

Inkpen Village Design Statement



Inkpen Village Design Statement

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West Berkshire Council 1000015913, March 05*



Inkpen House Lower Green, West Inkpen

Section 1: Introduction

1.1. Scope and Status of Village Design Statement

This Village Design Statement (VDS) is intended to supplement policies in the West Berkshire District-wide Local Plan 1991-2006 as it relates to the Parish of Inkpen. It is compatible with the policies in the Local Plan and is intended primarily for the use of:

- i. The Local Planning Authority (West Berkshire Council) as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)
- ii. The Highway Authority (West Berkshire Council) and other relevant statutory bodies
- iii. The Parish Council, particularly when commenting on planning applications
- iv. Residents and owners of existing buildings who want to alter, extend or change the use of their buildings
- v. Prospective builders and developers, and their designers/architects

It is also hoped that the document will generally raise public awareness of planning issues.

As Supplementary Planning Guidance this Design Statement provides an explanation of West Berkshire Council's policy position. While it is not a statutory document, it has been subject to public consultation and was adopted by the Council's Downlands Area Forum on 31st August 2004. Compliance with its guidelines will not by itself guarantee planning permission as each case is judged on its merits. However its recommendations will be taken into account when planning applications are assessed.

1.2. Public Consultation

This document is an outcome of the Inkpen Parish Plan (2003) - the culmination of some two years work by a committee of parish volunteers and members of the Parish Council. The process included preparation and analysis of a parish-wide questionnaire (to which every household on the electoral register was invited to contribute), public meetings and publication of the final Plan. (Further details of this process are outlined in the Parish Plan.) The published Parish Appraisal and Parish Plan were distributed to every household and copies are available to purchase from the Parish Clerk.

One of the key points in the Parish Plan Action Plan was "to produce a Village Design Statement that states the parish's own views about maintaining and improving the appearance and character of the village."

This VDS has been prepared by a small community working group set up by the Parish Council in conjunction with the local community.

West Berkshire Council consulted with statutory agencies, national interest groups, relevant local authorities, Parish/Town Councils, local interest groups and local developers (or their agents) on the final Draft VDS for over four weeks from 14th July to 16th August 2004. Copies of the draft document were also made available for inspection at the Council Offices in Market Street, Newbury and all public libraries in the District. It was also available to view on the Council's web site. At the same time the VDS Group again consulted with the local community in Inkpen with a public meeting in the village hall. Responses to the consultation generally welcomed the production of the VDS with some constructive and helpful comments indicating how the document could be improved.

The final version of Inkpen Village Design Statement was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) by West Berkshire Council on 31st August 2004.



Paddocks interspersed with housing at Lower Green



Flint Cottage, Lower Green

Section 2: Overview

The Parish of Inkpen, which has a population of about 850 persons, covers an area of about 1,250 hectares and lies immediately to the north of the chalk scarp, which is such a spectacular feature of the Berkshire/Hampshire border. Newbury is about 6 miles to the east.

By any standards the countryside within which the village is set is very attractive. It is a national as well as a local asset and is designated as part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The village could be described as being relatively remote since the links to the main road network (A4, A34, and A338) are of limited capacity and the only public transport is an infrequent bus service. The roads within the village are, for the most part, narrow, twisty and flanked by high hedges with few pavements and roadside kerbing and a complete absence of street lighting.



View across fields towards houses at Upper Inkpen



The Church and Inkpen House, Lower Green



Manor Farm from the south-west



Manor Farm from the south-east

The generally low density of development and the nature of the road network give the village a distinctly rural character, notwithstanding that the design of much of the housing built in the last fifty years is little different from that to be found in many a suburban location. In this respect the hedges and walls on the road frontages and sizeable areas of fields and woodland within and between parts of the built-up area are critically important to the character of the village.

Existing planning policy in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty gives priority to conserving the natural beauty and visual quality of the landscape and the amenity of the area (Local Plan policy ENV.2)

The key aim in villages such as Inkpen is to retain their open character.

The Local Plan seeks to maintain the dispersed settlement pattern of Inkpen by resisting development that would materially harm or change that essential character, for example, by infilling open gaps or creating new ribbon development (Local Plan policy ENV.21) or allowing the unacceptable extension of residential curtilages into the countryside (Local Plan policy ENV.22).

A survey of the views of local residents, which formed part of the Parish Appraisal, indicates that the majority broadly support present planning policy.

The rural character of the village is greatly valued, particular attention being drawn to the importance of retaining the open spaces within the built-up area, the sense of remoteness, the peace and quiet and the darkness of the night sky.

There is general agreement amongst residents that the "suburbanisation" of the village should be resisted as far as possible.

*From top to bottom
Hidden dwellings in West Inkpen, Middle Inkpen, East Inkpen*



Section 3: The Parish as it is today

3.1 Housing

As with many other villages in this area Inkpen suffers from high house prices and a lack of local employment opportunities. In addition, the stock of smaller houses is reduced as existing dwellings are extended or rebuilt.

There is a continuing demand for private accommodation for rent or purchase. 20% of the population are in rented accommodation, just under half of which is in housing association ownership. The bulk of the housing association properties are at Robin's Hill/Bracken Copse.

Apart from those promoted by housing associations, recent residential developments have included little or no affordable housing.

The Parish Appraisal asked for views about how affordable housing might be provided. 34% of the replies were not in favour of any development and 42% considered that the provision should be dispersed in small groups of housing rather than being concentrated on a single site.

The Local Plan (Policy HSG.2) allows an exception to be made to the general policy of limiting new housing development when a local need for affordable housing can be clearly demonstrated. Many local residents support this policy in principle, but consider that proposals of this nature need to be given careful thought because of Inkpen's limited accessibility, except by car, and its lack of a general shop and post office.

The Parish Council has made it clear that it would be keen to be involved in any future assessment of local housing need. In addition, if a need for affordable housing (under HSG.2) were to be identified, it considers that any housing development to meet that need should be subject to an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to ensure as far as possible that the accommodation continues in the future to be available for local people.

The Bracken Copse development is an example of a successful S.106 agreement. The Parish Council would wish to be party to the drawing up of future agreements of this nature.

The Parish Appraisal revealed that there was public support for encouraging the design of houses to reflect predominant local characteristics.

3.2 Employment

70% of residents in employment commute out of the village on a daily basis. The substantial decrease since the last war in employment in agriculture and forestry has not been offset by an increase in other local jobs, though the steadily rising numbers who work from home are seen as a welcome trend by the villagers.

The Parish Plan sets out details of the results of the Parish Appraisal and shows 30% of those in employment are employed within the Parish, over two thirds of whom work at home. Possible sources of employment (outside the home) within the parish are; other residents; the farms; the two pubs; the primary school; local landowners and the Sawmills Industrial Estate. No job figures are available directly from these employers, but it is clear that there is a good deal of cross-commuting.

Another encouraging sign is the recent investment in new facilities at several local farms, although it is recognised that this will not necessarily lead to significant new employment opportunities.



The Old Sawmills Industrial Estate



Home working environment



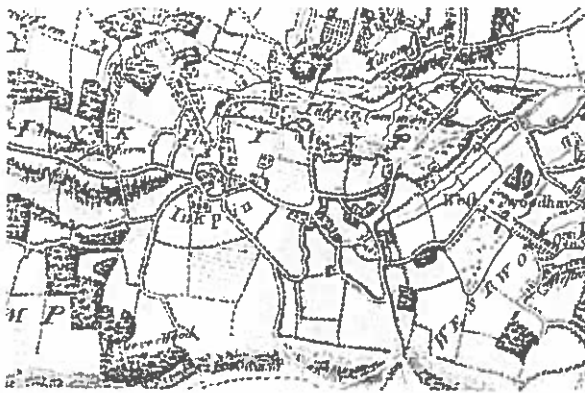
Typical Domestic Paddock



Staff cottage and dwelling.



View of harvest in West Inkpen View from Combe Road/Bell Lane (No.15 on Views Map)



18th Century map figure 1

3.3 Agriculture

In this rural area, modern farming practices and the general health of the agricultural industry have an important bearing on the village environment.

An old map of the village indicates the changes in farming practices that have taken place. Relatively recently there were a considerable number of small farms, many of them dairy units, some with their own milk round. Today, apart from a small pig-rearing unit at Hell's Corner, there are just four farms within and around the village, with not a dairy cow to be seen.

The predominant types of farming are arable (with some sheep) on the downland and open fields to the south of the village and stock rearing for meat production elsewhere.

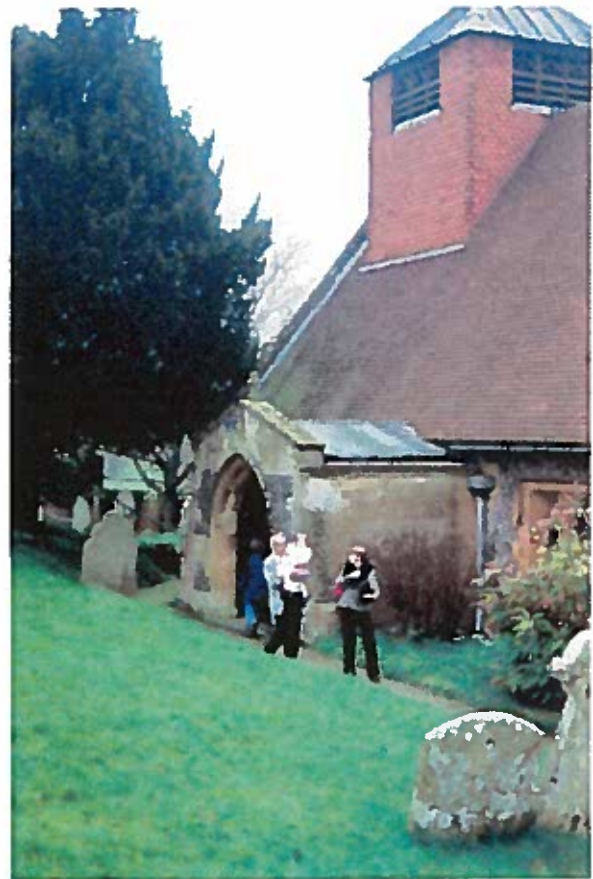
Local farmers agree that it is particularly difficult at the present time to predict what further changes might occur, especially as the variable soil quality is average at best. Worldwide market conditions are increasingly sensitive and we are at the start of a seven-year transition period during which the basis for agricultural subsidies will change from levels of production to environmental quality. Also there are increasingly variations in approach amongst farmers themselves, who range from those for whom farming and any related activities, such as shooting, are the main source of income to those for whom farming is a secondary activity which provides interest and/or protects the home environment. It is encouraging that, in spite of the uncertainty, there continues to be investment in new and refurbished farm buildings and in environmental improvement schemes, such as the planting of new copses and hedgerows.

3.4 Facilities

The facilities in the parish consist of the 13th century Parish Church of St. Michael, primary school, village hall, recreation ground and pavilion. There are also two public houses - the 'Crown and Garter' and the 'Swan Inn' - with an organic food shop attached to the 'Swan Inn'.

The facilities are all dispersed between Lower Green, Weavers Lane and Upper Green. Consequently there is no recognizable centre in the village.

Inkpen lost its original village shop and post office some 15 years ago and, unless there is a marked change either in the way that the retail sector now operates or in shoppers' habits, it is unlikely that such a shop could be viable today.



St Michael's Church at Lower Green, West Inkpen



The Inkpen Primary School , Weaver's Lane, Middle Inkpen



Looking north from Inkpen Hill through gate for TVHG Club Members



Footpath from Weaver's Lane across Northcroft Farm

3.5 Recreation

The parish is rich in facilities for recreation serving not only the local people but also the wider population.

When weather conditions are appropriate, considerable numbers of people are attracted to Inkpen Hill for hang-gliding and parascending.

There is an extensive network of well maintained footpaths and bridleways for riding, cycling and walking. Riding is particularly popular and the many small paddocks would probably have become overgrown long ago had they not been required for grazing horses.

The Inkpen Memorial Playing Field, the "Rec", is situated in Middle Inkpen on Post Office Road. The ground covers an area of 3.14 Hectares and contains two football pitches, a cricket pitch, two all-weather tennis courts, a children's play area, a pavilion/ changing rooms and car parking. The playing field is well used throughout the year by local sports clubs, the primary school and the annual village fete.

The village Hall which is used for parish council meetings, various club meetings, entertainment and social gatherings is located at Upper Green.

The two public houses, the Crown & Garter and the Swan are located on the east and west sides of the parish. Both serve restaurant meals and offer overnight guest accommodation.



From the north West Inkpen is hidden in the landscape



Walking in Middle Inkpen

Section 4: Character of the Landscape Setting

4.1 Overall Landscape Character

The village is set within a landscape that is remarkable both for its quality and its diversity – it forms part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is, therefore, of national significance.

A journey of less than 4 miles starting at Inkpen Beacon (at 297 metres the highest pure chalk hill in the country) passes through a great variety of landscape types – first, downland pasture, then the open arable land of the chalk slopes, then the intimate landscape of woods, heathland, streams and small pastures of the sand and gravel soils on which the village is situated, and finishing in the species-rich flat landscape of the River Kennet and the Kennet and Avon Canal.

The long-distance footpath along the top of the escarpment provides magnificent views of a large part of central southern England. On a very clear day it is possible to catch glimpses of the Cotswolds and the Isle of Wight. In contrast, views of the village are severely constrained by the lie of the land and by woodland. Most of the buildings are completely screened.



Lychgate in hedged enclosure to churchyard



Iron gateway and masonry post in overhung lane

The Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment (2003) refers to Inkpen and Walbury Hills as the largest area of unimproved chalk downland in the County. This land also contains a number of archaeological and historic features, including a hill fort at Walbury Hill and Combe Gibbet. Two long distance footpaths – the Wayfarers Walk and the Test Way – meet here and attract many walkers throughout the year.

The North Wessex Downs Landscape Character Assessment describes the key features that mark the landscape character of Inkpen and its setting:

- i A lowland landscape underlain by a mosaic of clays, gravels and sands to the north of the abrupt upland block of chalk at Walbury Hill;
- ii A complex micro topography with numerous small streams;
- iii A mosaic of small irregularly shaped fields of arable and pasture, often with wooded margins or contained by thick hedges;
- iv Extensive woodland cover, mainly deciduous but including conifer planting;
- v Parklands;
- vi Remnant heathland, often covered by woodland and scrub;
- vii Loose linear settlements along the intricate lattice of minor roads and tracks. Many residential properties, small hamlets and farms/studs scattered through the area;
- viii A small scale, enclosed and secretive character.

The relevant key issues for the area, which the Assessment identifies, include:

- i The decline in heathland vegetation through scrub invasion;
- ii Changes in farming practices and increase in equestrian land use;
- iii Lack of woodland and hedgerow management;
- iv Potential sub-urbanising influences such as lighting, road engineering, fencing;
- v Loss of tranquillity.

The overall objective for the area is 'to conserve and enhance the quiet secluded character' and to 'maintain the distinctive pattern of settlement'.



Glimpse through garden hedge



Fields, hedgerows and woods in Middle Inkpen



Paddock adjoining residential area, Middle Inkpen

4.2 Landscape Character of the Village

The local landscape context changes from one part of the village to another. This has influenced the character of different parts of the village.

The village, which stemmed originally from three hamlets, is distinguished by the many, and often large, areas of open space between the separate parts of the settlement. Predominantly, this land is in small fields under pasture, often in use as paddocks, with several blocks of woodland.

The area around Manor Farm is more open and lies on a small hillock. Inkpen Common and Great Inkpen Common are typical open heathland.

Visually the settlement is dominated by small woodlands and high hedges but locally distinctive features include areas of woodland pasture; tree belts of Douglas Fir; rhododendron and heathland of heathers, grass, gorse, bracken, birch and the like in the east.

Important local landscape features include:

- i the tree cover on the Folly (a landmark on the approach from the north west);
- ii lack of roadside edging, with narrow verges ditches and short steep banks;
- iii the churchyard and the gardens which provide the setting for the church;
- iv the pond at Upper Green;
- v the triangular open space at Lower Green;
- vi the common land;
- vii the Douglas firs – for instance, an avenue of trees runs south from Sadlers Road.



Byway through overhanging Beech wood

4.3 Biodiversity

The varied landscape of the parish supports a wide variety of flora and fauna, some species of which are uncommon, or even rare. There are three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (S.S.S.I) - Inkpen Common and the Crocus Field are both managed as nature reserves by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (B.B.O.W.T):- the Inkpen and Walbury Hills S.S.S.I, is chalk grassland and ancient semi-natural woodland. The Parish also has a number of other ancient semi-natural woodlands.

Other sites are also of particular interest, notably the semi-open woodland areas between Great Common and Post Office Roads and the village pond at Upper Green. The pond, having been somewhat neglected in recent years, is in the process of being restored as a result of the Parish Appraisal.



Byway off Folly Road to Balsdon



The village pond at Upper Green

4.4 Flooding and Drainage

Much of the subsoil in the parish consists of shrinkable stoney clay overlaying a chalk stratum.

Surface water from winter rains falling on the higher slopes above Inkpen makes its way through the chalk and emerges as springs. Sometimes these occur in residential areas where the depth of the overlaying clay is reduced, or removed by building and other ground works such as the construction of septic tanks and soakaways.

Residents have found that flooding and trouble with sewage effluent has been a constant problem in the parish particularly with older properties.

In the mid 1990s mains drainage was introduced to serve Weaver's lane, Folly road and Post Office Road and Hell corner. However the service does not reach all dwellings in the parish.

Where mains drainage has been provided, problems have been largely eliminated. In some other areas difficulties still persist if soakaways are inadequate.

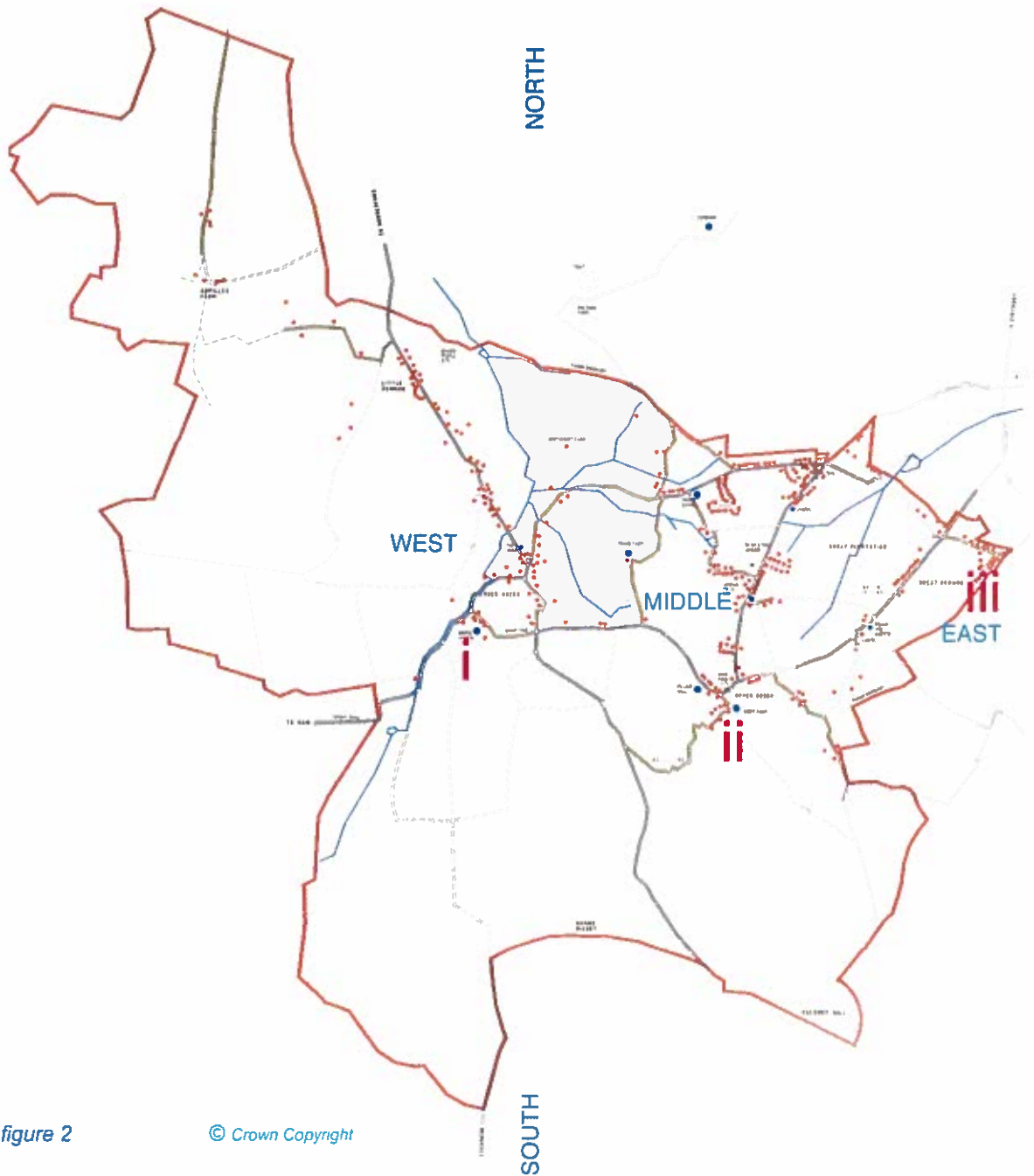


figure 2

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Section 6: Settlement Pattern

5.1 Approaches to the village

From the north west, a group of woodlands and a double bend in the road, clearly define the entrance/exit to the village. From the south west, the approach is marked by opening up of the landform to enable a view to the higher ground and the church and surrounding property. From the south, there is a strong contrast between the open landscape and the sudden enclosure, from woodland and the landform, which then embraces the built form. From the east, the approaches are distinguished by narrow winding roads within high hedges again with little distinction between settlement and the surrounding landscape.

5.2 Shape and form

The parish boundary is an irregularly shaped area of approximately 1,270 hectares, which is defined largely by the alignment of ancient roads, tracks and field boundaries.

The physical form of settlement in Inkpen does not follow the traditional pattern of an English village. Settlement is spread over a wide area originally based on three long established hamlets formed around old road junctions –

- i. Lower Green and the Church and extending along Craven Road towards Little Common
- ii. Upper Green
- iii. Inkpen Common and Hell Corner.

5.3 History of Development

Although the Parish and its surroundings have a recorded history going back to Domesday - the parish church of St Michael was built in the 13th century - a substantial proportion of the buildings have been constructed since the mid 20th century.

A number of houses listed by English Heritage are to be found in all parts of the parish showing that dispersed, but sparse, settlement was well established in the parish by the 17th century. These were for the most part built as artisans and smallholders dwellings which have since been restored and enlarged.

Inkpen House is a building of note being an elegant early 18th century Grade 2* Georgian country house with landscaped grounds designed and laid out by Capability Brown.

The number of dwellings in the parish remained fairly static until the late 1800's. From 1900 to 1950 there was an increase of about 20% and from the 1950's to the present the number of dwellings has increased by 50%.

Some older properties lie immediately adjacent to the highway, contributing to the local character. More normally, however, properties are set back a short way from the road with large gardens and roadside hedges.



Lower Green Dwellings

The southern part of Lower Green, designated a Conservation Area, still retains much of its original character.

Today there are small pockets of development in Middle Inkpen served by cul-de-sacs or access roads:- the Old Sawmills site on Folly Road; Bracken Copse off Robin's Hill; and the Firs site and Ingles Edge on Post Office Road.

The closure of the sawmill was undoubtedly a significant event for the village. It had operated for 60 years and in its heyday employed some 60 people. In addition to the site of the sawmill itself at the corner of Folly Road and Post Office Road the same family owned considerable areas of woodland. At first it was intended that the Sawmill site should be developed for rural industries, but after a lengthy period of discussion and negotiation a scheme of nine small industrial units and 13 houses was agreed and has now been built.



Ingles Edge, Upper Green



Residential development on the Old Sawmills site in Middle Inkpen

5.4 Visual Character

The existing built form nestles so well into the wooded rolling topography that little of the village can be seen from outside and only a part of the village can be seen at any one time. The existing vegetation is very important in creating this screening.

There are only a few views to central focal points within the village with the most prominent being the church group on the edge of the village.

Generally, the perception is of numerous glimpsed views to buildings, open space and the hills beyond the village.

There are panoramic views from Manor Farm in Middle Inkpen.



Views into and out of the Village

Section 6: Buildings and Spaces

6.1 Building Design

The fact that half the housing stock in the village has been built since the Second World War, much of it in a variety of styles and scattered throughout the built-up areas, makes it difficult to identify a characteristic design vernacular. This point is given added emphasis by the importance of the hedges and hedgerow trees which add to the character of the village. In large measure it is these which provide the unifying element, rather than the buildings.



Weavers Cottage Weavers Lane

Inkpen has an unusually high proportion of dwellings set in sizeable gardens behind boundary hedges. Many are only occasionally glimpsed from the road network and this gives a feeling of informality and often allows the siting and orientation of the building to be determined by the characteristics of the grounds and position of the sun, rather than the alignment of adjoining roads.

Nevertheless, it is possible to pick out some predominant characteristics of local houses:

- i The majority of houses are two storey and constructed of red brick
- ii Some roofs are thatched but more generally roofs are tile or slate at 45 degree pitch set low on the external walls
- iii The first floor ceiling is often in the roof space with dormer windows
- iv Windows are generally side hung timber casements
- v Many houses have a small pitched roof porch



Cottage in Craven Road, West Inkpen

There is no intention in this document to be prescriptive on design matters. The main requirements are that new buildings should respect their surroundings and show good manners to neighbouring properties.

Due to the diversity and nature of existing development there should be opportunities for innovative solutions provided they are to the highest design standards.

6.2 Extensions

Most of the planning applications in Inkpen are concerned with proposals for house extensions. West Berkshire Council has produced Supplementary Planning Guidance to for both house extensions generally and replacement dwellings and extensions to dwellings in the countryside. These documents deal with key matters – such as the size of extensions, the siting of replacement dwellings, and design and effect on neighbouring properties – and have the support of local residents in Inkpen. It is not, therefore, considered necessary to reiterate these matters in this document.



6.3 Materials

Many buildings are constructed from bricks produced locally until the end of the 19th Century.

Victorian masons could produce high quality brickwork often with narrow lime mortar joints in Flemish bond with blue brick plinths and header courses at sills and heads.



Covered parking space at Ingles Edge



matched roof dormers and walls in recent extension

A particular issue in Inkpen has been the problem of matching old local bricks with modern bricks which are generally about 8mm higher.

It is recommended that developers consider this point before selecting and ordering materials.



Typical frontages and porches

6.4 Boundaries and Road Frontages

The key role of roadside hedges has already been referred to several times.

Boundary walls are not a common feature in Inkpen, but there is a small number of significant examples, which, by virtue of their height and mellow brickwork, make a positive contribution to the character of the neighbourhood.



Rural wall in Middle Inkpen

6.5 Outside Lighting

The night sky is becoming increasingly rare in built-up areas and the lack of street lighting is a prized asset in Inkpen. However, it is noted that insensitive siting and direction of security and garden floodlighting can also have a deleterious effect on the dark night sky.

6.6 Agricultural Buildings

Within the parish, some old, traditionally built, barns have been taken into residential use either by change of use and conversion, or by incorporation into the curtilage of a dwelling.

Most agricultural buildings in use in the parish today have been constructed within the last fifty years. These tend to be large steel framed industrial units with wall and roof cladding of fibre reinforced cement sheet or profiled sheet metal.



Winter view of the Old Sawmills Industrial Estate from Folly Road. Colour and planting reduces the visibility of metal clad workshops.

Section 7: Highways and Traffic

7.1 Roads

There are some seven miles of through roads within the settlement areas of the Parish and the distance between East and West Inkpen is greater than the distance between the neighbouring villages of Ham and Kintbury.

With the exception of Folly Road, the road pattern follows ancient tracks between the settlements and is complex and winding with numerous single width sections and pinch points discouraging through traffic and use by heavy vehicles.

The twisting form and gradients of roads such as Weavers Lane, which is sunken and lined with coppiced hazel, naturally inhibit traffic speeds without the need for traffic calming.

There are few roadside footways, a minimum of concrete kerbing and a complete absence of street lighting. For most of their lengths local roads pass between substantial hedges or alongside woodland. These factors perhaps more than any others contribute to the rural character of the village and the much-valued sense of remoteness felt by residents.

6.2 Public Transport

The only available public transport service into and out of the parish is an infrequent bus service which is not integrated with the local rail service and which provides no late night service. Only 13% of residents say that they use the bus service regularly, while 10% rely on taxis.

6.3 Public Rights of Way

Inkpen possesses some 51 Rights of Way (footpaths & bridleways) and since the 1970's a small local committee has put considerable effort to ensuring they are maintained in a state that, as far as possible, enables them to be used at all times of the year (albeit with wellies in wet weather).

In recent years, under the Parish Paths Initiative, the focus has been to provide, where feasible, better access on the main routes for those less mobile, by replacing stiles with gates to allow the passage of push-chairs and wheelchairs.

Some Rights of Way that become muddy in winter have been surfaced with hardcore, or their drainage improved, and steps have been cut into high banks to facilitate access to Rights of Way, which had become isolated.

Walking, riding and cycling are major forms of informal rural recreation in the parish, enjoyed by more than 20% of the population. Furthermore, walkers from much further afield are attracted to the area as two long-distance footpaths – Wayfarer's Walk and Test Valley Way – meet on Inkpen Hill.



Spray Road to Ham from Lower Green, West Inkpen.



Footpath view of field hedgerows, secluded church and Inkpen Hill beyond



Narrow road and mixed boundary hedging

The local community considers that the Rights of Way network is a vital component of its heritage and that it is important that the parish preserves, maintains and promotes it as sustainable, convenient, tranquil, attractive and safe.

The committee has actively encouraged the use of Rights of Way in the parish by designing and producing a map and walks leaflet and erecting three weatherproof boards displaying the map.

Inkpen's attractive environment can be experienced by roaming its paths. However, although the network is quite extensive, it is often necessary to use the road to link one off-road section with another. Where this is the case, the local community considers it desirable that grass verges are available for walkers and riders to get clear of the road, or where possible and appropriate, separate footpath links provided. The community also feels that the creation of Quiet Lanes is worthy of further consideration.

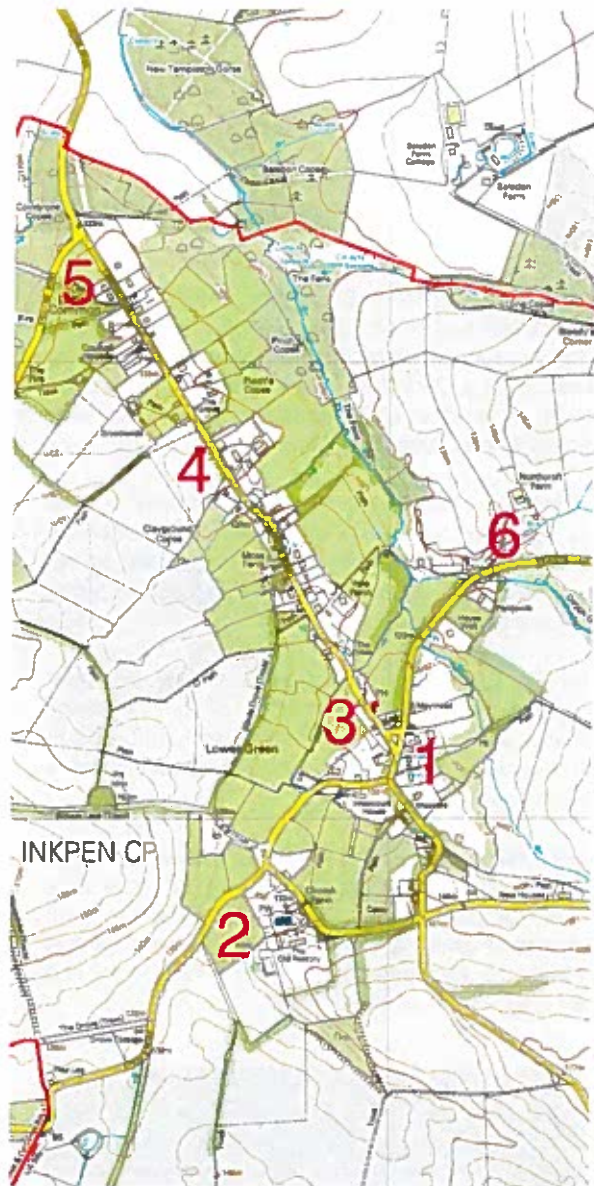


figure 3

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West Inkpen

1. Lower Green
2. St Michael's Church
3. Swan Inn
4. Craven Road
5. Little common
6. Weavers Lane



figures 4, 5

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Middle Inkpen

1. Folly Road
2. Post Office Road
3. Robins Hill and Bracken Copse.
4. Sawmills Industrial Site
5. The Old Sawmills
6. Upper Green
7. Village Hall
8. Playing Field

East Inkpen

1. Rooksnest Lane
2. Inkpen Great Common
3. Crown and Garter
4. Heads Lane

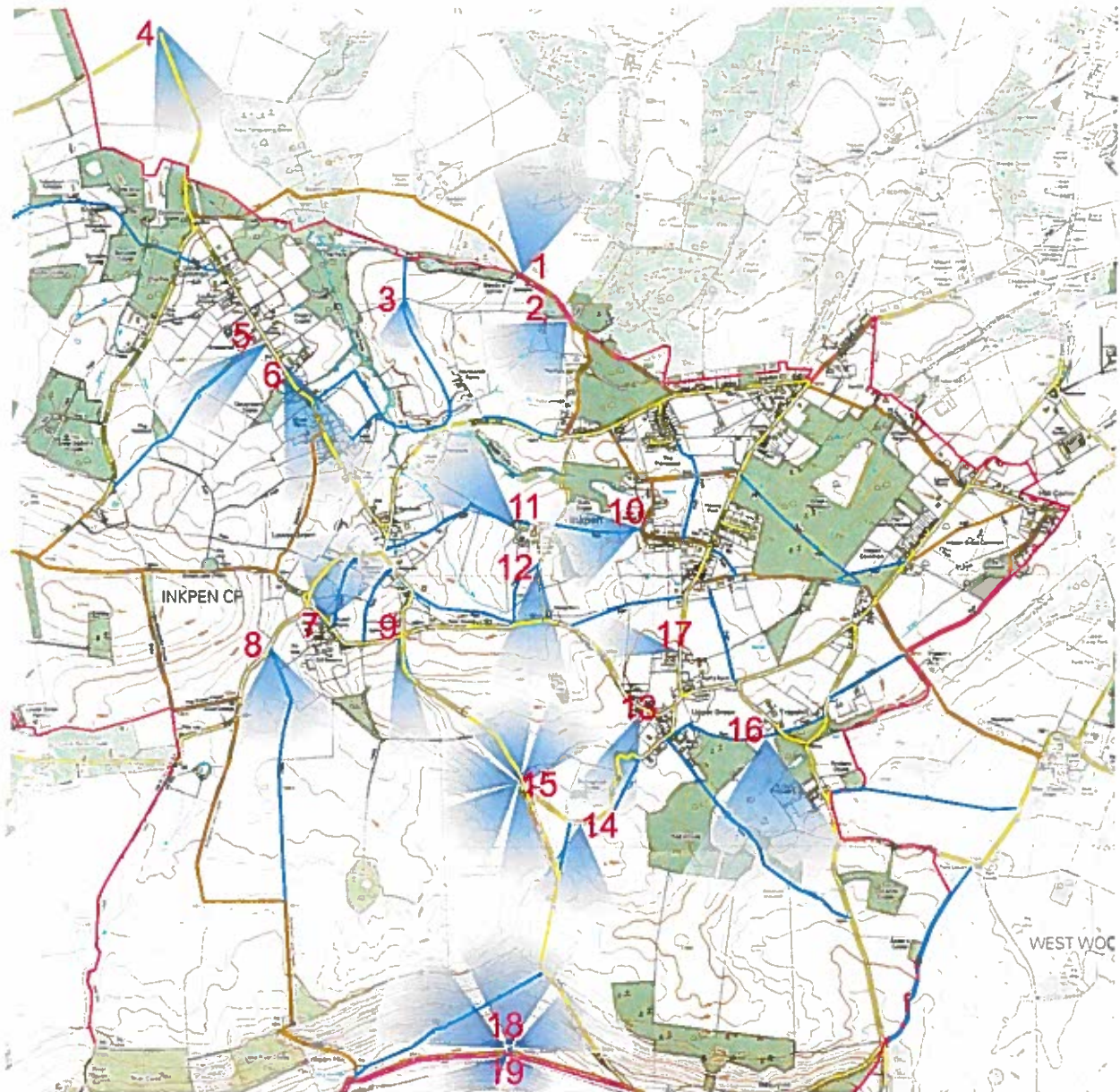


Figure 6 © Crown Copyright

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Long view from Balsdon Lane over open fields 2 Long view at Balsdon Lane gateway towards ridge 3 View from Footpath 19 to church and hills beyond 4 View of distant hills 5 View of open fields from gateway 6 View along Craven Road towards the ridge 7 View from churchyard over Lower Green 8 View across open fields towards Combe 9 View towards Combe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 View from end of Pottery Lane 11 Long view over open countryside to Membury 12 View from Manor Farm towards ridge 13 View from Village Hall 14 View towards gibbet from Bell Lane 15 Wide view from end of Bell Lane 16 View of Kirby House and Combe from footpath 37 17 View over gateway to countryside from PO Road 18 Panoramic view to the north from the gibbet 19 Panoramic view to the south from the gibbet |
|--|---|

Map of Significant Views



Figure 7

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Roads: Yellow
Byways: Brown
Footpaths: Blue
Parish Boundary: Red

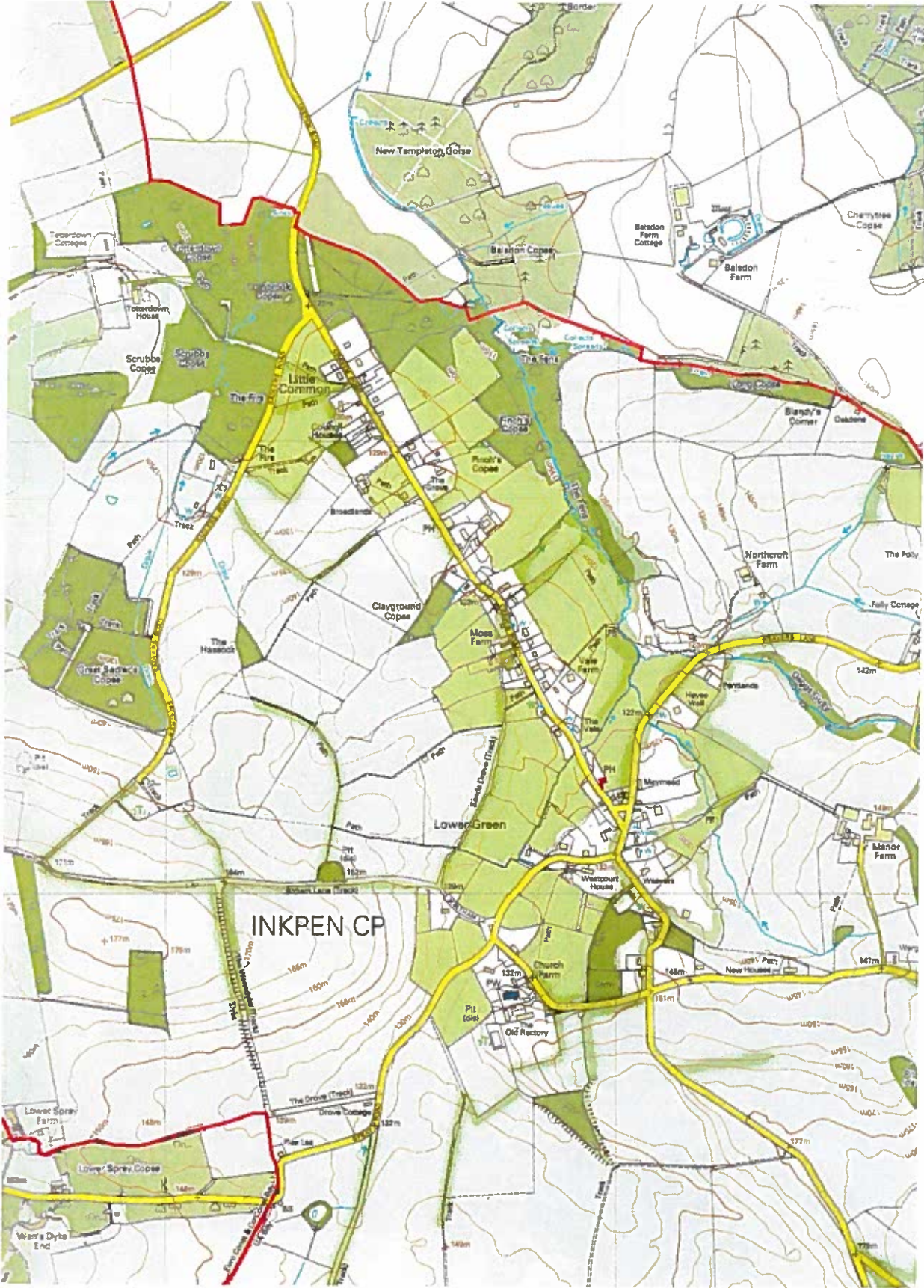
Map of Roads, Byways, Footpaths



figure 10 © Crown Copyright

- 1. Lower Green Conservation Area
- 2. Inkpen Common - Site of Special Scientific Interest
- 3. The Crocus Field
- 4. Inkpen Hill
- 5. Walbury Hill

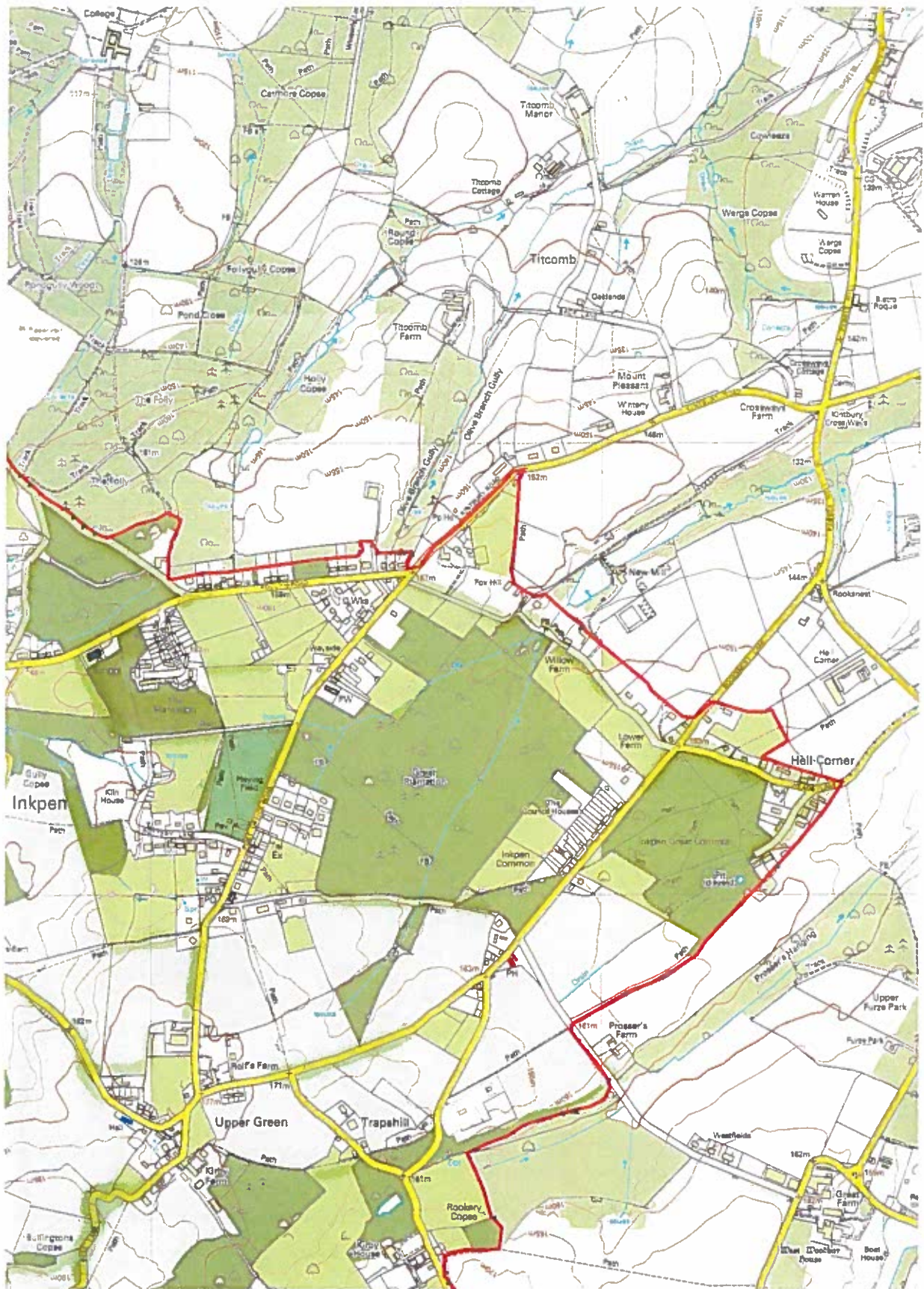
Inkpen Special Areas



Paddocks Farmland Woodland and Heathland Significant Tree Belts

Inkpen West *figure 8*

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Inkpen Middle and East figure 9

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Section 8: Planning Guidelines

8.1 Introduction

This Design Statement is intended to help guide the design of future development in the parish. It builds on existing planning policy, including additional guidance on certain aspects taking into account local circumstances and the aspirations and priorities of local people.

8.2 Landscape Character

- i. Any future development should conserve and enhance the landscape character of the area.
- ii. Any future development should preserve or enhance key features of the historic environment.

8.3 Open Spaces

The character and pattern of open spaces within the village and their connections to the surrounding countryside should be retained in any new development.

8.4 Views

New development should have regard to the 'special views' (see map) which are such a feature of the village.

8.5 Biodiversity

Any new development should ensure that the biodiversity of the Parish is conserved and enhanced.

8.6 Building Design

New buildings should respect the character and influences of the local environment. However, buildings which employ innovative design and modern technology to provide aesthetic and environmental benefits will not be discouraged.

8.7 Building Forms

- i. New development should generally not be more than two storeys high and should respect the scale of surrounding buildings.
- ii. Materials should be chosen to respect the style, colours and textures of neighbouring buildings within the local context.

8.8 Siting of Buildings

- i. The siting of a building on a plot should take account of its relationship with both neighbouring properties and the surrounding wider landscape, including specific features such as trees and hedges.
- ii. The footprint of new buildings should not be disproportionate to the area of the site.

8.9 Alterations & Extensions

- i. Works to existing buildings should respect the character, scale and proportions of existing structures.
- ii. The original features of a building should be matched as closely as possible, particularly when old buildings are extended, incorporating where appropriate, traditional details such as pitched roofs with flat clay tile or slates; matching brick or flintwork walls; flat arch brick window lintels; window sills of two courses of clay roofing tiles or sloping red or special blue sill bricks. Materials and workmanship should be carefully considered.

8.10 Windows in Existing Buildings

- i. In older properties traditional window frames should be retained whenever possible. Where they do need to be replaced their replacement with wooden frames is strongly encouraged.
- ii. Existing proportions, styles and aspect ratios for windows and dormers should be respected.

8.11 Roofs

- i. Where roofs are extended, the new materials used should match/complement the existing materials on the original roof. When a new roof joins an existing roof the use of 'saved' tiles on the parts of the roof visible from the road frontage will help the new extension to blend with the existing.
- ii. New and extended roofs should respect the materials, scale and style of adjacent buildings.

8.12 External Walls

- i. New and extended external walls should relate to the materials of the existing surrounding buildings.
- ii. When course matching cannot be achieved between new and old brickwork the junctions should be carefully detailed to avoid obvious mismatching.

8.13 Boundaries and Road Frontages

- i. Prospective developers are encouraged to consider the treatment of the road boundary at the beginning of the design process. Property boundaries should be rural in character and materials.
- ii. Existing roadside hedges should be retained and maintained wherever possible.
- iii. The traditional boundary walls that do exist should be conserved and enhanced.
- iv. When planting new hedges, indigenous species, such as hawthorn, beech, holly and yew, are preferred. Careful thought should be given to their relationship with adjoining residential hedges or field hedges which often contain a variety of species and are frequently 2 to 3 metres high.
- v. Where a new gateway is required in an existing hedge, the design and position of the opening should be carefully considered both to provide safe sightlines and to minimise damage to the hedge line.
- vi. The replacement of hedges and other natural boundaries by new brick walls or solid wooden fences should be avoided.

8.14 Agricultural Buildings

New agricultural buildings should be designed and sited in such a way as to minimise a potential adverse effect on the landscape. Visual impact, for instance, can be softened by choice of cladding colour and by planting indigenous hedge and tree species.

8.15 Garden/Security Lighting

Any external lighting should be carefully designed and sited so as not to increase light pollution.

8.16 Road Alignment

The existing alignment of the roads should be retained. In order to avoid a suburban appearance, road widening would not be welcomed unless for reasons of highway safety.

8.17 Road Kerbs

Roadside kerbstones should be restricted to those required for control of flooding or roadside erosion and should be unobtrusive.

8.18 Pavements

In order to avoid a suburban appearance, pavements alongside roads should be installed only where absolutely necessary and where there is no satisfactory alternative. Appropriate materials should be used in sympathy with the rural character of the area.

8.19 Street Lighting

The introduction of street lighting in this rural location is not welcomed by residents.

8.20 Traffic Management

Any necessary traffic management and speed calming measures should be designed to be in sympathy with the rural character of the area. The impact of street/road signs should be kept to a minimum without impairing highway safety.

8.21 Rights of Way

Where appropriate and possible, opportunities should be taken to improve the safety of walkers and riders on sections of road which link parts of the rights of way network. Any such works should be in sympathy with the rural character of the area.

The Consultative Process

The Inkpen Village Design Statement has been prepared by a Steering Committee at the instigation of Roger Hunt and with the support of the Inkpen Parish Council and West Berkshire Council. It follows the completion of the Village Appraisal in 2002 and the Parish Plan in 2003.

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Inkpen Village Design Statement

