

Neighbourhood Plan Vision, Objectives and Policy Options for Discussion

Vision

Over the next 15 years, we wish to sustain and nurture the features of our village that contribute positively to quality of life and the local environment, through a carefully managed ecological approach that facilitates sustainable growth whilst maintaining a high-quality landscape. To that end, we aim to maintain the distinctive structure of the village, with almost all housing disposed linearly on through roads or lanes, and grouped in small hamlets separated by green spaces. The rural character of the village should be promoted through publicly accessible green spaces and gardens in keeping with the character of the area and sufficient to meet the needs of the occupants. These should link to open countryside directly, or via green corridors, thereby helping to support biodiversity. New housing should be modest in scale and size, making it better suited to young families and older people wishing to downsize, and sympathetic to the nature of existing buildings with respect to materials and design.

Objectives (as per the Sustainability Themes Table)

1. Identify and protect important local wildlife habitats and species.
2. Enhance existing habitats and create wildlife corridors, particularly in relating to Biodiversity Opportunity Area mapping.
3. Protect the Mottisfont Bats foraging zone from loss of trees and hedgerows as well as inappropriate lighting.
4. To highlight areas either subject to existing flooding issues or unsuitable geology whereby development proposals should ensure run-off from private drainage systems will be satisfactory
5. Encourage use of appropriate renewable energy and sustainable materials on new development through a Design Code
6. Maintain and enhance the distinctive structure of the settlement areas. In particular to maintain the primarily linear form of development along the rural roads and lanes.
7. Retain the individual dispersed small hamlets which are distributed across the Parish and separated by green gaps.
8. Protect the dark night skies.
9. Enhance the Public Rights of Way and green infrastructure
10. Ensure new development respects the identified character of the area and follows the Design Code with appropriate densities, plots sizes, layout, mass and appearance etc.
11. Protect and enhance the identified community services and facilities
12. New dwellings should be located such that occupiers can access publicly accessible green spaces and contain sufficient private amenity space (Design Code)
13. Support improvements to pedestrian access to village hall and a pedestrian crossing at the school?

14. Engage with the school to seek to reduce traffic volumes/ parking congestion
15. Support speed limit reduction on narrow rural lanes (including Danes Rd/Saunders La/Romsey Rd) or a quiet lanes policy where appropriate.

Potential Policy Options

The following policy options and topics have been devised in response to the Vision and Objectives and the parish surveys / consultations that have taken place to date. These are initially options for the group to discuss with a view to going out to public consultation to ensure that the final options reflect the community's needs.

ENVIRONMENT

Policy – Local Green Spaces

- Designate Local Green Spaces where development is allowed only in very special circumstances (as per Local Green Space Assessment). These spaces are to be consulted upon and explained in more detail. <https://www.oss.org.uk/faqs-about-local-green-space-designation/>

Policy– Important Views & Vistas

- Protect important views that are considered to be of local value and are identified in the Character Appraisal / Landscape Assessment. These spaces are to be consulted upon and explained in more detail.

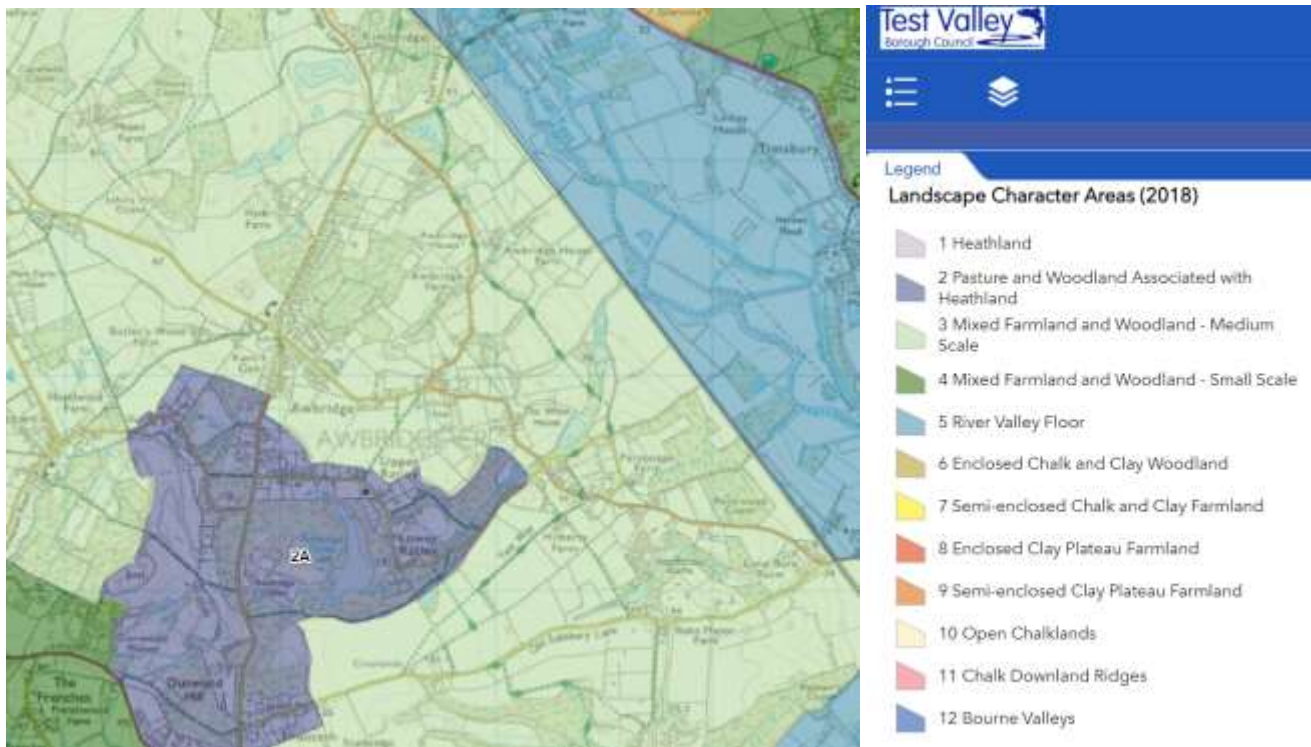
Policy – Biodiversity and habitats

- Developments to conserve, enhance and provide a net gain (at least 10%) in the biodiversity of the area
- Protect / mitigate impacts on Ancient Woodlands
- Protect and enhance biodiversity sites of local value to the NP Area (i.e Awbridge Hill Nature Sanctuary as well as the nearby international and national designations (inc Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest etc)
- Preserve and enhance local habitats
- Avoid the loss of significant trees and hedges and improve the linkage between existing wildlife corridors
- Ensure that new residential proposals are accompanied by an appropriate ecological survey
- Ensure that all applications that propose a net increase in housing units will be accompanied by a nitrogen budget and provide appropriate mitigation measures to demonstrate that the development is nutrient neutral.

<https://www.testvalley.gov.uk/planning-and-building/guidance/solent-southampton-water-special-protection-area>
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/biodiversity/conserving>

Policy – Landscape

- Retention of the distinct rural character of the settlements and wider landscape
- Preserve the views in and out of the settlements
- Minimise impact of any intensive uses on the landscape
- Lessen the harm caused by recreation uses
- To ensure that the dispersed small hamlets which are distributed across the Parish do not coalesce and lose their individual identity, they should be separated by green gaps. In such gaps development which would be intrusive or individually or cumulatively result in the merging of settlements would not be supported.
- Preserve landscape assets and features as identified in the Character Appraisal and Landscape Assessment including Landscape Area 3B Melchet and Awbridge Wooded Farmland, 2A Embley Wood and Heathland and 5B Middle Test Valley Floor



Policy – Dark night skies

- Limit light pollution that can potentially be created from extensive street and exterior lighting associated with new development
- Preserve the rural character of the NP Area
- Protect valued habitats and ecological designations, such as the Mottisfont Bats Special Area of Conservation from any adverse impacts that could be caused by unnecessary exterior lighting

Policy – Green infrastructure and Landscaping

- Support the creation and enhancement of new green infrastructure
- Resist the loss of existing open spaces, as identified in the Character Appraisal
- Ensure new development is well connected to existing green infrastructure
- New proposals should include appropriate landscaping comprising of local features
- Proposals that could potentially affect existing trees will need to be accompanied by a tree survey and tree protection plan
- Protect existing playing fields and recreational grounds

DEVELOPMENT

Policy– Conversion of Rural Buildings

- Encourage proposals that would seek the sensitive conversion of historic rural buildings, such as agricultural barns, that are not in use provided that they accord with relevant policies

Policy – Housing

There are different options when it comes to housing. You can allocate specific sites if that is what the community want to see / TVBC ask you to do. Alternatively, you can rely on TVBC housing policy COM2 (or to be superseded in the future).

You can also set out you own policy which makes it clear that you are seeking linear, infill development within the settlement boundary.

- Set out good practice that developers to liaise with the Parish Council and provide evidence that their proposal seeks complies with the Design Code and not harm either the landscape setting or the local character area.
- Housing to be in line with the needs of the parish – i.e. 1-3 bed.
- Provide a clear definition on what type of development can be considered as infill development

Policy – Replacement dwellings

- Support subject to it not being identified as a designated / non designated heritage asset
- Design should enhance the character and appearance of the area as highlighted in the Character Appraisal and Design Code
- Required to be positioned within the same location as the original property (unless justified)
- Should be proportionate to the size of the plot and in keeping with the character of surrounding properties in terms of scale and mass etc.

HERITAGE & DESIGN

Policy – Historic Environment

- Preserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets their setting and historical value. <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/locallylistedhas/>
- Identify local buildings (include a list in Appendices) that should be protected due to their historical contribution
- Require new development that could potentially affect the setting of a heritage asset and proposals that relate to the alteration of a heritage asset to be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment
- Ensure that design of new development respect the local characteristics of each historical area, as described in the Character Appraisal <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/neighbourhood-planning-and-historic-environment-advice-note-11/heag264-neighbourhood-planning-and-historic-environment-2nded/>
- Preserve the character and appearance of Awbridge Danes Park and Garden and support proposals that would seek its enhancement / regeneration

Policy – Design Principles

- New development will need to take into consideration the Character Appraisal of the NP Area and inform their design proposals accordingly (Design Code) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>
- Size, scale (height), mass and materials proposed will need to reflect those that have been identified in each character area in the Character Appraisal (Design Code)
- Ensure appropriate densities (Design Code)
- Adequate garden sizes (Design Code)
- New development should respect the character of the area and the linear nature of existing built form (Design Code)
- Extensions or new builds must preserve the residential amenity of existing occupiers (Design Code)
- Ensure new development will preserve residential amenity (Design Code)
- Provide appropriate landscaping works, such as boundary treatments (Design Code)
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Policy – Sustainable Construction

- Support the use of sustainable construction techniques and materials to mitigate the effects of climate change (Design Code)
- Promote proposals for individual renewable energy, provided they comply with the relevant development and NP plan policies (Design Code)

INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy – Infrastructure Contribution

- Ensure new development will provide appropriate financial contributions to mitigate any negative impacts <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/understanding-community-infrastructure-levy-cil/>
<https://www.testvalley.gov.uk/planning-and-building/cil>
- Make list of infrastructure projects that the parish would like to see

Policy– Flooding and Drainage

- Demonstrate that new developments will not increase the risk of flooding <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-the-sequential-test-for-applicants>
- Provide an appropriate foul and surface water drainage strategy when necessary
- Adopt appropriate and maintainable sustainable drainage systems as part of new developments
- Designate areas where it has been identified that due to geological conditions infiltration is not achievable and require from new development to plan accordingly <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/>
- Within these identified areas either subject to flooding issues or unsuitable geology applications must be accompanied by sufficient information to demonstrate that arrangements for run-off from private drainage systems will be satisfactory
- Ensure that new development in close proximity to the River Test SSSI adopts best practise SuDS to ensure the protection of the water supply
- Promote rainwater harvesting methods and greywater recycling
- Promote water efficiency.

Policy – Community Facilities

- Identify and protect existing community facilities (Awbridge Primary School, Village Hall etc)
- Encourage the enhancement of community facilities, subject to appropriate conditions

Policy– Local Economy

- Protect local businesses and shop and resist proposals that would result in their loss
- Support proposals that would enable them to continue operate, improve their services and contribute towards the local economy

Policy– Access and Safety

- Explore safer cycling and pedestrian routes
- Ensure new development include adequate parking provisions which do not exacerbate existing problems
- Resist development that would exacerbate highway safety issues on existing narrow lanes
- New development should be accompanied by a sufficient highways information and plans that show that safe access, egress and appropriate visibility and walking routes can be achieved

- Support proposals for improving local walking and cycling routes to community facilities, such as the Primary School
- Require new development to make provisions for new footways (appropriate to a rural area) to mitigate any road safety risks
- Protect / enhance existing Public Rights of Way and ensure new development would not have an unacceptable harm to its operational use