

# BERRICK SALOME PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2013–2034

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## FOREWORD

The Berrick Salome Parish (The Parish) was created in 1993 as part of the Government reorganisation of Local Government. It is essentially the combination of 4 settlements: Berrick Prior, Berrick Salome, Roke and Rokemarsh. It is located in central South Oxfordshire and connected by rural country lanes to Benson, Ewelme, Chalgrove and Newington.

The Parish is rural in character, surrounded by rolling landscape and largely arable farming. The 4 settlements are surrounded by working farms. In recent history, as farms and farm workers declined, their houses and small parcels of land (often adjacent to farm roads) were purchased by families who wished for a more rural way of life in the countryside. Sustainability of the economic activity in The Parish rests primarily on the continuing presence of viable, working farms.

The settlements are arranged in a triangle, with Rokemarsh located at the southerly corner, Roke at the south-east corner, and Berrick Prior and Berrick Salome at the northern corner. Roads between the settlements are narrow and winding, being constructed as roads suitable for farm traffic within The Parish. All of The Parish roads are historic, connecting farms within The Parish to the larger villages, and The Parish has never benefited from any road improvement. The result is that modern traffic flows have to be accommodated in an environment ill-suited to current circumstances.

As there is no public transport between settlements or to villages outside The Parish, parishioners use these roads to walk, cycle or horse ride to visit Parish amenities (2 public houses, Berrick and Roke Village Hall, allotments, recreational and children's play area, village green, St Helen's Church) and to drive to areas where they can access additional amenities, including shops, GP surgeries, fuel, dental practices, vet practices and schooling; none of these exist in The Parish.

For employment, a high proportion of parishioners drive out of the area daily to the surrounding towns and cities. The Parish has no direct access to the rail network. The nearest stations are in Didcot, Oxford, Haddenham, Cholsey, Henley and Reading. A recent trend has been, an increasing number of people work wholly or partially from home, resulting in more people in The Parish during the working week, creating a more active environment.

There is rich evidence of an ancient settlement and historical features, including St Helen's Church; with its Norman arch to the south door, it was probably built in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. In 1429 a tower was built, unique in Oxfordshire for a timber tower on a stone church. Today it has a ring of 6 bells, the oldest dating from 1621.

There are 38 listed buildings in The Parish, all Grade II, and one further Grade II\* building, ie St Helen's Church.

The Parish has a small number of facilities which limit its suitability for considerable additional housing development. These include two public houses, St Helen's Church, Berrick and Roke Village Hall, recreational and children's play area and village green. As a result of these limited facilities, the settlement of Berrick Salome (and Berrick Prior as SODC regards the two as a single settlement) remains defined as a 'Smaller Village', with Roke as an 'Other Village' and Rokemarsh not listed in its own right, by the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) 2034 emerging plan.

The Parish Council advertised for members to join a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (The Group), which formed the working group responsible for the progression of the Berrick Salome Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BSPNP). A variety of rigorous consultation methods were used to engage with the local community and stakeholders throughout the process to inform the development of the BSPNP.

The Group has worked closely with SODC to ensure the formal planning aspects of the BSPNP were addressed correctly. SODC's excellent input has been central to

the development of this Plan.

The Group has worked hard over the last 18 months to progress the development of the BSPNP. The Parish Council is confident that BSPNP policies will enable sustainable development of The Parish, in line with the wishes of parishioners and hope that this will be confirmed at referendum.

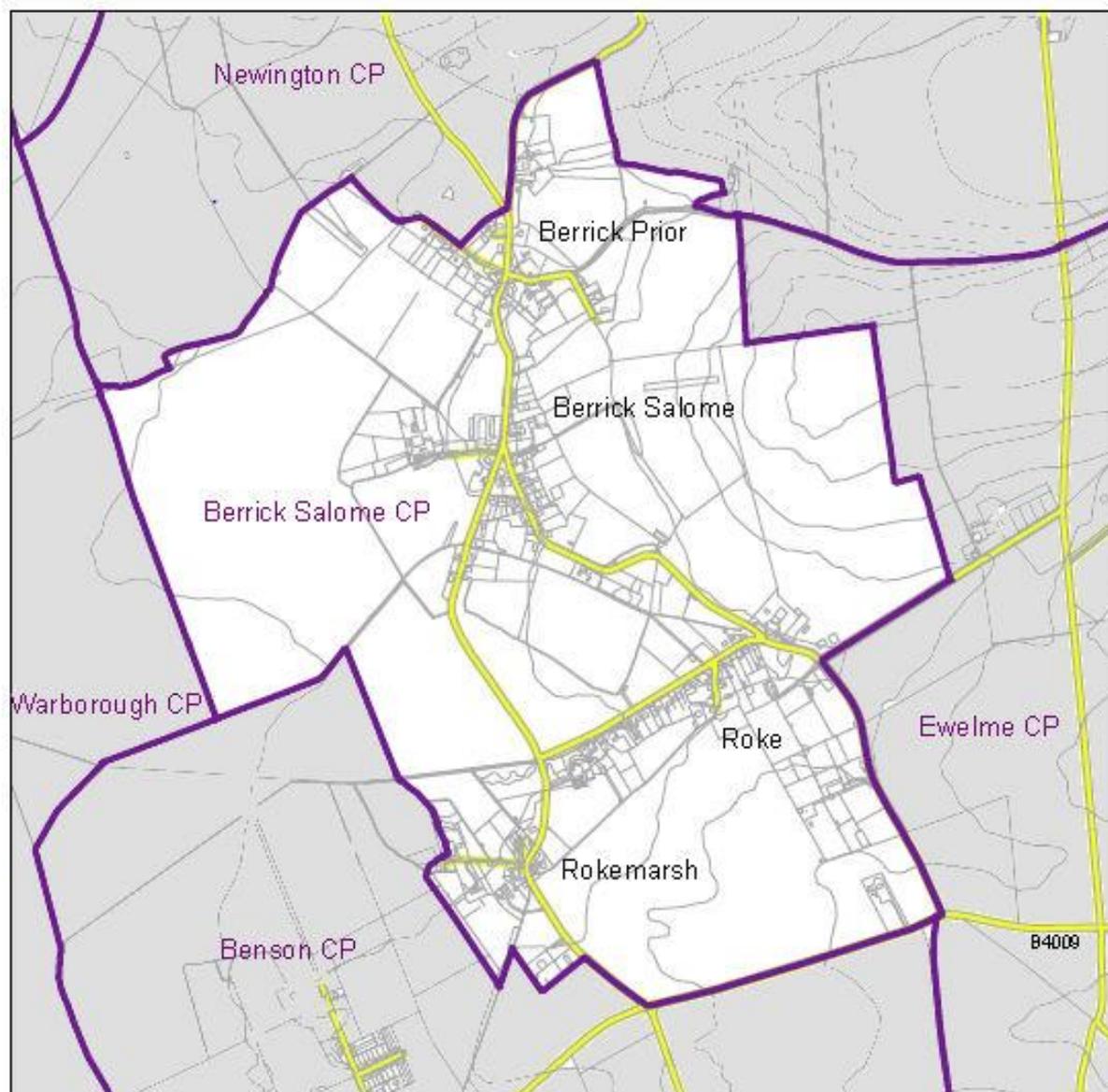
I would like to express my sincere thanks to The Group and to the many members of our community who have contributed to the development of the BSPNP.

**Brian Tracey**

Berrick Parish Neighbourhood Plan Team Leader

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 The Berrick Salome Parish Council has prepared this Submission version of the Berrick Salome Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BSPNP), in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment 2004. The Local Planning Authority, South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), designated the Berrick Salome Parish Neighbourhood Area on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017 for this purpose. The designated area is essentially the combination of 4 settlements: Berrick Prior, Berrick Salome, Roke and Rokemarsh as shown in the map below.



*Plan A: Berrick Salome Parish Boundary*

1.2 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to make planning policies and recommendations that can be used by the District Council in the determination of planning applications in the local area. The BSPNP's policies will protect the special rural character of The Parish and its surrounding landscape setting while planning for the sustainable growth of The Parish to 2034.

1.3 Neighbourhood Planning is an opportunity for local communities to shape the future development of their area and to facilitate locally-appropriate, sustainable development. Once approved at a public referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes a part of the statutory development plan for the local area and will carry

significant weight in how planning applications are decided, as embodied in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.4 A Neighbourhood Plan is a legal planning document used for managing development. As a consequence, all policies within a neighbourhood plan must relate only to land use. Through the consultation and engagement process, some issues were raised by the local community that fall beyond the remit and scope of our Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council will have regard to these issues.

1.5 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans are legally required to meet a set of 'basic conditions'. These are:

- It must have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- The making of a Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the Neighbourhood 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); and
- The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

1.6 For a plan to be made it must demonstrate how the prescribed conditions are met and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, The Parish Council must be able to show that it has properly engaged and consulted with the local community and other relevant organisations, throughout the process of making its Neighbourhood Plan, and has followed the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (as amended).

1.7 These requirements will be tested by an Independent Examiner now the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised. If satisfied, the examiner will recommend to SODC that the BSPNP goes to a public referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes for the BSPNP, then SODC will formally 'make' the BSPNP where it becomes legally adopted into planning policy for the local area.

### **The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

1.8 At the Parish Council meeting on 1 September 2016, parishioners were invited to join the Steering Group. Everyone who expressed interest was invited to an initial meeting on 29 September. Of those expressing an interest, the majority formed the core team and agreed its terms of reference with The Parish Council that month, which enabled it to manage the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of The Parish Council.

1.9 This core team was responsible for the primary engagement and consultation phase, which included the undertaking of a parish-wide survey in September 2017. In addition to the local community volunteers in the Steering Group, SODC supported the development of the BSPNP. An early version of the Plan was presented at The Parish Christmas Fair, on 25 November 2017, at which time all parishioners were given the opportunity to engage with representatives of the Steering Group.

1.10 A draft version of the Pre-Submission BSPNP was emailed to all parishioners on 3/10/18 and all were asked to comment in writing to The Parish Clerk or verbally at a Parish meeting on 23/10/18. A leaflet was dropped to the addresses of all Parishioners without email inviting them to ask for a printed version of the Plan and to comment on it on 23/10/18 or in writing before that date. 45 parishioners attended the meeting on 23/10 and 13 parishioners commented by email. All

comments made to date are being tabulated, along with the consequent action taken. These have been published in the separate Consultation Statement.

1.11 The Pre-Submission BSPNP was published for its statutory consultation period commencing on 16 November 2018 and ending on 11 January 2019 in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 14 of the 2012 Regulations. The Steering Group has reviewed all the representations made by local people and organisations and by the statutory bodies and other consultees, which have informed this final version of the plan. Again, the representations, and the responses from the Steering Group, are set out in the Consultation Statement.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment & Habitats Regulations Assessment**

1.12 The BSPNP has been screened by SODC to determine the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment or a Habitats Regulation Assessment of the plan. These assessments are requirements of EU Directives. SODC has finalised its screening opinion, and consulted with the statutory bodies, and has concluded that the BSPNP policies do not have the potential for significant environmental effects. The screening opinion is published separately and, as a result, neither of these assessments have been necessary.

## 2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

### A Profile of The Parish

2.1 Berrick Salome Parish (The Parish) is located in central south Oxfordshire, within the setting of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs AONBs, and connected by rural country lanes to Benson, Ewelme, Chalgrove and Newington. The open fields on the southern edge of The Parish give an extensive view over the Thames Valley to the long line of the Berkshire Downs, with the isolated chalk ridge of the Sinodun Hills crowned by Wittenham Clumps, as a focus in front of them. To the east, the foothills of the Chilterns can be seen. The Parish is approximately one mile from the River Thames.

2.2 The Parish is historically an agricultural community, comprising 4 settlements: the settlements of Rokemarsh, Roke, Berrick Salome and Berrick Prior. The 4 settlements are arranged in a triangle, with Rokemarsh located at the southerly corner, Roke at the south-east corner, and Berrick Prior and Berrick Salome at the northern corner.

2.3 The Parish is surrounded by working farms. It is desirable to maintain these farms. In addition, circa 45%<sup>1</sup> of parishioners work wholly or partially from home and for this to continue The Parish is very dependent on access to high-quality fibre-optic broadband.

2.4 Commercial shops, dentist, medical centre and garage are close by at Benson, accessible by car, bicycle or on foot. There is no provision for the education of children in The Parish. The closest primary schools are at Benson, Ewelme and Warborough, with nursery schools at Newington and Benson. Secondary schools are at Wallingford and the Icknield School in Watlington. There is a bus service for secondary schools. However, no other public transport is on offer in The Parish.

2.5 As the farms and farm workers declined, their houses and small parcels of land often adjacent to the farm roads were purchased by families who wished for a more rural way of life in the countryside. All of The Parish roads are historic, connecting farms within The Parish to the larger villages. However, The Parish has never benefited from any road improvement, which is part of its charm, but the result of which is that modern traffic flows have to be accommodated through narrow lanes with many blind bends, and shared with pedestrians without pavements or refuges.

2.6 There is no public transport between settlements or to other villages outside The Parish. Parishioners use these roads to walk, cycle or horse-ride to visit The Parish amenities and to drive to areas where they can do their shopping, access facilities such as GP surgeries, dental practices, veterinary practices and schooling; none of which exist in The Parish.

2.7 The NP Survey found that as many parishioners walk around the settlements as drive, and while 80%<sup>1</sup> use a car daily, 56%<sup>1</sup> of respondents walk around The Parish on a daily basis. For employment, 57%<sup>1</sup> of residents drive out of the area daily to the surrounding towns and cities. The Parish has no direct access to the rail network. The nearest stations are in Didcot, Oxford, Haddenham, Cholsey, Henley and Reading.

2.8 The rural position of The Parish makes it a very pleasant place to live. We had an extremely high response rate to the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire of 86%<sup>1</sup> of households in The Parish, with 99%<sup>1</sup> of those parishioners who responded, stating they 'liked living in The Parish', rating it 4 or 5 (out of 5, 5 where 5 is very favourable). There is a vibrant community where activities open to all are run at regular intervals throughout the year.

<sup>1</sup> Neighbourhood Plan Survey

2.9 The Parish benefits from the following facilities:

- Two thriving public houses: one in Roke and another at Berrick Salome;

- St Helen's Church: offering a weekly service on Sunday, as well as driving community fund-raising activities to support its upkeep;
- Berrick and Roke Village Hall: our village hall has recently been up-graded internally and externally. The hall has two rooms for hire, with Wi-Fi, good toilet facilities, kitchen and ample safely-lit parking. It is available for hire, eg children's parties; weekly Pilates classes; and Parish events, eg annual Christmas Fair; as well as regularly hosting the Wallingford Bridge Club;
- Recreation and children's play area: well-equipped play area with swings and climbing frame and permanent football goal posts. The area is used to host an annual cricket match, rounders match, village shows, and other community festivals and events;
- Allotments: available for parishioners' use;
- Band hut in Roke: home to the Roke & Benson Brass Band;
- Village green: small village green situated outside The Chequers Public House in Berrick Salome; and
- Industrial units: small industrial units are available on existing farms in the form of a working forge, carpentry workshop, limited storage units and a livery stable.

### Early history

2.10 It is thought that The Parish developed here because of the stream which flows west and south, originating in the foothills of the Chilterns. This chalk ridge stores artesian water which emerges as springs and the main stream follows the ancient route of Hollandtide Bottom. The soil around The Parish is largely fertile alluvium over gault clay, supporting pastoral farming, as well as livestock.

2.11 There is rich evidence of ancient settlement. When the Didcot power station was converted from coal to gas fuel in the 1990s, the groundworks needed for the gas pipeline initiated comprehensive archaeological investigations. These revealed three or four settlements ranging from the early Bronze Age (2,500 BC) to early Roman occupation (43 AD) and flint tools dating back 4,500 years were found. The evidence shows that the early parishioners farmed sheep and pigs for meat and cows for milk, as well as growing wheat.

2.12 By 1086, the Domesday Book records the population of Berrick as being 4 serfs (slaves), 10 villeins (tenant farmers tied to the lord of the manor, in this case, Miles Crispin) and 6 bordars (smallholders), probably totalling, with their families, about 50. Berrick was a small agricultural settlement; its church was a chapel of Chalgrove Church.

### St Helen's Church

2.13 There is no evidence for a church before the present one, which was probably built in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Berrick Prior at this stage was part of the Newington parish, which was a 'peculiar' of the Archbishop of Canterbury and not part of the local diocese. It only became incorporated into Berrick Salome in the 1993 local government boundary rationalisation.

2.14 The Church serviced the spiritual needs of the farm labourers locally, without them having to walk to Chalgrove, and the two parishes are part of the same benefice, sharing an incumbent vicar. Today the church seems isolated in a field on the edge of The Parish, but there is evidence that, at one stage, there were dwellings around it.

2.15 In 1429 a tower was built, unique in Oxfordshire for being a timber tower on a stone church. Today it has a ring of 6 bells, the oldest dating from 1621; they were overhauled and retuned in the major restoration project of 2015, all funded by the parishioners. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, after the Dissolution of the Monasteries and

the disposal of their looted assets, there was more wealth circulating in the country and churches were endowed with gifts and improvements. In Berrick, there was enough money to replace the roof timbers and build the west gallery to accommodate musicians. This wave of prosperity also led to the building or extension of several farmhouses in The Parish, including Lower Farm, Grace's Farmhouse and Roke Farmhouse.

2.16 Two centuries of decline followed, with some parishioners rebelling by becoming non-conformists and by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the church was in a state of decrepitude, necessitating a huge restoration effort, when a Vestry was also added. The church today is largely as the Victorians left it in 1890 – a historic gem of a church, supported by several teams of cleaners, gardeners and flower arrangers to keep it in its present impressive state.

### **The changing nature of village life**

2.17 Apart from the large farms, evidence suggests that the dwellings were small houses for agricultural workers, many being thatched and built of clunch (chalky limestone) or brick from the local brickworks. Today 24%<sup>1</sup> (30 in total) of the houses are Grade II listed. Within recent memory, there were 3 public houses, two off-licences, a petrol pump, a post office and an infant school, as well as a few shops, of which today only two public houses remain.

2.18 The Inclosure Act in 1863 moved the nature of farming away from the open-strip system and two areas of land were allocated to 'the Churchwardens and overseers of the poor' to administer for the inhabitants: the recreation ground for exercise and the allotments for parishioners to supplement their small gardens. These two areas remain today for communal use.

2.19 With the advance of mechanisation, there was less call for farm hands and in any case people with motorbikes could earn a better salary at the Morris works in Oxford than working in the fields. People started to commute. More houses were built during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including six council houses in Weller Close. The Parish has now become a place from which to either commute or home-work, the advent of modern communication systems enabling the latter, especially the recent arrival of the fibre-optic cable that the parishioners decided to install in 2017 to correct their rurally-deprived and hitherto their lamentable Broadband service.

2.20 So today the social life of The Parish has changed out of all recognition. There are 130 houses, and approximately 300 people in total. The Berrick and Roke Village Hall was added in 1979, administered by a Hall Committee and is used regularly by the Wallingford Bridge Club, which plays a vital role in the Hall's maintenance, making it available for Parish and private functions. The two public houses are a traditional focus for community life at each end of The Parish, offering events from time-to-time, and the church also plays a central role in the social life of the village.

2.21 Whether or not parishioners choose to worship there on a regular basis, they are fully supportive of their church and work to see it thrive. Thus, the PCC and other parishioners organise Open Gardens, Summer Fete, Pop Quiz, Progressive Supper, Christmas Fair, Tennis Tournament, 'Ride and Stride' and concerts, all pulling people together and enriching the communal life of the neighbourhood, while raising money to support St Helen's Church. It is perhaps ironic that the continual need to maintain the ancient church and to pay for a one-third share of the incumbent for a weekly service, has resulted in a much richer programme of social fund-raising events than a wealthier church would have provided.

### **Transport and infrastructure and their challenges**

2.22 The Parish is connected by rural country lanes to Benson, Ewelme, Chalgrove and Newington. The southern of the 4 settlements have small lanes that are

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<sup>1</sup> *Neighbourhood Plan Survey*

connected to the B4009 (Watlington to Benson) and the north to the A329 (Warborough to Stadhampton). Roads between the settlements are narrow (on average 4.4m wide) and winding, being constructed as roads suitable for farm traffic within The Parish.

2.23 The lanes throughout The Parish have evolved haphazardly over the years and were clearly not designed for their current use, resulting in them becoming wider by virtue of constant erosion of the verges and regular resurfacing. They are also becoming increasingly unsafe, as more traffic shares the lanes with pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists. Within the past 40 years they were badged "single track roads access to villages only" for which their design was intended.

2.24 All of The Parish roads are historic, connecting farms within The Parish to the larger villages. However, The Parish has never benefited from any road improvement, which is part of its charm, but the result of which is that modern traffic flows have to be accommodated through narrow lanes with many blind bends, and shared with pedestrians without pavements or refuges.

2.25 The Parish's location means that it has become a shortcut for traffic to reach the eastern side of the city of Oxford and the M40 to the north. These road links have to cater for a growing amount of through traffic as well as extra traffic generated by the current expansion in Benson.

2.26 The Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire (NPQ) results conveyed serious concern about the current safety of the lanes through The Parish and the likelihood of the current position worsening with the potential for fatal accidents as a direct result of proposed development activity in Benson and Chalgrove. Even if the construction traffic is kept away from The Parish, there will inevitably be increased traffic caused by additional occupied dwellings, as the lanes are a direct link between Chalgrove and Benson. The Berrick Salome Parish Council is considering solutions to the traffic problems and exploring ways of funding the required work.

2.27 The specific areas of concern are the current volume of vehicle and cycle traffic using the lanes as rat runs and race tracks, respectively; the speed of traffic using the lanes; the number of heavy goods vehicles using the lanes contravening existing regulations; and the safety at present time for walkers, equestrians and cyclists, young and old, particularly given the absence of footpaths refuges. All of the above are getting worse, as a result of the explosion of internet shopping and consequent deliveries.

### **Bridleways and footpaths**

2.28 There is no public transport between settlements or to other villages outside The Parish. Parishioners value the ability to walk (and to a lesser extent) ride cycles and horses around the Parish. As many as 57%<sup>1</sup> of parishioners walk daily around The Parish. The present facilities designed to assist walkers, cyclists and equestrians are not extensive, so many have to use our roads. Many of The Parish roads are narrow and not conducive to non-motorised transport in busy traffic.

2.29 There is an established system of public footpaths and bridleways. Whilst the number of paths is adequate in some parts of The Parish, provision for pedestrians in many parts of The Parish is non-existent or inadequate. The Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire (NPQ) conveyed a considerable concern over current and future safety of walking, cycling and horse-riding on the lanes in The Parish. Parishioners want the infrastructure that supports such activity to be improved, as they see the dangers involved in such activities as very significant. Provision of pavements and footpaths were mentioned by many, but there is concern about delivering them, without impacting on the rural nature of The Parish and reducing the width of the already narrow roads.

2.30 Some paths may not appeal to users because they are narrow, overgrown and enclosed. However, other more open and attractive examples add to the distinctive rural character of The Parish by providing valuable shortcuts. They help to preserve The Parish's historic links with adjacent settlements. The Parish Council has embarked on a scheme of footpath maintenance to encourage their usage. Where appropriate, landowners are responsible for maintaining a right of way on their land.

### **Public Transport**

2.31 Currently, The Parish is not served by any public transport. The NPQ results conveyed that a surprisingly large number (251 specific comments) of responders have travel difficulties and wish for better public transport facilities.

### **Pedestrians and cyclists**

2.32 Our NPQ conveyed that over 90%<sup>1</sup> of parishioners walk in The Parish. In fact, as many responders walk around The Parish as drive and surprisingly, on a weekly basis they walked about as regularly as they drove.

2.33 The Parish is located in relatively flat terrain that lends itself to walking, but there are currently insufficient arrangements for pedestrians. Furthermore, The Parish historic road structure does not lend itself easily to establishing new pedestrian and cycle routes on existing roads. There is no available land to install pavements or cycle lanes and further limiting road width to partition an area for non-motorised transport, would seriously affect the road capacity. Installing cycle lanes would seriously reduce the road capacity. Concern was expressed about the state of the roads, in particular potholes and the danger to cyclists.

### **Road Safety**

2.34 The NPQ indicated that a large proportion of the respondents had concerns over road related issues. In the context of traffic flows in The Parish and the question of 'How important are the following': 'continuing to walk, ride horses and cycle along the lanes'; 'continuing ability for children to visit friends on foot'; the 'avoidance of an increase in traffic speeds'; and the 'increase of the degradation of the verges', over 80%<sup>2</sup> responded with 'very important' in every instance. A subsequent section of the BSPNP will seek to identify safety concerns reported and then assess them in the light of possible future development.

2.35 A high proportion of respondents also reported believing there are road safety issues in The Parish, with the following identified as safety related: speeding, inadequate road width, potholes, winding roads and dangerous junctions.

### **Effects of proposed developments**

2.36 The Parish is sandwiched between the two larger villages of Benson and Chalgrove, where very significant housing development (circa 4,000 houses) is proposed in the immediate future. These developments will introduce considerably more traffic into the lanes through The Parish, unless action is taken to prevent or discourage it. Any increase in traffic through The Parish will inevitably have a debilitating effect on the welfare and safety of those living here, which this plan addresses.

2.37 Apart from extra "local" journeys and delivery activity generated by the new housing, there is a significant likelihood of those commuting to and from Chalgrove to the south and east (Wallingford, Reading, Didcot and the M4) and to and from Benson to the M40 and the Oxford Ring Road, going east using the lanes through The Parish as a rat run.

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<sup>2</sup> *Neighbourhood Plan Survey*

## **Mains drainage**

2.38 Prior to 2002 only properties in Roke and Rokemarsh were connected to mains drainage. All properties in Berrick Salome and Berrick Prior were served by their own treatment plants. In 2002, those properties that elected to (and most did) were connected to the Mains Drains in a major exercise, engineered by Thames Water but encouraged by the Environment Agency (who were becoming increasingly concerned at the quality of the effluent in the area).

2.39 The design of the current system routes the gravity flow of sewage to a pumping station adjacent to the west end of Weller Close. From there it is pumped to a further pumping station near Harrow Corner in Rokemarsh and then on to the Main Sewer in Benson.

2.40 There have been problems with the current system from the early days of its introduction which are attributed to two main causes. Firstly, as the water table has risen in The Parish there has been water ingress into the old pipes in Roke and the new ones through Berrick. This has resulted in the system becoming overloaded. And secondly, the outlet pipe from Rokemarsh to Benson (which runs through the field between Rokemarsh and Benson, and currently proposed as the Ben3/4 residential development) is considered to be of insufficient diameter to service the volumes now being produced. Thames Water accepts the issues with point 1 above and are working towards remedies, but are reluctant to accept the issue described in point 2.

2.41 The effect of the two issues described above is that, when the water table rises. Foul sewage has, on several occasions, escaped onto the Roke road at the junction with the road from Berrick to Rokemarsh and Benson, and foul sewage has also escaped into some gardens in Rokemarsh. Thames Water is aware of the issues and organises extraction of foul waste by tanker out of the pumping stations by Weller Close and more extensively, Rokemarsh, to mitigate when it occurs. But the situation is, clearly, unsatisfactory and The Parish is constantly seeking to insist that Thames Water prioritises affecting a long-term solution.

2.42 Meanwhile the Parish Council has repeatedly reminded the Planning Authority of the issue, in the context that any extra volumes will further exacerbate the situation and the issue has influenced (and will continue to do so) the recommendations that The Parish Council has offered regarding Planning Applications for new housing. Some Applications for new housing in The Parish, acknowledging this issue, have reverted to installing their own treatment plants-- which is precisely the situation that concerned the Environment Agency prior to 2002. The issue will and should significantly affect this Plan in the context of The Parish's ability and desire to accommodate any residential development.

## **Surface water**

2.43 The Parish is low lying and flat but served by a network of streams and culverts that work adequately. For them to prevent flooding in extreme conditions it is essential they are kept clear from obstruction and that existing flood fields are not prevented from doing their job.

2.44 Therefore, this Plan notes the importance of preventing development of hard surfaces on areas of porous land which has historically served the purpose of offering drainage and run-off in extreme conditions. There are areas of particular sensitivity to this issue and past experience has informed where those areas are. The Plan acknowledges this issue, to ensure that the flooding risk (attendant to ignoring it) does not become a real one.

2.45 The residents of The Parish must be conscious of their obligation to keep the streams and culverts in The Parish (and downstream of it) clear of obstruction and

the Parish Council must continue to ensure that the message regarding this obligation is clearly understood and acted upon.

#### **Rural broadband**

2.46 In 2016, the community generated sufficient numbers to warrant investment and installation of superfast fibre optic in the area, by Gigaclear.

#### **Power**

2.47 There is no mains gas in the area; all properties use electricity and/or oil/non-main supply gas. There is no apparent likelihood to upgrade to mains gas.

#### **Communications**

2.48 Communications in The Parish are good. Residents have the opportunity to attend parish and village meetings in Berrick and Roke Village Hall. The Parish Clerk informs all residents by email or hard copy of these meetings and Minutes are circulated after. The Parish benefits from 4 notice boards and a Parish monthly magazine, circulated free of charge to every household.

### 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Berrick Salome Parish (The Parish) lies within South Oxfordshire District Council in the County of Oxfordshire.

#### National Planning Policy Framework

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published by the government in 2012 and was subsequently revised in July 2018 and again in February 2019 ('2019 NPPF'). The NPPF is an important guide in the preparation of both Local and Neighbourhood Plans, which must demonstrate that they are consistent with its provisions. Those paragraphs that are considered of particular relevance to the Plan are listed in the table below.

Paragraph	Subject
77, 78, 79	Housing in rural areas
83	Supporting a prosperous rural economy
91	Promoting healthy and safe communities
99	Protecting local green spaces
102	Promoting sustainable transport
118	Making effective use of land
124	Achieving good design and adding to quality of an area
163	Meeting the challenge of flood risk
170	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
184	Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

#### The South Oxfordshire Development Plan

3.3 Planning legislation requires a Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the 'development plan'. The development plan for South Oxfordshire currently comprises the Core Strategy adopted in 2012 (covering the period to 2027) and a number of saved policies from the Local Plan adopted in 2006. There are also minerals and waste policies adopted by Oxfordshire County Council but none are considered relevant to the BSPNP. The District Council is presently developing a new Local Plan to cover the period to 2034, which is anticipated will be adopted after the examination of the BSPNP. Therefore, as far as is possible, the BSPNP also needs to take the likely provisions of this new Local Plan into account.

#### South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027

3.4 The Core Strategy provides a set of strategic policies aligned to the provisions of NPPF 2012. Of particular significance to The Parish were the changes to rural housing policy. The settlement classification scheme, as a measure of sustainability, was elaborated to include a wider range of criteria than those that had been used previously. Consequently, many small rural settlements, which were hitherto classified as 'unsustainable', were re-classified as 'sustainable' and therefore deemed suitable places for new housing.

3.5 In the case of The Parish, the settlements were re-classified as follows:

Berrick Salome	a 'Smaller Village'
Roke	an 'Other Village'
Berrick Prior	not listed in its own right
Rokemarsh	not listed in its own right

3.6 The criteria for new housing considered suitable for each settlement category are set out in policy CSR1:

<b>Policy CSR1 Housing in villages</b>			
In order to contribute to the present and future economic, environmental and social sustainability of the villages, housing will be allowed where the scale and nature of the development is as follows:			
	<b>Allocations</b>	<b>Infill</b>	<b>Rural exceptions</b>
Larger villages	Yes	Yes - no limit	Yes if need shown
Smaller villages	No	Sites of up to 0.2ha*	Yes if need shown
Other villages	No	Sites of up to 0.1ha**	Yes if need shown
All other places not listed	No	No	No
* Equivalent to 5-6 houses		See Appendix 4 for list of settlements within each category	
** Equivalent to 2-3 houses			

3.7 For the purpose of this policy, 'infill development' is defined as:

*"... the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings. Rural exception sites are small sites for affordable housing within or adjacent to villages where housing would not normally be permitted."*

Core Strategy 2027, paragraph 13.10

3.8 In addition to CSR1, the policies listed below are relevant to various degrees:

- CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CSEM4 - Supporting economic development
- CSEN1 - Landscape protection
- CSEN3 - Historic environment
- CSG1 - Green infrastructure
- CSB1 - Conservation and improvement of biodiversity
- CSH1 - Amount and distribution of housing
- CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
- CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction
- CSQ3 - Design
- CSR1 - Housing in villages (detailed above)
- CSR2 - Employment in rural areas
- CSR3 - Community facilities and rural transport
- CSS1 - The overall strategy

3.9 The District Council has also saved a number of older policies from the Local Plan of 2006. Those that are considered to be relevant to the BSPNP are:

- C4 - Landscape setting of settlements
- C6 - Maintain & enhance biodiversity
- C9 - Loss of landscape features
- CON5 - Setting of a listed building
- CON7 - conservation areas (applies to part of Berrick Salome and Berrick Prior)
- CON11 - preservation of archaeological remains
- CON16 - preservation of common land, village greens, etc.
- D1 - Principles of good design and local distinctiveness
- D4 - Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
- EP2 - Light pollution
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- G3 - Location strategy
- G4 - Protection of countryside
- H4 - New homes in the towns and villages
- H10 - Rural exception sites
- H12 - Replacement dwellings
- H16 - Extensions to dwellings and ancillary buildings
- H18 - Extensions of gardens
- R10 - Proposals involving the keeping of horses
- T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
- T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

### Emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034

3.10 The new Local Plan will replace both the Core Strategy and the old Local Plan policies. The final (Regulation 19) version of the Local Plan was published in January 2019 and its reasoning and evidence have been used to inform this final version of the BSPNP.

3.11 As currently drafted, the rural housing policies in the emerging Local Plan are very similar to those of the Core Strategy. The settlement of Berrick Salome (and Berrick Prior as SODC regards the two as a single settlement) remains defined as a 'Smaller Village', with Roke as an 'Other Village' and Rokemarsh not listed in its own right.

3.12 In general, the new Local Plan maintains much the same policy provision for 'Other Villages' as the Core Strategy. Its Policy STRAT1 (Overall strategy) supports "smaller and other villages by allowing for limited amounts of housing and employment to help secure the provision and retention of services". In housing terms, its Policy H1 (Delivering New Homes) confines new housing development on sites not allocated to affordable housing on a rural exception sites and to "appropriate infilling within the existing built up areas of ... other villages", unless "brought forward through a community right to build ... or a Neighbourhood Development Plan ...". It also allows for housing development and conversions to dwellings on previously-developed land, but only when "balanced against other policies of the Development Plan, particularly with reference to safe and sustainable access to services and facilities and safeguarding the natural and historic environment".

3.13 Policy H8 of the Local Plan ('Housing in Smaller Villages') supports infill development within the built-up areas of those villages in accordance with Policy H16 (see below). However, its supporting text (§5.39) makes clear that the villages are not required to contribute towards delivering additional housing to meet the Objectively Assessed Need of the District. In respect of the BSPNP, the District

Council has confirmed that the 'indicative housing figure' (as per 2019 NPPF §66) for the Parish is zero.

3.14 The Local Plan also says the following about housing development in 'Other Villages':

"It is not generally expected that those settlements ... will provide a significant source of housing supply, However, it is possible that some development proposals may come forward over the Plan period in these villages, such as single dwellings, infilling and conversions from other uses. Such proposals will be considered against the relevant policies in this Local Plan." (§5.41)

"Some of the other villages may wish to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans and we will support them to bring these forward in the same way that the Council would support their preparation in smaller villages." (§5.42)

3.15 Infill development is covered by Policy H16 and is essentially very similar to policy CSR1. It continues to confine such development to sites "within the built-up areas" provided a range of conditions are met, including open space protection and heritage matters. As with previous versions of the development plan, built up area boundaries are not defined on the Policies Map and so the policy relies on the following definition:

"Infill development is defined as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings. The scale of infill should be appropriate to its location and this will be directed, in part, by the settlement hierarchy ... (in Smaller Villages) sites of up to 0.2ha (equivalent to 5 to 6 homes) ... (and in Other Villages) sites of up to 0.1ha (equivalent to 2 to 3 homes) ... (with in relation to redevelopment) no site area limit ... (and) redevelopment proposals in these categories of settlement are likely to be acceptable but will be considered on a case by case basis through the development management process in line with other policies in the Development Plan."

"The development of large back gardens or land behind an existing residential frontage may be acceptable in principle if it meets the criteria in the above policy. However, such development will not normally be permitted if it creates problems of privacy and access." (§5.82)

3.16 The new Local Plan introduces a new policy (STRAT5) on residential densities. It requires proposals for major residential development to achieve a minimum net density of 40 dwellings per hectare in 'Smaller Villages' and 35 dwellings per hectare in 'Other Villages'.

3.17 As currently drafted, other policies in the new Local Plan that may be relevant, include:

- H10 - Exception sites
- H12 - Self-build and custom housing
- H18 - Replacement dwellings
- H19 - Re-use of rural buildings
- H20 - Rural workers dwellings
- H21 - Extensions to dwellings
- INF4 - Water resources
- EMP11 - Development in countryside and rural areas
- ENV1 - Landscape and countryside

ENV3 - Biodiversity in non-designated sites, habitats and species  
ENV4 - Watercourses  
ENV6 - Historic Environment  
ENV7 - Listed Buildings  
ENV8 - Conservation areas  
EP4 - Flood risk  
DES1 - Delivering high quality development  
DES2 - Enhancing local character  
DES9 - Promoting sustainable design  
CF1 - Safeguarding community facilities  
CF4 - Existing open space, Sport and recreational facilities

### **Adjoining Neighbourhood Plans**

3.18 Neighbourhood planning is popular in South Oxfordshire and a number of plans have been made, or are in preparation, in the vicinity of the Parish.

#### Benson (Plan has been made)

3.19 This is the closest and most significant of those plans to the Parish, for which Benson is a key local service provider in the absence of such services in The Parish itself. The new plan provides for large numbers of new houses around the northern edge of the village to deliver a new link road and to improve local services, e.g. a larger GP surgery. Those changes may be of benefit to The Parish but it is crucial that SODC adheres to the provisions of the plan to ensure that the gap between the new edge of Benson and Rokemarsh is maintained to prevent the coalescence of the two.

3.20 Similarly, it is important that the commitment to create a footpath link through the new developments is delivered and the acknowledgement of the streams running into Benson through this Parish remains. There is also the stated opportunity of using the construction work on the sites closest to The Parish to install a waste pipe of sufficient girth to manage its waste when the water table rises to address the current problems that effect Roke and Rokemarsh.

#### Chalgrove (Plan has been made)

3.21 Some local residents use the Chalgrove surgery, so any proposals to protect and improve it will be welcomed.

#### Ewelme (Plan under preparation)

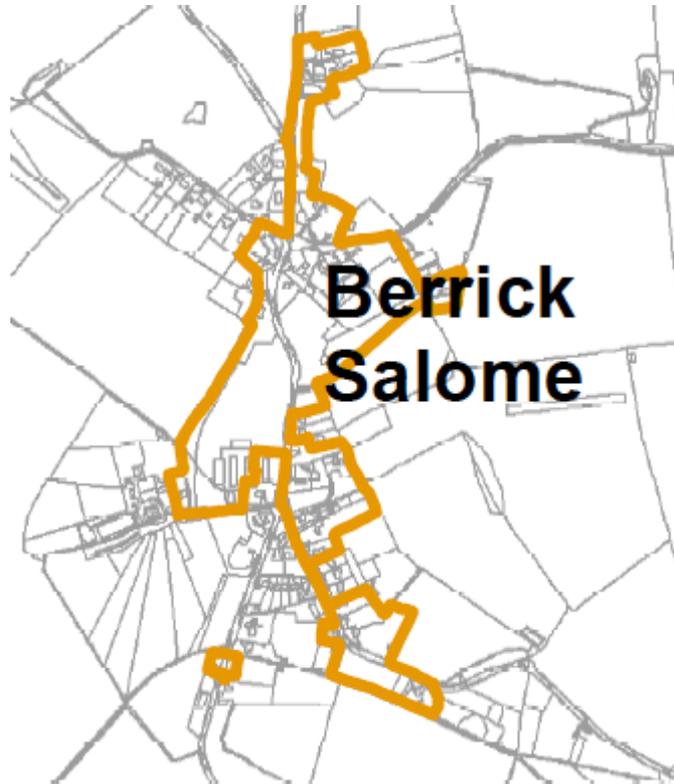
3.22 We may wish to support them if they promote Hollandtide Lane as a 'Berrick By-pass'.

#### Warborough and Shillingford (Made)

3.23 The Warborough and Shillingford Neighbourhood Plan has now been 'made'.

### The Berrick Salome Conservation Area

3.24 The Conservation Area was designated by SODC in the 1990 and its boundary was amended in 1991 (see Plan B below). Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, to protect areas of special interest as opposed to individual buildings. Since 1967 some 8,000 conservation areas have been designated in England, including 72 in South Oxfordshire District.



*Plan B: Berrick Salome Conservation Area  
(Source: Adopted Proposals Map, SODC)*

3.25 Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities have a duty to designate conservation areas and from time to time to review the boundaries. Such areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. A search for 'Berrick Salome' on the National Heritage List website displays 38 assets for the Parish, all being Grade 2 listed buildings (with St Helen's Church as Grade 2\*). For detail of these buildings see the Berrick Salome Parish Evidence Based Report, Appendix B1.

3.26 The main attributes that define the special character of an area are its physical appearance and history, i.e. the form and features of buildings and the spaces between them, their former uses and historical development. Where there are a number of periods of historical development, the character of individual parts of the conservation area may differ. Contrasts between the appearance of areas and the combination of buildings of various ages, materials and styles may contribute to its special character.

3.27 Policies which seek to preserve or enhance the special character of the council's 72 conservation areas, are contained in South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan. Unfortunately, all the SODC records concerning the Berrick Salome Conservation Area were lost in the 2015 fire at the council offices. However, an appraisal of the Area was never undertaken following its designation, and so a new Character Appraisal report has been prepared for the whole Parish, including the Conservation Area and its setting.

## 4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group developed a community engagement strategy at the initial planning stages of their activities. It was agreed that a range of methods would be used to inform the residents of our activities and to give them every opportunity to provide feedback, which would be used in the development of the BSPNP. The methods included:

- establishment of a Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Plan website, which includes meeting minutes, published documents, examples of other plans and links to government websites relating to neighbourhood planning
- links from the Berrick Salome Parish Council website
- door drop leaflets
- public meetings
- public noticeboards
- public exhibitions

4.2 The Steering Group developed a Vision Paper to provide an agreed starting point for the Steering Group's formal activities, including public consultation through the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire (see Berrick Salome Consultation Statement, Part B).

4.3 The Parish Council created a Berrick Salome Parish Neighbourhood Plan website, [www.berricksalomeparishnp.info](http://www.berricksalomeparishnp.info), with a range of information and relevant documents. The Parish Clerk developed and maintains the website and also manages email communication, which is the most effective tool the Steering Group has for reaching those in The Parish with access to the internet.

4.4 The main consultation exercise to inform the development of the policies was undertaken in September 2017. The Steering Group developed a six-page questionnaire covering a range of topics and invited residents to return it in post boxes situated at both public houses. Questionnaires and an explanatory leaflet were distributed to every house in the village by the Steering Group members and other volunteers. The official return date was 30 September but late responses were included in the data analysis.

4.5 Responses to the direct questions were analysed (see Berrick Salome Consultation Statement, Part B, for graphical representation). In some sections, the questionnaire also invited general comment. These comments are tabulated in Part D, with the significant messages used to inform the Plan, where appropriate.

4.6 To help people understand the issues, the Steering Group encouraged engagement during the Village Christmas Fair at the Berrick and Roke Village Hall on 25 November 2017, where a small exhibition of the current status of the Plan was presented along with the outline of the traffic calming initiatives. Members of the Steering Group were available for consultation.

4.7 The response to the questionnaire was extremely satisfactory (86%<sup>1</sup>) and the results have provided satisfactory evidence for consideration by the Steering Group in developing the policies contained in this BSPNP.

4.8 Full details of the Consultation Process and the responses to the views raised during the various Consultation events are presented in the Berrick Salome Consultation Statement accompanying this Plan.

*1 Neighbourhood Plan Survey*

## 5. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

### Vision

5.1 The BSPNP provides a framework to guide development within The Parish until 2034. The Vision is largely inspired by the responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, the feedback responses and, more broadly, by the consultation with parishioners during the preparation of the Plan.

5.2 This framework is based on and supports the following Vision:

*"The Parish – four distinct settlements acting as one parish - remains an attractive rural parish with a close supportive community at its heart. Although the settlements remain residential in character, our agricultural and equestrian local economy has survived and home-based working has become increasingly popular.*

*Our historic environment has been conserved and enhanced and is appreciated. The distinct characters and identities of each of the four settlements will have been preserved, whilst embracing small change. The scale of new development has been very modest but some new homes have been built for younger people and families and for downsizers, so our communities have become a little more sustainable.*

*This development has been sustainable, in that its scale and form have worked well with our local heritage, rural character, landscape and community ethos. We have ensured that new development in the settlements and in the countryside has respected and improved our network of footpaths and bridleways, which has encouraged more walking, cycling and horse-riding in The Parish. And our local wildlife remains abundant and diverse. There have also been some improvements in managing the volume and speed of traffic using our tight Parish lanes and so road safety has improved."*

### Objectives

5.3 In order to achieve the above Vision, a number of objectives have been identified, as follows:

1. protect the quality, character and local distinctiveness of the natural and historic landscape and buildings and maintain high design quality
2. ensure the character of the four settlements and their separate and distinct identities are preserved, but act as one parish
3. ensure there is a more balanced population of both old and young to maintain a vibrant rural community
4. encourage healthy lifestyles, reduce reliance on the private car by supporting proposals that encourage sustainable travel, including improvement and promotion (where possible without spoiling the rural nature of The Parish) of new and existing walking and cycle routes
5. ensure The Parish's rural character does not suffer from through traffic from larger settlements

### Land Use Policies

5.4 Land use policies are used to determine planning applications made for development proposals. They can establish the principles for retaining or changing the use of land in settlements and in the countryside. They can also set out the conditions against which development proposals will be judged, in terms of, for example, their design or access.

5.5 The purpose of these policies is to encourage planning applications to be made

for potential development that reflect the Vision and Objectives, as outlined at the beginning of this section. The policies have been clearly written so that they can be easily interpreted and applied in the consideration and determination of planning applications.

5.6 The BSPNP deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies. The proposed policies therefore focus on a relatively small number of key development issues in the area. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents, the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies of the South Oxfordshire Development Plan will continue to be used.

## **BER1 SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES & INFILL DEVELOPMENT**

***The Neighbourhood Plan defines Settlement Boundaries at Berrick Prior, Berrick Salome, Roke and Rokemarsh, as shown on the Policies Maps below.***

***Proposals for infill development within the settlement boundaries will be supported, provided they accord with the design and development management policies of the development plan.***

***Proposals for development outside the boundaries will only be supported if they accord with development plan policies managing development in the countryside.***

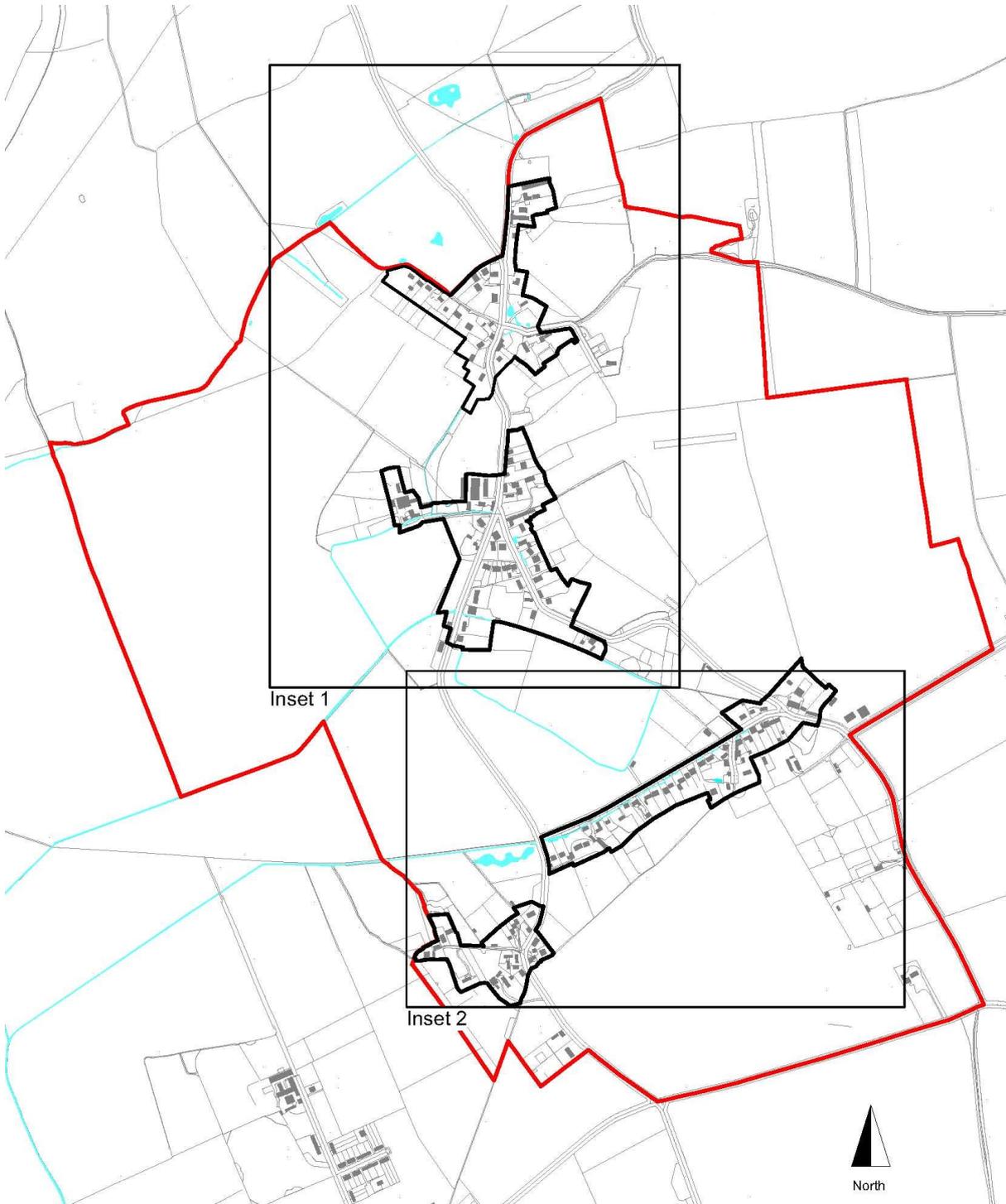
5.7 This policy is intended to distinguish between the built-up area of each of the four settlements in The Parish and their surrounding countryside (supporting the desire to maintain the separation of Rokemarsh from Benson) in order to manage development proposals accordingly. The boundaries have been drawn using the Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal (see Berrick Salome Parish Evidence Based Report Part A) and the conventions deployed by other local planning authorities that use this development management tool (see Section 7: Appendices), but essentially, they follow the observed settlement edge formed by buildings, which have a clear functional relationship to the settlement.

5.8 They also reflect plot boundaries where they are clearly defined in the street-scene or within the landscape, e.g. mature trees/hedges, boundary walls/fences. Features that appear visually as part of the open landscape – roads, waterways, large open gardens with no/few built structures – are excluded from the boundary, irrespective of their functional relationship to land within the boundary. In defining the boundaries on the Policies Map (see below), the reliance on ambiguous historic settlement names is avoided, with applicants and the local planning authority having certainty when preparing and determining planning applications respectively. This is consistent with a number of Core Strategy (and emerging Local Plan) policies to encourage sustainable forms of development in the rural areas and does not affect the definition of each settlement in the settlement hierarchy of SODC in the 2034 emerging plan, where the settlement of Berrick Salome (and Berrick Prior as SODC regards the two as a single settlement) remains defined as a 'Smaller Village', with Roke as an 'Other Village' and Rokemarsh not listed in its own right.

5.9 Most new development will be acceptable in principle within the defined boundaries, subject to it being appropriate in terms of its design and other arrangements. This may be small scale, infill housing and other uses that are appropriate in scale to very small villages with a severely limited road network and no effective public transport services. The Core Strategy Policy (Policy CSR1) defines both the term 'infill' and establishes an appropriate scale of infill housing development and redevelopment for 'Other Villages' and its Policy CSH2 defines a minimum housing scheme density of 25 dwellings per Hectare. The suitability of a design proposal will also be assessed using the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan for each settlement.

5.10 The policy requires that development proposals outside the defined boundaries are in line with the relevant policies of the Core Strategy (Policy CSS1(v) and Policy CSEN1) and Neighbourhood Plan in respect of protecting local landscape and character of the natural environment character. This recognises the valued function of the countryside and working farmland in shaping rural character.

5.11 The Neighbourhood Plan does not make any housing site allocations as to do so would be inconsistent with adopted and emerging strategic policies, given the status of the settlements in the District settlement hierarchy. However, the local community recognises the potential value that small scale, infill housing development and entry-level homes (see Policy BER3) may have in enabling access to homes in The Parish suited to younger people and 'downsizers'.

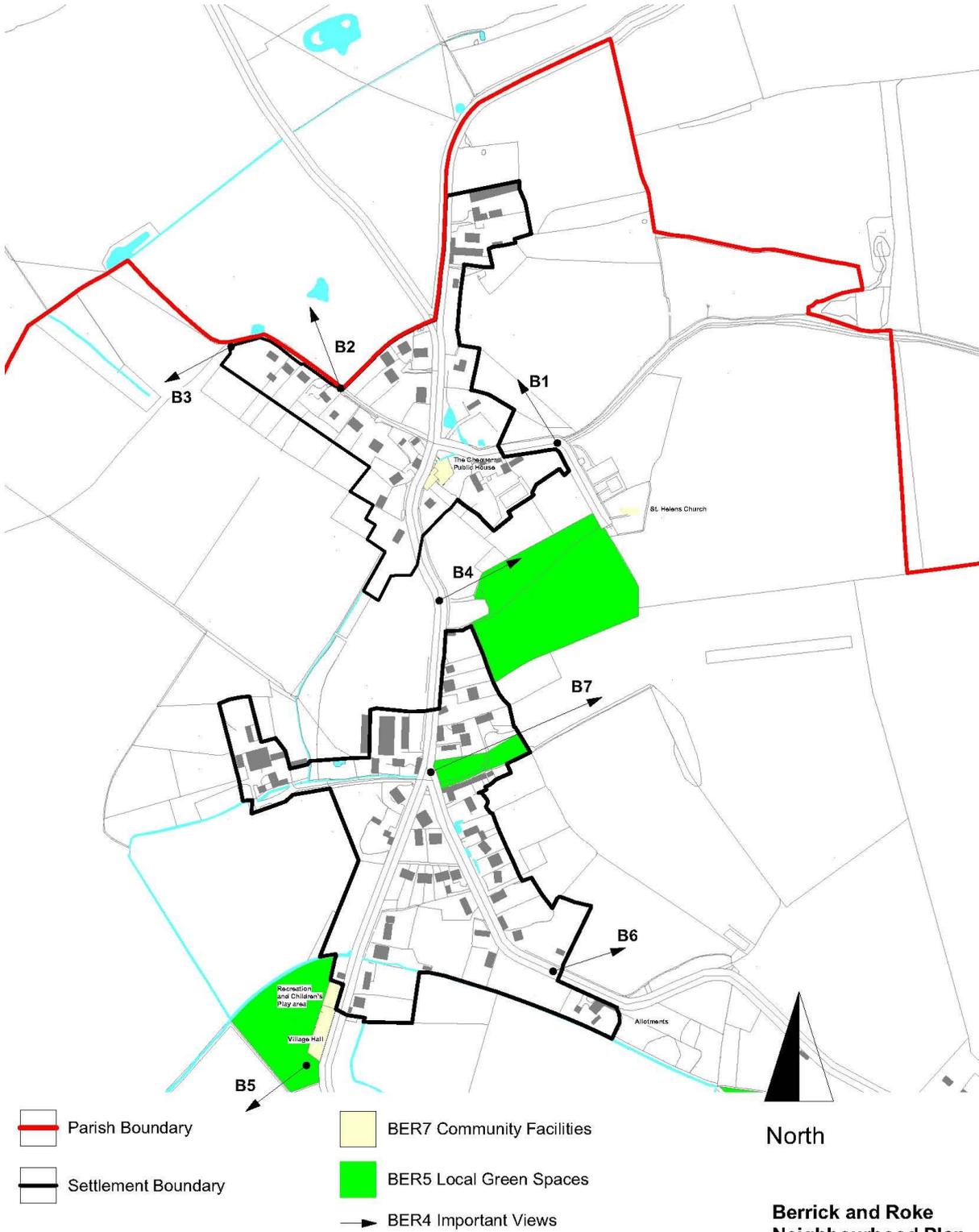


-  Parish Boundary
-  Insets
-  Settlement Boundary

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**Berrick and Roke  
Neighbourhood Plan  
Insets Map**  
Submission  
Policy Map  
March 2019

# Berrick Prior and Berrick Salome

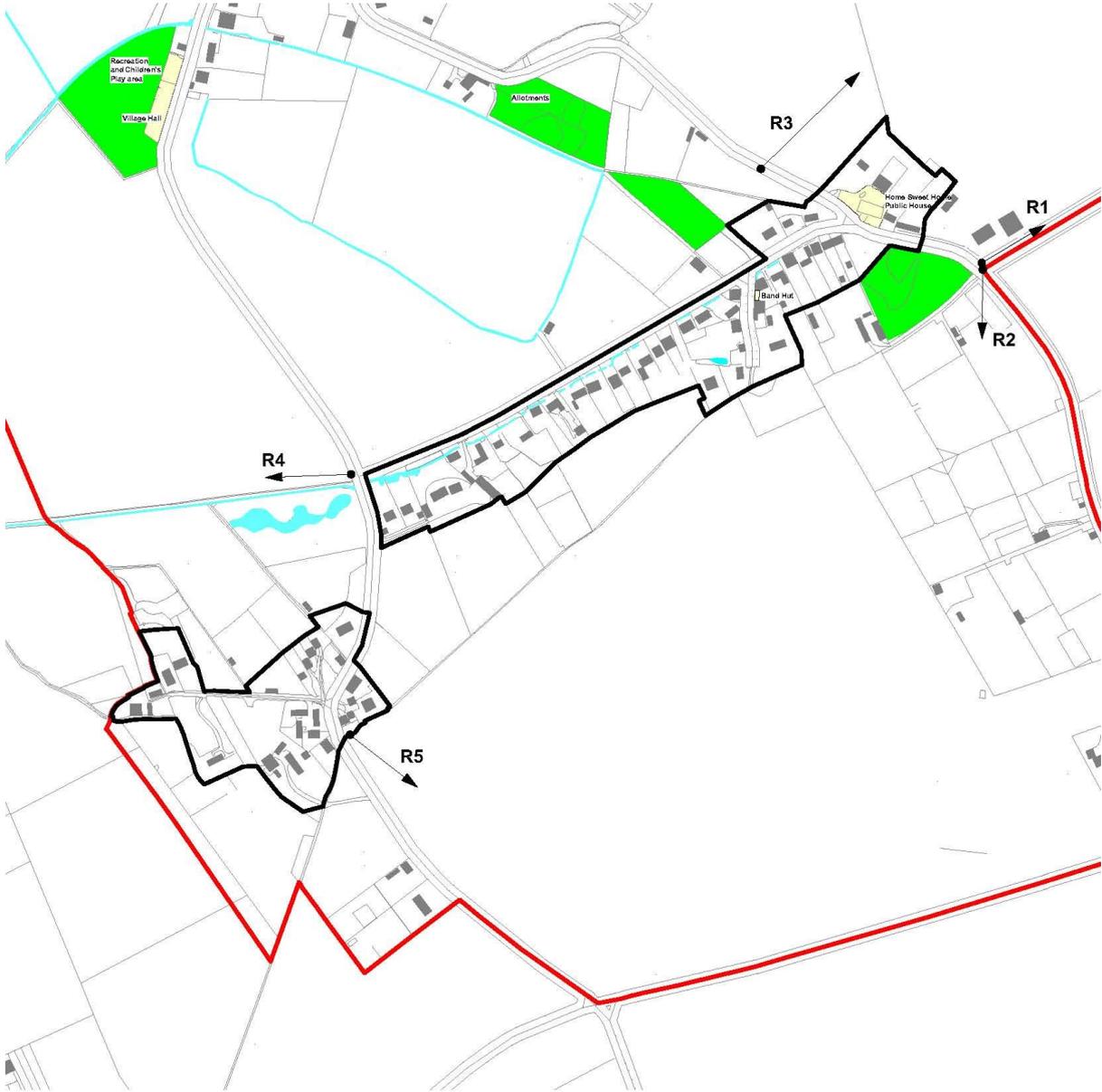


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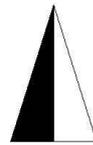
North

**Berrick and Roke  
Neighbourhood Plan  
Inset 1  
Submission  
Policy Map  
February 2019**

# Roke and Rokemarsh



-  Parish Boundary
-  Settlement Boundary
-  BER7 Community Facilities
-  BER5 Local Green Spaces
-  BER4 Important Views



North

**Berrick and Roke  
Neighbourhood Plan  
Inset 2  
Submission  
Policy Map**

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## **BER2 DESIGN**

***A large part of The Parish is within a conservation area and there are a substantial number of listed buildings, mostly Grade 2. The design of any development must respond to this unique local context and proposals should demonstrate an understanding of their immediate setting and how they could be viewed within the wider countryside.***

***The design of new development should reinforce the local character and distinctiveness of our settlements, and of the landscape, which is derived from:***

- low density development, set in landscaped grounds with soft boundary treatments, which assist integration into the wider rural landscape***
- scale, layout and design which respects and complements its immediate neighbours***
- use of traditional building materials (brick, flint, thatch, clay tiles or slate)***
- attention to design detail, with discrete siting and design of service features such as bin stores; cycle stores; meter boxes, flues and ventilation ducts; renewable energy; lighting, satellite dishes and phone lines***

***Development should create places that are sustainable, durable, safe and secure, functional, aesthetic, flexible and suitable for their location and use, meeting the relevant policies of this plan. Development should build upon local identity by capturing the spirit of local architecture. Bold contemporary design will be welcomed where it can demonstrate that it takes its inspiration from the surrounding area. All development proposals should utilise high quality materials and should be consistent with the other policies in the plan***

***Proposals must show clearly how the scale, mass, density, layout and design of the site, building or extension fits in with the character of the immediate area and wider context within the village. The scale of new developments should conserve and enhance the rural character and appearance of the village and its landscape setting as defined in the adopted Character Appraisal.***

***In addition, development proposals will be supported if they have had regard to the following design principles, as appropriate:***

- I. Historic plot boundaries, hedgerows and enclosure walls;***
- II. Proposals for new garages, outbuildings or tall garden walls must be subservient in scale and, whether of a traditional or modern design, should draw from the local palette of vernacular building materials;***
- III. Impacts on residential amenity of the construction arrangements are minimised by way of lorry movement, deliveries, working times, lighting and loss of vegetation wherever possible;***
- IV. Do not include installing pavements or kerbs to existing village lanes;***

- V. Proposed parking arrangements should seek innovative solutions that do not necessitate large expanses of driveway nor the loss of vegetation along the highway, but do not necessitate parking on village lanes;**
- VI. Layout, orientation and massing of new houses must avoid an estate-style or by dividing the developable area into distinct parcels and by responding to the historic grain of the development in the village, including its road and footpath network and historic property boundaries;**
- VII. Avoid historic pastiche but respond both to the landscape setting and the surrounding built environment;**
- VIII. Long-term weathering and maintenance of building fabric ensuring that over time any development will sit more easily within its setting;**
- IX. Permeable surfaces on driveways and use of sustainable drainage systems that can connect directly to an existing or new wet environment wherever possible;**
- X. No requirement for the culverting of existing ditches;**
- XI. Hardstanding areas to comprise of permeable surfaces to allow for the efficient absorption of surface water run-off during heavy rainfall; and**
- XII. Arrangements for the storage and collection of refuse and recycling should not detract visually or physically from the appearance of the proposal from a public vantage point.**

**Buildings should be considered as visual and tactile compositions of form detail and material, with attention to detail. Generic commercial solutions are not encouraged and attention should be paid to the silhouette produced by roof forms and chimneys.**

**Design should have regard to:**

- **Balance of vertical and horizontal emphasis in the building composition, roof span and pitch;**
- **Distribution and proportion of windows within the overall "grid" of the elevation;**
- **Relationship of the upper floor windows to the eaves;**
- **Building materials: timber, stone, render and brick are acceptable, though brick should be used sparingly and would be better used in groupings of houses in terraces and groupings that sit within a traditional village context. When used it should be of a mellow and aged appearance and not of a uniform shade;**
- **Innovative building techniques and materials will be encouraged, such as factory-built units when this does not detract from the external appearance of houses;**
- **Roofs can be of thatch, slate or tile with mitred hips or roof tiles;**
- **Chimneys should be of brick, stone or render. Most houses should have chimney stacks; and**
- **Windows: their size and shape; relation of void to solid; and sub-division, including their pane size and proportion related to glazing bars, are critical to the appearance of the building.**

5.12 This policy seeks to maintain high standards of design in The Parish. Successful design solutions for new development can enhance the unique qualities of the four settlements. All design proposals should ensure that a thorough analysis of the context is carried out to ensure that proposals respond positively. All proposals should respect and maintain the key views identified in the plan and should demonstrate via a Design and Access Statement that there will be no harmful impacts on the environment, conservation area, listed buildings or the natural environment.

5.13 This policy establishes the importance of the design of new development in The Parish to maintaining its essential, for the most part, historic character. Although it allows for modern architectural responses to the vernacular, it makes clear that 'pattern book' housing forms that dominate urban and suburban towns will not be appropriate.

5.14 The policy highlights a series of development principles that are drawn from the Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal of the settlements. Those principles set out the features that make The Parish distinctive. It therefore requires the Design & Access Statements prepared for planning applications to demonstrate that, where relevant to the location of the proposal, regard has been paid to those principles.

### **BER3 ENTRY LEVEL HOMES**

***Should there be an established need in the District, proposals for the development of entry-level homes suitable for first time buyers or those looking to rent their first home will be supported, provided:***

- i. The gross site area is no more than 1 Ha and is not greater than 5% of the total land area of a village;***
- ii. The site has a boundary that significantly adjoins the defined boundary of the settlement;***
- iii. The site does not lie within in a designated Important View or within the Berrick Salome Conservation Area;***
- iv. The location of the proposal will not lead to the coalescence of either Berrick Salome with Berrick Prior or of Roke with Rokemarsh; and***
- v. They accord with the design policy (BER2) and with all other relevant development management policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan.***

***Consent will only be granted for one entry-level homes scheme in the Parish during the plan period.***

5.15 This policy sets out how the new national policy initiative to encourage the development of entry-level homes on the edge of towns and villages can be successfully implemented in this Parish, if it can be demonstrated that there is a need for the supply of such homes in South Oxfordshire.

5.16 The new NPPF (§71) defines this new type of affordable housing as 'suitable for first time buyers (or those looking to rent their first home)' with schemes confined to 'offering one or more types of affordable housing. Its new definition of affordable housing comprises affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing (often known as 'low cost homes') and affordable routes to home ownership (for example shared equity and rent to buy schemes).

5.17 The NPPF makes it clear that proposals must 'comply with any local design policies and standards', hence the policy requires sites to have more than a tenuous relationship to a settlement boundary and are not located on an edge that has been designated in policies BER4 and BER5 as either part of an Important View or a Local Green Space respectively. Importantly too, given the remote location of the settlements and their small size, the policy confines proposals to no more than one in The Parish during the plan period, to prevent consecutive proposals being made.

## **BER4 IMPORTANT VIEWS**

***The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following Important Views on the Policies Maps on pages 28 and 29:***

### **Berrick Prior**

- ***B1: View north, north west across paddock and grazing land towards Manor Farm with listed cottages to the side***
- ***B2: View north west across pastureland rising to Ewe Farm and road to Newington***
- ***B3: View south west from Green Lane over meadow pasture across to Wittenham Clumps***

### **Berrick Salome**

- ***B4: View north east from footpath across green space to St Helen's Church and towards Hollandtide Bottom. An area originally thought to be the centre of the settlement***
- ***B5: View South west from edge of the recreation ground***
- ***B6: View east South East across horse paddock towards open pastureland framed by woods***
- ***B7: View East North East through old apple orchard/home pasture for Parsonage Farm***

### **Roke**

- ***R1: View East North East along lane past Hale Farm flanked by open pastureland***
- ***R2: View South across horse paddocks and stabling***
- ***R3: View East over arable farmland towards Ewelme***
- ***R4: View west from start of footpath to Warborough across pastureland with Wittenham Clumps in the distance***

### **Rokemarsh**

- ***R5: View South East over arable farmland towards Britwell Hill and Swyncombe Down***

***Development proposals that are located within or immediately adjoining an Important View will be supported, provided they do not comprise buildings or other structures, the height and/or mass of which will obstruct or undermine their defined value.***

5.18 This policy (and the Policies Map) identify a series of views from public vantage points in The Parish that are considered in the Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal as especially important in defining the valued relationship between the settlements and their rural hinterland.

5.19 These views are particularly distinctive of the rural landscape setting, the settlements lying low within it, and the context of the Chilterns and North Wessex AONBs, which form the backdrop to The Parish in long distance views. The policy does not seek to prevent any development lying within a view, but requires that proposals recognise and take account of these in their design. These views are clearly shown on the Policies Map and have been grouped according to their settlement. In each case, only the minimum area of land necessary to define the view has been identified.

**The views from Berrick Prior and Berrick Salome**

*B1: View north, north west across paddock and grazing land towards Manor Farm with listed cottages to the side*



*B2: View north west across pastureland rising to Ewe Farm and road to Newington*



*B3: View south west from Green Lane over meadow pasture across to Wittenham Clumps*



*B4: View north east from footpath across green space to St Helen's Church and towards Hollandtide Bottom. An area originally thought to be the centre of the settlement*



*B5: View South west from edge of the recreation ground*



*B6: View east South East across horse paddock towards open pastureland framed by woods*



*B7: View East North East through old apple orchard/home pasture for Parsonage Farm*



**The views from Roke and Rokemarsh**

*R1: View East North East along lane past Hale Farm flanked by open pastureland*



*R2: View South across horse paddocks and stabling*



*R3: View East over arable farmland towards Ewelme*



*R4: View west from start of footpath to Warborough across pastureland with Wittenham Clumps in the distance*



*R5: View South East over arable farmland towards Britwell Hill and Swyncombe Down*



## **BER5 LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

***The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following locations as Local Green Space, as shown on the Policies Maps on pages 28 and 29:***

- ***Berrick and Roke Village Hall with recreation field;***
- ***Apple Orchard - home field and part of original Parsonage Farm Farmstead - opposite existing Parsonage Farm buildings;***
- ***Green space behind The Old Post Office, either side of footpath from Berrick Salome to St Helen's Church;***
- ***Allotments at the edge of Berrick Salome and land connecting them to Roke;***
- ***Green space to the right of the path travelling from Roke to the allotments and to the rear of the plot adjacent to the road; and***
- ***Green space opposite the Home Sweet Home - mixed deciduous woodland including an old orchard containing mature fruit trees.***

***New development will not be permitted on land designated as Local***

5.20 This policy proposes six important green spaces in and on the edge of The Parish are protected from development by their designation as Local Green Spaces in accordance with §99 and §100 of the NPPF. The policy has the effect of managing development proposals in line with the NPPF provisions in the Green Belt.

5.21 In each case, as described in the Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal, the space lies in close proximity to the local community and none can be described as 'extensive tracts of land'. All play an integral part in the enjoyment of The Parish and are therefore special to the local community.

## **BER6 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

***Development proposals will be supported if they have had regard to the following biodiversity principles:***

- i. Avoid the unnecessary loss of mature trees, hedgerows or other form of wildlife corridor, either as part of a landscape scheme and layout or as part of the construction works of a development scheme;***
- ii. Where the loss of a mature tree or hedgerow is unavoidable, the proposals must make provision on site for replacements;***
- iii. Wherever possible developments should seek to have a biodiversity net gain for the parish;***
- iv. Where the loss of scrubland is unavoidable, the proposals must retain one or more wildlife strips of scrub linked to adjacent areas of open space wherever possible***
- v. For new homes, an owl box, bat box and/or bird boxes (particularly suited to their use by swifts, swallows and house martins) should be installed as an integral part of any house design;***
- vi. Wherever possible, piped water courses should be re-opened in new developments linked to wetland creation; and***
- vii. Proposals that result in run off of surface water into the stream network of the Parish should ensure the water flows through an appropriate sustainable drainage system.***

5.22 This policy identifies a series of development principles that relate to specific green infrastructure opportunities and constraints in The Parish so that development proposals can address green infrastructure (and especially biodiversity) matters as relevant to the nature and scale of the proposal. Not all of these principles will be relevant to each proposal. For the most part, they can be dealt with as part of the proposed landscape scheme as a means of ensuring any potentially harmful effects of the development can be satisfactorily mitigated.

## **BER7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

***The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following community facilities, as shown on the Policies Map.***

- ***The Chequers public house;***
- ***Home Sweet Home public house;***
- ***St Helen's Church;***
- ***Berrick and Roke Village Hall, and recreation and children's play area;***
- ***Allotments at the edge of Berrick Salome and land connecting them to Roke; and***
- ***Band hut, Chapel Lane***

***Proposals that help to sustain the viability of a community facility will be supported, provided they conform to other land use policies.***

***Proposals that will result in either the loss of, or significant harm to an identified community facility, will be resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the operation of the facility, or of another community use of the facility or land, is no longer economically viable, or that there is an alternative, accessible location within or adjoining a Settlement Boundary of Policy BER1.***

5.23 This policy seeks to prevent the unnecessary loss of valued local community facilities. It identifies a number of buildings in The Parish that form an essential part of community life. Given the remote and small nature of the settlements, the loss of any of these facilities would be significantly detrimental, so even though a specific type of community use may no longer be viable, the opportunity to retain the premises or land in this use cannot be lost.

5.24 Adopted development plan policies allow for facilities to be lost without considering the ongoing community value of their established use and without requiring their re-provision close by. This policy addresses those weaknesses by ensuring that those making proposals provide clear evidence that the location, as well as the current facility operations, is no longer viable for community use before its change of use and redevelopment are supported. However, it does allow for the relocation of established uses without this test being passed, provided the relocation proposal benefits local people by being within or adjoining the Parish, and is not lost to other parishes.

## **BERS MANAGING TRAFFIC**

***Development proposals will be supported, provided that, where appropriate to the location, they deliver or make financial contributions towards the mitigation of traffic volumes and speed through the Parish and they do not introduce urbanising highways infrastructure into the street-scene and they accord with the other policies of the Plan and the South Oxfordshire development plan.***

5.25 The Parish Council strongly supports the maintenance of the rural character and encourages Oxfordshire County Council to consider reducing the speed limit; introducing traffic calming measures; or adopting a policy for maintenance of roadside verges that maintains their character and biodiversity.

5.26 This policy is aimed at preserving the rural lanes of The Parish as safe havens for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. There is considerable concern within the local communities at the prospect of an increase in the current volumes and speed of traffic using the lanes in The Parish as a rat run/ short cut as a consequence of developments planned in Benson and Chalgrove. The lanes are already used by drivers as a short cut.

5.27 The recommended remedy to the problem is to encourage drivers to respect the environment that they are driving through by making it perfectly obvious that the settlements are inhabited and that the lanes are used by residents for walking, cycling and horse riding through the Parish. To that end, although the scale of change provided for in the Plan must be very modest, there may be opportunities through a combination of small scale, infill housing or entry-level housing schemes to secure some proportionate traffic management measures.

5.28 Such measures may include enabling strategic car parking on the lanes (where it is safe to do so) as a way of slowing the traffic down, and by the use of refuges at critical points or the use of the existing or enlarged verges to improve safety for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. However, any such measures must be carefully designed and located to reflect the rural character of The Parish and not require highways infrastructure – signage, barriers, pavements – that is more appropriate to an urban location.

## **BER9 WALKING, CYCLING AND RIDING**

***Development proposals will be supported, provided that, where appropriate to the location, they have regard to the following walking, cycling and riding principles, and they accord with the other policies of the Plan and the South Oxfordshire development plan:***

- if they adjoin a public footpath or bridleway, have regard to maintaining the functionality and rural character of the footpath or bridleway, unless this is unavoidable, in which case the route must be diverted in a way that remains safe and convenient for users***
- if they lie in a location that enables a new pedestrian, cycle link and/or bridleway to be created to an existing public footpath or bridleway, that the layout and access arrangements of the scheme allow for such an improvement, provided they avoid or minimise the loss of mature trees and hedgerows and use materials that are consistent with a rural location***
- their location encourages walking, cycling and riding to access the Parish***

5.29 This policy seeks to encourage safe and convenient means of walking, cycling and horse riding through the Parish, when the opportunities of new development arise to make improvements.

5.30 The Parish is almost (apart from the east side) surrounded by a network of Rights of Way, comprising footpaths, permissive paths and bridleways that provide access to Benson, Warborough, Chalgrove and Brightwell Baldwin. In all, The Parish has three bridleways and seven footpaths. Rights of Way are protected and present huge benefits to the health and wellbeing to users. Our bridleways and footpaths are listed on The Parish website. Hollandtide Bottom and its continuation (Green Lane to Warborough) is an ancient track dating back to medieval times or beyond. Roman remains have been found at Ladybrook Copse. In addition to the environmental factors already noted, our historical heritage would be spoilt by development along these byways and centuries' old ambiance lost.

## **BER10 SUPPORTING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

***Development proposals will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that, where appropriate:***

- i. the sewer network can accommodate the additional demand for sewerage disposal either in its existing form or through planned improvements to the system in advance of the construction of the development;***
- ii. any hardstanding areas comprise permeable surfaces to allow for the efficient absorption of surface water run-off during heavy rainfall;***
- iii. consideration is given to the net increase in water and waste water demand to serve the development and also any impact the development may have off-site further down the network, if no/low water pressure and internal/external sewage flooding of property is to be avoided; and***
- iv. they will not increase flood risk from fluvial flooding or any other source of flooding, including surface water flooding.***

5.31 This policy serves two important purposes in seeking to manage the effects of new development on the supporting infrastructure of our settlements in this rural location.

5.32 Firstly, it requires all proposals to show, by rigorous analysis, that there is sufficient capacity in the local sewerage system to accommodate an increase in demand and that any new connections will not increase the risk of system back up/flooding.

5.33 The sewage undertaker is Thames Water. There is a perennial problem in The Parish of sewage discharge. Thames Water has acknowledged that a problem exists and has been investigating the causes for years. To date, no long-term remedy has yet been implemented or even proposed by Thames Water. This policy is intended to draw greater attention to this important issue in The Parish by both Thames Water and SODC when determining planning applications.

Secondly, it requires proposals to be accompanied by a site-specific assessment of the potential for flooding in line with the requirements of national policy and advice, so that flood risk will not be increased elsewhere and that the proposed development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant.

5.34 The Parish is served by a network of watercourses and land drainage ditches which have sufficient capacity to deal with 'normal' weather conditions provided they are properly maintained and kept clear of obstructions. They are unable to cope with very heavy rainfall as the capacity of the network has been compromised over the years, due to the loss of ponds and storage areas that attenuate the rate of water flow under adverse weather conditions. The water table throughout The Parish is high. Standing water tends to drain away slowly due to the underlying layers of clay in 'wet' areas - such areas should be avoided for new development as should existing and potential future water storage areas. Several areas are identified as Flood Zones 2 and 3 on DEFRA flood maps. However, there are other sites around The Parish that carry similar risks from local catchment areas.

### **Monitoring and reviewing the policies**

5.35 The BSPNP will be monitored by SODC and The Parish Council, using data collected in planning monitoring reports. The objectives will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at a Parish level, relevant to the BSPNP may also be included. It is expected that the BSPNP will be formerly reviewed on a five-yearly cycle or to coincide with the development and review of the Local Plan if this cycle is different.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION**

6.1 The BSPNP will be implemented through a combination of the local planning authority's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in The Parish.

### **Development management**

6.2 Most of the policies contained in the BSPNP will be delivered by landowners and developers. In preparing the BSPNP, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the policies are achievable.

6.3 Whilst the local planning authority will be responsible for the development management, the Parish Council will use the BSPNP to frame its representations on submitted planning applications. It will also work with SODC to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

### **Infrastructure projects**

6.4 The Parish Council proposes some or all of the following projects for investment of future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, allocated by the local planning authority and to the Parish Council:

- Upkeep of non-private, community facilities and open spaces;
- Traffic calming and parking improvement scheme (see below);
- Enhancing the interface of the pedestrian/equestrian/cyclist experience with vehicular traffic;

6.5 Parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan will receive 25% of any CIL arising from developments in their area; parishes without a Neighbourhood Plan will receive 15%. The Parish Council will lead consultation on the preferences and priorities of The Parish to improve its infrastructure.

### **Highway safety and traffic calming**

6.6 The task is to create a Parish environment that drivers understand and respect, and behave accordingly. Our strategy, to discourage and limit through traffic; ensure road users obey the established speed limits and respect the safety of those walking and riding in the lanes; and preserve the rural appearance of The Parish, combines a blend of conventional measures with a more innovative approach.

6.7 The main thrust of the strategy is driven by the theory (accepted amongst traffic calming experts) that drivers will respond responsibly to the environment they find themselves in, if they are guided to do so by the environment, ie slower moving traffic can be brought about by hazardous or constricting obstacles. Our proposed calming features will result in it taking longer to navigate through The Parish, with an aim of encouraging slower moving vehicles and even more so, drivers to select an alternative route for their trip/ commute.

## Appendix 1: Drawing of settlement boundaries

### Definition of Settlement Boundary

*In simple terms, a 'settlement boundary' is the dividing line, or **boundary** between areas of built/urban development (the **settlement**) and non-urban or rural development – the open countryside [Wiltshire Council 2014]*

Settlement boundaries are a well utilised planning tool for guiding, controlling and identifying limits to development for an individual village. A settlement boundary is a line that is drawn on a plan around a village, which reflects its built form, this is also known historically as a 'village envelope'. The settlement boundary is used as a policy tool reflecting the area where a set of plan policies are to be applied.

**It must be noted that the settlement boundary is a planning designation only and has no other administrative relevance. Settlement boundaries do not necessarily reflect land ownership boundaries, parish boundaries or the exact curtilage of dwellings.**

Settlement boundaries guide development to sustainable locations. In general, there is a presumption in favour of development within the settlement boundary. Any land and buildings outside of the boundary line are usually considered to be open countryside where development would be regulated with stricter planning policies. However, it should be noted that any land which has been included within the boundary line does not have a guarantee of approval of planning permission, as there will be other planning policies which will need to be adhered to also, for example; the protection of the character of a settlement.

Often the character and form of villages and towns makes the designation of a settlement boundary more problematic. Judgement will need to be used in these cases to assess where there is a more appropriate alternative to define the settlement.

It is key to identify a settlement boundary, or any alternative, by engaging the local community through public consultation. This will help to discuss and designate a settlement boundary which is fitting for a village.

### Methods of defining Settlement Boundaries

A set of criteria should be used when defining the settlement boundary and some examples are detailed below. It will be worth considering these whilst defining the boundary, as well as incorporating local circumstances and knowledge in defining the boundary.

- Lines of communication - The boundaries trace the edge of the built-up area, therefore excluding roads, paths, railways and other lines of communications.
- Physical features - Wherever possible try to allow the boundaries to follow physical features, such as: buildings, field boundaries or curtilages. However, in order to conserve the character and to limit expansion, settlement boundaries can exclude large gardens, orchards and other areas. This may mean that occasionally the boundaries do not relate fully to the physical features surrounding the village.
- Planning History – It may be appropriate to consider existing commenced planning permissions, recent refusals, planning appeal decisions and previous Local Plan inspector's comments concerning areas on the edge of the village.
- Village enhancements - Settlement boundaries should include buildings and associated land that make up the village form. In some edge of village areas, boundaries may need to include small areas of land and/or buildings which offer the opportunity for improvements to the entrance of the village or ensure infrastructure improvements or a general enhancement to the village.

- Recent development - Where appropriate, settlement boundaries should include new developments which may have occurred recently. It is also advisable to include sites that have received planning permission within the settlement boundary.
- Important amenity areas - These form part of the character of the settlement and could be identified and protected by policy and included in the settlement boundary due to their contribution to built form.
- Settlement boundaries should be drawn to facilitate an appropriate level of proportional growth within the plan period. If land within the boundary is not formally allocated, there will be a requirement to demonstrate that there is enough available capacity within the boundary to enable development to take place.

**Note that the Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide does not have any references on how to define settlement boundaries within the production of a Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Advantages of defining Settlement Boundaries**

There are a few generic advantages to having a settlement boundary which are detailed below:

- Certainty: with a 'black line' being plotted on a plan it is easy to identify the 'settlement' from 'open countryside'. This is the primary benefit to our Neighbourhood Plan
- Locally, settlement boundaries are an understood and accepted planning tool for guiding and controlling developments.
- A defined settlement boundary will ensure a more plan-led and controlled approach to potential development in The Parish
- It Protects the countryside from unnecessary development and prevents ribbon development.
- A defined settlement boundary allows a consistent approach to the determination of planning applications
- Allows for more certainty to developers/land owners with sites/land within the boundary, as long as they adhere to all other plan policies.
- Allows the development of small sites which cannot be identified as allocations.

### **Disadvantages of defining Settlement Boundaries**

- Has the potential to increase land values within the settlement boundary.
- Has the potential to increase hope values for land adjoining but outside the boundary.
- The use of settlement boundaries has led to criticism that they result in cramming within the village as every available area of land competes for development resulting in a potential reduction in the landscape quality and character of that village, unless other policies are in place.
- Settlement boundaries can be crude and inflexible.
- The character of properties and the village, could be altered if development is allowed within the gardens of these houses within a settlement boundary, although this is one of the reasons that a number of larger gardens have been split by the settlement boundaries.

## Berrick and Roke Neighbourhood Plan Settlement Boundaries

### Methodology

Using the Cheshire East Council Settlement Boundary Assessment Guidance to guide our decisions, the settlement boundaries have been created following a desktop review of The Parish. A desktop study of The Parish assessed the existing settlements; their built form, land-use, landscape character, woodland cover, field pattern and natural features. This enabled a clearer understanding of the potential settlement boundaries. Following this a detailed site visit was carried out by our consultant Neil Homer and a number of persons from the committee. They collected visual data relating to land form, land-use, field boundaries and more perceptual aspects like scale, enclosure and visual unity.

Plans were then prepared to show the settlement boundaries and these were debated over a number of months, testing consistency across the settlements. Particularly testing was the transition between types of openness such as moving from garden to countryside which may be hard to define. However, taking into account the process followed creates a judgement where the characteristics of one are more dominant than the other.

### General Rules

**Principle 1:** Settlement boundaries have been created around the four recognised settlements in The Parish; Berrick Prior, Berrick Salome, Roke, Rokemarsh. The settlement boundaries should be created such that each settlement will continue to be seen as a separate entity within The Parish, separated by fields or open countryside from each other

**Principle 2:** The boundary will be defined tightly around the built form of each settlement and where possible will follow defined features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, roads and woodland

**Principle 3:** The settlement boundaries will include:

- a) Existing commitments ie unimplemented planning permissions and implemented permissions
- b) The curtilages of buildings

**Principle 4:** The settlement boundaries will exclude:

- a) Open spaces, sports and recreational facilities which stand on the edge of the built form of settlements (existing or proposed).
- b) Sections of large curtilages of buildings (including gardens) which relate more to the character of the countryside than the built form. Where possible and to maintain continuity, exceptionally long gardens will follow the boundaries of adjacent properties with smaller curtilages.
- c) Important gaps e.g. where a settlement is fragmented, the open gaps between developed areas should be retained.

### Berrick Prior

The boundary to Berrick Prior follows the built-up form of the settlement which is centred on the village green at The Chequers and the cross roads with lanes leading to Green Lane and St Helen's Church. The boundary has been drawn through the gardens of a number of properties on these lanes as it is considered that they extend into the open countryside.

### Berrick Salome

The boundary to Berrick Salome has been drawn to reflect the physical characteristics of the built form. The settlement has evolved around a triangular fork in the road at Parsonage farm. There is a focus of dwellings around this fork and then a linear line of dwellings on each fork extending to the village hall on the

western fork and West End Cottage on the eastern fork. It was important when defining the boundary to ensure that open countryside was maintained between Berrick Salome and Roke.

#### Roke

Roke is a linear settlement which has developed along the southern edge of the road running east from Rokemarsh to the Home Sweet Home. The settlement is characterised by dwellings on a single side of the road with views over open countryside to the north. Many of these dwellings have large gardens which extend into rear paddocks. It is considered that these are extending into open countryside and have the settlement boundary has been drawn 30m from the rear of the dwelling. There is a small concentration of dwellings around the Home Sweet Home pub which is recognised in the boundary.

#### Rokemarsh

Rokemarsh is a small settlement which has a concentration of houses around a triangle and a number of houses extending down a lane. It is on the edge of The Parish and with planned developments in Benson the boundary has been drawn tight to ensure that there is as much countryside and space between Rokemarsh and Benson as possible so that it maintains its individual identity. Similarly, to the north the boundary cuts through the garden of Ten Trees to maintain a landscape gap between Roke and Rokemarsh.

#### Sources:

Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20 Guide to settlement boundaries April 2013 - Revised June 2015, Herefordshire Council

Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) Draft Proposals for Revised Settlement Boundaries; Informal Consultation with Parish and Town Councils; Monday 28 July – Monday 22 September 2014

## Appendix 2: Settlement Boundary Assessment Guidance



### CEC Settlement Boundary Assessment Guidance

Settlement Boundaries		
The following criteria may be used to assess the existing settlement boundaries in relevant settlements		
<p><b>a) Extant planning consents</b></p> <p>Where sites on the edge of the settlement have outstanding permission for housing, these should be included within the settlement boundary, unless these consents allow development in a situation where it would normally be refused (e.g. Rural Exception Sites and dwellings with an agricultural or other occupancy condition). Where a long-standing occupancy condition is in force and the house in question is clearly well-related to the built form of the village, then the dwelling should be incorporated into the settlement boundary.</p>	<p>Site currently outside but adjoining existing settlement boundary has extant planning consent for housing, with no exceptional circumstances attached (e.g. previous allocation)</p>	<p>Site is included within the settlement boundary</p>
	<p>Site currently outside but adjoining settlement boundary has extant planning consent for housing, with exceptional circumstances attached (e.g. Rural Exception Site or agricultural / occupancy condition)</p>	<p>Site excluded from settlement boundary unless considered to meet the requirements for inclusion outlined in criteria 2(b), (c) and (d)</p>
<p><b>b) Functional relationship to physical form of built-up area</b></p> <p>Assessment of sites against this criterion will identify any discrepancies in the settlement boundary in relation to existing built development which forms part of the built-up area of the settlement. Regard should be given to the extent of existing development as seen from both outside a settlement, particularly from approach roads, and from within the settlement.</p> <p>Similarly, the form and character of a settlement as defined by dwellings, other buildings and their curtilages, the road network, and open spaces will determine whether a tight boundary designed to safeguard the existing pattern of development is appropriate or not.</p> <p>Outlying development, including small pockets of development that are clearly detached from the settlement, will have no functional relationship to the built physical form of the settlement, and therefore should not be included within the settlement boundary.</p>	<p>Site currently outside but adjoining settlement boundary displays high level of containment, high level of previously developed land and topography which increases a sense of confinement and is therefore considered to have a strong functional relationship with the existing built form.</p>	<p>Site to be considered for inclusion within the settlement boundary, subject to assessment against criteria 2(c) and (d)</p>
	<p>Site currently outside but adjoining settlement boundary displays low level of containment, little or no previously developed land and a very open topography, and is therefore considered to have a relatively weak functional relationship with the existing built form.</p>	<p>Site is not included within the settlement boundary</p>
	<p>Site does not adjoin existing settlement boundary and is considered to be physically and/or visually detached from the built form of the settlement</p>	<p>Site is not included within the settlement boundary</p>

<p><b>c) Functional relationship to use of built-up area</b></p> <p>The settlement boundary should reflect uses and development that has a clear social and/or economic relationship with the settlement. Settlement boundaries will therefore normally include existing uses and buildings that have a clear social or economic function and better relate to the built form of the settlement than the countryside e.g. residential properties, services, community facilities and employment development.</p>	<p>Site currently outside but adjoining settlement boundary and has an existing use which has a clear functional relationship with the existing settlement</p>	<p>Site to be considered for inclusion within the settlement boundary, subject to assessment against criteria 2(b) and (d)</p>
<p>As such, settlement boundaries should generally exclude:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buildings, such as halls, large houses, hotels hospitals and schools set in spacious grounds on the edge of settlements where they are not functionally related to the physical built form of the settlement;</li> <li>- Domestic gardens of properties on the edge of settlements which are extensive and are not functionally related to the physical built form of the settlement;</li> <li>- Curtilages of properties on the edge of settlements which are extensive and partially or wholly undeveloped and are not functionally related to the physical built form of the settlement, including paddocks associated with residential properties;</li> <li>- Designated open spaces and playing fields on the edge of settlements;</li> <li>- Camping and caravanning sites;</li> <li>- Sites which are of nature conservation importance, designated green gaps, scheduled monuments, village greens and other pockets of valuable amenity land such as woodlands, many of which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders;</li> <li>- Industrial or commercial uses on the edge of settlements where they are not functionally related to the physical built form of the settlement;</li> <li>- Farmsteads and associated outbuildings where their rural characteristics predominate and they appear to relate more strongly with the surrounding countryside. Generally, agricultural buildings of modern construction should be excluded whereas traditional stone or brick-built farm buildings which have historically been long associated with the settlement may be included within the settlement boundary.</li> </ul>	<p>Site currently outside but adjoining settlement boundary and has an existing use which has no clear functional relationship with the existing settlement</p>	<p>Site is not included within the settlement boundary</p>

<p><b>d) Relationship to permanent physical boundaries</b></p> <p>Wherever practicable and appropriate, settlement boundaries will follow well-defined physical features which are durable and likely to be permanent. Apart from being readily discernible and less open to dispute, these boundaries usually represent the transition between village or town and the neighbouring countryside.</p> <p>Those features which are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infrastructure: Motorway; public and made roads or strongly defined footpath/track; a railway line; river.</li> <li>- Landform: Stream, canal or other watercourse; prominent physical features (e.g. ridgeline); protected woodland/hedge; existing development with strongly established, regular or consistent boundaries.</li> </ul> <p>Those features which represent 'soft' boundaries and lack durability include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infrastructure: private/ unmade roads; power lines; development with weak, irregular, inconsistent or intermediate boundaries.</li> <li>- Natural: Field Boundary, Tree line</li> </ul>	<p>Existing settlement boundary relates to durable / permanent features.</p>	<p>Retain settlement boundary, subject to assessment against other criteria</p>
	<p>Existing settlement boundary does not relate to durable / permanent features</p>	<p>Amend settlement boundary to relate to these features where practicable and appropriate, subject to assessment against criteria 2(b) and (c)</p>