

# Barlestone Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020 - 2039



Barlestone Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan logo designed by Nyah Linnett and Katie Chiswell

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# Foreword

In May 2017, Barlestone Parish Council was successful with its application to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council to become a Qualifying Body for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. The Designated area was the existing Parish Council boundary.

The Parish Council has produced the Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan with assistance from a Steering Committee including Parish Council members, community volunteers, and interested individuals in the community and with help from the Borough Council and other agencies.

The Neighbourhood Plan will form the basis for planning decisions applicable to Barlestone Parish, up to 2039, together with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which embrace the whole of the country and the Local Plan for Hinckley and Bosworth which covers the area controlled by the Borough Council. It is the Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority who will continue to determine planning applications but they will have to consider the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan when reaching their decision.

The Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan reflects community-wide comments, observations and concerns about its future, bringing them together with Census information, strategic and statistical evidence into a document that mirrors the community's overwhelming desire to make Barlestone an even better place to live, both now and for future generations. The Plan sets out a Vision with aspirations and planning policy aims to help shape future development in Barlestone. The policies aim to address key concerns raised by local people including protecting the character of the village and surrounding area. Some of the issues raised cannot be directly addressed by planning policies within the Neighbourhood Plan but are included as 'Community Actions' to support the Plan policies.

Community consultation events including Open Events have sat alongside membership of the Advisory Committee and several 'Focus Groups' and have enabled local people to be involved at a level to reflect their circumstances to contribute to identifying the changes that the local community wishes to see in Barlestone.

We are grateful to Officers at Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Borough Councillors and the wider community for their involvement in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Barlestone is an attractive and popular place in which to live and the contribution from people who care about their community and want to make it better for generations to come is greatly appreciated.

Cathie Watkins (Chair)  
Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

# Background and Context

## Introduction

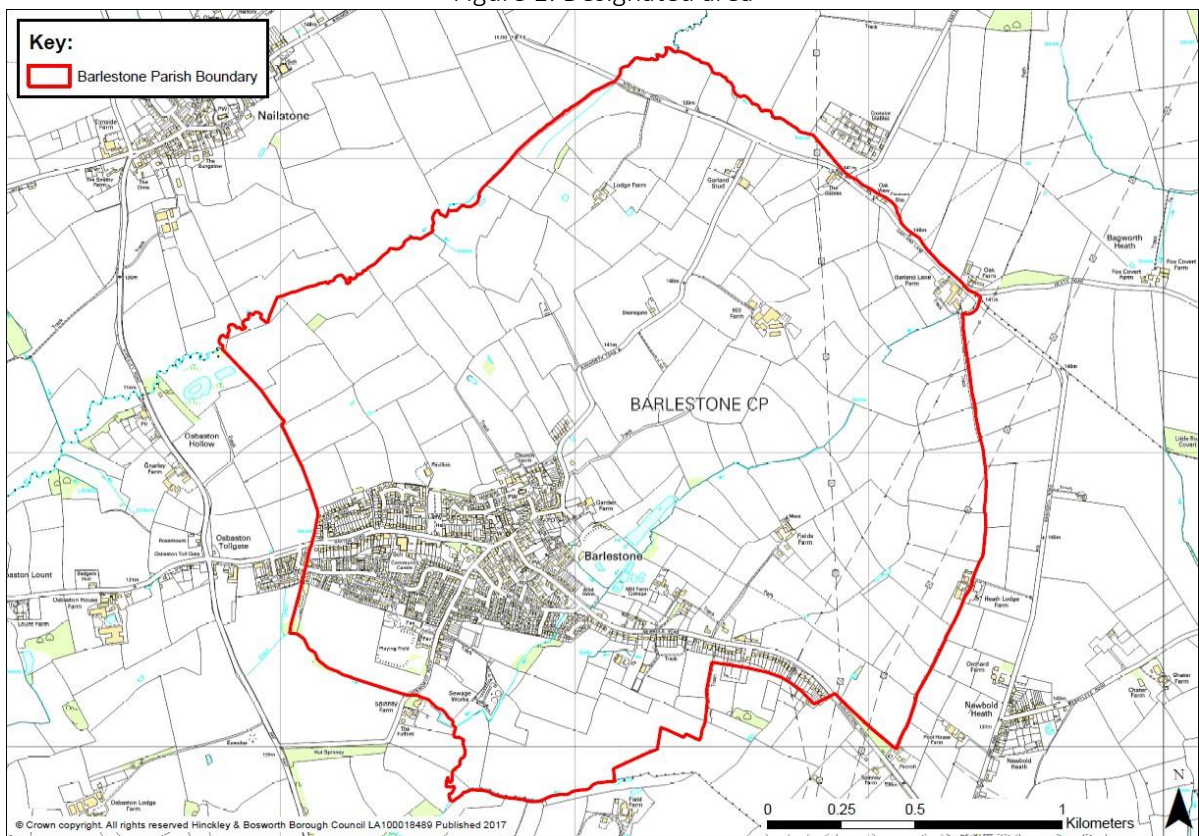
This Plan been prepared by the Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, which brings together members of the local community and Parish Councillors and has been led by the Parish Council.

A key part of the Government’s Localism agenda, a Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document that gives local people greater control and say over how their community develops, now and in the future. This includes, for example, where new homes and businesses etc. should be built; what new buildings and extensions should look like and which areas of land should be protected from development.

As the *Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011* states, “Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live”.

The Plan covers the whole of the Parish of Barlestone. It sets out a long-term approach for development and set out out clear development-related policies to realise this.

Figure 1: Designated area



In preparing a Neighbourhood Plan a community is not working from ‘a blank piece of paper’. Legislation requires that the Plan, and the policies it contains, must be prepared in a prescribed manner. In particular, the policies must be in general conformity with relevant national and borough- wide (i.e. Hinckley and Bosworth) approved strategic planning policies.

# How the Plan fits into the planning system

The right for communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans was established through the Localism Act 2011, which set out the general rules governing their preparation.

A Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area in which it is prepared. This statutory status means that it must be taken into account when considering planning decisions affecting that area.

One of the main rules governing the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan is that it must be in line with European regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations. It must also be in general conformity with national, county and district wide (i.e. Hinckley and Bosworth) planning policies. This means that it cannot be prepared in isolation. It will need to take into account, and generally work with, the grain of the borough-wide and national policies unless there are good reasons for not doing so.

Also important is the NPPF, this sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF requires the planning system (including Neighbourhood Plans) to encourage sustainable development and details three dimensions to that development:

- An economic dimension – they should contribute to economic development;
- A social dimension – they should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the right supply of housing and creating a high-quality built environment with accessible local services; and
- An environmental dimension – they should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Following consultation with the community and statutory stakeholders, the Plan will be submitted to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council for a validation check and further statutory consultation, before being considered by an Independent Examiner, who will check to see that it has been prepared in the prescribed manner. If the Plan successfully passes this stage, with any modifications, it will be put forward to referendum, where those on the electoral register in Barlestone Parish will be invited to vote on whether or not they support it. Over 50% of those voting must approve it for the Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan to become a 'Made' statutory planning document.

Whilst planning applications will still be determined by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, and in special circumstances Leicestershire County Council, the production of a Neighbourhood Plan will mean that they must have regard to the provisions of the Plan and the relevant locally formulated criteria when reaching planning decisions that affect Barlestone Parish. This means that the residents of the Parish will have a far greater control over what development takes place.

It should be noted, however, it is not at the 'Made' stage when the provisions of the Plan need to be taken into account when considering planning decisions by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and others. Once submitted to the Local Planning Authority, the draft Plan carries weight in the planning system. Legislation and guidance requires that the more advanced the preparation of the Plan the greater the 'weight' that may be given to its contents.

## The Neighbourhood Plan and what we want it to achieve

The Plan area encompasses the whole of the Parish of Barlestone and covers the period up to 2039, a time scale which deliberately mirrors that for the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan is not intended to replace or supersede the Borough-wide Local Plan, but rather it sits alongside it, to add additional or more detailed policies specific to Barlestone. Where the Local Plan contains policies that meet the needs and requirements of Barlestone they are not repeated here. Instead, the Plan focuses on those planning issues which consultation shows matter most to the community and to which it can add the greatest additional value.

These include policies that:

- Ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations;
- Encourage the right types of development that meet local needs;
- Protect important buildings and structures of historic and architectural interest;
- Protect important community facilities and shops;
- Promote high quality design in new development;
- Protect the countryside and special landscape;
- Protect open spaces that are important to the community and/or wildlife; and
- Seek ways of addressing the problems of traffic congestion.

Furthermore, these locally formulated policies will be specific to Barlestone Parish and reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

It is important to note that when using the Plan to form a view on a development proposal or a policy issue the whole document and the policies contained in it must be considered together.

While every effort has been made to make the main parts of this Plan easy to read and understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal, so that it complies with statutory requirements.

The Plan will be kept under review and may change over time in response to new and changing needs and requirements.

## How the Neighbourhood Plan supports sustainable development

According to the key national planning document – the NPPF - the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development. The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and to enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own social, economic and environmental needs.

The NPPF carries a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, environmental and economic, all of which are important and interrelated. In accordance with this, the Plan's aims and policies are centred on the achievement of sustainable development, including by, for example:

### **a) Social**

- To safeguard existing open space for the enjoyment of residents;
- To protect existing community facilities; and
- To deliver a mix of housing types, so that it can meet the needs of present and future generations.

### **b) Environmental**

- To ensure that housing development is of the right quantity and type in the right location, so that it does not harm but instead positively reflects the existing and historic character of the area;
- To protect important open spaces from development,
- To ensure that the design of development enhances the Parish's special character and identity;
- To protect and enhance biodiversity and important habitats; and
- To make provision for improved pedestrian and cycling facilities.

**c) Economic**

- To protect existing employment uses;
- To enable appropriate farm diversification;
- To support appropriate small-scale business development and expansion; and
- To encourage appropriate start-up businesses and home working.



# Barlestone Parish

## A Brief History of the Parish

The first written record of Barlestone's existence is in the Domesday Book compiled in 1086 where it is known as Berulveston. At that time it had an approximate population of 60 among 15 households with the land being split between two landowners, Hugh of Grentemaisnel and Robert de Buci. The village was surrounded by three open fields largely devoted to strip farming where each man's holding consisted of widely separated long narrow strips, the ridge and furrow patterns still being visible on some land today, and a large open heath.

Along with many rural locations, the fortunes of the people changed according to harvests and spread of disease and this continued for many centuries until the 16th century. In 1563 there were still only 16 households, only one more than in the Domesday Book almost 400 years earlier.

The Industrial Revolution changed how people lived and worked. The framework knitting industry was introduced into Leicestershire around 1640 and there are framework knitters recorded in Barlestone by 1700. Men, women, children and the elderly worked long hours in cramped conditions, usually working back to back in their own rooms. By 1844 there were 114 working frames in Barlestone. After 1850 mechanical power destroyed the domestic nature of knitting and it migrated to factories in the city and towns.

In the local developing mining areas, many framework knitters abandoned knitting to become colliery workers. Two collieries were established near Barlestone early in the 19th century, one at Ibstock and one at Bagworth. Nailstone colliery was sunk in 1863 which provided more local employment and by 1871 the numbers of colliery workers had significantly increased with many coming from other towns and villages. This led to a number of houses being built to house the mining families and some of these remain in the village today.

In the period between the two world wars large machinery was introduced into the mines making large scale production easier and the colliery communities grew. The village also supported many other tradesfolk such as grocers, bakers, tailors, dressmakers, milliners, butchers, etc.

With the advent of alternative sources of fuel such as oil, coal production was scaled back in the 1960s but this wasn't before the underlying mines had caused subsidence in many areas such as Newbold Road where many homes had to be evacuated and demolished. During this recession in the mining industry many young people turned to the more prosperous villages of Barwell and Earl Shilton to work in the boot and shoe industry. Several smaller factories also opened in Barlestone in the 1960s. Harvey Harvey & Co Ltd opened a boot and shoe closing room off Barton Road and this gave employment in the village through to its closure in 1999. Universal Textiles also opened a hosiery factory in 1964 but this also closed in 1999.

Over the last 60 years the village has seen much development, with two large estates being built by Jelson (the Manor Road estate) and Wimpey (the Meadow Road estate), the post-war 'prefab' houses being replaced and additional development in Westfields and more recently the development of Littlemill Close. Washpit Lane has also been developed with St Giles Close providing bungalows for senior citizens. Many of the older cottages have either been destroyed or are in the centre of a much larger village. Whilst improved facilities such as a custom-built doctor's surgery and landscaping of the brook area have improved the village, it is a commuter age and many people travel for work, shopping, leisure, etc. by car. This has resulted in the closure of many of the shops and local businesses and, although Barlestone now has a bigger population than ever, it has fewer shops than at any time in the past 200 years.

# Barlestone Today

Barlestone is a village and civil parish in the Hinckley and Bosworth district of Leicestershire (despite having Warwickshire post codes). The 2011 Census (see Appendix 1a) recorded a parish population of 2,481 spread among circa 1050 village-based properties and circa 25 rural based properties. Analysis of the Census suggests that between 2001 and 2011 the local area population grew marginally by 0.4% (10 people). During this period, the number of dwellings rose by 9% (89).

The area has a slightly higher share of working age people and lower proportion of older residents. However, there is evidence that the population is ageing with the share of residents aged 65 and over increasing from 11% of the total population in 2001 to 25% in 2011. The Census shows that the number of residents aged 65+ rose by 31% during this period. In line with national trends the local population is likely to get older as average life expectancy continues to rise.

The village centres on a small number of older properties mainly on New Street, Main Street, Bagworth Road, Church Road and Chapel Street. There are three churches, two public houses, a Co-operative store, an Indian restaurant, two hairdresser's salons, a shoe shop, a chip shop, a Chinese takeaway, an undertakers, a shoe shop and a car repair garage. There is also a thriving football club with their own premises which also has a bar and function rooms. The recently built Community Centre offers function rooms, changing rooms, etc. for a variety of activities. The village Church of England primary school provides education for 4 to 11-year olds, the village playgroup caters for 2 to 4-year olds.

Within the village there are numerous green spaces including a cemetery and two sports fields. There are three children's play equipment areas and an outdoor gym.

Large areas of the outlying parish are rural farmlands with a mix of arable and dairy farming activities.

At 75%, Barlestone's economic activity rate is higher than the borough (73%), regional (69%) and national (70%) rates. At the time of the 2011 Census the unemployment rate was low.

At the time of the 2011 Census, the average household size in the Barlestone Parish was 2.4 people which was in line with the national average but above the borough and region (2.3) rates. The average number of rooms per household stood at 5.7 which was lower than the borough (5.8) but above the regional (5.6) and England (5.4) rates.

Home ownership levels are high with around 77% of households owning their homes outright or with a mortgage or loan. This is in line with the borough but above regional (67%) and national (63%) rates. Around 10% of households live in private rented accommodation which is lower than the borough (11%), region (15%) and national (17%) rates. Some 11% of households live in social rented accommodation which was slightly above that of the borough (10%) but below regional (16%) and national (18%) rates.

Data from the 2011 Census shows that the majority (44%) of residential dwellings were semi-detached which is somewhat higher than the borough (38%), regional (35%) and national (31%) shares. Detached housing accounted for 33% of the housing stock against 37% for the borough, 32% for the region and 22% nationally. Terraced housing, flats and apartments provide 21% of accommodation spaces which is lower than the borough (25%), region (32%) and national (47%) shares.

Around a fifth (20%) of households live in homes with four or more bedrooms which is close to the borough (22%), regional (20%) and national (19%) averages.

There is evidence of under occupancy in the local area (having more bedrooms than the notional number recommended by the bedroom standard). Analysis of the 2011 Census shows that around 41% of all occupied households in Barlestone have two or more spare bedrooms and around 37% have one spare bedroom. Under occupancy is close to the borough score but higher than regional and national averages. Under occupancy in the local area is particularly evident in larger properties with around two fifths (41%) of households with 4 or more bedrooms

occupied by just one or two people.

Census data also suggests that older person households are more likely to under-occupy their dwellings. Data from the 2011 Census allows us to investigate this using the bedroom standard. In total, around 49% of pensioner households live in homes that have at least two more bedrooms than are technically required by the household) and is somewhat higher than the 39% non-pensioner household rate.

Overcrowding is not a significant issue in the local area; however, the Census shows that a small number of households with dependent children did not meet the standard bedroom occupancy rate.

In the Barlestone local area a low to mid-priced property costs on average £157,500\* which is somewhat higher than the national average. Assuming a 15% deposit, those entering the property market in the area would require a household income of £29,750\* (£26,444 E&W average) and savings of £26,275\*.

Prospective buyers would require an estimated £2,000\* for legal and moving costs and £23,625\* for a 15% deposit, £650\* for stamp duty coming to £26,275 in total which is a challenge for many entry level households.

\* as at 2020

# Community Engagement process

After the Parish Council took the decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan a process was set in motion to establish a Steering Committee to drive the process forward.

The Steering Committee met regularly throughout the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and helped to steer the process and to pull together the various activities that were being undertaken.

Further detail on all of the following consultation activities are available on the Neighbourhood Plan website: <http://www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/np/barlestone1.html>

In addition to the specific events described below, the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan was kept in the forefront of people's minds locally through numerous display board presences at village events such as the Fun Day, Garage Sales, School Fete, Fireworks Evening, Village Walks Events etc. A Facebook page was created in June 2017.

## Initial Open Events

An initial Open Event in November 2016 set out the context and stages of the project and gain support for development of a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Two further community Drop-In events took place in September 2017 which asked questions about people's thoughts about Barlestone. An analysis of the events is included in the evidence base. A total of 73 residents attended these events.



The views expressed by the residents were used to shape the strategy in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan for Barlestone.

## Stakeholder event

A workshop event took place in January 2018. Its purpose was to provide project stakeholders with some background and context to the Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan; to ensure local stakeholders understood the process and their role in helping to shape the Neighbourhood Plan; to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to feed in the issues and priorities they consider important to include/explore further within the Neighbourhood Planning process; to make stakeholders aware of future opportunities to engage in the plan making process and to contribute to the core evidence base and inform the ongoing consultation and engagement process required to produce the Neighbourhood Plan.



## Primary School mini-stakeholder event

A session took place with year 6 students at the Barlestone Church of England Primary school in June 2018. Its purpose was to provide the opportunity for local children to give their opinions on what they would like Barlestone to be like in 2036 and what they don't want Barlestone to be like in 2036 (2036 being the Local Plan date when this event took place).



The full reports from each of these events, including further details, can be accessed at <https://www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/np/community-engagement-reports.html>

## Focus Groups

As the Neighbourhood Plan progressed, residents signed up to become part of 'Focus Groups' to explore the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan, to build the evidence base and to lay the foundation for the draft Neighbourhood Plan. An environmental focus group was established, along with a group on housing and the built environment and a group looking at issues to do with employment, community facilities and transport.

The Focus Group work was launched with an event on 22 November 2018 (see image below) and the work continued into 2020 through a range of engagement processes such as fieldwork and group discussions. Evidence was gathered from statistical data, planning documents, historical records, fieldwork and consultation activities.



## Further Open Event

A further Open Event was planned for 26th March 2020 where it had been hoped to put the emerging policies to the community. This event had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. An Executive Summary of the Neighbourhood Plan was distributed to all households in the Parish to share its content and to advise them about the next steps.

## A vision for Barlestone

Our vision for Barlestone Parish is that by 2039 it will remain an attractive and sustainable place for people to live and work, while keeping its character as a rural village. In order to achieve this:

- The special open spaces and heritage assets of our parish will be protected,
- Housing developments will be sympathetic to the character of the village, will have minimal environmental impact and will cater for the full range of local housing needs,
- Community amenities will be both preserved and enhanced,
- Appropriate local employment opportunities will be made available, and
- Recreational activities promoted to enhance the well-being of Barlestone residents.

The Plan will be kept under review.

# Neighbourhood Plan Policies

## Housing and the Built Environment

### Introduction

Barlestone is a village with a strong sense of community which has experienced substantial housing growth in recent years. The parish is a popular place to live due to its quality services, school and its good road links with several employment sources, including Leicester and Hinckley. The demand for housing is strong across all tenures, as reflected in reasonably high property prices on a regional comparison and low vacancy rates.

A Housing Focus Group was launched following a very successful meeting in December 2018 when over sixty local people were consulted on the Neighbourhood Plan and many asked to become involved in preparing the Plan and deciding upon future policy priorities. The role of the Housing Focus Group was to consider the future housing provision that is required to meet the needs of the parish in a comprehensive fashion.

The NPPF, updated in 2019, provides the overarching framework for planning policy. One of the key areas it sets out to address is to increase the housing stock and in particular, the low supply of affordable housing. A key element of the Neighbourhood Plan is to prepare a Plan-led approach to future housing provision that meets local needs.

### What is the Leicestershire housing need?

The Leicester and Leicestershire Local Authorities including Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) commissioned a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) analysis from G L Hearn (part of the Capita group) to assess future housing needs, the scale of future economic growth and the quantity of land and floor-space required across Leicestershire between 2016 and 2036. The HEDNA report provides a major element of the evidence base for the preparation of statutory local development plans for individual local authorities, a non-statutory growth plan for Leicester and Leicestershire and a refresh of the LEP's strategic economic plan.

The HEDNA report was published in January 2017 and revealed an increase in housing need from earlier projections and this need has since increased further by local issues including the findings of the Leicester Housing Market Assessment (2017) which identified Leicester City as being unable to accommodate its own housing need requirement based upon the HEDNA figures. In addition, a reduction in housing delivery in the city meant a corresponding increase in the required housing delivery in the surrounding areas, of which HBBC and therefore Barlestone are included. The LEP signed a 'memorandum of understanding with the local authorities committing all the relevant local planning authorities to collectively delivering this housing need to 2036 through the local plan framework. The Local Plan end date has since been moved to 2039.

Neighbourhood Plans cannot promote fewer dwellings than the local planning authority require to be built. The NPPF 2019 requires that target housing numbers should take into account overall housing need and the population of the area, in effect, an objectively assessed need. HBBC have suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan bases its housing requirement on a proportionate share of the total HBBC population. Barlestone housed 2.3% of HBBC's total population using the Office of National Statistics Mid-Year Estimates for 2017.

The residential target in a Neighbourhood Plan can also incorporate a reasonable allowance for windfall development based upon an average of annual delivery performance and all planning approvals from 1st April 2017 onwards can count towards achieving the overall minimum target.



## What is the Barlestone housing need?

Information provided by the Borough Council indicates that the gross housing requirement for HBBC for 2020 – 2039 is 8,588 dwellings.

Based on an approach which apportions the overall borough housing need to Barlestone based on its share of population (2.3%) the housing requirement for Barlestone up to 2039 is 194 dwellings. There are two sites allocated in the Site Allocations DPD for a total of 148 dwellings.

- I. Garden Farm, ref Site Bar102. Approved for development of 99 dwellings.
- II. Spinney Drive, South of Brookside, Ref Bar127PP with capacity for 49 dwellings

This leaves a residual target of 46 dwellings.

When outstanding permissions are taken into account (18), the housing requirement for Barlestone is 28. However, the Borough Council recommend that some flexibility is built into the housing requirement and have recommended up to 10% is added onto the figure calculated through the standard methodology. This would add on up to a further 20 dwellings to the housing requirement for Barlestone, a total of 48.

The housing allocations identified in Policy H2 provide for a maximum of 57 dwellings over the Plan period.

## Delivering sustainable growth to meet housing need

In January 2019, the Borough and Parish Council commissioned the Midlands Rural Housing Trust (MRHT) to conduct a comprehensive housing need survey for the Parish. The report was published in April 2019 and allowed a recent and meaningful evidence base to be considered. The aim of the survey was to provide a projection of affordable and market housing need for both the immediate, current situation and a projection for the next five years, to inform the Parish Council's and HBBC's housing and planning strategies (full survey Appendix 2).

The survey had a statistically significant response and the key findings were;

- Immediate housing need – at least 16 open market homes, 9 affordable rented homes and 10 shared ownership homes to be provided to people with a local connection.
- Emerging projected housing need to 2025 – an additional supply of at least a further 13 dwellings across all tenures.

To meet this minimum housing target of 50 dwellings, it was agreed to undertake a call for residential development sites and to undertake a sustainable site assessment process to bring forward residential development sites of the right type and in the right location to meet locally identified need.

**POLICY H1: HOUSING PROVISION TO MEET IDENTIFIED NEED - New housing development will provide a minimum of 57 additional residential units in the Parish to be delivered by 2039.**



# Housing allocations to meet identified need

The aim of the Site Sustainability Assessment process was to agree the most sustainable locations as the sites to be allocated for future residential provision. An important consideration was that as the Parish is a very linear settlement, expansion should be predominantly to the north or south of the current built form. Further East to West growth extending the current built form was considered less suitable given the potential for increased traffic congestion and the threat of coalescence with nearby villages.

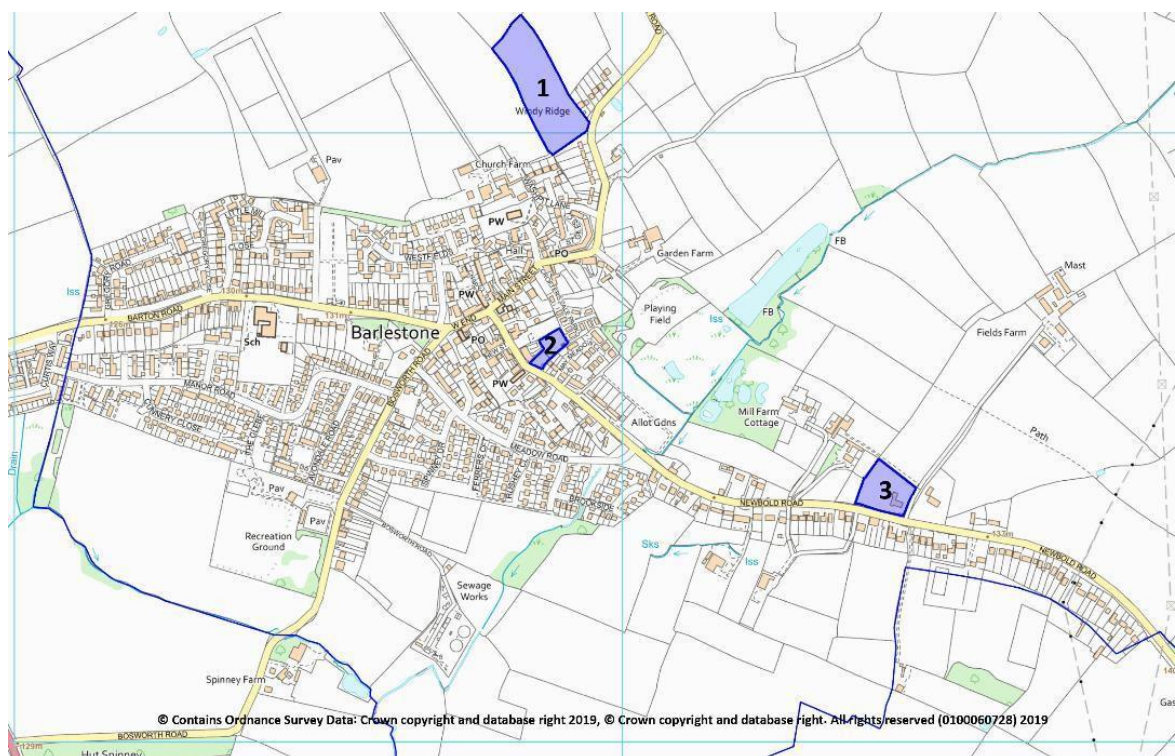
The HBBC call for sites and SHELAA evaluation report (of both housing and economic development sites) from Autumn 2019 was used as the base for this work and nine potential sites came forward. In addition, it was agreed to undertake a local call for residential sites. This resulted in a further five potential sites coming forward to provide a total of fourteen sites to be assessed. The process undertaken and outcome of the assessments is described in detail in Appendices 3a and 3b.

Following this comprehensive exercise, three residential development sites are allocated for development. Allocating these sites will provide a minimum of 57 residential units and provide a buffer against the minimum target of 50 dwellings

**POLICY H2: RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATIONS – the following sites are allocated for residential development (See figure 2) subject to meeting the requirements for housing mix specified in Policy H4; Affordable Housing in Policy H5 and Design in H6.**

- **Site 1.** Land is allocated for the site to the North of Bagworth Road for around forty units of residential accommodation, subject to linkages being provided between the development and existing housing to improve access to local facilities and amenities, via, where appropriate, footpaths and the creation of clear and safe entryways to the site.
- **Site 2.** Land is allocated at the site behind 11-19 Newbold Road for around six units of residential accommodation. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be utilised in the development proposals.
- **Site 3.** Land is allocated for the site at Newbold Road for around eleven units of residential accommodation. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be utilised in the development proposals.

Figure 2: Residential allocations



# Settlement Boundary

Historically, rural communities like Barlestone have been protected from inappropriate development by the designation of a village envelope (or settlement boundary) adopted in a statutory Local Plan. Outside of a Settlement Boundary, development is more carefully controlled (for example to provide affordable housing or for agricultural purposes).

The downside of such a policy can be that it restricts the residential growth required to meet local needs and this can lead to an increase in house prices, potentially making the Parish less affordable.

The community, through consultation, has expressed a clear desire to protect what is special locally for future generations; Barlestone's countryside setting is seen as being of particular importance.

The Local Plan review is considering the continued existence of settlement boundaries across the Borough. The Neighbourhood Plan has therefore taken the opportunity to formally designate a Settlement Boundary to help ensure that sufficient land to meet residential and commercial need is available in the right locations. The identified land uses will be supported by the current and proposed transport links and services infrastructure and will therefore only encroach into the local open countryside on a limited scale to help meet the projected housing need.

The plan has therefore designated a settlement boundary for the built form of the parish as shown below in figure 3. This updates and supersedes the existing settlement boundary used by HBBC as it takes into account recent housing consents and the site allocations proposed through the Neighbourhood Plan.

Within the defined Settlement Boundary an appropriate amount of suitably designed types of development in the right location is acceptable in principle, although some sites within the settlement boundary are protected from development and all development will be required to take into account the design and other policies within this Neighbourhood Plan.

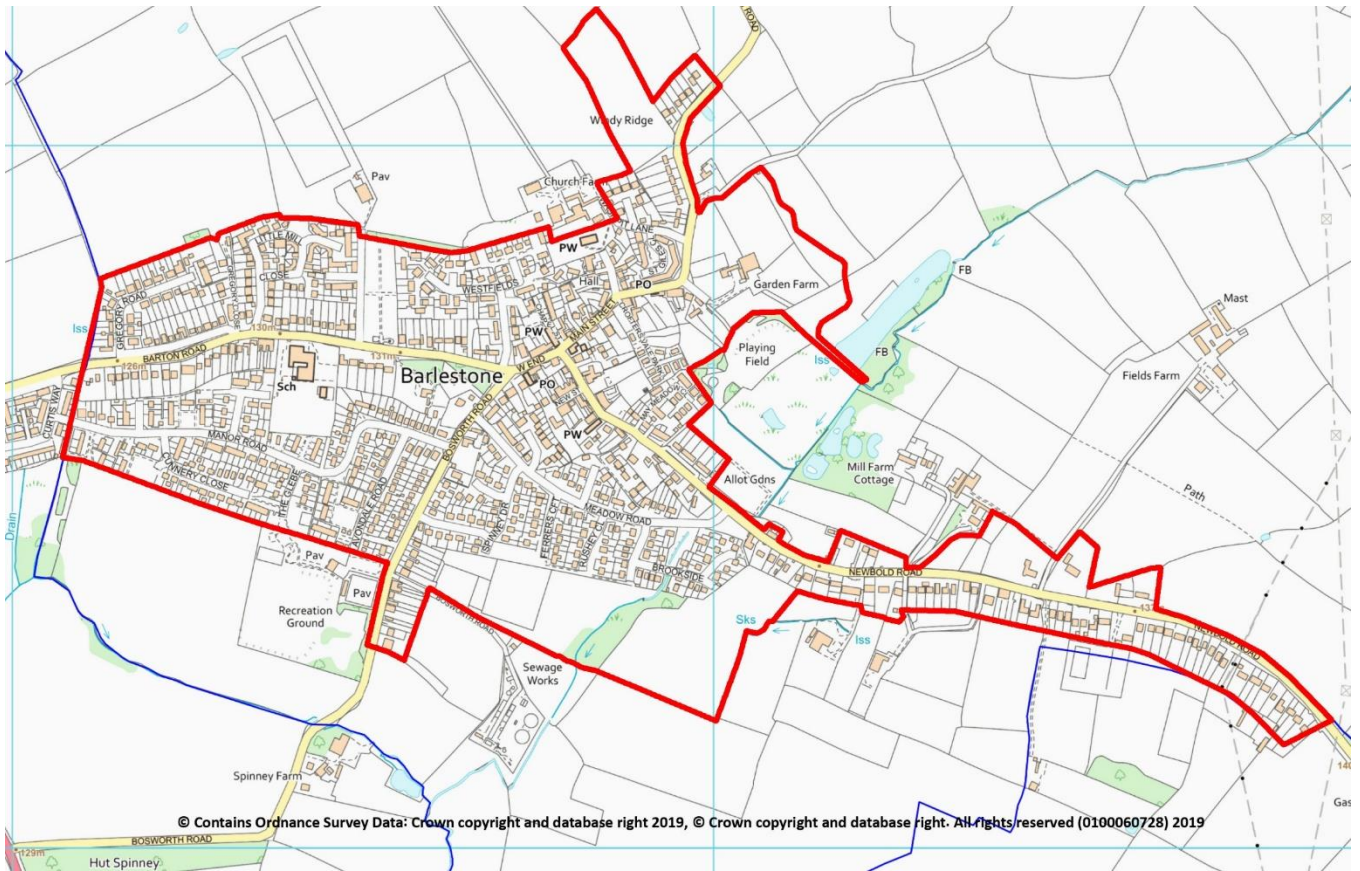
## Methodology

The following methodology has been applied:

- Existing employment uses or leisure uses on the edge of the village which are clearly detached from the main built up area are excluded;
- Clearly defined physical features such as walls, streams, fences, hedgerows and roads have been followed where possible;
- Residential gardens are generally within the boundary unless they relate more to a countryside setting;
- Allotments are generally outside the boundary;
- Open areas of countryside – agricultural land, meadows, paddocks, woodland and other greenfield land (with the exception of residential land) – have been excluded;
- Planning permissions that already exist for residential development on the fringes of the settlement are included; and
- Isolated or sporadic development that is detached from the main built-up form is excluded.

**POLICY H3: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY – Development proposals on sites within the Settlement Boundary will be supported where they respect the character of that area of Barlestone and comply with other Plan policies. Land outside the defined Settlement Boundary will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully controlled in line with local and national strategic planning policies.**

Figure 3: Settlement Boundary



## Windfall development

A windfall site is defined in the NPPF as one which has not been specifically identified as an allocation through the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan process. These sites normally comprise of previously developed land that unexpectedly becomes available. To help protect the amenity and character of the Parish beyond the three housing allocations described above, further residential development will be restricted to windfall sites wholly within the Settlement Boundary.

**POLICY H4: WINDFALL SITES - Small residential development proposals within the Settlement Boundary will be supported subject to proposals being well designed and meeting all Development Plan requirements and where such development:**

- Supports the delivery of the identified housing need for the Parish;
- Provides for a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site;
- Retains or enhances existing important natural boundaries such as trees, hedges and streams;
- Does not reduce garden or green space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area or on the amenity of neighbours and the existing and future occupiers of the dwelling(s)

## Housing Mix

The HEDNA report recommends the HBBC District-wide affordable housing mix as one bedroomed at 30 to 35% of future provision, two bedroomed at 35 to 40% of future provision, three bedroomed at 20 to 25% of future provision and four or more bedroomed at only 5 to 10% of future provision. There is an under representation of housing for single people with just 4% of dwellings having one bedroom against 6% for the borough, 8% for the region and 12% for England as a whole.



There is evidence of under occupancy suggesting a need for smaller homes of one to two bedrooms which would be suitable for residents needing to downsize, small families and those entering the housing market. Providing suitable accommodation for elderly residents will enable them to remain in the local community and release under-occupied larger properties onto the market which would be suitable for growing families.

There is evidence that the population is ageing with the share of residents aged 65 and over increasing from 11% of the total population in 2001 to 25% in 2011.

**Policy H5 HOUSING MIX - New development should provide for a mixture of housing types having regard to identified local housing needs. The provision of bungalows suitable for elderly people and dwellings of 2/3 bedrooms will be particularly supported.**

**The inclusion of four-bedroom or larger houses in housing developments will be supported where they are subservient in number to one, two and three-bedroom accommodation and where there is a proven housing need.**

## Affordable housing

An analysis of land registry data shows some interesting features (see Appendix 1b). Over the twenty- two-year period from 1995 to 2017, the property market in Barlestone has fluctuated from a minimum number of yearly transactions of 17 to a maximum number of 79. The mean annual transactions rate is 46 dwellings. Approximately 10% of these transactions have been new build units (99 out of 1007) and about 90% have been re-sold properties (908 units). There has been a slight upward trend in sale prices over this period but over the last five years prices have increased significantly on an annual basis. In the Barlestone local area a low to mid-priced property costs on average £157,500 which is somewhat higher than the national average.

Assuming a 15% deposit, prospective buyers would require a household income of £29,750 (against a £26,444 East Midlands average) and savings of £26,275. The savings figure comprises of an estimated £2,000 for legal and moving costs and £23,625 for a 15% deposit and £650 for stamp duty. Anecdotal evidence shows that very few people in the Parish have access to this level of resources and access to the owner-occupied sector is very limited. In addition, the rural housing premium, i.e. the higher price of rural compared with urban housing, for the Parish (set out in detail in Appendix 2) shows that it is approximately £55,000.

The private rented sector provides only short term lets with limited security of tenure and is also very expensive. An analysis of rental data for January 2020 shows a range of monthly rent between £750 and £925 for a three bedroomed (unfurnished) dwelling.

Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF (2019) as “*housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market*”. The definition refers to affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership, including shared ownership and equity loans.

The HBBC Core Strategy requires 40% Affordable Housing on sites of four dwellings or more in rural areas such as Barlestone.

Local consultation has demonstrated support for more affordable units to be provided across a range of tenures. Similarly, the local consultation activities support provision of starter homes so these will be supported to help achieve a balanced community. In line with the HEDNA report the NDP seeks a tenure split for the 40% of total site provision that is affordable housing as 80% social and affordable rented and 20% intermediate housing to be delivered.

**POLICY H6: AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION – Affordable housing will be provided on development sites as follows:**

- Affordable housing will consist of 40% of the site area for all development sites of 4 dwellings or more for developments of 10 or more dwellings;
- New affordable housing proposals will be expected to demonstrate how the proposal will meet the current and future housing needs of the parish as evidenced in the Parish Housing Needs Survey Report 2016 (Appendix 2) and the HBBC Housing Needs Study (2019) or any more recent document updating either of these reports. This is currently a tenure split of 75% social and affordable rented homes and 25% low cost starter homes or other home-ownership products and provide a balance of accommodation, including bungalows,

- which meets the needs of people of all ages, including older people;
- The affordable units should be integrated within the design and layout of a development such that they are externally indistinguishable from market housing on the same site;
- Wherever possible, new affordable housing shall in the first instance be made available to eligible households with a connection to the Parish.

## Design standards

Residential development in Barlestone reflects a wide range of architectural styles and approaches, with property of time-different tenure types. The community is concerned that further development should not adversely affect the environmentally important areas within the village that play an important part in the overall character and physical form of the village. The 'linear pattern' of the existing built form should be respected.

The Parish has developed over a fairly short period of time with certain periods showing an increase in construction activity, for example during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The aim of the design standards policy is to keep what is special whilst encouraging contemporary building and design.

Residents in the Plan area want their community to play its part in the sustainable development of the Borough. As noted in the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Authorities should, through their policies, contribute as fully as possible to the aims of Biodiversity 2020 DEFRA, 2011. New development in Barlestone should be designed to incorporate the current (at time of determination) best practice standards and methods for biodiversity protection and enhancement.

The removal of watercourses and ditches from development sites presents a risk for future growth and development in such that links to the natural water cycle can be removed resulting in a potential increase of on site and off site flood risk. The removal of these features would result in an increased need to connect surface water to the sewerage network.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be designed in accordance with current industry best practice. Good SuDS design can be key for creating a strong sense of place and pride in the community for where they live, work and visit, making the surface water management features as much a part of the development as the buildings and roads.

**POLICY H7: – DESIGN STANDARDS - Development proposals of one or more properties, replacement dwellings and extensions will be supported where they meet the following building design principles to a degree that is proportionate to the scale of the development:**

- a) Development should fit in with the character and historic context of nearby existing development within the village. Proposals should demonstrate how they meet the design features as described in the Character Assessment (Appendix 5) and incorporate local materials where possible. Contemporary and innovative materials and design will be supported where positive improvement can be demonstrated without detracting from the historic context. Care should be taken to ensure that the development does not disrupt the visual impact of the street scene or adversely affect any wider landscape views;
- b) Owing to the poor public transport and existing parking and congestion problems, sufficient off-road parking should be provided at a minimum of two car parking spaces per two bedroomed house, three parking spaces per three bedroomed house, four parking spaces per four bedroomed house and above. There should be adequate parking areas for residents and visitors within each development;
- c) Does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers by reason of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion or noise;
- d) Development should be enhanced by landscaping with existing trees, protecting existing trees and hedges whenever possible to promote biodiversity. Where watercourses (either man-made or natural), dry ditches, or other water drainage exists, these must be retained. Wherever possible, plots should be enclosed by native hedging, wooden fencing or walls in keeping with the local style;
- e) Development should incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques, to a minimum of the standards contained within the relevant Building Regulations in force at the time of development and proportionate to the scale of the development, to meet high standards for energy and water efficiency, including the use of renewable

and low carbon energy technology such as solar panels and rainwater harvesters; All applications for new development shall demonstrate that all surface water discharges have been carried out in accordance with the principles laid out within the drainage hierarchy, in such that a discharge to the public sewerage systems are avoided, where possible;

- f) Development should provide species friendly features, such as holes in fencing for hedgehog movements and bat boxes as required with roof and wall construction following technical best-practice recommendations for integral bird nest boxes and bat breeding and roosting sites;
- g) Development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems such as use of water butts, permeable surfaces and balancing ponds to retard surges and to minimise the vulnerability to flooding and poor drainage. All applications for new development shall demonstrate that all surface water discharges have been carried out in accordance with the principles laid out within the drainage hierarchy, in such that a discharge to the public sewerage systems are avoided, where possible. All major developments shall ensure that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off are put in place unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. All schemes for the inclusions of SuDS should demonstrate they have considered all four aspects of good SuDS design, Quantity, Quality, Amenity and Biodiversity, and the SuDS and development will fit into the existing landscape. The completed SuDS schemes should be accompanied by a maintenance schedule detailing maintenance boundaries, responsible parties and arrangements to ensure that the SuDS are maintained in perpetuity;
- h) Lighting design, location, type, lux levels and times of use should follow current best-practice, e.g. by applying the guidelines in *Guidance note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK: Bat Conservation Trust / Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2018*, as well as regulations; and
- i) Appropriate provisions for the storage of waste and recycling should be made.

## The Natural and Historic Environment

### Introduction

#### The environment in sustainable development

This part of the Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan deals with the environmental component of *sustainable development*, as described in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019, p.5. It balances the requirement for appropriate development in the Plan Area against the value of environmental features that are both *special* – appreciated by local people, both in their own right and as community assets – and *significant* – for their wildlife and history. It also deals with broader environmental issues of concern to the community, including protection and enhancement of local biodiversity.

Care was taken during preparation of the Plan to ensure that the policies (and the sites and areas of environmental significance covered by them) were not unduly restrictive on development during the Plan's lifetime. Less than 27% by area of all the open and currently undeveloped land in the parish is wholly or partly protected from potential environmentally damaging development, as follows:

Total area of the Neighbourhood Plan Area = c.410 ha

Area of all open or undeveloped land = c.360 ha

Total area designated or notified in this Plan for environmental protection = c.96 ha (27%)

#### Landscape, geology and setting

As noted in the description of H&BBC's Landscape Character Area B *Charnwood Fringe Settled Forest Hills*, the Plan Area is 'gently undulating with small plateaus on higher ground ... irregular field pattern, smaller round settlements ... hedgerows with scattered trees ... industrial heritage [but] now predominantly rural...'. Barlestone village is situated on a south-facing hillside overlooking the small valley of a tributary of the west Leicestershire River Sence; the higher ground to the north and east provides spacious vistas, including north-eastwards to Charnwood Forest and west into



the Midlands plain.

A narrow area of sandstone outcrops at the surface along the Plan Area's northwest boundary, while coal measures underlie the whole area, as shown by mines in adjacent parishes and historic subsidence in some parts of the village. But everywhere else the surface is composed of glacial deposits – mainly heavy, stony clay, although the village itself is located on a patch of gravel; this was part of the original settlers' reason for establishing their settlement here, thanks to dry ground and springs of fresh water rising from the gravel.

Figure 4.1: Geology of Barlestone

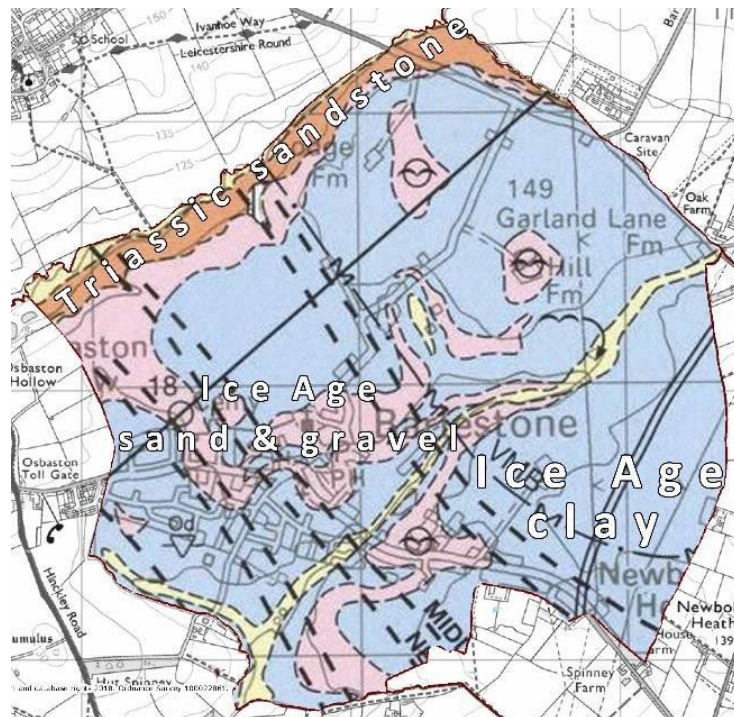
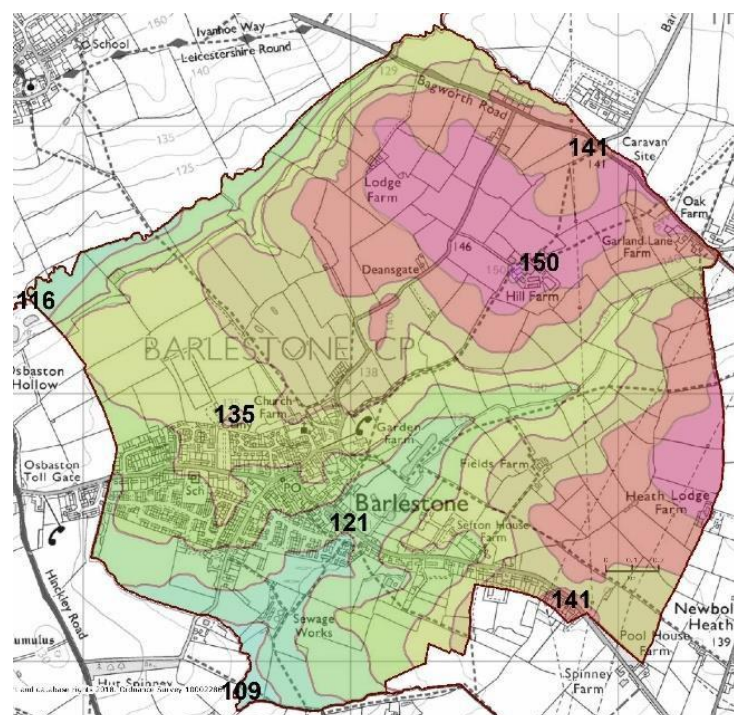


Figure 4.2: Topography of Barlestone



## Historic environment

The early history of the parish can be seen by the few remaining segments of “ridge & furrow” in the fields mainly adjacent to the current village, these being the remnants of the early strip farming used between the 11th to the 19th centuries. There was also a significant amount of heath land in the parish, but this has now all but disappeared.

The Industrial Revolution brought new employment opportunities in the form of framework knitting and coal mining with its associated expansion of the village itself. In the centre of the village, some of those cottages remain today. The coal mining industry also had a significant effect on the environment in the form of significant subsidence which altered the landscape especially to the east of the village centre towards Newbold Verdon.

The later development of housing on two main estates took farmland although a number of green spaces were incorporated as part of these developments which still give the village a semi-rural feel even in the housing estates.

As car ownership increased, this also had an impact on the village centre as many smaller businesses were lost. With the associated ease of travel to alternative places of employment and access to leisure facilities, many residents now both work and shop away from the village.

## Natural environment

The history of land use in the Plan Area – it has been more or less cleared or managed by its human inhabitants for at least 1500 years – means that all ‘natural’ environment is actually *semi-natural* (as classified by Natural England). This does not imply, however, an absence of wildlife, because animals and plants have adapted and evolved, even moved in, to occupy the landscape features created by human occupation and use. While Barlestone has no recorded nationally important wildlife sites it does have a significant number of local features and habitat areas whose ecological value makes a vital contribution to English biodiversity (see Policy ENV 3). They include watercourses and wetlands, woods, hedgerows, permanent grazing fields where a mix of grassland species still survives, gardens and churchyards, brownfield sites, arable field margins and other ‘re-wilded’ places.

## Existing environmental designations

Barlestone parish is located in National Character Area *NCA71 Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield*. It is also included in Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council’s Landscape Character Area *B Charnwood Fringe Settled Forest Hills*. There are four *Listed buildings* (Historic England) and 22 *Leicestershire Historic Environment Record* sites and features, of which three have visible expression in the landscape. In the natural environment, three areas of *priority habitat* (Natural England) have been mapped, while Leicestershire Environmental Records Centre has designated nine *Local Wildlife Sites* and records ten more from earlier surveys.





# Environmental Inventory

An Environmental Inventory (Appendices 6a and 6b; key map Appendix 7) of Barlestone parish was carried out between January and August 2019. The work comprised two elements:

- Review of all existing designations and available information, and
- Fieldwork to identify sites and features of natural and historical environment significance in the context of the Plan Area.

The review compiled information from many sources, including DEFRA, Natural England, Historic England, Leicestershire Historic Environment Records, Leicestershire Environmental Record Centre records (biodiversity and geology), Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council policies map, Environment Agency, British Geological Survey, old maps (Ordnance Survey, manuscript), British History Online, local history and archaeology publications, and local knowledge.

The fieldwork reviewed all open and currently undeveloped land in the Plan Area, and significant species, habitats, landscape characteristics, earthworks and other extant features were checked. These data, along with all relevant site-specific information from the existing information review, were mapped and tabulated, and each site was evaluated and scored (the criteria and scoring mechanism can be found in appendix 6c) using the seven eligibility criteria for Local Green Spaces in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2019*.

The maps contained within this section have been reduced to fit the document page size. Full size and higher resolution versions are available as supporting documents.

## Local Green Spaces

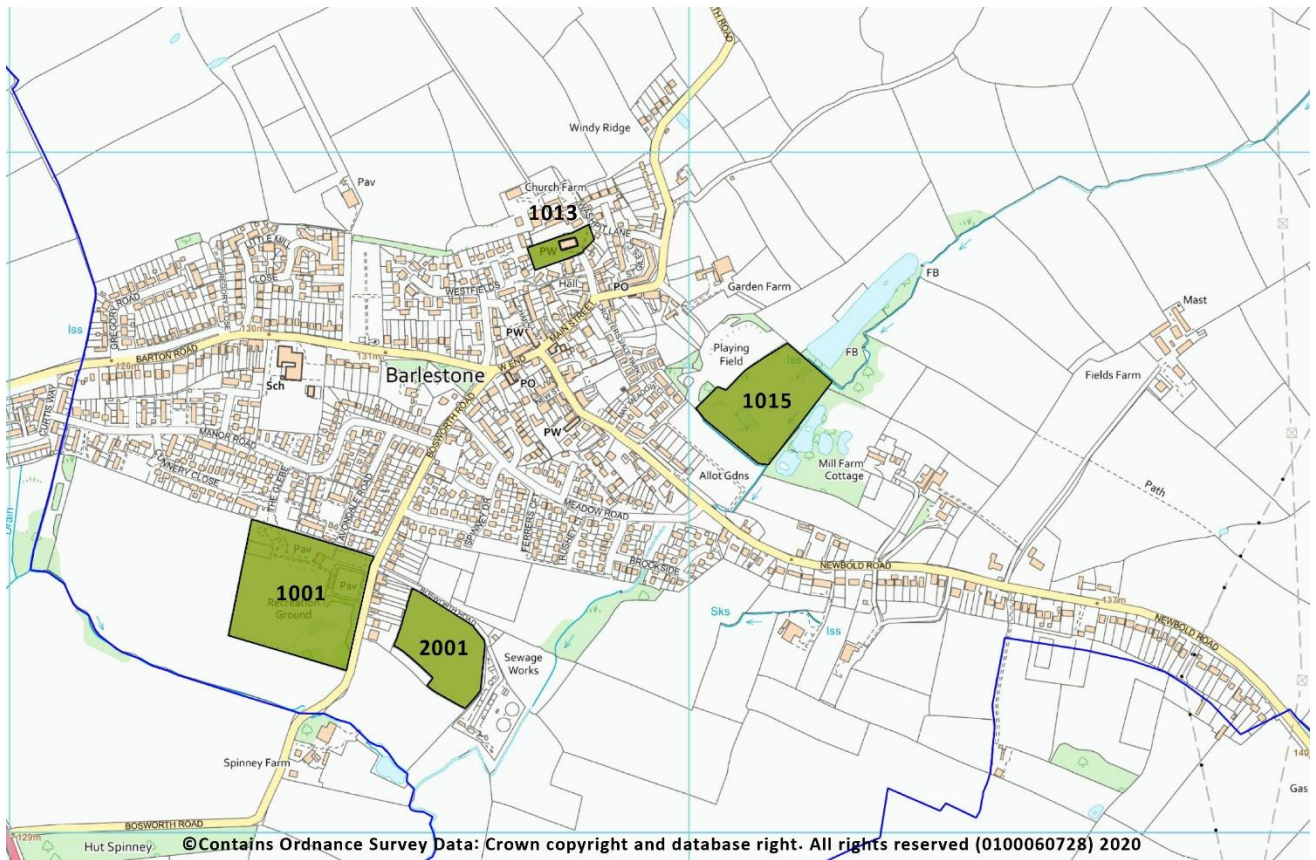
Of the 170 inventoried parcels of open or undeveloped land in the parish, 44 were identified as having environmental (natural, historical and/or cultural and community) features, as described below. All sites have been scored, using the seven criteria for Local Green Space designation noted in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2019* (see appendix 6c for the criteria and scoring system devised for this Plan). Four sites score or exceed 16 (the threshold selected to identify only the key sites in Barlestone) of the maximum possible (25) and meet the essential requirements for designation as Local Green Space as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 100). Their statutory protection will ensure that these most important places in the natural and human environment of Barlestone are protected for the benefit and appreciation of residents, visitors and future generations.

**POLICY ENV 1: PROTECTION OF LOCAL GREEN SPACE – Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, the following Local Green Spaces (figure 6; details Appendix 8) will not be allowed other than in very special circumstances.**

- St Giles churchyard (inventory reference 1013)
- The Boardwalk (inventory reference 1015)
- Bosworth Road Playing Fields (inventory reference 1001)
- Old Pasture (inventory reference 2001)



Figure 6: Local Green Spaces



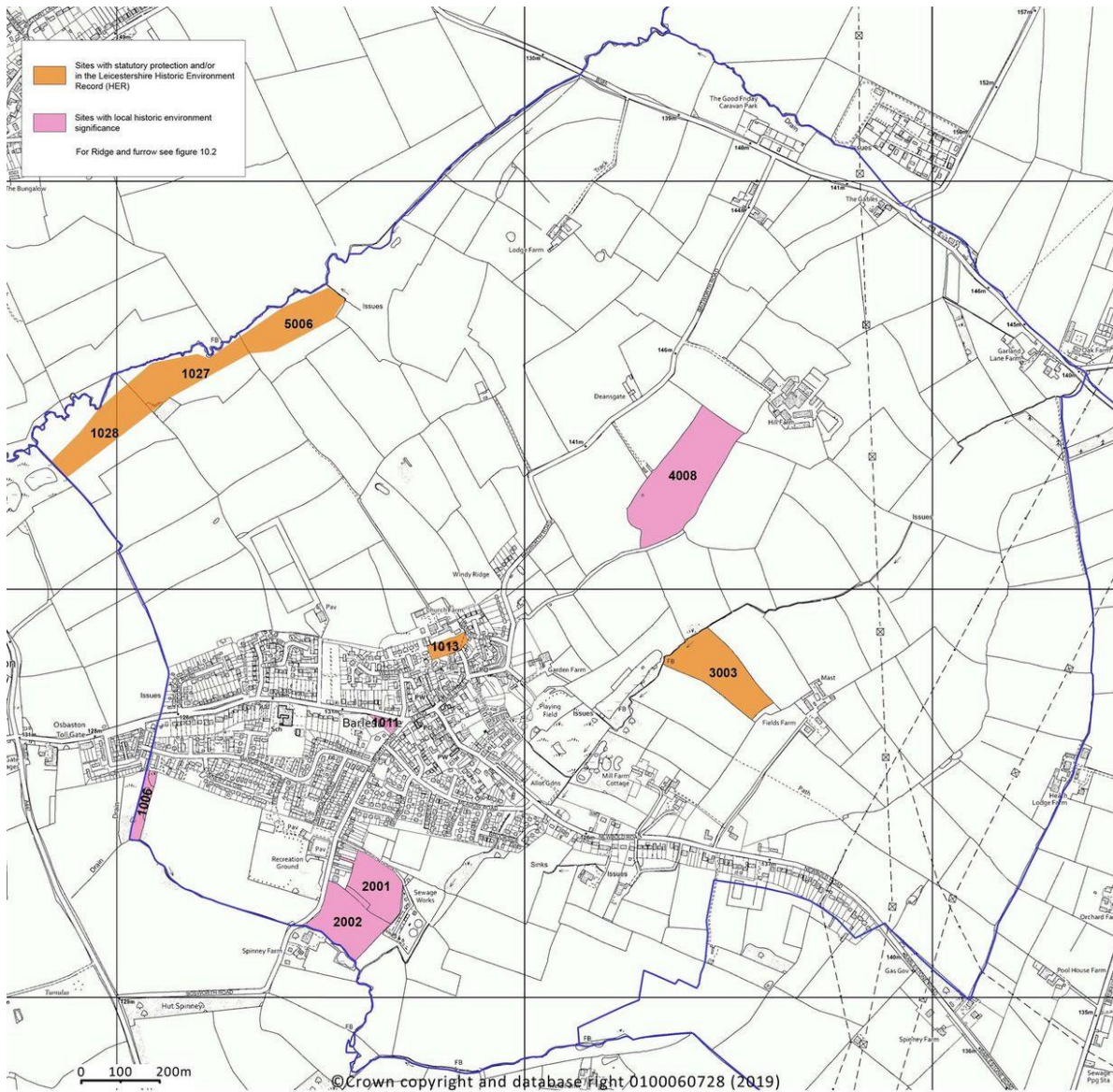
## Sites of environmental significance

A group of inventory sites scored highly for 'history' and/or 'wildlife', but - except when their community value scores are also high - they are not eligible for Local Green Space designation. The historical features, species and/or habitats which justify the identified sites' high scores and support their selection or designation are listed in the Environmental Inventory (Appendix 6). The maps (figures 7.1, 7.2) show their locations.

The historic environment sites comprise:

- sites with *extant and visible* archaeological or historical features recorded in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Records (HER) database;
- sites in the Leicestershire HER with proven buried archaeology; or
- other sites of historical and social significance identified in local records, during the inventory process, and through consultation.

Figure 7.1: Sites and features of historic environment significance



Policy ENV 2 applies the basic principles of sustainable development (NPPF 2019, page 5 and paragraph 11) to require planning decisions in the Plan Area to balance the environmental significance of features that would be destroyed or adversely affected against any local economic or societal value of a development proposal. It is also in conformity with NPPF paragraphs 184 and 197.

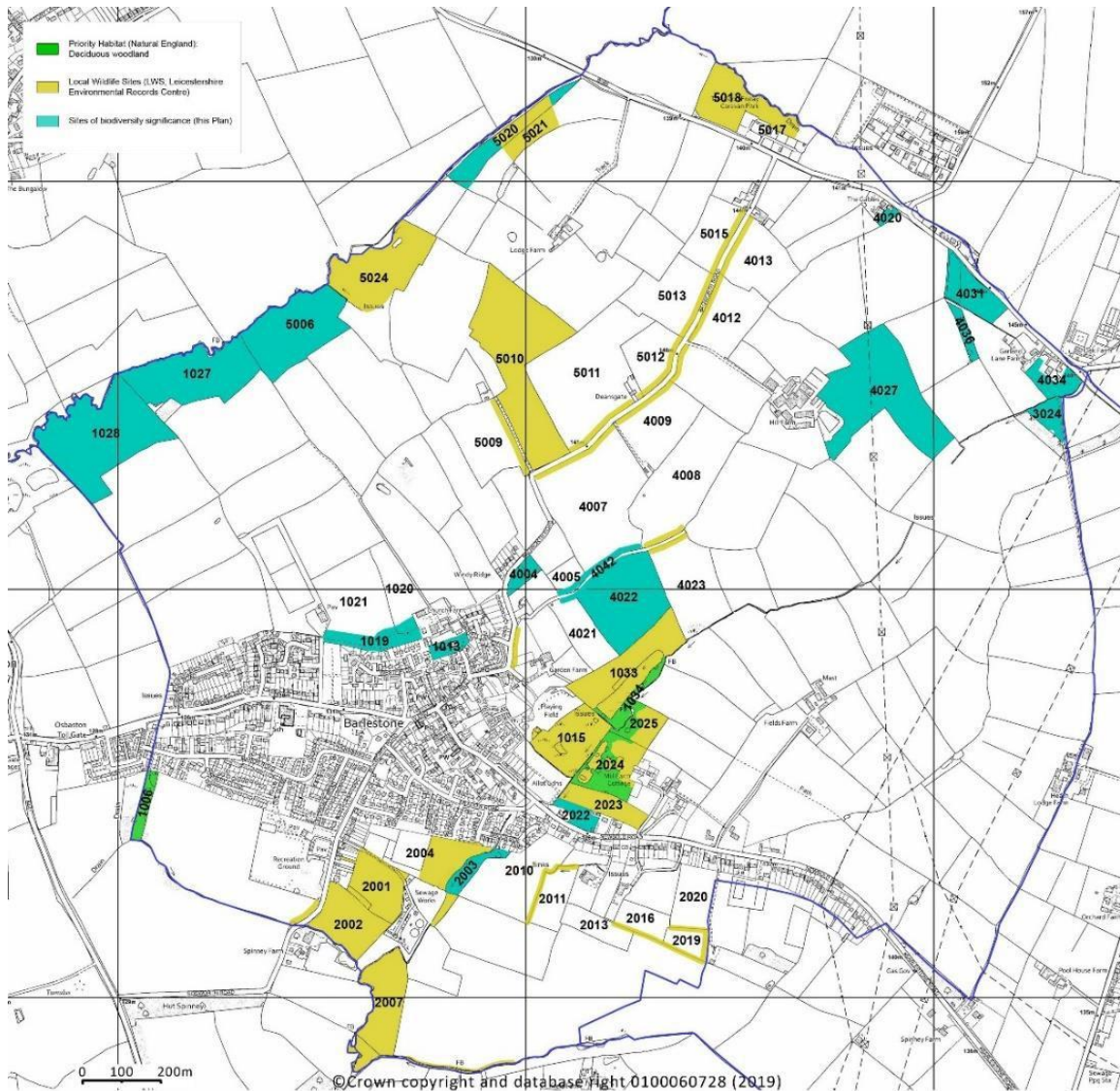
**POLICY ENV 2: PROTECTION OF SITES OF HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE – The sites listed and mapped (figure 7.1) have been identified as being of significance for their historical environment features (built heritage or archaeology). They are important in their own right and are locally valued. The historical and cultural significance of the sites and the features present on them should be balanced against the local benefit of any development that would affect or damage them.**

The natural environment sites comprise:

- those where *priority habitats* occur (Natural England mapping) or where *biodiversity action plan (BAP) species* have been recorded as breeding or as regular visitors;
- sites identified as ecologically significant by Leicestershire County Council or Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, including Local Wildlife Sites; or
- sites identified during the inventory process as being of high biodiversity significance in the context of the Plan Area.



Figure 7.2: Sites and features of natural environment significance



Policy ENV 3 applies the basic principles of sustainable development (NPPF 2019, page 5 and paragraph 11) to require planning decisions in the Plan Area to balance the environmental significance of features that would be destroyed or adversely affected against any local economic or societal value of a development proposal. It is also in conformity with the letter and spirit of NPPF paragraphs 170, 171, 174 and 175. The need to protect habitats and species throughout England is now widely acknowledged but will only be achieved if Planning decisions at the local level apply these NPPF Policies (and associated Guidelines) rigorously.

**POLICY ENV 3: PROTECTION OF SITES OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE – The sites listed and mapped (figure 7.1, 7.2) have been identified as being of significance for their natural environment features (habitats and species). They are important for biodiversity in their own right and are locally valued. To be supported, development proposals will be required to demonstrate that the development’s value outweighs the natural environment significance of the site or features.**

## Important Open Spaces

A group of sites scored highly in the inventory for their outstanding community value. They have been identified in fieldwork, community consultations and in Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and Barlestone Parish Council records.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (H&BBC) open space typologies, as listed in its *Open Space and Recreation Study Assessment Report 2016*, are:

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural green spaces
- Amenity greenspace
- Provision for children and teenagers
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Allotments
- Churchyards and cemeteries
- Green corridors

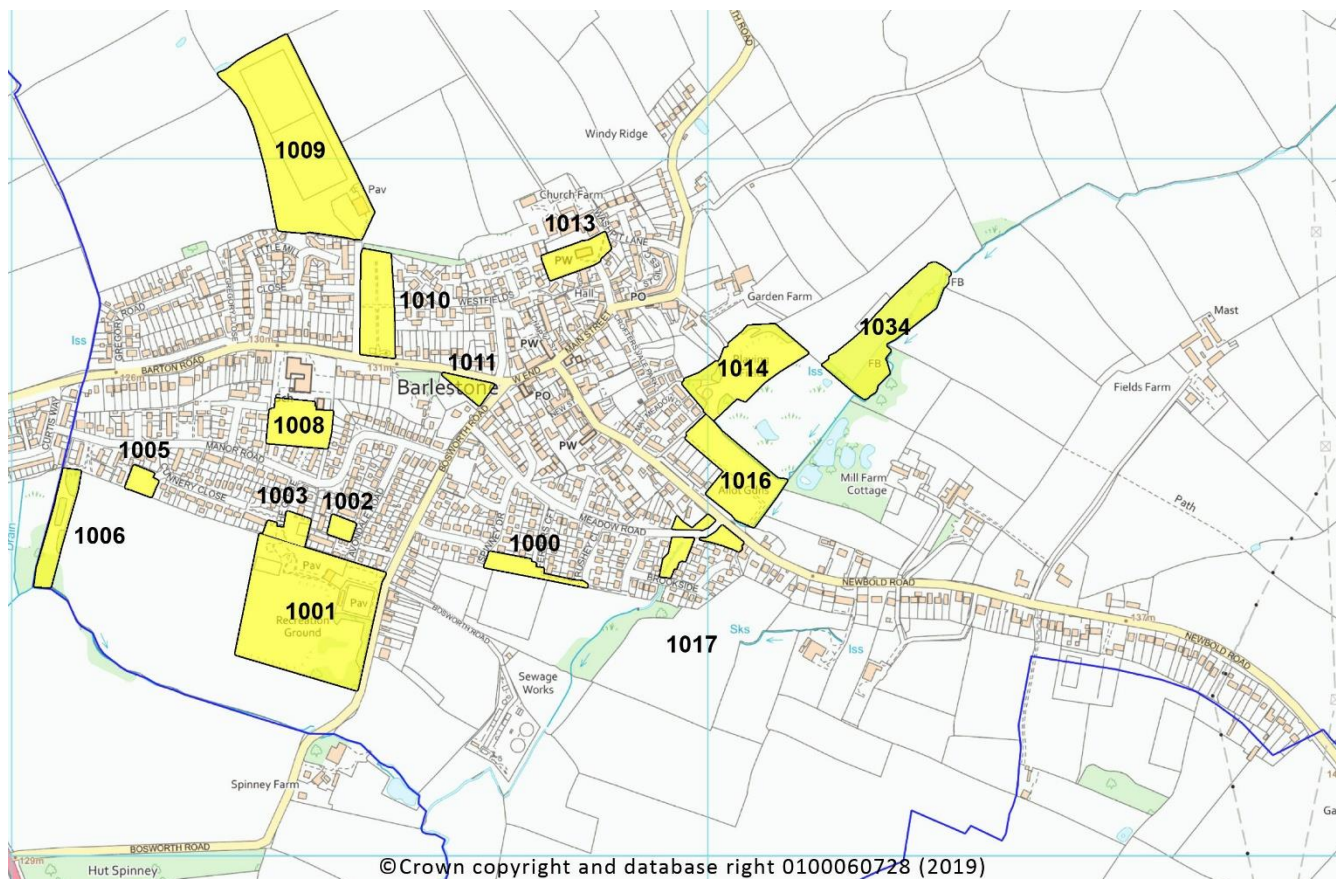
In Barlestone these sites' value as open space within and close to the built-up areas and/or their current, or potential, value, as community resources are recognised in this policy, which is in conformity with NPPF (2019) paragraphs 96 and 97, and with Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan (2009) policy DM8.

**POLICY ENV 4: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES** – The following open spaces in Barlestone (figure 8) are of high value for recreation, beauty, amenity, tranquillity or as green spaces within or close to the built-up area. Development proposals that result in their loss, or have a significant adverse effect on them, will not be supported unless the open space is replaced by equivalent or better provision in an equally suitable location, or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is no longer required by the community.

- St Giles Churchyard (also Local Green Space); inventory reference 1013; owned by Diocese of Leicester, maintained by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *churchyards & cemeteries* BARL12
- Bosworth Road Playing Fields (also Local Green Space); inventory reference 1001; owned by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *formal park, provision for children and teenagers; outdoor sports facilities* BARL10
- The Bullpiece; inventory reference 1006; Glebe Land owned by St Giles church rented by Barlestone PC; designated in this plan as natural and semi-natural green space
- May Meadow; inventory reference 1014; owned by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *amenity greenspace and outdoor sports facility* BARL16
- The Roundhouse Spinney and Mine Wheel; inventory reference 1011; part owned by Barlestone PC (spinney), part owned by Leicestershire CC Highways (wheel area), maintained by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *amenity greenspace* BARL11
- Barlestone Cemetery; inventory reference 1010; owned by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *churchyards & cemeteries* BARL06
- Barlestone allotments; inventory reference 1016; owned by H&BBC, maintained by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *allotments* BARL15
- St Giles Sports & Social Club Grounds; inventory reference 1009; owned by club members; H&BBC *outdoor sports facilities* BARL05; also (this plan) *provision for children and teenagers*
- Avondale Road/Kirkman Close amenity greenspace; inventory reference 1002; owned and maintained by Leicestershire CC Highways; H&BBC *amenity greenspace* BARL09
- The Glebe amenity greenspace and play area; inventory reference 1003; land owned by Jelson; play equipment owned by Barlestone PC; maintained by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *amenity greenspace, facilities for children and teenagers* BARL08
- Cunnery Close amenity greenspace; inventory reference 1005; owned by Jelson, maintained by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *amenity greenspace* BARL04
- Meadow Road amenity greenspace; inventory reference 1000; owned by Wimpey, maintained by Barlestone PC; H&BBC *amenity greenspace* BARL13

- Barlestone Primary School Grounds; inventory reference 1008; jointly owned by LCC and the Diocese of Leicester, maintained by LCC; H&BBC *outdoor sports facilities* BARL07
- The Brook and Barle Stone; inventory reference 1017; owned by Leicestershire CC Highways; H&BBC amenity greenspace BARL14
- Field 1034 (The Fishing Lakes); privately owned.

Figure 8: Important Open Spaces in Barlestone Parish



## Buildings and structures of local significance

### Listed Buildings

Four buildings and structures in the Plan Area have statutory protection through Listing at Grade II. The Neighbourhood Plan lists them for reference, as follows. Details Appendix 10:

The Manor House; List Entry Number: 1074116; Heritage Category: Listing; Grade: II; Location: 15 Bosworth Road, Barlestone

Church Farmhouse (now known as Mortimer House); List Entry Number: 1074073; Heritage Category: Listing; Grade II; Location: 11 Washpit Lane, Barlestone



The White House (now known as the Old Rectory); List Entry Number: 1361357; Heritage Category Listing; Grade II; Location: 1 Barton Road, Barlestone

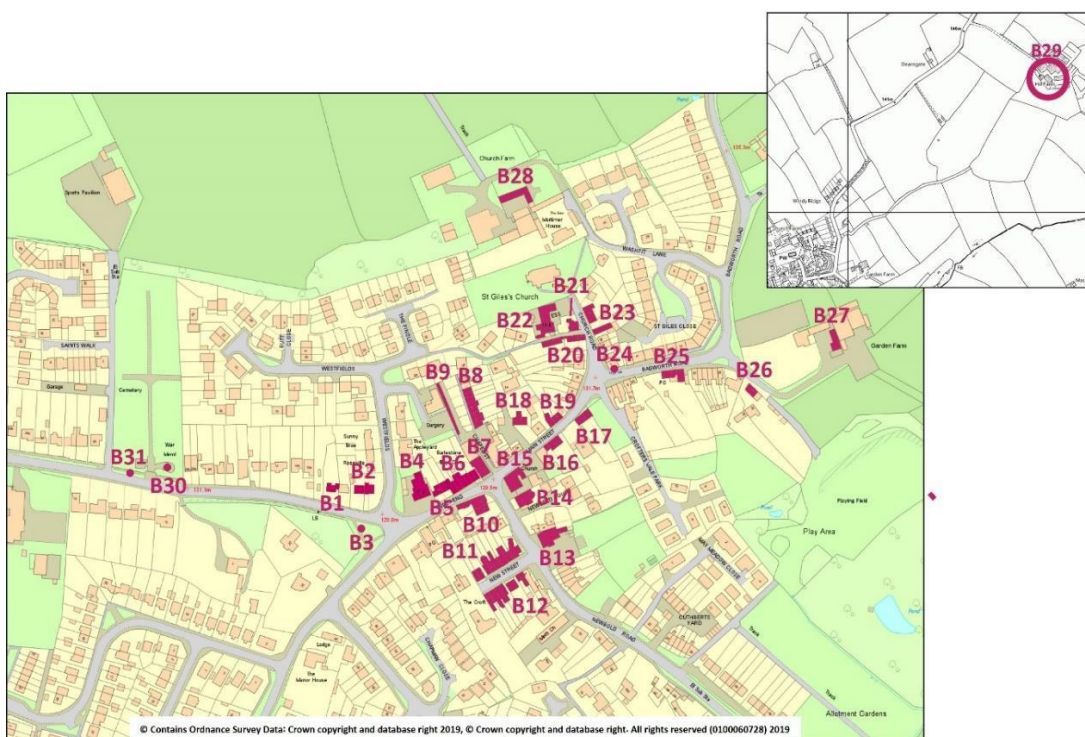
Church of St Giles; List Entry Number: 1361377; Heritage Category: Listing; Grade: II, Location: Church Road, Barlestone

The Neighbourhood Development Plan notes that proposed development is required to take into account the direct impact upon the significance of listed buildings and also the effects upon their setting. Their location within, or close to, sites designated or noted for protection in the Plan's Policies can contribute to evidence of their significance.

## Local Heritage Assets

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies other buildings and structures in the Neighbourhood Plan area that are considered to be of local significance for architectural, historical or social reasons (details in Appendix 9). The list has been compiled in collaboration with the H&BBC Conservation Officer. Inclusion in the Plan records them in order that any effects upon their significance arising from a development proposal are a material planning consideration.

Figure 9: Local Heritage Assets: buildings and structures of local significance



**POLICY ENV 5: BUILT ENVIRONMENT: LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS** – The structures and buildings listed here (and within figure 9) are important to the Parish and their features and settings will be protected wherever possible. The value of a development proposal, or of a change of use requiring planning approval, will need to be weighed against their significance as heritage assets.



B1 Spring Cottage, 10 Barton Road  
 B2 Terrace, nos. 2-6 Barton Road  
 B3 Mine wheel, The Roundhouse  
 B4 The Three Tuns Inn, West End  
 B5 Pair of cottages, nos. 12 and 14 West End  
 B6 Terrace. Nos. 2 to 10 West End  
 B7 Barlestone Baptist Church, West End MLE16738  
 B8 Row of cottages, nos. 25 to 35 Chapel Street  
 B9 Outbuildings, Chapel Street  
 B10 Old Whiteheads Farmhouse, nos. 2 and 4 Newbold Road  
 B11 Terrace, nos. 1 to 8 New Street  
 B12 Corner terrace, nos. 11-16 New Street and 8 Newbold Road  
 B13 The Red Lion public house, Newbold Road  
 B14 Victoria House, 1 Newbold Road  
 B15 Elohim Christian Church, 2 Main Street  
 B16 Archway Cottage, 10 Main Street  
 B17 Old Rose Cottage, 16 Main Street  
 B18 No. 5 Main Street  
 B19 Row of cottages, nos. 11 and 13 Main Street  
 B20 Two terraced rows, nos. 1-4 Church Terrace  
 B21 Old Schoolmaster's House, 5 Church Road  
 B22 Old School Hall, Church Road  
 B23 Nos. 2c and 4 Church Road  
 B24 K6 telephone kiosk, Bagworth Road  
 B25 Nos. 16 and 18 Bagworth Road  
 B26 No. 33 Bagworth Road  
 B27 Garden Farm, Bagworth Road  
 B28 Church Farm, Washpit Lane  
 B29 MLE24164 Hill Farm, Bagworth Road  
 B30 MLE20760 War memorial, Memorial Garden, Barlestone cemetery  
 B31 MLE23178 'Circle of Time' sculpture, Memorial Garden, Barlestone Cemetery

## Ridge and Furrow

From the time of its establishment as a village in the late 'dark ages' through the medieval period Barlestone was farmed using the open field system. The arable crops were rotated on a three- or four- year cycle, while the rest of the productive land was set aside as permanent meadow and woodland. Ploughing was by teams of oxen; ploughs were of the non-reversible type, meaning that as the teams progressed up and down the furlongs the earth was always thrown to the plough's right, creating strong ridges and deep furrows. As in most parishes in the English Midlands, farming continued in Barlestone in this way until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when agricultural improvement led to the enclosure of the open fields and their conversion to grazing land. The ridges and furrows of the old ploughlands were 'fossilised' under the new grass fields; many survived in this way into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when a new agricultural revolution led to a return to arable farming, but this time on an industrial scale. Hedges were grubbed out and deep ploughing destroyed most of the surviving ridge and furrow; across most of the Midlands there has been a loss of (typically) 90% since the 1940s.

In English legislation ridge and furrow fields (except for the few that are Scheduled Monuments) are not statutorily protected, despite recognition that *"as the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international importance"* (English Heritage, 2001).

The *Turning the Plough* (2009) survey was a baseline for a new survey, undertaken as part of the inventory for this Plan in 2019. The summary results (see supporting information) show the decline since 2009 and compare it with that since 1947; despite the rediscovery of four ridge and furrow areas not recorded in 2009 the situation is now critical:

Open farmland in the Plan Area = 360 ha

1947 = 78+ fields; c.300 ha (83% of the open land)

2009 = 19 fields; 25 ha

2019 = 12 fields; 20 ha, of which 17 ha is well-preserved = *95% loss by area since 1947*.

NB four areas of ridge and furrow not recorded in 2009 have been rediscovered during the 2019 fieldwork. Seven or eight areas of ridge and furrow have been destroyed since 2009.

While the twelve individual fields of surviving ridge and furrow in Barlestone are not claimed to be of international importance, their rarity in the Plan Area and across the Midlands means that any further, avoidable loss would be irreversibly detrimental. Historic England strongly recommends treating all surviving ridge and furrow as (non-designated) *heritage assets*, and this is the approach taken in this Plan.

**POLICY ENV 6: RIDGE AND FURROW - The areas of ridge and furrow earthworks mapped in figure 10.2 are recorded here as non-designated heritage assets. Any loss or damage arising from a development proposal (or a change of land use requiring planning permission) is to be avoided; the benefits of such development must be balanced against the significance of the ridge and furrow features as heritage assets.**

Figure 10.1 Ridge and furrow in c.1947 as reconstructed by R F Hartley (LCC) (left); ridge and furrow in 2009 *Turning the Plough update assessment* (Historic England/LCC 2012) (right).

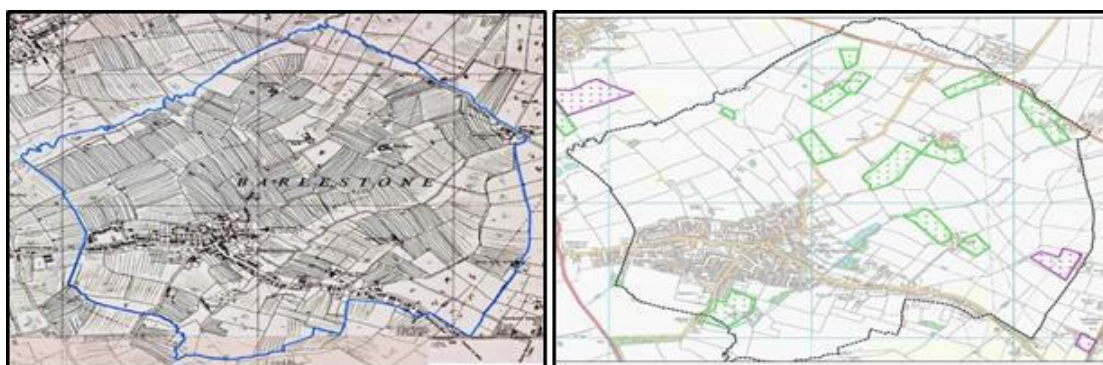


Figure 10.2: Surviving ridge and furrow in 2019



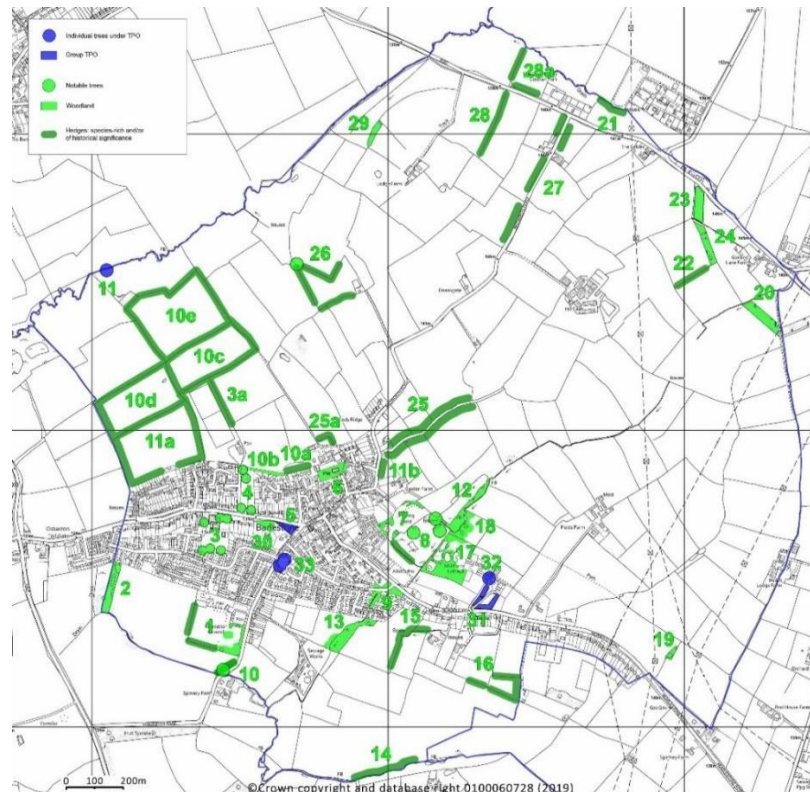
## Notable trees, woodland and hedges

By comparison with other northwest Leicestershire villages, Barlestone is a green settlement, with a number of trees of historical, arboricultural, landscape and ecological value – a key reason, as given in consultation for the Plan, for why Barlestone’s residents enjoy living here. In addition, hedgerows and standard trees within them are significant for the rural landscape and ecologically: fieldwork for this Plan combined with Local Wildlife Site (LWS) designations by Leicestershire County Council has identified the most important. Conversely, Barlestone’s agricultural history means that no significant woodlands survive in the open countryside and that the few small copses and recent new plantings that do exist have particular biodiversity and landscape value in the context of the Plan Area.

Trees, whether single specimens or grouped in woodland or hedgerows, are living organisms, so they do not live for ever; when located in areas where the public has access, they require arboricultural management to prolong their lives and for safety reasons. In other locations, there are strong ecological reasons for ‘allowing nature to take its course’ because of the recognised high biodiversity value of mixed-age woodland and standing dead trees. This policy deals with the protection of notable trees, woodland and hedges within the limits of the planning system. The principles of *mitigation hierarchy* (NPPF 2019 paragraph 175a) and *biodiversity net gain* (Planning Practice Guidance paragraphs 020-028, 21-7-19) should be taken into consideration when development proposals are determined. The Bagworth to Market Bosworth Multifunctional Corridor, the green infrastructure corridor, spans the Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan area.

**POLICY ENV 7: NOTABLE TREES, WOODLAND AND HEDGEROWS** – The notable trees, woodland and hedgerows mapped here (figure 11) have been identified (in addition to the four Tree Preservation Order subjects in the Plan area) as having high arboricultural, historical, ecological and/or landscape value (details in Appendix 11). Any proposals for new development should seek to incorporate existing trees and hedgerows. Any proposals which result in the loss of trees and hedgerow should be accompanied by an Arboricultural Survey to assess the quality of the tree and or hedgerow. Where removal is required replacement planting will be required elsewhere on the site. The principles of mitigation and biodiversity net gain should be applied where loss is unavoidable, in line with NPPF para 32.

Figure 11: Notable trees, woodland and hedgerows (See appendix 11 for details)



## Biodiversity and habitat connectivity

Protection of habitats and species in the planning system is an obligation under European directives (e.g. Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) and the English legislation derived from them (e.g. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with later amendments). An individual planning decision affecting one parcel of wildlife habitat in Barlestone might feel too small to have an effect on biodiversity more widely, but English biodiversity consists only of the sum of all such individual places; destruction of any one reduces English biodiversity – irreversibly – by that amount. The cumulative effect of this approach, allowing development to destroy local habitat sites, has played a significant part in the observed 70% decline of much of England’s wildlife over the past several decades. The people of Barlestone want to play their part in discouraging this unhelpful approach to Planning. In so doing they are explicitly supported by a number of paragraphs in the National Planning Policy Framework as well as by thoughtful interpretation of the NPPF’s definition of *sustainable development*. As noted in the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Authorities should, through their policies, contribute as fully as possible to the aims of *Biodiversity 2020* (DEFRA, 2011).

As described in *Landscape, geology and setting* above, Barlestone is located in an area with a very long history of farming. Productive arable and pastoral agriculture means that any ‘wild’ land, even the watercourses, was cleared or managed at least 1500 years ago and that today’s wildlife – plants and animals - has adapted and evolved to survive in semi-natural niches and habitats and in the places where people also live and work. These include:

- Watercourses, wetlands and ponds



- Areas of less intensively managed open land, including field margins and corners
- Permanent grass (grazing fields, paddocks, roadside verges) under low-intensity (unploughed, no artificial fertilizers or herbicides) management in which a 'semi-natural' mix of grass species and flowering plants survives
- Planted, managed and semi-natural (regrowth) woodland; generally small and isolated (coverts, spinneys, community woodland, and ornamental or commercial plantations)
- Species-rich hedgerows: a few on ancient boundaries, many of 18<sup>th</sup> century date ('Enclosure hedges') and some modern plantings
- Gardens, cemeteries, allotments
- Farmyards, traditional and historic buildings

Although attractive and productive, the rest of the landscape is inevitably of relatively low biodiversity value, and the pockets of good habitat are small and distant from one another. This has two effects. It raises the relative importance, in the context of the Plan Area, of the few remaining sites of local biodiversity importance – whether semi-natural or artificial – to high / irreplaceable; and it means that *species connectivity*, by which populations of animals and plants are able to interact, feed and reproduce, is disrupted.

## Wildlife Corridors

While Policy ENV 3 deals with the protection of identified parcels of land of high biodiversity value, this policy (ENV 8) covers the general principle of biodiversity protection through the Planning system. It also identifies two wildlife corridors (figure 12), incorporating some of the best biodiversity sites in the parish and passing close to or through the village. These wildlife corridors will provide *habitat connectivity* to enable wildlife populations to move between the otherwise isolated surviving places for living, breeding, foraging and feeding, and (because of their proximity to the village) give opportunities for local people to enjoy the benefits of appreciation of the natural world.



Plan Area are under consideration. The following policy deals with the three factors on which bat conservation relies:

- Provision of roosting opportunities
- Availability of foraging and commuting habitat (including connectivity)
- Appropriate management and protection of existing roosts and areas
- Appropriate artificial lighting

Sources: Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Records Centre *Guidance Note*; Institute of Lighting Practitioners/Bat Conservation Trust *Guidance Note 8 Bats and artificial lighting*.

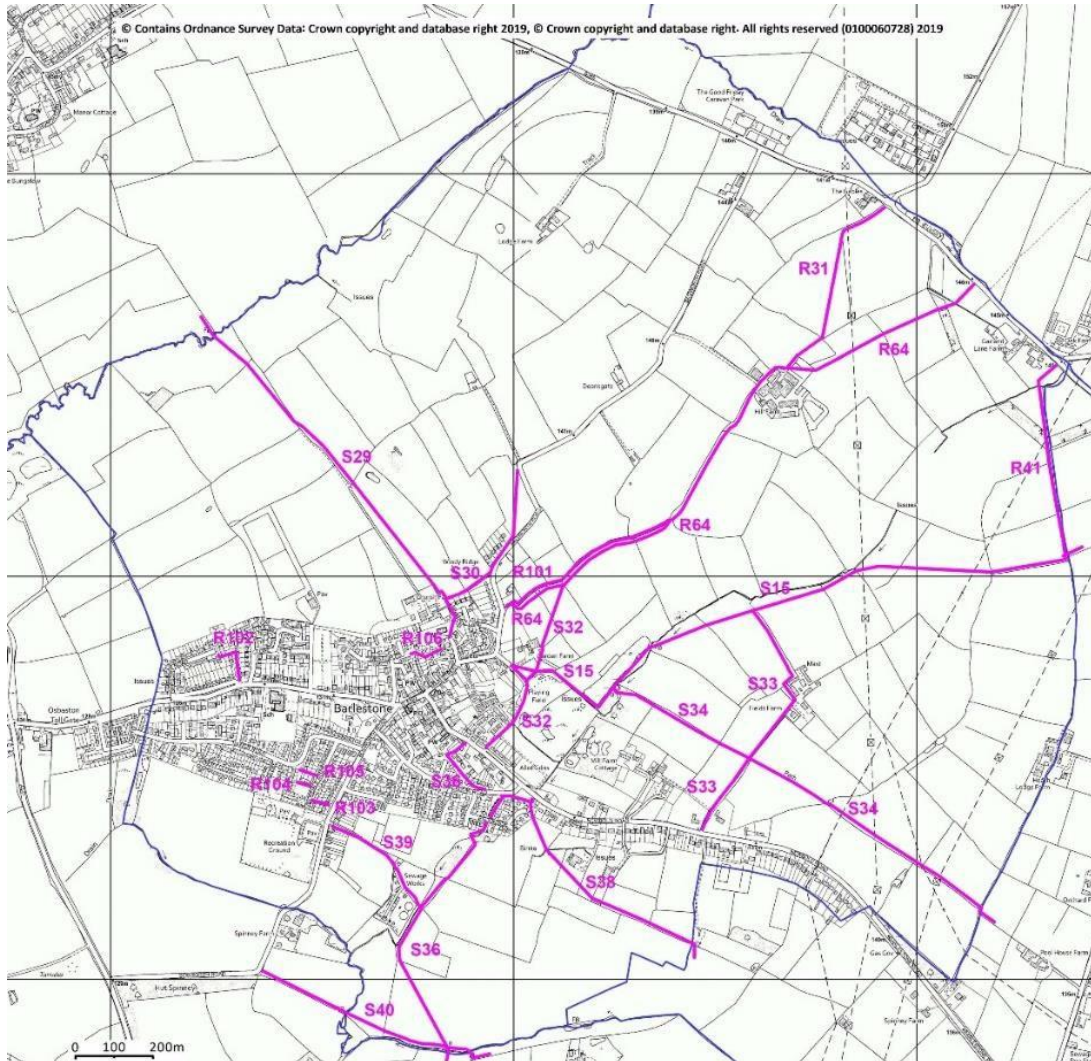
**POLICY ENV 9: BAT CONSERVATION – To ensure compliance with current legislation and best practice, development proposals should use independent research to determine the presence or absence of bats, roosts, commuting and foraging habitat in, and adjacent to, the development site. Based on the results, the development should:**

- **in known bat habitat areas, not incorporate exterior artificial lighting (on buildings or open areas) unless demonstrably essential;**
- **in known or potential bat habitat areas, not remove trees unless demonstrably essential;**
- **in all sensitive areas, apply mitigation methods in the design and location of artificial lighting using current best practice in respect of dark buffers, illuminance levels, zonation, luminaire specifications, curfew times, site configuration and screening;**
- **in all locations, incorporate integral or external bat boxes in line with current best practice of boxes to number of buildings or site size.**

## Rights of Way

A good network of footpaths and bridleways survives in the Plan Area. To some extent they are a characteristic historic feature, as well as being a well-used community asset that helps improve physical and mental wellbeing for local residents (and visitors). The network around Barlestone records essential walking routes established and used in two periods of local history when walking was the only way of getting around: in the medieval period, for walking between the villages and from them into the open fields and to market towns; and in the 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial period, for walking to work. The modern public roads mostly post-date these old walking routes, which – unlike the situation in many Leicestershire communities – have survived, thanks to continued use into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although this popularity continues, the need for vigilance and a combination of Highways Authority and community support, and maintenance is recognised by this Policy. It also requires developers to respect the historical and rural character of local footpaths, which have a value and meaning beyond simply being unobstructed linear features

Figure 13: Existing Rights of Way.



**POLICY ENV 10: RIGHTS OF WAY - Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, the existing network of public rights of way (figure 13) will not be supported without appropriate mitigation. The creation of new footpaths, or the enhancement of existing footpaths, to encourage walking from the new developments to the village amenities for leisure and wellbeing, is supported.**

## Flood risk

Barlestone village is not at risk of flooding from main rivers, and although the floodplain of Booson Brook, which forms the northwest boundary of the Plan Area, is mapped as Zone 3, it is in open countryside. Any future *approved development* proposals here would be affected by, and would have deleterious effects on, flood events and downstream properties and infrastructure. However, two watercourses do pass through and close to the village; residents' experience is that these do cause local flooding, either from the watercourses themselves or from surface water in low-lying areas along their valleys. The effects of new development, more intensive arable farming practice and climate change have exacerbated these local flood events in recent decades and are expected to become more damaging in future.



Figure 14.1: Current flood risk from rivers - Based on Environment Agency mapping

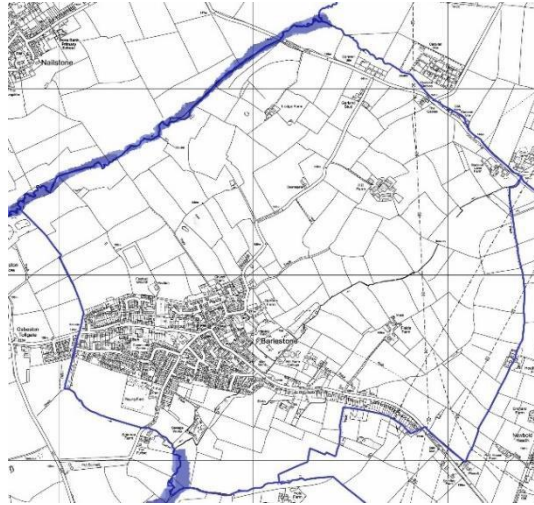
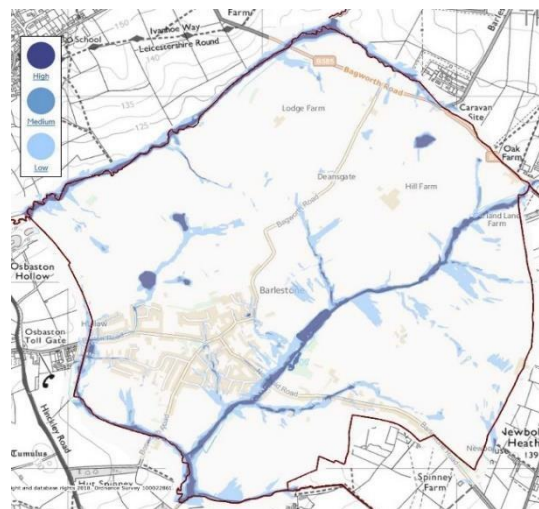


Figure 14.2: Current flood risk from surface water - Based on Environment Agency mapping



Although sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should help to prevent new development from exacerbating flood risk generally and avoid the potential for adverse effects on the environment (e.g. polluted run-off entering existing water bodies), Policy ENV11 acknowledges local concerns and risks, and it reiterates the complete range of factors that should be taken into account, in conformity with current regulations and National Planning Policy, when development proposals in Barlestone are under consideration. In the light of the widely accepted scientific evidence for ongoing climate change, the policy also requires developers to demonstrate how their proposals will not exacerbate the effects of future, climate change-driven, flooding.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) does not prohibit development in areas of high flood risk (e.g. Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone 3). Flooding from surface water was excluded from the National Flood Resilience Review (September 2016). This policy therefore represents a local determination to strengthen the conditions in respect of flooding and hydrology to be applied to all substantial development in the Parish. It supports and is in conformity with relevant sections of NPPF 2019 paragraphs 148, 149-150 and 155 – 164, and is strongly supported by the Environment Agency 2019 draft *National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England*.

**POLICY ENV 11: FLOOD RISK - Development proposals of appropriate scale and, where relevant, will be required to demonstrate that:**

- a) The proposal demonstrates resilience to future climate-change-driven flood risk during the lifetime of this Plan and beyond;
- b) The location takes geology, flood risk from rivers, other watercourses and surface water into account;
- c) a hydrological study, whose findings must be complied with in respect of design, groundworks and construction, is carried out;
- d) The design includes, as appropriate, Sustainable Drainage Systems, other surface water management measures and permeable surfaces; the appropriate discharge of surface water is key to mitigating the risk of flooding as a result of development and the impacts of climate change.
- e) The development does not increase the risk of flooding downstream.
- f) The development is not in an area of land likely to be required for future flood resilience, whether by 'rewilding' or infrastructural works.

Proposals for flood risk resilience and mitigation infrastructural works, including landscaping for attenuation in the floodplain, roadside culverts, etc. and for natural mitigation measures (watercourse 'rewilding', tree planting, etc.) will be supported.

## Important Views

Consultation during the Neighbourhood Plan's preparation identified a widely held wish to protect Barlestone's rural setting, and its relationship with the surrounding landscape, including the dissected topography of the old Leicestershire Coalfield and the rocky high ground of Charnwood Forest away to the north.

One of the main ways in which residents expressed this wish was by describing a few highly valued views. The initial consultation findings were updated during the environmental inventory; although principally aimed at identifying sites of environmental significance, the inventory fieldwork also checked the eligibility of the suggested views, confirmed their sightlines and described their qualities. The confirmed selection is mapped in figure 15.

**POLICY ENV 12: PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS – Views around Barlestone and across the parish (figure 15, appendix 13) are important to the setting and character of the settlement and the wider Plan area. They are highly valued by residents.**

To be supported, development proposals must not significantly harm the following views or their viewpoints, which are at publicly accessible locations. Development proposals must consider, assess and address, with mitigation where appropriate, their impact on the important views:

1. Village centre panorama
- 2a. Panoramic views of the allotments up the valley over the Boardwalk (LGS) and fishing lake
- 2b. Panoramic views around the lakes east of Garden Farm.
3. North over open fields to Hill Farm and toward Bardon Hill and Charnwood Forest
- 4a, 4b. Northwest from the edge of the village over open countryside, across the valley and toward the Nailstone ridge on the horizon
- 5a, 5b. South from the edge of the village to Hut Spinney



## Barlestone St Giles Sports and Social Club

A good example of social interaction, the club is run by dedicated locals within an active and competent committee. The club accommodates two separate sports organisations: Barlestone St Giles FC and Barlestone St Giles Running Club.

It is open for six days a week for events which range from bingo and cabaret to weddings and wakes, providing part-time employment for several local people. The clubhouse has 2 main public areas of differing sizes. The clubhouse and outdoor facilities are available to non-members on the payment of a fee. Bar, catering and audio-visual facilities are available for such hires.

## The Community Centre

The relatively recently constructed Community Centre building is proving to be a major asset to the Parish with many groups, both old and new, now enjoying the range of facilities on offer. The Centre, located within the Bosworth Road Playing Fields, is managed by Barlestone Community Development Trust, a management team consisting of user groups and parishioners.

## The Old School Hall

This premises, managed by a trust, was the village school several decades ago. Much work has been carried out over the intervening years to maintain and improve it. There is a large hall and associated kitchen available for hire. It is also the home of the pre-school (First Steps Playgroup).

## The Allotment Gardens

Managed by The Parish Council, the allotments are usually fully occupied. The Parish Council collects an annual rent, provides water to the site, maintains the roadway and perimeter fencing whilst keeping a register of tenants and when necessary a waiting list for plots.

A relatively recently formed volunteer group from the village, The Barlestonians, has secured funding and hopes to establish some community plots on unused land in the allotment gardens. They are hopeful that families with young children will take an interest in helping to cultivate this new community garden.

It is planned to construct a car park extension to accommodate additional parking for allotment holders and visitors to the community garden.

## The Roundhouse Spinney

The Parish Council is responsible for the upkeep of the spinney, which they have recently secured ownership of. There is the intention to develop this into an open park area with seating and cultivated vegetation, where residents can sit peacefully and enjoy the surroundings. When completed it will be available for small-scale outdoor events.

## Public Houses

Three Tuns – A historic village pub serving drinks and basic food. It is the old-style pub in the village. It runs a pool and a darts team. The owning brewery is currently struggling to attract long-term tenants.

Red Lion – This pub has had a recent makeover; latterly an Indian restaurant, it now offers wider cuisine and, once again, encourages people to visit for a drink without food.



## Co-operative Shop and Post Office

The co-operative store is the only general retail facility in the village. It is also a newsagent and post office. Opening hours are from 7am until 10pm each day (8am to 10pm on Sundays). The store is relatively small and hence has a limited range of products.

However, in supplementary questions on future improvements required in the village in the Housing Needs Survey conducted in early 2019, 66% of the respondents said that there were needs for improvements in the provision of food shops. Additionally 47% felt that the services provided by the in-house post office were not adequate to meet future needs.

The present site of the co-op could not allow for expansion. A new location for any additional shops would be needed.

## Food Outlets

A fish and chip shop, the Oriental Chinese takeaway and the Daawat Indian restaurant are situated in the centre of the village and are open most evenings.

## Other Public Facing Businesses

The village garage offers vehicle service and repair. There is a shoe shop operating out of Sefton House trading under the name Mosaic. Two Hairdressers are currently situated in the centre of the village and offer various beauty treatments as well as hairdressing. There is also an undertaker operating in the village.

## Churches

There are 3 active Christian churches within the village; they are Anglican, Baptist and the Elohim Christian Church.

The Anglican Church of St Giles has a resident priest; the diocese controls the activities of the church with local management in the hands of the Parochial Church Council. Services are held on Sunday mornings together with various activities during the week. The Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance of the grounds surrounding the church.

The Baptist Church is also in the centre of the village. It has a resident Pastor, is run by a management committee of members and is affiliated to the Baptist Union. Services are normally held both morning and evening on Sundays. Various meetings are held during the week.

The Elohim Christian Church is affiliated to the Kingdom Faith Organisation. It has a pastor who oversees the work of the Church. They meet for worship on Sunday morning and have numerous activities during the week. These include lunch and afternoon tea activities, a café and primary and teenager clubs. This building is available for approved hire subject to availability.

## Sport & Recreation

St Giles FC – The St Giles Football Club is affiliated to the St Giles Sports & Social Club but is managed as an independent organisation. They presently have 1 senior football team that competes in good standard league and cup matches regularly, and a number of junior teams covering the age range 7 to 17. Most of their matches are played on the St Giles pitch but some are played on the Bosworth Road Playing Fields pitch.

St Giles Running Club – The club is based at St Giles Sports & Social Club but is a totally independent organisation meeting on Monday evenings. This club is open to any interested person.

Bosworth Road Playing Fields – Owned by the Parish Council, there is a range of outdoor facilities including cricket and football pitches, a hard surface play area with tennis court, gymnastics equipment, a tree-lined walking area and a children’s play area. There are first-class changing and shower facilities at the on-site pavilion. In addition there is a young children’s play area on The Glebe. Recently, the new community centre was built on the playing field next to the car park. The Bowls Club is located at the Bosworth Road edge of the playing fields.

**Tennis Court** - A team of volunteers from the community, funded by the Parish Council, refurbished the hard-surface tennis court by completely repainting both inside and outside walls of the floodlit court, which also painted over the graffiti. Then they held three sessions for locals to record their handprints on the newly painted walls. One session was during the village fun day and, to date, there are over two hundred recorded handprints on the walls. Tennis coaching sessions have been successfully held with a trained coach for all ages.

**Bowls Club** – The bowls clubhouse is situated within the Bosworth Road Playing Fields. The club, started in 1988, is a mixed club and presently has 40 playing members. They play weekday league matches and friendly matches at the weekend. They also meet on Tuesday evenings for social play, which in the winter includes short mat bowls. The Bowls Club is also available for private hire; it has a reasonably large open space together with a fully equipped kitchen and a bar.

**3 Villages Walking Group.** - This group meets for guided walks on a 3-monthly basis in Barlestone on a Wednesday morning at the Elohim Christian Church (other months at Newbold Verdon and Desford).

**May Meadow** – This is an area of open grassed land, which includes areas devoted to football, rugby and play facilities. There is also a nature reserve here accessed by a boardwalk. This land is held in trust by the Parish Council who is responsible for its maintenance.

**Baxter’s Pool** – This is a fairly large man-made lake running alongside the village brook which is its source of water. The lake is privately owned and is stocked with fish. Fishing permits are available.

**The Bull Piece** – Owned by St Giles Church and maintained by the Parish Council, this is a small recreation wooded area within the Parish, which is mainly used by dog walkers.

**Bosworth Road** - This is the last remaining traditional country lane within Barlestone village, running from the village centre to Hinckley Road (A447) and is a popular circular walk returning via the A447 and Barton Road. It is therefore a real community asset, with its small bridge and a roadside spinney (Hut Spinney, although this falls outside of the parish). Bosworth Road is something the Parish wishes to preserve into the future.

## Village Cemetery

The Parish Council manages the area in the village where Parish residents can be buried or their cremated remains interred. There is very limited available space for further burials and new space is therefore required.

**Community Action CFA1: The Parish Council will continue to seek an extension to the cemetery or other land subject to land availability.**

## Community Association

A group of village volunteers who organise various events in the village, e.g. Tabletop sales, the annual village firework display, treasure hunts. The profits from these events are distributed to local groups or used to provide village facilities.

**POLICY CFA1: THE RETENTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES - Development leading to the loss of existing community facilities, including the sports club and recreation ground, the village park and community centre, the existing pubs, the churches, the co-op and post office, the primary school and the pre-school**

playgroup, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:  
There is no longer any need or demand for the existing community facility; or  
The existing community facility is, demonstrably, no longer economically viable or able to be supported by the community – such viability and support includes fundraising and volunteering by parishioners and others; or  
The proposal makes alternative provision for the community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish which complies with the other general policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## New and Improved Community Facilities

The Parish feels that it is currently well served by the community facilities that it has worked hard over many years to develop and maintain. This is evident in the survey, conducted in early 2019, showing fewer than 20% of the respondents felt there was need for improvement in the areas of Child Minders, Public Houses and Restaurants, Sports and Social Club, Mobile Library, Allotments and Community Centre.

However, the Parish welcomes the prospect of new and improved facilities, which are appropriate to the size and nature of the area, in the future.

**POLICY CFA2: NEW AND IMPROVED COMMUNITY FACILITIES - Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, will be supported provided that the development:**

- Meets the design criteria stated in Policy H5;
- Will not result in unacceptable traffic movements or other loss of amenity to residential properties;
- Will not generate a need for parking that cannot be adequately catered for;
- Is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the village wishing to walk or cycle; and
- Takes into full account the needs of people with disabilities.

## Doctor's Surgery

The doctor's surgery in Westfields is an important community facility, which is open to the public 5 days per week. This surgery is a satellite of the main surgery at Ibstock, which offers a more extensive range of services.

The Barlestone surgery is staffed by most of the doctors and practice nurses from Ibstock on a rolling basis. The surgery is permanently staffed by a receptionist and pharmacy staff that dispense drugs provided by the doctors. There is no resident trained pharmacist at the surgery.

The daily appointment system is based on the patient contacting the surgery for a telephone conversation with the doctor to establish the exact cause of illness. Sometimes a diagnosis is made over the telephone, otherwise the patient is asked to visit the surgery for a face-to-face meeting with the doctor.

In supplementary questions on future improvements required in the village in the Housing Needs Survey conducted in early 2019, 60% of the respondents said that there were needs for improvements in the doctor's surgery. Also 52% of respondents indicated that improvements are needed in the dispensary services provided by the surgery.

It is uncertain what impact significant numbers of new houses would have on the performance of the practice but, presently, visits to the nurse for such services as blood tests can regularly entail a wait of around two weeks.

**POLICY CFA3: DOCTOR'S SURGERY** - In order to meet the needs of any increased numbers of parishioners brought about by any new housing development, proposals for enhancing the size and facilities of the doctor's surgery in the Parish, or the provision of a new surgery, will be supported subject to it:

- being safely accessible by pedestrians and cyclists and with adequate provision for waiting cars to park;
- having appropriate vehicular access and not having a severe adverse impact upon traffic circulation; and
- not resulting in a significant loss of open space and amenity to local residents or other adjacent uses.

## Education

### Barlestone C of E Primary School

Barlestone C of E Primary School has made significant progress over the last 5 years in developing its educational standards and pupil roll. In 2013/4 the school was put into special measures and its pupil roll had declined to just over 130 pupils. Since then a new head teacher has turned the school around. The School is now rated as 'Good' and its pupil roll has increased to 201 pupils at the start of the Autumn term 2019.

The school operates a one class per year system and as there are 7 classes and the assumption that each class should not exceed 30 pupils the school capacity is 210 pupils. At the beginning of the Autumn term 2019 there were 8 vacant places for pupils in the early years classes with the classes for older pupils being full. The Head teacher's prediction for the Autumn term 2020 is that the school will be full with no emergency places available.

The capacity of the school site is 7 classrooms with one being an outside portable wooden classroom of questionable longevity. So, the school has no capacity to expand without additional buildings being provided. Hence any increase in house building in Barlestone must include a significant financial component for the extension of the school. Because of legal requirements not to have more than 30 pupils in the early school years classes the capacity of the existing school could not realistically increase beyond 220 pupils. Such an overcrowding situation is one that neither the school, nor its governing body wish to see.

In the housing survey conducted in early 2019, 56% of respondents said that there would be needs for improvements in provision of pupil places at the school as the Parish grows.

The school premises are available for suitable private hire when not required by the primary school: the facilities available include a large hall, classrooms and meeting rooms. A small kitchen is also available. Fees for hire are based on a local authority scheme.

### First Steps Playgroup

The group operates in the Old School Hall and is the only such group in the village. The playgroup cares for children from the age of 2 until they enter the primary school at 4 years old. The group is led by a fully qualified Early Years manager and is supported by circa 10 staff. The maximum capacity is 70 children, which is usually achieved by the start of the spring term. At its last Ofsted inspection in 2019 the playgroup was graded as good.

In the survey conducted in early 2019, 24% of the respondents said that there would be need for improvements in the playgroup as the Parish increases in size.

**POLICY CFA4: SCHOOL AND PRE-SCHOOL FACILITIES** –Proposals for enhancing the size and facilities of the Primary School and pre-school in the Parish will be supported subject to:

- It would be both easily and safely accessible by pedestrians and cyclists and there is adequate provision for waiting cars and school buses to park;
- It has appropriate vehicular access and does not have a significant adverse impact upon traffic circulation;
- It would not result in a significant loss of open space and amenity to local residents or other adjacent uses; and



## Traffic and transport

Barlestone is a rural parish, not served by major roads. The local roads are, however, busy through- routes from the A447 at Osbaston Tollgate to the B582 at the Newbold Heath junction. The roads also accommodate significant numbers of large farm machinery such as combine harvesters, heavy earth cultivating equipment and grain transport trucks during harvest but are an integral part of the agricultural environment. A number of large vehicles currently service the water treatment works, accessing this via the village centre.

The Parish and surrounding rural areas are very popular with leisure cyclists, particularly at weekends and summer evenings, which can bring about further congestion issues at these times.

The highway system in Barlestone is that which was inherited a century ago - with the central road system being used by the vast majority of villagers and through traffic. The population of the village has increased 3-fold since the 60's and the vehicle density per household has also increased significantly. At the end of 2017, 1516 cars, 154 light goods vehicles, 19 heavy good vehicles, 75 motorcycles and 20 other vehicles were registered to residents of the Parish. The centre of the village has few houses with space to park cars off road hence they are parked on roads, leading to traffic holdups and potential road safety issues.

Over many years there have been problems with parking in the centre of the village making it very difficult for traffic to get through. The addition of yellow lines on part of Newbold Road by the Red Lion seems to have made things worse to a degree, and the promise of the lines around the corner near Moda Hairdressers has not come to fruition, causing traffic to back up or, in some cases, create a 'standoff'. Parking in general in and around the village is not good.

Transport, access and parking were major concerns expressed during the Neighbourhood Plan Drop-In Events during September 2017. It was described as needing urgent attention:

*"Ensure new houses have suitable parking for their cars"; "Decent Parking also needed"; "Increased 'safe' parking"; "No development in built up areas due to desperate lack of parking facilities"; and "Lack of suitable parking already makes access in the centre of the village difficult. Planning needs to take traffic into consideration".*

Speeding was also identified as a concern:

*"Speed of vehicles both entering and leaving the village needs addressing" and "Speeding and cars parked on roads cause distraction and hazards for youngsters".*

There were various suggestions made for how developers could contribute to improving these issues including a one-way system in village centre, better parking and access and traffic calming measures.

Again, these issues figured highly in the responses to the village Questionnaire. 71% said that changes were needed to relation to the speed of vehicles, whilst 51% felt that more control was needed on weight restrictions of vehicles. Road maintenance, car parking provision, bus service provision and footpath provision were also seen as necessary by the majority of respondents, whilst parked cars blocking roads for emergency services and farm vehicles were also of great concern.

Further comments about traffic issues included:

*"Heavy lorries/ vans/farm vehicles passing through the village and causing major traffic holdups in the centre of the village"; "There is a weight restriction on vehicles passing through the village but this appears to be generally ignored"; and "There is a particular problem with tractors towing tankers containing waste material using the village road as a shortcut".*

## Parking Issues

Car parking is a significant issue in several parts of the Parish, which was largely built before the advent of widespread car ownership. Creative and concerted efforts to alleviate the problem must be treated as a priority in considering any planning application. The Parish Council is actively seeking to work in partnership with any potential developer to explore methods and funding to alleviate both parking and speeding issues.

In the survey conducted in early 2019, 69% of the respondents identified parking and the need for more off-street parking provision to be a major future issue.

### **Newbold Road**

Parking is a serious problem in the area around the old Methodist Church with cars being parked on the road up to, and including, the bend.

### **West End**

Parking is a serious issue with cars being parked from the junction of Newbold Road through to the Co-op on West End. Drivers are parking their vehicles when going both to the shops and also to the Three Tuns public house. Cars are also parked overnight along this road as a result of the houses here having no off-street parking of their own.

### **Main Street /Entrance to Church Road**

Cars parked on one side of this narrow road often causing traffic hazards for other road users driving along Main Street. Problems relating to parking also occur at the entrance to Church Road, particularly at playgroup drop-off and pick-up times.

### **Barton Road**

This is a particular problem outside the primary school at dropping off and picking up times for school children.

### **Meadow Road/Manor Road**

Parking can be an issue along both of these roads due to vehicles being parked along the road despite all the properties have parking facilities; many homes have garages and all have driveways. An additional problem here is that cars are parked on both sides of the road meaning that traffic has to weave in and out.

### **Bagworth Road**

There are several blind bends along this road and visibility is impaired by the parking of vehicles on this road outside house numbers 43 to 63.

## Possible Solutions to the Car Parking Problems within the Village

Land availability is a big problem within these areas for car parking. There are possibly two areas of land suitable for the creation of car parks in the centre of the village. One being the area of land at the bottom of Westfields adjacent to the Three Tuns public house, and secondly a small area of land at the junction of West End and Bosworth Road near to the gateway entrance to the Roundhouse Spinney.

Public car parking is available at the doctor's surgery on Westfields although at surgery times this car park is often full and is only visible from the surgery. Parking is also available at the car park at the playing field on Bosworth Road, however this is locked overnight and is sited outside the village centre.

Of the areas identified as having problems, the ones in the older area of the village (West End, the village end of Newbold Road, Main Street, the entrance to Church Road and the section of Bagworth Road near Church Road) are of the most concern as this is where majority of the houses have no off-street parking. The two areas identified above are located close to some of these problem areas.

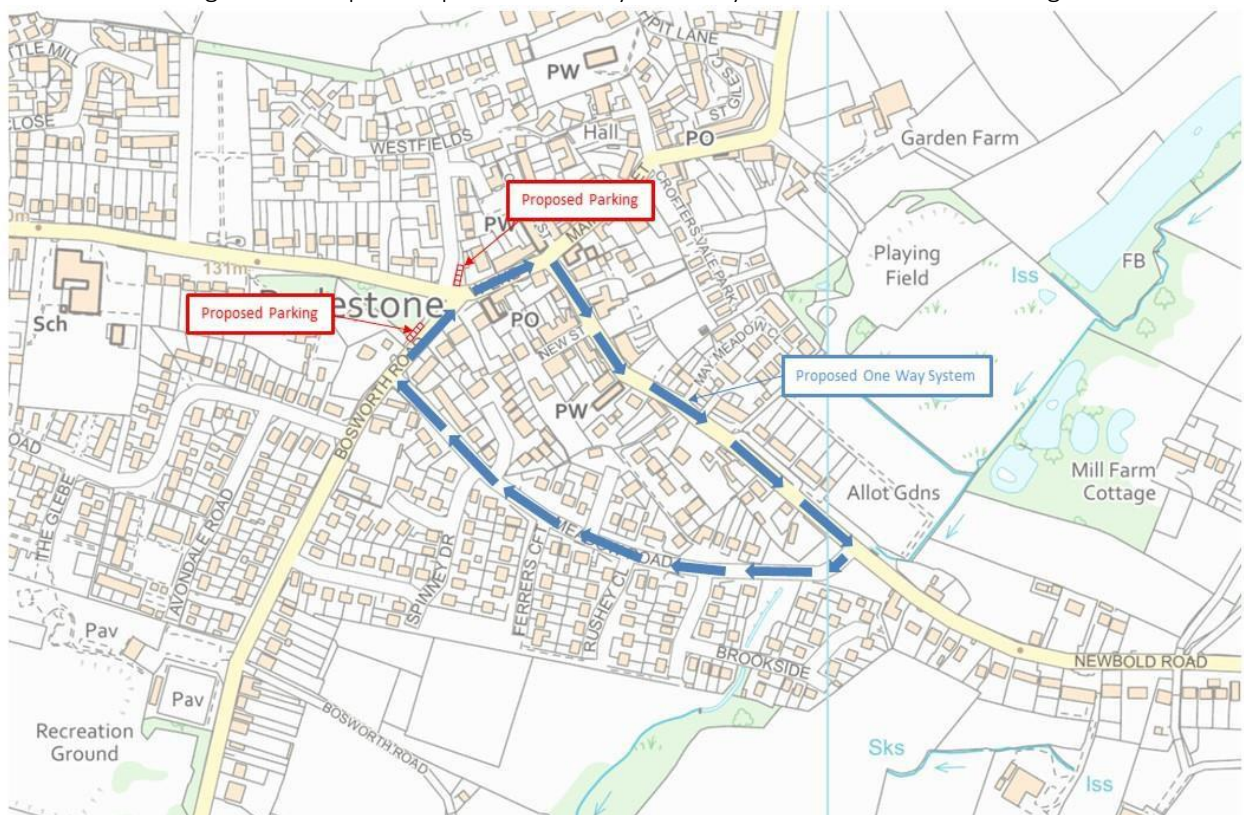
## Proposed One-way Traffic System

A possible solution to both the present congestion and parking situation in the village would be to introduce a one-way system in the village, together with suitably positioned double yellow lines on the roads. This proposal has strong levels of community support.

It is suggested that this could be a clockwise one-way route along Meadow Road towards the centre of the village, turning right onto Bosworth Road and proceeding along West End to the Baptist Church. Here it would travel along Newbold Road until it re-joins the one-way system at the entrance to Meadow Road. Key considerations would be whether the sections including Bosworth Road and West End would be one or two way.

Initial contact has been made with the County Highways department to explore this proposals and further discussion will be held.

Figure 16: Map of Proposed One-Way Traffic System and Areas for Parking



## Bus Services

There are services to and from Leicester provided by Arriva (number 153) and to Coalville and Hinckley provided by Roberts coaches (159). The service by Arriva provides regular buses at peak times, but during the bulk of the day provides only an hourly service. Services to Leicester start at 06.28 and terminate at 19.32. Services from Leicester commence at 06.53 and terminate at 18.25. These services are for Monday to Saturday only, there are no services on Sundays. Stakeholder comments were that the service was inadequate particularly in the early evening. There was suggestion that smaller vehicles could be used where

demand is lower although observation would suggest buses are not well used for the majority of the day.

The service between Hinckley and Coalville is provided by Roberts Coaches. The service between Barlestone and Hinckley commences at 06.35 and terminates at 18.00. This is at best an hourly service but extends to one and a half hourly service during the middle of the day. The return service from Hinckley commences at 07.30 and terminates at 18.40 at a similar frequency. The service from Barlestone to Coalville commences at 08.08 and terminates at 19.18, frequency being similar to the Hinckley service. The service from Coalville commences at 06.15 and terminates at 17.40, again with similar frequencies. The service operates on a Monday to Saturday service with no service on Sundays.

In the survey conducted in early 2019, 74% of the respondents said that there are needs for the improvement or at least retention of the existing bus services. This was the most concerning factor in all the issues raised in the survey.

The use of the bus service is very variable, the buses are well used by workers and students in the early morning and evenings, but in the middle of the day use is very sparse.

Barlestone is a village which is early on the route into Leicester and, as the bus travels through the urban area, many more passengers alight thus the sparsity of passengers from the village can be somewhat deceptive. Improvements may be achieved by reducing the frequency of services in the middle of the day or the use of smaller vehicle but it is essential that bus frequency is maintained if it is to be of use to workers and students. There are good social reasons for maintaining an adequate daytime service because those without any independent means of transport are totally reliant on the bus service; this particularly applies to the elderly and teens.

School bus services take children to Market Bosworth and Desford, picking up and dropping off at West End. Having an off-road pick-up/ drop-off for buses could lessen the temporary congestion this causes.

**POLICY TR1: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - With particular regard to the rural highway network of the Parish, and the need to minimise any increase in vehicular traffic, all housing and commercial development must:**

- Be designed to minimise additional traffic generation and movement through the village;
- Incorporate sufficient off-road parking in line with Leicestershire County Council standards;
- Not remove or compromise the use of any existing off-road parking areas unless a suitable equivalent alternative is provided;
- Provide any necessary improvements to site access, communal parking and the highway network either directly or by financial contributions; and
- Consider, where appropriate, the improvement and where possible the creation of footpaths and cycle ways to key village services.

**Community Action TR1: Traffic Management - The Parish Council will develop a coherent action plan to address traffic and parking issues that have been identified through the Neighbourhood Plan including:**

- Undertake an ongoing awareness exercise to make explicit the negative impact on residents of inconsiderate parking;
- Work to achieve improvement of car parking provision for the Parish for residents and visitors;
- Develop appropriate traffic management/calming/ parking measures for the Parish; and
- Work with the school to resolve parking issues at drop off and pick up times.

## Electric Vehicles

The UK government has recently announced its intention to ban sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2040 to combat rising levels of air pollution and address climate change concerns; new cars and vans powered wholly by petrol and diesel will not be sold in the UK from 2030. The implication is that the number of 'pure' (i.e. not hybrid) electric vehicles (EVs) on the road will certainly increase rapidly (there is some evidence this is already starting). If



EVs are to have a similar range to today's petrol/diesel cars, they will need to have large capacity batteries installed.

This raises the crucial question of battery recharging. Residential charging is probably the current norm, but using a typical generator size of 3.7kW (as currently installed as standard on-board EVs and similar electrical usage as a domestic kettle), this would take 19 hours to re-charge the battery (assuming a typical run-down state of 25% of maximum). The lower capacity (and lower range <100miles) Nissan Leaf would take about 6 hours.

The availability of larger capacity on-board generators (7kW) is emerging, which would halve these times, but this is then the maximum that would be possible using current standard domestic electricity supply (single phase 240volt). However, residential charging is only allowed where off- road parking is available and there is a higher-than-average level of terraced housing in Barlestone. This issue is already influencing planning and building regulations; for example in London, any new development that includes more than 5 parking spaces must include electric charging points in greater than 5% of these. It would seem wise to include such requirements for new developments in locations such as Barlestone if rural communities are not to be left behind.

Similarly, commercial/communal rapid charging facilities are growing across the country (making use of 3-phase supply not possible at the domestic level and reducing the 7KW re-charge time by a factor of 3). These could be utilised in Barlestone, for example by installation in a permanent parking area as described above, providing re-charging for residents with no off-road parking, and allowing fast re-charge for all residents.

**POLICY TR2: ELECTRIC VEHICLES - Residential development of one dwelling or more should provide 7kW, or better if feasible, cabling to the most practical point in the home to facilitate subsequent installation of a home electric vehicle charging point. The provision of communal vehicular charging points within the Parish will be supported so long as there is universal access and they do not impact negatively on the availability of existing parking within the Parish.**

## Footpaths

Barlestone, although never being a mining village, was for many years in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, home for many mineworkers who travelled to work on foot. Neighbouring mining villages such as Nailstone, Bagworth, Desford, Merrylees and Ellistown were all accessible on foot and this resulted in a great number of Public Footpaths being established which remain today.

These footpaths have always been well used and now that the population is living longer, they are being encouraged to live healthier and more active lifestyles and remain active into their later years. These footpaths provide a great opportunity to do just that as many paths are joined up and provide circular routes of varying distances around the village.

Unfortunately, the older population, although active enough to walk varying distances, often find footpath stiles quite a challenge and many are reluctant to try these footpath routes, as most stiles are not accessible for older people. In 2015 the Parish Council acquired grant funding to replace five difficult stiles with self-closing gates and renew a damaged swamp bridge on a two-mile circular route adjacent to Bosworth Road. This once rarely-used footpath has become a regular short walk for parishioners and visitors. It is the Parish Council's policy where possible to repeat this scheme throughout the Parish footpath network.

Dog fouling is a major issue in the Parish at the recreation grounds and on footpaths. There are adequate bins provided.

**POLICY TR3: FOOTPATHS - The upgrading and, where appropriate, extension of the pedestrian footpath network in the Parish will be supported in order to:**

- **Service new developments and connect them to the existing pedestrian footpath network (the desired location of any new footpaths will depend on the design of any development and hence cannot be specified at this time);**
- **Encourage walking over car use for making journeys within the Parish; and**
- **Provide an improved and more extensive footpath network to support exercise and leisure activities for Barlestone Parish residents and visitors.**

## Businesses and Employment

In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Barlestone had considerable employment opportunities, traditionally taken up by female employees. The Harvey and Harvey shoe factory had been in place in the village since the 50s and, at its peak, employed about 50 people. The factory supported a main factory in Barwell by producing the upper part of the shoe and sewing together cut-out components. As the UK shoe industry declined, the need for shoe wear operatives also fell; the Barlestone factory closed at the end of the 1980s. The premises was then used by a number of organisations but employing very few people and was eventually demolished and the site used for housing.

There was also a hosiery factory at the entrance to Bosworth Road. Alongside the factory workers were many outworkers carrying out the work in their own homes within the Parish. The factory eventually became part of the Corah Empire and the range of products was extended to include lingerie; the site was given the affectionate title of the Knicker Factory. The factory also included a shop that sold a whole range of items associated with Corah. At its peak in the 80s and 90s the site employed approximately 100 internal and external workers. With the demise of the Corah business the site was closed and the land was built on.

On land where the entrance to Meadow Road now is, there was a business making road cones for use on motorways and other applications. This site employed around 10 people but relocated out of the village in the late 80s. The Comfort bus company had its headquarters in the village until City Buses bought it out in the late 80s. This company had its management team, drivers, cleaners and mechanics within the village, employing about 20 people. In addition to these major employers there were significant numbers of people employed in the village shops and the local public houses.

It would not be unreasonable to estimate that over 200 people could have found full or part time employment in the village in the 80s but unfortunately almost all of this employment has disappeared and the land that it previously occupied has been used to provide houses.

The only premises now providing employment are one shop, two public houses, two takeaways, one restaurant, the football club, the Community Centre, two hairdressers, the garage, the undertakers and a shoe shop. The total number of people employed in these establishments is around 20. Alongside these are: the village school, which employs approximately 25 people, but at least half of these are from outside the village; the playgroup which employs circa 11 people, mostly from within the village; and the after school club, which employs circa 4 village residents on a part-time basis.

The 2011 census gives the latest information on employment types in the village. This indicated that there are 61 people working mainly at, or from, home, a figure that has almost certainly increased during the intervening years. The census also indicated that there were 182 self-employed people living in the village. Few of these self-employed people run their businesses from within the village.

## Support for existing businesses and employment

For any community to flourish, good employment opportunities are essential. As shown, there are limited local employers and businesses within Barlestone Parish. Barlestone is a rural community and close to several significant employment centres, such as Hinckley, Coalville and Leicester.

Most existing businesses in the Parish do not employ more than one or two people from within the Parish. There is also a small range of local residences that have businesses in the village or work from home. In addition, the Community Centre is used by local people for paid activities such as yoga, dance, exercise classes and weight watchers.

It is important that our Neighbourhood Plan protects and strengthens the economic base within the Parish; existing employment should be proactively encouraged and supported to develop where appropriate, reflecting the growth of Barlestone and its residents.

**POLICY BE1: SUPPORT FOR EXISTING BUSINESSES & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES** There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land that provides employment or future potential employment opportunities. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that:

- The commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and
- The commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months.
- The business function of the land or premises would not be undermined by an alternative use on an underused part of the land or floor space, for example living above a shop.

## Support for new businesses and employment

New employment initiatives can help to boost and diversify the local economy, thus providing more local employment opportunities. Shortage of available space leads local businesses to seek premises outside of the Parish. As stated, there is a potential need for smaller workshop units and office space.

Parishioners have, however, been clear that any new employment initiatives should be small-scale and sensitive to the character of the Parish. Employment proposals should only be approved if they avoid harmful impacts on other matters agreed to be locally important, such as increased traffic flows, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment.

As the Parish wishes to encourage more local employment, it needs to create opportunity - for example, the provision of small work units. In this respect the two main barriers, which must be overcome, are the financing and identifying space where such units can be built.

**POLICY BE2: SUPPORT FOR NEW BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYMENT - New employment-generating opportunities, including small workshops and office space, will be supported where:**

- It is located within the settlement boundary of Barlestone Parish, unless it relates to small-scale leisure or tourism activities, or other forms of commercial/employment related development appropriate to a countryside location, or there are exceptional circumstances;
- It is sited in existing buildings or on areas of previously developed land;
- It is of a size and scale not adversely affecting the character, infrastructure and environment of the village itself and the neighbourhood plan area, including the countryside;
- It does not have an adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;
- It does not involve the loss of dwellings;
- there is no significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light or other pollution, increased traffic levels or increased flood risk;
- the local road system is capable of accommodating the traffic generated by the proposed new use and adequate parking can be accommodated within the site; and
- it is well integrated into, and complements, existing businesses.

## Homeworking

As mentioned in other sections there is an increasing national trend to homeworking and therefore, as Barlestone develops and grows, it too will need to support residents who are working from home. This will include good broadband infrastructure and also opportunities within the village to allow businesses to develop and grow. The provision of business hubs, meeting spaces and workshops would all create opportunities for residents.

There is a strong desire for Barlestone to offer local employment to a wide range of people as this adds to the diversity of the village and will bring opportunities for those already working locally, including those homeworkers. The 2011 Census showed that 61 people were working from home and this number has now increased.

With this in mind, it is clear that residents who wish to move to homeworking within their homes or within the village may need to make adaptations to their homes. Therefore, the construction of extensions, the conversion of outbuildings and the development of new freestanding buildings in gardens from which businesses can operate, will be supported. This is intended to maximise the opportunities for entrepreneurial activity and employment in Barlestone Parish. It will be important that any future housing and developments within the village should strongly consider accommodation that can promote homeworking and local employment.

**POLICY BE3: HOMEWORKING - Proposals for the use of part of a dwelling for office and/or light industrial uses, and for small-scale free-standing buildings within its curtilage, extensions to the dwelling or conversion of outbuildings for those uses, will be supported where:**

- a) Such development will not result in unacceptable traffic movements and that appropriate parking provision is made;
- b) No significant and adverse impact arises to nearby residents or other sensitive land uses from noise, fumes, light pollution, or other nuisance associated with the work activity; and
- c) Any extension or free-standing building shall be designed having regard to policies in this Plan and should not detract from the quality and character of the building to which they are subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction.

## Farming and farm diversification

The majority of land within the Parish is owned by small to medium size farms.

In the early 1950s there were at least 12 small mixed farms, mostly producing milk sold in churns to dairies in Leicester. Now there are only three working farms, all are family owned and worked; one produces milk along with beef and arable enterprises, another is a stock farm and the third is sheep and arable.

A number of the small farms have become part of the Hill Farm acreage. Milk produced here now goes to larger national dairies outside the county, as is the case for the beef, sheep and grain products, and comes back to the consumer via the supermarkets.

Very few hedges have been removed; those remaining have been established over many years, are in good stock-proof condition and encompass fields of mainly 5 to 12 acres. Trees are mainly in hedgerows, except for a few small Spinney plantations.

Most land is classified as grade 3, the majority being medium loam type tile drained in the 19th and 20th century, with some re-draining taking place in the 1950 to 1970 era due to the serious effects of coal mining.

There are no solar farms or wind turbines in the Parish so landscaping is largely unchanged over many decades.

In order to survive and thrive, some farms may need to diversify during the lifetime of this plan. Diversification could create traffic and accessibility issues for the Parish. However, creative approaches to diversification do have the potential to enhance farm sustainability and create new employment opportunities.



**POLICY BE4: FARM DIVERSIFICATION** - In order to support farm diversification and the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses, the conversion of existing agricultural and commercial buildings will be supported subject to:

- a) The use proposed is appropriate to the rural location;
- b) The conversion/adaptation works respect the local character of the surrounding area;
- c) The development will not have an adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;
- d) The local road system is capable of accommodating the traffic generated by the proposed new use and adequate parking can be accommodated within the site; and
- e) There is no significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light or other pollution, increased traffic levels or increased flood risk.

## Broadband and mobile phone infrastructure

In the recent survey, Broadband services were considered to need improvement by 40% of respondents.

The Leicestershire Superfast broadband scheme provides FTC (Fibre to Cabinet) internet connections. Barlestone was one of the first to benefit from this scheme because the distance between Barlestone and the exchange at Market Bosworth is approx. 5 miles. The theft of the copper cable along the A447 also contributed to the early introduction in 2015.

Superfast broadband is available to residents from various providers however, there appears a problem with people's understanding of which connections are available. For example, a resident in one street of the village has a connection of 75Gb whilst their neighbour has given up on broadband as it's too slow. The Neighbour with 75Gb uses a BT infinity (Superfast connection) the other uses a traditional ADSL+ connection which relies on copper cable all the way to the exchange. This is evidenced in the returns from the survey where some residents are happy with the service and others are not.

All major Mobile telecom suppliers provide coverage over Barlestone:

- Vodafone; Strong indoor/outdoor 4G and 3G signal limited to half of village only;
- BT/EE; Strong indoor/outdoor Signal coverage for majority of the village. The Manor Road estate does not have a strong indoor 4G signal;
- Three; Strong indoor/outdoor signal for 3G no 4G available in Barlestone. Speed checks for 3G show a reliable connection average 25GB; and
- O2; Strong indoor/outdoor signal 3G and 4G however Meadow Road, Bagworth Road and Newbold Road areas are only supported with outdoor coverage.

A number of virtual operators such as Tesco/Virgin/Sky etc. are available however these operators use one of the above networks to provide access.

Barlestone appears to be well supported with data and voice connections either by fixed line or mobile phone. Pockets exist where coverage is patchy however consumer research allows residents to identify the best provider for their needs.

It is particularly important that, as the Parish of Barlestone grows and develops, an efficient and effective communications infrastructure is in place to maximise connectivity for businesses, services and residents. Such provision will reduce social isolation, ensure that not only residents, employers and services are well supported, but visitors to the village can also access good communications. All future developments in communication technology must be supported by the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that all those in the Parish can take full advantage of these developments.

**POLICY BE5: BROADBAND AND MOBILE PHONE INFRASTRUCTURE - The Parish wishes to maximise the quality of its broadband and mobile phone infrastructure AND to be at the forefront of any future enhancements to communications technology.**

- a) **Proposals to provide access to superfast broadband for all businesses and households in Barlestone Parish will be supported;**
- b) **Improvements to the mobile telecommunication network that will serve all businesses and households within the Parish will be supported. Where new masts are installed, more than one provider should share these where possible; and**
- c) **Any infrastructure improvements, possibly requiring above ground network installations, must be sympathetically located, designed to integrate into the landscape and not be in or near to open landscapes.**

## Infrastructure Prioritisation

Each site identified in the NP, plus those already allocated by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for housing development, will bring its own priorities for bolstering the existing infrastructure.

Any site with larger number of houses will necessitate increasing the capacity of both the school, pre-school and doctor's facilities whereas smaller developments are likely to be able to be accommodated.

Any site which is towards the centre of the village or necessitates traffic towards and through the village centre such as development sites on Bagworth Road will need to address existing parking arrangements as these are already issues. Many of the existing houses have no off-street parking and hence providing yellow lines to prevent parking is not the solution, additional areas of safe parking for these existing must be found or created prior to any increase in traffic caused by new development.

## Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan will last until 2039. During this time it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change. The review will also consider the status of the village centre including drawing up a vision/strategy for the village "local centre" as designated in the Hinckley & Bosworth Site Allocations & Development Management Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. This will be led by Barlestone Parish Council, in conjunction with Hinckley & Bosworth District Council as the local planning authority, on at least an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan on a five-year cycle commencing in 2023 or to coincide with the review of the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan if this cycle is different.

+++ END OF MAIN DOCUMENT +++