

South Somerset District Council

Settlement Profile: Castle Cary & Ansford

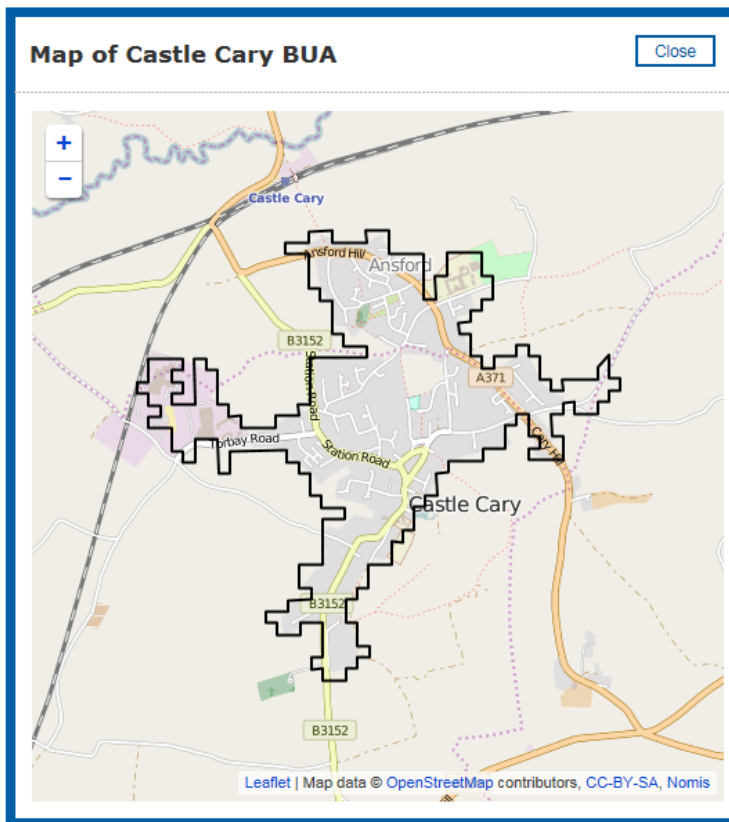


October 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Settlement Profile has been produced using 2011 Census data for the 'Built-up Area' (BUA) of Castle Cary & Ansford (Figure 1.1), unless otherwise stated.

Figure 1.1: Map of Castle Cary & Ansford BUA



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council

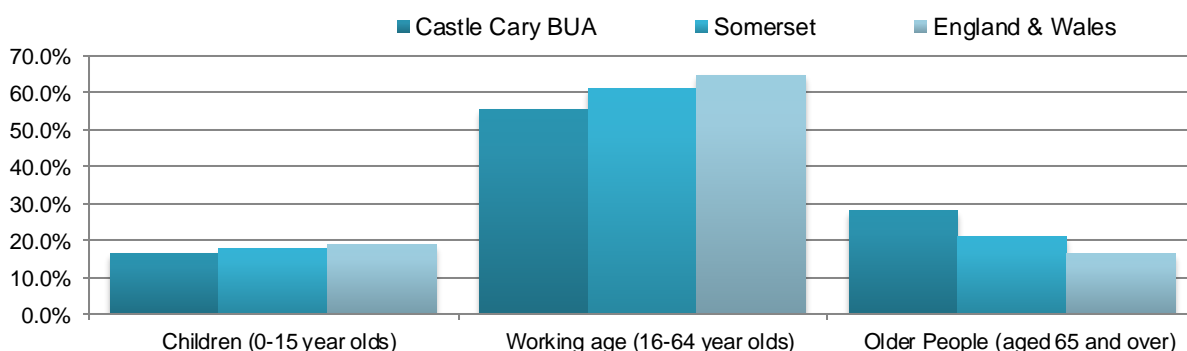
- 1.2. As Figure 1.1 shows, NOMIS includes both Castle Cary and Ansford in its Castle Cary BUA. They are also considered jointly in the Local Plan as a Local Market Town.
- 1.3. The settlement is set within a rural context, in the east of the district, located eight miles to the south of Shepton Mallet. The Local Plan notes that the isolated nature of the town and its largely rural surroundings mean that it serves a more strategic service role than might be expected.
- 1.4. Castle Cary benefits from having a railway station on the London to Penzance line and the Heart of Wessex line.
- 1.5. Castle Cary and Ansford parishes are designated as a joint neighbourhood area under The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). Work on the Neighbourhood Plan is progressing well.

2. POPULATION

2.1 Figure 2.1 shows the age profile of Castle Cary & Ansford’s resident population, assessing the number and percentage of residents in each of the following groups: children; working age; and older people. It then compares the percentages against those for Somerset, and England & Wales.

Figure 2.1 Castle Cary & Ansford Age Profile Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Castle Cary BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total usually resident population	3,232	100.0	100.0	100.0
Children (0-15 year olds)	534	16.5	17.8	18.9
Working age (16-64 year olds)	1,792	55.4	61.1	64.7
Older People (aged 65 and over)	906	28.0	21.1	16.4



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

2.2 Figure 2.1 shows that Castle Cary & Ansford has a resident population of 3,232 people, with proportionately fewer residents of ‘Working age’, and more ‘Older People’ than Somerset, and England & Wales. It has a slightly lower proportion of children to Somerset and England & Wales.

2.3 Castle Cary & Ansford has an older population which is likely to result in pressure on services.

3. HOUSING

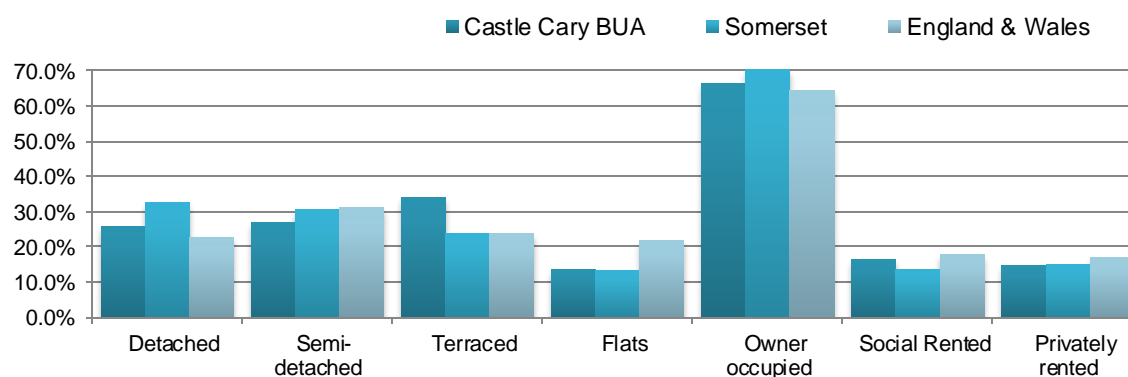
3.1 Policy SS5 sets Castle Cary & Ansford a target of delivering 374 new dwellings by 31st March 2028, the same as the other Local Market Towns. A direction of growth is identified to the north of the settlement (Policy LMT 1). Between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2017, only 68 dwellings have been delivered but there have been 523 commitments¹, the majority of which are located in the Direction of Growth.

¹ South Somerset District Council Monitoring Database

3.2 Figure 3.1 shows the number and percentage of dwellings by dwelling type and households by tenure. It also presents a comparison of dwelling types and tenure profiles for Castle Cary, Somerset, and England & Wales.

Figure 3.1: Castle Cary & Ansford's Accommodation and Household Profiles Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Castle Cary BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total number of dwellings	1,578	100.0	100.0	100.0
Detached	404	25.6	32.3	22.6
Semi-detached	423	26.8	30.4	31.1
Terraced	536	34.0	23.7	23.6
Flats	213	13.5	13.0	21.6
Tenure		%	%	%
Total number of households	1,482	100.0	100.0	100.0
Owner occupied	983	66.3	70.2	64.3
Social Rented	240	16.2	13.5	17.6
Privately rented	217	14.6	14.7	16.7
Average household size (persons per household)	2.1			



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

3.3 Figure 3.1 shows that Castle Cary & Ansford has a similar number of flats to the Somerset average, both of which have a significantly lower proportion than England & Wales. However, the settlement does have a greater proportion of terraced properties than Somerset, and England & Wales, which means a higher proportion of properties at the more affordable end of the scale. The settlement has a lower proportion of semi-detached properties than Somerset and England & Wales, and fewer detached properties than Somerset.

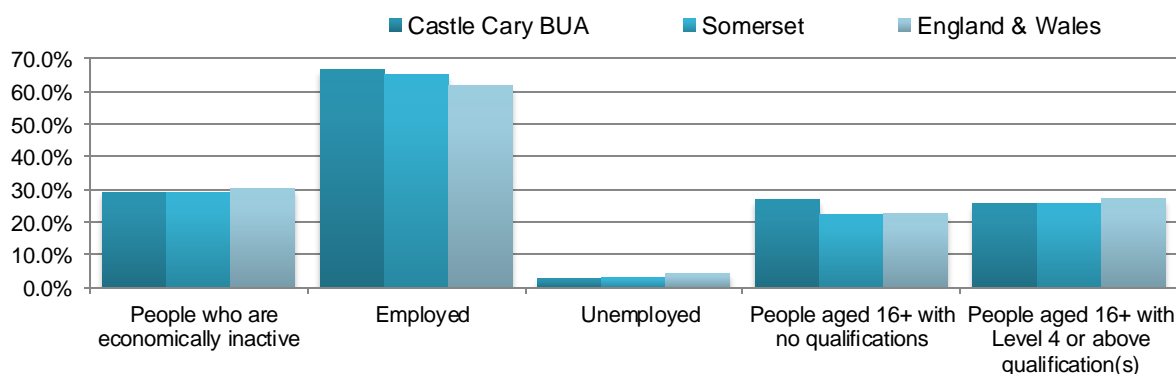
3.4 As with Somerset and England & Wales, Castle Cary & Ansford's tenure is dominated by owner-occupied properties. The proportion of private rented accommodation is similar to Somerset, and English & Welsh levels. The proportion of social housing is better than the Somerset average and, whilst below, closer to the English & Welsh average than most other settlements in the district.

4. ECONOMY

- 4.1 As Figure 4.1 shows, the proportion of economically inactive people and unemployed people in Castle Cary & Ansford is akin to Somerset, and below the English & Welsh average. The proportion of people employed is above the Somerset, and English & Welsh averages. The settlement should then be considered to be in an economically strong position, despite lower than average qualification levels.

Figure 4.1: Castle Cary & Ansford's Economic Activity Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Castle Cary BUA	Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%
Total number of people aged 16 to 74	2,194	100.0	100.0
People who are economically inactive	641	29.2	30.3
Employed	1,464	66.7	61.9
Unemployed	60	2.7	3.0
People aged 16+ with no qualifications	725	26.9	22.4
People aged 16+ with Level 4 or above qualification(s)	691	25.6	27.2



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

- 4.2 The main employment areas of Torbay Road and Blackworthy Road are located to the west of the settlement, which is to be expected given the location of the A303.
- 4.3 The SSDC Monitoring Data base shows that Castle Cary & Ansford has delivered 9.31 hectares of land (gross) and 18,265 sq. metres of floorspace (gross). These levels of delivery are significant given the relative size of the settlement. Losses have reduced these gross figures to 8.92 hectares of land (net) and 16,313 sq m floorspace (net) since 2006/7. Nearly all the land and floorspace losses were to residential use.
- 4.4 The majority of land delivered in the settlement is in the B-uses, which can be attributed largely to the completion of the Royal Canin pet food factory at Torbay Road of 8.10 hectares and 13,511 sq. m of floorspace, the erection of a 450 sq. m workshop on Torbay Road Industrial Estate, and the 3,003 sq. m extension to the Centaur Service.

4.5 Figure 4.2 shows employment within the settlement, specific to 18 industry groups.

Figure 4.2: Employment Provision in Castle Cary & Ansford, 2015

Sector	Castle Cary & Ansford		South Somerset
	No of Jobs	%	%
1 : Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	10	0.7	n/a
2 : Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	10	0.7	0.9
3 : Manufacturing (C)	310	22.1	20.3
4 : Construction (F)	35	2.5	5.5
5 : Motor trades (Part G)	10	0.7	(All G) 18.8
6 : Wholesale (Part G)	210	15	
7 : Retail (Part G)	125	8.9	
8 : Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	20	1.4	3.5
9 : Accommodation & food services (I)	60	4.3	6.2
10 : Information & communication (J)	10	0.7	2
11 : Financial & insurance (K)	0	0.0	0.9
12 : Property (L)	10	0.7	1.4
13 : Professional, scientific & technical (M)	130	9.3	7
14 : Business administration & support services (N)	25	1.8	5.5
15 : Public administration & defence (O)	20	1.4	2.3
16 : Education (P)	150	10.7	7.8
17 : Health (Q)	225	16.1	14.1
18 : Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	45	3.2	3.9
Total	1,400		

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, NOMIS, 2015

The BRES data does not include farmagriculture (SIC subclass 01000).data at settlement level; it is only available at region and country level. This is Open Access data that has been rounded to make it publishable; as such, the figures do not tally to an exact 100%. The settlement area has been created by combining super-output areas E01029167 and E01029168.

4.6 Of the industries, the primary employer within the settlement is manufacturing, the second and third largest employers are Health, and Wholesale.

4.7 The settlement provides around 1,400 jobs, meaning that for every resident aged 16 to 74, the settlement provides approximately 64% of a job. In fact, the settlement provides a similar number of jobs than there are people employed in the settlement.

4.8 Overall, considering its relatively small size, the settlement has produced a very good amount of jobs, and employment land and floorspace. And overall, despite low qualification levels and proportionately high levels of economically inactive people, Castle Cary & Ansford is in an economically strong position.

Town Centre

- 4.9 As the Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study² identifies, the town centre has a good range of comparison units. There is no large supermarket in the settlement; the convenience offer is comprised of small scale units. Evening uses are limited to a handful of restaurants and public houses, and a few takeaways. Service uses comprise several hairdressers, estate agents, and, at the time of writing, one bank. However, it is understood that the bank is to close in October 2017³. The imminent closure of the bank may have an adverse effect on the town centre. Despite this, the Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study projects that there will be additional capacity for retail floorspace, suggesting that new units will be required.
- 4.10 The streets are narrow and there is only limited on street parking but free car parking at Millbrook Gardens (85 spaces) and Catherine's Close (36 spaces).
- 4.11 The settlement has a centre within a high quality public realm with a good range of small scale services and facilities that serve a wide rural hinterland.

Figure 4.3: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Castle Cary & Ansford

Type	Additional Floorspace (Square Metres) (Gross)		
	2024	2029	2034
Convenience	712	737	761
Comparison	97	228	361
Food and Beverage	25	74	122
Total	834	1,039	1,244

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.1 Ansford & Castle Cary has a primary school and a secondary school, albeit with no sixth form provision. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan⁴ (IDP) states that there is capacity within Castle Cary Primary School to meet the initial demand from development, though a feasibility study may be needed to see if further expansion is possible at this school.
- 5.2 Millbrook Practice has experienced a significant increase in patient numbers since 2014, giving a higher than usual patient to GP ratio. Some funding has been secured to improve overall space standards, and an extension of the car park has been undertaken, providing an extra 30 parking spaces.
- 5.3 Castle Cary station lies on the interchange of 2 of the district's railway lines. However the lack of car parking is currently constraining any increase in rail patronage both for Castle Cary and potentially for a wide hinterland. Additional parking at the railway station has also been identified in the IDP to facilitate rail travel and planned growth.
- 5.4 Growth in line with the Local Plan is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints relating to utilities, flood risk and drainage, telecommunications, waste and recycling, and emergency services. New housing does generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports,

² Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study (2017)

³ Letter from Barclays Bank: <http://www.castle-cary.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Barclays-Bank-closure.pdf>

⁴ Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Update 2015/16) Part One – Spatial Summary (January 2016)

community and cultural facilities; but the timing of their delivery is not fundamental to the delivering housing growth.

- 5.5 The IDP has asked questions about the infrastructural capacity up to the Local Plan target. As the potential growth of the settlement could be significantly beyond this target, the capacity of the infrastructure will have to be re-assessed.

6. TRAVEL

- 6.1 How the residents of a settlement travel is an indication of its sustainability.
- 6.2 The settlement’s public transport provision is shown in Figure 6.4 below.

Figure 6.1: Public Transport Provision

Buses		
Operator	Principal Destinations	Frequency (Approx.)
South West Coaches	SWC 1,1A,1B & 1C: Evercreech - Shepton Mallet – Sparkford - Yeovil	Hourly
Nippybus	667: Bruton – Wincanton – Keinton Mandeville - Street	90 mins
Train Services		
Operator	Service	Frequency (Approx.)
Great Western Railway (GWR)	London Paddington to Penzance line – (Taunton – Exeter)	2- hourly (after 10.30hrs westbound)
GWR	Weymouth to Bristol Line (Heart of Wessex line)	2 hourly

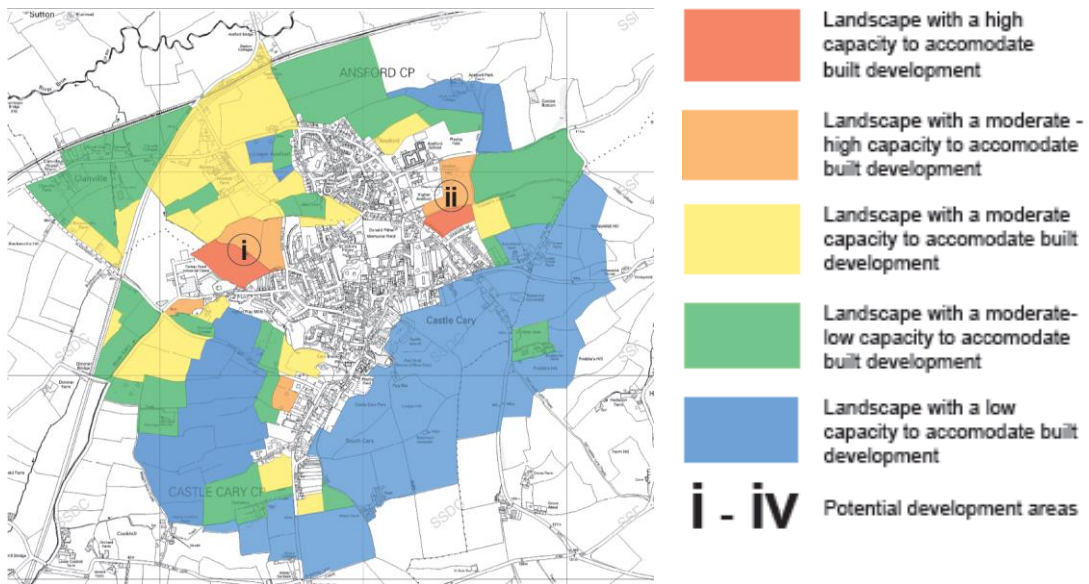
- 6.3 As the railway station is positioned on the London to Penzance line and the ‘Heart of Wessex’ line, residents benefit from access to much of the south of England. However, the current timetable on the GWR Paddington to Penzance line is not conducive to local commute journeys e.g. to Taunton and an expansion to the station car park is required to maximise its strategic potential.

7. ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 The Peripheral Landscape Study⁵ shows that the majority of land to the south and south-west of the settlement has a low capacity land to accommodate growth. From a landscape standpoint, the two best areas for growth are to the north-west and north-east. The north-west site and a larger swathe of land to its north form the Direction of Growth for the settlement.

⁵ Peripheral Landscape Assessment, March 2008: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-base/district-wide-documents/peripheral-landscape-studies/>

Figure 7.1: Castle Cary & Ansford Landscape Capacity

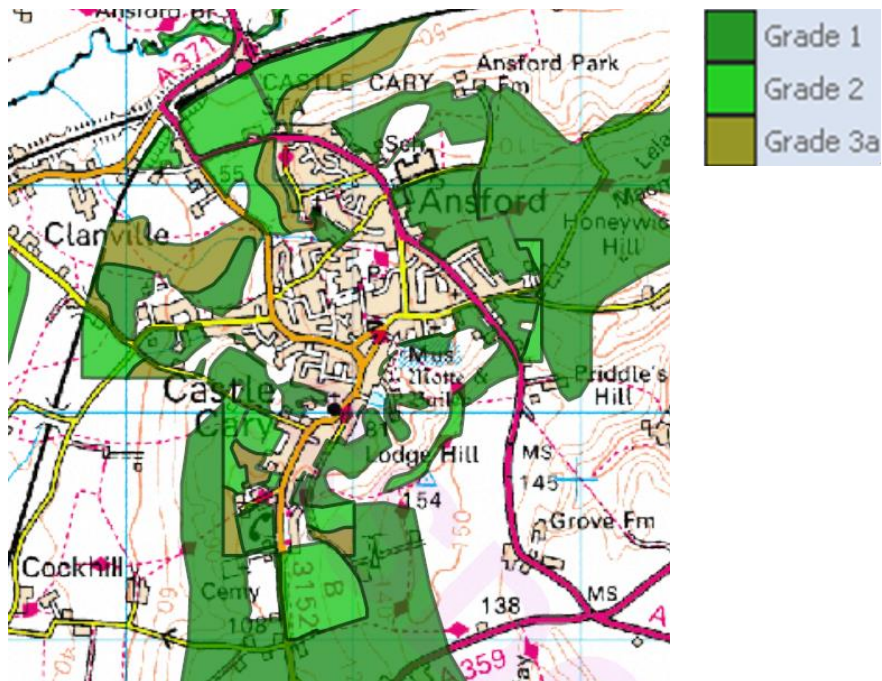


Source: Peripheral Landscape Study (2008)

7.2 Whilst landscape potential is important, other factors and constraints are also necessary to understanding the growth potential of the settlement.

7.3 Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land (Grades 1, 2 & 3a)⁶, is a key environmental constraint, according to the NPPF⁷. Loss of BMV will have to be considered as part of the planning balance for future growth. As Figure 7.2 shows, most of the settlement is surrounded by BMV land.

Figure 7.2: BMV Land around Castle Cary & Ansford



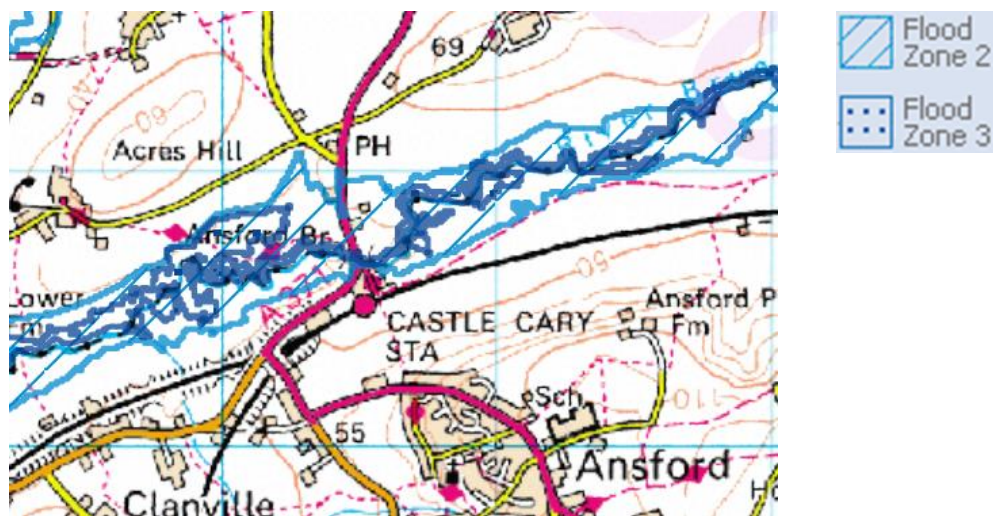
Source: WebMap, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Data

⁶ Defined in the NPPF, (DCLG) 2012 – Annex 2

⁷ DCLG, 2012

- 7.4 Another environmental constraint for Castle Cary & Ansford's growth is flood risk, shown below in Figure 7.3.

Figure 7.3: Castle Cary & Ansford Flood Map (Flood Zones 2 and 3)



Source: Environment Agency data on WebMap

- 7.5 The only Flood Zone 2 and 3 land on the periphery sits to the north of the London to Penzance line, to the north of the settlement. As the railway line forms a physical development line to the north of the settlement, this flood risk land to the north of the line does not therefore present a constraint to the growth of the settlement.
- 7.6 There are no nature reserves, county wildlife sites or geological sites.
- 7.7 There are numerous archaeological sites but they do not appear to pose a significant constraint to the growth of the settlement.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The strength of the housing market and appetite of developers to build housing in the sustainable settlement means that Castle Cary & Ansford's ability to accommodate future growth is considered to be strong. Growth of the settlement has potential to enhance the existing retail and public transport offer for the settlement.

Key Issues

- 8.2 Looking towards the future it is considered that the key issues for Castle Cary & Ansford are:
- Planning approvals allow for significant growth beyond the Local Plan target
 - The imminent closure of the bank means that settlement may become increasing reliant on the services of other settlements or the internet.
 - Limited bus service frequency between the settlement and the train station.