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Introduction from the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Welcome to the Submission Consultation Version of the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Ashover.

The current Neighbourhood Plan process originated by Ashover Parish at a Council meeting in November 2014 when it was decided to set up a joint Council/Community working group. A formal inaugural meeting was held in December 2014 and identified three community volunteer members, three Councillors along with a consultant from 'Your Locale' as the Steering Group.

The Parish Plan which was formulated in 2006 and has formed the basis of the Neighbourhood plan.

A constitution for the Steering Committee was drafted and agreed in December 2014, and agreement was reached to meet on a monthly basis.

At the outset we sent a questionnaire to all the households in the parish and had a very good response.

The output from the questionnaire was used as the basis for the drop in events which have been held in the Parish Hall.

These events were well attended and we would like to thank all who attended for their attendance and contribution.

A draft neighbourhood Plan was then developed and consulted on.

Following consideration of the comments received, the Parish Council approved this final draft Neighbourhood Plan, which was submitted to North East Derbyshire DC along with the supporting documents, as we are required to do to under neighbourhood plan regulations to take the plan forward.

I would also like to thank the members of the steering group, the Parish Council, the Parish Clerk and Your Locale as well as and for the grant funding received from Locality and the Big Lottery Awards for All for their help and support in producing this plan

Councillor Richard Fidler

Chairman Neighbourhood Plan Steering group.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This Plan been prepared by the Ashover Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, which brings together members of the local community and parish councillors, and has been led by the Parish Council.

A key part of the Government’s Localism agenda, a Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document that gives local people greater control and say over how their community develops, now and in the future. This includes, for example, where new homes, shops, etc. should be built, what new buildings and extensions should look like and which areas of land should be protected from development.

As the Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011 states, “Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live”.

The Plan covers the whole of the Parish of Ashover.

It builds on the existing Parish Plan for Ashover. It is not intended to replace the Parish Plan. It sits alongside it to provide more detailed development ‘planning’ related policies to help achieve the aims and objectives of the Parish Plan.

The Plan sets out a long term approach for the development of Ashover, and set outs out clear development related policies to realise this.

In preparing a Neighbourhood Plan a community is not working from ‘a blank piece of paper’. Legislation requires that the Plan, and the policies it contains, must be prepared in a prescribed manner; in particular, the policies must be in general conformity with relevant national and district wide (i.e. North East Derbyshire) approved planning policies.

The Plan is now at the submission consultation stage and has been formally submitted to North East Derbyshire District Council. They will then have six weeks to confirm that it meets the Basic Conditions and the other legal requirements that a neighbourhood plan needs to meet before it moves to the next stage.

Once approved, the draft Plan will form part of the Statutory Development Plan for North East Derbyshire. This means that it must be taken into account when considering planning decisions affecting Ashover Parish.

CHAPTER 2. HOW THE PLAN WAS PREPARED

The Plan has been prepared by the Ashover Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

This Steering Group comprises members of the local community and local parish councillors, with the support of North East Derbyshire District Council and consultants Yourlocale, and under the direction of Ashover Parish Council (the Accountable Body for the Plan).

It is based on robust evidence. This includes statistical information gathered through sources such as the Census as well as from community consultation and engagement.

Effective and extensive consultation have been at the heart of the preparation of the Plan. This is key to ensure that the Plan fully reflects local needs and priorities. There have been a variety of consultation exercises over the last 12 months, at which many hundreds
of local people have taken part. These include drop-in sessions, questionnaires, and meetings with developers and others.

CHAPTER 3. HOW THE PLAN FITS IN TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM

The right for communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans was established through the Localism Act 2011, which set out the general rules governing their preparation.

A Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area in which it is prepared. This statutory status means that it must be taken into account when considering planning decisions affecting that area.

One of the main rules governing the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan is that it must be in line with European regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations. It must also be in general conformity with national, county and district wide (i.e. North East Derbyshire) planning policies. This means that it cannot be prepared in isolation. It will need to take into account, and generally work with, the grain of the district wide and national policies unless there are good reasons for not doing so.

At the local level, the key planning document which a Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to is the District Wide Local Plan. In the case of Ashover, this is the North East Derbyshire District Local Plan.

This requirement, however, for the Plan to be in general conformity with the adopted District Wide Local Plan is complicated by the revised timescale for the production of the new North East Derbyshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (which will replace the saved policies from the North East Derbyshire Local Plan 2001-2011, and are now a bit dated). An initial draft of the Local Plan was prepared in 2015. This Plan has since been effectively withdrawn, and the revised draft Local Plan is not expected until 2017. Nevertheless, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considered it expedient to proceed with the Plan based on the best available evidence, including that contained in the draft Local Plan.

Also important is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF requires the planning system (including Neighbourhood Plans) to encourage sustainable development and details three dimensions to that development:

- An economic dimension – they should contribute to economic development;
- A social dimension – they should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the right supply of housing and creating a high quality built environment with accessible local services; and
- An environmental dimension – they should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

The Plan is now at the submission’ stage. This means that the Parish Council is satisfied that it has a robust draft Neighbourhood Plan and asks North East Derbyshire District Council to check that it has been developed in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. This is in accordance with rules covering the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Once it has successfully passed this stage, it will then go to an Independent Examiner, who will check to see that it is has been prepared in the prescribed manner. If the Plan
successfully passes this stage, with any modifications, it will be put forward to referendum, where those on the electoral register in Ashover Parish will be invited to vote on whether or not they support it. At least 50% of those voting must approve it for the Ashover Neighbourhood Plan to become a ‘Made’ statutory planning document.

Whilst planning applications will still be determined by North East Derbyshire District Council, and in special circumstances Derbyshire County Council, the production of a Neighbourhood Plan will mean that they must have regard to the provisions of the Plan and the relevant locally formulated criteria when reaching planning decisions that affect Ashover Parish. This means that the residents of the Parish will have a far greater control over where development takes place, and what it looks like.

It should be noted, however, it is not at the ‘Made’ stage when the provisions of the Plan need to be taken into account when considering planning decisions by North East Derbyshire DC and others. It is at the draft stage, whereby whilst decision makers need to bear in mind that it is still draft, legislation requires that the more advanced the preparation of the Plan the greater the ‘weight’ that may be given to its contents. Indeed, the Plan has added importance in guiding and shaping development in the absence of an up to date district wide Local Plan.

CHAPTER 4. THE PLAN, ITS PURPOSE AND WHAT WE WANT IT TO ACHIEVE

The Plan area encompasses the whole of the Parish of Ashover and covers the period up to 2031, a timescale which deliberately mirrors that for the planned North East Derbyshire Local Plan.

The main purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is not to duplicate national or district-wide (i.e. North East Derbyshire) planning policies, but to sit alongside these, to add additional or more detailed policies specific to Ashover Parish. Where there are national and district-wide planning policies that meet the needs and requirements of the Parish they are not repeated here. Instead, the Plan focuses on those planning issues which consultation shows matter most to the community, and to which the Plan can add the greatest additional value. These include policies that:

- Ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations;
- Encourage the right types of development that meet local needs;
- Protect important buildings and structures of historic and architectural interest;
- Protect important community facilities and shops;
- Promote high quality design in new development;
- Protect the countryside and special landscape;
- Protect open spaces that are important to the community and/or wildlife; and
- Seek ways of addressing the problems of traffic congestion.

Furthermore, these locally formulated policies will be specific to Ashover Parish and reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

It is important to note that when using the Plan to form a view on a development proposal or a policy issue the whole document and the policies contained in it must be considered together.
While every effort has been made to make the main parts of this Plan easy to read and understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal, so that it complies with statutory requirements.

The Plan will be kept under review and may change over time in response to new and changing needs and requirements.

CHAPTER 5. HOW THE PLAN SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

According to the key national planning document – the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development.

The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and to enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own social, economic and environmental needs.

The NPPF carries a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, environmental and economic, all of which are important and interrelated. In accordance with this, the Plan’s aims and policies are centred on the achievement of sustainable development, including by, for example:

a) Social

- To safeguard existing open space for the enjoyment of residents;
- To protect existing community facilities and shops; and
- To deliver a mix of housing types, so that it can meet the needs of present and future generations.

b) Environmental

- To ensure that housing development is of the right quantity and type in the right location, so that it does not harm but instead positively reflects the existing and historic character of the area;
- To protect important open spaces from development,
- To ensure that the design of development enhances the Parish’s special character and identity;
- To protect and, where possible, improve biodiversity and important habitats; and
- To make provision for improved pedestrian and cycling facilities.

c) Economic

- To protect existing employment uses;
- To support appropriate small scale business development and expansion; and
- To encourage appropriate start-up businesses and home working.
CHAPTER 6. ABOUT ASHOVER PARISH

Ashover Parish is one of the largest and most sparsely populated parishes in the Country. Situated in the western edge of the district of North East Derbyshire, it covers 3,686 hectares and extends more than five miles north to south by a similar distance east to west at its widest point.

The Parish has a long and proud history. The earliest written record of the Parish is in the Domesday Book of 1086. At this time the parish was noted as being in possession of a church, priest, a plough and a mill, with a taxable value of £4.00. It was known in Saxon times as ‘Essovre’, meaning ‘ridge where ash trees grow’.

The Parish comprises a number of distinct historic settlements. The largest of which is Ashover Village. Other smaller settlements include Alton, Farhill, Kelstedge, Littlemoor, Milltown, Stone Edge and Uppertown. The majority of its population and services are concentrated in the settlements while between and surrounding them are large areas of open and generally attractive countryside.

Agriculture and farming is the dominant land use. At 0.5 persons per hectare, its population density is well below the district average (3.6 persons per hectare) and national average (4.1 persons per hectare).

In 2011 it had a population of 1,905 (up from 1,794 in 2001). Reflecting the national trend, it has an ageing population. The proportion of young people in the Parish is below district and national averages.

There is a range of community and service facilities in the Parish, mainly concentrated in Ashover Village. These include churches, a primary school, medical centre, pubs, a village hall and a range of other facilities. Residents have to travel outside the Parish, mainly to the nearby centres of Chesterfield and Matlock, to access other retail and community services.

The built environment is generally very good. There are a number of buildings and structures that have been identified as being of national and historic interest, including over 50 Listed Buildings. There is a Conservation Area based on the historic core of the village of Ashover.

It also has a very good and diverse natural environment, including some of the finest Derbyshire landscape outside the National Park.

The majority of people living in the Parish use a car. 90% of households have access to a vehicle, compared to 74% nationally. There is limited public transport provision.

A full statistical profile of the Parish is available on the Parish Council website.

CHAPTER 7. A SUSTAINABLE ASHOVER PARISH

7.1 A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The purpose of the UK Planning System as set out in the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development.

This means ensuring that providing for the needs of the current generation does not make life worse for future generations.
This Plan has securing sustainable development at its heart. This includes how much new development is required to meet the needs of the local community, where it should best go and how it should be designed, both for now and in the future. This encompasses all proposals for development from the very smallest, such as a minor extension to a house, to major housing and employment developments.

The Parish Council will take a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals that contribute to sustainable development. This includes working with North East Derbyshire District Council, Derbyshire County Council, local community, developers and other partners to encourage the formulation of development proposals, which clearly demonstrate how sustainable development has been considered and addressed, and can be approved without delay.

**POLICY AP 1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** - When considering development proposals, the Plan will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in relevant national and district wide plans and polices, unless those policies direct otherwise.

7.2. Development Strategy

One of the key ways in which the planning system can ensure sustainable development is to direct significant development, such as new homes and employment, to the most sustainable locations.

This is a core principle of the NPPF, which seeks to “focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable”.

It is also at the heart of North East Derbyshire’s draft Local Plan “which aims to direct growth to the most sustainable settlements”.

In support of this, North East Derbyshire District Council has developed a hierarchy of settlements.

This hierarchy categorises settlements based on their size and the level of facilities such as shops, schools and employment that they have to meet their resident’s everyday needs. It then seeks to direct development to those settlements with the highest level of services and facilities, as these are considered to be the most sustainable locations for future development – by directing development to these locations, the need to travel, especially by car, to access jobs and services should be reduced.

The general principle is that the higher a settlement comes in the hierarchy the more suitable it is considered for future development in the most sustainable way.

All the fifty plus settlements in North East Derbyshire with more than 20 dwellings (as of 2008) were included as part of this hierarchy. This included Alton, Ashover, Fallgate, Kelstedge and Littlemoor in the Parish of Ashover.

This hierarchy grouped similar settlements across North East Derbyshire into five main classifications:

- Principal Towns
- Secondary Towns
• Large Settlements  
• Small Settlements  
• Very Small Villages and Hamlets

Ashover village was identified as a Large Settlement. This means:

• it is mainly residential in nature  
• it has some retail, community and employment uses  
• it is a rural centre serving the surrounding villages and rural hinterland, and  
• it is suitable for limited small scale development, essentially to serve its needs and those of the wider Parish, and is proportionate to their size.

Alton, Fallgate, Kelstedge and Littlemoor were each identified as a Small Settlement. This means:

• that each has some housing and facilities  
• that any new development will be restricted to small-scale development targeted to meet local needs, and  
• that development should be of a scale and type necessary to secure and service a mixed and balanced community.

The community has some reservations about these results. In particular, the identification of Alton, Fallgate and Littlemoor as Small Settlements in view of their lack of services and infrequent bus services, which suggests that they are more akin to Very Small Village and Hamlets.

That said, the consultation shows that the community is generally comfortable with the modest scale of development suggested by the hierarchy and proposed in the district-wide growth strategy (as articulated in the draft North East Derbyshire Local Plan) for the settlements of Alton, Ashover, Fallgate, Kelstedge and Littlemoor and across the Parish as a whole. Residents do not wish to see significant housing and other growth in the Parish, but are generally sympathetic to development that help meets local needs and supports local services and facilities, and that creates more diverse and mixed communities. Any development, however, will need to reflect and complement the special character of the Parish, meet a clearly identified need, be sustainable and not have an adverse impact on the amenity of this predominately rural area.

The community also recognised that by focusing development in the main settlements, and encouraging the re-use of previously developed buildings or sites, the open countryside can be protected.

It should also be borne in mind that there has been a considerable significant level of new development in the Parish in recent years; more is the pipeline, including planning permissions that have yet to be implemented. There is evidence that the scale and pace of this development have stretched facilities such as schools and the road network, having an adverse impact on the special character of the Parish and adding to the already high (and unsustainable) levels of car journeys away from the Parish to access jobs and services.

7.3 Limits to Development

Limits to Development are a commonly used tool in planning documents such as Neighbourhood Plans and Local Plans. They are used to define the extent of a built up
part of a settlement. They distinguish between areas where, in planning terms, development would be acceptable in principle (such as towns and villages) and where it would not be (generally in less sustainable locations, such as in the open countryside). As a general principle, suitable development proposals should be directed towards sites within Limits to Development.

The Plan proposes to designate Limits to Development for the settlements of Ashover, Fallgate, Kelstedge, Alton and Littlemoor. These will update and supersede the existing ones for Ashover, Kelstedge and Littlemoor introduced by North East Derbyshire in 2005, and introduce new ones for Fallgate and Alton. Their introduction is supported by district wide planning policies, which also recommend that Limits to Development be introduced and/or updated for all the main towns and villages in the District.

The proposed Limits to Development are shown on the Proposal Maps. These have been developed through consultation with the local community and other stakeholders, including the District Council, and are based on best practice and guidance provided by North East Derbyshire.

Within the defined Limits to Development identified in this Plan small scale, sustainable development will be viewed sympathetically. This development will mainly comprise infill – the filling of a restricted gap in an otherwise built up frontage or the conversion of an existing building. Any development will be required to demonstrate that it meets an identified local need, and is well designed and located.

In addition, much of the built up parts of the Parish have developed at relatively low densities. There are substantial areas of verge and other green spaces in these settlements, and many properties are set within relatively large grounds and gardens. These spaces between and around these buildings contribute significantly to the special character of these settlements and the wider Parish, and to maintaining residential amenity. When considering development proposals, it is therefore also important to have regard to the impact the proposed development will have on the setting and layout of the surrounding area.

Special regard will also be required to protect and enhance special views and landscape settings. The Parish is mainly rural and open in character, and set in largely unspoilt countryside. This means there are views of open countryside from almost every part of the Parish. This gives the residents a strong sense of pride and connection to the countryside, and is important to the special and distinct character of each settlement and the whole Parish. The consultation confirmed that views and landscapes are highly prized by the local community.

**POLICY AP 2: DEVELOPMENT WITHIN LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT** - Within the defined Limits to Development for Alton, Ashover Fallgate, Littlemoor, and Kelstedge, as defined on the proposal maps, small scale development proposals which help to meet the development needs of the Parish and secure the sustainability of the Parish will be viewed positively where the proposal:

a) helps to meet an identified local need;

b) respects the shape and form of the relevant settlement in order to maintain its distinctive character and enhance it where possible;

c) is of an appropriate scale which reflects the size, character and level of service provision within the relevant settlement;
d) retains existing important natural boundaries such as trees, hedges, walls and streams, which either contribute to visual amenity or are important for their ecological value;

e) respects important views;

f) does not adversely affect neighbouring properties by way of privacy, daylight, visual intrusion or amenity;

g) protects the physical and visual separation of neighbouring settlements;

h) is sensitive to the landscape setting of the settlement;

i) preserves and where possible, enhances Ashover Conservation Area in which it is situated or adjacent to, where relevant;

j) preserves and where possible, enhances the setting of any important heritage asset, where the setting of that heritage asset would be affected by the proposal;

k) does not reduce garden space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area, or the amenity of neighbours and the existing and future occupiers of the dwelling;

l) contributes to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour; and where

m) any traffic generation and parking impact created does not result in an unacceptable direct or cumulative impact on congestion or road and pedestrian safety.

7.4 Development in the Countryside

In planning terms, land outside a defined Limits to Development, including any small groups of buildings or small settlements, is treated as countryside.

It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be strictly controlled. It should only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where it is appropriate to a rural location, such as for the purposes of agriculture, including (in principle) farm diversification, or for sport and recreation.

This approach is also supported by this Plan, in particular, because it will help ensure that development is focused in more sustainable settlements with a greater range of services and facilities, as well as helping to maintain the special landscape character of the Parish and protecting the countryside for its own sake as an attractive, accessible and non-renewable natural resource.

POLICY AP 3: DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS OUTSIDE THE DEFINED LIMITS OF DEVELOPMENT - Land outside the defined Limits to Development will be treated as open countryside, where development will be only allowed in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with other relevant policies in this Plan and with relevant district and national planning policies.

CHAPTER 8. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND MEETING HOUSING NEEDS

8.1 Housing

The Parish is a very popular place to live. It is reasonably accessible to those with access to public transport from major towns and cities such as Sheffield, Matlock and Chesterfield, and has a very good natural and built environment. The good quality of life is reflected in above average house prices, as well as pressure to build more homes in the Parish.
8.2 Housing Growth

Determining how much housing growth should take place in the Parish is not straightforward.

The consultation showed that residents were not generally opposed to further house building. They recognise that some new housing development is necessary and could bring benefits to the Parish. Benefits include supporting local facilities and services, such as shops and public transport, encouraging the redevelopment of redundant buildings, and helping to create a more balanced and sustainable community by, for example, providing a greater range of housing types and choice.

Residents were concerned, however, about the scale of new housing development that had already taken place in the Parish and could take place in the future. It was strongly considered that the Parish is not a suitable location for significant growth, especially as the Parish lacks the services and infrastructure to support such growth, and that there are more sustainable locations for major housing development in the District (as articulated in the settlement hierarchy developed by North East Derbyshire District Council).

There was also concern that some of the housing development which had taken place was having an adverse impact on the character of the Parish, and did not reflect the needs and wishes of the community. It was noted that the Parish has seen a steady increase in the number of dwellings, primarily as a consequence of new house building.

National planning regulations require District Councils such as North East Derbyshire to establish their housing requirements and develop planning policies and allocations to ensure that these requirements are met.

North East Derbyshire has established that this requirement is a minimum of 6,000 new homes between 2001 and 2031. Reflecting good practice, it has also added a 12% over-provision to ensure that delivery issues on individual sites would not affect the ability to deliver the overall minimum target. This results in an overall target of 6,755 dwellings for the District.

Determining how much of this District-wide requirement the Parish should plan for is not straightforward. Whilst the draft Local Plan did begin to apportion a housing target to specific towns and villages in the District, the Plan has effectively been withdrawn; as North East Derbyshire District Council stated “it is clear that there are significant problems in showing that the proposed strategy can be delivered successfully”.

In the absence of an agreed District-Wide methodology for proportioning the overall 6,755 new dwellings target across the District, and recognising the need to progress the Neighbourhood Plan during the period of uncertainty, the approach taken by the Neighbourhood Plan to determine the appropriate level of new housing for the Parish is (i) to use the settlement hierarchy and principles developed by North East Derbyshire; (ii) distribute housing growth to each of the five settlements based on the district average of 14% growth (based on number of dwellings in 2011), and (iii) bring these individual settlement targets together to create a composite target for the Parish.

This results in a target of 98 new dwellings to be built between 2011 and 2031. It should be noted that housing completions between 2011 and 2014 have gone some way to meeting this target already, analysis of planning approvals show that of February 2016 over 40
dwellings have been built or have planning permission in the Parish over this period. This leaves a residual target requirement of a minimum of 58 new homes which the Plan needs to accommodate.

It is recognised that this level of housing growth is less than that envisaged in the draft Local Plan for North East Derbyshire; in particular, the draft Local Plan suggested that Ashover village should have a minimum growth target of 40%. This proposal was, however, part of a draft document which was itself the subject of consultation. This consultation generated a substantial number of representations questioning its appropriateness and viability, about both the approach proposed by North East Derbyshire to distribute this growth and, specifically, the very high 40% growth target for Ashover.

These concerns were acknowledged and recognised by North East Derbyshire District Council, which in its decision to effectively withdraw the draft Local Plan stated “site assessments have revealed significant problems in identifying sufficient sites in appropriate locations to demonstrate that the proposed strategy can be delivered successfully”, and adding that there is “only limited supply in Ashover, where there are very few appropriate sites”.

It is considered that a 14% housing growth target for the Parish is an appropriate and sustainable target that makes provision for the needs of its residents and contributes to the overall housing target for North East Derbyshire. Also, by basing this growth on the district wide target of a minimum 6,755 new homes (thus including 12% over-provision) rather than the lower figure of 6,000, it provides some flexibility and future-proofing should deliverability issues arise on individual sites.

It is recognised, however, that there is a possibility that North East Derbyshire Local Plan (when finally agreed) may come up with a different target for Ashover than that contained in the Neighbourhood Plan. The draft Local Plan is now expected in 2017, but may take longer. It is considered, however, expedient to take forward the Neighbourhood Plan as soon as possible. Should the Local Plan require a significantly higher or lower figure to be accommodated within Ashover Parish, the Plan will be reviewed immediately.

**POLICY AP 4: NEW HOUSING PROVISION** - Having regard to the number of dwellings already constructed and existing sites with planning permission between 2011 and 2014, the remaining housing requirement for the Parish will be a minimum target of 58 new dwellings over the period 2014 to 2031, which will be met by sites allocated in accordance with Policy AP 5 and windfall sites in accordance with AP 6.

### 8.3 New Housing Allocations

Following consultation with the community, and using an agreed methodology for assessing potential housing sites across the District, a number of sites have been put forward for housing.

These have been identified as suitable, available, achievable and generally acceptable to the local community. Each can accommodate at least five dwellings but no more than nine dwellings. These sites will provide for greater choice, competition and flexibility in the provision of new homes to meet local need.

In identifying these sites, regard has been made to such factors such as the current use of the land, accessibility, distance to the important services and impact on the landscape. In
addition, a strong principle is that individual development should be of a scale appropriate to the settlement in which it is proposed to be located and that it is built in the most sustainable parts where it has least impact on the Parish.

The proposed allocations also reflect the findings of consultation with the local people, which demonstrated smaller sites were overwhelmingly the most preferred for development, and that large housing estates are strongly considered inappropriate.

**POLICY AP 5: NEW HOUSING ALLOCATIONS** - Land is allocated for new housing, as shown on the Proposal Maps, at

a) Land off Moor Rd, Ashover;
b) Land off Hockley Lane, Ashover;
c) Land off Fallgate;
d) Land east of Ashover Road, Kelstedge; and
e) Land west of Ashover Road, Kelstedge.

**8.4 Windfall Housing Sites**

The Plan recognises, however, that in addition to the larger sites allocated in Policy AP 5 there will be opportunities for further small scale (sites of less than five dwellings), limited, housing development in suitable and sustainable locations.

These 'Windfall Housing Sites' are small infill or redevelopment/conversion sites of less than five dwellings that come forward unexpectedly and which have not been specifically identified for new housing in a planning document. These sites often comprise redundant or underutilised buildings, and can range from small sites suitable for only a single dwelling to areas with a capacity for several (but fewer than five) houses.

Such sites have made a regular and significant contribution towards the housing supply across the Parish. Analysis of planning approvals approval between 2007 and 2014 show that about 7 new dwellings a year have come forward on sites of less than five dwellings, scattered across the Parish. This is a trend which is expected to continue. Though these sites cannot be identified, the high land values in the Parish coupled with the level of vacant and underutilised land and buildings, including agricultural related, mean that they will continue to provide a source of housing supply. It is important however that such windfall development respects the scale, form and density of surrounding development and enhances rather than detracts from the character and amenity of the settlement in which it is to be located. In addition, such new development will generally increase car ownership and there is a need to ensure that it does not worsen traffic and parking issues.

The Plan recognises that there is considerable scope for further windfall development within the built-up area of the Parish as defined by the identified Limits to Development.

The consultation shows that the community is generally supportive of small scale windfall sites. This is subject to any proposal generally being within the defined Limits to Development and in keeping with the overall character of the area. It would also need to be in accordance with AP3 and other relevant policies contained in this Plan, and with district and national plans and policies.

**POLICY AP 6: WINDFALL HOUSING SITES** - Development proposals for small (less than 5 dwellings) for new windfall housing within the defined Limits to Development
will be viewed sympathetically where they are in accordance with relevant policies in the Plan, including AP3, and with relevant district and national planning policies and where

a) The development involves two or more dwellings, provides for at least one home with three or fewer bedrooms for every one large dwelling (i.e. with four or more bedrooms); and

b) If the development would result in the number of completions plus outstanding permissions exceeding the identified target set out in Policy AP 4, regard will be given to:
   a. the degree by which the requirement is exceeded;
   b. the likelihood of delivery of the outstanding permissions;
   c. evidence of community support; and
   d. the benefits arising to the community from the development.

It also recognised that proposals for infill and redevelopment sites may come forward outside the defined Limits to Development, for example the conversion of a redundant barn in a rural location. In these instances, they should be considered in accordance with relevant Policies in the Plan, especially relating to development in the open countryside, and other relevant district and national planning policies.

8.5 New Housing Mix

It is important that any local housing growth is able to sustain the changing population of the Parish. Housing delivered as part of proposed new development must be of the right type to address the existing and future needs of the population, so as to help support balanced and vibrant communities

This is especially important as there is some evidence that the housing type of the Parish is unbalanced. In particular, there are relatively more larger properties and relatively few small dwellings. The number of detached dwellings at 63%, for example, is more than one and a half times the district average (36.5%) and nearly three times the national average (22.4%). Over the last ten years, nearly half of the properties that have been built in the Parish have been detached.

The consultation also reinforces a need and local support for a more balanced housing stock to help create more diverse and sustainable communities. In particular, it showed that the Parish needs smaller homes both for elderly villagers wishing to downsize while remaining in the Parish, and to encourage young people and families to stay or move into the Parish. At 26.4%, the proportion of people aged over 65 in the Ashover population is more than half again the national average (16.3%), and (reflecting a national trend) growing fast.

POLICY AP 7: NEW HOUSING MIX - Housing development proposals should provide a mixture of housing types and sizes specifically to meet identified local needs in Ashover Parish. Priority should be given to smaller homes (e.g. 3 bedrooms or less), especially those suitable for young families and older people (who wish to downsize) and self-build proposals to meet a recognised need.

8.6 Affordable Housing

Housing affordability is an issue within the Parish.
Average house prices in the Parish at £346,000 in 2015 are well above the district and national average, and have been increasing at an above-average rate. As a consequence, some people who wish to live in the Parish, including those with a local connection, are unable to do so, as they cannot find suitable accommodation either to buy or rent.

Consultation with residents shows support for the provision of affordable housing, especially for people with a strong local connection, and suggests that starter homes, homes for young people and for older people should be prioritised.

Local planning policy requires that all new housing developments, especially those involving ten or more dwellings, should provide at least 40% affordable homes in Ashover Parish.

This Plan supports the provision of affordable housing that reflects and meets a local housing need and is genuinely affordable. In particular, it is keen to explore opportunities for the provision of additional affordable housing building though self-build. This would see local people who otherwise would not be able to purchase or rent a suitable house in the Parish build their own home. Self-build homes are cheaper, and sometimes greener and more innovatively designed than standard market housing.

POLICY AP 8: AFFORDABLE HOUSING - Development proposals for new housing should include on site high quality affordable housing to meet identified local needs, in accordance with district wide planning policies.

Priority should be given to the provision of self-build and smaller homes (e.g. 3 bedrooms or less), especially those suitable for young families and older people (who wish to downsize) to meet an identified need.

All affordable housing will be subject to conditions, or a planning obligation will be sought wherever possible, to ensure that when homes are allocated, priority is given wherever possible to people with a local connection to Ashover Parish (i.e. including living, working or with close family ties, in the Parish).

In exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated to North East Derbyshire District Council in consultation with the Parish Council that it is not possible or appropriate to build affordable homes on the site, the development should provide a financial contribution towards the future provision of affordable housing in the Parish of equivalent value to that which would have been provided on site.

CHAPTER 9: JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

The Parish has a relatively strong and vibrant economy. It is home to a wide range and growing number of businesses, and levels of economic activity are high.

Historically the main business activities in the Parish have been related to farming. Whilst this continues to be important and remains the main land use in the Parish, other types of economic activity have come to the fore, increasingly ‘professional and technical activities’. The proportion of residents (19.9%) stating they were self-employed at the time of the 2011 Census was more than double the national (9.8%) and district (9.3%) averages.

Whilst there are some large and medium sized employers within the Parish such as the Peak Edge Hotel, the vast majority of businesses are small. These businesses are...
scattered across the Parish but there are some clusters, including in the Ashover Business Centre as well as Grove House and Grove Park.

The consultation shows that residents and stakeholders wish to see the economy of the Parish continue to create jobs and wealth, and to prosper. However, the Parish is generally not considered appropriate for significant, new, business or industrial development, especially as this would lead to more journeys by road and congestion, and have an adverse impact on the amenity and character of the Parish. The community does support the retention and safeguarding of existing employment sites and buildings in appropriate locations and that meet the needs of modern business.

Many current businesses are very small, and many operate from a home office or workshop. There is evidence that the number of businesses that operate from a home office is far in excess of the national and district averages.

The consultation showed there was support to encourage people to run businesses from home or a workshop. This could include the construction of extensions, conversion of outbuildings, and the development of new freestanding buildings from which such small scale businesses can operate. Though such types of development do not necessarily need planning permission, where it is required the Plan is generally supportive of their provision where they are in suitable and appropriate locations and do not have a negative impact on the surrounding area and uses.

**POLICY AP 9: EXISTING EMPLOYMENT USES** - Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, an existing employment use will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the site or building in employment use is not viable or no longer suitable for employment use and has been actively marketed for over a year.

**POLICY AP 10: NEW SMALL SCALE EMPLOYMENT-RELATED DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS** - Small scale employment-related development for new, or the expansion of existing, employment uses will be supported where it will not generate unacceptable noise, fumes and smell; will respect and is compatible with local character and uses; and would not adversely affect (where appropriate) residential and environmental amenity and the transport network.

**CHAPTER 10. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SHOPS**

Community facilities and shops (buildings and land except for green space, which is covered later) are vital for meeting the health, welfare and social needs of the residents of the Parish. They include shops, schools, community centres, places of worship, leisure centres, public houses and medical facilities; all of which are important for good health and wellbeing, sustainable development and act as a focus for community life and engagement. They are especially important in rural areas, such as Ashover, where the number of buildings suitable for community use may be limited, and where it is neither sustainable nor desirable for people to have to travel several miles, primarily by car, to access important everyday services.

The Parish is fortunate to have a good range of community facilities and shops. These include public houses, a primary school, doctor’s surgery, village hall and a number of shops. However, many of its residents lack accessible community facilities to meet their day to day needs. Furthermore, the Parish has already lost some community facilities,
which has had an adverse impact on the community, and there is concern that this trend may continue.

Also, due to the scattered nature of the Parish, some residents – especially young, elderly or infirm people – may experience difficulty in travelling to facilities from outlying areas or at night, while for people without a car locations like Uppertown Social Centre can be hard to access.

Studies, such as the Settlement Role and Function Study (2013) undertaken by North East Derbyshire District Council, have shown that the Parish is generally not well served by community facilities, and that any further loss could have a major adverse impact on the community.

In addition to their protection, there is a need, where feasible, to increase local community facilities and shops that meet the needs of the Parish and reduce reliance on other centres and travel by car. Large scale retail or community development, however, would not be appropriate as it would harm the special nature and character of the Parish and encourage travel by car.

Consultation shows that the retention and enhancement of community facilities and shops is a priority for the Plan.

**POLICY AP 11: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF SHOPPING PROVISION** - Development proposals that result in the loss, or have a significant adverse effect on, an existing shopping use will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that its continued use for shopping is no longer viable and the site has been actively marketed for over a year. Proposals to create new shop units within the defined Limits of Development will be viewed positively.

**POLICY AP 12: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES** - Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, an important community facility will not be permitted, unless the building or facility is replaced by an equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in an equally suitable location or it can be demonstrated that the service or facility is not viable or is no longer required by the community. The following community facilities have been identified as being especially important to the community:

- Peak Edge Hotel;
- The Famous Red Lion;
- Old Poets Corner;
- The Crispin;
- The Miners Arms;
- Ashover Toilets;
- The Kelstedge Inn;
- Bassett Rooms;
- The Post Office;
- Ashover Parish Hall;
- Upper Town Social Centre;
- Ashover Medical Centre/Pharmacy;
• Ashover Parish Church; and
• Spitewinter Chapel.

Development proposals to enhance the provision of community buildings where it can be demonstrated to North East Derbyshire District Council and Ashover Parish Council that that it will meet an identified local need will be viewed positively.

10.1 Assets of Community Value

The designation of a community facility as an Asset of Community Value provides the opportunity to give it added protection from inappropriate development.

The Localism Act 2011 defines an ‘Asset of Community Value’ as “a building or other land is an asset of community value if its main use has recently been or is presently used to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future”. The Localism Act states that “social interests” include cultural, recreational and sporting interests.

Where an asset is ‘Listed’ the Parish Council or other community organisations will be given the opportunity to bid to purchase the asset on behalf of the local community, if it comes up for sale on the open market.

The inclusion of a specific policy in a Neighbourhood Plan in respect to Assets of Community Value provides the opportunity to give any registered Asset added protection from inappropriate development. It ensures that the Listing’ of an Asset of Community Value is a material consideration (i.e. it must be taken into account) when a planning application is being considered that may affect the Listed Asset.

To date no Assets have been formally designated as Assets of Community Value. However, through the consultation process, a number of community assets have been identified which are considered important for community life. The Parish Council therefore intends to use the mechanism of designating them as Assets of Community Value to further ensure that they are retained.

**POLICY AP 13: ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE**

- Development proposals that will result in the loss of, or has a significant adverse effect on, a designated Asset of Community Value will not be permitted unless in special circumstances, such as the Asset is replaced by an equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in an equally suitable location or it can be clearly demonstrated that is not viable or no longer required by the community.

**CHAPTER 11. DESIGN AND BUILT HERITAGE**

The Parish of Ashover has a long and interesting history, with evidence that it has been inhabited since Neolithic times. As a consequence, the settlements and the surrounding rural areas of the Parish are rich in buildings and structures of historical and architectural significance.

These buildings and structures date from many different periods, with individual buildings clustered around historic street patterns and former and existing farm buildings. Many buildings were constructed using locally mined stone, and there are many fine examples of this.
Many buildings and structures that have been designated as Listed Buildings. There is also a designated Conservation Area based around the historic core of the village of Ashover.

Consultation shows that this historic and attractive built heritage is highly prized and cherished by the local community. It is a source of pride, and a key element in the unique, distinctive and attractive character of the Parish.

The community wishes to ensure that future development preserves and enhances this built heritage and the general rural character of the Parish. This encompasses not only the design and appearance of new buildings, but also their layout and siting.

Generally, the design of buildings (including new build) in the Parish is good and is sympathetic to its special character and appearance. There was concern, however, that some of the development which had taken place was of indifferent design or out of keeping.

The Plan seeks to ensure that all new development (including minor works) is of good quality and designed to respect the existing character and various building styles of Ashover Parish, particularly where located within or in close proximity to Ashover Conservation Area or affecting a Listed Building or its setting.

**POLICY AP 14: DESIGN -** Development proposals should be designed well and sensitively to ensure that the high quality built environment of the Parish is maintained and enhanced. They should respect and be sensitive to the existing settlement pattern and respond positively to their surroundings. Development proposals, including extensions, should satisfy the following design principles:

a) Should enhance and reinforce the local distinctiveness of an area; proposals should show clearly how the general character, design and layout and landscaping of the site, building or extension fits in with the “grain” of the surrounding area using Design and Access Statements, where required;

b) Should be of a scale and design which responds positively to the characteristics of the site and its surroundings;

c) Should avoid generic “scheme” features, styles or designs, and demonstrate how they have taken account of the locally distinctive character of the area in which they are to be sited using a Design and Access Statement, where required;

d) Buildings and extensions to existing buildings should follow a consistent design approach in the use of materials, design and the roofline. Materials should be chosen to complement the design of a development and add to the quality or character of the surrounding environment; and

e) Development proposals in Ashover Conservation Area should be particularly sensitive to the local context in terms of materials, design, colour scheme, scale and structure, and be in accordance with the Ashover Conservation Area Appraisal.

11.1 Buildings and Structures of National Historic and Architectural Interest
There are over 50 Listed Buildings scattered across the Parish that have been identified as being of national significance and importance. These include All Saints Church, Old Post Office cottage and the Telephone Kiosk on Church Street in the Village of Ashover.

The full schedule of Listed Buildings in the Parish can be viewed on North East Derbyshire DC Web site via http://www.ne-derbyshire.gov.uk/environment-planning/planning/conservation-and-listed-buildings/listed-buildings/.

The designation of these buildings and structures as Listed gives them special legal protection beyond that which can be provided through a Neighbourhood Plan. It is important, however, that the Plan highlights them, especially to ensure that all interested parties are aware of their local importance, and of the need to conserve and enhance this.

**POLICY AP 15: LISTED BUILDINGS** - Development proposals that affect a scheduled Listed Building or its setting will be required to conserve and enhance its site and setting in accordance with other relevant policies in this Plan and district and national planning policies.

### 11.1 Other Buildings and Structures of Local Heritage Importance and Interest

In addition to these Listed Buildings, across the Parish are other buildings and structures, which whilst not meeting the national criteria for listing, have been identified as being of considerable local heritage interest.

These include buildings, as well as many sites of archaeological significance (with some remains dating back to the Neolithic Age). There are some, such as Stone Edge Smelt Mills (aScheduled Ancient Monument) which have been well documented or are protected. There are however a number that which are less known and recognised.

These non-designated buildings and structures are historically important in their own right, but are also significant and characteristic landscape, historical and cultural features of the area, and are valued by residents. Conserving and enhancing, as well as assisting the interpretation, understanding and appreciation of these non-designated historic buildings and structures are priorities of the community.

**POLICY AP 16: BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES OF LOCAL HERITAGE INTEREST** - The Parish Council in consultation with North East Derbyshire District Council will develop a schedule of ‘non-nationally designated‘ buildings and structures of local heritage interest. Development proposals that affect a building, structure or its setting identified on this list will be required to conserve and enhance the character and the setting of that building or structure.

### 11.2 Dry Stone Walls

The attractive nature of the Parish is not only a result of the buildings to be found within it, but a combination of topography, trees, open spaces and other features that characterise the Parish.

Particularly important are the dry stone walls that are found across the Parish. These were the traditional field boundaries in this part of Derbyshire, and are an important, and are highly valued by residents and visitors.

**POLICY AP 17: DRY STONE WALLS** - Development proposals that may result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, a dry stone wall should be designed...
to retain or enhance the affected dry stone wall. Development proposals that will protect and enhance the network of dry walls will be viewed positively.

CHAPTER 12. LANDSCAPE, GREEN SPACES AND THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

Ashover Parish encompasses an area of 3,868 hectares, and is one of the largest and most sparsely populated parishes in England. It is mainly rural and open in character and set in largely unspoilt countryside, much of it rolling hills.

This unique setting allows for views of open countryside from almost every part of the Parish, which gives the Parish a strong of pride and connection to the countryside. The most dramatic views are seen from ‘The Fabrick’, the highest viewpoint for a considerable distance, from which panoramic views can be seen of the Parish and the surrounding areas, and as far away as Chesterfield and the suburbs of Sheffield and the surrounding counties of Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire.

This rural environment is varied and includes moors, heaths, woodland, quarries and land in agriculture.

The consultation shows that the rural nature of the Parish is highly prized by the community, and is a great source of pride and identity. They wish to see it protected and enhanced, to ensure local wildlife, habitats and the wider local landscape character are supported both for their intrinsic value, and for the benefit and enjoyment of residents and the main visitors to the Parish, many of whom come to experience the high quality rural environment.

12.1 Landscape

The Parish has an attractive and varied landscape that is especially valued by residents and visitors. It is located within the Peak Fringe National Character Area (NCA) as defined by Natural England.

It is often referred to as the “Gateway to the Peak”; it contains some of the highest quality landscapes surrounding the Peak District National Park and was seriously considered for inclusion within the National Park boundary when this was conceived in the 1950’s.

Not only are these landscapes cherished by residents and the protection of their fauna and flora supported, but they also play an important role in the local economy through recreation and tourism. Their value is recognised as their current designation as a Special Landscape Area under the saved policies (i.e. remain in force) of the North East Derbyshire Local Plan (2001 – 2011) as well as by their designation as “Areas of Multiple Environmental Sensitivity” in 2013 by Derbyshire County Council.

This Plan supports and reinforces saved Policy NE 2 in the North Derbyshire Local Plan 2001 – 2011.

POLICY AP 18: SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA - The Plan supports and reinforces saved Policy NE2 of the North East Derbyshire Local Plan (2001 – 2011), which states “Within Special Landscape Areas as defined on the Proposal Maps, development will be permitted where:

- it would not materially detract from the surrounding landscape, nor adversely affect the setting of any heritage or wildlife resources; and
b) the siting, scale, design, landscape treatment and the use and colour of materials in any building or engineering works are in keeping with the special character of the area; and


c) it would not unduly disturb or detract from the visual amenity of an area by the attraction of large numbers of people or excessive traffic.

In addition, new development or extensions to existing development on land adjoining a Special Landscape Area will be permitted provided it would not have a detrimental effect on the visual amenity, character and function of the Special Landscape Area”.

12.2 Important Local Green Spaces

The Parishes rural and attractive character is defined not only by surrounding countryside, but also by the green spaces within the settlements and hamlets. This pattern of open spaces within settlements is a key element of the special character of the Parish. They also have a wider role and contribution to its character and well-being. For example, they provide opportunities for exercise, sport, active recreation, as well as protecting and enhancing the natural environment including its wildlife and wildflowers.

This is also in the context of studies, such as the 2012 North East Derbyshire Green Infrastructure Study that have demonstrated that the Parish has an under provision of such formal spaces relative to its population size.

Local and National Planning Policy enables a Neighbourhood Plan to protect especially important local green spaces from development where it meets certain specified criteria such as where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community, is demonstrably special to a local community and is not an extensive tract of land.

Based on the criteria set out in national and local planning policy and following consultation with the local community, a number of important green spaces have been identified as being highly valued by, and special to, the local community and requiring special protection from development.

POLICY AP 19: IMPORTANT LOCAL GREEN SPACES - Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or has an adverse effect on, an identified Local Green Space (see proposal maps and below) will be not be permitted except where it is for essential facilities for sport and recreation, which do not compromise the function of the Local Green Space. Development proposals may be accepted where the community would gain equivalent benefit from the provision of suitable replacement Local Green Space or gain significant social, economic or environmental benefits from an alternative facility.

- All Saints Church Cemetery;
- Ashover Sports Ground and Playing Field;
- Land at Junction of Church Street, Moor Road and Milken Lane, Ashover;
- Land off Malthouse Lane, Ashover;
- Tennis Court off Malthouse Lane, Ashover;
- Fabrick Wood;
- Land between Hill Road and Hill Top Road, former Ashover parish quarry, Ashover;
- Allotment site off Marsh Green Lane and Cripton Lane, Ashover;
Land off West Edge Close, Kelstedge;
Two small areas of Land off Alton Hill, Alton; and
Land at the junction of Stubbed Edge Lane and Alton Lane, Littlemoor

12.3 Biodiversity

The Parish supports a wide and diverse range of habitats including rivers, streams, enclosed moors, heaths, woodlands and grasslands. These provide an important and natural habitat for wildlife and wildflowers, including flowers, birds, amphibians and animals, some of which are rare and declining species such as bilberry, grey partridge and lapwing. They also create natural corridors for wildlife movements.

Recent studies by bodies such as the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust have highlighted the importance of the Parish to the biodiversity and nature conservation of the County and more widely, and have identified several sites of special nature conservation value. Although some of these sites have specific statutory protection as designated sites such as Fall Hill Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest, most do not.

The Derbyshire Wildlife Trust also holds a ‘biodiversity alert map’, which shows Local Wildlife Sites (non-statutory designated sites), as well as protected species data, species and habitats; the Plan will seek to protect and enhance these sites, species and habitats.

The consultations showed that the community wishes to see the biodiversity and nature conservation of the Parish respected and wherever possible enhanced. This includes seeking development proposals to consider how they contribute here through, for example, the sensitive use of native species and traditional boundary treatments.

POLICY AP 20: BIODIVERSITY - Development proposals that conserve or enhance biodiversity, and incorporate biodiversity in and around them will be encouraged. Development proposals should promote preservation, restoration and recreation of locally and nationally priority sites (such as Fall Hill Quarry SSSI) and habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations where applicable. Development proposals that cannot avoid (through for example locating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigate, or, as a last resort, compensate for the loss of a locally or nationally identified site of biodiversity value should not be permitted.” Where a development proposal may affect a protected species a suitable survey should be undertaken prior to development in accordance with, and under the guidance of Natural England, Standing Advice.

12.4 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

The Parish has a rich variety of trees, hedges and woodlands. This includes wooded valleys and slopes, many of which are to be found in the east of the Parish, as well ancient woodlands. In addition, there hedgerows and individual and groups of trees which are to be found across the Parish.

These are highly valued, especially as they make an important contribution to the character of the Parish, and are of ecological value due to the species they support, including flora and bird species. Some individual important specimens are protected
through Tree Preservation Orders, but many more important trees and hedgerows are not specifically protected.

**POLICY AP 21: IMPORTANT TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLANDS** - Development proposals that may result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse impact on, trees, hedges and woodlands (including ancient woodlands) of good arboricultural, ecological and amenity value should ensure that the relevant trees and hedges are protected and integrated into the design of the development. In such instances, proposals should be accompanied by a tree survey that establishes the health and condition of any affected trees.

### 12.5 Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies

The issue of renewable energy and low carbon related development is an issue in the Parish. It has been the subject of a small number of planning applications for renewable energy and low carbon related development.

To date, all planning applications for significant energy related development in the Parish have been refused. The main reasons for refusal have included impacts on landscape character, visual amenity and residential amenity.

Consultations shows that the community is not in principle opposed to such energy generation, and recognises the potential benefits it may bring as a renewable energy source.

Its potential for wind energy related and other forms of renewable low carbon related development, however, needs to be balanced against other important considerations. In particular, the potential impact on the Parish’s high quality and special landscape and residential amenity.

Any development must also be of an appropriate scale and in a suitable location within the Parish, and sensitive to the special and high quality landscape of the Parish, as well as respecting residential amenity and other important considerations.

**POLICY AP 22: RENEWABLE ENERGY AND LOW CARBON TECHNOLOGIES** - The Plan does not identify any areas suitable for the development of renewable energy installations especially due to the special nature of its landscape. However, suitably located and designed proposals that promote and encourage the development of renewable and low carbon energy resources will be viewed in principle sympathetically where, following demonstrable consultation with local residents, the Parish Council and the District Council, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed. The potential impacts (either in isolation or cumulatively) of the development proposal, as follows, should be addressed. Proposals will be supported that:

- do not have an unacceptably adverse impact on the amenity of local residents (such as noise, visual impact, shadow flicker, water pollution, odour, air quality, emissions);
- do not have an unacceptably adverse impact on the location, in relation to visual impact and impact on the character and sensitivity of the surrounding landscape;
c) do not have a significant adverse effect on any Site of Special Scientific Interest, regionally or locally important geological site, site of ecological value, Special Landscape Area, Listed Building; Local Green Space or Conservation Area or their settings;

d) do not have an unacceptably adverse impact on Listed Building or heritage assets or their settings;

e) in the case of wind turbines, it can be demonstrated that the development would not result in an unacceptably adverse effect (either in isolation or cumulatively) on protected bird species, including important sites and migration routes;

f) in order to address community concerns and in the interests of residential amenity and safety, there is an appropriate minimum separation between wind turbines over 25m to blade tip and residential properties;

g) in the case of ground mounted solar panels, it can be demonstrated that they do not result in the loss of good quality agricultural land;

h) operational requirements are addressed (including accessibility and suitability of road network, ability to connect to the grid underground, proximity of any relevant feedstock);

i) measures are included for the removal of structures and the restoration of sites, should sites become non-operational; and

j) potential benefits to the local economy and the local community, including agriculture and other land based industries, are considered and demonstrated.

12.6 Sports and Recreation that may cause Noise or Disturbance

The rural nature of the Parish means that it is popular for sporting and recreational activities. The vast majority of these activities can be undertaken in the Parish without issue.

There have been some concerns that the enjoyment and the quality of the countryside and in some instances residential amenity can be spoilt by noise and other disturbance from some sporting and recreational activities where for example they involve (though not exclusively) motor sports, powered water sports and gun sports – often known as 'noisy sports'.

It is important that such noise generating sports are situated in appropriate locations and designed, so that they do not affect noise sensitive development, unless the noise impact can be minimised to an acceptable level.

POLICY AP 23: NOISY SPORTS - Development proposals for the use of land for noisy sports will be viewed sympathetically where the proposed development:

a) will be assessed in respect of its noise impact on noise sensitive development or areas valued for their tranquillity. Account will be taken of all applicable statutory standards, British Standards, and rules of governing bodies and other appropriate guides, with reference to the District Council’s environmental services team;
b) incorporates a scheme indicating noise mitigation measures to be incorporated at the site. This scheme will be reviewed at intervals to allow a progressive improvement of the noise environment as changes in technology and regulation take place. Conditions will also be imposed limiting the hours and/or days of use where appropriate;
c) would not result in excessive noise levels at the boundaries of noise sensitive development;
d) incorporates and commits to the implementation of a plan to show how the site will be managed, to minimise the impact of activity on areas of wildlife and ecological importance and to ensure adequate woodland/countryside management; does not disrupt or lead to the loss of public access such as footpaths, bridleways; and cycle routes or place their users in any danger; and
e) does not cause unacceptable traffic congestion, or generate traffic flows which would be harmful to the environment such as heavy traffic flows on a minor road through a settlement or the Parish more generally.

Chapter 13. Getting Around

Ashover is a rural and a sparsely populated Parish but has two major roads running through it: the A632 from Matlock to Chesterfield, and the A615 from Matlock to Alfreton.

Its rural location and limited public transport provision means that the car provides the principal mode of transport for residents of the Parish, with 90% of households in the Parish having access to one or more cars.

The road and street pattern in the Parish, however, has developed over many centuries, and is not suited to modern traffic. Consultations shows that residents are concerned about the volume of existing traffic, including lorry movements and additional traffic generated by new development in the Parish. Speeding is also an issue.

On-street parking and road safety especially are an issue in parts of Ashover village. The B6036 is routed through the centre of the Village and is frequently used by vehicular traffic including large lorries between the A61 and A632, causing noise, pollution and damage to roads, as well as hazards to personal safety and the environment. There is a serious issue with on-street parking on the narrow streets in Ashover village, with the consequent detrimental effect on pedestrian and road safety and problems for traffic, including emergency and service vehicles, traveling within the village. The issue is particularly acute around Ashover Primary School on Narrowleys Lane at drop-off and pick-up times and the resulting congestion extends into Moor Road and surrounding areas.

**POLICY AP 24: TRAFFIC** - Development proposals must demonstrate that the traffic generation and parking impact created by the proposal does not result in a severe direct or cumulative adverse impact on congestion, or road and pedestrian safety.

**POLICY AP 25: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT** - The Parish Council will work together with the Highway Authority, District Council, local schools and developers to bring forward traffic management measures to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety and movement, especially in the village of Ashover and the surrounding area, and encourage ‘safe routes to schools’ schemes, including through developer contributions.
POLICY AP 26: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - The Parish Council will work together with the Highway Authority, District Council, local schools and developers to bring forward traffic management measures to exclude inappropriate heavy vehicles from routes through the village of Ashover and surrounding area.

13.1 Footpaths, Cycleways and Bridleways

The Parish is crisscrossed by an extensive network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways, with over 140 within the Parish. The landscape and terrain of the paths is varied and includes meadows, woodland, agricultural, valleys, hills and settlements.

These are important for health and the environment as well as for getting around, and are enjoyed by its residents as well as the many visitors to the Parish. Walking, cycling and horse-riding are popular pastimes in the Parish.

Consultations shows that these are highly prized and cherished by residents, who wish to see them protected and enhanced wherever possible.

POLICY AP 27: FOOTPATHS, CYCLEWAYS AND BRIDLEWAYS - Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, the existing network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways will not be permitted.

POLICY AP 28: FOOTPATHS, CYCLEWAYS AND BRIDLEWAYS - The Parish Council will actively seek to work with the County Council, District Council and other relevant agencies to encourage opportunities to secure improvements in the present network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways, including through developer contributions.

14. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Plan will last for a period covering the next 15 years. During this time, it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change.

The Plan will be monitored by Ashover Parish Council with the support of North East Derbyshire District Council on an at least annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Plan will also be included.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Plan on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the review of North East Derbyshire District Local Plan, if this cycle is different.