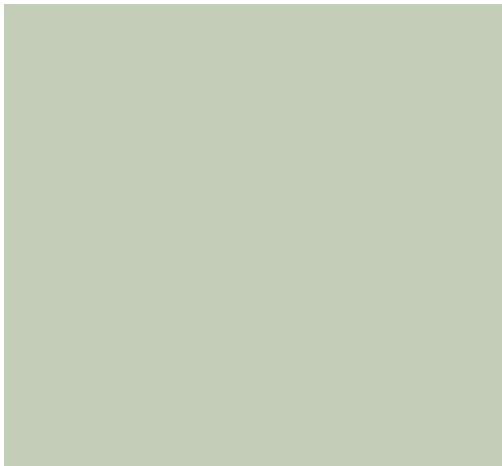




Freshford & Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan 2013





Contents



Map 1	Inside Back Cover	5. Natural Environment.....	16
1. Introduction.....	4	5.0 Facts.....	16
1.0 Definition of the Plan.....	4	Map 3	17
1.1 Why develop the Plan?.....	4	5.1 Projects.....	18
1.2 Plan area.....	5	5.2 Policy objectives.....	19
1.3 Timetable.....	5	6. Safeguarding village greens & play parks.....	20
1.4 Management structure	5	6.0 Facts.....	20
1.5 Community consultation.....	6	6.1 Projects.....	21
1.6 Proposed community projects & planning policies	6	6.2 Policy objectives.....	21
1.7 Project implementation and financing...	6	7. Walking, cycling and safer roads.....	22
1.8 Sustainability appraisal.....	6	7.0 Facts.....	22
2. Vision and objectives	7	7.1 Projects.....	23
2.1 Vision.....	7	7.2 Policy objectives.....	24
2.2 Plan objectives.....	7	Map 4.....	25
3. Development Framework.....	8	8. Community Facilities and Assets.....	26
3.0 Facts	8	8.0 Facts.....	26
3.1 Projects.....	8	8.1 Projects.....	26
3.2 Policy implications.....	9	8.2 Policy objectives.....	27
3.3 The Village Design Statement.....	10	Table 1 Key Facilities & services.....	29
Map 2.....	11	Table 2 Assets & land of community value...30	
4. Housing.....	12	Map 5.....	31
4.0 Facts.....	12		
4.1 Projects.....	13		
4.2 Policy objectives.....	14		

9. Business and Technology..... 32

9.0 Facts..... 32

9.1 Projects..... 32

9.2 Policy objectives..... 32

Map 6..... 33

10. Draft policies..... 34

Development framework..... 34

Housing policies..... 34

Environmental policies..... 35

Village greens and play parks policy..... 35

Walking cycling & safer road policies..... 35

Community facilities and assets policy..... 35

Business and technology policy..... 35

11. Glossary..... 36

Appendix Contained in Separate Document

A. Policy Options.....

B. Community Consultation Statement.....

B1. Community pamphlets.....

B2. Community questionnaires & responses...

C. Sustainability Appraisal.....

C1. Habitat Assessment.....

D. Timetable.....

E. Supplementary information on Plan.....

E1. Village planning application Questionnaire

E2. Parish Plan.....

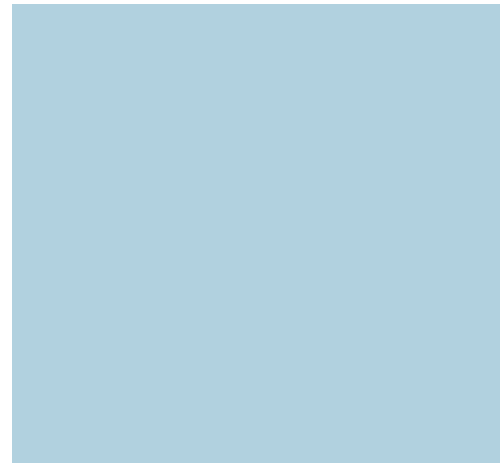
E3. Heart of Wessex.....

E4 Shared Space.....

E5 Freshford conservation area.....

E6 Affordable Housing Surveys.....

E7 Ownership of key Neighbourhood facilities..





Section 1

Introduction



1.0 Definition of the Plan

The Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan (“the Plan”) has been drawn up under the 2011 Localism Act and embraces the parishes of Freshford in Bath and North East Somerset and Limpley Stoke in Wiltshire (see Map 1). Formal designation was made under section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and approved by Bath and North East Somerset Council on the ----- day of ----- 2012 and by Wiltshire Council on the ---- day of ---- 2012².

1.1 Why develop the Plan?

Without a Neighbourhood Plan, the community is vulnerable to the Local Authority or Central Government locating new developments in this area and against the wishes of the local population.

Under the 2011 Localism Act, the Neighbourhood Plan will allow residents of Freshford and Limpley Stoke to determine the scale, pace and location of new developments which will ensure that Freshford and Limpley Stoke remain as vibrant communities whilst protecting the unique rural environment which defines the character of this area.

The Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils believe their combined community requires a cohesive strategy for future development which is not served by the respective core strategies of Bath & North East Somerset or Wiltshire (“the relevant local authorities”). This is particularly important given the cross border nature of this community which is not reflected in either core strategy.

Once the Plan is “made” by the relevant local authorities, it will become an integral part of the Development Plan and used to determine all planning applications. Due account will be required to be taken of the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan by the local planning authorities in Wiltshire and Bath & North East Somerset in all cases where the contents are relevant to the matter under consideration.

The Neighbourhood Plan is evidence-based and is aimed at bringing together the whole community with a single and coherent development plan. It will be used by the Parish Councils and other community groups to drive forward community projects and will help attract funding sources to enable their implementation.

Those using the Plan will include: Bath & North East Somerset Council; Wiltshire Council; the Planning Inspectorate; statutory agencies and utility providers; Freshford Parish Council; Limpley Stoke Parish Council; those seeking Planning Permission within the area covered by the Plan; residents of the local community.

1.2 Plan area

This neighbourhood plan covers the parishes of Limpley Stoke and Freshford which conjoin and are located around six miles south-east of the City of Bath (see Map , inside back page). This area lies in the Avon and Limpley Stoke Valley and at the junction of the River Frome with the River Avon and the steep valley sides provide part of the unique

character of the villages. The whole area is within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (CAONB) who classify it as a “closed limestone valley” and characterise it as a rolling and settled agrarian landscape with a domestic and rural character. The underlying limestone characterises much of the building materials used in the two parishes.

The two parishes are over 1,000 years old and the distinctive county boundary between Freshford and Limpley Stoke is believed to reflect the tenth century Wessex shires. The remains of the pre-Roman settlement of Woodwick are located in fields near Peipards Farm in Freshford, and it is thought St Mary’s church in Limpley Stoke was rebuilt in stone in 1001.

Freshford and Limpley Stoke are of roughly equal size with a combined population of around 1,100 (source: National Statistics 2011 Census) residents living in 459 households. The two villages cover an area of 465ha.

The two parishes share many services, including a community shop, a junior school, a pre-school, a doctor’s surgery, two village halls and two churches in the same united parish. They also share many social activities including the annual village fete. Together the two villages form a single, sustainable community, albeit divided by a county boundary, which is the rationale for a joint Neighbourhood Plan.

1.3 Timetable

The Neighbourhood Plan process was started in 2012 and, subject to the statutory consultation and

inspection processes, the referendum on the Plan is expected to take place by the end of 2013 with adoption by both relevant local authorities soon thereafter.

The Wiltshire core strategy is intended to provide strategic planning policy until 2026 and the timetable for the Bath & North East Somerset core strategy is “for the next 20 years and beyond”. This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to shape and influence future planning for Limpley Stoke and Freshford to 2026 and beyond. It will be reviewed every 5 years.

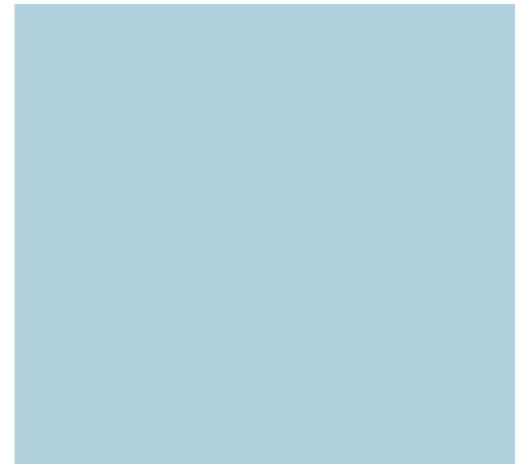
1.4 Management structure

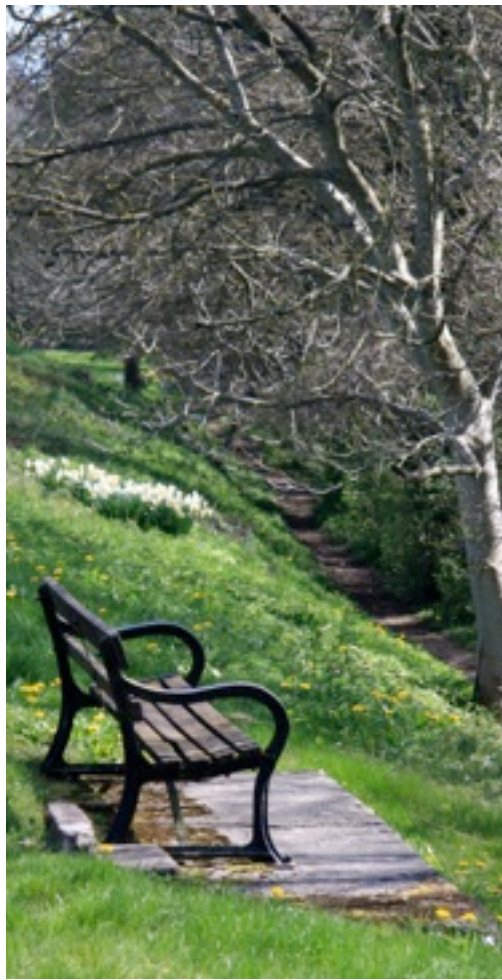
Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils (“the qualifying body”) have the legal responsibility for the creation and implementation of the Plan and have been supported by the relevant local authorities. To progress the creation of the Plan, the following structure was set up:

A Steering Committee comprising the Management Committee (see below) and planning policy officers of both relevant local authorities to oversee the overall process

A Management Committee of six Parish Councillors (three from each Parish Council and including the Chairs and Vice-Chairs) to organise and coordinate the day-to-day management of the Plan. This group will work with the respective Parish Councils on the implementation and regular 5-year review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

A Clerk to the Management Committee responsible for the record keeping and finances.





Four Working Groups (see Section 2.2), who report in to the Management Committee, consisting of a Chairman and members of both communities to explore and advise on the main issues touching the community. A Communications Group was also formed to engage with the wider community. In addition, professional planning and design consultants have been employed to advise the Working Groups and the Management Committee and financed with the generous support of the Department of Communities & Local Government, the Prince's Foundation and CABI Design Council.

1.5 Community consultation

The development of this Neighbourhood Plan has been an evolutionary process and has been driven by extensive community consultation (see Appendix B). The key areas of concern and ideas in the plan area were first raised in well attended community meetings and workshops which kicked off the process in January 2012. These ideas were investigated more closely by the four Working Groups working in close collaboration with the Management Committee. This process was overseen by the Steering Committee which included representatives from the two relevant local authorities.

Further public opinion was sought through a number of village "surgeries" and newsletter updates to the community. A questionnaire was distributed to every household in early 2013, summarising the key ideas and this received a high and positive response rate. Over 57% of electors responded and all the outlined proposals were approved by a majority of respondents, and many were approved by an overwhelming majority (see Appendix B2).

1.6 Proposed community projects and planning policies

Through discussions with the relevant local authorities and planning consultants, the Management Committee has developed the ideas arising from the evolutionary process of community consultation into the proposed community projects and planning policies outlined in this Neighbourhood Plan (see Section 10).

1.7 Project implementation and financing

The projects proposed in this Neighbourhood Plan will be supported by the Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils and implemented by local community groups and volunteers. This has been the successful pattern for recent projects in the community which include: the Galleries community shop; painted pavements; the Tynning; King George V play ground; Galleries' solar panels; the cloakroom in St Mary's church; the Limpley Stoke telephone kiosk library, etc.

Over £400,000 has been raised by the community in the past five years to fund the projects listed above through grants and loans. The Management Committee are confident that this Neighbourhood Plan, which will be one of the first Neighbourhood Plans in the country, will be a catalyst for accessing significant sources of grants and other financing to support the implementation of the projects listed in this plan.

1.8 Sustainability Appraisal

See Appendix C



2.1 Vision

The Plan seeks to ensure that Freshford and Limpley Stoke remain the unique and cherished villages that they are: vibrant, sustainable and forward-looking communities which are attractive places to live, work and visit. We wish to ensure that future generations will benefit from improved facilities whilst protecting the distinctive rural nature of the villages and their surrounding green fields and woodlands.

2.2 Plan objectives

Four key themes and objectives arose from the initial community meetings and associated workshops supported by ESHA Architects. Four Working Groups were subsequently formed from community volunteers. These groups were tasked with the following objectives:

Environment: to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment within the Green Belt, Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Local Conservation Areas. At the same time we want to live in a vibrant community which provides for, and supports, people of all ages.

Planning and development: to drive and support sustainable development which delivers homes, businesses and infrastructure, helping our community to flourish as it meets present and future demands, while at the same time preserving and enhancing all that is best about the two communities

Facilities and services: to improve health, social and cultural well being for all to ensure facilities and services are in place to meet local needs.

Walking, cycling and safer roads: to create a safe environment for pedestrian movements, cyclists, accessible public transport and traffic on roads.

Section 2

Vision & Objectives





Section 3

Development Framework



3.0 Facts

3.01 Freshford and Limpley Stoke include the hamlets of Sharpstone, Pipehouse, Park Corner and Waterhouse. The topography and history of these communities have resulted in these settlements being separated by green fields and woodlands which account for their unique rural character.

3.02 Freshford and Limpley Stoke reside in the Green Belt and are protected from urban sprawl by National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) paragraphs 79-92. These policies also aim to preserve the openness and permanence of the lands surrounding and within the settlements.

3.03 Both villages are also located in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (CAONB) and are covered by the draft CAONB Management Plan 2013-2018. This plan acknowledges the scenic diversity of the area, its richness in wildlife and heritage and its home to vibrant communities supported by a sustainable economy. This Management Plan recommends that, in the enclosed Limpley Stoke valley, new development should be avoided on visible valley sides and be contained within the existing settlement boundaries.

3.04 Freshford is a small (“RA3”) settlement within the Green Belt and already has a Housing Development Boundary (HDB) within which a limited amount of new, mostly infill, development could be permitted. The Bath & North East Somerset’s draft

Core Strategy envisages 800 houses being planned to be built in “rural areas” with a particular emphasis on larger (“RA1”) settlements with good local facilities and public transport.

3.05 Limpley Stoke is defined as a “small village” in the Wiltshire draft Core Strategy and is within the Green Belt. As a “small village”, Limpley Stoke does not have a Housing Development Boundary and the whole area is covered by the Green Belt.

Development is governed by Wiltshire Core Policy 51 with a particular objective to: “maintain the open character of undeveloped land adjacent to Bath, Trowbridge and Bradford on Avon and prevent the coalescence of Bradford on Avon with Trowbridge or the villages to the east of Bath”. The Wiltshire draft Core Strategy assumes that 160 houses will be built between the three large and four small villages around Bradford on Avon up until the year 2026.

3.1 Projects

3.11 Develop a Village Design Statement (see 3.3) used to guide the future development of any house extensions and new development and which will be policed by the Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils.

3.2 Policy Objectives

3.21 Two village envelopes have been drawn (see Map 2), defining the area of built environment, where the limited amount of new housing (defined in Section 4.21) can be built according to the Village Design Statement (see 3.3) and which will define the areas for potential brown field and infill sites. Importantly, the controls and restrictions of Green Belt Planning Policy would continue to apply.

The two envelopes have been defined by the existing curtilage, or built up area, of the two villages where existing services are located and avoid environmentally sensitive areas such as green fields, woodlands, flood plains and areas of steep topography. The two envelopes have been labelled the Northerly and Southerly envelopes.

The envelopes exclude Local Green Spaces (see Map 2) which are:

Village greens and play parks in the heart of the two villages (see section 6).

There are environmentally sensitive areas between the two villages which include the historically important remains of the medieval village of Woodwick. These Local Green Spaces are limited in size, are adjacent to the two villages and have been designated, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 77, to preserve the rural character of the villages and hamlets and prevent incremental development which might merge them together.

3.22 Small developments, defined as developments of fewer than 9 houses, will be preferred over a single large development which would impact the character, service provision, traffic movement and car parking pressures in this community.



Village Design Statement

3.3 Objectives: The Village Design Statement will be used to guide the future development of any house extensions and new development. It is aimed at improving the physical qualities of the area by promoting good quality architectural and landscape design in development which complements and reinforces the existing character of the rural landscape and which will be sustainable in the future. The Village Design Statement is outlined below:

Heritage: The historic fabric of buildings should be preserved and repaired wherever possible (where buildings are 'listed' specialist advice should be sought) and existing buildings reused creatively.

New developments: New developments must be mindful of and sensitive to the physical and environmental context of the site and its location in the Green Belt, the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and (where applicable) the Conservation area. They should be rural, not suburban, in character.

Design: The design, contemporary or traditional, must be a harmonious addition to the rural environment, complement the local built heritage, and sit well in the landscape.

Detailing: The detailing of new development and changes to existing buildings must seek to reflect the quality of craftsmanship and materials both of the area and of the specific location. Where possible, local and durable materials should be used which improve in appearance with age.

Car Parking: New developments need to show adequate car parking consistent with the use of the development to prevent an exacerbation of car parking pressures in the villages.

Local concerns: Proposals for new development must take proper account of relevant planning considerations raised by immediate neighbours or by the community through their Parish Councils through comprehensive local engagement. Specific consideration needs to be taken on all matters relating to the Neighbourhood Plan and the Village Design Statement.

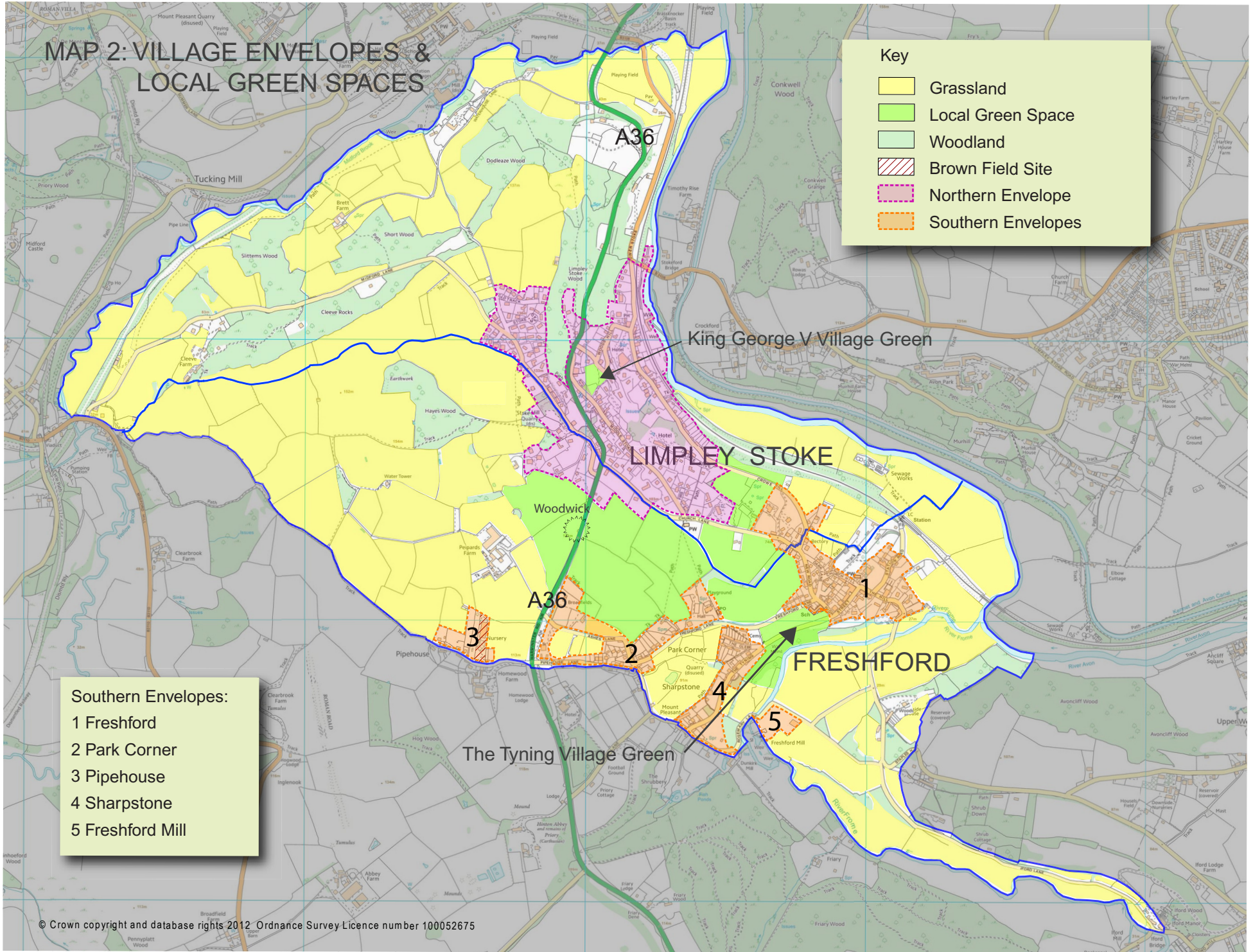


MAP 2: VILLAGE ENVELOPES & LOCAL GREEN SPACES

Key

- Grassland
- Local Green Space
- Woodland
- Brown Field Site
- Northern Envelope
- Southern Envelopes

- Southern Envelopes:**
- 1 Freshford
 - 2 Park Corner
 - 3 Pipehouse
 - 4 Sharpstone
 - 5 Freshford Mill



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Section 4

Housing

4.0 Facts

4.01 With the exception of the unfinished Freshford Mill development, only one house has been built in Freshford and Limpley Stoke in the past ten years.

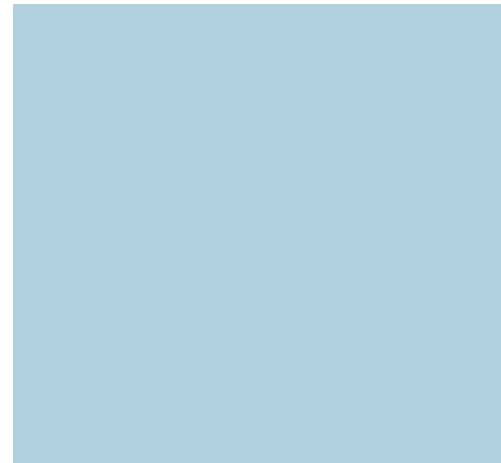
4.02 Much of the existing housing stock has been extended into larger homes. Only 20% of the housing stock in both villages now comprises 1-2 bedroom houses, compared to 40% nationally, and over 40% of the housing stock comprises of 4+ bedrooms, compared to less than 20% nationally (source: National Statistics 2011 Census). More 1-2 bedroom houses are needed to encourage more younger and older residents to remain in the community.

4.03 Lack of smaller and more affordable homes has made it difficult for young families to remain in, or move into, the villages. Just over 10% of residents are aged between 21 and 40 compared to almost 30% nationally. Longer term, the lack of younger families will

threaten the viability of key local services such as the Freshford Primary School and community shop. It is, therefore, important to encourage young families to remain in the community.

4.04 23% of residents are over the age of 65. This figure as a proportion of the population is forecast to rise significantly in the next 20 years. There is little need-related evidence for housing specifically designed for the elderly and Avon Park retirement village, one mile away in Winsley, provides a range of independent, sheltered and nursing supported accommodation. Elderly residents would however benefit from more 1-2 bedroom houses in the housing mix and their relocation to smaller and more manageable housing would free up larger housing for growing families.

4.05 The social housing stocks in Limpley Stoke and Freshford are owned and managed by Selwood



Housing and Curo Trust. The current stock of nine properties includes one bungalow in Limpley Stoke and a mix of eight homes in Freshford. Three housing needs assessments have been undertaken in the last 10 years (see Appendix E6). The results of these have been widely published over the period.

4.06 The housing needs assessment completed in 2004/05 indicated the need for a minimum of eight affordable houses in Freshford. These comprised six rental and two shared ownership homes.

A joint parish housing needs assessment completed in August 2009 indicated the need for a minimum of eleven affordable houses in Freshford and Limpley Stoke between 2009-2012. These comprised seven 1-2 bedroom and four 2-3 bedroom houses with nine rental and two shared ownership homes.

The most recent housing needs survey undertaken in Limpley Stoke in October 2011 indicated a need for a minimum of six affordable houses between 2011-2014. These comprised of one 1-bedroom, three 2-bedroom and two 3-bedroom houses with four rental and two shared ownership homes. Wiltshire's Housing Register in April 2013, which only covers rental homes, shows applications for five affordable houses and these numbers have been consistent over time.

4.07 The Freshford Mill dates back to the 17th Century and, until 1993, it was used by Peradins for the manufacture of rubber components for the car industry. In 2009 planning permission was granted to construct 21 units of housing on this site but the developers, Ypres Rose, went into administration in 2010 and these units remain uncompleted. Concerns remain about the extent of the decontamination of this site and the current state of its flood defences.

4.1 Projects

4.11 Encourage the completion of the Freshford Mill development which is currently an eye-sore with the partially completed buildings deteriorating since the abandonment of the building work in 2010.

This development provides a mix of housing and includes some suitable apartment-style housing which might attract some "empty-nest" residents and free up some larger housing for growing families.

Discussions with potential developers have raised questions whether a revised planning application might be required to facilitate the completion of this development.





4.2 Policy objectives

4.21 An average of the housing needs surveys undertaken in the past 10 years, together with a review of the up-to-date needs register, have indicated a demand for six to eight affordable homes for people with a local connection. These are people who wish to remain in, or return to, the locality but cannot afford to buy at market rates (see Section 4.27). This number has been confirmed by Development Officers from Wiltshire and Bath & North East Somerset. It is also consistent with the housing needs set out in the Wiltshire and Bath & North East Somerset's core strategies, particularly in the context of the environmental and physical constraints of the area.

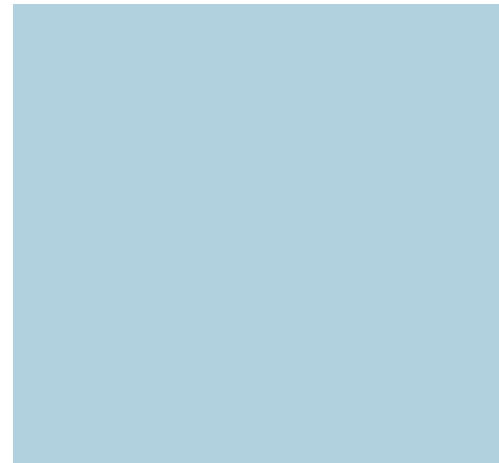
4.22 There has been little specific need expressed in the three housing surveys for housing aimed specifically at the elderly and the 1999 needs survey identified the need for a single 1-2 bedroom rented home for an elderly couple.

4.23 There is a need for smaller houses for younger and older people to move into and thereby release larger homes for those with families.

4.24 Given the existing imbalance of the housing stock and the stated housing needs, the emphasis on any new housing should be on 1-2 bedroom houses with a limited number of 3-bedroom houses.

4.25 The Rentokil brown field site and Freshford Mill site have been identified as feasible sites for limited amounts of new housing under the Rural Exceptions Site policy (NPPF paragraph 89). Discussions with local developers suggest the Rentokil site could accommodate 6-8 houses and the Freshford Mill site could accommodate a further 4-6 homes.

4.26 Other housing can be accommodated as infill developments within the village envelopes (see Section 3.22) where there is access to local services. Residents with large gardens, which would be suitable



for small and high quality developments, might be interested in selling some of their land for affordable housing under the Rural Exceptions Site policy (NPPF paragraph 54). Whilst these sites will have to be judged on a case-by-case basis, all sites within the village envelopes are regarded as accessible and sustainable for affordable housing.

4.27 The nominated rural Housing Association will work with the relevant local authorities and the two Parish Councils to allocate affordable housing to applicants with a local connection. For the purpose of this Neighbourhood Plan, this is defined as people aged sixteen years or above who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The person was born in Freshford or Limpley Stoke Parishes and lived in the area for at least 10 years up to the age of sixteen; and/or
- The person normally resides in the parish and has done so for at least three years; and/or

- The person has family who are currently resident in the Freshford or Limpley Stoke Parishes and have been so for at least fifteen years; and/or
- The Freshford or Limpley Stoke Parishes are the person's permanent place of work for at least three years.

4.28 Outside the village envelopes, extensions to existing properties might exceptionally be permitted as defined in the draft Neighbourhood Plan Policy numbers 2 and 12 (see Section 10).



Natural Environment



5.0 Facts

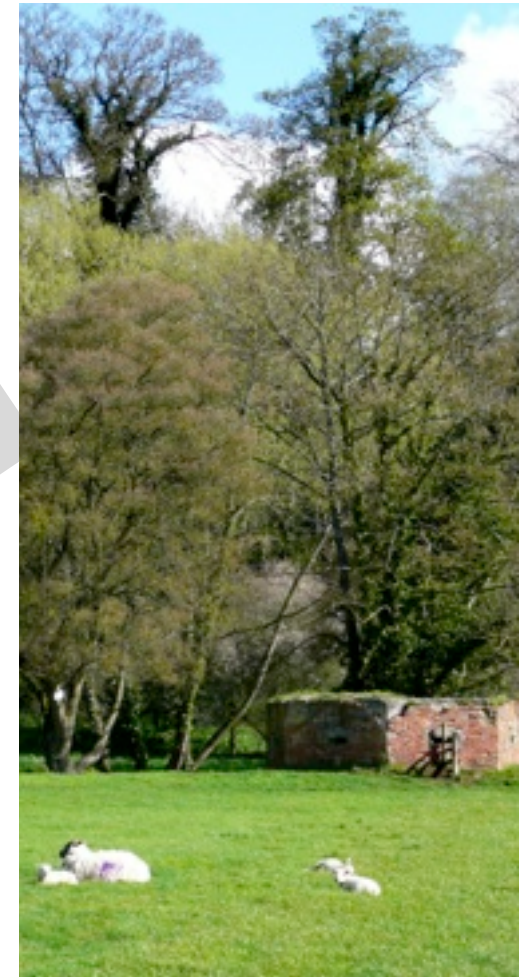
5.01 Freshford and Limpley Stoke are set in a particularly attractive location in environmentally sensitive surroundings. The villages are integrated into the landscape as against simply surrounded by it: woodlands descend steep slopes into the heart of Limpley Stoke and cattle graze in fields in the centre of Freshford.

5.02 The unique qualities of the location are evidenced by its inclusion in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (CAONB) and the designation of four areas of Ancient Woodlands, four areas of Special Scientific Interest and five Wildlife Sites within its borders. Approximately 60% of the neighbourhood is grassland and 15% is woodland (see Map 3). The whole area is washed over by Green Belt.

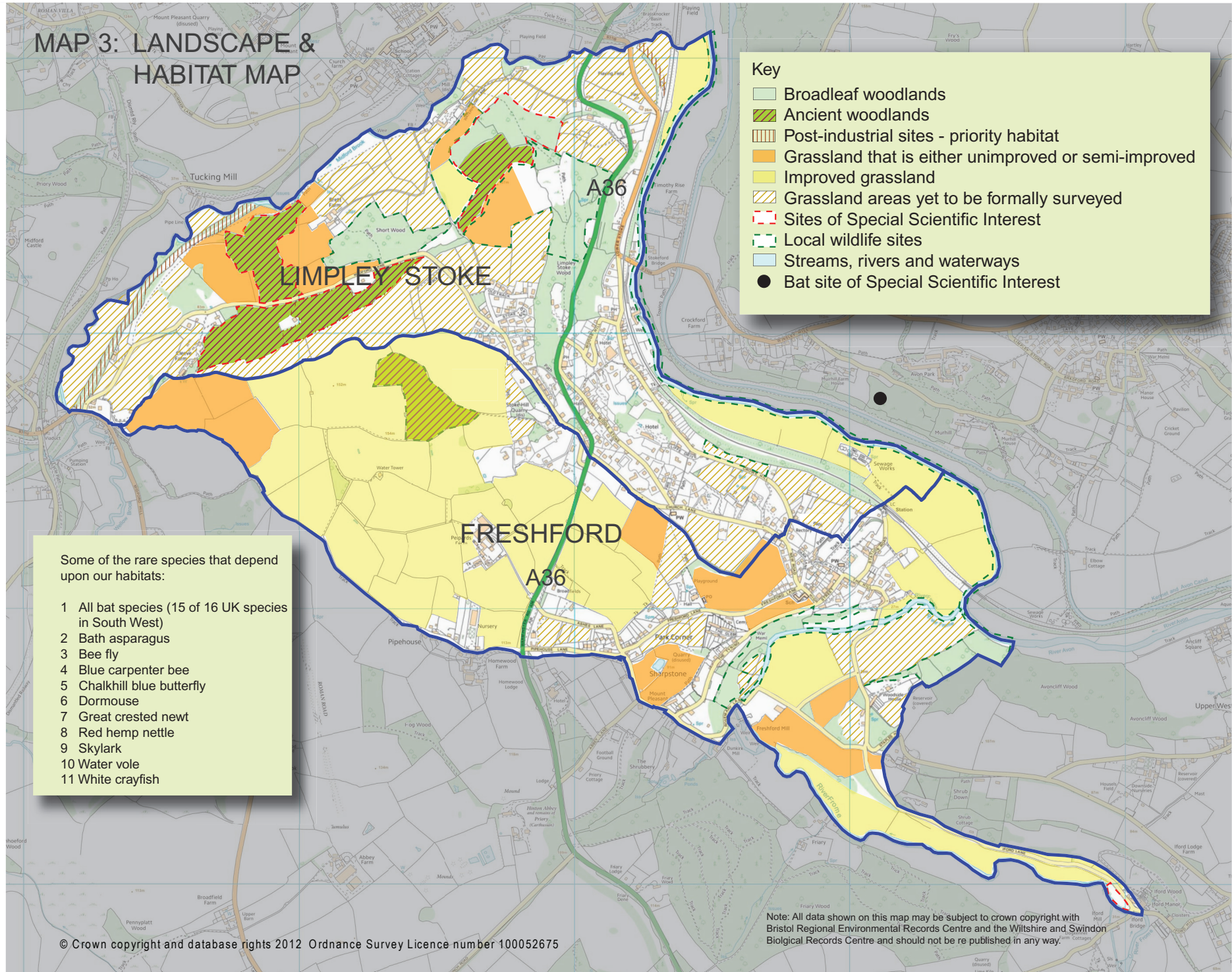
5.03 Many visitors come to the area to walk and engage with the attractive and tranquil landscape which helps support the local economy.

5.04 There is a range of different habitats capable of supporting rich biodiversity but some of these are suffering from neglect and lack of appropriate management. These include hedgerows, grasslands and ancient woodlands.

5.05 Despite the rural location, light pollution from nearby towns results in the CAONB Light Pollution Map showing the neighbourhood as being in Class 3 for light pollution, the class typical of areas on the outskirts of conurbations.



MAP 3: LANDSCAPE & HABITAT MAP



Key

- Broadleaf woodlands
- Ancient woodlands
- Post-industrial sites - priority habitat
- Grassland that is either unimproved or semi-improved
- Improved grassland
- Grassland areas yet to be formally surveyed
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Local wildlife sites
- Streams, rivers and waterways
- Bat site of Special Scientific Interest

Some of the rare species that depend upon our habitats:

- 1 All bat species (15 of 16 UK species in South West)
- 2 Bath asparagus
- 3 Bee fly
- 4 Blue carpenter bee
- 5 Chalkhill blue butterfly
- 6 Dormouse
- 7 Great crested newt
- 8 Red hemp nettle
- 9 Skylark
- 10 Water vole
- 11 White crayfish

Note: All data shown on this map may be subject to crown copyright with Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre and the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre and should not be re published in any way.



5.1 Projects

5.11 Work with the CAONB to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and to increase the access, understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the neighbourhood. The Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils will have the responsibility for monitoring planning, highways, lighting and other local issues to ensure the protection of the unique local natural environment.

5.12 Work with the Valley Parishes Alliance to protect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the Avon Valley for present and future generations.

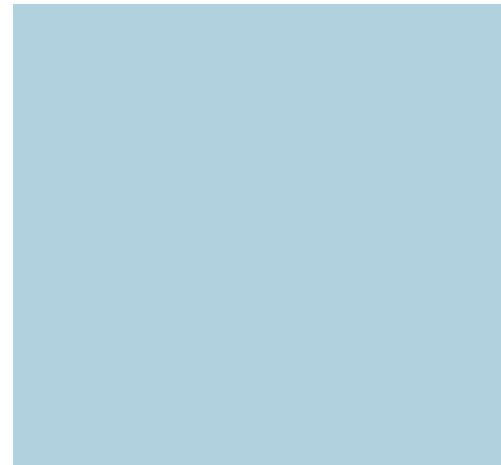
5.13 Set up a community Environment group with a remit to audit regularly the local flora and fauna and monitor changes over time and work in partnership with local farmers, landowners and residents to promote biodiversity, sustainable land use, local food production and wildlife-friendly gardening (see www.flewg.weebly.com).

5.14 Investigate ways to stimulate resident and visitors interest in the local environment - flora, fauna, habitats, geology etc. Educational programmes can be coordinated with the local schools targeted at the local children and teenagers.

5.15 Work with Natural England to review the management of the wooded, south-eastern slope of The Tynning and plan cut-throughs to create valley views from the top of The Tynning. Review damaged, species-poor hedgerows in public areas (e.g. at the foot of The Tynning by Freshford Lane and near the War Memorial) and investigate whether their biodiversity and amenity could be improved.

5.16 Complete a Habitat Assessment Report on this neighbourhood area (see Appendix E2).

5.17 Design and develop an ecological reserve in the unused land in Middle Stoke (see Section 6.13).



5.18 Encourage the use of dry stone walling, hedge laying and coppicing to preserve ancient crafts and enhance the rural environment.

5.19 Improve access to the area by designing and building new footpaths along key movement axes which are in keeping with the rural setting and minimise the disruption to existing agricultural land use and local fauna (see Sections 7.16 and 7.17). Improve knowledge of the Countryside Code which clarifies the responsibilities for both the public and the people who manage the land.

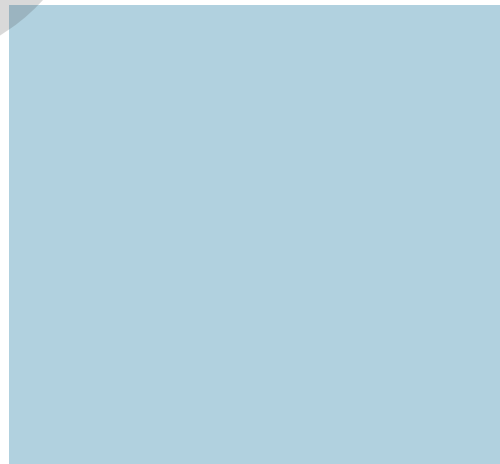
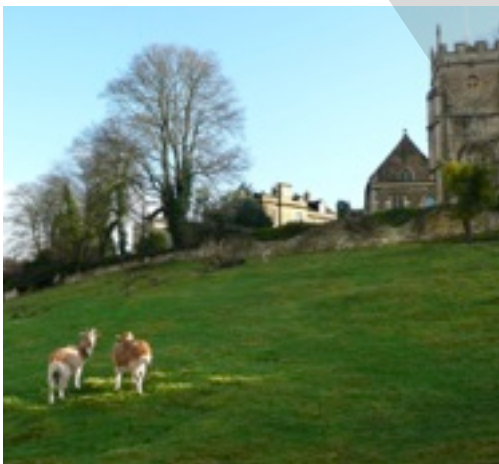
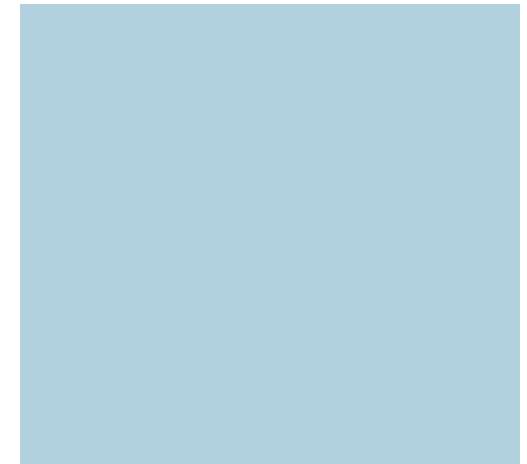
5.2 Policy objectives

5.21 To protect green fields, hedgerows, woodlands – and especially Ancient Woodlands - and environmentally sensitive areas against inappropriate development which has an adverse impact upon the extent, quality or longer term viability of the local environmental resources.

5.22 To work with local farmers and landowners to manage the natural environment, maximising its amenity value and contribution to biodiversity, and preventing its deterioration as a result of neglect or improper management.

5.23 To design facilities and services for residents and visitors, meeting their needs without damaging the attractive natural environment.

5.24 To minimise light pollution, whilst maintaining an appropriate level of safety for residents and visitors at night. preventing its deterioration as a result of neglect or improper management.



Safeguarding village greens & play parks

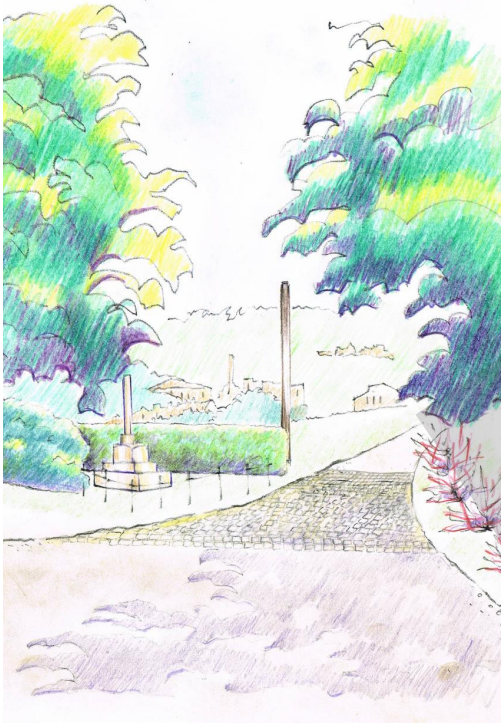


Image A

6.0 Facts

6.01 The steep relief of the villages results in few locations within the community which are flat enough for recreational activity. Brown's Field (also known as Brown's Park), where the local football and tennis clubs are located, lies just across the border in Hinton Charterhouse. The Freshford play ground is located behind the Memorial Hall while the Limpley Stoke play ground is within the King George V playing field.

6.02 The Tying in Freshford and the King George V play park in Limpley Stoke are the green lungs in the heart of both villages, are used for play and leisure and for community get-togethers and contribute to the green infrastructure and biodiversity of both communities.

6.03 The five acres of land known as the Tying rest at the heart of the village and, in 1970 was registered as a village green. The War Memorial is sited at the boundary of the Tying, close to the cemetery. This green space is in part in common use and has special value as a connecting green link between the two settlements of the Freshford village centre and Sharpstone. It is embraced by the revised Freshford and Sharpstone Conservation Area (2007). The land is currently in private ownership but Freshford Parish Council is negotiating for the purchase of the land on behalf of the community.

6.04 The King George V play park is on Woods Hill in Limpley Stoke. It was created in 1936 as a recreation and playing field, to be preserved in perpetuity as a memorial to King George V. It is managed by the Limpley Stoke Parish Council whose members act as trustees for the charity. The facilities include play equipment, a boules pitch, a cruck shelter and community barbeque. The upper field in the park has poor access and car parking is limited. These factors limit the use of the play park by local parents and children.

6.05 There is a disused and overgrown plot of green field land in Middle Stoke which is adjacent to the telephone exchange and the King George V play park. This land is privately owned by a local property developer and for over 10 years the Limpley Stoke Parish Council has been attempting its acquisition in order to enhance the green space in the centre of the village and improve access to the play park for local parents and children. This idea is approved of by 70% of residents (source: questionnaire responses in Appendix B2).

6.1 Projects

6.11 Acquire the Tynning by the Freshford Parish Council and then manage and maintain it in a manner consistent with its biodiversity and village green status³ and on behalf of the whole community.

6.12 Improve the land in front of the Freshford War Memorial and delineate it so that it respects more appropriately the dignity of the site (see Image A).

6.13 Investigate the acquisition of the disused land in Middle Stoke by the Limpley Stoke Parish Council in order to improve access to the King George V play park. Convert this land into an ecological reserve which will be managed and maintained on behalf of the whole community (see Image B).

6.14 Designate King George V play park as a village green and incorporate the disused land in Middle Stoke.

6.15 Continue to maintain and improve the play ground facilities in both villages to improve the health and well being of children and teenagers.

6.16 Work with the trustees of Brown's Field and Hinton Charterhouse Parish Council to investigate ways of using the existing land and buildings to support more sporting and recreational facilities for children, teenagers and adults.

6.2 Policy objectives

6.21 To designate and safeguard the green spaces in the heart of Freshford and Limpley Stoke.

6.22 To register the disused land and King George V playing field in Limpley Stoke as a Village Green under the Commons Act 2006.





7.0 Facts

7.01 Improving walking and cycling access by residents and visitors to key village facilities and public transport will reduce traffic volumes and parking problems and improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

7.02 Many of the lanes running through and between the villages are too narrow for pavements. Pedestrians are very concerned with the dangers of walking along roads with speeding traffic.

7.03 There is a need to improve safety for children arriving at and/or leaving Freshford Primary School by bus, car or on foot. There is significant congestion at peak times and concerns have been raised by parents about the lack of an off-road bus stop and an inadequate pavement linking the school to the Freshford Memorial Hall car park.

7.04 Many of the local footpaths are unsafe or inadequate for all residents which results in an excessive use of cars to access local facilities.

7.05 The A36 is a major trunk road which divides the community and acts as a barrier for residents in

Waterhouse, Midford Lane and Pipehouse to access key services.

7.06 Road signage in the villages is confusing and cluttered.

7.07 Each household owns an average of 1.7 cars, reflecting the rural nature of this community. This has resulted in parking pressures in key parts of the villages, particularly in areas of terraced housing with no off-street parking (e.g. Middle Stoke, Lower Stoke and Sharpstone). Parking problems also exist near key village facilities (e.g. the Freshford Primary School, community shop and village halls).

7.08 The Limpley Stoke and Freshford Transport Link service help the elderly, the frail or people with disabilities to make important journeys which they could not do by public transport.

7.09 The community is served by two bus routes (94 and 264/265) and Freshford Railway Station is on the Bristol to Weymouth “Heart of Wessex Line”.

Section 7

Walking, cycling & safer roads



7.1 Projects

7.11 Construct new and sensitively-designed 'village gateways' at all entry points (see Map 4), using natural, durable materials (see Image E page 24). These are proven as an effective way to address traffic speeds and cluttered road signage. The gateways will mark the entrance into quiet villages in a rural setting. Symbols or text will advise that pedestrians and cyclists have priority, 20mph speeds apply, and that there is limited accessibility for larger vehicles. Road widths could be reduced at gateway locations to provide single-lane entry for cars, and larger vehicles would drive over a ribbed surface to give additional warning.

7.12 Introduce a 20mph zone to cover the residential area of the two villages (see Map 4) in accordance with consultation work being carried out by Bath and North East Somerset and Wiltshire Councils. Traffic calming measures may also be required within the 20mph zone and some speed reminders may be needed within the village area. Painted road surfaces might be used as an interim measure with a long-term goal to build granite setts to encourage speed reduction.

7.13 A raised road surface will be made at the Freshford Primary School crossroad and a similar arrangement will be investigated for the Hop Pole junction in Limpley Stoke. These would help reduce traffic speeds and encourage more pedestrian use.

7.14 Improve local access to public transport by constructing a pavement from the Hop Pole to the bus stop on the B3108. Improved lighting will also be investigated to improve pedestrian safety to/from the railway station.

7.15 Encourage the use of public transport by publishing the times for trains and buses on the village websites and distributing Welcome Packs to new residents with details of public transport and local facilities (see section 8.17).

7.16 Build an off-highway bus stop outside the school and upgrade and reroute the footpath linking the school to the community shop to improve safety for school children (see Image C).

7.17 Build a second footpath, using natural materials (see Image D) and suitable for pushchairs and elderly residents, across Church Fields (Stoke Church Tynning) to the community shop and Memorial Hall to improve the safety and amenity of pedestrians walking to and from Limpley Stoke and Midford Lane.

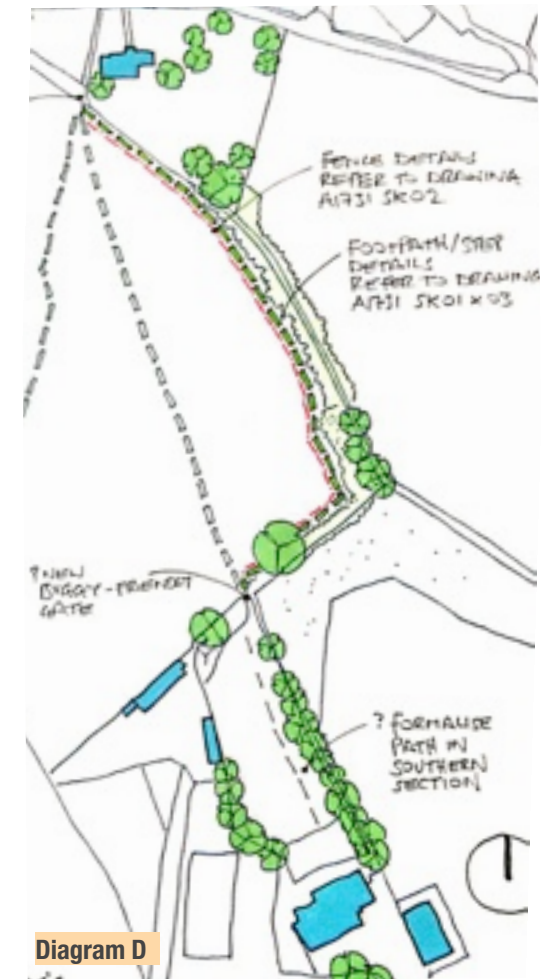


Image E



7.2 Policy objectives

7.21 To enhance and preserve key pedestrian links used by residents in the two villages to access local facilities and public transport (see Map 4).

7.22 To recognise the importance of the Village Gateways as a means of improving the safety, amenity and sustainability of the neighbourhood.








7.23 To preserve and support Public Transport links covering the two villages and to encourage both B&NES and Wiltshire Councils to recognise the importance of their provision, especially in the context of their crossing local authority boundaries.

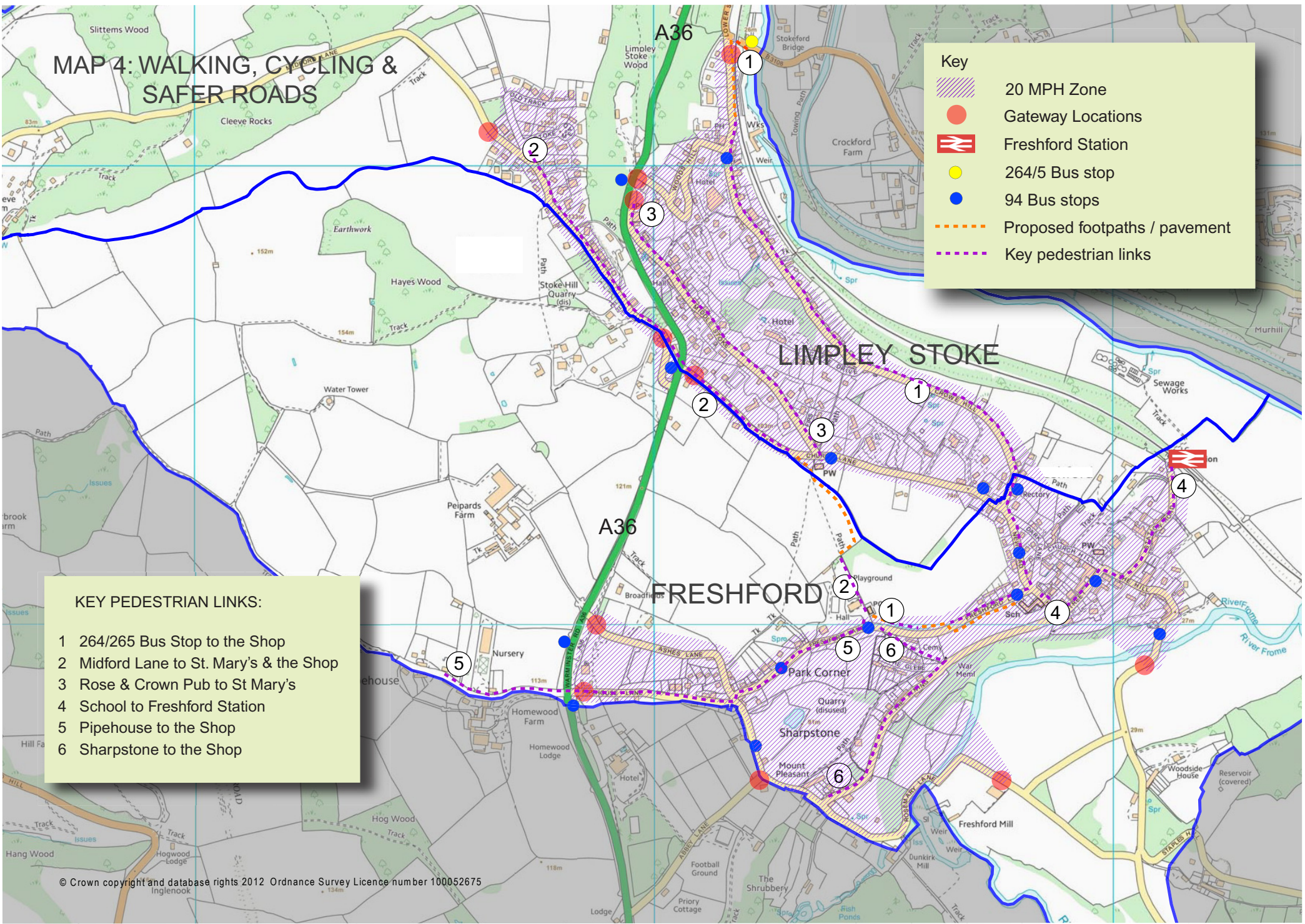
7.24 To improve the safety of residents crossing the A36 from Midford Lane and Pipehouse, seeking Highways Agency recognition in the investigation of speed limits, and the use of double white lines and pedestrian refuges/traffic lights.



MAP 4: WALKING, CYCLING & SAFER ROADS

Key

-  20 MPH Zone
-  Gateway Locations
-  Freshford Station
-  264/5 Bus stop
-  94 Bus stops
-  Proposed footpaths / pavement
-  Key pedestrian links



KEY PEDESTRIAN LINKS:

- 1 264/265 Bus Stop to the Shop
- 2 Midford Lane to St. Mary's & the Shop
- 3 Rose & Crown Pub to St Mary's
- 4 School to Freshford Station
- 5 Pipehouse to the Shop
- 6 Sharpstone to the Shop

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Section 8

Community Facilities and Assets



8.0 Facts

8.01 The two villages benefit from a large number of community facilities and assets; these are shown on Map 5. These benefit residents from both villages.

8.02 Following the closures of the Limpley Stoke and Freshford village shops, the new Galleries community shop opened in 2009 as a local enterprise owned and run by the community and staffed mainly by volunteers. It is run through the Freshford & Limpley Stoke Community Association (FLISCA) which is a charity which reinvests its profits in community projects.

8.03 The Freshford Primary School is a co-educational primary school for children between the ages of 4 – 11 and the Freshford Pre-school rents a room at the Memorial Hall and offers day care for children aged between 2½ and 5 years. The primary school suffers from a shortage of play space and the pre-school needs some dedicated working space.

8.04 The Freshford Memorial Hall is a charitable foundation which runs the largest village hall in the community. It is used for a variety of communal and sporting and cultural events and also hosts the Freshford pre-school. This building is 50 years old and needs upgrading. The Limpley Stoke Village

Hall is a smaller facility which suffers from a shortage of parking.

8.05 St Peter's Church in Freshford and St Mary's Church in Limpley Stoke are both part of a United Parish of three churches which also includes St John's in Hinton Charterhouse.

8.06 The Beckington Family Practice has a branch GP surgery in a building owned by the Younghusband Trust Freshford. Parking is limited and disabled access to this building is unsuitable.

8.07 Freshford Railway Station serves both communities with regular rail services along the Heart of Wessex Line.

8.08 Football and tennis are provided at Brown's Field which is owned by a sport-focused trust. These sporting facilities are used by children and adults from the community, although this land is located across the parish boundary in Hinton Charterhouse.

8.09 Essential utilities in the area include the water tower, sewerage works and telephone exchange. The three local pubs also provide important local meeting places for socialising and public meetings.

8.1 Projects

8.11 An extension has been built onto the Galleries community shop to increase the profitable café business.

8.12 Freshford Primary School would benefit from greater access to the Tynning land for recreational activities. This is being investigated as part of the wider use of this village green (see Section 6.11).

8.13 An initiative is underway to redevelop and upgrade the Freshford Memorial Hall and is investigating the possibility of providing dedicated space for the Pre-school and GP surgery with better disabled access. A feasibility study has been undertaken and the community is exploring various refurbishment or redevelopment options (see Image F1 & F2 page 28 & 30 and weblink_ http://www.hewittstudios.co.uk/downloads/130513_Options_Study_Rev_A.pdf).

8.14 The relocation of the GP surgery from the Younghusband building would free up space which might be useful for the expansion of the Freshford Primary School, which is opposite.

8.15 St Mary's Church has added a toilet and pantry and is investigating removing some pews to encourage greater non ecumenical use of this building from the broader community. A parallel project is underway looking at ways in which the space in St Peter's Church can be better utilised by the community.

8.16 The playgrounds in Freshford and Limpley Stoke are important sources of play and recreation by the children in the community and they will

continue to be improved and upgraded by the respective Parish Councils.

8.17 Encourage the use of local facilities by publishing details on the village websites and distributing Welcome Packs to new residents with details of public transport and local facilities (see section 7.14). Encourage the improved coordination between the management groups of the local facilities to maximise their use (eg. coordinate the booking of facilities).

8.18 Increase community welfare by liaising with the Police and Crime Commissioners. Work with the Neighbourhood Police teams to develop a Community Watch scheme across both villages to support vulnerable residents, increase road safety and maintain low levels of criminal activity.

8.19 It is recommended that a study is undertaken on the feasibility of developing the unused land and buildings in Brown's Field for increased sports and recreational facilities for the children, teenage and adult residents of Freshford, Limpley Stoke and Hinton Charterhouse.

8.2 Policy objectives

8.21 To encourage both relevant local authorities to understand that, irrespective of local authority boundaries, key neighbourhood facilities and services (see Maps 5 and 6) in both villages support



the ongoing sustainability of this combined community. Support must continue to be given to projects that improve the viability and usage of these assets.

8.22 To recognise that the area that includes the Galleries community shop and Freshford Memorial Hall is, de facto, the centre or hub of the combined community. This area is separate from the centre of the two communities but is accessible from both. It is an important community meeting place and contains the community shop, pre-school and largest village hall which is regularly used by the community for social, educational, sporting and dramatic events. There are plans in place for possibly relocating the local GP surgery to this site (see section 8.13).

8.23 Many of the assets and land of community value are already owned or controlled by local charities, trusts or the Parish Councils (see Appendix E).

Important, privately owned assets include the three local public houses which are popular local meeting places and important historic buildings: the Hop Pole in Limpley Stoke and the Inn at Freshford are both 16th Century coaching inns. Many pubs across the country are under threat of being closed and redeveloped and the community has expressed a strong interest in protecting the status of these local pubs (see questionnaire results).

The disused land in Middle Stoke (see section 6.05) is adjacent to the King George V play park and the Limpley Stoke Parish Council has been attempting to purchase it for many years to enhance the green space in the centre of the village and improve access to the play park. The community has expressed a strong interest in the acquisition of the disused land by the Limpley Stoke Parish Council in order to convert this land into an ecological reserve and manage and maintain it on behalf of the whole community.

Assets and land of a community value can be protected under The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012. If an asset is listed and then comes up for sale, these regulations give communities six months to put together a bid to buy it. This improves the probability for communities to save important local facilities.

The Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils intend to list the three pubs in the community and the disused land in Middle Stoke (see Map 5) assets as Assets of Community Value with their respective Local Authorities (see Table 4).



Image F 1

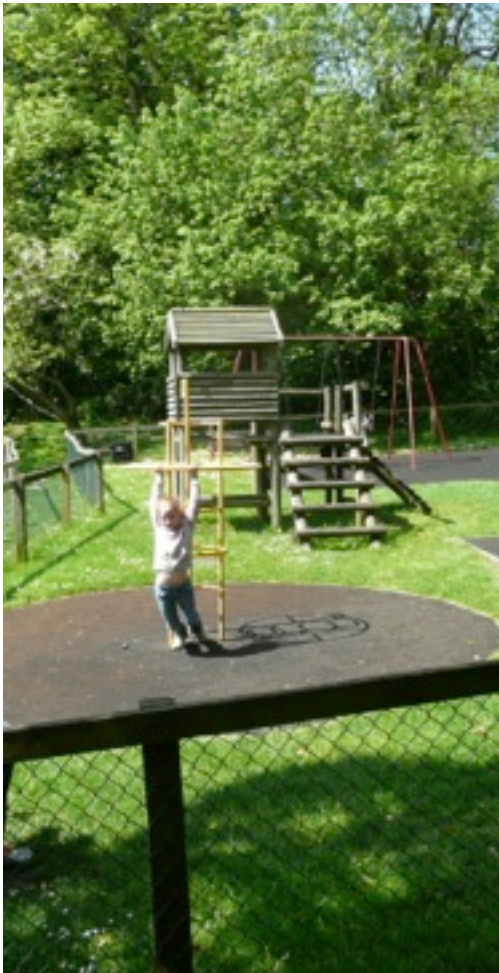
Table 1: Key neighbourhood facilities and services

Neighbourhood facility	Location	Map ref:
Freshford Memorial Hall	Freshford	1
Freshford Pre-School	Freshford	1
Freshford Playing Field	Freshford	2
Freshford Memorial Hall	Freshford	3
Cemetery	Freshford	4
The Tynning Village Green	Freshford	5
Freshford War Memorial	Freshford	6
Freshford Primary School	Freshford	7
GP Surgery	Freshford	8
The Old Bakery meeting rooms	Freshford	9
St Peter's Church	Freshford	10
Freshford Railway Station	Freshford	11
Limpley Stoke Village Hall	Limpley Stoke	12
Limpley Stoke War Memorial	Limpley Stoke	13
St Mary's Church	Limpley Stoke	14
King George Vth Play Park	Limpley Stoke	15
Telephone Kiosk library	Limpley Stoke	16
Bus services (94 and 264/265)	n/a	n/a
"The Link" car service	n/a	n/a
Brown's Field (Hinton Charterhouse)	Hinton Charterhouse	17

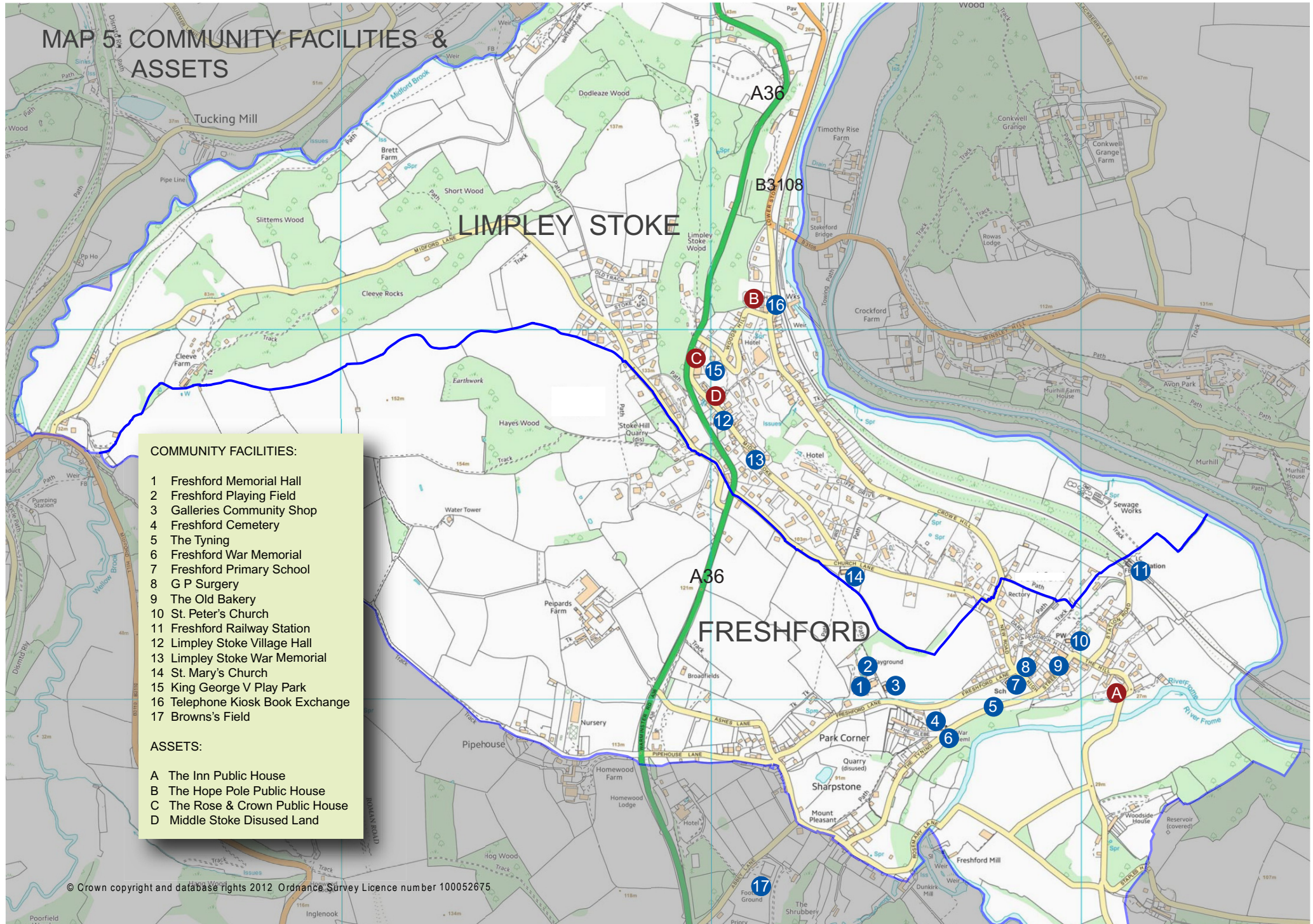


Table 2. Assets and Land of Community Value to register

Neighbourhood facility / land	Owner	Map Ref:
The Inn	The Roberts family	A
The HopPole	Latona Leisure Group	B
The Rose & Crown	n/a	C
Middle Stoke land (next to LS telephone exchange)	The Foulkes Family	D



MAP 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & ASSETS



- COMMUNITY FACILITIES:**
- 1 Freshford Memorial Hall
 - 2 Freshford Playing Field
 - 3 Galleries Community Shop
 - 4 Freshford Cemetery
 - 5 The Tynning
 - 6 Freshford War Memorial
 - 7 Freshford Primary School
 - 8 G P Surgery
 - 9 The Old Bakery
 - 10 St. Peter's Church
 - 11 Freshford Railway Station
 - 12 Limpley Stoke Village Hall
 - 13 Limpley Stoke War Memorial
 - 14 St. Mary's Church
 - 15 King George V Play Park
 - 16 Telephone Kiosk Book Exchange
 - 17 Browns's Field
- ASSETS:**
- A The Inn Public House
 - B The Hope Pole Public House
 - C The Rose & Crown Public House
 - D Middle Stoke Disused Land

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Business and Technology



9. Business and Technology

9.0 Facts

9.1 20% of economically active residents work either at home or elsewhere on a self-employed basis, compared to 10% nationally. A large number of residents work from home either full or part time.

9.2 Whilst only 2% of economically active residents are employed in primary activities, agricultural land comprises 80% of the land area of the two parishes and a small number of farms work on and maintain the fields surrounding the community. Another important local business includes the stone mine in Freshford, owned by the Bath Stone Group.

9.3 Tourism is an important local employer and supports a number of local businesses including the Limpley Stoke Hotel and the three village pubs. Some office space and workshops are provided at Limpley Mill and Waterhouse. The location of local businesses can be seen on Map 6.

9.4 The local topography results in poor mobile phone reception.

9.5 The Limpley Stoke telephone exchange has been recently upgraded with fibre optic to 20Mb. However with less efficient copper cable linking households to the exchange, broadband speeds in

the community are patchy with households furthest from the exchange recording speeds of less than 2Mb.

9.1 Projects

9.11 BT will be asked to prioritise the laying of fibre optic cables from the Limpley Stoke telephone exchange to local hubs which will significantly increase broadband speeds for businesses and households distant from this exchange.

9.12 An investigation will take place into the feasibility of deploying rural small cells which boost mobile phone signals without the need for intrusive mobile phone masts. Residents can also deploy local femtocells (small, low-power cellular base stations) to boost signals in their own houses.

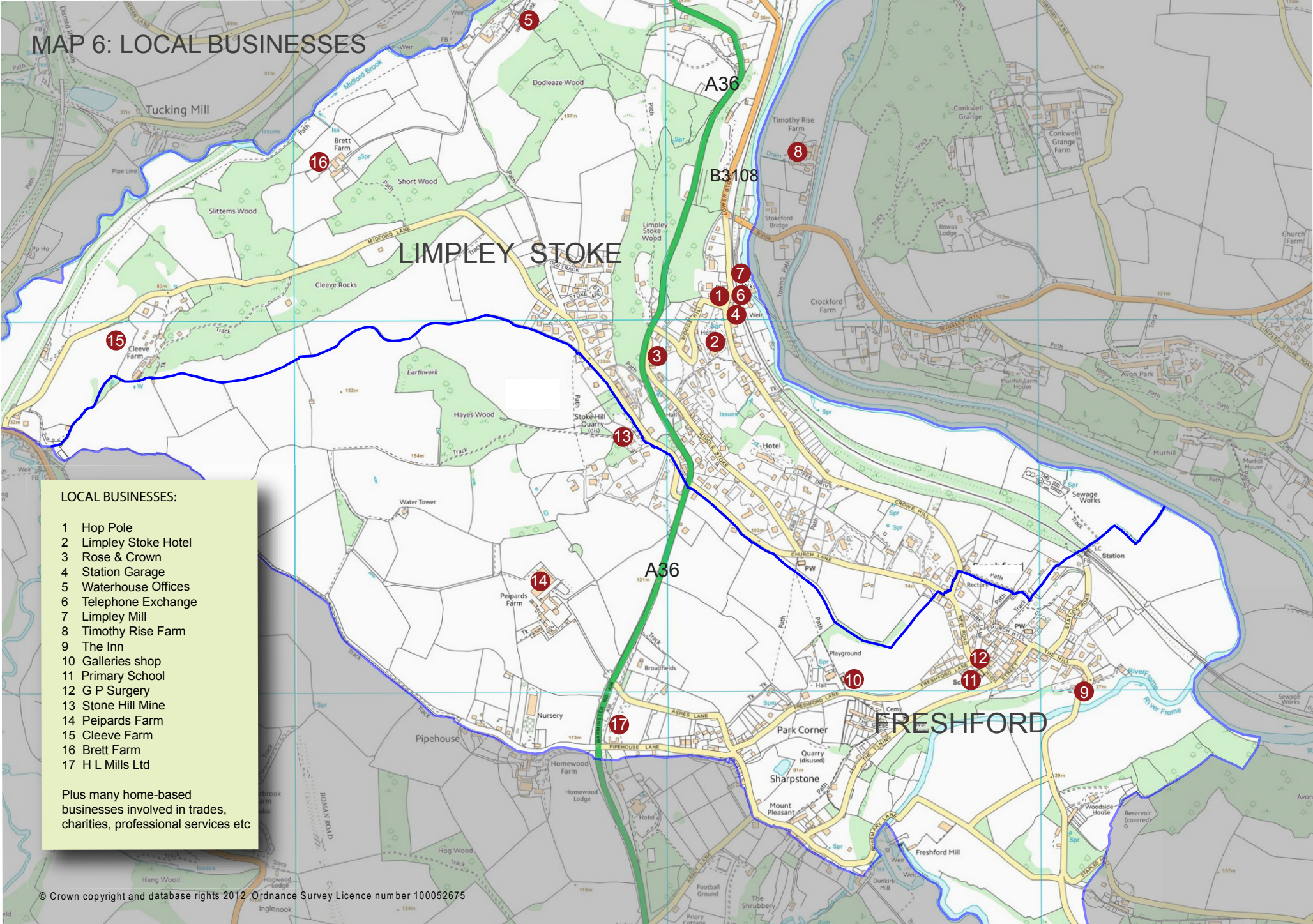
9.2 Policy objectives

9.21 To protect the livelihood of local farms and prevent their redevelopment.

9.22 To retain local employment and create new employment by protecting existing businesses and encouraging the development of new local and artisan businesses.

9.23 To retain local employment and create new employment by encouraging and promoting more home working.

MAP 6: LOCAL BUSINESSES



- LOCAL BUSINESSES:**
- 1 Hop Pole
 - 2 Limley Stoke Hotel
 - 3 Rose & Crown
 - 4 Station Garage
 - 5 Waterhouse Offices
 - 6 Telephone Exchange
 - 7 Limley Mill
 - 8 Timothy Rise Farm
 - 9 The Inn
 - 10 Galleries shop
 - 11 Primary School
 - 12 G P Surgery
 - 13 Stone Hill Mine
 - 14 Peipards Farm
 - 15 Cleeve Farm
 - 16 Brett Farm
 - 17 H L Mills Ltd
- Plus many home-based businesses involved in trades, charities, professional services etc

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Draft policies



10. Draft policies

The following policies shall be used to promote and manage new development within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Alternative policy options, which have been discarded, are detailed in Appendix A. The fulfilment of one of these policies does not over-ride the need to meet the requirements of any other policy.

Development framework

NP Policy 1: In order to promote the quality of life of the villages in the Neighbourhood and to safeguard the Greenbelt and the landscape of the AONB, any new development within the neighbourhood plan area shall:

- (i) Be contained within the Village Envelopes of Freshford and Limpley Stoke, as defined in Map 2;
- (ii) Protect and enhance the quality of the Local Green Spaces (see section 3.2) which provide a buffer zone between the two villages as defined on Map 2; and
- (iii) Accord with the guidance set out in the Village Design Statement (see section 3.11).

Housing policies

NP Policy 2: Emphasis should be given both to the provision of 1-2 bedroom houses in the villages by:

- (i) Limiting any extension to existing properties to a maximum of 33% of their original floor space or their size in 1948, or justified through NP Policy 11; and
- (ii) Focusing new housing development on 1-2 bedroom accommodation.

NP Policy 3: New housing development will be limited to brown field or infill sites within the Village Envelopes. Potential sites for development include the Rentokil site and Freshford Mill. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of up to eleven new affordable housing units up to 2033 through a rural Housing Association, together with a limited amount of market housing to help cross subsidise these developments. Any housing development that exceeds this level of provision will need to be justified in terms of its positive benefits to the character of, and community benefit to, the villages.

NP Policy 4: All planning applicants will be required to complete a questionnaire confirming they have read and considered the Village Design Statement with an explanation of how their application conforms to it (see Appendix E1).

Environmental policies

NP Policy 5: All woodlands, as defined in Diagram B, shall be safeguarded and there should be no net loss of woods, trees and hedgerows overall.

NP Policy 6: Additional and replacement street and footpath lighting will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances, and will be time controlled, and planned to meet safety needs, whilst minimising light pollution.

Village greens and play parks policy

NP Policy 7: The two village greens, known as the Tynning and King George V Play Park, and the Freshford play park, are limited in size, are located in the heart of the community and are of particular importance to the community (see section 6). They shall be defined as Local Green Spaces and will be safeguarded from development other than in very special circumstances in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 77 of the NPPF.

Walking cycling and safer road policies

NP Policy 8: A 20 mph zone across both villages as set out on Diagram Z should be implemented and policed.

NP Policy 9: Key village gateways and pedestrian routes (see Diagram E), especially those to the community hub (see NP Policy 10) and village schools, are required to improve the safety, amenity and sustainability of the Neighbourhood. The need

for these to be safeguarded and enhanced shall be taken into account in the consideration of any development proposal.

Community facilities and assets policy

NP Policy 10: To recognise that the area that includes the Galleries community shop and Freshford Memorial Hall is, de facto, the centre or hub of the combined community. Development in this area, compatible with its role as a centre of community service provision, will be permitted.

NP Policy 11: In order to help safeguard important privately owned local community facilities, the assets identified in Tables 4-5) will be included on a List of Assets of Community Value (as provided in the Localism Act 2011). The list will be reviewed every five years. There will be a presumption in favour of safeguarding them from any adverse proposal which would result in their loss.

Business and technology policy

NP Policy 12: Home adaptations or extensions will be supported which are demonstrably required to provide additional home working capacity for local residents.

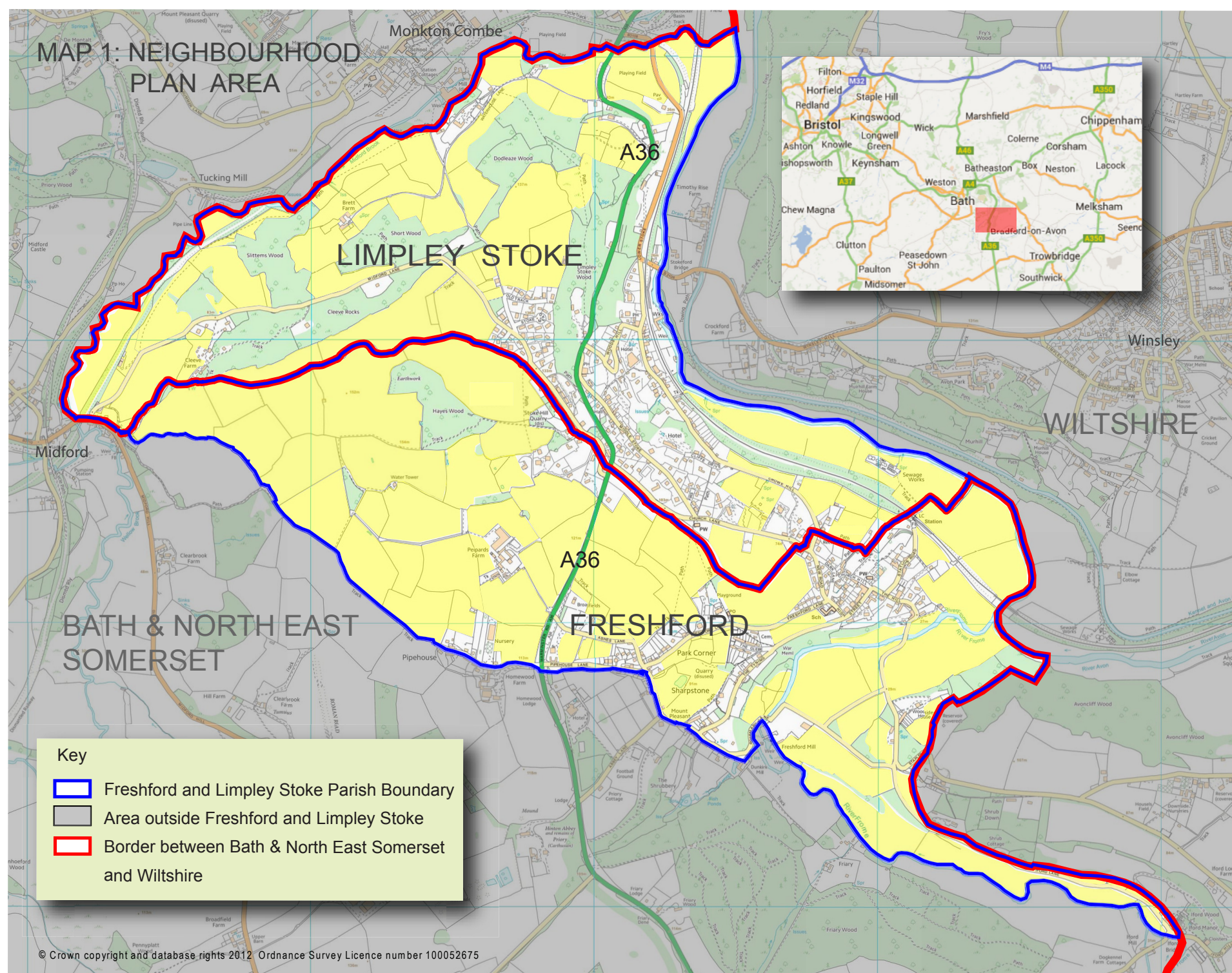


Neighbourhood Plan Glossary of Terms




Term	Definition
Adoption	The procedure by which a plan becomes formal council Policy
Affordable Housing	In respect to our Neighbourhood Plan, Affordable Housing would provide residents, or those who have an existing family or employment within the villages, with rental accommodation at a reasonable rate. Affordable housing is retained at an inexpensive price for future households.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	A formally assigned zone where planning control is based on the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area.
Brownfield Land	Land that has been previously developed on (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings and gardens). E.g. Freshford Mill.
Biodiversity	The degree of variation of life forms within a particular ecosystem. Biodiversity is the measure of the health of the eco system.
Community	A group of people who hold something in common. They could share a common place (e.g. individual neighbourhood), a common interest (e.g. interest in environment) a common identity (e.g. age) or common need (e.g. particular service focus)
Community facilities	Land and buildings used to help meet social needs, health and education needs for everyone in the community.
Community Right to Bid	Aims to give community groups the time to develop bids and raise money to buy public assets that come on the open market
Conservation area	An area selected under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest' the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
Core Strategy	A Development Plan Document which forms part of the Local Development Framework and sets out the vision and strategic policies for the county
Environmental Impact assessment	Evaluates the likely environmental impacts of any future development, together with an assessment of how these impacts could be reduced.
Flood Plain	An area prone to flooding
Front Runners	A mix of urban and rural communities, selected and sponsored by government, that are spearheading Neighbourhood Planning

Term	Definition
Green belt	A designated band of land around urban areas, designed to contain urban sprawl
Greenfield site	Land where there has been no previous development, often in agricultural use.
Habitat Regulation Assessment	Habitat Regulation Assessment assesses the impact of implementing a plan or policy on protected sites for nature conservation. This is to ensure that plans will not result in significant damage to protected wildlife sites.
Independent Examination	Assessment taken by a third party examiner, who is not part of the Local Authority to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan, meets the required conformity and legal requirements.
Infrastructure	Basic services necessary for development to take place for example roads, water, education, and health facilities.
Listed Building	Any building or structure which is included in the list of 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest.'
Local Plan	A document, which is produced by both B&NES and Wiltshire Councils in consultation with the community which sets out the strategic policies for the counties.
Local Referendum	A direct vote in which communities will be asked to either accept or reject a particular proposal/plan.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Sets out national planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. Provides a planning policy framework for Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans.
Neighbourhood Plan	A community led framework for guiding the future development and growth of an area. In our case a plan for Freshford and Limpley Stoke.
Parish Plan	Community led plans, which contain a wide range of community issues and aspirations.
Permitted Development	Certain minor building works that do not require a planning application.
Scoping report	This report identifies the sustainability issues within Freshford and Limpley Stokes' Neighbourhood Plan and sets objectives as to how these issues will be addressed.
Sustainability Appraisal	An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment or natural resources.
Village Envelope	A designated area where limited new development can occur
Village Green	This is a common open area within a settlement

MAP 1: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA



Key

-  Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Boundary
-  Area outside Freshford and Limpley Stoke
-  Border between Bath & North East Somerset and Wiltshire

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