

EAST HANNEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 TO 2031

Regulation 16 Final Submission Version

Prepared by:

East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

On behalf of East Hanney Parish Council

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1. Introduction

The Localism Act 2011 introduced Neighbourhood Planning into the hierarchy of spatial planning in England, giving communities the right to shape their future development at a local level.

East Hanney Parish Council (EHPC) is a “qualifying body” and authorised to lead in the preparation of the East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan (EHNP). To produce the Plan, the Parish Council (PC) appointed the East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (EHNPS), which includes parish councillors and community volunteers, with support from Community First Oxfordshire (CFO), an independent planning consultant – Mark Doodes Planning (MDP), and Vale of the White Horse District Council (VWHDC).

This document and accompanying appendices constitute the (Regulation 16) submission version of the EHNP for comment by Vale of the White Horse District Council, statutory consultees and other interested stakeholders. It has been prepared by the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee with support from the local people, statutory bodies and advisors. This submission follows the pre-submission (Regulation 14) Statutory Consultation process conducted from December 2021-January 2022, following which comments were analysed and used to refine the documentation.

The EHNP sets out objectives and policies that will be used in shaping the future development of the Parish. These have been established through extensive public consultation and are underpinned by both statistical information and local knowledge. The aims and objectives of the EHNP relate principally to planning matters but also have relevance to other issues important to the community. In our view, it represents a strong and robust approach to the Localism agenda and has been informed through consultation with the community.

The EHNP sets out a plan for a sustainable future for East Hanney, taking into account the views and needs of the residents. The Plan has a time frame in line with the Vale of the White Horse District Council Local Plan time frame: 2019 to 2031.

Alongside the EHNP and its accompanying appendices, the Parish Council also submits the following documents:

- **A Basic Conditions Statement:** This demonstrates how the EHNP meets the statutory requirements set out within the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012)
- **A Consultation Statement:** This comprises a statement which sets out who has been consulted, how consultation has been undertaken and how the representations have informed the EHNP.

2. The East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan

2.1. How the EHNP fits into the Planning System

Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and allows local people a say in how development is shaped within their local areas. The East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Guidance and the development plan for the Vale of the White Horse District Council, which consists of:

- Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 - Part 1
- Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 - Part 2
- Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Plan

N.B As at 2022 The District Council together with South Oxfordshire District Council are jointly in the process of developing a Joint Development Plan for the future, which is at an early stage.

Neighbourhood Plans must also be in line with European regulations as incorporated into UK law as set out in national planning practice guidance on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations.

2.2. Designation

In accordance with regulations, the VWHDC publicised the Neighbourhood Plan application from EHPC and advertised a 6-week consultation period which was completed. The Head of Planning at Vale agreed the designated area (shown in Figure 1) as the East Hanney Neighbourhood Area on 15 July 2015.

The following diagram shows the designated area.

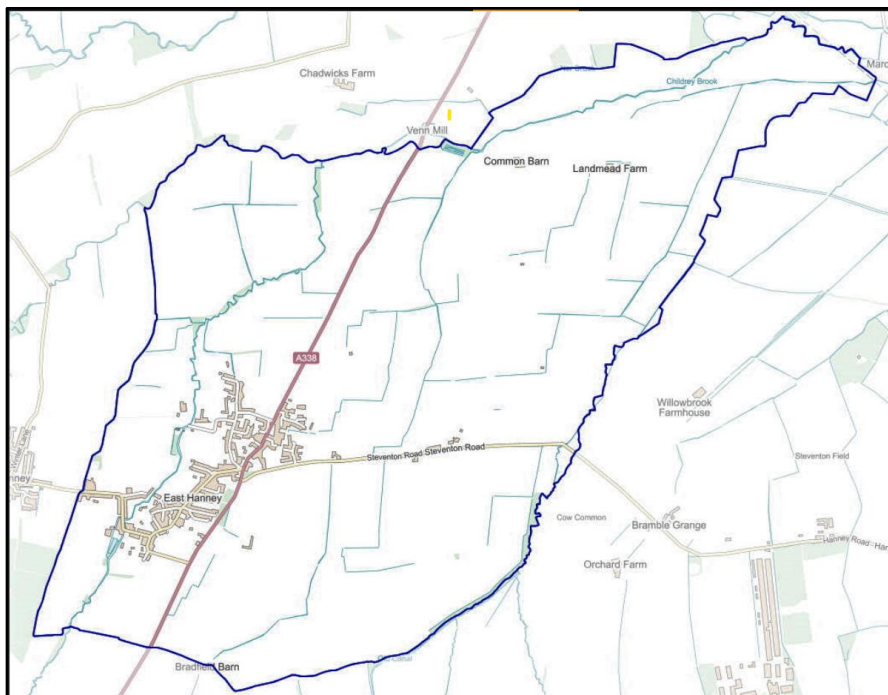


Figure 1- East Hanney Neighbourhood plan area

The following map shows the context of the designated area within the surrounding rural landscape and distance from neighbouring villages.

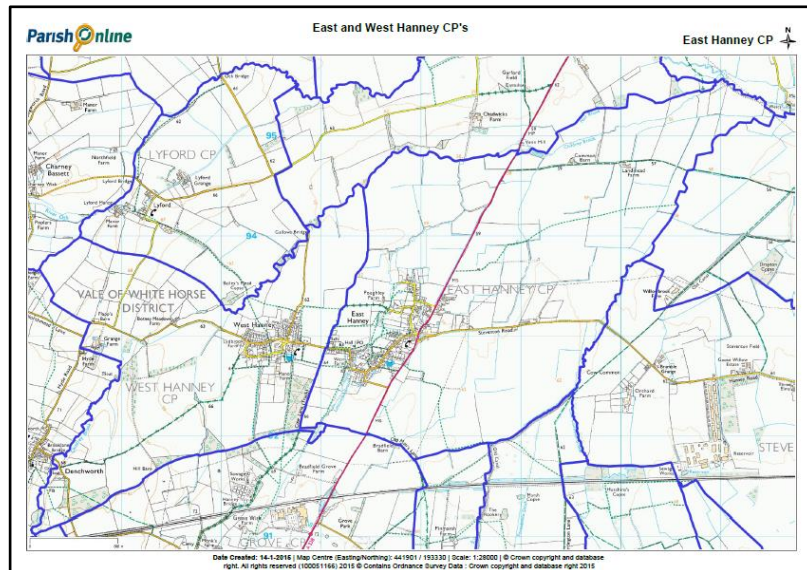


Figure 2- East Hanney Neighbourhood plan area location and surrounding area.

2.3. Community engagement

From 2015, when the community was first consulted about the EHNP, up until this pre-submission stage, the Steering Committee has followed a community consultation strategy and encouraged community involvement. This was achieved through open meetings, via newsletters, the EHPC website, and a more comprehensive community consultation Questionnaire which assessed the specific neighbourhood housing needs and other key issues for the village.

At each stage in the Plan process, elements such as the Plan Objectives, Vision, and Policies have been refined in response to feedback from residents.

The extensive community consultation process is comprehensively documented in the Consultation Statement. This captures the details of the consultation process followed at each stage of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan to date, including the early informative processes, public events and community forums undertaken as the Plan evolved. It also includes the details of the Regulation 14 Consultation undertaken and the responses received.

2.4. Plan Creation

The Steering Committee (EHNPS) drafted policies to meet the EHNP objectives. In this task, the EHNPS had input from Community First Oxfordshire, the District Council and an independent planning advisor.

An early draft of the draft policies was presented to the public and published in advance on the Parish website. Feedback was received and the policies subsequently refined. The planning justification, evidence and local support underpinning each of the EHNP policies is set out with the respective policies and have been subject to consultation, including the Regulation 14 statutory consultation as part of this process, and where relevant been amended to conform with the consultation responses received.

2.5. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

A SEA Screening Opinion produced by the Planning Department at Vale of White Horse District Council (13.1.23) advised that a SEA would not be required for the EHNP.

2.6. Submission, Examination and Referendum

This document is the submission version of the EHNP. The PC is responsible for submitting this (Regulation 16) version to the District Council, which will consult with statutory consultees and other interested stakeholders for a statutory six-week period before the Plan is subjected to an Examination by an Independent Examiner.

Once any further amendments have been made the Plan will be subject to a local referendum. If the Plan is supported by a majority vote at the referendum, the Plan will be 'made' or adopted by the District Council.

3. The Parish of East Hanney – Development Context

3.1. Location and Brief History

The parish of East Hanney is located approximately 3 miles north of Wantage, closely neighbouring the village of West Hanney and is within the Vale of White Horse District of Oxfordshire.

The parish encompasses the village of East Hanney, which is a rural village with a long history, surrounded by land mainly used for arable crops and historically orchards and paddocks.

The aerial photograph below illustrates that East Hanney is a low-density village settlement situated in open countryside surrounded by agricultural land within the typical Lowland Vale landscape. The lowland vale landscape is distinctive and valued for its own quality, the area around East Hanney is green and recognized as being of environmental and visual value. There are notable views from both the south and the north, including from the ancient ridge in the south.



Figure 3- Aerial View

The underlying land is formed of and denoted as Upper Thames Clay Vales. This is summarised as a broad belt of open, gently undulating lowland farmland on predominantly Jurassic and Cretaceous clays. The Vale of White Horse District Council have carried out a Landscape character assessment of the area of the Vale of White Horse District, within which they have divided the district into landscape types. The area covered by the East Hanney Neighbourhood plan includes two types, RF (River Flood Plain) and VL (Lower Vale Farmland). The village is therefore built generally on a clay base and is formed of farmland and river plain. More specifically, the village lies within the zone of Central Alluvial Island Villages, which were established in pre-Norman times. The village is thought to have remained rural and quiet only growing organically from a small core until the early 1800's when the introduction of the canal and railway led to growth and changes. The village that existed prior to the turn of this century very much reflected the shape and form of the village developed from the early 1800's or earlier.

The name Hanney is thought to derive from the Saxon 'hanena-ey' meaning 'the island frequented by wild cocks'. Several villages in the area are similarly located and are still referred to as the 'island villages'. Causeways remain as practical evidence raising vulnerable village paths and linking East Hanney with its neighbour to the west.

The village has a long history, and this has resulted in a village with a wide variety of building styles, two conservation areas and a good proportion of listed buildings, which together with the green and rural environment provide a very strong sense of place and character.

The development of the village has been influenced by the natural environment in which it is situated, the geology, and major natural features, particularly the Letcombe Brook. The brook passes through the middle of East Hanney, historically the village developing alongside the Brook. There remain two mills and a network of ditches. The water ways reflecting the close relationship between the village and the stream, and East Hanney's vulnerability to flooding.



Figure 4 - Letcombe Brook

The Letcombe Brook flows into Childrey Brook before joining the River Ock and ultimately into the Thames, the River Ock also having influence on the village. The surrounding geology together with the waterways jointly mean that the village is subject to flood, as well as being typically flat in nature with alluvial soils suited for agriculture.

The discovery of Neolithic pottery in the fields between the Hanneys confirms the early habitation of this fertile area, with the Letcombe Brook at its heart and there is also much evidence of habitation during the bronze, iron, roman and saxon periods. Finds in both Hanneys indicate the use of the current Wantage to Oxford route as a roman road.

The Saxon Hanney brooch found in 2009 is the most significant recent archaeological discovery. Excavations undertaken with recent development works has evidenced that the village was settled throughout all of the above periods.

The historic or older part of the village broadly extends along the Letcombe Brook and records show that the land has been farmed since the bronze age, also that the area was overseen by manorial estates. Historic footpaths, stone walls, green verges, stone-built dwellings and thatched cottages together with verdant green spaces give witness to a rural and valued environment.

The centre of the village has become focused on the playing field area which has a memorial hall (shown below) with a community shop. The primary school which has served the community for over 100 years, also being in this part of the village.



Figure 5 - Hanney War Memorial Hall – Village Hall

Historically, the population has been consistent and stable in number reflecting very little development. For example, the population was recorded as 748 in the 2011 census and 746 in the 2001 census. The green location and propensity for much of the land to flood being natural reasons as to why there has been little growth over the years.

East Hanney has recently experienced rapid growth in the number of homes, which are either in the process of development, or newly built, with [271] new dwellings (April 2021) having received planning approval since 2011, the majority of which has been since 2015. This level of growth has brought both changes and sustainability challenges for the village's future.

It has also brought a considerable increase in community numbers to welcome, new people to support village clubs, to share amenities, to build relationships and to plan for.

The village has a close-knit community with a strong supportive environment as demonstrated by the many clubs and organizations' active within the village. There is a very strong sense of community. Many of the clubs and organizations have been active in the village for long periods reflecting the general stability of the community. There are also a number of families who have lived in the village for generations.

In Summary:

East Hanney is a historic village in a rural setting with a strong sense of place and character. It has an established, long serving and thriving community who care for the village, its history and its sense of place. Our policies reflect this and the wishes of the community, as determined through the NP process by way of consultation and community engagement. Our policies, whilst being in general conformity with the hierarchy of wider planning policies, set out to ensure and provide for the needs and requirements of the village and the community.

3.2. Planning and Development context

Planning context

As well as being consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, the EHNP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area, as required by the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

East Hanney parish lies within the Vale of White Horse District in the County of Oxfordshire. Currently, the development plan in Vale of White Horse consists of:

- Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 - Part 1
- Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031- Part 2
- Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Plan

N.B As at 2022 The District Council together with South Oxfordshire District Council are jointly in the process of developing a Joint Development Plan for the future, which is at an early stage.

Neighbourhood Plans must also be in line with European regulations as incorporated into UK Law as set out in national planning practice guidance on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations. In addition, Neighbourhood Plans must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and not breach, and be otherwise compatible with, EU obligations as far as these remain aligned.

Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1

East Hanney falls within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area. It has been identified for planning terms as a 'Larger Village'. This means that it is affected by planning policies relevant to 'Larger Villages'.

There is no strategic housing allocation for East Hanney in Local Plan Part 1, noting that an allocated site proposed for 200 dwellings nominated in the draft Plan Part 1 was removed by the Inspector on planning grounds.

The most relevant policies to the EHNP in Local Plan Part 1 are summarised below:

- **Core Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development**- states that planning applications that accord with this Local Plan 2031 (and where relevant, with any subsequent Development Plan Documents or Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- **Core Policy 4: Development at Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages** – states that development outside of the existing built area of these settlements will be permitted where it is allocated by the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 or has been allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. This development must be adjacent, or well related to the existing built area of the settlement or meet exceptional circumstances set out in the other policies of the Development Plan and deliver necessary supporting infrastructure.
- **Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services**- sets out requirements for new development to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal.
- **Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area**- has no strategic housing allocation for East Hanney.
- **Core Policy 22: Housing Mix** -which requires a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet current and future household needs.
- **Core Policy 23: Housing Density**- which intends for the density of new housing to align with the surrounds so that the character of an area is not adversely affected

- **Core Policy 26: Accommodating Current and Future Needs of An Aging Population.** This core policy addresses the requirement to plan for the needs of an aging population and recognises that as the population increases and ages, the level of disabilities and health issues amongst the older population is likely to increase significantly, along with specialist housing to address the needs.
- **Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness-** sets out a series of key design principles for development in the District, which will be informed by the Vale of White Horse Design Guide.
- **Core Policy 39: The Historic Environment** recognises and supports the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment in the district such as conservation areas, listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments.
- **Core Policy 42: Flood Risk** which sets out requirements to minimise the risk and impact of flooding.
- **Core Policy 44: Landscape-** sets out the key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale of White Horse District's landscape. These will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced.
- **Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure** - resists a loss of green infrastructure.
- **Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity** – seeks the conservation and improvement of biodiversity

Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 2

Under Local Plan Part 2 East Hanney is allocated 2 Strategic sites.

- **Core Policy 8a: Additional Site allocations for the Abingdon-on-Thames & Oxford Fringe Sub-Area-** includes two sites in East Hanney:
 - North of East Hanney – 80 homes
 - North-East of East Hanney – 50 homes
- **Development Policy 21: External Lighting** – consideration of impact on the amenity of the surrounding area regarding the use of external lighting
- **Development Policy 23: Impact of Development on Amenity-** Development proposals should demonstrate that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses
- **Development Policy 24: Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments-** Development proposals should be appropriate to their location
- **Development Policy 29: Settlement Character and Gaps-** Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the settlement's character is retained, and physical and visual separation is maintained between settlements
- **Development Policy 30: Watercourses.** Particularly in relation to chalk streams. **Development Policy 37: Conservation Areas** - Proposals for development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area must demonstrate that it will conserve or enhance its special interest, character, setting and appearance.

Development context

East Hanney is the smallest of the 'Larger Villages' in the District, and there are larger Smaller Villages by population and dwelling numbers. The relatively small size of East Hanney (compared to other Larger Villages) and the low level of services available to support the population are important considerations for the Neighbourhood Plan and capability of the village to be able to support housing growth and provide facilities for the expanded population. Also important are physical and geographical constraints such as flooding, the extent of the Parish at risk of flood, and environmental considerations.

In the last 6 years, housing development in East Hanney has been both material and significant and has brought about changes to the experience of life in the village, the shape and form of the village and

community needs. The village has been subjected to a near continual flow of applications for new developments, mainly Major in classification. This has continued through to 2021, giving rise to significant change and sustainability challenges for the village and community.

Applications have been witnessed for development on land which is both undevelopable/undeliverable due to flood or other planning constraints, as well as for places within and outside of the village boundary, which has materially pushed the envelope of the settlement.

There has been little consideration of the significance of the cumulative impact on the village and its ability to support new homes of such a quantum, the village infrastructure and local services being geared for smaller needs

Many of the applications have been for development in areas of significant risk (such as flood) to the village, also affecting village character and the environment. A good number of these were made whilst the District Council did not have a Local Plan, at the same time East Hanney because of its nominated status as a 'Larger Village' was also subject to inclusion within the Local Plan for provision of strategic sites.

Applications for large developments allocated under the Local Plan Part 2 continue in process with one of the sites now in construction. Under the Local Plan Part 2 East Hanney has been allocated and deemed appropriate to accommodate up to 130 new homes.

Inclusive of the Strategic site allocations, to April 2021 East Hanney has received applications and/or provision (for some 790 dwellings; in context that is more than twice the number of dwellings that existed in East Hanney as recorded at the 2011 census.

271 dwellings (as at April 2021) have been approved, which together with the strategic sites, will result in a doubling of the village.

The East Hanney NP Steering Committee decided against identifying or allocating potential sites for future development in the EHNP for the following reasons:

- East Hanney has been allocated two sites under the Local Plan Part 2
- there is no expectation or requirement in the adopted Local Plan 2031 to allocate additional housing other than that already allocated through Local Plan Part 2.
- there has been and is likely to continue to be adequate development within the village through limited infill to meet local needs.
- There is insufficient capacity within the infrastructure of the village to accommodate any further additional development

The physical infrastructure of East Hanney village is old and historic, for example, the roads are narrow, the sewer network limited in capacity, and there is a lack of local services to support an increased population. Much of the settlement is within one of 2 conservation zones, reflecting this. The village only has sufficient infrastructure and services intended for a small rural village population, consequently the priority through this plan is to address sustainability challenges and to provide for the needs of the village and community requirements as identified through this Neighbourhood Plan process.

3.3. Our Sustainability challenges

The number of planning applications approved together with the additional housing allocated under the Local Plan Part 2 jointly represent a doubling of the village size since the 2011 census. Details of this are evidenced within Appendix A, 'Base Line Evidence'. The projected growth in population also being clearly

seen to grow significantly compared to the 2011 and prior census levels. See Appendix A - Base Line Evidence, chart page 8.

The recent growth in housing has however not been matched by improved provision of facilities, at the same time some basic facilities such as the library service have ceased.

Appendix A – Baseline Evidence provides the detail of the number of houses approved, the locations and therefore the spatial context on the village. The housing numbers and population growth details are given on page 8, the location of the dwellings approved, and the strategic sites are shown on pages 5 and 6 respectively.

There is considerable concern about the lack of services and basic infrastructure in the village to be able to accommodate the increase in population, and associated services requirements, including for example volume of traffic, space for parking, and space for recreation. In this section we present salient evidence from Appendix A and from Appendix B (Village Infrastructure report) to better illuminate key sustainability challenges arising from the rapid changes which the village is experiencing.

Examples of how changes have given rise to need for improvement in service or facilities are given below. It is worth noting that there are some consistent themes presented. The policies of this plan were informed by the Community survey and consultation, many of the sustainability challenges which the village faces can be seen from the survey results to be concerns for the community, and consequently, are recognised within this Plan and its policies.

Village Character

East Hanney is a rural village with a long history. As a consequence, the village benefits from a wide variety of housing styles at low densities, with green spaces interspersed across the village. Many of the dwellings are historic and full of character reflecting the historic and rural nature of the village. The housing styles, designs, local materials, low densities, local green spaces and green environment, together with the low levels of light pollution, rural views, local chalk stream and green spaces give East Hanney a distinct sense of place.

Many residents feel that recent and proposed housing developments are threatening the character of the village and therefore policy should be applied to ensure that harm is prevented. This Plan consequently includes policies intended to help preserve the character of the village whilst planning for the future. It also includes provision for future development to use local materials and designs reflective of the village by way of a local design guide.

Further evidence of the concerns arising from the impact of development on the character of the village and how important it is that East Hanney be able to keep its sense of identity and place, is given within the Base Line evidence, and in the Village and Community Infrastructure report. It cannot be emphasised enough that it is essential for the village and the community that East Hanney retains its character and remains an independent village in a green and rural environment.

Factors that impact on character are varied and include for example loss of green surround or hedgerows. Also, the visual impact of change within the village and on approach. As well as the nature and design of housing, and density. There is a real concern about loss of openness, openness is a major part of East Hanney's character and village feeling. The importance of these aspects and of the setting in a rural and green environment is evidenced through the Community Survey.

The Letcombe Brook, its environs, its relationship with the village and with Local green spaces as well as its status as a wildlife corridor is also very important to the village, being a key component of the essence of East Hanney and a great influence on the character of the village both historically and today. Consequently, this Plan looks to provide for the green and blue networks within the Parish and to support the green and natural form of the village environment, aligning to national and local environmental initiatives.

Provision of new housing at higher density to the neighbouring area, both removes open green space and introduces homes which are at risk of adversely affecting the spatial form and feel of the village. Particularly should this arise on green sites at edge of village locations, which in planning terms should be expected to be of a lower density so as to give a softer village edge. It is therefore important that development is not at higher density than in surrounding areas and that the EHNP policies encourage appropriate layouts, designs and provision of green space, together with substantial planting to ensure that this very important aspect is maintained. This plan thus provides a policy encouraging good use of land that is balanced and positively aligned in density and design to the immediate area, pre-existing neighbouring dwellings, materials, village character and setting.

Other matters that affect character include noise and light pollution which is referenced in paras 1.3.5 and 1.3.6 of the Base Line evidence document. East Hanney is also very protective of the fact that it benefits from being a dark sky village and a policy is included to help ensure this aspect. A number of policies which relate to character of the village are provided.

Green Space and the environment

It is important to underline that East Hanney has special features which play an important part in defining its character and sense of place. The prevalence of the Letcombe Brook running through the heart of the village, being a rare chalk stream for example, means that there is a diverse wildlife and ecological setting, the stream itself attracting protective legislation. The green and rural setting of the village with a profundity of hedgerows and native species, set out within historic rural field patterns and historical orchards, collectively mean that East Hanney is unique. Ecologically sensitive, home to rare and protected species within a verdant environment shaped through its rural historical past. Planning for the future of East Hanney must have at its heart the endurance of these unique aspects.

As outlined, significant concern to residents is the protection of the village environment. This is evidenced by responses to the community survey and through the Consultation events held.

The green and natural landscapes that surround and lie within the village, the bordering fields, paddocks, orchards, trees and hedgerows. The form and presence of the Letcombe Brook, the blue and green infrastructure essential to support village wildlife, as well as pathways and surrounding fields, are all aspects of the village environment and features which help make up the character of East Hanney. These are important to resident lives and help constitute making East Hanney the place that it is.

The Character Assessment provides detail of the importance of these aspects of the village and of the vitally important role which Letcombe Brook plays. A survey of residents and separately of school children (provided in the Character Assessment) highlights these aspects. This plan accordingly provides various policies relating to the green and blue environment including a policy for hedge rows and trees, as well as one for the Letcombe Brook, and for Nature Recovery and Biodiversity.

Growth in recent years to the northern and northeast edge of the settlement also means that residents in these locations are some distance from the greenspace of the sports field, thus in the future should any new developments be implemented in that location, consideration should also be made for additional leisure and open space provision. As the community grows there will be an even greater need for access to green

space for recreation and nature. A further consequence of the extent of development experienced is that the level of green space per resident across the village has also significantly reduced.

General Village Infrastructure and Facilities

The village infrastructure and facilities are those intended for a smaller village and have generally developed over time, the rapid growth in village size and population recently experienced has given rise to an increase in use and demand. The community survey identified concerns and a need for the improvement or expansion of some facilities. This plan includes consideration of the impact of the growth in housing and population numbers on aspects of the village infrastructure, what additional facilities may be needed and how certain aspects might be able to be delivered. The following summarises how various facilities have or may during the period of this plan be impacted:

The village hall is heavily used and it serves the community in many ways as the community hub, including as the regular meeting place and venue for clubs and societies. Demand for and pressures on the hall are likely to increase as a consequence of the growth in the village.

The village hall car park is already at capacity and a requirement for additional spaces needs to be provided for. Parking at the Hall is also the only available parking for users of the sports field, the community shop, and the children's play area. This parking space is also used for school drop off, there being no facilities at the school.

Further detail on the Hall is provided within the Village and Community Infrastructure report (Appendix B). 55 of 184 respondents to the Community Survey identified that provision of larger car park at the hall should be provided.

The Hall is jointly managed by residents from both East and West Hanney and is independent of East Hanney Parish Council. The Hall has sought to expand the available parking but was not able to raise sufficient funding. There has been no funding provided from developer contributions to help address this, yet the number of users will significantly increase. Of existing residents who completed the survey, 219 used the hall regularly, as evidenced in Appendix B page 4. New residents will also want to use the hall and the sports fields, but there is no increase in parking or allocated financial support from developments to enable this.

Whilst East Hanney Parish Council is not responsible for the Hall, it has from this plan a community action to review the sports fields facilities including consideration of a sports pavilion for community use and space for provision of additional parking spaces close to the hall. Access to funding from developments would assist the Parish Council with this.

In addition to concerns over the limitations of the village hall and lack of parking at the hall and sports fields:

- There is no commercial shop such as a Co-op - just a farm shop and a community shop run by volunteers at the village hall.

The shop is shown within Appendix B page 5. Whilst providing an essential service to the village it is small and volunteer run, consequently the range of goods are limited. As can be seen within the Base Line evidence appendix B, page 6 most respondents to the survey use the shop, and the largest category of frequency of use was 'at least once a week'. The shop demonstrated its importance to the village through the period of COVID and is essential to the village. The community survey identified a need for a wider range of products, however, has little space to do so, but like other facilities in the village will need to support the needs of a population projected to be twice the size of that in 2011. The shop is independently run and whilst supported, is not therefore subject of a

policy within this Plan but is recognised through the Neighbourhood plan process as essential for the community.

- Space at the sports field is limited and is shared with West Hanney. East Hanney owns approximately half the land. The western side of the sports field belongs to West Hanney. This limits the area available to the Parish to be able to provide new equipment or areas for multigenerational use. There has been a clear increase in use of the field including by walkers and dog walkers, as well as families seeking recreation and to participate in sport. This has led to issues with parking, erosion of footpaths to and at the park, and a need for additional seating, bins and dog waste facilities. The Parish Council routinely considers waste bin and seating needs and provides these facilities as well as maintaining the sports field area. As part of the strategy for the sports field to support the increase in users a new layout is to be adopted and investment made. Encouragement is also given through the policies within this plan to ensure improved and new facilities from development throughout the village.
- The existing play equipment in the sports field have been present for many years, are limited, and there are no facilities for the very young. The facilities that are available are provided by East Hanney but are for use of all residents of the Hanneys and visitors. The consultation process events held with children and the youth in the village clearly identified the need for a wider range and quantum of facilities, to provide for the expanding young population. Further detail regarding existing facilities and need is provided within the Base Line Evidence document and in the village and community infrastructure report. As part of the infrastructure policy, this plan seeks to address this and other infrastructure needs. This has culminated in the Parish Council recently investing in additional new equipment, further facilities are required to support the growth in the village.
- There has been a per capita loss in open green space accessible for play and leisure. This is because the number of people now resident and projected to be resident in the village has increased since 2011, and only a limited number of new developments have provided new space. Developments have typically provided only the minimum, yet the number of homes in the village that now need space will have effectively doubled. Accordingly, policies for spaces for play and local green space are included in this plan.
- The school has recently expanded to one form of entry to accommodate additional pupil numbers but has limited physical space available to enable further expansion. The expansion was expected to be sufficient for the needs of families living in the catchment area. It is not clear whether it will be able to accommodate the additional demand from the new housing once all the approved housing has been completed. As at March 2021 a number of year groups are already full, and whilst some capacity remains, many of the new homes approved are yet to be built or occupied. It is of concern that children may at some future point need to be bused out of the village.

The school is a primary school, secondary education is outside of the village in Wantage. Further reference to the school is included in the Village and Community Infrastructure Report.

Lack of parking provision for parents at drop off is also a concern, as is speeding on the Causeway outside the school as evidenced by community speed monitoring and as identified by residents within the community survey. Whilst the school is vital to the community the school is part of the Vale Academy Trust, and the responsibility for highways lies with OCC. However, there are

community actions to try to address speeding which include the area in the vicinity of the school, and to provide additional parking space at the village hall which may serve for parent/child drop off.

- There is no chemist or any other basic health facilities. The nearest health facilities are in Grove.
- Whilst there is a chapel, there is no dedicated church within in East Hanney. Both East Hanney and West Hanney are in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Hanney and are served by St James the Great (with its burial ground) which is in West Hanney. St James the Less in East Hanney has been deconsecrated. Residents therefore need to travel to West Hanney in order to attend the Parish church. There is no burial ground within East Hanney.
- There are high and growing levels of traffic passing through the village at speed. This is of concern particularly on the road by our village primary school, through the Main Street and on the A338. This has been evidenced by the speeds routinely recorded through the facilities operated by the Parish Council. Detail of speeds recorded are provided within Appendix A, Base Line Evidence para 1.3.12. Responses to the community survey also identified concern among East Hanney residents about speeding both by the school and along the A338 as shown on page 27 of the Base Line Evidence. The Parish Council is committed to working with Oxford County Council to introduce 20mph limits on nominated roads within the village and has also introduced electronic speed monitoring indicators which are used at locations to highlight speeds and capture data to help reduce traffic speeds and address the community concerns identified through this NP process.
- The A338 is a main north /south road subject to speeding, congestion and heavy traffic flows. Traffic flows through the village have increased not only because of the additional housing seen in the village but also from the additional housing in Wantage, Grove and neighbouring villages. The traffic on the A338 can now be stationary during peak periods, and access by car into and out of the village is becoming increasingly difficult. Details of speeds and traffic volumes is shown within the Base Line Evidence.
- Typically, people in the village need to drive to receive basic services, or even just to be able to access open green space suitable for play. This means that the village suffers higher traffic levels than should be expected, people having little alternative other than to use cars in order to access services such as a pharmacy or a commercial shop like a co-op. This does not accord with sustainable living and green transport ambitions. Results of the community survey (shown within para 1.3.7 of the Base Line evidence) indicate that travel by car is the most common form of transport. Walking and cycling both locally and to places of work had relatively low use figures reflected in the survey. This Plan encourages use of cycling and walking, and also has policies for future development relating to air quality and traffic noise.

Guidance is given through the Design Code for future development in relation to the road hierarchy.

- A lack of green cycle routes through the village and linking East Hanney to neighbouring areas such as Grove is an issue. It is a challenge to be able to cycle safely to destinations outside of the village particularly for work, which as evidenced in the Base Line Evidence is for most residents outside of East Hanney.

Lack of appropriate cycle paths and green routes are therefore a concern for the sustainability of the village. Para 1.3.8 of the Base Line Evidence considers the need for additional routes and also

identifies from the community survey a need for improvements to public footpaths and bridleways. Whilst these are the responsibility of OCC there is a community action relating to seek improvements in both footpaths and provision of green cycle routes. Developers are encouraged to make provision for cycling as part of this Plan.

- As an old and rural village, the footpaths and roads that run through the village tend to be traditional and narrow, having been established during quieter times. Many are therefore not sufficient to accommodate increased use. The importance of the historic footpath and road network as features of the character of the village are recognised within this plan.
- East Hanney, being a low-lying settlement, has historically suffered from flooding and a lack of sewage capacity. Both are of major concern to residents as shown in the Base Line Evidence page 10 to page 16. Risk of flooding and areas that routinely flood have impact on development and on various policies. This plan includes a policy relating to Flooding and climatic change.
- The possibility of a potential reservoir represents a significant challenge which the village may have to face in the future, which if it proceeds will have significant impact on the village and the District. The size and form being proposed by Thameswater represents a real concern. It is currently (2022) proposed to be of such a massive size and height that it would physically overshadow the village, being truly mega in terms of extent of water capacity, land area consumed, and height raised above ground level. Its proposed upward height above ground level is evidenced by GARD (a local and technical action group) to impact on the level of day light hours enjoyed by the village. The mass of water is also expected to affect the local climate. It consequently represents a risk not only to the way of life in the village but also fundamentally to the whole environment ranging from climate to flood risk, as well as the consequences of years of potential disruption from construction including rerouting of road access to Steventon. Should the reservoir proceed this plan carries some consideration as to how areas related to the reservoir might be used for green space and leisure.

Housing

The housing provided recently by commercial developers has not been suitable for accommodating a growing aging population or the specific needs of elderly residents, yet there is a high number of elderly residents in the village many of whom want to down-size and remain within the village and the community. This clear and stated housing need has not been addressed by contractors who have paid little regard to this community need. Evidence of housing needs is provided within the community survey, details of which are presented with the related policies. Further detail on housing which is also an important theme in this Plan is given immediately below.

Housing - Extent of growth and challenge for the future

East Hanney has been identified for planning terms as a 'Larger Village'. This means that it is affected by planning policies relevant to 'Larger Villages' and been allocated 2 strategic sites under Part 2 of the Local Plan. Applications for housing developments received have typically been of a 'Major' nature.

To be considered as a Larger Village, the District Council set qualifying boundaries some time ago based on a points system. East Hanney was the lowest qualifying Larger Village with the minimum number of points. In recent years certain of the services which the village received such as the mobile Library have been withdrawn and only recently in 2021 has an East /West bus service been reintroduced. As a consequence, East Hanney is technically below the classification of a 'Larger Village' but remains and is identified by the District Council within the Category of a Larger Village for Planning purposes. As a 'Larger Village' East Hanney has little infrastructure compared to other Larger villages. It is also not a place of employment,

other than for people who work from home, nor a settlement with a limited range of employment services or facilities.

Therefore, although under the Local Plan Part 1, Core Policy 3 East Hanney is assumed because of the classification as a 'Larger village' to be a settlement with a more limited range of employment, services, and facilities, it has very little infrastructure to support large development. This was recognised during the Inspectors review of the Local Plan Part 1. Proposals for a large Strategic Site at East Hanney under Part 1 were withdrawn.

As East Hanney has very limited infrastructure to support growth, it is an essential focus of this Plan that provision is made where possible to ensure community services that are essential to the village.

East Hanney is a separate village from West Hanney which has its own parish; however, because of the close proximity and the use of various shared facilities, any description of East Hanney and of its facilities should also consider the needs of West Hanney (and surrounding villages such as Denchworth) whose population share and make use of the limited facilities that East Hanney has.

Excluding the larger of the Strategic Sites, the District Council has (as of April 2021) approved applications for [271] new homes in the village since 2011, this represents with the strategic sites a doubling of the village since the 2011 census. Much of this has occurred since 2015. Consequently, East Hanney has seen significant housing growth within the past 7 years but has unfortunately seen little or no improvement to infrastructure or community facilities.

Details of the house numbers and locations are given in Appendix A Base Line Evidence. During the period since 2011, it should also be noted that approximately 520 applications for additional homes, which are the subject of speculative developer applications, have been refused by the District Council and on appeal by the Inspector.

The Base Line Evidence together with the Village Infrastructure Report provide consideration of the village facilities, the existing infrastructure, and the future needs of the village and community. This plan includes policies to address concerns where it is able, such as to encourage provision of spaces for play, a further example being to seek to provide housing to meet the needs of the elderly. This plan also includes community actions relating to certain of the community infrastructure needs.

4. The Neighbourhood Plan – Vision and Objectives

The East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan Vision, Objectives and policies have evolved and been refined throughout the neighbourhood planning process through extensive community consultation. This included the following events and activities:

- Public launch event
- Community survey -Neighbourhood Survey
- Youth event with free pizza
- Tea and Scone event
- Marquee at the Primary school fete (twice)
- Presentation at History group meeting
- Presentation at Tennis club AGM
- Event with the Hanney Flood Group
- Meetings with Thames Water
- Meeting with Hanney Guides

- Meeting with representatives from a local Church group
- Marquee on the land in the new housing developments by A338.
- Mail survey of Local business
- Public event regarding the village boundary
- Public event providing results of community survey
- SWOT Analysis event

The totality of the consultation process is documented in detail in the Consultation Statement.

4.1. Vision

The vision is set out below and has been derived from responses to the Community survey and through the consultation events held in the village.

The Vision of the East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2031

Our vision is to ensure that East Hanney remains as an attractive Lowland Vale parish where any new development reflects and enhances the sense of place.

We want the strong sense of community to be maintained and thus expect community facilities to be improved, expanded, or provided anew to match the growing population.

The effects of climate change are likely to increase the probability of flooding, which is already a major concern, so our vision is for reduced risk of flooding through a variety of means including improved drainage systems.

Our population is predominantly in an older age range, the village also attracting families and people of all ages, so our vision is to provide housing, infrastructure and facilities that meet the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities, including those who are less able.

Our long history is continually being discovered as new archaeological finds are being uncovered, this includes roman coins, civil war lead shot and First World War cap badges found in 2017. Our vision is that opportunities for discovering more about our past village are encouraged and not prevented by future development.

4.2. Themes and Objectives

The vision incorporates themes and objectives, as set out in the box below.

Theme 1 - Village Character

Objective 1 - To ensure all new development conserves and enhances the rural, historic and character of the village.

Theme 2- Green Space and the Environment

Objective 2 - To maintain and improve the natural environment including biodiversity, landscape, green infrastructure and waterways.

Theme 3- Housing
Objective 3 - To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a high quality home and providing a mix of housing to better meet local needs including smaller homes and homes for the elderly.
Theme 4 - Infrastructure and Facilities
Objective 4 - To cater for the needs of existing and future residents. And to seek to improve the quality of life of residents through policies intended to reduce pollution, risk of flooding, noise, and the effects of traffic.

5. The Neighbourhood Plan - Policies

The consultation and community events undertaken in preparation for this Plan and summarised above, clearly identified issues and needs as well as wishes and requirements for the future. The Policies within this Plan are provided to address the needs and help influence development within East Hanney to benefit the community for the period of the Plan.

Key themes and related objectives were identified and determined through the consultation process and are addressed within the Policies.

The policies are presented relevant to a respective theme. Noting that various of the policies may have relevance to more than one theme.

5.1. POLICY THEME 1 - VILLAGE CHARACTER

Vision

To ensure that East Hanney remains an attractive Lowland Vale parish where new development reflects and enhances the sense of place. To ensure all new development conserves and enhances the historic and rural, character of the village.

Objective

To ensure all new development conserves and enhances the historic and rural, character of the village.

Policies	
Policy EHNP1	Village Character, Sustainable Development and Design
Policy EHNP2	Settlement Boundary
Policy EHNP3	Village Infill
Policy EHNP4	Coalescence
Policy EHNP5	Historic Environment

5.1.1. Policy EHNP 1 – Village Character, Sustainable Development and Design

Issue and need

East Hanney is a historic rural village and has a distinct character which gives it a sense of place. This policy aims to encourage new developments to be designed on a basis which reflect the character of the village. This will assist integration and enhance the sense of place.

Consideration of the sustainability of proposed developments and how they would complement and enhance the environment and character of the village, should be a key part of the determination as to whether a new development is acceptable.

As a rural village with a strong association to the past, the village has many agricultural and rural characteristics, which includes the shape and form of land parcels. Those that are close to or within the village have historically been either small paddocks or areas of fruit orchard, or areas of green space particularly alongside or in the vicinity of the Letcombe Brook, providing a green and natural wildlife corridor of ecological importance to the village running through its centre. Outside of the settlement the paddocks and enclosures give way to more open agricultural farming land, as can be seen in the aerial image below.



Figure 6 Aerial with paddocks and enclosures

This make up and form of the land parcels and historic closes of East Hanney has meant that the rapid expansion of development experienced has tended to be at the expense of loss of paddocks and fruit orchards/nurseries, each of which is typically small in size. This has led to the creation of housing development on land parcels which are relatively small giving rise to relatively high-density development in certain builds, compared to the village generally and the surrounding built form. Thus, out of character with the village and setting.

It is also the experience of the village that certain recent new developments have tended to have been built using standardised housing designs as is typical from a national house builder. Some are without due regard to local design features, local materials, or local character, nor do they reflect the village surroundings. Cumulatively, this can have an adverse effect on a rural village the size of East Hanney. In one case an owner of a plot within the village negotiated with the developer to produce a small-scale infill scheme of six homes in line with village character at that location, whereas on a plot that size a higher density would normally have been required by the developer. This shows that standardised building templates can be resisted.

Provision of guidance through this EHNP policy would help address this so that all future developments may be of a suitable scale and location as well as being provided with features that are more in keeping and with designs intended to reflect the locality, enabling new homes to integrate sympathetically with the existing settlement. Larger schemes in the wrong place would impact local streets and spaces, as well as negatively affecting the character of the whole village.

Use of features, designs and materials identified as being part of the character of the village as set out in the Character Assessment is encouraged. For example, use of local red brick matching existing older houses, use of distinctive patterns within the brick builds, cottage style windows and use of porches. Layouts aligned to the village form is also important with houses set back from roads providing green frontage and garden space, enabling achievement of lower density housing reflective of the rural setting of East Hanney.

Character extends not to just the built physical form of new homes but also to the landscape and infrastructure proposals. For example, provision and retention of green verges, dwellings within green settings, provision of stone walls, footpaths, and waterways. The need is to encourage new development in all aspects to be built with materials reflective of and aligned to the rural local styles that can be seen within the village and as identified in the Character Assessment.

Rationale

The aim is not for all new housing to look like older houses in the village but that designs should take into account local design and character features so that the design for new developments is both functional and aesthetically appropriate to their setting.

Whilst the District Council has a design guide because there are a wide range of settlement landscapes across the Vale and because most development is focused on towns or settlements larger than East Hanney much of the District Council Design Guide is very generic in nature. Consequently, typically supporting designs reflective of an urban nature, or a town (as that is where the majority of housing is to be built under the District Council Local Plans). Accordingly, it does not specifically cater for the detail of design which reflects the character of a village and village specific design features, essential for ensuring the integration of new housing with the existing settlement. A EHNP policy would help this and address the requirement as identified through the Community Survey would .

Proposals for new development or external alterations should show how they contribute to the vitality and viability of the village. Also, how they complement the local vernacular and character of the village and its rural setting by use of appropriate design and materials.

Developments should conserve and enhance the historic environment, the village being of historic nature with 2 conservation areas and over 30 listed properties. It is important that new development takes into account this aspect of the village, and therefore seek to complement, rather than be of a bulk standard form that has little or no relationship with the surroundings or village features.

The green environment of East Hanney is also important and is a big feature of the essence of village character. Accordingly, developments need also to consciously conserve and enhance the landscape, to achieve net biodiversity gain and habitat connectivity, paying special attention to the green and blue infrastructure networks, biodiversity designations, hedgerows, open green spaces, protected species and priority habitats. Net biodiversity gain should be achieved within the village and not by offsetting, as to do so degenerates the environmental qualities of this village.

An important part of the green environment and character of the village are the key views which are both within the village, looking inwards, for example across the open green spaces which run throughout the village spaces alongside the Brook and also those looking outwards across the wider landscape, being part of the setting and a formative part of East Hanney.

The following diagram provides is an extract from Appendix I and summaries the views within the Parish which are recorded within that appendix 'Key Views and Vistas'. The views in the Appendix represent a collective of just some of the views that are enjoyed by the community, and evidence the rural and green landscape as well as street scenes. They are provided as a representative sample, there being additional open country vistas, hedgerow backed lanes, and street scenes also worthy of record.

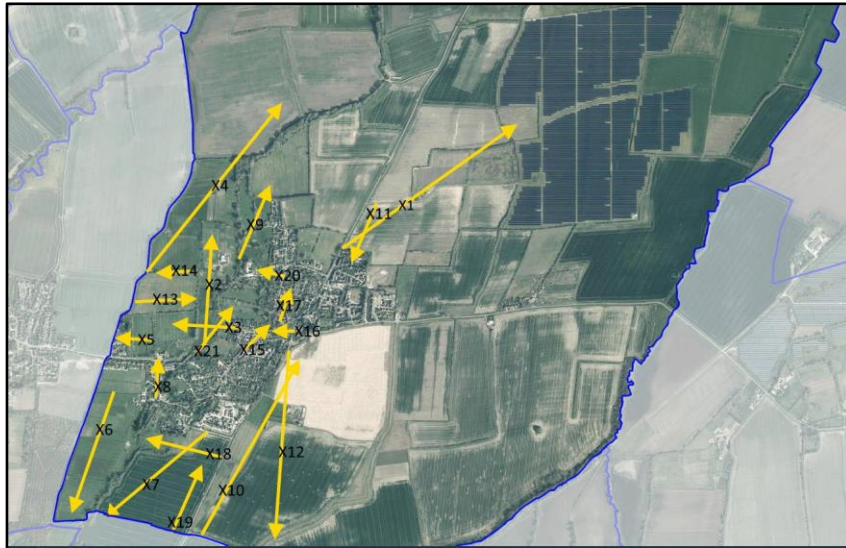


Figure 7 Extract from views and vista Appendix I

Proposals for development should consequently, through this policy take a more considered approach to design and sustainability, and consciously be incentivised to preserve, complement and enhance the character of the village.

Responses to the Neighbourhood Plan survey provide evidence of a very strong requirement from the community for the character of the village to be maintained and for development to be guided to meet this.

Relevant Results from the Survey

In the Community survey section 8 was devoted to village character. When asked what is your opinion of the village character?

- 191 out of 241 agree most strongly that they value the open spaces within the village
- 180 out of 236 agree most strongly that the setting in rural landscape is important
- 158 out of 237 agree most strongly that they value the network of footpaths
- 97 agree most strongly that they like the mix of buildings
- 137 out of 230 agree most strongly that it is the high quality / unusual historic buildings.
- 171 out of 234 agree most strongly that they value the distinct village identity
- 141 out of 222 agree most strongly that there is a need for stronger control of building in and around the conservation areas
- 95 out of 212 agree most strongly that the East Hanney conservation areas should be expanded.
- 136 out of 227 agree most strongly that reflecting the character of existing buildings, structures and layouts should be a major consideration for the design of future houses and housing developments

These results demonstrate that the village character is important to the majority of people living in the community. Two of the last 3 bullets supporting the need for a policy specific to ensuring stronger control of buildings and that the character of existing buildings, structures and layouts should be a major consideration for the design of future houses and housing developments.

Details of the character of the village are identified within the Character Assessment. The Character Assessment is useful to help inform designs and development types within an area of the village. It demonstrates the styles of buildings that exist, and the materials and character aspects that commonly

feature throughout the village. These documents have been used to prepare a Design Code and Guide for the Parish which is incorporated in this Neighbourhood Plan.

The Character assessment identifies 8 areas within the parish, each of which has a distinct layout and design. The Design Guide follows likewise. New developments in an area are guided by this approach to the features and characteristics of that locality so as to encourage designs and materials aligned to the respective area.

In respect of Area 8, “The Wider Parish” this comprises mainly of a flat open landscape of large arable fields interspersed with trees and hedgerows. The impact of climate change and the risk of further flooding may generate a call for the creation of more flood meadows to both the east and west of East Hanney such as in the Letcombe Brook corridor. Whilst acting as a relief valve this might also include significant habitat creation opportunities to enhance biodiversity. In addition, more open space provision might be needed to the north, northeast and south of the village especially if further housing pressures were to emerge. Climate change may increase the need for tree planting and other measures in and around the settlement.

Furthermore, there has recently been an application for a further solar farm to the north of the village, and it is possible that in the next few years applications for this type of development could potentially increase with the need to move to more green renewable energy infrastructure nationally. This could potentially be in the form of solar farms or onshore wind proposals in the wider countryside (area 8). These would need to be subject to consideration of various matters including impact on landscape character before approval is given. If this were to arise it would be beneficial to the community if energy generated can directly supply local communities as well as the grid.

Also in area 8, there may during the life of this Plan be a strategic reservoir built east of the settlement, whilst this is not determined, land is reserved in the Local Plan for this. Should the reservoir be approved by the government it is important that the village is protected from the works and that the opportunity is taken for a green environmental and recreational area to be provided ensuring an environmentally beneficial buffer between the village and the reservoirs infrastructure, that protects the nature and character of the village. This may also provide an opportunity to move the A338 further eastwards away from the village reducing environmental impacts on residents and allowing unification of the outlying estates with the heart of the village. Any re-routing might also enable opportunity for significant tree planting between the reservoir and the village and enable any downgraded stretch of the A338 to become a cycle, horse-riding and walking route through a wooded and safe route.

The possibility of the potential reservoir of the size and form being proposed by Thames Water represents a real concern to the village and would have a significant impact. It is currently (2022/23) proposed to be of such a massive size and height that it would physically overshadow the village, potentially affect the road layout, village access, and space for leisure and recreation. Its mass which includes its significant height would also mean it would affect views from the village, the open landscape, and influence climatic change and therefore flood risk, thus affect matters such as requirements for aspects of sustainable development in the village. It is a threat and a challenge and represents a risk should the proposal be taken forward, not only to the way of life in the village but also fundamentally to the whole local environment, to the community and to the character of the village. Developers need to consider this possibility and to provide development with capability to be maintained sustainably for the future.

The policy below refers to both the design of dwellings and structures as well as landscape.

Without this policy, the design of new developments is at risk of being banal and indifferent, without features and characteristics representative of the village, which would potentially be harmful to the character of a respective area by degrading the existing character, setting, and environment of an area, contrary to the requirements of the NPPF.

Policy EHNP 1 – Village Character, Sustainable Development and Design

New development should be designed to a high standard, in keeping with the character of the area, and demonstrate how regard has been given to the East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan Local Character Assessment and Design Code. In particular all development proposals should ensure that:

- i) The design of new developments should be in accordance with and complementary to the immediate surroundings and;
- ii) should demonstrate that they have considered the scale, form, materials, details and density of the Character Area in which they are located.
- iii) Where development is located on the boundary between two Character Areas, they have taken account of the characteristics of both areas and
- iv) they have taken account of the impact on the two conservation areas where appropriate.
- v) They preserve or where practical enhance, the openness of East Hanney including key views in and out of the village.
- vi) Where appropriate provide in all new developments of 10 or more units accessible greenspace with an appropriate stewardship funding mechanism including capital spend on amenities.

Innovation and sustainability are to be encouraged as long as the design approach is sympathetic to the Character of the surrounding area.

- vii) In seeking to achieve sustainable development, proposals should, where appropriate, demonstrate how they:
 - a) contribute to the vitality and viability of East Hanney Parish;
 - b) complement the local vernacular and character of the village and its rural setting by use of appropriate design;
 - c) maintain, restore or enhance the local landscape character, and long-distance views including south towards the ridgeway, and views into and out of the village
 - d) conserve and enhance the historic environment;
 - e) maintain, restore or enhance the local landscape to achieve a net biodiversity gain and habitat connectivity, paying special attention to biodiversity designations, priority habitats and protected species;
 - f) ensure development is easily accessible by sustainable modes of transport to local facilities;
 - g) provide the necessary infrastructure to enable communications services including high speed broadband; and
 - h) minimize energy use and its overall carbon impact.

Evidential material

- East Hanney Character Assessment
- Base Line Evidence
- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey
- East Hanney Design Code and Guide
- The Joint Design Guide with South Oxfordshire

Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 12 of the NPPF highlights the importance of design in the planning process. It notes 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”.

With specific reference to Neighbourhood Plans, the NPPF states at Paragraph 29:

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.”

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states: “Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.”

NPPF goes on to say in paragraph 128 that, “To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design. However, their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.”

“Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments (should achieve a number of aims including):

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation; and
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

Furthermore, the NPPF recognises the importance of ensuring that planning policy has a vital role to play in the integration of development into existing communities, noting: “Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

Vale of the White Horse Local Plan 2031

VOWH Core Policy 1 requires development to take into account local distinctiveness and character. Any application should therefore adequately take into account the existing character of East Hanney.

VOWH Core Policy 37 states: Proposals for new development will be required to be of high-quality design that:

- i. responds positively to the site and its surroundings, cultural diversity and history, conserves and enhances historic character and reinforces local identity
- ii.that physically and visually integrates with its surroundings
- viii. is visually attractive and the scale, height, density, grain, massing, type, details and materials are appropriate for the site and surrounding area

5.1.2. Policy EHNP 2 – Settlement Boundary

Issue and need

This policy is intended to distinguish between the built-up area of the village and its surrounding countryside. In defining the boundary, applicants and the Local Planning Authority will have certainty when preparing and determining planning applications. This is consistent with various of the Local Plan Policies to encourage sustainable forms of development.

This policy is needed to ensure that future development is within the definitive built-up area as intended by DC Policy 4. The provision of a Settlement boundary through this policy ensures that there is clear definition of where development may be supported.

In 2011 there were just 345 dwellings in East Hanney which were within the built-up area. Since that date, the village has been subjected to a near continuous flow of applications for housing development, much of these have been outside of the Local Plan strategic sites and have often been proposed for locations outside of the pre-existing settlement built up area.

East Hanney is surrounded by countryside and under DC Policy 4 relevant to the Open Countryside the Local Plan states that 'Development in open countryside will not be appropriate unless specifically supported by other relevant policies as set out in the Development Plan or national policy'.

Under DC Policy 4; East Hanney having been classified as a larger village should only be exposed to development within the built-up area and at strategic sites allocated under the Local Development Plan, the policy stating that 'Development outside of the existing built area of these settlements will be permitted where it is allocated by the Local Plan'.

The issue is that whilst there is intent under the District Council Policy 4 for development to be either within the existing built-up area or in strategic sites, developers have sought to expand the village out into the countryside or sought to claim that an area is within or adjacent to the built-up area when it is not. There is a clear need to set and specifically state where the settlement boundary is for East Hanney village so that for all future applications there is a clearly defined boundary within which development may be considered.

Rationale

In developing this policy consideration has been given to the requirement for a settlement boundary relevant to development, how it will apply, and how it will help achieve the vision and objectives. The

provision of the boundary compliments other policies within this Neighbourhood Plan, the existing District Council Policies and the NPPF. It also addresses the requirements of the residents for a boundary as evidenced by the Community survey.

East Hanney is a historic rural village surrounded by agricultural land in the typical Lowland Vale landscape. The village being surrounded by a green aspect, typically comprising of agricultural land, is bordered by countryside on all sides.

The Lowland Vale is distinctive and valued for its own quality. Any new housing development should be focused within the existing built up area of the village in accordance with the intention of the District Council Policies in order to preserve the Lowland Vale landscape and to conserve and enhance the rural setting and historic character of the village.

Despite East Hanney not having any allocation under Part 1, the village has expanded at certain points beyond the built-up area. In the period from 2011 to April 2021 there has been 271 housing approvals most of which have been outside of the existing built-up area (as existed at 2011). For example, the development at Dews Meadow which has extended the village edge south, and the development known as Hermans Close which is an extension of the built settlement outwards along the Steventon Road.

The number of approvals since 2011 represents an increase in growth of the village by 78%, in addition there is also a further potential 80 dwellings at one of the strategic sites. In total potentially increasing housing numbers to 351, or 100%, being a doubling of the village, most of which has taken place since 2015. Much of this (for example to the East of the A338) has pushed the village into the countryside and outside of the existing built-up area.

Questions 2.3 and 2.4 of the Community Survey asked about housing within a defined village boundary: 87.5% of the respondent's evidence overwhelming support for a settlement boundary. Identifying that development should only be within a defined village settlement boundary.

Proposals for new development of an appropriate scale for a village of the size of East Hanney (345 dwellings as at 2011) will be supported where they are within the boundary, and which accord with the policies of this Plan and those of the District Council. This may be new housing, as well as shops, businesses and other commercial activities that are appropriate in scale to East Hanney bearing in mind the very limited road network and services that exist in the village.

The provision of a settlement boundary ensures that future development will be within the built-up area of the village, and therefore planned and managed. A settlement boundary gives a definition as to where the edge of the settlement of the village is, and therefore is definitive in respect of where development may be.

Without the provision of a defined settlement boundary for the village by way of EHNP policy, the village remains exposed to risk of development creep and potentially harmful extension of the settlement footprint into sensitive areas. For example, possible encroachment into areas of green open space at the village edge, with resultant loss of character and place.

Without the boundary there is also the risk that development may be progressed by developers in areas unsuitable for housing which could result in adverse and harmful outcomes for the village. For example, development in areas that could give rise to flood risk.

Areas of known localised flooding are therefore generally outside of the boundary, as are areas of an environmentally sensitive nature, which if lost would have a direct and harmful impact on the character of the village.

The boundary is shown in figure 8 below. For the most part the boundary reflects the natural boundaries of the village and planning precedent. It has been developed following consultation and with assessment by an independent planning advisor. The results of this process and a description of the boundary are detailed in the Settlement Boundary appraisal report at Appendix C.

The boundary enables guidance and assistance for prospective developers, therefore ensuring that new developments are directed to places that are suitable, sustainable and aligned with community wishes and needs.

This policy is consistent with the District Council Policy 4 in LPP1, whilst also setting out a defined basis for definition of settlement, which is not otherwise provided for in the general District Council policies.

The Boundary has been subject to public consultation and has been discussed with senior members of the District Planning team.

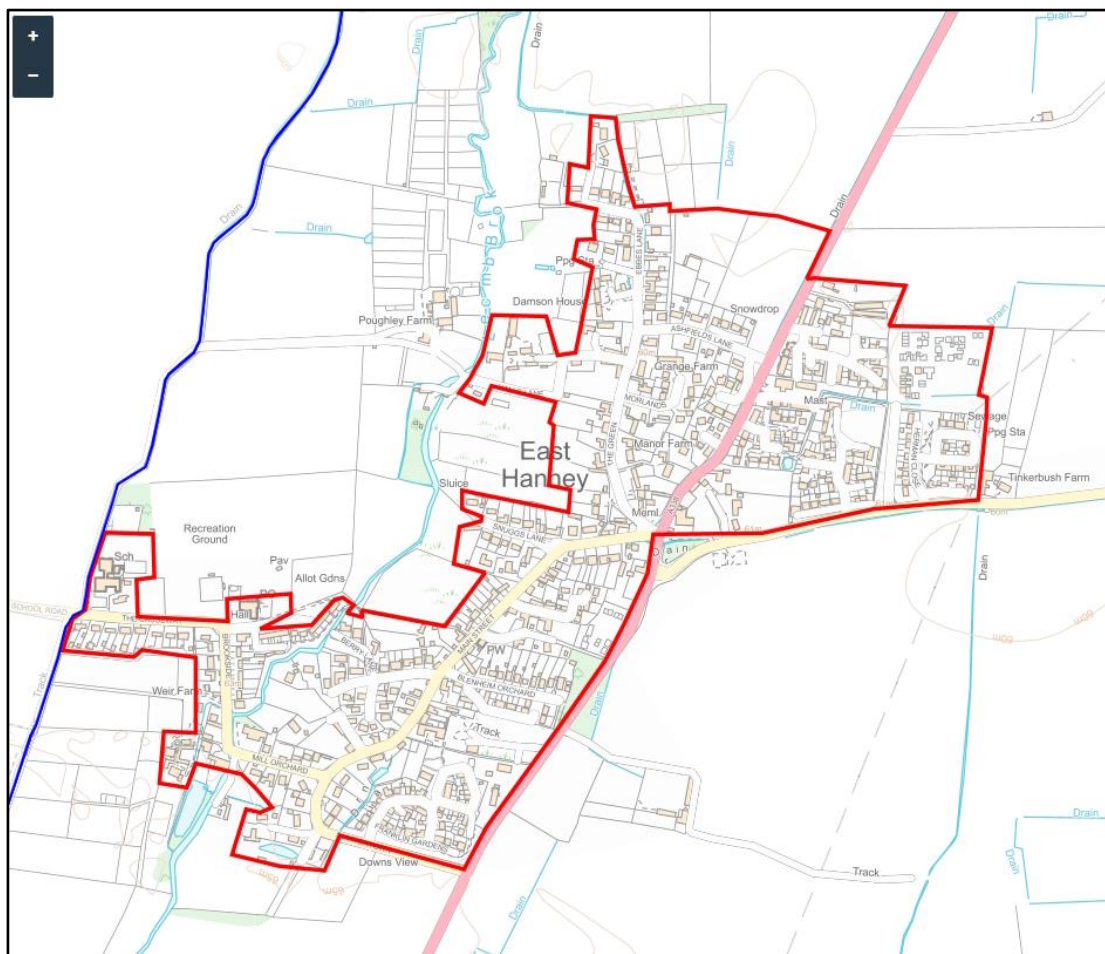


Figure 8 Settlement Boundary- Policy Map – Policy EHNP 2

The above is inclusive of the 2 strategic sites allocated under the Local Plan Part 2, which are within the boundary.

Policy EHNP 2 – Settlement Boundary

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Settlement Boundary as shown on the Policy Map (figure 8).

Development proposals within the Settlement Boundary for sustainable development will be supported provided they are in accordance with policies of the development plan.

Outside of the Settlement Boundary development proposals will be supported on allocated sites or where the development is appropriate for a countryside location and they are in accordance with policies of the development plan and comply with policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Evidential Material

- East Hanney Settlement Boundary Appraisal report
- East Hanney Character Assessment
- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey
- Appeal Ref: APP/V3120/W/16/3163560 East Hanney. An edge of village site where the inspector noted that LP Policy CP4 states that development in the open countryside is not appropriate and that sustainable development in larger villages should only be within existing built areas of settlements. Noting that East Hanney does not have a settlement boundary and that the term 'existing built-up areas' is not defined in the policy CP4.

Policy Context

- The village boundary and the policy has been discussed with the Vale Planning officers including the lead strategic planning officer as well as the officers responsible for the development of Neighbourhood plans. The draft of the policy includes text provided by the Planning office.
- In formulating the boundary due consideration has been given to the NPPF and Local Plan policies. The boundary as proposed is shaped and formed not only by the existing settlement, but also by consideration of recent planning decisions, the lowland vale landscape, limitations, and by reference to policy.
- The boundary has been subject of public consultation and amended following consideration of representations received as part of the consultation.
- There are a number of relevant policies from the Local Plan including CP4.
- There is now a precedent for provision of a policy within local Neighbourhood plans with the Parish of Brightwell-Cum-Sotwell having recently had its Neighbourhood plan approved by the inspector inclusive of a policy for a settlement boundary. Brightwell-Cum-Sotwell is located at the western edge of South Oxon and neighbours the Vale, sharing the same planning team. Like East Hanney it is a rural and historic village in a green setting.
- Local Plan 2031 Part 1, strategic sites and policies
 - Core Policy 4, Meeting Our Housing Needs. The policy states: (i) that development in the open countryside is not appropriate save for in certain specific circumstances such as rural exception sites as set out in Core Policy 25; ii) only assumes sustainable development within existing built-up areas of settlements such as larger villages; (iii) assumes that development will be permitted where it is allocated within the LP or has been allocated within an NDP. Our approach through the provision of the boundary, enables development within that boundary and in alignment with the NPPF also makes the distinction between appropriate

and inappropriate forms of development in the open countryside, seeking to ensure that appropriate development as allowed for under the NPPF and District Council policies may be provided where appropriate.

- Core Policy 43, Natural Landscape. The policy states: The conservation of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is a core planning principle of the NPPF, stating that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. East Hanney is set in the lowland vale in a green and rural environment. Provision of the settlement boundary will enable preservation of the surrounding landscape in accordance with this key policy.
- Core policy 44, Landscape. The policy states: The key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale of White Horse District's landscape will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced, in particular: i. features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and water bodies ii. important landscape settings of settlements iii. topographical features iv. areas or features of cultural and historic value v. important views and visually sensitive skylines, and vi. tranquillity and the need to protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise, and motion. Provision of the Settlement boundary will assist in protection of these aspects.

5.1.3. Policy EHNP 3 - Village Infill

Issue and need

The intent of this policy is to help enable sustainable development proposals for the division of land and village infill provided that such applications are for development in keeping with the surrounding environment and character of the village.

One of the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan is to enable controlled development in line with the requirements of the community. Our consultation clearly identified a requirement to maintain East Hanney's character and green village environment.

The issue is that either inappropriate infill or over development could result in an adverse impact on the character and sense of place. The need is to have a policy which looks positively to deliverable sustainable development within the village provided that it is proportional and in keeping with immediate environment, so that the character and sense of place of the village is maintained and enhanced.

Rationale

The vision seeks to ensure that East Hanney remains an attractive Lowland Vale Parish where any new development reflects and enhances the sense of place.

It is important that policies are provided to ensure that this is achieved, including for the management of infill, subdivision, and potential loss of back-land. This policy addresses concerns of residents regarding excessive subdivision and over development and seeks to ensure that the sense of character of the village is maintained.

As an established settlement there will naturally be infill development arising and this is supported provided that such proposals are of a reasonable nature, in keeping with the surrounding environment, house type, and character of that part of the village in accordance with the EHNP policies.

The Character Assessment identifies that there are a large number of historic dwellings including those with large gardens. There are also a proportionally high number of listed properties and unlisted heritage assets compared to various neighbouring villages and settlements. The village also has several historic walls, gardens and footpaths across the village, typically these are linked to the village's rural, green and historic past.

An important consequence of the history of the village which greatly influences the feel and sense of place that is experienced today is the prevalence of areas of green rural back-land, paddocks, and the number of dwellings with large gardens. Together these create a green open rural feel across the village and give rise to an average housing density which is low compared to more modern settlements. The average housing density across the built-up area is considered to be 16 per h.a.

There has been experience of applications for infill development and subdivisions, which have resulted in loss of areas of character and also had impact on the conservation area. One outcome has been the loss of important historical plots, the houses and gardens being subdivided.

An example is the subdivision of the grounds attached to the fine property known as Varlins, a period character property. This was objected to by the community and local residents. Whilst the house and barn remain, the grounds and gardens have been subdivided and the plot now holds 4 separate and distinct homes. The openness has diminished. Part of the stone wall surrounding the plot, an important feature, has also been taken down for vehicular access which residents strongly objected to.

Provision of a policy specific to the needs of East Hanney will assist in ensuring that development is measured and that features of the village of importance to the community are considered positively on a basis of the neighbouring setting and the community wishes.

This policy supplements the prevailing District Council policies which are general in nature, by providing for the specific needs of East Hanney. It will help ensure a balanced and proportional approach to sustainable development within the village including development which may be of an 'infill', 'back-land', or 'shoehorned subdivision' nature.

This policy is in accord with the objectives of the District Council Policies, particularly in relation to character and sense of place, heritage, and green, and rural settlement environments.

Policy EHNP 3 – Infill

Proposals for infill development must have regard and reflect the guidance set in the East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide and the Local Character Assessment.

Infill development is defined as the filling of a small gap by way of construction of dwellings in an otherwise built-up frontage or on other sites within the settlement where the site is closely surrounded by buildings, including on and within the gardens of established properties, or on areas of back-land.

Proposals for infill development should in particular have regard to the following principles:

- i) That the width of the development site is close or similar to the widths of existing adjoining plots as measured along the row of dwellings and other substantial buildings,**
- ii) that the curtilage for each dwelling is of a size and shape comparable to existing adjoining plots;**
- iii) and the siting, scale and appearance of each dwelling is compatible with the character of existing dwellings in the vicinity of the development site and where included within its boundary should enhance the Conservation Area;**

Where the plot is bounded by listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets, the setting of the adjacent buildings will also need to be considered.

Evidential Material

- Appeal Ref APP/V3120/W/20/3257228. Application for infill at the Green East Hanney. Refused due to adverse impact on the character of East Hanney conservation area. The proposal subdividing the existing plot and disaggregate to the intervisibility of rear gardens. Found to result in an erosion of spaciousness in the setting.
- East Hanney Character Assessment
- East Hanney Design Guide and Code
- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey

Policy Context

- No directly correlating policy within the District Council Local Plan, hence the need for this policy specific to East Hanney.

There are, however, various aspects of the District Council policies which this EHNP policy aligns to and compliments including:

- Core Policy 4, Meeting our Housing Needs. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the existing built area of Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Larger Villages.
- Core Policy 39, The Historic Environment, which is for protection of heritage assets. Including: i) which is to ensure that new development conserves, and where possible enhances, designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets and their setting in accordance with national guidance and legislation.
This is relevant to East Hanney which has 2 conservation areas, over 30 listed Grade 2 buildings and various non designated historical assets.
- Design guide Part 3, re 3.7. 1 and 3.7.2, and DSG26.
- The District Council and EHNP Policies for protection of character and environment.

5.1.4. Policy EHNP 4 - Coalescence

Issue and need

The aim of this policy is to ensure that any new developments do not compromise the sense of place and retain the visual and physical separation of the village from the neighbouring villages and towns. Ensuring that East Hanney remains as a village with its own identity, separate from other settlements, separated by clear open green space.

The issue is that recent developments have begun to encroach on the village; from the West, there is now just one small field between East and West Hanney, the remaining space separating the villages is known as 'The Hanney Gap'.

Similarly, from the south where Grove has expanded extensively, there is now only 2 fields between Grove and our village. Grove is an urban area of higher density housing and is unlike East Hanney in character and form. There is also a possibility that the station at Grove may be reopened, located to the north of Grove.

It is important for the preservation of East Hanney's character and distinctiveness of settlement, that an area of countryside within the Parish enabling separation is maintained. The open countryside, which is currently enjoyed, positively contributes to the distinctiveness of the village and helps prevent coalescence through separation of the settlements in accordance with the intent of national and local plan policies.

Rationale

It is important for East Hanney to be able to maintain its separation from all surrounding settlements and to be protected from potential loss of place.

Although East Hanney and West Hanney share some common facilities each village has a distinct identity with a green space known locally as the 'Hanney Gap' separating them. For centuries the 'Hanney Gap' has helped maintain the distinctive identities. Neighbourhood Plan consultation has shown the strength of feeling with regard to the 'Hanney Gap', which this NP wishes to address via a policy for resistance of coalescence through separation specific to the East Hanney locality.

East Hanney is also a neighbour to other villages including Grove to the south. Grove is currently subject to massive urban expansion from housing development, which is pushing the built settlement boundary further north. East Hanney is a historic and rural village and is therefore very different to Grove in its context, character, and sense of place.

The green spaces which have historically provided the clear separation of East Hanney from neighbouring settlements have recently narrowed due to development. Whilst there is general provision in the District policies, the principle is founded on the words 'unacceptable narrowing of the countryside gap'. It is therefore unclear as to when a gap becomes unacceptably narrow. Accordingly, this EHNP policy is provided to define those green spaces which separate East Hanney from neighbouring settlements to prevent coalescence and so help refine the importance of these areas, providing detail which compliments the application of Local Plan Part2 Development Policy 29.

Recent development proposals approved both to the west and to the south of East Hanney have started to erode what were established gaps separating the settlements.

The rationale for this policy is therefore to ensure that there is a policy within this Plan which compliments that of the District Council and to provide specifically for those areas within the Parish at risk of coalescence. It complements the District Council Development Policy 29 which together with the District Council Policy 4 provides a good basis to protect the character of settlements and prevent coalescence.

Separation from West Hanney

The physical separation of the two communities of East and West Hanney has been vital to retaining the historically established distinctiveness. West and East Hanney have always been physically separated by the open fields of the 'Hanney Gap', which is delineated by the parish boundary which lies along Cow Lane, with East Hanney to the east of Cow Lane and the edge of the built-up area of West Hanney to the west.

The 'Hanney Gap' is formed of open agricultural land between the villages and is the historic natural 'border'. At its narrowest point it is now only a hundred metres or so wide but was likely to have been much

wider in the past. In very recent years there has been development on the West Hanney side at the narrowest part which is now giving rise to the risk of coalescence.

The 'Hanney Gap' is well-used locally by residents of both West and East Hanney, particularly by walkers using the intervillage paths and Cow Lane, which forms the eastern boundary of our Parish.

Both the East Hanney and the West Hanney character assessments describe the significant evidential, historic, aesthetic, and communal value of the 'Hanney Gap'.

Whilst the narrowest point is in West Hanney, to the north of the Causeway the 'Hanney Gap' widens and falls partly in East Hanney and part in West Hanney, opening up into open countryside looking northwards from East Hanney. This policy seeks to ensure that the separation remains including that which is located in this Parish to the north.

The value of the 'Hanney Gap' is particularly related to its spatial character. There is a significant sense of openness and 'big skies' in the flat landscape, particularly to the north where there is no visible obstruction for several miles, whereas the trees of the community woodland limit the southward view although it remains an open vista. The space is both visual and landscape, from the East Hanney side, its existence is also ecological with the Letcombe Brook lying to both the southern and northern parts of the landscape.

The strength of community feeling with regard to the maintenance of the 'Hanney Gap' was expressed both at Neighbourhood Plan community events and in the Neighbourhood Plan community survey, which found that 89% of East Hanney respondents (and 90% of West Hanney respondents) thought that this space which separates the villages should be maintained.

The photo below shows the Hanney Gap, and its expansion to the north within East Hanney. Currently between the villages at the narrowest point there is just a small area of open space remaining. The image also illustrates how the gap widens to the north and the east as it extends into East Hanney.

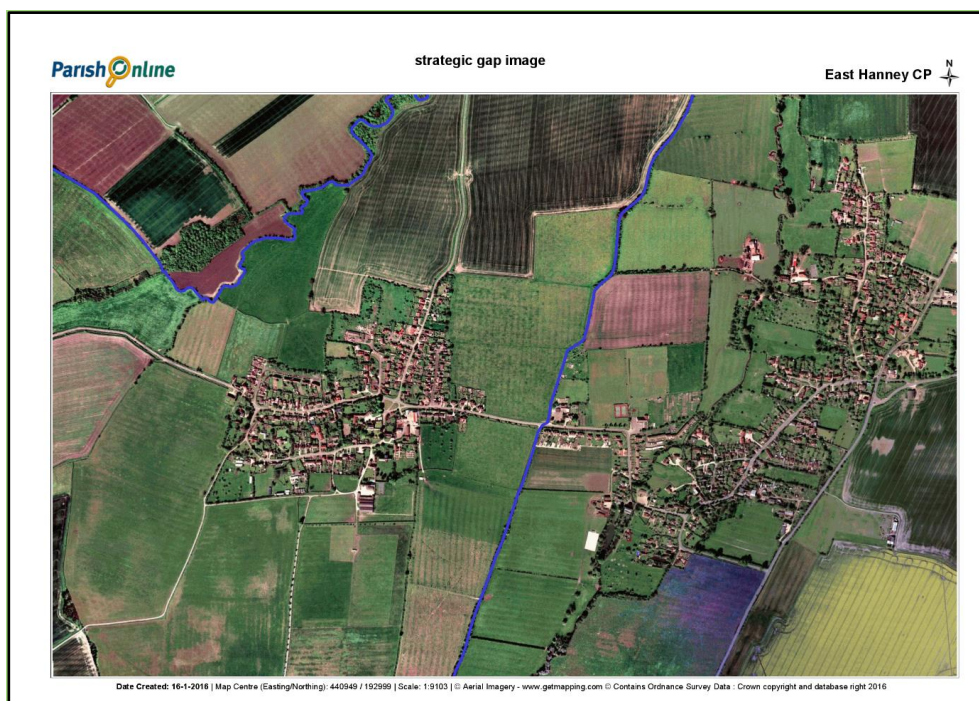
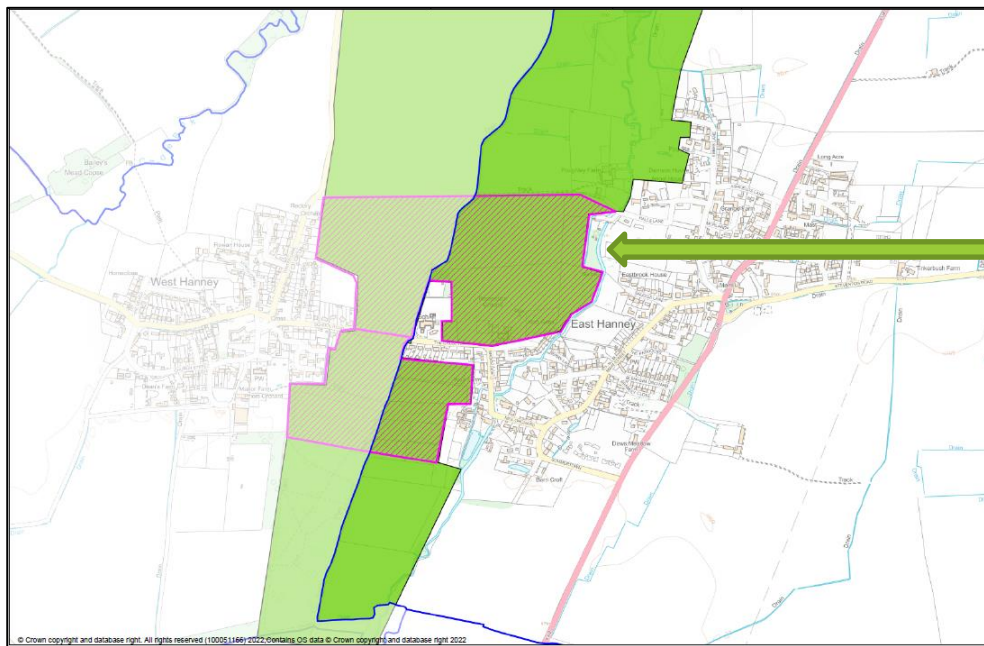


Figure 9 - Hanney Gap Aerial view

The Hanney Gap at its narrowest point lies in West Hanney, but extends into East Hanney especially to the north where it widens. The blue line is the Parish boundary. The narrowest point of the Gap is in the centre of this aerial view. Since the photograph was taken during 2022 further development has started within the Gap at the edge of West Hanney, narrowing the Gap further.

The area of the remaining space which separates the settlements is shown in the diagram below (fig 10), with the hashed area being the spaces which separate the settlements. The area to the right of the blue line lying in East Hanney, and thus subject of this policy. The blue line is the Parish border.



Dark green hashed areas are the spaces which remain within the Parish separating East Hanney from West Hanney.

Figure 10 - Hanney Gap overlain on map

The West Hanney Neighbourhood Plan incorporates a policy relating to the protection of the 'Hanney Gap'. This EHPC policy considers the general consequence of coalescence on East Hanney and in so doing complements the West Hanney policy, recognising that the land at the narrowest point which is currently at most risk of coalescence is located within West Hanney.

For clarity the primary school site and the land immediately north of the school which is owned by the County Council within East Hanney is not within the Hanney Gap as can be seen in Figure 10.

Separation from Grove

The diagrammatic map (fig 11) below illustrates the extent of expansion of Grove northwards towards East Hanney. The area shaded in brown being allocated housing under development in Grove which extends toward East Hanney. The southern boundary of East Hanney is also shown.

The land shaded in brown within Grove was previously open fields and green space. The area is being developed on an urban scale with very few rural features or characteristics. There is street lighting, a mass of development and a network of roads and pavements, which is quite different to the rural and green nature of East Hanney. As the diagrammatic map shows there are now just 2 fields remaining separating the settlements. The Parish border with East Hanney is north of the area where the new railway station would

be located if delivered. The blue line is the Parish boundary. The area shaded light blue in figure 11 identifies the open space that remains in neighbouring Parishes.

The open space which remains within the Parish of East Hanney is shaded in pink hatch and identified in the diagram as 'Remaining Southern gap'.

The street lighting, noise and illumination emitted from the newly developed area of Grove can already be seen and heard from East Hanney village and therefore already has some impact on the sense of peace and tranquillity of our village.

It is important for the preservation of East Hanney's character and distinctiveness of settlement, that the area of countryside within the Parish helping separate the settlement from Grove is respected. The open countryside separating the settlements is currently enjoyed, forms part of the views from the village on approach along the A338, and positively contributes to the distinctiveness of the village.

This policy seeks to protect East Hanney from the risk of coalescence with Grove by way of ensuring that an area of the open countryside which separates the settlements is maintained. The current size of East Hanney compared to Grove, evidence's support for the proportionality of this space.

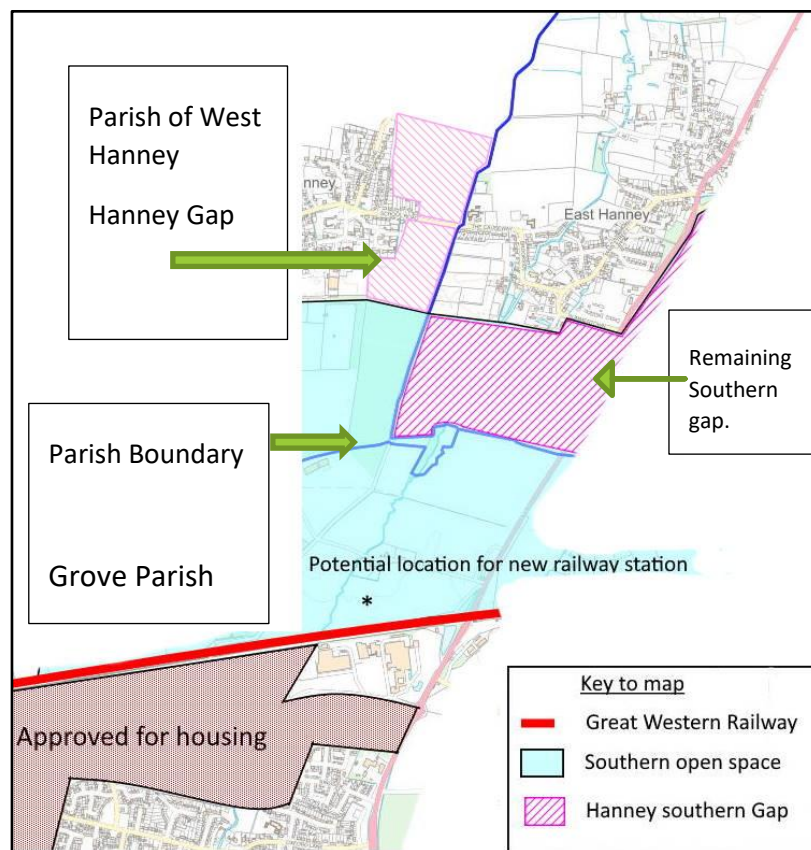


Figure 11 - Extent of limited separation remaining between East Hanney and Grove

The provision of a separation of settlement policy and concept of local gaps, such as the 'Hanney Gap' is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Vale of the White Horse Local Plan. Local Plan Part 2, Development Policy 29: Settlement Character and Gaps states that 'Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the settlement's character is retained, and physical and visual separation is maintained between settlements.' Also, one of the three main strands of the Local Plan Part 1 Spatial Strategy is to

‘promote thriving villages and rural communities whilst safeguarding the countryside and village character.’ There is therefore strong support in national policy and the Vale of the White Horse Development Plan for the principle of protecting the distinct landscape character of a settlement and the maintenance of separation of settlements.

Policy EHNP 4 – Coalescence

Development proposals in the neighbourhood area should demonstrate that the character of any particular settlement is retained, and that a physical and visual separation is maintained between its different settlements. In particular, new development should maintain the separation between the following settlements within the neighbourhood area:

- between East Hanney and West Hanney (insofar as this affects the neighbourhood area);
- between East Hanney and Grove (insofar as this affects the neighbourhood area);

Development proposals will be considered in the context of Core Policy 4 in the Local Plan 2031: Part 1, and, in addition, will only be supported where:

- the physical and visual separation between two separate settlements is not unacceptably diminished;
- cumulatively, with other existing or proposed development, it does not compromise the physical and visual separation between settlements, and
- it does not lead to a loss of environmental or historical assets that individually or collectively contribute towards their local identity, including loss of or detrimental impact on the siting of East Hanney on the rural landscape of the lowland vale.

The provision of the protection of the space separating East and West Hanney will also be implemented by way of the inclusion in this plan of a Community Action to work with West Hanney Parish Council to support the continuation of a ‘Green gap’.

Evidential material

- Neighbourhood Plan Survey
- West Hanney Neighbourhood Plan
- East Hanney Character Assessment
- West Hanney Character Assessment

Policy Context

- District Council Core Policy 4
- Vale of the White Horse Local Plan. Local Plan Part 2, Development Policy 29: Settlement Character and Gaps states that ‘Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the settlement’s character is retained, and physical and visual separation is maintained between settlements.’ Also, one of the three main strands of the Local Plan Part 1 Spatial Strategy is to ‘promote thriving villages and rural communities whilst safeguarding the countryside and village character.
- NPPF Paragraph 130: ‘Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments... are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and

landscape setting.’ In addition, paragraph 174 states that ‘planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.’ The green open spaces between settlements around East Hanney are valued landscapes as evidenced by the Community Survey

- West Hanney Neighbourhood Plan Policy RS2, The Hanney Gap.

5.1.5. Policy EHNP 5 – Historic Environment

Issue and Need

East Hanney is a historic village with a great history and is able to look back to evidence of very early settlement. In the context of the village as set out on page 6, the very name of Hanney is thought to derive from the Saxon ‘hanena-ey’ meaning ‘the island frequented by wild cocks’. The history of the village dates back even further with recent finds from the bronze and iron ages, together with much evidence of roman settlement.

The history of the village is rich and heavily evidenced. The long history as settlement has resulted in a village with a wide variety of building styles, and a green and rural environment with historic pathways focused along the brook and tracks out into the fields. There are also the stone walls, the water distribution system which once supplied water around the village from the mills, narrow streets, the causeway, the old bathing point on the brook, and much more.

The village has two conservation areas and a proportionally high number of listed buildings as well as some non-designated historic assets, all of which are important to the styles of buildings evident and play a part in the character of the village as evidenced by the Character Assessment. The history of the village is an essential part of the strong sense of place and character.

The number of recent developments and associated surveys has led to the unearthing of new and further finds of archaeological interest such as neolithic pottery found in the fields between the Hanneys. Finds such as the Hanney Brooch are evidence of the potential richness of the historic past of the village.

The large number of applications received as the village has grown recently has meant that many new green field sites previously untouched have been subject of archaeological interest, and it is important for the future that both the designated and non-designated assets of the village be taken account of and that they be appropriately treated and preserved from harm.

The issue and need is to provide a policy which makes provision for and respects the history of the village, the designated and non-designated historic assets, and all matters of archaeological interest.

Rationale

All aspects from the historic past are important features which shape the character of the village today. The archaeological maps of finds evidence that there is much of interest throughout the Parish and that the village is very likely to have much more to find. It is important that there is a policy in place respecting the archaeological and historic past.

Objective 1 of the Vision is to ‘ensure all new development conserves and enhances the historic and rural, character of the village’.

This policy addresses the vision and provides a specific policy on the historic environment. The policy as worded below both supports the vision objective and appropriately accords with the NPPF and Local Plan policy.

Policy EHNP 5 – Historic Environment

The parish’s designated historic heritage assets and their settings, both above and below ground including listed buildings, scheduled monuments and conservation areas will be conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their important contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.

Proposals for development that affect non-designated historic assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Evidential material

- East Hanney Character Assessment
- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey
- East Hanney Designated Conservation Areas, VoWH District Council website
- Neighbourhood Plan Baseline evidence, Appendix A

Policy Context

- Local Plan Part 1 – Core Policy 39: The Historic Environment – which sets out the Council’s approach to conserving historic assets across the district. Which includes the provision to ensure that new development conserves, and where possible enhances, designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets and their setting in accordance with national guidance and legislation
- The NPPF takes into consideration designated and non-designated historical assets.

5.2. POLICY THEME 2 – GREEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENT

Vision

Our vision is to ensure that East Hanney remains as an attractive Lowland Vale Parish where new development reflects and enhances the sense of place.

Objective

To maintain and improve the natural environment including biodiversity, landscape, green infrastructure and waterways.

Policies	
Policy EHNP6	Retention of trees and hedgerows
Policy EHNP7	Letcombe Brook
Policy EHNP8	Local Green Spaces
Policy EHNP9	Nature Recovery and Biodiversity

5.2.1. Policy EHNP 6 – Retention of trees and hedgerows

Issue and Need

East Hanney is a rural village and consequently has a variety of trees, shrubs and hedgerows, evident, providing the sense of a rich green environment. However, the village has recently witnessed loss of ancient hedgerows, and wild copse areas, as well as trees as a result of development proposals.

The verdant landscape is an important element which helps give East Hanney its sense of place and character. The Community Survey evidences that the village community values these features and has a deep desire to ensure that they are retained. The intent of this policy is to ensure that the village retains its intrinsic character by preserving its rural landscape, trees and hedgerows both within the village and the surrounding countryside.

Examples of losses of ancient hedgerows and wild copse areas, include along the edge of Summertown. Also, along the border/road edge of the land, which is now Whitfield Gardens, that established hedgerow having been disturbed and broken up so that it is now intermittent and has some fence panels and metalled bar railing showing. The recent application for additional housing on the strategic site known as Rosie Bees has also sought to remove a natural hedgerow which not only affects biodiversity but is also intrinsic to the visual aspect of the site.

Loss of land to development particularly towards the edge of the village has also meant loss of open unimproved and rough grassland. Including in some cases potential loss of priority habitat. Loss of open land, particularly grassland which is ideal wildlife habitat for reptiles and small mammal's adversely impacts on village biodiversity in a number of ways, such as loss of wildlife refuge and loss of formative landscape. A consequential loss of grassland is loss of habitat for small mammals and therefore loss of feeding ground, such as for barn owls. This has been experienced, for example at the site known as Rosie Bees and at Dews Meadow, both of which are edge of village locations where the settlement has expanded into surrounding fields. In clearing such areas for development, the consequence is loss of trees, hedgerows, green environment, and wildlife habitat.

The issue is loss of open grassland, trees, and hedge rows¹ to development. As the village experiences more development there is a site specific and cumulative wider consequential impact. The need is to ensure retention on site where practical, promote planting, and to encourage replacement within the village, where possible, rather than through application of offsetting. The net effect of offsetting is a biodiversity loss to the village, and cumulative negative impact on the character and ecological balance of East Hanney. This policy is required for ecological, biodiversity enhancement, village character and community reasons.

Despite there being trees evident within the Parish these are mainly in limited pockets, and much of the landscape is without woodland. The following diagram shows the very low population of trees that remain in the Parish as of May 2022. The very small proportion of woodland which remains is concerning, the map highlighting that a policy is required to address this problem. The positioning of the woodland areas that remain are mainly along pathways and at sites along the Brook, and essentially provide the green backdrop to the village facilities. When consideration is also given to the number and extent of orchards that existed, the number of fruit trees or native species that remain is now minimal and in need of protection and repopulation where possible.

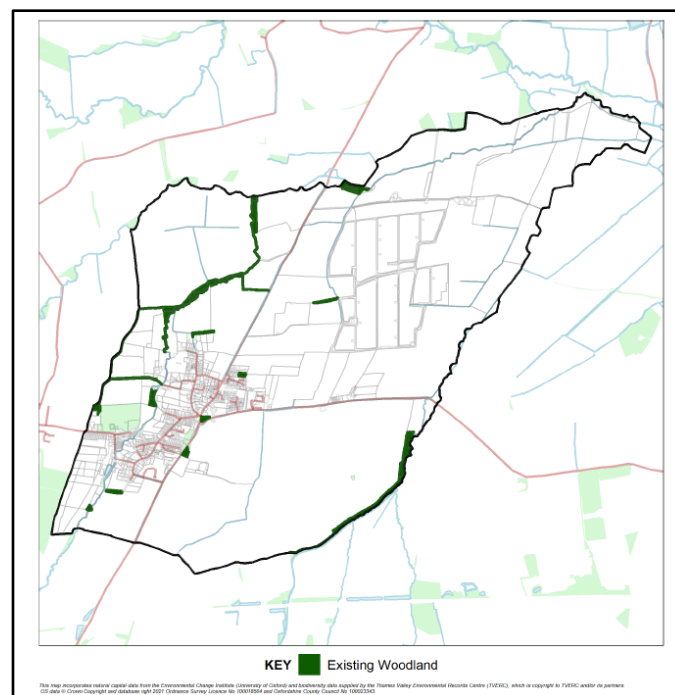


Figure 12 - Map of woodland within the Parish

The map shows woodland areas in the parish. Some very small woodland areas may not be shown. These total 10.1 ha which is 1% of the Parish. Source: Oxfordshire Treescape Project, Report produced of East Hanney Parish May 2022.

The following map shows the remaining areas of native hedgerows. There are a number of gaps evident around the field systems and a report by the Oxfordshire Treescape Project identifies that there is scope for new planting. There is a total of approximately 24.2 kilometres of hedgerow within the Parish which is only 31% of all field boundaries. Hedges are of particular biodiversity value as they provide ecological corridors for wildlife.

¹ Please note that hedgerows mark or form the boundary of domestic residential curtilages do not benefit from any protection under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and can be removed at any time without prior consent or approval from the LPA.

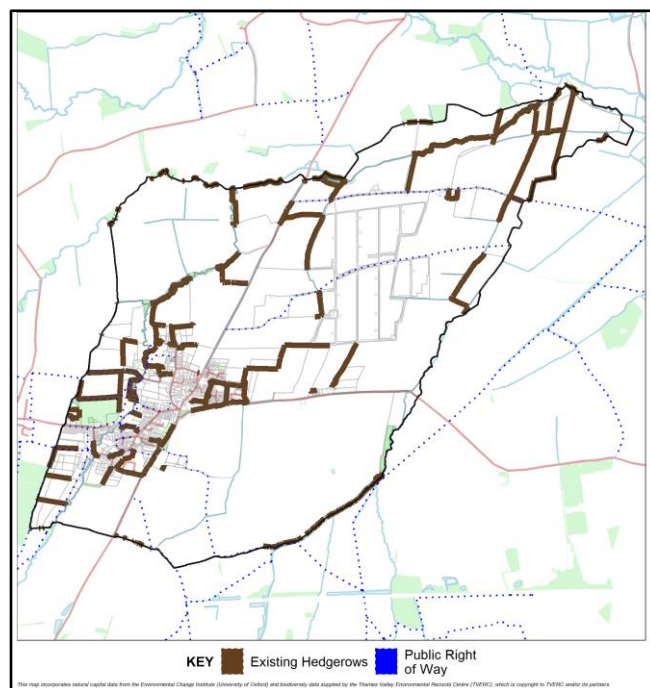


Figure 13 - Remaining hedgerows as of May 2022.

Source: Oxfordshire Treescape Project, Report produced of East Hanney Parish May 2022.

A policy to require developments to retain trees and hedgerows would be environmentally more beneficial and help retain the sense of character of the village.

Rationale

There is considerable evidence and support for this policy from the community. The policy is also aligned to the intention of the District Council policies which set out to protect and enhance character, protect and enhance the natural environment, and to provide an environment whereby flora and fauna may be preserved and flourish, East Hanney being a rural village in a green rural setting.

By ensuring that there is a net positive approach to protecting and enhancing trees and hedgerows, the natural habitat of the many species of flora and fauna in the village will also be protected.

This EHNP policy provides for the concerns that are specific to East Hanney which the more general policies of the District Council do not necessarily encompass. Examples of how East Hanney has been affected and why a specific policy is needed include:

- 1) In the past, the village had numerous orchards, remnants of which still exist and should be protected. The extent of hedgerows and orchards are clearly seen on older maps, and most of the village historically was orchard separated by hedgerow. The Peoples Trust for Endangered species has used aerial photography to help identify traditional orchards, and several sites are located in the village. The Trust states that Traditional Orchards are wildlife havens and that 90% of this precious habitat has been lost since the 1950's.
- 2) Protection of hedgerows. One such complete removal of a hedgerow was on the eastern boundary of the ancient orchard to the South of Summertown. The removal has had an adverse long-term effect on the local wildlife, and the accompanying ditch system that was filled in may consequently form a potential flood risk.

- 3) It is our experience that the proposal for each new development whilst including an arboreal report also tends to carry with it proposals for removal of hedgerows, and often has proposal for offsetting rather than maintenance and protection of the existing trees and hedgerows. This results in loss of green/ecological environment in the village. For example, at the strategic site under LPP2 known as Rosie Bees which formerly had a high biodiversity value, the developer has proposed development which has a significant net biodiversity loss at the site with offsetting payment which will not benefit the village, causing a net loss to East Hanney and the village environment.

Another example is the developer's application for phase 1 of the second strategic site under LPP2 'land at Ashfields Lane, East Hanney reference P21/V0376/FUL.

Bearing in mind that the village has experienced a raft of such developments the cumulative effect has been and continues to be an expansive cross village erosion of the natural environment and loss of biodiversity with trees and hedgerows typically affected at each instance, and loss of grassland and natural habitat. As can be seen from the maps within this section, the number of trees remaining in the village is small, and hedgerows are similarly becoming affected.

- 4) The District Council policy (CP 44 Landscape) whilst considering a district wide position does not specifically address the needs of East Hanney and the village is experiencing cumulative loss of the local natural environment and biodiversity. Whilst CP 46 does give some consideration to cumulative effect of development its focus is on delivery in specified Conservation target areas and not a localised environment such as in East Hanney. CP 45 currently being site focused effectively enables unlimited offsetting without consideration of the impact on the local affected environment, nor is there provision for encouraging reinvestment back into the immediate affected locality, by way of new planting of trees and hedgerows, for example.

This EHNP policy addresses the specific needs of East Hanney and compliments those of the District Council where the intent is to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.

The policy also addresses the wishes of the community who would like to see more trees and hedgerows as the community survey evidences: question 2.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan Community survey asked *what are the most important things to consider about design and layout for new housing?* Approximately 75% of respondents would like to see trees and hedges used to soften any development edge and any development should provide a net gain in trees; question 6.2 of the Neighbourhood Plan Community survey asked if the respondent would like to see more trees around the village. As shown in the survey results there was a significant majority support for this.

Policy EHNP 6 – Retention of trees and hedgerows

Applications within the parish of East Hanney must recognise the important role provided by native trees, hedgerows, copses and other vegetation in contributing to and protecting landscape and historic character, biodiversity, as well as their carbon sink role.

Applicants should demonstrate all such matters have been considered and will ensure that:

- i) **Developments should respect their relationship to the surrounding environment and reflect the intrinsic character of the village by safeguarding existing hedgerows, trees and other**

natural habitats. Where possible enhanced planting should be provided, such as the provision of additional appropriate vegetation not just replaced on a like for like basis, with tree species appropriate to the site's growing conditions.

- ii) Development proposals must include Arboricultural Impact Assessments and Arboricultural Method statements seeking to retain mature or otherwise important trees, groups of trees, woodland and hedgerows on site. Where loss of any such features are proposed these must be accompanied by a robust argument as to why the scheme design/layout concept cannot accommodate such features.
- iii) In addition, development proposals must mitigate loss of features by undertaking a review as follows:
 - a) seeking to provide for feature preservation based on advice from a qualified arboriculturist that specifically states that the feature is either dangerous or diseased to the extent it must be removed in its entirety for safety purposes;
 - b) seeking to minimise the extent of any removal particularly in the case of a hedgerow through appropriate measures such as layout design changes;
 - c) setting out a clear plan and provision for suitable healthy replacement with tree species appropriate to the sites growing conditions undertaken by arboreal specialists as part of the planning application process;
 - d) ensuring replacements will be appropriate to the location to complement the character of the immediate area and the wider settlement/parish, ensuring sufficient space for their mature dimensions;
 - e) Ancient or Veteran Trees should be identified and must not be removed, afforded protection during works, and provided sufficient space for them to continue to thrive should there be required design changes.
- iv) Where sites were historically orchards, old varieties of fruit trees should be preserved and enhanced, including propagation and replanting to within the site and wider village
- v) Ornamental shrubs are to be avoided as they are not in keeping with the traditional rural landscape of the area.

Evidential Material

- Historical maps of East Hanney – Evidencing lost fruit orchards, paddocks and hedgerows.
- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey
- East Hanney Character Assessment
- Oxfordshire Treescapes - Parish Report May 2022

Policy Context

Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan (2031)

- Core policy 44: Landscape

The key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale of White Horse District's landscape will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced, in particular: Features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, water courses and water bodies.

- Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure

A net gain in Green Infrastructure, including biodiversity, will be sought either through on-site provision or off-site contributions and the targeted use of other funding sources. A net loss of Green Infrastructure, including biodiversity, through development proposals, will be resisted.

Proposals for new development must provide adequate Green Infrastructure in line with the Green Infrastructure Strategy. All major applications must be accompanied by a statement demonstrating that they have taken into account the relationship of the proposed development to existing Green Infrastructure and how this will be retained and enhanced. Proposals will be required to contribute to the delivery of new Green Infrastructure and/or the improvement of existing assets including Conservation Target Areas in accordance with the standards in the Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Habitats Regulations Assessment. NOTE- offsite contributions could effectively be within another part of the Parish.

- Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity

Development that will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in the district will be permitted. Opportunities for biodiversity gain, including the connection of sites, large-scale habitat restoration, enhancement and habitat re-creation will be actively sought, with a primary focus on delivery in the Conservation Target Areas. A net loss of biodiversity will be avoided. The highest level of protection will be given to sites and species of international nature conservation importance (Special Areas of Conservation and European Protected Species).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Paragraph 8

‘Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives. [This includes] an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, **improving biodiversity**, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

- Paragraph 153

‘Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

- Paragraph 180

‘When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

Tree Preservation Orders

Within the Vale of White Horse district there are hundreds of trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and within Conservation Areas. To carry out work to these trees written consent is required from the District Council.

Conservation Areas

Anyone wanting to carry out works on trees over 75 mm (3inches) diameter at breast height within a conservation area must give the council six weeks written notice including a plan.

Summary: Whilst there are some provisions within existing District and National Planning policies, the context of the village is that trees and hedgerows should be protected and additional planting undertaken relative to new developments, as set out in the NP policy proposed.

5.2.2. Policy EHNP 7 – Letcombe Brook

Issue and need

The purpose of this planning policy is to protect and enhance the Letcombe Brook and its corridor ecologically for the benefit of the village, for the wildlife, and for enjoyment by the community.

As highlighted under ‘Sustainability challenges’, it is important to underline that East Hanney has a number of special features which play an important part in defining its character and sense of place. The prevalence of the Letcombe Brook running through the heart of the village, being a rare chalk stream means that there is a diverse wildlife and a sensitive ecological setting, the stream itself attracting protective legislation. The brook is influential in the form and nature of the village, of the community experience, and many aspects of life within East Hanney. Planning for the future of East Hanney must have at its heart the Letcombe Brook including the associated green and blue landscape, preservation of the diversity of wildlife, and the ecological environment.

This policy will enable specific protection to the Brook as part of East Hanney’s green and blue environment, as an important wildlife and ecological corridor, and for its importance to village life. It also enables some mitigation for future flood risk.

The village has developed around the Brook which has had importance throughout the history of the village. The Brook contributes wildlife pathways and is home to several rare species of flora and fauna including for example otters. It enables a green and natural landscape through the heart of East Hanney and is a major feature and aspect of the character of the village.

East Hanney recently witnessed housing applications in proximity to the Brook which if approved would have had the consequence of loss of sensitive landscape, loss of environment, and loss of green space, each fundamental to the sense of place and character of the village. Development close to the Brook could also threaten and cause loss of wildlife habitat.

The Brook is recognised as being important not only as a rare chalk stream but also as a wildlife corridor.

As a rare chalk stream, it is afforded some protection and has defined natural characteristics. It is recognised by the EA and other parties as the link between designated wildlife sites of which there are 3 along the brook corridor, such as Cowslips Meadow which is the Local wildlife site located in East Hanney. The Brook is included (as part of the ‘Core Zone’ and ‘Recovery Zone’ within the draft nature recovery network which the EA and the County Council together with other parties such as Natural England are supporting to help protect and provide a natural environment across Oxfordshire, for the future.

It is critical that this NP recognises the importance of the Brook to not only East Hanney but to the whole area and catchment which it feeds and the natural environment that it provides.

The Brook and its associated environment are also important for the mitigation of flooding and flood risk in various parts of the village. Its management and the green spaces which relate to the Brook, provide natural

areas for flood mitigation. We recognise, too that this means the Brook itself can also be a source of fluvial flood risk, the areas surrounding it are classed as FZ3b (functional flood plain).

Notably there is a green corridor aligned along its course through East Hanney. This is illustrated at figure 15 in policy EHNP8 below on Local Green spaces, where a natural green corridor can be seen aligned to the Brook.

As the water course runs through the heart of the village it is essential for the preservation and protection of village character, sense of place and well-being of the community that development is managed in accordance with this EHNP policy which seeks to ensure a balance between development and a net positive outcome for the village. It specifically addresses the needs and fragility of the environment along the Brook in East Hanney and seeks to ensure that this is positively planned for.

Relevant policies under the Local Plan are the Development Policy relevant to watercourses within the Local Plan Part 2 (Development Policy 30) this addresses watercourses of various types across the District, and within Local Plan Part 1 Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity, which applies to chalk streams, as they are classed as priority habitats.

In the context of East Hanney, in the Local Plan Part 2 on page 113 the District identifies:

- the importance of rare chalk streams
- that chalk streams are identified as a priority for conservation under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- cites the Letcombe Brook as the example of a chalk stream to be protected
- the importance of the habitat stating that ‘the water is characterised as having high clarity and quality with a stable temperature regime. It is the quality of the water as well as the in-stream and bankside habitats that make chalk streams so important for a variety of rare and protected species, including, for example, White Clawed Crayfish, Otters and Water Voles’.

The extent of provision for the protection of the chalk stream and current guidance under the Local Plan is set out within Development Policy 30, read in conjunction with Core policy 46.

Within East Hanney the Letcombe Brook is home to an array of protected species and provides a rare environment. There is in essence a sensitive biodiversity and ecological environment related to the stream for which a specific policy reflecting; the special protected status; the nature of the highly sensitive biodiversity; its importance as a wildlife habitat; and the importance of the chalk stream to East Hanney is required. This policy is therefore provided as a specific policy relevant to the Letcombe Brook and its associated environment as it flows through East Hanney.

The importance of the Brook to East Hanney and the community was also reflected in the Community survey.

It is noted that in the wording of the Local Plan Part 2 Policy 30 that the requirement is for a minimum of a 10m buffer with a following requirement for development proposals located within 20m of a watercourse to provide a construction management plan. The proposal and requirement under this EHNP policy is to ensure that a full 20-meter buffer both sides of the watercourse is applied to protect from any new development, so that there is protection for both the Brook and the natural wildlife habitat which is associated with the Brook within the Parish.

Rationale

Letcombe Brook is a rare chalk stream that runs through the centre of East Hanney. It plays an important role in the village and has impact on villagers’ lives in a great many ways. It forms a very important part of the character of the village as well as a crucial wildlife habitat which attracts and supports a considerable

diversity of flora and fauna including some rare and protected species. It enhances the richness of the village, the village setting and the environment.

River corridors are of great importance to biodiversity, water resources, water quality, fisheries and recreation. They make a significant contribution to landscape character and form green links between habitats which are vital for the conservation of biodiversity and enhancement of wildlife habitats.

In recognition of their international importance, chalk streams such as Letcombe Brook have been classified as a NERC Habitat of Principal Importance (previously called UKBAP priority habitats).

Species which it supports include healthy wild brown trout, priority species such as otter and the UK's most endangered species, the water vole. It also attracts rare species of bird including birds of prey, kingfishers, and egrets. The biodiversity of the Brook is rich and has a very strong influence on the nature and character of the village

It is therefore important that the Letcombe Brook forms part of the Neighbourhood Plan policies, as its wellbeing affects the whole of the community and natural environment. The Brook can be looked at as a natural green and blue corridor that runs through the length of the Parish.

The following diagram shows the flow pattern of the Letcombe Brook and flowing branches through East Hanney.

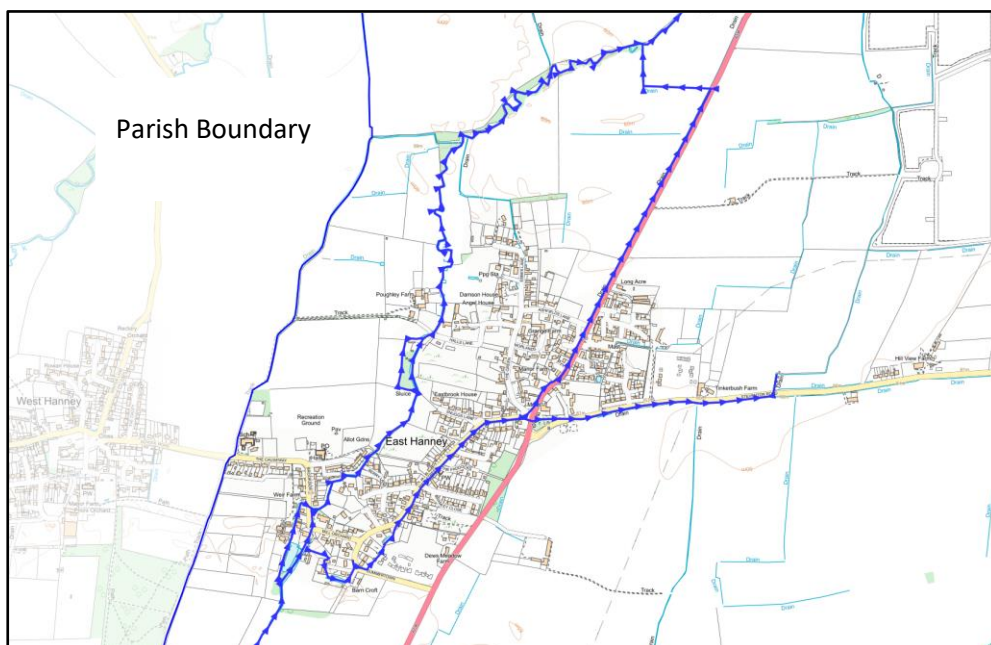


Figure 14 - Letcombe Brook flowing branches

In addition to its ecological importance the Letcombe brook is of historic importance to the village and within the vicinity are many historic features such as two water mills, an old iron bridge and the site of a Victorian bathing pond.

The policy is supported by the draft of the emerging Wantage Neighbourhood Plan, the District Council Local Plan 2031, DP30 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006.

There is also legislation intended to protect rare chalk streams: chalk streams being given priority for conservation under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)12,

This policy provides:

- specific provision for the protection of the Brook its wildlife corridors and habitat within the Parish

- a platform to encourage enhancement of the associated green environment
- for flood mitigation measures to be instigated in areas related to the Brook, such as flood risk assessment and appropriate flood mitigation proposals, for example the creation of new habitat features such as ponds.
- enhancement of biodiversity in areas related to the Letcombe Brook.

The Neighbourhood Plan also gives provision for Nature Recovery and biodiversity through Policy EHNP9, and for wider flood mitigation measures through development as set out in Policy EHNP 16.

This policy and its principles are in accordance with the ambitions of the draft Nature Recovery network, of which Letcombe Brook is incorporated. Further detail on the Nature Recovery Network is given within the EHNP9 and in Appendix A Base Line Evidence. Within Policy EHNP9 and the Base Line Evidence a map of the extent of the Nature Recovery Network within the Parish is shown.

88% of this parish is within the NRN Core and Recovery Zones, with the main ecological corridor clearly seen to follow the route of the Letcombe Brook.

To protect this important ecological corridor development in the vicinity needs to be designed so that it does not cause any adverse effects. There also needs to be consideration of the potential impact which any development in the village may have on water courses that relate to the Brook, such as an increase in flood risk.

Provision is made within this Policy for a natural green buffer zone to apply in respect of any new operational development proposals within 20 meters of the top of the river bank along both sides of the watercourse, noting that the scope of buffer recommended by the Letcombe Brook Project, an independent party with expertise and knowledge of the Brook and its environmental requirements is 50 meters.

The application of the buffer through this policy also assists with protection against any increase in flood risk that developments within 20 meters of the Letcombe Brook may bring. The Brook is sensitive to flood, as evidenced within the SFRA (Strategic Flood Assessment), Character Assessment, in this NP document, and in the Base line evidence. The banks of the Brook being higher in some parts than lower lying areas of the village. Predictions are that climate change will lead to more intense rainfall which in turn will increase flood risk. Development should not take place in river corridors for that reason, river corridors protected by buffer strips can provide opportunity for nature based solutions to both the risk of increased flooding and biodiversity loss. Past developments alongside the Brook and poor habitat management have resulted in a disconnect between the water course and its floodplain and increased flood risk both in East Hanney and downstream in the Ock catchment area, specifically Abingdon (source Letcombe Brook Project).

Consequently, the need is for a policy to protect the Brook and its associated biodiverse environment, which includes provision to protect against any new operational development within 20 meters of the bank, and thus help protect the ecological corridor and mitigate risk of flooding along the course of the Brook within East Hanney.

Policy EHNP 7 – Letcombe Brook

Proposals for development should ensure that regard is given to the highly sensitive nature of the Brook through East Hanney both ecologically and in respect of flood risk, and the need for its conservation by not allowing any new operational development within 20 meters of the Letcombe Brook. As appropriate to their nature and scale, development proposals should be at least 20m from the bank of the Letcombe

Brook, unless exceptional circumstances can be fully demonstrated in which case a minimum of 10m must apply, and all proposals should:

- I. Protect the important and historic waterway system through the village including man made water courses, existing ponds and drainage ditches from adverse impacts.
- II. Demonstrate within the proposals that specific consideration has been given to preserve the ecological environment, the character of the chalk stream and the character of the village. All major proposals should include a construction ecological management plan
- III. Make specific provision for ensuring the existing high ecological value of this area including preserving wildlife pathways and natural habitat
- IV. Include flood risk assessment and appropriate flood mitigation proposals which may include the provision of new habitat features such as ponds.
- V. Conserve and enhance the biodiversity, landscape and recreational value of the Letcombe Brook.
- VI. Conserve the geological and ecological significance of the area and the natural flow and water course taking account of the global rarity, natural characteristics and ecological significance of the Brook as a rare chalk stream.
- VII. New development proposals adjacent to or encompassing Letcombe Brook outside of the 20-meter buffer are encouraged as appropriate to their nature and scale, to:
 - Create new habitat features such as ponds, and scrapes in the Letcombe Brook corridor.
 - Include a long -term landscape and ecological management plan for their proposals and a minimum 20 meter buffer zone, favourable to the enhancement of biodiversity, along both sides of the water course.
- VIII. For the future, the whole length of the Letcombe Brook as it passes through the Parish is to be considered, recognised and treated as a sensitive ecological area and natural habitat. The footpaths along its bank and through associated Local Green Spaces are to be maintained using natural materials. The qualities of tranquillity, openness, and green natural landscape which the Brook provides to be protected and enhanced.

Evidential Material

- Oxfordshire Treescapes Project Report for East Hanney May 2022
- East Hanney Character Assessment
- Base Line Evidence
- Letter from The Letcombe Brook Project supporting the proposed policy. This also references the case for the buffers, and national environmental policy in this regard. Letter is presented in Appendix A, Base Line Evidence.
- WWF UK Chalkstream Report 2014 “Chalk rivers should be protected or restored to a quality which sustains the high conservation value of their wildlife, healthy water supplies, recreation opportunities and their place in the character and cultural history of the landscape.”
[wwf_chalkstreamreport_final_lr.pdf](#)
- Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre species recordings:
 - Chalk stream restoration strategy produced by catchment-based approach (CaBA). This provides helpful guidance on how to protect and restore chalk streams. The EA state:

Implementing the CaBa is a step closer to meeting the government 25-year environmental plan. The plan has a target of 75% of England's chalk streams being restored to natural state. Note: The group is made up of representatives from the Environment Agency, Natural England, Ofwat, Water UK, WWF, Angling Trust, Salmon and Trout Conservation, The Rivers Trust, Wild Trout Trust and Wildlife Trusts.

- Draft Nature Recovery Network. Detail provided in Appendix A, Base Line Evidence.
- The Vowh Level 1 SFRA (Strategic Flood Assessment) Updated 2017.

Policy Context

- Local Plan Part 1 Core Policy 46 - Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity
- The Local Plan part 2, development policy 30 - Watercourses which requires provision of a buffer along both sides of the watercourse to create a corridor of land and water favourable for the enhancement of biodiversity.
- NPPF Para 153: 'Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.'
- Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- The draft of the emerging Wantage Neighbourhood Plan
- For rural areas the Letcombe Brook Project recommends a corridor of at least 50m wide. Because East Hanney Parish is within a rural area and the Brook runs through the green parts of the village with a diverse and rare wildlife population a policy with a 50m buffer zone is appropriate. This policy EHNP7 provides for a 20m buffer having taken due consideration of the District Policies and the village setting. Note: In other sensitive areas along the Brook such as in the village of Letcombe Regis the natural space along the edge of the Brook is preserved by way of a designated Nature Reserve. Similar wildlife and green habitats are experienced in East Hanney, for example: evidence of otters and water vole, as well as associated green spaces, hence the need for recognition of the buffer proposed through this EHNP Policy.
- Ashbury Neighbourhood Plan, Policy 6a Chalk Springs and Watercourses.

5.2.3. Policy EHNP 8 – Local Green spaces

Issue and need

Designation of 'Local Green Spaces' is provided for under the NPPF.

A key feature of East Hanney is its rural and green environment with open spaces, long vistas and green corridors including those which relate to the Letcombe Brook. These natural amenities are important for human well-being and in supporting wildlife in all its forms. The extensive network of footpaths provides easy access to these green spaces and onwards to open fields.

The NPPF recognises the value of the natural and local environment and paragraph 101 states: "The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in

sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.'

Paragraph 102 goes on to add: "The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is: a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; (b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and (c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Paragraph 174 states that: 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils [and] minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures...'

The village has various green open areas which are an important feature of the village that qualify as Local Green Spaces under the NPPF. These areas are an essential part of the green landscape and contribute significantly to the character and sense of place, as well as providing important habitat for both flora and fauna. The change in planning provision under the NPPF is relatively new and accordingly there is need to include the areas as Local Green Spaces as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. 90% of all responders to the Community survey being in favour of designation of Local Green Spaces.

The East Hanney Village Character Assessment gives reference to the importance of green and open spaces to the character of East Hanney. Also, of the pathways and walkways through the village, giving access to or outlook over this important village amenity for much of East Hanneys history. There also being an established pattern of routeways, fields and tree cover.

The built village of East Hanney is typically well established and for the most part in one of the two conservation areas, so where green areas exist, they are important to the character of the built environment.

Immediately surrounding the village there are green spaces that provide a sense of space, views and a soft transition to the wider countryside, or have local significance, because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness in wildlife.

Rationale

The Neighbourhood plan seeks to retain the character of the village by proposing a number of important green spaces to be designated as Local Green Spaces. In each case, the green spaces are an integral part of the village character and are therefore regarded as special to the local community.

East Hanney village is a rural village set within the Lowland Vale Landscape, with green spaces of varying use and types. The village is surrounded by arable farmland. The green spaces and surrounding green environment forming an important part of the character of the village as identified within the Character Assessment.

The village has grown around a network of lanes which has resulted in many areas of open land in and around the village. The village has areas of mature tree lines, areas of shrub, uncultivated grass, and meadows, there is also a rare chalk stream. As a result, East Hanney is a village where residents do not have to walk far before they feel they are within the country. Within the village are two equestrian stables which include open grassland for grazing, and a number of areas of open fields, some of which historically were orchards. Alongside the Letcombe Brook there are various public footpaths which pass through or provide views over green amenities.

The National Planning Policy Framework gives local Communities the opportunity to protect important green areas by designating them as 'Local Green Space' through the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. Opportunity is given to identify and nominate green spaces that qualify as Local Green Spaces for the period of the Neighbourhood Plan. To be a Local Green Space, specific criteria as set out within the NPPF must be met.

This Neighbourhood plan seeks to retain the character of the village by proposing that various of the green spaces which fulfil the criteria for Local Green Spaces in the parish be protected by designation as Local Green Spaces. In each case, the green spaces are an integral part of the village character and are therefore regarded as special to the local community.

Evidence to identify significant green spaces comes from four sources:

- 1) The Community Survey and resident representations for specified local green spaces. Designation of Local Green Spaces NPPF paragraphs 101-103, enables local communities to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance by designating them as Local Green Spaces.
- 2) The Character Assessment and Base Line Evidence appendix which considers the landscape.
- 3) The VoWH designation of the East Hanney Conservation Areas, designated 27.02.78 amended 18.12.90 shows the relationship of the Local Green spaces being dedicated under this plan to the conservation areas. Broadly these areas being part of the heart of the village align and provide a backdrop to the conservation zones. It helps show the context of "important open spaces" within the historic village and reaffirms the importance of these to the village and the wider area of the Parish.
- 4) Review of greenspaces in the village, as referenced within The Local Green Spaces Appendix.

Advice from an independent Planning advisor, assisted in the determination of criteria for nomination of identified green spaces as Local Green spaces and the formulation of this policy.

Considerable support for the provision of Local Green Spaces was received through the community consultation process and specific designations of land identified as 'Local Green Spaces' received. In each case the areas identified as Local Green Space are considered to comply with the planning criteria as set out within the NPPF and their environmental qualities provide basis for each to endure.

The results of the Community Survey comprehensively evidenced support for this policy including the identification and promotion of specific areas to be classified as Local Green Spaces. 229 (90%) of respondents to the 2016 NP Survey were in favour of protecting important green areas by designating them as a 'Local Green Space'.

Further detail of the responses to the questions is given in Appendix D 'Local Green Spaces' which provides the assessment and qualification criteria relevant to each of the areas proposed as Local Green Space under this plan.

There were several areas within the Parish recommended through the community consultation process for consideration as a Local Green space. However, in applying the criteria in NPPF (Para 101) it was clear that Local Green Space designation would not be appropriate for some of these green spaces and so a sifting process was undertaken. In addition, some sites may be considered sufficiently protected by other means, for example sites within the Conservation Area or sites owned by the Parish Council. The sites were reviewed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group using the required NPPF criteria and the Cotswold toolkit to evaluate each proposal and consider which of these sites should be considered for further protection, using the three main criteria for designation: 1. Proximity to the community; 2. Special features and significance and; 3. Scale.

As a result of this evaluation, 8 sites are identified as worthy of special protection, further detail of the evaluation of each and consideration of the criteria, is provided within the Appendix 'Local Green Spaces' (Appendix D) which supports this policy.

Note: The Nigel Eddy Woodland, and the Land between East and West Hanney whilst identified by respondents to the survey are not included as these areas are outside of the village, forming part of West Hanney Parish.

The 8 areas which are within the Parish that have been identified as appropriate and qualifying as Local Green Spaces are:

- **A** - The area referred locally as 'the Ancient Orchard' and its approach, located south of Summertown alongside the Letcombe Brook, adjacent to the county wildlife site 'Cow slip meadows.
- **B** - The land forming part of the Letcombe Brook Green corridor which runs alongside the Brook close to the spine of the older part of the village, commencing on the right bank of the brook northwards from the iron bridge. This area comprises of green parcels of back land running from behind main street to the back of The Green.
- **C** - Letcombe Brook Green corridor, land to the west bank of the Brook, from the iron bridge extending northwards toward Ploughly Farm
- **D** - Chapel Site, at Ploughly Farm, alongside Letcombe Brook.
- **E** - Land north of Philberds alongside the East Bank of Letcombe Brook.
- **F** - The green corridor to the East of the A338 running south of the junction with Steventon Road.
- **G** - Kingsleases, the area of land north of the sports fields which links through to land along the Letcombe Brook Green corridor.
- **H** - Parcel of land adjacent to the right bank of Letcombe Brook to the rear of the British Legion, known as Garstane Paddocks.

The map below shows the location of each of the sites.

Save for F which lies alongside the A338, the sites can be envisaged to form a natural green heart to the village, being a green corridor linked by footways and water course, providing a core of tranquillity, and environmental sanctuary for both wildlife and residents alike. In addition, the historic contribution of the greenspaces to the village character is of fundamental importance including to the setting of the Conservation Area. Whilst the Local Green space alongside the A338 provides a green edge to the village on approach and when passing through.

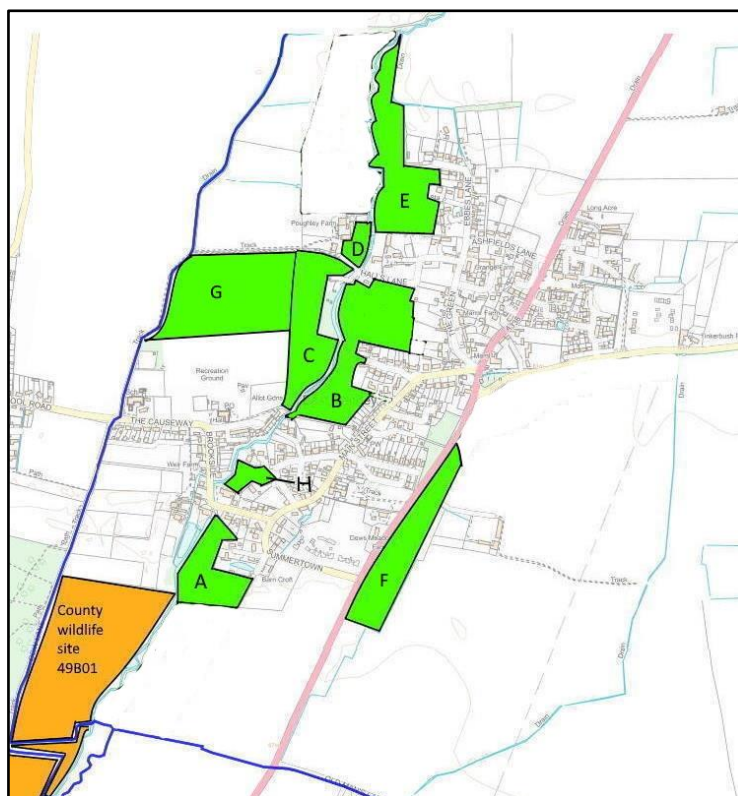


Figure 15 Local Green Spaces

The consequence of designating land as a Local Green Space is that local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Government guidance on '[Open spaces, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space](#)' (Para 20), explains that designating a green area as Local Green Space would give it protection consistent with that in respect of Green Belt. However, designation imposes no new restrictions or obligations on landowners (Para 20) and does not in itself confer any rights of public access over what exists at present. Any additional access would be a matter for separate negotiation with landowners, whose legal rights must be respected (Para 17).

The County Wildlife site at Cow slip meadows which as a County Wildlife site is already a designated area compliments the spaces to be designated under this plan as Local Green spaces, forming part of the green corridor and being an area of importance to biodiversity. It is not included as a Local Green Space as it already holds a designation as a County Wildlife site.

Policy EHNP 8 – Local Green spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following locations as Local Green Space, as shown in Figure 12:

- The area referred locally as the Ancient Orchard and approach, located south of Summertown alongside Letcombe Brook, adjacent to the county wildlife site 'Cowslip Meadows'. Area A.
- The land forming part of the Letcombe Brook Green corridor which runs alongside the Brook close to the spine of the older part of the village commencing on the right bank of the Brook northwards from the Iron bridge. Area B.
- Letcombe Brook Green corridor, land to the west bank of the Brook, from the iron bridge extending northwards toward Ploughly Farm. Area C.

- Chapel Site, at Ploughly Farm, alongside Letcombe Brook. Area D.
- Land north of Philberds alongside the East Bank of Letcombe Brook. Area E.
- The green corridor East of the A338 running south of the junction with Steventon Road. Area F.
- Kingsleas, the area of land north of the sports fields which links through to land along the Letcombe Brook Green corridor. Area G.
- Parcel of land adjacent to the right bank of Letcombe Brook to the rear of the British Legion., known as Garstane Paddocks. Area H.

New development will not be supported on land designated as Local Green Space except in very special circumstances

Evidential material

- East Hanney Local Green Spaces Study
- East Hanney Character Assessment
- Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards
- East Hanney Community Survey
- East Hanney Designated Conservation Areas, VoWH District Council website
- DCLG Guidance on Open Spaces

Policy Context

- The NPPF – paragraphs 101 and 102
 - Paragraph 101: “The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.
 - Paragraph 102 “The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is: a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; (b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and (c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

In order to provide further certainty, Natural England's *Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards* (ANGSt) have been used to define the likely size of a suitable Local Green Space and its distance from the local community. A Local Green Space should normally be located within 2km (1.25 miles) of the community it serves and a site of 2ha (5 acres) or less and should be located within 300m (325 yards) (or 5 minutes' walk) of the community it serves.

A site of over 20ha (50 acres) would be considered to be “an extensive tract of land” and therefore not suitable for designation as a Local Green.

Once designated, the policy will resist all proposals for development unless it can be clearly demonstrated they are minor, or they are required utilities development.

- Vale Local Plan Part 1
 - Core Policy 43, Natural Resources, which identifies that: ‘the conservation of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is a core planning principle of the NPPF, stating that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.
 - Core Policy 44, Landscape, which states that: ‘The key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the Vale of White Horse District’s landscape will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced, in particular: i. features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and water bodies; ii. Important landscape settings of settlements; iii. Topographical features; iv. areas or features of cultural and historic value; v. important views and visually sensitive skylines, and; vi. tranquillity and the need to protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise, and motion.
 - Core Policy 45, Green Infrastructure, which seeks through the policy to achieve a net gain in Green Infrastructure including biodiversity. That Policy states that ‘there are numerous important natural habitats, including ancient woodlands and habitats of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity (under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act). Identifying that Waterways and river corridors are also an important feature in the district, making a significant contribution to the character, biodiversity and landscape quality. There are also a wide variety of legally protected and priority species resident throughout the Vale’.
- Consideration has been taken of how other adopted plans have approached the issue and addressed the need for Local Green spaces. The relatively nearby village of East Hagbourne in South Oxon being one of the plans considered, there being many similarities. East Hagbourne like East Hanney is a historic rural village and has a number of areas that qualify as Local Green Spaces, the East Hagbourne Neighbourhood Plan has recently been made inclusive of all of the Local Green Spaces designated through the Neighbourhood Plan process. East Hagbourne is a nearby Parish within South Oxon, which shares the same planning team as VoWH DC.
- Other Neighbourhood Plans within the District which also have designated Local Green Spaces and which are also rural in nature include Ashbury and also Longworth.

Technical Note – Chartered Planner: Community First Oxfordshire

Local Green Space Proposals at East Hanney

Community First Oxfordshire was commissioned to independently review the LGS proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan with reference to the Cotswold Tool Kit but also based upon our knowledge of East Hanney and the individual sites.

A walkover was undertaken to examine each site and the review included checks as to whether there are any extant planning permissions or development allocations which would compromise the LGS proposals. There are none.

Description of East Hanney

A key feature of the assessment is that East Hanney is a linear settlement and most of the proposed LGS sites follow the line of the Letcombe Brook which runs through the heart of the settlement on its western side. The village has evidence of early settlement, as a consequence, much of the village space has been long established. The built environment incorporates 2 conservation areas which relate to many of the open spaces.

To the west of the settlement lies the Hanney Gap, part of which lies within West Hanney parish but fundamentally this is an area of undeveloped countryside between the two settlements with only one minor connecting road along which the Gap narrows. There are no extra through routes for cars, so lanes west of East Hanney's Main Street all turn into narrow walking and cycling tracks that connect to the Letcombe Brook corridor and beyond. It is therefore possible to walk immediately from Main Street through green spaces via the Letcombe Brook and from thence using extensive footpath networks, to the wider countryside and to larger recreational spaces to the west of the Letcombe Brook. This means that as well as being highly accessible to the community the LGS sites to the west of Main Street are tranquil, biodiversity hot spots, contributing to a high-quality living environment and to East Hanney's unique historic character. In addition, views of the wider countryside exist from within East Hanney across the centuries old green spaces known as paddocks which lie on the edge of the large Conservation Area.

The extensive biodiversity that exists in the Letcombe Brook, a rare chalk stream including rare species, is a key factor present in many of the LGS sites in the corridor and this is a much-appreciated aspect of living in the settlement. In addition, this corridor is also valued for its heritage which includes 2 mills, Lower Mill and Dandridge Mill, the local drainage system that provides historic tributary channels through the Conservation Area and the ancient green spaces known as paddocks which provide tranquil areas where cars cannot intrude. The only outlier LGS is a strip of land alongside the A338 on the eastern side of the village which includes a small area of woodland and is linked by public footpath.

Thus, in summary the sites are all highly accessible and within the five minutes walking distance from the community as set out in the Cotswold Tool Kit. None of the sites may be classed as extensive tracts of land. The sites meet the criteria in NPPF.

Specific LGS selection

In earlier dialogue with the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group, it was agreed that some of the LGS sites should be deleted or reduced in size to meet the criteria in the Cotswold Tool Kit more accurately, mostly concerning accessibility and local character issues.

The NPSG has also contacted owners of the proposed LGS sites with the detail of the Reg 14 consultation undertaken provided in the Consultation document, and responses to the Community survey evidence significant support from the community. Whilst most of the LGS sites are clear and straightforward in terms of meeting the criteria some require further clarification.

- Site B

This main group of contiguous albeit separately owned sites to be found within the settlement has been identified as Site B. This is a crucial location not just because it joins the heart of the village to the Letcombe Brook corridor through a network of paths making it highly accessible for walkers but because cumulatively it is the largest remaining ancient paddock area on the eastern side of the Letcombe Brook and although in six separate ownerships these are conjoined with significant biodiversity. Some of the paddocks are more heavily overgrown providing a habitat hot spot. These paddocks also effectively form part of the setting of the Conservation Area in this part of the village and provide a zone of tranquility.

Although the largest holding on its northern side (plot 1) abuts a lane, south of this there are no other access routes suitable for cars within site B. These associated paddocks cannot be easily independently accessed by motorized vehicle and bearing in mind their historic character, the setting and the Conservation Area status the risk of future development is very low. However, should any development (other than permitted development extensions) be allowed to encroach into these paddocks it would undermine their contribution to local character, disrupting the tranquility and accessibility network and biodiversity as a whole and so it is especially important in Site B's case that cohesiveness is maintained to support the village's local character.

- Site F

This linear LGS proposal provides a defined green edge to the eastern side of the village which is potentially accessible from many parts of the community. It is the only green space in this part of the village (south of Steventon road and East of the A338) which is not open arable landscape. It incorporates a small woodland and is connected to public footpaths including that to the Berks and Bucks canal. It is an edge of village location within the lowland vale landscape and affords visibility over the wider lowland vale landscape. The landscape extending from this area across the lowland vale to the east is identifiably arable and green.

An established village footpath links this area to both the heart of the older village and with more recent developments such as that at Dews Meadow on Summertown, close by. It is within 5 minutes' walk of the community.

Functionally its role will be more to support local character in terms of its biodiversity and acting as a landscape and visual buffer between the village and the wider countryside including its potential juxtaposition with a potential future strategic reservoir to the east. Its future role will be enhanced should the reservoir be taken forward, as the A338 is likely to be realigned further away from the village in connection with the reservoir enabling the strip to contribute to local character to a greater extent.

Conclusions

The key criteria as set out in the Cotswold Tool Kit have all been met with respect to the LGS sites proposed. None comprise extensive tracts of land and all contribute to the local character of the village and its hinterland in heritage and biodiversity terms. These are all locations which are accessible and are visible and whose boundaries have been carefully considered so they provide a robust and continuing legacy for the village.

Importantly, these LGS sites have not been designated to prevent development but are of importance to the community in varied aspects. All of the areas can be seen on historic maps as open space or paddocks and so are well established and important features of the village. It is also the case that their development is not a realistic prospect for reasons which include the setting of the Conservation Area, the lack of road access for vehicles, and possible damage to biodiversity and nature, especially as most adjoin the Letcombe Brook, a rare chalk stream. In addition, boundaries have been adjusted so LGS sites can practically demonstrate they are the minimum necessary to deliver the benefits in terms of reflecting the contribution of the residual LGS sites to the unique local character of East Hanney.

N.B 'Accessible' and 'Barriers' are as defined in 5.2 of the Cotswold Tool Kit.

Stephen McKenna

Chartered Surveyor and Chartered Town Planner, Community First Oxfordshire



5.2.4. Policy EHNP 9 – Nature Recovery and Biodiversity

Issue and need

The purpose of this planning policy is twofold, firstly to recognise the importance of and need to protect and enhance local biodiversity including the blue and green infrastructure network of the village; and secondly to recognise, support and enhance the Nature Recovery Network across the parish.

Much is set out in associated policies within this Neighbourhood Plan about the richness of the green environment and the value of its rural location and surrounds. The importance of the rural and historic setting of the village, access through old established pathways which link green spaces, the Letcombe Brook, and the wildlife and habitat existent in the village should not be under-estimated.

Aspects of green infrastructure also have dedicated policies such as for Trees and Hedgerows, both of which have suffered significant loss, with only relatively small pockets remaining. There is also a dedicated policy on the Letcombe Brook.

The proposed policy on the Letcombe Brook and its immediate environs is additional to this proposed policy taking into account the Brook's globally rare status as a chalk stream. That policy is essential for the future of the Brook, and for the preservation and enhancement of its biodiversity, the Brook providing habitat, including for rare and protected species supported by the unique ecosystem that is only existent in the presence of chalk streams.

The Local Plan also recognises the rarity and importance of chalk streams and their habitat, stating: 'the water is characterised as having high clarity and quality with a stable temperature regime. It is the quality of the water as well as the in-stream and bankside habitats that make chalk streams so important for a variety of rare and protected species, including, for example, White Clawed Crayfish, Otters and Water Voles'². In recognition of their international importance, chalk streams such as Letcombe Brook have been classified as a NERC Habitat of Principal Importance (previously called UKBAP priority habitats).

Biodiversity

This policy is needed to give provision within the NP for promotion of biodiversity and protection of the wider environment, and to ensure that future development is undertaken on the basis of enhancing biodiversity, through biodiversity net gain, thereby avoiding further erosion of the village green and blue infrastructure, environment, and nature.

This policy supports the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity within the village and the wider parish.

Development without appropriate provision under this policy may result in loss of habitat and ongoing erosion of the local environment. This can be critical to the natural balance and therefore nature and character of the village which currently enjoys a rich wildlife, populous, verdant green landscape, natural chalk stream, native trees and hedgerows, and access to an open and green landscape at its edges. Recent experience from the developments that have taken place on green-field sites has been for a net loss in biodiversity within the village to have occurred. The village has seen for example 46 houses on a small paddock which was previously home to rich grass land and a strong bee colony, at the site known locally as Rosie Bees. The value of this site to the village biodiversity has been lost with the value offset. Cumulative developments can effectively erode biodiversity value and have an adverse cumulative effect on the environment of the village.

² [Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part Two – Page 113](#)

There is also need through this policy to recognise the network of blue and green infrastructure assets within the parish, so that they may be supported. For example, the green corridor aligned to the course of the Letcombe Brook, and the established natural network of pathways, many of which link through Local Green Spaces. In addition, there are historically established green village assets such as paddocks, old orchards, and hedgerows, which together are part of the formative character of the village and are important to biodiversity. Many green spaces are of high quality, some being priority habitat, others with potential as priority habitat, the Letcombe Brook as a chalk stream being an example of a priority habitat.

River corridors are of great importance to biodiversity, water resources, water quality, fisheries and recreation. They make a significant contribution to landscape character and form links between habitats which are vital for the conservation of biodiversity and enhancement of wildlife habitats. East Hanney is able to evidence the rich range of flora and fauna associated with a chalk stream, which together with the green landscape of the village, gives East Hanney a unique biodiverse rich environment, attracting, amongst other species, otters, egrets, mute swans, lapwings and water vole.

Other waterways, including historic drainage systems and mill ponds also have ecological value for the village, for the wildlife, and for enjoyment by the community and are important features of the village environment. With a high water table locally there should be scope to maintain and extend surface water bodies where there is development rather than filling in of existing ponds and features.

The green and blue environment play an important part in defining the character and sense of place and can be seen as an essential infrastructure network with a high level of biodiversity that is important to protect and enhance through policy.

Nature Recovery Networks

Large parts of the Parish have been recognised for Nature Recovery and lay within the Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network 'NRN', thus identified as Recovery Zone. These are areas where improvements to the environment and biodiversity are acknowledged as being in need and are supported at various levels, including for example within Oxford by Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC), Wild Oxfordshire, The Berks, Bucks, and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), and is overseen by Oxfordshire's Biodiversity Advisory Group (BAG) and adopted by the Oxfordshire Environmental Board (OxEB). Areas within East Hanney include those identified as core NRN.

Various green spaces throughout the village are linked, and there is a green corridor aligned to the course of the brook through the Parish.

Further detail on the Nature Recovery Network is given within the Base Line Evidence. The map below evidences the Nature Recovery Network, and its extent within the Parish, which includes the Letcombe Brook and its surrounding environment.

The intention of this policy is to assist enablement of improvements in biodiversity, reconnecting and extending elements of the Draft Nature Recovery Network and to ensure that future development is undertaken sympathetically with a view to preserving East Hanney's green and blue assets, with a resultant enhancement in biodiversity within sites and within the village.

The aims of this EHNP policy therefore align to that of biodiversity enhancement, improvement and preservation of the village green and blue infrastructure assets, which may play a part in delivering the aims of the Recovery zone of the Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network.

The Parish Council through the Neighbourhood Plan also wishes to achieve improvements through initiatives such as planting and working with landowners and volunteer groups such as the Hanney Flood group, and Letcombe Brook Project to help achieve enhancement. Examples include recently undertaking a community planting initiative, as well entering into a lease for the area known as Kingsleases where planting has now taken place and wild grassland seeded.

The following map shows the extent to which fields and pathways/natural routeways throughout the Parish fall into or partly overlap with the Draft Oxfordshire NRN Core and Recovery zones. (This may mean that the NRN areas stated are greater than those shown on the map).

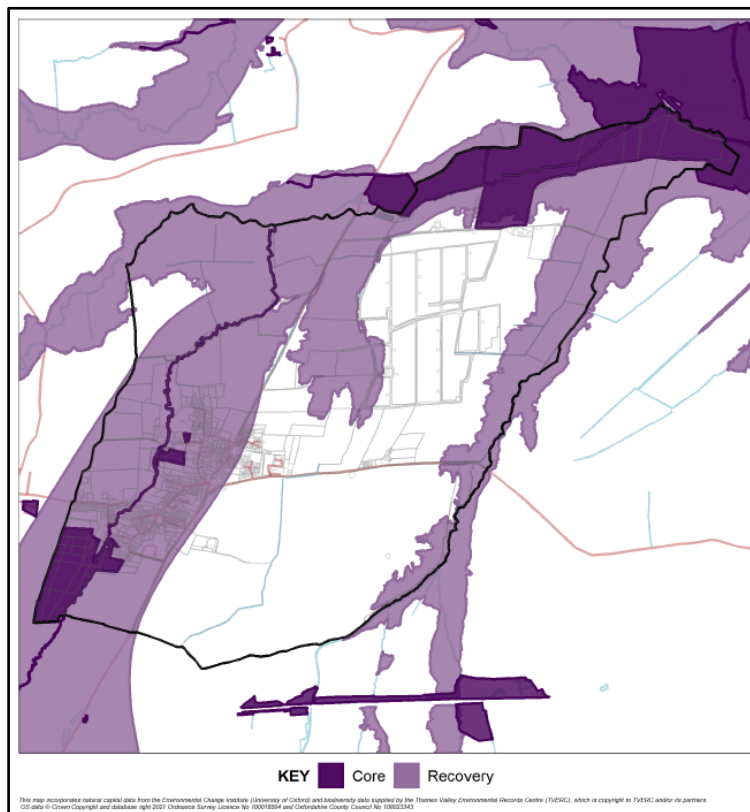


Figure 16- Extent of the Draft Nature Recovery Network within the Parish
Source Oxfordshire Treescape Project Report for East Hanney May 2022.

The map shows that 779.3 hectares or 88% of this parish is within the NRN Core and Recovery Zones. This highlights the sensitive nature of the environment within our Parish, the importance of biodiversity to the village as illustrated by the extent of the Recovery Network and the need for protection of the natural landscape within the Parish. The main ecological corridor can be seen following the route of the Letcombe Brook.

Rationale

This policy recognises the importance of the green and blue infrastructure assets in the Parish and seeks enhancement in biodiversity. It supports those VoWH policies relating to biodiversity, habitats, and landscape. It links with the vision and principles for green infrastructure in the District, including defining a network of green infrastructure assets in the neighbourhood plan area as a means of providing environmental support for the benefit of the community, environment and wildlife. Also, it supports nature recovery through connecting and improving habitats, a large part of the Parish being within the Draft Nature Recovery Network (NRN).

District policies of significance in this context include:

- Local Plan Part 2 Development Policy 30 – Watercourses;
- Local Plan Part 1 Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity. Under this policy opportunities for biodiversity gain, including the connection of sites, large scale habitat restoration, enhancement and habitat recreation will be actively sought and a net loss of biodiversity will be avoided. Development likely to result in the loss, deterioration or harm to habitats or species of importance to biodiversity will not be permitted.
- Local Plan Part 1 Core Policy 44: Landscape. This provides for key features which contribute to the nature and quality of the District's landscape to be protected from harmful development, including, at i), trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, water courses and water bodies
- Local Plan Part 1 Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure. This gives provision for a net gain in green infrastructure, including biodiversity, to be sought, and for a net loss of green infrastructure, including biodiversity, through development proposals to be resisted.

The policies of the District are very relevant and supported by this EHNP Policy particularly as East Hanney has examples of the habitats and biodiversity which the District seeks to specifically protect, including: a Local Wildlife site, Priority Habitats and species listed in the national and local Biodiversity Action Plan, for example, the Letcombe Brook as a chalk stream, protected and endangered species such as water voles, legally protected species, as well as deciduous and ancient woodland, traditional orchard habitats, hedgerows and veteran trees.

Those areas of the Parish which fall within the Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network are shown in figure 16. The main routes within the network and areas of biodiversity are evidenced and include areas identified as Core NRN. Under this policy those areas recognised as forming part of the Nature Recovery Network and which are therefore important for biodiversity, are designated as a Network.

The following map shows the area that is designated as a Network, which includes the Letcombe Brook Green corridor. The area shown in hash is the area designated as a Network under this policy.

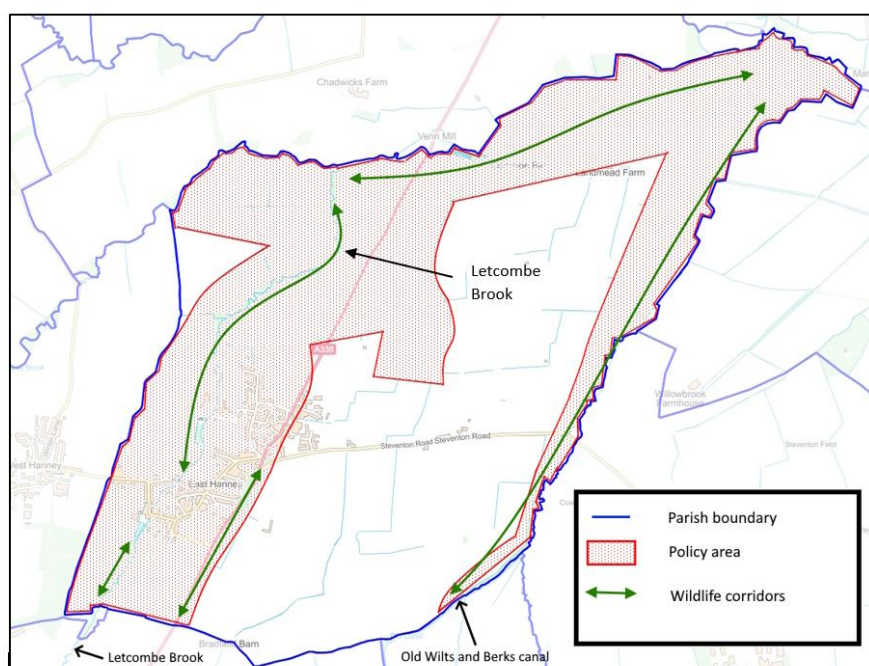


Figure 17 ; Policy Map - Designated area Policy EHNP9

Policy EHNP9 – Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity

The Parish contains a variety of green and blue infrastructure that provides an environmental support system for both the community and wildlife. The Neighbourhood Plan designates this as a Network as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of promoting nature recovery and enhancement of biodiversity.

The Network comprises of the Letcombe Brook green corridor, the watercourses in the north of the Parish, the area associated with the route of the old Wilts and Berks canal along the eastern boundary, woodland, trees, hedgerows, and other land of biodiversity value. Opportunities to connect this network to areas of biodiversity value in adjacent parishes will be supported.

This policy will require:

- i) Development proposals that lie within or adjoining the Network to have full regard to maintaining and improving the functionality of the Network in the design of their layouts and landscaping schemes. Proposals that will harm the functionality or connectivity of the Network will not be supported.
- ii) Development proposals that will lead to extension of the Network, including the delivery of allotments and orchards and enhancing hedgerows for the use of the village, will be supported provided they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.
- iii) All proposals should seek to achieve a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity, having regard to the requirements of section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework to be implemented within the site, or where this is evidenced as not possible, implement local delivery of this biodiversity compensation
- iv) Any proposals outside of the settlement within the countryside to the north of the village, are encouraged to achieve a 20% net gain in biodiversity.

Evidential Material

- Oxfordshire Treescapes Project Report for East Hanney May 2022
- East Hanney Character Assessment
- Base Line Evidence
- WWF UK Chalkstream Report 2014 “Chalk rivers should be protected or restored to a quality which sustains the high conservation value of their wildlife, healthy water supplies, recreation opportunities and their place in the character and cultural history of the landscape.”
[WWF_chalkstreamreport_final_lr.pdf](#)
- TVERC Species recordings
- Draft Nature Recovery Network. Detail provided in Appendix A, Base Line Evidence.

Policy Context

- Local Plan Part 2 Development Policy 30:- Watercourses;
- Local Plan Part 1 Core Policy 46: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity;
- Local Plan Part 1 Core Policy 44: Landscape;
- Local Plan Part 1 Core Policy 45: Green Infrastructure; Culham Draft Neighbourhood Plan Policy CUL7 – Nature Recovery and Climate Change (Note this Plan has been to Examination)

5.3. POLICY THEME 3 – HOUSING

Vision

Our Vision is to provide housing, infrastructure and facilities that meet the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities, including those who are less able.

Objective

To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a high-quality home and providing a mix of housing to better meet local needs including smaller homes and homes for the elderly.

Policies	
Policy EHNP10	Housing Density
Policy EHNP11	Housing Mix
Policy EHNP12	Housing for an Aging Population

5.3.1. Policy EHNP 10 - Housing Density

Issue and need

The issue is that the DC core policy 23 relating to housing density provides for new developments at a minimum housing density of 30 dwellings per h.a, save for reference to local conditions. That policy primarily addresses urban developments in towns or much larger villages. The specific local circumstance of East Hanney is that of a historical village in a rural setting and green environment. As a consequence, the housing density in East Hanney is considerably lower than that proposed by the District Council policy. There is need within this plan for a policy which addresses the issue and provides for development in the village in which fits with the setting, needs and circumstance of East Hanney.

The requirement is to ensure that new development is of a density which is aligned to the immediate area in which the works are undertaken. This will help enable development within the village to be consistent with the density of neighbouring dwellings and therefore in keeping with that of the immediate and local area. Helping protect the character and feel of an area.

This is not a matter purely about density, it is also related to design and layout which needs to be appropriate for the location and aligned to the character of this village as well as providing public open space and meeting local needs.

The issue is that for a development to appropriately provide the essential aspects to meet and service resident needs, and to achieve a level of density inferred under District policy 23, the development would need to be urban in nature. Whereas East Hanney is a village set in a rural environment and hence has

natural characteristics which are green, historic, rural with a feeling of general openness. The housing across the settlement averaging a much lower density than referenced within the DC policy. Thus, the nature of East Hanney is very different to a higher density urban form.

Rationale

East Hanney is located within the Downland Vale, an area of specific character and interest, giving rise to a green setting within surrounding open fields.

A consequence of its history, layout, and rural location is that East Hanney has a comparably low housing density compared to more recently established villages or towns.

The low density is an intrinsic part of the character of the village as identified within the Character Assessment.

The District Council identifies with East Hanney as being a village in a rural and green setting, as does the Housing Inspector in the decision response ref APP/V3120/W/16/3145359.

East Hanney is not considered by the community to be an area of urban space and is clearly a village with rural features and characteristics. It does not have typical features of urbanisation as seen in larger villages and neighbouring communities such as Grove. For example, Grove has comparably high-density housing, urban development, streetlights, concrete pathways with kerb stones throughout, and commercial facilities such as shops, doctor surgeries, and parking for shopping. Such features are contrary to the essence of this village and the character of East Hanney.

East Hanney is characterised by historic pathways, waterways, green verges, a dark skies environment, and green back lands. There is a high presence of hedgerows, established tree lines and woodland growth, both within the village and in the surrounding lands. A green rural setting with a large number of historic listed heritage assets. Consequently, the housing density is low. Much of the existing village is in linear form, in small closes, or spread as single dwellings.

One of the reasons for the lower density is the historic past which has given the presence of older properties with large gardens, and green natural pathways running through the village. There are 2 conservation areas, and over 30 listed properties.

East Hanney is recorded as a relatively low-density settlement by the inspector within the appeal decision ref APP/V3120/W/16/3145359 and is identified with by a second inspector as being a 'small village', quoting that East Hanney is 'a small village with a population in 2011 of just under 750 and around 340 dwellings. The character and context of the settlement is therefore one of a small settlement in size, within a rural setting, with a strong agricultural basis, and a relatively low housing density reflective of its green and open nature – considered to be on average only 16 dwellings per ha.

Housing density is referenced within the Character Assessment.

This plan recognises the importance of being able to preserve the character through ensuring that development is balanced and reflective of its immediate area, and in keeping with the nature of the village. It is also an established principal that any edge of village developments should have low housing densities that provide a gradual change, and thus do not adversely affect the visual impact of the village from its approaches.

The East Hanney Character assessment has divided the parish into 8 distinct areas and the character of each area is assessed. The assessment shows that there is a wide variety of styles of housing within the village

reflecting organic growth and the history of the village over a prolonged period. Although some recent developments have a higher density, the bulk of the village has a very low density. Even taking into account the recent developments the average density is much lower than that referenced in District Council Core Policy 23.

A point of concern and reason for the need for this policy is that although the District Council Core Policy 23 makes provision for density, it does so on the basis of provision for a minimum density of 30 dwellings per h.a. This is extraordinarily high for our village being nearly twice that of East Hanney. Such a density would seem to be intended to align with the more urban landscape designs in the District Council Design Guide and not to a rural village of East Hanneys form.

There is specific need for a policy in this Plan to address this matter because unlike other villages of a similar nature East Hanney has been classed as a 'Larger village'. Other rural and historic villages under the Plan are typically defined as 'Smaller villages' and therefore are not exposed on the same basis to development as East Hanney is. Typically, for smaller villages there being a much lower cap of '10' on the number of homes allowed. East Hanney by comparison is classified as a 'larger village' and consequently is subjected to the same planning development considerations as a town, despite being rural and without infrastructure or space to support larger developments.

The planning applications seen have much higher densities than the village generally and seek to fit comparably large numbers of dwellings into small land parcels, also resulting in minimal open green space and lack of facilities.

Whilst District Council Core Policy 23 has provision for lower density developments to be proposed where 'specific local circumstances indicate that (a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare) would have an adverse effect on the character of the area, highway safety, or the amenity of neighbours', it is the experience of the village that virtually every development application has a density of 30 dwellings or over, which then needs to be challenged in order to seek to achieve a reasonable outcome relative to the village and the surrounding properties. This has typically resulted in very little dilution of housing numbers from original applications received, and then either a process leading to refusal by the Planning committee, or imposition of a development with a density out of keeping.

As identified in the Character Assessment East Hanney is in a rural setting with a strong and historic agricultural tradition. This has influenced the landscape, setting, and field systems that exist today. The village until relatively recently was traditionally identifiable with fruit orchards, nurseries and paddocks. New developments have typically been promoted on what were paddocks or nurseries, the plots being contained. This has resulted in higher density clusters and minimal open space provided as developers seek to maximise dwelling numbers

The drafting of District Council Core Policy 23 would seem to have consequently encouraged applications for development that is high in density compared to the rest of the village, and out of keeping in terms of design and landscape. This would seem to have also led to minimal Public Open Space provision and a lack of or only limited provision of space for play within new developments.

This has meant that the new housing recently approved tends to typically be in close quarters and in clusters, the largest approved being 46 dwellings, and another which is 43. This is different to the pre-existing layout and pattern of housing, and thus affects the character and housing landscape of the village.

Each of the developments is also comparably large in terms of number of dwellings as a % of the village when compared to the size of the village previously existing (recorded at only 345 dwellings in 2011).

It is also the recent experience that although the new developments have been toward the edge of the village, they have been delivered with a density higher than the village average. This does not comply with the intent of the District Council policies which seeks to provide for lower density at the village edge. Consequently, and aligned to the intent of the existing District Council Core Policy 23, this EHNP Policy provides specific policy relative to the rural nature and green edge of the village to provide for any future development at the village edge to be at a lower density than that of the immediately surrounding area.

Appendix K of Local Plan 2031 Part2 sets out the leisure and open space standards relating to the use of land within a development, the adopted standards require the equivalent of 15% of the residential area to be provided as public open space, plus play and space for allotments where appropriate. With a minimum of only 15% it follows that any development at a village edge need only adopt this standard, which would result in comparably high-density housing at the village edge that would not in the case of East Hanney, deliver a transition into the rural surround.

This effectively risks creating potential for higher density housing development at the village edge because the more established housing within the village core was built within an open and rural low-density environment. This has been the experience of the village with most of the developments providing just the minimum, for example at 'The Silk Mill' and at the recently proposed development for Ashfields lane, both of which are edge of village sites with rural landscape and a housing density higher than that in the neighbouring area.

A policy which provides for an increase in the minimum level of public open space to 25% for village edge locations would encourage landscape planning which was more open and aligned with the requirement for a lower housing density at the village edge.

It must be recognised that East Hanney is not an urban area but is in fact a low-density village with green and open areas, and historic rural features. This EHNP Policy seeks to guide future development accordingly.

It is much better for all parties for East Hanney to have a specific EHNP policy which gives guidance relative to East Hanney and helps ensure that development will be balanced, reasonable and in context with the immediately surrounding area. Application of a specific EHNP policy together with guidance in Design through the EHNP Design Guide to encourage good use of space and application of principles, will help new developments meet with the character requirements of the village and be appropriate for their environment inclusive of being at a density reflective of the rural location.

The EHNP Design Guide considers the characteristics of various sub areas through the village as identified in the Character Assessment and encourages development to reflect of that of the area. For an edge of village location, this would naturally be at a lower density than within an established developed area.

The housing density proposed for any new development should be appropriate to the respective location in the village and respond to and/or enhance the local character of the existing settlement.

Policy EHNP 10 - Housing Density

The density of any new development should be in keeping and in accordance with the character of the local surrounding area. It must respect the rural nature of the parish and be designed to give an impression of spaciousness with uniform houses and plots being avoided.

To respect the character of the village, developments which reflect the rural setting and low density of the village, will be acceptable.

Where development is proposed at an edge of village location these must be at a lower density than in the core of the settlement reflecting the rural nature of an edge of village location, such proposed development should also be at a density which is lower than that of the immediate surrounding area, enabling provision of a lower density of housing at the village edge.

Developments should include as a minimum 15% public open space plus an area for play and allotments where applicable, save that there should be no less than 25% of the development site available for public open space where development is proposed at an edge of village location.

Evidential Material

- East Hanney Character Assessment
- East Hanney Design Guide and Code
- Applications for development at East Hanney refused quoting excessive housing density or mass, adverse impact on character, and upheld on appeal include:
 - P19/V2156/FUL 26 Dwellings
 - P16/v0364/O 24 Dwellings
 - P15/V1846/O 200 Dwellings
 - P15/V1616/FUL 194 Dwellings

Policy Context

Local Plan

- Core policy 23: Housing Density

‘On all new housing developments, a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare (net) will be required unless specific local circumstances indicate that this would have an adverse effect on the character of the area, highway safety or the amenity of neighbours.’

- Core policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness

‘All proposals for new development will be required to be: Viii of high-quality design that: is visually attractive and the scale, height, density, grain, massing, type, details and materials are appropriate for the site and surrounding area.

Thus, by DC policy must be of the same scale, and density as that of the surrounding area, and be of the same materials as that of the surrounding area. This EHNP policy complements this DC policy with specific provision for East Hanney.

5.3.2. EHNP Policy 11 – Housing Mix

Issue and need

The issue is that developers are not building to meet local needs.

There is currently no specific policy for the provision of housing to meet the needs of the community of East Hanney or which sets out to ensure that the specific needs of the local community are provided for within new developments. As a result, the housing mix seen in the 271 dwellings recently approved has been very much formed of estate homes for families and able people. Typically, the outcome seems to be a combination of contractor house bed numbers proposed to meet economic aims and District Council Planning Office input with focus on ensuring compliance, affordable housing requirements and a balance of bed number needs, such as 2 or 3 bed homes. Rather than also ensuring housing for the aged, or for those with disability.

There has been only very limited provision of dwellings such as bungalows, most developments have no provision, and as of April 2021 no new development has delivered a bungalow. This evidences a failure to deliver dwellings to meet all needs.

It is good that the District Council has sought to ensure homes that provide a mix of beds and tenures as this will enable development of the community, but as evidenced by the absence of homes for those with other needs, there is the requirement for this EHNP Policy to also ensure that the wider needs of the East Hanney community are met.

Rationale

There are a number of issues which the community feel needs to be addressed when new housing is proposed.

1. An ageing population

The UK demographic is changing with a growing population of older people. East Hanney is experiencing a similar change to the UK as a whole but with an even greater skew towards an older population. The proportion of aged individuals residing in the Hanney's is higher than the national average as the diagram below illustrates, the 2011 census and the published Hanney Community Plan data showed that approximately 40% of inhabitants were aged over 60 years old, and about 11% of the population is over 75 years old. Further detail in respect of the population trend and the impact on housing is given within EHNP Policy 12 'Housing for an Ageing Population'.

Whilst new developments in the village since 2011 has attracted younger people and families, the average number of older people in the new larger population has reduced, but the actual number of older residents remains. East Hanney still continues to have a large number of older residents who remain core to the community, but for whom there are no new properties specific to their needs.

2. Families with limiting physical conditions

Oxfordshire Community First carried out a rural places profile and this reported that within the village there were 45 people with limiting long term illness of working age and 20 claiming disability living allowances. Recent housing has not been suitable for people with limiting physical conditions, for example there has been no single level accommodation, no housing with provision for wheelchair access or housing designed with suitable rooms to be equipped with a disabled toilet or shower.

In the Neighbourhood Plan community survey, 7 residents responded that limited mobility will affect the type of home they need.

3. Housing for local need

In the community survey 44 responded that they would like to move within East or West Hanney to a new home, 17 wanted to downsize and 7 wanted to start a new home. This indicated a requirement for homes with a smaller number of bedrooms. In addition, 16 indicated a desire to move but could not because a lack of suitable housing. This illustrates that the current mix of housing is not providing for local need.

Whilst the DC has an allocations policy of 20% of homes being allocated to local residents or people with a strong local connection the experience in East Hanney as evidenced by the community survey response is that either this is not necessarily the case on the ground, or that the need is greater.

EHPC discussions with developers to encourage provision of homes to meet the needs has encountered resistance. The same response has also been received for a request to ensure sale or supply to local residents, even on a small number of properties.

The issue is that developers are not building to meet local needs such as bungalows or properties that sufficiently meet local needs, including for younger people, and are not willing to have an allocation for existing residents. Nor have they been responsive to requests to accommodate known local needs. It is our experience that typically large developers, especially national house builders have as their priority delivery of their own standardised house form and template typically for families or professionals, rather than to provide a housing mix which caters for all needs including meeting local demographic requirements as identified for this village.

In terms of affordable housing, for proposals of ten or more dwellings the District Council policy provides to deliver 35% affordable housing provision. This EHNP policy aligns with the District Council and also recognises that affordable housing provision within new developments are to meet district wide need. The needs of East Hanney sit within those of the District. Accordingly, new affordable accommodation should take into consideration local needs so that the housing mix provided includes the required proportion of affordable housing, and that the style of housing provided both affordable and market, helps meet local needs, and is complementary to the village housing styles, character, and form.

This EHNP policy also recognises the recent change in national government policy regarding affordable housing which requires at least 25% of all affordable housing delivered to be First Homes and accordingly this EHNP policy includes provision for a tenure mix in accordance with the national policy.

This EHNP policy also aligns with the DC allocations policy and encourages allocation to people with a strong local connection to the Parish.

An important aspect of this EHNP policy is that it encourages developers to discuss proposals with the Parish Council at an early stage so that the developer's plans can include homes which will meet local need and be of a form and mix which is suited to the village and setting.

Policy EHNP 11 – Housing Mix

i) Proposals of ten or more dwellings should deliver 35% affordable housing provision with an appropriate mix of housing types and sizes, having regard to the prevailing local community requirements when meeting the district wide need.

ii) Taking into account the requirements for affordable housing set out in the Development Plan, and that at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered should be First Homes, the affordable housing tenure sought should be in accordance with the table below:

Tenure	Vale of White Horse
<i>First Homes</i>	25%
<i>Social Rent</i>	56%
<i>Affordable Rent</i>	
<i>Other routes to affordable home ownership</i>	19%

iii) Housing types which meet the needs of the neighbourhood area are encouraged and should reflect the prevailing local community requirements and the provisions set out in this NP such as for bungalows.

iv) 20% of all new affordable housing will, on first letting only, be subject to eligible households with strong local connection to the parish – as set out in the Vale of the White Horse Housing Allocations Policy. The requirement is for those who have a strong local connection and whose needs are not met by the open market to be the first to be offered the affordable housing tenure or shared ownership of the home in accordance with the prevailing National or District policies

v) Pre-application discussions with the Parish Council are strongly encouraged.

Evidential Material

- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey
- Hanney Housing Needs Survey
- East Hanney Character Assessment
- East Hanney Design Guide and Code

Policy Context

- District Council Core Policy 22, Housing Mix. The policy requires: A mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households will be required on all new residential developments.
- Para 6.4 of the Local Plan Part 1 also states; 'It is important that new housing addresses any imbalance within the existing stock and the impact of demographic and household change.' This EHNP Policy compliments this intention of the Local Plan and seeks to ensure developments meet local needs and provide a balance of housing types in order to enable a sustainable community.

Therefore, any development must not for example comprise of a majority of 1 and 2 bed starter homes as this is unbalanced. Similarly, developments need to be in keeping and therefore designs and housing types that integrate with the surrounding area, meet local needs, such as small developments of family homes that enable sustainable communities would be encouraged. As would bungalows mixed with family homes to meet community needs.

- District Council Design Guide inclusive of requirements for a mix of housing and appropriate layout in accordance with the design guide.
- VOWH Housing Allocations Policy which determines allocation of housing with respective applicant needs, as determined through the Housing register.
- Prevailing National policies. The written Ministerial Statement (WMS) of 24TH May 2021 on Affordable Homes introduced 'First Homes' a new affordable housing tenure and introduced changes to the model of Shared ownership.

First Homes provide the governments preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing delivered by developers through planning obligations.

5.3.3. Policy EHNP 12 - Housing for an Ageing Population

Issue and need

This policy aims to ensure that new housing developments will include a provision for housing that will specifically serve the needs of the elderly within the village.

The Community Survey and 2011 Census evidence that there is a proportionally high level of elderly people in the village compared to the national average, a consequence of this is that there is a need for Housing for the elderly. This matter was also previously identified in the last East Hanney Housing needs survey. It is the only area of Housing need required by the community.

Whilst new developments in the village since 2011 has attracted younger people and families, the average number of older people in the new larger population has reduced, but the actual number of older residents remains. East Hanney still continues to have a large number of older residents who remain core to the community, but for whom there are no new properties appropriate to their needs.

Rationale

Whilst the village has seen approvals for 271 new dwellings (at April 21), there has been no provision made for homes that are for use by the elderly. This is despite requests by the Parish Council for some provision.

Whilst the village is in receipt of significant housing numbers for younger people and families, there is no new housing for the aging population to be able to move to, or in which to be accommodated. Yet a large portion of the population are or are becoming aged as the graphs below illustrate.

The Community Survey and 2011 Census evidence that there is a comparably high level of elderly people in the village. Hence it is understandable why there is need for Housing suitable for the aging and is identified as an area of need by the community.

It is relevant to consider the population data for the village compared to the national average.

The UK demographic is changing with a growing population of older people. The parishes of East and West Hanney are experiencing a similar change.

However, the recent housing that has been developed has not been designed (or include any homes) suitable for an older population. For example, there has been no provision of dwellings with single level accommodation, no purpose-built provision for wheelchair access or disabled toilet.

The lack of properties designed for purpose, sheltered housing and bungalows has meant that people needing or wishing to downsize from the large, multi-bedroom properties that they have traditionally lived in for many years are unable to do so, and thus remain in the village in properties that are too large for their current needs or in need of adaption.

In the community survey 39% of those wanting a new home were looking to downsize.

The chart below evidences the age of population in East Hanney compared to the National average.

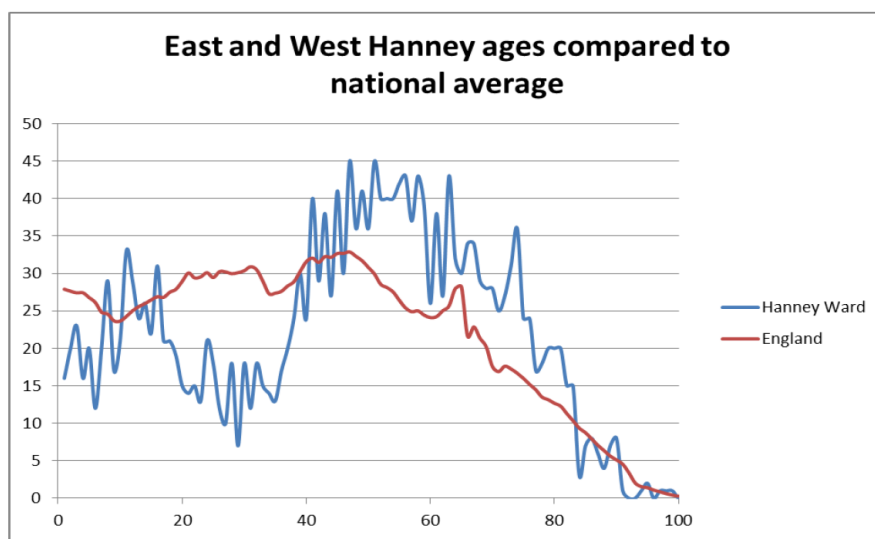


Figure 18 Age Demographic – source 2011 Census data

Despite the need for homes for the aged, and despite repeated requests from the Parish Council to developers for the inclusion of some provision of housing to meet the needs of the aging population, developers have persistently ignored the need.

As of April 2021, of the 271 homes built or approved since 2011 census **NO** bungalows have been delivered, nor dwellings designed for wheelchair access or those that have any special features suitable for an elderly or less able resident.

To date only one developer has provided for bungalows in their plans, and that development approved in May 2022 (application P21/V0376/FUL is yet to progress. Homes for the older population under this policy can be either affordable or of a market nature.

Although East Hanney has 2 strategic sites under Part 2 only one of the sites has any provision within its proposals (the site approved in May 2022). The other which as at January 2023 is under construction (known as Rosie Bees) was approved for planning consent without any bungalows or housing to meet special needs despite requests from the Parish Council, it is therefore important that this is a policy within the EHNP.

Policy EHNP 12 - Housing for an Ageing Population

- i. **Development which provides a material portion of suitable accommodation for the elderly population and opportunities for downsizing will be supported provide that the proposal complies with DC and EHNP policies.**
- ii. **Developments will be encouraged that provide at least 15% of market housing that is suitable for an aging population. These developments should have features that take into account the likely needs of aging residents such as being on a single level and provision to an accessible garden area.**

Evidential Material

- Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People

Policy Context

- NPPE

The policy fully aligns with the NPPE - paragraph 62 states: the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, **older people**, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes).

- Local Plan

Core Policy 22, Housing Mix. The policy requires: A mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households will be required on all new residential developments. Section 6.4 of the Local Plan also states 'It is important that housing provision across the district reflects the needs of an ageing population and growth in smaller households'.

Core Policy 26, Accommodating Current and Future Needs of the Ageing Population. This states that residential dwelling houses designed for older people should be provided in the strategic site allocations in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and other suitable locations.

Part 2: requires provision of housing to meet needs and for community engagement, as set out within the parameters for strategic sites.

Vale of White Local Plan 2031 Part 2, Development Policy 2, Space Standards which states that proposals for major development should ensure 15% of market dwellings and all affordable housing are constructed to the category 2 standard as set out in the Building Regulations Approved Document m Part2.

The definition of Category 2 is 'A new dwelling makes reasonable provision for most people to access the dwelling. It incorporates features that make it potentially suitable for a wide range of occupants, including older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users.'

5.4. POLICY THEME 4 – INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

Vision

To maintain the strong sense of community and enable the provision or expansion of community facilities to match the growing population

Objective

To cater for existing and future resident's needs. And to seek to improve the quality of life of residents through reducing pollution, risk of flooding, noise and the effects of traffic.

Policies	
Policy EHNP13	Community Facilities and Infrastructure
Policy EHNP14	Green Infrastructure and Spaces for Play
Policy EHNP15	Dark skies and Light Pollution
Policy EHNP16	Flood mitigation in New Housing Schemes and Climate change
Policy EHNP17	Sustainable Development and Environmental impact

5.4.1. Policy EHNP 13 - Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Issue and need

The intent of this policy is to help ensure that new development makes appropriate contributions to the improvements or enhancement of community infrastructure in East Hanney to help meet the needs of new and existing residents.

East Hanney's village life is supported in particular by the following community facilities: Hanney War Memorial Hall, St. James the Great Church (located in West Hanney), chapel, school, play/sports field, community shop and Post Office. However, as set out in the Community Infrastructure Report (Appendix B). Some of these facilities are operating at or near capacity, while some are in need of improvement such as the equipment and status of the football pitches at the play/sports field.

In addition to these community facilities the village infrastructure also includes footpaths and byways, bus stops, verges, waste bins, benches, allotments, green spaces for play, and water ways. Road and drainage networks. Some are the responsibility of the Parish Council and other Councils such as Oxford County Council, and some by private individuals such as styles /kissing gates.

As evidenced in the Village infrastructure report and the Community survey much of the village infrastructure is old and insufficient for the needs of the expanded village having been in place historically and intended to support a smaller and static population.

A summary of the facilities and needs for repair and replacement or for additional new facilities is provided in the appendix 'Community Infrastructure Report'.

The Vale of White Horse District Council Town and Villages Facilities Study (2014), part of the Local Plan Part 2 Evidence Base, collated information on the services and facilities available in East Hanney and gives what could be described as a 'sustainability score.' East Hanney's score of 14 was the lowest for larger villages. Despite this the village has been subjected to significant growth with the number of dwellings doubling since 2011, this has the consequence of a considerable increase in use of and pressure on village facilities and infrastructure. For example, other than some dedicated play areas in small sections of new developments and an expansion of the village school, East Hanney has not witnessed an increase in facilities supported by new development to meet the increased need.

The village has not received support proportional to the growth experienced from either District or County Council towards services and facilities, save that some section 106 monies arising from larger developments are awarded subject to specified terms for use which the Parish Council are applying to help provide for needs.

The consequence is that as a relatively small village East Hanney has only limited facilities appropriate for a population half the size of that which it now has to accommodate. Our main child play area at the sports fields for example had³ limited equipment and nothing for the very young. There are only limited facilities provided for the older generation at the sports field other than access to the allotments which are normally fully utilised.

The War Memorial Hall tends to be the main venue used by community groups including the older generation with events such as weekly senior citizens coffee mornings and a monthly senior citizens group. It is also the venue for most of the community clubs. There is not however, a coffee shop or dedicated space outside of the village hall. Nor is there a dedicated place where youth groups could meet. With a rapidly expanding population and support evidenced by the Community survey there is a clear need for additional facilities to provide for the future population.

It should also be noted that it is our experience that some potential funds arising from developments have been awarded to projects outside of the village, also to the failed leisure centre, which is now no longer proceeding, and the intended benefit is lost (such as the contributions deflected from East Hanney developments), whilst East Hanney does not have a sports pavilion.

³ The Parish Council has during 2022 invested in additional play equipment at the sports field funded using Parish resources. This was necessary in order to provide facilities for the increase in number of children within the village including for the very young. There was only minimal section 106 funding provided from developments despite the increase in size of the village and provision of family homes.

Detail of the limited infrastructure within the village is given in the appendix, 'Community and infrastructure report'. Further detail of our sustainability challenge arising from the rapid increase in population and need for facilities is given under the 'Sustainability challenge' part of this document.

The need is for a policy to ensure that funding arising from all development is used within the village and be available to enable delivery of community infrastructure projects to provide for the needs of all residents, as identified through this Neighbourhood plan process and consultation.

Rationale

It is important for the health of the community and the sustainability of the village that investment is made into the provision of facilities sufficient to serve a larger village, and the needs of the expanded population.

Included within this plan is the Community Infrastructure Report which identifies the main facilities within the village and needs. Community facilities include sports fields, park land and natural facilities of an environmental nature essential for the health and well-being of the community. Also included in that appendix is a Community Projects list which identifies the requirements of the community as determined through consultation. This sets out the immediate needs of the community which it is proposed will benefit from investment once funds arising from new developments are received subject to sufficiency of monies being attained.

Policy EHNP 13 - Community Facilities and Infrastructure

New development must be served and supported by appropriate onsite and off-site infrastructure and services. Development proposals should have regard to the Community Infrastructure Report (appendix B) and deliver improvements to existing community facilities and services necessary to address impacts arising from the increased usage by the residents of the new development.

Provision of Public open space and/or infrastructure facilities are encouraged and should be provided together with a maintenance or management programme as appropriate through section 106 or equivalent agreements to help ensure long term use for the community, and preservation as a Community infrastructure asset. Discussion of proposed facilities with the Parish Council at an early stage is encouraged, proposed facilities are to be agreed under section 106 or equivalent agreement prior to commencement.

Any development proposals that result in the loss of Open Space will need to demonstrate that the proposal would either provide a community benefit or that alternative provision of equal or better value will be provided within the immediate vicinity to ensure that the residents local to the proposed area do not lose amenity.

Evidential Material

- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey
- Community Infrastructure Report
- Base Line Evidence

Policy Context

- NPPE

NPPF paragraph 93 states that, “To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: (a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; (b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community; (c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs; (d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and (e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

- Local Plan

Core Policy 7, Providing supporting infrastructure and services, sets out requirements for new development to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal.

Development Policy 33, Open Space, states that. ‘Proposals for major residential developments will be required to provide or contribute towards safe, attractive and accessible open space in accordance with the open space standards.’

5.4.2. Policy EHNP 14 - Green Infrastructure and Spaces for Play

Issue and need

There is a need for additional accessible Public Open Spaces for Play. As evidenced within the Community Infrastructure report, the village has only had one area for sport and play, that area being the sports field located by the war memorial hall. Only part of the public open space is owned by East Hanney Parish, the area to the west side being owned by West Hanney Parish Council and is where most of the junior football pitches are located, as is a private tennis club, the Hanney emergency hut and the Hanney youth football club storage. The space to the west also includes the West Hanney allotments. To the east of this area is the land is owned by East Hanney Parish Council and includes the cricket pitch, child’s play area, senior football pitch and the East Hanney allotments. The amount of public open space available to East Hanney is therefore limited and is fully utilized providing facility for basic recreation and sports.

The issue is a lack of Public Open Spaces for Play within the village to support the existing and growing population. As a rural village with a small and stable population historically of only circa 750, East Hanney has not had to support the level of population to which it must now provide for, which is anticipated to double. Consequently, new and additional accessible Public Open Spaces for Play are needed from future developments to support population growth. These are to be passed to and managed by the Parish Council to ensure access and availability.

A further issue is that it is the experience of the Parish that although there have been several large developments compared to the size of the village these are not being provided with LEAP’s, instead the experience has been provision of just the required minimum area of space, which has been in some cases without facilities, and also not maintained. As a result, there is less facilities per capita in the village now compared to 2011 despite the significant increase in housing numbers and demand for facilities.

As certain of the new developments have only provided minimum areas of space and limited or no facilities for play on site, the village has not seen an increase in community, social infrastructure, space and play facilities sufficient to provide for the level of increase in population. Particularly to meet the requirement of providing facilities for play in those areas where children and families live. This has also meant that not only do families and children need to travel to the sports field to be able to access play facilities, but that there is significantly increased pressure on those facilities.

The aim of this policy is therefore: to ensure that in new developments sufficient accessible public open space is provided, that such space is suitable for play, that it is provided with appropriate equipment for play and to ensure that ownership and responsibility for the land and equipment is passed to the Parish Council to own and maintain, so that it remains available and accessible for the community to use.

Rationale

Since the last census in 2011, East Hanney has seen a significant growth in new housing but there has not been a proportionate expansion of space accessible for public use, nor an increase in play equipment provided from developments to meet the demands of the expanding population. Whilst there are some facilities in the village for play at the sports fields, this is the only large recreational area for leisure and play, it is accordingly heavily used by residents, as well as residents from West Hanney and neighbouring villages. As the village continues to grow so will the demand for use of facilities.

The facilities at the sports field are limited as they were only intended to support a much lower number of users and not the level of demand that the increasing population will require. The equipment is also old having served children of the village for many years. There is an area for children's play which includes a variety of play equipment with a grass and soft bark-chipping surface. Although old the play equipment is regularly inspected by a ROSPA approved inspector, the inspection, upkeep and replacement are managed and paid for by the East Hanney Parish Council. The grounds are also regularly maintained by the Parish Council. As a result of the increase in population and demand from the community for play facilities the Parish Council has during 2022 invested in additional equipment as it was an essential need, funded through Parish resources, there being very little funding support arising from new developments.

Whilst the larger developments in the village have had some public open space allocated through the development and planning process, this has typically been to minimal requirements and in some cases without provision of equipment or space dedicated for children's play.

Only three of the new housing developments have space with play facilities designed within the planned layouts.

Some of the other new housing developments to the village do not provide or make only minimal provision towards green space to enable play, nor provide play equipment, despite being major developments. For example, two of the new developments by the A338 do not have provision for any play equipment or recreational facilities for children or family use, providing only small areas of grass or borders not suitable for recreational purposes.

As at May 2022 from all of the developments delivered and the new homes approved yet to be built, the Parish has been awarded just 2 Section 106 awards for play equipment of low value. One has been spent on providing a nest swing, the other is less than £5000 and insufficient to be able to provide an appropriate play facility for the increased need.

A reason for the lack of provision of facilities such as could be expected to be provided within a LEAP (which would ensure provision of play equipment), is that it is the District Council Planning policy to follow the In fields Trust guidance which requires a minimum of 67 dwellings on a development to trigger a 'LEAP'. This

guidance requires 67 houses in a development to trigger a LEAP (equipped play space min 400m²) under DP Policy 33. The issue for East Hanney which the District Council policy does not address is that East Hanney is a small rural village and whilst having experienced a number of developments the nature of the layout of the village is that of small land parcels, consequently development has been formed typically on sites comprising of paddocks and orchard spaces, each of which is singularly small, typically generating up to 45 dwellings, and these have been at a density high for the village.

A consequence of this is that in the developers attempts to increase housing numbers not only are the densities high compared to the village, but the amount of public open space is minimal, and the trigger for facilities in accordance with a LEAP not met. Within developments the experience is that the space provided is minimal to fulfil the requirements of a 'LAP' (Local Area for Play).

A Fields in Trust standard Local Area for Play (LAP), is only required to provide local space for local play for the youngest children, and does not need to include equipment. A LAP should be a minimum of 100m², therefore at least 17 houses would be required to trigger one.

As the average number of dwellings in the last 6 developments approved is between 35 and 45 dwellings on average per site, the size of the facility provided is only 1/3 of that needed as a minimum to service the development. A number of the developments are located close to each other and cumulatively there are over 150 new dwellings in close proximity now in the village to the east of the A338, which if considered on a cumulative basis would have attracted a sizeable area of public open space for use by the community together with a level of play equipment and facilities including for the children of all age's as a LEAP would have determined.

It would therefore be better in the case of East Hanney because it is a historic rural village for developers to be required to consider the cumulative effect of the additional homes to those in an area where they propose to develop in order to ensure that the community receives appropriate public open space and recreational equipment.

A second issue that the village is experiencing, arises from the recent trend in housing development whereby the required green space or common land on any new development has been retained by the developer or their owned agent company. It is the experience of East Hanney and other neighbouring villages (for example Steventon) that management by the developer through an independent management company, appointed (and often owned by) the developer, does not work and in the case of East Hanney is evidenced to have led to dispute, and failure to maintain and provide the facility.

Whereas traditionally land made available through planning has been provided to the community with the responsibility of the Parish or another Council to maintain on behalf of residents. Thus, assuring access and fitness for purpose.

Since 2011 all but 2 of the new developments have the public open space owned and managed by developers. Two of the public open spaces have seen poor levels of maintenance by the developers. Both of which have been subject of enforcement orders, and in two cases the developer has sought to build on the land despite it being designated public open space. In these cases, the purpose for which the land was intended, - 'for use by residents' has clearly been frustrated.

In the second of these cases the application was made in the period prior to occupation and the developer successfully applied to build an additional dwelling directly on the land originally approved as public open space but has not provided alternative amenity.

It is also our experience that one developer has sold small parcels of the landscaped green space within a development to residents who have unwittingly purchased the land unaware of the consent and lifelong landscaping requirements. The parcels of land have been sold to unsuspecting residents, who thought they were adding to their private gardens or that the land would be for their own use, including to pave over.

This again has become a matter for endorsement. Land which under the planning approval is allocated for public access being denied by the developer.

As a result of this series of very poor experiences with developers over provision and maintenance of public open space, provision is included in this policy to ensure that future public open space arising from development is offered and made available to the Parish Council together with an endowment to secure and maintain the facility for residents use. This will ensure that public open space is retained for the benefit of the community and in accordance with the planning conditions.

Precedent is provided within the village for the transfer of Public Open Space to the Parish Council inclusive of the facilities for play, as has been the case of the site known as Rosie Bees where the POS has been awarded as part of the planning consent for that development. The public open space at phase 1 of the proposed development at Ashfields Lane also adopts this approach with the support of the Planning authority.

Many of the new homes developed in the village are located some distance away from the main village sports field and play area. These are mainly to the east of the A338, a busy road which has only in 2022 had a formal place of crossing. The A338 links Wantage and Grove with Abingdon and Oxford. This means that current access to play equipment and areas for play by children from these houses is by a long walk and involves crossing a busy 'A' road, that is limited to a single pedestrian crossing. A recently approved development does include provision for some play facilities when it is delivered. However, the scope of the facilities to be provided are small compared to the cumulative size of all the developments which have been approved in that part of the village.

Guidance relating to the provision of spaces for play provides evidence for the need for this EHNP policy to ensure access to Green spaces for play. The document "planning for outdoor space and play" published by the Fields Intrust states that a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) is an area of open space specifically designated and laid out with features including equipment for children who are beginning to go out and play independently close to where they live, usually within 5 minutes walking time.

The majority of recent new developments experienced in the village do not meet with this guidance. Accordingly, this policy also seeks to ensure that new developments include a provision for access to play.

The new developments without facilities for play are typically more than 5 minutes' walk from the existing area for play at the sports field, and in the majority of cases are located to the east of the A338. This means that families need to travel to the sports field in order to access suitable facilities for play. Whilst there is provision for some further facilities within new developments, these are yet to be built.

It is also our experience that because of the number of houses being developed compared to the small amount of useable and accessible green open space practicably achieved within each, the consequence is that the amount of recreation space per head of population within East Hanney has been steadily eroded. Thus, play areas and green spaces are becoming very heavily used.

There is also a special need in East Hanney because of the very high-water table, extent of flooding and drainage issues to ensure that balancing ponds, water ways and drainage routes provided as part of a developments landscaping does not form part of the calculated public open space, as such facility is not accessible especially in the case of balancing ponds. This is an East Hanney specific issue and is not therefore directly addressed through the DC policies, accordingly, some specific consideration for developments in East Hanney is given within the policy drafting.

The Parish Council will look positively to accepting the responsibility for maintenance of play areas and play equipment in all future developments in accordance with this EHNP policy. It currently already maintains

existing facilities not owned by developers, the sports field, as well as undertaking maintenance of verges on behalf of Oxford County Council.

Provision of green space, recreation and play areas and allocation of the responsibility for maintenance to the Parish Council would ensure availability and suitability for purpose. The mechanism for this is through the Section 106 process, this EHNP policy seeks to encourage and facilitate this arrangement for future development.

This policy is intended to help ensure that for the future there will be provision of adequate and properly managed open green space and spaces for play and that these are provided from and within future new development site areas.

This policy also ensures through the proposed ownership of the Parish Council that the areas of public open space from developments will be properly maintained, and that the equipment is provided and maintained in a useable state, fit for purpose, for use by the community.

This approach is intended to enable provision of play equipment and recreational areas not only in the sports field but spread through the village within new developments.

Policy ENHP 14 - Green Spaces for Play

New major residential development will be required to provide or contribute towards new open space in line with the District Councils Development Management Policies. These open spaces should be accessible and/or useable for play, leisure or recreation. Such areas should not include/comprise of areas of shrub, water courses, or attenuation ponds, or walkways, where such features would unacceptably affect the access or use of the site.

Developers are encouraged to consider the cumulative needs of the community in which the development is located within their proposals for the provision of public open space and play equipment.

Provision for the future long-term maintenance and management of the open space and facilities to be agreed as part of the planning application. Development proposals which include provision for the Public open space provided to be made available to the Parish Council to own and manage in perpetuity, supported by an endowment covering long term maintenance and management of stewardship, are encouraged and will be supported.

Evidential Material

- Vale of White Horse District Council Open spaces report

The Vale of White Horse District Council Open spaces report included an audit of facilities. This identified that in East Hanney the following needed attention: Accessibility; Safety and security; Condition of equipment. The site was considered poor in terms of other facilities. It was acceptable in terms of General Character, Management and Maintenance.

The report also looked at accessibility to children, youth and MUGA facilities. It concluded that for East Hanney, 'The area around the A338 had no access to a LEAP within 400m and the accessibility standard was not met for both full NEAPS only 1,000m walk and to youth and MUGA provision 1,000m walk.'

- Fields Intrust report for outdoor sport and play (www.fieldsintrust.org/...for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England).

This report is relevant as it is an appropriate guide for the provision of sport and play facilities and has been used in the development of play areas in East Hanney. It has for example been adopted to ensure the correct mix of play and activity equipment for children by the developer of the Strategic Site on Steventon Road, 'Rosie Bees' in East Hanney.

- Community Infrastructure Report (EHNP appendix B)

This report gives an overview existing community infrastructure, usage and requirements.

Policy Context

- NPPF

Paragraph 98 notes: 'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.'

Paragraph 99 goes on to add: 'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless: a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.'

- Local Plan

Core Policy 7, Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services. The policy states that new development is required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal. Infrastructure requirements will be delivered directly by the developer and/or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development.

Development Policy 33, Open Space. The policy states that proposals for major residential developments will be required to provide or as set out in Appendix K, including i. children's play and youth provision ii. public open space (15% of the residential area), and iii. allotments.

Para 4.41 defines Infrastructure as including Green Infrastructure such as parks, allotments, footpaths, play areas and natural and amenity green. The standards of provision being determined within Appendix C Provision Standards of the White Horse District Council Minutes '[Minutes Appendix C sub appendix A - Open Space Provision Standards.pdf \(whitehorsedc.gov.uk\)](#)'

Note: Vale of White Horse DC NP Planning advice: A Fields in Trust standard Local Area for Play (LAP), provides local space for local play for the youngest children, but does not need to include equipment. A LAP should be a minimum of 100m², therefore at least 17 houses would be required to trigger one. 67 houses are required to trigger a LEAP (equipped play space min 400m²) under DP Policy 33 based on the Field in Trust guidance. An issue for East Hanney is that it is a small rural village and the extensive development experienced has been formed by loss of a number of paddocks and orchard spaces, each of which is singularly small, typically generating up to 45 or so dwellings per development only achieved through close quartering and therefore at a density out of keeping with the village and with little public open space. In order to achieve the housing numbers within the restricted areas developers are producing layouts with limited open space and are not triggering a requirement to provide LEAPS. This has resulted in lack of

facilities for a growing community, the total number of homes being developed within areas of the village when compounded being much larger than needed for a LEAP.

District Council Developer Contributions SPD, Section 5, which provides the basis for facilities to be made available to a Parish, and which forms part of the S106 process.

5.4.3. Policy EHNP 15 – Dark Skies and Light Pollution

Issue and need

The issue is that applications for new developments are frequently submitted with street lighting despite East Hanney being a dark sky village with a rural surround. This is because developers seem to typically be taking a standardised urban approach and are not alive to the fact that the village is recognised as being of a dark sky nature. The need is for a policy within the EHNP so that it is clear and a matter of policy that there should not be street lighting within their designs. This is important to protect and preserve this aspect of the character of the village, and to protect the rural surround and associated wildlife habitats from damaging light pollution.

This policy aims to ensure that any future development does not compromise the rural nature of the village and any external lighting is designed, located, and operated in a manner that retains the sense of place.

Rationale

East Hanney is a rural village with low levels of light pollution. Residents enjoy the ability to see the stars at night and wish to retain the rural nature of the village by limiting light pollution.

A key feature that defines East Hanney is the lack of street lighting and low light pollution. This is one of the features which makes East Hanney distinctive.

Darkness at night is also one of the key characteristics of rural areas, helping define East Hanney as a rural village. Darkness at night represents a major difference between what is rural and what is urban. The current light levels are very low with only 8 streetlights within the whole village. These lights are located mainly in two clusters of three as shown in the map below. As shown the lights are limited and are provided for safety purposes.

The following light pollution map shows the level of light to which East Hanney and the surrounding area was exposed to on a typical night in October 2020. It can be seen that East Hanney situated within rural surrounds has a much lower reading compared to urban areas such as Wantage and Abingdon, where it can be clearly seen that the presence of street lighting and denser housing generates light, producing much higher levels of light emissions, causing a heat island effect. This helps evidence that it is important for East Hanney to continue as a dark skies village and that through this plan East Hanney should encourage developers to avoid development that give rise to increased light emissions, and seek to encourage approaches which would help to reduce light pollution levels.

Map of Light Pollution showing surrounding area and East Hanney

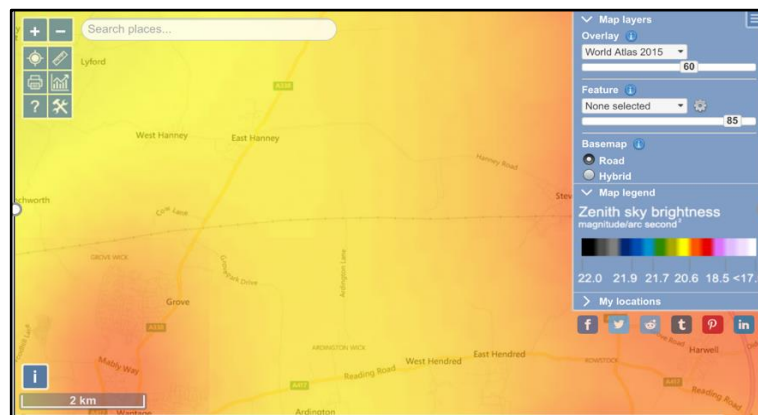


Figure 19 Light pollution

In the Community survey residents were asked “What is important to you about living in a rural village?” 145 out of 225 respondents stated that low light pollution was **very important**.

A map of village streetlights is shown below, as illustrated the village benefits from not having many streetlights save for where required for road safety purposes e.g. pedestrian crossings/traffic calming. Otherwise only one close in the village has street lighting which was installed in the 1970’s.

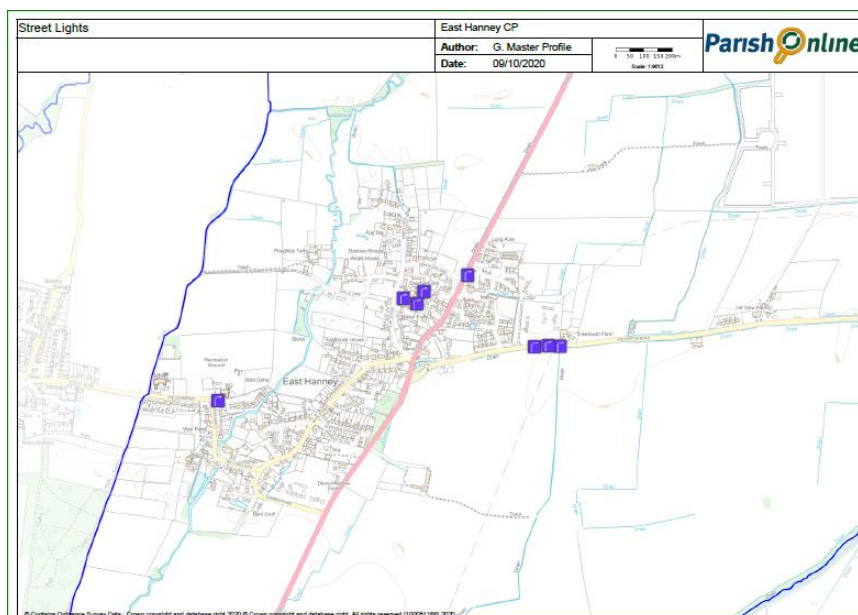


Figure 20 Location of street lights

The above diagram includes the 3 streetlights which illuminate the bollard speed restrictions at the entrance to the village on the Steventon road which have recently (2020) been installed, as a requirement for the new bus stop and speed calming introduced with the new developments. A further streetlight set has been newly installed (2022) on the A38 with the new pedestrian crossing. In each case these new lights are on highways and for safety purposes.

The existence of a dark sky status for the village was recognised recently by the Housing Inspector as part of his response to an Appeal ref APP/V3120/W/19/32333980 which was in respect of conditions relating to a

new development. In his response it is stated: 'To protect the character and appearance of the area and to ensure clear skies, I have imposed conditions requiring the implementation of a landscaping scheme and preventing the installation of street lighting'.

Many villages have recognised the effect of Street lighting on the character of the neighbourhood and have included provision to protect from street lighting in their Neighbourhood plans which have been adopted, for example the Winchfield Neighbourhood Development Plan.

This NP policy aims to ensure that any future development does not compromise the rural nature of the village and any external lighting is designed, located and operated in a manner that retains that sense of place. Also, to ensure that the requirements of the village in this context recently identified by the housing inspector is achieved on a cross village basis, namely 'installation of streetlamps to be prohibited'.

This policy aligns with District Council and NPPF policies regarding protection from light pollution and protection of character. For example, The Vale of White Horse District Council Policy 44: Landscape, which is a general policy on protecting landscape from harmful development, includes provisions for tranquillity and the need to protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise, and motion.

The NPPF para 185 (c) states: Planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation.

This EHNP policy aims to ensure that any future development does not compromise the rural nature of the village and any external lighting is designed, located and operated in a manner that retains the sense of place.

Policy EHNP 15 - Dark Night Skies and Light Pollution

- 1. Development proposals that conserve and enhance relative tranquillity, in relation to light pollution and dark night skies, and comply with other relevant policies will be permitted, provided it can be demonstrated that they meet or exceed the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance and other relevant standards or guidance (CIE 150 1003 Guide on the Limitation of the Effects of Obtrusive Light from Outdoor Lighting Installations, or any equivalent replacement/updated guidance) for lighting within environmental zones, and have regard to the following hierarchy:**
 - a) The installation of lighting is avoided**
 - b) If there is to be lighting, use of street lamps will not be supported and is to be avoided**
 - c) If lighting is installed it is necessary for its intended purpose or use and any adverse impacts are avoided, and**
 - d) If it is demonstrated that a), b) or c) is not achievable, then adverse impacts are appropriately mitigated.**
- 2. To be appropriate, lighting for development proposals should ensure that:**
 - a) The measured and observed sky quality in the surrounding area is not reduced,**
 - b) Lighting from such development is not visible in nearby designated and key habitats, including the conservation zones, The Letcombe Brook corridor, and the Local Green Spaces**
 - c) The visibility of lighting from the surrounding landscape is avoided, and**
 - d) Building design that results in increased light spill from internal lighting is avoided, unless suitable mitigation measures are implemented.**

Evidential Material

- Base Line Evidence, commentary on Landscape and setting - this identifies that East Hanney is located in a rural area with views of open fields, hedgerows and trees and distant views of the Berkshire Downs: - which provide a low light pollution environment.
- East Hanney Character Assessment- identifying the dark skies environment enjoyed by the village
- East Hanney Design Guide and Code
- Light pollution map

Policy Context

- NPPF paragraph 185
- District Council Policy 44, also the Design Guide Principal DG40 which states that Light fittings should be designed to avoid causing light pollution particularly in sensitive and dark rural areas.
- Ashbury Adopted Local Plan Policy 3, Dark Night Skies.
- Winchfield Neighbourhood Development Plan

5.4.4. Policy EHNP 16 – Flood mitigation in New Housing Schemes and Climate change

Issue and need

This policy is provided to achieve greater resilience against climate change as flooding is a significant issue across East Hanney, with a large portion of the land being categorised as Flood Zone 2 or 3 and the Neighbourhood Plan Community survey notably reflecting concerns about flooding. Whilst Policy EHNP7 Letcombe Brook gives some consideration to a need for Flood risk assessment and the DC Core Policy 42 provides robust policy relating to flood and flood risk, the issue is of such fundamental importance and concern to the residents of East Hanney that additional consideration is required particularly in light of the extent of flooding already experienced and the need to provide for the impact of climatic change.

The need for this is evidenced by way of example from the difficulties encountered and flooding issues highlighted at the Ashfields Lane strategic site, allocated under Local Plan Part 2. The land at Ashfields lane is recorded as regularly being flooded and has been so for most years during the last 20. The regularity of flood and period of flood increasing in recent years with climate change. During 2021 the site was under water for 4 months. East Hanney suffers from both fluvial and pluvial flooding, this is the case at this site where groundwater regularly rises above the surface. The very high-water table also meaning that solutions such as underground storage are not workable. The Vale of White Horse SFRA Update (2017) also identifies a risk of surface water and groundwater flooding in East Hanney.

At the planning committee meeting regarding the Ashfields site in May 2022 approval to build was given subject to there being a workable drainage solution. Residents have been concerned about increased risk of flooding to neighbouring parts of the village and to homes nearby. The site has been subject to approximately 4 sets of proposed plans in recent years each with a different and unresolved drainage solution and each ultimately withdrawn because of the extent of flood. The plan recently approved is subject to the determination of conditions for the drainage solution.

This experience has highlighted that any development in East Hanney must have a robust drainage solution which includes consideration of future flood risk due to climatic change at a very early stage of the

development process and that this is proven not to increase flood risk in the village, to be provided at the planning application stage. Noting, that it is recognised that for any new development a workable drainage solution needs to be demonstrated as feasible at an early stage.

The Ashfields Lane experience has also highlighted the very real risk of exposure to flooding that new development may potentially cause in the village.

The potential impact which the considered mega reservoir (one of the strategic water resource options under consideration in the South East) is likely to have on the microclimate and climatic change in the area is also of concern and can only be expected to increase the risk of flood. This is because the large volumes of water proposed will increase air moisture levels and affect the drainage network. As we plan for the future such a major change to the local environment which is already sensitive to flood needs to be considered.

The core principles of addressing risk of flood are set out within the District Council policy CP 42, this EHNP Policy is provided to address local considerations relating to the nature of flooding in the village (which is both fluvial and pluvial) and is needed because of the history of flooding, the high ground water levels, and the consequence of both future climatic changes and any impact which the reservoir may potentially bring, should it be developed. This includes for example provision so that developments should not damage existing resilient features such as watercourses and should try to create better more integrated solutions, also being required to take into consideration and evidence the cumulative effect of drainage arrangements of other developments within the village and the consequential impact on the proposed drainage solution.

The cumulative impact is important in light of the number of developments that have been experienced and how each has had impact on the village drainage network and the cumulative volume of water and run off that will need to be managed at peak flow levels through the drainage system and network of ditches of the village, including into the Letcombe Brook. It is important that landowners understand they are responsible for managing ditches that border their land, though equally where ditches border potential sites, developers do have the right to connect, provided that runoff is restricted.

The village has experienced new homes being built in areas with a high-water table and this has in some developments been addressed by developers simply raising the ground level. Unfortunately, this raises the height of the site and can increase the rate of run off if the material used to raise the land is unsuitable and therefore potentially flood risk to neighbouring homes. It may also not resolve the underlying issue, with many new residents complaining that they are unable to use their gardens during winter months because the land is too wet or flooded. For example, in The Silk Mill development off Summertown, which was previously a flood meadow and had ground water levels up to the surface during the winter months. This is a concern because of flood risk and also because residents may be affected.

The updated District Flood Map from the VoWH Level 1 SFRA Update (2017) – which is the current Flood Map is shown below, it illustrates that much of the village is categorised as being in a flood zones 2 and 3, importantly it is possible that other areas are also likely to become affected by flood due to climatic change in the future.

The first of the maps shows the wider context and the location of East Hanney within one of the major flood area arms, this map also includes the legend. The second provides a more detailed view generally covering the area of the Parish. They highlight the high amount of FZ3 within East Hanney.

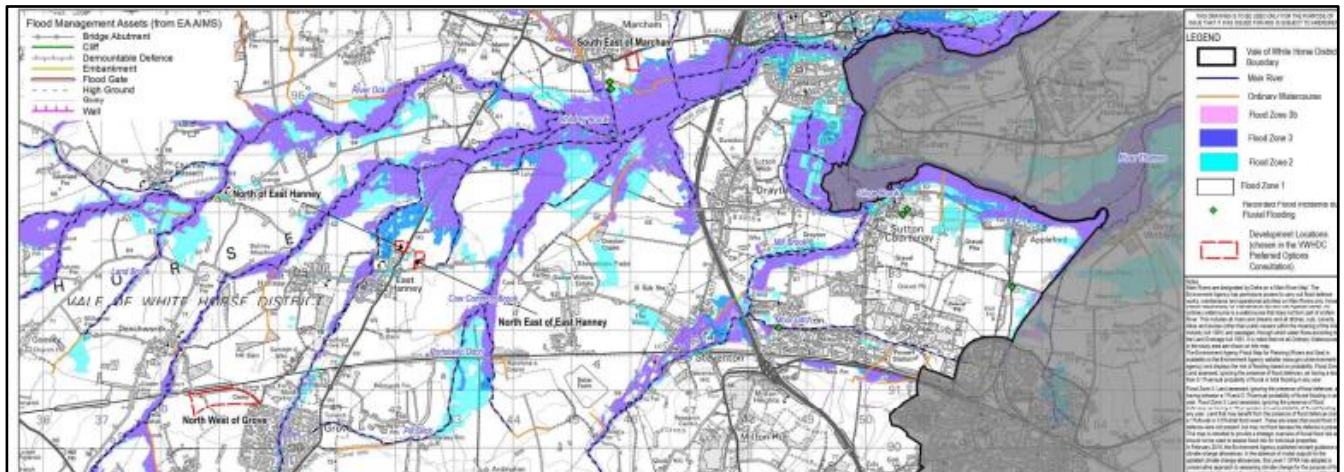


Figure 21 Flood Map from VoWH Level 1 FSRA Updated 2017.

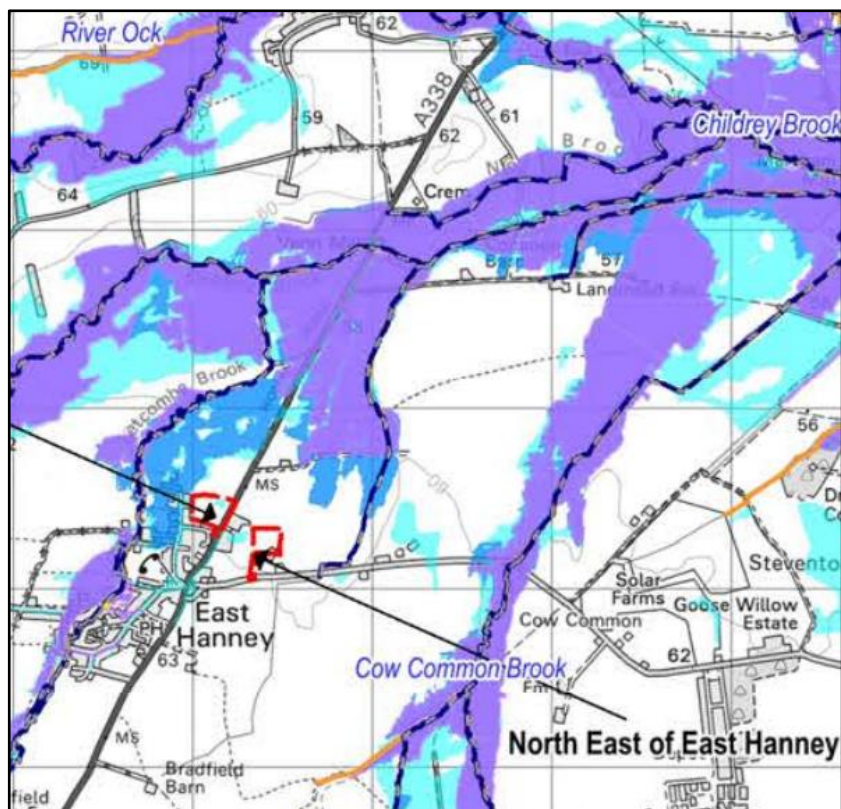


Figure 22 Detailed extract of flood map for area of East Hanney, Level 1 FSRA Updated 2017.

The key intentions of this policy are therefore to try and create better and more integrated solutions, and to:

- discourage new development in areas of flood risk or where flood risk could be increased on other parts of the village or neighbouring structures.
- encourage developers to take into consideration future climate change consequences including increased frequency and extent of flood, and to avoid new development in areas of regular flood.

- provide within proposals mitigation measures to future proof against all types of flood risk including potential more severe and more frequent flood events from fluvial flooding and bearing in mind the exposure in the village to both pluvial and groundwater flooding and the consequences of climatic change.
- encourage developers to build in more natural flood control measures such as balancing ponds which are in keeping with a river based rural village and offer opportunity for biodiversity.
- ensure that developments do not represent risk of damage to resilient features such as water courses.

Rationale

- *Need for mitigation against flooding*

The issue of flooding and the increasing regularity of flood within the village is a clearly identified issue and concern for the village. Detail of the extent and regularity of flood is given in the earlier part of this document and within the Base Line Evidence, flood represents one of the greatest sustainability challenges which the village has. Increasing numbers of development, has resulted in loss of land including areas such as Dews Meadow (now called Silk Mill) which formerly acted as natural sink or sponge which held water and had a ridge and furrow surface that provided natural ponding and enabled natural slow release into the Brook. Once developed such areas have been seen to be replaced with hard surface that can cause rapid run off and discharge.

There is concern about the cumulative impact of development on the village, the long-term maintenance of the drainage ditches and the cumulative effect of this practice on flood risk to the village.

Use of balancing ponds within developments would provide better and more natural solution and positively contribute to biodiversity as well as provide a more rural feature in keeping with a water/river-based village. However, we also support the use of surface SUD features where feasible.

Since 2016 when the expansion of the village effectively began to accelerate and fields which previously held water naturally such as Dews Meadow and the green lands behind La Fontana have been lost, the village has recorded regular floods on an annual basis, including rising through drain hole covers, emersion of the Causeway, and prolonged periods of retained water on surrounding fields such as at Ashfields Lane. The rate of flow in the Brook through the village is regularly high after heavy rain and the water can be seen to breach in several places, such as by the iron bridge where it flooded the footpath in January 2021.

Increasing fluctuations in precipitation patterns arising from climate change together with the increase in level of water flows caused by replacement of meadow with hard surface represents real risk of further flood to this already very flood sensitive village. Accordingly, it is imperative that any development proposal has a comprehensive and well-designed drainage solution, including utilising the SUDS train to help provide mitigation against risk of flood. All drainage strategies to also include for climatic change to mitigate against changing weather patterns.

Future Opportunity

Should a future opportunity arise to re-site the A338 further to the east, possibly in connection with a new reservoir (should it proceed) or other infrastructure, the opportunity to relieve East Hanney of some of the adverse environmental effects should be realised. In addition, any downgraded sections of the original A338 road should in these circumstances, no longer be used for vehicular through traffic and should provide safe opportunities for recreation including provision of water features in a green setting to encourage positive biodiversity whilst delivering a flood protection measure, as well as to encourage cycling, horse riding and walking. Access for new development should not be provided from downgraded sections of road.

Policy EHNP 16 – Flood mitigation in New Housing schemes and climate change

Applications need to demonstrate that they do not increase the risk of flooding from increased surface water run off within flood zones 2 and 3 and must take account of the predicted impact of climate change during the lifetime of the development, including the impact on the existing settlement, and impact on the village drainage and watercourse network. Fully developed drainage solutions to form part of the development proposals at an early stage.

Other flood mitigation measures to be used relative to development in East Hanney to include use of integrated drainage control systems within developments, and the provision of water storage/retention features such as balancing ponds.

The creation of balancing ponds and provision of water features designed to positively contribute to biodiversity and complement the green village environment will be encouraged.

Evidential Material

- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey
- Neighbourhood Plan Base Line Evidence
- The Vale of White Horse SFRA Updated (2017)
- Flood Map - VoWH Level 1 SFRA Update (2017) - (reference page 99)
https://data.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1019020496&CODE=6FC84D5697E564DA9C3D3302B53E3412
- Planning Applications and technical drainage reports identifying fluvial and pluvial flooding within East Hanney, including the flood risk report provided by WRE written by DR Harvey Rodda submitted to the DC in respect of the land at Ashfields Lane, Planning Application p21/v0376/FUL.
- The County Flood Map
- East Hanney flood zones as shown in figures 8 and 9 of Base Line Evidence Appendix -A of this Plan.

Policy Context

- District Council Core Policy 42, Flood Risk
- District Council Core Policy 43, Natural Resources
- District Council Core policy 45, Green Infrastructure

5.4.5. Policy EHNP 17 – Sustainable development and Environmental impact

This policy is provided to address issues relating to noise and associated vibration arising from development and development related environmental matters such as biodiversity considerations. The matter of air quality is also an issue in certain parts of the village where there is exposure to high levels of traffic.

An objective is to seek where appropriate, for developments to incorporate features which would positively enhance the green landscape and improve sustainable development within this village. Including for example incentives to encourage cycling.

The village also wishes to protect and enhance the high levels of biodiversity evident in the village, currently where development occurs at each site there has been a net loss to the village as a result of biodiversity

offsetting, which has meant that value to compensate for loss of biodiversity has been lost to the village and received elsewhere in the District. It would be very positive for the sustainability of new housing schemes if the negative loss to the village could be managed so that value is achieved for the village and able to be enjoyed by both existing and new residents.

Issue and Need

Noise and vibration

- to ensure that future developments are not built within areas of the village where homes would suffer from exposure to noise and vibration that exceeds the allowable limits and to:
- ensure that noise and vibration arising from development during construction and thereafter is managed and mitigation planned for, so that noise arising from development works does not arise at unsociable time periods and is within the legal limits.

It is the experience of East Hanney that homes are being built in areas which are exposed to high levels of vibration and noise that are significantly beyond WHO guidelines. Noise and vibration along the A338 is an issue identified by residents. The A338 runs parallel to the A34 which is a main UK north /south transport artery. When the A34 is closed the traffic including the heavy commercial goods vehicles are directed to the A338 through the village.

Exposure to excessive noise and vibration is a real problem experienced by residents of the newly built homes and sites immediate to the A338 as the road carries large traffic volumes and heavy commercial traffic both during the day and at night. Areas of the village close to this route, consequently, suffer vibration and extreme noise at busy times including during the night. Residents have complained of their homes shaking.

Air Quality

- Protect the air quality within the village, this is particularly needed for areas close to the A338 which has become a very heavily used road, with a heavy flow of large diesel vehicles. It would be beneficial for the air quality to be assessed as part of any planning application with an independent consultant report provided which also considered future increases in traffic volumes based on the area wide levels of development. Another example is to encourage use of electric cars by users in the village by ensuring provision of electric car refill points within new developments as standard.

Biodiversity enhancements for new developments (4 or more homes)

- Provision of Biodiversity enhancement features within new developments to assist biodiversity and encourage wildlife, assisting sustainability within this rural village environment. Simple measures built into design and development proposals would help achieve this, including:
 - Swift bricks, at least one for every 4 dwellings
 - Bird boxes secured to trees within the site layout
 - Hedgehog pathways providing connectivity for mammals through developments. *Note: Chilton NP Policy P5 also reflects this 'where practicable, development proposals should preserve hedgerows and verges as "wildlife corridors"*
 - Owl boxes within each development
 - Use of insect/bee attracted grasses and vegetation at selected points throughout a development including in the public open space delivered, this will help attract native grasses and flowers through the trail of pollination.

Green cycleways and features to incentivise cycling, for all major developments, including:

- Provision of cycle racks ideally located at the public open space
- Provision of EV charging points. It is noted that installation of charging points is being addressed through Building Regulations and new technical guidance will come into effect in June 2022, which is welcomed and aligns to the green credentials of East Hanney
- Where possible support for and linking of green cycleways between new developments.

Biodiversity

An issue which the village has suffered from with every new development without exception is loss of biodiversity as identified within policies EHNP6 and EHNP9 where the issue is also highlighted. In every development there has been a negative resultant impact for the village. All new developments have been on green field sites.

It is our experience that the proposal for each new development whilst including a supporting arboreal report also tends to carry with it proposals for removal of green assets from the site, and proposals for offsetting rather than for maintenance and protection of green and natural assets. Loss of trees and hedgerows affects the balance of the whole natural environment on site. For example, at the strategic site under LPP2 known as Rosie Bees which formerly had a high biodiversity value, the developer proposed development which has a significant net biodiversity loss at the site with offsetting payment which will not benefit the village, causing a net loss to East Hanney and the village environment.

The same has been experienced with the developer's application for phase 1 of the second strategic site under LPP2 'land at Ashfields Lane, East Hanney reference P21/V0376/FUL where there is a significant loss of biodiversity for which offsetting payment is proposed.

Bearing in mind that the village has experienced a raft of such developments the cumulative effect has been and continues to be an expansive cross village erosion of the natural environment and loss of biodiversity, each and every site and the respective surrounding areas suffering from removal of natural habitat, loss of green space and loss of natural environment. There is very little evidence of compensation by way of replacement or enhancement of green facility, wildlife habitat or natural space within the village.

The District Council policy (CP 44 Landscape) whilst considering a district wide position does not specifically address the needs of East Hanney and the village is experiencing cumulative loss of the local natural environment and biodiversity. Whilst CP 46 does give some consideration to cumulative effect of development its focus is on delivery in specified Conservation target areas and not a localised environment such as in East Hanney. CP 45 currently being site focused effectively enables unlimited offsetting without consideration of the impact on the local affected environment, nor has provision for encouraging reinvestment back into the immediate locality affected.

When a developer makes use of the District Council net biodiversity offsetting scheme, the payment is made for investment in biodiversity enhancement in the District. This has resulted in a negative impact on this village, with financial benefit being paid by the developer into a general DC scheme. Typically, this is paid to a third-party charity such as TOE (Trust for Oxford Environment) or the Oxford Environment Bank, who decide where it is allocated. The consequence, for East Hanney is a cumulative loss for the village and therefore harm or loss to the green environment of East Hanney. Whilst the policy is intended to benefit the area, the number of green field sites and habitat lost in East Hanney has been significant and is now visual, because whole areas of paddock and open fields have been developed. At the same time there are landowners in the village who are sympathetic to enhancing and protecting the green credentials and nature of East Hanney for the benefit of the community. The Parish council also has access to land such as

Kingsleas which it needs funds for in order to undertake a planting and a natural development programme. There is also a need to enhance green pathways.

Through this EHNP developers are encouraged to discuss their proposals with the Parish Council at an early stage to identify whether reinvestment within the village to positively benefit biodiversity can be achieved. Developers are also encouraged to design sites and dwellings in an environmentally beneficial way inclusive of features that will support wildlife.

Rationale

- *Noise and vibration levels*

New developments have been allowed to be located too close to sources of ongoing noise and vibration and/or without appropriate or sufficient insulation from noise. It has been found that residents close to the A338 are exposed to noise and vibration pollution levels beyond allowable limits. The seriousness of the issue has grown as the level of traffic has increased.

As the level of housing growth in Wantage continues to be delivered the volume of traffic and traffic vehicle size will continue to increase. With the level of projected housing in Wantage and Grove the volume and amount of traffic and hence noise and vibration pollution will only intensify.

The DEFRA noise map clearly identifies a channel along the A338 where because legal limits are exceeded, any new housing development should not be allowed within that zone, a clear buffer between the A338 and the position of any housing would be a solution.

Whilst developers may suggest mitigation such as fencing, double glazing, or vegetation cover, from the experience of residents affected it is clear that such mitigation may on its own be insufficient against the extremely high levels of pollution recorded. The WHO have published requirements for acceptable noise and vibration levels which technical reports show are far exceeded.

The case for this is also supported by a report dated 2020 undertaken by consultants for a developer on an application alongside the A338 at the Ashfields Lane site which found that the noise limits were 3 times the WHO guidelines.

This policy proposes to protect residents for the future by ensuring that developments are set back from the road and have appropriate mitigation. Further, that developers provide appropriate technical reports to evidence noise and vibration levels for every new housing development proposed.

A number of residents identified as being affected by noise and vibration in the community survey response. The survey also identified that development should not be built in areas with exposure to high noise levels. This EHNP Policy compliments that of the DC.

Development policy 25 Noise- Sensitive Development of the Local Plan Part 2, requires noise-sensitive development in locations likely to be affected by existing sources of noise to provide an appropriate scheme of mitigation to ensure appropriate standards of amenity are achieved for future occupiers of the proposed development. Development policy 25 also requires proposals for noise-sensitive development to be accompanied by an assessment of environmental noise and an appropriate scheme of mitigation measures. If mitigation cannot be provided to an appropriate standard with an acceptable design under the DC planning remit the scheme is not to be permitted. Accordingly, as there is an area of specific concern to residents along the A338 corridor, this EHNP Policy is provided to identify the issue and to require that all new developments that could arise in the vicinity of the corridor be required to provide as standard with the application the assessment and mitigation measures set out within policy 25.

The following map is from Defra and shows the extent of exposure to noise and vibration along the A338.



Figure 23 Defra noise map

It is also the experience of the community that construction works themselves are causing land shake/ vibration movements and noise which is experienced considerable distances across the village. For example, recently from pile driving such as has occurred at Dews Meadow.

Whilst there are 'time or working hour' requirements on developers as a condition of approval because of the small size of East Hanney noise and disruptions arising from a development can affect much of the village.

This policy seeks to ensure minimalization of noise and vibration, so that the levels are restricted to industry guideline standards. To do this the policy seeks for contractors to include in their proposals the standards to which they will work, insulation proposal, and for time considerations to be applied in order to restrict the extent of disruption where work is close to existing residents.

An example, of a nearby Neighbourhood Plan which also includes provision for protection against noise disturbance is Chilton which is also in the Vale of White Horse, that policy includes provision to ensure that existing natural screening is not removed.

- *Air Quality*

Linked to the increasing flow of traffic use on the A338, and the level of development being experienced in the locality, is the impact on air quality. The A338 is the only north south route and thus carries all traffic load types. It is already often at stand still during peak hours in normal working conditions at points as it passes through the village. Stationary vehicles or those proceeding slowly discharge vehicular fumes including close to housing along the A338. The extent of emissions can only be expected to increase as the level of development in this area increases and the A338 becomes more congested. The District Development Policy 26 Air Quality provides comprehensive guidance.

This EHNP Policy seeks to help achieve better air quality locally by encouraging use of greener travel and energy facilities. For example, whilst use of electric cars is becoming popular, by far most people have a diesel or petrol vehicle. As a rural village the level of air quality is being affected. One measure to help offset this is for a policy to encourage developments to provide or to contribute to the village for the provision of

vehicle electric charging facilities within developments, and to enable pedestrian and cycle links between developments to deter car journeys and incorporate design of permeable layouts in schemes.

The new developments along the Steventon Road were not strategically developed with linkage and provision of a cycle way or green route. For the future, it would be beneficial for the village if developers could be encouraged to respect and embrace the rural and green nature of East Hanney and to provide for appropriate cycle and pathway linkages. This policy seeks to provide a measure to encourage this.

- *Green credentials and biodiversity enhancements*

The rationale is to enhance the green environment of the village. Encourage cycling and use of electric vehicles. Also, to design in features which encourage wildlife.

The loss of biodiversity to the village from development has been significant as every development has shown a negative biodiversity outcome for the village but has been countered through payment giving value elsewhere. As described above this has not helped the village, yet at the same time funding is needed to help schemes within East Hanney. The rationale is therefore to both encourage positive biodiversity by reinvesting in the village, and also encourage features within new developments which will benefit wildlife, the local environment, and assist in delivering a net gain in biodiversity.

Developers are also encouraged to discuss with the Parish Council opportunities for enhancing biodiversity within the village by way of supporting local green projects such as planting. This policy also aligns with EHNP6 Trees and Hedgerows which also addresses loss of biodiversity and incentive to retain value within the village to enhance the local green environment.

Policy EHNP 17 – Sustainable Development and Environmental impact

- **Applications for new residential development in those areas shown on the Defra noise map figure 23 as being affected by excess noise levels to be required to provide with the development applications the assessments and design requirements set out in Local Plan Development Policy 25.**
- **Areas of existing screening should not be redeveloped without alternative procedures in place.**
- **Measures may include setting dwellings further away from the source with an intervening vegetated buffer zone which will also address particulates and other air quality issues impacting homes and gardens.**
- **Contractor proposals to include details of proposed work periods and take into consideration mitigations to limit the extent of disruption that may arise during the period of construction.**
- **All major developments to be permeable to enable active travel cycling and walking through the settlement using easiest routes and thereby deterring car use (e.g. no gated cul de sacs)**
- **a location for a communal visitor bicycle parking (Sheffield type, etc) provision to allow for 1 bicycle per home**

Biodiversity enhancements are encouraged on all developments of 4 dwellings or more as part of the developers' proposals, including:

- **provision of swift bricks into the design and build of homes, with a preference for at least one every 4 dwellings,**
- **provision of routes for wildlife pathways through developments by way of preservation and introduction of hedge rows and verges as wildlife corridors**

- provision of bird boxes and owl boxes, together with insect hotel style features within the landscape plans.
- Use of insect/bee attracted grasses and vegetation at selected points throughout a development including in the public open space
- Proposals which result in a net biodiversity loss but can provide biodiversity compensation elsewhere within, and for the benefit of the Parish of East Hanney, will be supported. If there are no reasonable local solutions, other biodiversity compensation projects will be considered.
- Developers are encouraged to discuss with the Parish Council at an early stage opportunities for enhancing biodiversity within the village.

Evidential Material

- Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey
- Base Line Evidence
- Technical Report and response on noise levels relating to proposed development at Ashfields Lane 2020
- WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines: www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/noise/environmental-noise-guidelines-for-the-european-region
- Defra noise map

Policy Context

- District Council Core Policy 1, Sustainable Development
- District Council Core Policy 45, Green Infrastructure
- District Council Development Management Policy 25, Noise
- District Council Development Management Policy 26, Air Quality
- District Council Net biodiversity offsetting requirements. Ref: [VoWH Biodiversity Net Gain statements](#)⁴
- Chilton Neighbourhood Plan, Policy 6

⁴ 'Biodiversity net gain is an approach to development and land management that leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before, after first avoiding and minimising harm'. It has been in operating since 2013, although now refined. 'To measure biodiversity net gains and assess the impacts of planning applications, we use biodiversity metrics. We aim to ensure that all developments achieve a net gain of biodiversity however, sometimes it is not always possible to avoid a causing a net loss. Where residual losses of biodiversity are unavoidable, developers can pay to create habitat of equal or greater value to wildlife. This is called biodiversity offsetting and is a key mechanism to deliver biodiversity net gain.'

6. Implementation and monitoring

6.1 Implementation

Implementation of the EHNDP will be ongoing. Responsibility for determining planning applications rests with Vale of White Horse DC.

6.2 Monitoring

East Hanney Parish Council will monitor the Neighbourhood Plan and the implementation and effectiveness of its policies.

Twelve-month review

EHNP will be reviewed after one year after its adoption at community referendum by the Parish Council and the reconvened Neighbourhood plan steering committee or their representatives.

The purpose of the review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the Neighbourhood plan objectives have been implemented in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting those objectives; and secondly to rectify any errors and omissions.

Five-year review

EHNP will be reviewed every five years thereafter. Review of policies will be led by East Hanney Parish Council. The purpose of the review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the Neighbourhood plan objectives have been implemented in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting those objectives; and secondly to rectify any errors and omissions.

Where significant amendments or additions are needed that cause significant public concern, a public consultation will be undertaken to be sure that 50% or more of respondents to the consultations with residents accept the changes

End of plan review

At least two years prior to the expiry of the EHNP, a full review will be undertaken to gauge the success of the Plan in meeting its objectives and to put in place a succession plan.

7. List of Appendices

- Appendix A Base Line Evidence (including SWOT analysis)
- Appendix B Village and Community Infrastructure Report and Community Project List
- Appendix C East Hanney Settlement Boundary Appraisal report
- Appendix D Local Green Spaces Study
- Appendix E East Hanney Character Assessment
- Appendix F Design Guidance and Code
- Appendix G Neighbourhood Plan Community Questionnaire Report
- Appendix H SEA Screening Statement
- Appendix I Views