



# Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan

**2017 to 2033**

**PRE-SUBMISSION REGULATION 14**

**CONSULTATION DRAFT October 2020**



# CUDDINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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# FOREWORD

Cuddington is a beautiful small village located on a ridge overlooking the Thame Valley within the Brill-Winchendon Area of Attractive Landscape. In addition to its landscape setting, it is renowned for the architectural qualities of its historic buildings and Conservation Area, and the network of footpaths that link the village to the surrounding countryside. Cuddington also has a fine reputation as one of Buckinghamshire's Best Kept Villages, and its many clubs, societies and the annual street fete that bring the village together and attract visitors from a wide area. The village also benefits from a church, chapel, pub, infants' school, social and community halls, a village shop and hairdresser. These resources are enjoyed by the village residents and also the by the wider community in adjacent villages.

Physically and socially, Cuddington is a fine example of an authentic working rural village where agriculture and smallholdings continue to be an important part of daily life. Its social infrastructure is as important as the physical qualities of the settlement and its setting. This balance has been maintained by a process of slow incremental growth, and a succession of residents who give up their time to look after the village and keep the social activities flourishing.

Like other rural villages, Cuddington is now exposed to external influences for change (and uncertainty) arising from the re-organisation of local government, the proposed east-west expressway, increased government housing targets, through-traffic generated by increased road use by heavy vehicles and commuters, as well as multiple developments in and around Aylesbury.

It is clear from the 2005 Cuddington Village Plan and the 2018/19 consultations for the Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) that the village accepts the need for some small-scale growth to provide new homes and support local services. Managed carefully, incremental growth can bring positive benefits to local facilities and welcome contributions to community infrastructure such as traffic mitigation and improved social and sports facilities. However, it is important that any new development does not adversely affect the environmental or social infrastructure of the village or erode its distinctive character. This new CNP sets out guidelines for the continued conservation of Cuddington and further development of the village.

We would like to thank the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for their hard work and continual valuable insight, as well as the Parish Council for their support. We would also like to thank the Cuddington community for their interest, input and involvement during the creation of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Ken Birkby

Chairman of Cuddington Parish Council

Ken Trew

Chairman of CNP Steering Group

# 1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1 Cuddington Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) area (shown in Figure 1). It was designated on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018 by the (then) local planning authority, Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC\*), under the provisions of the *Localism Act 2011* and of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

\*AVDC ceased to exist on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and was replaced by Buckinghamshire Council.

The designated CNP area is shown below.

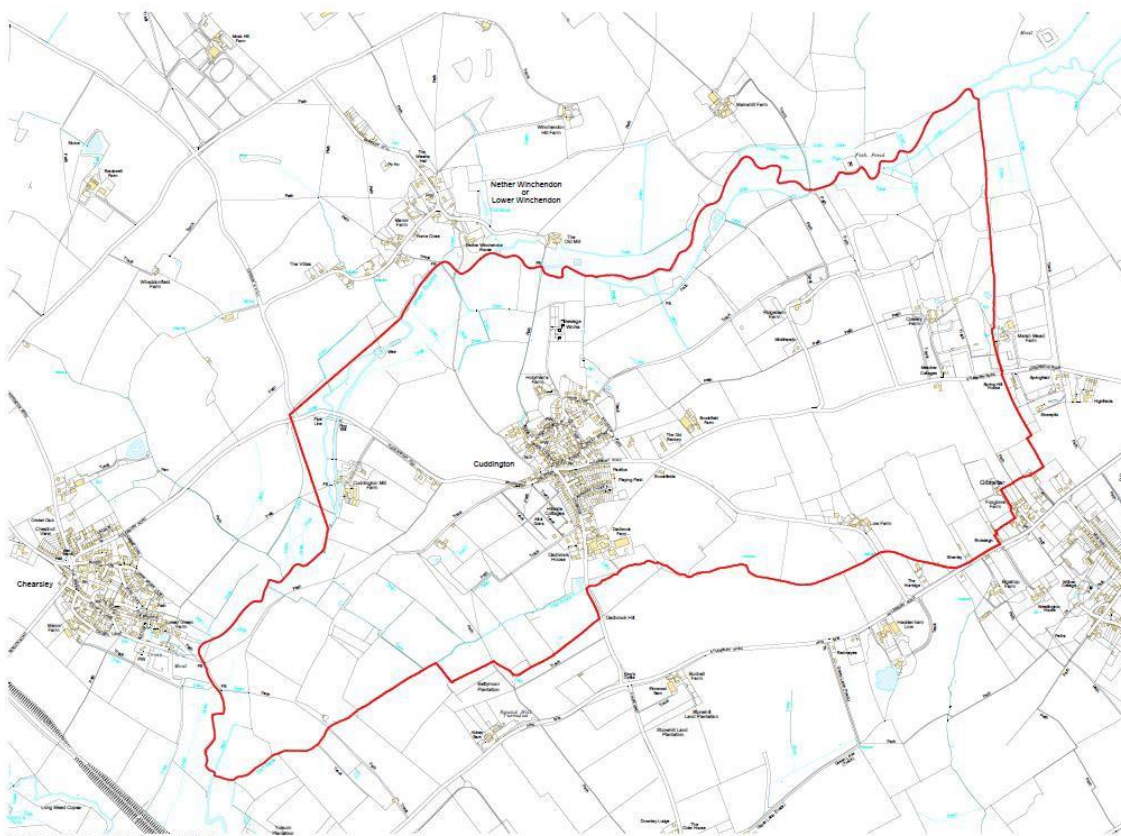


Fig 1. The CNP boundary

- 1.2 The CNP is informed and supported by an evidence base of surveys and other documents that can be found in the Appendices to this document.
- 1.3 The purpose of the (Regulation 14) PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT CNP is to seek feedback from the parishioners and other stakeholders before a (Regulation 15) DRAFT CNP is submitted to Buckinghamshire Council.

Neighbourhood planning regulations (Regulation 14) require the draft neighbourhood plan proposal to be the subject of a pre-submission consultation before it is submitted to the local authority for independent examination. The consultation should last at least 6 weeks. The Parish Council will need to approve the consultation draft of the plan and that the Regulation 14 consultation has taken place.

The proposed Regulation 14 programme is:

|                                                                              |                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Completion of Pre-Submission Draft Reg 14 CNP and approval by Parish Council | Oct 2020        |
| 6-week consultation on the Pre-Submission Draft of the CNP                   | Oct to Dec 2020 |
| Amendments and submission of Draft Reg 15 CNP to Bucks Council               | Early 2021      |

1.4 Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan for the area and carries significant weight in deciding planning applications. Neighbourhood Plans can therefore only contain land-use planning policies that can be used for this purpose.

1.5 This often means that important issues of interest to the local community cannot be addressed in a Neighbourhood Plan, if they are not directly related to land-use planning.

1.6 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans must meet some 'basic conditions'. These are:

- Is the Plan consistent with national planning policy?
- Is the Plan consistent with local planning policy?
- Does the Plan protect Listed Buildings?
- Does the Plan protect the Conservation Area?
- Does the Plan promote the principles of sustainable development?
- Is the Plan compliant with any EU Regulations?

Compliance with these conditions will be described in the Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement to be submitted with the draft CNP (Regulation 15 version).

The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to advice in Section 3 (Plan-making) of the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF and avoid duplication of policies (para 16 f) and address non- strategic matters (para 18).

1.7 In addition, the Parish Council must be able to show sufficient community engagement, and that it has properly consulted local people, landowners and other relevant organisations during the process of making the Neighbourhood Plan, and has followed the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (as amended). A description of the timetable and outcome of public consultation will be included in the Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement to be submitted with the draft CNP (Regulation 15 version).

1.8 In preparing the PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT, consideration has been given to the content and status of the VALP (as modified) and emerging Bucks Local Plan. The main issues with regard to the CNP are:

- Once approved, the CNP will be reviewed in line with the Bucks Local Plan (to be adopted by 2025)
- VALP (as modified) makes provision for housing within the village to 2033 and no additional housing allocations are recommended in the CNP.
- Reference may need to be made to relevant Bucks Supplementary Planning Documents when these are published.

## 2.THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

- 2.1 The Parish of Cuddington is located 6 miles south west of Aylesbury and 5 miles north east of Thame, within the district of Aylesbury Vale and the county of Buckinghamshire. It is a relatively small parish, extending for approximately 518 hectares, with 269 homes and around 570 residents.
- 2.2 Cuddington lies above the Nether Winchendon Valley, with the River Thame at its base, and is surrounded by the attractive landscape of the Vale of Aylesbury. The heart of the village is designated as a Conservation Area.

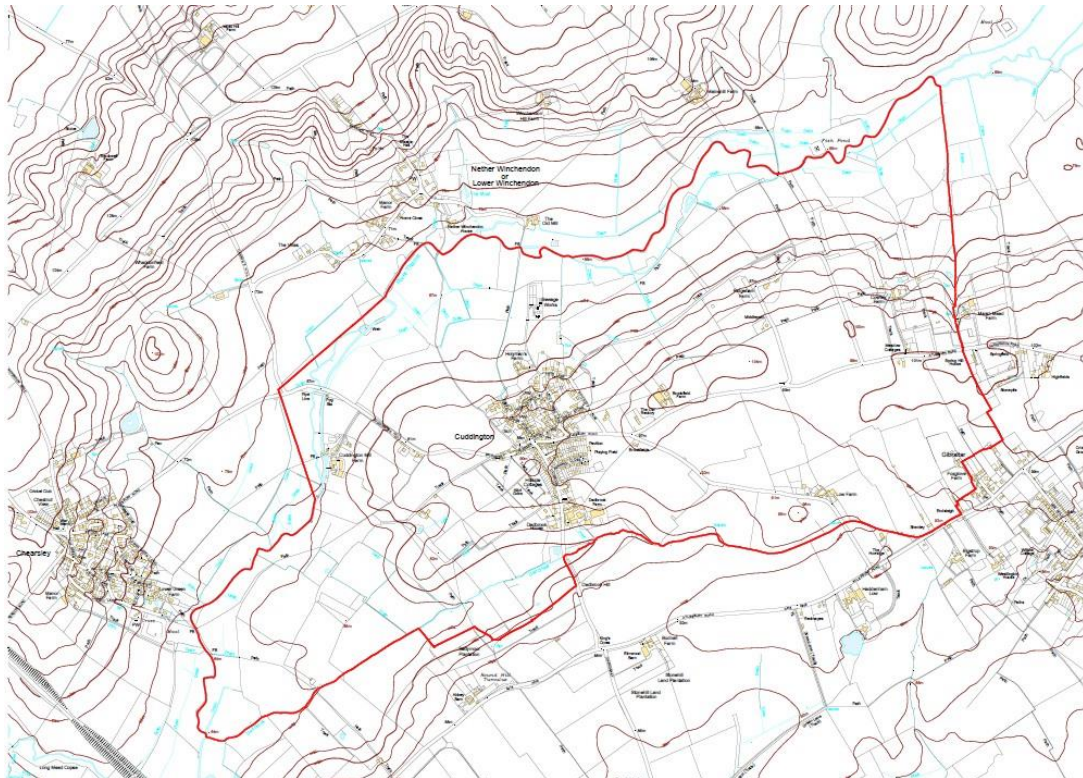


Fig 2. Cuddington parish – contours and watercourses

## History

- 2.3 The village name is Old English (Anglo-Saxon) in origin, and means "Cudda's estate.". In ancient times the village was the location of a medicinal spring of great repute, though its exact location is unknown. The Church of St Nicholas dates from the 12th Century but was much restored in 1857. Across the road is Tyringham Hall that dates from the 17th Century.
- 2.4 Cuddington could very well be described as a quintessential English village. It is a compact village surrounded by farms, farmland and two local estates, Waddesdon and Nether Winchendon. The latter owned a large proportion of the 111 houses in the village at the beginning of the 20th century, most of them built out of local wychert or brick under thatched, tiled or slated roofs.

- 2.5 In the last 100 years the housing stock has more than doubled and today numbers 269. Most of the increase is attributable to rented housing which was built by the Rural District Council in the post-war years. The majority of these houses have been transferred to private ownership and there are now only 32 that are still owned by Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust, of which 16 are small bungalows. The rest of the housing growth has been created by infilling, mostly with higher-priced four- or five-bedroom houses.

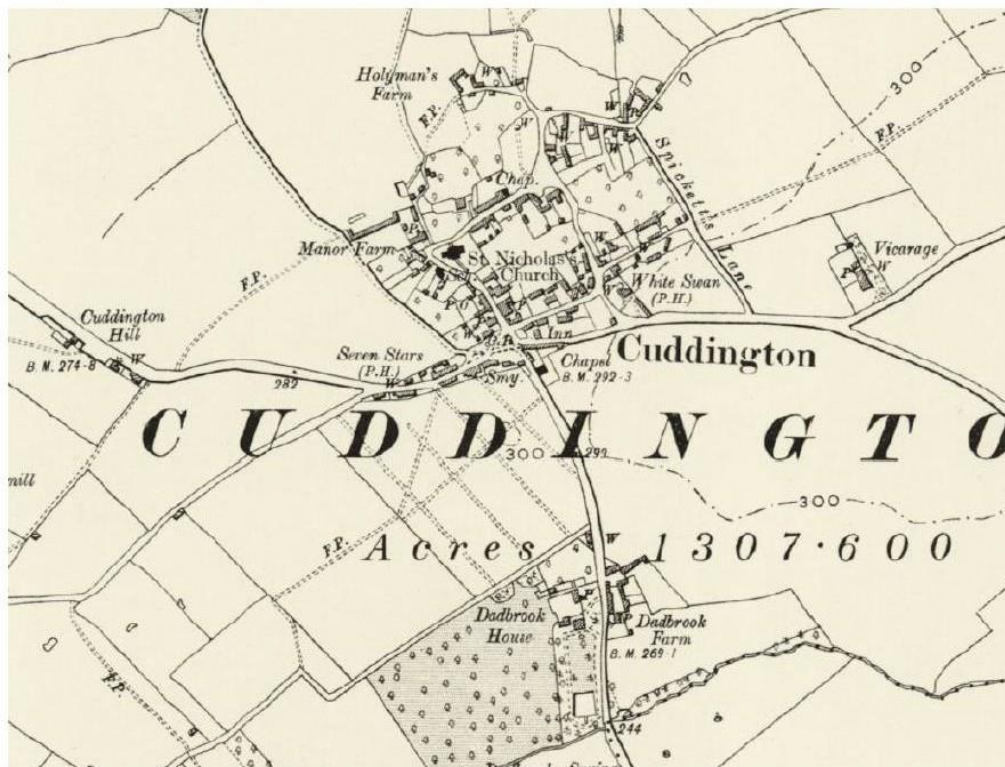


Fig 3. Map of Cuddington village 1888-1913

## Unique Settlement Identity

- 2.6 The factors that contribute to the unique identity of Cuddington are set out in detail in Appendices C to I. The character of the village derives from its physical setting and history, and its social infrastructure. The Foreword to this document explains how these attributes have created a safe community that is valued by its residents and many visitors. The village is now facing new challenges from the growth of adjacent settlements and the direct and indirect effects of the planned east/west expressway.

Doug Kennedy, a Cuddington resident, author and landscape photographer, has summarised the position as follows:-

*'Viewed from the north, the village of Cuddington almost floats on its minor ridge over the valley of the River Thame in Buckinghamshire. Its ancient church tower and Tyringham Hall stand out over the huddle of lower buildings and trees, and its boundary is clear above the surrounding meadows. No roads exit the main body of Cuddington to the north, hence there is no vehicular route through the heart of the old village to elsewhere which means that Cuddington has avoided the curses of road widening and ribbon development. It has therefore retained its distinctive rural character and its clear village boundaries.*

*Most of the old village is situated north of the Aylesbury Road, arranged in an untidy rectangle along its pretty lanes. These are lined with buildings from every historical period including a good proportion of older properties of great unspoiled character, including those of wychert construction or with thatched roofs. There are flower-filled gardens, wildflower-strewn verges, two well-maintained greens and the churchyard, so a stroll around Cuddington is full of interest and a delight to the eye. This is aided by the fact that, unusually in the South-East of England these days, the village is normally traffic-free north of the Aylesbury Road. As a result of its situation in the landscape, Cuddington has retained its essential integrity and character while supporting a vibrant and active community, which includes several indigenous families.*

*Although vehicles are limited in where they can go, pedestrians are not. One of the great joys of Cuddington is that it has a network of well-maintained footpaths and rides radiating into the countryside in all directions. These are very popular with residents of the surrounding settlements who come to walk, cycle and ride, enjoying glorious views across the Thame Valley and the surrounding countryside.*

*The presence of the river and the amount of land not subjected to intensive farming means that there is a good wildlife presence in and around the village. This includes rabbits, foxes, badgers, owls, deer, several raptor species, many songbirds, woodpeckers, geese, herons and the commoner garden birds. (NB These are monitored annually by residents.) Butterflies are also to be found in the surrounding meadows, in greater number than is normally the case in unprotected agricultural land.*

*The southern part of Cuddington is much more recent, so has a quite different character. The houses are contemporary and mostly arranged along the two busy roads to Aylesbury and Haddenham. However, it is spacious and well-supplied with green spaces where blossom trees and wildflower bloom in the springtime. It is also very practical with good access to the village amenities, the Playing Fields and Allotments, and served by the 110 bus.*

*Cuddington is of great and enduring value to Aylesbury Vale district, being unique in its delightful setting and having retained its essential and historic shape, size and integrity. The value of this will only increase as surrounding settlements are forced to expand, and infrastructure projects obliterate heritage and landscape'.*

## Heritage Assets

2.7. A large part of Cuddington is included in the Cuddington Conservation Area (shown in Fig 4.). It was designated in 1976 and updated in 2008, covering the historic village overlooking the Thames valley to the north. Tyringham Hall (17<sup>th</sup> C) and St Nicholas Church (11<sup>th</sup> C) are Grade II\* listed and there are 38 other Grade II listed buildings within Cuddington. (See Appendix E: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Built Environment Report).

2.8. In addition to the designated heritage assets there are a number of locally important features and these are described in Appendix E.

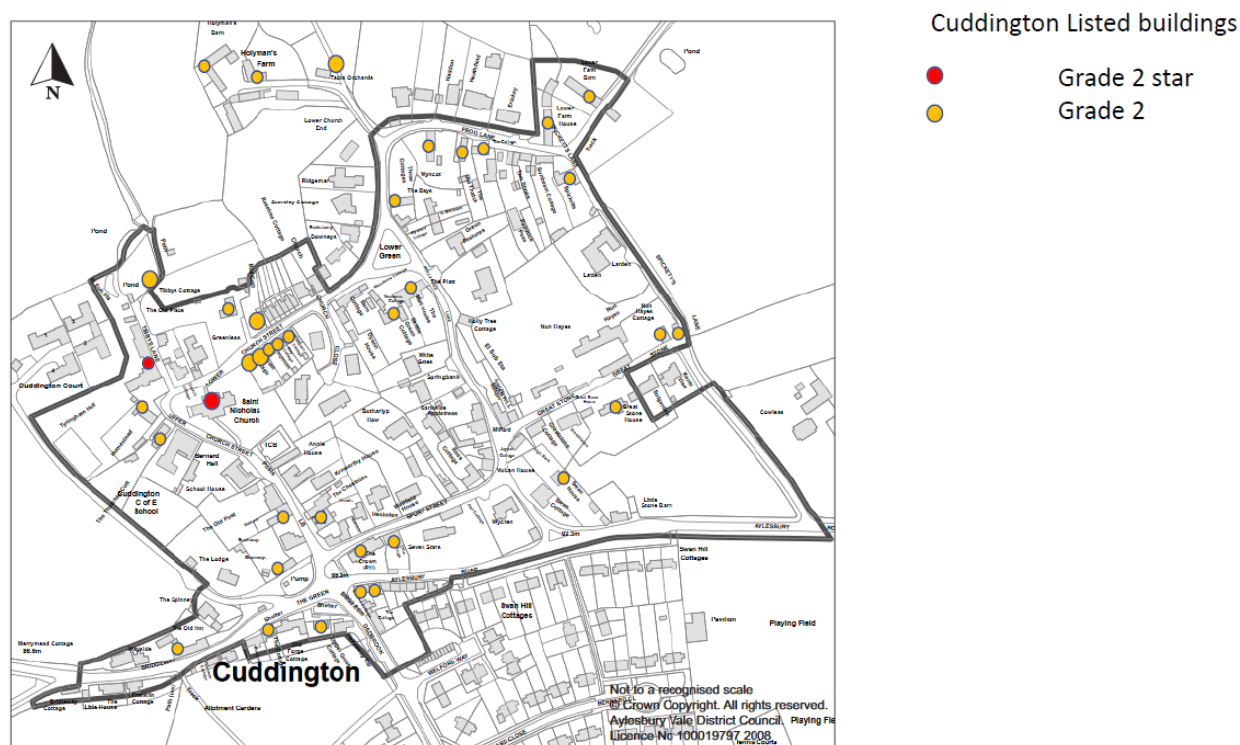


Fig 4. Cuddington Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

## Village Amenities

2.9. Cuddington has a thriving and vibrant community (see Appendix F: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Social Infrastructure Report). An infant school, pub/restaurant, church, chapel, village shop/Post Office, hairdressers and village hall lie at its centre and are all well supported. The annual fete attracts hundreds of visitors to the village each year and is recognised as being amongst the very best in the county.

A local health centre is available in nearby Haddenham. Sporting facilities at Cuddington Playing Fields include tennis, cricket and football clubs, boules and a playground. The village also benefits from an area of allotments and smallholdings to the south west of the centre. There are two churchyards. There is broadband and mobile phone reception, but the quality varies across the village from very good to non-existent.

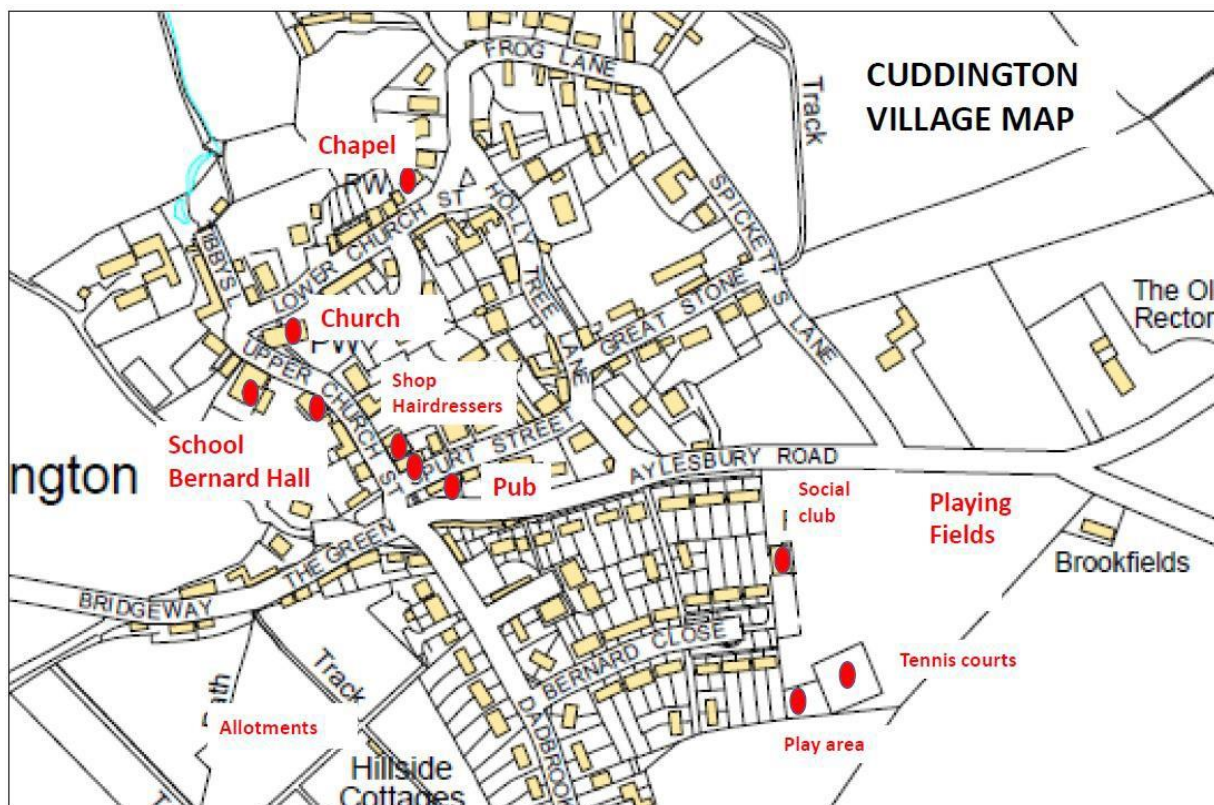


Fig 5 Village map showing community facilities

## Public Transport

2.10 The nearest railway station, 3 miles from the centre of the village, is Haddenham and Thame Parkway on the Chiltern Line. This offers regular services to London (Marylebone), Oxford and Birmingham.

2.11 Bus services are primarily provided by Arriva.

- The 110 Thame, Long Crendon, Chearsley, Cuddington, Aylesbury route.
- The 111 service between Oakley, Thame, Long Crendon, Cuddington and Aylesbury.
- The 280 bus route provides a regular service between Aylesbury and Oxford, and stops at King's Cross on the A418.

The 110 and 111 services have a very restricted timetable. The 280 bus stops are only accessible via Dadbrook, a walk of about half a mile from the village centre, the majority of which is on a derestricted road with no footway. This route has poor sightlines due to the winding and undulating nature of the road and is unsafe for pedestrians especially at night.

The Parish Council has asked Bucks Highways to provide a safe pedestrian route along Dadbrook to encourage greater use of the 280 but have been advised that there are technical difficulties in providing a safe refuge for pedestrians because of drainage issues as well as the considerable cost. The Parish Council will continue to press Bucks for a resolution to this issue.

## Roads and parking

- 2.12 Cuddington is located at the crossroads for north/south traffic between the A418 and A41 and east/west traffic between Long Crendon and Aylesbury. Traffic volume on these routes has been steadily increasing, and traffic speeds through the village and the high proportion of HGVs have also been a cause for concern. Appendices C (Consultation) and I (Traffic) explain how traffic is a priority issue for the village and the measures that are being pursued to help mitigate the situation.
- 2.13 Parking within the village has also become an issue with some residents as a result of the loss of the main informal car park to housing development about 10 years ago, and an increase in on-street parking. House extensions and high levels of car ownership have resulted in more pressure for on-street parking and an increase in parking on verges. These issues are exacerbated by the short-term parking around the infant school (drop-off and pick-up), the narrow roads in the Conservation Area and the increase in home deliveries.
- 2.14 Parking is available at the Playing Fields, but this has not proved very popular with users even though it is only a short walk from the village centre. It has been difficult to find an alternative safe, convenient and affordable location for additional parking.

## Countryside

- 2.15 The countryside around the village is a mixture of arable and permanent pasture within a framework of water courses, trees and hedgerows (see Appendix C: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Report). The quality of this landscape is recognised in its designation as an Area of Attractive Landscape (AAL), designated originally by Buckinghamshire County Council in 1979 and reaffirmed periodically, most recently in the VALP 2013-2033. It provides the setting for a network of rights of way including bridleways linked to equestrian uses to the east of the village. The footpaths are particularly popular with local residents, including dog walkers and families, and attract visitors from a wide area. The settings of many of these footpaths within a rural landscape have changed little over the last 100 years and the views of the local countryside from the village and of the village from the landscape are of particular value to conserve (see Appendix D: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan important Local Views).
- 2.16 The CNP area is rich in flora and fauna and is part of the Thames Valley Extension Biodiversity Opportunity Area designated for the restoration and creation of priority habitat. This includes the management and restoration of rivers/streams, lowland meadows, hedgerows, ponds and arable field margins, or their creation where appropriate.

## Summary

- 2.17 Cuddington is valued by residents and visitors as an attractive, historic village with good facilities and easy access to the countryside. Since the addition of around 70 houses by the District Council in the 1960s development has been mainly restricted to four new houses along Dadbrook, extensions, refurbishments and the occasional single house. The natural and built assets are well maintained within the Parish. The annual village fete, firework display, best kept village and the many sport and social clubs and activities have maintained the traditional life of the village. Cuddington is a good example of the sustainable and healthy communities that the planning system seeks to promote. It is important that any change is managed sensitively to provide benefits for the village without adverse effects on its natural and built assets and social infrastructure.

### 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Cuddington Parish lies within Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) in the County of Buckinghamshire. The CNP needs to demonstrate that it complies with National and Local Planning policy and this will be set out in the Regulation 15 Submission document Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement.

#### National Planning Policy

3.2 The National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) published by the Government in Feb 2019 is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The CNP must demonstrate that it is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF.

3.3. The following paragraphs of the NPPF are especially relevant to the CNP:

- Presumption in favour of sustainable development (paras 11 and 12)
- Neighbourhood planning (paras 13 and 14)
- Plan-led non-strategic policies (paras 16, 18 and 29)
- Identifying small to medium size sites for rural housing (paras 68, 69 and 78)
- Achieving appropriate densities (paras 122 and 123)
- Achieving well-designed places (paras 124 etc)
- Promoting healthy communities (para 91 and 92)
- Protecting local green spaces (para 98 to 101)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (paras 170 etc)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (paras 184 etc)

#### The Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (AVDLP)

The current 'Development Plan' is the 2004 Adopted Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan saved policies.

#### The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) (as modified)

3.4. The AVDLP will shortly be replaced by VALP (as modified), which is completing its final stages of examination and consultation. It is anticipated that VALP will be adopted by the end of 2020. Given the advanced stage of the new Local Plan the proposed CNP policies are reviewed against VALP (as modified) rather than AVDLP.

3.5 AVDC has been replaced as the relevant planning authority in April 2020 by the new Buckinghamshire unitary authority which will produce a new Buckinghamshire Local Plan within 5 years. During this transition period, VALP will continue to provide the context for the CNP.

3.6. The VALP (as modified) sets out the spatial and growth strategy for the District over the plan period 2013 to 2033 and contains development management policies to replace those saved from the AVDLP.

3.7. The most relevant strategic policies of the VALP (as modified) for Cuddington are:

- S2 Spatial Strategy for growth

*h) At medium villages, listed in Table 2, there will be housing growth of 1,282 at a scale in keeping with the local character and setting. This growth will be encouraged to help meet local housing and employment needs and to support the provision of services to the wider area.*

Table 2 shows 5 completions and commitments for Cuddington and 23 allocations.

- S3 Settlement hierarchy & cohesive development – identifying Cuddington as a ‘medium village’ in the hierarchy
- D2 Delivering site allocations in the rest of the district – includes D-CDN001 North of Aylesbury Road, Cuddington (under construction) and D-CDN003 Dadbrook Farm, Cuddington
- D3 Proposals for non-allocated sites at strategic settlements, larger villages and medium villages - refers to the role of a settlement boundary
- H1 Affordable housing – requiring all housing schemes of 11 or more homes or sites of 0.3 ha or more to deliver at least 25% affordable homes on site
- H6a Housing mix – setting out the principles to meet housing needs to 2033 by type and tenure
- T4 Capacity of the transport network to deliver development
- T6 Vehicle parking
- T7 Footpaths and cycle routes
- BE1 Heritage assets – confirming national policy on sustaining and enhancing heritage assets and their settings
- BE2 Design of new development – establishing design principles for new development
- BE3 Protection of the amenity of residents
- BE4 Density of new development
- NE1 Biodiversity and geodiversity – managing development schemes to avoid harm to biodiversity value
- NE2 River and stream corridors
- NE4 Landscape character and locally important landscape – requiring proposals to have full regard to landscape character and especially designated landscapes, including the Brill to Winchendon Hills Area of Attractive Landscape
- NE6 Local green space
- NE7 Best and most versatile agricultural land
- NE8 Trees, hedgerows and woodlands
- C1 Conversion of rural buildings
- C2 Equestrian development
- C4 Protection of public rights of way
- I1 Green infrastructure
- I2 Sports and Recreation
- I3 Community facilities – protecting existing valued facilities from unnecessary loss

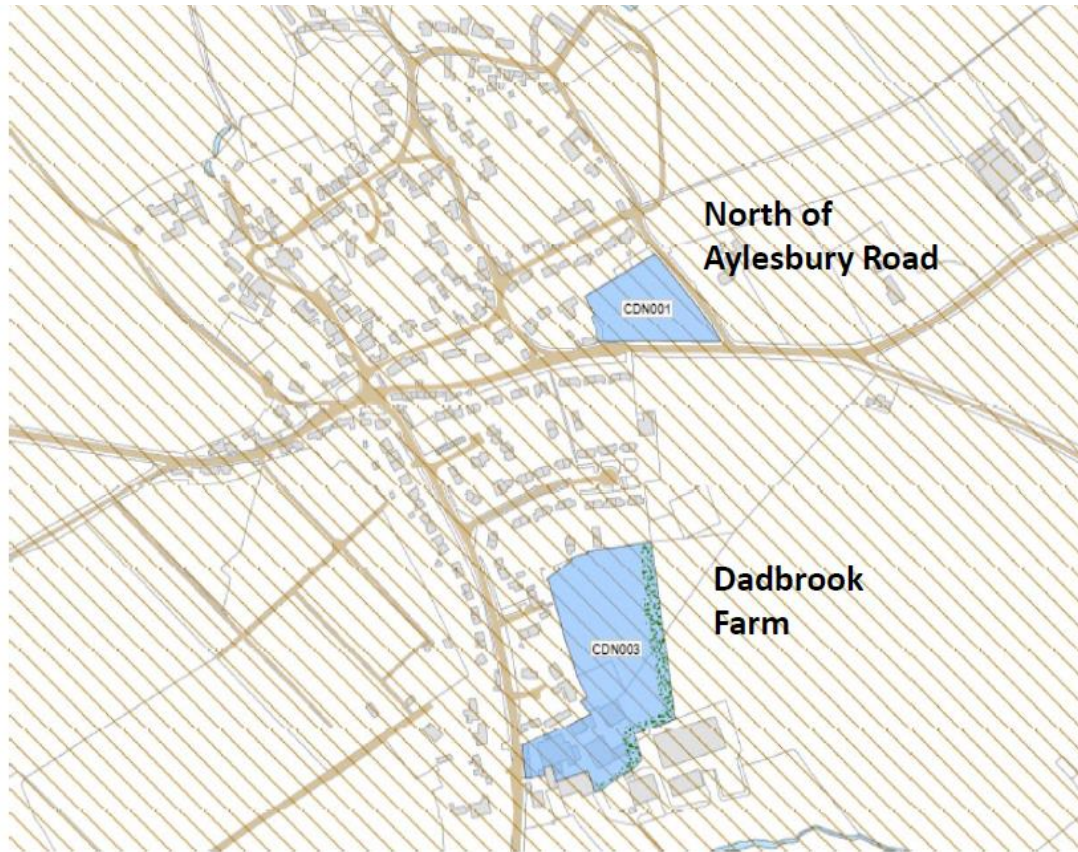


Fig 6: Map of Cuddington housing allocations taken from VALP (as modified).  
The hatched area is the Area of Attractive Landscape (AAL)

## Recent Planning Issues

3.8 The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan follows a period during which significant planning issues have arisen in the Parish. These include the preparation of VALP, the HS2 Rail project, the East/West rail and the expressway, the growth of Aylesbury as a garden town, the growth of Haddenham and the replacement of AVDC by a unitary authority for Buckinghamshire.

One aspect of these various policy and infrastructure policies has been to generate more traffic on local roads in and around Cuddington and to create uncertainty about future housing growth in the area.

3.9 In the context of continuing pressure for change, the CNP seeks to identify and protect the unique qualities of the village and introduce planning policies that complement those in VALP (as modified) and/or at a local level of detail.

## 4. VISION, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

4.1 The Vision for Cuddington (in the box below) was developed through the consistent feedback received from villagers during the Neighbourhood Plan process. This will be described more fully in the Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement to be submitted with the Reg15 Submission draft.

### VISION FOR CUDDINGTON 2033

The vision for Cuddington at the end of the plan period is that Cuddington will have preserved its outstanding characteristics as a traditional English village and its setting in rural countryside. Its Buckinghamshire heritage and historic buildings (of which 40 are currently included in the National Heritage List) will have been protected along with its church, chapel, school, village shop, public house and other amenities. The village's winding lanes, multiple green spaces, footpaths and country views will continue to encourage a feeling of community among its residents.

A modest number of new homes will have been built within the village boundary; they will have been designed and constructed in styles sympathetic to the current conservation area, will not have changed the essential open nature and character of the village. The green spaces and ecological benefits of the village will have been maintained and enhanced for the benefit and use of all. However, the new homes will have helped to sustain and allow investment in community facilities, which will have been improved in line with residents' wishes.

There will be a wider range of housing types within the village boundary, which will allow younger people and families to find homes, some for the first time, and older people to downsize. There will be a number of new lower cost homes in the village, supplementing the existing 31 village homes currently managed by the Aylesbury Vale Housing Trust.

Traffic in and through the village will be well controlled and large vehicles will have been discouraged from passage through the village. The walking and cycling connections between the village and the neighbouring settlements of Nether Winchendon, Dinton, Chearsley and Haddenham will have been maintained and, where possible, improved. Bus services to Thame, Aylesbury will have been significantly enhanced.

The physical and visual relationship between the village and the countryside which surrounds it, an important feature of the Conservation Area designation of 1976, will have been maintained. The views from and to the village over the attractive Thame valley, Winchendon Hill and other areas of rural landscape will have been preserved.

# Objectives

4.2 To achieve this vision, the key objectives of the CNP have been identified as follows:

## Housing

- Restrict new housing developments to within the village settlement boundary.
- New housing should be restricted to small-scale infill and small-medium scale development as described in NPPF paras 68 and 69.
- Ensure that extensions and any new housing is built to standards defined in the CNP and that the amenity and privacy of residents is protected.
- Ensure new houses reflect a mixture of large and small homes meeting local housing needs, particularly catering for residents wishing to stay in the village, new families moving to the village and first-time buyers.
- Include a proportion of lower-cost homes as part of the overall housing mix.
- Provide generous parking for residents, visitors and deliveries to avoid additional on-street parking within the village

## Environment

- Minimise the effects of development on the historic character and appearance of the village.
- Restore and maintain existing green spaces and, where possible, expand or create additional green areas. Maintain and enhance the trees, hedgerows, verges, and areas of flowers within the village.
- Ensure all new developments include the planting of trees and hedgerows and the creation of green spaces.
- Protect the special landscapes that surround the village and prevent the closure of openings giving views of the countryside; protect important views and consider opening new views.

## Local amenities and services

- Encourage the use of local shops and services, the Pub, parish and community buildings, and protect them from unnecessary loss to other uses.
- Ensure that the allotments remain as an amenity available to all with adequate provision for future users.
- Encourage and support all sporting and community activities and facilities for village residents.

## Travel & Transport

- Contain and control local traffic flow, with traffic calming and speed controls as necessary, and reduce the number of HGVs
- Ensure all new housing developments include appropriate access roads and, where possible, that traffic is directed away from the centre of the village.
- Ensure that new developments provide adequate safe pedestrian and cycle linkages to the existing paths within the village.
- Encourage walking and cycling in and outside the village by the construction and maintenance of footpaths, cycle ways and walkways.
- Provide a safe pedestrian walkway from the village centre to the bus stop on the A418
- Seek to enhance public transport to and from the village, particularly to Thame, Aylesbury and Haddenham, including Haddenham and Thame Parkway station.

## 5. POLICIES

- 5.1 Land-use policies are used to determine planning applications made for development proposals. They can establish the principles for retaining or changing the use of land in settlements and in the countryside. They can also set out the conditions against which development proposals will be judged in terms of their design, access, etc.
- 5.2 The purpose of these policies is either to encourage planning applications for proposals that the local community would like to support, or to discourage applications for developments that the community does not want. Policies must be clearly written so they can be easily applied when considering planning applications.
- 5.3 The Neighbourhood Plan avoids duplicating existing national or local planning policies. The policies proposed in the Plan therefore focus on a relatively small number of key development issues in the Parish. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents - the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and VALP- already provide full guidance.
- 5.4 In particular the CNP relies on the comprehensive policies in the NPPF and VALP for the protection of natural (landscape, rivers, hedgerows, trees and biodiversity) and designated heritage assets (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings).
- 5.5 Set out below are the proposed policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. Each policy has a number and title, and the policy itself is written within a box for ease of reference. There is also a short statement explaining the intention of the policy and any other relevant background information. Where a policy refers to a specific site or area, this is illustrated on the Policy Map below

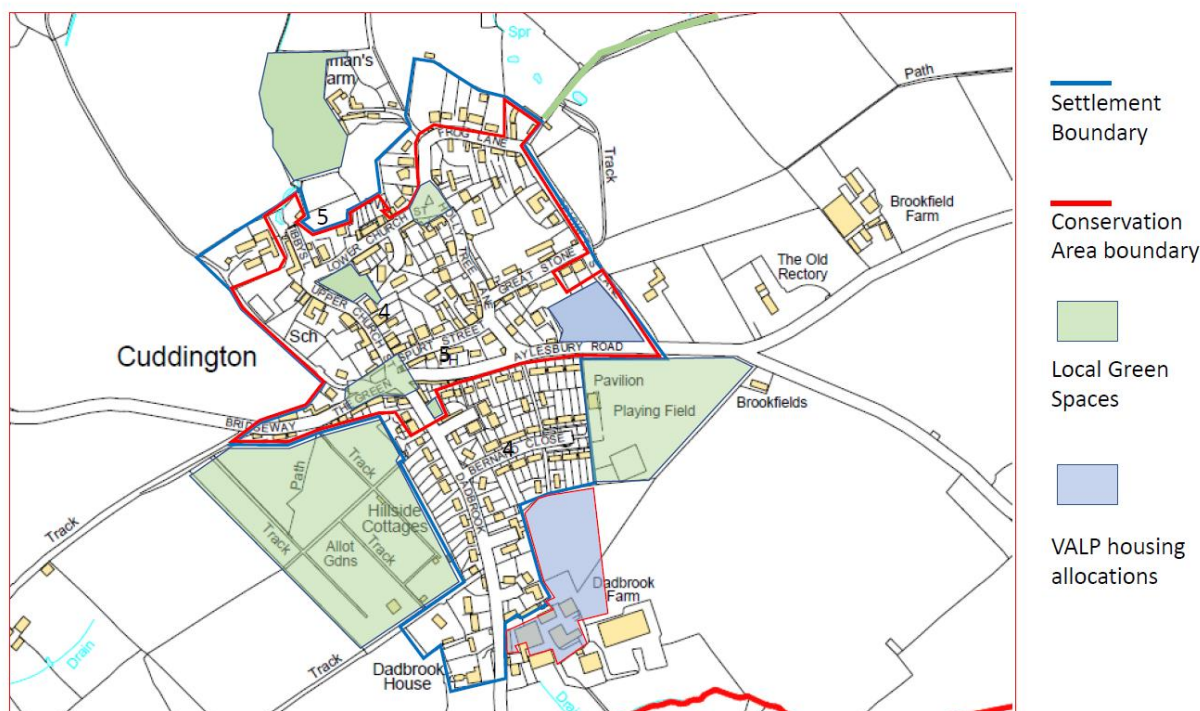


Fig 7 CNP Policy map

## Housing

- 5.7 The 2017 AVDC Settlement Hierarchy shows that Cuddington is defined as a medium village and has a population of 569 and 264 houses. Housing growth in the Plan period to 2033 is shown in VALP (Table 2) and includes 28 houses (completions, commitments and allocations) for Cuddington, i.e. approximately 10% growth over the Plan period.

VALP (para 4.2) confirms that the proposed housing figures meet the housing needs of Cuddington:

- 5.8 As set out in the spatial strategy (S2), sites are allocated based on the capacity of a settlement to accommodate development, taking into account factors such as landscape, flooding and settlement form as well as site availability. Site-specific allocations for strategic settlements, the north east of Aylesbury Vale, larger and medium villages are set out in the following sections. The sites at these allocations are sufficient to meet the development needs for the area.

On this basis no additional housing sites are proposed for allocation in the CNP.

- 5.9 The housing allocations for Cuddington in VALP include 8 homes at D-CDN001 (to be completed in April 2020) and 'at least' 15 homes projected to be completed at D-CDN003 (Dadbrook Farm) by 2021/22 (Ref Appendix A of VALP). A larger development was promoted for the Dadbrook Farm allocation site at the VALP Examination and rejected by AVDC.
- 5.10 A Village survey in 2018 established a preference for new 2/3 bed homes that can help to meet the needs of the current residents who wish to downsize or encourage younger family members to stay in the village, rather than seek housing farther afield. Smaller, lower cost homes (and maybe maisonettes/flats), for rent or sale, would also help existing or new residents to take their first steps on the housing ladder and improve the affordability of the housing stock. Extensions, annexes and other additions have seen many of the lower/medium cost housing increase in value, leaving a shortage of homes at the lower end of the market.

<https://www.cuddingtonvillage.com/page-content/documents/1540983898-CNP%20-%20Overview%20of%20Village%20Survey%20updated%20with%20web%20address.pdf>

### **POLICY CDN O1: HOUSING**

The CNP recognises the site-specific requirements for D-CDN003 set out in VALP. The allocation meets the CNP objectives for small /medium scale housing development. Larger scale development in this location is considered to be out-of-scale with the size and population of the village and difficult to accommodate in terms of landscape/townscape impact, traffic and social infrastructure.

## Settlement Boundary

- 5.11 The CNP establishes and defines the Cuddington Settlement Boundary to distinguish the consideration of planning applications within the built-up area of the village from those outside the boundary, covering the rest of the Parish. It therefore sets the essential spatial strategy for the CNP, by allowing for sustainable growth to meet local housing needs over the Plan period, whilst protecting the intrinsic character and identity of the village.
- 5.12 The settlement boundary has been drawn taking account of the definition of the built form of the village in VALP:
- \*The existing developed footprint is defined as the continuous built form of the village, and excludes individual buildings and groups of dispersed buildings. The exclusion covers former agricultural barns that have been converted, agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the village and gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built-up area of the village.*
- 5.13 The settlement boundary incorporates allocation D-CDN001. Allocation D-CDN003 sits outside the existing development footprint of the village. It is customary to include allocations within the settlement boundary on the basis that the Local Plan has determined, in principle, to extend (round off) the built-up area of the village to include the proposed houses. However, in the case of D-CDN003 (Dadbrook Farm), the site requirements in the VALP allocation confirm that only the northern part of the site is to include housing.
- 5.14 The residual (southern) part of the site consists of a farmyard and agricultural buildings that should remain outside the settlement boundary as they are more associated with the surrounding countryside (see para 4.8 below). Therefore, the settlement boundary will continue to be drawn along the line of existing built development in this part of Cuddington (excluding allocation D-CDN003) until such time as a planning application has been submitted and approved. The settlement boundary would then be adjusted at the next review of the Plan to accurately reflect the scale and location of the consented built development.

### POLICY CDN 02: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

The Neighbourhood Plan designates a Cuddington Settlement Boundary, as shown on the Policy Map, within which small-scale proposals for development will be supported if they comply with VALP Policy D3 and are consistent with other VALP and CNP policies.

In accordance with VALP Policy D3, development proposals on land outside the defined Settlement Boundary will only be supported if they meet the VALP policy requirements for rural development in the countryside.

## Local Green Space

- 5.15 The NPPF and VALP give guidance on the designation of Local Green Spaces to protect areas of particular importance to the village. In each case, the proposed green spaces play an integral part in the enjoyment of the village and are therefore special to the local

community. A fuller description of each site, and the justification for its designation, is provided in Appendix D. Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Local Green Spaces Report.

#### **POLICY CDN 03: LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following locations as Local Green Spaces, as shown on the Policy Map and described in more detail in Appendix B:

- The Field at the end of Tibby's Lane
- The Lower Green
- The Playing Fields
- Baptist Graveyard
- St Nicholas Churchyard
- The Upper Green
- The Allotments
- Bridleway to Ridgebarn Farm

Proposals for development on Local Green Spaces will only be supported if very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

## **Important local views**

5.16 The setting of Cuddington and its heritage assets benefit from publicly accessible views to open countryside that contribute to the special character of the unique identity of the village. The location of these views and their importance is described in Appendix D: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Important Local Views.

Proposals for the development of land that contributes to the appreciation and enjoyment of the Conservation Area including land in its setting, will only be supported if they do not obstruct views to the Conservation Area from beyond the village, and views of the surrounding countryside from within the village.

#### **POLICY CDN 04: IMPORTANT LOCAL VIEWS**

New development proposals must not obstruct nor detract from the Important Local Views defined in Appendix D: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Important Local Views.

## **Local heritage assets**

5.17 The Neighbourhood Plan attaches great weight to the conservation of the character and appearance of Cuddington through the preservation of its designated and non-designated assets. These heritage assets help define the village's character and portrays its history. They are irreplaceable and need to be conserved. Designated heritage assets are already afforded protection under the national system of heritage preservation.

5.18 However, there are non-designated assets within Cuddington without such protection which are potentially at risk from development threats. It is important that non-designated heritage assets are accounted for and covered within the heritage policies as their value to the community is often as much as those which are designated.

## **POLICY CDN 05: LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS**

New development proposals must not lead to the loss or damage of Local Heritage Assets that help to define the unique character of the village unless they can demonstrate significant public benefit. Local Heritage Assets are defined in Appendix E: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Built Environment.

## **Design of new development in the Conservation Area**

- 5.19 The Conservation Area Appraisal published by the District Council in Feb 2008 outlines the special character that development shall preserve or enhance. The Appraisal is an important reference point for applicants in obtaining advice on design guidance to understand the character of the Conservation Area. (See also Appendix E: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan Built Environment Report).
- 5.20 The purpose of Conservation Area designation is to acknowledge the special character of an area and this also applies to its setting. The extent of the setting will differ with the context/nature of the site.
- 5.21 The policy requires that any planning application for development within the setting of the Conservation Area will be expected to show that the relationship between the site and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, has been understood and taken into account in the design of the proposals.
- 5.22 The values placed on high quality design within the village, as set out in Policy CDN 06, also apply to some of the developed land on its edge, the redevelopment of which could provide an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area positively or, at the very least, must not harm its character.
- 5.23 The buildings and streetscapes of the Cuddington Conservation Area are described in the Appraisal and are the result of several hundred years of gradual and mostly small-scale development. Many of the design features are valued by residents and visitors and are of particular interest because they are specific to this part of Aylesbury Vale and arise from the use of certain building materials and techniques such as wychert. Some developments in the last few decades within the Conservation Area have, through inappropriate design, not had a positive effect on the character of the centre of the village.
- 5.24 The aim of this policy is to ensure that new development sits comfortably in the Conservation Area without harm to the character or appearance described in the Appraisal. At a more detailed level, the policy aims:
- to identify the key positive design features of Cuddington's Conservation Area;
  - to help to avoid developments that would damage the character or appearance of the village; and
  - to ensure, as far as possible, that new buildings within the Conservation Area respect and enhance the built character of the village while allowing for the provision of new housing for a growing population.

5.25 This policy has regard to paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019) and in particular seeks to ensure that new developments within Cuddington:

- preserve (and even enhance) the qualities that are valued by residents and visitors;
- are aesthetically pleasing as a result of high quality and appropriate design, layout and landscaping;
- are sympathetic to local character and history, including Cuddington's distinctive and important setting in (and views of) its rural landscape, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation (such as the use of environmentally sensitive materials and technologies);
- maintain a strong sense of place, respecting the current arrangement of narrow village streets and green spaces as well as the historic mix of building types and materials;
- enable the village to accommodate and sustain appropriate amounts and types of new development that connects with and responds to its surroundings and is appropriate for the area and
- create places that are inclusive and accessible, and which promote health and well-being for the whole community.

This policy also takes into account policies BE1 (Heritage Assets) and BE2 (Design of new development) in VALP.

#### **POLICY CDN 06: DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONSERVATION AREA**

1. Proposals shall take account of the site context in relation to landscape, character, local distinctiveness and building types.
2. Developments should preserve existing views from the village into the surrounding countryside and retain the graduated and ambiguous edges of the existing settlement.
3. Building heights should follow the existing pattern of single and two-storey houses with gently pitched roofing.
4. Where possible, local materials and techniques should be used to create connections with existing buildings. In particular:
  - use of stone or wychert boundary walls (or walls constructed to resemble wychert with stone foundations ("grumplings"), curved rendered surfaces and tiled coping);
  - mixed use of thatch, tile and slate for roofing;
  - mixed finishes including timber frames, stone, lime render and red brick;
  - modest sized casement windows (abutting eaves on first floor or with small and/or sloping dormers).
  - the characteristic grass verges should be retained and protected where possible

5. Proposals for development must respect and enhance the built character of the village and its countryside setting. Reflecting the way the village has developed over previous centuries, innovative designs, materials and techniques will be considered but must be complementary to their context.
6. Given the importance to the conservation area of its relationship to, and views across, surrounding countryside, development should avoid obstructing or distracting from those characteristic views.
7. Development should seek to avoid garages and parking spaces that intrude onto or dominate the streetscape. Where possible, off-street parking should be provided in order to avoid increased pressure on narrow village streets and to discourage parking on pavements and the erosion of grass verges.
8. Where possible, off-street parking and garages should be screened by walls of traditional construction or by hedges to reduce the visual impact of increased numbers of motor vehicles.
9. With the possible exception of Upper Church Street, developments should avoid having high facades close to the roadway. The use of hedges and walls (including existing boundaries) to reduce the impact of new developments on the streetscape is to be encouraged.
10. Inappropriate or obtrusive lighting (security lights, driveway lights etc.) should be avoided in a village that, with its lack of street lighting, enjoys a peaceful atmosphere and genuinely impressive, and increasingly rare, dark skies at night.
11. Developments should retain corridors and pockets of green, including grass verges that contain a variety of wild and ornamental flowering plants as well as remaining pockets of orchard.
12. Development forms and layouts that offer greater energy efficiency and scope for the use of renewable energy should be encouraged (where this is consistent with criterion 4 above).
13. Extensions shall be in character with the existing building in terms of scale, materials and design, taking into account any previous extensions or outbuildings added after the original building was constructed.
14. Proposals for new developments or for alterations to existing buildings should not be detrimental to the amenities of neighbours as a result of scale, siting, massing, impact, unacceptable loss of daylight to habitable rooms or overlooking.
15. As far as possible, opportunities should be taken to run electricity supplies underground to mitigate the impact of overhead cables on the appearance of the village.

## New development outside the Conservation Area

5.26 While the character of the conservation area in Cuddington reflects the fact that it has developed over several hundred years, with little evidence of planning or coherent design, the dwellings and streetscapes outside the conservation show signs of consistent design and use of space. The parts of Cuddington that lie outside the conservation area, while still sitting within the settlement boundary, form several distinct areas:

### *Swan Hill Cottages and Bernard Close*

Evenly spaced post-war houses in brick (those on Swan Hill being painted white) with a mix of low fences, walls and hedges, generous grass verges and front gardens providing a sense of space and making the most of views to open country. Some more recent extensions in keeping with original houses, with varied porches and conservatories added. Windows are mainly white uPVC double glazed units. There are shared parking areas as well as some off-street parking. Welford Way has single-storey housing and a range of garages in a more modern style and with different brickwork.

### *Hillside Cottages and Dadbrook*

Mostly post-war houses. As with area 1, wide verges and planting of small trees gives a sense of space. Some small “close” developments have been built, providing off-street parking and keeping the impact of additional housing on the street scene to a minimum.

### *Cuddington Court*

Four substantial bungalows arranged in a courtyard on the north-western edge of the village overlooking fields and the views across to Chearsley and Nether Winchendon. They are built in local style to look like witchert, with rounded edges and tile-topped garden walls. They have a fairly low profile, helping to maintain a smooth transition between village and countryside.

### *The north side of Lower Church Street and Frog Lane*

An eclectic line of one and two-storey houses in a wide range of styles and materials, with off-street parking and extensive greenery around them, making a gentle boundary to the village.

### *Two houses at the eastern end of Great Stone*

Two bungalows set back from the street.

### *Holymans Farm*

A group of buildings surrounded by fields and retaining the shape of a traditional farm, with a substantial barn conversion alongside an older thatched farmhouse. It lies outside the settlement boundary and is to all intents and purposes separate from the rest of Cuddington.

5.27 Appendix E describes the characteristics of existing housing within the village. Outside the Conservation Area, the more modern housing does not blend particularly well with the historic core of the village. Upgrades to part of the post war Council house stock, for example along Swan Hill, shows what can be done to evoke the traditional values of the older cottages through the use pastel rendered walls and careful detailing of porches,

doors and windows. Combined with boundary hedges and leafy front gardens, these properties provide a 'garden village' style that sits well alongside older properties.

5.28 The most recent new homes along Aylesbury Road similarly combine high quality materials and detailing with dormer windows and skylights to achieve well-proportioned homes of rural character. Elsewhere in the village, some post-war housing (bungalows and two storey housing) are suburban in character and fail to capture the identity of the village. Any new development, whether extensions or new dwellings, needs to be carefully considered in its context, to maintain and enhance the rural character. This can be done by ensuring that massing and orientation of buildings respect the adjacent buildings or street scene and that boundary treatment is 'traditional' such as hedgerows, or walls.

5.29 A pastiche of 'workers cottages' would not be appropriate, and more subtle designs and materials are required to achieve modern living standards in a style that responds to the character of the village and its landscape setting.

#### **POLICY CDN 07: DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE THE CONSERVATION AREA**

Where planning permission is required:

1. Proposals shall take account of the context of the site in relation to landscape, character, local distinctiveness and building types.
2. Developments should preserve existing views from the village into the surrounding countryside and retain the graduated edges of the existing settlement.
3. Building heights should follow the existing pattern of single and two-storey houses.
4. Proposals for development must respect and enhance the built character of the village and its countryside setting. Green buffers between development and the countryside should be preserved and/or enhanced by new planting.
5. Innovative designs, materials and techniques will be welcomed where they contribute to the interest of the streetscape or offer other benefits to the environment.
6. Development should seek to preserve the broad verges, open front gardens and the use of modest-sized trees that characterise these parts of the village.
7. Care should be taken to balance the provision of off-street parking, which keeps the streetscape clear and spacious, and the loss of broad green verges caused by front gardens being given over to parking.
8. Developments should avoid having high facades or garages close to the roadway.
9. Inappropriate or obtrusive lighting (security lights, driveway lights etc) should be avoided in a village that, with its lack of street lighting, enjoys a peaceful atmosphere and genuinely impressive, and increasingly, rare dark skies at night.

10. Developments should retain corridors and pockets of green, including grass verges that contain a variety of wild and ornamental flowering plants.
11. Development forms and layouts that offer greater energy efficiency and scope for the use of renewable energy should be encouraged.
12. Extensions shall be in character with the existing building in terms of scale, materials and design, taking into account any previous extensions or outbuildings added after the original building was constructed.
13. Proposals for new developments or for alterations to existing buildings should not be detrimental to the amenities of neighbours as a result of scale, siting, massing, impact, or overlooking.
14. As far as possible, opportunities should be taken to run electricity supplies and communication cables underground to mitigate the impact of overhead cables on the appearance of the village.

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION

### Development Management

6.1 Great care has been taken during the creation of this Neighbourhood Plan to ensure, as far as possible, that the policies outlined in this document are achievable. Therefore, in practice, most of the policies contained will be delivered by landowners, developers and all other planning applicants. However, flexibility will be required as new challenges and opportunities arise over the Plan period.

6.2 The Cuddington Parish Council, as an important stakeholder in any planning application within the Parish, will use the Neighbourhood Plan to facilitate appropriate local development which reflects the needs and aspirations of the community, by undertaking the following actions over the course of the Plan's period:

- Guide comment and scrutiny on all planning applications.
- Negotiate with planning applicants, particularly developers, to achieve the best possible outcomes from new infrastructure, residential or otherwise, within the Parish.
- Direct financial resources to the village in a structured way and in line with the wishes of the local community.
- Bring together groups or working parties to improve the village environment.
- Lobby local authorities to support the parishioners' wishes and aspirations.

### Monitoring & Review of both the Policies and the Plan

6.3 Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been formally adopted by the Local Planning Authority, regular monitoring is required to ensure that progress is made towards meeting the objectives and policies of the Plan. The Plan will be subject to routine monitoring by Cuddington Parish Council, through data collected in planning monitoring reports. The Plan's Objectives will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at village level relevant to the Plan should also be included.

6.4 A formal evaluation of the Neighbourhood Plan will be conducted by the Cuddington Parish Council on a five year cycle. This will consider and review whether:

- Progress is being made to achieve the Vision and the Objectives of the Plan.
- The policies in the Plan are being implemented properly.
- Financial contributions available to the community arising from development are being targeted towards the identified plans and projects, and in line with the community's wishes.
- The most up to date information, including the Local Plan housing allocation, is reflected in the Plan.
- The LPA is adhering to the Plan when determining planning applications.

6.5 The Parish Council will then conclude whether an update to the CNP is required, which potentially entails revisions to the Plan's policies. If so, it will secure opinions of residents and stakeholders, through community engagement and consultation, to revise or amend the Plan.

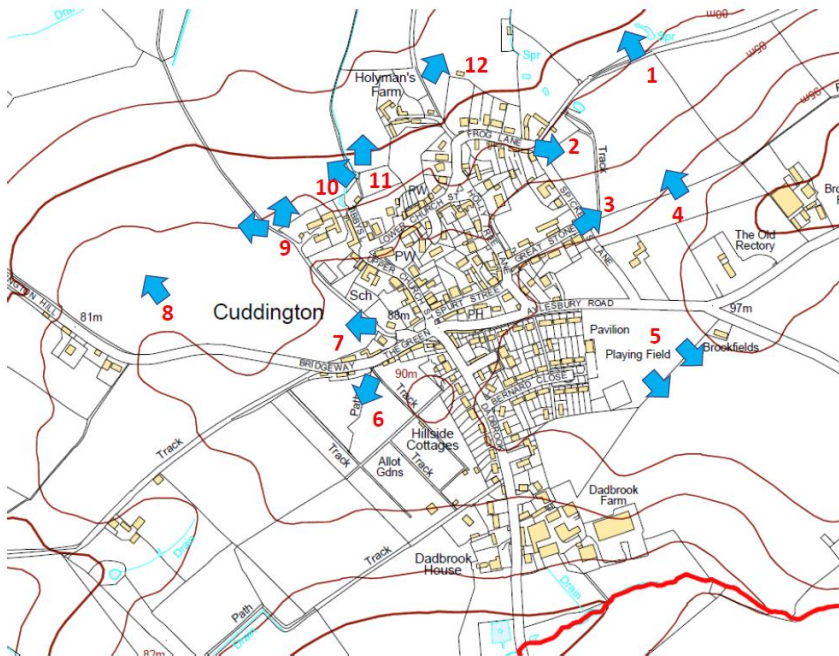
## Infrastructure Projects

6.6 The Parish Council proposes some or all the following projects for investment of future community infrastructure levy funding allocated by the local planning authority and to the Parish Council:

- Traffic calming measures
- Improvements to mobile and Wi-Fi coverage in the village
- Improvements to community facilities (Bernard Hall, Social Club, Playing Fields and Play Area)
- Improvements to the condition and safety of the public footways within the village
- Improved pedestrian and cycle access along Dadbrook between the village and the bus route on the A418
- Additional public parking close to the centre of the village
- A Green initiative for additional tree planting and enhancing the ecological value of the local green spaces and highway verges

## Annex I Important local views

For more detail see Appendix D: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan: Important Local Views



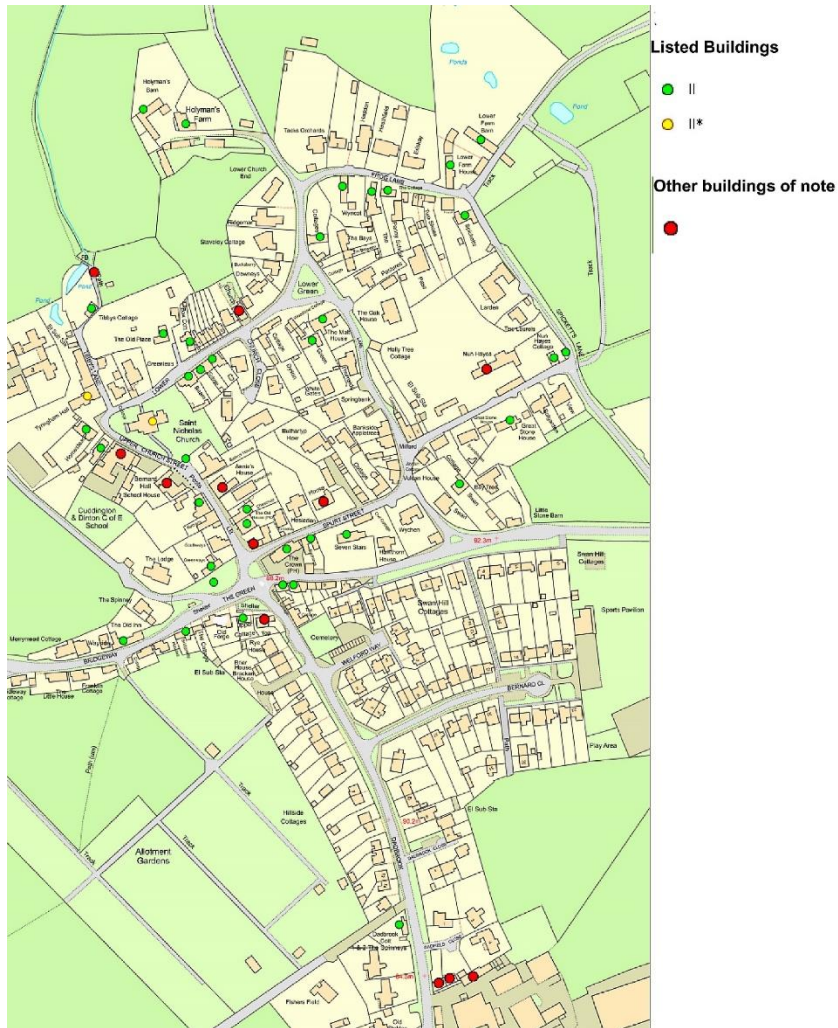
**Important views from public spaces and footpaths**

1 Viewpoint and direction of view

1. Bridleway 6
2. Frog Lane
3. Great Stone / Spicketts Lane
4. Footpath 3
5. Playing Fields
6. Footpath 8 and allotments
7. Footpath 14
8. Footpath 13
9. Footpath 14, 16 and 13 junction
10. Footpath 1
11. Footpath 2
12. Footpath 2

## Annex II Local heritage assets

For more detail; see Appendix E: Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan: Built Environment



## Local heritage assets



## Wychert walls

