

POLICY PENN5: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan designates a Penn Parish Green Infrastructure network, as shown on the Green Infrastructure Network Map, for the purpose of promoting nature recovery and helping mitigate climate change. The network comprises land with known biodiversity value, woodlands, significant hedgerows and lines of trees, water courses and bodies of water.*
- B. Development proposals that lie within or adjoining the network are required to have full regard to maintaining and improving the functionality of the network, including delivering a net gain to biodiversity, in the design of their layouts and landscaping schemes.*
- C. Proposals that will harm the functionality or connectivity of the network, including the loss of Ancient Woodland, ancient and veteran trees, and ancient wood pasture which are irreplaceable habitats, will not be supported.*
- D. Development proposals that will lead to an extension of the network including the provision of allotments, and the proper management of Ancient Woodland, ancient and veteran trees, and ancient wood pasture as irreplaceable habitats, will be supported, provided they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.*
- E. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as Ancient Woodland and ancient or veteran trees) must be refused.*
- F. Development, including buildings, hardstanding and gardens, within 15m of the boundary of an irreplaceable habitat will result in its deterioration and must be refused. Gardens must be excluded from this buffer area.*
- G. Ancient wood pasture and historic parkland should receive the same consideration as other forms of ancient woodland. The protection of the whole habitat is necessary even though tree cover may be comparatively sparse. Development on open space between trees in an area of ancient wood pasture or historic parkland should not be permitted.*
- H. As Ancient Woodland and ancient or veteran trees are irreplaceable, discussions over possible compensation should not form part of the assessment to determine whether the exceptional benefits of the development proposal outweigh the loss.*

5.31 Penn Parish is a largely rural area with over 80% of the Parish falling within both Green Belt (GB) and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Unlike many other Parishes, Penn has at its heart green space which is surrounded by the 5 settlements that make up the Parish (Knotty Green, Penn, Forty Green, Winchmore Hill and Penn Street). We recognise the importance of the green space in the Parish as an amenity for those in the Parish and in surrounding areas. Whilst there are no large developments planned in the Parish we are aware of a number of large developments nearby that could put additional pressure on our green spaces.

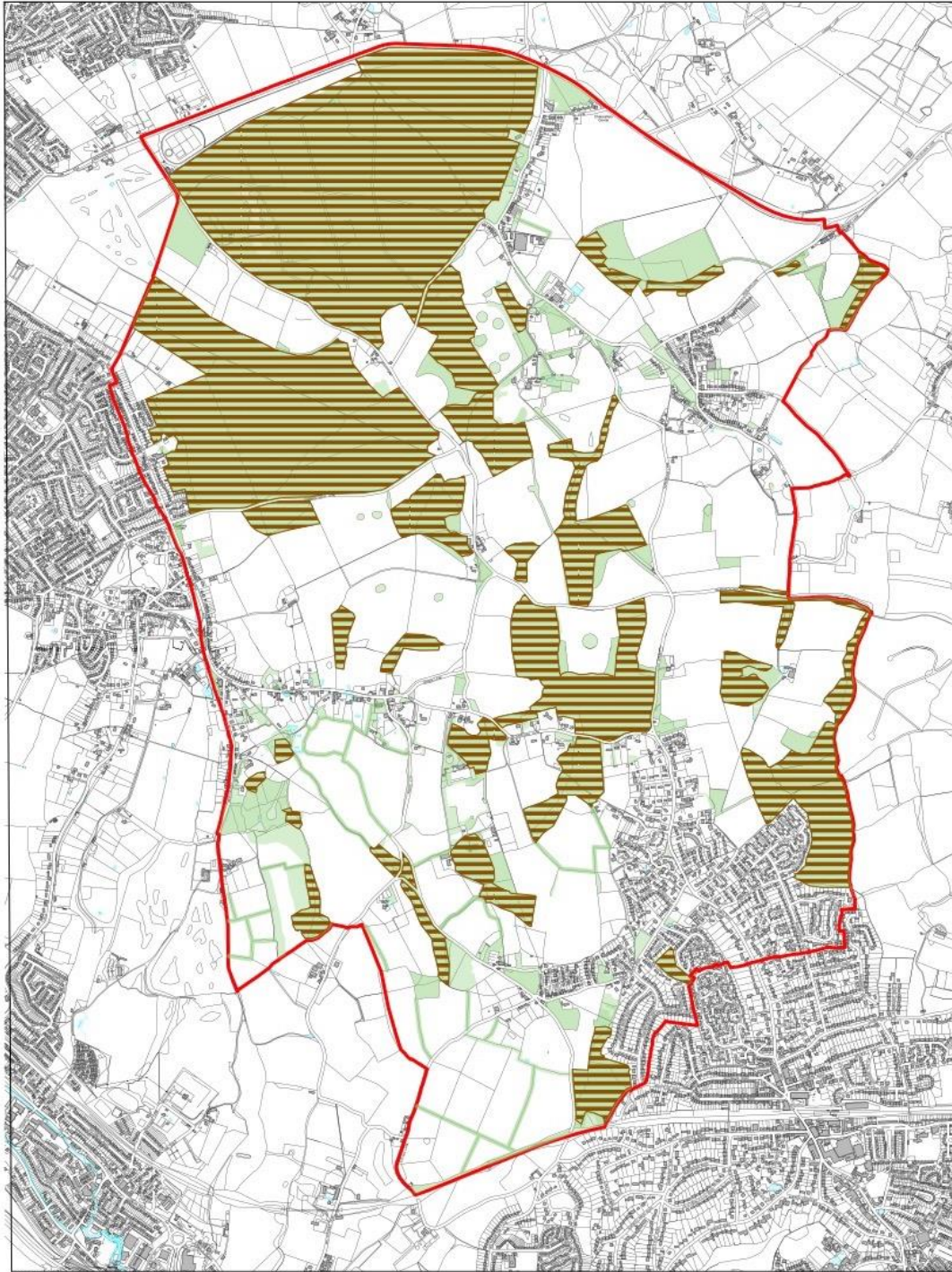
5.32 The GB and AONB afford considerable planning protections to the green spaces that fall within these areas. We also have several Ancient Woodlands and Recovering Ancient Woodlands in the Parish. These designations afford the areas covered with significant protections within the planning system. In addition, the commons, playgrounds, and many other green spaces in the Parish that fall outside the Green Belt, benefit from designations that also afford significant planning protections. These are shown in Tables 1 & 2.

5.33 We will not support developments that have a negative impact on the Green Belt, AONB, Ancient Woodlands, Ancient Trees or Veteran Trees in the Parish. Any infill developments proposed for built up areas within the Green Belt and AONB should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. This may mean that development layouts are designed to contribute to the network's effectiveness.

5.34 The policy defines the presence of green and blue infrastructure assets in the Parish, derived from the Natural England Green Infrastructure evidence base ([link](#)) and local knowledge, which have multiple roles including carbon sinking, flood alleviation and biodiversity net gain). By doing so it supports Core Strategy Policy CW32 'Green Infrastructure' and is in line with saved Local Plan Policies NC1 'Safeguarding of Nature Conservation Interests' and TW6 'Resistance to Loss of Woodland' and Core Strategy Policies CS24 'Biodiversity'. The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account.

5.35 The policy requires that all development proposals that lie within the network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. This may mean that development layouts are designed to contribute to the network's effectiveness.

5.36 The policy also recognises that the provisions of the NPPF on irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland or ancient or veteran trees) applies in Penn Parish. Proper management of this special resource will be expected to be in line with Natural England and the Forestry Commission's standing advice on this matter ([link](#)).



**Penn Parish Neighbourhood Plan
Green Infrastructure Network**

 Parish boundary



 Existing Green Infrastructure

 Existing Blue Infrastructure

 Ancient Woodland

Plan M: Penn Parish Green Infrastructure Network