

# Green Infrastructure

## What is this about?

The Green Infrastructure of Mortimer consists of all those green spaces within and around the village, such as the Fairground and Brewery common, as well as the links to and between these spaces.

The NDP can help make sure that new developments provide new green infrastructure and that existing spaces are protected.

**Background:** The green spaces in and around the village are one of the defining characteristics of the area and are much appreciated by residents and visitors alike.

In order to maintain this 'green feel' for the village it is necessary to protect the existing green infrastructure and to ensure that any new development respects this aspect of the village and builds in meaningful green spaces.

## What will it mean to me?

If the NDP is successful you will see more green spaces being created. And existing spaces being protected

There will also be more green corridors and you will be able to gain easier pedestrian access to the countryside.

Of course the green spaces are of limited value if they cannot be accessed and so it is considered important that pedestrian access to these spaces is maintained and enhanced. A very important side effect of this sort of approach is that areas that support a diverse range of flora and fauna will become linked by what in effect may be considered as wildlife corridors. This will assist in maintaining the biodiversity of the area.

Of course all such activities come at a price either in terms of cash, resources or space and this plan must try and strike the right balance between these competing aspects.

## Specific Considerations

Mortimer has a substantial network of rights of way and bridle paths. New developments provide an opportunity to extend this network.

Natural and semi-natural open spaces are highly valued by local residents, not just for their recreational value, but also for their landscape character, quiet enjoyment and biodiversity.

Recreation fields, etc. are valued open spaces that the community wishes to be protected. In addition to maintain its rural 'green feel' the community would like to see additional open space, woodland and public paths to be a part of any significant new developments.

Good-quality open space affects the quality of life and personal wellbeing of the community and makes an important contribution to biodiversity. New developments incorporating ample open spaces can create opportunities to improve the quality of existing green spaces.

The area of open countryside outside the Mortimer village settlement boundary makes an important contribution to the landscape setting and rural character of the village. As such extension of the settlement boundary needs to be kept to a minimum. New developments that are at the edge of the existing settlement boundary need to be sensitive to and in harmony with the immediate countryside and its historical nature.

West Berkshire in the approved core strategy establishes the importance of a green infrastructure in its policy CS 18. The Mortimer NDP positively seeks to build on that policy with policies that are additive, distinctive and specific to Mortimer.

### The options

Extend cycleways and footpaths throughout the village, link footpaths to the existing network of rural footpaths.

Provide similar facilities and green spaces in any new development with more than 10 houses.

### Example NDP policies:

*Examples of the sort of policies that might be formulated are:-*

*❖ Each site approved for development will have a site plan developed by the NDP laying out the minimum site designs including open spaces, woodlands and green access routes that a developer shall incorporate. Proposed developments that do not abide by the plans shall be rejected.*

*❖ To promote healthier lifestyles and improved walking and cycling access to green spaces and the countryside will be a requirement of developments of more than 0.4 hectares (typically more than 10 houses). Such facilities will be an inherent part of every site plan. Such spaces shall be accessible by the public and shall link to the natural environment and the existing network of public footpaths, and adhere to the site-specific policies*

### Pros and cons

The provision of green links will help walkers and cyclists gain access to open space.

These routes and spaces will help wildlife flourish.

There is a cost to this provision and it will have to be borne by developers which will increase the cost of new houses.

More people will walk on non-surfaced paths which could lead to trips and falls.

*❖ Opportunities to extend the rural pathway network in order to provide direct access to the countryside, significant village locations and wildlife habitats shall be provided in accordance with site plans. Specifically developers will be encouraged to contribute to the possible development of the public footpaths (e.g. along Foudry Brook from The Street southwards)*

Fig. 1 - Green route through housing



### Please use the post card:

Please help us find the best green routes by drawing where you think new or improved routes should go on the map of Mortimer on the postcard.

### Discussion Sessions

**Tue 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 7 – 9pm**

**Sat 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 10 – 12am**