



# Great Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan

**Submission to 2035  
V5.0 April 2026**

Prepared by Great Brickhill Parish Council

In conjunction with  
Bluestone Planning LLP



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The community of Great Brickhill has been working on a Neighbourhood Plan since 2023. A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was created under the auspices of the Parish Council in November 2023.

Residents are proud of their village and their community and want to see the rural character of their village and its surrounding countryside protected and enhanced for everyone to enjoy, without further development on the southern edge of Milton Keynes impacting that character negatively.

The residents of the village have given strong support to the creation of the Great Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan and have contributed to its this via Steering Group which was formed to produce the Plan. The Steering Group organised a detailed survey of village residents in May 2024 to which 285 responses were received. The results of that survey were presented to the village in a meeting in the Parish Hall in July 2024, which 90 people attended, and where feedback was given via 42 Post-It notes stuck on the wall. A further supplemental question in March 2025 addressed an outstanding issue and received 180 responses. The Steering Group held regular meetings throughout the period of the Plan's creation which were open to the public. The process will culminate in a referendum to agree, or otherwise, the final version, once approved by the appointed Examiner. The referendum requires a simple majority of those voting to vote in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan for it to be brought into effect.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group hosted a webpage through the development of the plan, which includes minutes of meetings as well as relevant documentation. Flyers were posted around the village giving high level updates on the process and when appropriate the village Info Line e-mail, the Parish news and the village WhatsApp group were used to communicate with residents.

### **Acknowledgements**

The Steering Group members are:

Chairman: Paul Jennings

Secretary: Karen Barker (Parish Clerk)

Group members: Chris Leech (Chairman of the Parish Council), Rob Andrews, David Beatty, John Brown, Vanessa Edmonds, Marcus Feinhols, Andy Gearty, Judith Gibbs, Anne Jennings, Ian Larman, David Marlow, Tom Turner

Professional advisor: Bluestone Planning (Sharon De Brú and Erin Scarsbrook)

## SOURCES

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Natural England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

Historic England: <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1. Neighbourhood Plan Status

- 1.1.1 The Localism Act 2011, supplemented by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, introduced neighbourhood planning into the spatial planning hierarchy of England, giving communities the right to influence future development at a local level.
- 1.1.2 Once approved at a referendum, a neighbourhood plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan, which will be incorporated into the district planning framework and be used by Buckinghamshire Council in the determination of planning applications. It supports the delivery of the strategic policies in the development plan and contains policies for the development and use of land. Wider community aspirations do not form part of the statutory development plan but are referred to separately in each relevant section.

### 1.2 Submitting Body

- 1.2.1 The Parish Council is the qualifying body responsible for preparing the neighbourhood plan and therefore they are responsible for submitting the plan to the District Council for examination. The term 'qualifying body' is defined by the Localism Act 2011, meaning it is the body with responsibility for neighbourhood planning in the designated neighbourhood area.

### 1.3 Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.3.1 Great Brickhill Parish Council established a Steering Group to produce the neighbourhood plan in late 2023, with the first meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023. In accordance with Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 Great Brickhill Parish Council submitted an application for the designation of a neighbourhood area, which was approved on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The specified area (see Figure 1 below) follows the parish boundary.

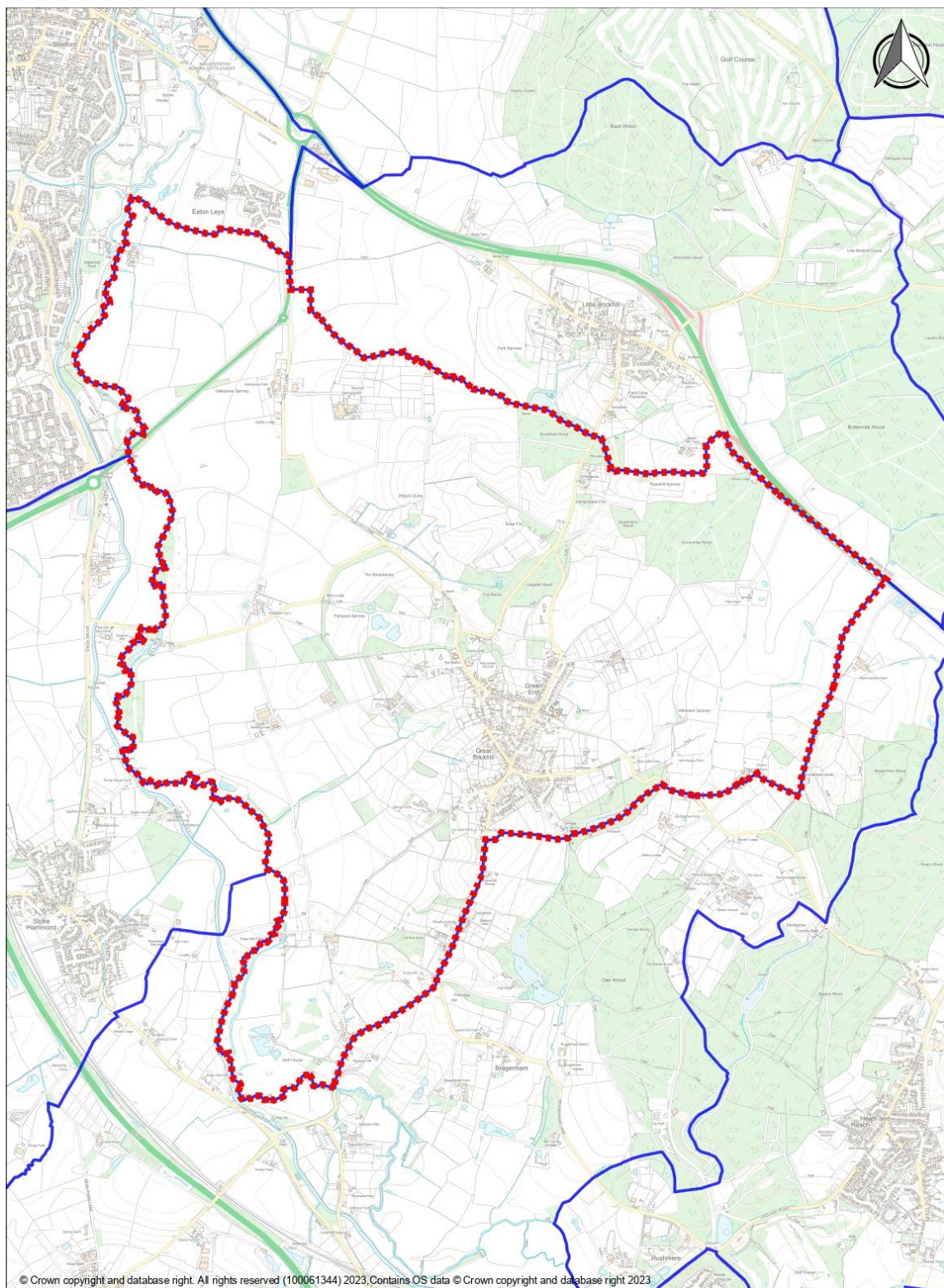


Figure 1 - Map of Designation of Neighbourhood Area<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. Leech, 2023, Parish Online, 'Great Brickhill Parish Boundary'. Accessed at: [https://buckinghamshire.gov.uk/s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Great\\_Brickhill\\_Neighbourhood\\_Area\\_Map.pdf](https://buckinghamshire.gov.uk/s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Great_Brickhill_Neighbourhood_Area_Map.pdf)

## 2 BASIC CONDITIONS

### 2.1 Neighbourhood Plans

2.1.1 Neighbourhood plans must comply with what are known as 'Basic Conditions'. These Basic Conditions are defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and comprise:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order (or Neighbourhood Plan).
- The making of the order (or Neighbourhood Plan) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- The making of the order (or Neighbourhood Plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
- The making of the order (or Neighbourhood Plan) does not breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations as incorporated into UK law.
- The making of the order (or Neighbourhood Plan) does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.

2.1.2 Schedule 4B (8(6)) also indicates that it is necessary to consider whether the neighbourhood plan is "compatible with the Convention rights". The interpretation section (s.17) in Schedule 4B confirms that "the Convention rights" has the same meaning as in the Human Rights Act 1998.

### 2.2 Plan Period, Monitoring and Review

2.2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been produced to cover the period up to 2035.

2.2.2 It should be noted that this plan will change over time to reflect current needs and requirements. Through ongoing review processes, we are committed to monitoring the effectiveness of the documents underpinning this plan. An annual review will therefore assess their timeliness and identify areas for improvement. This commitment to continuous evaluation guarantees the plan's effectiveness in shaping a vibrant future for the parish.

### 2.3 Neighbourhood Plan Stages

2.3.1 Figure 2 illustrates the progression of the neighbourhood plan from its initial stages through to completion. Following receipt of a screening opinion from Buckinghamshire Council confirming that the Great Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), the Plan has now reached the Submission stage. This is the point at which it is formally submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for consultation, prior to independent examination. This stage provides a further opportunity for the community to offer valuable feedback and help shape the future of the parish up to 2035.

2.3.2 In the next stage, the neighbourhood plan and all supporting documents will be submitted to Buckinghamshire Council, which will consult on the draft plan for a minimum period of six weeks. Once the consultation closes, all comments received will be compiled and forwarded to the Examiner for review as part of the formal examination process.

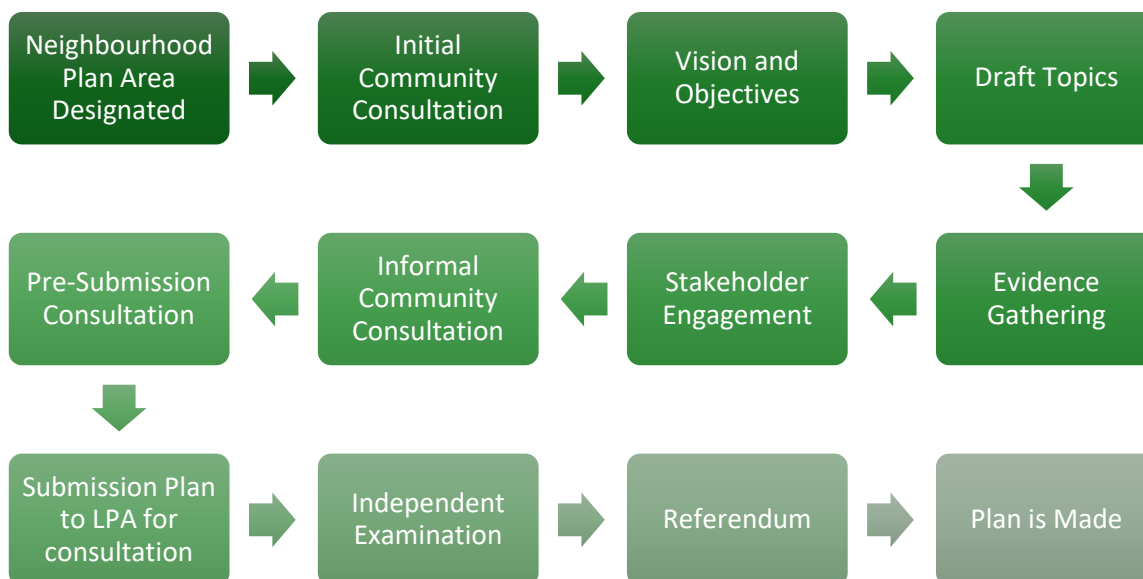


Figure 2 - Neighbourhood Plan Process Diagram

### 3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

#### 3.1 National Planning Policy

3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published by the government in 2012 and revised in December 2024, is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. It sets out the government’s policy in relation to land use planning matters.

3.1.2 The neighbourhood plan must demonstrate that it has had regard to, and is consistent with, the provisions of the NPPF as a whole. The central focus of the NPPF is achieving sustainable development, which incorporates three overarching objectives. These are described in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF as:

- an economic objective – this neighbourhood plan seeks to protect and facilitate the growth of local businesses which play a significant role in defining the economy of the parish.
- a social objective – this neighbourhood plan aims to preserve and highlight the significance of local community facilities and to encourage proposals that would seek the creation of new facilities within the parish that either do not currently exist or are targeted towards younger people.
- an environmental objective – this neighbourhood plan imposes several measures to ensure the protection and, when appropriate, the enhancement of nationally and locally significant habitats, to conserve the rural character of the parish.

## 3.2 Vale of Aylesbury and Buckinghamshire Local Plan

- 3.2.1 The development plan for the parish currently comprises The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2013-2033.
- 3.2.2 Under existing adopted policy, Great Brickhill Parish, identified as a smaller village, is not designated for significant housing or employment growth. However, the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan stipulates that housing is expected to come forward through neighbourhood plans or development management processes considered against relevant policies in the plan.

## 3.3 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan

- 3.3.1 The Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) was adopted in 2019 and runs to 2036. The Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan forms the land use planning strategy for minerals and waste development within the administrative area of Buckinghamshire County. It provides guidance regarding industry investment, the level of minerals and waste development needed to support the development of sustainable communities and infrastructure and where in the county such development should go. The plan also addresses the design and impact of development and how it can best relate to the surrounding land use(s) and link with the wider community in order to optimise beneficial outcomes.
- 3.3.2 The adopted MWLP will provide the basis for determining planning applications for, or linked to, minerals and waste development in Buckinghamshire.

## 3.4 Emerging Local Plan for Buckinghamshire

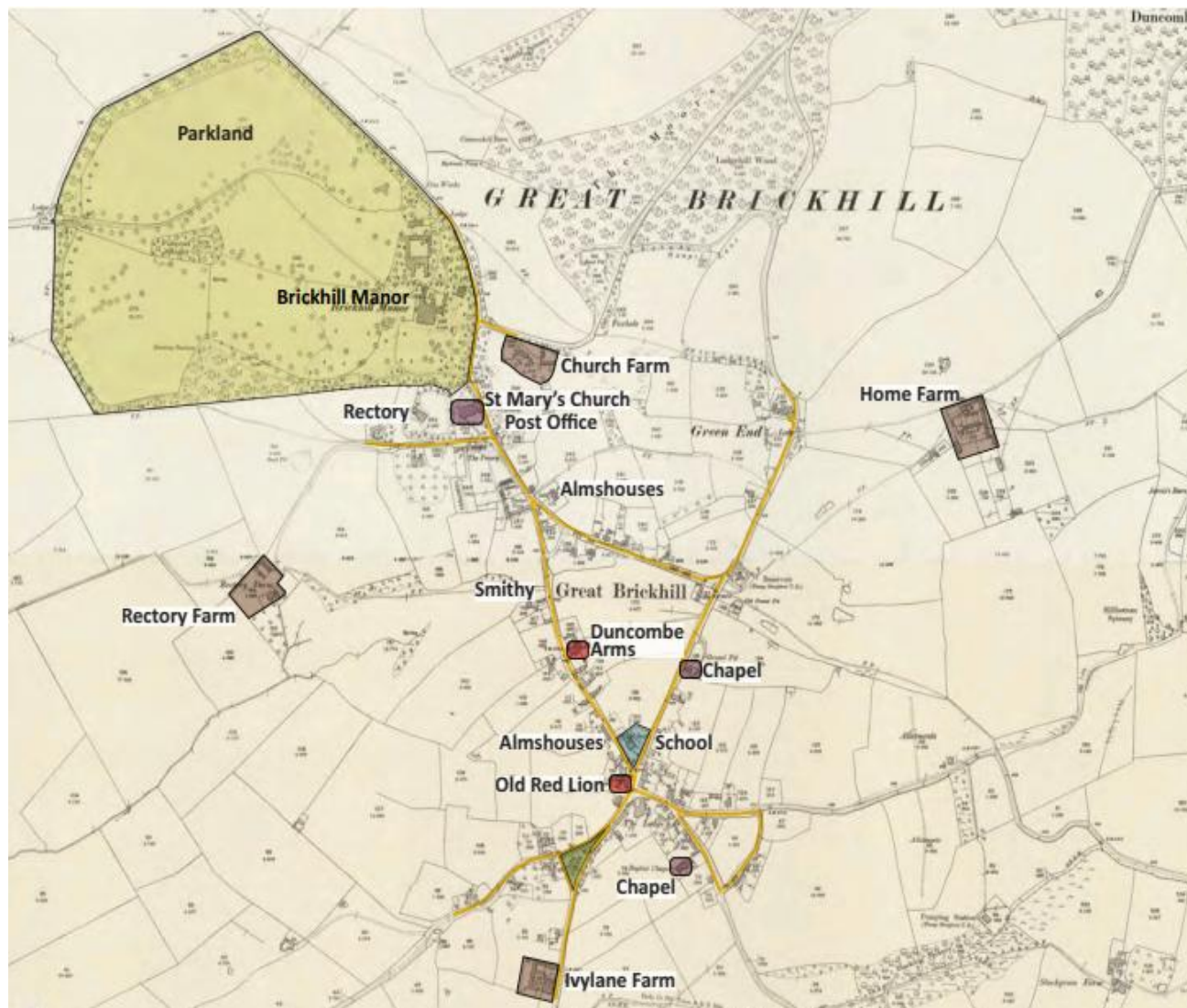
- 3.4.1 A new Buckinghamshire Local Plan is being prepared to cover the entirety of Buckinghamshire. Once adopted, this will supersede the existing Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP).
- 3.4.2 A revised local plan programme has been published to reflect government changes and the revised National Planning Policy Framework which was published in December 2024.
- 3.4.3 Buckinghamshire Council is currently preparing the Local Plan, with the intention of receiving the Inspector's report and proceeding to adoption between September and December 2027. The Plan is presently at Stage 3: Further Plan Preparation, which is expected to continue until June 2026.
- 3.4.4 At the time of writing, the objectives for the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire are as follows:
- meeting the social, economic and environmental needs of Buckinghamshire,
  - better quality places,
  - more comprehensive and predictable delivery of all kinds of infrastructure,
  - making sure there are enough of the right homes and workplaces,
  - getting the infrastructure in the right place at the right time, and
  - delivering better deals from developers on the obligations arising from their proposal.

### 3.5 Overview of the Parish

- 3.5.1 Great Brickhill is a civil parish and village in the authority area of Buckinghamshire. It lies on the border with the City of Milton Keynes, situated 6 miles (9.7 km) southeast of central Milton Keynes and 3 miles (4.8 km) southeast of Fenny Stratford.

### 3.6 Historical Development

- 3.6.1 Evidence of early human activity near Great Brickhill dates back to the Old and Middle Stone Ages, with artefacts discovered in neighbouring Fenny Stratford and Bow Brickhill. Within the parish itself, the earliest finds are Bronze Ages axes.
- 3.6.2 Despite the proximity of the Roman road Watling Street and the Roman camp at Magiovinium in Fenny Stratford, only limited Roman presence has been found in the parish, most notably a Roman cremation burial at Holt's Green in 1978.
- 3.6.3 The origins of Great Brickhill as a settlement are believed to lie between 410 and 800 AD, during the Saxon period, when hilltop locations were favoured for their strategic views. The village name derives from Saxon and Old English words meaning "*hill summit*". By 800 AD, Great Brickhill was part of the Hundred of Moulsoe, later merged into the Newport Hundred.
- 3.6.4 In the Domesday Book (1086), the village appears as Brichella/Brichelle, showing no distinction from Little Brickhill. It was then held by Earl Hugh of Chester and Bishop Gilbert Maminot and included woodland and profitable mills. The prefix "*Great*" was added in 1197, later becoming "*Much Brickhill*" in the 1600s.
- 3.6.5 Ownership of the manorial lands changed hands several times before being purchased by William Duncombe in 1549. The Duncombe family significantly shaped the village's character. In the early 1800s, a new Manor House was built, featuring formal landscaping and ancillary buildings like lodges and a gas works. Though the Manor House was demolished in 1937, the Duncombes moved into the 18th-century Rectory, renamed Great Brickhill Manor, which still stands today.
- 3.6.6 The 1880s map below shows a village previously centred around Ivy Lane and The Green, gradually expanding north and west to form a distinctive diamond-shaped settlement. Key features included the Duncombe Arms, the Old Smithy, a school, chapel, almshouses and a reservoir. Many Victorian buildings bear characteristic Duncombe features, such as decorative bargeboards and dated stone inscriptions.



■ Farms ■ Pubs ■ Schools ■ Parkland ■ Places of Worship

Figure 3 - Great Brickhill Settlement Pattern Map (1880s)

3.6.7 Over time, Great Brickhill has experienced substantial infill and development, especially in central and southern areas. Modern cul-de-sacs have altered the original pattern of single-plot-depth development, though some open gaps remain, preserving valued long-distance views. Despite many original buildings being lost or repurposed, several heritage assets, including the church, the former Rectory (now Great Brickhill Manor) and walled parkland, continue to define the character of the village and its conservation areas.

### 3.7 Parish Profile

3.7.1 In the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP), Great Brickhill is categorised as a Smaller Village.

### 3.8 Population

- 3.8.1 Using the most recent (Census 2021) data from the Office for National Statistics, at the time of writing the population of Great Brickhill is 860 people, rounded to the nearest 10 people. When comparing this to the 2011 Census data, this shows an increase of 43 people over a 10 year period.

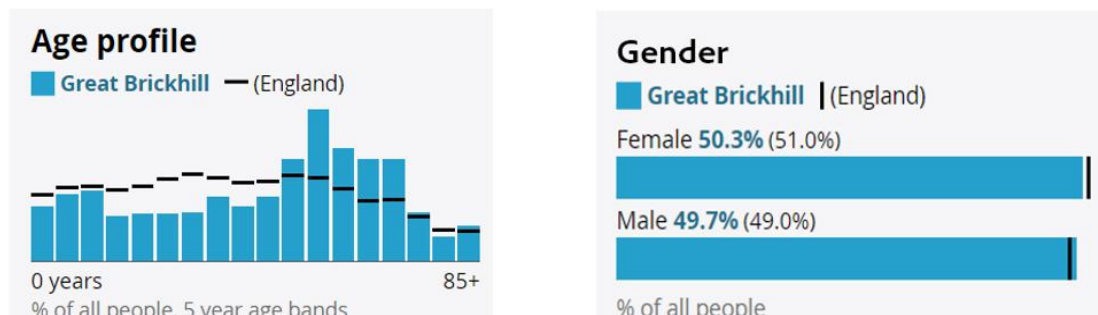


Figure 4 - Age and Gender Profiles in Great Brickhill Parish (Census 2021)

- 3.8.2 The most prominent age band within Great Brickhill as of 2021 was ages 55 to 59 years (12.2%), as visible in Figure 4. This is in comparison to the national average of 6.7%.
- 3.8.3 The gender ratio of all people in Great Brickhill is almost even, with 50.3% of respondents being female and 49.7% being male. However, Great Brickhill has a lower percentage of female residents than the national average (51.0%), although only slightly, and a higher percentage of males by 0.7%, as visible in Figure 4.
- 3.8.4 In the 2021 Census, 13.0% of all people in Great Brickhill identified as disabled under the Equality Act. This is less than the national average of 17.3%.
- 3.8.5 General health was recognised as above the national average (48.5%), with 55.7% of all people in Great Brickhill being in 'very good health'. This is in comparison to very bad health, which 0.8% of respondents categorised themselves as – however, this too is still under the national average of 1.2%.

## 3.9 Household

- 3.9.1 The majority of households in Great Brickhill consist of 2 people (44.8%), which is higher than the national average of 34.0%. The second most prevalent household size is 4 or more people, at 20.6%. This is similarly higher than the national percentage of all households, which is 19.9%, as visible in Figure 5. Interestingly, the percentage of all households in Great Brickhill that contain only 1 person is considerably lower than the national average by 9.4%.
- 3.9.2 In Great Brickhill, the occupancy rating for 2 or more bedrooms in all households is significantly higher (64.6%) than the national average (35.6%) – see Figure 5.

3.9.3 Moreover, the tenure of household in Great Brickhill differs from the national average. Notably, the percentage of households that are owned outright in Great Brickhill (43.6%) is higher than the national percentage of 32.5%. This is similarly the case for households that are owned with a mortgage, loan or shared ownership (36.4% compared to 29.8%). The prevalence of socially rented, privately rented or lives rent free as tenure of households within Great Brickhill is also considerably lower than the national average of 17.1% and 20.6% respectively, as visible in Figure 5.

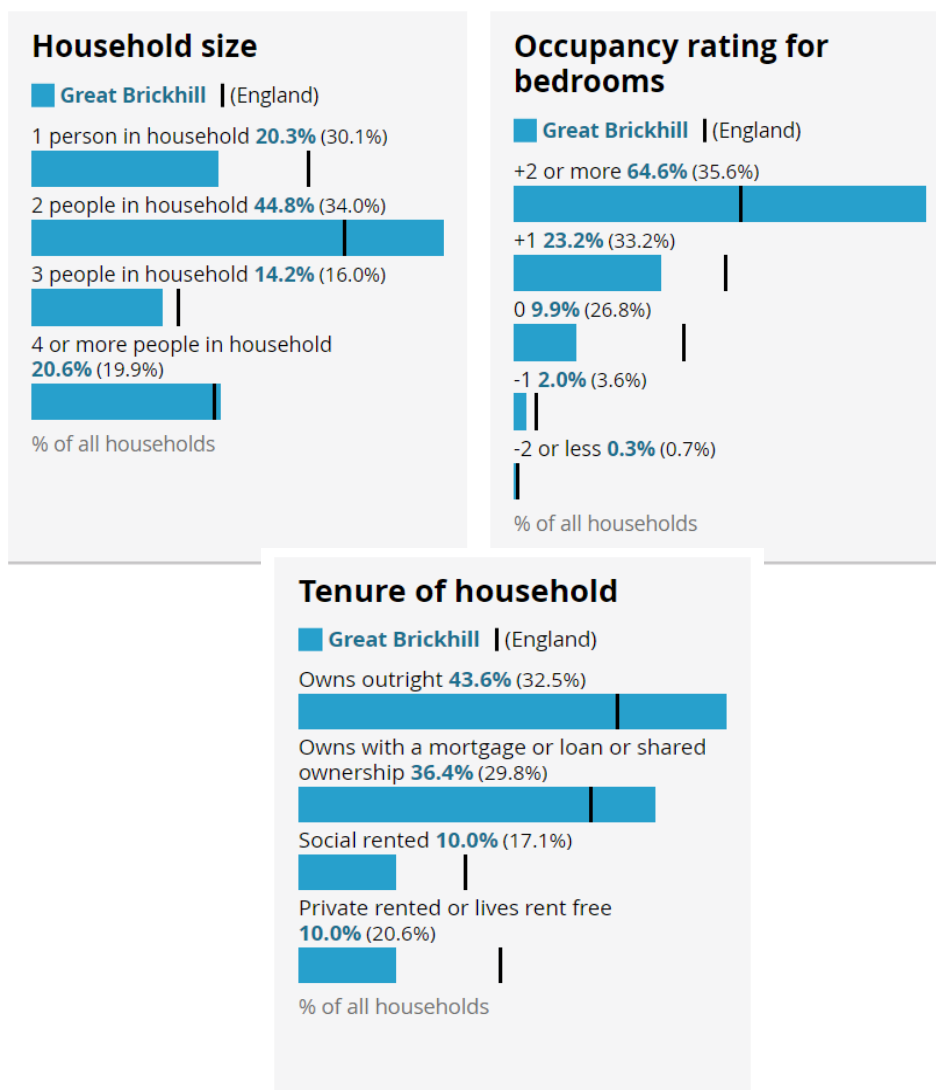


Figure 5 - Household Size, Occupancy Rating for Bedrooms and Tenure of Household Profiles in Great Brickhill Parish (Census 2021)

## 4 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### 4.1 Overview of Land Use Issues

- 4.1.1 To understand the needs of the parish over the neighbourhood plan period, public consultation was undertaken in May 2024 via an online village survey, in addition to supplementary surveys on the topics of: employment and community facilities, landscape and the natural environment, heritage and design, highways, transport and road safety and housing and development. Hard copies were also made available and supplied when requested.
- 4.1.2 A flyer advertising the survey was delivered to each house and was posted on social media. Reminders were posted on the heavily used village WhatsApp group chat and the physical notice boards in the village. In total, there were 285 responses for the main survey and 60, 49, 45, 47 and 88 respectively for the supplementary surveys.
- 4.1.3 An exhibition of the survey results was held on 13th July 2024 in which 90 residents attended. During the exhibition residents provided both verbal and written feedback on what they would like covered in the plan.
- 4.1.4 A further supplementary online survey was conducted from Friday 24th March to Sunday 6th April 2025, seeking residents' opinions on housing allocation within the parish in response to potential large-scale development on the northern side of the parish area (adjoining Milton Keynes). Hard copies of the survey were also distributed in the form of brochures delivered to every household. The survey was additionally promoted via social media and village noticeboards.
- 4.1.5 The results of the consultation and exhibition have been highlighted below and made available on the Great Brickhill Parish Council website. For full details of all community consultation activities, please refer to the Consultation Statement document.
- 4.1.6 The following list of issues has been summarised from the responses as being of key importance for inclusion within the neighbourhood plan (see Figure 6 also):
- improvements to existing network of footpaths and public rights of way,
  - preservation of the local character of the parish,
  - preservation of valuable views and enhancement of open spaces,
  - protection and enhancement of local wildlife habitats and green spaces,
  - protection of dark night skies,
  - protection of Greensand Ridge,
  - retaining the separate identity of settlements by keeping appropriate gaps between each settlement area,
  - the architectural style and layout of any new development being in keeping with the local character,
  - the importance of protecting the local heritage and historic buildings, and
  - the use of sustainable design principles for any new development.

## Q4: What, if anything, do you like about Great Brickhill?

Answered: 280

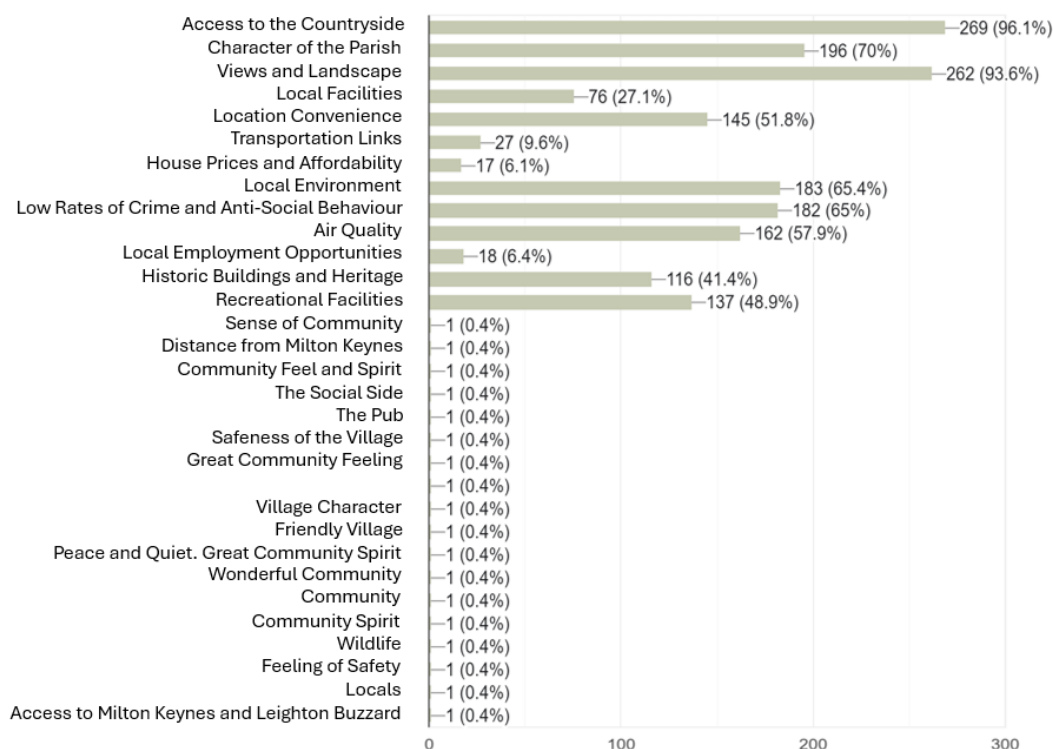


Figure 6 - Community Consultation Results Detailing Resident's Likes about the Parish

## 4.2 Overview of Non-Land Use Issues

4.2.1 Neighbourhood plans are concerned with land use planning policies relating to the development of land. This often means that important issues of particular interest to the local community that do not relate directly to planning are not addressed by neighbourhood plans. Nevertheless, the steering group is aware of the importance local residents attach to certain issues that fall outside of the scope of the neighbourhood plan and has sought to address these in this by including relevant 'community aspirations' with the aim of pursuing these with the Parish Council or other bodies as relevant. These non-land use issues are visible in Figure 7 and include:

- prevalence of litter and fly tipping,
- volume of traffic,
- lack of allocated parking,
- improved transportation links,
- enhancing existing services and creating new facilities, such as a local village shop,
- speeding within the parish, and
- creation of a community-led renewable energy project.

## Q5: What, if anything, do you dislike about Great Brickhill?

Answered: 275

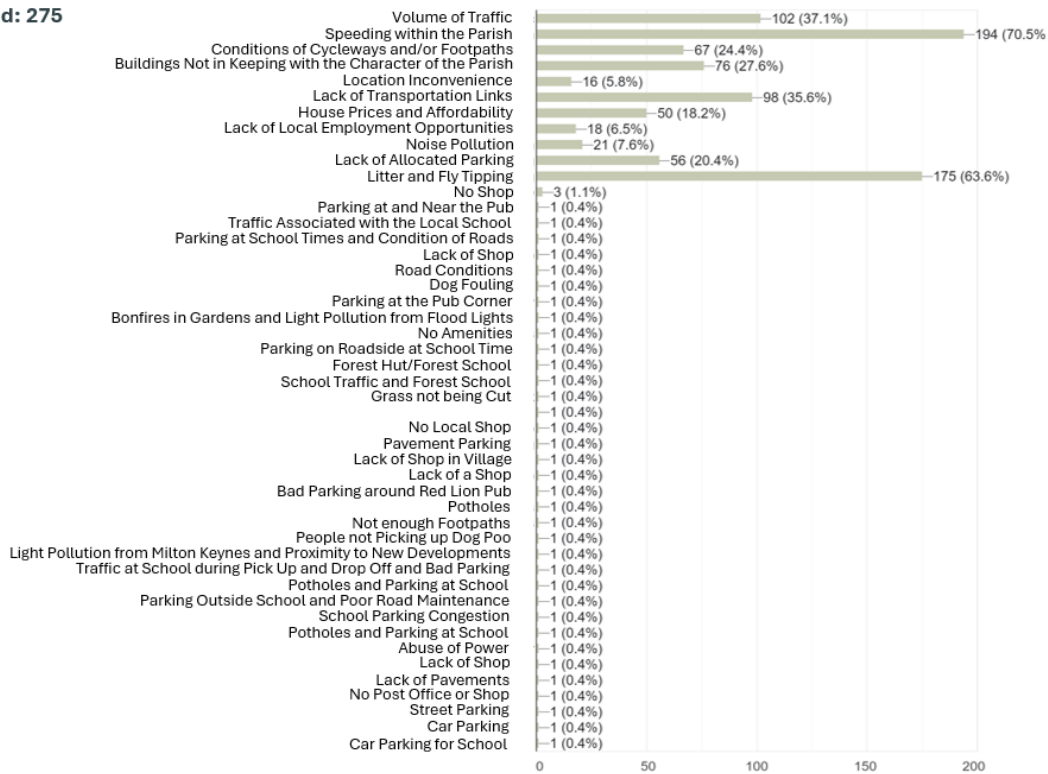


Figure 7 - Community Consultation Results Detailing Resident's Dislikes about the Parish

### 4.3 Vision and Objectives

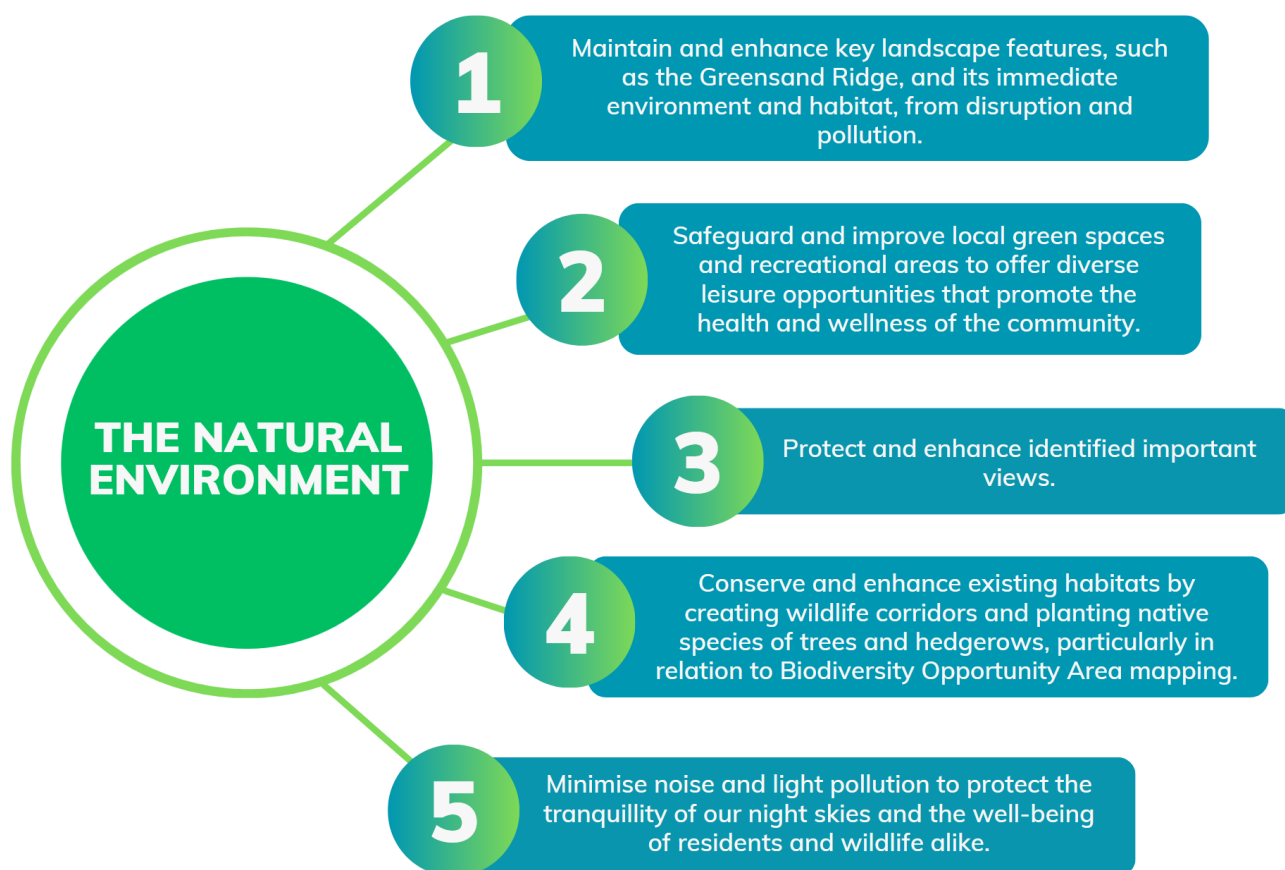
4.3.1 The vision statement has been consulted upon in community consultation and refined based on useful returns made by residents within the parish. Every effort has been made to ensure that it reflects the views expressed.

Vision

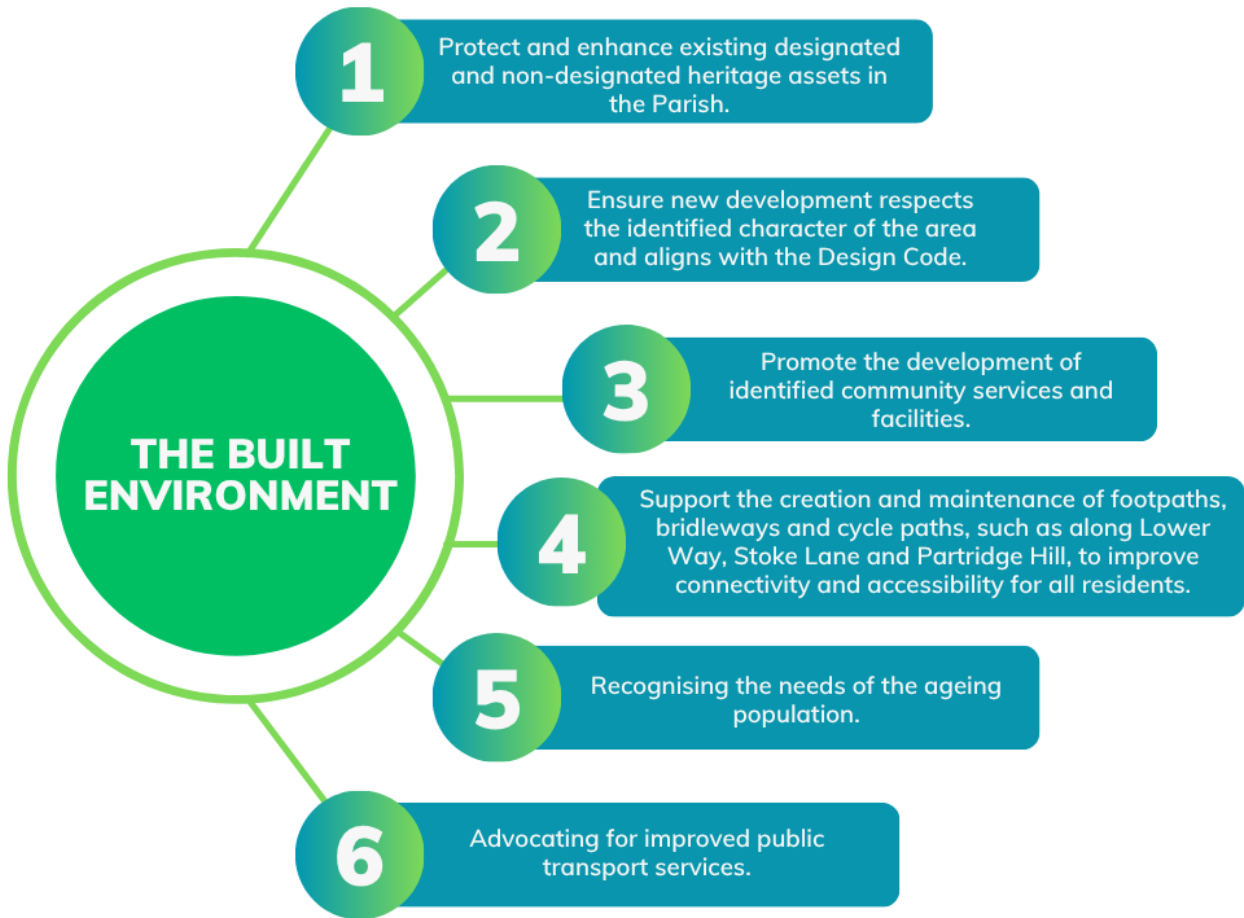
The Great Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan will preserve and improve the Parish’s qualities and character as a small peaceful village, by protecting and respecting its rural basis, its attractive landscapes, its vistas and its natural environment. The Plan will ensure that the existing settlement remains geographically separate from neighbouring villages and the City of Milton Keynes.

4.3.2 Moreover, following public consultations, a list of objectives was created. The objectives have been grouped into two categories: natural environment and built environment, as visible below.

### Objectives for the Natural Environment



Objectives for the Built Environment



## 5 LAND USE POLICIES

### 5.1 Background

5.1.1 The following policies have been devised in response to the vision and objectives and the parish consultations that have taken place to date.

### 5.2 List of Policies

5.2.1 The following policy options and topics relate to those elements and issues raised in consultation. Some matters cannot be addressed by a neighbourhood plan, and where this is the case, we will instead highlight them as a community aspiration.

Topic Area	Policy Title and Number
Natural Environment	Policy GB1: Landscape Character
	Policy GB2: Important Views and Vistas
	Policy GB3: Local Green Spaces
	Policy GB4: Biodiversity and Habitats
	Policy GB5: Dark Night Skies
	Policy GB6: Gaps Between Settlements
	Policy GB7: Flooding and Drainage
Housing and Development	Policy GB8.1: Land North of A4146
	Policy GB8.2: Housing for an Ageing Population
	Policy GB8.3: Replacement Dwellings and Residential Extensions
Heritage and Design	Policy GB9: Heritage Assets
	Policy GB10: Character and Design Principles
Community, Services and Accessibility	Policy GB11: Community-Led Renewable Project
	Policy GB12: Community Services and Employment
	Policy GB13: Infrastructure
	Policy GB14: Transport, Access and Safety

## 6 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### 6.1 Landscape Character - Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment

- 6.1.1 The Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment was published in 2008. It is a detailed study outlining the different types of landscapes found within the Aylesbury Vale borough. It describes the unique characteristics of each landscape, including its topography, geology, land cover, historical features and cultural significance.
- 6.1.2 The assessment divides the district into distinct areas, each with its own unique character and sense of place. This helps planners and developers understand the specific qualities and sensitivities of each area when making decisions about land use and development. The assessment identified 79 detailed character areas categorised within 13 broader landscape character types.
- 6.1.3 Within Great Brickhill Parish, as shown in Figure 8 below, there are 4 detailed landscape character areas (LCAs) set within 2 broader landscape character types.

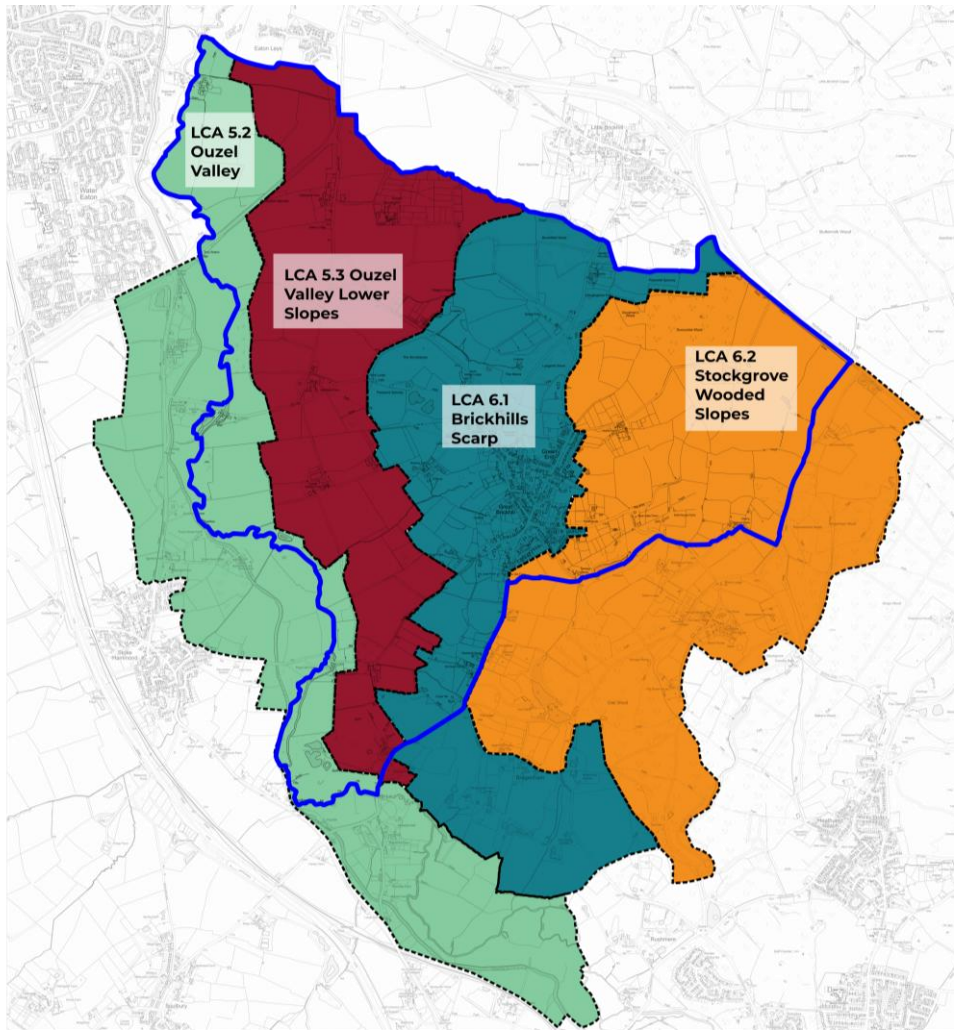


Figure 8 - Great Brickhill Parish Landscape Character Areas

## Landscape Character Area 5.2 – Ouzel Valley

- 6.1.4 This LCA is the clay floodplain of the valley bottom. It follows the meandering course of the River Ouzel, which is fed by a number of smaller streams, providing aquatic habitats. The alluvium and river terrace drift lead to clayey and loamy soils that are seasonally waterlogged. The grasslands and small patches of woodland form the terrestrial habitats.
- 6.1.5 There are dispersed farmsteads and former mill creating a landscape of mix of arable and grazing land, hedged with hawthorn and elm suckers. Mature tree belts of willow and ash are associated with the canal (which is outside the parish boundary) and somewhat to the river, which are both important for recreation.
- 6.1.6 There is evidence of prehistoric and Roman occupation, although again this is generally outside of the parish boundary.
- 6.1.7 The views of Milton Keynes and traffic associated to the A4146 are considered to be intrusive elements.

## Landscape Character Area 5.3 - Ouzel Valley Lower Slopes

- 6.1.8 This LCA is west facing with gentle clay slopes of the valley between the valley bottom and the ridge. The underlying land consists of Oxford Clay with deposits of head and river terrace on the slopes. Calcareous mudstone exists at the southern tip. There are some small water courses which drain into the river Ouzel.
- 6.1.9 The landscape is predominately arable land with a few pastures of which are predominantly parliamentary and 19th century enclosures, with some 18th century irregular enclosures (see Figure 9 below).

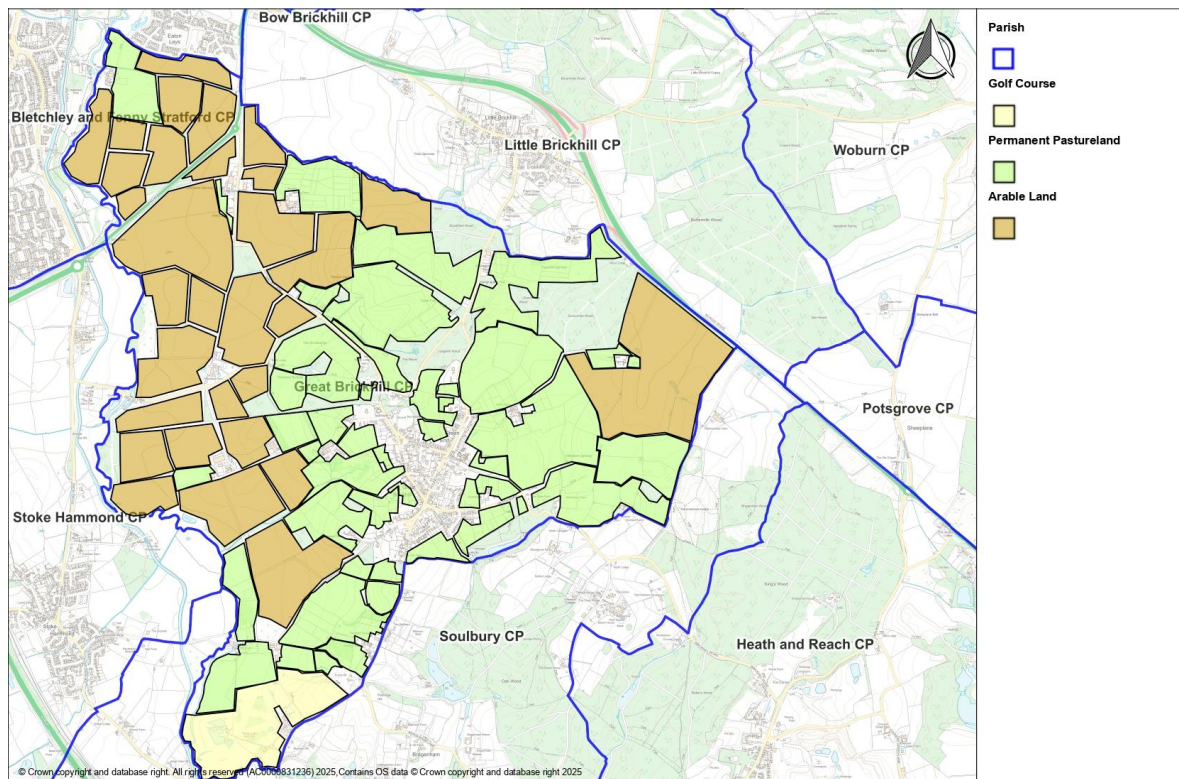


Figure 9 - Pasture and Arable Land in Great Brickhill

- 6.1.10 Fields are hedged with hawthorn and occasionally elm, with varying presence of boundary trees. In places the fields are amalgamating due to loss of hedgerows. The land consists mostly of dispersed farmsteads with a few dwellings.
- 6.1.11 The views of Milton Keynes, traffic associated to the A4146 and golf course in the south are considered to be intrusive elements.

### Landscape Character Area 6.1 - Brickhill Scarp

- 6.1.12 This LCA is a dramatic scarp, which is sited on a deposit of Woburn sandstone. It is highly visible from the west sitting at 164m AOD (on High Ash C Of E Primary School site) and ranging to 100m AOD (see Character Appraisal for topography).
- 6.1.13 The lower slopes are exposures of West Walton Formation calcareous mudstones and Oxford clays whilst the top layer is overlain by glacial till and other glacial deposits.
- 6.1.14 Great Brickhill village is centrally positioned within the scarp and is highly visible from the western edges of the parish (although often hidden by woodland).
- 6.1.15 The landform is a mosaic of woodland, pasture and settlement. There is little arable cultivation due to the sandy acidic soils.
- 6.1.16 The long-distance views to Milton Keynes and intermittent views of trains are considered to be intrusive elements in an area which is otherwise characterised by few visual detractors.

### Landscape Character Area 6.2 - Stockgrove Wooded Slopes

- 6.1.17 The area exhibits a distinct topographic prominence due to its elevated landform compared to surrounding areas (although area 6.1 adjacent contains the highest point in the parish).
- 6.1.18 Watling Street Roman Road forms the area's north eastern boundary but otherwise there is little known archaeology.
- 6.1.19 This characteristic is further emphasised by the presence of mature woodland cover such as Duncombe Wood and around Pochard Lake. Outside of the parish boundary woodland is particularly concentrated within the Stockgrove area to the southeast.
- 6.1.20 However, the woodland cover is not uniform across the entire area. In the north, it transitions to intermittent cover with large expanses of open arable fields.
- 6.1.21 The elevated position and sparse tree cover in the north contribute to high levels of visual permeability. This means long-distance views are prevalent, particularly from the fringes of the parish, offering vistas of the surrounding landscape.
- 6.1.22 Due to these combined factors, the overall landscape sensitivity of the area remains high. This signifies a greater importance placed on preserving the existing character during any development considerations.

## 6.2 Natural Features

- 6.2.1 The parish possesses a myriad of key valued characteristics that contribute to its quaint and rural charm, such as:
- small pastoral fields, strategically situated close to the village centres;
  - hedgerows surround settlement areas and assist with integrating them into the surrounding landscape;

- larger arable and pasture fields are lined with mixed hedgerows which connect the habitats, acting as wildlife corridors;
- good levels of tree coverage within the settlement where streets are lined with mature trees (see Figure 10). Many trees are protected by virtue of being located within a Conservation Area, where permission needs to be sought for works to a tree in the same way as if covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO);
- to the north and east of the village there are pockets of deciduous woodland which are of high biodiversity value, as well as providing excellent leisure and recreation opportunities being well connected by Public Rights of Way (PRoW);
- the western boundary of Great Brickhill Parish follows the River Ouzel, of which the meandering boundary is attributed to. There are several streams within the parish which drain east to west to eventually meet the River Ouzel in addition to other water bodies and course disbursed throughout; and
- although a man-made feature, the Grand Union Canal sits just west of the River Ouzel and is outside the parish. Both the river and canal offer leisure and recreation opportunities.

6.2.2 It is particularly important to ensure that potential wildlife corridors are identified in the neighbourhood plan to link nationally important sites and foraging routes for species together, as visible in Figure 10 below.



Figure 10 - Natural Features of Great Brickhill Parish

## **Policy GB1 – Landscape Character**

**Development proposals should demonstrate how they preserve or enhance the distinct rural character of the settlement and wider landscape as described in the Character Appraisal (Appendix I) and as visible in Figure 10. Proposals should demonstrate how they have taken into consideration the recommendations of the Great Brickhill Design Code (Appendix VII).**

**Proposals should seek to:**

- a. Protect the myriads of key valued characteristics that contribute to the parish’s character, such as multi-braided water channels, clear spring water, valleys dominated by pasture, rough grassland and woodlands.**
- b. Maintain the parish’s strong rural character by protecting punctuated hedgerows and low walls delineating property boundaries, which fosters inter-visibility throughout the settlements.**
- c. Preserve the views within the parish and outside settlement boundaries, in particular relating to the conservation area and views (see Figures 11 and 12).**
- d. Retain and, where possible, enhance the tranquillity of the parish. Support will be given for schemes which provide appropriate noise pollution reduction measures.**
- e. Minimise the impact of disruptive uses or major development on the landscape – including from neighbouring settlements.**





### **Aspirations:**




In collaboration with other affected parishes, work to reduce pollution in the Greensand Ridge by educating residents to stop having bonfires, discouraging littering and promoting litter picking.

### 6.3 Important Views and Vistas

- 6.3.1 The parish of Great Brickhill is unsurprisingly characterised by the number of stunning views around the village, as it lies within an ‘Area of Attractive Landscape’ (AALs).
- 6.3.2 As part of a community consultation, a list of important views was presented to parish residents, who were invited to provide feedback and suggest additional views of local significance. This policy identifies 11 key views within the parish, which are listed and described in the table below.
- 6.3.3 Consequently, new development proposals should be designed to avoid visual intrusion. This can be achieved through appropriate scale, sensitive design and, where necessary, the use of landscape screening tailored to the specific characteristics of each location.
- 6.3.4 Proposals should maintain visual connections to the surrounding landscape and long views out of the settlement. They should allow for space between buildings to preserve views of countryside beyond and maintain the perceived openness of the settlement.
- 6.3.5 Developments should seek to retain existing and frame new views and vistas towards the wider countryside.
- 6.3.6 These views have been deemed significant due to their contribution to:
  - Landscape and Built Character: preserving the unique character of individual settlements and the landscape between them within the neighbourhood development plan area.
  - Heritage Assets: recognising the proximity to designated heritage assets.
  - Visual Amenity: the aesthetic value of the undulating landscape setting with a number of views gained from elevated points.
- 6.3.7 When considering development proposals within the plan area, careful consideration must be given to the potential impact on the following identified significant views.
- 6.3.8 This policy does not seek to prevent all development within the view but to ensure that the scale, massing and height of proposals do not result in the integrity of the view being undermined. Further information on the Important Views and the reasons for their inclusion can be found in Appendix II.

<u>View</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Photo</u>
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<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>View from Footpath Behind High Ash School</b></p> <p>Far reaching vista across meadows towards Kings Wood National Nature Reserve in the distance.</p>	
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>View from the Footpath Between Cuff and Ivy Lanes</b></p> <p>Almost 360-degree panoramic views from the high point taking in Rushmere Park and the Chiltern Hills in the far distance.</p>	
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Views from Ivy Lane</b></p> <p>One of several viewpoints that look east and west along the ridge of Ivy Lane. This one looking west towards Stoke Hammond.</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>View from Furze Hill</b></p> <p>From the public footpath looking towards the west taking in part of Three Locks golf course and on towards Stoke Hammond.</p>	

<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>View from Lower Way</b></p> <p>Possibly the most well-known view for residents and visitors alike with far reaching views across the vale opposite where the Duncombe Arms pub was sited.</p>	
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>View from the Cemetery</b></p> <p>Far reaching view to the west over Rectory Farm out to the Vale of Aylesbury.</p>	
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>View from the Footpath at the End of Church Lane</b></p> <p>Looking out to the west towards Newton Longville and Buckingham.</p>	
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>View from Mill Lane</b></p> <p>View looking south-east, across Rectory Farm up to the village on the top of the ridge.</p>	




<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>View from Galley Lane</b></p> <p>One of several scenic views as you approach the village, looking towards Philip’s Clump and Great Firs.</p>	
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>View from John Horncapps Lane</b></p> <p>View down the marshy valley of Great Brickhill Field looking north-west from the lane towards Milton Keynes.</p>	
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>View from the Footpath West of Green End</b></p> <p>Looking down the slope of Church Farm Biological Notification Site towards Fox Hole Pocket Park.</p>	

Figure 11 - Important Views within the Parish

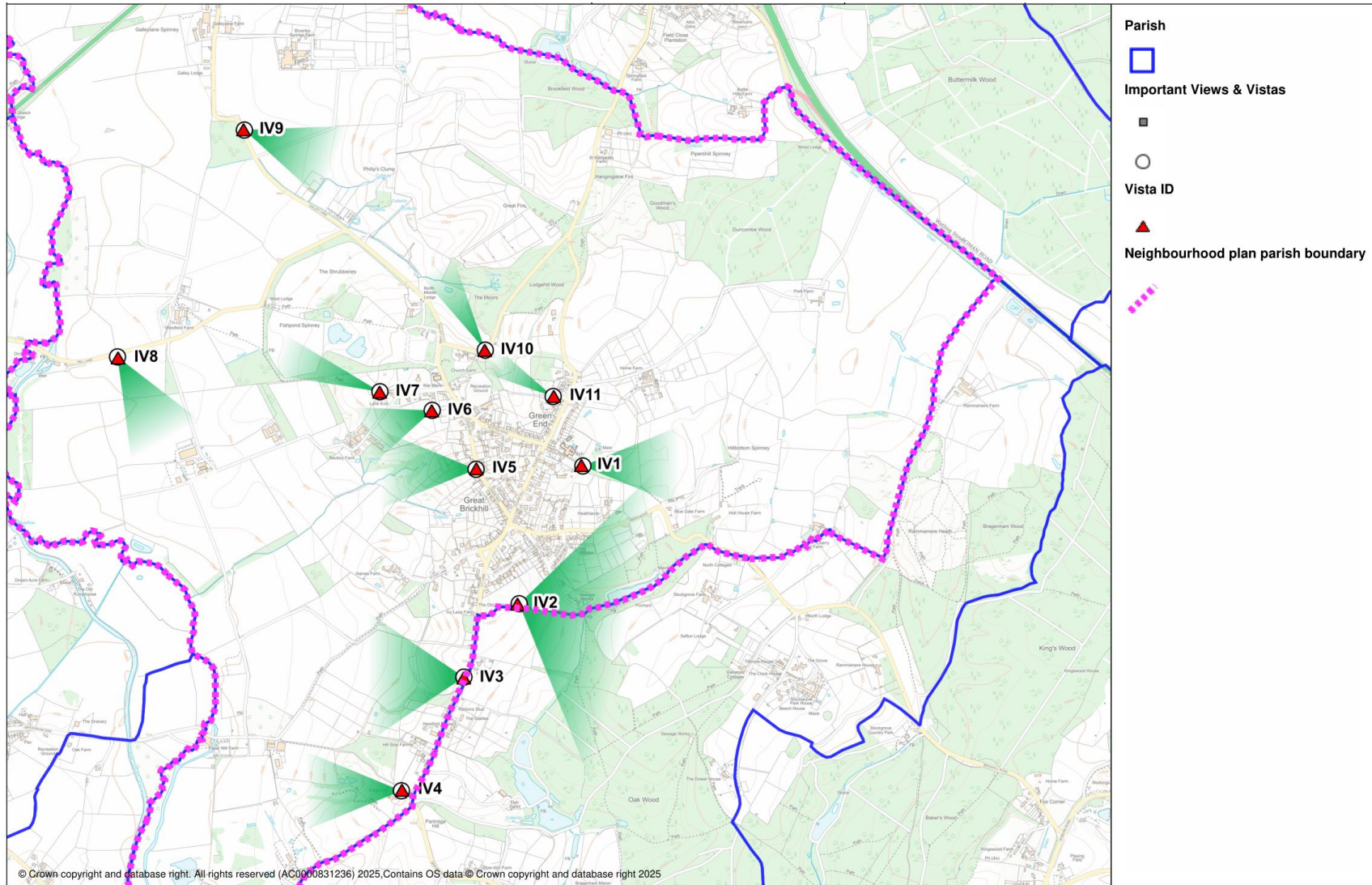


Figure 12 - Important Views within the Parish

## **Policy GB2 – Important Views and Vistas**

The neighbourhood plan identifies the following Important Views on Figures 11 and 12. These views are drawn from the Landscape Character Appraisal (see Appendix I):

- IV1 – View from footpath behind High Ash School.**
- IV2 – View from the footpath between Cuff and Ivy Lanes.**
- IV3 – Views from Ivy Lane.**
- IV4 – View from Furze Hill.**
- IV5 – View from Lower Way.**
- IV6 – View from the Cemetery.**
- IV7 – View from the footpath at the end of Church Lane.**
- IV8 – View from Mill Lane.**
- IV9 – View from Galley Lane.**
- IV10 – View from John Horncapps Lane.**
- IV11 – View from the footpath west of Green End.**

Development proposals should preserve or enhance the local character of the landscape and through their design, height, massing and landscape should recognise and respond positively to the various Important Views. Development proposals which would have an unacceptable impact on an identified Important View will not be supported.

### **Aspirations:**

Where possible, enhance important views from the village by installing benches or information boards at their locations to promote their enjoyment.

## 6.4 Local Green Spaces

- 6.4.1 This policy proposes 9 Local Green Spaces which are important green areas within the community. These are to be protected from development by their designation as Local Green Spaces in accordance with Paragraphs 101 and 102 of the NPPF. The resulting policy of managing any future development proposals in such space is akin to that of Green Belt policy.
- 6.4.2 The initially considered spaces are as a result of survey and public consultation exercises, where the public were asked to nominate important green spaces and the reasons for which they should be protected.
- 6.4.3 Each space has been individually assessed in accordance with the NPPF Criteria and found to be play a key part in the enjoyment of the parish and are therefore special to the local community. A full description of each site and the justification for its designation can be found in Appendix III, with a summary set out below.
- 6.4.4 Each area was considered using the following criteria as set out in Figure 13.

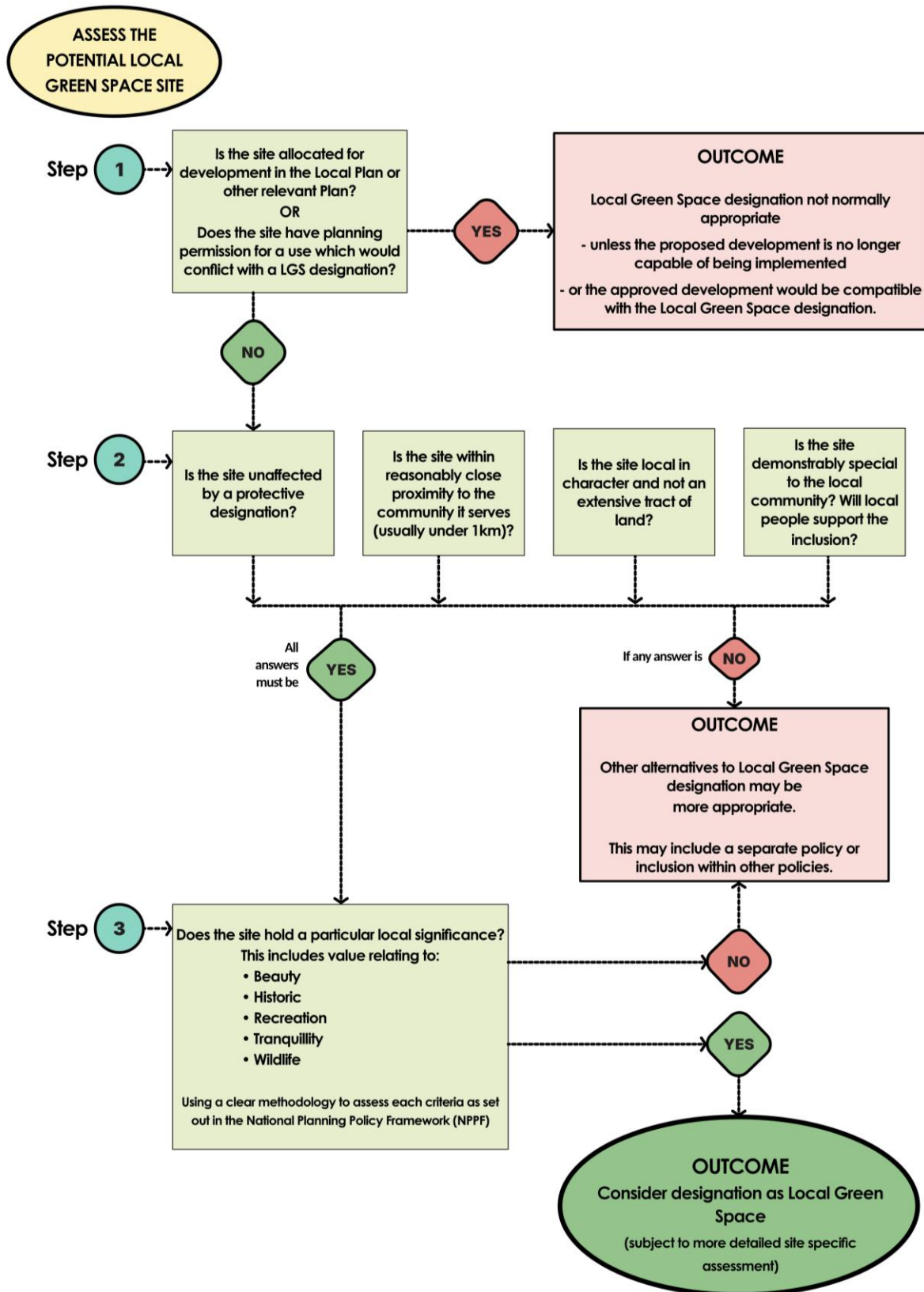


Figure 13 - Local Green Spaces Assessment Flowchart



Figure 14 - Local Green Spaces Map

## **Policy GB3 – Local Green Spaces**

The Local Green Spaces are shown on the 'Map of Local Green Spaces' (Figure 14) and listed below. These spaces will be protected for the benefit of the community and development will not be permitted except in very special circumstances.

**LGS1 – Cricket Ground and Spinney.**

**LGS2 – Poors Acre.**

**LGS3 – The Green.**

**LGS4 – Foxhole.**

**LGS5 – Green End.**

**LGS6 – The Pyghtle.**

**LGS7 – The Three Trees.**

**LGS8 – St Mary's Churchyard.**

**LGS9 – The Cemetery.**

## 6.5 Biodiversity and Habitats

- 6.5.1 The objective of this section is to identify key habitats and green spaces within the parish and provide solutions to protect and enhance them to increase biodiversity. This has been achieved with evidence based scrutiny of records held by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre (BMERC) and fieldwork carried out on publicly accessible land. It is hoped there will be scope to work with landowners to improve biodiversity in the parish by targeting certain key species and habitats.
- 6.5.2 Great Brickhill is located between the City of Milton Keynes to the north and Leighton Buzzard to the south, lying on top of the southern end of the Greensand Ridge. The ridge is one of England's 159 distinct National Character Areas, chosen for their distinct and recognisable character at the national scale.
- 6.5.3 From a habitat and biodiversity point of view, being located on the ridge with its underlying geology provides a diverse range of habitats and species, as laid out in Appendix IV.
- 6.5.4 Roughly half the parish on the eastern side lies within the Greensand Ridge Biodiversity Opportunity Area, recognised by Local Nature Partnerships in Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire, as shown by the shaded green area in Figure 15.
- 6.5.5 These areas, known collectively as the Biodiversity Opportunity Network, have been chosen specifically for their high ecological value, being considered the most important areas for protecting biodiversity in each county. The aim is to create a buffer around existing wildlife rich areas to protect them from external pressures, such as development, farming and other human pressures, giving the opportunity to enhance the habitat on a landscape scale to protect ecosystems through which species can move (see Figure 16 below).
- 6.5.6 The parish should therefore be extremely proud of this status but equally has a responsibility to ensure the area is protected and ideally improved.
- 6.5.7 In addition, the Ouzel valley on the western boundary of the parish is recognised by Milton Keynes Council as a Green Infrastructure (GI) zone and is an important wildlife corridor.
- 6.5.8 Much of the land in Milton Keynes has already been developed for housing or parkland and there are plans to develop more to the south of the city, thus any future development needs to create zones for wildlife, access and recreation.

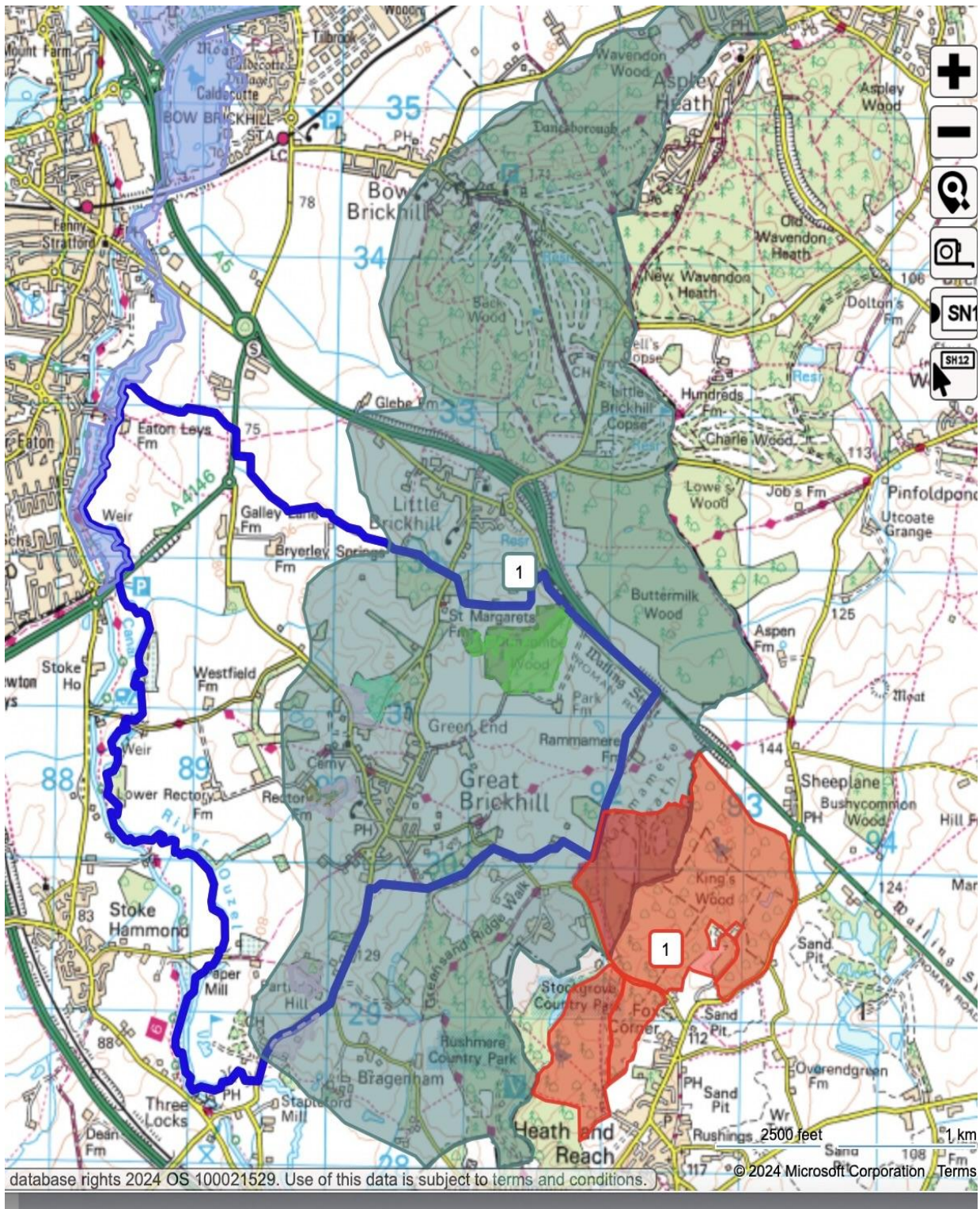


Figure 15 - Areas of Biodiversity Opportunity (Orange Area Represents the Kings and Bakers Wood and Heaths SSSI and Green Area Represents the Buckinghamshire Part of the Greensand Ridge Biodiversity Opportunity Area)

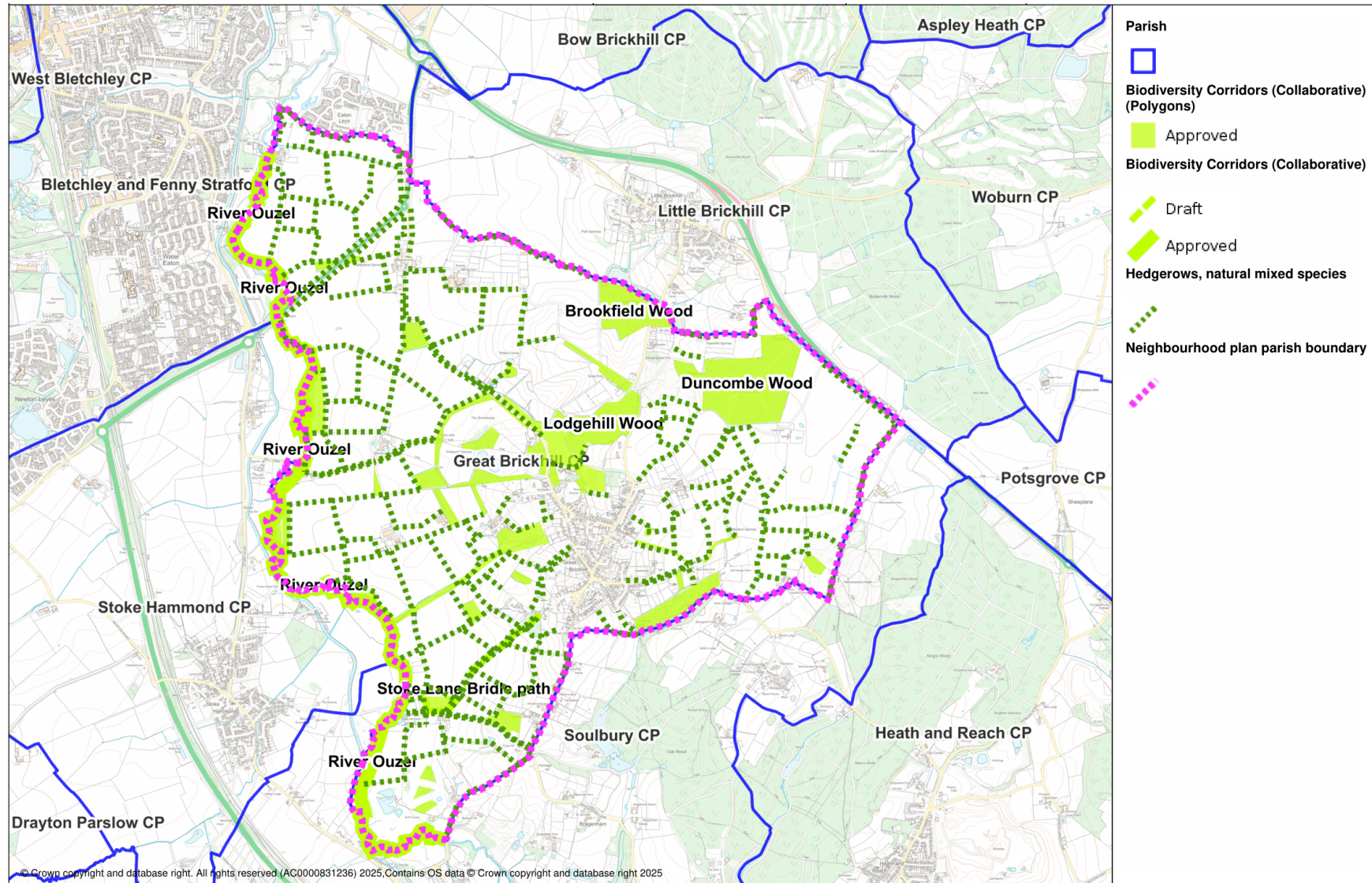


Figure 16 - Map of Biodiversity Corridors and Hedgerows

## Local Nature Recovery Strategy

6.5.9 Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) were introduced by the government in the Environment Act 2021 with the following objectives:

- support efforts to recover nature across England,
- help planning authorities,
- incorporate nature recovery objectives,
- support the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and
- help deliver our national environment targets.

6.5.10 The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (NEP) works with individuals, organisations and businesses to drive positive change in the local natural environment based on three task groups:

- Biodiversity – aiming to deliver biodiversity targets and promote work at landscape scale, focusing on Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs).
- Planning and Environment – ensuring the value of the natural environment is embedded in all aspects of planning.
- Green Infrastructure (GI) and Health – to promote coordinated thinking and action which focuses on the provision of a GI network which maximises multi functioning benefits for healthy people and environment.

6.5.11 There are various national and local designations on important sites in the parish. These are listed below.

## Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

- The Greensand Ridge BOA – roughly half of the parish on the east side lies within this BOA.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Kings and Bakers Wood and Heaths – 191 hectares of ancient woodland, heath, grassland and wetland. Many rare species have been recorded. This site is just over the parish boundary and includes Rammamere Heath so the impacts on its habitat need to be considered inside our boundary.

## Local Wildlife Sites

- Furze and Partridge Hills – marshy and neutral grassland, pond, scrub and hedges.
- Rectory Farm – acid and neutral grassland, species rich marsh and fen and wet scrub.
- Waterhall Park – lowland meadows, ponds, fenland river margin. Areas of species rich grassland.
- Duncombe Wood – ancient lowland mixed deciduous woodland with interesting species due to greensand geology.
- Great Brickhill Field – rare acid grassland with wet flushes. Many butterflies and dragonflies.

- St. Mary's Churchyard – lowland dry acid grassland with fungi assemblage.
- Great Brickhill Cemetery – lowland dry acid grassland.
- Canon Hill – neutral, acid and marshy grassland, scrub, hedges, streams and woodland with species rich marsh and fen.
- The Moor and Great Firs – wet acid woodland with county rare plants.

### Biological Notification Sites

- Orchard Mill – river with marginal vegetation
- River Ouzel, Sparks Meadow to the west of Eaton Mill – small river.
- Church Farm – semi improved acid grassland on steep slopes with Bird's Foot Trefoil and Cat's Ear.

## Policy GB4 – Biodiversity and Habitats

**Development proposals should protect, maintain and enhance the local biodiversity of the plan area, as shown in Figure 10, in accordance with Aylesbury Vale Local Plan Policies NE2 and NE8.**

**The protection, enhancement and creation of wildlife corridors linking key ecological assets, including Kings and Bakers Wood and Heaths SSSI, Local Wildlife Sites and Biological Notification Sites, will be supported. New wildlife/biodiversity corridors (as shown in Figure 16) that connect to existing ecological networks in neighbouring parishes will also be encouraged.**

**Species-specific enhancements, such as the installation of swift and bat boxes, bird boxes and hedgehog access points, should be incorporated into new developments to strengthen local ecological connectivity and support recorded species populations, as outlined in Appendix IV.**

**Where practical, development proposals should seek to deliver a minimum biodiversity net gain of 20%.**

### Aspirations:

The Parish Council will consider ways of working with neighbouring parishes to co-ordinate the improvement of wildlife corridors within and through the parish.

Educate parishioners on the benefits of biodiversity to help them make positive decisions on management of their land.

Educate parishioners about the harmful impact pesticides and weed killers have on human health and wildlife and make them aware of/promote natural alternatives.

## 6.6 Dark Night Skies

6.6.1 The level of light pollution was raised in community consultation (see Figure 7) and there is a concern that the proximity to Milton Keynes and its future planned growth will have further impact on light pollution in the parish.

6.6.2 Figure 17 below supports this concern, as the level of radiance shining up into the night sky near Bletchley, Fenny Stratford and Leighton Buzzard reaches highs of 16-32 NanoWatts/cm<sup>2</sup>/sr.

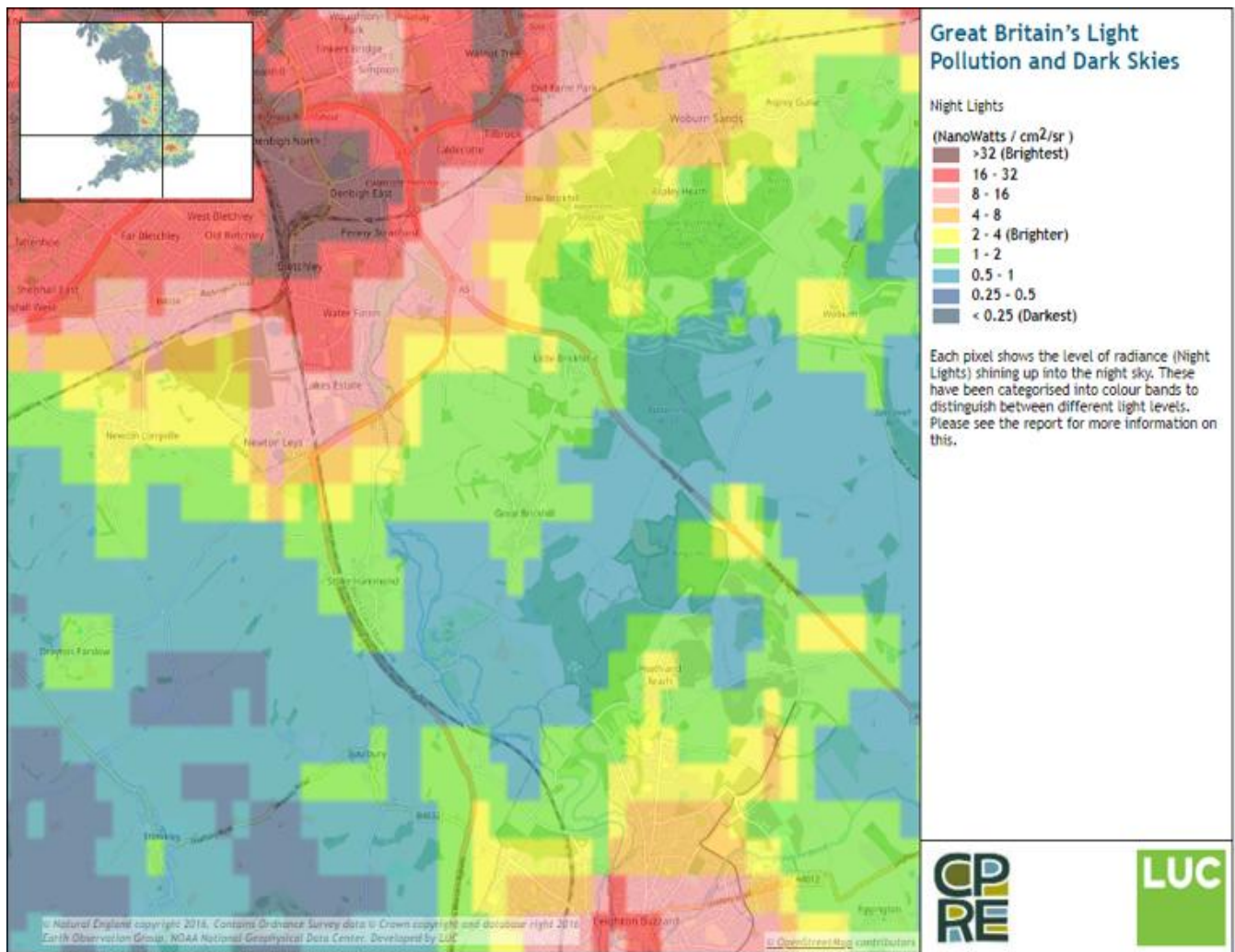


Figure 17 - Map of Light Pollution in Great Brickhill Parish

6.6.3 Whilst there are some streetlights, further new lights are generally not supported by the community unless there are specific security or safety concerns. It should be noted however that even new streetlights can be designed to prevent light pollution.

6.6.4 The policy is drafted to guide decisions on new and replacement lighting and help private householders and businesses make informed choices. From discussions with residents, many had little knowledge of the potential adverse impact on wildlife.

6.6.5 It is essential for developments proposals to consider the following factors when deciding the appropriateness of lighting. These will include the type of artificial lighting, the location, the hours of operation, the quantity of lights proposed, brightness and control and direction of the beam. Where lighting is proposed as essential, appropriate mitigation and control measures secured by planning conditions to prevent unnecessary light pollution include:

- limiting the hours of operation through the use of automatic timers and nighttime dimming;
- ensuring that lights have incorporated or additional shielding or hoods, which angle the beam downwards to a level below that of horizontal;
- the use of different surface types to reduce the amount of reflectivity;
- appropriate planting to limit the extent of any light spill; and
- reflect the latest best practise guidance on lighting.

### **Policy GB5 – Dark Night Skies**

**Development proposals should be designed to minimise light pollution, as illustrated in Figure 17, including both external lighting and light spill from the interior of buildings. Adverse effects from installed lighting should be avoided where practicable. Where this is not possible, adverse impacts should be appropriately mitigated e.g. activated by sensors and turned off by timers.**

**Development proposals will be supported where they:**

- **limit disturbance to wildlife, biodiversity and their food sources;**
- **avoid visually detrimental impacts on the immediate or wider setting and on landscape character;**
- **minimise sky glow through the appropriate use of luminaires with zero upward light; and**
- **limit large areas of glazing which would cause light spillage into rural and unlit areas.**

### **Aspirations:**

There will sometimes be exceptions to the above, where for example heritage reasons prevent the installation of a certain type of lighting or where floodlighting is required for sports and recreation purposes. In such circumstance, it is recommended that applicants discuss the needs with the Parish Council such that a balanced approach can be agreed.

Minimise light pollution by ensuring outside lights are shielded and on a timer or sensor. Educate residents on the impact of light pollution to wildlife.

## **6.7 Green Buffers Between Settlements**

6.7.1 Support for retaining the settlement area and preventing development creep into the

open countryside was overwhelmingly supported in several public consultations.

6.7.2 This plan as a whole therefore seeks to support modest and proportionate development to meet local need around Great Brickhill, whilst understanding that there may be a need for some expansion on the edge of Milton Keynes.

6.7.3 The key is to safeguard the countryside and rural character of the Great Brickhill and ensure that it is not damaged by major development which would not be in keeping with the rural character. In this regard, many members of the community expressed concern with the level and type of development emerging closer to the parish in recent years from neighbouring settlements, most notably Milton Keynes.

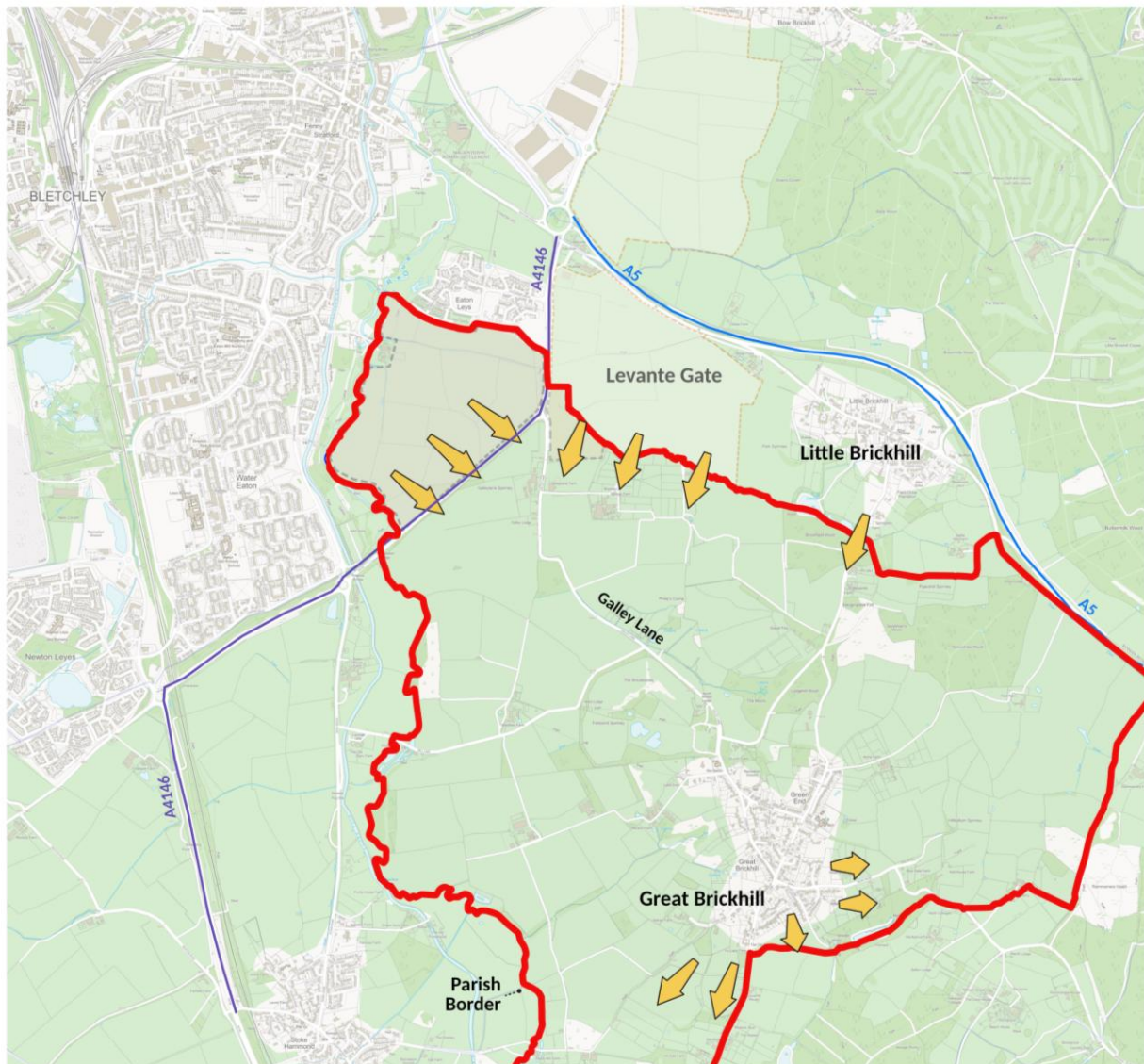


Figure 18 - Sources and Direction of Development Pressure

6.7.4 From a review of such development to date, it was concluded that (in line with those issues identified in the Landscape Character Assessment) there are areas at significant risk of coalescence with neighbouring settlements. This is either through piecemeal or cumulative development. Figure 18 highlights those areas of development pressure.

- 6.7.5 In response, a buffer has been proposed to provide an effective visual gap between Great Brickhill and neighbouring settlements (see Figure 19).
- 6.7.6 Figure 19 responds to those areas which may be at risk of merger or where the setting of the settlement would have a significant adverse impact should large scale development take place either outside of the parish boundary or adjacent to the A4146. Given the elevated topography of the historic village and the nature of the multi-directional approach, it is key that an appropriate green buffer be applied as follows, with only the land necessary to fulfil this function included.
- 6.7.7 Landscape Buffer 01 (see Figure 19) has been proposed between the parish and the southern boundary of the future Milton Keynes built-up area. There is no fixed outline for this buffer as it would depend on the nature of any future development in this area. However an effective landscape buffer should be implemented and maintained as part of any new development to the north of the A4146. This reflects the strong community sentiment that development should not extend south of the A4146, with 92.2% of village respondents opposing such expansion in the survey conducted in March/April 2025.
- 6.7.8 Buffer 02 (see Figure 19), located to the north and north-west of the parish between Galley Lane and Bryerley Springs Farm and the A4146, has been proposed to prevent the potential development at Levante Gate and incremental spread of development from land west of Little Brickhill, in addition to development north of the A4146, in order to maintain the distinct rural character of Great Brickhill. Galley Lane has a number of farm buildings that are appropriate for a rural location. Should any new employment or residential development take place, this should not result in urban sprawl along the lane. The route is a primary route into the village and this setting is part of the Conservation Area and former parkland (which is locally listed), and extends along Galley Lane. A gap between farm buildings and Galley Lane should be retained. Any further ribbon development along Galley Lane would be considered inappropriate and likely to have an adverse landscape and heritage impact. This area therefore plays a key role in preserving the visual and physical separation between settlements, as highlighted in the Landscape Character Assessment.
- 6.7.9 Buffer 03 (see Figures 19 and 20) is sited to the south of the village in multiple parts.
- A: along Ivy Lane, between Old Farm and Hereford House, and is an important gap between the built up area of the village and the sporadic farm buildings and houses to the south.
- B: To the east of Ivy Lane, a gap between the built up area of the village (Gable Cottage) and the parish boundary is considered essential. With the location of the parish boundary, the gap cannot be extended to Cloverhill House, although that would be the natural extension.
- C: Is east along Heath Road, with the built up area clearly defined at the edge of High Haven (to the north of Heath Road).
- D: At the edge of no. 20 Heath Road (to the south).
- In both instances, there are farm buildings further eastwards, however these are sporadic pockets of development and associated with a current or former agricultural use. Again, this gap has been proposed because the setting of the Conservation Area boundary is important here, given its proximity. In this regard it is clear that linear or sprawling development along this road would detrimentally intrude into the open countryside and erode the tranquillity of this area.
- 6.7.10 Further evidence of community support for this buffer is provided in the July 2024 village survey, where proposed developments to the south of the existing village along

Ivy Lane and to the east along Heath Road were strongly opposed by residents.

6.7.11 Buffer 04 (see Figure 19) is north along Little Brickhill Lane. Whilst much of the land is wooded and safeguarded as a protected habitat, the area between Great Firs and Brookfield Wood is not. A recent retrospective planning permission was issued for change of use of land to a quadbiking facility and whilst outdoor recreation is accepted, as are buildings within the existing developed area, any further development of buildings within the open area would, given the elevated nature, be highly visible from the road and detrimental in the wider landscape. This area is particularly sensitive due to its elevated landscape and open views, which contribute significantly to the rural setting of both parishes. The designation of Buffer 04 therefore aims to prevent potential coalescence and protect the integrity of the parish boundaries.

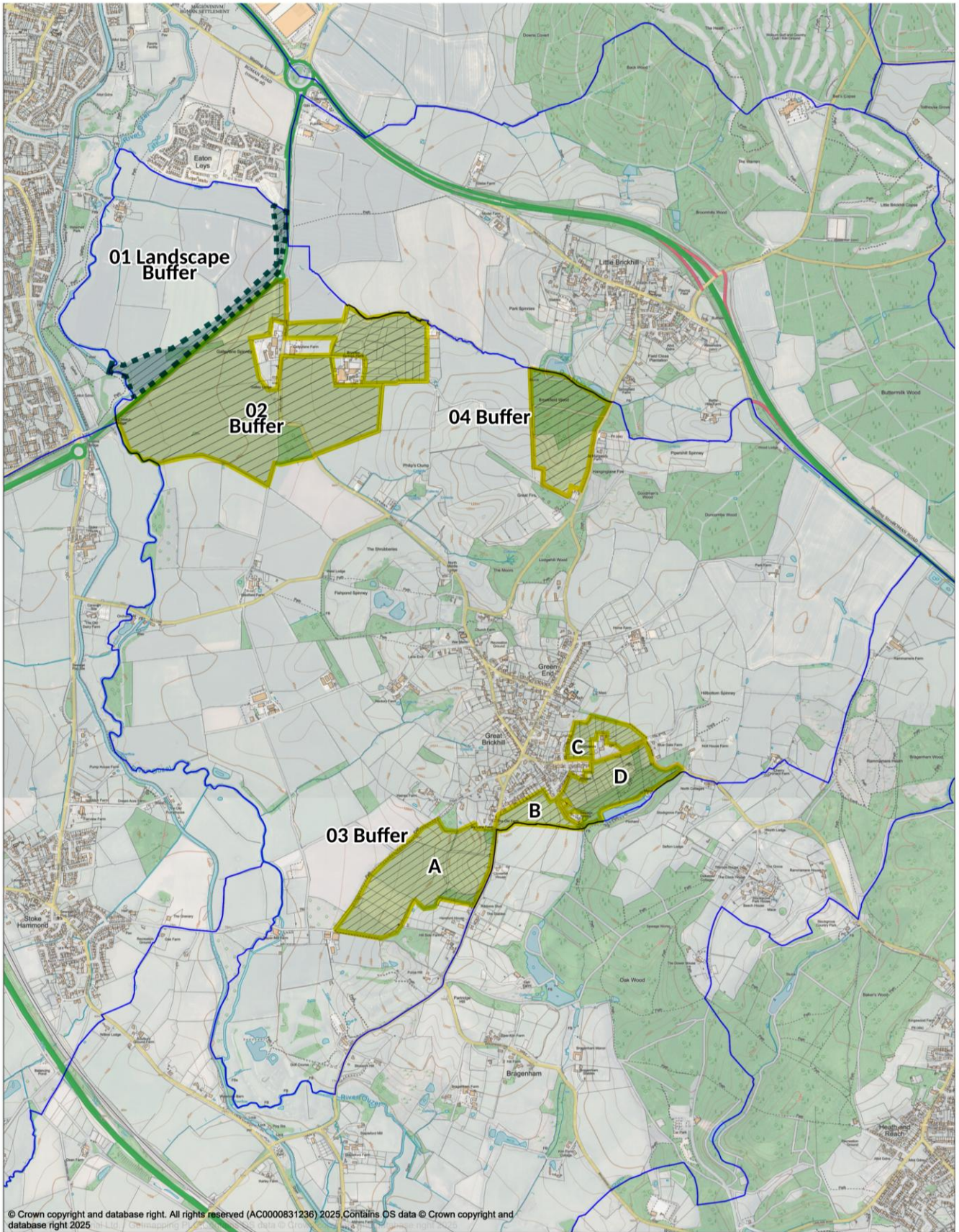


Figure 19 - Proposed Buffers

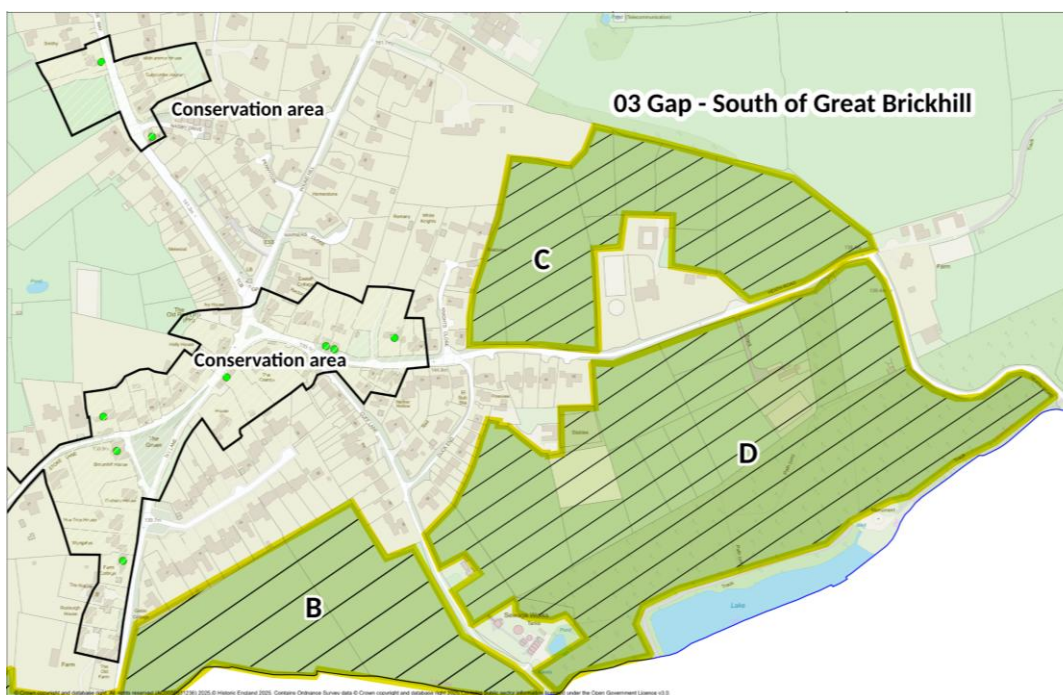


Figure 20 - Detail of Proposed Buffer 03

## Policy GB6 – Green Buffers Between Settlements

As per the definition of the NPFf:

1. Development proposals should respect the open countryside and rural landscape setting of the parish and the distinctive physical separation between settlements which contributes to their separate identities.
2. Proposals for appropriate rural development should be nonintrusive and preserve the physical and visual separation between the settlements.
3. The green gap within the parish and the southern boundary of the Milton Keynes built up area (Buffer 01), as shown on Figure 19, should be maintained such that development does not spread south of the A4146.
4. The buffer located to the north of the parish between Galley Lane and Bryerley Springs Farm (Buffer 02), as shown on Figure 19, should be maintained.
5. The identified buffer south of the existing village along Ivy Lane and east along Heath Road (Buffer 03), as shown on Figures 19 and 20, should be maintained.
6. Buffer 04, northeast of Great Brickhill, adjacent to the boundary with Little Brickhill (as seen in Figure 19) should be maintained to prevent coalescence with Little Brickhill.
7. Development in the gaps which would individually or cumulatively result in the merging of settlements would not be supported.

## 6.8 Flooding and Drainage

6.8.1 As illustrated in Figure 21 below, the majority of the parish is in Flood Zone 1 and as such is unlikely to flood from fluvial sources such as rivers, lakes, canals and reservoirs. However, the River Ouzel increases the risk of flooding along the western parish boundary. As such, areas within Flood Zones 2 and 3 can be found within the western boundary and part of the southern boundary of the parish, but do not extend far into the parish due to its topography.

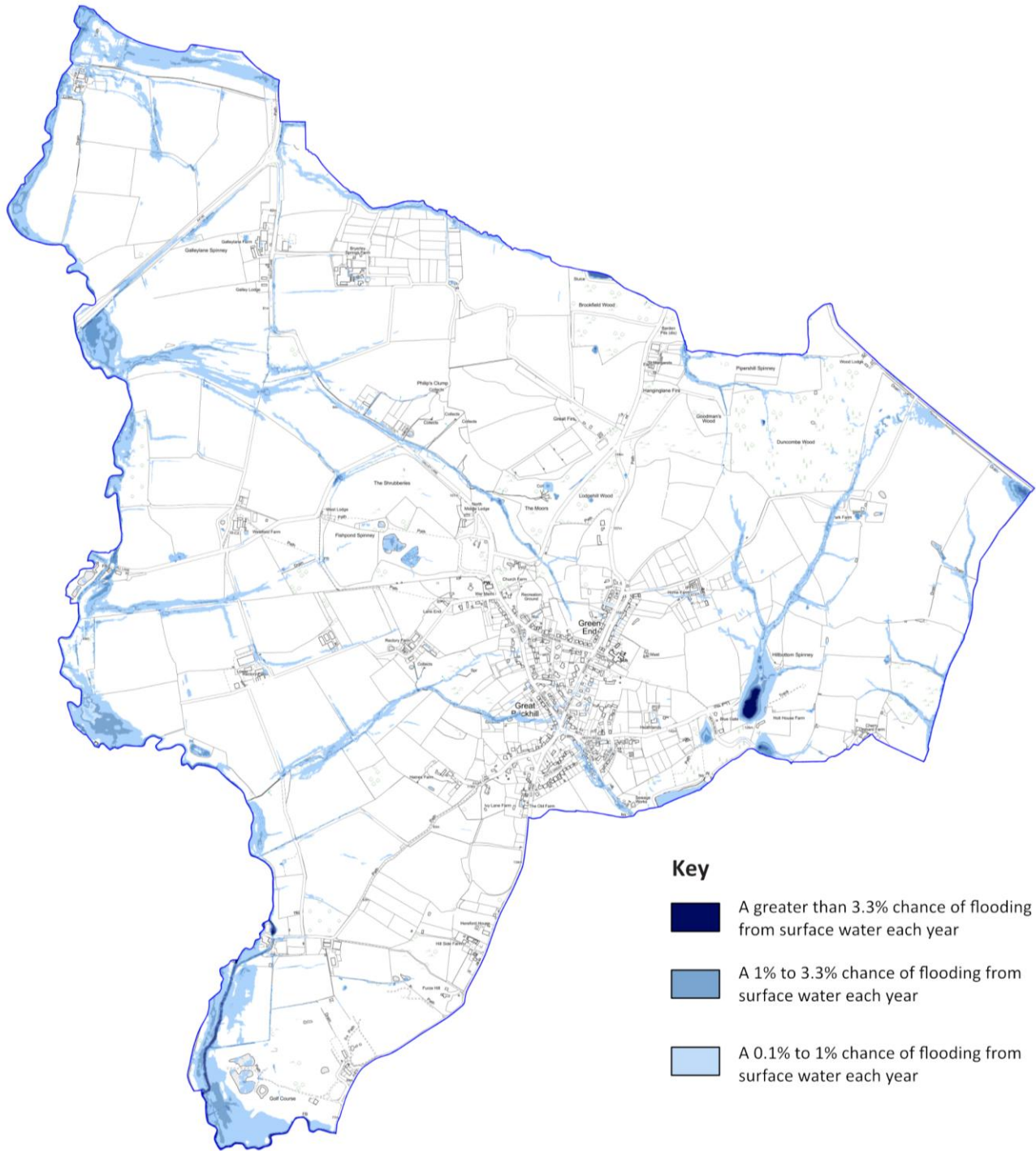
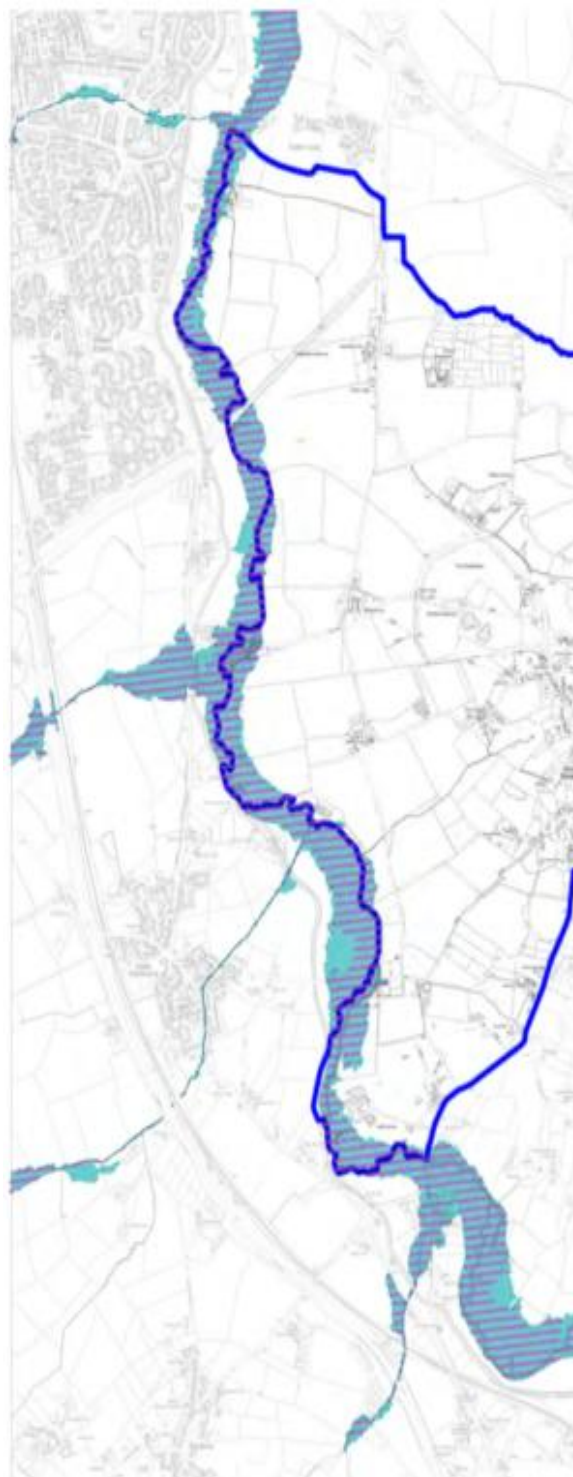


Figure 21 - Map of Surface Water Flooding in Great Brickhill Parish

- 6.8.2 In addition to areas adjacent to the River Ouzel, there are other locations within the parish that are susceptible to surface water flooding, as visible in Figure 22. These areas tend to be around minor watercourses, drains and ponds around the parish. Surface water also collects where the parish's topography dips towards the valley bottoms.
- 6.8.3 The majority of these areas comprise of farmland, however there are a smaller number of residential areas that are susceptible to surface water flooding, including Cuff Lane and small pockets around Pound Hill and Lower Way.
- 6.8.4 Both fluvial and surface water flooding are a potential concern that may not be readily apparent to those proposing new developments. In locations prone to flooding (see Figures 21 and 22), any new development should be designed to avoid exacerbating existing drainage challenges.
- 6.8.5 The Local Plan (Policy I4) focuses on water management and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guides development to areas with minimal flood risk. The following policy aims to identify flood-prone areas within the parish, regardless of whether the flooding originates from rivers or surface runoff.
- 6.8.6 Applicants should assess soil and geological conditions to determine the suitability of implementing a Sustainable Drainage Scheme (SuDS).



Key



Figure 22 - Map of Fluvial Flooding in Great Brickhill Parish

## **Policy GB7 – Flooding and Drainage**

**Development will be supported where it is demonstrated that surface water drainage will not add to the existing site runoff or cause any adverse impact to neighbouring properties and surrounding environment.**

**To sustainably manage flood risk on site and to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere, development will be required to incorporate a Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) scheme, unless it is demonstrated to be inappropriate. Schemes will be detailed within a site-specific flood risk assessment and designed to current policy and best practice, including taking account of climate change, to manage rainfall runoff rates and volumes to existing pre-development rates and mimic the natural drainage regime of the site.**

**SuDS where possible should be designed to contribute towards the landscaping and biodiversity of the sites and provision should be made for their future maintenance. Additional green space should be provided on site in addition to areas contributing to SuDs.**

## 7 HOUSING AND BUILT DEVELOPMENT

### 7.1 Housing

- 7.1.1 Great Brickhill has seen approximately 39 new homes built between 2011/12 and 2023/24, with a further six new dwellings currently awaiting construction. Given the scale of the settlement within the parish, this is a relatively proportionate increase.
- 7.1.2 The NPPF makes clear that in rural areas planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. It highlights that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.
- 7.1.3 Planning policies should always aim to promote sustainable development which will help villages grow and thrive.
- 7.1.4 The parish need for housing is clearly different from a need generated by the expansion of Milton Keynes.

#### Local Housing Needs

- 7.1.5 A Housing Needs Assessment was undertaken by AECOM Limited, reporting in January 2025, drawing on public information sources. The conclusions of the 2024 survey conducted by the Great Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was discussed with AECOM Limited so that AECOM Limited was aware of the themes of concern to the village. Members of the Great Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were able to review the draft of this document in December 2024 on behalf of the Parish Council.
- 7.1.6 The Housing Needs Assessment did not identify any major housing needs. However, it does highlight a potential shortfall of 7 to 8 units of specialist accommodation, such as retirement housing or care provision, over the period to 2035.
- 7.1.7 Proposals for appropriate provision in this category will be supported while acknowledging, as AECOM did, that Great Brickhill may be a less suitable location for specialist housing compared to nearby larger settlements such as Leighton Buzzard or Bletchley.
- 7.1.8 The Housing Needs Assessment and accompanying community consultation explored the potential for future large-scale development within the parish. Of the 180 respondents, a majority expressed conditional support for larger-scale development north of the A4146, acknowledging that a future Local Plan may require a greater housing allocation. In contrast, there was strong opposition to any development south of the A4146, including sites adjacent to the existing built-up area.
- 7.1.9 Buckinghamshire Council has asked landowners who are thinking of applying for planning permission to develop their land to submit notice to them. Five sites as shown on Figure 23 were submitted. In recognition of the potential for a future Local Plan to require a greater housing allocation, as part of the March/April 2025 consultation, respondents were asked to consider the suitability of those sites for development (see Figure 24 below). In a supplementary survey carried out for clarification of the views on Site 1, 92.2% preferred development on the site located north of the parish near Milton Keynes, favouring the use of the A4146 as a clear southern boundary for Milton Keynes. This reflects a strong community preference to maintain a meaningful green buffer and visual separation between Great Brickhill and the expanding urban edge of Milton Keynes, as seen in Policy GB6.

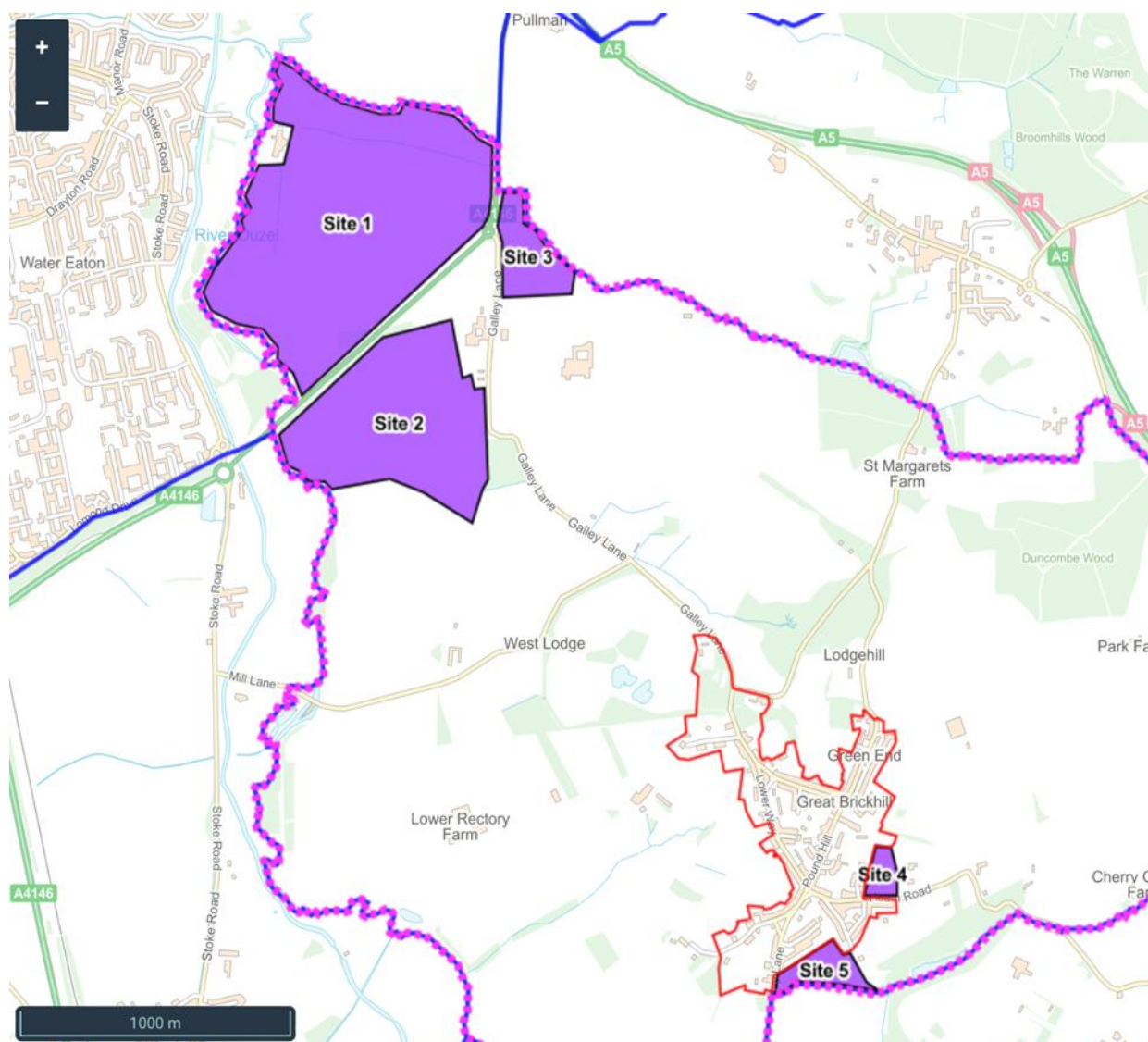


Figure 23 - Map of Potential Housing Development Sites

7.1.10 By contrast, the May 2024 main survey highlighted strong opposition to development on sites adjacent to the village itself, specifically Sites 4 and 5. As shown in Figure 25, 195 respondents opposed or strongly opposed Site 4, and 222 respondents opposed or strongly opposed Site 5. These results further reinforce the community's desire to protect the rural setting of the parish and preserve the distinct identity of Great Brickhill. Policy GB6 reinforces this through the proposal of Gaps 3 and 4 (see Figure 20 and 21).

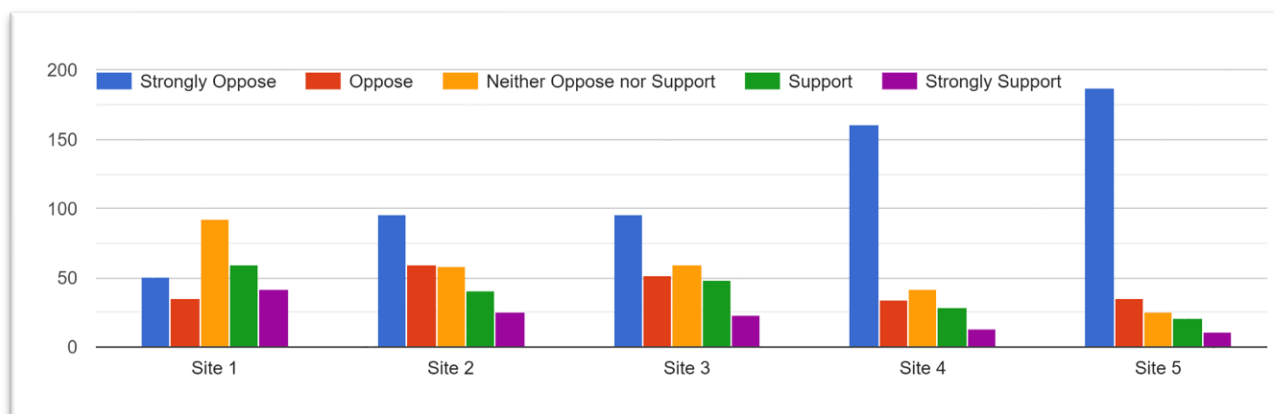


Figure 24 - Survey Response to Question 9: Level of Support for the Development of Housing on Proposed Sites 1 to 5

- 7.1.11 It should be noted that both Site 1 and Site 2 lie adjacent to the Waterhall Park Local Wildlife Site and any development proposals in these areas must be supported by a comprehensive ecological assessment to identify potential impacts on valued habitats.
- 7.1.12 Site 2 has also been identified for the Grand Union Canal Transfer Scheme, which proposes a water treatment and storage facility linked to the canal at the southern end of the project area. Should the scheme proceed, it is important that any land within the site that is not required for the delivery of the canal transfer infrastructure is managed in a way that supports the wider objectives of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Specifically, any surplus land arising from this allocation should be retained as green space to enhance local biodiversity, provide opportunities for recreation or contribute to landscape character, ensuring that the land continues to deliver environmental and community benefits.
- 7.1.13 In line with Aylesbury Vale Local Plan Policy NE1 ecological surveys must be undertaken by a suitably qualified professional and prepared in accordance with nationally accepted standards and guidance, including BS 42020: Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development and CIEEM Ecological Report Writing Guidance (as updated).
- 7.1.14 All identified effects on ecological features should follow the mitigation hierarchy, with avoidance as the first priority, followed by appropriate mitigation and, where residual impacts remain, compensatory measures to ensure the protection and enhancement of the Waterhall Park Local Wildlife Site and surrounding ecological network.

### Need for Affordable Housing

- 7.1.15 The AECOM Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) estimated that there was a need for 1.1 affordable rented homes per annum in Great Brickhill, equating to a total of 12.2 over the plan period.
- 7.1.16 Buckinghamshire Council provided data showing that there are 20 households on the Housing Register for social/affordable rented housing with a local connection to Great Brickhill. This suggests a significant backlog of need, with it potentially advisable to deliver affordable housing early in the plan period to meet these needs.
- 7.1.17 AECOMs HNA estimated potential demand for 1.8 affordable home ownership dwellings per annum in Great Brickhill, equating to a total of 20.3 over the neighbourhood plan period.

- 7.1.18 Private renting is generally only affordable to higher earners. Households on mean incomes can only afford entry level rents, with households made up of one or two lower quartile earners unable to afford any of the given rental thresholds.
- 7.1.19 This is supported by the Housing and Development Supplementary Survey conducted in May 2024, where six respondents identified pricing as a concern and cited the lack of affordable housing as a barrier to finding suitable accommodation within the parish.
- 7.1.20 Looking at affordable home ownership specifically, it is recommended that First Homes are delivered at a 50% discount in Great Brickhill, making the product marginally affordable to households on mean incomes.
- 7.1.21 Shared ownership appears to be slightly more affordable than First Homes but is broadly accessible to the same groups, with households on mean incomes able to afford shared ownership at 10% equity and potentially 25% equity. Rent to Buy may also be a useful product for households with little or no savings for a deposit.
- 7.1.22 AECOM suggests an indicative mix of affordable housing in response to the expectation that the delivery of affordable housing will be lower than the needs identified here. In this context, affordable rented tenures should be prioritised. AECOM suggests an indicative mix of 60% social/affordable rented housing and 40% affordable home ownership. This mix complies with the various minimum requirements mandated nationally.
- 7.1.23 Looking specifically at affordable home ownership, it is recommended 15% of affordable housing is delivered as First Homes or other forms of discounted market sale housing. In the interests of diversity and maximising choice, a further 20% is allocated to shared ownership and 5% to Rent to Buy as an option for households with little or no savings for a deposit.

### Housing Mix

- 7.1.24 Great Brickhill has a smaller proportion of smaller 1-2 bedroom dwellings than the average for Buckinghamshire and England. The majority of households in the parish live in 4+ bedroom dwellings. This represents 52.5%, compared to 32.0% across the Buckinghamshire and 21.1% nationally, clearly indicating a gap in provision of mid-sized family housing as well as smaller housing options.

### Supporting Housing

- 7.1.25 As already explored, restricting development to Site 1 north of the A4146 received support of 92.2% of 180 respondents to a survey carried out in March/April 2025. This is in addition to the July 2024 survey, in which residents did not support developments next to the existing built up area on Heath Road or between Ivy Lane and Cuff Lane (see Figure 23). Together, these results demonstrate a strong and consistent community preference for limiting large-scale development and, if required, locating it north of the A4146.
- 7.1.26 In response to the clear preference expressed through recent community consultations, Policy GB8.1 has been proposed to ensure that any development north of the A4146 is brought forward in a manner that reflects local priorities, recognising that while the favoured approach is to avoid large-scale growth, any such development required by future Government policy or the Local Plan should be directed to this location.
- 7.1.27 The policy sets out criteria to manage the impact of development on the rural setting, protect the River Ouzel corridor and ensure strong connections to existing rights of way and neighbouring areas. It also requires adherence to the Great Brickhill Design Code to

maintain design quality and character. This targeted policy approach supports appropriate growth while safeguarding key environmental and landscape features.

7.1.28 In this context, Policy GB8.1 is not an allocation but a supporting policy intended to guide the form, design quality and environmental considerations of any future development north of the A4146, should such proposals come forward.

### **Policy GB8.1 – Land North of A4146**

**Where the land north of the A4146 (as indicated in Figure 23), is brought forward for housing through a planning application or the Development Plan processes, proposals shall accord with the Great Brickhill Design Code (Appendix VII), and the following criteria:**

- a. a green buffer including appropriate native tree planting along the edge of the A4146 to lessen the impact of development within the Parish (as shown in Figure 23);**
- b. a green / wildlife corridor alongside and following the route of the River Ouzel. This shall be a designed landscape and biodiversity feature of any development;**
- c. providing a well-integrated network of cycle and pedestrian paths and open spaces and link into and enhance the existing GBR/2/1, GBR/1/2, GBR/1A/1 and GBR/3/1 Public Rights of Way across the site. This should also include access to the Eaton Leys development to the north and any new major development sites as put forward in a Local Plan;**
- d. building heights should not exceed those recommended in the Great Brickhill Design Code (Appendix VII);**
- e. provide good access to services and facilities, and are within walking distance of essential services and amenities, having regard to the catchment distances in;**
- f. provide for a safe and convenient access for all users to the highway network; and**
- g. where required, are accompanied by a programme of archaeological evaluation to be agreed with Buckinghamshire Council and undertaken in advance of the proposal being determined. Subject to the findings of any evaluation, mitigation measures may be required that preserve features of archaeological interest on site.**

### **Aspirations:**

Great Brickhill Parish Council will continue to work with surrounding parishes, in addition to Milton Keynes Council, to ensure that strategic development does not adversely impact upon the character and identity of Great Brickhill.

Any development north of the A4146 needs to provide facilities relevant to the residents of the existing village as well as those of the new development and the neighbouring parts of

Milton Keynes.

The Parish Council aspires to ensure that any future development north of the A4146 is carefully considered in terms of governance and would not object if future residents of such developments investigated or organised a referendum to join the Milton Keynes Council area.

## 7.2 Housing for an Ageing Population

- 7.2.1 The parish currently has no specialist housing for older residents. Using the national average provision of 136 specialist units per 1,000 people aged 75 and over and applying this to local Census data, Great Brickhill would require around 7 - 8 specialist homes over the Neighbourhood Plan period. This reflects the projected rise in the 75+ population from 76 residents in 2021 to an estimated 105 by 2035, when this age group is expected to make up 11.8% of the parish.
- 7.2.2 AECOM's assessment, based on HLIN SHOP prevalence rates and projected demographic change, also indicates that by 2035 there may be a need for two residential care beds and one nursing care bed to meet the needs of those no longer capable of independent living.
- 7.2.3 Residents seeking alternative accommodation as they age tend to fall into three broad groups:
- those wishing to downsize,
  - those who require sheltered or managed housing while remaining largely independent, and
  - those who need full care home provision.
- 7.2.4 Over recent decades, the supply of smaller homes in the parish has been steadily diminished as many properties have been extended or replaced by much larger dwellings. As a result, there is a need for two-bedroom, higher specification dwellings, mainly single storey and with manageable gardens, which offer privacy. It is important that such properties are provided as an adaptable and high-quality space, whereby residents feel that downsizing is not downgrading.
- 7.2.5 However, the parish's limited services and public transport mean that Great Brickhill is not ideally suited to provide the full range of specialist accommodation. The Housing Needs Assessment indicates that larger nearby settlements, including Leighton Buzzard and Bletchley, are better suited to provide specialist and care home accommodation. Within Great Brickhill itself, the priority is therefore to support ageing in place by increasing access to adaptable, smaller homes that maintain independence and keep residents rooted in the community.

## Policy GB8.2 – Housing for an Ageing Population

Development proposals that provide suitable accommodation for the elderly population, such as retirement housing, supported living facilities and opportunities for downsizing, will be supported where they are in accessible locations and comply with relevant development plan policies.

Retirement housing should be flexibly constructed so that it can be adapted to changing needs.

### 7.3 Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings

- 7.3.1 Proposals for the replacement of dwellings and extensions to dwellings will need to accord with the Design Code. To summarise, these should reflect the character and appearance of the area as highlighted in the Character Appraisal (see Appendix I).
- 7.3.2 They should also be positioned within the same location as the original property (unless otherwise justified – usually for amenity reasons or to continue an existing building line).
- 7.3.3 It is clear from community consultation that there is a concern that some replacements are overly large for their plots and out of keeping with neighbouring dwellings. Each replacement or extended dwelling should also be proportionate to the size of the plot and in keeping with the character of surrounding properties in terms of scale and mass. They should allow sufficient space for local native planting along the boundary and to soften the development in keeping with the sylvan character of the wider area.
- 7.3.4 It is considered that the privacy of existing residents is paramount and that adequate gaps and existing native trees and planting should be retained.
- 7.3.5 Where the dwelling is a non-designated heritage asset, its demolition would not normally be supported unless there was adequate justification otherwise.
- 7.3.6 It is anticipated that an extension to or replacement of a dwelling beyond 30% increase in its original size is unlikely to be supported. There may be some circumstances where there is a particularly multi-generational family or medical need. In which case, it is considered that additional information should be submitted alongside such applications.
- 7.3.7 With regard to garage conversions for properties built since 1990, these would not normally be supported unless additional parking is guaranteed within the development curtilage.

### **Policy GB8.3 – Replacement Dwellings and Residential Extensions**

**Development proposals for residential extensions will be supported if they will not result in over development of the site and subject to the following considerations:**

- a. the proposal is of an appropriate scale, size and mass and the materials proposed and design have been informed by The Great Brickhill Design Code (Appendix VII). Extensions of contemporary and innovative design must be accompanied by adequate evidence and justified accordingly within the Design and Access statement to demonstrate how it accords with the character of the area;**
- b. the proposed extensions must conserve the historical significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets;**
- c. the proposed extensions must be subordinate to the original dwelling to ensure that there will be no adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties;**
- d. all extensions which are within close proximity to habitable room windows of neighbouring dwellings will need to be supported by a daylight and sunlight assessment to ensure that there are adequate levels of privacy for existing occupiers;**
- e. the proposal takes into account the potential presence of protected species, such as nesting birds and roosting bats and includes appropriate biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures;**
- f. proposals for the replacement of a dwelling will be supported, as long as they meet the following conditions:**
  - a. ensure that the replacement dwelling will be in keeping with the character of the area as highlighted in the Great Brickhill Design Code and will contribute positively towards the wider landscape character of the area;**
  - b. the dwelling to be replaced is neither locally listed nor identified as a designated/non-designated heritage asset. The list with all identified heritage assets within the village can be seen in the Great Brickhill Design Code;**
  - c. the design, siting, appearance, and materials proposed must accord with the findings presented in the Great Brickhill Design Code; and**
  - d. the new dwelling must be positioned within the same location as the original property and face towards the same direction, unless environmental and amenity factors prevent this.**

## 8 HERITAGE AND DESIGN

### 8.1 Historic Environment

- 8.1.1 In the parish there are 20 listed buildings, of which 19 are Grade II and 1 (St. Mary the Virgin Church) is Grade II\*. There are also 3 Conservation Areas in the parish, which contain 19 of the 20 listed buildings (see Figures 25 and 26 below). In addition to this, there are also some Duncombe Estate developments and other buildings outside of the Conservation Area which add to the rich heritage of Great Brickhill Parish. The parish also contains a wide range of archaeological sites, as illustrated on the heritage map below, including Bronze Age finds, Roman features, a post-medieval remain and historic industrial site, all of which contribute to the broader historic environment.
- 8.1.2 Also of note are the many historic walls around the parish which are significant to the historic development of Great Brickhill. These features, along with below-ground archaeological remains, help to explain how the settlement has evolved over time.
- 8.1.3 Understanding the heritage of a settlement is key to its successful future. Ensuring that owners and neighbours understand the significance of heritage assets and their settings is critical to their maintenance and protection. A greater knowledge also allows their special architectural, historic and archaeological interest to be celebrated and acknowledged in future development in the parish.
- 8.1.4 While the designation of non-designated heritage assets carries less weight than that of designated heritage assets, they remain significant, nonetheless. The NPPF mandates that the significance of a non-designated heritage asset be considered when evaluating an application that affects such an asset. Any harm to or loss of the asset will necessitate a balanced judgment based on the severity of the harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 8.1.5 Policy GB9 aims to safeguard the significance of locally important assets and their settings, as appropriate. Significance, as defined by the NPPF, refers to "the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest". This interest can be "archaeological, architectural, artistic or historical". It may also encompass the asset's setting, particularly if it was historically significant and remains so today. Historic England defines conservation as "the process of maintaining and managing change to heritage assets".
- 8.1.6 Further buildings have been identified and are considered by residents of the parish to be of local importance due to their value relating to age, appearance or historic association (see Figures 27 and 28 below). Further information on these locally listed buildings can be found in Appendix VI. These assets sit alongside the parish's archaeological resource, reinforcing the need for a comprehensive approach to the protection and enhancement of Great Brickhill's heritage.

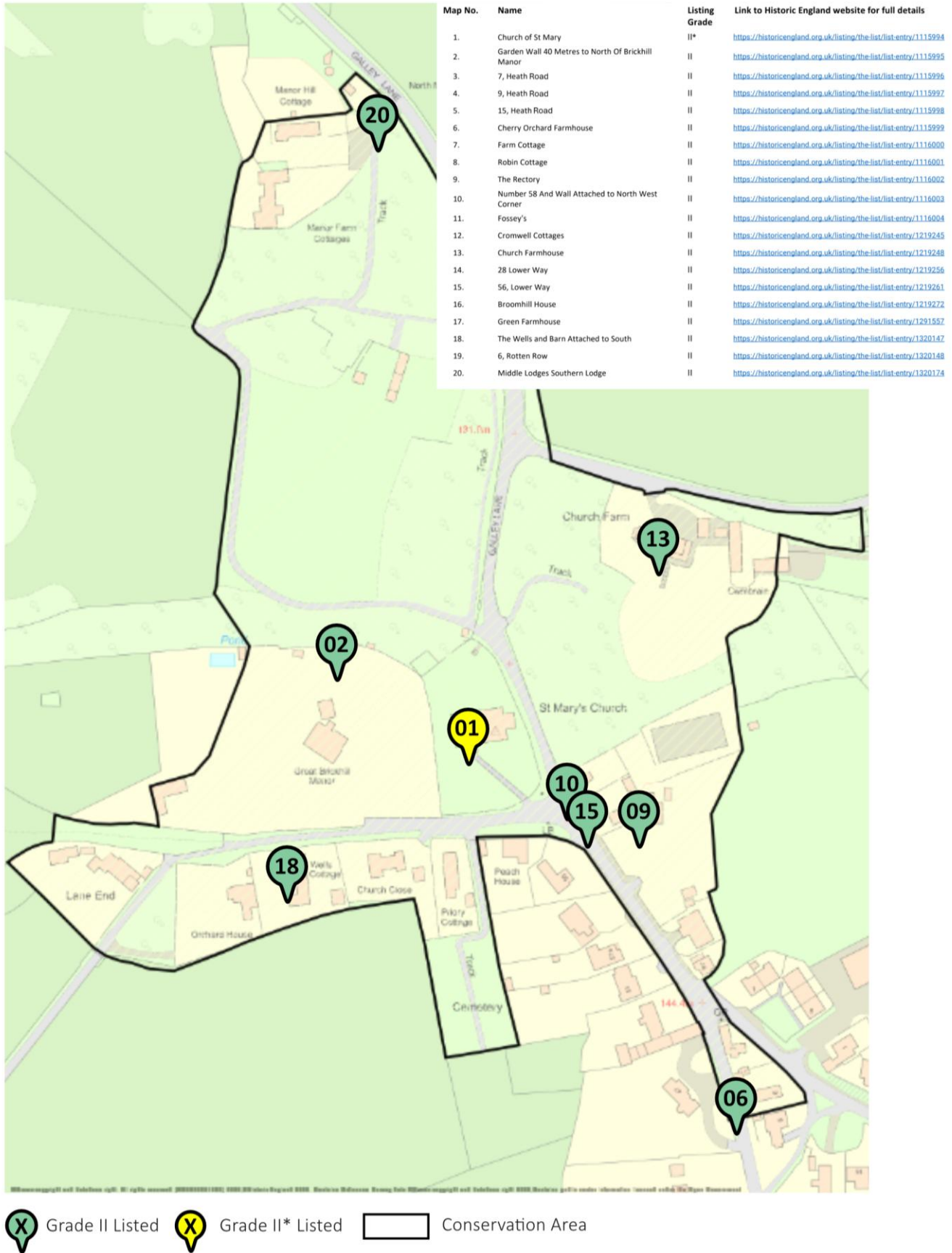
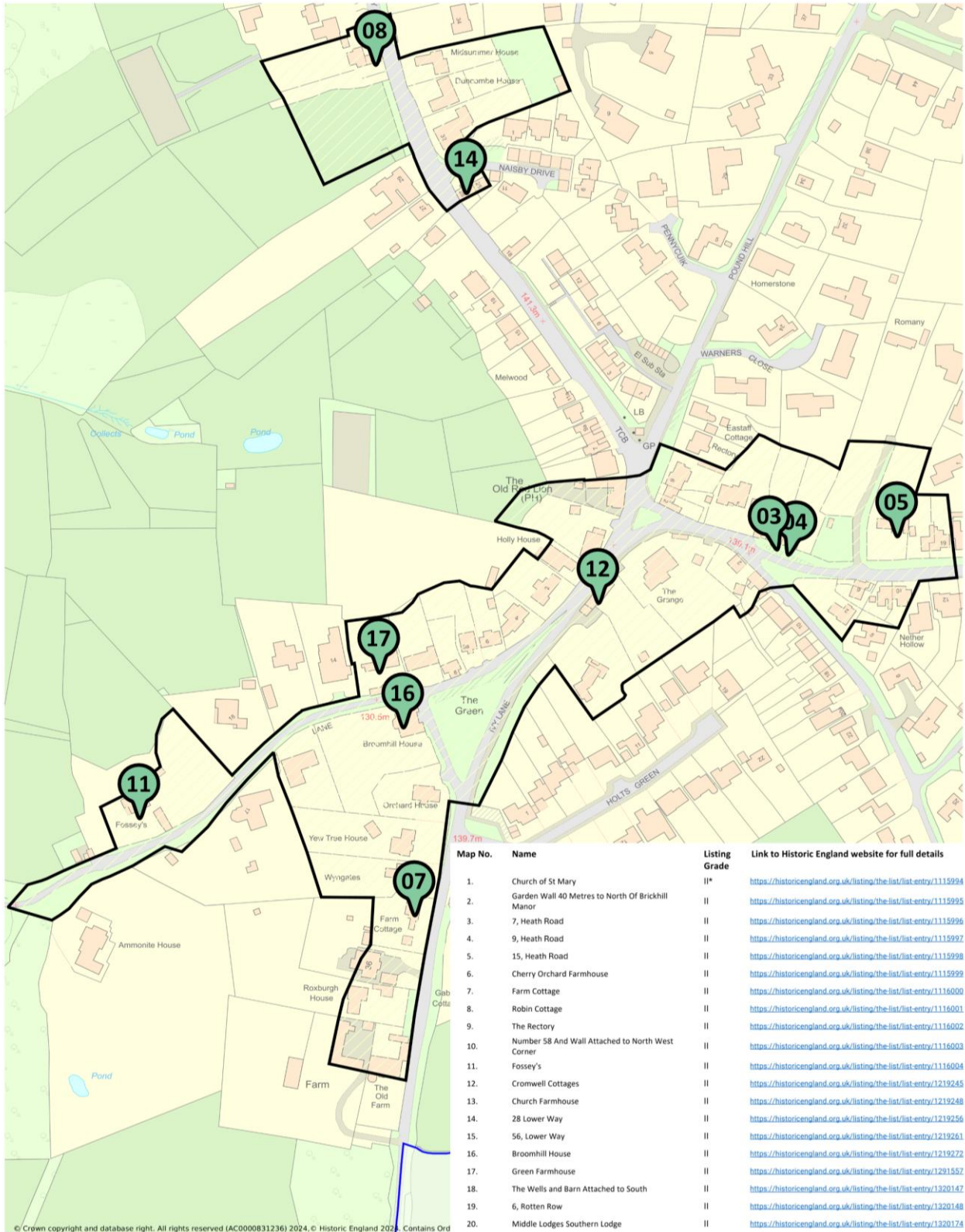


Figure 25 - Map of Designated Heritage Assets in Great Brickhill Parish



Grade II Listed    
 Grade II\* Listed    
 Conservation Area

Figure 26 - Map of Designated Heritage Assets in Great Brickhill Parish

● Non-Designated Heritage Assets

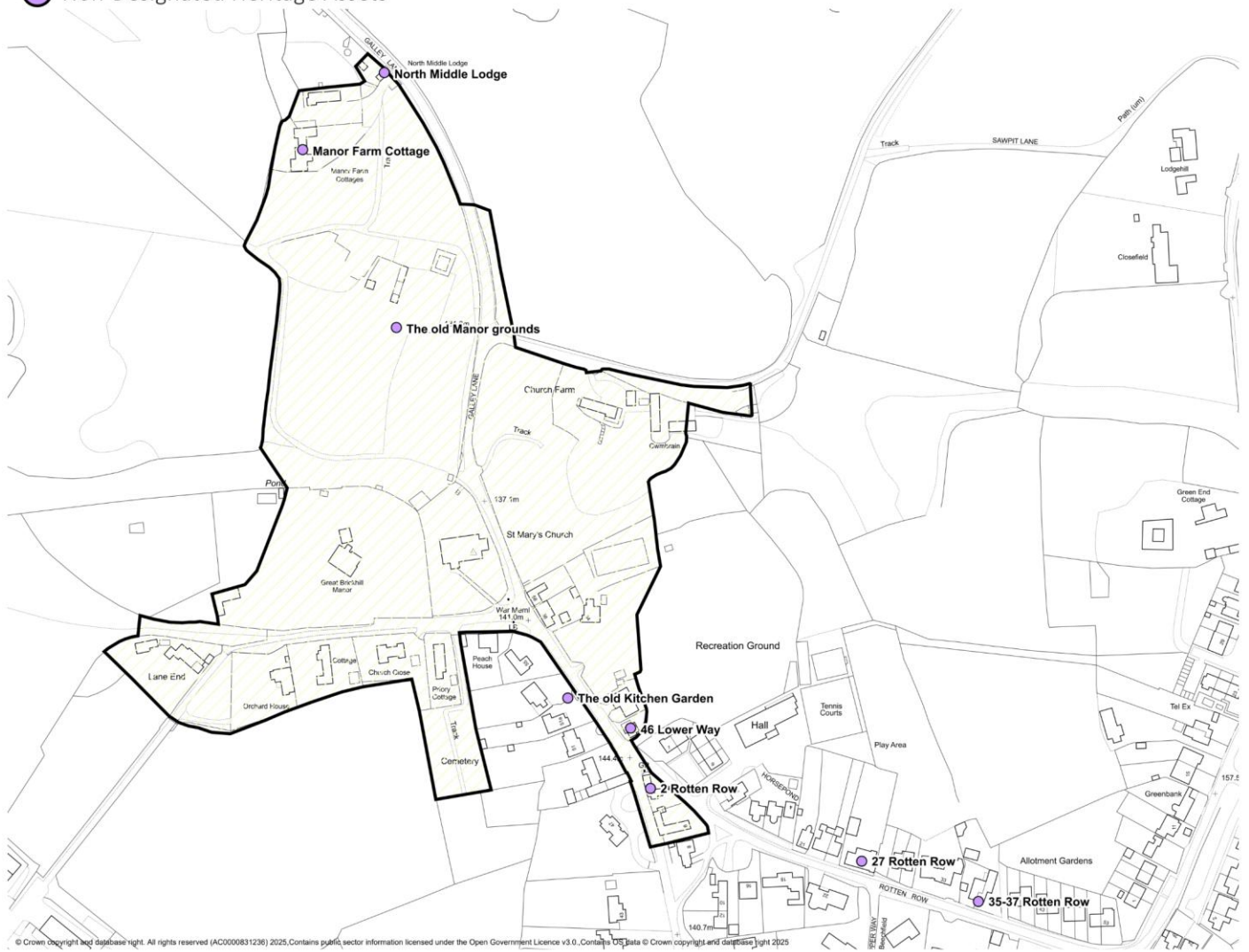


Figure 27 - Map of Non-Designated Heritage Assets in Great Brickhill Parish (North)

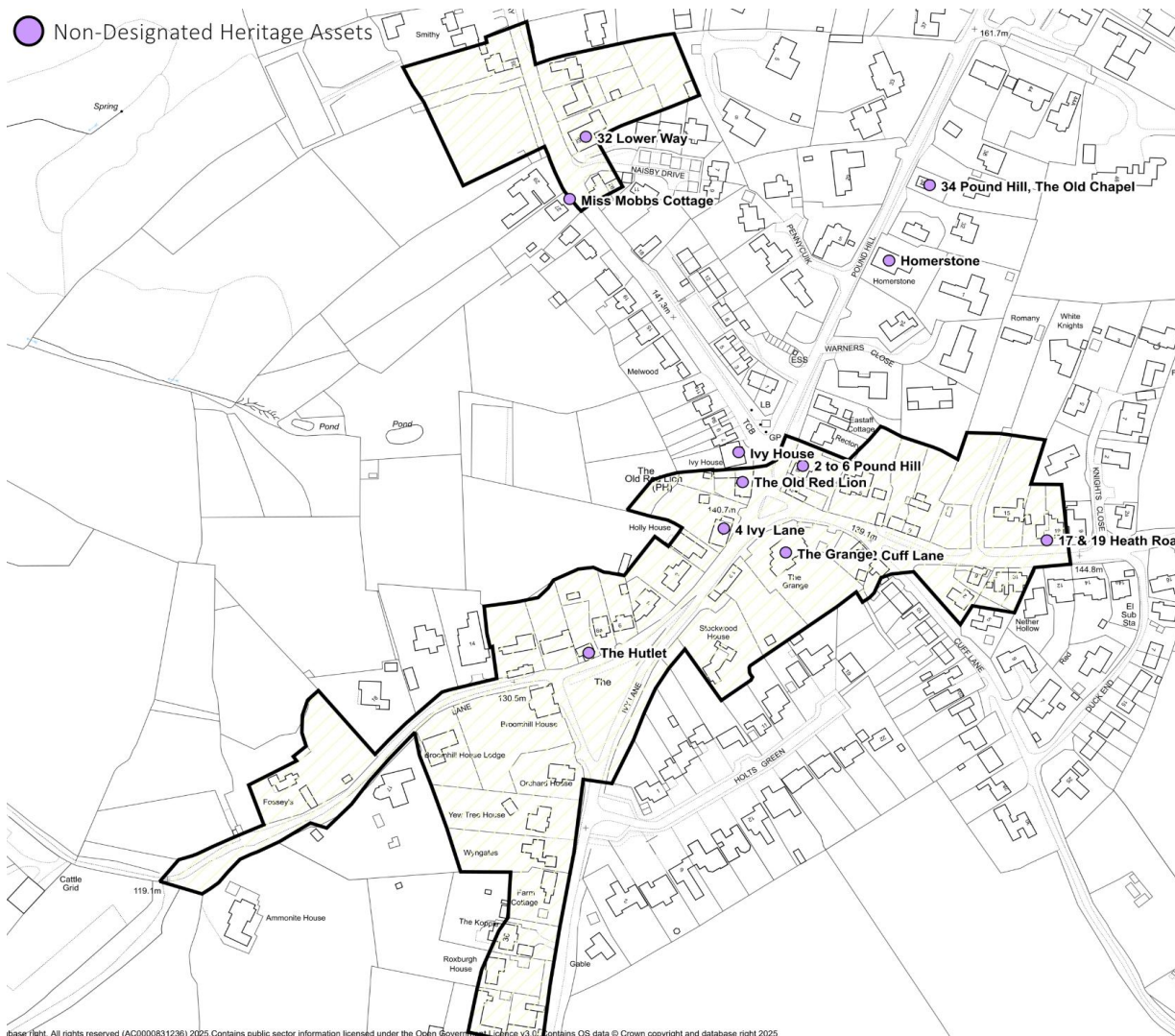


Figure 28 - Map of Non-Designated Heritage Assets in Great Brickhill Parish (South)

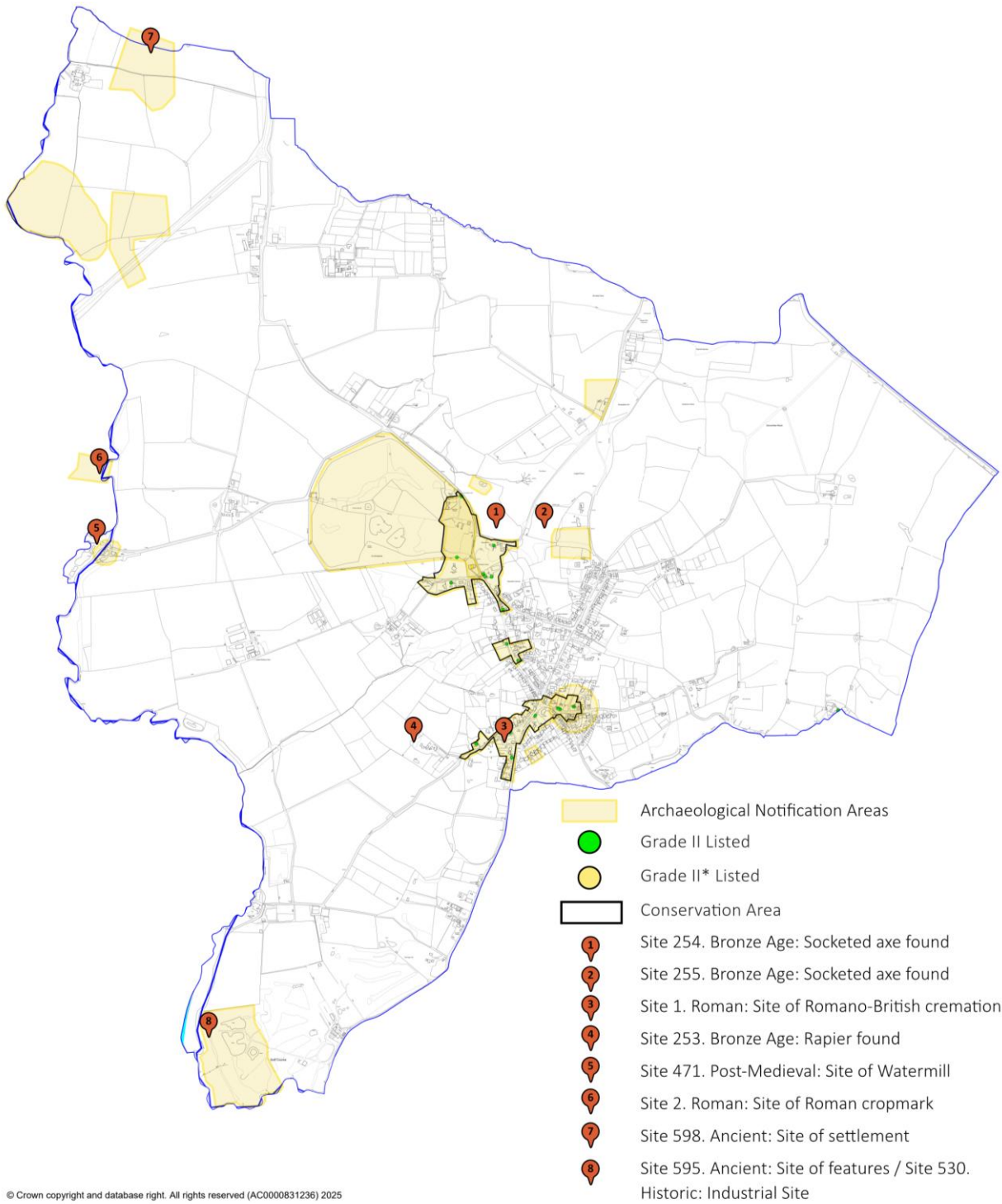


Figure 29 - Map of Heritage Assets in Great Brickhill Parish

## **Policy GB9 - Heritage Assets**

The Plan identifies the following buildings as non-designated heritage assets (see Figures 27 and 28) and as described in Appendix VI:

- 1. North Middle Lodge.**
- 2. Manor Farm Cottage.**
- 3. 32 Lower Way.**
- 4. 46 Lower Way.**
- 5. Miss Mobbs Cottage.**
- 6. 2 Rotten Row.**
- 7. 27 Rotten Row.**
- 8. 35 – 37 Rotten Row.**
- 9. 46 Green End.**
- 10. 48 Green End.**
- 11. 2 to 6 Pound Hill.**
- 12. 34 Pound Hill, The Old Chapel.**
- 13. Homerstone.**
- 14. The Old Red Lion.**
- 15. 4 Ivy Lane.**
- 16. 2 Cuff Lane.**
- 17. The Hutlet.**
- 18. 17 and 19 Heath Road.**

Great Brickhill Parish contains a range of other heritage assets, as identified in Figure 29.

Any new development proposals must carefully consider all heritage assets on the site and within its setting, in accordance with the NPPF. Proposals should be accompanied by a proportionate Heritage Impact Assessment that identifies the significance of all affected heritage assets (including their settings), assesses the archaeological potential of the site and evaluates the nature and degree of any impacts. The assessment should demonstrate how harm has been avoided, minimised or appropriately mitigated. Where opportunities arise, development should seek to better reveal the significance of heritage assets within or adjacent to the site.

### **Aspirations:**

Enhance the parish's heritage assets by producing accessible information.

## 8.2 Design Principles

- 8.2.1 The NPPF highlights the importance of the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. These are fundamental to the planning and development process. 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. It is intended that the policies in this neighbourhood plan will make design standards in the parish clear and allow developers and householders to understand what is expected from this.
- 8.2.2 The Great Brickhill Parish Design Code complements the neighbourhood plan and forms part of Policy GB10 by providing specific guidance for each character area within the parish.
- 8.2.3 New development should refer to the Design Code to determine the appropriate design for new housing and/or employments sites.
- 8.2.4 The Design Code document includes codes on appropriate scale, bulk, height, density, plot coverage and mass, views in and out of the settlement and maintaining appropriate gaps between buildings. It seeks to secure the amenities of local residents by ensuring that development results in no loss of privacy and daylight or sunlight, with a focus on native planting, and to provide suitable boundary treatments which do not urbanise the rural area.
- 8.2.5 General principles are summarised below.

<b>General Design Principles for New Development in Great Brickhill</b>	
New development within Great Brickhill should be sensitively designed to reflect the village’s historic rural character and its setting within the rolling Buckinghamshire countryside.	
<b>a. Integration with the route network</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate seamlessly with existing footpaths, lanes and village street patterns, respecting traditional movement routes and encouraging a natural flow of activity throughout the parish.</li> </ul>
<b>b. Character of the village</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and strengthen the existing character of the village, including its historic greens, wooded edges and informal open spaces that are integral to the rural settlement structure.</li> </ul>
<b>c. Respect the existing pattern of development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complement the established form and grain of Great Brickhill, harmonising with the scale, layout and historic land use that define the village’s identity.</li> </ul>
<b>d. Layout</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a coherent layout, where buildings, gardens, access routes, parking areas and green spaces are well-related and contribute to a sense of place.</li> </ul>
<b>e. Respect the elevated position of the</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond positively to the local topography, particularly the elevated ridge lines and long-distance countryside views that characterise the area.</li> </ul>

<b>village and surrounding views</b>	
<b>f. Traditional materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect and reinforce the local vernacular architecture, drawing upon traditional materials such as red and buff brick, clay tiles and timber detailing, while respecting the village's historic buildings and conservation areas.</li> </ul>
<b>g. Building forms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect the character and proportions of surrounding buildings, with careful attention to scale, height, form and massing to ensure new development feels part of the established village fabric.</li> </ul>
<b>h. Detailing and appearance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use materials and architectural detailing that are sympathetic to the local style, ensuring that new construction contributes positively to the aesthetic and heritage of the area.</li> </ul>
<b>i. Gardens and amenity space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of adequate gardens and amenity spaces. Including appropriately sized plots with front and rear gardens as set out in the Design Code.</li> </ul>
<b>j. Public open space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide green and open space that is both functional and in keeping with the rural character, offering opportunities for informal recreation and ecological enhancement.</li> </ul>
<b>k. Trees, hedgerows and boundary features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain and sensitively incorporate mature trees, hedgerows, stone walls and other valued landscape and built features, ensuring that these assets contribute to the identity of new development.</li> </ul>
<b>l. Drainage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate essential infrastructure such as drainage and services in a way that minimises disruption to valued features, including trees, ditches and traditional boundaries.</li> </ul>
<b>m. Energy efficient design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate low-impact, energy-efficient design, where renewable technologies are integrated discreetly and enhance the long-term sustainability of development.</li> </ul>
<b>n. Passive design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed passive environmental design strategies, prioritising site layout for solar gain, natural ventilation and thermal performance, before incorporating efficient technologies and renewable energy systems.</li> </ul>
<b>o. Waste and recycling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make suitable provision for sustainable waste and recycling, ensuring storage and collection solutions are discreet and do not detract from the visual quality or amenity of the area.</li> </ul>
<b>p. Management and future maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design with long-term management and maintenance in mind, especially for shared spaces and infrastructure.</li> </ul>

## Policy GB10 – Character and Design Principles

**Proposals for new development should reflect the local characteristics and circumstances in the Neighbourhood Plan Area as identified in the Great Brickhill Design Code, and create and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.**

**Planning applications should demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Design Principles in Table 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan, as appropriate to the proposal.**

**Proposals for any works to a Non-Designated Heritage Asset will be assessed in accordance with Paragraph 216 in the NPPF.**

### 8.3 Sustainable Construction Methods

- 8.3.1 Public consultation shows that a large majority of residents within Great Brickhill Parish are interested in the creation of policies that actively contribute towards reducing energy use and making more use of renewable energy sources.
- 8.3.2 Design proposals should therefore seek the use of sustainable construction techniques and materials to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- 8.3.3 Proposals for individual renewable energy will be supported, provided they comply with the relevant development and neighbourhood plan policies.
- 8.3.4 New development proposals should seek to minimise both the embodied carbon during construction and minimise the operational carbon emissions by design using the Fabric First Approach.
- 8.3.5 Current targets are to achieve at least 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a code 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case. This reduction is to be secured through renewable energy and other low carbon technologies and/or energy efficiency measures.
- 8.3.6 The requirement will increase from 31st March 2026 to at least a 50% reduction in carbon emissions and again from 31st March 2030 to a 100% reduction in carbon emissions (zero carbon). These targets will be reviewed in the light of any future legislation and national guidance.
- 8.3.7 A 'fabric first' approach to building design should be taken to maximise the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems. As such developers should consider the following development principles:
- minimising the use of high carbon cost building materials such as concrete, cement and steel;
  - maximising use of materials such as wood, hemp or other sustainable plant fibre; and

- using modern design techniques such as EnerPHit as a best practice standard to achieve good airtightness and insulation in retrofit and Passivhaus for new development.

8.3.8 The Local Plan already requires new developments to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110 litres/head/day (l/h/d) for new homes. Policy GB11 includes the incorporation of measures to maximise opportunities for solar gain through building orientation to maximise natural ventilation through the use of green roofs and natural shading.

8.3.9 The details are set out in the Design Code and referenced in Policy GB10.

## 8.4 Community-Led Renewables Project

8.4.1 As part of a community survey commissioned between May and June 2024, 111 residents strongly supported a community led renewable energy installation for community benefit. In total, 211 out of 285 respondents either strongly supported or supported a community led renewable energy installation in the parish (see Figure 30 below).

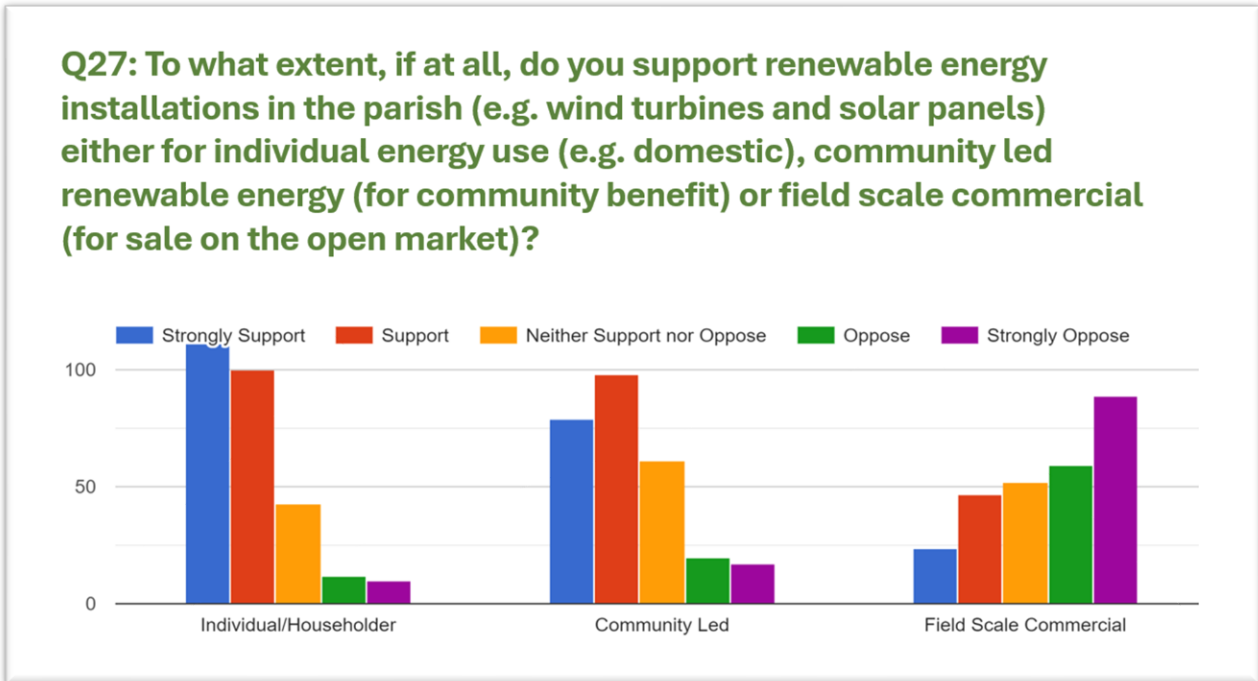


Figure 30 - Community Consultation Results for Renewable Energy Installations

### Policy GB11 – Community-Led Renewable Project

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the development of a community-led renewable energy project that contributes to local energy needs, reduces carbon emissions, and promotes environmental sustainability. Such a project should be initiated and managed by local community groups, with the benefits shared among the residents of the parish.

Proposals for renewable energy installations must be appropriately sited to minimise any adverse impacts on the landscape, local biodiversity, and residential amenity. The design of this project should be sensitive to the character of the area, incorporating screening, landscaping and other measures to blend with the surrounding environment.

## 8.5 Community, Services and Employment

### Community Services

- 8.5.1 Community service and facilities contribute to the social, spiritual and physical well-being of the wider community. They make a significant contribution to the vitality and viability of the parish and they have a positive impact on the sustainability of the village. They enhance the quality of life and often provide an important focal point for social interaction.
- 8.5.2 Both the NPPF and Local Plan indicate that valued community facilities should be retained. However, planning permission is not always required to change the use of a building or land and this restricts the opportunity to examine the possibility of securing the continued use of a facility threatened with closure.

### Employment

- 8.5.3 The parish supports a range of local employment opportunities which reduces the need to travel and offers an important service, particularly for those who do not have access to a car. The loss and threatened closure of employment facilities and services is increasingly common and where a planning application is required to change its use, such sites should be protected unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that it would be neither economically viable nor feasible to be retained.
- 8.5.4 Planning proposals that generate new employment opportunities on existing employment sites will be supported where they comply with the following considerations and as set out in the policy overleaf.
- 8.5.5 It is important that any proposal respects the character and appearance of the immediate locality in terms of its height, scale, design and massing, particularly given the rising topography and extensive views.
- 8.5.6 Whilst there are many locations where current businesses operate successfully and without harm, new development should not cause an unacceptable impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties. The potential for noise and air pollution should be considered by potential developers in choosing a suitable location.
- 8.5.7 Equally, proposals must include adequate parking solutions, with appropriate servicing and access arrangements based on the number of trips generated. Proposals must be in accordance with the most recently published standards of Buckinghamshire County Council.

## **Policy GB12 – Community Services and Employment**

**Development proposals that meet the below criteria will be supported where they:**

- **Protect existing community facilities and encourage new facilities, including, but not limited to, a grocery/general village shop.**
- **Encourage developments enabling new rural industries, tourist accommodation and community facilities subject to ensuring that they:**
  - a. **prevent significant harm to heritage/the local biodiversity;**
  - b. **maintain or enhance the local landscape character;**
  - c. **are sited in an appropriate location where they do not cause a nuisance regarding noise, smell or visual impact; and**
  - d. **are appropriate to the local economy/community need and sustainably located (with no adverse impact to the local road network).**

**New community facility proposals must demonstrate how they will meet a community need. Proposals should reference the Design Code and Character Area (see Appendix VII) in terms of design.**

**Development proposals that provide areas of recreation, such as a cricket or multi-use sports pitch, will be supported.**

**The community would benefit from a potential local village shop and such proposals would be supported subject to compliance with other Development Plan policies.**

## 8.6 Infrastructure

- 8.6.1 The parish has identified various infrastructure schemes that are important to the community.
- 8.6.2 Funding for these improvements can be secured by a number of sources.
- 8.6.3 Should the Parish Council receive infrastructure levy payments, it would consult parishioners at a special parish meeting and through a survey on suggested proposals for expenditure, subject to detailed investigation of feasibility and costing and after consultation with Buckinghamshire County Council. Potential priority infrastructure projects include:
- Completion of the pavement along Lower Way from Gable Cottage on the southern edge of the village to the Church on the northern edge of the village, as there are currently missing sections.
  - Improved parking provision in the vicinity of High Ash Church of England Primary School.
  - Traffic calming on Lower Way and Pound Hill.
  - Improved cycle paths to Bletchley and Leighton Buzzard, which would separate cyclists from motorists and improve road safety.
  - Acquisition of fields with the Parish to protect views, provide enhanced access to green spaces for residents, to provide more opportunity for biodiversity, expand the wooded area of the village, etc, which could expand our Pocket Parks, or become new Pocket Parks.
  - Replacement of the bent crash barrier alongside The Green.
- 8.6.4 The Parish Council will liaise with Buckinghamshire Council to establish a robust method for agreeing when and where to spend CIL monies. This will include a mechanism for monitoring CIL receipts and reporting on expenditure.

### Policy GB13 – Infrastructure

- **Development proposals will be supported for the provision or funding of infrastructure that directly mitigates the effect of the development where the proposal is consistent with other policies.**
- **Site-specific planning obligations, in accordance with future Infrastructure Levy Regulations, will be sought in relation to development proposals deemed necessary by Buckinghamshire Council, in consultation with the Parish Council.**
- **Any future infrastructure levy income received from applicable development in the Great Brickhill NP area will be spent on projects to be agreed by the Parish Council in consultation with parishioners.**

## 8.7 Highways, Accessibility and Safety

- 8.7.1 It is recognised that encouraging and promoting greater levels of active travel has become increasingly important for climate change and health and wellbeing. Although it is more difficult to achieve in rural areas, where settlements are within 5km of a town with a good range of services and facilities, such as Milton Keynes, there is a realistic potential to shift away from private vehicles to active, public and shared forms of transport.
- 8.7.2 It is noted that public transport provision is poor, however, with improved, safe and well-connected paths for cycling and walking, this could have a significant role to play in terms of reducing congestion and pollution in the area.
- 8.7.3 Notwithstanding the above, there are several safety concerns within the parish, as expressed during public consultation.
- 8.7.4 Aside from the stretch of the A4146 within the parish, which is a fast moving ring road around Fenny Stratford and Bletchley, but which does not pass through a residential area, specific areas with the highest concentration of accidents are:
- Heath Road. This is a narrow lane leaving the village which reduces to almost a single track at times and is quite twisty.
  - Ivy Lane/Lower Way/Galley Lane. This is used by traffic as a short cut between Bletchley and Leighton Buzzard, which often does not respect the 30mph speed limit.
  - Rotten Row/Green End. This is a concern due to the accidents which have happened there are on either side of the entrance to High Ash Church of England Primary School, which is always congested and busy at school drop-off and collection time.
- 8.7.5 At present, there are also a lack of safe walking and cycling routes, not only within the parish but towards neighbouring parishes.
- 8.7.6 The village's objective is to complete and improve the Lower Way footpath and improve the safety of users of Lower Way (within the village) and to enhance walking, riding and cycling routes on the edge of the village, most notably along Stoke Lane and Partridge Hill by utilising infrastructure levy payments.
- 8.7.7 The NPPF highlights the importance of the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure and layouts that encourage walking and cycling to enable and support healthy lifestyles. It also states that planning policies should "provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking... Planning Policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails".

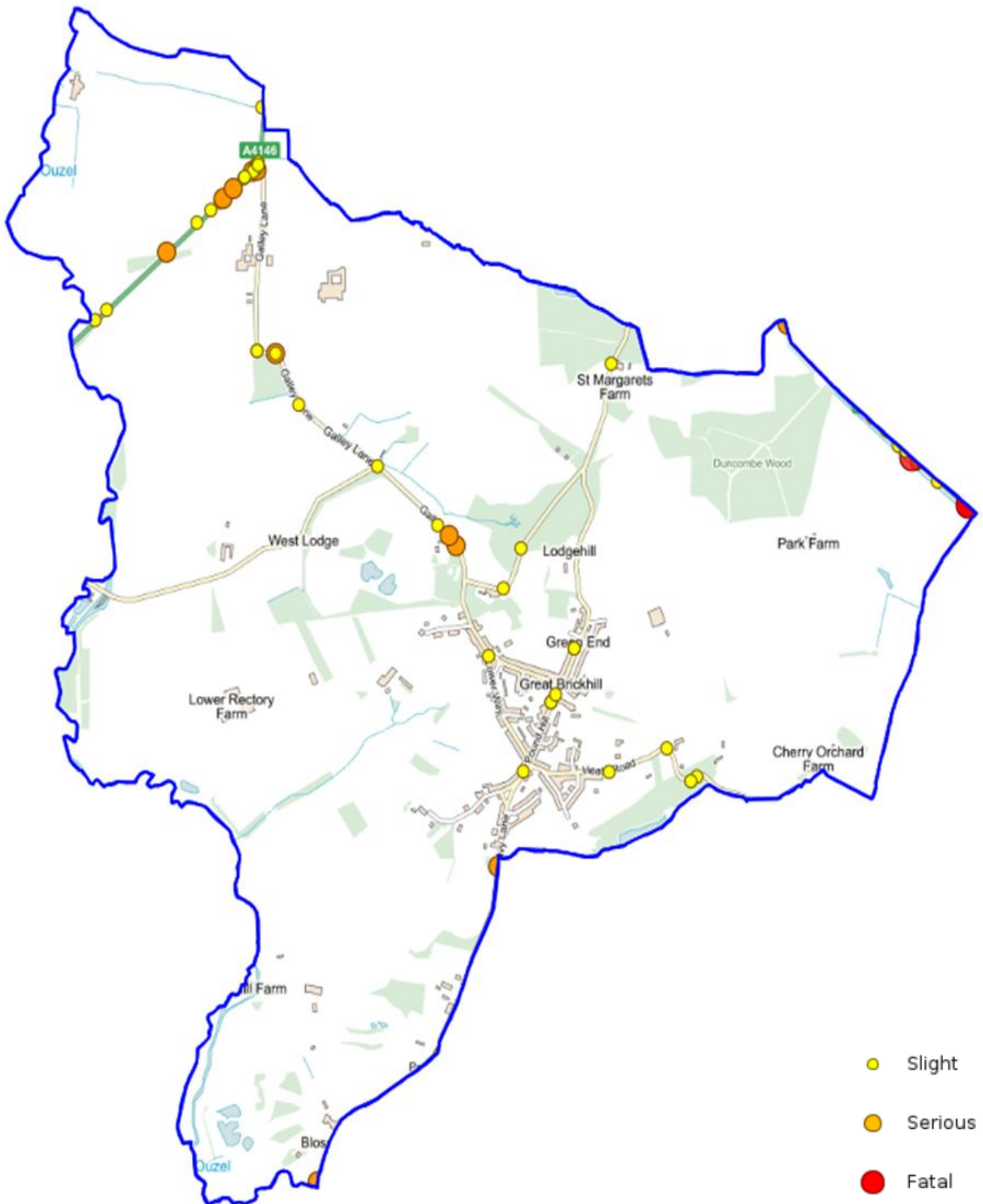


Figure 31 - Map of Road Accidents in Great Brickhill Parish (2000-2022)

## **Policy GB14 – Transport, Access and Safety**

**Development which exacerbates the current problems with the road network including accident blackspots, constrained junctions and narrow rural lanes (as shown in Figure 31) will not be supported.**

**Where appropriate in scale and nature, new development should:**

- a. Enhance existing pedestrian and cycle access to the site.**
- b. Improving safe and convenient walking and cycling routes including to Milton Keynes and Leighton Buzzard, such as along Stoke Lane, Partridge Hill and Lower Way.**
- c. Provide adequate off-road parking in areas which are currently constrained (including narrow rural lanes as highlighted).**
- d. Ensure that there are safe access and appropriate visibility to serve new developments.**
- e. Where mitigation measures are proposed in rural areas to improve road safety such as traffic calming, these should avoid adverse noise impacts or the introduction of urbanising features (excessive built form, road markings) in this peaceful, rural area.**
- f. Contribute, where appropriate, to the improvement of public transport services and infrastructure, such as bus service frequency, accessibility and connections to nearby towns, as part of transport mitigation measures. Such contributions should seek to reduce car dependency and promote sustainable travel options for residents.**

### **Aspirations:**

Install traffic calming measures, particularly at the junction immediately adjacent to the school.  
Reduce speeding within the village.

Improve public transport services, specifically local bus services, through lobbying.

Creation of a cycle path from the roundabout at the end of Galley Lane along the A4146 to the new traffic lights at the entrance to Woburn Downs.

## APPENDICES


### I. Character Appraisal



See Great Brickhill Parish Character Appraisal.



### II. Important Views



The parish of Great Brickhill is characterised by the number of stunning views around the village, not surprising as it lies within an ‘Area of Attractive Landscape’ (AALs).



A list of important views was presented to the village for the Village Survey and opinions sought on these and any other views that were particularly important to them. The table below lists and describes these views.

<u>View</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Photo</u>
1	<p><b>View from Footpath Behind High Ash School</b></p> <p>Far reaching vista across meadows towards Kings Wood National Nature Reserve in the distance.</p>	

<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>View from the Footpath Between Cuff and Ivy Lanes</b></p> <p>Almost 360-degree panoramic views from the high point taking in Rushmere Park and the Chiltern Hills in the far distance.</p>	
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Views from Ivy Lane</b></p> <p>One of several viewpoints that look east and west along the ridge of Ivy Lane. This one looking west towards Stoke Hammond.</p>	

<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>View from Furze Hill</b></p> <p>From the public footpath looking towards the west taking in part of Three Locks golf course and on towards Stoke Hammond.</p>	
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>View from Lower Way</b></p> <p>Possibly the most well-known view for residents and visitors alike with far reaching views across the vale opposite where the Duncombe Arms pub was sited.</p>	

<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>View from the Cemetery</b></p> <p>Far reaching view to the west over Rectory Farm out to the Vale of Aylesbury.</p>	
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>View from the Footpath at the end of Church Lane</b></p> <p>Looking out to the west towards Newton Longville and Buckingham.</p>	

<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>View from Mill Lane</b></p> <p>View looking south-east, across Rectory Farm up to the village on the top of the ridge.</p>	
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>View from Galley Lane</b></p> <p>One of several scenic views as you approach the village, looking towards Philip's Clump and Great Firs.</p>	

<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>View from John Horncapps Lane</b></p> <p>View down the marshy valley of Great Brickhill Field looking north-west from the lane towards Milton Keynes.</p>	
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>View from the Footpath West of Green End</b></p> <p>Looking down the slope of Church Farm Biological Notification Site towards Fox Hole Pocket Park.</p>	

### III. Local Green Spaces

The table below lists each Local Green Space. For a breakdown of how each Local Green Space was selected, see the Great Brickhill Local Green Spaces Assessment.

<p><b>LGS1 – Cricket Ground and Spinney</b></p>	
<p><b>LGS2 – Poors Acre</b></p>	

**LGS3 – The Green**



**LGS4 – Foxhole**



**LGS5 –  
Green End**



**LGS6 - The  
Pyghtle**



**LGS7 – The  
Three Trees**



**LGS8 – St  
Mary's  
Churchyard**





#### IV. Biodiversity and Habitats

The aim of this section is to identify key habitats and open spaces within the parish and provide solutions to protect, enhance and increase biodiversity. This was done using evidence-based scrutiny of records held by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre (BMERC) and fieldwork carried out on publicly accessible land. Our aim is to work with landowners and villagers to improve biodiversity in the parish and to target certain key species and habitats.

##### Context

Great Brickhill is located between the City of Milton Keynes to the north and Leighton Buzzard to the south, lying on top of the southern end of the Greensand Ridge. The ridge is one of England's 159 distinct National Character Areas, chosen for their distinct and recognisable character at the national scale and is also within 'An Area of Attractive Landscape'.

Roughly half the parish on the eastern side lies within the **Greensand Ridge Biodiversity Opportunity Area**, recognised by Local Nature Partnerships in Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire, as shown by the shaded green area in the map below.

From a habitat and biodiversity point of view, being located on the ridge, with its underlying geology, provides a diverse range of habitats and species.

Such Biodiversity Opportunity areas form part of a nationwide **Biodiversity Opportunity Network**, having been chosen specifically for their high ecological value and are considered the most important areas for protecting biodiversity in each county. The aim is to create a buffer around existing wildlife rich areas to protect them from external pressures, such as development, farming and other human pressures, enhancing the habitat on a landscape scale to protect ecosystems through which species can move. The Parish should therefore be extremely proud of this status but equally has a responsibility to ensure the area is protected and ideally improved.

In addition, the **Ouzel valley** on the western boundary of the parish is recognised by Milton Keynes Council as a **Green Infrastructure (GI)** zone and is an important wildlife corridor.

Much of the land in Milton Keynes has already been developed for housing or parkland and any development south of the city needs to create zones for wildlife, access and recreation.

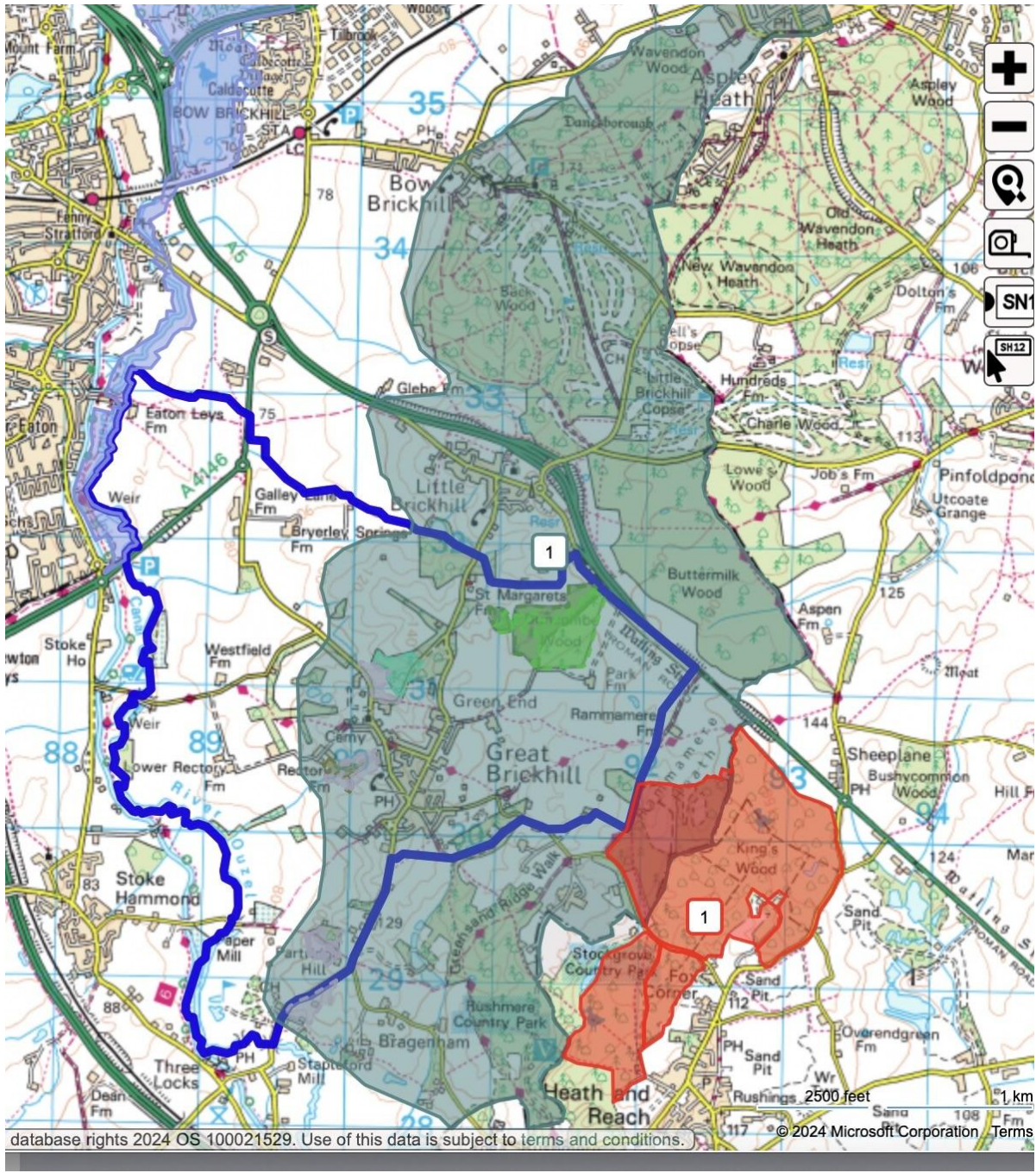


Figure 32 - Areas of Biodiversity Opportunity (Orange Area Represents the Kings and Bakers Wood and Heaths SSSI and Green Area Represents the Buckinghamshire Part of the Greensand Ridge Biodiversity Opportunity Area)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre (BMERC)

### **Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

The Environment Act 2021 introduced the concepts of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, aim to target the best places for nature recovery and wider environmental benefits, and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) which aims to ensure any development leaves the habitats in a better state than they were before.

LNRS better equip local planning authorities to incorporate nature recovery objectives into local plans and development decisions and have the following objectives:

- Support efforts to recover nature across England.
- Help planning authorities.
- Incorporate nature recovery objectives.
- Support the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Help deliver our national environment targets.

The Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (NEP), which includes representatives of Buckinghamshire Council, works with individuals, organisations and businesses to drive positive change in the local natural environment based on three task groups.

Biodiversity – aiming to deliver biodiversity targets and promote work at landscape scale, focusing on Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs).

Planning and Environment – ensuring the value of the natural environment is embedded in all aspects of planning.

Green Infrastructure (GI) and Health – to promote coordinated thinking and action which focuses on the provision of a GI network which maximises multi functioning benefits for healthy people and environment.

In their document ‘Forward to 2030 Biodiversity Action Plan’ the aims and objectives include – ‘to improve, create and link priority habitats in Bucks and Milton Keynes, with a focus on Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and priority water catchments and to seek stronger protection for priority habitats’.

Buckinghamshire Council issued draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy for consultation on 10th February 2025 and views sought from the public before 10th March 2025. After the responses have been considered the final Local Nature Recovery Strategy will be presented to the Secretary of State for approval ahead of publishing in late 2025.

There are various national and local designations for important sites within and adjacent to the parish. These are listed below.

### **Biodiversity Opportunity Area**

The Greensand Ridge BOA – Roughly half of the parish on the east side lies within this BOA. The area inside our parish is a small section at the south-west tip of a much larger area running north-east mostly through Bedfordshire and into Cambridgeshire. Despite being a fraction of the overall landscape scale site, a report by the former Mid Bedfordshire District Council described ‘the valuable habitats on the Buckinghamshire portion of the Greensand Ridge are an important biodiversity hotspot’. These include Rammamere Heath and Rushmere Park, as well as the surrounding meadows and hedgerows located within the parish. There is huge potential to attract scarce species to the area, particularly those associated with lowland meadows and sandy heathlands.



Figure 33 - Common Lizard on the edge of a meadow to the south of the village. A nationally declining species on the red list.



Figure 34 - Skylark is a typical species of traditional lowland meadows and spring sown arable fields.

### Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Kings and Bakers Wood and Heaths – 191 hectares of ancient woodland, heath, grassland and wetland. Many rare species have been recorded. This site is just over the parish boundary and includes Rammamere Heath and sections of Rushmere Park so the impacts on its habitat need to be considered inside our boundary.

### Local Wildlife Sites

1. Furze and Partridge Hills – *marshy and neutral grassland, pond, scrub and hedges.*
2. Rectory Farm (Chartwell Moor) – *acid and neutral grassland, species rich marsh and fen and wet scrub.*
3. Waterhall Park – *lowland meadows, ponds, fenland river margin. Areas of species rich grassland.*
4. Duncombe Wood – *ancient lowland mixed deciduous woodland with interesting species due to greensand geology.*
5. Great Brickhill Field – *rare acid grassland with wet flushes. Many butterflies and dragonflies.*
6. St. Mary's Churchyard – *lowland dry acid grassland with fungi assemblage.*
7. Great Brickhill Cemetery – *lowland dry acid grassland.*
8. Canon Hill – *neutral, acid and marshy grassland, scrub, hedges, streams and woodland with species rich marsh and fen.*
9. The Moor and Great Firs – *wet acid woodland with county rare plants.*

### Biological Notification Sites

1. Orchard Mill - *river with marginal vegetation.*
2. River Ouzel, Sparks Meadow to the west of Eaton Mill – *small river.*
3. Church Farm – *semi-improved acid grassland on steep slopes with bird's foot trefoil and cat's ear.*

The Local Wildlife Sites and Biological Notification sites are shown on the map below.

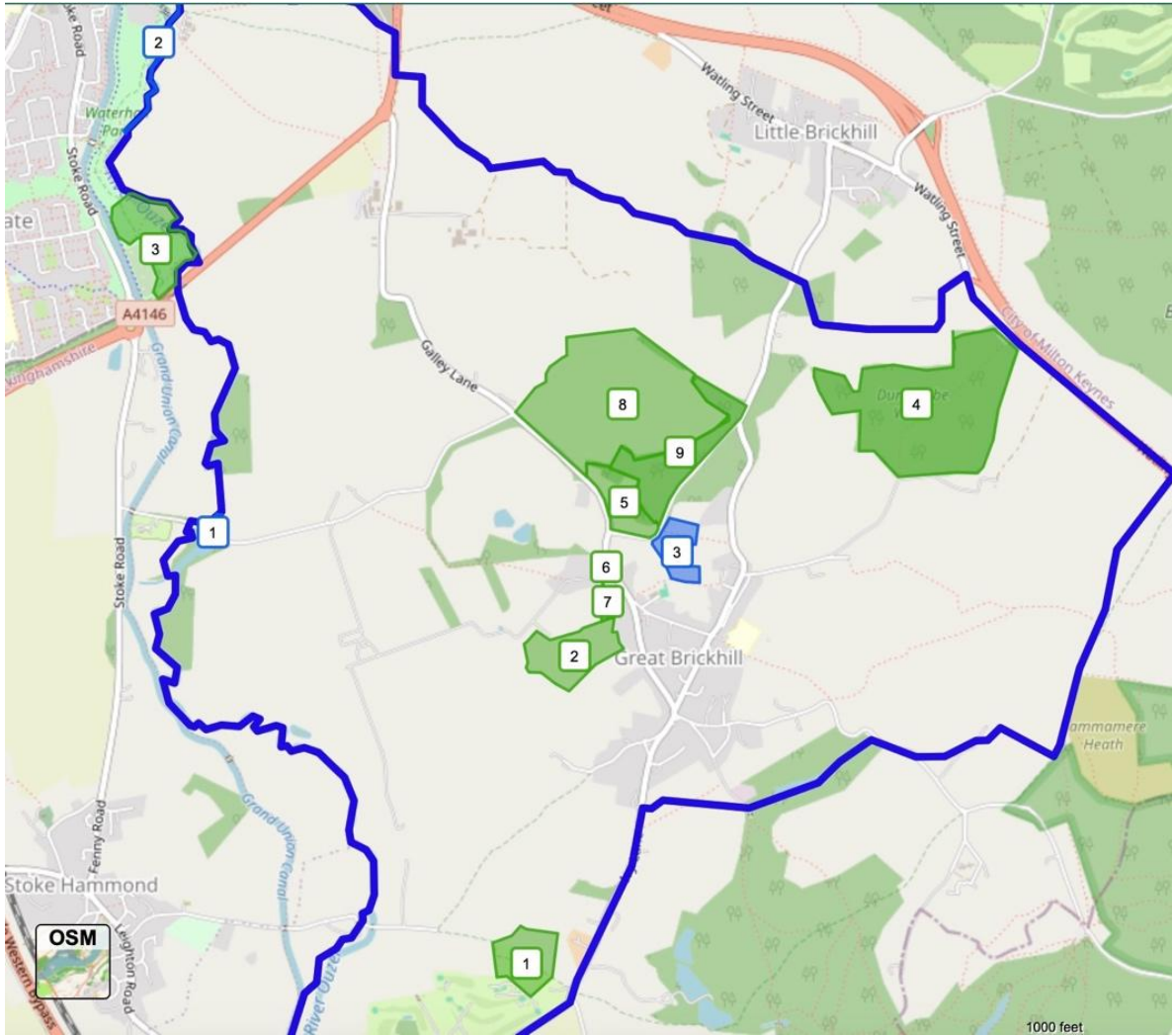


Figure 35 - Map Showing Location of Local Wildlife Sites (Green) and Biological Notification Sites (Blue)<sup>4</sup>

**Habitats**

Grassland

The dominant habitat within the parish is grassland, mostly found on the Greensand Ridge, as the poor acidic soils are unsuitable for growing crops. The majority are semi-improved grazing pastures for horses and livestock but there are species rich meadows between Cuff and Ivy Lanes, Furze and Partridge Hills, Great Brickhill Field, Canon Hill, Chartell Moor and acid grassland species at Cherry Orchard Farm.

There are many equestrian facilities in the immediate vicinity of the settlement. The paddocks for the grazing of horses create a varied sward structure from field to field.

<sup>4</sup> Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre (BMERC)

The Swallow, a long-distance migrant bird which travels more than 6,000 miles from southern Africa to return to the same nest site each year, benefits from this activity and epitomises village life. The abundant flies and perfect nesting locations in barns and stables, provide it with the ideal conditions for raising a family. Any development in the village should ensure that measures are put in place to protect the nest sites of this iconic village species.



Figure 36 - Young Swallows Begging for Food on the Edge of a Meadow in the Village

### Heathland

The underlying geology of the Greensand Ridge provides ideal conditions for heathland species such as gorse and heather to thrive. There are only a handful of heathland sites in Buckinghamshire with all the others being found in the far south of the county. One fifth of lowland heath in Europe is in the UK and is home to a number of specialist species, such as Adder, Dartford Warbler, Woodlark and Nightjar. The Greensand Trust works hard on Rammamere Heath and in Rushmere Park to enhance the heathland on these sites. As they are both adjacent to our parish (with a small part of Rammamere encroaching into it) there is a huge opportunity to extend this habitat within the parish and connect other biodiverse areas.



Figure 38 - Heather and Birch at Rammamere Heath SSSI. A Nationally Scarce Habitat

### Woodland

Tree cover is fairly sparse in the parish, with the largest area of woodland being Duncombe Wood towards the eastern side, an ancient woodland site known to date back to at least the 1700s. It was extensively planted with conifers in the 1960s which diminished the ecological value but in recent years efforts have been made to thin out the trees and plant native species. Locally rare plants such as Ragged Robin are present and the main ride can attract good numbers of butterflies, including Silver-washed Fritillaries.

This wood is linked by smaller areas of trees and hedgerows to Brookfield Wood west of Little Brickhill Lane which contains a wide variety of tree species, abundant dead wood and wet areas. The lane between the village and Little Brickhill is lined with some patches of birch woodland, an important early pioneering tree species. The slopes alongside John Horncapps Lane are largely made up of Sycamore trees with a carpet of Bluebells flowering in the spring. Other notable patches of woodland in the parish include the new Jubilee Wood between Church Lane and Mill Lane and a small patch of woodland around Pochard Lake.

Oak and Birch are common trees in the parish, with some impressive mature Oaks found in a few places. The nationally rare Black Poplar grows along the River Ouzel and near Rammamere Farm.



Figure 38 - Silver-Washed Fritillary on Bramble Flowers in Duncombe Wood Local Wildlife Site

## Hedgerows

Hedges act as important corridors for wildlife to move between different areas, as well as being crucial habitats in their own right. Many hedgerows in the parish are believed to be ancient and are home to a vast array of species. Birds use them for nesting and the fruits provide vital food during the autumn and winter months. A large variety of species of insect rely on the different plant species for their life cycles and these in turn attract predators such as bats. Ancient, good quality hedges contain a high diversity of shrub and tree species as well as a shrubby outer layer of bramble.

Many of the large arable fields to the north of the village completely lack any hedgerows and so would benefit from planting schemes to connect isolated areas, as well as fix nitrogen in the soil and reduce erosion.



Figure 39 - Example of a Good Quality Double Hedge along the Bridleway at the end of Stoke Lane



Figure 40 - A Species Rich Hedgerow in Meadows on the South Side of the Village

## Farmland

Agricultural areas in the parish are concentrated along the Ouzel valley and lower slopes to the north and west of the village where the soil is more suitable. The majority of the land is arable with some pasture for sheep and cattle. In common with most of Britain, farmland birds have declined drastically in the last 40 years due to the intensification of agriculture and the increase in the use of pesticides. The change from spring to autumn sowing, the production of silage and loss of flower rich meadows have all been harmful to many species. Typical farmland birds such as Skylark, Linnet and Yellowhammer are just hanging on, whereas Grey Partridge, Turtle Dove, Tree Sparrow and Corn Bunting have all disappeared. There are signs of the early stages of recovery in the Chilterns for some species where environmental schemes have been implemented so there is some hope in the future of these reappearing in the parish. On a more positive note, a pair of Barn Owls bred successfully at a site to the north of the village in 2024.



Figure 41 - A Typical Arable Field at Eaton Leys Farm

The River Ouzel runs down the western boundary of the parish and is an important 'wildlife corridor' as well as being vital for certain freshwater species. Otter have been sighted along this stretch in recent years and there is a possibility of Water Vole making a comeback after having its population ravaged by the non-native American Mink. It is thought that Mink could be successfully eradicated in Britain over the next few years and reintroduction of Water Voles to their previous sites will be possible. The native White-clawed crayfish has also been driven out by the invasive Signal Crayfish.



Figure 42 - The River Ouzel by Mill Lane, an Important Wildlife Corridor

There are a few small lakes within the parish, including Pochard Lake to the south of the village, a couple of small lakes at Three Locks Golf Course and two in the spinney to the north-west of the church. These have no public access but are accessible to customers paying for the facilities provided (fishing and golf) and the spinney lakes are opened occasionally for events such as the annual Snowdrop walks. There are also a number of ponds in the parish, a couple of these at least, known to hold populations of Great-crested Newts, as well as being important for other amphibians, aquatic insects and plants.



Figure 43 - A Pond in Poors Acre Pocket Park

### Pocket Parks

The village benefits from having two pocket parks, Foxhole and Poors Acre, each roughly an acre in size. Both were originally small quarries, presumably extracting sandstone for use as building material in the village and were later used as informal dumps. Both sites, along with other areas around the village, are managed by hard working volunteers of the Village Improvement Committee (VIC) who ensure the meadows are cut appropriately to encourage wildflowers, as well as keeping invasive plants under control. Foxhole is a more open area with mature Oaks and Birches around the edges. Bluebells and Wild Garlic profuse on the shaded slopes while the meadow area is carpeted with Cowslips in the spring and Ox-eye daisies in the summer.

Poors Acre is more wooded with a meandering circular path through the mature Oaks, Hollies, Ash and Elms, past a pond and back to a grassy area by the road. The parks are used and enjoyed by many villagers.



Figure 44 - Cowslips in the Meadow at Foxhole Pocket Park

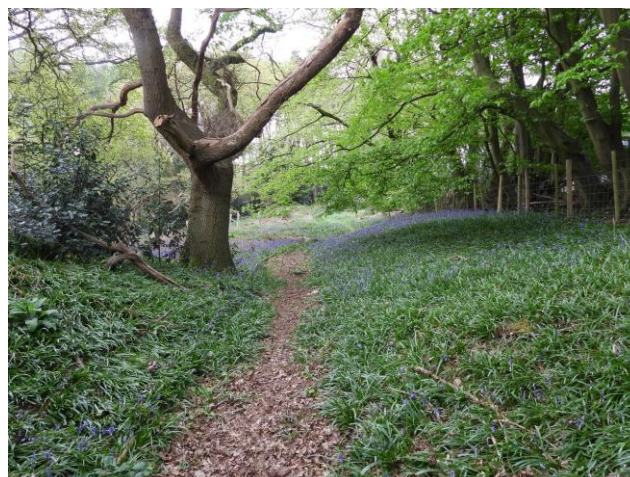


Figure 45 - Bluebells Amongst the Trees in Pools Acre Pocket Park

Gardens

Gardens can play a role in supporting local biodiversity for species tolerant of the presences of humans and their pets. There is a wide variety of different gardens within the parish, from large woodland type gardens to small courtyard plots and everything else in between. Flower borders with a wide flowering range will attract pollinating insects while shrubs and climbers provide nest sites for birds. The addition of a pond has a huge positive effect on the amount of species visiting and are vital refuges for amphibians and aquatic invertebrates.



Figure 46 - Hummingbird Hawkmoth on Buddleia, an Increasingly Regular Visitor to Gardens



Figure 47 - A Garden Pond can Attract a Large Variety of Species to the Garden

The table below contains a list of notable species recorded in the parish, along with their status. Below is a list of abbreviations used in the table:

- BAP - UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species,

- BDir2.2 - EU Birds Directive Annex 2.2 - Birds which may potentially be hunted within certain member states,
- Bern2 - Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, Appendix 2 - Strictly protected fauna species, Bern3 - Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, Appendix 3 - Protected fauna species,
- Bonn2 - Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Appendix 2 - Migratory Species
- to be the subject of agreements,
- CHS2 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, Schedule 2 - European Protected Species of Animals,
- CITES-A - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, Annex A - Species threatened with extinction,
- HDir2 - Habitats Directive, Annex II - Species requiring designation of Special Areas of Conservation,
- HDir4 - Habitats Directive, Annex IV - Species in need of strict protection,
- LI[County Rare] - Locally Important Species,
- LI[County Scarce] - Locally Important Species,
- LI[Locally Important] - Locally Important Species,
- PBA - Protection of Badgers Act 1992,
- RL-DD - IUCN Red List of Threatened Species - Data Deficient,
- RL-EN - IUCN Red List of Threatened Species - Endangered,
- RL-NT - IUCN Red List of Threatened Species - Near Threatened,
- RL-VU - IUCN Red List of Threatened Species - Vulnerable,
- S41 - Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Section 41), and
- WCA5 - Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 Schedule 5 - Animals which are protected.

Species	Scientific Name	Status in Great Brickhill	Lists
<b>Mammals</b>			
Water Vole	<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>	The last records were in 1997 near Three Locks. Reintroduction projects are in place in other parts of the country so previous occupied sites could hold this species once again.	BAP, RL-EN, S41, WCA5
Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	Fairly widespread in the parish.	Bern3, PBA
Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	A couple of recent records from the south part of the village	BAP, Bern3, RL-VU, S41

Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	Records from the River Ouzel and other water bodies as recently as 2025	BAP, Bern2, CHS2, CITES-A, HDir2, HDir4, S41, WCA5
Harvest Mouse	<i>Micromys minutus</i>	The only confirmed site in the parish is of a number of nests found in meadows adjacent to Holts Green, between Cuff and Ivy Lanes. The nearest known site in Bucks is over 15km away.	BAP, RL-NT, S41
Barbastelle Bat	<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	Records from near Duncombe Wood, the church and to the south of the village in recent years	BAP, Bern2, Bonn2, CHS2, HDir2, HDir4, RL-VU, S41, WCA5
Daubenton's Bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Records from Pochard Lake and the River Ouzel. Regularly hunts over water.	Bern2, Bonn2, CHS2, HDir4, WCA5
Noctule Bat	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Records from the church, near Duncombe Wood and south of the village	BAP, Bern2, Bonn2, CHS2, HDir4, S41, WCA5
Pipistrelle Bat	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Widespread in the parish. A good place to observe them is at the bottom of Cuff Lane.	Bern2, Bern3, Bonn2, CHS2, HDir4, WCA5
Soprano Pipistrelle Bat	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Records from near Heath Road, Duncombe Wood and meadows to the south of the village	BAP, WCA5
Brown Long-eared Bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Records from around 15 sites in the parish	BAP, Bern2, Bonn2, CHS2, HDir4, S41, WCA5
Leisler's Bat	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	One record in 2020 near Mill Lane	Bern2, CHS2, HDir4, WCA5
Whiskered/Brandt's Bat	<i>Myotis mystacinus/brandtii</i>	Recorded near Pochard Lake in the 1990s	Bern2, Bonn2, CHS2, HDir4, RL-DD, WCA5
Birds			
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	Regular records from meadows to the south and west of the village in winter. This species has become extinct as a breeder in the county but Rushmere Park and the surrounding meadows offer ideal habitat.	UKBR
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Now a regular sight in the parish with several breeding pairs	

Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	A few breeding records from the west and south of the village in recent years.	Bern2, S41, UKBR
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Recent records from meadows on the southern edge of the village	BAP, UKBR
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	There may be the odd pair breeding in the parish, but this species should be more common. All new developments should include Swift nesting bricks and residents could be encouraged to put up nestboxes	BAP, UKBR
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Breeds in meadows on the southern edge of the village and in arable fields to the west and north	BAP, UKBR
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	A species which has declined drastically.	UKBR
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flavissima</i>	Breeding season reports from near Home Farm and migrants to the south of the village	BAP, UKBR
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	A few pairs breed mostly on the south side of the parish	BDir2.2, UKBR
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Records mostly of passage migrants but singing birds have been recorded in recent years at Rammamere Heath and it could potentially return as a breeder in Bucks with the correct habitat management	BAP, UKBR
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Breeds in Rushmere Park and seen using hedges in meadows to south of the village	BAP, UKBR
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	A few pairs breed around the village but has declined	BAP, UKBR
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	A few breeding pairs around the village	BAP, UKBR
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Breeding recorded from meadows adjacent to Holts Green and farmland west of the village	BAP, UKBR
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Recorded breeding on the southern side of the village and adjacent hedgerows	UKBR
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	Recorded as a passage migrant to the south of the village. Potential breeder.	BAP, UKBR
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	A few pairs breed on farmland to the west of the village	BAP, UKBR
Amphibians and Reptiles			
Great Crested Newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	Recorded at ponds in the north and south of the parish	BAP, HDir4, WCA5

Adder	<i>Vipera berus</i>	Records from the edge of the parish near Rammamere Heath which is well known for the species.	BAP, Bern3, S41, WCA5
Grass Snake	<i>Natrix helvetica</i>	Records from meadows adjacent to Holts Green, Duck End, Ivy Lane and Heath Road	BAP, Bern3, S41, WCA5
Common Lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	Recorded in 2024 behind Duck End	BAP, Bern3, S41, WCA5
Slow Worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	Recent record from the south of the parish	BAP, Bern3, S41, WCA5
Common Toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>	Records from Canon Hill and meadows south of the village	BAP, Bern3, S41, WCA5
Plants			
Golden Dock	<i>Rumex maritimus</i>	Record from Eaton Leys Farm	LI (County Scarce)
Ragged Robin	<i>Silene flos-cuculi</i>	Records from Duncombe Wood	RL-NT
Knotted Clover	<i>Trifolium striatum</i>	Recorded from the church	LI (County Scarce)
Lesser Chickweed	<i>Stellaria pallida</i>	Recorded at the church	LI (County rare)
Sand Spurrey	<i>Spergularia rubra</i>	Recorded near Duncombe Wood	LI (County Scarce)
Star Sedge	<i>Carex echinata</i>	2 records from Galley Lane Farm	LI (County Scarce)
Small fruited Prickly Sedge	<i>Carex muricata</i> subsp. <i>pairae</i>	Recorded at the church	LI (County Scarce)
Cornfield Knotgrass	<i>Polygonum rurivagum</i>	Record form Partridge Hill	LI (County Scarce)
Hard Shield Fern	<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>	Recorded at the church	LI (County Scarce)
Black Poplar	<i>Populus nigra</i> subsp. <i>betulifolia</i>	Records from near Rammamere Heath and near Mill Lane	LI (Locally important)
Little Mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium semidecandrum</i>	Recorded at St Marys Church	LI (County Scarce)
Marsh Ragwort	<i>Jacobaea aquatica</i>	2 records from Galley Lane Farm	RL-NT
Butterflies and Moths			
Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura iris</i>	Recent record from the edge of Duncombe Wood	BAP
White Admiral	<i>Limenitis camilla</i>	Records from just south of the parish in Rushmere Park	BAP, RL-VU, S41
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	Records from Rectory Farm, meadows adjacent to Holts Green and behind Duck End	BAP
Cinnabar Moth	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	Records from the Church and Church Farm	BAP, S41

## **V. Designated Heritage Assets**

For more information on the designated heritage assets in Great Brickhill Parish, see the Character Appraisal.

## **VI. Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

For more information on the non-designated heritage assets in Great Brickhill Parish, see the Character Appraisal.

## **VII. Design Code**

See Great Brickhill Parish Design Code.