

Vision for Shifnal – How it will look in 2026

'In 2026, Shifnal is still a pleasant place to live. It has grown considerably in size, but good planning which has taken account of the concerns and policies included in the Neighbourhood Plan has meant that its long-established character as a bustling town with an attractive built environment, a distinctive town centre with a range of independent shops and good community facilities has not changed. It has enhanced its role and sustainability as one of Shropshire's historic small market towns.'

Shifnal has successfully addressed its two key issues. First, a new medical centre with the latest facilities meets the health needs of residents including newcomers to the town and has reduced the need to travel to local hospitals.

Secondly, there have been great improvements in traffic management and pedestrian safety. The improvements to bus service infrastructure and the development of walkways and cycle paths into and around the town centre have encouraged people to leave their cars at home. This has reduced congestion and the pressure on the town's car parks, and so has improved the town centre as a place to stop and walk around, and its shops and businesses are thriving in both daytime and evening. This has led to increasing job opportunities for local people.

The protection of the character of the town centre, including the actions taken with regard to former derelict and empty shops and buildings, has led to an increase in the number of visitors and tourists coming to the town. Shifnal has become a destination, where people come to walk or cycle in the surrounding attractive countryside and then return to enjoy a drink or meal in the town.

Better leisure facilities have been developed, and those green spaces listed in the Neighbourhood Plan because of their recreational and informal leisure value have been retained and improved to meet the needs of all sections of the population, and new green spaces including a Town Park have been provided as part of recent housing developments. Community effort backed by public and private funding has led to the Wesley Brook becoming an attractive feature. The greenbelt and the agricultural land around the town have not been built upon.

Some small-scale housing development has taken place on infill sites, but in accordance with the policies in the Plan it has matched the size, scale and character of the existing built environment and has met only local housing needs. This has meant that neither younger nor older people need now to move away to find affordable or suitable housing.

There has been an increase in local employment opportunities due to the implementation of the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, thereby reducing the need to travel out of the town to work.

A strong community spirit continues to exist and new residents have successfully integrated into the town, and this has given everyone the opportunity to participate in and live a healthy, safe and satisfying life.'



Green Belt and the Shifnal Settlement Boundary

Objectives

- The existing Green Belt around the town should continue to be protected
- The Neighbourhood Plan should seek to protect the existing market town character of the town from additional greenfield development

Policy SL1: Green Belt

The settlement boundary of Shifnal Town is shown on the Proposals Map. Development or redevelopment will be permitted within the settlement boundary subject to the other policies in this plan and those in the Shropshire Local Plan.

Outside the settlement boundary within the Safeguarded Land, no permanent development or redevelopment will be permitted with the exception of those sites already granted planning permission.

The only general exceptions shall be uses that are considered appropriate for the Green Belt.



Housing

Design of Residential Development

Objective

- The design and scale of any new housing in Shifnal town should be in keeping with its character as a historic market town

Policy HG1: Residential Infill Development

Any proposals for residential development on infill sites within the settlement boundary, including redevelopments, will be permitted provided that all the following criteria are met:

- it is of a scale and height in keeping with the local character of neighbouring buildings and the town generally;
- it does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring uses through loss of privacy, loss of daylight or visual intrusion;
- the traffic generation and parking impact created by the proposal does not result in an unacceptable direct or cumulative impact on congestion or road and pedestrian safety.

Developments which seek to use materials common to the buildings in the immediate surrounding area will be encouraged, particularly on street frontages. However, this should not stifle innovation in the overall design of buildings.



Transport and Movement

Highway Improvements

Objective

- The road network should be improved to accommodate the extra local traffic generated by the new housing developments as well as through traffic

Policy TM1: Highway Improvements

Proposals to improve the flow of traffic and pedestrian safety on highways and at key junctions in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be strongly supported, subject to there having been positive engagement with the community at the earliest stage. This is particularly the case in respect of highways and junctions serving Shifnal Town Centre.

New development that results in an increase in traffic generation will need to demonstrate that they do not have a severe adverse impact on the free and safe flow of traffic and the safety of pedestrians and cycle users.

The Shifnal Transport Strategy will identify a series of actions addressing wider movement issues across the Neighbourhood Plan area. Proposals to address these action points, either as part of planned developments or individually, will be strongly supported subject to there having been positive engagement with the community at the earliest stage.



Transport and Movement

Car Parking

Objective

- Adequate public car parking should be provided in the town centre

Policy TM2: Car Parking in Shifnal Town Centre

There will be a presumption against the loss of publicly accessible car parking in Shifnal Town Centre. Any proposals that would result in the loss of existing publicly available car parking spaces must provide at least an equivalent number of spaces in an equivalent location that serves the town centre.



Transport and Movement

Walking and Cycling

Objective

- Encourage and support the provision of and improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes into and around the town to create a more sustainable environment and healthier life style options

Policy TM3: Pedestrian Access and Primary Walkway Routes

To ensure that residents can walk safely to public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities serving Shifnal town, all new developments must provide safe pedestrian access to link up with existing footways that, in turn, directly serve the Primary Walkway Route 1 shown on the Proposals Map or any other Primary Walkway Routes subsequently identified.

Proposals to enhance the identified Primary Walkway Route and any other Primary Walkway Routes that are subsequently identified will be strongly supported.

Development will be expected to:

- make contributions toward the enhancement of these Primary Walkway Routes; and
- not have an unacceptable impact on Primary Walkway Routes, in particular through the creation of significant additional traffic movements which would have a detrimental impact on the safety or flow of pedestrian access.

Policy TM4: Cycle Routes and Infrastructure

Proposals to extend National Cycle Network Route 81 into Shifnal Town Centre, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be supported.

The provision of cycle parking in Shifnal Town Centre will be supported.

Transport and Movement

Bus and Rail Provision

Objective

- Improve the provision of bus and rail services and infrastructure in order to increase public transport movements

Policy TM5: Bus Services and Infrastructure

Proposals to improve and extend existing commercial and community-operated bus services will be supported especially to serve new development sites permitted. In respect of community-operated bus services, these should improve linkages with key areas and services, including the medical centre, the town centre and the railway station.

Proposals to provide new bus shelters and service information along existing bus routes will be supported.

Policy TM6: Improvements to Shifnal Railway Station

The provision of additional cycle and car parking to directly serve Shifnal Railway Station will be strongly supported.

As part of any improvements to Shifnal Railway Station, the provision of improved disabled access will be strongly supported



Character and Conservation

Objectives

- Any new development should not adversely affect the market town character of Shifnal
- Encourage and support re-use or redevelopment of derelict, unused and vacant sites and buildings to protect and enhance the character of the town

Policy CH1: Derelict/Empty Buildings and Vacant Sites

Proposals for re-use or re-development of derelict or empty buildings and vacant sites in the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- the character of the conservation area is not harmed by the proposed development; and
- the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbours, including the impact of increased on-street parking.

Outside the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town, Policy SL1 will apply.



Health Education and Leisure

Health Provision

Objective

- A new medical centre should be provided to meet the health needs of existing residents and the new households coming to live in the town

Policy HL1: New Medical Facility (land at corner of Haughton Rd/Newport Rd)

As shown on the Proposals Map, land at Haughton Road/Newport Road is allocated for the provision of a medical centre.

Education Provision

Objective

- Improved education facilities and services should be provided for everyone in the community including adults

Policy ED1: New Education Provision

The provision within the Shifnal Town settlement boundary of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings to serve as education facilities, particularly for adult education, will be supported.



Health Education and Leisure

Leisure Provision

Objective

- Better opportunities for leisure should be provided for everyone in the community

Policy LE1: Existing Leisure Users

Proposals that would result in the loss of leisure facilities will only be permitted if alternative and equivalent leisure facilities are provided.

Alternative leisure provision will be required to meet the following criteria:

- the scale of the alternative provision must be of an equivalent scale to the existing provision; and
- the quality of the alternative site must be of equivalent standard in terms of layout to the existing provision; and
- the location of the alternative provision must be generally accessible by foot and within or adjacent to the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town. On safeguarded land outside the settlement boundary (or if in exceptional cases in the Green Belt), then only uses suitable in the Green Belt will be permitted.

This policy does not apply to leisure uses identified in Policy EN1.



Health Education and Leisure

Leisure Provision cont.

Policy LE2: Provision of Additional Leisure Uses

Proposals to provide new leisure facilities to serve the community of Shifnal town will be strongly supported. These proposals must be of a scale commensurate with the site and its surroundings, particularly in terms of the built form, traffic generation and parking.

Policy LE3: Shifnal Town Park

Land beyond the new Thomas Beddoes housing development and sited either side of the railway line (linked through the railway tunnel) is allocated for the provision of a town park. It is expected that such provision will address the following:

- the provision of a range of access points for pedestrians and cyclists, with routes through the park; and
- the potential to create a nature reserve as part of the park; and
- play facilities for children.



Environment

Local Green Spaces

Objective

- Existing parks, play areas, playing fields and open spaces should be retained and additional open space areas provided

Policy EN1: Protection and Maintenance of Local Green Spaces

The following areas and as shown on the Proposals Map are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- Wheatfield Drive recreation area
- Jubilee Park
- Curriers Lane play area
- Cricket ground, Priorslee Road, and football fields, Coppice Green Lane

Proposals for built development on these Local Green Spaces will not be permitted unless:

- the proposal is of a limited nature and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of an identified Local Green Space; or
- the proposal would result in the development of local community infrastructure.



Environment

Loss of Public Open Space

Objective

- Existing parks, play areas, playing fields and open spaces should be retained and additional open space areas provided

Policy EN2: Loss of Public Open Space

Proposals that would result in the loss of public open space will not be permitted unless alternative and equivalent public open space is provided.

Alternative public open space provision proposed as part of such development proposals will be required to meet the following criteria:

- the scale of the alternative provision must be of an equivalent scale to the existing public open space provision; and
- the quality of the alternative site must be of at least an equivalent standard in terms of layout to the existing public open space provision; and
- the location of the alternative provision must be generally accessible by foot and within or adjacent to the existing settlement boundary of Shifnal Town.

Outside the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town, Policy SL1 will apply.



Environment

Flooding and Drainage

Objective

- Any new development should not adversely affect drainage and flooding in the town

Policy EN3: Minimising the Impact of Flooding from Development

Development proposals will be expected to:

- be designed and constructed to minimise the overall level of flood risk within the parish; and
- provide appropriate surface water drainage; and
- open existing culverts where practicable.

Development will not be permitted in flood attenuation areas where that development would reduce the ability of these areas to alleviate flooding.

Proposals that would create new culverts (unless essential to the provision of access to water systems) will not be permitted.

Proposals that would result in the loss of open watercourses will not be permitted.

Any new development must have adequate receiving surface water drainage, i.e. drains, culverts and definable water courses, under Environment Agency and Local Authority control.



Town Centre and Economy

Shifnal Town Centre

Objective

- Existing employment land should be retained and new employment opportunities encouraged within the town
- Provide for and enhance existing facilities and support initiatives to attract and retain visitors and tourists to the town

Policy EC1: Shifnal Town Centre

Development within the area of Shifnal Town Centre shown on the Proposals Map will be expected to comply with the requirements of Shropshire Core Strategy Policy CS15 (Town and Rural Centres) and SAMDev Policy MD10a (Managing Town Centre Development).

Primary Shopping Area

Policy EC2: Primary Shopping Area

In the Primary Shopping Area of Shifnal town centre, as defined on the Proposals Map, there will be a presumption in favour of retail proposals and a presumption against changes of use away from use classes A1 (shops), A2 (Financial and Professional Services), A3 (Restaurants and Cafes) and A4 (Drinking Establishments). This relates to proposals that sit outside of permitted development rights.

This reinforces the protection provided by Policy MD10 in the SAMDev Development Management DPD and assists in ensuring that non-Class A uses would not dominate or detract from the core objective of providing retail outlets for the shopper.



Town Centre and Economy

Shopfront Design

Policy EC3: Shopfront Signage within the Primary Shopping Area

Proposals for shopfront signage within the primary shopping area should be in sympathy with the upper storeys of the building and adjoining facades.

The use of traditional materials such as timber with sign-written titles rather than plastic, externally illuminated signs will be required.

Flush-fitted signs (as opposed to those mounted at a 90-degree angle) will be preferred.

Protection of Existing Commercial Premises or Land

Objective

- Existing employment land should be retained and new employment opportunities encouraged within the town

Policy EC4: Protection of Existing Commercial Premises or Land

There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land which provides employment or future potential employment opportunities. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:

- the commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and
- the commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months.

Town Centre and Economy

New Employment Opportunities

Objective

- Existing employment land should be retained and new employment opportunities encouraged within the town

Policy EC5: Employment-generating Issues

Within the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town, development proposals to provide employment-generating uses on B-class employment allocations will be supported, subject to the following criteria:

- the land in question has no potential for development for B-class employment uses as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months; and
- it is clearly demonstrated that the alternative use of the site will create jobs; and
- the proposals do not provide retail floorspace, other than as an ancillary element to a larger employment-generating development.

Policy EC6: Small-scale Commercial Development

Development proposals to provide small-scale B-class employment opportunities will be supported. This could either be through the following:

- conversion of existing buildings across the Neighbourhood Plan area, subject to the impact of provision on the highway network and parking and subject to it being an appropriate use within the Green Belt (where applicable); or
- provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings within the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town.

Strong support will be given if such provision is made for incubator/start-up businesses on flexible terms.

Town Centre and Economy

Rural Economy

Objective

- Rural farming activities should be protected and encouraged

Policy EC7: Rural Commercial Activities and Agricultural Land

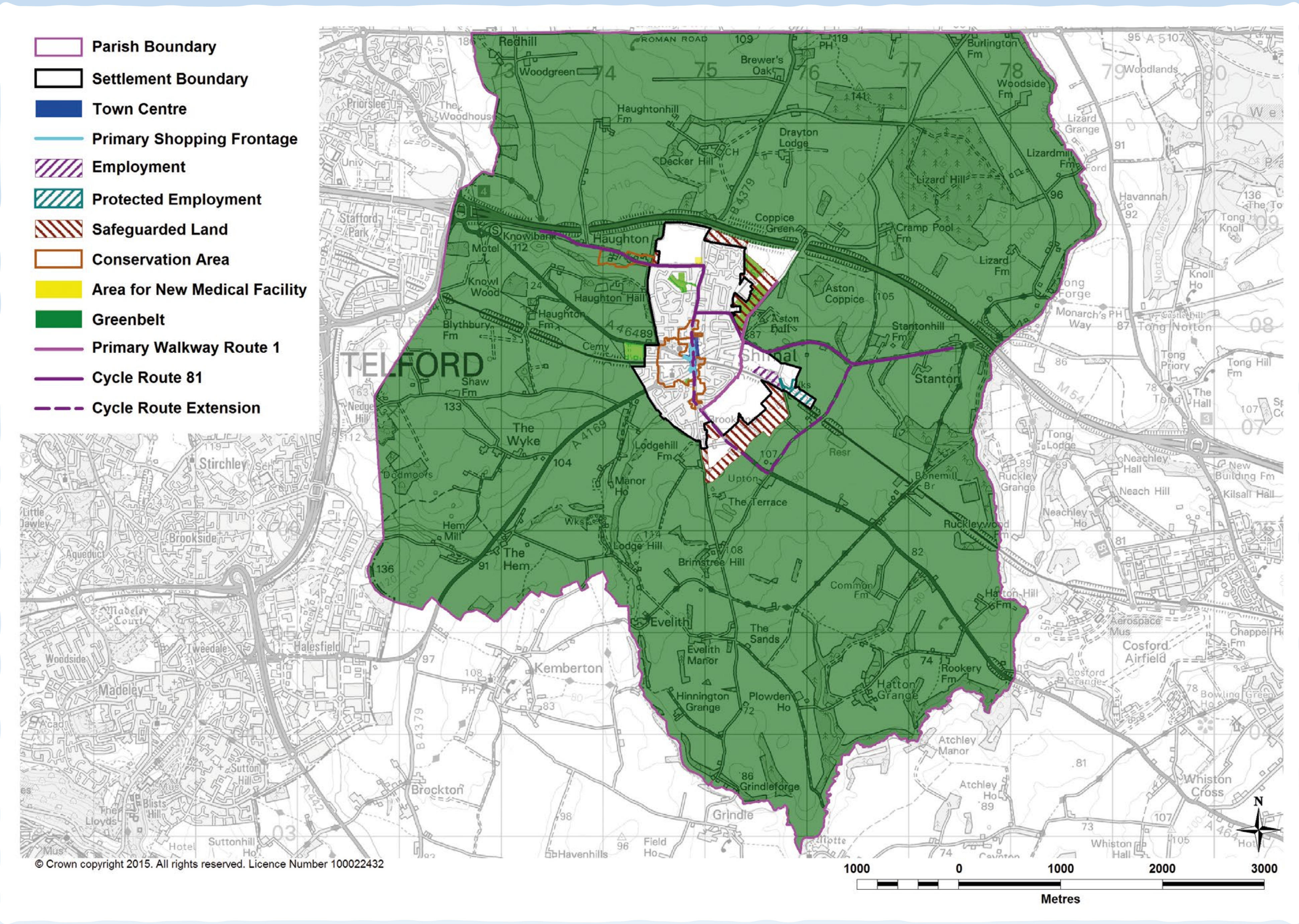
Support will be given for proposals that strengthen the rural economy. It is important that any such proposals represent appropriate development in the countryside and do not conflict with the purposes of the green belt.

Planning permission will be refused for development on grade 1 and grade 2 agricultural land unless:

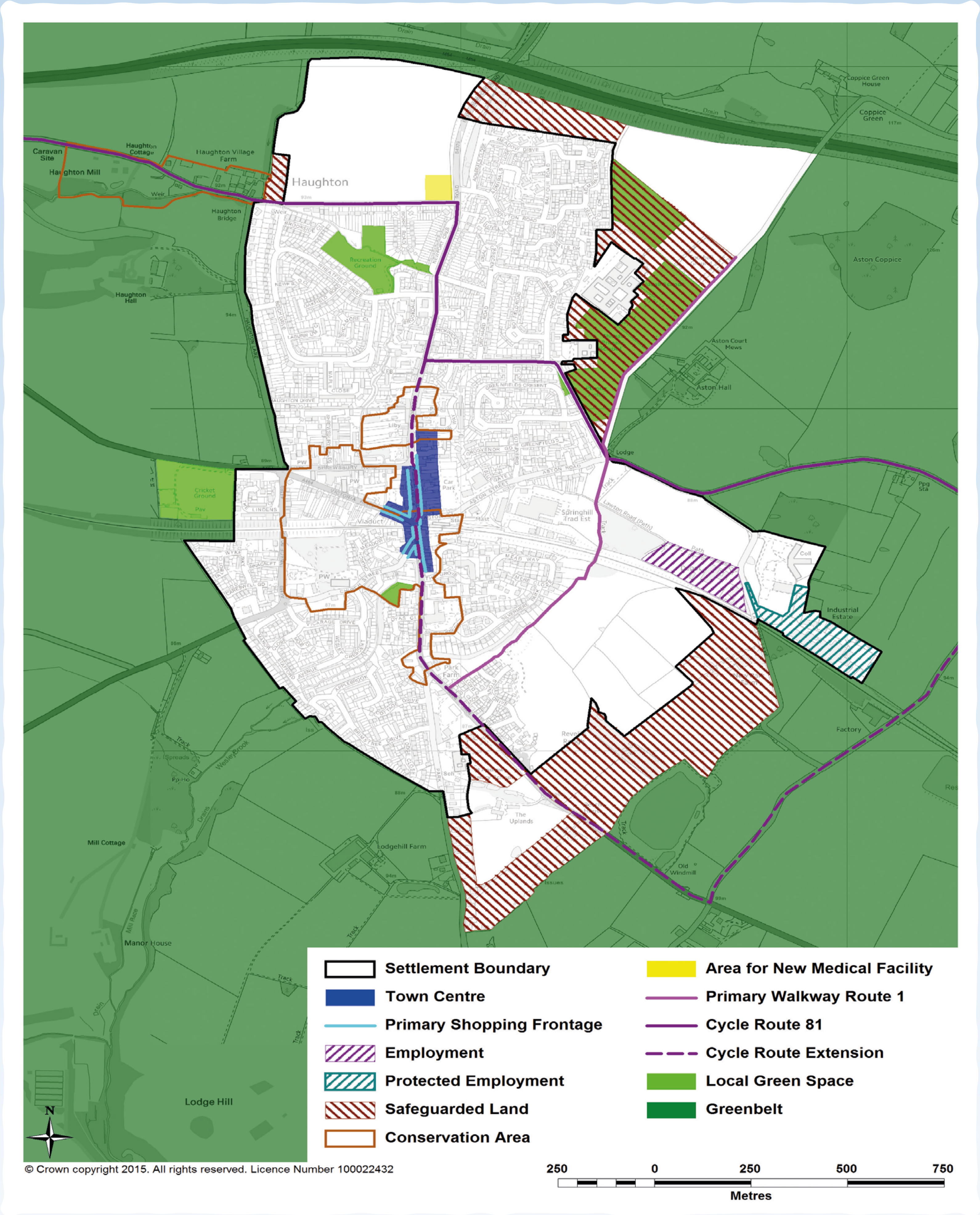
- it is for the purpose of improving the agricultural activities already being undertaken on the land; and
- it represents a small scale development that is required for the continuation of agricultural activities.



Proposals Map – Neighbourhood Plan Area



Proposals Map – Shifnal Town and Surrounds



Proposals Map – Shifnal Town Centre

