

Maids Moreton Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Version (V9.2)



July 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Maids Moreton Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Maids Moreton Parish Council. A Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, including four parish councillors, was established to lead and undertake the task.

This Neighbourhood Plan covers the whole of Maids Moreton civil parish (Plan 1). The Neighbourhood Area was designated by Aylesbury Vale District Council on 10 September 2012.

The Plan is based on evidence and also engagement and consultation with local people. This highlighted a need to respond creatively and constructively to the challenges of sustainable development in the twenty-first century. The Plan supports proportionate and sustainable growth to meet local need, but also maintains the village's identity as a distinct community and protects the historic and natural environments.

This is reflected in the Plan's aims (see Chapter 2).

1.2 Status of the Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan is part of the statutory development plan, together with the adopted local plan. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The duration of the Maids Moreton Neighbourhood Plan is from the date it is made until the end of 2035.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with excluded matters such as waste, mineral extraction or nationally significant infrastructure.

1.3 Monitoring and Review

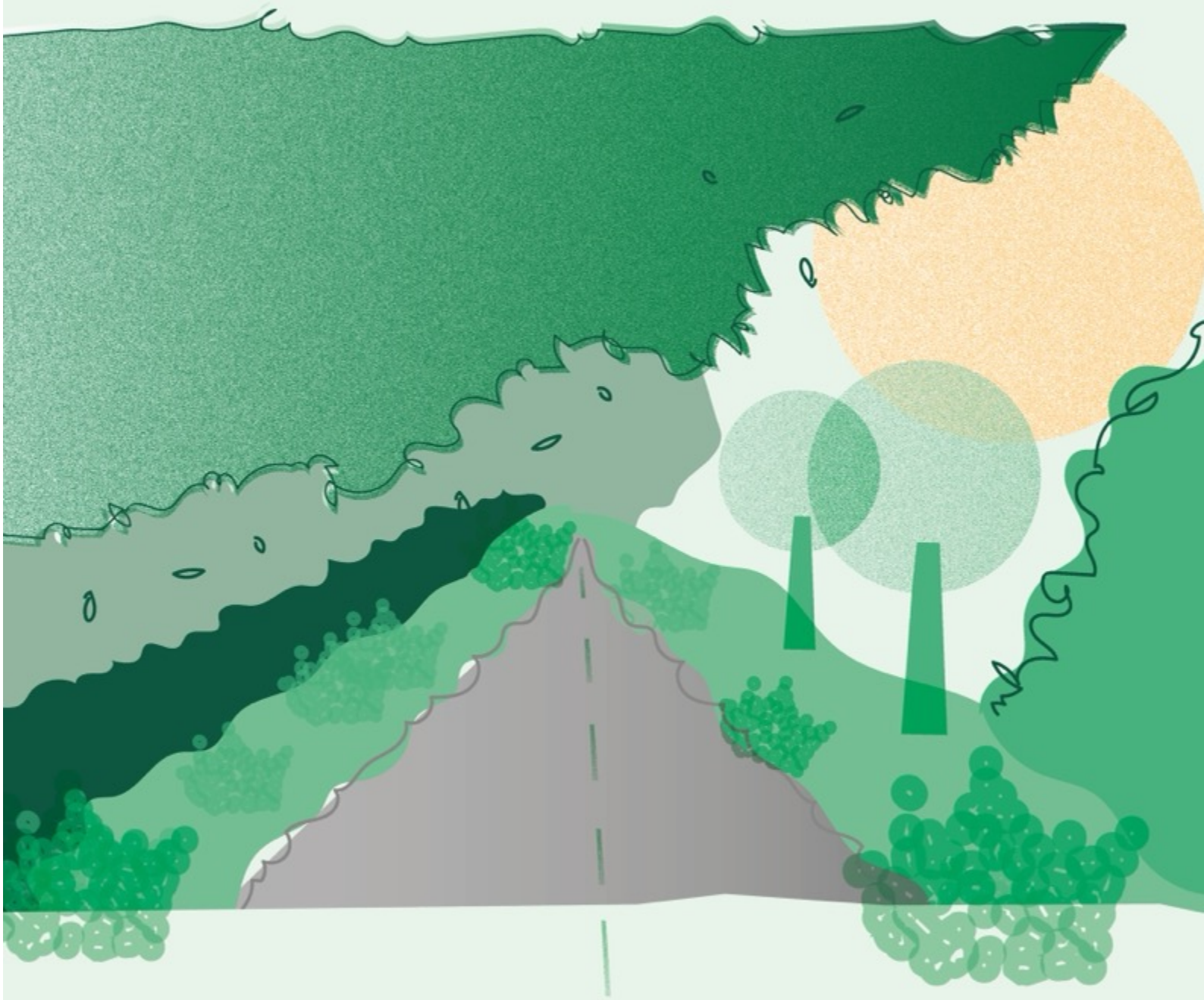
The Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored on an ongoing basis and will be reviewed as and when necessary. This will include monitoring of:

- Planning decisions, to make sure that the policies are being applied correctly;
- Relevant changes to national legislation, policy or guidance;
- Changes to local policy; or
- Other social, economic or environmental factors.

Maids Moreton Parish Council will monitor this Neighbourhood Plan on an ongoing basis and a report will be an agenda item for the Council at least twice in each year. Additionally, the Neighbourhood Plan can be added to the Council's next meeting agenda at the request of a Parish Councillor or a resident of Maids Moreton. Residents can make such a request to the Parish Clerk between meetings or request at a meeting that it be added to the agenda for the following meeting.

Plan 1: Maids Moreton Neighbourhood Area





2. Vision and Aims

2.1 Vision

The vision for the Neighbourhood Plan is:

To allow the village to develop in a sustainable way against the context of global climate change while meeting the needs of the local village community, creating more sustainable life/work patterns, and preserving or enhancing the historic character and the natural and rural environment of the parish.

2.2 Aims

Based on an analysis of evidence and the outcomes from community engagement, the Neighbourhood Plan has the following aims:

- 1 To maintain Maids Moreton as a distinct built settlement and community and enhance quality of life for all residents;**
- 2 To enable housing and employment growth in sustainable locations to meet local needs;**
- 3 To preserve or enhance the historic character of the village, including the historic core and the green fields around Scott's Lane;**
- 4 To conserve and enhance green spaces, the natural environment and biodiversity and other environmental attributes and assets;**
- 5 To ensure that development is well-designed and sustainable;**
- 6 To maintain, improve and expand the range of local community facilities, including recreational and play space;**
- 7 To promote more sustainable live/work patterns and improve local transport and active travel infrastructure.**



3. Maids Moreton – The Area

3.1 Strategic Context

Maids Moreton is a civil parish of approximately 459 hectares (NSO). The southwest boundary of the parish abuts the northeast boundary of the civil parish of the town of Buckingham. The main settlement, Maids Moreton, is a rural village with a built-up area of approximately 24 hectares, with 366 residences. There are six further residences dispersed outside the built-up area. The village lies on higher land, about one mile north of Buckingham centre. The built-up area is surrounded by open countryside for all but 300m of its boundary with Buckingham (see Figure 1).

Road access to Buckingham, Milton Keynes, Bicester and Aylesbury is either through Buckingham centre or via narrow country lanes to the A422 road from Buckingham to Milton Keynes. Entering and leaving this major road via any of the narrow lanes is difficult, especially at rush hours. Major shopping, hospitals and wider services are only available in Milton Keynes, Aylesbury, Banbury or Oxford, with limited services also in Bicester.

Despite its proximity to Buckingham, Maids Moreton village has a distinct character and identity of its own. Of the four approaches to the village, two are narrow rural lanes and two are approaches from the A413. All four approaches into Maids Moreton have clearly visible green “gateways”, framing views of historic features and providing a separate sense of place on entering the village. Conversely, when leaving the village, three of the four available routes immediately enter open countryside; the fourth leads into Buckingham with its distinctly different street scene and character.

There are very limited opportunities for employment within Maids Moreton and nearby Buckingham, though home working is clearly an increasing trend. More opportunities are available in Bicester, Milton Keynes and Northampton, though for most people these involve car-based travel.

There is a substantial challenge in meeting the requirements of a viable and sustainable community while preserving the important historical and natural environments. Within the settlement area, the aim is to preserve the setting and appearance of the numerous historic buildings while accommodating appropriate and well-designed new development.

3.2 Nature of the Area

The predominant land use in the built area is housing, with supporting community facilities. The agricultural land is a mix of grades 3a and 3b and supports mixed farming, with roughly similar areas of arable and pasture land. The field pattern in the west is medium fields with strong hedgerows while to the east, and close to the settlement, fields are often smaller but still with good hedgerows.

In 2020, as in 1595, the settlement of Maids Moreton stands in a rural agricultural landscape featuring arable farming, meadows, pasture and lea (*i.e.*, open grassland).

*“...many parcels of arable land, meadow, pasture and lea ground”
(legend of All Souls College map of Maids Moreton, 1595)*

Maids Moreton has a wide range of buildings dating from every century from the 1400s to the present day. Its buildings are mainly residential, with a few community, leisure, business and care home buildings plus an infant school, which plans to become a full primary school. There is no post office, no shop and no medical practice.

Twentieth century housing developments date from the 1920s, 1960s and 1980s and most are characterised by their spacious layout. All these more recent developments have been within the settlement boundary. Most housing (80% in 2011) is owner occupied with the remainder split broadly equally between private and social renting with a small proportion of shared ownership.

The historic centre of Maids Moreton is covered by the Maids Moreton Conservation Area, designated in 2009. The fields within the village centre around Scott’s Lane include meadow and pastureland regularly grazed by sheep, with mature trees and hedgerows and criss-crossed by historic public footpaths. These fields form a focus and green lung for the village and are a key element of the character of the Conservation Area.

3.3 Population

The figures in this section are from the 2011 Census unless otherwise stated. The 2011 population of 847 is 10% lower than that in 2001. Although the reduction in economically active people age 16 to 74 was only 4.5%, the greatest reduction was in the 20 to 44 age group, which declined by 32%, while the 45 to 59 age group increased by 14% but the young population, aged 0 to 19, remained stable.

The proportion of the population aged 0 to 19 in Maids Moreton in 2011 was 21.8% compared with 25.3% for Aylesbury Vale. The 60+ age group accounted for 28% in 2011 compared with an average of 21% for Aylesbury Vale district. Maids Moreton has a higher proportion of those age 60+ and a lower proportion of those aged 0 to 19 than Aylesbury Vale as a whole.

The gender balance in Maids Moreton is 47% male, slightly lower than Aylesbury Vale for which the figure is 49.5%. In terms of country of birth and ethnicity, 95.6% of the usual residents in Maids Moreton in 2011 were born in UK compared with 89.2% for Aylesbury Vale; 98.6% give their ethnicity as white compared with 89.6% for Aylesbury Vale.

Looking at the figures from the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification of residents age 16 to 74, there is very little difference between Maids Moreton and Aylesbury Vale as whole, as shown in summary below. Further sub division of the grouped figures does not change this.

Detailed information on the population structure is included in the Background Document together with other tables from the 2011 Census relating to matters such as lifestyle.

Figure 1: Demographics

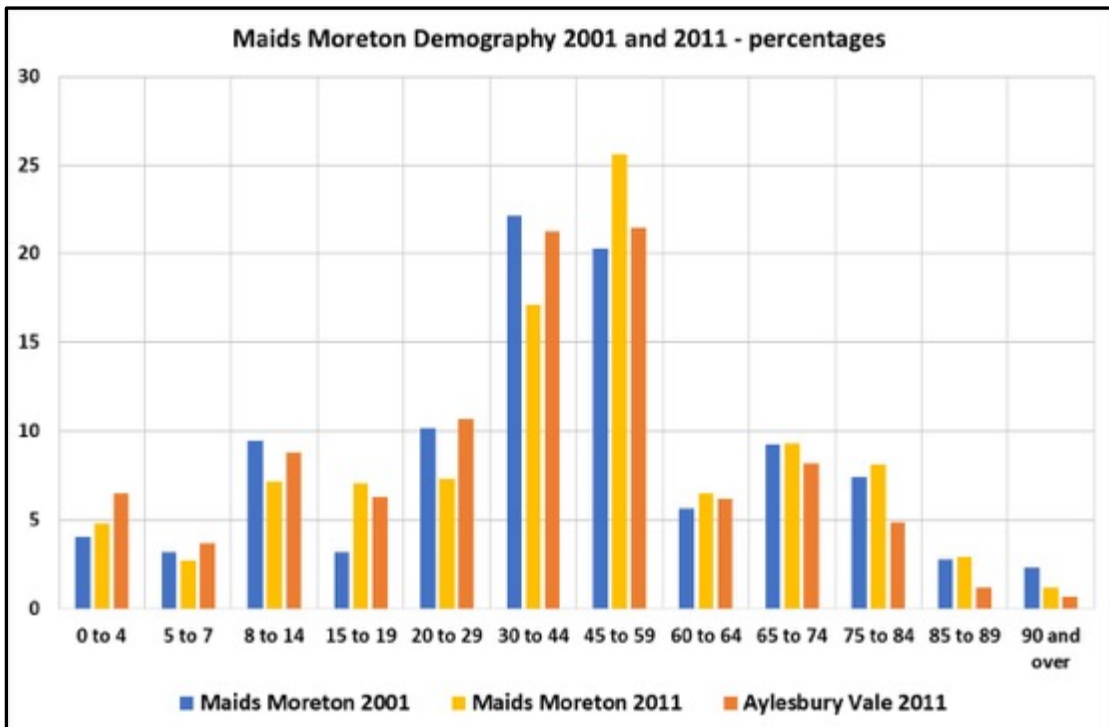


Figure 2: Socio-economic classification

National Statistics – Socio-economic Classification Group	% Maids Moreton	% Aylesbury Vale
Groups 1 to 3	52.7	52.9
Group 4	10.9	11.0
Groups 5 to 8	28.8	29.6
Not classified	7.6	6.6

3.4 Development of the Settlement

The built-up area of Maids Moreton occupies just under 6% of the overall area of the civil parish. The pattern of development has been based on the various historic manors and large farms predominantly centred on an L-shaped axis from the church and along Main Street. Housing has replaced paddocks and smallholdings while retaining the open space of Scotts Lane Fields and not breaching the ancient settlement boundary on the northeast.

Considering the location, demography, historic and natural environments, transport links, services, employment opportunities, and a range of other factors, the aims in Chapter 2 were formulated. Maids Moreton needs to be a sustainable community that also contributes to meeting wider challenges like climate change. Growth will continue to be accommodated within the long-established settlement boundary.



4. Engagement

4.1 Engagement Overview

Community and stakeholder publicity and engagement has been undertaken as part of the process of preparing the Plan. Engagement has included a public exhibition, questionnaires, a footfall survey and liaison with various stakeholders.

At the very start of the Neighbourhood Plan process, an extensive community engagement exercise was undertaken in September 2016. This informed the aims, issues and policies of the plan and is summarised in 4.2.

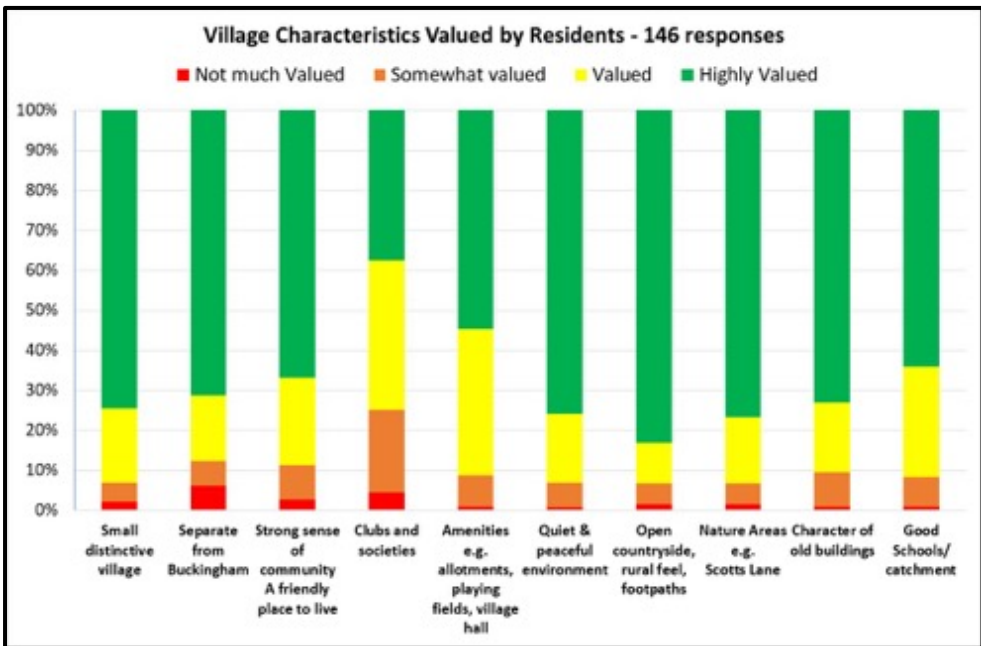
Scott’s Lane questionnaires and footfall survey took place in 2018 – 2019.

There has been regular briefings on planning matters through various media, including quarterly newsletters. In addition, there have been various local meetings in the past few years, mainly dealing with specific planning matters, which have informed the Neighbourhood Plan. There has been an ongoing dialogue on planning matters.

4.2 Outcomes of Engagement

An all-day open event was held on Saturday 10 September 2016 to explain the scope and purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan and invite people who were interested in giving assistance to do so. Questionnaires were distributed to gather people’s views on what they liked and disliked about the village and how they wanted to see it developed. The main responses are summarised in the figures below.

Figure 3: Opinions on Village Characteristics



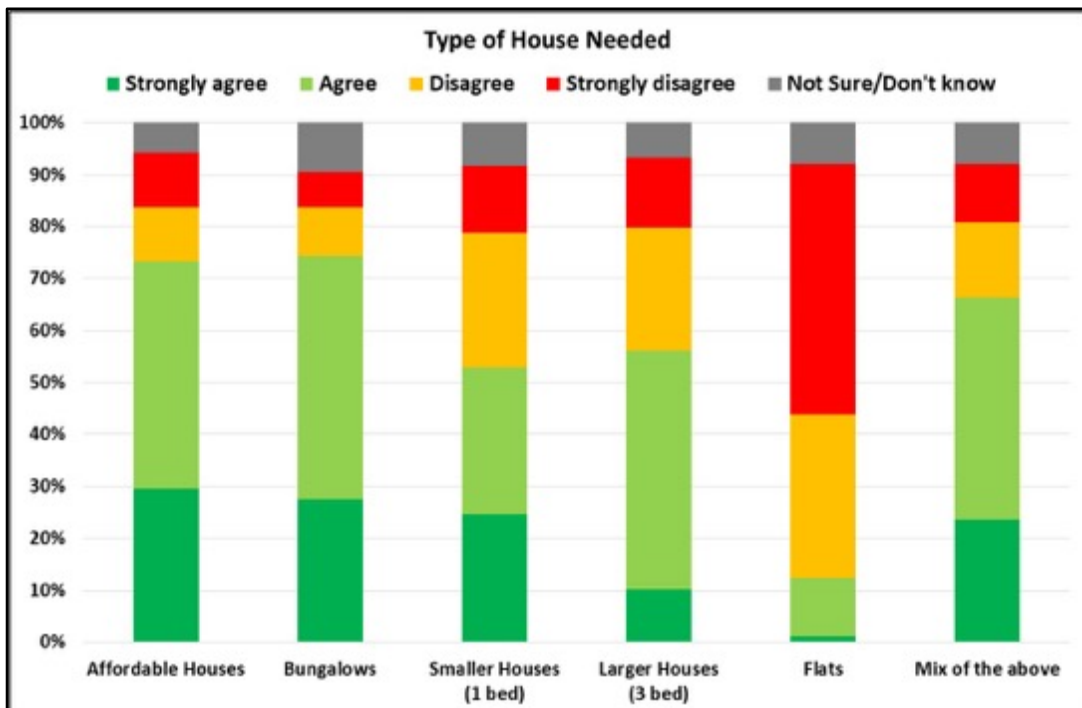
In essence, people valued the rural setting, historic character, open green space, network of footpaths and the strong sense of community. Additional comments were extensive but the main issues covered were:

- Creeping urbanisation that threatened the long-term separate existence of Maids Moreton, including danger of the loss of Scotts Lane fields and land immediately outside the settlement boundary; and
- Inadequate infrastructure to support nearby developments resulting in the village, especially Main St, South Hall and Avenue Rd, with dangerous speeding by much increased traffic. This was noted as a very serious issue given the lack of pavements in much of the centre of the village.

People were also asked about housing, employment and services. They responded that there were no services other than the pub and the very limited bus service was inadequate even for access to Buckingham, which is difficult and potentially dangerous to access on foot or by bicycle, especially for older people or those with children. Using the infrequent bus was also expensive and the service times were of little value to those commuting even to Buckingham and still less to those working further afield, or for, *e.g.*, medical appointments, making personal transport effectively essential.

A question was also asked on the type of housing required in the village and the most suitable locations. The responses on this are summarised in the figure below.

Figure 4: Type of housing required



In terms of new housing, most respondents recognised that some would be needed but there was a general consensus that it should meet the needs of young families, particularly those who had roots in the community, wanted to stay here and worked locally, and older people who wanted to downsize but would not need to travel.

The main concern expressed was the need to avoid large-scale, generic housing estates and to focus on small developments that could be fitted into the current village envelope and were built to reflect and reinforce the diversity of styles, sizes and materials already existent while not prejudicing the highly valued green space, rural outlook and, especially, not result in much increased traffic levels. It is noteworthy that flats were almost universally felt to be inappropriate.



5. Meeting Legal Requirements

5.1 Meeting the Basic Conditions

The Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have been drafted to achieve the vision and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan and to meet the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements, which are summarised as:

- Helping to achieve sustainable development;
- Having regard to national policy and guidance;
- Being in general conformity with adopted strategic local policies;
- Not breaching EU Obligations;
- meeting the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017; and
- Complying with human rights legislation.

Sustainable development is interpreted against the context of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 as having economic, social and environmental dimensions. The aim is to ensure that growth meets local needs whilst taking account of the needs of future generations. This includes taking account of biodiversity, historical context, conservation, minimising emissions through transport, design, location, sustainable life-work patterns and other aspects of sustainability.

The plan enables different kinds of growth, recognising that Maids Moreton is a living village. At the same time, a range of policies has been formulated to ensure that development has positive impact and avoids or properly mitigates harm.

All of the policies take account of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 and Planning Practice Guidance and other guidance, such as the National Model Design Code. These are referenced in the rationales to the policies.

The plan has been written so that the policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies and spatial strategy of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033, which was adopted in September 2021.

The plan has been screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Community and Stakeholder engagement has been undertaken throughout the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process. This has helped to ensure that the policies are underpinned by a good understanding of the needs and views of different parts of the community.

In addition, an equalities assessment has been undertaken.

5.2 Structure of Policies

The following chapter contains the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan. The policies have been drafted to support sustainable development.

The Policies have the following format:

Purpose (what the policy is intended to achieve)

Rationale (evidence and planning rationale to justify the policy)

The Policy (in bold)

Interpretation (notes on how the policy should be applied).



6. Policies

6.1 Sustainable Growth

Purpose

To enable housing growth in sustainable locations to meet local need.

Rationale

Chapter 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2022 deals with achieving sustainable development. Sustainable development has economic, social and environmental objectives, set out in Paragraph 8. Paragraph 11a) states:

all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects

Chapter 5 of the NPPF deals with supply of homes, mix and affordability. (density is dealt with in Chapter 11). This includes ensuring that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.

Chapter 6 of the NPPF deals with building a strong, competitive economy and the need to create conditions for businesses to invest, expand and adapt.

Relevant policies in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 include:

- S3 Settlement Hierarchy and Cohesive Development
- D2 Non-allocated sites at strategic settlements, larger villages and medium villages
- BE2 Design of new development
- NE4 Landscape character and locally important landscape

Whilst allocated sites and rural development are dealt with by the Local Plan, this policy enables residential and employment development in sustainable locations and subject to consideration of impacts.

The distinctive, separate identity of Maids Moreton is an essential attribute to the existence and character of the village and needs to be retained while also conserving the historic character of the village and its rural setting, including its separation from Buckingham.

Separation is currently provided by the band of open ground that flows east from the agricultural landscape west of the village, through the rugby club pitches, across the fields on either side of Scott's Lane and thence over the school playground, field and spinney to the playing fields and down to the A422 through pastureland (see Green Space map in the Background Document).

The existing boundaries of the settlement envelope need to be maintained to prevent development sprawling into the open countryside of the Maids Moreton Plateau to the north and west, the Foscoote valley to the northeast and east and the LLA Ouse Valley to the southeast.

The settlement boundary (Plan 2) has been long established from the four early manors and their associated farms plus the Victorian Maids Moreton House. Outside of the historic centre, which forms the “L” shape of Main St and Church St, more recent developments have been on land within the grounds of the former manors. The northeast boundary remains defined by the grounds of 18th century Manor Lodge, which were partially taken up by public housing in The Pightle (1922) and, after Manor Lodge was pulled down, by Manor Park (1960s). Newer housing on Church Close (1980s) and the open space of Church Green occupy the original Anglo-Saxon settlement overlooking the Great Ouse valley and the land around the later Manor (1300s) that was rebuilt twice, lastly in 1800s, and is now Gracewell nursing and care home.

Some infilling has taken place within the central historic zone with extensions being limited to ribbon development along roads leaving the village to the north and east. These are Towcester Rd and Bycell Rd to the north, with Foscoote Rd to the east. The latter includes Wellmore, which was historically poorer housing and now has terraced cottages (1800s) and more recent (1900s) larger properties. From the Church, to the southwest towards the boundary with Buckingham, Glebe Close, South Hall and Hall Close were developed with a wide range of house sizes in the 1970s and 1980s.

Vitalograph Business Park has been developed in the grounds of nineteenth century Maids Moreton House. There are a manufacturing business head office and a number of other registered offices there but the scope for expansion is limited by the inadequate access for vehicles and, especially, for heavier ones. The only other major employers are the two Care Homes, The Veterinary Centre, The Wheatsheaf pub, Harris Bros metalwork and agricultural engineering, three farms, and an NHS ambulance station.

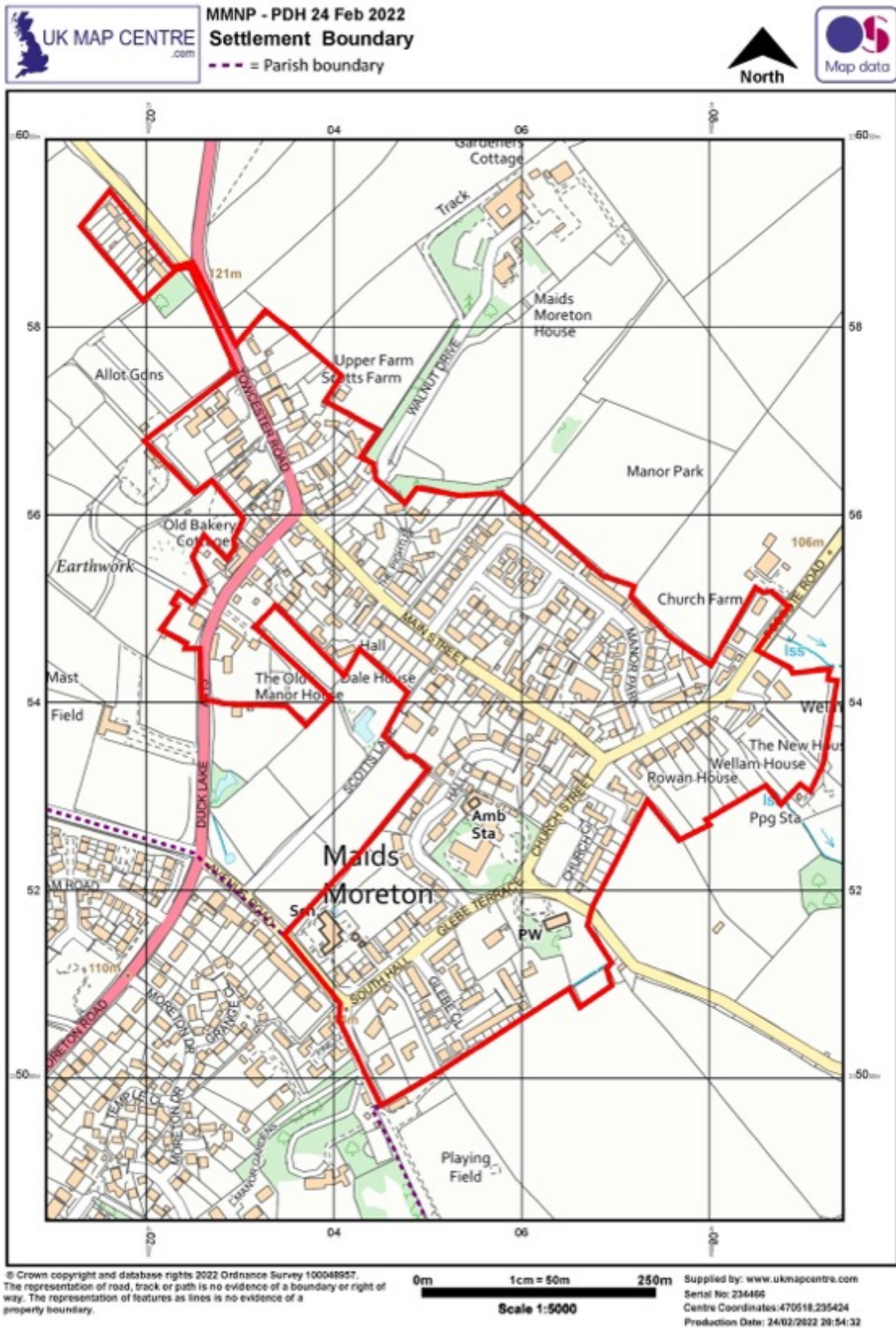
There are some small private companies based in private dwellings undertaking a range of occupations including plumbing, management consultancy, video production, company secretarial facilities and financing. In addition, there is a small but unknown number of people working as sole traders, mainly on consultancy tasks but a few running businesses selling products from home.

In respect of employment and travel to work, the 2011 Census recorded that of the economically active population: 11% worked from home; 76% used a car, van or motorcycle; 3% used a bus; and 7% went on foot or by bicycle. There is little employment within Maids Moreton and this is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

Mobile phone coverage is generally adequate throughout the area. Fixed infrastructure for internet connections is predominantly good within the built-up area, although short, intermittent failures of connection are frequent.

Maids Moreton has a strongly developed sense of community identity separate from Buckingham. Policy MMG 1 is a key policy, setting out locations for sustainable development, without compromising the rural setting of the village.

Plan 2: Maids Moreton Settlement Boundary



Policy MMG1: Sustainable Growth

1. Residential development will be supported for brownfield sites and for land within the Maids Moreton settlement boundary (Plan 2), except for designated Local Green Spaces (Plan 4).
2. Employment development (Use Class E) will be supported for existing employment sites and brownfield sites and for land within the Maids Moreton settlement boundary, except for designated Local Green Spaces, subject to there being no significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents or the historic and rural character and economy of the area.
3. Development to support or diversify agriculture and the rural economy will be supported, providing there is no loss of high grade agricultural land (Grade 3A and above) and no significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents or the historic and rural character and economy of the area.
4. Infilling of gaps within existing built frontages will be supported, subject to:
 - a. Complementing the village character, meeting the requirements of design, heritage and other policies in this plan;
 - b. Providing sufficient garden space for new dwellings and maintaining sufficient garden space for existing dwellings.
5. Development must not harm the open rural landscape setting of Maids Moreton as an historic village, including the landscape separation between Maids Moreton and the neighbouring settlements of Chackmore, Akeley, Leckhampstead, Foscite and Buckingham.
6. Development must include super-fast broadband provision within the site, so as to be ready as local services are upgraded.

Interpretation of MMG1

The policy highlights land within the settlement boundary as a location for residential or employment development, but makes clear that Scott's Lane Fields and other Local Green Space should not be developed. This is due to their intrinsic historical importance and recreational value as well as their contribution to the special interest and character of the Conservation Area. In addition, Scott's Lane Fields are designated as Local Green Space by Policy MME2.

Sufficient garden space would mean gardens of a size to support normal garden activities and also to reflect the character and pattern of garden spaces in the wider area.

Adverse impacts from development on amenity could include noise, disturbance, dust, vibration and other, less quantifiable, impacts such as loss of views, privacy and amenity, as well as the increased nuisance and safety aspects of more traffic movements and parking all resulting in reduced quality of life.

6.2 Residential Development

Purpose

To ensure that residential development meets local needs.

Rationale

Chapter 5 of the NPPF 2021 deals with supply of homes, mix and affordability, including a need to address the needs of groups with specific housing requirements.

Housing space standards are addressed in 'Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard' March 2015.

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 Policy H2 proposes that all housing schemes of 11 or more homes or on sites of 0.3 ha and above deliver at least 25% affordable homes on site. Furthermore, affordable housing needs to be tenure blind and distributed across any development.

The Local Plan suggests need for careful consideration of housing mix to respond to the demography, particularly the increasing proportion of older people with various levels of care need.

The 2016 Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment for Aylesbury Vale is in process of being updated. It recommends that 70% of affordable housing should be 1 and 2-bedroom units compared with only 35% of market housing. It also notes the importance of older people downsizing and releasing larger properties suitable for families into the market. House sales in Maids Moreton have been generally slow over the past 5 years and the market for larger properties is less fluid than that for smaller ones.

House prices in Maids Moreton are broadly similar to those in Buckingham, but around 18% less than in Buckinghamshire as a whole (prices are much higher in the south of the county; closer to London prices). Northamptonshire prices, including Brackley, are generally lower other than in Whittlebury, Silverstone and Towcester, where prices are similar to Maids Moreton. House prices and market rents are high compared with average incomes for younger people employed locally. More detailed information on house prices is given in the Background Document.

The average property price in Maids Moreton between 2015 and 2021 was £389,674. Since 2018, there has only been one house sale at less than £250,000. For a house of even this cost, with a 90% mortgage of £225,000 repaid over 25 years, buyers would also need to have a deposit of £25,000 and then pay £1009 per month at an interest rate of 2.5%. Noting that the median household annual disposable income is just under £30,000, very little of the current housing stock would be available for people with household disposable income less than the median.

Given the ageing population in the Parish, there is a need for smaller properties and sheltered accommodation for older people wishing to downsize, while maintaining safe, independent living in Maids Moreton. Due to currently high house prices, there is a need to ensure that new development includes smaller and less expensive housing for young families and first-time buyers, in particular two/three-bedroom accommodation and social as well as open market housing.

Policy MMG2: Residential Development

- 1. The mix of accommodation in residential development must reflect the needs of the area by comprising predominantly smaller housing (mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms) suitable for first time buyers, small families and elderly people seeking to downsize.**
- 2. Any affordable housing requirement, including First Homes, should be provided as an integral part of the development, to meet local need, and be of similar design and specification to market housing, so as to be tenure blind.**
- 3. Support will be given to specialist accommodation, including sheltered accommodation and supported living.**
- 4. Affordable residential accommodation should be an integral part of any development and be of similar design and specification, so as to be tenure blind.**
- 5. The layout of dwellings should be adaptable to differing needs and include storage space, meeting or exceeding the space standards in 'Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard' March 2015 or any standard replacing that document.**

Interpretation of MMG2

The Local Plan sets requirements for housing mix and affordability. This policy complements those in the Local Plan, highlighting the particular needs of the village, so should be applied together with those policies.

6.3 Community facilities

Purpose

To maintain, improve and expand the range of local community facilities, including recreational and play space.

Rationale

Chapter 8 of the NPPF deals with promoting healthy and safe communities, including guarding against loss of valued facilities and services.

Relevant policies in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 include:

- I3 Community Facilities and Assets of Community Value
- I2 Sports and Recreation

The Maids Moreton Parish Plan 2004 also addresses community facilities.

Maids Moreton has some characteristics of a '15 minute neighbourhood'. This is based on there being a mix of housing, employment and community facilities and a permeable environment to enable walking. Maintaining or expanding the range of community facilities is therefore a fundamental part of making Maids Moreton a sustainable village.

Currently there are no shops or medical facilities, but there are other key local community facilities including:

- Maids Moreton CE [Infant] School, Avenue Road;
- The Village Hall, external defibrillator, Main Street;
- Maids Moreton Playing Field and associated facilities;
- Rose Garden and level grass with benches (close to care homes), Junction Main Street and Church Street;
- The Scout Hut with kitchen and toilets;
- The Cricket Pavilion, with kitchen and toilets;
- Children's play park;
- St Edmund's Church, burial ground and garden of remembrance, Church Street;
- The Wheatsheaf Public House, Main Street;
- Allotments, area of 0.76ha with 19 allotments, some divided into half-plots, plus wooden hut with kitchen facilities and toilet block, Towcester Road;
- Scotts Lane verges with benches and information board; and
- Extensive footpath network with occasional benches.

Policy MMI1: Community Facilities

- 1. Development that improves existing community facilities or provides new community facilities will be supported, including public sports, play and leisure facilities, providing there is no significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents and the rural and historic character of the area.**
- 2. Development that results in the loss of community facilities will only be supported where a similar or better facility is provided in close proximity or where it can be demonstrated that their continued use is no longer viable.**

Interpretation of MMI1

In the case of replacement facilities, close proximity would mean within easy walking distance (around 0.5 miles).

To demonstrate that a community facility is no longer viable, it would be expected that meaningful steps be taken to continue the use, including offering the facility for sale at a realistic price for a period of at least 12 months.

Adverse impacts from development on amenity could include noise, disturbance, dust, vibration and other less quantifiable impacts such as loss of views, privacy and amenity, as well as the increased nuisance and safety aspects of more traffic all resulting in reduced quality of life.

6.4 Natural and Rural Environment

Purpose

To preserve or enhance the rural character of the village and enhance and conserve biodiversity and other environmental attributes and assets.

Rationale

Chapter 8 of the NPPF (promoting healthy and safe communities) highlights a need for planning policies to aim to achieve ‘healthy, inclusive and safe places’, making provision for shared spaces and community facilities, guarding against loss of valued facilities and services.

Chapter 15 deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including protection and enhancement of landscapes, intrinsic character and beauty of the landscape, habitats, and biodiversity.

Relevant policies in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 include:

- NE1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- NE4 Landscape character and locally important landscape
- NE8 Trees, hedgerows and woodlands

The Neighbourhood Area includes protected sites, as follows:

- Foxcote Reservoir and Wood, designated under SSSI, Local Wildlife Site and Water Framework Directive, which lies within both Maids Moreton and Foxcote civil parishes.
- The Ouse Valley East Designated Local Landscape Area is along the southern boundary of Maids Moreton civil parish with Buckingham and Thornborough so lies in all three civil parishes.
- Wellmore Meadow Biological Notification Site and Foscombe Meadow Biological Notification Site lie to the east of the settlement area.

There is a range of evidence relating to the natural environment, including:

- Maids Moreton Heritage Report September 2021
- Maids Moreton Conservation Area (2009), Aylesbury Vale District Council.
- Maids Moreton Parish Plan (2004), Maids Moreton Parish Council.
- Maids Moreton Tree Preservation Orders map
- Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment (2008), Aylesbury Vale District Council & Buckinghamshire County Council.
- Buckinghamshire Council Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy

Maids Moreton is a rural village set in an extensive agricultural landscape, with a clearly defined settlement area. Preservation of the rural setting is vital to conserving the identity of Maids Moreton as a rural village. The open grazing fields either side of Scott’s Lane are particularly sensitive in terms of their pastoral and historic character in the heart of the village and also form an important transition from suburban Buckingham to rural Maids Moreton.

Maids Moreton has good faunal and floral biodiversity including a number of species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and 25 Red list bird species recorded. Numerous trees and hedgerows contribute to biodiversity as well as to the rural and historic character of the parish.

This Plan seeks to preserve and enhance the key historical character-defining rural and natural wildlife features and setting of the village. This Plan resists development that causes harm to habitats or biodiversity, and welcomes preservation, restoration enhancement and creation of habitats and ecological networks, in line with NPPF policy.

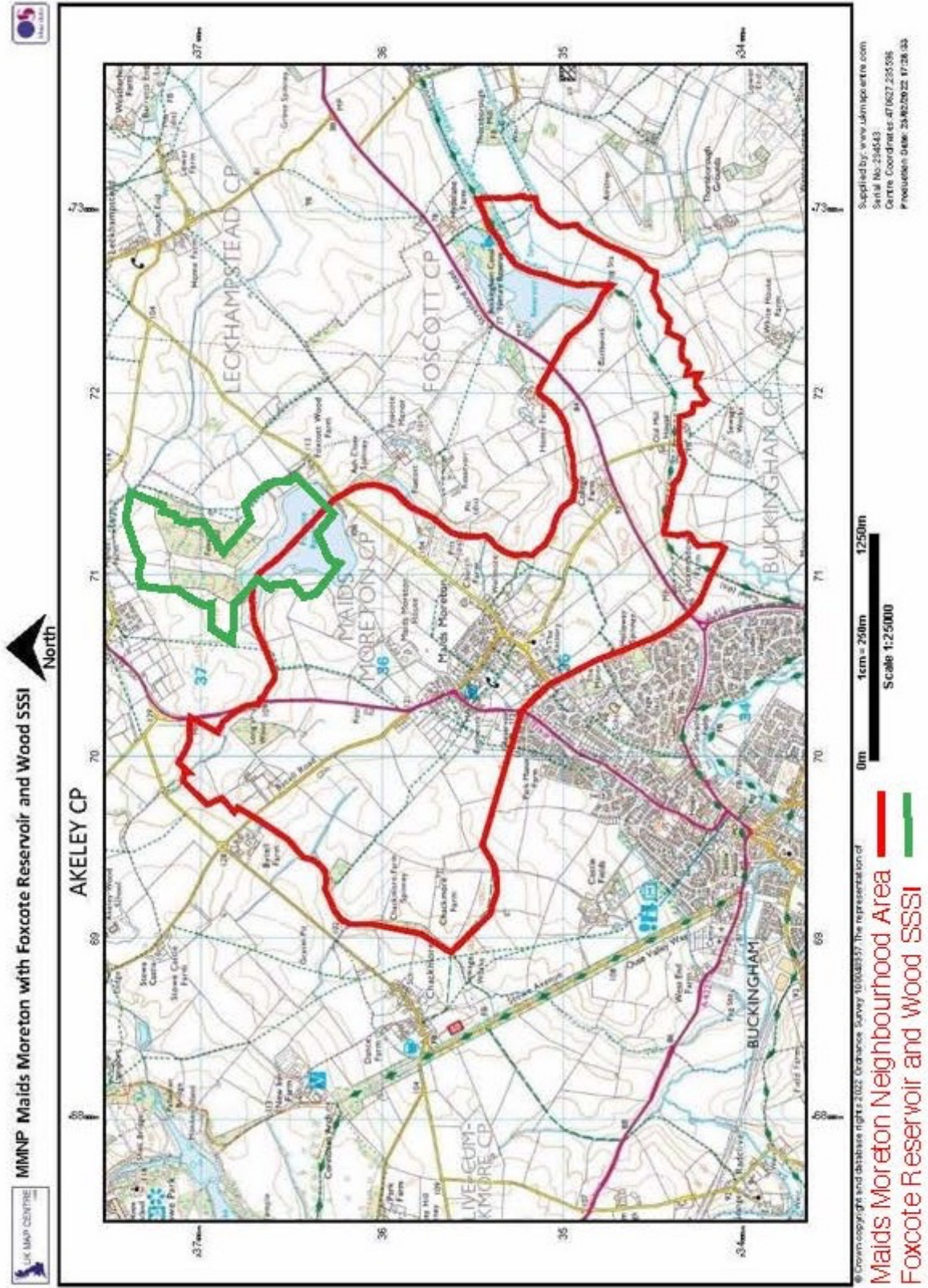
The proposals in this plan are also consistent with the requirements of the 2021 Environment Bill which targets the recovery of the natural world in the priority areas of air quality, biodiversity, water and waste, and reversal of the decline in species abundance by the end of 2030.

Given the proximity of Maids Moreton to a SSSI that hosts numerous Red List bird species, and its location surrounded by open countryside and with a large greenfield site at its heart, this plan takes particular note of Maids Moreton's natural environment and unique biodiversity characteristics and seeks to protect these and reverse negative impacts of climate change and unsustainable development.

The landscape character to the west of the village is a gently sloping wooded ridge with arable/pasture farming alternating in medium fields. To the west, this grades to LCA 2.4 Stowe Approaches, in which there is a slow transition to the designed landscape of Stowe and thence to the upper reaches of the Great Ouse Valley. To the east is Foxcote Valley (LCA 2.5) with incised enclosed valleys, uneven ground, steep pasture, small fields but arable intensification on suitable valley land. The southeast part of the parish along the river lies in LCA 3.1 – Lower Great Ouse Valley – with bankside willows and flood plain; pasture on the valley floor and arable on the gently sloping valley sides.

The landscape itself is one of mixed arable and livestock farming on largely individually owned and managed farms with relatively small field sizes, hedges with standard trees and patches of woodland varying between small copses and substantial blocks. This diversity of aerial structure provides a good intensity of edge effects supporting high levels of biodiversity, further supported by mixed land uses. The use of the land for both arable and pastoral farming has a long-established history, which also links with the way in which the village has developed over its long history of settlement.

Plan 3: Natural Environment Key Plan



Policy MME1: Rural and Natural Environment

- 1. Development must have no overall adverse impact on flora, habitats or biodiversity and should take opportunities to enhance habitats and green infrastructure and provide a biodiversity net gain.**
- 2. Where development causes harm to flora, habitats or biodiversity, it must be fully mitigated or offset in the design, features and landscaping of the development.**
- 3. Development should conserve or enhance and causes no harm to connected habitat throughout the area, including hedgerows and wildlife corridors.**
- 4. Trees and hedges should not be harmed or cut down and measures should be taken to protect them during the development process.**
- 5. Where loss of a tree is unavoidable, a replacement must be provided of ecologically similar species, or species with higher service value, and similar maturity and level of coverage.**
- 6. Development must cause no harm to the ecology, habitats and character of Foxcote Reservoir and Wood.**
- 7. Where development flanks the open rural landscape setting, a soft transition must be provided between built development and the rural edge in the form of a landscape buffer.**
- 8. Landscape design and planting in development should be an integral part of the design and layout, to complement and conserve the rural, natural and historic environments of the area.**

Interpretation of MME1

Actions for enhancement include the design of open space, and connectivity within the built village to optimise good biodiversity values. The green infrastructure within and beyond the village settlement provides wildlife corridors that support natural and ecological processes.

The policy seeks to protect trees and hedges and specimens and trees with a diameter of 75mm or greater at 1.5m from ground level must only be cut in exceptional circumstances, when all other alternatives have been exhausted. For replacements, native species will normally be preferred.

Compliance with the policy would require landscape design and planting to be submitted as part of the scheme, rather than leaving it to conditions. This is especially important in applying special heritage statutory duties and in considering impacts on wildlife and biodiversity. The policy should be applied closely with MME3, which also addresses landscape design.

Good biodiversity design would respect all existing biodiversity features and do no harm to these. Avoidance of islands would ensure connectivity to allow for the good gene flow that is essential to maintaining healthy populations of all elements within biodiversity.

Enhancement of wildlife habitats could include features such as bird and bat boxes, gaps in fences for hedgehogs and hibernacula for newts. Other wildlife enhancement measures are listed in the Green Guidance Note at Annex 1, which also lists local plant and tree species.

Sympathetic landscape buffers would include a height and density of trees, hedges and planting to effectively screen rear fences or walls for close neighbours while minimising any loss of open views to the wider countryside. Erosion of existing landscape buffers will be resisted. Hard transitions, such as unscreened concrete and close boarded panel fences, would not meet the requirements of the policy.

6.5 Local Green Space

Purpose

To designate Local Green Space and protect their special community value.

Rationale

Local Green Space, including criteria for designation, is dealt with in Chapter 8, Paragraphs 101-103 of the NPPF. Local Green Spaces must be demonstrably special to the local community and hold a particular local significance, for example because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or the richness of their wildlife.

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 policy NE 7 states that where land is identified as local green space on the policies map of a made Neighbourhood Plan, national policies will apply.

The five defined Local Green Spaces for Maids Moreton have special community value and are assessed in the LGS Evidence document. The Heritage Assessment, 2021 is also relevant.

The spaces designated as LGS are:

LGS1 Scott's Lane and the adjacent fields (Tin Hovel Field, Culver Leys and Whirly Field):

A popular beauty spot where people from Maids Moreton and Buckingham walk on the lane and PRoWs through the fields and sit on benches to enjoy the tranquil atmosphere, abundant nature and beautiful views of open undeveloped historic grazing pastures, essentially unchanged for over 400 years (Heritage Assessment, 2021).

LGS2 Maids Moreton CE First School field and spinney:

Highly valued locally as an exceptional recreational infant school play and sports space, with an atmospheric spinney and a pond hosting a significant population of Great Crested Newts. Infants, pre-school children, staff and visitors experience the rich and beautiful natural environment throughout the year here; annual events bring the community together in this special space.

LGS3 The Rose Garden:

A small public rose garden, well maintained by volunteers, providing a beautiful social space at a focal key point in the village, and close to two nursing homes.

LGS4 St Edmund's Churchyard:

A tranquil and beautiful historic graveyard. People tend graves, walk for leisure and contemplation, enjoy the rural views, flora and fauna, absorb the historic atmosphere and attend community events such as the annual barbecue, bat walks, and guided heritage walks-and-talks.

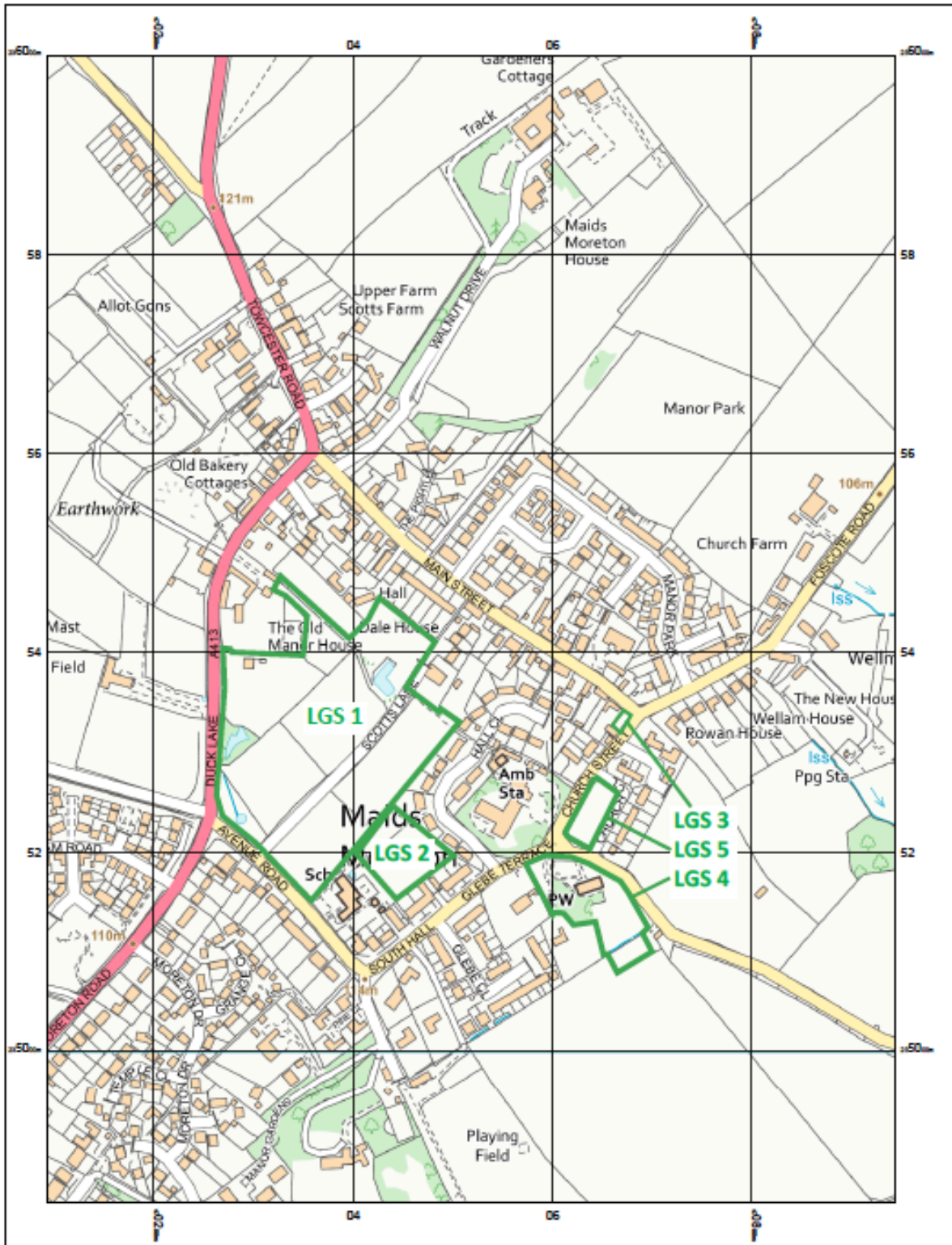
LGS5 Church Green:

A traditional green with mature trees making a significant contribution to the setting of the historic St Edmund's church, enhancing the beauty of this special part of the village. It also provides informal play space and occasionally hosts large-scale community events such as the Maids Moreton Millennium Pageant against the backdrop of the church.

Plan 4: Local Green Space



MMNP - PDH 24 Feb 2022
Local Green Space



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Policy MME2: Local Green Space

1. The following spaces are designated as Local Green Space (See Plan 4):
 - LGS1: Fields around Scott's Lane
 - LGS2: Maids Moreton CE School field and Forest School spinney, Avenue Rd
 - LGS3: The Rose Garden, Church St and Main St
 - LGS4: St Edmund's Churchyard, Mill Lane (also known as College Farm Road)
 - LGS5: Church Green, Church Street
2. Development must not harm the open and green character, amenity, safety or accessibility of Local Green Space.
3. Small-scale development within Local Green Space may be supported in exceptional circumstances where all of the following requirements are met:
 - a. it enhances or supports the community value and community use of the space;
 - b. it is located and designed so that it does not compromise the open or green character of the space.

Interpretation of MME2

Local Green Space designation creates similar protection as green belts. However, it should be noted that the purpose of Local Green Spaces is different from the five purposes for green belts, as reflected in the policy.

6.6 Sustainable Design

Purpose

To ensure that development is well-designed, sustainable and adds to the locally distinctive character of Maids Moreton.

Rationale

Chapter 12 of the NPPF (achieving well-designed places) lists design considerations as including function, adding to the quality of the area, visual attractiveness, effective landscaping, being sympathetic to local character and history, not discouraging innovation and change, maintain strong and distinctive sense of place, optimising site potential, and making safe, inclusive and accessible places. For neighbourhood plans, this includes identifying the special qualities of an area.

The National Design Guide (2021) establishes that well-designed places have ten characteristics. These are context, nature, identity, use, resources, movement, built form, public space, homes and buildings and lifespan.

Relevant policies in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 include:

- BE2 Design of new development
- BE3 Protection of the Amenity of residents
- BE4 Density of new development
- C3 Renewable energy

Various evidence documents are relevant to design and have informed the policy, including:

- Building for a Healthy Life (update on Building for Life 12);
- Maids Moreton Vision and Design Statement, 2007,
- Maids Moreton Heritage Assessment 2021
- Inspector's final report on Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, Aug 2021.

This Policy seeks to ensure that new developments respect the character of Maids Moreton and takes account of the intrinsic constraints of its historic and natural environments. Designs should enhance practical functionality of the village infrastructure rather than exacerbate existing constraints and should promote the quality of life of all residents.

Maids Moreton takes seriously its obligation to contribute to climate change efforts and regards sustainable development as crucial. The use of high-quality building design using durable, local and recycled materials will both limit the carbon footprint of development and will contribute positively to the distinctive sense of place and character. The policy seeks to ensure that new development contributes to climate change mitigation in terms of design, landscaping, materials, water conservation and drainage and other sustainable features.

Policy MME3: Sustainable Design

1. Development must be well-designed, sustainable and create a locally distinctive sense of place, meeting the following requirements of this policy, proportionate to the scale and nature of the development.
2. Development must include positive design features to reduce carbon use or achieve carbon neutrality and to support biodiversity.
3. Development must complement the immediate context and wider village character in terms of scale, height, massing, set-back from the road, and any pattern of front and rear gardens.
4. Development must complement traditional front boundary treatments, in the form of low (below 1 metre) walls using traditional local materials or hedges.
5. Development must provide active frontages to face roads or spaces, in the form of elevations with windows and doors, so as to provide overlooking and natural surveillance.
6. Opportunities must be taken to prioritise pedestrian permeability and connectivity, including by providing convenient links to existing footpath networks for people of all ages and levels of mobility.
7. Shared traffic and pedestrian space will only be supported where it would enable safe walking for people of all ages and levels of mobility.
8. Development must cause no harm to surrounding land or properties through surface water run-off and hard surface areas should be minimised and should use permeable surface materials to allow water drainage, whilst also complementing the historic character of the area.
9. Landscaping and planting should be an integral part of the design and layout, to reinforce the rural and historic character of the area, also meeting the requirements of Policy MME1.
10. Landscaping and green infrastructure must form an integral part of the design and layout of development, to support amenity, recreation and biodiversity.
11. Materials must be durable, with a high standard of finish and use of local or recycled materials will be supported.
12. All new dwellings must include discreetly located and screened storage space for bins and recycling.
13. The spacing and separation of properties should provide sufficient access for maintenance and repair.
14. Innovative and creative design solutions for the specific site and context will be supported, especially where they incorporate superior environmental performance.

Interpretation of MME3

The policy should be applied together with MME4 within the Conservation Area. Compliance with the policy requires careful analysis of the characteristics of the site and context. Design and access statements can explain how the design of development responds to this context and meets the requirements of the policy.

The need to treat landscaping design and planting as an integral part of the design will mean that details should be part of planning submissions rather than being left to conditions.

The policy encourages use of local and recycled materials, but does not preclude use of other high-quality materials, for example materials with low embodied energy or superior environmental performance.

Separation of properties to allow for maintenance could be interpreted as a minimum of 2 metres (or 2 metres either side of a dividing fence, wall or hedge).

In terms of landscape design, the preference is for trees, shrubs and ground flora to be appropriate native or well-naturalised species. There are opportunities for encouraging pollinators through use of native wildflowers and grasses. Verges and footpaths are important biodiversity corridors that should be fully integrated into plans.

The Green Design Guidance Note in Chapter 8 should be useful in securing compliance with the policy requirement to include positive design features to reduce carbon use or achieve carbon neutrality and support biodiversity.

6.7 Historic Character

Purpose

To preserve or enhance Maids Moreton's historic character and heritage assets.

Rationale

Chapter 16 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, including a need for plans to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. This includes consideration of sustaining or enhancing heritage assets, wider social, economic and cultural benefits, contribution of new development, and character of place.

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 includes Policy BE1 Heritage Assets.

Evidence documents that have informed the policy include:

- Maids Moreton Village Design Statement (2007)
- Maids Moreton Conservation Area (2009), Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Maids Moreton Heritage Assessment (2021) Urban Vision Enterprise
- Maids Moreton Houses with History 2017

Maids Moreton has an organic and informal character, based on incremental development over time, rather than a planned character. There are 21 list entries (commonly known as listed buildings) in the Parish plus 2 scheduled monuments.

The historic centre dating from the 1600s has narrow roads, with narrow or no pavements. The historic centre is concentrated around Main Street and Church Street, with buildings of all ages. The fifteenth century St Edmund's church is grade 1 listed and provides a focus for the village. There are also several open green areas within the village settlement, which are key elements of character.

The older houses are of individual design on non-uniform plots. Some are set directly on to the roadway. Others are at the rear of the pavement or are set back behind garden frontages with brick or stone walls, metal railings or hedge boundaries.

The more recent housing tends towards a more generic and uniform character, set on wide streets with wide pavements, wide green verges, set back frontages, trees and open views. Walls commonly utilise brick and stone and in some cases a mixture of these.

Overall, the impression is of individual houses and groups of houses, predominantly two-storey and with mixed rear of pavement, edge of roadway and set-back frontages. A network of footpaths provides good pedestrian infrastructure across the village.

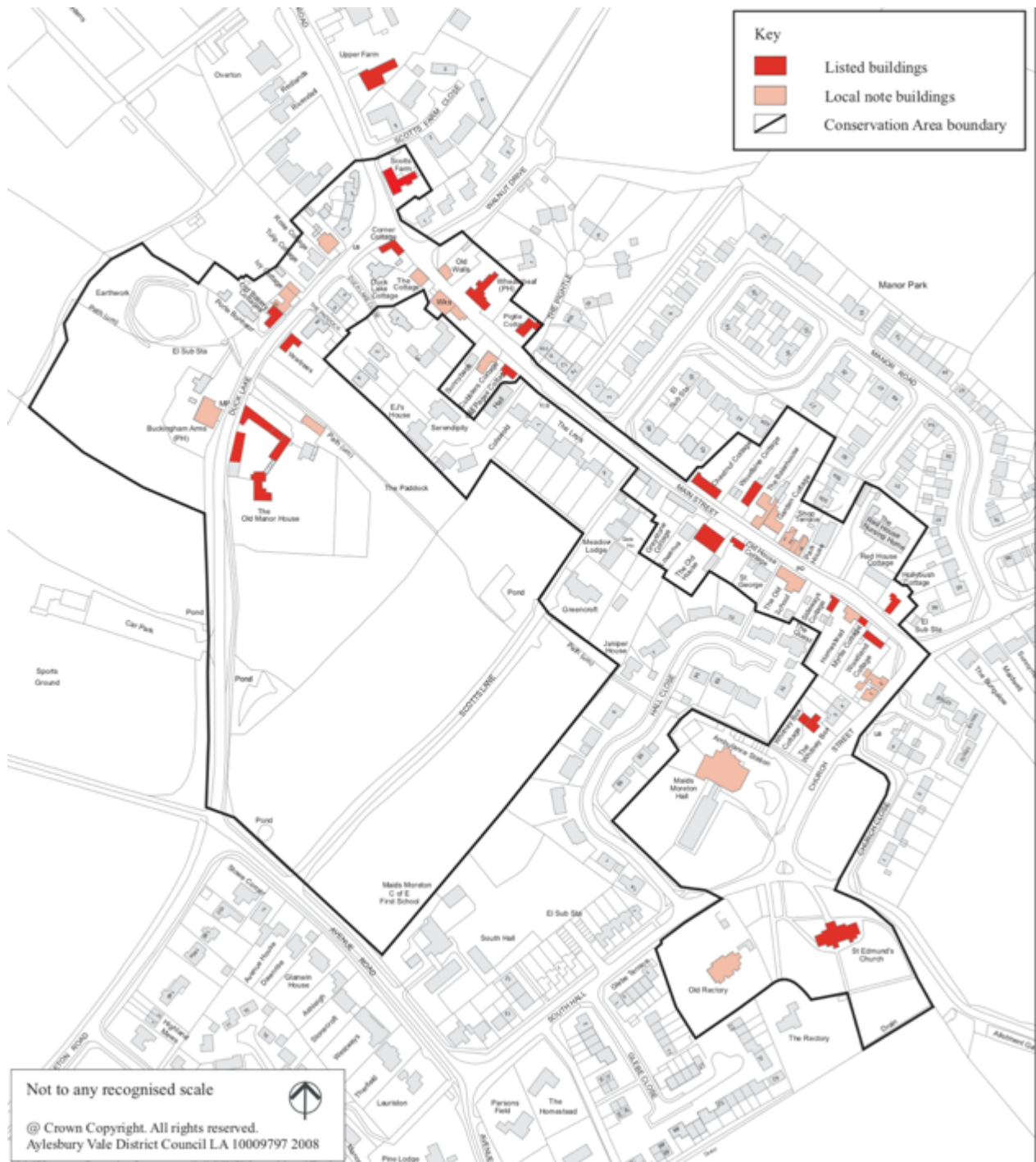
The policy intends to encourage development that complements these key characteristics of the area. It does not seek to suppress creativity or to require imitation. Indeed, it is important to avoid compromising the integrity of the area through 'fake' historic buildings.

Maids Moreton has a distinctive sense of place as an historic village, with a clear settlement boundary. Within the settlement area, Maids Moreton has several challenges.

The historic narrow through-routes have narrow or no pavements. Domestic doorways, driveways and footpaths open directly onto the roadway. There are numerous conflicts of traffic and pedestrians, especially where driveways, junctions, lack of pavements and poor visibility coincide. The policy emphasises safety, rather than seeking further development with no pavements, despite this being part of the character.

Many of Maids Moreton's listed buildings are of timber and infill construction, without foundations. Most stand on the main routes through the village, some fronting directly on to the roadway in very close proximity to passing traffic.

Plan 5: Maids Moreton Conservation Area Boundary and Listed Buildings



Policy MME4: Historic Character

1. **Built development, including new-build and extensions, must complement the historic character of the area, including responding to the following key characteristics:**
 - a. **The townscape character based on varied building lines, with both rear of the pavement and set-back building frontages, and a predominantly two-storey built form;**
 - b. **The informal and domestic nature of the area, with most houses being of individual character rather than being of uniform design;**
 - c. **The landscape character of the area, including mature trees and hedges as boundary treatments, also with varied gardens which are not of uniform size or shape.**
 - d. **Predominant materials, including brick, render, stone, tile, slate and thatch, with timber frame windows;**
 - e. **Boundary treatments comprising low brick walls, metal railings, stone walls or hedges.**
 - f. **The architectural diversity of the area, reflecting its development over time;**
 - g. **Scott's Lane and the adjacent open and green landscape, fields and paths;**
 - h. **Views towards St Edmund's Church and open countryside, especially the Ouse Valley and Foxcote Reservoir.**
2. **Notwithstanding the built character of parts of the Maids Moreton Conservation Area, building frontages directly onto the roadside with no pavement will not be supported, in the interests of pedestrian safety.**
3. **Development must not harm the character, amenity and structural integrity of historic assets through the generation of significant additional traffic movements or parking in Main Street.**

Interpretation of MME4

The policy should not be interpreted as requiring or even encouraging stylistic imitation. Indeed, it is important to avoid falsification of heritage. However, development should complement the different aspects of character set out in the policy.

The policy, by defining aspects of historic character, should assist in the application of the special heritage duties under Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Use of local or reclaimed materials is encouraged in the Sustainable Design policy, as are low embodied energy materials which use relatively low amounts of energy in their manufacture.

Local Materials include:

Stone: Bath or Cotswold, oölitic or bioclastic limestone;

Brick: Brindled / blended / heritage / cottage / antique / hand moulded (in mixed red and red multi shades);

Roof tiles: Slate / plain clay plain tiles (predominantly red).

Design and access statements provide an opportunity to explain how the design of development meets the requirements of the policy.

6.8 Transport and Active Travel

Purpose

To support active travel and ensure that transport infrastructure does not harm the character of the area.

Rationale

Chapter 9 of the NPPF deals with promoting sustainable transport, including consideration of impacts of development, existing and proposed infrastructure, promotion of walking, cycling, and public transport, environmental impacts, and movement, streets, and parking in the design of schemes.

Relevant policies in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 include:

- T5 Delivering transport in new development
- T6 Vehicle parking
- T7 Footpaths and cycle routes

Evidence documents used to inform the policy include:

- Maids Moreton Traffic Surveys 2018 and 2019
- Maids Moreton ATC Traffic Survey 2020

Major employment centres accessible from Maids Moreton include Northampton, Oxford, Aylesbury, Milton Keynes and London. There are only limited employment opportunities in Maids Moreton and Buckingham. The nearest rail stations are in Milton Keynes and Bicester, both 12 miles away. In due course, there will be a station at Winslow (8 miles) with services to MK and Oxford. Bus services to Aylesbury, Milton Keynes Oxford and Cambridge can be accessed in Buckingham but the lack of public transport from Maids Moreton into Buckingham results in most people commuting by car or van (Census 2011). Around 90% of households own at least one vehicle (Census 2011). Working from home or commuting by car to work or to a rail station or regular bus route are the options for many people.

The centre of the village is 1.3 miles from central Buckingham, although supermarkets and medical facilities are progressively moving to the Industrial area and Lace Hill on the Southern Bypass, 2.2 miles distant. The A413 from Buckingham to Towcester skirts the western edge of Maids Moreton. Milton Keynes and Bicester lie 12.5 miles to the east and west respectively. The county town of Aylesbury is 19 miles to the south.

Looking at the 2013, 2018, 2019 and 2020 surveys, traffic levels have increased substantially within the village in recent years. Through traffic has increased greatly following the expansion of Buckingham, in particular along the Moreton Road to the west of the Parish boundary. These housing developments have not been accompanied by adequate infrastructure improvements.

Within Maids Moreton, Main St, Avenue Rd, Church St, South Hall have become routes for speeding vehicles trying to avoid congestion in Buckingham and this has safety and amenity implications, especially given the lack of footway in Main Street and width limit and poor visibility in Mill Lane.

The increased traffic levels, including through the historic parts of the village, have a negative cumulative effect on old buildings, which are mainly built on the solum or, at best, with very shallow foundations. This is a matter of major concern for the long-term conservation of the many historic buildings, most of which lie close to the carriageways.

There are no safe cycling routes, even into Buckingham, and while walking is possible, it is not really feasible for the elderly, disabled or those with small children, particularly because of the relatively steep return journey and the lack of pavements in places.

Residents have expressed serious concerns about potential accidents due to the speed and volume of traffic through the village, and lack of pavements and visibility, especially the risk to children and pedestrians outside Maids Moreton CE School and on Main Street, which has no or only one pavement for much of its length. There are also concerns regarding the lack of crossing facilities on all the through-routes: Main Street, Foscoote Road, Church Street, Glebe Terrace, South Hall and Avenue Road.

There is also concern about the increasing trend to park cars on pavements blocking the path of pushchairs, wheelchairs and emergency vehicles. Often, this is because some housing has inadequate parking for modern vehicle usage.

Figure 5: Method of travel to work (NSO census)

Method of travel	MM 2001		MM 2011		AV 2011	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Age 16 to 74 and in employment	467	100.0	446	100.0	90,724	100.0
Driving a car or van	328	70.2	317	71.1	60,447	66.6
Passenger in a car or van	24	5.1	27	6.1	4,125	4.5
Work from home, or use public transport, or travel by bicycle or walking		23.3		20.6		27.0

Policy MMI2: Transport and Active Travel

1. **Development should take opportunities to enhance safe pedestrian and cycle connectivity, as part of a balanced transport provision.**
2. **Secure, covered storage for cycles and personal vehicles must be provided within development, including for all new dwellings, and should be discreetly located and designed to complement the historic and rural character of the area.**
3. **Parking space within development must be sufficient to support the scale of the scheme and must be carefully integrated with the building and landscape design, so as to complement and avoid harm to the historic and rural character of the area.**
4. **Highway infrastructure works required to enable development must take opportunities to enhance, and must cause no harm to, the historic and rural character of the area.**
5. **Development must not harm the safety, amenity or character of rural lanes or historic roads, including those with no footways.**
6. **Streets must be designed to allow for emergency and public service vehicles to gain access and turn around.**

Interpretation of MMI2

The policy promotes more sustainable forms of transport, to ensure that development is not based on a narrow consideration of vehicular transport alone.

The special statutory duties relating to conservation areas and listed buildings apply not just to the development itself, but also any associated transport infrastructure works. So particular care is required to preserve or enhance and avoid harm to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and to the various listed buildings and their settings.

Highway infrastructure could include new or enlarged access, highway improvements and sensitively designed traffic calming measures. Highway works that urbanise the village, such as roundabouts and excessive signage, would be unlikely to meet the requirements of the policy.



7. Infrastructure Priorities

7.1 Community and Transport Infrastructure

The actions identified in parish Plan 2004 and responses through community engagement have allowed priorities to be identified.

Residents value the peaceful rural environment, which gives opportunities for informal recreation and leisure. There is also scope for enhancing recreation facilities for children and youth. Walking in attractive and safe environments is important not just for recreation, but to active travel, with associated benefits to physical and mental health. The footpaths and fields and the Local Green Spaces are really important, particularly, Scott's Lane fields.

Against this context, the preferences for this Neighbourhood Plan for the use of Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy monies is for:

- Improvement of footpaths and green spaces, carefully designed to preserve or enhance the local rural character;
- Improvement of community leisure and recreation facilities
- Traffic calming measures, carefully designed to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and to preserve listed buildings and their setting;

8. Green Development Guidance Note

This guidance note is not policy. It is informal guidance for developers on how to make development greener. Therefore, it is not limited to planning matters.

However, following advice in the guidance note may be useful in securing compliance with design and other policies.

Green Building Design

The aim should be to create carbon neutral development. In terms of building design, this can include things like:

- superior insulation properties;
- airtightness;
- natural ventilation and air flow;
- use of non-toxic materials from sustainable sources, including local, low-embodied energy or recycled materials;
- use of green or brown roofs;
- orientation to take account of solar gain;
- use of bird and bat boxes and transit routes for ground-dwelling creatures;
- rainwater capture, storage and reuse (grey water);
- making the house layout and design adaptable for different and changing needs;
- efficient use of energy, water and other resources, for example through use of LED lighting;
- pollution and waste reduction measures and enabling of re-use and recycling.

There are different green building standards, such as Passive-Haus and BREAME.

Green Landscape Design

A key principle is to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) into the landscape design. This can involve green spaces for residential developments. But it can also be applied at the level of a single dwelling, for example by minimising hard surfacing and ensuring that hard surfaces are permeable.

Use of traditional hedges for boundary treatments, rather than walls and fences, creates a greener environment, and also enhances the historic and rural character of the area.

Local Plant and Tree Species

A key principle is to separate wild and domestic (gardens and parks) settings. Wild settings should predominantly use appropriate native or naturalised species.

Thorny plants (*e.g.*, *Pyracantha*) should not be planted adjacent to footpaths. problem species for hedges should be avoided, such as Leyland cypress.

Poisonous plants should also be avoided, such as ragwort / corn cockle.

Wild Settings:

In wild settings, the following is an indicative list of species appropriate for the area:

Trees	Hedges	Grasses and Wildflowers
Alder (common)	Blackthorn	Mixes of native grasses and wildflowers – specified for the location Species that support pollinators and invertebrates generally Clovers for nitrogen fixation
Ash	Bullace	
Black poplar – var betulifolia	Crab apple	
Elm (disease resistant clones)	Dogwood	
Grey willow	Elder	
Hazel	Goat willow	
Hornbeam	Hawthorn	
Oak	Holly	
Small-leaved lime	Spindle	
Wild cherry	Wayfaring tree	
	Whitebeam	
	Wild service tree	
	Dog rose	
	Osier living hedges	

Domestic Settings:

In domestic settings, smaller trees should be used appropriate for garden sites.

Appropriate planting includes:

- Species from “wild settings” lists plus:
- Apples, pears on appropriate rootstocks
- Cherries, plums for fruit
- Holly – non-spiny varieties
- Horse chestnut
- Rowan
- Roses in appropriate settings
- Silver birch
- Walnut
- Osier hedging
- Shrubs that are non-invasive

Wildlife Measures

Design features to support wildlife include:

- Bat boxes and bird boxes (owl, raptors, house sparrow, house-martin, swift, woodpecker)
- Measures to encourage reptiles and amphibians
- Hedgehog gaps in fences
- Badger routes
- Wildlife connectivity via grass verges and footpath edges

- Well-conserved edges between hedges, trees and open space to improve arthropod habitat
- Meadow edge grasses and wildflowers, bee friendly desirable

Green Energy

Green energy schemes can be created at micro-scale for specific properties or at local level, for groups of properties. These can include wind turbines, ground heat pumps, photovoltaics, biomass and other technologies. There has to be careful consideration of the impact of such schemes on historic and rural character, so the location and design of such facilities needs careful consideration.

Materials

Local materials include:

Stone: Bath or Cotswold, oölitic or bioclastic limestone;

Brick: Brindled / blended / heritage / cottage / antique / hand moulded (in mixed red and red multi shades);

Roofing: Slate / plain clay plain tiles (predominantly red) and thatch.

Low embodied energy materials are materials that use relatively low amounts of energy in their manufacture.

9. Contact

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