

Aston Abbotts

Design Guide

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Quality information

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Introduction

01

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1. Introduction

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to Aston Abbotts' Parish Council.

1.1 The importance of good design

As the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraph 126) notes, 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'.

Research, such as from the Government's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (now part of the Design Council; see, for example, The Value of Good Design¹) has shown that good design of buildings and places can improve health and well-being, increase civic pride and cultural activity, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and reduce pollution.

This document seeks to harness an understanding of how good design can make future development as endearingly popular as the best of what has been done before.

1. <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/the-value-of-good-design.pdf>

Following the analysis of the parish, a set of architectural and design qualities will be created. This set of qualities, combined with good design practice, will form the design guidelines that any development within Parish should follow in order to comply with this Design Guide document.

1.2 What is a design guide?

The Government's Planning Policy Guidance defines design codes as:

'... a set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should be proportionate and build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area. Their content should also be informed by the 10 characteristics of good places set out in the National Design Guide. They can be ...appended to a Neighbourhood Plan...'²

2. Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 26-008-20191001 - Revision date: 01 10 2019.

1.3 The purpose of this document

The NPPF 2021, paragraphs 127-128 states that:

'Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers...'

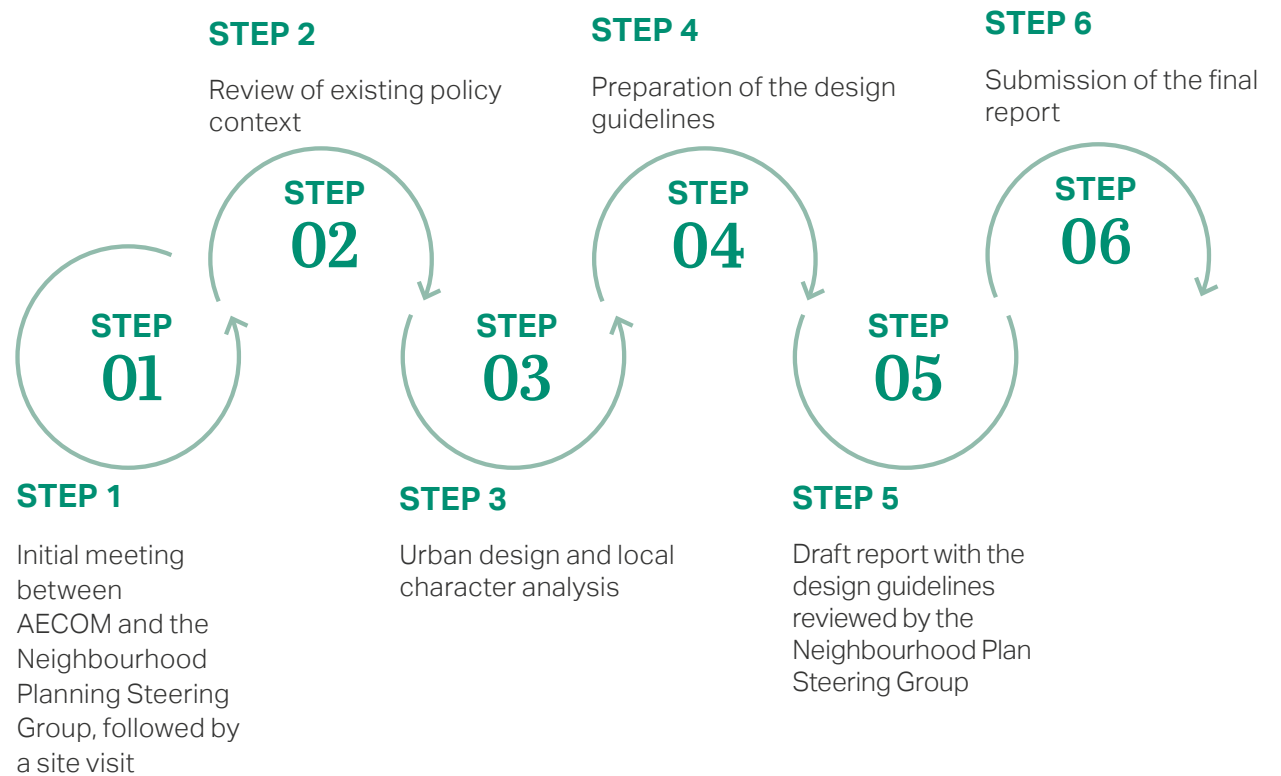
'To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. Design guides and codes provide a local framework for creating beautiful and distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design. Their geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety.'

The Government is placing significant importance on the development of design guides in order to set standards for design upfront and provide firm guidance on how sites should be developed.

The design guidance provided in this document aims to influence any development within the parish.

1.4 Preparing the design guide

Following an inception meeting and a site visit with members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, the following steps were agreed with the Group to produce this report:



1.5 Signpost to other documents

The following documents provide guidance at national, district and local level and have been used to inform this report.

Any new development application must be familiar with these documents and make explicit reference to how each of them is taken into account in the design proposals.

2023 - National Planning Policy Framework

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

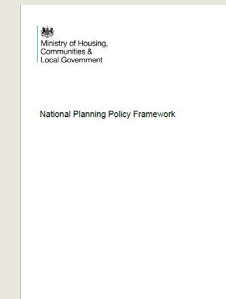
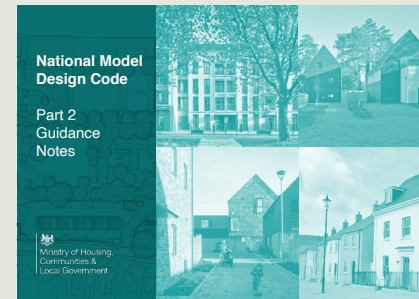
2021 National Model Design Code DLUHC

This report provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide.

2020 - Building for a Healthy Life Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new (2020) name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments. It can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

NATIONAL LEVEL



NATIONAL LEVEL

2019 - National Design Guide

DLUHC

The National Design Guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

2007 - Manual for Streets

Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts and place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

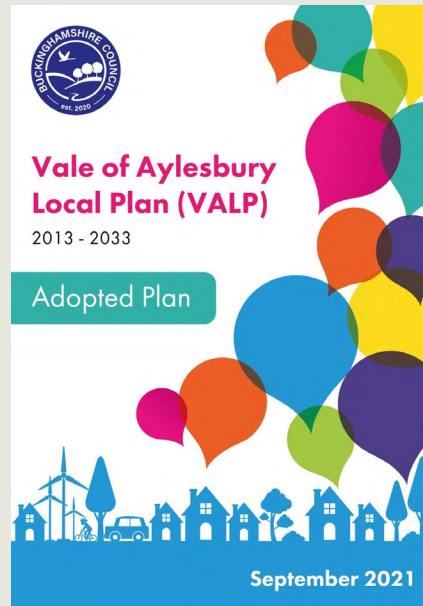


DISTRICT LEVEL

2019 - Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

Buckinghamshire Council

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, adopted in September 2021, classifies Aston Abbotts as a "smaller village". This means that it does not have an allocated number of houses like larger settlements do. Instead, the Plan says that housing is expected to come forward through neighbourhood plans or through wider Plan policies.



Emerging Draft Local Plan for Buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire Council

Buckinghamshire Council is working on a new draft Local Plan which will guide the future of the county by setting out how and where development will take place. Once adopted, it will replace the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (2021).

1.6 Area of study

Aston Abbotts is a small village and civil parish located in Buckinghamshire with a population under 500 residents. The A418 connects Aston Abbotts to the neighbouring towns of Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard. There is a bus stop on this route servicing the village. The nearest railway stations are at Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard which provide connections to London, Birmingham and Milton Keynes.

The parish has a rich history. "Aston" is a common toponym in England, derived from the Old English for "eastern estate". The suffix "Abbotts" refers to the former abbey in the village. The Abbey country house in the centre of the village was largely built in the late 18th century and altered in the early 19th century.

During the second world war, the exiled president of Czechoslovakia stayed in The Abbey and conducted his activities from there. In return for his refuge, he gifted a bus shelter to the villages of Aston Abbotts and Wingrave.

The village amenities include: the recreation ground, orchard, allotments, St James the Great Church, and the Village Hall. There was previously a pub within the village, however, it is not currently operational.



Figure 03: View towards the Royal Oak and into the centre of the village.



Figure 01: Aston Abbotts 'Best Kept Village' award sign.



Figure 02: Aston Abbotts Chapel which is now in use as a dwelling.



F.4 Figure 04: Aston Abbots parish in the wider context.

1.7 How to use this document

The Design Guide will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development within Aston Abbotts. It will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process.

What follows is a list of actors and how they will use the Design Guide:

Actors	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers, & landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – applicants will be expected to follow the guidance as planning consent is sought.
Buckinghamshire Council (when consulted)	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The design guidance should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Aston Abbotts Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guide is complied with.
Local organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.



**Parish-wide character with
guidance and codes**

02

2. Parish-wide character with guidance and codes

This chapter describes the local context and key characteristics of Aston Abbots parish and provides area-wide design guidance and codes based on these findings.

2.1 Historic character

Aston Abbots is a village with a great deal of historic character. This is protected by the Conservation Area (and seven listed buildings), which covers a large part of the settlement. Some of these assets include: Oak Farm House (16th century), Royal Oak (16th and 17th centuries) and The Abbey (18th century). In the early to mid 1800's, Aston Abbots was largely rebuilt by the Earl of Chesterfield which included the construction of the 'Overstone Cottages' (1850).

The Conservation Area represents the original settlement and more recent post-war development has occurred around The Green and on the outskirts of the village.

Codes

- i. New development must avoid or fully mitigate any negative impacts on Aston Abbots heritage assets.
- ii. Timber fenestration on street addressing façades will be preferable in new developments.
- iii. Openings in the façades of new developments should consider or reflect the rhythm of those in existing buildings, especially within the Conservation Areas.
- iv. All new developments within Aston Abbots should reflect the fine grained and street facing nature of the surrounding buildings. This constraint must be rigorously applied for developments which are prominent and close to historic assets particularly within the Aston Abbots Conservation Areas.



Figure 05: Aston Abbots parish church.



Figure 06: Example of how the historic character of buildings have been replicated in a recent development in the village.

2.2 Green infrastructure and views

One of Aston Abbotts' greatest assets is its surrounding green environs. The village is set in the rolling hills of Buckinghamshire, elevated above Aylesbury Vale. Much of the land surrounding the village is in use as arable farmland. Traditional orchards and deciduous woodlands are also scattered throughout the parish.

The village is situated high on a hillside which provides it with panoramic views across the countryside. Some valued viewing locations include: Lines Hill, Moat Lane, Back of Ross Road, from the village recreation ground towards Aylesbury in the valley below and the Chilterns AONB.

Codes

- i. New development at the edge of the village must not impede the quality of the existing outward views of the countryside.
- ii. New development at the edge of the settlement must avoid hard boundary treatments such as railings or walls above eyeline at road edges.
- iii. Any new development beyond the village's central area should incorporate substantial setbacks to maintain uninterrupted sightlines.
- iv. New development on the village edge should be of low density to provide a soft landscape border.
- v. New development on the outskirts of the village should include green verges and must show consideration for appropriate landscaping, such as trees and hedgerows.



Figure 07: Aston Abbotts village orchard.



Figure 08: Viewing spot from Aston Abbotts recreation ground.

2.3 Distinctive palette

There is wide variety of architectural details and materials within the Neighbourhood Area which, together, create a soft and organic material palette.

Many of the buildings in the parish were constructed several centuries ago, especially those that are located within the Conservation Area. Some of the notable buildings include: Oak Farm House (16th century), Royal Oak (16th and 17th centuries), the Overstone Cottages and The Abbey (18th century). Detached and semi-detached houses are the most prevalent typology within Aston Abbots. Buildings typically have gabled or pitched roof styles, with dormers being a common feature.

Common materials include local stone bricks, red bricks, grey slate tiles and pantiles on roofs. Brickwork and painted render detailing surrounding windows and doors is a common feature within the village. Future developments should seek to reflect this character by adhering to the following codes:

Codes

- i. New developments should seek to utilise and reflect the existing outlined material palette across Aston Abbots.
- ii. Rooflines in new developments should generally reflect the surrounding roof angles and height.
- iii. Vertically articulated windows will be encouraged in Aston Abbots. Where dormer windows are included, they should be vertically aligned to the openings below.
- iv. New developments should seek to provide architectural interest where possible by including detailed features on façades. Windows should always be recessed to provide articulation to facades.



F.9

Figure 09: Overstone Cottages (c1850) using red brick and yellow brick to frame the windows and doors.

Services such as gutters are generally slim and understated, and do not detract from the façade of the buildings.

Aston Abbotts' organic but cohesive architectural feel is created by its uniform street edge, alongside its varied materials and features.

Future developments should seek to reflect this character by adhering to the following codes:

Codes

- v. Services such as gutters, security systems, and satellites should be designed unobtrusively where possible and should not detract from the street scene.
- vi. Where colour is applied to a building façade, a muted tone should be used which takes reference from the existing colour palette.
- vii. When solar panels are applied to a structure, they should be unobtrusive as far as possible and should not detract from the surrounding street scene.
- viii. Façade materials should be consistent with the greater area or need particular justification. Non vernacular finishes will be discouraged.



F.10

Figure 10: Flat rendered property with cream walls and pantiles.



F.11

Figure 11: Historic thatched cottage.

2.4 Streets

Aston Abbotts is a small rural village that is partially characterised by its narrow winding roads. In places the vegetation and buildings with short setbacks create an enclosed feel to the streetscape.

Vehicle clutter is abundant within the centre of the village, especially overnight and at weekends, and there are many properties where residents rely on on-street parking. It is important that future development does not exacerbate this problem by using the following guidance:

Codes

- i. When a new development involves the creation of new streets and routes, it must prioritise active transport by providing direct, safe, and attractive routes for pedestrians and cyclists;
- ii. Any new development should avoid further on-street car parking by providing other solutions such as on-plot car parking or parking courts; and
- iii. New developments should be laid with a clear street hierarchy and facilitate multiple modes of transit.




F.12

Figure 12: Example of narrow lanes entering the village.



F.13

Figure 13: Existing building with on-street car parking.



**Design guidance and
codes for Aston Abbotts'
character areas**

03

3. Design guidance and codes for Aston Abbotts' character areas

This section provides design guidelines which are specific to the individual character areas demarcated across the village of Aston Abbotts. These guidelines and codes aim to provide highly context specific guidance.

3.1 Introduction

The following section outlines a set of design guides and codes that have been put together based on the distinct character areas of Aston Abbotts.

These guidelines and codes will aim to guide any changes or development within the Neighbourhood Area to ensure the local character is respected whilst still allowing space for innovation within the built environment.

The design guidelines and codes have been applied by area based on their relevance to the prominent features, opportunities and issues of their associated character area.

3.2 Character area guidance overview

The character area guidelines and codes are designed to provide specific guidance to areas within Aston Abbotts. The specific guidance builds upon the general design codes outlined in the previous chapter and highlights guidelines that will both preserve and enhance the existing character of individual areas. These should be read jointly with the previous guidelines and codes.

Applicants seeking to develop in these areas should refer to these sections when considering the street layout, placemaking and architectural features of new development.

The character area descriptions have been provided by members of the Aston Abbotts community.



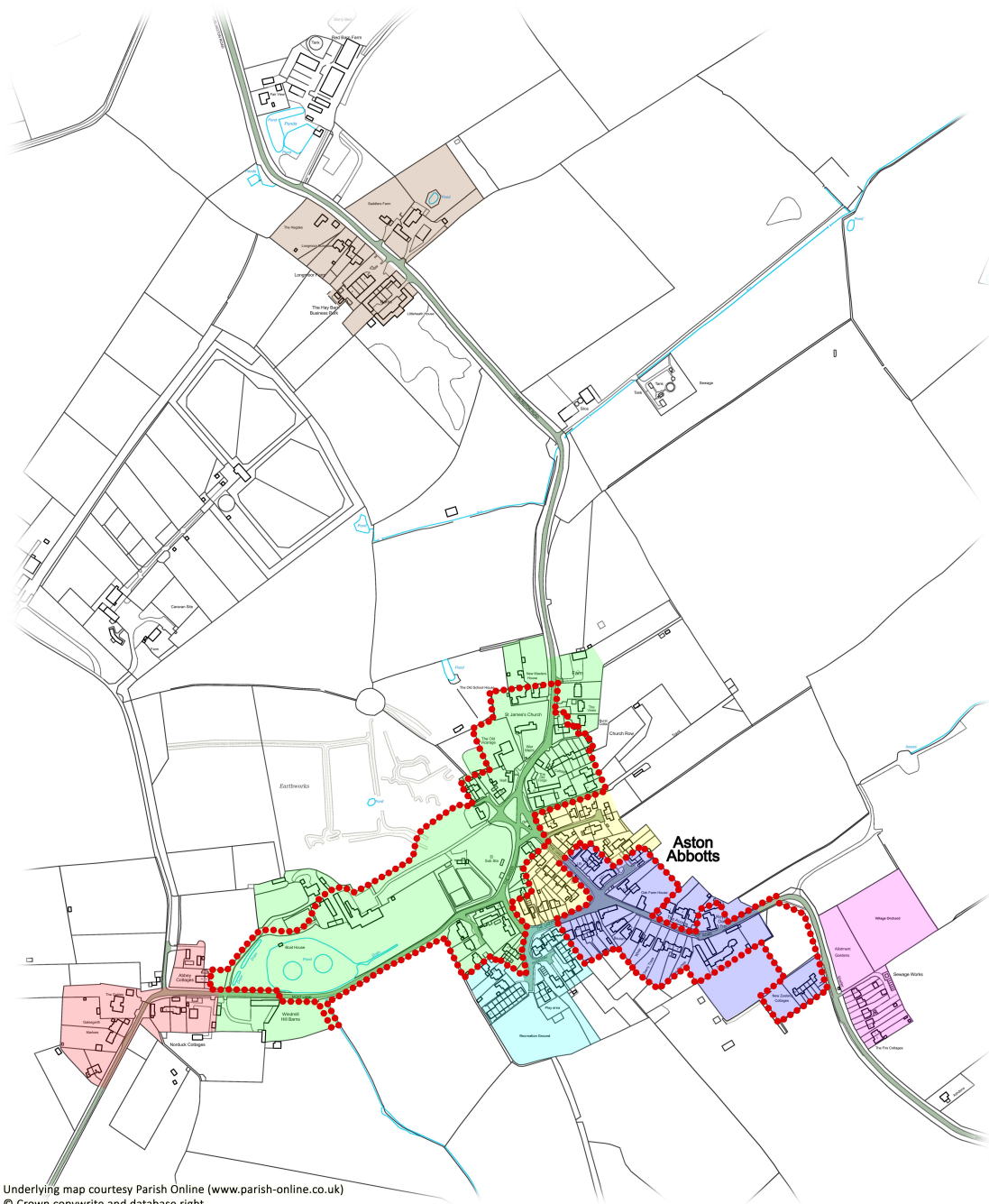
F.14

Figure 14: View entering the village on Cublington Road showing the church.



F.15

Figure 15: View of traditional house in the village.



	1	Conservation Area North
	2	Conservation Area South
	3	Ross Road/Inner Green
	4	Bricstock
	5	The Lines
	6	Wingrave Road
	7	Longmoor

Underlying map courtesy Parish Online (www.parish-online.co.uk)
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F.16 Figure 16: Map showing the location of the character areas in Aston Abbots, with the red dotted line showing the boundary of the Conservation Area.

3.3 CA1 Conservation Area North

Introduction

Aston Abbots Conservation Area North encompasses a significant portion of the village, spanning from Church Farm at its northern boundary, southwards to include The Abbey, and ending at Windmill Hill Barns along its southern boundary.

The area features the village green which consists of three sizable grass islands adjacent to The Abbey's entrance gates. The village green hosts several trees, including two large oak trees and a lime tree planted by diplomats from the Czech and Slovak Embassies to mark the 60th V.E. Day anniversary."

While many of the views towards significant buildings should be protected, the oldest building in this area is the Church of St James which was originally built in the 15th century.



Figure 17: Traditional house with vegetation softening the feel of the area.

Layout

Conservation Area North runs along Moat Lane, The Green and Cublington Road. The streetscape is dominated by vegetation, such as trees and hedges which soften the feel of the built environment. The layout of plots and buildings in the area has developed organically over the years.

Heights

Most buildings are of two storeys within the Conservation Area with some bungalows scattered throughout. This allows the mature woodland to dominate the skyline and create a rural character in Aston Abbots. Roofs are typically pitched and punctuated with chimney stacks. The roofline is broken up by trees which often border properties.



Figure 18: Aston Abbots Village Hall.

Streets

The street layout in Aston Abbotts Conservation Area North is defined by Moat Lane, The Green and Cublington Road which cut through the heart of the village. This is a historic route that is shown on historic maps. The roads are lined with grass verges. Most of roads do not have pavements which creates a rural feel to the streetscape.

The section of Moat Lane within the Conservation Area is narrow with no footpaths and is unsuitable for on-street parking. Many of the properties on The Green and Cublington Road rely on on-street parking and, therefore, have significant vehicle clutter, especially overnight and at the weekend.

Buildings

The Conservation Area North has lots of interesting historic buildings with a great deal of character. Typical materials in the area include red brick, cream render and

yellow bricks (which are often used in a decorative manner around the outside of the windows and doors of houses).

There is a very wide range of property types in this character area including detached, semi-detached and terraced cottages. The area also includes Hunters Way which is a cul-de-sac of a handful properties built c2000. At the southwestern corner of the area on Moat Lane lies Windmill Hill Barns (now transformed into private dwellings).



Figure 20: Home Farm, one of the listed properties on The Green.



Figure 19: village green showing properties on the west edge of the green and the gates to The Abbey.



Figure 21: One of the terraces on Church Row.

CA1 Aston Abbots Conservation Area guidance and codes

Code	Rationale	Implementation
CA1.1 Consider immediate context	<i>The Conservation Area North acts as a focal point for Aston Abbots. The area is rich in built heritage and is successful in relaying the area's historic context.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development must demonstrate an understanding of immediate context and design proposals must respect the existing historic character and listed buildings of the area.
CA1.2 Views and sight lines	<i>The landmarks and historic assets of the Conservation Area help to assist in creating memorable routes, allowing users to orient themselves.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development must be positioned in a way to retain and enhance valuable sight lines through the area. Proposals must respect the prominence of nearby landmarks.
CA1.3 Enclosure and building line	<i>The Conservation Area is made up of fine grain development with a continuous building line. This creates a sense of enclosure and dictates a direction of flow through the area.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, façades should face the street and reinforce the existing building line. New developments should have subtle variations to improve visual interest but follow the building line.

Code	Rationale	Implementation
CA1.4 Materials and architectural detail	<i>The Conservation Area North benefits from a sense of architectural unity and cohesion due to the established material palette.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New development should provide a sympathetic response to the existing character and architectural details.• New development should utilise the traditional materials, local stone, red brick, or white render, which contribute to the local vernacular.• Rooflines should be pitched with the use of traditional slates. Windows should be casement on façades or dormer on rooflines.
CA1.5 Windows and doors	<i>The Conservation Area North has a restrained language of architectural detail. This is evident across the fenestration of Conservation Area buildings.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fenestration on new developments should follow the rhythm and layout, potentially taking reference from surrounding context.

3.4 CA2 Conservation Area South

Introduction

The Conservation Area South is situated between The Green and Wingrave Road. The Conservation Area runs from the converted Methodist Chapel on The Green and continues along Wingrave Road to New Zealand Cottages on the southern boundary. The area is filled with characterful historic buildings such as the Royal Oak Pub and Oak Farm House which are focal points of the community's history.

Layout

Much of the development within the character area takes place along Wingrave Road. The pattern of development is linear with properties typically facing onto the road with a generous setback. The frontages facing onto the road allow for natural surveillance and the front gardens soften the feel of the built environment.

Heights

Buildings in the outer parts of Aston Abbots are either 1, 1.5 or 2 storeys in height. This allows for trees to dominate the skyline, reinforcing the rural feel of the character area.



F.23

Figure 23: Oak Farm House on Wingrave Road.



F.22

Figure 22: New Zealand Cottages, so named for their remote location from the settlement when first built.



F.24

Figure 24: The converted Methodist Chapel on The Green.

Streets

The Conservation Area South is characterised by narrow roads with footpaths on either side. Property boundaries are most commonly defined by vegetation and sometimes low brick walls or timber fences.

Upon entering the village from Wingrave, a sharp left-hand bend occurs shortly after passing New Zealand Cottages. Navigating the bend reveals an imposing avenue of tall hedgerows, guiding the way into the village. At the end of the hedgerows, stands the impressive thatched Royal Oak on the right.

Figure 25 shows how an element of enclosure is created by trees and hedgerows which gives the streetscape a leafy feel.

Buildings

The Conservation Area South has several locally important buildings that add to the character of the village as a whole. Typical

materials in the area include red brick, cream render and yellow bricks (which are often used in a decorative manner around the outside of the windows and doors of houses).

Roofing materials include red pantiles, slate, brown tiles and thatch. While there is a range of roof types, the pitched typology is the most common, particularly with eyebrow dormers.

Decorative brickwork is often used on the windows of traditional red brick buildings. This is something that should be replicated in future developments in the area.



F.25

Figure 25: View down Wingrave Roads.



F.26

Figure 26: Historic Tudor cottage.



F.27

Figure 27: Overstone Cottages (showing the decorative brickwork around the windows).

CA2 Conservation Area South guidelines and codes

Code	Rationale	Implementation
CA2.1 Form and massing	<i>The Conservation Area South is made up of a mix of plot sizes and building types. Generally, rooflines are of shallow pitch and do not rise above two storeys in height.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The scale and pitch of the roof should reflect the surrounding roofscapes.• New dwellings should be laid out in a manner which reflects the surrounding typologies.
CA2.2 Density	<i>Aston Abbotts is made up of low density development with generous spacing in-between buildings.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New developments should respect the surrounding density.
CA2.3 Rural character	<i>The informal and open layout of the area contributes to its distinctive rural character.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New developments should have subtle variations in frontage and large setbacks to retain rural character.

Code	Rationale	Implementation
CA2.4 Connection to landscape	<i>The area is defined by its relationship to the surrounding landscape, which is enriched by broad views and soft planted boundary treatments.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development must be positioned in a way to retain and enhance valuable sight lines through the area. • New developments should have low and natural boundary treatments such as trees and hedges.
CA2.5 Boundary treatment	<p><i>The outer developments in Aston Abbots benefit from a low scale boundary treatment and lower density, allowing for the village to transition gently into the open countryside.</i></p> <p><i>The southern border of this area is on the outskirts of the village; the only other properties extending further south are those on the eastern side of Wingrave Road (see Character Area 6).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should provide a sympathetic response to the existing character and architectural details. • New development should utilise the traditional materials, local stone brick, red brick, or white render, which contribute to the local vernacular. • Rooflines should be pitched with the use of traditional pantiles. Windows should be sash on façades or dormer on rooflines.

3.5 CA3 Ross Road/Inner Green

Introduction

The Ross Road and Inner Green area is in the centre of the village and is made up of several infill developments that have been added between the north and south parts of the Conservation Area. While they have a slightly different feel to the older parts of the village, several key local characteristics are retained in these newer developments.



F.28

Figure 28: Detached modern property up Chapmans Lea.



F.29

Figure 29: Semi-detached and terrace properties.

Layout

A lot of the development within the character area has come in the form of short cul-de-sacs. Examples of these include Chapmans Lea and Ross Road. The Green is populated by bungalows which front onto the road.

Although many properties within the character area have generous setbacks to allow space for front gardens and on-plot car parking, vehicle clutter is common and restricts the roads to a single lane. This is most prevalent overnight and at weekends.

Heights

There is a mix of 1 and 2 storey houses within the character area. Cul-de-sac developments such as Ross Road are populated by 2 storey dwellings with sharply pitched roofs. Around The Green, there are generous quantities of trees, hedges and grass verges that take centre stage in this part of the village.



F.30

Figure 30: View down The Green including the bungalows.

Streets

The Green is a road that loops around what was originally the village common. Parts of the road are lined by pavement and others have grass verges which offer pedestrians refuge from oncoming traffic.

Chapmans Lea, Ross Road and Humphreys Close are all cul-de-sacs that create a more tranquil street scene away from the main routes through the village.

Buildings

There is a mix of building typologies within this character area, ranging from large detached houses on Chapmans Lea to terraced houses down Ross Road and the small detached bungalows lining The Green.

Building materials include red brick, yellow decorative brickwork, red pantiles and modern brown tiles. Eyebrow dormers are a feature that is prominent throughout this area as well as the rest of Aston Abbotts.

Ross Road/Inner Green area guidelines and codes

Parish-wide codes apply (see chapter 2).



F.31

Figure 31: On-street car parking on The Green.



F.32

Figure 32: On-plot car parking in the new development up Chapman Lea.

3.6 CA4 Bricstock

Introduction

Bricstock is located in the southwest of the village and is characterised by a number of small incremental housing developments including Nash's Farm. The land use in this area is primarily residential. The road 'Bricstock' runs from the southwest corner of The Green to the village recreation ground which includes playing fields and a child's play park. On the edge of the recreation grounds is a viewing area with a bench providing panoramic views across the countryside towards Aylesbury.

Layout

Cul-de-sacs are the prominent street typology in the Bricstock character area which is typical for small developments in British villages. The Nash's Farm houses front into a parking court area while the 1970's bungalows, on the edge of the village, front directly onto the recreation grounds with parking contained on the road behind the buildings.

Heights

Building heights descend from 2 storeys, to bungalows on the edge of the village which

Streets

Bricstock is effectively a cul-de-sac, most of which has pavements on either side. On street car parking leads to vehicle clutter on the street, especially at the weekend when people are generally at home.

Buildings

The Bricstock area has developed over the last five decades with small incremental developments and hence consists of a range of difference building types. The typologies range from 2 storey detached, semi-detached and terrace houses to 1970s terraced bungalows. Materials include red and grey brick with mainly pitched roofs.

Bricstock area guidelines and codes

Parish-wide guidelines and codes apply (see chapter 2).



F.33

Figure 33: Nash's Farm development.



F.34

Figure 34: Bungalows fronting onto the recreation grounds.

3.7 CA5 The Lines

Introduction

On the western edge of Aston Abbotts, where Moat Lane runs into The Lines, there is a scattering of residential buildings. Houses in this part of the village are on higher topography than the rest of the settlement and, therefore, have stunning views towards the Buckinghamshire countryside.

Layout

The building density of this character area is very low with large gaps between development. This allows for views towards green space from the street, providing a more rural feel to the area. Buildings often face onto the street which maximises the passive surveillance of the area, improving safety.

Heights

Buildings along are typically 2 storeys in height which allows the trees and other vegetation to dominate the landscape in a rural part of the village.

Streets

The Lines is a gated road with the gate situated on the corner where it meets Moat Lane. It is a narrow street which is lined with grass verges and tall hedgerows.

Buildings

The buildings on The Lines are typically two storey terraces with pitched rooflines. The materials that are most common in the area are red brick, yellow decorative brickwork, and slate tiles.

With the exception of Abbey Cottages, the buildings on the far western stretch of Moat Lane are more recent, being a mix of red brick semi-detached and detached houses.



F.35

Figure 35: Norduck Cottages.



F.36

Figure 36: 2 storey terraces houses in the character area.

CA5 The Lines guidelines and codes

Code	Rationale	Implementation
CA6.1 Accessible and attractive footpath network/ access to the countryside	<i>The surrounding countryside is a huge asset to Aston Abbotts and, therefore, it is important any new development should make the most of it by introducing new connections and improving existing connections to the countryside.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, new proposed footpaths should link up green spaces and woodlands to create a network of green walking routes and promote biodiversity. • Strategically placed signposts can assist pedestrians and cyclists with orientation and increase awareness of publicly accessible paths beyond the parish.
CA6.2 Biodiversity	<i>There is the chance that development in The Lines/ Moat Lane area could have a negative impact on biodiversity, which should be avoided where possible.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity, woodlands, hedgerows, ditches should be protected and enhanced where possible and be an integrated part of the design process rather than an afterthought. • Gardens and boundary treatments should be designed to allow the movement of wildlife and provide habitat for local species. For that reason, rich vegetation and plantation is suggested.



F.37

Figure 37: Views of the open countryside from the top of the hill along The Lines.



F.38

Figure 38: View towards the village from Norduck Cottages.

3.8 CA6 Wingrave Road

Introduction

Situated just to the south of the village along Wingrave Road is a group of 10 semi-detached houses originally built in the 1950s. These properties are on the edge of the settlement and have countryside facing views to the rear of them. Also located within the character area is the village allotments with the orchard connected to that.

Layout

The semi-detached houses face onto Wingrave Road with a reasonable setback which creates space for on-plot car parking. It also ensures that there is natural surveillance onto the street.

Heights

The buildings in this area are all 2 storeys, semi-detached and have the same setback from the street. This creates a very uniform roofline. This allows the trees and hedgerows on the other side of Wingrave Road to dominate the skyline in the character area.

Streets

Wingrave Road connects the village of Aston Abbotts with the A418 which is the primary road connecting the parish with Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard.

Buildings

The buildings in the character area are all 2 storey semi-detached houses with red brick for walling and predominantly gable roofs. They are all flat faced which creates a uniform building line as you look at the row of houses from Wingrave Road.

Wingrave Road area guidelines and codes

Parish-wide guidelines and codes apply (see chapter 2).



F.39

Figure 39: Aston Abbotts' allotments.



F.40

Figure 40: Properties on the Wingrave Road to the south of the allotments.

3.9 CA7 Longmoor

Introduction

Situated half a kilometer north of the village proper is Longmoor which is made up of a scattering of houses, barns and an industrial building. The area feels disconnected from the rest of Aston Abbots, however it does have bus stops that link it to the village as well as to Leighton Buzzard and Aylesbury.

Layout

Development has occurred over time on either side of Cublington Road. Properties are typically forward facing onto the street, however they have generous setbacks with tall hedges defining the boundary which creates an element of privacy.

Heights

Building heights range from 2 storeys to 1 storey on the edge of the built environment which softens the boundary between the Aston Abbots and the surrounding countryside.

Streets

Cublington Road is a narrow country lane lined by grass verges and tall hedgerows which creates a sense of enclosure. The grass verges provide pedestrians with refuge in the case of oncoming traffic as there are no pavements.

Buildings

There is a mix of building typologies in the Longmoor character area. Detached, semi-detached, bungalow and industrial buildings are all found here. Materials include red brick, weatherboarding, corrugated iron and brown tiles.

Longmoor area codes

Parish-wide codes apply (see chapter 2).



F.41

Figure 41: Entrance to Longmoor Barns off Cublington Road.



F.42

Figure 42: Property at the end of lane in Longmoor Barns.



Checklist

04

4.1 Checklist

Because the design guidelines and codes in this chapter cannot cover all design eventualities, this section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which design proposals in Aston Abbotts should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development.

The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution. As a first step, there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals.

These are listed under 'General design guidelines for new development'. Following these ideas and principles, a number of questions are listed for more specific topics.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

2

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?

3

Building line, access and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?
- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

4

Street layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

5

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

6

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Do the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

7

Buildings layout and grouping:

- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?
- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?

8 (continues)

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

