

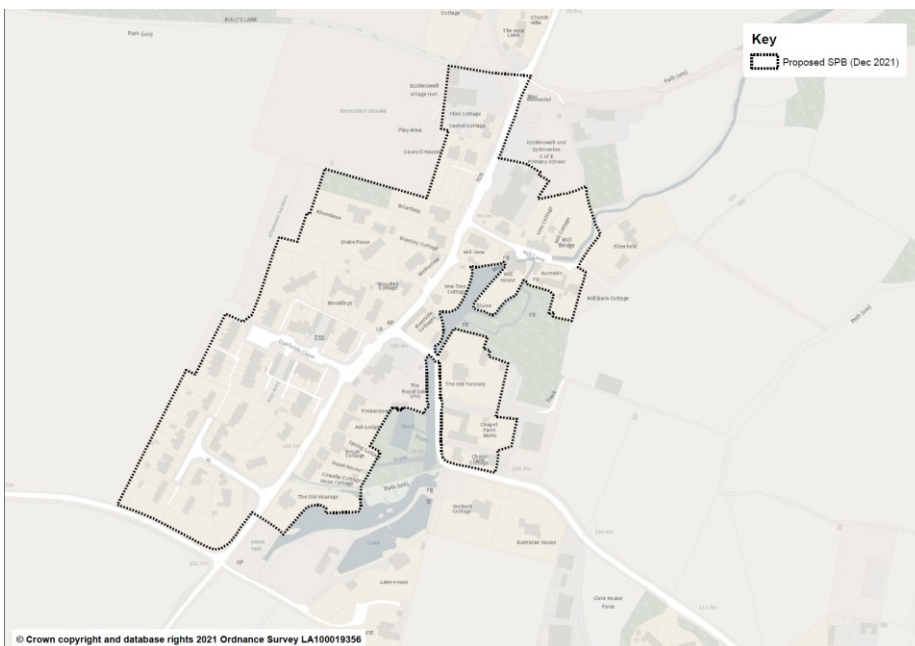
Supporting Evidence B – Settlement Boundaries for the Parish of Ecchinswell, Sydmonton & Bishops Green

Settlement Boundaries are defined for Bishops Green and Ecchinswell according to the maps below.

Bishops Green Settlement Boundary



Ecchinswell Settlement Boundary



A smaller scale map shows the location of the settlement boundaries within the northern part of the parish:

**Northern
third of our
parish**



The adopted Basingstoke & Deane BC Local Plan (2016) did not define Settlement Boundaries for the ES&BG Parish partly because no allocation for increased housing was made in the Plan. One component of the B&D BC Local Plan Update now being developed is a Spatial Study for Rural areas of the borough. This study categorises Bishops Green and Ecchinswell as “small villages” with an associated requirement for Settlement Boundaries to be defined for each and then proposes an allocation from the total number of extra homes required in the Borough.

The Neighbourhood Plan establishes the required settlement boundaries for Bishops Green and Ecchinswell.

Development proposals within the defined/adjusted settlement boundary will be supported, provided they accord with policies of the development plan particularly Policy ESG2 (Sustainable Settlements that are Rural in Character).

The establishment of settlement boundaries will therefore make the desired contribution to meeting housing requirements in the Borough for the period of Local Plan Update.

Development proposals outside the defined settlement boundary will only be supported if they are appropriate forms of development within rural areas suited to a countryside location or a location within the North Wessex Downs AONB and they accord with policies of the development plan relating to the historic environment, heritage assets, landscape character and the natural environment.

The two settlements in the parish are surrounded by a sensitive landscape that needs to be protected from larger scale developments that threaten the rural character of the area. It is therefore crucial that new developments remain in and around the current built-up area, to minimize the impact they would have on the landscape. In addition, it is critical that any development maintains and enhances the rural character of the parish.

The Settlement Boundary and Housing & Development Policies therefore set the spatial strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan. The objective is to allow the modest and sustainable growth needed to meet local housing requirements over the Plan Period while also protecting the integrity of the rural character of the villages and the wider parish.

The boundaries have been created based on careful review of the existing settlements such that the more clearly built-up areas are within the boundaries while the areas outside the boundaries comprise open countryside and a number of dwellings with relatively large rural plots. This process defines the initial boundaries. In order to deliver the extra homes required in the parish over the plan period, the initial boundaries will be revised appropriately to incorporate the built area and curtilages of the sites following the housing objectives laid out in Policy ESG2 and the specific allocations in Policies ESG3 and ESG4.

The Policy also allows for some modest continuing growth of Bishops Green and Ecchinswell through suitable infill sites. The suitability of sites for infill development will be judged against the design policies of the development plan.

The Settlement Boundary for Bishops Green is a clean compact area west of the roadway that runs through the parish from North to South. It also retains the small "Traveller Site" in Rooksfield which contributes the B&D BC policy of ensuring such accommodation is available in the Borough.

The Settlement Boundary for Ecchinswell comprises the main part of the settlement. Historical evolution has led to the village with the main part containing the majority of homes. There is a secondary group of houses to the north around the village pond separated from the main part by open fields and a small number of larger dwellings in extensive plots and St Lawrence Church.

Development of the Bishops Green Settlement

Bishops Green is largely comprised of housing built in the second half of the 20th Century/early 2000s. Prior to this there were only a few houses around the ford that was the historic crossing of the Enborne in the north of the parish. The establishment of the Greenham Common Airbase in WW2 and its various uses by the RAF and USAF in 1945-1995 led to two major waves of building

- The first around what is now Ash Road and connecting roads was of relatively low quality social housing that was redeveloped in the early 2000s by the current mix of social and private housing in a relatively dense/urban layout of ~ 150 homes.
- The second was the set of ~90 homes along Eagle Road that were originally built to house USAF personnel and are now largely owned/operated by Sovereign Housing as social housing.

As a result, Bishops Green is a relatively compact settlement.

Development of the Echinswell Settlement (extracted from the Conservation Area Assessment by B&D BC)

The village of Echinswell has evolved as a linear settlement with irregular and loosely formed clusters of buildings. There is perhaps one planned area, consisting of a regular row of houses.

Between the main north/south road and the river, is an irregularly shaped area which originally contained a church along with other buildings. North of this, on the west side of the stream, are three plots which appear to have encroached onto a former open area. On the east side of the river are a group of buildings that have a common rear boundary, and at the north of this area is the mill. Backing onto part of this area are a number of long narrow strips of land, which may be the remnants of the open field strip system. To the north of the main concentration of settlement is an area with an internal curving boundary, suggesting that the road system may once have been different to the present day narrow roads. On the northern boundary of the village is a small cluster of cottages around a small green and pond, suggesting a later phase of settlement within the village.

The village has developed around two foci with the Church of St Lawrence located between the two. The southern focus is the more historical centre of the settlement, formerly containing the original church within the village. The northern focus has developed around Echinswell House and Malthouse Farm, spreading to the north to centre on a pond.

The prevailing former employment within the village was agricultural, with two farms situated within the boundaries of the Conservation Area, and a further three farms located to the east of the village. The mill also provided local employment along with the tannery. A number of watercress beds existed in the south of the village.

Specific rationale for the Settlement Boundaries from discussion with B&D BC

Bishops Green

1. Back gardens of Rooksfield properties There is close boarded fencing separating the countryside from residential curtilage which provides a distinguishing visual feature and separation between residential built-up area and surrounding open countryside to the west and south.
2. The settlement is clearly defined along its western edge by hedging and trees with a dense copse to the north (Gold Copse SINC). This provides a distinctive natural physical and visual edge to the settlement.
3. Bishops Green play area A recreational area physically surrounded on all sides by development. The play area provides a focal point for surrounding dwellings. The use has been urbanised and is primarily related to the surrounding residential use and village hall immediately adjacent to the space.
4. Harrier Road This area of amenity grassland physically adjoins and is more visually related to the newly built residential development on the edge of Bishops Green. It is bounded by hedgerow and scattered trees to the north and west which provides a natural screen and separation from the countryside to the north. As such this land has been included within the settlement boundary.
5. Campsite and light industrial uses Despite being on the edge of the built-up area, these businesses are not visually or physically related to the settlement and this is further separated by the existing main road and high hedging along Ecchinswell Road. In particular, the campsite has a closer relationship with the surrounding countryside for tourism and recreation.
6. Ecchinswell Road Provides well-defined boundary to the settlement which is also bound by high hedgerows along the majority of this stretch of road, containing the curtilages to the west.

Ecchinswell

1. Corner House, Corner Cottage and Church Villa. Exclusion of these large properties and associated curtilages that are not strongly linked to the built-up area.
2. War Memorial and Ecchinswell and Sydmonton Church of England Primary School Exclusion of school playing fields.
3. Copse and agricultural uses behind local primary school. Excluded from the boundary due to agricultural use and the presence of an existing copse which creates a natural screening from the wider countryside.
4. Residential properties along Mill Lane. Included due to curtilages of dwellings being contained by enclosing features which separate them from the surrounding countryside and as these dwellings and also both visually and closely related to the built-up area of the settlement. Large properties at the end of Mill Lane excluded as they are less physically and visually related to the built up area of the settlement.

5. Natural features between The Old Tannery and Mill House. Wooded area and presence of watercourse providing natural physical boundary on the edge of the built-up area softening the transition between the residential dwellings and wider countryside to the east.
6. The Old Tannery and Chapel Farm. These residential dwellings continue the built form of the settlement and therefore have been included. The boundary ends at the edge of the road, which provides a distinct separation from the properties to the south (Orchard Cottage and Burnbrae House).
7. Orchard Cottage and Burnbrae House. These dwellings are largely separated from the main built-up area of the settlement by the wooded area to the south-west. As such, it is considered that these dwellings are only loosely related and do not visually or physically relate to the built-form and should not be included within the boundary.
8. Land around the Old Vicarage. The wooded area with streams to the east and south of the vicarage includes a cluster of residential dwellings. These properties are all separated from the main built form of village by natural features which remain undeveloped and preserve the character of the settlement. However, the Old Vicarage has been included in the SPB due to its strong relationship with Ecchinswell Road.
9. White Hill and Oakfields Close. Maintained residential hedging along the western boundary provides a distinctive boundary edge to the settlement and built-up area between countryside and residential uses.
10. Allotments. Due to the horticultural nature of the use and location on the edge of the settlement, it is not considered that the land should be enclosed by the settlement boundary as this is primarily related to the countryside context in its context.
11. Village Hall. The village hall is a community facility and has been included within the boundary due to its contribution to the settlement and location on the edge of the built-up area of the village. The recreation field has not been included as it is only physically surrounded by development on two sides and relates more closely to the rural countryside to the west.