

STEEPLE CLAYDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2013-2033

BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

Published by Steeple Claydon Parish Council under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement has been prepared by Steeple Claydon Parish Council ('the Parish Council') to accompany its submission to the local planning authority, Aylesbury Vale District Council ('the District Council'), of the Steeple Claydon Neighbourhood Plan ('the Neighbourhood Plan') under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ('the Regulations').

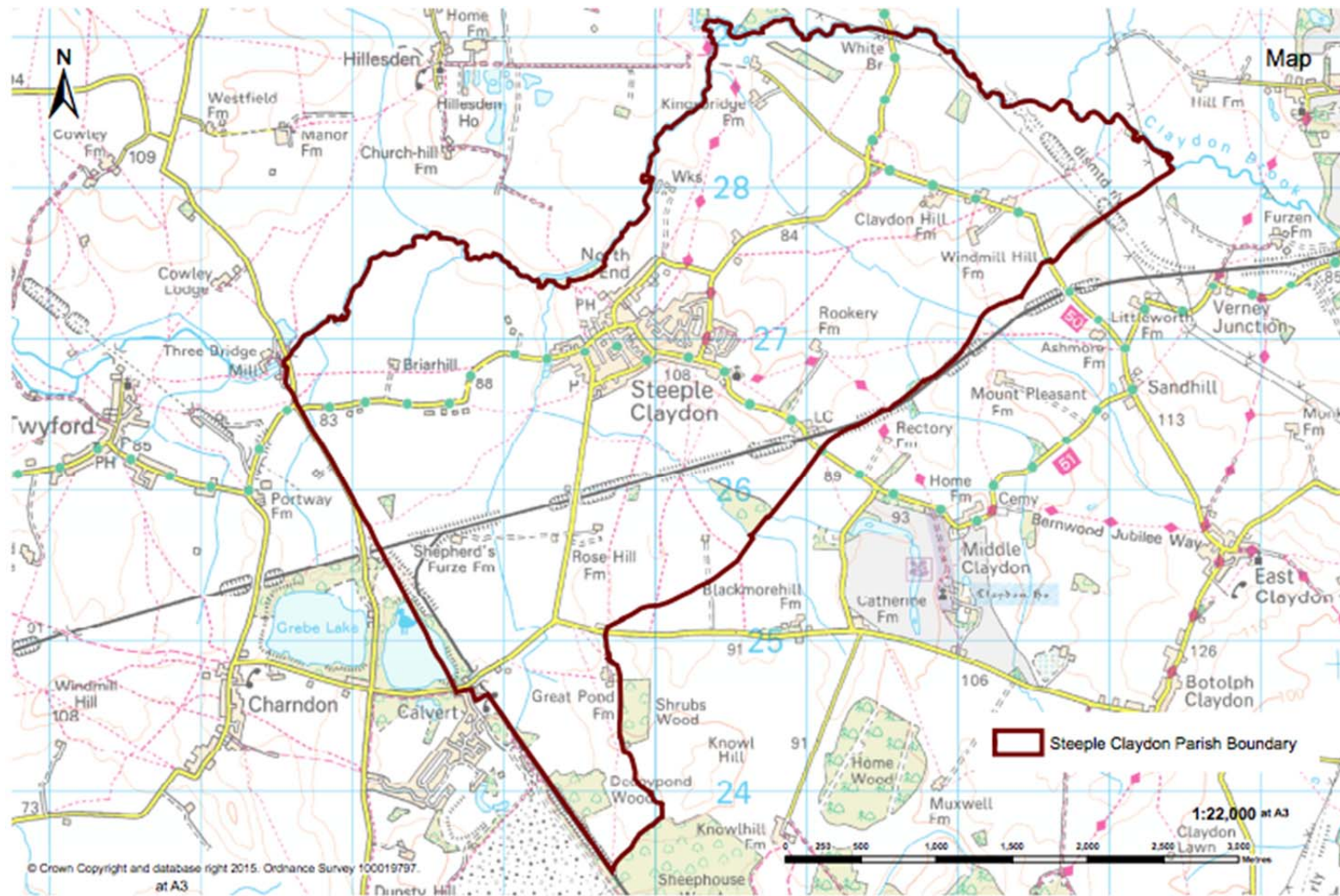
1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council, a qualifying body, for the Neighbourhood Area covering the whole of the Parish of Steeple Claydon, as designated by the District Council on 14 April 2015.

1.3 The policies described in the Neighbourhood Plan relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area. They do not relate to 'excluded development', as defined by the Regulations. The plan period of the Neighbourhood Plan is from 2013 to 2033, which corresponds with the plan period of the emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP).

1.4 The statement addresses each of the four 'Basic Conditions' required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 *Town & Country Planning Act*.

1.5 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the conditions if:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
- The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations.



Steeple Claydon Proposed Neighbourhood Area

Plan A: Designated Steeple Claydon Neighbourhood Area

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The decision to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan was made by the Parish Council in 2015. The key driver of this decision was a sense of wishing to plan positively for the future of the Parish on a range of issues and the encouragement by the District Council for local communities in its area to prepare Neighbourhood Plans.

2.2 A steering group was formed comprising resident and Parish Council representatives of the Parish. The group has been delegated authority by the Parish Council to make day-to-day decisions on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, as the qualifying body, the Parish Council approved the publication of the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan in February 2017 and of the Submission Plan in May 2017.

2.3 The Parish Council has consulted the local communities extensively over the duration of the project. It has also worked closely with officers of the District Council since the start of the project to collate and examine the evidence base, to design and iterate policy proposals and to define the proper relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan and the 2004 Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (AVDLP) and the emerging VALP. The outcome of that work is the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

2.4 The Neighbourhood Plan contains eight land use policies, most of which are defined on the Policies Map, as they are geographically specific. The plan has deliberately avoided containing policies that may duplicate saved development plan policies that are already used to determine planning applications. The policies are therefore a combination of site-specific allocations or other proposals and of development management matters that seek to refine and/or update existing AVDLP policies.

3. CONFORMITY WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with full regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is mindful of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in respect of formulating Neighbourhood Plans. In overall terms, there are four NPPF paragraphs that provide general guidance on neighbourhood planning, to which the Neighbourhood Plan has directly responded:

Para 16

3.2 The Parish Council believes the Neighbourhood Plan is planning positively to support the strategic development needs of the district by making housing site allocations and supporting community development in the village, which accord with a clear spatial vision in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan or tested objectively assessed housing need position.

Para 183

3.3 The Parish Council believes the Neighbourhood Plan has established a vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the Parish that reflect the desires of the majority of the local community for the kind of place that the Parish should remain and how it may change for the better.

Para 184

3.4 The Parish Council believes the Neighbourhood Plan, as highlighted below, is in general conformity with the few relevant, saved policies of the development plan. It is considered to strike a positive balance between the physical and policy constraints of the main village and the desire to steer development of the right type to the right locations.

Table A: Neighbourhood Plan & NPPF Conformity Summary

No.	Policy Title	NPPF Ref.	Commentary
SC1	Steeple Claydon Settlement Boundary	14, 47, 50, 109	<p>This policy establishes a distinction between the built up area of the village, which there is a general presumption in favour of sustainable and well-designed development, and the surrounding countryside, where only development that is suited or necessary to that location will be favoured.</p> <p>As such, it is in line with para 14 of the NPPF in positively seeking opportunities to meet the development needs of this area and with para 50 in seeking to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes.</p> <p>The principle of using a development boundary policy mechanism to contain and manage settlement growth is therefore consistent with national policy, provided, as here, the boundary defines the outcome of decisions made on the scale and location of growth in line with the evidence base on the assessment of objectively assessed housing need at the District level. In which case, there is no inherent conflict between this mechanism and para 47 seeking to boost housing supply. But it also acknowledges the importance of protecting the countryside as a valued landscape from harmful development (as per para 109), though does not seek a blanket prevention of any</p>

			development.
SC2	Land at Molly's Field, Addison Road	50, 58, 70, 118, 126, 173	<p>This policy is consistent with para 50 of the NPPF in contributing to the supply of a mix of new open market and affordable homes to meet local needs by allocating land for housing development within the defined settlement boundary.</p> <p>It also sets out the key development principles for the site in line with para 58. The policy also sets out the retention of hedgerows to play part in delivering a biodiversity net gain (in line with para 118). It also acknowledges that there are heritage assets in the vicinity to take account of in line with para 126.</p> <p>The policy is in line with para 34 by growing the village in a location that is within reasonable walking distance of most other services in the village (there is no conventional village 'centre' here) and by accommodating the relocated convenience store and GP surgery. The policy also requires a financial contribution to the Parish Council's proposed community bus service project, which will provide new services to connect the site with all other facilities in the village and with other surrounding villages that depend on Steeple Claydon for these services.</p> <p>This policy is also in line with the ambitions of paras 28 and 70 in enabling proposals to relocate and improve important local facilities – the convenience store and GP surgery. In these and the other policy respects, the Parish</p>

			<p>Council has worked closely with the developer since choosing the site as its preferred allocation option to ensure it is deliverable, in line with para 173.</p> <p>The developer also accepts that if the relocation proposals cannot be delivered within a reasonable timeframe, then that community benefit will be replaced with a higher level of affordable homes to be delivered in the replacement housing scheme.</p>
SC3	The Co-op, West Street	50, 58, 70	<p>This policy conforms with para 50 by supporting the development of new homes in a sustainable location in the village and with para 70 in retaining a community use of a small area of the redevelopment scheme. The loss of the current store, and its relocation to the edge of the village, is justified by the limitations of operating from the current site, which is too small to meet increasing demand, and is located on a difficult road bend with no car parking. The location of the site in the centre of the village would otherwise be highly sustainable, hence the requirement to retain a local community meeting room/office as part of the scheme.</p> <p>This policy accords with para 58 in establishing key design principles that reflect the distinct physical characteristics of the site and its proximity to the surrounding buildings.</p>
SC4	The GP surgery, Vicarage Lane	50, 58, 126	<p>This policy conforms with para 50 by supporting the development of new homes in a sustainable location in the village and with para 126 in respect of requiring the</p>

			<p>retention and refurbishment of the former vicarage building as being of local heritage interest. It is not considered that this requirement need undermine the viability of the scheme, as the building is capable of reuse and the car park area is of a size and shape that would suggest it is capable of accommodating a small housing scheme.</p> <p>This policy accords with para 58 in establishing key design principles that reflect the distinct physical characteristics of the site and its proximity to the surrounding buildings.</p>
SC5	Land at Queen Catherine Road	50, 58	<p>This policy conforms with para 50 by supporting the development of new homes in a sustainable location in the village.</p> <p>In line with para 58, the policy recognises the sensitivity of this site in relation to the adjacent semi-detached cottages which are set back a significant distance from the road. The proposed scheme will be designed to prevent the development being too prominent in views along Queen Catherine Road in leaving the village towards the church.</p>
SC6	Local Green Spaces	76, 77	<p>This policy accords with para 76 by designating land that will allow communities to rule out new development and protect the proposed spaces. The sites are considered to meet the tests of para 77 as each is located in reasonably close proximity to the local community, each is demonstrably special to the local community and each is local in its character.</p>

SC7	Community Assets	70	This policy accords with para 70 in protecting specific important facilities from unnecessary loss to other uses and by encouraging suitable proposals that will improve their viability.
SC8	Design	58, 60	This policy accords with para 58 in seeking to define some specific design characteristics to which development proposals should respond. As per para 60, it avoids unnecessary prescription of design solutions.

4. CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The separate SEA Report sets out how the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have addressed their potential to have significant environmental effects. It concludes thus:

10.1 In overall terms, therefore, the sustainability effects of the Neighbourhood Plan are generally assessed as neutral but are occasionally positive. A combination of the proposed mitigation measures of the policies and the use of other development plan policies to determine planning applications will effectively avoid any negative impacts. In no case does the assessment indicate that a reasonable alternative would deliver a more sustainable outcome.

10.2 There are no other significant housing development plans or proposals in the vicinity of the Parish, so there are no cumulative effects of the plan's proposals in this respect. There are the HS2 and East-West Rail projects that pass through the Parish to the west and south. Their environmental effects will be significant in this relatively remote rural area but the additional housing development on the edge of the village will be relatively insignificant in comparison.

4.2 However, the basic condition of 'contributing to the achievement of sustainable development' requires a broader view of the sustainability performance of the policies and of the Neighbourhood Plan as a whole. Table B below shows a brief appraisal of how each policy performs in its social and economic as well as environmental attributes (*Note: + positive effect; 0 neutral effect; - negative effect*).

Table B: Neighbourhood Plan Policies & Sustainable Development Summary

No.	Policy Title	Environ.	Social	Economic	Comments
SC1	Steeple Claydon Settlement Boundary	+	0	0	This policy has a positive environmental effect in discouraging further housing development on the edge of the village to protect its landscape setting. There are no negative social or economic effects as the settlement boundary has been drawn to accommodate housing growth and the policy supports housing and economic development as a matter of principle within the boundary, and suitable rural economic development outside the boundary.
SC2	Land at Molly's Field, Addison Road	0/-	+	+/0	The policy has positive social and modest economic effects by delivering new homes for the village and enabling the relocation and improvement of its convenience store and GP surgery. Both facilities are valued by the local community and serve a wider rural population. Both are likely to generate some new job opportunities in the longer term. As the SEA report notes, there will be some residual negative landscape effects as a result of using a greenfield site on the edge of the village, but the site is in reasonable walking distance of most of the other facilities in the village. The requirement of the policy for the scheme to make a financial

					contribution to a new community bus service for the village and surrounding villages will also provide a positive social benefit and address the potential negative effect of relocating the facilities further away from their more central location in the village at present.
SC3	The Co-op, West Street	0	+	0	This policy has a positive social effect by delivering new homes, by requiring the provision of a small community room as part of the scheme and by enabling the relocation and improvement of the store from its present difficult location. It avoids a negative environmental effect by setting out the design requirements of a proposal and it avoids a negative economic effect by requiring the prior provision of the new store before consent will be granted to replace the existing store.
SC4	The GP surgery, Vicarage Lane	0	+	0	This policy has a positive social effect by delivering new homes. It avoids a negative social effect by requiring the prior provision of the new facility before consent will be granted to the loss of the existing surgery use. It avoids a negative environmental effect by requiring the retention and reuse of the former vicarage building, which has some local heritage interest, and by setting out some key design principles.
SC5	Land at Queen	0/-	+	0	This policy has a positive social effect by

	Catherine Road				delivering new homes. As noted in the SEA report, there will be some residual negative landscape effects as a result of using a greenfield site on the edge of the village, but the design principles should enable a high quality scheme to come forward.
SC6	Local Green Spaces	0	+/0	0	This policy has a modest positive social effect in protecting from development land that is cherished by the local community. It avoids having a negative social effect as it does not seek to achieve a blanket protection of the village from development and other policies of the Plan make positive provision for new development.
SC7	Community Assets	0	+	0	This policy will have a positive social effect by protecting existing community facilities and encouraging their improvement.
SC8	Design	+	+/0	0	This policy will have a positive environmental effect by identifying specific design features of the village, to which development proposals should respond. In managing design in this way, there ought to be a modest positive social effect in sustaining the character of the village, even though there will be considerable disruption to village life with the construction of HS2 and the East-West Rail projects over the next decade.

5. GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC POLICIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to ensure its general conformity with the development plan for the District, that is the saved policies of the 2004 Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (AVDLP).

5.2 The Draft Vale of Aylesbury Plan of summer 2016 has been referenced to inform the reasoning and evidence of the Neighbourhood Plan. It defined Steeple Claydon as a 'Larger Village' in the settlement hierarchy of the District (as evidenced in the 2016 Settlement Hierarchy Assessment Review) and made no other provisions that indicated the village or parish would be part of any strategic-scale development proposals in the plan period. Though this cannot be regarded as definitive, as it is possible that the adopted VALP may come to a different spatial view in due course, it is considered unlikely, given the limited facilities in the village and the relative remoteness of the Parish in District terms.

5.3 Despite this uncertainty, the Parish Council has used the plan-led approach expected of the NPPF to show that it can deliver new homes in line with environmental constraints and with a pattern of sustainable development in this rural area. It has therefore brought forward housing proposals that exceed the requirements of the Draft VALP.

5.4 An assessment of the general conformity of each policy, and its relationship with emerging VALP policy where relevant, is contained in Table C below.

Table C: Neighbourhood Plan & Development Plan Conformity Summary

No.	Policy Title & Refs	Commentary
SC1	Steeple Claydon Settlement Boundary	This policy establishes and defines the Settlement Boundary to distinguish the consideration of planning applications within Steeple Claydon settlement from those outside the boundary. In doing so, it replaces saved AVDLP policies RA13 and RA14 relating to development within and adjoining rural settlements in so far as they are applied in the designated neighbourhood area. The provisions for development outside the boundary are consistent with Policy RA11 (the conversion of buildings in the countryside). But, the policy effectively updates and replaces Policy RA29 (proposals for new employment uses in the countryside), in following the policy direction of the NPPF to be more permissive of rural employment proposals that are well designed and located.
SC2	Land at Molly's Field, Addison Road	This policy accords with policy GP35 in establishing key design principles that reflect the distinct physical characteristics of the site and its proximity to the surrounding landscape and heritage assets. More specifically, this policy makes requirements of the landscape scheme runs alongside policies GP38–GP40 on landscape, hedgerows and trees. The policy is in line with the emerging VALP affordable housing policy and with the majority of rural housing schemes of this type and scale that the District Council has successfully negotiated in recent years (superseding Policy GP2 of the AVDLP). For clarity, the proposal to require the provision of land for the store and surgery uses is not made to conform with Policy GP94, as the housing scheme is not of sufficient size to warrant such provisions. Rather, it is seen as part of the positive planning of the village as a whole, providing the opportunity to address the site capacity and location problems of the current operations with a developer that is willing to do so.

Table C: Neighbourhood Plan & Development Plan Conformity Summary

No.	Policy Title & Refs	Commentary
SC3	The Co-op, West Street	This policy seeks to shape all development proposals in terms of appropriate design, and reflecting the local character, adhering to policy GP35. The policy accords with Policy GP32 that seeks to resist proposals that will lead to the loss of shops by requiring the prior relocation of the store as part of Policy SC2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
SC4	The GP surgery, Vicarage Lane	This policy seeks to shape the proposals in terms of appropriate design, and reflecting the local character, particularly to have regard to the prominence of the site in punctuating views along Vicarage Lane/ Chaloners Hill corner of the site, thus adhering to policy GP35. It accords with Policy GP93 in requiring the prior relocation of the surgery as a community facility as part of Policy SC2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
SC5	Land at Queen Catherine Road	This policy proposes a small development of 6 homes, some or all of which are to be bungalows. This policy seeks to shape all development proposals in terms of appropriate design, adhering to policy GP35 – and responding to the local housing demands.

Table C: Neighbourhood Plan & Development Plan Conformity Summary

No.	Policy Title & Refs	Commentary
SC6	Local Green Spaces	This policy proposes a number of important green spaces in the parish to be protected from development by designation as Local Green Spaces. Although this type of designation was established by the NPPF and post-dates AVDLP, it remains in line with its policies GP86, GP87 and GP92, which have a similar intent. Once designated, the policy will resist all proposals for development unless it can be clearly demonstrated they are minor, they are ancillary to a public recreation use or they are required utilities development.
SC7	Community Assets	This policy complements Policy GP93 by seeking to protect community facilities that the local community strongly favours from unnecessary loss.
SC8	Design	This policy seeks to shape all development proposals in terms of appropriate design, adhering to policy GP35.

6. Compatibility with EU Legislation

6.1 The District Council provided a screening opinion in January 2016 on whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was required of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessments of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. It concluded that as the policies had the potential for significant environmental effects then an SEA would be necessary. As there are no European nature sites within the vicinity of the Parish, the District Council has also confirmed that no Habitat Regulations Assessment is necessary.

6.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has also had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act.