

WORMINGHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Let's set the future of our village!

Neighbourhood Plan 2017- 2033



April 2018

Foreword

Since around 2012, the community of Worminghall has been involved in looking to the future for the village. 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. A Community led Plan was produced in the first instance (published in 2014) and this has evolved and progressed into the production of a Neighbourhood Plan to deal with the land use issues in the Parish.

The Parish Council wishes to thank everyone who has been involved, all the residents who have responded to questionnaires and events and to the Steering Group who have worked hard to produce this document on behalf of the Parish Council and residents.

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1. Introduction

1.1. 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 development plan for the area. This means that any 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 local character. A neighbourhood plan is a planning document aimed at guiding sustainable future development within the plan area. The plan is therefore concerned with development of land and its associated social, economic and environmental issues. Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, neighbourhood plans must meet the following basic conditions;

- regard to national policy;
- general conformity with strategic local policy;
- contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;
- compatibility with EU obligations; and
- meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.2. 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. These requirements will be tested by an Independent Examiner once the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised. If satisfied, the Examiner will recommend to AVDC that the plan goes to referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes for the NP, then it becomes adopted by AVDC as formal planning policy for the local area.

2. Background

2.1. **The Village Plan:** Worminghall Parish Council produced a Community-Led Plan ('the Village Plan') in Autumn 2014 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 top priorities for Worminghall as identified in the Village Plan are set out below.

Village Plan Priorities:

Housing: Top priority is to encourage a broader mix of age groups within the village, especially young families, by supporting more affordable housing.

Community Facilities and Groups: Top priorities are to support and protect our three key assets, and to provide a recreational space and play area in the village.

Traffic and Connectivity: Top priorities are to slow down traffic passing through the village and to achieve access to faster internet broadband.

Environment: Top priorities are to improve the quality and accessibility of the footpaths and enhance the visual attractiveness of the village.

2.2. **The Neighbourhood Plan:** The Parish Council decided in 2016 that a Neighbourhood Plan should be produced which would be able to fulfil this role for the future of the village.

3. Designation of the Neighbourhood Area

3.1. The purpose of the WNP is to contain planning policies that can be used to allocate development land and to determine planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area for the period from when the plan is made until 2033. Worminghall Parish Council is therefore preparing a Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) for the area designated by the 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 19 September 2016 and is shown in Figure 1 below.

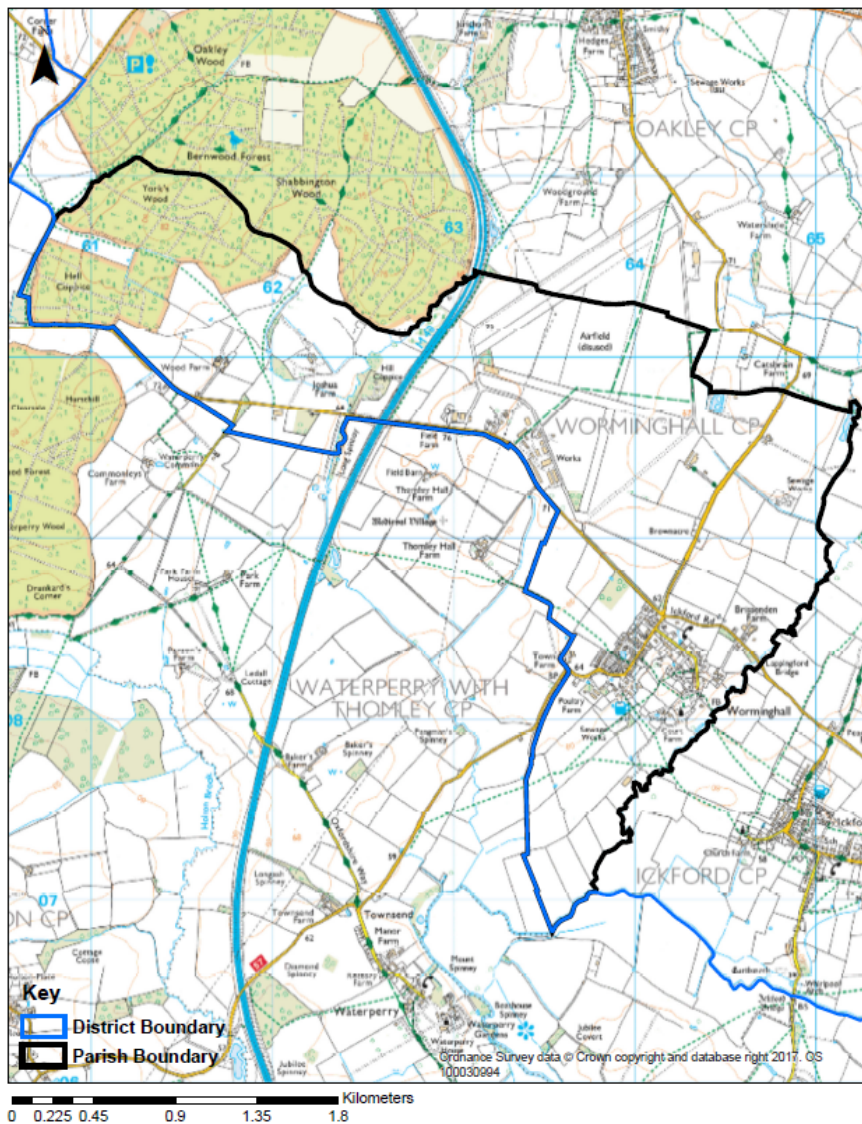


Figure 1: Worminghall Neighbourhood Area

4. Background to Worminghall

- 4.1. Worminghall is a small village and parish with around 215 dwellings and around 534 residents (2011 census). It is set in the Aylesbury Vale, around 4 miles west of Thame. Its western border is with Oxfordshire, but the parish lies within AVDC in Buckinghamshire.
- 4.2. The population profile, in common with many such rural villages, is composed of mainly older residents. Over a fifth are aged over 60 and almost half are aged 45 or above, and less than a third of households have dependent children of any age. Over a quarter of those aged between 16 and 74 are not in employment, the greatest proportion of these are retired. Over 20% of households are occupied by single adults (with or without dependent children) with a long term health problem or a disability. Transport links are poor, so nearly half of all households have two or more cars and vans. Over half of the accommodation in Worminghall is detached, most of the remainder is semi-detached or terraced. Over 70% is owner occupied (2011 census).

History of the Area

- 4.3. The village name is derived from Old English meaning "Wyrma's nook of land". The Domesday Book of 1086 records it as Wermelle. It evolved through Wormehale in the 12th and 13th centuries, Wrmehale in the 13th and 14th centuries, Worminghale in the 14th and 15th centuries and Wornall in the 18th century before reaching its current spelling. "Wornall" (or "Wunnle") is still its common local pronunciation. J. R. R. Tolkien in his novella 'Farmer Giles of Ham' suggests (tongue-in-cheek) that the 'worm' element in Worminghall derives from the dragon in the story. (source Wikipedia)
- 4.4. Roman times. There is some evidence of Roman settlement in the north of the village where a Roman coin of Constantine and some pottery pieces have been found in Saxon times (up to 11th Century). Our place name of Worminghall comes from the Anglo-Saxon name Wermelle (meaning 'nook of land of a man called Wyrma'). The village was "...held by Eddeva, wife of Woluard, for Queen Edith, the wife of Edward the Confessor". There was probably a wooden chapel on the site of the present church.
- 4.5. The Norman Conquest (11th-14th centuries). Wermelle is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and shows the village population was '..26 households' comprising '16 villagers, 6 small holders and 4 slaves'. The land was held by the French Bishop of Coutances, before being forfeited to the Crown and managed by successive earls, dukes, baroness etc under the feudal system (the village was part of the Ashendon Hundred) established by successive Kings before and after the Magna Carta of King John.
- 4.6. The village church St Peter & St Paul, with its classic Norman nave, doorways, and chancel arch, dates back to 1160 and the bell tower and stained glass windows were added in the 15th century. It was first mentioned in a charter of 1158 from Pope Adrian IV to St. Frideswide's Priory in Oxford to whom it was subsequently gifted. The vicarage was ordained in 1229 and the first vicar was William de Estin - for the past 750 years there has been a vicar of Worminghall (now shared with Shabbington, Ickford and Oakley).

- 4.7. In the 14th century, village life prospered when John de la Rivere (1304) succeeded Robert Fitz-Ellys as Lord of the Manor of Wormehale, as the village had now become known. A weekly market was held in the village on Thursdays and the tradition started of an Annual Fair and pig roast on the Feast of St Peter (29th June) on the village green. The great hunting grounds of the nearby Bernwood Forest became popular. "There was once a windmill at Portway.." which fell into disrepair in the 13th century.
- 4.8. The Middle Ages. We can deduce from old maps and earthworks visible on aerial photographs that the centre of our village was in former times clustered around the church, the vicarage (now converted to two cottages), and the Manor House (rebuilt in the 18th and 19th centuries and now known as Court Farm), and the village market and fair were probably held on the open area that still exists in front of the church. In 1525 Henry VIII gave the rectory to Cardinal Wolsey before his fall from grace. In 1670 John King, grandson of the Bishop of London, founded the brick and stone Almshouses and charity for six men and four women with the legacy money left by his father, Henry King, the then Bishop of Chichester. A memorial brass to the King Family can be seen in the church.
- 4.9. The Manorial estate of the village, whose name had now become Worminghale, belonged to successive noble families, for example seven generations of the Tracy family ('descendents of Sir William who was one of the Knights who murdered Becket') and amongst others, the Fitz-Elys, the Ingleton, the Tyrell, the Tipping and the Horne families (1766 - 1827).
- 4.10. Farm development on pastures around the village started from the late 17th century (examples are Court Farm, Lower Brook Farm, Town Farm and Wood Farm), as well as building of an extension to one of the 15th century timber-frame thatched houses which later was turned into the village's Public House. As the village expanded northwards a plot of pasture land behind the Almshouses was used as the village green (now built upon).
- 4.11. The village population increased significantly after the Great Plague of London (possibly due to an exodus towards Oxford) and by 1722 the number of inhabitants in the village was '259 comprising 45 families'. The first official census in 1801 confirmed a slow down - '..266 comprising 61 families in 36 houses'. In 1851 the records show a higher level of 360.
- 4.12. The 2nd Viscount Clifden (an Irishman named Henry Welbore Agar Ellis) arrived in 1827 to become the most influential Lord of the Manor of Worminghall (also referred to by the name Wornal in the 19th century). 'He set about many tasks including thoroughly repairing and restoring the church, opening a school*' (the Village Hall), '..had the farmland properly drained, had dry roads constructed and made improvements to the farm workers' cottages.' After his death in 1836 the good work was continued by his family estate until 1911. His legacy lives on in the life of the village through The Clifden Arms and Clifden Road.
- 4.13. The 20th Century. Many locals still refer to Worminghall with the old pronunciation 'Wornal'. This is also the name used for the 'Wornal Industrial Park' which has been created for private enterprise on land formerly used as an airfield site during WW2. In 1942-45 it served as a training ground for Wellington bomber crews and became the reception place for Dakotas and Lancaster planes returning with thousands of repatriated POWs.
- 4.14. The first major housing development was in the late sixties when the field behind Rose Cottage at the bottom of The Avenue was used to build the houses on the private road. Silvermead followed in 1976, then Old Farm Close, the houses to the east of Clifden Road on 'Ticky' Boyles' land, and the aforementioned Close in front of the old Post Office.

5. Public Consultation on Worminghall Neighbourhood Plan

The Community Led Plan

5.1. This was an earlier statement of the views of villagers as to the need for housing in the village. It took around two years to produce and was published in Autumn 2014. Housing was identified as the top priority issue for the village. Four visions for change to ensure its future as a thriving and active community were identified: housing, community facilities and groups, traffic and connectivity and lastly the environment. The detailed results of the questionnaire were posted on the Parish Council website. There were well over 100 respondents out of just over 200 households in Worminghall.

The Village Fete

5.2. A stall was manned by the Steering Group at the village fete in early September 2016. The stall was advertised by flyers in the week leading up to the event. One was delivered to each household within the village. This was the first opportunity for the Steering Group to explain the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan process and its significance in the light of the recently published draft Local Plan, the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, proposed and subsequently withdrawn by Aylesbury Vale District Council. Copies of the draft Local Plan and the community led plan were made available to interested villagers, together with information about the neighbourhood plan process. Given the poor weather on the day, many villagers sought refuge in the village hall and were invited to write down their views on their priorities for development in the village, including of course, if they felt that there should be no further development. This led to a good response which was summarised and subsequently posted on the Parish Council website.

The 2016 questionnaire

5.3. A copy of this questionnaire was sent to each household in the village with a request for it to be delivered on completion back to a member of the Plan Steering Group, whose addresses were given, by 16 January 2017. Some respondents chose instead to use the SurveyMonkey option and complete the survey online. The first surveys were delivered on 30 December 2016 and the process was completed in the next couple of days. No more than three or four were completed before a further note was delivered to each household to inform them of the recent grant of outline planning permission on two sites (sites 5 and 11 in the Site Assessment Document). The decision to provide this further information was taken because it was felt necessary to ensure that all residents had the same information about the full picture of planning permissions already granted in the village. Several respondents would have been aware of these already, but many were not. This way every respondent had been notified in writing of these relatively recent developments. The total number of respondents, whether by completed paper questionnaire or by SurveyMonkey was over 70. The detailed numerical analysis of the responses and an extensive sample of all comments received were made available at the Village Hall event on 4 February 2017 and were subsequently posted on the Parish Council website.

The Village Hall event

- 5.4. A special event was held at the Village Hall on 4th February 2017. This was extensively advertised in flyers and posters all over the village in advance of the event. The village hall was open from 10am to 4pm throughout Saturday, with never fewer than three Steering Group members in attendance to answer questions and explain the Plan process. The purpose of this event was twofold, to share with residents the results of the questionnaire and to invite their comments on the individual sites in the village that had been proposed as suitable for development by landowners. It was agreed to set out the numerical and percentage responses to each question in the questionnaire together with a sample of the comments received against each question.
- 5.5. As to the sites, an enlarged map was put on the wall. This showed the individual potential sites with an indication of how many properties were proposed for each one, where this had been made known to the Plan Steering Group. Those sites which had recently obtained outline planning permission were indicated separately. It was made clear how much development was already likely to take place in the village, so that residents could indicate whether they thought any further development of the village should take place, and if so the scale of that development. Residents were invited to comment on any site on sheets dedicated to each of the numbered sites on the site plan. There was a separate set of sheets for other comments, not specific to any of the sites. Detailed proposals for the sites that had been put forward by developers were not made available at the event.
- 5.6. It was made clear that the purpose of the neighbourhood plan was to indicate the development and land use that was suitable for the village.
- 5.7. Those visiting the hall on the day were invited to sign in with their address to identify whether or not they were residents. Any representations made by non-residents at the event were not taken into account for the purposes of the consultation. Anybody wanting to be kept informed about the progress of the neighbourhood plan was invited to provide their contact details and copies of the site plan and the questionnaire response analysis were sent to them directly.
- 5.8. A total of 36 residents, together with others, such the local district councillor, attended during the day. Most left comments on the paper provided and some gave their views subsequently by email or otherwise.



The Draft Neighbourhood Plan

5.9. The Draft (Pre-Submission) Neighbourhood Plan was drawn up and published along with the background documents from 4th October 2017 to 17th November 2017. The background documents were: Consultation Report, Site Assessment Report, Sustainability Appraisal Scoping and Background Evidence and the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Draft. All the documents were published on the Parish Council website, all residents were notified by a flyer being posted through their door and posters were put up around the village. All statutory consultees, landowners and other interested parties were notified by letter or email and invited to make comments. Hard copies of the documents were available to view in the Village Hall and from all the Steering Group Members and the Parish Clerk.

5.10. Three drop in events were held in the Village Hall, where hard copies of the documents were available and Members of the Steering Group available to talk through any issues. 32 residents chose to attend the sessions.

5.11. In total 40 representations were received. They have been summarised and where appropriate changes have been made to the Neighbourhood Plan.

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Neighbourhood Plan – Consultation

Click on the below files to view

- [WORMINGHALL Neighbourhood Draft Plan](#)
- [WORMINGHALL Consultation Report](#)
- [WORMINGHALL Site Assessment Report](#)
- [Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report & Background Evidence](#)
- [Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment Draft](#)
- [WNP Feedback form](#)
- [Public consultation leaflet](#)

WORMINGHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
Let's set the future of our village!

Your views are important to us

ONLY 1 WEEK TO GO

Please return your comment sheets before this date.

We would like to hear your views on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and its proposals for the future development of WORMINGHALL

The consultation period ends on **17th November**
See Parish Council website for details
www.worminghall-pc.co.uk

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Complete the comment form on the left and return it to any member of the Steering Group or email to:
worminghallNP@gmail.com

All feedback must be received by 17th November 2017.

Please note that this will be your last opportunity to make your views known on the draft Neighbourhood Plan before it is finalised.

Parish Clerk: Adèle Berthel Email: clerks@worminghall-pc.co.uk Tel: 07979 438810 FOI © WORMINGHALL parish council 2017

Communications generally

5.12. A range of different media, as noted above, have been used by the Plan Steering Group and WORMINGHALL Parish Council (WPC) to inform their fellow WORMINGHALL residents about the neighbourhood plan process and to seek their views about the right development for WORMINGHALL. At all times information has been presented neutrally with a view to assisting villagers to reach their own opinion. Where a member of the Group has had a particular interest in the outcome of the Plan as a landowner this has been recognised and made clear to villagers.

6. Vision and Objectives

6.1. The Vision and Objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan have been carefully developed by the Steering Group 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, whilst the objectives are more specific and allow the development of land use policies to deliver the objectives.

Vision

To improve the amenities, facilities and environment in our village, accompanying the gentle growth in housing and numbers of residents living in Worminghall, alongside encouraging a younger age demographic of our village.

Objectives

- 1. To allow carefully designed new housing on a small scale in village locations to reflect the rural character of the parish**
- 2. To achieve new recreational space and play facilities for children and support the existing community facilities.**
- 3. To protect and enhance the natural environment and setting of the village and retain the rural quality of the area.**
- 4. To manage and reduce traffic issues within and around the village**

7. Settlement Boundary & Open Countryside

- 7.1. The current village envelope (i.e. the built up area of the village) is mostly easily definable, both visually and functionally. The Policies Map at Annex 1 defines the extent of the settlement boundary, which includes a location for new homes. Within this defined area, new buildings, including houses should reflect the pattern of development and the rural character of the village.
- 7.2. Beyond the settlement boundary, in open countryside there should only be development allowed which is suitable for the countryside location, including farming, employment and small scale tourism. The National Planning Policy Framework provides guidance as to what housing development is suitable in a countryside location, notably in paragraphs 54 and 55.

POLICY SB1: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

Within the Settlement Boundary, defined on the Policies Map, proposals for new buildings will be supported which are appropriate in scale, design and character to the village of Worminghall; contribute to its local distinctiveness; and are not harmful to the amenity or living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

Proposals for development outside the Settlement Boundary in the open countryside will not be supported unless they;

- meet the criteria for rural exception sites or special circumstances for new isolated homes in the countryside, set out in national planning policy;
- respect the character of the countryside and do not generate levels and types of traffic which would be harmful to highway capacity and / or safety;
- assist the sustainable growth and expansion of a business or enterprise in the countryside area, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- promote the development and diversification of agriculture and other land use based rural businesses, including meeting the essential need for a rural worker;
- support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in the countryside area, communities and visitors.
- Conserve and enhance connected habitat such as hedgerow and wildlife corridors and provide a biodiversity net gain for the Parish

8. Housing

8.1. There has been little development over recent years with only 24 new houses being built between 1992 and 2015, as the chart below illustrates. This is fewer than any of its neighbouring villages of Ickford, Oakley or Shabbington, and indeed less than half the number of completions in Oakley.

<i>Mar-92</i>	<i>Mar-93</i>	<i>Mar-94</i>	<i>Mar-95</i>	<i>Mar-96</i>	<i>Mar-97</i>	<i>Mar-98</i>	<i>Mar-99</i>	<i>Mar-00</i>	<i>Mar-01</i>
2	0	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	3
<i>Mar-02</i>	<i>Mar-03</i>	<i>Mar-04</i>	<i>Mar-05</i>	<i>Mar-06</i>	<i>Mar-07</i>	<i>Mar-08</i>	<i>Mar-09</i>	<i>Mar-10</i>	<i>Mar-11</i>
0	0	0	2	3	2	0	2	2	0
<i>Mar-12</i>	<i>Mar-13</i>	<i>Mar-14</i>	<i>Mar-15</i>	TOTAL					
1	0	0	1	24					

Figure 2: Housing Completions in Worminghall

8.2. All public consultation related to this Neighbourhood Plan and indeed the Village Plan before it, which elicited a substantial response, is in favour of further development in Worminghall beyond the rate of new builds in recent years. This is less to meet housing need within Worminghall as to ensure a sustainable future for the village and to generate resources and land suitable for shared green space and play/recreation areas for the village's current and future residents. The appropriate number of new homes is seen as 10-15 in addition to recent permissions in the Parish.

- 8.3. Recently planning permission has been granted for a total of 15 new houses of mixed sizes at land to the rear of Clifden Road and Coldstream Farm. (Known as sites 5 and 11 in the Site Assessment Document).
- 8.4. There was a strong sense in the community that new development should be modest in scale and sensitive to the rural character of the village, so it should disturb existing dwellings and views as little as practicable. There should be space for occasional permissions for infill along roads with well-spaced out residential properties within the built up area.
- 8.5. It is acknowledged that within the Settlement Boundary, there may be instances where infill plots become available for additional dwellings. An infill plot is defined as a space between existing dwellings where 1 or 2 dwellings could be built without impacting on the pattern of development in the immediate vicinity. It is important that such new dwellings do not have a significantly harmful impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residents and are complimentary in terms of scale, design and character to the adjacent properties.
- 8.6. All new dwellings will be required to provide a safe access, footpaths, appropriate waste and waste water management, sewerage, water efficiency measures and appropriate surface water drainage.

POLICY NH1: NEW HOUSES

New houses to be built as infill in Worminghall will be modest in scale and sensitive to the rural character of the village, ensuring that

- **Development does not result in the loss of amenity to existing residents, including loss of privacy, loss of daylight, or visual intrusion by a building structure;**
- **A landscape and visual impact assessment is provided with the application for development;**
- **The proposal seeks to conserve and enhance mature vegetation, with new planting to screen the site and/or maintain the rural character of the locality; and**
- **The proposal conserves existing public rights of way.**

Housing mix

8.7. There has (ever since the Village Plan) been an expressed preference for a mix of housing, which should include properties that are more likely to be less expensive to young families with children. Affordable housing can be provided in three different forms to eligible households, having regard for local incomes and house prices, whose needs are not met by the market (see the Glossary in the NPPF). Policy H1 of the emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan sets requirements for the provision of some affordable housing when new residential development takes place. The policy refers to the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document which will provide further detail for developers. Low cost market housing is not included in the definition for affordable housing in national planning policy, but it represents another mechanism for providing less expensive new homes.

The need for less expensive homes also points in favour of some more flats and two/three bed terraced or semi-detached accommodation. These properties may also be suitable for older people wishing to downsize, given the ageing population in the Parish. There is existing affordable housing (i.e. non-market) in the village with some Housing Association dwellings and the almshouses.

POLICY NH2: HOUSING MIX

New development shall comprise a mix of housing, including affordable housing in line with the District Council's policies and/or low-cost market housing, where feasible and viable. Support will be given to housing schemes which include two/three bed terraced or semi-detached accommodation.

New Housing Development

- 8.8. Ad-hoc development such as infill, would not be able to provide the much needed play facility for the new residents and the village. One of the fundamental purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan is to provide such a play space.
- 8.9. The Site Assessment document, which is a technical background document to the Neighbourhood Plan, shows the process that the Steering Group went through to ascertain which site or sites would be most appropriate to bring forward such modest development in the Parish. Most potential sites around the periphery of the village were assessed and subject to public consultation at the event held on the 4th February 2017.
- 8.10. The resulting outcome was that a combination of 2 sites would provide the most appropriate location for new housing development.
- 8.11. This Neighbourhood Plan accordingly allocates development of land at Coldstream Farm and to the rear of the Clifden Arms (sites 10 and 11 combined as Site 15). This includes the area for which conditional outline permission was granted in December 2016 for three homes, and occupies the area of what is currently Coldstream Farm, on Waterperry Road, and the contiguous enclosed field to the rear of the car park of the Clifden Arms. This site includes previously developed land including a bungalow and chicken sheds. The development of this land would also remove the unneighbourly chicken farming use and whilst there will be an impact on traffic and increased activity on the site, this is outweighed by the removal of the use and the provision of new homes of mixed sizes, a play area and accessible green space on the site. In addition, there is an important opportunity to add to the network of paths around the village, by providing a path through the sites to the back of the Clifden Arms. There should be no more than fifteen dwellings within this area (plus the three which have already been given planning permission), and they should comprise of a mix of sizes of homes, around half should be more affordable (in terms of their size and type) homes, whether semi-detached, terraced or flats. The allocated site is shown on the Policies Map at Annex 1.
- 8.12. One of the overriding concerns for residents is that there are no recreational facilities at all for children or adults. It is therefore critical that any new housing development should facilitate the provision of such a facility, particularly as much new accommodation is likely to be occupied by families. Preferably a new play area should be provided on a new development, but should be located so as to be accessible for all residents. The village is sufficiently compact for anyone to walk to such a facility wherever it is located in/adjacent to the village. One of the main purposes for allocating development in this Neighbourhood Plan is to provide play facilities for the village.

POLICY NH3: COLDSTREAM FARM/REAR OF THE CLIFDEN ARMS

The site is allocated for up to a total of 18 dwellings. The development should comprise a mix of units including both larger (family) and smaller 2 and 3 bedroom homes. At least 9 of the dwellings should be affordable or low cost market housing, unless it can be demonstrated that this would not be practicable or viable. The development must allow retention of existing trees and hedgerows where appropriate, enhance the natural boundaries of the countryside with native species planting, respect the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and ensure that there is no unacceptable impact on the amenities of nearby occupiers. New development should use Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) to reduce the risk of flooding.

The site will also provide: an equipped play area and accessible green space on the site; a footpath through the site linking the play area/green space with the back of the Clifden Arms car park; a pedestrian crossing across Clifden Road.

9. Rural Character

- 9.1. The rural character of the village and its surroundings should be preserved as much as possible, whilst allowing some development of individual buildings and some new housing to ensure the future vitality of the village. Much of the village is characterised by small groups of similar properties where incrementally, housing has been added over the years. This is particularly true of The Avenue, the road which leads to the Church past the Village Hall, once the village school. Some of these additions are groups of larger houses, but these are of good quality design and materials and characterised by large front gardens and 'soft' boundaries such as hedgerows to maintain the rural feel of the area and provide habitat for wildlife.
- 9.2. Any new development, whether extensions to dwellings or new dwellings or other buildings need to be carefully considered in its context to maintain this rural character. This can be done by ensuring that massing and orientation of buildings respect the adjacent buildings or street scene and that boundary treatment is 'traditional' such as hedgerows, or low walls. 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.
- 9.3. The village has numerous trees and hedgerows which contribute to this rural character. Most of the Parish comprises agricultural land, although Bernwood Forest at the western end of the Parish is an important part of the 'Green Infrastructure' in the vicinity. Bernwood Forest includes Shabbington Woods Complex which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), protected for its nature conservation value. Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities. Green infrastructure strategies are needed to maintain green corridors and extend or enhance them where possible. Where new development takes place, the layout and form of new buildings should have regard for the rural setting of the village, with its existing green spaces and corridors. Development should enhance green spaces or features and the connections between them where practicable. Of particular interest in the Parish in terms of species are butterflies, bats and Great Crested Newts. Therefore new development should make a contribution to green infrastructure and where possible result in a net gain in biodiversity.

POLICY RC1: RURAL CHARACTER

The rural character of the village and its surroundings should be respected through new development by ensuring that

- **new buildings and extensions to existing buildings reflect and enhance the street scene, by way of their scale, height and massing.**
- **the resulting form and layout of development is appropriate to the surroundings;**
- **boundary treatment and landscaping schemes should be carefully designed so as to prevent undue urbanisation of the location;**
- **proposals should seek to conserve and enhance mature vegetation.**
- **development proposals must provide appropriate green infrastructure which aims to result in a net gain in biodiversity, species richness and/or abundance and provides or enhances connectivity between green spaces.**

10. Community Facilities, Recreation & Footpaths

Community Facilities

- 10.1. Worminghall is a small village with few community facilities remaining. There are only the pub, the Clifden Arms, the Village Hall and the Church. The pub has been registered as an Asset of Community Value. It is an attractive thatched and timber framed building, which dates from mediaeval times and has substantial gardens attached. It serves meals as well as the usual pub fare. But it has been closed for months at a stretch in recent years. The new licensees will have to work hard to make it popular and well-attended, especially in winter months when its garden is naturally less enticing to customers.
- 10.2. The Village Hall is a Victorian polychromatic brick structure which was originally the village school, and is flanked by two dwellings of the same age and construction. It is popular and well used for a range of village events as well as by the parish council and village hall committee, which manages it for charitable purposes.
- 10.3. The Church of St Peter and St Paul is Norman. Its north and south doors survive from this time. It has a well-kept graveyard, which contains a tomb to the north of the vestry which itself is listed. It is valued by all villagers, whether they attend regularly or not. It is part of the benefice of Worminghall with Ickford, Oakley and Shabbington. The Vicar lives in the village.
- 10.4. It is essential that these assets are retained and remain supported.

POLICY CFR1: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Development proposals that will result in either the loss of or significant harm to a community facility will be strongly resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that its continued use is no longer viable. This will require evidence that the property has been actively marketed, commensurate with its use, at an open market value for a period of at least 12 months. Facilities include;

- **The Village Hall**
- **The Clifden Arms Public House**

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 heritage in terms of traditional frontages and character in general, and the resulting increase in use are appropriate in design terms and will not have negative impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

Recreation

10.5. Because of local concern that there are no formal recreational facilities or children's play facilities in the village, it is critical that any new housing development contributes as much as is possible and viable to their provision. Policy NH3 seeks provision of a play area and accessible green site on this site. In the unlikely event that this site does not come forward as anticipated, section 106 obligations can be sought from developers to fund recreational facilities, as long as they are necessary to make a development acceptable, are directly related to the development and are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) system also provides a means of funding community projects such as recreational facilities. Aylesbury Vale District Council expects to adopt a CIL Schedule in 2018, and it is anticipated by the Parish Council that some funding for recreational facilities in Worminghall will be available from this source in due course. Further information about s106 obligations and CIL is available in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan September 2017, which accompanies the emerging Local Plan.

POLICY CFR2: RECREATION

All new housing development should make on site provision or a financial contribution for the provision of play and recreational space. Developer contributions will be sought where onsite provision cannot be made for the inclusion of play and recreational space in line with s106 planning obligations requirements or CIL Regulations.

Footpaths

10.6. The footpaths around and through the village are very well used, for dog walking, informal recreation and getting to the community facilities without using cars. The networks should be protected and indeed increased wherever possible to ensure the continued outdoor recreation and sustainable travel opportunities. If diversion is proposed of a footpath or bridleway, the diversion should be appropriate and convenient.

POLICY CFR3: FOOTPATHS

Loss, reduction or diversion of existing footpaths will strongly be resisted and the addition of new footpath links will be supported.

11. Character and Heritage

11.1. There are 12 listed buildings in the Parish (source National Heritage List for England (NHLE)). Some of the most notable include The Clifden Arms, the Church and the Almshouses, the last two of which are Grade II*. The historic environment of the parish and heritage assets (both designated and undesignated) must be conserved and enhanced. Whilst there is no designated Conservation Area, the village includes several areas where the historic development of the village can be seen and the rural character is one of the most highly regarded elements of the village which the residents wish to see preserved. (Village Plan).



Approach to Clifden Arms and path towards Ickford (View 1)

11.2. Views across from vantage points in the village to the historic buildings are important to preserve as part of the rural and historic character of the settlement. The view from the approach to the Clifden Arms across the fields towards Ickford is one such view. (View 1 on the Policies Map at Appendix 1). The other important view is of the Church approaching it from the public footpath which leads across the fields from Clifden Road towards the Church (View 2 on the Policies Map).

POLICY CH1: HERITAGE

All new development should preserve and where possible, enhance Worminghall's listed buildings and their settings. Applications will explain how the design of proposals might affect the historic character and appearance of the area, including any features of archaeological importance or undesignated heritage assets, and how proposals have sought to retain or enhance positive features of the area.

Views of particular importance as defined on the Policies map should be preserved and not be obstructed by new development.

Construction materials and finishes should reflect the surrounding area and the character and heritage of the immediate environment. Modern replacement and/or new build materials should visually compliment the immediate environment.



View from public footpath towards the Church (View 2)

12. Traffic and transport

12.1. In common with many rural villages, Worminghall is within easy reach of some major employment centres, including Oxford, Aylesbury, Thame and London (via rail). The vast majority of residents will use their own cars for individual journeys to work and most households with more than one resident in employment will have a car each.

12.2. Residents expressed serious concerns about potential accidents due to the speed of traffic through the village, especially the risk to children and pedestrians at the sharp bend by the road to The Clifden Arms; to drivers at the Ickford Road crossroads, and along the Menmarsh Road, including at Wornal Business Park. With increased housing stock planned for Thame, Wheatley and surrounding villages, we expect traffic to increase throughout the day. Additionally, there is increased haulage traffic through the village partly due to the removal of the weight restriction at Shabbington.

- 12.3. Many of the village's older residents and young adults who do not drive, and also parents with children, would like to have more regular bus services to Thame (shopping, friends etc), Haddenham (rail station), Aylesbury and Oxford (schools, shops, entertainment). As matters stand, the only public transport is the number 110 bus, which runs only four times a weekday and takes villagers to Thame and Aylesbury, which takes an hour, and a few surrounding villages. The only way to get to Haddenham or Oxford is to catch connecting services in Thame.
- 12.4. There is some concern about the increasing trend to park cars on pavements and block the path of pushchairs, wheelchairs and emergency vehicles. Often, this is because some housing has inadequate parking for modern usage. Parking standards will be issued through a Supplementary Planning Document to the VALP and until that time the standard set out in the policy below shall be used.
- 12.5. Whilst issues such as speeding, parking and the provision of bus services are not directly land use issues and therefore outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, all new development will be required to provide sufficient parking to meet modern needs and incorporate traffic calming where appropriate. Section 106/CIL contributions will be sought to contribute to traffic calming measures wherever possible.

POLICY TT1: PARKING AND TRAFFIC

All development should provide adequate off-street car parking to meet the standards set out in the adopted Local Plan and any subsequent updates. Until the emerging Plan is adopted, there should be 1 parking space within the plot for 1 bedroom homes, at least 2 spaces for 2 or 3 bedroom homes, and at least 3 spaces for 4 bedroom homes.

Where a clear case can be demonstrated that off street car parking provision cannot be made, reasonable alternatives such as garages and shared parking arrangements should be developed;

Any car parking spaces, where required, should use permeable surfaces to allow for rainwater absorption and to maintain a rural character to the streetscene;

New development in the village will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that any severe adverse impacts on the road network would be mitigated and pedestrian safety would not be compromised.

13. Implementation and Monitoring

13.1. The Neighbourhood Plan 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.

13.2. 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 village environment
- lobby local authorities to support the parishioners wishes and aspirations

13.3. It is important to check that progress is made towards meeting the objectives and policies of the Plan. The Parish Council will report on the implementation of the Plan every 5 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 is being targeted towards the identified plans and projects
- if the Plan remains based on the most up to date information
- if the Plan is being taken into account by AVDC when determining planning applications

13.4. It will then conclude whether a review is required. If so, it will secure opinions of residents and stakeholders to update the Plan.

Annex 1 WNP Policies Map

