

Ashford Hill with Headley Neighbourhood Plan

2022-2029

October 2022



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1 Foreword

Our Neighbourhood Plan describes the unique environment, location and features of the Parish of Ashford Hill with Headley and explains why it is an attractive place to live. As a result of the consultation with the community, both residents and businesses, it is clear that the inhabitants of the Parish value living and working here and wish to protect the Parish from intrusive change in the form of inappropriate development and, where possible, to address other issues such as highways.

Our plan has two objectives. Firstly, to capture what people who live and work in the Parish feel and value about it. Secondly, to develop policies to help ensure that the future of the Parish reflects the wishes of those who live and work in it. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) is legally obliged to take the plan into account when considering applications for development. The plan's development process is described in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 6.

The population of the Parish has grown significantly over the last two decades with new developments in both villages. Some developments have been in-fills within the established settlements and have settled well into the predominantly rural environment. We recognise that the Parish will continue to grow in order to meet housing needs but such growth must be sensitive to the character of the Parish, the needs of its residents and in appropriate locations.

Throughout the process of producing this Plan, we have received technical support from BDBC's planning officers and from our consultants at Bell Cornwell. We have also received financial support from Locality, a government supported organisation formed to provide technical and financial assistance to groups such as ours. We would like to extend our thanks to all these organisations.

This process was started at the instigation of the Parish Council and its members and has been undertaken by the volunteers forming the Steering Group who have been working continuously on this project since April 2019. We are grateful to the Parish Council members and its clerk for their guidance and support and would like to thank particularly the Steering Group for their diligence in undertaking this project.

Joe Woodford
Chair - Parish Council

Caroline Hellings
Chair - Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

2 Executive Summary

This document is the Neighbourhood Plan (the 'Plan') for the Parish of Ashford Hill with Headley which is located within the boundary of Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council (BDBC).

The Neighbourhood Plan is part of the Local Development Plan (the 'Local Plan') for the area. The Plan must be in accordance with both the Local Plan and the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This Plan has been subject to consultation and incorporates the recommendations of the Independent Examiner.

This Plan has been prepared by the Ashford Hill with Headley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (the 'Steering Group'), which is made up of a mix of parish councillors and residents who have all given their time voluntarily.

The current Local Plan does not require the Parish to allocate sites for housing, but the Parish Council (PC) considered that having the Plan would permit the PC and residents to have a greater say over any proposed future developments in the Parish. Over the last few years, residents have completed a questionnaire designed to explore what is important to them, visited a stand at the annual fete, attended drop-in sessions to further understand the process and been kept up to date with progress through monthly articles in the parish magazine. The views of residents expressed in the returned questionnaires have been the basis of the policies included in the Plan.

The objectives of the Plan are as follows:

- preserve and enhance the rural and historic character of the Parish (Policies L1, L2, HD1 and HD3);
- protect and enhance the natural environment and green spaces within the green infrastructure network, particularly the important ecological sites and wildlife corridors (Policies L2, NE1, NE2 and LGS);
- support and enhance local amenities, recreational facilities and improve broadband speed throughout the Parish (Policies LGS and LVF1);
- promote small housing developments on brownfield and in-fill sites that deliver a mix of housing with a preference for low-cost housing for local people in order to retain the character of the Parish (Policies HD1 and HD2);
- ensure any development that takes place complements and reflects the surroundings and existing housing stock so as to enhance the Parish and the quality of its built environment in accordance with the Village Design Statement (Policy HD3);
- minimise light pollution from new development (Policy L2)
- minimise the impact of any new development on safety and the road, pavement and footpath infrastructure (Policies TTP1, TTP2 and TTP3);
- recommend improvements to road, pavement and footpath safety within the Parish (Community Projects).

Sections 3 to 5 give more detail of the background to the Plan and its purpose.

Section 6 details the development of the Plan to date including engagement with the local community.

Section 7 outlines the vision and objectives and how they link to Plan policies.

Section 8 gives a profile of the Parish based on the latest published information.

Section 9 focuses on Plan policies which together ensure that new development will be sustainable and in accordance with the objectives above.

- Policies L1 and L2 focus on protecting the rural quality of our landscape.

- Policies NE1 and NE2 deal with conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including the preservation of trees and hedgerows.
- Policy HA1 concerns the protection of our heritage assets.
- Policy LVF1 covers the protection of our local valued facilities.
- Policy LGS is concerned with the protection of our local green spaces.
- Policy PCF1 deals with the terms of potential replacement of community facilities.
- Policies HD1, HD2, HD3 and HD4 give the terms under which new housing development would be supported.
- Policies LE1 and LE2 give the terms under which new business development proposals would be supported.
- Policies TTP1, TTP2 and TTP3 are concerned with the impact of new developments on traffic, highways and public rights of way, including provision of parking facilities.

Section 10 outlines community projects which are not officially part of the Plan. These have been raised by residents as potential areas for improvement which could be progressed by the Parish Council and/or residents. These projects might be considered as objects for any funding received from future developments.

3 Introduction to the Parish

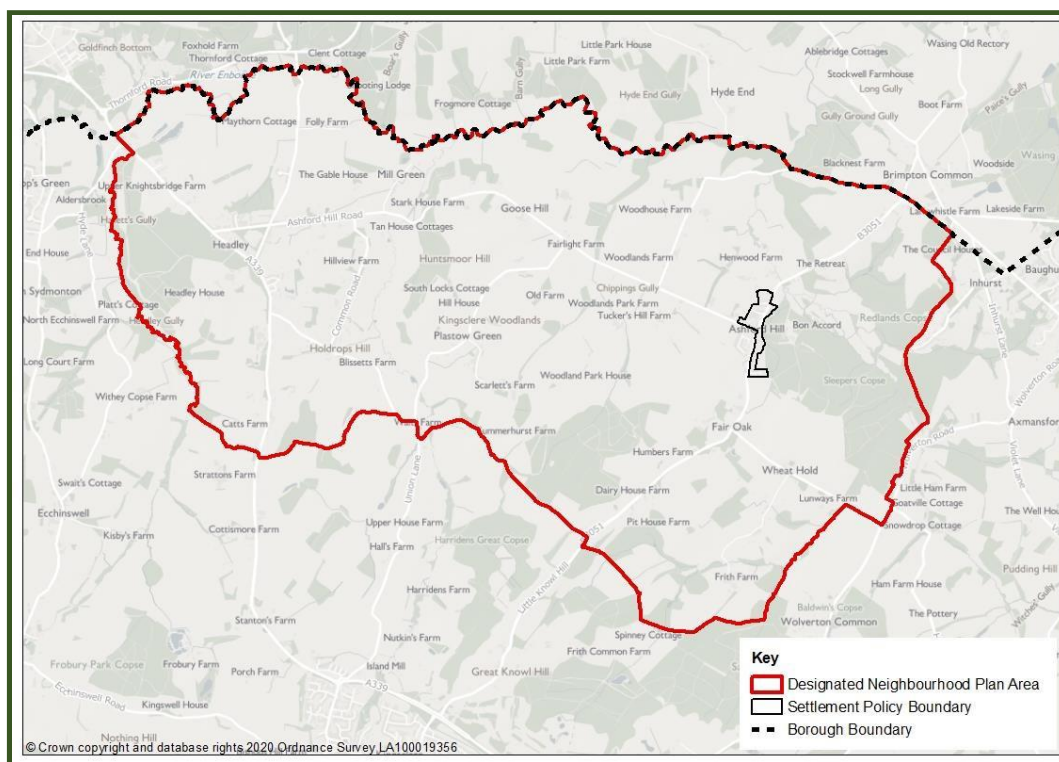


Figure 1 Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area (identical to the Parish boundary).

See Appendix 6 for full-page map. The existing SPB is at Ashford Hill

The Parish of Ashford Hill with Headley (the ‘Parish’) lies within the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane. It has an adult population of 1,046 (Electoral Roll Dec 2018) and an estimated total population of 1,459 (HCC Small Area Population forecasts 2018) with established settlements at Ashford Hill, Headley, Goose Hill, Fair Oak, Mill Green, Plastow Green and Wheathold. The River Enborne marks the northern borders of the Parish, Basingstoke and Deane and also Hampshire. To the south, the adjacent area is covered by the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan (2011-2029) which was ‘made’ in 2018.

This is mostly a rural area with woodlands and both arable and livestock farming. Most local children attend Ashford Hill primary school before moving on to secondary schools outside the Parish. Cheam School in Headley is an independent preparatory school catering for pupils to age 13. The churches, schools, the community shop in Headley and the two village halls are important features of the area.

The Parish is 6 miles from Newbury, 12 miles from Basingstoke and 4 miles from Tadley. The M3, M4 and A34 are within easy reach and there are good rail links to London, the north, west and south from Basingstoke, Newbury and Reading. A major feature of the area is the triangle of heavily used roads within it. Many residents commute to work outside the Parish. This, together with changes in shopping habits, has driven a decline in community facilities.

The Greenham Business Park is situated on the former USAF base at Greenham Common approximately one mile north of the Parish. The 180 businesses on the Park provide local employment, but also contribute to traffic volumes through the Parish.

4 Purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan

The Localism Act 2012 enables local communities to take the lead in planning how their neighbourhoods will develop. Communities can now define policies in a Neighbourhood Plan that covers local development and the use of land. A Neighbourhood Plan is a statutory document that, once made, forms part of the Development Plan and must be taken into account by the relevant authorities when determining planning applications whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is in force.

The Neighbourhood Plan must comply with the Basic Conditions which specify that the Neighbourhood Plan should:

- have regard to national planning policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the borough council's development plan;
- comply with EU and human rights obligations;
- not breach the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats Regulations 2017.

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot include policies that fall outside planning control; for example, policies covering traffic and transportation. However, where there is sufficient support from residents, these may be included as community projects.

This Plan has been produced by local residents and with the support of the Parish Council. It is based on a survey of, and consultation with, residents and local employers. The Village Design Statement 2004 (see Chapter 12: Relevant Websites) gives additional guidance on design of the built environment. It was supported by local residents at referendum on 8 September 2022.

5 Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council (BDBC) Local Plan 2011-2029

In May 2016, BDBC adopted its current Local Plan which sets out its planning strategy up to 2029. However, BDBC expects to adopt a new Local Plan in Spring 2024.

The current Local Plan (policy SS5) confirms that BDBC will support the development of Neighbourhood Plans and that, within the period covered by the Local Plan, it will be necessary to identify sites for the development of 750 homes to meet housing needs. These will be in Bramley, Kingsclere, Oakley, Overton and Whitchurch.

Sites for a further 150 homes need to be identified in areas outside these settlements. It will be necessary to identify sites to deliver at least 10 homes within or adjacent to each of the settlements with a defined Settlement Policy Boundary specified in the Local Plan (policy SS1).

The only existing defined Settlement Policy Boundary in the Parish is that for Ashford Hill. Therefore, according to the Local Plan, Ashford Hill would be expected to deliver not less than 10 new houses by 2029. However, BDBC has confirmed that the Oakfield Lane development of 35 houses in Ashford Hill is more than adequate to satisfy this requirement.

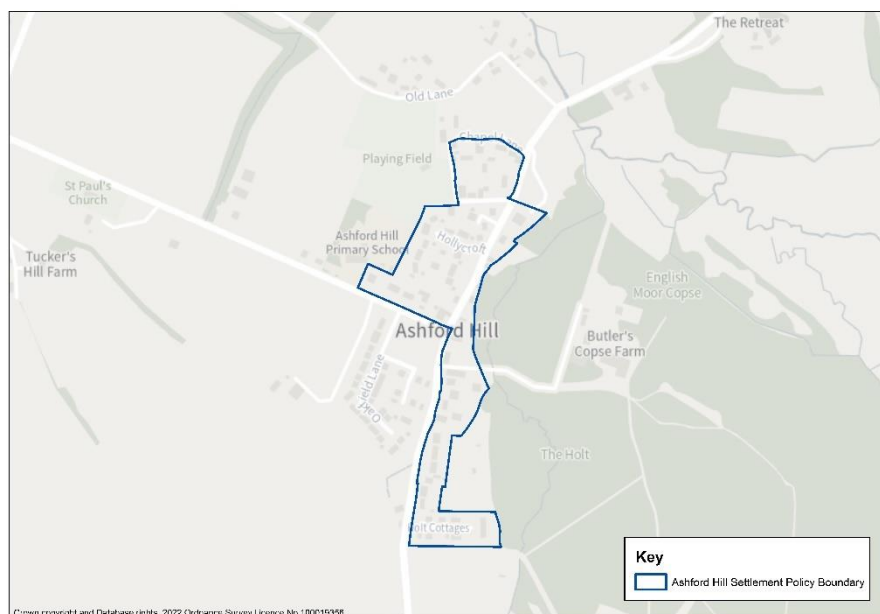


Figure 2 Ashford Hill Settlement Policy Boundary

The Local Plan (Policy SS6) states that new housing outside any Settlement Policy Boundary (see Glossary for definition) will not be permitted except in specific circumstances. In summary, these are:

- on previously developed land;
- on rural exception sites for affordable housing;
- re-use of redundant or disused permanent buildings;
- replacement dwellings, not temporary in nature, or an extension to existing dwellings;
- small scale (four or less) residential proposals that meet a locally agreed need;
- new dwellings linked to an existing and viable agricultural, forestry, horse breeding and training, livery or equivalent rural business;
- on land allocated for development in a Neighbourhood Plan 'made' by BDBC.

6 Development of this Plan

On 1 December 2017, BDBC approved the area of the whole Parish as the basis for this Plan. This Plan sits within the framework set by BDBC for the Local Plan. It will also take account of Hampshire's Minerals and Waste Plan, adopted in 2013.

The Plan's steering group consisted of local residents. The group reported to, and has worked with, the Parish Council to prepare the Plan. (See Appendix 1 for steering group's membership and terms of reference.)

The Parish Council and 'Locality' (a government-funded organisation that provides advice and support to communities producing a Neighbourhood Plan) have provided financial support. Planning officers from BDBC and planning consultants from Bell Cornwell have advised the steering group.

The steering group has consulted with and listened to the community on a wide range of issues that influence the well-being, sustainability and long-term preservation of our rural community. More information on the community consultation and engagement can be found in Appendix 2 and the accompanying Consultation Statement.

This Plan was developed according to the process set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). If the Plan does not follow the defined process, it may be vulnerable to legal challenge at a later date. The general process was as follows:

- consultation with the community to gather evidence;
- analysis of responses to the community questionnaire;
- preparation of a draft Plan that identifies objectives and policies and is referred to BDBC for Strategic Environmental Assessment screening;
- formal 6-week public consultation period where the draft Plan is available for the public and statutory bodies to comment;
- consideration of all representations received during consultation and appropriate modification of the draft Plan;
- submission of the draft Plan with Basic Conditions and Consultation Statement to BDBC so that it can be satisfied that the process and the draft Plan satisfy requirements for consultation and publicity;
- Plan published for 6 weeks and representations from all consultees invited;
- independent examination of the draft Plan by an independent examiner approved by the Parish Council and appointed by BDBC;
- if the independent examiner considers that the draft Plan meets the Basic Conditions (outlined above in Section 4), the examiner will recommend to BDBC that it proceeds to a Referendum.

The above steps were completed and the examiner recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum. The referendum was held on 8 September 2022, and 92% of the local residents who voted were in favour of the Plan.

The number of new houses in the Parish required by the existing Local Plan has already been met. Although this may not be true in any updated Local Plan, the Parish Council has decided that this Plan will not allocate specific sites for development. This does not prevent new housing in the Parish. It means only that BDBC must take account of the policies in this Plan when determining any planning application in the Parish.

7 The Plan's Vision and Objectives

Vision

The Plan is aligned to the priorities and needs of the local community. It complies with local and national planning policies and contains robust policies, specific to the Parish, that:

- reflect the aspirations and opinions of the community;
- safeguard the character of the Parish, and;
- influence development so that it is proportionate and complementary.

Objectives

The main objectives of this Plan reflect the public consultation and are to:

- preserve and enhance the rural and historic character of the Parish (Policies L1, L2, HD1 and HD3);
- protect and enhance the natural environment and green spaces within the green infrastructure network, particularly the important ecological sites and wildlife corridors (Policies L2, NE1, NE2 and LGS);
- support and enhance local amenities, recreational facilities and improve broadband speed throughout the Parish (Policies LGS, LVF1 and LE1);
- promote small housing developments on brownfield and in-fill sites that deliver a mix of housing with a preference for low-cost housing for local people in order to retain the character of the Parish (Policies HD1 and HD2);
- ensure any development that takes place complements and reflects the surroundings and existing housing stock so as to enhance the Parish and the quality of its built environment in accordance with the Village Design Statement (Policy HD3);
- minimise light pollution from new developments (Policy L2);
- minimise the impact of any new development on safety and the road, pavement and footpath infrastructure (Policies TTP1, TTP2 and TTP3);
- recommend improvements to road, pavement and footpath safety within the Parish (Community Projects).

The policies in this Plan seek to deliver the above objectives. However, some community aspirations are outside the remit for neighbourhood planning, for example, highways. In this instance, comments from residents will be collated and passed to the highways team at Hampshire County Council as the Highway Authority. A separate section lists potential projects that would help to meet community aspirations.

8 Parish Profile

The Parish is part of the Tadley North, Kingsclere and Baughurst Ward of BDBC. The Electoral Roll 2018 gives the Parish's adult (over 18s) population as 1,046 with 502 occupied households. The current total population is estimated at 1,459, based on HCC Small Area Population Forecasts 2018. The 2011 Census indicates that the Parish's population increased from 1,217 in 2001 to 1,277 in 2011 (equivalent to 5% in total and 0.5% p.a.). The key points of the 2021 demographic profile for the Tadley North, Kingsclere and Baughurst Ward (which includes the Parish) are shown in the table.

	Key facts	What this means
An ageing population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2001 our resident population aged 45+ has increased by 18.7%, and the number under 45 has decreased by 13.4% • Retired residents account for 14.8% of the population, an increase of 11.1% since 2001. 	
Economic activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An earlier profile (Kingsclere Ward 2011) predicted a median household income of £46,950 by 2017. The lower quartile has a median income of £26,700. • 43.7% of residents aged 16-74 workfull time, a decline of 4.9% since 2001. • The top 5 occupations (managers/directors, administrative, business and science professionals and service occupations) account for 40.5% of all occupations in the ward. The number working in professional occupations increased by 53.9% since 2001. 	The rising age profile has led to a decline in the working population.
Health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85.2% of residents are in good or very good health; however, 3.6% are in bad or very bad health. 	
Traffic and transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65% of those in employment drove a car to work; commuting by rail or bus declined by 16.8% • The number working from home has increased by 24.7%. 	Increased home working makes provision of high-speed broadband more essential. More extensive bus services would discourage rising car use, especially by local commuters.

Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An earlier profile (Kingsclere Ward 2011) reported there were around 620 dwellings in the Parish. • Of these, almost 40% were detached, 70% owner occupied, 16% in shared ownership or social housing and 10% in private rented accommodation. 	<p>The high percentages of detached houses and owner occupation reflect that the Parish is a generally prosperous and desirable place to live. This, combined with limited rented accommodation, makes it difficult for younger residents to remain in the Parish.</p>
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9 Policies

9.1 Landscape

These policies relate to the use and development of the land and buildings within the Parish and seek to deliver the Plan's Vision and Objectives (Chapter 7). The policies in this Plan should be read together and in conjunction with the policies in BDBC's Local Plan. Where there are minor differences between the policies in this Plan and those in BDBC's Local Plan, this does not imply that there is a conflict between the two and they should be read together.

BDBC's Landscape Character Assessment (May 2021) describes the main Landscape Character Areas of the borough. The Parish sits across the boundary between the two Landscape Character Areas of Ecchinswell and Wolverton. These share many characteristics, for example:

- gently undulating landform drained by valleys and streams flowing northward into the River Enborne;
- complex and diverse pattern of small to medium-scale farmland and woodland;
- generally well-wooded, unspoilt rural character giving a distinctive sense of place;
- numerous scattered remnants of semi-natural, broadleaved woodland that give a sense of intimacy;
- examples of scarce habitat types including the ancient woodland and unimproved meadow complex in Ashford Hill.
- a settlement pattern dominated by small villages, hamlets and individual dwellings;
- typically, rural and quiet with a network of narrow roads, except for the A339

The 2019 survey showed that the open, green spaces of the Parish, its character and appearance, and the Ashford Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserve (NNR), were all ranked as 'very important'. There were 20 specific comments on the value of the natural environment and over 80 references to the public footpaths and bridleways, the majority relating to their value in providing access to the local countryside.

Significant landscape features close to the Parish are: Greenham and Crookham Commons; the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); Plantation Hill; Cottington Hill; and Watership Down. The three latter features lie within the AONB.

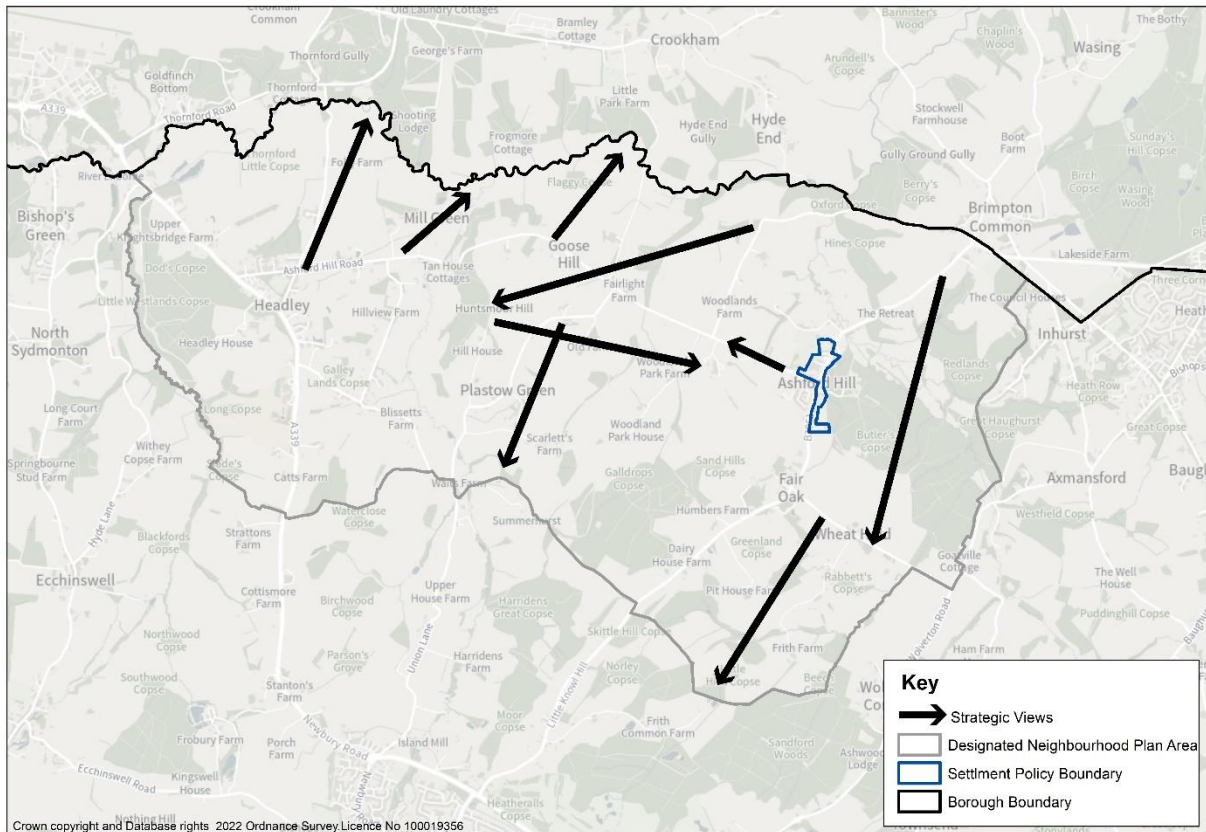


Figure 3 Strategic views

Landscape Policy L1: Landscape Character

Development will only be permitted where it can be shown, through an appropriate level of supporting technical landscape work, that the proposals respect, enhance and are sympathetic to the landscape character and visual amenity of the Parish.

For all major development proposals, a landscape strategy must be submitted and approved which includes (where possible):

- ***existing and proposed hard and soft landscaping plans;***
- ***assessment of near and strategic views of the development from the principal public vantage points (as shown in Figure 3) and from public rights of way;***
- ***comparison of existing landscaping and that proposed to be established after 10 years;***
- ***the importance of retaining hedgerows and existing boundaries that complement and are part of the landscape character, and;***
- ***details of how areas retained as open space and/or woodland will be connected through corridors and links and be managed in the future.***

Supporting Text

As set out above, the quality of the landscape is very important to the local community. Applications for new development should be informed and supported by hard and soft landscape plans to ensure that the special qualities of the surrounding landscape are reflected in development proposals. The scale of this work will be proportionate to the scale of the development and will range from a landscape plan to a more detailed landscape strategy. These will be bespoke and informed by BDBC's Landscape Character Assessment (May 2021), the Landscape, Biodiversity and Trees SPD and the Local Plan (Policy EM1) as well as the Village Design Statement.

Landscape Policy L2: External Lighting

Development proposals that include external lighting which requires planning permission must be accompanied by a lighting scheme that has regard to the latest national design guidance published by the Institute of Lighting Professionals. Permission will only be granted where the submitted lighting scheme demonstrates:

- ***no adverse impact on neighbouring uses or the wider landscape;***
- ***no adverse impacts on the habitats of protected species;***
- ***light levels are the minimum required for essential security and working purposes;***
- ***minimal potential for glare and spillage, and;***
- ***minimal potential for light spillage from the internal lighting of any buildings.***

Where appropriate, conditions will be imposed that will seek to control the times of external illumination.

Supporting Text

External lighting schemes are a consideration for new residential development and can often give rise to unwanted, negative impacts of light pollution on local amenity and nature conservation. If planning permission is required for the lighting scheme, then the scheme can be managed by planning condition.

'Dark Sky' is an important feature of the rural and semi-rural areas within the Parish as it supports and enhances conditions for nocturnal wildlife and maintains the quality of life for residents. Many of the Parish's residents live close to woodland and/or open countryside. Therefore, intrusive external lighting schemes (including street lighting) will have a negative and detrimental impact on the rural character of the Parish, leading to a further urbanised feel. New developments in the Parish that propose installation of external lighting schemes where Parish residents are accustomed to Dark Sky will be considered in planning terms to be "a nuisance" (See 'Ten Dark Sky Policies for the Government 2021' that sets out the concerns and recommendations of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Dark Skies).

9.2 Natural Environment



Figure 4 Hill House bridleway, looking south towards Ladle Hill

The Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan aims to conserve and enhance biodiversity. It describes biodiversity in the county and action plans to protect and enhance habitats and species.

There are no internationally designated sites in the Parish, the nearest being the Kennet and Lambourn Flood Plain. This is approximately 4 miles to the north of Headley and designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). However, the Parish is particularly unusual in enjoying so many nationally and locally designated areas of high wildlife and environmental value.

Ashford Hill Woods and Meadows is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) of 142 hectares within which 20 hectares is additionally designated as a National Nature Reserve (NNR). The SSSI has varied woodlands and agriculturally unimproved meadows. It lies in a shallow valley on the London Clays and Lower Bagshot Beds, a series of sands and clays of shallow-water origin. The site is a high-quality habitat with diverse communities containing rare and threatened species. The Natural England citation provides further details of the site and its flora and fauna (see Links in Section 12).

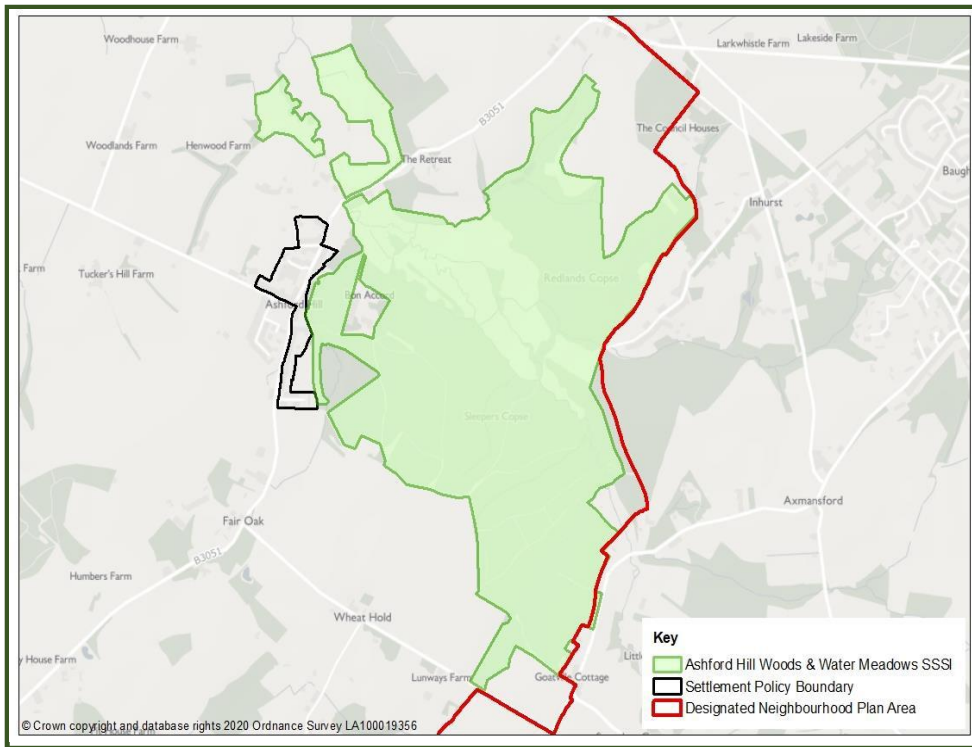


Figure 5 Ashford Hill Woods SSSI



Figure 6 Ashford Hill Woods and Water Meadows

There are 16 ancient woodland sites in the Parish. These have been continuously wooded since at least 1600 and are protected due to their important, unique and complex communities of microorganisms, plants and animals.

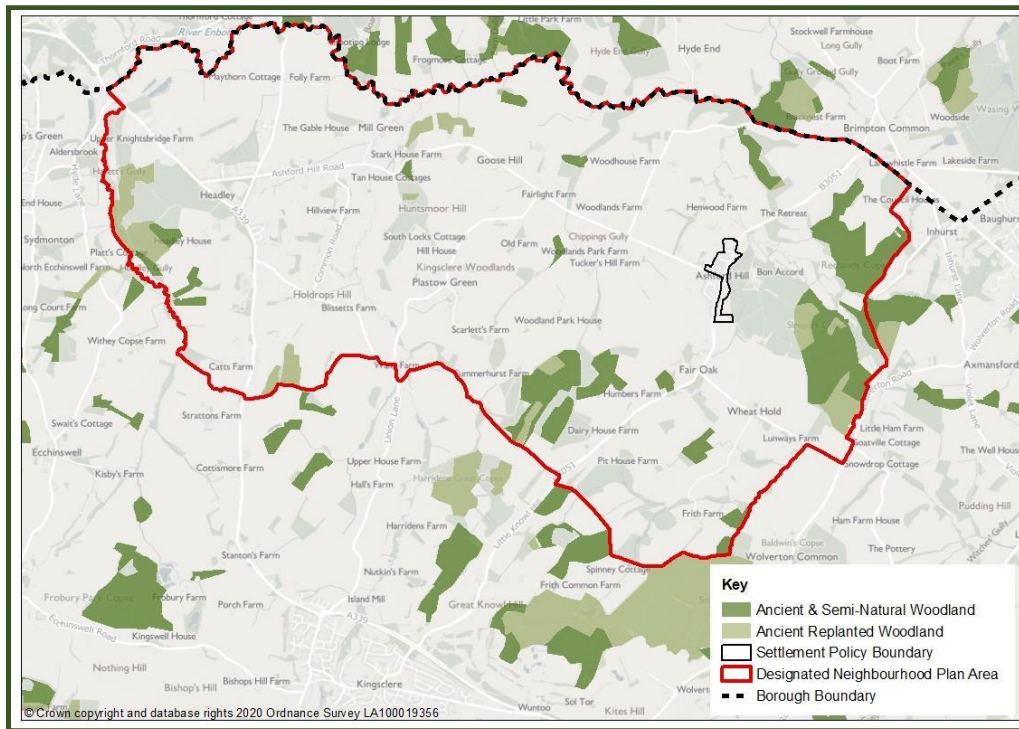


Figure 7 Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodlands

Over 30 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) lie wholly or partially within the Parish. SINCs often contain habitats or features that cannot easily be recreated. They represent a legacy of good management and rely upon continued stewardship by landowners and managers. Also, they form an integral component of the green infrastructure network that helps sustain biodiversity. Therefore, it is important that SINCs in the Parish are not lost and that they continue to be managed for their wildlife interest.

The Parish has a single Road Verge of Ecological Importance located at Wheathold.

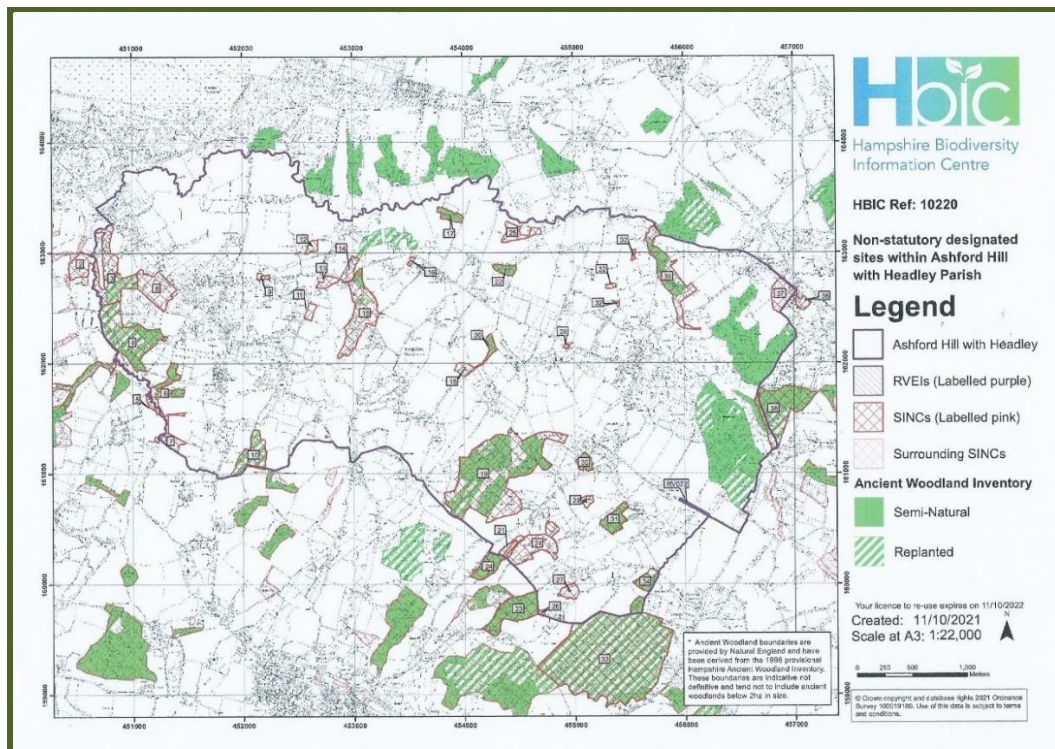


Figure 8 Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs)

Headley Gravel Pit is one example of a SINC. This 7-hectare wildlife reserve is managed by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and is located just west of the junction of the A339 and Ashford Hill Road. The reserve is ecologically very fragile so access is only permitted by permit from the Trust or along public footpaths.

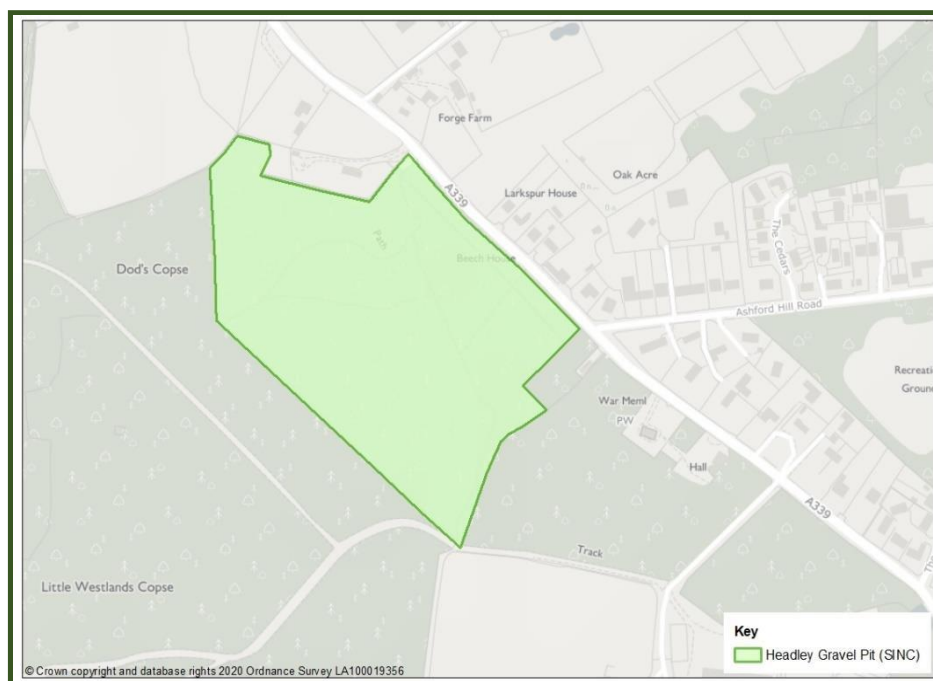


Figure 9 Headley Gravel Pit Nature Reserve

The Parish contains parts of two Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs). These identify opportunities to create and restore habitat so that resources can be focussed to achieve the greatest positive impact for wildlife. The north-west corner of the Parish forms part of the East Woodhay to Headley BOA No. 07 of lowland, heath and ancient woodland. The north-

east corner of the Parish is part of the Ashford Hill (Hants.) BOA No. 14, also of lowland, heath and ancient woodland, that includes the Ashford Hill Woods and Meadows SSSI.

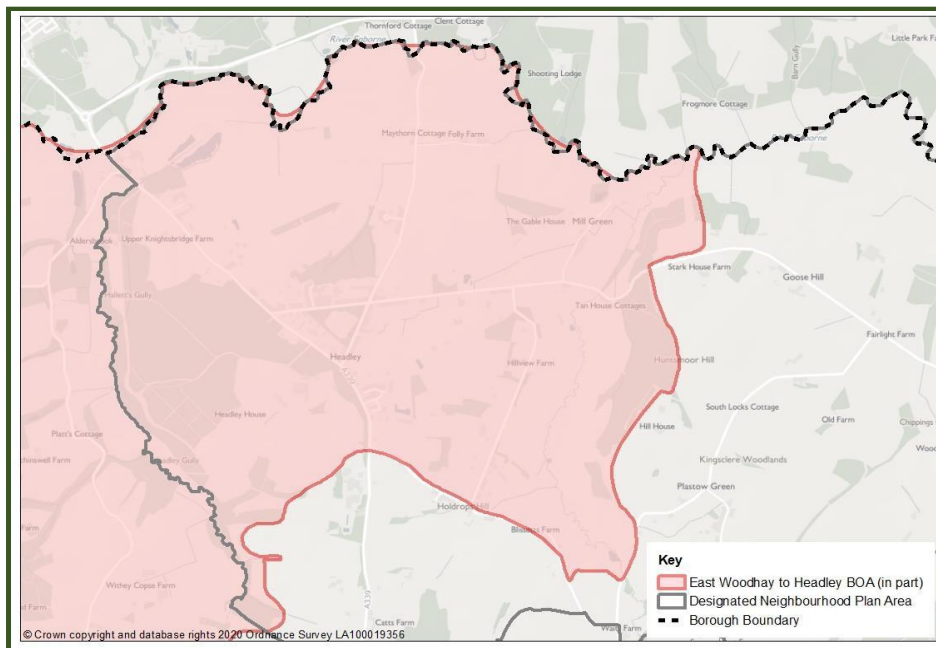


Figure 10 East Woodhay to Headley BOA No. 07

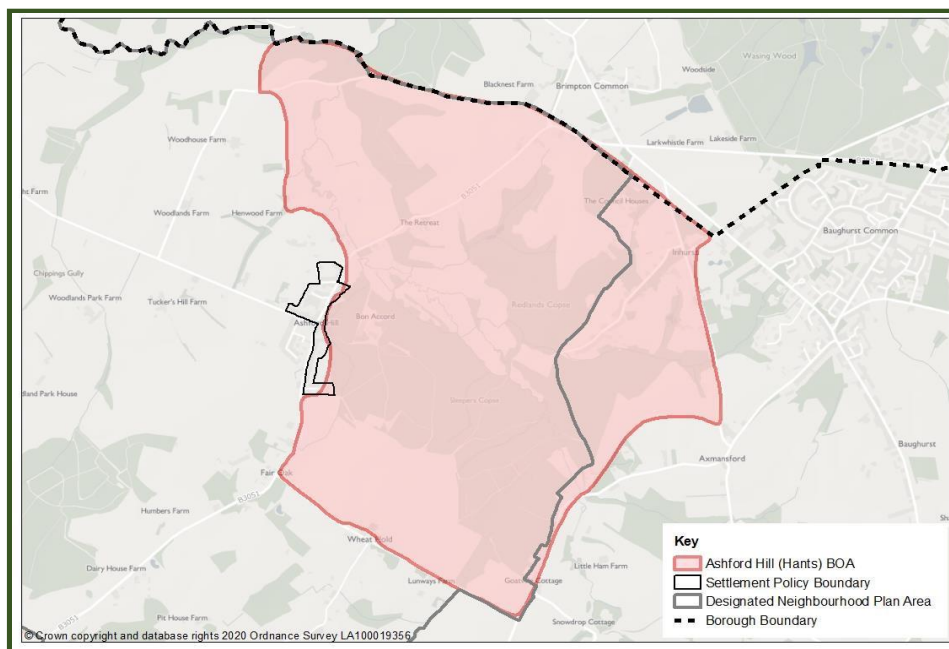


Figure 11 Ashford Hill (Hants.) BOA No.14

Many protected species are resident in the Parish, including Dormouse, Badger, Grass-snake, Adder, and several bat species. Protected or important species along the River Enborne and its valley include Otter, Water Vole, Eel, Bullhead, Brown Trout and Tubular Water Dropwort. A number of nationally declining species still occur in the Parish and would benefit from local initiatives to protect them. They include Lapwing, Skylark, Barn Owl, Little Owl, Linnet, Yellowhammer, House Martin, Brown Hare, and a number of scarce plants of arable land such as Annual Knawel, Corn Spurrey and Prickly Poppy.

The Parish also has invasive, non-native species such as Signal Crayfish, Himalayan Balsam, Orange Balsam and Rhododendron. These need to be controlled to safeguard native flora

and fauna.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) states that the planning system should contribute to the government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, to support healthy, well-functioning ecosystems and to establish coherent and resilient ecological networks with more and better places for nature and for the benefit of wildlife and people.

Natural Environment Policy NE1: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Development proposals will be expected to conserve and enhance the natural environment, in particular:

- ***they should protect existing biodiversity and their design should provide net gains in biodiversity, for example by planting trees and hedgerows, creating meadows and ponds and leaving un-cropped arable margins and headlands. The extent of any net gain in biodiversity should be in accordance with national policy;***
- ***if there would be a known and totally unavoidable loss, any compensatory measures should be directly relatable to the habitat and/or species being lost;***
- ***opportunities should be taken to connect fragmented wildlife habitats into a more robust green infrastructure network in order to enhance their value to wildlife, for example through using hedgerows, ditches and river corridors;***
- ***they should conserve the environment for nocturnal species through the avoidance of streetlighting and mitigating the impact of domestic external lighting, and;***
- ***they should contain measures that will help to mitigate the impacts of, and adapt to, climate change.***

Supporting Text

The household questionnaire confirmed that residents strongly value the natural environment of the Parish. Therefore, protecting it is an important consideration for this Plan.

This policy reflects NPPF policies of 'minimising impacts on and providing gains for biodiversity' (including establishing coherent ecological networks)' (para.174d) and 'identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity' (para.179b).

Development proposals will be expected to reflect the principles and requirements of BDBC's Landscape, Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document 2018.

Climate change is likely to have a major impact on the Parish's biodiversity over the plan period and beyond and the network of green spaces should be maintained and enhanced to help wildlife adapt to climate change and facilitate the migration of species.

Incorporating and enhancing existing landscape features such as native hedgerows and trees in new development provides important opportunities to improve both biodiversity and human health and well-being.

Natural Environment Policy NE2: Trees and Hedgerows

Development proposals will only be permitted where:

- they retain veteran and other important trees, groups of trees, woodland, and hedgerows on site. All applications where there are trees on or adjacent to the site will need to be supported by a satisfactory Arboricultural Impact Assessment in accordance with BS5837 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – recommendations'(2012);***
- they provide a survey and satisfactory protection plan in all cases where there are trees on the site, not only if they are affected. Where loss of trees or hedgerows is unavoidable, replacement planting of equivalent species and amenity value should be incorporated into the application;***
- opportunities are taken for the planting of additional native trees and hedgerows that contribute to the green infrastructure network, character and biodiversity of the Parish, and appropriate provision is made for the long-term maintenance of trees and hedgerows within the site;***
- they include tree-lined streets unless in specific cases there are clear justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate.***

Supporting Text

Woodlands, trees and hedgerows provide wide-ranging aesthetic and environmental benefits, particularly mature native species that are impossible to replace and merit effective protection. Within the Parish, we will retain and protect the green and rural character of the area by protecting existing trees. New planting of native species of trees and hedgerows will be encouraged. Development proposals will be expected to have regard to guidance in BDBC's Landscape, Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Document 2018.

9.3 Heritage

There is evidence of Neolithic, Bronze Age and Roman settlement in the Parish, whilst the Domesday Book mentions two manors north of Kingsclere. Our Parish was originally part of Kingsclere, but became the separate Parish of Kingsclere Woodlands in 1841 before being re-named as 'Ashford Hill with Headley' in 1987. There are a number of "Archaeological Green" sites recorded across the Parish

The Parish has no conservation areas or scheduled ancient monuments, but does have 46 buildings listed as grade 2, including Hill House at Plastow Green Headley which is listed grade 2*. Most listed properties date from the 18th century; nearly half have timber frames and a third originated as agricultural buildings such as barns, granaries and a cart shed.

BDBC also lists 21 buildings of architectural or historic interest in the Parish, including a 16th century dwelling and a Victorian cast iron post-box.

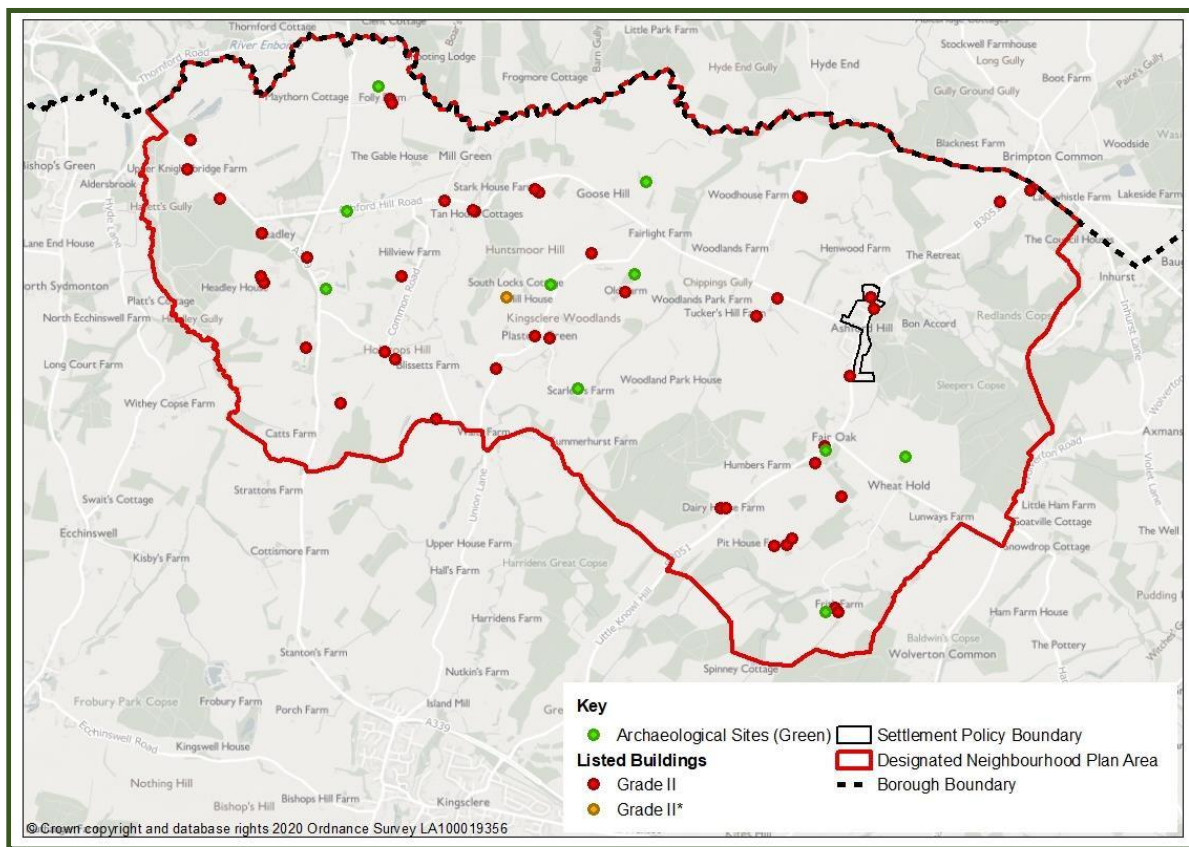


Figure 12 Listed Buildings and Archaeological Green Sites within the Parish. Also shows Ancient Woodlands and the Settlement Policy Boundary for Ashford Hill.

Built environment

Ashford Hill, formerly known as Pidgeon's Cross, is the oldest continuous settlement within the Parish, apart from some individual dwellings. There are 502 occupied households in the Parish and housing stock has developed over a long period, which is an important characteristic.



Figure 13 The White House, Galley Lane (Listed Grade II)

Small country estates and farms occupy the rural spaces between villages; these are mostly set back from the roads and surrounded by cottages and outbuildings. There is a wide variety of existing dwellings that do not conform to a disciplined pattern. These houses are often more than a century old and most are of handmade clay brick, some also feature blue header bricks (fired at a higher temperature). Blue glazed bricks are also used for string courses and to create features around arches to windows and doors. Sash casement and dormer windows add interest. Plain clay tiles are the predominant roofing material but slate is also used. These houses have developed and changed over time to show a wide variation in style. They are generally of low aspect and fit easily into their surroundings and do not dominate or intrude on the countryside.



Figure 14 Ashford Hill Farmhouse (Listed Grade II)

Small cottages or homesteads built in earlier times have been modified and extended. The earliest originated as squatter cottages built in a day and consisting of two rooms and a thatched roof, and few survive to this day. In the earlier nineteenth century, a standardised cottage style became more common; this featured two rooms either side of a central entrance door with inglenook fireplaces at each end and a further two rooms upstairs. Thatch was the normal roofing material which was often later replaced by slate or tile. Tile hangings are used on some houses while others are lime rendered and painted in muted colours. Later additions typically have been extensions to the rear and side of cottages or conversions of adjoining units, but many still show their history in their names and appearance.



Figure 15 Chapel Lane Cottage, Ashford Hill - typical 19thC dwelling, but with later porch and windows

The local vernacular building styles include:

- Timber-framed dwellings of one and a half storeys originally with thatched roofs. Historic alterations include alternative roofing materials and brick re-fronting;
- Timber-framed barns with queen post trussed roof structure originally thatched and others. One example of a cruck frame is recorded;
- Small cottages and medium sized dwellings of red brick with Flemish bond and tiled or slated roofs. There are many examples with blue brick headers or other blue brick detailing including using blue bricks throughout;
- Brick or rendered elevations with a first-floor projecting band. Traditional porches, chimneys and cast-iron water goods are the norm.
- Examples of traditional timber casement and both vertical and horizontal sash windows are extant.

Working environment

Arable farming and equestrian land use are common. Brickmaking, based on local clay deposits, was once an important local industry, and borrow pits and kilns were located in Headley, Ashford Hill, Holdrops Hill and Plastow Green. The resulting soft red bricks were used for St Peter's Church and other local buildings. Historic small-scale aggregate production from the plateau gravels is evident in many places and Headley Gravel Pit is now a wildlife reserve. Early maps show a watermill together with a fishery on the Enborne at Hyde End. Circumstantial evidence suggests a tannery was located on the Kingsclere Brook near Mill Green between Ashford Hill and Headley.

Infrastructure development

There are no Roman roads in the Parish, but two roads through the Parish from Aldermaston and Newbury meet at Kingsclere and were recorded in medieval times. Most of the local network probably evolved to serve the growing local communities. As a result of the 1843 Enclosure of Headley and Holt Commons, the Ashford Hill Road was built directly linking Headley and Ashford Hill. Less frequently used routes fell into decline and many are now just bridleways, footpaths or have disappeared completely. Historically important crossings of the River Enborne occur at Knight's Bridge on the A339, Thorn Ford at Headley and Hyde End (now a bridleway linking Ashford Hill to Brimpton). The route to Aldermaston crosses the Baughurst Brook at Ashford Hill.

Water supply was historically from shallow wells or the clear, chalk-fed streams crossing the area until deep boreholes into the chalk aquifer and a piped network were constructed in the first half of the 20th century. Today, mains drainage still only covers part of Headley whilst many other settlements rely on septic tanks, cesspits or small private treatment plants discharging into various watercourses.

Mains electricity and telephone infrastructure in the Parish is largely by overhead lines. Coverage by high-speed broadband is still patchy in the area.

Heritage Assets Policy HA: The Protection of Heritage Assets

- ***Listed buildings and designated historic heritage assets in the Parish and their settings, both above and below ground, will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced for their historic significance and their importance to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.***
- ***Proposed development in the setting of designated heritage assets or their setting should not adversely affect the heritage asset or its context. Where harm is unavoidable, proposals must clearly demonstrate that harm is justified by provision of public benefit that could not otherwise be delivered.***
- ***Proposals for development should include a heritage statement including a statement of significance for any affected heritage assets to demonstrate an understanding of the significance of any heritage assets or their setting.***
- ***Proposals for development that affect non-designated heritage assets (including non-designated archaeology) or their setting will be considered with a balanced judgement taking account of the scale of harm or loss and the significance of the heritage assets.***
- ***Developers will be required to submit an archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation where archaeological assets have been identified in any application site.***

Supporting text

The Parish has a significant number of designated heritage assets, scattered throughout the whole area rather than in concentrated groups. Responses from the questionnaires indicate that the community places a high importance on the preservation of its heritage assets and the variety which they create in the rural scene. This policy is intended to ensure that any development to, or affecting the setting of, any such assets respect the value placed on them by the community. Attention is drawn to 'Housing Policy HD3: High-Quality Design of New Development' in the context of development that is sensitive and responsive to heritage assets.

9.4 Community Facilities and Services

The Parish has limited facilities and residents must travel to Tadley, Basingstoke, Kingsclere or Newbury for medical, retail and other facilities.

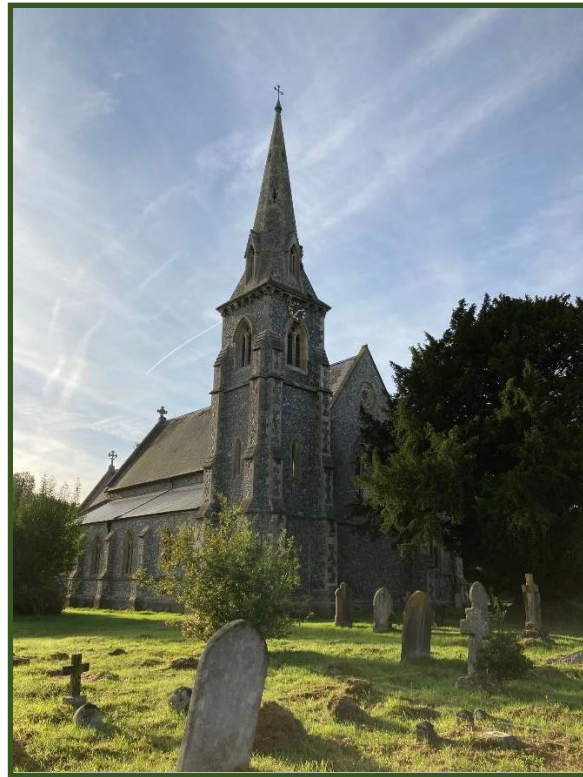


Figure 16 St. Paul's Church, Ashford Hill

St. Paul's Church hosts cultural and other community events in addition to its religious role. The modern village hall is well used for private and community events such as the gardening club. The primary school in Ashford Hill attracts children from the Parish and surrounding area. Parking near the school has been a long-standing issue that should be alleviated by the new village car park, opposite the school.



Figure 17 Ashford Hill Primary School



Figure 18 The Community Shop, Thornford Road

Facilities at Headley include the only shop and post office in the Parish. The Headley with Ashford Hill community shop is proactive in running events to increase patronage. However, more customers are needed to ensure its long term future. It provides residents with a venue for day-time meetings and hosts frequent coffee mornings, lunches and other social and charitable events. The village hall is an old wooden structure and will need to be replaced in the near future. The hall is located away from the village on the opposite side of the A339, making access for pedestrians difficult and dangerous. Relocating the hall to the recreation ground and opposite the shop has been considered, but this is not currently viable due to restricted parking space. St. Peter's Church is in active use for religious ceremonies, but also suffers from being separated from the main village by the A339.



Figure 19 St. Peter's Church, Headley

Local Valued Facilities

The NPPF (Section 8) states that planning policies should ‘aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction’. NPPF (para, 93) states that planning policies should ‘plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services’. NPPF (para. 93c) further reinforces this and uses the term ‘valued facilities and services’.

A number of ‘Valued Facilities’ were identified during consultations with local residents and are set out in the table below. These ‘Valued Facilities’ are important in maintaining a good quality of life and a sustainable community within the Parish.

Local Valued Facilities			
Map Key	Name	Location	Use
1	St Peter’s Church	A339, Headley	Parish church
2	Headley Village Hall	A339, Headley	Community building
3	Headley Community Shop and Post Office	Thornford Road, Headley	Community building
4	St Paul’s Church	Ashford Hill Road	Parish church and Community building
5	Ashford Hill Village Hall	B3051, Ashford Hill	Community building



Figure 20 Local Valued Facilities (Headley)

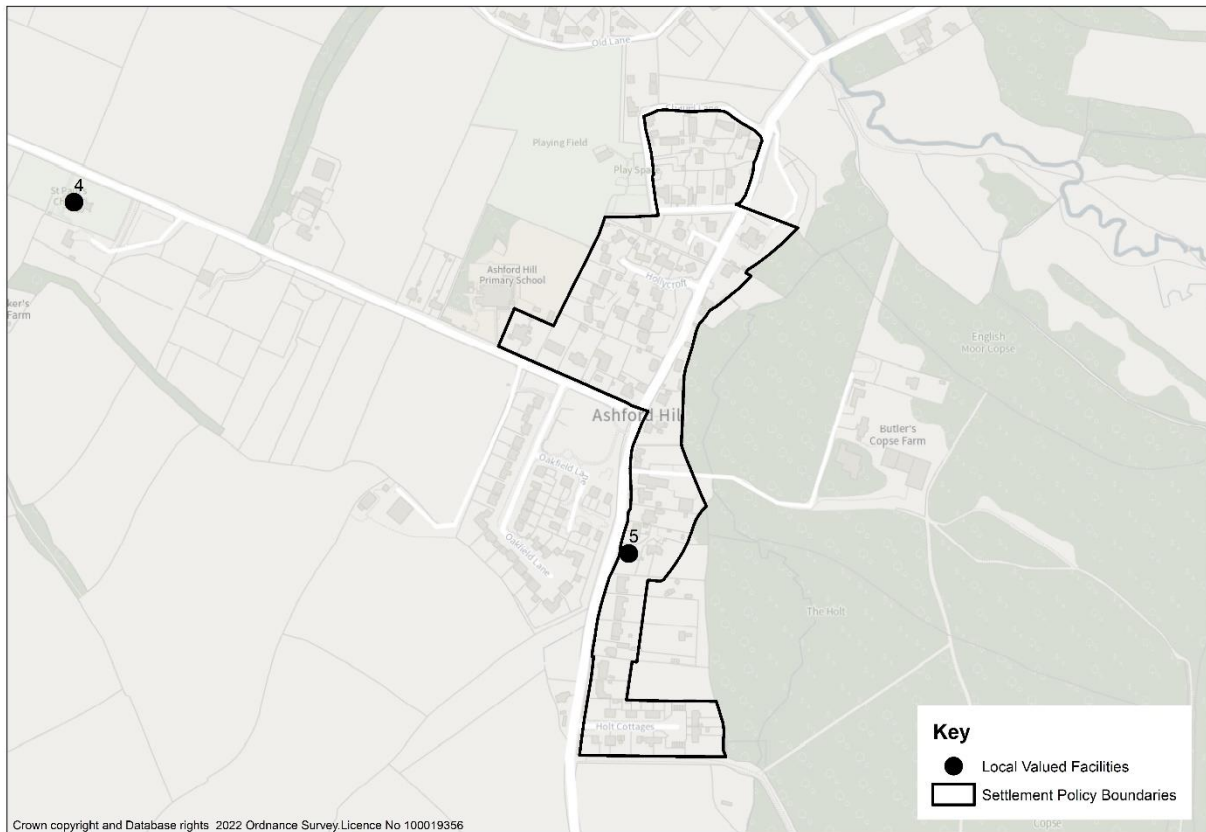


Figure 21 Local Valued Facilities (Ashford Hill)

These policies should be read in conjunction with the Local Plan (Policies CN7 and CN8) which supports the retention and improvement of such facilities.

Local Valued Facility Policy LVF1

Proposals to improve or assist in the continued availability of the Valued Facilities identified in Figures 20 and 21 and the Table on Page 29) will be supported provided the development is of a scale and design that is in keeping with its surroundings and will not adversely affect the amenities of any nearby residential properties.

Supporting Text

A number of 'Valued Facilities' have been identified through the background work on the Neighbourhood Plan including the outcomes of the household questionnaire.

It is important to protect and retain these facilities due to their importance to the local community. Improvements may be necessary during the life of the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. Each application will be considered on its own merits.

Local Green Spaces

The NPPF states that local communities, through Local and Neighbourhood Plans, should ensure that green areas of particular local importance are designated as Local Green Spaces. NPPF (para. 102) defines Local Green Space as land which is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- 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), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife, and;
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Appendix 5 describes how each of the following sites meets the NPPF (Para. 102) criteria for designation as a Local Green Space.

- **Ashford Hill Recreation Ground:** Held in trust by the Parish Council and the only publicly accessible area of open space within the village. It accommodates: a children's play area; football pitches; and a thriving cricket club with pitch, nets and pavilion. The pavilion is also used by Jiminy Cricket's nursery. The recreation ground has also hosted the local fete.

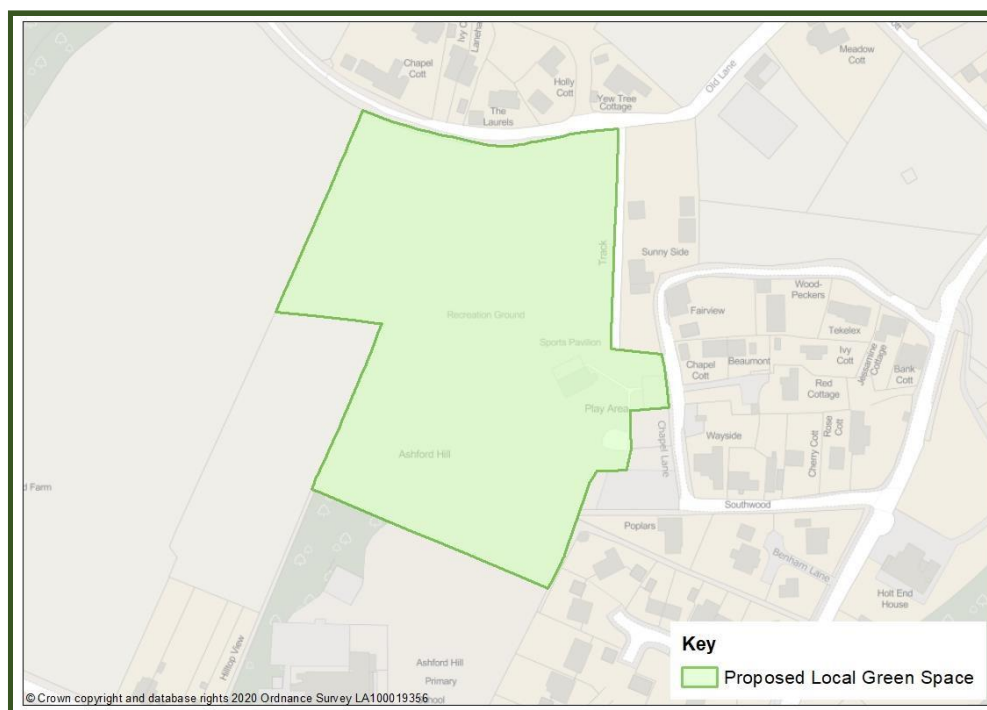


Figure 22 Ashford Hill Recreation Ground

- **Headley Recreation Ground:** Held in trust by the Parish Council and the only publicly accessible area of open space within the village. It is valued for a range of activities including: a children's play area; a pleasant woodland walking area; and as a venue for the annual fete. The area can accommodate a full-size football pitch, but the demise of the once-active football club contributed to the deterioration of the changing rooms.

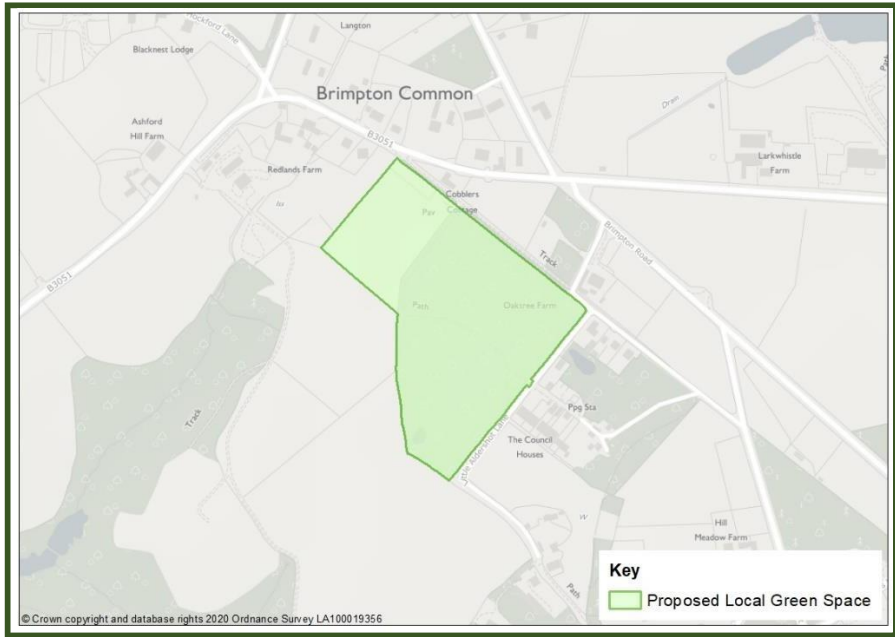


Figure 25 Sports Pitches

- **Oakfield Open Space:** To the south of the junction of Ashford Hill Road and Kingsclere Road, this area is an agreed public space within the Oakfield development. The space provides a welcome amenity with hedges, trees and a balancing pond in a built-up area of the village and serves the purpose of a Public Open Space.

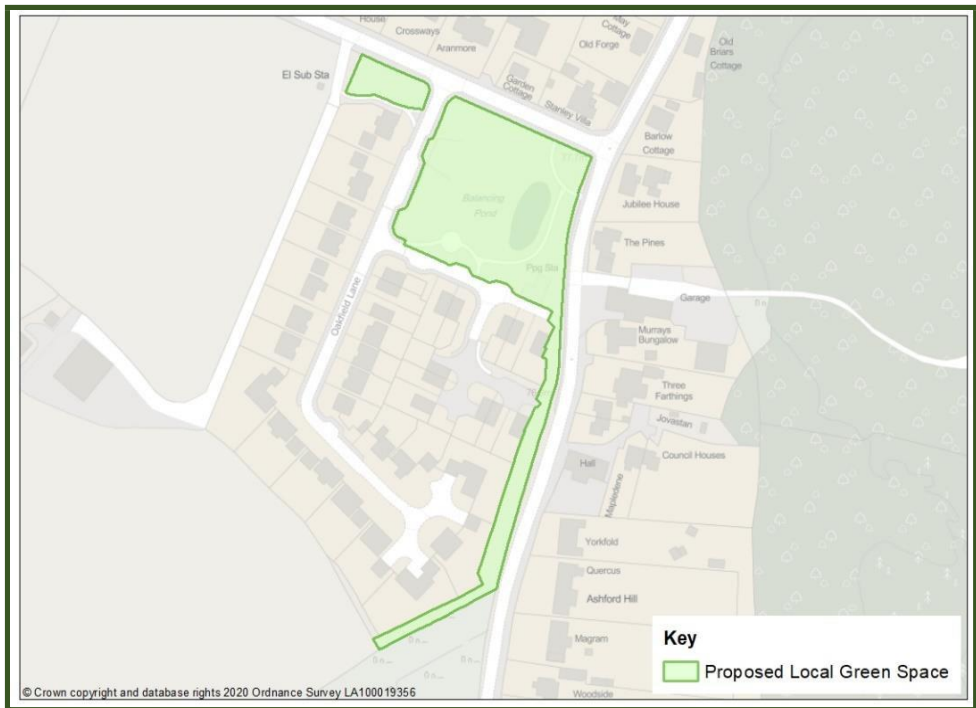


Figure 26 Oakfield Open Space

- Headley Ford: The open area at the bottom of Thornford Road adjacent to the Headley Ford is a well-known local "beauty spot", much painted by local artists and with strong historical connections with the old road system. The shape of the road here and bridges (currently a footbridge) can be traced back to the earliest maps of our area.



Figure 27 Headley Ford

- Hollybush small open space: mature trees within this area give it a rural appearance.

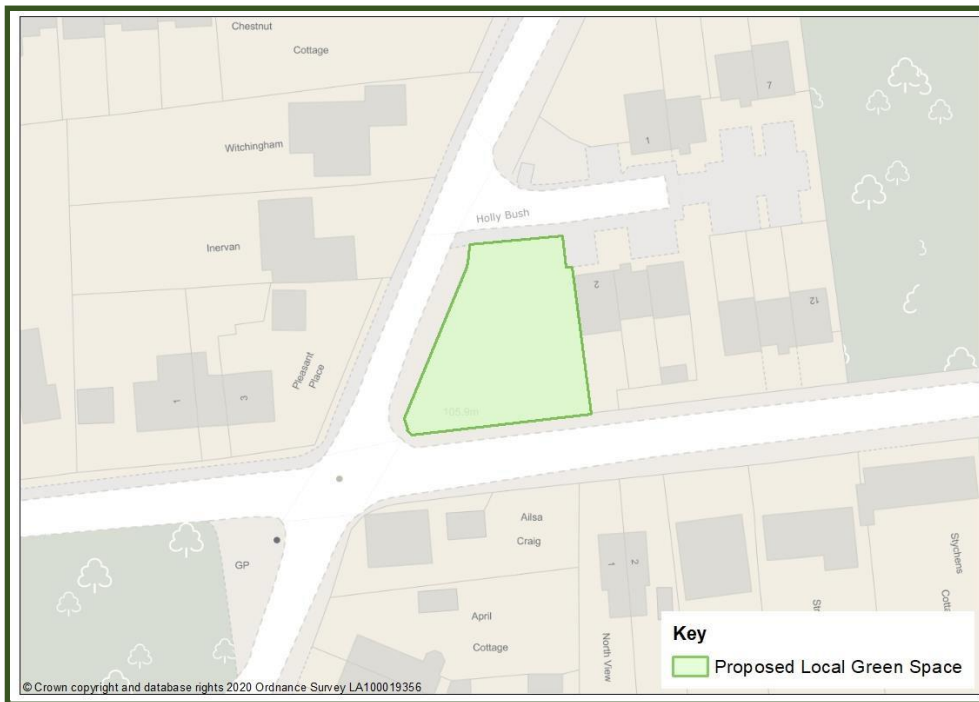


Figure 28 Hollybush Small Open Space

- Harrow Drive open space: land adjacent the A339 and adjoining the Harrow Drive development that offers vegetation and screening from the traffic and the grassed area within the estate is available for recreation.

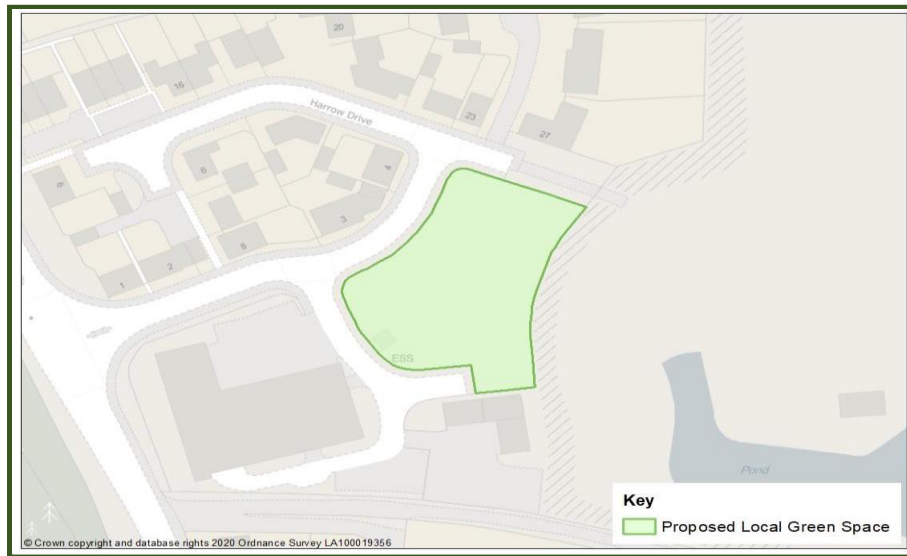


Figure 29 Harrow Drive Open Space

Local Green Space Policy (LGS): Local Green Spaces

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in this Plan and are identified in Figures 22-29:

- ***Ashford Hill Recreation Ground***
- ***Headley Recreation Ground***
- ***Mill Green Common Land***
- ***Sports Pitches and Common Land to the North of Ashford Hill***
- ***Oakfield Open Space***
- ***Headley Ford***
- ***Hollybush Small Open Space***
- ***Harrow Drive Open Space***

Supporting Text

A number of areas in the Parish warrant protection in perpetuity due to their particular importance to the local community, as evidenced by the outcomes of the household questionnaire. Designating these sites as Local Green Spaces means that they receive a high level of protection from inappropriate development.

Provision of Community Facilities

The 2019 survey of residents did not identify a strong sense of community in either of the villages. However, the Headley with Ashford Hill community shop does provide a focus for social activities. Each village has its own village hall: both halls are in regular use for Parish Council meetings, for private functions and by local groups, for example the gardening club. St Paul's Church enjoys large congregations during major celebrations such as harvest festivals, Christmas services and 'Candles at Christmas', with attendance boosted by parents and children from the nearby primary school.

Developments may generate developer contributions paid via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or Section 106 funds to improve local facilities. Once the Plan is 'made' the Parish Council will have access to 25% of the CIL funds which are generated by development in the area. Potential projects include:

- extra facilities on both recreation grounds;
- replacement changing rooms on Headley recreation ground;
- measures to encourage compliance with traffic speed limits – residents consider this to be a major need.

Provision of Community Facilities Policy (PCF)

Where there is a clearly demonstrated need, a new, replacement or relocated day nursery, church or village hall will be permitted provided that:

- ***appropriate levels of parking are available;***
- ***where it is a replacement or relocated facility, it should have at least equivalent capacity and quality to the existing facility;***
- ***it does not adversely affect the amenities enjoyed by any nearby residential properties;***
- ***it is well related in both appearance and accessibility to either Ashford Hill or Headley;***
- ***the building is of a scale and design that is in keeping with its surroundings.***

Supporting Text

There may be occasions during the life of the Plan where an opportunity for a new and improved or relocated day nursery, church or village hall comes forward. This policy seeks to ensure that any provision is appropriately located and of a high standard which does not have any detrimental impact on local residential amenities.

9.5 Housing and Other Development

The majority of houses in the Parish are detached, overlook open views and are attractively surrounded by trees and hedges. Generally, there is low building density within the two villages and in the surrounding hamlets, and from the village centres there is a gradual thinning of housing density towards the boundaries in every direction. At the village boundaries there is a distinct break to open countryside in every direction. The only major areas of flood risk to properties are along the River Enborne and in Old Lane from the Baughurst Brook.

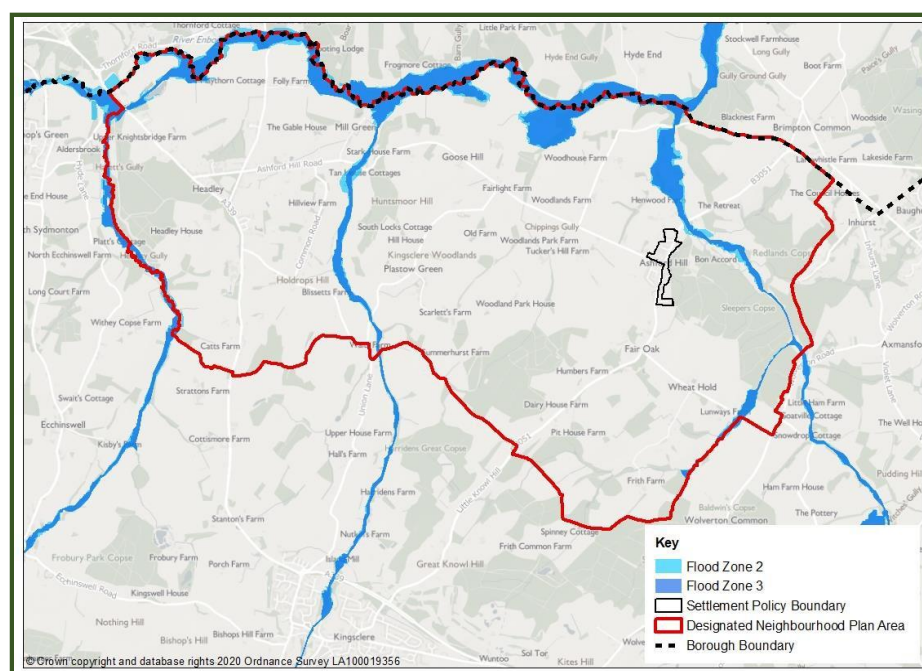


Figure 30 Areas of flood risk in and around the Parish

The Village Design Statement 2004 (see Chapter 12: Relevant Websites) gives guidance on the design of the built environment. Historically, house construction has been by gradual in-fill, mostly of single homes of traditional design. However, developments over the past 15 years have generally been of larger scale and include:

- Hollycroft, Ashford Hill: This was a good example of sympathetic modern village design with 10 detached and 4 semi-detached houses with diverse styles, attractive detailed brickwork, dormer windows, porches and broken roof lines. Care has been taken with brickwork, style and hedge screening has been preserved.
- Benham Lane, Ashford Hill: A development of 3 detached houses.
- Oakfield Lane, Ashford Hill: An urbanised development of 35 houses outside the Settlement Policy Boundary on agricultural land; it attracted significant controversy and concern because of its size and bland design. It comprises: 16 x 5-bedroom; 2 x 4-bedroom; 10 x 3-bedroom; and 7 x 2-bedroom houses. 40% of the dwellings are social housing.



Figure 31 Oakfield Lane, Ashford Hill

- Hollybush, Headley: A social housing development of 10 properties on a greenfield site with a modern style that was inconsistent with the surrounding older properties. It comprises: 2 x 3-bedroom; 4 x 2-bedroom; and 4 x 1-bedroom houses.
- The Cedars, Headley: This was an infill development of 3- and 4-bedroom houses. Several large trees and hedge planting were retained and the development blends well with the existing houses.
- Harrow Drive, Headley: This consisted of 27 houses. 19 are privately owned (6 x 2-bedroom; 7 x 3-bedroom; 6 x 4-bedroom) and 8 are for social housing (6 x 2-bedroom; 2 x 3-bedroom). The site has 7 car parking spaces and 54 cycle spaces.
- The Harrow Inn development, Headley: This consisted of 5 houses (2 x 3-bedroom; 3 x 2-bedroom) with 5 car parking spaces.
- Swait's Meadow, Headley: This was a development of 6 properties (2 terraced; 2 maisonettes; 2 detached).

Housing and other Development Policy HD1: Location and Scale of New Development

- ***Development proposals within any Settlement Policy Boundary will be permitted provided they accord with the policies of the Development Plan. The use of brownfield sites and the conversion of agricultural buildings will be especially welcomed.***
- ***The area outside any Settlement Policy Boundary is considered to be countryside where the Local Plan (Policy SS6) and national policies apply.***

Supporting text

BDBC have confirmed that the adopted Local Plan does not require the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate additional housing sites in the Parish and the outcome of the household questionnaire was that any further new estates would be unpopular.

There will, however, be ongoing opportunities for small scale development in suitable locations, largely on infill plots. Smaller, more affordable homes of 1-3 bedrooms are envisaged. This type of development was supported by local people responding to the household questionnaire.

Housing and other Development Policy HD2: Mix and Tenure of New Residential Development

- ***The provision of affordable housing must have regard to BDBC Housing Supplementary Planning Document (July 2018) and, where required, must include First Homes , part ownership tenures and units for rent to contribute to a mixed and balanced community.***
- ***With open market housing, development will be permitted where it includes a range of types and sizes to meet local needs with normally not less than 70% comprising 1-3 bedroom units (such percentage to be determined by reference to the number of units).***

Supporting Text

A priority for this Plan is to ensure that future development is suitable for the needs of existing residents. The Parish is currently well provided with large, detached dwellings.

In the 2019 survey, local residents were asked 'If new housing development takes place, what type of dwellings do you think are needed?' 'Affordable houses for local people' and '1- or 2-bedroom houses' were ranked first and second respectively. There was little support for large, 4+-bedroom houses (see Appendix 2). This supports the case for prioritising suitable accommodation for residents who might wish to downsize: this would make larger homes available to families. Smaller homes will also assist in providing for the needs of keyworkers and for younger people who wish to live independently in the Parish whilst remaining close to their families.

Housing and other Development Policy HD3: High Quality Design of New Development

Development proposals, including extensions to existing buildings, will be permitted where they are of high design quality, positively contribute to the rural character of the Parish, reflecting its local and historic distinctiveness and comply with the following:

- ***Development should be provided at a density, scale and form reflective of the surrounding area and having regard to:***
 - ***the locally distinctive shape of the settlements and existing patterns of development;***
 - ***local vernacular traditions including materials and architectural detailing (see Section 9.3 of this Plan for a good summary of local vernacular building styles.;***
 - ***the distinctive character of the landscape of the Parish;***
 - ***strategic views valued by the public (as identified in Policy L1 and Figure 3).***
- ***Development proposals should be informed by an analysis of locally distinctive features and should demonstrate that they have had regard to:***
 - ***the use, where appropriate, of traditional roof forms such as hips, gables and pitches and architectural features such as chimney stacks whether decorative or operational.***
 - ***the common use of brick, tile hanging and natural slate, and clay tile building materials.***
 - ***the weather-boarding of traditional farm buildings and the occasional use of thatch on older buildings contributing to the diverse character of the area.***
 - ***the important role broad leaf trees and native hedges play in defining the overall character of the area.***
 - ***the importance of the setting of heritage assets, other buildings and structures, open spaces and mature trees and tall hedges in defining the centres of the villages. For Ashford Hill particular attention should be paid to the Church, Primary School, Recreation Ground, Village Hall and Pub. For Headley the***

identity of the village is informed by the Recreation Ground and Wood, the Shop and Community Room, the Church and Village Hall and Cheam School.

- *the importance of trees and hedges along the frontage boundaries of most plots in softening the streetscape, requiring landscaping and access proposals of schemes to avoid or minimise the loss of existing vegetation or to provide new trees and tall hedges if currently absent.*
- *the importance of unobstructed views from the villages to the surrounding countryside in maintaining and enhancing a rural ambience.*
- *the importance of wooded areas in creating a feeling of seclusion and intimacy.*

For non-residential properties, where practicable and viable, low carbon, energy efficient design should be employed and development should incorporate features that improve environmental performance and reduce carbon emissions in line with the National Design Guidance and the energy hierarchy such as ground source heat pumps, solar panelling and grey water harvesting.

Supporting Text

The Ashford Hill with Headley Village Design Statement (2004) sets the scene well for both planning guidelines and also building materials. HD3 is sympathetic to these aspirations whilst updating them to take account of current concerns relating to the environment, low carbon and energy efficient design, and the related aspects of landscaping, parking, flood risk management and infrastructure.

Housing and other Development Policy HD4: Infrastructure considerations

- *New and improved utility infrastructure will be encouraged and supported in order to meet the identified needs of the community, subject to the other policies in the Plan.*
- *Where appropriate, planning permission for developments which result in the need for off-site upgrades will be subject to conditions to ensure the occupation is aligned with the delivery of necessary infrastructure upgrades.*
- *The developer must make proper provision for surface water drainage to ground water courses or surface water sewer. Ground or surface water must not be allowed to drain to the foul sewer as this is the major contributor to sewer flooding.*
- *The principles of flood risk management, including sustainable drainage systems, should conform to the requirements of Local Plan Policy EM7 (managing Flood Risk). This should include problems of surface water on roads, lanes and paths and drainage problems in general.*

Supporting text

The water and sewage companies have stated that it will be necessary to ensure that there is adequate water and waste water infrastructure to serve all new developments. In Ashford Hill there are particular concerns about the foul water drainage and the discharge of same into the Baughurst Brook which feeds into the River Enborne. Developers are encouraged to contact the water/waste water company as early as possible to discuss their development proposals and intended delivery programme to assist with identifying any potential water and waste water network reinforcement requirements. Where there is a capacity constraint it will be necessary to apply phasing conditions to any approval to ensure that any necessary infrastructure upgrades are delivered ahead of the occupation of the relevant phase of development.

9.6 Employment and Skills

NPPF (Section 6) emphasises that planning policies should support growth and expansion of businesses in rural areas, as well as the diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses. However, NPPF (para. 85) also emphasises that in locations poorly served by public transport, such as much of the Parish, it will be important to ensure that Development is sensitive to its surroundings and does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads. Feedback from local residents states that the impact of increased traffic on local lanes, some of which arise from existing employment sites, is already a concern.

The Local Plan (Policy EP4) states that important considerations in assessing proposals for employment opportunities in the countryside are: the impacts on the local highway network; the type of traffic generated; the appropriateness for the rural roads; and the impact on their character. Policy LE1 below adds to the criteria set out in the Local Plan (Policy EP4) by requiring specific regard to be given to the impact of a proposal on those who live in the vicinity of the site.

The need for improved broadband service was a common issue in the 2019 survey, especially to enhance support for local business. This service is currently the responsibility of Openreach and Hampshire Broadband. For new developments over 10 dwellings, Openreach is required to provide broadband, and this may provide an opportunity for existing properties to benefit from the upgraded broadband. Poor broadband service in some areas of the Parish has an adverse impact on business growth and employment opportunities for commercial premises and for residents working from home.

Mobile phone reception was also cited in the 2019 survey as poor in areas and would have an equally negative impact on employment growth.

Parish businesses are listed in Appendix 3.

Local Employment Policy LE1: New and existing employment

Proposals for new or extended employment premises will be permitted where they accord with all relevant Development Plan policies, and the criteria set out in the Local Plan where relevant (Policy EP4).

Evidence must be submitted to ensure that any development proposals for new or extended employment facilities are appropriate to their surroundings and will not have negative impacts on neighbouring amenity or local roads.

Supporting Text

It is important to secure appropriate employment opportunities within the Parish to give residents the opportunity to work locally and to accord with the principles of sustainable development. This Plan supports increased home working for which high-speed broadband speeds are highly desirable (also see Chapter 10: Community Projects – Improved broadband).

Local Employment Policy LE2: Development on Farms

Proposals for development on farms (including farm diversification proposals) which increase commercial or recreational activity and conversion or diversification of redundant farm and rural buildings to commercial use will be supported provided that proposals:

- ***comply with the Heritage Assets Policy in this Plan;***
- ***comply with Local Plan policy EM4.***
- ***respect the surrounding landscape and are sensitive to the amenities of neighbouring residents and other users and their setting in regard to size, light pollution, noise, dirt, loss of wildlife habitat.***
- ***will not have any unacceptable impact on the local road network.***

Supporting Text

Arable and livestock farming is important to the Parish and more broadly to the rural economy. Farming is instrumental in protecting the character and appearance of the landscape and potentially enhancing local biodiversity. However, farming faces many challenges e.g. changes in subsidies following Brexit. Therefore, farmers may need to seek opportunities to diversify their businesses. This will be supported as long as the proposal can be accommodated within the landscape and does not cause detrimental impacts to the amenity of local residents or cause unacceptable impacts to the local road network.

9.7 Transport, Traffic, Highways and Public Rights of Way

Except where new development would impact on existing networks, many traffic matters fall outside the scope of local planning as they are the responsibility of the Highways Authority. However, the 2019 survey showed these are issues of considerable importance to local residents and are therefore addressed below.

The main roads through the Parish are very heavily used, with traffic increasingly spilling onto local lanes. This is raising major concerns amongst local residents (see Appendix 2).

The A339 through Headley connects Newbury and Basingstoke and is deemed inadequate for the high and increasing volumes of traffic it carries. This is exacerbated by high numbers of HGVs and by traffic generated by the Greenham Common Business Park. Signs encouraging vehicles travelling between Basingstoke and Newbury to use the A303 and A34 have proved ineffective. Particular local problems exist at the junction of the A339 and the Ashford Hill Road and for pedestrians who are highly vulnerable when crossing the A339 to reach St. Peter's Church, bus stops for Newbury or Headley Gravel Pit wildlife site.

The B3051 from Kingsclere to Tadley which passes through Ashford Hill, is a winding rural road bordered mostly by close hedges, features frequently poor sight lines and is heavily used by AWE employees and by HGVs making deliveries to local businesses such as the Sasron car dealership and Frith Farm Dried Herbs. The Ashford Hill Road is a shortcut between Newbury and Tadley, particularly for AWE employees. It is subject to a 7.5 tonne weight restriction (except for access) although this is poorly signposted at the Headley end.

Road and rail connections are very good. Basingstoke (12 miles) offers very good connections to London, Salisbury, Winchester, Southampton and Reading, both by road (M3, A33, and A303) and by rail (mainline link to London Waterloo, Southampton and Exeter). Newbury (6 miles) has excellent connections to London, Oxford, Birmingham, Bath, Bristol and Wales by road (M4, A4, and A34) and by rail (mainline link to London Paddington and the West Country).

An hourly, daytime bus service on Monday-Saturday connects Headley to Newbury and to Basingstoke. The last bus from Newbury leaves at 18.40. The last bus from Basingstoke to Headley leaves at 17.40 although there are two later buses to Kingsclere at 18.40 and 19.40. Ashford Hill is only served by a community bus service running between Kingsclere and Tadley once a day, on Wednesdays and Fridays. Other than this, access from the Parish to medical facilities, supermarkets and other amenities is only possible by car or taxi.

The Parish is well served by public footpaths, including a section of the Brenda Parker Way. The Parish also has 5 bridleways but these are very poorly connected, so horse riders are forced to use the increasingly busy local lanes, Ashford Hill Road and the B3051.

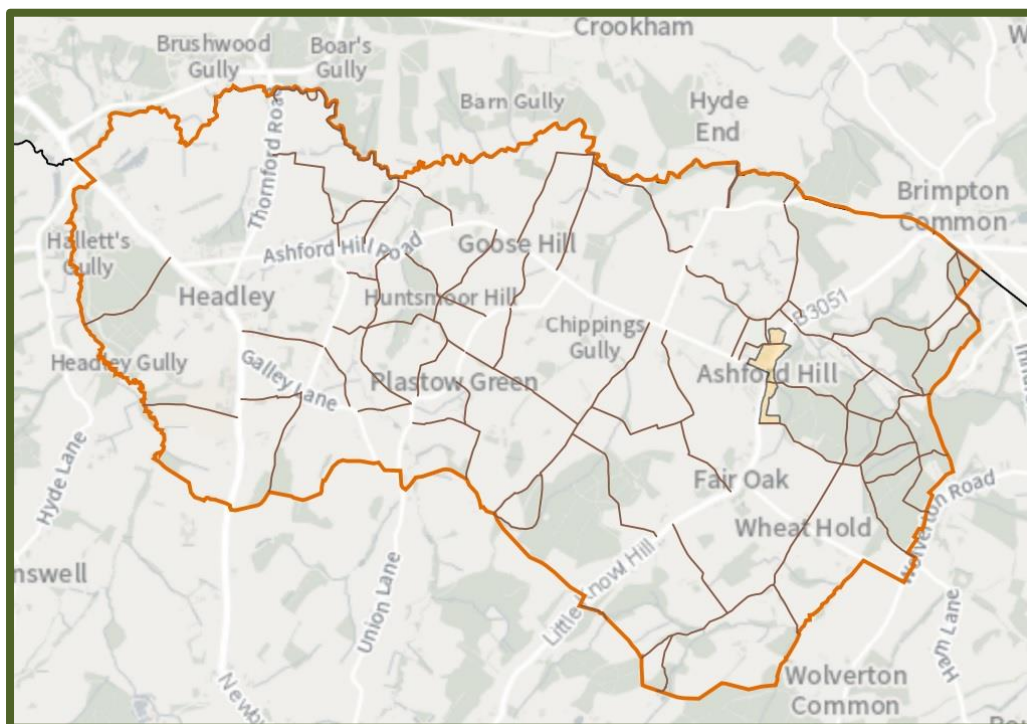


Figure 32 Rights of Way

Transport, Traffic and Public Rights of Way Policy TTP1

New development will only be permitted providing there is no adverse impact on road safety, the road network or existing public rights of way shown in Figure 32.

New development should have regard to BDBC's Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

New development should provide adequate parking on site in order to avoid anti-social and dangerous parking in and around the development. All parking should respect the character and design of the development it serves. Allocated parking should be appropriate to the nature of the development and garages should not be isolated within the plot.

Planning applications should forecast any additional impact on existing transport infrastructure and, where appropriate, provide or contribute towards appropriate measures to address the identified deficiency.

Supporting Text

This is in line with NPPF (Paras.104-9) and the high current volumes of traffic.

Transport, Traffic and Public Rights of Way Policy TTP2

Where relevant, new development should provide safe pedestrian and cycle access and link up with existing rights of way (Figure 32) and pavements (Fig. 33) ensuring residents can walk or cycle safely to existing or new amenities. Additionally, where relevant, all new developments will be expected to provide safe vehicular access.

Supporting Text

The lack of pavements within the Parish was identified as an issue of concern through the household questionnaire.

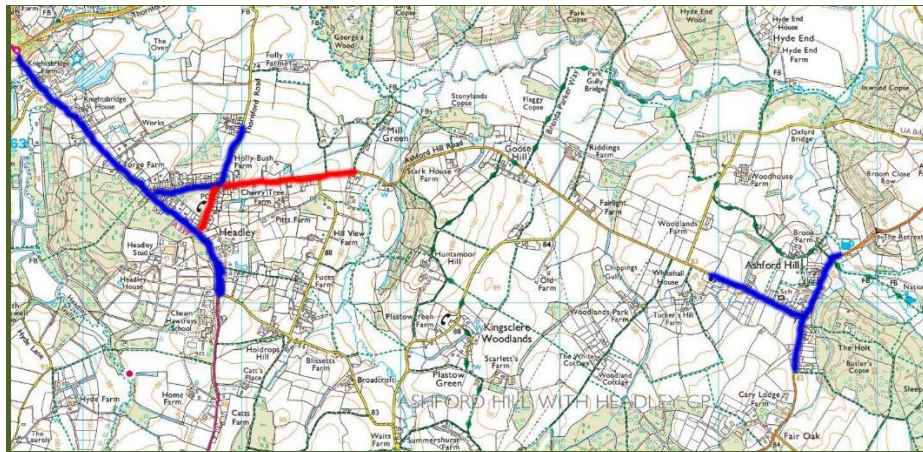


Figure 33 Parish Pavements (blue = existing; red = proposed)

Transport, Traffic and Public Rights of Way Policy TTP3

New developments should not hinder access to Rights of Way as defined by the Hampshire County Council Definitive Maps of Public Rights of Way and identified on Figure 32.

Supporting Text

The Parish is fortunate in the extent of Public Rights of Way it contains which are very much appreciated by the local residents and visitors and access to them should not be hindered by any new development.

Traffic

The 2019 survey of residents identified two major concerns regarding traffic:

- Volume, speed and weight of traffic, particularly on the B3051, Ashford Hill Road and A339;
- Difficulty in joining the A339 from the Ashford Hill Road in Headley.



Figure 34 Ashford Hill Road – westbound approach to A339



Figure 35 A339 southbound at junction with Ashford Hill Road

Much of the 2019 survey feedback related to reducing HGV traffic on the A339, particularly for through traffic. This needs further investigation although it is difficult to reduce volumes of traffic using public roads legitimately. Speed limits exist on all roads, but residents are concerned that drivers do not adhere to them, and some residents favour traffic calming measures.

It is difficult to join the A339 from the Ashford Hill Road, especially during rush hours. Many vehicles avoid this junction by using the Thornford Road past the village shop to access the A339, but this section of road is narrow and often congested near the village shop. Some vehicles even avoid the junction by using local lanes and then Galley Lane to reach the A339. A new roundabout at the A339/Ashford Hill Road junction would: provide much safer access onto the A339; reduce 'rat run' traffic on Thornford Road and local lanes; and slow traffic on the A339. Roundabouts on the A339 already provide easy access to and from the Greenham Common Business Park without unduly impeding traffic flow.

Long queues occur on the A339 in the morning and evening when children are dropped off or picked up at Cheam School. The concept of an extra turning lane into the school has been discussed, but has not yet been progressed.

Parking

There is little off-street public parking in Ashford Hill or Headley. In Ashford Hill, parents collecting or dropping off children at the school can now use the new parking area opposite the school. There is a small car park serving Ashford Hill recreation ground, but it is only accessible via Chapel Lane which is unadopted and has poor sightlines when re-joining the B3051. The village hall has a small car park and R. D. Butlers on occasion allow overflow parking at the back of their premises. There is also some parking available at St Paul's church.

In Headley, St Peter's Church and the village hall share a car park. Whilst this is adequate, it is not available for general parking and is separated from the village by the A339. The lay-bys in Thornford Road opposite the village shop are the only off-road parking for users of the community shop or recreation ground and are often full. Parking on the road is an issue due to its narrowness and use by vans or lorries, particularly from Hope and Clay. The recreation ground is no longer used for football but, if that were to recommence, parking for visiting teams would be a major issue. Limited unsurfaced parking space exists opposite The Cedars but this is on the busy Ashford Hill Road.

Pavements

In Ashford Hill, pavements on both the B3051 and Ashford Hill Road reasonably serve existing residential and other buildings. Pavements exist mostly on only one side of these roads and there are no designated crossing points.

In Headley, the A339 has a pavement only along its eastern side. A pavement runs along the north side of the Ashford Hill Road between the A339 and Thornford Road and along the west side of Thornford Road from the cross-roads down towards Thornfield. Thornford Road between the A339 and the Ashford Hill Road is narrow and has no pavement even though used by many pedestrians to access the village shop or homes. The numerous houses along the Ashford Hill Road between Thornford Road and Mill Green have no pavement access. New housing developments in both villages have pavements.

Street lighting

The only street lighting in the Parish is along the A339 between the Parish boundary at Knightsbridge and Galley Lane. Residents did not regard the absence of street lighting elsewhere in the Parish as a concern. Indeed, some welcomed it.

Recommendations

Hampshire County Council is responsible for highways and the following recommendations will be passed to them:

- investigate why there is inadequate weight limit signage at the Headley end of the Ashford Hill Road;
- find ways to limit HGV traffic on the A339 and B3051;
- investigate the need for enforcing speed limits;
- consider making the voluntary 20 mph speed limit past Ashford Hill School mandatory at start, finish and lunch times;
- provide pedestrian crossings on the B3051 in Ashford Hill and on the Ashford Hill Road, especially near the school;
- investigate how to improve access from the Ashford Hill Road onto the A339 at Headley– potentially a roundabout;
- follow up the plans for reducing congestion outside Cheam School;
- investigate if there is demand and justification for the Kingsclere/Ashford Hill/Tadley bus service to run more than two days a week;
- investigate if there is demand and justification for the last Link bus to Kingsclere being extended through Headley to Newbury;
- provide pedestrian crossings across the A339 in Headley, close to the A339/Ashford Hill Road junction, to provide safe pedestrian access to the bus stop, village hall and church
- install a pavement in the narrow section of Thornford Road to provide safe pedestrian access to the Headley community shop;
- install a pavement along the Ashford Hill Road in Headley between Thornford Road and Mill Green.
- ensure effective maintenance and preservation of footpaths and bridleways which are of importance to many residents.
- Hampshire County Council is responsible for highways issues, but the volume and speed of traffic in the Parish were major concerns in the 2019 survey. Therefore, we propose a community project to erect white village gates on the A339 at the entrance/exit points of Headley village to alert drivers that they are in a residential area.

10 Community Projects

This section does NOT form part of this statutory Neighbourhood Plan.

Some of the important issues raised through community engagement cannot be addressed in the main Plan or through the planning system. Therefore, this section lists potential projects to address some of those issues. These projects could be progressed by the Parish Council and/or interested groups of residents.

Headley village centre improvement

This two-stage project aims to create a more vibrant and social centre in the heart of Headley by relocating the village hall. This would require a plan to take to the necessary decision-making bodies to decommission the village hall, currently situated across the busy A339 away from the village. The derelict changing rooms on the recreation ground would be replaced and extended to incorporate a new village hall. This new building could be used for some of the social activities proposed by residents in the 2019 survey. Outdoor adult fitness equipment could also be located close to the new village hall as an additional village recreational activity.

Public rights of way

The 2019 survey shows that there is limited awareness of existing rights of way for walkers and cyclists in the Parish. Future developers could be asked for contributions to enable way marking the public rights of way and to provide information boards for walkers and cyclists.

Net zero carbon village agenda

This project combines many of the ideas raised in the 2019 survey. A local action group would be created and charged with identifying methods to reduce the carbon footprint of the Parish. This would include the promotion of current activities, for example, where Headley village shop uses and promotes local suppliers. Examples of new activities could include: a local market which could take place periodically; looking at renewable energy options for future domestic and business use; providing allotment sites; reducing water usage or recycling water; seed swops; and beehives in the Parish.

Improved broadband

The need for improved broadband was frequently cited in the 2019 survey, especially to enhance support for local business and residents. Broadband provision is currently the responsibility of Openreach and Hampshire Broadband. For new developments over 10 dwellings, Openreach are required to provide broadband, and this may provide an opportunity that allows existing properties to benefit from upgraded broadband. Potential local initiatives include exploring different forms of broadband; a local 'take-up' group of those willing to pay for higher speeds and availability of grants.

Survey wildlife habitats of local significance

The aim of this project is to identify and describe wildlife habitats of local importance, including rivers, streams, churchyards, road verges, ancient trees, school grounds, recreation areas, meadows, woodlands and hedgerows. Results from this will form part of a Parish wildlife inventory that would:

- provide an online and/or printed description of the wildlife within the Parish;
- enable wildlife sightings to be shared, for example through a blog;
- encourage the recording and monitoring of wildlife, perhaps through a team of wildlife guardians.

Enhance wildlife on arable land

The whole Parish is targeted for Higher Level Stewardship schemes that encourage more wildlife-friendly farming, but only relatively small areas of farmland are currently entered into such schemes. The aims of this project are to:

- encourage declining farmland birds such as skylark, lapwing, yellowhammer and linnets;
- provide a refuge area on arable farm land for scarce plants such as Annual Knawel, Corn Spurrey and Prickly Poppy.

The Parish will encourage local farmers to enhance the wildlife value of local arable farmland by:

- leaving unsown margins and headlands;
- leaving winter stubble unsprayed, providing a source of food for winter birds;
- providing unsown skylark nesting plots;
- providing winter wild bird seed crops;
- rotational hedge trimming so that some hedges retain berries to feed winter birds such as redwing and fieldfare.

In addition, a refuge area will be sought to encourage arable plants that are typical of the area but now scarce. This could be as simple as a buffer zone or margin adjacent to an arable crop that is left unsown and unsprayed. A strip of thin, poorly-cropping stony soil would be ideal.

Protect and restore declining species

The aim of this project is to conserve and encourage declining species within the Parish. These are mostly species living in arable habitats and the proposed project to enhance wildlife on arable farmland seeks to address this need. There is an existing and successful initiative by a local resident to provide nesting boxes for barn owls and little owls; other species which would benefit from the provision of boxes are swifts, house martins and bats.

11 Glossary

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): Designated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, these are areas outside the National Parks considered to have such significant landscape and natural beauty that they should be protected.

Basic Conditions: The conditions which a Neighbourhood Plan must satisfy (see Chapter 4 for details)

BDBC: Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council

Biological Opportunity Area (BOA): A designated landscape-scale area identifying opportunities for habitat creation and restoration where resources can be focused to have the greatest positive impact for wildlife and biodiversity.

Development: Defined by statute as ‘the carrying out of building, mining, engineering or other operations in, on, under or over land, and the making of any material change of use of buildings or other land’.

Development Plan: Any Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans in force for a local authority area.

Heritage Assets: Include designated and non-designated heritage assets. Designated heritage assets include Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas designated under relevant legislation. Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some instances, non-designated assets, particularly archaeological remains, may be of equivalent significance to designated assets, despite not yet having been formally designated.

Highway Authority: Hampshire County Council is the responsible authority for maintenance of public roads in the Basingstoke and Deane area.

Independent Examination: The examination of a Neighbourhood Plan carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced independent person in accordance with Regulation 17.

Local Plan: Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council’s Local Plan 2011-2029, adopted in May 2016. <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/1592.pdf>

Listed Building: A building or structure appearing on a list maintained by Historic England under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990 as being of special architectural or historic interest. BDBC also maintain a local listing designation for planning purposes.

National Nature Reserve: land established under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and managed for the purpose of research and study of flora and fauna or geological and physiographical features; and/or for the preservation of such special features.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The guidance document published by HM Government (revised in 2021) setting out the planning policies for England and Wales and how these are expected to be applied. (See Chapter 12 for link to NPPF).

Neighbourhood Plan: The neighbourhood development plan for an area drawn in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 which once “made” will have the same legal status as a Local Plan and become part of the statutory Development Plan for the area.

Parish: Ashford Hill with Headley Parish

Plan: The Ashford Hill with Headley Neighbourhood Plan

Planning Permission: The permission issued by the Local Planning Authority authorising development in accordance with Town and Country Planning legislation.

Pre-submission Plan: The draft of this Plan setting out the visions, objectives and policies prepared for the six-week consultation in accordance with Regulation 14.

Referendum: The referendum organised by the Local Planning Authority to approve the adoption of a draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Regulations: The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and any reference to a specific Regulation is a reference to the relevant paragraph within Part 5 of the Regulations.

Settlement Policy Boundary: The defined Settlement Boundary for any settlement within the Parish.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): A designated area of particular scientific interest due to its biological, geological or physiographic features.

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC): A defined area, identified and selected by a local authority and its partners, for its nature conservation value, based on important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Defined in the Habitats Directive as "a site of Community importance designated by the Member States through a statutory, administrative and/or contractual act where the necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at a favourable conservation status, of the natural habitats and/or the populations of the species for which the site is designated".

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): An assessment, carried out by the Local Planning Authority, to determine whether the proposals set out in a Neighbourhood Plan are likely to have significant environmental impact and therefore an environmental assessment will be required in order to satisfy the Basic Conditions. A screening assessment is carried out by the Local Planning Authority to determine whether an environmental assessment is required.

Sustainable Development: In summary, development to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs i.e. development without damage to the environment or natural resources. The NPPF (para. 8) sets out three objectives to be achieved to satisfy sustainable development, namely:

- economic objective - to help build a strong and responsive and competitive economy;
- social objective - to support strong vibrant and healthy communities;
- environmental objective - to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

The three strands of sustainability need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

12 Relevant Websites

Ashford Hill Woods and Water Meadows SSSI

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1004214.pdf>

BDBC Landscape Assessment 2001 <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/ENV07>

BDBC Landscape, Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document 2018

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/ENV07>

BDBC Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/133.pdf>

Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan 1998 Vol. 1

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/biodiversity/HampshireBiodiversityActionPlanVolume1.pdf>

Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2000 Vol. 2

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/biodiversity/HampshireBiodiversityActionPlanVolume2.pdf>

National Planning Policy Framework

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf

Tadley North, Kingsclere and Baughurst Ward Profile 2011

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/page/47978/Ward%20Profile%20-%20Kingsclere.pdf>

Village Design Statement 2004

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/page/39590/Ashford%20Hill%20with%20Headley%20-%20February%202004.pdf>

13 Appendices

Appendix 1: Steering Group

Members

Roger Dobbs, Joanne Fernandez, Caroline Hellings (Chair, Steering Group), Jan Hellings, Peter Hemmings, Karin Hendrickse, Steve Hoskins (Parish Council representative), Sarah Langley, Jonathan Morshead, Carol-anne Rhatigan, Joe Woodford (Chair, Parish Council).

Terms of Reference:

By decision of the Parish Council, the Steering Group constituted as below is established to oversee the research and preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Ashford Hill with Headley.

Name

The name of the organisation shall be the Ashford Hill with Headley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, hereafter referred to as the NP Steering Committee.

Purpose

The purpose of the NP Steering Committee shall be to act on behalf of the Parish Council to carry out the following tasks:

1. Investigate and identify support for the Neighbourhood Plan.
2. Identify sources of funding and obtain available grants etc.
3. Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Plan and report back to the Parish Council on these matters.
4. Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Plan as effective as possible.
5. Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
6. Determine the types of survey and information gathering to be used.
7. Take responsibility for the analysis of the survey, the production and distribution of the final report.
8. Identify priorities and timescale for local action in the action plan including lead organisations and potential sources of project funding.
9. To report back to the Parish Council on progress, issues arising and outcomes from the exercise.
10. Draft the Neighbourhood Plan for submission to the Parish Council, the community and Basingstoke & Deane.
11. See the project through to completion.

Reporting

The Steering Committee shall report its recommendations and progress to the Parish Council.

Membership

- The Steering Committee will include no less than 4 members.
- At least one of these members will be members of the Parish Council.
- The initial members of the Steering Committee are residents of the parish who have expressed an interest in participating.
- Any resident or person, particularly those representing a local group, may join the Steering Committee.
- The Committee may co-opt additional members at its discretion.
- A person shall cease to be a member of the Committee having notified the chair or secretary in writing of his or her wish to resign.

Officers

At the first meeting the Committee will elect a chairperson, a deputy chair, a finance officer and a secretary. All other committee members should have a specific role, to be agreed by the Committee.

Meetings

- The Committee shall meet every two months as a minimum, or as may be required. At least five clear days' notice of meetings shall be given to members. All notices of Committee meetings must detail the matters to be discussed.
- Minutes of the Committee meetings will be posted on the Neighbourhood Plan website.
- By nature of the business being conducted, discussions will need to be confidential (i.e. not in public) with recommendations rather than decisions being reported to the Parish Council for debate/approval, which are meetings open to the public.
- Public meetings to seek evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan, Public Survey and feedback on draft sections of the local plan are to form an integral part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the Committee members present and voting. In the case of equality of votes the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
- The committee may decide the quorum necessary to transact business – with a minimum of three members.
- The secretary shall keep a record of meetings, and circulate notes recording headings and actions to members of the committee not more than 14 days after each meeting.
- **Working Groups**
- The Committee may appoint such working groups as it considers necessary to carry out functions specified by the Committee. Each working group should have a nominated chair.
- Working groups do not have power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the Committee. Planned expenditure will be authorised by the Committee in advance.
- Working groups will be bound by the terms of reference set out for them by the Steering Committee.

Finance

- The Committee shall keep a clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices.
- The Committee will report back to the Parish Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project, and liaise with the Clerk to set up a petty cash system and enable cash withdrawals and payment of invoices to be made as required.

Changes to the Terms of reference

These Terms of reference may be altered and additional clauses may be added with the consent of two-thirds of the Committee present.

Dissolution of the Committee

Upon dissolution of the Committee any remaining funds shall revert to the Parish Council.

Appendix 2: Survey of Parish Residents 2019

SURVEY OF RESIDENTS – FINAL REPORT – November 2019

INTRODUCTION

In June 2019, a questionnaire seeking the views of parishioners was delivered to every household in the parish. Further questionnaires were left in several public locations around the parish and the questionnaire was available to download from the parish website. Residents were asked to return their completed questionnaires directly to members of the plan team or via dedicated boxes in key locations around the parish. This report summarises the replies given by parishioners.

ANALYSIS OF RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRES

123 completed questionnaires were received by October 21st: this equates to an approx. 20% response rate. The detailed replies in every questionnaire were transcribed into an Excel or a Word document, as appropriate, and then analysed as described below.

For questions dealing with ‘importance’, every score on every topic by every respondent was allocated a score as shown below. The average (mean) score for each topic was calculated and the topics for each question were ranked according to their mean scores.

Very important	= 5
Quite important	= 4
No opinion	= 3
Quite unimportant	= 2
Very unimportant	= 1
No reply	= 0

On forced choice questions, the totals for each choice were summed.

‘Free text’ comments were transcribed verbatim into a Word document. A small minority of replies were illegible or made no sense. Top line impressions are summarised below, but the detailed responses will be carefully considered during formulation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

RESULTS

1. Essential Characteristics

All the listed characteristics were scored highly with little to choose between them.

Essential characteristics	average
Friendly and safe environment	4.5
Open/green spaces	4.5
Chara. and appearance of neighbourhood	4.4
Ashford Hill NNR	4.3
Sense of community	4.3
Rural and agricultural surroundings	4.2
Variety of traditional building styles	4.0

What other local characteristics are important to you?

66 comments. The Headley shop and the two village greens figured strongly. Residents clearly value the rural feel and natural environment of the parish. Wildlife, birds, woodland,

biodiversity, etc. were mentioned through all ‘free text’ sections, along with over 80 mentions of footpaths and bridleways.

What are the negative features/characteristics of our community?

92 comments. These were wide ranging. Most prominent were: volume and speed of traffic (48 comments); lack of pavements; lack of places to meet; only one pub (closed at weekends); low broadband speeds; poor/no bus service; dual nature of parish.

2. Facilities

‘Please rate how important the following facilities are to you.’ The average scores are ranked high to low in the following table.

Facilities	average
Headley shop and post office	4.6
Improved mobile reception	4.4
Improved broadband service	4.4
Public footpaths and bridleways	4.4
Headley green and play area	4.2
Local businesses	4.1
Bus service to Newbury and Basingstoke	4.0
Ashford Hill green and play area	4.0
Headley shop community room	3.9
Headley village hall	3.9
Ashford Hill school	3.9
Ashford Hill village hall	3.8
Places of worship	3.8
i. The Ship at Ashford Hill	3.5

What other facilities are important to you?

25 comments. Wide ranging and no dominant theme.

Are improvements to existing facilities or new facilities required?

65 comments. Common themes are: poorly maintained footpaths and bridleways; no decent pub; improvements to and/or relocation of Headley village hall; better leisure facilities; need for a decent sports pavilion in Headley; better bus services.

3. Enterprise and Skills

Enterprise and skills	Yes	No	No reply	Total
Do you travel to work outside AHH?	51	68	4	123
Work at home more than 50% of time?	42	78	3	123
Op. bus. from comm. premise in AHH?	20	100	3	123

Is there anything which could be done to support local businesses?

48 comments, the vast majority wanting/suggesting faster broadband.

4. New Housing

	Yes	No	No reply	Total
Does AHH need new homes?	39	75	9	123

Many residents against new homes in the parish expressed strong views on the topic. The

following table shows that large estates are distinctly unpopular.

New development should be located on:	
Brownfield sites	76
Sites replacing existing dwellings	76
Small in-fill sites	50
Small devs. of less than 6 dwellings	44
Conversion of agricultural buildings	43
A single estate	3

When considering the nature of new homes, affordable homes for local people are clearly the top priority, followed by what would generally be smaller homes. Large houses are not popular. The average score for apartments is misleadingly low because this table was split across two pages of the questionnaire. 'Apartments' was isolated at the top of a following page and 31 people failed to give this item a score. By comparison, typically a dozen people failed to score each of the other items in this section.

If new housing, what type of dwelling?	average
Affordable homes for local people	3.8
Small houses (1-2 bedrooms)	3.2
Housing for key workers	3.1
Retirement or sheltered housing	3.0
Medium sized house (3+ bedrooms)	2.8
Care homes	2.4
Large houses (4+ bedrooms)	2.1
Apartments	1.5

The criteria scores for any new housing are self-explanatory, as shown in the following table.

Criteria for new housing?	average
Density in keeping with neighbourhood	4.2
Enhance appearance - native trees, etc.	4.2
Reflect form/scale/prop. of local buildings	4.1
Two storey housing	3.1
Single storey housing or bungalows	2.9
Three storey housing	1.6

What other housing development is important to you?

29 comments. The main themes are that: there should be no more development in the parish; any developments should be at the smaller end of the spectrum; and that infrastructure must be commensurate with any development.

What other issues are important to you in any new development?

57 comments. Broadly the issues were: high quality housing; in keeping with the existing dwellings and character of the parish; upgrades to infrastructure; and no traveller/caravan sites.

5. Highways and Road Safety

What measures to improve road safety would you like to see?

102 comments (i.e. over 80% of all respondents). Views were strong and almost universally

about: high volumes and speed of traffic on the A339, B3051 and all the other roads and lanes in the parish; the need to reduce HGV traffic; the need for more and lower speed limits with effective enforcement; an improved and safer junction of the A339 and AH Road; and traffic calming measures. These replies were reinforced by over 48 similar adverse comments listed as negative features of the Parish See section 1(i) above.

6. About you

Response from?	Joint	Indiv.	None	Total
	87	29	7	123

No. in household?	18+	17-	Total
	245	34	279

Age band of respondent	No.
18-24	1
25-34	1
35-44	11
45-54	22
55-64	31
65+	51
no response	6
Total	123

Location	No.
Headley	70
A. Hill	37
Neither	11
No response	5
Total	123

How long lived here? (years)	No.
<10	39
11-20	31
21-30	19
31-40	13
41-50	8
>50	5
no response	8
Total	123

Are there any other comments you wish to make about AH&H that you would like to address in the neighbourhood plan?

14 comments. Concerns that there have already been too many new developments. Some scepticism about the value of a neighbourhood plan.

Appendix 3: Parish Businesses

Commercial Premises in Parish receiving questionnaires	
NAME	ADDRESS
4 Kingdoms Adventure Park	Knightsbridge Farm, Newbury Road, Headley RG19 8JY
Able Steelwork & Metalwork Ltd.	Unit 6, Ridding's Farm, Goose Hill, Headley RG19 8AU
Acrobat Vehicle Rentals	Union Lane, Kingsclere RG20 4ST
Always Autos	The Old Saddlery, Ashford Hill Road, Headley RG19 8AA
April Farm Stud	Common Road, Headley RG19 8AW
Ashford Hill Primary School	Ashford Hill Road, Ashford Hill RG19 8BB
Ashford Hill Village Hall	Ashford Hill, Thatcham RG19 8DQ
B P S Leisure Ltd	Ashford Hill Road, Headley RG19 8AJ
Berkshire Camper Van Hire	Thornford Road, Headley RG19 8AD
Butler R A & M D	Murrays Service Station, 2 Council Houses, Ashford Hill RG19 8BQ
Carlton Cattery	Hillside Cottage, Ashford Hill Road, Headley RG19 8AJ
Catherine Blades Couture	The Stables, Goose Hill House, Ashford Hill Road, RG19 8AT
Cheam School	Newbury Road, Headley, RG19 8LD
CRW Flooring	1 Tan House Cottages, Ashford Hill Road, RG19 8AP
Fair Oak Farm (Ashford Hill) Ltd	Ashford Hill Road, RG19 8BJ
Fairoak Grange Stud	Ashford Hill RG19 8BL
Gecko Home Cinema	Cherry Cottage, Common Road, Headley RG19 8LJ
H Simmonds Builders Ltd.	Three Farthings, Ashford Hill Road, RG19 8BQ
Headley P.O. & Shop	The Old Baptist Church, Thornford Road, Headley RG19 8AD
Headley Tyres	Newbury Road, Headley RG19 8LG
Hope & Clay Construction Ltd.	Thornford Road, Headley RG19 8AG
Jiminy Crickets Pre-school	The Cricket Club, Chapel Lane, Ashford Hill RG19 8BE
Knightsbridge Farm	Newbury Road, Headley RG19 8JY
La Capanna	Little Knowl Hill, Brimpton Common RG7 4RN
Miles Contractors Ltd.	11 Thornfield Headley, RG19 8AQ
Old Briar Property Services Ltd.	Old Briar Cottage, Ashford Hill RG19 8BD
P G H Memorials	Unit 7B, Ridding's Farm, Goose Hill, Headley RG19 8AU
Redlands Property Services Ltd.	Redlands Farm, Barn Brimpton, Common RG7 4RN
ReThink Office Furniture	Unit 1, Ridding's Farm, Goose Hill, Headley RG19 8AU
Sascron Car Supermarket	The Old Bakery, Ashford Hill RG19 8BJ
Ten-K Electronics	Unit 7, Blacknest Farm, Brimpton Common RG7 4RN

The Headley Fold - Pedigree Highland Cattle	Common Road, Headley
The Ship Inn	Ashford Hill Road, Ashford Hill RG19 8FQ
The Tinderbox Stoves & Fireplaces Ltd.	Unit 7B, Ridding's Farm, Goose Hill, Headley RG19 8AU
Vincent Horseboxes	Blissett's Farm, Union Lane, Holdrop Hill RG19 8LJ
Woodhouse Farm	Woodhouse Lane, Ashford Hill RG19 8BA
Woodlands Farm	2 Woodhouse Lane, Ashford Hill RG19 8BA
Woodside Livery Yard	Ashford Hill Road, Goose Hill RG19 8AS

Appendix 4: Sites of Nature Conservation Interest

Map Label	SINC Ref	SINC Name	Central Grid Ref.	Area (ha)
1	BD0247	Long Court Copse	SU50206180	6.12
2*	BD0255	Knightsbridge Farm Meadow 1	SU50506280	3.79
3	BD0260	Aldersbrook	SU50806275	11.69
4	BD0264	Westlands Copse & Plantation	SU50906220	15.96
5*	BD0270	Riverside Strip, Hyde Farm	SU51206160	0.71
6	BD0271	Headley Gravel Pit	SU51206270	7.39
7	BD0272	Slade's Copse	SU51306130	2.86
8	BD0273	Cheam School Woods	SU51306180	4.57
9	BD0280	Little Meadows	SU52156280	0.46
10	BD0281	Catt's & Redlands Copses	SU52206120	6.38
11	BD0289	Common Road Paddock	SU52606250	0.99
12	BD0290	Mill Green Meadow	SU52626303	0.89
13	BD0291	Wheatlands	SU52706270	1.30
14	BD0302	Mill Green	SU52986285	1.91
15	BD0305	Rackletons/Hill Cross/Hill House Copses	SU53106250	12.10
16	BD0315	Stark Farm Meadow	SU53526293	0.29
17	BD0317	Flaggy Copse	SU53906330	1.82
18	BD0319	Eleven Acre Copse	SU4006195	1.49
19	BD0323	Broom Close Copse Complex	SU54206110	45.91
20	BD0324	Chippings Gully	SU54206210	1.21
21	BD0329	Skittle Hill	SU54406030	1.23
22	BD0330	Riddings Farm Copse	SU54406290	1.51
23*	BD0333	Morrell's & Clinker's Copses	SU54505980	8.77
24*	BD0334	Skittle Hill Copse & The Hervent	SU54506030	12.02
25	BD0335	Riddings Farm Fen	SU54506320	3.06
26	BD0339	Withy Bed Copse Meadow	SU54685939	0.30
27	BD0341	Frith Farm Meadows	SU54905990	1.85
28	BD0342	Ashford Hill Churchyard	SU4936214	0.19
29	BD0348	Greenland Copse	SU55106070	0.85
30	BD0349	Fairoak Copse, Ashford Hill with Headley	SU55106110	1.67
31	BD0352	Pithouse Copse & Fairoak Copse	SU55306050	3.55
32	BD0353	Woodhouse Farm (3 small woods)	SU55336289	0.76
33	BD0358	Sandford Wood East	SU5540940	70.95
34	BD0368	Kitt's Court Copse	SU55706000	2.59
35	BD0370	Oxford/hines Copse/Broom Close Row	SU55806270	11.07
36	BD0390	Great Haughurst Copse	SU56806150	15.47
37	BD0393	The Gravel Pits	SU56906260	4.12
38*	BD0395	The Gravel Pits East	SU57076253	1.17

N.B. Asterisked sites are adjacent to the Parish boundary, but do not extend into the Parish.

Appendix 5: Local Green Spaces - Justification

NPPF Para. 101

The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

NPPF Para. 102

The Local Green Spaces designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- b) 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), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

Ashford Hill Recreation Ground

- a) Centre of village, only publicly accessible open space within village.
- b) High recreational value featuring football pitches, cricket pitch and pavilion and large children's play area.
- c) Significant local amenity.

Headley Recreation Ground

- a) Centre of village, only publicly accessible open space within village.
- b) Highly valued by locals for recreational use and walking and by children for playing. It has a good quality football pitch and interest has been expressed in using it for junior team training. Also features a children's play area.
- c) Significant local amenity.

Mill Green Common Land

- a) Located at a hub of local popular footpaths.
- b) A registered area of common land and noted for its wildlife.
- c) One of the last fragments of the once extensive Headley Common.

Sports Pitches and Common Land adjacent to La Capanna

- a) Adjacent to Ashford Hill National Nature Reserve.
- b) The playing fields and pavilion are highly valued by local junior football clubs as is the common land comprising heathland and a footpath network.
- c) The heathland is virtually unique in the Ashford Hill area.

Oakfield Open Space

- a) Centre of village adjacent to a recent housing development.
- b) Serves the purpose of a Public Open Space in an increasingly built up area.
- c) With further local housing development planned this open space will become an even more important local feature.

Headley Ford

- a) Along with the Recreation Ground is considered one of Headley's two main distinguishing features.
- b) Historically significant as prior to the building of the "new" Thornford Road to the west all north bound road traffic into Berkshire crossed the ford via the "old" Thornford Road.
- c) A unique feature and "beauty spot within the parish and traceable on earliest maps of the area.

Hollybush small open space

- a) Not far from what is deemed to be the centre of Headley.
- b) Particularly of importance to the residents of the recent housing development at Hollybush as their “only open, unbuilt space”.

Harrow drive open space

- a) Not far from what is deemed to be the centre of Headley.
- b) Particularly of importance to the residents of the recent housing development at Harrow Drive as their “only open, unbuilt space”.

Appendix 6: Parish Boundary

