

Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2014–2031



First Review, February 2020

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**Prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Review Committee
and adopted by Great Horwood Parish Council on 10 February 2020**

Contents

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans
- 1.2 The Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan
- 1.3 Monitoring and Review

2. Policies and Proposals

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Policy 2: Land South of Little Horwood Road
- 2.3 Policy 3: Land North of Little Horwood Road
- 2.4 Policy 4: Land Off Nash Road
- 2.5 Policy 1: Spatial Plan & Sustainable Development – Settlement boundary
- 2.6 Policy 1: Spatial Plan & Sustainable Development – Site size limit
- 2.7 Policy 1: Spatial Plan & Sustainable Development – Other requirements
- 2.8 Objectives and measures

3. Local and National Policy

- 3.1 The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan
- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 Short term conclusions
- 4.2 Longer term conclusions

Appendix: List of Review Documents (referenced in footnotes)

1. Introduction

1.1 Neighbourhood Plans

1.1.1 Every local planning authority is required to maintain a *development plan*, containing policies regarding the use and development of land in its area.

1.1.2 Since 2004, development plan policies have been contained in *development plan documents*, known also as *local plans*. (For a short period, some policies were also contained in regional spatial strategies, but these have now been withdrawn.) Since 2011, however, policies can also be contained in *neighbourhood development plans*, known simply as *neighbourhood plans*. These neighbourhood plans also form part of the development plan.

1.1.3 A neighbourhood plan differs from a local plan in that it applies only in a small part of the planning authority's area, commonly (although not always) a single parish. The area covered by a neighbourhood plan is known as a *neighbourhood area*. In addition, the neighbourhood plan is not prepared by the planning authority itself but by a designated *qualifying body*. Where a single parish is a neighbourhood area, the qualifying body will be the parish council.

1.1.4 The examination procedure for a neighbourhood plan is simpler than that used for a local plan. The plan is submitted by the qualifying body to the planning authority, who conduct a public consultation during the *Regulation 16 Publicity Period*. The planning authority also appoints an Examiner, who must take account of representations made during this period.

1.1.5 The Examiner must be satisfied that the plan satisfies the *basic conditions*, which require in particular that the plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, and that it has regard to national policy and guidance.

1.1.6 A concise statement of national policy, the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*, was published in 2012 (a revised version was published in July 2018, and a version with minor additional modifications was published in February 2019). Paragraph 13 of the current NPPF states:

Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

1.1.7 The Examiner may decide to hold a hearing if it appears necessary so that people who have made representations during the plan's consultation period can explain their views in more detail. A hearing was held into the neighbourhood plan for Great Horwood, but this was unusual; most neighbourhood plan examinations are carried out using written representations alone.

1.1.8 The Examiner may propose modifications to the plan in order that it should meet the basic conditions.

1.1.9 Once the planning authority is satisfied that the plan meets the basic conditions, a referendum is held, asking electors in the neighbourhood area if they want the plan to be taken

into account when decisions on planning applications are made. If a simple majority in favour of the plan is achieved, the plan is *made* by the planning authority and becomes part of the development plan.

1.1.10 Although it was expected that up-to-date local plans would be in place before the corresponding neighbourhood plans, judicial authority has held that this is not necessary. If, however, a subsequent local plan introduces new or modified strategic policies, for example involving increased housing requirements, then policies in an existing neighbourhood plan might be considered out-of-date. In addition, if in any particular case there is a conflict between an older policy and a more recent one, then legislation requires the more recent policy to prevail.

1.1.11 Once a neighbourhood plan has been made, it cannot be altered, except for the correction of minor typographical errors. The plan can, however, be replaced by a modified plan or a new plan.

1.1.12 The original procedure was for the modified or new plan to pass through the same stages as the original plan. Recently, however, a simplified procedure has been introduced for modified plans which are of the same nature as the original plan. In the simplified procedure, the Examination is expected to be conducted by means of written representations, and there is no requirement for a referendum.

1.1.13 The decision on whether the modified plan is of the same nature as the original plan is a matter for the Examiner. For example, if the modified plan contained policies allocating land for housing but the original plan did not, then the Examiner is likely to decide that the nature of the plan has changed.

1.2 The Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan (GHPNP)

1.2.1 On 24 September 2012 an area corresponding to the parish of Great Horwood was designated as a neighbourhood area by Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC)¹. The qualifying body was therefore Great Horwood Parish Council (GHPC).

1.2.2 Work on developing a draft plan was carried out by a Neighbourhood Planning Team during the period 2012–2014, and the draft plan was submitted by GHPC to AVDC on 14 July 2014. The Regulation 16 Publicity Period was from 21 July 2014 to 8 September 2014.

1.2.3 The Examiner held a hearing on 27 November 2014, and his report recommended one significant modification and a number of minor modifications. The significant modification was that the land allocated in Policy 2 should include a reserve area, to be used for housing if required by an adopted local plan.

1.2.4 The Examiner's recommendations were accepted by AVDC, and a referendum was held on 5 March 2015. A total of 491 votes were cast from an electorate of 815 voters, corresponding to a

1 RD1: Neighbourhood Area Designation

turnout of 60.2%. There were 447 votes for YES and 44 for NO, so that the plan was supported by 91% of those voting.

1.2.5 The plan² was made by AVDC on 16 March 2015, and become part of the development plan for Aylesbury Vale on that date³.

1.3 Monitoring and Review

1.3.1 Paragraph 3.6 of GHPNP states:

It is expected that the GHPNP will be formally reviewed on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the development and review of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan if this cycle is different.

This present document is the first such review.

1.3.2 Paragraph 3.5 of GHPNP describes the nature of the review:

The GHPNP will be monitored by the Parish Council on a regular basis using planning data collected by the District Council. The objectives and measures will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at a Village level relevant to the Plan will also be included.

1.3.3 The detailed objectives and measures are given in Paragraph 3.2 of GHPNP:

To achieve this vision a number of key objectives have been identified. For each objective one or more indicators have been selected to monitor the successful progress of the GHPNP. No targets have been set for these indicators; progress will be judged against the trends that are identified in the data when it is reported and reviewed (see para 3.5 below). These are as follows:

- 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 development that compromises the rural setting of the village*
 - No. of planning permissions affecting designated environmental assets*

These objectives and measures are assessed in this review in subsection 2.7 below.

2 RD2: Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2014–2031

3 RD3: GHPNP Decision Statement

1.3.4 Comments on a draft version of this review were requested from AVDC Planning Policy. Their response was received on 26 September 2019, and their comments have been taken into account.

1.3.5 Where this review is supported by documentary evidence, this will be indicated in footnotes, and the evidence documents will be labelled as “Review Documents” and numbered sequentially. A list of review documents is given in the Appendix.

2. Policies and Proposals

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 GHPNP is a comparatively small and straightforward neighbourhood plan, containing just four policies, all concerned with land use; three of the policies allocate sites for development.

2.1.2 The three site allocation policies are Policies 2, 3 and 4; it will be convenient to assess these before the more general Policy 1.

2.1.3 It should be recorded that, although the GHPNP policies are part of the development plan and so take priority over other material considerations, this priority is a matter for the assessment of the decision maker in each case. In particular, policies may be regarded as out-of-date, and so given less weight, if there are changes in circumstances.

2.1.4 There is also one project proposal in GHPNP; this does not have statutory force but outlines the intentions of GHPC. The proposal describes several infrastructure projects, most of which are contingent on the availability of Community Infrastructure Levy funds, and these are not yet available. This Review will therefore not provide an assessment of the project proposal.

2.2 Policy 2: Land South of Little Horwood Road

2.2.1 An outline planning application (with all matters except access reserved) for the development of up to 30 dwellings on land comprising both the allocation site and the reserve site was validated by AVDC on 29 September 2016 and given the reference 16/03538/AOP.

2.2.2 Although partly in conformity with GHPNP, there was a conflict with Policy 1 in terms of site size; this will be discussed below in subsection 2.6 below. There was also a conflict with Policy 2 in terms of the use of the reserve site although there was no requirement to do so from an adopted local plan.

2.2.3 The conflict with Policy 2 is discussed in the Planning Officer's Report dated 29 August 2017⁴. Paragraph 2.0 of the Report states

The proposal would not fully accord with criteria relating to the bringing forward of the reserve housing land allocation for development in advance of the VALP being adopted or the GHPNP being reviewed but other material considerations, including the delivery of a more efficient and master plan led comprehensive form of housing development, in terms of ensuring good design, as set out below, are considered to justify the development as put forward.

The report also notes in paragraph 6.0 that the consultation response from GHPC stated

Strictly speaking the proposal is not in accordance with GHNP as it includes both the allocated site and the reserve site. The Parish Council recognises that it is likely that VALP, if

4 RD4: South of Little Horwood Road – Officer's Report

and when approved, will require a level of housing in Great Horwood that will mean that the reserve site will have to be developed. In such circumstances the Parish Council would not object to the development of both sites at the same time.

2.2.4 Planning consent for the proposal was granted on 29 August 2017 by delegated authority⁵.

2.2.5 A S.106 Agreement was executed on 29 April 2017⁶. This provided for ten affordable dwellings, with a tenure mix of seven affordable rental dwellings and three shared ownership dwellings.

2.2.6 An application for the approval of all remaining reserved matters was validated by AVDC on 20 March 2018 and given the reference 18/00992/ADP. The housing mix is⁷:

Market housing		Affordable housing	
4	2 bedroom house	2	1 bedroom flat
7	3 bedroom house	3	2 bedroom house
7	4 bedroom house	4	3 bedroom house
2	5 bedroom house	1	4 bedroom house

2.2.7 The detailed proposal is substantially in accordance with the eleven design principles listed in Policy 2.

2.2.8 The reserved matters were approved by AVDC on 18 February 2019 by delegated authority⁸. Construction work on the site has now started, and the first houses will be offered for sale in 2020.

2.3 Policy 3: Land North of Little Horwood Road

2.3.1 An outline planning application (with all matters reserved) for the development of 15 dwellings on the allocation site was validated by AVDC on 14 June 2016 and given the reference 16/01664/AOP.

2.3.2 An Officer's Report dated 13 March 2017 recommended that the application be deferred for approval subject to the completion of a S.106 agreement⁹.

2.3.3 A S.106 agreement was executed on 11 February 2019¹⁰. This provided for five affordable dwellings, with a tenure mix of two affordable rental dwellings (specified as 1 bedroom flats) and three shared ownership dwellings (specified as 2 bedroom houses). The agreement also made provision for the transfer of Open Space Land to GHPC in accordance with principles (i) and (ii) of

5 RD5: South of Little Horwood Road – Planning Consent

6 RD6: South of Little Horwood Road – S.106 Agreement

7 RD7: South of Little Horwood Road – Site Layout; RD8: South of Little Horwood Road – Affordable Housing

8 RD9: South of Little Horwood Road – Reserved Matters Approval

9 RD10: North of Little Horwood Road – Officer's Report

10 RD11: North of Little Horwood Road – S.106 Agreement

Policy 3. The agreement specifies that the land should be used as a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP), although there is no provision for funding in this agreement; instead the funding is secured by a provision in the S.106 agreement for the nearby development south of Little Horwood Road¹¹.

2.3.4 Planning consent for the proposal was granted on 11 February 2019 by delegated authority¹².

2.3.5 An application for reserved matters approval was validated by AVDC on 7 October 2019 and given the reference 19/03613/ADP. The proposed housing mix is¹³:

Market housing		Affordable housing	
2	2 bedroom house	2	1 bedroom flat
5	3 bedroom house	3	2 bedroom house
3	4 bedroom house		

2.3.6 Concern about the level of play provision specified for the Open Space Land has been expressed by AVDC Parks and Recreation; this will need to be resolved before reserved matters approval.

2.3.7 Subject to approval, it is expected that construction will commence in 2020.

2.4 Policy 4: Land off Nash Road

2.4.1 A full planning application for the development of 14 dwellings on the allocation site was validated by AVDC on 11 March 2016 and given the reference 16/00877/APP.

2.4.2 A S.106 agreement was executed on 1 August 2018¹⁴. This provided for four affordable dwellings, with a tenure mix of one affordable rental dwelling (specified as 2 bedroom) and three shared ownership dwellings (specified as 3 bedroom). The overall proposed housing mix is¹⁵:

Market housing		Affordable housing	
2	1 bedroom bungalow	1	2 bedroom house
2	3 bedroom house	3	3 bedroom house
6	4 bedroom house		

11 RD6: South of Little Horwood Road – S.106 Agreement (ibid)

12 RD12: North of Little Horwood Road – Post-S.106 Delegated Report; RD13: North of Little Horwood Road – Planning Consent

13 RD14: North of Little Horwood Road – Proposed Site Plan

14 RD15: Nash Road – S.106 Agreement

15 RD16: Nash Road – Proposed Site Layout

2.4.3 A Deed of Variation to the S.106 Agreement¹⁶ was executed on 4 November 2019. This made provision for the transfer of Open Space Land to GHPC in accordance with principles (iv) and (v) of Policy 4. The land proposed to be transferred is in two parts, corresponding to the landscape buffer of Policy 4(iv) and the Landscaped Amenity of Policy 4(v).

2.4.4 Planning consent for the proposal was granted on 4 November 2019 by delegated authority¹⁷. There are several pre-commencement conditions which will need to be discharged before development can start.

2.5 Policy 1: Spatial Plan & Sustainable Development – Settlement boundary

2.5.1 The principal purpose of Policy 1 was to introduce a settlement boundary for the village of Great Horwood, in order to contain the physical growth of the village over the plan period. Development within the boundary would be supported if it satisfied seven conditions, whereas development outside the boundary would be resisted unless it was for agriculture or forestry, or supported the rural economy.

2.5.2 There have been several planning applications proposing development outside the settlement boundary in conflict with Policy 1. Of the three most significant proposals, one was allowed on appeal, one was initially agreed by AVDC but subsequently refused after having been called in by the Secretary of State, and one was withdrawn. All three proposals were submitted at a time when AVDC could not demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites, and so the NPPF “presumption in favour of sustainable development” was engaged.

2.5.3 An outline planning application (with all matters reserved) for the development of 7 dwellings at Horwood Mill, Spring Lane, was validated by AVDC on 8 March 2015 and given the reference 15/00774/AOP¹⁸. It was refused under delegated authority on 18 May 2015, but was allowed on appeal on 6 June 2016¹⁹. Paragraph 19 of the Appeal Decision stated:

In balancing the various factors, I give substantial weight to the conflict of the proposal with the NP despite the shortage in the supply of housing sites, in line with Framework paragraphs 183 to 185 and 198. I find it to be of great importance that the site has so recently been endorsed by the local community in the NP process. I do not, however, find any significant prejudice to the aims or strategy of the NP. The site is already built up, so there would be no encroachment into open countryside and no loss of open land contributing to the form and character of the village. I see no reason why the small scale of development proposed cannot be reasonably accommodated without overdeveloping the village.

The Inspector also noted that the site had been considered for inclusion in GHPNP, but had not found favour. In fact a significant reason for failure to include the site had been resistance from AVDC Forward Plans: the 2013 Aylesbury Vale Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) described the site as

16 RD17: Nash Road – Deed of Variation

17 RD18: Nash Road – Officer's Report; RD19: Nash Road – Planning Consent

18 RD20: Horwood Mill Location Plan

19 RD21: Horwood Mill Appeal Decision

Not Suitable - Site forms a redundant farm yard which is poorly related to the village. Poor vehicular access from Spring Lane which would exasperate [sic] current traffic congestion.

2.5.4 A full planning application for the development of 45 dwellings at land off Weston Road was received by AVDC on 23 May 2014 and given the reference 14/01540/APP²⁰. An amended application, for 42 dwellings on a slightly larger site, was validated by AVDC on 16 September 2014. An Officer's Report recommending approval subject to the completion of a S.106 agreement was published on 14 September 2015, and this was accepted by the AVDC Strategic Development Management Committee at its meeting on 23 September 2015. That conditional approval was, however, nullified by a decision of the Secretary of State dated 30 October 2015 to call in the application for his own determination. After a public inquiry, held on 15–18 March 2016, the Inspector recommended that permission be refused, and the Secretary of State confirmed this in a decision letter dated 26 September 2016²¹. Paragraph 16 of the decision letter states:

For the reasons given above, the Secretary of State concludes that the proposal does not comply with the development plan as a whole because of the identified conflict with LP policies RA13 and 14 and GHPNP policy 1. He has therefore gone on to consider whether there are any material considerations that would justify deciding the case other than in accordance with the development plan and, given that he concludes that the development plan policies for the supply of housing land are out of date under the terms of paragraph 49 of the Framework, he concludes that paragraph 14 of the Framework is material to the decision. He has therefore gone on to consider whether any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole and, in particular, gives substantial weight to the conflict with paragraph 198 of the Framework.

After considering the planning balance in paragraph 17, the letter concludes in paragraph 18:

Overall, therefore, the Secretary of State concludes that the proposed development would not amount to sustainable development and that its adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. The Secretary of State therefore concludes that planning permission should not be granted.

The Inspector, in his recommendation, noted that part of this site had been considered for inclusion in GHPNP, but that development of the whole site had not been considered.

2.5.5 An outline planning application (with all matters except access reserved) for the development of up to 34 dwellings at land off Willow Road was validated by AVDC on 19 August 2014 and given the reference 14/02414/AOP²². A consultation response from the Highway Authority stating "It is with reluctance that I cannot object to this proposal " was published on 22 September 2014, but a modified response from the Highway Authority recommending refusal was published on 16 June 2016. According to the AVDC planning website the application was withdrawn on 7 February 2017. Although the application could well have been refused on highway grounds alone, it is plausible that the conflict with GHPNP Policy 1 would have been given

20 RD22: Weston Road Location Plan

21 RD23: Weston Road Call-in Decision

22 RD24: Willow Road Location Plan

additional weight after the Weston Road refusal on 26 September 2016, and that this persuaded the applicant to withdraw.

2.5.6 The settlement boundary specified by Policy 1 may therefore be considered successful in achieving its objective of containing the physical growth of Great Horwood village. Permission has been granted for two houses in Spring Lane just outside the settlement boundary, but these will be replacements for existing converted dwellings rather than new dwellings. The single new development allowed outside the settlement boundary, at Horwood Mill, is separated from the boundary by several hundred metres, and does not significantly alter the built form of the village.

2.6 Policy 1: Spatial Plan & Sustainable Development – Site size limit

2.6.1 Out of the seven requirements listed in Policy 1, the first is essentially a spatial policy: the requirement that supported developments

comprise up to approximately 15 dwellings and land of up to about 0.5 Ha.

This is a requirement concerning the “site” – that is, the red line area forming the planning unit – described in each individual planning application. There has at times been a misconception among residents that this requirement might refer to multiple adjacent developments taken together, but that is not the case.

2.6.2 The proposal for a development on land off Weston Road was for 42 dwellings on a site of about 2.35 ha. The Inspector’s recommendation to the Secretary of State, appended to the decision letter²³, stated in paragraph 148

So, although I agree that the greater number of modern developments and those closest to the application site comprises groupings of about half the number proposed in the current application, a considerable proportion of the village as a whole is formed from a single development about twice the size of the current application. I cannot therefore agree that the size of development now proposed would be inconsistent with the visual character with the village as a whole.

2.6.3 The Inspector’s view on this question, emphasising visual character in preference to the historical reasoning for that character, means that only limited weight can be given to the site size restriction, unless there are arguments to the contrary relating to a specific proposal.

2.7 Policy 1: Spatial Plan & Sustainable Development – Other requirements

2.7.1 There are six other requirements in Policy 1, most relating to specific features of proposals rather than the principle of development.

2.7.2 Requirement (ii) specifies that up to 35% of the dwellings provided should be affordable. Out of the 59 dwellings to be provided on allocated land, 19 will be affordable, a proportion of 32%.

23 RD23: Weston Road Call-in Decision (ibid)

2.7.3 Requirement (iii) specifies that a proportion of dwellings be for custom build if the demand is demonstrated. There have been no demonstrations of demand.

2.7.4 Requirement (iv) specifies that a proportion of dwellings be provided suited to occupancy by older person households. There will be two ground-floor one-bedroom flats, and two one-bedroom bungalows.

2.7.5 Requirement (v) specifies that the overall housing mix should reflect the most up-to-date assessment of housing needs in the parish. The most recent such assessment is the Housing Needs Survey prepared for GHPNP in April 2014²⁴. The summary and recommendations in Section 9 of the Survey indicate the need to be

- *Affordable homes for local people*
- *2 and 3 bedroom starter homes for sale on the open market*
- *Medium family homes*

The mix of housing to be provided on the allocated land is

Market housing		Affordable housing	
2	1 bedroom house	4	1 bedroom flat
6	2 bedroom house	7	2 bedroom house
14	3 bedroom house	7	3 bedroom house
16	4 bedroom house	1	4 bedroom house
2	5 bedroom house		

In broad terms the housing mix appears to satisfy this requirement.

2.7.6 Requirement (vii) is that the proposals do not result in the loss of existing publicly accessible open space. There has been no loss of such open space; instead additional open space will be provided on two of the allocation sites.

2.7.7 Finally, requirement (vi) is that proposals should

sustain or enhance the significance of the architectural and historic interest of the Great Horwood Conservation Area and where possible enhance or better reveal the significance of the asset and its setting

2.7.8 The Great Horwood Conservation Area Review 2012²⁵ describes 40 listed buildings within the conservation area (one, St James Church, being listed at grade II* and the remainder being listed at grade II); there is another grade II* listed building at Manor Farm, along Nash Road but outside the conservation area.

2.7.9 The sites allocated for housing development in policies 3 and 4 are separated from the conservation area by buffer zones, the Open Space Land in the case of Policy 3 and the Landscape

24 RD25: Housing Needs Survey

25 RD26: Conservation Area Review 2012

Buffer in the case of Policy 4. The site in Policy 4 is separated from the listed building at Manor Farm by the Landscaped Amenity.

2.7.10 Planning consent was granted on 30 July 2015 for a new dwelling at The Grange, 2 Winslow Road, a building listed at Grade II within the conservation area. This proposal was considered by the AVDC Conservation Officer to be “a well thought out scheme which will result in an enhancement to both fabric and the setting of this listed building”.

2.7.11 Planning consent was granted on 13 August 2019 for three new dwellings at Vine Cottage, 3 Little Horwood Road, a building listed at Grade II within the conservation area, and adjacent to Chapel House in Nash Road, another building listed at Grade II. The assessment of this proposal by the AVDC Heritage Officer was that “The design, scale and materials of the proposed dwellings are considered to preserve the identified heritage assets.”

2.7.12 Both the planned development and the windfall development within the Great Horwood Conservation Area have therefore been considered either to sustain or to enhance its significance.

2.8 Objectives and measures

2.8.1 The detailed assessment of the effectiveness of the policies in GHPNP described above may, as outlined in subsection 1.3 above, be used to provide the specific measures listed in paragraph 3.2 of the Plan.

2.8.2 “To consolidate the role and function of Great Horwood as a small village by meeting the future housing needs of the parish” (note that Great Horwood is now considered to be a medium village in the AVDC settlement hierarchy):

- No. of open market homes: 59, plus windfall developments in conformity with Policy 1;
- No. of affordable homes: 19;
- No. of homes suited to occupation by older people: 4;
- No. of custom build homes: 0.

2.8.3 “To conserve the special historic character of the village”:

- No. of planning permissions affecting designated heritage assets: 2

2.8.4 “To protect the open countryside of the parish from development that compromises the rural setting of the village:”

- No. of planning permissions affecting designated environmental assets: 0.

3. Local and national policy

3.1 The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

3.1.1 When GHPNP was being prepared, policies in the development plan for Aylesbury Vale (apart from those dealing with minerals and waste) were contained in the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2004 (AVDLP). Although the plan period was from 2004 to 2011, and so nominally the plan was “time expired”, over a hundred policies were “saved” by direction of the Secretary of State in 2007 and so remained as part of the development plan.

3.1.2 As AVDLP contained no strategic policies indicating the overall housing requirement for Great Horwood, the preparation of GHPNP took place in a policy vacuum. Work had begun on a new local plan, the Vale of Aylesbury Plan (VAP), but this was found to be unsound during its examination, and it was withdrawn in February 2014.

3.1.3 Another new local plan, the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP), has now been prepared and a draft version was submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2018²⁶. An Examination in Public was held for two weeks from 10 July 2018, and the Inspector’s Interim Findings were dated 29 August 2019. A list of proposed main modifications was published for consultation on 5 November 2019²⁷, together with a list of proposed additional modifications²⁸ (not for consultation).

3.1.4 The submitted VALP contained, in Table 2 “Proposed settlement hierarchy and housing development”, a classification of Great Horwood as a “medium village” with a required housing development of 74 dwellings; no additional allocations were proposed. A modified version of Table 2 was published on 22 July 2019²⁹; this increased the required housing development to 75 dwellings, again with no additional allocations.

3.1.5 Data provided by AVDC Forward Plans indicates that the figure of 75 dwellings over the VALP period 2013–2033 (not quite the same as the GHPNP period of 2014–2031) is derived from the 59 dwellings on the three GHPNP allocation sites, the 7 dwellings approved on appeal at Horwood Mill (see paragraph 2.5.3 above), together with the following 9 commitments or completions:

- 2 Spring Lane
- 22 Greenway
- 51 Greenway
- Spring Cottage, Spring Lane (two dwellings)
- 15C Little Horwood Road
- Old Chapel, Little Horwood Road
- 11A The Green
- The Grange, 2 Winslow Road
- Abbey Farm, Singleborough.

26 RD27: VALP Submission Version

27 RD28: VALP Proposed Main Modifications

28 RD29: VALP Proposed Additional Modifications

29 RD30: VALP Modified Table 2

This list includes dwelling conversions under the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) and Certificates of Lawful Existing Use or Development (CLEUDs) as well as planning consents granted for new or converted dwellings. The increase in the VALP total requirement from 74 to 75 has arisen because the two dwellings at Spring Cottage, one a conversion under the GPDO and the other a CLEUD, were originally counted as a single new dwelling. Since the VALP assessment was made, there have been several further consents for either new dwellings or dwelling conversions.

3.1.6 The potential effect of VALP on GHPNP Policy 1 also needs to be considered. Paragraph 4.4 of GHPNP indicates that Policy 1 is intended to take precedence over saved AVDLP Policies RA3, RA13 and RA14; this precedence of a later policy over an earlier one is established by legislation.

3.1.7 The list of AVDLP policies replaced by VALP policies³⁰ indicates that RA3 will be replaced by VALP policies BE2 and NE5, and RA13 and RA14 will be replaced by VALP policies D3 and D4. (These policies were labelled D2 and D3 in the VALP submission version, but the list of VALP Proposed Additional Modifications³¹ indicates in Examination Change References AM007 and AM008 that all references to policy D2 should be changed to D3, and all references to policy D3 should be changed to D4.)

3.1.8 VALP policy BE2 “Design of new development” and VALP policy NE5 “Landscape character and locally important landscapes” do not significantly impinge on GHPNP Policy 1, and VALP Policy D4 “Housing development at smaller villages” is not relevant to either Great Horwood (which is a medium village) or to Singleborough (which is an “other settlement”).

3.1.9 VALP Policy D3 “Proposals for non-allocated sites at strategic settlements, larger villages and medium villages” is relevant to Great Horwood. The modified wording is given in the list of VALP Proposed Main Modifications at Examination Change Reference MM080 (where it has its original label of policy D2):

D3 Proposals for non-allocated sites at strategic settlements, larger villages and medium villages

1. Small scale development and infilling

Development proposals in strategic settlements, larger and medium villages that are not allocated in this plan or in a made neighbourhood plan will be restricted to small scale areas of land within the built-up areas of settlements. Subject to other policies in the Plan, permission will be granted for development comprising:

- a. infilling of small gaps in developed frontages in keeping with the scale and spacing of nearby dwellings and the character of the surroundings, or*
- b. development that consolidates existing settlement patterns without harming important settlement characteristics, and does not comprise partial development of a larger site*

2. Larger scale development

Exceptionally further development beyond allocated sites and small-scale development as set out in criteria a) or b) above will only be permitted where the Council's monitoring of housing

30 Listed near the end of RD28: VALP Proposed Main Modifications as “Schedule of Saved Policies Replaced by VALP” (ibid)

31 RD29: VALP Proposed Additional Modifications

delivery across the district shows that the allocated sites are not being delivered at the anticipated rate. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence demonstrating how the site can be delivered in a timely manner. The proposal must contribute to the sustainability of that settlement, be in accordance with all applicable policies in the Plan, and fulfil all of the following criteria:

- c. be located within or adjacent to the existing developed footprint of the settlement* except, where there is a made neighbourhood plan which defines a settlement or development boundary, where the site should be located entirely within that settlement boundary*
- d. not lead to coalescence with any neighbouring settlement*
- e. be of a scale and in a location that is in keeping with the existing form of the settlement, and not adversely affect its character and appearance*
- f. respect and retain natural boundaries and features such as trees, hedgerows, embankments and drainage ditches*
- g. not have any adverse impact on environmental assets such as landscape, historic environment, biodiversity, waterways, open space and green infrastructure, and*
- h. provide appropriate infrastructure provision such as waste water drainage and highways.*

**The existing developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village, and excludes individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings. The exclusion covers former agricultural barns that have been converted, agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the village and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built-up area of the village.*

3.1.10 This new policy is largely consistent with GHPNP Policy 1, but in the event of any conflict the new VALP policy will take precedence.

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework

3.2.1 The examination of GHPNP in 2014 confirmed that, with the wording as modified by the Examiner, it satisfied the basic conditions, so that in particular it had regard to national policy and guidance. The national policy in place at the time of the examination, and at the date GHPNP was made, was the 2012 version of the NPPF.

3.2.2 Paragraph 213 of the current NPPF states:

However, existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

3.2.3 There have been no planning determinations, either at first instance or at appeal, where there has been any suggestion that the policies in GHPNP are not fully consistent with the current NPPF.

4. Conclusions

4.1 Short term conclusions

4.1.1 GHPNP allocated land for the development of 45 new dwellings, and also allocated a reserve site. Construction of a development of 30 dwellings has started; outline consent for a development of 15 dwellings has been granted, and a reserved matters application has been submitted; and full planning consent for a development of 14 dwellings has been granted. Approximately 32% of the dwellings will be affordable. Three parcels of Open Space Land have been agreed to be offered to GHPC in accordance with GHPNP.

4.1.2 It may be seen from this that GHPNP is well on track to see a successful implementation of its proposals.

4.1.3 The emerging VALP has taken account of both the GHPNP developments and additional windfall developments, and does not require any housing development in Great Horwood beyond that already planned.

4.1.4 There is, therefore, no immediate need for modifications to be proposed to the existing GHPNP with its plan period 2013–2031. Nevertheless, it will be important to continue to monitor the progress of the three planned developments.

4.2 Longer term conclusions

4.2.1 There are, however, expected to be significant changes in North Buckinghamshire over the next decade, as a result of the expected opening of East West Rail in 2024, with a new station in Winslow, and the proposed Oxford Cambridge Expressway, whose route is expected to lie in a broad corridor to the south of Great Horwood.

4.2.2 Although it is likely that much of the new development associated with this improved transport infrastructure will take the form of a large new settlement, it is clear that smaller settlements, including villages such as Great Horwood, will not be unaffected.

4.2.3 These changes will be considered when the VALP is reviewed; that review will, according to NPPF paragraph 33, be required within five years of the plan's adoption date. The review will be carried out by the new Buckinghamshire Council, the unitary authority which will replace AVDC and the three other district authorities in Buckinghamshire from 1 April 2020.

4.2.4 Even if there is no immediate need for GHPNP to be modified, it would therefore be prudent for GHPC to take a longer term view of the way in which it might wish to see the parish change over the next decade, and how such a vision could be incorporated in a new or modified neighbourhood plan to be prepared over the next few years in anticipation of the VALP review.

Appendix

List of Review Documents

- RD1: Neighbourhood Area Designation
- RD2: Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2014–2031
- RD3: GHPNP Decision Statement
- RD4: South of Little Horwood Road – Officer’s Report
- RD5: South of Little Horwood Road – Planning Consent
- RD6: South of Little Horwood Road – S.106 Agreement
- RD7: South of Little Horwood Road – Site Layout
- RD8: South of Little Horwood Road – Affordable Housing
- RD9: South of Little Horwood Road – Reserved Matters Approval
- RD10: North of Little Horwood Road – Officer's Report
- RD11: North of Little Horwood Road – S.106 Agreement
- RD12: North of Little Horwood Road – Post-S.106 Delegated Report
- RD13: North of Little Horwood Road – Planning Consent
- RD14: North of Little Horwood Road – Proposed Site Plan
- RD15: Nash Road – S.106 Agreement
- RD16: Nash Road – Proposed Site Layout
- RD17: Nash Road – Deed of Variation
- RD18: Nash Road – Officer's Report
- RD19: Nash Road – Planning Consent
- RD20: Horwood Mill Location Plan
- RD21: Horwood Mill Appeal Decision
- RD22: Weston Road Location Plan
- RD23: Weston Road Call-in Decision
- RD24: Willow Road Location Plan
- RD25: Housing Needs Survey
- RD26: Conservation Area Review 2012
- RD27: VALP Submission Version
- RD28: VALP Proposed Main Modifications
- RD29: VALP Proposed Additional Modifications
- RD30: VALP Modified Table 2

These documents are available on the Great Horwood Parish Council website at:
<https://e-voice.org.uk/ghpc/>