

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan 2016 – 2033

Submission Version



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August 2016

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2033

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Foreword

The Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton is a rural parish with a population of approximately 2,500 people living in about 1,000 houses spread over an area of around 10½ square miles.

The built environment of the parish is made up of the villages of Bledlow, Bledlow Ridge and Saunderton. There are also a number of hamlets and scattered housing surrounded mainly by farmland and woodland. The Parish is served by the A4010 to the East and the B4009 running across the North of the parish with a network of minor roads connecting the villages – some being used as 'rat runs' for through traffic.

The parish has scores of listed buildings and 14 scheduled ancient monuments. Approximately 70% of the parish lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and/or is classified as Green Belt. The beauty of the area attracts many tourists and the extensive network of footpaths and bridleways, including the Ridgeway and ancient routes such as the Icknield Way, makes it popular with walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

Some people have lived in the parish all their lives and have strong family connections spanning many generations; others have moved in more recently, often with young families. Established and more recent residents together enjoy a friendly community spirit. The clubs, societies and many social networks; the rural and open character of the parish and the quality of its built environment all make the area a very desirable place to live.

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton is located in the south east of England with a good rail connection to London via the Chiltern line. Although the parish has changed only slightly over the years, we accept that the parish will grow in order to help meet the demand for housing in the region. We want, however, to ensure that such growth is organic, sympathetic to the character of the parish and, as much as possible, benefits those who live in or have direct connections with the parish.

Through this Neighbourhood Plan we have the opportunity to influence how the parish will develop over the next 17 years until 2033. Once approved, it will become part of Wycombe District Council's Development Plan and, as a consequence, will direct future development.

This document benefits from the input of residents, local businesses and members of the community, the technical expertise of Wycombe District Council and rCOH (the parish council's planning consultants) who have all contributed to its production.

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I wish to thank everyone who has contributed: local residents who have, sometimes passionately, shared their views on the plan, the volunteers of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and five Task Groups, the Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerks.

We are now submitting the Plan to Wycombe District Council. This will be followed by a further round of public consultation before the plan is sent to an independent Examiner for review. Provided the plan passes this review it will finally be subject to a local referendum in 2017.

Cllr Simon Breese

Chairman, Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish Council
& Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

List of Land Use policies

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Glossary

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BCC	Buckinghamshire County Council
BcS	Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish
BcS NP or Plan	Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan
BcS PC	Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish Council
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
HEDNA or HEDNA Report	Buckinghamshire Housing and Development Needs Assessment January 2016
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PRTP	Prince Risborough Town Plan
TfB	Transport for Buckinghamshire
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WDC	Wycombe District Council

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish Council (BcS PC) is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, Wycombe District Council (WDC), under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The designated area is shown (in pink) in Plan A below.



Plan A: The Designated Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish Neighbourhood Area

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.2 The purpose of the Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan (BcS NP) will be to make planning policies that will be used in determining planning applications in the area. Its policies will aim to protect the special character of the parish and to encourage development proposals for the benefit of the local community.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, and adopted ('made') by WDC, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes a statutory part of the Development Plan for the area and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided. Neighbourhood plans can therefore only contain land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are more important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Neighbourhood Plan if they are not directly related to planning.
- 1.4 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood plans must meet some 'basic conditions'. These are:
 - Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the plan
 - The making of the plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
 - The making of the plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority
 - The making of the plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations
 - Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the plan.
- 1.5 In addition, BcS PC must be able to show that it has properly consulted local people and other relevant organisations during the process of making its Plan and has followed the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.
- 1.6 These requirements will be tested by an independent examiner once the Plan is finalised. If satisfied, the examiner will recommend to WDC that the plan goes to referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes for the Plan, then it will become made as formal planning policy for the area.

The Pre Submission Plan

- 1.7 The Pre-Submission Plan was the opportunity for BcS PC to consult on the proposed policies of the Plan. The contents of the Pre-Submission Plan were presented at the Regulation 14 stage to obtain the views of the local community and other organisations on its proposed vision, objectives and land use policies. This final version of the Plan takes into account representations received on the Pre-Submission version.
- 1.8 BcS PC requested a screening opinion from WDC in respect of the need to prepare a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) under the EU Directive 42/2001 and the 2004 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations.
- 1.9 WDC's screening opinion concluded that there was a requirement for an assessment because the contents of the Plan were likely to lead to significant environmental effects. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / SEA Scoping Report has been consulted upon and a draft SA/SEA report was published alongside the Pre-Submission Plan for consultation. A final SA/SEA is published alongside this Submission Plan for examination in order to assess how the plan "contributes to the achievement of sustainable development", one of the 'basic conditions' of the 1990 Act and therefore a requirement of the BcS NP.
- 1.10 Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan falls within the zones of influence of the Chilterns Beechwoods and Ashton Rowant Special Areas of Conservation, Wycombe District Council have concluded in their Screening Opinion (August 2016) that the Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects on any Natura 2000 sites alone or in combination with other plans and projects, and an Appropriate Assessment for the Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan is not required.

The Next Steps

- 1.11 This 'Submission Plan' will be submitted to WDC to arrange for its independent examination and then referendum.

2. The Neighbourhood Area

- 2.1 On 13th October 2015 WDC designated the whole of the Bledlow-cum-Saunderton parish as the area for the BcS NP. Bledlow-cum-Saunderton is a rural parish spread over an area of about 10½ square miles in the north-west corner of WDC's area in Buckinghamshire. It comprises the villages of Bledlow, Bledlow Ridge and Saunderton and a number of hamlets and scattered housing surrounded mainly by farms, woodland and other open spaces. 70% of the parish lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty much of which is classified as Green Belt. Like other rural parishes within the District, Bledlow-cum-Saunderton is ranked within the 5% most deprived in England in respect of geographical barriers to services (distance to a doctors, shop, primary school & post office). The parish has one primary school, two village halls, three churches, three pubs and one shop.
- 2.2 The parish has a population of approximately 2,500 people living in 1,000 houses. The most common house type within the parish is detached property, with 43% of total residents owning their property outright. According to the 2011 Census, 92% of the parish population is defined as "white British", mainly in "good" (32%) or "very good" (55%) health. The age demographic for the parish compared with the District shows that the parish has a higher percentage of people in the 45 to 74 year old bracket and a lower percentage between the ages of 20 and 44. The Bucks ACORN (A Classification Of Residential Neighbourhoods) scheme positions the parish among the very least deprived areas of Buckinghamshire and England. The largest percentage of economically inactive people in the parish is represented by residents who have retired.
- 2.3 The nearest large settlements are Princes Risborough, High Wycombe and Chinnor (in Oxfordshire), with which the parish shares boundaries. These settlements (and in particular Princes Risborough where the current plan suggests 2,500 new houses, representing an increase of 70% in the town's population) are currently the subject of development plans which would see their respective geographical footprints and populations grow significantly. Princes Risborough is used by a number of parish residents for their day-to-day shopping needs and for access to critical services like doctors, pharmacies, post office, etc. High Wycombe and Thame (in Oxfordshire) are also popular shopping destinations.
- 2.4 There is a great deal of evidence of prehistoric activity in the parish, which has the largest concentration of Bronze Age barrows outside of Wessex. There is evidence of three roman villas in the parish and one at Church Farm, Saunderton was excavated in the 1930s. There is a Saxon cemetery on Hemley Hill, Saunderton. In the medieval period the parish area included several different manors and there are two moated sites in the Saunderton area. In the 18th

century a workhouse was founded in Saunderton, which in the Victorian era became the main workhouse for the union of High Wycombe.

- 2.5 Holy Trinity church in Bledlow is the oldest church in the parish having been founded in the twelfth century. St Mary and St Nicholas in North Saunderton was established in the thirteenth century and rebuilt in 1886, while St Paul's church in Bledlow Ridge is more recent, and was built in the nineteenth century. In addition to the churches, there were several mills in the parish dating back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- 2.6 In 1862 Bledlow station was opened on the Wycombe Railway between High Wycombe and Oxford, this was followed in 1901 by a station at Saunderton. In 1906 these were linked with Marylebone, and the Watlington and Princes Risborough Railway was opened with a halt at Bledlow.
- 2.7 Historic maps show that over the last 150 years the parish has remained largely as undeveloped countryside which now forms part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and has changed little over the years.
- 2.8 During the period 2006-2015 domestic extensions were by far the most common form of development which took place in the parish. During the same period some 80 planning applications were made for the construction of one or more houses, many of which were rebuilds of existing residential and non-residential development. Excluding the yet-to-be-built 42 houses on the brownfield site of Wests Yard in Saunderton, the net increase of the parish housing stock over the last 10 years totals some 40 houses. At the same time the parish has few non-agricultural employment sites and has experienced a pattern of continuing loss of light industrial and small businesses units and the closure and sale of the tobacco machinery business at Molins, the biggest employment site in the parish, over the last 30 – 40 years.
- 2.9 There are 63 listed buildings in the parish, including one Grade I and four Grade II*. 21 listed buildings are included in the Bledlow Settlement Area (19 of these are within the Conservation Area), including one Grade I and one Grade II*. There are 6 listed buildings and 1 locally listed building in the Pitch Green Settlement Area. 3 Grade II listed buildings are included in the Bledlow Ridge Settlement Area. The parish also includes 14 scheduled ancient monuments.
- 2.10 The parish contains several different Landscape Character Areas, which help describe the key characteristics of the parish and identify its relative sensitivity to future change:
 - Longwick Vale
 - Risborough Chalk Foothills
 - Wain Hill Chalk Escarpment
 - Bledlow Ridge Dip Slope with Dry Valleys

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- Wye Chalk River Valley.

The Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation Project is also of relevance since the predominant landscape character areas include the Bledlow Ridge Dip Slope with dry valleys and the Wye - Chalk River Valley.

3. Planning Policy Context

3.1 The parish lies under the control of WDC in the County of Buckinghamshire.

3.2 The National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) published by the Government in 2012 (and its National Planning Practice Guidance) is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The BcS NP must demonstrate that it is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF. The following paragraphs of the NPPF are especially relevant to the BcS NP:

- The role of neighbourhood plans (paragraph 16)
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (paragraph 28)
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (paragraph 50)
- The vitality of rural communities (paragraph 55)
- Good design (paragraph 58)
- Protecting healthy communities (paragraph 70)
- Protecting local green spaces (paragraph 76)
- Protecting the Green Belt (paragraphs 79-89)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (paragraphs 109-116)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (paragraph 126)
- Neighbourhood planning (paragraphs 183-185)

3.3 WDC, as the planning authority, has planning policies that are helping to shape strategy and policies of the BcS NP. The BcS NP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan as required by the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and is applying the reasoning and evidence underpinning the development of the new Local Plan.

3.4 The Wycombe District Development Plan comprises:

- Wycombe District Local Plan (as saved and extended (2007) and replaced by the adopted Core Strategy July 2008 and Delivery and Site allocations plan July 2013)
- Wycombe Core Strategy (2008)
- Delivery and Site Allocations Plan for Town Centres and Managing Development (2013)
- Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy 2012
- Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2004-2016 - part retained).

3.5 A consultation on the New Local Plan options took place in the spring of 2014. The emerging Local Plan is scheduled for examination in spring 2017 and adoption in 2018. It will include the overall strategy for the district, how the environment of the district will continue to be protected and set out the most sustainable locations for housing and economic development up to 2033. The plan will not replace matters already dealt with in the Delivery and Site

Allocation Plan 2013 (with the exception of policies with regards to flood risk, and with regards to requirements in terms of water efficiency and energy) but will set out strategic policies for the District, individual site proposals for local areas and detailed policies to manage development.

- 3.6 While the new local plan is still at a formative stage, the BcS NP has anticipated this scope in positively seeking opportunities to develop complementary neighbourhood plan policies to meet evidenced needs against a backdrop of the significant environmental constraints that apply in the parish.

The Wycombe District Consolidated Local Plan (2013)

- 3.7 Wycombe District Council applies the adopted policies of its development framework (as set out in paragraph 3.4) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in determining planning applications.
- 3.8 The Development Plan contains strategic and non-strategic policies that are specific to the BcS NP area.

General Development Policies

- Policy DM1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy CS7 – Rural Settlements and Rural Areas – Sustaining rural settlements including ensuring new development respects the character and sense of place of villages and hamlets
- Policy CS19 Raising the Quality of Place shaping and Design by securing high standards of design and layout
- Policy DM14 Biodiversity in Development
- Policy DM18 Carbon Reduction and Water Efficiency
- Policy G3 – General Design Policy: encourages a high standard of design and layout in all new development
- Policy G7 – Development in relation to topography: acknowledges the importance of wider views from both higher and lower ground given the varied topography of the district
- Policy G8 – Detailed Design Guidance and Local Amenity: to control the effects of future development on living and working conditions within site boundaries and on surrounding properties
- Policy G10 – Landscaping: establishes the significance of both hard and soft landscape design in new development
- Policy G11 – Trees and Hedgerows: acknowledging the importance of trees and hedgerows to the districts environment
- Policy G16 – Light Pollution: to control the use of external lighting and reduce light pollution
- Policy G28 – Telecommunications: acknowledging its importance whilst ensuring new telecoms equipment minimises visual harm

Housing

- Policy H8 – Appropriate Development Densities: making the most efficient use of land
- Policy H10 – The Protection of Existing Residential Accommodation and Land: ensuring development does not reduce the supply of housing or housing land
- Policy H14 – Affordable Rural Housing: supporting the development of a limited supply of rural housing to meet local needs
- Policy H17 – Extensions and other developments within Residential curtilages: ensuring extensions that require planning permission are appropriate in their context
- Policy H19 – Residents' Amenity Spaces and Gardens: ensuring amenity space is attractive and usable

Transport

- Policy T4 – Pedestrian Movement and Provision: providing for safe, direct and convenient pedestrian access
- Policy T13 – Traffic Management and Parking: reducing the impact of traffic and parking on local roads
- Policy CS16 Transport and assessing the transport impacts of proposals
- Policy CS20 – Transport and Infrastructure
- Policy DM2 Transport Requirements of Development Sites

The Countryside and the Rural Economy

- Policy C6 – Farm Diversification: encouraging rural enterprise and the contribution to the wider rural economy
- Policy C7 - Re-use and adaptation of Buildings in the Countryside: to support the need for employment development in rural areas and to encourage good design
- Policy CS11 Land for Business including small scale business development that supports the rural economy
- Policy DM5 Scattered Business Sites

The Countryside beyond the Green belt

- Policy C10: development necessary to support agriculture and forestry
- Policy C14: supporting extensions to dwellings in the countryside at an appropriate scale and not detrimental to character

Green Belt

- Policy CS9 Green Belt – Protecting from inappropriate development

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- Policy GB2: Development in the Green Belt
- Policy GB4: defining built up areas in the green belt, allowing for infilling in identified villages including Bledlow Ridge
- Policy GB5: controlling the scale and design of replacement dwellings in the green belt
- Policy GB6: controlling the scale and design of extensions in the green belt
- Policy GB7: controlling the scale and design of ancillary buildings within residential curtilages
- Policy GB9 – Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt: defining the former Molins Factory site in South Saunderton as a 'Major Developed Site in the Greenbelt' and supporting the redevelopment of that part of the site so defined

Landscape and Nature Conservation

- Policy L1 – The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: acknowledging its conservation status and scenic beauty, and where development acceptable for it to be of the highest quality design and where major development, it is in the public interest
- Policy L6 – Woodlands: protecting woodland from loss or fragmentation
- Policy CS17 – Environmental Assets – conserving the Chilterns AONB and its setting and the conservation and enhancement of landscape character
- Policy DM13 Conservation and Enhancement of Sites, Habitats and Species

Heritage

- Policy HE3 – Development Affecting the setting of Listed Buildings: ensuring the settings of listed buildings are preserved
- Policy HE6 – New development in Conservation Area and Conservation Area Character Surveys: ensuring development preserves and enhances the special character or conservation areas including Bledlow village
- Policy HE11 – Development Adjoining Conservation Areas: to minimise the visible adverse impact on conservation areas
- Policy HE18 – Scheduled Ancient Monuments: ensuring development creates no adverse impact on the site or setting

Saunderton Local Area Action Plan

3.9 On 16th November 2015 the WDC Cabinet decided that:

- a) the Saunderton Local Area Action Plan be abandoned in favour of a Bledlow-cum-Saunderton neighbourhood plan;
- b) the principle of established national planning policy of protecting the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt must be upheld; and

c) mixed use developments be actively encouraged within the parish of Bledlow-cum-Saunderton.

Conservation Areas

- 3.10 A Conservation Area Character Survey of Bledlow Village was undertaken in 1996, and the village was subsequently designated a Conservation Area under the powers of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971.
- 3.11 Future development should respect the setting and views into and out of the Conservation Areas to sustain the character of the villages. The BcS NP has reviewed the Conservation Area appraisal to inform an updated design appraisal of the village as whole, beyond the conservation area boundary defined on the Bledlow Village settlement boundary map.

Chilterns AONB

- 3.12 Over half of the neighbourhood area falls within the Chilterns AONB, and the area that is not designated AONB forms part of the setting of the Chilterns AONB. As a protected landscape, with equal planning status to National Parks, government policy in NPPF paragraphs 115 and 116 states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and that planning applications for major development should be refused except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. The Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019 is a material consideration for all applications within, or within the setting of, the AONB. Public bodies, including parish and district councils, have a statutory duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.

4. Community Views on Planning Issues

- 4.1 In August 2015 BcS PC established a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to steer the preparation of the BcS NP. In December 2015 the Working Group set up five Task Groups to work on specific topics of relevance to the BcS NP. From the start, both the Working Group and the Task Groups have reached out to the local community with the aim to (i) raise/maintain awareness of the neighbourhood plan initiative, and (ii) involve residents in the work on-going at the time.
- 4.2 Key consultation initiatives organised by the Working Group include:
- A parish survey on a wide-range of planning issues (January 2016). A total of 360 responses were returned out of 921 surveys sent to the parish households, a return rate of 39%.
 - Two public meetings (February/March 2016), organised as walk-in exhibitions (with some 40 A1 posters displayed) with members of the neighbourhood plan team in attendance to respond to any questions concerning the results of the parish survey and the initial proposals and draft policies prepared by the Task Groups.
 - Two Neighbourhood Plan Clinics (March 2016) to further discuss ideas for the BcS NP with residents.
 - In total the Working Group received 137 feedback forms, 68 collected from the public meetings and 69 mailed or e-mailed, following the public meetings and the two clinics.
- 4.3 The Task Groups have benefited from their members' extensive knowledge of the parish, the involvement of local organisations with specific interest / focus on the relevant topic (whenever possible), as well as the responses from the survey and feedback.
- 4.4 The evidence collected (a Survey Report and a Feedback Report which are available on the BcS PC website) shows that residents cherish and want to protect the Chilterns AONB, the natural beauty of the parish, the open countryside, the Green Belt areas, the woods and the extensive views. Feedback refers to:
- *"The tranquillity and beauty of the Chiltern countryside"*
 - *"Village atmosphere"*
 - *"The people, the community gatherings, the beautiful countryside"*

- *"Feeling of space"*

- 4.5 While a minority of residents are against any development, the majority accepts that some limited development is desirable and only opposes development which is inappropriate for a rural parish, particularly large high-density estates and development which introduces alien features in the area. Support is greater for new housing development to take place on brownfield land or within settlements (87% and 56% of respondents to Q4 of the parish survey, respectively). There is also strong support for development to be sited, clustered and designed in a manner which enhances rather than detracts from the character of the area.
- 4.6 A large number of residents recognise and are concerned that the current housing stock does not address existing and emerging housing needs, such as those of people in their late fifties and sixties who wish to downsize once their children have left home, or of younger families in search of smaller and more affordable dwellings. Similar concerns are expressed on the affordability of houses in the parish (Q5 of the parish survey).
- 4.7 With specific reference to the re-development of the former Molins site in South Saunderton, the overwhelming majority of residents oppose the development proposed by St Congar which is awaiting the start of the appeal process, currently scheduled for September 2016 (see Feedback Report). Residents are, instead, fairly divided in supporting WDC's appeal position (which would limit the redevelopment of the site for housing to the area equivalent of the buildings remaining on site) and a low density mixed development (as emerges from the answers to Q6 to Q8 of the parish survey). See the Feedback Report for further details.
- 4.8 Local business is also a recurrent consideration; from concerns about the continuing loss of non-agricultural employment sites, to the support for existing land-based businesses, to the frustration for the lack of high-speed broad band access, so critical to the many home-based businesses in the parish.
- 4.9 In general residents greatly value the existing communal facilities and assets and want to protect and improve them. Concerns have been expressed that any development would put further strain on the existing infrastructure/communal facilities.

5. Vision, Objectives & Land Use Policies

Vision

- 5.1 The Plan provides a framework to guide development within the Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish until 2033. This framework is based on and supports the following vision for the future of the parish:

“To achieve an incremental development of Bledlow-cum-Saunderton, which respects the rural nature of the parish and offers housing and social/economic opportunities for current and future generations”

- 5.2 The vision is largely inspired by the responses to the parish survey (in particular its section on the likes and dislikes of living in the parish), the feedback responses and more broadly by the interactions with residents during the preparation of the Plan.

Objectives

- 5.3 In order to deliver this vision, the Working Group has, in response to the community views and evidence collected, identified a number of objectives to inform the Plan:
- A. To promote limited small housing development and proactively direct it to preferred land types.
 - B. To encourage development which addresses local housing and community infrastructure needs.
 - C. To ensure that development conforms to the strategy set for the management of the Landscape Character Areas present in the parish and protects the rural character and tranquillity of the parish and Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
 - D. To ensure that the development of the built form integrates well with the predominant character of the established housing in the area, including listed buildings and those buildings of an historic and architectural interest to the parish.
 - E. To ensure that all new development within the parish is configured to optimise high-speed broadband connectivity, integrates energy efficient technologies and limits light pollution.
 - F. To support land-based and land-related rural businesses as well as home-based business/work.
 - G. To encourage appropriate employment use for land within the parish in support of local employment opportunities.
 - H. To protect and enhance community assets (facilities, buildings and land).

Monitoring & Review of Policies

- 5.4 The BcS NP will be monitored by WDC and the Parish Council using data collected in planning monitoring reports. The objectives will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at a parish level relevant to the Plan may also be included. It is expected that the BcS NP will be formally reviewed on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the development and review of the Development Plan for WDC If this cycle is different.

Land Use Planning Policies

- 5.5 The planning policy context and the community engagement work already undertaken have raised a number of issues for the Plan to address to deliver the vision and objectives above. These are:
- a limited appetite for significant housing growth
 - a preference for creating modest new housing within existing settlements
 - a desire to rebalance the housing stock by building a higher proportion of smaller homes
 - a wish to cater for the needs of an older population
 - a desire to attract younger families to the parish
 - a desire to improve the quality of design of development within the parish
 - a wish to preserve the rural character of the parish
- 5.6 Land use policies are used to determine planning applications made for development proposals. They can establish the principles for retaining or changing the use of land in settlements and in the countryside. They can also set out the conditions against which development proposals will be judged in terms of their design, access etc.
- 5.7 The purpose of these policies is to either encourage planning applications to be made for things the local community wants to see happen or to discourage applications for developments that they do not want to happen. Policies must be clearly written so they can be easily applied when considering planning applications.
- 5.8 The plan deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies. The proposed policies therefore focus on a relatively small number of key development issues in the area. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents - the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies of the Wycombe Development Plan (as set out in paragraph 3.4) will continue to be used. The BcS NP will also look to the reasoning of the policies and the evidence base of the emerging Wycombe Local Plan which is due to reach examination stage by 2017.

- 5.9 Set out below are the proposed policies of the BcS NP. Each policy has a number and title and the policy itself is written in bold italics for ease of reference. There is also a short statement explaining the intention of the policy and any other relevant background information. At the end of this document are the Policies Maps - where a policy refers to a specific site or area then it is shown on the Maps.

Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parish

The Plan defines Settlement Boundaries on the Policies Map for the following settlements in the parish:

- ***Bledlow***
- ***Bledlow Ridge***
- ***Pitch Green***
- ***South Saunderton***

Proposals for development within these boundaries will be supported, provided they do not result in the loss of an important local open space of public, environmental or ecological value and they accord with other provisions of the Plan and the Wycombe Development Plan.

Development proposals outside the Settlement Boundaries will be required to conform to the provisions of the Plan and the Wycombe Development Plan in respect of the control of development in the open countryside, and where applicable the Green Belt and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

- 5.10 The parish survey confirmed that residents appreciate the location of the parish within the AONB and greatly value the views and rural nature of the parish and wish the parish to be protected from inappropriate development.
- 5.11 This policy defines the Settlement Boundaries of the established villages and settlements within the parish. The purpose of defining settlement boundaries is to establish where different types of development should take place and where they should be constrained. The policy is intended to operate in parallel with Policy 2 of the Plan, which sets out the principles for development in these defined settlements. At present, only Bledlow Ridge (a defined settlement in the Green Belt) and the Bledlow Conservation area have defined boundaries.
- 5.12 The principle of development inside the defined Settlement Boundaries is accepted provided proposals can demonstrate that they accord with all other relevant policies in the Development Plan. For example, they must avoid

publically accessible open land and have regard to other design principles, as defined in policies 4 to 6 below.

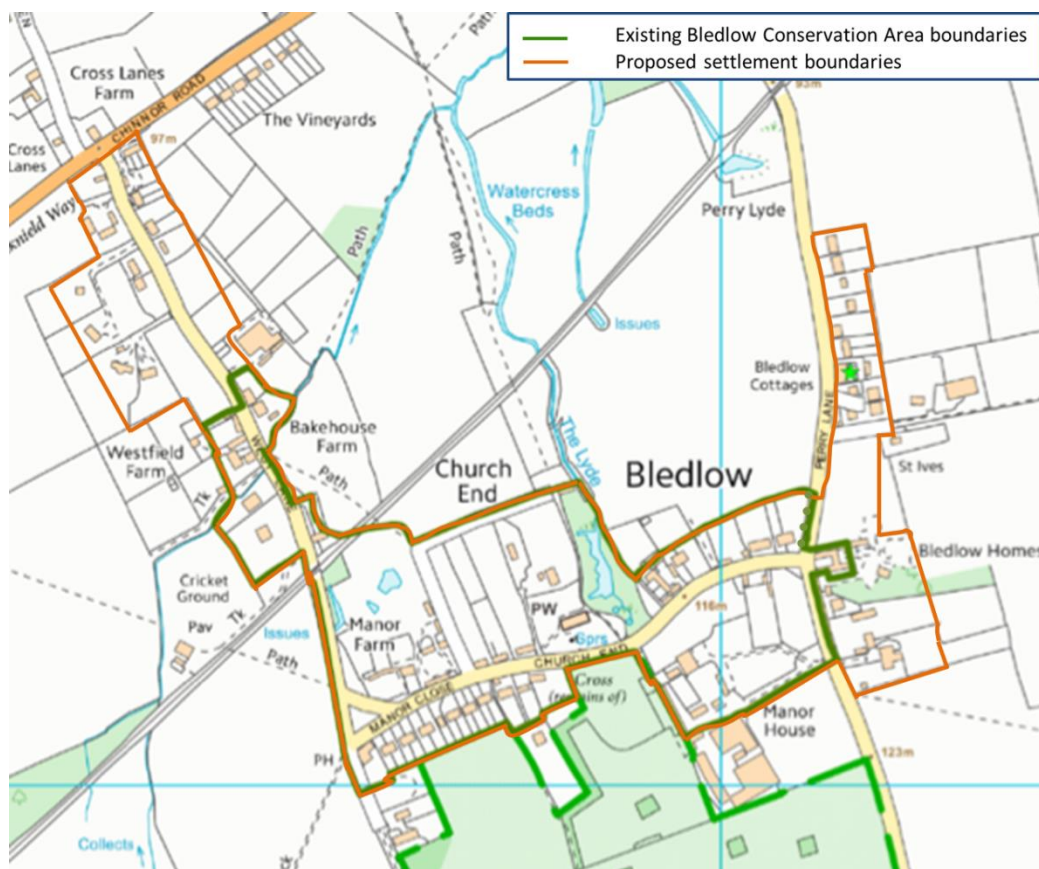
- 5.13 Proposals outside the defined Settlement Boundaries are by definition regarded as lying within the 'open countryside' as each settlement has a distinct edge with extensive countryside beyond. They must therefore be justified in relation to policies controlling development in such sensitive locations, and in particular policies within the Green Belt and AONB where applicable. The sustainability appraisal of Policy 1 concluded that the level of development implied by the policy will have positive benefits, is consistent with the vision for the parish, and will help to avoid any significant incursion into the countryside and the Chilterns AONB.
- 5.14 Five criteria have been applied to decide where the boundaries should be drawn. A description of the methodology applied to the boundary review and the boundary options considered is available in the Housing Development Task Group Report.
- 5.15 The first criterion defined a minimum cluster of buildings suitable for consideration as a settlement, the remaining criteria excluded locations that are unsuited to development and considered other factors including permanence and landscape character.
- 5.16 Of the six boundaries originally considered, four are recommended; the other two at Saunderton (Shootacre Lane) and Routs Green are not considered to fulfil the remaining assessment criteria. The following sections summarise the conclusions of the settlement boundary reviews.

Bledlow

- 5.17 The settlement is outside the green belt and lies partly in the Longwick Vale and partly in the Risborough Chalk Foothills Landscape Character Areas. The proposed settlement boundaries (see Plan B and Policy Inset Map 2) respect the features of both Landscape Character Areas as it offers some limited potential for development. By and large it respects the existing field boundaries, it does not compromise the existing views across the landscape and towards the Chiltern escarpment, it does not modify the small scale and dispersed settlement pattern of the hamlets and farmsteads, and it does not affect the open, expansive views from higher ground.
- 5.18 The core of the settlement is the current Bledlow Conservation Area, to which expanded areas of existing development along West Lane and Perry Lane are added. The proposed boundaries provide an opportunity to create a continuity of the built-up area in and around Bledlow without unduly increasing the overall

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

scale or density of the village or impacting on the surrounding landscape and views towards and from the Chilterns AONB.



Plan B: Bledlow Proposed Settlement Boundary

- 5.19 Both sides of West Lane already include large sections of development and the views from the road across the fields, which it is proposed to include in this part of the settlement, are limited owing to the raised level of surrounding fields. The recent approved development of the former Children's Homes and at Cutlers Orchard on Perry Lane has narrowed the distance of the built area with the Bledlow Cottages development. The views from Perry Lane across the field to the north of the former Children's Home, which it is proposed to include in this part of the settlement, are also very limited.

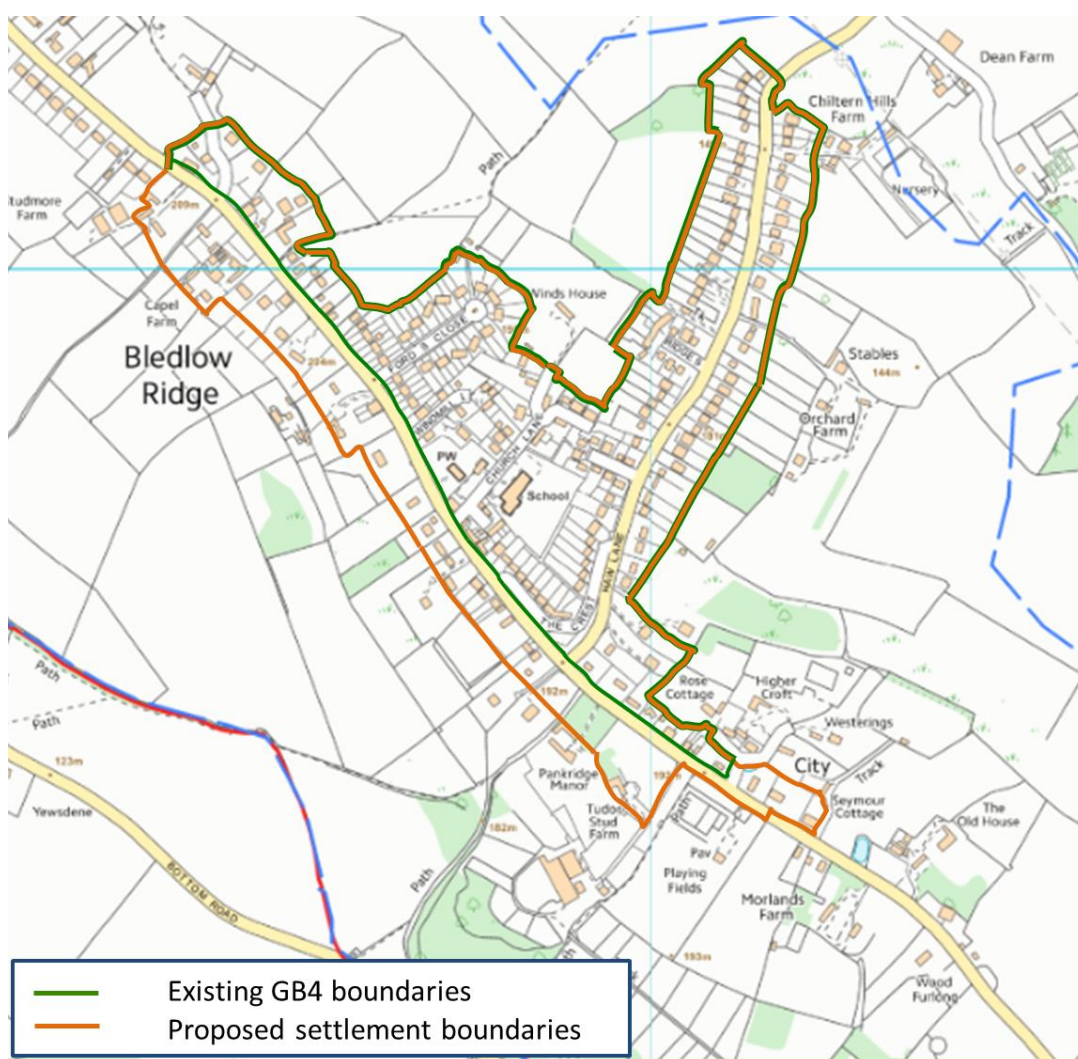
Bledlow Ridge

- 5.20 The settlement lies within the Bledlow Ridge Dip Slope with Dry Valleys Character Area and respects the features of the area. There are extensive views up onto the ridge from both the north east and the south west. Also the land to the south

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west falls steeply down towards Radnage. Given the prominence of the village in the landscape any future development should ensure these landscape features and views are protected.

- 5.21 Bledlow Ridge is the largest settlement in the parish and the only settlement with a policy boundary. The boundary is established by Local Plan policy GB4 to define the built up area of the village, which is 'washed over' by the Green Belt (and also by the Chilterns AONB). It was drawn to encompass the north-eastern side of Chinnor Road and both sides of the upper part of Haw Lane. However existing housing and other development extends on both sides of Chinnor Road to the north-west towards Wigans Lane, and to the south-east towards West Wycombe.



Plan C: Bledlow Ridge Proposed Settlement Boundary

- 5.22 When entering the village from the north or from the south one has the impression of entering a settlement enclosed on both sides, albeit with markedly varying housing densities on each side of the road. There is a case for extending the GB4 boundary to the other side of the road as this would be consistent with this sense of enclosure. The proposal is therefore to amend the boundary by extending it to a limited extent to enclose the existing built up area, particularly on the south-west side of Chinnor Road, in a way that will allow modest opportunities for limited development on infill sites between existing houses on that side of the road in line with criterion (c) of policy GB4. The proposal (see Plan C and Policy Inset Map 3) recognises the fact that, although there is no single point at which the built-up form of the settlement could be said to end, the built form of the settlement beyond the proposed boundary does start to break-up into areas of more sporadic housing interspersed with more frequent gaps, on at least one side of the road.

Pitch Green

- 5.23 The settlement is outside the green belt and lies in the Longwick Vale Landscape Character Area. The proposed settlement boundary (see Plan D and Policy Inset Map 4)) respects the features of the area as it offers limited potential development, by and large respects existing field boundaries, does not compromise the existing views across the landscape and towards the Chiltern escarpment, and does not modify the small scale and dispersed settlement pattern of the hamlets and farmsteads.
- 5.24 The core of the settlement is the crossing of the B4009 road with Sandpit Lane, on the one hand, and Perry Lane on the other. The extension of the built area on Perry Lane is limited to the existing development at the very beginning of the road going towards Bledlow. On the other side of the B4009 the settlement boundaries include most of the existing development on Chapel Lane and the initial built-up area of Sandpit Lane, up to and excluding Coram Stables, which represents the natural boundary to the built area.

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan



Plan D: Pitch Green Proposed Settlement Boundary

- 5.25 On the B4009, the proposed boundaries include the development made up of the Bledlow Village Hall and the houses to its north-east. The proposed boundaries recognise the existing development and do not unduly increase the overall scale or density of the settlement or impact on the surrounding landscape and views towards and from the Chilterns AONB.

South Saunderton

- 5.26 The settlement lies in the Wye Chalk River Valley Landscape Character Area. This comprises two parallel dry chalk valleys which converge south of the area below West Wycombe Hill from where the River Wye rises and flows into High Wycombe. The valleys lie either side of the predominantly wooded ridgeline which extends from West Wycombe Hill to Slough Hill, after which they merge again to form a broad valley landform transitional with the Chilterns escarpment foothills.
- 5.27 The proposed settlement boundary (see Plan E and Policy Inset Map 5) respects the features of the area as it does not impact on the fabric and appearance of historic buildings, respects existing field patterns, does not compromise

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

archaeological sites / monuments and their settings and does not impact on key views in the landscape to the Mausoleum, the church on West Wycombe Hill and to the chalk escarpment to the north.



Plan E: South Saunderton Proposed Settlement Boundary

- 5.28 With the exception of a few isolated houses most of the development in the South Saunderton area has occurred during the 20th century. This settlement covers the area around Saunderton station and comprises existing residential development at Saunderton Vale, mixed residential and light industrial buildings along the A4010 running on the east side of the railway line; the former West Yard industrial estate (currently being converted into 42 new houses), the Golden Cross pub, and the former Coal Yard on the other side of the A4010 which is currently subject to an application for residential development.
- 5.29 The settlement is washed over by the Green Belt, but is not identified as a built up area by Local Plan Policy GB4, and forms part of the Chilterns AONB. However, the settlement contains a scale of existing development that is comparable to the other settlements identified in this policy and is served by a mainline railway station with services to London Marylebone. The built up nature of the settlement may allow for limited infill and for sensitive redevelopment without undermining the openness of the Green Belt or the special qualities of the Chilterns AONB.

Policy 2: Development within Settlements

Development proposals for small scale development within the defined Settlement Boundaries will be supported, provided the proposals meet all the relevant requirements set out in other policies in the Development Plan, and where such development:

- i. preserves the essential open character of the parish;***
 - ii. within settlements in the Green Belt, does not constitute inappropriate development;***
 - iii. is a single dwelling with no more than 4 bedrooms; or
is two or more dwellings at least half of which have either 2 or 3 bedrooms;***
 - iv. is of a scale and density that is (a) appropriate for the size of the plot, and (b) in keeping with the existing pattern of housing development in proximity to the proposed development, particularly that on the same side of the road;***
 - v. in the case of non-ancillary buildings, respects the existing building line and does not result in an outward extension of the built-up area of the settlement;***
 - vi. avoids harming the amenities of adjoining residential properties by way of forming a new access route or of overlooking neighbouring properties; and***
 - vii. in all other respects accords with the relevant design policies of the Plan.***
- 5.30 The results of the parish survey indicated a general acceptance of infill development providing it is sympathetic to the character of the villages, and is preferred to large scale development. However, some felt too much infilling/expansion could potentially undermine the character of villages.
- 5.31 Residents are keen that the parish continues to be a place that can support a wide demographic both in terms of age and income, demonstrated in the responses to the types of homes people felt were needed, including affordable homes for letting/shared ownership by people with a local connection and two and three bedroom homes to support younger families. There was also considerable mention of the need for homes suitable for the elderly which would enable them to downsize whilst staying in the parish.
- 5.32 The settlements of Bledlow, Pitch Green, South Saunderton and Bledlow Ridge define the main built up areas within which there is limited potential for development.
- 5.33 The existing policy framework provides few opportunities for housing in the parish due to the general policy of restraint that applies and the shortage of a supply of previously developed and brownfield land distributed amongst the settlements for these purposes. The result has been:

- Between 2006-2015, house extensions were by far the most common form of housing development in the parish resulting in an increase in larger homes and corresponding decrease in smaller homes
 - Only 20% of the parish housing stock has 2 or fewer bedrooms
 - The average house in the parish has 3.4 bedrooms compared to 2.9 across the District and 2.8 across the South East
 - Average occupancy rate is 0.75 persons per bedroom compared to 0.88 across the District
 - The “*high price of housing for the next generation*” (see BcS NP Housing Development Report)
- 5.34 The underlying housing strategy is therefore intended to improve the sustainability of Bledlow-cum-Saunderton as a demographically more balanced community by:
- Giving priority to smaller dwellings to address the imbalance identified and also to support residents wishing to downsize
 - Providing lower priority for larger dwellings but recognizing that some larger homes on sites that provide more than one dwelling may be necessary given the scale of development likely to come forward to deal with affordable housing matters through other avenues
- 5.35 Proposals for development can relate to a vacant site or to an existing developed plot capable of appropriate subdivision.
- 5.36 When considering proposals relating to existing dwellings within or close to the edge of the Chilterns AONB, there should be due regard for the potential impacts on its landscape and scenic beauty.

Policy 3: Molins, South Saunderton

Proposals for development of the former Molins site will be supported, provided: either

1. In the case of proposals for development the quantum of which is no greater than the Existing Development (which is defined in this Policy to mean (a) the buildings currently standing at the site comprising a canteen/ballroom and office building and (b) the slab on which they are standing), such proposals comply with all applicable national, local and Plan policies; or

2. In the case of proposals for development the quantum of which is greater than the Existing Development, such proposals do not exceed approximately 15,000 square metres of gross floor area and comply with each of sub-paragraphs (i) to (iv) below.

(i) The development shall comprise:

- A retirement village with sheltered, care and downsizer homes;**
- Residential development (including open-market and affordable housing);**
- Small low-rise business premises suited to start-up, incubator and micro-enterprise uses; and**
- One or more community facilities to serve the scheme and the existing residential area of South Saunderton.**

(ii) The development shall include:

- a) A landscape scheme including the maintenance of the existing tree belts, the provision of a 10m buffer zone around the identified Bronze Age barrow and a scheme of suitable biodiversity enhancements;**
- b) A sustainable drainage system to manage surface water run-off;**
- c) (unless the developer provides written evidence that it has used best efforts (on reasonable commercial terms) to obtain, but has failed to obtain, the necessary permissions from other non-connected parties to allow the developer to provide such connections) the provision of safe and convenient cycle and pedestrian connections to Saunderton Station (a) by the creation of a direct connection or (b) by the upgrading of and improvements to the existing right of way between Haw Lane and Slough Lane; and**
- d) Provision for access to superfast broadband.**

(iii) The development shall be confined to the developable area shown outlined in purple on Inset Map 1, which is currently defined by Wycombe Local Plan Policy GB9 as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt and be designed to ensure that the character and layout of the proposed redevelopment respects the setting of the site within the Wye Chalk River Valley.

(iv) The proposals shall be made in the form of a comprehensive outline planning application for the whole site and shall include:

- a) ***An illustrative masterplan that defines the land uses and key development principles for access, layout and design, elevations and buildings heights, and principles of phasing and implementation and which includes at least two entrances to the site from Haw Lane;***
- b) ***A design statement demonstrating compliance with Policy 6 of the Plan, setting out how the proposal conveys the character of a Chiltern valley bottom village and reflects high quality 'place making' principles (including typical details of appearance, elevations and heights of buildings);***
- c) ***A landscape and visual impact assessment and illustrative landscape masterplan to demonstrate how the development will conserve and enhance the Chilterns AONB;***
- d) ***A greenbelt statement to demonstrate the 'very special circumstances' for development and an assessment on the openness of the greenbelt;***
- e) ***An archaeological statement in respect of the scheduled Bronze Age Round Barrow and other Neolithic remains in the vicinity***
- f) ***A housing statement to demonstrate the mix and delivery of the range of housing models proposed;***
- g) ***A dark skies strategy to demonstrate how light pollution into the AONB, including from the cycle and pedestrian connections to Saunderton Station, will be minimised;***
- h) ***An ecology, green infrastructure and boundary treatment strategy to demonstrate how existing environmental assets will be protected and enhanced and green space will be integrated into the built form, including returning the non-developed areas to bio-diverse chalk grassland;***
- i) ***A flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage strategy and Operation and Maintenance Plan to demonstrate no increase in local surface water flood risk nor infiltration into areas of contaminated land;***
- j) ***A contamination statement setting out how any contamination and other ground condition issues will be addressed; and***
- k) ***A transport strategy to demonstrate how the scheme will manage its traffic effects on the road network, with specific reference to the capacity of Haw Lane/Wycombe Road junction (or ways to mitigate such an impact), and how it will encourage and enable walking and cycling to [South] Saunderton station and Bledlow Ridge.***
- l) ***A draft planning obligation to include the means by which the delivery of all land use and infrastructure requirements of the policy, for which provision has been made in the masterplan, will be secured over and above those requirements that have been provided for by the Community Infrastructure Levy.***

5.37 The Wycombe Local Plan policy GB9 defines the former Molins industrial site in South Saunderton as a 'Major Developed Site in the Greenbelt'.

5.38 The land comprises an area of 21 hectares consisting of two parcels in single ownership to the north west of South Saunderton village within an area of open countryside. The surrounding land is generally in agricultural use; bound to the northwest by Haw Lane, to the east by mature trees and the Chilterns rail line, hedging to the south and to the west by grassland. In the south east corner is the

boundary with housing at Saunderton Vale. The site has been vacant for some years. The majority of the industrial buildings were removed as part of the current planning consent for a data centre, which is no longer viable and will not be delivered.

- 5.39 The northern parcel (Areas A to F on Plan F) is broadly the 10 hectare site of the former Molins Factory located immediately off Haw Lane and approximately 1km from Saunderton station and Bledlow Ridge by existing links. This parcel consists of two buildings that front Haw Lane; the Ballroom and an office building, neither of which are in active use. Within Area B is a scheduled ancient monument - the buried remains of a 'bowl barrow' – dating back to the late Neolithic/Bronze age. The second parcel (Area J on Plan F) consists mainly of improved grassland with a 'right of way' crossing the site connecting Haw Lane with Slough Lane.
- 5.40 The Parish and District Councils wish to see this previously developed land put to beneficial use in line with National Planning Policy and the Wycombe Development Plan. A decision was made by WDC in November 2015 to abandon the Saunderton Area Action Plan in favour of developing proposals for Molins within the Plan.
- 5.41 There is a current proposal for a major housing scheme on the land, which is the subject of an appeal and scheduled to be heard later in 2016. The Parish and District Councils have both objected to that scheme. The intention of this policy is to clarify that development will be supported provided that this is (i) either limited in its quantum (no greater than the Existing Development) or (ii), if larger, based on a more sustainable, development plan-led solution, which allows for the reuse of the site in line with the preferences expressed by the community in the parish survey.
- 5.42 For development extending beyond the Existing Development the policy requires a mixed use scheme comprising a retirement village together with a range of open market housing types and tenures suited to a wide range of household types, new business uses suited to micro-business enterprises and community facilities. Not only is there a demand for such uses but a mixed use scheme will deliver a more sustainable and acceptable outcome than a conventional housing scheme alone. A mixed use scheme is intended to secure wider economic, social and environmental benefits, and as such is considered to be in general conformity with the Wycombe Local Plan and meet the objectives of Wycombe District Council and the Chilterns AONB. A mixed use scheme concentrates on uses where connectivity and integration to surrounding areas is less critical such as care use and employment, which can be more self-sufficient and standalone than solely residential use in which day-to-day accessibility and connectivity becomes more critical – and hence has greater impact. Plan F is an

indicative land use diagram, which sets out broad principles as to how the allocation requirements are expected to be fulfilled.

- 5.43 The evidence of need for the combination of land uses in a mixed scheme is contained within the South Saunderton Task Group Report. The employment need is principally based on the Buckinghamshire Housing and Development Needs Assessment 2016 (HEDNA) and the demand shown at, for example, the nearby Ministry Wharf business site. The HEDNA confirms the continuation of the demand for start-up/incubator/micro business accommodation throughout the plan period. This use is also in line with the recent statements made by the government in relation to boosting productivity in rural areas.
- 5.44 The HEDNA also confirms the demand for 'Extra Care' facilities. For the purposes of this allocation, extra care housing is regarded as a model of accommodation that combines independent housing with flexible levels of care and support. It is intended that the policy retains flexibility on how the allocation might incorporate purpose-built, self-contained and accessible rented, shared ownership or leasehold accommodation. This flexibility will ensure it provides a continuum of housing designed to meet the needs of an ageing population where care and support needs can be focused as required.
- 5.45 Comments made by consultees and residents during the Regulation 14 consultation process confirm the validity of the mixed scheme approach. Its employment elements (the retirement village complex and the incubator / micro business units) are seen as an ideal "modern day" employment use of the site, which help rebalance the decline in more traditional employment uses witnessed by the parish over the years.
- 5.46 Regarding the community facilities portion of the scheme, the parish survey identified the "community space" as an essential component of a redevelopment at Molins, one which would help integrate the site with the rest of the South Saunderton area. The many and varied ideas put forward by residents mean that the local community and developers would need to work together to finalise plans for this portion of the scheme. It should, however, be noted that the area does not have a public meeting space and in addition the Parish Council has been campaigning for a children's playground in the South Saunderton Area for some time.
- 5.47 The NPPF at Paragraph 58, 3rd bullet point, states that neighbourhood plans should "optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks". The 4th bullet point of the same Paragraph 58 states that plans should "respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging

appropriate innovation". The Plan therefore puts forward proposals designed to meet both of these requirements and to avoid the potential harm associated with the current major housing scheme proposal which is addressed below.

- 5.48 Representations from local residents at the public meetings of the WDC Task & Finish Group on the Saunderton Area Action Plan (October 2015); responses to St Congar's original planning application; responses to the Parish Survey (January 2016); and feedback from the Neighbourhood Plan public meetings (February/March 2016), all point to the fact that the currently-appealed major housing scheme proposal (i) maximises rather than optimises the potential of the site; (ii) prevents rather than creates an appropriate mix of uses; (iii) does not support local facilities and (iv) does not respond to the local character of the site and of its surroundings. At the same time residents' feedback indicates that a development larger than the Existing Development should (i) include a mix of uses which benefits the South Saunderton community while being financially viable for the developer; (ii) be physically connected to the South Saunderton settlement, if at all possible; and (iii) be of a density and appearance which would minimise its impact on the surroundings (an area of outstanding natural beauty).
- 5.49 At the Neighbourhood Plan public meetings in February/March 2016 a conceptual layout of what a large development on the former Molins site would look like was presented. As the St Congar proposal was felt to represent overdevelopment of the site, this concept and design precedents sought to show a development more in keeping with its environment and more reflective of the communities wish to maintain employment opportunities and facilities for older people. Based on feedback and the support for this alternative concept and range of land uses received, the Working Group applied a planning judgement in determining a development with a maximum gross floor area of about 50-60% of the St Congar proposal representing the optimal development that would be acceptable to the community at referendum. This was used as the basis for the Indicative Land Use Diagram (Plan F) which loosely translates into development with a maximum gross external floor area of approximately 15,000 square metres, given the St Congar application is of the order of 25,000 square metres.



Plan F – Molins indicative land use diagram for development greater than the Existing Development

Policy 4: Design Management in Bledlow Village and Pitch Green

Development proposals in the Bledlow Settlement Area and Pitch Green Settlement Area, as shown on the Policies Maps, will be supported, provided they have full regard to the following design principles in addition to those laid out in Policy 6 and all other Policies within the Plan:

- **Any new development should not harm the integrity or visual quality of the important buildings or groups of buildings as defined in the Bledlow and Pitch Green Settlement Area Design Statement (Appendix B).**
- **Development should in all regards be in compliance with Policy 2 of this Plan and respect the historic pattern of existing building lines and building orientation of the immediately adjoining plots where a consistent pattern is prevalent. Where a pattern is not clear proposals should reflect the wider mix of historic building lines and building orientation in the relevant Settlement or Conservation Area. The building heights of any such developments should not exceed the prevailing roof line of the adjacent plots**
- **Any new building works should be designed not as a separate entity, but should be sympathetic in form and scale with the existing historic or traditional buildings within the relevant Settlement or Conservation Area.**
- **Any new building works should use materials that complement those used in the adjoining or adjacent buildings, particularly when such buildings are listed, include features of particular visual interest, or are listed as key buildings in the Bledlow and Pitch Green Settlement Area Design Statement. In all instances of new building work:**
 - **Where brick is to be used as a building material it should be done in accordance with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide – Brick, Supplementary Technical Note (2006) and with regard for the particular local traditions of hand-made orange/orange-brown bricks, the use of vitreous bricks as headers or in chequer patterns, herringbone brickwork as infill on timber framed buildings and dentil eaves.**
 - **The use of flint should be restricted to ancillary buildings only in Church End. Where flint is proposed as a building material it must be done in accordance with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide – Flint, Supplementary Technical Note (2003).**
 - **Within the Bledlow Settlement Area weatherboarding should only be used on ancillary buildings or subservient extensions.**
 - **Where tiles are proposed as a roofing material their use should be in accordance with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide – Roofing Materials Technical Note (2007).**
 - **The use of slates should be restricted to ancillary buildings only in Church End. In all cases the use of slates or thatch must be done in accordance with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide – Roofing Materials Technical Note (2007).**

- ***Traditional natural materials should be used for new or replacement windows and doors in the Bledlow Conservation Area in order to safeguard the special character of the Conservation Area. In the Settlement Areas painted timber windows and doors are more appropriate – the use of more modern materials such as UPVC and aluminium must be considered with care to ensure that they are sympathetic to the character of the area.***
- ***When replacing existing boundary features on a like-for-like basis low brick and flint walling may be acceptable in the Bledlow Settlement Area and picket fencing in the Pitch Green Settlement Area.***
- ***New development should not present a risk to the continued future growth and habit of established trees in the Bledlow Conservation Area.***
- ***Development that adversely impacts on the character of an important view into, out of or through the settlement areas as defined in the Bledlow and Pitch Green Settlement Area Design Statement (Appendix B) will not be allowed.***

5.50 This policy establishes the key design management principles for new development in the Bledlow and Pitch Green Settlement Areas that will ensure the essential character of the Bledlow Conservation Area, its setting, the land falling within the Bledlow Settlement Boundary and Pitch Green Settlement Boundary, will be maintained and enhanced. The evidence is drawn from the 1996 Conservation Area Appraisal document, the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, feedback from the parish survey, Community Consultation events and visual surveys.

Policy 5: Design Management in Bledlow Ridge

Development proposals in the Bledlow Ridge Settlement Area, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported, provided they have full regard to the following design principles as supported by the Bledlow Ridge Settlement Area Design Statement (Appendix C) in addition to those laid out in Policy 6 and all other Policies within the Plan:

- ***Development should not adversely impact views of the village from the surrounding hills and valleys of the AONB.***
- ***Any new development should avoid harm to the integrity or visual quality of the important buildings or groups of buildings as defined in the Bledlow Ridge Settlement Area Design Statement (Appendix C).***
- ***Proposals should identify the essential architectural form and scale of the traditional buildings in the wider Settlement Area of the proposed new building, and interpret these in the design.***
- ***The use of hipped roofs on all but the largest developments should be avoided. Half-hipped roofs should be avoided.***
- ***Simple building layouts at right angles or parallel to the road should be used.***

- ***Development that adversely impacts the character of an important view into, out of or through the Settlement Area as defined in the Bledlow Ridge Settlement Area Design Statement (Appendix C) will not be allowed.***

5.51 This policy establishes the key design principles for new development in the Bledlow Ridge Settlement Area that will ensure the essential character of the Area will be sustained and enhanced. The evidence is drawn from the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, feedback from the Parish Survey, Community Consultation events and visual surveys.

Policy 6: Design Management in the Parish

All development in the parish should have full regard to the following design principles:

- ***The form, scale, siting and landscaping of all new buildings should be such that they sit discreetly in the landscape and do not have a negative impact on the streetscape or setting of traditional buildings in the neighbourhood.***
- ***Floor plans which create large roof spans likely to be either unacceptably shallow in pitch or overly large for the landscape setting should be avoided.***
- ***Where designs are proposed that are intended to follow the traditional vernacular style they must demonstrate that they are in accordance with the guidance set out in the relevant 'Chilterns Buildings Design Guide' Technical Supplements.***
- ***Where development is proposed that is contemporary in character it should demonstrate that the materials proposed complement local traditional materials.***
- ***Protection of the intrinsically dark skies of the parish and AONB by minimising light pollution through adherence to the appropriate industry guidelines.***
- ***Applications for development in the immediate vicinity of any of the Settlement Areas defined in Policy 1 should give consideration to the Design Statement and Guidance for that Settlement Area.***

Applications for development in the parish are expected to include a Design Statement demonstrating how the design of the development has responded to the guidance contained in the relevant Settlement Design Statement (Appendices B and C) and the 'Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish Local Design Checklist' (Appendix D).

In addition, applications for extensions to existing properties should:

- ***Be subservient to the main dwelling if the house is of architectural or historical merit.***
- ***Be subservient to the main dwelling unless the original dwelling is being extended in order to remedy earlier poor quality work or creates an improved overall appearance.***
- ***Not overwhelm the original dwelling.***

Landscaping, boundary treatments and lighting of new or existing development should ensure that:

- ***Areas of residential parking and driveways should, where practical, avoid the extensive use of modern surface treatments which represent a single visual and impermeable mass such as tarmac or concrete.***
- ***'Gardening' of the road verge is avoided.***
- ***Except where otherwise specified in this Plan boundary treatments comprise hedges and trees only, where possible. Consideration should be given to replacing native hedgerows where they have been lost.***
- ***Entrance gates are simple, visibly permeable and rural in character.***
- ***Security measures are discreet.***
- ***Lighting of external areas meets the appropriate standards (Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011) as published by the Institute of Lighting Professionals. The relevant Zones being E2 within Settlement Areas and E1 elsewhere.***

5.52 This policy establishes the key design principles for new development that will ensure that:

- the essential character of the parish both within, and beyond its main settlements, will be sustained and enhanced.
- development will conserve and enhance the Chilterns AONB.

5.53 The evidence for the policies is drawn from the parish survey and feedback from Community Consultation, a refinement of the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and policies contained in the Chilterns AONB Management Plan.

5.54 The parish survey demonstrated that many residents valued the dark night skies, free from street light pollution, and felt that we should develop a 'dark skies policy' that would help protect the tranquillity of the AONB. Artificial lighting in the countryside can have a demonstrable effect on 'dark skies', one of the special qualities of the rural landscapes, and can affect the natural diurnal rhythms amongst a wide range of animals and plants. Light trespass is a problem that intrudes on the residential amenity, causing stress and anxiety for those affected. In addition to these specific problems, obtrusive light represents a waste of energy, resources and money.

Policy 7: Sustainable Design in the Greenbelt

Proposals for extensions or alterations to, or the replacement of, a building within the Green Belt should not be disproportionate over and above the size of the original building. In order to encourage designs that have a minimal impact on the environment and landscape:

- **Passive structural or design elements included in such proposals, which demonstrably allow for the building, and its inhabitants, to mitigate or respond to the impacts of climate change will not be considered when assessing the proportionality of the development.**
- **Applications to link existing or replacement outbuildings to the main house will not be considered inappropriate or disproportionate so long as:**
 - **They are solely for uses ancillary to the main dwelling and do not accommodate primary functions such as kitchen, living rooms, bedrooms or bathrooms.**
 - **The outbuilding is of a subservient scale and form to the main house.**
 - **The outbuilding is in close proximity to the main house.**
 - **The proposed link is subservient in scale and form to both the main house and the outbuilding and will not have a detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt.**

5.55 The purpose of this policy is to:

- promote more sustainable approaches to building design, construction and insulation which have a minimal impact on the openness of the green-belt in order to ensure that existing and future buildings can be properly designed in order to mitigate the impact of climate change without penalising applicants through the reduction of useable internal space;
- promote the re-use of redundant buildings to provide suitable accommodation for ancillary functions and the requirements of the parish in respect of the increasing numbers of home-workers;
- encourage development which has a minimal impact on the openness of and the landscape in the Green Belt in terms of built form by discouraging over extensions of single buildings where ancillary uses can be assigned to existing subservient buildings.

5.56 The policy will allow for: more thermally efficient buildings, the upgrading of poorly performing old buildings to be carried out (for example through the installation of internal or external wall insulation), designs that will be more capable of dealing with the impact of climate change by incorporating the principles of passive cooling and heating (for example through the use of solar shading and double height spaces) and increased rainfall events (for example through the use of deeper eaves and oversized rain water goods). The policy is intended to be flexible and the technologies and principles outlined should be considered an indicative rather than exhaustive list.

5.57 Promoting high levels of energy conservation within new and existing buildings was considered a priority by two-thirds of the respondents to the neighbourhood plan, whilst Policy D12 of the Chilterns Management Plan seeks to

"...promote measures which will help people and buildings to adapt to climate change, subject to the overriding consideration of the need to be compatible with the character of the built and natural environment. Some of the measures that will be considered include ... the way that buildings are orientated and allowing for more comfortable living conditions with increased summer shading..."

- 5.58 The policy will discourage applications for over extending houses in the Green Belt by allowing for the accommodation of ancillary activities such as hobby and home working space or temporary guest accommodation in an existing subservient outbuilding allowing for; better design that has less impact on the openness of the Green Belt and allowing the utilisation of existing redundant outbuildings adjacent to dwellings.

Policy 8: Rural Diversification

The re-use of an existing building in the countryside will be supported provided that it will enable enterprise, farm diversification or recreation that benefits the rural economy without harming the open character of the landscape. Proposals for housing development in the countryside will only be granted in exceptional circumstances where such dwelling is

- (i) required to serve the essential uses of agriculture, forestry or some other special and justified need,***
- (ii) in harmony with the landscape (in terms of its design and siting), and***
- (iii) sited within or immediately adjacent to an existing group of dwellings or on a previously developed site suitably located to serve the purpose, unless it can be shown that there are overriding reasons why it must be built elsewhere.***

The re-use and development of any such housing must also be in accordance with all other planning policies applicable to that location, including but not limited to policies applying within the Green Belt".

- 5.59 Many respondents to the parish survey valued the open space, wildlife and countryside within and around the parish, and its rural character.
- 80% of respondents to the community survey supported the continued use of land for agricultural purposes.
 - 51% of respondents supported farm diversification.
 - Other respondents expressed concern about the demise of agriculture and the restrictive views of parishioners on farm diversification and farm business adaptation.

- 5.60 Agriculture and forestry are the predominant land uses in the parish and are likely to remain so. The use of land for agricultural and forestry purposes lies largely outside the scope of planning legislation.
- 5.61 There are few examples of economically viable farm and land-based diversification in the parish. Whilst the National Planning Policy Framework encourages land based businesses to diversify and recognises that the conversion of existing buildings can help to promote a strong rural economy this is a complex area to get right.
- 5.62 Economic activity in rural areas is diverse and becoming increasingly dynamic. Knowledge-based and creative industries are growing rapidly in rural areas and flexible, home-working is more prevalent in rural than in urban areas, and tends to involve higher skilled, higher wage roles. So while new isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided, there may be special circumstances where the development would re-use a redundant or disused building and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.
- 5.63 The rural diversification policy to re-use buildings in the countryside is primarily aimed at buildings with an existing use but may also involve redundant, disused or underused buildings. An existing building does not need to be empty before a scheme for conversion or diversification to economic development or community uses might be considered. However, any existing use or activities should be accommodated, either on or off site, without the need for an additional building to fulfil the function of the building being converted.
- 5.64 Buildings need to be soundly constructed to merit retention and re-use. Derelict buildings are clearly no longer of sound construction but some other buildings are also not suitable for re-use. These include buildings constructed with temporary or short-life materials and those built without proper foundations.
- 5.65 Where a building (which is not a designated or non-designated heritage asset) is redundant or disused, re-use for residential purposes may be permitted under national policy. However, this is limited to a number of 'special circumstances' in such cases the developer will need to demonstrate the redundant or disused status of the building.

Policy 9: Employment

Proposals for the development of new B1 business uses and flexible start-up accommodation within settlements will be supported provided they:

- i. Do not lead to the loss of A1 uses or existing community facilities.***
- ii. Do not adversely impact on neighbouring residential properties.***

- iii. ***Do not adversely affect transport and other infrastructure.***
- iv. ***Provide the necessary infrastructure to connect to superfast broadband.***
- v. ***Provided they comply with all other applicable local and Plan policies.***

Development proposals which enhance the operational effectiveness and appearance of existing employment sites and facilities, or to redevelop those sites to provide modern commercial units and associated facilities, will be supported.

Proposals which will result in the loss of employment floor space will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that either there will be an increase in jobs as a result of the proposals enabling a higher employment density to be achieved, or the use is no longer viable.

5.66 Many respondents to the parish survey expressed concern at the loss of and lack of local/rural businesses and employment opportunities within the parish. In particular:

- 80% supported the use of brownfield land and/or existing buildings for business use.
- 64% supported policies relating to working from home.
- 40% were in favour of encouraging more visitors to the parish in order to support local shops and public houses.

5.67 In addition, the survey showed that 40% of respondents worked from home, with 66% of such home-based businesses employing one person and 32% employing two persons.

5.68 The parish has few non-agricultural employment sites and has experienced a pattern of continuing loss of light industrial and small businesses units over the last 30 – 40 years. The following is a list of known employment sites that have been converted to housing over this period. It demonstrates a gradual decline in local employment opportunities within the parish.

- Hillview. The houses that are now Hillview occupy what has previously been Saunderton Carriage Company motor sales and repairs (circa 1983), Saunderton Garage (circa 1980) and Saunderton Service station with pumps and small shop (circa 1960s).
- Saunderton Vale. Formerly Anderson Strathclyde, circa 1936-1980s, once a major employer in Saunderton (now 57 houses).
- Bledlow Ridge Post Office. Closed c.2000.
- Bird & Tole, Bledlow Ridge. Light engineering works closed c.2008.
- Bledlow Ridge Garage closed c. 2012. Now housing.
- The Chiltern Hotel (formerly the Crown), Saunderton. Hotel closed 2013 and is now housing.

- J.B. Searl & Son Coal Merchants, Saunderton. c. 2013 now the subject of a Planning Application for redevelopment with 5 homes.
- West Yard, Saunderton. 20+ light industrial units closed 2014. Permission granted for development of 42 homes.

5.69 The remaining employment sites in the parish include:

- Crownfield Industrial Estate.
- Ministry Wharf, Saunderton. Before these office and industrial units were built (circa 1980's), this was a large Ministry emergency storage unit, mostly for flour and grain.
- Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.
- Clare Foundation. Formerly Ortho, a large employer, and subsequently occupied by Janssen Cilag, a pharmaceutical company. It is now the Clare Foundation which operates as a business hub for charities and not-for-profit organisations. Buckinghamshire Business First is also based there.
- Risborough Service Centre and Combined Carriers on Chinnor Road, Bledlow.
- Small office units at Forty Green Farm.

5.70 As regards current occupancy levels, 13 out of the 16 units at Ministry Wharf are owner-occupied and 3 are sub-let. Of the 6 units at the Crownfield Industrial Estate, 4 are occupied, with 2 available to lease. Evidence from the Clare Foundation Centre's website indicates that about 80% of their office units are currently let.

5.71 In any event, evidence on which to base any clear assessment of the supply and demand for employment floor space in an area as small as a parish is not easy to establish. The Consultation draft of the HEDNA Report considered the employment position across the District to 2036 and concluded that there was a theoretical surplus of employment floor space over that period. This was, however, qualified by uncertainty that all the sites identified would come forward for development. The Report's overall conclusion was that there was likely to be a shortage of suitable land for employment use.

5.72 The HEDNA Report also pointed to a lack of flexible space suitable for start-ups and SMEs looking to expand. Enquiries to a commercial agent active in the local market indicated that demand for space in the existing light industrial/office units in South Saunderton was good. Units of this type evidently meet some demand for relatively low cost employment floor space within the parish.

5.73 The Consultation draft of the HELAA Report identifies one site within the parish as suitable for future employment use and potentially developable over the next 6 – 10 years - the former Coal Yard site in Smalldean Lane, Saunderton – but this is currently the subject of an outline planning application for 5 dwellings.

- 5.74 Buckinghamshire and Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (BTVLEP) believes there is a strong business case to establish more hatchery / incubation / business centre facilities in Buckinghamshire. The provision for businesses of a safe, supportive environment in which to grow will, with access to peer-to-peer mentoring support, advice and finance, accelerate their development path. The purpose of this policy is to support this demand.
- 5.75 Support for the Village Store in Bledlow Ridge and the three Public Houses in the parish is largely dependent upon personal spending decisions made by parish residents and others who live in the wider area.

Policy 10: Environment

Development proposals must conserve and enhance designated environmental and landscape assets, especially the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Lodge Hill and Butler's Hangings SSSIs.

In addition, any development proposals should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by ensuring the protection of local assets such as mature trees, hedgerows and woodland, and the provision of additional habitat for wildlife and green spaces for the community.

- 5.76 Almost all respondents to the parish survey attached significant value to the open space, countryside, wildlife and rural farmed landscape in the parish. In particular:
- 92% supported the protection of the views of and from the Chilterns AONB from inappropriate development.
 - 80% supported the protection of existing mature and important trees and hedgerows, groups of trees or woodland.
 - 80% supported the minimization of the level of noise and other forms of pollution caused by development and transport infrastructure.
 - 75% supported the preservation and restoration of key local habitats and wildlife biodiversity.
- 5.77 Approximately 70% of the parish falls within the Chiltern Hills AONB and is covered by policies within the Chilterns Conservation Board's Management Plan 2014 – 2019 which are treated as 'material considerations' in the determination of decisions on planning applications.
- 5.78 The Lodge Hill and Butler's Hangings Sites of Special Scientific Interest have statutory protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1984. The latest Natural England condition summaries show that 100% of Lodge Hill SSSI is assessed as being in an 'unfavourable condition' but 31% is recorded as 'recovering', with all necessary management conditions in place; similarly, 100%

of Butler's Hangings is assessed as being in an 'unfavourable condition' but all of that is recorded as 'recovering'.

- 5.79 Farmers in the DEFRA Basic Payments Scheme are required to keep their land in 'Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition' and there is a range of environmental options available for farmers under the Environmental Stewardship Scheme. Farmers and land managers therefore play a material role in the stewardship of the natural landscape within and around the parish and the wildlife biodiversity it sustains.
- 5.80 Although the natural beauty and distinctive character and quality of the landscape are already well protected by national and local planning policies, this policy is intended to provide a more general requirement to protect and enhance the environment across the whole parish. This is in line with the significant level of support for this objective shown during the community consultation.

Policy 11: Community Facilities

Proposals that will result in the loss of a community facility, as listed below, will be resisted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the use of the building and ancillary land is no longer viable or that the use can be satisfactorily re-located for the ongoing benefit of the local community:

1. **Bledlow Village Hall, Car Park and Playground – Chinnor Road, Bledlow HP27 9Q**
2. **Bledlow Cricket Ground – West Lane, Bledlow HP27 9PF**
3. **'The Lions of Bledlow' Public House – Church End, Bledlow HP27 9PE**
4. **'The Boot' Public House – Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge HP14 4AW**
5. **Bledlow Ridge Village Hall – Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge HP14 4AL**
6. **'The Country Store' – Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge HP14 4AJ**
7. **Church Lane Car Park – Bledlow Ridge, opposite Bledlow Ridge School**
8. **Meadow Styles – Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge HP14 4AE**
9. **'The Golden Cross' Public House – Wycombe Road, Saunderton HP14 4HU**
10. **St. Paul's Church – Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge HP14 4AX**
11. **Holy Trinity – Church End, Bledlow HP27 9PD**
12. **St. Mary and St. Nicholas Church – Bledlow Road, Saunderton HP27 9GN**

Proposals to improve the viability of an established community use of the buildings and ancillary land by way of its extension or partial redevelopment will be supported, provided the design of the scheme and the resulting increase in use (i) are appropriate in design terms, (ii) will not harm the amenities of adjoining residential properties, and (iii) in all other respects accord with the Development Plan.

- 5.81 Whilst the community facilities present in the parish are few they are relied on heavily by local residents and are regarded as important for developing a sense of community. The parish survey revealed that overall there was felt to be an

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

active social network and community pride in the parish, and respondents considered the parish to be well located for vital services (GP/hospitals).

- 5.82 This was balanced by comments on the lack of facilities in relation to older residents and young people/teenagers, for example. In certain areas a lack of a community hub or place to meet (such as a village hall), poor or no village shop and the lack of public transport at weekends was felt to isolate some residents. Like other rural parishes within the District, Bledlow-cum-Saunderton is ranked within the 5% most deprived in England in respect of geographical barriers to services (distance to a doctors, shop, primary school & post office).
- 5.83 The Community Infrastructure Task Group has collected evidence on community facilities within the parish that are valued by the community and offer a valuable resource to support community life.
- 5.84 The purpose of this policy is therefore to secure these assets in the long term for the benefit of the people of Bledlow-cum-Saunderton and to apply a test of viability, which otherwise would not exist, to give added protection to them.
- 5.85 The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. National policy states that to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that local communities need, planning policies should plan positively for the provision of community facilities.
- 5.86 In rural areas, national policy requires local plans to promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. Access to these services is a key issue for the community and the Parish Council wishes to ensure that community facilities are retained and enhanced, wherever possible.

Policy 12: Bledlow Ridge School

Proposals for the development of permanent extra classrooms at Bledlow Ridge School, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported. Proposals to create additional classrooms, space for play and/or car parking on the site will also be supported, provided the proposals do not harm the amenity of residents living near the school or create additional highway safety concerns.

Any proposals to extend the school should include a plan to promote sustainable travel measures to support an increase in the size of the school population and to minimise the volume of vehicle traffic to and from the school.

Proposals for development on the site of the Church Lane car park will not be supported unless Bledlow Ridge School, St. Paul's Church and Bledlow Ridge Village Hall have all

ceased to operate on their current sites or have moved to alternative sites such that the car park is no longer deemed to be a viable location to park for access to these facilities.

- 5.87 The current school building was designed in the early 1960's for 100 children with 4 classrooms, a hall, kitchen and cloakrooms. The Middle School Extension was not built until later. Today Bledlow Ridge School caters for 140 pupils aged 4 - 11. More recent building work has allowed for an additional new classroom, a purpose-built ICT Suite, an outdoor classroom, modern cloakrooms and a well-equipped library.
- 5.88 It is clear from the parish survey responses and the consultation feedback that there is significant concern with regard to road safety during busy times at Bledlow Ridge School, St. Paul's Church and/or Bledlow Ridge Village Hall.
- 5.89 The Community Consultation events confirmed that Bledlow Ridge School (BRS) is highly regarded within the local community. The school is currently rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and is recognised as one of the best primary schools nationally.
- 5.90 Several respondents to the Survey and responses to the consultation events indicated their concern that the school was already over-subscribed and would not be able to accommodate the increased numbers of children that would be generated from the developments at West Yard, the former Molins site and from any extension to the GB4 boundary in Bledlow Ridge. Some respondents commented that they did not think that there was scope for the necessary extensions to accommodate the required expansion.
- 5.91 The Community Infrastructure Task Group liaised with the Governors of BRS in relation to dealing with an expansion of the primary age population within the school catchment. The initial response would be to work with Bucks CC (the Local Education Authority) and local schools to use up excess capacity. The school would need to restrict taking in children from out of catchment, which could include siblings. If there remained a capacity issue, then it would need to work with the LEA to extend the school.

Policy 13: Connecting the Parish

Development proposals to provide access to a super-fast broadband network to the villages of the parish, and outlying properties in the countryside, and to improve the speed of existing services, will be supported, provided the location and design of any above-ground network installations reflect the character of the local area.

Proposals for housing and employment schemes must provide appropriate ducting suited to fibre communications technologies that is either connected to the public

highway; through satellite broadband; a community led local access network; or to another location that can be justified.

Proposals should demonstrate how any development will contribute to and be compatible with local fibre or internet connectivity. This should be through a 'Connectivity Statement' provided with relevant planning applications. Such statements should include details of:

- **The intended land use and the anticipated connectivity requirements of the development.**
- **Known nearby data networks and their anticipated speed (fixed copper, 3G, 4G, fibre, satellite, microwave, etc.).**
- **Realistic viability and delivery assessments of connection potential or contribution to any such networks.**
- **Measures taken by the applicants to work with Telecomm providers to ensure that Superfast Broadband is available at the point of occupation.**

5.92 A large number of respondents cited poor broadband speeds as being an issue, with poor mobile phone reception being mentioned less frequently. In addition, 64% attached importance to policies to support working from home.

5.93 Availability of high speed broadband is a critical factor in securing the sustainability of the parish and unlocking untapped economic potential. National Planning Policy supports the need for high quality communications infrastructure, acknowledging its role in supporting economic activity and enhancing the provision of local facilities and services, particularly in rural areas. The Rural Productivity Plan (DEFRA; 2015) places fast and reliable broadband services at the top of a ten-point plan to boost rural productivity.

5.94 There has been a market failure to provide good connectivity in rural areas resulting in a number of government backed initiatives to remedy this situation. This failure extends to the parish. The ability of these initiatives to deliver good connectivity to all existing and new developments is, as yet, unknown.

5.95 Very poor broadband speed in the parish was the primary infrastructure concern of residents, having a demonstrable impact on business and education in the parish. It was acknowledged as having a negative effect on businesses in the area, for those working from home and for students/school children who also require good internet speeds for study.

5.96 Superfast Broadband is currently only available in the 'South Saunderton' area – broadly the area comprising of the 'Saunderton Vale' development, the Golden Cross pub and the properties adjacent to the A4010. The purpose of the policy is to ensure all new development throughout the parish is enabled and ready for connection.

- 5.97 The Parish Council fully support the aims and objectives of the Bucks and Herts 'Connected Counties' initiative. Parish Councillors and nominated officers will continue to engage with Connected Counties (and other related groups such as Bucks Business First) to promote the interests of the parish and ensure that the parish receives its fair share of investment funding.
- 5.98 The parish is not included in the current 'Connected Counties' broadband rollout. The funding for a second rollout is currently being modelled and will have to be reviewed and agreed by funding partners before it is finalised.
- 5.99 While the evidence showed that the number of light industrial units and small businesses in the parish had decreased, the number of those working from home seems likely to continue to increase, aided by further developments in communications technology.
- 5.100 The Parish Council will engage directly with Telecoms providers and relevant landowners to encourage the provision of Superfast Broadband to those areas of the parish not already covered. This policy is 'solution neutral' – e.g. the Parish Council would consider 'Mobile' based solutions and/or satellite technologies in addition to the more established fibre-based solutions.

Policy 14: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

The parish will support proposals for small scale generation of electricity from renewable resources in appropriate, non-sensitive locations, and the use of low carbon technologies for heat and power, provided the generation systems:

- ***Do not detract from the AONB, its setting or the Bledlow Conservation Area by reason of their cumulative visual, landscape or environmental impact.***
- ***Are in keeping with the scale, form and character of their surroundings.***
- ***Do not have significant adverse effects on the amenities of residents in the area.***

Specifically, the parish will support:

- ***The use of roof areas of commercial, farm and residential buildings as suitable locations for PV solar panel installations.***
- ***The installation of domestic external air source heat pumps, which comply with this policy.***
- ***The provision of farm scale anaerobic digestion facilities for the processing of locally produced digestible materials, provided that there is no impact (including smell) on nearby residents or settlements and that any traffic implications can be addressed through a transport assessment.***

The parish will not support the installation of renewable energy facilities that do not comply with this policy.

- 5.101 73% of respondents to the parish survey considered it important to manage the visual impact, scale and location of alternative energy installations. Whilst there was support for renewable technologies in the parish, there were few detailed responses that gave clear guidance. For example, one respondent argued against solar farms, while another argued for more wind turbines.
- 5.102 The National Policy Planning Framework is supportive of renewable energy (paragraphs 17, 97 and 98). Renewable and low carbon energy developments will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute towards national and international targets. They will also help to increase energy security and give some protection from fossil fuel price fluctuations.
- 5.103 The benefits of renewable and low carbon energy schemes for local communities may include local job creation and investment in the local economy. However, there may be greater local benefits where a scheme is put forward by a community or involves a level of community ownership (or community shareholding). Such schemes could offer benefits in the form of income generation, lower energy bills and a wider acceptance of such developments. Developers will be expected to give careful consideration to such matters.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 The BcS NP will be implemented through a combination of the local planning authority's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the parish, and through steering public and private investment into a series of infrastructure proposals contained in the plan.

Development Management

- 6.2 Most of the policies contained in the BcS NP will be delivered by landowners and developers. In preparing the BcS NP, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the policies are achievable.
- 6.3 Whilst the local planning authority will be responsible for the development management, the Parish Council will use the BcS NP to frame its representations on submitted planning applications. It will also work with WDC to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

Infrastructure Projects

- 6.4 BcS PC proposes the following projects for investment of future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding allocated by the local planning authority to the Parish Council.

Rights of Way

- 6.5 The maintenance and promotion of our local Rights of Way is demonstrably an important issue for residents. The concerns raised with regards to Rights of Way are not issues that can be readily dealt with under a development control policy tool such as is represented by a neighbourhood plan. It is therefore recommended that the Parish Council establish a sub-committee for the purposes of:
- Liaising with the Local Access Forum on "Restoring the Record" in order to ensure all existing Rights of Way in the parish are recorded and maintained as part of our heritage by 2026.
 - Co-ordinating between local land owners and external bodies, including funding bodies for the purposes of ensuring the parish's network of footpaths and bridleways is properly maintained with a specific focus on those locations (some of which were highlighted in the parish survey and consultation responses) where maintenance costs are particularly onerous on landowners as a result of local conditions.
 - Establish a project in order to identify and investigate 'missing links' and improvements in the network that would, in particular, improve local

connectivity between those parts of the parish where the only current alternative is to use local roads in areas where there are no pavements.

Highway Safety and Traffic Calming

- 6.6 With the exception of the former Molins factory site (where traffic safety policies particular to large scale development have been incorporated in to the South Saunderton Task Group report) it is not anticipated that there will be any development in the parish that will require a specific traffic safety or traffic calming policy.
- 6.7 However, traffic safety issues drew strong responses from residents in both the parish survey and in the consultation feedback and there are some areas where it is clear that consideration needs to be given to immediate action by the Parish Council with regards to both current planning matters and the longer-term management of the parish's roads.
- 6.8 The proposals contained within the draft Princes Risborough Town Plan (PRTP) are considered to be highly likely to have an overspill impact on the adjacent rural road network within Bledlow-cum-Saunderton and currently outside the area of the PRTP. It is recommended that the Parish Council work with WDC, BCC and Transport for Bucks (TfB) in order to ensure that the management of the Upper Icknield Way, Lee Road, Bledlow Road and the potential relief road on Shootacre Lane, Saunderton is focused on reducing traffic speeds and volumes in order to encourage their safe shared use by walkers, cyclists and horse-riders as well as motorists.
- 6.9 Traffic volumes and speeds along the A4010 were raised as a significant concern in the parish survey. The Parish Council should urgently engage with the A4010 HS2 Consortium which has been identifying priorities for improvements as part of HS2 mitigation work.
- 6.10 Empirical data on traffic speeds in the varying locations around the parish mentioned in residents' responses and comments was hard to come by and it is therefore recommended that the Parish Council in conjunction with Buckinghamshire County Council and Buckinghamshire Police and/or Safer Neighbourhood Team undertake a programme of informal speed surveys for the purposes of then prioritising where work on reducing traffic speeds needs to be focused (subject to available funding). The following locations have been identified as priorities by residents:
- In South Saunderton to assess the effectiveness of the 40mph zone.
 - Haw Lane to assess the effectiveness of both the 30mph and 40mph limits.
 - Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge to assess the effectiveness of the 30mph limit at locations other than outside the village hall.

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- Chinnor Road to assess the effectiveness of the 40mph limit between Routs Green and the 30mph zone.
 - Perry Lane, Bledlow to assess the effectiveness of the 30mph limit.
 - At the junction between Upper Icknield Way and Lee Road, assess the need for a speed restriction on the approach to the zig-zag bend heading north.
- 6.11 On completion of the speed survey project outlined above and if collected evidence shows appropriate locations where mitigation work could be carried out (subject to available funding), the Parish Council should establish a shortlist of priority projects in liaison with relevant local partners and funding bodies. The CITG suggest that with regards to current approaches to reducing traffic speeds in rural villages that are appropriate within an AONB the Parish Council refer to the Dorset AONB Partnership 2011, Traffic in Villages – Safety and Civility for Rural Roads; A toolkit for communities and to Environmental Guidelines for the Management of Highways in the Chilterns.

Public and Local Community Transport

- 6.12 It is recommended that the Parish Council closely monitor the situation with regards to the withdrawal of bus services within the parish in order to determine what steps (from a planning or any other perspective) can be taken to support essential services.

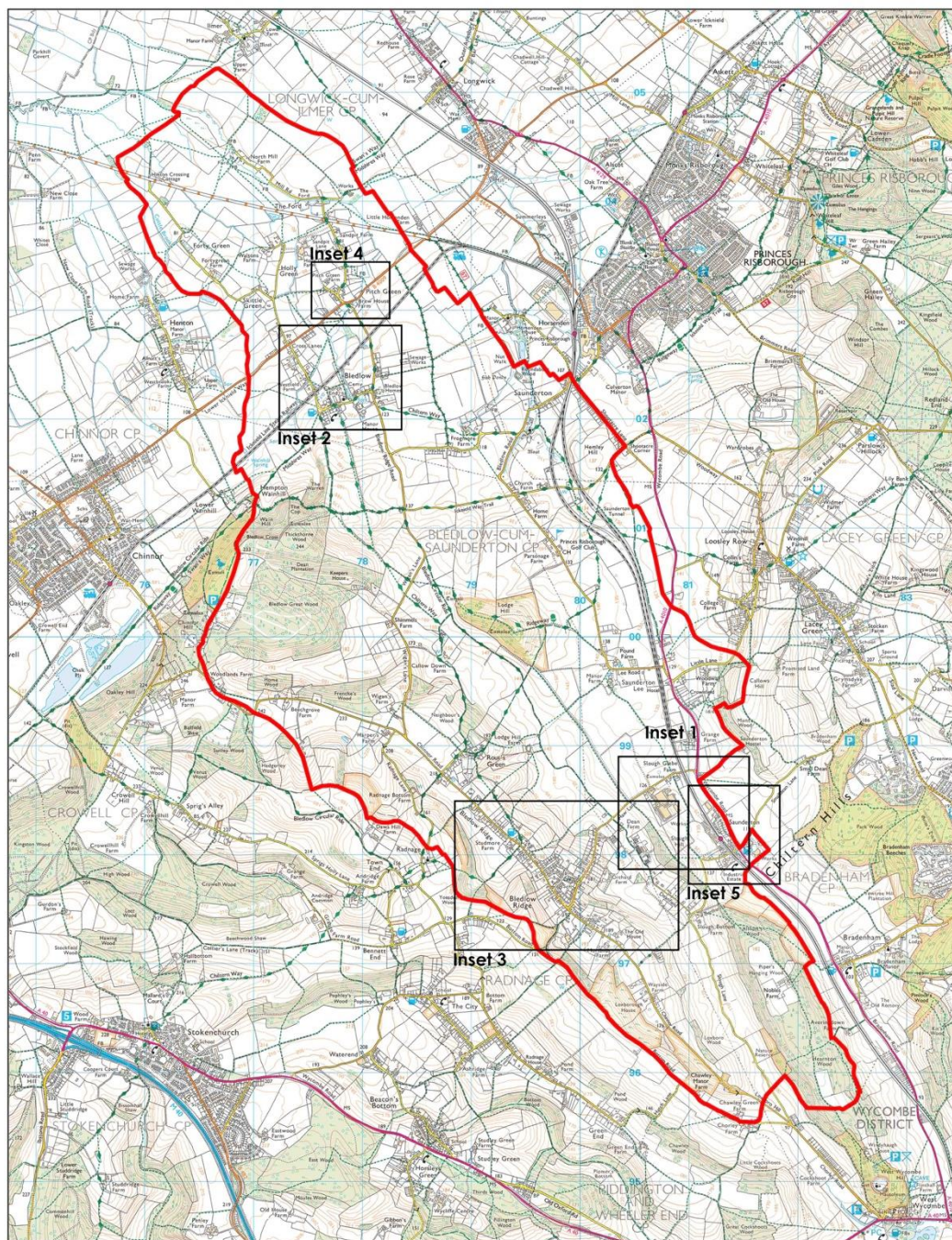
Affordable housing and other Planning Obligations

- 6.13 WDC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (April 2013) establishes the mechanism for the contribution towards affordable housing across the District in line with policy DM18. Any planning obligations must be justified with regard to the CIL Regulations and the National Planning Policy Framework. WDC has confirmed that with CIL in place, restrictions on the use of pooled contributions, potential costs and delays and the benefits of increased certainty in the development process, only rarely will it be appropriate to seek a planning obligation from developments that are less than ten dwellings or 500sqm of commercial floor space. Other than Policy 3 (Molins), the neighbourhood plan does not contain policies that are likely to trigger such obligations. However, the SPD indicates there may be circumstances below these thresholds where an obligation is required to secure affordable housing in rural parts of the District.
- 6.14 This series of local infrastructure projects outlined above will be prioritised for investment from Section 106 agreements and the Wycombe District CIL. A minimum of 25% of the levy collected from development in the parish will be passed to the Parish Council for investment in the parish when the Plan is 'made'. This transition from plan making focus to infrastructure delivery focus, as set out above, provides the local community with an indication of the priorities for

investing the fund to improve local infrastructure as a result of new development in the parish.

- 6.15 In addition, other policies of the Plan require some planning obligations to be entered into as part of planning consents to finance and deliver specific infrastructure projects relating to the development scheme in order to make the scheme satisfactory in line with paragraphs 173 and 204 of the NPPF.

Policies Maps



Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan
Policies Map - Submission Plan - August 2016

Key



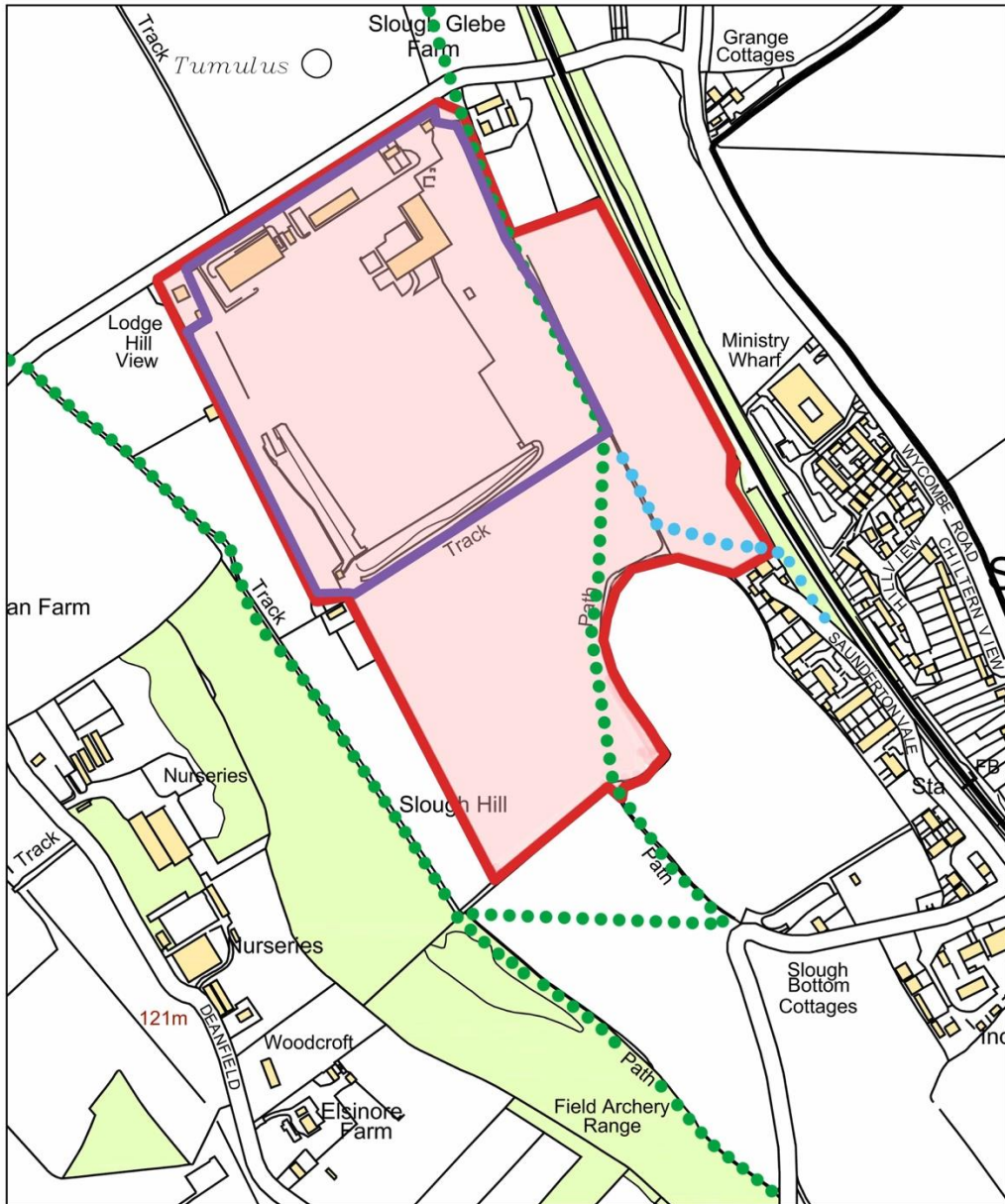
Parish Boundary



Inset 1,2,3,4,5

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Inset Map 1



Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Inset 1 - Submission Plan - August 2016

Key

Policy 3
Molins, South
Saunderton

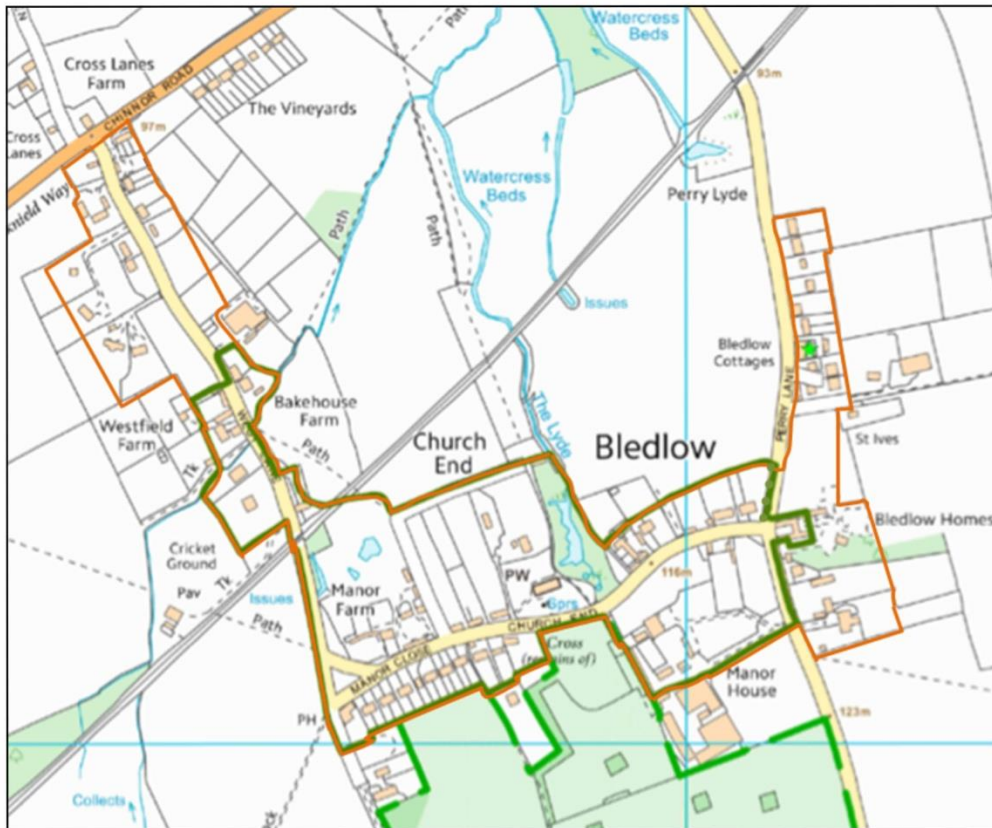
Existing Public
Footpath

Proposed Ped/Cycle
Connections to
Saunderton Station

Major Developed
Site in the Green
Belt

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Inset Map 2



Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Inset 2 - Submission Plan - August 2016

Policy 4 - Design management Bledlow Village

Key



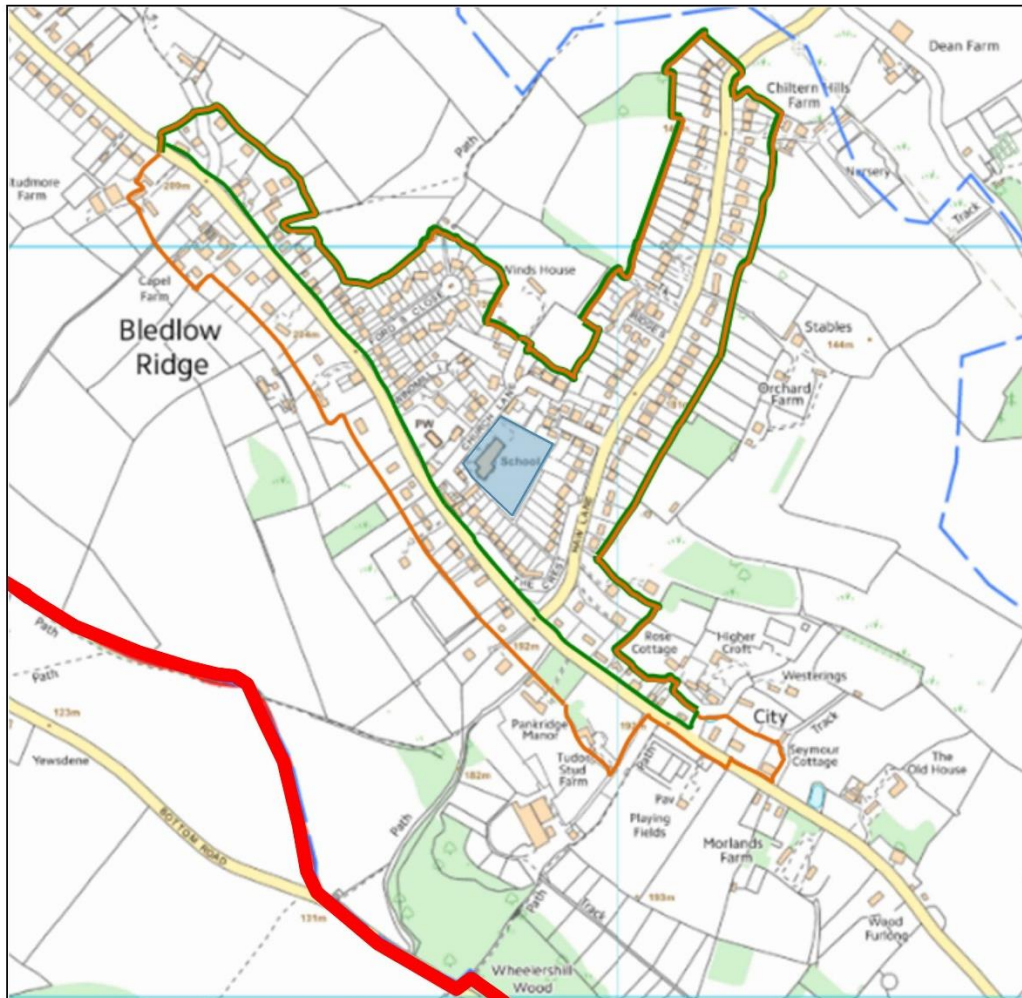
Existing Bledlow
Conservation Area
Boundary



Policy 1 - Proposed
Bledlow village Settlement
Boundary

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Inset Map 3



Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Inset 3 - Submission Plan - August v2016

Policy 5 - Design management in Bledlow Ridge

Key



Parish Boundary



Policy 1 - Proposed
Bledlow Ridge Settlement
Boundary



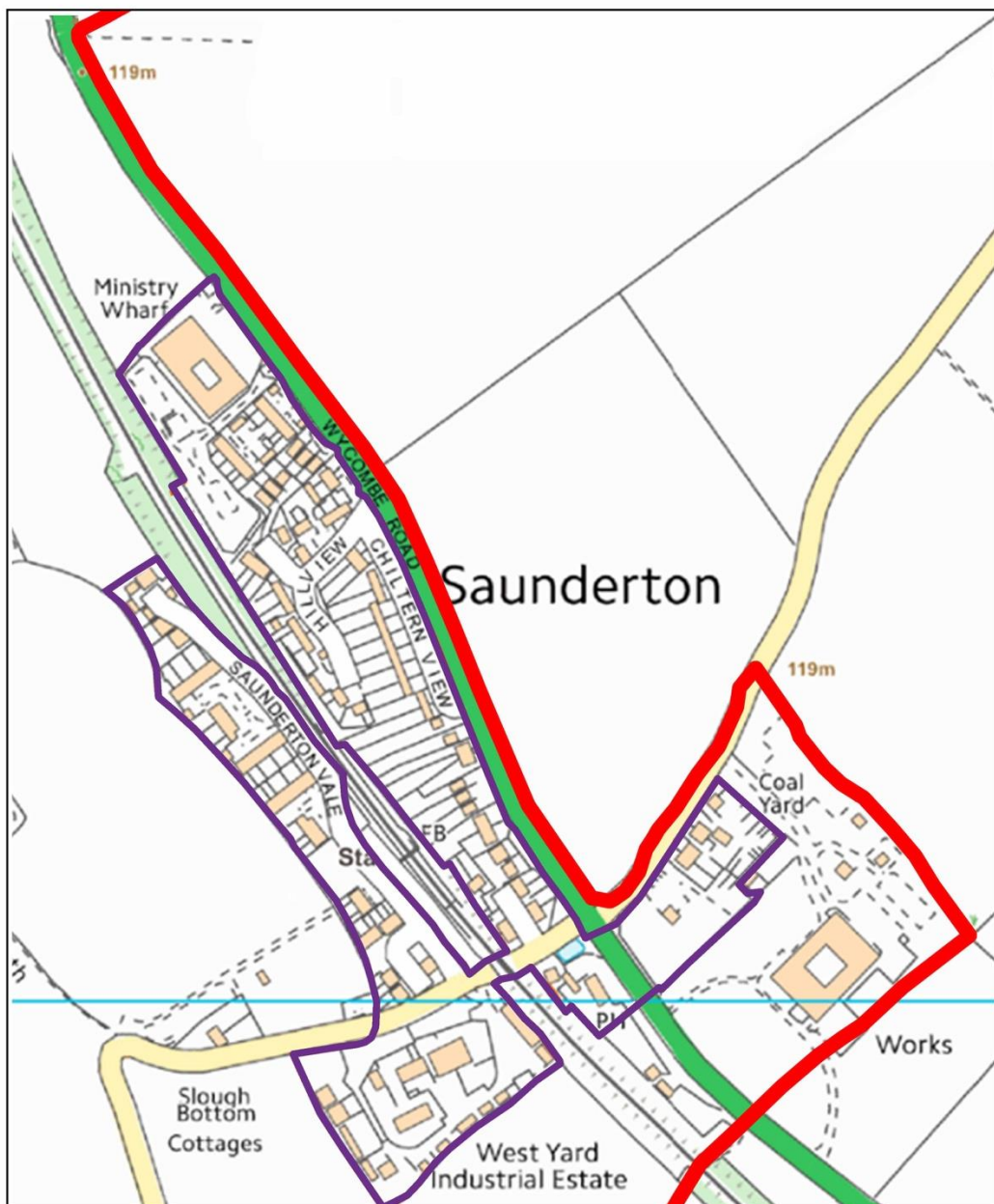
Policy 12 - Bledlow
Ridge School



Existing GB4
Boundaries

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Inset Map 5



Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan

Inset 5 - Submission Plan - August 2016

Key



Parish Boundary



Policy 1
South Saunderton Proposed
Settlement Boundary

Appendix A: Schedule of Evidence

The list below contains all those documents collected and reviewed in the process of preparing the Plan. Links to the evidence base are available on BcS NP website (unless otherwise specified).

BcS NP Community Infrastructure Task Group Report
BcS NP South Saunderton Task Group Report
BcS NP Housing Development Report
BcS NP Design of the Built Environment Report
BcS NP Rural Economy and Environment Report
Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment. January 2016 (https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/pages/Planning-and-building-control/New-local-plan/New-local-plan-supporting-evidence.aspx)
Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish Profile
Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish: 2011 Census data
Survey Report (February 2016)
Pre-drafting parish consultation – Feedback Report (April 2016)
Wycombe District Council Cabinet decision concerning the Saunderton Area Action Plan
Wycombe District Landscape Character Assessment (http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/environment/heritage-ecology/landscape/buckinghamshire-landscape-character-assessment/wycombe-district-landscape-character-assessment/)
Press release – Boosting productivity in rural areas - Department for Communities and Local Govt, February 2016 (https://www.gov.uk/government/news/boosting-productivity-in-rural-areas)
Wycombe District Council 2015, Viability Assessment: Final Report (https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/uploads/public/documents/Wycombe-District-Council-FINAL-REPORT-with-Appendices-February-2015-Web.pdf)
Rural Businesses January to March 2016. Data from HMG (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/512337/Rural_Businesses_January_2016_31mar16.pdf)
Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Economic Partnership, Plan for Sustainable Economic Growth 2012 – 2031 (http://buckstvllep.co.uk/uploads/downloads/SEQ129_BBF_BusinessPlan_0912_LOW-1.pdf)
Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire Broadband, Connected Counties anticipated fibre deployment (http://www.connectedcounties.org/media/825773/Connected-Counties-postcode-fibre-coverage-map-June-2014.pdf)
The New Boot Limited website (https://sites.google.com/a/brvh.co.uk/new_boot/home)
Wycombe District Council, Assets of Community Value (http://data.wycombe.gov.uk/View/planning/assets-of-community-value)
Oxfordshire County Council Consultation on Supported Transport (subsidised buses & Dial-A-Ride)

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(https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/stconsultation/consultationHome?utm_source=FURL-1&utm_medium=stconsultation&utm_term=nil&utm_content=&utm_campaign=stconsultation)
Princes Risborough Town Plan, Draft Plan Consultation Document (https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/uploads/public/documents/Draft-Princes-Risborough-Town-Plan-consultation-document.pdf)
Traffic Speed Data in Bledlow-cum-Saunderton for May 2012. (Sourced from TVP)
Bledlow Conservation Area Character Survey, 1996
Bucks CC Parking Standards (Oct 2015)
The Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019: A Framework for Action. (http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/ManagementPlan/Management%20Plan%202014-19/chilterns_management_plan_2014-19_final.pdf)
The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide, 2010 (http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/BuildingsDesignGuide2010.pdf)
Chilterns Buildings Design Guide - Chilterns Flint, Supplementary Technical, 2003 (http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/ChilternsFlint.pdf)
Chilterns Buildings Design Guide - Chilterns Brick, Supplementary Technical, 2006 (http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/ChilternsBrick.pdf)
Chilterns Buildings Design Guide - Chilterns Roofing Material, Supplementary Technical, 2007 (http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/RoofingMaterials.pdf)
Ordnance Survey Maps (https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/)
WDC 'Consolidated Local Plan 2013 (https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/uploads/public/documents/Planning/Planning-policy/Local-plan-2013/Consolidated-Local-Plan.pdf)
Chiltern Conservation Board Renewable Energy Position Statement (http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/CCB%20renewable%20energy%20position%20statement%20adopted%20Jan%202014%20(R%20Rev%201%20Dec%202014).pdf)
Chiltern Conservation Board Development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB (http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/PlanningDevelopment/Setting_position_statement_adopted_June_2011_web.pdf)
National Policy Planning Framework – Department for Communities and Local Government (2012) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)
Buckinghamshire Thames Valley LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2012 – 2031 (http://www.buckstvllep.co.uk/uploads/downloads%5CFINAL%20DRAFT%20BTVLEP%20SEP.pdf)
Wycombe District Council Draft Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment – November 2015 (https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/uploads/public/documents/WDC-Housing-and-

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Economic-Land-Availability-Assessment-November-2015-FinalV2.pdf)
The Clare Foundation Centre (http://www.theclarefoundation.org/)
Businesses located at Ministry Wharf, South Saunderton (http://www.endole.co.uk/explorer/company/postcode/hp14-4hw)
Businesses located at The Crownfield Industrial Estate (http://www.endole.co.uk/explorer/company/postcode/hp27-9nr)
The Impact of Pubs on the Level of Socio-Economic Activity in Rural Parishes: An Econometric Study – Mount M. and Cabras J – University of York Management School 2013 (http://www.regionalstudies.org/uploads/MMIC_RSAPaper.pdf)
Standing up for Rural Businesses (Country Land and Business Association) January 2016 (http://www.cla.org.uk/sites/default/files/CLA%20Standing%20up%20for%20Rural%20Business%20(Final).pdf)
Towards a one Nation Economy: A 10-point plan for boosting productivity in Rural Areas - (DEFRA August 2015) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/454866/10-point-plan-rural-productivity-pb14335.pdf)
The Guide to Cross Compliance in England (DEFRA 2015) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/397044/Cross_compliance_handbook_v2_web.pdf)
Wycombe District Council – Planning Portal (http://publicaccess.wycombe.gov.uk/idoxpa-web/)
Natural England – Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Buttler's Hangings) (https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1000543&SiteName=&countyCode=3&responsiblePerson=)
Natural England - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Lodge Hill) (https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1001448&SiteName=&countyCode=3&responsiblePerson=)
CPRE: Planning Campaign Briefing 11: Tranquillity (July 2014) (http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/housing-and-planning/planning/planning-campaign-briefings/item/3266-planning-campaign-briefing-11-tranquillity)
The Making of the Chilterns Landscape - Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/AboutTheChilterns/HistoricEnvironment/The_Making_of_the_Chilterns_Landscape.pdf)
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/section/85