



**South  
Cambridgeshire**  
District Council

# **Over Village Design Guide**

Supplementary Planning Document  
Consultation Draft April 2019







## Contents

	Page
Foreword	3
Introduction	3
1. About Over	4
2. Community Input	
Section C	
ETC	

### Note to reader

The draft Over Village Design Guide supplements the new Local Plan policies on high quality design, distinctive local character and placemaking. Technically the SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in Over and it has been prepared in collaboration with community representatives.

The outcome of the current consultation will help us to further refine the Village Design Guide before it is considered for adoption by South Cambridgeshire District Council. It is important to understand that the SPD cannot make new planning policy, or allocate sites for development and must be in conformity with the policies of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

The draft Over Village Design Guide SPD is being consulted upon along with the following accompanying documents:

- Sustainability Appraisal Screening Report
- Habitats Regulations Screening Report
- Equality Impact Assessment
- Consultation Statement

Consultation is for six weeks and runs between 15 April-31 May 2019. These documents can be viewed online at [www.southcambs.gov.uk/villagedesignstatements](http://www.southcambs.gov.uk/villagedesignstatements) and will be available for inspection at:

- South Cambridgeshire District Council offices at South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6EA (8.30am to 5pm Monday-Friday)



## Foreword

South Cambridgeshire is a district of diverse and distinctive villages, as well as being a high growth area. South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) wants new development to maintain and enhance the special character of our villages, and for communities to be at the heart of the planning process to help achieve this.

This is supported through our Local Plan which places good design at the heart of its vision for achieving sustainable growth:

### **Local Plan – Policy S/1: Vision**

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

In 2018, the Council was awarded funding from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government to develop exemplar village design guidance, working in collaboration with village communities undergoing significant growth and change, in order to develop locally specific design guidance.

In line with our key objective of putting our customers at the centre of everything we do, we are delighted to have worked with representatives who live and work in these communities, to produce this exemplary design guidance to improve the quality of new developments in our villages.

We look forward to seeing a new generation of locally distinctive, high quality schemes that show the influence of this Village Design Guide.

**Cllr. Dr. Tumi Hawkins**  
**Lead Cabinet Member for Planning**



## Acknowledgements

The Over Village Design Guide has been prepared by SCDC and Emily Greeves Architects with Freddie Phillipson Architect, and developed in collaboration with the village community, through a process of active community participation and consultation.

SCDC is very grateful to Anne Griffiths for leading the village steering group for the Village Design Guide project and acting as community project champion.

All photographs and drawings are copyright South Cambridgeshire District Council 2019, and have been produced for the purposes of this document by Emily Greeves Architects and Freddie Phillipson Architect.

## Introduction

### **Purpose and scope of this document**

As a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), the Over Village Design Guide has been prepared to amplify and build on the requirements set out within the following policies in the adopted 2018 Local Plan, relating to the built and natural character and distinctiveness of South Cambridgeshire:

- S/1: Vision
- S/2: Objectives of the Local Plan
- S.7: Development Frameworks
- S/8, S/9 and S/10 etc
- NH/2: Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
- NH/14: Heritage Assets
- H/8: Housing Density
- HQ/1: Design Principles

This Village Design Guide:

- Describes the distinctive character of the village, and those aspects of its built and natural environment that the community most value
- Sets out clear design principles to guide future development proposals in and around the village of Over.
- Is intended as a user-friendly tool for planners, developers, designers and community members.

Once adopted, the Over Village Design Guide will form a material consideration in determining planning applications for developments within the village.

### **Who should use this document**

The Over Village Design Guide should be read by:

- Developers, property owners and their designers, in considering potential development proposals.
- Development management officers in assessing the suitability and determination of planning applications.
- Statutory and non-statutory consultees, including the parish council and members of the public, in commenting on planning applications.

The Village Design Guide should give confidence to all parties involved with the planning and design process, that they understand the essential character of the village, and how to respond to this appropriately through design. This will lead to better quality, more locally distinctive development that is welcomed by local residents and contributes positively to the sustainability of the village.



**South  
Cambridgeshire**  
District Council

Published by South Cambridgeshire District Council  
© April 2019

For further information please contact:

Built and Natural Environment Team  
Tel: 01954 713310  
Email: [vds@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:vds@scambs.gov.uk)

South Cambridgeshire District Council  
South Cambridgeshire Hall  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambridge  
CB23 6EA





# Over Village Design Guide

March 2019



SCDC



# 1. Introduction

# SCDC



Figure 1  
Aerial photograph with Over parish boundary shown in red



# 2. About Over

Over is situated on the Fen Edge to the south of the River Great Ouse, with road connections via Swavesey, Willingham and Longstanton. The village stands on a ridge of higher ground with the land falling to the west, north and south. The underlying geology is Amphill clay. The village is not prone to flooding from the river but poor drainage causes surface water flooding in winter, particularly in the fields adjacent to the Community Centre and around Fen End. The parish has an area of 2535 acres (1025 hectares) and the 2011 census recorded a population of 2650. There is currently no Neighbourhood Plan in development.

Over consists of two original settlements, Church End and Over End, that have grown together over time through a process of infill. The original northern settlement of Church End and the High Street which developed to the east of this form the conservation area of Over. The medieval settlements were both sited on important trading routes. Over End was formed around a large village green along the route to Cambridge via Longstanton. At Church End, this road converged with the road leading to Cambridge through Willingham and connected with routes to the markets of St.Ives and Swavesey. The unusual configuration of Over, resembling a ‘figure of eight’, is partly explained by this network of historic routes.



Figure 2  
Location of Over Parish within South Cambridgeshire

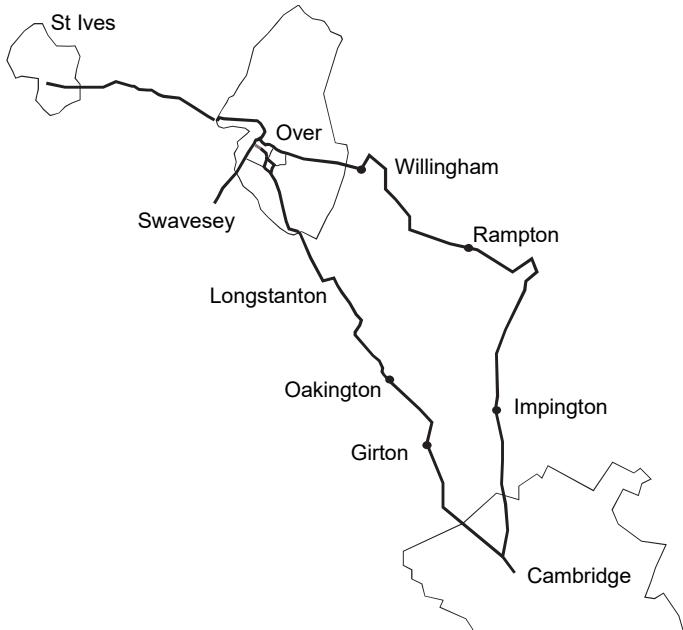


Figure 3  
Diagram of primary medieval routes from Cambridge to Over



Figure 4  
Figure-ground plan of Over



# 3. Community Input

The Village Design Guide was developed in consultation with a steering group of Over residents that included representatives of the Parish Council. The guidance is intended to capture the community's priorities for the design of future development within the village.

Resident's key priorities for the Village Design Guide are summarized below, along with a series of wider issues raised through the engagement process that are outside the scope of this Supplementary Planning Document but captured here as important wider



Figure 5  
Workshop on the character of Over at the community centre

## 1. Priorities for the Village Design Guide

### Village landscapes

- Maintain and enhance the characteristic landscapes of Over: the surrounding belt of enclosed fields, orchards and pastures and the loose grid, or network, of green lanes and open spaces running through the village.
- Maintain the 'green fingers' which connect the village interior to the landscape, particularly the fields between the recreation ground, Station Road and New Road.

### Village character

- Building heights and materials of new development should reflect the characteristic buildings of Over.
- Maintain key landscape views, and views within and around the village, especially when considering infill development of existing plots.

### Amenity and green space

- Opportunities should be sought to increase the provision of amenity space, particularly on the east side of Over, including sports fields, playgrounds, informal open space, community meadows, community orchards, riverside spaces and burial grounds.

### Moving around the village

- Opportunities should be sought to improve footpaths along existing roads within the village and provide a footway in locations where this is currently missing.
- Improve the network of bridleways, foot and cycle paths to destinations outside the village, including recreational routes into the wider landscape.
- Improve and extend the green network, a valued means of moving through the village away from vehicular routes.

### Future growth

- Maintain the compact shape of the village but also avoid infilling the last remaining green spaces.
- Avoid new development extending the existing housing grain without providing significant open spaces.
- Avoid repeating the problems of Over's large suburban cul-de-sac estates such as Cox's End.
- Preference for small and medium scale development with communal open spaces.



Figure 6  
View of the north village edge and church steeple from Chain Road

## 2. Other priorities raised through the engagement process

- The mix of housing in new developments; ensuring provision of bungalows and specialist housing for elderly people.
- Bringing wildlife to The Doles Green Lane and completing the scheme for seasonal gates to reduce vehicular traffic on this route.
- The careful integration of affordable housing into new development so that it does not feel segregated.
- The maintenance regime and responsibilities of new amenity spaces, trees and street improvements should be considered carefully. Residents would like to see developments contribute to maintenance and/or establish a Community fund for this purpose.
- Planning contributions to fund the ongoing maintenance of open spaces.
- Creating a bridleway link across the River Great Ouse by re-using the current gravel extraction bridge at Brownhill Stauch (see fig.1).
- Bringing the land adjacent to the community centre playing fields into public amenity use as sports fields and / or community meadow.



# 4. Village landscapes

The ‘village landscapes’ which define the edges of Over and permeate its built up area have distinctive qualities resulting from the village’s historic development.

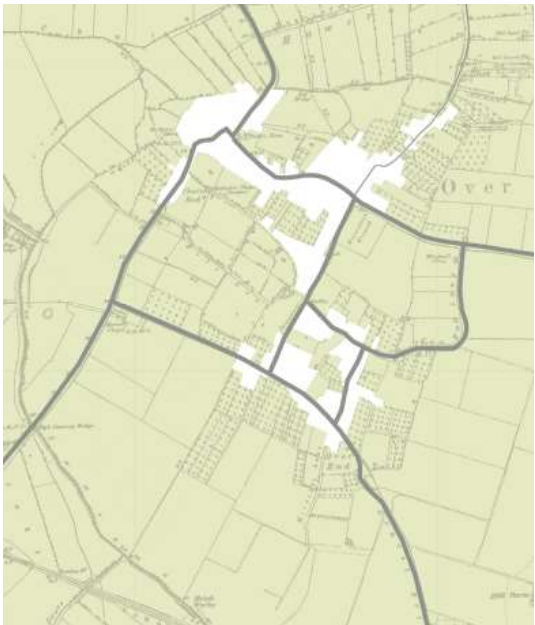
Over’s rectangular grid of roads once contained a patchwork of fields and orchards, with houses strung along the main roads. During the twentieth century, the fields were infilled by housing development and only a handful remain. While the northern edge of the village retains the original settlement pattern, most other parts of Over now have a more built-up and suburban character.

Over lies within an area of arable cropping land but is surrounded by a belt of small fields and orchards - a valued characteristic of the village. From the three road approaches, the village edge appears wrapped by trees and hedges, with glimpses of low-density housing beyond. The exception is on the eastern edge along Mill Road, which has distant views across large arable fields. This ‘Prairie edge’ is another valued feature of the village.

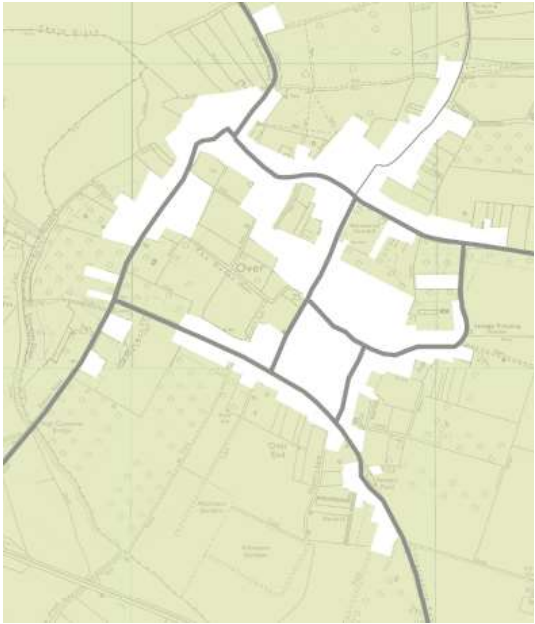
The principal roads leading into the village are well planted with hedges and provide views out into the surrounding landscape. As such, they act as ‘green fingers’, drawing the countryside in.

A network of green lanes and open spaces runs through the interior of the village and connects with the two formal public amenity spaces; the Village Green and Community Centre recreation ground. The green lanes allow people to get around the village away from traffic and link with the green spaces of several housing developments, including recent developments such as Papworth’s Close. The Doles Green Lane, an historic bridleway (BOAT), is a main green spine within this network. In contrast, the east side of the village, which is dominated by the large developments at Cox’s End and Chapman’s way, did not incorporate any green space and failed to provide adequate pedestrian connections.

1890s



1970s



2018



Figure 7  
Plan diagrams showing development of Over through time

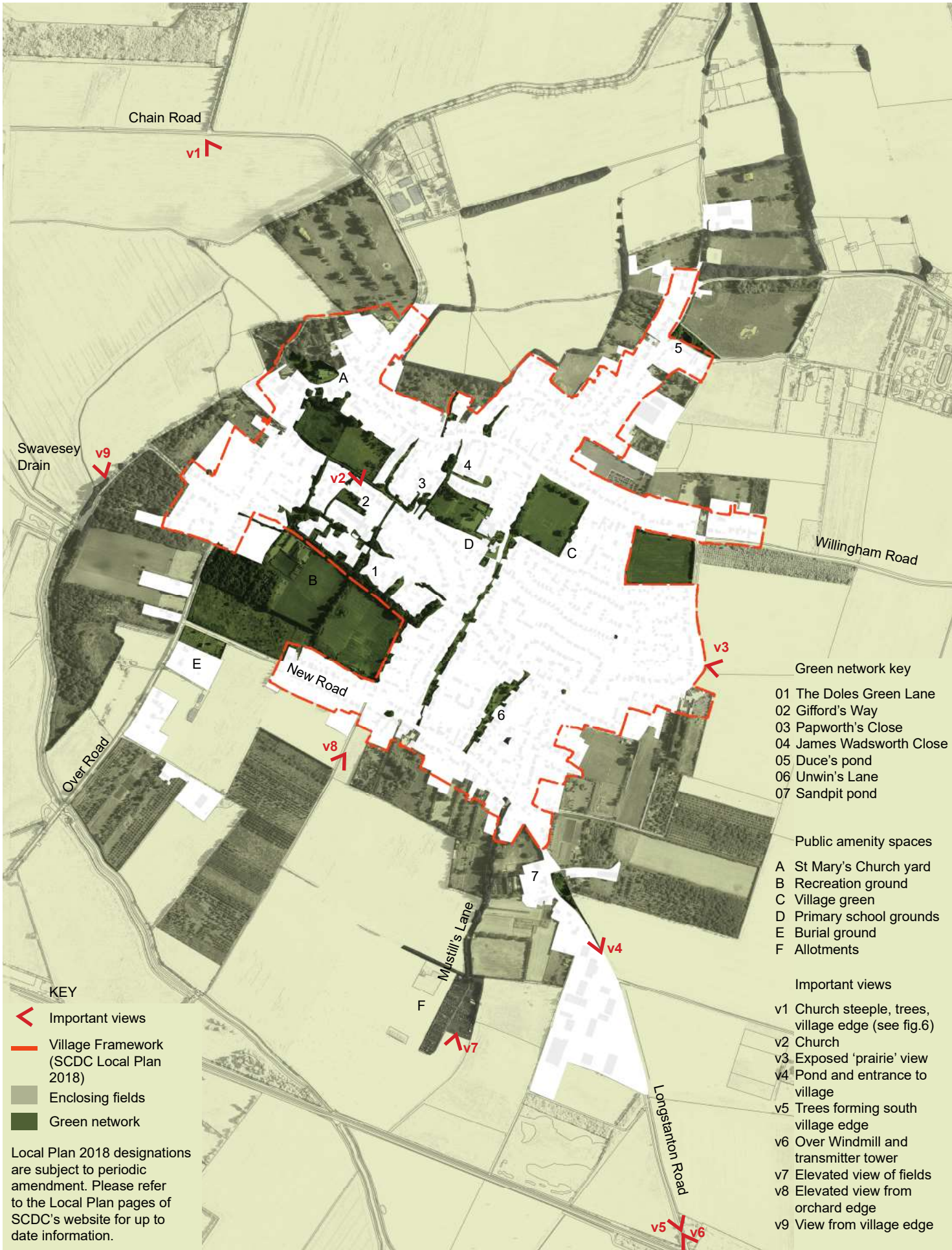


Figure 8  
Plan of Over village landscapes





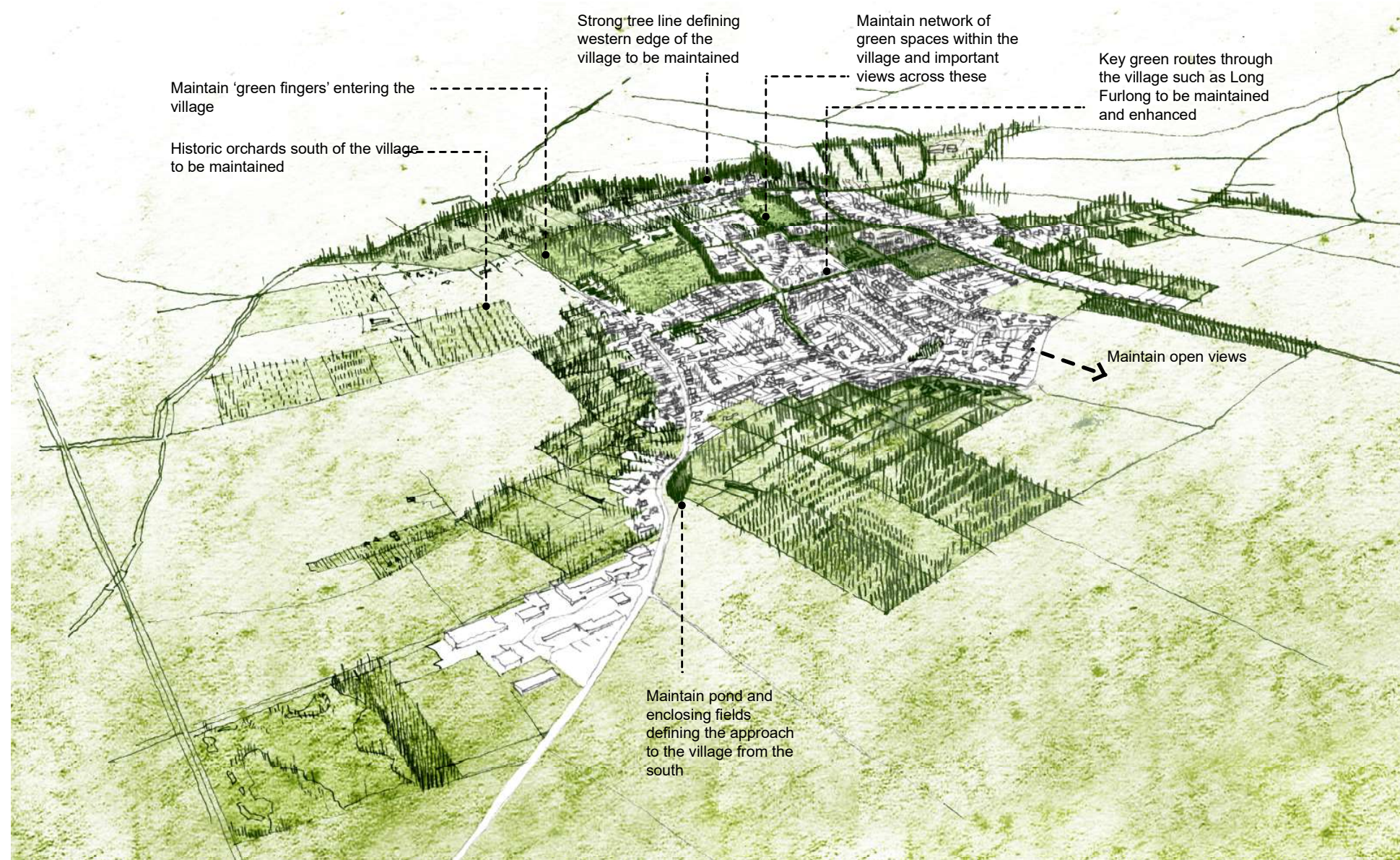


Figure 9  
Bird's eye sketch of Over summarising priorities for village landscapes



Figure 10  
View of the High Street looking west towards St Mary's Church



Figure 11  
Village Green looking east

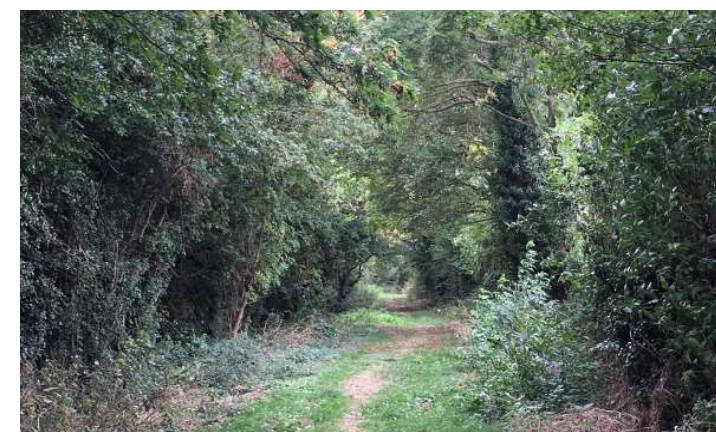


Figure 12  
The Doles Green Lane



Figure 13  
Prairie edge to the east of Over, at Cox's End

## Design Guidance

**4.1** New development should maintain and enhance valued landscapes and views such as the landscapes surrounding 'Old Over', the Village Green and Long Furlong, the green network including The Doles Green Lane, the belt of small fields, orchards and pastures, and the wide views across farmland to the east from Mill Road.

**4.2** Future development should sustain and enhance the green 'fingers' of landscape which extend through the primary roads and adjoining fields into the village.

**4.3** There should not be continuous development along New Road and Station (Over) Road; this would interrupt the landscape connection to the west.

**4.4** The network of green spaces running through the built up area of the village should not be infilled with further development.

**4.5** Development should seek to maintain and enhance wildlife corridors in ways that are not costly to maintain, reflecting the 'wild-feeling' spaces within the village. The use of native plant species, hedges, ditches and open fencing would help to support diversity of wildlife.



# 5. Character areas

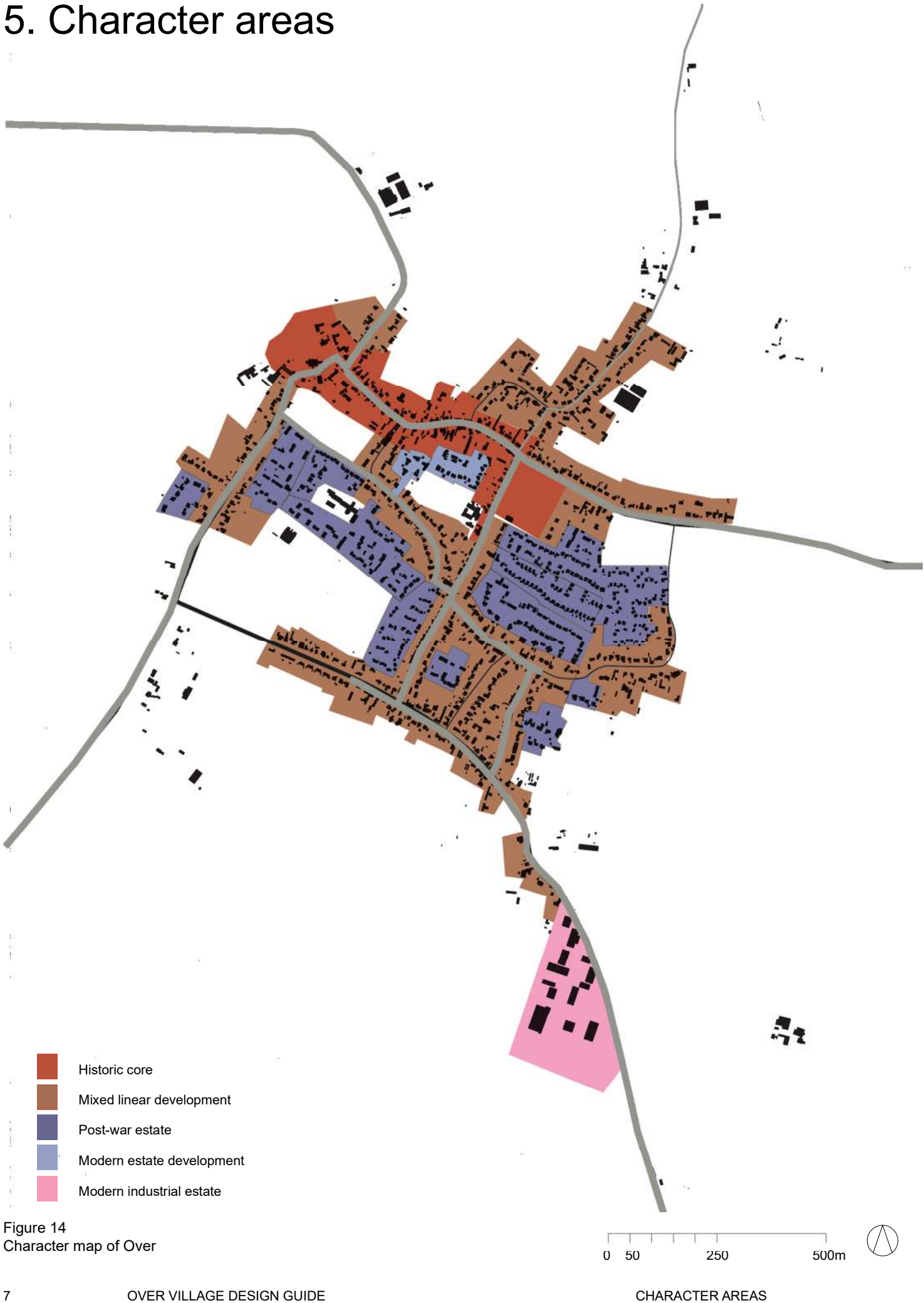


Figure 14  
Character map of Over



Figure 15  
View of the High Street looking east



Figure 16  
Long Furlong, looking south with the village green to the left

## Historic Core

- Corresponds with the Over Conservation Area, encompassing St Mary's Church and the High Street, Long Furlong and the Village Green.
- The area's character is distinct from the rest of the village. It is mainly characterised by yellow Cambridge brick houses of one and two storeys with slate roofs that front onto the street, directly on to the pavements. Interspersed among these are a number of historic houses in fine red brickwork (fig.15).

- A strong rural character due to views through to the fields and mature trees north and south of the High Street. This characteristic is sensitive to infill development (fig.17).
- Features of the western end include the walled church yard and mature trees.
- The regular row of detached houses and avenue of mature trees along Long Furlong is a distinctive feature of the eastern end (fig.16).

## Design Guidance:

- 5.1.1** Maintain the linear form, open spaces and density of the historic core.
- 5.1.2** Maintain trees, walls and hedges which contribute to the street scene.
- 5.1.3** New development should respect the building heights, materials and building lines characteristic of the historic core.

- 5.1.4** Infill and insensitive back garden development should be avoided.
- 5.1.5** The extent of the conservation area would benefit from being reviewed as it does not currently include the historic area of Over End (fig. 4).



Figure 17  
Detail plan of the historic core





Figure 18  
Mill Road looking west.

### Mixed linear development

- Mixed linear development threads through the village along the main roads. One- and two-storey, detached and semi-detached houses are set back from the street with front gardens. Older houses are interspersed with newer properties. Houses generally occupy larger plots and are widely spaced (figs.18,19).
- Hedges, brick walls and grass verges are important features and give the streets a coherent character.
- A number of important trees remain along Glover Street/Long Furlong; other street trees have been lost.

#### Design Guidance:

- 5.2.1** New infill development should continue the scale, grain and materials of the existing housing.
- 5.2.2** Hedges, verges and other characteristic boundary features should be maintained and continued in new development.
- 5.2.3** Opportunities should be sought to enhance street tree planting.



Figure 19  
Detail plan of Hilton Street showing older linear development along the road.



Figure 20  
Chapman's Way looking east.

### Post-war estate

- Housing estates constructed behind the main roads, displaying a variety of layouts and building styles but broadly characterised by a cul-de-sac road pattern, higher densities, a suburban character and a lack of views or connections to the surrounding landscape.
- Estates along The Doles (Drings Close, Metcalfe Lane, Webster's Way) have terraced and semi-detached housing with separate pedestrian and vehicle circulation. Houses front onto communal green spaces and there are parking courts at the rear.

#### Design Guidance:

- 5.3.1** Opportunities should be sought to enhance the communal green spaces of the housing estates along The Doles.
- 5.3.2** Opportunities should be sought to create or enhance green verges or underused spaces in Cox's End and Chapman's Way.



Figure 21  
Detail plan of the estates at Cox's End and Chapman's Way.



Figure 22  
An open space at Metcalfe Lane, adjacent to The Doles.

- Cox's End, Anglesey Way and Chapman's Way are cul-de-sac developments of mainly semi-detached houses. The estates have very poor pedestrian and vehicle connections and no shared amenity space. The street environment is dominated by driveways and parked cars. Residents feel that the housing is regimented and monotonous and the dark material palette at Chapman's Way and Cox's End is particularly disliked.

- 5.3.3** New developments of multiple dwellings should avoid repeating the problems of Cox's End and Chapman's Way. Instead they should provide a considered and varied streetscape of rural (not suburban) character: not dominated by parked cars, with good footpath connections and shared amenity spaces (see guidance in sections 6-10).



Figure 23  
Detail plan of the estates along The Doles.



Figure 24  
View of the communal open space at James Wadsworth Close.

### Modern estate development

- Recent residential developments have tended to be smaller infill projects around green open spaces. James Wadsworth Close is seen as a positive example with a sympathetic use of materials. Detached and semi-detached houses of two and two-and-a-half storeys are set back from the street with small front gardens and off - street parking. Developments have a cul-de-sac layout but incorporate additional pedestrian connections.
- Another trend has been the redevelopment of individual house plots at higher densities.

#### Design Guidance:

- 5.4.1** New infill development of multiple homes should create community green space and useful, direct pedestrian connections that expand Over's pedestrian network.
- 5.4.2** New development should be in keeping with the scale of surroundings and avoid overbearing impact on neighbouring properties.



Figure 25  
Detail plan of the infill development at Gifford's Way.



# 6. Amenity space

Over's designated amenity spaces comprise the Village Green (used for sports) and the Community Centre sports fields, which also both have a children's playground. The only informal amenity spaces in Over are footpaths and bridleways around and within the village, incidental open spaces within housing estates, and a few enlarged roadside verges. There is no informal recreation ground, accessible wild space or orchard within the village.

Residents see the current provision of amenity space as adequate in relation to the existing village population, but are concerned that future development and population growth would cause a shortage in public amenity space. This is the most important issue for many residents. There is a particular lack of accessible open space and play space in the east and south of the village. Sports facilities are intensively used and expansion of sports pitches would be particularly desirable to residents.

The existing designated amenity spaces and the few informal or incidental spaces in Over form part of the 'green network', the patchwork of small fields between the primary roads which are the remnant of the historic village landscape (see section 4). Providing additional amenity space has the potential to make more of these village landscapes accessible to the public and to maintain Over's characteristic village form (see also section 2, fig.4).



Figure 26  
Recreation ground looking east

## Design Guidance

**6.1** New developments of multiple homes should make provision for informal public amenity space within their sites, as this is a priority for residents. This informal recreation space should have a rural character and should be combined with natural landscapes such as meadowland or orchards. Small 'doorstep' play spaces and play equipment should also be integrated.

**6.2** Opportunities should be sought to provide the following types of amenity space through new development, outside of the developments themselves where the community has identified a preferred location.

- Informal recreation space contiguous with the existing Community Centre sports fields. This would help to maintain the 'green finger' which is important to village character (see fig.4).
- New sports fields, increasing capacity beyond the existing Green and community centre fields, which are intensively used. This is a priority for the community.
- New amenity spaces within the surrounding countryside, for example by opening historic orchards for public access and creating a community meadow next to the Guided bus way and future St Ives green cycle way (see also fig. 29).
- New burial spaces, including a non-denominational burial ground.

**6.3** Additional amenity space associated with any new developments to the south and east should as a priority be provided in the form of a buffer space between the existing village edge and the new developments. This is in order to avoid further extending the continuously built up area in the eastern half of the village and provide amenity space which is easily accessed from this area.

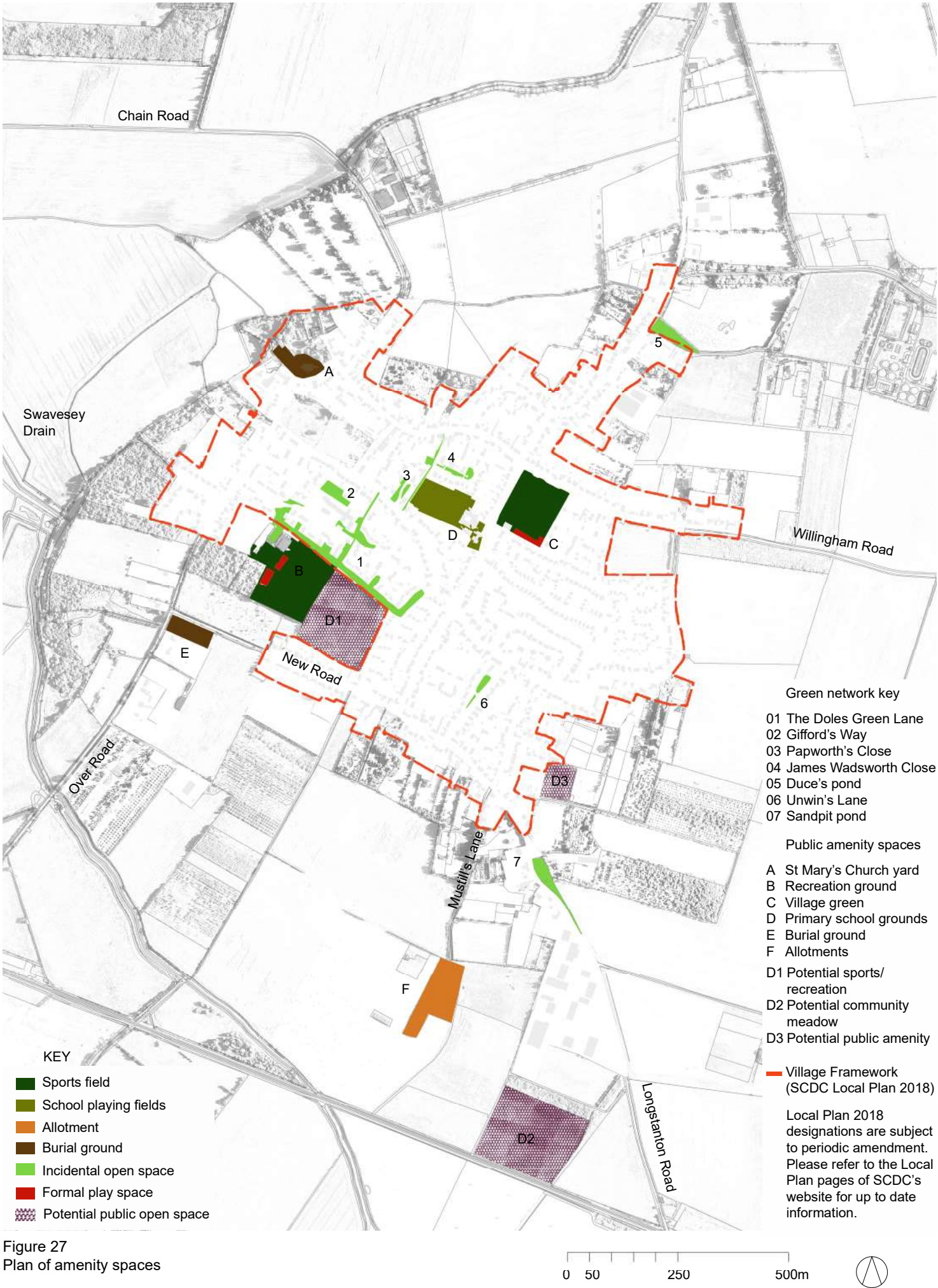


Figure 27  
Plan of amenity spaces



# 7. A connected village

Over is relatively easy to get around due to its compact shape and rectangular grid of roads. There is no significant traffic congestion, but parking capacity can be a problem in some estates.

The majority of roads provide footpaths while a number of lanes runs through the village interior (see section 8 for further detail on these ‘green lanes’). As a result the pedestrian network is relatively well connected (fig.29). In other areas of Over the pedestrian network is intermittent. At Church End, along extensive stretches of Mill Road, and along Longstanton Road leading to the Business Park, there are no footpaths at all. Older cul-de-sac developments generally failed to provide pedestrian routes through, and blocked potential footpath routes.

Key foot, cycle and bridleway connections outside the village are lacking, including routes to the guided busway and adjacent cycle route and east towards Willingham. The footpaths along the Swavesey Drain are popular recreational routes but the route could be more extensive.



Figure 28  
Some foot and cycle ways are discontinuous and would benefit from upgrading. Example: Mill Road

## Design Guidance

7.1 New development should maintain and enhance the distinctive footpath network within the village (see also section 8).

7.2 New development should be well connected to Over’s existing network of public footpaths and cycle paths and seek opportunities to provide additional public pedestrian and cycle routes that are separate from streets and roads.

7.3 Opportunities should be sought to provide the following connections through new development, outside of the developments themselves where the community has identified their preferred locations (as shown on figure 29).

- New foot and cycle routes to the guided busway cycle route, particularly along Longstanton Road.
- A new bridleway to Willingham, either along Willingham Road or past the Over Sewage Works.
- New footpath connections around the Community Centre recreation ground and to the east of the existing built up area (see also section 8 regarding potential extensions of the ‘Green Network’).
- Upgrade an existing footpath to a bridleway connecting Over to Swavesey. This could follow the River Great Ouse bank from Swavesey and connect into Over along the Swavesey Drain or Chain Road. Alternatively it could follow the path from New Road by the historic orchard to the south of Over towards Swavesey.
- Safe footpaths at Church End, around the eastern edge of Over on Mill Lane, and along Longstanton Road between Mustill’s Lane and the business park.

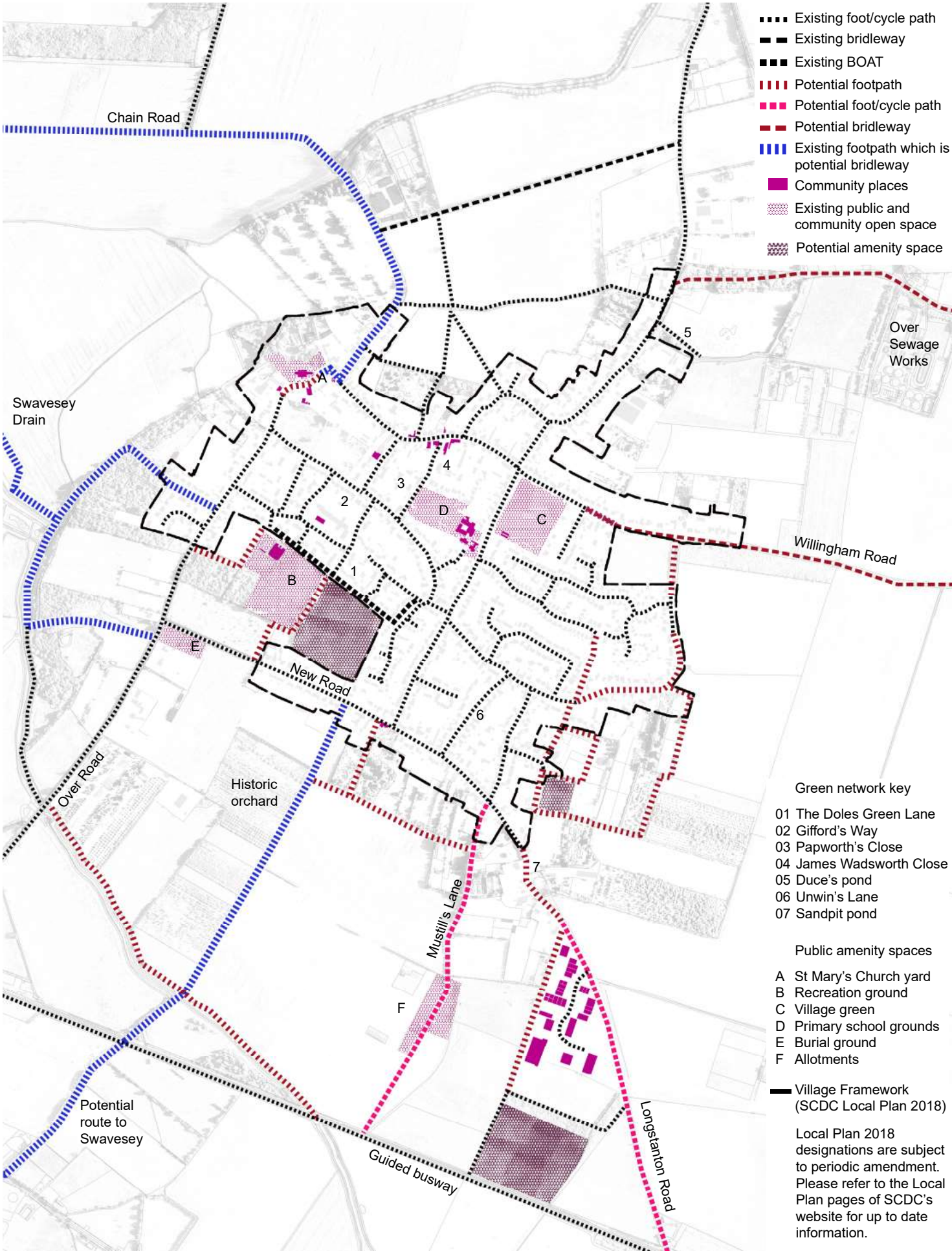


Figure 29  
Map of existing and potential non-vehicular routes around Over



# 8.The green network

Over’s network of green lanes is a valued amenity that brings the countryside into the heart of the village, helps people get around easily away from roads, supports biodiversity, and offers leisure walking routes in a village where public open space is lacking.

Recent developments including Giffords Way, Papworth’s Close and James Wadsworth Close have created footpath routes linking to the existing green network and have been well received by the community. Future residential development could go further by allowing wider and more generous spaces for green lanes and adjoining hedgerows and verges. The community would look for future development outside the village envelope within the surrounding belt of fields and pastures to provide significant new public amenity spaces and accessible wild spaces connecting with an expanded green network.



Figure 31  
View across the fields south of the High Street



Figure 30  
Plan of medium scale infill developments which contribute to the green network

## Design Guidance

8.1 The ‘green network’ through the centre of Over should be maintained, enhanced and opportunities should be taken to extend it. Potential enhancements include:

- Improved connections between The Doles Green Lane and the community centre playing fields and adjacent potential new public amenity land.
- Extending the network to the east by intensifying planting and retaining verges and hedges on Unwin’s Lane, King Street and Whine’s Lane, and where possible on Hilton Street and Mill Road.

8.2 Opportunities should be taken to improve the accessibility, safety, appearance and wildlife value of the existing lanes, adopting the principles set out for new lanes on p.12 wherever possible.

8.3 New and improved footpaths, cyclepaths and bridleways leading out of Over should be designed as extensions of the green network, where green lanes free of cars connect green open spaces and public amenity spaces.



Figure 32  
Plan of the Over Green Network





Figure 33  
Open spaces at Metcalfe Lane connect to the bridleway at The Doles (on the left) in the west part of the village.



Figure 34  
One of two footpaths from Chapman's Way to Cox's End. The east half of Over lacks footpaths and green spaces.



Figure 35  
The Cramp: the rural or wild character of the right hand edge is undermined by the close boarded fencing to the left.

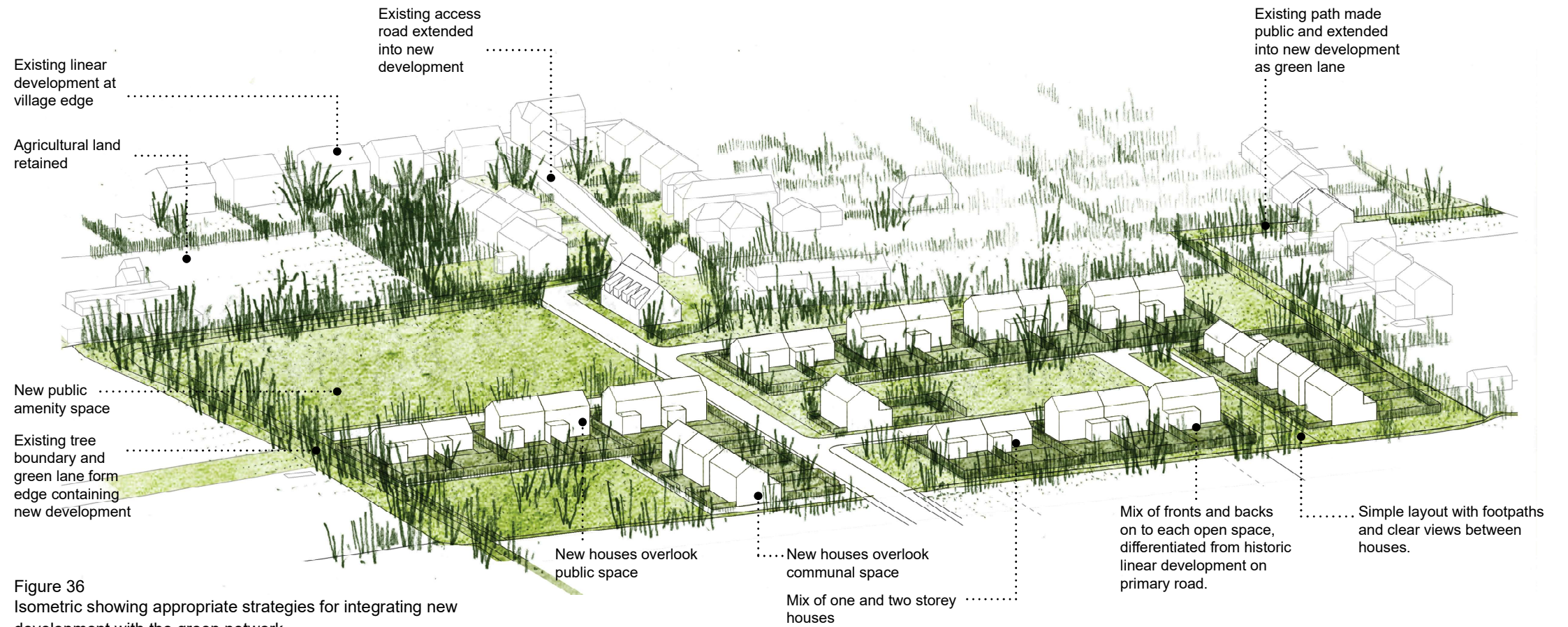


Figure 36  
Isometric showing appropriate strategies for integrating new development with the green network.

**8.4** New developments of multiple homes should incorporate accessible green lanes away from roads within their sites, creating useful and direct connections. These lanes should link with green open spaces within the site, so that new development is well integrated with the characteristic green network running through Over. An example of how this can be achieved is described in figure 36.

**8.5** Social infrastructures like playgrounds benefit from being sited within the green network.

**8.6** New green lanes should have the following design characteristics:

- At least 2m wide
- Street lighting within the village envelope
- Native species hedgerows on at least one side
- Connecting with communal green spaces and wild

spaces wherever possible.

- Avoid close-boarded fencing as these are visually unsuitable and block the movement of wildlife

**8.7** The surface of new green lanes should be permeable to rainwater and suitable for walking and cycling. Suggested materials are hoggins, loose fill, fine grit.

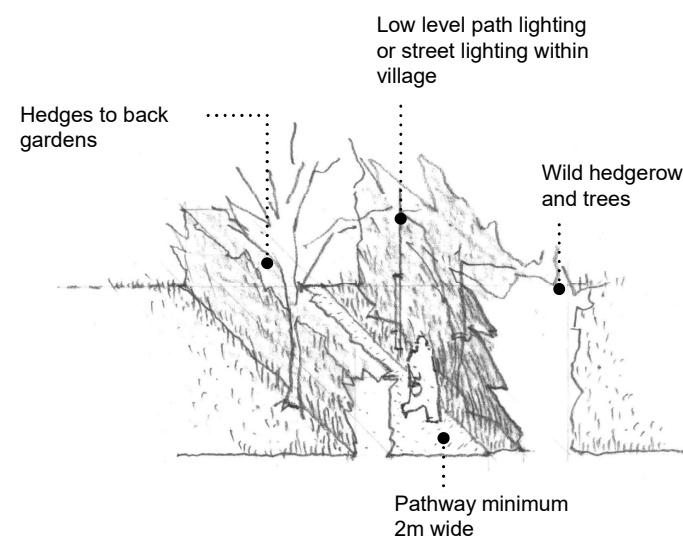


Figure 37  
Example of a suitable design for a narrower new green lane.

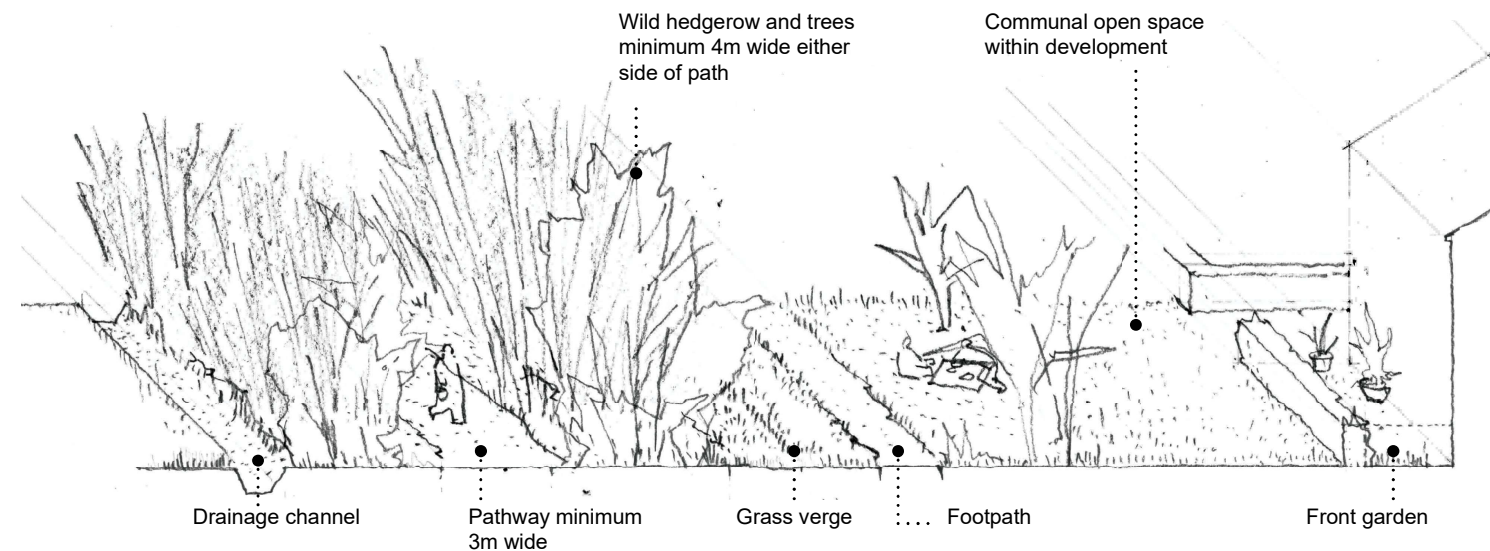


Figure 38  
Example of a suitable design for a wider new green lane connecting with communal open space.



# 9. Streetscape and materials

The settlement pattern of Over is distinctive and complex. Older houses of mixed character line the primary roads, with twentieth and twenty-first century infill development of a more consistent character. In general residents do not wish to see further development along the lines of the larger post war estates in the village, where both the layout and the materials are highly repetitive.

Small scale infill has taken place through subdivision of individual plots. Backland development which blocks views to surrounding countryside and large houses constructed to the rear of a smaller property undermine the primacy of the historic linear development pattern and are not in keeping with village character. Residents however welcome some variety in the alignment and material character where plots are subdivided to provide an additional dwelling on a main road.

The primary material of the village is brick: seventeenth century houses in fine red brickwork are scattered along a nineteenth century yellow stock brick streetscape, with some dark brown brick post war buildings. Along the main roads, each house has its own single material but variety is achieved through the changing alignment of houses to the road. At the estates along The Doles, a single brick colour is used together with a variety of house types and layouts. Using multiple materials in one elevation, or to disguise the repetitive use of a single house type, is not in keeping with village character.



Figure 39  
Infill developments at Lowburyholme Road/Station Road. The occasional setting back from the building line is seen as consistent with village character by residents.



Figure 40  
Back land development on the High Street blocks views from the High Street to the landscape and breaks this historic connection.

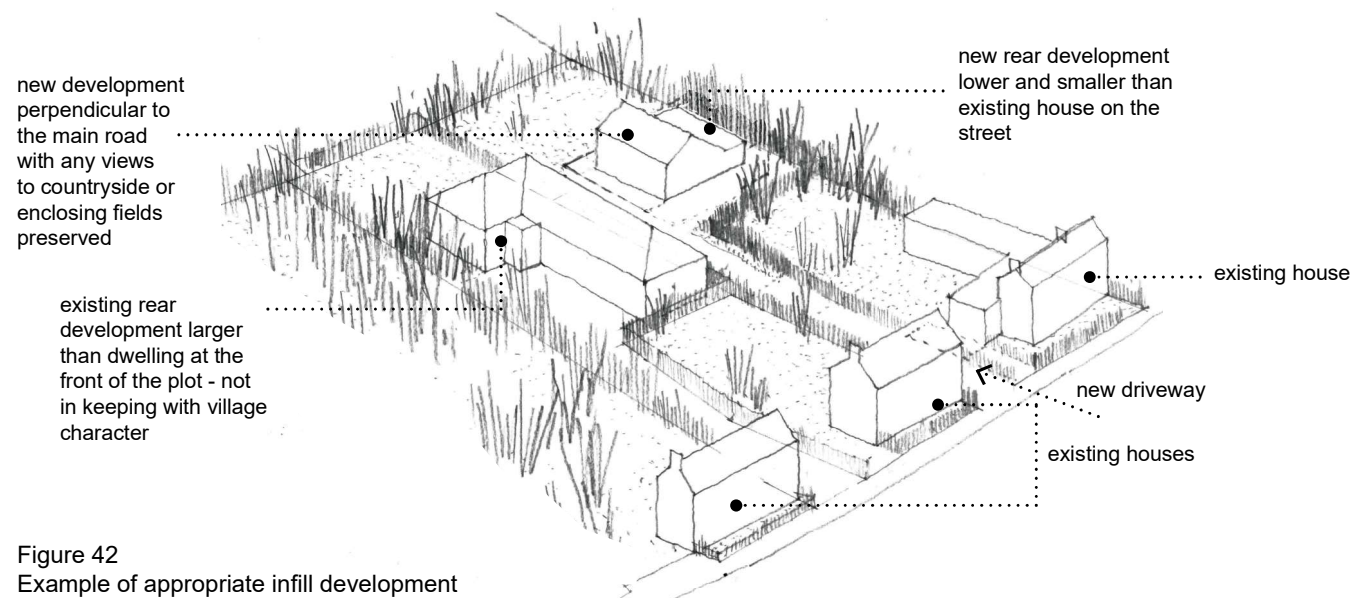


Figure 42  
Example of appropriate infill development

## Design Guidance

**9.1** New development should respond appropriately to the existing material palette of red brick, yellow stock brick, slate, clay and clay pantile roofs. White render should be avoided.

**9.2** Gaps and set backs in the building line contribute to village character and should be maintained (fig.39).

**9.3** The one and two storey scale of houses should be maintained. Two-and-a-half storey house designs should be generally avoided and where necessary incorporated sparingly into new developments, to maintain the characteristic roofscape and ridge heights of the village.

**9.4** Any backland development should not block views from the road to surrounding countryside or enclosing fields and should be clearly subservient in size to the front property. The distinction between older linear development and newer infill should be maintained (fig.42). See also 5.1.4.

**9.5** Individual houses should have elevations in a single material. In developments of more than two houses, using different materials to disguise a completely repetitive layout of identical houses is not in keeping with village character.

**9.6** In developments of multiple homes, variety should be achieved primarily through the range of open spaces and house types (fig.45).



Figure 43: material integrity  
High Street: number 22. Consistent palette of red brick walls and red clay tiled roof, with 'Dutch' gables.



Figure 44: variety of streetscape  
Mill Road: a mixed streetscape of buildings from different times. The materials are similar in tone but specific to each development.



Figure 41  
Recently constructed home in Over, an example of a complicated building envelope with multiple materials, not in keeping with village character.



Figure 45: variety of design  
Metcalfe Way: consistent material palette, variety of dwellings. Range of characterful open spaces.



# 10. Village edges

Most of Over is surrounded by a belt of small, hedged fields and orchards, that give a soft, green edge to the village and largely screen houses from surrounding roads and fields. There is a linear pattern of development along the perimeter roads and houses generally have good-sized back gardens bounded by hedges.

In general, there is a desire among the community to maintain the compact, rectangular shape of the village and avoid outward spread. The outward expansion of the village could threaten Over's rural character and connection with the landscape, and erode the surrounding belt of small, hedged fields and orchards which is central to the identity of the village. However, the alternative of further infill development within Over's grid of roads, would result in the loss of the few remaining fields and green spaces which are an important memory of the historic village structure and offer the potential to create much needed amenity space in future.

The village edges differ in their sensitivity to potential new development. The northern edges (map zones 1-5) would be highly sensitive to development due to the proximity of the flood risk zone and the presence of the Conservation Area and several heritage assets.

The eastern 'Prairie' edge (6) is valued for its expansive views over open arable fields. Any development here would need to preserve a wide corridor free from development and create significant public amenity space to address the shortfall in the eastern side of the village.

The southern edges (7-9) are largely surrounded by a deep belt of market gardens, small fields and historic orchards. They are considered potentially more suitable for new development, as commuter traffic would not affect the rest of the village. However, development would need to preserve the landscape belt and create suitable amenity space.

The western edge of the village (11) is contained by the flood risk zone and an attractive belt of orchards and paddocks adjoining the Swavesey Drain. The belts of hedges and trees along Station Road and New Road are important as 'green fingers' extending from the countryside into the village. Any future development would need to preserve the green, planted character and the belts of hedges and trees.

## Character of edges (see figure 46)

- 01. Enclosed paddocks. Flood risk zone. Important view of the church spire and surrounding landscape from Chain Road.
- 02. Small fields are important backdrop to historic core. Flood risk zone.
- 03. Low-density linear housing with hedges create soft edge to village. Large mature hedgerows and verges mark entrance to village.
- 04. Small scale, intimate village edge. Paddocks and market gardening, hedges.
- 05. Soft edge to village. High hedges and orchards on approach from Willingham. Low-density linear development with front gardens and hedges. Rural qualities and hedges extend to village green.
- 06. 'Prairie edge', exposed to large arable fields. Wide open views. Few trees and hedgerows.
- 07. More extensive area of small fields, market gardens and mature trees. Several historic orchards. Hedgerows and pond form attractive rural village entrance from Longstanton Road.
- 08. Low density housing, paddocks and hedges provide soft village edge.
- 09. Road adjoins fields with continuous hedges on both sides.
- 10. Community recreation ground and adjoining fields. Desired amenity land and expansion of playing fields.
- 11. Enclosed fields towards Swavesey Drain. Linear development on large plots.

## Design Guidance

- 10.1** Development within or outside the village should maintain and enhance valued landscape characteristics, including the belt of small hedged fields, open views on the east of the village, the green network, and existing belts of hedges and trees.
- 10.2** Development beyond the existing village boundaries should be designed to maintain the sense of a landscape belt around the village and create or preserve significant open green spaces with a rural character.
- 10.3** Development should maintain the soft green village edges by using native species hedges rather than fences on the external sides.



Figure 46  
Plan of Over's characteristic village edges