



Assington



Neighbourhood Plan



2018-2036

1. Welcome



Welcome to the launch of the formal six week consultation period on Assington's Draft Neighbourhood Plan, our fifth consultation event.

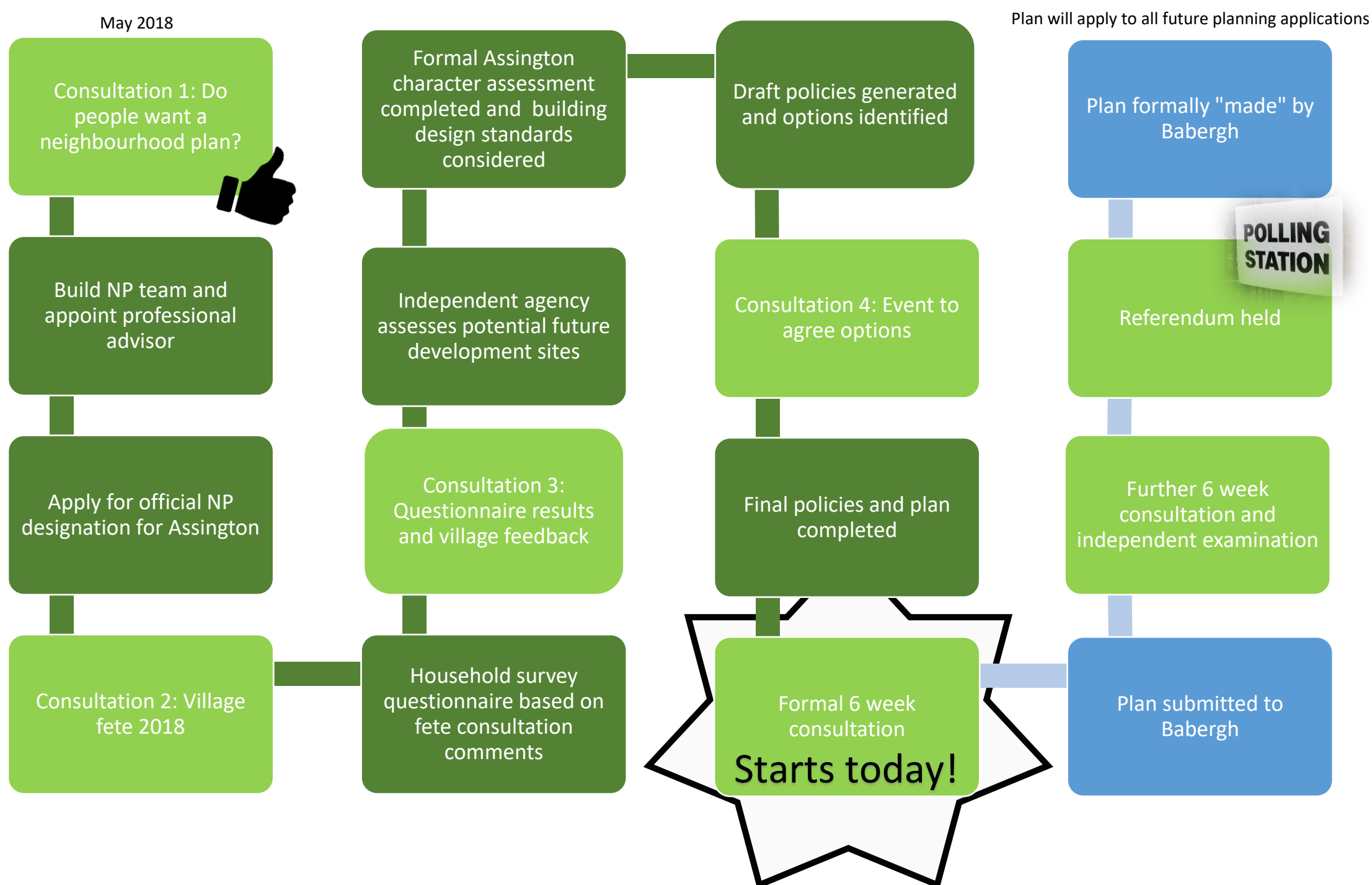
The Assington Neighbourhood Plan was born as a result of a public meeting of residents in 2018 where it was clearly identified that villagers wanted to have their say in the future development of Assington.

Once complete, our Neighbourhood Plan will be a serious consideration by the local authority when making decisions about possible development in Assington and it may indeed be instrumental in securing desirable development in Assington or possibly preventing what is deemed as 'undesirable' development for the village.

Neighbourhood Plan Team

We have a team of volunteers from all over the village. Please speak to any of our team today who will be pleased to hear your opinions or to explain the plan further:

Helen Wallace (Chair), Ian Jordan (Vice-Chair), Nigel Finch, Catherine Harrison, Andrew Hill (Treasurer), Stephen Lustig (Secretary), Nick Miller.



Today we present the draft Assington Neighbourhood Plan. The culmination of over 1000 hours of work, it is 58 pages long, and you will find a number of copies are available to read in the hall today along with supporting documents.

To formally record your opinion, please fill in a feedback form online at:

<http://assington.onesuffolk.net/assington-neighbourhood-plan/>

or ask for a paper form to complete and return.

2. How Have We Made the Plan?

Consult, consult and consult again!



Consultation

It is most important to us that the plan aims to incorporate the views of as many residents as possible. We have had hundreds of written comments and submissions from residents during our four consultation events so far, many of which resulted in changes to policies and improvements to the plan. A separate evidence document showing these comments is available online and in the hall today.

The residents questionnaire gave us fantastic statistical information about what people want to see happen in the village, and with a 52% response rate, this has guided us throughout the process. The questionnaire results are also available for everyone to view on paper today and online.

Of course, there will have been some comments and opinions that we haven't been able to accommodate, either because they weren't compatible with planning laws and the laws governing neighbourhood plans, or simply because not enough people shared the opinion.

There were only a small number of such comments, however, and so we very much hope that we have a draft plan that Assington residents can support for adoption in 2020!

Professional Advice

Throughout the process we have been supported by Places 4 People Planning Consultancy who have produced plans for parishes across Suffolk and beyond. They have advised us on what is and isn't legally possible, as well as what is likely to pass independent examination.



Research

The team has completed extensive research during the process to ensure that the policies produced are based on evidence. This includes census data, information from Babergh's joint local plan, and research on biodiversity and wildlife in the parish.



Independent Assessment

In 2019 we engaged independent agency AECOM to assess sites across the parish for potential development, as well as to produce a character assessment of the village. These reports are available online and in the room today.



Resulting from this work, today we are also presenting the following supporting evidence documents:

- Residents Questionnaire Results
- Assington Special Landscape Area Extension Report
- Local Green Space Assessment
- AECOM Assington Site Assessment
- Assington Biodiversity Report (Flora and Fauna)
- AECOM Assington Character Assessment
- Comments and Feedback from consultation

3. The Draft Plan

How to read the Neighbourhood Plan



The contents of the plan are as follows:

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The most important parts of the plan are the 24 planning policies. These will form part of planning policy and future planning applications will be judged against them. They are highlighted in blue boxes, like this:

Policy ASSN10 – Housing Mix

In all housing developments there shall be an emphasis on providing a higher proportion of two and three-bedroomed homes, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i) the particular circumstances relating to the tenure of the housing dictate otherwise; or
- ii) the latest publicly available housing needs information for the Plan area identify a need for a different mix.

The provision of bungalows will also be supported where the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area in the vicinity of the site.

Some areas of concerns cannot be dealt with by planning policies (e.g. speeding traffic). Here we have set 5 ‘community actions’, which are designed to act as a guide for the parish council and other bodies with regards to various policy priorities. These are highlighted in yellow, for example:

Community Action CA2

The Parish Council shall work with Babergh Council to establish a conservation area, broadly stretching from The Shoulder of Mutton public house on The Street, through to Assington Hall and the A134. A map of this proposed zone is shown below.

Each of these policies and community actions is shown on the following display boards.

4. Vision and Objectives

What do we want to achieve?



The plan's vision has been created from all the feedback we have had from residents:

In 2036 Assington will remain a rural and attractive village, having protected its countryside setting by ensuring that new development is in proportion to and respectful of the character of the village, while at the same time maintaining a thriving, vibrant and open community.



To achieve this vision, we have five key objectives:

Housing

New development should respect the character of the village and only be brought forward where there is a demonstrable need and where there is the necessary infrastructure to properly support it. Priority should be given to smaller units and affordable housing.



Natural Environment

Villagers should be able to enjoy Assington's natural environment and every opportunity should be taken to enhance this environment and access to it.

Transport and Travel

The future development of the village will have regard to improving the safety of pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists, including through the use of measures to reduce vehicle speeds and volume.

Built Environment and Design

Development should respect the rural character of the existing village and avoid unnecessary urbanisation.

Infrastructure, Business and Services

Development should not place any unacceptable burden on infrastructure and services and should respect the natural limitations of the rural location. Wherever possible, existing services should be maintained and improved, and commercial community assets preserved.



5. Spatial Strategy

Principle of development



The first policy makes clear that any future development should be focussed on sites within the settlement boundary (which the plan updates). This is with the aim of avoiding development in open countryside.

Policy ASSN1 – Spatial Strategy

The Neighbourhood Plan area will accommodate development commensurate with Assington's designation as a Hinterland Village in the Local Plan.

The focus for any new development will be within the Settlement Boundary, as defined on the Policies Map.

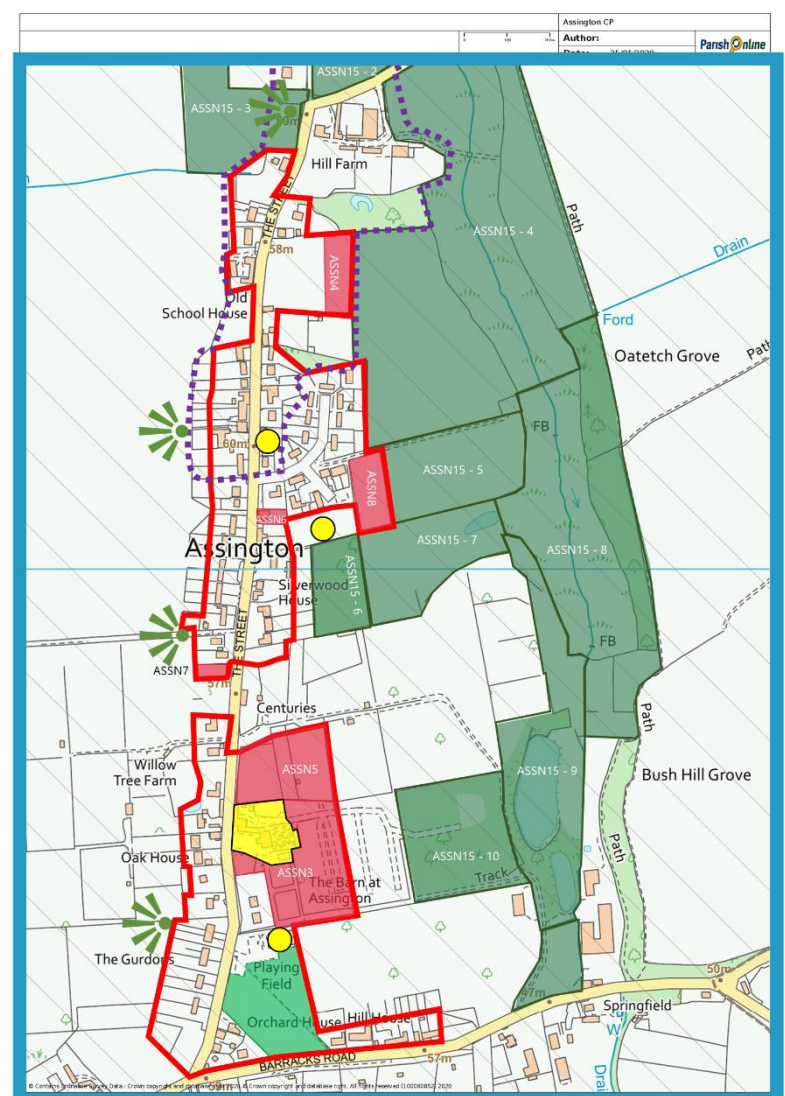
Proposals for development located outside the Settlement Boundary will only be permitted for those that are essential for the operation of an existing business, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other exceptional uses, where:

- i) it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that there is an identified local need for the proposal; and
- ii) it cannot be satisfactorily located within the Settlement Boundaries.

In exceptional circumstances, the redevelopment of existing brownfield sites that create unacceptable impacts on the local environment, highways and the amenity of residents for alternative uses, including residential, may be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that the public benefit will outweigh the loss of the existing use.

The updated settlement boundary is detailed by the red line on the policies map, large versions of which you will find around the hall today:

The policy allows for redevelopment of brownfield sites outside of the settlement boundary, if the benefits outweigh the loss of the existing use.



6. Housing

How many new houses?



It was clear from the residents questionnaire that most people feel Assington has enough housing already and this feeling is backed up by clear evidence. Since 2018, 64 dwellings have been granted planning permission by Babergh, well above the minimum target set in the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan of 38.

Given the high number, the plan provides for the 64 dwellings with permission (some of which have already been built and therefore are not given specific policy numbers), plus three bungalows, for a total of 67 dwellings. The three bungalows should not be brought forward for development before 2031.

Policy ASSN2 – Housing Development

This Plan provides for around 67 additional dwellings in the Neighbourhood Plan area between 2018 and 2036. This growth will be met through:

- i the implementation of planning permissions for additional dwellings granted between 1 April 2018 and 1 November 2019, including those allocated in ii below;
- ii the site allocations as identified in Policies ASSN3 to ASSN8 in the Plan and on the Policies Map; and
- iii small brownfield “windfall” sites within the Settlement Boundary that come forward during the plan period and are not identified in the Plan; and
- iv in exceptional circumstances, in accordance with Policy ASSN1, outside the Settlement Boundary.

In addition, proposals for the conversion of redundant or disused agricultural barns outside the Settlement Boundaries into dwellings will be permitted where:

- a) the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for extension, significant alteration or reconstruction; and
- b) the proposal is a high-quality design and the method of conversion retains the character and historic interest of the building; and
- c) the proposal would lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting of the building, and the creation of a residential curtilage and any associated domestic paraphernalia would not have a harmful effect on the character of the site or setting of the building, any wider group of buildings, or the surrounding area.

As well as the criteria set out in Policy ASSN1, proposals for new permanent dwellings outside the Settlement Boundary should also satisfy the following criteria:

- a) a clearly established existing essential functional need for resident workers;
- b) the need relates to a full-time, not part-time requirement;
- c) the unit and activity concerned are well established, profitable and have sound financial prospects; and
- d) the functional need can only be met by the proposed dwelling.



7. Housing

Where will future housing go?



On sites already with planning permission:

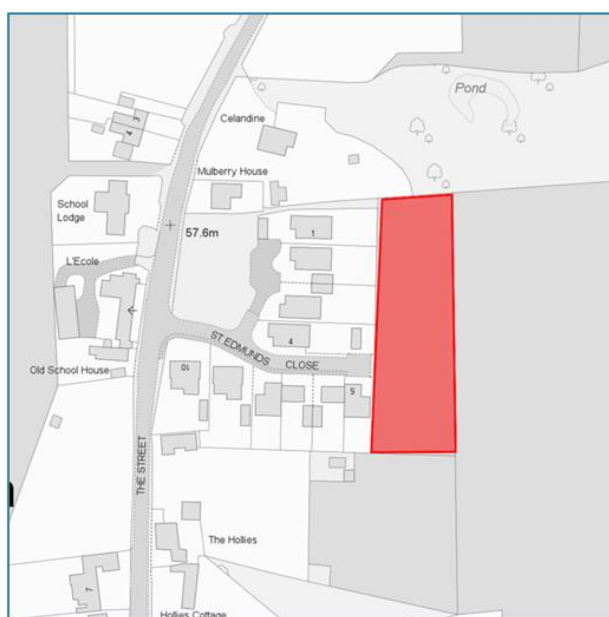
Policy ASSN3 – Site at Assington Barn

A site with an area of 1.1 hectares, as identified on Map 3 and the Policies Map, is allocated for no more than 15 dwellings. The development shall provide a new access off The Street to the development and the adjoining Assington Barns complex.

Development will be expected to take place in accordance with the current planning consents unless superseded by a subsequent planning permission for residential development.



Map 3 – Land at Assington Barns



Map 4 – Land East of St Edmund's Close

Policy ASSN4 – Land East of St Edmund's Close

A site with an area of 0.25 hectares, as identified on Map 4 and the Policies Map, is allocated for no more than six dwellings.

Development will be expected to take place in accordance with the current planning consent unless superseded by a subsequent planning permission for residential development.

Policy ASSN5 – Land North of Assington Barn

A site with an area of 1.1 hectares, as identified on Map 5 and the Policies Map, is allocated for up to 8 two, three and four-bedroomed dwellings. The development shall provide a new access off The Street.

Development will be expected to take place in accordance with the current planning consent unless superseded by a subsequent planning permission for residential development.



Map 5 – Land North of Assington Barns



Map 6 – Land adjacent to Cornerways

Policy ASSN6 – Land Adjacent to Cornerways, The Street

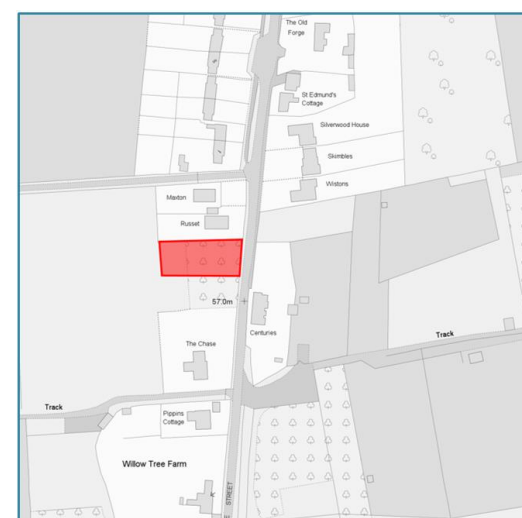
A site with an area of 0.05 hectares, as identified on Map 6 and the Policies Map, is allocated for no more than two semi-detached bungalows of no more than 5.8m in height (excluding chimneys).

Development will be expected to take place in accordance with the current planning consent for each site (as noted) unless superseded by a subsequent planning permission for residential development.

Policy ASSN7 – Land South of Maxton and Russets, The Street

A site with an area of 0.10 hectares, as identified on Map 7 and the Policies Map, is allocated for one one and a half storey dwelling of up to three bedrooms.

Development will be expected to take place in accordance with the current planning consent for each site (as noted) unless superseded by a subsequent planning permission for residential development.



Map 7 – Land South of Maxton and Russets, The Street

and possibly on one site currently without...



Map 8 – Land East of Meadow Way

Policy ASSN8 – Land East of Meadow Way

A site with an area of 0.4 hectares, as identified on Map 8 and the Policies Map, is allocated for up to three bungalows. Each dwelling shall have no more than three bedrooms and with a maximum floorspace of 95 square metres.

Development of the site will not be allowed to commence before 2031.

8. Housing

How to get desirable housing for Assington



Villagers told us they would like to see more affordable housing in the village. We cannot guarantee this but we have included a policy which allows for building outside of the settlement boundary if the housing is affordable in perpetuity, and is offered in the first instance to people with a connection to Assington.

Policy ASSN9 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes, including entry level homes for purchase (as defined by paragraph 71 of the NPPF) on rural exception sites outside but adjoining the Settlement Boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:

- i. remains affordable in perpetuity; and
- ii. is for people that are in housing need because they are unable to buy or rent properties in the village at open-market prices; and
- iii. is offered, in the first instance, to people with a demonstrated local connection, as defined by the Babergh Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Where there are no such people in Assington, a property should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.

These restrictions should be delivered through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing. Applications for such development will be considered in relation to the appearance and character of the surrounding area, the potential impact on residential amenity and highway safety.

To be acceptable, proposals should demonstrate that a local need exists which cannot be met by applying normal planning policy for the provision of affordable homes in association with market housing.

Any application for affordable housing in respect of this policy should be accompanied by a detailed need and the accommodation proposed should contribute to meeting this proven need.

In exceptional circumstances, a small number of market homes will be permitted where it can be demonstrated:

- a) that no other means of funding the construction of the affordable homes is available; and
- b) the market housing is subsidiary to the affordable housing element of the proposal and the amount of market housing required is, as demonstrated through a viability assessment, the minimum required to deliver the affordable housing.

Where sites for affordable housing are brought forward with an element of market housing, both housing tenures should be built to the same design standards and contribute towards the character of the area.

Policy ASSN10 – Housing Mix

In all housing developments there shall be an emphasis on providing a higher proportion of two and three-bedroomed homes, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i) the particular circumstances relating to the tenure of the housing dictate otherwise; or
- ii) the latest publicly available housing needs information for the Plan area identify a need for a different mix.

The provision of bungalows will also be supported where the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area in the vicinity of the site.

The questionnaire results showed people want smaller houses and bungalows in the village, and policy ASSN10 promotes this.

Policy ASSN11 ensures housing has appropriate internal space and has cycle parking and space to store bins.

Policy ASSN11 – Measures for New Housing Development

All new dwellings shall achieve appropriate internal space through adherence to the latest Nationally Described Space Standards.

Dwellings should also make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and cycles. Cycle parking provision shall be in accordance with the adopted cycle parking standards.

9. Natural Environment

How to preserve Assington's Setting

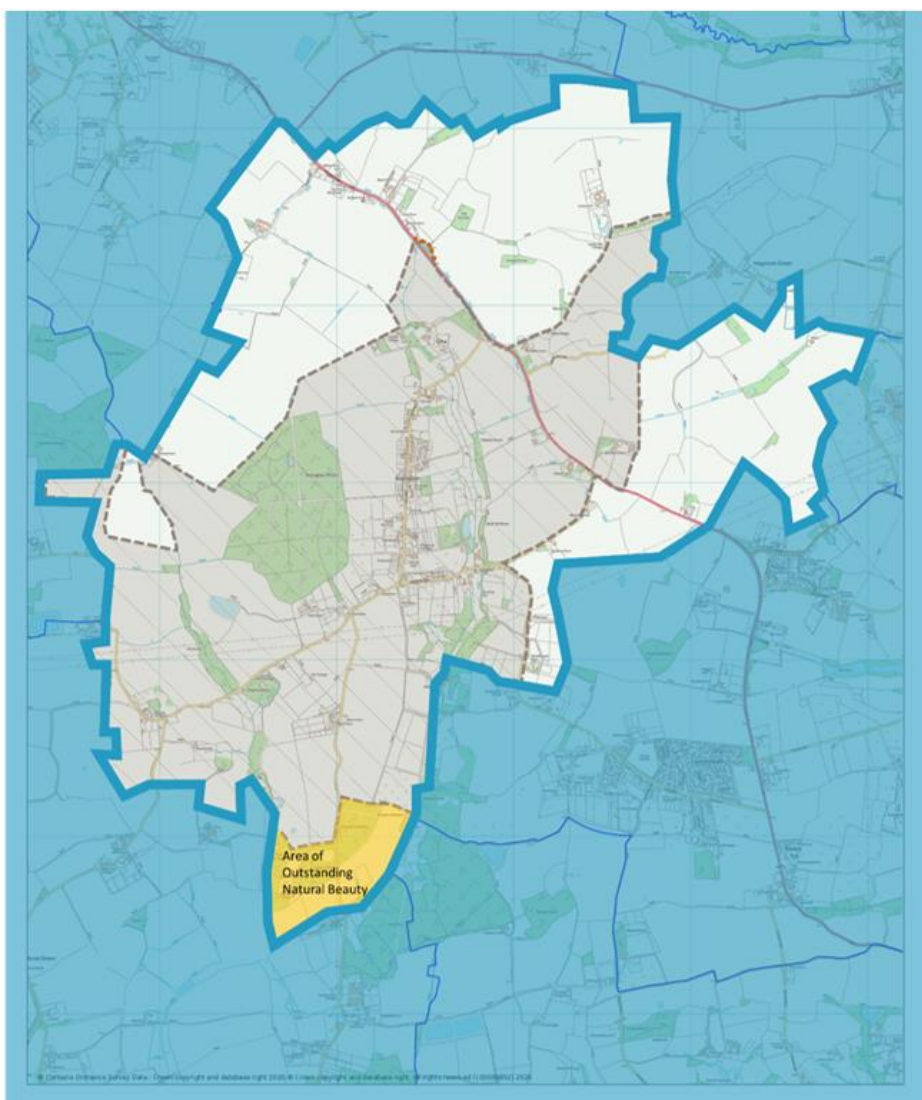


We have developed policies to protect Assington's landscape, the first of which designates an area of local landscape sensitivity, extending the previously designated 'special landscape area':

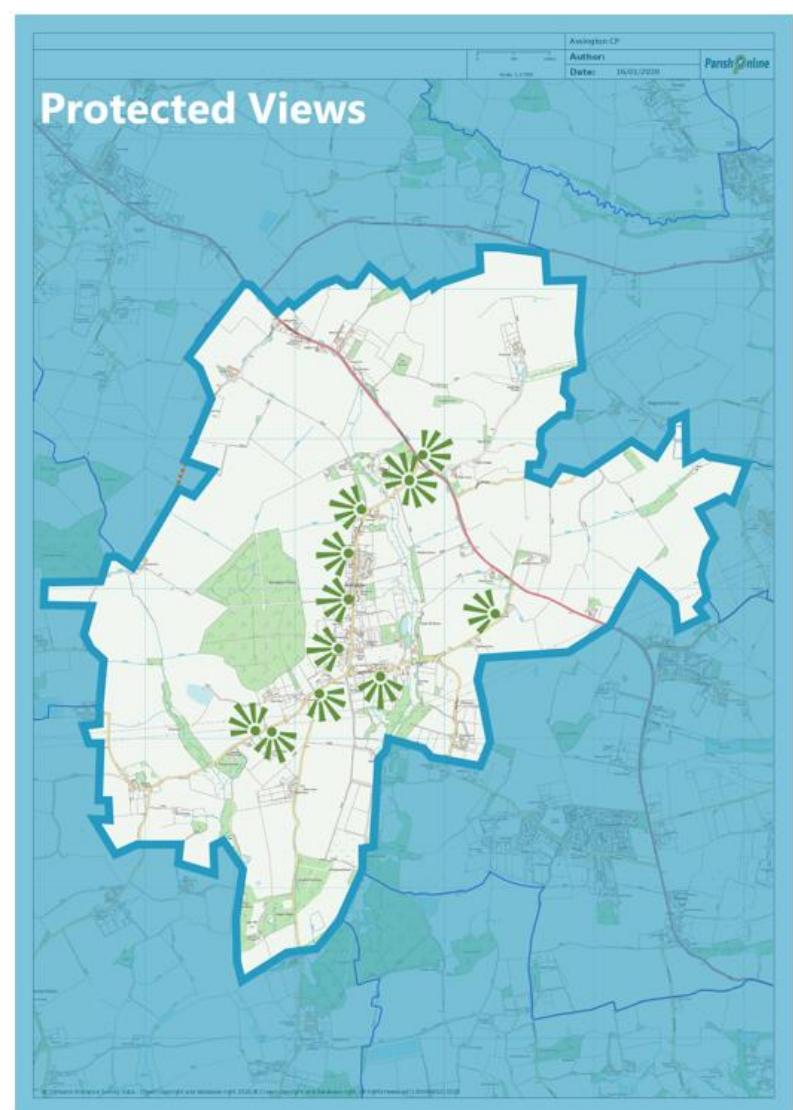
Policy ASSN12 – Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity

Development proposals in the Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity, as identified on the Policies Map, will be permitted only where they:

- i) protect and enhance the special landscape qualities of the area; and
- ii) are designed and sited so as to harmonise with the landscape setting.



Map 10 – Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity



Map 11 – Protected Views

The next policy aims to preserve the most important views in the parish, as voted for by people through the residents questionnaire.

Policy ASSN13 – Protected Views

Development proposals must not reduce the quality of the 'protected views' identified on the Policies Map



10. Natural Environment

How can we protect and improve?



The consultations showed that residents want to control light pollution and reduce the impact of the village on local wildlife. This policy aims to preserve and improve dark skies.

Policy ASSN14 – Dark Skies

While ensuring that new developments are secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety, dark skies are to be preferred over streetlights. Any future outdoor lighting systems should have a minimum impact on the environment, minimising light pollution and adverse effects on wildlife subject to highway safety, the needs of particular individuals or groups, and security. Schemes should reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the night-time skies dark and reducing glare. For the avoidance of doubt, no ‘permanently on’ external lighting should feature in new developments and security lighting should be motion activated. No uplighting features will be permitted on any new development.

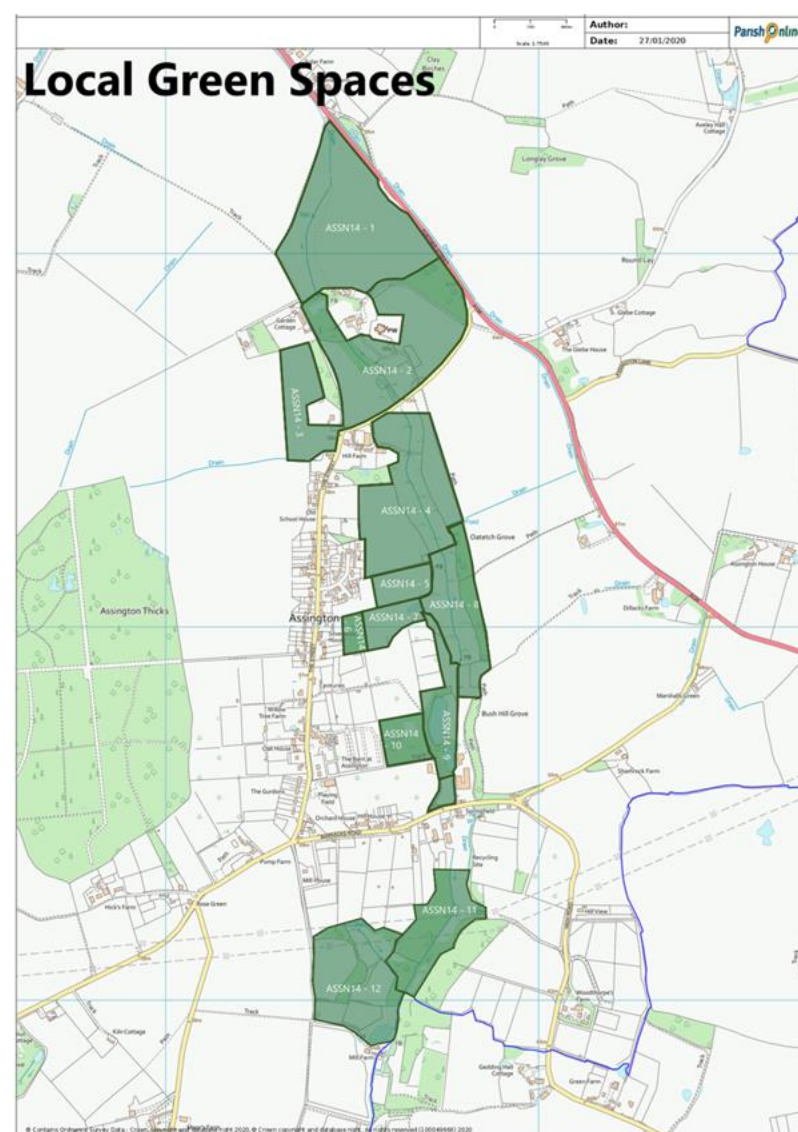
The strongest protection we can give to the natural environment is to designate land as ‘Local Green Spaces’. This gives similar protection to green belt land but has strict criteria to be met to be allowed designation. We believe the areas below meet the criteria, as shown in the separate evidence document available to review today and online.

Policy ASSN15 – Local Green Spaces

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in this Plan and identified on the Policies Map.

- 1 Assington Park, north part
- 2 Assington Park, south part
- 3 Area of the Old Vicarage
- 4 Hill Farm land, with rear of “Celandine”
- 5 Meadow View
- 6 Wildlife Area
- 7 The Mere
- 8 Oatetch Grove and Meadow
- 9 The Reservoir
- 10 Part of Old Orchards
- 11 Cotton Wood
- 12 Mill Farm Land

Development on these sites will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Permitted development rights, including the operational requirements of infrastructure providers, are not affected by this designation.



Map 13 – Local Green Spaces

Policy ASSN16 – Biodiversity

Except in exceptional circumstances, development proposals should avoid the loss of, or material harm to important trees, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds.

Where such losses or harm are unavoidable:

- i) the benefits of the development proposal must be demonstrated clearly to outweigh any impacts; and
- ii) suitable mitigation measures, that may include equivalent or better replacement of the lost features, will be required.

It is expected that the mitigation proposals will form an integral part of the design concept and layout of any development scheme, and that development will be landscape-led and appropriate in relation to its setting, context and ongoing management.

Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened through an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.

Development proposals will be supported where they provide a net gain in biodiversity through, for example,

- a) the creation of new natural habitats including ponds;
- b) the planting of additional trees and hedgerows (reflecting the character of Assington’s traditional hedgerows), and;
- c) restoring and repairing fragmented biodiversity networks.

Policy ASSN 16 aims to protect and improve local biodiversity.

11. Built Environment and Design

What should development look like?



Assington has a high number and quality of listed buildings and Policy ASSN 17 aims to ensure any future development doesn't cause any harm to these buildings or their setting.

Policy ASSN17 – Heritage Assets

To ensure the conservation and enhancement of the village's heritage assets, proposals must:

- preserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets of the village, their setting and the wider built environment, including views into, within and out of the conservation area as identified on the Policies Map;
- retain buildings and spaces, the loss of which would cause harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- contribute to the village's local distinctiveness, built form and scale of its heritage assets, as described in the Landscape Appraisal and Built Character Assessment, through the use of appropriate design and materials;
- be of an appropriate scale, form, height, massing, alignment and detailed design which respects the area's character, appearance and its setting, in line with the AECOM Design Guidelines for Assington;
- demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits, alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the heritage asset and its context; and
- provide clear justification, through the submission of a heritage statement, for any works that could harm a heritage asset yet be of wider substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis of the asset and the proposal.

Proposals will not be supported where the harm caused as a result of the impact of a proposed scheme is not justified by the public benefits that would be provided.

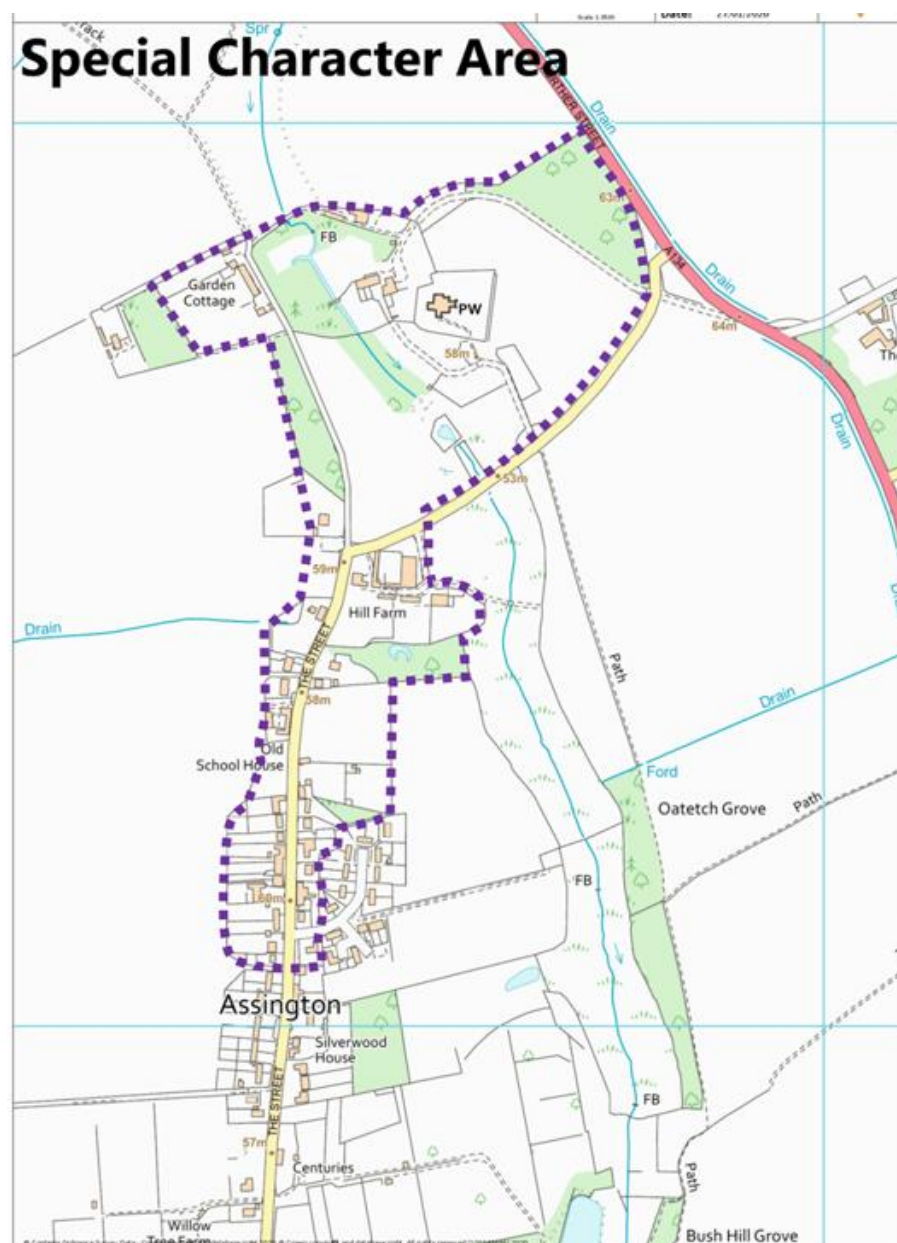
Where a planning proposal affects a heritage asset, it must be accompanied by a Heritage Statement identifying, as a minimum, the significance of the asset, and an assessment of the impact of the proposal on heritage assets. The level of detail of the Heritage Statement should be proportionate to the importance of the asset, the works proposed and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance and/or setting.

A large number of these listed buildings are in the north of the central village and we propose designating this a 'special character area' and any development in this area would be required to demonstrate how it enhances the setting.

Policy ASSN18 – Assington Special Character Area

A Special Character Area is identified on the Policies Map. Within this area, as well as having regard to the need to preserve and enhance the significance of the heritage assets in or adjoining the area, consideration will be given as to how a proposal enhances the distinct characteristics of the identified area.

Where the harm caused as a result of the impact of a proposed scheme is not justified by the public benefits that would be provided, it will not be supported.



Map 14 – Special Character Area

12. Built Environment and Design

How should development be designed?



New development should sit naturally alongside the existing buildings in the village. Policy ASSN 19 aims to achieve this by using detailed design guidelines produced by independent consultants AECOM after visiting the parish.



Policy ASSN19 – Design Considerations

Proposals for new development must reflect the local characteristics and circumstances in the Neighbourhood Plan area and create and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.

Planning applications should, as appropriate to the proposal, demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix B of this Plan and, as appropriate to the proposal.

In addition, proposals will be supported where they:

- recognise and address the key features, characteristics, landscape/building character, local distinctiveness and special qualities of the area and/or building and, where necessary, prepare a landscape character appraisal to demonstrate this;
- maintain or create the village's sense of place and/or local character avoiding, where possible, cul-de-sac developments which do not reflect the lane hierarchy and form of the settlement;
- do not involve the loss of gardens, important open, green or landscaped areas identified on the Policies Map, which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of that part of the village;
- taking mitigation measures into account, do not affect adversely:
 - any historic character, architectural or archaeological heritage assets of the site and its surroundings;
 - important landscape characteristics including trees and hedgerows and other prominent topographical features;
 - the character and appearance of the building, street scene and surroundings and reflects and respects the relationship of the site and its context setting and those of any adjoining properties;
 - identified protected views into, out of, or within the village as identified on the Policies Map;
 - sites, habitats, species and features of ecological interest;
 - the amenities of adjacent areas by reason of noise, smell, vibration, overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light, other pollution (including light pollution), or volume or type of vehicular activity generated; and/or residential amenity;
- not locate sensitive development where its users and nearby residents would be significantly and adversely affected by noise, smell, vibration, or other forms of pollution from existing sources, unless adequate and appropriate mitigation can be implemented;
- produce designs that respect the character, scale and density of the locality;
- produce designs, in accordance with standards, that maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network ensuring that all vehicle parking is provided within the plot and seek always to ensure permeability through new housing areas, connecting any new development into the heart of the existing settlement;
- wherever possible ensure that development faces on to existing lanes, retaining the rural character and creates cross streets or new back streets in keeping with the settlement's hierarchy of routes;
- not result in water run-off that would add-to or create surface water flooding;
- where appropriate, make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and for cycle storage in accordance with adopted cycle parking standards.
- include suitable ducting capable of accepting fibre to enable superfast broadband; and
- provide one electric vehicle charging point per new off-street parking place created.

Policy ASSN20 – Sustainable Construction Practices

Proposals that incorporate current best practice in energy conservation will be supported where such measures are designed to be integral to the building design and minimise any detrimental impact on the building or its surroundings. Development proposals should demonstrate:

- how they maximise the benefits of solar gain in site layouts and orientation of buildings;
- incorporate best practice in energy conservation and be designed to achieve maximum achievable energy efficiency;
- avoid fossil fuel-based heating systems; and
- incorporate sustainable design and construction measures and energy efficiency measures including, where feasible, ground/air source heat pumps, solar panels and grey/rainwater harvesting and recycling;

Policy ASSN 20
promotes
sustainable
construction...



... and Policy ASSN 21
aims to improve the
quality of Assington's
stream

Policy ASSN21 – Discharge of Sewage

Given the relatively low flow rate of Assington's stream, any new development will not be permitted to discharge sewage outputs to the stream, even if treated. New developments will be encouraged to improve the stream quality by providing remediation through reed beds or weeper drains into the fields, or by supporting schemes to reintroduce and establish swan mussels.

13. Infrastructure, Business and Services

The plan is about more than housing!



Clearly we want to support the highly valued shops, facilities, services and recreational spaces in the village, and these policies aim to do just that.

Policy ASSN22 – Community Facilities

Proposals that would result in the loss of valued facilities or services which support a local community (or premises last used for such purposes), including those identified on the Policies Map, will only be permitted where:

- it can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable nor likely to become viable. Where appropriate, supporting financial evidence should be provided including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 12 months; and
- it can be demonstrated, through evidenced research, that there is no local demand for the use and that the building/site is not needed for any alternative social, community or leisure use; or
- alternative facilities and services are available, or replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent standard, in a location that is accessible to the community it serves with good access by public transport or by cycling or walking.

The provision of the following community facilities will be supported where they can be implemented such as not to adversely impact upon the rural character of the parish:

- Improved high speed broadband provision
- Improved mobile phone reception
- Increased post office facilities, mobile library provision
- Improvements to the playing field
- Healthcare provision



Policy ASSN23 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

Proposals for the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will be permitted subject to compliance with other Policies in the Development Plan. Development which will result in the loss of existing amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will not be allowed unless:

- it can be demonstrated that the space or facility is surplus to requirement against the local planning authority's standards for the particular location, and the proposed loss will not result in a likely shortfall during the plan period; or
- replacement for the space or facilities lost is made available, of at least equivalent quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the needs of users of the existing space or facility.

Any replacement provision should take account of the needs of the settlement where the development is taking place and the current standards of open space and sports facility provision adopted by the local planning authority.

Where necessary to the acceptability of the development, the local planning authority will require developers of new housing, office, retail and other commercial and mixed development to provide open space including play areas, formal sport/recreation areas, amenity areas and where appropriate, indoor sports facilities or to provide land and a financial contribution towards the cost and maintenance of existing or new facilities, as appropriate. These facilities will be secured through the use of conditions and/or planning obligations.

Clubhouses, pavilions, car parking and ancillary facilities must be of a high standard of design and internal layout. The location of such facilities must be well related and sensitive to the topography, character and uses of the surrounding area, particularly when located in or close to residential areas. Proposals which give rise to intrusive floodlighting will not be permitted.

Policy ASSN24 – Local Businesses

The retention and intensification of employment premises will be supported provided that proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character, the amenity of residents and would not generate unacceptable levels of vehicular traffic on local roads.

Proposals for non-employment uses that are expected to have an adverse effect on employment generation will only be permitted where one or more of the following criteria are met:

- evidence can be provided that genuine attempts have been made to sell/let the site in its current use, and that no suitable and viable alternative employment uses can be found or are likely to be found in the foreseeable future;
- the existing use has created over-riding environmental problems (e.g. noise, odours or traffic) and permitting an alternative use would be a substantial environmental outweigh the loss of an employment site;
- an alternative use or mix of uses would assist in regeneration and offer greater benefits to the community in meeting local business and employment needs;
- it is for an employment related support facility such as employment training / education, workplace crèche or workplace related café;
- an alternative use or mix of uses would provide other sustainability benefits that would outweigh the loss of an employment site.



14. Highways and Movement

How can we improve for all road users?



Measures to reduce vehicle speeds and ways to encourage cycling, walking and horse riding were clear priorities for residents in our consultation events. These outcomes cannot be achieved by planning policies but we have created the following community actions with the aim of seeking improvements.



Community Action CA3

The parish will work with Suffolk Highways to create a 20mph zone on the Street in the area of the conservation zone. This will be with a view to encouraging walking and cycling in the area, and in particular with a view to improving the perception of safety of pedestrians in an area where there is no pavement, nor space to create one.



The achievement of these aims will need funding as well as the support of Suffolk Highways and/or Babergh. Their achievement is clearly outside the control of residents or the Parish Council. However, by clearly stating these actions in the neighbourhood plan it shows strong community support which may help deliver results.

Community Action CA4

The Parish Council shall work with Babergh Council, Suffolk Highways and Suffolk Police to improve road safety and reduce traffic volume and speed within the Village and the Parish Council will commit parish funding towards road improvements where required and affordable. The three priorities, as discussed with Suffolk Highways are:

1) Traffic Calming Zone

This will mirror the area of the proposed conservation zone and will include a 20mph speed limit. It may also include:

- Pedestrians in road or pedestrian/cyclist/horse rider priority signage
- A changed road surface colour which is sympathetic and enhancing to the rural location
- Additional pinch points using natural features (perhaps facilitating essential on-street parking)

2) Actions to reduce speeds near The Ryes school

These may include:

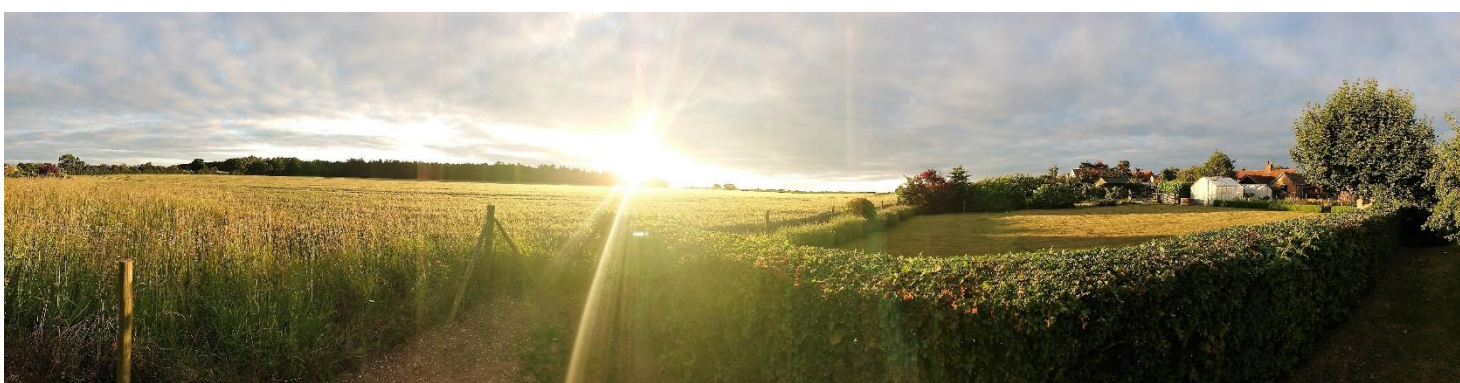
- "20's plenty" signage
- "School Slow" road markings
- An extension of the 30mph limit from the current location out to beyond Rose Green

3) Speed reduction measures on the straight section of The Street between the village shop and the public phone kiosk

It is essential that any traffic calming features do not urbanise the area and therefore additional pinch points should be natural in appearance and not include large signage. Adequate access for farm vehicles will also be retained

Other suggestions to help achieve improvements could include:

- i the provision of Gateway features at the extents of the existing 30mph speed limit through the village.
- ii additional signing to warn drivers of the likelihood of horses, cyclists and pedestrians, particularly around the narrow lane approaches to the village.
- iii the provision of signing informing drivers of single-track roads and the presence of passing places.
- iv establish a Community Speed Watch group in association with Suffolk Police.
- v Formalising passing places on the narrow roads into the village.



15. Other Community Actions

What else do we want to achieve?



Unusually for Suffolk there is a lack of communal green space in Assington, and throughout our consultations we have been asked if this situation could be improved. Community action CA1 aims to pursue this possibility.

Community Action CA1

The Parish Council shall investigate with landowners the possibility of creating new community green spaces within the village, through either purchase or donation of areas of unproductive agricultural or scrub land. This may be done by the creation of a community land trust in which all parishioners will be able to participate.



A neighbourhood plan can create a special character area, as this one does in Policy ASSN 18. It cannot, however, designate the higher protection and status of a conservation area, which is in the gift of Babergh. Community action CA2 makes it an aim to pursue this.

Community Action CA2

The Parish Council shall work with Babergh Council to establish a conservation area, broadly stretching from The Shoulder of Mutton public house on The Street, through to Assington Hall and the A134. This area will mirror the Special Character Area as shown on the policies map.

Many villagers lamented the lack of well-connected circular walks in the village. While we have countryside footpaths, there are some key connections between these which could be made to create both long and short circular walks. Community action CA5 gives the aim of pursuing such possibilities with land owners.



Community Action CA5

The Parish Council shall work with landowners to create connecting footpaths to allow new circular walks within the parish. While the goodwill of landowners will be needed for this to be possible, it is proposed that some concerns may be overcome by:

- The parish council funding new signage and improvement works to the paths
- New footpaths to be 'permissive' ones only and protected from permanence (where the landowner wishes it) by carefully created signage which is legally watertight.
- Landowners therefore retaining the ability to remove access at any time or restrict it (for example during certain farming activity)

16. What's Next?

We are in the home straight!



Today is the start of a six week period of consultation which ends on
Monday 30th March.

Please remember to give us your opinion; good, bad or indifferent!



You can fill in a feedback form online at:

<http://assington.onesuffolk.net/assington-neighbourhood-plan/>

or ask for a paper form today to complete and return.



Copies of the plan will be available to borrow from Ian Jordan (07767 035742) or Catherine Harrison (07710 899750). They will also be available at the Shoulder of Mutton, Assington Barn Café, and the village hall foyer, all during normal opening times.

At the end of the consultation we will review all submitted comments, as well as those from organisations such as Suffolk County Council and Natural England before establishing if any amendments to the plan are required.

At the same time a "Consultation Statement" and a document known as the "Basic Conditions Statement" will be prepared. The Final Draft Plan – known as the "Submission Plan" and these two documents will be put to the Parish Council for approval for submission to Babergh District Council.

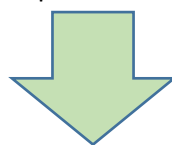


The Parish Council will be asked for approval to submit the plan to Babergh District Council, who will carry out a further six week consultation.



The plan is then submitted to an independent examiner who recommend whether the plan, possibly with amendments, should proceed to a referendum.

The Independent Examiner will review the Plan and consider any objections to it. The Examiner must consider: • whether having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to approve the neighbourhood plan; • the approval of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; • the approval of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Babergh Local Plan; and, • the approval of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.



Referendum. This is the final stage organised by Babergh District Council in the same way as a local election.

If there is a simple majority in support of the plan, it will be adopted!

Our aim is for this to happen in 2020.

Thank you for coming to our event today!