BERRICK SALOME PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Pre-Submission Plan 2013–2033

NOVEMBER 2018 – DRAFT v10



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FOREWORD

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

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

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

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

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

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

There are 30 listed buildings in The Parish, all Grade II, and one further Grade II* building, ie St Helens Church.

The Parish has a small number of facilities which limit its suitability for considerable additional housing development. These include two public houses, St Helens Church, Berrick and Roke Village Hall, recreational and children's play area and village green. As a result of these limited facilities The Parish is classified as an 'Other Village' by the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) 2033 emerging plan.

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

Our team has worked closely with SODC to ensure the formal planning aspects of the BSPNP were addressed correctly. Their excellent input has been central to the development of this Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan team has worked hard over the last 18 months to progress the development of the BSPNP. As a result of this activity I am confident that we have developed policies that will enable sustainable development of The Parish, in line with the wishes of the majority of The Parish and we hope that this will be confirmed at referendum.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Neighbourhood Plan team, the Parish Council and to the many members of our community who have contributed to the development of the BSPNP.

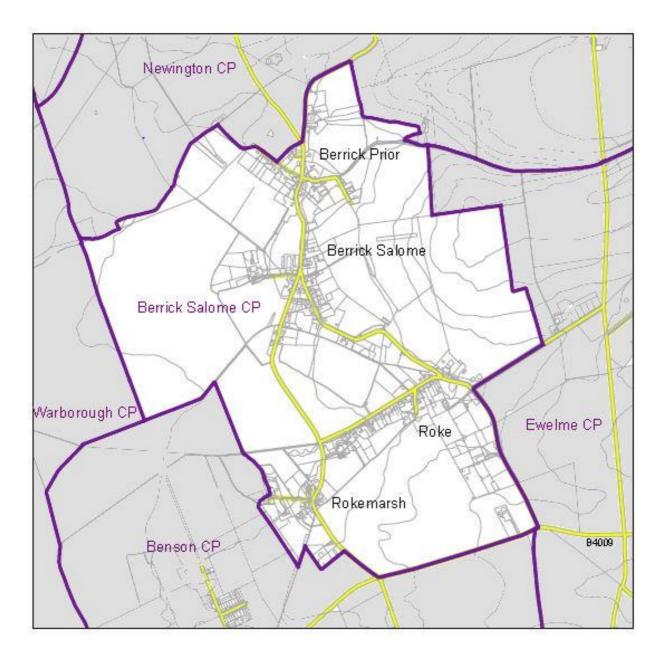
Brian Tracey

Berrick Parish Neighbourhood Plan Team Leader



1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

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



Plan A: Berrick Salome Parish Boundary

1.2 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to make planning policies and recommendations that can be used by the District Council in the determination of planning applications in the local area. The BSPNP's policies will protect the special rural character of The Parish and its surrounding landscape setting while planning for the sustainable growth of The Parish to 2033.

- 1.3 Neighbourhood Planning is an opportunity for local communities to shape the future development of their area and to facilitate locally-appropriate, sustainable development. Once approved at a public referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes a part of the statutory development plan for the local area and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided, as embodied in the National Policy Framework.
- 1.4 A Neighbourhood Plan is a legal planning document used for managing development. As a consequence, all policies within a neighbourhood plan must relate only to land use. Through the consultation and engagement process, some issues were raised by the local community that fall beyond the remit and scope of our Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council will have regard to these issues.
- 1.5 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans are legally required to meet a set of 'basic conditions'. These are:
 - It must have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - The making of a Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area); and
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- 1.6 For a plan to be made it must demonstrate how the prescribed conditions are met and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, the Parish Council must be able to show that it has properly engaged and consulted with the local community and other relevant organisations, throughout the process of making its Neighbourhood Plan, and has followed the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (as amended).
- 1.7 These requirements will be tested by an Independent Examiner once the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised. If satisfied, the examiner will recommend to SODC that the BSPNP goes to a public referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes for the BSPNP, then SODC will formally 'make' the BSPNP where it becomes legally adopted into planning policy for the local area.

The Neighbourhood Planning Team

- 1.8 At the Parish Council meeting on 1 September 2016, parishioners were invited to join the BSPNP team. Everyone who expressed interest was invited to an initial meeting on 29 September. Of those expressing an interest, the majority formed the core team and agreed its terms of reference with the Parish Council that month, which enabled it to manage the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Parish Council.
- 1.9 This core team was responsible for the primary engagement and consultation phase, which included the undertaking of a parish-wide survey in September 2017. In addition to the local community volunteers in the team, SODC supported the development of the BSPNP. An early version of the Plan was presented at the Parish Christmas Fair, on 25 November 2017, at which time all parishioners were given the opportunity to engage with representatives of the Neighbourhood Planning Team.

Version 9 of the BSPNP was emailed to all parishioners on 3/10/18 and all were asked to comment in writing to the Parish Clerk or verbally at a Parish meeting on 23/10/18. A

leaflet was dropped to the addresses of all Parishioners without email inviting them to ask for a printed version of the Plan and to comment on it on 23/10/18 or in writing before that date. 45 parishioners attended the meeting on 23/10 and 11 parishioners commented by email. All comments made to date are being tabulated, along with the consequent action taken. These will be published in the Evidence Based Report, together with those yet to be received, as the result of the full consultation, once completed.

Strategic Environmental Assessment & Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.10 This version of the Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted to SODC to enable it to provide a 'screening opinion' on the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment or a Habitats Regulation Assessment. These assessments are requirements of EU Directives and must be undertaken if, in due course, SODC cannot rule out the possibility that the Plan may have significant environmental effects.

Consultation

1.11 The consultation phase for the pre-submission plan begins on 16 November and ends on 11 January 2019.

The Berrick Salome Parish Neighbourhood Plan website contains an update on progress of the Berrick Salome Parish Neighbourhood Plan. Its web address is www.berricksalomeparishnp.info.

All responses to the Plan should be emailed to the Parish Clerk at the following address: parish-clerk@berrickandroke.org.uk



2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

A Profile of the Parish

- 2.1 Berrick Salome Parish (The Parish) is located in central south Oxfordshire and connected by rural country lanes to Benson, Ewelme, Chalgrove and Newington. The open fields on the southern edge of The Parish give an extensive view over the Thames Valley to the long line of the Berkshire Downs, with the isolated chalk ridge of the Sinodun Hills crowned by Wittenham Clumps, as a focus in front of them. To the east, the foothills of the Chilterns can be seen. The Parish is approximately one mile from the River Thames.
- 2.2 The Parish is historically an agricultural community, comprising 4 settlements: the settlements of Rokemarsh, Roke, Berrick Salome and Berrick Prior. The 4 settlements are arranged in a triangle, with Rokemarsh located at the southerly corner, Roke at the south-east corner, and Berrick Prior and Berrick Salome at the northern corner.
- 2.3 The Parish is surrounded by working farms. It is desirable to maintain these farms. In addition, circa 45%¹ of parishioners work wholly or partially from home and for this to continue. The Parish is very dependent on access to high-quality fibre-optic broadband.
- 2.4 Commercial shops, dentist, medical centre and garage are close by at Benson, accessible by car, bicycle or on foot. There is no provision for the education of children in The Parish. The closest primary schools are at Benson, Ewelme and Warborough, and there are nursery schools at Newington and Benson. Secondary schools are at Wallingford and the Icknield School in Watlington. There is a bus service for secondary schools. However, no other public transport is on offer in The Parish.
- 2.5 As the farms and farm workers declined, their houses and small parcels of land often adjacent to the farm roads were purchased by families who wished for a more rural way of life in the countryside. All of The Parish roads are historic, connecting farms within The Parish to the larger villages. However, The Parish has never benefited from any road improvement, which is part of its charm, but the result of which is that modern traffic flows have to be accommodated through narrow lanes with many blind bends, and shared with pedestrians without pavements or refuges.
- 2.6 There is no public transport between settlements or to other villages outside The Parish. Parishioners use these roads to walk, cycle or horse-ride to visit The Parish amenities and to drive to areas where they can do their shopping, access facilities such as GP surgeries, dental practices, veterinary practices and schooling; none of which exist in The Parish.
- 2.7 The NP Survey found that as many parishioners walk around the settlements as drive, and while 80%¹ use a car daily, 56%¹ of respondents walk around The Parish on a daily basis. For employment, 57%¹ of residents drive out of the area daily to the surrounding towns and cities. The Parish has no direct access to the rail network. The nearest stations are in Didcot, Oxford, Haddenham, Cholsey, Henley and Reading.
- 2.8 The rural position of The Parish makes it a very pleasant place to live. We had an extremely high response rate to the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire of 86%¹ of households in The Parish, with 99%¹ of those parishioners who responded, stating they 'liked living in The Parish', rating it 4 or 5 (out of 5, 5 where 5 is very favourable). There is a vibrant community where activities open to all are run at regular intervals throughout the year.

1 Neighbourhood Plan Survey

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

Early history

- 2.10 It is thought that The Parish developed here because of the stream which flows west and south, originating in the foothills of the Chilterns. This chalk ridge stores artesian water which emerges as springs and the main stream follows the ancient route of Hollandtide Bottom. The soil around The Parish is largely fertile alluvium over gault clay, supporting pastoral farming, as well as livestock.
- 2.11 There is rich evidence of ancient settlement. When the Didcot power station was converted from coal to gas fuel in the 1990s, the groundworks needed for the gas pipeline initiated comprehensive archaeological investigations. These revealed three or four settlements ranging from the early Bronze Age (2,500 BC) to early Roman occupation (43 AD) and flint tools dating back 4,500 years were found. The evidence shows that the early parishioners farmed sheep and pigs for meat and cows for milk, as well as growing wheat.
- 2.12 By 1086, the Doomsday Book records the population of Berrick as being 4 serfs (slaves), 10 villeins (tenant farmers tied to the lord of the manor, in this case, Miles Crispin) and 6 bordars (smallholders), probably totalling, with their families, about 50. Berrick was an unimportant agricultural settlement; even its church was a chapelry of Chalgrove Church.

St Helens Church

- 2.13 While a church at Berrick had existed in some form for centuries, the nave of the current building, with its Norman arch to the south door, was probably built in the 11th century. Berrick Prior at this stage was part of the Newington parish, which was a 'peculiar' of the Archbishop of Canterbury and not part of the local diocese. It only became incorporated into Berrick Salome in the 1993 local government boundary rationalisation.
- 2.14 The Church serviced the spiritual needs of the farm labourers locally, without them having to walk to Chalgrove, and the two parishes are part of the same benefice, sharing an incumbent vicar. Today the church seems isolated in a field on the edge of The Parish, but there is evidence that, at one stage, there were

dwellings around it, possibly abandoned in the 17th century when people fled from the plague as it travelled down the river Thames.

- 2.15 In 1429 a tower was built, unique in Oxfordshire for being a timber tower on a stone church. Today it has a ring of 6 bells, the oldest dating from 1621; they were overhauled and retuned in the major restoration project of 2015, all funded by the parishioners. During the 17th century, after the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the disposal of their looted assets, there was more wealth circulating in the country and churches were endowed with gifts and improvements. In Berrick, there was enough money to replace the roof timbers and build the west gallery to accommodate musicians. This wave of prosperity also led to the building or extension of several farmhouses in The Parish, including Lower Farm, Grace's Farmhouse and Roke Farmhouse.
- 2.16 Two centuries of decline followed, with some parishioners rebelling by becoming non-conformists and by the end of the 19th century the church was in a state of decrepitude, necessitating a huge restoration effort, when a Vestry was also added. The church today is largely as the Victorians left it in 1891 a historic gem of a church, supported by several teams of cleaners, gardeners and flower arrangers to keep it in its present impressive state.

The changing nature of village life

- 2.17 Apart from the large farms, evidence suggests that the dwellings were small houses for agricultural workers, many being thatched and built of clunch (chalky limestone) or brick from the local brickworks. Today 24%¹ (30 in total) of the houses are Grade II listed. Within recent memory, there were 3 public houses, two off-licences, a petrol pump, a post office and an infant school, as well as a few shops, of which today only two public houses remain.
- 2.18 The Inclosure Act in 1863 moved the nature of farming away from the openstrip system and two areas of land were allocated to 'the Churchwardens and overseers of the poor' to administer for the inhabitants: the recreation ground for exercise and the allotments for parishioners to supplement their small gardens. These two areas remain today for communal use.
- 2.19 With the advance of mechanisation, there was less call for farm hands and in any case people with motorbikes could earn a better salary at the Morris works in Oxford than working in the fields. People started to commute. More houses were built during the 20th century, including six council houses in Weller Close. The Parish has now become a place from which to either commute or home-work, the advent of modern communication systems enabling the latter, especially the recent arrival of the fibre-optic cable that the parishioners decided to install in 2017 to correct their rurally-deprived and hitherto their lamentable Broadband service.
- 2.20 So today the social life of The Parish has changed out of all recognition. There are 130 houses, and approximately 300 people in total. The Berrick and Roke Village Hall was added in 1979, administered by a Hall Committee and is used regularly by the Wallingford Bridge Club, which plays a vital role in the Hall's maintenance, making it available for Parish and private functions. The two public houses are a traditional focus for community life at each end of The Parish, offering events from time-to-time, and the church also plays a central role in the social life of the village.
- 2.21 Whether or not parishioners choose to worship there on a regular basis, they are fully supportive of their church and work to see it thrive. Thus, the PCC and other parishioners organise Open Gardens, Summer Fete, Pop Quiz, Progressive Supper, Christmas Fair, Tennis Tournament, 'Ride and Stride' and concerts, all pulling people together and enriching the communal life of the neighbourhood, while raising money to support St Helens Church. It is perhaps ironic that the continual need to maintain the ancient church and to pay for a one-third share of the

incumbent for a weekly service, has resulted in a much richer programme of social fund-raising events than a wealthier church would have provided.

Transport and infrastructure and their challenges

- 2.22 The Parish is connected by rural country lanes to Benson, Ewelme, Chalgrove and Newington. The southern of the 4 settlements have small lanes that are connected to the B4009 (Watlington to Benson) and the north to the A329 (Warborough to Stadhampton). Roads between the settlements are narrow (on average 4.4m wide) and winding, being constructed as roads suitable for farm traffic within The Parish.
- 2.23 The lanes throughout The Parish have evolved haphazardly over the years and were clearly not designed for their current use, resulting in them becoming wider by virtue of constant erosion of the verges and regular resurfacing. They are also becoming increasingly unsafe, as more traffic shares the lanes with pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists. Within the past 40 years they were badged "single track roads access to villages only" for which their design was intended.
- 2.24 All of The Parish roads are historic, connecting farms within The Parish to the larger villages. However, The Parish has never benefited from any road improvement, which is part of its charm, but the result of which is that modern traffic flows have to be accommodated through narrow lanes with many blind bends, and shared with pedestrians without pavements or refuges.
- 2.25 The Parish's location means that it has become a shortcut for traffic to reach the eastern side of the city of Oxford and the M40 to the north. These road links have to cater for a growing amount of through traffic as well as extra traffic generated by the current expansion in Benson.
- 2.26 The Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire (NPQ) results conveyed serious concern about the current safety of the lanes through The Parish and the likelihood of the current position worsening with the potential for fatal accidents as a direct result of proposed development activity in Benson and Chalgrove. Even if the construction traffic is kept away from The Parish, there will inevitably be increased traffic caused by additional occupied dwellings, as the lanes are a direct link between Chalgrove and Benson. The Berrick Salome Parish Council is considering solutions to the traffic problems and exploring ways of funding the required work.
- 2.27 The specific areas of concern are the current volume of vehicle and cycle traffic using the lanes as rat runs and race tracks, respectively; the speed of traffic using the lanes; the number of heavy goods vehicles using the lanes contravening existing regulations; and the safety at present time for walkers, equestrians and cyclists, young and old, particularly given the absence of footpaths refuges. All of the above are getting worse, as a result of the explosion of internet shopping and consequent deliveries.

Bridleways and footpaths

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

- 2.29 There is an established system of public footpaths and bridleways. Whilst the number of paths is adequate in some parts of The Parish, provision for pedestrians in many parts of The Parish is non-existent or inadequate. The Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire (NPQ) conveyed a considerable concern over current and future safety of walking, cycling and horse-riding on the lanes in The Parish. Parishioners want the infrastructure that supports such activity to be improved, as they see the dangers involved in such activities as very significant. Provision of pavements and footpaths were mentioned by many, but there is concern about delivering them, without impacting on the rural nature of The Parish and reducing the width of the already narrow roads.
- 2.30 Some paths may not appeal to users because they are narrow, overgrown and enclosed. However, other more open and attractive examples add to the distinctive rural character of The Parish by providing valuable shortcuts. They help to preserve The Parish's historic links with adjacent settlements. The Parish Council has embarked on a scheme of footpath maintenance to encourage their usage. Where appropriate, landowners are responsible for maintaining a right of way on their land.

Public Transport

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

Pedestrians and cyclists

- 2.32 Our NPQ conveyed that over 90%1 of parishioners walk in The Parish. In fact, as many responders walk around The Parish as drive and surprisingly, on a weekly basis they walked about as regularly as they drove.
- 2.33 The Parish is located in relatively flat terrain that lends itself to walking, but there are currently insufficient arrangements for pedestrians. Furthermore, The Parish historic road structure does not lend itself easily to establishing new pedestrian and cycle routes on existing roads. There is no available land to install pavements or cycle lanes and further limiting road width to partition an area for non-motorised transport, would seriously affect the road capacity. Installing cycle lanes would seriously reduce the road capacity. Concern was expressed about the state of the roads, in particular potholes and the danger to cyclists.

Road Safety

- 2.34 The NPQ indicated that a large proportion of the respondents had concerns over road related issues. In the context of traffic flows in The Parish and the question of 'How important are the following': 'continuing to walk, ride horses and cycle along the lanes'; 'continuing ability for children to visit friends on foot'; the 'avoidance of an increase in traffic speeds'; and the 'increase of the degradation of the verges', over $80\%^1$ responded with 'very important' in every instance. A subsequent section of the BSPNP will seek to identify safety concerns reported and then assess them in the light of possible future development.
- 2.35 A high proportion of respondents also reported believing there are road safety issues in The Parish, with the following identified as safety related: speeding, inadequate road width, potholes, winding roads and dangerous junctions.

Effects of proposed developments

- 2.36 The Parish is sandwiched between the two larger villages of Benson and Chalgrove, where very significant housing development (circa 4,000 houses) is proposed in the immediate future. These developments will introduce considerably more traffic into the lanes through The Parish, unless action is taken to prevent or discourage it. Any increase in traffic through The Parish will inevitably have a debilitating effect on the welfare and safety of those living here, which this plan addresses.
- 2.37 Apart from extra "local" journeys and delivery activity generated by the new housing, there is a significant likelihood of those commuting to and from Chalgrove to the south and east (Wallingford, Reading, Didcot and the M4) and to and from Benson to the M40 and the Oxford Ring Road, going east using the lanes through The Parish as a rat run

Mains drainage

- 2.38 Prior to 2002 only properties in Roke and Rokemarsh were connected to mains drainage. All properties in Berrick Salome and Berrick Prior were served by their own treatment plants. In 2002, those properties that elected to (and most did) were connected to the Mains Drains in a major exercise, engineered by Thames Water but encouraged by the Environment Agency (who were becoming increasingly concerned at the quality of the effluent in the area).
- 2.39 The design of the current system routes the gravity flow of sewage to a pumping station adjacent to the west end of Weller Close. From there it is pumped to a further pumping station at Harrow Corner in Rokemarsh and then on to the Main Sewer in Benson.
- 2.40 There have been problems with the current system from the early days of its introduction which are attributed to two main causes. Firstly, as the water table has risen in The Parish there has been water ingress into the old pipes in Roke and the new ones through Berrick. This has resulted in the system becoming overloaded. And secondly, the outlet pipe from Rokemarsh to Benson (which runs through the field between Rokemarsh and Benson, and currently proposed as the Ben3/4 residential development) is considered to be of insufficient diameter to service the volumes now being produced. Thames Water accepts the issues with point 1 above and are working towards remedies, but are reluctant to accept the issue described in point 2 as, clearly, to accept that would require a remedy by them which would be very costly.
- 2.41 The effect of the two issues described above is that, when the water table rises. It is unacceptable that foul sewage has, on several occasions, escaped onto the Roke road at the junction with the road from Berrick to Rokemarsh and Benson, and foul sewage has also escaped into some gardens in Rokemarsh. Thames Water is aware of the issues and organises extraction of foul waste by tanker out of the pumping stations by Weller Close and more extensively, Rokemarsh, to mitigate when it occurs. But the situation is, clearly, unsatisfactory and The Parish is constantly seeking to insist that Thames Water prioritises affecting a long-term solution.
- 2.42 Meanwhile the Parish Council has repeatedly reminded the Planning Authority of the issue, in the context that any extra volumes will further exacerbate the situation and the issue has influenced (and will continue to do so) the recommendations that the Parish Council has offered regarding Planning Applications for new housing. Some Applications for new housing in The Parish, acknowledging this issue, have reverted to installing their own treatment plants—which is precisely the situation that concerned the Environment Agency prior to 2002. The issue will and should significantly affect this Plan in the context of The Parish's ability and desire to accommodate any residential development.

Surface water

- 2.43 The Parish is low lying and flat but served by a network of streams and culverts that work adequately. For them to prevent flooding in extreme conditions it is essential they are kept clear from obstruction and that existing flood fields are not prevented from doing their job.
- 2.44 Therefore, this Plan notes the importance of preventing development of hard surfaces on areas of porous land which has historically served the purpose of offering drainage and run-off in extreme conditions. There are areas of particular sensitivity to this issue and past experience has informed where those areas are. The Plan acknowledges this issue, to ensure that the flooding risk (attendant to ignoring it) does not become a real one.
- 2.45 The residents of The Parish must be conscious of their obligation to keep the streams and culverts in The Parish (and downstream of it) clear of obstruction and the Parish Council must continue to ensure that the message regarding this obligation is clearly understood and acted upon.

Rural broadband

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

Power

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

Communications

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



3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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

National Planning Policy Framework

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published by the government in 2012 and subsequently revised in July 2018. The NPPF is an important guide in the preparation of both Local and Neighbourhood Plans, which must demonstrate that they are consistent with its provisions. As this Neighbourhood Plan will be examined after January 2019, it will be the NPPF 2018 that is relevant and those paragraphs which are considered of particular relevance to the Plan are listed in the table below. For each of the paragraphs the affected Plan policies are indicated.

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

The South Oxfordshire Development Plan

3.3 Planning legislation requires a Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the 'development plan'. The development plan for South Oxfordshire currently comprises the Core Strategy adopted in 2012 (covering the period to 2027) and a number of saved policies from the Local Plan adopted in 2006. There are also minerals and waste policies adopted by Oxfordshire County Council but none are considered relevant to the BSPNP. The District Council is presently developing a new Local Plan to cover the period to 2033, which is anticipated will be adopted in 2019, i.e. after the examination of the BSPNP. Therefore, as far as is possible, the BSPNP also needs to take the likely provisions of this new Local Plan into account.

South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027

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

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

Berrick Salome a 'Smaller Village' Roke an 'Other Village'

Berrick Prior not listed in its own right Rokemarsh not listed in its own right

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

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

- 3.7 For the purpose of this policy, 'infill development' is defined as:
 - "... the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings. Rural exception sites are small sites for affordable housing within or adjacent to villages where housing would not normally be permitted."

Core Strategy 2027, paragraph 13.10

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

- 3.9 The District Council has also saved a number of older policies from the Local Plan of 2006. Those that are considered to be relevant to the BSPNP are:
 - C4 Landscape setting of settlements
 - C6 Maintain & enhance biodiversity
 - C9 Loss of landscape features
 - CON5 Setting of a listed building
 - CON7 conservation areas (applies to part of Berrick Salome and Berrick Prior)
 - CON11 preservation of archaeological remains
 - CON16 preservation of common land, village greens, etc.
 - D1 Principles of good design and local distinctiveness
 - D4 Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
 - EP2 Light pollution
 - G2 Protect district from adverse development
 - G3 Location strategy
 - G4 Protection of countryside
 - H4 New homes in the towns and villages
 - H10 Rural exception sites
 - H12 Replacement dwellings
 - H16 Extensions to dwellings and ancillary buildings
 - H18 Extensions of gardens
 - R10 Proposals involving the keeping of horses
 - T1 Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
 - T2 Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

Emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033

- 3.10 The new Local Plan will replace both the Core Strategy and the old Local Plan policies. The latest version of the Local Plan was published in May 2018 and its reasoning and evidence have been used to inform the BSPNP. It is anticipated that the new Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan will be published before the BSPNP is submitted for examination, and so it can also be taken into account as far as any changes that are relevant to the BSPNP are concerned.
- 3.11 As currently drafted, the rural housing policies in the emerging Local Plan are similar to those of the Core Strategy. However, a significant difference is the reclassification of the settlement of Berrick Salome (and Berrick Prior as SODC regards the two as a single settlement). The respective settlements within the parish of Berrick Salome are classified as follows:

Berrick Salome (including Berrick Prior) an 'Other Village' Roke an 'Other Village'

Rokemarsh not listed in its own right

3.12 The settlement infill development policy is H16 and is essentially very similar to policy CSR1:

> Infill development is defined as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings. The scale of infill should be appropriate to its location and this will be directed, in part, by the settlement hierarchy, as follows:

Settlement type	Infill limit	
Towns / Larger Villages	No limit	
Smaller Villages	Sites of up to 0.2Ha	
	(equivalent to 5-6 homes)	
Other Villages	Sites of up to 0.1Ha	
	(equivalent to 2-3 homes)	
All other places not listed	Not normally acceptable	

3.13 The District Council's aspirations regarding policy H16 are worth noting:

"The policy [H16] does not mean that every space within the settlements will be developed. Many open spaces, both public and private, are important for recreational, wildlife or amenity reasons or are vital to an area's character, and proposals for the development of such spaces will be resisted. Care will be taken to ensure that the cumulative effects of development would not damage the character and amenity of the surrounding area. Some residential areas have large houses set in extensive grounds and further residential development of such spaces will not normally be permitted if it would spoil the spacious character of the area. In appropriate locations we will encourage higher-density development and will seek innovative design solutions to ensure that adequate space and privacy levels are achieved. We will also ensure that development can have an adequate access, be serviced by other infrastructure and would not cause problems to neighbours." Local Plan 2033, paragraph 5.75

- 3.14 As currently drafted, other policies in the emerging Local Plan that may be relevant, include:
 - H1 Delivering new homes
 - H8 Housing in smaller villages
 - H10 Exception sites
 - H12 Self-build and custom housing
 - H18 Replacement dwellings
 - H19 Re-use of rural buildings
 - H20 Rural workers dwellings
 - H21 Extensions to dwellings

 - INF4 Water resources
 - EMP11 Development in countryside and rural areas
 - ENV1 Landscape and countryside
 - ENV3 Biodiversity in non-designated sites, habitats and species
 - ENV4 Watercourses
 - ENV8 Conservation areas
 - EP4 Flood risk
 - DES1 Delivering high quality development
 - DES2 Enhancing local character
 - DES9 Promoting sustainable design

CF1 - Safeguarding community facilities CF4 - Existing open space, Sport and recreational facilities STRAT1 - Overall strategy

Adjoining Neighbourhood Plans

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

Benson (Plan passed referendum)

- 3.16 This is the closest and most significant of those plans to the Parish, for which Benson is a key local service provider in the absence of such services in the Parish itself. The new plan provides for large numbers of new houses around the northern edge of the village to deliver a new link road and to improve local services, e.g. a larger GP surgery. Those changes may be of benefit to the Parish but it is crucial that SODC adheres to the provisions of the plan to ensure that the gap between the new edge of Benson and Rokemarsh is maintained to prevent the coalescence of the two villages.
- 3.17 Similarly, it is important that the commitment to create a footpath link through the new developments is delivered and the acknowledgement of the streams running into Benson through this Parish remains. There is also the stated opportunity of using the construction work on the sites closest to the Parish to install a waste pipe of sufficient girth to manage its waste when the water table rises to address the current problems that effect Roke and Rokemarsh.

Chalgrove (Plan under independent examination)

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

Ewelme (Plan under preparation)

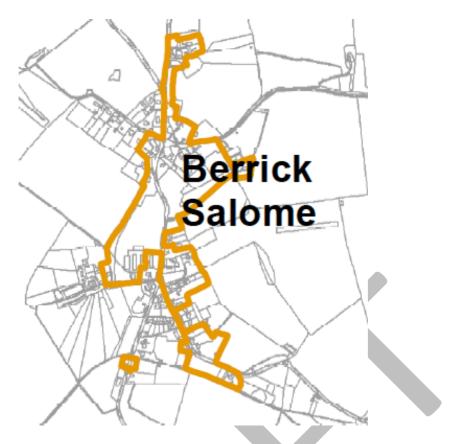
3.19 We may wish to support them if they promote Hollandtide Lane as a 'Berrick By-pass'.

Warborough and Shillingford (Made)

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

The Berrick Salome Conservation Area

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



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

- 3.22 Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities have a duty to designate conservation areas and from time to time to review the boundaries. Such areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.
- 3.23 The main attributes that define the special character of an area are its physical appearance and history, i.e. the form and features of buildings and the spaces between them, their former uses and historical development. Where there are a number of periods of historical development, the character of individual parts of the conservation area may differ. Contrasts between the appearance of areas and the combination of buildings of various ages, materials and styles may contribute to its special character.
- 3.24 Policies which seek to preserve or enhance the special character of the council's 72 conservation areas, are contained in South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan. Unfortunately, all the SODC records concerning the Berrick Salome Conservation Area were lost in the 2015 fire. However, an appraisal of the Area was never undertaken following its designation, and so a new Character Appraisal report has been prepared for the whole Parish, including the Conservation Area and its setting (see separate report).

4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan team developed a community engagement strategy at the initial planning stages of their activities. It was agreed that a range of methods would be used to inform the residents of our activities and to give them every opportunity to provide feedback, which would be used in the development of the BSPNP. The methods included:
 - establishment of a Neighbourhood Plan update section to the Berrick & Roke Village website, which includes meeting minutes, published documents, examples of other plans and links to government websites relating to neighbourhood planning
 - links from the Community Facebook page and the Berrick & Roke Village website
 - door drop leaflets
 - public meetings
 - public noticeboards
 - public exhibitions
- 4.2 The team developed a Vision Paper to provide an agreed starting point for the team's formal activities, including public consultation through the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire (see Appendix D).
- 4.3 The team created a Berrick Salome Parish Neighbourhood Plan website, www.berricksalomeparishnp.info, with a range of information and relevant documents. The Parish Clerk developed and maintains the website and also manages email communication, which is the most effective tool the team has for reaching those in the Parish with access to the internet.
- 4.4 The main consultation exercise to inform the development of the policies was undertaken in September 2017. The team developed a six-page questionnaire covering a range of topics and invited residents to return it in post boxes situated at both public houses. Questionnaires and an explanatory leaflet were distributed to every house in the village by team members and other volunteers. The official return date was 30 September but late responses were included in the data analysis.
- 4.5 Responses to the direct questions were analysed (see Appendix E, Part C, for graphical representation). In some sections, the questionnaire also invited general comment. These comments are tabulated in Part D, with the significant messages used to inform the Plan, where appropriate.
- 4.6 To help people understand the issues, the team encouraged engagement during the Village Christmas Fair at the Berrick and Roke Village Hall on 25 November 2017, where a small exhibition of the current status of the Plan was presented along with the outline of the traffic calming initiatives. Members of the team were available for consultation.
- 4.7 The response to the questionnaire was extremely satisfactory (86%¹) and the results have provided satisfactory evidence for consideration by the team in developing the policies contained in this BSPNP.

5. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Vision

5.1 The BSPNP provides a framework to guide development within the Parish until 2033. The Vision is largely inspired by the responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, the feedback responses and, more broadly, by the consultation with parishioners during the preparation of the Plan.

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

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

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

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

Objectives

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

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

Land Use Policies

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

- 5.5 The purpose of these policies is to encourage planning applications to be made for potential development that reflect the Vision and Objectives, as outlined at the beginning of this section. The policies have been clearly written so that they can be easily interpreted and applied in the consideration and determination of planning applications.
- 5.6 The BSPNP deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies. The proposed policies therefore focus on a relatively small number of key development issues in the area. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents, the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies of the South Oxfordshire Development Plan will continue to be used.



BER1 SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES & INFILL DEVELOPMENT

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

Proposals for small scale, infill development within a settlement boundary will be supported, provided they accord with the design and development management policies of the development plan and other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Proposals for development outside the boundary will only be supported if they are appropriate to a countryside location and they are consistent with local development plan policies.

- 5.7 This policy is intended to distinguish between the built-up area of each of the four settlements in the Parish and their surrounding countryside in order to manage development proposals accordingly. The boundaries have been drawn using the Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal and the conventions deployed by other local planning authorities that use this development management tool, but essentially, they follow the observed settlement edge formed by buildings.
- 5.8 They also reflect plot boundaries where they are clearly defined in the street-scene or within the landscape, e.g. mature trees/hedges, boundary walls/fences. Features that appear visually as part of the open landscape roads, waterways, large open gardens with no/few built structures are excluded from the boundary, irrespective of their functional relationship to land within the boundary. In defining the boundaries on the Policies Map (see Section 7), the reliance on ambiguous historic settlement names is avoided, with applicants and the local planning authority having certainty when preparing and determining planning applications respectively. This is consistent with a number of Core Strategy and Local Plan policies to encourage sustainable forms of development in the rural areas.
- 5.9 Most new development will be acceptable in principle within the defined boundaries, subject to it being appropriate in terms of its design and other arrangements. This may be small scale, infill housing and other uses that are appropriate in scale to very small villages with a severely limited road network and no effective public transport services. For the purpose of this policy 'small scale' is defined as no more than three dwellings on a site of less than 0.1 Ha (as per the adopted Core Strategy and emerging Local Plan) to reflect the limited opportunities and plot sizes for infill development in the settlements. And 'infill' is defined as meaning a scheme on a site that has a frontage to a main road (with the exception of Rokemarsh see Policy BER5), that has an established, defensible boundary at the rear of the plot and that has existing buildings on two sides of the site. The proposed design will be primarily judged using the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan for each settlement.
- 5.10 The policy requires that development proposals outside the defined boundaries are appropriate to a countryside location and are consistent with relevant policies of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan in respect of protecting local landscape and character of the natural environment character. This recognises the valued function of the countryside and working farmland in shaping rural character. In some places, there are paddocks, recreational facilities, agricultural units and dwellings in open

countryside or on the edge of the settlement, extending into the countryside beyond. The policy does not seek to prevent the improvement and extension of such uses.

5.11 The Neighbourhood Plan does not make any housing site allocations as to do so would be inconsistent with adopted and emerging strategic policies, given the status of the settlements in the District settlement hierarchy. However, the local community recognises the potential value that small scale, infill housing development and entry-level homes (see Policy BER7) may have in enabling access to homes in the Parish suited to younger people and 'downsizers'.



BER2 DESIGN DETAILS

Proposals for new buildings using contemporary architecture will be supported, provided they utilise high quality materials and are consistent with the relevant settlement-specific design policy (BER3-BER6). Proposals should avoid pastiche design solutions but should seek to reinterpret the traditional building forms of the locality with contemporary elements such as doors or windows. Proposals that are or suburban either in layout or design will not be supported.

Proposals should also demonstrate that full regard has been had to the following design principles:

- Designs should have pitched roofs covered in tile, slate or thatch. Roofs should be steeper than 45 degrees and in elevation the roof should be equal to the height of wall below.
- Windows should be in timber or aluminium. UPVC will not be supported. Proposals should demonstrate that window reveals are at least 100mm deep.
- Large expanses of roof should be punctuated with chimney or dormer features.
- Any hardstanding areas comprise permeable surfaces to allow for the efficient absorption of surface water run-off during heavy rainfall.
- The arrangements for the storage and collection of refuse and recycling should not detract visually or physically from the appearance of the proposal from a public vantage point.

5.12 This policy is one of five (BER2 – BER6) that seek to maintain high standards of design in The Parish. Successful design solutions for new development can enhance the unique qualities of the four settlements. All design proposals should ensure that a thorough analysis of the context is carried out to ensure that proposals respond positively. All proposals should respect and maintain the key views identified in the plan and should demonstrate via a Design and Access Statement that there will be no harmful impacts on the environment, conservation area, listed buildings or the natural environment.

BER3 DESIGN IN BERRICK PRIOR

Proposals for development in Berrick Prior, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported, provided they sustain and enhance the distinctiveness of the settlement and where appropriate the character and appearance of the Berrick Salome Conservation Area and its setting.

The use of building forms and materials that reflect the vernacular may be considered appropriate, provided it can be demonstrated that they adhere to the essential settlement character and that sustainable methods of construction have been employed. Building forms that are characteristic of urban housing schemes in their appearance are not considered appropriate.

In these regards, development proposals in the settlement will be supported, provided they have full regard to the following design principles:

- the importance to defining the essential character of the settlement of large building plots with large, two storey, detached dwellings fronting on to the main road and Green Lane and set back on common building lines, with no precedent for plot sub-division or dwellings located at the rear of plots with no frontage to a main road
- the importance of long, unobstructed or punctuated views along the main roads into the settlement towards its centre at The Chequers P.H., requiring attention to be paid to the location of buildings within the plot
- the importance of the group value of designated heritage assets, other buildings and structures, open spaces, mature trees and tall hedges to defining the former village green at the junction of the main road, Hollandtide Bottom and Green Lane, requiring any new or replacement buildings or structures in this location to reinforce that group value
- the importance of mature trees and tall hedges along the frontage boundaries of plots, requiring the landscaping and access proposals of schemes to avoid or minimise the loss of existing vegetation, or to provide new trees and tall hedges if currently absent
- the occasional use of limestone, clunch rubble, grey brick, plain tile and thatch in building and boundary materials of the most important heritage assets in the settlement, inviting proposals for new buildings to incorporate one or more of those materials
- the common use of tall pitched roof forms and timber window frames set within a deep reveal to accentuate shadowing
- the importance of rare glimpse views from the main roads through plots to the open countryside beyond, requiring the layout of proposals to avoid siting new buildings that will obstruct such views

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

5.14 The policy highlights a series of development principles that are drawn from the Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal of the settlement. Those principles set out those features of the settlement that make it distinctive from its neighbouring settlements and help define the significance of the Conservation Area. It therefore requires the Design & Access Statements prepared for planning applications to

demonstrate that, where relevant to the location of the proposal, regard has been paid to those principles.



BER4 DESIGN IN BERRICK SALOME

Proposals for development in Berrick Salome, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported, provided they sustain and enhance the distinctiveness of the settlement and where appropriate the character and appearance of the Berrick Salome Conservation Area and its setting.

The use of building forms and materials that reflect the vernacular may be considered appropriate, provided it can be demonstrated that they adhere to the essential settlement character and that sustainable methods of construction have been employed. Building forms that are characteristic of urban housing schemes in their appearance are not considered appropriate.

In these regards, development proposals in the settlement will be supported, provided they have full regard to the following design principles:

- the importance to defining the essential character of the settlement of large building plots with large, two storey, detached dwellings fronting on to the main roads and set back on common building lines, with no precedent for plot sub-division or dwellings located at the rear of plots with no frontage to a main road
- the importance of long, unobstructed or punctuated views along the main roads into the settlement towards its centre at Parsonage Farm and Parsonage Farmhouse, requiring attention to be paid to the location of buildings within the plot
- the importance of the group value of designated heritage assets, other buildings and structures and open spaces to defining the settlement centre at the junction of the roads from the settlement to Berrick Prior, Roke and Rokemarsh, requiring any new or replacement buildings or structures in this location to reinforce that group value
- the importance of mature trees and tall hedges along the frontage boundaries of plots, requiring the landscaping and access proposals of schemes to avoid or minimise the loss of existing vegetation, or to provide new trees and tall hedges if currently absent
- the contribution made by Plough Cottage in punctuating views into the settlement centre from Berrick Prior and its visual interrelationship with agricultural buildings at Parsonage Farm
- the occasional use of clunch, rendered masonry, plain tile and thatch in building materials of the most important heritage assets in the settlement, inviting proposals for new buildings to incorporate one or more of those materials
- the common use of tall pitched roof forms and timber window frames set within a deep reveal to accentuate shadowing
- the importance of rare glimpse views from the main roads through plots to the open countryside beyond, requiring the layout of proposals to avoid siting new buildings that will obstruct such views

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

5.16 The policy highlights a series of development principles that are drawn from the Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal of the settlement. Those principles set out those features of the settlement that make it distinctive from its neighbouring settlements and help define the significance of the Conservation Area. It therefore requires the Design & Access Statements prepared for planning applications to demonstrate that, where relevant to the location of the proposal, regard has been paid to those principles.



BER5 DESIGN IN ROKE

Proposals for development in Roke, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported, provided they sustain and enhance the distinctiveness of the settlement.

The use of building forms and materials that reflect the vernacular may be considered appropriate, provided it can be demonstrated that they adhere to the essential settlement character and that sustainable methods of construction have been employed. Building forms that are characteristic of urban housing schemes in their appearance are not considered appropriate.

In these regards, development proposals in the settlement will be supported, provided they have full regard to the following design principles, which are characteristic of the settlement:

- the importance to defining the essential character of the settlement of large building plots with large, two or two and a half storey, detached dwellings fronting on to the main road to Rokemarsh and set back on common building lines, with no precedent for plot subdivision or dwellings located at the rear of plots with no frontage to the main road
- by exception, the different, tight character of Chapel Lane with small, two storey dwellings in a variety of orientations and locations within small plots
- the importance of the group value of designated heritage assets and other buildings and structures, most notably the Home Sweet Home P.H., to defining the settlement centre at the junction of the roads from the settlement to Berrick Salome, Ewelme and Rokemarsh, requiring any new or replacement buildings or structures in this location to reinforce that group value
- the common use of tall pitched roof forms and timber window frames set within a deep reveal to accentuate shadowing
- the importance of occasional glimpse views from the main road through plots to the open countryside beyond, requiring the layout of proposals to avoid siting new buildings that will obstruct such views

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

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

BER6 DESIGN IN ROKEMARSH

Proposals for development in Rokemarsh, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported, provided they sustain and enhance the distinctiveness of the settlement.

The use of building forms and materials that reflect the vernacular may be considered appropriate, provided it can be demonstrated that they adhere to the essential settlement character and that sustainable methods of construction have been employed. Building forms that are characteristic of urban housing schemes in their appearance are not considered appropriate.

In these regards, development proposals in the settlement will be supported, provided they have full regard to the following design principles:

- the importance to defining the essential character of the settlement of with a mix of two storey, semi-detached and detached dwellings either fronting on to the main road or in plots off the main road
- the importance of the group value of designated heritage assets, and other buildings and structures to defining the settlement centre at Harrow Corner, requiring any new or replacement buildings or structures in this location to reinforce that group value
- the contribution made by Thatched Cottage and the former Horse & Harrow P.H. in framing views into the settlement centre from the Benson road
- the importance of mature trees and tall hedges along the frontage boundaries of most plots, requiring the landscaping and access proposals of schemes to avoid or minimise the loss of existing vegetation, or to provide new trees and tall hedges if currently absent
- the common use of tall pitched roof forms and timber window frames set within a deep reveal to accentuate shadowing

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

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

BER7 ENTRY LEVEL HOMES

We positively encourage a broader range of dwelling sizes to better reflect that of local need. Should there be an established need in the District, proposals for the development of entry-level homes suitable for first time buyers or those looking to rent their first home will be supported, provided:

- i. The gross site area is no more than 1 Ha and is not greater than 5% of the total land area of a village;
- ii. The site has a boundary that significantly adjoins the defined boundary of the settlement;
- iii. The site does not lie within in a designated Important View or within the Berrick Salome Conservation Area;
- iv. The location of the proposal will not lead to the coalescence of either Berrick Salome with Berrick Prior or of Roke with Rokemarsh; and
- v. They accord with the design details policy (BER2) and with the policy (BER3 BER6) for the settlement that they adjoin and with all other relevant development management policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan.

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

- 5.21 This policy sets out how the new national policy initiative to encourage the development of entry-level homes on the edge of towns and villages can be successfully implemented in this Parish, provided it can be demonstrated that there is a need for the supply of such homes in South Oxfordshire.
- 5.22 The new NPPF (§71) defines this new type of affordable housing as 'suitable for first time buyers (or those looking to rent their first home)' with schemes confined to 'offering one or more types of affordable housing. Its new definition of affordable housing comprises affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing (often known as 'low cost homes') and affordable routes to home ownership (for example shared equity and rent to buy schemes).
- 5.23 The NPPF makes it clear that proposals must 'comply with any local design policies and standards', hence the policy requires sites to have more than a tenuous relationship to a settlement boundary and are not located on an edge that has been designated in policies BER8 and BER9 as either part of an Important View or a Local Green Space respectively. Importantly too, given the remote location of the settlements and their small size, the policy confines proposals to no more than one in the Parish during the plan period, to prevent consecutive proposals being made.

BER8 FARM COMPLEX DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals within the boundary of a complex of agricultural buildings will be supported, provided:

- i. it can be demonstrated that they will not compromise either the essential rural character of the complex or its viability as an agricultural enterprise;
- ii. if they comprise a change of use to a residential use, the total gross internal floorspace of that use will not exceed half of the existing floorspace of the agricultural buildings;
- iii. they comprise a mix of small dwellings as either entry-level homes or homes suited to downsizers that offer more than one type of affordable housing and of small business and live-work units suited to rural crafts and businesses;
- iv. they comprise a combination of the redevelopment or reuse of existing barns and of small-scale infill development that retains the essential agricultural appearance of the building complex, especially in any Important Views designated in Policy;
- v. they retain the existing building form, layout and massing;
- vi. they have regard to the design details of Policy BER2 and to the principles of the relevant settlement design Policy BER3-BER6; and
- vii. the proposals are made as part of a masterplan for the whole site.
- 5.24 This policy anticipates that there may be sound reasons why proposals may emerge during the plan period for the diversification of one or more of the larger farm complexes in the Parish. These complexes are prominent in the Parish and a key reminder of the historic and continuing value of agriculture to the local economy and environment. They are considered to be capable of accommodating some well-planned transition from their existing agricultural use to a mix of that and other residential and business uses, without undermining their character and viability as farm businesses.
- 5.25 A sympathetic, well-designed development would have the advantage of delivering some entry-level homes for first time buyers and renters (as defined by the NPPF), a housing type that has not been delivered in the settlement or wider Parish for many years. There is also the possibility of creating some small business units and live-work units to encourage craftspeople to base themselves in the Parish.
- 5.26 The policy requires that proposals are made in the form of a masterplan for the whole farm complex, to avoid incremental and poorly co-ordinated schemes. The masterplan should indicate the likely full extent of change proposed in line with the policy and should set out the expected phasing and nature of each change. All future planning applications will be determined in line with the original masterplan, unless it can be shown that circumstances have changed. In which case, a new masterplan should be submitted as part of the application.

BER9 IMPORTANT VIEWS

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following Important Views on the Policies Map:

Berrick Prior

- View B1 'Views north and north west to farmland'
- View B2 'Views north and north west to open farm and countryside'

Berrick Salome

- View B3'Views in easterly direction from Church Lane towards historic Hollandtide Bottom'
- View B4'North Easterly views out from the settlement'
- View B5 'South westerly across open fields'
- View B6 'Berrick Salome: View north easterly across open fields'
- View B7 'View north easterly through orchard'

Roke

- View R1 'View across open farmland'
- View R2 'View of paddocks and stabling facilities'
- View R3 'View of characteristic open farmland'
- View R4 'View across open farmland and bridleway'

Rokemarsh

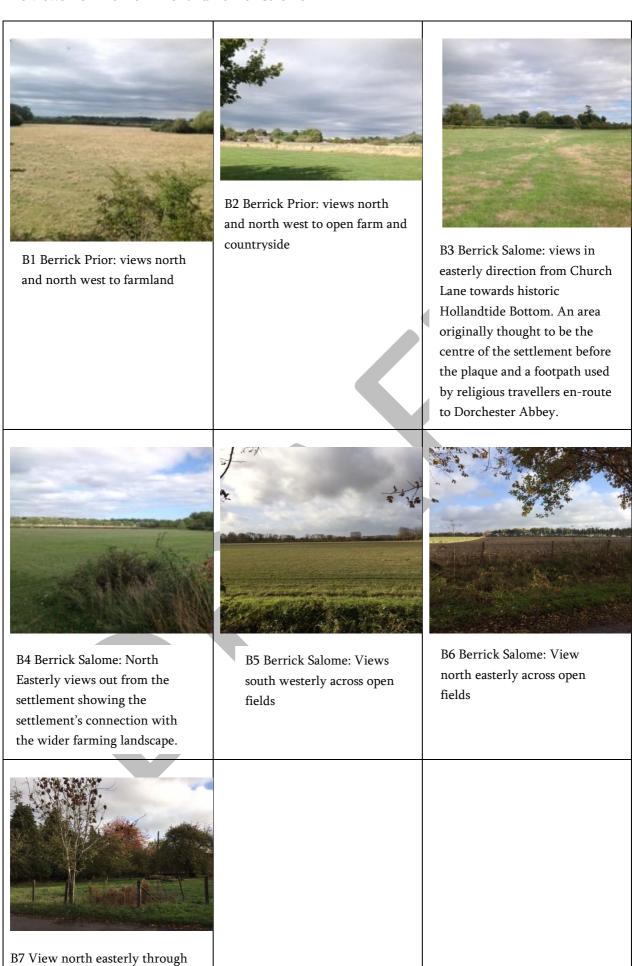
View R5 'View of open farmland with Britwell Hill backdrop'

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

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

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

The views from Berrick Prior and Berrick Salome



orchard

The views from Roke and Rokemarsh



R1 Roke: open farmland



R2 Roke: view of paddocks and stabling facilities



R3 Roke: north easterly views out from the settlement showing the settlement's connection with the wider farming landscape.



R4 Roke: view of open farmland and bridleway



R5 Rokemarsh: view of open farmland with Britwell Hill

BER10 LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following locations as Local Green Space, as shown on the Policies Map:

- Berrick and Roke Village Hall with recreation field;
- Village Green (outside The Chequers) including the green area at eastern end of Green Lane (adjacent Ivy Cottage);
- Allotments at the edge of Berrick Salome and land connecting them to Roke;
- Apple Orchard home field and part of original Parsonage Farm Farmstead- opposite existing Parsonage Farm buildings;
- Green space opposite Home Sweet Home public house, Roke
- Green space behind The Old Post Office, either side of footpath from Berrick Salome to St Helens Church
- Fishery, Rokemarsh; and
- area around the St Helens Church.

New development will not be permitted on land designated as Local Green Space except in very special circumstances

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

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



BER11 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

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

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

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



BER12 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

BER13 MANAGING TRAFFIC

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

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

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

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



BER14 WALKING, CYCLING AND RIDING

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

- if they adjoin a public footpath or bridleway, they will maintain the functionality and rural character of the footpath or bridleway
- if they lie in a location that enables a new pedestrian, cycle link and/or bridleway to be created to an existing public footpath or bridleway, that the layout and access arrangements of the scheme allow for such an improvement, provided they avoid or minimise the loss of mature trees and hedgerows and use materials that are consistent with a rural location
- they encourage sustainable transport and specifically includes adequate walking, horse-riding and cycle routes to access the Parish
- they enable residents to move freely and safely around the settlements on our narrow roadways, footpaths and bridleways, on foot, cycle or horseback

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

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



BER15 SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Development proposals will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that:

- the sewer network can accommodate the additional demand for sewerage disposal either in its existing form or through planned improvements to the system in advance of the construction of the development;
- ii. any hardstanding areas comprise permeable surfaces to allow for the efficient absorption of surface water run-off during heavy rainfall; and
- iii. they will not increase flood risk from fluvial flooding or any other source of flooding, including surface water flooding.
- 5.39 This policy serves two important purposes in seeking to manage the effects of new development on the supporting infrastructure of our settlements in this rural location.
- 5.40 Firstly, it requires all proposals to show, by rigorous analysis, that there is sufficient capacity in the local sewerage system to accommodate an increase in demand and that any new connections will not increase the risk of system back up/flooding.
- 5.41 The sewage undertaker is Thames Water. There is a perennial problem in the parish of sewage discharge. Thames Water has acknowledged that a problem exists and has been investigating the causes for years. To date, no long-term remedy has yet been implemented or even proposed by Thames Water. This policy is intended to draw greater attention to this important issue in The Parish by both Thames Water and SODC when determining planning applications.

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

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

Monitoring and reviewing the policies

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

6. IMPLEMENTATION

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

Development management

- 6.2 Most of the policies contained in the BSPNP will be delivered by landowners and developers. In preparing the BSPNP, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the policies are achievable.
- 6.3 Whilst the local planning authority will be responsible for the development management, the Parish Council will use the BSPNP to frame its representations on submitted planning applications. It will also work with SODC to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

Infrastructure projects

- 6.4 The Parish Council proposes some or all of the following projects for investment of future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, allocated by the local planning authority and to the Parish Council:
 - Upkeep of non-private, community facilities and open spaces;
 - Traffic calming and parking improvement scheme (see below);
 - Enhancing the interface of the pedestrian/equestrian/cyclist experience with vehicular traffic:
- 6.5 Parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan will receive 25% of any CIL arising from developments in their area; parishes without a Neighbourhood Plan will receive 15%. The Parish Council will lead consultation on the preferences and priorities of The Parish to improve its infrastructure.

Highway safety and traffic calming

- 6.6 The task is to create a Parish environment that drivers understand and respect, and behave accordingly. Our strategy, to discourage and limit through traffic; ensure road users obey the established speed limits and respect the safety of those walking and riding in the lanes; and preserve the rural appearance of The Parish, combines a blend of conventional measures with a more innovative approach.
- 6.7 The main thrust of the strategy is driven by the theory (accepted amongst traffic calming experts) that drivers will respond responsibly to the environment they find themselves in, if they are guided to do so by the environment, ie slower moving traffic can be brought about by hazardous or constricting obstacles. Our proposed calming features will result in it taking longer to navigate through The Parish, with an aim of encouraging slower moving vehicles and even more so, drivers to select an alternative route for their trip/ commute.
- 6.8 Conventional measures to be considered are:
 - Prominent notification of speed limits;
 - Potential reduction of speed limit to 20 mph in specific areas;
 - Reinstate "Access Only" restriction signs at all entrances to the Parish;
 - Reduce the speed limit on both access roads from the B4009 to The Parish, to 30mph (60mph at present);
 - Decorative" gates " at all entrances to The Parish to denote residential and other activity; and
 - Flashing " your speed is" signs.
- 6.9 In addition, we have also proposed more innovative solutions, such as:
 - Exaggerate the triangle at Rokemarsh to change the road priorities;

- Emphasise the right turn into Roke with structures or obstacles in such a way that slows traffic but does not send it along the Roke road;
- Bring the Berrick and Roke Village Hall and playground into prominent display by altering the frontage completely;
- Provide established and attractive landscaped parking by Weller Close thereby narrowing the road;
- Alter the road layout at the millennium stone junction to include, perhaps, a mini roundabout;
- Improve The Chequers' "road appeal" with the addition of garden furniture;
- Make a feature of the village green at The Chequers, extending out into the road; and
- Consider delineating walking / cycling / horse riding corridors in appropriate places within the lanes where there are no refuges.



