

# Conservation and Heritage Policies

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## Policy CH1: Character of Housing

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All new development proposals and modifications to existing buildings will be expected to comply with the design principles as set out in the AVDC Design Advice and Guidance (including Building Materials, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Local Distinctiveness, New Buildings in the Countryside, New Houses in Towns and Villages, and Residential Extensions).

Specifically, in the Stewkley Parish, the following stipulations should be incorporated into the design of any new dwelling, or extension:

- ❖ Roof - Real slate tiles or real clay plain red tiles;
- ❖ Walls - ‘Stewkley red’ brick or equivalent or render (sand and lime or similar);
- ❖ Height - Any new building built within the Parish should be no more than 2 storeys;
- ❖ Street frontages - Street frontages should be ‘in keeping’ with adjacent properties;
- ❖ Stewkley Parish Council will seek to preserve and protect the many architectural features of non-listed heritage buildings, set out in **Appendix ?**, which are important to the environmental and social history of Stewkley. These may include historic features such as original wooden doors, windows, and commercial signs, which may indicate a former use.
- ❖ Sustainable Homes - Built to the Stewkey Code for Sustainable Homes attached at **Appendix ?**

### Justification:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all new developments coming forward within the Parish are designed to respect and where possible enhance Stewkley’s character and are constructed to minimise any impacts on both the natural and built environment. All new developments should therefore look to incorporate designs that respect the existing built form and its relationship with the surrounding countryside.

Stewkley’s Conservation Area was designated by Aylesbury Vale District Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2001. The Conservation Area Appraisal sets out the key features and characteristics of the village’s historic core which in turn justify its designation. **The Conservation Area Report and Map can be found at Appendix ?**

The appraisal identifies twelve contiguous “identity areas” or “nodes of development” along Stewkley’s linear street pattern, which collectively form the cohesive townscape identity special to Stewkley. This highlights that it is the special architectural and historic interest of the whole area, rather than the merits of individual buildings, which are important in defining the Conservation Area. To this end it is important to maintain the patterns of development including the linear street pattern, the heights of buildings and street frontages, which add to the special architectural and historic interest.

The Stewkley Conservation Area is characterised by its linear nature such that the majority of historic or traditionally-built properties are situated at the front of their plots and have a strong relationship with their road frontages. It is thus important that any

proposed development within or adjacent to the Conservation Area does not extend beyond the existing line of development associated with the area.

The Conservation Area Appraisal sets out what it calls a series of Appraisal Factors, which are thought to have a significant impact on Stewkley's character. These include Space about Buildings, Materials, Highway Boundaries and Frontage Parking. When referring to materials Paragraph 3.16 states; *"The use of appropriate colour and texture of brick is vital to the visual integration of new development; this also applies to boundary/curtilage walls"*. This reinforces the policy requirement for Stewkley red brick or equivalent or render to protect this character.

The Conservation Area also highlights vistas and views, which merit protection, through the village and from the village to open countryside. A number of particular arrangements of buildings, together with brick walls and railings throughout the village, form strong building lines and boundaries, which add character and reinforce the streetscape in what remains a predominately rural environment. The Conservation and Heritage working group have also complimented this work through updating the important vistas and views list which is set out in **Appendix ?**.

The special character of Stewkley lies in the current density and layout of the buildings and the relationship between the High Street buildings and streetscape through which it passes. Good design and landscaping in any new development is key to preserving and enhancing the built environment. The policy stipulations set out in CH1 seek to closely reflect the Conservation Area Appraisal, setting out the special characteristics which contribute to the overall character of the village.

**Figure X** below shows the Historic Designations across Stewkley including the boundary of the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Notification Areas.

DLP - INSERT FIGURE X HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS MAP

## Policy CH2: Protecting our Heritage Assets

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Stewkley's Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets (as set out in **Appendix ?**) are vital to the character and appearance of the village, its community and culture. It is therefore essential that these assets are protected.

All development proposals which affect Designated or Non-Designated Heritage Assets must be accompanied by a proportionate Heritage Impact Assessment, which considers the significance of the asset and the impact of the proposed development.

Under the policy terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), any residential, commercial and non-residential development proposal which results in the loss of significance of a heritage asset, for example the Stewkley Conservation Area, must have that harm weighed in planning balance against any community benefits of the proposal in reaching a decision, If there is no apparent community benefit, then the proposal should be refused.

### **Justification:**

Stewkley has a rich and varied history. Both the designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Parish act as an important reminder of the key areas that have made the Parish what it is today. It is therefore important that these sites remain substantially in their current state.

The key heritage considerations in deciding any development proposals within and adjacent to the Stewkley Conservation Area are:

- The impact of the proposal on the setting of heritage assets in the vicinity, including listed buildings, heritage sites and the Conservation Area itself.
- That such development, inside, immediately adjacent to, or within the setting of the Conservation Area can greatly influence the character and appearance of the area, for example by intruding into open countryside, despoiling important vistas in and out of the village, or creating an irregular development pattern harmful to the linear nature of the village.
- Development that does not reflect the traditional form, layout and scale of buildings within the Conservation Area must be refused.

### **Listed Buildings**

The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) is the official register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England. These include listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields.

Within the Parish of Stewkley there are one Grade I Listed Building and thirty-three Grade II Listed Building records. The locations of these listed buildings are also shown in **Figure X**. Today, all but five of the listed buildings are residential homes (see Appendix ?). The primary objective of the Listed Buildings Register is to ensure their protection and the local authority has a special statutory duty regarding the preservation of any listed building or its setting.

All of Stewkley's thirty-four listed buildings make an important contribution to the special interest of the village, but none more so than the Grade I Listed parish church of St Michael and All Angels. This unique building and the peaceful, open, green space of its churchyard, together form the most important heritage asset at the centre of both the Conservation Area and the community. St Michael's Church, its churchyard and the adjoining Village War Memorial constitute one of the twelve "Identity Areas" of special interest and townscape character which were identified in the Stewkley Conservation Area document.

### **Other Important Village Buildings and Heritage Sites**

Forty-three further buildings have been identified which by virtue of their age, scale, former function or architecture, contribute significantly to the character of the area. Five important Heritage sites have also been identified for example the site of Littlecote Medieval Village and the Moated Earthworks at Tythe House. All these buildings/ heritage sites are listed in Appendix 4 and are believed to be worthy of conservation and recognition.

### **Buildings and Features of Historic, Social or Commercial Interest**

**57.** In addition to those listed, there are many other heritage buildings which possess architectural features that indicate a different former use, such as public houses, bakeries, shop premises, barns and smithies. It is also considered that these should be recognised and appreciated because they are important to the social history of Stewkley. To give an example of this, in a row of six cottages, one larger ground floor window indicates that this was a village shop, allowing for the goods on sale to be displayed in that window. A large, elaborate bracket projecting from a house and from which an electric lantern now hangs, indicates that the building was formerly an inn or public house as the painted sign of the inn's name or emblem would previously have hung from the bracket.

Historically, a common feature of the village, often tucked away in backyards, are wells and pumps, the only source of water before mains water was supplied to Stewkley in 1941; two of these parish pumps still exist. Whilst a number of barns have now been converted to other uses, they still reflect the agricultural roots of the parish, with some still retaining architectural features indicating their earlier use. These differing features, some small and seemingly insignificant, all add interest to Stewkley's streetscape, as well as the buildings themselves. Their retention should be encouraged as part of the village heritage.

# Planning, Housing, Landscape & Environment Policies

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## Policy H1: Stewkley Development Boundary

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The Neighbourhood Plan has designated a new Development Boundary, as shown on the Policies Map, ensuring that the land available meets future housing and business needs whilst maintaining the overall character and development pattern of the village.

Proposals for development within the boundary will be supported provided they:-

- Accord with, and are consistent with the design and development management policies and other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Are appropriate in size, height, scale and character of the village, contribute to its local distinctiveness and respect the Conservation Area and Heritage Assets
- Have no adverse impact on:
  - the immediate rural character
  - Biodiversity
  - the surrounding landscape
  - footpaths, and
  - views
- Are not harmful to the amenity or living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

Housing developments will be restricted to within the Development Boundary which links gaps on the outer built areas of the village and therefore defines a clear line between countryside and built form.

Proposals for development on land outside the Development Boundary will not be supported unless:

- It is a rural exception scheme, necessary for the purpose of:
  - Agriculture or forestry,
  - Diversification of agricultural and other land use based rural businesses,
  - Recreation or tourism that benefits the local rural economy without harming countryside interest or existing agriculture.

Such proposals will be assessed in terms of their potential impact on the visual setting and landscape features of the site and its surroundings. The potential impact on the biodiversity of the area the potential impact of traffic, noise, illumination and air pollution and other relevant planning considerations (including National Policy), including the Policies of the Plan.

- It does not generate levels and types of traffic which would be harmful to the village and residents of Stewkley and Littlecote, the Conservation Area, Heritage Assets and surrounding landscape - its highway capacity, suitability and safety

- It positively contributes to the landscape upon which it sits, and is in harmony with the form and character of the Parish, its quality, local distinctiveness and views
- Its conserves and enhances connected habitats and provides a biodiversity net gain for the Parish

Proposals which fail to demonstrate that these impacts can satisfactorily be addressed and mitigated will not be supported.

DLP - Insert **Figure X** Stewkley Development Boundary.

### Justification:

Stewkley is a linear village with development predominantly sited along its high street and extending into the five entrance roads into the village. This policy establishes and defines the Development Boundary to distinguish the consideration of planning applications within the settlement from those outside the boundary. This policy seeks to protect the intrinsic rural character of the village whilst allowing for sustainable growth.

The Development Boundary links ‘gaps’ on the outer built-up areas of the village and therefore defines a clear line between the countryside and the villages built form. At the public consultation meeting held in early 2016, it was decided by public vote (97% in favour) that the delivery of future housing in Stewkley should take place in the form of smaller developments distributed throughout the linear built up area of the village rather than major developments in one location. The PHLE Group has assessed various locations in terms of their suitability and is confident the sites allocated within this Plan will help deliver the most appropriate form of growth.

The Development Boundary has been drawn to observe the existing built up area edge and to accommodate the sites that already have planning permission and/ or are site allocations as listed in Policy H2. Maintaining the linear nature of the village, the openness of its countryside and access to country views is critical, consequently in-fill development within the village will only be acceptable if it falls within the build line and is in keeping with its surrounding buildings. It is crucial that any new development remains adjacent the current built up area in order to protect the openness of this valued rural landscape forming the setting to the village.

## Policy H2: Housing Allocations

The following final list of sites set out in **Table X (also displayed on Figure X)** have been proposed as housing allocations. The chosen location of these sites, other than NP06 approved by AVDC contrary to objections from Stewkley Parish Council and residents, sets out to provide for an ‘even’ distribution of housing throughout the village.

**Table X:** Housing Allocation Sites

Ref	Site Name and Location	Dwellings	Phase
NP01	Land to south of Grange Farm in Bletchley Road, Stewkley	8	10/15yrs
NP02	Land at No 7 Bletchley Road, Stewkley	2	10/15yrs
NP03	Bletchley Road (South Side) Stewkley	10	10/15yrs

NP04	Bowls Farm, High Street North, Stewkley	5/6	15yrs
NP05	Cricketers 66 High Street North, Stewkley	14	5yrs
NP06	Soulbury Road, Stewkley	67	2/5years
NP07	Land below No 3 Wing Road, Stewkley	8	5yrs
NP08	Orchard at No 3 Wing Road, Stewkley	3	5yrs
NP09	Land south of 20 Wing Road, Stewkley	7	5yrs
NP10	Manor Business Centre, High Street South, Stewkley	8	15+yrs
NP11	Land to the rear of NP09 adjacent to Coal Yard, Dunton Rd. Stewkley	4	5yrs
NP12	Land at Griffin Field, Stewkley	2	5yrs
NP13	Potash House Barns, Mursley Road, Stewkley	4	5yrs
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	

Figure ? below indicates the location of the selected sites.

DLP - INSERT FIGURE X - HOUSING SITES CONTEXT MAP

Appendix ? contains details of the location plan and description of the type of development considered appropriate for each site. Summary details are as follows:-

#### **NP01 Land to south of Grange Farm in Bletchley Road, Stewkley**

The site is suitable for up to eight residential dwellings. Considering the size, location and surrounding properties the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group considers it would be appropriate for a mix of 2-storey 2/3-bed terraced or semi-detached houses with off road parking facilities for residents and guests.

A low-density scheme along the frontage of Bletchley Road to reflect the linear character of the village represents an opportunity for an attractive gateway development in this location in conjunction with allocation NP03 opposite.

#### **Other Site-Specific Requirements:**

- A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be required as part of any planning application to ensure development will adequately mitigate any impacts on views of the open countryside.
- Access: The development would need to be set back behind a service road and grass verge similar to other developments in the village to ensure visibility and limit the number of new accesses to a single access and egress point with good visibility to the Bletchley Road, subject to Highway authority approval.
- A listed barn lies within the farm complex next to NP02, any development would therefore need to be sensitively designed to mitigate any adverse impact on the setting of the listed building.
- May require further information in terms of agricultural land classification.

#### **NP02 Land at No 7 Bletchley Road, Stewkley**

This site is suitable for up to two dwellings and should come forward in conjunction with NP01. Considering the size, location and surrounding properties the Neighbourhood Plan

Working Group considers it appropriate for a further two, 2-storey 2/3 bed terraced or semi-detached houses with off-road parking facilities for residents and guests. An appropriate low-density scheme along the frontage of Bletchley Road represents an opportunity for an attractive gateway development in this location in conjunction with NP03 opposite.

#### Other Site-Specific Requirements

- Housing Allocation NP01 must be developed before or in conjunction with this site as they will share service road access and egress, drainage and water infrastructure.
- A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be required as part of any planning application to ensure development will adequately mitigate any impacts onto views of the open countryside.
- Access: The development would need to be set back behind a service road and grass verge similar to other developments in the village to ensure visibility and limit the number of new accesses to a single access and egress point with good visibility to the Bletchley Road, subject to Highway authority approval.
- Any development would need to be sensitively designed to mitigate any adverse impact on the setting of the listed barn at Grange Farm.

#### **NP03 - Bletchley Road (South Side) Stewkley**

This site is suitable for up to ten dwellings. This should include either 2 or 3-bed terraced or semi-detached houses with off road parking facilities for residents and guests.

A low-density frontage development to match the opposite side of the road (NP01 and NP02) would likely be acceptable and limit the depth of development to reflect the linear character of the village. The site's peripheral position gives the opportunity for a high-quality development to form an attractive gateway at the entrance to the village.

#### Other Site-Specific Requirements

- A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be required as part of any planning application to ensure development will adequately mitigate any impacts onto views of the open countryside.
- Access: The development would need to be set back behind a service road and grass verge similar to other developments in the village to ensure visibility and limit the number of new accesses to a single access and egress point with good visibility to the Bletchley Road, subject to Highway authority approval.
- The potential consideration of NP01 and NP02 as part of a wider masterplan.
- May require further information in terms of agricultural land classification.

#### **NP04 Bowls Farm, High Street North, Stewkley**

This site is suitable for up to five or six dwellings. Considering the size, location and surrounding properties the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group considers it would be appropriate for 3-bed semi-detached houses with off road parking facilities for residents and guests. This development would form a cul-de-sac on the lines of similar locations within the village, although smaller homes. This is an irregular size site due to the retention of conservation buildings.

## Other Site-Specific Requirements

### **NP05 Cricketers 66 High Street North, Stewkley**

This site has Outline planning permission (15/00932/AOP allowed on appeal) for 14 dwellings. The Reserve Matters application (17/04373/ADP) is currently awaiting decision.

### **NP06 Soulbury Road, Stewkley**

This site currently has Outline planning permission for 67 dwellings and will be placed on the market in 2018. Discussions will be ongoing with developers, once identified, on the types of properties to come forward which will be detailed within any Reserved Matters application.

### **NP07 Land below No 3 Wing Road, Stewkley**

This site is suitable for up to eight dwellings. Considering the size, location and surrounding properties the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group considers it would be appropriate for a mix of 2, 3 or 4-bed dwellings.

#### Other Site-Specific Requirements

- A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be required as part of any planning application to ensure development will adequately mitigate any impacts onto views of the open countryside.
- Access: The development would need to be from a service road and grass verge similar to other developments in the village to ensure visibility and limit the number of new accesses to a single access and egress point with good visibility to the Wing Road, subject to Highway authority approval.
- May require further information in terms of agricultural land classification.

### **NP08 Orchard at No 3 Wing Road, Stewkley**

This site is considered suitable for up to three dwellings. However, this site can only deliver the additional housing provided it is combined with the adjoining land at NP07.

#### Other Site-Specific Requirements

- A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be required as part of any planning application to ensure development will adequately mitigate any impacts onto views of the open countryside.
- Access: The development would need to be from a service road and grass verge similar to other developments in the village to ensure visibility and limit the number of new accesses to a single access and egress point with good visibility to the Wing Road, subject to Highway authority approval.
- May require further information in terms of agricultural land classification.

### **NP09 Land south of 20 Wing Road Stewkley**

This site is suitable for up to seven dwellings. The current developer proposal includes seven terraced adjoining 2-bedroom cottages built with reclaimed bricks and slate roofs in line with the existing similar properties. Off road parking and set back behind existing hedge line.

#### **Other Site-Specific Requirements**

- A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be required as part of any planning application to ensure development will adequately mitigate any impacts onto views of the open countryside.
- Access: The development would need to be from a service road and grass verge similar to other developments in the village to ensure visibility and limit the number of new accesses to a single access and egress point with good visibility to the Wing Road, subject to Highway authority approval.
- Site would need to be sensitively designed as it adjoins the village Conservation Area.
- May require further information in terms of agricultural land classification.

### **NP10 Manor Business Centre, High Street South, Stewkley**

This site is suitable for up to eight detached dwellings. Given the location of the site a development should look to provide 3/4-bed 2-storey properties. The irregular size of the site promotes a small development which would follow the same lines as various existing cul-de-sac developments off High Street South.

At the request of the site owner, the development boundary, as it passes through this location, was slightly modified, although the allocation for up to eight detached dwelling was unchanged.

#### **Other Site-Specific Requirements**

- The site is located within the Conservation Area, with listed buildings on and adjacent the site any development would therefore need to be sensitively designed to mitigate any adverse impact on the setting of the listed buildings and conservation area.
- Redevelopment of this site would require alternative commercial space for the existing businesses (see Policy B2)

### **NP11 Land to the rear of Site 23 adjacent to Coal Yard, Dunton Road**

This site would be suitable for up to four dwellings. Given the location of the site a development should look to provide 2/3 bed cottages .A small development as proposed would follow the same lines as proposed for NP09 and would fit into the site comfortably. Whilst it does slightly extend the linear nature of the village it is still within easy reach of local amenities and it is therefore supported by the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **Other Site-Specific Requirements**

- A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be required as part of any planning application to ensure development will adequately mitigate any impacts onto views of the open countryside.

- May require further information in terms of agricultural land classification.
- This site should seek to come forward in conjunction with NP09 as access is reliant on this.

### **NP12 Land at Griffin Field**

This site would be suitable for two dwellings. This is an infill site which will provide the opportunity for two more affordable homes. Given its location it is most likely they would be built to sell direct to the purchasers rather than a Housing Association. A small development of two 2/3-bed cottages

### **NP13 Potash House Barns, Mursley Road, Stewkley**

This site is located outside of the proposed development boundary. The site has however been included in the Plan as it would be a diversification of agricultural and other land use based rural businesses (see para ?) involving the conversion of existing farm buildings and stables, which are currently derelict resulting in a more efficient use of land. The proposed conversion is considered suitable for up to four dwellings and does not extend the footprint of the existing property.

#### **Other Site-Specific Requirements**

- The site is located at the T junction with Drayton Parslow Road and it is considered that improvements to the road layout would be essential

#### **Justification**

Whilst the residents of Stewkley are aware that a certain level of housing development will be required to meet future housing need, through this policy they are looking to ensure these developments take place in the most suitable, sustainable locations respecting the linear nature of the village and its rural setting.

National planning policy promotes sustainable development and encourages development to be located in the most sustainable location, this is reiterated through AVDC's Local Plans including the adopted AVDLP and the emerging VALP. Recent policy also encourages housing growth to be more widely disbursed across the district where appropriate to support rural communities.

The Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) is evidence used to support the emerging VALP and identifies the needs for new jobs and homes across Buckinghamshire up to 2033. Through this, a target for Aylesbury Vale has been set at 27,400 which also includes meeting an element of unmet need from adjacent authorities. In addition to delivering growth in the strategic settlements, further growth is also envisioned at the large, medium and smaller villages. The village of Stewkley has been identified in the AVDC Settlement Hierarchy as a medium village which was originally set a target of 141 dwellings.

### **Policy H3 Delivering the type of homes in the village required to meet local need.**

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1. At least 25%, with an aspirations for 35%, of the new homes built shall be designed to be appropriate for occupation by elderly persons and/or first-time buyers or those on lower incomes. Those for the elderly should include a proportion of single storey homes.

2. Developers will be encouraged to deliver mainly 2 bed properties to meet this need, designed to meet the Building Regulations equivalent of ‘Lifetime Homes’ standards.
3. Permitted development rights will be removed for these properties to encourage the protection of these types of homes in the Parish.

### Justification

Stewkley appears to be a relatively elderly village, confirmed by the community consultation in which 19% of those covered by survey responses (80% of households) were persons who were over 65, compared with Aylesbury Vale’s average of 17% (from Buckinghamshire Populations Projections data). That is to say the proportion of the village population over 65 years old is over 10% larger than the Bucks average. However, the village’s elderly are also considered to be relatively healthy, with about half of the elderly population walking the village footpaths at least once a week (Neighbourhood Plan Survey); residents can be assumed to be more likely to survive to greater age. Considering this, it is likely that the average age of the village, is going to increase at least as rapidly as that of the wider population and probably more so. Clearly, the needs of the elderly (and disabled) will be significant factors in planning for the future.

The community consultation has highlighted that there is a clear shortage of homes suitably adapted for the elderly/ disabled occupation. The consultation response also highlighted that there are a number of elderly residents living in the village who would like to or would consider downsizing in the future but do not feel they are able to, given the lack of appropriate properties in the village. Specifically, the Village Survey data shows 56 households not currently living in bungalows saying that they will be seeking a bungalow in the next 10 years, 31 of those are currently in detached houses with 4 or more bedrooms. Moreover, an additional 34 households in such houses report that they will be seeking retirement accommodation in the next 5 to 10 years but did not specify a bungalow. An important corollary of this is there may be up to 65 relatively large, ‘executive’ homes potentially available from down-sizing in the next 10 years, even with no new build of ‘executive’ homes. This is something the Neighbourhood Plan is keen to address through encouraging the development of lifetime homes and the development of smaller properties (including bungalows).

The delivery of new homes within Stewkley offers the opportunity to address the balance of homes available in the village. As set out in the background data the majority of dwellings currently consist of larger detached properties at 57% with less than 2% of the dwellings flatted properties. The average number of bedrooms per household currently stands at 3.3. Providing a proportion of smaller 2-bed properties is specifically encouraged given they offer additional living space for visitors (and space for families to grow).

The Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (2016) sets as guidance a future need for at least 17% of homes (flats and houses) to be 2 bedroom (with a higher portion required as more of the mix is affordable housing - up to 44%) and 52% to be 3 bedroom. With existing proportions (from the Village Survey) of 14% 2 bedroom and 32% 3 bedroom, the HEDNA guidelines for 2 bedroom homes would be met if 33% of the potential future build of 143 houses were 2 bedroom. The 3 bedroom requirement would still not be met even if all additional 100 potential homes were 3 bedroom, because of the existing over provision of 4 bedroom, 5 bedroom and larger homes. A significant proportion of these larger homes have, of course, arisen from extensions in line with permitted development rights. We conclude that:

- a. At least one third of all new build should be homes with no more than 2 bedrooms and proposals for homes with more than 4 bedrooms will not be supported.
- b. Permitted development rights should be removed from new build 2 bedroom homes.

As set out in ‘The Lifetime Homes’ standards (See Appendix 7), developers will be encouraged to deliver a proportion of homes which incorporate design criteria that supports the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life, designed with the flexibility to change. This allows for easier access and movement within the property and ensures that units are suitable for young families or older people.

According to the research undertaken by the Elderly and Disabled Working Group following the original consultation, of the 553 households surveyed only 8 homes were recorded as adapted for older/ disabled person’s occupation. The ‘elderly’ Stewkley residents key factors in their consideration of whether/when to downsize, included quality (many have lived in houses with en-suite facilities for several bedrooms) and availability of adequate room for visitors such as children and grandchildren. Moreover, elderly and disabled residents can actually require additional space, for example for storage of wheelchairs, hoists, medical equipment and specialist beds. After careful review, it is considered that the proportions set in the Aylesbury Vale ‘VALP’, 100% of new build homes built to Approved Document M Category 2 and 25% built to Approved Document M Category 3 standards will meet the community’s needs. In addition there is a demand for a proportion of all new homes to be single-storey.

## Policy H4: Right to purchase

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Due to local demand for housing, any residential development in the Stewkley Parish will be obliged to offer those new properties for sale to parish residents or direct members of their families, for a period of three months, prior to general market sale. The developer may not offer for sale at a lower price than offered to parish residents. If the price is reduced, it must first be offered at the new price to parish residents or direct members of their families.

### **Justification:**

This policy sets out to address the housing needs of local people and to create new opportunities for existing residents and their members of family to continue to live in the village. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the process of working with developers delivering any housing proposal in the Parish, to offer the first opportunity of these properties to local people.

The Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire response highlighted that both Starter Homes and retirement homes were the most requested type of housing in terms of need overall, but also that Starter Homes and 3/4 bed homes were of an urgent need. It is considered to be important that new housing coming forward, of this type in particular, is first offered to parish residents or direct members of their families.

The type of properties coming forward on those permitted and allocated sites will as highlighted through the other housing related policies allow for a greater choice in terms of the types and tenures of properties available in Stewkley, offering further opportunities for those wishing to remain in the village.

## Transport Policies:

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### Policy ITP1 - Car Parking

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Buckinghamshire County Council and AVDC set Parking Standards for all new housing developments. This Policy should be read as an additional requirement;

- Any proposal for new business or commerce or any proposal incorporating a new dwelling or dwellings must provide car parking provision off road within the proposed development boundary. Parking provision will be sufficient for all regular occupants/residents to park off-road away from site entrances and road junctions'

Details of what is expected from a car parking proposal is set out in Figure X?

- To prevent obstruction of the main thoroughfare, any new housing development is to provide 0.5 car additional parking spaces per new home, off road within the development boundary for visitor parking\*.

#### Justification

The National Planning Practise Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that transport policies have an important role to play in achieving sustainable development and also contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives.

To evidence the 2010 Parish Plan, consultation was undertaken with approximately 60% of households responding to a public questionnaire. Of those responses 60% conveyed issues with the roads being too busy at peak times with more traffic-calming measures required and 44% of respondents said they encountered problems with parked cars when driving.

Concerns regarding the quantity and location of vehicles parked on the main routes through Stewkley have been repeatedly raised over the years. Stewkley suffers from a shortage of off-road parking capacity as a result of its historic development. New developments offer the only opportunity to improve the situation and reduce the shortfall, thus preventing the on-road problem becoming worse.

Through the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, the group were able to quantify that nearly 180 vehicles routinely parked on-street, usually due to lack of suitable off-street parking spaces. Responses to the questionnaire also highlighted that the majority of residents without sufficient off-street parking placed significant importance in parking as closely to their front doors as possible for security/convenience reasons. Whilst many of these parked vehicles are located outside properties in side streets, there are a significant number along the two stretches of the High Street and Soulbury Road, which do cause problems for other drivers.

INSERT FIGURE X - MAP HIGHLIGHTING PROBLEM PARKING AREAS - SPC TO PROVIDE, DLP TO DIGITISE

The reason for such parking behaviour is clear, many of the older houses fronting the High Street were not provided with sufficient parking spaces beside or behind their properties. The consequence of this is that some of these vehicles increase the risk of accidents or danger to passing traffic and pedestrians by being parked inconsiderately or close to junctions or bends, often against the guidance of the Highway Code.

According to the consultation and supporting evidence Stewkley also has problems in terms of vehicles speeding into and around the village. Stewkley is approached on five main routes by relatively straight-through, undulating single carriageway roads. As set out in the introduction, vehicles are required to reduce their speed from the national limit of 60-mph directly down to 30-mph at the gateways to the village with no 40-mph buffer zone to highlight the change from rural to residential and no major gateway features to

encourage this speed reduction. Given this issue many vehicles are still well over the speed limit as they enter and continue into Stewkley.

Data from periodic Speedwatch operations and the Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS) give concrete support to the conclusion that too many drivers are ignoring the limits, thereby increasing the risks of injury or damage to themselves or others on our narrow roads. According to Speedwatch 2015 data there were 936 speeders (over 36mph) up to 59mph. MVAS 2015 (395,000 vehicles movements). Overall, more than 16% were exceeding 40 mph within a 30mph area.

Considering the level of growth proposed in Stewkley, there is no doubt that the new housing developments will add to the volumes of traffic and if not appropriately catered for further impact on the safety of the roads through inappropriate parking. Ensuring this is appropriately considered in any proposal is critical to avoid exacerbating such issues in the future.

## Policy ITP2 Safe Cycle and Pedestrian Access

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Proposals involving the development of a new dwellings or non-residential floor space (over 100sqm) should include a consideration of how the proposal will safeguard or improve pedestrian and cycle access both into and out of the site and linkages around the village.

### **Justification:**

Both the Government and AVDC require planning policies to support the promotion of sustainable transport modes. Considering the issues surrounding congestion, parked cars and speeding in the village it is especially important that future developments look to improve pedestrian and cycle access and linkages around the village.

Although Stewkley is fortunate to have a wide network of footpaths leading out of the village across the surrounding countryside, there are few suitable paths or footways for wheelchair or pushchair users except along the main spine of the High Street and Soulbury Road. Issues in this respect are highlighted in **Figure X**.

Measures to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists along this principal access route specifically are necessary now and will be even more so after any development in Stewkley. Design layout of any new development should therefore, where appropriate, seek to optimise and improve on the existing footpath network to improve pedestrian and cycle safety and encourage a reduced vehicular dependence when accessing services in the locality.

## Amenities Sports and Recreation Policies:

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### Policy ASR1: Protecting our Community Assets

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Development proposals affecting the following Community Assets will only be permitted if the proposed development protects and enhances the community value of the asset.

- ❖ St. Michael's church;
- ❖ Stewkley Methodist Chapel and Hall;
- ❖ Village Hall;
- ❖ Recreation Ground and Pavilion;
- ❖ The Swan Public House
- ❖ The Carpenter Arms Public House

#### **Justification:**

The NPPF (and AVDC Local Plan policy) promotes healthy inclusive communities where residents have opportunities to meet through safe and accessible environments. Community facilities and services include public halls, schools, shops, post offices, public houses, places of worship, libraries, museums, creches, day centres and doctor's surgeries. They make a vital contribution to the social and economic life of the community, particularly in rural areas and are especially important for elderly and disabled people and for those who do not have easy access to private or public transport.

The Community Assets listed above have been identified through consultation as key to the Stewkley community and should therefore be protected and where possible enhanced to continue their valuable function in the village.

### Policy ASR2: Development of Existing or New Community Use Buildings

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Proposals to improve an established community building by way of physical improvements, extension or redevelopment will be supported provided the community benefits of the scheme outweigh any potential harm to the viability and usage of the existing facility.

New community buildings will only be supported if clear evidence of an unmet need for a new facility can be illustrated, that cannot be met through extensions or redevelopment of existing community buildings. An audit of existing community buildings and their usage will be required to support any application for the development of a new community building.

#### **Justification**

This policy again seeks to support development proposals intended to secure the continued operation of a range of facilities that are important to the local community. Whilst the community buildings are all considered important to the village, in some cases, for these to remain viable in the future they may require investment to update and/or increasing the size of the facility to support new uses.

This policy sets out to resist proposals for the change of use of community buildings and facilities for which there is a demonstrable local need. If applications for alternative development or uses come forward a number of considerations should be addressed in

deciding whether the proposals are suitable including; the viability of the existing use, the presence of alternative local facilities and the community benefits of the proposed use.

In considering applications for residential development, the council should also consider the need for new community facilities arising from any proposal. Conditions will be imposed on permissions, or planning obligations sought in order to secure appropriate community facilities, including financial contributions towards existing community facilities, reasonably related to the scale and kind of housing proposed.

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## Natural Environment Policies

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### Policy NE1: Maintain the Integrity of Key Open Spaces within the Village.

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The integrity of key open spaces within the village should be maintained as they are fundamental to the identity and character of the village.

No new development proposals will be permitted or supported within the key open spaces (listed below and set out in **Figure X** below). Key open spaces may be enhanced but their cultural and community contributions to the village must be conserved.

DLP - INSERT **FIGURE X** KEY OPEN SPACES MAP

#### Justification

As part of the Neighbourhood Plan process the Planning Group undertook a Green Infrastructure Audit which described in detail the important open spaces in the village which add to its unique character. These include a series of heritage, non-recreational and recreational green spaces as set out below. The detailed assessment including a description and details of their importance is available in Appendix 6. Given these spaces are valuable assets to the village, it is important that they are conserved and protected for future generations to enjoy.

#### Recreational Green Spaces:

- ❖ The Recreation Ground.
- ❖ The Football Field (adjacent to the Recreation Ground)
- ❖ Stewkley Wildlife Reserve
- ❖ Griffin Field Green Space
- ❖ St Michaels School Playing Fields (expansion of the school as and when necessary may form a specific instance of permissible breach of Policy H1 on the Development Boundary)
- ❖ Airport Monument and the Spinney
- ❖ Stewkley Allotments

#### Non- Recreational Green Spaces

- ❖ Parish Council Lawn Cemetery
- ❖ Fishweir
- ❖ Stockall Tiger Island
- ❖ Sycamore Close
- ❖ Various Grass Verges and Islands

#### Heritage Spaces

- ❖ Littlecote Medieval Village
- ❖ Stewkley War Memorial

- ❖ St Michael's Churchyard.
- ❖ Moated Earthworks West of Mursley Road
- ❖ Warren Farm Quarry
- ❖ Drover's Way

## Policy NE2: Maintain the connection between the village and its surrounding countryside.

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Priority will be given to protecting the countryside and Public Rights of Way linking the village and countryside from inappropriate development.

Any proposal will only be permitted, provided it does not negatively impact on the distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points. Those Important distinctive views have been defined on the Important Views and Footpaths Map available in Figure X.

DLP - INSERT FIGURE X IMPORTANT VIEWS AND FOOTPATHS MAP

### Justification:

Building upon the information provided in the AVDC Conservation Area Appraisal, attached at Appendix ? and an important part of appraisal under this Policy, the Group has undertaken an audit of important distinct views into and out of the village. These views are an important part of the village's character and should be protected. The Important Views and Footpaths Map included in Figure ? shows these views and what should be protected. We need to review these protected views against our proposed sites.

Figure X below also displays the environmental designations across Stewkley, including Public Rights of Way, also showing those important linkages between the villages and countryside which should be protected.

DLP - INSERT FIGURE X ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS

## Education Policies

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### Policy E1: Nursery School

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Recognising the current and potential future demand for pre-school places, the Neighbourhood Plan will support proposals to provide a new Nursery School located within the parish. If necessary, fulfilling this need might form a specific instance of permissible breach of Policy H1 on the Main Settlement Boundary.

**Justification:**

Pre-school facilities have been running within the village for around 60 years but on an informal basis. The pre-school building located at St Michael's School is run by Trustees through a committee of volunteers and is currently undergoing incorporation to provide ongoing support and stabilisation. At the time of the Nursery and Primary Education Working Group report there were 37 children attending the pre-school, with a maximum of 25 children per session allowed.

The working group through interviews held with the Pre-school Manager found that by September 2017 the Pre School would be full with more demand than places available. The pre-school is currently operating at full capacity in the existing building.

Given the pre-school facilities are currently operating at capacity and there is potential for further demand as a result from the proposed housing developments, the Plan would support the delivery of a new pre-school facility within the Parish. Any application would have to also address all the other policy requirements set out in the Plan.

# Employment Policies

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## Policy B1: Business Sites

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Applications for business use (including live/work), offering employment opportunities for local people will be supported providing they complement existing clusters of activity, accord with Policy H1 and

Do not;

- negatively impact upon residential amenity or the character, appearance, vitality and distinctiveness of the local area;
- adversely increase traffic or impact upon road safety.

### Justification

Through this policy, opportunities where appropriate, for the delivery of new small-scale business units (including live-work) will be supported.

The provision of local employment units provides opportunities for local residents to live and work in the Parish and therefore improve the sustainability of the village. Whilst Stewkley can only provide a supporting economic role within Aylesbury Vale, it was identified through the consultation that maintaining local business activity was important to support day time activity from local employees and potentially enable more sustainable commuting.

With the advent of faster broadband speeds available to the majority of residents in the village, the potential to run businesses or work from home has improved, providing further opportunities for small businesses. According to the Stewkley Neighbourhood Plan Survey 64% of the working population questioned currently commuted to work with 74% of those commuting by car. Offering small scale business units could go some way in reducing the need for some to commute outside of Stewkley to work.

In terms of the farming economy according to the 2011 Census around 4% of the population were involved in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Farming operations have changed significantly over the last few decades but maintaining the productive use of the land is essential. In order to secure the farming economy as with other rural areas some diversification in the use of buildings and land may well be necessary. This Plan offers a positive approach to enable farms to diversify, promoting the development and diversification of agriculture and other land use based rural businesses, including meeting the essential need for a rural worker.

## Policy B2: Protection of Existing Employment Sites

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Existing employment sites should be retained unless it can be demonstrated that there is no demand for such a facility or that the redevelopment would result in a more efficient use of land.

Applications for change of use of employment sites will be considered subject to the provision of alternate site(s) that comply with current development policy.

### **Justification:**

Local employment sites can provide a valuable contribution to the local economy and offer opportunities for residents to work locally and subsequently reduce commuting levels. According to the Stewkley Neighbourhood Plan Survey carried out in 2016 19% of the population are employed in home businesses, with 39% home working and 12% working in Stewkley. It is therefore important to support small scale development needed to facilitate the growth of small office and home-based enterprises.

According to the community consultation 39% of those questioned worked from home and 12% worked within Stewkley (49% working elsewhere). 19% of those interviewed ran their business from home.

A separate business survey undertaken in June/July 2016 sought to establish reasons for businesses being based in Stewkley, current challenges and future plans. Respondents identified their residency in Stewkley, transport links and local customers as being typical reasons for having their businesses based here.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the need to maintain the variety of businesses in Stewkley and to ensure that the main challenges of improved broadband and mobile capability are addressed as set out in Policy B3.

### **Policy B3: Superfast Broadband**

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Proposals involving the development of a new dwelling/s or non-residential floor space (over 100sqm) should recognise the need for a choice of supply for Superfast (via copper) or Ultrafast (via fibre) broadband and incorporate the infrastructure to connect to both.

#### **Justification**

As is common within many rural areas the prevalence of poor broadband/ internet connection to properties in the village was an issue raised through a number of Neighbourhood Plan consultation responses. In fact, in an initial survey 69% of respondents said they were very or somewhat dissatisfied with the service. Given a significant number of businesses also now choose to operate from home, it is increasingly important that this is addressed with faster more reliable broadband connections through all new homes and businesses connecting to the fibre optic network when available.

Following the first aborted attempt to install Fibre optic broadband an alternative company now have their installation underway in the village giving all homes the opportunity to connect to a fast and reportedly reliable fibre network. This policy sets out to ensure all housing, employment and community development proposals are capable of benefiting from recent investments in superfast broadband infrastructure in the village.

With the increasing use of the Internet in all facets of daily domestic and business life, the provision of better broadband capacity and speeds will be encouraged, with a target to future-proof the capability. This would equally support the growing need for good internet connections for home-working, with obvious benefits in reducing traffic on the village's roads.