

# **Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031**

**Draft Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a  
Strategic Environmental Assessment)**



**Published by Great Horwood Parish Council to accompany the Pre Submission version of the Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan for consultation in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004 and EU Directive 2001/42**

**April 2014**

## **Non Technical Summary**

Great Horwood Parish Council ("the Parish Council") is preparing the Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan ("the Neighbourhood Plan") in accordance with the provisions of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Aylesbury Vale District Council ("the District Council"), as the local planning authority, designated the whole of the parish as the Great Horwood Neighbourhood Area on 10 September 2012 (see Plan A below) for this purpose.

The purpose of this report is to provide a draft sustainability assessment of the policies and proposals of the Pre Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with EU Directive 2001/42 on strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004.

This SA report covers Stage B and forms the Stage C report by providing an assessment of the policies of the Pre Submission Neighbourhood Plan using the SA Framework proposed in the Scoping Report. The report will be used to undertake the public consultation in Stage D (alongside the Pre Submission Neighbourhood Plan for its statutory six week consultation period) and a new report will be published at Stage E to accompany the Submission Neighbourhood Plan for examination.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework ("the NPPF") and with the saved strategic policies of the adopted 2004 Aylesbury Vale Local Plan ("the Local Plan"), which sets out part of the strategic planning context and policies for the District.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out four policies in total. These are; a spatial plan & sustainable development policy and three housing allocation policies. Their combined effect is to make provision for 45 dwellings (of which 15 will be affordable homes) on the edge of the village.

Within the area there are no statutory environmental designations other than some areas of woodland identified by Natural England. This designation affects College Wood in the far north-east of the parish and part of Little Horwood Airfield. The Pilch Field Site of Special Scientific Interest lie just outside the parish boundary to the west. The area does however contain a number of important heritage assets.

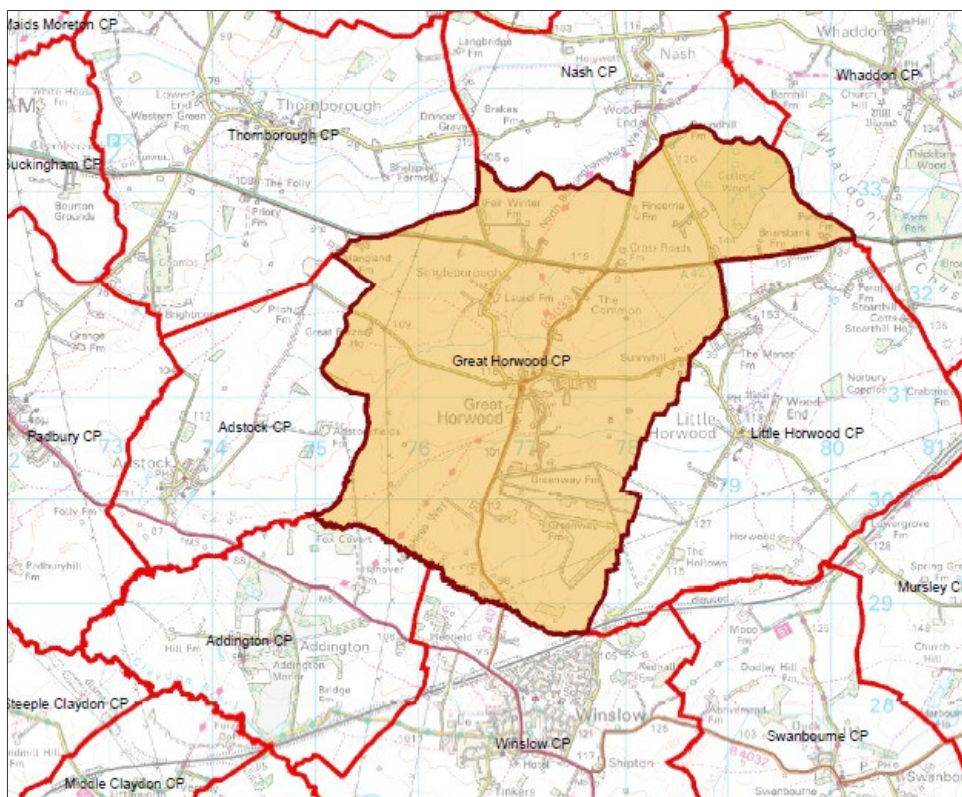
The summary shows a reasonably positive correlation between the SA framework objectives and the three Neighbourhood Plan objectives. The assessment shows that there are no significant adverse effects resulting from the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. The policies have been specifically chosen and formulated to adhere to the principles of sustainable development as defined by the NPPF.

The District Council and the Parish Council will jointly monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan using the available data. The AVDC Monitoring Report will provide some data at this level.

## 1. Introduction & Method

1.1 Great Horwood Parish Council ("the Parish Council") is preparing the Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan ("the Neighbourhood Plan") in accordance with the provisions of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Aylesbury Vale District Council ("the District Council"), as the local planning authority, designated the whole of the parish as the Great Horwood Neighbourhood Area on 10 September 2012 (see Plan A below) for this purpose.

1.2 The village is the main settlement for the Neighbourhood Plan area, with considerable tracts of rolling countryside surrounding the settlement, which includes the hamlet of Singleborough as the only other settlement in the parish.



*PLAN A: Designated Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Area*

1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide a draft sustainability assessment of the policies and proposals of the Pre Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with EU Directive 2001/42 on strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004.

1.4 The formal screening opinion of the District Council is expected to require a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), is undertaken of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council, the qualifying body, has therefore commenced the assessment process.

1.5 A Scoping Report of the SA was published by the Parish Council in February 2014 to consult with the District Council and the other statutory consultees on the proposed assessment framework. The report, which is available in the evidence base, brought together all the relevant sustainability data and summarized the planning policy context relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.6 The Neighbourhood Plan has been led by a small neighbourhood planning team of local residents to represent the community, with the support of the District Council. This process enables the Parish Council and the wider community to build on previous engagement with the local community including the 'Community View' consultation on future development carried out for the Vale of Aylesbury Plan (2011) and Great Horwood Parish Plan (2006). All meetings are minuted and guidelines for the Neighbourhood Planning Team are contained in Terms of Reference lodged on the Great Horwood Parish Council website. Further information will be included in the Great Horwood Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement that will be part of the submission documentation in due course.

1.7 The approach for carrying out the SA has been based on current best practice. The main stages for the SA are set out below. The Scoping Report represented tasks in Stage A.

*Table 1: The different stages in the Sustainability Appraisal process*

<b>Stage A: Setting context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</b>
A1 Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainable development objectives
A2 Collecting baseline information
A3 Identifying sustainability issues and problems
A4 Developing the SA framework
A5 Consulting on the scope of the SA
<b>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</b>
B1 Testing the NP objectives against the SA framework
B2 Developing the NP options
B3 Predicting the effects of the draft NP
B4 Evaluating the effects of the draft NP
B5 Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects
B6 Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the NP

<b>Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal report</b>
C1 Preparing the SA report
<b>Stage D: Consulting on the draft Sustainability Appraisal report</b>
D1 Public participation on the SA report and the draft NP
D2 Assessing significant changes
<b>Stage E: Sustainability Appraisal and Publication/Submission</b>
E1 The Sustainability Appraisal report
E2 Consulting on the draft plan and sustainability appraisal report
E3 Making significant changes
E4 The sustainability appraisal report at submission stage
<b>SA and Examination</b>
Examination and adoption
Monitoring significant effects

1.8 This SA report covers Stage B and forms the Stage C report by providing an assessment of the policies of the Pre Submission Neighbourhood Plan using the SA Framework proposed in the Scoping Report. The report will be used to undertake the public consultation in Stage D (alongside the Pre Submission Neighbourhood Plan for its statutory six week consultation period) and a new report will be published at Stage E to accompany the Submission Neighbourhood Plan for examination.

## 2. Planning Context

2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will be in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework ("the NPPF") and with the saved strategic policies of the adopted 2004 Aylesbury Vale Local Plan ("the Local Plan"), which sets out part of the strategic planning context and policies for the District. The District Council had intended to replace the Local Plan with a new development plan – the Vale of Aylesbury Plan – but, following a finding by the Planning Inspectorate that certain aspects of the plan were unsound, it was withdrawn on 5 February 2014.

2.2 The NPPF contains a number of key policy principles that will shape the GHPNP. These are itemised below:

- The presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 14)
- The role of NDP's (16)
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (28)
- Minimising journey lengths (37)
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (50)
- Rural affordable housing and exception sites (54)
- The vitality of rural communities (55)
- The quality of development (58)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (109-115)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (126)
- Neighbourhood plans (183-185)

2.3 The principles above are those of most relevance to the GHPNP but many other principles in the framework will have some bearing on the preparation of the document in due course.

2.4 The 2004 AVDLP contains a number of 'saved' policies that have a specific relevance to the GHPNP and these are listed below:

- GP2 – affordable housing
- GP8 – protection of amenity of residents
- GP24 – car parking guidelines
- GP35 – design of new development proposals
- GP38 – landscaping of new development proposals
- GP53 – new development in and adjacent to Conservation Areas
- GP87 – application of open space policies
- GP88 – payment in lieu of providing sports and play areas
- GP91 – provision of amenity areas
- RA2 – loss of open gaps and consolidation of settlements
- RA11 – conversion of buildings in the countryside
- RA13 – development within settlements listed in Appendix 4
- RA14 – development at the edge of Appendix 4 settlements

### **3. The Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan: Pre Submission**

3.1 The GHNP contains a number of policies for the use and development of land in the parish of Great Horwood in the plan period from 2014 to 2031. These policies, together with the policies of the Aylesbury Vale development plan - that is the saved policies of the 2004 Local Plan - and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), will be used by AVDC in determining planning applications once the GHNP is approved in due course.

3.2 The Vision of the GHNP is:

*“The vision for Great Horwood Parish in 2031 is that it will seek to remain an independent, distinctive rural community comprising the small village of Great Horwood and the hamlet of Singleborough, conserving and enhancing its rich architectural and environmental heritage for the benefit of current villagers and for future generations.”*

*“We will seek to sustain and reinforce our open social structure and mixed community, and will foster activities and facilities that enhance them. These will include the provision of affordable housing. We will work to lessen the adverse impact of road traffic on the village and will endeavour to enhance transport and other links to neighbouring communities.”*

*“Overall, our aim is that residents will want to continue to live in the parish, and that others will wish they could.”*

3.3 In pursuit of this Vision, the GHNP contains three strategic objectives and specific measures:

1. to consolidate the role and function of Great Horwood as a small village by meeting the future housing needs of the parish
  - No. of open market homes
  - No. of affordable homes
  - No. of homes suited to occupation by older people
  - No. of custom build homes
2. to conserve the special historic character of the village
  - No. of planning permissions affecting designated heritage assets
3. to protect the open countryside of the parish from harmful development
  - No. of planning permissions affecting designated environmental assets

3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan sets out four policies in total. These are; a spatial plan & sustainable development policy and three housing allocation policies. Their combined effect is to make provision for 45 dwellings (of which 15 will be affordable homes) on the edge of the village.

#### **4. Overview of the Parish & its Environment**

4.1 Great Horwood is a rural village located in the north of Aylesbury Vale, five miles southeast of Buckingham town and two miles north of Winslow town. The village lies on an important route connecting the A413 and A421. To the southwest of the village are the North Buckinghamshire Way/Midshires Way strategic footpaths. The parish of Great Horwood comprises 1,025 people (2001 census) with 422 homes (AVDC Monitoring, March 2012).

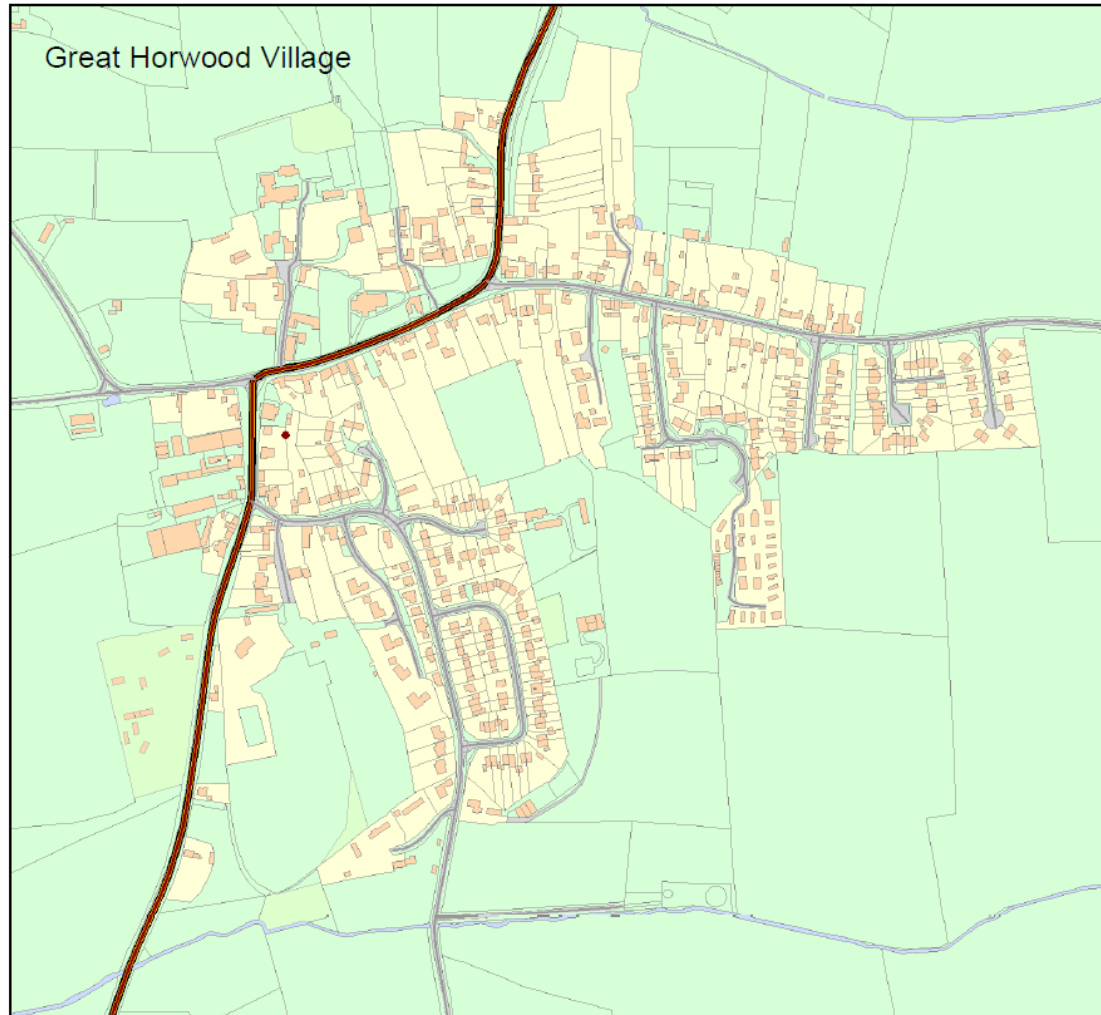
4.2 The size of the population has remained relatively constant over the last 40 years. The central part of the village was first designated as a Conservation Area in 1989. This report, where possible, uses the most up to date information available and this can be updated as the plan progresses and new information is made available. Where it has not been possible to use Great Horwood specific information, either ward level (Great Horwood ward) or Aylesbury Vale district wide data has been used.

4.3 Within the area there are no statutory environmental designations other than some areas of woodland identified by Natural England. This designation affects College Wood in the far north-east of the parish and part of Little Horwood Airfield. The Pilch Field Site of Special Scientific Interest lie just outside the parish boundary to the west.



4.4 The GHNP does contain a number of important heritage assets, namely:

- the Great Horwood Conservation Area
- Singleborough Conservation Area
- 46 listed buildings, all Grade II except for two at Grade II\*, St James Church and Manor Farm, of which 5 are in Singleborough



4.5 The Scoping Report identified a series of key issues across a range of sustainability matters. Its evidence is mostly drawn from the Great Horwood 'Fact-Pack' (FP) produced by the District Council to describe the baseline environment for the Vale of Aylesbury Plan but also from the 2011 Census and AVDC monitoring information.

4.6 These issues are summarised below:

**Box 1: Key Biodiversity Issues for Great Horwood**

Although there are no national biodiversity designation in the Great Horwood neighbourhood area, there are a number of local designations and important biodiversity assets. This include:

- One Biological Notification Site – ‘Three Field’ to the south of Great Horwood Village
- Two Local wildlife sites – North and west outside of Great Horwood village
- Black poplar trees
- Important wildlife including Great Crested Newts, bats, toads, kestrel, barn owls and starlings

**Box 2: Key issues for Soil and Geology**

There are limited issues for the soil and geology in Great Horwood. The soil quality is moderate. If future development is located in areas of grade 3 further investigation will be required to be identified if the land is grade 3a or 3b. There are no geological issues which would prevent future development. Potentially there are areas of contamination but further investigation needs to confirm this if development is to take place in the identified locations.

**Box 3: Key Climate Change Issues for Great Horwood**

No specific issues have been identified for Great Horwood but there are some general trends which may affect the south east region including:

- Higher temperatures and increased number of storm events and flooding could result in an increased incidence of heat related illnesses and injuries during the summer from. In Great Horwood there are two water courses so the risk of flooding might increase.
- Adverse effect on water quality from watercourse levels and turbulent flow after heavy rain and a reduction of water flow; a need to increase the capacity of sewers.
- Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence.
- Development will need to support climate change mitigation through seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions e.g. by improving energy efficiency and reducing the need to travel.
- Development will need to incorporate climate change adaptive features e.g. improving flood risk management.

**Box 4: Key Water issues for Great Horwood**

There are no significant issues for Great Horwood, areas of floodplain are primarily located away from the village in locations where future development is unlikely to occur. There are no water quality issues currently for Great Horwood. Some limited constraints have been identified for the waste water network infrastructure which will need to be overcome for future development.

**Box 5: Key Landscape and Topography issues for Great Horwood**

- Ensuring any new development has a minimal impact on landscape sensitivity. Great Horwood has a landscape sensitivity between 50%-75%, which is of a moderate level.
- New development should seek to retain and enhance the key landscape characteristics.
- There is a need to ensure that the rural quality of what makes the countryside surrounding Great Horwood tranquil and to some extent remote are retained and enhanced while providing appropriately for the needs of local communities and visitors for recreation activities such as walking.
- Ensuring that Great Horwood remains relatively free of types of elements which detract from landscape character such as new major roads, derelict land and neglected building and electricity pylons/overhead wires.

**Box 6: Key Historic Environment issues for Great Horwood**

- Conserve and retain the historic character of Great Horwood village and its surroundings.
- Great Horwood has a number of historic buildings. Their quality and character can easily be destroyed by unsympathetic or inappropriate renovation, repair, extension, and redevelopment or simply by neglect.
- To ensure Archaeological Notification Areas are fully explored to ensure historic features are not lost to future development. To ensure the conservation area continues to protect the village from change that is harmful to the historic qualities of the village and ensure that listed buildings are maintained and their historic settings are not adversely impacting upon from new development.
- Encouraging the use of sustainable building methods including careful siting, layout, design and choice of materials (including using more reuse of materials and local materials) to minimise the impact on heritage assets and improve cultural heritage.

**Box 7: Key transport and air quality issues for Great Horwood**

- Public transport is the biggest issue for Great Horwood due to its rural nature. A more regular service would make the service more usable.
- Congestion through the village is a concern.
- There is no train station or nearby station within Great Horwood, although this will change with the opening of East-West rail providing a train station at Winslow.
- There are no off road surfaced cycling links in the neighbourhood area.
- There are no air quality issues for Great Horwood.

#### **Box 8: Key Population and Quality of Life Issues**

- Great Horwood has a relatively old population structure and therefore an ageing population. This will have implications in terms of housing, employment and health needs.
- In terms of access to housing and services Great Horwood is moderately deprived.
- In terms of the living environment Great Horwood is moderately deprived. This includes both indoor and outdoor living conditions including condition of housing, air quality and road traffic accidents.

#### **Box 9: Key Housing and Service Issues**

- Great Horwood is within the top 50% of most deprived areas in terms of barrier to housing and services due to high house prices and rural characteristics.
- There is a limited number of services within the village.
- Although the income to house price ratio has reduced in the last couple of years, there is still a significant gap between house prices and average income.
- Affordability of housing is a key issue within Great Horwood.
- Demand for all types of housing, but particular homes for first buy, shared ownership and smaller family homes.
- Community views have indicated that growth of up to 40 dwellings is supported by local people.

#### **Box 10: Key Economic Issues**

- There is a high level of employment of the parish's population.
- There are 46 local businesses in the parish, this current level of businesses and employment should aim to be at least maintained
- There is possible competition from nearby employment sites at Buckingham and Milton Keynes
- Adequate infrastructure to support local businesses needs to be provided.

## **5. Developing a Sustainability Appraisal Framework**

5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is assessed against a SA Framework of objectives, decision-making criteria, indicators and targets. The SA Framework provides a way in which sustainability issues can be described, analysed and compared. The SA Framework consists of SA objectives, which, where practicable, may be expressed, in the form of targets, the achievement of which is measurable using indicators. SA objectives and indicators can be revised as further baseline information is collected and sustainability issues and challenges are identified. These can also be utilised in monitoring the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.2 The purpose of the SA Framework is to provide a way of ensuring the proposed plan's policies consider the sustainability needs of the area in terms of their social, environmental and economic effects. The SA objectives have drawn on the baseline information, the key issues and other plans and programmes of particular interest discussed earlier in the Scoping Report.

5.3 The SA Framework below aims to test how the plan objectives and policies impacts on the social, environmental and economic characteristics of Great Horwood.

<p><b>1. Community wellbeing</b></p> <p>Maximise the benefits and minimise the negative impacts of development on new and existing communities, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving access to housing, jobs, health and education and social opportunities</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Design</b></p> <p>Through development, create sustainable communities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• championing high quality sustainable design;</li> <li>• encouraging creation of place; and</li> <li>• ensuring development is locally distinctive reflecting historical character.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Access and provision of services</b></p> <p>Through development, aim to ensure there are opportunities for people to obtain access to services and facilities that are appropriate to their needs by helping to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate facilities and services, recreation and green infrastructure</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in appropriate locations; at the appropriate times.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Village centres</b></p> <p>Support and enhance the role of the village centre, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encouraging vitality and viability;</li> <li>• maximising potential to meet the needs of the community;</li> <li>• enabling improvements to the village centre;</li> <li>• enable opportunities for retail provision</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Employment, workforce and skills</b></p> <p>Through development, encourage and maintain an available and skilled workforce which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meets the needs of existing and future employers and improves opportunities and facilities for all types of learning;</li> </ul> <p>Through development, aim to ensure there are opportunities for all employers to access facilities and services that are appropriate to their needs including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different types and sizes of accommodation;</li> <li>• flexible employment space;</li> <li>• high quality communications and infrastructure.</li> </ul>

<p><b>6. Housing</b></p> <p>Through development, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate types of homes;</li> <li>• in appropriate locations;</li> <li>• at the appropriate times;</li> </ul> <p>And in doing so aim to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a home that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is appropriate to their needs;</li> <li>• they can afford;</li> <li>• and of high quality design, and residents feel safe in.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Best use of land</b></p> <p>Make the best use of land, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• re-using existing buildings;</li> <li>• developing on previously developed land (PDL); and</li> <li>• minimising development on high quality agricultural land.</li> </ul> <p>• In addition, avoid development on contaminated land where remediation is not possible.</p>
<p><b>8. Transport and travel</b></p> <p>Enable improvements to transport infrastructure and transport choice, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reducing the need to travel through encouraging more sustainable patterns of land use and development;</li> <li>• encouraging modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel;</li> <li>• and reducing the negative effects of transport on the environment and communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Air quality</b></p> <p>Through development, reduce the negative impacts development brings on air quality by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce emissions of transport to help achieve national and international standards for air quality;</li> <li>• using sustainable construction methods</li> </ul>
<p><b>10. Landscape and heritage</b></p> <p>Through development, maintain, conserve and enhance the landscape, heritage and built character of the villages and countryside by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protecting and enhancing designated and undesignated heritage and landscape assets;</li> <li>• protecting areas of sensitive landscape and minimising adverse impacts of development;</li> <li>• maintaining historical, archaeological and cultural value and potential of assets; and</li> <li>• increasing access to, enjoyment and understanding of, these assets, where this will not cause harm.</li> </ul>

### 11. Biodiversity

Conserve and enhance biodiversity, including the need to avoid or mitigate the potential impacts of new development in the long term, by:

- managing natural habitats and wildlife;
- enabling opportunities for greater biodiversity;
- protecting the integrity of European sites and other designated sites for nature conservation;
- increasing access to, enjoyment and understanding of, these assets, where this will not cause harm; and
- encouraging the creation of new (or replacement) habitats and features for wildlife.

### 12. Flooding

Through development, reduce the risk of flooding in the villages, by:

- minimising the risk of flooding to people and property;
- reducing the risk to those areas susceptible to flooding;
- managing flood risks appropriately both now and in the long-term; and
- ensuring provision of sustainable urban drainage.

### 13. Water, energy and climate change

Through development, maintain, and where possible enhance, water quality & avoid water stress, by:

- meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive;
- encouraging reduction of water consumption;
- protecting groundwater resources and abstractions;
- providing adequate water infrastructure to ensure the sustainable supply of water and the disposal of sewerage; and



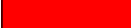
- ensuring adaptation and reducing vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

Through development, reduce contributions to climate change by:

- encouraging sustainable, low carbon building practices and design;
- maximising the potential for renewable energy and reduce CO2 emissions through energy conservation;
- reducing emissions of greenhouse gases; and
- maximising opportunities for recycling and minimising waste.

## 6. Predicting & Evaluating the Effects of the Plan

6.1 The likely significant effects of the strategic objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are assessed in turn below. In each case, the assessment uses the following notation:

	Likely positive effect
	Likely neutral or minor adverse effect
	Likely minor or moderate effect

6.2 In most cases, it is acknowledged the data is not collected or reported at a Neighbourhood Plan scale to enable an accurate assessment. In addition, the scale of development proposed in the GHNP is too small in comparison with the scale of existing development in the village, making the identification of cause-and-effect relationships between inputs and outputs very uncertain.

6.3 However, the assessment does seek to identify the relative attributes of the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan to inform the reader.

### **Assessing the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Objectives**

6.4 In Table B below the 3 strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are assessed against the 13 SA objectives.

GHNP SA Objectives	GHNP Strategic Objectives		
	1 Housing	2 Historic Character	3 Open Countryside
Wellbeing	Green	Green	Green
Design	Green	Green	Orange
Services	Green	Orange	Orange
Village Centre	Orange	Orange	Orange
Employment	Green	Orange	Orange
Housing	Green	Orange	Orange
Brownfield	Orange	Orange	Orange
Transport	Orange	Orange	Orange
Air Quality	Orange	Orange	Orange
Landscape	Orange	Green	Green
Biodiversity	Orange	Orange	Green
Flooding	Green	Orange	Orange
Water	Orange	Orange	Orange

*Table B: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Objectives*

6.5 The summary shows a reasonably positive correlation between the SA framework objectives and the three Neighbourhood Plan objectives.



## **Assessing the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan policies**

6.6 The assessment considers each policy in turn, combining an overview and comparison of the impact of the policy in a short commentary. The assessment should therefore be read in conjunction with the Pre Submission Neighbourhood Plan document and Proposals Map.

### ***Policy 1 - A Spatial Plan***

<b>GHNP SA Objective</b>	<b>GHNP Policy</b>	<b>Policy Option A</b>	<b>Policy Option B</b>	<b>Policy Option C</b>
Wellbeing	Green	Orange	Green	Green
Design	Green	Red	Red	Red
Services	Green	Green	Green	Green
Village Centre	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange
Employment	Green	Green	Green	Green
Housing	Orange	Green	Orange	Orange
Brownfield	Red	Red	Red	Red
Transport	Green	Red	Red	Orange
Air Quality	Green	Red	Red	Orange
Landscape	Green	Red	Orange	Orange
Biodiversity	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange
Flooding	Green	Green	Green	Green
Water	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange

6.7 This policy carries the most importance of the Neighbourhood Plan as it establishes the key principle within which the policies that allocate land for development have been designed. This policy establishes and defines the Great Horwood Settlement Boundary to distinguish the consideration of planning applications within the village settlement from those outside the boundary.

6.8 This policy device is not used in this way in the development plan but does provide the local community and development promoters with a clear and consistent guide to where different types of development should take place in the parish.

6.9 In doing so, the policy makes provision for new development beyond the existing settlement area, as there is no suitable or available land within that area, brownfield or otherwise, to seek to allocate in the Neighbourhood Plan. The strong desire of the local community in accepting development is for the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate a number of small sites to be suited to local people (in type and tenure) and phased across the whole plan period.

6.10 Such an approach would retain the rural character of the village and its setting in the landscape and would better match the housing needs and well-being of the local community than a single, larger scheme. Importantly, local people regard Great Horwood as a small village in Aylesbury Vale that unfortunately now lacks most of the community facilities that would be necessary to regard it as a large village. With no convenience store in the village, it can only service a limited population without generating many more traffic movements to neighbouring towns.

6.11 The chosen sites have all been allocated on the edge of the village beyond the Conservation Area on sites that can be well accessed without impacting on the use of existing residential streets. Their respective landowners have all committed to delivering development in the form proposed in the policies, including meeting the District Council's affordable housing policy.

6.12 The chosen policy is assessed against three other policy options. These were:

- Policy Option A – allocate the chosen sites plus land off Weston Road and land off Willow Road, resulting in an approximate total of 115 dwellings in the plan period
- Policy Option B – allocate land off Weston Road and South of Little Horwood Road only, resulting in an approximate total of 60 dwellings in the plan period
- Policy Option C – allocate only land off Weston Road, resulting in an approximate total of 45 dwellings in the plan period

6.13 Setting aside the challenge in making the Neighbourhood Plan via a successful referendum with any of these other options, it is clear that none deliver as strong a sustainability performance as the chosen option in relative terms. All three of the alternatives will deliver housing growth (and employment through construction jobs) but the scale and location of that growth has consequences for local amenity and effects on the setting of the Conservation Area and the wider landscape. Another key difference with the alternatives is their reliance on using existing residential access roads to create their new access. Those existing roads – Weston Road and Willow Road - and their junctions with Little Horwood Road are not currently well suited to servicing new development schemes of the scale being promoted on those sites. The chosen sites can each make a direct access to an existing main road.

**Policy 2 – Land South of Little Horwood Road**

<b>GHNP SA Objective</b>	<b>GHNP Policy</b>	<b>Policy Option</b>
Wellbeing		-
Design		-
Services		-
Village Centre		-
Employment		-
Housing		-
Brownfield		-
Transport		-
Air Quality		-
Landscape		-
Biodiversity		-
Flooding		-
Water		-

6.14 This policy allocates land for housing development of up to 15 homes on the eastern edge of the village. The land is part of a larger site currently in agricultural use but the landowner has made this part of the site available for this scale of housing scheme. The site is closely related to the land opposite which is proposed for allocation in Policy 3.

6.15 The sites lies outside a flood risk zone and beyond the designated Conservation Area and its setting. Together with the site opposite, the site will create a stronger 'gateway' to the village from the east. The policy promotes housing development to meet the needs of the local community and to contribute to the wider housing needs of the District. New homes may also support the remaining local services, i.e. the pubs and primary school.

6.16 The allocation accords with the provisions of Policy 1 in respect of the defined Great Horwood Settlement Boundary, within which it is located. The assessment concludes that it will have a number of positive effects, notably in the supply of housing and sustaining the community and its jobs and services and can be accessed directly from the existing main road network. Given the Neighbourhood Plan expects that all planning applications will be determined by a combination of its own policies and those of the development plan, it will be the relevant development plan policies, and the provisions of the NPPF as necessary, that will seek to ensure that future

planning applications are satisfactory in respect of all other sustainability measures.

6.17 There is no reasonable alternative policy option as the intention of the chosen policy is simply to define the site on the Proposals Map and to establish a maximum site capacity.

***Policy 3 – Land North of Little Horwood Road***

<b>GHP SA Objective</b>	<b>GHP Policy</b>	<b>Policy Option</b>
Wellbeing		-
Design		-
Services		-
Village Centre		-
Employment		-
Housing		-
Brownfield		-
Transport		-
Air Quality		-
Landscape		-
Biodiversity		-
Flooding		-
Water		-

6.18 This policy allocates land for housing development of up to 15 homes on the eastern edge of the village. The land is part of a larger site currently in agricultural use but the landowner has made this part of the site available for this scale of housing scheme. The site is closely related to the land opposite which is proposed for allocation in Policy 2.

6.19 The sites lies outside a flood risk zone and beyond the designated Conservation Area, though forms part of its setting. Together with the site opposite, the site will create a stronger 'gateway' to the village from the east. The policy promotes housing development to meet the needs of the local community and to contribute to the wider housing needs of the District. New homes may also support the remaining local services, i.e. the pubs and primary school.

6.20 The allocation accords with the provisions of Policy 1 in respect of the defined Great Horwood Settlement Boundary, within which it is located. The assessment concludes that it will have a number of positive effects, notably in the supply of housing and sustaining the community and its jobs and services and can be accessed directly from the existing main road network. Given the Neighbourhood Plan expects that all planning applications will be determined by a combination of its own policies and those of the development plan, it will be the relevant development plan policies, and the provisions of the NPPF as necessary, that will seek to ensure that future planning applications are satisfactory in respect of all other sustainability measures.

6.21 However, given the close proximity of the site to the Conservation Area, the policy proposes that a village park is created on part of the site to separate the development scheme from the eastern edge of the village, thus preserving the setting of the Area. It is also makes clear the need for a future planning application to demonstrate its design will by in line with heritage asset policy of the Local Plan and NPPF.

6.22 There is no reasonable alternative policy option as the intention of the chosen policy is simply to define the site on the Proposals Map and to establish a maximum site capacity.

***Policy 4 – Land off Nash Road***

<b>GHNP SA Objective</b>	<b>GHNP Policy</b>	<b>Policy Option</b>
Wellbeing		-
Design		-
Services		-
Village Centre		-
Employment		-
Housing		-
Brownfield		-
Transport		-
Air Quality		-
Landscape		-
Biodiversity		-
Flooding		-
Water		-

6.23 This policy allocates land for housing development of up to 15 homes on the northern edge of the village. The land is part of a larger site currently in agricultural use but the landowner has made this part of the site available for this scale of housing scheme.

6.24 The sites lies outside a flood risk zone and beyond the designated Conservation Area though forms part of its setting. The policy promotes housing development to meet the needs of the local community and to contribute to the wider housing needs of the District. New homes may also support the remaining local services, i.e. the pubs and primary school.

6.25 The allocation accords with the provisions of Policy 1 in respect of the defined Great Horwood Settlement Boundary, within which it is located. The assessment concludes that it will have a number of positive effects, notably in the supply of housing and sustaining the community and its jobs and services and can be accessed directly from the existing main road network. Given the Neighbourhood Plan expects that all planning applications will be determined by a combination of its own policies and those of the development plan, it will be the relevant development plan policies, and the provisions of the NPPF as necessary, that will seek to ensure that future planning applications are satisfactory in respect of all other sustainability measures.

6.26 However, given the close proximity of the site to the Conservation Area, the policy makes clear the need for a future planning application to demonstrate its design will be in line with heritage asset policy of the Local Plan and NPPF.

6.27 There is no reasonable alternative policy option as the intention of the chosen policy is simply to define the site on the Proposals Map and to establish a maximum site capacity.

## **7. Assessment Conclusions**

7.1 The assessment shows that there are no significant adverse effects resulting from the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. The policies have been specifically chosen and formulated to adhere to the principles of sustainable development as defined by the NPPF.

7.2 The District Council and the Parish Council will jointly monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan using the available data. The AVDC Monitoring Report will provide some data at this level.