

Beachley

Introduction

- 8.1 The general area of the Beachley peninsula, south of Sedbury, is dominated by the Severn Bridge and the Army Barracks. As Ministry of Defence property the Barracks falls largely outside the scope of this Plan. An estate of 79 houses has been completed on land adjacent to the Barracks to be used solely for the army, but this area is not included within the settlement area for Beachley as land owned by the Ministry of Defence is not subject to the same planning regulations as non Crown land. The most substantial part of Beachley outside the Army Barracks is an area of regular plots served by Loop Road and Inner Loop Road. This is situated between the Severn and Wye estuaries, on relatively low-lying land.
- 8.2 Beachley has few services. It is close to Sedbury which has a range of shops and other facilities, and Chepstow is within two miles. Tutshill, Sedbury, Chepstow and the Army Camp provide employment close to Beachley. There is also some employment locally, including an engineering works.
- 8.3 Since 1981, 3 new houses have been completed in Beachley. The present population of the area is approximately 255, which corresponds with a housing stock of about 100. There were no residential commitments within the defined settlement boundary as of January 2004.

Development Strategy

- 8.4 The countryside surrounding Beachley provides a generally attractive setting and it is not considered appropriate to allow the developed area to expand into the surrounding open countryside. The defined settlement boundary has been tightly drawn around the built up area of Beachley offering very few opportunities for further development. The strategy restricts the potential for residential development. This may allow some changes to take place within the Plan period, in a similar manner to the few completions which have taken place in the past years. A further constraint is that the village relies on private drainage facilities. It is not anticipated that any other significant development is likely to occur over the Plan period.

Blaisdon

Introduction

- 9.1 Blaisdon is a small settlement located on the edge of a lowland agricultural plain approximately three kilometres south west of Huntley. The village has a dispersed form made up of dwellings, farm buildings, fields and orchards. Blaisdon lies within a landscape of rolling agricultural plains. The majority of the settlement was designated a Conservation Area in January 1990.
- 9.2 Blaisdon has a very restricted range of local services which includes a Church, public house and meeting hall. Nearby is Blaisdon Hall, a substantial building formerly part of Hartpury College of Agriculture. This building has now returned to private residential use.
- 9.3 There are approximately 30 dwellings in Blaisdon, with an estimated population of 70.

Development Strategy

- 9.4 Blaisdon is a small village with limited services and restricted access via a network of narrow lanes. The village is not a suitable location for further residential development and will be regarded as forming part of the open countryside. The Plan will continue to protect and enhance the Conservation Area together with the protection of the surrounding open countryside.

Blakeney

Introduction

- 10.1 Blakeney is a large village situated on the A.48, about 5 kilometres from Lydney. It lies on the lower slopes of the Severn escarpment. The land rises steeply around the northern and western edges. To the east it trails off through an undulating landscape to the nearby River Severn. The village has taken on a linear character as it has developed alongside the A.48, with two other ribbons of development following Mill Lane and Awre Road. In recent years two local authority housing estates have been built on rising ground to the west and north and 28 houses on land at Millend. Blakeney lies just outside the statutory Forest.
- 10.2 The village has a long history, and by the thirteenth century was a centre for iron smelting. An important period of growth which took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries left a legacy of particularly fine buildings in the centre of Blakeney, they now form the core of the designated Conservation Area.
- 10.3 Blakeney acts as a local service centre, offering a range of shops and other facilities. These include a school, doctors' surgery, extensive recreation ground, hall and two churches, two public houses and a social club within the village itself. The position of the village on a principal road adds to the viability of some of these services. There are no major employers in or adjoining Blakeney, although there are quite a large number of small businesses providing local employment. The village derives some income from tourism.
- 10.4 The population of Awre Parish declined considerably between 1951 and 1981. This trend has been reversed as a result of increased house building in Blakeney and it is likely that the village population grew quite significantly as a result of these completions. The village population is estimated as 712 at 1999 with a housing stock of about 276 dwellings. There were outstanding planning consents for 7 dwellings on January 1st, 2004.

Development Strategy

- 10.5 Blakeney is surrounded by attractive countryside, especially to the north and west of the village. The Plan strategy allows for some residential development in the form of infilling, single dwellings and small groups of dwellings and single dwellings within the defined settlement boundary, which has been drawn to follow closely the present extent of the built up area of Blakeney. There is an opportunity for further residential development at the former goods station located to the south of the High Street. This site will accommodate approximately 17 dwellings. Other than this allocation, there are few opportunities remaining for further development within the village. Incursions into the surrounding countryside will be resisted.
- 10.6 A number of important open areas have been identified within Blakeney. These include the recreation ground, together with other areas which contribute significantly to local amenity and should be protected from development.

Built Environment

- 10.7 The central part of Blakeney is a designated Conservation Area, with many fine examples of individual and groups of buildings. The High Street and Church Square area contain a particularly fine group of buildings which together form a most interesting and impressive townscape. Any new development in the Conservation Area would be expected to complement and enhance the built environment. Archaeological assessments may be required to accompany development applications.
- 10.8 Within the Conservation Area and along the line of the main road there are a number of individual buildings and sites where localised improvements would be very beneficial to the overall appearance of

the village. There may be opportunities for such improvements arising from the redevelopment of existing sites. Where these occur the Plan strategy will seek to ensure that appropriate environmental improvements are incorporated. Implementation would require the co-operation of property owners and other bodies. A successful programme would enhance the centre of Blakeney, support local services, and possibly enhance the potential for tourism.

Housing Allocation - Former Goods Station

(R)F.Blakeney 1 (Old Railway Line)

0.66 hectares of land off High Street will be allocated to accommodate approximately 17 new housing units. The development will be required to:

1. Provide vehicular and pedestrian access from High Street
2. Provide for landscaping to the site boundaries and within the site to incorporate existing landscape features including trees and hedgerows where appropriate.
3. Subject to securing the necessary access rights, to provide for pedestrian and cycle access via Butler's Mead to the village centre.
4. Provide for an appropriate number of affordable housing units
5. Provide for an appropriate contribution to education provision for the prospective occupiers of the site
6. Provide for the recreational open space needs of the prospective occupiers in accordance with Policy (R)FBE.12.

- 10.9 The above land has permission for B1 employment use. The employment use of this site has been reconsidered in the light of the Urban Capacity Study undertaken by the Authority in October 2001. As a result of the study it is considered more appropriate for this site to be allocated for residential development for approximately 17 dwellings. It was originally a railway goods yard and has good natural screening. A development brief has been prepared for the site.

Traffic

- 10.10 Throughout the village there is a need to address the impact of through traffic. Some traffic management measures have already been implemented to reduce the present impact of the A.48 as it carries a considerable volume of traffic. The Highways Agency will continue to monitor the situation.

Bream

Introduction

- 11.1 Bream is one of the largest villages in the Forest of Dean District with a population of 2600 in January 2000. It is just one of a number of settlements which make up the Forest Ring of settlements on the fringes of the statutory Forest. Positioned on the southern edge of the forest core between the towns of Lydney and Coleford, the village is set on a ridge of high ground, falling away on three sides. Development on these slopes is prominent within the surrounding open countryside.
- 11.2 Bream is a sporadic low density settlement located partially within the statutory Forest. Development displays characteristics typical of forest ring settlements. In contrast development outside the statutory Forest takes on a more consolidated form with concentrations of larger and more modern housing estates. The margins of the village generally comprise low density buildings spreading out into the forest margin. Many groups of these buildings are attractive when viewed with their settings. Due to the location of Bream within the fringe of the Forest, the village contains large areas of forest waste and open areas, including a substantial provision of formal recreation space. These areas are of great aesthetic value and provide important amenity spaces. Bream is one of a number of nearly continuous settlements around the fringes of the forest. It is the close relationship of these settlements to the forest itself and the extent, nature and variety of the open spaces within the settlements, which gives this landscape its special character.
- 11.3 Due to the haphazard way in which Bream has developed there is no clearly recognisable village centre. A considerable number of shops and other local facilities are well spread out along the extended High Street. This unplanned development of Bream has resulted in poor vehicular access to many parts of the village.
- 11.4 Despite a variety of constraints which limit potential for development the village has the capacity to absorb some development due to its size, range of shops and services and accessibility to the public transport network.

Development Strategy

- 11.5 The strategy for Bream will enable the continued development of land for housing within the settlement boundary in the form of outstanding commitments, and other small groups, single dwellings and infilling. This will provide continued support for existing local services. In addition a new allocation of land for about 12 dwellings is proposed on land off Highbury Road at Bream Woodside.
- 11.6 Much of the periphery of Bream which lies within the Forest boundary, open spaces consisting of Forest waste and other open land within the village, will be subject to policies to protect them from inappropriate development. This approach recognises the very attractive qualities of the settlement form in these areas, which are worthy of retention.
- 11.7 The Strategy seeks to improve the built environment of Bream. Areas of particular concern are identified at the southern end of the High Street. The aim will be to improve the attractiveness of this area for those using local facilities and services and to enable the development of additional commercial uses. Issues of traffic management will need to be considered at the same time. Recent improvements to the B.4231 will improve access to and from Bream along the secondary lorry route between Coleford and Lydney.
- 11.8 Two related areas of land outside the defined settlement boundary are identified for the development of new employment.

Built Environment

- 11.9 To the south-west of Bream, along the High Street, there are a number of opportunities for environmental improvements. During the previous Plan period environmental improvements were carried out in the area around the War Memorial. Further environmental improvements should continue during the Plan period to improve the attractiveness of the area for those using local services and facilities, and to provide for additional commercial uses. Policy (R)F.Bream 1 identifies the area where environmental improvements would generally improve the area and encourage greater levels of vitality and viability for commercial businesses.

Environmental Improvement Area

(R)F.Bream 1

A scheme of environmental improvements will be implemented to the south-west of Bream as identified on the Inset Map.

- 11.10 Policy (R)F.Bream 1 identifies land to the south-west of Bream which contains a number of commercial premises. A major constraint to the viability of these businesses is the lack of car parking and the safety of pedestrian users. The highway is narrow and lacks a footpath in places along its length. Any scheme for environmental improvements will include a review of traffic management to improve the highway environment for all users and the possibility of securing further off street public car parking.
- 11.11 The built environment identified by (R)F.Bream 1 shows some evidence of lack of investment. In particular several sites along the road frontage appear to offer possibilities for redevelopment or refurbishment. The Plan will support proposals for small scale residential or appropriate employment development which could utilise these sites. The New Inn is an important Listed Building and any proposals for change must respect its qualities. The Council will, during the period of the Plan, prepare a programme of environmental improvements for the southwest of Bream, to be implemented with the support of private landowners and the local community.

Natural Environment

- 11.12 The natural environment of Bream illustrates a distinctive landscape character, including important open and amenity areas including sites of forest waste, woodland, paddocks and large gardens. The Plan will protect these areas and the open countryside surrounding the village. The combination of protection for open and amenity spaces and poor vehicular access to some areas will significantly reduce opportunities for development within and adjacent to the settlement boundary.

Settlement Character

11.13 Many areas within the north western and north eastern boundaries of the defined settlement of Bream developed originally from the encroachment upon the woodland areas and Forest Waste surrounding much of the village. These developments include a series of blocks of housing set in areas of Forest Waste and coniferous plantation. The established character of the areas of Bream which lie within and adjacent to the forest margin, where large plots are a feature, should remain largely undisturbed. Poor access is also often a feature of these areas. Housing located along Parkend Road justifies inclusion for similar consideration because it shares the features of being an established area in attractive surroundings. The large plot sizes, which are also a characteristic of these dwellings, have the potential for further change; this would prove detrimental if carried out on a piece-meal basis. Any new development, including infilling and replacement buildings and uses, will be required to complement the characteristic open and sporadic pattern of the settlement. These areas of distinctive local character, all of which are within the Statutory Forest are shown on the proposals map Inset and are considered under Policy (R)FBE.2 of the Plan.

Housing

- 11.14 From 1991 to the beginning of 2004, 123 dwellings were completed in Bream. Planning consent exists for a further 41 dwellings, including one site of dwellings at Brems Eaves as of 1st January, 2004.

Population (Village)	Housing Stock (Village)
1981-2298	1981- 750
1991-2500	1991- 1000
2000-2600	2000- 1100 (2004- 1114, approx)

- 11.15 Up until 1993 the rate of residential development was relatively high primarily due to the construction of several large housing estates, both public and private (including 91 dwellings at Highbury Road), together with residential infilling. The Plan period to 2011 will provide for a slower rate of growth in Bream.

Housing Allocation - Bream Woodside

(R)F.Bream 2

A site of 0.6 hectares at Bream Woodside is allocated for residential development of approximately 12 dwellings and for recreational use. Development of the northern part of the site will be required to provide for amenity and play space on approximately 0.25 hectares on the southern part of the site.

- 11.16 (R)F.Bream 2 allocates an area of 0.3 hectares for residential development and about 0.25 hectares for recreational use. This part of the allocation is a former children's play area. Development proposals for the site should enable a unified form of development over the whole area, and should provide for the reinstatement of play facilities on the southern part of the site.

Employment

- 11.17 Bream has a strong base of small shops and commercial premises providing a range of services catering for local needs. In addition there is an infant and junior school, a library, a bank, several churches, two large social clubs, a youth centre and two public houses.
- 11.18 Bream has no large employers, but there are many small businesses within the village and immediate surrounding area. These include garages, engineering businesses and others in the service sector. The opportunity to develop further employment opportunities in Bream exists on land to the east of Bream off Whitecroft Road. The site will offer an opportunity for new employment development at Bream.

Employment Allocation – Whitecroft Road

(R)F.Bream 3

0.57 hectares of land adjacent Whitecroft Road will be allocated for development in use classes B1, B2 and B8. Other employment uses of the former pithead buildings that would secure their restoration and would otherwise accord with the Plan will also be permitted.

- 11.19 The allocation comprises two parcels of land, one either side of Whitecroft Road. To the south of Whitecroft Road is a vacant colliery bathhouse stated to have last been used for storage and retail purposes. To the north of Whitecroft Road, the site includes a derelict former colliery office building together with open land bordered on three sides by mature woodland. The fourth side opens onto Whitecroft Road. Part of the site is currently derelict and shows signs of vandalism and fly tipping. The plan will support proposals for the development of both parcels of land for classes B1, B2 or B8 uses. Other uses of the former colliery buildings will also be permitted if these provide employment, would secure the restoration of the buildings, and would not conflict with other policies of the plan. Development will be required to provide appropriate landscaping along the frontage to Whitecroft Road. The area is within the Statutory Forest and within the Forest Ring of settlements and the development should be designed with regard to the character of the landscape. Careful consideration should be given to improving or enhancing the site and to ensuring that views of the development are mitigated. An

electricity sub station is located in the northwest corner of the site and should be protected within development proposals.

11.20 Further detailed guidance is provided in a development brief prepared for the site.

Brierley

Introduction

- 12.1 Brierley is a small linear settlement located immediately adjacent to the A.4136. The village is one of only very few settlements located wholly within the statutory Forest. It is surrounded by woodland and is characteristic of the Forest Fringes and Settlements type of landscape. The older part of the village (Brierley Bank) has the typical layout and character of the Forest Ring and displays a settled character. Along the High Street the built environment takes on a more modern form, made up of a combination of Local Authority housing, recent infilling, and other private housing.
- 12.2 Brierley has well defined settlement boundaries formed by the line of the A.4136 and by the surrounding woodland. Within these boundaries there is very limited opportunity for further development, although the possibility of redevelopment may occur. Traffic on the A.4136 causes a degree of environmental intrusion.
- 12.3 Brierley has a number of local services, including a filling station (with shop), a Church, public house and recreation ground. The woodland which surrounds the village offers great scope for informal recreation, and adds greatly to local amenity.
- 12.4 The population of Brierley is approximately 152, with a housing stock of about 60. There was one outstanding consent for a single dwelling as at January 2004.

Development Strategy

- 12.5 Brierley is tightly constrained by a high quality landscape and restricted access to parts of the village. The strategy of the Plan is to contain development within a tightly drawn settlement boundary. The strategy will allow small developments of one or two dwellings although there are very restricted opportunities for further development.
- 12.6 A strategy to upgrade the A.4316 to achieve access and safety improvements is outlined within Gloucestershire County Council's Local Transport Plan. Safety improvements were implemented within the village during the previous Plan period with the introduction of a 40mph speed restriction. The Forest of Dean District Council will support proposals for strategic highway improvements during the Plan period.
- 12.7 The Inset Map identifies two open areas consisting of an area of forest waste and a recreation ground. These areas are visually important to those parts of the village located around their perimeter. The Plan will protect these areas from development.

Brockweir

Introduction

- 13.1 Brockweir is a small tightly-knit village situated at a crossing point of the River Wye. The village is located within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is an attractive settlement, which is designated as a Conservation Area. Much of its character is derived from the compact layout punctuated by narrow lanes, the use of traditional materials, and its attractive riverside location. The core of the village has not changed a great deal in recent years, but some newer development has occurred on the edge of the village.
- 13.2 Brockweir has limited services which include a pottery shop, a public house, a general store and a village hall close by. Tourism plays a significant part in the support of these services. An oil depot in the village provides a very limited source of local employment.
- 13.3 The present population of the village is approximately 110 with a housing stock of 36. The population has changed very little since 1951. Two new dwellings have been added to the housing stock in the village since 1981. There was outstanding consents for one dwelling in January 2004.

Development Strategy

- 13.4 The overall strategy for Brockweir is to maintain and enhance the attractive character of the built environment of the village and the landscape setting of the Wye Valley AONB. The defined settlement boundary for Brockweir has been closely drawn in order to preserve its attractive and compact built form. As a result there is likely to be little opportunity for new development. The only limited opportunities which may come forward in the village are likely to be in the form of re-development. New housing development will be limited by policy (R)FH.5 to one or two dwellings only. Any development which does occur will be expected to conserve or enhance the Conservation Area.
- 13.5 The oil depot site in the village has potential for amenity improvements to the present use to complement the quality of the surrounding built environment. Any redevelopment proposals for the site should provide for the enhancement of the Conservation Area. Proposals to re-develop the oil depot site for less intrusive employment uses, in Class B1 for example, will be generally welcomed. Development proposals for the site will be judged against the level of environmental improvements which will result for the site, and for the surrounding properties.
- 13.6 Several important open areas are identified within Brockweir. These include the Quay which is of particular aesthetic and historic importance. The network of narrow lanes within the village are an important feature. The Quay and riverside have only limited potential for additional recreation use, due to the sensitive and exposed nature of the location.
- 13.7 The village will be protected from pressures it cannot absorb, for example from inappropriate tourism proposals. During the Plan period consideration will be given to the potential for improved access to the riverside area for recreational purposes. Any proposals arising however must ensure that proper provision is made for ancillary uses, such as car parking, in a manner which is appropriate for the built form of the village and the need to maintain the quality of the AONB setting.

Bromsberrow Heath

Introduction

- 14.1 Bromsberrow Heath is located near to the northern boundary of the District. It lies close to the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It has a population of about 240 and contains approximately 100 houses. The village has no real nucleus, and it is characterised by a network of narrow lanes and tracks. These help to give the village a certain character but also give rise to certain access limitations. There has been much residential infilling over an extended period which has changed the nature of the village from that of a dispersed agricultural settlement to a more intensively developed linear settlement, with almost continuous development, although many dwellings are set in large plots.
- 14.2 There is a combined post office and shop within the village but few other facilities. The nearest school is over a mile away at Bromsberrow. There is very limited local employment in the village itself though a small industrial estate lies close by.
- 14.3 The M.50 Motorway forms part of the southern boundary of the village and generates a degree of background noise. There are two sand quarries in Bromsberrow Heath, one to the south of the M.50 is dormant at present but has a valid planning consent for mineral extraction. The quarry which is adjacent to the settlement is fully operational and produces building sand.
- 14.4 As of 1st January 2004 there were no outstanding consents although five new dwellings had been completed since 2000.

Development Strategy

- 14.5 The village offers few opportunities for further development and has little in the way of services or employment. New development will therefore be restricted to schemes for one or two dwellings on appropriate sites within the Defined Settlement Boundary. The settlement boundary is tightly drawn to protect the adjoining open countryside, and the important underground aquifer underlying the area.

Environment

- 14.6 The network of green tracks and lanes are an attractive feature of the village and should be retained as a feature of the village character. The area surrounding the village is a water gathering ground for Severn Trent Water and there is a ground water extraction plant to the north of the village. Any new development must therefore specifically provide for the safeguarding of the quality of the ground water in the underlying aquifer.

