

Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay Neighbourhood Development Plan



Plan Period 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2028.

Version: Final 2015

VIA: Vision Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay Steering Committee
on behalf of Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay Parish Council

Our Vision

Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay will continue to be a thriving and attractive rural area. Its special landscape, flora, fauna and traditional architecture will have been protected and enhanced and will continue to be valued by residents, visitors and business. It will have a lively, mixed age community providing people with a high quality place to live and work.

This page is intentionally blank

Table of Contents

	Page Number
1. Background	4
1.1 National and Local Planning Policy	4
1.2 The need for a Neighbourhood Plan for Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay	4
1.3 Community Involvement	5
1.4 Submission Draft	6
Neighbourhood Plan Area Map	7
2. Evidence Base	8
About Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay	
2.1 Local Background	8
2.2 Landscape Character	9
2.3 Neighbourhood Area Landscape Character	11
2.4 Settlement Character	12
2.5 Historic Features	14
2.6 Environment Designations and Biodiversity	14
2.7 Current Area Profile	15
2.8 Planning History and Background	18
2.9 Survey Distribution and Outcomes	24
Appendices to Section 2	
Appendix 1. Listed Buildings and HER for the Neighbourhood Area	31
Appendix 2. List of Businesses in Neighbourhood Area	32
Appendix 3. Property Survey results	33
Appendix 4. Planning Applications 1992-2013	33
3. The Plan	34
3.1 Key Issues	34
3.2 Vision for the Future	35
3.3 Objectives for the Neighbourhood Area	36
3.4 Policies	36
4. Community Priorities	46
4.1 Transport	46
4.2 Community Forum	47
Glossary	48
Abbreviations	49
List of Supporting Documents	49

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 National and Local Planning Policy

Under recent legislation, The Localism Act 2011, local communities have the right to develop Neighbourhood Plans detailing the community's views relating to planning issues. The relevant sections of the Localism Act provide reforms to make the planning system more democratic and effective and reforms to ensure that planning decisions are taken locally. A Neighbourhood Plan must comply with European and national legislation. It must also have regard to national policy notably that set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It must also be in general conformity with existing strategic local planning policy as set out by Amber Valley Borough Council (AVBC) and have regard to emerging plans. These issues are covered in the Basic Conditions Statement¹. It cannot promote less development than that identified in the development plan for the area. However it can allow greater growth levels. It must also contribute to the Achievement of Sustainable Development, ensuring that better lives for ourselves does not mean worse lives for future generations – positive growth. This has been addressed in the Sustainability Grid².

The Neighbourhood Plan can specify policy and guidance on how any new development should be designed, orientated and located. Neighbourhood Plans can therefore be a powerful tool in shaping the development of a neighbourhood.

In order to be consistent with the AVBC Draft Core Strategy Part 1³ (Core Strategy), the plan period for the Neighbourhood Plan is up to 2028.

1.2 The need for a Neighbourhood Plan for Ildridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay

The two parishes in the Neighbourhood Area, Ildridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay (IAA), are on the rural western fringe of the Amber Valley Borough Council (AVBC) in the county of Derbyshire. This area of special countryside is highly valued by residents and visitors and has been recognised by the Derbyshire County Council (DCC) by designating a large proportion of it as a Special Landscape Area (SLA) in its Derbyshire Special Landscape Areas Local Plan. This was adopted in 1985 and continued through to a saved policy in the 2006 AVBC Local Plan.

The Borough of Amber Valley is predominately a built up area and the Local Plan tends to focus on urban issues accordingly. The Parish Council (PC) and residents of IAA therefore decided to take the opportunity provided by The Localism Act to enhance and strengthen the rural policies within the Local Plan to take into account our particular situation. Whilst welcoming appropriate development we would also like to ensure that the extra controls on development currently provided by the SLA designation are secured and continued in the future.

A Neighbourhood Plan, based on the views of the local people and robust evidence collected for the purpose of drafting the Plan, should become a powerful influence on decisions made by AVBC on planning issues relating to IAA. It is hoped that the Plan will ensure that future planning will take account of the importance of retaining the

¹ Available at www.iaa-pc.org.uk Submission Documents: Basic Conditions Statement

² Available in www.iaa-pc.org.uk Supporting Documents: Sustainability Grid

³ Throughout this document reference is to the Amber Valley Borough Council Local Plan 2014 Core Strategy Part 1 as 'Core Strategy'.

characteristics and unique qualities of the Neighbourhood Area whilst allowing sympathetic development.

1.3 Community Involvement

At a Parish Council meeting on 14 November 2012, following representations by local residents, Parish Councillors agreed to support the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. They hoped the making of a Neighbourhood Plan would help the Parish Council to determine the priorities for the parishes and guide their decision-making. Members of the Parish Council also hoped that the research and writing of a Neighbourhood Plan would encourage more active community involvement in parish matters and add social cohesion to a dispersed rural community.

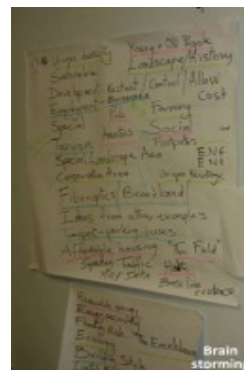
With the support of the Parish Council an open social evening was held in January 2013 to publicise the intention to develop a Neighbourhood Plan and to encourage people to become involved. Over fifty people attended despite severe weather. Those people who expressed interest were invited to attend a subsequent meeting either to join the Steering Committee, volunteer to help in any way, or simply to learn more about Neighbourhood Plans.

This Steering Committee, subsequently named VIA (Vision Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay), was delegated to prepare the plan on behalf of the Parish Council. It comprised representatives from both parishes and has met monthly since February 2013 (see www.iaa-pc.org.uk Submission Documents: Statement of Community Engagement and Statutory Consultation, Supporting Documents: VIA Timetable, Steering Committee minutes).

After an initial meeting with AVBC a formal application was made to accept the Neighbourhood Plan Area which follows the boundaries of both parishes. This was agreed by delegated powers from the full AVBC by Planning Officers on May 23rd 2013 (see www.iaa-pc.org.uk Supporting Documents: AVBC Designated Neighbourhood Area decision notice).

From the outset it was agreed that it was essential that the creation of the Plan should be inclusive and systematic and that a variety of methods and formats would be used to achieve this. The Steering Committee worked closely with the Parish Council and has referred to the Local Authority planning department throughout the process of the development of the Plan. Advice has been sought from the Rural Community Council, Midlands Rural Housing and Locality who have also arranged a DCLG grant. Steering Committee members have attended relevant local and regional workshops.

An extensive consultation process was undertaken to ensure that everybody living, working or owning land within the two parishes had the opportunity to express their views and opinions (see www.iaa-pc.org.uk Submission Documents: Statement of Community Engagement and Statutory Consultation). This included open meetings, a stall at the Village Fete, a comprehensive household questionnaire survey and subsidiary 'hard to reach' group surveys: one for local businesses, the other for young people. Local neighbour contacts were identified to make it easier for residents to come forward with any queries and at every stage of the process the local population has been kept informed of progress on the plan by house to house leafleting and further open meetings.



Concerns surrounding transport and highways are often raised at Parish Council meetings. Although not always planning issues it was felt some of these might be able to be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.4 Submission Plan

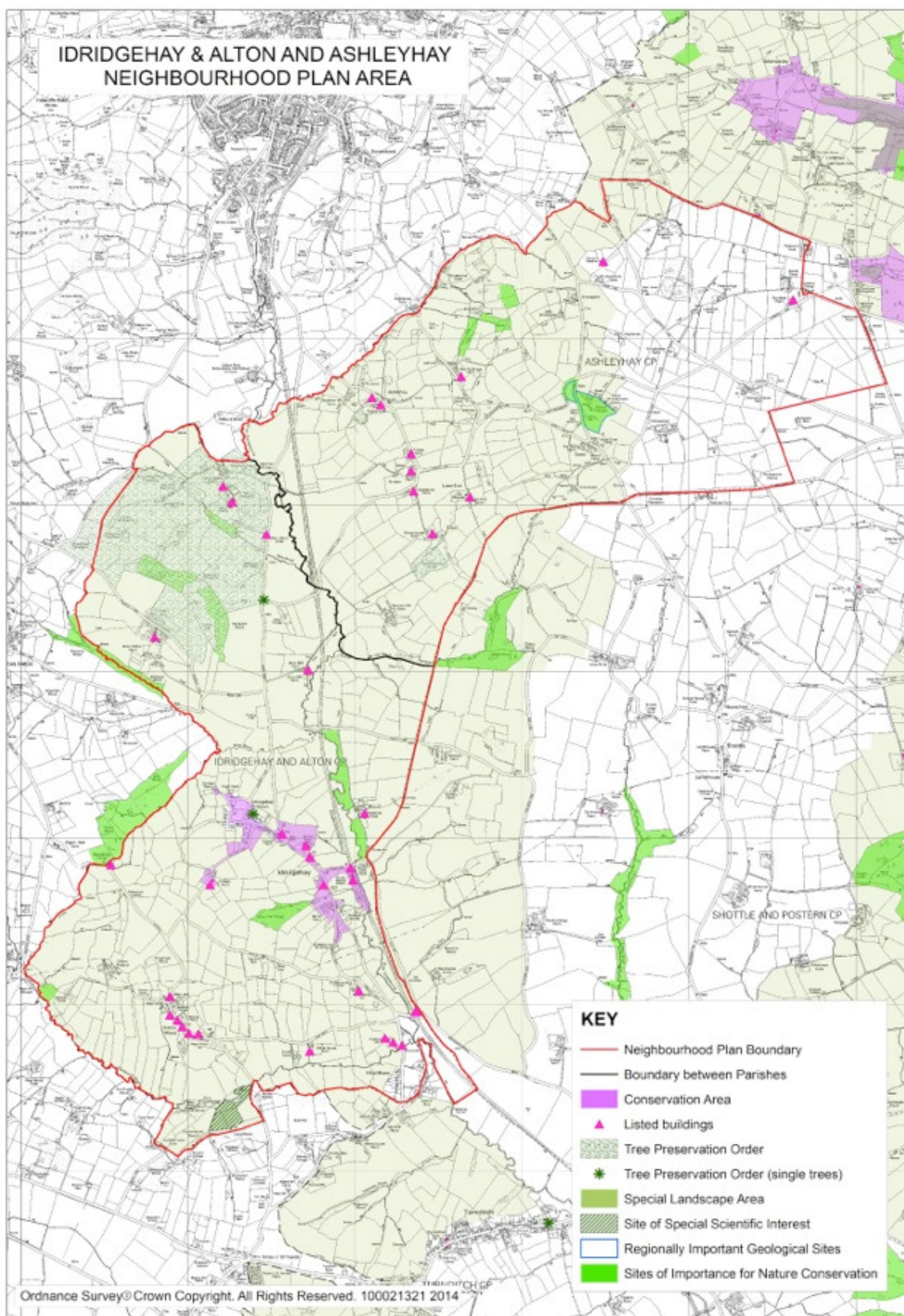
This document is the submission version. The regulations required that the proposed plan must be the subject of a 6-week consultation before it was submitted to Amber Valley Borough Council for independent examination. This requirement included:

- publicising the Plan in a manner which brought it to the attention of people who live, work or run businesses in the neighbourhood area
- consultation with statutory bodies whose interests might be affected by the Plan such as Amber Valley Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage
- consultation with Derbyshire Dales District Council, neighbouring town and parish councils, significant landowners, local businesses and local groups.

This consultation took place between March 28th and May 9th 2014. A time extension was granted to AVBC and DCC at their request. All comments received have been considered and where appropriate the Neighbourhood Plan was amended prior to being formally submitted to Amber Valley Borough Council. Details of this consultation can be found in www.iaa-pc.org.uk Submission Documents: Statement of Community Engagement and Statutory Consultation.

The Borough Council publicised the Neighbourhood Plan and invited representations from any interested party. These representations were passed to an independent examiner appointed by the Borough Council following consultation with the Parish Council. The examiner assessed any comments received and assessed whether the Neighbourhood Plan met certain basic conditions and fulfilled the required community engagement. The examiner recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan go forward to a community referendum. A Basic Conditions Statement can be found at www.iaa-pc.org.uk. Submission Documents.

If the majority of local residents subsequently vote in favour of the Plan, the Borough Council will 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan and it will become part of the Development Plan for the area and be used when assessing planning applications.



2. EVIDENCE BASE

During the development of the Neighbourhood Plan information has been collected from a wide range of sources. This consists of data already available in the public domain:

- census and planning data
- National Planning Policy Framework
- AVBC Local Plan and draft Core Strategy Documents
- historical and environmental records
- property market data
- historical photographs

and information gathered specifically for this plan:

- collection of views/opinions expressed verbally and by post-it notes at public meetings
- household questionnaire data
- question sheet for younger people
- buildings survey
- telephone business survey
- visitors comments book

About Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay:

2.1 Local Background



The Neighbourhood Area is part of the Alport Ward within AVBC and is situated in the Upper Ecclesbourne Valley, south of the historic market town of Wirksworth in Derbyshire. The valley offers a gateway to the Peak District National Park, a few miles to the north. The boundary of the Area to the north and west is with the adjoining local authority, Derbyshire Dales District Council. To the east is the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site and the buffer zone to this adjoins Ashleyhay parish on the northeast. The two parishes of Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay hold joint parish council meetings. See the Neighbourhood Plan Area Map for a more detailed view of the Neighbourhood Area (p.6 or in www.iaa-pc.org.uk Supporting Documents: Neighbourhood Area Map).

2.2 Landscape Character

Landscape character is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity and can be described at a national, local or site level. The boundaries of landscape character areas or types follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision making framework for the natural environment.

Natural England has identified 159 distinct **National Character Areas** (NCAs) across England and the Neighbourhood Plan area lies within NCA Profile: 50 Derbyshire Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent (NE541)⁴.

Summarised it states that '*The Derbyshire Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent National Character Area (NCA) is a picturesque transitional area between the natural beauty of the Peak District National Park to the west and the largely urban, formerly mined Derbyshire Coal Measures to the east and is often referred to as the Gateway to the Peaks. Although the area was not included in the National Park, it was seriously considered during the original boundary selection in 1950 and remains a landscape of extremely high quality. The area is rich in semi-natural habitats, intimate and dramatic landscapes, views and vistas. The transition between uplands and lowlands provides pathways for species to migrate in response to a changing climate*'.

Derbyshire County Council has further sub-divided the NCA's into **Landscape Character Types** which are described in the document 'The Landscape Character of Derbyshire'⁵ which can be used at a local level for County and District matters. Key features that define character include geology and landform, soils and land use, ecology, tree cover, enclosure, transport patterns and the built environment.

The Neighbourhood Area includes four of these of Landscape Character Types, illustrated here with views from the Neighbourhood Area:

1. **Enclosed Moors and Heaths:** Very upper slopes and tops around Alport Height.



'An open farming landscape on broad rolling summits with patches of remnant moorland. Dry stone walls enclose regular fields and straight roads join occasional sandstone farmsteads'.

⁴ Natural England April 2014 <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/nca/>

⁵ The Landscape Character of Derbyshire 2014 DCC
<http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/environment/conservation/landscapecharacter/default.asp>

2. Wooded Slopes and Valleys: on the Upper sides of the Ecclesbourne valley around Tinkerley and Storer farms.



'This is a landscape of small pastoral fields on undulating, rising ground. Woodlands many semi-natural on steeper slopes, some of ancient origin, along steep slopes and valley sides, with densely scattered hedgerows and stream line trees contribute to a strongly wooded character'.

3. Wooded Farmlands: on the undulating ground of the Lower slopes of the Ecclesbourne valley around Alton Manor, Idridgehay & Ireton Wood.



'This is a mixed farming landscape on undulating ground. Woodlands, hedgerows and stream line trees contribute to a strongly wooded character, of small, organic woodlands, some of ancient origin, with densely scattered hedgerow and watercourse trees'.

4. Riverside Meadows: flat land south of Barnsley Lane adjacent to the River Ecclesbourne.



'Broad, flat flood plains hold meandering rivers, with scattered trees along the river bank. Scattered boundary trees and transport routes punctuate the pastoral landscape'.



Fig 1. Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent NCA.

Landscape Character Types (DCC The Landscape Character of Derbyshire 2003)

2.3 Neighbourhood Area Landscape Character

The Ecclesbourne River flows north to south on the west of the Neighbourhood Area and its route is mirrored by a heritage railway, the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway, and the only main road in the Neighbourhood Area, the B5023 Wirksworth to Derby road which bisects Idridgehay village. Other lanes connecting the farms, houses and hamlets are narrow, often sunken and enclosed by tall mixed species hedges, often with holly. Roadside banks are full of wildflowers including bluebells, vetches and wild garlic. Scattered farmsteads are found on the valley slopes to the west and in the northeast of the area among small pasture fields enclosed by hedges. Small patches of woodland are common throughout, some being remnant patches of ancient origin.

Above 250 metres the ground levels off and drystone walls surround larger fields around Alport Height. This is the highest point in the Neighbourhood Area and within the region, at 314 metres, a popular National Trust viewpoint. It affords spectacular 360 degree views of this attractive landscape with long distance views to the Wrekin, Charnwood Forest and

Axe Edge. This site has remnant moor and heath with heather, bilberry and gorse and a small, disused gritstone quarry. The rest of the rolling hilltop is strongly defined by gritstone walls enclosing regular pasture fields with mainly straight roads joining occasional farmsteads.



Historically there was little built on the floodplain of the Ecclesbourne River valley except occasional watermills as at Alton Mill Farm and Sherbourne Mill. The line of the meandering river is followed by alder trees and other vegetation. Footpaths follow the course of it for most of its length through the parishes and the Ecclesbourne Valley trains provide glimpses of the river for its passengers. Some riverside meadowland is recognised locally as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Overall the Area has a high level of tranquillity⁶.



2.4 Settlement Character

Idridgehay

Idridgehay lies on the west side of the Ecclesbourne River alongside the B5023. It is linear in nature with two distinct areas of settlement, one around 'The Green' and the other following the main road and up Ecclesbourne Lane. The church, on the corner of the main



road and Cliffash Lane forms a focal point for travellers on the B5023 in both directions. The older houses are found in all parts of the village, most of these were farms and south facing, some gable end on to the lanes. A Conservation Area was designated in 1994 to protect these older buildings. Modern building, predominately bungalows, has taken place around the Green and on the main road. A small terrace of cottages is to be

⁶ The Landscape Character of Derbyshire Technical Support Document 2 Tranquillity. DCC 2014

found on Cliffash Lane. A distinctive characteristic of the village is that properties only occupy one side of the road giving all a rural outlook. Most properties are surrounded by good-sized gardens with hedged or stone walled boundaries and mature trees. Small areas of pastureland separate groups of houses in most parts of the village and little copses and orchards add to the biodiversity. The village is visible from the surrounding hills and sits within a landscape of hedged pasture fields and small woodlands.

Ireton Wood

Situated in the sheltered valley of the Sherbourne Brook Ireton Wood is a tranquil rural hamlet. The properties date from different periods and are in varying styles but all fit in with a traditional style of architecture. Most are built of brick with tiled roofs and often have small outhouses or other buildings attached. One or two are stone built and some farm buildings incorporate both materials. Cottage gardens, small orchards, mature trees and ironwork boundary fences add to the character of the settlement. No modern houses have been built here but a few old buildings have been converted for domestic use. Narrow lanes lead out of the hamlet and the surrounding fields are small and hedged or post and railed fenced with many boundary and freestanding trees and diverse flora.



Alton

The old settlement of Alton had its focus at Alton Hall on Tinkersley Lane. In the mid 19th century Alton Manor was built on farmland to the north, surrounded by mature parkland with a Home Farm. The original farm buildings at Alton Hall and Alton Nether Farm have been converted for holiday use and new farm buildings and residential accommodation provided at Tinkersley Lane. Hedged fields and small woods surround these houses giving the area a rural feel.

Hillcliffane⁷



A change in the route of the Derby to Wirksworth road in the 19th century means that the settlement of Hillcliffane has two areas of development, one down the old route and the other down the later. Old Hillcliff Lane leads down to a long ford over the Sherbourne brook that is now passable only on foot or horseback. This area is quiet and surrounded by waterside trees and meadows. Along the later route modern linear development has taken place and is busy with fast-moving traffic. The outlook from these houses is still rural in nature and one or two older houses are found at

the bottom of the hill.

⁷ On Ordnance Survey maps the settlement is Hillcliffane, the roads are Hillcliff Lane and Old Hillcliff Lane

Ashleyhay



This parish has a scattering of dispersed farms with groups of houses at Beighton Hill, Spout and the Bent. The farms are all built of gritstone and have tiled roofs, surrounded by hedged and walled farmland connected by narrow lanes. Most have substantial traditional farm buildings within the farmstead. Few new houses have been built since the 19th century although some farm buildings have been converted for holiday use. Woodland, mixed species hedgerows often with holly, small orchards and old quarries add to the biodiversity of

the parish.

Within the parish the National Trust land at Alport Height is a local landmark. It has for many years been the location of radio masts, now seven in total. The countryside, crossed by many footpaths, is much used by walkers parking here or coming up the old track, Prathall Lane, from Wirksworth. The steep hillsides and narrow lanes are also popular with cyclists.

2.5 Historic features

The Neighbourhood Area contains 36 listed buildings, all Grade II and one house, South Sitch, is Grade II*. These are mostly farms but some other notable 19th century buildings are also included, the Gilbert Scott designed Alton Manor, the railway buildings in Ildridgehay and the Black Swan public house for example. Twenty further sites appear on the Derbyshire Historical Environment Record (HER) including a Romano-British pottery site at Alport, the early enclosure or 'hay' at Ildridgehay and a small moated site near Norman Hill Farm.

See Neighbourhood Area Map and Section 2 Appendix 1: Listed Buildings and HER for details.

2.6 Environmental Designations and Biodiversity

The Neighbourhood Area includes one Site of Special Scientific Interest at Mount Pleasant [SK282473] in the south of the parishes. This 2.97 hectare site is noted for its lowland unimproved neutral grassland with two nationally scarce varieties of grass, crested dog's-tail and common knapweed.

Throughout the rest of the Area are nine Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation designated by the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and recognised by AVBC in the Local Plan. These include four woods totalling nearly 11 hectares, a lake, nearly five hectares of river meadows in two locations, four hectares of unimproved acid grassland at Alport Height and just over two hectares of pastureland. Many other small woodlands and historic orchards are found throughout the Area, two are recognised as Ancient Woodland, another has a Tree Preservation Order on it. All are important in the landscape as wildlife habitats. For details see www.iaa-pc.org.uk Supporting Documents: Local Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and SSSI.

These designated areas are marked on the Neighbourhood Area Map.



The Ecclesbourne River has been chosen by the Environment Agency as one of only ten pilot projects in England to look at new ways to improve watercourses. Called 'Love Your River', the project aims to involve the whole community in tackling issues that affect the quality of the catchment area and its wildlife.

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/139235.aspx

Alport Height is also a Regionally Important Geological Site for the exposed outcrop of deltaic gritstone in the disused quarry. At least four other disused small quarries in Ashleyhay provide interesting habitats for a variety of plant and wild life.

2.7 Current Area Profile

Population

According to 2011 National Census data, the total population of the Neighbourhood Area was 393, 275 in Idridgehay & Alton and 118 in Ashleyhay, a total of 169 households. Over 80% of houses had three or more bedrooms although the majority of households only contained one or two people. The population density was 0.3 persons per hectare whereas in AVBC as a whole it was 4.6 persons per hectare.

There were only eight children under five in both parishes, considerably less than the national average (there had been 18 in 2001). 23% of the population was in the age bracket 18-44, with 68% in Idridgehay & Alton and 56% in Ashleyhay in the age ranges 45-64 and 65 and over, higher than the national averages.

Over 50% of the population were between 25 and 65 and almost all of them were employed: 43% were in professional or managerial occupations, 13% clerical or administrative and 12% in semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, and 28% were self-employed. Most households had two cars and this was the most usual way to get to work although a number of people worked from home, a few travelled by bus or train and some others walked to work. From the household questionnaire (see section 3.3) it was established over half of those respondents who worked did so from home, obviating the need for a daily journey to work.

For details see www.iaa-pc.org.uk Supporting Documents: Census 2011 Idridgehay & Alton and Census 2011 Ashleyhay.

Businesses

Changes in farming practice have led to farms being amalgamated into larger holdings with fewer small farms in the area. The resulting redundant farm buildings have often been

converted into holiday accommodation. Despite this trend, there still are seventeen working farms in the Neighbourhood Area, 12 of these in Ashleyhay. These farms remain small in national terms as the agricultural land is not suitable for large scale agriculture.



in the Neighbourhood Area).

Other businesses in the area include the Idridgehay Village Store and Corn Store, a small embroidery workshop for leisure and work wear, a small engineering business carrying out traction engine renovations and repairs, and individual agricultural contractors, electricians, horticulturists, a fishery and shoot, a bed and breakfast, a bunk barn and a number of consultants working from home. The nature of these businesses means that a high proportion of people work from home reducing the need for a journey to work (see Section 2 Appendix 2: Businesses

Building stock

A visual survey of the buildings in the Neighbourhood Area was carried as part of the data collection. The majority of houses are detached, with a number of other 'attached' houses usually barn conversions. Idridgehay and Hillcliffane have a significant number of bungalows, Ashleyhay only one. The majority of modern housing is in Idridgehay and Hillcliffane. This has taken place in a small way on individual plots. The other hamlets are overwhelmingly built of traditional materials, in Ashleyhay and Alton this is gritstone with usually Staffordshire blue tile roofs, in Ireton Wood brick or stone with tiled roofs (see Section 2 Appendix 3: Property Survey).



At the time of the survey there were nine vacant houses in the Neighbourhood Area. There is no low cost housing and no Local Authority or Housing Association provision for local families or older people. An on-line survey of house prices was conducted in the local press between April and October 2013 and showed local prices are well above the national average.

Community Amenities

In 2012 part of the church, the Alton Room, was converted for use as a community space. Kitchen and toilet facilities have also been provided and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) is keen to increase the use of this local facility. Regular activities at present include a Toddler Group and Flower Arranging Class and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee have held their public meetings here. The lack of car parking close to the church is an issue that is being addressed by the PC, PCC and the VIA Steering Committee.

Until November 2012, Idridgehay had a pub, the Black Swan. Over the years, this has been at times a successful business but in recent years it became more of a restaurant than a pub and as a result was not used on a regular basis by the locals as a meeting place. The Steering Committee asked the Parish Council to register this, together with the car park, as Assets of Community Value. This process was initiated in January 2014 and the nomination accepted by AVBC on January 28th. Following a review hearing on May 21st requested by the landowners, AVBC confirmed that the pub and its car park would remain on its list of Assets of Community Value. An appeal has been lodged by the owners.

The Village Stores has been revitalised in recent years with the addition of the Corn Store selling animal feed and horse requisites. Unfortunately the post office part of the shop was closed in 1998.

Since 1953 the parishes have had the use of a playing field on land a little way outside the village. The land was given by a local landowner to enable the children at the school somewhere green to play. The primary school was closed in 1983 and has since been converted into a house. The playing field is administered by the Parish Council for Fields in Trust, successor to the Playing Fields Association. However, it is rarely used as access by foot from the village is difficult and there are no on-site facilities.

Some residents in the Neighbourhood Area living away from Idridgehay have stronger links with neighbouring larger communities such as Turnditch and Hulland Ward to the south, Wirksworth to the north and Alderwasley and Belper to the east. They are less likely, therefore, to use community amenities in Idridgehay.

Local shopping services are provided at the Village Stores and residents either use Wirksworth, Belper or Duffield for essential services such as doctors, schools, library and post office (see Section 2.9 Survey Distributions and Outcomes, Key Services).

Tourists and Visitors

A number of properties have been converted for use as self-catering holiday lets and there is one bed and breakfast establishment in the Neighbourhood Area. These cater for visitors from all over the country and abroad who take advantage of the accessibility to the many visitor attractions in the wider area: Carsington Water, Crich Tramway Museum, Chatsworth and Haddon Hall for example. Many more local people visit the Neighbourhood Area to walk, cycle, paint, fish, shoot and attend events. The area is particularly popular with local rambling groups.



Wyvern Rail reopened the railway line through the valley from Wirksworth to Duffield in 2011 as the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. This heritage line operates at weekends and on Tuesdays and passenger numbers have steadily risen since 2011. The train stops at Idridgehay Station and a walking route “Eadric’s Way” was published by the Parish Council to encourage passengers to enjoy a local walk before returning to Duffield or Wirksworth.

As part of the Ecclesbourne River Project a walking route along the river valley is also being developed by a local rambling group. A small area of steep rough land at Alport Height is occasionally used for an off-road motorcycle track. An annual music festival in Ashleyhay also attracts a number of people over a bank holiday weekend.

Infrastructure

The only main road through the parishes, the B5023, is used as a bus route with hourly services to Derby and Matlock. A minibus collects children from Ashleyhay to transport them to schools in Wirksworth. The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway does not provide a daily service but, on the days and times when it is running, does connect to the mainline at Duffield.

Electricity is available throughout the area but there is no mains gas supply despite a major pipeline and hub situated in Ashleyhay. Most properties are now connected to mains water supplies, the exceptions being in Ireton Wood and some farms reliant on boreholes. Ildridgehay has a sewage system but all other areas are reliant on private arrangements. Landline telephone coverage is good but distance from the exchanges make computer download times slow for some residents. A local company provides a wireless broadband service for residents in line of sight of the masts on Alport Height or other relay stations. Mobile phone coverage is patchy dependent on service providers and thickness of property walls.



2.8 Planning History and Background

Two significant planning policies have successfully operated in the Neighbourhood Area in the last thirty years: the designation of most of the area within a Special Landscape Area in the 1980s and the adoption of Conservation Area status in parts of Ildridgehay in the 1990s.

Special Landscape Area



Derbyshire County Council, as part of its Structure Plan, established Special Landscape Areas, which were identified as those areas of finest Derbyshire landscape outside the Peak District National Park. Special planning policies have been applied by the Local Authorities in these areas since 1985 to conserve and enhance their character. The majority of the area of the parishes of Ildridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay was identified as being of high landscape quality and was afforded the extra protection by being included in the SLA. See Neighbourhood Area Map for boundary of the SLA.

Amber Valley Borough Council's saved Special Landscape Area policy (2006) stated:

EN6: Planning permission for new development, including conversions of and extensions to existing buildings, will only be permitted in Special Landscape Areas if it does not have an adverse effect on the landscape quality or character.

Amber Valley Borough Council's Policy in the 2014 emerging Core Strategy states:

Policy E5: Special Landscape Area

Development proposals including agricultural development, conversions of existing buildings and extensions to existing buildings will only be supported in the Special Landscape Area, as shown on the map, where they can demonstrate that they do not have an adverse impact on the visual quality of the landscape.

In order to verify that the SLA in the Neighbourhood Area was still part of the finest landscape in the Borough, a Visual Quality Analysis was undertaken by a member of the Steering Committee for the preparation of this Plan. It included an objective desktop study as had been used at the time of the original designation. This study considered factors such as landform, land-use and landscape features by looking at OS maps and 1971 black and white aerial photographs. Factors which contributed positively to the visual quality included scenic hills (landform), land use such as moorland and landscape features such as woodland, hedgerows, hedgerow trees and water. Factors that detracted from the visual quality included residential, built areas, mines, tips, quarries, other light industry, railways and power lines.

It was decided to re-examine 'contributing' and 'detracting' factors by comparing historic and recent aerial photographs. This work compared the 1971 photographs with 2006 aerial colour photographs available in the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record Office. The aim was to ascertain whether the fabric of the landscape is still intact and whether it retains those qualities that warranted its inclusion in the Special Landscape Area.

Some built development, both domestic and agricultural, has occurred within Ildridgehay, the hamlets of Ireton Wood, Spout, Beighton Hill and the existing farmsteads. This has reinforced the settlement pattern of a single village, hamlets and scattered farmstead across the valley which are key landscape characteristics of the area. The majority of recent conversions and restorations of traditional buildings have kept within the footprint of the originals, and have been of appropriate scale, size and materials thus retaining their distinctive character. The converse of this would be detrimental to the distinctive characteristics of the Neighbourhood Area.

The landform remains unchanged. There has been some loss of sections of boundaries and some boundary trees, possibly from Dutch elm disease. Overall the woodland and the intricate small to medium field pattern are intact. A visual assessment of the area confirmed that most features are in good condition with well-managed hedges and dry-stone walls.

It was concluded that the area has maintained its landscape quality and that the standards that led to the original designation still apply. This area is still part of the most attractive landscape in Derbyshire outside the Peak District National Park.

In considering planning applications the SLA policy has guided Planning Officers to take careful account of siting, design and materials, together with their visual impact on the surrounding landscape. The Special Landscape Policy has been successful but not restrictive as, on the whole, appropriate development has taken place. For further analysis see www.iaa-pc.org.uk

Supporting Documents: SLA Landscape Value and Quality.

The scenic value of the area bestows a sensitivity on this landscape which limits its capacity to absorb development without it becoming detrimental to the area. The slow rate of change and sensitive development has up to now generally minimized negative visual effects on the landscape however at some point size, scale and massing of development could tip this delicate balance.

It was considered important to ask the local population whether they valued this special landscape and this was addressed in the preparation of this Plan (see Section 2.9 Survey Distribution and Outcomes).

Conservation Area

In 1994 residents in both Ildridgehay and Ireton Wood were given the opportunity to express their views to the Local Authority as to whether or not they wanted these areas to be designated Conservation Areas.

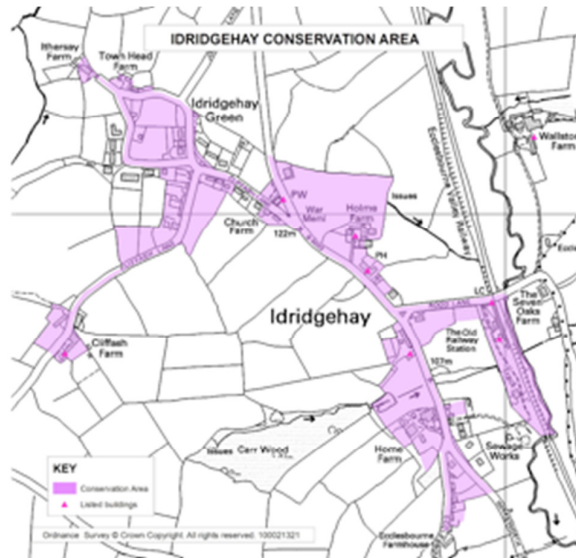
Ildridgehay residents supported this whereas those in Ireton Wood felt it was unnecessary. It was difficult to agree a coherent boundary for the Conservation Area in Ildridgehay as the listed buildings and historic features are spread throughout the parish. Residents have not always known where the boundary is or why it is where it is. No Character Statement was produced for Ildridgehay.



It was considered important to ask the local population whether they still considered this designation important and this was addressed in the preparation of this Plan (see Section 2.9 Survey Distribution and Outcomes).

AVBC Core Strategy emerging Historic Environment Conservation Area Policy E3 states that:

Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals within and adjacent to Conservation Areas, as shown on the Map, if they would contribute to the preservation or enhancement of the Conservation Area. Special consideration will also be given to proposals for development adjacent to and affecting the setting of a Conservation Area.



Other Policies

AVBC Local Plan (2006) includes these saved Housing Development Policies:

H4 Within the built framework of all other settlements not listed in policy H3⁸, planning permission will be granted for housing development, providing the proposals are in the form of one or more of the following:

1. the conversion of existing dwellings to provide additional units, or of existing buildings to housing from other uses,
2. extensions to or replacement of existing dwellings,
3. new development on previously developed or brownfield land, or on vacant land which has not been previously developed, providing the development is in the form of infilling of small gaps capable of accommodating no more than 2 dwellings within existing groups of houses, subject to the character of the surroundings.

H5: Outside the built framework of settlements, planning permission will not be granted for housing development unless the proposals are in the form of one or more of the following:

1. extensions to existing dwellings, provided this would not result in a significant change to the scale or character of the dwelling and its surroundings,
2. replacement of existing dwellings, providing that the number of dwelling units is not increased,
3. new development which can be shown to be necessary for the operation of a rural based activity and where a countryside location is essential.

H6: Planning permission for the conversion of existing buildings in the countryside to residential use from other uses will only be permitted if:

1. it can be demonstrated that employment or tourism uses would not be suitable or viable, and
2. the building or group of buildings is of permanent and substantial construction, is of a form, bulk and general design in keeping with its surroundings and can be converted without extensive alteration, rebuilding or extension.

In the Supplementary Planning Document this is further constrained by clause 5.1

The Borough Council will expect proposed new residential development to be located within

⁸ in the Neighbourhood Area this means within Idridgehay and Hillcliffane

easy walking distance of local amenities and public transport facilities. As a guide, the following walking distances to facilities will be expected:

- *Less than 250m (2-3 minutes' walk) from a post box, convenience store/newsagent*
- *Less than 600m (7-8 minutes' walk) from a natural green space, a nursery school, a primary school, a doctor's surgery, a public transport facility, and a local shopping centre including a post office, and bank/cashpoint.*

AVBC Local Plan (2006) includes three relevant saved Environment Policies:

EN1. In the countryside, outside the built framework of settlements, new development will only be permitted where it:

is essential in conjunction with the requirements of agriculture or forestry,

is necessary within the countryside and cannot reasonably be located within an existing settlement, or

will improve the viability, accessibility or community value of existing services and facilities in settlements remote from service centres provided by the towns and larger villages

EN6. Planning permission for new development, including conversions of and extensions to existing buildings, will only be permitted in Special Landscape Areas, if it does not have an adverse effect on the landscape quality or character.

EN11. Planning permission will be granted for agricultural development, providing that:

- a) it is essential for the purposes of agriculture;
- b) it would not have a significant adverse impact on the character of the locality and
- c) any proposed buildings are located within or adjacent to existing agricultural buildings to minimise visual impact.

The effect of these policies has been that no new houses have been built outside Ildridgehay or Hillcliffane in the last twenty years, except for two with agricultural ties.

Planning Applications considered and determined in the last twenty years

Details of planning applications for the past twenty years are now available on the AVBC website. These can be summarised as follows:

- The majority of applications for the area have been for extensions to existing dwellings.
- In Ildridgehay village and the hamlet of Hillcliffane there have been nine new houses and three new bungalows built in 20 years, with one application refused.
- In the same period there have been no new build houses in Ashleyhay. One recent conversion of a new stone built agricultural building outside the SLA has been allowed for conversion to an agricultural worker's house.
- In both parishes a number of conversions of old buildings to houses have been allowed; several of them for holiday lets, some of which have applied later to have such a restriction removed.
- Very few applications have been refused, one on Appeal for a 2000 pig farm on farmland in Ashleyhay, recently re-submitted and approved for 500 pigs, and another for a house outside the built up area of Ildridgehay, recently gone to Appeal. A number of applications were withdrawn and re-submitted after further consultation and amendment.

(See Section 2 Appendix 4: Planning Applications 1992-2013)

Current Planning Position and Emerging Policies

The Development Plan for Amber Valley currently consists of the following documents:

- Saved policies of the Amber Valley Borough Local Plan (April 2006)
- Saved policies of the Derby & Derbyshire Waste Local Plan (March 2005)
- Saved policies of the Derby & Derbyshire Minerals Local Plan (April 2000) & First Alteration to the Plan (November 2002)

The AVBC Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy was submitted for examination on December 20th 2013 following consultation. Examination started in the first quarter of 2014 but was adjourned in May until November 2014 for further clarification and amendments to the Housing Policies. At present (October 2014) within the Neighbourhood Area no allocation for housing has been made in the Core Strategy except in the case of windfall sites.

A specific request to the AVBC Housing Department for information about affordable and other housing needs in the VIA Neighbourhood Area by the Steering Committee elicited the following response:

'AVBC are looking at how they can work with all the parishes to robustly identify housing need and specifically identify the needs for affordable housing in more rural communities. Whilst some needs assessments have been completed they have tended to be site specific and completed to provide evidence in support of a planning application. With colleagues from Planning Policy we are looking at how we can support phase 2 of the Core Strategy to work out what steps are necessary to identify how we can provide robust evidence to support housing need across the Borough. The Housing team have requested that policies look more subtly at house types rather than just numbers so that new housing can reflect the needs of the population as a whole I have just completed a search of the housing register to analyse where applicants have expressed an interest and Idridgehay has not been specified. However this is very specific and very few rural settlements are specified in over 3000 entries....Applicants tend to specify the major towns.'⁹

The Strategic Objectives in the AVBC emerging Core Strategy relevant to the Neighbourhood Area are:

- 1) To achieve sustainable design and construction of all new development by promoting carbon neutral buildings and best-practice design standards that facilitate reductions in resource consumption and waste, whilst maximising opportunities for renewable energy generation and utilisation where appropriate.
- 2) To foster economic development by improving the quality and accessibility of employment land and infrastructure within the Borough, and reducing socio-economic inequalities through the regeneration of deprived communities.
- 3) Not applicable
- 4) To enable the provision of a sufficient number of decent, affordable and well-designed dwellings to meet the housing needs of all local communities.
- 5) Not applicable
- 6) To improve the health and wellbeing of local people and promote equality and cohesion within and between communities in the Borough, by increasing opportunities for local people to participate in a range of leisure, cultural, sport and community activities and providing access to the natural environment, particularly for children and young people.

⁹ by email AVBC Housing Manager 13th August 2014

- 7) To protect and enhance the environmental quality and local distinctiveness of spaces and places in the Borough in relation to landscapes and heritage, including, but not limited to, the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site and the Special Landscape Area.
- 8) To protect, maintain, restore, enhance and create areas of nature conservation and woodland in the environment, with a focus upon enhancing wildlife corridors and networks of habitats, preventing further fragmentation and extending the connectivity of habitats.
- 9) To ensure that a network of easily accessible and high quality open spaces, parks, recreational areas, leisure facilities, community facilities, sports facilities, green infrastructure and cultural facilities is maintained and enhanced in the Borough.
- 10) Not applicable
- 11) To provide infrastructure that creates opportunities for non-motorised transport, increases public transport accessibility and mitigates against the creation of traffic congestion.
- 12) To aim to ensure that local services, facilities and employment opportunities in the Borough are accessible by as many sectors of the population as possible.
- 13) Not applicable

2.9 Survey Distribution and Outcomes

An essential component of the evidence gathered in the development of the plan was the views of those living, working and running businesses in the area. Based on these views and those expressed at the meetings and the outcomes of the working groups, a questionnaire was devised and piloted in July 2013. A separate survey was devised for people running businesses within the parishes and, in order to obtain the views of young people living with their parents, a short question sheet was prepared. For more details see www.iaa-pc.org.uk Supporting Documents: Questionnaire and Survey Data.

The main questionnaire was delivered to every occupied household within the two parishes early in August 2013. Of the 178 delivered, 125 were returned which is an exceptionally high response rate, 70% of all households. A further eight questionnaires were sent to the small number of people who have some involvement in the community but do not live in the area (e.g. non-resident land owners and church officials) and four of these were returned.

Questionnaires were returned from all parts of the parishes in proportion to the number of households within each part and by people who had lived within the area for all of their lives as well as those who had more recently moved to the area. Seventeen **young people**, ages ranging from six to 21 completed the short question sheet and five businesses responded to the **local business telephone survey**.

The exceptionally high response rate of the household questionnaire and the volume of data therein, have made a considerable impact on the evidence gathered and give weight to the development of the policies for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Landscape, Countryside and Environment

From the discussions that were held at the open meetings it was clear that the quality and beauty of the landscape are greatly valued by the residents. Questions were included in the **household questionnaire** to gauge this quantitatively.

- 93% stated that they like living here because of the lovely countryside
- 85% rated the importance of retaining the Special Landscape Area status as highly important with a further 11% rating it as fairly important
- 89% wanted to protect the landscape beauty

- 68% felt that all areas of the countryside outside of the current built areas should be protected from development with a further 32% stating that some areas should be protected

One respondent commented

'We want AVBC to retain the SLA and enforce the relevant policies to protect it from inappropriate development. The area is unique and merits special measures and extra protection.'

The **young people** also valued the beauty of the countryside, as one 14 year old put it *'I like the views and the peace and the animals in the fields. Also to look around and see crops growing and the land being looked after.'* An 8 year old wanted *'more hedgehogs'*.

Other qualities associated with the beauty of the landscape are also valued:

- 78% of respondents wanted to protect the tranquillity, peace and quiet
- 77% of respondents wanted to protect the wildlife
- between 64% and 75% of respondents wanted to protect dark skies, woodland, trees and hedges, dry stone walls and ponds, rivers and streams.

One of many similar comments describes respondents' feelings on this subject

'I like the low light pollution, peaceful rural location and heritage, historic interest and landscape; the low population, tranquillity, narrow lanes and grass verges which encourage wildlife and birdlife to flourish.'

Conservation Area

Respondents were asked whether they thought the Conservation Area in Ildridgehay was still important and whether it should be extended. 83% thought that it was still important and 21 people described an area where it should be extended, five of these thought Ireton Wood should be re-considered as a potential Conservation Area.

Housing Development and Accommodation

Whilst the Neighbourhood Area is not viewed within the AVBC emerging Core Strategy as being a potential location for new housing the residents acknowledge that there will be planning applications for some new build housing and extensions to existing houses or business enterprises. Views expressed at the **open meetings** indicated that many residents were not against a small amount of new build per se, but that they had clear opinions about its design, scale and siting. A number of questions within the **household questionnaire** sought to examine these views.

- 87% rated it as very important that any new development, including extensions, should be in sympathy with their surroundings in terms of scale, size and use of materials with a further 12% rating it as fairly important
- 83% specified their preference for a 'traditional' building style
- 78% considered the design of any new development to be very important with 20% considering it to be fairly important
- 44% also supported innovative or eco friendly designs
- 37% of respondents thought new housing should be for starter homes
- 25% of respondents thought new housing should be for older people.

Respondents were fairly equally divided on the size of house that should be provided in any new housing: some preferring one or two bed-roomed houses, others three or four bed-roomed houses.

'Small scale development can be integrated provided design and materials match those in the location and the building is of the appropriate scale.'

'As we are all aware, we live in a most beautiful area. We believe it should be protected as much as possible from inappropriate development. Any new housing must be in keeping with the area on a small scale, using sites that have already been used, e.g. old farm buildings or derelict buildings.'

A number of questions in the **household questionnaire** were asked about accommodation. General questions were concerned with what sort of new housing people considered was appropriate for the area, what style of new development they would like to see and for what use they would like to see existing old farm buildings converted. More specifically households were asked if family members had had to stay living in the family home due to a lack of alternative suitable accommodation. Twenty-two respondents across the Neighbourhood Area said this was the case. The major reason they gave was that housing in the area is too expensive for them.

Some expanded this response with comment: *'Applied for a bungalow for us to move into so that newly-wed son can move into the family home where the family business is based, this was refused'*

'Much of the area is not suitable for housing development. It is possible that a small special development in Ildridgehay might be suitable for older people who wish to move out of larger properties and still stay in the village however facilities are not good for older infirm people.'

'The demand for housing is not clear in Ildridgehay, there do not appear to be any homes suitable for smaller/younger households. If demand is there (in hidden households) we would support affordable housing (rent and shared ownership) with local connection criteria.'

'Number of new homes close together should be limited - perhaps to 2 or 3 maximum avoiding any feeling of an 'estate'.'

Business Development within the area

Within the **household questionnaire** people were asked whether or not new businesses should be encouraged in the area and what types of new businesses they would find acceptable and unacceptable. 58% thought that new businesses should be encouraged, 22% thought that they should not and 20% did not mind. However, the great majority of respondents had clear ideas about what types of business they would find acceptable and unacceptable.

- 72% described the type of business that they would find **unacceptable** – principally large scale businesses with a high environmental impact on the locality and landscape and those causing an increase in traffic along lanes, especially HGVs

Ninety respondents made comments on the types of business that they would find **unacceptable**:

'Large-scale agricultural, industrial business (out of keeping with network of small tree-lined fields). Businesses bringing increased traffic to area. Any business polluting i.e. air, water, noise.'

'Noisy, intrusive tourist development such as campsites/caravan sites within earshot of domestic housing.'

'We must not lose the traditional agricultural ethos of the area.'

'There needs to be protection in place to prevent buyers converting agricultural land into a hotchpotch of unsightly, intrusive ventures – e.g. off-road biking/scrambling, caravan sites, trailer parks etc.'

- 66% described the type of business that they would find **acceptable** – principally small scale in keeping with the rural nature of area, with a low environmental impact and housed unobtrusively, especially within existing buildings.

'internet based or internet mediated businesses are an excellent match for this area (they avoid traffic for example).'

A number of **existing businesses** took part in a **telephone survey**. They included a cattery, small-scale manufacturing and repairs, farming, small-scale horticulture, consulting and tourism. Between them they employed very few staff, most of whom lived outside the Neighbourhood Area. None had any difficulty in recruiting staff, some commenting on the close proximity of Wirksworth and Belper as sources of personnel.

Most commented on access difficulties caused by the lack of winter gritting. Several had suitable vehicles to ensure the supply of their products would not be interrupted. All of them commented on the poor telephone broadband and mobile phone services in the area and most had switched to the local wireless broadband service which they praised.

When asked about whether or not they had considered expanding their business and what influenced this, their responses ranged from potential planning issues to an awareness that some forms of expansion would impact on the locality in terms of increased traffic. Four of the five respondents showed a responsible attitude towards the environment, two being organic and three showing a desire to be as self-sufficient and green in terms of energy usage as they could.

The majority felt that the Neighbourhood Area was a good place to run a business mostly because of the beauty of the area and, for some, the ease of access to other parts of the country.

Infrastructure

Several questions within the **household questionnaire** were concerned with the practical aspects of living within the Neighbourhood Area:

Transport, traffic and road safety

- 75% of respondents used a motor vehicle in the course of their work, some of whom noted that they drove to the railway station in Derby, 10% walked or cycled to work and 8% used public transport
- only 9% of the respondents used public transport more than once a month and most of them lived on or near to the bus route on the B5023
- 85% considered the speed of traffic in the area to be either a major or minor problem and 74 respondents wrote comments about traffic speed and road safety
- 83% of the respondents ticked options for measures for improving road safety.

Several of the **young people** commented on the impact on their lives of living away from bus routes:

'No public transport and the taxis find it hard to navigate or won't come up at all.'

'We have to rely on parents to get anywhere.'

The questions in the **household questionnaire** relating to road safety brought forth some heartfelt responses. For those living in the village of Ildridgehay and on Hillcliff Lane most of the comments related to traffic speed, in Ildridgehay the lack of enforcement of the 30mph limit and on Hillcliff Lane the lack of speed restriction.

'Hillcliff Lane MUST reduce speed limit to 40mph (from 60mph) before fatality (inevitable otherwise). PLEASE!!! Every resident has had all their pets killed on the road.'

For those living away from the main road accessed by lanes, most of the comments related to familiar and unfamiliar drivers driving too fast along single-track lanes without regard to walkers, cyclists, animals, riders and other drivers.

'remove 'stupid' national speed limit signs (on entrances to lanes off the B5023). Telling people they can legally go at 60mph on the lanes is not helpful. No signs at all forces people to think.'

'Most lanes are used by horse riders/walkers as well as cars – all lanes have blind spots and no speed limit or in many cases places to get off the road.'

There were many other comments relating to poor visibility at junctions from lanes onto the B5023 due to overgrown hedges, poor road maintenance and, in the lanes, long delays before gritting in the winter. There was also mention of the damage wrought by HGVs.

Several of the **young people** also made comments about cars speeding on the lanes and road safety: *'I don't like people speeding down the roads and I think the roads would be a little safer if the hedges and sides weren't as high and overgrown.'*

Key Services

The residents of Ildridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay access key services from a wide range of surrounding towns depending on whichever is closest to them. It was felt that the **household questionnaire** was a good opportunity to obtain accurate data about where the residents access each key service.

The Table below shows that by far the greatest proportion of residents use services in the market town of Wirksworth in Derbyshire Dales District Council, rather than services in Amber Valley Borough Council. In practice the Neighbourhood Area has far more in common with the villages and rural nature of the Derbyshire Dales than it has with the urban areas within the AVBC.

Locations of Key Services used by residents

Service	Wirksworth	Duffield	Belper	Hulland/ Brailsford	Allestree	Other
Doctor	67%	15%	4%	15%	1%	2%
Pharmacy	70%	11%	6%	7%	2%	1%
Post Office	64%	10%	16%	2%	1%	6%
Library	60%	1%	12%		3%	6% Mobile 9%
Primary school (nos. of children)	10	1	2	1		Turnditch 8 Other 3
Secondary school (nos. of children)	14		2			4

Renewable Energy

Energy Use and views on different Energy Sources

The residents were asked how they heat their homes and the responses reflect a rural area lacking mains gas. The majority use oil with significant numbers using wood, electricity, coal and LPG, a few have solar panels, heat exchangers and biomass. Four households heat their homes exclusively with wood. About half the residents in Ildridgehay said that they would use mains gas if it became available in the village.

Responses to the questionnaire demonstrated a population conscious of the importance of conserving energy. Most use low energy lighting, loft insulation and double-glazing, many have low energy appliances and cavity wall insulation. There are two domestic wind turbines in the Neighbourhood Area. Listed building status was noted as a restriction preventing some energy conservation measures.

Questions were asked about whether there was support for various renewable energy sources. On a domestic scale 55% supported solar, 26% were neutral and 16% against; 37% supported wind, 23% were neutral and 35% against; 31% supported biomass, 26% were neutral and 10% against.

Whilst, on a larger scale 24% supported solar, 25% were neutral and 28% against; 17% supported wind, 21% were neutral and 42% against; 21% supported biomass, 19% were neutral and 21% against; 8% supported fracking, 9% being neutral and 35% against.

Although 117 people responded to questions on this subject only a few made additional comments. Two were vehemently against wind turbines, one of whom was also firmly against solar, five were generally supportive depending on their location and two made comments about fracking.

Broadband

The internet has transformed most people's lives and for those living in rural areas, it means that many can work remotely, contact can be maintained with distant family and friends and shopping can be done from home. 70% of respondents said having access to Broadband was important to them and it is fairly important to 19% more. 94% use it for domestic use, 50% use it for working from home, 37% for business. For 53% speed is a limiting factor, 75% are connected by their telephone line and 60% of them had problems with speed, 25% by a local wireless provider with 17% only having problems and 14% by 3G/4G of these 67% had problems with speed.

Utilities

The household questionnaire contained some questions about utilities: electricity, water supplies and sewage disposal. Historically the area has suffered from frequent electricity outages and many respondents commented on the improvement in this situation with 81% saying that they did not suffer difficulties with the consistency of their supply, although 19% still do. Only a third of respondents are connected to mains sewage, the others relying principally on septic tanks, and 5% had no mains water supply.

Community

When asked what they liked about living in the area several people mentioned the good community spirit and the kindness of neighbours. Others, especially within the village of Ildridgehay, commented on the fact that, due to the main road running through the village and a lack of a continuous footpath or pavement, it was difficult to build a community. They also felt that there is a lack of 'centre' to the village and that this was exacerbated by the recent closure of the pub. This was an issue that united most of the respondents.

- 72% would like to see the Black Swan public house re-opened
- 20% see the lack of parking near the Church and Community Room as a major problem and another 26% as a minor problem
- 25 people had suggestions as to how this might be overcome



Consultation meeting December 2013

Appendices to Section 2

Section 2: Appendix 1

Listed buildings Grade II

Alton

Alton Manor and attached Stable Range to northeast, 1846-7 by Sir G. G. Scott
Lodge to Alton Manor, adjacent Gate piers and gates, c1846-7, by Sir G. G. Scott
Icehouse at Alton Manor, c1846
Alton Mill, dated 1695
Alton Hall, late C16 and C17, with additions in C18

Ashleyhay

Primitive Methodist Chapel, Beighton Hill, 1851
Beighton Hill House, early C19
New Buildings Farmhouse and attached outbuilding to northwest, late C18
Spendlove Farmhouse, early C19 with C18 rear range
Toplas Farmhouse and attached range of buildings to west, late C18
Storer Farmhouse, early C17 with C18 additions
Dirty Lane End Cottage and adjoining outbuilding to north, C17, remodelled in C19
Sandhall Farmhouse, mid C18
Brownhouse Farmhouse and adjoining outbuilding to west, C17 and earlier
Chequer Meadow, early C19

Idridgehay

Sherbourne Mill House, early C19
Sherbourne Mill, water-powered corn mill, now disused
Wallstone Farmhouse, early C18
South Sitch, Grade II* dated 1621 with evidence of an earlier house within, additions in 1842
Church of St. James, 1854-5 by H. I. Stevens of Derby
Rakestone Farmhouse, early C19
Bridge over Sherbourne Brook, southeast of Sherbourne Mill, late C18
Ecclesbourne House, c1845 in Italianate/Tudor style
Holme Farmhouse, early C19
Black Swan Inn and adjoining outbuilding to east, early C19
Bridge House, late C18
Idridgehay Station, c1867
Station Masters House, c1867
Cliffash Farmhouse and adjoining outbuilding to northeast, C17

Ireton Wood

Wood Cottage, mid C19
Iretonwood House, c1850
Gate and Gate piers, northwest of Iretonwood House, c 1850
House to the northeast of Iretonwood House, attached boundary wall and railings, mid C19
Mag Lane Farmhouse, late C17 and C18 additions
Home Farmhouse, late C18
White House, C17 with C18 remodelling and additions
The Cottage, early C19

Historic Environment Record (HER)

Alton

Park and gardens, Alton Manor, SK 278507
A possible moated site east of Milepost Plantation, Alton SK 282507

Hollow way, north of Barley Hill, Alton, SK 281506
 Earthwork features, Derby Road, Alton, SK 281506
 Hurst Fields Farm (site of), Wirksworth Road, Alton SK 283508
 Milepost, on the Derby Road, southeast of Alton Manor, SK 284506
 Alton Manor Farm, Alton Manor, Alton, SK 282512

Ashleyhay

Alport Hill, romano-british site, SK 306516
 Farmstead, Broadgates, Hay Lane, SK 302523
 Ashleyhay Mill (site of), SK 287505
 Alport Stone, SK 303515
 Boundary Stone, Derby Road, SK 286516
 Guide stone, Alport Lane SK 303515
 Sycamore Farm, SK 304523

Idridgehay

Possible early 'hay' or enclosure, Idridgehay, SK 283489
 Homestead Moat east of Alton Mill Farm, SK 292500
 Earthworks, Rakestones Farm, SK 274487
 Milepost, Derby Road, SK 285489
 Tollbar Cottage, Wirksworth Road, SK 294479

Ireton Wood

Primitive Methodist Chapel, Bullhill Lane, SK 282477

Section 2: Appendix 2

Businesses in the Neighbourhood Area April/May 2013

Ashleyhay

12 farms
 4 self-catering holiday lets
 3+ self-employed consultants etc. working from home
 2 self-employed electricians
 1 agricultural contractor
 1 builder
 1 cattery
 1 firewood business

 1 furniture growing/making business

 1 plant nursery
 1 business making inflatables (until March 2013)

Alton

3 farms
 2 self-catering holiday lets
 1 fishery
 1 shoot
 1 bed and breakfast
 1 engineering business - traction engine

Idridgehay with Hillcliff Lane

2 farms
 1 village shop
 1 Corn store and country shop

 1 market garden
 1 business making plant supports
 1 builder
 1 business making 'stone troffs' (? retired)
 1 business doing work and leisure wear embroidery
 A number of self-employed consultants etc. working from home
 1 pub/restaurant (until autumn 2012)

Iretonwood

3 farms

renovations and repairs

Section 2: Appendix 3

Property Survey results April 2013

	Ashleyhay	Idridgehay	Alton	Ireton Wood	Hillcliff Lane	Total
Detached	36	45	8	17	8	105
Attached	6	11	6	3	0	26
Semi	0	2	2	0	2	6
Bungalow	2 ¹	18	1	0	5	25
Barn Conversion ²	12	12	6	5	1	27
Flat/Apartment	1	0	0	1	0	2
Traditional	53	49	15	25	4	139
Modern	3	31	4	1	12	48
Stone	55	33	17	3	5	103
Brick	0	42	2	23	8	62
Render	0	1	0	0	3	3
Tile	56	72	19	23	15	173
Slate	0	7	0	3	1	11
Thatch	0	1	0	0	0	1
Occupied houses	49	80	13	24	15	164
Vacant houses	2	4	2	2	1	9
Holiday let	6	0	4	0	1	9
Farm/smallholding	16	3	3	2	0	24
Other businesses	Agricultural contractor Builder Cattery Consultants Electricians Holiday lets Firewood Furniture Plant nursery	Royale leisurewear Stonetrotts Village Shop Corn Store Consultants Plant supports Market garden [Black Swan pub]	Traction engines Fishery Shoot Holiday lets Bed & breakfast			
Empty buildings	7	2	0	1	0	10
Listed buildings ³	9	10	3	5	1	28
Total	57	84	19	26	16	202

¹ includes converted air raid warden hut

² includes 2 converted chapels, 1 converted school, 1 converted forge

³ does not include non-residential listed buildings

Section 2: Appendix 4

Planning Applications in the Neighbourhood Area 1991-2013

Planning applications	Idridgehay and Alton	Ashleyhay
New building	9 houses, 3 bungalows 1 refused	
Extension to existing dwelling	36 and 1 refused	19 and 3 refused
Refurbishment of listed building	5	1
Holiday let/bunk barn	4	6
Conservatory/orangery/garden room/summer house	13	4
Conversion old building to dwelling	23	19
Agricultural buildings	13 and 2 refused	25 and 6 refused
Small agricultural development e.g. silage clamp	5	1
Change from holiday let to independent dwelling	3 and 1 refused	5 and 1 refused

Change from feed store to agric. workers dwelling		1
Stable or other equestrian provision	10	1
Utilities: water/sewage, masts at Alport	1	5
Green energy	4	5 and 1 refused
Residential caravan/mobile home	3 (1 temporary)	1 refused
Garage/outside storage	39	3
Swimming pool, pool room	2	
workshop	5	1
polytunnels	1	2
Other- Corn Store, sale of motor vehicles, portakabin on playing field, cattery	4	1

3. THE PLAN

There has been a recurring central theme throughout the consultation and preparation process. Residents continually refer to an appreciation of, and attachment to, the special nature of the area's countryside. There is a genuine desire to conserve and enhance the special character of the area for current and future generations of residents and visitors alike – the essence of sustainability. The intention to nurture the area for the wellbeing of residents and enjoyment of visitors underpins the vision, objectives and policies.

3.1 Key Issues

Based on the evidence described in Section 2 and the analysis of the consultation response outlined in Section 2.9, the key issues to emerge are as follows.

Arising from public consultation:

- The landscape of the Neighbourhood Area is highly valued by the vast majority of the population and its continued protection is of paramount importance.
- The biodiversity of the area should also be protected and enhanced where possible.
- Some limited small-scale housing development would be acceptable especially if it enabled local people to remain in the area as their circumstances change.
- Sustainable business development is acceptable provided it is limited to small-scale rurally based enterprises located on sites with low visual impact.
- Large-scale businesses with a high environmental impact on the locality and landscape are not acceptable.
- Any development should reflect local distinctiveness and be in sympathy with its surroundings in terms of scale, size and design.
- The provision of better quality broadband is necessary especially for people working from home.
- There were divided views on large-scale renewable energy developments with more support for domestic schemes.
- Some measures are required to lessen speeding traffic through Ildridgehay and Hillcliff Lane.
- Narrow lanes with multiple users (traffic, bikes, horses, walkers) can be dangerous due to speeding traffic.
- An increase in public transport provision would be welcomed by the young people.
- Community spirit is good throughout the Neighbourhood Area but the closure of the pub and the lack of parking for the church are major issues when considering the future of the community. The playing field is rarely used at present.
- The majority of the population look to Wirksworth for key services.

Arising from available information and research:

- The distinctive rural character of the landscape is acknowledged as being of high quality and this is recognised by the Special Landscape Area designation.
- The Neighbourhood Area contains important habitats for wildlife, particularly along the Ecclesbourne River.
- The population of the Neighbourhood Area is older than the population of the UK as a whole.
- The population density is very low compared to the rest of the Amber Valley area.
- Most people are dependent on car usage for all needs apart from those living within walking distance of the village shop.
- Building stock is predominately old and therefore likely to score less well on energy performance assessments.

- House prices are higher than the national average and without a village school young families are not attracted to the area.
- A number of small businesses exist in the Neighbourhood Area many of which are run from home.
- The Neighbourhood Area has a high level of tranquillity.

3.2 Vision for the future

Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay will continue to be a thriving and attractive rural area. Its special landscape, flora, fauna and traditional architecture will have been protected and enhanced and will continue to be valued by residents, visitors and business. It will have a lively, mixed age community providing people with a high quality place to live and work.

The vision for the future is that the whole Neighbourhood Area will have retained its distinctive rural character, with small developments having taken place within settlements or alongside existing buildings. In particular the Ecclesbourne Valley will have been recognised as an area valued for its biodiversity and special landscape.

Idridgehay village will be an active rural community with a balanced population comprising mixed ages. Village amenities will include a thriving shop, with the pub and church providing community meeting spaces. There will be regular and frequent public transport both along the B5023 and from Idridgehay station, giving young people easier access to education, jobs and social venues. There will be additional connecting footpaths within the village to create a more integrated community. Thriving businesses will remain small-scale without causing a significant increase in environmental impact. Some small, unobtrusive developments may have taken place but these will ensure that the valued open space and views of the surrounding hills remain. Footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths will continue to provide access to the Ecclesbourne Valley and surrounding area.

Ashleyhay and Alton will continue to be areas of scattered dwellings and farmsteads. The countryside around these will still be farmed traditionally with an emphasis on Stewardship. No new development will have taken place outside the sites of traditional farmsteads and houses. The views from Alport Height and viewpoints around the parish will have remained largely unchanged consisting of a mix of pasture and some arable land, small woodlands, stone walls, hedges and old farms.

Ireton Wood will continue to be a rural hamlet providing some tenanted houses for people working locally. A small community facility may have been built to replace the WI hut, should the money become available and the need arise. Some traditional farm buildings may have been converted for small business or domestic use.

Measures will have been taken to reduce the adverse impact of fast and heavy traffic travelling along the B5023 and Hillcliff Lane and to restrict the speed of vehicles on single-track lanes and their use by HGVs.

Residents throughout the parishes will feel part of a more integrated community, involved in local decision-making and active in local projects. The Parish Council, with the support of a Community Forum, will work together to bring this about.

3.3 Objectives for the Neighbourhood Area

To realise this vision the plan has the following objectives for the Neighbourhood Area:

- **To protect and enhance the special and valued landscape, scenic beauty and traditional architecture**
- **To allow limited small-scale housing development to sustain a lively rural community**
- **To retain a variety of house types and sizes to encourage a balanced community**
- **To promote high quality and sustainable design that enhances local characteristics**
- **To encourage and support appropriate sustainable small-scale enterprises providing benefit to the local community whilst protecting the intrinsic character and distinctiveness of the area**
- **To protect and enhance the natural environment and encourage biodiversity**
- **To retain the qualities of tranquillity and dark skies associated with the area**
- **To encourage and support the use of domestic scale renewable energy**
- **To improve the safety, health and well being of the residents by introducing highway modifications**
- **To improve the safety, health and well being of residents and visitors by promoting and developing walking , cycling and horse riding routes**
- **To retain, enhance and develop community facilities**

3.4 Policies

The evidence from the discussions held at the open meetings and the responses to questions in the household questionnaire made it clear that the quality and beauty of the landscape and the special character of the area are greatly valued by the residents. The desire to protect this by the prevention of inappropriate development has been of paramount importance. The quality of this special landscape has also been acknowledged by Derbyshire County Council and Amber Valley Borough Council in their planning policies.

NB: All policies except VIA Housing Policies 1 and 2 apply to the whole of the Neighbourhood Area.

Landscape Policy

Objective: To protect and enhance the special and valued landscape, scenic beauty and traditional architecture

During the period of this Plan it is accepted that some limited development will take place in the area but any change must help maintain the area's valued landscape character and visual amenity and not detract from it. The Neighbourhood Area, unlike much of Amber Valley, is characterised by a distinctive dispersed pattern of development comprising one small village, a number of hamlets and scattered farmsteads surrounded by hedged and walled fields, small woodlands, streams and mainly pasture fields. Each planning application needs to be considered with a view to its effect on the visual amenity of the countryside, the distinctiveness of settlements and the open land between them.

Most of the Neighbourhood Area is in the Ecclesbourne Valley and its catchment area. This defines the landscape of riverside meadows and wooded farmlands with small tributary streams forming steep sided valleys on both sides of the main river. No visual detractors are found throughout this area. Modern farm buildings, with one exception, are part of traditional farmsteads. Electricity cables are carried on wooden poles and the impact of the B5023 road and railway are both softened by mature hedges and trees. Other lanes are

narrow and enclosed by tall mixed species hedges, often holly. Around the viewpoint of Alport the enclosed moorland is well defined by gritstone walls enclosing mainly pasture fields.

The scenic value of the landscape in this Area has much in keeping with the nearby Peak District National Park (PDNP). It effectively acts as a valuable buffer between the PDNP and the more populated areas of Amber Valley and the Derby suburbs. Over the last twenty years saved AVBC (2006) Housing Development Policies H5, H6 and Environment Policies, Special Landscape Area Policy EN6 and Agricultural Development Policy EN11 have successfully protected this countryside. The emerging policies SS12 and E5 continue this approach.

The open rural nature of this landscape therefore needs to be maintained and, for this reason, **any** development in the open countryside outside of the settlements should be located within or adjacent to the enclosed areas immediately surrounding traditional farmstead and house sites. The majority of recent conversions and restorations of traditional buildings have kept within the footprint of the originals and have been of appropriate scale, size and materials thus retaining their distinctive character. The converse of this would be detrimental to the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Area.

The scenic value of the area bestows a sensitivity on this landscape which limits its capacity to absorb development without it becoming detrimental to the area. The slow rate of change and sensitive development has up to now generally minimized negative visual effects on the landscape. However, at some point size, scale and massing of development could tip this delicate balance. *Consideration must therefore be given to the potential incremental changes that can occur by other past, present or reasonably foreseeable developments. The potential cumulative impact must be considered and whether it could have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area*¹⁰.

In the **household questionnaire** the clear majority of respondents thought the AVBC SLA policy had been successful in this regard and this policy stance should be retained in the emerging Local Plan. The majority of respondents and **young people** indicated that they like living here because of the lovely countryside and the open space around them. Overwhelmingly they want to protect the landscape beauty of the area now and for future generations and consider it important that new development should be in sympathy with its surroundings. **This is felt to be the essence of sustainability.**

The NPPF in paragraph 184 under the heading 'Neighbourhood Planning' states 'Neighbourhood Planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure they get the **right types of development** for their community'. In the Neighbourhood Area the value placed on the quality of the landscape by residents and visitors means that any development must respect the visual qualities of the existing landscape and not detract from it.

Two policies in the AVBC emerging Core Strategy are relevant to the Neighbourhood Area (SS12 and E5) and need to be interpreted carefully when considering planning applications in the area.

¹⁰ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: 3rd Edition, 2013. The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment

VIA Landscape Policy L1: In order to protect and conserve the countryside and Special landscape Area status applications for any development should reflect and enhance the distinctive landscape characteristics and settlement pattern of the Neighbourhood Area. Any proposal for development will therefore be required to

- a) be located within or adjacent to the enclosed areas immediately surrounding traditional farmsteads and house sites if at all possible;**
- b) reflect the distinctive character of the landscape and its scenic beauty;**
- c) respect the setting of any group of houses or single farmstead;**
- d) be of a size and scale that is proportionate to surrounding buildings;**
- e) respect the character of surrounding buildings;**
- f) be not unduly prominent in the landscape;**
- g) occupy a footprint no larger than the original, if the application is for the replacement of an existing building; and**
- h) meet the above requirements without contributing to a cumulative effect that has adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area.**

VIA Landscape Policy L1 respects NPPF Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, para. 109; supports policies EN1 and EN6 in the AVBC 2006 Local Plan; delivers AVBC Strategic Objectives 7 & 8 and complements Policies SS12, E4 and E5 in the AVBC emerging Core Strategy.

Anyone undertaking work under Prior Approval should also have regard to, or as far as is reasonably practicable, comply with these requirements.

Housing Development Policies

Objectives:

To allow limited small-scale housing development to sustain a lively rural community

To retain a variety of house types and sizes to encourage a balanced community

To promote high quality and sustainable design that enhances local characteristics

This plan acknowledges that some small increase in the housing stock would be of benefit to the village and hamlets and to the viability of services such as the shop and pub. Over the last twenty years nine new houses and three new bungalows have been built in Ildridgehay and Hillcliff Lane, a total of twelve in twenty years, all on individual plots. It is considered that this rate of development has been appropriate for this area. Change is more acceptable when it takes place slowly. No new dwellings have been built in Ashleyhay or Ireton Wood in the same period and only two in Alton, both with agricultural ties.

It is noted that Amber Valley Borough Council's Preferred Options consultation and Site Allocations and Policies Submission Document in the Core Strategy document has not included any allocations in or adjacent to Ildridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay. Windfall provision within villages is set at 50 dwellings per annum throughout all the villages in the AVBC area. Currently the infrastructure in the area (e.g. sewage facilities) makes any development greater than that indicated by past trends, as described above, likely to be unsustainable.

When asked in the **household questionnaire** whether somebody had had to move away or stay living with them due to a lack of alternative appropriate housing, 16 households answered 'yes'. In 13 households it is likely someone will have to move out in future. In 95% of these cases the reason given was that property was too expensive and in 35% too large. In the past no Housing Needs Survey has been carried out by AVBC in the

Neighbourhood Area, however this may be considered appropriate during the Plan period and could be requested by the Parish Council. The possibility of rural exception sites for providing small-scale housing for local people has not been considered as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Local property prices are above the national average and the 2011 Census shows 80% of houses have three or four bedrooms, although the majority of households comprise two people. There is neighbourhood support for limited new housing in the area, as long as it addresses diverse needs - starter homes for younger people, homes for older people, some larger properties and some smaller properties. The population of the area is weighted towards older people but a lively community needs a mixed age population. Respondents to the household questionnaire suggested that some smaller houses with two or three bedrooms suitable for young people or older people would be beneficial.

In the **household questionnaire** most respondents supported traditional design but a notable proportion (44%) also supported innovative or eco friendly designs. Responses also demonstrated a population conscious of the importance of conserving energy. The aim should be to achieve the highest possible standard of energy efficiency as described in the Code for Sustainable Homes. The design of buildings should complement or enhance in siting, scale and design the character of the surrounding area. Applications should be assessed against the standards of design set out in AVBC Residential Development Supplementary Planning Documents or other documents replacing them. This accords with Policy E2 Quality and Design of Development in the emerging Core Strategy.

Housing Policy for Idridgehay village and Hillcliff Lane

These settlements are linear in nature with houses often only occupying one side of the road, giving all a rural outlook. Some are gable end on to the lanes and often south facing. Building materials and styles are surprisingly varied, even within a single building: stone, brick and render with tiled or slated roofs with traditional house types alongside modern bungalows. All are surrounded by good-sized gardens, often with mature trees. **These characteristics need to be retained in any future development.** Housing development should also reflect the **neighbouring properties** in terms of building materials, size and scale and adjacent roof ridge lines. New development should not dwarf neighbouring older smaller properties as this spoils the visual amenity. Advice on good design can be taken from AVBC Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Listed Buildings and Buildings within Conservation Areas SPD or any other documents replacing them.

As Idridgehay is a Conservation Area it is not surprising that the great majority of respondents to the **household questionnaire** think that the historic character of the village is important and want the objectives of the Conservation Area designation to be respected. Empty properties in the Conservation Area are unsightly and encouragement for owners of such properties to improve them would be welcomed.

When asked to suggest suitable sites for new houses within the village only 19 Idridgehay residents made comment. Eight of these said there were none and one other did not know where. The remaining ten gave a variety of locations, some suggesting more than one. Despite the Steering Committee's positive attitude towards development, in order to reflect the views of the residents of Idridgehay, the housing policy needed to be modest in its ambition. We have tried to assess future housing need of Idridgehay within the scope of our resources and in relation to the size and layout of the settlement.

The linear nature of the village, the conservation area and many open fields within the village make defining a village envelope difficult. When asked to define 'the settlement

framework' during the Neighbourhood Planning process the AVBC Community Planning Team were unable to provide a definitive boundary - *"In relation to new dwellings, unfortunately Amber Valley do not define settlement framework boundaries and instead each application is taken on its own merits and a judgment has to be made as to whether or not it is located within the settlement I have been advised settlement framework boundaries are likely to be defined in the future through the local plan review process"*¹¹. Development Control Officers have recently used this as the reason for refusal in an application for a new dwelling¹².

Residential development during the Plan period will come from windfall sites and should be guided by the pattern of the last twenty years.

VIA Housing Policy H1: In Ildridgehay and Hillcliffane applications for any residential development should reflect and complement the distinctive characteristics of these settlements. Residential developments within and affecting the setting of Ildridgehay should preserve and enhance the Conservation Area. Residential development in Ildridgehay and Hillcliffane should

- a) be designed to be in keeping with its immediate setting with particular regard to neighbouring properties and roof ridge lines;**
- b) demonstrate how it complies with the principles of good design and use of natural resources;**
- c) aim to achieve the highest possible standard of energy efficiency; and**
- d) retain and enhance green space as part of the development if it is reasonably practical.**

Developments including two or three bedroom houses suitable for young families and older people and those featuring a contemporary design and/or innovative response to their context will be looked on favourably.

When application is made for conversion of farm buildings for residential development within Ildridgehay and Hillcliffane the conditions as set out in VIA Housing Policy 2 should apply.

VIA Housing Policy H1 respects NPPF Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes, para. 55, Section 7: Requiring good design, para.58; supports saved policy H4 & LS3 in the AVBC 2006 Local Plan; delivers AVBC Strategic Objectives 1, 4 & 7; and complements Policies E2, E3 & E5 in the AVBC emerging Core Strategy.

Housing Policy in the Neighbourhood Area including Ireton Wood, Alton, Ashleyhay and the surrounding countryside and excluding Ildridgehay and Hillcliffane

This is an area of small hamlets, groups of houses, farm buildings and single farmsteads scattered throughout the countryside. These buildings are overwhelmingly of traditional design and this contributes to the historic landscape character. They sit comfortably in the landscape, they are not unduly prominent and are frequently hidden from view by small orchards or groups of trees. Planning history shows that no new houses have been built in Ashleyhay or Ireton Wood in the last 20 years. In Alton two new build houses with agricultural ties have been permitted.

AVBC saved (2006) Policies H5 and H6 deter any new residential development in the open countryside. The NPPF and emerging AVBC policy SS12 address issues of building in the

¹¹ by email from AVBC Planning Officer May 8th 2014

¹²AVA/2013/1012

countryside. It is anticipated that there will be a demand for some limited expansion to the housing stock in this area. The plan, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended by Statutory Instrument 6 April 2014 Class MB, allows for some limited conversion of existing farm buildings for residential use not associated with agriculture or forestry.

Throughout this area conversions of existing farm buildings for domestic use should comply with the principles of good design as set out in English Heritage's Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings document¹³.

VIA Housing Policy H2: Outside Idridgehay and Hillcliffane where planning permission is required, applications for conversion of existing farm buildings for residential use will be supported if

- a) they reflect the character of the surrounding buildings;**
- b) they comply with the principles of good design;**
- c) any proposals for enclosed private areas are carefully sited so as not to be unduly prominent; and**
- d) necessary alterations around the buildings respect the small scale and rural nature of the setting by retaining or adding native species hedges, particularly holly, dry stone walls and gateways reflective of the local vernacular.**

If a new build house is allowed outside Idridgehay and Hillcliffane the conditions a,b and c as set out in VIA Housing Policy 1 should apply.

VIA Housing Policy H2 respects NPPF Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes, para.55 and Section 7; Requiring good design, para.58; supports saved policy EN1 & LS3 in the AVBC 2006 Local Plan; delivers AVBC Strategic Objectives 1, 4 & 7 and complements Policies SS12, E2, E3 and E5 in the AVBC emerging Core Strategy.

Alterations and Extensions Policy

Over the last twenty years the majority of planning permissions granted in the area have been for extensions and alterations to existing domestic properties. This has led to an increase in the size of existing dwellings, both bungalows and houses, leaving fewer smaller houses for young families, single or older people. **In order to keep a variety of house types, extensions and alterations that require planning permission should be clearly subordinate to the original building and only modestly extend a property.**

VIA Housing Policy H3: Where planning permission is required, applications for extensions and alterations to existing dwellings will be supported if

- a) the extension is in scale and proportion to the existing building;**
- b) it only results in an increase clearly subordinate to the existing building;**
- c) the design complements or enhances the character of the original building; and**
- d) it has no significant adverse impact on the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties.**

VIA Housing Policy H3 supports policies EN6 and LS3 in the AVBC 2006 Local Plan; delivers AVBC Strategic Objectives 4 & 7 and complements Policies E2 & E5 in the AVBC emerging Core Strategy.

¹³ www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conversion-of-traditional-farm-buildings

Business Development Policy

Objective:

To support appropriate sustainable small-scale enterprises providing benefit to the local community whilst protecting the intrinsic character and distinctiveness of the area.

A number of thriving and diverse businesses in the area already help to maintain a lively and balanced community. Over the last forty years farmland has been amalgamated into fewer larger farming units leaving old buildings empty. These farms remain small in national terms as the agricultural land is not suitable for large scale agriculture. Employment levels on farms in the area have reduced in the last 50 years. However the number of non-farming small businesses already existing in the area shows that there is a demand for small-scale business opportunities. The infrastructure in the area makes any large-scale development unsustainable.

In order to ensure the community gets the **right type of development** questions were asked in the **household questionnaire** to ascertain what respondents thought would be acceptable and what would be unacceptable. Just over half of respondents thought that new businesses should be encouraged in the area. Most people felt additional small-scale businesses that are in keeping with the rural nature of the area would be acceptable in the future. Thirty-nine people commented that small-scale business with a low impact on the environment, housed unobtrusively, especially within existing buildings, would be appropriate. Two-thirds of respondents thought old farm buildings should be converted to small business premises and a similar number described the type of business that they would find **acceptable**, principally small-scale, in keeping with the rural nature of area with a low environmental impact. Three-quarters of respondents described the type of business that they would find **unacceptable**, principally large-scale businesses with a high environmental impact on the locality and landscape and those causing an increase in traffic. **Wherever development is permitted particular care will be needed to ensure that it does not have an adverse impact on neighbours and the surrounding area, fits sympathetically into the landscape and its environmental impact is minimised.** New buildings of quality design and appropriate scale and materials in the right location could be acceptable.

Distinctive to the Neighbourhood Area are the small-scale field patterns and woodlands complemented by traditionally built development that sits well in the landscape. In order to facilitate new development but retain the special character it would indicate that development is best located in association with existing buildings. Sites with no existing infrastructure, services or access have the potential to create problems such as removal of landscape features and adverse visual effects. All of which suggests future development of a similar nature would further detract from the valued visual amenities of the area.

Agricultural permitted development rights allow new agricultural buildings of up to 465 sq metres to be built on agricultural land if they are 'reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture'. For this, Prior Notification needs to be given allowing the opportunity for the Planning Authority to ask for Prior Approval in cases of contention. **Prior Approval requires consideration of siting, design and appearance and these factors need to be very carefully examined.** In the Neighbourhood Area only one recent building approved under this legislation is not alongside an already existing traditionally constructed farm building. It stands in an exposed open field site detracting from the visual quality of the landscape.

VIA Business Policy B1: Business development, whether new or expanding, will be considered favourably provided that it

- a) re-uses redundant or existing buildings as far as is reasonably practicable;**
- b) is located within or adjacent to existing buildings if at all possible;**
- c) is appropriate in scale to the Neighbourhood Area;**
- d) is of a quality of design and materials appropriate to the location;**
- e) protects residential amenity;**
- f) demonstrates benefit to the local community in terms of jobs or services;**
- g) will not significantly adversely affect the visual amenity or character of the area;**
- h) will not have unacceptable environmental impact in terms of traffic generated, light and noise, pollution and loss of natural green space; and**
- i) aims to achieve the highest possible standard of energy efficiency.**

VIA Business Policy B1 respects NPPF Section 3: Supporting a prosperous rural economy, para.28; and supports saved Policy LS1 in AVBC 2006 Local Plan; delivers AVBC Strategic Objectives 2,7 and 12 and complements the Policies R1, SS12 & SS13 in the AVBC emerging Core Strategy.

Environment Policies

Objectives:

To protect and enhance the natural environment and encourage biodiversity

To retain the qualities of peace and quiet and dark skies associated with the Neighbourhood Area

The aim is to ensure that the Area remains attractive, environmentally healthy and sustainable. The area has a high biodiversity value with the river and riverside meadows, wooded hillsides, hedged and walled fields, pasture and arable land all contributing to the mix. Small disused quarries, old orchards and ancient woodland add further layers. The 'Love your River' project on the Ecclesbourne River and a number of farms in Environmental Stewardship show how much this biodiversity is valued by the residents. It is not just the beauty of the landscape that people value but also other qualities associated with that, such as peace and quiet, wildlife, dark skies.

In the **household questionnaire** three-quarters of respondents wanted to protect the tranquillity of the area and its wildlife and two-thirds wanted to protect the dark skies. Similar numbers of respondents wanted to protect woodland, trees and hedges, dry stone walls, rivers, streams and ponds. **Young people** when asked said they liked the peace and quiet and the nature of the countryside.

The Environment Agency has selected the Ecclesbourne River as a pilot project to look at the catchment area of the river to improve its water quality and involve the whole community in a monitoring and improvement programme. DCC has designated the area in Levels 2 and 3 of Areas of Multiple Environmental Sensitivity with all of it within an area of Ecological Sensitivity, Level 3 being the most environmentally sensitive areas in the county¹⁴. Visitors to the area make favourable comments on the local environment.

¹⁴ The Landscape Character of Derbyshire Technical Support Document 1 AMES (Areas of Multiple Sensitivity) DCC 2014

VIA Environment Policy E1: Proposals for development shall respect the topography, protect and enhance the biodiversity value of landscape features including woodland, trees and hedges, dry stone walls, rivers, streams and ponds and natural resources taking particular account of the Ecclesbourne River Valley and its catchment area.

VIA Environment Policy E1 respects NPPF Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, paras. 109 – 114 and 117-122; supports saved Policies EN6, EN8, EN11, EN12, EN13 & EN14 in AVBC 2006 Local Plan; delivers AVBC Strategic Objectives 7 & 8 and complements Policies E4, E5 and E6 in AVBC emerging Core Strategy.

VIA Environment Policy E2: Proposals for development shall incorporate design features that minimise noise to protect the tranquillity of the area and minimise light pollution to retain the dark skies.

VIA Environment Policy E2 respects NPPF Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, paras. 123 & 125; delivers AVBC Strategic Objectives 7 & 8 and complements Policy E6 in AVBC emerging Core Strategy.

Renewable Energy Policies

Objective: To increase the use of domestic scale renewable energy.

The residents of the Neighbourhood Area show considerable enthusiasm for environmental concerns and already adopt many alternative energy schemes.

In the **household questionnaire** two-thirds of respondents supported the use of domestic solar power and one-third domestic wind power, nearly half were against larger scale wind power.

Most respondents have double-glazing and loft insulation, others are restricted by listed building controls. Wood is used for heating by two-thirds of respondents and 10% have solar panels for water heating. Small numbers have dry lining or under floor insulation. There is no mains gas supply in the area and there are already two domestic wind turbines in the Neighbourhood Area.

The residents' enthusiasm for environmental concerns is supported by all the relevant national and local policies. NPPF Section 10 requires policies that maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily. AVBC 2006 policies EN35 and EN36 include positive predisposition towards renewable energy projects provided certain conditions are met. These policies also support and actively encourage proposals that are designed to minimise the use of land, fuel and materials and make the best use of renewable energy resources such as solar or wind power. The Amber Valley Core Strategy reiterates the legally binding European targets for renewable energy and also includes positive predisposition towards consenting renewable energy developments provided that all environmental impacts are taken into account or addressed satisfactorily.

Appropriate renewable energy sources include non-fossil fuel heating systems such as biomass or wood burning appliances and heat pumps, solar powered water heating and electricity generation from solar photovoltaic panels or tiles, wind turbines, small-scale hydropower systems and any other emerging carbon free technology.

VIA Renewable Energy Policy RE1: Applications will be supported for domestic small-scale renewable energy schemes where it is demonstrated that there is no unacceptable adverse environmental impact.

VIA Renewable Energy Policy RE2: All new development should incorporate appropriate alternative energy sources wherever reasonably practicable.

VIA Renewable Energy Policies RE1 & RE2 respect NPPF Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change, paras. 93-104; support saved Policies EN35 & EN36 AVBC Local Plan 2006; deliver AVBC Strategic Objective 1 and complement Policies R1 & R2 in the AVBC emerging Core Strategy.

Community Development Policy

Objective: To retain, enhance and develop community facilities

Community facilities within the parishes are underused. From the **household questionnaire** it was found only a quarter of respondents currently use the Alton Room in Idridgehay Church and only 3% of respondents use the playing field. Three-quarters of respondents wanted the Black Swan to be re-opened as a pub. As has been noted earlier (Section 2.5 Community Amenities) these issues have been followed up during the Neighbourhood Planning process.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has found the lack of a village car park limits their ability to develop community use of the Alton Room. An embryonic Community Forum has been established to resolve the issue of car parking for the church and community room comprising members of the PCC, PC and VIA. They have met with members of the Highways department to discuss the challenges arising from this. Provision of a car park may lead to the requirement for road safety measures.

At its meetings the Parish Council has discussed the lack of present use and possible future siting of the playing field. They have initiated a dialogue with Fields In Trust to see what might be possible in the future.

The VIA Steering Committee have discussed and researched the possibility of listing the pub and its car park as an Asset of Community Value and asked the Parish Council to follow this up. This they have been happy to do as there is no other pub within a mile and a formal application was submitted by the PC to AVBC for these registrations. The nomination was accepted by AVBC on January 28th 2014. Following a review hearing on May 21st requested by the landowners, AVBC confirmed that the pub and its car park would remain on its list of Assets of Community Value. It was revealed at the hearing that the owners do not think it is financially viable for the pub to re-open as a commercial venture and have lodged an appeal.

VIA Community Policy C1: Support will be given to development proposals that would

- a) enable the reopening and retention of the Black Swan building as a community asset open to public use;**
- b) enhance and retain usage of the Alton Room at Idridgehay Church for community activities;**
- c) enable or directly provide improved car parking for the church and community room; and**
- d) enable the bringing into use a suitable site for a playing field for the community.**

VIA Community Policy C1 policy respects NPPF Section 8: Promoting healthy communities, paras. 69-70 and 73-4; supports saved Policies LC11, LC12 & LC13 in the AVBC 2006

Local Plan; delivers AVBC Strategic Objectives 6, 9 & 12, and complements Policies IN2 & IN3 in the emerging Core Strategy.

4. Community Priorities

4.1 Transport Issues

Objectives:

To improve the safety, health and well-being of residents in the Neighbourhood Area by introducing highway modifications

To improve the safety, health and well-being of residents and visitors by promoting and developing walking, cycling and horse riding routes

The Neighbourhood Planning process has raised a number of issues that are of concern to the residents and affect their safety, health and well-being. The VIA Steering Committee accepts these are not strictly planning issues but since DCC Highways is often consulted following a planning application it is important these concerns are noted in the Neighbourhood Plan. This reflects the emphasis put on them by the respondents to the household questionnaire.

A rural area with limited public transport puts a heavy emphasis on car use and in turn causes problems for other road users, predominately pedestrians. The presence of the B5023 through Ildridgehay and the through use by traffic of Hillcliff Lane impacts adversely on the lives of the residents of those areas. The regular bus service only operates along the B5023 and the railway line does not provide a commercial service. Increasing traffic on narrow lanes makes their multi-use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders more dangerous.

In the **household questionnaire** a majority of respondents considered the speed of traffic in the area to be either a major problem or a minor problem and many people made suggestions for improving road safety. 74 respondents wrote comments about traffic speed and road safety and three-quarters of respondents thought speed indicator devices would be a good idea, a third wanted pavements along the main road in Ildridgehay and most of these wanted some traffic calming measures. Over half the respondents wanted improvements to footpaths, cycle and bridleways and a similar number wanted signs indicating multiple use of country lanes. In Hillcliff Lane residents reported the death of pets on the road there.

In a speed survey, carried out as part of a recent planning appeal, it was shown traffic travelling on the B5023 often contravenes the speed limit by a significant amount. The Parish Council minutes reveal a number of occasions when they have been asked to liaise with the community police officer over speeding issues. Random speed checks on traffic through Ildridgehay are now carried out on a regular basis by the local constabulary and reported to the PC.

Many of these issues reflect the challenges dealt with in DCC Local Transport Plan 2011-2016. This states: *'reducing the need to travel and travelling more healthily are twin themes which run through the plan. Healthier lifestyles, safer communities, a safeguarded and enhanced natural environment and better access to jobs and services will be the result'*. Although lacking a specific rural transport policy the plan does state that rural transport should support local business and access to services and employment for residents and visitors.

To lessen the impact of traffic and car usage in the Neighbourhood Area and to deliver AVBC Strategic Objectives 11 & 12 and complement Policy IN1 in the emerging Core Strategy the following are suggested:

- a) traffic management measures to minimise the impact of traffic in Ildridgehay and Hillcliff Lane**
- b) provision of walking routes through the villages and hamlets**
- c) provision of multi-use signs on country lanes that do not detract from landscape quality**
- d) protection and enhancement of public footpaths and provision, retention or improvement of them when development takes place**
- e) more frequent rail services from Ildridgehay station**
- f) more frequent local buses.**

Any highway improvements should not look out of place in a rural setting.

4.2 Community Forum

The process of making the Neighbourhood Plan has greatly increased the community spirit in the Neighbourhood Area and revealed a number of practical issues that need addressing in order to improve village life that are beyond the scope of this Neighbourhood Plan. For this to continue in the future it is proposed to ask the PC to establish a Community Forum to build on this enthusiasm. The Community Forum would be an informal group and could include Parish Councillors, members of the Parochial Church Council and residents of the parishes.

The Community Forum could assist the PC in practical ways and act as a discussion group for community issues, including the development of facilities and looking for an alternative site for the playing field. The possibility of the Community Forum offering a support role to the Parish Council in reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan has also been considered by the VIA Steering Committee.

This would deliver Strategic Objective 6 in the Core Strategy.

Glossary

Assets of Community Value - are land and/or buildings considered important for social well-being of the community

Balanced community - a mix of different needs, households, different ages, backgrounds and family structures

Character Statement - sets out the historic development of an area, defines elements of its character or appearance that make it special today and provides a context for planning policies

Conservation Area - planning designation that protects all aspects of character or appearance, including landscape and public spaces, which contribute to an area's special interest

Dark skies - where the darkness of the night sky is relatively free from interference from artificial light

Environmental Stewardship - a scheme for farmers & land managers to promote effective environmental land management

Historic Environment Records - provide comprehensive source information and evidence which is essential for managing, caring for and understanding the historic environment in an area; maintained by local planning authorities for use in planning, development control and for public benefit and education

Housing Needs Survey - a survey undertaken by the local authority to assess the need for affordable housing

Multi-use signs – the signing of some minor rural roads (Quiet Lanes) for shared use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders & motor vehicles

Permitted development - allows certain types of development changes without needing to apply for planning permission

Prior Approval - this procedure follows a permitted development application when siting, design and appearance must be further considered

Prior Notification - is used for a development that complies with all the permitted development criteria, is not subject to any further consideration and is dealt with under delegated powers

Rural exception sites - are those where the Local Planning Authority suspends a planning policy in order to meet the needs for affordable housing on small sites within rural areas

Scenic beauty - where views of the landscape are considered to be impressive or beautiful

Sustainability/Sustainable development - meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

Visual amenity - the collective impact of the visual components which make a site or area attractive to be in

Abbreviations

AVBC - Amber Valley Borough Council
DCC - Derbyshire County Council
DCLG - Department of Communities and Local Government
HER - Historical Environment Record
HGVs - Heavy Goods Vehicles
IAA - Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay
NA - Neighbourhood Area
NDP - Neighbourhood Development Plan
NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework
PC - Parish Council
PCC - Parochial Church Council
PDNP - Peak District National Park
SPD - Supplementary Planning Document
SLA - Special Landscape Area
VIA - Vision for Idridgehay & Alton and Ashleyhay

Supporting Documents: available at www.iaa-pc.org.uk

AVBC Designated Neighbourhood Area Decision Notice

AVBC SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report

Census 2011: Ashleyhay

Census 2011: Idridgehay & Alton

Consultees' Letters

Local Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and SSSI

Neighbourhood Area Map

Newspaper Articles

Parish Council Application for Designated Neighbourhood Area & supporting documents

Parish Newsletters

Publicity Posters & Fliers

Questionnaire and Survey Analysis

SLA Landscape Value and Quality

Steering Committee Minutes

Sustainability Grid

VIA Timetable