

ASHLEY GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

MAY 2026

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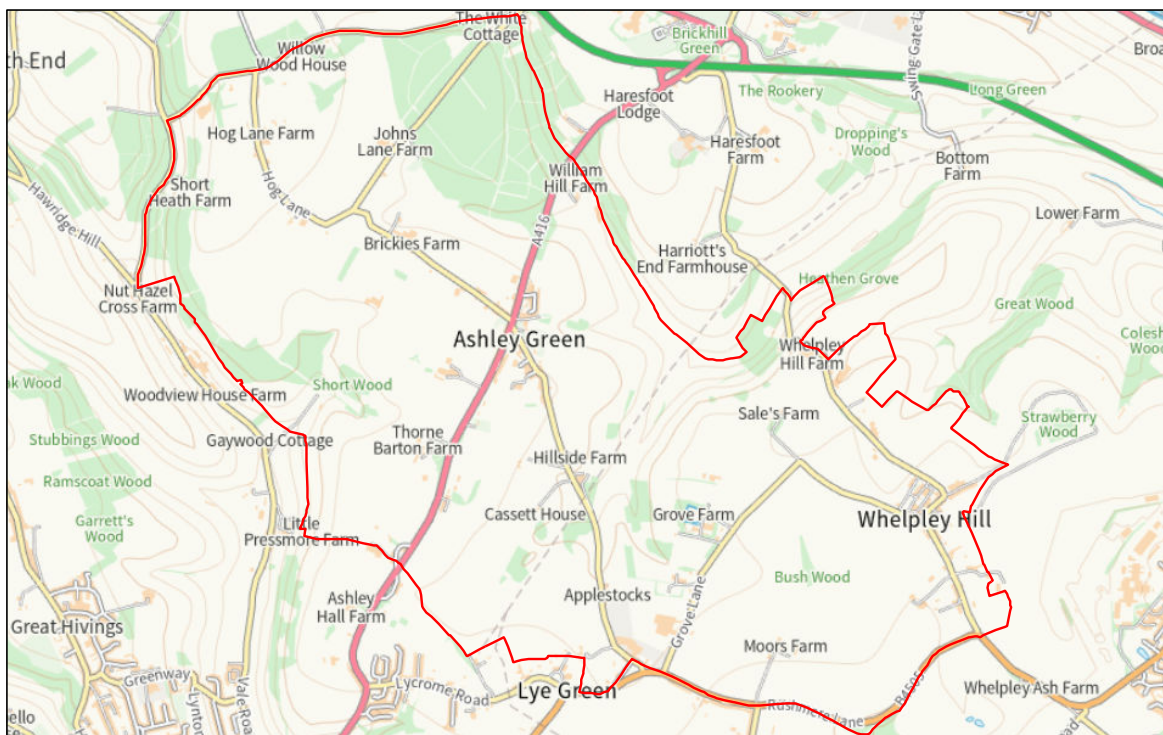
1.INTRODUCTION

The Neighbourhood Plan

1.1 This Statement has been prepared by ONH on behalf of Ashley Green Parish Council ("the Parish Council") to accompany its submission of the Ashley Green Neighbourhood Plan ("the Neighbourhood Plan") to the local planning authority, Buckinghamshire Council ("BC"), under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations").

1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council, the 'Qualifying Body', together with the local residents for the Neighbourhood Area ("the NA"), which coincides with the boundary of the Parish of Ashley Green shown on Plan A below. BC designated the NA on 20 May 2025.

1.3 ONH has provided the professional planning advice and support to the Parish Council throughout the project, alongside occasional help from officers of BC.



8/4/2025

 Parish Boundary



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Plan A: Ashley Green Designated Neighbourhood Area

Neighbourhood Plan Content

1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan contains 5 land use policies, which are defined on the Policies Map where they apply to a specific part of the Area. These policies all fall within the scope allowed by s38B(A1) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and none relate to 'excluded development' as defined in s61K of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. Per s38B(1) of the 2004 Act, the Neighbourhood Plan specifies a plan period, i.e. 2026 to 2036 and does not relate to more than one designated neighbourhood area.

1.5 Per s38B(2B) of the 2004 Act, the Parish Council considers that the Neighbourhood Plan does not contain policy proposals that would undermine the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contributing to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. Furthermore, per that same provision, it considers that it has taken into account the Buckinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy of November 2025 as relevant to the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.6 Per s38B(2C) of the 2004 Act, the Parish Council considers that none of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are inconsistent with or (in substance) repeat any national development management policy.

The Basic Conditions

1.7 The statement addresses each of the four 'Basic Conditions', which are relevant to this plan, required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. It is noted that these provisions were amended by s99 of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act which came into force on 25 March 2026.

1.8 Paragraph 8 (as amended) defines the Basic Conditions thus:

A. Having regard to **national policies** and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan;

B. The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan contributes to the achievement of **sustainable development**;

EA. The making of the neighbourhood development plan would not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that **less housing** is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made;

F. The making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, **assimilated obligations**;

FA. Any requirements imposed in relation to the Neighbourhood Development Plan by or under Part 6 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (**environmental outcomes reports**) have been complied with; and

G. **Prescribed conditions** are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Development Plan and **prescribed matters** have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

2.BACKGROUND

2.1 The decision to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan was made by the Parish Council in early 2025. The key driver of this decision was a sense of wanting to ensure that future growth is integrated into the current much-loved fabric in a sympathetic way.

2.2 A steering group was formed comprising residents and Parish Council representatives. The group has been delegated authority by the Parish Council to make day-to-day decisions on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, as the qualifying body, the Parish Council approved the publication of the Pre-Submission plan in November 2025 and the Submission Plan now.

2.3 The Parish Council has consulted local communities extensively over the duration of the project. It has also worked with officers of BC since the start of the project to collate and examine the evidence base, to design and iterate policy proposals and to define the proper relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan and the strategic policies of the relevant development plan(s). The nature and outcome of these various publicity and consultation exercises are set out in the separate Consultation Statement.

3. CONDITION (A): REGARD TO NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

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

General Paragraphs

3.2 The Parish Council believes the Neighbourhood Plan “support(s) the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans ... and ... shape(s) and direct(s) development that is outside of these strategic policies” (§13). It considers the Neighbourhood Plan contains only non-strategic policy proposals or proposals that refine strategic policy to fit the circumstances of the Area without undermining the purpose and intent of those strategic policies (§18). It considers that the Neighbourhood Plan sets out more “detailed policies for specific areas” including “the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies” (§29).

3.3 The Parish Council considers that its Neighbourhood Plan has provided its communities the power to develop a shared vision for the Area that will shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, albeit in a modest way, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. The Neighbourhood Plan contains no site allocation proposals nor any other policies that will result in less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area (§30). In this regard, the NPPF provisions of meeting local housing needs (as per §69/§70) are therefore not relevant to this Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan is underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This is considered to be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned (§32).

Specific Paragraphs

3.4 Each policy engages one or more specific paragraphs of the NPPF. Those that are considered to be of the most relevance and substance are identified in Table A below.

Table A: Neighbourhood Plan & NPPF Conformity Summary

Policy No.	Policy Title	Commentary
AGWH1	Managing Development in Ashley Green Parish	Policy AGWH1 provides a locally specific framework for managing housing development in the Parish, informed by the indicative housing target provided by the LPA, per §69, and by the Grey Belt Study. In doing so, it adds value to the higher level BC Green Belt Assessment by going further than it is able to in identifying not just the land that meets the definition of Grey Belt but also those sites where smaller types of minor housing development schemes (i.e. five or fewer homes on land of no more than 0.2 Ha gross site area) may be deemed not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It has been established in other neighbourhood plan examinations that plans are able to identify Green Belt land to which one or more of the exceptions to inappropriate development set out in §154. As §155 and §156 extend the exceptions to cover certain types of proposal in the Grey Belt it is reasonable for a plan to contain policy that guides applicants and decision takers in this regard as well. The maximum thresholds for smaller housing schemes are justified in the design study, which describes the evolution of the village and its consequences for defining its essential character and appearance. For consistency they match the scheme size thresholds used for other planning purposes, e.g. the BNG exemption for small schemes and affordable housing in designated rural areas, per §65.
AGWH2	Village Infilling	Policy AGWH2 takes forward adopted, but out of date development plan policy that supports limited village infilling. The policy therefore enables modest growth within the village while ensuring that development remains proportionate and sensitive to its context. This approach is consistent with national policy which supports sustainable development in rural areas and recognises limited infilling in villages as an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt where it maintains openness and character (§154e). As noted above, it has been established in other neighbourhood plan examinations that plans are able to identify Green Belt land to which one or more of the exceptions to inappropriate development set out in §154.

AGWH3	Local Green Spaces	The policy designates Local Green Spaces in accordance with §106-108, having demonstrated each space meets the criteria in §107. The policy resists all development proposals that will undermine the essential character of designated areas, unless there are very special circumstances as set out in §153, to justify why consent should be granted.
AGWH4	Key Views, Vistas and Corridors of Significance	This policy highlights the importance of protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as in §187. As a positive design policy it guides proposals to avoid causing unnecessary, harmful visual obstruction and to consider the aesthetic and historical integrity of the villages and surrounding landscape. This policy considers the local aspirations of the communities in both Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill and is grounded in an understanding and evaluation of the area's defining characteristics. It plays an important role in identifying the special qualities of the villages settings (both individually and as a whole parish) and in explaining how this should be reflected in development proposals (§132).
AGWH5	Local Heritage Assets	Policy AGWH5 identifies and seeks to conserve locally important heritage assets that contribute to the character and historic significance of the parish. By recognising non-designated heritage assets and requiring proposals affecting them to be sensitively designed and justified, the policy ensures that local heritage significance is properly considered in decision making. This approach aligns with national policy which requires planning policies and decisions to conserve and enhance the historic environment and to take account of the significance of non-designated heritage assets (§209).

4. CONDITION (D): CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

4.1 As neither a Sustainability Appraisal nor Strategic Environmental Assessment Report have been required of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Statement sets out in Table B below how each of the policies contribute to the achievements of sustainable development. It does so by identifying the potential of each policy to lead to positive (green), neutral (yellow) or adverse (red) effects, taking into account the proposed mitigation measures.

Table B: Neighbourhood Plan & Sustainable Development					
Policy		Social	Economic	Environmental	Commentary
AGWH1	Managing Housing Development in Ashley Green Parish				The policy establishes a locally defined, plan-led framework for determining where housing proposals on Grey Belt land may be considered appropriate within the Parish, ensuring that development is focused in the most sustainable settlement location. This supports the delivery of a modest level of housing to meet identified needs, contributing positively to the social objective by supporting the continued vitality of the village community. The economic effects are neutral given the small scale of development envisaged. Environmental impacts are broadly neutral as proposals remain subject to other development plan policies protecting landscape character, openness and environmental assets.
AGWH2	Village Infilling				The policy supports limited infill housing development within defined village boundaries at Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill, enabling small-scale growth that is consistent with the established form and character of the settlements. By allowing modest housing development within existing built-up areas, the policy contributes positively to the social objective by supporting the vitality and sustainability of the parish community. Economic effects are neutral due to the limited scale of development anticipated. Environmental impacts are also neutral, as development is confined within existing settlement boundaries and remains subject to wider development plan policies protecting landscape character and Green Belt purposes.

AGWH3	Local Green Spaces				Designating The Glebe, Ashley Green Village Green and Ashley Green Allotments safeguards much-used spaces that support recreation, wellbeing and social interaction. The policy has neutral economic effects, while the protection of accessible greenspace delivers environmental benefits.
AGWH4	Key Views, Vistas and Corridors of Significance				The policy identifies key views, vistas and corridors of significance that contribute to the distinctive rural character and setting of Ashley Green and seeks to ensure that development proposals are designed to preserve or enhance these important landscape features. By requiring development to respond sensitively to local valued landscape characteristics, the policy helps safeguard the visual quality of the countryside and the setting of the village. This delivers a positive environmental outcome. The social and economic impacts are considered neutral, as the policy primarily guides the design and location of development rather than promoting or restricting development directly.
AGWH5	Local Heritage Assets				The policy identifies a number of buildings and structures in recognition of their contribution to the historic character and identity of the parish and requires that their significance is taken into account when determining planning applications. This provides a positive environmental outcome by helping to conserve elements of the local historic environment and ensuring that development proposals respond sensitively to their setting and significance. The policy also contributes positively to the social objective by reinforcing local identity and sense of place. Economic effects are considered neutral as the policy primarily guides decision making rather than directly influencing development activity.

5. CONDITION (EA): HOUSING PROVISIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.1 The new Basic Condition EA replaces the previous Condition (E) that required a neighbourhood plan to demonstrate that its policies were in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan as a whole. As such, it is no longer necessary to identify those strategic policies or to assess the extent to which each neighbourhood plan policy is in conformity, other than in relation their effect on adopted housing policies.

5.2 Instead, the Parish Council only has to demonstrate that the policies will not result in the development plan for the Parish proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place than if the plan were not to be made. This is a simple condition to meet as there are no adopted housing site policies in the Chiltern District Local Plan (adopted in 1997) or the Chiltern District Core Strategy (adopted in 2011) for this Neighbourhood Plan to obstruct. Nor has the emerging Local Plan for Buckinghamshire (LPFB) progressed far enough to propose any new housing sites.

5.3 In any event, the Neighbourhood Plan contains policies that seek to manage the scale, location and design of new homes in line with the advice received from the local planning authority that would not lead to fewer homes being planned for in the Parish. Instead, the approach taken to planning positively for parts of the Grey Belt around the village edge should enable those new homes to be of an appropriate scale and sustainability located.

6. CONDITIONS (F), (FA) & (G): OTHER OBLIGATIONS & CONDITIONS

6.1 In respect of Condition F, BC provided a determination statement in July 2025 that has determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment, in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessments of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is not required, following consultation with statutory bodies as per those Regulations. A copy of the final screening opinion is published separately. As set out in Section 4 the Parish Council has met its obligations in relation to the EU Directive 2001/42 in respect of assessing the potential for significant environmental effects of the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

6.2 The Parish Council has also met its obligations in relation to the habitats provisions of EU Directive 92/43/EEC (and the associated Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)). In this regard, the Parish Council provided BC with all the necessary information it required for the purposes of determining whether an Appropriate Assessment was required or to carry out the Appropriate Assessment if one was required. BC's Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment concludes that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the 2017 Regulations) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

6.3 In respect of Directive 2008/98/EC – the Waste Framework Directive – the Neighbourhood Plan does not include any policies in relation to the management of waste. On that basis, this Directive is not considered relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore could not be breached. In respect of Directive 2008/50/EC – the Air Quality Directive – the Neighbourhood Plan includes some policies relevant to Air Quality. These policies are tested in accordance with national policy and guidance relevant to their content. The policies are not considered to breach the requirements of the Air Quality Directive as they comprise small-scale interventions and do not negate from the framework for measurement and improvement of air quality set in the Directive.

6.4 In respect of Condition FA, the Environmental Outcome Report system provided for by the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act 2023 has not yet been implemented.

6.5 In respect of Condition G, the Parish Council has carried out the designation, preparation and consultation of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with all the necessary Regulations. It has also been mindful of the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights in process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and considers that it complies with the Human Rights Act. The Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to extensive engagement with those people local to the area who could be affected by its policies and their views have been taken into account in finalising the Plan.

7. SUMMARY

7.1 In Section 3 it is considered that each of the policies have had full regard to national policy, with no incidence of two or more national policies being in tension, nor of the Parish Council having to strike a balance between them. As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan meets Condition (A).

7.2 In Section 4 it is considered that each of the policies either contributes to the achievement of sustainable development or is neutral in its impact on one of more of the three sustainability themes. As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan meets Condition (D).

7.3 In Section 5 it is considered that the policies will not result in the development plan for the Parish proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place than if the plan were not to be made. As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan meets Condition (EA).

7.4 In Section 6 it is considered the making of the Neighbourhood Plan accords with all assimilated obligations and conditions. As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan meets Conditions (F), (FA) and (G).