



Aldbourne Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021 - 2036

Part B: Aldbourne Parish Community Character and Design Statement

MADE March 2023



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THIS STATEMENT IS PART B OF THE ALDBOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This document has been prepared by the Aldbourne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with support from their Plan consultants Place Studio.

Photos by the Aldbourne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Isabelle Lennep and Jeff Bishop

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1 Introduction

What is it that makes up the unique character of Aldbourne Village? How can the local distinctiveness of the Parish be protected and enhanced into the 21st century and beyond? This Character and Design Statement analyses the built character to help identify what aspects of the built environment make Aldbourne a distinct and thriving place.

The elements which create the distinctive character of a place – streets, buildings, open spaces, trees and landscape and how they fit together - are important to understand. They provide an evidence base to enable any future development in the Parish to contribute to a distinct sense of place and sensitive integration, avoiding ‘anywhere’ development that would detract from the unique character of Aldbourne.

Though presented separately, this Statement is an integral part of the Aldbourne Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). In addition to the assessment of current character, it also provides design parameters for any new development – what it should look like. It can also be used to help inform where development could go. The NDP will shape future development through planning policies, proactively shaping development that is appropriate to the community’s needs and aspirations.

What is a Community Character and Design Statement?

A Community Character and Design Statement (CCDS) is a document produced by the community which describes the distinctive character of a parish or village. It provides a way of capturing the local characteristics and qualities valued by the community. It also draws together design guidance to inform the design of any new development in the Parish, including alterations to existing buildings. The core of the Statement is a description and analysis of what are believed to be the important and locally distinctive features of the Parish.

How will it be used?

The CCDS is a tool for the Parish to articulate guidance against which any planning or other applications can be considered. It is for Parish residents, businesses and landowners who may wish to improve or add to their home and garden, and business premises. It is also for designers, developers and planning professionals (including the local planning authority) involved with new build developments.

It does not focus on whether or where developments should happen; rather it is about informing the design of any future developments in the Parish.

This CCDS alone cannot ensure the best quality design. That can only come through meeting and talking with those proposing changes or developments, doing this early enough to have a constructive influence and basing discussions on how best to meet the guidance in this CCDS. To that end, potential applicants should take note of the statement about community involvement in the main NDP.



Why produce a Community Character and Design Statement for Aldbourne?

Aldbourn Parish is located in the North Wessex Downs Area of Natural Beauty. Aldbourn village is of historic importance; much of its core is a designated Conservation Area and it contains a considerable number of listed buildings. There is currently no requirement for large amounts of new development but some is inevitable in the village, even needed, to address the circumstances of some in housing need. In design terms therefore, any new development should respect, relate to and ideally enhance the distinctiveness of our local environment.

The CCDS sets out the special qualities of Aldbourn as identified by the local community through analysis and research. It is an integral part of the NDP and further informs aspects in that statutory plan that relate to character and design.

The objectives of our CCDS are to:

- complement and inform our Neighbourhood Development Plan;
- draw up design guidelines that will guide future change and development to ensure that local character is preserved and enhanced;
- encourage early pre-application involvement of our community by prospective developers;
- inform the design process of any new development;
- be used in the process of considering planning applications in the Parish.

How has it been produced?

The process has been very much community-led, underpinned by advice and guidance from consultants Place Studio. The main stages were as follows:

- An open community event in March 2019 where people contributed to the identification of character areas and local features that are valued.
- Landscape survey work by a local resident and landscape architect.
- Built environment survey work by the Steering Group and the Plan consultants.
- Consultation on this draft document.



Planning Context: National Policy

Part 12 of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the importance of design in the planning and development process “*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.*” (NPPF, Para 126, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021).

In the NPPF the government sets out the role of communities in realising this aim: “*Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.*” (NPPF, Para 127).

In late 2020 the government published a ‘National Design Guide’. Early in 2021, they then published the ‘National Model Design Code’. Both documents were therefore produced after this Design Statement had effectively been completed. However, because both documents place great emphasis on the importance of understanding and responding to local character (in many senses) and on community engagement, this Statement relates directly and positively to that more recent government guidance so has not been fundamentally revised.

Planning Context: Wiltshire Core Strategy

The relevant policies are as follows:

- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 52: Green Infrastructure

- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

Landscape Character Assessment

At the time of writing (winter 2019), the Wiltshire Core Strategy was in the process of being reviewed. If there are any significant changes relevant to design in Wiltshire’s final adopted Reviewed plan, these will be taken into account in the first review of the Aldbourne NDP.

North Wessex Downs AONB Guidance

Though not formal planning policy, guidance produced by the AONB, backed as it is by national legislation, has to be considered and it is of particular value for Aldbourne. Of particular relevance are:

- Management Plan 2014-2019
- Position Statement on Setting
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Historic Landscape Character Assessment

Aldbourne Material

A key document is the ‘Aldbourne Conservation Area Statement’ (Kennet District Council 2003) which identifies and records the special qualities of the village that make up its architectural and historic character, and though prepared some time ago it remains a detailed, and accurate reference document. There is also relevant information and detail about listed buildings, monuments, historic landscapes and archaeology in the Historic Environment Record. These documents can be found in the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base.

2 Village Development



The village lies at a point where the rolling landscape converges in five dry valleys and the built settlement is shaped by this landform. The core of the village sits in between the valleys and development sits below the skyline. As with many such villages, Aldbourne would originally have developed because it was where valleys and roads in and across the Marlborough Downs met and there was a river running through. It is a classic 'downland', village surrounded by open fields to the north and west and common grazing beyond .

The settlement has a long history beginning back in the 7th or 8th century, well documented in the 'Aldbourne Conservation Area Statement' of 2003. Parts of St. Michael's church date from the 12th century. Substantial development had taken place by the middle ages and the settlement grew steadily. Little that is visible today remains from early settlements but the pattern of valleys, roads and river still shapes the village. A very early, if mainly symbolic picture of the village can be seen on a map (done, unusually, as a tapestry) from around 1590. This shows the church tower, built not much before 1590, and a few houses. The village was named on the map as 'Auburne', though this may have been just the map-maker's understanding of the name.



Development would probably have started in the area south from the church (which stands on a slight rise) and some of that area, down to the pond, appears to have been laid out in a grid pattern; unusual, so perhaps deliberately planned as such by the local lord of the manor. The main village green is part of this grid and was used for markets, but some commentators suggest that it might originally have contained houses and only became the green after the serious fire of 1760.



From here on, development spread out along the five or six main roads. That development was, however, constrained by the often steep-sided valleys; as demonstrated by the fact that almost all of Aldbourne's Listed Buildings, other than those around the green, are stretched out alongside the main roads. Such development would have included houses, workshops, paddocks and gardens (for food growing), as well as the main farmsteads for the agricultural land all around – for example, Manor Farm along West Street.



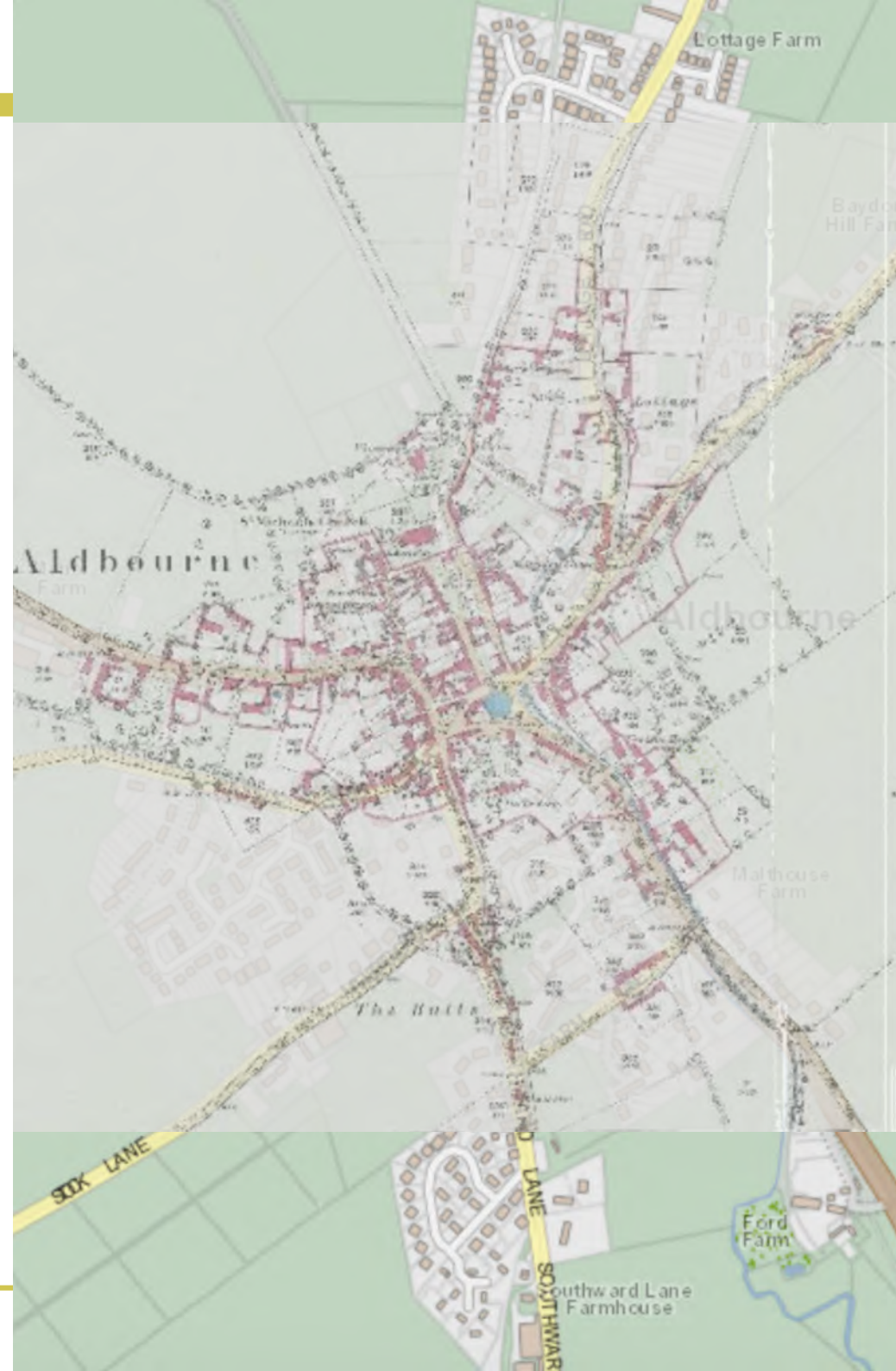
This general pattern remained the case until the start of the 20th century, as shown on Map 1 (right) from 1901. At this time there were just beginning to be some backland developments along the roads, as well as mostly Victorian infill between the older (and often listed) buildings.

Development in the 20th century, both between the wars and after WW2, then took place in three main ways:

- Further small scale infill along the main roads or extensions outward although, compared with other villages, this did not 'straggle' very far.
- Infill in the core of the older village, mainly through the selling off of parts of the gardens or paddocks shown on the 1901 map. Some of this involved a single house, some involved small groups of houses in culs-de-sac.
- Post WW2 housing estates along or off the main roads, mainly to the north/north east and south/south west, reflecting the basic topography of the several valleys and hills.

The clear clustering of Listed Buildings around the core of the village generated the boundary of the Conservation area, as on the map below, and relates closely to the untithed (therefore urban) area from the mid 19th century.

Map 1: Aldbourne Historic Map 1844 - 1888 OS 25" 1st Edition overlaid with a 2017 map. Map Credit Wiltshire & Swindon Archives



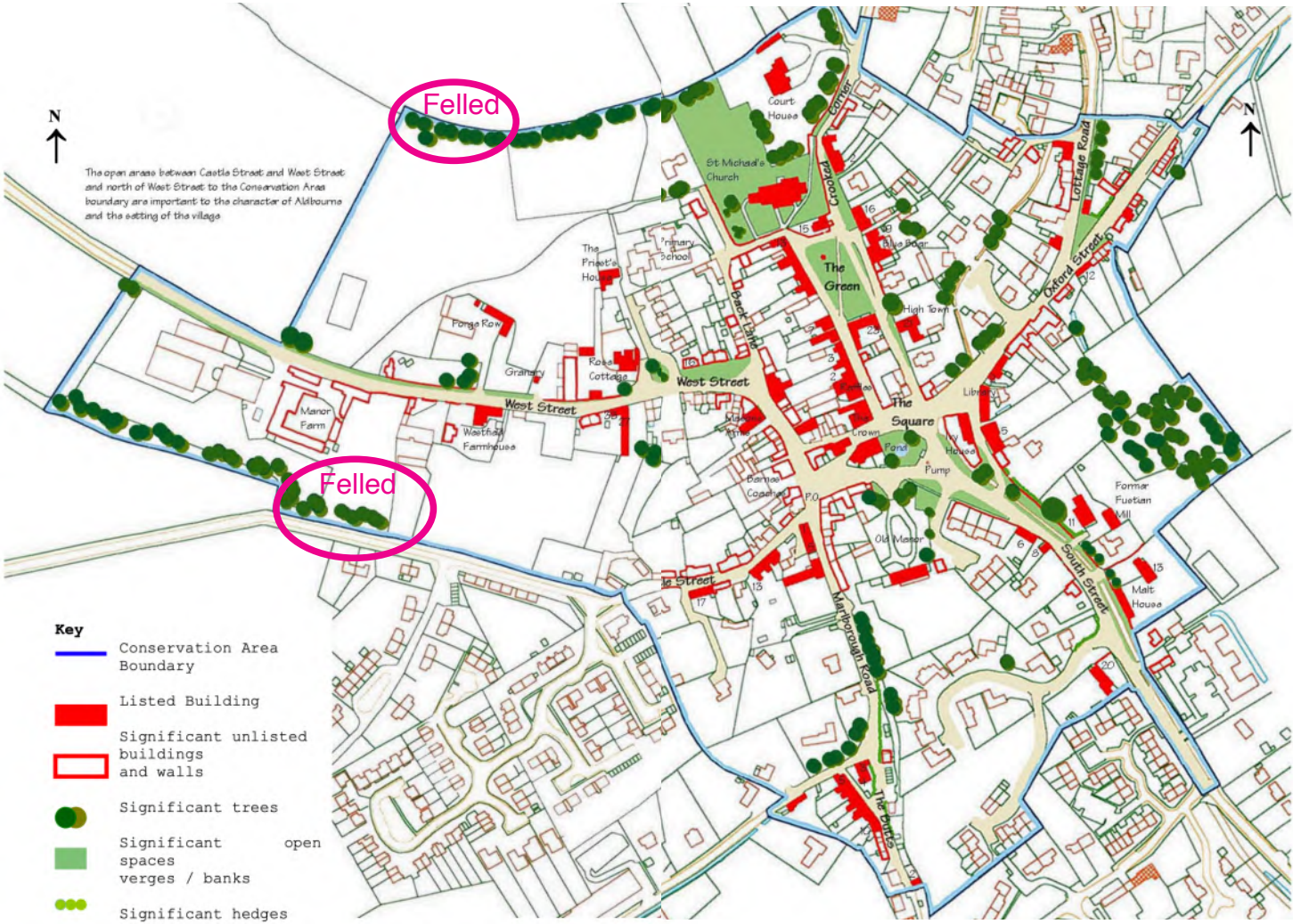
Map 2: Conservation Area Map with key features - taken from the Conservation Area Statement and updated to include detail on felled trees

As well as all the interwar and postwar buildings, the rise of car ownership and vehicular traffic led to changes in the public domain. Further pavements, kerbs and white lines were introduced, roads widened, eroding old grass verges, and other previously grassed areas were surfaced with tarmac to provide parking spaces (e.g. in front of the Library).

The balance of 'green' and 'black' surfaces changed significantly. There is street lighting scattered about the village and, only occasional, overhead cabling.

A recent community initiative is the planting of orchard trees in various sites across the village.

Note: The Conservation Area Statement was produced in 2003 and only available as a pdf, so no better graphic version was available. There is no Appraisal or Management Plan for the area. Other than for felled trees, the items listed have not been reviewed since the Statement was produced.



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved Kennet District Council LA078328 2002
The base map used in this report is the latest available - recent changes within the village may not be shown.

Today's Challenges

Traffic and Parking

Traffic in its own right is not a character/design challenge but its implications are: inappropriate signage, a fragmented pattern of pavements, possible pressures for street lighting and other non-rural features, easing of corners and loss of grassed areas and verges.

On-street car parking both for residents and visitors (there are a number of the latter), and the amount of parking around The Square, have significant negative effects on the village character. And not just in the historic core; on-street parking is also an issue in the more peripheral estates.

It is also clear that pressures on parking have led to the loss of green areas in the historic core. Parking also has an impact on key features, for example all around the old village pump where West Street meets Back Lane.



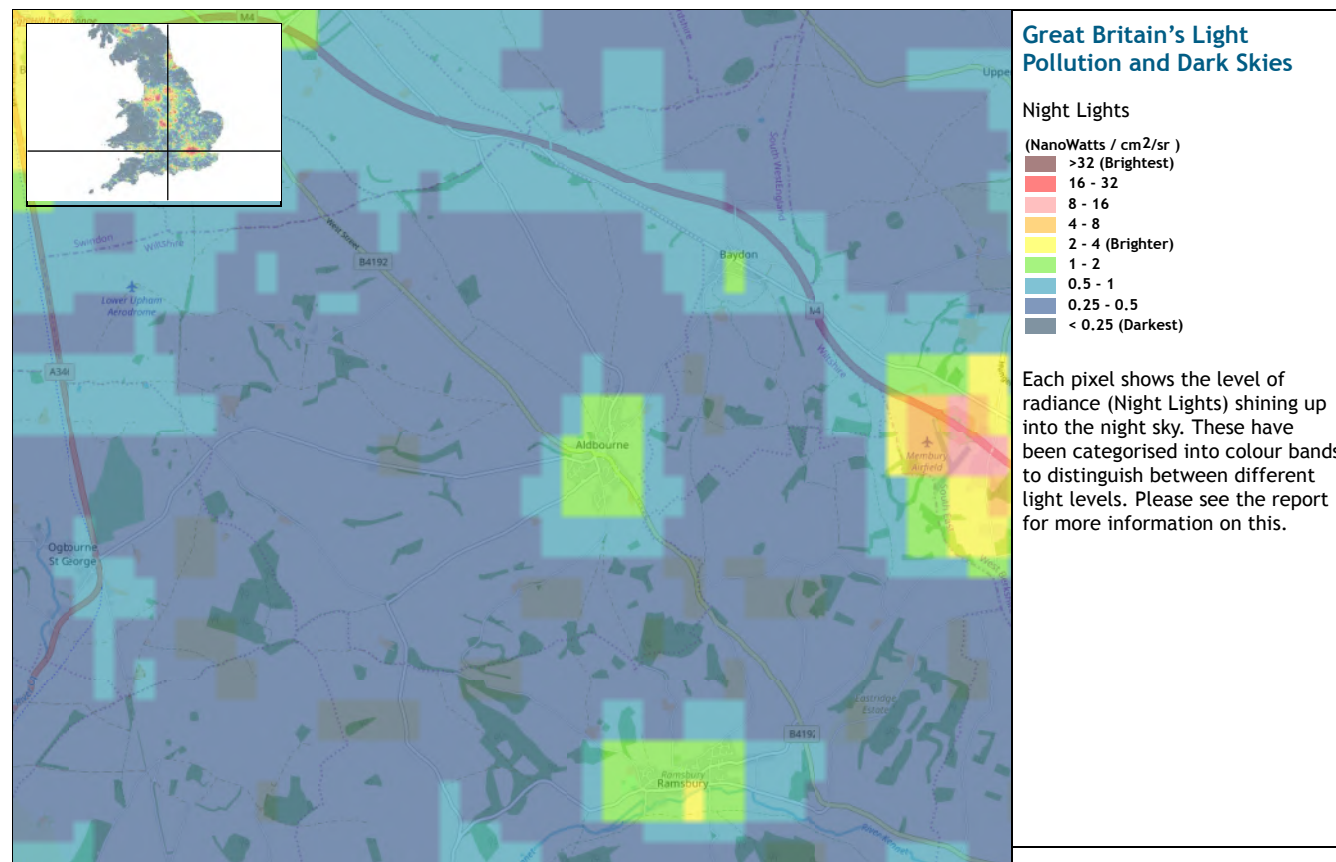
Light Pollution

The NPPF makes it clear that planning policies and decisions should: ‘limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.’ (NPPF, para 185).

Light pollution is a generic term referring to artificial light which shines where it is neither wanted nor needed. In broad terms, there are three types of light pollution:

- skyglow – the pink or orange glow we see for miles around towns and cities, spreading deep into the countryside, caused by a scattering of artificial light by airborne dust and water droplets
- glare – the uncomfortable brightness of a light source
- light intrusion – light spilling beyond the boundary of the property on which a light is located, sometimes shining through windows and curtains

Aldbourne village and the wider Parish has low levels of light pollution that can impact on wildlife, and human health as well as obscuring the night sky as a result of artificial light.



<https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/print.html?0|5487.932284974208,5600.845647782666,4972.2....593222514071,0|thBI=1,th0=0,th1=0,th2=0,th3=0,th4=0,th5=0,th6=1,th7=0,th8=1|thBI=OpenStreetMap>

Map 3: Extract from Great Britain's Light Pollution and Dark Skies Map

3 Landscape Setting

As set out above, there are three wider area landscape assessments that provide information for the Aldbourne landscape in particular: the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessments (LCA) and the two used by the North Wessex Downs AONB: their Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Landscape Character Assessment. This also all operates within the frame set by the policies in the current Wiltshire Core Strategy and the latest NPPF. The AONB team have also produced guidance related to design in a landscape context.

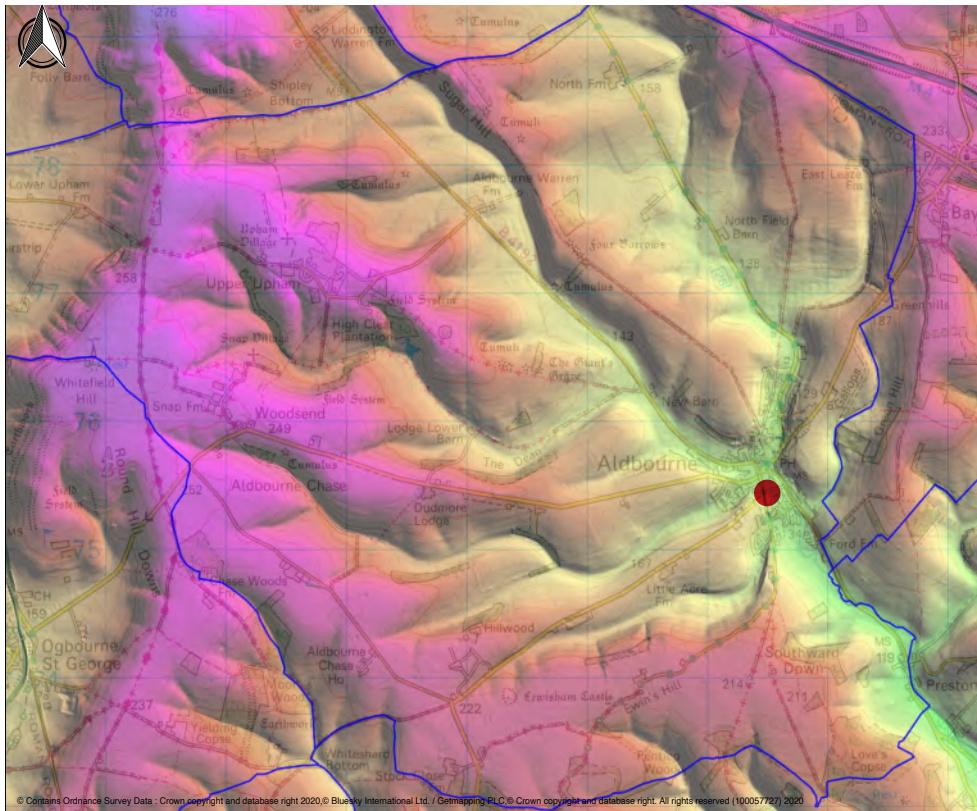
Survey work has been undertaken as part of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, in the main by a local Landscape Architect.

The Landscape setting of Aldbourne is a vital part of the village character with development generally being contained within the valleys. The village has a ‘secretive setting’; the village lies at a point where the dramatic rolling landscape converges in five dry valleys and the built settlement is shaped by this landform. The core of the village sits in between the valleys and the buildings of the village all sit below the skyline.

View to Aldbourne’s secretive setting from the north east of the Parish



Map 4, below: the rolling landscape of the Parish converges in five dry valleys and the village (location indicated with a red dot) nestles in the convergence and is shaped by this landform and shown on this topographic map.



The whole parish sits within a character area called the Marlborough Downs area of Open Downland. The key characteristics of this area relevant to Aldbourne have been identified by the AONB Landscape Character Assessment and are as follows in italics; additional plain text highlights points specific to Aldbourne as highlighted by local survey work:

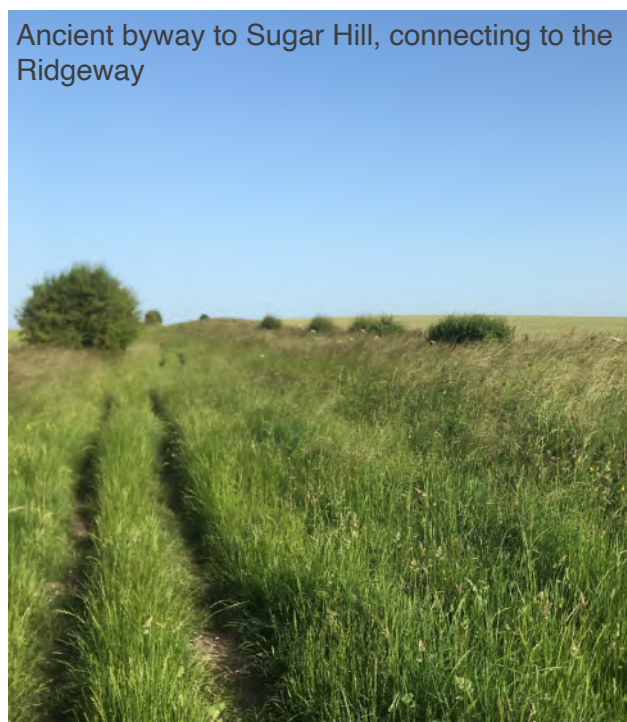
Strongly articulated landform dissected by steep scarps and dry valleys plus (the) valleys of the Aldbourne with the land rising to gently rounded summits. The landform creates a very distinct and dramatic skyline. There is a strong sense of connection with the landscape from the village as the skyline is visible from many points within it.



An open expansive landscape dominated by arable farmland and absence of field boundaries allowing extensive views - a more enclosed landscape with woodland occurs to the east. There are small pockets of woodland immediately around the village of Aldbourne. Some but not all strong field boundaries still remain, though some hedgerows are in poor condition, and the fields are generally large to very large.



Notable for the concentration of sarsen stones plus numerous Bronze Age round barrows, many of which survive as highly visible earthworks. There are very many monuments all around the village, many not visible on the ground, although there are the remains of some barrows and tumuli to the west in particular. Four Barrows is a popular walking destination for people of the village.



Extensive network of public rights of way. There are several into and around Aldbourne, including links to national routeways and ancient by-ways.

A number of ancient and veteran trees are found within and around the village.



The AONB Landscape Character Assessment also identifies the following key issues, again as relevant to Aldbourne and again using italics and plain text:

Loss and fragmentation of chalk grassland by arable conversion. Current threat of loss, as marginal land comes out of active management particularly in the absence of grazing livestock.

Increasing intensification within this already very large scale landscape with further loss of peripheral features including field boundaries and habitats. This has already happened to some extent, although roadside boundaries (trees and hedgerows) are extensive.



Close proximity of arable fields to ancient byway

Loss and damage to archaeological sites, in the past by ploughing but now by damage from vehicles/trampling. There are few signs of damaging vehicle use in the parish.

Inappropriate woodland planting which would impact on the open, expansive, remote character and views. Woodland felling and linear planting is taking place, and an unsympathetic conifer plantation.



Unsympathetic conifer plantation near the north eastern boundary of the Parish.

Future potential demand for chalk extraction. There are signs of chalk extraction in the Parish landscape.

Cumulative impact of small-scale incremental change, (e.g. signage, fencing, kerbing of rural lanes) on the remote qualities of the chalk upland landscape.



Below: Wiltshire wildlife reserve to the north west of the Parish. Unimproved grassland with regenerating scrub.



Below: View through to Upham Manor



Below: Four Barrows. Rich unimproved grassland with some regenerating scrub which could cause some damage to Barrows in the future



4 Key Views

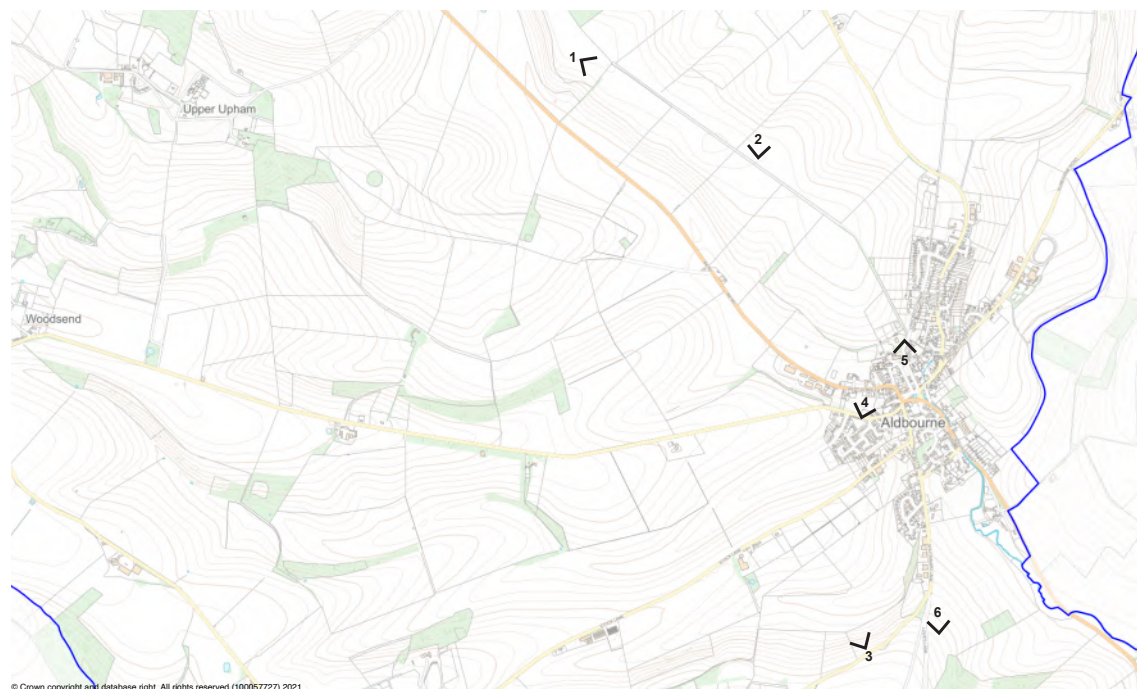
This distinct topography means that there are frequent views out of the settlement to the surrounding landscape, and a strong visual connection to it. From some elevated positions within the parish there are panoramic views of the surrounding landscape.

A number of locally valued key views have been identified both within the built environment and the wider parish landscape that satisfy at least some of the following criteria:

- Visible from a publicly accessible location (including public rights of way or public highways)
- Selected for a specific reason i.e. overreaching far view, view to an historical or public interest building/monument

- A high quality and distinctive ‘visual amenity’ (the overall pleasantness of a view, its setting and value to the community)
- An historic link to an important event or person
- A specific mention in literature i.e. ‘Ruskin’s view over Lunedale’
- Where facilities for their enjoyment i.e. parking places and interpretive boards are included.

For clarity, a view is defined as what can be seen from a particular place. In this report both specific views (selected to demonstrate key and sometimes promoted viewpoints within the landscape or towards it) and representative views (chosen to represent views from a place or routeway) can be identified.



Map 5, left: Key Views

There is an absence of clear long views on the approach to Aldbourne village along the main roads going in. There are however, long views to the village, if never all of it, from parts of the surrounding landscape, including from Public Rights of Way (and therefore to potentially be highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan) where the way the buildings of the village nestle into the valleys that converge can be appreciated.

Key View 1: the view below looking south east towards Aldbourne village from near the Four Barrows.

This key view from the top of Barrow 1. looking west towards the village and is a good example of the nestled hidden settlement aspect of Aldbourne. A popular walkers destination for the village with 360 degree views across Sugar way escarpment, Liddinton Hill, and Foxhill.



Right: Key view 2 looking North from Four Barrows public footpath.

Long views from raised elevation of surrounding farmland and valley. Distinctive steep downland hills with scattered copses and some ancient field boundary earthworks visible to the East.

Below: Key view 3 from Ewin's Hill with Aldbourn on the right.

View West from bench at the top of Ewin's Hill. Popular resting place for walkers and cyclists going through Ewin's Hill to take in views towards the west of the village. Favoured spot for views of sunsets over downland.



Key View 4: View of the village on approach from Woodsend

A gateway view which is mostly enjoyed by vehicles on the 30 mph approach into the village from Castle street, of the village and Church. All other approaches are on the lower roads so the raised elevation makes this a unique view of the heart of the village. A view little affected by newer development and has a timeless historical quality. Excellent example of the varied local vernacular with a mix of clay, slate and thatched roofing styles and brick and sarsen walling styles, clustered at the base of church which floats above the village from this angle.



Key View 5: View South East from St Michaels Church Graveyard Bench.

Views over graveyard, St Michaels Church and village beyond. Favoured for Sunrise viewing and visitors to the Church. Views over the historic part of the village and landscape beyond.

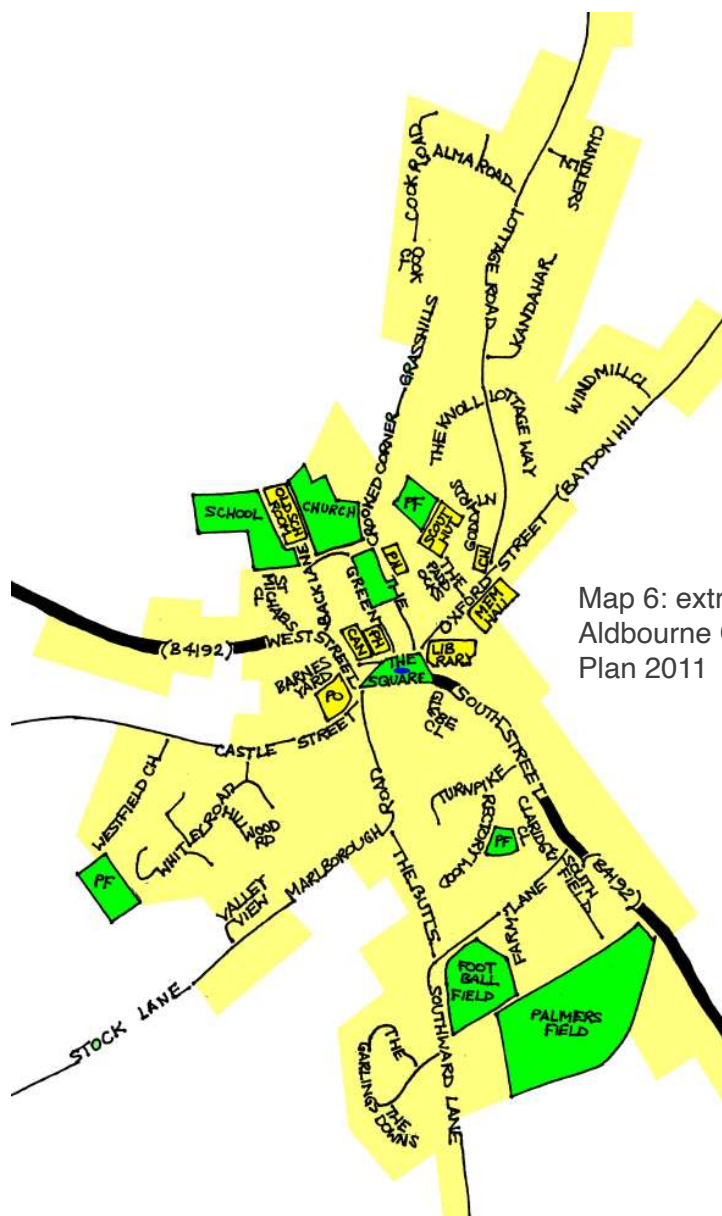


Key View 6 - View North from green triangle bench at top of Southward lane

View from secluded green triangle favoured by walkers to Ramsbury and Love's Copse. View of Church in the distance nestled into downland valley.



5 Settlement Pattern



Map 6: extracted from Aldbourne Community Plan 2011



The striking and unusual aspect of how the village sits in its valley is that, from every direction along approaching roads, there is only an occasional and limited view of the village and then of little more than the church tower and small areas. (Some more distant views provide wider pictures.) There is therefore, in general, a sudden arrival at the village; it is almost hidden in its valley setting. This is almost replicated in the other direction because there are no significant views **out** from the centre of the village; potential views are blocked by the almost constant backcloth of relatively nearby trees.

As a result, for someone driving into Aldbourne, the village really only seems to start at or close to its historic centre. At the same time, this is an importantly different experience along the four main roads in (as shown on the photo sequences overleaf).

Entering along Oxford Street, gates and a sign mark arrival (1). Coming down the hill, there is almost continuous greenery to the left and a few properties behind hedges or fences to the right (2). There is then a long view before the road then flattens out, with a hall and shop on one side and large trees the other (3). The grassed area by the village pond is then straight ahead with the main part of The Square to the right (4).



Coming in along South Street (all flat), 30 mph and village signs again announce a clear arrival (1). As before it is some time before the heavy greenery to one side and the long, strongly-hedged front gardens (2) give way to a long, straight view almost to The Square (3). The distinctive features here are the grassed area and stream to one side (3) before a swing to the left reveals a view through towards the pond (4).

Just gates announce arrival along West Street (1) but, this time, the arrival is straight the Conservation Area. Older buildings spread along to the right side with fields to the left before a large barn on the left and a glimpse to the church tower (2). From the barn on, the road swings left (with grassed areas and a parish pump to the side) then right with houses right up to the pavement (3) before a glimpse through to the left to The Square (4).



The entry along Castle Street is very different. 30 mph signs and a more basic village sign (1) suggest arrival but, after a view to the left over the village centre to the church, the road dips steeply left then slightly right (2) and soon there are older houses either side, without any pavements but quite a bit of greenery (3). At the T-junction ahead there is a view slightly left, across the main road, towards The Square and the Crown pub.

The Square is a generous space, bounded by houses and the pub to one side and grassed areas, trees and the pond to the other. However, it is – as the heart of the village along with The Green - rather dominated by car parking, as are some of those areas described earlier that were, at one time, grassed. Tarmac and parking erode some of the otherwise interesting and varied character of such areas; appearing to put vehicles before people.

Off ‘behind’ The Square is the oldest part of the village, the grid of development up to the church and including The Green (and the Blue Boar pub) – the other main ‘node’ of the village. While there are grass verges around parts of The Green (and occasional cars parked on them!) the basic pattern is of houses and garden walls close up to narrow roads. There are only occasional opportunities in this area for people to take their cars off the road, so cars are often parked on roads, even the narrowest ones.

As suggested already, there are areas where there are, and others where there are not, pavements, but parked cars again influence not just the village core’s character but also people’s ability to walk around safely. (See also the Safety Around the Village Report in the Evidence Folder.)

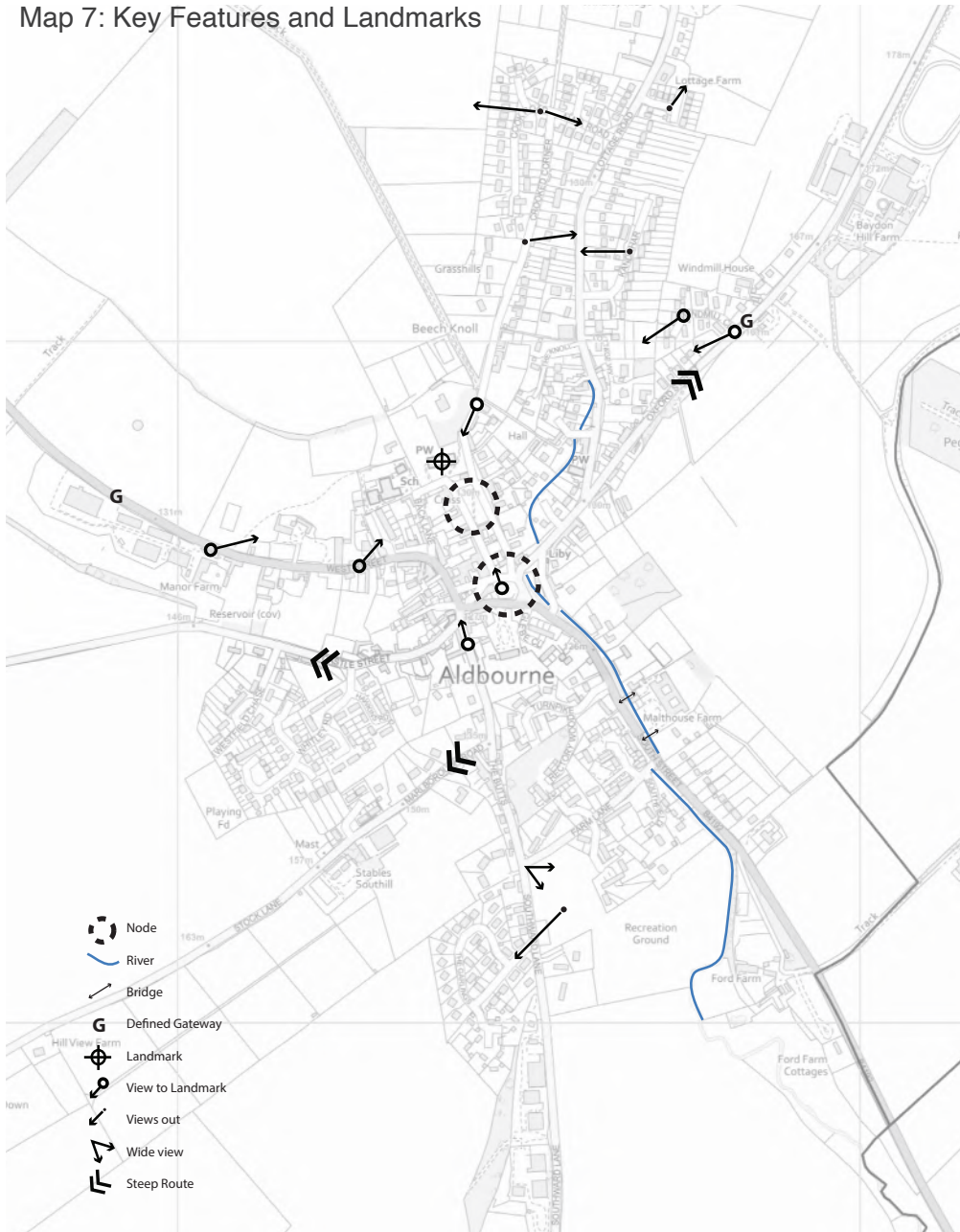


Landmarks

In addition to the main church and its tower there are regular views towards and throughout the village, other landmarks include the two old village water pumps and the pond.



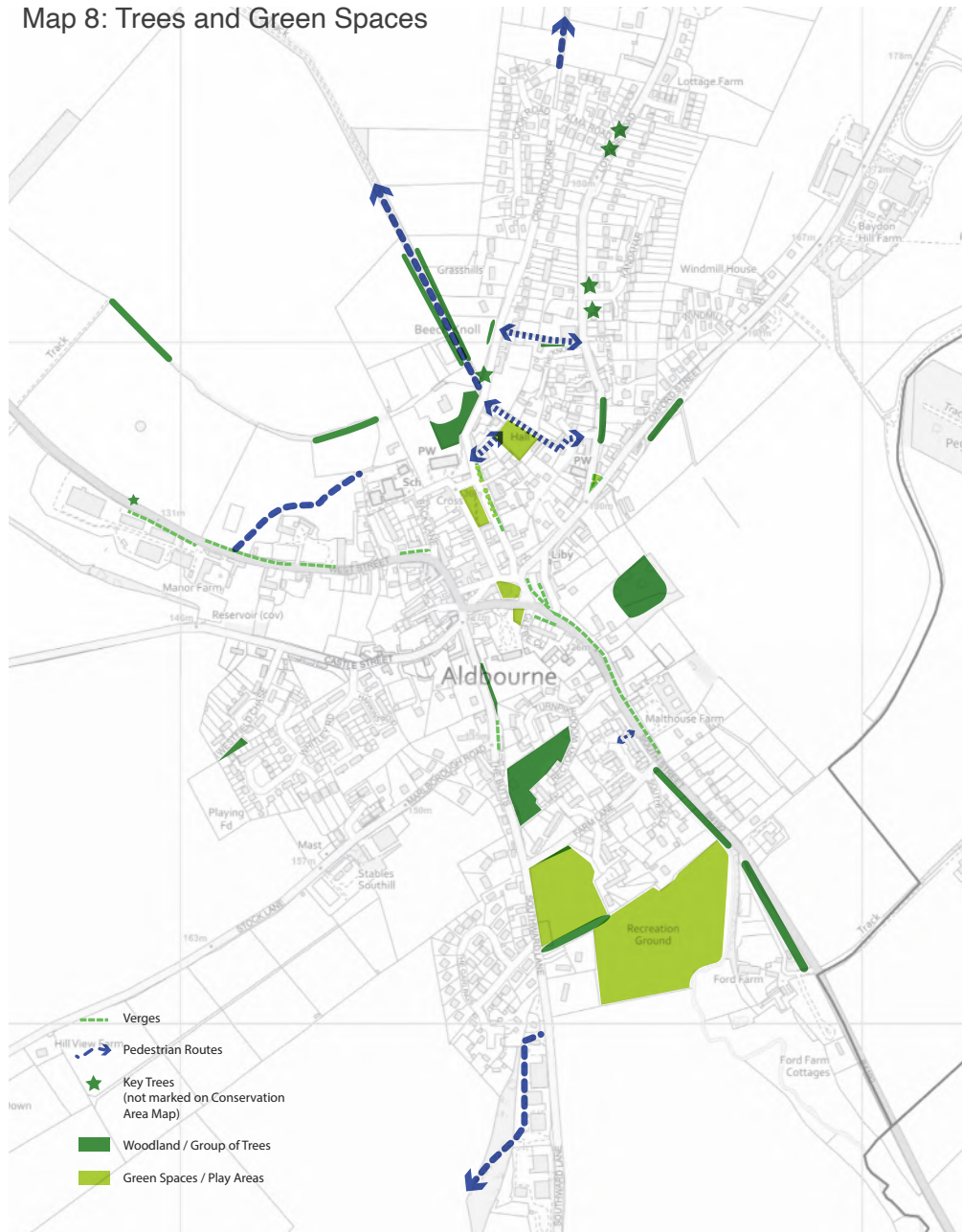
Map 7: Key Features and Landmarks



Map 7 shows some of the features highlighted in the text above – the arrival points or gateways, some of the views, the steep route of Castle Street, the river and the bridges across it and the two clear ‘nodes’ of The Square and The Green.



Map 8: Trees and Green Spaces



Trees and Green Spaces

From the pond in the core of the village, to the seasonal Bourne stream that winds its way through the village, to the trees and shrubs that are everywhere in the village and to the many green areas, there is a very strong 'green feeling', and not just in the core. And if a tree is not visible in the foreground, there is almost always one visible over or by the side of a building, creating an almost constant backcloth. As stated earlier, it is this significant backcloth that prevents views out, at least from the core of the village.

Significant trees are mapped in the Conservation Area Statement (see Map 2 on page 9) with some notes to update the diagram to illustrate where trees have been felled. Significant green areas are shown on Map 8 to the left.

There are a large number of highly significant trees within the Conservation Area, many of which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

Trees particularly worthy of note include:

- The woodland at Rectory Wood.
- The lime trees and other species at Turnpike and The Old Manor.
- The beech trees at the entrance to Hightown and the mixed trees along the rear boundary stretching to Oxford Street.
- The backdrop of mixed trees on the banks on the eastern side of South Street and the roadside copper beech just south of The Square.
- The wooded backdrop to the churchyard and the school.
- The backdrop of trees on the ridge behind Manor Farm and the paddocks between West Street and Castle Street.

During the autumn and winter rainfall in normal years, ground water levels naturally rise in the fields north of the village causing a seasonal stream (the Bourne), fed by the groundwater, to run down Lottage Road, through

the centre and down South Street, then flowing for about 4 miles through farmland with occasional buildings until it joins the River Kennet near Ramsbury. A similar seasonal stream rises in the fields north west of the village and flows in culverts under West Street to enter the Bourne beneath the junction of Oxford Street and the B4192.



Facilities

Facilities for the village are well spread around, including for example, the primary school, the play park, the youth club, a meeting hall, the recreation ground and the Heritage Centre.

Footpaths

Another unusual feature of the village is the pattern of footpaths, perhaps a result of the hill and valley topography. There are only three Public Rights of Way out into the countryside from the built area of the village (though others can be picked up further out), and just two, roughly between Crooked Corner and Lottage Road, that link different areas of the village together. There is only one other alley or snicket within the village core and no paths connecting the various 20th century estates further out. (There is an oddly located PRow from near the school round to West Street, perhaps originally used a route to the church.)



The Older Parts of the Conservation Area

The various building types found here are well described in the Statement, which notes that most buildings are from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, spread across the area rather than in specific parts of it, although the grid of streets and mainly 18th century buildings around the Green is probably the most consistent. Most buildings might best be described as cottages, although there are a number, often larger, that are or were houses linked to yards, paddocks or workshops. The larger properties tend to be close to the south side of the Square and out along the first part of South Street. As the Conservation Area Statement also notes, the main building materials are stone (chalk, flint or sarsen) or brick for walls, with roofs of clay tile or thatch. A number of properties are rendered and painted (usually white), something that may hide poor quality chalk or even brick. Chimneys are very prominent and property boundaries (where houses are not straight on to the road) are in stone or brick, often with hedges above, adding even more privacy and creating a clear sense of enclosure. The (socially) more important buildings mostly use the same materials but have more and more intricate details.



More Recent Infill in the Conservation Area

There have been a number of more recent (generally 20th century) additions to the Conservation Area. Some have frontages along one or other of the main roads. Earlier 20th century ones are in small terraces, later ones more commonly a single house or two. In most but not all cases they fit well into their setting or are at least set back so not highly visible. There have also been a number of backland developments off culs-de-sac (see Map 9), on a couple of occasions through 'tunnels' under otherwise street frontage development. In general, their styles and materials have little relationship with those setting the general character of the Conservation Area but, by being backland sites, the designs do not affect the area as a whole.

(See Neighbourhood Plan Part A, Appendix 1, Item 11 for the Character Areas Assessment Report, which provides more details of building types, materials and so forth for the next two sections.)



Linear Developments along Radial Routes

Although almost all of the older buildings (pre 20th century) are contained within the Conservation Area, there are some outside that area, notably north along Lottage Road up to the Bite Events building and a few along Crooked Corner. All other developments along the roads into the village*, front onto the roads and were either developed and built as single plots, small groups of plots or, on occasion, what appears to be long strips of plots (as from Bite Events outwards). (* Crooked Corner is not a main route, originally little more than a back access, local track; see below.)

Almost all of these plots were for detached houses, although some houses are semi-detached and a few are in short terraces (of perhaps 4 houses). The majority appear to have been built in the inter-war years, 1918-1939, with a few post WW2. The prevailing materials on these linear strips of buildings are brick or render walls with clay or concrete roof tiles.

The linear nature along each road does, however, vary in layout and length. Beyond the Conservation Area boundary, there are:

- Very few properties along West Street and Castle Street.
- A few properties along Marlborough Road,

Southward Lane and Oxford Street, and mostly on one side of the road only, the other having trees and substantial hedgerows.

- A series of large, well set-back properties along South Street, again on one side only and opposite trees and substantial hedgerows (and the stream).

The most substantial linear stretch, this time on both sides of the road, is often protected by trees and high hedges, is along Lottage Road north beyond Bite Events. As well as being protected by the hedges and trees, most properties are set a long way back from the road, making many barely visible. For a number of these properties on the east side of the road, access to parking provision is along Crooked Corner.



Mid to Late 20th Century Estates

There are five more substantial estates - The Garlings, Cook Road/Alma Road, Kandahar, Whitley Road east and Whitley Road west. Each has its own distinct identity, reflecting when they were built, the topography (notably Kandahar 'dug into' the hill behind) and tenure (all being private other than Whitley Road east which is social housing).

There are then several small, infill estates (not dissimilar to those above within the Conservation Area) – Windmill Close, Chandler's Lane, Goddard's Lane, Lottage Way, Valley View, Westfield Chase, Claridge Close, Southfield and Turnpike/Rectory Wood. These vary particularly in terms of when they were built; Valley View being very recent.

There are also several small clusters of houses off the main roads, usually along private access lanes.



7 Design Guidelines

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (Para 130) sets out the importance of achieving “well-designed places” and asserts that *“policy and decisions should ensure that developments... are visually attractive ... (and) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change”*.

Up to this point, this Design Statement has outlined the many aspects and features of the character of Aldbourne. However, the NPPF also emphasises (in Para 127) the need for design and development proposals to *“reflect local aspirations ... grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics ... identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development”*.

While potential applicants can and should use all the character analysis in this Statement in order to reflect that character in their designs, good practice (notably through the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code) supports the provision of further help and guidance for applicants in using the character analysis.

This is provided in this section of the Statement, although it is recognised that any design guidance should strike a balance between promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and allowing for innovation and originality. Contemporary designs are encouraged that capture and respect the local distinctiveness of Aldbourne as a whole and that of their immediate setting. Some aspects of design can and should also respond to the demands of sustainable construction, which can assist with addressing climate change.

Design Principles

1: Enhancing Core Character

The overall ambition is that the design of new developments should help to restore what is most valued by local people – and visitors - about Aldbourne, i.e. the character of the historic core of the village, as seen in the core itself and in any future developments immediately alongside the main roads entering the village.

2: Pre-application Engagement

This Statement alone cannot ensure the best quality design. That can only come through meeting and talking with those proposing changes or developments, and doing this early enough to have a constructive influence, exactly as is encouraged in the NPPF (para. 132). How to manage this is elaborated in Part A of this Plan in Section 6: Community Engagement.

3: Landscape and Key Views

These topics are addressed in Policies 15 and 16 in Part A of this Plan.

4: Character Areas

Development on any site should reflect and reinforce the sense of place in its relevant Character Area, drawing on identified cues such as settlement pattern, architectural details and relationship to the landscape.

Any new Infill development should respect the existing pattern and density of settlement within the immediate area, and complement the appearance of the existing neighbourhood in terms of scale, height, form, massing and materials.

Projects on sites with frontage to the main roads into the village should ensure that the design character of frontage buildings respects the overall ambition noted in Design Principle 1 above, notably in terms of their close relationship to the street, building heights and roof shape and materials.

5: Heritage

Development and environmental management and infrastructure proposals within or adjacent to the Conservation Area will be expected to demonstrate how they have referenced both this Statement and the Aldbourne Conservation Area Statement.

Proposals for development in the wider Parish will be expected to conserve heritage assets recorded on the site and the setting of heritage assets immediately adjacent to the proposal site or potentially impacted by development.

See Policies 10, 11 and 12 in Part A of this Plan.

6: Mix of Housing Types

Where new housing developments include affordable houses, these should be spread within the development, not be in a single or separate area.

7: Layout and Pattern of New Roads

New development should adopt a road layout that reflects that of the relevant Character Area. That would more spacious in areas of more modern development and more intimate around the historic village core and along roads entering the village. The latter is best achieved by placing houses as close as possible to the road and providing small, enclosed front gardens. Road layouts should be designed to limit opportunities for on-street parking.

8: Pedestrian Connections

Where site location permits, new development should provide pedestrian through routes to connect with the village centre, amenities and the surrounding countryside.

9: Open Spaces

Small areas of open, public space should be provided within new estates, whether hard surfaced or green, but in all case with trees and seating. If lighting is to be provided see Design Principle 10 below.

10: Lighting

Proposals for artificial lighting will be supported where:

- they would not give rise to an unacceptable level of illumination into the sky, open countryside, or in the village;
- it can be demonstrated that additional lighting on site will have no detrimental impact on visual and residential amenity, the historic environment or local ecology;
- any adverse impact of lighting proposals in all new development, including light spill and energy use, is minimised through design or technological solutions or by controlling the hours of use;
- safety is not compromised in low lit or dark public area.

11: Accessibility and Safety

All public areas – pavements, open spaces, entrances to facilities etc. – should be designed to ensure full accessibility to all members of the community and ensure community safety (e.g. see lighting above.).

12: Parking

Garages should be designed to appear to be an integral part of the associated house; garage blocks would not be supported.

13: Boundary Treatments

Developments in in the Conservation Area will most probably be close to the pavement and road rather than set back. They should mainly aim to continue the common grass verge pattern. If a small front area is to be provided, this should either have no rail/fence or a very low one. Front gardens elsewhere should not be open to the street but should be bounded with low walls or hedges, not fences.

14: Trees

Development should respect the green character of all parts of the village by retaining viable mature trees that are of value to the street scene or views out from it.

New tree and shrub planting is particularly encouraged to address health, wellbeing and climate change issues. The following species would be particularly appropriate in Aldbourne: Beech, Purple Beech, Sycamore, Yew, Ash, Hornbeam.

15: Hedges

Existing hedges should be preserved as far as possible, including those within sites. New or replacement hedges should comprise a mix of species such as Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Dog Rose, Elder, Viburnum, Hazel.

16: Signage

Road name signs should be unobtrusive. Other road signs or other signs should be avoided wherever possible, consistent with ensuring safety.

17: Water

Open streams are a key feature of Aldbourne; they should not be culverted.

18: Design for Nature

Opportunities should be sought to provide opportunities for bat boxes, hedgehog openings, walls for solitary bees etc.

Some construction works by utility companies will need planning permission. If so, whilst respecting public safety and performance, proposed utility development should be sensitively positioned to respect the context as outlined in this Statement, especially in the Conservation Area.

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