



Granborough Neighbourhood Plan

2020-2035

Referendum Version July 2022

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Foreword

Since 2012, the community of Granborough and the Granborough Parish Council have been involved in looking to the future for the village. A Community led Village Plan was produced in the first instance (published in 2012) and this has evolved and progressed into the production of a Granborough Neighbourhood Plan to deal with the land use issues in the Parish.

Residents are proud of the village and the community and want to see the rural character of the village and its surrounding countryside protected and enhanced for everyone to enjoy.

Acknowledgements

The residents of the village are strongly in support of the creation of the Granborough Neighbourhood Plan and have contributed to its creation through a Steering Group, which was formed to produce the Plan. An initial meeting in 2019 produced hundreds of suggestions for matters to be addressed in the plan and gave the Steering Group a strong indication of the feeling of village residents. Further public open meetings have been held throughout the period of the Plan's creation. The process will culminate in a referendum to agree, or otherwise, the final version, once approved by the appointed Examiner. The referendum requires a simple majority, of those voting, to vote in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan for it to be brought into effect.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held monthly meetings throughout the development of the Plan and information sheets and minutes are available online and were also published in local publications.

The Steering Group members are:

Chairman: Steve Slater

Vice Chairman: John Thorogood

Secretary: Victoria Firth (Parish Clerk)

Group members: Philip Oakland (Parish Councillor), David Smedley (Parish Councillor), David Morris, Nick Fenwick, John Piddington and Paul Sutton

Professional advisor: Sally Chapman

Previous members: David Copperwheat (until March 2020)

Glossary

Adoption		The procedure by which a plan becomes formal council responsibility. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations also call this stage ‘made’ for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Plan.
Affordable Housing		Social rented, affordable rented, first homes and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as low-cost market housing, are not currently considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.
Amenity		A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, green spaces, open land, trees, historic buildings and the interrelationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquility.
Biodiversity		The whole variety of life encompassing variations, including plants and animals.
Buckinghamshire Council	BC	The new unitary Council replacing the former Buckinghamshire County Council and the 4 District Councils within the County (Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks).
Brownfield Site		Sometimes referred to as previously developed land: Land which is, or was, occupied by a permanent structure. This excludes land that is, or was, last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings, parks, recreation grounds and allotments, and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.
Conservation Area	CA	An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of ‘special architectural or historical interest’ the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
Consultation Statement		A document which details when, where and how the public and stakeholders have been consulted, issues that were raised and how they were addressed.
Countryside		Land not within a defined settlement boundary.
Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL	An amount of money payable to the Council based on an approved charging schedule on new housing and other development which is used for infrastructure, community facilities and services. There is no CIL in the Aylesbury Vale area of Buckinghamshire currently, although one could be prepared in the future.
Developer Contributions/Planning Obligations/Section 106	S106	Developer contributions, also known as planning obligations, can be secured via a Section 106 legal agreement or planning condition attached to a planning permission. They help mitigate any adverse impacts generated by new development on infrastructure and facilities.
Employment Land		Land that is used or is proposed to be used for offices, industry and/or storage and distribution – covered by the B Class of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order.
Evidence Base		The information and data gathered by local authorities and other plan makers to inform and support the policies set out in a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.

Examination		For neighbourhood planning, an independent assessment carried out by an examiner to determine whether the legal requirements and Basic Conditions are met for the Plan to be approved.
Flood Risk		The combination of probability of a particular flood event and its corresponding hazard and is used to refer to the scale of flood effect, combining hazard and probability, upon a particular site. Flood Zones 1-3b (as set out by the Environment Agency) describe land with a specific probability of flooding with 1 being the least affected. Development may be restricted by Flood Zones.
Greenfield		Land where there has been no previous development.
Green Infrastructure	GI	A network of multi-functional green space and other environmental features, urban and rural, including both established and new sites, which support natural and ecological processes, and are capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
Habitat		A habitat is the type of natural environment in which a particular species of organism lives.
Habitats Regulation Assessment	HRA	Tests the impacts of a plan or project on nature conservation sites of European importance and is required under current EU legislation.
Heritage Asset		A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets such as listed buildings and ancient monuments and also assets identified by the local planning authority.
Infrastructure		Refers to the fundamental facilities and systems serving a country, city, or other area, including the services and facilities necessary for its economy to function, including transport.
Landscape Character Assessment	LCA	The Aylesbury Vale landscape character assessment was prepared for Bucks County Council and the 4 district Councils (combined to form Buckinghamshire Council in April 2020). The assessment has been carried out to a methodology following national guidance in which biodiversity and historic environment factors are fully integrated with physiographic, natural, cultural and visual considerations. The assessment identified 79 landscape character areas grouped within 13 landscape character types.
Lifetime Homes		The concept of Lifetime Homes was developed in the early 1990s by a group of housing experts. Lifetime Homes are ordinary homes designed to incorporate 16 Design Criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost. Each design feature adds to the comfort and convenience of the home and supports the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life.
Listed Buildings		Listed buildings are considered nationally important and therefore have extra legal protection within the planning system. They are buildings which have been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.
Local Plan		A statutory planning document produced by the Local Planning Authority for an area (normally district wide) which sets out what type and how much development will occur across the area for the period covered. It also provides a suite of policies that help manage development including, for example, design, access and amenity.
Local Planning Authority	LPA	The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. In this case it is Buckinghamshire Council from April 2020. Previously the LPA was Aylesbury Vale District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council.
National Planning Policy Framework	NPPF	Sets out the Government's current planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF was last updated in July 2021.
National Planning Practice Guidance	NPPG	A web-based resource which provides more detailed guidance on the contents of the NPPF.

Neighbourhood Area		This is the area that the Neighbourhood Plan will focus on. For Parish Councils, the designated area is usually the Parish boundary.
Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood plan	NDP/NP	Will set out the vision for the designated neighbourhood area and the planning policies for the use and development of land. These policies will be at a local level to support the strategic policies within the current or Local Plan. Plans should guide sustainable development rather than stop it. When adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan will become a statutory plan carrying equal weight with adopted Local Plan Policies.
Policy		A concise statement of the principles that a particular kind of development proposal should satisfy in order to obtain planning permission.
Policies Map		Identifies and illustrates the extent of the planning policies and designated areas referred to in the Plan document.
Qualifying Body		Either a Parish/Town Council or a Neighbourhood Forum*, which can initiate the process of neighbourhood planning. (* Note a Neighborhood Forum can only be formed where there is no Parish/Town Council).
Referendum		A vote by the eligible population of an electoral area who may decide on a matter of public policy. Neighbourhood Plans are subject to a referendum of the eligible voters within a neighbourhood area. There is a specific question set out in the relevant Regulations which has a simple yes or no answer.
Settlement Hierarchy		Many Local Plans set out a hierarchy of settlements according to their population and facilities available. Different levels of growth may be attributed to each tier.
Strategic Environmental Assessment	SEA	A European requirement to assess any significant environmental impact of plans and programs.
Supplementary Planning Document	SPD	A document which elaborates upon the policies within the Local Plan to provide additional guidance for a particular topic or type of development, e.g. parking standards.
Sustainability Appraisal	SA	An assessment of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of a Local Plan to check that the plan accords with the principles of sustainable development.
Sustainable Development		An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment of natural resources, thereby development which 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'
Sustainable Drainage System	SuDS	A drainage solution which reduces and slows the quantity and rate of surface water run-off from new development, dealing with it as close to the source as possible.

1. Introduction

Overview – What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

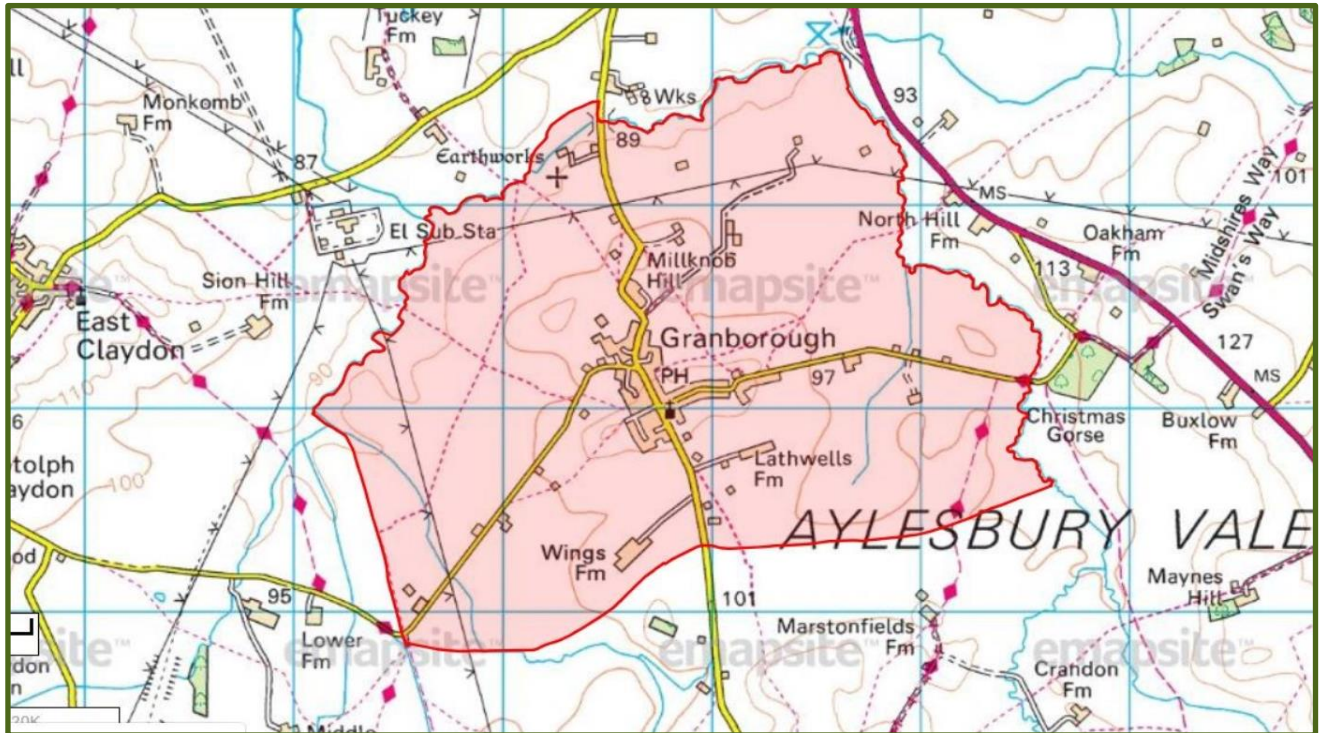
- 1.1. A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is a planning document aimed at guiding sustainable future development within the designated plan area, which for Granborough is the whole of the Parish. The Plan is therefore concerned with development of land and its associated social, economic and environmental issues. There is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies.
- 1.2. All Neighbourhood Plans must meet the ‘basic conditions’ set out in planning law. This will be tested through an independent examination. The basic conditions for Neighbourhood Plans are that they must:
 - have regard to national policy,
 - be in general conformity with strategic local policy,
 - contribute to the achievement of sustainable development,
 - comply with human rights legislation,
 - be compatible with EU obligations and,
 - meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.
- 1.3. In addition, the Parish Council must be able to show that it has properly consulted local people and other relevant organisations during the process of making its Neighbourhood Plan and has followed the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (as amended). These requirements will be tested by an Independent Examiner once the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised. If satisfied, the Examiner will recommend to the Buckinghamshire Council that the plan goes to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan, then it becomes formally adopted by Buckinghamshire Council as planning policy for the local area. Therefore, it has significant statutory weight.

Why should Granborough have a Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.4. In 2011, the Localism Act introduced a new opportunity for local communities to shape their future formally as part of the planning system. Neighbourhood Plans can be produced by Parish Councils and when they have gone through all the required steps and processes, they become part of the statutory development plan for the area. This means that any new planning applications will have to take account of policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan. It also provides local people with a say on how land use and buildings can develop over time, such as protecting open spaces and improving the local character.
- 1.5. **The Village Plan:** Granborough Parish Council produced a Community-Led Plan (‘The Village Plan’) in 2012 following extensive consultation with the village. The Village Plan was well received and remains a useful document. However, it is unable to deliver and guide new development. The Parish Council decided in 2018 that a Neighbourhood Plan should be produced.
- 1.6. The Granborough Village Plan, written by the Parish Council in conjunction with the local community, demonstrated that the majority of residents enjoy living in the village. A Neighbourhood Plan offers the residents of Granborough an opportunity to guide and influence the future development of the Parish:
 - Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and to shape the development and growth of their local area,
 - Neighbourhood planning is not a legal requirement but is a right that communities in England can choose to use. Since 2011 Government has continuously encouraged local communities to seriously consider producing neighbourhood plans,
 - The NP document is written and produced by the local community, the people who know and love the area, rather than the Local Planning Authority and,
 - It is a powerful tool which will, as far as possible, ensure that the community gets the right types of development, in the right place.

- 1.7. The purpose of the Granborough Neighbourhood Plan (GNP) is to contain planning policies that can be used to allocate development land and to determine planning applications in the Neighbourhood Plan Area for the period from when the Plan is made until 2035. The Granborough Parish Council has prepared the Plan for the area designated by the then Local Planning Authority, Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC), under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Neighbourhood Area was designated by AVDC for this purpose on 11 September 2018.

Figure 1: Map of Parish Grid Ref: SP 7674 2501 (License Code PSGA No. 010C)



2. The Strategic Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's approach to sustainable development. The latest iteration was published in July 2021 and the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to be consistent with this document. At the heart of the NPPF is the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Essentially, it is about positive growth with economic, social and environmental gains being sought simultaneously through the planning system. Neighbourhood planning forms part of the NPPF approach to planning, to allow local communities to shape sustainable development within their area and to enable local communities to address their strategic needs and priorities. The NPPF states that Neighbourhood Plans should set out a positive vision for the future of the local area with planning policies to determine decisions on planning applications, including policies which set out the quality of development that should be expected for the area, based on stated objectives for the area's future and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. However, a Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and plan positively to support these policies.
- 2.2. The Neighbourhood Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF states that pursuing sustainable development includes making it easier to create jobs in villages, to promote gains in biodiversity, to achieve better quality design, to improve people's quality of life, and to provide a wider choice of high quality homes.
- 2.3. Therefore, the aims, objectives, policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan should be assessed against their ability to achieve sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan should actively promote the achievement of sustainable development.
- 2.4. In 2020, the Government produced a Planning White Paper that has been consulted upon and which will introduce significant reform to the planning system in the future. No details or legislation have yet been released to indicate what this reform might involve and its impact on neighbourhood planning.

Local Planning Documents

- 2.5. Granborough Parish lies within the local planning authority of the new Buckinghamshire Council, which was formed in April 2020. However, the most recent development plan was started by the former Local Authority for the area, which was Aylesbury Vale District Council. The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan was adopted in September 2021.

Infrastructure Projects

- 2.6. The path of the High Speed railway (HS2), between London and the North, runs within 5 miles of the village while the East West Rail link passes through Winslow and is just 2 miles away. Although Granborough is not directly impacted by these projects their construction may be intrusive on the local environment and it is likely that, once completed, they will change the complexion of the local area and have a long term effect on village life.

3. Parish Description

Background to Granborough

- 3.1. Granborough is a civil Parish of 1,580 acres (2.47 square miles) in the County of Buckinghamshire and was part of the Aylesbury Vale area of Buckinghamshire until April 2020. It is now part of the Buckinghamshire Council which is a new county wide Unitary Local Authority. It is situated 9 miles north of Aylesbury and approximately two miles to the south of the small market town of Winslow. Today Granborough remains a rural village with farming being the predominant business.
- 3.2. As well as 239 residential properties, Granborough has St John the Baptist Church, the Village Hall built in 1910, the Crown Public House, a children's play area and communal allotments.
- 3.3. The two historic sites of Mill Knob Hill and the Biggin Estate are now both reduced to grass covered areas but are still considered of historic interest. The local community uses a site off Church Lane, Kings Field, locally referred to as 'Sledge Hill' - the only hill in the area which is steep enough to allow snow sledging in the winter. This area has also been identified by Historic England and thought to contain archaeological remains probably relating to medieval earthworks, possibly as being the site of part of the original Granborough village. In certain daylight conditions outlines of the foundations of buildings can be seen beneath the grassy surface.
- 3.4. Granborough still has a number of thatched cottages and houses, many of them in Green End, and some 17 properties and sites are currently listed as being of architectural or historical interest.

History and Heritage

- 3.5. The Parish of Granborough (formerly Grandborough) in the Hundred of Ashendon covers some 1,580 acres two miles south of Winslow. The name has Anglo Saxon origins and the village appears in the Domesday Book 1086 as 'Grenesberga', meaning 'green hill'.
- 3.6. The manor was given by King Offa to the abbey at St. Albans in 792. Following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1547 it passed back to the crown until 1699 whereupon it came into the ownership of the Lowndes family of Winslow Hall until 1924.
- 3.7. The ancient Church, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, was demolished by Cornelius Holland the Regicide during the civil war but was rebuilt soon after in 1685 upon the restoration of the monarchy. The earliest government census in 1801 stated that there were 230 inhabitants living in 44 houses in the village. This climbed to 374 in 1861 and then fell to under 300 at the turn of the 20th century.
- 3.8. Three public houses served the community in the 1800's, the Sovereign Inn, the Red Lion and the Crown, the two latter having been operating for far longer. Only the Crown now remains, its car park is the site of the Sovereign, and the Red Lion is now a private residence.
- 3.9. Granborough was a village dependent upon agriculture and developed as a poor and hard place to live. In 1833 an article appeared in the Pall Mall Gazette, penned by the local Vicar and appealing for a capitalist Squire to assist in civilising the village. He commented on the size, number and poor condition of the dwellings and commented that an alternative to frequenting the Public House should be created to pass the winter evenings.
- 3.10. The earliest remains in Granborough are of a Roman road that is thought to pass through the Parish and some Roman pottery found in foundation digging in Winslow Road. A study has been done on the tenth century manor boundaries in this area and it is possible to trace the southern boundary of the Parish as a low bank. It

is thought that Dammerham Slade, north of Tuckey Farm, was the main supply of water for a settlement named Deneburgham. A possible tenth century settlement or gallows is suggested at Staplers Piece Farm. Slightly later medieval settlement earthworks have been recorded at Rookery Farm and to the north of Mill Knob Hill, along with a moat and historical records of a chapel at the latter.

- 3.11. St John the Baptist Church is the oldest surviving building in the Parish, parts dating to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Fifteenth century artefacts, such as a possible altar stone and a chrismatory, a vessel for carrying holy oil, have been found in the twentieth century, the former in the wall of a farmhouse and the latter during works to the Church.
- 3.12. Sixteenth century records, mainly in the form of the 1599 Salden Estate Map, have suggested the presence of a windmill at Mill Knob Hill. The Biggin Estate is also identified with a farmstead that has now disappeared. Some of the secular buildings in the Parish are of sixteenth or early seventeenth century date, such as 23 Green End and Rookery Farm. Other listed buildings date to the seventeenth or eighteenth century, some with a few nineteenth century alterations but there are no records of the industrial nature of the nineteenth century.
- 3.13. The Village Hall was built in 1910 on land donated to the village by Sir Frederick Verney for the purpose of establishing a Village Hall and Library. The architect for the building was Mr. Kitchen from Winchester and it was built by Matthew Bros. of Winslow for £1,200, funded by Sir Frederick Verney and Andrew Carnegie (of the Carnegie Hall in New York) for an agreed yearly rent of one shilling. In 1925 Sir Ralf Verney Lt Col. agreed to transfer the freehold to the Trustees of the Hall. It is a striking building with a wooden frontage making it a distinctive part of the village. It faces onto the main Winslow road and is opposite the church and these two buildings formed the focal point of the village until this moved further down the Winslow Road to where the junction with Hogshaw Road and the Crown Public House are located. Although now 110 years old, the Hall remains in daily use and provides an essential meeting place for the local community to come together.

Landscape

- 3.14. Most of the Parish is permanent grassland with some arable, irrigated by Claydon Brook and another stream which joins it. The soil is clayey loam with gravel, with a subsoil of clay and marl, the chief crop being wheat. The borders of the Parish lie from 90m to 100m above sea level, but at the centre the ground is higher, and the village stands on this ridge at around 120m. It is mainly built around the road running north to south and along a road, branching off at right angles towards Swanbourne, which is named Green End.

Services and Facilities

- 3.15. There is one pub, the Crown, and the Village Hall. At the centre of the village stands the Church. There is also a play area and allotments.

Figure 2: Village Hall



Population & Household Data

- 3.16. Granborough has experienced a steady increase in population over the years, but from 2001, when the population was 553, it has remained stable. According to the 2011 census the population of Granborough was 545. The male population was 262, the female population was 283. 103 (19%) were under 18 years old, 308 (56%) were between 18 and 65 and 134 (25%) were over 65.
- 3.17. As of early 2020 the number of residential properties in the village totaled 242. This figure has remained largely unchanged since 1993 when 21 properties were built forming Sovereign Close and before that 17 properties were built forming Marks Orchard. These were the last major expansions of the village to take place. More recent additions have been through small infill such as the 5-property development in Winslow Road or conversion schemes. There are approximately 6 more properties to add to the total which are at various stages from planning to on-site works which should be finished in 2021/2.

4. Consultation

4.1. The Steering Group has been extremely active in engaging with the community. Full details are set out in the Consultation Statement, but the main consultation is summarized below.

Initial Meeting

4.2. In January 2019, an open house meeting was held with villagers in the Village Hall. Participants were asked to consider 3 questions:

1. What do you like most about living in Granborough?
2. What are your biggest concerns now and in the future?
3. What progress and changes would you like to see in the future?

4.3. Participants were then asked to give written feedback on the 3 questions and post these answers on one of 6 whiteboards for each of the following themes:

- Community
- Environment
- Amenities
- Housing
- Roads and Transport
- Infrastructure

4.4. Over 50 residents from across the village took part, and hundreds of inputs were received. These inputs were analysed and summarised in a report of the views, ideas and aspirations of the people of Granborough, and from this a more focused house by house questionnaire was produced as the next significant step.

Figure 3: Initial meeting



Figure 4: Display at initial meeting



The Questionnaire

4.5. Every resident of the village was given the opportunity to further express their views by means of a written Questionnaire, which was prepared taking into account the responses received from those residents that attended the Public Consultation meeting in January 2019.

4.6. In addition to asking questions about the respondent, which were important for assessing the gender, age mix and location of residents, the Questionnaire contained 25 questions covering a range of topics relating to living in the village and how residents wish to see the village progress in the future.

4.7. Two copies of the Questionnaire were delivered to every residence in the Parish in June 2019, with the stated option that, if a family needed additional paper copies, they could either print them from the Neighbourhood

Plan website or request further copies from a member of the Steering Group. Residents were given up to mid-August to complete and return their completed Questionnaires. This could be done by presenting the paper document to a member of the Steering Group or to a central post box, or on-line.

- 4.8. A total of 304 Questionnaires were completed and returned, either in hard copy or online, representing 56% of the village population.
- 4.9. The detailed results were posted on the Neighbourhood Plan website. To keep residents informed and to invite follow-up comments, a summary of the results was printed and distributed to every residence in the village.
- 4.10. For this summary, where questions asked for a range of answers, such as 'Agree strongly', 'Agree somewhat', 'Disagree somewhat' and 'Disagree strongly', the responses were simplified to show all 'Agrees' and 'Disagrees' as a percentage of the total.

Summary of Results of the Questionnaire

About You (Questions 1 to 5)

- 4.11. The estimated average age of respondents is 60 years, and the estimated average tenure in the village is 15 years. 85% of respondents are owner-occupiers.

Living in Granborough (Question 6)

- 4.12. This question asked if residents agreed with a number of positive statements about the village. Scores of 80% and above were received for nine out of the eleven statements. At the top end, 99% agreed that Granborough is a good place to live in and 98% agreed that it is quiet and peaceful. The two lowest scores were 51% agreeing that the village has good facilities and 33% agreeing that it has good public transport connections.

Communication (Question 7)

- 4.13. As sources of news and information on the GNP, respondents found external noticeboards, the Parish Council website, the North Marston and Granborough Magazine and Pew News as being valuable (over 70%). Social media and local radio scored below 50%.

Housing and Land Development (Questions 8 to 12)

- 4.14. The first question asked if villagers agree that there will be a need for additional housing in Granborough over the next 10 to 15 years. 57% agreed and 41% disagreed.
- 4.15. The second question asked how many new homes might be appropriate in the next 15 years. A number of quantity ranges were suggested. In summary, 78% of respondents think that a total of 25 or fewer would be acceptable over the 15 year period, with just 3% accepting over 50 new homes.
- 4.16. The final three questions in this section asked what types of development and types of residences were most appropriate in meeting the local need. The clear majority responses were for 'infill', in keeping with surrounding properties, and for small developments of less than 10 houses. A variety of housing types were deemed suitable, but larger houses and flats were not acceptable to a majority. Other strong majority responses suggest that developments should not lead to Granborough merging with neighbouring settlements and that there should be provision for adequate off-street parking, nature areas/green spaces and landscaping, and low-cost housing.

Local Economy (Questions 13 and 14)

- 4.17. Only 9% of respondents run a business in Granborough. 75% were against allocating business development sites in the village.

Hard Infrastructure (Question 15)

- 4.18. For this (partly) open question on village infrastructure, over 1,000 comments defining a need for improvements were received. The priority items were:
- Local road condition - 74%
 - Internet (including broadband) - 57%
 - Pavements and footpaths - 57%
 - Parking facilities - 43%

Social Infrastructure (Questions 16 and 17)

- 4.19. The first question asked which of the facilities and amenities in Granborough do villagers use, and how often. The most popular, used at least once a month by over 50% of respondents, were the Village Hall and The Crown. Majority responses to the second question, asking where improvements are needed, were for the Village Hall, the Church and the Play Area. The most popular suggestion for new facilities/amenities was a village shop.

Green Infrastructure (Question 18)

- 4.20. This question asked what facilities and amenities need to be improved now or in the future. There were 56 responses, the majority issue with respondents (47%) was the state of footpaths which are seen as being overgrown, lacking proper maintenance, with gates in poor repair and awkward stiles.

Green Environment (Questions 19 to 23)

- 4.21. These questions asked about the importance of the local environment and the use of footpaths and bridleways. The headline results were that 52% of respondents used public footpaths, and 12% used bridleways, at least once per week. 94% of respondents agreed to the idea of creating local green spaces which would be legally protected from development. For these, 9 potential sites were suggested.

Traffic and Transport (Questions 24 to 28)

- 4.22. 74% of respondents had concerns about the volume and speed of traffic, and there are many suggestions for minimising these concerns. 44% of respondents had concerns about the types of vehicles, the majority issue (67% response in 131 written comments) being the excessive numbers of HGVs. The bus service was never used by 50% of respondents and was considered to be inadequate by 57%. 39% of written responses (out of 149) thought that a more frequent and regular bus service would lead to higher levels of bus usage.

History and Heritage (Question 29)

- 4.23. 91% of respondents agreed that it is important to conserve the Parish's heritage. The priorities, taken from 157 written responses, were the Church, the Village Hall and all buildings built before 1900.

Additional comments (Question 30)

- 4.24. The key messages from 63 responses here were that we need to keep Granborough small and contained, maintain its village characteristics and keep it distinct from town living. There should be no expansion outside the current village footprint.

Communication of the Summary Results of the Questionnaire

- 4.25. The Parish Council was presented with a summary of the outcomes of the Questionnaire and an event was held in the Village Hall on Saturday 23rd November 2019 to feedback to residents. A copy of the presentation to the residents is available on Granborough.org and a leaflet "Summary of results" was delivered with Pew News and published in the NM & G Magazine.

Pre-submission consultation

- 4.26. The pre-submission consultation draft Neighbourhood Plan was published for comment on 23rd May 2021 for a period of six weeks ending on 4th July 2021. A total of 24 comments were received from statutory bodies, stakeholders and residents. The comments were analysed and, where appropriate, amendments were made to the Plan.

Newsletters/publicity

- 4.27. Informative leaflets were distributed to every household in the village at intervals during the development of the Plan as follows:
- Two leaflets between October 2018 and January 2019 informed residents of the decision to create a Neighbourhood Plan for Granborough. The first set out the purpose of the Plan and invited residents to the Initial Meeting in January 2019. This was followed by a second leaflet reminding residents of the forthcoming meeting.
 - In March 2019, a leaflet set out the summary results of the Initial Meeting.
 - In June 2019 a leaflet introduced the proposed Questionnaire.
 - Three leaflets followed the collection of the Questionnaire returns:
 - August 2019 - a 'Thank You' leaflet,
 - October 2019 - Initial Questionnaire Results, and invitation to the Results presentation, and
 - November 2019 – Final Questionnaire Results.
 - In July 2020 a leaflet updated the residents on progress with the development of the Plan.
 - During May, June and July 2021 leaflets referring to the pre-submission consultation were distributed to every household, emails were sent to stakeholders, landowners and statutory consultees, and posters were put up on the village noticeboard.

Website

- 4.28. A section dedicated to informing residents about the development of the Neighbourhood Plan was set up on the Parish Website: granborough.org
The Neighbourhood Plan Section of the website includes the email address of the Steering Group, which is: gnpsteering@granborough.org.
- 4.29. Further details of all the consultations that have taken place will be set out in the Consultation Statement.

5. Vision and Objectives

- 5.1. The Vision and Objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan have been carefully developed and endorsed by the Parish Council to reflect the priorities of the community and help set the future of the village. The Vision is the overall aim of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Objectives are more detailed, allowing the development of policies which in turn will be used to comment on and determine planning applications.

Vision

Our Vision is that Granborough will retain its rural character and community spirit. Future development and housing design will respect the natural environment and heritage whilst fulfilling the needs of all age groups in the community.

Objectives

1. To protect and enhance the rural quality of the Parish and the compact form of the hilltop village,
2. The historic character of the village and the extensive archaeological remains will be conserved, enhanced and recorded,
3. The diversity of wildlife and habitats will be protected and enhanced, and new planting will be of appropriate native species,
4. Formal and informal amenity green spaces will be protected and enhanced, and Local Green Space designated to protect those spaces of particular community value,
5. New housing growth will contribute to a compact and integrated village, meeting the needs of existing and future residents in terms of housing mix,
6. Footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways will be enhanced to ensure connectivity between places and access into the countryside from the village,
7. To manage and reduce traffic issues within and around the village, and
8. Existing facilities will be protected.

- 5.2. The Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are set out in the following sections and serve to further these Objectives. The table below shows the relationship between them.

Policies	Objectives
RC1: Village Character	1
RC2: Protecting the Landscape	1, 2
RC3: High Quality Design	1, 2, 3, 6
HE1: Protecting and enhancing local heritage assets	2
B1: Nature Conservation	3
GSR1: Local Green Spaces	4
H1: Housing	5
HSAT1: Highway Safety and Access	6, 7
CF1: Community Facilities	8

Figure 5: Aerial views of the village



6. Sustainable Development

- 6.1. Reflecting the NPPF and the consideration of locations for new housing development by Buckinghamshire Council (previously AVDC) through the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, there are three over-arching development principles to ensure that new development is sustainable which are: (i) it achieves high design and environmental standards, (ii) it reflects local preferences in terms of location and, especially important, (iii) it supports community infrastructure.
- 6.2. The Parish has a distinctive character, but the small village is not a particularly sustainable location for new development due to it being remote from amenities and lack of public transport options. Any new development should be small scale and protect, reflect and enhance the rural character of the village. There is a need for development to contribute to the quality of life for residents, including healthy lifestyles, access to local services, green open spaces, safe places for active play, and to be accessible by walking and cycling. These factors have become particularly important following the COVID pandemic, with increasing numbers of people working from home and increasing usage of their local facilities and outdoor space.
- 6.3. It is generally accepted that new development is necessary but there is a strong feeling that this should meet the needs of local people, existing and future generations, applying the principles of sustainable development to reflect environmental, economic and social needs. Sustainable development will be provided through Local Plan policies and development management decisions, utility providers obligations and Building Regulation requirements as well as Neighbourhood Plan policies. The Vision and the Objectives of the Parish are reflected in the policies set out in this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.4. For Granborough, the meaning of sustainable development is set out below.

Sustainable Development Principles
<p>Sustainable development for Granborough means that development should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At a small scale and in locations where it would support the community,• Of a high standard of design, reflecting the character of Granborough and its surroundings,• Contributing towards community infrastructure and supporting community cohesion,• Facilitating the provision of superfast broadband (fibre-optic) connections, and• Meeting contemporary construction, energy efficiency and water management standards. <p>The following adverse impacts must be avoided, unless mitigated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The loss or inappropriate diversion of public rights of way,• Avoidable intrusion into open countryside,• The loss of or damage to wildlife habitats, hedgerows and trees,• A loss of amenity for existing residential properties and reduced efficiency for nearby businesses, and• Overloading existing utilities and services (water, drainage, sewage and waste).

7. Rural character

Village character

- 7.1. Granborough is a charming hilltop village, approached through open countryside by long straight roads bounded by hedgerows from the nearby settlements of North Marston, the Claydons and Winslow. It feels like a relatively isolated settlement, set up on a low ridge. The village has an attractive historic character, particularly along Green End where there are some thatched properties. The centre is dominated by the Church, which is viewed from vantage points outside the village and the Village Hall.
- 7.2. The village has developed over time with some cul-de-sac developments such as Church Lane, Park Road and Denham View which comprise mainly bungalows from the 1950's, Sovereign Close (late 1990's), Marks Orchard (1990's) and the more recent 5 new dwellings on Winslow Road in 2020. The main through road, Winslow Road, is fairly wide with grass verges and a pavement on alternate sides and the houses are of mixed ages, sizes and orientation. The spaces between buildings adds to the rural character, with trees and plants or glimpses through to open countryside beyond, giving a green setting to the village. Building materials are also mixed including thatched, clay tile and slate roofs, red brick and painted render.

Figure 6: Some housing styles



- 7.3. Many of the houses are set back from the road behind hedges or walls, and there is no overriding building material, style or age of housing, although all buildings are modest in scale. This wide variation in style, age and position of buildings adds to the character of the village and is much valued by residents. It is expected that new buildings will need to be designed so as to respect the bulk, massing, height and orientation of buildings in close proximity to the site but can be designed in such a manner as to add to the varied character of the village.

- 7.4. Boundary treatment varies throughout the village and includes hedgerows, brick walls, railings and low fences. New front boundary treatments must be 'traditional' such as hedgerows, or low walls avoiding the use of close boarded or panel wooden fencing. Large masses of building or extensive use of hard landscaping would represent inappropriate 'urbanisation' of the area and erode the character so much valued by the residents.

Policy RC1: Village Character

Development proposals should respect the rural character of the village and its surroundings. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should ensure that:

- I. New buildings compliment the character of the immediate locality of the site and the surrounding context and be in keeping with the rural setting,
- II. New buildings respect the hilltop position of Granborough and are sympathetic to the contours of the land by ensuring that building heights, roofscapes and massing do not dominate the landscape,
- III. The sense of space between and around existing buildings is retained, particularly where there are existing views of the countryside beyond the village. The design of new buildings should ensure that adequate space is provided around them to compliment the rural character of the village, and, where relevant, retain views of the Church from vantage points outside the village,
- IV. Boundary treatment and landscaping schemes are carefully designed so as to prevent undue urbanisation of the location.

(Fulfills Objective 1)

Landscape

- 7.5. The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is the systematic division of the countryside into discrete and relatively homogenous units of land, within which the constituent physical, biological historical and cultural elements occur in repeating patterns and share certain aesthetic characteristics. The LCA for this part of Buckinghamshire was carried out in 2008 and has been amended and endorsed since then. It is a very useful tool for establishing important characteristics of local landscapes that can then be protected and/or enhanced when new development takes place. Any replacement of the 2008 LCA will also inform policy RC2 in what it identifies are the key characteristics, positive and detracting qualities of development in the landscape.
- 7.6. The Parish lies within the 'Shallow Valleys' Landscape character type, with the more detailed classification areas of the 'North Marston Undulating Claylands' Landscape Character Area (LCA 5.8), the Hogshaw Claylands (LCA5.7) and the Claydon Valley (LCA 5.6). The LCA concludes that that the condition of the LCA as a whole is 'Good' (within a range of poor to very good), with 'Moderate' sensitivity. This means that the landscape may be adversely affected by development in some locations but less so in others.
- 7.7. The 'North Marston Undulating Claylands' landscape covers the village and is described as an undulating landscape with small hills and ridges being a feature of the area. It notes that the village has a strong historic character. The landscape is predominantly pastoral with sparse settlements. Pylon lines are the main visual intrusion throughout the character area. LCA 5.8 guidelines seek to 'Conserve and Reinforce' the characteristics of the landscape that makes up the LCA.

- 7.8. Statements of relevance in the LCA with regard to Granborough are:
- Promoting the conservation and interpretation of rich historic environment,
 - Identifying key views to surrounding higher ground from publicly accessible land and promoting the preservation and enhancement of these views, and
 - Maintaining the historically open landscape by discouraging the planting of new woodlands and sub-division of fields.

7.9. The landscape is highly valued by residents of the Parish with 81% stating its value as very important and 16% as important. Accordingly, all new development which could impact on the landscape must seek to protect and enhance the landscape and the historic landscape (a particularly important aspect of the landscape in the Parish).

Policy RC2: Protecting the Landscape

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should recognise and seek to protect and enhance the historic and natural landscape and local character of the Parish. In particular, proposals should ensure that:

- I. They do not impact on the skyline and are in keeping with adjacent development and not introduce over-dominant features. Where necessary, mitigation and/or design solutions should be incorporated to offset the impacts; and
- II. Field patterns and elements of the landscape heritage of the area (including ridge and furrow, field ponds, mature, notable and ancient trees, and historic hedgerows) are protected and incorporated into any landscape design schemes and include details to ensure their long-term management and maintenance.

(Fulfills Objectives 1, 2)

High Quality Design

7.10. The NPPF and the Neighbourhood Plan recognises that well-designed buildings and places improve the quality of life and that it is a core planning principle to secure good design. The Neighbourhood Plan wishes to reflect community opinion and aspirations and add a local dimension to the assessment of proposals for new housing by utilising the relevant principles from 'Building for Life 12' and other design standards. Good design is not just about appearance, but also functionality and the relationship to surroundings and it is not about copying past styles or preventing innovative modern design. The aim is to create site-specific creative design, which is contextual by referencing form and materials to surroundings. Development proposals should include a Design and Access Statement, or other written statement related to the scale and complexity of the scheme, which shows that the development has been designed to specifically relate to its setting. This is essential to ensure that the special character of the village is protected, and its local distinctiveness is enhanced and reinforced. Policy RC3 addresses these matters. The policy applies to all new buildings including extensions to existing buildings. It is worded in a way which will ensure that it is applied on a proportionate basis.

7.11. In keeping with the Questionnaire respondents' views about the style of new developments the Neighbourhood Plan requires all developments, including alterations to existing buildings, to be sympathetic to the character and scale of surrounding buildings and landscape. Buildings of more than three storeys would not be appropriate given the existing characteristics of the village dwellings. The bulk, massing and cumulative visual impact of buildings are particularly important considerations at the periphery of the village where new

buildings may be seen on the hilltop, to avoid a hard edge of development in this rural setting. This policy sets a standard of design for all developments in the Parish to ensure proposals are well designed, reflect the distinctive character of the Parish and create environments that are accessible to all members of the community.

Policy RC3: High Quality Design

All development proposals should be designed in a way which results in good quality new development. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should:

- I. Relate to the existing development pattern in terms of enclosure and definition of streets/spaces,
- II. Be of a scale, mass and density in proportion to its setting,
- III. Use high quality materials to complement the development's context,
- IV. Be well integrated with the surroundings; reinforcing connections and taking opportunities to provide new ones,
- V. Provide convenient pedestrian/cyclist access to community services and facilities,
- VI. Be of a design with a locally inspired or distinctive character,
- VII. Take advantage of the local topography, landscape and water features, trees and plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings and site orientation,
- VIII. Respect views into/from the site to enable retention of rural character, particularly at the edges of the village,
- IX. Integrate any required car parking within the broader landscaping of the development so that it does not dominate the street scene,
- X. The height of new dwellings should reflect and be sympathetic to the scale and height of adjacent buildings, and
- XI. Provide or contribute towards the provision of infrastructure such as drainage including the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff and foul sewerage of a type and design best able to serve the development.

(Fulfills Objectives 1, 2, 3, 6)

8. Heritage

Listed Buildings and Archaeology

- 8.1. Granborough has 17 listed buildings in the Parish, including the Grade II* listed Church of St John the Baptist. The Church is constructed of coursed rubble limestone and is visible from a distance as it sits up on the hill. The majority of the listed buildings are close to the heart of the village at the junction of Marston Road with Church Lane and Green End. There is no designated Conservation Area.
- 8.2. The Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record show 39 entries for Granborough Parish. They range from ridge and furrow to roman roads to earthworks for the sunken medieval village near Sovereign Close. The Archaeological Notification Areas encompass much of the Parish. These are areas that indicate the existence, or probable existence, of archaeological heritage assets. In or close to such areas, it is required that any planning applications must take this into account and that investigations should be carried out to determine the existence or otherwise of remains.
- 8.3. Residents of the Parish felt that it was important or very important to conserve the Parishes heritage (91%). Alongside the Church and Crown pub (both of which are listed buildings), the Village Hall, Mill Knob, Biggin and Kings Field were mentioned as being of specific importance.
- 8.4. Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monument status are the two statutory designations that offer protection to the historic environment. Only a proportion of heritage assets are protected by statutory designation and the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to recognise the value of the historic environment through the neighbourhood planning process. Heritage assets are non-renewable resources that are intrinsic to the character and sense of place. The Neighbourhood Plan offers recognition and additional protection to the heritage assets that are considered to be of local importance. The Non-designated Heritage Asset list is made up of one historic building and three archaeological sites that have not been deemed eligible for protection under Listed Buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monument status but are locally important and distinctive. They contribute to the sense of place of Granborough and represent the best of the non-statutory designated assets.

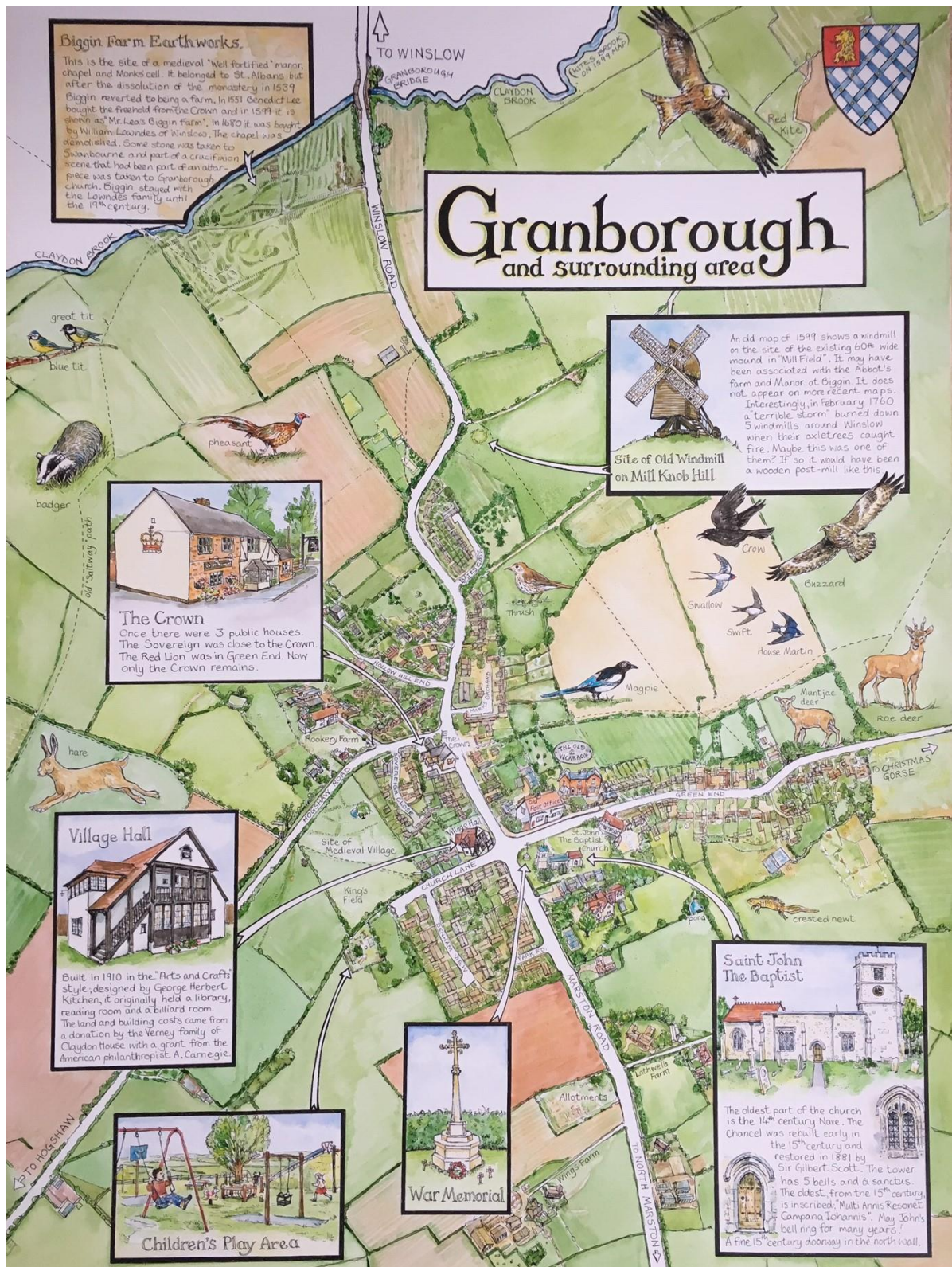
The Village Hall has been recognised by the Planning Authority as a building of local heritage interest.

Mill Knob Hill was excavated during World War 2, but nothing was found. It is a grassed mound about 4 ft. high by 60 ft. in diameter. Sixteenth century records, mainly in the form of the 1599 Salden Estate Map, have suggested the presence of a windmill at Mill Knob Hill. Whether it was made for a mill, or is a tumulus adapted to such a use, can only be settled by excavation.

Kings Field, also known as **Kings Hill**, is an area of land adjacent to Sovereign Close with a pond in its north-east quarter. Surveys have indicated that there is evidence of buildings which could well have been the original site of the village.

Biggin, which was identified in the 1599 Salden Estate Map, lies 400 metres from Granborough bridge on the road to Winslow and is the site of a well-fortified manor house and chapel forming part of the estate of the abbey of St Albans. With the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 Biggin came into the hands of Queen Elizabeth and degenerated into a working farmstead. Its buildings were pulled down and most of the stonework was conveyed to the neighbouring village of Swanbourne. The adjacent fields and surviving fish ponds are still known as Biggin.

Figure 7: Illustration of sites of interest (drawn by local artist)



HE1: Protecting and enhancing non designated heritage assets

The Plan identifies the following non-designated heritage assets:

- Biggin
- Kings Field
- Mill Knob Hill
- The Village Hall

The effect of a development proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the planning application concerned. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

(Fulfills Objective 2)

9. Biodiversity

- 9.1. Protection of the nature conservation interest in the Parish, which is valued by local people, is critical, with reference to the important habitats and landscape. A wildlife corridor is an area of habitat connecting wildlife populations separated by human activities or structures (such as roads and built development). The Parish has a wide variety of wildlife living within its boundaries. This predominantly agricultural Parish supports a thriving variety of British mammals including roe deer, badgers, foxes, brown hares and bats. The Parish also contains registered breeding sites of great crested newts, a species protected under UK and European legislation, as well as other amphibians and reptiles. The fields and hedgerows provide ideal cover for a large variety of farmland birds including skylarks, linnets, yellow buntings as well as the more spectacular red kites, buzzards, ravens, woodpeckers and owls. There is also a nationally significant butterfly conservation area on the edge of the Parish which supports established colonies of rare black hairstreak butterflies, according to Buckinghamshire Monitoring Environment Record Centre (BMERC), Butterfly Conservation and Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT).
- 9.2. Another feature of the Parish is the black poplar, or water poplar, Britain's rarest native tree. Of the estimated national population of less than 7,000 more than half are in the Vale of Aylesbury, and Granborough has at least its fair share. The tree grows to over 30m high and many in the village are more than 200 years old. It can be found on most farms in and around Granborough and one is opposite the Crown Public House. Its numbers are declining and it is protected by law, but recent national interest indicates a growing awareness to preserve and propagate these trees through local action and survey groups. For every black poplar that is lost, at least two new black poplar trees should be planted in a suitable location. Within appropriate new development, planting of black poplars will be encouraged.
- 9.3. All proposals for new development will be required to demonstrate how the design has taken into account its potential impact on local habitats and species. This will include sites and features that are locally important, including hills and the river valleys, trees, hedges and woodland, ponds and watercourses and unimproved grassland. New developments will be required to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to protect wildlife and take every available opportunity to enhance biodiversity and important habitats. Policy GSR1 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. In particular 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.
- 9.4. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a concept proposed in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and mandated as a condition of planning permission in the 2021 Environment Act. Biodiversity Net Gain requires a 10% increase in biodiversity after development, compared to the level of biodiversity prior to the development taking place. In locations such as Granborough where all new development will be close to the countryside, it is really important that this principle is adopted to mitigate the impact of losing biodiversity value of undeveloped land to development. All new development should seek to increase biodiversity such as incorporating bat boxes etc. into new buildings, particularly at the edges of the settlement. Landscaping schemes will be required to use appropriate native species for planting schemes, particularly those found locally. The Environment Act was enacted in November 2021. It is incorporated into the contents of Policy B1.
- 9.5. Where Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SuDS) are required to serve new developments, every opportunity to link them into habitats should be taken.

Policy B1: Nature Conservation

Development proposals should protect and enhance existing natural features of the site and enhance biodiversity. Where it is practicable to do so, and as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals should:

- I. Provide at least 10% biodiversity gain,
- II. Incorporate appropriate species-related measures including, for example, swift bricks, bat and owl boxes,
- III. Incorporate native species into landscaping schemes,
- IV. Create new links to areas of existing biodiversity to create more robust wildlife networks, especially woodlands, grasslands and hedgerows,
- V. Link sustainable drainage systems to complement nature conservation to create new habitats, and
- VI. For every black poplar that is lost, at least two new black poplar trees should be planted in a suitable location.

(Fulfills Objective 3)

10. Green Space and Recreation

Local Green spaces

- 10.1. Green spaces can be used for many functions and contribute to a healthy lifestyle and well-being of residents. There are different types of green spaces, some are functional, such as play spaces, and some are used informally. Some are purely visual, but they are still important, providing visual interest in the village environment.
- 10.2. All these green spaces are valuable to the community and should be retained unless replacement facilities would represent an improvement in quality, quantity or location.
- 10.3. In the NPPF it is stated that in Neighbourhood Plans, local communities can identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection and to rule out new development, other than in “very special circumstances”. The proposed designations are in accordance with the requirement in Paragraph 102 of the NPPF:
 - The green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves,
 - The area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife, and
 - The area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The following green spaces (see map, Figure 8) have been identified as fulfilling the criteria:

Village Green

- 10.4. The Village Green is located at the intersection of Winslow Road and Hogshaw Road opposite the Crown Public House. Although only a small triangular plot of land of approximately 0.10 acres it is the only remaining public access green space on the main road through the village.

One of the six bus stops in the village (3 stops in each direction) is located on the northern corner. Two mature trees stand on the regularly maintained open green space which provide a small island of tranquillity in the centre of the village. Residents walking by benefit from the display of spring flowering bulbs which were originally planted by the Granborough Brownies as part of Granborough’s millennium celebration.

The Village Green is used by local residents during the annual Granborough Charter Fayre, a community event of fun, enjoyment and varied entertainment such as a treasure hunt, a fancy dress competition, a parade down the main street to The Crown for on-stage entertainment and games in the garden. A popular and well attended village festival.

Play Area

- 10.5. The beautiful and valued play area which is maintained by the Parish Council is located at the end of Church Lane. The land, approximately 0.15 Acres, is leased from the Oxford Diocese and the lease was renewed in 2013 and will run until 28th February 2033.

It is located in a quiet and safe setting. A public footpath runs along the northern boundary. From one of the highest points in our hilltop village there are lovely views to the south and west over adjoining farmland and to the east over glebe land.

Land Adjacent to the Play Area

- 10.6. The open land adjacent to the Play Area is glebe land owned by the Diocese of Oxford and is situated on the western side of Denham View. The open land is approximately 1.5 Acres and is enclosed by fencing and natural hedging on all sides. From its elevated position it enjoys views to the south over open farmland.

A small strip of this land on its eastern boundary is currently leased to a number of home owners in Denham View and Church Lane who have gardens backing onto the area.

The open land is somewhat overgrown but is open to residents visiting the play area and is sometimes used by dog walkers.

The recent Neighbourhood Planning questionnaire returns showed significant interest in the possibility to enable use of this land as a recreational area for the benefit of all Granborough residents. Of all open spaces identified by respondents which should be designated as 'local green spaces', this open land adjacent to the play area received the highest number of votes.

Suggestions were made for use of this land as a wildflower meadow, a picnic area or simply a quiet area for general recreation and relaxation.

Green Space in Sovereign Close

- 10.7. Sovereign Close is a modern estate of 21 houses of various design styles including detached and terraced properties and has the highest population density in Granborough. The green space is an open area of approximately 0.15 Acres situated in a central position on the estate and provides residents with a space for recreation. Screened by low hedging on three sides and fencing on the fourth side, the green space offers a safe area for the young people of Sovereign Close and the wider community.

Allotments

- 10.8. The land used for the allotments in Granborough, an area of at least 2.0 Acres, is located on Marston Road to the south of the village and is owned by the Diocese of Oxford. Each allotment, typically of 20 poles (500 sq. metres), is leased from the Oxford Diocese on an annual basis.

Allotments not only provide fruit, vegetables and flowers at a very reasonable cost, but allotment gardening is also a very healthy relaxing outdoor exercise. Our allotments are well used by village residents and many exhibit their produce in the annual Granborough Show. After prizes have been awarded for the best entries the produce is auctioned to raise funds for local charities. Many old varieties of fruit and vegetables are still grown there, and the area is home to a wide variety of wildlife.

The history of allotments can be said to go back over a thousand years and the tradition continues in the countryside village of Granborough. Such activity promotes healthy diet, reduces food miles and integrates the community. The Granborough allotments are an important facility which should be preserved and protected.

Policy GSR1: Local Green Spaces

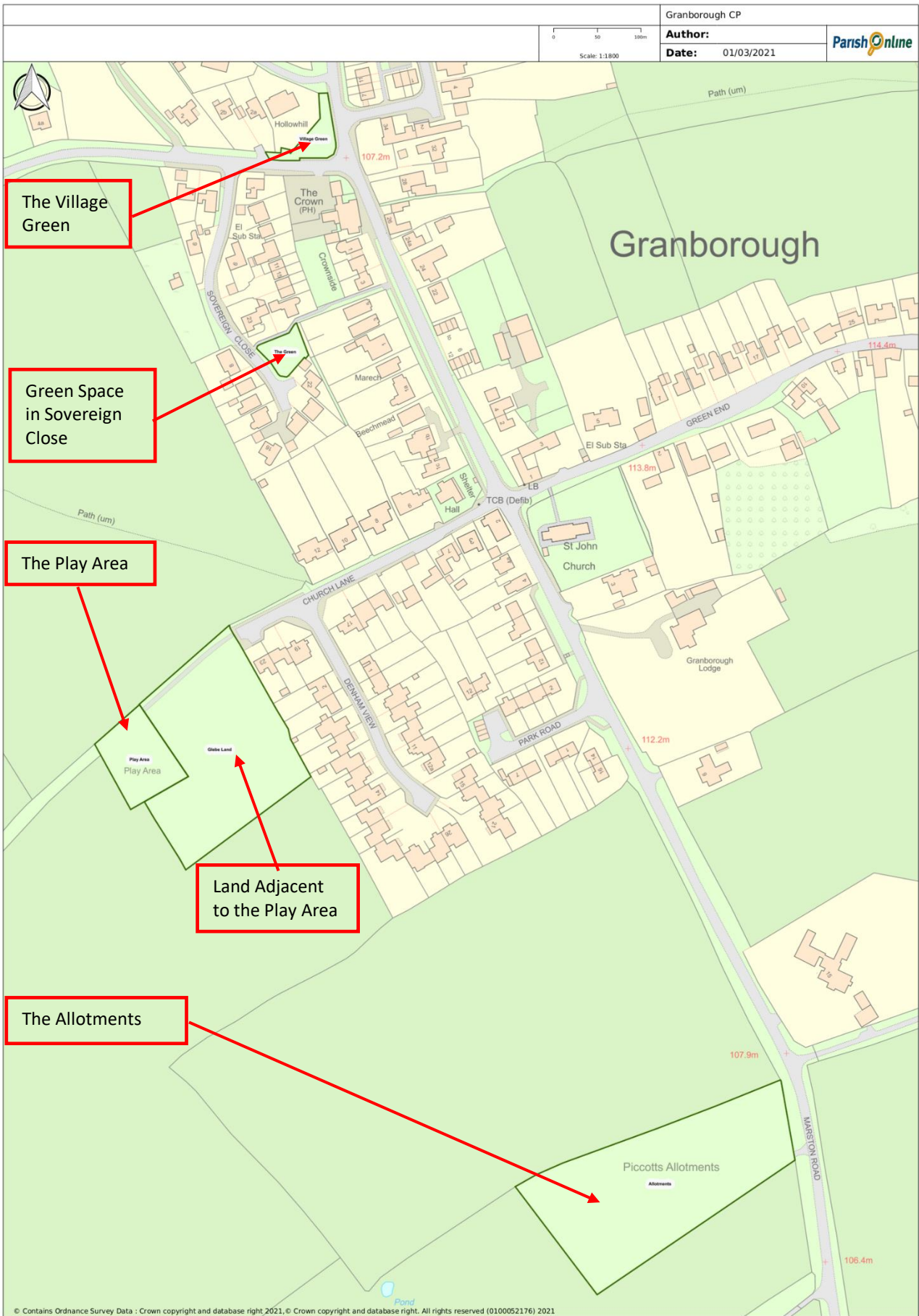
The following areas shown on the Policies Map are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- Village Green
- Play Area
- Land adjacent the Play Area
- Sovereign Close Green Space
- Allotments

Development proposals within the designated local green spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.

(Fulfills Objective 4)

Figure 8: Map of Green Spaces (License Code PSGA No. 010C)



11. Housing

Overview of Housing in Granborough

- 11.1. Granborough is a typical Buckinghamshire small village comprising a mixture of house types of various types and ages. It is acknowledged that the NPPF promotes sustainable development and encourages consolidation of smaller rural settlements where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. In terms of the Local Plan (VALP), Granborough is identified in the September 2017 version of the Settlement Hierarchy as an Appendix 4 settlement implying that this is considered to be appropriate to allow “limited small-scale development” within the settlement. Appendix 4 settlements are described in the Settlement Hierarchy as *“smaller, less sustainable villages which have poor access to services and facilities. However, it is expected that small scale development could be accommodated without causing any environmental harm. This level of development is also likely to help maintain existing communities.”* Small scale is likely to be in the context of the existing number of dwellings. A recent proposal for 17 dwellings was dismissed on appeal for a number of reasons including the acceptance that this number of dwellings is not small scale for Granborough which had a population of approximately 550 in December 2020.
- 11.2. However, opportunities for new small-scale housing developments are likely to continue to arise in Granborough throughout the Plan period. An example of this is the 5 new houses completed at the northern end of the village in 2020. Nevertheless, to ensure new housing development is in keeping with the village and small scale, it is considered that a settlement boundary preventing extending the village outwards would ensure protection of the surrounding countryside, the compact form of the village and its setting within the landscape. One of the three dimensions of sustainable development in the NPPF is ‘environmental’ and this holds equal weight with the social and economic dimensions. The NP seeks to promote sustainable development, but not at the expense of the environment. It is acknowledged that opportunities for development of new housing within the boundary are limited but this reflects the relatively unsustainable location of the village and its lack of services.
- 11.3. 78% of respondents to the Questionnaire considered that up to 25 new homes in the next 15-year period would be acceptable, the majority of these saying that small homes (1-2 bedrooms) are needed locally, although 3 bedroom homes and bungalows were also popular. Popular criteria to be applied to new housing were the avoidance of merging with neighbouring settlements, infill being in keeping with surrounding properties and parking and green space/landscaping being provided.

Housing development within and beyond the Settlement Boundary

- 11.4. The Settlement Boundary for the village is defined in this Neighbourhood Plan and separates the village from the surrounding countryside. This has been drawn up carefully, using site visits and planning application history where available to determine existing land uses and boundaries on the ground. Settlement related uses are within the boundary and countryside related uses are beyond the boundary. The methodology for determining the Settlement Boundary is included in this Plan as Appendix A.
- 11.5. Within the Settlement Boundary (see Figure 9) development for new homes or for small-scale employment use and for community facilities would be accepted on redeveloped (brownfield) sites or through infill development. Infill sites are defined as spaces between or to the rear of existing houses where new housing will repeat or respect the surrounding pattern of development.

Generally, ‘infill’ sites can be acceptable for a few houses, provided that the amenities of the adjacent properties are not adversely affected and that the street scene and pattern of development remains appropriate to the rural character of the village.

- 11.6. A development proposal on land outside the defined Settlement Boundary will not be supported unless it is a rural exception housing site, necessary for the purposes of agriculture or forestry, or for enterprise, diversification, recreation or tourism that benefits the rural economy without harming countryside interests.

New isolated homes in the countryside will not be supported unless they conform to the requirements of Paragraph 80 of the NPPF.

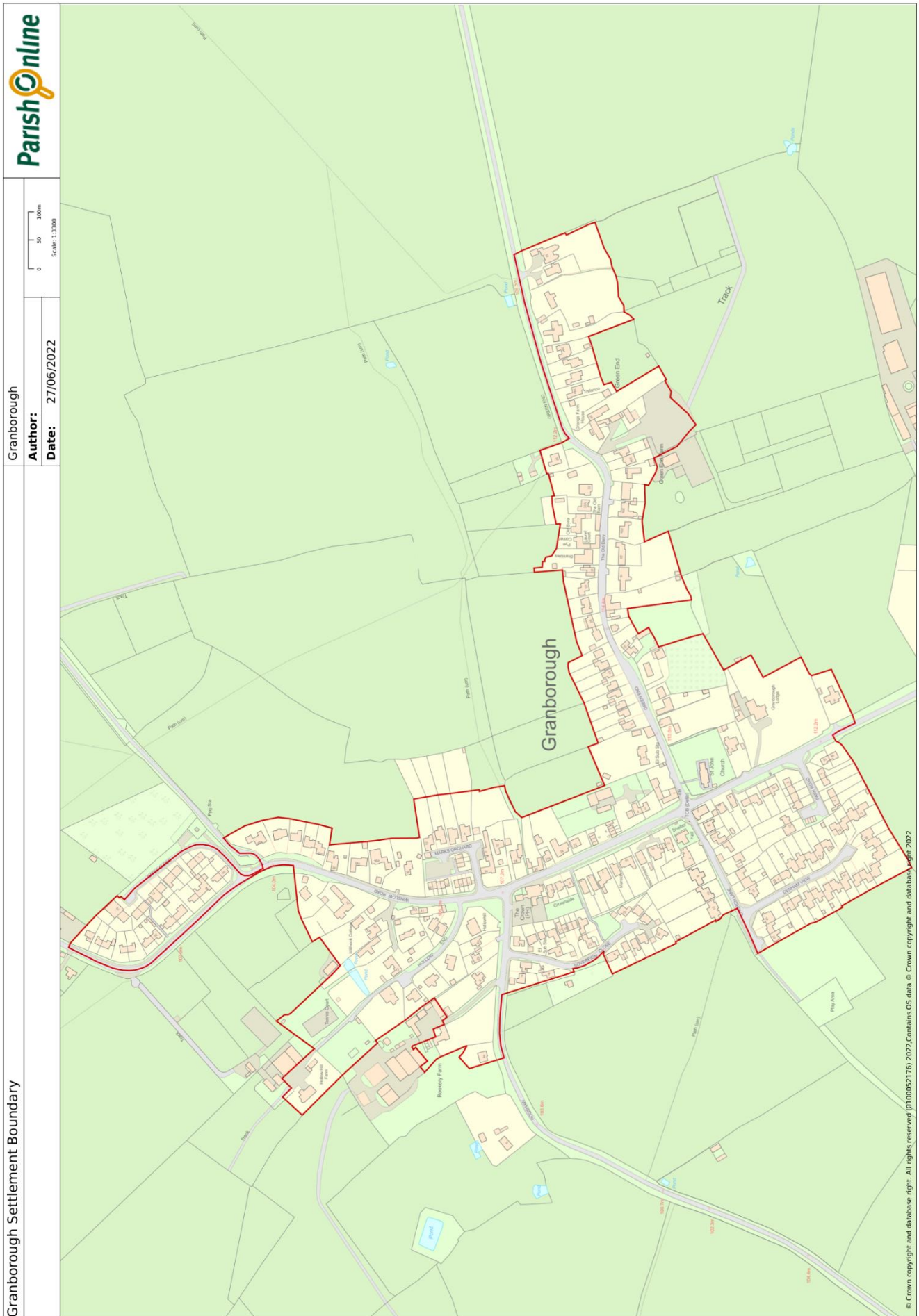
Housing Mix

- 11.7. There are very few notable large houses of any age and the predominant house types are houses (47%) and bungalows (26%), the majority of which are detached, with modern 3 or 4 bed roomed houses arranged in small estates. There are very few terraced homes (8%) and no flats or maisonettes. This information has been gathered by volunteers as part of the GNP process to ensure an up-to-date picture of housing stock in the village. 86% of the homes are owner occupied, with the remainder rented. (2001 census).
- 11.8. Granborough house prices are substantially above the average for Buckinghamshire and South East England. (£457,938 vs £413,498 Buckinghamshire, £393,930 SE England). (Data source: Zoopla July 2020). There is clearly an imbalance and lack of choice of cheaper homes to buy in Granborough, meaning that young people, who have grown up in the village may be forced to seek housing elsewhere, where it is cheaper and more plentiful.
- 11.9. There are some village properties suitable for first time buyers, but many young buyers are unable to obtain mortgages and the properties do not meet the criteria for older buyers downsizing. Smaller properties have been targets for buy to let and for redevelopment.
- 11.10. At the other end of the spectrum, older residents are living in accommodation which is too big for them. They are unable to move because of the lack of suitable homes such as smaller houses with relatively large downstairs space and fewer bedrooms or bungalows.
- 11.11. The proportion of older people (65+) in the population overall will rise. Forecasts for national demographic change between 2008 and 2033 show that the elderly population could increase from 16% to 23% of the total population.
- 11.12. Granborough needs more young people and families for the community to retain its age balance but the current shortage of affordable housing denies young people and families the opportunity to live in the village where they grew up. The village needs smaller homes for elderly villagers wishing to downsize and remain in Granborough and for young singles or couples.
- 11.13. The provision of any additional houses in Granborough gives an opportunity to change the balance of village homes available. A good mix of houses is required, in particular, fewer large homes and smaller, less expensive units; the mix should also include some homes suitable for older residents who wish to downsize and for those seeking their first home.
- 11.14. Homes likely to be suitable for young families or older people should be built to standards which incorporate design criteria supporting the changing needs of individuals and families at different life stages allowing easier access and movement within the property and ensuring properties are suitable for young families or older people.

Housing Need

- 11.15. The proportion of new housing development which is required to be affordable will be set by Buckinghamshire Council. The Neighbourhood Plan requires proposals for new housing development to conform to up to date Buckinghamshire Council requirements, both in overall requirement and tenure mix. Affordable housing in this part of Buckinghamshire is generally operated by registered providers of social housing.

Figure 9: Settlement Boundary (License Code PSGA No. 010C)



Policy H1: Housing

- I. Within the Settlement Boundary, proposals for new development will be supported which are appropriate in scale, design and character to the village, contribute to its local distinctiveness and do not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity or living conditions of neighbouring occupiers,
- II. Outside the Settlement Boundary, development will only be supported in the circumstances set out in the relevant Local Plan policies and the NPPF,
- III. Housing developments for three or more dwellings should incorporate a mix of house sizes with a larger proportion of smaller (1-2 bedroom) homes.

(Fulfills Objective 5)

12. Highway Safety, Access and Transport

- 12.1 Granborough is a small village at the heart of a rural road network with the nearest A road being the A413 Whitchurch to Winslow Road which is some 1.5 miles to the east of the village centre.
- 12.2 There is no shop, no doctor's surgery and no school in the village. Children have to travel outside the village for schooling, and all residents must travel outside the village for doctor's and dentist's surgeries and shops. Employment opportunities in the village are very limited and most working people have to travel outside the village for work.
- 12.3 This results in households being very dependent on private cars, and also the local bus service from Aylesbury to Buckingham. Most children travel to and from school by school bus, local bus and private car.
- 12.4 Traffic volume increases significantly during the morning and afternoon 'rush hours', with speeding vehicles a particular problem on Marston Road and Winslow Road. Green End and Hogshaw Road also reported problems of excessive speed for small country lanes and with HGVs and heavy farm vehicles causing damage to grass verges.
- 12.5 Limited parking, particularly outside the Crown public house on Hogshaw Road, causes congestion problems in Hogshaw Road and Sovereign Close. Parking outside the Village Hall and the Church also causes problems in Church Lane and Green End. Any future village developments must ensure that adequate off-road parking spaces are provided.
- 12.6 The bus service within the village is limited, with no significant services at peak hours for access to work and schools. The bus service would also be the preferred option of many of the lesser-abled and elderly residents of the village, allowing them easy transport to the local area facilities.
- 12.7 74% of respondents to the Questionnaire were concerned about the volume and speed of traffic and HGV traffic. However, these issues are beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan because they are not land use issues. Nevertheless, the Parish Council is aware of the issues raised and the suggestions made for improvement.
- 12.8 As part of the underlying approach to achieving sustainable development in the Neighbourhood Plan, any development should encourage walking, cycling, and the use of public transport. Where new development would increase traffic significantly, or impact on pedestrian safety, it would be expected to contribute towards measures to ameliorate such issues. Policy HSAT1 sets out the Plan's approach to this matter. Off-site highways works can be achieved through legal agreements and/or planning obligations. As appropriate to the particular circumstances, provision should be used (on or off site) to support reduced traffic speeds and volumes, improve road junctions, improve the provision and connectivity of pavements and access for pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists.
- 12.9 Rights of Way include public footpaths and bridleways which can be used by cyclists and are protected through legislation which deals with closure and diversion. Pedestrians also use the pavement network in the village.
- 12.10 Public footpaths are heavily used by residents of the Parish, with 52% of respondents to the questionnaire using them at least once a week. Only 7% said that they never used footpaths. Nearly 40% of respondents used bridleways at least once a week, although sometimes as footpaths. Improvements to footpaths and cyclepaths were considered by residents as needed, second only to improvements to roads. Footpath links and

cycleways need to be utilised to link residential properties and services/facilities within the village, and new appropriate footpaths and cycleways should be created for entering and leaving the village, linking nearby villages, particularly North Marston and Winslow.

12.11 A partnership approach will be required to improve highway safety and minimise conflicts between road traffic, cyclists and pedestrians for any new housing. Any off-site financial contributions through Section 106 will need to meet the tests of any contribution in the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (2010) as amended. It is intended to support new ways of managing the traffic throughout the Parish by promoting pedestrian and cyclist safety and resident well-being through lower traffic speeds and traffic volumes.

Policy HSAT1: Highway Safety and Access

- I. Insofar as planning permission is required the provision of new or extended footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths will be supported, providing that the rural character and heritage assets are not adversely affected by the development,
- II. New developments should be capable of being accommodated safely within the capacity of the local highways network. Where they would otherwise be acceptable, development proposals should include measures to mitigate their effects on junction capacity and/or alignment and the overall safety of pedestrians, cyclists and car users.

(Fulfills Objectives 6,7)

13. Community Facilities

13.1. In terms of built community facilities, the village has a Church, Village Hall and a pub. The nearest shop and school are at North Marston with a larger range of facilities including doctor's and dentist's surgeries and supermarkets in Winslow to the north.

13.2. St John the Baptist Church

Originally dating from the 14th / 15th Century the Church was demolished during the civil war but rebuilt in 1685 to serve the local community. Still in regular use it has no hall, instead relying on the Village Hall to provide an additional meeting place.

Figure 10: St John the Baptist Church



13.3. The Village Hall.

Built in 1910 the Village Hall is used by the community for social gatherings and is therefore essential for the wellbeing of the community. The hall hosts regular events such as the toddler club, senior citizens club, art club etc. while also providing the venue for Parish Meetings and the Polling station. It also provides the venue for social events and can be hired for parties, celebrations and other functions.

Figure 11: The Village Hall



13.4. The Crown Public House.

At the centre of the village is the Crown public house, the only one remaining of three which were originally operating in the village. The pub has been renovated and provides an excellent menu in the restaurant and a wide range of liquid refreshments in the bar for residents of Granborough and visitors from the surrounding area.

Figure 12: The Crown Public House



13.5. Other Community amenities

Finally, those in the village who have the space provide additional facilities for social events with farmers providing the use of barns and residents space for garden parties and open garden viewing.

Change of use, conversion or demolition of the church, village hall and Crown pub, to a use which is not for the community will be strongly resisted unless a replacement would prove more suitable for the community. The applicant would need to put forward evidence that the existing use is no longer commercially viable and prove that a genuine and sustained attempt has been made to market the enterprise as a going concern for at least a year prior to any application.

Policy CF1: Community Facilities

- I. The provision of new community facilities will be supported,
- II. Proposals to improve the viability of a community facility by way of the extension or partial replacement or redevelopment of buildings, structures and land, will be supported, provided the design of the scheme respects the village character in general, and the resulting increase in use is appropriate in design terms and will not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties,
- III. Development proposals that will result in either the loss of, or significant harm to, the Crown Public House, including its garden and car park will not be supported unless it can be clearly demonstrated that that its continued use is no longer viable.

(Fulfills Objective 8)

14. Aspirations

14.1. During the creation of the GNP the residents voiced a firm wish to maintain the rural nature of the village and to ensure the continuing safety of all residents and visitors. Whilst the following aspirations fall outside of the remit of the GNP, they are recorded below for consideration in future by the Parish Council. Funding for any future aspirations may come from various sources including S106 contributions or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

- New safe crossing points for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians should be considered, whilst retaining the essential rural character of Granborough. These would also slow the speed of traffic in the village.
- The rural nature of the footpaths around the village is much valued and a 2019 planning appeal decision (Sovereign Close) put value on this rural character. It is therefore appropriate to ensure that the footpath network in the vicinity of the village is not reduced or urbanized by new development.
- The village questionnaire returns showed a significant interest in using the land adjacent to the play area (owned by Oxford Diocese) for the benefit of Granborough residents and the wider community. Granborough Parish Council is in discussions with Oxford Diocese concerning the possible use of this land as a managed wild flower meadow, providing a rich habitat for a wide range of wild life, including butterflies.
- A cycle path linking Granborough to North Marston would provide enhanced connectivity between the two villages, particularly with regard to the North Marston School, Sports field and North Marston village shop.

15. Implementation

Approach

- 15.1 This section outlines the approach to the implementation of the GNP, including working in partnerships, funding mechanisms, priority projects and monitoring/review. The approach will be that new development should be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to provide a balanced community.
- 15.2 The GNP will be delivered and implemented over a long period and by different stakeholders and partners. Flexibility will be needed as new challenges and opportunities arise over the plan period. The Parish Council is committed to Localism and locally informed influence over planning decisions and will be the key organisation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the GNP.
- 15.3 The Plan will be used by the Parish Council to:
- guide comments on planning applications,
 - negotiate with landowners and developers to achieve the best possible outcomes from new development,
 - direct financial resources to the village in a structured way,
 - bring together groups or working parties to improve the local environment and,
 - lobby local authorities to support the Parishioners wishes and aspirations.

Working in partnership

- 15.4 Granborough Parish Council is committed to Localism and locally informed influence over planning decisions and it will be the key organisation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will build upon its excellent track record in engaging in planning decisions (reactively through consultation and proactively through promoting the policies of this Plan) and by delivering related projects for the local community. However, it is recognised that partnership working is needed for the potential of the Plan to be realised. Partnerships and joint working will be key elements in the successful implementation of the Plan. The main organisations and the roles that they can play are summarised below.
- **Buckinghamshire Council** - Planning Policy, Development Control, Housing Management and Improvement, Economic Development, Open Spaces, Recreation and Community Facilities and unitary authority functions, including: Drainage, Flooding, Highways and Transport, Education, Landscape and Social Services.
 - **Adjoining Parish Councils** – Assessing impact of large-scale planning applications and working together to deliver Green Infrastructure.
 - **South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnerships (SEMLEP)** - The LEP is a potential partner for joint working, funding and implementation and its activity may be relevant to rural businesses.
 - **Environment Agency** - The planning, design and delivery of development, taking account of: (i) Flood risk management; (ii) Water quality and water resources, (iii) Waste management, (iv) Land contamination & soil and (v) Environmental permits and other regulation.
 - **Site owners, developers and infrastructure providers** will need to liaise with the Parish Council as well as the other agencies involved in development.

Funding and Implementation Mechanisms

- 15.5 Financial contributions will be sought from developers through Section 106 legal agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which provides a legal framework to raise funds to provide the infrastructure needed to cope with new developments. Buckinghamshire Council is working on CIL at present

and when it is introduced in the area, contributions will be sought as appropriate under CIL Regulations and the NPPF.

- 15.6 The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations of the 2011 Localism Act enable areas with a Neighbourhood Plan in place to receive at least 25% of the CIL raised in their area to direct to their new or improved infrastructure priorities. However, the Government's recent Planning Consultation ('Planning for the Future' – consultation closed 29th October 2020) to reform the planning system in England, which mooted changes to S106 and CIL, did not contain any details. The consultation still promoted neighbourhood plans and better engagement with local communities.
- 15.7 In addition, the Parish Council will seek to influence annual and other budget decisions by Buckinghamshire Council on housing, open space and recreation, economic development, community facilities and transport through the Local Transport Plan.
- 15.8 The Parish Council will also work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to develop funding bids to help to achieve Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives and non-policy aspirations. This might include: The Lottery, UK Government programmes, land fill tax credits, EU funds and LEP funding.

16. Monitoring and Review

16.1 It is important to check that progress is made towards meeting the objectives and policies of the Plan. The Parish Council will report to the residents on the implementation of the Plan every 3 years and consider:

- If progress is being made to achieve the vision and the objectives of the Plan,
- If progress is being made towards the implementation of the policies in the Plan,
- If financial contributions available to the community arising from development are being targeted towards the identified plans and projects in the Plan,
- If the Plan remains based on the most up to date information and,
- If the Plan is being taken into account by Buckinghamshire Council when determining planning applications.

16.2 These periodic reviews will allow the Parish Council to conclude if a formal review needs to take place. If so, it will secure opinions of residents and stakeholders to update the Plan.

Appendix A: Settlement Boundary Definition and Methodology

Definition

A settlement boundary defines the built up area of a settlement, and indicates where development for housing, commercial use (appropriate to a settlement) could be suitable. It allows for flexibility by potentially allowing more development than is planned for by the allocation of specific sites, at the same time as avoiding the loss of undeveloped land in the countryside and further sprawl into the countryside.

Settlement boundaries do not reflect the administrative boundaries of the Parish nor do they define the extent of the village community. Therefore, settlement boundaries only incorporate the continuous form of the settlement and may in some cases, exclude dwellings and structure that are detached from the main settlement pattern.

A settlement boundary defined in a Neighbourhood Plan allows Buckinghamshire Council to apply planning decisions in a consistent manner and if appropriate, develop 'exception sites' which allow for certain types of development such as 100% affordable housing schemes which wouldn't otherwise be viable if they were competing for land with market housing. It does not confer any use class or planning permission to land or buildings.

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan does not use settlement boundaries as a tool for determining planning applications although several neighbouring planning authorities do so (e.g. Central Bedfordshire Council). Several Neighbourhood Plans in Buckinghamshire do define settlement boundaries and have done so using their own bespoke methodology.

Methodology

The boundary has been carefully drawn using maps and Google Earth plus site visits and planning applications or property history where available to determine existing land uses and boundaries on the ground.

Where possible, the boundary has been drawn using clearly defined physical features. These include discernible ground features such as walls, hedgerows, streams, roads, and field boundaries.

The settlement boundary was drawn up using the following criteria:

- The use of the land within the boundary is settlement related, such as residential, community use, employment use etc. Land which is clearly related to the countryside, such as agricultural land and buildings or land and buildings associated with keeping horses remains outside the boundary.
- Sites with planning permission for housing on the edge of the settlement which have been granted, are under construction or recently completed have been included within the settlement boundary.
- Garden extensions which have planning permission are included within the settlement boundary (e.g. 04/03216/APP, 33 Green End).
- Large expanses of land associated with dwellings have been assessed with regard to their status in planning or historic terms (planning or property history) and whether they are separated from the formal garden of a property by a physical feature. If there is ambiguity regarding the use of the land, regard has been paid to whether the piece of land clearly extends into the open countryside (excluded) or has settlement related uses adjacent to the boundaries (included).
- Buildings have not been included if they are too far from the settlement to be considered part of it and if they do not relate to the built form of the settlement.
- Buildings which are located on the perimeter of the settlement but separated from the main built up area by an area of open land i.e. buildings not surrounded by other buildings have not been included

within the boundary.

- All buildings on the edge of a settlement that have a clear rural character or use, such as farm buildings, have been excluded from the boundary.
- Formal areas of open space at the edge of settlements have been excluded from the boundary unless they are clearly adjacent to existing built development. If these areas are surrounded by the main built up area of the settlement, they have been included within the boundaries.