

# WESTBURY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2023 – 2040

## Submission Plan

1- Westbury Aerial View



PUBLISHED BY

Westbury Parish Council for Submission consultation under  
the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012  
(as amended).

DECEMBER 2023

# GUIDE TO READING THIS PLAN

Of necessity, this Neighbourhood Plan is a detailed technical document. The purpose of this page is to explain the structure and help you find your way around the plan.

## 1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

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This section explains the background to this Neighbourhood Plan and how you can take part in and respond to the consultation.

## 2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

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This section details many of the features of the designated area.

## 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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This rather technical section relates this Plan to the National Planning Policy Framework and the planning policies of Buckinghamshire Council.

## 4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES

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This section explains the community involvement that has taken place.

## 5. VISION, OBJECTIVES & LAND USE POLICIES

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This key section firstly provides a statement on the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives. It then details Policies which are proposed to address the issues outlined in the Foreword and in Section 4. These Policies are listed in Table 1. There are also Policy Maps at the back of the plan.

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION

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This section explains how the Plan will be implemented and future development guided and managed. It suggests projects which might be supported by the Community Infrastructure Levy which the Parish Council will have some influence over. Finally, it deals with a number of issues which although relevant are outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan.

FOREWORD

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## FOREWORD

Dear Residents and Stakeholders of Westbury Village,

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I present the foreword for the Westbury Village Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of the Steering Group. This plan represents a significant milestone in our collective efforts to shape the future of our cherished, rural village. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed their time, expertise, and insights throughout this transformative journey.

Our Neighbourhood Plan is a testament to the power of community engagement. It is the result of extensive collaboration, consultation, and the invaluable input of residents, community groups, experts and stakeholders. From the initial stages of data collection and analysis to the Engagement Event and survey, your active participation has been instrumental in shaping this plan. We are deeply grateful for the overwhelming response and the enthusiasm with which you shared your thoughts, concerns, and aspirations for Westbury.

The Neighbourhood Plan is not just a document; it is a roadmap for a sustainable and confident future. It sets out a series of planning policies that will guide the decision-making process for planning applications in our area until 2040. By harnessing the collective wisdom and aspirations of our community, we have strived to ensure that the plan addresses key issues and reflects the unique character and needs of Westbury.

One of the fundamental principles underpinning this plan is sustainability. We recognise the importance of striking a balance between growth and preservation, and the need to safeguard our environment for future generations. Through your input, we have incorporated policies that promote limited responsible development, protect beloved green spaces, and preserve our natural and cultural heritage. This plan will serve as a blueprint for sustainable growth, enabling us to protect and maintain the charm and integrity of our village.

The Neighbourhood Plan represents an opportunity for us to actively shape our own destiny. It provides us with the tools to manage the quality of development in our area and ensure that future decisions align with the aspirations of our community. By embracing this plan, we are taking ownership of our future and shaping Westbury into a place where residents can thrive, businesses can flourish, and our unique identity can be preserved.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the dedicated members of the Steering Group who have worked tirelessly to bring this plan to fruition. Their expertise, commitment, and passion have been instrumental in guiding the process and ensuring that our plan reflects the collective vision of Westbury.

Finally, I would like to thank the residents of Westbury for your unwavering support and engagement throughout this journey. Your active involvement has been the driving force behind the Neighbourhood Plan, and it is through your input that we have been able to craft a plan that truly represents the aspirations and priorities of our community.

Together, let us embrace this Neighbourhood Plan as a roadmap to a sustainable future for Westbury. With our continued collaboration, dedication, and shared vision, I am confident

that Westbury will continue to be the thriving, vibrant, and inclusive community that we all value so dearly.

Thank you once again for your invaluable contributions.

Warm regards,

Jonathan Newman

Chairman, Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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## 1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1. Westbury Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, Buckinghamshire Council started in May 2019. Discussions on the plan ceased during the COVID pandemic and actively restarted in mid-2022, following a well-attended village meeting during which a local developer outlined a possible project. The area in the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan coincides with the Parish boundary (see Plan A on page 4). The plan is being prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations of 2012 (as amended).

1.2. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to set out a series of planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the area in the period to 2040. The Plan will form part of the development plan for the Buckinghamshire plan area, alongside the adopted Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP), which will eventually be replaced by the Buckinghamshire Local Plan 2040 and will cover the same period.

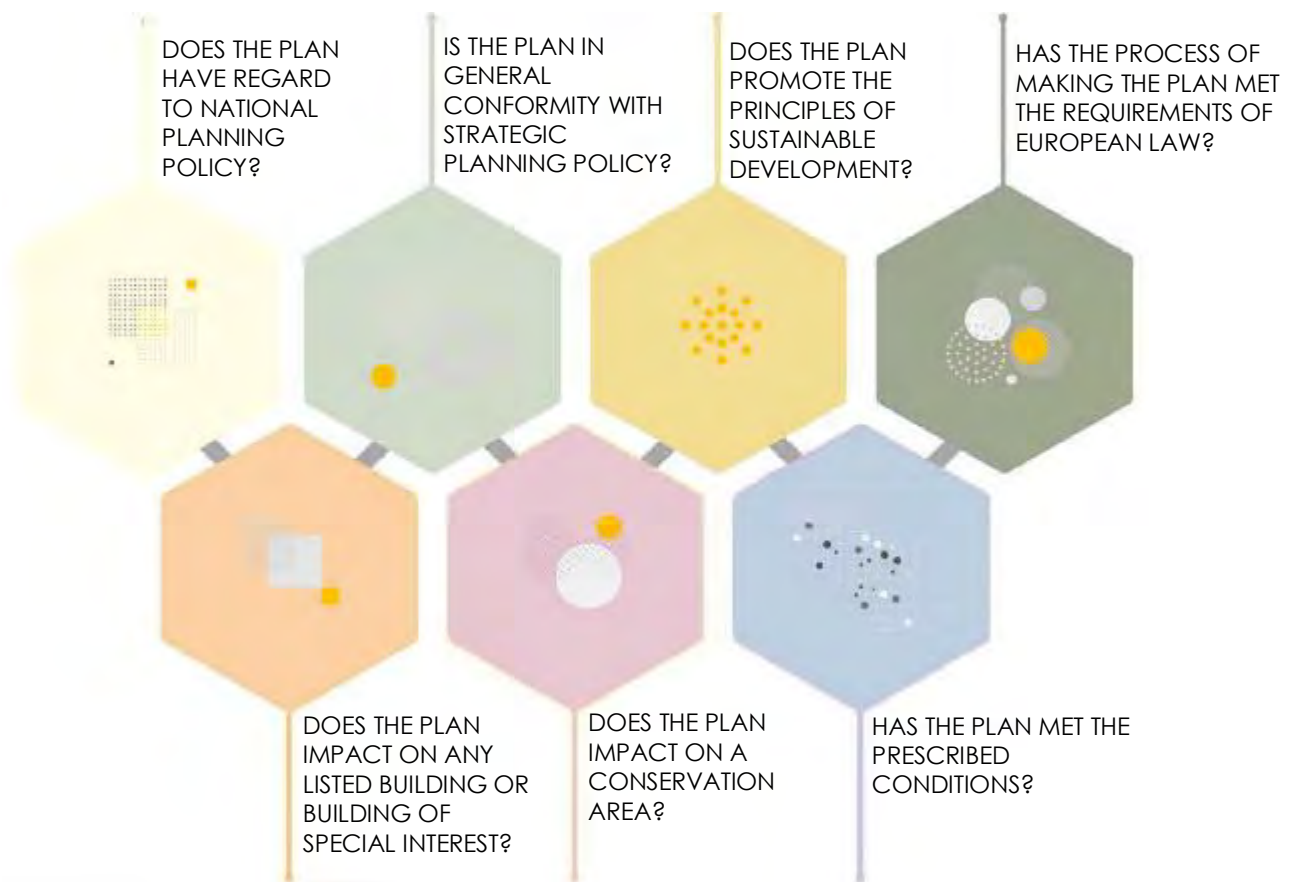
1.3. Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to manage the quality of development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Plan becomes part of the Council's statutory development plan and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided in the neighbourhood area. Plans must therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Plan if they are not directly related to planning. Although there is scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans must meet all the relevant basic conditions (see Figure 2 overleaf).

1.4. In addition, the Parish Council will need to demonstrate to an independent examiner that it has successfully engaged with the local community and stakeholders in preparing the Plan. If the examiner is satisfied that it has, and considers the Plan meets the above conditions, then the Plan will go to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority (over 50%) of the turnout votes in favour of the Plan, then it becomes adopted as formal planning policy for the neighbourhood area.

### THE SUBMISSION PLAN

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1.5. A draft ('Pre-Submission') Plan was published for consultation in June 2023 in line with the Regulations. The Parish Council has reviewed the comments received from the local community and other interested parties, including Buckinghamshire Council, and have made changes to this final version.



## 2 Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions

### STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & THE HABITATS REGULATIONS

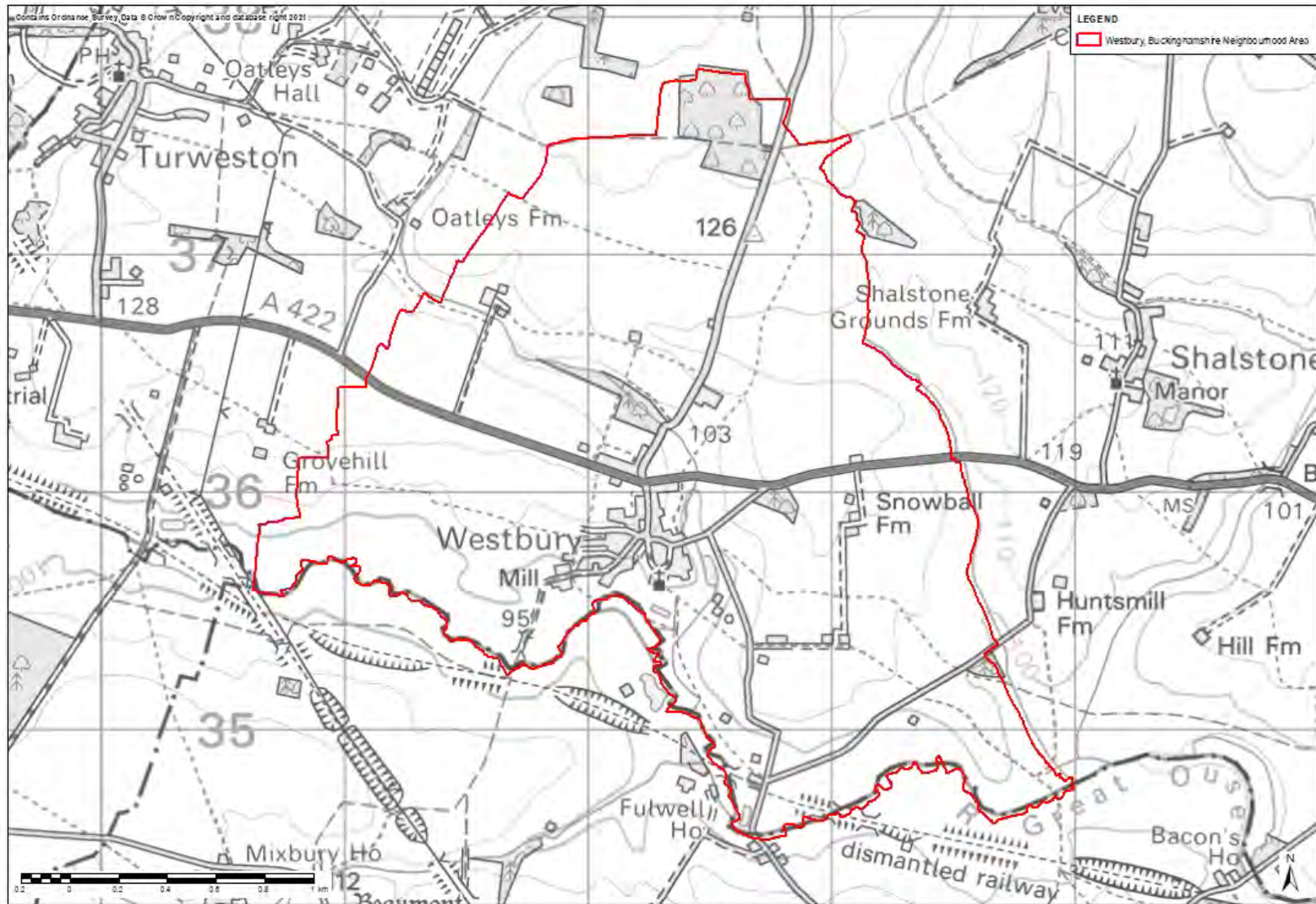
1.6. Buckinghamshire Council confirmed in its screening opinion of February 2020 that a Strategic Environmental Assessment would be necessary in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). The SEA report is published alongside this plan.

1.7. The screening opinion also confirmed that a Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

### THE NEXT STEPS

1.8. This Plan will be submitted to Buckinghamshire Council for a further consultation and to arrange for its examination by an independent examiner and subsequent referendum, if the examiner is satisfied that the draft plan meets the basic conditions.





**Plan A: Designated Neighbourhood Area**

## 2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

2.1 The village of Westbury lies in the North-West corner of Buckinghamshire County, near its border with Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire. The nearest large settlements are Brackley and Buckingham, approximately 2 miles West and 5 miles East along the A422 respectively, which is the main road that runs through Westbury from East to West. There are two smaller, rural roads which go north and south out of the village, connecting with other small settlements. Due to Westbury's position between the three counties, some residents feel as though Westbury is often overlooked for maintenance and enhancement investments in critical infrastructure. Westbury's residents must make regular trips to Brackley and Buckingham to make use of the wider range of facilities and infrastructure that are available in those towns. Public transport infrastructure in Westbury is limited, comprised of infrequent bus services. The village has several community facilities including a Village Hall, Cricket Club, Football Club, Village Club, Church and a Community Shop. Areas of land in the Parish are subject to a HS2 safeguarding direction, including some strips adjoining the existing built village footprint.



2.2 The infrastructure of the village has reached and now exceeds capacity in several areas. Vehicular traffic congestion and access is a problem, compounded by residential car-parking on the side of the narrow Main Street, as well as local and school bus services using the route. All the Mill Lane abodes are supplied by a single road, itself one-way only at the proximal segment adjacent to a listed building (Little Thatches) and reaching a dead end at the Mill flats block (i.e., no continuation to exit the village by a loop). The residential traffic volume along Mill Lane is compounded by additional school traffic following the opening of a new, nominally overflow, car park for Beachborough School towards the end of Mill Lane. The village is bisected by the main road A422

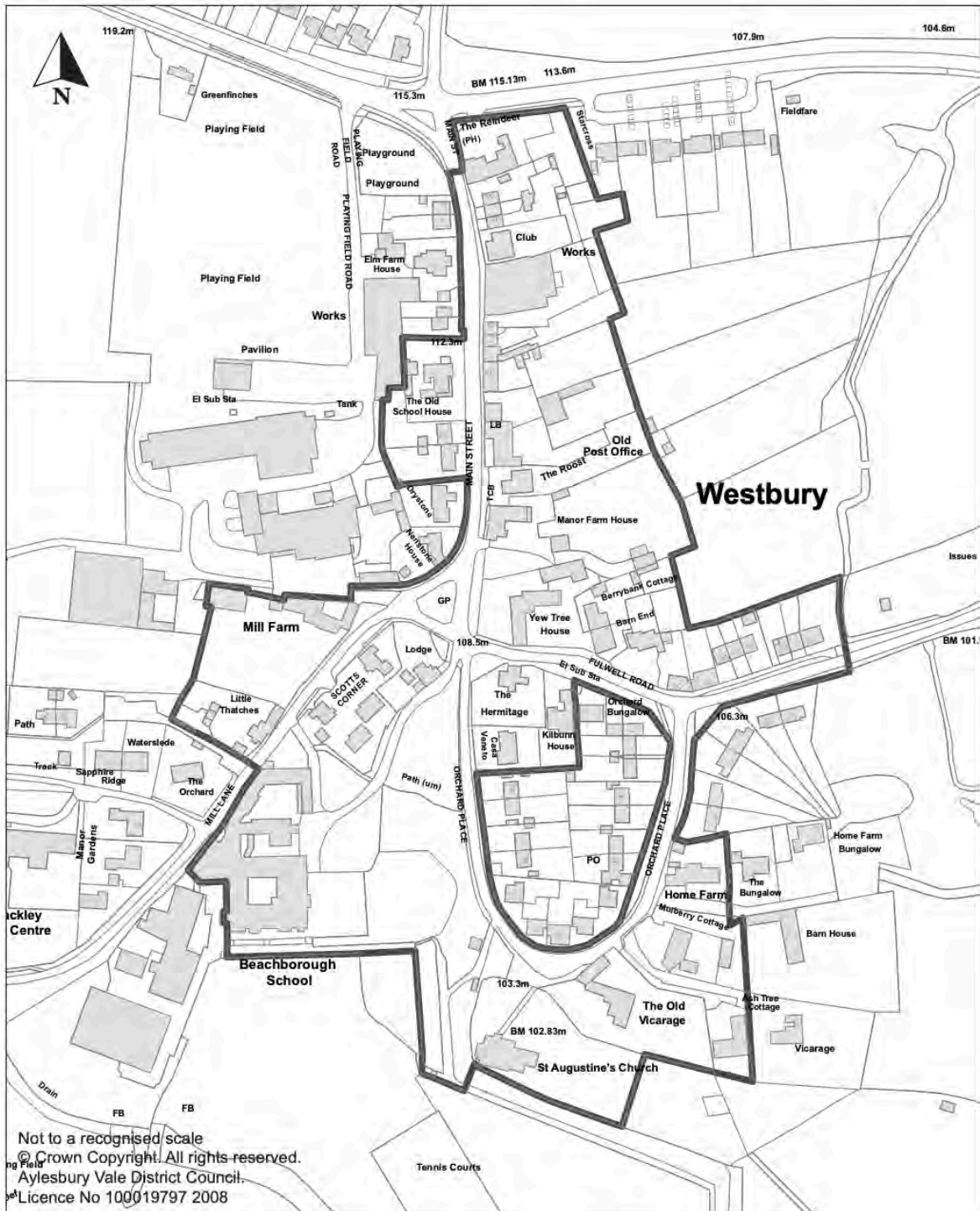
(Brackley to Buckingham), which has heavy traffic during rush hours. Also, delivery lorries on the A422 to SugaRich facility on Biddlesden Road operate 24/7. The growth of HS2 infrastructure, with a new roundabout 1km away from the village, has increased overall traffic. In 2023, a much-needed Puffin crossing is to be installed west of the village crossroads on the A422. Sewage foul-water drainage is at critical level, with all drains ending up at the sewage works by Fulwell Road. A recent planning decision (rejection) indicates that there is no capacity to take any additional flow from north and west of Red Oak Lane (i.e., any further housing development there would require major new drainage infrastructure).



2.3 St Augustine's Church was controlled by a local abbey (under, unusually, an abbess) when constructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> C. Westbury Manor owned most of the land up to 1931, when it was sold off and (later) Beachborough independent prep school took it over. At that time, there were about 50 abodes in Westbury, including the Manor and 8 farms (Home Farm, Manor Farm, Wilds Farm, Mill Farm, Grove Farm, and College Farm, Yew Tree Farm, Elm Farm). Most of the farmhouses have now been converted to residential accommodation. Farming was wheat and dairy. The last active farmhouse (Mill Farm) in the central village area ceased in the early 2000s. Beef cattle farming has since been built up on the land to the west of Westbury, and the original farm buildings converted into abodes, with new build development on redundant silo land, and infill buildings on vacant small lots. From WW2 up to 2000, new housing developed mainly along Brackley Road, Buckingham Road, Biddlesden Road, and Orchard Place. By 2000, there were 122 abodes in Westbury. Since 2000, there have been 66 newly built properties and 27 conversions to housing. This amounts to a 76% increase in housing stock, with a current total of 215 abodes. The main areas of development since 2000 have been on or around Mill Lane: new-builds on School Close and the middle part of Mill Lane (land released by

Beachborough School); the distal part of Mill Lane with new-builds on previous light-industry land, and refurbishment of the old Mill into 13 flats. A smaller development took place after 2010 on land vacated by Mill Farm. The old farm-working buildings were renovated as The Stables; four large properties were built on the old silo barn sites, and an additional bungalow erected. The private access road from the A422 has been renamed Red Oak Lane, noting the expanding cattle farm (Red Oak Farm) which shares the road. The post-WW2 properties are very mixed in style, from bungalows, through red-brick semi-detached houses, to large stone-clad buildings. The overall quality is attractive and good [see picture highlights]. Up to the present, there has been no new housing on green-space land, only on redundant farm and light-industry land. A notable increase in the valuable utilisation of available farmland has been the expansion of Red Oak Farm for cattle, where 10 times as many cattle now reside compared with a decade ago. Numerous fences have been constructed to contain the cattle, restricting the available previously public open land, riverside walks and bridle paths.

- 2.4 The population of the village has seen a 7% increase from 447 in 2011 (2011 Census) to 481 in 2021 (2021 Census). The largest age groups are 50-59 and 40-49, representing 18% and 16% of the population respectively. A survey of the housing stock in Westbury confirmed there are 215 properties in the village, with an overrepresentation of large properties in comparison with the rest of Aylesbury Vale and England as a whole. Housing tenure in the Parish is skewed significantly towards ownership (78.9%) (2021 Census) and a dominance of detached houses (42%) (Village Survey) compared to the rest of England (15.9%). In 2023, the average house price in the Parish is £515,500 (Right Move). This is an increase of 15% since 2019.
- 2.5 The built footprint of Westbury Village lies next to the Southern border of the Parish boundary. This part of the boundary follows the natural border of the River Great Ouse while the North, East and West boundaries follow various field borders and wooded areas. The built footprint is concentrated in a relatively small part of the Parish. Although a certain amount of development has taken place along the A422 Buckingham to Brackley Road, the older part of the village is situated to the south on a slope of the River Great Ouse. The rest of the Parish area is rural in nature and contains various farms and industrial units.
- 2.6 The Parish contains the Westbury Conservation Area (see Plan B below) which was designated in July 1989. It contains several surviving important historic buildings and structures.



**Plan B: Westbury Conservation Area**

2.7 There are 10 listed buildings in the Parish, all Grade II listed bar one which is Grade II\* listed (see Plan C below). These include Westbury Manor Farmhouse and the Church of St Augustine.

# MAGiC Listed Buildings in Westbury



## Legend

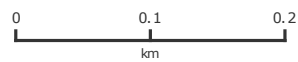
 Parishes (GB)

## Listed Buildings (England)

 I

 II

 II\*



Projection = OSGB36

xmin = 461300

ymin = 235400

xmax = 463000

ymax = 236200

Map produced by MAGiC on 24 May, 2023.

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## Plan C: Listed Buildings in Westbury

2.8 There are areas of the Parish which are subject to varying degrees of flood risk, from both fluvial and surface water sources (see Plans D and E below). These risks are exclusive to areas in close proximity to the River Great Ouse and the stream running along the Eastern side of the village.



Extent of flooding from rivers or the sea

● High ● Medium ● Low ● Very low ⊕ Location you selected

### Plan D: Flooding (Fluvial Sources)



Extent of flooding from surface water

High 
  Medium 
  Low 
  Very Low 
  Location you selected

### Plan E: Flooding (Surface Water Sources)

- 2.9 Within the Parish Boundary there are a number of priority habitats. These include grazing marsh, semi-improved grassland, deciduous woodland and wood pasture & parkland. Areas of ancient woodland can provide key Green Infrastructure and habitat value. Just North-East of the Parish is the Whittlewood Forest Biodiversity Opportunity Area.
- 2.10 Legislation provides protection to many animal species in the UK, meaning that a Protected Species Survey would be required to support any planning application where some of the following are present: badgers, bats (all species), birds (including owls and breeding and wintering birds), dormice, great crested newts, invertebrates (such as butterflies, moths, snails white-clawed crayfish and stag beetles), natterjack toads, otters and water voles, reptiles (such as adders, grass snakes, common lizards and slow worms). Many of these species have been sighted in the Parish and an ecological survey confirmed presence of bats, badgers, great crested newts and various reptiles at one particular site. Hedgehogs also have some degree of legal protection in the UK and are listed on Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) which makes it illegal to kill or capture wild hedgehogs. They are also listed under the Wild Mammals Protection Act (1996), which prohibits cruel treatment of hedgehogs.



2.11 The construction of HS2 has resulted in several, significant impacts to the picturesque rural village of Westbury:

- Increased traffic on A422, resulting from the project, has disrupted the tranquillity of the village and put further strain on the already over-subscribed local road infrastructure.
- Despoliation of the westward views, due to the construction of the railway line, has marred the natural beauty that once characterised the area and protection of integrity of the remaining views is a community priority. There is a strong interest in continuing to work with HS2 to achieve the 15 year and beyond restorative benefits of the environmental mitigation scheme as outlined in [Vol 2 CFA 14 Newton Purcell to Brackley](#)<sup>1</sup>. Any action that put these restorative benefits at risk would not be supported.
- Reduced farmland availability, impacting local agricultural operations.
- Incessant noise from drilling deep piles and other HS2 construction activity has, and continues to be, a source of annoyance and disturbance for the residents.
- Extensive destruction of trees and hedgerows during construction has had a detrimental effect on the biodiversity of the area, further highlighting the ecological impact of HS2 on Westbury village and the criticality of the restorative planting schemes and other environmental impact mitigation actions.
- Uncertain consequences for water drainage due to the creation of ponds near the new viaduct.

However, one positive outcome has been the (temporarily) increased footfall at the village café, benefiting local business.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-phase-one-environmental-statement-volume-2-community-forum-area-reports-and-mapbooks>



### 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Parish lies within the former Vale of Aylesbury District, which now is a part of the unitary Buckinghamshire Council plan area.

#### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

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3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The following paragraphs of the latest NPPF version published in July 2021 are considered especially relevant:

- Neighbourhood planning (§28 – 30)
- Housing mix and tenure (§62)
- Healthy and safe communities (§92)
- Community facilities (§93)
- Local green spaces (§100 – 103)
- High quality design (§127, 129, 130)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (§174 - §176)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (§189 - §203)

3.3 The Government has also set out a requirement for the provision of First Homes in a Written Ministerial statement on 24 May 2021. These requirements were subsequently incorporated into National Planning Practice Guidance. First Homes Exception Sites can come forward in the Parish in the same way that Rural Exception Sites can. It is anticipated that the forthcoming Local Plan will deal with this matter appropriately and Buckinghamshire Council has published an Interim Position Statement regarding First Homes in the meantime ([link](#)).<sup>2</sup>

3.4 The Government is consulting on proposed changes to the NPPF, and the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill (LURB) is currently passing through Parliament. It expects to publish the new NPPF and enact the LURB in spring 2023, but there are further changes to the NPPF proposed by the end of the year in relation to the LURB. The proposed amendments continue to indicate that there remains a future for neighbourhood planning.

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY

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3.5 The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan which primarily comprises the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) adopted in 2021. It identifies Westbury as a 'smaller village' in the settlement hierarchy of the district (S3 Settlement hierarchy and cohesive development) and as a result, makes no formal site allocations but allows 'windfall' applications. The VALP makes clear that development in the countryside should be avoided.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/affordable-housing/first-homes-interim-position-statement/>

3.6 It is anticipated that the emerging Buckinghamshire Local Plan will treat small villages like Westbury in a similar manner to the VALP.

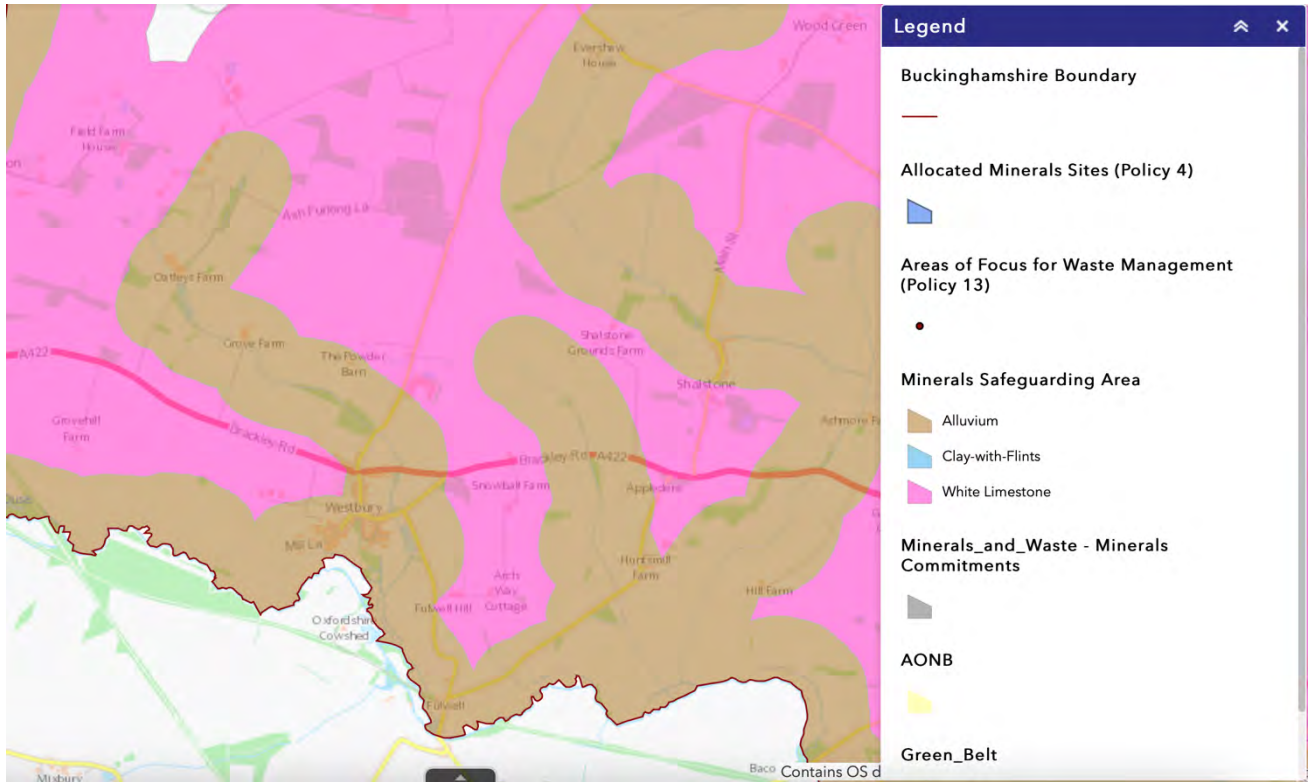
3.7 The VALP does not itself adopt settlement boundaries on its Policies Maps but D4 'Housing development at smaller villages' defines the 'existing development footprint' as the 'continuous built form of the village'. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to build upon this policy and provide a further degree of clarity by defining the settlement boundary on the policies maps.

3.8 The key strategic policies which have guided the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan are:

- S2 Spatial Strategy for Growth
- S3 Settlement Hierarchy and Cohesive Development
- D4 Housing Developments at Smaller Villages
- D7 Town, Village and Local Centres to Support New and Existing Communities
- H6a Housing Mix
- T7 Footpaths and Cycle Routes
- BE1 Heritage Assets
- BE2 Design of New Development
- NE4 Landscape Character
- NE6 Local Green Space
- I1 Green Infrastructure
- I3 Community Facilities
- C3 Renewable Energy

3.9 The new Buckinghamshire Council will be obliged to prepare and adopt a new statutory strategic policy framework by 2025. The Buckinghamshire Local Plan is in its very early stages of preparation, although it is currently anticipated that this Plan will cover the period to 2040. This Neighbourhood Plan has set the plan period to 2040 to cover the same plan period as the emerging Buckinghamshire Local Plan.

3.10 The Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2016 – 2036 (MWLP) also forms part of the development plan that apply in the Parish. There are Minerals Safeguarding Areas in and adjacent to the Parish (see Plan F). The Minerals and Waste Authority has therefore been invited to comment on the proposals within this plan.



**Plan F: Minerals Safeguarding Areas**

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING POLICY

3.11 There are a large number of made Neighbourhood Plans in Buckinghamshire and the Aylesbury Vale area. However, there are none which directly adjoin the Parish.

## 4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES

### 4.1 Community Engagement Event

The first Community Engagement Event for the Westbury Neighbourhood Plan was held on 4th March 2023 from 10am to 12 noon in the Westbury Village Hall. Approximately 80 residents took the time to attend the event and provide their feedback, demonstrating a strong level of community interest and engagement.

The event was made possible with the generous support of the extended Neighbourhood Plan working group and the Westbury Community Shop and Cafe, who served breakfast and refreshments for the attendees. To ensure maximum awareness and participation, the event was advertised through various channels. Local social media platforms were utilised, along with posters distributed in the local area. Additionally, a leaflet drop was conducted, reaching all households in Westbury and ensuring that everyone had the opportunity to learn about and engage with the event.

The Westbury Village Hall served as the venue, arranged as an open forum exhibition where villagers could drop-in and explore the considerations and progress made with the Neighbourhood Plan. Members of the Steering Committee were present at the event, available to explain and discuss the information presented. The three development scenarios and preference criteria for potential development site evaluation were clearly outlined on posters, along with other supporting materials, providing a comprehensive overview for attendees.

- Scenario 1 – Incremental growth
- Scenario 2 – Affordable homes
- Scenario 3 – New community facilities

The high attendance at the event was evident through a steady stream of people throughout the duration and is an indicator of the high level of interest and engagement within the community. The villagers who participated in the event demonstrated a genuine interest, actively contributing additional insights and suggestions that greatly enhanced the quality and completeness of the Neighbourhood Plan.

During the event, attendees were asked to complete a survey (either on-site or online after the event). In total, 89 survey responses were received, reflecting feedback from a significant portion of the community. The overall feedback from attendees indicated that the event was well-organised, engaging, helpful, and highly informative. Residents expressed their satisfaction that action was being taken to complete a Neighbourhood Plan, highlighting the positive sentiment and support for the initiative.

The Community Engagement Event for the Westbury Neighbourhood Plan successfully fostered a sense of community involvement and provided a platform for residents to express their views. The event's organisation, informative materials, and the presence of the Steering Committee members ensured that attendees received comprehensive information and had the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions. The valuable

feedback and suggestions provided by the residents have contributed to the development of a comprehensive and inclusive Neighbourhood Plan that accurately represents the needs and aspirations of the Westbury Village community.

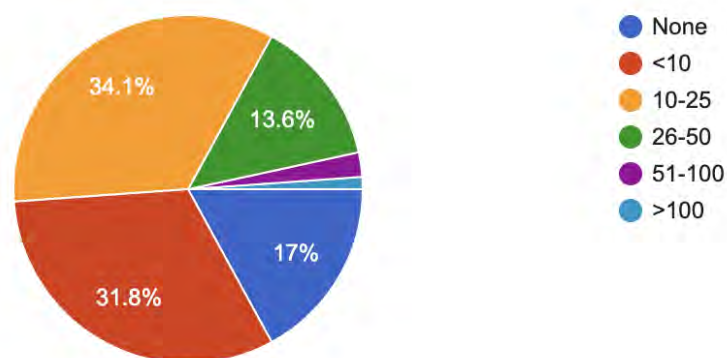
#### 4.2 Engagement Event Survey

A survey was circulated to residents of the village to solicit their views following the Engagement Event in March. 89 responses were collected although not all questions were answered. The number of responses per question is stated below. The survey engagement rate was considered a strong response in relation to the property count of the village with almost half of all households responding. Questions were structured in relation to the information provided at the event to establish the view of the village regarding growth, new housing strategies and to further validate the housing stock data collected through observation and conversation coupled with Land Registry records. The responses regarding the scenarios presented at the event have helped direct the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### 4.3 Analysis (89 respondents – not all questions answered by all respondents)

##### **How many new homes do you think would be appropriate?**

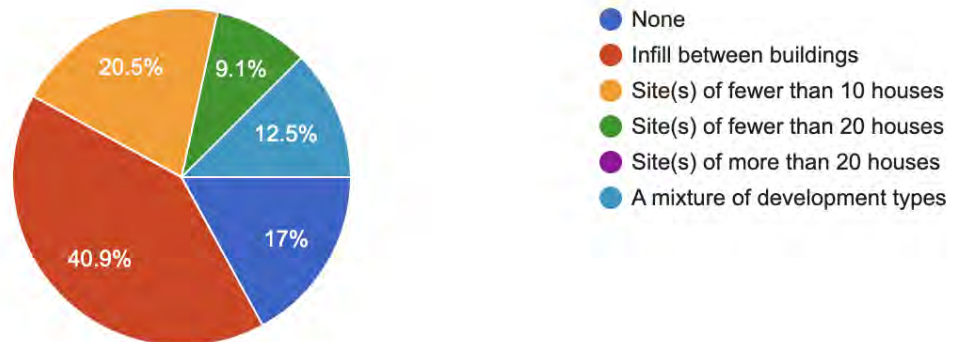
88 responses



The majority view is that up to a maximum of 25 houses would be an appropriate increase during the life of the Neighbourhood Plan. If realised, running to the year 2040 would represent an increase of housing stock of up to 11.6%. This would be a slower growth rate compared to the previous 17 years leading up to the present day. Only a very minor portion of the responses favoured larger developments. When grouping responses, 82.9% wanted to see an increase between 0-25 houses, again an overwhelming majority supporting a reduction of growth rate compared to recent years with 17% wanting no further growth at all.

## What type of future housing development(s) do you think would be appropriate?

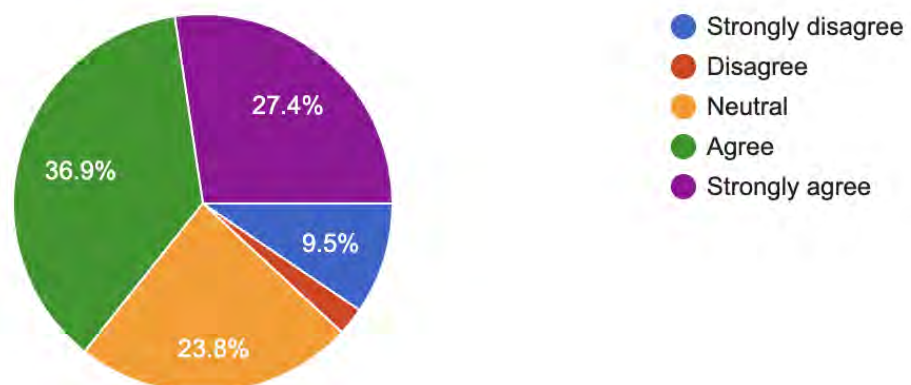
88 responses



Infill between buildings was the standout favoured approach by the 88 respondents to this question and was almost twice as strong a response compared to the second top option being sites of fewer than 10 houses. 17% wished to see no further development which is consistent with the previous question regarding quantities of new homes. There wasn't a single response to 20 or more houses. In conclusion, the responses favour either no development, or small developments using infill sites.

## To what extent do you agree or disagree with Site Assessment Criteria?

84 responses



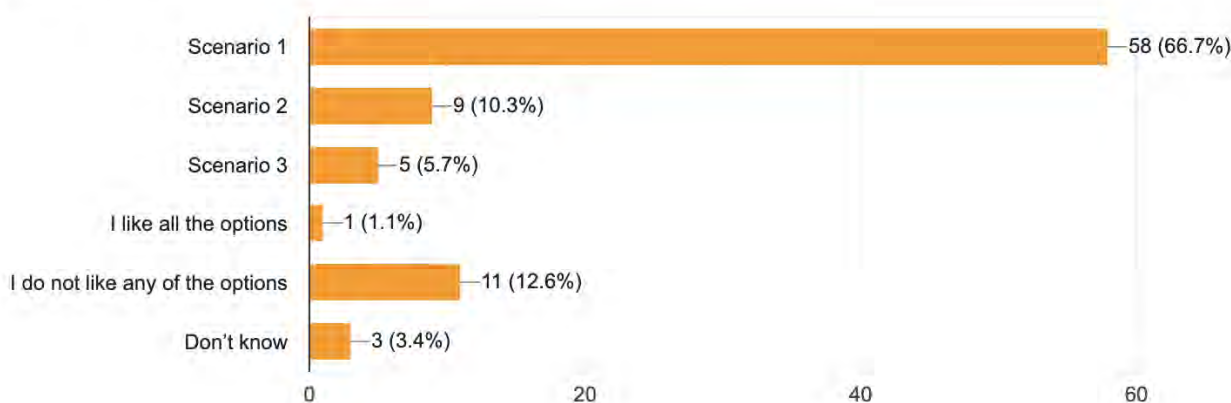
61.3% agreed with the Site Assessment Criteria outlined at the Engagement Event which is almost 6 times greater compared to those that didn't agree, strongly or otherwise. Of those that didn't agree, looking a level deeper in the data reveals that exactly 50% of those respondents didn't agree with the Site Assessment Criteria, purely on account of not wishing there to be any further development at all when inspecting their responses to adjacent questions. Again, looking at other answers to questions for this group, despite not



wanting any further development, all apart from one later went on to agree with Scenario 1 which favours Infill between existing developments.

**Considering all three scenarios, which is your preferred option? Please select one answer only.**

87 responses



Two-thirds of the 87 responses were in favour of the proposed Scenario 1 compared to 16% in favour of either Scenarios 2 or 3 combined. The information strongly indicated a preference for the direction of the village and has therefore been factored into key elements of the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### 4.4 Importance of the rural setting

The respondents provided several reasons highlighting the importance of the rural setting, local environment, and landscape to the quality of life for the residents of Westbury:

1. **Mental Health:** Access to the countryside is considered crucial for maintaining good mental health.
2. **Serenity and Beauty:** The rural setting offers beautiful sunsets, open views, and a peaceful atmosphere that enhances the residents' enjoyment and relaxation.
3. **Community Spirit:** The village's rural nature fosters a sense of community and friendliness among the residents.
4. **Access to Nature:** The presence of footpaths, walking routes, and open spaces allows residents to connect with nature and enjoy outdoor activities.
5. **Prevention of Overdevelopment:** Residents express concerns about maintaining the village's rural character to avoid the negative consequences associated with excessive development, such as traffic congestion, crime, and a lack of facilities.
6. **Unique and Special Community:** The rural setting contributes to the village's unique identity and attractiveness, making it a desirable place to live.
7. **Health of the Environment:** Preserving the rural environment is important for the well-being of both the residents and the natural ecosystem.

8. Quality of Life: The rural setting, open spaces, and quiet environment contribute to an overall higher quality of life for the residents.
9. Protection Against Industrialization: Residents value the village as a peaceful contrast to industrial landscapes and pollution often found in cities.
10. Sense of Place: The rural setting gives a distinct sense of place and identity to Westbury.

These responses collectively emphasise the importance of the rural setting, local environment, and landscape in preserving the unique character, well-being, and quality of life for the residents of Westbury.

#### 4.5 Views on Design Code

The respondents provided the following suggestions for design requirements in new housing developments within the village:

1. Reflect Village Character: The design should be in keeping with the traditional, stone-built, and rural aesthetic of the existing housing stock.
2. Green Spaces: Incorporate ample green spaces and gardens in the development plans.
3. Small-Scale Development: Advocate for smaller-scale developments to promote gradual growth and integration with the community, without overwhelming existing services.
4. Environmental Considerations: Ensure that the design is environmentally friendly, energy-efficient, and incorporates eco-friendly features such as solar panels and insulation.
5. Sympathetic Construction: Use materials and construction methods that are sympathetic to the existing properties and structures within the village.
6. Off-Street Parking: Provide sufficient off-street parking, screened with hedges or trellises adorned with plants, to minimise the impact of cars on the village roads.
7. Improved Infrastructure: Enhance infrastructure, including pathways, crossings, and public transport, to support the needs of the new housing development and the village.
8. Quality and Variation: Encourage diverse designs and variations in the properties within the development to avoid uniformity and promote quality.
9. Proximity and Spacing: Consider the proximity between properties and provide ample space between them to maintain privacy and reduce overcrowding.
10. Historic Preservation: Protect any historic locations within the village during the development process.
11. Sustainable and Modern Features: Emphasise eco-friendly and sustainable design practices, such as high thermal performance, smart homes, and low environmental impact.

These suggestions collectively stress the importance of maintaining the village's character, incorporating environmentally friendly elements, respecting existing architecture, and

considering the impact on infrastructure and community integration in any new housing development within the village.

#### 4.6 Additional comments and suggestions

The respondents provided the following comments and additional suggestions:

1. **Preserve Village Character:** It is crucial to maintain the village's character and identity while avoiding excessive development and meeting housing targets.
2. **Increase Woodland:** There is a desire to have more woodland areas within the Parish.
3. **Adhere to the Neighbourhood Plan:** Ensure that the policies and guidelines outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan are followed.
4. **Consider Infrastructure and Traffic:** Address existing traffic concerns and avoid expanding developments that would further impact traffic congestion.
5. **Provide Amenities:** Consider the addition of amenities such as improved public transport, drinking water fountains, improved active travel networks, improved cellular coverage and faster broadband.
6. **Future Employment and Community Groups:** Consider post-pandemic increases in remote or hybrid working, future employment opportunities and ways to revive community groups that have declined.
7. **Protect Footpaths and Bridleways:** Preserve existing public footpaths and bridleways and ensure they are not destroyed or removed.
8. **Underground Cables:** Explore the possibility of putting electricity cables underground.
9. **Traffic Management:** Improve traffic management without implementing a one-way system that could increase vehicle speed.
10. **Solar Farm:** Consider utilizing fields for a solar farm as an alternative to housing development, promoting carbon neutrality, and generating sustainable energy.
11. **Protect Village from HS2:** Continue to take measures to actively engage with HS2 to protect the village from the potential negative impacts of the nearby HS2 project.
12. **Consideration for Housing Composition:** If new housing is necessary, ensure it complements the village, attracts homeowners who will respect the surroundings and positively improves the housing mix.
13. **Reduce Speed Limits:** Advocate for reducing the speed limit on the A422 road to enhance safety, particularly in areas with play parks and playing fields.

These comments and suggestions provide additional insights into the community's concerns and aspirations regarding the village's future development and infrastructure improvements.

VISION

“To recognise Westbury’s rural village environment by ensuring that its key special features are protected, and only appropriate development occurs within the area.”

OBJECTIVES

To facilitate incremental growth through small scale ‘windfall’ sites

Securing a more appropriate mix of housing in new developments which recognises the need for a balanced community

Design coding to manage the quality of infill and other schemes and prioritising the mix of any future housing schemes to deliver smaller homes

To protect community facilities and services that are essential to community life

## INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND USE POLICIES

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5.1 The following policies relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area of Westbury Parish. They focus on specific planning matters that are of greatest interest to the local community.

5.2 There are many parts of the Parish that are not affected by these policies, and there are many other policy matters that have been left to the adopted and forthcoming Buckinghamshire Local Plan to cover. This has avoided unnecessary repetition of policies between this Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted development plan, though they have a mutual, helpful inter-dependence.

5.3 Each policy is numbered and titled, and it is shown in bold italics. Where necessary, the area to which it will apply is shown on the Policies Map attached to the document. After each policy is some supporting text that explains the purpose of the policy, how it will be applied and, where helpful, how it relates to other development plan policies.

## THE LAND USE POLICIES AND SUPPORTING TEXT

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### **POLICY W1: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan defines a settlement boundary for Westbury, as shown on the Policies Map.**
- B. Proposals for housing development within the settlement boundary will be supported provided they accord with other relevant policies of the development plan.**
- C. Proposals for housing development outside of the settlement boundary will only be supported if they accord with development plan policies managing development in the countryside.**

5.4 The policy is intended to distinguish between the built-up area of the main village settlement of Westbury and the surrounding countryside in order to manage development proposals accordingly. By doing so, the policy aims to prevent the shortening of the gap between the development footprint of the village and HS2. The policy refines VALP Policy D4 which defines the development footprint in smaller villages as:

*“the continuous built form of the village and excludes individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings. This includes former agricultural barns*

*that have been converted, agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the village and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built-up area of the village."*

5.5 By clearly defining the Settlement Boundary on the Policies Map, this policy is providing greater clarity as to where development will be deemed acceptable. This will allow applicants and the local planning authority greater certainty when preparing and determining planning applications respectively.

5.6 The policy draws a settlement boundary that is more permissive and precise than the VALP's definition. The Neighbourhood Plan's plan period runs until 2040 (rather than the 2033 VALP period) and the intention of the more permissive boundary is to allow smaller, infill sites to come forward organically.

5.7 The Settlement Boundary reflects plot boundaries where they are clearly defined in the street-scene or within the landscape, e.g., mature trees/hedges, boundary walls/fences. Features that appear visually as part of the open landscape are excluded from the boundary, irrespective of their functional relationship to land within the boundary. The process of drawing the Settlement Boundary is further explained in the Settlement Boundary Report (Appendix A).

5.8 Most new development will be acceptable in principle within the defined boundaries, subject to compliance with the Design Guidance and Codes Report (Appendix B). This may be small scale, infill housing and other uses that are appropriate in scale to small villages with a severely limited road network and limited public transport services, telecoms, wastewater and sewage infrastructure.

5.9 The Neighbourhood Plan does not make any housing site allocations. This decision was taken mainly in response to output from informal consultation engagement with the local community, but also with recognition of Westbury's status as a Smaller Village in the VALP settlement hierarchy. As per VALP Policy S2, there is only an expectation of limited housing growth within smaller villages. As evidenced by survey output, the local community are mainly in favour of small sites of less than 10 dwellings as well as infill developments. The Settlement Boundary has been drawn in a manner which reflects this and allows small scale 'windfall' and infill development proposals to be brought forward.

## POLICY W2: HOUSING MIX

**A. Proposals for residential development of 2 dwellings or more will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to address the nature of local needs and contribute to the objective of creating a mixed and balanced community. To achieve this objective, new residential development will seek to include in their housing mix, a majority of 2 and 3 bed dwellings.**

5.10 VALP Policy H6a states that housing mix will be negotiated having regard for evidence provided by Neighbourhood Plans. This policy is intended to give local effect to Policy H6a by setting a specific requirement for all new homes in the Parish. It is necessary in order to start to rebalance the current mix of homes so that it better reflects local need. The policy is intended to contribute towards a mixed and balanced community in line with paragraph 62 of the NPPF.

5.11 Data collected by the Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Working Group found a significant over-provision of large homes (4 or more bedrooms) and under-provision of smaller homes (1 to 3 bedrooms) in Westbury, when compared to the rest of Aylesbury Vale and England (a copy of the housing data has been published in a separate document). Output from informal consultation with the local community found the greatest need over the next 20 years will be for 2–3-bedroom homes and homes for first time buyers.

5.12 The provision of a stock of small housing units would give the elderly an opportunity, if they wish, to vacate their larger dwellings, yet remain resident in the village and provide an opportunity for younger and/or key worker, one and two person households to find suitable accommodation in the area. Changing the balance of housing mix towards more and smaller, two-to-three-bedroom houses would allow more younger families to join the community. This is key for the continuing development of vibrancy in our communities and overall sustainability of Westbury. Better utilisation of the existing housing stock is unlikely to occur unless smaller units are available either by the construction of new small dwellings or by the conversion of existing properties.

5.13 In addition, a greater number of smaller units can be delivered on a given site than larger units. The provision of a higher proportion of small dwellings (i.e., greater than 50% of the total of schemes of five or more dwellings) will ensure an efficient use of scarce land in the built-up areas of the villages.

## **POLICY W3: DESIGN CODE**

- A. Development proposals will be supported provided they have full regard to the essential design guidelines and codes, where applicable relevant to the character area typologies within which they are located, as shown on the Policies Maps, and set out in the Westbury Design Guidelines and Codes Report attached as Appendix B.**

5.14 There are distinctive features of Westbury that shapes it character. These features are set out in the Westbury Design Guidance and Codes attached at Appendix B. The Code is an integral part of the policy but is extensive and the document is therefore attached as an Appendix for representational purposes only. Its content places additional local emphasis to the design quality principles of VALP Policy BE1, and VALP Policy BE2 in respect of the particular characteristics of the Westbury Conservation Area. It therefore carries the full weight of the development plan in decision making and is not subordinate or supplementary guidance carrying lesser weight.

5.15 The policy requires that applicants should demonstrate that they have full regard to the design principles and guidance the Code contains as relevant to the location of their proposals. The policy does not advocate pastiche or historic solutions; however, it is important that any new development demonstrates a connection with local character and place making. Where a proposal does not follow the requirements of the Code then the applicant will be obliged to justify why an exception should be made.



## **POLICY W4: PASSIVHAUS**

**A. All development must be ‘zero carbon ready’ by design to minimise the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping. Consideration should be given to resource efficiency at the outset and whether existing buildings can be re-used as part of the scheme to capture their embodied carbon.**

**B. Wherever feasible, all buildings should be certified to a Passivhaus or equivalent standard with a space heating demand of less than 15KWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year. Where schemes that maximise their potential to meet this standard by proposing the use of terraced and/or apartment building forms of plot size, plot coverage and layout that are different to those of the character area within which the proposal is located, this will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that the scheme will not have a significant harmful effect on the character area.**

**C. All planning permissions granted for new and refurbished buildings should demonstrate that they have been tested to ensure the buildings will perform as predicted and will include a planning condition to require the provision of a Post Occupancy Evaluation Report to the Local Planning Authority within a specified period, unless exempted by Clause B. Where the Report identifies poor energy performance and makes recommendations for reasonable corrective action, the applicant must demonstrate that those actions have been implemented before the condition will be discharged.**

**D. All planning applications for major development are also required to be accompanied by a Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Emission Assessment, using a recognised methodology, to demonstrate actions taken to reduce embodied carbon resulting from the construction and use of the building over its entire life.**

**E. An Energy Statement will be submitted to demonstrate compliance with the policy (except for householder applications). The statement will include a passive design capacity assessment to demonstrate how opportunities to reduce the energy use intensity (EUI) of buildings over the plan period have been maximised in accordance with the energy hierarchy. Designers shall evaluate the operational energy use using realistic information on the intended use, occupancy and operation of the building to minimise any performance gap.**

5.16 The UK Parliament declared an environment and climate emergency in May 2019. The Climate Change Act 2008 is the basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. It requires that emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are reduced and that climate change risks are prepared for. The Act also establishes the framework to deliver on these requirements and commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 'net zero' by 2050. Buckinghamshire Council has also published its Climate Emergency Statements.

5.17 The Energy White Paper published in December 2020 sets out the government's Vision and 10-point transition plan for how the UK will reach the UK target of 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2050. The White Paper confirms the government's intention to ensure significant strides are made to improve building energy performance to meet this target. This means that by 2030 all new buildings must operate at 'net zero', the means by which this can be achieved is described in the diagram overleaf. This approach unequivocally focuses on the energy hierarchy and the role of post occupancy monitoring and verification to ensure buildings perform in the way they are designed.

5.18 The consultation on the 'Future Buildings Standard' announced in January 2021 aims to 'radically improve' the energy performance of new homes ensuring they are 'zero carbon ready' by 2025. This means having high levels of energy efficiency and fabric performance that produce 75 to 80 per cent lower carbon emissions than houses built to current standards. The Government has also confirmed in its response to the Future Homes Standard consultation that they do not intend to amend the Planning and Energy Act 2008 and that as a result the setting of energy efficiency standards at the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan scale is permissible.

5.19 This policy is in five parts, the combination of which is intended to deliver a step change in the energy performance of all new and extended buildings in the town and, in doing so, encourage and incentivise the use of the Passivhaus or equivalent standard of building design. Along with the passive design capacity assessment, it is anticipated that designers will demonstrate compliance using a design for performance methodology such as the Passivhaus Planning package or CIBSE TM34 Operational Energy. Achieving this level of performance will make a significant contribution to mitigating climate change that the Neighbourhood Plan can help deliver.

5.20 Clause A of the policy requires developers to ensure they address the Government's climate change targets and energy performance at the very initial stages of design. 'Zero Carbon Ready by Design' means making spatial decisions on layout and orientation of buildings at the outset to maximise the passive design benefits ('free heat') of a site and avoids leaving this to technical choices and assessment at the Building Regulation stage, by which time the opportunity may have been lost.

5.21 Its Clause B requires all schemes, no matter what their intended use or size other than householder extensions, to use the Passivhaus Planning Package (PHPP) or equivalent design methodology for all buildings. It acknowledges that it may not be feasible to do so

and allows applicants to explain those factors that make the method unfeasible, for example, the topography and orientation of the site. In respect of scheme viability, any extra-over cost of building to the 'zero carbon ready' Passivhaus standard (now less than 5%) will diminish to zero well within the period of this Plan, as per both the Governments Regulatory Impact Assessments and research by the Passivhaus Trust. The policy will also ensure that expensive and unnecessary retrofit costs are not passed down to building occupiers in the future, particularly in an area which has relatively high property values. Scheme viability will not therefore be acceptable as a reason for not using the Standard, unless the applicant can demonstrate the scheme has abnormal costs to accommodate.

5.22 The policy acknowledges that there may sometimes be a trade-off between its objectives and local design policy. Although meeting these standards ought not to compromise a scheme fitting in with the character of a local area, on occasions this may be the case. It therefore allows for some degree of flexibility in meeting the Westbury Design Code, especially in terms of prevalent building orientation and density. Proposals seeking to apply the PHPP must also be able to demonstrate that the Passivhaus standard can be achieved. Prior to commencement a 'preconstruction compliance check' completed by a Passivhaus Designer accredited by the Passive House Institute (PHI) will be required and secured by condition. Upon completion a Quality Approved Passivhaus certificate for each building will be required prior to occupation, again secured by condition.

5.23 Clause C operates where the developer cannot or chooses not to use the Passivhaus or equivalent standard. It requires that every building in the consented scheme is subject to a Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) including actual metered energy use, and to submit the report to the local planning authority. This provision is implemented by a planning condition being attached to the planning permission, which will only be discharged once the report has been submitted and any recommended actions to rectify any performance gap with the design stage assessment are carried out by the developer. Passivhaus certified schemes cannot fail in this way, hence they are not subject to this clause and will not require a POE report.

5.24 The policy complements VALP Policy C3 which encourages development schemes that achieve greater energy efficiency.

5.25 Clause E requires an Energy Statement to be submitted to cover the following:

- an assessment of the proposal to minimise regulated and unregulated emissions, the embodied emissions and the emissions associated with maintenance, repair and replacement of the new building(s), as well as its dismantling, demolition and eventual material disposal
- a calculation of the energy and carbon emissions covered by the Future Homes Standard and Building Regulations and, separately, the energy demand and

carbon emissions from any other part of the development that are not covered by the Future Homes Standard or Building Regulations

- the proposal to reduce carbon emissions beyond the Future Homes Standard and Building Regulations through the energy efficient design of the site, buildings and services
- the proposal to further reduce carbon emissions through the use of zero or low-emission decentralised energy where feasible
- the proposal to further reduce carbon emissions by maximising opportunities to produce and use renewable energy on-site, utilising storage technologies where appropriate
- the proposal for a demand-side response, specifically through installation of smart meters, minimising peak energy demand and promoting short-term energy storage
- an analysis of the expected cost to occupants associated with the proposed energy strategy

5.26 Every new build or redevelopment project in Westbury provides an opportunity to make a difference and a contribution towards meeting our climate change targets for 2050. This new information requirement need not be an unreasonable expectation of even the smallest schemes for new buildings. Land values in the village are very high relative to build costs and ought to be sufficient to ensure the policy requirements to tackle improving energy and carbon performance are viable.

# Net Zero Operational Carbon

## Ten key requirements for new buildings

By 2030 all new buildings must operate at net zero to meet our climate change targets. This means that by 2025 all new buildings will need to be designed to meet these targets. This page sets out the approach to operational carbon that will be necessary to deliver zero carbon buildings. For more information about any of these requirements and how to meet them, please refer to the: UKGBC - Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework; BBP - Design for Performance initiative; RIBA - 2030 Climate Challenge; GHA - Net Zero Housing Project Map; CIBSE - Climate Action Plan; and, LETI - Climate Emergency Design Guide.

### Low energy use

- 1** Total Energy Use Intensity (EUI) - Energy use measured at the meter should be equal to or less than:

  - **35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr** (GIA) for residential<sup>1</sup>

For non-domestic buildings a minimum DEC B (40) rating should be achieved and/or an EUI equal or less than:

  - **65 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr** (GIA) for schools<sup>1</sup>
  - **70 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr** (NLA) or **55 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr** (GIA) for commercial offices<sup>1,2</sup>

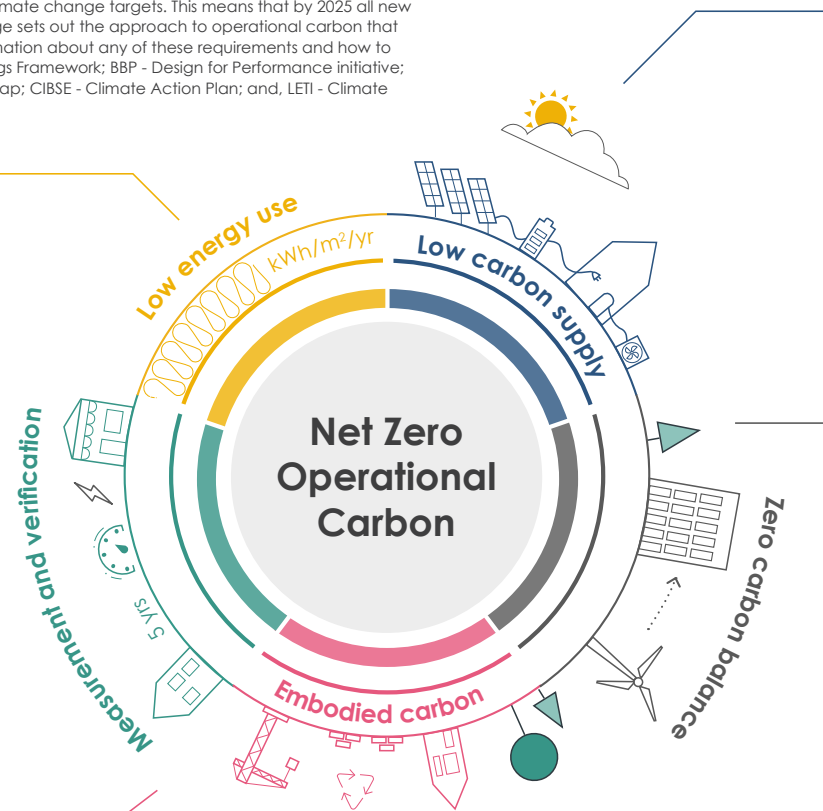
- 2** Building fabric is very important therefore space heating demand should be less than **15 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr** for all building types.

### Measurement and verification

- 3** Annual energy use and renewable energy generation on-site must be reported and independently verified in-use each year for the first 5 years. This can be done on an aggregated and anonymised basis for residential buildings.

### Reducing construction impacts

- 4** Embodied carbon should be assessed, reduced and verified post-construction.<sup>3</sup>



### Low carbon energy supply

- 5** Heating and hot water should not be generated using fossil fuels.
- 6** The average annual carbon content of the heat supplied (gCO<sub>2</sub>/kWh) should be reported.
- 7** On-site renewable electricity should be maximised.
- 8** Energy demand response and storage measures should be incorporated and the building annual peak energy demand should be reported.

### Zero carbon balance

- 9** A carbon balance calculation (on an annual basis) should be undertaken and it should be demonstrated that the building achieves a net zero carbon balance.
- 10** Any energy use not met by on-site renewables should be met by an investment into additional renewable energy capacity off-site OR a minimum 15 year renewable energy power purchase agreement (PPA). A green tariff is not robust enough and does not provide 'additional' renewables.

#### Notes:

**Note 1 – Energy use intensity (EUI) targets**  
The above targets include all energy uses in the building (regulated and unregulated) as measured at the meter and exclude on-site generation. They have been derived from: predicted energy use modelling for best practice; a review of the best performing buildings in the UK; and a preliminary assessment of the renewable energy supply for UK buildings. They are likely to be revised as more knowledge is available in these three fields. As heating and hot water is not generated by fossil fuels, this assumes an all electric building until other zero carbon fuels exist. (kWh targets are the same as kWh<sub>heat,elec</sub>). Once other zero carbon heating fuels are available this metric will be adapted.

**Note 2 – Commercial offices**  
With a typical net to gross ratio, 70 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> NLA/yr is equivalent to 55 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr. Building owners and developers are recommended to target a base building rating of 6 stars using the BBP's Design for Performance process based on NABERS.

**Note 3 – Whole life carbon**  
It is recognised that operational emissions represent only one aspect of net zero carbon in new buildings. Reducing whole life carbon is crucial and will be covered in separate guidance.

**Note 4 – Adaptation to climate change**  
Net zero carbon buildings should also be adapted to climate change. It is essential that the risk of overheating is managed and that cooling is minimised.

Developed in collaboration with:



Developed with the support of:



## **POLICY W5: LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS**

**A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following buildings and structures as Local Heritage Assets, as shown on the Policies Map.**

- 1. Beachborough School, Main Building**
- 2. The Old Mill, Mill Lane**
- 3. Westbury Causeway, Near the Old Mill**
- 4. The Reindeer Inn**

**B. Proposals that will result in harm to, or unnecessary loss of, a Local Heritage Asset, will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a public benefit that outweighs the harm or loss.**

5.27 This policy identifies a number of buildings and structures which are regarded as ('non-designated') heritage assets in the Parish that, whilst not statutorily listed, have some local heritage value for the purposes of applying the provisions of §203 of the NPPF and VALP Policy BE1. Local volunteers identified candidate local heritage assets as part of the preparation of the evidence base supporting the Neighbourhood Plan. These have been assessed against criteria advocated by Historic England in its 2019 guidance note<sup>3</sup>. A description of the value of each asset is provided in the Appendix C list. The owners of the heritage assets properties have already been notified of the proposed inclusion on this list and their responses have been considered in the Consultation Statement which will be published alongside the Submission Plan in due course.

5.28 Buckinghamshire Council has its own Local Heritage List project, which shares the same aims of this policy. Given both have used the same evaluation criteria, it is expected that the assets identified in this policy will be added to Buckinghamshire list in due course.

5.29 By creating a list of Local Heritage Assets, the neighbourhood plan will be able to carry out the community's wishes of protecting historic buildings and architecture that contribute to Westbury's character and sense of place.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/>

## **POLICY W6: IMPORTANT VIEWS**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Key Views on the Policies Maps (and Plan G and Appendix E) as valued sightlines into and out of the Parish.**
- B. Development proposals should preserve or enhance the local character of the landscape and through their design, height and massing should recognise and respond positively to the various Key Views.**
- C. Development proposals which would have a significant adverse impact on an identified Key View will not be supported.**

5.30 The policy, and Policies Map, identifies a series of views from public vantage points in the Parish and from within the grounds of Beachborough School that are considered an important element of preserving the character of the village and the surrounding landscape. Development which would obstruct such a view, or which would lead to a detrimental impact on the view should not be permitted.

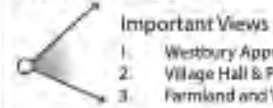
5.31 The policy does not seek to prevent any development lying within a view but requires that proposals recognise and take account of these in their design, as per VALP policies BE2 and NE4. These views are clearly shown on the Policies Map. In each case, only the minimum area of land necessary to define the view has been identified. Identification of important views will help to conserve our Parish's character and sense of place.

5.32 Each of the important views identified in this policy is shown on the Policies Map and Plan G below. A photograph and a description of each view is shown in Appendix E.

# Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Key Views Map - November 2023



## W6: Important Views



1. Westbury Approach
2. Village Hall & Playing Fields - Rural Views and Gorgeous Sunsets
3. Farmland and Woodlands to the North of Westbury Village
4. View from the A422 & Biddlesden Rd Crossroad
5. Picturesque Country Lanes - Biddlesden Road
6. Rural Outlook from Footpath to the Northwest of the Westbury
7. Views of the agricultural amenity ponds to the Southwest of the Village
8. Views of Beachborough School Grounds & Farmland
9. Rural Views from the bottom of Mill Lane
10. North towards Red Oak Farm & Westbury Village from Mibury Footpath
11. Rural views from The Powder Barns (locally known as The Dust House)
12. Sunsets and Rural Outlook from the top of Mill Lane
13. Looking up to Fulwell Road
14. Disused Railway
15. Fields Barn Farm on Fulwell Road

Plan G: Key Views Map



## **POLICY W7: LOCAL GREEN SPACE**

**A. The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following Local Green Spaces, as shown on the Policies Map:**

- 1. Holywell Wilds**
- 2. Green Grass Triangle, End of Main Street**
- 3. Playing Field**

**B. Proposals for development in a Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances.**

5.33 The policy designates a series of Local Green Spaces in accordance with §101 – 103 of the NPPF and VALP Policy NE6. A designation has the policy effect of the equivalence of the Green Belt in terms of the definition of 'inappropriate development' consistent with paragraph 101 and 143 of the NPPF and of the 'very special circumstances' tests in the NPPF when determining planning applications located within a designated Local Green Space.

5.34 A review of all open land within and adjoining the village settlement has been completed, informed by the qualifying criteria in the NPPF. The land is considered to meet those criteria and is therefore worthy of designation as illustrated and justified in the Local Green Space report (Appendix D). In the Parish Council's judgement, each designation is capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period having regard to NPPF §136. The owners of these sites were notified of the proposed Local Green Space designations during the preparation of the Plan.

5.35 The policy has been reviewed in relation to the consideration in the Court of Appeal (2020 EWCA Civ 1259) of an equivalent policy in a neighbourhood plan in Mendip District. Policy W7 follows the matter-of-fact approach in the NPPF. In the event that development proposals come forward on the Local Green Spaces within the Plan period, they can be assessed on a case-by-case basis by Buckinghamshire Council. It will be able to make an informed judgement on the extent to which the proposal concerned demonstrates the 'very special circumstances' required by the policy.

## POLICY W8: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- A. The Parish contains a variety of Green and Blue Infrastructure that provides an environmental support system for the community and wildlife. The Neighbourhood Plan designates a Westbury Green Infrastructure network, as shown on the Policies Map (and Plan H), for the purpose of promoting nature recovery and helping mitigate climate change. The network comprises land with known biodiversity value, priority habitats, woodlands, significant hedgerows and lines of tree, including newly planted hedgerows and trees as part of the HS2 project mitigation measures extending into the Parish.
- B. Development proposals that lie within or adjoining the network are required to have full regard to maintaining and improving the functionality of the network, including delivering a net gain to biodiversity, in the design of their layouts and landscaping schemes. Proposals that will harm the functionality or connectivity of the network will not be supported.
- C. Development proposals that will lead to an extension of the network will be supported, provided they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.
- D. The Policies Map shows those parts of the designated Network that are known or likely to have biodiversity value either as habitat areas; as hedgerows or lines of trees; or as streams and rivers. For the purpose of calculating Biodiversity Net Gain requirements using DEFRA's latest metric, development proposals located within or adjoining that part of the Network should anticipate achieving at least a medium distinctiveness multiplier score.
- E. Any proposal that can demonstrate that off-site compensation to mitigate for biodiversity loss is necessary must follow a sequential approach to its delivery. The gain should be delivered within or adjoining the network where the land is suited in principle for delivering the necessary gain. If this is not practical, then gain should be delivered on land within an adjoining Parish that is suited in principle for delivering the necessary gain. Only if it can be shown that this is not practical may the gain be delivered on other land.

5.36 The policy refines adopted VALP Policy I1 on Green Infrastructure by identifying the Green Infrastructure Network of Westbury. Green infrastructure can be broadly defined as a network of high quality natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, which is designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services and

protect biodiversity in both rural and urban settings. This includes parks, public open spaces, allotments, watercourses, play areas, playing fields as well as informal open land and associated features such as trees, hedgerows, ponds, green roofs and green walls. The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applications to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account.

5.37 The policy requires that all development proposals that lie within the network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. This may mean that development layouts are designed to contribute to the network's effectiveness. The policy also requires a biodiversity net gain to be delivered. This is expected to be in line with national provisions which is expected to be a minimum of 10% as identified in the Environment Act 2021. Net gain will be measured using DEFRA's latest biodiversity metric.

5.38 Clauses D and E respond to the biodiversity net gain (BNG) provisions of the Environment Act 2021, which will become a statutory part of plan making and development management in November 2023, April 2024 for small sites. The BNG Metric (currently in its 4.0 version and includes a Small Sites Metric which is a simplified version of the 4.0 Metric) will provide the means for applicants to calculate the baseline biodiversity value of the application site in determining the net gain requirement of their proposals. The Policies Map makes a distinction between those parts of the Network that have, or are likely to have, existing biodiversity value, based on published mapped data and observation, and those that do not. Green infrastructure is multi-functional but some features – for example amenity and formal recreational land – are unlikely to have biodiversity value or will be suited to improving that value by the nature of their use. The areas identified as 'amenity open space' consist of open spaces with recreational or social value.

5.39 Clause D relates to those parts of the Network of biodiversity value. Given it includes all defined Priority Habitats and semi-natural habitats, native hedgerows and trees and natural water bodies, the clause anticipates that the distinctiveness multiplier score of the BNG Metric (from very low to very high) will be at least medium.

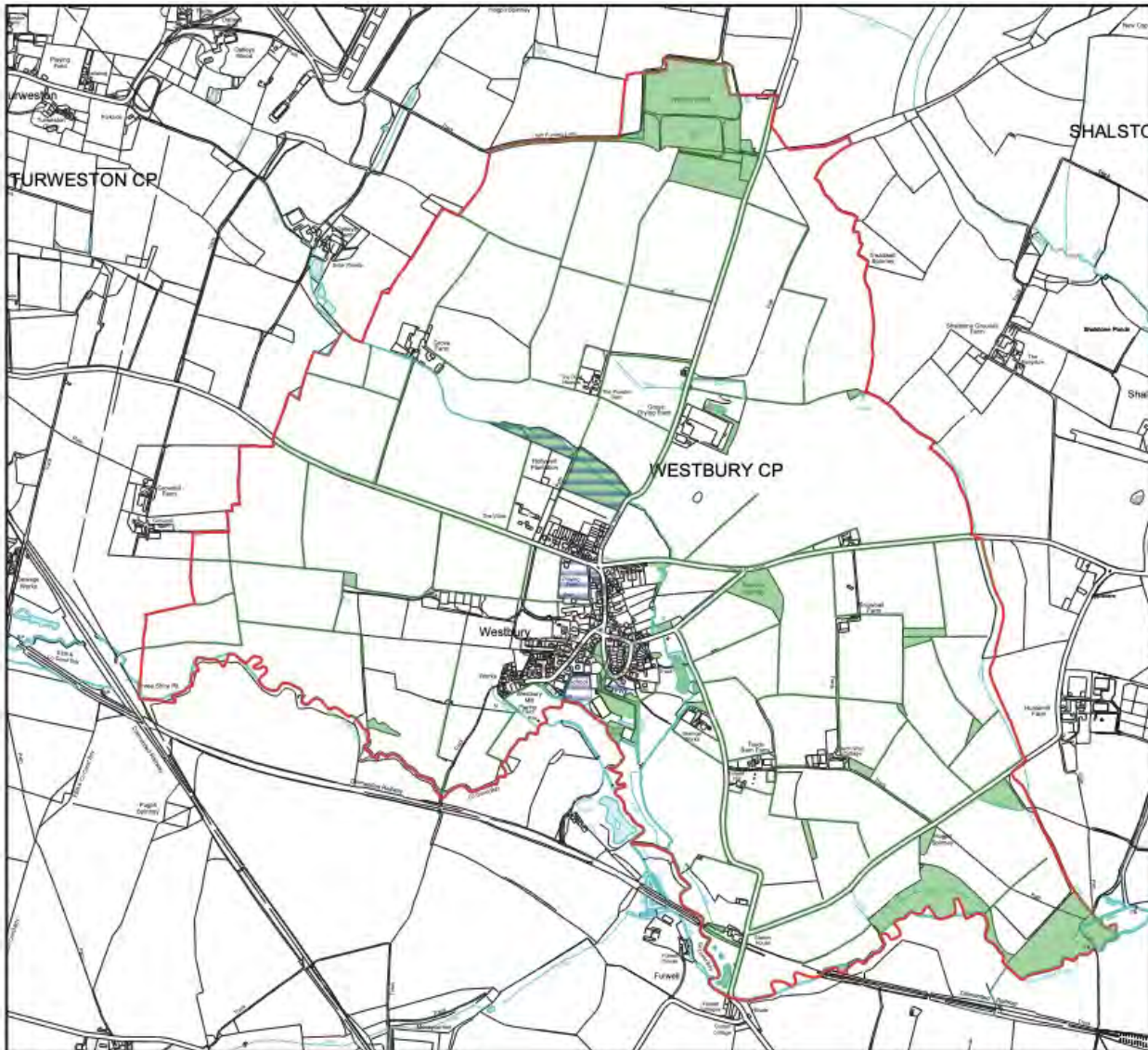
5.40 Finally, the policy sets out how the loss of biodiversity value will be addressed through a sequential approach. The new biodiversity net gain requirement of at least 10% (as set out by the Environment Act of 2021 and the Biodiversity Net Gain SPD) should be delivered either onsite or within or adjoining the Network so that the benefits of development are accrued as close as possible. However, it is accepted that the Network in the Parish may not be suited to delivering every type of required off-site gain. In such cases Clause D allows for the gain to be delivered in adjoining Parishes to Westbury or, as a final resort, on land elsewhere.

5.41 For proposals seeking to extend the existing Network, and delivering biodiversity net gain within the Parish, as per Clauses C and E in the policy, Plans I and J indicate where land has been identified as suited in principle for achieving these improvements. The

Neighbourhood Plan is not trying to 'deliver' these opportunities as such, it is simply identifying where natural flood management and the national habitat network can be improved.

5.42 If planting of flora is required it is recommended to focus on locally sourced and native species to reduce spread of diseases, support local businesses and to enhance the local biodiversity. In appropriate locations development should seek to plant species such as the native black poplar.

5.43 Identifying the GI network is the first step to protect its functionality and connectivity and will also contribute to maintaining access to countryside and preserving the rural character.

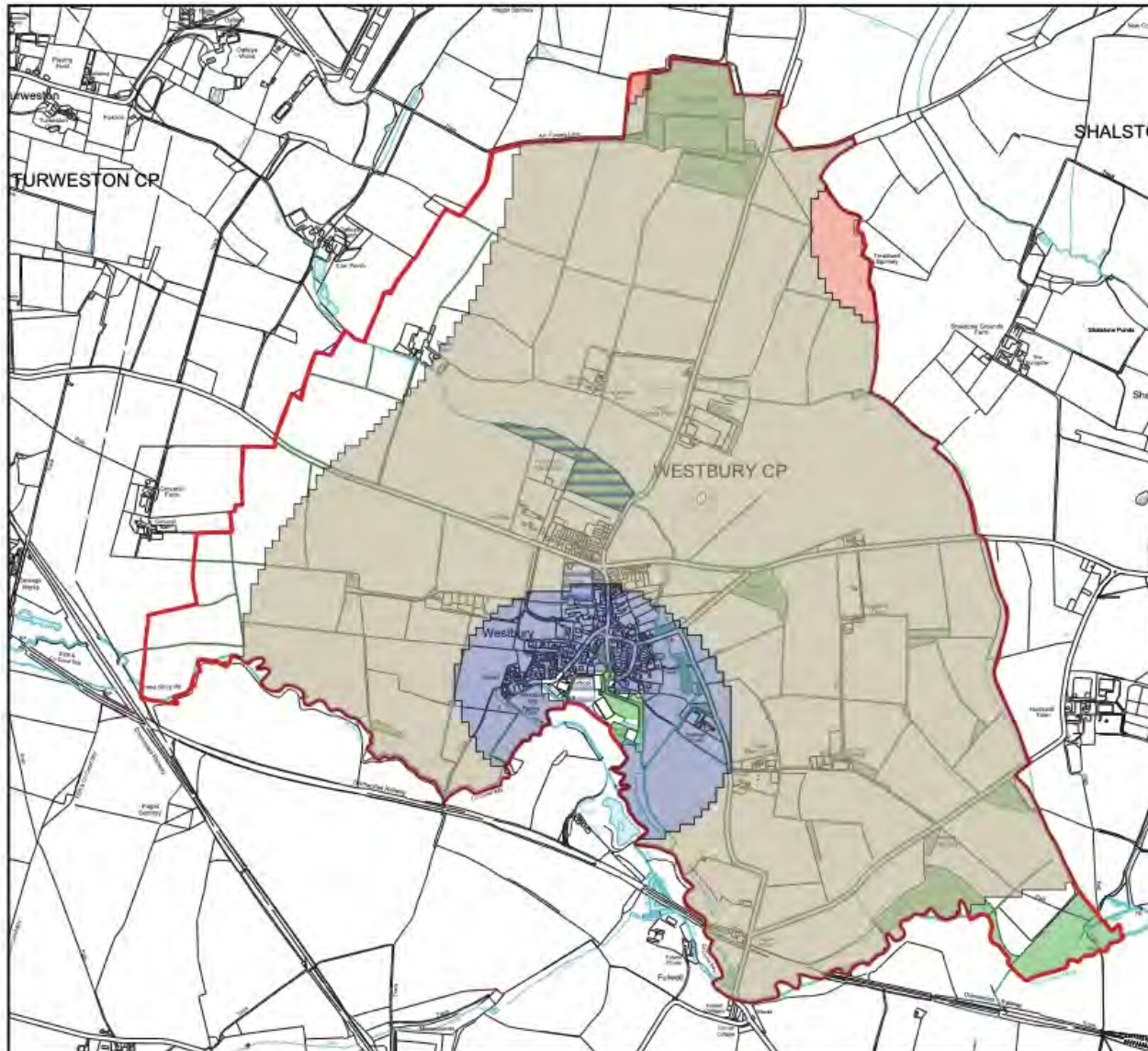


**Westbury Neighbourhood Plan  
Green Infrastructure Map  
(Existing GI Only)  
November 2023**

-  Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Existing Green Infrastructure
-  Existing Blue Infrastructure
-  Amenity Open Space

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**Plan H: Green Infrastructure Map (Existing GI Only)**

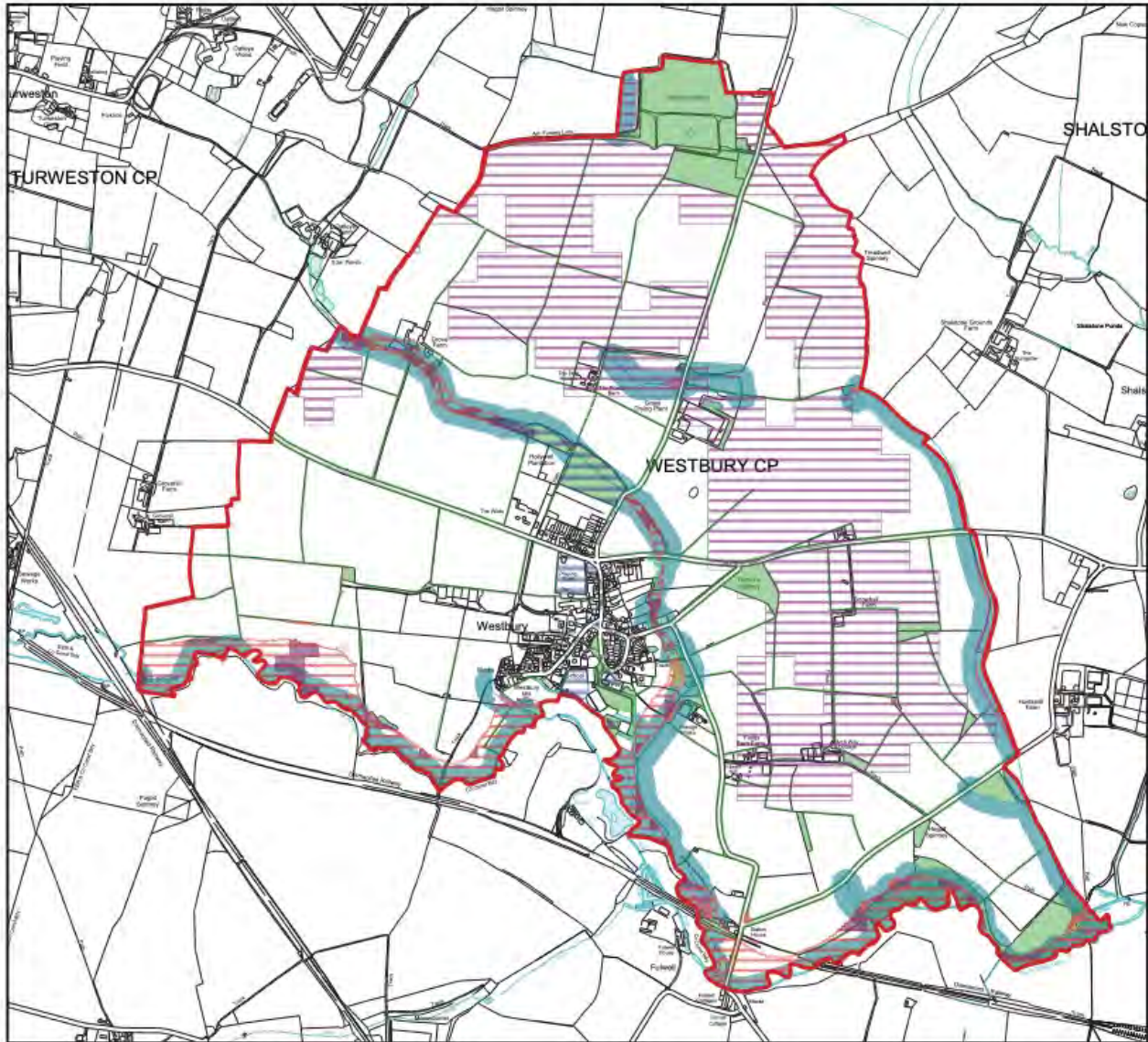


**Westbury Neighbourhood Plan  
National Habitat Network  
Opportunities  
November 2023**


-  Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Existing Green Infrastructure
-  Existing Blue Infrastructure
-  Amenity Open Space
- National Habitat Network :**
-  Network Expansion Zone
-  Network Enhancement Zone 1
-  Network Enhancement Zone 2

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**Plan I: National Habitat Network Opportunities**



**Westbury Neighbourhood Plan  
Natural Flood Management  
Opportunities  
November 2023**

-  Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Existing Green Infrastructure
-  Existing Blue Infrastructure
-  Amenity Open Space
- Natural Flood Management:**
-  Additional Floodplain Woodland
-  Additional Riparian Woodland
-  Additional Catchment Woodland
-  Enhanced Floodplain Reconnection
-  Runoff attenuation features to reduce 1/30 annual probability flows
-  Runoff attenuation features to reduce 1/100 annual probability flows

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**Plan J: Natural Flood Management Opportunities**

## **POLICY W9: ACTIVE TRAVEL**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the existing Active Travel Network, as shown on the Policies Map (and Plan K), for the purpose of supporting healthy and safe active travel opportunities in the Parish.**
- B. Development proposals on land that lies within or adjacent to the network should sustain, and where practicable, enhance the functionality of the network by virtue of their layout and means of access and landscape treatment.**
- C. Proposals that will cause harm to the functioning or connectivity of the network will not be supported.**

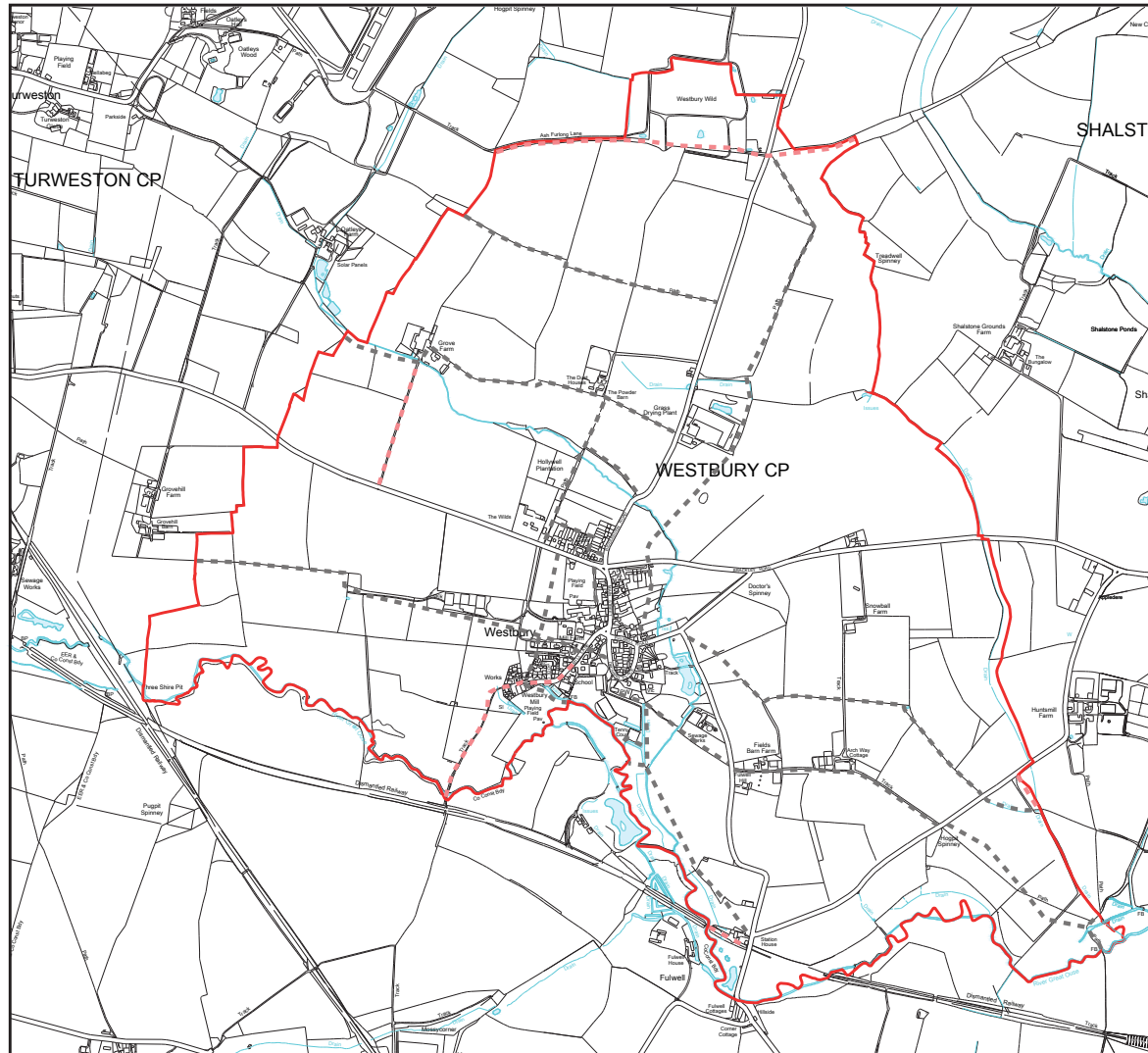
5.44 Identifying our existing Active Travel Network will help direct investment to encourage walking and cycling in the Parish.

5.45 The policy maps a network of walking and cycling routes through the main village settlement and to its boundaries where many routes continue to connect the village with the countryside and its neighbouring settlements. The aim of both is to raise awareness of the routes to encourage safe and convenient use, and to identify future opportunities to improve their connectivity, in line with VALP Policy T7.

5.46 The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to the Network and/or improve the attractiveness of rural routes. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission.



## Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Active Travel Map - November 2023



-  Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Footpaths
-  Bridleways

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Plan K: Active Travel Map

## **POLICY W10: COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following community facilities, as shown the Policies Maps, in the Parish for the purpose of applying development plan policy on such facilities:**
- i. Village Hall and Shop**
  - ii. Playing Field**
  - iii. The Village Club**
  - iv. St. Augustine's Church**
- B. Development proposals to change the use of a part of a facility that is shown to be surplus to requirements will be supported, provided the change will not undermine the viability of the primary community use.**
- C. Proposals to extend a facility will be supported, provided they are consistent with the relevant policies of the development plan.**

5.47 The Policy identifies local community facilities in the Parish that will be protected from change of use in line with the provisions of VALP Policies D7 and I3. These facilities are valued by the community and offer a valuable resource to support community life, and therefore warrant protection of policies in the VALP, and any future replacement Buckinghamshire Local Plan. The location of the facilities is shown on the Policies Map.

5.48 On occasions, some facilities will struggle, but this will more often be related to the economic viability of the use, rather than the limitations of the premises, land or location. As finding new land for such uses is often difficult, it is important that established land is retained in that use, even if the current occupier is not viable. The policy allows for a partial change of use of a facility if this is intended to help secure its longer-term viability. This may be an important way of putting to economic use floorspace that is no longer needed, but which can make a financial contribution to sustaining the community facility. However, such changes must be shown not to undermine the community functions of the use.

5.49 The Use Class Order of September 2020 now deems such uses as either Class F2 ('Local Community Uses') or in the case of the church, F1 ('Learning Institutions'). The Community Café and Shop is deemed an F2 use as it has less than 280 sq. m of retail floor space; it sells mostly essential goods including food; and it lies more than 1,000m from the nearest other shop.

5.50 A description of each facility and its community value is provided in Appendix F. Collectively, these facilities are cherished by the community and offer a valuable and vital resource to support community life, and therefore warrant the protection of policies in the

emerging Local Plan. In some cases, the facility is included in Policy W5 as a Local Heritage Asset to identify its historic as well as social value. Or it may be included in Policy W7 as a Local Green Space as it will also form part of a key open space in the village.

## 6 IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan policies will be implemented through the determination of planning applications for development in the Parish by Buckinghamshire Council.

### DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

---

6.2 The planning authority will use a combination of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies to inform and determine its planning application decisions. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications made in the Parish and it will be made aware of any future planning applications or alterations to those applications by Buckinghamshire Council. It will seek to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan policies have been Identified and applied correctly by applicants and by officers in their decision reports.

6.3 Where necessary, the Parish Council may seek to persuade the Secretary of State to call-in a planning application that it considers is in conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan but which the planning authority has deemed to consent. Similarly, it may also seek to persuade the Secretary of State to recover an appeal of a refused application, where the conflict with one or more Neighbourhood Plan policies has been important in the reasons for refusal. In both cases, the Parish Council will do so if it considers matters of national policy significance (for neighbourhood planning) are raised.

### LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

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6.4 As part of the Westbury Neighbourhood Plan, several policies have been identified to guide potential investments in the village. These policies aim to preserve and enhance the local character, heritage, green spaces, green infrastructure, active travel network, community facilities and overall quality of life for the residents of the village. In line with these policies, the Westbury Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure the preservation of important views, local heritage assets, green spaces, green infrastructure, active travel opportunities, and community facilities. Developer funded investments— Section 106 or otherwise— that contribute to creating a sustainable and thriving future for Westbury, safeguarding its character, environment, and community well-being would be welcomed.

### OTHER NON-PLANNING MATTERS

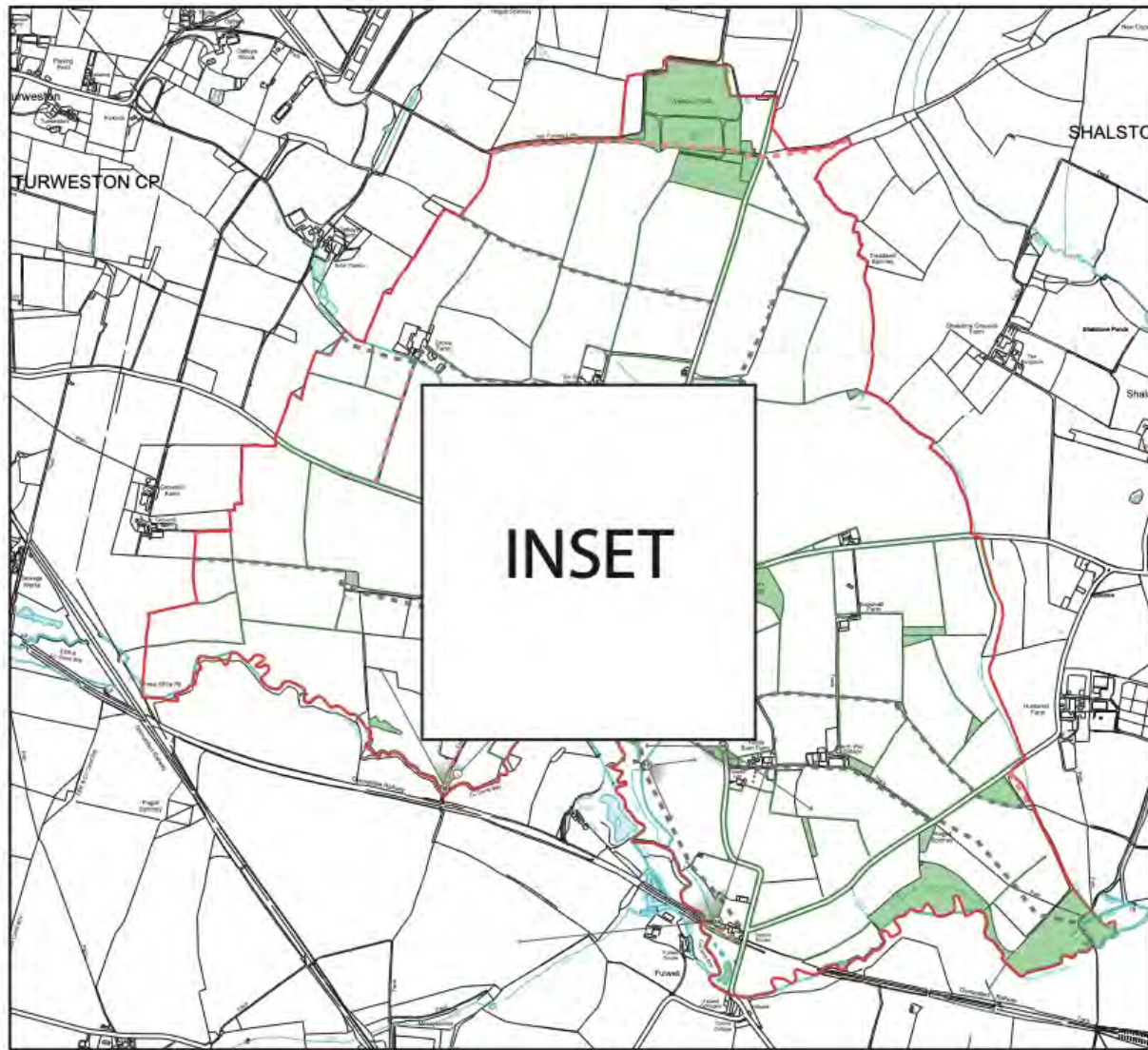
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6.5 During the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, there have been many ideas for improving or addressing current problems in the Parish that lie outside the scope of the land use planning system to control. The Parish Council has noted these issues and will take them forward through its day-to-day business and in partnership with the local community and relevant parties. These include:

- Applying to the HS2 Road Safety Fund to provide a safe crossing on the A422 which will also help bring the two parts of the village together. A Puffin crossing will be

installed later this year and the Parish Council has organised a community speed watch group to help with traffic calming issues.

- After twelve years of lobbying, three footpaths have been recently confirmed as public rights of way. The Parish Council strives to keep our footpaths accessible to allow residents to take advantage of Westbury's wonderful environment.
- Installed a permanent bioclimatic pergola at the village hall which has been beneficial to both the village hall committee when organising events and also for the shop & café, providing a comfortable, undercover seating area.
- Tarmacked the back and side areas of the village hall to create a much larger area for parking.
- The Parish Council has recently been awarded funds (via HS2) to install solar panels on the roof of the village hall to help with utility costs.
- Ongoing dialogue with Beachborough School over traffic management and are working with them to expand the inclusion of residents in some of their events, so they become more inclusive within the village.
- A strong relationship with HS2 and EKFB which is essential in keeping residents up to date with the latest news and work updates whilst also protecting the needs of the village.



## Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map - November 2023

Parish Boundary

### W5: Local Heritage Assets

Local Heritage Assets  
3. Westbury Causeway, Near the Old Mill

### W6: Important Views

Important Views

- 10. North towards Red Oak Frame & Westbury Village from Mixbury Footpath
- 13. Looking up to Fulwell Road
- 14. Disused Railway
- 15. Fields Barn Farm on Fulwell Road

### W8: Green Infrastructure

Existing Green Infrastructure

Existing Blue Infrastructure

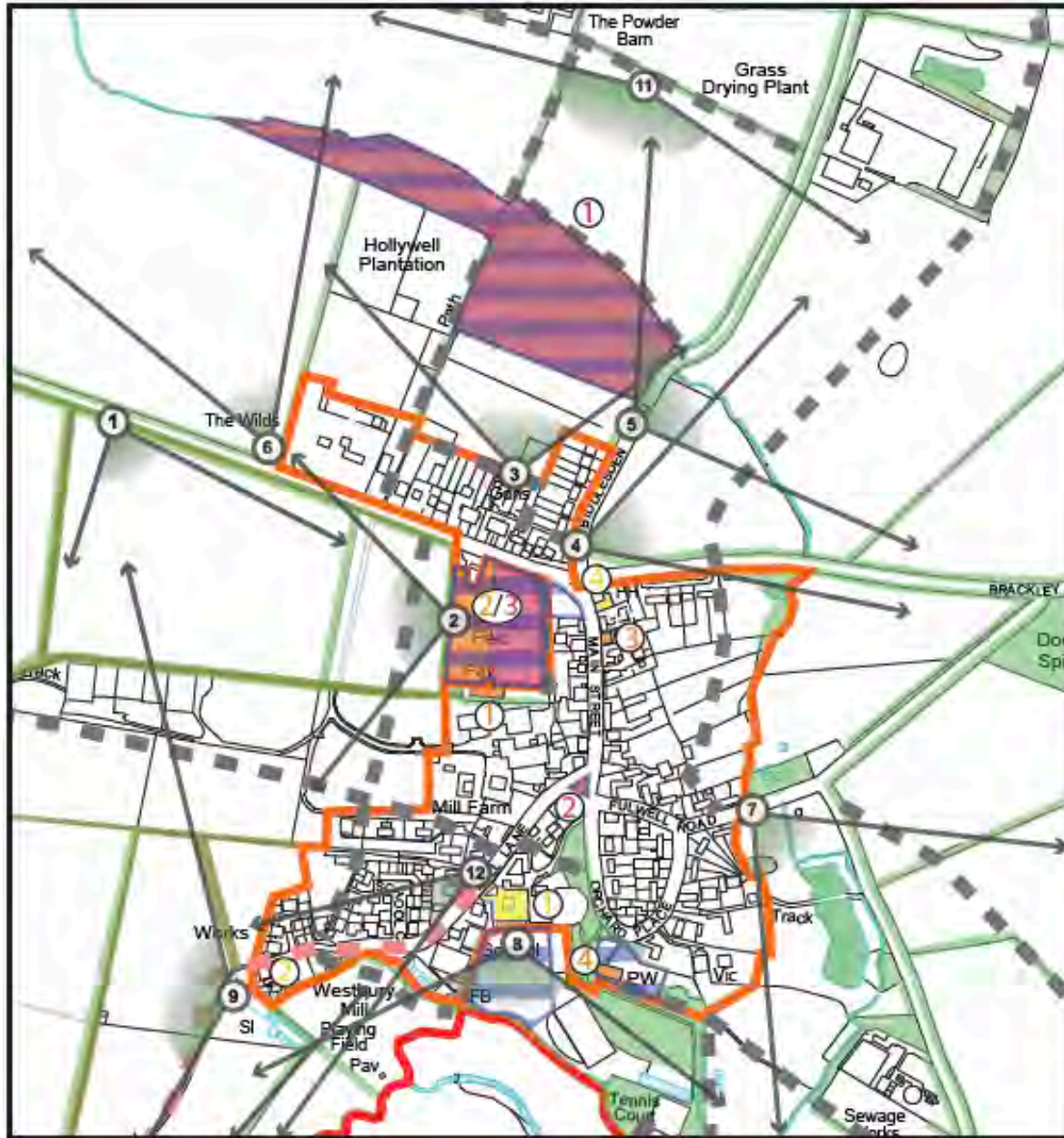
### W9: Active Travel

Footpaths

Bridleways

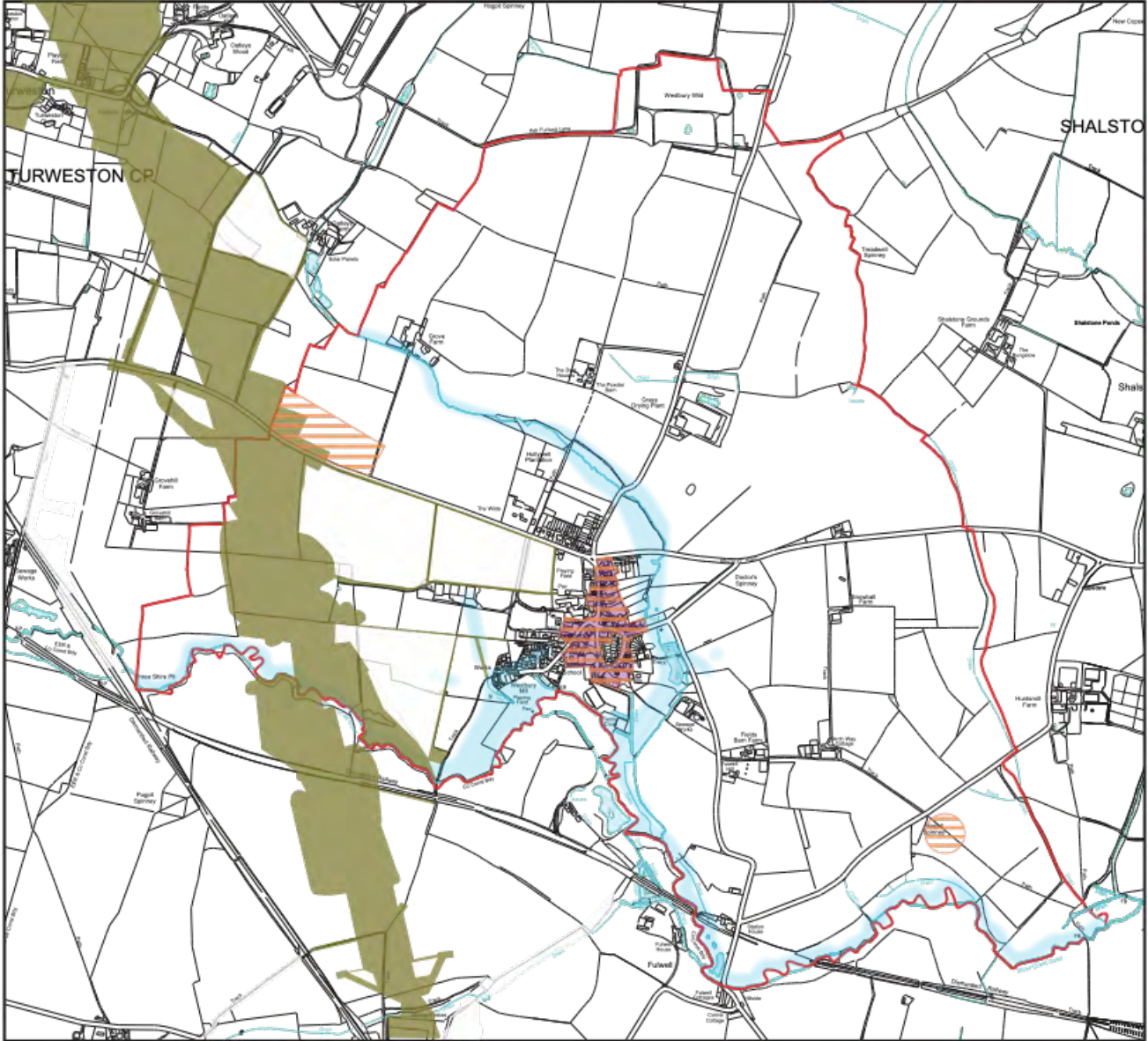
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# Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map (Inset) - November 2023



-  Parish Boundary
- W1: Settlement Boundary**
  -  Settlement Boundary
- W5: Local Heritage Assets**
  -  Local Heritage Assets
    1. Beachborough School, Main Building
    2. The Old Mill, Mill Lane
    4. The Reindeer Inn
- W6: Important Views**
  -  Important Views
    1. Westbury Approach
    2. Village Hall & Playing Fields – Rural Views and Gorgeous Sunsets
    3. Farmland and Woodlands to the North of Westbury Village
    4. View from the A422 & Biddlesden Rd Crossroad
    5. Picturesque Country Lanes - Biddlesden Road
    6. Rural Outlook from Footpath to the Northwest of the Westbury
    7. Views of the lakes to the Southeast of the Village
    8. Views of Beachborough School Grounds & Farmland
    9. Rural Views from the bottom of Mill Lane
    11. Rural views from The Powder Barns (locally known as The Dust Houses)
    12. Sunsets and Rural Outlook from the top of Mill Lane
- W7: Local Green Space**
  -  Local Green Spaces
    1. Holywell Wilds
    2. Green Grass Triangle, End of Main Street
    3. Playing Field
- W8: Green Infrastructure**
  -  Existing Green Infrastructure
  -  Existing Blue Infrastructure
  -  Amenity Open Space
- W9: Active Travel**
  -  Footpaths
  -  Bridleways
- W10: Community Facilities**
  -  Community Facilities
    1. Village Hall and Shop - Playing Field Road
    2. Playing Field - Playing Field Road
    3. The Village Club - Main Street
    4. St Augustine's Church - Orchard Place

# Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Constraints Map - November 2023



- Parish Boundary
- Limits of Land Subject to HS2 Safeguarding Direction
- Approximate Areas Susceptible to Flooding
- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Area
- Archaeological Notification Areas

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### APPENDIX A: SETTEMENT BOUNDARY REPORT

#### Definition of Settlement Boundary

In simple terms, a 'settlement boundary' is the dividing line, or boundary between areas of built/urban development (the settlement) and non-urban or rural development – the open countryside [Wiltshire Council 2014]

Settlement boundaries are a well utilised planning tool for guiding, controlling and identifying limits to development for an individual village. A settlement boundary is a line that is drawn on a plan around a village, which reflects its built form, this is also known historically as a 'village envelope'. The settlement boundary is used as a policy tool reflecting the area where a set of plan policies are to be applied.

**It must be noted that the settlement boundary is a planning designation only and has no other administrative relevance. Settlement boundaries do not necessarily reflect land ownership boundaries, Parish boundaries or the exact curtilage of dwellings.**

Settlement boundaries guide development to sustainable locations. In general, there is a presumption in favour of development within the settlement boundary. Any land and buildings outside of the boundary line are usually considered to be open countryside where development would be regulated with stricter planning policies. However, it should be noted that any land which has been included within the boundary line does not have a guarantee of approval of planning permission, as there will be other planning policies which will need to be adhered to also, for example, the protection of the character of a settlement.

Often the character and form of villages and towns makes the designation of a settlement boundary more problematic. Judgement will need to be used in these cases to assess where there is a more appropriate alternative to define the settlement.

It is key to identify a settlement boundary, or any alternative, by engaging the local community through public consultation. This will help to discuss and designate a settlement boundary which is fitting for a village.

#### Methods of defining Settlement Boundaries

A set of criteria should be used when defining the settlement boundary and some examples are detailed below. It will be worth considering these whilst defining the boundary, as well as incorporating local circumstances and knowledge in defining the boundary.

- Lines of communication - The boundaries trace the edge of the built-up area, therefore excluding roads, paths, railways and other lines of communications.

- Physical features - Wherever possible try to allow the boundaries to follow physical features, such as: buildings, field boundaries, gardens or curtilages. However, in order to conserve the character and to limit expansion, settlement boundaries can exclude orchards and other areas. This may mean that occasionally the boundaries do not relate fully to the physical features surrounding the village.
- Planning History – It may be appropriate to consider existing commenced planning permissions, recent refusals, planning appeal decisions and previous Local Plan inspector's comments concerning areas on the edge of the village.
- Village enhancements - Settlement boundaries should include buildings and associated land that make up the village form. In some edge of village areas, boundaries may need to include small areas of land and/or buildings which offer the opportunity for improvements to the entrance of the village or ensure infrastructure improvements or a general enhancement to the village.
- Recent development - Where appropriate, settlement boundaries should include new developments which may have occurred recently. It is also advisable to include sites that have received planning permission within the settlement boundary.
- Important amenity areas - These form part of the character of the settlement and could be identified and protected by policy and included in the settlement boundary due to their contribution to built form.
- Settlement boundaries should be drawn to facilitate an appropriate level of proportional growth within the plan period. If land within the boundary is not formally allocated, there will be a requirement to demonstrate that there is enough available capacity within the boundary to enable development to take place.

**Note that the Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide does not have any references on how to define settlement boundaries within the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.**

#### Advantages of defining Settlement Boundaries

There are a few generic advantages to having a settlement boundary which are detailed below:

- Certainty: with a 'black line' being plotted on a plan it is easy to identify the 'settlement' from 'open countryside'. This is the primary benefit to our Neighbourhood Plan
- Locally, settlement boundaries are an understood and accepted planning tool for guiding and controlling developments.
- A defined settlement boundary will ensure a more plan-led and controlled approach to potential development in The Parish.
- It Protects the countryside from unnecessary development and prevents ribbon development.

- A defined settlement boundary allows a consistent approach to the determination of planning applications.
- Allows for more certainty to developers/landowners with sites/land within the boundary, as long as they adhere to all other plan policies.
- Allows the development of small sites which cannot be identified as allocations.

#### Disadvantages of defining Settlement Boundaries

- Has the potential to increase land values within the settlement boundary.
- Has the potential to increase hope values for land adjoining but outside the boundary.
- The use of settlement boundaries has led to criticism that they result in cramming within the village as every available area of land competes for development resulting in a potential reduction in the landscape quality and character of that village, unless other policies are in place.
- Settlement boundaries can be crude and inflexible.
- The character of properties and the village could be altered if development is allowed within the gardens of these houses within a settlement boundary, although this is one of the reasons that a number of larger gardens have been split by the settlement boundaries.

#### Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Settlement Boundary Methodology

Using the Cheshire East Council Settlement Boundary Assessment Guidance to guide our decisions, the settlement boundary has been created following a desktop review of the Parish. A desktop study of The Parish assessed the existing settlement; its built form, land-use, landscape character, woodland cover, field pattern and natural features. This enabled a clearer understanding of the potential settlement boundary. O'Neill Homer (OH) planning consultants drafted an indicative settlement boundary on a map and used this to consult members of the Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. A couple of points were raised, informed by greater knowledge of the local area, which were subsequently incorporated into the settlement boundary.

Particularly testing was the transition between types of openness such as moving from garden to countryside which may be hard to define. The decision was taken to include all gardens within the settlement boundary. Most notable are the large gardens to the east of the Parish which fall between Brackley Road and Fulwell Road. The intention behind this is to encourage developments to come forward organically in this area, without the need for a formal site allocation.

#### General Rules

Principle 1: A settlement boundary has been drawn around the main built-up area of Westbury. The settlement boundary should be created such that Westbury is separated from the fields and open countryside that surround it.

Principle 2: The boundary will be defined tightly around the built form of the settlement and where possible will follow defined features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, roads, gardens, streams and woodland.

Principle 3: The settlement boundary will include:

a) Existing commitments i.e., unimplemented planning permissions and implemented permissions.

b) The curtilages of buildings.

c) Sections of large curtilages of buildings (including gardens) which relate more to the character of the built form of the village than the character of the countryside beyond.

Principle 4: The settlement boundary will exclude:

a) Open spaces, sports and recreational facilities which stand on the edge of the built form of settlements (existing or proposed) e.g., Westbury Playing Fields and Beachborough Prep School playing fields, sports pitches and car park.

Sources:

Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20 Guide to settlement boundaries April 2013 - Revised June 2015, Herefordshire Council

Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) Draft Proposals for Revised Settlement Boundaries; Informal Consultation with Parish and Town Councils; Monday 28 July – Monday 22 September 2014



# WESTBURY

Design Guidance and Codes

Final report  
September 2023

## Quality information

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## Revision History

Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
01	20.02.2023	Draft	Jack Wilton-Cooley	Graduate Urban Planner
02	06.03.2023	Draft Review	Jonathan Newman	Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
03	21.03.2023	Second Draft	Angus McNeill Peel	Urban Planner
04	23.03.2023	Second Draft Review	Jonathan Newman	Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
05	23.03.2023	Final Report for Locality Review	Angus McNeill Peel	Urban Planner
06	06.04.2023	Locality Review	Annabel Osborne	Neighbourhood Planning Officer, Locality
07	11.04.2023	Final Report	Angus McNeill Peel	Urban Planner
08	08.08.2023	Additional comments	Matthew Jennings	Neighbourhood Planning Consultant
09	14.09.2023	Final Report	Angus McNeill Peel	Urban Planner

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**Introduction**

**01**

# 1. Introduction

**Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to Westbury Parish Council in support of the Westbury Neighbourhood Plan. The support is intended to provide design guidance and codes based on the character and local qualities of the parish to help ensure future development, particularly forthcoming housing, coheres with and enhances Westbury.**

## 1.1 About this document

Design Codes are written in order to meet a key development and design objective of the Neighbourhood Plan, one of five objectives alongside themes on environment and landscape, access and parking, business and employment, and community infrastructure.

The Design Code does this by describing the existing character of Westbury and setting out the Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group’s analysis of character areas. Secondly, the Design Code sets out codes and guidance for the whole of the parish, and for the identified character areas.

During February and March 2023, Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group consulted the community about various Neighbourhood Plan themes including design. Those responses from the engagement have informed this report.



F.1

Figure 01: Steps undertaken to produce this document



Turweston flying Club




Brackley


Westbury

Towards Buckingham

Towards Finmere

**KEY**

-  Parish boundary
-  A road
-  Rural road

0km    0.5km    1km 

**F.2** Figure 02: Map showing the Westbury Neighbourhood Area.

## 1.2 Overview of Westbury

Westbury is a village and civil parish in northern Buckinghamshire, near the Northamptonshire border with a population of approximately 500. The village is located south of the A422, situated 2.5 miles east of Brackley and 5 miles west of Buckingham.

The settlement originates from Saxon times when an entrenched camp was built on a mound northeast of what is now St. Augustine's Church in 867 A.D. The current church dates back to 13C.

The parish is home to several social clubs such as the Cricket Club and the Village Club.

The village is a nucleated settlement positioned at the juncture between Brackley Road and Biddlesden Road, with Main Street stretching southwards. The oldest part of the village is situated to the south of the A244 on a slope of the River Ouse, this area was designated as a Conservation Area in 1989.

The village is characterised by its rural nature, stone block and rubblestone dwellings with thatched roofs and pleasant views outward to the surrounding countryside.

To the south of the village lies the Beachborough Preparatory School which is surrounded by mature woodland. The school building formerly comprised of Westbury Manor which was substantially rebuilt in 1903.



Figure 03: Westbury Village Hall.



Figure 04: Terraced cottages on Main Street.



Figure 05: Derelict school building on Main Street.

## 1.3 Signpost to other documents

National and local policy documents can provide valuable guidance on bringing about good design and the benefits accompanying it. Some are there to ensure adequate planning regulations are in place to ensure development is both fit for purpose and able to build sustainable, thriving communities. Supplementary guidance documents complement national and local policy and provide technical design information.

Applicants should refer to these key documents when planning future development in the Westbury Neighbourhood Area. The following documents have informed the design guidance within this report.

### NATIONAL LEVEL

#### 2021 - National Planning Policy Framework

DLUHC

Development needs to consider national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In particular, NPPF Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places.

#### 2020 - Building for a Healthy Life

Homes England

The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

#### 2007 - Manual for Streets

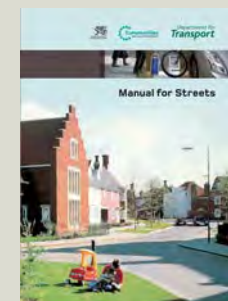
Department for Transport

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

#### 2021 - National Design Guide

DLUHC

The National Design Guide (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2021) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.



**2021 - Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2013-2033**

Buckinghamshire Council

The VALP is the key development plan for the local area. It provides the strategic framework, policies and delivery plans for Aylesbury Vale over the period 2013-2033

**2022 - Biodiversity net gain Supplementary Planning Document**

Buckinghamshire Council

This has been produced with advice from the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership. It sets out guidance on how biodiversity net gain can be delivered in Buckinghamshire.

**2025 - The emerging Local Plan for Buckinghamshire**

Buckinghamshire Council

Once adopted, the emerging plan will extend to 2038, providing for the housing and jobs needs of the area.

**DESIGN GUIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

**1990 - The conversion of traditional farm buildings**

Aylesbury Vale District Council

**1995 - Building materials**

Aylesbury Vale District Council

**1998 - New buildings in the countryside**

Aylesbury Vale District Council

**1995 - New houses in towns and villages**

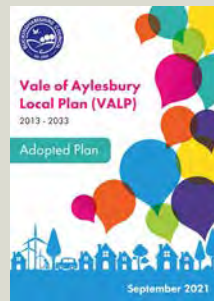
Aylesbury Vale District Council

**1991 - Residential extensions**

Aylesbury Vale District Council

**1989 - Westbury Conservation Area Appraisal**

This document describes the key features of the Conservation Area and has been used to inform this Design Code.



## 1.4 Engagement

As part of the Neighbourhood Plan development, Westbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group organised a community survey on various issues to be considered in the Neighbourhood Plan during February and March 2023.

The following is a summary of the key community issues identified through the responses which fall under the influence of the Design Guidance:

Key results	Relevant code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infill and smaller developments (of under 10 dwellings) are preferred over larger developments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.5 Infill development</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to the surrounding landscape and the presence of nature in Westbury should be preserved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Rural character</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscape views are highly valued by the community and should be protected. Westerly views from the playing fields are particularly valued.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Sitting within the landscape</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New housing should be in-keeping with the traditional style of the village, with local stone preferred to brick facades.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.2 Distinctive local materials</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green space including grass verges and front/back gardens are integral to retaining the rural feel of Westbury.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Rural character</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hedges and stone walls are preferable as boundary treatments to brick walls and fences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.2 Distinctive local materials</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficient off-street parking should be provided and should be attractive in design.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.3 Connectivity in the village</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In multi-unit developments, a variety of designs and typologies should be provided within the development proposal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.5 Infill development</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New developments should be as sustainable as possible utilising environmentally friendly building technologies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.7 Sustainable features</li> </ul>

## 1.5 How to use this document

The Design Guidelines will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development within Westbury. They will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process.

What follows is a list of actors and how they will use the design guidelines:

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





**Codes to promote good  
design in Westbury**

**02**

## 2. Codes to promote good design in Westbury

**This section outlines the positive physical, historic and contextual characteristics of Westbury and how these features should be factored into new development or retrofit of existing buildings, parish wide.**

### 2.1 Rural character

Westbury's rural character is one of its most distinctive and valuable features. The parish is sited within a lush agricultural landscape in the Aylesbury Vale. The south of the village is bordered by mature woodland as well as the River Great Ouse. The open and undulating nature of the landscape affords the dwellings within the village views outwards to the surrounding countryside.

The informal nature of the village's architecture, as well as generous setbacks, green verges, and a variety of built styles also enforce the sense of rural informality. Future developments should seek to reflect this character by adhering to the following codes:

Code	Implementation
<b>RC.01</b> <b>Informality</b>	New developments should reflect the informal style of the village by providing gentle variety in form and roofline.
<b>RC.02</b> <b>Boundary treatment</b>	Thresholds should be marked by natural features such as hedgerows, shrubs, and trees or stone block/rubblestone walls. Existing mature hedgerows and trees must be retained where possible.
<b>RC.03</b> <b>Scale</b>	New development must be of an appropriate scale to the village.



**Figure 06:** Example of dwelling with natural boundary treatment.



**Figure 07:** Informal layout in Westbury, looking northwards to Main Street.

## 2.2 Distinctive local materials

The parish contains a variety of brick, stone, and wood clad buildings. The village has several well maintained, historic stone farmhouses and outbuildings which reflect the area’s agricultural identity.

Sandy stone block and rubblestone facades are common across much of the historic built stock, stone and brick detailing is also common on dwellings in the area. Buildings are either clay or slate tiled, or thatched. Rooflines are typically gable but hipped roofs are also evident. Timber casement windows are typical across the village.

More contemporary buildings tend to have red brick facades and UPVC fenestration.

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

Code	Implementation
<b>DM.01</b> <b>Materials</b>	New developments should seek to utilise and compliment the existing outlined material palette across Westbury (see page 14).
<b>DM.02</b> <b>Brick façades</b>	When brick is used in new developments, this must be of similar tone and cut to the surrounding dwellings.
<b>DM.03</b> <b>Visual integration</b>	New development should show consideration for visual integration with neighbouring properties.



**Figure 08:** Example of dwelling with traditional rubblestone facade.



**Figure 09:** Example of timber casement windows which positively contribute to the street scene, Main Street.

Fenestration



Timber porch



Casement window



Dormer window

Roof



Clay tile



Slate tile



Thatch

Wall



Rubblestone

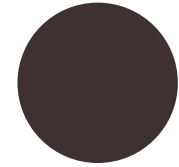


Red brick

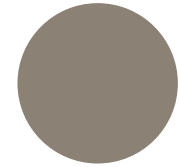


Rubblestone

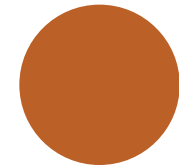
Colour range



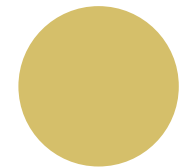
Dark grey



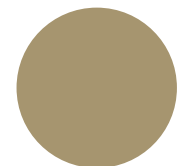
Grey



Terracotta



Ochre



Grey brown

## 2.3 Sitting within the landscape

Westbury is defined by its relationship to the surrounding landscape as well as the prevalence of green space within the village core.

Development is low slung and hunkered into the landscape creating a sense of enclosure and allowing for outward views to the undulating landscape of Buckinghamshire<sup>1</sup>. Dipped green verges and deep stone wall boundaries help to create a sense of enclosure and make the village feel settled in its location.

Green and natural features such as woodland, shrubs, and water courses such as the River Great Ouse serve to reinforce the village's connection to the landscape.

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

<sup>1</sup> Please see [Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment](#) for further detail.

Code	Implementation
<b>LA.01</b> <b>Roof pitch</b>	New developments should reflect the roof pitch of neighbouring properties.
<b>LA.02</b> <b>Outward views</b>	New developments must conserve valued outward views into the surrounding countryside.
<b>LA.03</b> <b>Planting</b>	New development should integrate into its surrounding landscape through the use of planting and soft landscaping.
<b>LA.04</b> <b>Green approach</b>	New development on the outskirts of the village should seek to retain green open spaces on approach to the village core.
<b>LA.05</b> <b>Height</b>	New developments should generally be two storeys or below in height to prevent the interruption of landscape views.
<b>LA.06</b> <b>Hardscaping</b>	New developments should favour permeable paving to hardscaping such as concrete and tarmac to avoid urbanising features.



**Figure 10:** Example of stone wall boundary on Main Street.



**Figure 11:** Mature tree retained as boundary feature on Biddlesden Road.

## 2.4 Connectivity in the village

As the NPPF<sup>1</sup> (paragraph 92 - 112) notes “Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

- Promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other
- Give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;”

To support ease of movement across the parish, pleasant and direct routes must be created which facilitate walking and cycling.

Future developments should support connectivity by adhering to the following codes:

<sup>1</sup> [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

Code	Implementation
<b>CO.01</b> <b>Active transport</b>	New developments must prioritise active travel by walking and cycling. They should consider measures to reduce any adverse impacts on the public highways and circulation in the village.
<b>CO.02</b> <b>Direct connections</b>	New developments should seek to provide direct connections to services and facilities such as community buildings, bus stops, or schools. Increased connectivity via the creation of new footpaths wherever possible will be supported.
<b>CO.03</b> <b>Choice of routes</b>	New routes should create multiple connections and therefore a choice of routes where possible.
<b>CO.04</b> <b>Landscape connections</b>	New routes should connect back to rural PRoW where possible to provide connections to the Buckinghamshire landscape.

<b>CO.05</b> <b>Electric vehicle (EV) charging points</b>	The installation of EV charging points will be supported when consideration is given to limit their visual impact on streetscape and adjacent buildings.
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**F.12**

**Figure 12:** Public Right of Way in Westbury.

## 2.5 Infill development

Due to the generally open nature of the settlement, as well as the generous spacing of buildings, Westbury may present opportunities for infill, as well as modification and reuse.

Backland development or plot infill is development on land of an existing dwelling or gap between existing dwellings. This sort of development should respect local context, form, and scale.

Future infill development should be controlled by the following codes:

Code	Implementation
<b>CO.01</b> <b>Low density</b>	New development must remain at a low density, avoiding urban levels of tandem development <sup>1</sup> .
<b>CO.02</b> <b>Pattern and layout</b>	Backland development should remain at a small scale to prevent disruption to the settlement pattern.
<b>CO.03</b> <b>Scale</b>	Infill development should cohere in overall scale and height to adjoining properties.
<b>CO.04</b> <b>Setback</b>	Plot infill should respect the existing setback if there is a standard street edge.

<sup>1</sup> Tandem development is a form of infill development where a new dwelling is placed immediately behind an existing dwelling and is serviced by the same vehicular access.



**Figure 13:** Positive example of successful backland infill, Main Street.

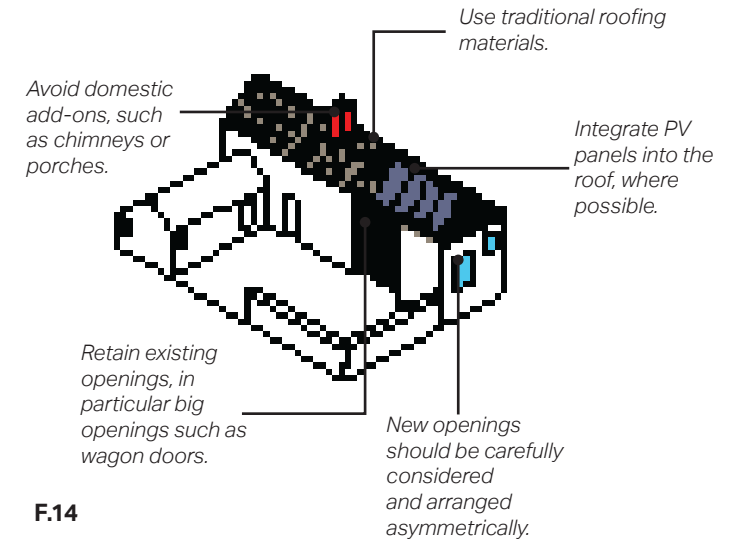
## 2.6 Sympathetic conversions

Westbury's agricultural and commercial legacy is evident through the numerous historic farm buildings and industrial buildings spread across the parish area such as the former Mill on Mill Lane. Many of these structures will provide opportunities for modification and reuse.

There are multiple ways to create extra space within a building using different types of extensions. Extensions must be designed to an appropriate scale and be secondary to the original building. The pitch and form of a building's roof forms part of its character; therefore, extensions should respond by complimenting and enhancing this. The design integrity of original structures must be retained in the event of conversion or extension. The previous agricultural use of the building must also remain evident in its form and composition.

Future conversions will be controlled by the following codes;

Code	Implementation
<b>CO.01</b> <b>Additions</b>	External additions should be subordinate in scale to the original or primary form of the building.
<b>CO.02</b> <b>Facade</b>	Extensions should be designed to match or complement the existing facade material of the structure.
<b>CO.03</b> <b>Sympathetic modification</b>	Modifications must retain evidence of a structure's original features where possible.
<b>CO.04</b> <b>Appearance</b>	Modifications must respect or enhance the appearance of the original building and the wider scene.
<b>CO.05</b> <b>On-plot parking</b>	Extensions should retain capacity for on-plot parking as well as viable garden space.



**F.14**

**Figure 14:** Illustrative diagram of some suggestive design principles for the conversion of agricultural buildings.



**F.15**

**Figure 15:** Example of sympathetic barn conversion in Westbury.



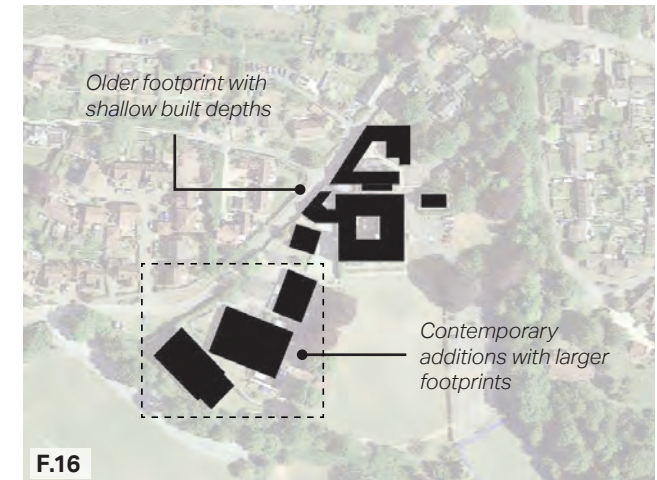
## 2.7 Education buildings

The Beachborough Prep School campus is a prominent landmark and institution in Westbury. The overall form and layout and the buildings making up the school campus have a great impact on the built character of the village.

Education facilities should cohere with the overall built form of the village and with the surrounding residential properties. Buildings should seek to achieve high design merit and to make a positive contribution to the local character.

New education buildings, as well as additions or alterations to the existing campus at Beachborough will be controlled by the following codes:

Code	Implementation
<b>EB. 01</b> <b>Facade</b>	Buildings should be finished in local materials (see page 15) or in a complementary material to the primary palette in Westbury.
<b>EB. 02</b> <b>Form and massing</b>	Where possible, built form should be broken up into smaller parcels, avoiding an excessively deep or large footprint in comparison to the surrounding built stock of the village (see figure 16).
<b>EB. 03</b> <b>Height</b>	Heights should remain unobtrusive, without exceeding that of neighbouring buildings.
<b>EB. 04</b> <b>Parking</b>	Sufficient car parking must be provided, located to the side or rear of buildings. Parking should not be allowed on verges/ green spaces or roads. Cycle routes and cycle parking should be included.



**Figure 16:** Illustrative diagram of the changing built depths in later additions to Beachborough Prep School.



**Figure 17:** Beachborough School as seen from Mill Lane, displaying local material palette.

## 2.8 Sustainable features

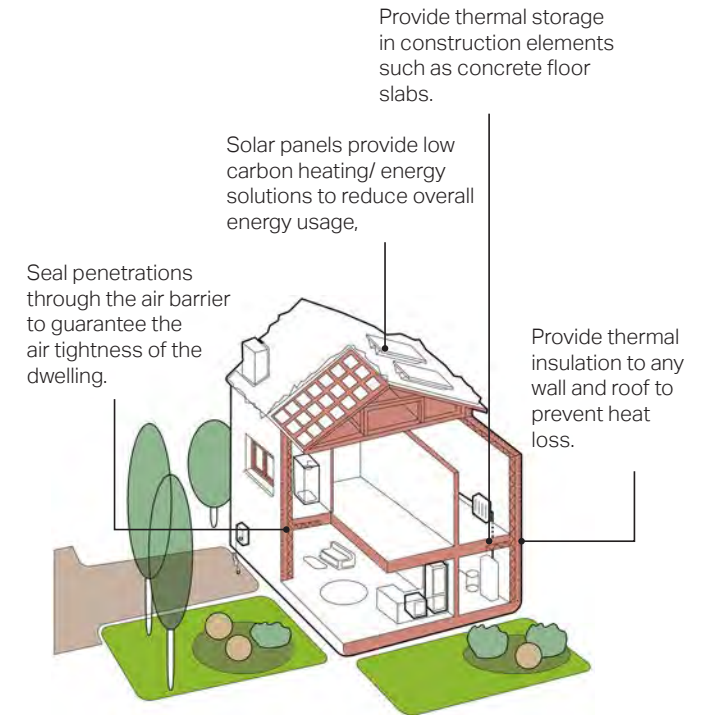
This section focuses on energy efficient technologies that could be incorporated in existing buildings and new build developments.

Use of such features should be encouraged in order to contribute towards a more sustainable environment. Energy efficient or eco-design combines all around energy efficient appliances with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar electricity and/or solar/ water heating and electric charging points.

This Design Code supports retrofitting of sustainable energy features.

Sustainable features in new and existing dwellings will be controlled by the following codes:

Code	Implementation
<b>SU.01</b> <b>Design integration</b>	Sustainable features should be incorporated from the design phase and seamlessly integrated into the built fabric.
<b>SU.02</b> <b>Key considerations</b>	New development proposals should show regard for key considerations such as thermal mass, drainage, and low carbon energy solutions.
<b>SU.03</b> <b>Attractive features</b>	Sustainable features should make attractive additions to the streetscape, i.e., SuDs and rainwater harvesting facilities should be visually attractive.
<b>SU.04</b> <b>Biodiversity</b>	Wherever possible, biodiversity should be supported by the inclusion of features such as hedgehog corridors, bird/bat boxes, or bee bricks.
<b>SU.05</b> <b>Solar panels</b>	Solar panels will be supported and encouraged in principle where they do not result in obtrusive visual impacts.



**F.18**

**Figure 18:** Diagram illustrating some aspects of the building fabric to be considered.



Character area codes

03

# 3. Design guidance and codes for Westbury’s Character Areas

**This section provides design principles which are specific to the individual Character Areas identified within Westbury. These codes aim to provide highly place-specific guidance.**

## 3.1 Introduction

The following section outlines a set of design codes that have been put together based on the distinct Character Areas of Westbury. The design codes take into account the prominent features, opps and issues of each respective Character Area

This section builds upon the parish-wide design codes outlined in the previous section and should be read jointly. The section will begin with the Character Area Codes matrix which provides an overview of the Character Area codes, followed by an analysis of each Character Area. The matrix indicates which codes are to be applied in which Character Area.

	<b>1</b>	Conservation Area North
	<b>2</b>	Conservation Area South
	<b>3</b>	Mill Lane area
	<b>4</b>	Orchard Place area
	<b>5</b>	Playing Field Lane/ Red Oak Lane area
	<b>6</b>	Brackley Road area



**KEY**

**CHARACTER AREAS**

-  1: Conservation Area North
-  2: Conservation Area South
-  3: Mill Lane area
-  4: Orchard Place area
-  5: Playing Fields Lane/ Red Oak Lane Area
-  6: Brackley Road area

0m 100m 200m 400m



## 3.2 Character Area Code matrix

Code	Rationale	Implementation	Applicable area					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>CC.01</b> <b>Timber fenestration</b>	Due to the prominence of heritage assets in these areas, high quality material finishes should be sought for a street addressing façades which compliment the surrounding building stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timber fenestration will be preferable to UPVC fenestration on new developments.</li> </ul>	X	X				
<b>CC.02</b> <b>Streetscape</b>	This area is situated on the main axis of the village with the highest levels of activity, serving as the village core. Therefore, new development should seek to contribute to the street scene by fronting onto the street.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New developments must address the street with fenestration.</li> <li>Entrances should be accessed from the street.</li> </ul>	X					
<b>CC.03</b> <b>Planted front gardens</b>	These areas benefit from a green and open feel due to the prominence of flora along the frontage of properties. This quality should be protected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New developments should include the provision for planted front gardens.</li> </ul>		X		X	X	X
<b>CC.04</b> <b>Screening</b>	This area is impacted by the vehicle traffic on Brackley and Biddlesden Roads. Screening will help to limit the audible impact of the road for future residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New developments should be screened from the road by boundary treatments such as planting of trees or hedgerows.</li> </ul>						X
<b>CC.05</b> <b>Visitor parking</b>	Crowded on-street parking on narrow roads, particularly around school drop-off and pick-up times, is a pertinent issue within this area, this can be addressed by increasing visitor parking provision to avoid parking overspill issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New development including multiple dwellings must include visitor parking provision (one visitor's space for every two dwellings<sup>1</sup>). This should always take the form of off-street bay parking as the roads in this location are narrow and confined.</li> </ul>			X			
<b>CC.06</b> <b>Height</b>	These areas are both low density and constitute the edge of the village, therefore development should not exceed two storeys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New development should not exceed two storeys in height.</li> </ul>					X	X

1 [Parking Guidelines](#), Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan.

## 3.3 CA1 Conservation Area north



### Introduction

The northern section of the Westbury Conservation Area, including Main Street and Fulwell Road. This area makes up part of the village core and has two connection points to Brackley Road (A422). The area is predominantly residential with some community use.



Figure 20: Outline map of Character Area 1.



Figure 21: Terraced cottages, Main Street.

### Layout

Character Area 1 is distinct due to its dense and continuous frontage and fine grained pattern. The area has a clearly defined street edge with a gently varying setback. There is one example of backland infill off Main Street.

### Heights

The area is varied in height stretching from one storey to three storeys. There are several bungalows and single storey outbuildings scattered across Main Street as well as two storey terraces. Towards the end of Main Street there is one three storey dwelling.



Figure 22: Westbury Working Mens Club.

## Streets

Main Street makes up the central axis of the village and is home to Westbury Working Mens Club as well as two bus stops served by the 131, 132, and 134. The street has a notable amount of on-street parking. There is a strong sense of enclosure on Main Street and dwellings tend to have a short setback from the road edge.



**Figure 23:** Row of Rubblestone cottages with red brick detail, Fulwell Road.



**Figure 24:** Gable end of grade II listed dwelling on Main Street.

## Buildings

The buildings in this area comprise of a mix of dormer bungalows, detached dwellings, and terraces. Roofs tend to be gabled, mostly made up of slate tiles or thatch. Medieval buildings are finished with stone blocks and rubblestone, while later additions have red brick facades or render. Windows tend to be casement style, a mix of UPVC and timber. There are four grade II listed assets in the area dated C17 and C18.



**Figure 25:** Late 20C infill on Fulwell Road which is not in keeping with surrounding traditional style.



**Figure 26:** Period terrace on Main Street with UPVC fenestration.



## 3.4 CA2 Conservation Area south



### Introduction

Character Area 2 is made up of the southern section of Westbury Conservation Area including Mill Lane and Orchard Place. The area is mostly residential and encompasses part of the Beachborough Prep School campus as well as St. Augustine's Church.



Figure 27: Outline map of Character Area 2.



Figure 28: Example of infill development in Character Area 2 in the traditional style of the village.

### Layout

The area's street grid is organic in form, with several cul-de-sacs branching off from Orchard Place.

Buildings tend to be detached, set on large plots, with generous setback from the roadside. This area has a lower density than CA1 with a less defined street edge.

### Heights

Dwellings are generally two storeys across the area, with single storey outbuildings and additions such as garages. The main building of Beachborough Prep School, housed in Westbury Manor, is three storeys in height. The steeple of St. Augustine's Church is the tallest structure is also three storeys.



Figure 29: St. Augustine's

## Streets

The area's streets are defined by their low rise boundary treatments, and a abundance of mature trees and hedges. Dwellings tend to have gardens addressing the road, and grass verges are seen across the area. Both Mill Lane and Orchard Place have footpath networks and there is some evidence of on street parking on both streets. Dwellings often include on-plot parking as well as garages. Stone walls or hedges are the dominant boundary treatments within the area.

## Buildings

The area has several listed assets. St. Augustine's Church is listed grade II\*, its chancel arch and arch tower date from C13 while the nave has three bays with C14 arcades. The building was restored in 1863.

There is also a grade II listed farmhouse on Orchard Place dated C17, as well as The Old Vicarage constructed in 1661. Little Thatches is a grade II listed dwelling on Mill Lane also dated C17-C18.

Much like CA1, older buildings in this area tend to be finished in stone blocks and rubblestone with slate tiled roofs and there are also some examples of weatherboarding and thatched roofs. Casement windows are common and buildings are generous in scale.



Figure 31: Little Thatches, Mill Lane.



Figure 30: Aerial view of Beachborough Prep School.



Figure 32: Example of rubblestone facade with dormer windows, Beachborough Prep School, Mill Lane.

## 3.5 CA3 Mill Lane area



### Introduction

Character Area 3 comprises of the southwestern edge of the village. Mill Lane is the primary route through the area, connecting back northward to Brackley Road. Surrounding residential development is centered around the converted mill building.

The area is mostly residential and includes part of the Beachborough Prep School Campus.



Figure 33: Outline map of Character Area 3.



Figure 34: Westbury Mill, in residential use.

### Layout

The area is comprised of several recent housing developments as well as some older properties from 1970/80s. The street pattern is laid out in several cul-de-sacs branching off Mill Lane which sweeps in a gentle curve westward.

### Heights

The area includes bungalows, dormer bungalows and two storey dwellings. Two storey buildings are the most prevalent in the area. The Westbury Mill building is the highest structure at four storeys.



Figure 35: Two storey residential properties in Character Area 3 with on-plot parking.

## Streets

Mill Lane has a rural feel with low density development and lush planting on its northern section. Mill Lane becomes a single lane track where the Beachborough exit lane connects to the road. There is one unpaved lane in the area which connects to Manor Cottage on the edge of the village in addition to rear entrances of several other dwellings. The western section of Mill Lane is more suburban in feel with dwellings placed closer to the road edge and footpaths connecting the streets.

## Buildings

The most prominent building in the area is Westbury Mill, which is an unlisted building in previous industrial use, since converted into apartment dwellings.

Properties are modest to generous in scale, typically with both front and rear gardens. Dormer windows and garages are common features in the area.



**Figure 36:** Cul-de-sac development in Character Area 3 in the traditional style of the village.



**Figure 37:** Set of two storey 1980s dwellings with on-plot parking and garages in Character Area 3.



**Figure 38:** Contemporary residential development on Mill Lane with a combination of solid and natural boundary treatment.



**Figure 39:** Internal view of semi-detached dwellings in School Close, Mill Lane.

## 3.6 CA4 Orchard Place area



### Introduction

Character Area 4 is comprised of the modern development on Orchard Place which falls outside of the Conservation Area boundary. This area marks the eastern edge of the village and is directly adjacent to the Conservation Area core and is residential in use.



**Figure 40:** Character Area 4 outline map.



**Figure 41:** Example of dormer bungalow, corner of Fulwell Road and Orchard Place.

### Layout

The area has an organic layout, primarily based around Orchard Place and Fulwell Road. Residential properties on Orchard Place are set on a mild incline with generous grass verges to the front, giving the area an open feel. Buildings are arranged on generous plots in short terraces or as semi-detached houses with broad grass in-between.

### Heights

Much like the surrounding Character Areas, Character Area 4 has a range of dwelling typologies from bungalows, dormer bungalows, two storey housing. Two storeys is the maximum height in the area and two storey dwellings are the most common.



**Figure 42:** Two storey semi-detached dwellings on Orchard Place.

## Streets

Orchard place has a semi-rural feel due to its low density development and prominent natural features such as planted front gardens, mature trees, and hedgerows. Dwellings tends to have on-plot parking but there is some evidence of on-street parking on Orchard Place. Orchard Place is framed by mature trees of the broadleaved forest to the south which surrounds St. Augustine's Church, as well as the ponds to the east of the area.



**Figure 43:** Example of dwellings with on-plot parking and planted front gardens on Orchard Place.



**Figure 44:** View northeast on Orchard Place to listed dwelling within Character Area 2.

## Buildings

The area has no listed structures or community buildings. Dwellings are predominately from the late 20C, with red-brick facades and white framed UPVC casement windows. Many properties have short concrete porches. Several dwellings at the eastern edge of the area have rendered finishes. Roof pitches are relatively uniform across the area with red or grey pantiles. Dormer windows can be seen on some properties.



**Figure 45:** Low stone wall and grass verges in front of housing on Orchard Place.



**Figure 46:** View of ponds to the east of Character Area 4.

## 3.7 CA5 Playing Field Road/ Red Oak Lane area



### Introduction

Character Area 5 is set at the western edge of the village and primarily accessed from Red Oak Lane which also services Red Oak Farm.

The area is primarily residential but also includes community uses with Westbury Village Hall.



Figure 47: Outline map of Character Area 5.



Figure 48: Private laneway in CA5.

### Layout

The area is accessed from Playing Field Road and Red Oak Lane. There are two private laneways which are used as access for a row of Victorian cottages on the southern side of the area. The area is bordered by Long Meadow Wood which is a private wood planted in 2018 by a local resident and has two public footpaths through it. The area is rural in feel due to its rural laneways, generous setbacks, and generous planting.

### Heights

The predominant building height is two storeys tall with some three storey dwellings. There are dormer bungalows and single storey outbuildings also evident throughout.



Figure 49: Westbury Village Hall.

## Streets

Character Area 5 has a rural feel due to its low density, generous setbacks, and lack of footpath network. The area is characterised by its handsome heritage buildings and proximity to open spaces such as the playing fields and Long Meadow Wood. There is a lack of street edge in the area due to the placement of dwellings away from the roadside.

## Buildings

The Victorian buildings in the area have handsome blond stone blocks and rubblestone, and red brick facades, with details in granite or red brick. Casement windows and black slate roof tiles are most common. The area has been sensitively developed on the Mill Farm site with new dwellings in a similar material palette.



**Figure 52:** Manor Cottage, Mill Lane.



**Figure 51:** New development on the site of Mill Lane Farm in the traditional style of the village using rubblestone facades.



**Figure 50:** Internal view of Long Meadow Wood.



## 3.8 CA6 Brackley Road area



### Introduction

This area comprises the northern part of the village which was developed in the 20C. The area is split into two parts on either side of Brackley Road. The northern side is the only part of the village developed on the far side of the road protruding into the countryside. The area is predominantly residential.

The eastern part of the area is directly adjacent to the Conservation Area.



Figure 53: Outline map of Character Area 6.



Figure 54: Corner of Brackley Road and Biddlesden Road.

### Layout

Character Area 6 is comprised predominately of post-war dwellings which front onto the Brackley and Biddlesden Roads. The area has a regular setback and building line dwellings are laid out in a linear fashion, creating a uniform feel. The northern portion of this area is physically separate from Westbury Village core.

### Heights

Building heights are generally two storeys. There are several bungalows, dormer bungalows, and single storey outbuildings across the area.



Figure 55: Dwelling with on-plot parking and low rise boundary treatment, Brackley Road.

## Streets

Due to the one-sided development on Brackley Road, there is no sense of enclosure in this area of the village. Vehicular traffic is prominent due to the area's location on a main route, unlike the southern portion of the village. Dwellings are typically set on generous plots with front and back gardens, and on-plot parking capacity.

## Buildings

There are no listed assets in this area, buildings are generally finished in either red brick or render. Roof materials are a mix of slate tiles, red pantiles, and clay tiles.



**Figure 57:** Recent development on Biddlesden Road which retains a mature tree incorporated as boundary treatment.



**Figure 56:** Dwellings with generous setbacks, Biddlesden Road.



**Figure 58:** Lane to the rear of dwellings on Brackley Road.

An aerial photograph of a large, multi-story stone house with a grey roof and several chimneys. The house is surrounded by lush greenery and a paved courtyard. A large, semi-transparent teal circle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text 'Checklists' and '04'.

Checklists

04

# 4. Checklist

## 4.1 Checklist

This section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which design proposals in Westbury should be evaluated. Not all questions will apply to every development.

As a first step, there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals. These are listed under 'General design guidelines for new development'. Following these ideas and principles, a number of questions are listed for more specific topics.

# 1

### General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;

# 1 (continued)

## General design guidelines for new development:

- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

# 2

## Local green spaces, views & character:

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

# 3

## Building line, access and boundary treatment:

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

# 4

## Street grid and layout:

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

# 5

## Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Solar panels are included as permitted development on all roofs but may not be placed on facades or face a listed building. See [permitted development rights for householders](#).

# 6

## Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.

## 6 (continued)

### Building materials & surface treatment:

- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

## 7

### Buildings layout and grouping:

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

# 8

## Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

# 9

## Car parking:

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





## APPENDIX C: LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS

The following buildings and structures are not on the Statutory List of Buildings ('listed buildings') but have been identified as having local heritage value in relation to the provisions of Policy W5 'Local Heritage Assets'.

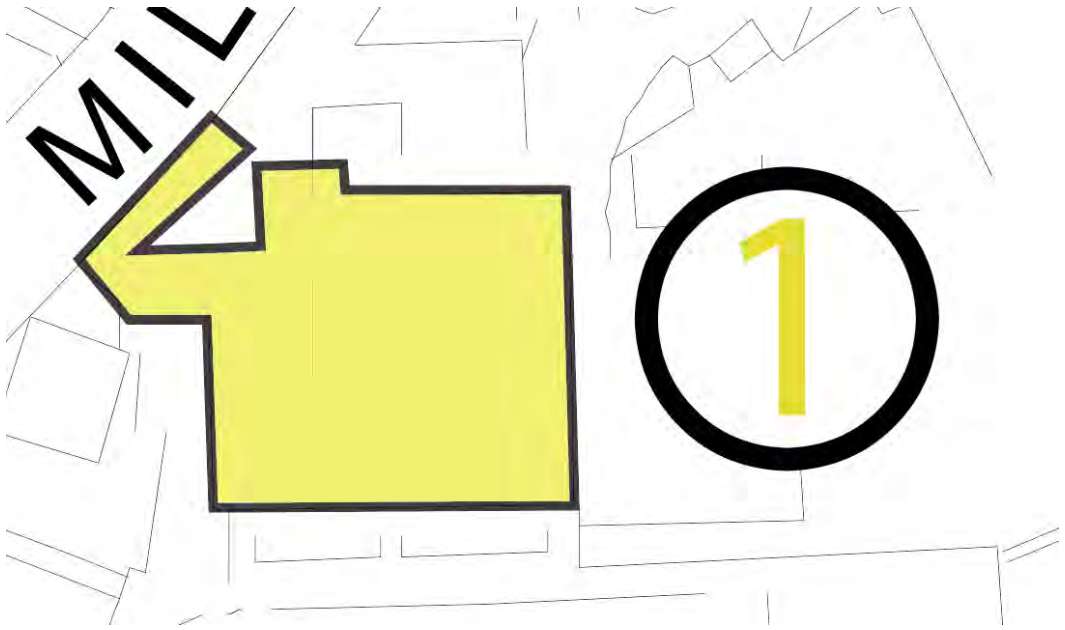
The assets have been identified using local knowledge and a variety of sources noted in the schedule and using the criteria established by Historic England for this purpose (and that are also being used by the Buckinghamshire Local Heritage Asset project).

### 1 - Beachborough School, Main Building



Originally founded in Surrey in 1910, the school moved to Westbury after the Manor estate was sold off in the 1930s. The original medieval Manor itself was completely rebuilt in handsome yellow stone in the early 1903. It is a private preparatory school since 1932, sitting in 35 acres of land to the north of the Gt Ouse River, with abundant mature trees and extensive playing fields.

The main school building, the old Manor House, is a village asset of Historic Interest and Landmark Status.



## 2 - The Old Mill, Mill Lane

The original water-drive mill dated from 1608 and reconstructed in the 1860s on the banks of the river Gt Ouse.

Stone-built on 4 stories. From 1890, steam replaced water as the power source, but by 1940 it had ceased working and the inside was converted into a factory. Other surrounding light industry buildings developed in the 20th C.



In the 21st century it was converted into 13 apartments, and the other works demolished to create an estate at the end of Mill Lane.

The Mill has Landmark Status and Historical Interest.

Information from report by Nigel Wilson for the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, BAS 2012-08. [aagWestburyReport.pdf](http://aagWestburyReport.pdf) ([bucksas.org.uk](http://bucksas.org.uk))



### 3 - Westbury Causeway, near the Old Mill



A 3-foot-wide raised track originally of limestone slabs and corn brash, which provided a dry path across the original millrace that took water from the river to the millpond by the Old Mill.

Derelict now and overgrown by trees, with some sections repaired with other paving stones. The original mill race has mostly disappeared apart from a ditch that floods in heavy rain; the mill pond disappeared under the foundations of the housing estate.

The Causeway, though now only partly visible, has Historical and Landmark Status

Information from report by Nigel Wilson for the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, BAS 2012-08. [aagWestburyReport.pdf \(bucksas.org.uk\)](http://bucksas.org.uk/aagWestburyReport.pdf)



#### 4 - The Reindeer Inn

A two-storey 19th C white-stone built house with outhouses that was the village public house until 2012. Since then, it has been handsomely renovated as a private abode.

The original pub hanging sign is installed in the Village Hall.

The old Inn has Landmark Status.



## 1 - Hollywell Woods

2.8 hectares of natural unmanaged indigenous wood, along a stream, with a footpath. Northern edge of the village, west of Biddlesden Road, with access footpaths from Biddlesden Rd and the A422/Brackley Rd (over a stile).

In the middle is a substantial grove of mature beech trees.

Once, it contained a well and pump house, providing water to the north end of the village.

Criterion for listing: tranquillity and richness of wildlife.



## 2 - Green grass triangle, end of Main St



400 sq m raised grass triangle at the intersection of Main St, Fullwell Rd and Mill Lane, also at a road entrance to Beachborough School and to Orchard Place. It has access steps and a wooden seat; also a permanent outline WW1 memorial figure. A new, replacement tree has been planted in the centre. It is colour-lighted at Christmas.

Criterion for listing: a focal point of the village, and a location for occasional communal events.



### 3 - Playing Field



1.5 hectare managed grass playing field, between the A422 and the village hall, café and shop. Open view westwards, housing to the east. Used for football and cricket, and local village events such as summer fetes.

At the top is a fenced children's playground.

Criterion for listing: recreational value



## 1 – Westbury Approach



Views from the Brackley approach towards the Western side of the Village. Picturesque views of the village and Red Oak Farm.

The village approach illustrates the rural setting that is such a strong part of the village's character. During the community engagement process the rural setting – and especially the rural vistas to the West of the village were highlighted as a much-loved aspect of the village.

The HS2 Project has resulted in a significant, negative impact to the middle-ground of the Western views from within the village. Fortunately, the HS2 environmental mitigation plans include several recovery initiatives that should mitigate these negative impacts during the life of this Neighbourhood Plan.



During the community engagement process it has become extremely clear that there is very strong support for avoiding any further damage to the rural vistas to the west of the village.

## 2 – Village Hall & Playing Fields – Rural Views and Gorgeous Sunsets

The Village Hall & Playing Fields benefit from exceptional rural views to the West of the village. This community space has become one of the most important gathering points for the local community and is a well-known, family-friendly destination for many visitors from nearby towns and villages.



The westerly outlook and the unspoilt rural outlook create the setting for spectacular sunsets. These are a particular feature of many of the community events that take place at the Village Hall including the renowned Friday Night Take Away and regular summer village BBQs.



### 3 – Farmland and Woodlands to the North of Westbury Village

The north and northwest outlook from the proposed settlement boundary enjoys an outlook of agricultural land with Hollywell Woods as a backdrop.



The woods offer a much-loved community green-space, and the surrounding rural outlook is highly valued by the community.

At sunset the views are bathed in beautiful yellows, reds and oranges creating magnificent silhouettes of the established trees.



#### 4 – View from the A422 & Biddlesden Rd Crossroad



The village, and the surrounding countryside is bisected by the A422. Exiting the village Eastwards towards Buckingham enjoys an exceptional agricultural vista dotted with several beautiful established trees – including an exceptional beech tree planted in honour of the late Queen's Coronation in 1953.



## 5 - Picturesque Country Lanes - Biddlesden Road

Several country lanes provide secondary access to the village. Biddlesden Road is one example providing connectivity from the village to settlements to the north including Turweston and Biddlesden as well as access the Whittlewood Forest Biodiversity Opportunity Area.



Biddlesden Rd winds through active farmland and woodland areas offering panoramic rural vistas. The natural beauty of this area has been somewhat compromised by the SugaRich facility and there was strong support for protecting this area from any further damage.



## 6 – Rural Outlook from Footpath to the Northwest of Westbury



To the northwest of the village the public footpath enjoys open rural panoramic views. Feedback captured during the community engagement process emphasised how highly valued the access to the countryside vistas is to the residents of the village. The footpaths to the northwest of the village are a fine example of the active travel network providing open access to views that have become an important part of the village identity.



## 7 - Views of the agricultural amenity ponds to the Southeast of the Village

To the southeast of the village the amenity ponds and surrounding landscape provide a striking contrast to the agricultural land surrounding much of the village. The ponds themselves are on private land but they are a significant addition to the character of the village.

Approaching the village from the south via the Fulwell Road provides a particularly impressive view of the ponds and the southeast side of the village.





## 8 - Views of Beachborough School Grounds & Farmland



Beachborough Independent School is blessed with exceptionally beautiful grounds that includes protected woodlands, exceptional specimens of mature trees and the historically significant Manor House. The grounds extend south of the Manor House to the river and enjoy an idyllic rural backdrop. Whilst the school grounds themselves are private property there is a public footpath that provides an opportunity for the public to enjoy exceptional views of the well-kept grounds, heritage assets and surrounding farmland.

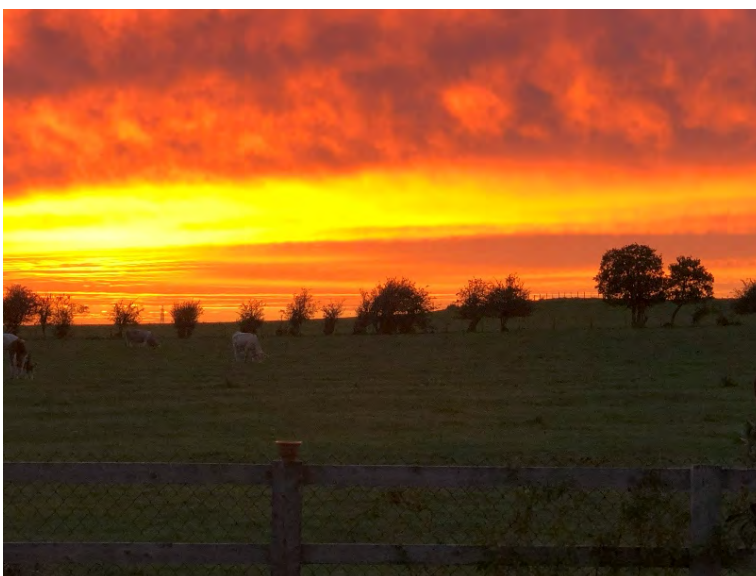
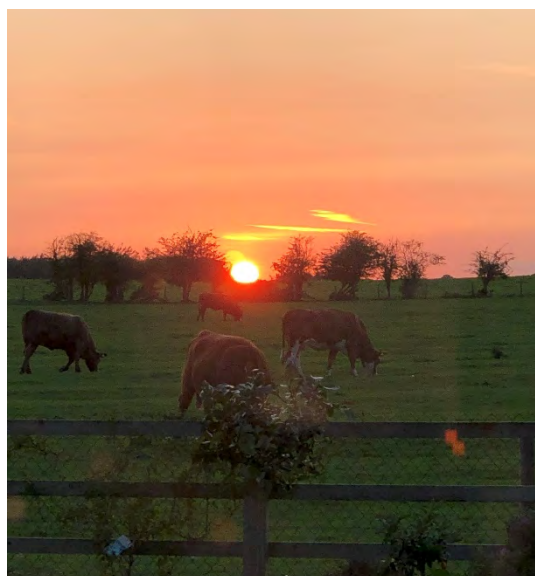


## 9 – Rural Views from the bottom of Mill Lane



During the community engagement process one of the most commented upon views was the rural outlook to the west of the village. The westerly outlook – and the sunsets that so beautifully silhouette the countryside to create an incredible outlook from several key areas of the village – can be enjoyed from the bottom of Mill Lane.

From the bottom of Mill Lane residents can access one of the most beloved parts of the active travel network – the footpaths linking to the disused railway and the villages of Evenley & Mixbury.



## 10 - North towards Red Oak Farm & Westbury Village from Mixbury Footpath



Southwest of the village there are lovely views of the village that highlight how the village is nestled into the broader rural landscape. Some of the most appreciated views are enjoyed from the bridleway and public footpath that connects Mixbury with Westbury. Heading north on this footpath provides panoramic views of Red Oak Farm and then reveals the village with particularly noteworthy views of Beachborough School grounds and the historic Manor House.

## 11 - Rural views from The Powder Barns (locally known as The Dust Houses)



To the north of the village the public footpaths allow public access to the open farmland located near The Powder Barns (located on Biddlesden Road). From the footpath there are panoramic views over agricultural land and the Hollywell Woods.



## 12 – Sunsets and Rural Outlook from the top of Mill Lane

The silhouettes of the homes and the remnants of the Manor House's original walled gardens make for a captivating sunset view. Westbury is particularly blessed with exceptional sunset views across all westerly aspects.



## 13 – Looking up to Fulwell Road

One of the beloved walks around the village provides an incredible view of the early morning countryside and the sunrise.



## 14 - Disused Railway

To the south of the village and along the Parish boundary there is a disused railway that now forms a critical element of the active travel network for Westbury residents as well as the surrounding villages. The majority of the disused railway lies outside of the parish however some parts fall within the Westbury Parish boundary. The view of the railway and the views of the village from the portion of the disused railway within the parish boundary are important to parishioners.



Walks along the disused railway provide access to a variety of rural vistas which were widely commented upon during the community engagement activities throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Residents noted that they found the footpath along the disused railway line provided not only a valuable active travel link but also acted as a critical connection to the rural landscape and provided significant mental health benefits.

During the last few years, the HS2 construction project has bisected the disused railway, redirected some of the beloved footpaths and significantly scarred the rural landscape.

There is a strong feeling, expressed during the engagement process, that this damage is having a significant, negative impact on the community. With the planned mitigation and recovery in mind there is a reluctant acceptance of this impact. However, there is also a very high expectation that these recovery efforts will be prioritised in all planning decisions until the expected environmental mitigation has been delivered.



## 15 – Fields Barn Farm on Fulwell Road



Exiting the village to the southwest via the Fulwell Road provides access to spectacular rural views over the Asparagus Farm and Fields Barn Farm. There are also popular views back to the village and out towards Finmere.

## 1 - Village Hall and Shop – Playing Field Road



Constructed 2016, replacing an older village hall. The Village Hall is a true gem in the heart of the community offering a versatile, inviting space with modern amenities for a wide range of events and activities. Supported by a team of dedicated volunteers the Hall is the go-to destination for locals to gather and celebrate.

After church events such as christenings and weddings take place, along with children's parties, significant birthdays and Beachborough School events. There are also regular bookings for fitness classes, toddler groups, the Film Club, The Cafe Society and Friday night socials.

The Parish Council and other important community meetings and official events take place. The Hall is also used as the Polling Station in local elections.

The Village Hall was also the focus for the celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and more recently, the King's Coronation on 6th May 2023.

The Community Shop & Cafe is an excellent example of the power of community spirit with local residents from all age groups working as volunteers to support the project. It is a hub for socialising and supporting each other as well as providing essentials such as fresh fruit, vegetables and groceries. With its friendly atmosphere, delicious food and commitment to sustainability the shop and cafe is a place to shop, eat and meet.







During the Covid 19 emergency, Westbury Community Shop and Cafe became a lifeline for many people in the village and some from farther afield. They closed off the inner space and built a hatch making it a safe shopping environment. A delivery service was also provided for those self-isolating and unable to get out.

Since then, during the cost-of-living crisis the Cafe and Hall became a warm space twice a week offering free drinks and a space to relax, work or play games. Numerous cycling and other local touring organisations use the Café as a food & drink stop.

Because of demand, particularly when sports events take place on the Field, additional car parking space has been created.

The Village Hall and Café have communal Landmark Status as an asset.



## 2 - Playing Field – Playing Field Road



The Brackley Town Football Club Juniors with players from Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, started playing in Westbury recently. They really appreciate the venue for its well-maintained pitch, access to the village shop and cafe and the tranquil, scenic environment. This, they emphasise, is so important for the morale of the players and the enjoyment of the spectators.

They currently have 17 teams and are adding 3 to 4 female teams aiming, potentially for 25 teams in all. At present there is a 1-year arrangement but in the future, they would like to sign a 5-year lease. This would enable them to apply for a grant from the Football Foundation to improve the pitch still further with aeration and drainage. (This could also be of benefit to the Cricket Club.)



Spectators can enjoy thrilling matches in a picturesque setting and have access to facilities provided by the village hall, cafe and shop.

In addition, there is a cricket pitch which is used in the summer by the Cricket Club with changing rooms located within the Village Hall. The club provides a friendly atmosphere where seasoned players and beginners alike can come together to enjoy the sport. From time to time, Beachborough School hold training

sessions and matches here as well. All sporting events here are well attended.

The Playing Fields have communal recreational value.

### 3 – The Village Club – Main Street

The Westbury Village Club is a traditional, private members' club with a yearly membership fee. Affiliated to the Club & Institute Union, it abides by their rules. It has been serving Westbury for more than 100 years and is led and owned by its members.

It does occasionally host funerals for members and their families.

A regular clientele of older people in the village plus some from Brackley, Water Stratford and Calvert have been frequenting it for over 20 years.



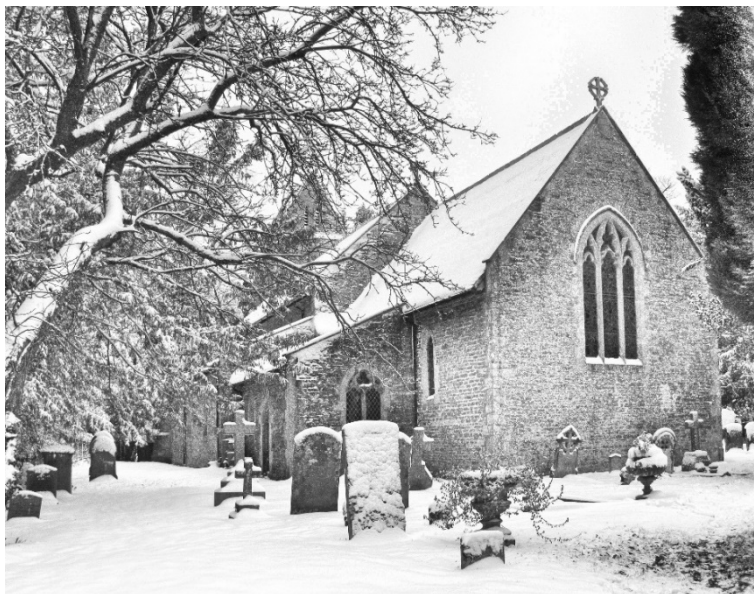
Westbury Gun Club use the venue for meetings and socialising.

Open Friday evenings and the first Saturday in the month, the club is family and child friendly. The Village Club is open to new members who are interested in joining and using it regularly.

The Village Club has communal Landmark Status.

#### 4 - St Augustine's Church – Orchard Place

St. Augustine's church, a Grade II listed building, is a true treasure both as a place of worship and as an historic landmark. With its stunning 12th Century architecture, peaceful atmosphere and rich history the church is a beloved destination for locals and visitors alike. The Revd. Paula Smith is a resident in the village.



The church is open daily and is inclusive and welcoming to everyone. People are brought together through worship and organized activities which encourage the community spirit. Beachborough School also uses the church regularly for school services.

Last summer, for the first time, a Pet Service was held which was very well attended and successful.

A celebration service was held following on from the Platinum Jubilee event. In the autumn many villagers came together for a memorial service for the late Queen Elizabeth II.



At Christmas time a workshop is held for local children to make angels with which to decorate the yew tree at the entrance to the church. There is also a very popular, fund-raising Bazaar organized and run by local volunteers. Nearer to Christmas, many people of all ages from in and around the village area attend a joyful, atmospheric candle-lit Carol Service with mince pies and wine afterwards making it a lovely social occasion.

Looking to the future, it is felt that the potential of the church could be greatly enhanced by the provision of toilets and a water supply. The sound system has now been improved and was demonstrated at the recently held Plant Sale which was tremendously successful on a beautiful sunny day.

Not long ago the Friends of St Augustine's Church (FOStA) was formed and will be raising funds to maintain, preserve and improve facilities within the church. St Augustine's Church has communal Landmark Status and Historical Interest.