



**Referendum
Version**

June 2022

**The Leigh Parish
Neighbourhood Development Plan
2020-2031**

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The Leigh Neighbourhood Development plan
was supported by Dr Andrea Pellegram MRTPI.



Andrea Pellegram Ltd.

Introduction

The Leigh Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

1. At the heart of the Localism Act of 2011 is the right for communities to influence future development in their area through their Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live. The Act introduces a new right for communities to draw up a neighbourhood plan.¹

2. It is clarified further in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) which states:

Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need².

3. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs³. This NDP, having followed due process, will ensure that necessary sustainable development will deliver the vision shared by The Leigh Parish community and as required in the NPPF. The NDP will meet the objectives for sustainable development set out in NPPF paragraph 8 in its policies:

How the neighbourhood plan supports Sustainable Development

The economic objective:	EMP1 – New employment development EMP2 – Home working
The social objective:	H1 – Design for new residential development H2 – Conversions and redevelopment to existing buildings H3 – Developer contributions H4 – Parking in new residential development H5 – Caravan and camping sites
The environmental objective:	E1 – Landscape and Countryside E2 – Biodiversity E3 – Historic Environment F1 – Flooding

4. During the development of this plan, we have seen the adoption of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS; covering Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury) and the preparation of the Tewkesbury Borough Plan both of which have been considered in the development of The Leigh NDP.
5. The JCS identifies Coombe Hill which is part of The Leigh parish as a Service Villages requiring a small level of future development. The Tewkesbury Borough Plan disaggregates the overall

1 "Plain English Guide to Localism Act (Nov 2011) Page 15, Department for Communities and Local Government.

2 National Planning Policy Framework, 2019, para. 29.

3 National Planning Policy Framework, 2019, para. 7.

need of 880 dwellings for the Service Village set out in the JCS to provide an indicative requirement based on size, services and accessibility. This process produced an indicative requirement for 22 dwellings for the parish.

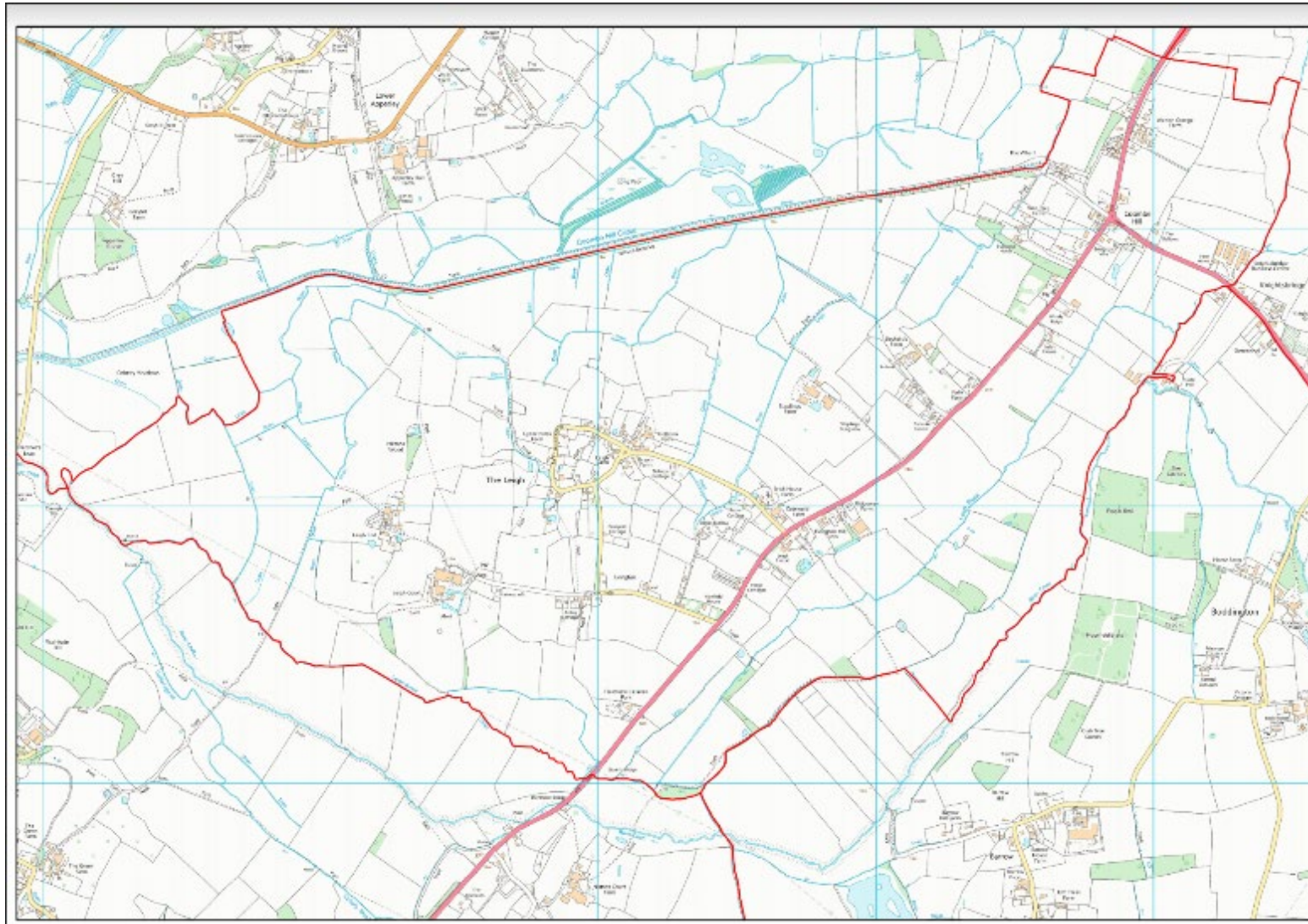
6. However this disaggregation process was taken as the starting point for the Borough Plan. There was an overall need for additional housing land across the Borough, and Coombe Hill had the capacity to meet more than its basic requirement. Coombe Hill was deemed to have the capacity to deliver two sites (50 and 25 dwellings) which were progressed as site allocations in the emerging review of the local plan. These allocations will be discussed in more detail below.
7. This document is the **Submission Draft** of The Leigh Parish Council NDP. It has been developed by a Steering Group of parish councillors and community members to help shape the future of the parish and to help manage future development occurring in the area in a proactive and effective manner.
8. The Parish Council wish to take this opportunity to shape the area, to ensure that new development reflects the character of the Parish over the course of the plan period and that it grows in a sustainable and measured manner to 2031.

The Leigh PC would like to thank all those parishioners who attended meetings and made contributions towards this NDP. Special thanks go to Colin Withers who has chaired the meetings throughout and who with the assistance of Dawn Shopwood wrote the initial drafts. Finally thanks to Andrea Pellegram for completing the final draft and for TBC Officers for their guidance and comments.

Neighbourhood Plan Area and Period

9. The Period of the Leigh Parish Neighbourhood Plan (LNDP) is 2020 - 2031.
10. The Leigh Parish Council applied to Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) to designate a neighbourhood area for the preparation of a neighbourhood development plan, which was received on 22 March 2016. In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended, a consultation on the proposed neighbourhood area was undertaken, ending on 24 June 2016. The meeting of the Executive Committee on 31 August 2016 resolved 'That the designation of Neighbourhood Areas covering the Parishes of The Leigh be approved.'
11. The Designated Area of the NDP is The Leigh Parish, shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1. The Leigh Parish Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area



Background to The Leigh and the NDP

12. The parish of The Leigh sits amidst Green Belt to the west of Cheltenham in the Severn Vale, in the Borough of Tewkesbury. The ancient parish of The Leigh (pronounced The Lye) has an area of 1504 acres and sits almost equidistant from Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury - only about five miles from each. The land is mostly flat: the highest point lies 30 metres above ordnance datum with a large proportion being pasture, bounded almost entirely by watercourses with the River Severn to the west.
13. Although it is a small parish, there are three distinct historic parts: Leigh End where the church is located; Evington where the more compact village is known as The Leigh; and Coombe Hill where the road to Cheltenham (A4019) intersects with the main Gloucester to Tewkesbury road (A38).
14. At the last count in 2016, there were 144 dwellings with a combined population of 357 people of whom 70% had lived in the parish for more than ten years. Within the community is a small well run traveller site with 16 pitches (Fieldview) that has existed for many years. With a garage, shop, pub and farm shop at Coombe Hill, and bus services to the main towns, the Parish is compact with an opportunity for limited development. The vast majority of the population currently rely on their motor cars to commute for work, shopping, schools and other services.
15. There are significant constraints with regard to planning and development in the area. The areas to the east of the A38 lies within the Green Belt west of Cheltenham. The area's natural environment, notably the River Severn with its tidal nature, adds additional constraints. Indeed, the River Severn influences the productivity of much of the farmland and throughout history has provided a natural limitation on building development due to the extent of flood water and tidal reach affecting the area. Much of the Parish is covered by flood zone 2 and 3 and Landscape Protection Zone designations.
16. The River Severn also influences the area's major roads, with limited east-west accessibility due to the restricted river crossing points. The A38 runs north to south through the parish and carries increasing volumes of traffic. The rural roads throughout the parish are mostly tight, narrow and without footways. The nature of these roads forms part of the area's valued rural character and means that vehicle use of the roads off the A38 needs careful management, given the shared space with other users including walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
17. Of particular note is the Coombe Hill canal and meadows, a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) owned and managed by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, which is one of the most important sites in Gloucestershire, particularly for wetland birds.

Coombe Hill Nature Reserve SSSI



18. The Leigh Parish has a definite rural character where a sense of community has been maintained. The overall vision for the NDP is to conserve this rural character and community cohesiveness evident throughout the Parish.

Flooding

19. The NDP area suffered severely during the 2007 flood when 12 houses and the Fieldview Caravan Park were flooded and residents were forced to leave their homes for many months.
20. Brooks that drain the area pass through the parish and will back up and spill on to the land when the Severn is in flood. In addition, much of the parish is part of the flood plain which severely affects farmers and residents at times of flood.
21. The Government's long term flood risk maps illustrate the flooding issues in The Leigh Parish. **Figure 2** shows the extent of flooding from surface water. Dark blue shows high risk, lighter blues show medium and low risk. The maps indicate that the land allocated for residential and commercial development in the emerging Borough Plan (to be discussed in a later section) and Fieldview Caravan Park are at risk of surface water flooding. Figure 2 should not be used to assess individual property risk.

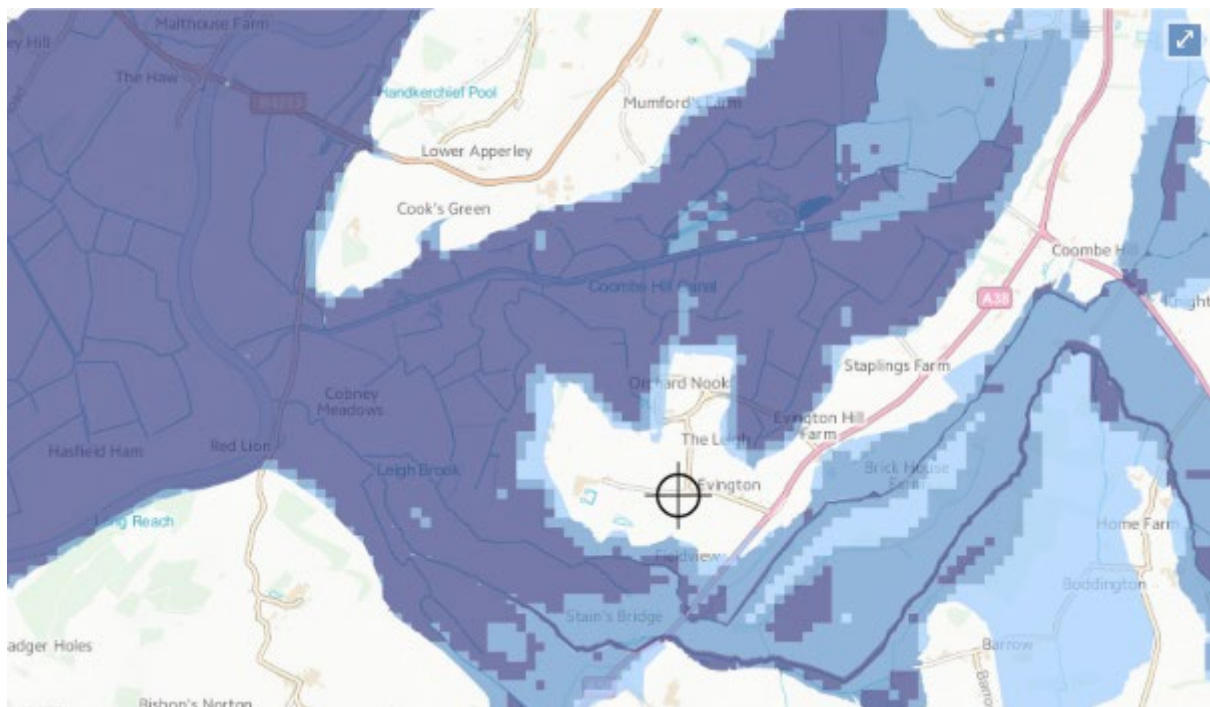
Figure 2: Surface Water Flooding Risk in The Leigh Parish



Source: Surface Water flooding, <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/>, accessed 16/7/20

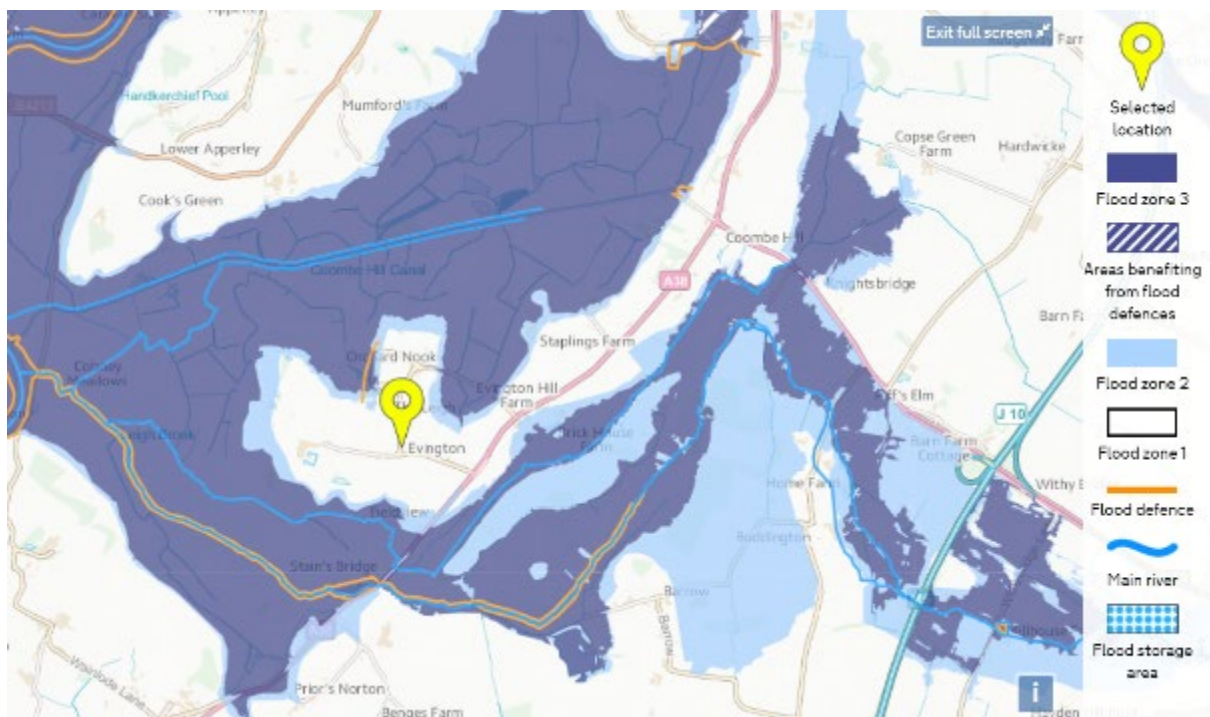
22. **Figure 3** shows flood risk from rivers and the sea, using the same colour categories. This shows that most of the parish is at risk of severe inundation except in the historically developed areas of Evington, The Leigh village, Coombe Hill and a few outlying settlements along the A38. Most undeveloped areas in the Leigh Parish are located in Flood Zone 3 as shown in **Figure 4**.

Figure 3: Flood risk from rivers and the sea in The Leigh Parish



Source: River and Sea flooding, <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/>, accessed 16/7/20

Figure 4: Flood Zone map for The Leigh Parish



Source: Flood Maps for Planning (accessed 16/7/20)

23. There is concern that extensive development throughout the area will increase flood risks to people's properties so adversely that it will affect their lives. As development in Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester increases, it becomes more important to consider the cumulative impact of flooding on those parishes such as The Leigh that are in, or on the edge of, the flood plain. Residents strive to work with the authorities to help them understand localised flooding issues.

Flooding impact in 2007





24. Since 2007, a Parish council sub-committee has successfully completed two flood prevention schemes to protect houses both in The Leigh village as well as The Wharf. Whilst this protects most of those houses affected in 2007, this NDP recognises the need to continue efforts to obtain support to protect any house in the parish subject to flooding and to ensure that no future developments further increase the risks of flooding. This will be done in concert with flood Agencies to manage scheme and seek improvement where necessary.

Bund built by the community



Photo of bund illustrating how flood defence can also result in high quality environmental assets



Demographic profile

25. In 2016, according to “Local Insight⁴” the total population of The Leigh was 357: 45 children under 15 (15%), 195 working age (60%), and 80 over the age of 65 (25%). There are fewer children and more older people than the England average. The local population is 90% White British, and 10% Black or Minority Ethnic.
26. Very few people in the parish were out of work (only 10 working age workless benefits claimants), and only a relatively small number of benefits claimants. Overall, claimant levels are lower than Gloucestershire or England and the Parish is around the 50th decile for deprivation (i.e. neither deprived nor least deprived). 162 residents were economically active which is slightly lower than the England average. The number of people working in managerial, professional or associate professional occupations was 46% which is higher than the England average of 41%.
27. Most houses are detached (85 houses, 59%) or semi-detached (32 houses, 22%). Most houses (104) are owner occupied. House prices are relatively high (the average price in 2016 was £563,750 compared to the England average of £300,314).
28. Crime in the parish is low and health and wellbeing is on par with Gloucestershire and England. The number of people with no educational qualifications is on par with Gloucestershire and England but people with a Level 4 qualification or higher is greater (34% in The Leigh compared with 27% in England).
29. Only 5 households (or 5%) had no cars compared to the English average of 26%, 29% had one car (compared to 42% in England) and 65% had two or more cars (compared to 32% in England). However, in The Leigh, people had to drive farther to work (7 km compared to 5 km in England), and also farther to schools (7.8 km compared to 2.1 km in England) and around 7 km to both a GP and post office (compared to 1.2 km and 1 km respectively for England).

Parish Aspirations

30. In 2016, The Leigh Parish Council appointed a representative to chair local meetings to discuss future requirements of the NDP.
31. Over a period of more than one year several focus group meetings were held at which all Parish members were invited to attend to debate matters that would affect future development within the Parish. Several questionnaires were designed and submitted to ask residents views on future housing needs, subsidised housing, business development and traveller requirements.
32. The results were considered in formulating this NDP and are shown in the **Consultation Statement**. The Chair and other Parish members have kept in regular dialogue with officers at Tewkesbury Borough Council who are responsible to provide support for community development and planning. Guidance has also been given by the professional input of Gloucestershire Rural Community Council. Andrea Pellegram MRTPI⁵ was brought on board after the evidence gathering stage to help frame the policies.
33. Historically, children from Leigh Parish have either gone to Norton School (south along the A38) for primary school, then progressing to Tewkesbury Comprehensive at senior level.

⁴ Local Insight for Gloucestershire County Council, 2016.

⁵ Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Recently however, Norton has become over-subscribed and local children have been forced to go to Apperley with no provision of transport. Apperley and Norton are equidistant from the parish, but the roads circumvent the canal and it is therefore a much longer journey by car.

34. The Parish Council will try to establish with the local authority a policy in relation to schooling at both junior and senior level. This will become more important when permitted housing development adds new pressure to the existing school provision.
35. With no medical facilities in the parish, the Parish Council will try to establish which local doctors are available for medical facilities.
36. There is no mains sewerage throughout the parish and the Parish Council will investigate whether residents wish to be connected to main drainage and whether such facilities can be provided at an economic cost.
37. Results from the NDP questionnaires, shown in **Appendix 2**, highlighted the inadequacies of local bus services especially relating to late night services and direct services from Leigh village to Cheltenham. The NDP is committed to improving all levels of service in order to minimise the use of private vehicle transport and to provide access to local facilities located in the major urban centres.
38. As a rural community The Leigh is blessed with a multitude of footpaths and the Parish Council is committed to maintaining this network for the enjoyment of all. The Parish Council intends to enhance the footpath from The Leigh village alongside the A38 to Coombe Hill with the intention of combining it with a cycle route.
39. The Parish Council will seek to have provided a village hall for the benefit of the expanding community, if it is economically viable in the long term, and can be operated at no cost to The Leigh PC funds.

Community Action Point

The Parish Council considers that current social, health and education infrastructure fail to support the volumes of residential development currently proposed by Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC). It therefore will maintain constant pressure on the relevant local departments in the Borough and County Councils for improvement of such infrastructure and associated access. Without this support, the Parish Council is concerned that new residents will be lacking in basic social amenities and will be forced to access these by increased use of cars.

The Parish Council will seek to influence the Education Authority so that Norton School gives priority acceptance to children from The Leigh Parish and that the County Council ensures free transport is provided. If this is not possible The Leigh Parish Council will seek guarantees from TBC that alternative facilities are available, transportation is provided and no future development is permissible whilst such development is unsustainable.

The Parish Council will seek to ensure that the footpath from Leigh Village to Coombe Hill is converted to a joint cycle/foot path with suitable access safety points before 2023.

The Parish Council will seek to secure the provision of a small village hall.

The Development Plan

40. The Leigh NDP has been prepared according to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the Localism Act 2011. This legislation requires neighbourhood plans to meet certain basic conditions such as:
- General conformity with strategic local policy in the Development Plan
 - Regard to national policy such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development
 - Compatibility with EU Obligations.
41. Therefore, this NDP has been produced in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF), the Development Plan and the emerging Local Plan. It is a complex policy backcloth. The NPPF requires that neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan that covers their area⁶. In this case, the strategic and housing allocation policies are in the review of the Tewkesbury Borough Plan where land is allocated for 76 houses at two sites in Coombe Hill. The NDP must be in conformity with this policy as well as the planning policies from Gloucestershire County Council.
42. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Neighbourhood Planning requires neighbourhood plans and planning groups to work closely with the Local Planning Authority, in this case TBC, to consider the implications of emerging planning policies in order that the Borough Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies do not conflict.
43. This NDP has been prepared in a quickly evolving policy context. Every effort has been made to follow advice in Planning Practice Guidance on the preparation of neighbourhood plans for the NDP to be both compliant with adopted Development Plan policies as well as to anticipate emerging policies.
44. The Development Plan for the NDP is:
- Saved policies of the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan to 2011 (LP)
 - Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011 – 2031, Adopted December 2017 (JCS)
 - Mineral Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 – 2032 (Adopted March 2020)
 - Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy 2027 – Adopted November 2012
 - Saved policies of the adopted Gloucestershire Waste Local Plan
45. The Joint Core Strategy took many years to reach adoption due to its complexity and because it was prepared by three separate planning authorities. TBC is also preparing a Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011 to 2031 that will sit beneath the Joint Core Strategy. This was formally submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2020.

⁶ NPPF 2019, footnote 16.

- ## Saved policies of the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan to 2011

- ### Figure 5: Excerpt from Saved Key Map

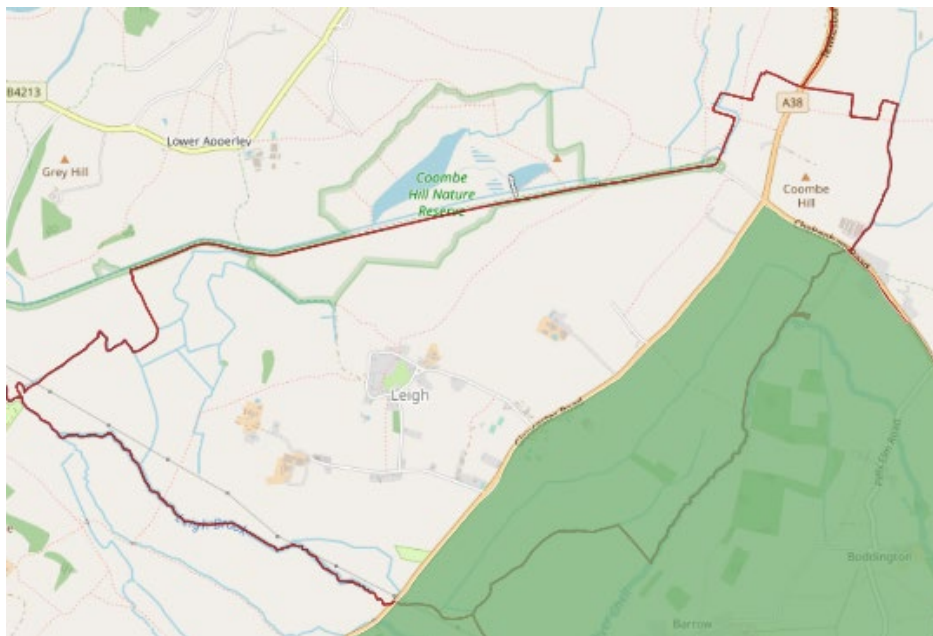


The Joint Core Strategy 2011 – 2031

Green Belt

49. The protection of Green Belt land is of great importance to the parish residents. The openness and permanence of the Green Belt land in the Parish is critical for a number of reasons set out in the five purposes defined in the NPPF⁷.
50. The Green Belt is critical to preventing the unrestricted sprawl of the large built-up area of Gloucester City northwards into the open countryside of this part of the Severn Vale and from Cheltenham westwards. The panoramic views of the open countryside, especially from the A38 trunk road, is one of the key features identified by contributors to consultation in the preparation of this NDP.
51. Current and emerging housing allocations in nearby settlements will lead to major residential developments to the south in Twigworth, at Innsworth, around Tewkesbury, to the east near Cheltenham and in West Cheltenham. As these many thousands of new homes are built, there will be a real danger that the open character of the Severn Vale will change. Maintaining the Green Belt in our Parish with continued protection of the nature reserve therefore is essential to maintain a balance not only for our community but for all those due to move to these newly developed areas. As other areas change and urbanise, the rural tranquillity of places like The Leigh will grow in importance for their rarity.
52. A review of the Green Belt boundaries by TBC in support of the emerging Borough Plan in July 2017 did not consider Green Belt in The Leigh Parish and no changes to the Green Belt have been proposed in the emerging Borough Plan.
53. Detailed Green Belt boundaries are shown in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6: Green Belt in The Leigh Parish



Source: Gloucestershire County Council interactive map (accessed July 2020)

⁷ NPPF 2019, paragraph 134.

54. JCS Policy SD5 protects the Green Belt to ensure that it continues to serve its key purposes.

Settlement hierarchy

55. The JCS sets out the settlement hierarchy in policy SP2 and table SP2c. Coombe Hill is designated as a Service Village where SP2.5 requires lower levels of development to be allocated through the Tewkesbury Borough Plan and neighbourhood plans, proportional to its size and function.
56. The remainder of The Leigh Parish is classified as a rural area where policy SD10 will apply to proposals for residential development. SD10 allows housing development and conversion on sites allocated for housing including by districts and neighbourhood plans. Elsewhere in The Leigh Parish and outside the proposed site allocations, residential development for affordable housing on a rural exception site, or as infill in the settlement, will be allowed except where otherwise restricted by other policies or as defined by the Tewkesbury Borough Plan or neighbourhood plans.

Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 - 2032

57. Most of the parish is designated as a Minerals Resource Area for Sand and Gravel, and/or a Mineral Consultation Safeguarded Area.
58. The presence of Minerals Safeguarding Area should ensure that mineral resources are afforded appropriate consideration alongside all other relevant planning issues in determining non-mineral developments. Furthermore, there is no presumption that mineral resources identified within a MSA will be worked.⁸ The presence of MSAs should ensure that mineral resources are afforded appropriate consideration alongside all other relevant planning issues in determining non-mineral developments.

Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy 2027 – Adopted November 2012

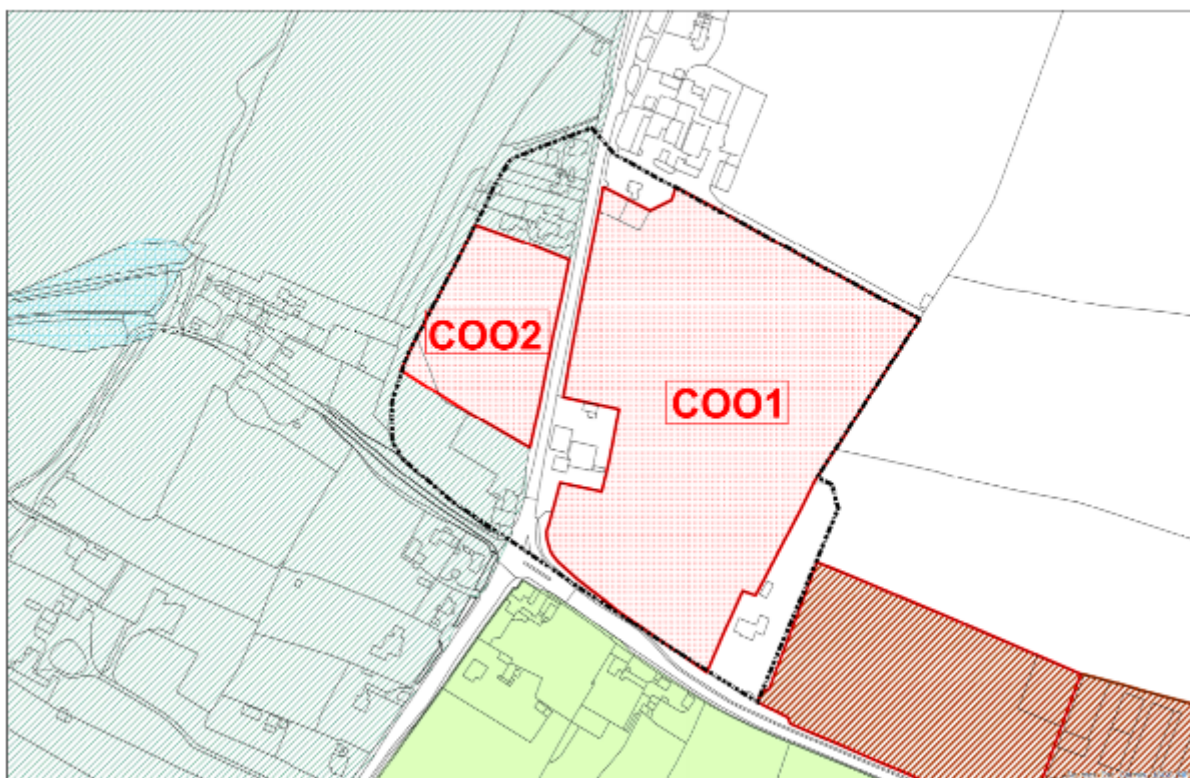
59. There are no allocations in The Leigh Parish and this plan will not be considered further.

The Emerging Borough Plan (Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011 to 2031)

60. Para. 3.6 of the emerging borough plan identifies Coombe Hill as a Service Village.
61. The emerging borough plan policies RES1 and RES2 seek to allocate a site of 4.9 ha, for up to 95 dwellings at Coombe Hill (COO1) and an adjacent site for 0.9 ha for 25 dwellings (COO2). The allocations are shown in **Figure 7**. This NDP seeks to address the development pressures that these allocations will give rise to.

Figure 7: Proposed residential allocations at Coombe Hill (pink hatching)

RES1 & RES2 - Coombe Hill



63. Policy C001 of the emerging Borough Plan⁹ is set out below:

The development of this site presents a place making opportunity. The Council will expect:

- the proposal to provide well designed, active frontages along the A38 and A4019 so to enliven the street scene and create a sense of place
- accessible public open space to be provided on site for use by the wider community
- enhanced pedestrian connectivity to be provided with Site COO2 (Land at Swan PH) and the services and public transport facilities within the village
- the proposal to contribute to the wider green infrastructure network, deliver biodiversity net gains and mitigate against increased recreational pressures on the Coombe Hill Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest including by providing alternative natural greenspace on site.
- the opportunity for a landmark feature on the prominent corner location at junction of A38 and A4019 to be explored and implemented
- the density of development to be relatively low, and the layout to be landscape led, so to respect the rural nature of the location and aid assimilation within the wider landscape

⁹ Pre-Submission Tewkesbury Borough Plan, 2020 as amended by Local Plan Inspector June 2021.

- the design and layout of development to address the relationship between the proposed dwellings and the adjacent petrol station and car wash facility, so to avoid adverse amenity impacts on future occupiers

64. A recent planning appeal¹⁰ was allowed and outline planning permission is granted for residential development (up to 95 dwellings), associated infrastructure, ancillary facilities, open space, landscaping and construction of a new vehicular and pedestrian access from the A38 and pedestrian access to the A4019 on Land off the A38, Coombe Hill, Gloucestershire in accordance with the terms of the application as amended, Ref 20/00140/OUT, dated 11 February 2020, subject to the twelve conditions appended to this decision.
65. Policy RES2 sets out **development boundaries**: development within these boundaries is acceptable in principle subject to all other Development Plan policies. In the case of The Leigh Parish, the only development boundary is that under proposed allocation COO1 and COO2, shown in Figure 4 as a dashed black line. If this emerging policy is adopted, RES2 development boundary would limit development outside the development boundary to that allowed under the following policies from the emerging Borough Plan¹¹:
- JCS policy SD10 (residential development).
 - RES3 (new housing outside settlement boundaries) which provides for the reuse of redundant or disused permanent buildings, sub-division of existing dwellings, replacement dwellings, rural exception sites for affordable housing, dwellings for essential rural workers who are required to live near or onsite, or allocations.
 - RES4 (new housing at other rural settlements) which provides for very small scale residential development within the built up area of rural settlements allowing only a 5% growth or 10 dwellings, whichever is less, of the settlement over the plan period.
 - RES6 (rural exception sites) provides for the provision of affordable housing where there is a proven local need; in or at the edge of rural settlements.
 - RES7 (reuse of rural buildings for residential use).
 - RES8 (sub-division of existing dwellings).
 - RES9 (replacement dwellings).
 - RES12 (affordable housing).

10 APP/G1630/W/20/3257625

11 The actual policy wording should be considered when applying these policies which are only summarised here.

CO01 taken from the west of the site on the A38 looking south east towards the scarp



CO01 taken from the west of the site on the A38 looking towards the north east



CO01 taken from the A38 from the petrol station looking north



CO02 proposed allocation looking north from Swan Pub car park



Swan Inn at the junction of the A39 and the A4019



Photo of the petrol station to the west of CO02 on the A38



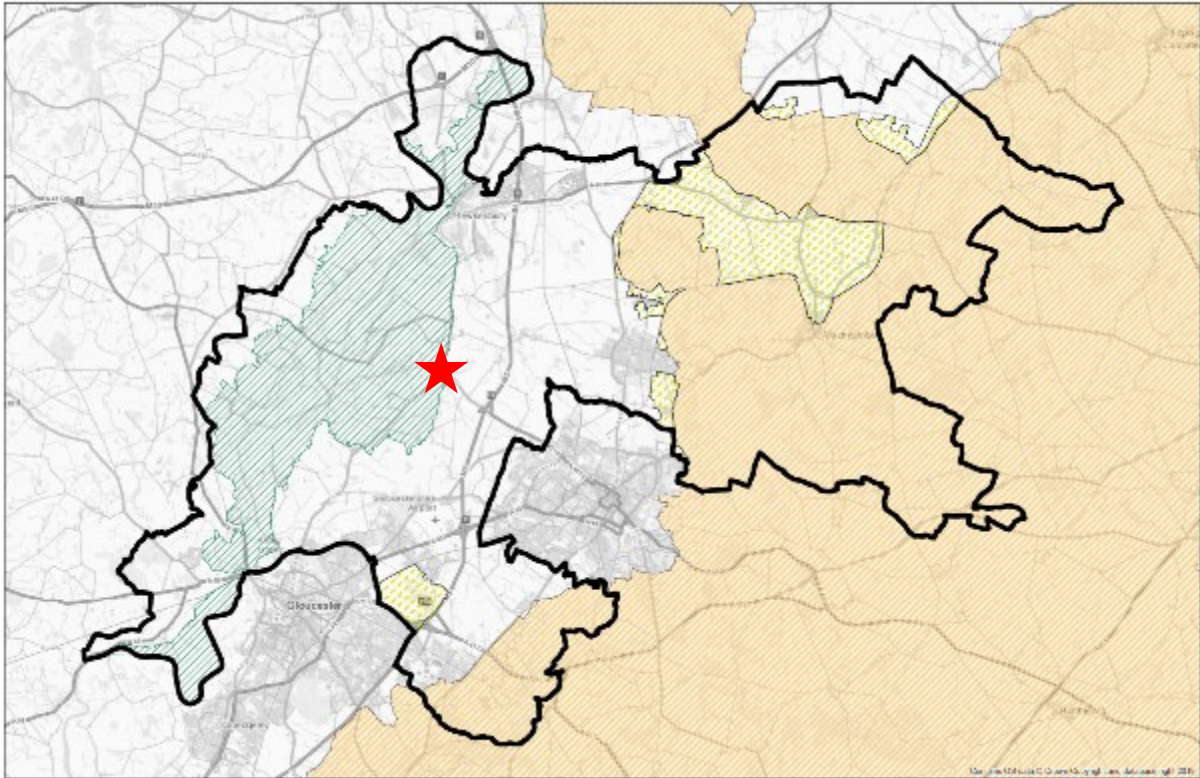
Photos of existing employment area



66. The majority of the parish is located in land designated in **Landscape Protection Zone** under policy LAN2, shown in **Figure 9** below. The red star in Figure 6 shows the approximate location of the COO1 and COO2 allocations.

Figure 9: Special Landscape Area (LAN2)

LAN1 Special Landscape Area & LAN2 Landscape Protection Zone



67. Within the land identified under Policy LAN2 Landscape Protection Zone, special protection is given to the ecology and visual amenity of the river environment where, when considering proposals for new development, regard will be had to the visual and ecological effect of development on the river banks and landscape setting of the Severn Vale; on the water environment; protection of important landscape and environmental features within the designated area; and reasonable opportunities for enhancement will be sought including the provision of appropriate improved public access. Harm to the zone should be weighed against the need for and benefits from the proposed development and will only be permitted where the benefits clearly and demonstrably outweigh the identified harm.

M5 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme

68. Coombe Hill is on the junction of the A4019 and the A38. The A4019 crosses the M5 at Junction 10 though there is only access onto the M5 going northbound. The A4019 is a largely single carriageway road running in a northwest to southeast alignment between Coombe Hill to the west and Cheltenham to the east, crossing the M5 via a dual two-lane carriageway overbridge located approximately 2.1 km south-east of Coombe Hill. The A38 is largely a single carriageway road running in a north to south alignment between Tewkesbury to the north and Gloucester to the south.
69. In conjunction with the proposed housing allocations under emerging Borough Plan policies RES1 and EMP2 (discussed above), and planned improvements at Junction 10 of the M5 to allow access in both directions, the Highways Authority, Gloucestershire County Council, has identified a need for improvement at the A38/A4019 junction.
70. The A4019 will be widened to upgrade the existing single carriageway to a two-lane dual carriageway to increase its capacity to accommodate the increased traffic that will be generated from the proposed housing and employment developments. In addition, there will be provision of dedicated cyclist and pedestrian facilities to encourage higher use of non-motorised forms of transport along the A4019 and provide a continuation of the cycleway/footways proposed for the separate Elms Park (North West Cheltenham) development.¹²
71. The A38/A4019 Coombe Hill junction will have a new layout to improve the flow of traffic from the A38 to the A4019. The existing signalised junction will be upgraded to improve resilience of local network on occasions when the M5 is closed. Pedestrian facilities which are very limited at the existing junction with only one uncontrolled crossing point currently provided will be improved. Cycling provisions at the junction will be included as none are currently provided.¹³



¹² M5 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme Technical Appraisal Report – A4019 and Coombe Hill Junction, Gloucestershire Highways, July 2020.

¹³ Ibid.

Junction of A38 and A4019 looking east towards Cotswolds escarpment



72. The A38 is prominent in the emerging Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) as a key corridor for public transport service frequency and cycle infrastructure improvements. The Leigh lies within a reasonable 5 mile cycle distance of employment centres along the A4019 where users should benefit from improved facilities as a result of M5 J10.
73. The constraint The Leigh has is its isolated rural nature. Although future LTP improvements would benefit the vast majority of users along the A38, The Leigh is rather more remote from it than other settlements with two access points, both of which are narrow without footways or street lighting. This does not create an attractive environment for all users to access A38 facilities. The NDP supports improvements to walking, cycling and non-car-based travel to school trips.

Vision and Objectives

74. The NDP presents a vision of the future of the parish and sets out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use, development change and other community projects.
75. In order to achieve the key aims of the community and the NDP outlined in this Vision and Objectives, the Neighbourhood Plan proposes policies to protect the valued character of the parish and address local issues to create a thriving community.

If this plan has been successful, by 2031, The Leigh will have maintained and enhanced its rural environmental quality and improved the wellbeing and quality of life for all of its residents.

NDP Detailed Objectives

To support the delivery of our NDP vision we have defined the following detailed thematic objectives:

Landscape and Environmental Objectives

- Safeguard the rural and agricultural character and identity of the Parish.
- To protect and enhance nature recovery or biodiversity or ecological networks and sites.
- Maintain and enhance the historic, agricultural, open rural character and environment of this valued part of the Severn Vale landscape.
- Maintain the valued openness of the landscape, key viewpoints and the A38 corridor.
- Maintain the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl into this rural parish.
- Reinforce and enhance the established Landscape Protection Zone in the Parish, and the natural environment generally.

Housing Development objectives

- Ensure that new development is sustainable and reflects the needs, nature, character, scale and rural identity of the Parish and its settlements.
- Support limited and proportional development subject to detailed design, scale and amenity considerations.
- Planning applications for development outside the defined settlement boundary would be supported providing they meet criteria as laid down in policy H1.
- Support well designed affordable housing provision which integrates well with existing village communities.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support good quality development that provides a range of housing types and tenure considered essential to the local rural economy.
Flood protection objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oppose developments which may displace flood water onto nearby land and increase flood risk to existing occupiers, including from raised ground levels for new developments. Ensure that proven water management features are integral to any new development and installed and continuously maintained as priority components from the outset. Promote the use of agricultural land for water management where relevant. Seek to ensure that flooding and surface water runoff is appropriately managed throughout the Parish.
Transport objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote demand management and congestion relief on the principal A38 and route to Cheltenham. Reduce vehicle speeds where appropriate and promote highway safety. Encourage sustainable travel modes. Support improvements to public and community transport, and to provision for cyclists and pedestrians. Support proposals for improvement to Junction 10 on the M5 provided any landscape, environmental and public harm have been fully considered and mitigated, and that all other options relating to the increased traffic through the parish have been explored and evaluated. Promote a balanced and intelligently managed use of the local road network, which provides accessibility for all without creating undue traffic impacts and congestion.
Rural economy and tourism objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the rural and specialist local economic sectors which contribute to the wellbeing and character of the area. Support development considered essential to the rural economy. Engage with others to enhance appropriate management, protection and recreational use of footpaths and nature reserves.
Community objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the creation of open spaces, and natural assets of the area that are important and valued. Encourage new and/or additional services and facilities which help to meet identified needs of local people and improve their wellbeing. Enhance community services and facilities to ensure that life for all within the Parish is improved in line with best standards.

Policies

Environment Policies

73. Protecting the natural and historic environment of The Leigh NDP area is of profound importance to the parish residents. A key purpose of preparing this NDP is to ensure that the natural and historic environment assets are fully recognised, appreciated, and fully protected from harmful development. Furthermore, beyond simply protecting these assets, this NDP seeks to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.
76. The NDP steering group has assessed and analysed the following environmental components:
- Landscape and countryside
 - Nature, ecology and biodiversity
 - Historic environment
77. The Leigh Parish is a traditional rural community. Farm land in the Severn Vale plays an important role in food production and contributes to the nation's food security and the majority of this Parish currently reflects this important role. Other large areas provide community features and wild life protection zones.

Landscape and countryside

78. The Leigh Parish is currently part of an important rural gap between the towns of Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury. Unless protected, the future could see these communities becoming one urban sprawl. It is therefore essential that the Parish is allowed to maintain its rural feel to provide a green buffer between built up areas.
79. The main artery of the A38 is raised above the surrounding countryside providing stunning distant views. There are many well-used country footpaths throughout the Parish and especially alongside the old Canal and through the Coombe Hill Nature Reserve with its area of mixed habitats. Footpaths are shown in **Figure 10**. The wetland area in the nature reserve, which has two hides, provides a habitat for a variety of waterfowl and waders, and the trees are hosts to warblers and other summer visitors.

Coombe Hill Nature Reserve



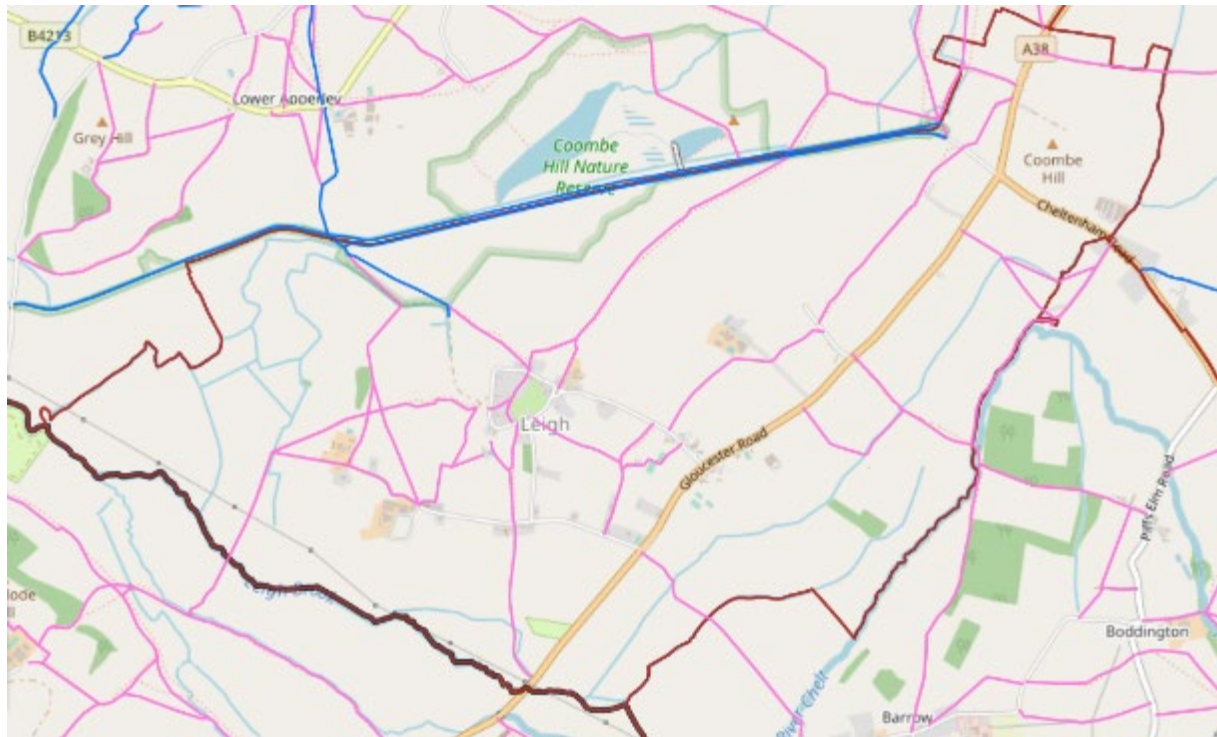
Sunset over Coombe Hill Nature Reserve



78. A Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Study for Rural Service Centres and Service Villages was commissioned by TBC¹⁴. It concluded on page 11:
- Coombe Hill occupies a prominent ridge at the junction of the A38 and A4019. It is sensitive to conspicuous development on the exposed side slopes of the ridge that would be visible in long distance views and would be at odds with the established settlement pattern (which is loosely cruciform). To the west of the village is the Coombe Hill Canal and surroundings, which represent a distinctive, and undeveloped landscape. It is valued for recreation, wildlife and heritage reasons and is sensitive to change.*
81. The landscape study considered the landscape and visual sensitivity of the residential sites proposed for allocation in Coombe Hill in the emerging local plan. It did not consider the landscape implications of the employment allocation.
82. The landscape and visual assessment indicates the importance of views from Coombe Hill to the Cotswold Escarpment and across the Severn Vale to the south. New development should seek to protect these views, and orientate the scheme(s) so that views are maintained where possible across the development.
83. JCS policy SD6 seeks to protect landscape character for its own intrinsic beauty. It requires proposals to have regard to local distinctiveness and historic character of different landscapes in the JCS area and proposals will be required to demonstrate how landscape character will be protected or enhanced.
84. The proposals for COO1 and COO2 are located on downward sloping land. Views towards the AONB escarpment and over the vale will generally be unrestricted. However, housing development on these sites should be sensitive to views from the escarpment and the AONB and it would be helpful in this regard to include ample tree coverage to partially obscure the introduction of urbanising features into the view.
85. Emerging Borough Plan policy LAN2 provides special protection to the Landscape Protection Zone (LPZ) for the ecology and visual amenity of the river environment. In addition to visual impacts and ecology, the policy seeks improvements to public access. Proposals causing harm to the Landscape Protection Zone will only be permitted where the benefits from the development would clearly and demonstrably outweigh the identified harm. Biodiversity offset schemes could be a way to mitigate harm and should be considered.
86. The Leigh Parish is well served with public footpaths and there is scope for the local plan housing land allocations (COO1 and COO2) to improve linkages to the canal and historic village. Footpaths are shown in **Figure 10**. The Parish Council has an aspiration to improve footpath and cycle paths along the A38 between the existing and proposed settlements.
87. A number of public rights of way through The Leigh are currently under threat, either through obstruction and/or removal of signage. All rights of way are historic and should be maintained and safeguarded.

14 Toby Jones Associates Ltd., November 2014.

Figure 10: Public Rights of Way (pink) in The Leigh Parish



Source: Gloucestershire County Council PROW map (accessed July 2020)

Policy E1: Landscape and countryside

Development in The Leigh Parish will be supported where it will:

- A. Have a positive impact on the ecology and visual amenity of the area. Development schemes will demonstrate that they have improved biodiversity on the site and have where possible linked these improvements to adjacent corridors or natural features.
- B. Improve access to the valued landscapes and natural countryside features by ensuring that new development links to the existing public rights of way network where possible to promote better access to the countryside.
- C. Protect, maintain and enhance those current public rights of way in the parish that are significantly affected by the development. Improvements should address signposting.

Proposals at CO01 and CO02 should in particular:

- D. Improve the linkages to the historic village for walkers and cyclists, using standards in Local Transport Note 20. Improvement schemes provided by the developments should be complementary and cumulative where each will make a proportionate contribution to overall improved linkages.
- E. Where development at CO01 cannot provide a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain on site, improvements may be made to land at the Coombe Hill Nature Reserve.

Nature, ecology and biodiversity

88. The Leigh Parish contains a number of species and habitats of local and national importance.

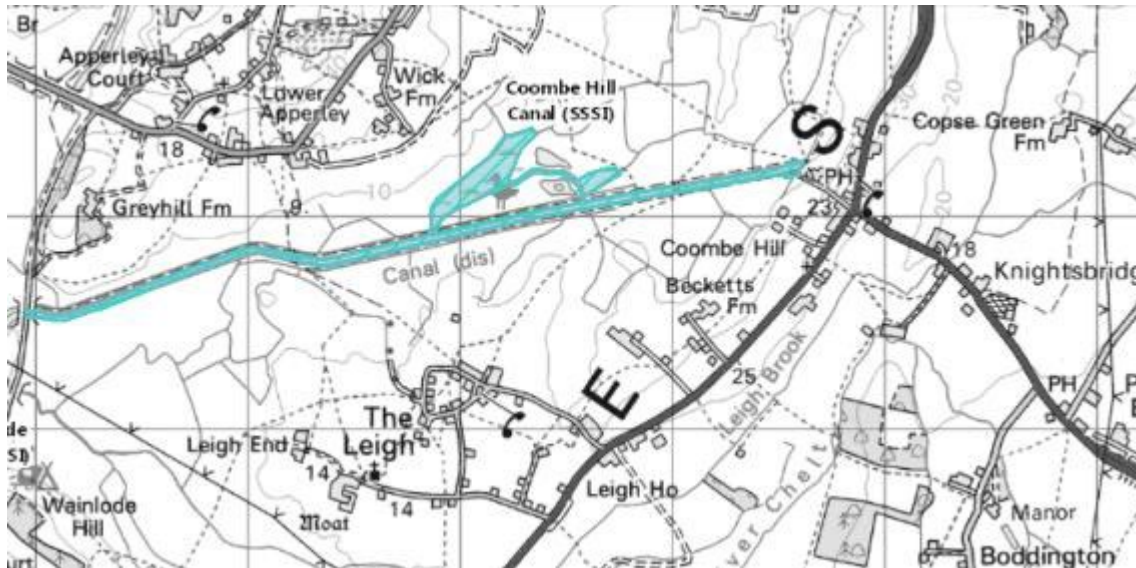
- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
- Deciduous woodland
- Woodland.

89. Species present include Priority Species: Lapwing, Redshank, Curlew, Snipe, Turtle Dove, Grey Partridge, Yellow Wagtail.

Coombe Hill SSSI

90. The Coombe Hill Canal SSSI lies directly to the north on the parish boundary (the canal forms the boundary), though the parish lies within its Impact Zone. The SSSI is shown in **Figure 11**.

Figure 11: Coombe Hill SSSI



Source: Magic map (accessed July 2020)

Traditional Orchards

91. The Leigh Parish had many traditional orchards and only remnants remain now. The map from the early 20th Century in **Figure 12** shows the extent of orchard planting. Orchards have been a traditional element of the local environmental character and should be reinstated where possible.

Figure 12: OS map 1888-1913, The Leigh Parish showing extent of orchards



Photo of typical orchard remnant



92. JCS policy SD9 requires development, including at allocated sites, to protect and enhance the biodiversity of The Leigh Parish, in particular by ensuring that European Protected Species and National Protected Species are safeguarded, and conserving and enhancing the SSSI. In addition, development is expected to contribute positively to biodiversity which is a requirement that is likely to be enhanced in the Environment Bill. This should include management and improvement of nature recovery or biodiversity or ecological networks
93. New development, particularly on COO1 and COO2, should enhance local biodiversity. This may be done either/or on the development sites or offset to another site. Suitable considerations are to improve the SSSI, canal, local woodlands, trees and hedgerows, as well as improvements to grazing habitats.
94. The Parish Council can assist applicants to determine if recent environmental harm or loss has occurred on the proposal site or area and can help identify suitable replacements or remediation if this is necessary.

Policy E2: Biodiversity

Development in The Leigh Parish will be supported where it will:

- A. Enhance local biodiversity or ecological networks on site, or where this is not possible, off-site. Suitable considerations for off-site improvements are to improve the SSSI, canal, local woodlands, trees and hedgerows, and improvements to grazing habitats.
- B. Schemes that reinstate orchards or re-introduce orchard trees will be encouraged.
- C. Significant loss of existing natural features such as habitats, woodland, hedgerows, remnant orchards and veteran trees will be resisted.
- D. Where loss of natural features has occurred in the five years prior to the application, or unavoidably as a result of the proposal, appropriate compensatory replacements will be required. Replacement can either be on-site or as part of an improvement scheme off-site in accordance with A above where it may be necessary to provide a commuted sum.

Historic environment

95. The parish which has a long history was originally divided between the hundreds of Deerhurst and Westminster. The first mention of St. Catherine's Church was in 1225, with the main settlement in the parish being close to the church and the moated Leigh Manor House, (now Leigh Court).
96. Cyder Press Farm incorporates some herring-bone masonry, thought to be Saxon, and the timber framed farm house incorporates a pair of incomplete cruckblades. In 1839, the parish had four inns, including the Swan at Coombe Hill which is now the only one remaining.
97. A canal was dug from the River Severn to Coombe Hill between 1792 and 1795. The canal was intended mainly for the carriage of goods between the Severn and Cheltenham, and up to 50,000 tons of coal each year from the Forest of Dean.
98. By 1846, there was a day and Sunday school with 44 children taught by a mistress, and in 1862 a new school with a teacher's house attached was built in Church Lane. This school reached its centenary, closing in 1962.
99. The Parish has a history based upon farming and productive farms still exist. The majority of the residents commute to work in the local towns but are able to return to The Leigh for some peaceful countryside living.
100. The parish contains a number of listed buildings. The Church of St Catherine is Grade I listed and many of the surrounding headstones are Grade II listed.

Photos of St Catherine's Church



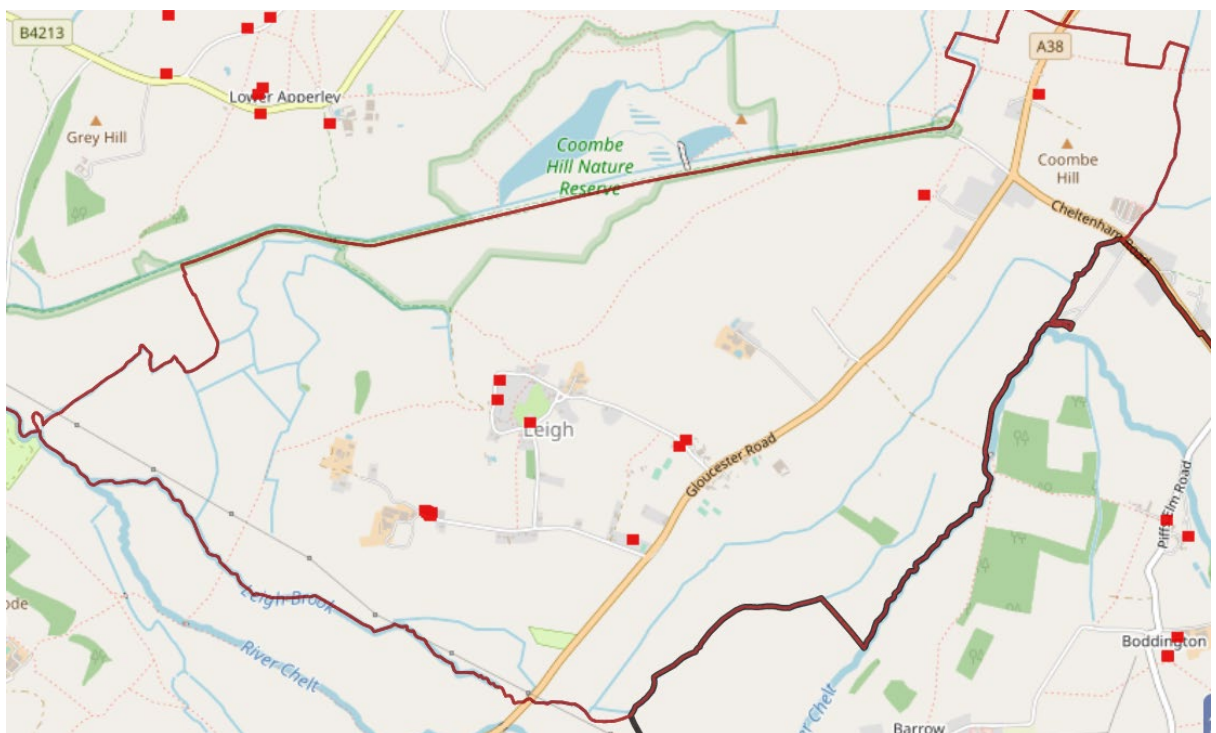
101. In the historic village of The Leigh, there are a number of Grade II listed buildings shown in **Figure 13**:

- Woodbine Cottage
- Daniel's Orchard
- Cyder Press Farmhouse
- Tudor Cottage
- Brick House Farmhouse
- Hoefield House.

102. In Coombe Hill, there are two Grade II listed buildings shown in **Figure 13**:

- Evington House
- The Barn at Grange Farm.

Figure 13 Listed buildings in The Leigh Parish



Source: Gloucestershire County Council policies map, accessed October 2020.

103. There are no Conservation Areas designated in the parish.
104. The Gloucestershire Historic Environment record was consulted as background evidence for the emerging local plan. This revealed a number of historic assets in the Parish including the route of the Tewkesbury turnpike, the great road to London from Tewkesbury and remnants of ridge and furrow agriculture.
105. JCS policy SD8 values and promotes the built, natural and cultural heritage of smaller historic settlements such as The Leigh and the wider countryside. Accordingly, development should make a positive contribution to the Parish's local character and distinctiveness. This applies

to both designated heritage assets such as listed building and undesignated assets such as those identified in the archaeological record and by the LPA during the course of planning applications. Development proposals at housing allocations (such as COO1 and COO2) should demonstrate that any potential adverse impact on heritage assets and appropriate mitigation measures have been addressed.

106. The historic environment is rich in The Leigh but it is concentrated in the older settlements around the church and in The Leigh village. The allocated development will be some distance from these historic areas and it will be important to provide interpretation linking the new with the old so that new residents can also enjoy their historic environment. Examples of such interpretation could be using interpretive signage that provides the context for new development in relation to historic features or waymarking to guide new residents into the historic parts of the parish.

Policy E3: Historic Environment

Development in The Leigh Parish will be supported where it will:

- A. Make provision for interpretation of and access to the historic environment to enable new residents to understand their historic context. Development at local plan housing allocation sites should provide interpretation of any historic context.
- B. Respect the historic features of neighbouring development as well as the wider character of the parish.

Community Action Point

To support these landscape, countryside, biodiversity and historic environment policies, the Parish Council will:

- Comment on Planning applications by assessing proposals against the NDP policies.
- Work with landowners and stakeholders to protect hedgerows, trees, verges and other important landscape features from loss or damage.
- Encourage the restoration and creation of orchards.
- Seek to protect and enhance the environment within the LPZ and the open countryside wherever possible. This will encourage conservation and related projects for the enjoyment of local people and visitors and foster positive relations with the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.

Housing development

Planning for sustainable housing development

107. The Leigh Parish is currently a great place to live as it still has the atmosphere of country living yet is close to major towns and motorway connections.
108. As well as historic buildings, there are an eclectic mix of thatched cottages, Severn Vale cottages, grand houses, traditional workers terraces alongside more modern houses and bungalows. It is important that developer estates and contain a mixture of styles if we are to maintain the rural feel of the Parish.
109. To maintain the special character of the parish and to meet the objectives of this plan, a careful and measured approach to new housing development is required. It is also important to recognise that, in practice, there has already been a supply of consented sites in The Leigh parish.
110. Whilst accepting that housing land allocation policies of the emerging Borough Plan will need to be accommodated and that more growth may occur on the allocated sites, or in limited circumstances in the surrounding countryside, it is vital that the general growth is managed carefully. This is to maintain the character of the area and the scale, role and functions of its settlements. The NDP housing policy approach has been framed in this context.
111. Since the original objectives were established through the JCS and emerging Borough Plan, there has evolved pressure for further development within the Parish. The Leigh's community initially resisted housing allocations in the parish but is now using the NDP as a means of ensuring that the allocations are positive.
112. The NDP seeks to ensure that new development will respect these principles:
 - Maintain the character of the parish and prevent large scale development from overriding the rural feel of the area.
 - Ensure the level of growth is proportionate with the village size and function.
 - Ensure that new development retains the local character.
 - Protect the existing landscape character .
 - Be located close to amenities such as the public house, bus services and local shop.
 - Protect key views as identified in the Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Study for Rural Service Centres and Service Villages and local consultations.
 - Enhance the local footpath, equestrian and cycling routes.
113. Since start of the NDP's preparation, there has been approval for a few additional residences and it is suggested further controlled growth can be considered as long as it does not affect any open aspect views or adversely impact on existing residences and is fully sustainable. In addition, new access on to the narrow lanes of the village must be a major design consideration of future development. The housing questionnaire (**Appendix 2**) indicated that residents would be willing to accept limited individual infill properties on vacant sites especially if this would assist in maintaining the community as a vibrant and safe village.

114. The land allocations at Coombe Hill in policy RES1 are contained in a development boundary (RES 2). The NDP Steering Group wished initially to introduce a development boundary around existing development elsewhere in the parish. However, the built form of the Leigh settlement is very loose and it would not be possible to define a settlement boundary without encouraging a significant amount of infill, which is contrary to what was sought.
115. For these reasons, the NDP will not define any settlement boundaries in the parish but will rely upon emerging development plan policies.
116. Such an approach, when considered alongside the criteria detailed in H1 and H2 below, will ensure that growth outside the local plan site allocations is directed to the best locations and is of type that is appropriate for the Parish and in line with the vision and objectives of this NDP. The approach also allows for the NDP (and development management decision making) to flex and adjust to meet differing growth levels.
117. JCS policy SD3 sets out detailed design and construction requirements for new housing development and policy SD4 sets out the considerations for masterplans and design briefs. Allocated development sites in The Leigh parish will in particular need to address these policies.
118. The historic environment in The Leigh is dominated by a few traditional building styles that can and should be incorporated into new development, building in curtilages of historic properties (including those that are of historic merit but not listed) and for modifications to existing buildings. Photographic examples with explanatory text identifying positive features can be found in **Appendix A. Table 1** summarises the most important positive local design features to be used in the design of new development.

Table 1: Positive local design features that should be incorporated into new development

Roof	Dark slate (natural or reconstituted) Red tile Corrugated metal in agricultural style Solar roof tiles or panels provided that they are dark in colour and emulate slate.
External walls	Irregular red brick Dark stained heavy timber lapboard (not to be confused with generic garden centre lapboard fencing) Stone or wood lintels Cotswold stone or Forest of Dean grey stone White paint or render over brick
Gates	Farm style open wooden gates Farm style open metal gates
Boundary features	Low red brick walls Laid stone walls to match traditional local construction techniques Hedges using native species A combination of red brick and dark stained timber Farm style open wood fencing

119. Housing growth will lead to pressure on the Library service. GCC ('the Library Authority') operates the local libraries that will attract users from new housing developments in The Leigh. New users will place additional pressure on these library services, and this in turn could require mitigation in some form (proportionate to the scale of growth proposed).
120. The Education Authority has indicated how it plans education and childcare provision in The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2019) and The School Places Strategy 2018-2023. The rural nature, geography and location of Leigh Parish means that children travel to nearby settlements for their schooling, some of which are in neighbouring districts.
121. Children from Leigh Parish are likely to attend the following schools:
- Primary schools include Norton C of E Primary School or Deerhurst and Apperley C of E Primary School.
 - Secondary Schools provision at Tewkesbury Academy or All Saints Academy (Cheltenham).
 - Post 16 education is at several locations in Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester.
 - Pre-school places in the form of nurseries, playgroups and childminders is also a duty of the County Council to secure. Early years provision is commissioned by the Education Authority from Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers, further details can be found in the county's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2019.
122. Where additional early years and school places are required, due to new housing developments, the County Council, working with the Local Planning Authority, will seek Section 106 planning obligations to provide places as part of the planning process. Contributions for school transport may also be required.

Policy H1: Design for New Residential Development

New housing development where a masterplan or design brief is required under JCS policy SD4 or other Development Plan policy will take the following considerations into account:

- A. Generic urban design will not be supported. Design and Access Statements should demonstrate how the locally distinctive character of the area has been accounted for using the Positive Local Design Features identified in **Table 1**.
- B. Biodiversity net gain will be required in relevant development. Natural landscape features such as hedgerows, hedges, orchard and mature trees, wildflower areas and habitats, should be retained and protected wherever possible and where not possible, should be replaced onsite or offsite with a feature of equivalent or better quality.
- C. Proposals should relate to the adjacent and nearby local character in massing, scale and use of outdoor landscaping, particularly in the village. Developments of multiple dwellings other than on allocated development sites should generally adopt a farmstead cluster to reflect the local rural character. Proposals that would lead to the creation of linear formed development alongside roads will be resisted.

- D. Proposals will consider the local foot and cycle network and demonstrate that provision has been made to link the new development to the network in order to create attractive walking and cycling opportunities. Standards should conform to those in Local Transport Note 1/20.
- E. A range of housing types, including housing appropriate to the elderly, and small houses for younger people, will be supported.
- F. All development will be highly sustainable, including energy efficiency measures and energy generation. Adequate refuse and recycling storage that is not visible from the public sphere will be incorporated into all schemes. Superfast broadband will be provided for all developments.
- G. Lighting schemes will reflect local character and be restricted to that necessary for public safety. Light pollution into the countryside will be avoided.

Policy H2: Conversions and extensions to existing dwellings

Conversions and extensions to existing dwellings will take the following considerations into account, especially within the Landscape Protection Zone:

- A. Generic urban design will not be supported. Proposals should demonstrate how the locally distinctive character of the area has been accounted for using the Positive Local Design Features are identified in **Table 1**.
- B. The proportion of the new building is in keeping within the scale, appearance and character of the existing dwelling and its surroundings. Extensions will be subservient to the main building.
- C. The privacy of neighbours will be respected so that they can enjoy in their own homes and gardens without fear of being overlooked.
- D. The development does not introduce an overbearing and incongruous feature that can be viewed from adjoining properties, from roadways or adopted footpaths.
- E. There is no harmful reduction in off street parking capacity.
- F. It does not detract from the character of the area.
- G. Extensions to dwellings will have the main access through the primary building and will not be capable of becoming severed from it to create a new and separate dwelling.

Policy H3: Developer Contributions

To the extent that the following is not covered by a community infrastructure levy, developer contributions that are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects will be sought from the local plan site allocations and any other major development for the following:

- A. Proposers of schemes on Housing Allocations in Coombe Hill will be expected to seek early engagement with The Leigh Parish Council to understand local requirements for a village hall and will make appropriate provision for a new village hall.
- B. Developer contributions will be sought from major development towards a footpath improvement scheme that will create a safe and attractive joint walking and cycling path between The Leigh village and Coombe Hill along the A38.
- C. Developer contributions will be sought for the provision of schools and school transport schemes in accordance with advice from the Local Education Authority.
- D. A proportionate contribution will be made to support the Library Authority for major residential development.
- E.

Community Action Point

The Parish Council considers that current social, health and education facilities fail to support the volumes of residential development currently proposed by the emerging Borough Plan. It therefore will maintain constant pressure on the relevant Borough and County Council departments to improve such facilities or access to such important support facilities.

The Parish Council will strive to ensure that adequate social, health and education facilities are in place to support the volumes of residential development proposed in the Borough Plan.

Parking in New Residential Development

123. There are no parking standards in Tewkesbury Borough. However, policy TRAC9 of the emerging Borough Plan requires that proposals for new development that generate a demand for car parking space should be accompanied by appropriate evidence which demonstrates that the level of parking provided will be sufficient. This wording leaves scope for local considerations to be taken into account.
124. Due to a lack of locally available social services, new residents will be reliant more than usual on the use of private vehicles. Therefore, TRAC9 must be interpreted to reflect The Leigh's special circumstances.

Policy H4: Parking in New Residential Development

Parking schemes for Major Development will demonstrate the following design principles and considerations, especially within the Landscape Protection Zone:

- A. Parking spaces will be located in a manner that:
 - a. ensures that parked cars do not dominate the street scene;
 - b. clusters of cars will not form in the street scene;
 - c. surfaces will be permeable;
 - d. parking fits in with the character of the area.
- B. Garages should reflect the architectural style of the house they serve, and be set back from the road frontages. Garage blocks will be discouraged.
- C. Every dwelling will have at least one electric vehicle charging point.
- D. Parking must be located in between or to the rear of houses, rather than in the front, to avoid dominating the street scene.

Flooding

124. The NDP will seeks to ensure that flooding and surface water runoff are appropriately managed.
125. JCS Policy INF2: Flood Risk Management; precludes proposals from increasing the level of flood risk to the safety of occupiers of a site, the local community or the wider environment either on the site or elsewhere. The policy sets out a sequential test and requires new development that could cause or exacerbate flooding to be subject to a flood risk assessment. New development is also required to incorporate surface water drainage systems (SuDS).
126. Tewkesbury Council's **Flood and Water Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**(March 2018) is a material consideration when preparing individual planning applications and should be read in conjunction with Development Plan policies and national guidance.¹⁵ The SPD encourages developers to seek early advice (pre-application) on flood management issues including early engagement with local communities.
127. The sequential test referred to in JCS INF2 makes it necessary to require most applications in Zone 3 except for minor development¹⁶ to be accompanied by an appropriate level of information in relation to flooding. This should be submitted in the form of a **Water Management Statement (WMS)** which will be a validation requirement for such schemes.¹⁷
128. The WMS for non-minor schemes in The Leigh Parish shall comprise a report outlining the water cycle issues relevant to the proposal including suitable means of providing for the sustainable drainage of the site in the long term. It shall also explain how both foul and storm water sewage from the development will be addressed and should include details of existing drainage problems including surface water flow, storm waste disposal and any other drainage related flooding issues that may be relevant.¹⁸
129. The SPD requires all developments regardless of scale and constraints to seek to incorporate SuDs (Surface Water Drainage Systems) which manage water runoff in a more sustainable way than traditional drainage.¹⁹
130. A number of surface water management techniques are indicated which would be appropriate in The Leigh:
- Permeable surfaces
 - Green and brown roofs
 - Rainwater harvesting
 - Filter trenches, drains and strips
 - Sand filters
 - Swales

15 Para 1.4.

16 "Minor Development" is non-residential extensions with a footprint less than 250 square metres; alterations to a building that does not increase its size; householder development.

17 SPD, para 8.1.

18 SPD, page 77, second para.

19 SPD, para 6.1.

- Basins
 - Bio-retention areas
131. An approach to design of SuDs in new developments is provided in the SPD, based on the SuDS Manual (CIRIA, C753) Part C, Chapter 7 –The SuDS Design Process and Appendix C – Design Example. The design approach²⁰ is summarised here:
- Examine site topography and geology, aiming to mimic the natural drainage systems;
 - Create a spatial framework for SuDs to minimise runoff by rationalising large paved areas and maximising permeable surfaces;
 - Look for multi-functional spaces and co-locate with green infrastructure, open space and public realm areas to create multi-functional spaces;
 - Structure the street network to complement and manage flow pathways;
 - Cluster land uses to manage pollution.
132. The Leigh community has detailed localised knowledge that is unlikely to be retained by the Lead Local Flood Authority (Gloucestershire County Council) and therefore, applicants for any development that is likely to lead to increased risk of fluvial, pluvial or overwhelmed sewers and drainage systems should seek pre-application advice from the Parish Council who will be aware of the extent and location of flood incidents.
133. In identifying measures for mitigation in accordance with the SPD, the Parish Council will work constructively to identify suitable and sustainable means of preparing appropriate design solutions in support of any required Water Management Statements. The Parish Council is particularly concerned that new development should be required to maintain flood defences in perpetuity.

²⁰SPD, para 6.5.4

Policy F1: Flooding

Proposals that require a Water Management Statement (WMS) should take the following into consideration:

- A. Early engagement with the Parish Council (but not excluding the Lead Local Flood Authority) is required to inform the WMS so that local flooding issues and experiences can be referenced in the design of schemes.
- B. Sustainable Drainage schemes should include a 'Service and Maintenance Plan' as part of the planning application. A 'Service and Maintenance Plan' would be expected to include:
 - a. details of how the scheme will be professionally serviced in perpetuity;
 - b. what resources will be required and how these will be provided to maintain flood defence infrastructure, water storage facilities, enhancements to the landscape, including space for appropriate wildlife habitats, and opportunities where appropriate, for people's safe access during a flooding incident;
 - c. awareness raising so that emergency measures are well understood and can be implemented when an incident occurs.

Community Action Point

The Parish Council will encourage the adoption of the following objectives when applications are discussed or assessed at local level:

- Promote flood prevention through resisting proposed developments which are likely to displace flood water onto nearby land and roads.
- Ensure any car-parks which are being constructed or repaired at community, business and other public venues should incorporate the latest permeable surfaces or other sustainable drainage features which shall retain their full permeable or drainage capability for the design life of the car park.
- Ensure that flood protection, water management and water landscaping is integral to any new building development, and to be regarded as priorities at the planning stage.
- Encourage development to manage water onsite using measures such as rainwater harvesting, rain gardens and natural flood management.
- Ensure that any elevation of land or buildings in a new development does not cause detriment to existing properties through increased risk of fluvial and/or pluvial flooding.

- Support the use of agricultural and amenity land for water management, and ensure that water storage creates positive environmental features and enhances local features.
- The LNDP will actively support and assist local farmers in obtaining compensation for land lost as a result of flooding particularly in the case of the flood plain.
- Support initiatives to alleviate fluvial flooding north of Gloucester.
- Support measures taken by neighbouring communities, upstream of our smaller rivers and streams, to manage run-off to prevent increased risk downstream, and where possible apply remedies (e.g. retrofitted ponds, application of more permeable materials).

Rural Economy

134. The economic health of the parish is in many ways linked to the larger areas of employment such as the City of Gloucester and the towns of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury.
135. There is a small business estate within the parish called Knightsbridge Business Centre comprising of 35 small single storey units with a wide variety of business activities: retail, service and manufacturing. Although employing few people directly from the parish, the NDP supports development of the opportunities on the estate.
136. Whilst agriculture employs far fewer people than a hundred years ago, it is important to support our local farmers and assist in the development of their businesses. Their success will maintain the healthy and attractive environment in which the Parish is located and the NDP will support eco-friendly extensions of their locations.
137. There are several people who work from home but they and other businesses in the parish suffer from poor internet and mobile reception and it is a priority to ensure improvements in these areas for both private and business users.
138. Our NDP approach is to recognise the Local Enterprise Partnership, GFirst LEP, *Strategic Economic Plan for Growing Gloucestershire*²¹ as the framework within which our NDP will work. We believe that a full range of small enterprises contribute to the vitality and flexibility of the local economy and that businesses within our parishes are an integral part of the local economy and should be supported.
139. Small scale, sensitive and appropriate developments which support the rural economy will also be supported in principle and assessed on their individual merits.
140. Emerging Borough Plan policy EMP2 states that small scale employment will be supported at the appropriate size and scale in Service Villages such as Coombe Hill. In the wider countryside, including The Leigh village, small scale employment will be supported adjacent to the existing settlement or as part of an employment-generating farm diversification project.

21 Gfirst LEP, 2014.

141. Homeworking is becoming increasingly common and has distinct environmental benefits: homeworkers can avoid or reduce residents' work commute. Homeworking should be encouraged provided that it does not harm the amenity of other home owners in the parish, for instance by causing increased traffic, noise or changing the character of the area.

Policy EMP1: New Employment Development

Proposals for new employment development should take the following into consideration:

- A. Small scale developments which improve the rural economy will be supported, especially on brown field sites.
- B. Proposals that would provide jobs for local people will be supported.
- C. Proposals that cannot be located on existing brownfield sites or vacant buildings may be supported on greenfield sites subject to a full review of their necessity and transportation, landscape, flooding, biodiversity and amenity impacts.

Policy EMP2: Home Working

Proposals that will result in home working should take the following into consideration:

- A. Small scale changes to residential properties to encourage home working and home-based small businesses will be supported, subject to them respecting the established sense of place and local character of the surrounding area. Extensions to existing buildings for this purpose will be subservient to the main building.
- B. New buildings within the curtilage of existing residential properties will be supported where they are subservient to the main building. A planning condition will be applied to ensure that the new building cannot ever be converted into a separate dwelling.
- C. Proposals will only be considered if they can clearly demonstrate that the work area is for its occupant(s) and is ancillary to the primary residential use. The commercial activity must demonstrate that it is appropriate in terms of amenity to residential neighbours – this includes traffic generation, parking, noise and odours.

Community Action Point

The Parish Council will encourage the adoption of the following objectives when applications are discussed or assessed at local level:

Pursue relevant authorities to continue to supply Superfast Broadband in order to encourage small enterprises in the NDP area.

Pursue relevant authorities and companies to improve mobile phone reception throughout the parish which is currently below accepted business levels.

Implementation and monitoring

142. The Parish Council will monitor developments during the period of the Plan and call to account any attempts to ignore or override the provisions of The Leigh NDP. It will also continuously consider if there is need for review due to changing circumstances locally or nationally. The principal aim however will be to ensure the parish retains its village and rural character and does not become an urban extension of the surrounding major towns and city.

Appendix A: Photographic examples of local historic Severn Vale buildings and materials

This appendix is a photographic record of The Leigh's character from September 2020. Each photograph is accompanied by commentary which describes positive and negative features which together define the prevailing style of character of build development in The Leigh. The main positive features have been summarised in **Table 1**.



Commentary: This traditional farm house shows the use of an open gate, irregular red brick construction, dark lapboard details, new slate roof and traditional red tile roof.



Commentary: This traditional dwelling reflects many changes and additions since it was built. It has many relatively modern features, but also reflects the local character with the use of mixed and irregular brick and stone work, red tile roof, dark stained lapboard walls.



Commentary: This wall shows a combination of irregular red brick topped with a lapboard fencing panel that blends well with older features because it is stained to match.



Commentary: This traditional house combines dark stained lapboard features with traditional red tile roof. The boundary is marked by an irregular red brick wall, pillars and picket gates.



Commentary: A common variant on red brick is white painted brick which is very pleasing and also representative of the local character. This house has a traditional red brick roof and red brick boundary wall which also contributes positively to the local character.



Commentary: This cluster of residential and farm buildings is another example of a red brick boundary fence, lapboard external walls with a corrugated metal roof which, though probably not suitable for residential buildings, makes a positive contribution for an out-building.



Commentary: This modern building does a good job of incorporating the historic style by using irregular red brick in the walls and boundary and slate roof.



Commentary: This traditional barn, outbuildings and gates show how wooden features can reflect the agricultural tradition of The Leigh and provide design inspiration for new development.



Commentary: This traditional building of painted brick retains the red tile roof, and includes a modern garage using lapboard construction with a farm-style gate and fence.



Commentary: This traditional dwelling is a combination of styles but because it uses the local palette of materials and colours, it's impact is positive.