

Stewkley Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2013 - 2033

Version March 2020



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Foreword

The Neighbourhood Plan you are about to read addresses the future of Stewkley Parish and takes into account views widely expressed by its residents.

Stewkley is a popular village in which to live due to its location, character and strong community spirit. This plan is supportive of the housing development in the Parish which is essential to allow the community to grow and thrive, and sets out the policies that will guide this development in design, location, and type of accommodation. The Plan also addresses the topics which will ensure that this development is sustainable: education, sports and leisure, environment and heritage.

We greatly appreciate the contribution of those involved in the preparation of this plan and of the many residents who have engaged in the process.

Keith Higgins, Chair of Stewkley Parish Council

Neil Dickens, Chair of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group





1. Introduction to the Plan

- 1.1 Stewkley Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared under the provisions of the 1990 Town and County Planning Act (as amended by the 2011 Localism Act) and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 For the purposes of the relevant legislation, the Qualifying Body is Stewkley Parish Council. The Parish Council applied to Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) on 16 March 2016. AVDC approved the application on 4 May 2016. Figure A shows the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Planning Area which includes the whole of Stewkley Parish.

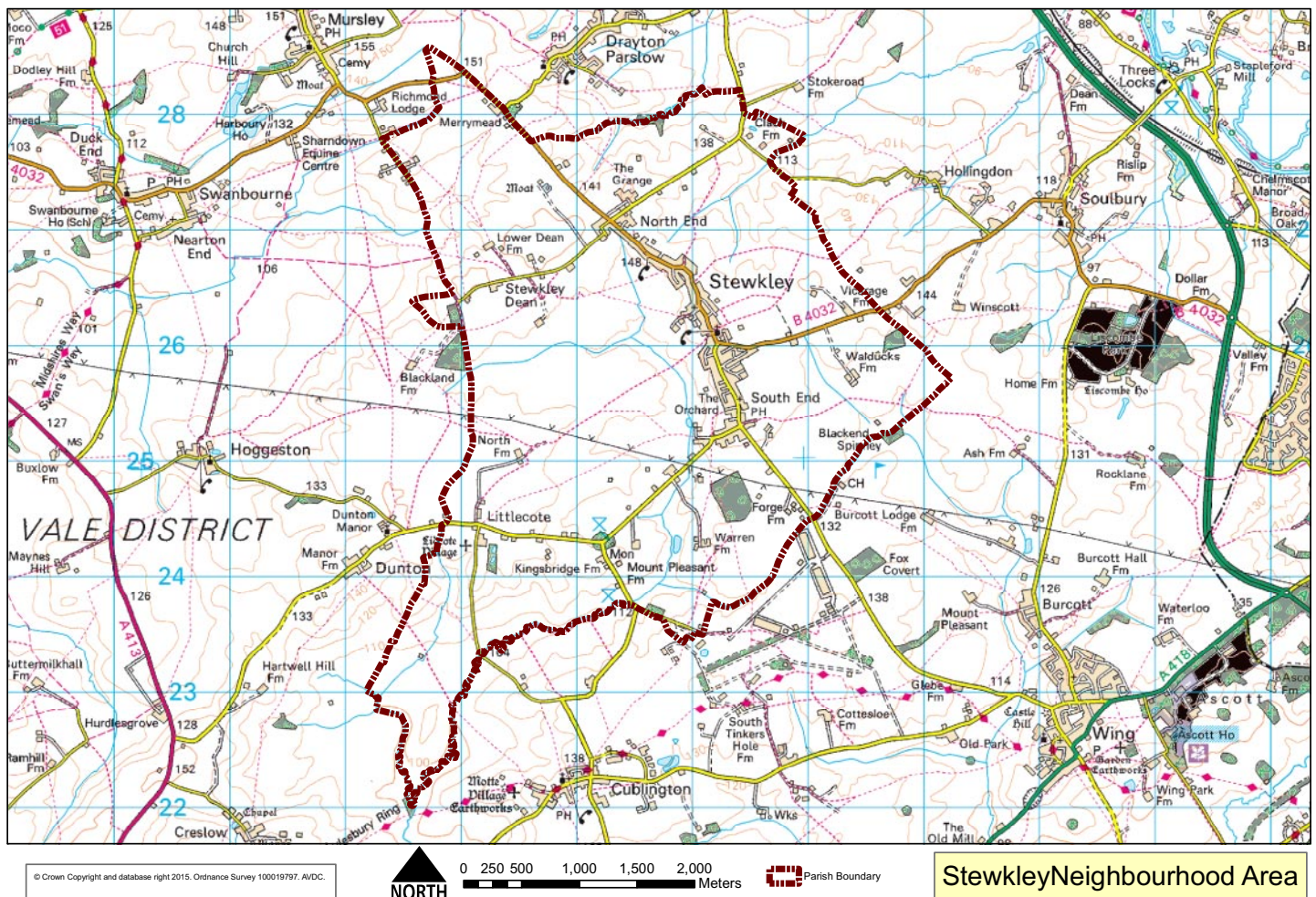


Figure A – Designated Neighbourhood Area



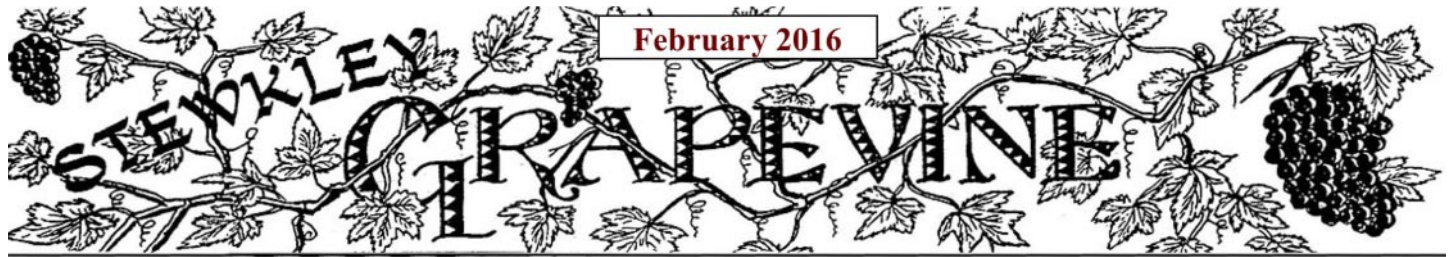
Planning Context

- 1.3 Neighbourhood Planning is a way of helping local communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live and work and can be used to:
- | | |
|--|--|
| Develop a shared vision for the neighbourhood; | Identify and protect important local green spaces; |
| Choose where new homes should be built; | Influence what new buildings should look like. |
- 1.4 Neighbourhood Plans, whilst locally specific, also need to be in general conformity with strategic policies set out in the wider Local Plan and guidance as included in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.5 Stewkley Parish falls within the AVDC local planning authority. This plan therefore sets out to support and build upon the strategic policies of their adopted development plan.
- 1.6 AVDC is in the process of producing a new development plan, known as the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP). The VALP has undergone independent examination, and AVDC are in the process of responding to the Examiner's findings; once adopted it will replace the 2004 Local Plan (AVDLP). Details of the plan can be found on AVDC's website www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk. As the VALP is still under development, this plan uses the *saved policies* of the AVDLP, as evidenced in the Basic Conditions Statement. However it also cross-references and reflects the intent of the emerging VALP as far as practicable. The report is available to view in the supporting documents to the Plan and on the Parish Council website – [Basic Conditions Statement report](#)
- 1.7 The Neighbourhood Plan has full regard to all current approved relevant national and local policies. In addition, aware of the developing VALP, the Plan has been checked as conforming in general with the VALP.
- 1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan has also been prepared in accordance with the EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The directive seeks to provide a high level of protection for the environment and requires that all plans and programmes that may have an environmental effect need an environmental evaluation.
- 1.9 An SEA report has been prepared to assess the objectives and policies of this Neighbourhood Plan in terms of the potential environmental implications. In doing so, the necessary information was collated to conclude that the policies within the Plan will not have any significant effects on a European site under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended by Schedule 2 of the 2012 Regulations) and will not result in any adverse environmental effects. The report is available to view in the supporting documents to the Plan and on the Parish Council's Website - [SEA Report](#)
- 1.10 Whilst the production of a Sustainability Appraisal to accompany the plan is not a legal requirement, the 'basic conditions' do require the consideration of whether the Plan promotes sustainable development. Therefore, Stewkley has also sought to demonstrate how the policies contained within the Plan will contribute towards the goal of achieving a sustainable outcome.
- 1.11 Each policy in this plan has a unique reference number. The policy sections set out the evidence to support the policy and the reasoning behind the approach taken.
- 1.12 After this plan has been through the formal stages of consultation, independent examination and referendum it will be considered 'MADE' and will be used by the Local Planning Authority in determining future planning applications.



Community Involvement

- 1.13 Stewkley Parish Council fully involved the community in the development of the Plan and all parishioners were invited to an open meeting on 7 December 2015. The response showed a clear majority in favour and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) was set up as a sub-committee of the Parish Council.



PLANNING STEWKLEY'S FUTURE: EVERYONE CAN HELP



- 1.14 The NPSG consulted with the local community through a range of scheduled activities, via the Council's website www.stewkley.org.uk and in the monthly Parish newspaper, the 'Grapevine', detailed in [The Consultation Statement](#).



Open Public Meeting

- 7 Dec 2015, 16 May 2016, 11 Oct 2016
- 11 Mar 2017, 15 July 2017



Questionnaire, Call for Sites and Housing Numbers Survey

- Jan 2016, Aug 2016
- Nov 2017



Group and 1:1 Discussions

- July 2017



Regulation 14 Consultation

- June 2019 for 6 weeks





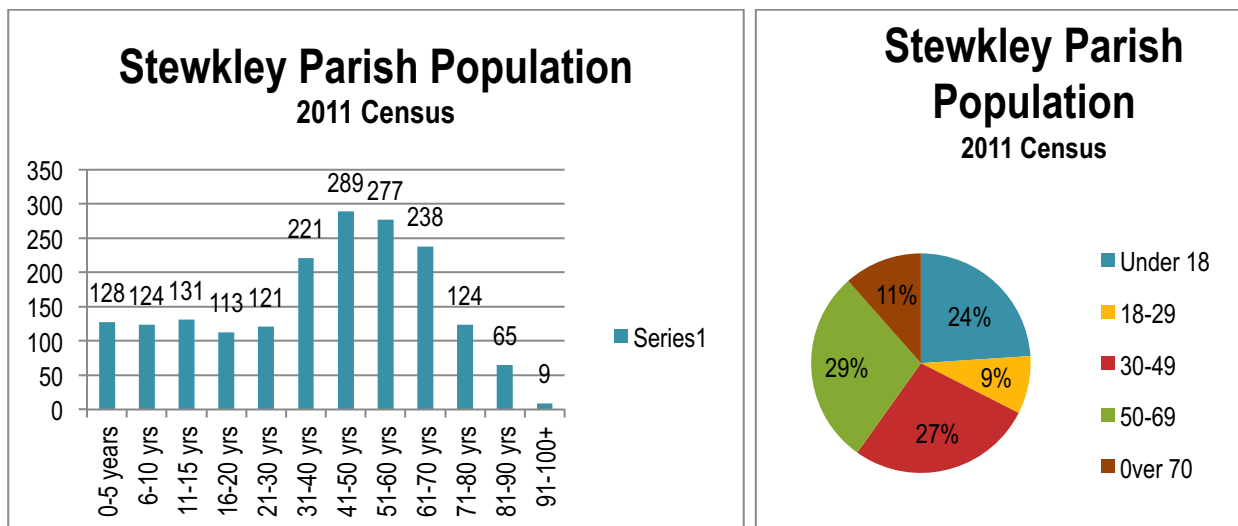
Stewkley Parish Geography

- 1.15 Stewkley Village is situated eight miles north-east of Aylesbury on the B4032, Winslow to Leighton Buzzard road. It is a two-mile long linear village with no significant depth of development to either side. Stewkley Parish includes outlying farms and the settlement of Littlecote, and covers approximately 6.76 square miles.



Population

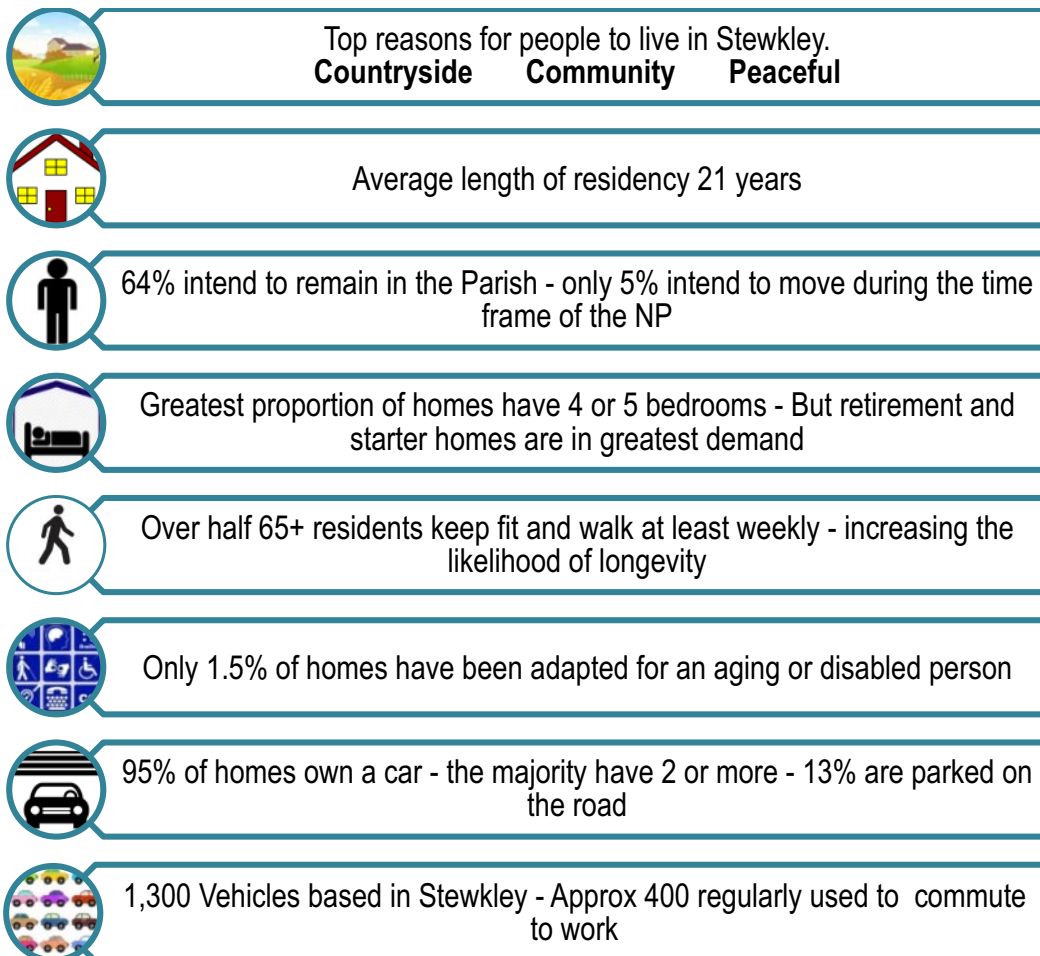
- 1.16 The 2011 Census recorded the population of Stewkley Parish as 1840 residents. The mid-year estimates for 2017 expected the population to reduce to 1822, although local intelligence would suggest an increase as a number of new homes have been built.





Stewkley Questionnaire (2016)

- 1.17 At the outset of the plan development in 2016, a [questionnaire](#) was devised and circulated to all households within the Parish of Stewkley. The intent of this questionnaire was two-fold: to provide some basic statistics which could be cross-referenced with the 2011 census, as well as some directional, aspirational insights which the census did not provide.
- 1.18 The questionnaire, which comprised of 34 questions, was prepared by a sub-committee of the Neighbourhood Planning team and was delivered to 691 homes. 553 were completed: an 80% response rate which represented 1419 Stewkley residents.
- 1.19 The 2011 census records 740 dwellings and a population of 1840 residents. There is a correlation between the census and the questionnaire in terms of demographics, house types and employment, giving confidence in the output from the questionnaire to provide insight into the daily lives of Stewkley residents as well as a 5-year update to the census. Some variance between the 2011 Census and the questionnaire was expected and may be explained by the 5-year time difference. The full results from the questionnaire can be found on the PC's website - [Stewkley Questionnaire](#)
- 1.20 Key findings from this questionnaire that have informed this plan include:



Conservation and Heritage



Corner of Ivy Lane and High Street North.

Pictures taken circa 2010 and 1930.

- 1.21 Stewkley is thought to be a Saxon village. A. Mawer & F.M. Stenton in 'The Place-Names of Buckinghamshire' attribute the name Stewkley as being *styfic leah*, stump clearing in Old English. It is referred to in the Domesday Book as *Steuclai*, a name believed to be derived from 'stiff clay' upon which the village is located.
- 1.22 Stewkley is one of the longest villages in England, the spine of the settlement resting about 150 metres above sea level along a ridge from which water runs down towards the Rivers Ouzel and Thame.
- The village follows a two-mile long High Street with no significant depth of development to either side. Three medieval Manors were originally developed along the High Street which perhaps explains the linear village form. There is speculation that two Roman roads from Alconbury to Dorchester-on-Thames and Leckhampstead to Tring traversed the parish and intersected in the vicinity of the Norman parish church.
- 1.23 The unique character of the village is in no small part the result of a linear growth that has occurred in harmony with this natural feature in the landscape over many hundreds of years. As the community has grown in size alongside its various industries, specifically agriculture and brickworks, homes and other buildings have increased in number along this cord from which our community unfurls.
- 1.24 Employment in Stewkley has traditionally been agricultural. The land was farmed using the open field system with the ridge and furrow landscape still visible today. Local brickworks, redundant since the 1940s, fed on the underlying clay and supplied the distinctive red/orange bricks and tiles from which many older village buildings are constructed. Lacemaking and straw plaiting were also popular domestic industries in the 19th Century. It is notable that at the turn of the 20th Century there were ten public houses in Stewkley, with only two remaining in business in 2019.
- 1.25 Within the Parish of Stewkley there are one Grade I Listed Building and thirty-three Grade II Listed Buildings. Today, all but five of the listed buildings are residential homes.

- 1.26 All of Stewkley's thirty-four listed buildings make an important contribution to the special interest of the village, but none more so than the Grade I Listed parish church of St Michael and All Angels, pictured right. This unique building and the peaceful, open, green space of its churchyard, together form the most important heritage asset at the centre of both the Conservation Area and the community. St Michael's Church, its churchyard and the adjoining Village War Memorial constitute one of the twelve "Identity Areas" of special interest and townscape character which were identified in the Stewkley Conservation Area document.

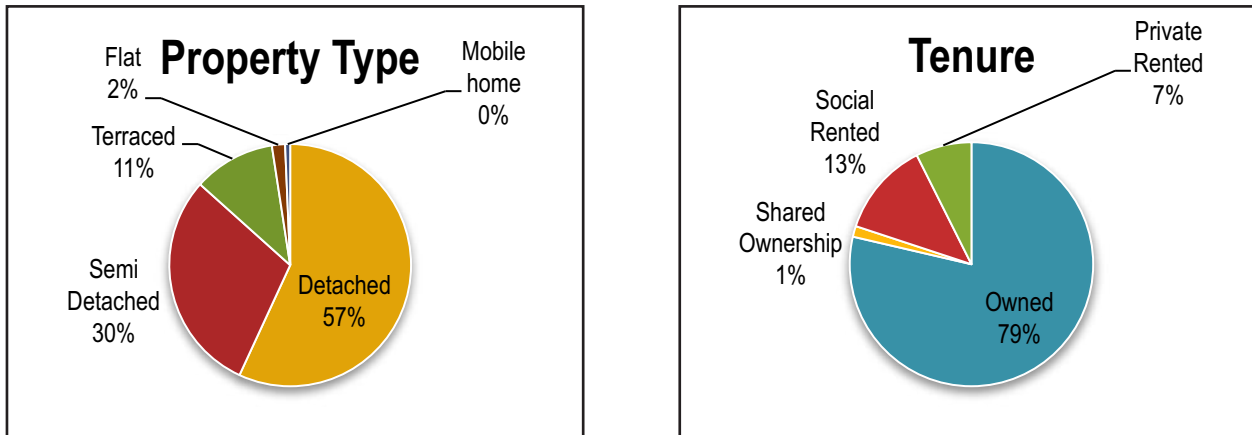


- 1.27 An Anglican chapel-of-ease, now a private home, was created in Dunton Road in the 19th Century to save the legs of South End worshippers the long walk to St Michael's. Non-Conformism played a leading role in village religious life. There were early Methodist chapels at the present 57 High Street North and in Orchard Lane. More spacious Primitive and Wesleyan Methodist chapels later replaced them on High Street South and in Chapel Square, the latter closing in 1987, and which has since been demolished, although its contemporary chapel school room opposite, survives as a private home.
- 1.28 Forty-three further buildings have been identified which by virtue of their age, scale, former function or architecture, contribute significantly to the character of the area. Five important Heritage sites have also been identified for example the site of Littlecote Medieval Village and the Moated Earthworks at Tythe House.
- 1.29 More information about Stewkley's historic buildings/ heritage sites can be found in the [Stewkley Conservation Area Document](#) . The document also includes a map featuring the location of all listed and prominent buildings.



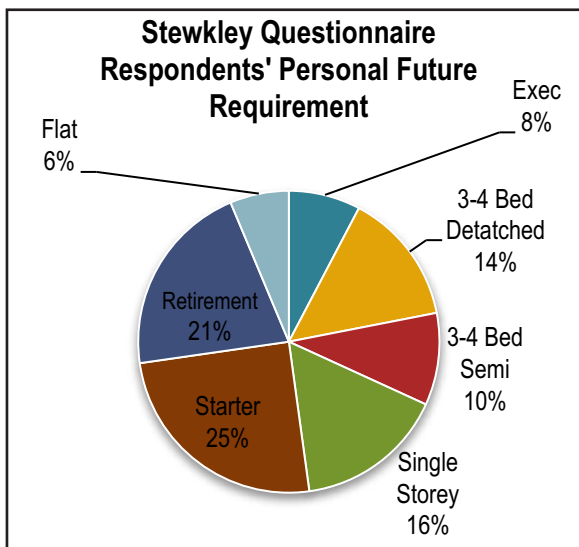
Housing

1.30 The 2011 Census Statistics show that housing stock in Stewkley is divided in the following way:



1.31 The average number of bedrooms per household is 3.3 and the average household size is 2.6 persons

1.32 The [Stewkley Questionnaire](#) asked residents to identify the type of development that they thought they would require in the future (Q29). The adjacent pie chart shows little demand for more executive homes but a strong need for starter homes (2-bed), retirement homes and 3-4 bedroomed homes.



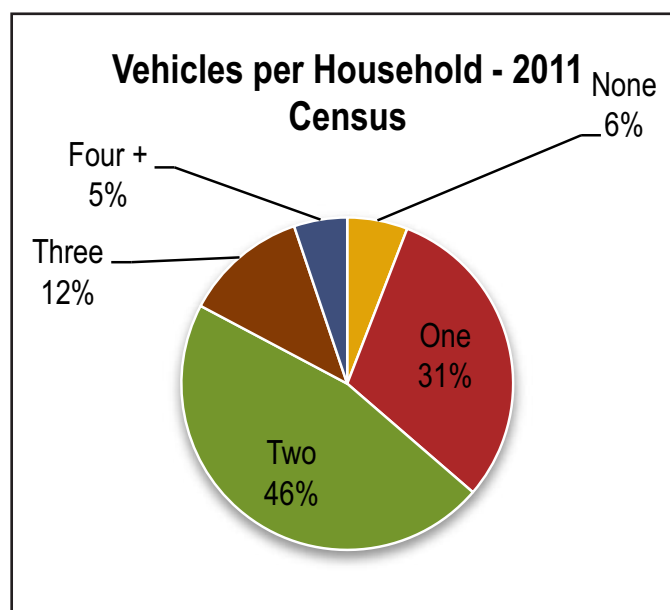
1.33 The questionnaire also identified that at least 82 households (and possibly as many as 108) consider that they want or need to move to accommodation for the elderly in the next 10 years. An important corollary of this is there may be 65 relatively large, executive, homes potentially available from down-sizing, even with no new build. See [the Elderly and Disabled Group report](#) for more details.

1.34 At the time of writing this Plan the Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) assessed the need for new jobs and homes across Buckinghamshire and identified a target of 27,400 new homes for Aylesbury Vale. AVDC allocated a target of 141 homes for the Parish of Stewkley and although this was subsequently reduced to 101, then 100 homes, it has influenced the development of the plan.



Roads and Infrastructure

- 1.35 Stewkley is well connected by road and is located within easy reach of the M1 motorway. However, it is this strategic connection which means that a large proportion of residents use private vehicles to get around. Historic data is not available to calculate traffic growth, but many residents bear witness to their impression that the roads are busier now than ever. The capacity of Stewkley's single carriage highway, originally 'designed' for horses and carts, offers little scope to widen or improve.
- 1.36 Stewkley is, historically, poorly served by bus companies and the limited services available are geared towards the retired community, not workers, commuters, students or socialising teens, which also has an impact on commercial viability. Responses to the Stewkley Questionnaire suggest that the demand for buses could triple in the future but there is doubt as to whether a commercial operation could be sustainable. In the absence of a frequent, reliable service to the main centres, it is unlikely that many residents will do without their private cars for employment or leisure travel.
- 1.37 The closest station for the West Coast Mainline rail network is Leighton Buzzard, which can be reached by car or bicycle. However, bus and taxi services are minimal and do not support commuting at practicable times of day, meaning that most of those working outside of the village are forced to commute by car. Improvements to cycling infrastructure to encourage non-vehicular trips to the station would be greatly appreciated.
- 1.38 Vehicle speeds have been noted throughout the community consultations as a key transport concern in terms of road safety. Stewkley is approached on five main routes by relatively straight (though undulating), single carriageway roads with vehicles required to reduce speed from the national limit of 60 mph directly to 30 mph at the gateways to the village. Unlike many neighbouring villages, there are no 40-mph buffer zones to highlight the change from rural to residential area, nor major gateway features, which means many vehicles are still well over the speed limit as they enter and continue into Stewkley.





- 1.39 Concerns regarding the quantity and location of vehicles parked on the main routes through Stewkley have been repeatedly raised over the years and again in the more recent Stewkley Questionnaire. Those parking on-street usually do so due to lack of suitable off-street parking spaces and the demand from residents to park as closely to their front doors as possible for security/convenience reasons. Whilst many are outside properties in side streets, there is a significant number along the two stretches of the High Street and a few along Soulbury Road. It is the intention of this Plan to ensure all new developments incorporate appropriate parking in order to avoid exacerbating this problem.
- 1.40 Parking is a significant issue in many areas of the village, meaning it can be unsuitable to solely rely on cars for access to amenities. Although Stewkley is fortunate to have a wide network of footpaths leading out of the village across the surrounding countryside, there are few suitable paths or footways in the Parish for wheelchair or pushchair users except along the main spine of the High Street and Soulbury Road. Access to amenities via footways generates particular issues for the elderly and disabled.

The Natural Environment



- 1.41 One of the core principles in the NPPF is that planning policies should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. It is important for Local and Neighbourhood Plans to introduce policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. This not only includes designated landscapes but also the wider countryside in general.
- 1.42 Stewkley's long, linear, rural character, location and unique direct linking of the community to its surrounding landscape and environment, highlights the important role that biodiversity and green space plays in the health and wellbeing of the whole community
- 1.43 Stewkley follows a ridge of higher ground in the form of a watershed divide between two watercourses, the Ouzel River (to the north-east) and the Thame River (to the west) with the village set in a gently undulating landscape. As set out in Paragraph 2.9 of the [Stewkley Conservation Area Document](#) from "various points in the surrounding countryside the village is discernible as a band of mature trees and rooftops, occupying a locally elevated position. From within the village itself, there are views and glimpses, down lanes and from gaps in the predominantly enclosed street frontage, to open countryside. The presence of mature trees, dense verdant boundaries, grass verges and views of fields gives further emphasis to the rural setting and character of the village".



Community, Leisure and Open Spaces

- 1.44 The Parish of Stewkley is well served by a network of key open spaces which play a vital role in the unique character of the village. The key open spaces include heritage sites, recreational and non-recreational green space and local green space (locally important in character). As shown through the Stewkley Questionnaire responses, these key open spaces are well used with over half of Stewkley's residents visiting the Recreation Ground, Sports facilities, Nature Reserve, Spinney and public footpaths at least weekly.
- 1.45 Through this Neighbourhood Plan and any proposed development which comes forward, it is important that we ensure this predominantly rural location is protected, including views across the countryside.

Amenities, Sport and Recreation

- 1.46 Stewkley has a range of amenities and facilities to support its current population, and it will be important as the population grows, that the appropriate level of amenity and facility is sustained. These amenities include a village shop, two pubs (both registered as Community Assets), a village hall and a recreation ground including pavilion, scout hut, tennis courts, sports fields, childrens play area, adult gym equipment, and a wildlife area.
- 1.47 Stewkley supports its faith community with a Church of England parish church and a Methodist chapel.
- 1.48 There is no doctors' surgery in Stewkley and residents have to travel to Wing or beyond for an appointment which is difficult for those without a car as there are no regular bus services. Ashcroft surgery based in Wing offers a limited service on Tuesdays at the Pavilion but without dedicated healthcare facilities is restricted to issuing prescriptions and minor consultation only.

Schools

- 1.49 It is important to maintain and where possible enhance the much-valued education and associated facilities in the village. A wide and varied mix of services (currently on offer) greatly enhances the educational experience for all the primary age children in the village. There are currently six different establishments including:
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| St Michael's C of E Combined School | Bluebell Club at the school |
| Cygnets Stewkley Pre-School | Daisy Club at the chapel |
| Wide Awake Club at the school | Friday Workshop at the chapel |
- 1.50 Community consultation raised concerns over the potential impacts of all the proposed developments coming forward at a similar time, which could lead to an influx of primary age children within the village.
- 1.51 There have been concerns that increased housing in the parish would increase the number of children at the village primary school (St. Michael's Church of England School). Any significant increase in the number of pupils at St. Michaels would force use of space and facilities important to the richness of the education offered, with music as an obvious example. Such expansion would be opposed by the school governors. On the other hand one third of the current pupils are from outside the recognised catchment area. There may be some transitional or statistical anomalies in the short term but overall the scale of housing growth envisaged should not require expansion of the local primary school. Buckinghamshire County Council, who control admissions policy, concur with this assessment.



- 1.52 Stewkley Cygnets, the pre-school facility located in a purpose-built building within the grounds of St Michael's School is operating at full capacity.
- 1.53 Within Stewkley there are 4 Childminders registered with Family Information Service Bucks County Council. All Childminders are at full capacity and report frequently turning children away. Childminders are a very valuable source of good reliable childcare within the locality. It is noted that some families are using Childminders outside the village due to the shortage of registered Childminders within Stewkley.

Youth

- 1.54 The Stewkley Neighbourhood Plan Survey identified that Youth (11-19 years) represent approximately 10.5% of the population of the Parish. It found that those aged 11-14 tend to be well catered for however this is not the case for those aged between 14-17 (outside of formal clubs). There are almost no social events arranged for this age group and their desire for a space(s) such as a youth shelter, has not been accommodated due to health and safety concerns.
- 1.55 Within the village the most used service is the scouts, followed by the sports clubs. Many of these activities take place on the Recreation ground with its excellent sports facilities, modern pavilion and scouts hut. The Recreation Ground is considered to be the most important asset in the Parish.
- 1.56 Outside the Parish young people attend a multitude of activities including recreation centres and cinemas. Access to these facilities via public transport would be of benefit if it was available on a frequent and regular basis.

Employment

- 1.57 According to the AVDC Economic Profile of Stewkley Ward Report (April 2014) there were 132 businesses in Stewkley, which in turn provide some 500 jobs. Of these businesses 112 were micro businesses, employing fewer than 10 people, which suggests a reasonable diversity in terms of its employment profile with no over reliance on one single employer.
- 1.58 In terms of the employment of those residents living in Stewkley, education was the highest employment sector at 49.1%, with professional, scientific and technical at 12%, construction at 8.4%, and property at 2.7%.
- 1.59 There are currently two business estates within Stewkley, Manor Business Centre off High Street South and the Ploughing Barns, off Soulbury Road. In terms of other locations of employment this includes the school, a number of farms, public houses, plant nurseries, a farm shop, a hairdressers and a village shop. Stewkley also has a high level of self-employed residents who are home based and offer a wide range of services and products.

We are a welcoming and forward-thinking community and this is a central part of our vision for the future. There are many reasons people might wish to move to Stewkley from elsewhere, and these are largely the same reasons that make villagers so determined to preserve and protect the character of the village. The rural nature of the village offers peace and tranquility, a safe environment for children, picturesque walks in the surrounding countryside and stunning views across the farmland that envelopes us.

Retain village character and heritage

Provide new homes which meet the needs of all ages

Protect enjoyment of the open Buckinghamshire countryside

Support local amenities and organisations

Protect the environment by supporting sustainable energy solutions



This Word Cloud reflects the parish responses to 'top reasons for being in Stewkley'.



3. Introducing the Policies

- 3.1 In the early stages of the Plan's preparation the Parish Council established a steering group to oversee its development. The steering group was responsible for collating the evidence required to inform the plan, developing the content and consulting with the community.
- 3.2 Nine Working Groups were formed to carry out investigations, gather evidence, consult with local people and begin to identify policies. The working groups covered the following themes:

Amenities	Employment	Roads and Infrastructure
Conservation and Heritage	Housing and Planning	Youth
Education	Landscape and Environment	
Elderly and Disabled	Sports and Recreation	

- 3.3 From the recurring themes and information gathered through the various working groups, the topics were grouped into the following:

Conservation and Heritage	Amenities, Sports and Recreation
Planning, Landscaping, Housing and Environment	Key Open and Green Spaces
Elderly and Disabled	Education
Roads and Infrastructure	Employment

- 3.4 Each working group undertook a detailed review of evidence collated from the Stewkley Questionnaire, national and local policies and other subject related data. They also carried out local surveys and consultations to inform the development of policies.
- 3.5 Full reports for each of the working groups can be found on the Parish Council's website www.stewkley.org.uk. Alternatively click on the titles above. Summary information and key points have been included in this Plan.
- 3.6 Each policy has a unique reference number.
- 3.7 Throughout the consultation a series of projects and/ or recommendations were suggested by the community; which whilst not land-use related were still considered important to the development of this Plan. Sections called Community Actions and Projects (CAPs) have therefore been included in the relevant topic chapters.



4. Planning, Landscaping, Housing and Environment (PLHE)

Objectives

Encourage smaller scale developments which respect the 'linear' nature of the village's built form

Facilitate the provision and retention of suitable types of housing for the elderly to down-size and encourage smaller dwellings to be built allowing younger families the opportunity to continue to reside in the village

Encourage phased developments which limit the impact on local services and infrastructure
Maintain the character of the village by incorporating traditional design

Goals

Increase the number of suitably adapted homes in the village to meet the requirements of an ageing population

Consider the future needs of the parish population when determining the type and mix of future housing

Retain Stewkley's linear, rural identity, and views of the open countryside

- 4.1 As previously described Stewkley is characterised as a 'linear' village, which has been built up around either side of the High Street enabling views across the countryside.
- 4.2 A key issue for Stewkley in terms of housing surrounds affordability and the lack of diversity in property on offer. Above average house prices and the lack of smaller properties highlights an obvious lack of choice for those looking for lower cost homes. Issues of affordability can also in turn impact on the population balance of an area, as younger people growing up in the village are forced to look elsewhere to more affordable locations.
- 4.3 Evidence collated through the Neighbourhood Plan also suggests that on the other end of the scale there are a number of elderly residents who would like to or would consider downsizing in the future but again the village lacks diversity in properties to support this.
- 4.4 The PLHE working group undertook a detailed review of evidence from AVDC and the community questionnaire to inform the housing policies. Wider consultation, including the work of the Elderly and Disabled Working Group, confirmed the following goals to be important.
- 4.5 The options for delivering new homes across the village are limited and the following policies have sought to address this need whilst protecting the intrinsic rural character of the village and the openness and views of its surrounding countryside.
- 4.6 A 'call for sites' exercise was undertaken. The NPSG identified 53 potential locations and consulted the owners. Those wishing not to develop their land were eliminated.
- 4.7 The remaining 29 sites were assessed against a number of criteria to assess their suitability for development including:
- Protection of the linear and rural nature of the village;
 - Protection of green spaces and environment;
 - The village requirements for housing type
 - Ease of access (traffic and parking);
 - The avoidance of large developments; and
 - Impact on countryside views
- 4.8 A series of events were held during 2016/7 to gain residents' feedback and after consultation SPC and NSPG shortlisted an initial 12 sites for inclusion in the Plan. Following Regulation 14 consultation and a formal review of the spatial options for development, two sites were allocated, see STK3. In addition to these allocated sites, new houses will be delivered from sites allocated in VALP (up to 81 homes) and from houses already built since 2013 or for which planning has been approved (about 20 homes)
- 4.9 The allocated sites will deliver up to approximately 25 additional dwellings representing a 3.3% increase based on the 2011 National Census which recorded 740 households in the Parish and will provide an opportunity to change the mix of type and size of homes available.
- 4.10 This permits a Settlement Boundary to be established as outlined in Policy STK1 which seeks to protect the intrinsic rural character of the village whilst allowing for sustainable growth.



Policy STK1: Settlement Boundary

The Neighbourhood Plan defines a Stewkley Settlement Boundary, as shown on the Policies Map.

In addition to the sites allocated for housing development in Policy STK3, proposals for housing development within the Settlement Boundary will be supported, provided:

- they comprise of no more than 5 houses on a site not exceeding 0.20 hectare, unless evidence can be provided to support a larger scheme
- buildings are no more than two storeys in height, unless special circumstances can be demonstrated to show there will be no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Development proposals on land outside the defined Settlement Boundary will not be supported other than for rural housing exception schemes, uses that are suited to a countryside location such as appropriate leisure and recreational uses, or community right to build schemes. Well-designed proposals for employment, agriculture or forestry and tourism that may help the rural economy will be supported. New isolated homes in the countryside will not be supported, but the creation of new homes through the conversion of barns may be acceptable in principle.

4.11 The Settlement Boundary, as shown on the Policies Map in Figure F, links gaps on the outer built-up areas of the village and therefore defines a clear line between the countryside and the village's built form. At a public consultation meeting held in early 2016, 97% voted in favour of smaller developments distributed throughout the linear built up area of the village rather than major developments in one location. The PHLE Group assessed various locations in terms of their suitability and is confident the sites allocated within this Plan will help deliver the most appropriate form of growth.

4.12 The Settlement Boundary has been drawn to observe the existing built up area edge and to accommodate the site allocations as listed in Policy STK3. Maintaining the linear nature of the village, the openness of its surrounding countryside and access to country views is critical, consequently in-fill development within the village will only be acceptable if it falls within the settlement boundary and is in keeping with its surrounding buildings.

4.13 Community Land Trust (CLT). Whilst presently there is no proposal for affordable homes to be provided by way of a Community Land Trust (CLT) scheme, if the opportunity arose, Stewkley Parish Council would welcome such a proposal in relation to any of the allocated sites.

4.14 Housing Associations. AVDC has a number of partners who specifically help to deliver sustainable affordable housing in rural areas on sites which would not normally be granted planning permission for market housing:

- English Rural Housing Association
- The Guinness Trust
- Hastoe Housing Association
- The Buckinghamshire Housing Association

Stewkley Parish Council would welcome any of these Housing Associations to provide Affordable Homes on any of the allocated sites.

4.15 Proposals for housing development on allocated sites will be permitted providing they accord with all relevant policies of the Plan.

Policy STK2: Housing Type

In any new residential development scheme of 5 or fewer dwellings only one may have 4 bedrooms, the remainder will comprise dwellings with 2 and 3 bedrooms only. For development schemes of 6 or more dwellings, at least two thirds of the total number of dwellings will be of 2 or 3 bedrooms and remainder will not exceed 4 bedrooms.



- 4.16 Maintaining a sustainable community requires that development supports the retention of local youth by having sufficient starter homes and, at the other end of the housing ladder, allowing those who wish it to downsize. The Stewkley Questionnaire surveyed not only the existing housing mix but also the future aspirations of the occupants. The results highlighted 3 key facts relevant to housing mix.
- 4.17 First, Stewkley has an existing abundance of large/executive homes. Over 50% of the households responding dwell in homes with 4 or more bedrooms. Indeed, 15% of homes have 5 or more bedrooms. These figures contrast with the Central Buckinghamshire HEDNA (Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment) 2016, quoted in the AVDC VALP, calling for just some 27% of housing to have 4 or more bedrooms. Moreover, aspirations expressed by occupants to downsize to either bungalow or retirement homes suggest that some 65 large/executive homes could become available to the market in the next 10 years, even with no new build, provided that smaller homes are available to allow the necessary moves. It should be noted that much of the feedback on downsizing emphasised that 3 bedroom homes were desired.
- 4.18 Second, aspirations for starter homes, which we take to be generally 2-bed or less, were expressed by 25% of responding households. This contrasts with a current stock of just under 18% and implies a high demand for a substantial number of smaller homes if the parish is to retain or attract younger adults.
- 4.19 Policy STK2 is designed to increase, as much as practicable, provision of homes for both those needing a first home and those seeking to downsize later in life. As stated above at paragraph 4.5 physical constraints mean only a number of new homes can be built in the parish whilst preserving the characteristics parishioners cherish. However demanding that every new home had 3 or fewer bedrooms risks some options ceasing to be viable for landowners/developers. Policy STK2 draws a careful, practical balance between the various constraints.
- 4.20 Third, Stewkley is already a relatively elderly parish, with 19% of those covered by Questionnaire responses being over 65, compared with Aylesbury Vales's average of 17% (Buckinghamshire Populations Projection data). Moreover, although relatively elderly, the parish may be considered to be relatively healthy; some 50% enjoy walking on the village footpaths at least once a week. Thus residents can be assumed to be more likely to survive to greater age. This prompts two issues. First, there is potential for an increase in households with at least one member with mobility or disability issues. We believe that the VALP requirements that all new residential development should meet Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings) of Approved Document M: Volume 1, will fully mitigate this concern Secondly, there is a potential increased requirement for institutional or quasi-institutional / supported accommodation. However, small communities do not make for viable 'markets' for such accommodation. We believe that Stewkley's potential need fits well with provision available in the village of Wing (some 3Km distant) which has a 75 bed residential home as well as other options in the Milton Keynes area. We therefore seek no specific provision within the parish.
- 4.21 It is considered to be important that new housing coming forward is first offered to Parish residents or direct members of their families. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the process of working with developers delivering any housing proposal within the Parish to offer the first opportunity of these properties to local people.
- 4.22 The Southern Gateway sites block plans, as provided here in Figure B, identify their location relative to the Wing Road
- 4.23 Southern Gateway East will provide some affordable housing on this development, and sections 4.13 and 4.14 are therefore of relevance to this development.



Policy STK3: Housing Allocations

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates for residential development site NP07 identified as Wing Road East, and co-joined sites NP09 and NP11 identified as Wing Road West, as shown on the Policies Map.

Complementary Planning Applications will be required to be submitted for co-joined sites. Proposals will be supported at each site, provided they accord with the following site-specific requirements and with other relevant policies of the Neighbourhood Plan

Wing Road East Site NP07 Land below No.3 Wing Rd

A scheme shall comprise approximately 15 dwellings on a developable area of 0.66 Ha.

the front elevations of buildings shall face the road and be set back behind the retained hedge and drainage channel with the creation of a new access road

a new (single) vehicle service road and pedestrian access/ egress shall be created off the road at the northern end of the site in a way that minimises the loss of the existing hedge for sight lines

The dwellings shall be in accordance with NP Policy STK2

The buildings shall comprise 2 single storey dwellings and around 13 dwellings up to 2 storey in a layout that allows for glimpse views through the scheme from the road to the countryside beyond

On the south of the site, a new village gateway (complementing and designed and built with the development on the west of the wing road), shall be created utilising the new houses and landscape.

the landscape scheme shall retain and bolster the existing boundary hedges and shall include new tree planting in the rear gardens

the palette of building material shall include Stewkley red bricks or similar approved by the Parish Council.

Wing Road West

Combination of Sites NP09 – Land South of 20 Wing Road and NP11 – Land to the rear of NP09.

A scheme shall comprise approx. 10 dwellings on a developable area of 0.299Ha.

the buildings shall be seven 2 (bedroom) terraced 2 storey dwellings and up to three 2 storey 3/4 bed roomed houses.

the front elevations of terraced buildings shall face the road and be set back behind the retained hedge and drainage channel with the creation of a new access road

The dwellings shall be in accord with NP Policy STK2

A new (single) vehicle and pedestrian access/egress shall be created off the road at the northern end of the site in a way that minimises the loss of the existing hedge for sight lines and that enables the new footway to join with the existing footway on that side of the road.

The palate of building material shall include red bricks or similar approved by the Parish Council

On the south of the site, a new village gateway (complementing, designed and built with the development on the east of Wing Road) shall be created utilising the new houses and landscape.

The landscape scheme shall retain and bolster the existing boundary hedges and shall include new tree planting in the rear gardens.

Figure B The Southern Gateway sites block plans

Southern Gateway East

Southern Gateway West





5 Conservation & Heritage

Objectives

Conserve and enhance local heritage features and minimise the effects of development on the historic character of the village

Ensure any new developments respect and reflect the key characteristics of the historic built and landscape environment in its form, layout, massing, materials and design.

Goals

Protect the Conservation Area and control future development within both the Conservation Area and its adjoining borders.

Protect the views of countryside visible from within the village, maintain the peace of the predominantly rural environment and enhance key heritage areas.

Ensure historic assets and important buildings are not damaged by inappropriate building or alterations.

Consider the countryside and spaces around buildings as being as important as the buildings themselves in creating Stewkley's character and to ensure this is also protected.

- 5.1 The C&H working group undertook a detailed review of both primary and secondary evidence to inform these policies, including reviewing the [Stewkley Conservation Area Document](#). Wider consultation confirmed the following goals to be important.
- 5.2 The aim of this policy is to ensure that all new developments coming forward within the Parish are designed to respect and where possible enhance Stewkley's character and are constructed to minimise any impacts on both the natural and built environment.
- 5.3 Stewkley's Conservation Area was designated by Aylesbury Vale District Council on the 24th January 2001. The Conservation Area Appraisal sets out the key features and characteristics of the village's historic core which in turn justify its designation. The Conservation Area Report and Map can be found at <https://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/stewkley-conservation-area>
- 5.4 The appraisal identifies twelve contiguous "identity areas" or "nodes of development" along Stewkley's linear street pattern, which collectively form the cohesive townscape identity special to Stewkley.
- 5.5 This highlights that it is the special architectural and historic interest of the whole area, rather than the merits of individual buildings, which are important in defining the Conservation Area. To this end it is important to maintain the patterns of development including the linear street pattern, the heights of buildings and street frontages, which add to the special architectural and historic interest.
- 5.6 The Stewkley Conservation Area is characterised by its linear nature such that the majority of historic or traditionally-built properties are situated at the front of their plots and have a strong relationship with their road frontages.
- 5.7 When referring to materials, the Conservation Area Appraisal, paragraph 3.16 states; "*The use of appropriate colour and texture of brick is vital to the visual integration of new development; this also applies to boundary/curtilage walls*". This reinforces the policy requirement for Stewkley red brick or equivalent or render to protect this character.
- 5.8 The Conservation Area also highlights vistas and views, which merit protection, through the village and from the village to open countryside. The important views are identified in the Policies Maps, Figure F.



- 5.9 The special character of Stewckley lies in the current density and layout of the buildings and the relationship between the High Street buildings and streetscape through which it passes. Good design and landscaping in any new development is key to preserving and enhancing the built environment. The policy requirements set out in STK4 seek to closely reflect the Conservation Area Appraisal, setting out the special characteristics which contribute to the overall character of the village.
- 5.10 The Historic Designations across Stewckley including the boundary of the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Notification Areas can be found in the [Stewckley Conservation Area Document](#)
- 5.11 Link to the full [Conservation and Heritage Report](#) and [Appendix Assets List](#)

Policy STK4: Village Character

Proposals for development will be supported, provided they sustain and enhance the distinctiveness of the village and, where appropriate, the character and appearance of the Stewckley Conservation Area and its setting. Development proposals should also have full regard to the following design features and to the supplementary guidance in the Stewckley Conservation Area Appraisal, where relevant to their location in the Parish:

The prevalent use of natural slate and natural clay plain red tiles as roofing materials, with roof forms rarely disturbed by openings or dormers but often including attractive chimneys that punctuate building silhouettes

The prevalent use of 'Stewckley red' brick or equivalent and/or a sand/lime render as a building material, often in diagonally patterned brickwork using burnt headers or in a chequer pattern using pale/bluff headers in a Flemish bond

Plot boundaries are commonly defined by 'Stewckley red' brick walls in traditional bond finished with half round or saddleback coping or by simple hoop-topped railings

No houses are taller than two storeys in height and no commercial or agricultural buildings are significantly higher than that same height

High Street comprises a sequence of distinct identity areas defined by common building lines; building forms (terraced, semi-detached and detached and double-fronted); plot coverage, widths, depths and orientation; and long and short views punctuated or terminated by buildings and mature trees in key locations along its length, for example, between 21-37 High Street North and 3-25 Dunton Road

The presence of architectural features indicating a former, non-residential use of a building, including original wooden doors, windows, and commercial signs

For most of its length, the absence of backland development behind the High Street frontage results in many glimpse views from the highway between buildings to the countryside beyond, which reinforces the rural character of the village. At any point in the village townscape, further character is derived from enclosure, change of level, turns in the road and even comparatively straight sections of road that channel views along the street, for example, along High Street North from King's Head House towards the Village Hall encompassing four important historic buildings





- 5.12 Stewkley has a rich and varied history. Both the designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Parish act as an important reminder of the key areas that have made the Parish what it is today. It is therefore important that these sites remain substantially in their current state.
- 5.13 Stewkley's Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets are vital to the character and appearance of the village, its community and culture. It is therefore essential that these assets are protected.

Policy STK5: Buildings of Local Historic Interest

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies buildings of local historic interest, as included on the list in Appendix 1. Proposals that will result in harm to, or unnecessary loss of a building of local historic interest will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a public benefit that outweighs the harm or loss

- 5.14 Under the policy terms of the Revised NPPF 2019, any residential, commercial and non-residential development proposal which results in the loss of significance of a heritage asset, for example the Stewkley Conservation Area, must have that harm weighed in planning balance against any community benefits of the proposal in reaching a decision, If there is no apparent community benefit, then the proposal should be refused.
- 5.15 In determining any development proposals within and adjacent to the Stewkley Conservation Area, the key heritage considerations would be the impact on:
- Heritage assets in the vicinity, including listed buildings, heritage sites and the Conservation Area itself;
 - The character and appearance of the area, for example by intruding into open countryside, despoiling important vistas in and out of the village, or creating an irregular development pattern harmful to the linear nature of the village;
 - The traditional form, layout and scale of buildings.

Community Actions and Projects

CAPCH1: Explore whether overhead cables, especially in Chapel Square, could be buried underground and the poles removed.

CAPCH2: Undertake a street furniture audit with a view to redesigning or colouring lighting and other columns and signs to reflect and visually integrate the historic environment.

CAPCH3: Undertake an audit of boundaries such as historic railings and brick walls which are an important feature of Stewkley's townscape with a view to commissioning repairs





6. Roads and Infrastructure

Objectives

Improve the safety of all road users including drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians including wheelchair users

Reduce average speeds of vehicles entering and transiting the village and reduce risk to residents, whether pedestrians or road users

- 6.1 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that transport policies have an important role to play in achieving sustainable development and also contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives.
- 6.2 To evidence the 2010 Parish Plan, consultation was undertaken with approximately 60% of households responding to a public questionnaire. Of those responses 60% conveyed issues with the roads being too busy at peak times with more traffic-calming measures required and 44% of respondents said they encountered problems with parked cars when driving.
- 6.3 Concerns regarding the quantity and location of vehicles parked on the main routes through Stewkley have been repeatedly raised over the years. Stewkley suffers from a shortage of off-road parking capacity as a result of its historic development. Many of the older houses fronting the High Street were not provided with sufficient spaces for parking beside or behind their properties.
- 6.4 Through the Stewkley Questionnaire, the group was able to quantify that an estimated 131 (13%) vehicles routinely parked on-street, usually due to lack of suitable off-street parking spaces. Residents also stated that they park as closely to their front doors as possible for security/convenience reasons. Whilst many of these parked vehicles are located outside properties in side streets, there is a significant number along the two stretches of the High Street, Dunton Road and Soulbury Road. The consequence of this is that some of these vehicles increase the risk of accidents or danger to passing traffic and pedestrians by being parked inconsiderately or close to junctions or bends, often against the Highway Code.

Goals

Ensure new developments provide the appropriate levels of off-road parking, for both residents and visitors

Reduce on-street parking

Improve the accessibility around Stewkley for pedestrians including wheelchair users

Policy STK6: Car Parking

Proposals for new, extended or redeveloped residential or employment uses must provide off road car parking spaces of a number and location that can be demonstrated to be sufficient for the use by all occupants without having to resort to parking in close proximity to site entrances, road junctions and on the road in general. All new residential uses of two or more dwellings will provide an additional 0.5 car parking space per new home for visitor parking above local authority requirements.

- 6.5 New developments offer the only opportunity to improve the situation and reduce the shortfall, thus preventing the on-road problem becoming worse.
- 6.6 Considering the level of growth proposed in Stewkley, there is no doubt that the new housing developments will add to the volumes of traffic and, if not appropriately catered for, further impact on the safety of the roads through inappropriate parking. Ensuring this is appropriately considered in any proposal is critical to avoid exacerbating such issues.

Policy STK7: Cyclists and Pedestrians

Development proposals will, where relevant to their location, retain or improve existing pedestrian and cycle access routes that either pass through or adjoin the site. They will make an appropriate financial contribution towards projects in the Parish aimed at improving or creating pedestrian and cycling routes and facilities, including contributions to establishing safe wheelchair access throughout the village, and improvement or enhancement of Rights of Way footpaths.

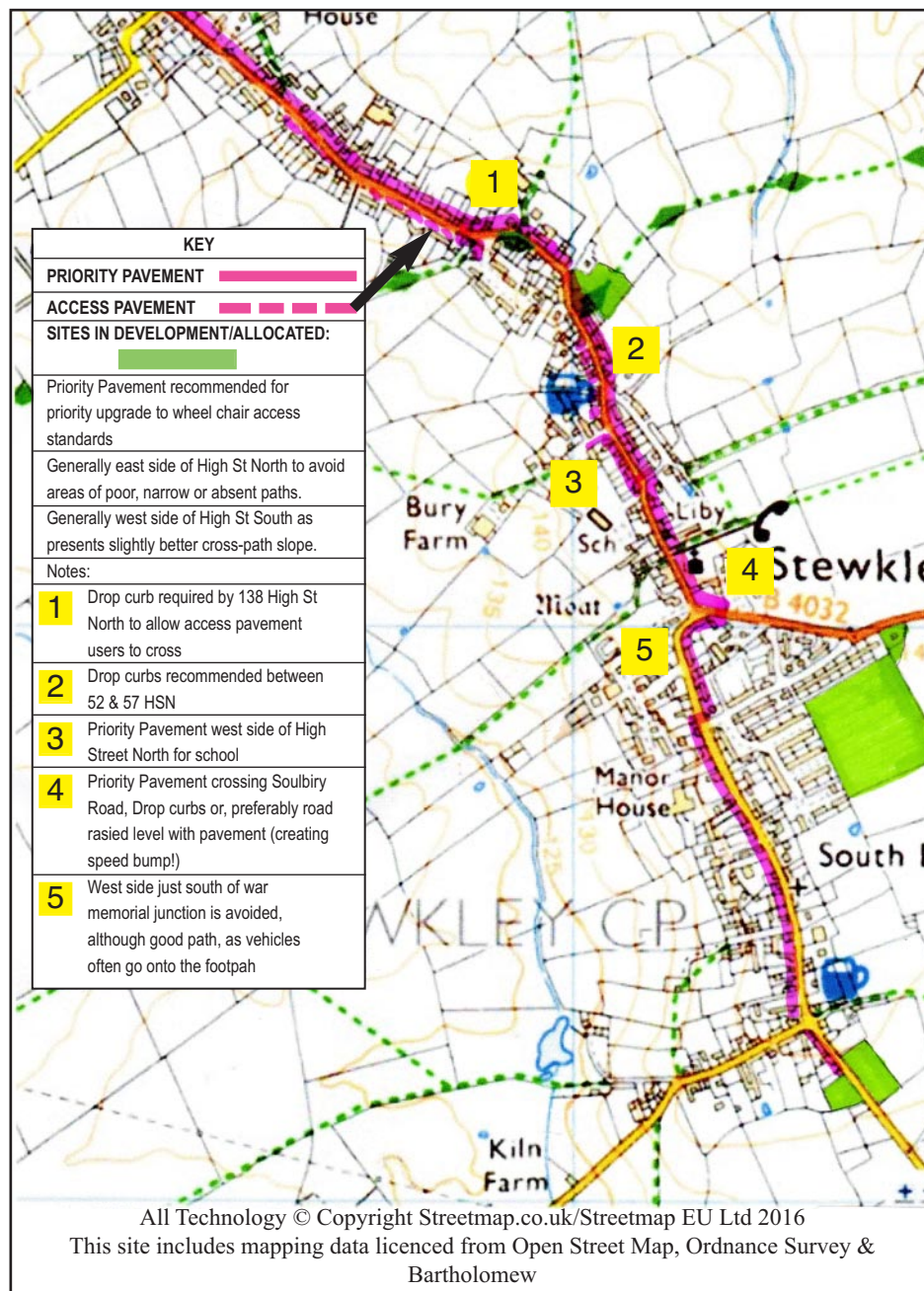


6.7 Both the Government and AVDC require planning policies to support the promotion of sustainable transport modes. Considering the issues surrounding congestion, parked cars and speeding in the village it is especially important that future developments look to improve pedestrian and cycle access and linkages around the village.

6.8 Although Stewkley is fortunate to have a wide network of footpaths leading out of the village across the surrounding countryside, there are few suitable paths or footways for wheelchair or pushchair users except along the main spine of the High Street and Soulbury Road.

6.9 Measures to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists along this principal access route specifically are necessary now and will be even more so after any development in Stewkley. Design layout of any new development should therefore, where appropriate, seek to optimise and improve on the existing footpath network to improve pedestrian and cycle safety and encourage a reduced vehicular dependence when accessing services in the locality.

Figure C – Red Route





- 6.10 It is recognised that making wheelchair usable pavements on both sides of the road throughout the village would simply be unaffordable. However, it is thought that a “Red Route” could be developed that would allow wheelchairs, or the elderly using sticks, to travel on suitable pavements to all amenities. This route would involve the provision of protected crossings at several points given the ‘Red Route’ would have to change sides of the road a number of times to use the best available pavement. There would also still be a need to upgrade the pavement in many areas, see Figure C.
- 6.11 Stewkley has a well-known and documented problem of vehicles speeding into and around the village.
- 6.12 Stewkley is approached on five main routes by relatively straight-through, undulating single carriageway roads. There is no 40mph buffer zone on the approach to the village therefore vehicles are only required to reduce their speed from the national limit of 60mph directly down to 30mph at the gateways to the village. Given this issue many vehicles are still well over the speed limit as they enter and continue into Stewkley.
- 6.13 Data from periodic Speedwatch operations and the Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS) give concrete support to the conclusion that too many drivers are ignoring the limits, thereby increasing the risks of injury or damage to themselves or others on the narrow roads. According to Speedwatch 2015 data there were 936 speeders (over 36mph) up to 59mph. MVAS 2015 (395,000 vehicles movements). Overall, more than 16% were exceeding 40 mph within a 30mph area.

Community Actions and Projects

CAP/TP1: Any funds spent on pavements and pedestrian safety should focus on a “Red Route” to improve disabled/elderly access to amenities, as outlined in Figure C above.

CAP/TP2: Introduce a 40mph buffer zone on the main approach routes.

Currently, vehicles approaching Stewkley can travel at 60mph, the National speed limit, until reaching the restriction signs of 30mph at the entrances of the village. The provision of 40mph buffer zones as featured in other local villages would make drivers more aware that they are entering a built up area.

CAP/TP3: Look into the potential delivery of a village wide traffic calming feasibility study, including:

The potential for physical traffic calming measures, appropriate to the village character

Use of advisory white lines in parking hot spots where there is a risk or danger

20-mph speed limits in high risk areas.

CAP/TP4 Deter parking on verges and green spaces by use of discrete low bollards

CAP/TP5 Consider the feasibility (through discussions with AVDC, BCC and/or Sustrans) of installing a cycle path to safely allow students/ commuters the option to cycle to school in Wing or Leighton Buzzard which would offer access onto the National Rail Network.

This could benefit:

Parents of sixth form student who pay for their child’s transport once they turn 17

Students who want to attend after school clubs

Safety for cyclists with the option of

CAP/TP6: Encourage the introduction of community bus schemes



7. Amenities, Sports and Recreation

Objectives

- Protect and where possible enhance local community facilities valuable to the residents of Stewkley
- Encourage the development of facilities for the younger members of the community

Goals

- Assess the use of existing village facilities before new community buildings are considered
- Use S106 funding to upgrade recreation facilities

- 7.1 The NPPF (and AVDC Local Plan) promotes healthy, inclusive communities where residents have opportunities to meet through safe and accessible environments.
- 7.2 Community facilities and services make a vital contribution to the social and economic life of the community, particularly in rural areas and are especially important for elderly and disabled people and for those who do not have easy access to private or public transport.
- 7.3 The Community Assets listed in Policy STK8 have been identified through consultation as key to the Stewkley community and should therefore be protected and where possible enhanced to continue their valuable function in the village.
- 7.4 Policy STK8 will support development proposals that are intended to secure the continuation of facilities that are important to the local community. It is recognised that over time these community buildings and assets may require investment to update and/or increase the size of the facility to support new uses and new users.
- 7.5 The policy sets out to resist proposals for the change of use of community buildings and facilities for which there is a demonstrable local need. If applications for alternative development or uses come forward a number of considerations should be addressed in deciding whether the proposals are suitable including; the viability of the existing use, the presence of alternative local facilities and the community benefits of the proposed use.

Policy STK8: Community Assets

Proposals that result in the loss of any of the following community facilities will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that they are no longer viable, as defined by the VALP

- St. Michael's church;
- Stewkley Methodist chapel and Hall;
- St. Michael's C of E Combined School
- Village Hall;
- Recreation Ground and Pavilion;
- The Swan Public House
- The Carpenter Arms Public House

Proposals to improve a community facility by way of physical improvements, extension or redevelopment will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that the benefits will enhance its community value and will not undermine the viability and usage of an existing facility.

Proposals for new or replacement community facilities will only be supported if clear evidence can be provided of an unmet need that cannot be met through extensions to or redevelopment of an existing community facility.

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



- 7.7 The [Key Open and Green Spaces Report](#) identified the recreation ground as an important, sporting, play and dog walking hub for the village. A number of enhancements were proposed and these have been included in CAPASR1.

Community Actions and Projects

CAPASR1: Improve the Recreation Ground facilities

- Upgrade the outside toilet facilities
- Upgrade the children's play equipment including for children aged 11+ and those with a disability
- Develop an all-weather pitch
- Provide a pathway to link the two car parks thereby enabling 'all year round' community access for parking when using the Scout Hut or a safe pathway for parking for St. Michael's School pick-up/drop-off
- Provide a further cricket practice net





8. The Natural Environment and Biodiversity

Stewkley Parish is an area of uneven mix of arable and grassland habitats, interspersed with random small to moderate size blocks of broadleaf deciduous woodland. Mostly improved grassland, some habitats occur as neutral or unimproved, some lowland meadow with occasional ponds and standing water adding further habitat interest. All broad habitat types are linked by strong hedgerow system throughout.

Objectives

Protect and enhance biodiversity

Maintain and protect existing green and open spaces within the village

Protect and where possible enhance visual and physical linkages to the local countryside

Address future drainage issues which could be associated with the proposed new developments

- 8.1 The Planning Group undertook a Green Infrastructure Audit to capture in detail Stewkley's key open spaces, which add to its unique character. These include a series of recreational green spaces, non-recreational green spaces and heritage spaces as set out in the tables below.
- 8.2 Maintaining the integrity, tranquillity and richness of life of these key open spaces is crucial as they are fundamental to its identity and character.

Goals

Woodland: maintain, manage and encourage planting of new to benefit habitats

Grassland: maintain condition and extent of neutral/lowland meadows.

Ponds: management to encourage wider diversity of habitats

Hedgerows: promote connectivity of habitats through management/improvement together with new hedgerow tree planting

Ensure any new development does not significantly impact on the surrounding natural environment

Protect the countryside and Public Rights of Way from inappropriate development

Recreational Green Spaces:

The Recreation Ground.

The Football Field (adj to the Recreation Ground)

Stewkley Wildlife Reserve

Griffin Field Green Space

St Michaels School Playing Fields

Airport Monument and Spinney

Stewkley Allotments

Heritage Spaces

Littlecote Medieval Village

Stewkley War Memorial

St Michael's Churchyard.

Moated Earthworks West of Mursley Road

Warren Farm Quarry

Drover's Way

Moat at Tythe House

Dunton Road brickfields and kilns

Non- Recreational Green Spaces:

Parish Council Lawn Cemetery

Fishweir

Stockall Tiger Island

Sycamore Close

Various Grass Verges and Islands

Chapel Square



- 8.3 Building upon the information provided in the Stewkley [Conservation Area Document](#) an audit of important distinct views into and out of the village was undertaken. Stewkley has a unique character with a long linear ridge top location, wide skies, multiple views woven in, through and across the village. These tentacles firmly adhering it to the surrounding environment with immediate physical access for all via well-established, dense network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW), reinforce their combined roles as being vital to the health and wellbeing of the whole community.
- 8.4 The Important Views, as identified in the Policies Map in Figure F, should be protected.
- 8.5 Figure D below also displays the environmental designations across Stewkley, including Public Rights of Way, also showing those important linkages between the villages and countryside which should be protected.
- 8.6 Figure E - the Biodiversity Map shows the important designations within the Parish - SSSIs, local wildlife sites and biological notification sites.
- 8.7 Stewkley's long, linear, rural character, location and unique direct linking of the community to its surrounding landscape and environment, highlights the important role that biodiversity and green space plays in the health and well-being of the whole community.

Policy STK9: Local Green Spaces

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

All Heritage spaces
Recreation Ground and Football Field
Wildlife reserve
Airport monument and spinney
Parish Council Lawn cemetery
Green spaces at: Griffin Field, Sycamore Close, Fishweir, Chapel Square and Stockhall Tiger Island

Proposals for development of the land will be refused unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

Proposals adjoining the land must be able to demonstrate that they will not compromise its special value to the community.

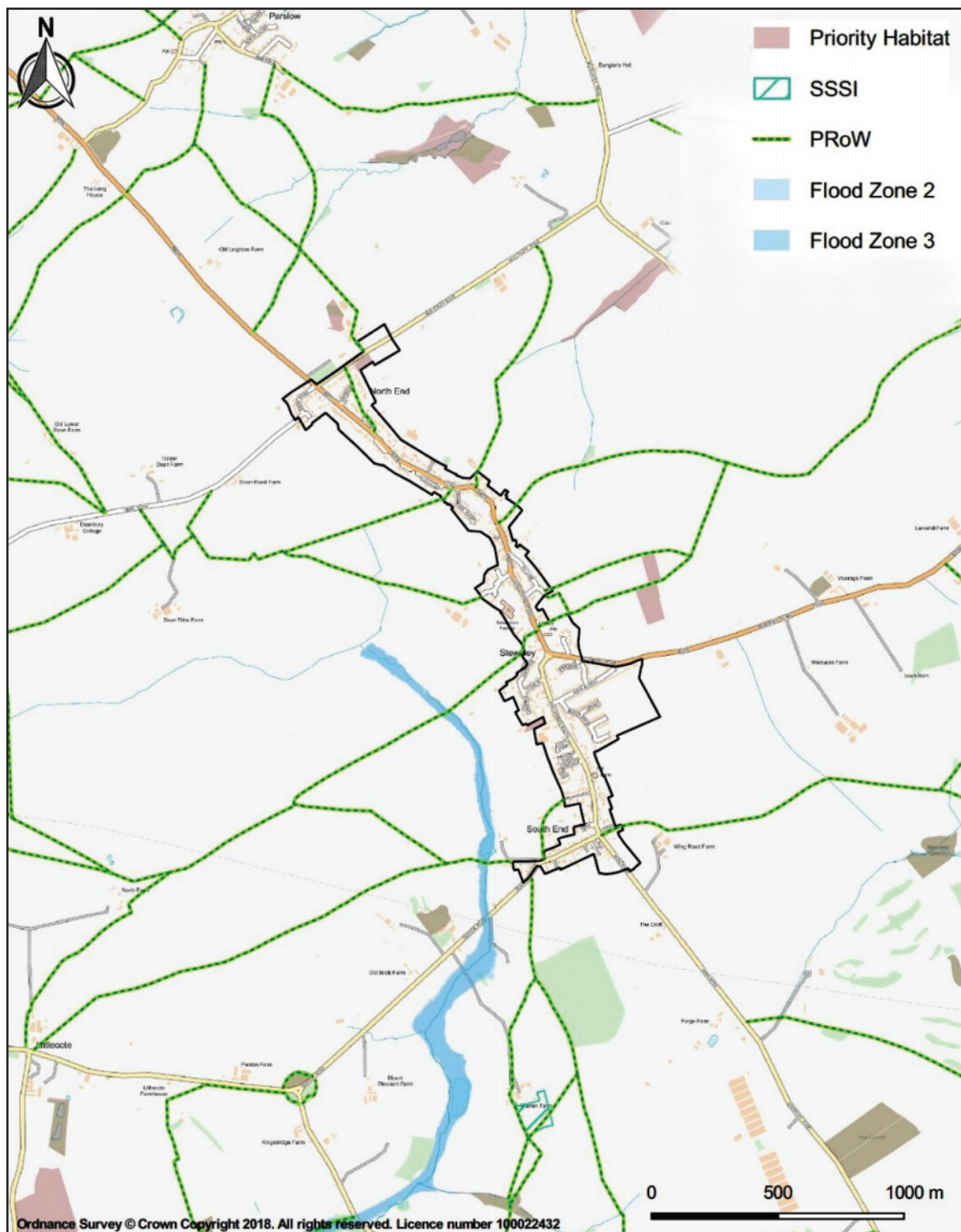
Policy STK10: Local Amenity Land

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Local Amenity Land as shown on the Policies Map. Development proposals on the land will only be supported if they do not undermine its local amenity value or, if the loss of value is unavoidable, they will deliver either a compensatory community benefit of each value or new local amenity land of equal value within the village. Proposals adjoining the land must be able to demonstrate how their proposal has been integrated with the open space and how it will not compromise its amenity value.

Policy STK11: Important Views

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Important Views on the Policies Map. 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 Important Views. Development proposals which would have a significant adverse impact on an identified Important View will not be supported.

Figure D - Environmental Designations



Policy STK12: Biodiversity

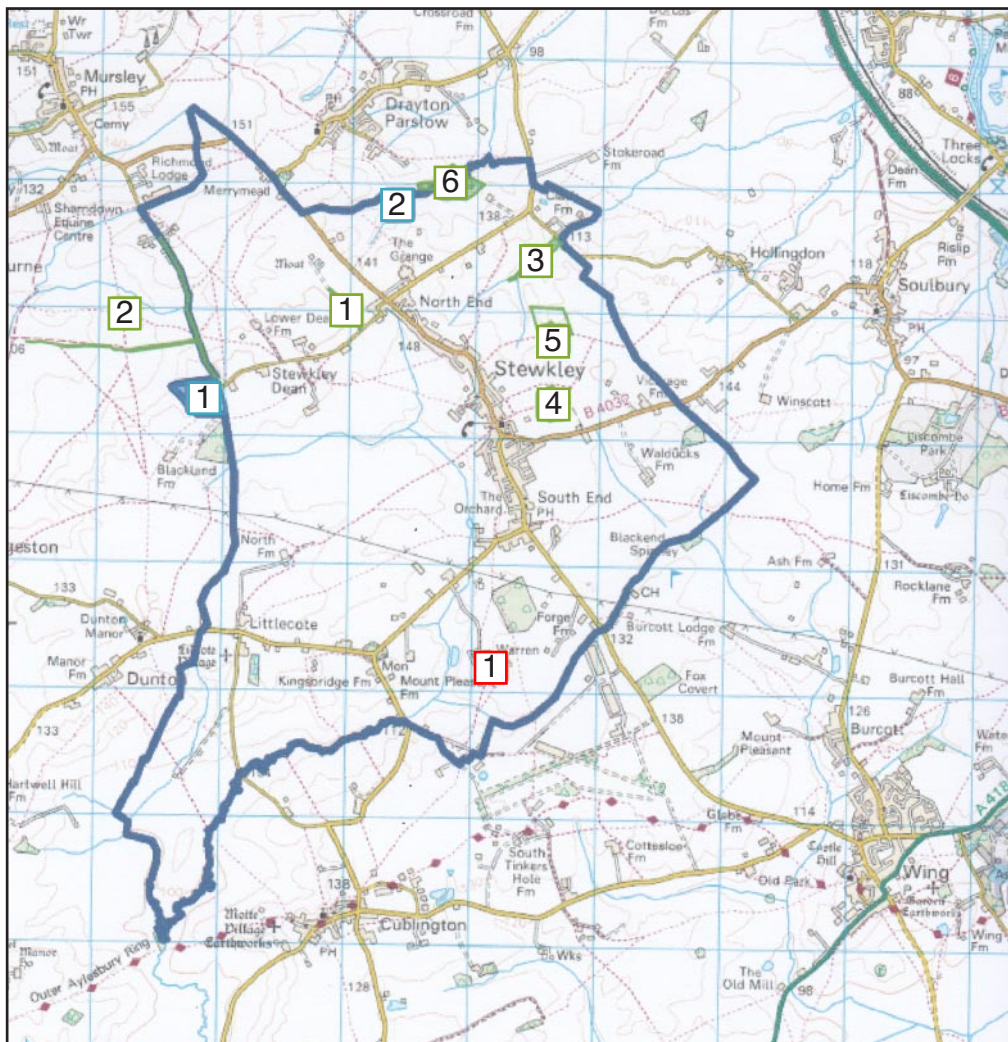
Development proposals must demonstrate that they will have no significant adverse effect on existing biodiversity and will deliver a biodiversity gain. Specific regard must be had to the protection and improvement of habitats of locally notable species.

The layout and landscape schemes of development proposals should where relevant include open green space, wild green space, allotments, green walls, roofs and other means of connecting habitats.

Development proposals located within or adjacent to the designated Site of Special Scientific Interest at Warren Farm, Stewkley will be resisted.



Figure E - Biodiversity Map



Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):

1. Warren Farm

Local Wildlife Sites:

1. Moat Lane
2. Track Se-S of Swanbourne, Lower Dean Farm and Stewkey Lane
3. Clack Fen
4. Stewkey Recreation Ground Fields
5. Little Sandpit Field
6. Drayton Parslow Valley Fen

Biological Notification Sites:

1. Field and Pond North of Blackland Covert
2. Old Leighton Farm Marsh

Community Actions and Projects

CAPNE1: Create Local 'Hubs' to celebrate the key nodal/road junctions in the village with enhanced landscape planting, street texture change (raised table/cobbles) and pedestrian crossings.

The village of Stewkey is one of the longest villages in the country. It does not have a traditional 'heart space' of a village green due to its formation from three key manor houses and their estate lands.

This proposal aims to celebrate the key nodal/ road junctions in the village whilst enhancing the character of the village. It also provides a signal to vehicles passing through that they have entered a village where pedestrians are crossing and speed restrictions apply:

- The Carpenter's Arms/Dunton Road/ Wing Rd/ HSS – a key entrance hub for the village
- War Memorial/ St Michaels Church – the faith/ remembrance hub
- The Swan/ Village Hall – The key heart space of the village – a key social hub of the village
- Bletchley Rd/ Mursley Rd/ HSN - a key entrance hub for the village



9 Education

Objectives

All nursery and primary age school children should be able to attend the local school if they wish to do so

Increase the number of local childminders to meet local demand

- 9.1 The Nursery and Primary Education working group carried out a series of interviews with representatives from the key educational facilities in Stewkley to inform the policy direction.
- 9.2 Concerns were raised over the potential impacts of all the proposed developments coming forward consecutively, which could lead to an influx of primary age children within the village.
- 9.3 Although in physical terms an additional 60 children could be accommodated at St. Michael's it would result in the loss of spare classrooms currently used for music, enrichment and activity group work. However, integrating new pupils into the school is a more complex procedure and year groups would need to be split, potentially requiring many more classrooms than are currently available. A significant growth in numbers would also require additional staff, cloakrooms, hall space, washrooms and kitchen. It is noted that the Governing Body would not currently be supportive of any expansion of St Michael's School.
- 9.4 Concern has been expressed that (primary school) children from Stewkley may need to be transported to schools in other areas due to places not being available at St Michael's school. Currently 78 of the 227 pupils attending St. Michael's School come from outside the recognised catchment area. Although it is felt that the school places of these children should be protected, future admissions policy should give precedence to local children. It is important to note that the Government Admissions Code does not allow Local Authorities to guarantee places to parents at local catchment area level in case there are peaks in population due to migration, which does not allow this guarantee to be met.

Goals

Support the provision of a Day Nursery

Provide support for childminder registration and training

- 9.5 Bucks County Council (BCC) confirm, based on current trends and the scale of housing growth proposed, there should be no requirement to expand the local Primary School.
- 9.6 BCC consider that, based on current trends, the providers of Nursery Education in Stewkley and Cublington should have sufficient capacity to accommodate any increased demand from new housing in the Stewkley Parish.
- 9.7 However the Neighbourhood Plan considers there is a lack of provision for babies and very young children's facilities for households where both parents work.
- 9.8 Pre-school facilities have been available for around 60 years on an informal basis. Cygnets Pre School is now located at St Michael's School and has recently been incorporated as a charitable organisation operating as a limited company. It is currently operating at full capacity, accommodating 30 children with a maximum of 25 children per session.
- 9.9 The Plan would support the provision of a Private Day Nursery facility within the Parish should such a venture be proposed.

Community Actions and Projects

CAPE1: The Plan encourages and supports the formation of a loan or bursary scheme (from an appropriate source, e.g. community or charity trust funds or individual sponsorship) enabling more people within the parish to fund the costs associated with becoming a registered childminder.



10. Employment

Objectives

Improve the local business space offer through the provision of additional/ improved premises for local businesses to relocate or expand; encouraging reduced levels of out-commuting. Including bringing unused farm/ agricultural buildings back in to use

Make Stewkley a better place for businesses and home workers to be able to operate

- 10.1 The Stewkley Questionnaire established that 64% of the working population commute to work, with 74% by car. High vehicle movement into and out of the village at rush hour is a consequence of commuting outside the village and also highlights the lack of alternative public transport.
- 10.2 The Business Working Group surveyed businesses in June/July 2016 to gain an understanding of the benefits and limitations of working in Stewkley. Respondents identified living in Stewkley, transport links and local customers as being typical reasons for having their businesses based here.
- 10.3 The consultation confirmed that it is important, through this Plan, to encourage small-scale business activity and homeworking in the village, protect Stewkley's existing employment sites and to improve the broadband facilities on offer in the Parish.
- 10.4 Offering small scale business units could go some way in reducing the need for some to commute outside of Stewkley to work, provide a valuable contribution to the local economy and improve the sustainability of the village.
- 10.5 Through this policy, opportunities where appropriate, for the delivery of new small-scale business units (including live-work) will be supported.
- 10.6 According to the Stewkley Questionnaire 19% of the population are employed in home businesses, with 39% home working and 12% working in Stewkley. It is

Goals

Maintain or increase the number of businesses premises in Stewkley

All new dwellings and non-residential space to have access to high speed Broadband

therefore important to support small scale development needed to facilitate the growth of small office and home-based enterprises.

- 10.7 Wiltshire Farms Foods, a significant employer based in Stewkley, plans to grow the business, which will require expanded premises.
- 10.8 In terms of the farming economy according to the 2011 Census around 4% of the population were involved in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Farming operations have changed significantly over the last few decades but maintaining the productive use of the land is essential. In order to secure the farming economy as with other rural areas some diversification in the use of buildings and land may well be necessary.
- 10.9 This Plan offers a positive approach to enable farms to diversify, promoting the development and diversification of agriculture and other land use based rural businesses, including meeting the essential need for a rural worker.

Policy STK13: Local Employment

Applications for new business uses, including live/work accommodation and the extension to dwellings to create office space will be supported providing they can demonstrate that:

- They are suited to a rural village location by way of the nature of their operations, scale and operating hours;
- They will not adversely harm residential amenity; and
- They will not significantly increase traffic movements or impact upon road safety



- 10.10 As is common within many rural areas the prevalence of poor broadband/ internet connection to properties in the village was an issue raised through a number of Neighbourhood Plan consultation responses. In fact, in an initial survey 69% of respondents said they were very or somewhat dissatisfied with the service. Given a significant number of businesses also now choose to operate from home, it is increasingly important that this is addressed with faster more reliable broadband connections through all new homes and businesses connecting to the fibre optic network when available.
- 10.11 This policy sets out to ensure all housing, employment and community development proposals are capable of benefiting from recent investments in superfast broadband infrastructure in the village.
- 10.12 A database of businesses operating out of the village would provide opportunities to find local suppliers and to communicate on matters of mutual interest.
- 10.13 Businesses surveyed expressed an interest in developing a networking club.

Policy STK14: Broadband

Proposals that provide access to a superfast broadband network to serve the village and properties adjoining the network in the countryside will be supported. New housing development should provide the necessary means for new residents to access superfast broadband network, and if possible contribute to improvements in the service for existing residents and businesses.

Community Actions and Projects

CAPB1: Develop a Stewkley business social networking club to share expertise and ideas and provide mutual support.



11. Youth

Objectives

Improve local facilities available for the younger population (between 11 – 19)

- 11.1 The Youth working group undertook a detailed analysis of information to investigate youth services available within the Parish and to principally identify:

How existing provision could be strengthened to ensure it continues to benefit young people, is able to cater for a wider / more diverse group of young people and/or is meeting the needs of young people;

Any additional services that are 'in demand' by youth and could be included in the Neighbourhood Plan as development objectives.

- 11.2 The information gathered by the Youth Working Group has been used to inform the Plan's focus, and input into the evidence to corroborate other policies such as those within the Amenities and Sports and Recreation section. There are, however, no stand-alone policies included under this heading. A series of Community Actions and Projects are listed below.

Goals

Include facilities for older children when refurbishing the play area in the recreation ground

Engage young people to investigate the creation of a 'hang-out' zone

Community Actions and Projects

CAPY1: It is recommended that a team is organised incorporating a panel of young people interested in creating a teenage "hang out" space for 14 to 17-year olds. This could involve:

- Investigating how other rural parishes manage the "hang out shelter" wish
- Considering how the shelter could be managed from a health and safety perspective.
- Considering the possibility of young people (16+) being allowed into village pubs as long as they are not served alcohol

CAPY2: The Parish Council could benefit from an annual meeting with village Youths who attend the various clubs to discuss ideas they have about village life and leisure facilities.



12. Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan

Implementation

- 12.1 The Stewkley Parish Neighbourhood Plan and its policies have been prepared to deal with issues important to residents.
- 12.2 The NP will be implemented by a number of bodies including the local planning authority and County Council. It will be used by the Parish Council to comment on planning applications in the Parish. The Council will be proactive in responding to AVDC, detailing any policy considerations for a proposal. Responses will highlight any conflicts with the Neighbourhood Plan or outline any deficiencies that may arise from development.

The Role of Stewkley Parish Council

- 12.3 The Parish Council will closely monitor the implementation of the NP once 'made' part of the statutory development plan. It will work closely with AVDC to monitor and record the progress of delivery of development on those sites allocated for development in this Plan, both in terms of when those sites secure planning permission and when this results in delivery of new housing and associated infrastructure on site.
- 12.4 The Parish Council will also use the Plan as a basis for its strategy and approach to funding allocations, future investments and development projects. It will work together with AVDC, BCC and other agencies as appropriate to secure funding for infrastructure improvements identified in the Plan.

The Role of Aylesbury Vale District Council

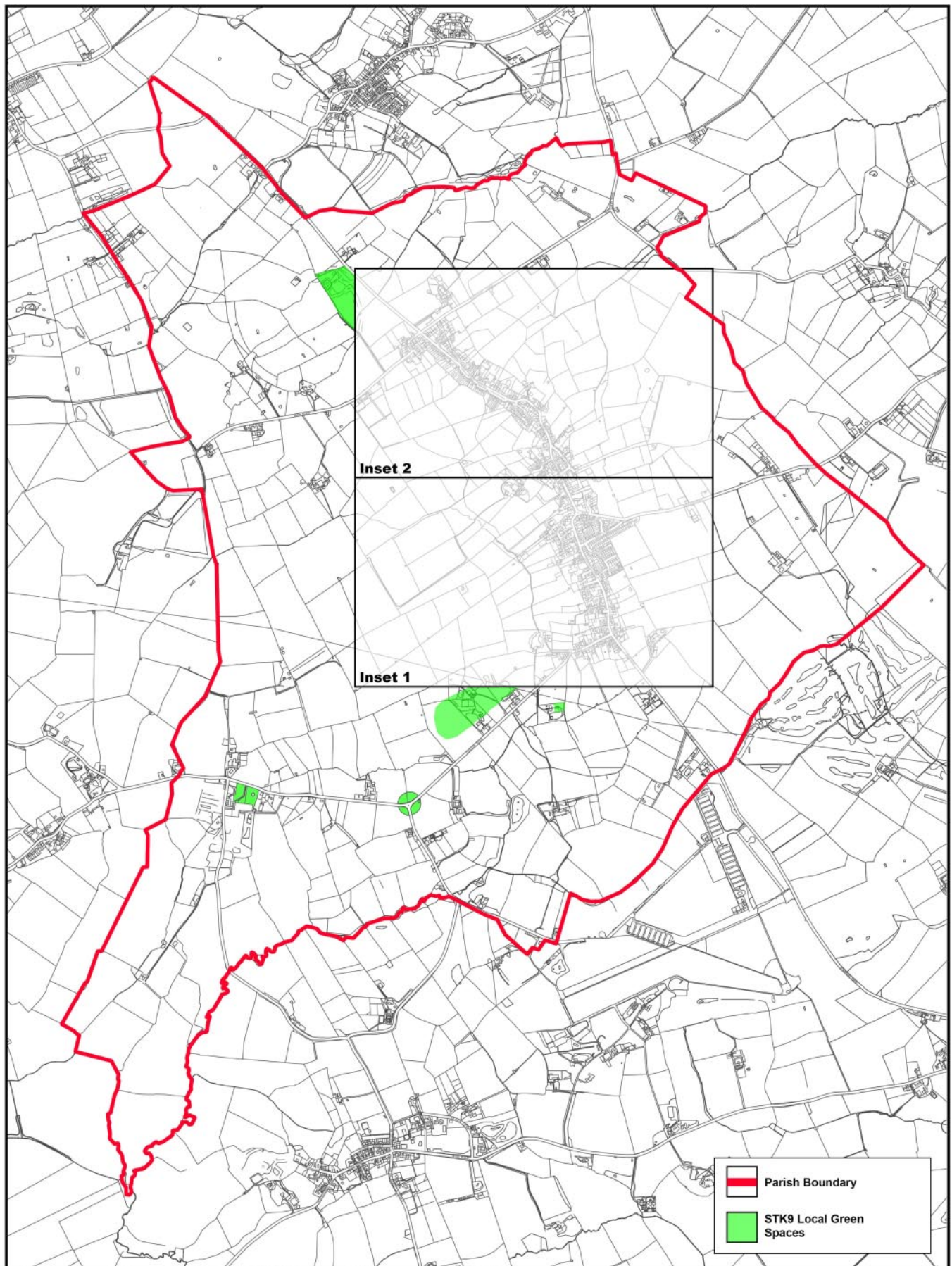
- 12.5 The NPPF requires that local planning authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. Where applications for proposed development accord with the principles of the Plan and other relevant Local Plan and national policies, the local planning authority will work proactively with applicants to secure the most sustainable outcome.

Monitoring and Review

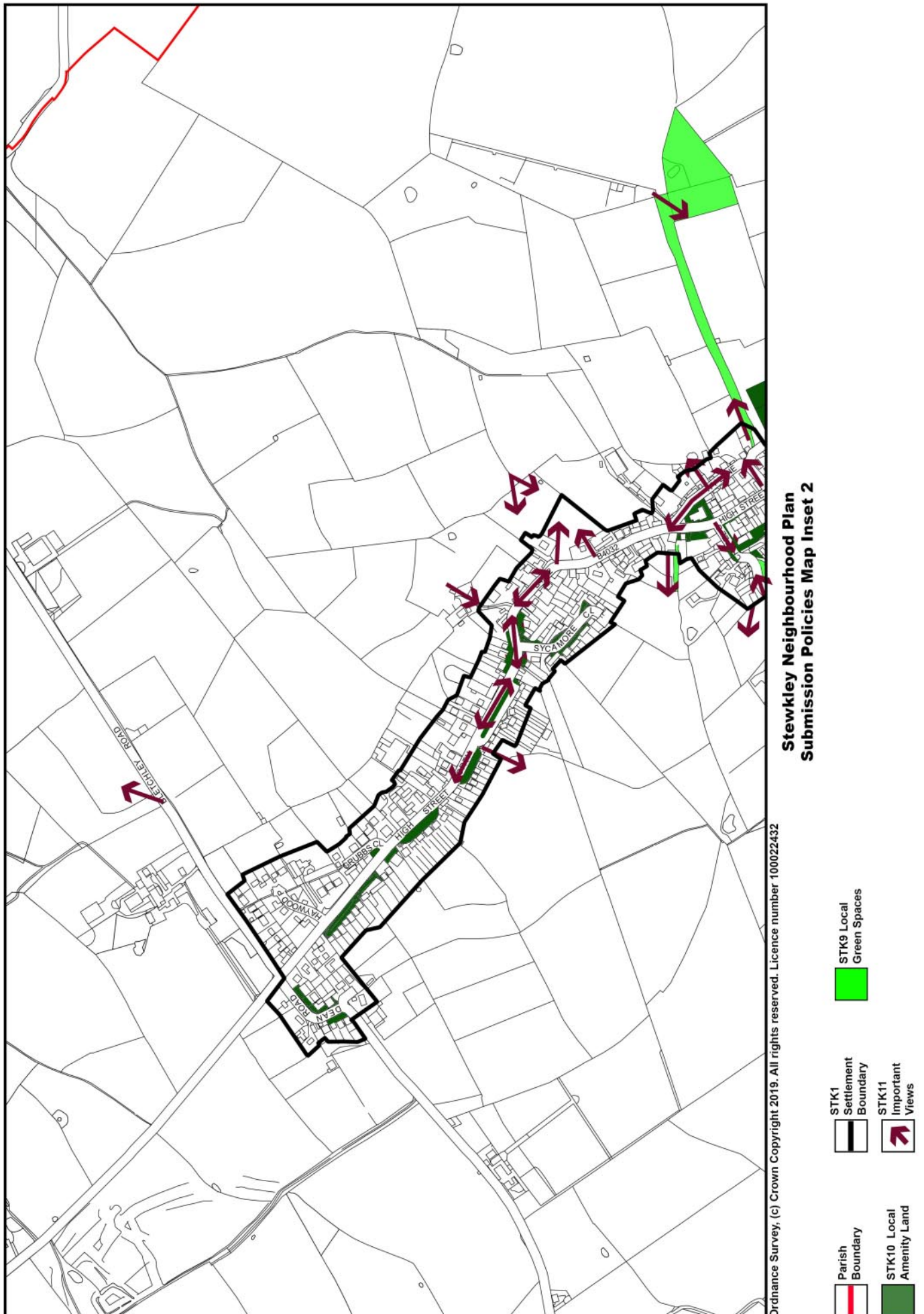
- 12.6 It is good practice to actively monitor plans and their effects in order to understand what progress has been made towards the delivery of the key objectives set out.
- 12.7 The Parish Council will review progress of the Plan at least every 3 years from the date of adoption and will focus on the following key indicators:
- Progress towards the vision and the objectives of the Plan
 - Progress towards the implementation of the policies in the Plan
 - Plan remains up to date including the Local Plan housing allocation
 - Plan is taken into account by the Local Planning Authority when determining planning applications.
- 12.8 The NP will be reviewed as necessary to update it and to secure the views of local residents.

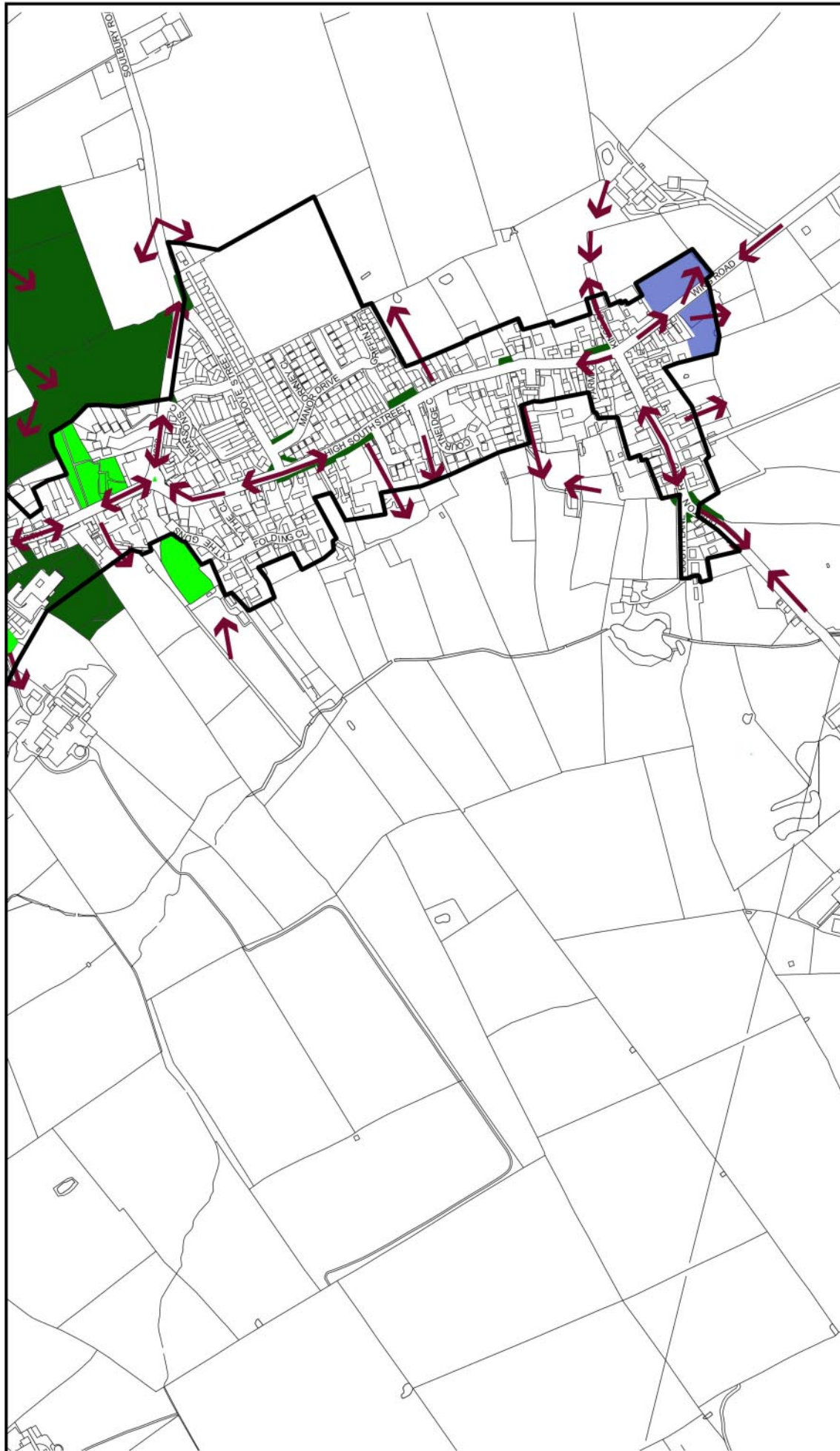


13. Policies Map and Inserts









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Stewkley Neighbourhood Plan Submission Policies Map Inset 1

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | Parish Boundary |  | STK1 Settlement Boundary |  | STK2 Housing Allocation |
|  | STK9 Local Green Spaces |  | STK10 Local Amenity Land |  | STK11 Important Views |



Appendices

Appendix 1 – List of Non-Heritage Properties

Other Important Village Buildings	
North End	South End
Vicarage Farm	Littlecote Barns
Tythe House	Old Kiln Farm
The Old School, 1 High Street North	Carpenters' Arms
6, High Street North	Trinity House
The Vines	90, High Street South
Church Farm House	94, High Street South
King's Head House	68, High Street South
Village Hall	66, High Street South
Old Chapel School House	62, High Street South
5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 Chapel Square	Methodist Church and Chapel Room
Pond House	Clarendon House
57 & 57a, High Street North (former chapel)	56, High Street South
80, High Street North	36, High Street South (Manor Farm units)
71, H High Street North	24, High Street South
Stewkley House	
92a-96, High Street North (Danesbury House and bakery)	
77, High Street North	
110, High Street North	
112, High Street North	
Bowls Farm	
Plough Cottage	
129, High Street North (Old Stores)	
131, High Street North	
Haywood House	
The Grange	
Grange Farm	
Merrymead Farm	



Heritage Sites
Littlecote Medieval Village
Stewkley War Memorial
St Michael's Church and Churchyard
Moated Earthworks at Tythe House
Moat/Earthworks to west of Mursley Road.
Warren Farm Quarry
Dunton Road Brickfields and Kilns
Airport Spinney

Heritage Buildings which together form a strong building line
Dunton Road brick cottages (3-19, Dunton Road.)
2-20, Wing Road
66-74, High Street South
Manor Farm units (36, High Street South)
28a-34, High Street South
1-41, High Street South
Old School-Maytree Cottage-11, High Street North
6-10, High Street North
21-37, High Street North
Chapel Square-Fishweir Brick Cottages
28-40b, High Street North
88-96, High Street North
Old Timbers-26, High Street North
110-118, High Street North