

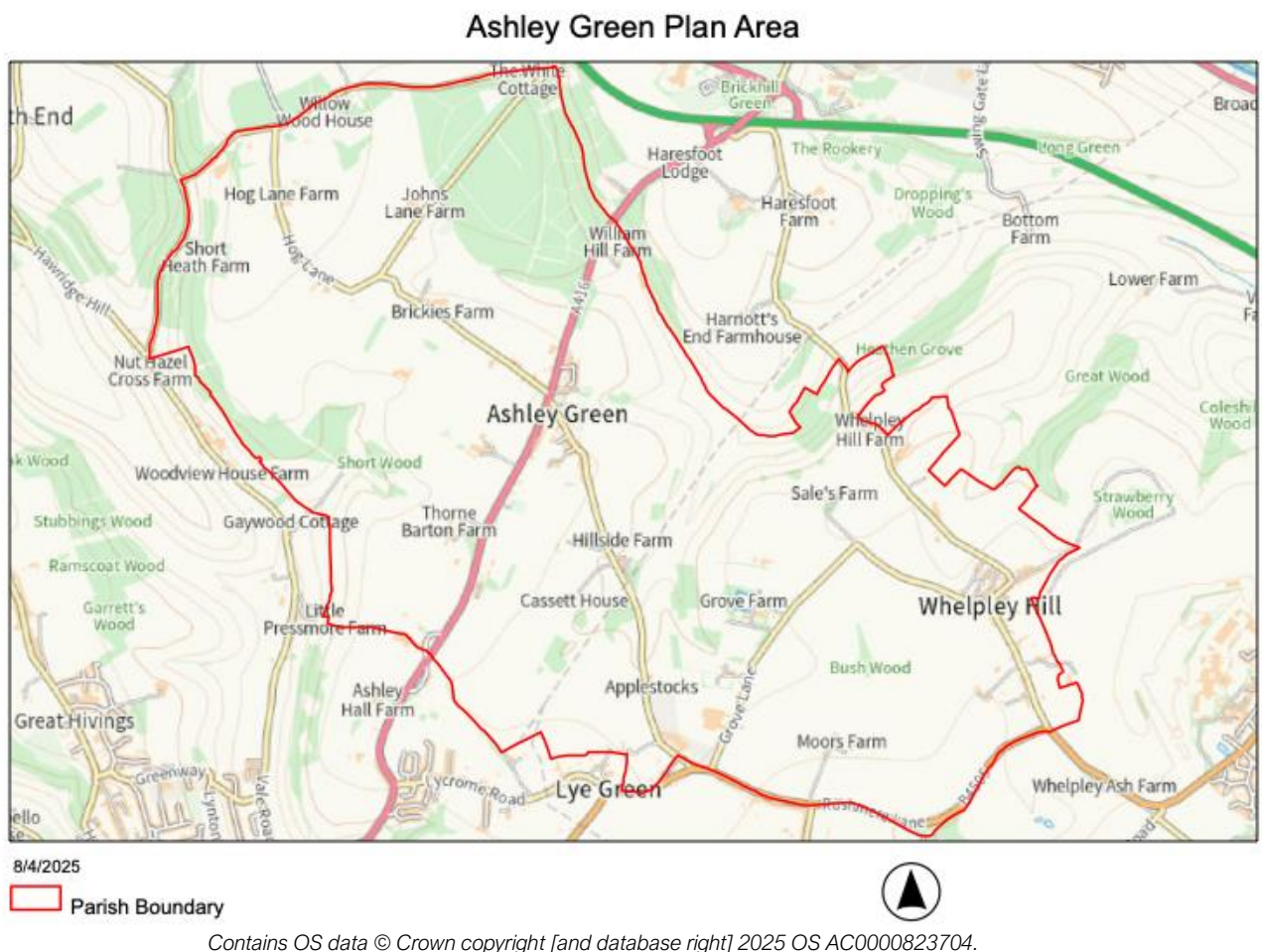
ASHLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

# ASHLEY GREEN PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2026 - 2036

PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION: NOVEMBER 2025

# 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Ashley Green Parish Council has prepared the first Ashley Green Neighbourhood Plan (AGNP). The Parish Council is defined as a 'qualifying body' for this purpose in line with the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended), hereinafter referred to as 'the Regulations'. Ashley Green Parish was designated a 'neighbourhood area' by the local planning authority, Buckinghamshire Council (BC), on 20 May 2025 (see map below). The Area coincides with the Ashley Green Civil Parish area.



1.2 The AGNP will cover the ten year period from 2026 to 2036. There is scope for the Plan to be reviewed every 5 years or as necessary having regard to changes to national policy and guidance, local policy or other factors. This version contains five policies to help BC determine planning applications for the use and development of land within the Parish during that period. In doing so it operates alongside other policies of the development plan that relate to Ashley Green.

1.3 In line with best practice, the AGNP has been subject to the informal engagement process throughout the summer of 2025, and has now progressed to the formal, statutory consultation period (Regulation 14). The final version of the AGNP will be

modified to take account of comments made during Regulation 14 consultation and submitted to BC to arrange an independent examination and referendum in due course.

1.4 A Glossary of Terms is included at the end of this document to define terms used throughout the AGNP and associated documents.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### History

2.1 Ashley Green is a rural parish situated in Buckinghamshire, close to the border with Hertfordshire. The village has historic roots dating back to the medieval period, with its name believed to derive from the Old English for “ash tree clearing”. Historically, Ashley Green was part of the estates held by the Duke of Bedford, and the area has long been characterised by its agricultural landscape and scattered farmsteads.

2.2 The parish remained a small farming community for many centuries, with limited development until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The arrival of the railway in nearby Chesham and Berkhamsted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century improved access to the area, but Ashley Green itself retained its rural character. The village hall, built in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, became a focal point for community life, hosting local events and activities.

2.3 During the Second World War, parts of the parish were used for military purposes, including accommodation for troops and storage of equipment. After the war, Ashley Green saw modest residential development, with new homes built to meet local needs while preserving the village’s distinctive character. The parish today includes several listed buildings, a church and a number of green spaces valued by residents for recreation and wildlife.

2.4 Ashley Green remains a close-knit community, with a strong tradition of local involvement and stewardship of the countryside. The parish sits entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt, which contributes to protecting its rural setting and preventing urban sprawl from nearby towns. The local pubs, village hall and regular community events continue to play an important role in village life.

### Profile

2.5 Ashley Green is a small rural parish with a population of approximately 600 residents. The age profile is broadly in line with national rural averages, with a balanced mix of families, working-age adults and older residents. The parish has a slightly higher proportion of older people (over 65) compared to the national average, reflecting its appeal as a peaceful countryside location. There are fewer young adults and children than in more urban areas.

2.6 Most households in Ashley Green are either two-person or single-person, with a notable number of retired couples and individuals. The housing stock is predominantly detached and semi-detached houses, with very few flats or apartments. Most homes have two or three bedrooms, and there are fewer one-bedroom properties or larger homes with four or more bedrooms.

2.7 Car ownership is high, with the majority of households having access to at least one vehicle, reflecting the rural setting and limited public transport options. A significant proportion of residents commute to nearby towns such as Chesham, Berkhamsted or further afield for work, with relatively few working from home or within the parish itself.

2.8 Employment in Ashley Green is mainly in professional, managerial or skilled trades, with fewer residents in routine or manual occupations. Unemployment rates are low, and the overall health of the community is generally good, although access to healthcare and other services can be more limited than in urban areas.

2.9 The parish is characterised by a strong sense of community, with active participation in local events and organisations. The village hall, church and local pub serve as important social hubs, and the surrounding countryside is highly valued for recreation and biodiversity.

## **Strategic Planning Policy**

2.10 The AGNP policies have been drafted to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Chiltern District Local Plan (adopted 1997) and the Chiltern District Core Strategy (adopted 2011). A fuller explanation will be set out in the Basic Conditions Statement as part of the submission, but the key policies affecting Ashley Green are:

### **Green Belt and Landscape Protection**

All of the Parish lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and partly within the Chilterns National Landscape. The Local Plan and Core Strategy include policies to protect the openness of the Green Belt and the special landscape character of the National Landscape, with a presumption against inappropriate development (Core Strategy Policy CS22, Local Plan Policies GB1-GB5). The Local Plan Policies Map shows most of Ashley Green village and parts of Whelpley Hill village lying within an area where housing development may fall within the definition of 'limited infilling in a village' per Policy GB4.

### **Local Green Spaces and Biodiversity**

Both the Local Plan and Core Strategy seek to protect open spaces, biodiversity, and areas of landscape quality (Core Strategy, Policies CS24 and SC32; Local Plan Policy LSQ1). The identification and protection of Local Green Spaces is supported, and the conservation of wildlife habitats and green infrastructure is a key objective.

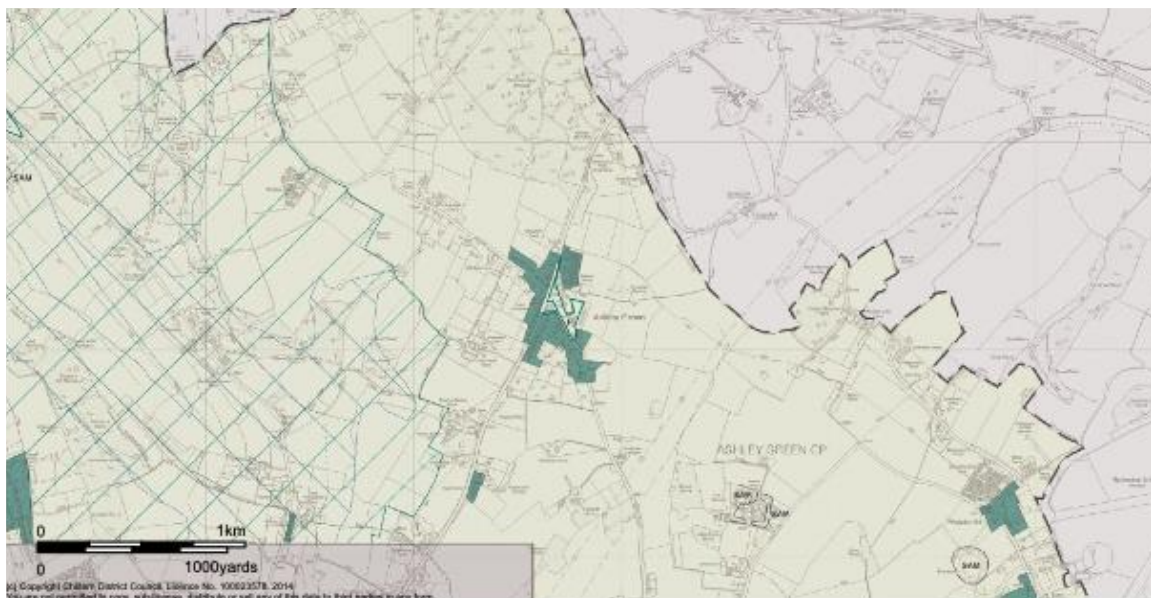
### **Heritage and Design**

The Local Plan and Core Strategy include policies to conserve and enhance the historic environment, including listed buildings, conservation areas and other heritage assets (Core Strategy Policy CS20, Local Plan Policies HE1-HE4). High standards of design and the protection of key views and local distinctiveness are also emphasised.

### **Community Facilities and Infrastructure**

The plans support the retention and involvement of local services, facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and support sustainable communities (Core Strategy Policies CS27-CS29).

2.11 BC is currently preparing a new Local Plan to cover the period up to 2042. This emerging plan is expected to address new policy areas such as management of Grey Belt land, as well as providing a spatial strategy to meet local housing needs and enhanced protection for green spaces and heritage assets. However, the new Local Plan is at an early stage and has not yet reached a point where the AGNP can reflect its proposals. The PC acknowledges the inclusion of an updated settlement hierarchy in Part B of the Local Plan Regulation 18 publication by BC. Notably, Ashley Green has been classified as a "Tier 5 Medium/Small Village." Based on the available information, it appears that Whelpley Hill has been incorporated as part of Ashley Green. The document further suggests that the BC's spatial approach to meeting housing targets does not heavily rely on small villages. Instead, the emphasis will be on more developed areas with existing infrastructure. The approach taken towards the AGNP remains consistent with that of BC.



Chiltern Local Plan Extract – National Landscape (former Chiltern Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and Green Belt Landscape Designations

## National Planning Policy

2.12 The AGNP has also been prepared having regard to national planning policy and guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of December 2024. Further detail is provided in the Basic Conditions Statement, but the key policies relevant to this plan are:

### Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood Planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area, shaping and directing sustainable development and influencing local planning decisions (§30).



### **Managing Housing Development on Grey Belt Land**

The NPPF introduces the concept of Grey Belt land, defined as land within the Green Belt that does not strongly contribute to its main purposes. Plans should prioritise previously developed land, then Grey Belt, before considering other Green Belt locations for development. Development on Grey Belt land must not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt, must meet a demonstrable unmet need, and be in a sustainable location. Where major housing development is proposed on such land, the 'Golden Rules' apply, including enhance affordable housing and green space provision (§143-159).

### **Village Infilling and Housing Supply**

Limited infilling in villages and the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land in the Green Belt is not inappropriate, provided it does not harm openness or conflict with Green Belt purposes (§155).

### **Local Green Spaces**

The designation of Local Green Space through neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance. Such spaces must be close to the community, demonstrably special and local in character (§106-§108).

### **Key Views, Vistas and Corridors**

Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development, including the protection of key views and landscape features, to avoid flood risk and maintain local character (§178).

### **Local Heritage Assets**

The NPPF requires the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, recognising their contribution to local character and distinctiveness (§206-§213).

### **Open Space and Community Facilities**

Planning should provide and protect the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, including open spaces, sports venues and places of worship. Access to high quality open spaces is important for health and well-being (§98a, §98c/d, §103).

2.13 The AGNP must demonstrate how its policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and ensure that no harm is caused to important ecological areas, in line with Habitats Regulations. These matters will be addressed in the Basic Conditions Statement.

## **Project Progress**

2.14 Having begun the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan in early 2025, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) was keen to understand the local community's views in respect of the key planning and development issues in Ashley Green Parish. Informal community engagement events were held over the summer of 2025 to support this information gathering process.

2.15 The Parish Council were also able to commission a Grey Belt Study to explore how the community should address the changes to national policy. The Study was completed in August 2025 and has been used to inform Policy AGWH1 of the AGNP.

2.16 The Parish Council will publish a Consultation Statement as part of the submission documents that will summarise the nature and outcome of the informal engagement and statutory consultation activities and how they have informed the AGNP.

2.17 The AGNP has been screened by BC to ascertain if a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulations Assessment are necessary. In July 2025 BC concluded that neither assessment is required given the plan does not make specific development proposals and the statutory consultees have confirmed they agree with that opinion. Any mitigation measures required of future development proposals by the location of the Parish within the Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation Mitigation Strategy area must already meet those obligations. There is no need for those provisions to be repeated here.



### 3. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

#### Introduction – the need for a Neighbourhood Plan

3.1 This vision statement has been prepared by the Parish Council of Ashley Green to represent the views of the parishioners of Ashley Green and how they want to see the environment of the Parish enhanced and improved over the plan period. The need to produce this Neighbourhood Plan has arisen due to changes in government planning guidelines and increased pressure for development in and around the Parish.

3.2 While there have been discussions, in recent years, regarding the benefits to be had from having a Neighbourhood Plan in place, it was decided that there was not a strong enough case for the Parish Council to commit time and resources to such an exercise. Recent changes to National Planning Policy, however, have now given the Parish Council sufficient cause to take the decision to prepare such a plan. These changes in national policy, allied to the effect they will have on local plan policy and the ongoing pressure for development in the parish, mean that there is now a very strong rationale for a Neighbourhood Plan to be prepared, at pace, to help manage future development in the Parish in a sustainable and sensitive way. It is clear from the studies undertaken in support of the Neighbourhood Plan that residential development, at an inappropriate scale, would be detrimental to the character of the Parish.

3.3 However, there is a place for characterful, small-scale residential development which fits with the Parish in terms of its design quality and complements the existing structure and form of the villages of Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill. It is clear that there is no place for commercial development in the Parish given the extensive and comprehensive facilities provided in the nearby towns of Berkhamsted and Chesham. The need to maintain the green space between Ashley Green and Berkhamsted and Chesham is strongly felt. It is recognised that the roads are too busy and in poor condition but, while local improvements to existing active travel routes are a goal of the Neighbourhood Plan, reducing traffic and road speed limits in the parish is beyond the scope of this plan.

#### A Vision for Ashley Green

*“Our vision is for Ashley Green Parish to continue to be an attractive and desirable place for people to live, work and take their leisure, for the period though to **2036** and beyond.*

*The parish is characterised by rolling green fields and ancient woodland with long, uninterrupted views out over the countryside and the National Landscape, with development concentrated in the villages of Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill.*

*Our vision is that the quality of this open landscape should be retained, protected and, where possible enhanced, with improved access allowing residents to continue to enjoy the benefit of the abundant wildlife and natural spaces. We will seek to enhance and increase our local community assets focused on our village halls, communal open space and other assets such as local pubs, play and sports provision, all of which contribute to the very strong sense of community in Ashley Green Parish.*

*Our vision is built on the desire for the existing, well-established, broad range of accommodation in the villages being the template for further development within the parish. Future residential development will be managed in a positive, sustainable and balanced way. The focus will be on small-scale, well-designed local housing provision based on an accurate understanding of need within the parish, together with a realistic assessment of the benefits and the impacts of new development on the character of the parish and the quality of life of residents."*

## Objectives

3.4 To support the Vision for Ashley Green, we have prepared a number of high-level objectives. These objectives are the means by which the vision will be delivered.

1. Minimise the impact of new development on the landscape and natural environment in the parish by focusing on development within the existing villages.
2. Manage the scale and quality of residential development in the parish, with the focus on smaller developments in discrete parcels that fit into the existing structure and complement the existing character and form of the villages.
3. Mitigate the impact of development on existing properties, open spaces, key views and the wider countryside by developing design guidance to inform and shape development proposals.
4. Enhance the parish's community assets by improving what we have and identifying opportunities to develop new facilities.
5. Support development that is sustainable and appropriate in scale that fits with the existing character and form of the villages

## Planning Policies

3.5 In order to achieve these objectives the AGNP contains five planning policies that are considered to add the most value to other adopted and emerging development plan policies covering the Parish and the wider area. These policies are set out below and each has a code number and title and is presented in bold text. There is also some brief supporting text to explain how each policy is intended to operate; full policy justifications are provided in the Basic Conditions Statement. The Policies Map shows the land in the Parish to which each policy will apply.

### Policy AGWH1: Managing Housing Development on Grey Belt Land

- A. The settlements of Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill are considered sustainable locations for housing development on Grey Belt land of a total of approx. 16 homes at Ashley Green and 15 homes at Whelpley Hill over the plan period. The settlement of Orchard Leigh is not considered a sustainable location for additional housing development.

- B. Proposals for minor housing development on Grey Belt land at Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill will only be deemed appropriate development in the Green Belt if they lie within land shown on the Policies Map.
- C. Proposals for major housing development on Grey Belt land at Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill will only be deemed appropriate development in the Green Belt if they lie within the land shown on the Policies Map.

3.6 This policy seeks to establish a plan-led approach to determining where proposals for minor and major housing development may be deemed 'not inappropriate development' in Green Belt. It will only operate during periods when it can be demonstrated that there are unmet housing needs and it does not apply to non-housing proposals.

3.7 The policy expressly does not allocate land for development as it is not possible for neighbourhood plans to allocate land in the Green Belt nor release land from the Green Belt – these are matters for strategic (Local Plan) policy only. Nor does it imply that proposals that are deemed 'not inappropriate' will be supported, as other policies of the development plan and national policy will be applied.

3.8 This policy has been informed by the Ashley Green Grey Belt Study completed in August 2025 following the update to Government policy and guidance in February 2025. The Study applied that policy and guidance to determine firstly which of the Parish's three settlements are sustainable locations and concluded only Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill met that definition (per the criteria of NPPF §110 and §115). It assessed that Orchard Leigh is too small and remote from local and public transport services, with no reasonable prospect of that changing without a fundamental shift in future strategic spatial planning policy.

3.9 The Study has defined a settlement boundary for each of Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill, using the adopted Local Plan Policy GB4 boundaries as a starting point for this specific purpose. They do not entirely coincide with the boundaries used for infilling in Policy AGWH2, which serve a different purpose. It then identifies sites (as 'assessment areas' per the guidance) adjoining those boundaries to apply the NPPF §155 and §156 criteria in relation to proposals for minor and major housing development.

3.10 In respect of the §156 Golden Rules, the study has assessed the accessibility of land to the A416 public transport services and to existing publicly accessible green spaces, or where new green spaces could be provided in a suitable location, and of a suitable size, to meet the needs of new and existing residents. Determining if a proposal meets the Golden Rule in respect of its affordable housing provisions does not fall within the scope of this policy.

3.11 The policy also establishes what is considered to be an appropriate scale of total housing development over the plan period at Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill that reflects their small sizes, limited facilities and modest active travel opportunities (see Appendix A). It therefore allows for a small number of minor housing schemes, or perhaps one major scheme, in each village.

## Policy AGWH2: Village Infilling

The Neighbourhood Plan defines on the Policies Map the boundary within which proposals for limited infill housing development will be deemed appropriate development in the Green Belt, provided they also meet the requirements of the development plan that define the meaning of infilling.

3.12 This policy applies to proposals seeking to meet the NPPF §154(e) exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt for limited infill housing schemes within Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill, which are both ‘washed over’ by the Green Belt.

3.13 The adopted Local Plan Policy GB4 defines boundaries on its Policies Map at Ashley Green village, Whelpley Hill (in two parts) and on Ashley Green Road in the Parish for this purpose and sets out criteria for determining if proposals meet the definition of limited infill housing development. The Parish Council has taken this non-strategic policy opportunity to make two minor modifications to the Ashley Green village boundary to reflect consented and built out schemes since it was last drawn many years ago and to have greater coherence. It has not modified the other boundaries, nor the wording of Policy GB4 as this is not within the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Policy AGWH3: Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces in the following locations, as shown on the Policies Map and listed below:

1. The Glebe
2. Ashley Green Village Green
3. Ashley Green Allotments

New development will not be permitted on land designated as Local Green Space except in very special circumstances or where it is ancillary to the use of the land for public recreational purposes.

3.14 This policy designates three Local Green Spaces in the area that are considered to meet the NPPF §107 criteria, which is explained in Appendix B. Given the new Green Belt provisions of national policy there is now clear value in identifying these Spaces in Green Belt locations to secure the status of NPPF footnotes 7 and 45 and to prevent harmful development.

## Policy AGWH4: Key Views, Vistas and Corridors of Significance

### Key Views and Vistas

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Key Views and Vistas on the Policies Map as valued sightlines within the Parish.
- B. Development proposals should preserve or enhance the local character of the landscape through their design, height and massing, and should recognise and respond positively to the various Key Views and Vistas.
- C. Development proposals which would have a significant adverse impact on an identified Key View or Vista will not be supported.

### Corridors of Significance

- D. The Neighbourhood Plan defines Corridors of Significance on the Policies Map for the spatial purpose of preventing harmful ribbon development along these corridors.
- E. Development proposals located within a defined Corridor of Significance should avoid giving the impression of ribbon development or suburbanisation, either individually or through the cumulative impact of their being co-located adjacent to other development.
- F. Development proposals within the Key Views and Vistas and Corridors of Significance should demonstrate that they have regard to the Chiltern District Landscape Character Assessment.

3.15 The Policies Map identifies a series of landscape features in the form of key views, vistas and corridors that are considered important to preserving the essential rural character and appearance of the village and its surrounding landscape. Each view and vista can be appreciated from a public vantage point – the highway or a public right of way – and corridors form distinct, open settlement entrances that shape a sense of arrival or departure between ‘here’ and ‘there’. A photograph and a description of each feature is shown in Appendix C.

3.16 Importantly, the policy does not seek to prevent any development in the vicinity of a defined feature but requires that proposals are designed in a way that understands and responds to them, per Local Plan Policy GC1. Every view, vista and corridor is shown on the Policies Map to assist in the application of this policy, but the precise definition of the feature and its effect on a proposal will be determined in a case-by-case basis.

## **Policy AGWH5: Local Heritage Assets**

A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following buildings and structures as Local Heritage Assets, listed below and shown on the Policies Map:

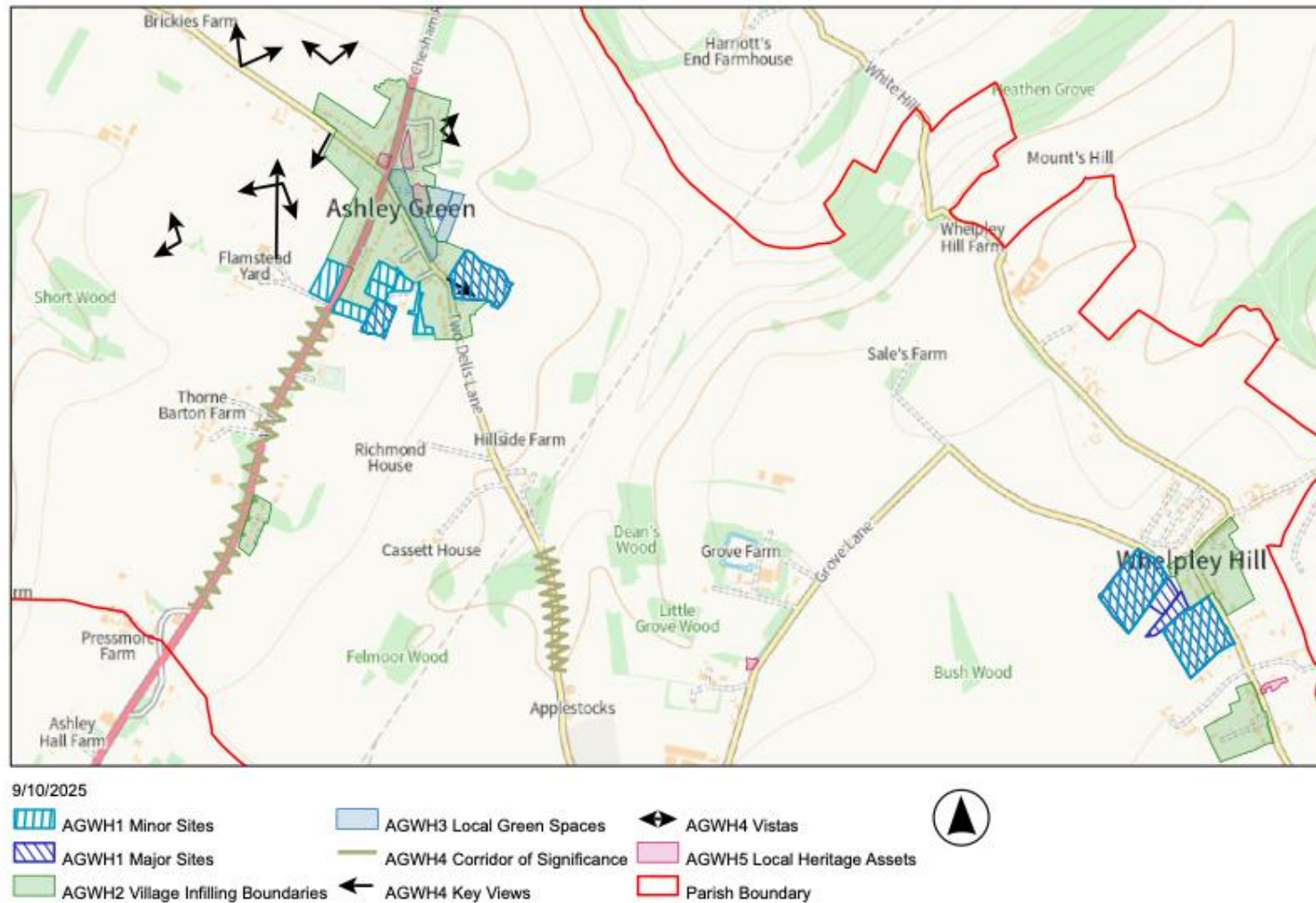
- 1. Row of Cottages, Nos. 1-4 Chesham Road
- 2. The Old School
- 3. The Old Vicarage
- 4. Little Grove Priory
- 5. The White Hart PH

B. The effect of a development proposal on the significance of an identified Local Heritage Asset should be taken into account in determining planning applications. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect identified Local Heritage Assets, a balanced judgement will be required, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

3.17 This policy designates buildings or structures as Local Heritage Assets in order to give them additional protection as heritage assets, in recognition of the important contribution that they make to the special character of the Parish. In validating its content, buildings and structures in each settlement which have a local interest have been identified, these have been described in Appendix D.

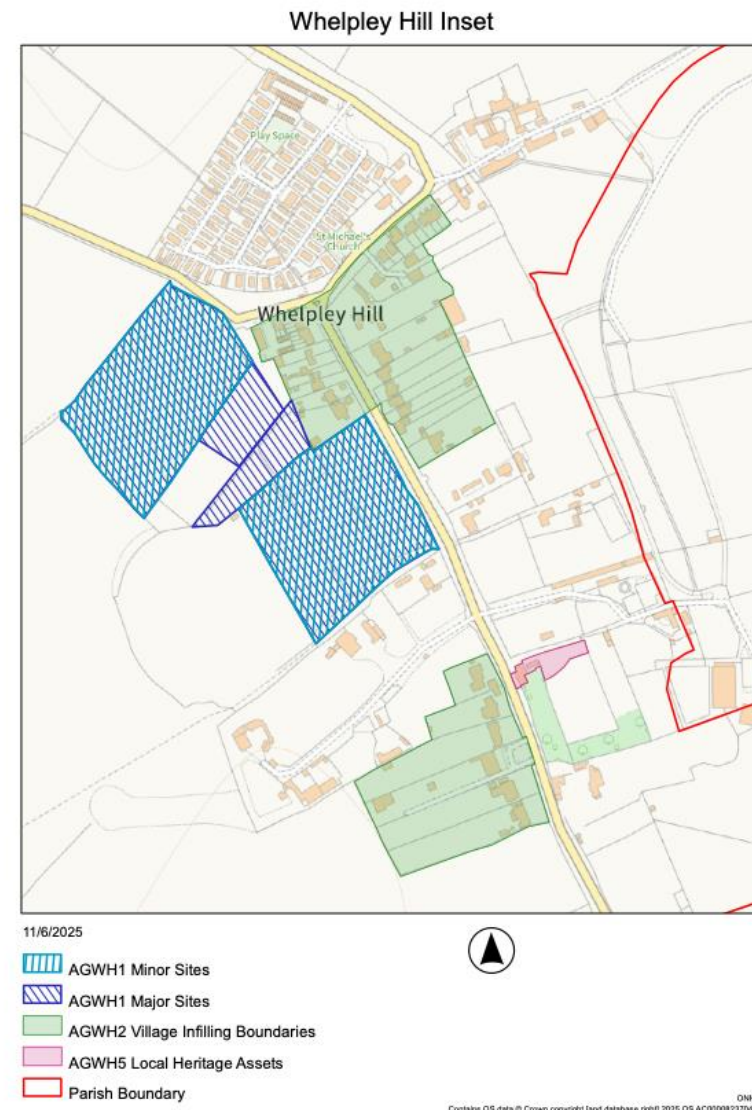
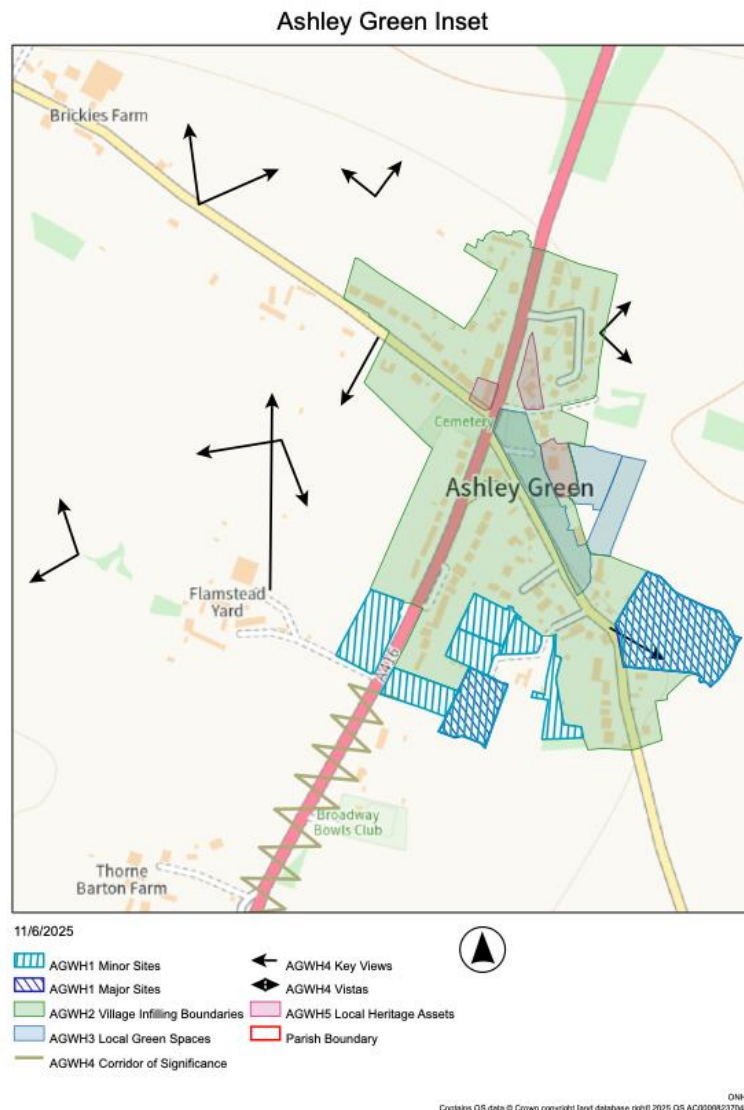
3.18 The Local Heritage Assets set out in Appendix D are regarded as 'non-designated' heritage assets by the community and not statutorily designated heritage assets. Some assets are part of BC's Local Heritage List, however, this Plan clearly explains their local significance and what makes them valuable to the local community.

## Ashley Green Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map



Please note that the Policies Map is best viewed online, visit [ashleygreenplan.co.uk](http://ashleygreenplan.co.uk) for the interactive mapping.





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## APPENDIX A: Indicative Housing Figure

4.1 The NPPF (§70) states that: *“Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure ... (and) should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.”*

4.2 The Local Planning Authority has been unwilling to provide such figures for Neighbourhood Plans in its area in advance of the publication of its draft Local Plan. However, it has advised qualifying bodies that they may use a 10% increase in their housing stock as a starting point to inform any housing supply policies, even in locations in its Green Belt.

4.3 At Ashley Green a 10% increase in its housing stock of 160 homes (based on Census 2021) would require 1.6 dwellings per annum, i.e. 20 16 homes over the 10 year plan period.

4.4 At Whelpley Hill, where there is a housing stock of 150 homes (based on Census 2021), a 10% increase this would result in a total figure of 1.5 per annum, i.e. 15 homes over the plan period. This is because its effective population includes homes in the village that lie outside its defined Local Plan Policy GB4 areas, most notably at Whelpley Hill Park. This is considered a more appropriate basis for determining the sustainability credentials of the village and its housing supply position.

4.5 There is no common practice yet for evidencing why and to what extent a departure from that number can be justified, but it seems sensible to take account of:

- the current (or planned) status of the settlement in the hierarchy of the planning authority area – there is no adopted settlement hierarchy policy in the development plan although both villages are identified as two of many washed over villages covered by Policy GB4 where limited infilling is appropriate, rather than being inset per the main towns or being too small to warrant being covered by Policy GB4;
- the relative scale of the settlements - here, both villages are among the smallest covered by Policy GB4 with fewer services than many others, e.g. a community centre, pub and church but no local shop or school;
- the PC acknowledges the inclusion of an updated settlement hierarchy in Part B of the Local Plan Regulation 18 publication by BC. Notably, Ashley Green has been classified as a "Tier 5 Medium/Small Village." Based on the available information, it appears that Whelpley Hill has been incorporated as part of Ashley Green. The document further suggests that the BC's spatial approach to meeting housing targets does not heavily rely on small villages. Instead, the emphasis will be on more developed areas with existing infrastructure. The approach taken towards the AGNP remains consistent with that of BC;

- the location of the settlement in respect of proximity to higher order settlements, which are far more suited to accommodating housing growth – the villages are close to the towns of Chesham and Berkhamstead (and the large village of Bovingdon immediately to the east of Whelpley Hill); whilst this means they have reasonable public transport services connecting to both towns, those towns and Bovingdon offer significantly more sustainable opportunities for growth based on their existing social, commercial and transport infrastructure; and
- the nature and scale of landscape and heritage factors that shape the essential character of the settlement and their sensitivity to growth – Ashley Green village lies within the wider setting of the Chilterns National Landscape to its south and west but also has a cherished landscape setting to its north (in long views to Hockeridge and Pancake Woods) and to the east (views across the sweeping countryside to White Hill); neither are visible from Whelpley Hill.

4.6 On this basis, it has been concluded that a suitable indicative housing figure should be 16 homes at Ashley Green, and 15 homes at Whelpley Hill.

## APPENDIX B: Local Green Spaces

Ashley Green Parish is fortunate to have a number of attractive, accessible and well used open spaces located in the heart of the village of Ashley Green. These spaces, which are all either common land or are in public ownership and, therefore, available for the use and enjoyment of residents. This land comprises a number of different types of space, each providing for different uses and users, such as the allotments, the children's playground adjacent to the Memorial Hall and the Glebe.

These open spaces make a significant contribution to the character of the village and are the sort of local assets that make Ashley Green an attractive place in which to live. In combination with other things, such as access to public transport, Ashley Green's open spaces also make the village a sustainable location for new development, as defined in the NPPF. The Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to find a balance between the ongoing contribution of the village's open spaces to village life and their capacity to attract development interest , which will arise, in part, from the fact that Ashley Green is an attractive, well connected place with accessible, well-maintained and popular public spaces and buildings.



Ashley Green - Aerial Photo of The Playground, Memorial Hall, Allotments, Glebe and Village Green

Image provided by resident of Ashley Green

### 1. The Glebe (and Playground)





**Ashley Green The Glebe**

Images provided by AGNP Steering Group

The Glebe is a small Common Land to the back of the Memorial Hall and Playground. It shares the same characteristics of the Village Green. It provides a great space for children to play and often used by dog walkers and for exercise. Importantly the annual Ashley Green bonfire is always celebrated on 5<sup>th</sup> November and is attended by people from surrounding areas and particularly popular as it has a bonfire.



Images provided by AGNP Steering Group

The playground at Ashley Green Memorial Hall is a popular spot for families, featuring a pirate ship, a wooden train, and musical instruments. It is designed for children up to about age 8, with a soft rubber surface and anti-slip strips on the wooden equipment. The playground also includes a cafe, outdoor gym equipment, and is located next to a green space.

#### Key Features:

- **Pirate Ship:** A centrepiece with slides, a rope bridge, and climbing features.
- **Wooden Train:** A large, wooden train provides opportunities for imaginative play.
- **Musical Instruments:** Features like a xylophone, rainmaker, and drums encourage creative play.
- **Swings:** Includes seat swings, a baby swing, and an accessible swing.
- **Outdoor Gym:** Adjacent to the playground, offering fitness equipment for older children and adults.
- **Glebe Cafe:** Located on the terrace, offering refreshments and a place to relax.
- **Parking:** A car park is available, though it can be busy, and there's on-street parking as well.
- **Toilets:** On-site facilities, including baby changing.
- **Surfaces:** Soft rubber and anti-slip strips for safety.

## 2. Ashley Green Village Green





Ashley Green Village Green

Image provided by AGNP Steering Group

The Ashley Green Village Green is Common Land at the centre of the village surrounded by the village's community facilities, the Golden Eagle, The Old School, St John's Church and Memorial Hall. The annual summer fair is held on the village green and is very popular. It is used by the community for street parties held to commemorate national celebrations. It provides a great space for children to play and often used by dog walkers and for physical activity. The village green promotes a sense of community identity.

### 3. Ashley Green Allotments



Ashley Green Allotments

Image provided by AGNP Steering Group

There are 7 full plots (previously 8 but one was removed to make a communal space). Each of these 7 can be divided in half to make 14 half plots. Currently there are 9 tenants taking up a mix of half plots and full plots. The Parish Council has put a lot of



work into the plots this year to redefine the areas and clear them up to make them better spaces. There used to be just one tap, but we have this year improved the area so that each plot now has its own standpipe.

The price of plots as of January 2025 are £40 per plot or £20 per half plot for anyone living in the parish. New tenants from outside the village will be charged £80 for a full plot and £40 for a half plot.

The age of the allotments is unknown. It is the only public land in the parish which Buckinghamshire Council have handed over ownership of to the PC.

The allotments are highly valued by the community in Ashley Green, as they offer a multitude of benefits, including providing access to fresh, affordable produce, promoting physical and mental well-being, fostering a sense of community, and improving the environment. They also provide a space for social interaction and can contribute to a more sustainable food system.

## APPENDIX C: Landscape Sensitivity

Data has been mapped on any landscape designations (using the Local Plan Policies Map and published Landscape Character Assessment), supplemented by a visual survey conducted in April 2025 (see Policies Map and the photographic record below).

The schedule of sites as part of the Grey Belt Study identifies whether a potential development site (or previously developed land) is located within or adjacent to a Key View, Vista or Corridor of Significance. If this is the case, then the policies set out in this Neighbourhood Plan will require the developer to demonstrate how their proposals avoid harmful impacts on the landscape and their setting and character of the village (with reference to the layout, scale, height etc).

It is noted that a part of the Neighbourhood Area lies within the Chilterns National Landscape. The NPPF definition of Grey Belt land excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas in its Footnote 7 (including National Landscapes, but not their settings) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development. The National Landscape boundary does not coincide with any sites assessed at Ashley Green or Whelpley Hill and only includes one PDL site – on Hog Lane – that has in any event been assessed as an unsustainable Grey Belt location.

The following designations and characteristics have been identified:

#### **Corridors of Significance:**

- the potential for visual coalescence of Ashley Green with Orchard Leigh that could be realised through linear development along Two Dells Lane south east of Ashley Green or north west of Orchard Leigh, justifying the designation of a Corridor of Significance
- the potential for visual coalescence of Ashley Green with Lye Green at Lycrome Road that could be realised through linear development along Ashley Green Road south of Ashley Green towards the groups of buildings at Thorne Barton Hall and on the opposite side of the road, justifying the designation of a Corridor of Significance

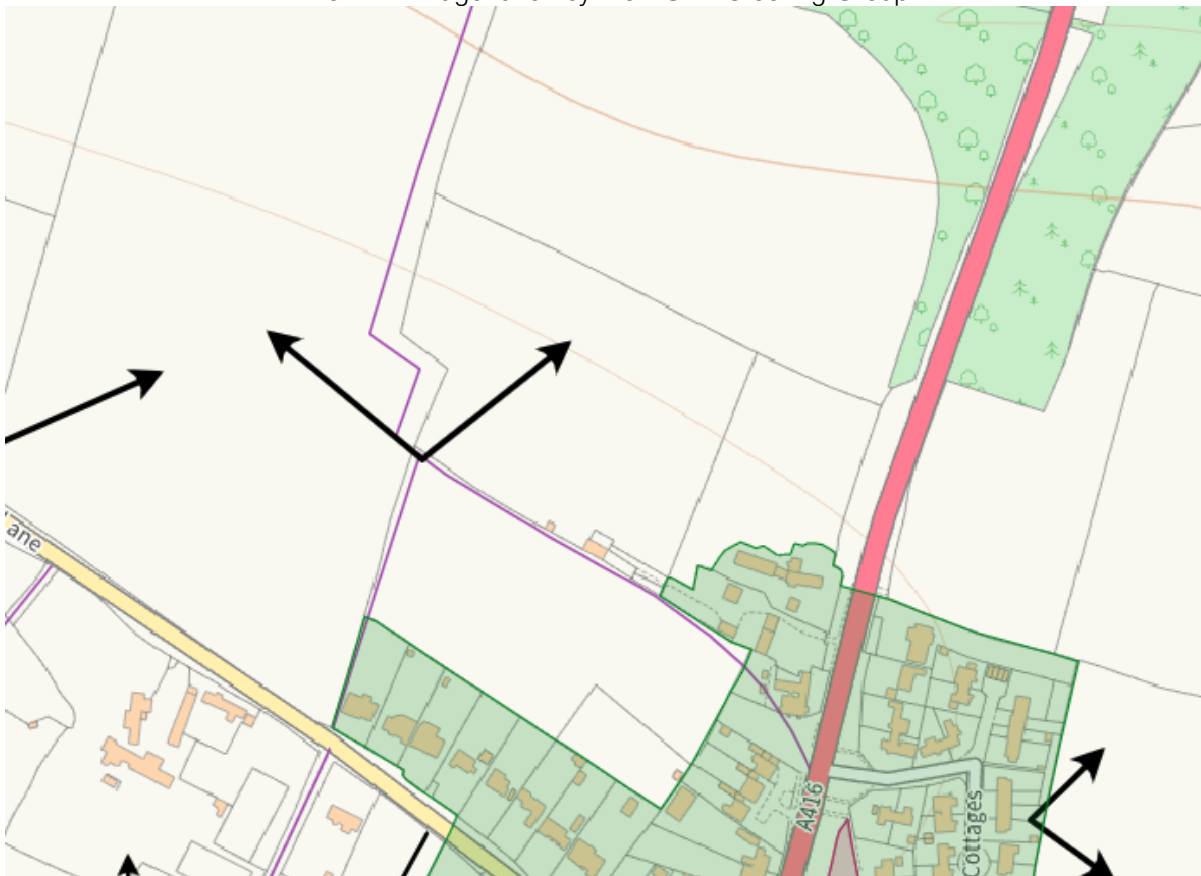
#### **Views and Vistas:**

##### **A. View towards Hockeridge and Pancake Woods**

This is an important view from the public footpath across open farmland, offering extensive, high-quality vistas northwest across the fields north of Hog Lane towards Hockeridge and Pancake Woods. These wooded areas near Ashley Green, Buckinghamshire, are renowned for their tranquil walking trails, particularly the Hockeridge Wood Loop—a gentle, circular walk popular with families and dog walkers. The woods are especially noted for their seasonal bluebells and peaceful atmosphere. Access to this key view is convenient, with parking available at the Hockeridge Wood car park or from Ashley Green’s Memorial Hall car park. The combination of open farmland and the distinctive woodland backdrop justifies the designation of this location as a Key View within the parish.



View A - Image taken by the AGNP Steering Group



View A - Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2025 OS AC0000823704.

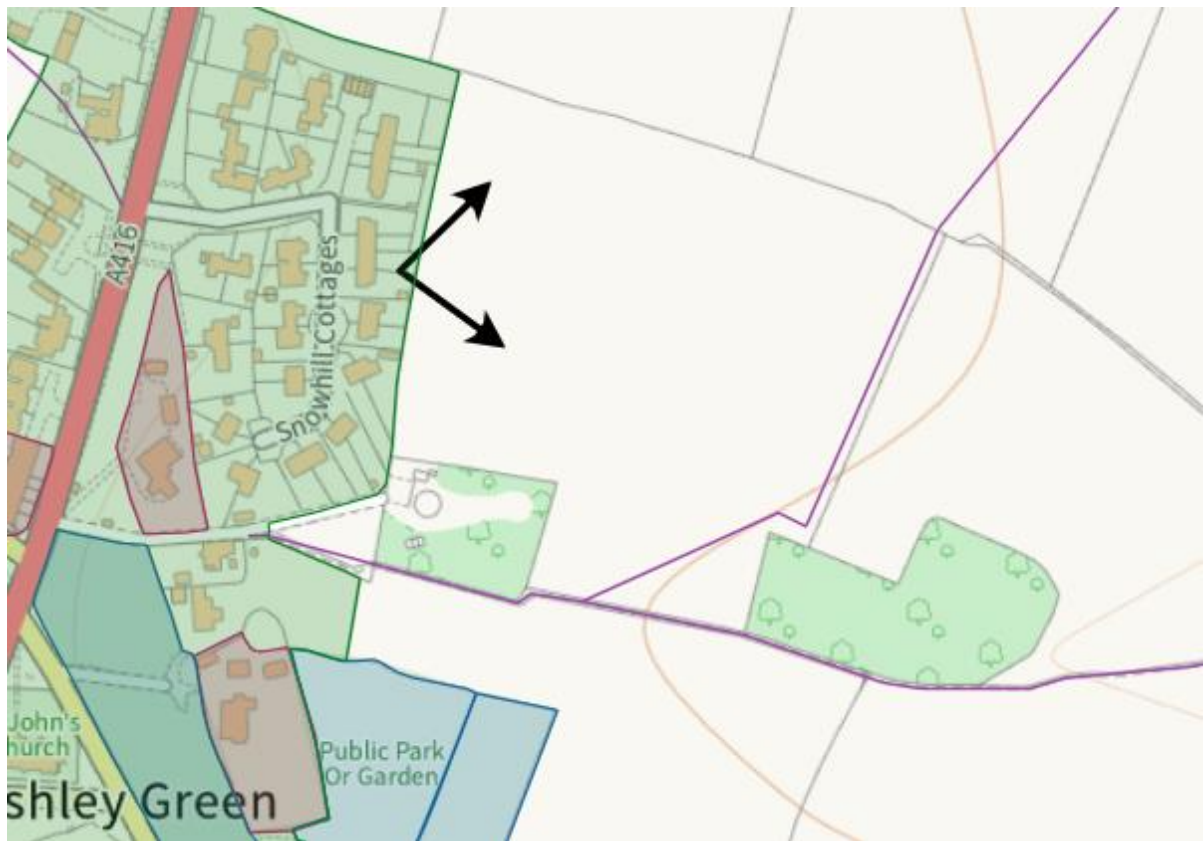
## **B. Footpath from the sewage works to the rolling Chiltern Hills**

This is a stunning, high-quality vista looking eastwards towards Mount's Hill, visible from several key locations: along the popular footpath, from Snowhill Cottages, the access road to the sewage works, and the public right of way (PRoW) running from that access road to the Memorial Hall. This route is a favourite for families and dog walkers, valued for its unspoilt rural character and far-reaching views. The landscape has changed little over time, making its preservation especially important. The combination of its popularity, accessibility, and the exceptional quality of the view justifies its designation as a Key View and Vista for Ashley Green.



View B - Image taken by the AGNP Steering Group





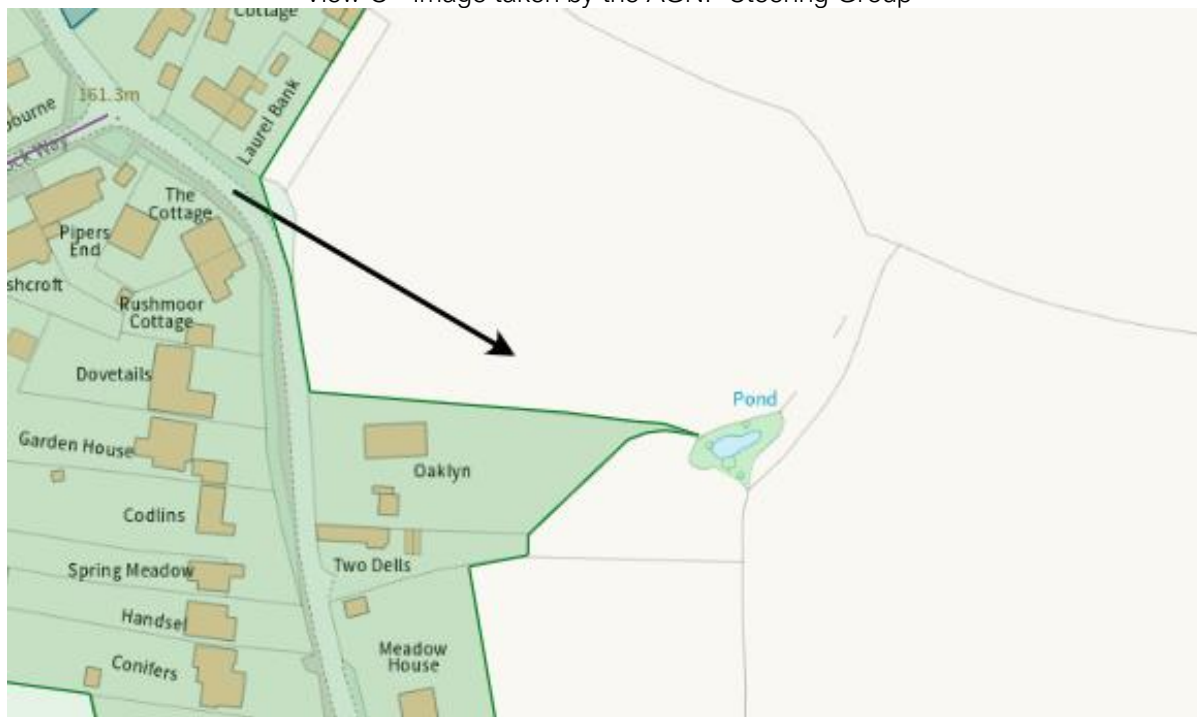
View B - Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2025 OS AC0000823704.

### C. View across fields towards Whelpley Hill from Two Dells Lane

A fairly level view across farmland showing the beauty of the Chiltern countryside.



View C - Image taken by the AGNP Steering Group



View C - Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2025 OS AC0000823704.

#### D. View from Flamstead Farm Towards Hog Lane

This key view encompasses the high-quality vistas across Flamstead Farm's open paddock land towards Hog Lane, as well as reciprocal views from Hog Lane back towards the farm. The view is particularly notable for its historic and architectural interest, featuring the Grade II listed Flamstead Farmhouse—a late 18th-century, letter-L plan farmhouse with a three-bay north range of two storeys, colourwashed roughcast walls, old tile roof (hipped to the right), dentil eaves, recessed barred sash windows, and a central door with a stack to its left. The east range is part brick, part brick and flint, all now colourwashed, with casement windows, while the flint and brick stable range includes timber-framed gables.

This view is enjoyed from the public right of way (PRoW) running alongside the paddock land and along its southern boundary to the A416. The vista also includes the distinct listed buildings of Old Oak Farm and Flamstead Yard, further enhancing its significance. The combination of open rural landscape, historic farmstead, and prominent listed buildings justifies the designation of this location as a Key View for Ashley Green.



View D - Image taken by AGNP Steering Group





View D - Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2025 OS AC0000823704.

### E. View across Paddock at Flamstead Farm

This key view stretches across the open paddock land of Flamstead Farm, offering a sweeping rural vista that captures the historic character of Ashley Green. The view is particularly valued for its sense of openness and its visual connection to the Grade II listed Flamstead Farmhouse and its associated stable range, which stand as prominent features within the landscape. The combination of unspoilt farmland and the backdrop of these historic buildings creates a distinctive and memorable scene, making this an important view to preserve for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.



View E - Image taken by the AGNP Steering Group



View E - Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2025 OS AC0000823704.

## F. View across fields towards Flamstead Farm from Hog Lane

This key view is experienced from Hog Lane, looking towards Flamstead Farm's land. It provides an important glimpse of the historic Flamstead Yard complex between buildings on Hog Lane—a view specifically recognised in a 2021 appeal decision. The combination of rural landscape and the visual connection to this historic farmstead justifies the designation of this location as a Key View for Ashley Green.



View F - Image taken by AGNP Steering Group





View F - Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2025 OS AC0000823704.

### G. View looking across the fields towards Hockeridge Woods – opposite Old Oak Farm

This key view looks across the open fields towards Hockeridge Woods from a vantage point opposite Old Oak Farm. The scene is characterised by the sweeping rural landscape, with the historic Old Oak Farmhouse providing a distinctive focal point in the foreground and the woodland backdrop of Hockeridge Woods enhancing the sense of depth and tranquillity. The combination of open countryside, historic farmstead, and mature woodland makes this an important and memorable view within Ashley Green, worthy of preservation.





View G - Image taken by AGNP Steering Group



View G - Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2025 OS AC0000823704.

## APPENDIX D: Local Heritage Assets

### 1. Row of Cottages – Nos. 1-4 Chesham Road

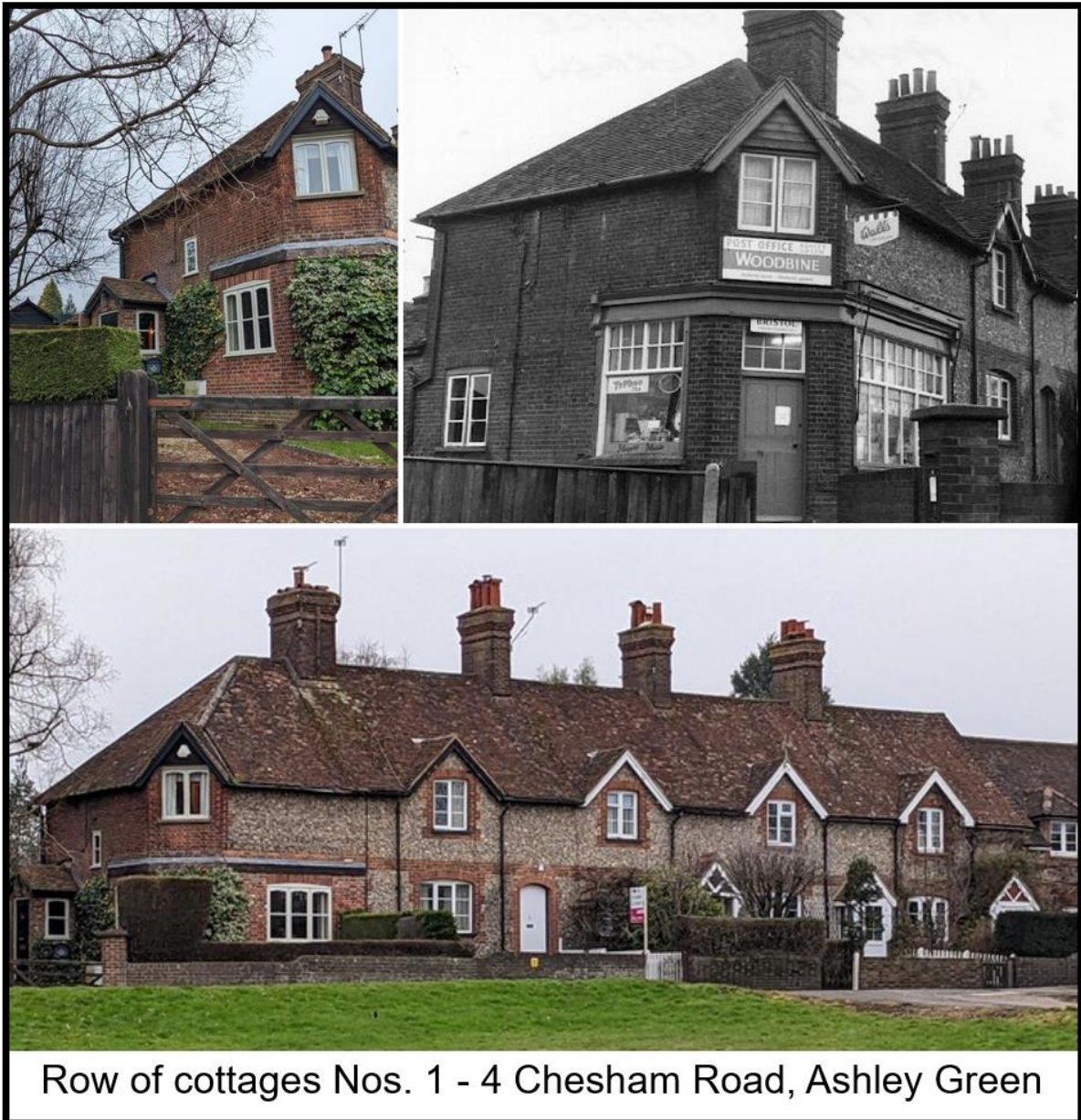


Image provided by AGNP Steering Group

Row of four late nineteenth century brick and flint cottages with clay tile roofs, the southernmost cottage formerly the village post office (picture from the 1960s).

Picturesque row of terrace cottages built in the local vernacular, brick and flint with clay tile roof, small facing gables and decorative detailing including brick quoin surrounds and rough curved arches to the windows, brick string course and decorative chimneys.

The Historical interest demonstrates the historical development of the village, as one of the early groups of cottages at the centre of the village facing the green, located at the junction with Hog Lane and Chesham Road.



## 2. The Old School



Image provided by AGNP Steering Group

Nineteenth century village school built in 1853, now used as a community centre. The school was built in 1853 at the cost of Colonel Dorrien, of Haresfoot, Berkhamsted, who was the chief supporter of it.

It gained prominence during World War II when, in 1940, it was featured in the propaganda film "Village School". The school was saved from closure in the 1980s through the efforts of the Ashley Green and District Community Association and currently serves as a community centre, hosting various events and activities for the village.

## 3. The Old Vicarage



Image provided by AGNP Steering Group

The age of the building is unknown but the Historic OS map of 1877 shows it was present at this time. It is the only Victorian building of this scale in the village.

Striking Victorian building featuring two facing gables that retains many of its original features including church like rooftop finials and decorative ridge tiles, ornamental

stonework to the flat band beneath the eaves, stone lintels, cills, double pointed arches and string courses to the front.

It was built as a residence for the vicar for St. John's Church (Grade II\*) and was likely to be contemporary with St Johns Church which was built in 1873 and the vicarage was evident in the 1877 OS map. Both building face onto the green.

It has historic interest due to its association with St John's Church, a place of worship for the local community since at least 1873.

It has Landmark status as a Victorian building that is prominent in the village due to its scale and location facing the green.

#### 4. Little Grove Priory



Image provided by AGNP Steering Group

The building is a large half-timbered dwelling, with white render, black timber detailing, red clay tiles and black framed leaded-light windows. Little Grove is shown by name in the Jeffreys map of 1766 and the building is shown in the OS sketch map of 1812 and tithe map of 1843. It appears on OS maps from at least the 1870s, annotated as Little Grove Priory.

Former priory. Described as 'House, Farm Buildings Yard and Garden' in the tithe survey, owned by Benjamin Lewis and occupied by Thomas Batchelor. Known as Little Grove Farm in 1901 census, and Little Grove Priory in 1939.

It is a large half-timbered building, used as a priory, then a school and finally as a dwelling since 1983. The building is white rendered, with extensive distinctive black timbers, black timber window frames and historic single glazed leaded-light windows. The roof is of traditional red clay tiles and the interior also displays historic features including fireplaces and black timber beams.

It is part of the historic estate of Grove Farm, which is an ancient stone-walled house with a moat, located around 220m to the north of Little Grove. Grove Farm contains several listed buildings and the moated site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The



history of the wider estate and the appearance and detailing of Little Grove indicate that it is historic in significance.

## 5. The White Hart PH



Image provided by AGNP Steering Group

Nestled in a tiny hamlet between Bovingdon and Chesham, The White Hart was originally an 18th Century timber framed barn. It then became The White Hart pub: Originally a 15th century farmer's cottage and a favourite for USAF during WWII. The officer's mess was a shed in the garden. There is evidence of a tunnel from the cellar, possibly a priest run.

Whelpley Hill is a hamlet of Chesham. The name is probably from the Saxon 'Hwelpa's Hill'. Hwelpa is ancient English meaning puppy or young animal. There was also a family called 'Whealply who lived in the village, who may have been livestock breeders. Sadly, the village was hit by the Great Plague 1592 to 1593 and with it much of its history was lost.

Two storey public house, first floor tile hung, including string courses of fish scale tiles. Brick to ground floor and flint to side. Left hand bay window and single storey extension. Pitched tiled porch roof.

# Glossary of Terms

This glossary explains technical and planning terms used in the Ashley Green Grey Belt Study and relevant National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) policies. It is designed to help parish councillors and local residents understand planning language. Each entry includes both the formal planning definition and a plain English explanation.

## Active Travel

Travel involving physical activity, such as walking or cycling, and the routes or facilities that support these options.

---

Plain English: Getting around without using a car – like walking or cycling – using safe and convenient routes.

---

## Affordable Housing (AH)

Homes for sale or rent for people whose needs are not met by the market, including Social Rent, Affordable Rent, and Shared Ownership.

---

Plain English: Housing that costs less than normal market prices or rents, aimed at people who can't afford regular housing.

---

## Assessment Area (AA)

A defined part of the parish used in the Grey Belt Study for detailed site analysis. Boundaries follow physical features.

---

Plain English: A small section of land marked out for study, using clear landmarks like roads or hedges.

---

## Brownfield Land

Previously developed land that has been built on before, excluding land returned to a natural state.

---

Plain English: Land that used to have buildings or development on it.

---

## Call for Sites

A process where the Local Planning Authority invites suggestions of land for future development.

---

Plain English: When the council asks landowners or the public to put forward land that could be built on.

---

## Community Infrastructure

Facilities and services needed by a community, such as schools, health centres, and parks.

---

Plain English: The things a community needs to work well, like schools, doctors, and playgrounds.

---

## Core Policy

A high-level policy from the Local Plan that sets strategic principles for development.

---

Plain English: A main rule in the council's plan about how land should be used or developed.

---

## Defensible Boundary

A strong, physical edge to development, like a road or river, that helps prevent urban sprawl.

---

Plain English: A natural or man-made barrier that clearly marks the edge of a built-up area.

---

## Designated Heritage Asset

A building, monument, or site of national importance, such as a Listed Building or Conservation Area.

---

Plain English: A building or place officially protected for its historical or cultural importance.

---

## Development Plan

A set of planning documents used to make decisions on planning applications.

---

Plain English: The official set of rules and plans that guide what can be built and where.

---

## Footnote 7 (NPPF)

A list of protected areas or assets where national policy strongly restricts development.

---

Plain English: A government list of important places where building is usually not allowed.

---

## Golden Rules (NPPF §156)

Special requirements for Green Belt or Grey Belt housing, such as higher affordable housing levels and infrastructure improvements.

---

Plain English: Extra rules for building houses in Green Belt or Grey Belt land, like providing more affordable homes and better roads.

---

## Green Belt

Land designated to prevent urban sprawl by keeping areas open and undeveloped.

---

Plain English: Protected countryside around towns and cities to stop them merging together.

---



## Grey Belt

Land within the Green Belt that may be considered for development if it meets certain tests.

---

Plain English: Parts of the Green Belt that could be built on if strict rules are met.

---

## Green Infrastructure

A network of natural and semi-natural spaces that provide environmental and social benefits.

---

Plain English: Green spaces like parks, woods, and playing fields that benefit people and wildlife.

---

## Large Built-up Area

An area physically and functionally part of a city or large town.

---

Plain English: A big, continuous built-up area with lots of services and transport links.

---

## Local Green Space (LGS)

A protected green area that is important to the local community.

---

Plain English: A special green space that is protected from being built on.

---

## Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

A county-level plan for protecting and improving biodiversity and green spaces.

---

Plain English: A county-wide plan for making nature and green areas healthier.

---

## Local Planning Authority (LPA)

The council responsible for local planning and deciding most planning applications.

---

Plain English: The council department that handles planning decisions.

---

## Major Development (Housing)

Usually a proposal for 10+ homes or on land of 0.5 hectares or more.

---

Plain English: A big housing scheme of at least ten homes.

---

## National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Government policy setting out how planning should be done in England.

---

Plain English: The government's rulebook for planning decisions.

---

## Neighbourhood Plan

A local plan made by a parish or community setting policies for development.

---

Plain English: A plan made by the local community to shape how their area changes.

---

## Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Government guidance explaining how to apply planning policies.

---

Plain English: Extra advice from the government on how planning rules should work.

---

## Provisional Grey Belt

Land that could be Grey Belt but needs more checks or assessment.

---

Plain English: Land that might be built on but still needs to be checked against rules.

---

## Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

Paths where the public has a legal right to walk, cycle, or ride.

---

Plain English: Footpaths, bridleways, and tracks anyone can use.

---

## Sustainable Location

A place with easy access to shops, schools, jobs, and services by walking, cycling, or public transport.

---

Plain English: Somewhere you can get to what you need without always using a car.

---

## Sustainable Pattern of Development

A layout of homes, services, and infrastructure that meets needs without harming future generations.

---

Plain English: Building in a way that works well now and in the future.

---

## Tier 2 / Tier 3 / Tier 4 Settlements

Settlement classifications in the Local Plan, based on size, services, and transport.

---

Plain English: Categories for villages and towns depending on how big they are and what they offer.

---

## Metropolitan Green Belt

A specific part of the Green Belt around London, aimed at preventing urban sprawl in the capital's surrounding counties.

---

Plain English: Protected countryside around London to stop towns and cities spreading into each other.

---

## Major Housing Development

For the purposes of this study, proposals for more than 9 homes or covering more than 0.5 hectares.

---

Plain English: A housing project of at least 10 homes or covering more than half a hectare of land.

---

## Minor Housing Development

Small-scale housing schemes below the threshold for major development.

---

Plain English: A small housing project with fewer than 10 homes.

---

## Settlement Boundary

A mapped line defining the edge of a village, used in planning to decide where development is acceptable.

---

Plain English: The official edge of a village, beyond which building is usually restricted.

---

## Nucleated Village

A village with buildings clustered around a central point, such as a green, crossroads, or church.

---

Plain English: A village where houses and buildings are gathered closely around a centre.

---

## Linear Village

A village where buildings are arranged in a line, usually along a road.



---

Plain English: A village with homes stretched along a single main road.

---

## Neighbourhood Plan Policy Lever

A tool available to a Neighbourhood Plan to influence development, such as identifying sites for specific types of housing.

---

Plain English: A rule in the Neighbourhood Plan that can be used to guide what gets built and where.

---

## Active Travel Infrastructure

Facilities like pavements, cycle paths, and safe crossings that support walking and cycling.

---

Plain English: The paths, pavements, and routes that make walking or cycling safer and easier.

---

## Publicly Accessible Green Space

Open land available for everyone to use, often for recreation, sport, or leisure.

---

Plain English: A park or green area anyone can visit.

---

## Doorstep Accessible Natural Greenspace

Small, good-quality green spaces close to where people live, identified by Natural England.

---

Plain English: A small local park or nature area within easy walking distance of your home.

---

## Call for Sites Data

Information collected by the council when it invites landowners to suggest land for development.

---

Plain English: A list the council makes when people put forward land they think could be built on.

---

## Irreplaceable Habitats

Habitats which, once destroyed, cannot be re-created, such as ancient woodland.

---

Plain English: Special natural areas, like ancient forests, that can't be replaced if lost.

---

## National Landscape

An area formerly called an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), protected for its scenic and environmental importance.

---

Plain English: Beautiful countryside protected by law.

---

## Listed Building

A building of special historical or architectural interest that is protected by law.

---

Plain English: A building that's important for history or design and legally protected from being changed without permission.

---

## Density (dph)

The number of dwellings per hectare, used to measure housing development intensity.

---

Plain English: How many homes are built on a piece of land, usually per hectare.

---

## National Model Design Code

Government guidance on design principles for creating high-quality, beautiful, and sustainable places.

---

Plain English: Government advice on how to design attractive, practical, and sustainable neighbourhoods.

---