of the Local Green Space designated in the Cheltenham Plan. It should support development such as new grocery provision within already planned developments such as the MD4 policy area, new or relocated grocery provision on previously developed land or the improvement of existing grocery stores so that they can improve their operations and viability. This is supported by NPPF paragraph 93(d).

119. The Neighbourhood Plan policy draws attention to the role played by each facility within the Neighbourhood Area and alerts development managers at Cheltenham Borough Council as to the importance of these facilities, in terms set by permitted development rights order. It

would be sensible to guard against the sudden loss of facilities in the Leckhampton Village area by seeking to safeguard existing provision where loss would result in the next nearest alternative being over 1,000m away. The Mid-Counties Co-op lies within the Neighbourhood Area. Any application that would seek to redevelop this site and change use from a grocery shop should seek alternative provision to maintain local provision.

120. Support for wider improvement to the environment around shopping facilities could provide a focus for investment of planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy funds.

Community facilities

121. Many local community facilities provide multiple functions which it is important to understand so that they are recognised and taken into account when proposals for redevelopment are made or when investment is needed to maintain and improve them to provide additional community benefits. Apart from a permitted development right to change use from a learning or non-residential institution (Class F1) to a state-funded school for a temporary period of up to two academic years, most community buildings are Class F1 or Class F2 Local Community Uses from which there is no permitted development right to switch to permanent alternative uses.

122. If planning applications are made for development away from existing local community facilities, then a key consideration will be the use and importance of the current facility, and the availability of alternatives. Adopted Local Plan policies support the retention of existing local community uses. The Neighbourhood Plan provides more detail on the specific local provision and its use. It is important that monitoring is undertaken so that information is up to date and this would also indicate where support should be given so that facilities remain used and provide good quality local accommodation. It is acknowledged that capital works to buildings needs to be complemented by revenue support for people to operate and run facilities and the events that take place in them.

123. **Table 2** provides a list of important community facilities within the Neighbourhood Plan Area and explains their current use class and function. Work required to maintain the function of these places as community facilities is indicated and potential for improvements are identified. Together, these facilities form the backbone of local neighbourhood community service and cultural facilities provision which needs to be protected and supported.

Table 2 – Local Community Facilities

Property	Use Class	Current community function and use	Identified requirements and potential improvements
St Christopher's Church, Lincoln Avenue, Warden Hill	F1 Place of Worship and F2 Community Use	Church and Community Hall providing playgroup and scout group facilities, with 12 parking spaces.	Retain in community use
United Reformed Church, Salisbury Avenue, Warden Hill	F1 Place of Worship and F2 Community Use	Provides church and community social uses with venue hire.	Retain in community use
Warden Hill Primary School, Durham Close, Warden Hill	F1	Local Education Authority School with indoor facilities, tennis courts and playing fields	Encourage and maintain community use of school facilities. Ensure access arrangements minimise amenity impacts on residents.
Brizen Young People's Centre, Up Hatherley Way, Warden Hill	F2 Community Use	Hall for hire, suitable for parties, fitness classes, children's activities and business meetings.	Retain in community use
St Peter's Church, Church Road	F1 Place of Worship	Parish Church with churchyard	Retain in community use
The Glebe Cottages at St Peters Church	F2 Community Use	Hall facilities available for community use.	Retain in community use
Leckhampton Village Hall	F2 Community Use	Multi-use venue which is used by 11 local clubs, available for hire. Parking off street provided.	Retain in community use
Leckhampton Primary School and the School Hall	F1	The school hall provide a community facility	Retain in community use
The Leckhampton Scout Hut, Leckhampton Road, Cheltenham	F2 Community Use	The Scout Hut is used by Leckhampton Scout Group and is available for hire for private functions or for longer term regular use. The approximate 48m² main hall can accommodate up to 100 people.	Retain in community use and improve facilities
High School Leckhampton, Farm Lane, Leckhampton.	F1	New Local Education Authority High School providing hall, parking spaces and all-weather pitch	Encourage community use of school facilities, eg for indoor events and community sports events onsite and nearby

SOURCE: ANDREA PELLEGRAM LTD

POLICY LWH1 – Grocery Shops and Community Facilities

Community Facilities

With regard to policies for the protection of existing social and community infrastructure set out in Joint Core Strategy Policy INF4 and to the range of potential planning obligations required to secure community infrastructure benefits set out in the adopted Cheltenham Plan 2020 Policy CI1, the local social, community, health and recreational facilities listed in Table 2 play a valuable role in meeting the needs of the local community and are identified as priorities for retention and improvement. Proposals for development away from F1 and F2 uses will not be supported unless suitable alternative provision exists.

Grocery Shops

Applications for prior approval of changes of use away from local shops within Class E Commercial uses to class MA Housing should not normally be permitted if it would significantly harm the overall function and role of the local shopping facilities and centres within the Neighbourhood Area

Applications for change of use from Class F2 Local Community Use, where that use is a local shop smaller than 280 square metres, should not normally be permitted if it would result in a loss of provision that could not be met by another local shop within 1000m.

Applications for development to improve existing shops will be supported in principle

New residential development within the Neighbourhood Area on sites larger than 1 hectare should not normally be permitted unless suitable local grocery shop provision exists or will be provided within 800 metres of the whole of the development.

Walking, Cycling and Sustainable Travel

124. Objectives set for the Neighbourhood Plan rely on addressing the increasing effects of traffic in the locality. Securing LWH Objectives 1, 3 and 4 in part rely on increasing the use of existing walking routes and providing new routes to fill gaps, and in the case of cycling create a network that is currently absent. More sustainable travel will improve the health of local people and help to tackle climate change by reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions and reduce particulate pollution.

A Transport and Travel Plan for the Neighbourhood Area

125. Consultation on previous work on the Neighbourhood Plan highlighted strong concerns over the growth in traffic within the Neighbourhood Area and the need to address this whilst promoting better walking and cycling links. Strategic issues are raised by the need to address traffic growth within urban areas and Leckhampton with Warden Hill sits with a wider Cheltenham town area, meaning strategic plans rightly provide leadership on the development of more sustainable approaches to car use and to public transport provision.

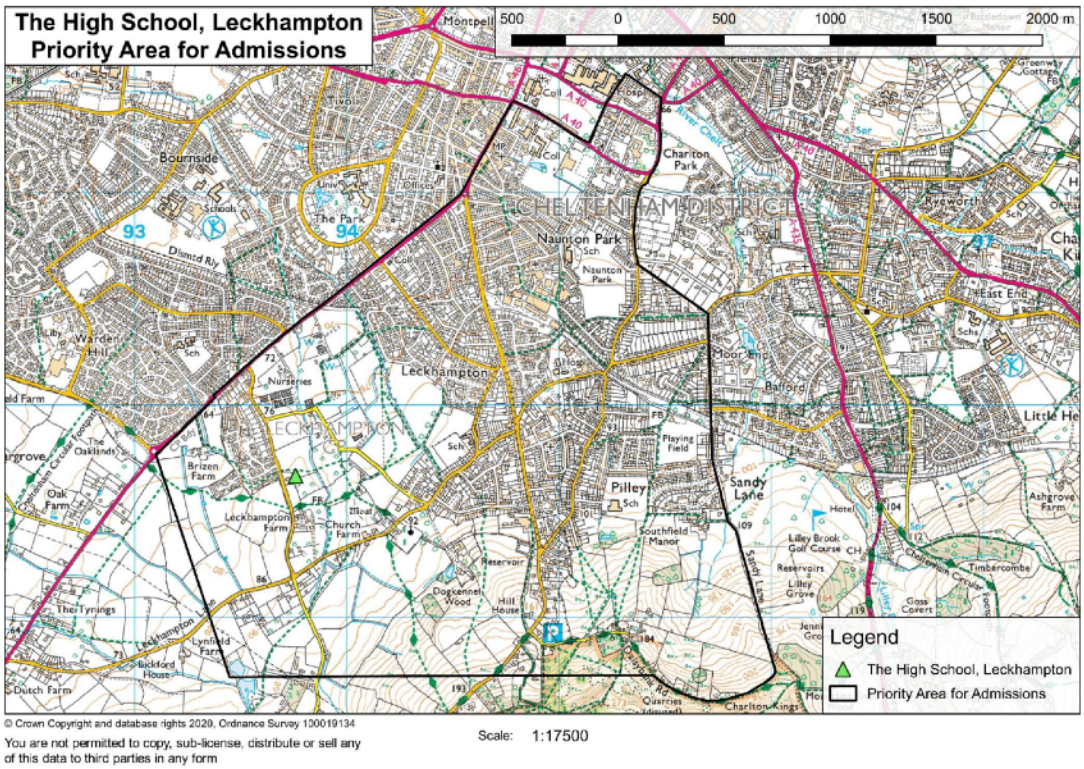
126. However, the Neighbourhood Plan has provided an opportunity to consider what contributions can be made locally, perhaps in the small way, to meet wider strategic goals and at the same time improve the environment within the Neighbourhood Area. This is through the adoption of specific principles, objectives and targeted measures. These will hopefully encourage partners in other agencies and in other authorities to take action in their plans and programmes.

127. A Transport and Travel Plan has been prepared in support of the Neighbourhood Plan and this is included in **Appendix 2**. The plan explains how strategic transport and other policy frameworks combine to influence conditions in the Neighbourhood Area. From the other direction, it highlights broad principles and specific measures that, if implemented, would improve the sustainability of travel within the Neighbourhood Area. This would have major benefits for environmental quality and amenity.

128. Many aspects of this plan are beyond the immediate scope of Neighbourhood Plan policy and so require a broader commitment by Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council, its local partners, broader stakeholders and others, including developers, to achieve its goals. This is reflected in policy LWH2 below in combination with specific proposals to improve key walking and cycling connections within the Neighbourhood Area and in policy LWH1 which seeks to maintain key local grocery shopping provision in the area, accessible on foot as well as a good network of local community facilities.

129. A significant new factor is the newly built 900 place secondary school High School Leckhampton whose priority catchment is designed to address gaps in secondary provision for those living as far east as Sandy Lane. Both the school and the community want to encourage students to walk and cycle to school but there has been minimal planning for this so far except in the immediate area around the school. The priority area for admissions is shown below as **Figure 7**.

Figure 7 - The High School Leckhampton Priority Area for Admissions



SOURCE: HIGH SCHOOL LECKHAMPTON – ACCESSED 15 SEPTEMBER 2022

WALKING

130. The map shown in **Figure 8** below shows the current network of public rights of way within the Neighbourhood Plan Area and adjoining areas. Routes can be seen to provide ways to reach open space resources on foot, such as those running north to south towards Leckhampton Hill and along the escarpment from Warden Hill. Footpaths run across Leckhampton Fields and other informal routes criss cross that area, many of them rooted in Leckhampton's history. These now provide important routes within destination areas for recreation and leisure. There are relatively few dedicated walking routes which connect places which people need to access for functional reasons today – schools, shops, community facilities. In this case, for the most part, street pavements are utilised and users need to negotiate road crossings.

131. An additional link is in the process of being recognised – at Leckhampton Hill opposite Undercliff Avenue, for which an order has been made.

Figure 8 – Local Footpaths

SOURCE: GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL RIGHTS OF WAY ONLINE MAP – ACCESSED 31 MARCH 2022

CYCLING

132. **Figure 9** below shows the current provision of cycle routes within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. One small stretch of off-road route runs into the Neighbourhood Plan Area from open space at St Michael's Road and a shared cycle/footway is located along Caernarvon Road on the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan Area before running south to the adjoining Parish. Both are located within Warden Hill. No further cycle route provision exists within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The map indicates the business of roads and experience required of cyclists using these routes. Routes which have the least traffic and are suitable for cyclists with the least experience are shown in yellow. It is not possible to cycle across the Neighbourhood Plan Area to access key services using only these routes. Green routes are seen to be relatively quiet in traffic terms whilst blue and pink routes are the busiest and require the most experience.

133. The map is very recent but does not reflect new development taking place in the area. The green routes (Kidnappers Lane and Farm Lane) and part of the pink route (Shurdington Road) have already, by September 2022, had wider pavements built to allow cycle lane markings but not physically distinct cycle lanes, and will become much busier now the new secondary school is open and once new housing development is occupied. They have already been busier and more hazardous for cyclists during construction.

134. These developments together with other planning applications (if consented) are likely to make Church Road and Leckhampton Road also busier and less usable for inexperienced cyclists over time.

Figure 9 - Local Cycle Routes

SOURCE: CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL CYCLE MAP (EXTRACT) – ACCESSED 31 MARCH 2022

PRIORITIES FOR NEW AND IMPROVED WALKING AND CYCLE ROUTES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

135. Given local people want to live in more walkable and cyclable neighbourhoods and experience less traffic in their everyday lives, which is supported by national and local planning policies, Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council will need to work with partners to establish a walking and cycling plan for the Neighbourhood Plan Area which will identify clear priorities for walking route improvements and new routes for walking and cycling, linked to key destinations.

136. Work has been undertaken to identify walking and cycle routes which could connect local facilities and destinations that local people want to access. These are the initial focus for route identification, investment and development. Inevitably given the size of the neighbourhood area, this will need to involve work outside the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan to deliver routes outside the Neighbourhood Area. Which elements are inside and outside the area are highlighted below.

- Connect housing allocation site MD4 to Salisbury Avenue Neighbourhood Centre (inside the Neighbourhood Area) and to St James Primary School and Bournside School and Sports Centres (outside the area). The Neighbourhood Plan can only address parts of this route within the Neighbourhood Area.

- Connect residential development along Farm Lane to Salisbury Avenue Neighbourhood Centre and Warden Hill Primary School.

- Connect High School Leckhampton to residential areas to the north, outside of the Neighbourhood Area (the neighbourhood plan can address routes across Leckhampton Fields and hosuing allocation site MD4).

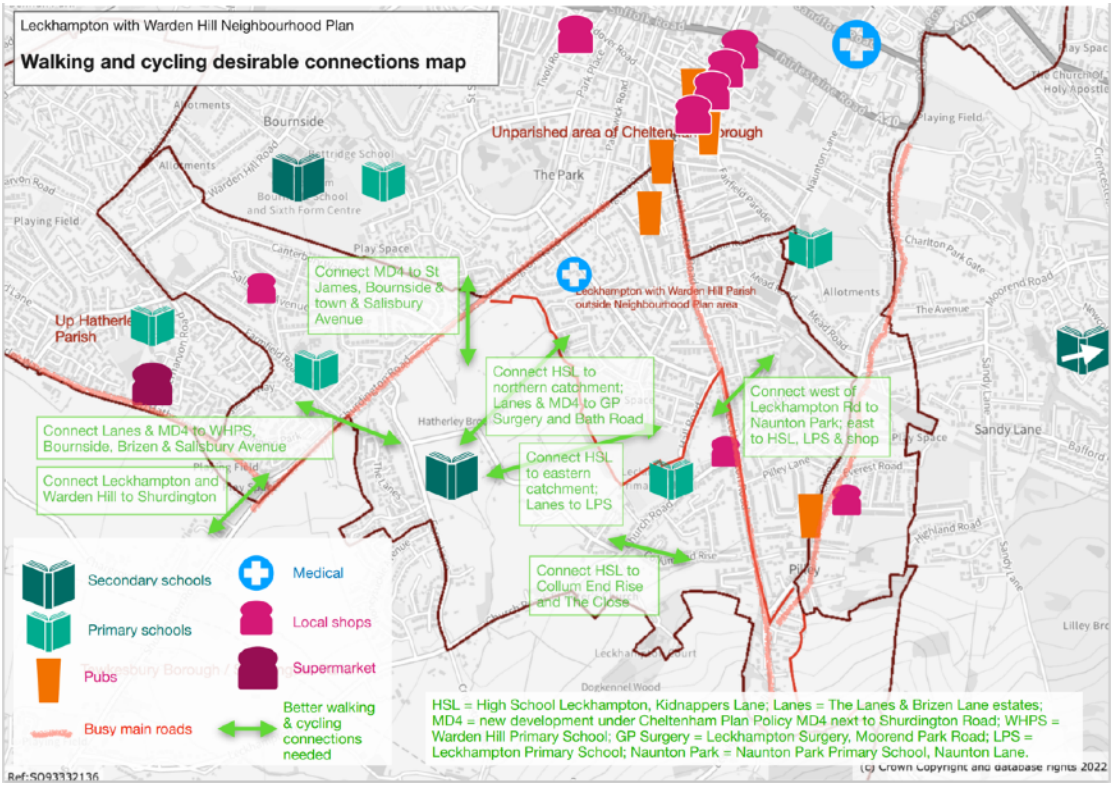
- Connect High School Leckhampton to residential areas to the east of Leckhampton Fields inside and outside the Neighbourhood Area. Further connection from the Leckhampton Road to priority catchment areas further east outside the Neighbourhood Area. Leckhampton Road forms the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area.

- Connect High School Leckhampton to areas to the south east via Kidnappers Lane including Collum End Rise, The Close and neighbouring roads across Church Road.

- Continue walking and cycle route provision along the A46 to the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area in the direction of Shurdington.

137. The routes referred to above are shown on in **Figure 9** below.

Figure 10 – Priorities for improved walking and cycling connections



SOURCE: LOCAL VOLUNTEERS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VOLUNTEERS

138. From the above, two clear challenges are presented in terms of barrier to safe and effective walking and cycling routes – the first is securing the infrastructure to cross the A46 Shurdington Road for east-west routes within the Neighbourhood Area. The second challenge relates to securing walking and cycling infrastructure from a major new school facility to its catchment to the north and east, across main roads, allocation sites, potential development sites under promotion for residential development, and the Leckhampton Fields Local Green Space and water bodies.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

139. The area is subject to significant proposals for new housing development and these should be able to contribute to the delivery of good quality and safe walking and cycling connections that will encourage local people to access local schools, shops and other

facilities on foot and by bike. Safe routes to school are particularly important for giving parents the confidence to allow their children to travel independently to school.

140. Significant housing developments should directly provide key route connections.

POLICY LWH2 – Transport Plan, Walking and Cycling

<u>Transport Plan</u>
All those with a role in creating, managing and responding to traffic growth in the local environment of Leckhampton with Warden Hill should actively promote sustainable transport measures set out in the Transport Plan in Appendix 2, including:

- **The development of better walking and cycling connections**
- **Improved traffic management including lower speed limits**
- **Reallocation of priority on highways to cyclists and pedestrians**
- **Support for the retention of key local facilities serving local people on foot.**
- **Better provision and distribution of public transport routes, services and stops**

<u>Walking and Cycling proposals</u>
Where appropriate, new development should contribute to the development of improved walking and cycling connections by incorporating specific proposals on site or through financial contributions towards off-site provision. The following routes are identified as priority requirements within the Neighbourhood Plan area:

a) Improved routes and crossing facilities from housing allocation site MD4 across A46 highway to the edge of the Neighbourhood Plan Area in the direction of St James Primary School and Bournside.

b) Improved routes and crossing facilities from residential development along Farm Lane and from allocation site MD4 across A46 highway to Salisbury Avenue Neighbourhood Centre and Warden Hill Primary School.

c) Improved facilities along the A46 within the Neighbourhood Area in the direction of Shurdington.

d) From High School Leckhampton across housing allocation site MD4 to the edge of the Neighbourhood Plan area adjacent to school catchment residential areas to the north also connecting housing allocation site MD4 to the local GP surgery.

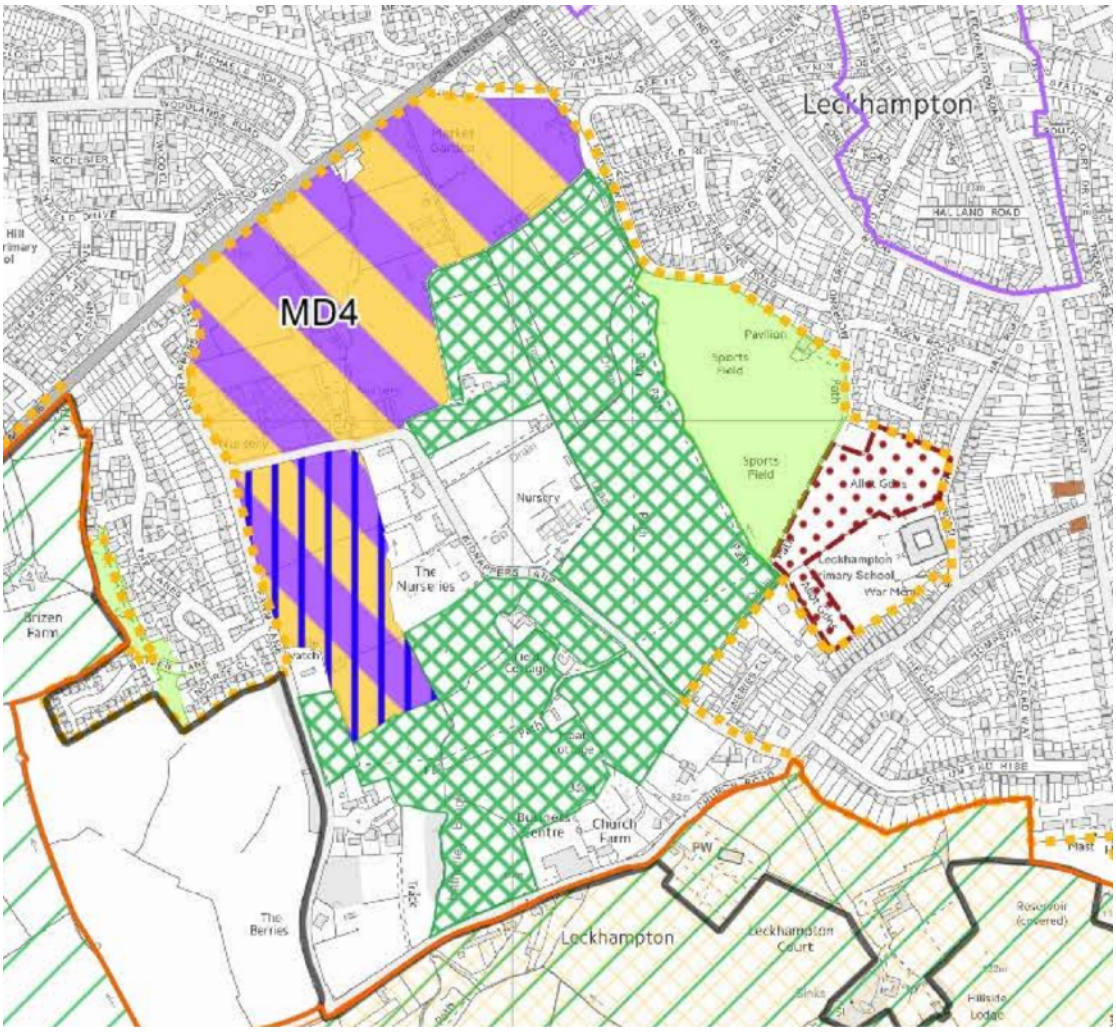
e) From High School Leckhampton towards and across Leckhampton Road to school catchment areas to the east.

f) From High School Leckhampton across Church Road to Collum End Rise, The Close and areas to the south east via Kidnappers Lane.

Local Green Space

141. The designation of Local Green Space in the Adopted Cheltenham Plan 2020 has established strong protection against development in a defined area of Leckhampton Fields. The area of Local Green Space designation is shown as the green hatched area on the Cheltenham Plan 2020 Proposals Map, a section of which is reproduced below in **Figure 11**. It is important now to ensure that the Local Green Space is managed and enhanced so that its use is promoted and its importance as a local resource for green infrastructure and as an important component of the local Valued Landscape.

Figure 11 – Leckhampton Local Green Space, from Cheltenham Plan 2020 Proposals Map



SOURCE: CHELTENHAM PLAN, 2020 – PROPOSALS MAP

142. Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council will work with local volunteer groups to development a management plan to manage and improve the Leckhampton Fields Local Green Space to achieve clear objectives, as set out below to:

- Protect the Local Green Space from development.
- Promote recreational use of the Local Green Space.

- Promote biodiversity within the Local Green Space.
- Promote pedestrian access to and within and across the Local Green Space.
- Improve understanding of the history, features and value of the Local Green Space.
- Maintain and enhance the strategic Valued Landscape function of the Local Green Space.

143. Where Local Green Space adjoins new developments, then the aim is to ensure that landscaping, planting, biodiversity gain, pedestrian/cycle access objectives and measures are complementary and create positive reinforcement for both new developments and the Local Green Space.

144. To secure the above objectives, the Neighbourhood Plan supports strictly limited development designed to facilitate use and understanding of the areas within the Local Green Space. The list of acceptable uses is set out in policy below.

POLICY LWH3 – Managing and Enhancing Local Green Space

Within Local Green Space, and in keeping with its rural characteristics, the following types of development are supported to achieve the Neighbourhood Plan's local objectives for Local Green Space:

a) Pathways

b) Signposts

c) Interpretation Boards

d) Benches

e) Similar development compatible with the use and purposes of a Local Green Space and with Walking, Cycling, Green Infrastructure and Valued Landscape objectives and policies.

Landscaping, planting, biodiversity mitigation and net gain, and pedestrian/cycle access proposals associated with proposals for new development on sites adjoining the Local Green Space should have regard to the history, landscape and rural nature of the Local Green Space and to management and improvement objectives developed for the Leckhampton Fields Local Green Space.

Green Infrastructure

145. Green infrastructure within the Neighbourhood Plan Area carries out important functions in maintaining biodiversity and species habitats but also in defining the character of the area. The area's green infrastructure in aggregate also fulfils an important existing strategic function in presenting a greener local neighbourhood in relation to Valued Landscape and the nationally important landscape designation which looks down upon it.

146. It is important that new development maintains and enhances this role by incorporating sufficient green infrastructure within developments (and of a type) to maintain local character and the strategic Valued Landscape setting.

147. In relation to the Vision and Objectives set for the Neighbourhood Plan, creating new and better green infrastructure also provides a significant opportunity to improve the look and feel of the neighbourhood, to align this with improvements to walking and cycling routes, to create connected networks for habitats and to promote opportunities for healthier lifestyles.

148. Green infrastructure is made up of a number of components which together have the potential to make up an important network of open spaces, green corridors and habitats. Much of what follows is covered by general policy protections in adopted local plans.

- Formal Open Spaces are an important aspect of green infrastructure, providing important spaces for sports, recreation, walking, running, and open-air enjoyment away from the built environment.
- Incidental green spaces provide important local functions in relation to housing developments for informal play and local recreation and greenery.
- Garden space to housing, businesses and in other more institutional settings.
- Formal play areas are not strictly green, but provide an important function for the local community
- Green corridors often are formed by natural or man-made linear features, such as rivers and streams, footpaths, railway lines, property boundaries etc.
- Local Nature Reserves
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other statutorily protected wildlife sites.
- Allotments
- Undesignated open land within the urban area
- Agricultural land

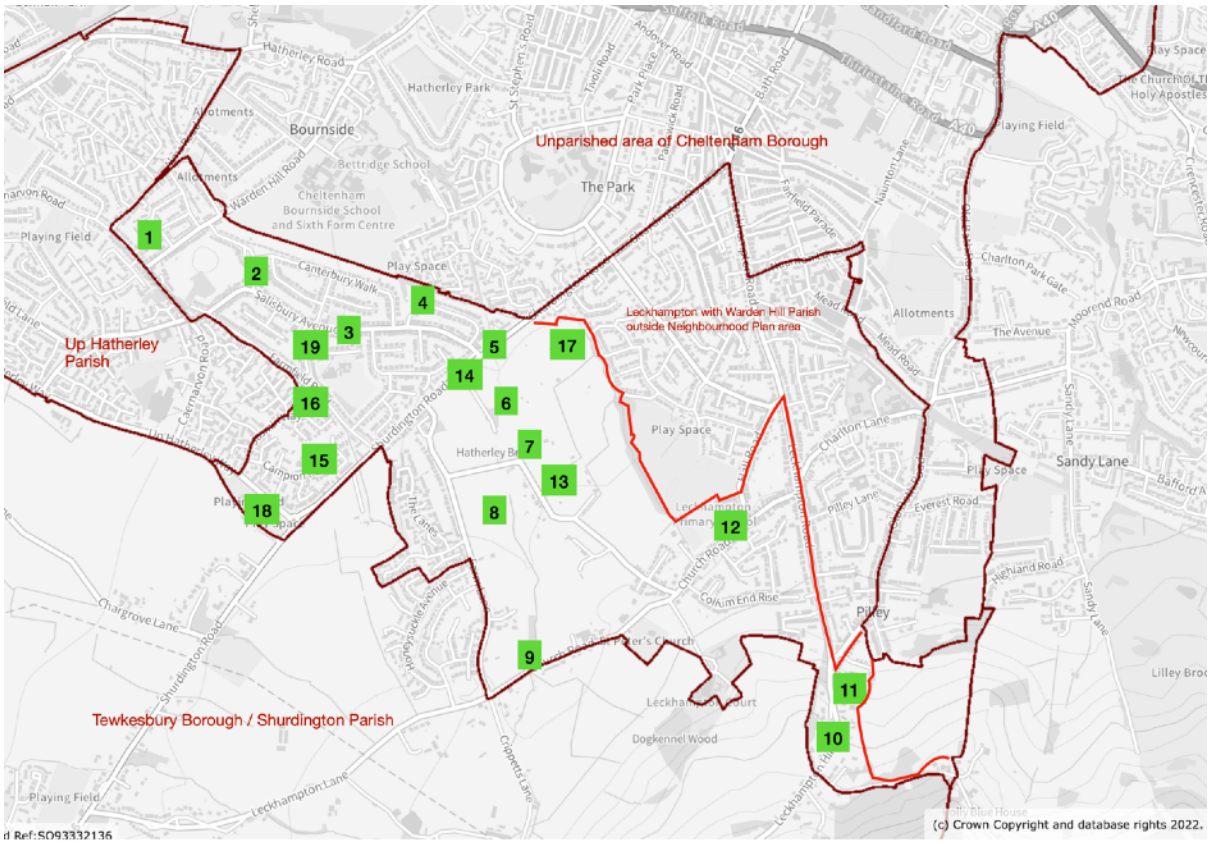
149. Given the strategic contribution that green infrastructure makes as a whole and in view of the objective to connect green infrastructure, extreme care should be taken in allowing its loss so that connections and functions of value to local people, and its strategic role, are maintained.

150. Strategic policies in local plans provide general policy support for the retention of existing open/green spaces of different kinds (see policies – GE2 in saved policies from the 2006 plan, D1 Design, D3 Private Green Space, Para 16.3 incidental green space, CI1 b) developer contributions, CI2 Sports and Open Spaces provision in new residential development). Local Green Space has specific protection also (Table 7, site 14).

151. The Neighbourhood Plan brings together how all these open space elements work together to form the Neighbourhood Plan Area's network of green infrastructure and sets objectives for protecting, maintaining, improving and creating new green infrastructure to strengthen the network.

152. Parish councillors have prepared a review of green infrastructure sites which make a contribution to the above objectives and roles within the Neighbourhood Area. The sites are shown in **Figure 12**.

Figure 12 – Green Infrastructure Sites



SOURCE: LOCAL VOLUNTEERS FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

153. The sites identified are described in **Appendix 3**. The sites are a mix of whole site areas which provide important green infrastructure functions, which it is sought to protect, and sites which already or might play a green infrastructure role as they are developed and managed through complementary approaches to site design, layout, landscape design and biodiversity net gain.

POLICY LWH4 – Green Infrastructure

The roles and functions of existing green infrastructure identified in Figure 12 and Appendix 3 should be protected and enhanced when considering new proposals for development including expected development at housing allocation site MD4. Where feasible, new development should contribute through onsite provision to the maintenance and enhancement of local green infrastructure roles and functions.

Future objectives for the maintenance and improvement of Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan Area green infrastructure should also be supported through developer contributions where appropriate.

Valued Landscape

154. Extensive work has been undertaken to support development of a distinctive neighbourhood approach to the consideration of the character and setting of Leckhampton with Warden Hill adjacent to the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now also referred to as the Cotswold National Landscape). This dates from early considerations on the Joint Core Strategy, through the development of the Cheltenham Borough Plan adopted in 2020 and in relation to significant planning applications and appeals within the area and outside it.

155. Key concepts relating to Valued Landscape have been clearly established in wider policies through these processes. A detailed statement setting out the key policy concepts and their basis is set out in **Appendix 4**.

156. In support of this Neighbourhood Plan, a Landscape and Visual Appraisal was prepared by Lepus Consulting and published in 2017. This work has now been updated to reflect the adoption of strategic policies, changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and decisions to development consents in the area. The updated Landscape Character Assessment and evaluation of Landscape Value by Lepus is included in **Annex 4**. It follows 2021 Landscape Institute published guidance to inform the assessment of landscape value for areas lying outside national landscape designations.

157. The updated report contains 18 recommendations which are reproduced below in **Table 3** alongside policy implications and other actions. **Figure 13** identifies the broad locational application of the recommendations. Policy LWH5 sets policy to implement the recommendations where appropriate.

158. Alongside the development of neighbourhood plan policy to define and apply concepts relating to Leckhampton with Warden Hills Valued Landscape, the Neighbourhood Plan has developed policy to manage and enhance the designated Local Green Space and to improve green infrastructure. Policies LWH3 and LWH4 of this Neighbourhood Plan recognise the strategic contribution that the Leckhampton Local Green Space and Green Infrastructure throughout the Neighbourhood Plan Area make to strategic Valued Landscape objectives and so should be read in conjunction with policy LWH5.

Table 3 – Landscape and Visual Appraisal Recommendation and Implementation

LVA Recommendation	Policy implications for Neighbourhood Plan and others
R1. Protect the special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB and its setting. Resist development and change that would be likely to adversely affect the characteristic features or qualities of these landscapes. In particular, resist development that would either adversely affect views from the AONB and the perception of a soft transition from the designated landscape to the urban edge of Cheltenham or adversely affect opportunities to enjoy the rural character of views from the study area towards the AONB.	This is a strategic policy consideration that will be considered by Cheltenham Borough Council and the Cotswold AONB Management Board. The Neighbourhood Plan can promote actions that preserve and enhance the contribution of landscape character within the Neighbourhood Area (in particular Valued Landscape) to AONB setting.
R2. Protect the historic landscape pattern created by the layout of public roads, rights of way and the field pattern, which have good time depth;	Ensure new development proposals and landscape management of sites preserve essential features of the Valued Landscape.
R3. Protect the rural, vegetated character of highways and rights of way and resist sub-urbanising features, for example, concrete curbstones to footways;	Ensure new development proposals preserve essential features of the Valued Landscape.
R4. Protect existing vegetated features and watercourses for their contribution to landscape character, soils and surface water runoff management;	Encourage Local Green Space management, green infrastructure provision and management, and protection of Valued Landscape to be approached holistically.
R5. Protect existing semi-improved grasslands and support opportunities to enhance species diversity in the sward, through appropriate seeding and management.	Promote bio-diversity net gain from development on improvement of important local habitats. Ensure management of open areas encourages more wildlife.
R6. Manage vegetation along watercourses to support a range of wildlife with a balance of open areas and shelter/enclosure. Willows should be pollarded or coppiced to prevent excessive shading. This can be done every 5-6 years.	Where relevant, ensure new development proposals include appropriate landscape and bio-diversity proposals to support and enhance wildlife along watercourses.
R7. Support hedgerow management to enhance opportunities for dormice, by maintaining phased hazel cutting, maintain honeysuckle and avoiding complete removal of bramble except where necessary to maintain access on public rights of way. Avoid use of flail cutting to manage hedgerows.	Provide clear advice to landowners on hedgerow management through Local Green Space Management Plan and other mechanisms. Ensure relevant development proposals include Local Ecological Management Plan proposals to manage and enhance hedgerows.

R8. Protect existing standard trees for their contribution to landscape character, visual amenity, biodiversity and surface water runoff management;	Where appropriate and feasible, the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to retain existing trees in proposed new developments.
R9. Protect the Veteran Oak tree in Lotts Meadow, and the nearby Oak tree which has the potential to be considered as a Veteran tree. Monitor and manage to allow safe senesce and the opportunity to become ancient trees.	The Tree is located within the Local Green Space. Management of the Local Green Space should protect root protection zones and tree canopy of the potential veteran tree.
R10.The presence of Orchards in the study area reflects the quality of the soils and former use of the land for market gardening in some locations. Traditional orchards often provide habitats that support a range of wildlife and are identified as a 'Priority Habitat' by Natural England. Community orchards can provide opportunities for social interaction and encourage social cohesion. This can be particularly important where existing communities are experiencing high levels of change, such as new development. Protect existing Traditional Orchards and encourage opportunities for new orchard planting, for example in new developments, or as part of community schemes.	The Neighbourhood Plan should seek to protect and enhance existing orchards for their role in supporting biodiversity and in making a contribution to Valued Landscape, and encourage planting of new orchards as part of new developments or through community growing schemes.
R11. Support opportunities for tree planting schemes. Small to medium scale tree planting schemes may be appropriate in the study area, such as linear woodlands and copses, which would also maintain the character of the landscape and opportunities to appreciate the openness of views towards the escarpment of the Cotswolds NL.	Encourage new developments to incorporate tree planting schemes to meet Valued Landscape objectives. Develop initiatives for tree planting more widely in the Neighbourhood Area.
R12.Support opportunities to enhance the public's understanding of the special qualities of the landscape of the study area, for example through the provision of information boards.	Provide educational information throughout the Neighbourhood Area to explain the history, current role and value of landscape character features. Seek provision of information in new development proposals where appropriate.
Views and visual amenity:	
R13.Maintain opportunities to experience the rural character of this landscape and views of the rising escarpment of the Cotswolds NL from publicly accessible locations within the study area;	Ensure that new development proposals do not 'enclose' the Local Green Space so that the visual link from within it to the escarpment is significantly reduced or lost.

R14.Ensure development and other change protects the rural character of the views available from publicly accessible locations in the study area and resist change that introduces visual detractors into these views.	Ensure that new development proposals have significant regard to the attributes of landscape character that are exhibited in the Valued Landscape.
R15.Protect opportunities to experience views towards heritage assets within a rural setting.	A consideration of the impacts of proposed development on the setting of heritage assets will be considered by Cheltenham Borough Council and Historic England. Landscape management activities should be undertaken with due regard to their impact on heritage assets.
R16.Support sustainable transport routes to create improved access, such as cycling routes and improvements to pedestrian safety to promote public enjoyment of the landscape	The Neighbourhood Plan supports the improvement of key routes across the neighbourhood area, through policy LWH2.
R17.Protect and, where possible, enhance tranquillity. For example, through carefully considered lighting schemes, while maintaining public safety, and through traffic reduction through improved sustainable transport routes.	The Neighbourhood Plan should encourage new development to minimise disturbance to the amenity users of the Local Green Space. This is addressed in policy LWH3.
Education and Social Capital:	
R18. Consider the creation of an outdoor field centre or gateway feature associated with awareness raising about the Cotswolds NL and countryside at the edges of Cheltenham. The centre would be used by local schools and interest groups to learn about for example biodiversity, landscape, history and climate change.	Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council and its partners should consider this idea as a stand-alone project.

Figure 13 – Landscape and Visual Appraisal Recommendations

LCA Update - Leckhampton with Warden Hill Neighbourhood Plan Septe
LC-814_Leckhampton_Warden_Hill_NP_LCA_11_090922RG.docx

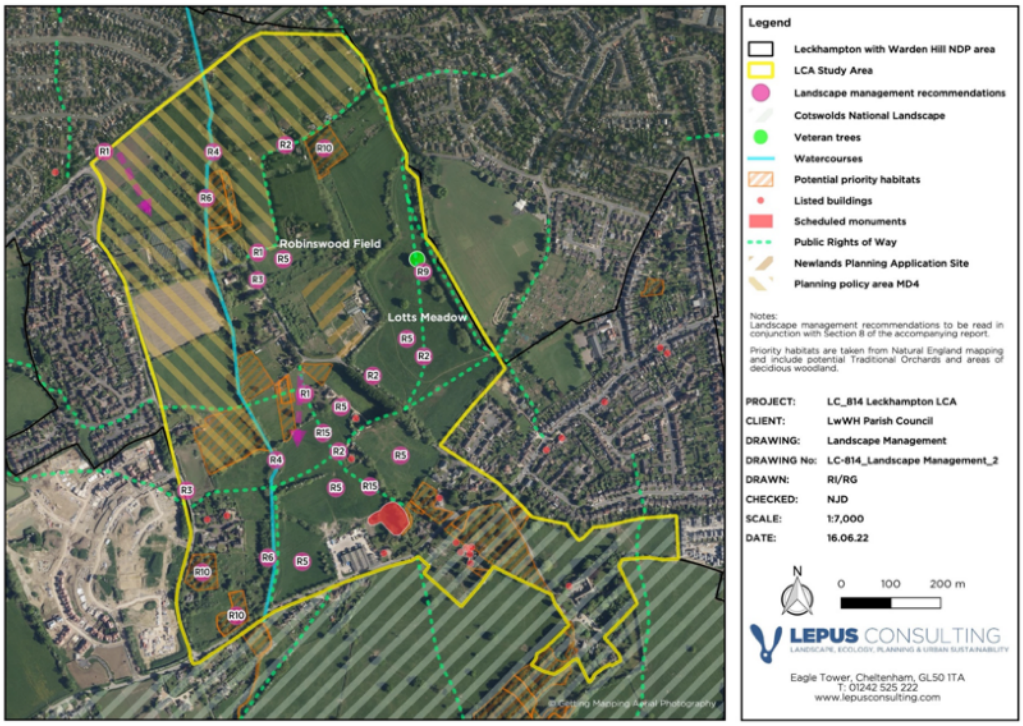


Figure 7.1: Landscape Management Recommendations

© Lepus Consulting for Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council

POLICY LWH5 – Conserving and Enhancing Valued Landscape

In conjunction with Policy LWH3 and LWH4 of this Neighbourhood Plan, where appropriate, new developments within the Neighbourhood Plan Area should satisfy the following principles to:

a) Preserve essential features of Valued Landscape within the Neighbourhood Area, including layout of public roads, rights of way, the field pattern, vegetated character of highways.

b) Maintain and enhance the contribution of Valued Landscape within the Neighbourhood Area to the setting of the Cotswold AONB. Ensure new development does not significantly reduce the visual link between the Local Green Space and the Cotswold Escarpment.

c) Incorporate landscape and ecological improvement proposals to protect, maintain and enhance the landscape and wildlife value of watercourses, hedgerows and trees.

d) Focus on opportunities for biodiversity net gain from new development on improvements and extensions to priority habitats including orchards and semi-improved grasslands

e) Provide a sufficient level of green infrastructure to maintain the strategic role of green infrastructure in providing a green setting for Valued Landscape.

f) Complement management principles for the Leckhampton Local Green Space in the provision of external landscaping, planting and biodiversity enhancement, where relevant.

g) Consider opportunities for provision of educational signage and interpretation to improve understanding about the history and character of the Neighbourhood Area.

Local Heritage

1. Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) attaches 'great weight' to the conservation of heritage assets and their significance, including listed buildings and scheduled monuments. Locally, JCS Policy SD8 and the Cheltenham Plan set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the borough's historic environment and heritage assets, including those at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. It acknowledges that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and also the need to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

2. Statutory Protections and Adopted Local Plan policies are in place for Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments located within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. These provide a development management framework governing the consideration of impacts on Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments and their settings. A full list and description of designated heritage assets in the Neighbourhood Plan area is included in **Annex 5**.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

3. Section 16 of the NPPF also covers non-designated heritage assets. It states in Paragraph 190 that "Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

   a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

   b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

   c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

   d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place."

4. The definition of heritage asset in the Framework is "A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest."

5. Cheltenham Plan Policy HE1 provides policy for the consideration of development proposals relating to Buildings of Local Important and Non-Designated Heritage Assets. This requires a demonstration that:

   a) all reasonable steps have been taken to retain the building, including examination of alternative uses compatible with its local importance; and

   b) retention of the building, even with alterations, would be demonstrably impracticable; and

   c) the public benefits of the redevelopment scheme outweigh the retention of the building.

6. Development proposals that would affect a locally important or non-designated heritage asset, including its setting, will be required to have regard to the scale of any harm or loss to the significance of the heritage asset.

7. The Neighbourhood Plan has considered the potential to identify further buildings, sites, places, areas or landscapes of local interest and importance as non-designated heritage assets. The Index of Buildings of Local Interest Supplementary Planning Document was adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council in 2007. This Local Index for Cheltenham includes the following categories which provides a guide to the identification of features that would make particular buildings local non-designated heritage asset, although it should be noted that the NPPF definition of heritage assets is wider than just buildings:

   BUILDINGS. These include:

   - Buildings designed by a particular architect or designer of regional or local note
   - Good examples of well designed domestic buildings which retain their original details and materials
   - Good examples of educational, religious or community buildings which retain their original details and materials
   - Landmark buildings or structures of notable design
   - Buildings or structures of which contribute to our understanding of the development of the area

   STRUCTURES. These include:

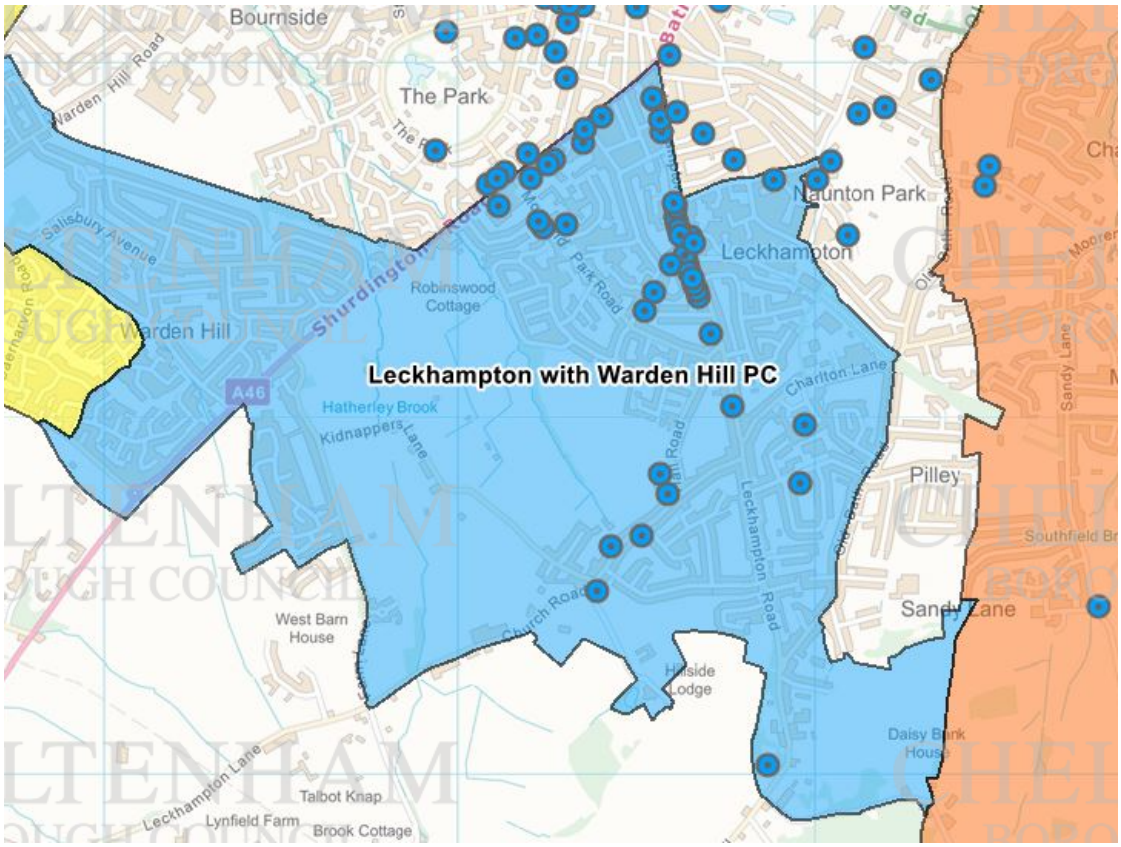
   - Notable walls or railings
   - Street lighting
   - Bollards
   - Street surfaces
   - Post boxes

   HISTORIC ASSOCIATION. These must be well documented and include:

   - Any building or structure which has a close association with famous people or events
   - Any building or structure which has a close association with an important local feature including statutorily protected sites or buildings.

8. **Figure 14** below is an extract from the interactive map maintained by Cheltenham Borough Council which shows Buildings of Local Importance included on the Cheltenham Index within the Neighbourhood Area (*Buildings shown to the north of Leckhampton Road above Church Road are not located within the Neighbourhood Area and buildings located to the east of Leckhampton Road above the old Bath Road are also outside the area).*

Figure 14 – Existing Buildings of Local Importance



SOURCE: CHELTENHAM BC INDEX OF BUILDINGS OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE (EXTRACTED JUNE 2022)

9. Parish councillors have identified further buildings, sites, places, areas or landscapes of local interest and importance as non-designated heritage assets within the Neighbourhood Area. The sites are set out in **Appendix 5**.

10. This listing does not rule out development but a key objective for these assets is to protect them against loss or harm, where development benefits would not clearly outweigh identified impacts. A complementary objective would be to support improvement to such assets where this is appropriate and to provide interpretive information about them where this would improve understanding of local cultural heritage.

11. We anticipate this list being kept up to date and added to or amended by local people in future. The policy below does not therefore list the specific sites but refers instead to Appendix 5.

POLICY LWH6 – Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The buildings, sites, places, areas or landscapes of local interest and importance listed in Appendix 5 are identified as Non-designated Local Heritage Assets in addition to those on the Cheltenham Index of Buildings of Local interest.

Weight should be given to this list in planning decision-making as required by the National Planning Policy Framework. As with the buildings on Cheltenham's Index of Buildings of Local Importance, any proposals should respect the listed heritage asset's character or interest and should preserve or enhance it.

Flood Risk

12. The local community has undertaken its own work to develop locally-specific information on rainfall and surface water flooding characteristics associated with run-off from Leckhampton Hill and along the escarpment onto the developed areas of Leckhampton and Warden Hill, below.

13. The Neighbourhood Plan working group considered that, because of its height and location, Leckhampton Hill experiences intense rainfall. Storms with 30-50mm of rainfall and lasting around an hour have occurred once or twice a decade for the past 60 years. Most houses in Leckhampton Village have their ground floors raised sufficiently above ground level that they avoid being flooded internally. This should be a guiding principle in all new development, though there are some examples where this has not been followed and flooding to properties subsequently occurred (Collum End Rise, 12 June, 2016).

14. Leckhampton Hill can also experience heavy cumulative rainfall. In the storm on 20 July 2007, 130mm of rainfall was measured in Collum End Rise over a period of about 8 hours with a peak rainfall of 25 mm per hour. The runoff from this storm flooded around 40 houses in the centre of Warden Hill, some to a depth of over 1 metre. In their report on the flooding for Cheltenham Borough Council, consultants Halcrow classified the storm as a 30 year event. To protect Warden Hill against future storms of this scale, flood defences were installed in 2011 along the west side of the A46. These provide a barrier to hold flood water back on the land east of the A46 and are designed to cope with a 100-year storm plus margin for global warming.

15. It is very important, however, to retain sufficient capacity on the open land at Brizen Farm to hold future flood water. The land is currently part of the green belt but was the subject of an application for housing development about 8 years ago. This area is outside the Neighbourhood Plan Area and so policies in the Neighbourhood Plan cannot apply there.

16. There are four main catchments on the scarp of Leckhampton Hill. The largest has an area of around 170 ha and feeds into Hatherley Brook. To the east of this are two smaller catchments one above Leckhampton Village and the other above Old Bath Road from run-off flows into Moorend Stream and thence into Hatherley Brook. Further to the east there are catchments below Hartley Hill from which the runoff flows into the River Chelt. To the west of the Hatherley Brook catchment there is a smaller catchment from which runoff flows into a stream at Brizen Farm. This catchment played a large part in flooding Warden Hill in July 2007. The part of this catchment west of Farm Lane is now the site of the new development of 377 houses being built by Redrow. This development will alter the runoff in future storms but the flood defences along the A46 are designed to hold back the flood water on the land of Brizen Farm.

17. In the case of Hatherley Brook and Moorend Stream the key issue is to ensure there is sufficient capacity on the Leckhampton Fields to hold flood water so that it does not flow over the A46 into housing in Warden Hill and The Park. Moorend Stream overflows mainly onto Lotts Meadow and the field north of Lotts Meadow and also onto the easternmost area of the Northern Fields west of the stream. All of this area is planned to remain as open land, most of it as part of the Local Green Space and the part on the Northern Fields being kept as

an open area with balancing pond. Some reprofiling of this land might be necessary to provide enough future capacity to hold floodwater.

18. Hatherley Brook overflows onto area land at the corner of Farm Lane and Church Road and onto the land east of the brook in the Local Green Space. It also overflows Kidnappers Lane and along the course of the brook across allocated housing site (Miller Homes) located off the A46. The brook has a gully with a depth of about 2.5 metres over most of its course between Church Road and the A46 and a width of about 50 metres, giving a possible storage volume of volume of around 100,000 cubic metres. The floodwater flow is held back where Hatherley Brook flows under Church Road and further north under Kidnappers Lane. In the storm of 20 July 2007 however the water flow caused damaged to Church Road and flooded across Kidnappers Lane, as it does also in smaller storms.

19. For a 100-year storm including the effect of global warming one might expect to have a rainfall of 200 mm over 6 hours or less. One must also assume that the ground (impermeable lias clay) is fully saturated at the start of the storm, which was the case for 20 July 2007 storm which was preceded by a heavy storm on 19 July.

20. One must also assume that any balancing ponds will be full or nearly full because of previous rainfall. For such a 100-year storm the runoff from a catchment of 170 ha would be around 340,000 cubic metres compared with a possible storage capacity in the Hatherley Brook gully as noted above of only 100,000 cubic metres.

21. Also this storage capacity could be reduced both by the re-profiling of the land along Hatherley Brook for the proposed new secondary school and by the proposed housing development on the Northern Fields. Great care is therefore needed to avoid flooding of the new development and of residential areas west of the A46.

POLICY LWH7 – Protection of dwellings against Future Flooding and Climate Change

Proposals for new development must have regard to the following guidance on specific local flood risk matters:

a) Any development on the scarp of Leckhampton Hill or on the land below the scarp between the scarp and the A46 must take fully into account the potential flash and cumulative water flow including a 30% margin for climate change, and specifically (1) high peak rainfall up to 65 mm in 75 minutes (1.3 times the measured rainfall in Leckhampton Village on 27 June 2007) and (2) a 100 year storm of 200 mm of rainfall in 6 to 8 hours (1.5 times the measured rainfall in Leckhampton Village for the 30 year storm on 20 July 2007), both on fully saturated land.

b) In order to protect against flooding of residential areas west of the A46 in storms up to a 100-year level adjusted for climate change, floodable open land must be preserved between Church Road and the A46 along both Hatherley Brook and Moorend Stream to be able to hold back sufficient flood water.

c) Any development on the scarp of Leckhampton Hill or on the land below the scarp must not divert water flows in a way that creates an additional flood risk to other residential areas. This includes diverting springs and underground water flow on the Leckhampton Fields as well as surface flow.

d) The use of permeable materials on external surfaces and the installation of water butts would allow much better drainage and reduce the frequency of flash flooding.

e) New development should incorporate tree planting, particularly important in Warden Hill which compares badly with the tree lined streets of Leckhampton Ward.

f) Developer contributions for tree planting off site and for advice and guidance to householders on improving flood resilience, would be supported.

Monitoring and Review

22. The development of the Neighbourhood Plan sets policies to achieve clear objectives to achieve the Vision. The effectiveness of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan in some cases will rely on on-going efforts to develop further ideas and strategy, and also to monitor local conditions so that information supporting policies in the Neighbourhood Plan remain up to date.

23. The following areas are identified for further action and monitoring:

    a) Monitor occupancy and vacancies in local commercial facilities.

    b) Monitor use of local community facilities.

    c) Identify programme of improvements required to community facilities and monitor implementation.

    d) Develop priorities for improvements to key walking routes and new cycle routes.

    e) Develop a Management Plan for the Leckhampton Local Green Space.

    f) Develop a programme for investment in green infrastructure using developer contributions and other potential sources of money.

    g) Consider the potential for a gateway site for the AONB located within the area.

    h) Consider a programme and timetable for development of a new Parish-wide Neighbourhood Plan.

    i) Review and keep up to date the list of non-designated heritage assets.