

# ASHTON

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2019-2029

Referendum version

December 2020



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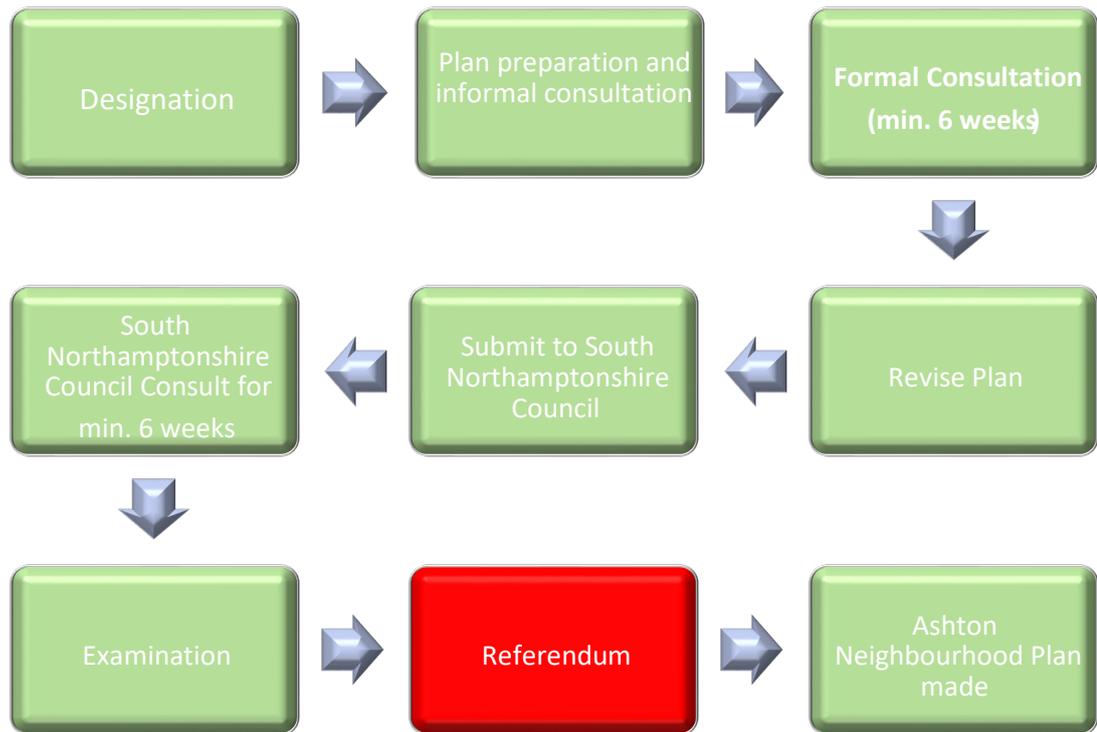
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# 1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 gives Parish Councils and other relevant bodies the power to prepare statutory neighbourhood development plans (NDPs) to help guide development in their local area. Through NDPs, local people now have the opportunity to shape future development in their area, because planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## **Neighbourhood Plan Process and Preparation**

- 1.2 Ashton Parish Council as a qualifying body decided to prepare an NDP for Ashton parish in April 2015. The application for designation as a neighbourhood area was approved by South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015. The designated Neighbourhood Area is shown on the Map 1 on page 32.
- 1.3 A steering group comprising Parish Councillors and local residents was established to progress work on the plan. The steps in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan are set out in Figure 1 below. In early 2019, the plan was subject to formal consultation (the Regulation 14 consultation) and two periods of further consultation in 2020 (the Regulation 16 consultation). The ANDP was then subject to independent examination. This found that the ANDP met the basic conditions and legal requirements. The ANDP is now published in revised form prior to the neighbourhood plan referendum.

**Figure 1 Neighbourhood Plan Process**

- 1.4 Planning can be full of technical phrases and jargon, so we have also included a Glossary on page 34 to help you when reading the plan.

## 2.0 Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan Key Issues, Vision and Objectives

### Introduction

- 2.1 The small village of Ashton, seven miles south of Northampton lies approximately half way between Milton Keynes and Northampton. With 153 houses, and approximately 400 residents, Ashton remains a small community compared with its larger surrounding village neighbours.
- 2.2 The lowest point in the parish of Ashton (235 feet) is at Bozenham Mill, a few yards from the border with Buckinghamshire and close to the banks of the River Tove. The highest point is one of 426 feet, at the cross-roads in Salcey Forest which forms the eastern corner of the parish. Ashton parish is approximately 3 miles at its longest, from Stoke Bottom lock to Salcey Forest and covers some 1,300 acres.



*i Saint Michaels and All Angels Church*

- 2.3 The earliest written records of the village come from the Domesday Book where the village is described as Asce or Aceshille. The ash tree was held in veneration by the Saxons and there is little doubt that this was the origin of the name of the village. Our village history shows continuous habitation here from Roman times and possibly even earlier. The village has had links with Royalty (associated with the Grafton Estate) from Henry VIII through to Charles II.

- 2.4 Our quiet village is tucked between the trees and in the folds of the hills, is south west facing and usually quiet, other than when the London – Birmingham express train rushes through the village. The railway line on its embankment (north – south) cuts the village in two. The eastern and smaller part of the village is known locally as ‘Little Ashton’.
- 2.5 Most of the residents work in the local towns and villages, with some commuting to London & Birmingham. In more recent years more workers are becoming ‘home based’. We have a thriving local Primary School, Church and pub - the Old Crown Inn, and the Men’s Own Rugby Club is within the Parish and villagers have access to this facilities.



*ii View south toward the village*

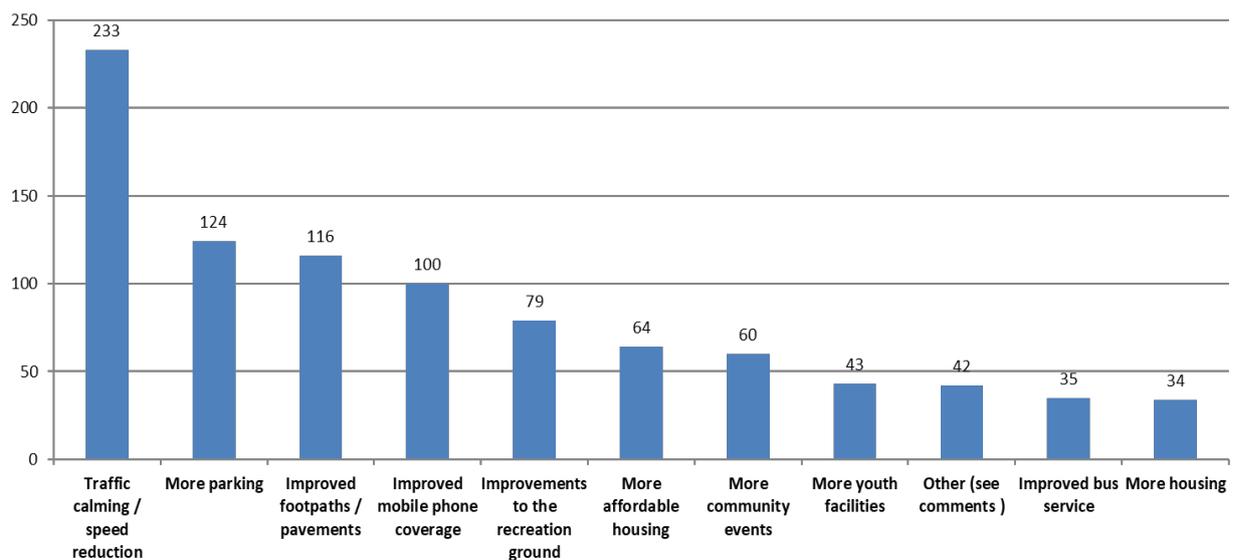
## **Key Issues**

- 2.6 The Key Issues that have been identified for the Ashton area are set out below. These have been informed by work completed as part of the Ashton Village Questionnaire 2015 (Figure 2); from the assessment of the evidence base and the policy review undertaken; the work of the Steering Group and the consultations held during the plan’s preparation.
- 2.7 The Key Issues identified by the Steering Group for the ANDP are:
- Management of future housing growth, where that growth should take place and the type and design of new homes;
  - Management of key environmental assets in the neighbourhood area e.g.

- heritage assets, landscape, the area’s tranquillity and public views;
- Protection and enhancement of key open spaces, such as the village’s Greens;
- Traffic and transport, in particular, speeding and limited access to public transport;
- Protection and enhancement of community facilities;
- Protection and enhancement of key recreation assets e.g. the play area and allotments;
- Support for appropriate levels and types of local business growth in what remains a rural area.

2.8 We know to a large degree that these issues are those of most concern to residents of the area. When asked to prioritise issues the following were identified in our Questionnaire Survey.

**Figure 2: Ashton Village Questionnaire 2015 Top Three Priorities**



2.9 Further informal consultation was conducted in late 2018 on an initial draft plan. The draft plan was placed on the Parish Council web site and widely publicised. An online response form generated further comments, including the following that were used to help refine the ANDP for the Regulation 14 consultation and for this submitted plan:

- Broad support for the plan’s objectives
- Broad agreement with SNC’s proposed village confines
- Need to protect trees and hedgerows
- Speeding traffic e.g. Roade Hill
- Why has the paddock been identified as a local green space?
- The village confines boundary is drawn too tightly
- Should Little Ashton be within the confines?

- Some heritage assets may have been omitted
- Ashton should not be over-developed
- Local drainage needs to be improved
- The plan should include one or two housing sites to support further growth in the village to help support facilities such as the school.
- Sites that have been refused planning permission on Roade Hill and to the rear of Old Manor Farmhouse should be removed from the village confines.
- The Steering Group should contact the owners of the local green spaces, such as Vale Brook Green.

## **Overall Aim**

- 2.10 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have considered these key issues and identified a set of objectives for the neighbourhood plan, these will be pursued to help us achieve our overall aim for the neighbourhood plan for 2029 of:

**“helping to shape future growth and protect key social, economic and environmental assets”**

## **ANDP Objectives**

- 2.11 The individual objectives identified for the ANDP are as follows:

### **Ashton Neighbourhood Plan Objectives**

**OBJECTIVE 1: To support and manage future housing growth within Ashton village.**

**OBJECTIVE 2: To support local business growth.**

**OBJECTIVE 3: To protect key open spaces.**

**OBJECTIVE 4: To protect community facilities.**

**OBJECTIVE 5: To protect key environmental assets.**

**OBJECTIVE 6: To improve access for all**

## 3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans must have regard to national policies and advice and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area. It is therefore important that as the Plan is prepared that its policies reflect this higher-level planning framework.

3.2 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>1</sup> published in revised form in February 2019. NPPF sets out in paragraphs 7 and 8 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and that the planning system performs an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.

3.3 More specifically for neighbourhood plans NPPF states:

*29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies<sup>16</sup>.*

*30. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.*

*Footnote 16: Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area”*

3.3 Local Strategic Planning Policy is set out in two local development plan documents (DPD) as follows the:

- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy which was adopted in December 2014 which sets out an overall vision setting out how the area and places within it should evolve, strategic objectives for the area focusing on key issues, a strategy for the delivery of these objectives, and an explanation of how the delivery process will be monitored; and
- The South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan 2011-2029, adopted 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020, this plan sets out more detailed planning policy for the District. Ashton is identified as a “small village” in the settlement hierarchy (Policy SS1)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

## 4.0 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- 4.1 This section sets out the planning policies to guide development in the Parish of Ashton up to 2029. The policies are defined below one of the six objectives identified for the ANDP. Whilst the policies are divided between the objectives the policies of the plan should be read as a whole. The ANDP policies only apply to development that requires planning consent, and not, for example, to development that can already take place under permitted development rights.
- 4.2 Accompanying the ANDP written plan is a Policies Map. This shows in spatial form the key designations and allocations made by the ANDP.

### OBJECTIVE 1 - To support and manage future housing growth within Ashton village.

#### **New Housing within the Ashton Village Confines (ANDP1)**

Over the plan period 2019 to 2029, within the defined Ashton Village Confines, (see Policies Map A) proposals for new housing development will be supported where they are:

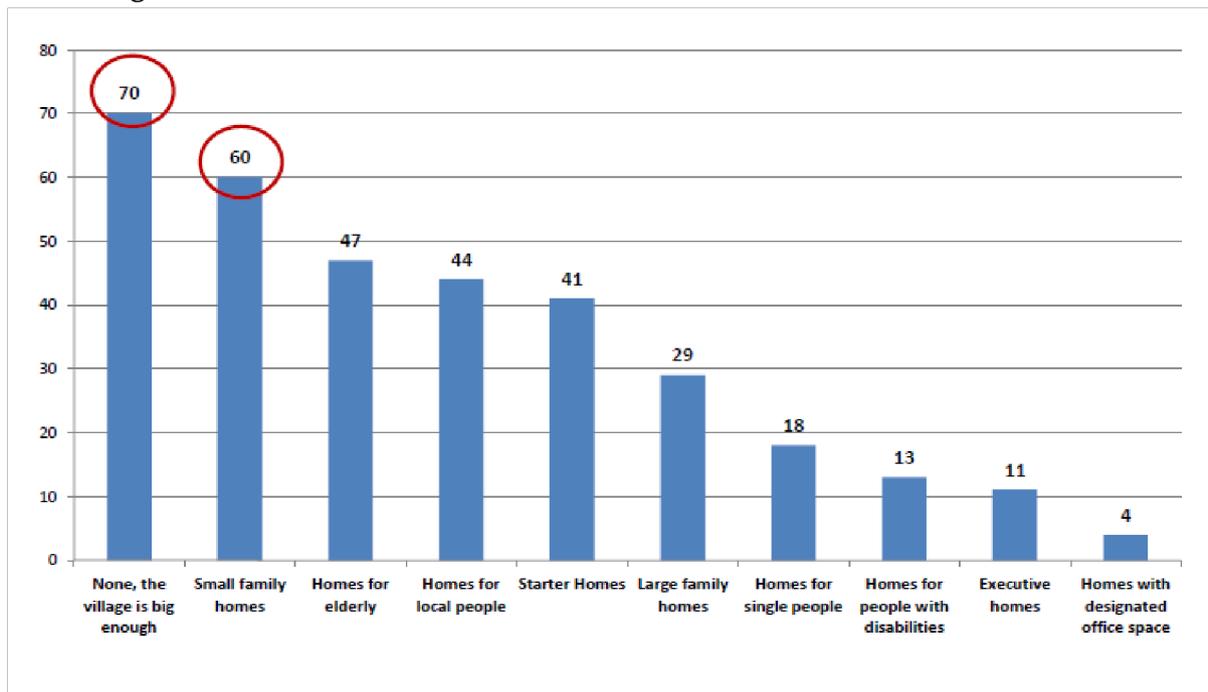
- (a) Located on an infill site;
- (b) Small-scale (individual or small groups of houses) that relates well to the existing layout, facilities and amenities of the village;
- (c) On previously developed land or re-use existing buildings, where possible;
- (d) Of a good design and make a positive contribution to the surrounding environment and rural landscape;
- (e) Designed to take account of the design policies in the ANDP, the SNC *Design Guide*, and the key principles of *Secured by Design*, Supplementary Planning Guidance on *Planning out Crime* and *Building for Life*;
- (f) Provide safe access by road users, pedestrians and cyclists and inclusion of an appropriate level off-street car parking to serve the development in line with local standards; and
- (g) They have no significant adverse impact on the amenity of existing and future occupiers.

Development outside the Ashton village confines will only be supported where it is in accordance with Policy R1 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policy LH1 of the Local Plan (Part 2).

## Background/Justification

- 4.3 The future housing growth in the village needs to be managed to meet the aims of strategic planning policy and to ensure that that growth is appropriate for Ashton. From our Questionnaire, we know that local people already have concerns about the size of the village, many respondents answering that they felt the village is already “big enough” (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. What kind of homes does Ashton need?**



- 4.4 There was also a clear preference for small family homes, homes for older people, local people and starter homes rather than “executive homes”.
- 4.5 Villagers concerns about new development are illustrated in Figure 5. These are:

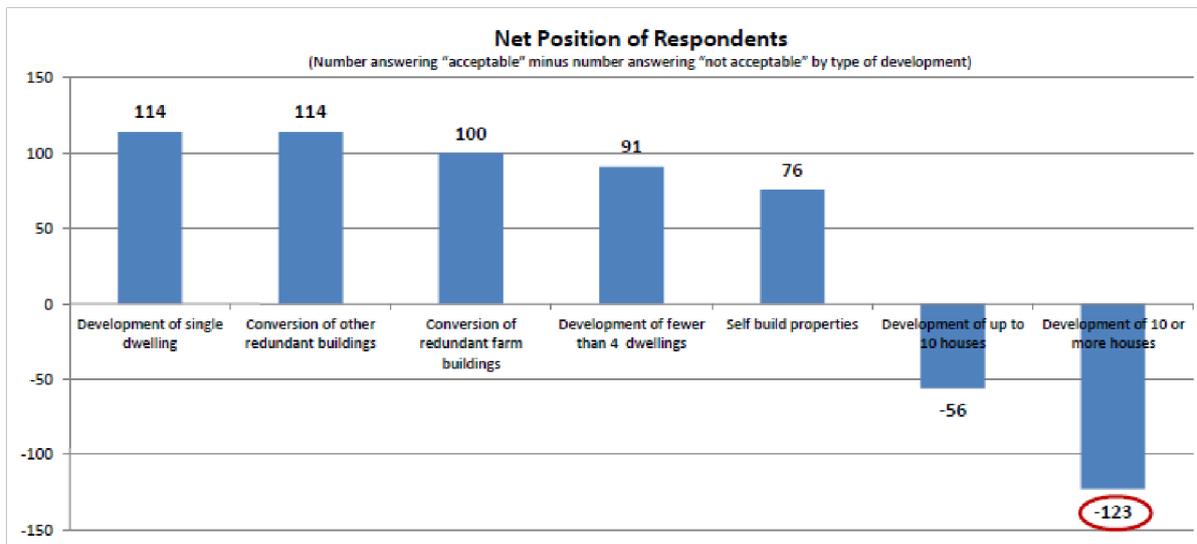
- Traffic generation and fears that local roads would not cope
- Impact on the character and environment of the village
- Concerns that the limited local services would be unable to cope
- And to a lesser degree concerns about design.

**Figure 5. Concerns about future development**

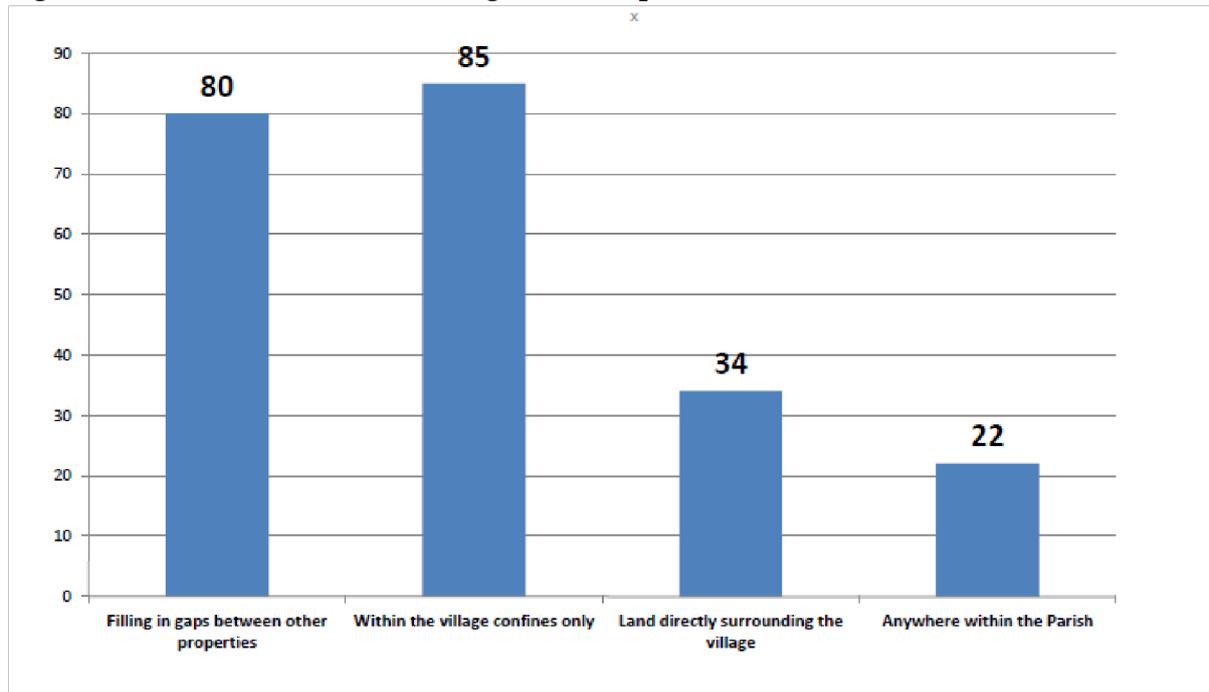


4.6 The Questionnaire also told us that single dwellings, conversions, and small infill developments were preferred over larger developments (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. What size of housing do you prefer?**

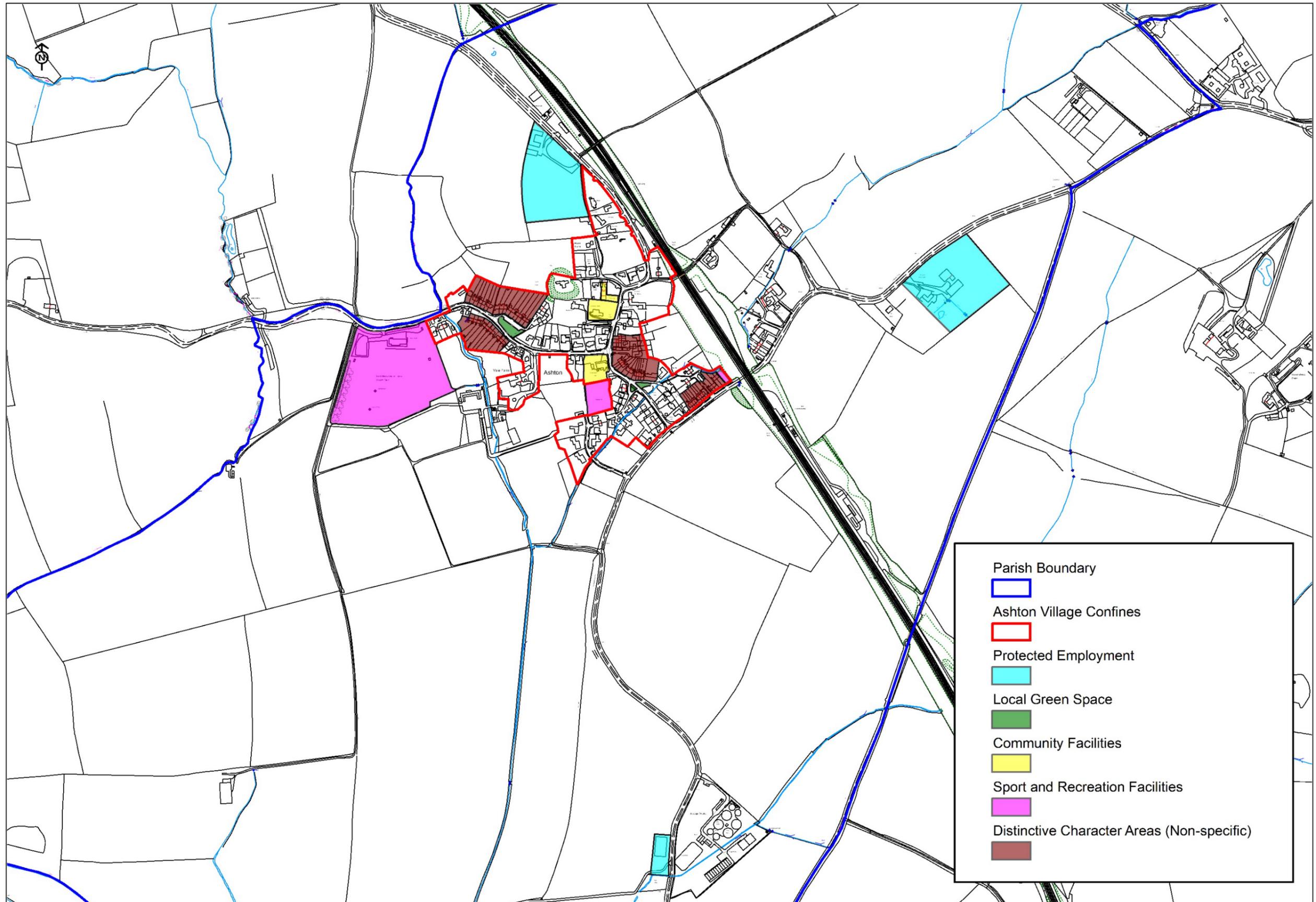


4.7 And when it comes to where that development should take place there is a clear preference for infill sites within the village confines (Figure 7).

**Figure 7. Where should new housing be developed?**

- 4.8 The recently adopted Local Plan (Part 2) has amended the village confines. This NDP uses the same village confines (Map A).
- 4.9 Given the scale of development commitments in the South Northamptonshire Rural Area it has also been decided that the Ashton Neighbourhood Plan will not allocate further sites for housing development. In line with the WNJCS new housing development will, for the remainder of the plan period, up to 2029, be managed within the confines of the village shown on the ANDP Policies Map. New development will be supported when it is within the defined village confines and meets the more detailed criteria set out in Policy ANDP1. Outside of the defined village confines new development will only be permitted where it meets the requirements of Policy R1 in the WNJCS, or other exceptions set out within the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan.
- 4.9 To address the key concerns of villagers Policy ANDP1 sets out the key criteria against how future development will be assessed. These criteria address the issues raised in the Questionnaire concerning size of development, design, and location.

**Map A - Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies Map** (©Crown copyright [and database rights] 2019 OS 100055940 on behalf of Ashton Parish Council 0100060736)



## **OBJECTIVE 2 - To support local business growth.**

### **Protecting Existing Employment and Supporting Small Business and Homeworking (ANDP2)**

The following local employment sites listed and as shown on Map B below will be protected for continued employment use:

- Arrowsmith (farming, specifically Vale Farm)
- KJ Pickering (construction, various sites)
- Komcept (electronic devices manufacture, Ridgeway Farm, Hartwell Road)

Proposals to expand or redevelop these sites for employment uses will be supported when they:

- a) do not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity, the natural and built heritage; and
- b) they provide adequate off-street vehicle and car parking;

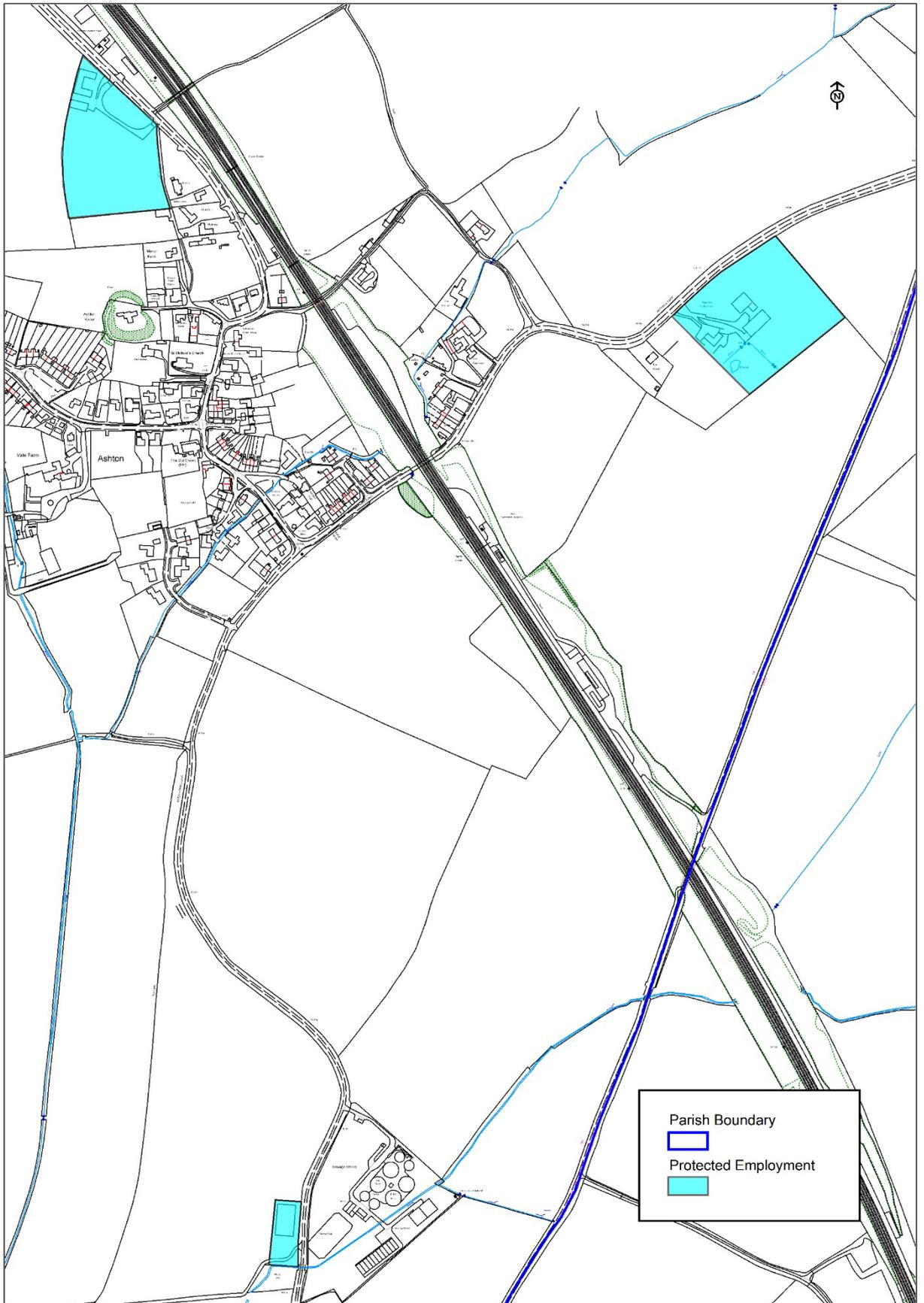
Proposals for small business development and homeworking will be supported within the village confines boundary when they also meet Policy R2 and the criteria listed above.

Proposals for non-employment generating uses on these sites will be supported when the applicant can satisfactorily demonstrate as evidenced through an active marketing exercise agreed with the local planning authority that the site/premises are no longer suitable or viable for employment uses. The marketing exercise will usually be required for a minimum period of 12 months.

### **Background/Justification**

- 4.10 Ashton has a small number of successful small businesses, including those remaining in agriculture. Other local employment opportunities are largely people working from home, despite the relatively poor state of mobile and broadband communications that was raised in the Questionnaire Survey. Policy ANDP2 seeks to protect and support the future development of local employment by protecting the main business uses and by supporting further small business development and homeworking. Policy AND2 is in general conformity with WNJCS Policy R2 – Rural Economy and provides more locally specific policy for appropriate business development.

**Map B – Existing Employment Sites** Crown copyright [and database rights]  
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## OBJECTIVE 3 - To protect key open spaces

### Protecting Local Green Space (ANDP3)

The following local green spaces as shown on Policies Maps A and individually on Policies Maps C to E are designated as Local Green Spaces:

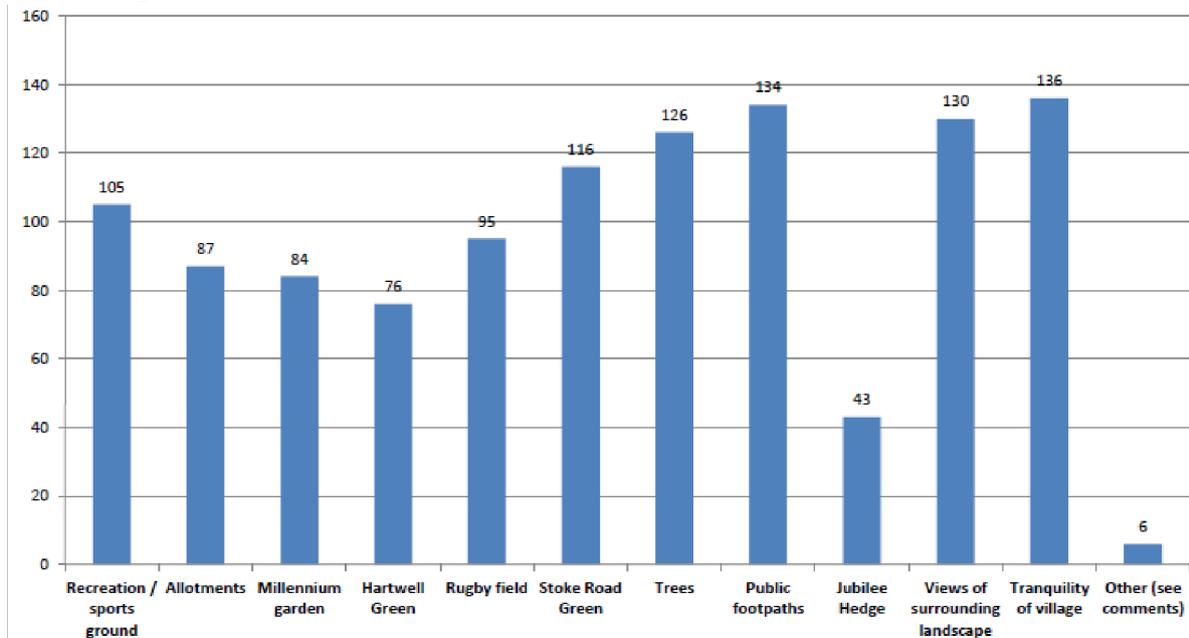
- Millennium Garden
- Hartwell Road Green
- Vale Brook Green

Development proposals affecting these spaces will be assessed against national Green Belt policy.

### Background/Justification

4.11 Internal green spaces are a key component of what helps to maintain the quality of life in the village. Villagers identified several open and green spaces as of special importance along with the neighbourhood area’s footpaths, tranquillity, hedges, and views of the surrounding landscape.

**Figure 8. Which areas of the village and surrounding countryside are of special importance?**



4.12 Paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that “the designation of land as Local Green Spaces through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to

them. Paragraph 101 of the NPPF states that “policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts”.

4.13 Paragraph 100 of the NPPF goes on to advise that “*the Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:*

- *where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- *where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”*

4.14 To help local communities identify local green spaces SNC have produced specific guidance

[www.southnorthants.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1748/local-green-space-designation-and-methodology.pdf](http://www.southnorthants.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1748/local-green-space-designation-and-methodology.pdf)) this has been used (Appendix 2) to identify potential designated Local Green Space in Ashton. Policy ANDP3 identifies these spaces and sets out a planning policy to manage their future development. The spaces identified include the Millennium Garden implemented in 2000.

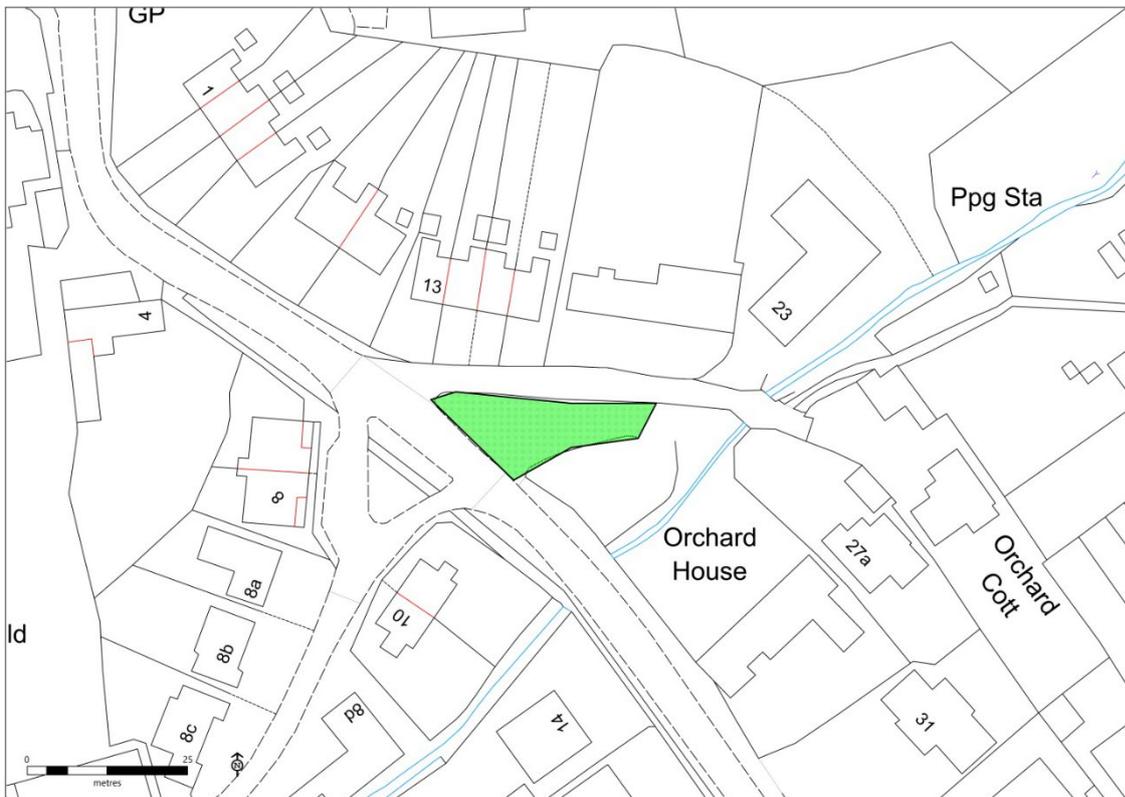


iii Millennium Garden

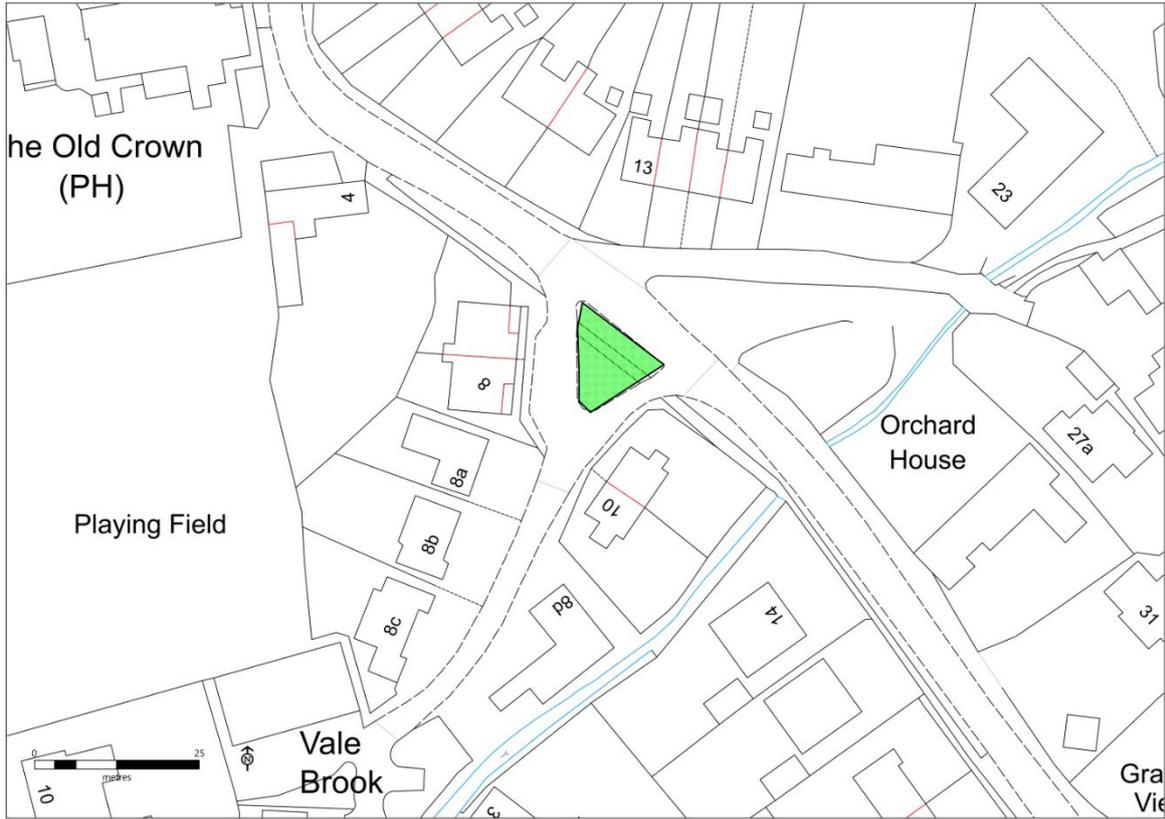
**Map C - Millennium Garden** (©Crown copyright [and database rights] 2019 OS 100055940 on behalf of Ashton Parish Council 0100060736)]



**Map D – Hartwell Road Green** (©Crown copyright [and database rights] 2019 OS 100055940 on behalf of Ashton Parish Council 0100060736)]



**Map E – Vale Brook Green** (©Crown copyright [and database rights] 2019 OS 100055940 on behalf of Ashton Parish Council 0100060736)



## **OBJECTIVE 4 - To protect community facilities.**

### **Protection of Community Facilities (ANDP4)**

Where permission is required, the change of use or redevelopment of local community facilities, as listed below, will only be permitted for other health, education or community type uses (such as village halls, local clubhouses, health centres, schools and children’s day nurseries), unless one of the following can be demonstrated:

1. The proposal includes alternative provision, on a site within the locality, of equivalent or enhanced facilities. Such sites should be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and have adequate car parking.
2. Satisfactory evidence is produced which includes an active marketing exercise to be agreed with the local planning authority which demonstrates there is no longer a demand for the facility. The marketing exercise will usually be required for a minimum period of 12 months.
3. Satisfactory evidence is produced to demonstrate that the facility is no longer viable.
4. The proposal would bring about community benefits that would outweigh the loss of the facility.

The facilities are listed as follows and shown on the Policies Map (Map A):

- St Michael and All Angels Church
- Ashton Church of England Primary School
- The Old Crown Public House

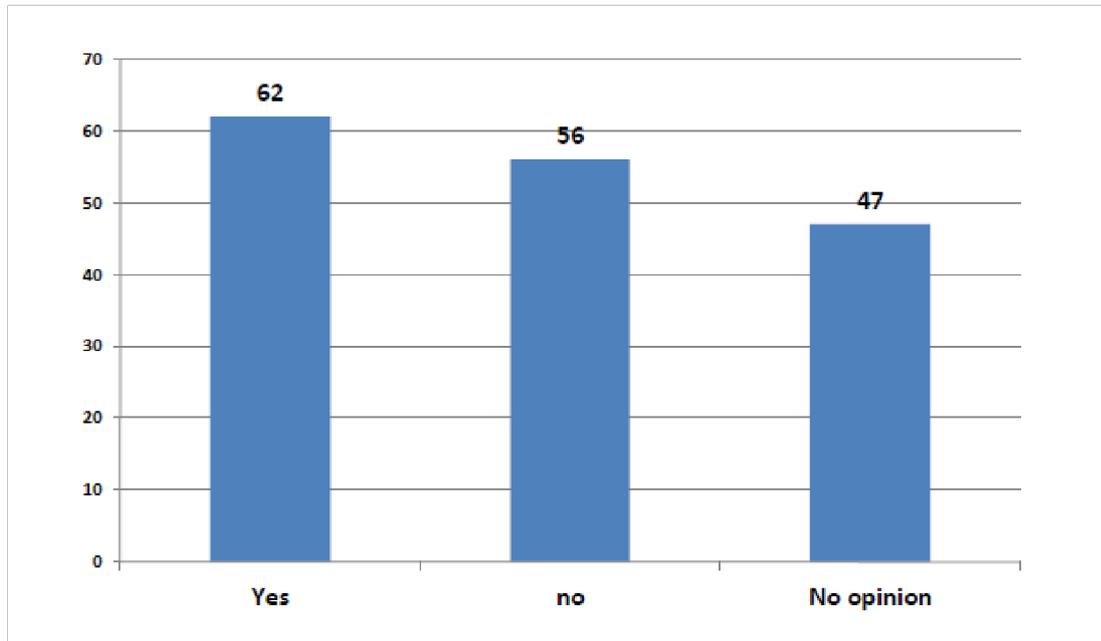
### **Background/Justification**

4.15 Community facilities are essential for the daily life and health of the local community. From our survey many people felt that there were not enough community buildings, Figure 9.

4.16 Policy ANDP4 identifies the existing community facilities in the neighbourhood area that will be protected for future community use. This includes the parish church, village primary school and the neighbourhood area’s only public house. By protecting these three key uses and setting out the circumstances when these facilities could be re-used or redeveloped for non-community uses the ANDP seeks to ensure that these essential facilities underpinning community life are retained.

- 4.17 Policy ANDP4 is in general conformity with WNJCS Policy RC2 that seeks to resist the loss of existing community facilities and supports the NPPF aim of promoting healthy communities, particularly by guarding “against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities” (NPPF, paragraph 92c).

**Figure 9. Do you think there are enough community buildings?**



*iv The Old Crown*

## **Sport and Recreation Facilities (ANDP5)**

**The following recreation facilities also identified on the Policies Map (Map A) will be protected:**

- 1. Men's Own Rugby Club**
- 2. The Hutland, Hartwell Road (Allotments)**
- 3. Recreation Ground (owned by the Pub, but rented from them for over 40 years)**

**Development proposals for the improvement of the existing recreation facilities on these sites will be supported when they would not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity.**

**Development proposals that would result in the loss of these facilities will only be supported when the applicant can demonstrate that the facility is no longer needed for recreational use or suitable alternative provision can be provided elsewhere within the neighbourhood area to an equivalent or better standard and in a location that is in close proximity to the community it currently serves.**

### **Background/Justification**

- 4.18 As well as having several community facilities that underpin village life and provide services to the village, Ashton has a small number of sport and recreation facilities. These will be protected and include large area of pitches and facilities at the Men's Own Rugby Club, the smaller Hutland, now used as allotments, and the recreation ground to the rear of the Old Crown.
- 4.19 Policy ANDP5 is in general conformity with Policy RC2 – Community Needs of the WNJCS that seeks to resist the loss of built sport facilities and the loss of open space. Policy ANDP5 also supports the national policy aim of promoting healthy communities with access to sports facilities, allotments and recreation space.

## **OBJECTIVE 5 - To protect key environmental assets.**

### **Conserving Valued Local Features (ANDP6)**

New development is expected to conserve and, where possible, enhance, the local landscape setting and demonstrate how it has had regard to valued features of the local landscape and how these features have informed the design of the proposal.

Proposals for development should:

- (a) Conserve and, where possible, enhance, the settlement pattern of Ashton village;
- (b) Conserve and, where possible, enhance, areas of historic local woodland;
- (c) Conserve in situ important national and local archaeological sites unless the public benefits derived from a development can be shown to outweigh the ability to preserve those remains in situ.
- (d) Conserve mature trees and hedgerows. Where removal of mature trees or hedgerows is exceptionally necessary as part of a development, the loss should be offset through the replacement of native species elsewhere on the site or within the Parish;
- (e) Where new planting and landscaping is proposed it should use native species and be designed in such a way as to ensure that it is suitable when considered in the wider local landscape and, where appropriate, links to existing woodland and hedgerows;
- (f) Mitigate the visual impact of development and take every opportunity to create new views and vistas;
- (g) Promote high quality residential design that respects local townscape and landscape character and reflects local vernacular building styles, layouts and materials;
- (h) Seek to minimise the encroachment of development into visually exposed landscapes and where development is proposed on the edge of the village ensure that it conserves, and, where possible, enhances views of the settlement edge from the surrounding countryside and does not lead to inappropriate incursion into the surrounding countryside by reason of its siting, design, materials or use of landscaping;
- (i) Seek to conserve or enhance the integrity and fabric of historic buildings and their settings, particularly where new uses are proposed, through the use of appropriate design and locally distinctive materials.

#### **Background/Justification**

- 4.20 Ashton lies within two of the National Character Areas identified by Natural England:

- - NCA89 Northamptonshire Vales
- - NCA91 Yardley Whittlewood Ridge



4.21 The Northamptonshire Vales NCA consists of a series of low-lying clay vales and river valleys, including the valleys of the rivers Nene and Welland and their tributaries. Challenges for this area include retaining the sense of place in light of ongoing pressure for development growth, and protecting and enhancing key features such as the many heritage assets, meadows, woodlands and hedgerows in the light of new development, continuing gravel extraction and the pressure to produce more food. NCA91 Yardley Whittlewood Ridge is a low and gently undulating limestone plateau commonly referred to locally as the Ridge. It runs in a south-west to north-east direction between the nearby towns of Northampton and Milton Keynes. The Ridge is more distinct in the south-west where it rises from the adjacent low-lying claylands. From the top, the land slopes away gently in most directions, giving long views over the surrounding countryside. The area is facing challenges such as how to protect and enhance its unique natural and historical assets while accommodating the pressure for development and increased demand for leisure and recreation. Opportunities exist to protect and enhance key landscape attributes, to cater to increased recreational demands and to promote a greater appreciation of local distinctiveness. Policy ANDP6 has been prepared to help protect and enhance the key landscape features in the area.



### **Development affecting non-designated heritage assets (ANDP7)**

**Non-designated heritage assets, including the “other significant buildings” of historical value or interest identified on Map 2, will be protected according to their significance.**

**Development proposals affecting these assets will be supported when they conserve or enhance these assets. Where renovation or alteration of non-designated heritage assets require planning permission, such changes should be designed sensitively and with careful regard to the heritage asset’s historical and architectural value and paying appropriate regard to the asset’s setting.**

**Development that would result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse impact on, these assets will only be supported in the following circumstances:**

- a) Where a development proposal would result in the loss of, or harm to a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be made as to the acceptability of the proposal having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset; and**
- b) Where such development is permitted, this will be conditioned in such a way so as to ensure the proposed development takes place after the loss, or harm, has occurred (e.g. demolition or removal of a building feature); and that appropriate recording of the heritage takes place prior to any loss or harm.**

## Background/Justification

- 4.22 As well as the scheduled manor and Listed Buildings (Appendix 1), that already have statutory protection through existing legislation, the neighbourhood plan area includes several other buildings and structures that have heritage value. In planning speak these are termed non-designated heritage assets. These assets are links and reminders of the area's long and varied history, for example there are assets linked to the area's agricultural and railway history. National planning policy is set so that heritage assets should be conserved in accordance with their significance. Policy ANDP7 is a suggested way to assess future planning applications affecting non-designated heritage assets. To make Policy ANDP7 more precise it is intended that the neighbourhood area's non-designated heritage assets are identified and included within the policy and on the Policies Map.

### Design (ANDP8)

All new development will be expected to respond positively to the key attributes of the neighbourhood area and the key local design features of Ashton village. Development will not be supported where it is of poor design that has an adverse impact on the character of the area. In assessing the design of development proposals, the following criteria will be used, where relevant, the development:

- (a) Promotes or reinforces local distinctiveness by demonstrating that appropriate account has been taken of existing good quality examples of street layouts, blocks and plots, building forms, materials and detailing, building style and Ashton vernacular. Distinctive character areas, marked on the Policies Map, should be respected;
- (b) Is designed in such a way so as to make a positive use of local landform, trees, hedgerows and other vegetation and for larger proposals has had suitable regard to landscape setting and settlement pattern;
- (c) Conserves and/or creates new wildlife habitats;
- (d) By use of space and creation of new public open spaces that are enclosed, integrated and overlooked by buildings and are in prominent useable locations;
- (e) Inclusion of sufficient amenity space to serve the needs of the development and its users;
- (f) Boundary treatments should be appropriate to the local context;
- (g) Does not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of existing or future occupiers in neighbouring property;
- (h) Does not have a cumulative adverse effect on the safe and efficient operation of the existing transport and road infrastructure;

- (i) Includes measures that seek to improve pedestrian facilities and linkages in the Parish and beyond to encourage walking and cycling, wherever possible;
- (j) Makes a contribution to local identity and sense of place. Proposals should avoid generic design and instead focus on an understanding of the area's defining characteristics and special qualities of the area. They should display how they take account of the locally distinctive character of the area in which they are to be located in the Design and Access Statement;
- (k) Respects the height of the immediate surrounding area;
- (l) Uses, and where appropriate re-uses, local and traditional materials appropriate to the context of the site, or suitable artificial alternatives;
- (m) Contributes to reducing carbon emissions, where possible, and where such features are included, they are a sympathetic enhancement to the building and surrounding area;
- (n) Is designed to be as water efficient as possible; and
- (o) Has appropriate car parking in accordance with SNC's Parking Standards and Design SPD 2018 and, where possible, this is sited so that it is unobtrusive and does not dominate the street scene and has an acceptable visual impact. New houses must have at least 2 off-street parking spaces.

Poor design when assessed against the above criteria will not be supported.

The South Northamptonshire Council *Design Guide* should be used when putting together planning proposals.



## Background/Justification

4.23 Campaign for Rural England's (CPRE) *Northamptonshire Countryside Design Guide* highlights that in Northamptonshire the villages' combination of building style, settlement pattern and countryside setting create the distinctive character of the county. The historic core of Ashton village has, in common with many Northamptonshire villages, the parish church, manor house, former farmhouses and cottages. Most of this area was built in the predominant original building material – limestone. Unfortunately, some of the more recent development in Ashton, indeed the County, has failed to take appropriate account of its context. Poor choice of materials and standardised suburban design solutions threaten to erode the distinctive character of Ashton village and the County. Policy ANDP8 sets out a criterion-based policy that will be used to encourage development that positively contributes to and enhances the character of the neighbourhood area. This policy should be read in conjunction with the existing Ashton Village Design Statement, that seeks to ensure:

- † Infill development should be constructed to match the local stone or brick colour with similarly corresponding plain tile roofing; and that
- † The care and maintenance of existing mature trees should be of paramount importance to the character of Ashton, associated with existing development as well as in connection with new proposals.

And the supplementary planning guidance set out in South Northamptonshire Council's *Design Guide*.

4.24 Policy ANDP8 will provide a distinct, Ashton specific set of criteria against which to judge planning proposals and which should be used by prospective applicants and their design teams in the preparation of planning proposals.



- 4.25 By setting this local policy the Ashton NDP is helping to meet one of the key aims of national planning policy – “good design”. Good design is seen as being indivisible from good planning and planning policies and decision should ensure that developments:
- Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials; and
  - Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

## **OBJECTIVE 6 – To improve access for all**

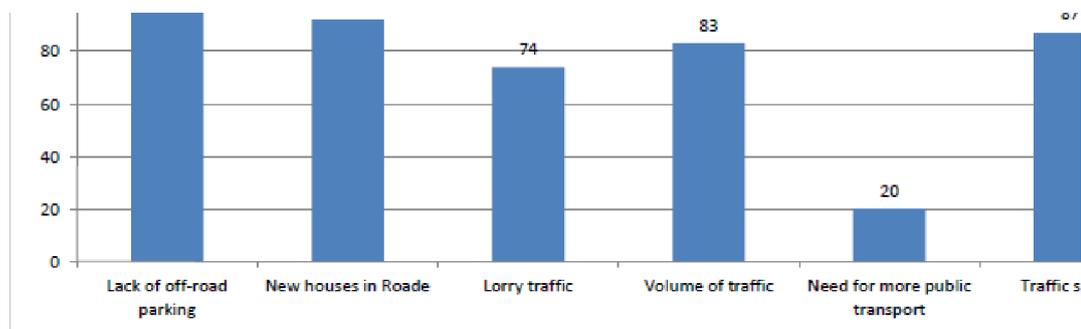
### **Traffic Management and Transport Improvements (ANDP9)**

Proposals to improve road safety and traffic management throughout the neighbourhood area will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that such improvements bring benefits that outweigh any disadvantages or identified impact on residential amenity, e.g. increased noise, annoyance, inconvenience, bottle necks, consequential damage, or additional traffic generation and congestion elsewhere in the neighbourhood area.

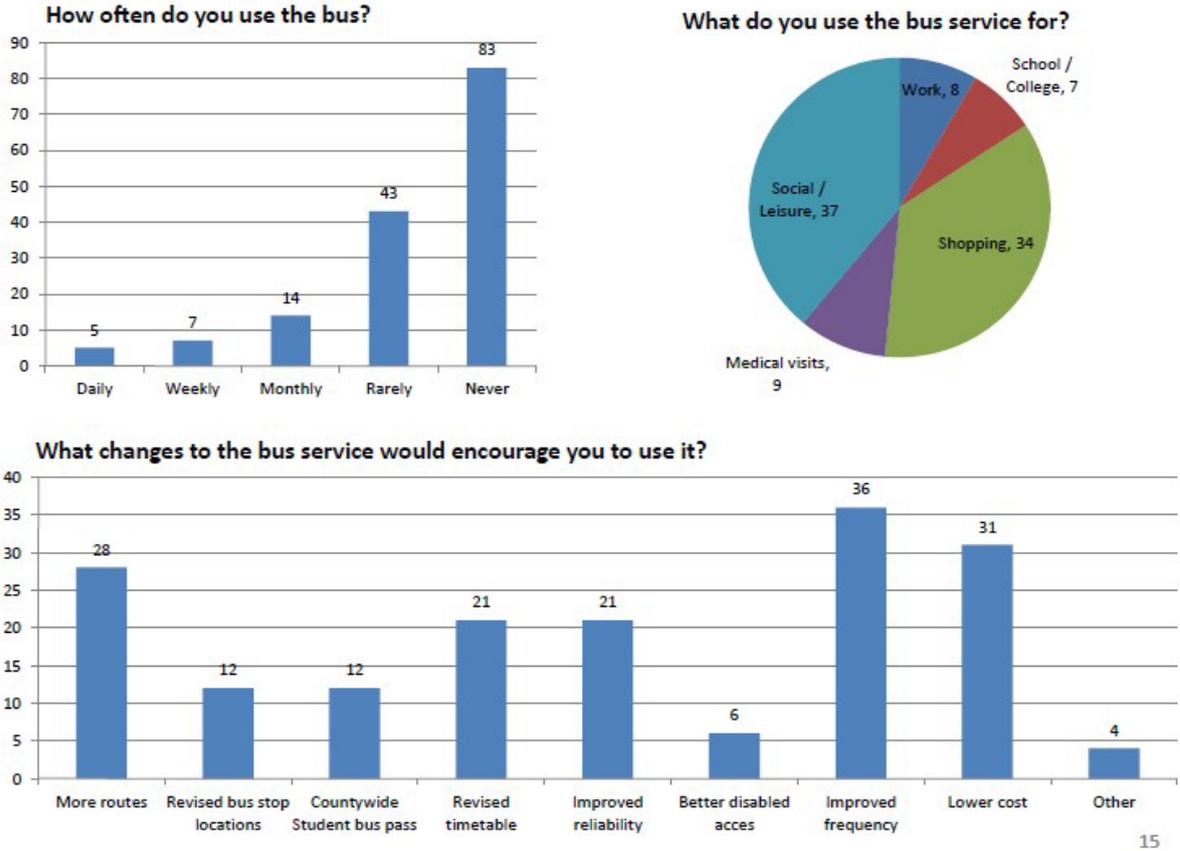
#### **Background/Justification**

- 4.26 From our questionnaire survey results we know that traffic and transport issues are a major concern (Figures 10 and 11). There are limits to what a neighbourhood development plan can say on issues such as speeding or improved bus timetabling. As a land use plan the ANDP has to deal with traffic and transport issues related to development. We have used the consultations on the neighbourhood plan to help identify specific improvements that we can encourage the County Council amongst others to implement to improve accessibility for all in Ashton.

**Figure 10. Main cause of traffic problems**

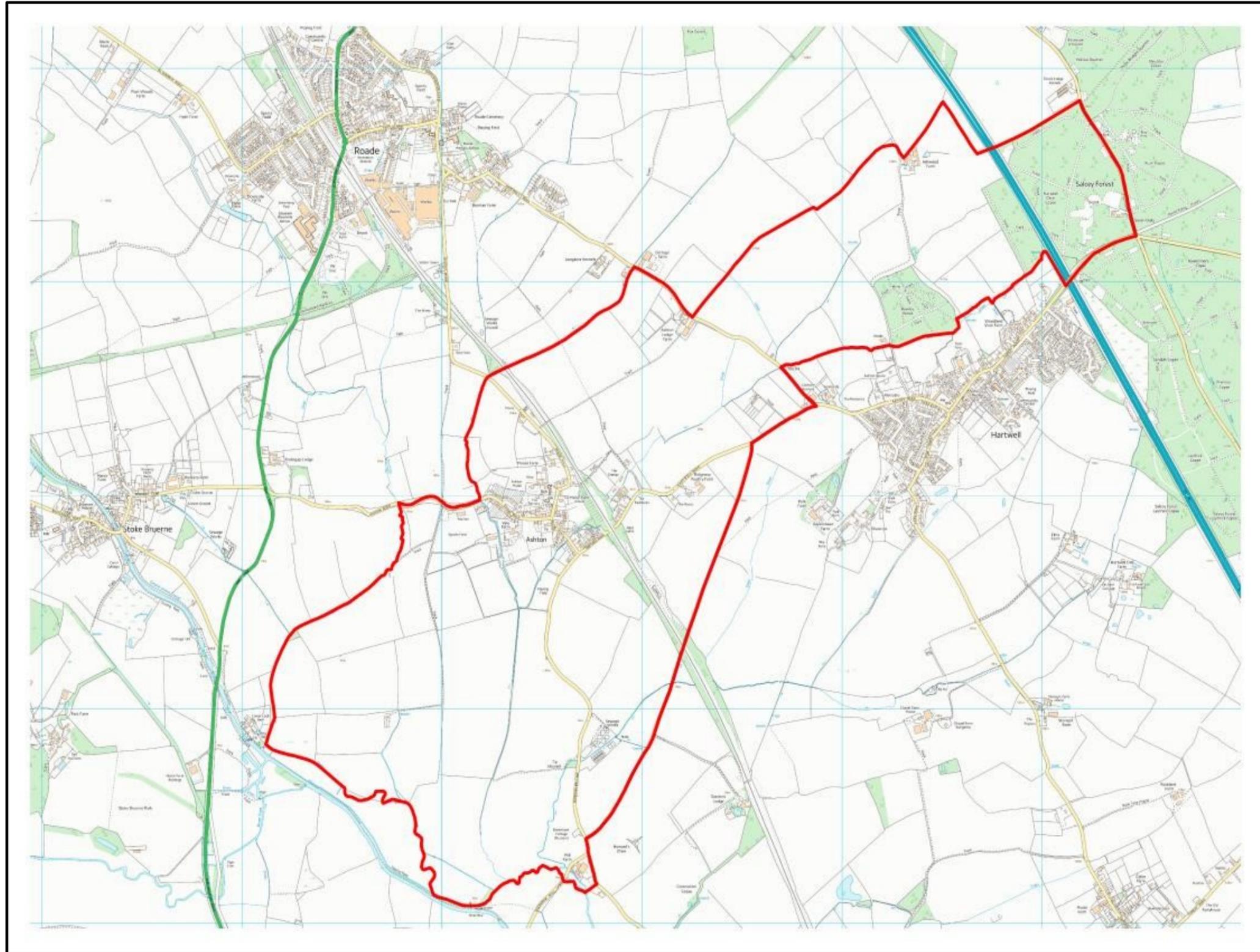


**Figure 11. Village Bus Services**

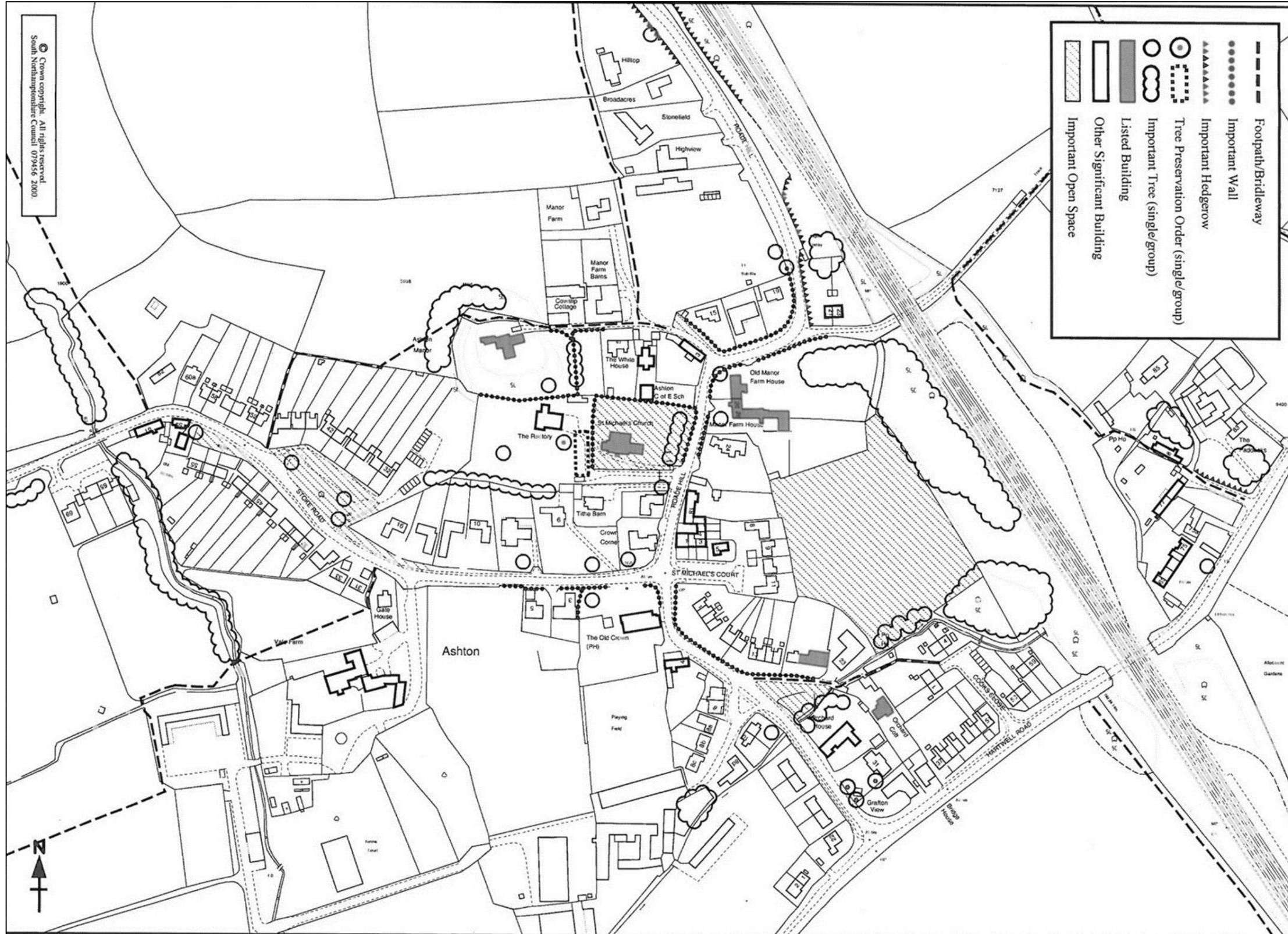


## Maps

**Map 1 - Ashton Parish** (©Crown copyright [and database rights] 2019 OS 100055940 on behalf of Ashton Parish Council 0100060736)



Map 2 - Village Design Statement Map



## Glossary

The Glossary is neither a statement of law nor an interpretation of the law, and its status is only an introductory guide to planning terminology and should not be used as a source for statutory definitions.

**Affordable housing:** housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.

c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

**Ancient or veteran tree:** A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient, but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

**Ancient woodland:** An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

**Archaeological interest:** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

**Brownfield land:** See previously developed land.

**Conservation (for heritage policy):** The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

**Design code:** A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

**Designated heritage asset:** A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

**Development plan:** Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

**Geodiversity:** The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

**Green infrastructure:** A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**Habitats site:** Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

**Heritage asset:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

**Historic environment:** All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

**Historic environment record:** Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.

**International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity:** All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

**Local housing need:** the number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance, or a justified alternative approach.

**Local planning authority:** The public authority (South Northamptonshire) whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority, the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

**Local plan:** A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

**Neighbourhood Development Order:** An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which parish councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

**Neighbourhood plan:** A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Non-strategic policies:** Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.

**Older people:** People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

**Open space:** All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**People with disabilities:** People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.

**Planning condition:** A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

**Planning obligation:** A legal agreement entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

**Playing field:** The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

**Previously developed land:** Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

**Priority habitats and species:** Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

**Renewable and low carbon energy:** Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

**Rural exception sites:** Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

**Self-build and custom-build housing:** Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

**Setting of a heritage asset:** The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

**Significance (for heritage policy):** The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

**Special Areas of Conservation:** Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.

**Special Protection Areas:** Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

**Strategic environmental assessment (SEA):** A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal

environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

**Strategic policies:** Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Strategic policy-making authorities:** Those authorities responsible for producing strategic policies (local planning authorities, and elected Mayors or combined authorities, where this power has been conferred). This definition applies whether the authority is in the process of producing strategic policies or not.

**Supplementary planning documents:** Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

**Sustainable transport modes:** Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

**Wildlife corridor:** Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

**Windfall sites:** Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

## Appendix 1 National Heritage List for England

The National Heritage List includes the following entries for Ashton Parish<sup>2</sup>. The information in this appendix is correct at the time of writing the Plan. Up to date information on heritage assets should always be sought from Historic England or other reliable sources of information.

### ORCHARD COTTAGE

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location:

- ORCHARD COTTAGE, HARTWELL ROAD, Ashton, South Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire

### MANOR FARM HOUSE

### OLD MANOR FARMHOUSE

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location:

- MANOR FARM HOUSE, 26, ROAD HILL,
- OLD MANOR FARMHOUSE, 26A, ROAD HILL, Ashton, South Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire

### CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

Heritage Category:

Listing Grade: II\*

Location:

- CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, ROAD HILL, Ashton, South Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire

### BOZENHAM MILL FARMHOUSE

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location:

- BOZENHAM MILL FARMHOUSE, BOZENHAM MILL, Ashton, South Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire

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<sup>2</sup> Historic England, 2017

**RECTORY COTTAGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location:

- RECTORY COTTAGE, HARTWELL ROAD, Ashton, South Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire

**ASHTON MANOR**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location:

- ASHTON MANOR, 7, ROADE HILL, Ashton, South Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire

**BOZENHAM MILL FARM, RANGE OF OUTBUILDINGS APPROXIMATELY 2 METRES SOUTH EAST OF FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location:

- BOZENHAM MILL FARM, RANGE OF OUTBUILDINGS APPROXIMATELY 2 METRES SOUTH EAST OF FARMHOUSE, BOZENHAM MILL, Ashton, South Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire

**Ashton Manor moated site**

Heritage Category: Scheduling

Grade:

Location:

- Ashton, South Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire

## Appendix 2 Local Green Space Assessment

The following Local Space Assessment was carried out using the template provided by South Northamptonshire Council. In total, 6 spaces were assessed. Four of the spaces are put forward for designation under ANDP Policy ANDP4.

### Site details

<b>Name and address of proposed site (please attach a site plan showing boundaries, access to the site and area that the site will serve)</b>	<b>Hartwell Green</b>	<b>Millennium Garden</b>	<b>Stoke Road Green</b>	<b>Vale Brook Green</b>	<b>Hut Land</b>	<b>Charity Fields</b>
<b>Details of land owner if known</b>	Claire Firth & Maddie Johnson	Village, Managed by APC	Village, Managed by APC	Seima Construction	Village, Managed by APC	Village, managed by APC
<b>Is the land owner aware of the proposal to designate their land?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Site history**

<b>What is the site currently used for?</b>	Recreation	Recreation	Recreation	Recreation	Allotments	Recreation
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**The Designation Tests**

<b>Test 1: Does the site already have planning permission for development? If yes please provide details</b>	No, Not Applicable					
<b>Test 2: Is the site allocated for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan?</b>	No	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Test 3: Is the site relatively close to the community it serves?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No. The site is not used by the local community for sport or recreation. The site provides a charitable income.

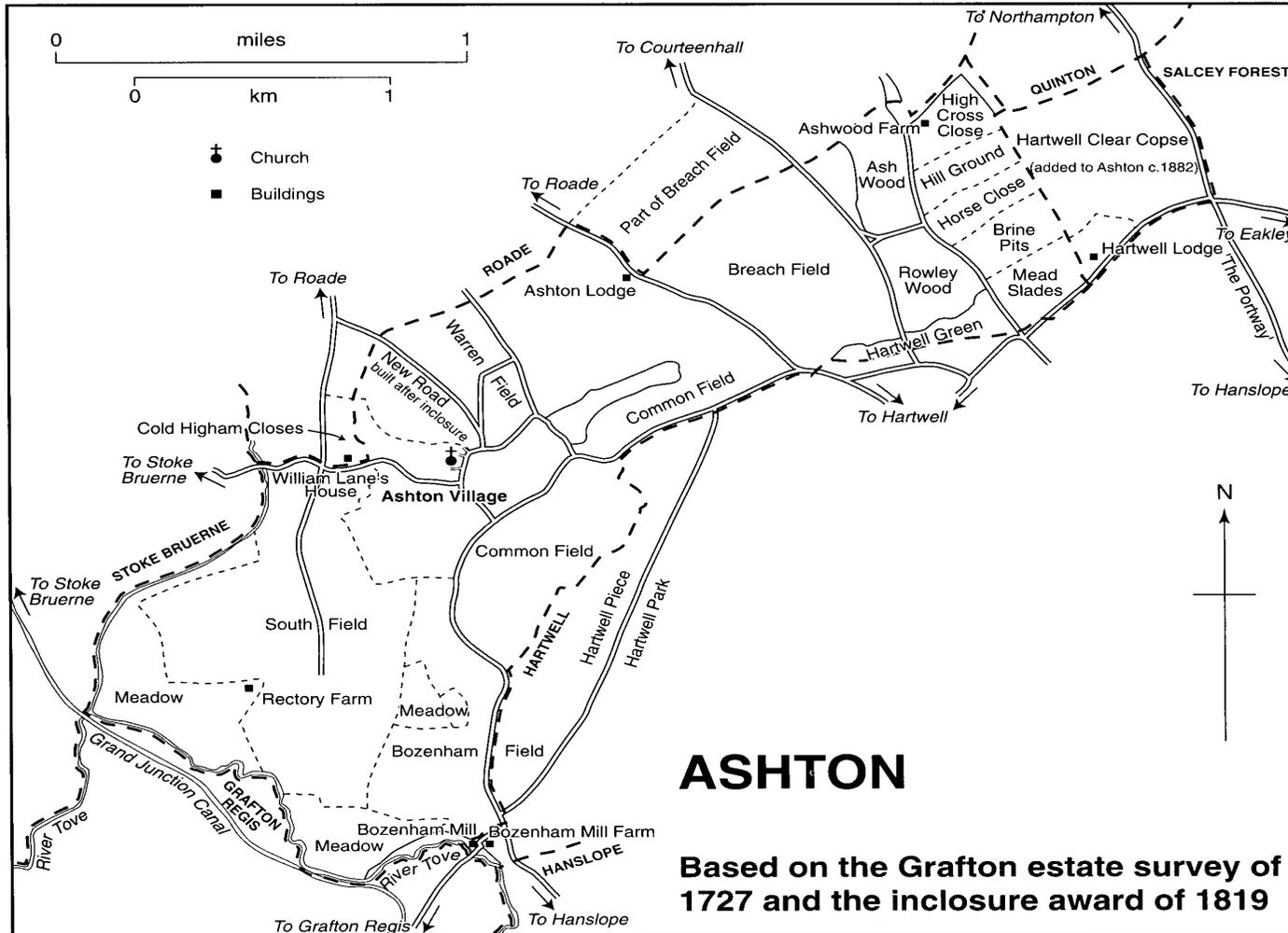
<p><b>Test 4: Can the site be shown to be demonstrably special to the local community?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b> Originally part of a bigger green, which was divided when the road was built around 1838. The site is central to the village and the space is important for its amenity value and contribution to the character of the village. 84 responses identified this as special in the Village Questionnaire.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> Small garden and seating area. Providing valuable amenity space and contributing to the character in this part of the village. 76 respondents identified this as special in the Village Questionnaire</p>	<p><b>No.</b> This was purchased by the PC from South Northants Homes in 2016</p>	<p><b>Yes</b> Originally part of a bigger green, which was divided when the road was built around 1838. The site is central to the village and the space is important for its amenity value and contribution to the character of the village. 84 responses identified this as special in the Village Questionnaire.</p>	<p><b>No.</b></p>	<p>This area of local farmland is let to a local farmer. Currently the land is used for production of cereals and oilseeds. The income generated from letting the field is then distributed to pensioners in the village at Christmas. The intention being that this can be used as a fuel supplement. Originally, in years gone by, the pensioners were provided with coal, but as times have changed, this has been replaced</p>
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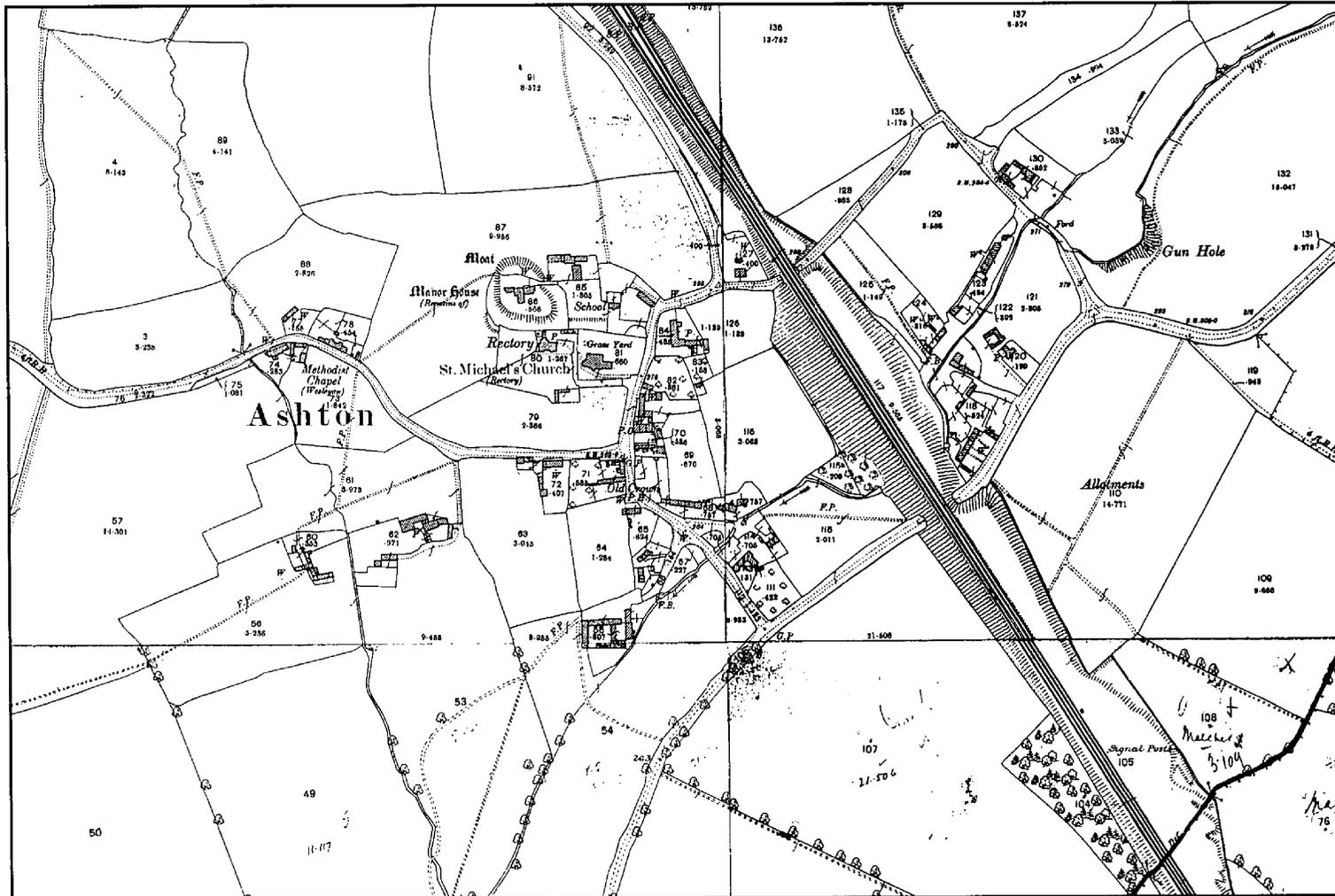
<b>4.3 How is the proposed space of particular local significance in respect of its recreational value?</b>	Open to all for walking and relaxation	Open to all for walking and relaxation and used for village events	Open to all for walking and relaxation and used for children's play area	Open to all for walking and relaxation	Provides space for 6 allotments	Open to all for walking and relaxation
<b>4.4 How is the proposed space of particular local significance, in respect of its tranquillity?</b>	Traffic free zone	Specifically designed to be a tranquil space for residents	Quiet space in front of houses	Not Applicable	Quiet area for gardening and fellowship	Traffic free zone away from dwellings and road
<b>4.5 How is the proposed space of particular local significance in respect of its richness of wildlife?</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>Test 5: Is the site an extensive tract of land?</b>	No	No	No	No	No	No

<b>Test 6: If site/space was designated can the site endure beyond the end of the plan period (2029) What are the owner’s long-term plans for the site?</b>	Too Small to develop and Parish Council control on behalf of village with no plans to change status	Too Small to develop and Parish Council control on behalf of village with no plans to change status	Too Small to develop and Parish Council control on behalf of village with no plans to change status	Too Small to develop and Parish Council control on behalf of village with no plans to change status	Too Small to develop and Parish Council control on behalf of village with no plans to change status	Too Small to develop and Parish Council control on behalf of village with no plans to change status
<b>Is there a management plan in place for the site? Who will be responsible for the on-going maintenance of the site</b>	Yes, Ashton Parish Council					

# Ashton in 1727



### Ashton after Railway created in 1838





# ASHTON

**NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2019-2029**

**Referendum version**

**December 2020**