

**OUR plan is  
YOUR plan**



# Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

**Draft Plan for Summer 2016  
Consultation**

**It's your plan too, so take the time to have your say**



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# Foreword

## **Shaping the Aylesbury Vale's future: have your say!**

This is an important time for the district, which like many places across the country will see significant development over the next two decades. Between now and 2033 more than 30,000 homes are set to be built within this area. As well as additional housing, we're confident this growth will bring more investment, employment and opportunity, helping the district to thrive.

When it's finalised, the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan will manage and direct that growth up until 2033 in a way that will protect what makes the district a special place. It contains some exciting proposals such as the creation of a new settlement and the designation of Aylesbury as a garden town, which provides sustainable growth in a way that works with Aylesbury's rural setting. This consultation is the second chance for you to have your say on the content of the plan, which the council believes will build on the vibrant community we already have and play a significant part in the district's bright future.

This draft plan builds on the previous consultation we carried out in 2015 by adding detail and responding to the many comments we received last time. We've accommodated the comments where possible and we are eager to hear what you have to say this time as well. We hope you will come along to the consultation events to ask questions and then tell us your thoughts.

As well as the plan itself, there are a range of evidence documents that sit behind it. These are available via the council's website. Much of what you will see in this document relies on the content of that evidence, so you may want to comment on those as well. Further evidence will be prepared and existing evidence revised later this year.

Residents and other interested parties will have until 5 September to look at this document and give their views and ideas on what the plan is aiming to achieve, plus whether we've found the best locations for new homes and jobs, and whether the suggested policies say the right things.

Any comments you make will be taken into account before we reach the formal proposed submission stage later on this year. People will then be able to make formal representations about the plan before it is considered in a public inquiry next year. If, as anticipated, it is approved, we expect it to be put into effect by mid 2017.

Please take this opportunity to play your part in the future development of Aylesbury Vale!

Thanks in advance for your participation.



Cllr Carole Paternoster  
Cabinet Member for Growth Strategy

# 1 Background

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## Introduction

- 1.1 Under the planning system most development needs planning permission. The principal basis for making those decisions is the development plan and this local plan will form the main part of it for the district. Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC), is the local planning authority and is responsible for producing the local plan; town and parish councils can produce neighbourhood plans, and the county council is responsible for producing minerals and waste local plans. Together all these plans make up the development plan, which sets out where development can take place, or where it shouldn't, and what form development should take.
- 1.2 Currently the district does not have an up-to-date local plan. The existing adopted local plan dates from 2004 and does not take account of recent changes in Government planning policy. The council has tried a number of times to produce a replacement plan and the most recent attempt was withdrawn in 2014 following an examination in public. Since then the council has been working towards delivering a new Local Plan to a self-imposed deadline of mid-2017 and a subsequent Government deadline for submission by early 2017.
- 1.3 An initial scoping consultation on the new Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) has already taken place - a 'Call for sites' in 2014, which led to a large number of sites being suggested. This was followed by an 'Issues and options' consultation in 2015, which looked at options for how 31,000 houses could be accommodated in the district up to 2033.
- 1.4 The council received over 700 responses to the Issues and options consultation. This included over 4,500 comments, many of which were very detailed. A summary of these is available on the council's website. Where possible, the content of those responses has been taken into account in the preparation of this draft plan.

### What is the draft plan?

- 1.5 The aim of this draft plan is to set out, (in as much detail as possible), the areas where:
  - development will take place
  - the areas that will be protected, and
  - policies that will be used to determine planning applications.
- 1.6 It is important to stress that this plan is a draft - it gives everyone the opportunity to express their views on the approaches we are aiming to take. Their feedback will be taken into account when the final local plan is prepared. It is by no means the final say on what the council will put in the final plan as it will be open to formal representations that will be considered by an independent planning inspector. The plan will then need to satisfy the tests of soundness set out by the Government before it can be approved.

### National planning policy

- 1.7 The local plan is not prepared in isolation. Its content has to be in conformity with the Government's planning policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the guidance contained in the national Planning Practice Guidance, the content of new relevant legislation and Government statements about planning. The NPPF has at its core a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means that the council should "positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area" and "should meet objectively assessed (development) needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change".
- 1.8 Particularly significant in the NPPF is the Government's commitment to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth and the requirement that councils should boost significantly the supply of housing. Government

policy is to deliver 250,000 houses per annum nationally. At the same time, the NPPF also states that ‘the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment and that there should be a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment’.

### Expected growth

- 1.9 The local plan also has to take account of the physical characteristics of the district and what is expected to happen to the area’s population up to 2033. These factors are the subject of a wide range of evidence which is either already in existence, such as maps of identified floodplains, or has to be developed from sources of information, such as the forecasts of the district’s housing and employment needs. Evidence shows that to just meet the district’s own housing needs, the plan will have to deliver 21,300 new homes and 22 hectares (ha) of employment land.

### Duty to cooperate

- 1.10 Aylesbury Vale district does not exist in isolation. It has major conurbations near to it which have effects across the boundaries of the district. As there is no longer any regional or sub-regional planning, councils are under a formal duty to cooperate over strategic issues which cross their boundaries. This means the council has to engage positively with its neighbouring councils and a number of other organisations, about issues such as housing numbers and employment requirements.
- 1.11 The council is cooperating, particularly with other councils in Buckinghamshire, over what evidence their plans should be based on. This has included:
- a joint housing needs assessment
  - a joint assessment of employment land requirements
  - a joint review of the Green Belt
  - a joint report on a best-fit housing market area, and
  - an agreed methodology over the assessment of land availability.
- 1.12 Comparing the land available for development in each districts plan area against the forecast need for that development shows that the capacity for development in the areas to the south of the district does not match the need for development. This is primarily because of the constraint of the Green Belt and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.13 The councils to the south of Aylesbury Vale district have identified an estimated collective unmet need of 12,000 homes. If sufficient suitable and deliverable sites can be found to meet this need, the housing requirement for the district will total about 33,300 homes. The council will be robustly challenging the level of unmet need, but this draft local plan has to be based on this requirement as a worst case scenario.

### Housing

- 1.14 The overall strategy being adopted by this council to meet housing need is to direct sustainable levels of development to its existing settlements, through the implementation of a settlement hierarchy. As that will not deliver the amount of housing we may need, the council is considering some different approaches to meeting housing need. This includes an application for Aylesbury to be designated as a Garden Town, the inclusion of a new settlement and consideration of sites in the Green Belt. Important factors within the delivery of new housing will be to meet the needs for particular types of housing. There will need to be specific provision for affordable housing given the high cost of housing in the district and specific provision to meet specialist needs such as housing for the elderly. The council also has to meet traveller needs and the council has updated a joint survey of traveller need with the other councils in Buckinghamshire.

## Employment

- 1.15 Employment need is usually met by new allocations to satisfy the forecast requirement. However the forecast requirement for the district is 22ha whilst the council has a supply of over 70ha (not including the Arla/Woodlands part of the new Enterprise Zone). The council is therefore considering which employment sites it can reallocate to other uses including housing.

## Town centres

- 1.16 Alongside housing and employment development, retail development needs to keep pace with the growth in the population, and key retail locations such as Aylesbury's town centre need to develop to meet the needs of the expanding population. The draft plan seeks to maintain Aylesbury town centre's position and allow for organic growth to match future housing developments. With the assistance of neighbourhood plans the council will also be aiming to protect and enhance its existing town and village centres.

## Infrastructure

- 1.17 The provision of infrastructure to support the new housing is essential, such as new roads, schools, water and sewerage provision. The implications of future developments are being considered by relevant infrastructure bodies such as Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC). The implications of this work will lead to the development of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This will also be needed to support the development of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- 1.18 An essential part of the new infrastructure will be the provision of new transport infrastructure. The main focus for road improvements will be in relation to Aylesbury, to improve the circulation of traffic around the town. There will also need to be a focus on improving north / south connectivity to enable the district to function better in relation to national highway networks.
- 1.19 In the longer term, the potential provision of an A421 Expressway across the district will have the potential to provide improved east / west connections. The proposed delivery of East West Rail will also increase connectivity. It is important to mitigate the effect of new transport infrastructure, such as the proposed HS2. The council will utilise the local plan to deliver suitable mitigation.

## Evidence

- 1.20 To become an adopted local plan, the inspector who undertakes the public inquiry into the new local plan will need to be convinced that the evidence which supports it is robust. The council is therefore producing a broad range of evidence to support the plan. Some of this has already been completed, such as:
- the land availability study
  - definition of housing market areas
  - forecasts of housing and employment need
  - revisions to landscape designations
  - Green Belt assessment
  - a new settlement hierarchy, and
  - the new settlement study.
- 1.21 This still leaves a range of other evidence that will need to be finalised before submission:
- conclusions will need to be reached on the housing numbers from the other councils in Buckinghamshire and surrounding areas

- flooding and water usage have to be evaluated through a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study
- traffic modelling of impacts of the proposed development is being prepared and has partly informed this draft plan, but this will need finalisation and will need to show how impacts can be addressed
- the traveller needs assessment has reached some conclusions, but the implications of the study need to be clarified
- the potential for releasing employment land will need to be refined and published
- further assessment of land availability will need to be carried out in relation to the larger and medium villages, and
- an infrastructure delivery plan is needed and the viability of our policies will need to be assessed which will help inform the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule.

1.22 A number of other matters will also need to be updated. This will include:

- new retail evidence
- additional sites to be included in the land availability assessment, or facts about existing sites will change
- new population information that will mean that the housing and employment forecasts will need to be revised
- revisions to site suitability because of new information could lead to more sites being allocated
- further work to align plans with other local authorities to meet the duty to cooperate, and
- monitoring development activity to determine its housing land supply.

1.23 On top of this there will be new requirements which the plan will have to take into account such as the government's starter homes initiative and any other changes which come forward from the government.

### **Sustainability appraisal**

1.24 A sustainability appraisal report is required under European and government legislation, which has to assess the sustainability implications of the proposals and policies in the new local plan. The legal requirement is for a report to be prepared to accompany the pre-submission consultation version of the plan, but as it is a process which works alongside the production of a local plan, reports are generally prepared at every stage of the local plans preparation. A sustainability appraisal report has therefore been prepared to accompany this draft plan.

### **Neighbourhood plans**

1.25 When a town or parish neighbourhood plan is 'made', or put into effect, it becomes part of the overarching development plan, which is the basis for planning decisions. Neighbourhood plans have to take account of the strategic elements of the relevant local plan, but apart from that they can determine how development will take place in their area. The expectation was that they would be created where a local plan was already in place but that is not the case in many places including Aylesbury Vale district. As a result the neighbourhood plans which have been made have not been based on this draft local plan or the associated settlement hierarchy.

1.26 This has always been pointed out to those town and parish councils preparing neighbourhood plans with the warning that housing numbers would probably need to be raised to meet overall housing need in the district. As will be seen in the following pages, the overall housing need for the district and the proposed settlement hierarchy leads to different housing figures than those set out in neighbourhood plans.

- 1.27 Rather than impose sites on settlements with neighbourhood plans to meet these figures, the council will work with town and parish councils to identify sites which can be allocated through revisions to their neighbourhood plans. The council will work to identify sites it can keep in reserve in such locations, so the supply which the local plan has to identify, is set out in the plan. These will only be activated if a neighbourhood plan revision has not passed pre-submission consultation within 12 months of the local plan being adopted, which is when neighbourhood plans gain enough weight or status to be considered in planning decisions.

### **Policies map**

- 1.28 A key element of the local plan is the map which is referred to as a 'policies map'. This map identifies the areas to be allocated for development and designations which need to be taken into account in applying policies. At this stage the council is not producing an overall policies map, but is instead concentrating on area maps which show the places where the council is allocating development in this draft local plan, or other important changes such as changes to the Green Belt.
- 1.29 An overall map and detailed inset maps will be prepared to accompany the pre-submission consultation version of the local plan. In the meantime, the existing proposals map for the current draft local plan shows many of the designations which will be replicated on the new overall policies map and detailed insets. The local plan policies map will not replicate the proposals and designations from the 'made' neighbourhood plans and their maps will need to be consulted separately.

### **The next stages**

- 1.30 Following consultation on this draft plan the comments received will be taken into account, evidence and the sustainability appraisal will be finalised, and the pre-submission consultation version of the plan will be prepared for December. That version of the plan will be considered by the council so that the statutory six-week consultation can be undertaken early in the new year. The plan should then be submitted at the start of March 2017.
- 1.31 The council hopes that a public inquiry can be held on the plan soon after that with adoption of the plan taking place in mid-2017. However, the timetable after submission will be in the hands of the Government's appointed planning inspector.

## Profile of Aylesbury Vale District

- 1.32 Aylesbury Vale is a large district (900 km<sup>2</sup>) which is mainly rural in character and has a high quality environment. The main settlements in the district are Aylesbury, Buckingham, Winslow, Wendover, and Haddenham, as shown on the district key diagram. Key features about the district and which the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan needs to take into account are set out below.

### Places

- 1.33 Aylesbury is by far the largest town in the district, and is the county town of Buckinghamshire. It is a focal point for housing, employment, retail, and community services and facilities. Latest population figures (from the Office of National Statistics Census 2011) indicate that Aylesbury town has a population of about 71,500 which is just over 41% of the population of the district.
- 1.34 Buckingham is the second largest settlement, with a population of 12,000, (2011) and is located in the northern part of the district. It has a strong employment base and a wide range of other facilities serving the town and surrounding villages.
- 1.35 There are over 80 larger, medium and smaller settlements across the district, many of which are very attractive. A number of these settlements are larger, in particular Haddenham, Wendover and Winslow, and provide key local facilities and services which serve surrounding rural areas. The Settlement Hierarchy reviews these to identify the most sustainable areas for growth.
- 1.36 The northern part of the district directly adjoins Milton Keynes so there are strong linkages in terms of employment, retail and other facilities.
- 1.37 The southern part of the district contains substantial tracts of high quality landscape, including part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and is also partly within the Metropolitan Green Belt around London. The districts to the south of Aylesbury Vale have significant environmental constraints due to the AONB and green belt designations, which can affect the scale and type of development they can accommodate.

### Population

- 1.38 The total population of Aylesbury Vale was 174,100 at the 2011 census. This is an increase of 5% compared to the 2001 census.
- 1.39 The population is forecast to increase to around 214,000 by 2033.
- 1.40 The population is becoming increasingly elderly: 21% of the population were aged over 60 in 2011, compared to 17% in 2001. There was a corresponding decrease in the young working population (aged 25 to 39) from 23% of the population in 2001, to 19% in 2011.
- 1.41 The latest census show that 14.8% of the population are in ethnic groups other than white British.
- 1.42 The quality of life is generally high, as demonstrated by the Government's indices of deprivation (2015) which show that the district falls within the 14% least deprived areas in England. However, there are pockets within Aylesbury town which rank among the 26% most deprived in the South East region.
- 1.43 The life expectancy of residents has been steadily increasing, and is longer than the average for England.

## Economy and Employment

- 1.44 The latest Government figures (2014) indicate that there are 71,700 jobs in Aylesbury Vale.
- 1.45 The unemployment level (2016) amongst residents, at 3.5%, is significantly lower than the level for Great Britain as a whole (5.2%). Average earnings of residents are higher than across the South East region or Great Britain.
- 1.46 The district is influenced by a number of larger employment centres around its borders, particularly Milton Keynes to the north, Luton/Dunstable and Hemel Hempstead to the east/south east, High Wycombe to the south, and Oxford and Bicester to the west. Data from the 2011 census shows that 35,025 residents commute out of the district to work (predominantly to areas just outside the district, but also to areas further away such as London) and 19,872 residents from other districts commute into Aylesbury Vale each day.
- 1.47 As well as centres of employment in the main settlements, there are a number of other important large employment locations across the district, including part of the Silverstone motor racing circuit, Buckingham Industrial Park, Westcott Venture Park, Long Crendon Industrial Park, Haddenham Business Park and College Road North Business Park associated with the Arla development. The RAF training base at RAF Halton, near Wendover, is of significant importance to the local economy. The National Spinal Injuries Centre is located at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, and Stoke Mandeville Stadium is the national centre for wheelchair sport.
- 1.48 There are a large number of small to medium sized business enterprises thriving across the more rural parts of the district which form an important part of the overall economy.

## Homes

- 1.49 The total stock of homes was around 78,591 in March 2016. Around 86% of these homes are privately owned, and the remainder are housing association or other public-sector homes.
- 1.50 Affordability of housing is an issue, with the average house price being over ten times the average income in 2016.
- 1.51 The total number of households on the Bucks Home Choice housing register waiting for a social housing tenancy in April 2016 was over 3,000.
- 1.52 Rates of house building over recent years have remained high with an average of 1,127 dwellings built each year over the past five years. Out of this total, an average of 349 were affordable dwellings.
- 1.53 There are a considerable number of homes either under construction or with planning permission awaiting development.
- 1.54 Over the past five years, an average of 29% of new homes have been built on brownfield sites. This percentage has decreased in the past 5 years and is expected to continue to decrease in the future as the supply of available brownfield sites decreases and greenfield urban fringe sites are completed.
- 1.55 The average household size in 2011 was 2.5 people.

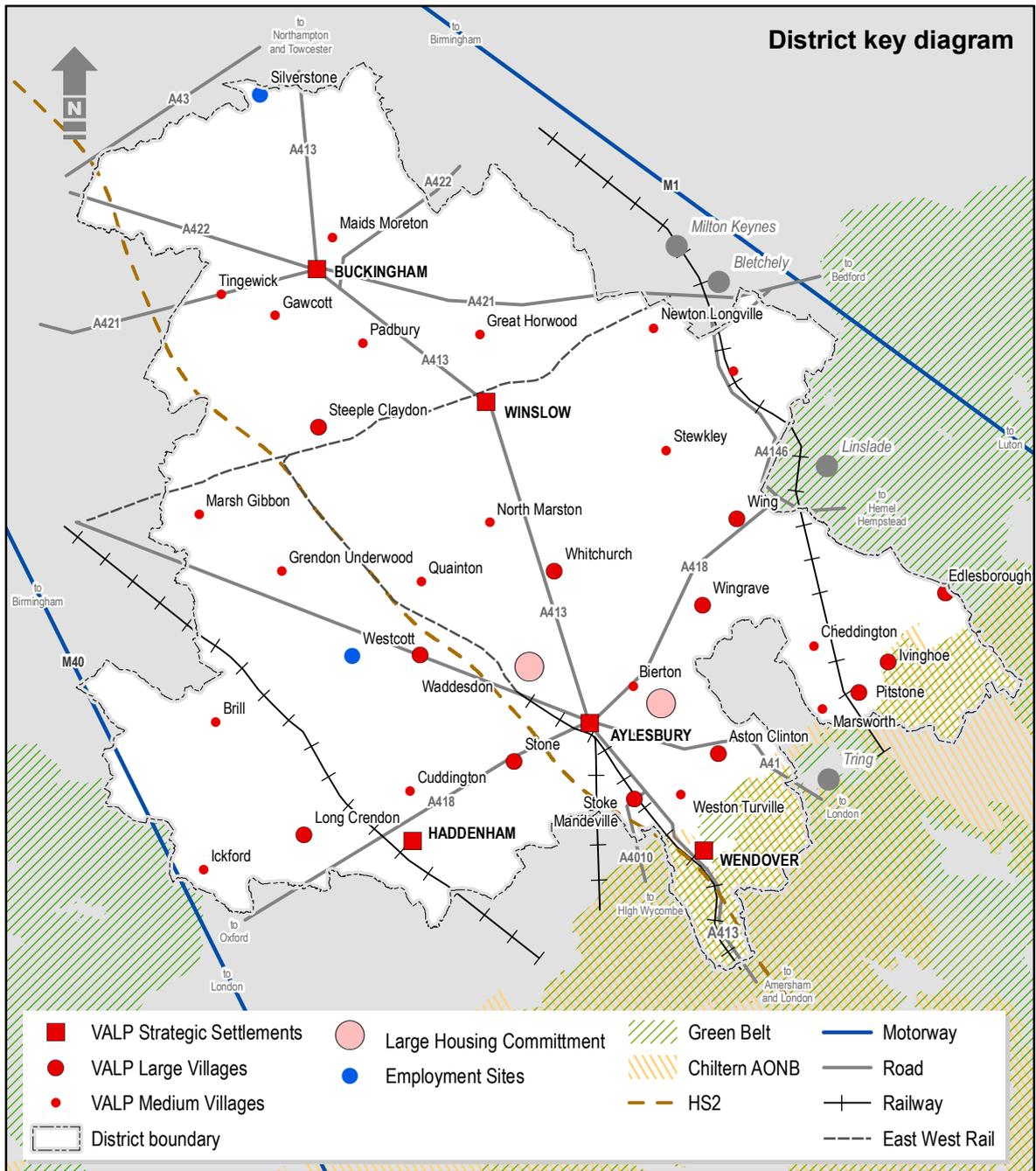
## Transport

- 1.56 Road transport links to the south of the district are reasonable, connecting to London, Heathrow and Luton airports, and access to the M40 and M25 motorways. There is poorer access to the Thames Valley area by road or public transport.

- 1.57 The northern half of the district is less well served by good road links, although places such as Silverstone and Buckingham have reasonable north bound access to the M1 and M40 motorways via the A43.
- 1.58 Parts of Aylesbury town suffer from road congestion at peak times, and three air quality management areas have been declared close to the town centre.
- 1.59 The district has rail links to London Marylebone from Aylesbury Parkway, Aylesbury, Stoke Mandeville, Haddenham & Thame Parkway, and Wendover. Services to the West Midlands are also available from Haddenham & Thame Parkway (to Birmingham Snow Hill, Bicester North and Stratford upon Avon). Cheddington is on a different line and enjoys a faster service to London Euston and Milton Keynes Central.
- 1.60 The Government, in 2012, made commitment to the East-West Rail line to address the current connectivity issues to the east and west by rail. When open, this will connect Aylesbury and Winslow by rail to Milton Keynes and Oxford/Bicester.
- 1.61 Express bus services operate between Aylesbury and Milton Keynes and between Cambridge and Oxford via Buckingham.

### **Natural and Built Environment**

- 1.62 The district contains a wealth of historic houses and key historic landscapes, such as Waddesdon Manor, Claydon House, and Stowe landscape gardens. There are 124 existing conservation areas which protect areas of architectural or historic interest, many of them located in attractive, locally distinctive villages.
- 1.63 Over 1,200 hectares are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, which is indicative of their importance for biodiversity or geology. In addition, there are a wealth of nature reserves and high quality open spaces valued for their landscape, nature, or recreational interest.
- 1.64 The district is at the head of two major river catchment systems: the Great Ouse in the north, which flows through Buckingham, and the Thame in the south, which is a tributary of the River Thames. The Grand Union Canal and its arms to Wendover and Aylesbury, provide local interest, character, leisure opportunities, and habitat diversity. Most areas in the district are in flood zone 1 (areas of lowest flood risk).
- 1.65 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per head increased slightly from 2011 to 2012, but have dropped since 2005. The figure, at 6.2 tonnes per person per year, is less than the average for the UK as a whole (7.1 tonnes per person per year).



## 2 Vision & Strategic Objectives

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## A Vision for Aylesbury Vale to 2033

- 2.1 The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) is the cornerstone of planning for the whole district and is critical to delivering national, community and corporate objectives and aspirations. It sets the ambition and direction for the district as a whole, which all relevant strategies and delivery plans of the council and its delivery partners should support. This includes proposals by development partners and in neighbourhood policy documents that may emerge. It needs to reflect the council's overall vision which is:

*To secure the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the people and businesses in the area*

- 2.2 The vision for Aylesbury Vale is also based on the characteristics of the area and the key issues and challenges being faced. It has been informed by the evidence base for the plan, sustainability considerations, the views of the community and encompasses the approaches set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.3 The vision for the plan, together with the ensuing objectives, will guide and drive the delivery of all elements of the VALP. The vision and objectives also form a key element in judging compliance of neighbourhood planning documents and development proposals as they come forward.

### Spatial vision

**By 2033 Aylesbury Vale will have seen an appropriate amount and distribution of sustainable growth, which will contribute to creating a thriving, diverse, safe, vibrant place to live, work and visit, and where all residents enjoy a high quality of life.**

- 2.4 For this to happen:
- a. Growth will be shaped by strong place-shaping and sustainability principles to create well-designed developments that are sensitive to the district's local character and are well integrated with existing communities, both in terms of scale and design, people will have a sense of pride in their communities, wherever they live in the district. Environmental, heritage and cultural assets will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. The Green Belt will be strongly defined and protected from inappropriate development.
  - b. New housing will have been provided in sustainable locations and at a high standard of design to meet housing needs in the area. This will include the delivery of affordable housing and housing to meet the needs of older people, as well as housing to meet those with specialist needs. The needs of the traveller community will have been met by the provision of suitable sites. Unmet housing need from other areas will have been met where it was reasonable and sustainable to do so.
  - c. Existing commitments will provide a diverse and flexible range of business premises and opportunities for new and existing businesses. The main town centres in Aylesbury and Buckingham will be enhanced to deliver retailing, services, and other activities that their communities need. This will create more jobs and high quality facilities, letting residents and visitors find work, shop, and spend their leisure time in the local area.
  - d. Growth will be accompanied by the delivery of infrastructure, services, and facilities in the right places and at the right time, to bring maximum benefits to new and existing communities. This includes improving transport (to encourage sustainable transport choices), education, health, green infrastructure, community facilities, leisure facilities, communications technology, water and air quality and flood protection measures. Improved links to London and the Thames Valley area, including Oxford and Milton Keynes (via East West Rail), will help to ensure that local businesses in the district

continue to thrive and grow. The environmental impact of infrastructure improvements, such as HS2, will have been suitably mitigated.

- e. Growth and regeneration will result in the difference in opportunities between the wealthier and the less well-off being narrowed, with increased opportunities for all residents to participate in local community events celebrating their history, identity and diversity.
- f. Growth will allow people in the district to have access to excellent education and training, both academically and vocationally, with opportunities for life-long learning accessible to all.
- g. Aylesbury will have grown significantly and will:
  1. be an inclusive, innovative and forward-looking garden town that meets the needs and aspirations of the existing population, new residents and visitors
  2. be a recognised centre for investment and growth providing new housing and opportunities for all
  3. be a key hub for public transport and interchange offering a diverse choice of travel modes with stronger public transport links to Milton Keynes, Oxford and the Thames Valley, meaning that Aylesbury is an integral part of the national rail network rather than the end of the line
  4. have had significant transport improvements across the town with new link roads connecting the existing highway network to provide alternative routes to the town centre and around the town
  5. have a comprehensive quality cycling and walking network completed within the town and extending to the expanded town and surrounding villages
  6. have seen the regeneration of previously-developed sites, and development of well-designed, connected, healthy, safe and integrated greenfield urban fringe sites. These will help deliver identified strategic infrastructure, without compromising the character of surrounding villages or community cohesion.
  7. have increased the range and quality of services, homes, retail and leisure facilities in Aylesbury town centre by designing and building to high standards. This will bring a renaissance to the town that protects and promotes its historic core, whilst adapting to the changing role of town centres. The centre will be vibrant and energetic with plenty for all to do and enjoy throughout the day and into the evening, serving both the urban and rural populations.
  8. have an accessible, sustainable and well-managed network of green infrastructure. This will include improved linkages from the town into the surrounding countryside along the Aylesbury Canal corridor and other routes, as well as protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the area and supporting a range of recreational activities.
  9. be increasingly seen as a tourist destination and used as a base to explore local tourism attractions such as Waddesdon Manor, Hartwell House, Wendover Woods, the Chilterns AONB and other tranquil and attractive areas, and.
  10. have enhanced its role and reputation as a centre for education, diversity and excellence.
- h. Buckingham, led by neighbourhood planning, will have grown and will:
  1. be an inclusive, innovative and forward-looking market town that meets the needs and aspirations of existing and new residents and visitors
  2. be a recognised centre for investment and growth providing new housing and opportunities for all
  3. have seen sustainable regeneration of previously-developed sites and integrated extensions to the town on greenfield urban fringe sites

4. be a hub of higher education and skills through growth and enhancement of the University of Buckingham and other facilities which support job training and skills
  5. have enhanced the town centre creating a vibrant and energetic place with plenty for all to do and enjoy throughout the day and into the evening, serving both the town and rural population, and
  6. have benefitted from further investment in transport infrastructure with a active links to the new station at Winslow as part of East West Rail.
- i. A new settlement, (the first in Buckinghamshire since Milton Keynes in the 1960's), will be under development, creating a new community which will be appropriately located and supported by a range of facilities. New infrastructure and employment opportunities will be in place to allow the residents of this new community to live, work and recreate in and around the new settlement.
  - j. The rural areas will have accommodated proportionate growth, focussed at Winslow, Haddenham, Wendover and larger sustainable villages, and:
    1. will remain predominantly rural in character, enjoying high-quality landscapes with heritage, cultural and biodiversity assets protected and where possible enhanced
    2. the economy will have seen continuing economic growth including a mix of strategic sites, expansion of existing sites and local small-scale development, which will be supported by improved communications infrastructure
    3. transport links will have been improved by the provision of a new station at Winslow on the East West Rail line that will have restored to the northern and central district a local and convenient access to the national rail network, absent since the mid 1960's.
    4. growth will have been proportionate and reflect community aspirations in terms of scale, phasing, type and design of growth. Further details will come through neighbourhood plans in most cases.
    5. development will reflect the character of the local circumstances in which growth is delivered.
    6. growth will protect high-quality agricultural land.
    7. will have a well-managed network of green infrastructure which protects and enhances the biodiversity of the area and supports a range of recreational activities, and will have local services which support sustainable communities, including shops and pubs.

## Strategic Objectives

2.5 The objectives flowing from the vision set out above represent the key delivery outcomes the VALP should achieve.

2.6 In order to accommodate growth and deliver development in accordance with the vision:

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>
<p>1. Provision will be made for balanced sustainable growth which will deliver new housing and jobs to meet the needs of new and existing residents through a flexible and pro-active approach to promoting sustainable development which includes a combination of new allocations, protection of existing sites and a more intensive use or conversion of existing sites.</p>
<p>2. Provision will be made for the housing needs of the new and existing population, including unmet needs from elsewhere if reasonable and sustainable, as identified through the VALP and in future revisions of the Local Plan, which will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. affordable housing to meet identified needs</li> <li>2. a mix of house sizes and types to meet identified needs</li> <li>3. specific accommodation to meet the needs of an ageing population and those with special housing needs, and</li> <li>4. phasing to ensure needs are being met throughout the planned period.</li> </ol>
<p>3. The council, working with its partners, will secure timely and well-located provision of the infrastructure, services and facilities needed to sustain and enhance existing and new communities including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. education, training and community facilities</li> <li>2. transport infrastructure including enhanced public transport, (both rail and bus), traffic management, cycling and walking to promote a shift to more sustainable choices.</li> <li>3. telecommunications including broadband by all means possible, including provision along HS2 route to reach remote areas</li> <li>4. police, fire and ambulance services</li> <li>5. accessible green infrastructure and associated sport, recreational and cultural facilities</li> <li>6. utilities, and</li> <li>7. social care and health infrastructure.</li> </ol>
<p>4. Development will be distributed across Aylesbury Vale. This will include locating the majority of development at the most sustainable locations at Aylesbury, Buckingham, Haddenham, Winslow and Wendover, together with an appropriate level of development at the most sustainable settlements in the rural areas and a sustainably located new settlement.</p>
<p>5. The council will promote enhancement of the district's towns, local centres and village facilities. The focus will be on quality design and development, flexibility of uses, and protection of local services and local distinctiveness to support their vitality and viability.</p>

6. The council will manage development in a way that ensures the protection and enhancement of the district's built, natural and historic environment, as well as its landscape and biodiversity. Planning positively for biodiversity and green infrastructure, minimise development on high-quality agricultural land, and require high-quality design and building at appropriate densities.

7. The council will manage development in a way that ensures that climate change is adapted to and mitigated against, including:

1. no built development to take place in the functional floodplain other than for essential strategic infrastructure
2. effective flood protection including more effective use of multi-functional green spaces which can assist in flood control, as well as supporting other environmental and social benefits
3. reduction in waste generation and increase in recycling and re-use of materials
4. making appropriate provision for the generation and use of renewable or low-carbon energy, and locally distributed energy, and
5. building to high standards of sustainable construction and design.

8. The council will promote provision of, and support for, measures and initiatives that strengthen the quality of life for new and existing residents of the district and address pockets of deprivation and health inequalities especially within Aylesbury town.

# 3 Strategic

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## Sustainable development of Aylesbury Vale

### Sustainable development at the heart of decision making

- 3.1 This section sets out the overall strategy for sustainable development, the identified growth requirements, and how this growth will be delivered spatially in Aylesbury Vale.
- 3.2 The principles of sustainable development are central to the planning system, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 11-16. All development has to fit with the NPPF and the central presumption in favour of sustainable development. The framework recognises that sustainable development is about change for the better and it defines sustainable as 'meeting needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'
- 3.3 Sustainable development is about positive growth making economic, environmental and social progress for current and future generations. To achieve this, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly as they are mutually dependent.
- 3.4 In line with this, the council has adopted a positive approach to development and the VALP provides a clear framework of policies to guide development that creates positive and sustainable growth. Policy S1 therefore seeks to ensure that all development is sustainable and follows the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This policy will be at the heart of decision making when assessing planning applications.

### S1 Sustainable development for Aylesbury Vale

All development must comply with the principles of sustainable development set out in the NPPF. In the local context of Aylesbury Vale this means that development proposals and neighbourhood planning documents should:

Contribute positively to meeting the vision and strategic objectives for the district set out above, and fit with the intentions and policies of the VALP (and policies within neighbourhood plans where relevant). Proposals that are in accordance with the development plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The council will work proactively with applicants to find solutions so that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

- a. Where there are no policies relevant to the application then the council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:
  - Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole, or
  - Specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted.

In assessing the most sustainable locations priority will be given to:

- b. Providing a mix of uses, especially employment, to facilitate flexible working practices so minimising the need to travel.
- c. Delivering strategic infrastructure and other community needs to both new and existing communities.
- d. Giving priority to the reuse of vacant or underused, tired brownfield land.
- e. Minimising impacts on local communities.
- f. Building integrated communities with existing populations.
- g. Minimising impacts on heritage assets, sensitive landscapes and biodiversity.

- h. Providing high-quality accessibility especially for public transport, walking and cycling.
- i. Providing access to facilities including healthcare, education, employment, retail and community facilities.
- j. Meeting the effects of climate change and flooding.

## Sustainable strategy for growth and its distribution

- 3.5 The development strategy seeks to deliver the Local Plan's vision and objectives to meet the wider needs of places and communities within the district.
- 3.6 The Local Plan strategy and its vision, objectives and policies have been shaped by a number of factors including:
- The identification of the strategic housing market area and functional economic market area within which Aylesbury Vale sits.
  - The identification of employment, housing and retail needs for the district.
  - Infrastructure capacity and constraints, in particular wastewater, roads and transport.
  - Environmental constraints – to avoid flood risk areas, protecting environmental assets, landscape quality, contaminated land and pollution, the historic environment and settlement character.
  - The availability of potential housing sites and their deliverability and phasing.
  - Public consultation and the sustainability appraisals of options and policies.

## Housing & economic needs

- 3.7 The NPPF requires local planning authorities to:
- 'Ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively-assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area' and 'identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period which meets household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change'. Paragraphs 47 and 159
- 3.8 The NPPF also identifies that:
- 'Local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of business needs within the economic markets operating in and across their area' and establish 'a robust evidence base to understand both existing business needs and likely changes in the market.' Paragraph 160.
- 3.9 In accordance with requirements set out in the NPPF the council, alongside other Buckinghamshire authorities, commissioned a series of reports to identify the Buckinghamshire housing market and functional economic areas, as well as a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA).
- 3.10 The reports produced by ORS, identify that Aylesbury Vale sits within a best-fit housing market area that includes High Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks. There was a recognition that Aylesbury town sat within its own area but within a wider strategic housing market area. Aylesbury Vale also has links with housing markets in neighbouring areas, such as Milton Keynes, though these are not considered to be as strong.
- 3.11 For the VALP to be considered sound in terms of housing provision, it was necessary to identify the full, objectively-assessed needs for the whole housing market area. The Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)<sup>1</sup> is the most up-to-date assessment of local housing needs, which identifies the needs for new jobs and homes up to 2033. The HEDNA starts by considering the government's population projections and determining whether they need to be varied to reflect local circumstances. Following uplifts, the number of new houses required across the housing market area is

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<sup>1</sup> The full report including executive summary is available to download [http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page\\_downloads/Buckinghamshire%20HEDNA%20FINAL.PDF](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page_downloads/Buckinghamshire%20HEDNA%20FINAL.PDF)

50,000, with 21,300 required in Aylesbury Vale. Although other councils have not yet completed their capacity assessments, there is likely to be an element of unmet needs required to be met by Aylesbury Vale. At present we are estimating a figure of 12,000 to meet unmet needs from Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks. Further capacity work within the housing market area may mean that this will change, so a definitive housing number cannot yet be established.

- 3.12 The HEDNA also considered the level of employment land for offices, manufacturing and warehousing that should be provided for in the VALP. This has involved evaluating two employment forecasts and determining which of them is the most appropriate for the economic area. Based on this, the identified need is for 22 hectares of new employment land in Aylesbury Vale. This has led to a review of the 73 hectares of employment land identified as employment commitments. Retaining the current level of allocated employment may mean a need for further housing provision.
- 3.13 Policy S2 sets out the magnitude of growth and the spatial strategy for the district. AVDC is working actively to meet the government's objective of significantly boosting supply and increasing the affordability of new housing. The spatial strategy and policy S2 meets the existing and future housing needs of people in the district, whilst also meeting some unmet needs originating from neighbouring authorities.
- 3.14 The VALP seeks to ensure that development is located in the most sustainable locations as set out in Policy S1.
- 3.15 The VALP focuses the majority of growth in Aylesbury Buckingham, Winslow, Wendover and Haddenham. Development at these strategic settlements will maintain and enhance their respective roles in the Vale's settlement hierarchy (Policy S3), minimising the need to travel, and optimising sustainable modes of travel. It will also help to deliver facilities and services needed and enable an integrated and balanced approach to the provision of homes, jobs and leisure. The strategy also identifies the provision of a new settlement and allocations on sites adjacent to Milton Keynes.
- 3.16 Further growth is also identified at the larger, medium and smaller villages. This will allow these settlements to have growth to sustain their communities and meet their local needs for housing, employment and community facilities.

## S2 Spatial strategy for growth

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan will make provision for the delivery of the following in the period to 2033:

- A total of 33,300 (this is subject to a decision on unmet needs) homes to be provided in accordance with the spatial distribution set out below and in Table 1.
- Provision of 22 hectares of employment land.
- Retail provision for convenience floor space of 2,674 sq. m. and comparison floor space of 16,048 sq. m.

The primary focus of strategic levels of growth and investment will be at Aylesbury, and development at Buckingham, Winslow, Wendover and Haddenham supported by growth at other larger, medium and smaller villages and where appropriate development will be supported by neighbourhood plans. The strategy also allocates growth at a new settlement and on sites adjacent to Milton Keynes. The spatial distribution will be as follows:

Strategic growth and investment will be concentrated in sustainable locations at:

- a. The Aylesbury Garden Town, comprising Aylesbury town and adjacent parts of surrounding parishes, will grow by 50%. Growth will seek to support the revitalisation of the town

centre. New housing will be delivered through existing commitments, including the Aylesbury East Major Development Area, and complemented by other sustainable extensions. New homes to support economic growth will be accommodated through the effective use of brownfield sites or sustainable greenfield urban fringe sites. The locations of these sites will provide or support delivery of identified strategic infrastructure requirements, and sustainable transport enhancements and make connections to strategic green infrastructure and the Vale's enterprise zones.

- b. Buckingham will accommodate housing growth of 50%, growth will enhance the town centre and its function as a market town, provision of new homes will support sustainable economic growth in the north of the district.
- c. Haddenham will accommodate housing growth of 50%, new homes will be supported by infrastructure and recognise the important role of Haddenham and Thame railway station.
- d. Winslow will accommodate housing growth of 50%, linked with the development of East-West Rail and the new railway station in Winslow.
- e. Wendover will accommodate more limited housing growth of 25% reflecting the environmental constraints of the surrounding AONB and green belt land but recognising the sustainability of Wendover and the railway station.
- f. Provision will also be made of a new settlement delivering 4,500 homes. A new community will be created with new employment opportunities and access to sustainable transport. The location of this is yet to be determined. Policy D2 sets out further details and the options being considered.
- g. Sites adjacent to Milton Keynes, within Aylesbury Vale will make provision for 4,274 homes. Policy D3 sets out further details and potential allocations.
- h. At larger villages, listed in Policy S3, housing growth of 22% will be at a scale in keeping with the local character. This will help meet identified needs for investment in housing and improve the range and type of employment opportunities across the district.
- i. At medium villages, listed in Policy S3, there will be housing growth of 19% at a scale in keeping with the local character and setting. This growth will be encouraged to help meet local housing and employment needs and to support the provision of services to the wider area.
- j. At smaller villages, listed in Policy S3, there will be more limited housing growth of 5% at a scale proportionate to the settlement.
- k. Elsewhere in rural areas, housing development will be further limited, this is likely be incremental infill development and should be principally in line with Policy D8, and other relevant policies in the Plan.

Development that does not fit with the scale, distribution or requirements of this policy will not be permitted unless brought forward through neighbourhood planning.

**Table 1 Spatial strategy for growth in Aylesbury Vale**

Category	Settlement	Percentage increase (on existing housing stock)	Housing requirement	Residual requirement (minus commitments and completions)	Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)	Total left to identify
Strategic settlements	Aylesbury	50%	14,113 <sup>2</sup>	6,489 <sup>3</sup>	6,896	0
	Buckingham	50%	2,612	598	1,212	0
	Haddenham	50%	1,059	605	599	0
	Wendover	25%	861	749	0	749
	Winslow	50%	1,072	441	585	0
	New settlement	-	4,500	-	-	(4,500)
	Sites adjacent to Milton Keynes	-	4,274	4,135	4,135	0
Larger villages	-	22%	2,211	1,199	1,698	<i>Will vary according to location</i>
Medium villages	-	19%	1,478	1,166	805	<i>Will vary according to location</i>
Smaller villages	-	5%	447	161	295	<i>Will vary according to location</i>
Windfall	-	-	714	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	33,344 <sup>4</sup>	15,543	<b>16,225</b>	

<sup>2</sup> Includes requirements for Stoke Mandeville, Bierton and Weston Turville as these settlements do not have their own housing requirement due to their proximity to Aylesbury

<sup>3</sup> Includes residual requirements for Stoke Mandeville, Bierton and Weston Turville as above

<sup>4</sup> This excludes 159 completions in 'Other Settlements' in years 2013-16. It also excludes commitments at these settlements too. This is discussed further in Policy D8.

## 5 year housing land supply

- 3.17 Despite the total allocations delivering the required housing supply the delivery rate per annum is much higher than achieved even in recent years. This means it will be very difficult to demonstrate the required five year housing land supply required in the local plan if the delivery rate is so high. This is because a large portion of the supply is made up of large sites which will not deliver early in the plan period. This would mean that the council would only be able to demonstrate 3.9 years supply.
- 3.18 As part of duty to cooperate discussions with its partners the council has been discussing options to address this situation. On the basis of external advice the council is suggesting that the delivery rate in the first five years should be reduced to a level which delivers a five year supply for the first five years of the plan whilst the delivery in the remaining years of the plan should be increased to ensure that the required total is reached. This higher level of delivery is considered to be achievable if a new settlement is being brought forward. A delivery rate of 1,623 dwellings per annum in the first five years will be balanced by a delivery rate of 1,859 dwellings per annum in the remaining 13 years of the plan.

## Calculating projected supply from windfall sites

- 3.19 Housing supply will also come forward through windfall sites<sup>5</sup>. The NPPF allows for a windfall allowance if there is “compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply” (para 48). Any allowance must be realistic and should not include residential garden land. It is anticipated that additional small and large windfall sites will continue to come forward (as have done historically) and contribute towards meeting the additional housing requirement to be planned for in the future.
- 3.20 Based on the NPPF requirements, the Council has put together evidence for windfall projections for sites of 4 or less which has been accepted by Inspectors<sup>6</sup>. This evidence has taken into account historic delivery rates and expected future trends and does not include residential gardens in accordance with the NPPF definition. Aylesbury Vale is a large rural district and therefore the majority of windfall sites are greenfield.
- 3.21 Windfall projections are based on the average dwelling completions for small sites (4 or less) over the last ten years (2005 – 2015) (the windfall allowance is based on completions, therefore a non-implementation allowance is not needed). There has been a consistent and reliable supply of windfall sites as follows :

**Table 2 Past windfall completion rates on sites less than 5**

	Completions on Small Windfall Sites (=< 5 Dwellings) Net (excluding residential gardens)
Strategic Settlements	187
Larger villages	105
Medium villages	152
Smaller villages	224
Other settlements	65

<sup>5</sup> Defined in NPPF as sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

<sup>6</sup> APP/J0450/A/14/2213924 paragraph 166 and APP/J0405/A/13/2210864 paragraph 66

- 3.22 The average number of homes delivered on windfall sites over the last ten years (1st April 2005 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015) is 73 per annum. However as smaller villages will not have allocations made through VALP, a windfall allowance should not be included for them as it would lead to double counting with the requirement. Therefore excluding this category the average number from windfalls under 5 over the last ten years is 51 per annum.
- 3.23 The windfall allowance is not applied to the next three years as sites under 5 are coming forward in this time period are likely to already have planning permission and therefore are countered as commitments. This gives a total windfall allowance of 714 dwellings for the last 14 years of the plan period, 2019-2033.

## Settlement hierarchy and cohesive development

- 3.24 The strategy for development generally reflects the size and character of different settlements and seeks to deliver a sustainable level of development that will support their different roles and functions. In order to ensure that new development takes place in locations that have the best access to a wide range of services, facilities and employment opportunities, the council has developed a settlement hierarchy which ranks all settlements (with a population of over 100), in order of their sustainability. The settlement hierarchy forms the basis for the distribution of growth outlined in the strategy. It may also assist providers of community facilities and services in their investment decisions.
- 3.25 The settlement hierarchy is based on an assessment of population size, settlement connectivity, and the availability of employment and other services and facilities. The draft settlement hierarchy was consulted on as part of the previous Issues and Options stage in 2015, and a number of changes have been made to the conclusions as a result of comments received. A report has been produced setting out how the settlement hierarchy was established<sup>7</sup> and comments on this are invited again at this stage. The proposed settlement hierarchy is set out in the table below, along with the amount of housing proposed at each settlement:

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<sup>7</sup> Draft Settlement Hierarchy for the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan to accompany draft plan consultation July 2016

**Table 3 Proposed Settlement Hierarchy and housing development**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Settlements</b>	<b>Amount of housing development<sup>8</sup></b>
Strategic settlements	The most sustainable towns and villages in the district and the focus for the majority of development. These settlements act as service centres for other villages around them. The plan will allocate sites at strategic settlements	Aylesbury Buckingham Haddenham Wendover Winslow	14,113 <sup>9</sup> 2,612 1,059 861 1,072 (TOTAL 19,717)
New settlement	A sustainable new settlement making provision for new homes, employment, services and infrastructure.	Location to be determined	4,500 (TOTAL 4,500)
Sites adjacent to Milton Keynes	Allocation of sites adjoining Milton Keynes that fall within Aylesbury Vale district.	Sites within the parishes of Whaddon, Stoke Hammond and Newton Longville.	4,274
Larger villages	Larger, more sustainable villages that have at least reasonable access to facilities and services and public transport, making them sustainable locations for development. The plan will allocate sites at larger villages.	Aston Clinton Edlesborough Ivinghoe Long Crendon Pitstone Steeple Claydon Stoke Mandeville Stone (including Hartwell) Waddesdon (including Fleet Marston) Whitchurch Wing Wingrave	345 169 87 236 292 208 0* 206 187 84 263 134 (TOTAL 2,211)

<sup>8</sup> Based on a percentage increase on housing stock as set out in policy S2

<sup>9</sup> This includes requirements for Stoke Mandeville (178), Bierton (132), and Weston Turville (240), these are added to Aylesbury's requirement and no further sites will be allocated at these settlements.

\* The requirement for this settlement is included within the Aylesbury requirement. See footnote 9.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Settlements</b>	<b>Amount of housing development<sup>8</sup></b>
Medium villages	Medium villages have some provision key services and facilities, making them moderately sustainable locations for development. The plan will allocate sites at medium villages	Berton (including Broughton) Brill Cheddington Cuddington Gawcott Great Horwood Grendon Underwood Ickford Maids Moreton Marsh Gibbon Marsworth Newton Longville North Marston Padbury Quainton Stewkley Stoke Hammond Tingewick Weston Turville	0* 102 141 50 66 81 84 55 74 83 58 155 56 63 104 144 71 91 0* (TOTAL 1,478)
Smaller villages	Smaller, less sustainable villages which have relatively poor access to services and facilities. It is expected that small scale development could be accommodated at smaller villages without causing environmental harm. This level of development is also likely to help maintain existing communities. The plan will identify how the housing requirement will be delivered at smaller villages, either through neighbourhood plans or at the next stage of the local plan, but does not make allocations at this stage	Adstock Akeley Ashendon Aston Abbots Beachampton Bishopstone Buckland Calvert Green Chackmore Charndon Chearsley Chilton Cublington	9 11 5 9 3 6 15 19 4 6 12 6 7

Category	Description	Settlements	Amount of housing development <sup>8</sup>
		Dagnall	11
		Dinton	18
		Drayton Parslow	12
		East Claydon	7
		Ford	4
		Granborough	12
		Great Brickhill	17
		Halton	17
		Hardwick	6
		Ivinghoe Aston	5
		Little Horwood	10
		Ludgershall	9
		Mentmore and Ledburn	9
		Mursley	14
		Nash	8
		Northall	9
		Oakley	22
		Oving (including Pitchcott)	9
		Preston Bissett	6
		Shabbington	10
		Slapton	12
		Soulbury	16
		Stowe and Dadford	8
		Swanbourne	9
		Thornborough	12
		Turweston	5
		Twyford	11
		Weedon	8
		Westbury	9
		Westcott	9
		Whaddon	10
		Worminghall	11
			(TOTAL 447)

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Settlements</b>	<b>Amount of housing development<sup>8</sup></b>
Other settlements (with a population of over 100)	The remainder of settlements in the district which are not sustainable locations for development and are places where it is likely that any development would cause harm to the local environment. Some very limited development could take place in accordance with the policies in this plan, but no allocations for housing will be made	All remaining settlements with a population of over 100 (listed in the Settlement Hierarchy document)	The local plan will not allocate housing development at other settlements; any development proposed would be considered against the relevant policies in this plan as part of the development management process
All other settlements	All other settlements are considered too small to be suitable for any further development		Not a sustainable location for any further development

- 3.26 Specific policies for each of the settlement hierarchy categories are set out in the Strategic Delivery Section (policies D1 - D8):
- 3.27 The council will seek to preserve the character and identities of neighbouring settlements or communities. The council will resist development that would compromise the open character of the countryside between settlements, especially where the gaps between them are already small.
- 3.28 It is acknowledged that in some cases, whilst neighbouring communities may still have separate characters or identities, the built-up areas of those settlements are already linked in part. The council will resist further development that would result in the consolidation of such linkage that threatens what remains of the separate character or identity of the settlement or communities.
- 3.29 In addition to the general control of coalescence<sup>10</sup>, There is a need for more specific protection in locations that are, or will be experiencing, the strongest pressures for development.

### **S3 Settlement hierarchy and cohesive development**

The Settlement Hierarchy set out in the table above guides the principles for sustainable growth across the district. Allocations will be made in accordance with the above hierarchy and allocation policies D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8.

Other than for specific proposals and land allocations in the Local Plan, new development in the open countryside should be avoided, especially where it would:

- a. compromise the open character of the countryside between settlements, and
- b. result in a negative impact on the identities of neighbouring settlements or communities resulting in their coalescence<sup>6</sup>.

In considering applications for building in the countryside the council will have regard to maintaining the individual identity of villages and avoiding extensions to built-up areas that might lead to coalescence between settlements.

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<sup>10</sup> Coalescence is the merging or coming together of separate settlements to form a single entity

## Green Belt

- 3.30 A relatively small part of the London Metropolitan Green Belt falls within the district, as shown on the proposals map. The Green Belt in Buckinghamshire was originally designated in 1954 through the Buckinghamshire County Development Plan. It has since been expanded and in 1979 was extended to include the approximately 48 square kilometres of Green Belt land that is now in the district. The northern boundary of the Green Belt was broadly established in line with the Chiltern escarpment excluding the settlement of Wendover.
- 3.31 The purposes of the Green Belt are to restrain the outward sprawl of London, to prevent the merging of towns, and so safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, checking unrestricted sprawl and assisting in urban regeneration. The Green Belt partly surrounds the strategic settlement of Wendover and small parts of the villages of Aston Clinton and Ivinghoe. The villages of Halton and Dagnall are washed over by the Green Belt. To the south of the district the Green Belt joins the Green Belt within Wycombe, Chiltern and Dacorum. To the east the district borders the Green Belt in Central Bedfordshire although this does not cross into the District. The Green Belt in these areas has helped shape the towns and villages.
- 3.32 Nationally, the government places great importance to the Green Belt which has a range of important functions. The most important attributes of green belts are their 'openness' and 'permanence' and their general extent should only be altered in exceptional circumstances and when a Local Plan is being prepared or reviewed.
- 3.33 A green belt assessment has been undertaken jointly by the Buckinghamshire authorities. This is in the context of a significant level of need being identified across the Housing Market Area (HMA) which as a whole contains a large amount of land within the Green Belt (88% of Chiltern District, 87% of South Bucks District and 48% of Wycombe District is within the Green Belt). The housing requirements for Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe District Council cannot be met on the land outside of the Green Belt within in their district boundaries leaving a large unmet need requirement. Therefore exceptional circumstances are considered to exist to justify removing specific sites from the Green Belt to help meet need closest to where it arises.
- 3.34 Part 1 of the assessment (published in March 2016) identified parcels of land covering all of the Green Belt within Buckinghamshire as well as some adjoining land and assessed these against the purposes of the Green Belt as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The assessment concluded that all areas of the Green Belt met the NPPF purposes to some extent, but identified parcels across all four districts that performed weaker or had areas within them which were likely to perform weaker if assessed on their own.
- 3.35 Part 2 of the assessment (published in June 2016) gave further consideration to the areas of land identified in Part 1. They were assessed for the suitability of development, whether there were exceptional circumstances for removing sites from the Green Belt, and whether further land should be designated as Green Belt.
- 3.36 Following this assessment, the council proposes a potential revision to the boundary of the Green Belt to the north of Wendover to allow for new development to meet the housing requirement. Wendover is the third largest town in the district and contains a relatively wide range of services. It is however very constrained with the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Green Belt largely surrounding it. While development within the built up limit of Wendover will be prioritised without any release from the Green Belt, the latest version of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) May 2016 identified a maximum capacity of only 36 dwellings. Yet, as well as being one of the most sustainable places in the district it is also well placed in the

south of district in relation to where the unmet needs are arising. The removal of land from the Green Belt to the north of Wendover will provide for approximately an additional 800 dwellings.

- 3.37 The council also proposes to remove part of RAF Halton as it is built up and has an urbanising effect within the Green Belt. The identified part of the RAF site has limited value in terms of the role and function of the Green Belt.
- 3.38 As well as these removals of land from the Green Belt, there is an area of land to the west of Leighton Linlade that is proposed for inclusion. This will help to balance the loss of the Green Belt land in other areas (including land removed from the Green Belt around Leighton Buzzard) and will provide a more recognisable boundary than what currently is used.
- 3.39 The reasons listed above for the RAF site and the shortage of land for housing around the strategic settlement of Wendover potentially represent exceptional circumstances which justify the release of the sites from the Green Belt. Whether the release of land to the north of Wendover for housing can be justified will depend on the final housing requirement and whether there is alternative capacity elsewhere. It may be that the site becomes a reserve site even if it is not allocated in this plan.
- 3.40 The new Green Belt boundaries are defined on the Policies Maps. The remaining Green Belt within the district will be protected for the long term, and opportunities which enhance the Green Belt particularly in terms of public accessibility will be supported.
- 3.41 Housing may come forward within the Green Belt through the conversion of existing buildings, the reuse of previously developed sites or through limited infilling within villages, where the openness of the Green Belt is maintained. The replacement of existing buildings and extensions will also be supported, when working out volume increase calculations the term 'original building' means the house as it was first built or stood on 1 July 1948 (if it was built before that date) excluding sheds and outbuildings.

## S4 Green Belt

The revised Green Belt boundary is shown on the Proposals Map. The council will apply national green belt policy to prevent the merging of settlements, check unrestricted urban sprawl, safeguard the countryside from encroachment, preserve the setting and special character of historic towns and to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the re-uses of derelict and other urban land.

Within the Green Belt, land will be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with national policy. Small scale development as set out below will be supported providing that their provision preserves the openness of the Green Belt, and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it:

- a. for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation or cemeteries
- b. if within the existing built-up area of settlements within the Green Belt, residential infilling of small gaps in developed frontages with one or two dwellings will be permitted if it is in keeping with the scale and spacing of nearby dwellings and the character of the surroundings
- c. for the re-use of buildings of permanent and substantial construction where there is no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the form, bulk and design of any conversion is in keeping with the surroundings and does not involve major or complete reconstruction. Permission for the re-use of such buildings may include conditions regulating further building extensions, and the use of land associated with the building

- d. replacement of existing buildings in the Green Belt by new buildings that are not significantly larger in volume, normally by no more than 25-30%
- e. extensions and alterations to buildings in the Green Belt that are not out of proportion with the original building, normally no more than 25-30% volume increase
- f. the redevelopment of previously developed sites where the gross floorspace of the new buildings are not out of proportion of the original buildings, normally by no more than 25-30% increase, and the buildings are positioned on land previously built on

Measures to improve public access to the Green Belt areas will be encouraged.

## Infrastructure

- 3.42 In order to achieve the strategic objectives of the VALP and enable sustainable development, it is essential that necessary infrastructure is provided to support new development.
- 3.43 The term infrastructure covers a wide variety of services and facilities provided by private and public bodies including:
- transport infrastructure – rail, roads, cycle routes, buses, footpaths/pedestrian links, parking and management systems
  - utilities and flood protection infrastructure - water supply and treatment, sewerage, flood prevention and drainage, waste disposal, energy
  - telecommunications infrastructure including high-speed broadband provision across the district
  - community infrastructure – schools, sport, cultural and recreation facilities, healthcare, public transport, emergency services, social care facilities, community buildings, places of worship and associated facilities, and community recycling facilities
  - green infrastructure – a network of high quality, multi-functional green spaces which improve connectivity of towns and villages and the wider countryside. It also delivers ecological enhancements, and economic and social quality of life benefits for local communities at both the local and strategic level. It can include green corridors, such as hedgerows or transport routes, and open green spaces, such as parks, allotments, and country parks.
- 3.44 The council will continue to co-operate with key delivery partners to secure the funding and delivery of key infrastructure projects including East-West Rail and the A421 expressway that will run from Oxford to Cambridge. We will also seek to secure funding and delivery of key transport, utility, and other improvements where major infrastructure improvements are needed to achieve sustainable development. We will urge government, and support Buckinghamshire County Council, the local economic partnerships (LEPs) and other partners.
- 3.45 Some of the infrastructure identified above is essential to ensure that the needs of new and existing residents are met. Some relate more to quality of life or environmental provisions.
- 3.46 While seen as a key part of national infrastructure, High Speed 2 (HS2) contributes little if anything to the overall infrastructure needs of the district. Working with partners, the council will work to minimise the impacts of the project both during construction and operation. The HS2 scheme should co-ordinate with local projects and not delay the provision of necessary infrastructure at Aylesbury or the delivery of East-West Rail.
- 3.47 Infrastructure should be delivered in a timely manner and integrated alongside new development, with the specific phasing to be determined in agreement with the local planning authority.
- 3.48 Infrastructure should be provided on-site as part of the development wherever possible, especially on larger developments, to contribute towards creating sustainable development and ensuring that new developments are attractive places to live.
- 3.49 While infrastructure associated with water supply and sewers can be provided and funded by developers, upgrades to Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) can only be provided by water and wastewater utility companies. Within the district, this work is dependent on Thames Water and Anglian Water’s funding programmes (asset management plans), which works in five year cycles.

- 3.50 The Aylesbury Vale Water Cycle Study is currently being prepared. It will identify which (if any) WwTWs are currently at capacity. It will also identify if increases in flow through parts of the sewerage network are likely to cause an increase in the frequency of diluted but untreated discharges from the system. If these discharges increase this may have an effect on the waterways they discharge into. The discharges must meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and Habitats Directive.
- 3.51 Aylesbury Vale District Council is working jointly with Buckinghamshire County Council (the minerals and waste local planning authority), in developing a policy approach for the management of Waste Water Treatment Works.
- 3.52 Development proposals that would result in the VALP growth targets being significantly exceeded must ensure, in consultation with Thames Water and Anglian Water, that the objectives of the Water Framework Directive are not compromised. There must be adequate capacity in foul waste infrastructure to accommodate the proposed development in order to prevent the deterioration in current water quality standards and thus.

### **Community infrastructure levy and developer contributions**

- 3.53 The VALP aims to ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate infrastructure to meet future needs. These would be funded, where appropriate by 'community infrastructure levy' (CIL) or developer contributions, as well as public sector funding and the delivery programmes of other partners. New development will therefore be expected to contribute towards the provision of necessary infrastructure to support the development of sustainable communities through the CIL charging process and other Section 106 planning obligation agreements.
- 3.54 Work to establish a CIL for the district is currently underway. This is anticipated to be adopted in 2017. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan will set out what infrastructure is in place, what is needed through the VALP period, and whether it is needed in the short or medium-longer term in order to deliver development identified in the VALP plus existing commitments.

## **S5 Infrastructure**

All new development must provide appropriate on- and off-site infrastructure (in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan) in order to:

- a. Avoid placing additional burden on the existing community
- b. Avoid or mitigate adverse social, economic and environmental impacts and
- c. Make good the loss or damage of social, economic and environmental assets

In planning for new development, appropriate regard will be given to existing deficiencies in services and infrastructure provision. Development proposals must demonstrate that these have been taken into account when determining the infrastructure requirements for the new development.

The provision of infrastructure should be linked directly to the phasing of development to ensure that infrastructure is provided in a comprehensive way in line with new development. The viability of the proposals and the overall objective of delivering sustainable growth in the district will be considered when negotiating developer contributions. Open book calculations will need to be provided by the applicant and then verified by at least one independent consultant at the expense of the applicant and be submitted to the council for its consideration.

A Community Infrastructure Levy for Aylesbury Vale will be developed to secure funding for infrastructure. A Supplementary Planning Document will be produced regarding the delivery and use of Section 106 planning obligation agreements.

## Protected transport schemes

- 3.55 The VALP will ensure that land needed to facilitate protected transport schemes including both local and national projects, is protected from development that would prejudice their implementation.
- 3.56 Planning applications will be assessed as to whether the implementation of a protected transport scheme would be prejudiced by a development proposal, the nature of the proposal, the programming of the transport scheme, and the extent to which implementation of the scheme would be compromised by the carrying out of the proposed development.
- 3.57 There are three national Infrastructure projects which directly impact on the district. These comprise a new high speed rail route - High Speed 2 (HS2); an upgrade to the existing partially disused rail corridor running through the heart of the district - East West Rail (EWR); and an upgrade of the A421 through the district as part of the government's proposal for an Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.

## High Speed 2 (HS2)

- 3.58 In December 2010 the government announced a preferred route option for the proposed high speed rail link between London and Birmingham, known as High Speed 2 (HS2). The preferred route runs through the western part of the district, entering at Wendover in the south past the western edge of Aylesbury, and proposes a major infrastructure maintenance depot located at Calvert/Steeple Claydon, then continuing northwards to exit the district at Turweston. AVDC and many others groups have been petitioning the government to achieve the best possible mitigation of the significant impacts that HS2 will have on the environment and local communities in the district.
- 3.59 The Secretary of State has issued a safeguarding directive for the route and this will be shown on the final proposals map. The safeguarding directive requires the notification to HS2 of any planning application which affects the safeguarded line.

## East West Rail

- 3.60 The East West Rail (EWR) project aims to provide a new east-west orbital route between the east of England and southcentral England using primarily existing infrastructure. The EWR project link between Reading, Didcot, Oxford, Bicester, Aylesbury, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Cambridge, Norwich and Ipswich supports sustainable growth.
- 3.61 The East West Rail western Section will link Aylesbury to Milton Keynes and Bedford via a new station at Winslow. Phase 2 of the project involves the upgrade and reconstruction of sections of line linking Bedford to Bicester and Milton Keynes to Princes Risborough. This will allow passenger and freight services to run between Bedford and Bicester and between Milton Keynes and London via Aylesbury. The second phase of the western section of East West Rail will extend the Chiltern Line northwards, beyond Aylesbury, to link up with East West Rail, with a new station in Winslow.
- 3.62 The implementation of East West Rail Phase 1 Bicester to Oxford is well underway and Phase 2 ,Bicester - Aylesbury - Milton Keynes, is planned for an earliest opening of services by 2020.

## Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

- 3.63 The Road Investment Strategy 2015 (Department for Transport) announced a new strategic study that will investigate the case for linking existing roads, which would create a high-quality link between Oxford and Cambridge, via Milton Keynes and Bedford. The A421

which runs across the northern part of Aylesbury Vale, bypassing Tingewick and Buckingham is included for upgrade within the expressway study.

- 3.64 Route options for the expressway are still being investigated and it is unlikely that anything will be available before autumn 2016. Subject to information forthcoming, any line for the expressway may need to be included as a safeguarded line in the VALP as it progresses through to adoption.

## S6 Protected transport schemes

- a. Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the implementation of existing or protected transport schemes.
- Transport improvements in accordance with Buckinghamshire County Council's Local Transport Plan and movement strategies projects associated with East West rail including new stations.
  - New development in the district will be required to provide financial and/or in-kind contributions to mitigate the transport impacts of development except where a community infrastructure levy payment is required.
  - New development should facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport including public transport, walking and cycling. The council will encourage transport solutions that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and congestion. Development which is not suitable for the roads that serve the development and which have a severe traffic impact will not be supported
- b. The council will continue to work with High Speed 2 Ltd, with the aim of influencing the design and construction of the route through Aylesbury Vale to minimise adverse impacts and maximise any benefits that arise from the proposal

The implementation of HS2 will also be expected to:

- deliver high-quality design to protect communities and the environment from noise and visual intrusion
  - manage the construction to minimise the impact on communities and the environment
  - adopt sustainable procurement and construction methods
  - minimise adverse social and economic impacts, by maintaining accessibility and avoiding the severance of communities and agricultural holdings, and
  - ensure that community and other benefits are fully realised.
- c. We will also support other key transport proposals including;
- subject to information becoming available regarding the route for the new Oxford to Cambridge Expressway through Aylesbury Vale district.

## Gypsy, Traveller and travelling showpeople provision

- 3.65 Gypsies and Travellers are amongst the most socially excluded groups in society and research has consistently confirmed the link between the lack of good quality sites for Gypsies and Travellers and poor health and education. The government and the council acknowledge that these issues must be addressed, but it is important to ensure that the planning system is not misused and that development is located in the most appropriate locations.
- 3.66 Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers form an ethnic minority group and are legally protected from discrimination under the Equalities Act 2014, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Human Rights Act 1998. Government guidance sets out that councils should assess and meet Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation needs in the same way as other accommodation needs, including the identification of land for sites. The government guidance on this is specifically set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). This was first published in March 2012 and updated in August 2015.
- 3.67 For the purposes of planning policy, Gypsies and Travellers are defined in the PPTS (2015 update) as being:
- Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.*
- 3.68 In determining whether persons are "Gypsies and Travellers" for the purposes of the PPTS, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:
- whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life
  - the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life
  - whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.
- 3.69 The council is required to set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for travelling showpeople, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs. It is required to identify and annually update a five year supply of deliverable traveller sites and to identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for six to ten years and where possible, for years eleven to fifteen.
- 3.70 A joint Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment was produced in 2013 and updated in 2014. A further update has been commissioned with Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe district councils to take into account the latest government definition of Gypsy and Travellers. The update is expected to be published shortly but as this latest data is not available the latest needs assessment, from 2014, will be used for the draft plan. The 2014 study includes an assessment of existing provision, any current needs and forecasts of what the future need is in each district.
- 3.71 Aylesbury Vale district has, as of May 2016, 68 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 52 temporary (or temporary permission that has lapsed) pitches totalling 120 altogether. The need figure is made up of concealed households (two families doubled up on one pitch), older teenagers in need of their own pitch and existing households on unauthorised pitches, existing households on temporary sites and growth in household numbers due to household formation. The 2014 assessment sets out the future net requirement for the district is 57 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.

3.72 No need has been identified for transit sites as there is little evidence of travelling through the area.

**Table 4 Pitch provision required in the district to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers**

	2013-2018	2018-2023	2023-2028
Requirement	34	11	12

**Table 5 Plot provision required in the district to accommodate travelling showpeople**

	2013-2018	2018-2023	2023-2028
Requirement	3	0	0

3.73 As well as identifying the accommodation need figures the original joint Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment published in 2013 recommended the following on how to approach the provision of traveller sites:

- existing sites should be safeguarded, to ensure that needs continue to be met in perpetuity
- the identification of additional pitch provision should take into account where the need arises
- the councils should be reasonably flexible about the location of small private sites
- the councils should investigate the potential for existing sites to achieve additional pitches/plots either through increasing the capacity within existing boundaries or through site extension onto adjoining land, and
- the councils should also undertake site assessment work to identify new sites to meet identified future Gypsy and Traveller needs.

3.74 Policy H2 provides a sequential and criteria based approach for identifying suitable locations for new sites.

3.75 The site assessment process has looked at finding suitable and available sites to meet the need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation that the 2014 assessment set out, as above. Further work will be carried out if needed once the latest needs assessment is published. Sites with temporary permission were considered initially, followed by the consideration of the intensification/expansion of existing sites. Sites promoted for Gypsy and Traveller pitches were also considered as well as if there were opportunities for the effective use of previously development (brownfield) untidy or derelict land. These did not give sufficient supply to meet the needs in the district. Therefore, consideration was then given to other sites that have been identified as available for development, including securing pitches alongside traditional housing provision on strategic sites on the urban periphery. Including provision on these sites will help ensure that the needs of Gypsies and Travellers are met and that sites can remain small-scale. The precise location and design of the new sites would be guided by the relevant site master plans. Consideration has also be given to including provision of pitches on sites released from employment for housing.

**Table 6 Potential allocations to meet the needs for Gypsies and Travellers**

Site	Current pitches	Commentary	Potential number of pitches to be allocated
Willows Park, (Green Acres) Slapton	5 permanent 3 temporary		3
Marroway, Weston Turville	7 permanent	Large plot sizes where some sub division has already happened	5
Dun Roaming Park, Biddlesdon	11 permanent 10 temporary		10
Oakhaven Park, Gawcott	21 permanent	3 pitches have recently been granted permission. There is another existing unauthorised pitch	4
Oaksview Park, Boarstall	13 temporary	Application for 19 pitches	19
Land at Swan Edge, Wendover	2 approved subject to S106		2
Land opposite Causter Farm, Nash	11 temporary		11
The Old Stables, Weedon	1 temporary		1
Large MDA sites not committed		Options include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whaddon Chase (WHA001)</li> <li>• South of Aylesbury site (STO016)</li> <li>• North of Stoke Mandeville sites (SMD007, 008, 006)</li> <li>• Green Belt site at Wendover</li> <li>• New Settlement</li> </ul>	2 (could deliver further if updated needs assessment requires it or in final years of plan)
Employment land released for housing			
<b>Total</b>			<b>57</b>

3.76 Travelling showpeople are defined by the PPTS as being:

*Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.*

3.77 There are currently 3 unauthorised travelling showpersons plots in the district which would meet the needs shown above.

**Table 7 Potential allocations to meet the needs for travelling showpeople**

Site	Current pitches	Commentary	Potential number of pitches to be allocated
Fairview, Stoke Hammond	3 unauthorised		3
<b>Total</b>			<b>3</b>

## **S7 Gypsy, Traveller and travelling showpeople provision**

The Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment (2014) identifies the potential need for permanent pitches and plots for the period 2013-2028 as:

- a. 57 (net) additional Pitches for Travelling or unknown Gypsy and Travellers
- b. 3 (net) additional Plots for Travelling Showpeople

In order to meet these requirements, and in order to provide and maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable sites allocations will be made as set out above (to be finalised once the updated assessment is published).

Existing traveller sites will be safeguarded for traveller use.

## Previously developed land

- 3.78 Previously developed (or 'brownfield') land is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and refers to land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition excludes land uses such as private residential gardens and agricultural or forestry buildings.
- 3.79 The full definition according to the NPPF glossary is: 'Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface have blended into the landscape in the process of time.'
- 3.80 One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is to encourage the effective use of land by reusing previously developed land, provided it is not of high environmental value.
- 3.81 The government announced a new initiative in July 2015 that could see automatic planning permission being granted on previously developed sites in an attempt to raise the productivity of the economy. The government intends to introduce a new zonal system which will effectively give automatic planning permission on suitable brownfield sites. A number of local planning authorities are taking part in a pilot scheme to trial this initiative.

## S8 Previously developed land

Development in Aylesbury Vale will be expected to make efficient and effective use of land. We will encourage the reuse of previously developed (brownfield) land in sustainable locations, subject to site specific considerations including environmental value and the impact on local character.

## Delivering through neighbourhood planning

- 3.82 Neighbourhood development plans, neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders have the potential to allow communities to develop a shared vision to shape their neighbourhoods and to work with landowners, developers and service providers to deliver new development and facilities.
- 3.83 The Local Plan provides a framework within which people can decide how to shape their local neighbourhoods through community-led planning documents. Many communities have already embraced this opportunity and have prepared or are setting out to prepare their own neighbourhood plans. At the time of writing there are nine 'made' neighbourhood plans in the district and a further eighteen neighbourhood areas approved.
- 3.84 A neighbourhood plan provides a mechanism for communities to bring forward development and for the community to have a say in its location and specification, and to plan positively to support local development in meeting the strategic needs of the Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans must adhere to the strategic policies within the Local Plan and as a minimum plan for the required growth set out in Policy S2.
- 3.85 The involvement of the community goes to the heart of successful planning for and implementing sustainable and inclusive growth and change. The Local Plan sets out the strategic policies to provide the framework for delivery of homes, jobs, infrastructure in the district. A neighbourhood plan and its policies will work alongside, and where appropriate replace, the non-strategic policies in the Local Plan where they overlap. The policies within a neighbourhood plan will only apply to the specific area covered by that neighbourhood plan or order.
- 3.86 'Made' neighbourhood plans will not replace the Local Plan but will sit alongside it, with their non-strategic policies applying ahead of similar policies in the Local Plan, e.g. in relation to parking requirements. The council will work with local communities to deliver growth through neighbourhood plans and good communication between the council and local communities will be essential.
- 3.87 Whilst it is possible for a parish or town to prepare a neighbourhood plan prior to the adoption of the Local Plan, and many in this district have done so, the risks of this have been highlighted. It could mean that a higher amount of development is now required. If this is the case then it may be that the local community wish to review their neighbourhood plan to be in line with the growth in VALP rather than have VALP allocate the additional growth. Where neighbourhood planning is undertaken before the Local Plan is in place, collaboration between the community and the council is critical to ensure strategic requirements are met. AVDC has and will continue to take an active role in advising and supporting the neighbourhood planning process by sharing evidence and information and ensuring the neighbourhood plan fits as much as possible with its emerging strategic policies and national policy.
- 3.88 Local communities are encouraged to have a say on where development goes in their local area so as to deliver strategic requirements. It is proposed that where there is a commitment to review or produce a neighbourhood plan in the settlements where the Local Plan requires a higher level of growth, the Local Plan will identify reserve sites but will allow neighbourhood plans to decide which sites are allocated. It is important to make an early start on neighbourhood plans to show that this approach is deliverable and to enable development to come forward in the early years of the Local Plan to assist with housing delivery.
- 3.89 However, the council is required to demonstrate delivery of housing numbers, employment, retail and Gypsy and Traveller sites, all of which are required by government planning policies in its Local Plan. Therefore, if work on a neighbourhood development plan

does not progress to submission (where it has statutory weight) within a year of the adoption of the Local Plan, the council will implement the reserve sites. Appendix A sets out all sites that could potentially be allocated in the Local Plan, however, if a neighbourhood planning group confirms that they are going to prepare a neighbourhood plan within 12 months of the adoption of the Local Plan, the council will not allocate these sites but will identify them as reserve sites.

- 3.90 Neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders can give permitted development rights to the types of development specified in that order, allowing development that is consistent with the Local Plan to proceed without unnecessary delay. None have produced or are currently under preparation in Aylesbury Vale.

### **S9 Securing development through neighbourhood plans**

The preparation and production of neighbourhood plans will be supported in accordance with the Localism Act. Should a neighbourhood plan not progress to submission within a year of the adoption of the local plan, the council will implement the reserve sites set out in the plan. It will only be on this basis, that a Neighbourhood plan has not made it to this stage, that the reserve sites should come forward. Neighbourhood development plans should:

- a. show how they are contributing towards the strategic objectives of the Local Plan and be in general conformity with its strategic approach
- b. clearly set out how they will promote sustainable development at the same level or above that which would be delivered through the Local Plan, and have regard to information on local need for new homes, jobs and facilities, for their plan area.

## 4 Strategic Delivery

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## Aylesbury – Delivery of a garden town

- 4.1 In March 2016 the government issued a prospectus for locally-led garden villages, towns and cities. This encourages councils to bid for funding to support the delivery of ambitious locally-led proposals for new communities that work as self-sustaining places, not dormitory suburbs. Proposals should have high quality and good design hard-wired in from the outset to create a new generation of garden villages, towns and cities. The prospectus invites expressions of interest on a rolling basis in new garden towns and cities of more than 10,000 homes.
- 4.2 Aylesbury is identified as playing a substantial and critical role in delivering growth for the district and the rest of Buckinghamshire. Identified as a potential new 'garden town' Aylesbury will be a focus for:
- new market and affordable housing;
  - new investment in economic activity and regeneration;
  - new retail and employment development;
  - developing Aylesbury Transport Strategy prioritising investment in multi-modal transport infrastructure; and
  - other new infrastructure, including health, education and community infrastructure, open space and recreation, and emergency and public services.
- 4.3 The identification of Aylesbury as a garden town recognises Aylesbury's role as the county town for Buckinghamshire and its central location in the 'brain belt' between Oxford and Cambridge. The rural area that surrounds Aylesbury provides an exemplar setting for the town located on the edge of the Chiltern Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Grand Union Canal.
- 4.4 The vision for Aylesbury builds on the principles of sustainable development established in the previous Local Plan (carried forward in VALP & set out in policy S1) with the delivery of high quality new homes, new jobs, new transport improvements, and community facilities. New housing allocations (combined with existing committed and sites already built) will ensure that around of 14,000 new dwellings will be provided in Aylesbury between 2013 and 2033. Jobs will be provided to support the delivery of homes, driven by the designated enterprise zone at Aylesbury (Woodlands/ARLA). A transport strategy for Aylesbury will deliver an overarching strategy to connect new developments, improve accessibility to the town centre, and improve public and sustainable transport for both existing and new residents and businesses. This will build on already planned improvements to transport infrastructure. In addition, there will be new shops in a reinvigorated town centre, plus health, education, leisure and other community facilities, and other infrastructure associated with the new development.
- 4.5 The strategy for Aylesbury is to deliver a new garden town which creates a sustainable and economically viable place. The principles for development can be split into four categories: sustainable development, movement, community, and green infrastructure.
- 4.6 The vision for Aylesbury Garden Town is that:
- 4.7 By 2033, it will have grown and be an inclusive, innovative and forward looking county market town that meets the needs and aspirations of existing and new residents, businesses and visitors. Aylesbury will be a key hub, a place to visit, with public transport and interchange offering a diverse choice of travel modes, and a recognised centre for investment and growth providing new jobs and opportunities for all.

#### 4.8 Between now and 2033:

- The town will have grown sustainably, by reusing previously-developed sites and by developing a well designed, connected, safe and integrated urban extensions, creating a well integrated network of thriving, vibrant communities. This growth will have a strong focus on sustainability and community cohesion, and will include new homes (including affordable homes), jobs, shops, leisure/recreational facilities and community, health and social care facilities. This will provide good quality housing for people within Aylesbury Vale as well as business premises and facilities, enabling residents and visitors to find work, shop and spend their leisure time in the area.
- The number and quality of shops, the environment, leisure facilities, homes and services in Aylesbury town centre will increase, including by designing and building to high standards, bringing a renewal to the town enhancing the attraction of the historic core, and creating well designed developments that are sensitive to the district's local character. The centre is vibrant and energetic with plenty for all to do and enjoy throughout the day and into the night, serving both the urban and rural populations.
- Aylesbury's role as the county town will continue and be improved so that local government, legal and other essential services are recognised for their excellence and personal focus.
- The town will have an accessible, sustainable and well managed green infrastructure network, including a new linear park adjoining the HS2<sup>11</sup> line on the western edge of the town, improved linkages from the town to the Chilterns and surrounding countryside, contributing to the biodiversity of the area and supporting a range of recreational activities.
- The growth will be planned in a way which minimises the need to travel by private car, with more and more people choosing to walk, cycle or use public transport. Traffic growth will be managed to control congestion.
- The residents of the new growth areas at Aylesbury will feel a strong sense of their own community identity as well as feeling an integral part of a successfully growing, vibrant town.
- The benefits of growth will have been maximised including bringing about significant infrastructure improvements such as:
  - increased public transport, building on the success of the Aylesbury Rainbow bus routes;
  - increased walking and cycling facilities, building on the success of the Aylesbury Gemstone cycleways;
  - road improvements linking new developments to the town, will create a series of links road around the town;
  - increased level of flood protection for the town; and
  - enhancements to the regional rail infrastructure linking us to neighbouring growth areas including East West Rail which will open up rail access to the north, east and west for the first time since 1965. As a result, new links will help to ensure that local businesses in Aylesbury and the surrounding rural areas continue to thrive and grow.
- Aylesbury's most valued assets such as the historic old town, the river Thame, the Grand Union Canal and Hartwell House historic park and garden will be protected and enhanced, allowing communities to celebrate their history, their identity and their diversity.
- The impacts of climate change will have been minimised, especially by building exemplar new developments and increasingly sustainable travel choices. As a result, local carbon emissions will be low relative to those within the UK.

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<sup>11</sup> should it gain royal assent

- Visitors will use Aylesbury more and more as a base to explore local attractions such as Waddesdon Manor, Hartwell House, Wendover Woods, the Chilterns AONB and other tranquil and attractive areas.
- Aylesbury's role and reputation as a centre for education diversity and excellence will be maintained and strengthened. People in Aylesbury will have access to excellent education opportunities, both academically and vocationally.
- People will live longer, healthier lives, and the contribution made by older people to the community will be valued and appropriate services will be available to meet their changing needs. As a result of growth and regeneration, the difference in available opportunities between the most affluent and less well-off communities will be narrowed.

4.9 All of these will have combined to help make Aylesbury Garden Town a very attractive, healthy and cohesive place to live and work in, offering its residents, visitors and employees the very best quality of life.

### **Sustainable development: Aylesbury Garden Town**

#### Aylesbury housing

4.10 Aylesbury's housing requirements will be delivered through a combination of existing allocations and commitments, other 'deliverable' sites and VALP allocations, which together will meet the overall requirements for Aylesbury. The VALP allocations will consist of a combination of allocations made on previously-developed land and on greenfield sites on the edge of Aylesbury.

4.11 Taking forward past completions since 2013 (2,205 dwellings)<sup>12</sup> and projected supply from existing allocated sites and other deliverable sites (5,419 dwellings) (see footnote 11), this leaves approximately 6,489 dwellings to be allocated in VALP.

4.12 Where possible development will be located at suitable previously-developed sites. A number of these dwellings can be accommodated in the existing Aylesbury urban area (including the town centre) on previously developed land. These developments will seek to improve the quality of the urban environment through their positive redevelopment and regeneration. The remainder of Aylesbury's housing development will be at linked and integrated sustainable urban extensions on greenfield sites around the town (see the Aylesbury Garden Town maps).

4.13 An important element of the new housing is the provision of affordable housing. Affordable housing is covered in more detail in policy H1.

#### Aylesbury employment

4.14 The key employment challenges for Aylesbury are to:

- encourage economic growth to meet the forecast in jobs;
- deliver employment in the most sustainable locations to support and complement housing growth and produce mixed use developments which reduce the need to travel;
- provide strategic sites as well as encourage existing companies to remain and grow within the area;

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<sup>12</sup> These include completions and commitments for Stoke Mandeville, Bierton and Weston Turville as these settlements do not have their own housing requirement due to their proximity to Aylesbury and are included within the Aylesbury figures (inline with Policies S2 and S3).

- provide a diverse and flexible range of employment sites and premises for new and existing businesses, by maintaining a flexible supply of employment land and premises in Aylesbury;
- retain and improve high value employment sites by making the best use of existing stock and encouraging its refurbishment and renovation where necessary particularly where applications come forward that will maintain existing number of jobs on sites;
- encourage skills growth innovation with the provision of business led skills to help specifically grow the knowledge economy and manufacturing;
- retain highly qualified graduates and reduce the current levels of outward commuting;
- invest in strategic transport and broadband infrastructure to encourage more self employment in the knowledge based sectors, micro businesses and Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's) that make up to 90% of the economic activity;
- supporting business to business and educational collaboration between growing businesses to encourage further growth and expansion; and
- ensure there is support and nurturing activities for new enterprises to encourage the growth of the economy.

4.15 The designation of an enterprise zone based around the existing Arla complex takes advantage of existing infrastructure and supports the growth of sustainable employment location. Three Aylesbury Vale Enterprise Zones (AVEZ) are designated at Aylesbury, Westcott & Silverstone). The enterprise zone at ARLA is strategically placed at Aylesbury, on the A41 dual carriageway leading directly to the M25 near Watford. Employment allocations will also be made alongside new housing developments to complement housing growth and allow creation of sustainable settlements where people have the opportunity to both live and work without the need to travel long distances .

4.16 The overarching strategy is to stimulate the development of a number of emergent growing sectors – high performance technologies and motorsports, space propulsion and environmental technologies and food and drink manufacturing and human health.

#### Aylesbury retail

4.17 The growth at Aylesbury, and across the rest of the district, will need to be accompanied by appropriate levels of retail facilities. Recognising Aylesbury town centre's role as the principal retail and service centre in the district. Alongside retaining existing retail operators there will be a focus on consolidating, regenerating and enhancing the role of the existing and creating a vibrant and diverse town centre. Policy D10 (Aylesbury town centre) supports the delivery of development and revival/growth of Aylesbury town centre and sets out a strategy for improving and contributing to delivery of the visions and aims set out in the policy.

#### Aylesbury movement

##### Aylesbury transport strategy

4.18 To continue to grow the town successfully key transport issues need addressing including tackling congestion, managing demand, enhancing access, increasing active travel and enhancing public transport in Aylesbury. The district and county councils are working up a transport strategy for the Garden Town, the principles of which are seen as part of a balanced and integrated package of measures.

4.19 Initial work to set the framework for the transport strategy for Aylesbury has identified a series of six overarching strategic objectives to guide the growth of the town:-

- Improve transport access and movement to the town centre
- Minimise the impact of future growth on traffic levels, congestion and air quality
- Make it easier and more accessible for active travel and the use of public transport;

- Improve journey time reliability
- Improve accessibility to other urban centres and new growth areas
- Reduce the risk of death or injury on the transport network

4.20 The strategy will build on previous and currently planned improvements to transport infrastructure. The initial work has identified a list of potential transport interventions for Aylesbury which will enable growth and meet the strategic objectives identified above. These will be based on:

- completing a series of outer link roads that will take traffic away from the town centre and allow public transport priority improvements to take place on the main radial roads closer to the town centre, improving public transport journey time reliability;
- implement an overarching strategy to connect new developments, with each other, to key destinations and to the town centre by active travel and public transport;
- consider new ways to redesign roads within central area of Aylesbury to ensure access for all;
- undertake a parking study to understand current supply and demand in order to reassess parking provisions and controls;
- complete gaps in cycling/walking network, particularly connections between the radial gemstone cycle network;
- improve pedestrian crossing options where safety is an issue or where major roads act as a barrier to pedestrian movements, including the inner relief road around the town centre; and
- ensuring a strategic approach is in place for providing sustainable transport access to all new development and ensuring good transport links are in place to all three rail stations around the town centre.

4.21 The transport strategy is still evolving at this draft plan stage and further detailed traffic modelling is being undertaken to establish priority for transport interventions and to identify the overall schedule of improvements required to support the growth of Aylesbury Garden Town.

### **Aylesbury community facilities**

Community facilities and other infrastructure

4.22 Providing appropriate new infrastructure to support housing and employment development at Aylesbury is essential to the creation of sustainable communities. Infrastructure includes hard infrastructure such as roads and cycle routes, community infrastructure such as schools, higher education, and healthcare facilities and green infrastructure such as green spaces and wildlife corridors. Policy S4 supports infrastructure delivery.

### **Aylesbury green infrastructure**

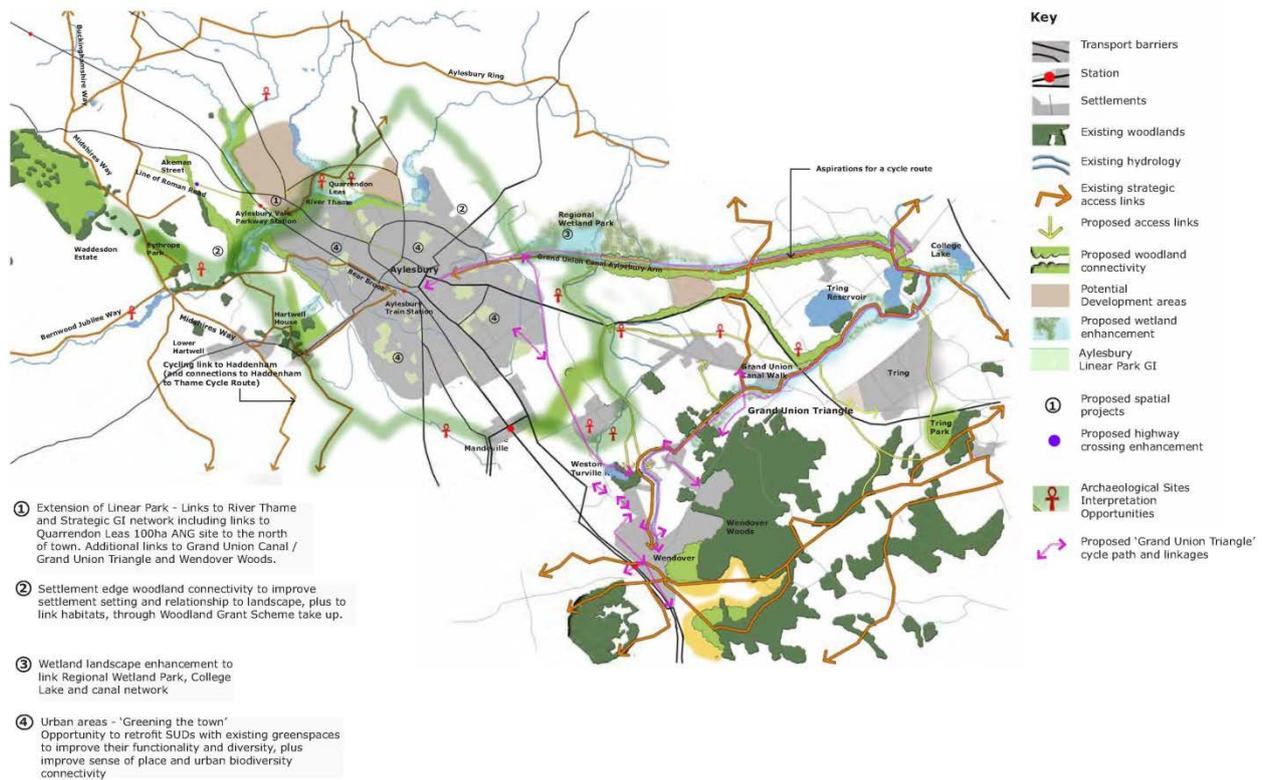
4.23 Strategic green infrastructure assets should be identified, retained and enhanced, including improving connectivity through the development of green corridors. Local open spaces should be protected and where possible connected to strategic green infrastructure networks. Aylesbury has linkages which should be enhanced to connect the surrounding countryside, to the Chilterns and surrounding rural areas.

4.24 The Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan (August 2013) was produced to build upon the Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) and the Aylesbury Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011). It identified a long list of green infrastructure projects, a number of which were focused around Aylesbury. From this list a series of priority areas were selected after consultation with the client and steering group. One of these combined a number of the above projects and focuses on Aylesbury. This proposal

area also forms the greater part of the county green infrastructure priority action area 2, Aylesbury environs. It includes a number of countryside access gateways identified in the 2009 County GI Strategy, notably Quarrendon Leas and, at greater distance, the Waddesdon Estate (National Trust), Tring Reservoirs Complex/College Lake and Wendover Woods:

<p><b>Aylesbury Linear Park</b> (includes a number of flagship GI projects: Aylesbury Linear Park east and west and Quarrendon Leas to the west and Grand Union Triangle, Wendover Woods and Regional Wetland Park to the east)</p>	<p>Part of the 'Area Around Aylesbury' GI Priority Action Area 2 in the County GI Strategy. Selected due to large scale planned and part implemented growth (developer led GI through development at Berryfields and Aylesbury East) and the fact that the area around Aylesbury is already the focus for many positive strategic GI proposals – Linear Park, Quarrendon Leas, Regional Wetland Park, Grand Union Triangle, plus Vale Park and thematic projects such as 'Trees Please' in the Aylesbury Vale GI Strategy. A number of these address the strategic ANGSt deficits identified in the county GI Strategy (e.g. Quarrendon Leas, Wendover Woods). Deficit continues to be experienced at the district ANG level and this should be a focus for future urban GI planning. The area is linked into key GI area corridors via the River Thames, plus Grand Union Canal corridors and foothills/scarps of the Chilterns to the east, which include strategic accessible natural green space (ANG) resources which are the focus of strategic projects e.g. Wendover Woods. BOAs at Thame Valley and Wendover Woods.</p>
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4.25 The green infrastructure proposal map for this, shown below, sets out the proposal area and some detail about the project. More information can be found in the green infrastructure proposals schedule in the delivery plan. Policy I1 supports the delivery of green infrastructure.



## Aylesbury Linear Park Green Infrastructure Proposals Map

### Aylesbury spatial strategy

4.26 In deciding where Aylesbury should grow, as much development as possible is to be located on previously-developed land in the town centre and existing urban area, but due to the scale of the growth, significant greenfield development will also be necessary. The decision relating to the most suitable direction of greenfield growth takes the following factors into account:

- Transport
- Flood risk
- Access to employment
- Water supply
- Specific infrastructure requirements
- Sewerage
- Integration with Aylesbury
- Landscape
- Strategic green infrastructure
- Agricultural land classification
- Contaminated land
- Relationship with other settlements
- Ecology
- Accessibility
- Historic environment
- Deliverability
- Overall environment
- Utilities

## D1 Delivering Aylesbury Garden Town

- a. Aylesbury Garden Town is the focus for the majority of the district's growth. It should be developed in accordance with the vision for Aylesbury Garden Town set out above and deliver key infrastructure requirements (inline with Policy S5). The 'Aylesbury Garden Town' maps indicatively show key proposals for Aylesbury. The housing requirement for Aylesbury is 14,113, taking account of commitments and completions the residual housing requirement for Aylesbury is 7,039 homes. A list of all potential housing allocations is contained within Appendix A. They are also shown on the policies map.
- b. As much development as possible will be located at suitable previously-developed sites. These developments should improve the quality of the urban environment.
- c. The remainder of Aylesbury's housing development will be at linked and integrated sustainable urban extensions on greenfield sites around the town (see the 'Aylesbury Garden Town' maps). This should be delivered to maximise the positive, and minimise the negative impacts of development on existing communities.
- d. Provision will be made for employment within the enterprise zones and at identified employment sites across the town Policy E1.
- e. All development in Aylesbury should contribute to meeting the Aylesbury Transport Strategy.
- f. To complement housing and employment provision, developments in the town centre will contribute to consolidating and enhancing its role.

## Delivering a new settlement

- 4.27 The Issues and Options consultation document outlined that to deliver the significant level of growth in Aylesbury Vale by 2033, the council needed to explore a number of options for the distribution of development, including the possibility of a new settlement. It explained that:
- “While this (option) has been looked at and rejected in the past, we are consulting on this again since a new settlement could contribute significantly towards meeting the district housing requirement, which has increased, and provide flexibility on where to develop new housing. A new settlement can mean enlarging an existing settlement by more than 50% of the population/dwellings or developing a freestanding new community. A study is currently being carried out for us to assess the potential for a new settlement within the district. The study will also see how this would compare with other ways of providing new homes in Aylesbury Vale. The findings of the study will inform the Local Plan at the next stage of preparation.”<sup>13</sup>
- 4.28 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies new settlements as an option for larger scale growth:
- “The supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages that follow the principle of garden cities.”<sup>14</sup>
- 4.29 In determining where development can be accommodated, the council has compiled evidence on whether there is scope for a new settlement within the district. This evidence ‘Aylesbury Vale - New Settlement Study Scoping Study’ (produced by consultants GL Hearn In conjunction with Capita and LDA Design) examines possible locations and whether a new settlement would offer a sustainable option to contribute towards meeting the district’s needs, compared with alternatives. The report identifies potential locations which could accommodate a new settlement utilising available evidence, of constraints and opportunities, to identify potential locations and assess their suitability. No stipulations were made by the council about where the development could or could not be located, so the consultants were able to look at every potential location within the Vale. It identifies a number of potential locations which could accommodate new development.
- 4.30 The report seeks to narrow the range of possible locations, and provide an initial assessment of deliverability , addressing potential ‘showstoppers’ and impacts, and ways in which identified constraints could be addressed.
- 4.31 The initial constraint mapping process resulted in a shortlisting of 12 broad ‘areas of search’ which could provide potential to accommodate a new settlement. These were as follows:

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<sup>13</sup> *Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation, Page 25*

<sup>14</sup> *NPPF Paragraph 52*

<b>Number</b>	<b>Potential Broad Area of Search</b>
1	Arcott
2	Cheddington
3	Doddershall
4	Haddenham
5	Granborough
6	Land around Oakley/Little London and Long Crendon
7	Marsh Gibbon
8	Steeple Claydon
9	Stewkley
10	Turweston Airfield
11	Waddesdon
12	Winslow
13	Cheddington

4.32 An initial assessment was undertaken considering environmental constraints, landscape capacity, access (or potential access) by both road and public transport, and consideration given to existing infrastructure provision, as well as the potential infrastructure necessary to support development, and relationships with other settlements. This process resulted in a shortlisting of two options to explore in further detail:

Option 1: 6,000 dwellings at Haddenham

Option 2: 6,000 dwellings at Winslow.

4.33 Haddenham was identified with potential for a large-scale extension to this existing settlement, taking account of the settlement's existing infrastructure and particularly its relative accessibility. Haddenham and Thame Parkway station and the A418 provide a strong level of transport accessibility, and public transport access to a range of larger employment centres.

4.34 Winslow was also identified as having potential for a large scale extension taking account of the range of services the settlement offers, the improved accessibility which East-West Rail will deliver on opening of a new station (currently anticipated in 2020) and physical potential to grow. Options for growth include extensions to the existing urban area, as well as the potential for growth to the north of the rail line including on the old airfield site.

4.35 Both of the shortlisted options provide suitable locations for a new settlement based on current information. None of the other sites appraised are considered to perform as strongly as the two shortlisted options in terms of overall suitability. At present it seems that the site at Haddenham is marginally preferable to the site at Winslow because it already has a railway station with a good service, including to London, whereas the station and railway service at Winslow are not in place yet. In addition to this consideration Haddenham is close to the higher-order services provided by Thame, is closer to a range of employment location and to the motorway network than Winslow. Another consideration is that Haddenham is closer to the source of unmet housing need which the Vale has to try to accommodate (unmet needs are coming from Districts to the south of Aylesbury Vale).

4.36 We have slightly revised the figure that can be delivered and based on the Scoping Report and have assumed 4,500 dwellings could come forward in the plan period. The Issues and Options Consultation looked at an option for 4,000 dwellings. The figure of 4,500 is what reasonably might be expected to be delivered within the plan period and takes into

account long lead times typical of development at this scale. However, the new settlement could continue to grow after the end of the plan period but this would be dependant on the capacity of the site selected.

- 4.37 However, before a decision can be reached on the delivery of either option, we are still awaiting critical transport evidence to inform the viability and deliverability of either site. Transport modelling work to understand the impacts is being undertaken in conjunction with the county council to determine whether the traffic from either site can be accommodated within the existing highway network. In the case that this cannot be accommodated, it is being considered whether necessary transport infrastructure improvements can be made. With this in mind we are consulting at this stage on the general principle of a new settlement at either Winslow or Haddenham.
- 4.38 Once detailed transport information is available we will be in a position to make a final decision on whether to include a new settlement in the Local Plan and which of the two shortlisted locations is most suitable.
- 4.39 A policy or policies will then be included in the Local Plan to set out where and how the development of a new settlement will take place. For this draft plan stage and given the uncertainty with regard to location and site selection we have not included a plan within the inset maps, once a location and suitable sites are selected this will form part of the inset maps accompanying the plan. The new settlement Scoping Report provides further details on the options being assessed.
- 4.40 In the case of both settlements work has not yet reached the stage of defining exact boundaries and the design of the new settlement. This will entail detailed masterplanning and production of an SPD including public consultation to determine the exact scale, form and layout of the new settlement. It is expected that the new settlement will benefit from its own community facilities, retail provision, green infrastructure and will deliver improved infrastructure which benefits current and new residents in the locality.
- 4.41 The following proposed vision and objectives for the new settlement will guide development if one is included in the plan:
- 4.42 The council and other stakeholders will create a new settlement which will be a great place to live, work and grow. It will be built to high sustainable design and construction standards and the development will provide a balanced mix of facilities to ensure that it meets the needs and aspirations of new and existing residents.
- 4.43 There are a number of objectives that this development must embrace to achieve the vision outcomes. These are:
- Create a sustainable community providing a mix of uses to ensure that housing development is accompanied by employment, infrastructure services and facilities. These include schools, leisure, retail, health and open spaces.
  - Ensure that high-quality walking, cycling and public transport links to and from both the existing settlement and to the station are provided. These links must be provided at the earliest appropriate opportunity in the development to help improve travel choices and achieve sustainable travel. This will reduce reliance on the car whilst creating a walkable environment with integration with public transport routes and key local facilities.
  - Ensure infrastructure, facilities and services are delivered in the right place at the right time. For example, well-planned and laid out local centres will establish the heart of new communities. Local centres will maximise opportunities for co-location of facilities including schools, retail units, health and community facilities and community spaces.

- Ensure strong place shaping, with community safety and sustainability principles are embedded throughout. Community safety will be a key component to ensure residents feel safe and secure within the development.
- Create a socially diverse place with a mix of dwelling types and tenure mix including affordable housing in line with policies in the Local Plan.
- Ensure a high level and quality of design to ensure the place is legible, has vitality and has a distinctive character. Form and layout should protect neighbouring communities from direct and indirect negative impacts.
- Create a well connected green space network throughout the site, linking to the existing and planned green infrastructure on and off site.

## **D2 Deliving a new settlement**

Policy to follow, awaiting further evidence.

## Sites adjacent to Milton Keynes

- 4.44 In determining the housing figure for Aylesbury Vale, a crucial aspect of the Local Plan is to decide the broad locations where development should take place. At the Issues and Options stage, a range of options to deliver 31,000 dwellings were considered. Two of the options included development adjacent to Milton Keynes / Bletchley.
- 4.45 Policy S2 identifies that the primary focus of strategic levels of growth and investment will be at Aylesbury, with development at Buckingham, Winslow, Wendover and Haddenham, supported by growth at other larger, medium and smaller villages. Where appropriate, development will be supported by neighbourhood plans. Outside the overall strategy, the plan also considers allocating growth at a new settlement and proposes development on sites adjacent to Milton Keynes.
- 4.46 There is a current application pending consideration at Salden Chase, Whaddon Road, Newton Longville, for a mixed-use urban extension on land to the south west of Milton Keynes. This could provide up to 1,885 mixed tenure dwellings. Other planning applications have also previously arisen within the site for mixed use development with a much larger area. The Milton Keynes Strategic Development Directions Consultation Document, (January to April 2016), recently consulted on four options for expanding Milton Keynes, one of which considers a direction of growth to the west around Newton Longville and Whaddon in Aylesbury Vale district.
- 4.47 This policy makes an appropriate allocation to provide for development of sites adjacent to Milton Keynes and outlines the principles under which development can, and should, occur. This will be taken forward through joint working between Aylesbury Vale and Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire County Council.
- 4.48 Background studies and work undertaken as part of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, (HELAA), identify three suitable sites that are located on greenfield sites north west of Newton Longville and adjacent to Milton Keynes, situated south west of the city. The HELAA identifies that all three sites could together (with an existing commitment at Stoke Hammond of 268 dwellings) provide a total potential housing capacity of 4,274.

**Table 8 Suitable sites adjacent to Milton Keynes**

Reference	Site Address	Parish	Site Area (ha)	Housing capacity (units)
NLV001	Site west of Far Bletchley, at the south western edge of Milton Keynes. Boundary A421 & A4034, disused railway and Whaddon Road. Adjoins residential of West Bletchley.	Newton Longville	143.9	1,885
NLV023	Dagnall House and adjoining land	Newton Longville	1.3	39
SHM012	Land to the south of Newton Leys off Drayton Road and Stoke Road	Stoke Hammond	14.2	268
WHA001	Shenley Road	Whaddon	90.1	2,000

Source: Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, Version 3, May 2016

- 4.49 Development adjacent to Milton Keynes should contain the following:
- Housing - a minimum of 4,274 dwellings to include affordable housing and a mix of tenures.

- Local infrastructure and services - provision of education, police, fire and ambulance services, social care and medical facilities.
- Local facilities -provision of retail within local centres, crèche and care facilities, recycling and community facilities within the site.
- Transport infrastructure -local highway infrastructure, (including foot, car and cycling), and public transport infrastructure, (including buses), linking the development with nearby centres Buckingham, Bletchley and Milton Keynes. The sites will provide a park and ride site as well as a reserve site for a station and a financial contribution to East West Rail.
- Green Infrastructure- provision of strategic multi-functional green infrastructure in the form of formal and informal open spaces, playing fields and new wildlife habitats; provision of allotments and parks linking to the linear parks within Milton Keynes and to Whaddon Chase north of the site.
- Flood mitigation measures -including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and linking to existing flood management and protection within and surrounding the area.

4.50 The developments will adhere to the follow place-shaping principles:

- provide a long term defensible boundary to the western edge of Milton Keynes
- recognise that, whilst being located totally within Aylesbury Vale, the development will use some facilities in Milton Keynes, given its proximity
- ensure the long term retention of Newton Longville and Whaddon as separate communities with a unique identities, and protect them and other neighbouring communities, (including Mursley and Far Bletchley), from direct and indirect negative impacts generated by the development
- be deliverable so as to maximise speed of delivery, enable faster delivery of key infrastructure whilst minimising disruption and delay, and
- provide a sustainable and strategic approach to flood mitigation and urban drainage, linked to multi-functional green infrastructure, to control surface water flows and flooding, (as set out in the Milton Keynes Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study).

### Infrastructure

4.51 Infrastructure to support housing and employment development is essential to the creation of sustainable communities. Infrastructure will include the provision of things such as cycle routes, schools, social care, water provision and treatment, electricity and green spaces (both local and strategic). This infrastructure will need to be provided and phased alongside development, the details of which will be agreed through developer contribution agreements.

4.52 Rather than including site specific detail which can date quickly, the draft plan does not contain detailed information about infrastructure requirements for the sites adjacent to Milton Keynes. Instead an infrastructure delivery plan is being developed in conjunction with the relevant bodies.

### Allocating the sites

4.53 The proposal map indicates the three areas for the allocation of 3,924 dwellings. Site NLV001 is located west of Far Bletchley, at the south western edge of Milton Keynes. It is bounded by the A421 & A4034, a disused railway and Whaddon Road. Site NLV023 is located immediately adjacent to Bletchley, adjacent to site NLV001. WHA001 is bounded by the A421 to the south, and is adjacent to the Tattenhoe Park site in Milton Keynes.

4.54 Following the adoption of the local plan, an SPD will be produced to set out a master plan for the site with key stakeholders and partners. The SPD will reflect design codes and standards so as to secure high quality sustainable development; it will outline the required

infrastructure on and off site (both within Aylesbury Vale and Milton Keynes). Planning applications should be accompanied by design statements, which will need to demonstrate an understanding of the local natural and built environment; they should embrace sustainable urban design principles, including flood and landscape mitigation measures. Design principles will show how the development will relate to its surroundings and integrate with existing neighbourhoods and communities.

### **D3 Delivering sites adjacent to Milton Keynes**

- a. Provision is made for a strategic allocation for 3,924 dwellings and necessary services, infrastructure and facilities, as indicated on the Policies Map Inset, to the north west of Newton Longville and south-west of Milton Keynes.
- b. The sites should be developed in accordance with a Master Plan and Delivery SPD produced by the council. The Master Plan and Delivery SPD for the site will need to consider:
  - how the rural settlements of Newton Longville, Mursley, and Whaddon will be protected from the negative impacts of development and take the opportunity to maximise the positive and how this development within Aylesbury Vale will relate to neighbouring Milton Keynes
  - how the transport challenges for the site can be addressed (including any future A421 and A4146 link road) in accordance with the Aylesbury Vale Rest of District Transport Strategy (BCC, 2009)
  - the necessary infrastructure, and
  - a detailed consideration as to further master planning requirements.

## **Delivering the allocated sites**

### **Role of the Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)**

- 4.55 The allocations in the Local Plan are based on the council's HELAA. This is a strategic assessment of the availability and suitability of land for development, providing a key component of the evidence base to inform the preparation of the Local Plan. It establishes realistic assumptions about the number of homes and amount of economic development that each site could yield and the timeframe within which this might come forward. The HELAA is an important evidence source to inform plan-making, but does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for housing or economic development or whether planning permission should be granted. The allocation of a site for development can only be made in the Local Plan or through a neighbourhood plan. This draft plan is the next stage in determining which of the sites deemed 'suitable' or 'part suitable' in the HELAA should be taken forward for allocation in the final Local Plan.
- 4.56 It is acknowledged that there is some disparity between the HELAA and the settlement hierarchy in that some settlements currently fall short of suitable sites to meet their housing requirement, and some settlements currently have more suitable sites than are needed to meet their own housing needs. By their very nature, some settlements are more constrained than others in terms of factors such as landscape, flooding and settlement form, and therefore it is to be expected that some settlements may not have sufficient suitable sites to meet their own housing requirements. The council, in consultation with the community, must decide on the most appropriate sites to allocate in the Local Plan for each village. By identifying new sites where possible and choosing from options where they are available, no village (in larger, medium or smaller categories) will be allocated more than their housing requirement even if there is unused capacity.

### **Interim position**

- 4.57 The housing requirements and associated policies set out in this section do not carry any weight at this stage. Weight will increase as VALP progresses through its formal stages, and development management decisions will continue in the meantime. Therefore the figures presented here may not represent the final figures to be taken forward in the pre-submission plan.

## Delivering the allocated sites – at strategic settlements

- 4.58 This section deals with the strategic settlements of Buckingham, Haddenham, Winslow and Wendover (Aylesbury is covered by Policy D1 and is considered to be a sub-regional strategic settlement). The strategic settlements are the most sustainable towns and villages in the district as they have the highest provision of services and facilities and are therefore the focus for the majority of the district's development. As set out in Policies S2 and S3, the strategic settlements (excluding Aylesbury) are required to provide a total of 5,604 new homes between 2013 and 2033. This is based on Buckingham, Haddenham and Winslow increasing in size by 50% compared to existing housing stock (as at April 2013) and Wendover increasing in size by 25% (reflecting its highly constrained location). Individual housing requirements for each strategic settlement are set out in Table 2 which accompanies policy S3. Those sites that already have planning permission (as at 2015/16) and homes already built in the period 2013-2016 are taken away from the total housing requirement.
- 4.59 Sufficient sites to meet the above housing requirement will be identified either through allocations in the Local Plan, and/or by a neighbourhood plan where these have been prepared or will be prepared within the first twelve months of this plan being adopted.
- 4.60 Therefore, additional development in the strategic settlements will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that sites allocated (either in the Local Plan or neighbourhood plan) are not coming forward at the rate anticipated. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence demonstrating how the site can be delivered in a timely manner, along with satisfying the criteria set out in Policy D4 below.
- 4.61 In relation to the strategic settlements (excluding Aylesbury), the current situation in terms of housing is as follows:

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16<sup>15</sup></b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites excluding commitments</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Buckingham	2,612	1,393	621	598	1,212	The commitments include 917 homes identified in the made Buckingham Neighbourhood plan. This leaves a shortfall of 598 homes to be allocated in this plan. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 1,212 homes, so there will only be a need to allocate the most sustainable sites
Haddenham	1,059	359	95	605	599	Sites for 605 new homes need to be identified at Haddenham. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 599 homes, so an additional 6 homes will need to be identified
Wendover	861	28	84	749	0	There is a need to allocate sites for 749 new homes at Wendover. The HELAA identifies no suitable sites, leaving a significant shortfall of 749 homes. Policy S3 identifies a potential site for 800 homes subject to it being found suitable for release from the green belt
Winslow	1,072	547	84	441	585	The commitments include 175 homes identified in the made Winslow Neighbourhood plan. This leaves a shortfall of 441 homes to be allocated in this plan. The

<sup>15</sup> This comprises sites with planning permission, sites approved subject to s106 and neighbourhood plan allocations

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16<sup>15</sup></b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites excluding commitments</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
						HELAA identifies suitable sites for 585 homes, so there will only be a need to allocate the most sustainable sites

4.62 The above table shows that overall, the strategic settlements have an oversupply of suitable sites either as already committed development or through sites being identified as suitable for housing in the HELAA.

4.63 The following settlements have sufficient sites identified through existing commitments/completions (which includes neighbourhood plan allocations for Buckingham and Winslow) and suitable HELAA sites to meet their housing requirement. Therefore, a process of prioritising the suitable sites in order of sustainability needs to be carried out. This could be carried out through a neighbourhood plan review process if that was to happen in a timely manner. It is likely that any suitable sites not required at this stage would be allocated as reserve sites.

- Buckingham
- Winslow

4.64 The following settlements fall short of their housing requirement, and further sites need to be identified:

- Haddenham (6)
- Wendover (749)

#### D4 Housing development at strategic settlements (excluding Aylesbury)

The housing requirement for the strategic settlements (excluding Aylesbury) is 5,604 homes. This will be delivered through the allocation of all suitable sites at Haddenham. For Buckingham and Winslow, the most sustainable 'suitable' sites at the strategic settlements will be allocated, and the less sustainable sites will be identified as reserve sites. At this stage, the council has not decided which are to be allocated and which are to be reserve sites, and is inviting comments on this at this stage.

A list of all potential housing allocations is contained within Appendix A. They are also shown on the policies map.

The 'made' neighbourhood plans listed below make the following contribution to the strategic settlements housing requirement:

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Neighbourhood plan allocation (including reserve sites)</b>
Buckingham	917
Haddenham	(476)
Wendover	n/a
Winslow	425
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,342</b>

The remainder of the housing requirement for Wendover will potentially be met by a site for 800 homes subject to it being found suitable for release from the green belt.

Development in sustainable settlements not allocated in this plan or in a made Neighbourhood plan will not normally be permitted. Further development beyond allocated sites will only be permitted where the council's monitoring of housing delivery across the district shows that the allocated sites are not being delivered at the anticipated rate. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence demonstrating how the site can be delivered in a timely manner. The proposal must contribute to the sustainability of that settlement, be in accordance with all applicable policies in the Plan, and fulfil the following criteria:

- a. Be located within or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village\*
- b. Not result in coalescence with any neighbouring settlement
- c. Be of a scale and in a location that is in keeping with the existing form of the settlement, and not adversely affect its character and appearance
- d. Respect and retain natural boundaries and features such as trees, hedgerows, embankments and drainage ditches
- e. Not have any adverse impact on environmental assets such as landscape, historic environment, biodiversity, waterways, open space and green infrastructure and
- f. Provide appropriate infrastructure provision such as waste water drainage and highways

\*The existing developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village, and excludes individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings. This includes former agricultural barns that have been converted, agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the village and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built up area of the village.

## Delivering the allocated sites – at larger villages

- 4.65 Larger villages are the largest, most sustainable villages that have reasonable access to services and facilities. As set out in Policies S2 and S3, larger villages are required to provide a total of 2,211 new homes between 2013 and 2033, which is a 22% increase on existing housing stock. Individual housing requirements for each larger village are set out in Table 2 which accompanies policy S3.
- 4.66 Sufficient sites to meet the above housing requirement will be identified either through allocations in the Local Plan, and/or by a neighbourhood plan where these have been prepared.
- 4.67 Therefore, additional development in the larger villages will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that sites allocated (either in the Local Plan or neighbourhood plan) are not coming forward at the rate anticipated. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence demonstrating how the site can be delivered in a timely manner, along with satisfying the criteria set out in policy D5 below.
- 4.68 Due to the high level of development needed throughout the district, and the strategy to locate this in the most sustainable locations, Aylesbury will be the focus for the majority of the district's growth recognising its role as the largest town in Aylesbury Vale. The impact of the growth of Aylesbury will be felt by some communities closest to Aylesbury. In the case of the larger villages, Stoke Mandeville will be in close proximity to allocated sites at Aylesbury. With this in mind, it is proposed that Stoke Mandeville's housing requirement is added to Aylesbury's requirement, and that no further allocations are made at Stoke Mandeville. Any other proposals for development at Stoke Mandeville will therefore not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances. Proposals will be assessed against the criteria in Policy D5 below (and other relevant policies in VALP).
- 4.69 In terms of larger villages, the current situation in terms of housing figures is as follows:

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Aston Clinton	345	350	27	0	365	Commitments and completions exceed the housing requirement, so no further sites are required to be allocated in Aston Clinton
Edlesborough	169	89	8	72	96	Allocations are required for 72 new homes in Edlesborough. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 96 homes, so only the most sustainable sites need to be allocated in the Local Plan
Ivinghoe	87	3	13	71	0	Allocations are required for 71 new homes in Ivinghoe. The HELAA identifies no suitable sites, so there remains a significant shortfall.
Long Crendon	236	8	5	223	84	Allocations are required for 223 new homes in Long Crendon. The HELAA identifies sites for 84 homes, and so it is proposed that all of these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 139 homes still to be identified.
Pitstone	292	44	12	166	229	Allocations are required for 236 new homes in Pitstone. The Neighbourhood plan identifies a site for 70 homes, taking the residual requirement to 166 be allocated in the Local Plan. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 229 homes, so only the most sustainable sites need to be allocated in VALP

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Steeple Claydon	208	85	30	93	65	Allocations are required for 93 new homes in Steeple Claydon. The HELAA identifies sites for 65 homes, and so it is proposed that all of these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 18 homes still to be identified.
Stoke Mandeville	178	0	6	172	772	The 172 requirement will be added to Aylesbury's requirement and no further sites will be allocated at Stoke Mandeville
Stone (including Hartwell)	206	26	2	178	53	Allocations are required for 178 new homes in Stone. The HELAA identifies sites for 53 homes, and so it is proposed that all of these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 125 homes still to be identified.
Waddesdon (including Fleet Marston)	187	106	1	80	29	Allocations are required for 80 new homes in Waddesdon. The HELAA identifies sites for 29 homes, and so it is proposed that all of these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 51 homes still to be identified.
Whitchurch	84	19	11	54	0	Allocations are required for 54 new homes in Whitchurch. The HELAA identifies no suitable sites. This leaves a shortfall of 54 homes still to be identified.
Wing	263	110	15	138	0	The 100 homes allocated in the Wing Neighbourhood plan are included as commitments. Allocations are therefore

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
						required for 138 new homes in Wing. The HELAA identifies no suitable sites. This leaves a shortfall of 138 homes still to be identified.
Wingrave	134	8	2	124	112	Allocations are required for 124 new homes in Wingrave. The HELAA identifies sites for 112 homes, and so it is proposed that all of these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 12 homes still to be identified.

4.70 The above table shows that overall, the larger villages have an oversupply of suitable sites either as already committed development or through sites being identified as suitable for housing in the HELAA. However, as previously stated, the council will not allocate more than the housing requirement for settlements even if there are suitable sites in order to ensure that new development comes forward in a proportionate way.

4.71 The following settlements do not require any allocations in this plan as either their housing requirement has already been met, or due to their proximity to major development areas around Aylesbury, no allocations are required:

- Aston Clinton
- Stoke Mandeville

4.72 The following settlements have sufficient sites identified (through existing commitments/completions and suitable HELAA sites) to meet their housing requirement, and a process of ranking the suitable sites in order of sustainability needs to be carried out:

- Edlesborough
- Pitstone

4.73 The following settlements fall short of their housing requirement, and further sites need to be identified:

- Ivinghoe (71)
- Long Crendon (139)
- Steeple Claydon (28)
- Stone (125)
- Waddesdon (51)
- Whitchurch (54)
- Wing (138)
- Wingrave (12)

4.74 The bracketed number denotes the number of homes still to be allocated (618 in total).

### D5 Housing development at larger villages

The housing requirement for larger villages is 2,211 homes. This will be delivered through the allocation of the most sustainable 'suitable' sites at the villages. Where a village has more suitable sites than needed to meet the residual housing requirement, the less sustainable sites will be identified as reserve sites. At this stage, the council has not decided which are to be allocated and which are to be reserve sites, and is inviting comments on this at this stage.

A list of all potential housing allocations is contained within Appendix A. They are also shown on the policies map.

The 'made' neighbourhood plans listed below make the following contribution to the larger villages housing requirement:

Settlement	Neighbourhood plan allocation (including reserve sites)
Pitstone	70
Wing	100
TOTAL	170

The remainder of the housing requirement will be met by identifying further suitable sites through a review of the HELAA, or by emerging/reviewed neighbourhood plans where there is a commitment for these to be 'made' in the 12 months following the adoption of the Local Plan.

Development in larger villages not allocated in the VALP or in a made neighbourhood plan will not normally be permitted. Further development beyond allocated sites will only be permitted where the council's monitoring of housing delivery across the district shows that the allocated sites are not being delivered at the anticipated rate. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence demonstrating how the site can be delivered in a timely manner. The proposal must contribute to the sustainability of that village, be in accordance with all applicable policies in the Local Plan, and fulfil the following criteria:

- a. Be located within or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village\*
- b. Not result in coalescence with any neighbouring settlement
- c. Be of a scale and in a location that is in keeping with the existing form of the settlement, and not adversely affect its character and appearance
- d. Respect and retain natural boundaries and features such as trees, hedgerows, embankments and drainage ditches
- e. Not have any adverse impact on environmental assets such as landscape, historic environment, biodiversity, waterways, open space and green infrastructure and
- f. Provide appropriate infrastructure provision such as waste water drainage and highways

\*the existing developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village, and excludes individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings. This includes former agricultural barns that have been converted, agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the village and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built up area of the village.

## Delivering the allocated sites – at medium villages

- 4.75 Medium villages are moderately well served with services and facilities and can therefore be considered to be reasonably sustainable villages. As set out in Policies S2 and S3, medium villages are required to provide a total of 1,478 new homes between 2013 and 2033, which is a 19% increase on existing housing stock. Individual housing requirements for each medium village are set out in Table 2 which accompanies Policy S3.
- 4.76 Sufficient sites to meet the above housing requirement will be identified either through allocations in the Local Plan, and/or by a neighbourhood plan where these have been prepared.
- 4.77 Therefore, additional development in the medium villages will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that sites allocated (either in the Local Plan or neighbourhood plan) are not coming forward at the rate anticipated. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence demonstrating how the site can be delivered in a timely manner, along with satisfying the criteria set out in Policy D6 below.
- 4.78 Due to the high level of development needed throughout the district, and the strategy to locate this in the most sustainable locations, Aylesbury will be the focus for the majority of the district's growth recognising its role as the largest town in Aylesbury Vale. The impact of the growth of Aylesbury will be felt by some communities closest to Aylesbury. In the case of the medium villages, Bierton and Weston Turville will be in close proximity to allocated sites at Aylesbury. With this in mind, it is proposed that the housing requirement for both of these villages is added to Aylesbury's requirement, and that no further allocations are made at either Bierton or Weston Turville. Any other proposals for development at Bierton and Weston Turville will therefore not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances. Proposals will be assessed against the criteria in Policy D6 below (and other relevant policies in the Local Plan).
- 4.79 In terms of medium villages, the current situation in terms of housing figures is as follows:

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Bierton (including Broughton)	132	7	6	119	122	The 119 requirement will be added to Aylesbury's requirement and no further sites will be allocated at Bierton
Brill	102	2	1	99	0	Allocations are required for 99 new homes in Brill. The HELAA identifies no suitable sites. This leaves a shortfall of all 99 homes still to be identified.
Cheddington	141	4	1	136	58	Allocations are required for 136 new homes in Cheddington. The Neighbourhood plan identifies a site for 100 homes, leaving 36 to be allocated in this Local Plan. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 58 homes, so only the most sustainable site needs to be allocated in the Local Plan
Cuddington	50	2	2	46	6	Allocations are required for 46 new homes in Cuddington. The HELAA identifies sites for 6 homes, and so it is proposed that this site is allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 40 homes still to be identified.
Gawcott	66	3	2	61	31	Allocations are required for 61 new homes in Gawcott. The HELAA identifies sites for 31 homes, and so it is proposed that these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 30 homes still to be identified.

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Great Horwood	81	2	4	75	90	Allocations are required for 75 new homes in Great Horwood. The Neighbourhood plan identifies a site for 45 homes, leaving 30 to be allocated in the Local Plan. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 90 homes, so only the most sustainable site(s) need to be allocated in the Local Plan
Grendon Underwood	84	16	13	55	22	Allocations are required for 55 new homes in Grendon Underwood. The HELAA identifies sites for 22 homes, and so it is proposed that these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 33 homes still to be identified.
Ickford	55	3	1	51	0	Allocations are required for 51 new homes in Ickford. The HELAA identifies no suitable sites. This leaves a shortfall of all 51 homes still to be identified.
Maids Moreton	74	1	1	72	21	Allocations are required for 72 new homes in Maids Moreton. The HELAA identifies sites for 21 homes, and so it is proposed that these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 51 homes still to be identified.
Marsh Gibbon	83	9	5	69	43	Allocations are required for 69 new homes in Marsh Gibbon. The HELAA identifies sites for 13 homes, and so it is proposed that these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 26 homes still to be identified.

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Marsworth	58	2	15	41	42	Allocations are required for 41 new homes in Marsworth. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 42 homes, so all of these need to be allocated in the Local Plan
Newton Longville	155	12	2	141	100	Allocations are required for 141 new homes in Newton Longville. The HELAA identifies sites for 100 homes, and so it is proposed that these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 41 homes still to be identified.
North Marston	56	2	2	52	0	Allocations are required for 52 new homes in North Marston. The HELAA identifies no suitable sites. This leaves a shortfall of all 52 homes still to be identified.
Padbury	63	6	2	55	50	Allocations are required for 55 new homes in Padbury. The HELAA identifies sites for 50 homes, and so it is proposed that these sites are allocated for housing. This leaves a shortfall of 5 homes still to be identified.
Quainton	104	9	8	87	21	Allocations are required for 87 new homes in Quainton. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 21 new homes. This leaves a shortfall of 66 homes still to be identified.
Stewkley	144	7	11	126	85	Allocations are required for 126 new homes in Stewkley. The HELAA identifies suitable sites for 85 new homes. This leaves a shortfall of 41 homes still to be identified.

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Stoke Hammond	71	164	0	0	93	Commitments and completions exceed the housing requirement, so no further sites are required to be allocated in Stoke Hammond
Tingewick	91	91	2	0	11	Commitments and completions exceed the housing requirement, so no further sites are required to be allocated in Tingewick.
Weston Turville	240	69	6	165	10	The 165 requirement will be added to Aylesbury's requirement and no further sites will be allocated at Weston Turville

- 4.80 The above table shows that overall, the medium villages have an undersupply of suitable sites and therefore additional sites need to be identified to meet the housing requirement.
- 4.81 The following settlements do not require any allocations in the Local Plan as either their housing requirement has already been met, or due to their proximity to major development areas around Aylesbury:
- Bierton
  - Stoke Hammond
  - Tingewick
  - Weston Turville
- 4.82 The following settlements have sufficient sites identified (through existing commitments/completions and suitable HELAA sites) to meet their housing requirement, and a process of ranking the suitable sites in order of sustainability needs to be carried out (apart from):
- Cheddington
  - Great Horwood
  - Marsworth<sup>16</sup>
- 4.83 The following settlements fall short of their housing requirement, and further sites need to be identified:
- Brill (99)
  - Cuddington (40)
  - Gawcott (30)
  - Grendon Underwood (33)
  - Ickford (51)
  - Maids Moreton (51)
  - Marsh Gibbon (26)
  - Newton Longville (41)
  - North Marston (52)
  - Padbury (5)
  - Quainton (66)
  - Stewkley (41)
- 4.84 The bracketed number denotes the number of homes still to be allocated (total of 535).

## D6 Housing development at medium villages

The housing requirement for medium villages is 1,478 homes. This will be delivered through the allocation of the most sustainable 'suitable' sites at the villages. Where a village has more suitable sites than needed to meet the residual housing requirement, the less sustainable sites will be identified as reserve sites. At this stage, the council has not decided which are to be allocated and which are to be reserve sites, and is inviting comments on this at this stage.

A list of all potential housing allocations is contained within Appendix A. They are also shown on the policies map.

<sup>16</sup> in the case of Marsworth, the residual housing requirement figure is almost exactly the same as the total suitable HELAA sites, so all suitable sites would need to be allocated rather than the process of prioritising sites

The 'made' neighbourhood plans listed below make the following contribution to the medium villages housing requirement:

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Neighbourhood plan allocation (including reserve sites)</b>
Cheddington	100
Great Horwood	45
Marsh Gibbon	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>145</b>

The remainder of the housing requirement will be met by identifying further suitable sites through a review of the HELAA, or by emerging/reviewed neighbourhood plans where there is a commitment for these to be 'made' in the 12 months following the adoption of the VALP.

Development in medium villages not allocated in this plan or in a made neighbourhood plan will not normally be permitted. Further development beyond allocated sites will only be permitted where the council's monitoring of housing delivery across the district shows that the allocated sites are not being delivered at the anticipated rate. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence demonstrating how the site can be delivered in a timely manner. The proposal must contribute to the sustainability of that village, be in accordance with all applicable policies in the Local Plan, and fulfil the following criteria:

- a. Be located within or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village\*
- b. Not result in coalescence with any neighbouring settlement
- c. Be of a scale and in a location that is in keeping with the existing form of the settlement, and not adversely affect its character and appearance
- d. Respect and retain natural boundaries and features such as trees, hedgerows, embankments and drainage ditches
- e. Not have any adverse impact on environmental assets such as landscape, historic environment, biodiversity, waterways, open space and green infrastructure and
- f. Provide appropriate infrastructure provision such as waste water drainage and highways

*\*the existing developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village, and excludes individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings. This includes former agricultural barns that have been converted, agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the village and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built up area of the village*

## Delivering sites at smaller villages

- 4.85 Smaller villages have relatively poor access to services and facilities and are therefore only suited to accommodating small scale development. As set out in Policies S2 and S3, smaller villages are required to provide a total of 447 new homes between 2013 and 2033, which is a 5% increase on existing housing stock. Individual housing requirements for each smaller village are set out in Table 2 which accompanies Policy S2.
- 4.86 The housing requirement for smaller villages will be met through a combination of sites allocated in neighbourhood plans and sites coming forward as part of the development management process. At smaller villages, where sufficient specific sites are not identified to meet the housing requirements, particular emphasis is given to the role of local communities in identifying how best to meet their own development needs through neighbourhood plans as set out in more detail in Policy D4. If sufficient capacity is not identified within 12 months of the VALP being adopted, development schemes will be permitted on a case by case basis until the identified housing requirement is met. The council will work with communities to identify sustainable sites in the smaller villages.
- 4.87 In terms of smaller villages, the current situation in terms of housing figures is as follows:

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Adstock	9	3	0	6	0	6 still to be identified
Akeley	11	2	2	7	0	7 still to be identified
Ashendon	5	5	0	0	0	No further sites required
Aston Abbotts	9	4	1	4	0	4 still to be identified
Beachampton	3	1	3	0	0	No further sites required
Bishopstone	6	0	0	6	0	6 still to be identified
Buckland	15	9	0	6	6	No further sites to be identified
Calvert Green	19	0	24	0	0	No further sites required
Chackmore	4	1	1	2	0	2 still to be identified
Charndon	6	1	0	5	0	5 still to be identified
Chearsley	12	7	5	0	10	No further sites required
Chilton	6	4	2	0	0	No further sites required
Cublington	7	5	2	0	0	No further sites required
Dagnall	11	2	1	8	0	8 still to be identified
Dinton	18	5	1	12	10	2 still to be identified
Drayton Parslow	12	1	6	5	20	Only permit approximately 5 homes
East Claydon	7	9	1	0	0	No further sites required
Ford	4	0	2	2	0	2 still to be identified
Granborough	12	3	0	9	40	Only permit approximately 9 homes
Great Brickhill	17	3	15	0	0	No further sites required
Halton	17	-1	0	18	0	18 still to be identified
Hardwick	6	4	1	1	0	1 still to be identified
Ivinghoe Aston	5	0	0	5	0	5 still to be identified

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Little Horwood	10	10	3	0	0	No further sites required
Ludgershall	9	2	2	5	0	5 still to be identified
Mentmore and Ledburn	9	1	4	4	0	4 still to be identified
Mursley	14	9	3	2	0	2 still to be identified
Nash	8	6	9	0	21	No further sites required
Northall	9	4	1	4	21	Only permit approximately 4 homes
Oakley	22	11	19	0	25	No further sites required
Oving (including Pitchcott)	9	23	7	0	1	No further sites required
Preston Bissett	6	10	0	0	5	No further sites required
Shabbington	10	6	0	4	8	Only permit approximately 4 homes
Slapton	12	5	10	0	8	No further sites required
Soulbury	16	17	6	0	12	No further sites required
Stowe and Dadford	8	1	0	7	18	Only permit approximately 7 homes
Swanbourne	9	7	1	1	6	Only permit approximately 1 dwelling
Thornborough	12	6	2	4	0	4 still to be identified
Turweston	5	2	0	3	0	3 still to be identified
Twyford	11	4	3	4	25	Only permit approximately 4 homes
Weedon	8	-1	2	7	0	7 still to be identified
Westbury	9	22	12	0	39	No further sites required

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Housing requirement</b>	<b>Commitments 2015/16</b>	<b>Completions 2013-2016</b>	<b>Residual housing requirement</b>	<b>HELAA suitable / part suitable sites (excluding commitments)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Westcott	9	1	2	6	10	Only permit approximately 6 homes
Whaddon	10	0	-1	11	0	11 still to be identified
Worminghall	11	6	2	3	10	Only permit approximately 3 homes

4.88 The following settlements do not require any further sites to be identified as either their housing requirement has already been met:

- Ashendon
- Beachampton
- Buckland<sup>17</sup>
- Calvert Green
- Chearsley
- Chilton
- Cublington
- East Claydon
- Great Brickhill
- Little Horwood
- Nash
- Oakley
- Oving (including Pitchcott)
- Preston Bissett
- Slapton
- Soulbury
- Westbury

4.89 The following settlements have more HELAA suitable sites than their residual housing requirement figure, and so not all of the suitable sites will be necessary to meet the requirement. Therefore proposals will only be permitted where the development would not result in the residual housing requirement for that village being exceeded.

- Drayton Parslow
- Granborough
- Northall
- Shabbington
- Stowe and Dadford
- Swanbourne
- Twyford
- Westcott
- Worminghall

4.90 The following settlements fall short of their residual housing requirement, and further sites need to be identified:

- Adstock (6)
- Akeley (7)
- Aston Abbotts (4)
- Bishopstone (6)
- Chackmore (2)
- Charndon (5)
- Dagnall (8)
- Dinton (2)
- Ford (2)
- Halton (18)
- Hardwick (1)

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<sup>17</sup> The site identified at Buckland as suitable in the HELAA matches exactly the residual housing requirement figure, and so it is assumed that this site will come forward for development

- Ivinghoe Aston (5)
- Ludgershall (5)
- Mentmore and Ledburn (4)
- Mursley (2)
- Thornborough (4)
- Turweston (3)
- Weedon (7)
- Whaddon (11)

4.91 The bracketed number denotes the number of homes still to be allocated (total of 102).

## D7 Housing development at smaller villages

The housing requirement for smaller villages is 447 homes. The ‘made’ neighbourhood plans listed below make the following contribution to the smaller villages housing requirement:

Settlement	Neighbourhood plan allocation (including reserve sites)
Buckland	0
TOTAL	0

The remainder of the housing requirement will be met by emerging neighbourhood plans where or by emerging/reviewed neighbourhood plans where there is a commitment for these to be ‘made’ in the 12 months following the adoption of the VALP, combined with proposals anticipated to come forward as part of the development management process.

New housing development at smaller villages will be supported where it contributes to the sustainability of that village and is in accordance with all applicable policies in the Local Plan, provided that the proposed development fulfils the following criteria:

- is located within or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the village\*
- would not result in coalescence with any neighbouring settlement
- is of a small scale and in a location that is in keeping with the existing form of the settlement, and would not adversely affect its character and appearance
- respects and retains natural boundaries and features such as trees, hedgerows, embankments and drainage ditches
- would not have any adverse impact on environmental assets such as landscape, historic environment, biodiversity, waterways, open space and green infrastructure
- can be served by sustainable infrastructure provision such as waste water drainage and highways and
- does not result in the published residual housing requirement for that village being exceeded, unless the council’s monitoring of housing delivery across the district shows that the allocated sites are not being delivered at the anticipated rate

*\*the existing developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village, and excludes individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings. This includes former agricultural barns that have been converted, agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the village and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built up area of the village*

## Assessing proposals at other settlements

- 4.92 New housing development at other settlements will be very strictly controlled to ensure that new development is directed to the most sustainable locations in the district. The replacement of existing homes and the infilling of one or two homes in an otherwise built-up frontage will generally be acceptable, provided that the proposal is in accordance with other policies in the Local Plan.
- 4.93 Dwellings that come forward under this Policy will count towards the Windfall allowance in Policy S2. In the years 2013 – 16 there have been 159 completions and there will be further commitments within these settlements.

### D8 Housing at other settlements

In other settlements, permission for the construction of new homes will only be granted:

- a. in the exceptional circumstances of providing affordable housing to meet local housing needs established through a housing need survey, or housing necessary for the purposes of essential rural needs or
- b. for infilling of small gaps in developed frontages with one or two homes in keeping with the scale and spacing of nearby homes, and for the replacement of existing homes in their original curtilage, where there would be no adverse effect on the character of the countryside or other planning interests, subject to other policies in the Local Plan

## The need for new employment land

- 4.94 Future employment requirements for the district have been assessed as part of the Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) December 2015, produced by Opinion Research Services and Atkins. The assessment used an economic forecast from Oxford Economics to predict the number of workers that there will be by 2033. They assessed the amount of floor space required for each employment use to accommodate that number of workers. This was then converted into land area requirements for each employment use – the ‘demand’ calculation. The ‘supply’ was then assessed taking account of any existing employment allocations in either the old local plan or neighbourhood plans, sites with planning permission minus sites that have prior approval to be converted from offices to residential development.
- 4.95 The Buckinghamshire HEDNA, identifies the supply-demand balance in terms of land requirements. This highlights that there is an oversupply of employment land in the district compared to the predicted need for employment land, with a surplus of 221,400sq m or 51 hectares of total B use class. The established principle is that the area where an employment use will be located should house the required workers. To avoid the need to build even more houses the council proposes to reduce this over supply. However, for the market to function efficiently and to allow effectively for churn, choice and flexibility, so it will always be necessary for the supply of land and premises to be in excess of projected future demand.
- 4.96 The council has examined the potential for reducing the level of employment provision in the district. This has focussed on reviewing sites where it is considered that employment use does not need to be protected in the long term. A number of the sites have only recently been granted consent and it is not certain that landowners would wish to see their land converted to other employment uses or housing. Nevertheless the council must find a way to reduce it’s employment land stock or else allocate a significantly larger amount of housing. Due to the controversial nature of this issue the council cannot identify the sites it will release at this stage, but will engage with landowners to determine which sites can be released. Landowners with permitted employment sites may wish to contact the council if they wish to suggest their sites for consideration.

## Provision of new employment land

- 4.97 Normally a local plan would aim to allocate new employment sites to meet the needs of new residents. A continuing provision of land and premises suitable for employment uses is needed, of a type and scale appropriate to the characteristics of the local area. This should provide sufficient opportunities for employment needs to be met locally, reduce the need to travel to work, and promote economic growth and social inclusion. Following the reduction of employment, this will be achieved by the protection of suitable existing employment sites, (including Enterprise Zones), from other forms of development. Flexible policies are required to allow employment development to come forward on other suitable sites where a specific requirement needs to be met.
- 4.98 The general principle relating to employment land and premises, is that fit for purpose B1, B2 and B8 key employment sites should be safeguarded to maintain a diverse range of business activities in the district. Surplus sites that are not fit for purpose should be considered for release to other uses. Any existing B1, B2 and B8 businesses that are affected by the loss of employment land should be relocated to alternative premises so viable businesses are not affected.

## **D9 Provision of employment land**

Employment development will generally be supported in sustainable locations:

- a. through any allocations in this plan
- b. through the intensification or extension of existing premises
- c. as part of a farm diversification scheme
- d. through the re-use or replacement of an existing building, or
- e. in a rural location where this is essential for that type of business.

Proposals for suitable live-work developments which will not diminish normal residential amenity, will be permitted in locations considered suitable for open market residential development. The subsequent conversion of such units to full residential use will not be permitted unless evidence can be submitted that there is no prospect of the unit being used for that purpose.

## Town, village and local centres to support new and existing communities

- 4.99 The town, village and local centres across the district are crucial in supporting the growth of sustainable communities by being a focal point for local communities in terms of services, retail, leisure and employment. It is therefore important to retain a hierarchy of centres and a 'town centre first' approach for those areas, in order to support the growth and distribution proposed in the VALP's strategy and to help retain local distinctiveness across the district.
- 4.100 Changes in the way that people shop mean that the role of town, village and local centres is evolving. Growth in internet shopping and other factors mean that the focus of town and local centres in future is likely to be more diverse than the traditional retail role. The VALP provides a flexible approach to be able to accommodate potential changes in the role of town and local centres during the plan period. The strategy and policy approach seeks to ensure town and local centres will flourish and prosper, providing a mix of uses.
- 4.101 Within the district Aylesbury town centre is the largest centre, followed by Buckingham town centre, and on a smaller scale the centres at Wendover, Winslow and Haddenham. Aylesbury and Buckingham are both operating as the main town centres in the district, offering a range of social, cultural, leisure and employment functions for a wide catchment area. However, they are competing with nearby larger centres at Milton Keynes, Bicester, Oxford, and to a lesser extent High Wycombe, Hemel Hempstead, and Luton. Aylesbury itself has a number of local centres that provide an important local shopping role that should be maintained.
- 4.102 Aylesbury will remain the principal retail and service centre in the district recognising its role as a potential garden town, but the town centre needs continued investment and revitalisation. There has been significant investment in the transport infrastructure and cultural offer at Aylesbury in recent years including development of the Waterside Theatre, Waterside North and the surrounding area. Policy D9 sets out a strategy for growth and revitalisation of Aylesbury town centre. The policy sets out further details about how the vision will be implemented and allocates a site in the town centre for redevelopment.
- 4.103 Buckingham town centre also needs to build on its programme of regeneration to maximise the benefits continuing growth can bring, and to support the level of jobs and homes growth proposed for the northern part of the district. Growth of the university campus is likely to play a role in this. Some of these issues are addressed in the made Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out policies to revitalise and grow the town centre of Buckingham.
- 4.104 To support economic, retail and leisure activity in the centres within the other strategic settlements of Winslow, Wendover and Haddenham, the council will encourage a mix of uses services as well as resisting the loss of essential provision. The policy seeks to create a positive framework to support economic growth and diversity in town and local centres with a mix of uses which can include retail, leisure, services and employment.
- 4.105 Similar to the approach for supporting employment growth, the strategy for town, village and local centres seeks flexibility to support opportunities for sustainable growth. This approach also recognises that a variety of uses, as well as retail, need to be encouraged to support local, village and town centres, particularly at the strategic centres. This will enable them to compete with centres outside of the district and to make them more sustainable and support their renaissance.
- 4.106 Community services and local facilities continue to be important in local and village centres. The strategy seeks to resist the on-going loss of essential facilities and businesses such as local shops, pubs and post offices so that communities do not stagnate or go into decline.

Policy I3 covers this in more detail. The council will support communities in preparing neighbourhood plans to help address these issues.

- 4.107 New local centres are to be provided within major development areas which will also be key to support sustainable development.
- 4.108 Town centres also have an important contribution towards meeting the requirement for housing. Residential development in the right location adds to the vitality and viability of the town centre and helps to reduce the need to travel as people can live close to work and local services. However, this must not lead to the loss of locations required for uses directly related to the town centre and its shopping and leisure functions, and should be of an appropriate scale.
- 4.109 Town centres are appropriate locations for residential development in order to contribute to the mix of uses. This should comprise a mix of tenures and sizes of units including affordable housing (in line with Policy H2) and should be of an appropriate scale.
- 4.110 The Aylesbury Vale Retail Study 2015 identifies the need for growth of retail (convenience or comparison) beyond that which is already committed in allocations of planning permissions. The report identifies the following indicative targets for retail floor space provision:

Convenience floor space capacity	2019	2024	2029	2033
Aylesbury town centre <sup>18</sup>	-	-	790 sq m	2,317 sq m
Buckingham	-	-	-	-
Haddenham	-	-	-	-
Wendover	-	8 sq m	20 sq m	29 sq m
Winslow	222 sq m	262 sq m	299 sq m	328 sq m

Comparison floor space Capacity	2019	2024	2029	2033
Aylesbury Vale total	-	3,173 sq m	10,292 sq m	16,048 sq m

- 4.111 Recognising that the existing retail study does not take fully into account the improving economic situation and that the unmet housing needs from other authorities increases the district's housing requirement significantly, it is the council's intention to commission an update to the retail evidence to accompany the next stage of the VALP (pre-submission). This will reflect the most up-to-date information on the amount of growth to be accommodated in the district, and recognise Aylesbury's enhanced role as a potential new garden town delivering the majority of the district's growth. As such, the floor space requirements may increase with the need to identify sites to accommodate additional capacity. The pre-submission Plan will identify all town, local and village centres.

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<sup>18</sup> This includes the commitment at Gatehouse Quarter of 2,617 sq m. If this development does not come forward there may be a requirement for equal floor space earlier in the VALP period.

## **D10 Town, village and local centres to support new and existing communities**

The strategy for town, village and local centres builds on the vision and strategic objectives set out in the VALP. Growth and expansion of town and local centres should be consistent with the existing hierarchy of centres within the district.

The council will promote the sustainable growth and regeneration of Aylesbury, Buckingham, Haddenham, Wendover and Winslow. Within defined town centres, development proposals for retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development will be supported (subject to compliance with other policies in the VALP) where they:

- a. retain or enhance the town centre's historic character and appearance, vitality and viability
- b. sustain or enhance diverse town centre uses and customer choice, incorporating residential accommodation above ground floor level where possible, and
- c. are readily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.

Proposals for town centre uses should be sited within the town or local centres. Proposals for such uses outside town or local centres are to be considered against Policy E3.

Proposals for development in and around town, local or village centres, including proposals for changes of use, should support the aspirations for regeneration of those town centres including those subject to neighbourhood plans by improving the range and quality of retail, public realm, leisure, employment and training opportunities.

New local centres will be provided within major development areas.

In local and village centres, proposals which provide access to jobs or homes and convenient access to everyday shops, services and local community facilities will be supported, provided the proposal is of an appropriate scale and does not compromise the character of the area and the functionality of the centre.

Local and village centres will also be encouraged to grow and loss of essential facilities and businesses such as local shops, pubs and post offices will not be supported.

## Aylesbury town centre

- 4.112 Aylesbury is the county town of Buckinghamshire and has long been the focus of new development in the district and will continue to be the main location for growth in its role as a garden town. This means that investment and development both inside and beyond the town centre boundary will be necessary to meet the needs of the growing population.
- 4.113 Aylesbury is fortunate in having successfully retained its historic centre whilst accommodating significant modern developments. A major part of its attraction is the proximity of the "Old Town", centred around St. Mary's Church, to the main shopping area, and that within the shopping area there is a number of historic buildings and frontages which adds to its distinctiveness and character.
- 4.114 Recent years have seen significant investment in the town with the development of Aylesbury Waterside Theatre and a Waitrose store, and further development is planned as part of the Waterside North scheme. The town is reasonably well represented by national retailers and has a major department store. However, in order to compete successfully within the sub-region, Aylesbury needs to overcome the current challenges it faces:

### The challenges

- 4.115 **Recession** - for towns of Aylesbury's size, the recession had a significant impact and whilst unit vacancy rates remained below the national average, many national retailers have reduced their portfolio concentrating their investments into the regional towns or cities. Attracting new private sector investment has also until relatively recently, been difficult. Future aspirations for the town centre need to recognise that phased development within a vision framework will be the favoured approach.
- 4.116 **Attractiveness and identity** - like all town centres, there are areas of Aylesbury which haven't been improved for some time and consequently reflect negatively on the town. This affects both visitors' perception and those of potential new investors. Future plans need to pay equal attention to these areas as well as the opportunities for new development.
- 4.117 **A growing population** - with Aylesbury remaining the main focus and a significant area for housing and employment growth in the district, further infrastructure (including retail) within and beyond the town centre will continue to develop, simply to meet the needs of a growing and working population.
- 4.118 **Protecting existing investment** - the success of existing assets and investments such as Aylesbury Waterside Theatre and Aqua Vale depend on the whole visitor experience. Plans to deliver new shops, catering outlets and public realm improvements have not come forward as quickly as originally anticipated, largely due to the economic downturn.
- 4.119 **Competition and changing expectations** - as well as people's changing expectations of their town centres, other growing trends are posing a threat to the traditional high street:
- **Out of town retailing** – key retailers moving out of Aylesbury's town centre when their leases come up for renewal could have a major impact.
  - **Competition from major supermarkets** who have made themselves more appealing to people with busy lifestyles by broadening their non-food retail offer and raising their game in sectors such as fashion by using leading designers.
  - **Internet/mobile shopping** – this continues to be the single biggest impact on the shape of town centre retailing. Retailers are responding partly by rationalising their portfolio but also by developing their click and collect offer to capture secondary purchases through the collect visit.

- **Consumers making fewer, shorter trips to towns**, preferring to make longer trips, less frequently to bigger regional centres which offer the total day experience. Here shopping can be combined with a variety of leisure activities whether dining or visiting the cinema. A two-hour drive is not considered unreasonable by today's consumers.
- **Leisure time is becoming more important** to people leading busy lives and coupled with the growth of internet retailing this means that shopping will no longer be the primary reason to visit a town centre. The opportunity to socialise in Aylesbury town centre will be key to its future success.
- **The proposed east-west rail route** could attract visitors from the villages in between Aylesbury and Milton Keynes. However, it will also make it easier and more attractive for them to go to MK from Winslow (a new station is due to open in 2020) if Aylesbury does not succeed in improving its offer.
- **The rising popularity and enhancement** of other competing centres such as High Wycombe and Bicester town.

Failure to capitalise on our catchment.

- 4.120 Aylesbury has a large potential catchment of 238,000 people within a twenty-five-minute drive time. Three quarters of this catchment are 'affluent, aspirational and from the highest social profile groups in terms of lifestyle.' Yet the town is failing to capitalise fully on these high spending consumers because, while some are visiting the town centre for employment reasons or to use services such as banks, they are not necessarily visiting in the numbers that could be achieved in terms of retail and other activities. Of those who are visiting, an insufficient number are spending their money in the town. So, unless Aylesbury improves its offer to give its catchment market what it is increasingly looking for, current leakage to neighbouring towns will continue.

### Guiding principles and strategic aims for future development

- 4.121 In seeking to enhance Aylesbury's role as county town and sub-regional shopping centre, the council has developed and approved the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan (2014) which was prepared working closely with Aylesbury Town Council and Buckinghamshire County Council. The Town Centre Plan sets out seven guiding principles for the future development of Aylesbury town centre:
- 4.122 **Principle 1:** Positioning the town centre correctly by providing a complementary, credible alternative to Milton Keynes and Watford and being a 'best in class' sub-regional centre.
- 4.123 **Principle 2:** Being different, rather than a 'clone', but base the town's unique selling point on reality. Aylesbury needs to distinguish itself from other town centres in the area, but in a way that is credible.
- 4.124 **Principle 3:** Offering what the 'market' is looking for to capitalise on our enviable catchment. Whilst there has been significant investment in the town centre in recent years by both the public and private sector, Aylesbury's retail offer is currently weighted towards the lower/mass market consumer, with a limited choice in terms of product categories, ranges and brands for the mid/upper market, discerning consumer.
- 4.125 A food and beverage assessment carried out by Coverpoint in 2014, also concludes that the town centre retail and food and drink sector needs more choice across all categories, but particularly in the family dining and mid-higher quality categories.
- 4.126 **Principle 4:** Encouraging social interaction. Whilst the retail experience is changing largely as a result of the internet, visitors will still value a physical town centre outlet, particularly if it offers them opportunities to browse and spend time in an attractive environment and meet their friends and family. They will see the town centre as a place not just for shopping

or business, but for social interaction in its widest sense and as a place in which to meet, relax and spend their leisure time. New improvement schemes need to recognise this by delivering, integrated mixed uses including housing and quality public space throughout the town to help connect the different areas.

4.127 **Principle 5:** Build community spirit. Social interaction is about inclusiveness and using space and facilities to help build a sense of togetherness as one community. We should aim to create a town which shows its community spirit through welcoming events and activities.

4.128 **Principle 6:** Take a connected, 'whole town' approach. The success of one area of the town should not be compromised by development in another and we must take a strategic approach to work such as green infrastructure and signage.

4.129 **Principle 7:** Appeal to all our different town centre users. We must make sure we're appealing to the whole of our potential catchment including families, young professionals, students, college and university leavers who are looking for their first jobs, 'empty nesters' and older people.

4.130 The following strategic aims flow from the guiding principles, our vision for Aylesbury and the studies and strategies which arose from the recommendations from the previous Aylesbury Town Centre Masterplan carried out by ARUP. They are cross-cutting, which means they have implications for the whole of the town, but the action plans in the Town Centre Plan show how they will apply to specific areas.

4.131 The strategic aims are grouped under two main headings:

Economic regeneration

4.132 Provide a more balanced and attractive leisure, retail and food and beverage offer and circuit, which:

- helps transform the day, evening and weekend economy in Aylesbury and puts it on the map as a destination of choice
- matches the needs of all ages and communities and brings them together
- matches the needs of consumers from within our catchment (and beyond), as well as business investors and operators, and
- builds on the legacy of London 2012.

Physical regeneration:

4.133 Create a high quality, connected and sustainable built, natural and transport environment which appeals to, and matches the needs of, all consumers and business investors within our catchment market and supports our leisure, retail and housing aspirations.

The vision

4.134 To enable Aylesbury to compete and succeed in the future we need to continue our work to reinvigorate the town centre. The Aylesbury Town Centre Plan contains the following vision for the town:

- To be a high profile, sub-regional centre for entertainment and the arts, which has added a distinctive edge to its market town heritage.
- To be a distinctive, 'best in class', modern market town, which is attractive, safe, sustainable and accessible.

- To provide a quality, day and evening environment in terms of leisure, retail and food and drink, which attracts and brings together people of all ages and communities from within its enviable catchment  
(Aylesbury Town Centre Plan, 2014)

- 4.135 There are a number of uses and activities that should be accommodated in the town centre including shopping, leisure, entertainment, employment, housing, worship and tourism. It is one of the objectives of this Plan to accommodate these sometimes competing uses in a way which most benefits the whole of the town centre.
- 4.136 The Aylesbury Town Centre Plan reflects the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) regarding town centres, which states that policies should support their viability and vitality and promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer.

### **A place to shop**

- 4.137 In accordance with the NPPF, the principles of the settlement hierarchy, and recognising Aylesbury's role as a garden town, new shopping development should be concentrated at Aylesbury, and this development should be concentrated within or on the edge of the town centre. Aylesbury's town centre embraces a multitude of uses and activities including shops, homes, jobs, pubs and clubs, restaurants, leisure, sports and community facilities. The town centre is defined on the policies map and includes the area within the inner relief road, along with areas to the south which include Morrison's and the railway station, to the south east including Aylesbury Waterside theatre, Waitrose, and Vale Park and Aqua Vale swimming and fitness centre to the east, and to the north east including Aylesbury Shopping Park, B&Q and the Royal Mail sorting office. The proposed town centre boundary is as identified in the Retail Study Annex F. Proposals for development within this area will be considered having regard to their town centre location.

### **New floor space requirements**

#### Comparison goods

- 4.138 As the population grows with the expansion of the town (and wider district), there is a need for the town's shopping facilities to expand and improve in order to maintain Aylesbury's role as the main retail focus in Aylesbury Vale and as a sub-regional centre in the county. The Aylesbury Vale Retail Study was carried out in 2015. This concludes that 16,000 sq. m. of comparison floor space<sup>19</sup> will be required by 2033 and that this should predominantly be delivered towards the end of the Plan period.
- 4.139 This is a district-wide target, but it is the council's intention to focus new comparison retailing at Aylesbury as the main focus for shopping in the district. This figure is not seen as a prescriptive target, but rather as an indicative guide to the amount of floor space that will be required in the plan period. However, it is the council's intention to commission an update on the retail evidence to accompany the next stage of the plan (proposed submission) in order to reflect the most up-to-date information on the amount of growth to be accommodated in the district, and where it should be located recognising Aylesbury's enhanced role as a garden town delivering the majority of the district's growth. As such, the floor space requirement may increase.
- 4.140 It is essential to locate comparison shopping in such a way as to extend range and choice. The first priority is therefore to accommodate the additional floor space within the retail

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<sup>19</sup> Comparison goods are defined in full in the glossary, but include items such as clothing and electrical items

core of the town centre . The additional floor space will primarily be delivered by allocating a new site within the town centre for a mixed-use redevelopment.

- 4.141 Waterside North, a town centre site adjacent to Exchange Street and currently in use as a temporary surface car park, has been identified for a number of years as the location for the next phases of development. The Phase one scheme will see the construction on part of the car park, of up to four restaurants, with 47 apartments on three floors above and a new public square beginning in early 2017 with completion in 2018.
- 4.142 The provision of the additional retail floor space is expected to be included in future phases of development which will extend the site beyond Waterside North to the Royal Mail sorting office. This area is shown on the policies map. In addition to retail, these development phases should provide a mix of main town centre uses and fulfil the vision and strategic aims for the town centre as set out above. This should include an element of car parking to redress any shortfall in car parking from the loss of existing car parks as a result the next phase of town centre regeneration.
- 4.143 An Aylesbury parking strategy is due to be commissioned shortly, which will set out the council's aims regarding parking in the town, identify the amount of parking that the town centre needs and conclude where this should be located and in what form.
- 4.144 Within the town centre, the council will view positively proposals for retail and other main town centre uses provided that they contribute positively to improving the quality of the town centre and delivering the vision and aims set out above. The Retail Study concludes that qualitative improvements and investment will be needed to retain Aylesbury's credibility as a sub-regional centre and ensure that it can increasingly be seen as a place for social interaction. In particular, the development or redevelopment of smaller sites can lead to qualitative improvements in shopping facilities and can readily be accommodated within and enhance the town centre. Other proposals for town centre comparison goods shopping will be assessed against policy D10.

Convenience stores

- 4.145 Aylesbury is well served by convenience stores<sup>20</sup>, and the Retail Study concludes that only around 3,000 sq. m. of new convenience floor space will need to be delivered by 2033 in Aylesbury. Within the town centre, a scheme for external enhancements and an extension to the existing Sainsbury's store fronting Buckingham Street has been approved subject to a section 106 planning obligation agreement. This is linked to the development of the larger, new Sainsbury's store which is proposed at Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury.

### **D11 Site for town centre redevelopment**

The policies map identifies a site between the Exchange Street car park and the Royal Mail sorting office (including Hampden House and Upper Hundreds car park) for mixed-use redevelopment based principally on retail uses with an element of residential and other town centre uses at an appropriate scale and location. The redevelopment scheme(s) must make adequate provision for car parking in accordance with the council's car parking strategy. Development proposals must contribute positively to meeting the vision and strategic aims for the town centre.

Aylesbury town centre and the primary shopping frontages are defined on the Policies Map (see Policy E2). Informed by the aims and objectives of the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan (2014), and the evidence in the 2015 Retail Study identifying a continuing need to improve and invest in

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<sup>20</sup> Convenience stores are defined in full in the glossary but include items such as food, beverages and newspapers

Aylesbury town centre, qualitative redevelopment in the town centre will be supported and encouraged.

## **D12 Aylesbury town centre**

Elsewhere in the town centre, proposals for retail and other main town centre uses will be supported provided that they contribute positively to improving the quality of the town centre and delivering the vision and strategic aims for the town centre set out above. Proposals should have particular regard to enhancements to the built environment, improvements for pedestrian access and environmental enhancements to the public realm.

### **A place to live**

- 4.146 Residential uses in Aylesbury town centre are mainly concentrated in the 'Old Town' area around St. Mary's Church, extending along Church Street and Parsons Fee to Castle Street and Rickfords Hill and north from the church along Nelson Terrace, Granville Street and Ripon Street, and to the south west of the town in the Friarscroft area.
- 4.147 It is important to ensure that the residential role of the town centre is not lost to ensure that Aylesbury continues and enhances its role as a vibrant and thriving town providing opportunities for social interaction. Providing more housing within and close to the town centre will contribute to meeting this aim. More housing in the town centre is sustainable; it will provide greater choice, a better balance of uses, accommodation for those who wish to be less reliant on the car, and increased activity outside peak periods. It will help provide a more attractive and safer town centre environment and add positively to the quality of the centre's urban fabric. A number of sites within Aylesbury town centre are identified as being suitable or part suitable for housing development in the Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessment, and three of these are to be allocated for housing. These sites are identified on the proposals map. Two further sites in the town centre are identified as part suitable for housing (Royal Mail sorting office and Hampden House), but these form part of the site for town centre redevelopment identified above and are covered by policy D11.
- 4.148 Due to the change in permitted development rights, the council has seen an increase in the number of offices that have been converted to flats. It is anticipated that the recent increase in residential development in Aylesbury town centre will continue, not only by the conversion of employment to residential, but also the use of the upper floors above shops, which can be particularly suitable for conversion to flats.

## **D13 Housing in Aylesbury town centre**

The following sites are allocated for housing in Aylesbury town centre:

- a. Land at junction of Buckingham Street and New Street (approximately 14 dwellings)
- b. Dayla Site (approximately 39 dwellings)
- c. Kingsbury House (approximately 8 dwellings)

The council will support proposals for residential development in Aylesbury town centre provided that the above vision and aims are not compromised, as follows:

- d. Use of upper floors above shops.
- e. Conversion of vacant or underused employment buildings.
- f. As subsidiary parts of (re)development and other mixed use developments provided that this is of an appropriate scale and is in accordance with other policies in this plan.

### **A place of leisure and entertainment**

- 4.149 Aylesbury town centre (which includes Vale Park, the canal basin and Aqua Vale swimming and fitness centre) provides the focus for much of the town's leisure needs, and also serves a much wider catchment. The town centre also provides entertainment facilities such as Waterside theatre, a cinema complex, parks, restaurants, bars and nightclubs. The council recognises the essential role of such facilities in the town centre and will resist proposals that would result in the erosion of community facilities and services as set out in policy I3.

## Gypsy, Traveller and travelling showpeople sites

- 4.150 Policy D14 sets out a criteria based approach to assess potential allocations and any applications for new sites or for expanding current sites within the district. This is required to ensure that Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation is provided in suitable locations. It is important to identify sites that are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally; have access to services, facilities and potential sources of employment; and which will promote inclusive communities but which will not be out of scale with or dominate nearby settled communities. When considering whether a proposed gypsy and traveller site would dominate settled communities, regard will be given to existing gypsy and traveller sites outside the district boundary but still in close proximity to the settled community.
- 4.151 Good practice guidance<sup>21</sup> has previously advised that an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a static and touring caravan, drying space for clothes, a lockable shed, parking space for two vehicles and a small garden.
- 4.152 The government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) identifies a definition distinction that gypsies and travellers who no longer lead a nomadic lifestyle are treated as non travelling gypsies and travellers for the purposes of the planning system and their needs must therefore be met by the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). However the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equalities Act 2010 protects their cultural choice to live in mobile accommodation and therefore there is a need to plan for this type of accommodation within the plan.

### D14 Gypsy/Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites

Proposals for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites or Gypsy and Traveller park home sites will be supported where it can be demonstrated that there is an identified need, taking into account existing local provision and the availability of alternative sites, and the following criteria have been met:

- a. It has reasonable access to existing local services and facilities (including shops, schools, healthcare and public transport). Sites should either be within or close to existing sustainable settlements or with good access to major roads and/or public transport
- b. Have safe and convenient vehicular access without giving rise to unacceptable impacts on highway safety
- c. Be able to achieve a reasonable level of visual and acoustic privacy for both people living on the site and those living nearby
- d. Not have an significantly adverse impact on environmental assets such as open countryside, landscapes, the historic environment, biodiversity, waterways, open space and green infrastructure
- e. The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community, and does not dominate the nearest settled community
- f. The site should not be located where there is a risk of flooding or be affected by environmental hazards that may effect residents health or welfare
- g. The site must be capable of being adequately serviced by drinking water, utilities and sewerage disposal facilities
- h. Sites should remain small in scale – no more normally than 15 pitches on any one site

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<sup>21</sup> Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites – Good Practice Guide, CLG, 2008; revoked 2015

- i. Sites should be suitably designed and the layout includes enough space to accommodate the proposed number of caravans, landscaping, vehicles and ancillary work areas as appropriate.

In the case of Travelling Showpeople, proposals will be also be assessed taking into account the needs for mixed use yards and the nature and scale of the Showpeople's business in terms of land required for storage and/or the exercising of animals.

Sites in the Green Belt will not be permitted unless other locations have been considered and only then where very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

# 5 Housing

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## Affordable housing on open market sites

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework currently defines affordable housing as ‘social rented, affordable rented<sup>22</sup> and intermediate housing<sup>23</sup>, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.’
- 5.2 ‘Starter homes’ are likely to be included within the definition of affordable housing and comprise 20% of a qualifying site. This will affect the viability of a site and the ability to deliver affordable housing. The forthcoming affordable housing viability study will consider the impact of starter homes<sup>24</sup>.
- 5.3 The (draft) Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2015 (HEDNA) identifies a need in Aylesbury Vale district for up to 6,580 additional affordable homes between 2013-33, equating to 329 affordable homes a year.
- 5.4 The majority of affordable housing in the district is achieved by requiring developers to provide affordable homes as part of open market housing developments (through Section 106 agreements). To enable the council to meet a proportion of the identified need, it will seek to secure a minimum of 31% affordable housing on qualifying development sites.
- 5.5 Policy H1 states that affordable housing will be sought on developments of 11 or more dwellings. This reflects the recently introduced threshold of 10 dwellings or fewer under which Section 106 planning obligations for affordable housing will not be sought. Where the affordable housing policy would result in a requirement that part of an affordable home should be provided, the calculation will be rounded upwards or a financial contribution of equivalent value for less than 0.5 may be sought.
- 5.6 Applicants seeking a lower percentage of affordable housing must demonstrate why it is not economically viable to provide the required level. Open book calculations will need to be provided by the applicant and then verified at their expense by an independent consultant chosen by the council who will then given it their consideration. Where development is demonstrated to be unviable, further negotiations will take place including consideration of the mix and type of social housing proposed, to test whether there is a better and more viable arrangement.
- 5.7 Affordable housing should be provided on the application site as this ensures the best prospect of ensuring a mixed and balanced community. The affordable homes will be expected to be integrated throughout the development site in groups of no more than 15 to 18 homes unless otherwise agreed by the council.
- 5.8 Off-site provision or financial contributions in lieu of affordable housing may be considered by the council in exceptional circumstances. The mechanism for how this is calculated will be outlined in the forthcoming Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

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<sup>22</sup> Affordable rented housing is normally let at less than 80% of market rent.

<sup>23</sup> Intermediate housing is provided at a cost below market levels and includes rented and shared ownership/shared equity homes.

<sup>24</sup> Policy H1 may be amended following the publication of the Regulations on Starter Homes as outlined in the Housing and Planning Act 2016. Policy H1 and its explanation have been drafted without reference to Starter Homes because until further guidance is received, it is not yet known how the legislation will impact upon this policy.

- 5.9 The type, size, tenure and location of the affordable homes will be negotiated on a site-by-site basis. The availability of affordable housing subsidy and identified needs in the locality at the time of the proposal would be considered, based on the most up to date evidence on housing need and any available evidence regarding local market conditions. For example, a proportion of affordable dwellings may be required to be suitable or easily adaptable for occupation by the elderly or people with disabilities. External factors such as subsequent changes in government policy that may affect the requirement of certain types of affordable homes may also need to be considered. Further details will be provided in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.10 Alternative housing delivery methods that may include affordable housing, such as Community Land Trusts and Community Right to Build, will be considered in line with national policy and in accordance with Policy H1 Affordable Housing policy.
- 5.11 The allocation of affordable housing will be made in accordance with the council's relevant allocation's policy. Affordable homes are to remain affordable in perpetuity or, if this restriction is lifted, the subsidy should be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision within the district.
- 5.12 Further details of the council's approach to affordable housing and the implementation of this policy will be provided in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

## H1 Affordable housing

Residential developments of 11 or more dwellings gross will be required to provide a minimum of 31% affordable homes on site. In addition:

- a. The type, size, tenure and location of affordable housing will be agreed with the council, taking account of the council's most up to date evidence on housing need and any available evidence regarding local market conditions.
- b. Where an applicant advises that a proposal is unviable in the light of the above policy requirement, an open book financial appraisal of the development should be provided by the applicant which will then be independently assessed at the expense of the applicant\*.
- c. In exceptional circumstances, the council may agree to the affordable housing being provided off-site or a financial contribution in lieu. In such cases, applicants will need to provide justification as part of the planning application.
- d. Where a site is part of a larger developable area that could be developed as a whole, the council will seek affordable housing provision appropriate to the larger area.

Further details regarding the implementation of this policy will be provided in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

\*the independent consultant who will assess the financial appraisal will be chosen by the Council.

## Affordable housing on rural exception sites

- 5.13 The largely rural nature of the district means the provision of affordable housing in rural areas is important. It helps to create and maintain sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. The need for more affordable homes in villages tends to be particularly acute as opportunities for delivery are more limited. This is mainly due to the limited availability of land suitable for residential development.
- 5.14 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines rural exception sites as small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing and seeks to address the needs of the local community. Such sites often provide fewer than 12 dwellings in locations within or immediately adjacent to the relevant settlement.
- 5.15 This policy applies to those areas designated as 'rural areas' in Statutory Instrument 1997 No. 625; The Housing (Right to Acquire and Enfranchise) ( Designated Rural Areas in the South East) Order 1997, in accordance with national guidance. The Statutory Instrument lists the areas (parishes by list and part parishes by map) where there is an exemption from 'right to acquire' on social rented properties. This assures that properties built on rural exception sites within these designated areas remain affordable in perpetuity.
- 5.16 The council expects exception schemes to be supported by the local parish council, and actively encourages parishes which are aware of a need for affordable housing to work with the Rural Housing Enabler or equivalent to undertake a local housing needs survey. Occupation of rural exception housing should be restricted to people with a local connection to the parish and/or surrounding parishes where the development is proposed.
- 5.17 It is expected that rural exception sites will deliver 100% affordable housing. In some cases however, a small proportion of 'market housing' may be appropriate where it can be demonstrated that the market housing is necessary to cross subsidise the delivery of the affordable housing within the scheme. In order for the council to establish if market housing is required, and if so the quantity, the applicant will be expected to provide an open book financial appraisal of the development. This will then be independently assessed at the expense of the developer to demonstrate the viability of the revised scheme.

### H2 Rural exception sites

In rural areas, small-scale developments for affordable housing may be permitted, provided that the proposal meets the following criteria:

- a. The number, mix, and design of dwellings is appropriate to meet local housing needs established through a housing need survey
- b. located on a site within or adjoining the existing developed footprint of the village\*, and
- c. dwellings permitted in accordance with this policy will be reserved in perpetuity for those in affordable local need with a valid local connection by planning obligation or conditions

Where an independently assessed open book viability assessment can demonstrate that 100% affordable housing cannot be delivered on an exception site, the council may agree to a proportion of some market homes within the site which will be sufficient to enable the site to be viable providing that the proportion is below 50% of the total dwellings.

\*the existing developed footprint is defined as 'the continuous built form of the village, and excludes individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings, agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the village and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings or the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built up area of the village'.

## Rural workers dwellings

- 5.18 National policy (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 55) states that 'local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside, unless there are special circumstances such as the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside'.
- 5.19 This policy sets out the council's approach to the provision of dwellings for agricultural, forestry and other full-time workers in the countryside where there is an essential need for them to live at or near their place of work.
- 5.20 A new permanent occupational dwelling will only be permitted:
- for a full-time (rather than part-time) occupational worker
  - if it can be justified on a functional and financial basis
  - if the identified accommodation need cannot be met in any other way and
  - if it is of an appropriate size, design and is well-sited.
- 5.21 The council may permit temporary agricultural, forestry operations or other rural-based enterprises workers' dwellings.
- 5.22 The council will control the occupancy of any occupational dwelling by condition or planning obligation. It will seek to secure the retention of such dwellings for occupational purposes to support the rural economy unless it can be demonstrated that an essential need no longer exists.

## Definition of a rural worker

- 5.23 The definition of a rural worker is not simply limited to someone employed in agriculture or forestry. It can include for example, those employed in equestrian or other land based enterprises, water based businesses, rural arts and crafts, etc. The definition does not apply to someone whose business or occupation is carried out in a wide locality in the rural area, for example a tradesperson who does not require fixed premises.

## The need for a full-time worker

- 5.24 The provision of residential accommodation for occupational purposes in the countryside is an exception to policies which seek to safeguard the countryside. Consequently, the council will not support an application for such accommodation unless available evidence clearly demonstrates that the scale and nature of an existing or intended enterprise is sufficient to require one or more full-time workers to live at or near to the place of work. In this respect, reference to full-time shall be construed as including a person who is employed to solely or mainly work in the relevant occupation. The council will not permit a permanent occupational dwelling for a part-time worker.
- 5.25 In considering whether the need is essential in any particular case, the council will consider the requirements of the enterprise concerned and not the personal preferences or circumstance of any of the individuals involved.

## Functional need and financial test

- 5.26 The council will seek functional and financial justification for all occupational dwellings in the countryside. The particular assessments applied can be different depending on whether the application is for a dwelling for an agricultural, forestry or other essential rural worker and whether the application is for temporary or permanent accommodation.

### Functional need for a permanent dwelling

- 5.27 The assessment of 'functional need' establishes whether the proposed dwelling is essential to enable one or more workers to be readily available at most times to ensure the proper functioning of the existing enterprise, provided that such a requirement cannot be reasonably dealt with by any other means.
- 5.28 For agricultural workers, such a requirement might arise, for example, if workers are needed to be on hand day and night:
- in case animals or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice or
  - to deal with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products, for example, by frost damage or the failure of automatic systems.
- 5.29 The protection of livestock from theft or injury by intruders may contribute on animal welfare grounds to the need for a new agricultural dwelling. By itself it will be sufficient to justify one. Requirements arising from food processing or agricultural contracting, as opposed to agriculture cannot be used to justify an agricultural dwelling, nor can agricultural needs justify the provision of isolated new dwellings as retirement homes for farmers.
- 5.30 It is unlikely that an essential functional need for a dwelling for a forestry worker could be justified given the nature of forestry, its limited scale in the district, and having regard to conventional methods of forestry management (which can involve the use of a seasonal or peripatetic workforce). Except perhaps for special circumstances, such as the need to service the intensive nursery production of trees.
- 5.31 There may also be instances where special justification exists for new isolated dwellings associated with other rural-based enterprises. The essential need for a rural worker's dwelling should be justified in relation to the activities and operations of the business, not the personal preferences or circumstances of the individuals involved, or for security reasons. In these cases, the enterprise itself, including any development necessary for the operation of the enterprise, must be acceptable in planning terms and permitted in that rural location, regardless of the consideration of any proposed associated dwelling.

### Financial test for permanent dwellings

- 5.32 Permanent accommodation cannot be justified on agricultural, forestry or business grounds unless the business enterprise is economically viable. A financial test is necessary to establish whether this is the case.
- 5.33 To justify a new permanent dwelling as sustainable development, the agricultural, forestry or rural business enterprise must be well-established. At the date when an application is submitted, it will need to be demonstrated that the enterprise to which the application relates:
- has been established for a continuous period of at least the previous three years and in the case of an enterprise consisting of more than one activity, the three years shall apply to the latest activity relating to the application
  - has been profitable for at least one of those three years and
  - Is both financially sound on that date, and also has a clear prospect of remaining so.
- 5.34 A proposal should be supported by a business plan and accounts prepared by a suitably qualified person, and be accompanied by evidence of how the maintenance or growth of the enterprise will be funded.
- 5.35 Applying the financial test can also help to establish the size and design of the dwelling the farming, forestry or rural business unit can sustain. In applying this test, the council will take

a realistic approach to the level or profitability, taking account the nature of the enterprise concerned.

### Meeting need in other ways

- 5.36 The council will need to be convinced that the identified accommodation needs could not be met in ways other than through the provision of a permanent dwelling. For example, applicants will need to demonstrate why agricultural, forestry or other essential rural workers could not live in nearby towns or villages, or make use of accommodation already existing on the farm, area of forestry or business unit. Where applicable, the council will take into consideration The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Schedule 2 Part 3 Class Q for agricultural buildings to dwelling houses.
- 5.37 The council will normally investigate when it believes a genuine need may not exist. For example, the council may look into the history of an agricultural holding, area of forestry or rural business to establish the recent pattern of use of land and buildings. This may include whether any dwellings, or buildings suitable for conversion to dwellings, have recently been sold separately or otherwise alienated from the farmland, area of forestry or rural business concerned. Such activity may well indicate a lack of a genuine need. In circumstances where the council considers that a genuine need does not exist, the proposal for an occupational dwelling will not be permitted.

### Dwelling size

- 5.38 Agricultural, forestry or other occupational dwellings should be of a size commensurate with the established functional requirement. In determining the appropriate size of a dwelling, the council will consider the requirements of the enterprise rather than those of the owner or occupier. The council will not permit dwellings that are:
- unusually large in relation to the agricultural, forestry or rural business needs of the unit, with net useable floor space not normally larger than 180 sq. m. for the initial dwelling and 120 sq. m. for each dwelling thereafter, excluding garaging but including associated offices such as a farm office, or
  - unusually expensive to construct in relation to the income the unit can sustain in the long-term.
- 5.39 Proposals for accommodation of a size in excess of the minimum that is demonstrated to be required will not normally be supported.

### Siting of the dwelling

- 5.40 Agricultural, forestry or other occupational dwellings should be sited so that the worker is conveniently located to undertake the activities required to meet the established functional need. New agricultural or forestry dwellings must be well-related to existing farm or forestry buildings, or other dwellings, where these exist on or adjacent to the unit for which the functional need has been established. Occupational dwellings associated with a rural business should be located on the site of the rural business and well-related to existing buildings, or other dwellings, where these exist on the site for which the functional need has been established.

### Temporary rural workers' dwellings

- 5.41 The council may permit a temporary dwelling for a full-time rural worker if it can be demonstrated that it is essential to support new farming, forestry or rural based enterprise, whether on a newly-created agricultural unit or an established one. The council will assess the functional need and apply a financial test to any proposal for a temporary dwelling.

- 5.42 The functional need for temporary accommodation will need to be justified in the same way as the need for a permanent occupational dwelling, except that need will have to be demonstrated in relation to the new farming enterprise. In this respect, clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise, such as significant investment in new farm building, will have to be available. The council will also require evidence that the functional need could not be fulfilled in any other way.
- 5.43 In the case of assessing financial need, the council will require the available evidence to demonstrate that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis with a reasonable prospect of delivering a sustainable profit before or by the expiry of the temporary period that the proposal seeks to secure.
- 5.44 The temporary dwelling should take the form of a caravan, a wooden structure or other temporary accommodation which can be easily dismantled. This is because any temporary permission will be granted for a specified period that will usually be for no longer than three years. Conditions will be imposed requiring its removal at the end of that period. Strong and clear justification will be required to support any proposals that a temporary period should be extended.
- 5.45 The council will not normally give temporary permission in a location where a permanent dwelling would not be permitted, or grant successive extensions to a temporary permission over a period of more than three years. If permission for a permanent dwelling is subsequently sought, the merits of the proposal will be assessed against the criteria in this policy relating to permanent occupational dwellings in the countryside.

### Occupancy and other conditions

- 5.46 Where a dwelling for a farm, forestry or essential rural worker has been permitted, the council wishes to ensure that the dwelling is kept available for meeting this need for as long as it exists. The council may control the occupancy of dwellings for farm, forestry or essential rural workers by condition, such as restricting the possible future separate sale of the occupational dwelling from all or part of the unit to which it relates.
- 5.47 Where a dwelling for a farm, forestry or essential rural worker is proposed, the council will usually seek to impose, as part of any permission, conditions removing permitted development rights to ensure the continued viability of maintaining the property for its intended use. Permitted development rights allow certain developments, such as extensions, within the curtilage (area of land cultivated and maintained as a garden) of a dwelling house. Developments of this nature could result in an occupational dwelling increasing to an unreasonable size; a size either not justified by the identified functional requirement of the unit, or becoming too expensive for any future potential occupier to acquire.

### Removal of occupancy conditions

- 5.48 The removal of an agricultural or forestry occupancy conditional will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it has outlived its usefulness.
- 5.49 The council would expect evidence to demonstrate why the dwelling is no longer required in connection with the related holding. Before considering the possibility of removing an occupancy condition, the council will also expect it to be evidenced that the dwelling has been:
- Made publically available without any unreasonable restriction and with amenity land proportionate to its size and

- Suitably advertised and marketed at a price reflecting its condition and the existence of the occupancy restriction for a continuous period of at least twelve months immediately prior to the date that an application is submitted.

- 5.50 The council would not expect an occupational dwelling for an essential rural worker to be severed from the business unit to which it is tied, unless the business fails. In particular, in such circumstances, the council would be unlikely to support any subsequent application to remove an occupational condition on such a severed dwelling or any future application for a new dwelling relating to the business.
- 5.51 Even if the business to which the dwelling relates fails, the council would expect every reasonable effort to be made to retain the occupational dwelling. The council would apply the same principles as it would to a proposal to remove an agricultural or forestry condition.
- 5.52 Proposals for the removal of an agricultural or forestry occupancy condition will be considered on the basis of an up-to-date assessment of the demand for farm or forestry dwellings in the locality and not just on the particular farm or forestry holding. When considering proposals to remove the occupancy condition for an essential rural worker, the council will need to be convinced that the dwelling is no longer needed for the continuing rural enterprise, or in the event that the enterprise fails, is not needed for any proposed new use with planning permission or to meet a wider need in the locality for an occupational dwelling for an agricultural, forestry or essential rural worker.

### Information and appraisals

- 5.53 Applicants must provide sufficient information to enable the council to determine any application for an occupational dwelling or the removal of an occupancy condition. The council may also seek the advice of agricultural or other consultants to give a technical appraisal of the case being put forward.

## H3 Rural workers dwellings

### Permanent rural workers' dwellings

A new permanent dwelling for an agricultural, forestry or rural worker will only be permitted if:

- the need relates to a full-time worker and does not relate to a part-time requirement
- there is an essential existing functional need for a worker to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work and
- the economic viability of the enterprise to which the proposed dwelling relates can be demonstrated by satisfying the 'financial test' applied by the council
- the functional need could not be fulfilled by any other means
- it is of the minimum size and an appropriate design commensurate with the established functional requirement and reflective of the enterprise's financial projections unless robustly justified
- it is sited so as to meet the identified functional need and is related to existing farm, forestry or rural business buildings, or other dwellings
- suitable accommodation, including that which might have been converted, has not been sold separately from the land within the last five years.

### Temporary rural workers' dwellings

A new temporary dwelling for an agricultural, forestry or rural worker will only be permitted if:

- the need relates to a full-time worker and does not relate to a part-time requirement
- it is essential to support a new rural business activity for which there is a clearly established functional need for the worker to live on or in the vicinity of the holding

- j. the future economic viability of the enterprise to which the proposed dwelling relates can be demonstrated a sound business plan
- k. the functional need could not be fulfilled by any other means
- l. it takes the form of a caravan, a wooden structure, or other temporary accommodation of the minimum size required to support the proposed new rural business activity
- m. suitable accommodation, including that which might have been converted, has not been sold separately from the land within the last five years.

### **Removal of occupancy conditions**

An agricultural, forestry or rural worker occupancy condition will only be lifted if it can be demonstrated that:

- n. A suitable sustained attempt has been made to advertise and market the dwelling for sale or rent at a price that reflects the occupancy restriction; and

The rural worker dwelling no longer serves a need in connection with the holding to which it relates, and there is no agricultural, forestry or rural worker occupational need elsewhere that it could reasonably service, nor is it likely that any such needs will arise in the foreseeable future.

## Replacement dwelling in the countryside

- 5.54 In the countryside outside the Green Belt, the replacement of existing dwellings will generally be acceptable. Whilst accepting the principle of the erection of replacement dwellings, it is important to take into account the overall effect of the proposed replacement. The effects of the proposed replacement should be compared with the impact of the existing dwelling. If the dwelling allowed exceeds the original size, the council may impose a condition withdrawing future permitted development rights. For the purpose of the comparison the term “dwelling” will not include any detached garaging or domestic outbuildings.

### H4 Replacement dwelling in the countryside

One for one replacement of dwellings within the countryside is considered acceptable in principle provided that the replacement dwelling does not cause significant harm to the site or its surroundings and accords with the design principles set out in policy BE2.

## Self/custom build housing

- 5.55 The affordability of housing in the district is a continuing challenge, and delivering housing that is affordable to local families is a priority for the council. The council considers that custom and self build housing can play an important part in solving the housing challenge, by complimenting the mainstream housing built by large house builders and housing associations.
- 5.56 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations defines self/custom build housing as ‘a dwelling built by or commissioned by someone to be occupied by them as their sole or main residence for at least three years.’ Because the VALP allocates mainly larger housing sites, without this policy it is likely that custom builders would struggle to compete for sites.
- 5.57 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF paragraph 50) expects local authorities to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. Local authorities must also plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community; such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes.

### H5 Self/custom build housing

The plan will expect all larger developments to provide a percentage of serviced dwelling plots for sale to self/custom builders. It may be appropriate to set a specific threshold for what is meant by ‘larger’ residential schemes, and therefore when these serviced dwelling plots should be provided. Further work will be done to determine what this threshold should be, which will be considered alongside any relevant responses to this policy. The council will be producing a supplementary planning document (SPD) to support this policy. The SPD will include details of demand, requirement, mix of plot sizes, design, planning requirements, marketing, and S106 requirements.

## Housing mix

5.58 A variety of housing types and sizes is necessary to meet the needs of the housing market to enable households to more easily move to housing which suits their needs and that they can afford.

5.59 The Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (2016) provides conclusions on the required mix of market and affordable housing need by house type and size for the VALP period. These conclusions take into account projected changes in the population and estimates future demand. The majority of the housing need is for houses, with a need for some flats identified. The HEDNA's conclusions regarding house sizes and types is set out below:

Market Housing		
Flats	1 bedroom	4%
	2 bedrooms	4%
Houses	2 bedrooms	13%
	3 bedrooms	52%
	4 bedrooms	21%
	5+ bedrooms	6.5%
Affordable Housing		
Flats	1 bedroom	9%
	2 bedrooms	6%
Houses	2 bedrooms	38%
	3 bedrooms	38%
	4 bedrooms	9%

*\*NB percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding*

## Housing for older people

5.60 Providing housing for older people is also essential. The demographic projections in the HEDNA's housing needs assessment show that the population of Buckinghamshire is likely to increase by between 64,700 and 73,700 people over the 20 year period 2013-2033. The number of people aged 75 or over is projected to increase by around 35,000, around half the total growth. Those that do move home are likely to need accessible housing. Specialist provision for older people is split into the following categories:

- mainstream (including adapted and wheelchair homes)
- specialised housing (including extra care and sheltered housing)
- care homes (including both registered nursing and registered care homes)

5.61 The HEDNA identifies the following demand for housing for older people:

Change in population aged 75+ over plan period	+13,978	
Demand for older person housing		
Extra care	Owned	420
	Rented	210
Sheltered 'plus' or 'enhanced' sheltered	Owned	140
	Rented	140
Dementia		80
Leasehold Schemes for the Elderly (LSE)		1,680

TOTAL	2,670
<i>Percentage of overall Objectively Assessed Need (OAN)</i>	12.5%

- 5.62 It is important to note that the objectively assessed housing need (OAN) for the district does not include the projected increase of the institutional population (including people in residential care homes and nursing homes, use class C2). For the district, it is projected that the institutional population aged 75+ will increase by 1,160 people.
- 5.63 Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) are currently preparing a document entitled 'Housing for Older Citizens in Buckinghamshire'. This sets out how housing for older people should be delivered. We will continue working with the county council as this document and their strategy evolves, to ensure that the plan reflects their objectives.
- 5.64 The plan will expect all larger developments in strategic settlements to provide an element of self-contained extra care dwellings as part of the overall housing mix, or an equivalent amount in an alternative location if this is agreed to be more appropriate. It may be appropriate to set a specific threshold for what is meant by 'larger' residential schemes, and therefore when extra care accommodation should be provided. Further work will be done to determine what this threshold should be, which will be considered alongside any relevant responses to this policy.

### Households with specific needs

- 5.65 Paragraph 50 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies that local planning authorities should plan for households with specific needs, and this is considered further in the Buckinghamshire HEDNA. The government's reform of Health and Adult Social Care is underpinned by the principle of sustaining people at home for as long as possible. This was reflected in recent changes to the building regulations relating to adaptations and wheelchair accessible homes. This introduced three categories of dwellings:
- category 1: visitable dwellings – mandatory, broadly about accessibility to all properties
  - category 2: accessible and adaptable dwellings – optional, similar to lifetime homes, and
  - category 3: wheelchair user dwellings – optional, equivalent to wheelchair accessible standard
- 5.66 The Buckinghamshire HEDNA identifies the proportion of dwellings in new developments that should comply with categories two and three above, based on the likely future need for housing for older and disabled people (including wheelchair user dwellings). This will be tested further as part of the viability study for the plan.
- 5.67 The demographic projections from the HEDNA show that the population of Buckinghamshire is likely to increase by between 64,700 and 73,700 over the period 2013-2033. The number of people aged 65 or over is projected to increase by around 53,000, around three quarters of the overall growth. This includes an extra 18,000 people aged 85 or over, around a quarter of the total increase. Most of these people will already live in the area and many will not move from their current homes, but those that do move are likely to need accessible housing. Given this context, the HEDNA supports the need for all dwellings to meet category two requirements, provided that this does not compromise viability. The government identifies that currently around 3.3% of households have at least one wheelchair user, although the rate is higher for households living in affordable housing (7.1%). These proportions are expected to increase over the period to 2033 in the context of the larger number of older people projected to be living in the area. The HEDNA therefore

supports the need for 10% of market housing and 15% of affordable housing to meet category three requirements.

## H6 Housing mix

New residential development should provide a mix of housing types and sizes to meet current and future housing needs. The housing mix will be agreed taking into account the council's most up to date evidence on housing need and any evidence available regarding local market conditions.

Larger residential development schemes in strategic settlements will be expected to provide an element of self-contained extra care dwellings as part of the overall mix, or an equivalent amount in an alternative location if this is agreed to be more appropriate.

In all residential development schemes, opportunities for the provision of extra care, specialist housing for older people and other supported housing for those with specific living needs will be encouraged in suitable locations, taking account of viability.

All new residential development should meet Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings) of Approved Document M: Volume 1, 10% of market housing should meet Category 3 of Approved Document M: Volume 1, and 15% of affordable housing should meet Category 3.

## Dwelling sizes

5.68 Homes should be designed and built to ensure that there is sufficient space for activity, privacy, circulation and storage. Following concern about the size of homes currently being built, the government has introduced Technical Housing Standards (March 2015) which set out requirements for the gross internal floor area of new homes dependent on the number of people expected to live there, as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home (notably bedrooms), storage requirements and floor to ceiling heights.

5.69 The standards are as follows:

**Table 9 Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m<sup>2</sup>)**

Number of bedrooms	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1	1	39 (37 <sup>25</sup> )	-	-	1.0
	2	50	58	-	1.5
2	3	61	70	-	2.0
	4	70	79	-	
3	4	74	84	90	2.5
	5	86	93	99	
	6	95	102	108	
4	5	90	97	103	3.0
	6	99	106	112	
	7	108	115	121	
	8	117	124	130	
5	6	103	110	116	3.5
	7	112	119	125	
	8	121	128	134	
6	7	116	123	129	4.0
	8	125	132	138	

5.70 A viability study required in relation to the standards is currently underway. This will conclude whether it would be viable to apply the government's standards above in all new development in the district. Should the viability study conclude that the above standards are viable, the proposed submission plan will include a policy requiring that the above standards (or the latest version) are applied to all new developments, subject to comments received at this stage. Further detail regarding implementation of the above standards is contained within the Technical Housing Standards document itself.

5.71 Applicants will need to provide a schedule of floor areas for each type of unit proposed.

## H7 Dwelling sizes

This policy would require that the above standards (or the latest version) are applied to all new developments.

<sup>25</sup> Where a one person flat has a shower room rather than a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m<sup>2</sup> to 37m<sup>2</sup>

## 6 Economy

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## Employment

- 6.1 The vision for the plan in relation to employment, is to ensure the availability of a diverse and flexible range of employment opportunities for new and existing businesses, which match the expectations for employment growth in the district. To support this, there is a need to maintain a flexible supply of employment land and premises. This includes making the best use of existing employment land and premises by retaining the most suitable sites and encouraging their refurbishment and renovation where necessary. For the avoidance of doubt, this section relates to those land uses that fall within the 'B' classes of the Use Classes Order: B1a/b (offices), B1c/B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage/distribution). Such employment sites are land or premises that are currently in a relevant employment use, or, if currently vacant, were previously in a relevant employment use. Other uses do generate employment, such as retail, education, tourism and sui generis types of development. These may have different impacts and needs other than the above employment uses, and as such, are generally covered by separate policies in the plan.
- 6.2 Economic development can have a significant impact on the quality and character of an area, particularly in rural or residential locations. Development should not, either on its own or cumulatively, (in combination with other established or proposed developments in the vicinity), significantly adversely affect the area's landscape, heritage and built environment, or the amenities of the resident population. The potential increase in vehicle movements generated by employment development and the impact on the highway network must also be acceptable.
- 6.3 Existing employment sites and premises often provide valuable opportunities for jobs close to where people live, and benefit the local and wider economies. However there is increasing pressure for change of use from employment to non employment uses, such as housing, due to the short term economic benefits such changes of use can bring. The resultant loss of employment use, can impact negatively on local access to employment and the economic competitiveness of the district which could ultimately undermine economic growth.
- 6.4 The council is therefore committed to ensuring we do everything we can to support sustainable economic growth. Where there are recognised viability issues preventing the delivery of sites, the council will work with developers to understand and seek to address potential barriers.

### Protection of key employment sites

- 6.5 Key employment sites are the larger employment sites in the district that contribute significantly to the employment land supply for B class uses. Their loss to non-employment uses would have significant impacts on the ability of the district to achieve the expected level of employment growth. These sites are therefore safeguarded for B class uses and other employment uses which would achieve economic enhancement without detrimental impact to the site or wider area.
- 6.6 The Aylesbury Vale Employment Land Review Update (2012) identified 16 key employment sites in the district. This included both B1/B2/B8 sites and other employment sites. The council has reviewed the key employment sites to account for changes in circumstance since 2012, and has concluded that the following key employment sites need to be protected for B1/B2/B8 developments. In November 2015, three of the key employment sites achieved 'Enterprise Zone' status, including Silverstone, Westcott Venture Park and Arla/Woodlands. These sites constitute the Aylesbury Vale Enterprise Zone, with the aim of supporting and encouraging economic growth across Buckinghamshire.

**Table 10 Key employment sites**

<b>Site</b>
1 Haddenham Business Park
2 Triangle Business Park, Stoke Mandeville
3 Westcott Venture Park EZ
4 Long Crendon Business Park
5 Gatehouse Industrial Area, Aylesbury
6 Rabans Lane Industrial Area, Aylesbury
7 Pitstone Green Business Park
8 Halton Brook Business Park, Aston Clinton
9 Network 421, Gawcott near Buckingham
10 Buckingham Industrial Park, Buckingham
11 Silverstone Circuit EZ
12 ARLA/Woodlands EZ

### **E1 Protection of key employment sites**

Key employment sites will be protected through the following criteria:

- a. within key employment sites (listed above and identified on the policies map) applications for B1 (light industrial), B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage and distribution) will be permitted. Other similar uses will be permitted subject to proposals not having a significant adverse impact on surrounding land uses.
- b. the use of key employment sites for employment purposes other than B1, B2 and B8 may be appropriate, if it can be proven that the use provides on-site support facilities, or demonstrates similar economic enhancement to B1/B2/B8 uses. Such development will not prejudice the efficient and effective use of the remainder of the employment area.
- c. retail uses will not generally be supported, except as an ancillary facility to service a key employment site. Exceptionally, uses which have trade links with employment uses or are un-neighbourly in character, (such as car showrooms, tyre and exhaust centres, or trade counters), may be permitted on employment sites which have good access to a range of transport options.
- d. other uses that do not provide direct, on-going local employment opportunities will not be permitted.

## Other existing employment sites

- 6.7 Other employment sites, such as Aylesbury town centre and Stoke Mandeville Hospital are also valued for the job opportunities that they provide. A more flexible approach will be taken for these to facilitate a broad range of economic development, which is vital for the future sustainability and development of the area's economy. The policy set out below also recognises that some existing employment sites may be causing significant environmental or amenity problems that cannot be overcome. In some circumstances, there may not be a need for that site to remain in employment use, if there are sufficient alternatives available in the local area and it would not benefit the local economy for it to remain vacant. In some cases, the size, location and characteristics of a site may mean that more intensive, mixed-use development could provide greater benefit to the community in terms of addressing local needs, rather than if the site was retained solely in employment use.
- 6.8 Where there is no reasonable prospect of an employment site being used for employment purposes, alternative uses may be considered. Where an application is made for an alternative use other than employment, the following information will be sought:
- a description of any problems caused by the employment use, together with any evidence, the measures considered to try and mitigate these issues, and an explanation of why these problems could not be overcome
  - any other reasons why the site is thought unsuitable for employment uses
  - details of how the property has been marketed, including for sale or rent, over what period and for what price (and how the asking price was calculated), what use/s it was marketed for, where it was advertised, and whether there have been any offers received, and
  - what other suitable, viable, alternative sites are available locally for employment uses, (this should include an assessment of existing sites and premises, in addition to land allocated by the Local Plan and where appropriate neighbourhood plans).

### E2 Other employment sites

Outside key employment sites, the redevelopment of other existing employment sites to an alternative employment use will normally be permitted:

- a. where it will not prejudice the efficient and effective use of the remainder of the employment area
- b. the site has been marketed as an employment site for an employment use suitable to the site and location at a suitable price, by appropriate means for at least 12 months with no viable interest, and
- c. there is a substantial over-supply of suitable alternative employment sites in the local area.

## **Provision of ancillary facilities for employees in business, industrial and warehousing developments**

- 6.9 Employees often require good access to a range of facilities, including food and drink, leisure/recreation and child-care. The absence of such facilities in an employment area can increase travel demand and make the areas less attractive to employers and employees. The council is seeking to enable the provision of appropriate complementary leisure, food and drink, and childcare facilities in existing and new office, industrial and warehousing areas. In existing employment areas, change of use of existing premises will be considered for these complementary facilities where this is suitably located and would not compromise the surrounding employment uses. Where new employment areas are proposed, the need for such facilities should be considered as part of the overall development scheme. In all cases, only facilities of an appropriate nature and scale to meet the needs of employees will be permitted. Appropriate leisure facilities may include fitness centres/clubs and indoor sports facilities, which cannot be accommodated within the town centre or on an edge of centre site.

### **E3 Provision of complementary facilities for employees**

Provision for open space, public realm, leisure, food and drink, and child-care facilities will be appropriate in office, industrial and warehousing developments, provided the facility is of an appropriate scale and nature, is intended primarily to meet the needs of workers in the vicinity and doesn't attract significant levels of visitor traffic into the area, or exacerbate existing traffic conditions.

## **Working at home**

- 6.11 Using your home as a place of work has a number of sustainability benefits including a reduction in journey's to work. Improvements in technology also mean that an office can be accommodated easily into a home. Making your home your place of work does not generally need planning permission if it remains ancillary to the residential use of the property . Even if it does not, it may be acceptable if there are no serious impacts on residential amenity or the character of the surrounding area arising from the change of use from home to business.

### **E4 Working at home**

Use of a residential property for business use will be permitted where there are no unacceptable impacts on residential amenity and would not have an adverse effect on the character of an area, whilst making appropriate provision for access, parking and noise attenuation, arising from the business activity.

## Development outside town centres

### Edge and out of town centre sites

- 6.12 Larger scale retail development may be accommodated at edge or out-of-centre locations, provided it does not harm the vitality or viability of the town centre. All potential out-of-town retail development will be required to consider the sequential set out in national policy (NPPF paragraphs 24-27).
- 6.13 Where the type of goods sold and the particular retail format cannot reasonably be accommodated within the existing town centre, the first choice for alternative development sites should be 'edge-of-centre' i.e., sites which directly adjoin, or can be reasonably related to the existing town centre.
- 6.14 If such sites cannot meet the demand for additional floor space, then 'out-of-centre' development can be considered for retailing such as superstores. This type of development may be acceptable on peripheral sites away from the town centre, providing it does not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the existing town centre, taking into account the cumulative effects of the existing and proposed development.
- 6.15 The council intends to set a local floor space threshold above which an impact assessment would be required to accompany proposals for main town centre uses<sup>26</sup> outside town centres. The council will commission further retail evidence to determine appropriate local thresholds based on past planning applications of this nature. The impact assessment should comply with the requirements in paragraph 26 of the NPPF by considering the impact of proposals on existing and planned investment in a town centre and the impact on town centre vitality and viability.
- 6.16 Development outside town centres should be accessible to the community by foot, car, public transport and cycling. In addition, sufficient car parking should be provided on site and developments should not add to traffic generation on the surrounding roads and in the town centre. Sites proposed for such development should not be required for other uses such as employment uses or housing.

### E5 Development outside town centres

A sequential test will be applied to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre. Town centre uses should be located in town centres, then edge of centre locations. Only when suitable sites are not available, will out-of-town centre sites be considered. In terms of edge and out-of-town centre proposals, preference will be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre.

Proposals outside defined town centres for non-food retail and food retailing, including extensions, will be granted provided that it can be demonstrated that all the following criteria have been considered:

- a. the proposal does not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the defined town centres, either as an individual development or cumulatively with similar existing or proposed developments
- b. the proposed retail development on out-of-centre sites will need to demonstrate that no suitable site can be found, firstly within the existing town or local centre or, secondly, on

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<sup>26</sup> Main town centre uses include uses such as retail development, leisure, entertainment facilities, some sport and recreation facilities, offices and arts culture and tourism development, The full definition is contained in the NPPF.

the edge of the centre. Any assessment of suitability should consider factors such as viability and availability

- c. proposals over the floor space threshold (to be determined) are accompanied by a full assessment of the potential impact on town centres and nearby centres
- d. proposals less than the above floor space threshold are accompanied by a retail assessment report
- e. the type of goods sold and the form of shopping unit proposed could not be conveniently accommodated within the existing shopping centre, or where suitable sites and premises are not available, within the centre or edge of centre sites
- f. the type of goods sold and the facilities provided complement those provided in the existing retail centre
- g. servicing and customer traffic can be safely and conveniently accommodated by the surrounding road network and does not add to traffic generation in the town centre
- h. the proposal is easily accessible by the highway network and public transport and includes provision for access by cycle and on foot, and
- i. the design of the buildings will not detract from the character or appearance of the site of the surrounding area.

## Shop and business frontages

- 6.17 The vitality of town centres depend on their attraction as a destination for a mix of uses including shopping and business, but also as a place in which to meet, relax and spend leisure time. Retail is an important part of the overall mix of uses in the town centre, however, the traditional role as the main focus for retail activity has been challenged by 'out of town' retail outlets and the change in people's shopping habits. In addition, increased mobility means that people are prepared to travel further afield to shop in larger centres. In this very competitive environment, it is important that town centres continue to develop and enhance their retail offer in order to retain existing market share and attract new trade.

### Primary shopping frontages

- 6.18 Primary shopping frontages are those which include a high proportion of retail units. The Retail Study 2015 defines these for Aylesbury (as shown on the policies map) and the updated retail study will define these for other town centres as appropriate. Recognising the importance of the retail role of primary shopping frontages, and of having a mix of uses within town centres, only A1 (shops) and A3 (restaurants and cafes) uses will be permitted on the ground floor in the primary shopping frontages. Residential development will be encouraged in the primary shopping frontages above ground floor level.

### Secondary shopping frontages

- 6.19 A number of outer shopping streets in Aylesbury have been defined as secondary shopping frontages (as shown on the policies map). These provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses. Again, recognising the value of a mix of uses within the town centre including the secondary frontages, non-retail uses such as offices, hotels and medical practitioners may be permitted, providing that they contribute positively to the vitality and viability of the town centre. Residential development will be encouraged in the secondary shopping frontages above ground floor level.

## E6 Shop and business frontages

### Primary shopping frontages

Within the primary shopping frontages in the town centres (as shown on the policies map) only A1 and A3 uses will be permitted on the ground floor.

The window and entrance should relate well to the design of the building and to the street-scene and its setting.

Residential development will be encouraged within the primary shopping frontage above ground floor level.

### Secondary shopping frontages

Within defined secondary shopping frontages, (as shown on the policies map), the following will be permitted where the proposal, either cumulatively or individually, is considered to contribute positively to the vitality and viability of the area:

- a. The development, improvement or expansion of retail and appropriate non-retail uses and
- b. The change of use of retail premises to appropriate non-retail uses.

This should take account of the mix of uses in the secondary shopping frontage (taking into account what is there currently and what development is committed).

A window and entrance should be provided or retained which relates well to the design of the building and to the street-scene and its setting.

Residential development will be encouraged within the secondary shopping frontage above ground floor level.

## Tourism development

- 6.20 Tourism plays an important role in generating income for local residents. Buckinghamshire is a popular tourist destination, providing leisure and recreation activities for its own residents and those visiting the county. Despite a number of small scale attractions and places to stay across the Vale, tourism is less developed than within other parts of the county.
- 6.21 Tourism and leisure development is generally welcomed, providing employment and a means of supplementing rural incomes. However, it can have negative impacts on the surrounding area if located insensitively, is out of scale with its context, or by failing to take account of local character and appearance. Policy E7 seeks to locate most development within or close to defined settlements, where local shops and facilities are most accessible and stand to benefit the most. Sustainable development will be approved in accordance with Policy S1.
- 6.22 Applications for tourism and leisure development in the countryside will need to be justified by the applicant. The council will require a marketing strategy and business plan to be submitted to explain how the development will achieve a high quality tourism product that meets demand. Proposals must demonstrate that their benefits outweigh harm, and that they do not cause an unacceptable impact to traffic on the local road network. Tourism and leisure development should benefit local businesses, the environment, communities and visitors in the long-term. The council will seek the right form of development in the right location, with evidence that the need is not already being met by existing provision.
- 6.23 The council wants to encourage visitors to the district whilst recognising that a balance needs to be maintained with regards to preserving the high quality environmental, historic, and cultural assets of the district. The re-use of existing buildings limits harm to the environment and may help farm diversification schemes.
- 6.24 Evidence supporting a countryside location should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the tourism proposal being considered. For instance, the conversion of a barn to tourist accommodation is permissible in principle under Policy C1 and is often dependent on an agricultural character which would not be found in a nearby town or village. Larger tourism attractions such as museums, outdoor activity centre or hotels may have a significant impact on the countryside and the local road network, so in these cases more comprehensive supporting evidence will be required.
- 6.25 Seasonal structures related to tourism such as marquees, can provide additional support to the local economy. Proposals of this type should be temporary in nature and not have an adverse impact on the landscape.

### E7 Tourism development

The council will promote a growing, sustainable tourism sector, and support proposals. Proposals for new or expanded tourism, visitor or leisure facilities will be supported within or adjacent to settlements. Elsewhere, the nature of the proposed development must justify a countryside location and minimise environmental impacts, and avoid unacceptable traffic impact on the local road network. Development proposals will be supported where they:

- a. Respect the character and appearance of the location;
- b. Involve conversion or replacement of existing buildings;
- c. Propose any extension or new buildings form part of an existing tourist facility;
- d. In the case of seasonal structures these are temporary in nature and do not have an adverse impact on the landscape; and
- e. Demonstrate that the need is not met by existing provision within nearby settlements.

## Tourist accommodation

- 6.26 The tourism sector needs good quality built tourist accommodation to cater for the range of visitors, and reflecting their needs, so as to continue to be vibrant and competitive.
- For the purposes of this plan built tourist accommodation refers to permanent tourist accommodation such as hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs and holiday lets (residential homes restricted to holiday use). It excludes more temporary and mobile units such as caravans (even though these may remain in situ for many years) and second homes.
  - Where built tourist accommodation is permitted in a location where open market housing would normally be refused, the councils will restrict its occupation to ensure it remains in use as tourist accommodation.
- 6.27 The most appropriate locations for large new hotels and guest houses are within the town centres, as tourist attractions are concentrated in these locations and public transport provision is greater. However visitors also come to enjoy the many attractive rural areas, and smaller-scale serviced accommodation and self-catering accommodation will also be appropriate within other settlements, for those businesses targeting tourists who are seeking such an experience.
- 6.28 Permanent built tourist accommodation is likely to be occupied all year round. If allowed in locations away from existing settlements this could lead to a significant level of development in the open countryside, weakening patterns of sustainable development. There may be cases where built holiday accommodation may be justified in a more rural location, for example through conversion of existing buildings. In addition to new built development, tourist accommodation from the change of use of existing buildings - in accordance with Policy C1 – has many advantages. It will increase the stock and variety of accommodation the area has to offer, can bring back into use buildings that may otherwise be left vacant, help maintain historic buildings and have a positive impact on the surrounding area.
- 6.29 It would also be unduly restrictive to limit the development of existing accommodation in the countryside. In order to support existing businesses, the replacement and expansion of built tourist accommodation and sites will be allowed where this improves the quality of the accommodation on offer and the appearance of the site, provided that there is no significant harm, and development would be consistent with the other policies of this plan.
- 6.30 The information required in support of applications is likely to vary greatly depending on the nature of the proposal, its scale and location. Proposals for accommodation in less accessible locations should normally include information on the long term viability of the enterprise, a clear justification of why such a location is needed, and the benefits to the local economy. As a town centre use, hotels should also comply with Policy E2. Where the impact of a new out-of-centre hotel would undermine the viability and contribution of more central hotels, or prejudice the potential to secure further hotel development on a more central site, development should be refused.
- 6.31 Tourist accommodation provides critical support to tourist attractions and facilities and contributes to the economy through its support of retail, food and drink and travel services. It is therefore important to ensure that the loss of stock is carefully considered, particularly with regard to the hotels and larger guesthouses in the area. As a guide this means those that have at least 6 guest bedrooms. However it is also important to recognise that changes in the market will mean that some types of built tourist accommodation may become less attractive to visitors. If the offer cannot be improved, falling profits would result in poorly maintained and ultimately failing accommodation, neither of which is a desirable outcome. A flexible approach will be needed in assessing to what extent the loss of such facilities

should be resisted. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that real effort has been made to retain the tourist accommodation. Evidence submitted should typically include:

- Reasons why there is no longer a market for the premises in its tourist function;
- Details of how the property has been marketed, the length of time that the marketing was active and any changes during this period, the sale asking price, the level of interest generated and any offers received;
- In the case of a reduction in size, the economic impact on the ongoing viability of the business.

6.32 Proposals for both static and touring caravan sites as well as those for chalets and camping will be judged against the criterion specified in the Policy E6. In certain circumstances restrictions will be applied through the imposition of planning conditions to avoid the continual residential use of a site. This reflects the need to preserve the supply of visitor accommodation in order to respond to demand, and equally that such sites may not be in a location considered sustainable for occupation as primary residences. Similarly, conditions may also be imposed to restrict seasonal occupancy of sites where considered necessary to safeguard landscape character through, for example, the winter months.

6.33 In addition to the need to obtain planning permission, caravan, camping and chalet operators must obtain a site licence. The site licence, issued by Environmental Health, covers such matters as the number and standard of spacing of the caravans, and hygiene.

## **E8 Tourist accommodation**

Proposals for Hotels and Guesthouses will be supported provided that:

- a. Larger developments are located within the town centres.

Proposals that would result in the permanent loss or reduction in size of hotels and larger guesthouses will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that their tourist function is no longer viable and there is no market for the business as a going concern.

New tourist accommodation in rural area will be supported provided that it is:

- Within an established settlement in the medium tier of the settlement hierarchy;
- Through the re-use of an existing building;
- Through the replacement, intensification or extension of existing premises where the expansion would improve the quality and appearance of the accommodation and site.

- b. Tourist accommodation in smaller and other settlements will not generally be supported.

- c. Support will be given for the conversion of existing rural buildings, in accordance with Policy C1.

- d. Support will be given for the proposed replacement of existing rural buildings to provide purpose-built tourist accommodation within existing rural building groups.

For proposals involving the provision of camping and touring caravan sites, as well as other considerations set out in this plan, particular attention will be given to ensuring that:

- e. The location, access and scale of facilities can be satisfactorily accommodated within the landscape character of the area, and where appropriate, is supplemented with additional landscaping;
- f. The site is well served by public transport or walking or cycling networks;
- g. The proposal does not cause significant highway problems;
- h. Facilities and buildings associated with the proposal are constructed of appropriate materials, are of a scale appropriate to the locality and are landscaped effectively to minimise any visual impact; and

i. Essential facilities such as toilets, showers and wash facilities are adequately provided for.

In granting permission, the council will impose conditions to control the use and occupation of holiday accommodation.

## **Agricultural development**

### **Agricultural Buildings**

- 6.34 The council recognises the need to support modern farming practices and a prosperous rural economy. However the trend towards larger agricultural buildings which have a more industrial appearance, can have a significantly adverse impact on the local character and also result in more traditional farm buildings falling into disrepair. New agricultural buildings (up to 465 sq. m.) can be allowed under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). However, where this is controlled under the planning system, applicants will be encouraged to locate development where it would not impact on the openness and attractive character of the countryside. For example by re-using existing buildings or locating new ones close to existing buildings, or on areas of existing hardstanding. The impact on residential amenity, including that arising from farm traffic movements, will also be a consideration. Proposals should refer to the AVDC Design Guide for New Buildings in the Countryside.
- 6.35 In cases where the council considers the building too large in relation to the holding, the council may require evidence to support the need for the building, such as stocking rates and storage requirements.

### **E9 Agricultural development**

The development of new agricultural buildings or extensions of existing buildings, will be permitted where:

- a. The development is necessary for the purposes of agriculture on the unit or locally where facilities are to be shared,
- b. Not over large in relation to the holding, and
- c. There are no existing buildings on the unit which are capable of re-use.

The scale, siting, design, external appearance and construction of the buildings should be:

- d. Appropriate for its proposed use; and
- e. Designed to minimise adverse impact on the landscape character and residential amenity

# 7 Transport

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## Vehicle parking

- 7.1 Car parking and its location has an impact upon the quality of the environment – how it looks, how it functions and on safety. The availability and convenience of parking at the destination of the trip can have a real effect on the choices people make regarding travel. Policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seek to manage the demand for car travel and encourage the use of more sustainable forms of travel, particularly public transport, walking and cycling, but whilst much of Aylesbury is well served by public transport and is easily accessible by walking or cycling, the same does not apply across the remainder of the district.
- 7.2 Car parking remains a significant issue for residents and house buyers; many feel that designs for new developments should accommodate anticipated levels of parking. Attempts to curb car ownership through restricting parking are considered unrealistic, and had little impact on the number of cars a household would require and acquire. Experience from recent residential developments and those presently being constructed has been that rather than encouraging modal shift away from car ownership, restrictive parking standards have simply intensified the demand for any available on-street parking.
- 7.3 Therefore, vehicle parking must be designed into new development schemes to include accommodation for on plot parking and on street parking; rear parking courts are discouraged as experience of new residential developments within the district shows that these are not used due to location and/or a lack of security, leading to anti social parking within the street. Parking courts to the front of dwellings are considered acceptable as they allow for the parking area to be overlooked.
- 7.4 Research has also shown that most residents use garages for domestic storage rather than for vehicle storage, which subsequently reduces the available off street parking for individual dwellings. It is therefore proposed that these structures will no longer be allocated as parking spaces within new developments.
- 7.5 The following standards include cycle and motorcycle parking, based on Trip Rate Information Computer System data (TRICS), together with standards for non residential uses proposed within the District.

### T1 Vehicle parking

Development must provide an appropriate level of parking, taking into account:

- a. The accessibility of the site, including the availability of public transport;
- b. The type, mix and use of development;
- c. Garages/integral garages/car ports will not be included within the allocation of parking spaces;

Design must enable and encourage the maximum use of sustainable modes of transport, including provision for cyclists and low-emission vehicles. Within Aylesbury, Buckingham, Haddenham, Wendover, and Winslow infrastructure for electric vehicles should be built into new major development schemes where local centres are proposed.

#### Residential car parking standards

These are based upon the numbers of habitable rooms per dwelling. Habitable rooms are bedrooms, kitchen, living room, and dining room.

Rooms	1-4	5	6	7	8+
Spaces	1.5	2	2.5	3	4

The car parking standards set out here are optimum; the level of parking they specify should be provided unless specific local circumstances can justify deviating from them.

To accommodate the increasing average size of motor vehicles, car parking spaces should have a minimum dimension of 5.0m x 2.8m

### Cycle parking

Land use- new developments		BCC recommended number of cycle space
Residential dwelling	1 bedroom	1 space
	2 bedroom	2 spaces
	3 bedroom	2 spaces
	4 bedroom	3 spaces
	5+ bedroom	4 spaces
Sheltered and retirement accommodation		1 space per 10 residents, plus 1 space per 5 staff on duty
Multiple occupancy		0.5 spaces per bedroom, plus 1 visitor space per 10 bedrooms
A1. Retail		1 space per 150 sqm (<1000sqm) 1 space per 250 sqm (>1000sqm)
Storage/distribution warehouse		1 space per 500 sqm up to 10,000 sqm. After 10,000sqm, 1 additional space per 20,000 sqm
Garden centre		Case by case
A3. Food and drink (inc pub, restaurant)		1 space per 100 sqm
Business	B1 Business offices	1 space per 250 sqm
Industrial unit		1 space per 500 sqm
Industrial estate		1 space per 500 sqm
C1. Hotel and hostels		1 space per 15 bedrooms plus 1 space per 7 staff
D1. Surgeries/health centres		1 space per 5 staff
D2. Assembly and leisure	Theatres, cinema	1 space per 100 seats
Leisure centres/ pools		1 space per 400 sqm
Schools (Please note, standards reflect use of scooters plus bikes)		1 space per 10 staff and students 1 space per 7 staff and students
D1e. Primary		
D1f. Secondary		
D1e. Colleges		1 space per 20 full time staff and students
D1. Libraries		1 space per 200 sqm
Transport	Bus station	Case by case
Train station		Case by case

### Motorcycle and scooter parking

Non residential	Minimum of 1 space for all new developments
Plus <b>1 space per 30</b> car parking spaces	
Residential	Minimum of 1 unallocated space for all residential developments
Plus <b>1 unallocated space per 30</b> car parking spaces	

Motorcycle/scooter spaces should have a minimum dimension of 2m x 1m

### Blue badge parking

Where the public do not normally have access (including employment sites)	1 bay per disabled employee; <b>Plus</b> 2 bays or 5% of total capacity (whichever is greater)
Where the public normally have access (e.g. shopping areas, leisure facilities, railway stations)	3 bays or 6% of parking capacity (whichever is greater)
Residential	Where a dwelling is to be built to Mobility Standards a minimum of 1 bay per dwelling (of the overall optimal standards for car parking) should be built to the blue badge parking dimensions set out in Table 11.
C3 Sheltered and retirement accommodation	30% of parking capacity (of the overall optimal standards for car parking) should be allocated to blue badge users.

Blue badge parking dimensions should be:

<b>Off-street parking</b>	
When bays are adjacent	5.1 X 3.8m (1.2m of this may be shared between two adjacent spaces)
Parallel bays	6.6 X 3.8m
Height (if applicable)	2.6 m
<b>On-street parking</b>	
At an angle to the access aisle	5.1 X 3.3m
Parallel to the access aisle	6.6 X 3m If cannot access footway from vehicle, width should be 3.3m

## Non residential parking standards

Land use – new developments	Zone 1 (more accessible)
<b>Retail</b>	
A1. Retail (GFA < 1000 sqm) See additional guidance below.	1 space per 45 sqm
A1. Non-food retail (GFA >1000 sqm) See additional guidance below.	1 space per 75 sqm
A1. Food retail (GFA > 1000 sqm) See additional guidance below.	1 space per 37 sqm
Retail warehouses (DIY, Garden Centre) Retail warehouse w/o garden centre	1 space per 90 sqm 1 space per 65 sqm
A2. Financial and professional services	1 space per 43 sqm
A3. Public houses, cafes or restaurants -	1 space per 56 sqm
A3/A4. Pub restaurants + hotel	Case by case
A4. Public houses without restaurant (although site may sell bar food)	1 space per 43 sqm
A5. Takeaways	1 space per 40 sqm
<b>Business</b>	
B1. Business – offices See additional guidance below.	1 space per 43 sqm
B2. General Industrial	1 space per 54 sqm
B8. General Warehouse, Industrial Units See additional guidance below.	1 space per 178 sqm
<i>HGV parking provision should be based on operational requirements and as set out in the Transport Assessment</i>	
<b>Other use classes</b>	
C1. Hotels and hostels	1 space per bedroom incl. staff + 1 space per residential staff
C2. Hospitals	Case by case
C3. Sheltered and retirement accommodation	0.5 spaces per dwelling (communal)
D1a. Exhibition centre/art galleries/museums	1 space per 60 sqm
D 1 (g & h). Place of worship/public assembly buildings	1 space per 49 sqm

D1b. Health surgeries	1 space per f.t.e staff + 1 space per consulting room
D1e. Primary schools See additional guidance below.	Travel plans required + 1 space per f.t.e staff
D1f. Secondary schools See additional guidance below.	1 space per f.t.e staff
D1e. Higher, further education, college	1 space per 1 f.t.e staff + student parking to be assessed individually
D1. Library	1 space per 57 sqm
D2. Bingo Hall	1 space per 70 seats
D2. Cinema	1 space per 22 seats
D2. Leisure Centre – swimming pool	1 space per 104 sqm or Individual assessment
Tennis courts	1 space per court or individual assessment
B1/B2. Vehicle services, including car sales and vehicle repair services	1 space per f.t.e staff + 1 space per 82 sqm

The car parking standards set out above are optimum standards. The level of parking they specify should be provided unless specific local circumstances can justify deviating from them. Proposals for provision above or below this standard must be supported by evidence detailing the local circumstances that justify the deviation. This evidence must be included in (and/or consistent with) the developer's Travel Plan and Transport Assessment.

- A1 shops – In all cases, adequate provision should be made for the parking and turning of service vehicles serving the site, off the highway.
- B1 Business – offices – These optimum standards are designed to provide an appropriate level of parking across the district. However recent developments suggest higher levels may be required in certain areas. This may be due to local circumstances and/or the geography of the district. Where this is the case, the flexibility allowed by the standards should be applied.
- Warehouse – consideration should be given to the requirement for overnight parking and facilities.
- Shared-use facilities – when a use forms part of a shared use facility, parking standards must be looked at for all uses and the appropriate amounts provided. For example when conference facilities are included in a hotel facility, appropriate parking standards must be applied for each use. However, where visitors will use more than one of these facilities the impact of this on the parking spaces required must also be taken into account.

- Residential schools – to be assessed individually.

## **Exceptions**

### Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), including relevant student accommodation

HMOs should provide the same number of spaces as other residential dwellings. As with all developments, the standards allow for flexibility where there is evidence that they would not be appropriate. Where the council considers that other rooms are likely to be used as bedrooms, they may wish to consider including these within the calculation for parking provision.

However, the particular challenges that can be associated with this land use are recognised. Therefore, there may also be scope to utilise the flexibility in these standards to make this provision in a different way. For example the council may wish to explore the potential for an agreement that allows equivalent parking facilities to be provided or funded elsewhere by the developer.

### Care home/sheltered housing accommodation

Care home and sheltered housing properties should provide a minimum of 1 space per dwelling, of which all must be provided as unallocated parking. However, similarly to HMOs, where properties are converted into care homes/sheltered housing accommodation, developers will need to agree with the council on how sufficient parking will be provided for these uses.

### Hospitals

Parking at hospitals is an important issue. However, there are a number of barriers to the creation of a hospital car parking standard. Hospitals are often complex, multi-occupancy developments catering for more than just the general hospital. The NHS is constantly evolving, with different ways of managing staff, patients and visitors; and hospitals are often developed in a phased way, meaning that long terms plans are not always clear.

Therefore, it is considered appropriate that car parking at hospitals is considered on a case-by-case bases, including, where appropriate, discussion between the council, health trusts, staff and patient groups. A number of points should be considered when determining parking requirements, including existing issues such as lack of capacity, overspill and neighbourhood issues; existing parking provisions; use and demand; long term development plans; accessibility by public transport; the overall sustainability and accessibility of the site; type of hospital; and number and timing of users.

### Parking for service vehicles

The provision of spaces for goods vehicles to load and unload will be assessed for each development proposal on its merits. It is essential to make adequate provision to ensure that servicing can be accommodated without affecting the safety of other road users, or the free flow of all-modes of transport on the highway. Car sales/showrooms will be expected to ensure that deliveries by car transporters can be accommodated within the site, clear of the public highway.

## Footpaths and cycle routes

- 7.6 Footpaths and cycle routes provide an opportunity to minimise and reduce the need to travel by car, maximise sustainable transport use, and decrease air pollution. These activities can also help to increase the health and quality of life of users. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning policies should aim to achieve places which promote accessible environments containing clear and legible pedestrian routes. It also states that developments should be designed to priority to pedestrian and cycle movements.
- 7.7 The VALP encourages sustainable modes of travel including provision for public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways. It also aims to maintain and develop a network of recreational routes that will allow easy access to cycle and footpath routes. These are important tourism and recreation facilities, both in their own right and as a means of linking other attractions and local communities.

### T2 Footpaths and cycle routes

For development which will have implications for the footpath and cycle route networks the following criteria will apply:

- a. The delivery of a strategic cycle network and improvements to the footpaths will be supported.
- b. The council will protect existing cycle routes from adverse effects of new development. In dealing with planning applications the council will seek new or improved cycle access and facilities, including cycle storage, and will use planning conditions or legal agreements to secure such arrangement.
- c. The council will safeguard existing pedestrian routes from adverse effects of new development. Development proposals must provide for direct, convenient and safe pedestrian movement and routes, connected where appropriate to the existing pedestrian network. In deciding planning applications the council will use planning conditions or legal agreements to secure the provision of new footpaths and the improvement of existing routes.

The council will ensure that networks of pedestrian and cycle routes give easy access into and through developments and to adjacent areas, and also to public transport services.

## Electric vehicle infrastructure

- 7.8 Electric vehicles offer a way of reducing the impacts associated with traffic or pollution (including air, water, noise and light pollution). Electric vehicles have received criticism that emissions are not reduced, but relocated to power plants and due to inefficiencies through transmission of the electricity. This can be mitigated by on-site renewable energy installations. Air quality in areas of high traffic movements will be improved if the use of electric vehicle increases. The NPPF encourages the inclusion of facilities for charging plug in vehicles (paragraph 35).
- 7.9 The Local Plan seeks to ensure that new electric vehicle charging facilities are readily accessible in new developments. Electric vehicles are an example of a sustainable mode of travel that is likely to have increasing market penetration throughout the duration of the plan. It is important that electric vehicle charging infrastructure supports this growing mode of transport, encouraging growth and supporting existing users of electric vehicles.
- 7.10 It is anticipated that within the life of the Local Plan other technologies will emerge for the fuelling of vehicles. These might include hydrogen, natural gas (CNG) and fuel cell vehicles.

### T3 Electric vehicle infrastructure

- a. To maximise the use of sustainable modes of transport, new developments of 10 dwellings or more will be required to provide electric charging points, at a rate of 1 charging point for every 10 dwellings.
- b. Trickle charge electric vehicle charging points must be provided at long stay locations such as employment sites and railway station/long stay car parks. Rapid/fast charge points should, where practicable, be sited at short stay locations such as service stations, large retail outlets and leisure facilities, particularly where these are located on the strategic road network. Charging points should be provided at a rate of 1 charging point for every 25 parking spaces, except at petrol stations where one space should be provided at each petrol station.
- c. Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points should wherever possible be coupled with renewable energy installations such as solar panels to enhance the sustainability of the provision.

## **8 Built Environment**

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### Heritage assets

- 8.1 The historic environment is an asset of great cultural, social, economic and environmental value. It contributes significantly to our quality of life and to the character of the district, representing a non-renewable resource that once lost is gone forever. Heritage assets are defined as those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest, over and above their functional utility, and covers both designated and non-designated assets.

### Listed buildings

- 8.2 There are over 3,000 buildings, bridges, statues and other structures in the district contained in the Lists of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Over 200 of these listed buildings are recorded as Grades I or II\* and the remainder as Grade II. Buildings in Aylesbury were last surveyed in 1973. Those in Buckingham were surveyed in 1994 and lists for the remaining parishes were revised between 1981 and 1985. A number of new buildings have been added to the lists since the parish listings as a result of requests for individual listings and Historic England's thematic listing programme.
- 8.3 The objective of listing buildings is to ensure their protection. The council has a statutory duty to have a special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses. Listed building consent is required for all works that would affect a building's special interest including internal work.

### Conservation areas

- 8.4 Conservation areas can include groups of listed or unlisted buildings, historic village greens and open spaces, important trees, unusual distinctive historic field patterns closely associated with a historic settlement (where these have a district-wide significance), historic parkland, linear features such as canals and railways, well-preserved archaeological remains and/or surviving historic street patterns.
- 8.5 When defining a conservation area it is the special architectural or historic interest of the whole area, rather than the merits of individual buildings and features, that is important. Interest may be characterised by uniformity of architectural style or variety.
- 8.6 Any development, be it construction, demolition, alteration, extension, or change of use, has the potential to impact upon the character or appearance of a conservation area. Whilst positive change should be welcomed as an important part of the organic growth of a settlement, there is always a risk that development may harm an area's special interest.
- 8.7 Similarly, development immediately adjacent to, or within the setting of, a conservation area can greatly influence the character and appearance of the area. Development that does not reflect the traditional form, layout and scale of buildings within the conservation area can have an adverse effect.

### Non-designate heritage assets

- 8.8 A non-designated heritage asset can be a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.
- 8.9 Significance is the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest that can be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.
- 8.10 The following criteria will be used by the council as local planning authority to establish if any potential non-designated heritage asset that is a building or structure meets the

definition in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This will be done at an early stage in the process, as advised by the National Planning Practice Guidance.

8.11 Development proposals affecting an identified non-designated heritage asset will be subject to the requirements of the NPPF at Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment and including paragraphs 131 and 135.

8.12 These criteria have been prepared with specific reference to Historic England's 'Conservation Principles – Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment'; and 'Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing'.

#### **Archaeological interest**

8.13 'Archaeological interest' refers to an above ground archaeological site or historic building recorded in the Buckinghamshire County Council Historic Environment Record. Identification of archaeological interest will always have to be made in conjunction with the Buckinghamshire County Council Archaeological Service. Sub-surface archaeological interest is considered and advised on separately by the service.

#### **Architectural interest**

8.14 Aesthetic value - the building or structure, through its intrinsic design value derived from local styles, materials, workmanship or any other distinctive local characteristic, will exhibit a positive external appearance in the street scene, village, townscape or landscape.

8.15 Known architect - the building or structure will be the work of an architect or designer of local, regional or national noteworthiness.

8.16 Integrity - the building or structure will retain a degree of intactness and lack of harmful external alteration and, if part of a group, will make a contribution to the surviving completeness of that group.

8.17 Landmark status - the building or structure by virtue of its design, age, innovation, construction, position, use or communal associations contributes as a landmark within the local scene.

8.18 Group value - the buildings or structures will have a coherent design or historic functional relationship as a group.

#### **Historic interest**

8.19 Association - the building or structure will enjoy a significant historical association of local or national noteworthiness including links to important local figures or events.

8.20 Rarity - the building or structure must represent a design, use or other quality that was always uncommon or has now become uncommon or exceptional to the locality, district or wider region.

8.21 Representativeness - the building or structure will survive as a good-quality representative of a particular historical or architectural trend or settlement pattern; or be part of the legacy of a particular individual, architect or designer, architectural or artistic movement, company or group in the past.

8.22 Social and communal value - the building or structure will be perceived locally as a source of local identity (for example, commemorative or symbolic), distinctiveness, social interaction or contributing to the collective memory of a place.

- 8.23 It is the aim of Aylesbury Vale District Council to protect and enhance the district's heritage assets through the identification of those of local significance and through ensuring that development is managed in a way that sustains or enhances their significance and setting. The effect of a planning application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining any application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated 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.

#### **Buildings at risk**

- 8.24 Investing in historic buildings can have a direct impact on the quality of life of residents. Many buildings at risk have a rich historic legacy and contribute to local identity. The repair and refurbishment of declining and/or derelict historic buildings can often be a catalyst in encouraging confidence and investment in an area.

#### **Archaeology and ancient monuments**

- 8.25 There are sixty-one sites in the district that are included in the statutory schedule of ancient monuments. The consent of the Secretary of State is required for any proposals that may affect them.
- 8.26 Additionally, there are other identified sites of archaeological importance. The council is committed to protect these sites from development that would damage or endanger them and will afford protection to archaeological remains in accordance with their archaeological importance. Sites currently known to be of archaeological importance are shown on the Buckinghamshire County Historic Environment Record.
- 8.27 Applications for development of sites containing or likely to contain archaeological remains will require an archaeological field evaluation. It is recommended that prospective developers consult the council at pre-application stage in this respect.
- 8.28 The council will expect proposals for sites containing important archaeological remains to be preserved in situ, i.e. preservation undisturbed in the monument's existing location and setting. Where preservation in situ is not justified, the council will seek preservation by record. This involves digging the site, exposing and removing whatever archaeological remains are found and making a record of the findings. The developer will be required to make satisfactory arrangements for the excavation and recording of the archaeological remains and the publication of the results. This will be achieved by the imposition of suitable conditions and/or agreement between the council and the developer.

#### **Historic parks and gardens**

- 8.29 In Aylesbury Vale there are nine parks and gardens of special historic interest included in the national register of such. They are graded in a similar way to listed buildings. The inclusion of a historic park or garden in the register carries obligations on the local planning authority to consult English Heritage and the Garden History Society on all applications for development likely to affect the area of special interest. In considering the impact of a proposal the council will have regard to the historical layout and landscaping of the park or garden and public views within, into or from it.

### **BE1 Heritage assets**

All applications that relate to a heritage asset/s shall have regard to the specific guidance set out in the council's adopted Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document, design guides, and advice notes, and include a heritage assessment that will contain the following information. The level of detail required will depend upon the nature of the works proposed.

- a. A brief history of the building and/or area affected.
- b. For buildings, details of the age, construction methods used, and materials (a plan of the building indicating construction phases may be helpful in complex buildings).
- c. For areas, a summary of settlement or landscape form, local building form and locally distinctive and characteristic materials (where applicable make reference to any available Conservation Area appraisals or Landscape Character Assessments).
- d. A statement of significance of any affected heritage asset, outlining the four key heritage values (historic, evidential, aesthetic and communal) and the contribution that each makes to the significance of the asset(s).
- e. An impact assessment of the proposals on the assets and their identified significance, item by item where relevant.
- f. For buildings proposed for demolition or major alteration, justification for that level of intervention (for example structural survey reports) which clearly identifies the reasons why the applicant believes that the intervention is necessary.
- g. The council will monitor heritage at risk within the district and will pro-actively engage with key stakeholders in order to secure and improve those heritage assets deemed to be most at risk. The council will use its statutory powers to enforce the repair of heritage assets where appropriate.

In conservation areas the council will seek to preserve or enhance the special characteristics that led to the designation of the area.

Proposals for development will not be permitted if they cause harm to the character or appearance of conservation areas, their settings or any associated views of or from the conservation area.

Proposals for development or redevelopment either within or adjacent to the conservation area must respect the historic layout, scale and form of buildings, street patterns, open spaces and natural features that contribute to its character and appearance.

Proposals for alterations, extensions and changes of use must respect and complement the character, materials and design details of the structure and site concerned and its neighbours.

### **Archaeology and ancient monuments**

In dealing with development proposals affecting a site of archaeological importance the council will protect, enhance and preserve the historic interest and its setting.

Where research suggests that historic remains may be present on a development site planning applications should be supported by details of an archaeological field evaluation. In such cases the council will expect proposals to preserve the historic interest without substantial change.

Where permission is granted for development involving sites containing archaeological remains the council will impose conditions or seek planning obligations to secure the excavation and recording of the remains and publication of the results.

### **Historic parks and gardens**

Development proposals within or affecting a park or garden of special historic interest should take full account of the area's historic and landscape significance. The council will resist proposals that do not protect the distinctive characteristics of such parks and gardens.

## Design of new development

- 8.30 Good design and landscaping as part of new development is a key priority in preserving and enhancing the quality of the built environment in Aylesbury. A design-led approach is required that respects the vernacular character of towns and villages, and where development in the countryside is necessary or appropriate, new development respects the existing character and visual amenity of rural landscapes and buildings.
- 8.31 The character of settlements differs across the district, particularly in the building materials used in vernacular buildings, reflecting the changing geology and geography. Local building traditions determine this local distinctiveness through their siting and the use of local materials and building styles. It is vital that new development reflects the scale and characteristics of its surroundings and adds to the built quality of the area.
- 8.32 The key to the council's approach towards the design of new development is focussing on local distinctiveness. This refers to the unique quality of buildings, landscape and topography in a locality that define its character. Within the district there is a wide variety of landscape character types, from the nationally recognised natural beauty the Chiltern Hills Area Of Natural Beauty (AONB), to the locally important pattern of fields, hedgerows and streams in other parts of the district. Similarly, there is a wide range of settlements with distinctive characteristics such as the narrow roads and high walls of Haddenham and Chearsley, to the wide main street and limestone houses of Thornborough. Designs or layouts that may be entirely acceptable in one part of the district may not be appropriate elsewhere.
- 8.33 The council wishes to conserve and enhance these distinctions between areas of the district and neighbouring districts and to reinforce a sense of place by requiring development to be appropriate to its context. This will be especially important in areas recognised for their landscape or townscape quality, i.e. the designated Special Landscape Areas and conservation areas.
- 8.34 The historic environment can be an important component of local distinctiveness. Development that respects the historic characteristics of its surroundings will be encouraged. Modern developments should look towards the same qualities in order to be appropriate to their setting. That is not to suggest that previous styles should be reproduced or to discourage innovation in building styles but rather to ensure that development respects existing architectural styles. The council wishes to encourage development that has an individual identity that either complements or forms an attractive contrast with its surroundings.
- 8.35 NB outdoor amenity space does not include parking spaces, garages, or car ports.

### BE2 Design of new development

All new development proposals shall follow the guidance set out within the council's adopted design guides and shall respect and complement:

- a. The physical characteristics of the site and its surroundings.
- b. The scale and context of the site and its setting.
- c. The local distinctiveness and vernacular character of the locality, in terms of ordering, form, proportions, architectural detailing and materials.
- d. The natural qualities and features of the area.
- e. The effect on important public views and skylines.

## External space standards

The distance between dwellings and the treatment of spaces around them have an important effect on the appearance of an area, the quality of life for residents and the distinctiveness of development. Sufficient space should be provided to meet outdoor needs of the household including children's play, hobbies, outdoor relaxation, drying of washing and greenery.

Outlook from a dwelling is allied to privacy and both are necessary for quality of life in dwellings. Whilst an adequate standard of privacy may be achieved by the use of walls, fences and planting, consideration will need to be given to the outlook that would then be achieved, as an enclosed or cramped outlook from habitable rooms is likely to be oppressive.

The provision of enclosed private outdoor amenity space should be incorporated in the early stage of the design process. Amenity space for all dwellings should be:

- Private, useable, functional and safe.
- Easily accessible from living areas.
- Orientated to maximise sunlight.

Private amenity space should not be steeply sloping or awkwardly shaped so as to jeopardise its function to accommodate relaxation and leisure activities of residents.

NB outdoor amenity space does not include parking spaces, garages, or car ports.

## Space between dwellings:

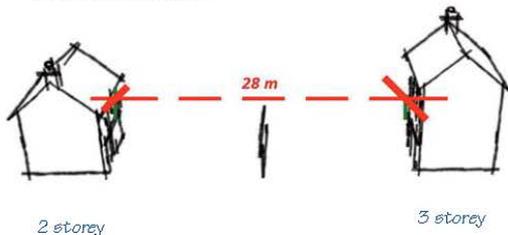
### Space Between Dwellings

#### Front to front

Where 1 or 2 storey buildings face a building of similar height a minimum distance of 22 metres should be maintained between the principal windows of the dwellings.

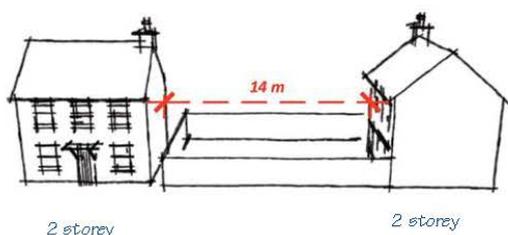


Where one or both of the facing dwellings are more than 2 storeys high the minimum distance between principal windows shall be 28 metres plus an additional 3 metres set back for each additional storey.



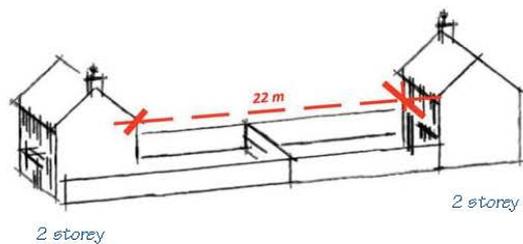
#### Front/back to side

Where principal windows face the wall of a 2 storey dwelling that contains no windows, or windows that contain obscured glass (e.g. bathrooms) the minimum distance shall be 14 metres. If the facing wall is 3 storeys high (with no windows) the minimum distance shall be 17 metres, increasing by 3 metres for each additional storey.



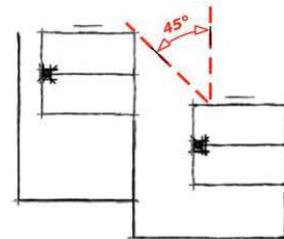
#### Back to back

Where the rear elevation of a 1 or 2 storey dwelling faces the rear elevation of a 1 or 2 storey dwelling a minimum distance of 22 metres shall be maintained. If one of the dwellings is 3 storeys high than a minimum distance of 28 metres shall be maintained, increasing by 3 metres for each additional storey.



#### 45° rule

New buildings that are sited close to the principal windows of existing properties shall be designed so that there is no obstruction to daylight beyond a horizontal angle of 45° measured on plan view from the centre of the principal window of an adjoining property.



### **Protection of the amenity of residents**

- 8.36 It is a central theme of planning that good neighbourliness and fairness are among the most important factors against which development proposals should be measured. While planning decisions should always be made on balance in the public interest, this should not be at the expense of unreasonable harm to people's peaceful enjoyment of their property. Most development will have some impact on its neighbours, but it is important to ensure that this impact is reasonable in relation to the benefits of the development.
- 8.37 Amenity can be harmed in a number of ways, for example by noise, fumes or odours, excessive or speeding traffic, loss of light, the overbearing nature of a new structure, disruptions to services, increased risk of injury, illness or damage to property. Aylesbury Vale is a valued place in which to live, and the council aims to protect this aspect of its residential environment.

### **BE3 Protection of the amenity of residents**

Planning permission will not be granted where the proposed development would unreasonably harm any aspect of the amenity of nearby residents when considered against the benefits arising from the proposal. Where planning permission is granted, the council will use conditions or planning obligations to ensure that any potential adverse impacts on neighbours are eliminated or appropriately controlled.

## 9 Natural Environment

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## Protected sites

- 9.1 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are hugely important to AVDC as these are sites of national importance for flora, fauna, geological and physiographical (landform) features. They are statutorily protected from harm under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Proposed development that has an adverse effect on a SSSI, whether individually or in combination with other developments, will not normally be permitted.
- 9.2 There are a significant number of sites of ancient woodland in the district across many parishes. Notably; woods at Whitfield, Sheephouse, Balmore, Foxcote, Stratford, Diddershall, Broadway/Thrift, Tittershall, Boarstall, Work/Shabbington/Oakley, Hell's Coppice and Salden. Ancient woodland will be accorded the same level of importance as SSSIs, as it comprises a number of woodland habitats that are a national priority for improvement under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Ancient woodland and trees are irreplaceable. As such, the opportunities for mitigation under criterion (3) of the policy are limited, and planning permission is likely to be refused for development that would result in the loss of ancient woodland or trees unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location demonstrably outweigh the loss. Where the council becomes aware of ancient trees not previously identified and under threat from development, a Tree Preservation Order will be considered.
- 9.3 Local geological sites, being of regional significance, are also accorded a high degree of importance. The district has 14 such sites, and in terms of size the most significant are Brill Hill, College Lake, The Ridgeway Complex, Ivinghoe Beacon to Inchcombe Hill and Wendover Woods. Any development proposal that adversely impacts upon one of these sites would need to be extremely well justified.
- 9.4 Local nature reserves are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. There are local nature reserves at Buckingham (Buckingham Sand Pit, Coombs Quarry) and at Haddenham (Snakemoor). Development proposals adversely affecting a local nature reserve will be considered on a case-by-case basis, according to the amount of information available about the site and its significance, relative to the type, scale and benefits of the development being proposed and any mitigation.
- 9.5 Where substantial adverse impacts are likely on protected sites, planning permission will be refused unless there is particular justification that clearly outweighs the impact in that case. The council will consider the wider implications of any adverse impact to a protected site, such as its role in providing a vital wildlife corridor, mitigating flood risk or ensuring good water quality in a catchment.

### NE1 Protected sites

Where development proposals would lead to an individual or cumulative substantial adverse impact on SSSIs, ancient woodland or ancient trees, the council will balance the overall benefits of the proposal against the impact.

Sufficient information must be provided for the council to assess the significance of the impact against the importance of the protected site and the species which depend upon it. Planning permission will be granted only where:

- a. the benefits of and need for the development clearly significantly outweigh the direct and indirect impact on the protected site and the ecosystem services it provides;
- b. the development could not be located in an alternative, less harmful location, and
- c. appropriate mitigation, compensation and where possible enhancement measures have been put in place.

## Biodiversity

- 9.6 The VALP seeks to conserve and enhance the district's biodiversity through the protection and improvement of the terrestrial and water environments and fauna and flora, relative to their importance.
- 9.7 The Aylesbury Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011-26 was agreed by a consortium of stakeholders including AVDC. It seeks to ensure that high quality green infrastructure (GI) is delivered which is accessible, attractive, and which conserves and enhances the district's special natural and historic environment, its wildlife and its landscape. GI offers the opportunity to engage with the community to build a strong sense of place, and to achieve cohesion between new and existing settlements. GI has an important role in providing a wide range of formal and informal health and recreational benefits at little or no cost to its users, by delivering economically sustainable GI. Strategic Principle 3 of the strategy is that GI should maintain and enhance biodiversity and ensure that development and its implementation results in a net gain of biodiversity as identified in Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species plans.
- 9.8 Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), including 2009 update 'Forward To 2020', identifies the key principles and goals that planning decisions must take into account. The BAP's aim is to retain, protect and where possible enhance biodiversity now and in the future. For biodiversity in Aylesbury Vale district to be supported sustainably, it needs to be meaningfully integrated into land management beyond protected sites and sites managed for wildlife. Biodiversity Opportunity Areas are the key areas in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes for the restoration and creation of priority habitat. They are the most important areas for biodiversity in the district and represent a targeted landscape scale approach to conserving biodiversity, and the basis for an ecological network.
- 9.9 The district supports a rich variety of natural habitats and species. Many of these are of regional and national significance. Part of the district south of Pitstone is in the internationally designated Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The council expects that the planning system should contribute to the conservation and enhancement of these, and to the ecological systems that support them. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), development policies will seek to maximise the benefits of planning decisions to biodiversity, within the context of sustainable development.
- 9.10 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Biological Notification Sites (BNS) are non statutory designated sites that occur within Buckinghamshire. There are over 200 LWSs in the district and 186 BNSs. There are also many non-designated sites that conform to the definition of Priority Habitat, as defined by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006. These are of varying degree of importance for nature conservation and receive varying degrees of protection as set out in the Act.
- 9.11 The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Record Centre (BMERC) holds records of all known sites of nature conservation value in Buckinghamshire. There are also many known sites of critical importance to species of national and international importance, such as bat roosts. Records of these are held by BMERC and/or specialist recording groups.
- 9.12 The council will consider planning applications for development affecting any of these sites against criteria weighted according to their ecological status and protection within a local, national and international status. Their local context is particularly important. Therefore, a particular habitat or species may be nationally frequent but extremely rare locally, or nationally scarce and locally frequent. Examples of this include Native Black Poplar, Water

Vole, Otter or Bechsteins Bat. Development affecting any of these sites or species is expected to result in appropriate mitigation or where possible a net gain to their area or populations.

- 9.13 Many species are entirely dependant on human habitation for their reproductive success. Modern housing standards virtually eliminate opportunities for these species. Consequently where appropriate, features for biodiversity within development will be expected. Simple inexpensive measures can result in significant gains, such as integrated bat roost cavities, and integrated swift or house martin boxes. These measures, if required, are expected to be permanent in order to deliver meaningful ecological gain and protection. Therefore these features will be expected to be built into suitable structures rather than provided as vulnerable, isolated and temporary boxes.
- 9.14 Bat populations are particularly sensitive to development that severs or disturbs movement corridors. Where appropriate, flight corridors should be identified and protected or enhanced to ensure the ecological functionality of bat populations. Examples of suitable measures include green bridges, underpasses or tunnels that are situated on the exact traditional routes of bat populations and free from disturbance.

## NE2 Biodiversity

Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment will be achieved by the following:

- a. In considering proposals for development, a net gain in biodiversity will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing resources, and by creating new resources.
- b. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be adequately mitigated, or as a last resort compensated for on site, then development will not be permitted.
- c. Internationally important sites and species will be protected. Avoidance of likely significant effects should be the first option. Development likely to affect the Chiltern Beechwood SAC international site will be subject to assessment under the Habitat Regulations and will not be permitted unless adverse effects can be fully mitigated.
- d. Development on or likely to have an adverse effect on sites of nationally important sites, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the substantial harm it would cause to the site and the wider national network of SSSIs, and the loss can be mitigated and where possible achieve a net gain on biodiversity/geodiversity.
- e. Development in Local Wildlife Sites and Biological Notification Sites will only be permitted where the benefits of development clearly outweigh harm to nature conservation interests. Additionally, where every effort has been made to minimise harm, and where appropriate mitigation and where possible enhancement measures can be put in place.
- f. The council expects ecological surveys for planning applications to be undertaken by a suitably qualified person and consistent with nationally accepted standards (BS 42020:Biodiversity – Code of Practice for planning and development) as replaced.
- g. Development proposals will be expected to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value on site. Existing ecological networks should be identified and maintained to avoid habitat fragmentation, and ecological corridors including water courses should form an essential component of green infrastructure provision in association with new development to ensure habitat connectivity.
- h. Planning conditions/obligations will be used to secure net gains in biodiversity where possible by helping deliver Bucks and MK BAP targets in the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.

A monitoring and management plan will be required for biodiversity features on site to ensure their long term suitable management (secured through planning condition or Section 106 agreement).

## Landscape

### Landscape Character and Locally Significant Landscape

- 9.15 All the landscape in the district is considered to have character and particular distinctive features to be conserved, positive characteristics to be enhanced and detracting features to be mitigated or removed. The 2008 Landscape Character Assessment is the primary evidence base which divides the entire landscape (beyond towns and Areas Of Natural Beauty) into Landscape Character Areas and Landscape Character Types. The assessment sets out landscape conservation guidelines for each Landscape Character Area. Therefore all the landscape in the district is considered to have innate value as referred to in the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF)<sup>27</sup> That said, of the locally significant landscape, the Areas of Attractive Landscapes (AALs) are of the greatest significance followed by the Local Landscape Areas (LLAs).
- 9.16 In early 2015, AVDC engaged the consultants Land Use Consultants (LUC) to review the 2008 Landscape Character Assessment, update it in light of major developments since 2008, and consider its conformity with the NPPF. The evidence base was considered to be a valid basis to develop a policy approach and a specific policy approach was recommended to note landscape character across the district and special qualities and differences between character areas and character types.
- 9.17 Areas of Attractive Landscapes (AALs) were first designated in the Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1979 and in successive plans through the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan Adopted 2004. Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) were designated by AVDC in the 1990s and carried forward into AVDLP in 2004. Neither of these designations are seeking to resist development in principle, unless regard has not been give to distinctive features and key characteristics of the AALs and LLAs.
- 9.18 Land Use Consultants carried out a criteria-based assessment of all AALs and LLAs, applying a nationally-accepted methodology to what influences landscape value. This evidence base 'defining the special qualities of local landscape designations in Aylesbury Vale District' has been published as a final report following stakeholder engagement in August 2015 and public engagement in October-December 2015. The study concludes at paragraph 4.2:-
- 9.19 "Most of the Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) have stronger special qualities and are relatively higher in landscape value in comparison to the Local Landscape Areas (LLAs), which are generally smaller scale locally valued features. The LLAs generally do not contain so many nationally significant natural or cultural designations, and they are typically less memorable or distinctive than the AALs. It may therefore be useful to retain the hierarchy of AALs and LLAs in order to distinguish the most valued landscapes from those that are not so greatly valued although still considered worthy of designation."
- 9.20 AVDC has accepted the recommendations of LUC on which AALs and LLAs have the greater value (following criteria based assessment of each sub area) and together with the support for locally designated landscapes received in response to the VALP Issues and Options consultation, designate new AALs and LLAs.

### NE3 Landscape character and locally important landscape

To ensure that the district's landscape character is maintained, development must have regard to the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment 2008 (as amended 2015) and recognise

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<sup>27</sup> paragraph 109.

the individual character and distinctiveness of particular Landscape Character Areas set out in the Assessment. Development should consider the role of the landscape character area and:

- a. be grouped where possible with existing buildings to minimise impact on visual amenity
- b. be located to avoid the loss of important on-site views and off-site views towards important landscape features
- c. reflect local character and distinctiveness in terms of settlement form and field pattern, spacing, height, scale, plot shape and size, elevations, roofline and pitch, overall colour, texture and boundary treatment (walls, hedges, fences and gates)
- d. minimise the impact of lighting to avoid blurring the distinction between urban and rural areas, and in areas which are intrinsically dark and to avoid light pollution to the night sky
- e. ensure that the buildings and any outdoor storage and parking areas are not visually prominent in the landscape
- f. not generate an unacceptable level and/or frequency of noise in areas relatively undisturbed by noise and valued for their recreational or amenity value

The first stage in mitigating impact is to avoid the identified harmful impact. Where it is accepted there will be harm to the landscape character, specific on-site mitigation will be required and, as a last resort, compensation will be required as part of a planning application. Applicants must consider the enhancement opportunities identified in the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment and how they apply to a specific site.

The policies map defines Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) and Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) which have particular landscape features and qualities considered appropriate for particular conservation and enhancement opportunities. Of the two categories, the Areas of Attractive Landscape have the greater significance. Development in AALs and LLAs should have particular regard to the character identified in the report 'Defining the special qualities of local landscape designations in Aylesbury Vale District' (Final Report, 2016) and Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment (2008). Development that adversely affects this character will not be permitted unless appropriate mitigation can be secured. Where permission is granted, the council will require conditions or Section 106 agreements to best ensure the mitigation of any harm caused to the landscape interest.

## Nationally Important Landscape

- 9.21 The most important landscape in the district is the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the vicinity of Wendover and Pitstone/Edlesborough. This forms part of a continuous landscape from Central Bedfordshire to South Oxfordshire. The Chiltern Hills were designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1965 by the government in recognition that the Chilterns countryside is amongst the finest in England and Wales. The main purpose of designation is to conserve beauty which includes protecting flora, fauna and geological features as well as the overall landscape.
- 9.22 AVDC, as a member of the shadow Chilterns Conservation Board endorses the Chilterns Conservation Board Management Plan 2014-19. The Management Plan sets a comprehensive vision for the management of the AONB (beyond just town planning) and provides a policy framework for achieving it. Specific policies and guidelines produced by the shadow Chilterns Conservation Board may, if appropriate (such as the Chilterns Building Design Guide), be adopted by AVDC, or as a group of councils, as Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 9.23 AVDC engaged Land Use Consultants in early 2015 to advise on the policy approach for landscape in VALP and they recommended having a specific a policy on development in the AONB and how it's national significance requires a different approach to assessing proposals affecting other landscapes.
- 9.24 A considerable extent of the southeast of the district around Aylesbury, Stoke Mandeville Weston Turville, Wendover, Aston Clinton, and south of Cheddington can have views from public vantage points to the Chilterns AONB and the areas adjacent the designated AONB be in the setting. There is no defined boundary to the 'setting' for the purposes of the VALP – a judgement will need to be made at the time a planning application is made.
- 9.25 A two tiered approach to this policy is proposed as major developments are likely to have more wide ranging impacts on the AONB.

## NE4 The Chilterns AONB and setting

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally designated landscape and as such permission for major developments will be refused unless exceptional circumstances prevail as defined by national planning policy.

Planning permission for any major development within the AONB, or affecting the setting or appreciation of the AONB, will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated it:

- a. conserves and enhances, in accordance with criterion f-m below, the Chiltern AONB's special qualities, distinctive character, tranquillity and remoteness in accordance with national planning policy and the overall purpose of the AONB designation
- b. is appropriate to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area or is desirable for its understanding and enjoyment
- c. meets the aims of the statutory Chilterns AONB Management Plan<sup>28</sup>, making practical and financial contributions towards management plan delivery as appropriate;

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<sup>28</sup> Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 A Framework for Action, or its future replacement, <http://www.chilternsaonb.org/conservation-board/management-plan.html>

- d. complies with the Chilterns Building Design Guide and technical notes by being of high quality design which respects the natural beauty of the Chilterns, its traditional built character and reinforces the sense of place and local character, and
- e. avoids adverse impacts from individual proposals (including their cumulative effects), unless these can be satisfactorily mitigated.

In the case of major developments, actions to conserve and enhance the AONB shall be informed by landscape and visual impact assessment, having considered all relevant landscape character assessments and shall focus upon:

- f. the Chilterns AONB's special qualities which include the steep chalk escarpment with areas of flower-rich downland, broadleaved woodlands (especially beech), commons, tranquil valleys, the network of ancient routes, villages with their brick and flint houses, chalk streams and a rich historic environment of hillforts and chalk figures;
- g. the scope for enhancing and restoring those parts of the landscape which are degraded or subject to existing intrusive developments, utilities or infrastructure;
- h. locally distinctive patterns and species composition of natural features such as chalk downland, trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, rivers and chalk streams;
- i. the locally distinctive character of settlements and their landscape settings, including the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the edge of settlements;
- j. visually sensitive skylines, geological and topographical features;
- k. landscapes of cultural, historic and heritage value;
- l. important views and visual amenity from public vantage points, including key views from the steep north-west facing chalk escarpment overlooking the low clay vale, and foreground views back to the AONB; and
- m. tranquillity, remoteness and the need to avoid intrusion from light pollution, noise, and transport.

Any other (non major) development can also have an impact on the AONB and its setting and will be required to meet criteria 1., 4. and 5. above.

## Pollution, noise, contaminated land and air quality

### Pollution

- 9.26 The council will ensure that no development creates or triggers unacceptable levels of pollution and land instability that could impact on human health, property and the wider environment, including environmental designations. Consideration must be given to adopting environmental best practice measures in all cases.

### Light, Noise and Odour Pollution

- 9.27 Although appropriate lighting may help to enhance community safety and reduce the fear of crime, caution must be taken to ensure that lighting only illuminates the intended areas or structures and does not negatively impact surrounding areas.
- 9.28 Consideration will be given to the impact of the proposed lighting on the natural environment and the effect on wildlife. Lighting within and around any development is expected to respect the ecological functionality of wildlife movement corridors. Certain species of invertebrate and mammal are highly sensitive to inappropriate lighting. In these circumstances, surveys are expected to determine where these wildlife movement corridors are and measures put forward that demonstrate how these will be protected and enhanced.
- 9.29 Similarly, the effects of noise on amenity can be limited by separating noise sensitive development such as homes, schools and hospitals from major noise sources. In cases where separation is not possible, the impact of noisy development and vibration on ambient noise levels should be assessed, for example by an Environmental Assessment, using the best available techniques and relevant technology and design guidance. This assessment will be relative to the scale of development being considered. Inconvenience can also be caused to local residents by late night opening, odours from cooking bars, restaurants and similar facilities.
- 9.30 It is important to stress that in addition to development proposals potentially having pollution impacts that require mitigation, applicants need to consider the impact of existing sources of pollution on proposed development (for example, proposals for residential development adjacent to railway lines, and associated noise and vibration impacts). As such, necessary supporting survey information will be required as appropriate.

### Air Quality

- 9.31 There are considerable health benefits related to the improvement of air quality through the reduction of air pollution in the district. The council's update and screening assessment has identified that road traffic is the main source of air pollution in the district. These are mostly in roads with a high flow of buses and/or HGVs, junctions and bus or coach stations. The pollutants of greatest concern in the district are nitrogen dioxide and particles, although other pollutants such as carbon monoxide and sulphur dioxide can also impact on health at high concentrations.
- 9.32 All development proposals which may cause significant impact on air quality directly or indirectly within air quality management areas (AQMA<sup>29</sup>) will need to submit an Air Quality Impact Assessment to the council. This needs to demonstrate how the proposal would likely impact on local air quality, whether the proposed use is appropriate, and how it would avoid, reduce and mitigate local pollutant emissions. Where appropriate, planning conditions or Section 106 agreements will be sought to minimise harmful air quality impacts arising from development.

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.aylesburyvaldc.gov.uk/air-quality-management-areas>

- 9.33 Nitrogen oxides from both industrial and vehicle emission can have a significantly detrimental effect on wildlife habitat. Therefore any large development needs to be carefully assessed through monitoring and Air Quality Impact Assessments prior to planning application determination.

### **Contaminated Land**

- 9.34 Presence of contamination may affect or restrict the use of land, but equally development may address the issue for the benefit of the wider community, and bring the land back into beneficial use. In determining whether land contamination is an issue when assessing a planning application, the council will consider a range of information sources including its database of past industrial and commercial land uses, information provided by developers and third parties, statutory guidance, historic maps, and the council's Contaminated Land Strategy.
- 9.35 In April 2000, Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 came into force, introducing a new regime for the regulation of contaminated land in England. The main purpose of Part IIA is to provide a system for the identification of land that is posing unacceptable risks to health or the environment, and for securing remediation where unacceptable risks cannot be controlled by other means.
- 9.36 Although most developments are rural in nature, there is development built on previously developed land, some of which may formerly have been employment land of an industrial or commercial nature, and may therefore be affected by contamination and require further investigation. The term 'contaminated land' describes land polluted by, for example heavy metals and preparations all of which may harm soils, fauna, flora, water resources and construction components.
- 9.37 Redeveloping such land provides an opportunity to remediate the site of any contamination, so that any threat to health, the environment and the structure itself is removed. The assessment and cleansing of contaminated land is complex, with each site being judged specifically to make it fit for end use. When carrying out an assessment, interested parties should take into account guidance set out in the council's Technical Guide for Planning Applicants and Developers. This document provides a guide for developers on how to deal with land contamination and what information should accompany a planning application for the development of affected sites. It should also be read in conjunction with DEFRA & the Environment Agency's Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 9.38 It is essential that a Contaminated Land Assessment is carried out by a competent person and in accordance with BS10175 (2011) Code of Practice for the Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites. Where there is evidence of contamination, remedial measures will need to be specified to ensure the development will not pose a risk to human health, and where appropriate, improve the wider environment.

## **NE5 Pollution, air quality and contaminated land**

### **Noise pollution**

Significant noise generating development will be required to minimise the impact of noise on the occupiers of proposed buildings, neighbouring properties and the surrounding environment. Applicants may be required to submit a noise impact study or to assess the effect of an existing noise source upon the proposed development, prior to the determination of a planning application.

Developments likely to generate more significant levels of noise will be permitted only where appropriate noise attenuation measures are incorporated which would reduce the impact on the surrounding land uses, existing or proposed, to acceptable levels in accordance with government guidance.

Where necessary, planning conditions will be imposed and / or a planning obligation sought in order to specify and secure acceptable noise limits, hours of operation and attenuation measures. Planning permission for noise-sensitive development, such as housing, schools and hospitals, will not be granted if its users would be affected adversely by noise from existing uses (or programmed development) that generate significant levels of noise.

### **Light pollution**

In developments where external lighting is required, planning permission will only be granted where:

- a. The lighting scheme proposed is the minimum required for the security and achieve working purposes
- b. Light spill and potential glare is minimised through the control of light direction, particularly in residential and commercial areas, areas of wildlife interest or the visual character of historic buildings and character of landscape, and
- c. The choice and positioning of the light fittings, columns and cables minimise their daytime appearance and impact on the streetscape.
- d. In considering development involving potentially adverse lighting impacts to wildlife, the council will expect surveys to identify wildlife corridors and ensure that these corridors are protected, and enhanced where possible.

### **Air quality**

Developments requiring planning permission that may have an adverse impact on air quality will be required to prove through a submitted Air Quality Impact Assessment that:

- e. The effect of the proposal would exceed the National Air Quality Strategy Standards (as replaced) or
- f. The surrounding area would not be materially affected by existing and continuous poor air quality.

Large, potentially polluting developments will be required to assess their air quality impact with detailed air dispersion modelling and appropriate monitoring. Air Quality Impact Assessments are also required for development proposals that would generate an increase in air pollution and are likely to have a significantly adverse impact on biodiversity. Required mitigation will be secured through a planning condition or Section 106 Agreement.

### **Contaminated land**

Development on or near land that is or may be affected by contamination will only be permitted where:

- g. an appropriate Contaminated Land Assessment has been carried out as part of the application to identify any risks to human health, the natural environment or water quality
- h. where contamination is found which would pose an unacceptable risk to people's health, the natural environment or water quality, the council will impose a condition, if appropriate, to ensure the applicant undertake appropriate remedial measures to ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed use and that the development can safely proceed.

Remediation works will be carried out before the commencement of any new development. Required remediation methods will be secured through a planning condition or Section 106 Agreement.

## Local green spaces

- 9.39 The designation 'Local Green Space' was introduced 2011 by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is the identification of locally important land for special protection, ruling out development other than in exceptional cases, giving it a similar status to land within the green belt. Local green space is designated when a local or neighbourhood plan is prepared or reviewed. The majority of the neighbourhood plans that have been made or are in the process of being prepared in the district have identified their own local green spaces, taking up the opportunity given for communities to protect local green areas of special importance.
- 9.40 The NPPF sets out strict requirements that the area must meet in order for the designation to apply, which would not be the case for most green areas or open space. It requires that the designation is only used:
- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
  - where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife, and
  - where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land
- 9.41 Proposals for Local Green Spaces can be put forward during the Draft Plan consultation period. Consideration will be given to proposals if they are put forward for an area of particular importance to the local community and are in line with the requirements set out above and guidance in the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). Proposals should set out where the site is on a map, why it meets the above requirements and be received during the draft plan consultation period. Once VALP has been adopted Local Green Spaces then can only be designated through Neighbourhood Plans until the Local Plan is reviewed.

### NE6 Local green space

Where land is identified as Local Green Space, either on the policies map in this plan or on the policies map of a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan, national policy will be applied. This rules out new development other than in very special circumstances

Within Local Green Spaces, small scale development within the following categories will only be supported providing that its provision does not conflict with the demonstrably special significance of the Local Green Space and preserves the purpose of its designation. Such development should be:

- a. For the purposes of agriculture or forestry, essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreational facilities and cemeteries
- b. The replacement of existing buildings in the Green Belt by new buildings that are not significantly larger in volume, normally by no more than 25-30%

Measures to improve public access to Local Green Spaces will be encouraged.

## **Best and most versatile agricultural land**

- 9.42 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>30</sup> encourages local planning authorities to support economic development in rural areas, and this is supported by the council's own Corporate Plan. The NPPF<sup>31</sup> sets out that poorer quality agricultural land should be prioritised for development over higher grades. The council's approach to site allocations as advised by the Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessment (2016) follows this advice. However a local plan policy approach is needed to safeguard any other agricultural land sites that come forward over the VALP period that could affect the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- 9.43 Agriculture still forms a significant economic sector in the district in terms of land use, and a significant proportion of farmland in the district is classified as the 'best and most versatile' (i.e. grades 1, 2 and 3a). Conversely, a lot of the farmland that does not fall into these categories is sensitive for other reasons – in areas of flood risk, important landscapes and in and adjoining areas of biodiversity importance. The council will continue to support new agricultural development which supports agricultural operations and innovative farming methods.

### **NE7 Best and most versatile agricultural land**

Subject to the development allocations set out in the VALP, the council will seek to protect the best and most versatile farmland for the longer term. Where development of best and more versatile agricultural land is proposed, planning consent will not be granted unless:

- a. the benefits of the proposed development outweighs the harm resulting from the loss of agricultural land, and
- b. there are no otherwise suitable sites of poorer agricultural quality that can accommodate the development

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<sup>30</sup> paragraph 28

<sup>31</sup> paragraph 112

## Trees, hedgerows and woodlands

- 9.44 Trees, woodlands and hedges make an important contribution to the beauty, diversity and distinctiveness of our rural landscapes and the beauty and liveability of our urban landscapes. Tree and woodland canopies create shelter and shade, intercept rainfall and airborne pollutants, and regulate the movement of water through river catchments - reducing soil erosion and the leaching of pollutants into surface and ground waters. Woodland ecosystems are a key component of the district's biodiversity, providing habitats for both rare and common species. Trees and woodlands take many years to mature - ancient woodlands and veteran trees in particular are irreplaceable.
- 9.45 Mature trees, woodlands and hedges are sensitive to the impacts of development, both directly through their removal or indirectly through the impacts of construction. Due to the length of time and the cost taken to replace mature features, and the contribution they can make to the quality of development, they should be retained and protected where possible. Surveys and assessments carried out in accordance with recognised standards should be used to inform the design process and minimise impacts. Where their loss is unavoidable, they should be replaced with suitable new planting, either within the site or in the locality if this is more appropriate. Development can make a positive contribution to the tree and hedgerow resource in the locality through new planting or the restoration and improved management of existing features.
- 9.46 Black Poplars (*Populus nigra subsp. betulifolia*) are a rare species of tree. The district has a high proportion of the British population. Black Poplars are important features in the landscape of the district and also support a wide variety of wildlife.
- 9.47 Tree surveys required through the policy need to be carried out at a sufficiently early stage to inform the design of the development.

### NE8 Trees, hedgerows and woodlands

Development should seek to enhance and expand the district's tree and woodland resource, including native Black Poplars.

Development that would result in the unacceptable loss of, or damage to, or threaten the continued well-being of protected trees, hedgerows, community orchards, veteran trees or woodland (including those that are not protected but are considered to be worthy of protection) will be resisted. Where the loss of trees is considered acceptable, adequate replacement provision will be required that utilise species that are in sympathy with the character of the existing tree species in the locality and the site.

Where trees within or adjacent to a site could be affected by development, a full tree survey and arboricultural implications assessment to BS 5837 (as replaced) will be required as part of the planning application. The implementation of any protective measures it identifies will be secured by the use of planning conditions or section 106 agreements.

# 10 Countryside

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## Conversion of rural buildings

- 10.1 In support of the transition to a low carbon future, national policy (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 17) indicates that planning should encourage the re-use of existing resources, including existing buildings.
- 10.2 National policy recognises that the conversion of existing buildings can help to promote a strong rural economy, as can the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses and sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments.
- 10.3 Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances, such as where the development would re-use a redundant or disused building and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.
- 10.4 Stimulating economic growth and supporting the recovery of the local economy is one of the council's corporate priorities. In support of this priority, and in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Policy C1 encourages the re-use of existing rural buildings for a variety of uses.
- 10.5 The policy is primarily aimed at redundant, disused or underused building. It sets out:
- the characteristics existing buildings should have to make them acceptable for re-use,
  - the council's approach to different types of use, and
  - how the council will assess the acceptability of any scheme for re-use.
- 10.6 Proposals should refer to the AVDC Designs Guides for Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings and Conversion of Listed Historic Farm Buildings.

## Permitted development rights

- 10.7 A number of permitted development rights apply to existing buildings in the countryside and these rights may change over the VALP period. Development (including change of use) allowed under such rights cannot be controlled by the policies in the VALP.

## Characteristics of the existing building

### Permanency

- 10.8 The council only permits the re-use of existing permanent buildings under this policy. This ensures that it is not used to establish a permanent use on a site where only a temporary consent exists or where a permanent use has lapsed as a result of dereliction. However, exceptionally, the council may permit the re-use of a derelict building if the applicant can demonstrate that dereliction was the result of severe accidental damage or accidental destruction, for example, by fire, in the past two years.

### Status

- 10.9 The re-use of buildings in the countryside may involve redundant, disused or underused buildings. An existing building does not need to be empty before a scheme for conversion or diversification would be considered. However, the council wish to ensure that any existing use or activities could be accommodated either on or off site, without the need for an additional building to fulfil the function of the building being converted.
- 10.10 Buildings need to be soundly constructed to merit retention and re-use. Derelict buildings are clearly no longer of sound construction but some other buildings are also not suitable for re-use. These include buildings constructed with temporary or short-life materials and those built without proper foundations.

## Location

- 10.11 The council supports the re-use of buildings in the countryside, particularly those close to towns and villages as a means of supporting sustainable growth. The re-use of buildings in the open countryside, such as those that are located well away from the public highway in locations not served by utilities such as sewerage, water and electricity, will generally not be allowed.
- 10.12 However, there are some businesses that already exist in open countryside, so development may be permitted where the re-use of a building could support an existing business. Diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses and sustainable rural tourism and leisure development are supported to promote a strong rural economy.

## Merits

- 10.13 The countryside has many buildings of historic or architectural importance and buildings which contribute to local character. Some buildings enhance the countryside and the council will actively encourage their retention and re-use.
- 10.14 However, national policy has widened the types of building suitable for re-use with changes to agricultural permitted development rights through The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Schedule 2 Part 3 Classes Q, R and S.
- 10.15 For existing agricultural buildings over 500 square metres, the council may not permit its retention and re-use if it considers that the existing building has a harmful impact on its surrounding or the wider landscape. Often, the removal of disused agricultural buildings is preferable to retention as it can bring about an environmental improvement. This is most likely to be the case with a modern building, whose retention and re-use is unlikely to be acceptable if it is large in scale, clad with unattractive materials such as profiled steel or asbestos sheeting, or has a very utilitarian appearance.
- 10.16 Buildings proposed for residential re-use, should readily lend themselves to residential conversion in terms of scale, height, depth and number and location of existing openings. The area of land cultivated and maintained as a garden ('domestic curtilage') should be restricted to that necessary to provide immediate amenity space without detracting from the countryside setting. Permitted development rights may be restricted.

## Assessing the acceptability of the proposed scheme for re-use

- 10.17 All schemes for the re-use of existing buildings in the countryside should be designed with their rural location in mind and any potential impacts that the re-use might have on the surrounding area.
- 10.18 Larger scale schemes are more likely to have an impact on the rural roads, the amenity of local residents and the landscape setting. Such impacts will be considered against the relevant policies elsewhere in the VALP.
- 10.19 Applicants should be realistic about the uses to which an existing building in the countryside might be put. Existing buildings should be large enough to accommodate the intended re-use but applicants should also be aware that a building's design and construction may limit the type of use that can be accommodated. Any scheme should enable conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction. The council may require a structural survey for buildings outside the built up area of settlements to confirm the level of reconstruction required.
- 10.20 Since the existing building should be large enough to accommodate the intended re-use, there should be no need for significant extensions.

- 10.21 Many existing buildings in the countryside have a well-defined 'curtilage', or an established site area which may be defined on the ground or legally, for example in a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development. Any activities associated with the re-use of a building should take place within that curtilage or site area. Where it is necessary to define a curtilage or operational site area as part of the scheme for re-use, this should be the minimum required to meet the operational needs of the intended re-use and not harming the character of the countryside.
- 10.22 Where a scheme for the re-use of a building is permitted, the use should be capable of being accommodated to a large extent within the building itself. Incidental external ancillary uses such as essential operational parking are likely to be acceptable, provided that they are the minimum necessary to meet the needs of the development. Other ancillary uses, such as the outdoor storage of goods or materials are unlikely to be acceptable. In all cases, the use, layout and design of any outdoor areas should ensure that the development is not visually intrusive in the landscape.

### Extensions

- 10.23 Extensions proposals to convert traditional buildings should normally be contained within the confines of the existing building shell. Proposals which rely on substantial alteration or extension in order to make them work will not be permitted.
- 10.24 Within settlements, an extension may be acceptable if it is designed with sensitivity for the host building and does not conflict with any other planning requirements. An extension should enhance the character and appearance of its immediate surroundings, and where possible, make a positive contribution in the wider area.
- 10.25 Where permission or prior approval is granted for the conversion of a traditional rural building, the council will consider the impact of the use of permitted development rights available at the time. The council may restrict or remove them if it is necessary to preserve the appearance of the building, or the amenity of users of neighbouring properties.

### Extensions to existing conversions

- 10.26 Proposals to alter or extend previously converted buildings will be assessed in the same way as proposals to alter or extend buildings as part of a conversion scheme. Buyers of converted traditional rural buildings should be aware of any restriction or removal of permitted development rights.

## C1 Conversion of rural buildings

### Building Characteristics

The re-use of an existing building that is of permanent and substantial construction and generally in keeping with the rural surroundings in the countryside will be permitted provided that:

- a. conversion works should not involve major reconstruction or significant extensions and should respect the character of the building and its setting,
- b. where the building is suitable for modern agricultural practice it would not give rise to a future need for another building to fulfil the function of the building being re-used, and
- c. the long term retention of a building that is by reason of its location, size, condition and appearance is harmful to the character of the countryside is not encouraged.

## Proposed uses

The re-use of existing buildings in the countryside for economic development of community purposes will be permitted. These include but are not limited to business uses, storage, small-scale tourist attractions, holiday accommodation, non-residential uses in association with a caravan and /or camping sites, community activities or recreational (including equestrian) uses.

The re-use of existing buildings for occupational or non-occupational residential purposes should avoid the creation of new dwellings in the open countryside unless there are special circumstances. The re-use of existing buildings for occupational or non-occupational residential purposes which are not designated or non-designated heritage assets, will only be permitted where:

- d. the redundant or disused status of the building has been confirmed, and
- e. it can be demonstrated that the occupational or non-occupational residential re-use of the building would enhance the immediate setting.

Proposals for the occupational or non-occupational residential re-use of designated or non-designated heritage assets will also be considered under Policy BE1.

## Assessment criteria

All application for re-use will be assessed using the following criteria:

- f. the existing building is inherently suitable, in terms of its size, design and construction for the intended re-use, and the proposed scheme enables the intended re-use to be achieved without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction,
- g. the proposed re-use is of a scale that would not have an adverse impact on its surroundings or the viability of existing facilities or services in nearby settlements
- h. any extension to the existing building included in the proposed scheme is modest in scale, ancillary in nature, subordinate to the main building and necessary to meet the essential functional requirements of the intended re-use
- i. any extension to the existing barn conversion is modest in scale, ancillary in nature, subordinate to the main building and in keeping with the rural character
- j. where the existing building is of historic or architectural importance or contributes to local character, the proposed scheme would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the building or its setting
- k. the proposed scheme does not require an extension of the curtilage of the existing building
- l. where a new curtilage is required it should not be excessive in size and should relate well to the existing building and landscape, or
- m. the proposed scheme would not give rise to ancillary uses that could not be accommodated within the site and does not include, or would not give rise to, ancillary uses within the site, such as open storage, that would be visually intrusive.

## Equestrian development

- 10.27 National policy (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 28) indicates that local planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity, by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. Local plans should:
- support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas,
  - promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses, and
  - support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, which respect the character of the countryside.
- 10.28 In the Vale, the riding and keeping of horses are popular leisure pursuits and equestrian businesses can contribute to the rural economy. However, both of these activities have the potential to adversely affect environmental quality and the rural character of the district.
- 10.29 This policy sets out the council's approach to equestrian activities in the countryside, which seeks to promote a strong rural economy whilst also protecting environmental quality and other rural character. The policy and supporting text cover both the keeping of horses for private recreational purposes and commercial enterprises. It:
- outlines the types of equestrian activities and developments that are likely to require planning permission
  - discusses some general issues that apply to all equestrian development, such as site suitability and management, horse exercising and highways
  - sets out the council's approach to different types of development (mainly field shelters and private stables, commercial recreation and leisure developments, and commercial training and breeding businesses), and
  - discusses the issue of ancillary uses (such as riding arenas and occupational dwellings).
- 10.30 In the policy and supporting text, the term 'equine' means any domestic horse, pony, donkey and hybrids (including mules) and where the word 'horse' is used the reference applies to all equines.

## The need for planning permission

- 10.31 Developments which normally require planning permission include:
- The use of land or a building to keep horses for recreational purposes
  - The erection of a building to shelter horses or their provisions
  - The erection of a building in which to exercise horses
  - The setting out of a riding arena or exercise arena or to create other hard surfaces for a similar purpose
  - The putting up of lights to illuminate a riding arena or other area
  - Any residential development associated with the keeping of horses, including the stationing of a mobile home or caravan in a field, and
  - The laying out or surfacing of a vehicular access in connection with the keeping of horses.
- 10.32 Commercial establishments, such as riding schools, livery stables, racing stables and stud farms (and extensions to existing premises) also require consent.
- 10.33 Planning permission is not usually required to graze horses which is considered to be an agricultural use, but is required for the keeping of horses for recreational or commercial

purposes. The distinction between 'grazing' and 'the keeping of' horses is not always clear but the council will assume that horses are being 'kept' (rather than 'grazed') if:

- the animals are being fed by imported food rather than off the land
- the land is being used (wholly or in part) as a recreational or exercise area, or
- the stocking density is too high to support the horses by grazing alone. As a general rule, each horse requires about 0.5-1 hectares (or 1.25 to 2.5 acres) of grazing of a suitable quality if no supplementary feeding is being provided.

10.34 Even where grazing is the primary use, any building (such as a field shelter) or other structure associated with the keeping of horses is likely to require permission.

### **General issues related to all equestrian development**

#### Site suitability and site management

10.35 Any land associated with any equestrian development should be inherently suitable for keeping horses. It should be managed to maintain environmental quality, countryside character, the amenity of local residents and the welfare of the horses themselves.

10.36 A site where the ground is wet and boggy or where poisonous plants such as ragwort are present is unlikely to be suitable for keeping horses unless these issues can be fully addressed through pasture management. Where it is proposed to keep horses close to residential properties they should not be able to gain access to garden waste (including lawn clippings) or garden plants that may be toxic (such as yew and laburnum). There should be sufficient land to support the number of horses proposed without causing problems such as overgrazing.

10.37 Horses require regular supervision and, as a minimum, should be visited at least once a day. Consideration therefore needs to be given to the site management regime, which will vary according to the size and nature of the development. However, in all cases consideration should be given to basic operational requirements. For instance, field shelters or stables for private recreational use, should be reasonably close to the site access, with the water supply for the horses close to the buildings.

10.38 Any arrangements for the storage and disposal of manure should not cause amenity problems for neighbours (for example, through smell or flies), or adversely affect environmental quality through pollution. The council will have regard to the advice of environmental health officers and the Environment Agency on issues of this nature when making planning decisions.

#### Exercising horses

10.39 Where it is proposed to exercise horses primarily on-site, any exercise area should be separate from the area where the horses are kept or grazed. Where it is intended to exercise horses off-site, the routes or sites that will be used for exercise, such as nearby bridleways or areas of open land, should be safely accessible from the proposed development. Where there is likely to be a need for riding on public roads, the council will have regard to any highway safety issues. The council will also seek to ensure that routes and sites can be used for exercise without contributing to soil erosion (especially on well-used bridleways), harming vegetation or having a detrimental impact on wildlife interests, particularly in respects to designated sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

#### Impact on the highway network

10.40 A site where horses are kept is likely to require access by towed horseboxes, horse-carrying lorries, or other large vehicles with limited manoeuvrability. The vehicular access to such a site should be capable of safely accommodating such vehicles. The routes to the site should

be capable of accommodating the type and volume of traffic likely to be generated, without harming the character of the route itself or impacting the local roads, including the safety of horses and riders and traffic using the highway.

### Types of equestrian development

#### Private recreation and leisure use

- 10.41 The keeping of horses for private recreation and leisure use are popular pastimes in the Vale, and for many owners, shelters and stables are necessary for their horses' welfare.
- 10.42 Field shelters or stables will be permitted where they are intended to be used by horses currently present on a site or the horses it is intended to graze or keep on a site for private recreational use, provided that they are suitably designed and located. The need for a field shelter or stable for private recreational use may cease after a period of time. With this in mind, such structures should be built, as far as possible, so that they can be removed when they are no longer needed. The council may use conditions or seek an agreement to require the removal of such structures in the event that the equestrian use ceases. Such structures will not generally be suitable for re-use under Policy C1.
- 10.43 Shelters and stables should ideally be built of wood or other similar lightweight material, although a concrete base may be acceptable where this is required for the safety and comfort of the horses (in line with the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and their Hybrids, DEFRA December 2009). New stables of stone, brick or block work will not generally be permitted for private use although the conversion of existing building to stables for private recreational use may be acceptable under Policy C1.
- 10.44 A separate ancillary structure of similar construction to store tack, feed and/or bedding may be permitted. The amount of tack stored on site should be kept to a minimum for security reasons.

#### Commercial recreation, leisure, training and breeding developments

- 10.45 Commercial recreation or leisure equestrian developments (such as livery stables and riding schools), and commercial training or breeding equestrian developments (such as racing stables and stud farms) may be acceptable uses in the countryside. Small-scale businesses, such as riding schools may provide a useful form of farm diversification, but the council may also permit larger-scale enterprises as they can help to diversify the wider rural economy.
- 10.46 Due to their scale, such enterprises can be difficult to accommodate within existing buildings, though existing buildings or group of buildings should form the basis for a development of this nature. The council may permit new building or an additional element of new building where there is an essential need, and there is no suitable alternative existing building available. Where an element of new build is permitted, it should be sensitively designed to integrate with the existing buildings. Elements of new building that are disproportionate in scale to, or out of character with, the existing buildings are unlikely to be acceptable.

#### Viability and change of use of commercial premises

- 10.47 Since commercial equestrian developments may be permitted in the countryside as an exception to the general policy of restraint, the council will wish to ensure that any such enterprise is likely to be viable before allowing it. Such proposals should, therefore, be supported by a business plan that shows the proposed enterprise has a sound financial basis. In the event that a commercial equestrian business fails, the own or occupier will need to produce evidence that the business is not viable, or cannot be made viable before a

change of use may be permitted. Any change of use will be assessed against the criteria outline in Policy C1.

### Ancillary development

#### Riding arenas and other exercise facilities

- 10.48 A riding arena (or manège) or other exercise facilities (such as horse exercisers) may be permitted in association with a commercial equestrian development or private recreation and leisure use. The council will expect an applicant or private individual to be able to explain why an arena or other facility is required, and to be able to justify its intended size and scale. Siting will be a key issue in the design. An arena and other exercise facilities should be sited close to the buildings where the related enterprise is located, to limit the impact of the development on the landscape. Other key design issues include hard landscaping, including fencing and surfacing, landscape planting, drainage and the potential impacts on the amenity of nearby residents. Given the rural nature of the district, floodlighting generally will not be permitted.
- 10.49 Approvals for riding arenas or other exercise facilities for private recreation or leisure use will be subject to conditions to prevent them from being use commercially. An arena (or other facility) used for commercial purposes has a far greater neighbouring amenity impact than one used solely for private recreation and leisure purposes.

#### Occupational dwellings

- 10.50 The council may permit occupational dwellings related to commercial equestrian enterprises, but will not permit such dwellings to enable people to live close to horses that are kept for private recreation or leisure use. Application for such occupational dwelling will be determined in accordance with Policy H3.

## C2 Equestrian development

### General criteria

When considering proposals for horse-related development the council will have particular regard to:

- a. the site being suitable for the keeping of horses and capable of supporting the number of animals proposed, having taken account of the arrangements for site management
- b. adequate provision made for the exercising of horses without causing harm to rights of way, other equestrian routes, or other areas such as open land, that will be used for exercise
- c. vehicular access to the site and the road network in the vicinity are capable of accommodating horse-related transport in a safe manner
- d. the impact on land of high agricultural or ecological value, or the fragmentation of farm units and the effect on the viability of farm units;
- e. the environmental effects of the development in terms of noise, smell or other disturbances, and
- f. the cumulative impacts of concentrations of equestrian developments have been considered, for example on the character of the countryside, appearance of the surrounding area, maintenance of the open nature and rural character of the land or on highway safety.

### Private recreation and leisure uses

In the case of a new field shelter or stable used for private recreation or leisure use:

- g. it will be for the exclusive use of the horses that are grazed or kept on site,

- h. it should be of a scale that reflects the number of horses to be kept or grazed on site,
- i. it should be built of material that is capable of being easily removed if the equestrian use ceases,
- j. it should be sited, where possible, adjacent to existing buildings or natural features such as trees or hedgerows, be of a design and constructed of such materials as are appropriate to the locality and proposed use, and be landscaped or screened so as to minimise any visual intrusion, and
- k. any ancillary use, such as a tack room or food storage structure, should be the minimum required to meet the functional needs of the horses on site and should not give rise to security issues.

### **Commercial recreation, leisure, training or breeding uses**

In the case of commercial recreation, leisure, training or breeding enterprises, developments should re-use an existing building or group of buildings in the countryside. An element of new building or buildings may also be permitted alongside the re-use of an existing buildings (or group of buildings), provided that:

- l. it can be demonstrated that no other building or group of buildings is available that is capable to accommodating the proposed equestrian use,
- m. the element of new building is the minimum required to accommodate the proposed equestrian use (over and above the requirement to re-use the existing building or group of buildings), and
- n. any new buildings and ancillary facilities would be erected to integrate with the existing building (or group of buildings).

### **Failure of a commercial enterprise**

The change of use of an existing equestrian commercial site to another use (other than agriculture or forestry) will not be permitted, unless it can be demonstrated that the existing use is not, or cannot be made, viable.

### **Ancillary development**

In the case of a riding arena or other exercise facility:

- o. it is of a size and scale appropriate to the existing commercial enterprise, or the number of privately-kept horses that will use the facility, and
- p. it is located close to other buildings on the site and is not visually intrusive in the landscape.

## Renewable energy

- 10.51 Low carbon and renewable energy is defined as:
- ‘energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity, provided through renewable sources that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment (eg wind, water, solar, biomass and geothermal heat), or through low carbon technologies which generate significantly less carbon emissions than compared to conventional use of fossil fuels’.
- 10.52 The European Union Renewable Energy Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC) sets an overall target for 20% of the energy consumed in the European Union to come from renewable sources by 2020. This overall target is divided by country. The UK’s target is 15% by 2020.
- 10.53 The Climate Change Act (2008) established a legal requirement for the UK to achieve an 80% cut in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050, with a 34% cut by 2020. The Planning and Energy Act (2008) allows local planning authorities’ policies to impose reasonable requirements for a proportion of energy used in developments to be from renewable and low carbon sources in the locality of the development. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises the key role planning plays in supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, the NPPF states in paragraph 97 that local planning authorities should:
- have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources
  - design policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts, and
  - identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
- 10.54 In June 2015, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government set out considerations to be applied to proposed wind energy developments. It made clear that planning permission should only be granted if:
- the site has been identified as suitable for wind energy development in a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan
  - that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been fully addressed, and
  - the proposal has the local community’s backing.
- 10.55 VALP aims to mitigate the impact of climate change by minimising greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the potential impacts of climate change by managing and reducing risks - particularly flood risk. Where possible, the council will encourage the adaptation of older buildings to include improved energy and water efficiency and retrofitted renewable energy systems. It will also aim to reduce waste, increase recycling, support the recovery of value and energy from waste, and protect water quality within the VALP area.
- 10.56 VALP also seeks to ensure that all development schemes achieve greater efficiency in the use of natural resources, including measures to minimise energy use, improve water efficiency and promote waste minimisation and recycling. This will involve consideration of building design, new material and construction technologies, layout and orientation, the use of sustainable (including re-used) materials, and planning a scheme’s resilience in terms of the future implications of climate change. Developments should minimise construction waste and encourage reuse and recycling wherever possible.

- 10.57 Applications for renewable energy schemes will be considered in light of the wider environmental, social and economic benefits and will be given significant weight in planning decisions. The council will expect developments for energy generation to address potential adverse impacts, especially in relation to visual impact, through careful location, design and landscaping following the design principles set out in the VALP.

### **Carbon reduction and resource use**

- 10.58 Building-related energy consumption is also a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. The need to achieve higher levels of energy efficiency (such as locally-produced clean, low carbon and renewable energy), is an important aspect of sustainable construction in new developments. However, sustainable construction for new and refurbished buildings incorporates more than just aspects of energy use. It also relates to other environmental impacts that buildings and inhabitants cause, for example, on water drainage and usage, waste generation and the use of unsustainable materials (in construction). Improved design of buildings can also lead to benefits in terms of ecology and quality of life for residents. Various standards for the efficient construction of new dwelling have been removed and are now covered by building regulations.

### **Off-site renewable energy**

- 10.59 National policy promotes increasing energy efficiency, minimising energy consumption and developing renewable energy sources. The VALP supports development that promotes these objectives. An important element in this is to ensure that the council embraces effective energy efficiency and the use of off-site renewable energy in all new developments, helping to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases and their effect on climate change. Proposals should generally be accompanied by a landscape assessment appropriate to the nature and scale of the proposal and its setting. The council supports renewable and low carbon energy provision wherever any adverse impacts can be addressed satisfactorily. The potential local environmental, economic and community benefits of renewable energy schemes will be a key consideration in determining planning applications.

## **C3 Renewable Energy**

Planning applications involving renewable energy development will be encouraged provided that there is no unacceptable adverse impact, including cumulative impact, on the following issues:

- a. landscape and biodiversity including designations, protected habitats and species, and Conservation Target Areas
- b. visual impacts on local landscapes
- c. the historic environment including designated and non designated assets and their settings
- d. the Green Belt, particularly visual impacts on openness
- e. aviation activities
- f. highways and access issues, and
- g. residential amenity.

In seeking to achieve carbon emissions reductions, the council will promote an 'energy hierarchy' as follows:

- h. reducing energy use, in particular by the use of sustainable design and construction measures
- i. supplying energy efficiently and giving priority to decentralised energy supply
- j. making use of renewable energy
- k. making use of allowable solutions, and

- I. an Energy Statement will be required for proposals for major residential developments (over 10 dwellings), and all non-residential development, to demonstrate how the energy hierarchy has been applied. The Energy Statement can form a standalone document or be part of the Design and Access Statement.

A feasibility assessment for District Heating/Combined Heat and Power (DH/CHP), including consideration of biomass fuelled CHP, will be required for:

- all residential developments for 100 dwellings or more
- all residential developments in off-gas areas for 50 dwellings or more, and
- all applications for non-domestic developments above 1000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace.

Where feasibility assessments demonstrate that decentralised energy systems are deliverable and viable, such systems will be required as part of the development.

Planning permission will be granted for off-site renewable energy (eg solar, biomass and energy crops, anaerobic digestion, wind and landfill gas), where it has been demonstrated that all the following criteria have been met:

- m. there is no significant adverse effect on landscape or townscape character, ecology and wildlife, heritage assets whether designated or not, areas or features of historical significance or amenity value
- n. there is no significant adverse impact on local amenity, health and quality of life as a result of noise, emissions to atmosphere, electronic interference or outlook through unacceptable visual intrusion, and
- o. there is no adverse impact on highway safety. Where development is granted, mitigation measures will be required as appropriate to minimise any environmental impacts. When considering the social and economic benefits, the council will encourage community participation/ownership of a renewable energy scheme.

## Protection of public rights of way

- 10.60 Walking, cycling and horse riding have a valuable role in recreational and leisure trips, and in meeting local access needs. There is considerable potential to make horse riding, cycling and walking more attractive alternatives for short journeys, providing a healthy alternative option to the car. Such routes can also provide wildlife corridors and form part of a green infrastructure network. The council will therefore support the provision of multi-user routes (those that can be used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders) and better integrate paths with the wider highway network and also with public transport and parking facilities.
- 10.61 Public rights of way are protected in law and comprise four types: footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (BOAT). Buckinghamshire County Council has responsibility for Public rights of way, and publishes a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. It also promotes routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders in order to encourage sustainable access to the countryside. In recognition of the health benefits of walking, cycling and horse riding, AVDC also promotes a number of circular walks and rides.
- 10.62 Protection and enhancement of open space, sport and recreation sites, and sites of importance to nature conservation will assist in maintaining the green infrastructure network. Green corridors consist of canals, river corridors and hedgerows, together with public rights of way. These can provide areas for walking, cycling and horse riding and also provide opportunities for wildlife migration, which on a strategic scale can help to address the impact of climate change on biodiversity. Development proposals will be expected to retain and enhance existing green corridors, and maximise the opportunity to form new links between existing open spaces.

### C4 Protection of public rights of way

Development proposals should ensure:

- a. existing rights of way and byways are retained and enhanced
- b. the delivery of improvements to the public rights of way network
- c. no adverse impact on the existing public rights of way network
- d. new pedestrian routes are provided that link to the wider public rights of way network
- e. new cycle routes, bridleways and where appropriate greenways or dual /multiple routes are included
- f. there are no negative visual impacts on the setting and amenity of existing rights of way

# 11 Detailed Infrastructure

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## Green infrastructure

- 11.1 Green infrastructure is a strategically planned network of high quality multi-functional green spaces in both urban and rural areas. It is designed, developed and managed to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of communities. The term includes open green spaces such as parks and gardens, country parks, allotments, cemeteries, green corridors (potentially including cycleways and rights of way), allotments and trees. It can also include informal amenity green spaces and accessible countryside such as river and canal corridors, woodland, natural grassland, wetlands, lakes and nature reserves.
- 11.2 Well-planned multi-functional green infrastructure is an important component of achieving sustainable communities. Green infrastructure helps to deliver conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, create a sense of place and appreciation of valuable landscapes and cultural heritage, increase recreational opportunities and support healthy living, improve water resources and flood management as part of environmentally sustainable design. It also positively contributes to; combating climate change through adaptation and mitigation of impacts and production of food, natural fibre and fuel. It helps deliver NHS initiatives around improving people's health and tackling obesity. The district's high quality green infrastructure is a vital asset and is an important element in ensuring that the district is somewhere people choose to live and locate their businesses. Policy I1 below will be used to ensure a green infrastructure network is provided across the district with enhancements to replace existing green infrastructure deficiencies.
- 11.3 The character of the district is defined by a wide variety of green infrastructure assets such as the Grand Union Canal and reservoirs, former Royal hunting forests such as Whaddon Chase and Bernwood Forest, Valleys of the River Ouse and the River Thames, the urban fringe Aylesbury and Buckingham Riverside Walks, and Wendover Woods which is the largest area of publically accessible green space in the district.
- 11.4 The Aylesbury Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>32</sup> was undertaken in 2011 and covers the period 2011-2026, giving more detail following on from the 2009 Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>33</sup>. These strategies identify a deficiency in green infrastructure in the district. 69% of dwellings in the district meet none of Natural England's Accessible Natural Green space standards (ANGst). Two priority areas were also identified in the district, North Aylesbury Vale and Aylesbury Environs. The detailed deficiencies in these areas are set out in the Aylesbury Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy. Following this work, a Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2013)<sup>34</sup> was produced which sets out two specific proposals in Aylesbury Vale, Aylesbury Linear Park and Whaddon Chase. Part of the Aylesbury Linear Park proposals are delivered through Berryfields Major Development Area (MDA) which is currently under construction, the approved MDA site to the east of Aylesbury will also provide approximately 100ha of Wetlands Park. Further development sites around Aylesbury should deliver green infrastructure in line with the delivery plan. There are also MDAs proposed at the edge of Milton Keynes which should, where possible, deliver Green Infrastructure in line with the Whaddon Chase proposal.
- 11.5 A joint review of the Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure strategy is intended to be undertaken to update it in line with future needs and used to deliver strategic green

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<sup>32</sup> [http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page\\_downloads/Aylesbury-Vale-Green-Infrastructure-Strategy-2011.pdf](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page_downloads/Aylesbury-Vale-Green-Infrastructure-Strategy-2011.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> [http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page\\_downloads/CD-ENV-010-Buckinghamshire-Green-Infrastructure-Strategy-Bucks-CC-April-2009-.pdf](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page_downloads/CD-ENV-010-Buckinghamshire-Green-Infrastructure-Strategy-Bucks-CC-April-2009-.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/1521901/5326-Bucks-GI-Delivery-Plan-FINAL-ISSUE\\_2013\\_08\\_07\\_low\\_res.pdf](https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/1521901/5326-Bucks-GI-Delivery-Plan-FINAL-ISSUE_2013_08_07_low_res.pdf)

infrastructure. Further work will be undertaken on what potential there is to remedy existing deficiencies in accordance with the below standards. Currently the Sport and Leisure Facilities SPG Companion Document: Ready Reckoner is used to provide details on what developments should provide. The detail in this will be updated for the proposed submission plan stage.

- 11.6 Development proposals, particularly on larger sites, can offer the opportunity to improve the green infrastructure network (as demonstrated through the Berryfields and Aylesbury East MDAs), Policy I1 looks to achieve this. Green infrastructure will be delivered through development proposals and will be obligated either on site or off site through the CIL regime or conditions to the planning permission as appropriate. HS2 mitigation works will also deliver some Green Infrastructure. All green infrastructure proposals should include details of management and maintenance to ensure these areas are permanently protected.
- 11.7 Policy T2 ensures development connects to existing pedestrian and cycle networks and provides new facilities, Policy NE2 secures biodiversity enhancements and Policy I2 sets out what is required in terms of sport and recreation provision. Development proposals will be expected to retain and enhance existing green corridors and ensure new links are provided between existing open spaces. Local Green Space designations, which are a fairly new concept, will mean protection for those areas, as outlined in policy NE6. Where possible, green infrastructure should ensure permeability for wildlife through development and provide sufficient beneficial habitat to support target species, independent of its connective function. The incorporation of sustainable drainage systems can contribute to green infrastructure provision as well as helping alleviate flooding and bringing biodiversity benefits. New landscaping areas are important and will be required in larger development schemes to assimilate development into the landscape and assist in the transition between the urban and rural boundary. The size and location of green infrastructure is expected to be suitable for the function it is intended to fulfil.
- 11.8 There are areas of the green infrastructure network in the district which are not in the council's ownership or control, so partnership working is required to plan, provide and manage the network to achieve the objectives of the policy.
- 11.9 For development purposes, both of existing and future green space facilities, the qualitative standards set out in the nine Strategic principles of the Aylesbury Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy as provided below should be applied with specific principles being utilised according to the size, nature and location of the development.

### Strategic principles for Aylesbury Vale

Green infrastructure should:

- contribute to the management, conservation and improvement of the landscape.
- contribute to the protection, conservation and management of historic landscapes, archaeological and built heritage assets.
- maintain and enhance biodiversity and ensure that development and its implementation results in a net gain of biodiversity as identified in Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species plans.
- deliver the enhancement of existing woodlands and create new woodlands and tree features.
- create new recreational facilities, particularly those that present opportunities to link urban and countryside areas.
- take account of and integrate with natural processes and systems.
- be managed to provide cost effective and multi-functional delivery and funded in urban areas to accommodate nature, wildlife, historic and cultural assets, economic benefits and provide for sport and recreation activities.

- be designed to high standards of sustainability to deliver social and economic, as well as environmental benefits.
- provide focus for social inclusion, community cohesion and development and lifelong learning.

11.10 The Aylesbury Vale Green Infrastructure Strategy states that ANGst is a national benchmark. ANGst emphasises the importance of communities in towns and cities having easy access to different sizes of natural and semi natural greenspaces close to where they live. The standards can be divided into quantitative standards (sizes of green space provision) and accessibility standards (representing the zone of influence of a provision and the distance people are prepared to travel).

## 11 Green infrastructure

The council will work with partners to ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is planned, delivered, enhanced and managed as an integral part of supporting sustainable communities and sustainable growth. The council will implement the most up to date Green Infrastructure Strategy.

AVDC seeks to realise the potential of green infrastructure to assist communities with mitigating and adapting to climate change as well as meeting health initiatives. It seeks to deliver high quality, multi-functional, accessible, and connected open spaces that are integral to new and existing development.

As part of this development proposals must demonstrate that the green infrastructure network would be maintained and, where appropriate, enhanced within the site as follows:

- biodiversity mitigation where warranted, should result in no net loss, and where possible a net gain, in biodiversity (linked with Policy NE2). Where possible green infrastructure is expected to positively contribute to the conservation, restoration, re-creation and enhancement of networks of biodiversity on a landscape scale.
- flood and water resource management (linked with Policy I4)
- green corridors and public rights of way to link with the wider green infrastructure network; providing walking, cycling and other exercise opportunities and avoid habitat or linear network fragmentation
- new green infrastructure should demonstrate a range of types of green space such as the creation of native woodland and community forests where possible
- public open space within housing developments should include, but not limited to: children's play areas, informal open space, sports facilities and allotments, in appropriate proportions, with safe and convenient access for people of all abilities.
- where appropriate a landscaping scheme should be provided which deals positively with the transition between development and any adjoining open land
- protect, create, and improve recreation, play, and local food cultivation opportunities for communities
- secure on-going management and maintenance of green infrastructure assets; and
- Protect and enhance the integrity, multi-functionality, quality and connectivity of the green infrastructure network.

Green infrastructure and habitat creation should be monitored to ensure that it develops in accordance with its stated intention. If it is not achieving satisfactory condition within stipulated timeframes, remedial measures will be required. Mechanisms to achieve this should be put forward in development proposals.

Green infrastructure accessibility and quantitative standards as set out in the Assessment of Leisure and Cultural Facilities (2012)

- No person should live more than 300m from their area of natural green space of at least 2ha in size, and there should be at least 2ha of accessible natural green space per 1000 population
- There should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km of peoples' homes
- There should be one accessible 100ha site within 5km of peoples' homes
- There should be one accessible 500ha site within 10km of peoples' homes
- There should be 1.4ha per 1000 population as incidental open space (incorporates amenity/landscaped planted areas, green corridors)
- There should be 2.4ha per 1000 population as major open space (parks, formal gardens and public open space which is broken down to 1.6ha of outdoor sport space (1.2 pitch sport) and 0.8ha for children and young people playing space)

## Sport and recreation

- 11.11 Participation in sport and recreation activities has many physical and health benefits while promoting community cohesion. Facilities that allow for this participation help deliver NHS initiatives around improving peoples health and tackling obesity. Aylesbury Vale has a wide range of sports and recreation facilities which provide for a variety of recreational sporting needs. There are important leisure centres in Aylesbury and Buckingham. Stoke Mandeville receives global recognition as the birthplace of the Paralympic Games and the Stadium provides a venue for community participation alongside disabled athletes from across the world. Building on this the ambition is for the Vale to become a national leader in accessibility for disabled people to sport and recreation facilities. Within the Vale there is also Silverstone racing circuit which has established itself as a premier motor sport venue.
- 11.12 Policy I1 on Green Infrastructure provides guidance on the provision of open space which includes parks, recreation grounds and amenity spaces. There is a cross over between this and facilities which fall under the category of Sports and Recreation. Where appropriate open spaces provided as part of new developments should include access to formal and informal recreational areas, including sports, playing pitches and children’s play areas.
- 11.13 A number of bodies are responsible for delivering and managing sport and recreation facilities, including Buckinghamshire County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Town and Parish Councils, Sport England, developers, and private sports clubs and associations. Therefore effective partnership working is required to maintain and enhance the provision in the district.
- 11.14 A large part of Aylesbury Vale has a rural nature, which can mean that access to sport and recreation facilities can be difficult, however current provision across the district is generally sufficient. New housing development are likely to create additional need for sport and recreation facilities. The 2012 Assessment of Leisure and Cultural Facilities for Aylesbury Vale<sup>35</sup> identifies the existing provision of sports and recreation facilities, identifies deficiencies and opportunities for future provision. This was undertaken before the current level of development was proposed and distribution established. Further work is intended to be undertaken to update future needs and define new provision. Chapter 5 of the assessment sets out what the need for new provision is based on the previous levels of growth set out in the Vale of Aylesbury Plan. As the levels of growth proposed in the VALP are significantly higher, these needs should be seen as a minimum until the assessment is updated. The assessment also set out recommended standards of provision.. The minimum threshold for provision is intended as a guide to developers, however the composition of provision will be dependant on the proposal and location of the site.
- 11.15 Currently, the ‘Sport and leisure facilities SPG companion document: ready reckoner’ is used to provide details on what developments should provide. The detail in this will be updated for the proposed submission plan stage.

## I2 Sports and recreation

The council will encourage partnership working to ensure that sufficient quantity and quality of, and convenient access, to sport and recreation provision is secured through the following measures:

- a. To protect existing sites and facilities, planning permission will not normally be granted where this would result in the loss of sport and recreational facilities. When dealing with

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<sup>35</sup> [http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page\\_downloads/Assessment-of-Leisure-and-Cultural-Facilities-for-Aylesbury-Vale-Study-.pdf](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page_downloads/Assessment-of-Leisure-and-Cultural-Facilities-for-Aylesbury-Vale-Study-.pdf)

applications which involve this the council will consider its recreational and amenity value, existing provision compared to need in the local area and if equivalent or better quantity and quality replacement provision are provided.

- b. Proposals for new facilities or those that expand/enhance existing provision to address existing deficiencies will be supported subject to compliance with other relevant planning policies. Facilities should be easily accessible by public transport and with safe pedestrian and cycle access for people of all abilities.
- c. Proposals for new development should include sufficient sport and recreation provision commensurate to the need generated by the proposals. Housing schemes designed for family occupation should where necessary make suitable provision for equipped play areas for children's use, located safely and with due regard for residential amenity. Consideration should be given to the ongoing management and maintenance of facilities and their cost and viability. Where new facilities are provided they will be encouraged to go beyond the current accessibility standards.

If development proposals are considered to be unviable when complying with the above requirements, open book financial analysis of proposed developments will be expected. Where on-site provision is not achievable, a financial contribution will be sought for improvement of provision as close as possible elsewhere.

## Community facilities

- 11.16 The National Planning Policy Framework promotes healthy inclusive communities where residents have opportunities to meet through safe and accessible environments. Community facilities and services include public halls, schools, shops, post offices, public houses, places of worship, libraries, museums, crèches, day centres and doctors surgeries. They make a vital contribution to the social and economic life of the community, particularly in rural areas, and are especially important for elderly and disabled people and for those who do not have easy access to private or public transport.
- 11.17 The council will refuse proposals that would result in the erosion of community facilities and services, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no long-term requirement for their retention. In the case of a commercial venture, the applicant will need to satisfy the council that the existing use is no longer commercially viable and, where a business is continuing to trade, prove that a genuine attempt has been made to market the enterprise as a going concern.
- 11.18 Similarly, new development creates an additional need for community facilities. The type of facilities needed depends on existing facilities in the locality, and the type of development proposed.

### 13 Community facilities

The council will resist proposals for the change of use of community buildings and facilities for which there is a demonstrable local need. In considering applications for alternative development or uses, the council will consider the viability of the existing use, the presence of alternative local facilities and the community benefits of the proposed use. Where permission includes converting the use of a building, conditions will be imposed to ensure later resumption of a community use is not excluded.

In considering applications for residential development, the council will consider the need for new community facilities arising from the proposal. Conditions will be imposed on permissions, or planning obligations sought in order to secure appropriate community facilities, or financial contributions towards community facilities, reasonably related to the scale and kind of housing proposed.

## Flooding

- 11.19 Climate change is expected to increase instances of extreme weather, causing: greater flooding, coastal erosion, crop failures/agricultural decline, species and habitats decline, human health risks from extreme temperatures, more limited drinking water resources, heavy rainfall and more frequent and severe storms, increased average sea levels and warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. The 2009 UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) set out some key projections of climate change across the UK over the twenty-first century. Projected changes by the 2080s, based on a 50% probability level, include: increases in summer mean temperatures, particularly in southern England where increases of 3.9 degrees are projected, decreases in summer precipitation, again particularly in southern England where decreases of 23% are projected, and increases in winter precipitation in southern England of 22%.
- 11.20 Changes as small as a 2°C global temperature rise will have serious impacts: rising sea levels, extreme events such as droughts and heavy rainfall, leading to disruption to natural and man-made habitats. Communities across the UK may struggle to cope with the effects of warmer summers and wetter winters. As a consequence of climate change, parts of the district will be at increased risk from groundwater, fluvial and/or tidal flooding. It might not be possible to maintain hard defences in the long term. Development therefore need to be strongly restricted in areas at risk to flooding, whilst ensuring that existing towns and villages are protected by sustainable means that make space for water in suitable areas.
- 11.21 Inevitably, there are serious concerns about the impacts of flooding, both in respect of current properties at risk but also the long-term management of the area. These issues are therefore key factors in determining the scale and location of development. Development should protect and enhance the natural environment by directing development away from sensitive areas that cannot accommodate change. Any development in the district must therefore have regard to flood and erosion risk, by way of location-specific measures such as additional flood alleviation, to protect people, properties and vulnerable habitats from flooding.
- 11.22 It is important that inappropriate development is avoided in areas currently at risk from flooding, or likely to be at risk as a result of climate change, or in areas where development is likely to increase flooding elsewhere. Where development is needed and harm cannot be avoided, appropriate mitigation to offset any adverse impact to the landscape, wildlife and green infrastructure network will be required. Development will be directed away from areas where there is likely to be significant risk to human health or the wider environment, through flooding, air and water pollution. Any risk must be assessed using the Environment Agency flood maps and the council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The VALP takes a sequential risk-based approach to ensure that development does not take place in areas at high risk of flooding, when appropriate areas of lower risk are reasonably available.

### Strategic flood risk assessment

- 11.23 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that local plans should be supported by a SFRA, which identifies areas that may flood taking into account all potential sources of flooding. It is used to inform planning policies and assist local planning authorities in directing new development to areas of lower flood risk, and ensure that new development helps to manage flood risk. The SFRA is a report identifying flood risk constraints in the district. The 2012 SFRA includes a set of flood maps covering the district with detailed coverage of Aylesbury, Buckingham, Winslow, Haddenham and Wendover. The main report summarises the main causes of flooding in the district and key historic incidents. It also sets out measures that need to be taken in planning for new development, managing surface water flooding and procedures for emergency planning.

- 11.24 Site specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) will be required in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG (National Planning Policy Guidelines). The FRA should identify and assess the risks of all forms of flooding to and from the development, and demonstrate how these flood risks will be managed, taking climate change into account. Fluvial (river) flood events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event with an allowance for climate change should be considered. For major developments in Flood Zone 1, the FRA should identify opportunities to reduce the probability and consequences of flooding. The FRA should also include investigation of the use of sustainable drainage systems.
- 11.25 We will work actively with the Environment Agency, the local lead flood authority, other operating authorities and stakeholders to ensure that best use is made of their expertise. We will ensure that spatial planning supports existing flood risk management policies and plans, management plans and emergency planning.

### Flood risk

- 11.26 Flooding usually occurs adjacent to rivers and other watercourses, but it can also occur elsewhere, such as groundwater flooding caused by springs, or where buildings or other structures affect the natural drainage of the land. Some areas are at risk from fluvial flooding, or have the potential to exacerbate flooding elsewhere through surface water runoff and overland flow. The council wishes to avoid danger to life and damage to property wherever flood risk may exist. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 assigns local authorities with a responsibility for managing flood risk. The probability of flooding can be reduced through the management of land, river systems and flood defences, and the impact reduced through influencing the type of development located in flood risk areas.
- 11.27 The council will manage and reduce flood risk in the district by using a sequential approach to development; locating vulnerable developments in areas at lower risk of flooding. Development proposals will be assessed according to the sequential approach and where necessary the exceptions test as set out in the NPPF and NPPG. Development will only be permitted in areas of flood risk when there are no reasonably available sites in areas of lower flood risk and the benefits of the development outweigh the risks from flooding. Defended areas should be sequentially tested as though the defences are not there.
- 11.28 In addition to safeguarding floodplains from development, opportunities will be sought to restore natural river flows and floodplains, increasing their amenity and biodiversity value. Building over or culverting of watercourses should be avoided, and the removal of existing culverts will be encouraged. Existing flood defences will be protected from damaging development, and where development is considered appropriate in areas protected by such defences it must allow for the maintenance and management of the defences and be designed to be resilient to flooding. Site specific flood risk assessments will be required to accompany development proposals in the following situations:
- all development proposals located in flood zones 2 or 3
  - development proposals of 1 hectare or more located in flood zone 1
  - development sites located in an area known to have experienced flooding problems, and
  - development sites located within 9m of any watercourses.
- 11.29 Flood risk assessments should assess all sources of flood risk and demonstrate that:
- there will be no increase in surface water discharge rates or volumes during storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year storm event, with an allowance for climate change (the design storm event)

- developments will not flood from surface water up to and including the design storm event, or any surface water flooding beyond the 1 in 30 year storm event, up to and including the design storm event will be safely contained on site.

11.30 Development should be safe and remain operational (where necessary). Proposals should demonstrate that surface water will be managed effectively on site and that the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere, including sewer flooding. Applications will also be assessed against the Environment Agency's standing advice on flood risk.

## 14 Flooding

### Management of flood risk

In order to minimise the impacts of and from all forms of flood risk the following is required:

- Other than sites allocated in the VALP, all development proposals must clearly demonstrate that the sequential test, as set out in the latest version of the SFRA, has been applied.
- If the Sequential Test has been satisfied, development proposals, other than those allocated in this Plan, must also satisfy the Exception Test in all applicable situations as set out in the latest version of the SFRA.
- Site specific FRAs, informed by the latest version of the SFRA, where: the development proposal is over 1ha in size. The development proposal includes land in Flood Zones 2 and 3 (as defined by the latest Environment Agency mapping). The development proposal (includes Flood Zone 1) affects land where evidence, in particular the SFRA, indicates there are records of historic flooding or other sources of flooding, e.g. due to critical drainage problems, including from ordinary watercourses and / or a need for more detailed analysis.

### Flood Risk Assessments

All development proposals must adhere to the advice in the latest version of the SFRA and will:

- provide level for level, volume for volume, floodplain compensation where necessary
- ensure no increase in flood risk or harm to third parties
- explore opportunities to reduce flood risk overall, including financial contributions where appropriate
- ensure development is safe from flooding for its lifetime
- ensure development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient
- take into account all forms of flooding
- include appropriate allowances for climate change
- ensure safe access and exits are available for residential development in accordance with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) guidance. Access to "safe refuges" or "dry islands" are unlikely to be considered safe as this will further burden the Emergency Service in times of flood
- provide an assessment of residual risk
- provide satisfactory Evacuation Management Plans, where necessary, including consultation with the Emergency Services and Emergency Planners;
- ensure development layouts are informed by drainage strategies incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

### Sustainable urban drainage systems

- All development will be required to design and use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off, as part of the submitted planning application.

- p. Where site specific FRAs are required in association with development proposals, they should be used to determine how SuDS can be used on particular sites and to design appropriate systems.
- q. In considering SuDS solutions, the need to protect ground water quality must be taken into account, especially where infiltration techniques are proposed. Where possible, SuDS should seek to reduce flood risk, reduce pollution and provide landscape and wildlife benefits. SuDS will require the approval of Buckinghamshire County Council as lead local flood authority (LLFA) and SuDS approval body, and proposals must include an agreement on the future management, maintenance and replacement of the SuDS features.
- r. Applicants will be required to provide a management plan to maintain SuDS in new developments, and a contribution required over a period of time to maintain the scheme/SuDS.

Applicants will be required to liaise with water boards, EA on any known flood issues, and identify issues from the outset with discussions with statutory bodies.

### Water resources

- 11.31 Water resources need to be safeguarded from the potentially negative impacts of development. The council will therefore require sustainable construction, sustainable flood risk management and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the impact of development on the natural environment and water resources. This will assist in contributing to the objectives of the Water Framework Directive which seeks to protect and enhance the quality of water bodies, and indicates that development should not result in any deterioration in the status of surface water bodies. Some development can remediate contaminated land which may be having an adverse impact on controlled water and human health.
- 11.32 The council will seek to maintain water quality, ensure adequate water resources and promote sustainability in water use. Water quality will be maintained and enhanced by avoiding adverse effects of development on the water environment. Development proposals will not be permitted which would adversely affect the water quality of surface or underground water bodies (including rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) as a result of directly attributable factors. Development will only be permitted where adequate water resources exist, or can be provided without detriment to existing uses. Where appropriate, phasing of development will be used to enable the relevant water infrastructure to be put in place.

## Telecommunications

- 11.33 Telecommunications is the general term for the transfer of information over varying distances using technologies such as telephone, television, mobile phones and the internet. High quality communications infrastructure includes the recent advances in broadband and wireless technologies.
- 11.34 High quality telecommunications are becoming increasingly important for economic growth - attracting new business and allowing existing businesses to remain competitive. Telecommunications also have social benefits - increasing social inclusion through better access to services that are web-based. Superfast broadband can also encourage homeworking and reduce car journeys.
- 11.35 Broadband networks are being developed with the government's vision for the UK to have the best superfast broadband network in Europe.
- 11.36 The Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Growth Deal includes commitments to extend superfast broadband across Buckinghamshire to areas of high business population, and to stimulate growth in Buckinghamshire electronics and telecommunications sectors through early access to 5G technologies.
- 11.37 The VALP recognises the importance of delivering superfast broadband to rural areas, and development should facilitate where possible the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems to ensure people have a choice of providers and services. At the same time the council is keen to minimise any adverse impact on the character of the locality and the environment.
- 11.38 A key element of the VALP is that new development should be co-ordinated with the telecommunications infrastructure it requires, and take into account the capacity of existing infrastructure. Delivery of infrastructure will be dependent upon maximising the contribution from the development process, whilst recognising that a contribution from both the public and private sector will be necessary. This includes the government's role in providing the necessary investment to achieve sustainable growth, including appropriate revenue support to those agencies required to manage or serve such development.

## Determining applications

- 11.39 In determining all applications for telecommunications installations, the council is required to consider its decisions in the light of site-specific issues, such as siting, design, effect on the street scene and highway safety. The council is also required to make its decisions in accordance with nationally established policy. National planning policy is included in Section 5 of the NPPF, and provides guidance on planning for telecommunications development - including radio masts, towers and antennas of all kinds.
- 11.40 In undertaking installations, the telecommunications operators have to comply with the requirements of Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) 2015 which gives deemed planning permission subject to exclusions and conditions. Proposed new changes to telecommunication permitted development rights will come into effect in summer 2016.

## Strategic policy

- 11.41 The VALP will encourage and facilitate improved access to high speed broadband and new communications technologies across the district. The VALP recognises the importance of delivering superfast broadband to rural areas. Development should facilitate where possible the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems to ensure people have a choice of providers and services. The council expects high quality communications

infrastructure to be incorporated into the design of all new housing and commercial development in the district, ensuring the future-proofing of telecommunications, enabling them to be easily provided and/or upgraded in the future. The council will therefore expect developers to explore the option of providing on-site infrastructure, including ducting to industry standards in any new residential, employment or commercial development for efficient connection to existing networks. If such measures cannot be delivered, the developer will need to submit evidence to justify the reasons why this is the case, whether it be for viability or technical reasons.

## 15 Telecommunications

Telecommunications development will be permitted where:

- a. It is provided as part of high quality communications infrastructure in new housing and commercial development providing it is future proofed to industry standards
- b. It is sited and designed to minimise visual impact and does not have a detrimental visual impact on the character or appearance of the building or the area to which it relates
- c. It has been adequately demonstrated that the use of alternative sites involving mast sharing and other buildings or structures that provide a less visual impact have been considered, together with any technical considerations and limitations.
- d. High masts and large telecommunication structures will not be permitted within the Green Belt, designated areas of outstanding natural beauty, other areas of landscape importance, areas of ecological interest, conservation areas, listed buildings or other designated heritage assets including within their settings unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the beneficial use outweighs the harm, and all reasonable alternatives to avoid or mitigate impacts have been considered.
- e. Proposals should, where necessary, be supported by an appropriate landscaping scheme and appropriate means of camouflage.
- f. Where permission is granted, conditions will be imposed or planning obligations sought, to ensure the removal of equipment when it is no longer required.

## 12 Appendix A

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## Potential sites to be allocated

### Strategic Settlements

Aylesbury<sup>36</sup>

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land at Havelock Street	25	AYL026
Ardenham Lane	12	AYL032
Walton Court Shopping Centre	22	AYL035
Land To Rear Of Ashley Row And Adj To 37 Haddington Way Haddington Way	5	AYL049
Tring Road (Hazell's)	140	AYL051
Walton Mill, Osier Way, off Park Street	50	AYL054
Land at Thame Road/ Leach Road, Aylesbury	18	AYL073
Oaklands Hostel 3 Bierton Road	13	AYL077
6-18 Mill Street, Aylesbury	6	AYL106
Manor Farm, Broughton	350	BIE022
Land south of Stoke Mandeville Hospital	409	SMD004
Land around Red House Farm, Lower Road	70	SMD005
Land between Oxford Road and Wendover Road	400	SMD006
Land on Wendover Road	252	SMD007
Land between Wendover Road and railway line	270	SMD008
Land between Oxford Road and Wendover Road	168	SMD009
Bucks Sport and Social Club, Lower Road	100	SMD011
Land South of Bucks Sports and Social Club, Lower Road	322	SMD012
Land between Oxford Road and Wendover Road	808	STO016
Westonmead Farm , A41 London Road	120	WTV017
Land Adjacent to Aston Clinton Holiday Inn	158	WTV019
New Road	51	WTV021
Land at Hampden Fields	3060	WTV022

Buckingham

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Roxwell, Moreton Road	14	BUC003
Land south of the A421, Buckingham	360	BUC025
Land West of AVDLP allocation BU.1, Moreton Road	130	BUC043
Land off Osier Way (south of A421 and east of Gawcott Road) Buckingham,	420	BUC046

<sup>36</sup> Three sites in Aylesbury town centre are allocated in Policy D13 and these are excluded from this table(AYL059, AYL064, AYL108)

<b>Site address</b>	<b>Number of dwellings</b>	<b>Site reference</b>
West Buckingham, land bound by Tingewick Road, A421, Radclive Road and Brackley Road.	288	BUC051

#### Haddenham

<b>Site address</b>	<b>Number of dwellings</b>	<b>Site reference</b>
Land north west of Dollicot	15	HAD001
Land at Haddenham Glebe/Land North of Aston Road	280	HAD004
Land north of Rosemary Lane/west of Church Way	210	HAD007
Fairfields Farm, Stanbridge Road	43	HAD009
Land Rear of Station Road	10	HAD010
Land at Dollicott	25	HAD015
Field to the rear of housing along Dollicott	16	HAD016

#### Wendover

No suitable sites identified at this stage.

#### Winslow

<b>Site address</b>	<b>Number of dwellings</b>	<b>Site reference</b>
Land to east of B4033, Great Horwood Road	585	WIN001

### **Larger Villages**

#### Edlesborough

<b>Site address</b>	<b>Number of dwellings</b>	<b>Site reference</b>
Land off Dove Close	10	EDL002
29 The Green, Edlesborough	6	EDL020
Slicketts Lane	80	EDL021

#### Ivinghoe

No suitable sites identified at this stage.

#### Long Crendon

<b>Site address</b>	<b>Number of dwellings</b>	<b>Site reference</b>
Land north of Cheersley Road	84	LCD011

Pitstone

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land fronting Marsworth Road and Vicarage Road	30	PIT001
Land at the end of Chequers Lane	5	PIT002
Land Rear of Vicarage Road	77	PIT004
Land adjacent to old allotment gardens, Off Marsworth Road	30	PIT005
Land north of Marsworth Road	87	PIT007

Steeple Claydon

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Adjoining 12 Queen, Catherine Road	8	SCD003
Land north of West End Close, West Street	9	SCD005
Land north of Chestnut Lees	10	SCD007
'Mollys Folly' Land west of Addison Road	38	SCD008

Stone (including Hartwell)

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land to the south of Creslow Way	42	STO008
Arkell's Field, Bishopstone Road	11	STO011

Waddesdon (including Fleet Marston)

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land east of Quainton Road	29	WAD003

Whitchurch

No suitable sites identified at this stage.

Wing

No suitable sites identified at this stage.

Wingrave

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land to the west of Church Street	21	WGR001
Land between Twelve Leys and Nup End Lane (Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2)	15	WGR003
Land North of Winslow Road	50	WGR004
Mill Lane	5	WGR010
Farm buildings, Forming PT, Floyds Farm, Land to north west of Baldways Close (Neighbourhood Plan Policy 3)	9	WGR011
Land South of Leighton Road (Neighbourhood Plan Policy 4)	12	WGR014

## Medium Villages

Brill

No suitable sites identified at this stage.

Cheddington

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land east and south of Croft Meadows	58	CHE001

Cuddington

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land to the north of Aylesbury Road and Rear of Great Stone House, Cuddington	6	CDN001

Gawcott

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land of Church Street	21	GAW001
Land to the east of Buckingham Road	10	GAW002

Great Horwood

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land at Willow Road adjacent Caravan Park and Caravan Park Land	10	GHW007
Land south of Weston Road	46	GHW013
The Meadows, Land off Willow Road	34	GHW016

Grendon Underwood

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
adj. Bailey's Farm, Main Street	7	GUW004
Land south of Ivy Cottage, Main Street	5	GUW008
Land off Shakespeare Orchard	10	GUW010

Ickford

No suitable sites identified at this stage

Maids Moreton

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land off Towcester Road, Maids Moreton, Bucks	21	MMO004

Marsh Gibbon

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Leopold Farm and area to the west	13	MGB003
Land between Swan Lane and Scotts Close (including Neighbourhood Plan Local Green Space)	30	MGB005

Marsworth

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Marsworth Glebe, Lower Icknield Way	42	MAR003

Newton Longville

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land South of Whaddon Road and West of Lower End, Newton Longville	30	NLV005
Land north of Stoke Road	70	NLV008

North Marston

No suitable sites identified at this stage.

Padbury

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Poultry Field, Lower Way	45	PAD004
Land to the r/o Fairhaven and adjoining Main Street	5	PAD007

Quinton

Site address	Number of dwellings	Site reference
Land south west of 62 Station Road	21	QUA001

Stewkley

<b>Site address</b>	<b>Number of dwellings</b>	<b>Site reference</b>
Cricketers Meadow, High Street North	5	STW003
Land off Orkney Close and Walducks Close, Stewkley	80	STW005

**Sites adjacent to Milton Keynes**

<b>Site address</b>	<b>Number of dwellings</b>	<b>Site reference</b>
Site west of Far Bletchley, at the south western edge of Milton Keynes	1,885	NLV001
Dagnall House and adjoining land	39	NLV023
Shenley Road	2,000	WHA001

# 13 Glossary

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<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, are not currently considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.
<b>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</b>	A landscape where the distinctive character and natural beauty is so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it. Aylesbury Vale district includes part of the Chilterns AONB. The AONB is managed by the Chilterns Conservation Board.
<b>Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (AVDLP)</b>	The spatial development plan for Aylesbury Vale used to determine planning applications. Adopted by Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) in February 2004, only some of the policies have been saved for use in planning decisions. The AVDLP will be replaced by the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) and neighbourhood plans.
<b>Black or Ethnic Minority (BME)</b>	A socio-economic grouping used with other such groups in housing and economic analysis including from the latest Census data. Utilised within background studies informing the VAP Strategy.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	A collective term for plants, animals, micro-organisms and bacteria which, together, interact in a complex way to create living ecosystems.
<b>Climate Change</b>	The lasting and significant change in weather patterns generally agreed to be caused as a result of higher global temperatures caused by greenhouse gas emissions over periods ranging from decades to hundreds of years, impacting on river and sea levels and the rate of flows on watercourses.
<b>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</b>	The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge on new buildings and extensions to help pay for supporting infrastructure. This new charge replaces the section 106 tariff, but Section 106 agreements will still be used for the specific impacts of a development (such as a new access road) and for affordable housing. Unlike Section 106, CIL is non-negotiable and collection is purely an administrative process. The levy and what it covers is set out in a charging schedule that is consulted on prior to submission to Government and a public Examination prior to adoption by the Council.
<b>Conservation Area</b>	A locally designated area (by AVDC for Conservation Areas in the Vale) of special architectural interest, where the character or appearance is desirable to preserve or enhance. AVDC carries out occasional reviews of the special interest through character appraisals and management plans.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Council Monitoring Reports</b>	Monitoring Reports published regularly usually covering a financial year. The first purpose of the Reports is to review the progress of planning policy documents, secondly to assess the effectiveness of existing planning policies and identify whether any policies are not being implemented, or should be amended or replaced. The second of these tasks is achieved by reporting against a number of indicators. Housing land supply is monitored more frequently and AVDC publishes regular 5-year land supply position statements.
<b>Brownfield Register</b>	A register of locally identified brownfield sites (previously developed land) suitable for housing which is in the process of being implemented
<b>Cultural Facilities</b>	Purpose built arts and entertainment venues available such as cinemas, theatres and arts centres
<b>Community Facilities</b>	Multi-purpose community buildings such as community centres, village halls, church halls, indoor and outdoor sports facilities available for public and community use and public open space including green infrastructure
<b>Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)</b>	The Department of Communities and Local Government sets national planning policy in England, as well as determining what Local Government does, how well it is working and how it is funded.
<b>Development Plan</b>	The statutory development plan for determining planning applications and appeals in the district. This currently comprises the Adopted Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (AVDLP) 2004 saved policies and any made Neighbourhood Plans. Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) will replace AVDLP on adoption in summer 2017.
<b>Duty to Co-operate</b>	The 'duty to co-operate' is a legal requirement on the Council in the VALP plan preparation process. The duty concerns the Council and neighbouring district/borough councils, county councils and other identified public bodies. The Council is required to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the duty has been undertaken appropriately for the plan.
<b>East-West Rail</b>	A new railway network, partly using existing track that will connect Reading and Oxford across to East Anglia via Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge. In the shorter term, the East West Consortium's priority is to deliver the western section of the route comprising Reading to Milton Keynes and Bedford via Oxford and also Milton Keynes to Aylesbury. There will be a new station at Winslow due to be built on the line between the Aylesbury spur/Bicester and Bletchley. This is planned to be open by March 2019.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	Economic Development, is any development for the following Use Classes A1 (Shops), A2 (Financial and Professional Services), A3 (Restaurants and Cafés), A4 (Drinking Establishments), A5 (Hot Food Takeaways), B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial), B8 (Storage and Distribution), C1 (Hotels), D1 (Non-residential institutions), D2 (Assembly and Leisure) and Sui Generis uses (other than Houses in Multiple Occupation and Hostels). The term 'Economic Development' land is mainly used in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) study.
<b>Flood Zones</b>	Areas of land assessed as being of low risk (Flood Zone 1), medium (Flood Zone 2), high (Flood Zone 3a) and the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) where no development should take place. The Environment Agency identifies where the flood zones are and are reviewed quarterly. AVDC must carry out a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to support VALP that will look at all forms of flooding and the impact of flood defences. Guidance on planning and flood risk is set out in the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance.
<b>Green Belt</b>	A policy designation for controlling urban growth to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another, assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. Within the green belt, guidance for which is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, land is to be kept permanently open and only used for agriculture open space, forestry and outdoor recreation and limited infilling of villages and previously development land. VALP may look at proposing changes to the areas currently designated in AVDLP as green belt depending on the outcome of the 2015 Green Belt Review.
<b>Green Infrastructure</b>	A planned network of high quality multi-functional green space and interconnecting links in, urban and rural areas with environmental features designed in delivering a wide range of environmental social and economic quality of life benefits for local communities. AVDC has published a Green Infrastructure Strategy and has contributed to a Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
<b>Greenfield land</b>	Land which has not been previously developed.
<b>Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs Assessment</b>	The Government requires each Local Planning Authority to set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area. The four District authorities in Buckinghamshire have worked collaboratively to bring forward a traveller accommodation needs assessment in conjunction with Opinion Research Services (ORS).

Term	Definition
<b>Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)</b>  <b>(Appropriate Assessment)</b>	<p>Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required under the European Directive 92/43/EEC on the "conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora for plans" that may have an impact of European (Natura 2000) Sites. The sites relevant to Aylesbury Vale are two Special Areas of Conservation.</p> <p>HRA is the assessment of the impacts of implementing a plan or policy on a Natura 2000 Site. Its purpose is to consider the impacts of a land-use plan against conservation objectives of the site and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of the site. Where significant negative effects are identified, alternative options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.</p>
<b>Heritage Assets</b>	<p>A collective terms used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule Ancient Monuments</li> <li>Conservations Areas</li> <li>Listed Buildings</li> <li>Historic Parks and Gardens Areas of Archaeological Interest</li> </ul>
<b>High Speed 2 Rail (HS2)</b>	<p>The Government's proposed high speed railway line from London to Birmingham (phase 1 due to open in 2026) and the north of England (phase 2), cutting through the district from the southeast near Wendover and Aylesbury to northwest near Turweston. The Council is working with Buckinghamshire County Council and other partner organisations to minimise the impact it will have if it does go ahead.</p>
<b>Historic Environment</b>	<p>A collective term to encompass people's interaction with heritage assets which include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage interest.</p>
<b>Historic Parks and Gardens</b>	<p>The Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England provides a listing and classification system for historic parks and gardens similar to that used for <a href="#">listed buildings</a>. The register is managed by <a href="#">Historic England</a> under the provisions of the <a href="#">National Heritage Act 1983</a>. Over 1,600 sites are listed, ranging from the grounds of large <a href="#">stately homes</a> to small domestic gardens, as well as other <a href="#">designed landscapes</a> such as town squares, public parks and cemeteries.</p>
<b>Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)</b>	<p>The national housing and regeneration agency for England. The Agency contributes to economic growth by helping communities to realise their aspirations for prosperity and to deliver high-quality housing that people can afford. The HCA provides investment for new affordable housing and to improve existing social housing, as well as for regenerating land.</p>
<b>5 Year Housing Land Supply</b>	<p>The supply of specific deliverable housing sites on which housing completions are expected. The five year housing land supply is the number of dwellings expected to be completed in the next five years, compared to the Local Plan target for the next five years (this is normally expressed in terms of the number of years worth of supply).</p>

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Housing Market Area (HMA)</b>	The 'best-fit' Housing Market Area (HMA) has been defined as Aylesbury Vale, Wycombe and Chiltern Council areas following work by Opinion Research Services (ORS). The HMA is the basic area for determining housing need through the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment
<b>Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)</b>	A key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing and employment to meet the community's need for more homes. The HELAA is an assessment to identify land for housing and assess the deliverability and developability of sites. These assessments are required by the National Planning Policy Framework.
<b>Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)</b>	A Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) is a study required by Government of local planning authorities to inform Local Plans in terms of housing targets, housing need, demand, migration and commuting patterns and the development of planning and housing policy as well as the future quantity of land or floorspace required for economic development needs. For Aylesbury Vale the HEDNA has been undertaken by Opinion Research Services (ORS) for the Central Bucks HMA.
<b>Housing trajectory</b>	A table (optionally accompanied by a graph) included in the local plan which sets out information on past and projected annual housing completions in comparison to the Local Plan target. The trajectory is a tool for analysing and illustrating whether or not housing delivery is on track.
<b>Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)</b>	The IDP's role will be to identify all items of infrastructure needed to ensure the delivery of the growth targets and policies contained in the VALP. This ensures that an appropriate supply of essential infrastructure is provided alongside new homes, workplaces and other forms of development up to 2033.
<b>Listed building</b>	A listed building is a building that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.
<b>Local Green Space</b>	Areas of green space of importance to local communities which are designated as such and protected preventing their future development unless under very special circumstances
<b>Localism Act</b>	An Act of Parliament which is the primary legislative basis for local authority Planning powers and came into force following gaining Royal Assent in November 2011. The Act made provision for new Regulations to be made including on plan making (came into force in April 2012) and a basis for the review of existing planning policy (the National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012).
<b>Local Development Scheme (LDS)</b>	The detailed timetable and project plan of all development plan documents and supplementary planning documents that are to be produced over a set period – normally 3 years.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)</b>	A voluntary partnership between local authorities and businesses formed in 2011 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to help determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation within its local area. They carry out some of the functions previously carried out by the regional development agencies which were abolished in March 2012. The two LEPs that involve AVDC are the South East Midlands LEP (covering Aylesbury Vale, Central Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes Council, South Northamptonshire District and other Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire districts) and the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley LEP (covering all of Buckinghamshire).
<b>Local Geological Site</b>	Local Sites are non-statutory areas of local importance for nature conservation that complement nationally and internationally designated geological and wildlife sites (previously Regionally Important Geological Sites).
<b>Local Nature Reserve</b>	Local Nature Reserves are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally for both people and wildlife.
<b>Local Nature Partnership (LNP)</b>	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, established for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it. There is one LNP covering Aylesbury Vale, this is called the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership, established in 2012, including the Delivery Group.
<b>Local Plan</b>	The statutory development plan for determining planning applications and appeals for the district. This is currently any 'made' neighbourhood plans and the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (AVDLP) 2004 saved policies until AVDLP is replaced by the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan.
<b>Local Wildlife Site</b>	Local Wildlife Sites, previously known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation or County Wildlife Sites are areas of land with significant wildlife value. They are typically an area of ancient woodland, a flower-rich hay meadow or a village pond.
<b>Market Housing</b>	Private housing for rent or for sale, where the price is set in the open market.
<b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</b>	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the Government's statement of national planning policy and all Local Plans must be in general conformity with it and this is tested at a Local Plan Examination. The NPPF was published on 27 March 2012 and replaced numerous planning policy guidance documents, statements and circulars. It was accompanied by Technical Guidance to the NPPF on flood risk, on minerals and waste and a planning policy statement on Traveller sites.

Term	Definition
<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	A type of Planning policy document that after ‘making’ can be used (alongside the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan/ Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan) to determine planning applications. The Plans are prepared by a parish/town council or designated neighbourhood forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Localism Act 2011) and have to be in general conformity with the district plan, undergo Examination and a Referendum. A neighbourhood plan should support strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development. A neighbourhood plan becomes part of the statutory development plan once it has been made (brought in the legal force) by the local planning authority.
<b>Office for National Statistics (ONS)</b>	The UK’s largest independent producer of official statistics and the recognised national statistical institute of the UK.
<b>Planning in Principle (PIP)</b>	The Homes and Planning Act 2016 requires local authorities to keep a register of brownfield land within its area capable of being granted ‘planning permission in principle’ (PIP) for housing. Proposals include extending PIP for sites identified in local and neighbourhood plans providing permission in respect of matters relating to location, uses and the amount of development on particular sites.
<b>Planning Practice Guidance</b>	Practical guidance that supplements policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Government launched the <a href="#">Planning Practice Guidance</a> on 6 March 2014, replacing a raft of separate detailed best practice guidance covering many areas of town planning issues.
<b>Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages</b>	These are defined in the Adopted Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan and are likely to be replaced in new definitions and designated areas in VALP. They cover specified rows of ground floor units within identified town centres and seek to retain activity-generating uses including high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for diversity of uses within the frontages such as restaurants. The defined frontages from AVDLP have been reviewed in the Aylesbury Vale Retail Study, 2015.
<b>Primary Shopping Area</b>	An area defined in a Local Plan where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).
<b>Previously-developed (brownfield) land</b>	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Registered Providers of affordable housing</b>	A Registered Provider of social housing as defined in Chapter 3 of Part 2 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 who is registered with the Homes and Communities Agency and has not been removed from the register.
<b>Rural Exception Sites</b>	Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.
<b>Self Build and Custom Housing Register</b>	The Homes and Planning Act 2016 requires local authorities to keep a register of people seeking to acquire land to build or commission their own homes and to grant sufficient suitable development permissions of serviced plots to meet demand.
<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments</b>	Nationally important <u>archaeological site</u> or historic building, given protection against unauthorised change.
<b>Sensitive Landscapes</b>	'Sensitive landscapes' is a term used in an evidence base prepared by Jacobs for the Council in 2008 called the 'Areas of Sensitive Landscapes' study. All landscapes in the district were surveyed. Six factors were used to determine what made an area sensitive. These were: scenic quality, rarity, representativeness (locally and regionally) and tranquillity. The Government uses the term 'valued' landscape as meaning important local landscapes that contribute to the quality of the natural and local environment. The valued landscapes for the district are the AVDLP designated 'Areas of Attractive Landscape' and 'Local Landscape Areas'. These have had a review and criteria based assessment by LUC in 2015.
<b>Settlement Hierarchy</b>	The Settlement Hierarchy is a way of identifying and arranging the largest settlements into an order for the purposes of distributing the VALP housing and employment land growth to towns and villages around the district based upon their population and sustainability criteria.
<b>Site Allocations</b>	Designations of land use, types and levels of development and other details identified in a Local Plan. There are existing site allocations in the Adopted Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2004 and several made neighbourhood plans. Future allocations will be made in VALP or in further made neighbourhood plans.
<b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</b>	A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a national designation indicating one of the country's very best wildlife and/or geological sites. SSSIs include some of the most spectacular and beautiful habitats: wetlands teeming with wading birds, winding chalk rivers, flower-rich meadows, windswept shingle beaches and remote upland peat bogs.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Special Areas of Conservation</b>	A Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is an area which has been given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive. SACs provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity. The two SACs relevant to the VALP are the Chiltern Beechwoods and Aston Rowant. The impact of the VALP proposals on these will be considered in the Appropriate Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment.
<b>Starter Homes</b>	The Housing and Planning Act 2016 requires local authorities to ensure starter homes are built and sold to young first time buyers below 40 years of age at a minimum 20% discount below open market value. Regulations will consider the requirement for 20% of such homes on sites of a certain size.
<b>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)</b>	A study and final report identifying all types of flood risk in the district and the considerations that development should adhere to including avoiding building in higher areas of flood risk and incorporating mitigation measures including sustainable drainage systems. A new SFRA will be prepared to support the growth identified in VALP.
<b>Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</b>	More detailed planning guidance to supplement what is in Development Plan Documents. SPDs cannot make new policy; there must be 'policy hook' to a policy or proposal in a Development Plan Document.
<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b>	An evaluation of the social, environmental and economic effects of policies and proposals in the VALP. The purpose is to ensure that the Local Plan documents are produced in accordance with the Government's definition of sustainable development included in the NPPF. Sustainability Appraisals are carried out in line with Government Guidance to meet the terms of Strategic Environmental Assessment which are required under an EU Directive.
<b>Sustainable Construction</b>	An approach to construction that reduces the environmental impact of a building over its entire lifetime, while optimising its economic viability and the comfort and safety of its occupants. A building designed and constructed in a sustainable way minimises the use of water, raw materials, energy and land over the whole life cycle of the building.
<b>Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP)</b>	The new planning policy document for the district covering the period 2013-2033 which will replace the adopted Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2004. VALP is referred to as the 'Local Plan' in the VALP Issues and Options consultation document, October 2015.
<b>Water Cycle</b>	A term used for the assessment of the impact of development on wastewater treatment work capacity, surface water management, wastewater networks, water quality and water supplies.
<b>Windfall sites</b>	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available for new development.