

7. Village Strategies and Policies

7.1 Ascot

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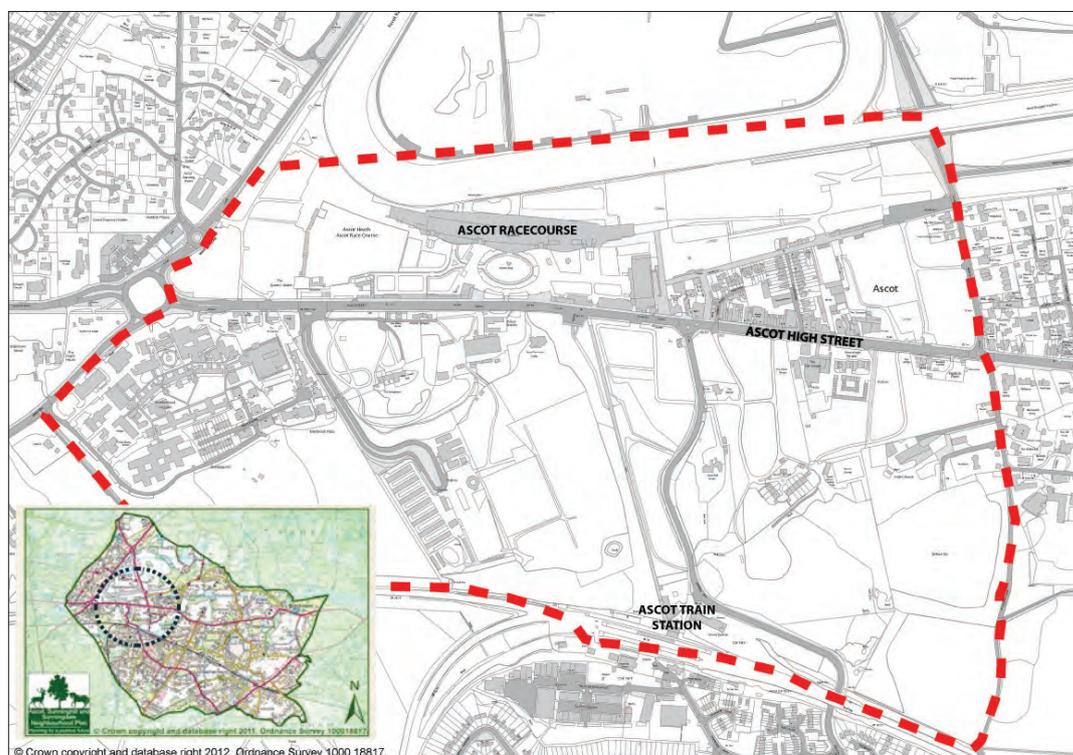
From our very first public consultation at our launch event, Ascot was highlighted as a village centre that people wanted to see improved, with a greater range of shops and a reduction in the traffic congestion high on the list of priorities, followed by improving the way it looks and feels and availability of parking.

Subsequent consultation reinforced this view, leading to the NP team conducting an Ascot specific High Street Survey that showed there was a desire to see the centre of Ascot developed, with the idea of having more small food retailers, independent restaurants/cafes/ bars, a market and community facilities such as a public open space, community hall and leisure centre all receiving support.

The decision was then made by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, with the support of a key stakeholder in Ascot Racecourse, to commission The Prince's Foundation to conduct an "Enquiry by Design" – a community consultation workshop – to discuss the future for Ascot. This took place in October 2012 and, subsequently, a full Ascot Centre Report was produced and is included in our Evidence Base.

The area initially considered encompassed all of Ascot centre, the area around Ascot Station and all the area up to and including the Heatherwood Hospital site. Because of its distance from the High Street, the latter was subsequently taken out of the scope and considered separately, as a stand alone site.

Map 13: Ascot area of focus for The Prince's Foundation "Enquiry by Design"



In view of the importance of the Ascot Rejuvenation proposals and the potential contentiousness arising out of the fact that much of this development will involve developing in Green Belt, the Ascot proposals were included for yet further consultation in our Options Questionnaire and were supported by a majority of respondents.

Results from the recent Borough-wide consultation also showed overwhelming support for the plans to rejuvenate Ascot at 93%.

This led to Ascot Centre/High Street and Ascot Station being identified as strategic sites. However, it is not within the remit of a Neighbourhood Plan to redraw Green Belt boundaries – only the Borough can do this through work on the Borough Local Plan. This means that only the Ascot Centre area north of the High Street - “Ascot Village” - has been included as a policy in Section 8 of the Plan. The Ascot Centre area south of the High Street - “Ascot Green” - and the Ascot Station site are not covered by policies in the Neighbourhood Plan but they have been included in section 9 as Projects the community wishes to progress in collaboration with the Royal Borough.

7.2 Sunningdale

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There is a strong sense of community in Sunningdale, which residents are keen to retain, and a desire to protect the character of the area – both its green and leafy surroundings and the built environment.

The key issues for Sunningdale which were highlighted in community consultations were:

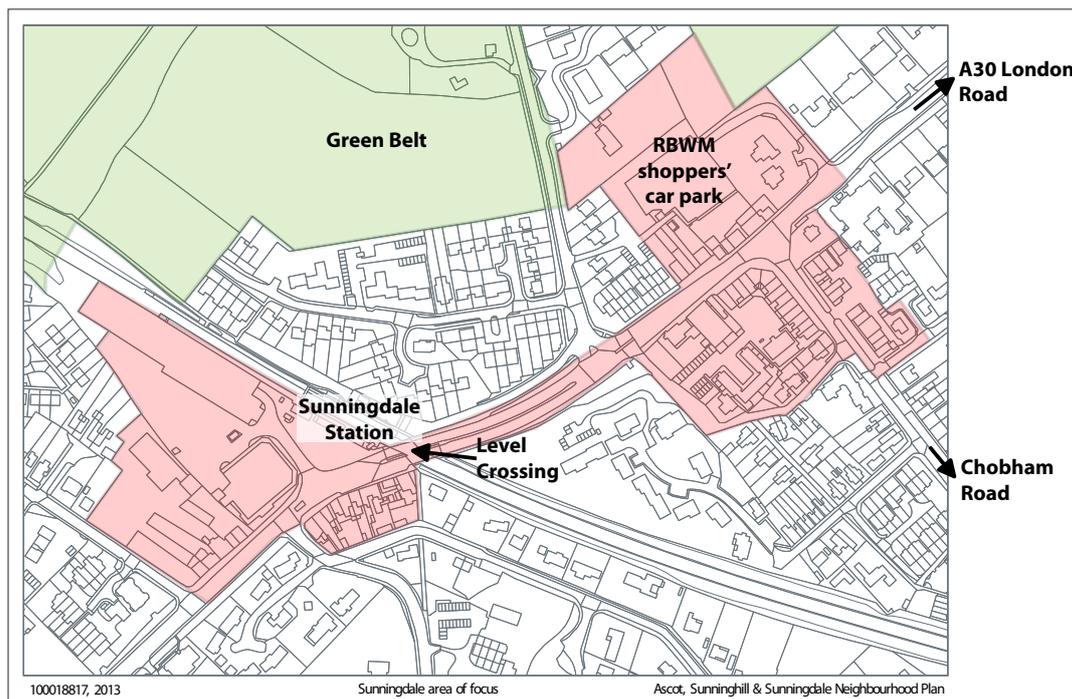
- A shortage of parking for workers, shoppers, commuters and residents
- Traffic congestion, aggravated by a busy level crossing
- The likely impact the development of the DERA site nearby in Surrey will have on both the above
- The adverse impact the increase in flatted developments is having on the character of the area and the amenity of residents
- A desire to retain a good mix of retail offering and restaurant/cafe outlets and to encourage smaller independents to thrive

Interviews with retailers in the retail centre of Sunningdale also raised some important issues:

- Retailers on Station Parade are separated from the main retail centre which is around the junction of the A30 and Chobham Road by the busy level crossing and footfall tends to suffer. They also suffer from lack of parking as the two major car parks nearby are dedicated to either Waitrose shoppers or station users
- The fact that the retail offering is spread out along the A30 and split in two makes for a less convenient and satisfactory shopping experience for shoppers

This led to the NP Steering Group setting up a ‘Sunningdale Improvement Group’ to focus on the area around the RBWM Shoppers Car Park, the shops and amenities on the Chobham Road and along the A30 and the Sunningdale and Waitrose Car Parks.

Map 14: Sunningdale area of focus



Two strategic sites were identified from this initiative – Sunningdale Broomhall Centre and Sunningdale Station & Waitrose Car Parks – see Section 8.

Note: Any new residential development in Sunningdale for 10 or more dwellings will require a new SANG to be found, as the Allen's Field SANG is too far away. (Thames Basin Heaths SPA Delivery Framework 2009, adopted by the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board. See Section 5.2.1)

7.3 Sunninghill

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Sunninghill is a thriving Victorian village that offers a variety of small convenience and specialist shops and food outlets and is popular with both residents and visitors. In consultations, the community tells us it is very special and they wish its character to be retained.

Its charm also contributes to its problems: There is quite a lot of housing in the immediate vicinity of the High Street, most of it attractive Victorian terraces. Many homes lack off-street parking, most roads are narrow and many have only one footpath or none at all.

The popular High Street is also used as a commuter through-route which, combined with traffic from two local schools, the proximity of Queen's Road Industrial area and a post office distribution centre, adds pressure to the traffic congestion.

There is concern that the village cannot accommodate much more new development without this putting undue strain on the Victorian infrastructure and impacting adversely on the amenity and wellbeing of residents. We have therefore written a policy to try to mitigate the impact of new development and protect the much loved character of this village.

7.3.1 Sunninghill village centre policy (NP/SV1)

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CONTEXT AND REASONED JUSTIFICATION

The village is poorly served by public transport as it has no station (it is mid-way between Ascot and Sunningdale stations) and has a very limited bus service, creating reliance on the car to get around.

It is clear from the description of Sunninghill village above that the village already suffers from frequent traffic congestion and a shortage of parking for local residents, visitors and workers, with many residents unable to park within a reasonable distance of their homes both during the day and in the evenings. Consultation feedback showed that 75% of respondents supported the management of future development in Sunninghill to avoid worsening of the situation.

The number of HGV deliveries to the High Street has escalated in recent years, due to the recent new convenience store and a trend towards larger delivery vehicles in general. On our narrow streets with very limited access this not only exacerbates the traffic congestion but also poses a serious risk to the safety of road users.

A development of a large care village, including 133 additional homes at Lynwood, approximately half a mile from the High Street, is already under way; planning permissions have been granted for a further approximately 30 dwellings in the immediate vicinity of Sunninghill village centre; and the close proximity of the Gasholder site, one of our identified strategic sites, will add further pressure to traffic and parking.

There is serious concern about the potential cumulative impact on congestion and parking in the vicinity of the high street from these and other developments within the Plan area. A recent traffic study indicated that new development throughout the NP area, as supported by this Plan, will add to the traffic congestion through Sunninghill village. With this consideration in mind, any traffic and parking impact assessments required by this policy should take into account all development being proposed or taking place in the plan area.

INTENT

To protect the character of the village and ensure the High Street retains its character and viability.

To protect the amenity of local residents.

To manage any potential *cumulative* impact of development on the traffic congestion and parking capacity in Sunninghill.



Policy NP/SV1 – Sunninghill village centre policy

POLICY NP/SV1 – SUNNINGHILL VILLAGE CENTRE POLICY

NP/SV1.1 Any development that will have a severe independent or cumulative impact on traffic congestion in Sunninghill High Street will not be permitted, unless the applicant can make a convincing case, supported by an independent traffic impact assessment, that measures can be put in place to mitigate its impact.

NP/SV1.2 Development proposals for new dwellings in or around Sunninghill village shall only be permitted provided sufficient on-site parking is made available for residents, visitors and tradesmen so that there is no increase in on-street parking demand in the village.

NP/SV1.3 Development likely to increase the frequency of HGV or large vehicle deliveries to retail premises or businesses in or around the centre of Sunninghill will not be permitted, unless the applicant can demonstrate through an independent traffic impact assessment that mitigating measures can be put in place which will result in no severe independent or cumulative impact on traffic congestion or on the amenity of local residents.