

Planning for new homes in Bourn parish

Planning for new homes in Bourn parish.....	1
Overview	1
Village survey	1
Current households.....	1
Future households	2
Housing needs surveys	2
Constraints	3
Guidelines	3
Timescales	4
Potential sites	5
Evaluation of sites	7
Recommendation	7
Appendices.....	9
1. Group village definition	9
2. Exception Site policy.....	10
3. Affordable Housing definition	11

Overview

Bourn parish lies between the A428 to the north and the A1198 to the south west. The eastern and western fringes follow field boundaries and part of the ancient track of Porters Way. The main settlement is clustered around the church, along the Bourn brook valley and lanes to the north and south. This cluster is surrounded by open countryside, scattered with dwellings.

There are a number of buildings of historical interest in the village; two grade I, two grade II* and 49 grade II listed. The parish church dates from the 12thC, and Manor farmhouse from the 13thC. Its great weatherboard and timber barns are outstanding examples of buildings of this type. The Bourn Windmill (17thC) is the earliest example of its kind, nationally.

There are 352 houses in Bourn; approximately 40% of which lie outside the village framework. There are also a number of business and retail premises.

Village survey

The village survey was conducted in June 2007. The housing and planning section of this survey sought views on future development in the Parish as follows –

- Is development required?
- If so, what mix of housing would be acceptable?
- If so, what type of businesses would be acceptable?

Current households

Approximately 75% of homes are owner occupied, 5% are privately rented and 20% are local authority or housing association rented.

22% of homes have two bedrooms or less, 34% have 3 bedrooms and 42% have 4 or more bedrooms.

49 people work from home full-time, 76 people work part-time or occasionally. Of these respondents, a significant number thought small office units (24%) or a dedicated business facility (17%) would benefit businesses in Bourn.

Future households

Of the villagers who answered the survey -

- 53% wanted to protect open spaces within the village framework
- 26% supported new development in suitable open spaces within the village framework
- 30% favoured building mixed housing on previously developed sites
- 17% supported building a new development of affordable homes outside the village framework
- 18% supported extending the village framework to create a new mixed housing development attached to the village.

A small but significant number of families or individuals wanted to move house but remain within the village (24). However, respondents were frustrated by a lack of suitable housing stock, to buy and rent.

Housing needs surveys

Housing need data for Bourn is available from three surveys –

1. 2005 – conducted by South Cambridgeshire District Council
2. 2007 – conducted by Bourn Parish Council (as part of the village survey)
3. 2009 – conducted by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC)

All of these surveys showed that there is a demand for additional local authority or housing association rentals as shown in Table 1.

Type of accommodation	Survey			Housing register
	2005	2007	2009	
House / Flat				
1 bedroom	5	5	0	12
2 bedroom	9	10	2	12
3 bedroom	0	6	3	6
4+ bedroom	0	1	3	2
Bungalow				
1 bedroom	1	0	1	0
2 bedroom	4	0	0	0
	19	22	9	32

Table 1 Type of accommodation required

Note that there is considerable variation between the 2005/7 and 2009 surveys. This may be due to the availability of housing in Cambourne.

Given these figures, the council believes that over the next five years there could be a requirement for 10 to 15 additional houses in the village.

Constraints

For planning purposes, Bourn is identified as a Group village (as defined in appendix 1). This means it is generally not regarded as a sustainable location for new development, having limited public transport and other amenities.

Any new development within the village framework is limited to schemes of no more than 8 dwellings, subject to the criteria set out in policy ST/6 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF). Most open spaces within the village framework are not regarded as suitable for development, either due to flood risk or protected views. New development outside the village framework is not permitted, unless an exceptional need is proven for 100% affordable housing.

The characteristics of the village most valued by parishioners must be preserved. Residents place a high value on Bourn's rural character and landscape. When asked what makes Bourn a special place to live, 73.6% said peace & quiet, 72.2% countryside access, 63.6% landscape.

Guidelines

There is a mixed message from village survey with respect to future development. There is reasonable support for development within the village framework but only limited support for building outside the framework. However the tightly drawn village framework restricts any general development within the village. There is also considerable concern about the volume of traffic within the village.

Therefore the following guidelines were adopted in the search for future development locations –

- Any development outside the existing framework must be tied to improvements in highway safety, particularly the extension of the 30 mph limit.
- Any development outside the existing framework should minimize traffic movements to local services such as shop, school, café, restaurant and pub.

Any development outside the existing framework should encourage the use of existing use of existing outdoor play spaces (as shown in

- Figure 1).
- Any development must provide adequate facilities (eg play areas, formal green space) commensurate with its size and phasing of delivery.

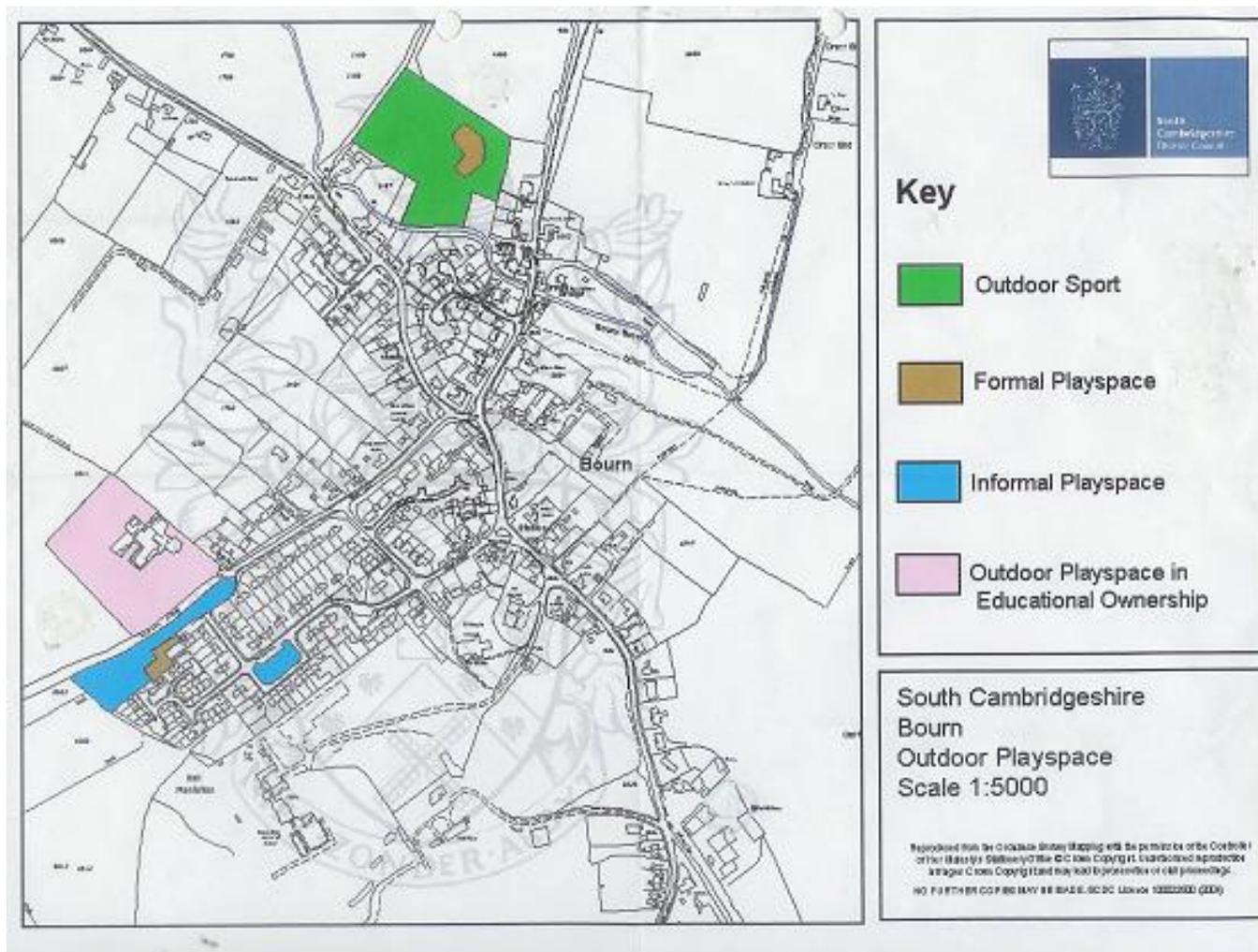


Figure 1 Outdoor playspaces

Timescales

The delivery of new housing in the village must balance the following factors –

- Timeliness – to ensure that the local need is met as it arises
- Design – to ensure that any development delivers appropriate green / play spaces as needed by the children in these new households
- Scale – to ensure that the phasing of the development is economically viable for the developer.

The right balance between timeliness and scale must be found to maximize local occupancy as defined by the following SCDC guideline -

- **Households to occupy Rural Exception Sites must reside in the local community ie. parish, or have a local employment connection, or have a local family connection**
- **If there are no such households when a property ready for occupation will “cascade” to adjoining parishes, then finally to wider district**

The phasing of any development should meet local demand as it arises – a previous survey¹ suggested a timescale of 2 – 5 years.

¹ SCDC Housing Needs survey May 2005

Potential sites

Eight possible locations for new housing were considered by the parish council and a short list of six taken forward for more detailed analysis. These short listed sites shown on the village map in Figure 2 -

- A. West of Bourn Primary School
- B. Gills Hill Farmyard²
- C. Manor Farm
- D. North of Jubilee Recreation Ground
- E. Rockery Farm³
- F. West of Hall Close

The following sites were also considered but not short listed –

- G. Chapel Hill
- H. 103 Caxton End

Note that all these sites fall outside the existing village framework and are therefore classified as exception sites. Such sites are subject to specific constraints with respect to type of housing as defined on the SCDC web site (<http://www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/strategyanddevelopment/affordabledevelopment/faq.htm>) –

Exception sites are areas of land, which are outside of the village envelope. This land can only be used for the provision of affordable housing for the local residents of that village. The land cannot be sold for private housing developments.

See appendix 2 for the current planning policy on such sites.
See appendix 3 for a definition of affordable housing.

² This site currently has planning permission for light industrial use

³ This site currently has a planning application under appeal for 8 affordable homes – S/1004/09/F

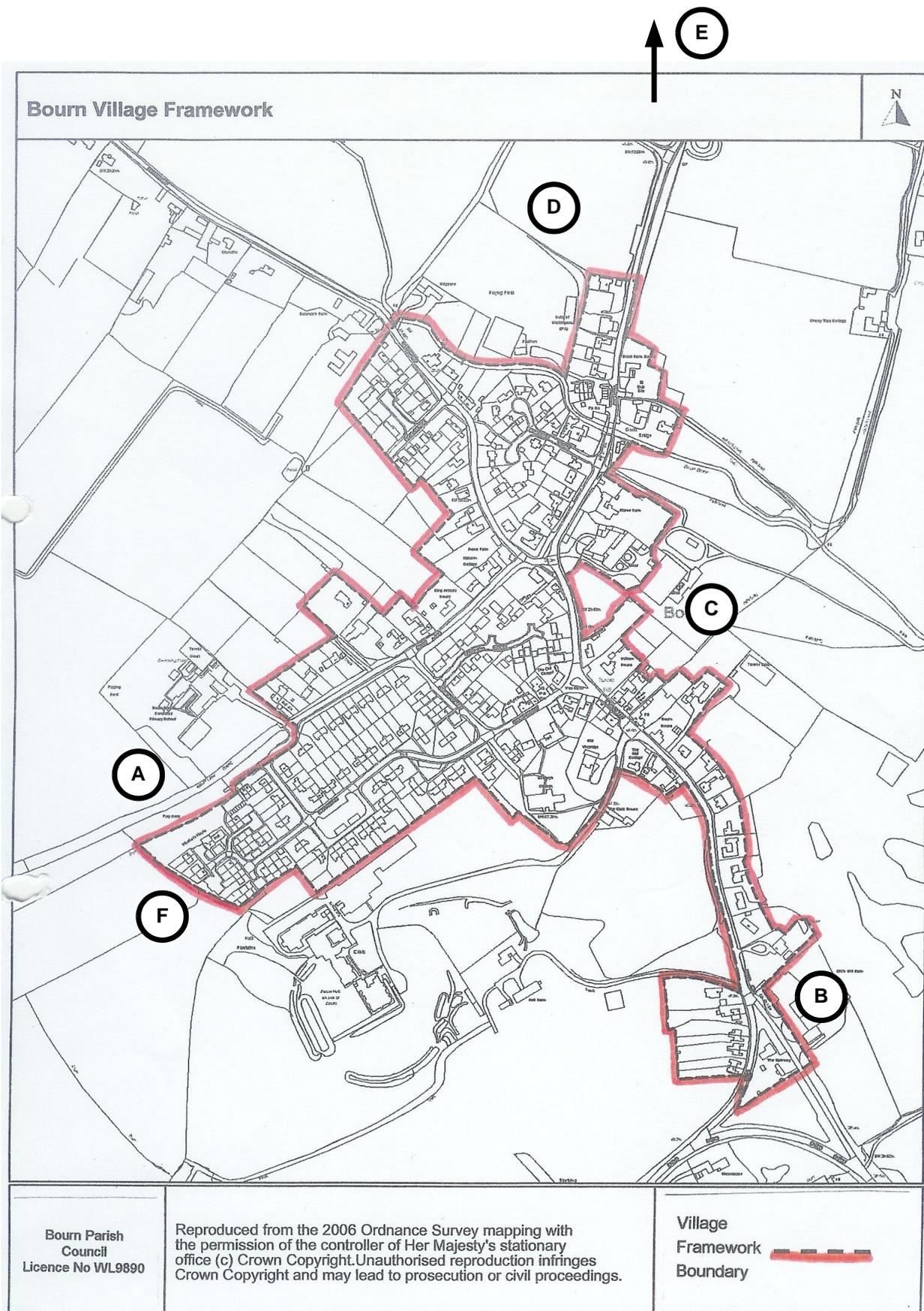


Figure 2 Potential housing sites

Evaluation of sites

These sites were evaluated against the following criteria –

1. Ease of access to village services eg
 - a. distance from service
 - b. mode of transport – foot, bicycle, road (car / bus)
 - c. safety – availability of footpaths, cycle ways, number of roads to be crossed
2. Ease of access to existing play spaces – distance, mode, safety as defined in (1)
3. Available infrastructure ie existing roads, paths and utilities
4. Minimizing impact on the village landscape eg conservation area, existing trees, public footpaths, brideways
5. Capacity of site – ability to handle the projected number of dwellings

Each criteria is scored from 1-7 with 7 being the highest ranking.

Suitable sites	1. Services	2. Playspace	3. Infrastructure	4. Impact	5. Capacity	Total
A (School)	7	6	3	4	6	26
B (Gills Hill)	3	2	6	7	6	24
D (Recreation)	6	7	1	3	5	22
C (Manor)	5	5	4	2	4	20
E (Rockery)	1	1	7	6	3	18
F (Hall Close)	7	6	5	5	6	29

Table 2 Site evaluation

From this evaluation, the following ranking of sites is suggested –

1. F – West of Hall Close
2. A - West of Bourn Primary School
3. B - Gills Hill Farmyard
4. D - North of Jubilee Recreation Ground
5. C - Manor Farm
6. E - Rockery Farm

Recommendation

It is recommended that Bourn Parish Council take the following actions –

- approach the owners of sites F and A to discuss whether these locations would be considered for sale for an affordable housing development
- disseminate findings to village via a public meeting and respond to feedback
- work with one of SCDCs preferred Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to establish “ballpark” costs to develop the chosen site in two phases –

an initial batch of 10 houses with an optional second batch of 5 at a later date

- liaise with SCDC to identify sources of funding to assist with infrastructure costs eg Homes and Communities Agency

Appendices

1. Group village definition

From LP2004 (and its successor the Local Development Framework) –

Residential development and redevelopment up to a maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the village frameworks of Group Villages provided that:

- (a) the retention of the site in its present form is not essential to the character of the village;**
- (b) the development would be sensitive to the character of the village, local features of landscape or ecological importance, and the amenities of neighbours;**
- (c) the village has the necessary infrastructure capacity; and**
- (d) residential development would not conflict with another policy of the Plan, particularly policy EM8.**

Development may exceptionally consist of up to 15 dwellings, if this would make the best use of a brownfield site.

All developments should provide an appropriate mix of dwelling size, type and affordability.

2. Exception Site policy

From the Local Development Framework – Development Control Policies
DPD –

POLICY HG/5 Exceptions Sites for Affordable Housing

1. As an exception to the normal operation of the policies of this plan, planning permission may be granted for schemes of 100% affordable housing designed to meet identified local housing needs on small sites within or adjoining villages. The following criteria will all have to be met:

- a. The development proposal includes secure arrangements for ensuring that all the dwellings within the scheme provide affordable housing in perpetuity for those in housing need;**
- b. The number, size, design, mix and tenure of the dwellings are all confined to, and appropriate to, the strict extent of the identified local need;**
- c. The site of the proposal is well related to the built-up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size and character of the village;**
- d. The site is well related to facilities and services within the village;**
- e. The development does not damage the character of the village or the rural landscape.**

3. Affordable Housing definition

From the Local Development Framework – draft Affordable Housing SPD –

Affordable housing – housing that is available at a cost low enough to meet the needs of eligible households, having regard to local incomes and local housing prices, and which will remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if not, that the subsidy is recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Affordable housing includes:

- **Social rented housing** - housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons, for example private sector bodies, or provided without grant funding where it is provided under equivalent rental arrangements.
- **Intermediate affordable housing** - housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents. These can include shared equity products e.g. Home Buy, other low cost homes for sale, and intermediate rent.