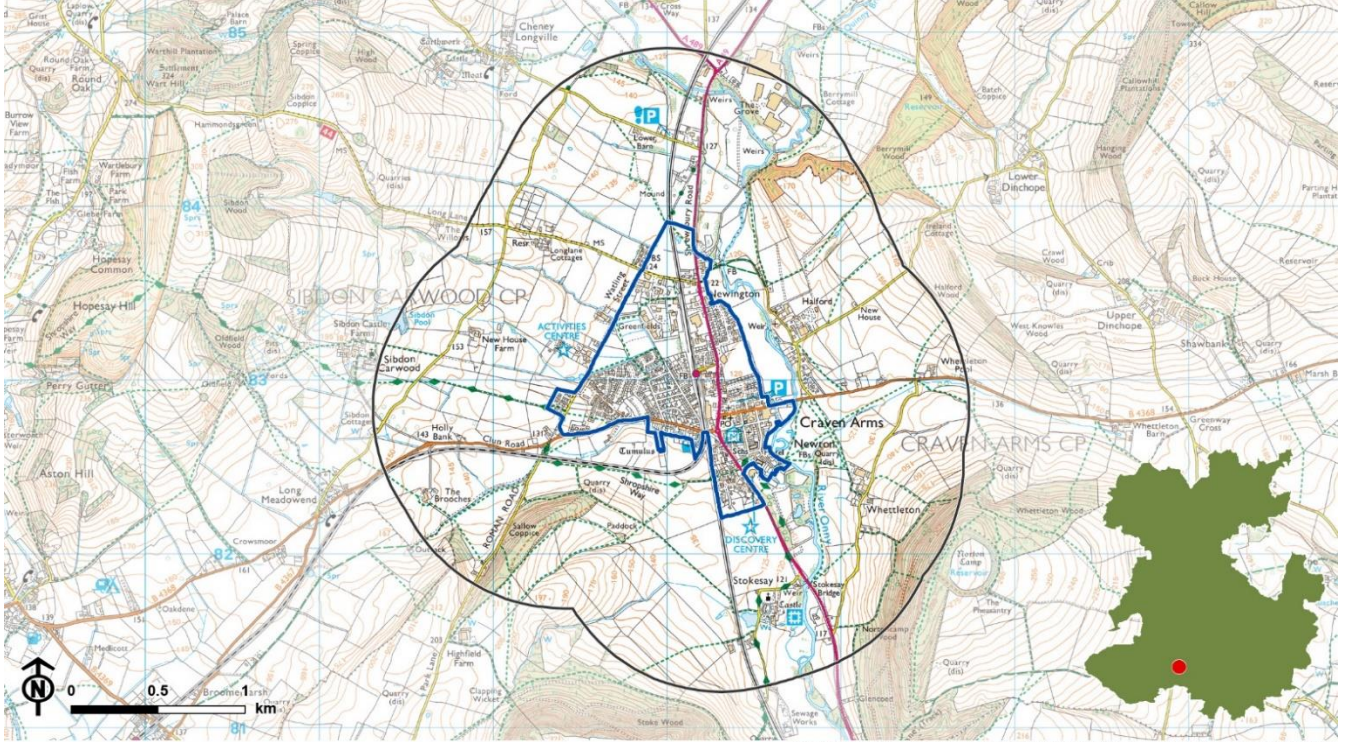


Key Centre – Craven Arms

Location



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CB:KC EB:Chamberlain_K LUC 10924-00_000_Location OSbase 05/02/2020 Source: SC, LUC, OS



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CB:KC EB:Chamberlain_K LUC 10924-00_001_Location_Aerial 05/02/2020 Source: SC, LUC, OS

Summary of Settlement Study Area and Location

Introduction

The Shropshire Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020) identifies Craven Arms, located in south Shropshire, as a Key Centre. This Green Infrastructure Strategy has defined the study area as a 1km buffer around this settlement.

Craven Arms is a small market town on the edge of the Shropshire Hills AONB and provides key services for a sizeable area of south Shropshire. It is just over 10km north west of Ludlow and is situated along the Welsh Marches railway line, gaining it the name 'Gateway to the Marches'. In 2016 the town had a population of 2,600 people.

Development context

Existing development allocations in the town are set out in the SAMDev (2015)¹.

Existing Housing allocations within the town (SAMDev Sites, 2015²):

- Site CRAV002: Land off Watling Street, Craven Arms. Exception site
- Site CRAV003 and CRAV009: Land between Watling Street and Brook Road, Craven Arms. Site provision: 235 dwellings
- Site CRAV004 and CRAV010: Land off Watling Street (east), Craven Arms. Site provision: 60 dwellings
- Site CRAV024: Land adjoining Clun Road/Sycamore Close, Craven Arms. Site provision: 25 dwellings
- Site CRAV030: Land at Newington Farmstead, Craven Arms. Site provision: 5 dwellings

Existing Employment land allocations within the town (SAMDev Sites, 2015):

- Site ELR053: Land at Newington Farm, Craven Arms. Provision: 8ha
- Site ELR055: Land west of A49, Craven Arms. Provision: 2.5ha

There are no Proposed Housing Allocations included within the Shropshire Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020).

The Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020) outlines how Craven Arms will act as a Key Centre and its ambitious growth strategy (SAMDev Plan Policy S7) will contribute to the strategic growth objectives in the south of the County. It is proposed that the High Street will be regenerated as a Key Area of Change. The relocation of the abattoir in the town is the key proposal for the growth and regeneration of the town, opening up land for further employment use around the Craven Arms business park and also kick starting the delivery of a strategic junction off the A49 to Newington Food park. The relocation of the abattoir and the delivery of the strategic junction will increase accessibility to a number of areas of land earmarked for employment use.

It is the objective of the strategy that the strategic junction on the A49 also be used to facilitate a new northern highway linking the trunk road to proposed developments to the north and west of the town.

The Shropshire Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020) sets out that the town has a number of existing housing and employment allocations with housing completions and commitments which will deliver the majority of the total housing figure allocated for Craven Arms (406 of a target 500). It is anticipated that the remaining 94 dwellings will be delivered as windfall sites over the Plan period to 2038. Existing employment allocations to the north of the town meet the demand for employment land in Craven Arms. The Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2020) does not include any additional sites.

¹ Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan 2015

² Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan 2015



Distant views of the Nortoncamp wood, semi-natural ancient woodland



Shropshire Way passes through the study area near Stokesay

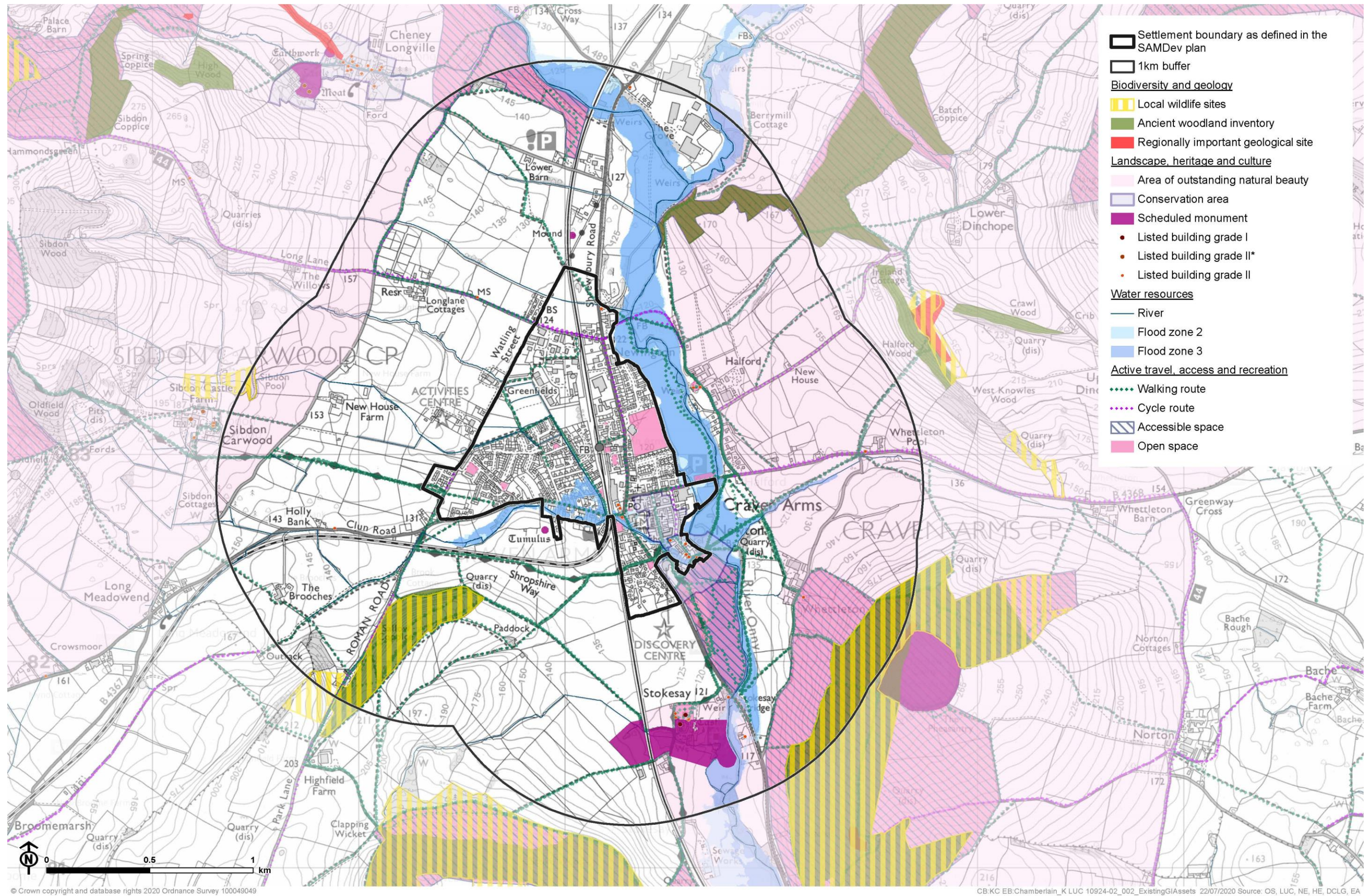


Grade I listed Stokesay Castle



Floodplain for the River Onny


Existing Green Infrastructure Assets and Key Constraints





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CB:KC EB:Chamberlain_K LUC 10924-02_002_ExistingGIAssets 22/07/2020 Source: OS, LUC, NE, HE, DCLG, EA



Existing Green Infrastructure Assets and Constraints


| Theme | Existing Green Infrastructure Assets / Constraints |
|---|--|
| <p data-bbox="164 913 320 994">Key Theme 1: Biodiversity and Geology</p>  | <p data-bbox="363 353 504 383">Biodiversity</p> <p data-bbox="363 405 560 434">Designated Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="363 450 1246 479">■ There are no local or national designations within the Craven Arms study area. <li data-bbox="363 499 1433 560">■ SSSI risk zones for Onny River Section and Wolverton Wood and Alcaston Coppice cover more than half of the northern portion of the study area. <p data-bbox="363 577 699 607">Notable and Priority Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="363 622 1458 846">■ There are a number of Priority Habitats within the study area, notably: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="408 674 1458 734">– Deciduous woodland at Sallow Coppice, Nortoncamp Wood and near the River Onny north of the settlement; and <li data-bbox="408 754 1458 846">– Grassland, including good quality semi-improved grassland in the north of the study area near Cheney Longville and lowland calcareous grassland as an additional habitat on the eastern border of Craven Arms along the River Onny. <li data-bbox="363 866 1458 1016">■ There are several tracts of ancient semi-natural woodland located at Sallow coppice along Park Lane and at Nortoncamp Wood south of Craven Arms, both of which are also Wildlife sites. To the north of the settlement there is replanted and semi-natural ancient woodland extending east from the River Onny towards Berryhill Wood. These three sites are also marked as Core Areas in the Shropshire Environment Network. <li data-bbox="363 1037 1414 1128">■ The semi-improved grassland north of the settlement is marked as a Restorable Habitat in the Natural England Habitat Network mapping. The land surrounding this is part of the Network Enhancement Zone 1. <li data-bbox="363 1149 1477 1209">■ The River Onny is an important Shropshire Environment Network Corridor within the study area and wider area. <li data-bbox="363 1229 1430 1290">■ The majority of roads within the study area support natural verges, however these are relatively fragmented and connection is lost within the settlement. <p data-bbox="363 1310 459 1339">Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="363 1355 1469 1447">■ Many Priority and Protected Species within the study area are associated with the River Onny, including otters and common pipistrelles bats. The River Onny is a particularly important for various Priority Invertebrates. <li data-bbox="363 1467 1469 1594">■ There are several recordings of polecats within the study area particularly within the settlement and on road corridors. Please note, species records only reflect what was present when the surveyor was on site and may not be exhaustive of the true species and geographic spread within the study area. <p data-bbox="363 1615 464 1644">Geology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="363 1659 1469 1720">■ There is a RIGS at a quarry within Nortoncamp wood on the south-eastern border of the study area which shows the changes of dominant fossils within different layers of the sediment. |

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| <p>Key Theme 2: Landscape, Heritage and Culture</p>  | <p>Landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The dominant landscape type within the study area is characterised as Estate Farmlands³, which covers the settlement itself and the land to the north, and east. This is characterised by order field patterns and woodlands within medium to large scale landscapes. ■ Land bordering the River Onny is characterised as Riverside Meadows. This is a flat, linear landscape with a pastoral land use and linear belts of trees. The land here is also the poorest agricultural land in the study area, which is classed as Grade 4. ■ On the higher ground there are Wooded Hills and Estatelands which have prominent, sloping topography and feature large blocks of prominently located woodland. ■ Most of the land within and surrounding Craven Arms has a low sensitivity to development. However, the whole western section of the study area is moderately sensitive and, in the north east on the higher ground towards Ireland cottage, the land is marked as highly sensitive to development. ■ Craven Arms is located near to the Shropshire Hills AONB and most of the land east of the River Onny, and the land in the very west of the study area, are included in the AONB. ■ The land within the study area is predominantly classified as Grade 3 for agriculture with smaller areas of Grade 2 located to the north west and south of the town. Large sections of the study area to the north and the west are under Environmental Stewardship Agreements and sections of the north east and far south are Countryside Stewardship Management Areas. <p>Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are a number of listed buildings within the study area, particularly around Stokesay. This includes the Grade I listed Stokesay Castle and Gatehouse and Church of St John the Baptist. ■ There is Scheduled Monument around Stokesay Castle in the south of the study area and a second just outside the study area to the south east at a large multivallate hillfort at Norton Camp. ■ There is a Conservation Area in the south east of the settlement of Craven Arms with a handful of grade II listed buildings. |
| <p>Key Theme 3: Water Resources</p>  | <p>Freshwater Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The River Onny flows north to south in the eastern section of the town whilst a tributary flows along the southern section. <p>Flood Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The land around the River Onny and the main tributaries lies within Flood Zone 3. This affects the eastern and southern parts of the settlement. ■ The Shropshire Outline Water Cycle Study (2020) notes that a high percentage of the existing settlement is at fluvial risk. ■ Mapping of surface water indicated a high risk of surface water flooding within the settlement.⁴ <p>Pollution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are no Nitrate Vulnerable Zone designations within the study area. <p>Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Shropshire Outline Water Cycle Study (2010) details that a combination of SUDs is likely to be suitable within this settlement. ■ Existing development allocations to the west of the town would be about 1km from the nearest watercourse. |

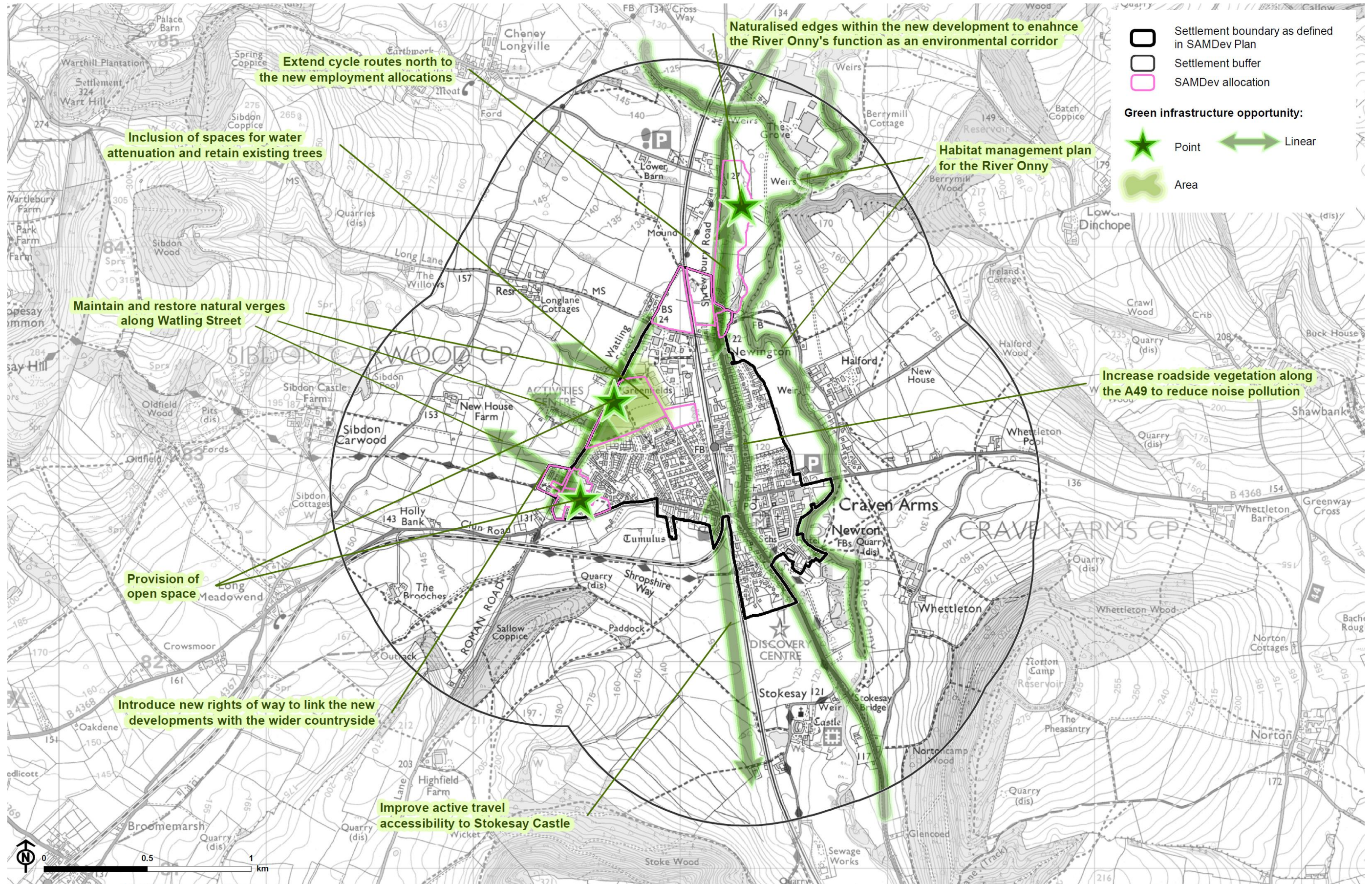
^{3 3} The Shropshire Landscape Typology, 2006

⁴ Shropshire County Council (2010) *Shropshire Outline Water Cycle Study Report*




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| <p>Key Theme 4: Active Travel, Access and Recreation</p>  | <p>Active Travel</p> <p>Walking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is an extensive network of PRow throughout the study area, particularly in the south. This is interlinked and connects the settlement with the wider countryside. ■ There are a large number of promoted walks which pass through the study area and many start or finish within the settlement of Craven Arms. These include a variety of lengths, some circular, and others which connect Craven Arms to other settlements. Key walks include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – War Walks – Hills & Dales Hike – Three Woods Walk – Shropshire Walks Route 3 Clun to Craven Arms – Heart of Wales Line Trail – Shropshire – The main route of the Shropshire Way goes through the study area and runs along the southern part of Craven Arms. ■ There are less footpaths and promoted routes west of the settlement and no links to the wider network of footpaths from the western edge of the settlement where new housing allocations are proposed. ■ Car Free Walks link Craven Arms to Church Stretton and Brownfields, reducing the reliance on cars. <p>Cycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Cycle Route 44 runs through the study area and along the northern edge of Craven Arms, just south of new SAMDev employment allocations off the A49. ■ Several Shropshire Cycle Routes run through the study area, heading north and south off the east – west running national route. This includes along the A49 through the centre of the settlement to north as far as the National Cycle Route 44. ■ There are very few bridleways within the study area so cycle routes in the area are road based. <p>Access and Recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Open spaces in and around Craven Arms include outdoor sports provision and natural and semi-natural open space. The sports provision includes playing fields, a bowling club and a football club. Open spaces include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A community garden at the Discovery Centre – Brown Clee football club – Craven Arms bowling club |
| <p>Key Theme 5: Health and Wellbeing</p>  | <p>Health</p> <p>Health Deprivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The majority of the study area is in the 9th decile for health deprivation but the centre of the settlement itself is more deprived than other areas and is in the 3rd decile for health. This area is therefore one of the more health deprived parts of Shropshire. <p>Childhood Obesity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In general, the west of the study area has some of the highest levels of obesity and excess weight in the county for reception aged children but much lower levels in year 6 children. ■ In the eastern half of the study area there are higher levels of obesity and excess weight in older children. <p>Air Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are no recorded AQMA within the study area. <p>Wellbeing</p> |




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| | <p>Accessible Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Open Space Assessment undertaken by LUC to inform this GI Strategy identified the following baseline provision of open space. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Accessible Open Space: 0.32ha per 1000 persons (2018 population base). Analysis shows that the majority of the town falls within 400m of such provision, however the northern edge of the settlement does not. – Allotments: 0ha per 1000 persons (2018 population base). – Provision for Children and Teenagers: 5 spaces in total. Analysis shows that the whole settlement falls within 800m of such provision. ■ See the Open Space Assessment appended to the GI Strategy Report for more details. <p>Noise pollution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Road noise associated with the A49 which runs through Craven Arms produces noise levels greater than 55dB_{L_{den}}³ over 24 hours. These noise levels affect only a limited part of eastern Craven Arms. |
| <p>Key Theme 6: Climate Change</p>  | <p>Tree Cover</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ According to the national Forest Inventory, the majority of woodland within the study area is broadleaved. Most of this is located on the outskirts of the study area rather than within the settlement of Craven Arms. ■ The Shropshire urban tree data shows that there are trees within the settlement, particularly in the west between Coppice Drive and Watling Street within one of the housing allocations. <p>Flooding Climate Change Allowance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Modelling suggests that taking account climate change, flooding will bypass current flood zone 3 levels in over 50% of cases by a small amount, mainly within river valleys. |







Green Infrastructure Opportunities



Key Green Infrastructure Opportunities

| Theme | Green Infrastructure Opportunities |
|--|---|
| <p>Key Theme 1: Biodiversity and Geology</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Shropshire Environmental Network and Natural England Habitat Network within the study area should be managed to ensure that they are enhanced in order to support wildlife populations. ■ Develop a management plan for the River Onny and adjoining land to create a mosaic of floodplain meadow and riparian deciduous trees, focusing on creating habitats to support the priority and protected species which have been found along the river corridor including otters, common pipistrelles bats and priority invertebrates. Development east of the A49 needs to be designed to bolster the riparian and floodplain biodiversity assets. ■ Enhance links between the separate tracts of ancient woodland including roadside planting along the A49 and B4368 and high ground to the south west of the settlement. ■ The semi-improved grassland north of the settlement is marked as a Restorable Habitat in the Habitat Networks. Restoration should occur here, supported by a mosaic of complementary habitats introduced in the north of SAMDev employment allocations located north of Craven Arms. ■ Provision of naturalised edging within the SAMDev employment allocation north of Craven Arms, east of Shrewsbury Road is recommended, associated with development to ensure the River Onny can function as a corridor within the Shropshire Environment Network and support many Priority Habitats. This could include introducing native, species rich hedgerows which will have a long pollen sequence, supporting pollinators for longer periods of the year. ■ Restoration of the natural verges within the study area is recommended to reduce fragmentation, and where road width allows extend these verges into the settlement itself. Verges along Watling Street should be maintained and enhanced in association with the new developments here. |
| <p>Key Theme 2: Landscape, Heritage and Culture</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The rural, predominantly agricultural landscape around Craven Arms should be taken into account within development proposals. Where possible, proposals should maintain and enhance existing field hedgerows and woodlands associated with the Estate Farmlands character type. ■ Development should retain the character of land to the west and east borders of the study area which lie in the Shropshire Hills AONB. ■ Accessibility to key heritage attractions at Stokesay should be improved including better wayfinding to these assets along the existing footpaths and key views to such features should be maintained. ■ Landscape and visual sensitivity assessment should be taken into account within all development proposals with development to the west, where sensitivity to development is higher, being committed to more rigorous development controls. Developments within this landscape should actively stress design rationale's within pre-application consultation and planning submissions. |
| <p>Key Theme 3: Water Resources</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Natural flood management along the River Onny north of Craven Arms is recommended as this could help limit flooding in the south of the settlement. This could be implemented through small scale SUDs schemes including rain gardens can be implemented as part of the new development along the riverside to provide water storage in high rainfall events. ■ The priority within the Place Plan to investigate the improvement of the conveyance and capacity of culverts to prevent flooding of Watling Street is supported / recommended. This could be addressed as part of the development alongside this street, with ponds and ditches included as part of the open space associated with this housing development. |
| <p>Key Theme 4: Active Travel, Access and Recreation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is currently a limited number of footpaths of bridleways west of the settlement where the new SAMDev housing allocations are located. New routes should be introduced to provide direct links from the new properties to the wider rural area and into the AONB. |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In line with the priority in the Place Plan to improve pedestrian access across the town, new pedestrian routes should also include urban trees or ornamental planting where possible. ■ Extension of cycle routes within the study area to link to the heritage assets at Stokesay and promote active travel to this key destination is recommended. This could include exploring the possibility of upgrading some footpaths into bridleways. ■ New employment developments off the A49 and north of Craven Arms should be linked to the current Shropshire Cycle Route 32 by extending National Cycle Route 44 northwards. This route would likely lie to the west of the A49 to avoid disrupting river crossings. ■ The Place Plan states that footpaths should be upgraded to permit shared cycling and walking within the settlement, particularly at Stokesay Castle in the south of the study area, Britpart on the northern edge of the study area and within the settlement near the community centre. This project is supported / recommended. ■ SAMDev housing allocations in the west of the settlement should provide open space, helping to address deficiencies in access to open space on this side of the study area. The typologies should address those which are currently deficient in the study area. |
| <p>Key Theme 5: Health and Wellbeing</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Current open space consists almost entirely of amenity space and provision for children. new open space should be provided within new development allocations west of the settlement and whilst this should prioritise allotments, it should also provide play provision and parks and gardens. Provision of open space for physical activity at housing developments in the west of the settlement should be designed to incorporate opportunities, , to promote physical activity. Improvement of the quality and density of roadside vegetation adjacent the A49 and residential properties to assist in reducing perceptions of road noise is recommended. This intervention would also help in the provision of contiguous habitat links. There is also opportunity to provide advanced planting prior to building works at the employment allocations north of Craven Arms to further reinforce this buffer. |
| <p>Key Theme 6: Climate Change</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Retain as many of the current trees as possible located in the SAMDev housing allocation between Watling Street and Coppice Drive. ■ Increased tree planting is recommended in the town to create urban shading and absorb carbon dioxide. ■ All new planting should provide climate resilient species. ■ Improve pedestrian access across town to help reduce dependency on cars for short journeys. |

| Summary of key opportunities |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Habitat management plan for the River Onny and adjoining land promoting a mosaic of habitats | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Maintain and restore natural verges along Watling Street | ✓ | | | | | |
| Improve active travel accessibility to Stokesay Castle through path maintenance and improved wayfinding | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| New developments should include spaces for water attenuation including ponds, ditches and rain gardens | | | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Introduce new rights of way to link the new developments on the west of the settlement with the wider countryside | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Extend cycle routes north to the new employment allocations | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Provision of open space within housing allocations should provide Parks and Gardens, Outdoor Sports provision and Allotments. | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | |

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| Increase roadside vegetation along the A49 to reduce noise pollution | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Retain existing trees as part of the new housing allocation | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ |