

Over Alderley  
Neighbourhood Development Plan  
2022 – 2030



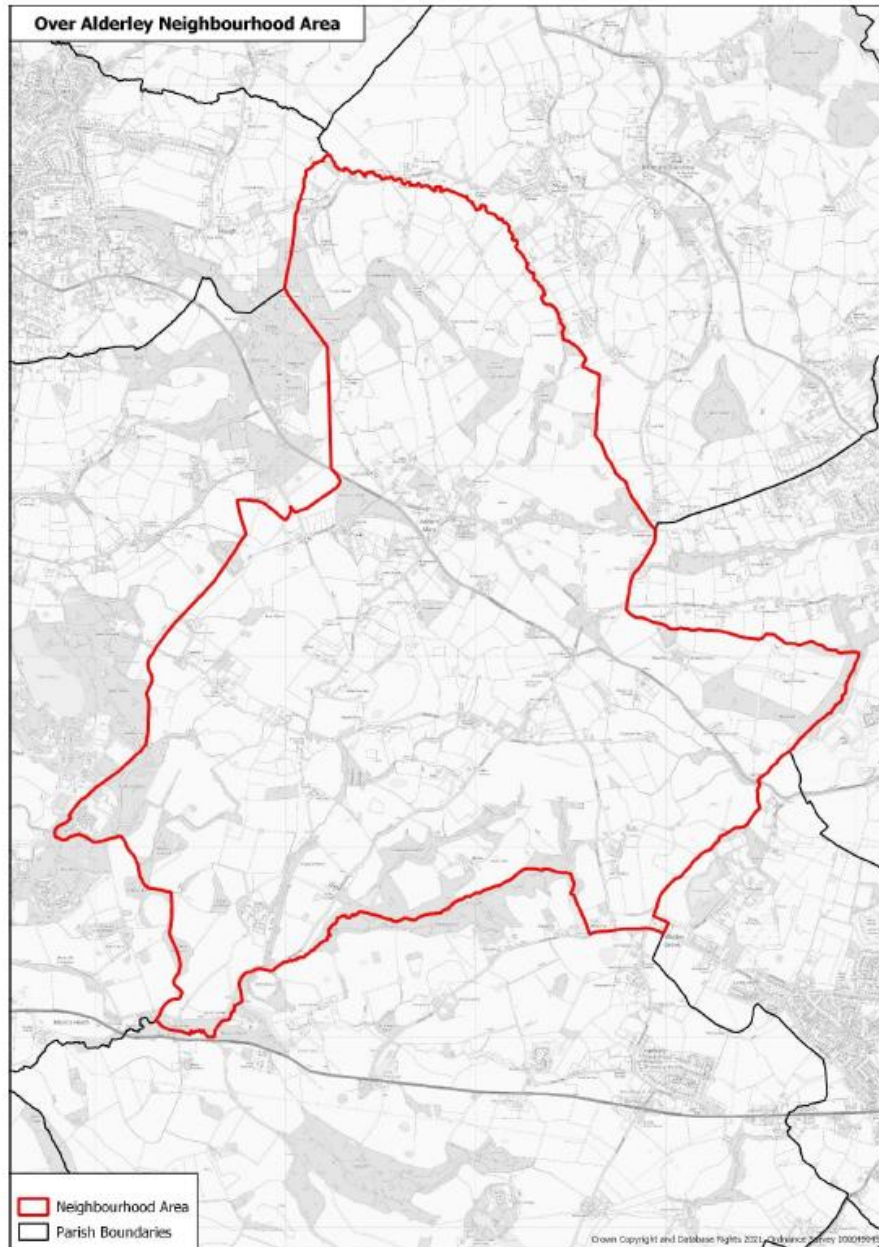
Vision and Aims Document  
For Public Consultation

Over Alderley Parish Council  
January 2022

## Map 1: Over Alderley Neighbourhood Area and Parish



### Over Alderley Designated Neighbourhood Area



Images for this document are kindly provided by David Fairbotham of Wizzy Park Photography  
Mob: 07951 888896 [Email:wizzyparkphotography@aol.com](mailto:wizzyparkphotography@aol.com)



## Foreword

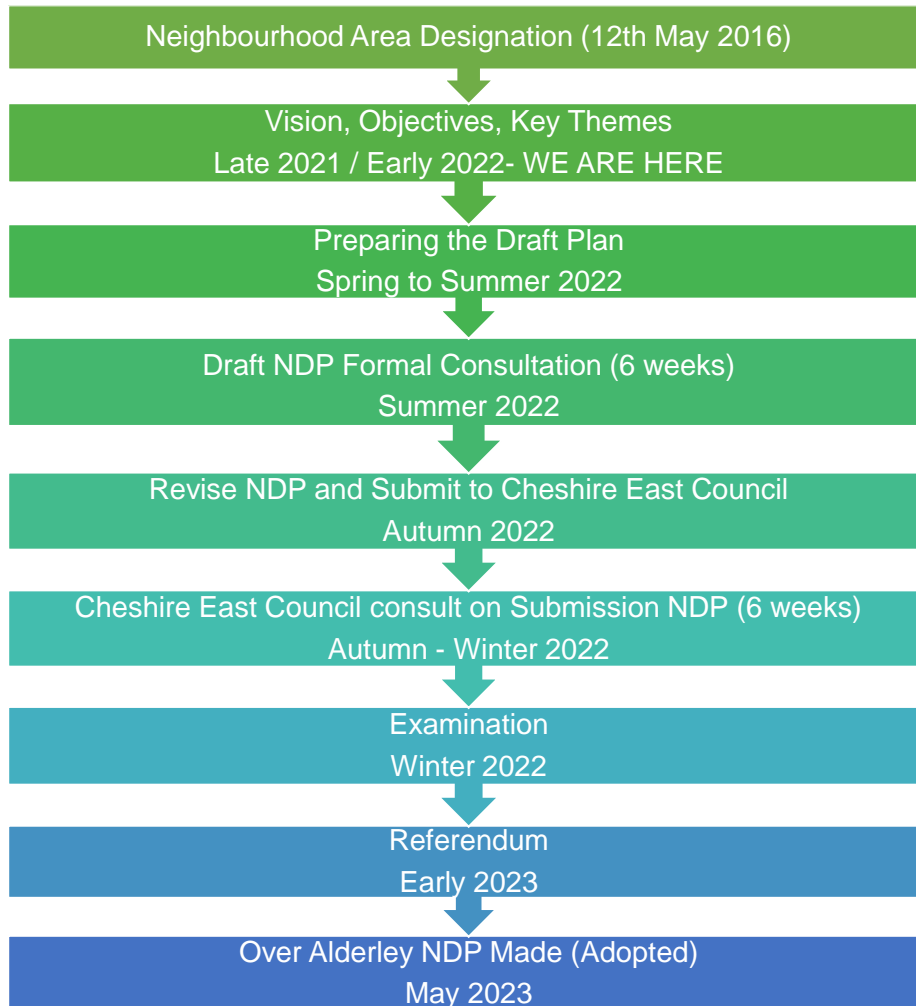


1. Welcome to the Vision and Aims document for the Over Alderley Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This document has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan steering group of local residents and parish councillors on behalf of the Parish Council and is the focus of our first public consultation with residents and stakeholders. Once completed, Over Alderley NDP will be an important document which contains local planning policies to inform decisions on future development in the Parish.
2. We have prepared a draft Vision, a set of Aims and some possible key planning themes which our Plan for the Parish could address. We would like to hear about whether you agree with these, whether you have any comments about how they could be improved, and whether we have missed anything important.
3. There is a short questionnaire at the back of the document for you to detach, complete and return. You can return your completed survey by either posting it to Councillor Wilson at 2 Birtles Hall Cottages, Birtles Hall Estate, Birtles Lane, Over Alderley SK10 4RU, or to The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Over Alderley Parish Council, The Folly Farm, Swettenham Lane, Swettenham, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 2LB. You can also take a photograph of your completed survey and email it to [clerk.overalderleypc@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.overalderleypc@gmail.com) or you can complete this survey online at <https://overalderleypc.weebly.com/>.
4. We hope very much that you will take the time to read the document and provide us with your thoughts at this early stage so that we can be sure our Plan is locally relevant and embeds our residents' and stakeholders' priorities for planning and development.
5. Thank you for your interest and we look forward to hearing from you.

## What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

6. Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) were introduced through the Localism Act 2011 to give local people a greater say in planning decisions that affect their area. NDPs are neighbourhood level planning policy documents with policies designed to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities.
7. NDPs can identify where development should take place, set out local design principles so that buildings respond positively to local character, and protect important facilities, historic buildings, the natural environment and open spaces. They are an important part of our planning system because planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Made (adopted) NDPs are part of the local statutory development plan for their area. An NDP can cover a range of planning related issues or just have one, single policy.
8. NDPs do not stand alone - they have to have regard to national planning policies (see the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other Government guidance) and be in general conformity with strategic planning policies, here provided in the Cheshire East Local Plan.
9. NDPs have to be prepared through extensive community consultation and backed up by robust technical evidence. The policies and proposals in the Plan are tested against a set of 'basic conditions' through an independent examination. At the very end there is a local referendum, when all those on the electoral register are invited to vote on whether the Plan should be used to determine planning applications. This process will probably take about 18 months or more to complete and is shown on Figure 1. We are only at the beginning.
10. The Parish Council decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in June 2020 and the Over Alderley NDP neighbourhood area was designated on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 – see Map 1. This area is important as the Plan policies can only apply to development within the Parish.
11. A steering group of local people and parish councillors meets regularly to oversee the Plan's preparation. Documents are placed on the neighbourhood plan pages of the Parish Council website <https://overalderleypc.weebly.com> . If you wish to join the steering group or become more involved, please get in touch, as we are looking for more members.
12. When finished the Over Alderley NDP will include local planning policies and proposals to inform decisions on development in the parish of Over Alderley (as shown on Map 1) up to 2030 – the same time period as the Cheshire East Local Plan. The Parish Council will also try to progress actions to accompany the policies in the Plan, which may be identified or confirmed through the consultation processes.

**Figure 1 Neighbourhood Plan Process and Timescale**



## A Portrait of Over Alderley Parish

13. Over Alderley is a very quiet, rural parish in the local authority area of Cheshire East. The Parish lies between Macclesfield and Alderley Edge and has a picturesque arcadian landscape of mature trees and hedgerows, woodland, pasture and parkland. There is no 'village' or main settlement but development is scattered across the area in small clusters of houses and farms, large country mansions, a reading room and a parish church, St Catherine's. The Parish extends over 893 hectares.
14. The neighbourhood area is washed over by the Green Belt. The area is attractive to visitors and provides recreational opportunities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders from the nearby built-up areas. It includes part of the National Trust property and SSSI at Alderley Edge in the north of the Parish. Traffic and parking on verges can cause conflicts on the rural, winding lanes that crisscross the area.

15. In 2011 the population of the Parish was 318 residents. There are few facilities, but the Reading Rooms are well used and highly valued by residents.
16. The local economy is largely connected to farming and there are also equestrian businesses, groundworks and stone and building supplies. A number of people work from home, including in the digital economy.
17. There are numerous listed buildings in the area and a couple of scheduled monuments including a bowl barrow near Birtles Hall. There are many bridleways, footpaths and cycle routes in the parish. Horses, bikes and walkers are a common sight. The parish provides a much-needed green space for those in surrounding built-up areas.

## Draft Vision and Aims

18. The Draft Vision and Aims have been prepared as a starting point for discussions about the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. They are:

### **DRAFT VISION:**

**To support and nurture the distinctive qualities of Over Alderley as both high quality Green Belt and a sustainable and vibrant community.**

### **DRAFT AIMS:**

1. **Community:** To support and encourage a strong sense of community and place, to encourage the active use of community assets and to value and promote the network of country lanes, footpaths and bridleways as healthy opportunities for informal recreation.
2. **Infrastructure:** To secure continuing improvements to local infrastructure and identify opportunities to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorists.
3. **Heritage:** To support the preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings in order to protect the distinctive local character of the area.
4. **Landscape and wildlife:** To promote the preservation of the distinctive quality of the rural landscape character in the woodlands, pasture, hedgerows and meres and to encourage planting of native hedgerows in boundary treatments and minimise light pollution sources.
5. **Development and Design:** To protect the integrity of the Green Belt; and to promote sensitive and appropriate high-quality development which enhances the existing character of the built form and landscape setting and is sustainable and resource efficient.
6. **Economy:** To encourage a thriving and prosperous business community that delivers a high quality of life for all its residents and visitors.

# Key Planning Themes

## 1. Community, Health and Local Infrastructure

19. As a small rural parish, Over Alderley has limited community facilities but they are well used and highly valued by residents. The Reading Room and church are the main centres of community. The Parish has no school or pub. The Reading Rooms serve as a parish hall, holding regular events from fitness classes to dog training and the village fete, as well as special celebrations. St. Catherine's church is the only place of worship in the parish and the church attracts good numbers to its services as well as hosting special events and exhibitions which are open to all.



20. There is inequity in connectivity in the parish with some parts already on high-speed fibre and other still awaiting upgrade and suffering from slow connections that limit digital homeworking opportunity.

21. In addition to these facilities the Parish has an extensive network of public rights of way (PROW) with many footpaths, tracks and country lanes which provide informal recreational activities for walking, cycling and horse riding.

22. Popular walks take in the Edge and Harehill which are owned by the National Trust and connected by footpaths. Well publicised routes exist in Alderley Park. Birtles Lane is a national cycleway and many cycle routes to and from Alderley, Macclesfield and up into the hills to Macclesfield Forest and beyond pass through the parish. There are a number of bridleways including through the woods at Alderley Edge as well as routes around the parish on private roads and tracks such as Hocker Lane and Bradford Lane which are increasingly of value to horse riders as roads become busier.





23. All these local facilities support residents' wellbeing, providing opportunities for socialising, mutual support and active, healthy lifestyles.

**Planning policies could:**

- Support retention and improvement of community buildings such as the Reading Rooms and St Catherine's Church.
- Promote walking and cycling and safe access to the countryside for all.
- Support schemes which reduce the impacts of visitor parking.

**Infrastructure Actions** could include developing solutions which prioritise walking, cycling and horse riding and identify the most appropriate locations for roadside parking. We could also look for solutions that reduce the harmful impacts of traffic.

## 2. Heritage

24. Over Alderley has 27 listed buildings and scheduled monuments. Most Listed Buildings are Grade II but St Catherine's Church, Hayman's House and Whirley Hall are Grade II\*. Scheduled monuments include a bowl barrow and a medieval boundary marker on Finlow Hill.



25. These buildings have protection through national and Cheshire East's planning policies but there may be opportunities through the neighbourhood plan to identify other buildings and structures which are worthy of protection by being on a 'local list' of 'Non designated Heritage Assets'. Each building would need to be assessed in terms of its local heritage and cultural significance.

**Planning Policies could:**

- Identify local heritage assets and set out how they should be treated.
- Recognise and value our rural and agricultural heritage and encourage enjoyment of it by all.

## 3. Landscape and Wildlife

26. Over Alderley falls within an area identified as 'Alderley Edge and West Macclesfield Wooded Estates'. This landscape features a number of 18<sup>th</sup> century parklands with mansion houses, woodlands, listed farmhouses, historic mill buildings, barns and cottages which create a distinctive sense of place. The influences of the estates are evident in the surrounding farmlands, including specimen oaks within fields and along





boundaries. It is a broadly undulating landscape with focal points of wooded backdrops and includes the dramatic wooded sandstone escarpment of Alderley Edge. Over Alderley landscape character includes gently undulating topography of pasture, woodlands and hedgerows, scattered farms and cottages.

27. Part of Alderley Edge SSSI falls within the Parish and there are several areas of ancient woodland, traditional hedgerows watercourses and ponds, all of which are important for biodiversity.

**Planning Policies could:**

- Identify locally distinct landscape and locally distinctive features in the landscape, protect native hedgerows and other important local landscape features and encourage schemes that include local species in hedgerow and tree planting and measures to support wildlife.
- Include criteria to protect wildlife such as limiting light pollution and promoting ‘darker skies’.

**Actions** could include considering TPO’s and establishing where and how improvements could be made to enhance the landscape and wildlife.

#### 4. Development and Design

28. Development opportunities in the Parish are very limited due to the Parish’s location in the Green Belt. However, some development is considered ‘not inappropriate’ in Green Belts and therefore small scale and incremental changes will continue over the lifetime of the Plan.



29. Scale, materials, detailing of developments can have positive and adverse impacts on local character. Cheshire red brick is the predominant building material, with decorative bricks used in detailing. Stone is commonly found on boundary walls and roofs are often slate or tile. Buildings in the Tudor revival style are also found, such as the Reading Rooms and Hayman’s Farm. Other common details include first floor oriel windows, steep pitched roofs, mullioned windows and tall narrow windows.

30. To support the work on the neighbourhood plan we are commissioning ‘Design Codes’. These will include a more detailed assessment of local built character and set out local criteria for policies on design in new development and conversions.

**Planning Policies could:**

- Encourage development to respond to local character and
- Use appropriate materials/design/landscaping/lighting/ boundary treatment in designs.

## 5. Economy

31. Employment opportunities in the Parish are limited and there are few local businesses with premises in the parish. Examples include local farms and equestrian yards. Anecdotally homeworking has increased both before and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and a number of individuals run small businesses from home, and work for their employers from home.



32. There are employment opportunities nearby at Alderley Edge, Alderley Park and further afield in Macclesfield and Manchester but commuting, particularly by private car has environmental impacts, and a more sustainable future may involve more people working locally and from home.

33. The Parish attracts visitors and there could be business opportunities linked to the tourist economy such as hospitality, food and drink. However, there is a need to balance the impacts of visitors with protecting the peace and tranquility of the rural area.

34. Over Alderley is washed over by the Green Belt and the Parish Council is committed to protecting the rural character of the area. However it is recognised that there is a need to ensure businesses can thrive and provide employment opportunities as part of the sustainable future of the community.

### **Planning Policies could:**

- Support local businesses and home working to thrive and coexist with the natural environment.
- Promote the economic benefits arising from a high-quality natural environment.
- Support local tourism for leisure and recreation, retaining and reinvesting the benefits, identifying and eradicating adverse impacts.

## Over Alderley NDP - Vision and Aims Questionnaire

Thank you for reading the Visions and Aims Document. Please complete this short questionnaire.

You can return your completed survey by either posting it to Councillor Wilson at 2 Birtles Hall Cottages, Birtles Hall Estate, Birtles Lane, Over Alderley SK10 4RU, or to The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Over Alderley Parish Council, The Folly Farm, Swettenham Lane, Swettenham, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 2LB.

You can also take a photograph of your completed survey and email it to [clerk.overalderleypc@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.overalderleypc@gmail.com) or you can complete this survey online at <https://overalderleypc.weebly.com/>.

When you attend a consultation event or return a survey or consultation document, the information you provide (personal information such as name, address, email address, phone number) will be processed and stored so that it is possible to contact you and respond to your correspondence and provide information relating to the Neighbourhood Plan. Any comments submitted may be made publicly available on the Over Alderley Parish Council website, or through other local publications, however, all comments will be anonymised prior to publication. Further information relating to privacy and data processing is available on the Over Alderley Parish Council website (<https://overalderleypc.weebly.com/policies.html>) or by contacting the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

Name:		
Do you want to be kept informed about the NDP and any future public consultations?	Yes	No
If so, please provide contact details:		
Q1 Do you support the Draft Vision?	Yes	No
Please provide any comments about how it could be improved.		
Q2 Do you support the Draft Aims?	Yes	No
Please provide any comments about how they could be improved.		
Q3 Do you support the proposed Key Planning Themes and Possible Policies and Actions for Over Alderley Neighbourhood Plan, as set out below?		
Q 3.1 Community Health and Local Infrastructure	Yes	No
Comments		



Q3.2 Heritage	Yes	No
Comments		
Q3.3 Landscape and Wildlife	Yes	No
Comments		
Q3.4 Development and Design	Yes	No
Comments		
Q3.5 Economy	Yes	No
Comments		
Q4 Please let us know if you disagree with anything or think we have missed anything important.		
Q5 Please use the space below to provide us with any further comments about the NDP for Over Alderley.		

Thank you for your time and interest.