Whitchurch

DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES

FINAL REPORT |
UPDATED MARCH 2022

Quality information

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Revision History

Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
5	09.03.2023	Review	Ben Castell	Director
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	02.03.2022	Review, research	Jasper den Boeft	Associate Director
	02.03.2022	Research, site visit, drawings	Hoorieh Morshedi	Urban Designer
	19.01.2022	Research, drawings	Chatnam Lee	Graduate Urban Designer

Contents

Introduction

01

1. Introduction

1.1 About this report

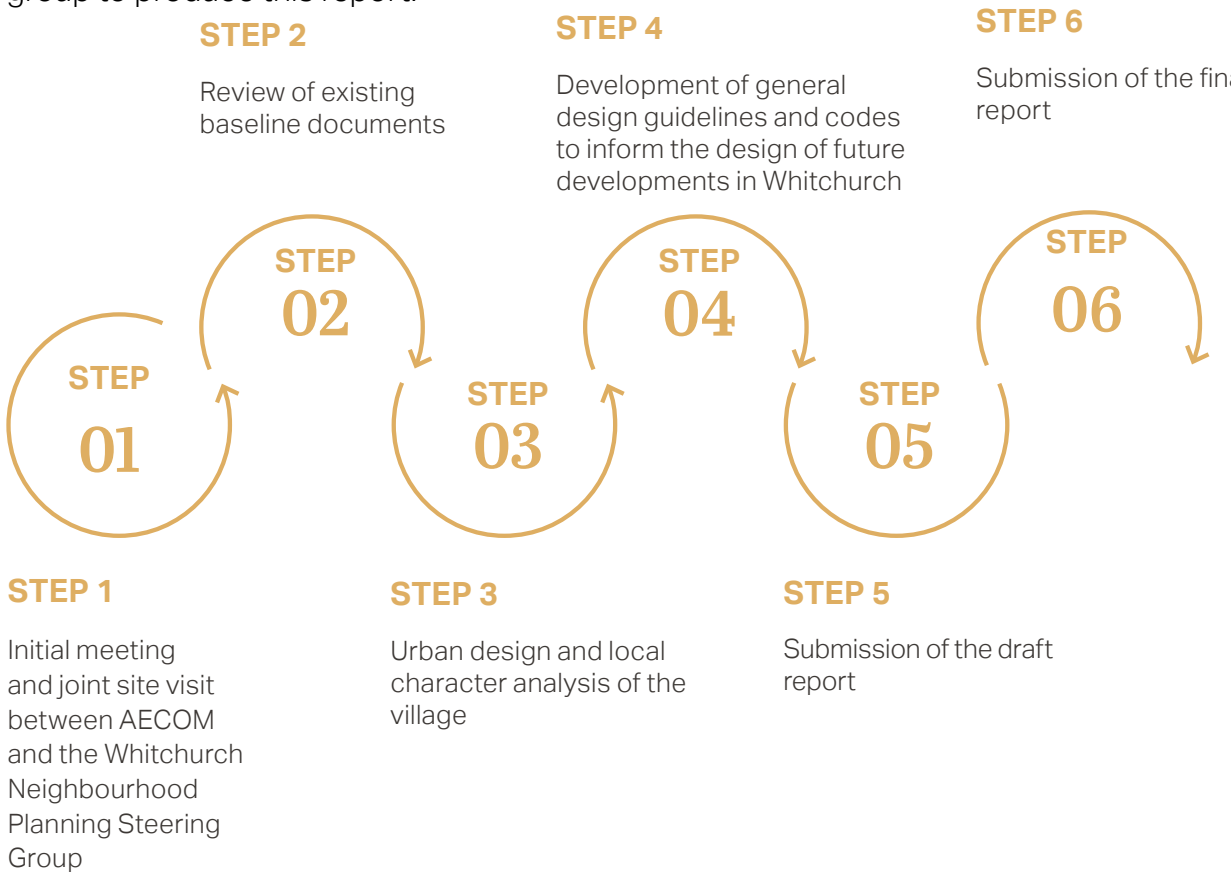
The village of Whitchurch has established a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) in order to shape and influence development within their area. The NPSG are currently in the process of preparing their Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Locality is the national membership network for community organisations that brings local people together to produce Neighbourhood Plans. Through Locality's Government-funded support programme, AECOM have been appointed to prepare this Design Code document, which will form part of the evidence base for their Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Whitchurch Parish Council.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The purpose of this document is to provide an appreciation of Whitchurch Parish's existing character, in order to create a set of design codes which will apply to any future housing development in the village. This will help to ensure that as any new development comes forward, it responds to its context and supports and enhances the quality of the villages' existing character.

1.3 Process

Following an inception meeting, AECOM and the members of Whitchurch Parish Council carried out a high-level assessment of the village. The following steps were agreed with the group to produce this report:



F.1 **Figure 01:** Key steps involved in the development of the Whitchurch Neighbourhood design guidance

1.4 Document structure

01 INTRODUCTION - Outlining the background, purpose, process, study area and design code document structure.

02 POLICY AND EVIDENCE BASED REVIEW - Reviewing the planning policy context.

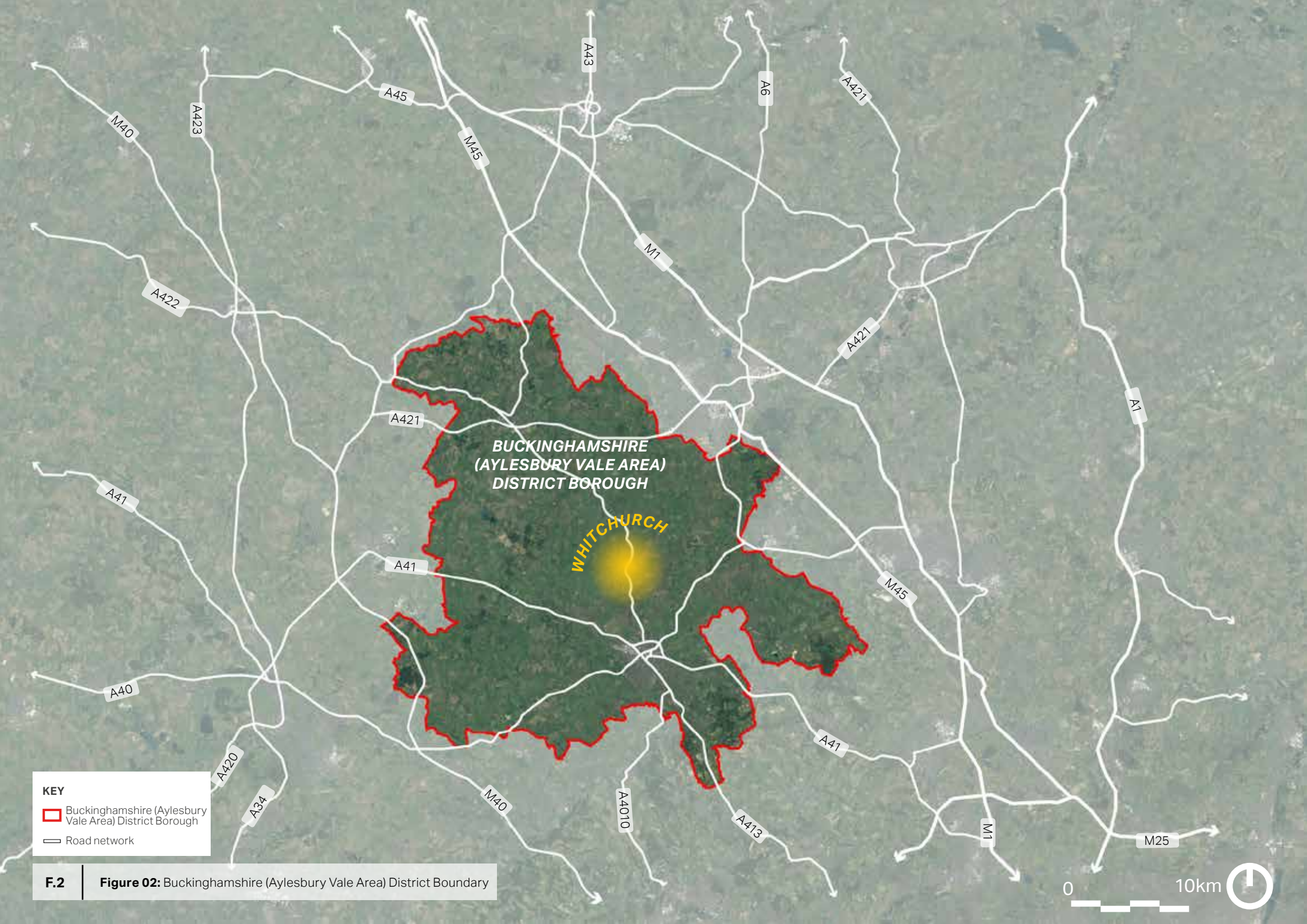
03 NP AREA CONTEXT ANALYSIS Provides an appreciation of physical influences which will be used to help inform the design codes.

04 VILLAGE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT A more focused understanding of the Parish's built and natural landscape character is provided by undertaking a photographic survey to analyse key characteristics.

05 DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES - The design codes to be applied to future developments in the Neighbourhood Area are established.

06 CHECKLIST - This chapter provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated.

07 DELIVERY - Provides guidance on the next steps for the NPSG and potential applicants.



F.2 | **Figure 02:** Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury Vale Area) District Boundary

1.5 Area of study

THE VILLAGE OF WHITCHURCH

Whitchurch is located approximately five miles north of Aylesbury and 12 miles south of Buckingham. The settlement is predominately linear, consisting of one street with a few minor roads branching off.

Whitchurch is on a prominent ridge of the Quainton Wing Hills. There are long-distance views in many directions. The surrounding land is mainly pastoral with hedgerows and mature trees. There is grazing land towards the north and several blocks of broadleaved woodlands towards the west.

Whitchurch is a historic settlement with buildings dating back to the 13th century. There are many fine examples of medieval buildings within the village.

Many cottages and houses are listed buildings with two of them grade II* listed. The White Swan Public house and St John the Evangelist Church on Church Headland Lane are important buildings that are celebrated by local residents.


F.3


F.4

Figure 03: The White Swan on the High Street

Figure 04: St John the Evangelist Church on Church Headland Lane

Figure 05: Two-storey dwelling on Church Headland Lane

Figure 06: Two-storey semi-detached house built with red brick on Ashgrove Gardens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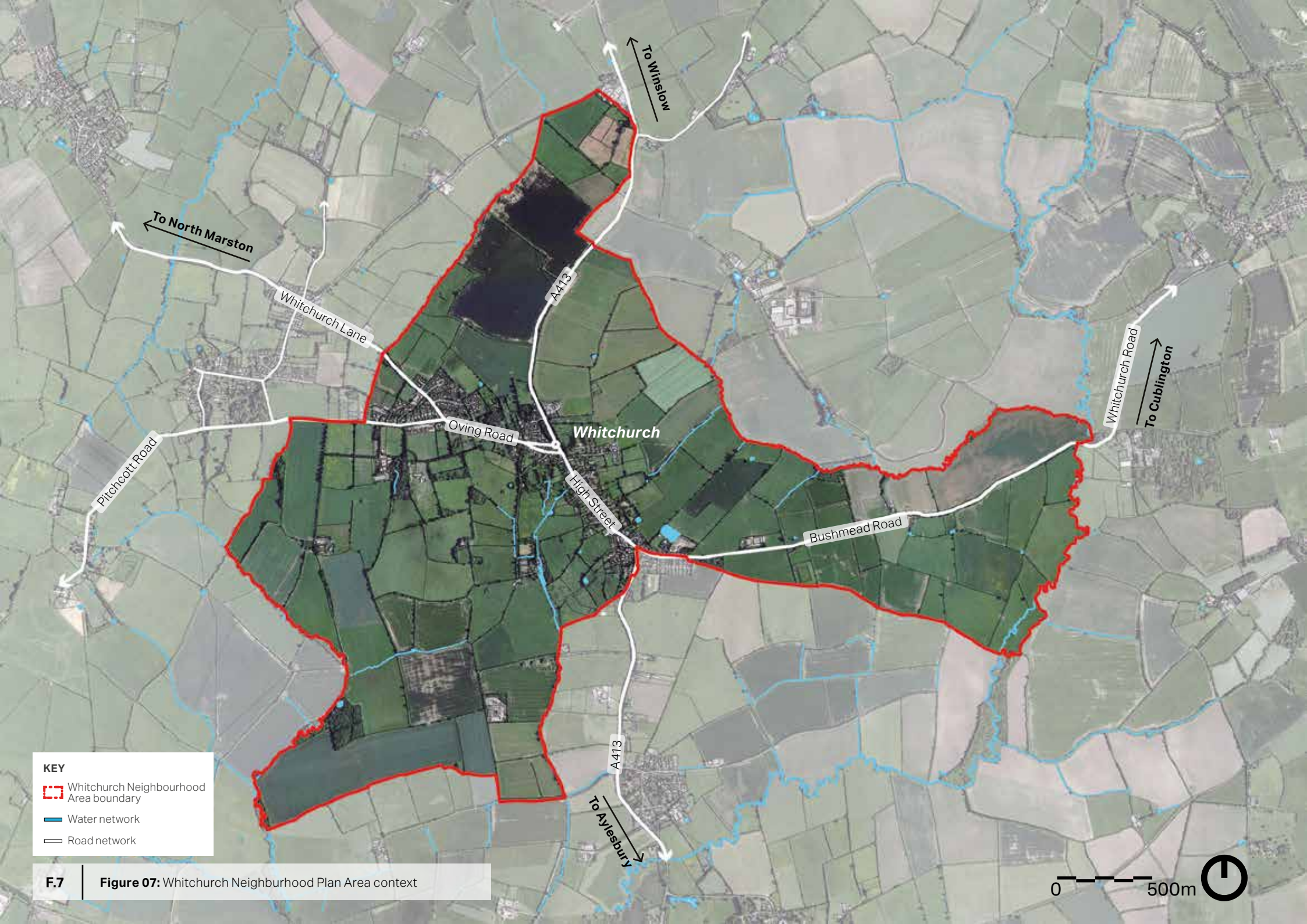


F.7 | **Figure 07:** Whitchurch Neighburhood Plan Area context

Policy and evidence based review

02

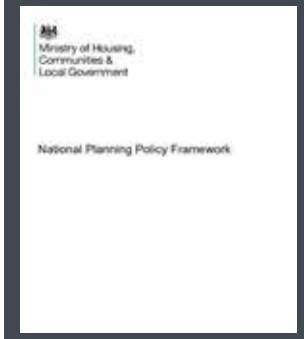
2. Policy and evidence based review

2.1 Introduction

This section summarises the relevant design policy, guidance and evidence base produced at national, county and district levels which have informed this design code. Any new development application should be familiar with those documents.

National Design Guidance

2021



National Planning Policy Framework - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Relevant national planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021). The NPPF was updated in July 2021 to include reference to the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code and the use of area, neighbourhood and site-specific design guides. Paragraph 126 states that: "the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and outlines that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities."

Householders have a wide range of permitted development rights to extend their homes, such as the ability to extend their homes up to 50% of the curtilage of the original house. Back garden land has been given added protection in the NPPF when it was reclassified from brownfield to formerly undeveloped land. However, the NPPF makes it clear that the key consideration should be whether back garden development would harm local character.

2021

National Design Guide - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The National Design Guide sets out the government's ten priorities for well designed places and illustrates how well-designed places can be achieved in practice. The ten characteristics identified includes: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan. The Guide also reinforces the National Planning Policy Framework's objective in creating high quality buildings and places. The document forms part of the government planning practice guidance.

2021

National Model Design Code - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The draft National Model Design Code provides guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote well-designed places. It sets out the key design parameters that need to be considered when producing design guides and recommends methodology for capturing and reflecting views of the local community.

2020

Building for a Healthy Life - Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life updates Homes England's key measure of design quality as the national housing accelerating body. The document sets out 12 considerations for creating integrated neighbourhoods distinctive places and streets for all. While it is not part of the national policy, it is recognised as best practice guidance and design tool in assessing the design quality of developments.

None

Planning Portal on extensions/ modification

The Planning Portal defines infill development as 'The development of a relatively small gap between existing buildings.' (https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory_record/305/infill_development)

2007

Manual for Streets - Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

2021

Vale of Aylsebury Local plan 2013-2033 - Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury Vale Area) District Council

'Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury Vale Area) District Council adopted their Local Plan in September 2021. The Local Plan defines Whitchurch as one of the "Larger Villages" which are larger, more sustainable and have at least reasonable access to facilities and services and public transport, making them sustainable locations for development.

Holt's Field (D-WHI009) is allocated in Whitchurch in the Local Plan.

Policy D3 provide guidance on proposals for non- allocated sites at larger villages. This policy provides guidance for small scale development and infilling.

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

2012

Whitcurch- Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Assessment Report - Buckinghamshire County Council and English Heritage

This report written as part of the Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Project is intended to summarise the archaeological, topographical, historical and architectural evidence relating to the development of Whitchurch in order to provide an informed basis for conservation, research and the management of change within the urban environment.

Neighbourhood Area context analysis

03

3. Neighbourhood Area context analysis

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the local context and key characteristics of Whitchurch village. It is important that all development proposals in Whitchurch, whether big or small, are based on an understanding of the context of the village. Development proposals should clearly demonstrate an understanding of that context and how it has been addressed in the preparation of the design and any related planning submissions. Context refers to the current (and sometimes future) conditions within an area, across a range of issues including village history and heritage, morphology, green space, movement and landscape setting. The following pages in this section consider these matters, in the context of Whitchurch, in more detail.

3.2 Village history

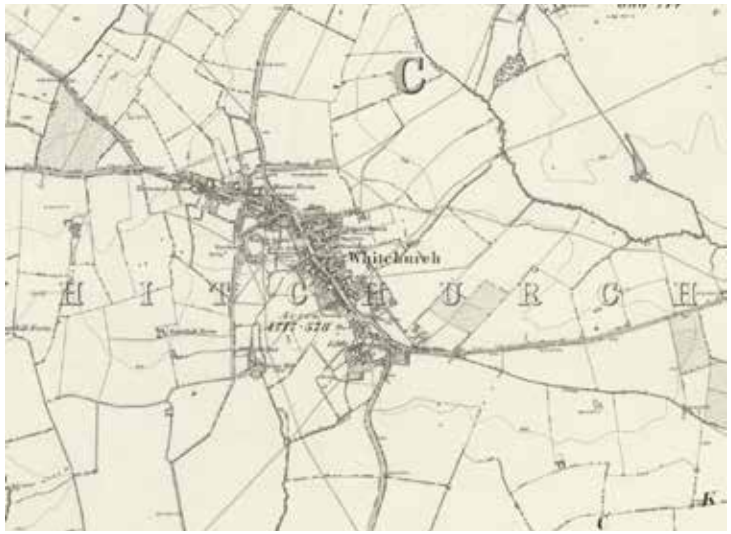
Whitchurch originated as a permanent settlement in the Anglo-Saxon period and was mentioned in the Doomsday book, beginning as a manor held by the Bolebec family. The Earl of Oxford later obtained this manor in 1245 and created a market place on Market Hill, establishing the road to Oving and Quainton.

The village has a silk and lace-making history. Silk weaving was introduced in the village by Mr Richard Moscrop. He established silk factory branches at Waddesdon and Whitchurch. A building at the far end of Little London fitted up as factory and later a new factory was built and fitted up with looms and, machinery, warehouse and employees houses near, known as 'Little Bolton'. In addition, a large portion of the poorer classes of Whitchurch was employed in making lace. The pillow lace of Buckinghamshire was very valuable. Furthermore, the history shows the high-quality brick and tile making activity of the 19th to early 20th Century, although this maybe has earlier origins. The former brick and tile making yards can be found on Bushmead Road where earthworks survive. Sand and limestone were quarried from pits to the north of the village on Oving Road.

Whitchurch has a few surviving late-medieval buildings, though the majority of its listed buildings are from the period of the "Great Rebuilding" in England during the 17th century. The village is unusual in having a large variety of visible building materials, in part creditable to its underlying geology which provides both stone and clay as building materials. The predominant building typology from this 17th century period is a vernacular, timber-framed house with walls of stone, render or brick or a combination of these.

By the early 19th century Whitchurch was home to a community of farmers, tradesmen and labourers. In terms of religion the village was strongly methodist with two chapels, one of which, Wesleyan Chapel, still stands along the High Street today.

Post war the village has experienced modest growth with both private and council housing on Oving Road and North Marston Lane in the west and Bushmead Road in the east. The Whitchurch Conservation Area was established in 1971 and the historic core of the village is well preserved, similarly the village boasts 47 listed buildings. This has enabled Whitchurch to retain its historic character and picturesque appeal.



1936

1961

1883

1952

F.8

Figure 08: Village historic analysis

Figure 09: Two- storey, grade II listed building, on High Street

Figure 10: Row of three cottages, grade II listed building, built in early 17th century on Market Hill

Figure 11: Church of St John the Evangelist, a grade II* listed building, built in late 13th century on Church Lane

Figure 12: Thatched cottage, a grade II listed building, on Keinches Lane built with timber and whitewashed brick

3.3 Statuary designations

The Conservation Area, established in 1971, covers the historic core of the village, primarily the High Street.

There are a number of trees within the village that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order, several line the High Street. There are pockets of protected trees at the top of Market Hill, to the west of the village along Green Acres Close and to the north of the village between Mount Pleasant and the A413.

There are few woodland areas within the Parish, the largest is situated between Hampden Veterinarian clinic and Barrettstown Estates south of Oving Road.

There is one scheduled monument in Whitchurch, the site of Bolebec castle. There is an additional scheduled monument just outside of the neighbourhood boundary, the site of a deserted village at Creslow.


F.14


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Figure 13: Whitchurch House, a grade II listed building, Built in 17th and altered early 20th. Located on Oving Road, constructed in coursed rubble stone on the ground floor and roughcast above.

Figure 14: Mary Monk's House located on High Street, a grade II listed building, constructed in late 18th and extended later on. Red brick with tuck pointing, moulded plinth and slate roof are some of the main materials.

Figure 15: Cobwebs, a grade II listed building on Market Hill, built by a mix of timber frame, rubble stone and brick with thatched roof.

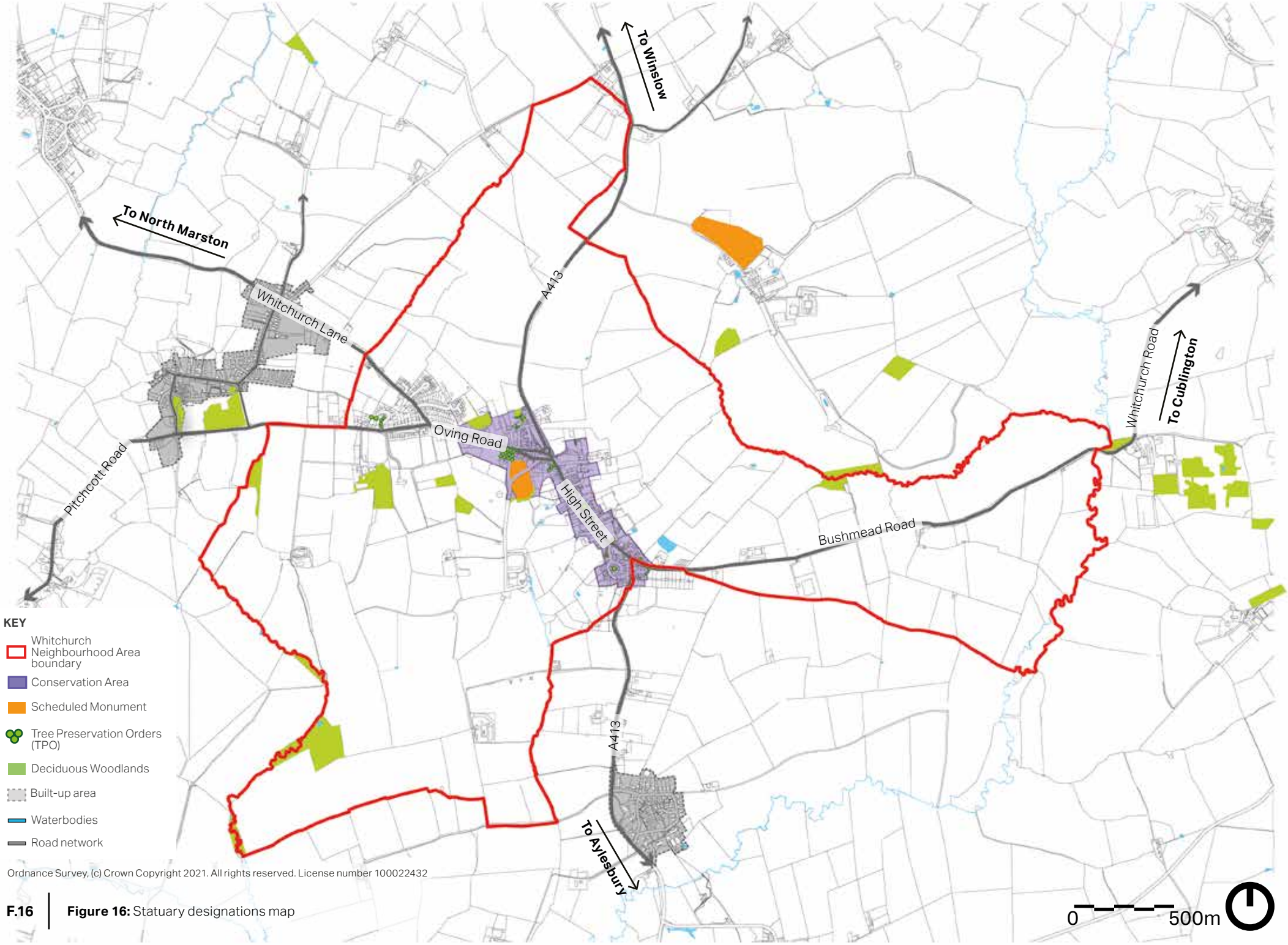


Figure 16: Statuary designations map

3.4 Heritage designations

Whitchurch village lies on agricultural land and the majority of its building heritage dates back to the 17th century.

The Conservation Area covers the entire village High Street and a small part of Oving Road, the A413 and Little London to the south.

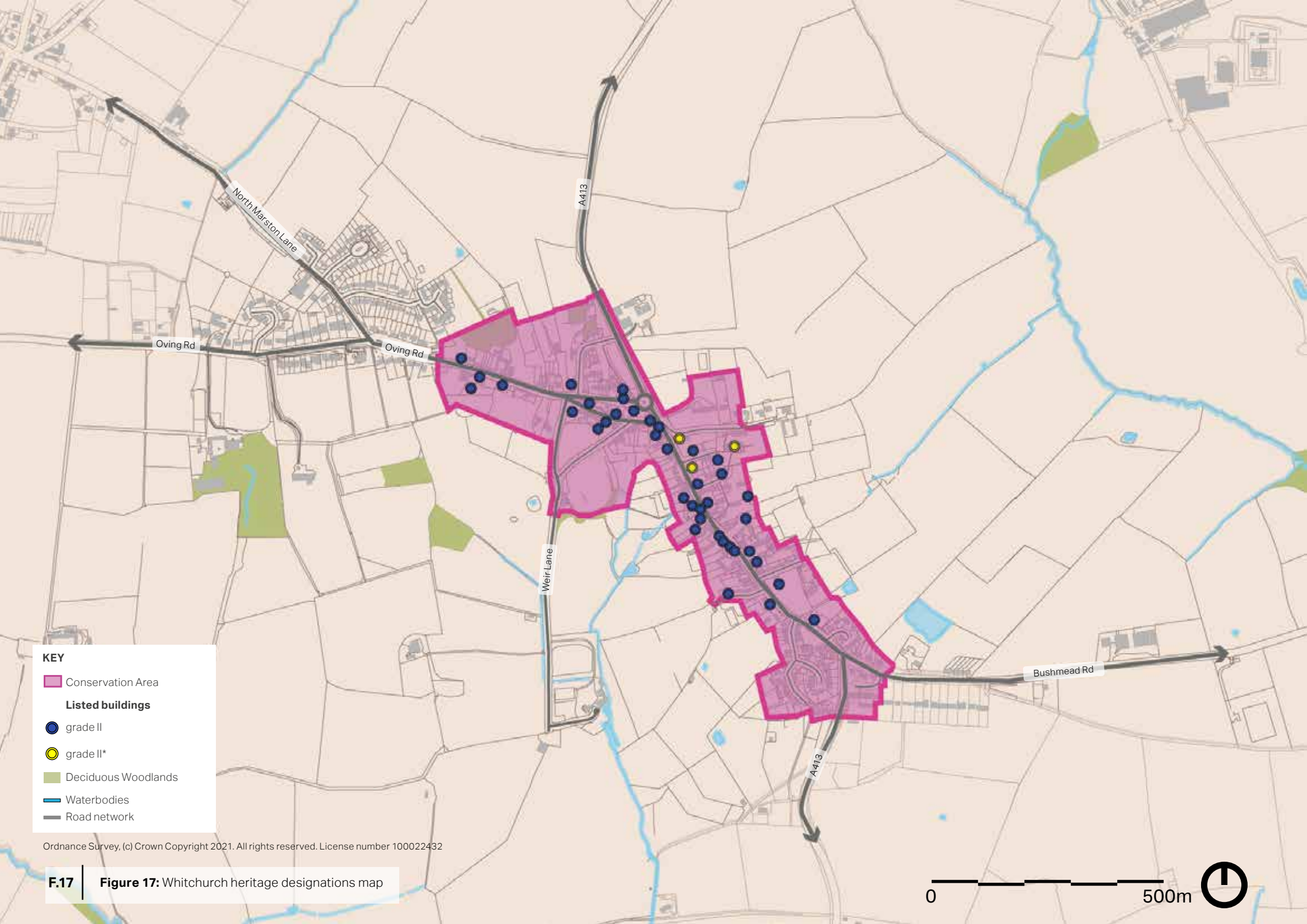
Whitchurch has a number of distinct buildings, constructed in a variation of materials, along its High Street which gives the village a unique character. There are 47 listed buildings predominantly clustered around the High Street and historic core of the village, as well as a scheduled monument at the site of Bolebec castle. The grade II* listed buildings are described here.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

- Bolebec Castle, a motte and bailey castle 300m west of St John's Church (List Entry Number (LEN) 1009536) The Bolebec Castle originally built during the 12th century and the castle buildings were destroyed in the 17th century. Motte and bailey castles are particularly important for the study of Norman Britain.

Listed Buildings

- Church of St John (LEN 1124307) is grade II* listed and is one of the oldest buildings in Whitchurch. It was first listed in 1967 and features built components from the 13th-16th century, though was heavily restored in 1911;
- Priory Hotel (LEN 1159973) is grade II* listed. It was first listed in 1951. Dating back to the 15th century, it was altered in the 16th century and renovated in the early 20th century. It has a timber frame and tiled roof and notably has a jettied first floor which signifies high status. It has been offices for many years and previously was a hotel;
- The Old House and attached garden walls (LEN 1332786) is grade II* listed. It was first listed in 1951 and dates back to the 15th century. It was altered during the 17th century and late 1930s and 40s. Built from coursed rubble stone, it has an old tile roof, brick chimneys and like Priory Hotel it also has a jettied first floor; and
- The White Swan, High Street (LEN 1159913) is a public house dating back to the early 19th century and is grade II listed. The main building features an old tile roof instead of the former thatch that was damaged by fire. Other materials are flanking brick chimneys, as well as a half-hipped thatch roof top a single storey bay.



F.17 **Figure 17:** Whitchurch heritage designations map

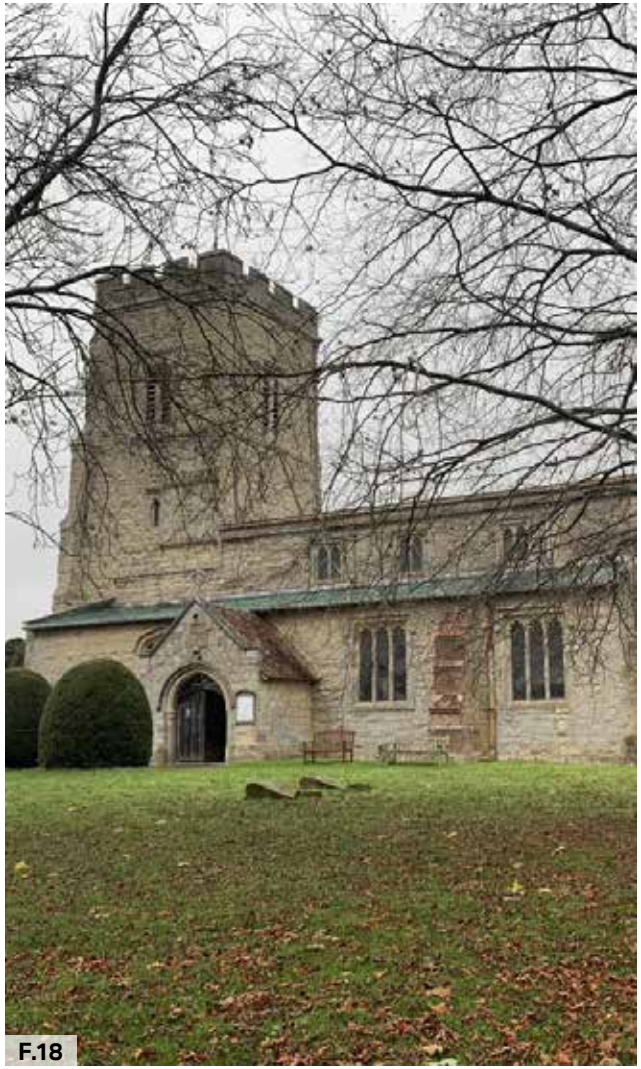


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Figure 18: Church of St John the Evangelist, a grade II* listed building with a green churchyard. The church is located at the end of Church Lane and the church tower is visible from the High Street.

Figure 19: Chestnut Corner, a grade II listed building on White Horse Lane, built in late 18th-early 19th Century by red brick with some vitreous headers and projecting plinth and thatch roof

Figure 20: The Priory Hotel, grade II* listed, faces directly onto the High Street and has a jettied first floor spanning the length of this facade. It has been offices for many years and previously was a hotel

Figure 21: The White Swan pub is grade II listed. The main building is early 19th century of chequered brick, an old tile roof with a single storey bay of red brick and half-hipped thatch roof

3.5 Built Form

BUILT FORM TYPOLOGIES

The centre of Whitchurch is made up of a variety of building typologies. These include cottages, terraces, mansions and church buildings. There are a few examples of 15-16th centuries buildings, but the 'great rebuilding' period of the 17th century forms the majority of the village's vernacular. The market place was located to the north of the castle and its place commemorated in the name of Market Hill, which was previously the main road to Oving. The buildings on the north side of Market Hill are post- medieval encroachment on the market place.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

In the older, northern part of the High Street, there are buildings with the ground floor constructed of brick and stone and first floor constructed in a timber frame with roofs of old red clay tiles. The southern part and the area known as Little London is composed of red/brown brick buildings of the late 18th and 19th centuries with clay tile or Welsh slate roofs. Outside of the Conservation Area new developments tend towards red brick.

ROOFS

There are mixed roof types, the dominant styles are pitched and hipped. Some of the more modern developments have dormers. Roof materials vary across Whitchurch, the most predominant are clay tiles,

PLOT BOUNDARIES

The boundary treatments ranges from small fences and hedges, to low stone walls and wooden fences, to more comprehensive boundary treatment including high hedges and fences.

KEY BUILDINGS

There are a number of key buildings within the village, many of which are listed. These include:

- St John's Church;
- The Priory;
- Old House;
- The White Swan; and
- The Firs.

F.22

Figure 22: The Firs, built in 1897 and used during World War II for the development and testing of various weapons and was known locally as Winston Churchill's toyshop

3.6 Route pattern and connectivity

Whitchurch is located approximately 5 miles north of Aylesbury. The A413 runs from north to south through the village and serves as the High Street. The historic core of the village is largely formed around this road which was part of the historic link between London and Birmingham.

The streets in the village are mixed in character, comprising the historic routes within the Conservation Area, such as the High Street and Oving Road, alongside a number of secondary residential roads and a number of cul-de-sacs. Other local roads include North Marston Lane, leading west to North Marston and Bushmead Road which provides links to the east to Cublington.

Whitchurch has a few bus services: 60, 60A, 67 and X60, all of which link the village to Aylesbury and run along the High Street. These services also provide connections to Milton Keynes, Buckingham and Great Horwood.

The PRoW network within the village consists of a number of footpaths which connect different areas of Whitchurch, as well as extending into the surrounding countryside.

National Cycleway (33) also runs through the village. It runs east to west, along Bushmead Road, the High Street and Oving Road and travels north east and south west.

On-street parking is an issue in the village, particularly along the High Street, Oving Road and North Marston Lane around the school.


F.23


F.24

Figure 23: View from the south of the High Street, also the A413 road, showing the petrol station on the High Street and the White Swan pub on the east side of the road. This road runs from north to south through the village.

Figure 24: View of Market Hill, a narrow road leading from the High Street around the location of the historic market in Whitchurch.

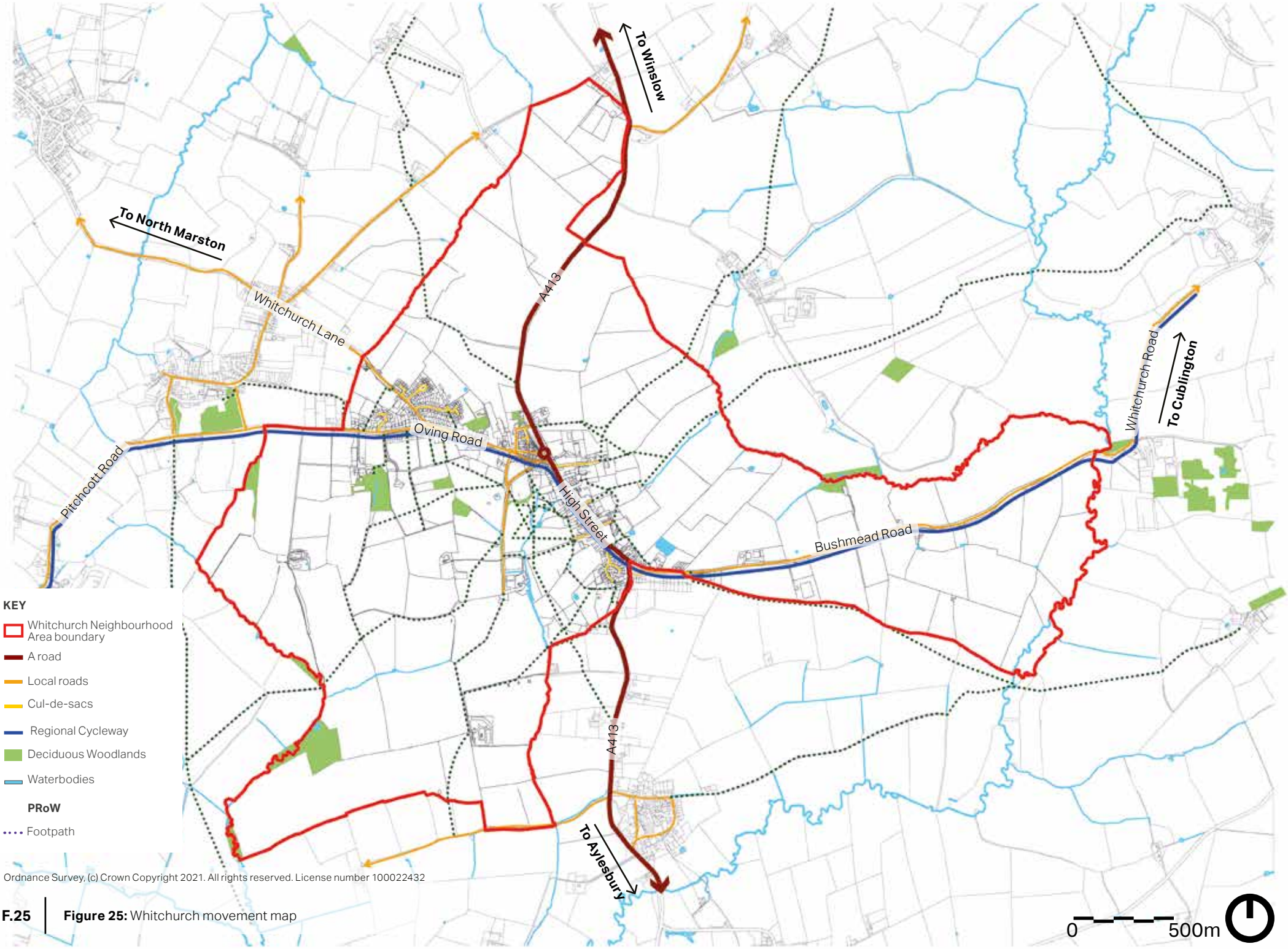


Figure 25: Whitchurch movement map

3.7 Landscape setting and green space

Whitchurch's hilltop location results in minimal flooding constraints, apart from potential surface water flooding along Oving Road. The village is at 140m above sea level and the landscape around the village is primarily open farmland, with hedgerow and tree bound fields. There are some woodland areas in the surrounding areas.

The landscape character for Whitchurch was described in the 2008 Landscape Character Assessment as "low hills and ridges with Vale landscape towards the south". The Areas of Sensitive Landscape study assessed Whichchurch's landscape sensitivity to be 90-100%. This assessment covers landscape quality, scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests and wildness.

Figure 26: View toward south to Chiltern Hills from Little London

Figure 27: View towards Church of St John the Evangelist from the surrounding open fields

There are several local open spaces within the village, including:

- Whitchurch Recreation Ground north of Ashgrove gardens known locally as "The Rec";
- St John the Evangelist Churchyard; and
- Whitchurch Cricket Club.

Given Whitchurch's advantageous hilltop location the village enjoys distant views of the Chiltern Hills to the south across lower-lying Aylesbury Vale and to the east across the undulating pastures.

The enclosure act of Parliament made in 1771 resulted in larger, regular fields, particularly noticeably to the north east of Whitchurch. Some fields are used for sheep and cattle grazing, though much land to the west has been taken up by horse paddocks.

Figure 28: Ashgrove Gardens Playing Fields

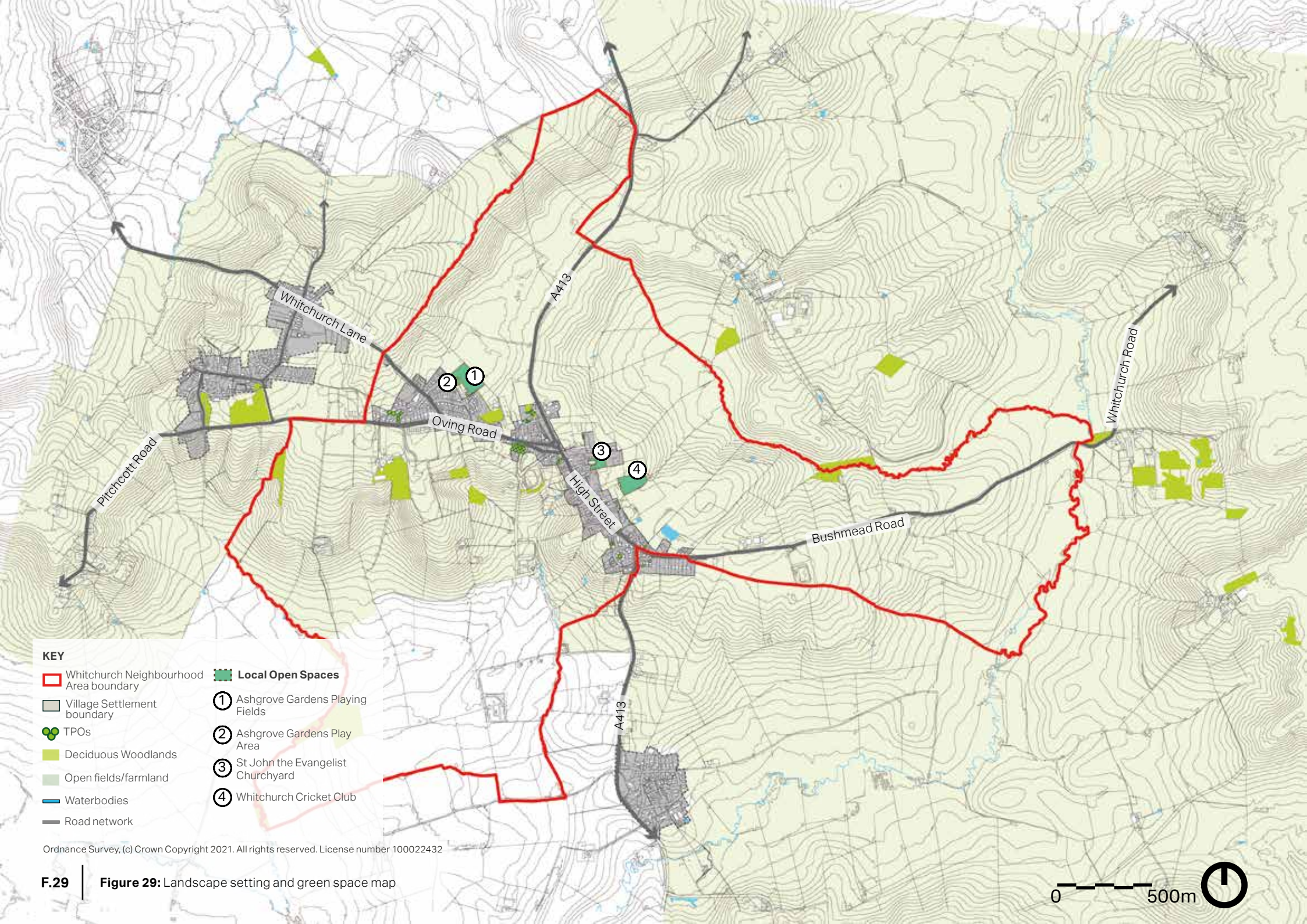


Figure 29: Landscape setting and green space map

Village character assessment

04

4. Village character assessment

4.1 Defining the character areas

Following on from the analysis set out in Chapter 3, this part of the report focuses on the different character areas within the village. The different areas are characterised by variations in topography, movement, views and landmarks, green space and landscape cover, public realm and streetscape, built form and architectural details.

The village of Whitchurch as it stands today has three character areas (See Figure 30), which have been defined with the Neighbourhood Forum, and are as follows:

- CA1- Conservation Area
- CA2- Outside Conservation Area
- CA3- Infill Development

1 **CA1- Conservation Area**

2 **CA2- Outside Conservation Area**

3 **CA3- Infill Development**

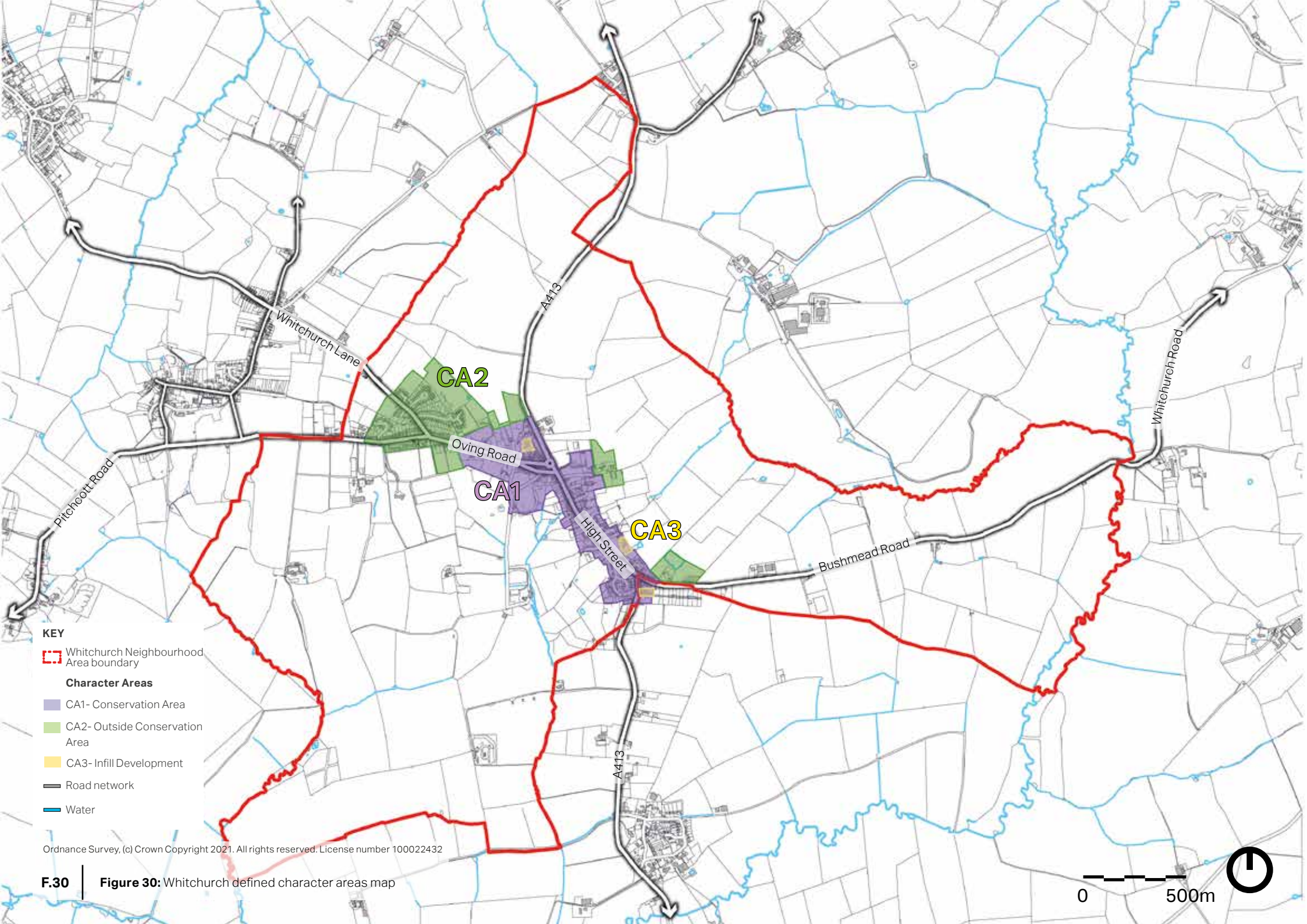
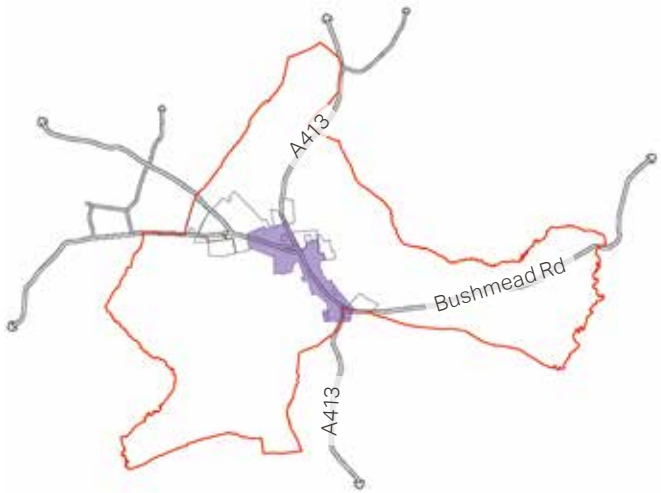


Figure 30: Whitchurch defined character areas map

1 CA1- Conservation Area



Whitchurch Conservation Area, established in 1971, forms the core of the village. Predominantly made up of the High Street and Market Hill, the area also covers a small stretch of the A413 and Oving Road.

There is a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced housing typologies, although towards the top of the High Street and Oving Road the majority of houses are detached.

Land Use	The village is largely residential, however there are religious, retail and business uses within the Whitchurch Conservation Area. These include: Whitchurch Methodist Church, St John the Evangelist Church, the Legion Hall, the Village Hall, a hairdresser, the White Swan Pub, a bed and breakfast, a garage, a petrol station and a post office. The majority of these are located along the High Street amongst residential units.
Pattern Of Development	Linear, with the Conservation Area extending along the High Street and a short stretch of Oving Road to the west and the A413 to the north.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	Many plots have small or no front gardens, facing directly onto the High Street. There is some variation in set back though generally the building line is quite consistent along the High Street. Plots on the west side of the High Street are narrow and more uniform, whereas plots on the east side are irregular and there are a number of small closes / lanes branching off from the main street. South of the Conservation Area is Little London, which has irregular plot arrangements with some more modern infill development. Older buildings here have little boundary treatment and no front gardens, though this is not consistent through the area.
Boundary Treatment	There is a mix of boundary treatment within the Conservation Area, including small railing fences, low stone walls and low hedges along both the High Street and Oving Road. Many buildings along the High Street, however, have no boundary treatment.
Heights & Roofline	Throughout most of the Conservation Area buildings are two storeys and the predominant roof style is pitched with a couple of hipped roof styles. Many buildings have quite deep roof pitches and the main roofing materials used in this area are slate, clay tile and thatch.
Public Realm	Parking and traffic flow are issues on the High Street. Cars are often parked on pedestrian areas and there is a lack of safe crossing points for pedestrians. The Conservation Area covers a small stretch of the A413 which has grass verges either side, but no pavement which creates accessibility issues. There is an established network of footpaths connected to the Conservation Area.


F.31


F.33

Figure 31: Little London housing plots are irregular and have varying boundary treatment and building line set backs with some as in this example facing directly onto the street

Figure 32: View towards Market Hill, the historic location of the Whitchurch Market

Figure 33: Parts of the footpath network which falls within the Conservation Area and connects to different part of the village as well as the surrounding countryside

Figure 34: View from the top of the High Street looking south which shows the variety of materials and the building line which along the High Street is generally consistent with buildings facing directly onto the street

Figure 35: A grade II listed mansion style house at the south end of the High Street. Housing typologies and plot sizes along the High Street are varied, examples like this have very large plots with back gardens stretching out into the field behind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F.34


F.35

2 CA2- Outside Conservation Area

This character area lies outside of the Conservation Area and is a predominantly residential area with mixed housing tenure.

The post World War II 1950s social housing estate, called Ashgrove Gardens, was the primary development which formed this area as an extension to the core village. There have since been additions of some private housing, as well as Whitchurch combined school in the 1970s.

Land Use	The dominant land use in this area is residential. The only school in the village, Whitchurch combined School is located in this area. There is a public green space, Whitchurch recreation ground north of Ashgrove gardens.
Pattern Of Development	The site covers two main roads, Oving Road and North Marston Lane and is a 20th century extension to the core village. The area is primarily made up the 1950s Ashgrove Gardens council housing estate, which consists of three separate closes branching off the main roads. There have been private housing additions to these closes post 1980. There is another site on Bushmead Road at the south- eastern fringe of the village. This area includes a mix of late 19th- early 20th century buildings.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	The dominant housing typologies in this character area are detached and semi-detached, most are set back from the road with front gardens and off road parking. Plot sizes are smaller and more regular in this area than plots in the adjacent Conservation Area on Oving Road.
Boundary Treatment	There is some type of boundary treatment for the majority of buildings in this area including wooden fencing, hedges and low walls between the front garden and pavement. There are also several streets with some buffering between the road and pavement through green verges. Boundary treatment along the three main roads: North Marston Lane, Oving Road and Bushmead Road is greater than on the quieter cul-de-sacs, often comprising large hedges and high fences which provide more privacy for residential plots, but reduce natural surveillance.
Heights & Roofline	Building heights are predominantly two storeys with a few bungalows at the end of the northmost close. Buildings have either pitched or hipped roofs and there are a number of houses with dormer additions. The main roof materials are clay and pan tiles.
Public Realm	Footpaths link these sites to the High Street and to neighbouring villages and countryside. There is inconsistent and narrow pavement provision along roads and on-street parking around the school creates access and traffic flow issues.


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Figure 36: Ashgrove Gardens features regular plots, grass verge buffering, front gardens and set back building lines

Figure 37: An example of boundary treatment along Oving Road consisting of large hedges

Figure 38: Much of the housing in this area use red brick and either pitched or hipped roof and are often semi-detached houses. Boundary treatments vary with some using low wooden fencing as shown in this example

Figure 39: On street parking along North Marston Lane is an issue, particularly around the school

Figure 40: Whitchurch recreation ground, accessed via Ashgrove Gardens


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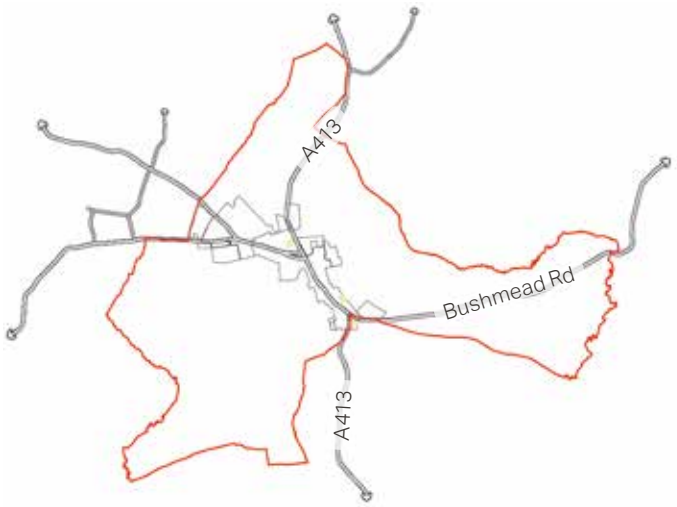
3 CA3- Infill Development



Infill developments has occurred in Whitchurch post 1990 and has primarily consisted of private residential development. It has also included the addition of Whitchurch Surgery, the village's only medical service, located on Oving Road.

Developments in these areas have resulted in expansion of the village at some points.

Land Use	Predominant land use of infill developments is residential, the communal value of this area is low. Whitchurch Surgery, the village's only medical service is part of an infill development along Oving Road.
Pattern Of Development	Developments has occurred post 1990 and consists of mainly private housing. Infill developments are generally a mix of small cul-de-sac estates and individually designed detached houses. There are some infill developments in form of terraced houses on Mount pleasant.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	The building line is set back in these more modern developments. Buildings have parking provision on site. Plot arrangement is much more uniform than older parts of the village, in general plot sizes for cul-de-sacs are quite generous and the individual detached houses have adequate plot sizes.
Boundary Treatment	Plots which face onto main roads, most often with no boundary treatment and front gardens with green verges separate public road from the plot. An exception of this is the infill development on Hawleys Lane with a row of trees as buffer between the road and front garden.
Heights & Roofline	In keeping with other character areas housing is generally one-two storeys in height and the prominent roofing styles are pitched and hipped roofs. Roof materials consist of clay tile, pan tile, concrete tile and natural slate.
Public Realm	The footpath network covers and connects infill areas to other parts of the village and surrounding countryside.

Figure 41: Some infill developments on Mount Pleasant with green verges separating the plot from public space

Figure 42: Infill development on High Street (Source: Whitchurch parish Council)

Figure 43: Infill development on North Marston Lane (Source: Whitchurch parish Council)

Figure 44: Infill development on North of Oving Road (Source: Whitchurch parish Council)

Design guidance and codes

05

5. Design guidance and codes

5.1 Introduction

It is important that any new development in Whitchurch responds to and enhances its special sense of place, while meeting the aspirations of its residents. With this in mind, this section identifies design guidelines and design codes for future housing developments to adhere to, based on the contextual analysis presented in the previous sections. These design guidelines and codes consider the unique setting and character of the village.

The following design guidelines and codes have been identified and will be explained in more detail in this section of the report:

GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- SL- Settlement layout
- RC- In keeping with rural character
- B- Built form
- BH- Built heritage
- SM- Safe movement
- SU- Sustainability

GUIDELINES FOR LARGER DEVELOPMENT SITES:

- Code 1- Block principles
- Code 2- Streetscape principles
- Code 3- Plot principles

5.2 Applying the codes

The table below identifies when each of the codes should be used. A prefix has been created for each code to allow simple application of the design codes to the coding areas on the following page.

General principles	Prefix	Code
Settlement layout	SL 01	Pattern of development
	SL 02	Site situation
	SL 03	Layout of building
In keeping with rural character	RC 01	Views and landmarks
	RC 02	Trees and landscaping
Built form	B 01	Proportion and scale
	B 02	Aspect and orientation
	B 03	Enclosure
	B 04	Boundary treatment
	B 05	Building line and setback
	B 06	Roofline
	B 07	Extensions and conversions
	B 08	Designing workspace into new residential developments
	B 09	Architectural details
	B 10	Local materials

General principles	Prefix	Code
Built heritage	BH 01	Heritage and tradition
	BH 02	Respect setting
	BH 03	Respect character
Safe movement	SM 01	Interconnected street network
	SM 02	People- friendly streets
	SM 03	Traffic calming measures
	SM 04	Parking solutions
	SM 05	Legibility and signage
Sustainability	SU 01	Energy efficient housing and energy production
	SU 02	Biodiversity
	SU 03	Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)
	SU 04	Permeable pavements

Guidelines for larger development sites	Prefix	Code
Code 1- Block principles	1A	Spatial definition of the public realm
Code 2- Streetscape principles	2A	Building heights and rooflines
	2B	Street typologies
	2C	Relationship of future development to landscape features
Code 3- Plot principles	3A	Backland developments
	3B	Ratio of private garden space
	3C	Plot boundary line
	3D	Privacy and space between buildings

Each of the areas on the plan (See Figure 45) relates to the appropriate design code prefix from the above tables, to enable an understanding of where each of the codes should be applied in the village.

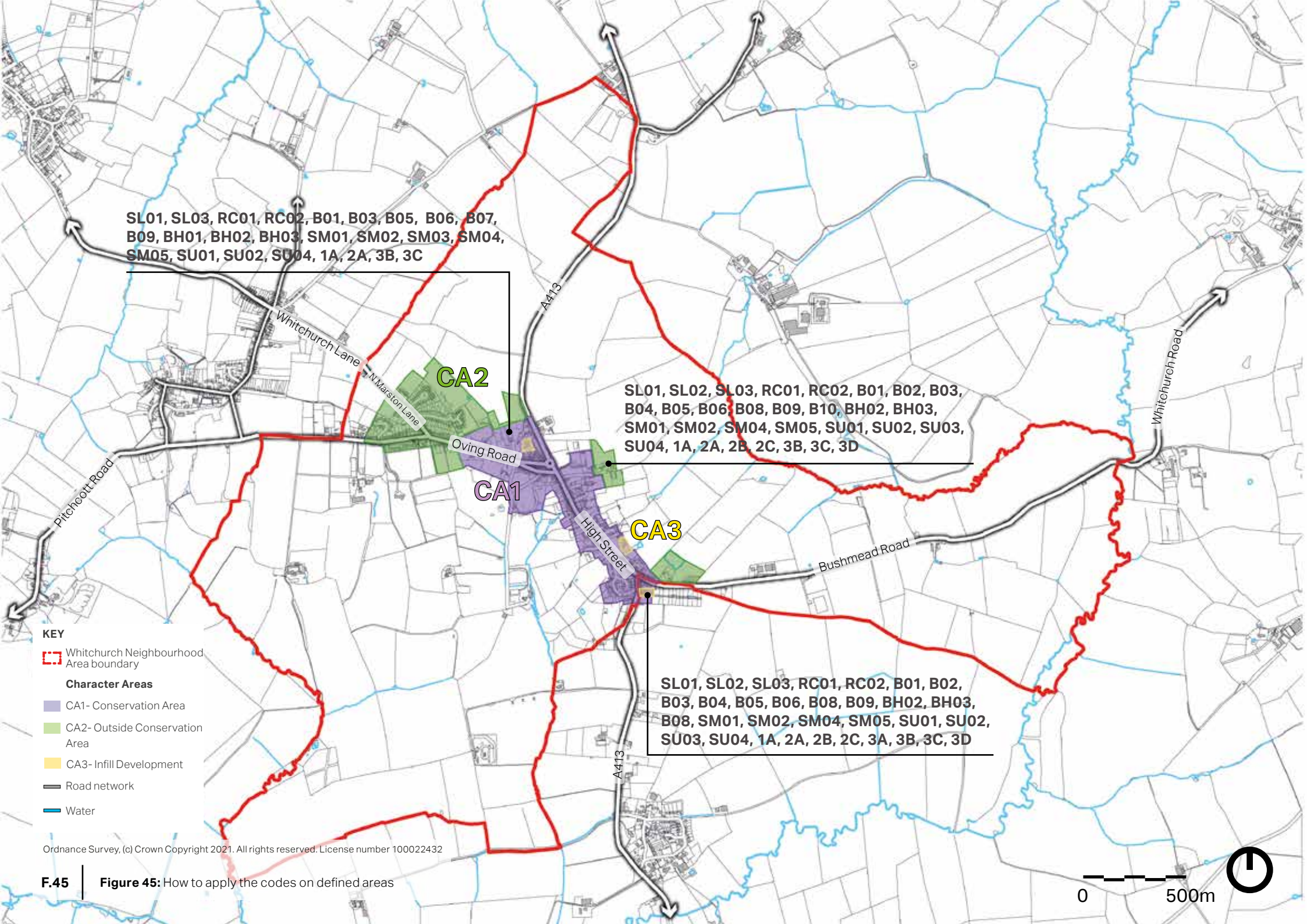


Figure 45: How to apply the codes on defined areas

5.3 Design guidelines

The following design guidelines are applicable to all character areas across the Neighbourhood Area and should be applied as a starting point to all new development, regardless of where it is in the Neighbourhood Area. These guidelines promote landscape and character led design which responds to the natural environment and enhances the existing townscape. Reference to context does not mean to copy or replicate in a pastiche manner, it means taking inspiration and influence from surrounding precedent, helping to form a design rationale which harmonises with the surrounding area.

SL. Settlement layout

SL 01- PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

Whitchurch has a linear development and any new development should respect the following principles:

- Proposals should maintain the continuity of built form along the main route. However, buildings should not be repetitive, and should provide variety of building types and design with coherent scale, massing and detailing;
- Treatment of main road frontages should include tall trees, hedgerows and the boundary walls typical of the village to increase the sense of enclosure and linear form;
- Linear pattern settlement almost always orientates inwards towards the main road and turns its back towards the landscape to the rear. Building frontages should reinforce the linearity of the street, where possible; and
- Boundary treatments can vary, from low walls to soft landscaped edges on the periphery of the settlement. Residential development with a hard edge which imposes an abrupt transition from the settlement to the surrounding countryside should be avoided.

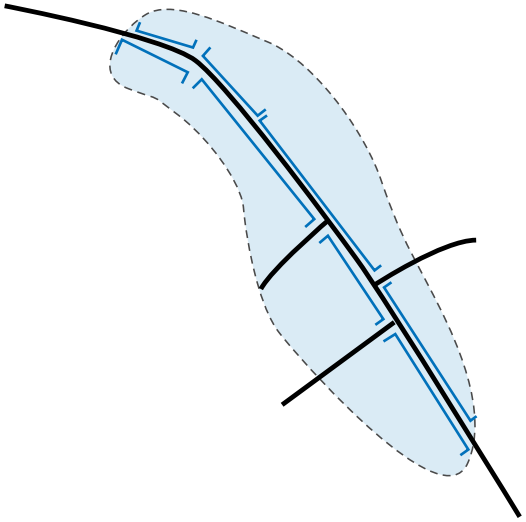


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Figure 46: Diagram showing the linear pattern development

F.47

Figure 47: Whitchurch pattern of development

SL 02- SITE SITUATION

GATEWAY

A gateway site is normally situated at the edge of a settlement, near to a main route into the settlement. It marks the transition from one space to another, and is a point of arrival into (and departure from) a settlement, usually from the surrounding landscape setting. The White Swan is a point of arrival situated on Bushmead Road.

The sense of departure and arrival can often be achieved by a noticeable change in scale, enclosure, or road configuration. The gateway buildings or features should, however, reflect local character.

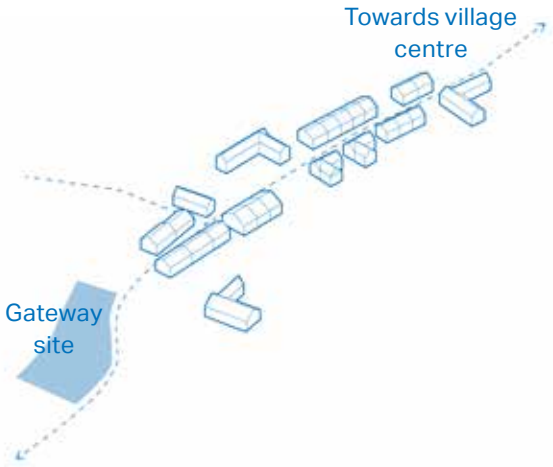

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Figure 48: An indicative gateway site leading into a linear settlement

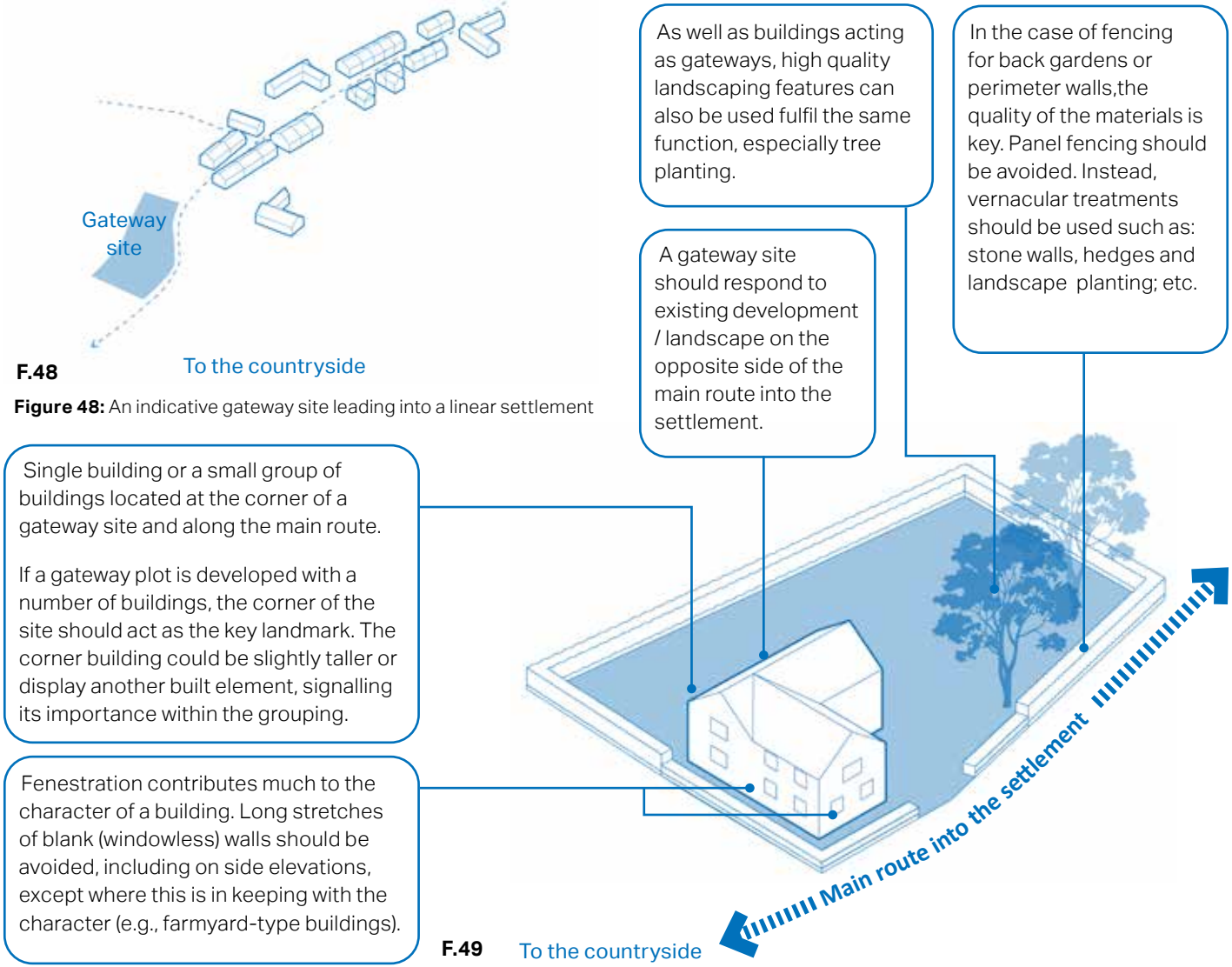

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Figure 49: Indicative sketch highlighting elements of design codes for a gateway site

EDGE SITES

New development often occurs on the edges of a settlement, as the central areas tend to be already developed (except where there might be the odd infill site). Developments on the edge of settlements play an important role in defining the interface between settlement and their surrounding context (be it other developments or the wider landscape). It is, therefore, important to respond positively to the different conditions that occur around the edges of a settlement.

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Figure 50: Indicative edge site to a nucleated settlement

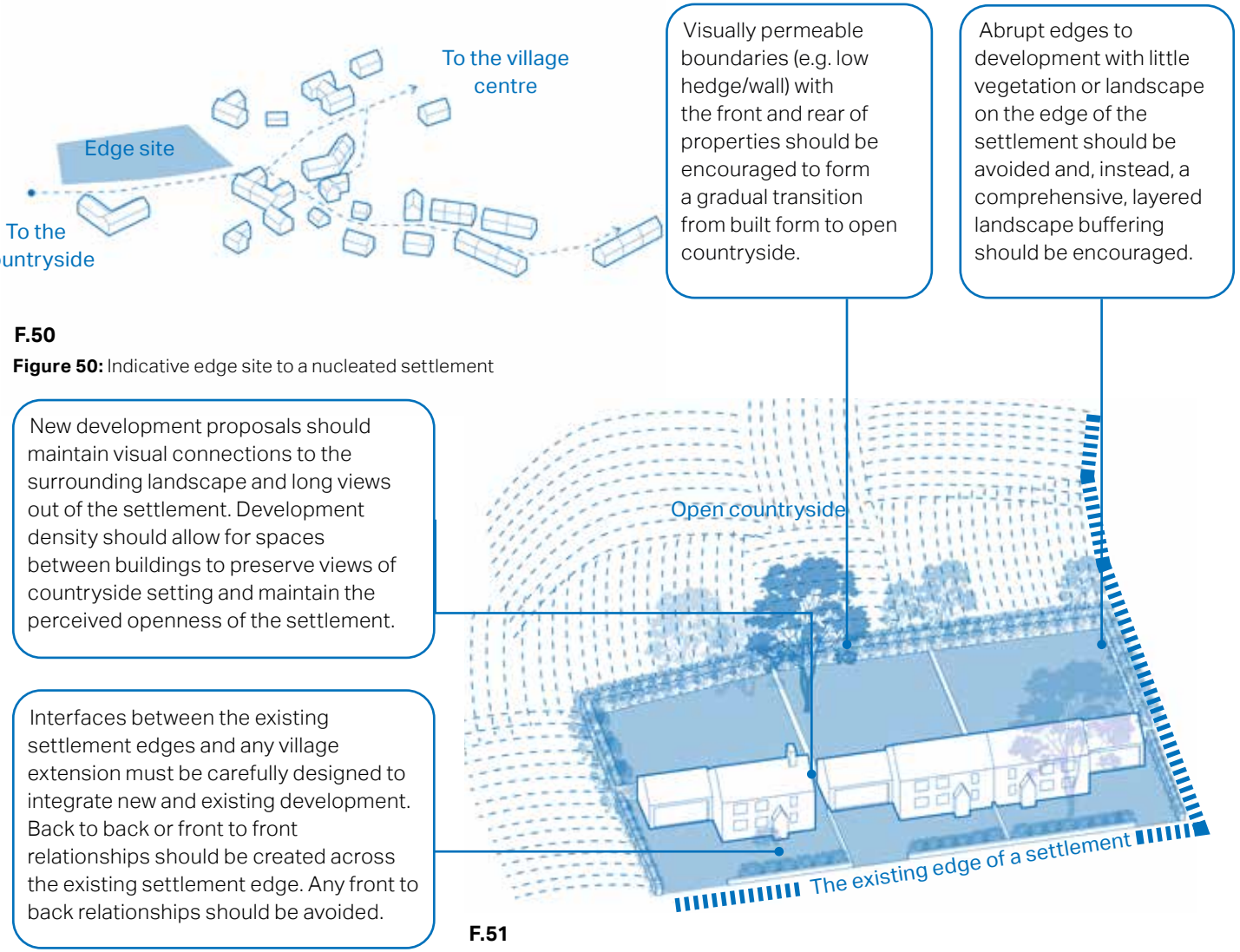

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Figure 51: An indicative diagram highlighting elements of design codes for a edge site

INFILL

Infill sites will vary in scale, context and location within a settlement. Any new infill can have significant impact on the character and appearance of the built environment. The following principles should be applied in any future infill site:

- Infill development should complement the street scene into which it will be inserted. It does not need to mimic the existing styles but its scale, massing and layout need to be in general conformity with the existing (this is particularly ridge/eave heights, especially for terraced or dense groupings of buildings);
- The building line of new development should be in conformity with the existing. Very often, with terraced or dense groupings, the building line will be exactly the same, but in other cases it might be acceptable that it closely aligns with the exiting arrangement of buildings where there is an irregular, meandering building line;
- The density of any new infill development should reflect its context and its location in the village (centre or edge), or in a smaller settlement nestled in a wider landscape. The optimum density will respond to surrounding densities whilst making efficient use of land; and
- Where there are opportunities for infill development, proposals should demonstrate that existing views and vistas between buildings and along view corridors have been considered and the aim should be that they are retained, wherever possible.

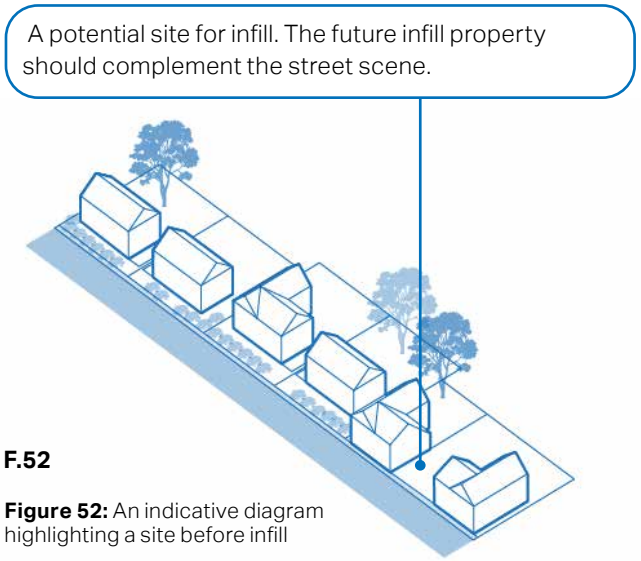

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Figure 52: An indicative diagram highlighting a site before infill

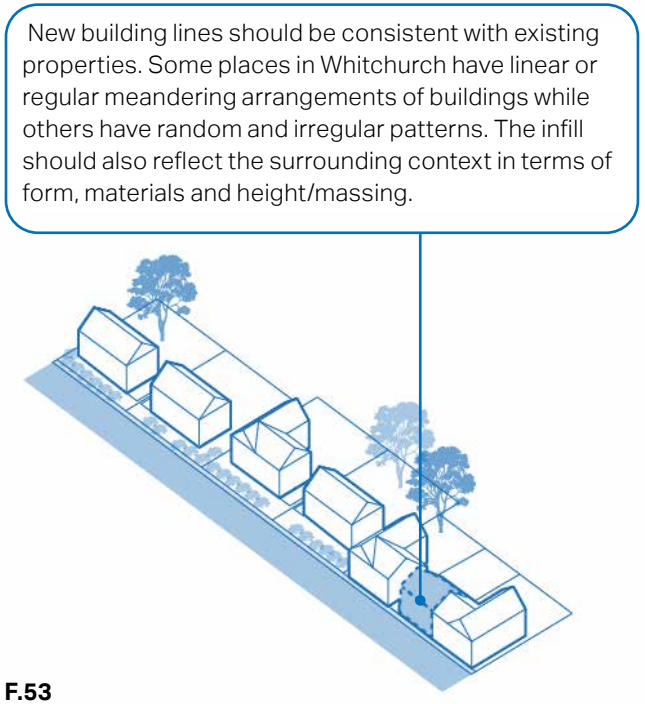

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Figure 53: An indicative diagram highlighting a site after infill building

SL 03- LAYOUT OF BUILDING

The Parish owes much of its character to the historic pattern and layout of its buildings and settlements. New developments should respect the particular building patterns of each settlement in order to contribute positively to their character. In particular:

- Development should adopt the enclosure characteristics demonstrated in the village. New development should strive to knit in with the existing settlement morphology by adopting similar characteristics;
- Development should be considered strategically at the settlement level and should not be considered in isolation;
- New development should be planned to be permeable, promoting active travel at all times, providing plentiful non-vehicular connections;

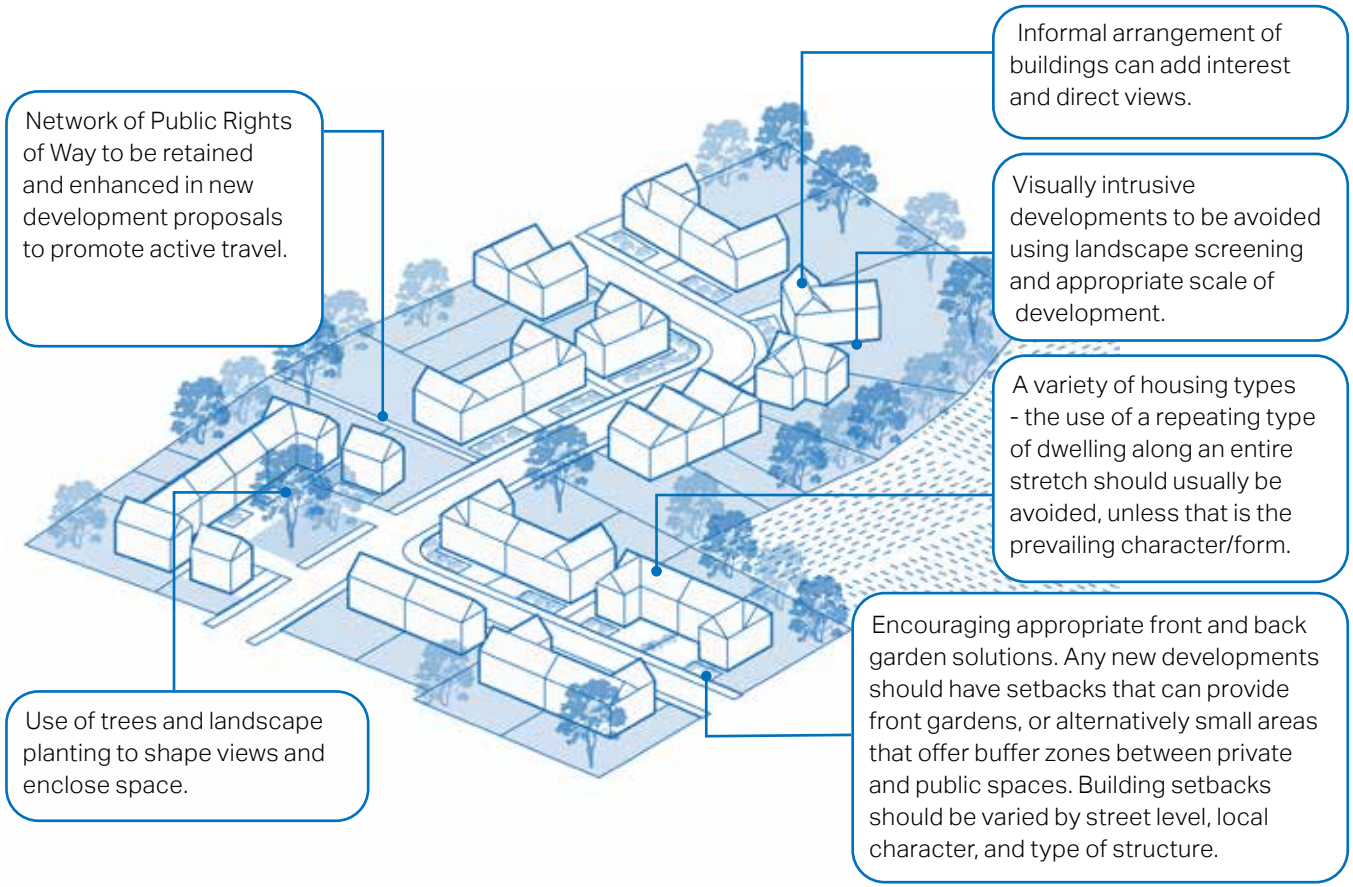

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Figure 54: Diagram showing layout of buildings elements

- Layout, clustering and massing should take precedent from the best examples of development within the surrounding context. The following page illustrates some precedent examples from the existing Neighbourhood Area; and
- New development should respond to site specific micro-climates and sun paths and use these as key design drivers to increase the environmental comfort for building users, both internally and externally.


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F.57


F.56

Figure 55: Various massing and layout on Market Hill add interest to the Conservation Area

Figure 56: Public Rights of Way network link different parts of the village and encourage active travel. The footpath links Hawleys Lane to the countryside

Figure 57: Detached houses with adequate front gardens along oving Road

RC. In keeping with rural character

RC 01- VIEWS AND LANDMARKS

- New development proposals should not be visually intrusive. This should be achieved through appropriate scaling and design, including landscape screening, where appropriate;
- As noted above, existing views and vistas should be actively considered when preparing new development proposals. Where possible, new developments should seek to retain existing and frame new views and vistas towards the wider countryside;
- Where appropriate, future development proposals should incorporate landscape and built features to create landmarks, helping with legibility;
- New development proposals should maintain visual connections to the surrounding landscape and long views out of the settlement. Development density should allow for spaces between buildings to preserve views of countryside beyond and maintain the perceived openness of the settlement; and
- Creating short-distance views broken by buildings, trees or landmarks helps to create memorable routes and places, and easily intelligible links between places. New developments should be oriented to maximise the opportunities for memorable views and visual connectivity.

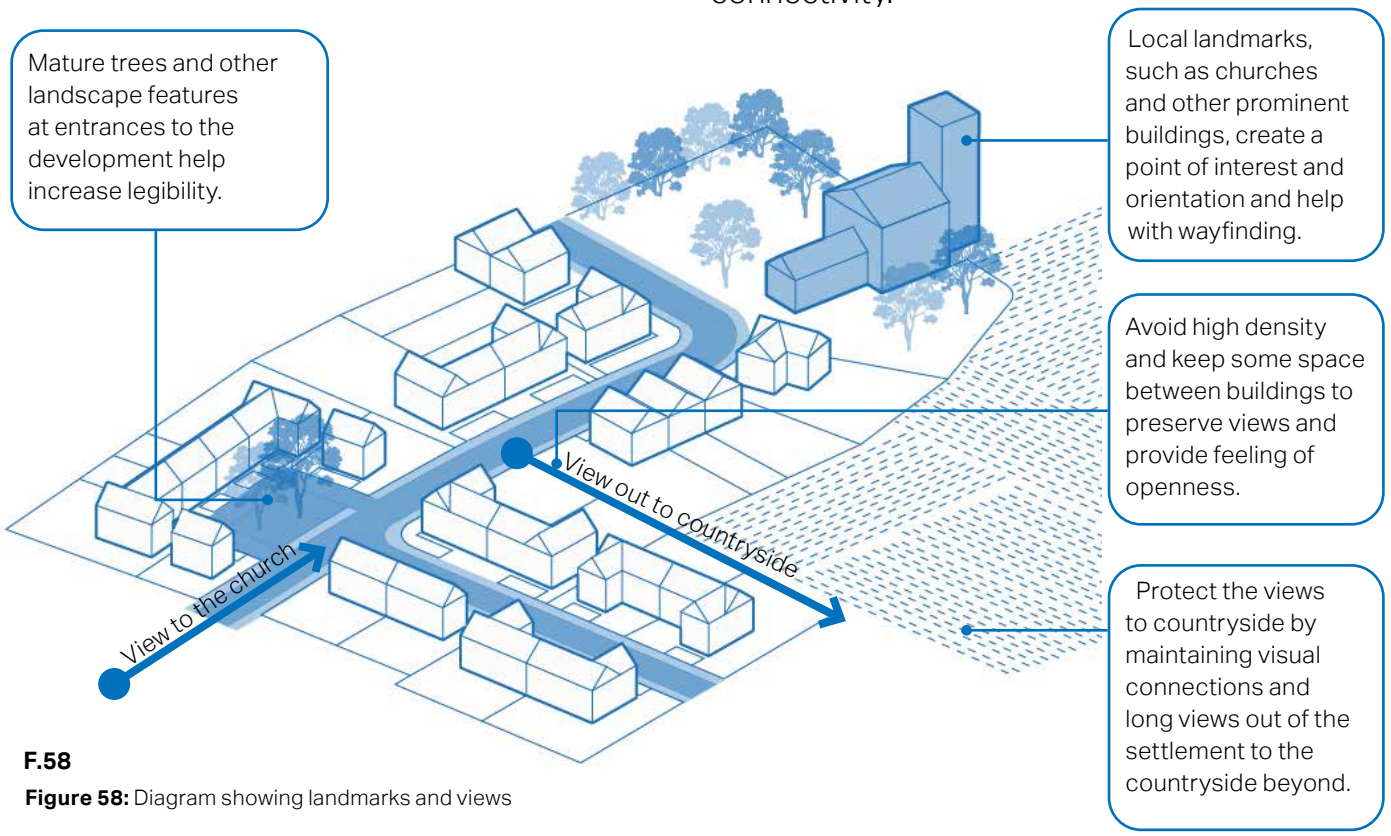

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Figure 58: Diagram showing landmarks and views


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Figure 59: The White Swan, a well- known landmark on the High Street

Figure 60: Significant view towards the undulating countryside

Figure 61: View to Church of St John the Evangelist, a grade II* listed building on Church Lane

Figure 62: Walnut Cottage, a grade II listed landmark built in 17th Century on Market Hill


F.62

RC 02- TREES AND LANDSCAPING

The abundance of trees is one of the Parish's greatest assets. They provide shading and cooling, absorb carbon dioxide, act as habitats and green links for species, reduce air pollution and assist water attenuation and humidity regulation. For people, they help alleviate stress and anxiety, help with recovery from ill-health and create a sense of positive mental health and well-being. In addition, they add life to the landscape and help shape and add character to open spaces.

The following guidelines focus on the design aspects and appearance of planting and trees in private gardens, as well as public open spaces and streets.

F.63

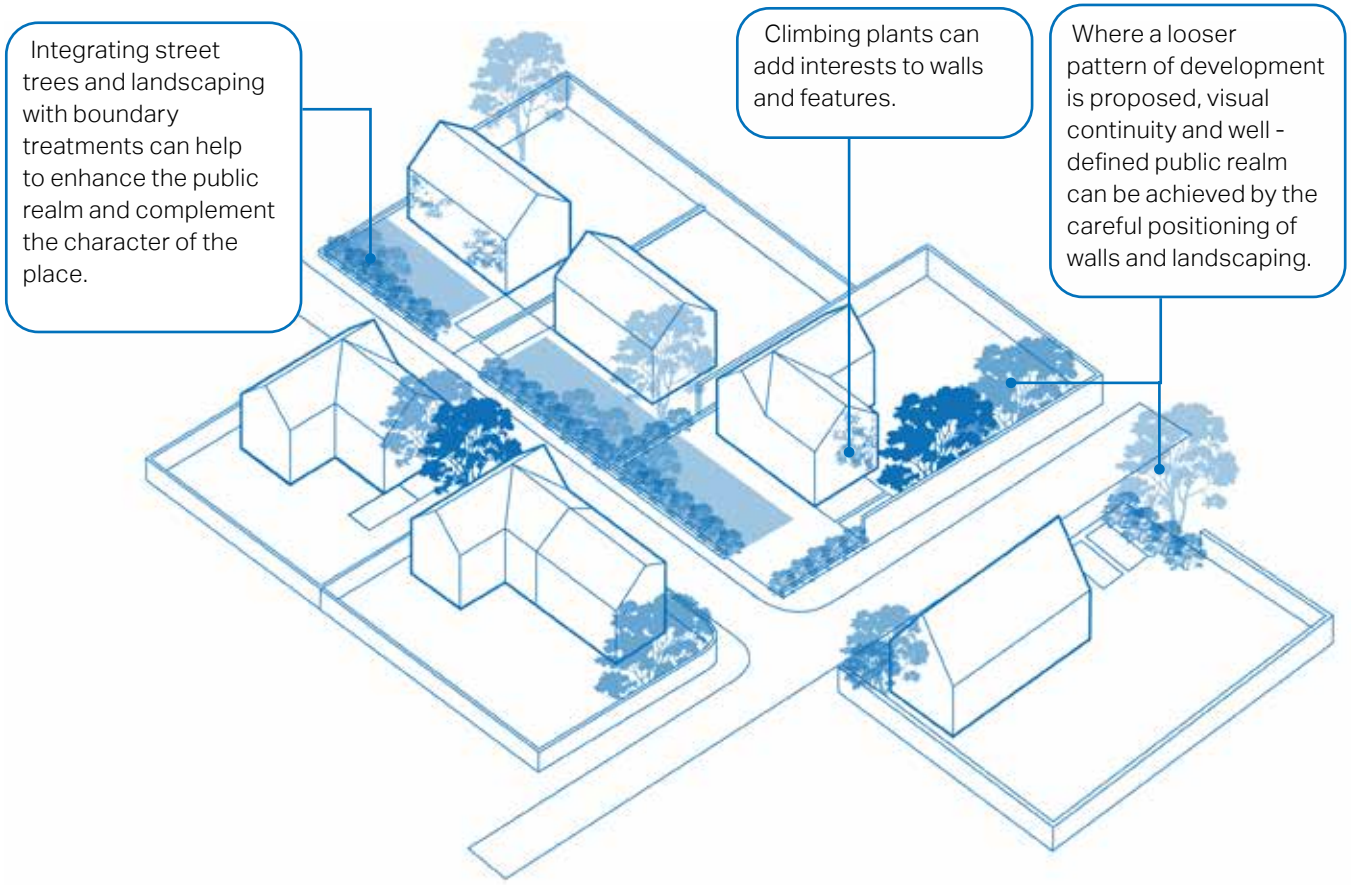
Figure 63: Diagram showing green spaces and landscape planting

PLANTING STANDARD

- Aim to preserve existing mature trees, incorporating them into the new landscape design and using them as accents and landmarks, where appropriate;
- Consider canopy size when locating trees; reducing the overall number of trees but increasing the size of trees is likely to have the greatest positive long-term impact;
- Size of tree pits should allow sufficient soil around the tree. Ensure tree stems are in the centre of the verge to provide a 1m clearance of the footway or carriageway;
- Tree root zones should be protected to ensure that trees can grow to their mature size. Root barriers must be installed where there is a risk of damaging foundations, walls and underground utilities;
- New trees should be added to strengthen vistas, focal points and movement corridors, while retaining clear visibility into and out of amenity spaces. They should, however, not block key view corridors and vehicular circulation sight lines;
- New trees should be integrated into the design of new developments from the outset rather than left as an afterthought to avoid conflicts with above- and below-ground utilities; and
- To ensure resilience and increase visual interest, a variety of tree species

is preferred over a single one. Tree species should be chosen to reflect the prevailing character of the landscape, soil conditions and the associated mix of native species, but should also have regard to climate change, environmental/habitat benefits, size at maturity and ornamental qualities.

- Regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to the planting and maintenance of trees are listed below:
- Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery;[1]
- Trees in the Townscape: A Guide for Decision Makers;[2]
- Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure;[3]



F.64
Figure 64: Diagram showing trees and landscaping that complement the public realm and create a sense of enclosure

[1] Trees & Design Action Group (2012). *Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery.* Available at: http://www.tdag.org.uk/uploads/4/2/8/0/4280686/tdag_trees-in-hard-landscapes_september_2014_colour.pdf
[2] Trees & Design Action Group (2012). *Trees in the Townscape: A Guide for Decision Makers.* Available at: http://www.tdag.org.uk/uploads/4/2/8/0/4280686/tdag_treesinthetownscape.pdf

[3] Trees & Design Action Group (2019). *Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure.* Available at: http://www.tdag.org.uk/uploads/4/2/8/0/4280686/tdag_treespeciesguidev1.3.pdf

- BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations;[4] and
- BS 5837:1991 Guide for trees in relation to construction.[5]

GIVE SPATIAL ENCLOSURE, PROVIDE SCREENING AND PRIVACY

The use of hedges, hedgerows trees and walls contribute to the strong character of the area and a sense of enclosure. To respect the existing context, both the building and the boundary feature should be consistent with the prevailing character, although there should be some allowance for an some of variation to provide added visual interest.

- Existing hedges, hedgerows trees and walls should, wherever appropriate, be retained to contribute to this sense of enclosure. Additional or replacement hedges and trees should be planted to maintain the continuity of existing hedges provide continuity of hedge and hedgerow tree cover; and
- Where appropriate and feasible, any new developments should have setbacks that allow for front gardens or else a small area to provide a planted buffer zone between the private space and public space.

COMPLEMENT PUBLIC REALM AND ENHANCE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL IDENTITY

Planting can make an appreciable difference to the appearance of an area, as well as adding to the local identity.

- New development should use boundary features which are complementary to the street and enhance the character of the village. The use of trees, hedges and planting in publicly visible areas, including edges and interfaces, should be encouraged; and
- Climbing plants are good at screening features such as garages, blank walls and fences.

FORM FOCAL POINTS AND FRAME VIEWS

In addition to the intrinsic value of trees, they can also have practical use value. In a small-scale open space, trees provide focal point of interest.

[4] British Standards Institution (2014). *BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations.* Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030219672

[5] British Standards Institution (1991). *BS 5837:1991 Guide for trees in relation to construction.* Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000000258384

Figure 65: Use of tall trees and well- kept hedges on Firs Close

Figure 66: Integrating landscape with the built environment create an interesting public realm and enhance local identity on Market Hill

Figure 67: Mature and well-maintained tree on front garden of Mary Monk's House located on High Street

B. Built form

B 01- PROPORTION AND SCALE

The relationships between the building and its elements can provide visual interest and enhance the local character.

- The proportions of a building's elements should be related to each other as well as the scale and proportion of the building;
- The proportions should be dictated by and respond to the type of activity proposed as well as the composition of the existing streetscape;
- The front elevation of the buildings must be arranged in an orderly way to avoid creating cluttered façades; and
- Features such as windows, doors and solid walls should create vertical and horizontal rhythms along the façade providing variety.

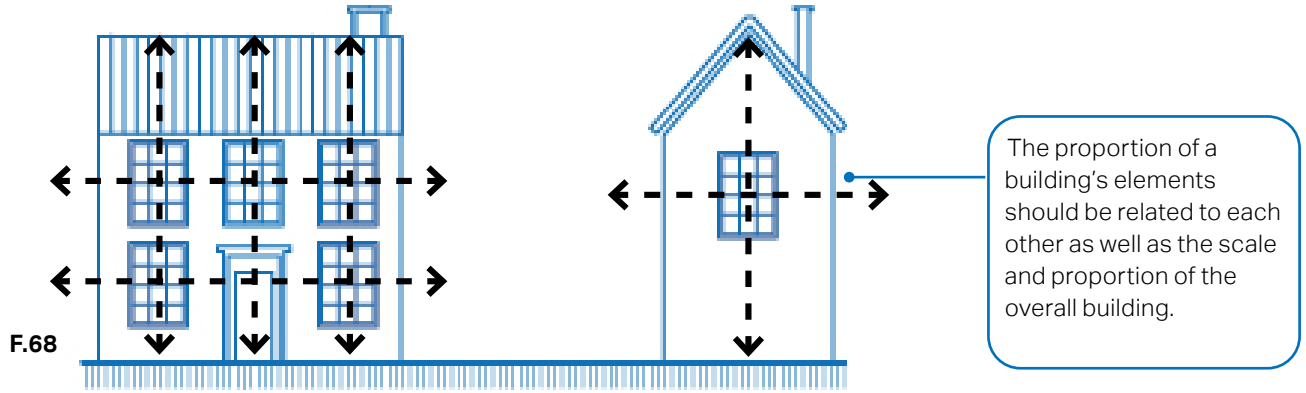


Figure 68: Elevation showing typical building proportion in a detached house

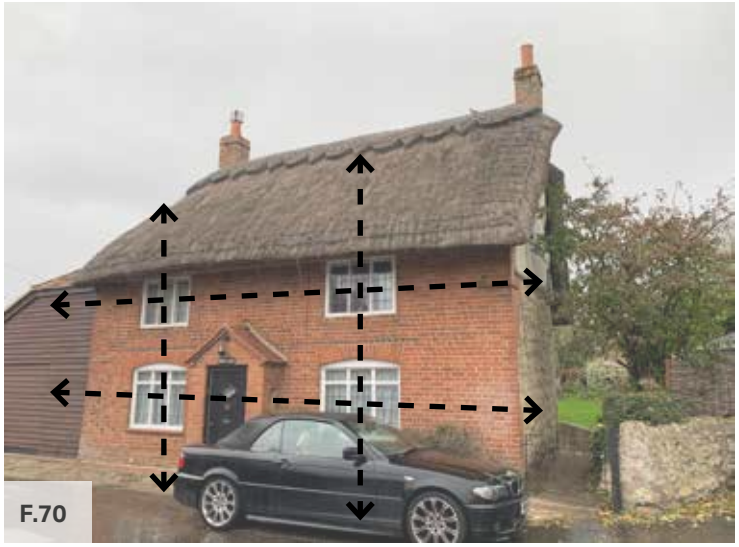


Figure 69: The vertical and horizontal rhythms on Firs Close

Figure 70: The grade II listed building proportion on White Horse Lane

Figure 71: The building proportion on White Horse Lane

Figure 72: Existing composition of a row of terraced buildings on Bushmead Road

B 02- ASPECT AND ORIENTATION

Buildings should be designed to maximise solar gain, daylight and sun penetration, while avoiding overheating. Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, they should be orientated to incorporate passive solar design principles. These principles include:

- One of the main glazed elevations should be within 30° due south to benefit from solar heat gain. Any north-facing façades might have a similar proportion of window to wall area to minimise heat loss on this cooler side (see Figure 73);
- If houses are not aligned east-west, rear wings could be included so that some of the property benefits from solar passive gain (see Figure 74);
- Homes should be designed to avoid overheating through optimisation of glazed areas, natural ventilation strategies via passive/ non mechanical

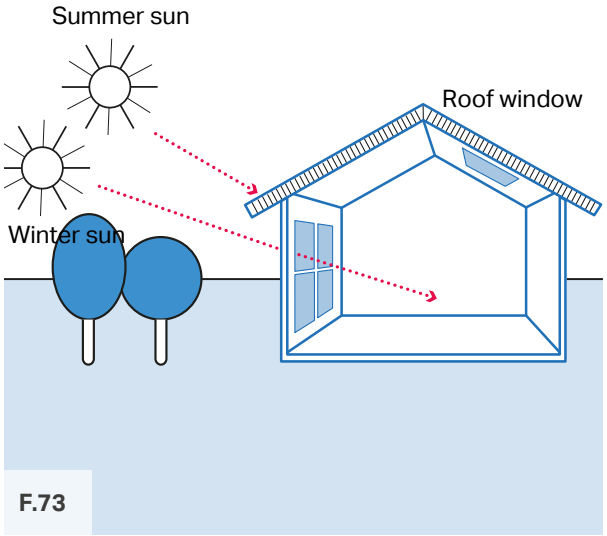


Figure 73: The use of roof window, pitch roof, location and size of windows in favour of maximising solar gain

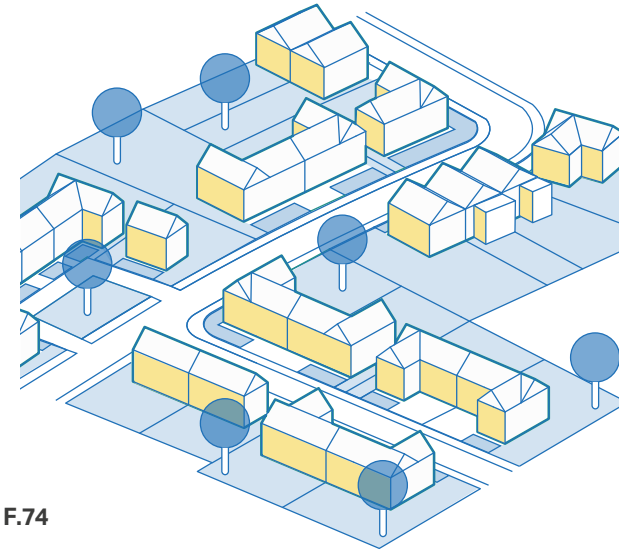


Figure 74: Elevations that would benefit from passive solar gain

design measures. The natural ventilation strategies include high- and low- level openings, longer roof overhangs deep window reveals and external louvers/ shutters to provide shading in hotter summer months (see Figure 74);

- North facing single aspect units should be avoided or mitigated with the use of reflective light or roof windows;
- Providing solar panel on roof of south facing buildings recommended to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability (see Section 6);
- Minimise the degree to which the development aspect faces onto main roads or other significant source of air pollution and/or noise and vibration, which would preclude opening windows; and
- Two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings should not intrude into a 45 degree splay line drawn from the corner of an adjacent residential property. This principle is dependent on the spacing and relative positions of the dwellings and consideration will also be given to the juxtaposition of properties, land levels and the position of windows and extensions on neighbouring properties (see Figure 75).

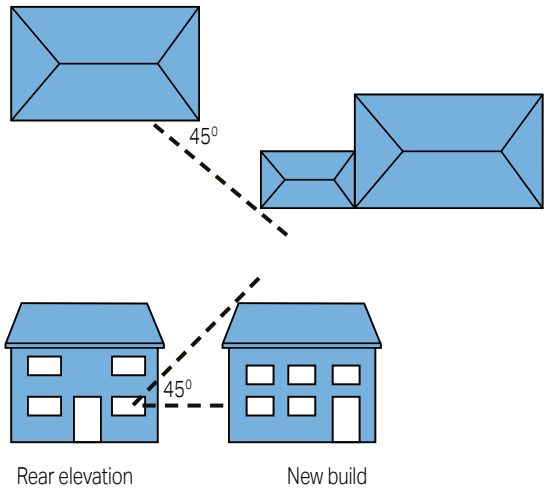


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Figure 75: The 45% rule ensures that adequate levels of daylight can be maintained.

B 03. ENCLOSURE

Enclosure is the relationship between public spaces and the buildings or other features that surround them. A more cohesive and attractive urban form is achieved where this relationship is in proportion.

The following principles serve as general guidelines that should be considered to achieve a satisfactory sense of enclosure:

- Façades should have an appropriate ratio between the width of the street and the building height;
- Buildings should be designed to turn corners and terminate views;
- Narrow gaps between buildings must be avoided, they should be either detached/semi-detached or properly linked;
- Building lines should run parallel to the back of the pavement;
- In places with lower density, the sense of enclosure is provided from the use of natural elements such as trees and hedges; and
- In the case of terraced buildings, it is recommended that a variety of plot widths, and facade alignments should be considered during the design process to create an attractive townscape.

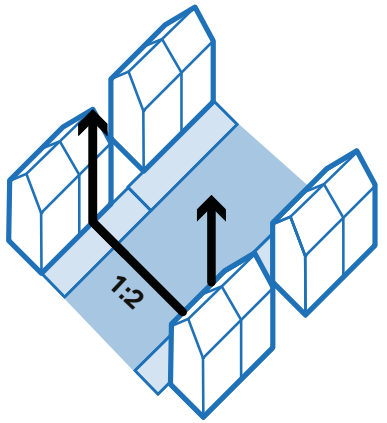

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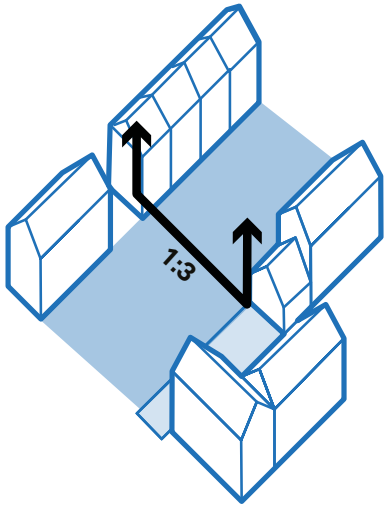
Figure 76: Enclosure ratio on Little London is about 1:2

Figure 77: Enclosure ration on Little London is 1:2



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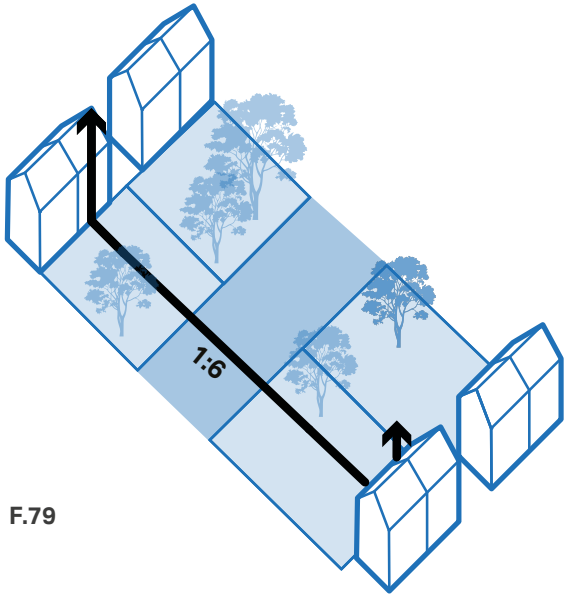

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Figure 78: Enclosure ratio on Oving Road is typically 1:3

Figure 79: Enclosure ratio on Market Hill can be more than 1:6

Figure 80: The example of enclosure ration which is 1:3 on Oving Road

Figure 81: The enclosure ratio on Bushmead Road and some part of Market Hill is about 1:6

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F.81

B 04- BOUNDARY TREATMENT

- Buildings should ordinarily front onto streets. The building line can have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions, but will generally follow a consistent line;
- Buildings should be designed to ensure that streets and/or public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from adjacent buildings. This can be achieved by placing ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows facing the street;
- Natural boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate to the character of the area. They should be mainly continuous hedges and low walls, as appropriate, made of traditional materials found elsewhere in the village;

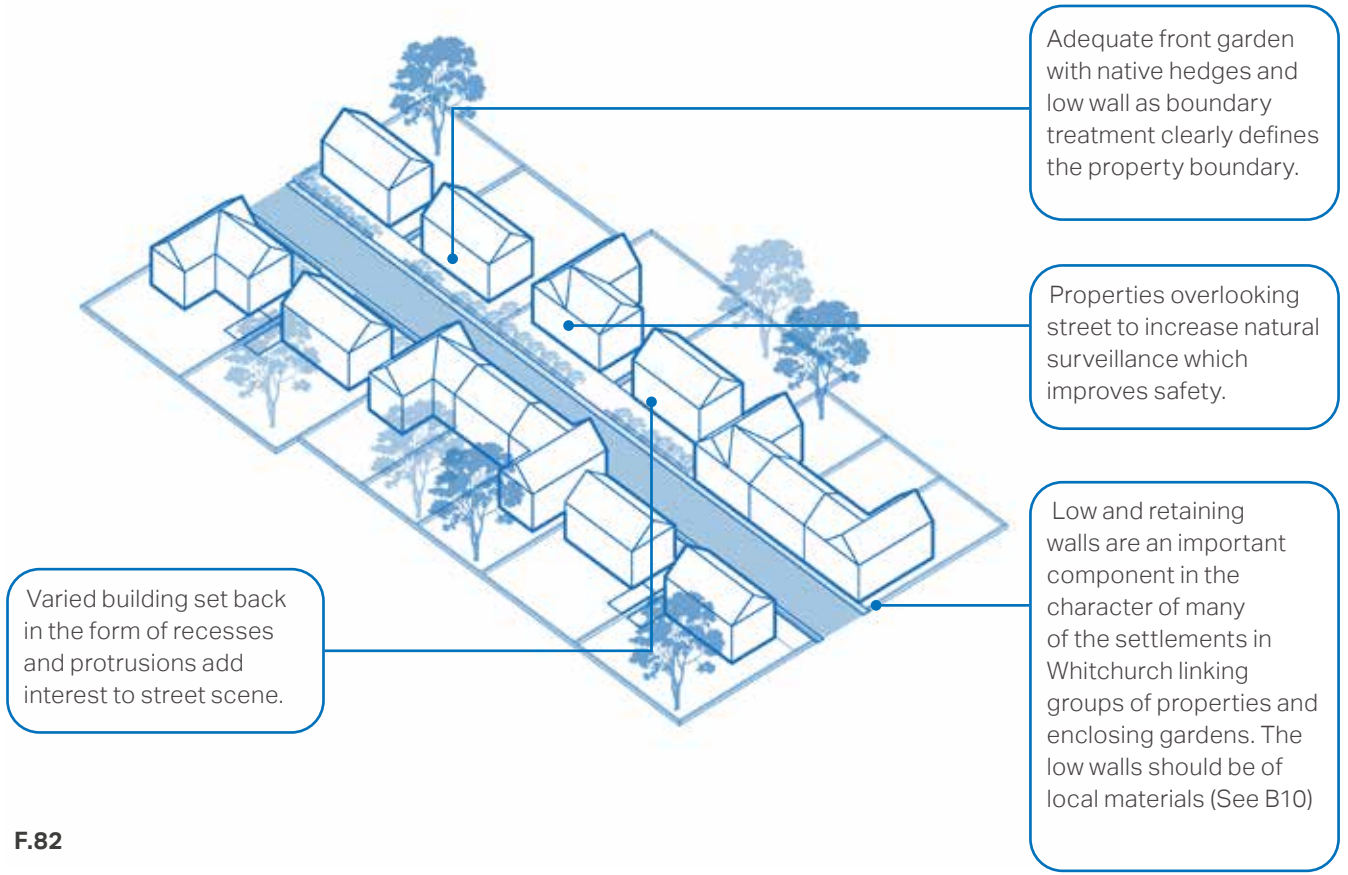


Figure 82: Illustrative diagram showing boundary treatments

- Front gardens/soft planted shallow setbacks should be provided in most instances, although it is recognised that there are some parts of Whitchurch where the prevailing character and form is one where buildings sit to the back of the footway/ highway;
- If placed on the property boundary, waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall design of the property. Landscaping could also be used to minimise the visual impact of bins and recycling containers; and
- Locally distinctive landscape features and planting, such as low wall boundary and hedges of native species should be used in new development to define boundaries. Any material that is not in keeping with the local character should be avoided.

Figure 83: Mix of low stone wall and hedges as boundary treatment

Figure 84: Mix of red-brick low wall and hedges as boundary treatment

Figure 85: No boundary treatment on the High street

B 05. BUILDING LINE AND SETBACK

The use of continuous building lines and setback distances contribute to the overall character of the area and the sense of enclosure of the streets and public spaces. Continuous building lines with a minimum gap create a strong distinction between public and private spaces, and provide definition to the public realm. Where buildings are more generously set back from the carriageway, the threshold spaces should be well landscaped.

- To ensure sufficient street enclosure private front threshold should have a modest depth and accommodate a small garden or area for plantation;
- Low to medium densities in residential areas can vary setbacks in order to respond to the landscape context and the more open character of the area; and
- Front gardens can be much deeper where the topography requires so or to respond to the existing character area. It also helps to create a softer transition between countryside, green spaces and built environment.

Figure 86: Subtle changes in building lines with deep front gardens on Bushmead Road

Figure 87: Consistent building line with no front garden on the High Street

Figure 88: Various setbacks with different portion of front gardens along Market Hill

B 06. ROOFLINE

Creating variety and interest in the roofscape is an important element in the design of attractive buildings and places. Traditional buildings within the Parish are unified by their simplicity of form, with gables and pitched roofs, which combined with variations in the height of eaves and ridges levels and the number of storeys, make an important contribution to defining the character of the area.

There are certain elements that serve as guidelines in achieving a well-designed roofscape:

- Interesting local traditions should be considered, such as slate and clay plain tiles and pantiles;
- The scale and pitch of the roof should always be in proportion with the dimensions of the building itself. Recently steep pitches used in new developments specially along north-western Oving Road which should be avoided in new developments;
- Monotonous building elevations should be avoided, therefore, subtle changes in roofline can be achieved during the design process. Roof shapes and pitches must, however, employ a restrained palette on a given building; overly complex roofs must be avoided; and
- Rooflines should respect view corridors and not obstruct them. They should also be considerate of topography and existing landmarks.

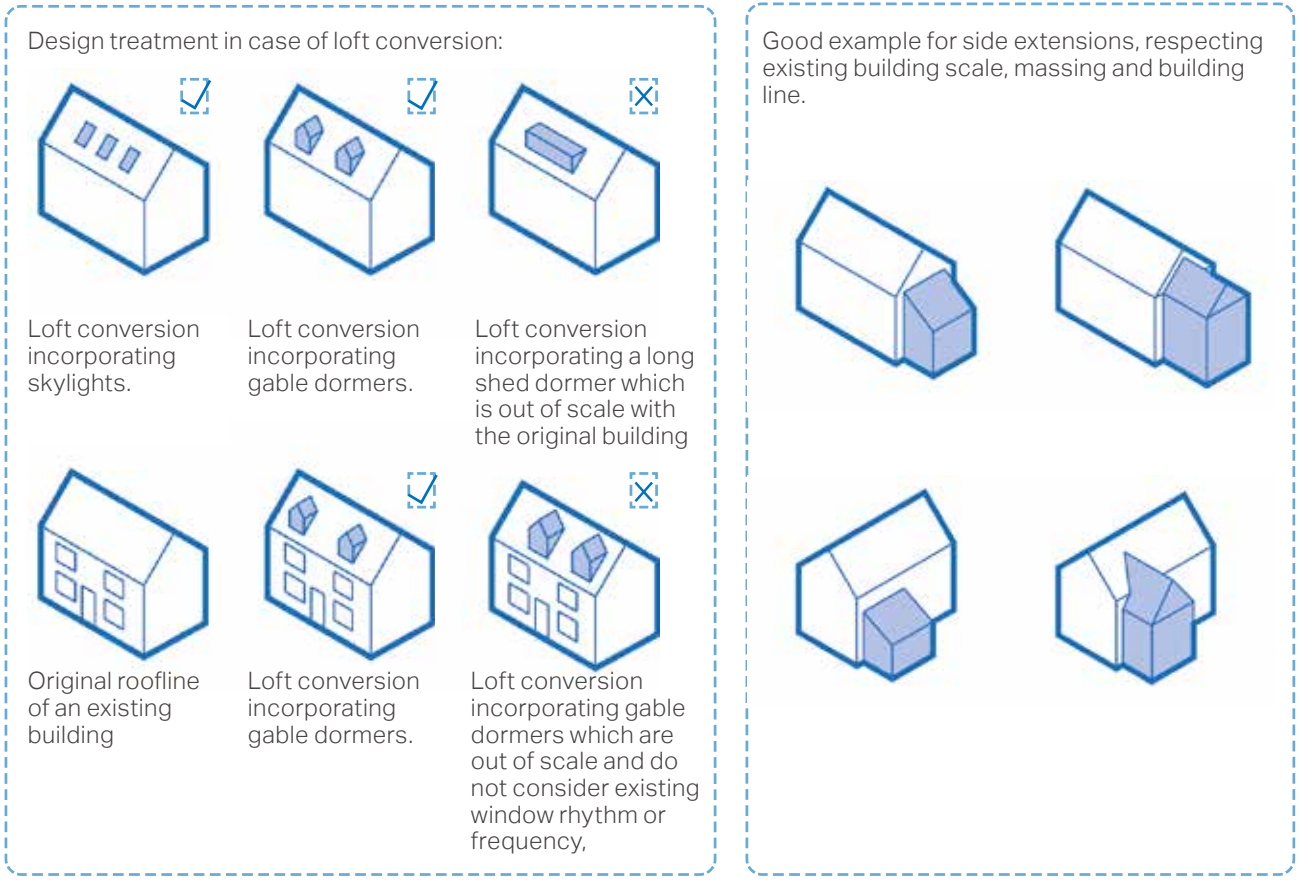
Figure 89: The pitch roof proportion in keeping with the scale of buildings on the High Street

Figure 90: Subtle changes in roofline on Little London. Cross-gabled roof provide variety in roofscape

B 07. EXTENSION AND ALTERATION

There are a number of principles that residential extensions and conversions should follow to maintain character:

- The original building should remain the dominant element of the property regardless of the scale or number of extensions. The newly built extension should not overwhelm the building from any given viewpoint;
- Extensions should not result in a significant loss to the private amenity area of the dwelling;
- Designs that wrap around the existing building and involve overly complicated roof forms should be avoided;
- The pitch and form of the roof used on the building adds to its character and extensions should respond to this where appropriate;



F.91

Figure 91: Some examples for different type of building extensions

- Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features, window sizes and proportions of the existing building and respect these elements to design an extension that matches and complements the existing building;
- In the case of side extensions, the new part should be set back from the front of the main building and retain the proportions of the original building. This is in order to reduce any visual impact of the join between existing and new;
- In the case of rear extensions, the new part should not have a harmful effect on neighbouring properties in terms of overshadowing, overlooking or privacy issues;
- Many household extensions are covered by permitted development rights, and so do not need planning permission. These rights do not apply in certain locations such as Conservation Areas;

Figure 92: The Old House extended to left with new gabled and jettied bays symmetrically matching the original part

Figure 93: Extension to right of a grade II listed building on Market Hill. It was formerly an outbuilding and the extension is of whitewashed brick with one storey and 2 bays of C20 3-light metal casements

- Any housing conversions should respect and preserve the building's original form and character; and
- Where possible, reuse as much of the original materials as possible, or alternatively, use like-for-like materials. Any new materials should be sustainable and be used on less prominent building parts.

Figure 94: A positive example of extension on Priory Hotel matching C19-C20 extension with jettied first floor set back to right. Other C18-C19 stone and brick extensions to rear

Figure 95: A positive example of side extension on Mount Pleasant. Use of local vernacular such as red brick and stone on facade

Figure 96: Incongruous example of side extension. The windows on first floor are not in keeping with the window type used on the wall on the High Street

CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS

The redevelopment of farm buildings has been a feature in Whitchurch, with some high quality conversions adding to the variety of housing.

- Avoid domestic add-ons such as chimneys, porches, satellite dishes, domestic external lighting and hanging baskets;
- Retain features characteristic of historic working buildings such as the openings, which should not be filled in, ventilation slots and any use-specific historic additions;
- New openings should generally be avoided, and kept to a minimum when necessary. They should never be planned in a regular or symmetrical pattern, as this is overly domestic;
- Avoid features such as dormer windows. If rooflights are used, they should be sited discreetly so as to not become a feature in the landscape;
- Where included, solar PV panels should integrate with the overall pitch, materials and feel of the roof;
- Existing brickwork, cladding and stone work should be reused or reclaimed. Consideration should be given to the material source and matching the colour, texture, size and bond of the existing brickwork;
- Courtyards should be surfaced in a material that reflects its rural setting. Farmyards should remain open and not be divided by fences or walls. Parking spaces should not be formally marked out; and
- Boundary walls should be left intact, and not chopped through or reduced for access or to create visual splays.

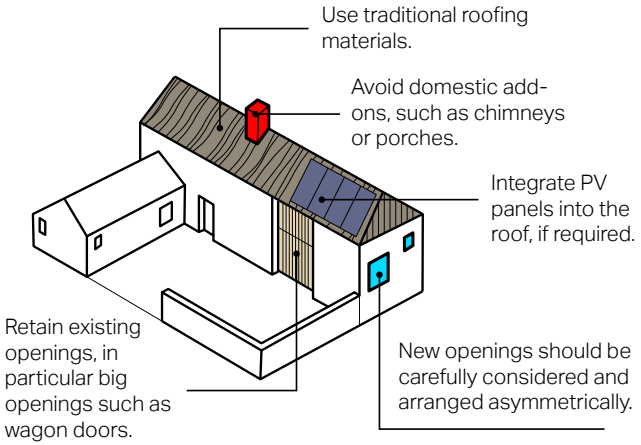


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Figure 97: Diagram to illustrate some design principles for the conversion of agricultural buildings

Figure 98: Before and after of a barn conversion where the scale, heights, openings of the building have been retained and respected

B 08. DESIGNING WORKSPACE INTO NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

After the pandemic impacted the world, many people made the abrupt shift to working from home. More home working should now be expected. The following principles should be considered in this regard:

- Create areas that can adapted into or used as a designated work area free from distraction;
- If not designed in from the start, design gardens in such a way that home office structures can be installed, subject to planning permission; and
- Build flexibility into new homes so that they can be adapted to changing needs.

Figure 99: New houses in Cambridge designed with a studio above the garage, ideal for use as a home office

B 09. ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

There are diverse architectural styles in the Parish ranging from Victorian cottages, Georgian detached houses, Gothic houses and 19th mansion houses, plus the use of vernacular arts and craft on the buildings. Terraced houses and semi-detached housing typologies can also be seen the village.

Materials used on walls include brick handmade and machined red, stone, timber frame, render, painted brick, weatherboarding and pebble dash. Tile clay handmade, tile clay machined concrete, slate, pantile and thatch are some of materials used on roofs.

- New developments should encourage and support innovative and proactive approaches to design and opportunities to deliver decentralised energy systems powered by a renewable or low carbon source and associated infrastructure, including community-led initiatives; and


F.100


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Figure 100: Detached house built by mix of timber frame, red bric and render on little London

Figure 101: A cottage on Market Hill built by painted brick, render, dark brown weatherboarding and thatched roof.

Figure 102: Terraced houses on the High Street constructed by red brick and bargeboard on gabled roof

- New developments should strive for good quality design that meets climatic targets for CO2 emissions and that can be constructed sustainability maximising opportunities for recycling.


F.103


F.104


F.105

Figure 103: Priory Hotel a detached building on the High Street built by red brick and timber frame and multi pane casement windows

Figure 104: A mansion house on Oving Road built by timber, red brick and casement windows plus clay tile and chimney stacks on roof.

Figure 105: Semi- detached houses on Ashgrove Gardens

B 10- BUILDING VERNACULAR

As previously stated, the special character of buildings in Whitchurch Conservation Area arises from the mixture of local stone and red brick and clay tile, alongside slate.

Informed by the local vernacular, the following pages illustrates acceptable materials and detailing for future housing developments in Whitchurch. The use of traditional construction finishes should be specified for all new development and repair work. Material specification quality for repair, replacement and modern developments should be maintained. The requirement for additional housing in the village should not trump architectural quality and character of the area.

Future developments should carefully apply this code to avoid creating a pastiche of the existing local vernacular. Detailing can be interpreted using contemporary methods to avoid this.

In the case of a conversion of an existing historic building into a residential use, this should look to preserve and enhance any existing heritage features, to maintain the integrity of the original building. Any new fenestration should be positioned carefully to maintain the character and balance of the building and reflect the existing design through use of complementary materials and finishes. These buildings create the opportunity to provide large single dwellings or can be split into a series of smaller dwellings

Wall

Red brick

Timber frame and white render

Black weatherboarding

Local stone

Mix or painted brick and timber

Red brick in herringbone pattern

Fenestration

Multi pane casement window

Sash window

Bay window

Casement window

Wooden door and casement window

Decorated gabled porch

Roof

Plain tile

Chimney stack built by red brick

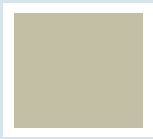
Gabled dormer

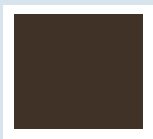
Slate

Thatched roof

Clay tile

Colour palette





BH. Built heritage

BH 01- HERITAGE AND TRADITION

Heritage and existing buildings can be a linchpin for new development, giving it more meaning and helping ensure that it is of its place and connected to the past. The approach to heritage must be one of protecting and enhancing historic assets (e.g. listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments), including both statutory designations and local designations should they be made in future. The village fabric of Whitchurch is already interwoven with both traditional and more modern day development (post-war), although predominantly retains its traditional character which is most valued by residents. Indeed, the local preference is for building that responds to heritage and traditional context to preserve and enhance the traditional appearance of the village.

The village shows that we can develop sensitively, whilst referencing local traditions such as building form, scale, types, materials and arrangement.

Future buildings should be predominantly 2 storeys and include changes in roof height with the presence of chimneys to contribute to the visual interest of the village.

Figure 107:
The Firs located on Little London built by high quality timber frame and render

Figure 106:
The mix of vernacular stone and timber frame on Old House Facade on Church Headland Lane

Figure 108:
Mary Monk's House constructed by red brick, white render and slate roof

BH 02- RESPECT SETTING

- The historical relationships between the settlements, Church of St John the Evangelist, woodlands, mature trees and other community facilities such as The White Swan should be clearly defined;
- Protect the views of Church of St John the Evangelist;
- Protect the character of the Parish by protecting views to the surrounding countryside and into the Parish; and
- Maximise opportunities for the restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats.

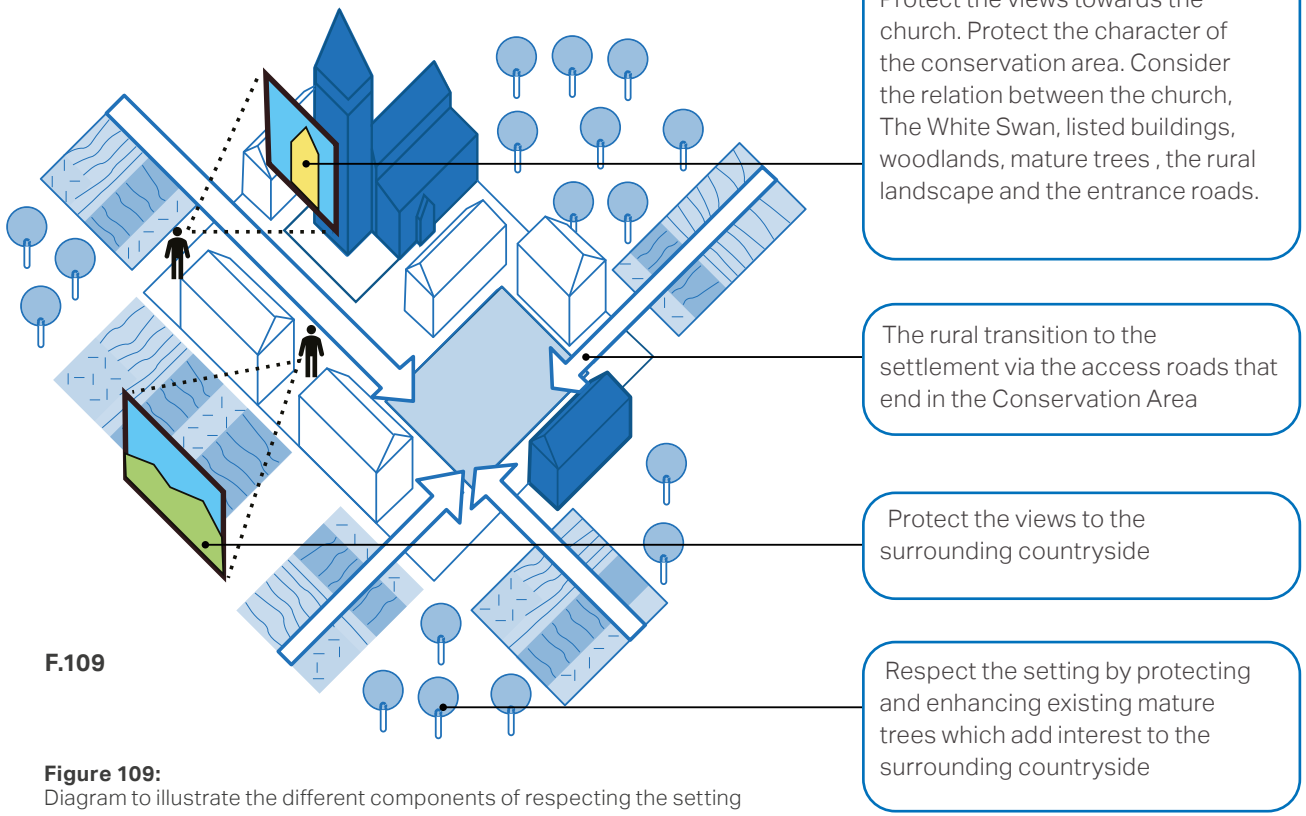


Figure 109:
Diagram to illustrate the different components of respecting the setting

BH 03- RESPECT THE CHARACTER

There are various architectural styles and diverse traditional materials within the conservation areas and numerous outstanding listed buildings within the Parish.

- Use traditional building materials and feature elements in any new developments, extensions and/ or refurbishment in the area such as red brick, render, weatherboarding, timber frame, stone; and
- Encourage use of current roof style and materials such as gabled roof style, slate, thatch and clay tiled materials.


F.110


F.112


F.111

Figure 110:
Thatched roof and chimney stacks on The White Swan on the High Street

Figure 111:
Use of traditional building materials and feature elements in future developments

Figure 112:
Respect the character of Market Hill and its openness

SM. Safe movement

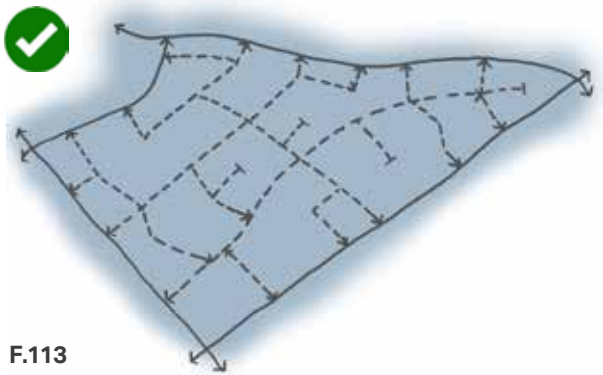
Safe movement looks at how to create safe, attractive and convenient connections around Whitchurch and to the wider area utilising sustainable modes of transport where possible.

Walking and cycling should be encouraged to support growth, limit the negative impacts of traffic congestion on the roads and create direct and memorable routes. In addition, public transport should be used to support active travel and provide improved links between places.

SM 01- INTERCONNECTED STREET NETWORK

Within Whitchurch, the speed of traffic and rat runs are the main issues on Oving Road specially from the High Street to the Surgery. This can be addressed by provision of traffic calming measure (See SM 03).

- Proposal shall have regards the existing relationship between buildings and the street or other surrounding open spaces and how the siting and position of any new buildings can positively respond to this;
- Minimising the number of culs-de-sac should be encouraged to promote permeability. Also there should be a clear hierarchy of streets to facilitate different levels of activity. Streets should incorporate opportunities for landscaping, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage; and
- The design of the street network should respond to the topography and natural desire lines.



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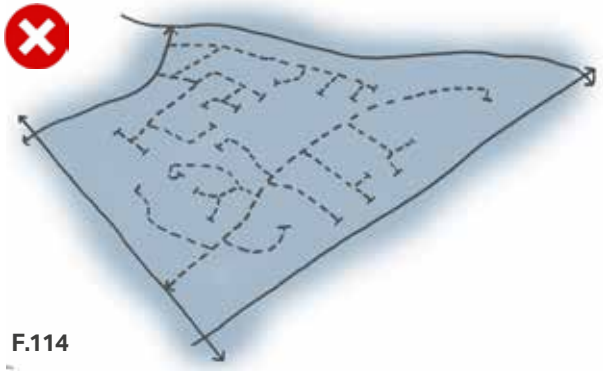

F.114

Figure 113:
A connected layout, with some cul-de-sacs, balances sustainability and security aims in a walkable neighbourhood

Figure 114:
A layout dominated by cul-de-sacs encourages reliance on the car for even local journeys

SM 02. PEOPLE- FRIENDLY STREETS

Public footpaths offer access to the wider landscape from the settlements and the wide variety of lanes play a crucial role in connecting the character areas within the parish. They also provide opportunities for people to enjoy nature, benefiting both their physical and mental health. The following are the principles for interconnected streets, pedestrian/ cycle paths:

- New streets should be considered a space to be used by all, not only vehicles. Therefore, it is essential that street design prioritises the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. Pedestrian and cycle routes need to be continuous and well connected, and can be from point to point or circular depending of the nature of the site and the relationship with the surrounding network;
- Propose short and walkable distances which are usually defined to be within a 10 minute walk or a 5 mile trip by bike. This information can be shown on signage at key points within the Parish. If the design proposal calls for a new street or cycle/pedestrian link, it must connect destinations and origins providing multiple access points where possible; and
- Create improvements to existing green networks to promote active travel opportunities, while also enhancing habitat and biodiversity.

Figure 115: A public footpath connects Bushmead Road to other part of the village and the countryside

Figure 116: A footpath linking Ashgrove Gardens to the countryside

SM03- TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

Traffic calming uses physical design and other measures to improve safety for everyone. These measures can be applied on roads that have traffic issues such as High Street and Oving Road.

It aims to encourage safer, more responsible driving and potentially reduce traffic flow. Paving materials in all traffic calming measures should contribute to the character of an area as a place to be read as a coherent whole.

Note that traffic calming is usually outside the remit of neighbourhood planning policies, unless as part of a wider planning application.

SPEED BUMPS / HUMPS AND CUSHIONS

There are traffic calming devices that use vertical deflection to slow vehicle traffic to improve safety conditions.

SPEED TABLES

A speed table is long flat-topped speed humps that slow vehicles more gradually than humps and provide safer conditions.

RAISED PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Raised pedestrian crossings act as speed tables, often situated at intersections, as well as improving the walking environment.

Figure 117:
An example of raised pedestrian crossing with a plateau in Hemel Hempstead

Figure 118:
Speed cushions

SM 04 - PARKING SOLUTIONS

Parking areas are a necessity of modern development. However, they do not need to be unsightly or dominate views towards the house. Parking provision should be undertaken as an exercise of placemaking.

- When placing parking at the front of a property, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings. This can be achieved by means of walls, hedging, planting, and the use of quality paving materials;
- When needed, residential car parking can be translated into a mix of on-plot side, front, garage, and courtyard parking, and complemented by on-street parking;
- For family homes, cars should be placed at the side (preferably) or front of the property. For small pockets of housing, a rear court is acceptable;
- Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles;
- Parking the cars on pavements should be avoided; and
- Parking areas and driveways should be designed to improve impervious surfaces, for example, through the use of permeable paving. 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings should provide at least 1 on-plot parking space. Dwellings with 3 or more bedrooms should provide 2 on-plot parking spaces.

F.119

Figure 119: On- plot parking on Burshmead Road

F.120

Figure 120: On-plot parking with garage on Firs Close

ON STREET PARKING

On-street parking is the only parking option for several dwellings within the Conservation Area, such as the High Street. In order to reduce the visual impact of parked cars on the street, on-street parking as the only means of parking should be avoided in future development. In addition, there is a problem with on street parking on Ashrgove Gardens at drop off/ pick up times of Whitchurch School which need to be addressed.

- On-street parking must be designed to avoid impeding the flow of pedestrians, cyclists, and other vehicles, and can serve a useful informal traffic calming function;
- On low-traffic residential streets or lanes that are shared between vehicles and pedestrians, parking bays can be clearly marked using changes in paving materials instead of road markings; and
- Opportunities must be created for new public car parking spaces to include electric vehicle charging points. Given the move towards electric vehicles, every opportunity must be taken to integrate charging technologies into the fabric of road and street furniture in the public and private realm.

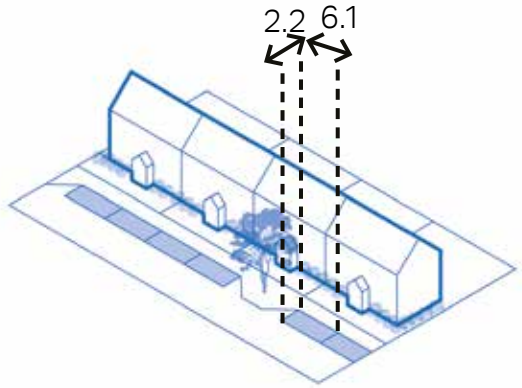

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Figure 121: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-street parking

F.122

Figure 122: Issue with on- street parking on Ashgrove Gardens parking outside Whitchurch School. It gets very congested at drop off/pick up times

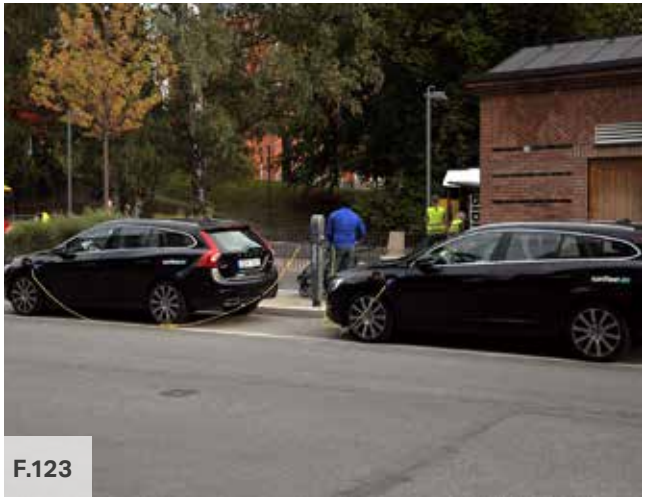

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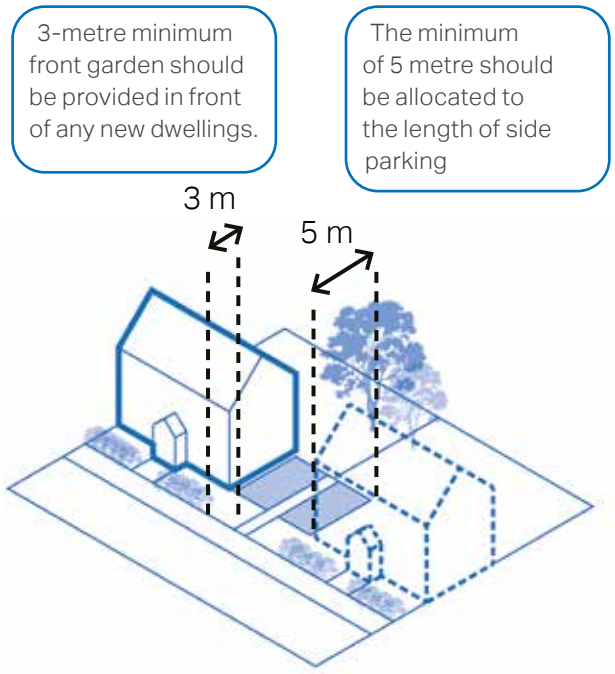
Figure 123: Inset on-street parking with electric vehicle charging points

ON- PLOT SIDE OR FRONT PARKING

- Parking provided on driveways in directly in front of dwellings should be restricted due to the visual impact that cars have on the street. Therefore, a maximum of 2 dwellings in a row will be permitted to provide parking in this way. Front gardens should be a minimum depth of 6m to allow movement around parked vehicles and also be well screened with hedgerows when providing parking space to the front of a dwelling.
- Parking being provided on a driveway to the side of a dwelling should be of sufficient length (5m minimum) so that a car can park behind the frontage line of the dwelling. This will reduce the visual impact that cars will have on the street scene. When parking is provided to the side of a dwelling a minimum front garden depth of 3m should be provided,



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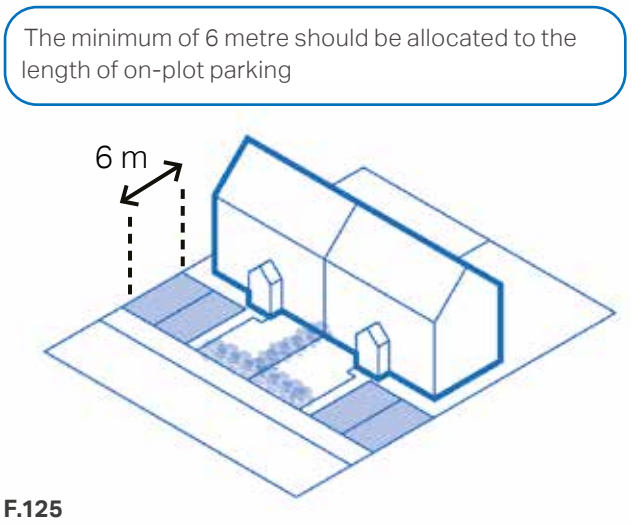

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Figure 124: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-plot side parking

Figure 125: An example of on-plot side parking in the village

Figure 126: On- plot side parking on Ashgrove Gardens

Figure 127: On- plot front parking on Little London

GARAGE PARKING

Parking being provided in a garage to the side of a dwelling should be in line with, or slightly set back from the frontage line of the existing dwelling, which is in keeping with the character of the existing village and will reduce the visual impact of cars on the street. Garages should also provide sufficient room for cars to park inside them, as well as provide some room for storage. The minimum internal dimensions of a garage should therefore be 6m x 3m.

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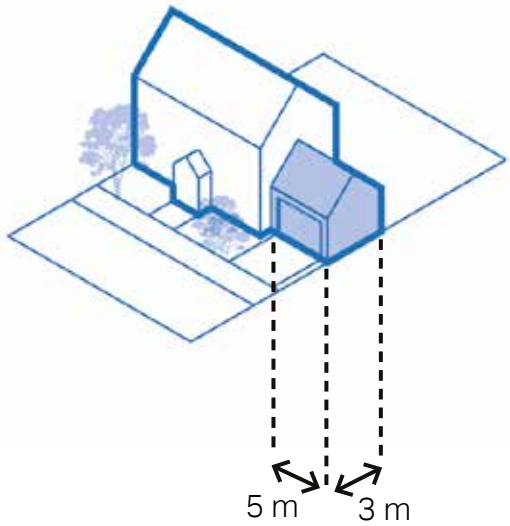

The internal dimensions of a garage should be 6m x 3m

Figure 128: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-plot garage parking

F.129

Figure 129: Garage parking on Little London

SM 05. LEGIBILITY AND SIGNAGE

A legible and well signposted place is easier for the public to understand as people can orient themselves with visual landmarks and direct routes. Being able to navigate around a place makes people feel safer as well as offering a more pleasant living environment that functions well.

- Whitchurch should use a variety of identifiable landmarks, gateways and focal points to create visual links and establish a clear hierarchy between places. There are a significant number of listed buildings within the village which are identifiable landmarks;
- The village should be complemented by distinctive architectural elements around gateways and nodes;
- New developments should be designed around a series of nodal points focusing on the relationship with the existing character areas as well as the surrounding landscape ; and
- Wayfinding must be clearly established throughout the village, particularly along pedestrian and cycle routes and should be designed to complement and not clutter the public realm.

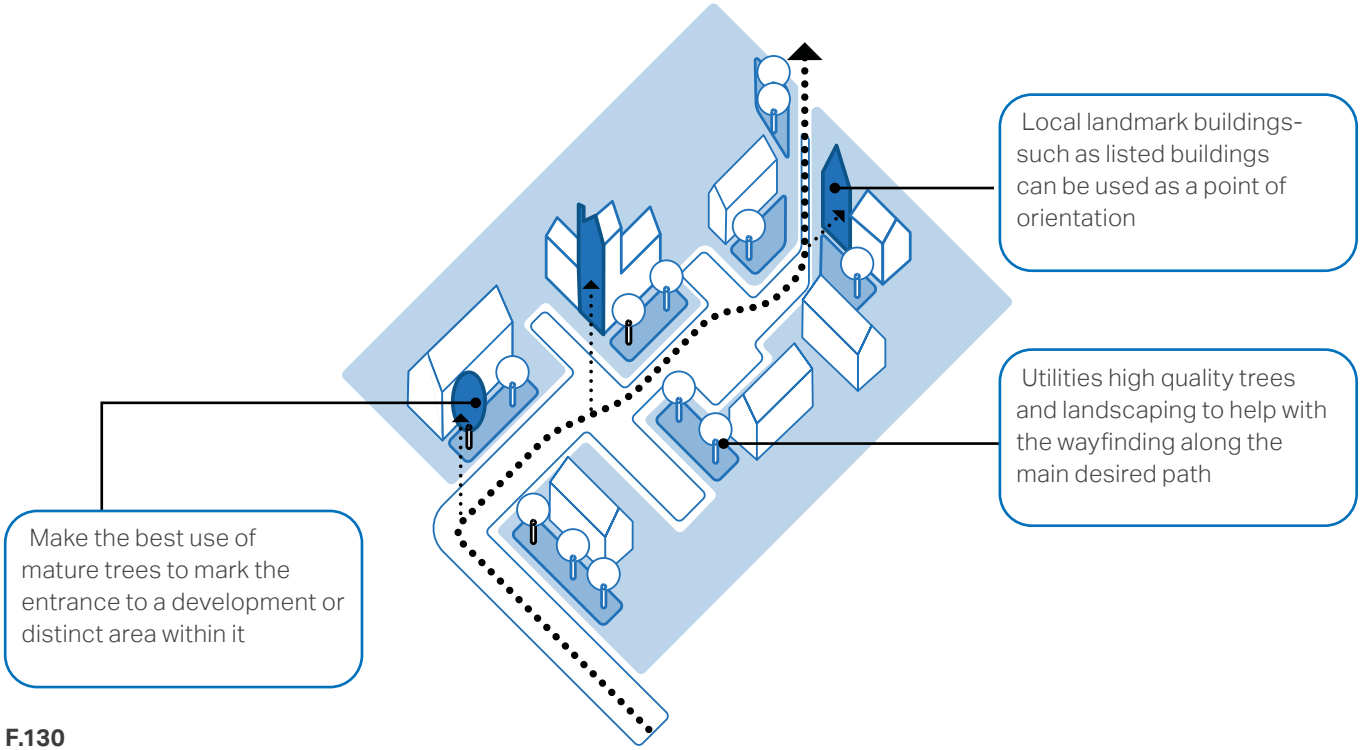

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Figure 130: Diagram showing the wayfinding elements in public realm


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F.132


F.134

Figure 131: The White Swan, a point of arrival which is an important landmark and increase legibility in the village

Figure 132: A grade II listed Georgian building on High Street with a pattern brick on facade

Figure 133: The best use of mature trees to enter a distinctive development

Figure 134: Local listed buildings act as unique landmarks which enhance the legibility

SU. Sustainability

Any new housing in Whitchurch Parish should mitigate its impact from the loss of countryside, wildlife and the natural environment and demonstrate that it is responding to climate change with the highest standards of insulation and energy conservation.

SU 01- ENERGY EFFICIENT HOUSING AND ENERGY PRODUCTION

The following section elaborates on energy efficient technologies that could be incorporated in buildings and at broader Parish design scale as principles.

Use of such principles and design tools should be encouraged in order to contribute towards a more sustainable environment.

Energy efficient or eco design combines all around energy efficient appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar electricity and/or solar/ water heating and electric charging points.

Any changes withing the conservation area should look similar to the original. Conditions A.3 Development is permitted by Class A subject to the following conditions- (a) the materials used in any exterior work (other than materials used in the construction of a conservatory) must be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the exterior of the existing dwelling house[1].

1. National Planning Policy Framework, 2021

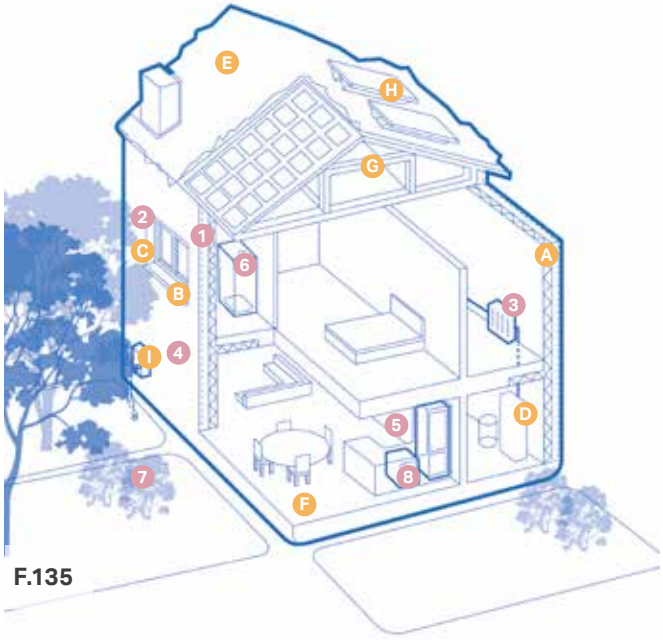


Figure 135: Diagram showing low-carbon homes in both existing and new build conditions.

SU 02. BIODIVERSITY

Whitchurch has a rich and varied landscape character and falls within LCA 9.3 Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge[1]. This area is largely grassland, but also includes significant area of arable habitat. Other habitats are restricted to a very small amount of broadleaved woodland scattered throughout the Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge and concentrated in the central part. In addition to this, there is mature tree cover associated with the settlements.

The landscape guidelines for Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge are as follows:

- Conserve the extensive network of hedgerows and tree cover;
- Strengthen the field pattern around the arable areas to the north by planting up gaps in hedgerows and encouraging the development of hedgerow trees;
- Promote good woodland management to conserve the extent of woodland cover;

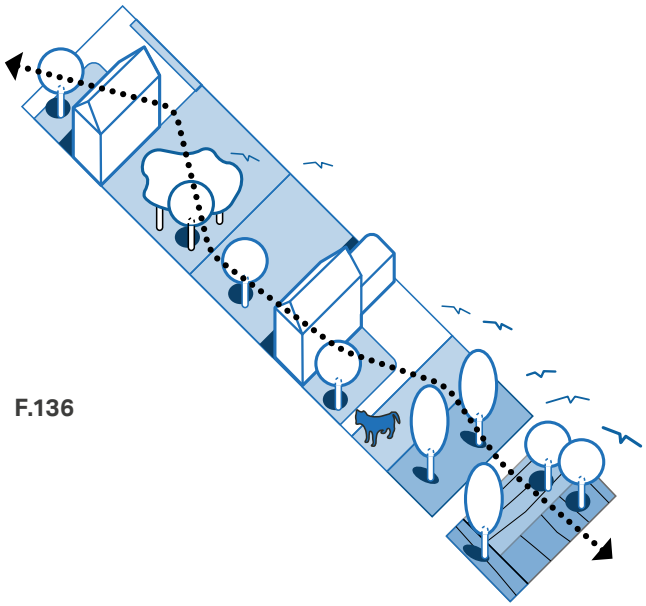


Figure 136: Diagram to highlight the importance of creating wildlife corridors.

1. Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment

- Maintain and improve connectivity;
- Protect the integrity and vernacular character of the settlements;
- Encourage planting around suburban fringes in relation to new development;
- The adoption of swift bricks, bat and owl boxes are encouraged to help provide nesting and roosting spaces or bats and birds;
- Conserve the sites and wider setting to the Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other Archaeological Notification Sites; and
- Encourage the preservation of historic earthworks and ridge and furrow by maintaining a continuous grass sward.

Figure 137: Examples of a bughouse decorating rear gardens or public green spaces

Figure 138: Amphibian wood shelter at The Recreation Pond (Source: Whitchurch parish Council)

Figure 139: View towards Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge Landscape Character

SU 03. SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE (SUDS)

The term SuDS stands for Sustainable Drainage Systems. It covers a range of approaches to managing surface water in a more sustainable way to reduce flood risk and improve water quality whilst improving amenity benefits.

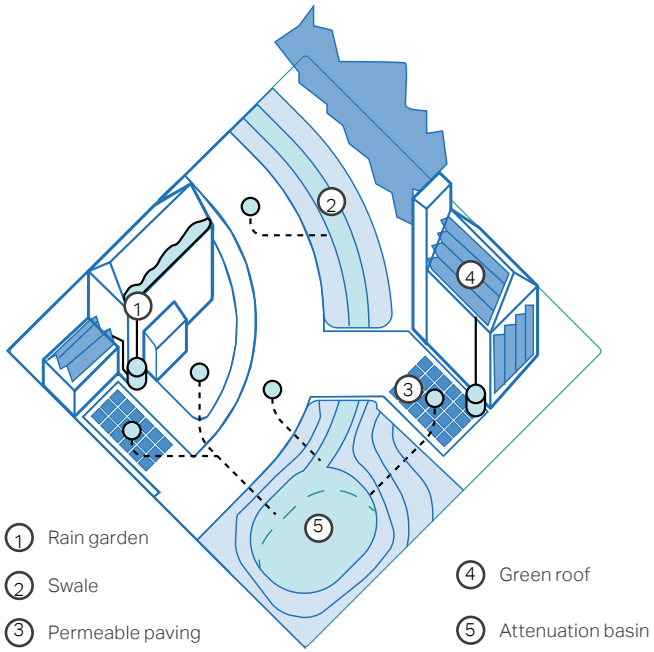
SuDS work by reducing the amount and rate at which surface water reaches a waterway or combined sewer system. Usually, the most sustainable option is collecting this water for reuse, for example in a water butt or rainwater harvesting system, as this has the added benefit of reducing pressure on important water sources.

Where reuse is not possible there are two alternative approaches using SuDS:

- Infiltration, which allows water to percolate into the ground and eventually restore groundwater; and
- Attenuation and controlled release, which holds back the water and slowly releases it into the sewer network. Although the overall volume entering the sewer system is the same, the peak flow is reduced. This reduces the risk of sewers overflowing. Attenuation and controlled release options are suitable when either infiltration is not possible (for example where the water table is high or soils are clay) or where infiltration could be polluting (such as on contaminated sites).

The most effective type or design of SuDS would depend on site-specific conditions such as underlying ground conditions, infiltration rate, slope, or presence of ground contamination. A number of overarching principles can however be applied:

- Reduce runoff rates by facilitating infiltration into the ground or by providing attenuation that stores water to help



F.140

Figure 140: Diagram showing the best use of harvesting water systems rain garden, swales, permeable paving, green roofs

slow its flow down so that it does not overwhelm water courses or the sewer network;

- Integrate into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices;
- SuDS are often as important in areas that are not directly in an area of flood risk themselves, as they can help reduce downstream flood risk by storing water upstream;
- Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area;
- Best practice SuDS schemes link the water cycle to make the most efficient use of water resources by reusing surface water; and
- SuDS must be designed sensitively to augment the landscape and provide biodiversity and amenity benefits.

Figure 141: Examples of SuDS designed as a public amenity and fully integrated into the design of the public realm, Sweden

SU 04. PERMEABLE PAVEMENTS

Most built-up areas, including roads and driveways, increase impervious surfaces and reduce the capacity of the ground to absorb runoff water. This in turn increases the risks of surface water flooding. Permeable pavements offer a solution to maintain soil permeability while performing the function of conventional paving. The choice of permeable paving units must be made depending on the local context; the units may take the form of unbound gravel, clay pavers, or stone setts.

Permeable paving can be used where appropriate on footpaths, public squares, private access roads, driveways, and private areas within the individual development boundaries. In addition, permeable pavement must also:

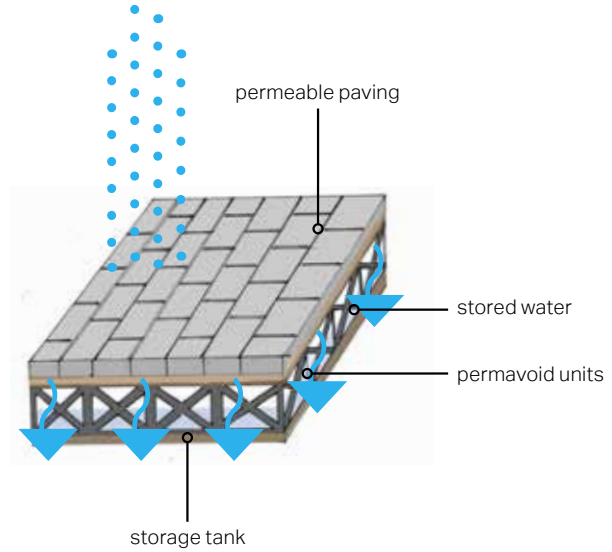
- Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Schedule 3;[1]

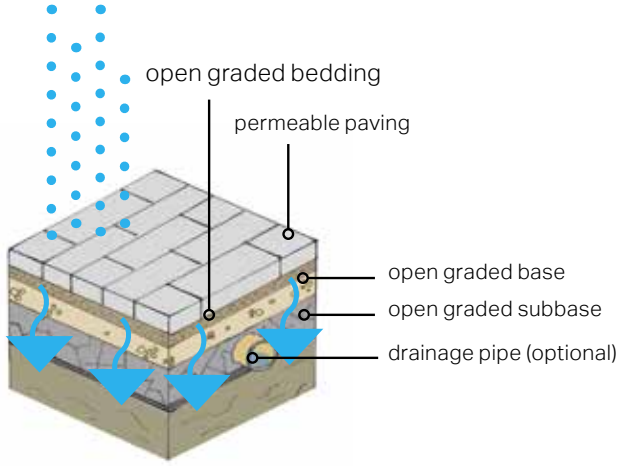
[1] Great Britain (2010). *Flood and Water Management Act, Schedule 3*. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/schedule/3

- The Building Regulations Part H – Drainage and Waste Disposal;[1]
- Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015;[2]

Regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to permeable paving and sustainable drainage are listed below:

- Sustainable Drainage Systems - non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems;[3]
- The SuDS Manual (C753);[4]
- BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites;[5]
- BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers;[6] and
- Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens.[7]





F.142

Figure 142: Diagrams illustrating the functioning of a soak away.

[1] Great Britain (2010). *The Building Regulations Part H – Drainage and Waste Disposal*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442889/BR_PDF_AD_H_2015.pdf

[2] Great Britain (2015). *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/596/pdfs/uksi_20150596_en.pdf

[3] Great Britain. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2015). *Sustainable drainage systems – non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415773/sustainable-drainage-technical-standards.pdf

[4] CIRIA (2015). *The SuDS Manual (C753)*.

[5] British Standards Institution (2013). *BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites*. Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030253266

[6] British Standards Institution (2009). *BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers.* Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030159352

[7] Great Britain. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2008). *Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf

5.4 Guidelines for larger development sites

The following issues have been identified and all the codes/ guidelines are to be applied to larger developments. These are sites where new streets will need to be constructed.

CODE 1: BLOCK PRINCIPLES

1A - SPATIAL DEFINITION OF THE PUBLIC REALM

- Development adjoining open spaces and important gaps should enhance the character of these spaces by either providing a positive interface (i.e. properties facing onto them to improve natural surveillance) or a soft landscaped edge;
- Development should not negatively impact on any important views. The topography should be carefully considered when any new buildings are being placed;
- Any trees or woodland lost to new development must be replaced. There should be a non-negative impact on biodiversity from a new development and a biodiversity net gain of 10% should be aimed for;
- The spacing of new development should reflect the rural character and allow for long distance views of the countryside from the public realm. Trees and landscaping should be incorporated in the design;
- The existing quiet and peaceful atmosphere of the village should be preserved. Future development should respond to the rural character of the settlements and retain the existing levels of privacy by including hedgerow and tree screening; and
- Landscape schemes should be designed and integrated with the open fields that currently border the settlements.

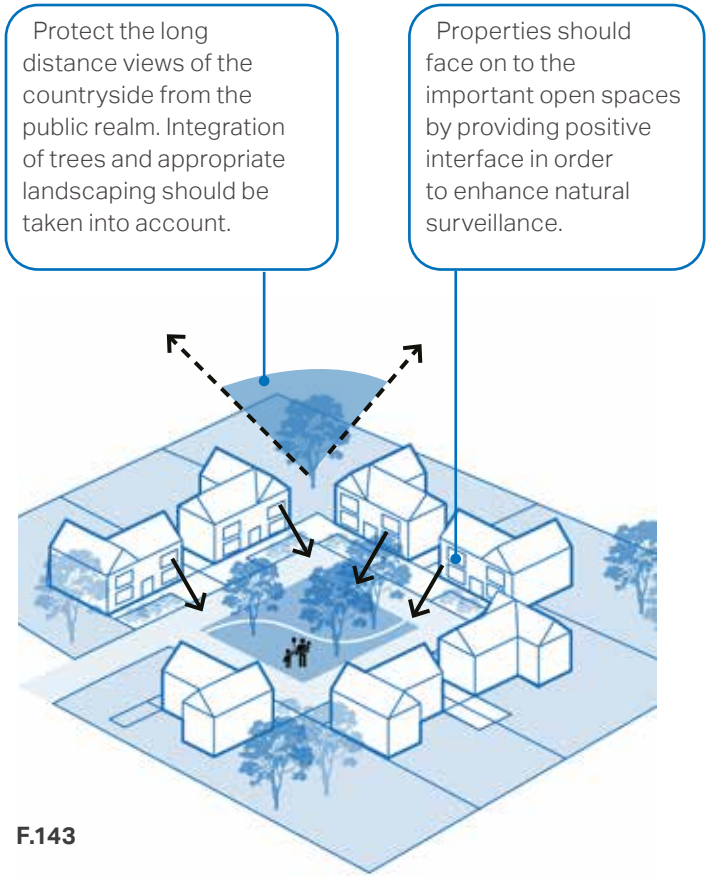


Figure 143:
Diagram showing green spaces and landscape planting

CODE 2: STREETSCAPE PRINCIPLES

2A - ROOFS AND ROOFLINES

- Development building heights should accord with the settlement character of two storey dwellings;
- Depending on the roofing materials used, pitches from 45 to 55 degrees are commonly seen on traditional houses in Whitchurch. Therefore, new buildings should be sympathetic in mass, height and scale to the existing context;
- Flat roofs for buildings, extensions, garages and dormer windows should be avoided; and Chimney type and height should be congruent with the typical Neighbourhood Area chimney precedent examples;
- Roofs in the village tend to be generally traditionally pitched, with some hipped examples and new roof type and pitch should reflect this. Pitched roofs The use of clay tile, slate and thatch are widespread and should be the main roofing material for new development in the Neighbourhood Area; and
- Innovation which explores the integration of green/brown roofs or standing seam roofs should be encouraged. Low quality concrete tiles should be avoided.

Figure 144: Full gables end at 55 degree

Figure 145: Full gables end at 45 degree

Figure 146: Halfhippedendat 50 degree

Figure 147: Unsympathetic roofline

2B - STREET TYPOLOGIES

Future development should be structured around an interconnected street network which includes a clear hierarchy of streets. This section presents three street typologies: secondary, tertiary and edge lane (assuming that there won't be any major development that requires a new primary road).

A new development should also support a well-connected footpath and cycle network that will link all of the site with the village centre, local facilities, and the surrounding countryside.

Parking provision should primarily include on-plot parking as well as on-street. Green verges and/or street trees should decorate the roads to minimise the impression of car dominance.

Subtle deviations in alignment and small variations in enclosure of streets can allow the creation of small incidental spaces to create interest and legibility.

SECONDARY ROAD

The secondary road should accommodate an approximately 5.5m carriageway and a 2.1m wide on-street parallel car parking on one side. They should also include 2m wide tree verges on both sides and accommodate the appropriate size of street trees (see Figure 148). These roads should also accommodate a minimum of 2m wide footpaths at either side.

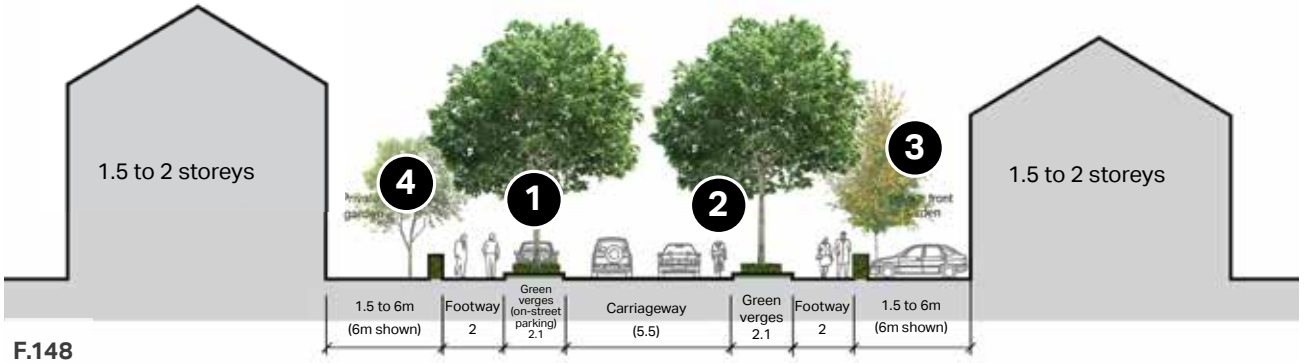


Figure 148: Section showing indicative dimensions for secondary street.

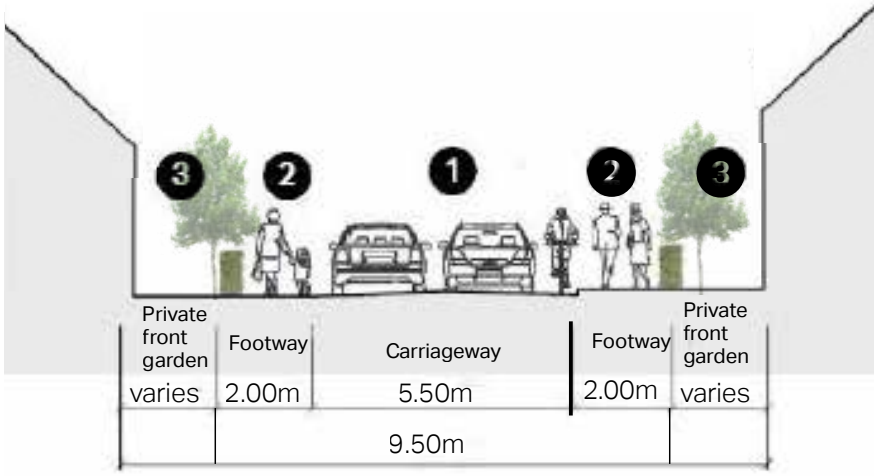
1. On-street parking along one side of the road interrupted from green verges and street trees. Traffic calming measures may be introduced at key locations.
2. Integrate cycle lanes into design.
3. Well-sized front gardens with on-plot parking on the side.
4. Physical boundaries and vegetation in front gardens.

TERTIARY ROAD

Tertiary roads should provide access to the residential areas. They must provide a minimum of 5.5m wide two lane carriageway. These roads should also accommodate a minimum of 2m wide footpaths at either side (See Figure 149). On- street car parking could be avoided in tertiary roads where not required. Otherwise, include verges or street trees between on-street car parking.

F.150

Figure 150: A very narrow single lane on Oving Road which make it difficult for a lorry to manoeuvre (Source: Whitchurch parish Council)



F.149

Figure 149: Section showing indicative dimensions for tertiary road

1. Shared carriageway (for tertiary residential streets with low traffic). Traffic calming measures may be introduced at key locations.
2. Footway (minimum 2m).
3. Residential frontage with boundary hedges and front gardens.

EDGE LANE

Edge lanes should be a narrow lane, low-speed with houses with gardens on one side and green space on the other side. Ideally, properties should have on-plot parking access from the lane with a sufficient set-back. However, limited street parking along the lane should be considered.

Carriageways typically consist of a single lane of traffic in either direction, and could be shared with cyclists. The lane width can vary (from 3.5m to 6.5m) to discourage speeding and introduce a more informal and intimate character (See Figure 151). Variations in paving materials and textures can be used instead of kerbs or road markings.

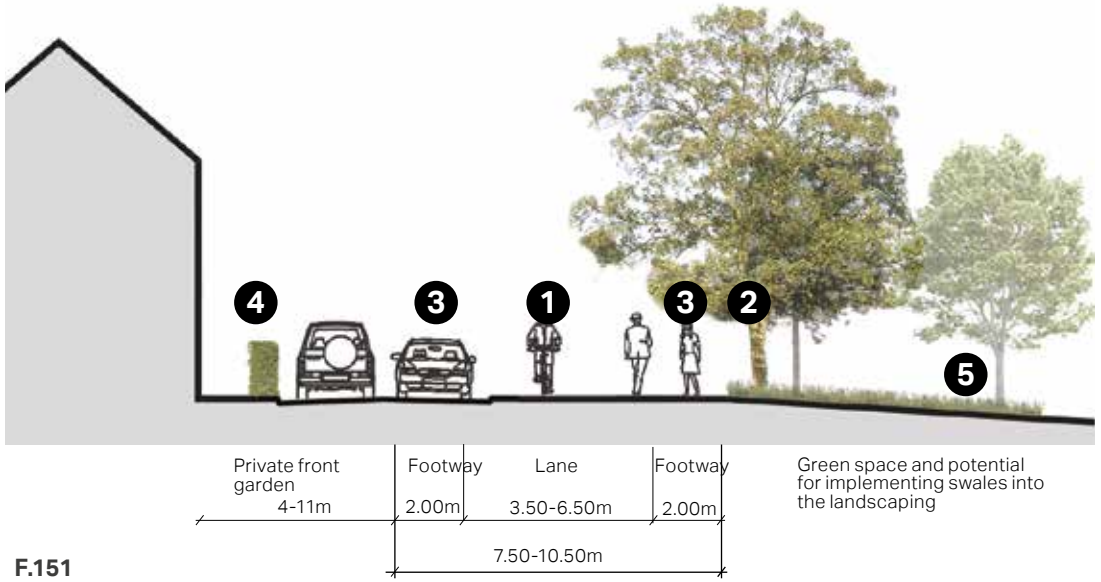


Figure 151: Section showing indicative dimensions for canal edge

1. Carriageway including vehicles and bicycles. The width of the shared lane could vary as shown in the diagram.
2. Green verges with trees along either side of the carriageway. Green features would be positive additions in the public realm design. Parking bays to be interspersed with trees to avoid impeding moving traffic or pedestrians.
3. Towpath (minimum 2m).
4. Residential frontage with boundary hedges and front gardens.
5. Green space and potential for implementing swales into the landscaping.

2C- Relationship of future development to landscape features

The interface of development edges to countryside, open space, woodlands, routes or the canal have a critical role in defining the character and quality of the place.

The edge towards natural features should positively be addressed with building frontages facing on to it and pedestrian and cycle links providing natural surveillance. The scale, mass and typologies of buildings must appropriately respond to the topography, existing landscape and context of the area.

Similarly, the welcome presence of various tree preservation orders and harbouring trees should be considered as a beneficial component. Any development proposals will need to take a proactive approach to mitigate and adapt to this specific landscape within the surrounding. In the case of developments along the edges, the insertion of edge land should be considered in line with the principles highlighted in the previous section on street typologies.

Where possible, encourage tree planting and landscaping along the development limits for visual appeal and recreation purposes.

Avoid hindering the continuity of green and blue infrastructure, by appropriately integrating new green links into the existing networks.

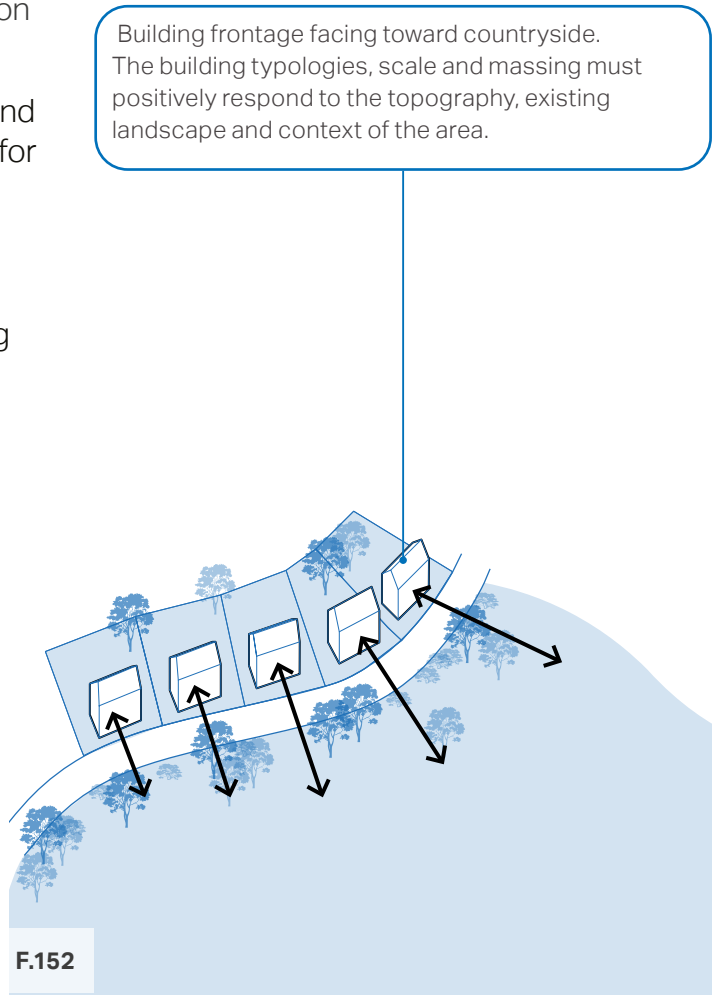


Figure 152: The relationship of housing with surrounding countryside

CODE 3: PLOT PRINCIPLES

3A - BACKLAND DEVELOPMENT

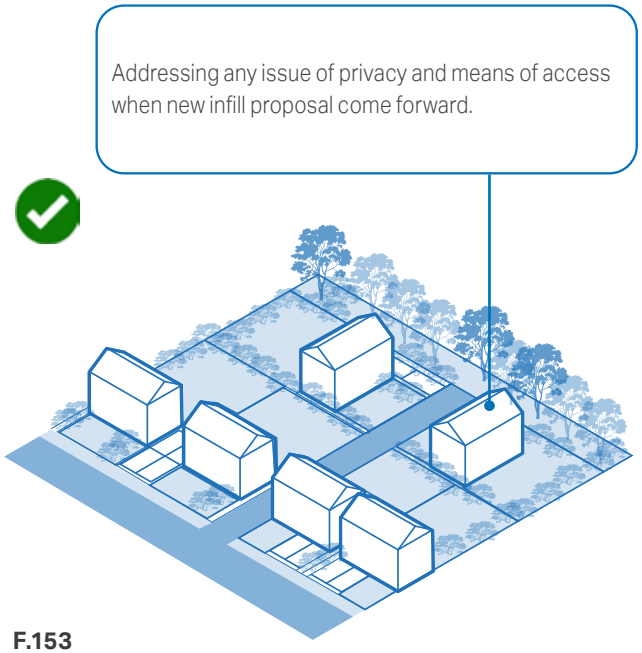
Backland development or plot infill is development on land of an existing dwelling. This sort of development has the potential to cause issues for existing residents including loss of privacy, daylight and parking problems.

Proposed backland development should ensure that the spacing requirements set out within the coding chapter (5) of this document are maintained and that the density, scale and appearance of the development reflects its immediate context and reduces impacts to the amenity of existing properties.

Tandem development is a form of backland development where a new dwelling is placed immediately behind an existing dwelling and served by the same vehicular access. Tandem developments will generally be unacceptable due to the impact on the amenity of the dwelling at the front of the site.

Where a proposal encompasses residential development of land behind an existing frontage or placing of further dwellings behind existing dwellings within the site, the proposal should demonstrate the privacy of existing and future residents means of access, and it should not extend the limit of settlements.

The design of backland development should take precedent from good examples within the surrounding architectural context. Poor contextual precedent should not set the standard.



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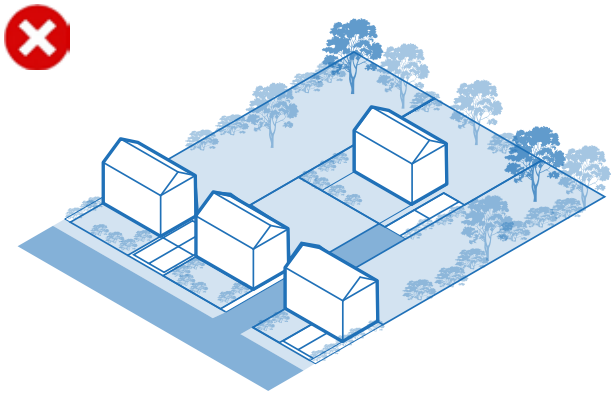


F.154

Figure 153:
Diagram showing backland development

Figure 154:
Diagram showing tandem development which will generally be unacceptable

3B-RATIO OF PRIVATE GREEN SPACE

The ratio of garden space to built form within the overall plot is exceptionally important to ensure that the sense of openness and green space within the village is maintained.

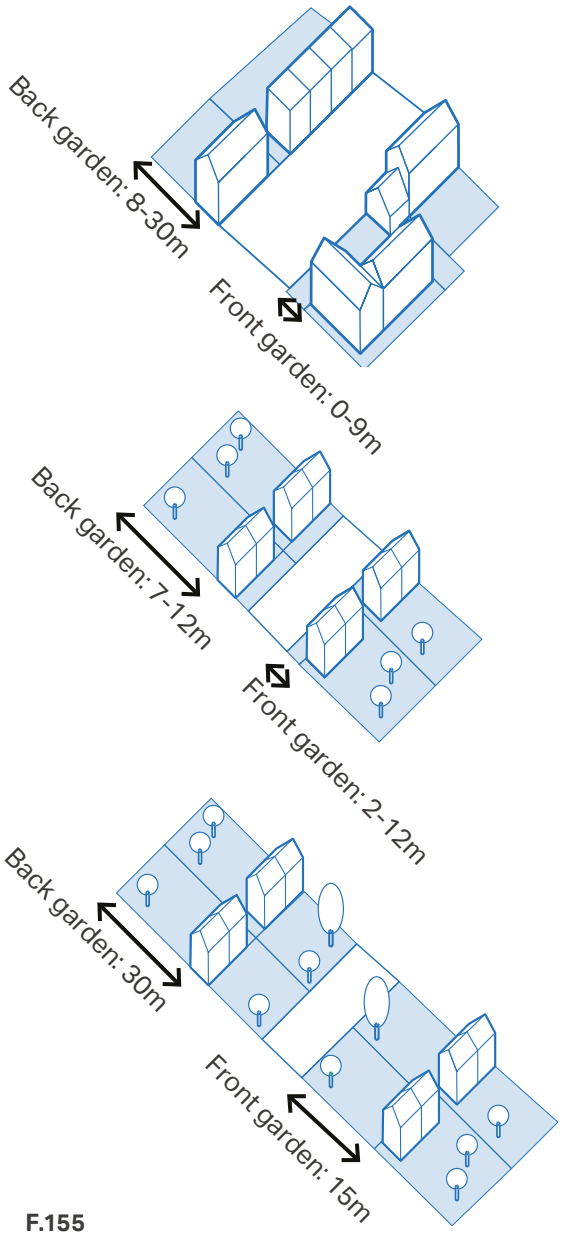
There are different garden dimensions in each of the character areas. In CA1, the front garden proportions range from 0 to 9 m and the back garden are between 8 till 30m. CA2 areas are located to the edge of the settlement and have spacious front garden (10m) with around 30m length for back garden.

CA3 have different width range of front and back gardens. For instance, the infill development on Bushmead Close have the same amount of front and back gardens (12m), while the terraced house infill development on Mount Pleasant has less that 2 m front garden and an average of 7m back garden.

As CA4 sit within the edge of settlement deep front and back gardens should be encouraged, but a careful consideration to the context should be taken into account where the development sit within.

Back gardens should be a minimum depth of 10m and provide a minimum area of 50m2 of usable amenity space.

North facing back gardens should exceed 10m in length to ensure sunlight is maximised.



F.155

Figure 155: Different proportion of green space varied. From top (The High Street(CA1)), middle (CA3) and bottom (Ashgrove Gardens(CA2 and CA4))


F.156


F.158


F.157


F.159

Figure 156: A building on the High Street with no front garden

Figure 157: The deep front and back gardens on Bushmead Road

Figure 158: Spacious front and back gardens on Ashgrove Gardens

Figure 159: Small front gardens on Mount Pleasant

3C- PLOT BOUNDARY LINE

Front boundaries should respond to the boundaries used within adjacent dwellings to provide continuation of street character. Appropriate boundary choices are illustrated in form of low wall either built by stone or red brick. Use of hedges are predominant in village as boundary treatment.

When rear boundaries abut the settlement edge, surrounding landscape or open green spaces, soft planted boundaries of hedgerows and trees must be used to soften the transition into the natural environment and protect views.

3D- PRIVACY AND SPACE BETWEEN BUILDINGS

Any proposed backland or infill development must not cause an unacceptable impact on the residential amenities of adjacent residential properties.

Hedges and fences usually protect privacy at ground floor level, so any privacy issues tend to arise from upstairs windows either looking into neighbours' windows or down into their private garden space.

To avoid overlooking of habitable rooms and gardens a minimum distance of 15m should be achieved between dwellings where a side elevation of one dwelling faces a rear elevation of another. Where a side elevation is windowless the separation distance can be reduced to 12m.

A minimum separation distance of 21m should be achieved between facing windowed rear elevations.

Where dwellings with facing elevations are positioned on different levels, the above separation distances should be increased by 2m for every 1m difference in level. Where there is a level difference and distances are increased, the lower dwelling should have the longer garden to compensate for any slopes or retaining structures.

Future housing developments should design the spacing between dwellings to allow for retrospective introduction of garden and cycle storage, as well sustainable measures such as air source heat pumps.

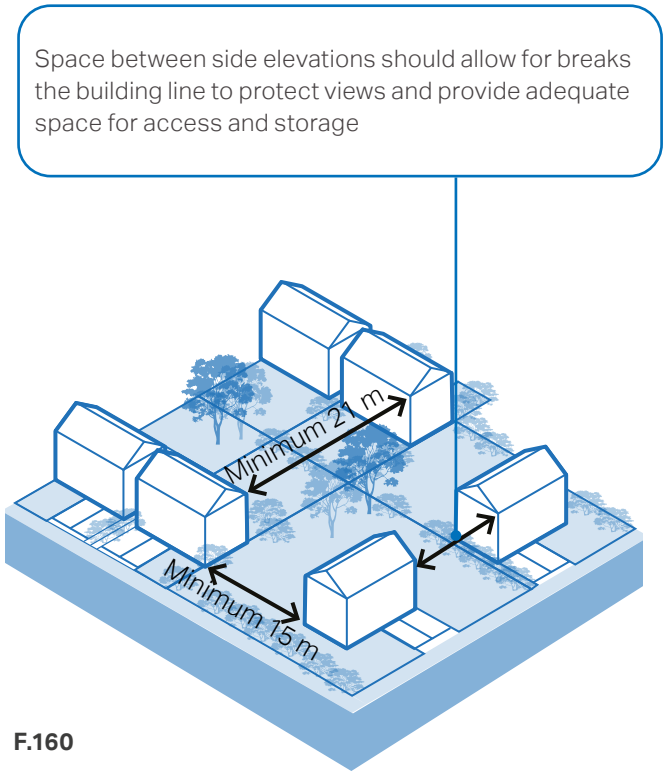


Figure 160: Diagram showing privacy and space between buildings

Checklist

06

6. Checklist

6.1 General questions to ask when presented with a development proposal

Because the design guidance and codes in this document cannot cover all design eventualities, this chapter provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has considered the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals. These are listed under 'General design guidance for new development'. Following these ideas and principles, several questions are listed for more specific topics on the following pages.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity. In addition, create new footpaths/ pavements so that no new development is cut-off from the village centre (High Street) thereby requiring access by car when many residents should be able to walk;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3 (continues)

Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5 (continues)

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles?

5

Buildings layout and grouping:

- If any of the buildings were to be heated by an individual air source heat pump (ASHP), is there space to site it within the property boundary without infringing on noise and visual requirements?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night to reduce peak loads? And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective?If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials and surface treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective?If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

9 (continues)

Building materials and surface treatment:

- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design?For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

10

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

11

Architectural details and design:

- If the proposal is within a conservation area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?
- Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?
- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?
- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?
- Is it possible to incorporate passive environmental design features such as larger roof overhangs, deeper window reveals and/or external louvres/shutters to provide shading in hotter months?
- Can the building designs utilise thermal mass to minimise heat transfer and provide free cooling?
- Can any external structures such as balconies be fixed to the outside of the building, as opposed to cantilevering through the building fabric to reduce thermal bridge?

Delivery

07

7. Delivery

7.1 Delivery

This document has set out an evidence base for the Whitchurch Neighbourhood Plan and it is recommended that the codes are embedded within the forthcoming plan as policy.

In addition to providing certainty to the local community, the design codes in this document should give more certainty to developers, as they will be able to design a scheme that is reflective of community aspirations, potentially speeding up the planning application process.

As well as the guidance set out in this document, future developers should also make sure that they have observed the guidance in the Department for Leveling Up, Housing and Communities' National Design Guide. Developers should also note that housing developments of any size should strive to achieve carbon neutrality in line with the Government's forthcoming Future Homes Standard.

Further standards on residential developments should also be obtained from Building for a Healthy Life, a government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods.

The Whitchurch Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidance and Codes will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high-quality development in Whitchurch. They will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table on the next page.

Actors	How They Will Use the Design Guidelines
Applicants, developers, and landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidance and Codes should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidance and Codes are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

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