Cliddesden Neighbourhood Plan

Trees, woodlands, hedgerows and wildlife corridors background paper

August 2023

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The rural setting of Cliddesden Parish is its greatest asset.

A typical characteristic of the village is the rich and prolific tree population which also lines the ancient field boundaries of the more open arable landscape surrounding the settlement. The effect of these is to soften the hard roof lines of buildings with trees adding significantly to the visual appeal.

The approach roads to the village are largely bounded by trees and mature hedges which all add to the rural feel of the area. To maintain the leafy nature of the village it is desirable for all tree works to be carefully considered and all Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) need to be enforced.

Trees and hedgerows help to define entry points to the village and create a sense of place for a rural community, examples include the Field Maple near the church (IT05) and the atmospheric entry to the village under a canopy of trees in Woods Lane (IT08). Important trees, hedgerows and woodland provide a natural habitat, support biodiversity and make an important contribution to the character and quality of the countryside and landscape. It is important that these natural features are protected and, as long as it does not affect their intrinsic character, made accessible to the local community so that their value can be appreciated. The treed landscape engenders a sense of pride in our place.

A Neighbourhood Plan policy will aim to protect, to enhance and to maintain the ecological balance of the natural environment in Cliddesden and supports the aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Basingstoke and Deane Landscape Biodiversity and Trees SPD 2018 p64:

> SPD Section 6: Trees, woodlands and Hedgerows: eg: Principle T1: Site Survey Reqirements, T2: Retention of trees, T3: Integrating trees into new development.

The importance of Cliddesden's trees and hedgerows to the community is demonstrated by the endeavours of the Cliddesden Community Conservation Group which is actively supported by 46 households, over 20% of the population. Since 2004 members and volunteers have planted 17,000 trees as hedgerows and copses within the parish to enrich the natural environment. This was mainly funded by grants from Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council to the tune of around £30,000. Due to consistent maintenance and after-care we have a 95% success rate which is far greater than the average tree-planting rate of tree survival. The subsequent increase in biodiversity proves how valuable this is. Surveys carried over the past 10 years have recorded

Details can be found on 3CG's website: www.cliddesdenconservation.org

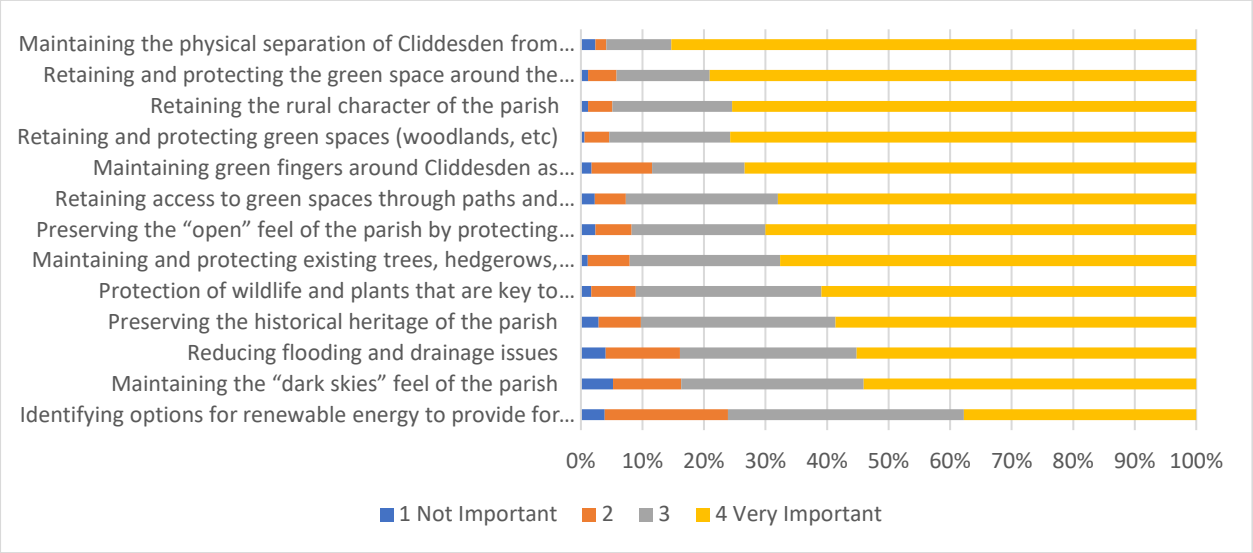
Tree planting in 2009

The Cliddesden Neighbourhood Plan team spent much time reviewing other NPs, reviewing documents such as the Woodland trust, contacted Locality for guidance etc, etc. Whilst other NPs include policies for protecting hedgerows, trees etc. it was very difficult to identify the evidence and criteria that have been provided to examiners. It has been difficult to find any specific recommendation regarding what is appropriate evidence to provide in order to identify hedgerows, trees, woodland and wildlife corridors to be protected within the neighbourhood plan.

In July 2020, the CNP team created a brief document to set out reasonable criteria and evidence to be collected to support a policy or policies for protecting hedgerows, trees, woodlands and wildlife corridors. The document was discussed with B&DBC before proceeding to gather evidence. The criteria are provided in the relevant sections below.

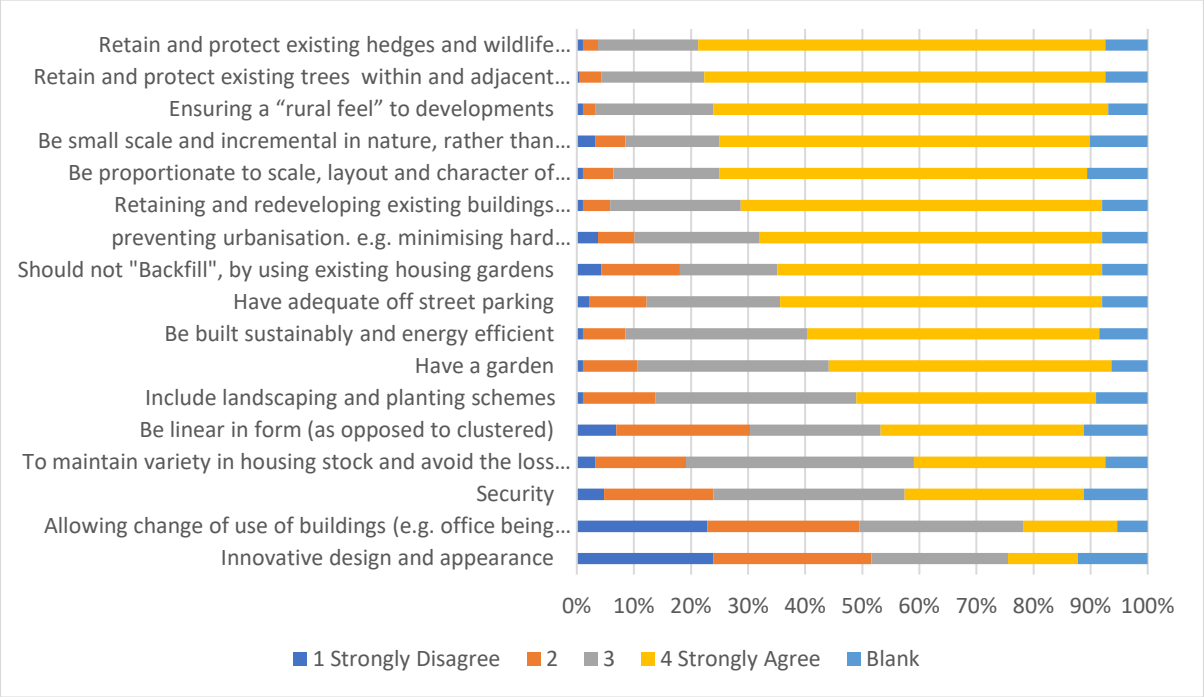
2. EVIDENCE FROM COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

The 2019 Community Questionnaire



Question 2: How important do you feel the following environmental issues are for Cliddesden?

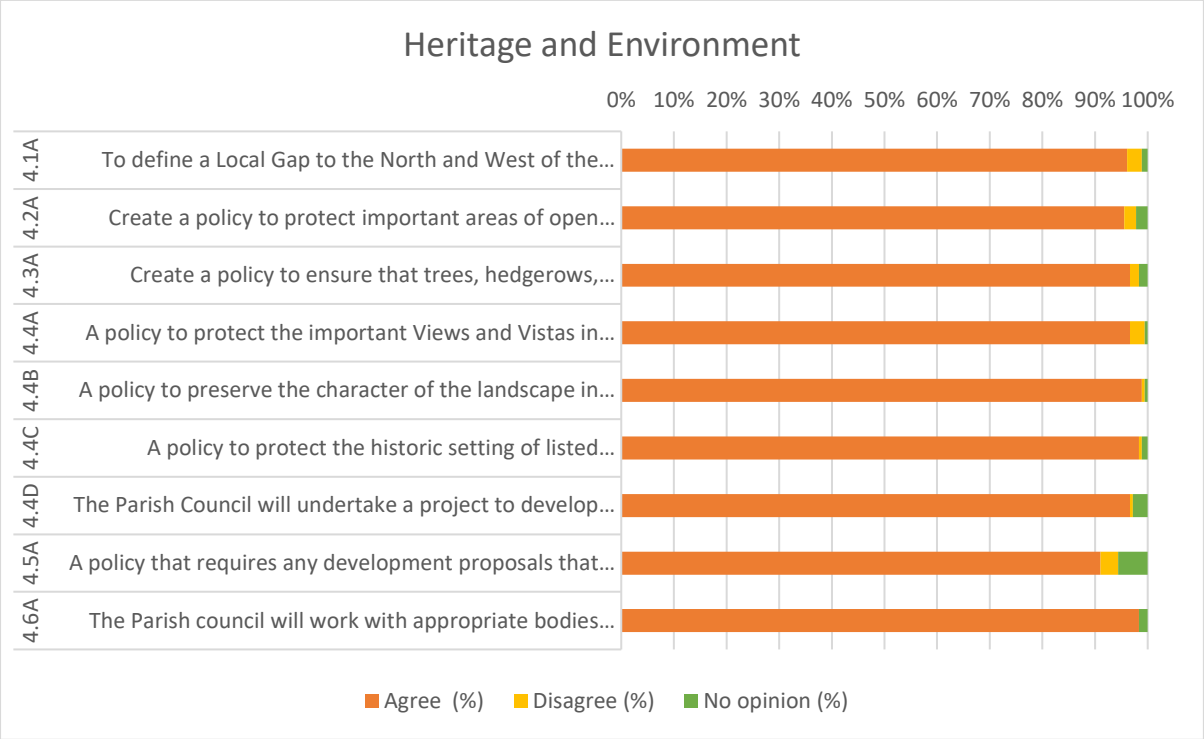
In response to question 2 it can be seen that the community felt it was very important to protect trees hedgerows and wildlife habitats and corridors.



Question 5: What principles should influence the design of any new residential developments?

In response to question 5, retaining and protecting trees, hedges, wildlife corridors proved to be the most important principles.

The 2020 Issues and Options consultation.



Question 4: Heritage and Environment

In the 2020 Issues and Options consultation question 4.3A, 93% agreed with the option to create a policy to ensure that trees, hedgerows, woodlands and wildlife corridors in the plan area are protected and enhanced.

3. TREES AND WOODLANDS

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 paragraphs 174 ,175 and 179 (a and b) places great importance on the natural environment, habitats and biodiversity, and the planning system's environmental role in delivering and securing sustainable development. This includes protecting the natural environment, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently and mitigating the effects of adapting to climate change.

The Village Design Statement 2004 highlights how sympathetic development should be undertaken, this included:

"preserve and enhance the extensive and important tree cover (see aerial photo above) within the village including mainly indigenous species of semi-mature trees and shrubs (see Appendix1). The existing cloak of natural vegetation should be extended to integrate any new buildings. Sufficient space should be allocated for the future growth of these plantings and their care."

The Conservation Area Appraisal October 2003 highlights the importance of trees and hedges:

"Individual and groups of mature trees are an essential component of the character of the Conservation Area and this is evident in both intimate views along the roads, and from longer vistas over the settlement"

"Hedges border many gardens, and uncultivated areas throughout the Conservation Area generally have hedge-lined boundaries, especially at the roadside. They strongly influence the character of Church Lane and Woods Lane in particular". The tree cover is broadleaved in character with lime, horse chestnut and sycamore the predominant species. A few conifers are present, including a few yew trees. Two large yew trees in the front garden of Thatches and on the boundary of Yew Tree Cottage are predominant in both directional views along the main road.

Important tree groups can be found in the grounds of Cliddesden Down House, Church Farmhouse, at the eastern end of Woods Lane, around Woods Corner, Laithe House and The Well House. In summer they create a dense canopy, which overhangs the road and tunnels axial views through the village. The leafy enclosure of significant sections of Farleigh Road is a notable characteristic of the Conservation Area. The trees also reinforce the historic significance of the key buildings and their extensive grounds.

The iconic line of Small-leaved Lime trees along the Southlea front gardens is sited within the Conservation Area.

The benefits of Green Infrastructure to people and wildlife have been valued by Natural England in their Green Infrastructure Valuation Tools Assessment 2013.

The NPPF defines Green Infrastructure as:

"A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity."

Natural England defines Green Infrastructure:

"Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its

design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types."

Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland.

Consequently, it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside."

Natural Environment – gov.uk states*:*

What can green infrastructure include?

Green infrastructure can embrace a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits. It can, for example, include parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees and 'blue infrastructure' such as streams, ponds, canals and other water bodies. References to green infrastructure in this guidance also apply to different types of blue infrastructure where appropriate.

Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 8-004-20190721

Revision date: 21 07 2019

Why is green infrastructure important?

Green infrastructure is a natural capital asset that provides multiple benefits, at a range of scales. For communities, these benefits can include enhanced wellbeing, outdoor recreation and access, enhanced biodiversity and landscapes, food and energy production, urban cooling, and the management of flood risk. These benefits are also known as ecosystem services. Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 8-005-20190721 Revision date: 21 07 2019

www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment#green-infrastructure

Green infrastructure can help in:

- ***Building a strong, competitive economy***
  Green infrastructure can drive economic growth and regeneration, helping to create high quality environments which are attractive to businesses and investors.
- ***Achieving well-designed places***
  The built environment can be enhanced by features such as green roofs, street trees, proximity to woodland, public gardens and recreational and open spaces. More broadly, green infrastructure exists within a wider landscape context and can reinforce and enhance local landscape character, contributing to a sense of place and natural beauty.
- ***Promoting healthy and safe communities***
  Green infrastructure can improve the wellbeing of a neighbourhood with opportunities for recreation, exercise, social interaction, experiencing and caring for nature, community food-growing and gardening, all of which can bring mental and physical health benefits. Outdoor Recreation Value (ORVal) is a useful online tool that can be used to quantify the

recreational values provided by greenspace. Green infrastructure can help to reduce health inequalities in areas of socio-economic deprivation and meet the needs of families and an ageing population. It can also help to reduce air pollution and noise.

- ***Mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change***
  Green infrastructure can contribute to carbon storage, cooling and shading, opportunities for species migration to more suitable habitats and the protection of water quality and other natural resources. It can also be an integral part of multifunctional sustainable drainage and natural flood risk management.
- ***Conserving and enhancing the natural environment***
  High-quality networks of multifunctional green infrastructure contribute a range of benefits, including ecological connectivity, facilitating biodiversity net gain and nature recovery networks and opportunities for communities to undertake conservation work.

Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 8-006-20190721

Revision date: 21 07 2019

Biodiversity, geodiversity and ecosystems

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. A key purpose of this duty is to embed consideration of biodiversity as an integral part of policy and decision making throughout the public sector, which should be seeking to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the commitments made by government in its 25 Year Environment Plan.

Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 8-009-20190721

Revision date: 21 07 2019

Development plans and planning decisions have the potential to affect biodiversity or geodiversity outside as well as inside relevant designated areas.

Planning authorities and neighbourhood planning bodies can work collaboratively with other partners, including Local Nature Partnerships, to develop and deliver a strategic approach to protecting and improving the natural environment based on local priorities and evidence. Equally, they need to consider the opportunities that individual development proposals may provide to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, and contribute to habitat connectivity in the wider area (including as part of the Nature Recovery Network).

Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 8-010-20190721

Revision date: 21 07 2019

As set out in the government's 25 Year Environment Plan, the Nature Recovery Network is an expanding and increasingly-connected network of wildlife-rich habitat across England. It comprises a core network of designated sites of importance for biodiversity and adjoining areas that function as stepping stones or wildlife corridors, areas identified for new habitat creation and up to 25 nature recovery areas for targeted action. Defra, Natural England and other government bodies are working

with national and local partnerships to deliver the Network, which includes support for developing maps and advice to show where actions to improve and restore habitats would be most effective.

Local ecological networks can make a significant contribution to developing the Nature Recovery Network. Local ecological networks can be identified and mapped as a part of the plan-making process, with policies identifying appropriate levels of protection and opportunities to create, restore or enhance habitats or improve connectivity.

Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 8-012-20190721

Revision date: 21 07 2019

Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council's Local Plan 2011-2029

Policy EM4 emphasises the importance of protecting the natural environment by ensuring new development does not adversely affect it, and where appropriate of sensitively enhancing it and improving access to it. The areas concerned include important landscapes, natural features and areas of biodiversity. The Local Plan provides an overarching statement of the factors which will be taken into consideration when the impact of development proposals on biodiversity and geodiversity is assessed. Ref 3.6 and 3.10

3.6 We will conserve and enhance the borough's environmental, biodiversity and heritage assets…

3.10 The Local Plan sets the framework for protecting, maintaining and enhancing the borough's green infrastructure network, the countryside and biodiversity to ensure residents and visitors alike continue to enjoy outdoor activities that promote health and well-being and that these assets are protected for their own sake.

POLICY EM1 *Development proposals must respect, enhance and not be detrimental to the character or visual amenity of the landscape likely to be affected, paying particular regard to:*

(a) The qualities identified within the council's landscape character assessment and any subsequent updates or relevant guidance

(b) The visual amenity and scenic quality

(c) The setting of a settlement, including important views to, across, within and out of settlements

(d) The local character of buildings and settlements, including important open areas

(e) Trees, ancient woodland, hedgerows, water features such as rivers and other landscape features and their function as ecological networks.

Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy Nov 2018 states:

"Accessible and cared-for green spaces provide opportunity for physical activity and contact with nature which has direct health benefits, reducing (in combination with other factors) the occurrence of heart and respiratory disease, stress, mental illnesses and obesity and associated economic benefits Recreation and Leisure Green spaces close to residential areas." "Green spaces and habitat networks are essential to healthy ecosystems. Habitats are essential for the species that they support and connectivity allows for foraging, dispersal and reduces vulnerability to local species extinction through genetic exchange and repopulation. Accessible green spaces allow people to experience nature, which in turn encourages environmental stewardship."

Green Infrastructure describes the network of greenspaces and natural elements that connect through cities, towns, villages and countryside. Green Infrastructure includes a wide variety of

spaces and elements including parks, playing fields woodlands streams and river corridors, allotments and churchyards. It is important to consider the features and spaces that make up our neighbourhood. From the results of the consultation open day and the questionnaire, it is clear that the local community place high value on green spaces and place great importance on protecting the environment."

The Cliddesden Design Code June 2020 document describes woodlands as follows:

"Ancient Woodland can be found at Buckshorn Copse in the south-east of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, whilst Ancient Replanted Woodland and Priority Deciduous Woodland Habitats can be found around Audley's Wood to the northeast. Woodpasture and Parkland (BAP Priority Habitat) can also be found around Audley's Wood, whilst at White Hill Dell to the south-west of the Plan Area there is a small pocket of Priority Deciduous Woodland at the disused pit, which connects with other Priority Woodlands and Ancient Woodlands beyond the Plan Area. A Traditional Orchard (Priority Habitat Inventory) can be found to the rear of properties south of Woods Lane and east of Cleresden Rise."

The Cliddesden Design Code document describes hedgerows as follows*:*

"The Neighbourhood Plan Area benefits from a pattern of historic hedgerows and woodland, which are prevalent across the area, but especially so in the south, where large areas of woodland and some plantations can be found. The disused railway line also creates a large vegetated swathe running north/south through the Plan Area. The settlement of Cliddesden benefits from a framework of mature trees and hedgerow boundaries, which contribute to its rural character."

The Design Code document goes on further:

"Mature trees and hedges contribute to the rural character of the Plan Area and these should be retained in any development. See Table 4 for a list of suitable trees that should be used in each Character Area. b. Historic hedgerows, Ancient and semi-natural woodlands contribute to the enclosed character of the Plan Area, especially in the south, and these should be retained and enhanced to ensure their long-term survival. Development that proposes to remove historic hedgerows and woodland should be resisted. c. Around the village of Cliddesden 'green fingers' play an important role in Green Infrastructure and contribute to the rural character of the village (see Section3.3.2 and Figure 4). 'Green Fingers' are primarily arable and paddock fields, which provide an important visual resource, whilst their hedgerows and boundary trees contribute significantly to the biodiversity of the Plan Area."

The Cliddesden Design Code document refers to Green Infrastructure and Open Space. DC06 addresses the need to retain trees hedges and open spaces.

Any developments will be required to demonstrate at least a 10% measurable net increase in biodiversity (before versus after development) which will need to be maintained for at least 30 years. Important hedgerows in the plan area will be identified for the policy. A similar approach has been employed in the Bramley NP.

The aim of the policy will be to preserve protected species and ancient or species-rich hedgerows, and woodlands. Preserve ecological networks, and the migration and transit of flora and fauna. Protect ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value. Promoting the mitigation, preservation, restoration and re-creation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species. Providing a net gain in flora and fauna.

One of the principles to protect and enhance biodiversity in paragraph 180 in the NPPF states:

"if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused."

Basingstoke & Deane, **The Horizon 2050 vision**

4. Environment

Nature is recognised as having its own value and worth, including land, waterways, flora and fauna. In the future, priority habitats will be protected, less fragmented and better connected. Developed areas will be integrated with green spaces and, where appropriate, a careful distinction will be made between amenity space and precious habitats. Maintaining easy access to nature and a network of quality parks and open spaces is also a priority and there will be a much greater understanding and appreciation of the importance of nature in communities with opportunities for learning, involvement and enhancing wellbeing. This includes the protection of the beautiful countryside that surrounds the urban areas.

Basingstoke & Deane Landscape, Biodiversity and Trees SPD, 2018

5.8 With respect to the NERC Act 2006, this places a legal duty on Local Authorities to have regard to biodiversity conservation (including opportunities for restoration and enhancement) in carrying out their functions. The determination of planning applications would be an example of one such function. Importantly the duty includes habitats and species found outside sites designated for their nature conservation interest but which are considered of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity (known as priority habitats and species). Examples include species-rich hedgerows and species such as hedgehogs and toads. P37

6.4 The principal Local Plan policy for determining planning applications including trees is Policy EM1 (Landscape). This seeks to ensure that development proposals respect, enhance and are not detrimental to the character or visual amenity of the landscape likely to be affected paying regard to its natural features including trees, ancient woodland and hedgerows. ***Policy EM4*** *(Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation) seeks to ensure there would be no loss or deterioration of key habitat types including veteran trees. P64*

Principle T2: *Retention of trees Important trees shall be retained and integrated into the development, with no loss of key habitat types and/or irreplaceable habitats. P67*

Irreplaceable habitats and key habitat types

6.19 Whilst all trees are a material consideration when determining planning applications, the National Planning Policy Framework places special emphasis on irreplaceable habitats.

6.20 Development resulting in the loss of ancient woodland or ancient and veteran trees shall be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, as outlined in the NPPF, and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

6.21 Other priority habitats include species-rich hedgerows, native broadleaved woodland, wood pasture and traditional orchards. Development that results in the loss of such hedgerows, trees and/or woodland shall be refused in accordance with criteria (e) of policy EM4 of the Local Plan.

6.22 …..Important trees which contribute to the setting of a heritage asset or the character and appearance of a conservation area must be retained. P68

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

6.29 Once the development has evolved into a proposal that is ready for submission to the local planning authority, it will be necessary to produce an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA). In addition to the identification of trees to be removed, the AIA will need to consider any post development impact that the development will have on retained trees. P70

6.32 Where the AIA identifies encroachment into a tree's root protection area, working method statements and design drawings will be required up front with the application, to enable the council to fully appreciate how the trees can be protected before granting consent. P71

Box B6 - Basingstoke and Deane's Landscape and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document requires development proposals to be designed and located to leave adequate above and below ground space for mature trees in the development without conflicting with surrounding infrastructure requirements. The SPD recommends a minimum distance between new development and the edge of woodland of 20m, to avoid adversely affecting the trees and bushes concerned. See below.

B&DBC , Landscape Biodiversity and Trees SPD , Box B6; Tree belts and woodlands; page 55.

Tree belts and woodlands Buffer zones should be created that provide a naturally graded edge to woodlands and allow for maintenance access. In the case of semi-natural woodlands, the buffer zone should also allow the natural processes of tree death and decay to occur without unnecessary risk to people or property. A minimum buffer of 20 metres should be provided between the edge of the woodland/tree belt and the development. Where a minimum buffer is proposed, information will be required to demonstrate that this will be adequate to prevent any adverse impact upon the woodland or tree belt feature. Where it is considered the woodland and/or tree belt form part of an important wildlife corridor, for example of particular importance to bats, or where the woodland is ancient in origin, then the council will expect buffers exceeding the 20 meters minimum as a precautionary principle and especially for major development. When designing housing schemes close to woodland, housing must face onto the areas of existing woodland. For the purposes of measuring the buffer, the edge of the woodland should normally be considered as the outer edge of the tree canopy (unless other woodland edge habitat is also in place and is a functional component of the woodland, in which case this should also be considered as part of the existing wo.odland). The edge of the canopy will be the agreed measured point at the time

National Planning Policy Framework (**NPPF 2021):**

Paragraph 179 a) *"To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should: a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*

b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity."

Paragraph 180. *"When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate."

Paragraph 182. "*The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site."*

Criteria for Important Trees and Woodlands

For the size of the parish and considering the number of trees and their important contribution to the landscape, there are surprisingly few trees protected by TPOs. The CNP team considers it unreasonable to expect a parish-wide tree survey (per BS5837) to be performed as part of the Neighbourhood plan, as it is beyond the resources of the CNP team to fund or resource such a survey. The CNP team also considered that a submission for multiple important trees for TPOs would not be welcomed by the council due to the workload that would be generated for the appropriate council department. The following approach has been adopted as a reasonable method to define and subsequently protect important trees and woodlands.

The CNP team will identify any trees (and record them on a map) considered to be "important", on grounds of landscape, cultural or ecological importance – see Fig2. Where an appropriate group of trees can be identified as an "important woodland", only trees over 3.5m in height will be considered. The map will not include trees within the Conservation Area as these are already protected. The map will include trees with TPOs outside the Conservation Area, for the sake of completeness. There are very few trees with TPOs outside the Conservation Area.

In line with guidance on TPOS, (from https://www.planningni.gov.uk/8pp_tree_preservation_order_lores.pdf)

The following will be considered when identifying trees and woodlands as important:

Visibility by the general public, impact on the local environment, size and form, its future potential as an amenity, special factors such as its screening value or contribution to the character or appearance of an area, significance of trees in their local surroundings and historical importance. Due to the workload involved, it is NOT proposed to present details on all the above as evidence. The evidence will take the form of maps showing the location of important trees and woodlands. This approach is in line with that which has been done by other NPs.

Policy considerations for important trees.

The policy will reference the Landscape Biodiversity and Trees SPD and will expect that section 6 will be followed with respect to any works that may affect Trees. The site survey should be carried out as per principle T1. The following additional requirements will be applied.

Any plans for tree removal must be presented to the parish council with 6 weeks advance notice and should be accompanied by the tree survey.

Any trees removed will need to be replaced on a 3 for 1 basis in order to adequately compensate for its loss.

Any tree identified as an important tree in the accompanying map (supporting NP evidence) shall be retained as per Principle T2.

Groups of 10 or more trees will be treated as a group and will not be permitted for removal and should be retained. Where there is a tree or trees in poor condition or with life expectancy less than 5 years then new appropriate native trees should be planted to act as successors.

Trees within an established hedgerow should not be removed.

Per 6.20 of the BDBC SPD:

> *Development resulting in the loss of ancient woodland, or ancient and veteran trees shall be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, as outlined in the NPPF, and a suitable compensation strategy exists*.

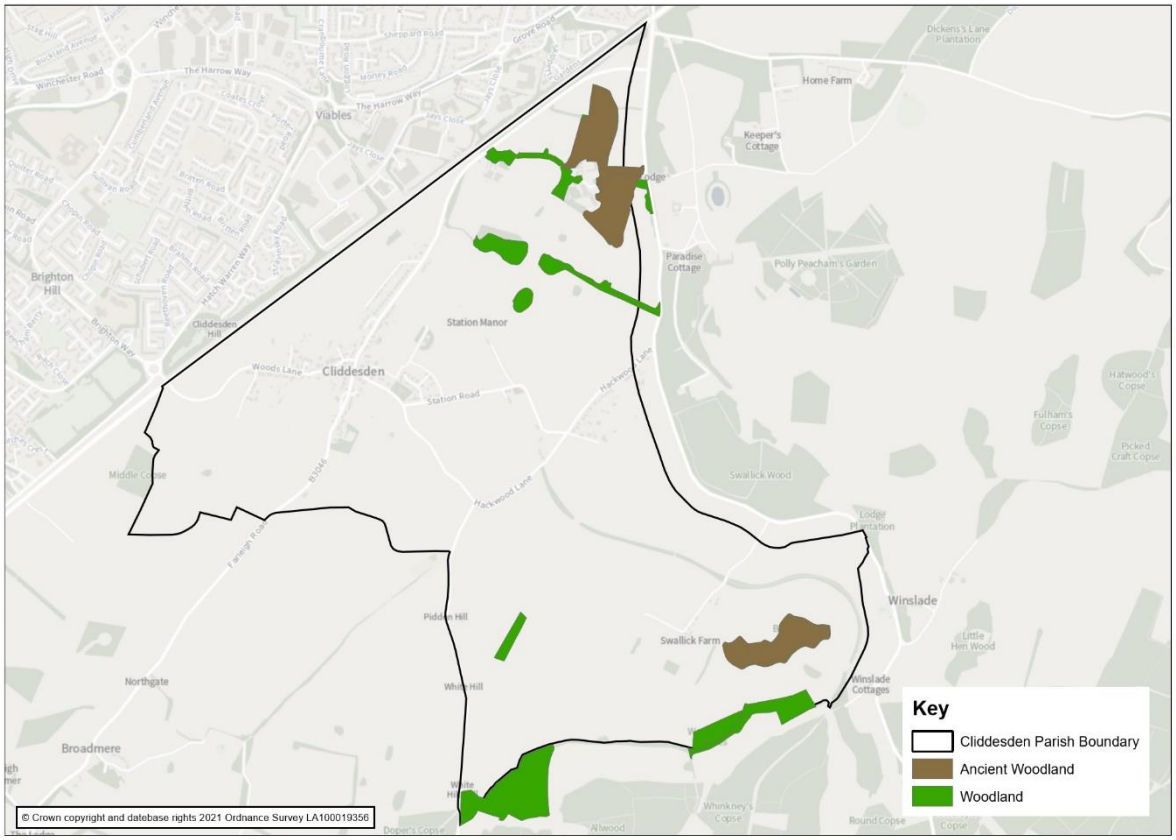


Fig 1 MAP of WOODLANDS – ancient woodland indicated in dark brown, important woodlands in light brown

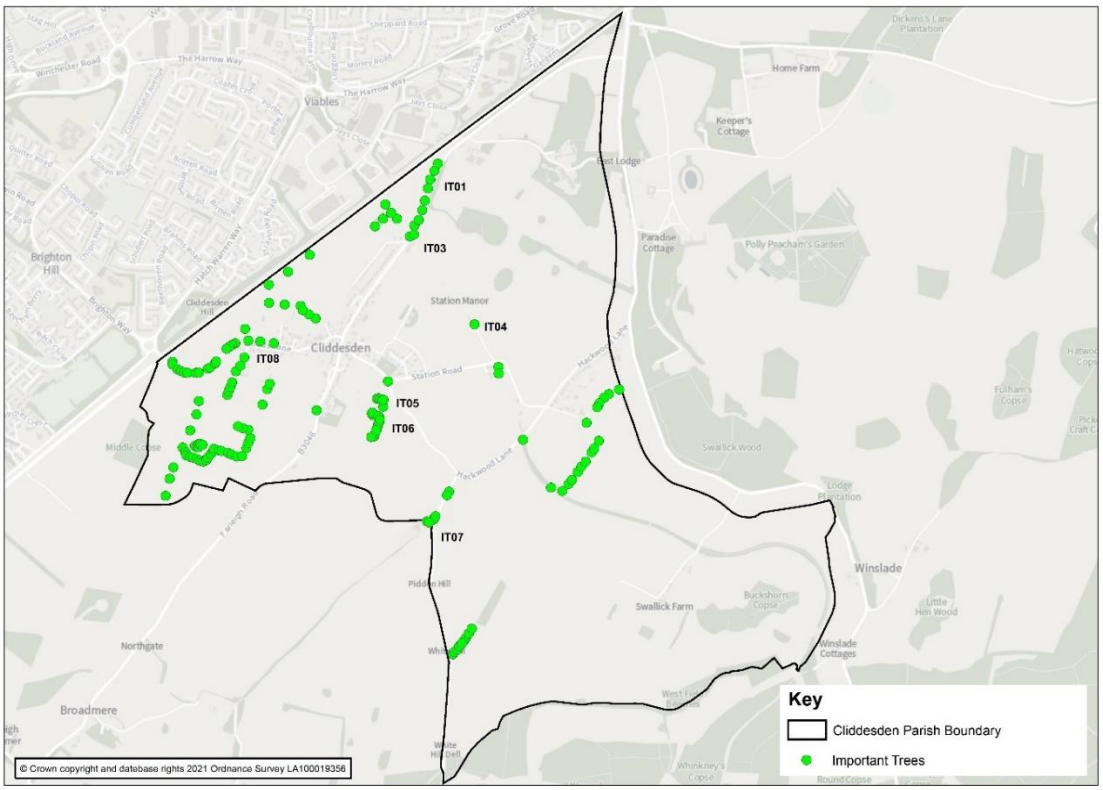


Fig 2 MAP of IMPORTANT TREES OUTSIDE THE CONSERVATION AREA indicated by green dots

Tree-lined lanes and field boundaries are an essential factor in characterising the parish and Cliddesden is blessed with many trees shown on this map adding to the rural feel of the village.

There are some iconic species of notable value outside of the Conservation Area depicted in the photographs including: IT01, IT02, IT03, IT04 on Fig 2A and IT05, IT06, IT07,IT08 on Fig 2B

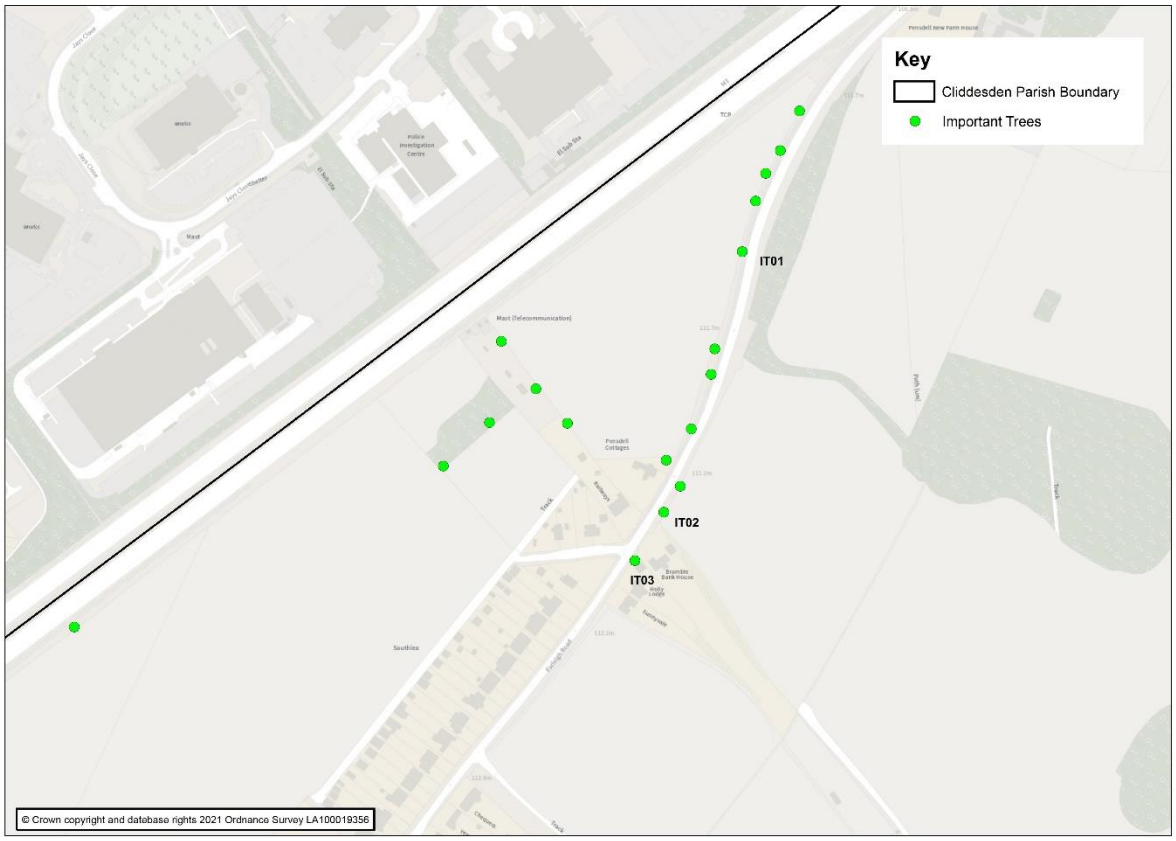


FIG 2A: iconic species of notable value

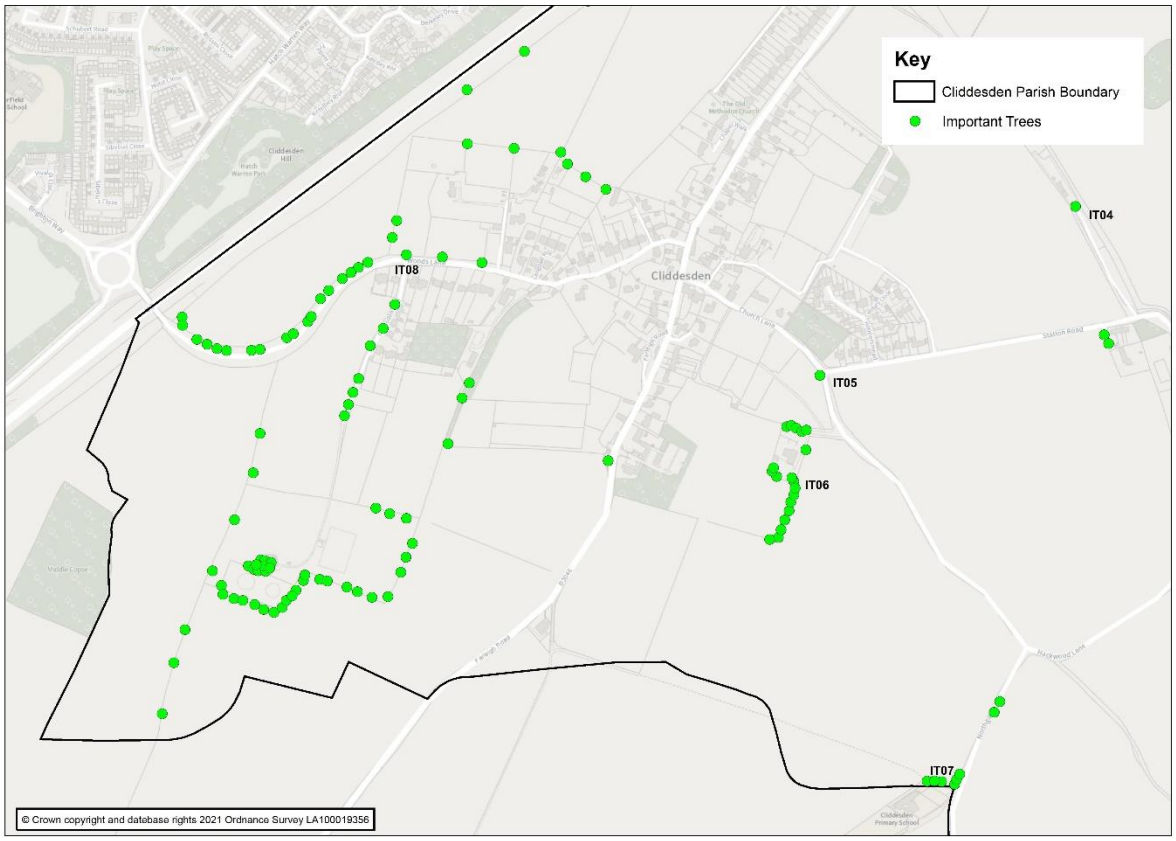


FIG 2B: iconic species of notable value

PROTECTED TREES

Within the Conservation Area strict permission is required for the pollarding, crown lifting and felling of trees with a trunk diameter exceeding 75 mm measured at a point 1.5m above ground level. It is very important that the trees are preserved to maintain the general appeal of the indigenous species, which are present in considerable numbers. They include oak, ash and beech, lime and silver birch, field maple, larch and pine.

Although all trees within the Cliddesden Conservation Area (that meet the size criteria) are protected, some specific trees and groups of trees outside the Conservation Area also have Tree Preservation Orders attached.

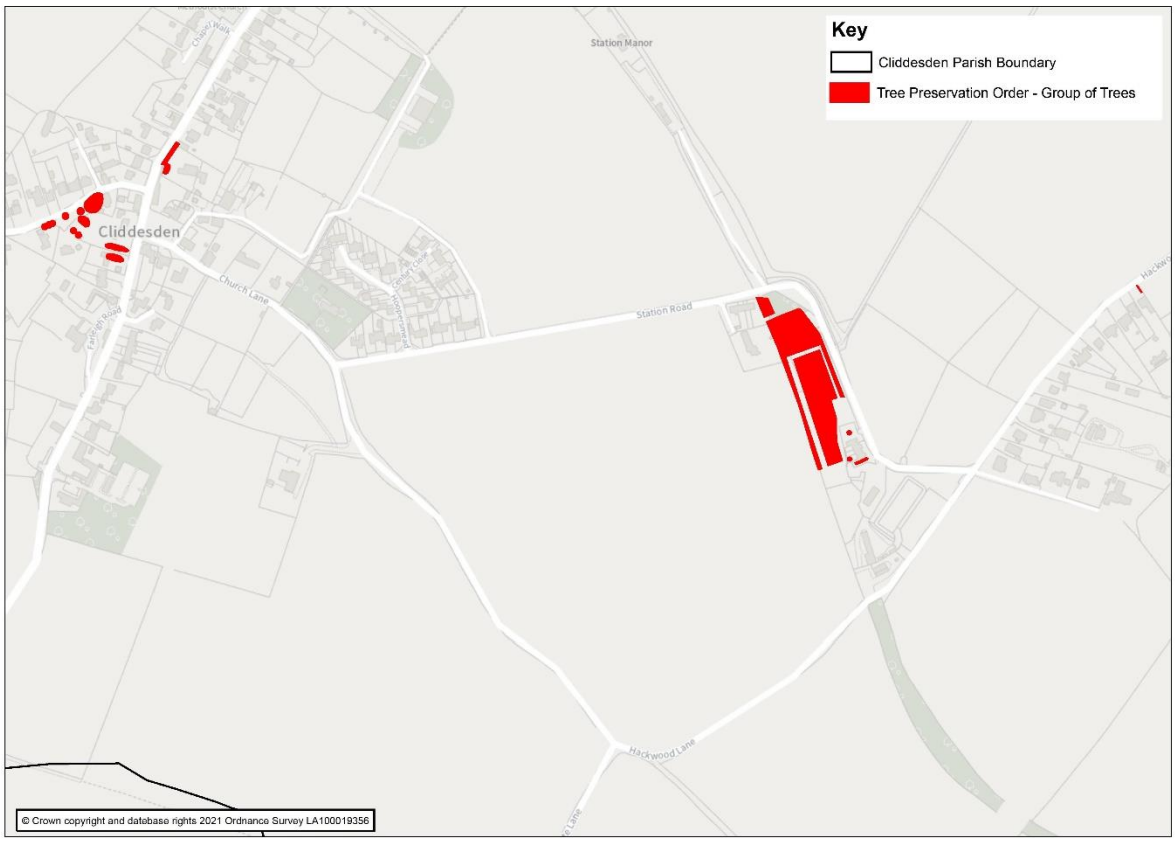
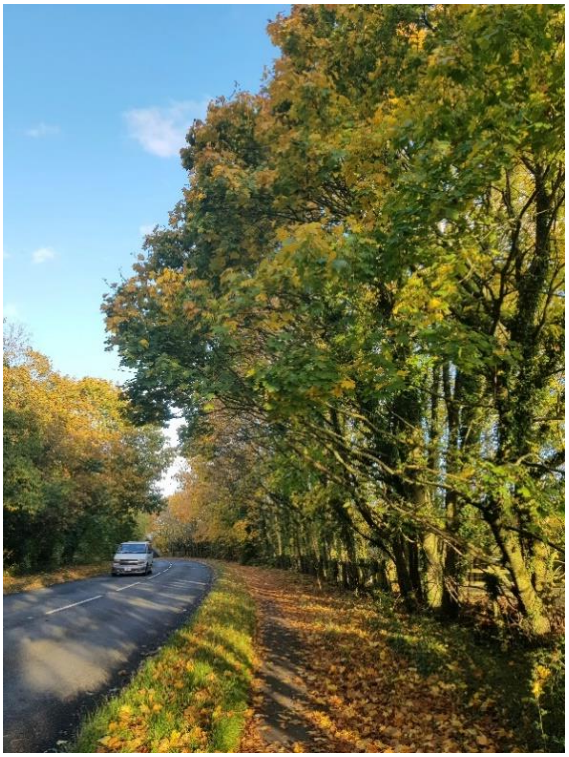


Fig 3 MAP of SPECIFIC TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS indicated by red dots

Photographs of some iconic Trees in and around Cliddesden



IT01 Norway Maple along Farleigh Road

IT02 Scots Pines along Farleigh Road

IT03 Larch along Farleigh Road

IT04 Ash along Footpath 1

IT05 Field Maple opposite Station Road

IT06 Oak & Silver Birch at Village Hall

IT07 Group of trees near Cliddesden School

IT08 Trees overhanging Woods Lane

4. HEDGEROWS

In recognition of the significant contribution to landscape and biodiversity in the parish, the policy will assume a default position that all hedgerows longer than 20m in the parish are protected. Any proposal to remove a hedgerow, will need to be accompanied by a professional survey to determine the make up by species. Policy will include the need for a hedgerow less than 20m in length to be professionally surveyed to identify species to determine if the hedgerow meets the requirements of the hedgerow protection. Ref: The Hedgerows Regulations 1997

Hedges are much in evidence throughout the Parish with native species prevailing although many gardens are bounded with cultivated varieties. In general, these garden varieties have blended in well, but care should be taken to avoid their creating too much of a suburban character.

The majority of hedgerows in the parish are species-rich (hosting five or more native tree and shrub species each).

The Village Design Statement 2004 states:

There are also old hedgerows and their species include spindle, hazel, hawthorn, field maple, elder, old man's beard, holly, ivy and blackthorn. Thinly scattered villages and hamlets such as Cliddesden, Winslade, Farleigh Wallop and Ellisfield, and occasional isolated farms such as Swallick are linked by narrow winding lanes, often sunken within high hedge banks, increasing the impression of a truly rural landscape and providing a further contrast with Basingstoke and its network of busy major roads. Page 8/9 of 26

The Conservation Area Appraisal 2003 (CAA) states:

A hedgerow is a line of closely spaced shrubs and tree species, planted and trained to form a barrier or to mark the boundary of an area, such as between neighbouring properties. Hedgerows are used to separate a road from adjoining fields or one field from another, and are of sufficient width to incorporate larger trees. A connected network of hedgerows is a common feature of the borough's landscape and can also provide an important habitat and migratory linkage for wildlife. Hedgerows form a component of a green corridor. New hedgerow planting (double row) is welcomed and should be encouraged as it also helps to define boundaries and makes efficient use of space.

Individual hedgerows have not been included on the Appraisal plan. However, their contribution to the character of the Conservation Area cannot be underestimated, and their significance is implicit in the Appraisal.

Church Lane is a gentle curving road lined by mature hedgerows and steep banks, which give it an intimate rural quality.

Hedges border many gardens, and uncultivated areas throughout the Conservation Area generally have hedge-lined boundaries, especially at the roadside. They strongly influence the character of Church Lane and Woods Lane in particular

The Cliddesden Design Code June 2020 document describes hedgerows as follows*:*

"The Neighbourhood Plan Area benefits from a pattern of historic hedgerows and woodland, which are prevalent across the area, but especially so in the south, where large areas of woodland and some plantations can be found. The disused railway line also creates a large vegetated swathe running north/south through the Plan Area. The settlement of Cliddesden benefits from a framework of mature trees and hedgerow boundaries, which contribute to its rural character."

Basingstoke & Deane Local Plan 2011-2029

POLICY EM1 e) *Trees, ancient woodland, hedgerows, water features such as rivers and other landscape features and their function as ecological networks.*

Basingstoke & Deane Landscape, Biodiversity and Trees SPD, 2018

See 6.21 above

Basingstoke & Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy November 2018

Hedgerows: A hedgerow is a line of closely spaced shrubs and tree species, planted and trained to form a barrier or to mark the boundary of an area, such as between neighbouring properties. Hedgerows are used to separate a road from adjoining fields or one field from another, and are of sufficient width to incorporate larger trees. A connected network of hedgerows is a common feature of the borough's landscape and can also provide an important habitat and migratory linkage for wildlife. Hedgerows form a component of a green corridor. New hedgerow planting is welcomed and should be encouraged as it also helps to define boundaries and makes efficient use of space. New hedgerows should be planted in a double staggered row.

protect most countryside hedgerows from being removed (including being uprooted or otherwise destroyed). If anyone wants to remove a hedgerow (or part of a hedgerow) they need to apply to the District Council in writing before they do so. The District Council can issue a hedgerow retention notice if it is considered 'important' and must be kept, or give permission to remove the hedgerow. An important hedgerow must be at least 30 years old and meet certain criteria.

For example, it marks a pre-1850 parish boundary, is an integral part of a field system pre-dating the Enclosure Acts, or contains protected species listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
For reference: A hedgerow is protected if it's on or next to: land used for agriculture or forestry land used for breeding or keeping horses, ponies or donkeys.

It would be unrealistic to survey every hedgerow in the parish for species. Therefore, it is proposed to identify on a map, any hedge greater than 20m in length, or any hedgerow less than 20m that connects to a longer hedgerow. This map will be included as evidence in the Neighbourhood plan, in support of a policy for protected hedges, similar to that done at Bramley, Whitchurch and a number of other Neighbourhood plans.

Criteria for Important Hedgerows

It would be unrealistic to survey every hedgerow in the parish for species. Therefore, any hedge greater than 20m in length, or any hedgerow less than 20m that connects to a longer hedgerow has been identified on a map. This map is presented as evidence in the Neighbourhood plan, in support of a policy for protected hedges, similar to that which has been done at Bramley, Whitchurch and a number of other Neighbourhood plans.

Considerations for Hedgerow policy.

The policy will assume a default position that all hedgerows in the parish are protected. Any proposal to remove a hedgerow, will need to be accompanied by a professional survey to determine the make up by species. Policy will include the need for a hedgerow less than 20m in length to be professionally surveyed to identify species to determine if the hedgerow meets the requirements of the hedgerow protection.

Ref: UK Biodiversity Action Plan; Priority Habitat Descriptions. BRIG (ed. Ant Maddock) 2008.

This document is available from: http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5706

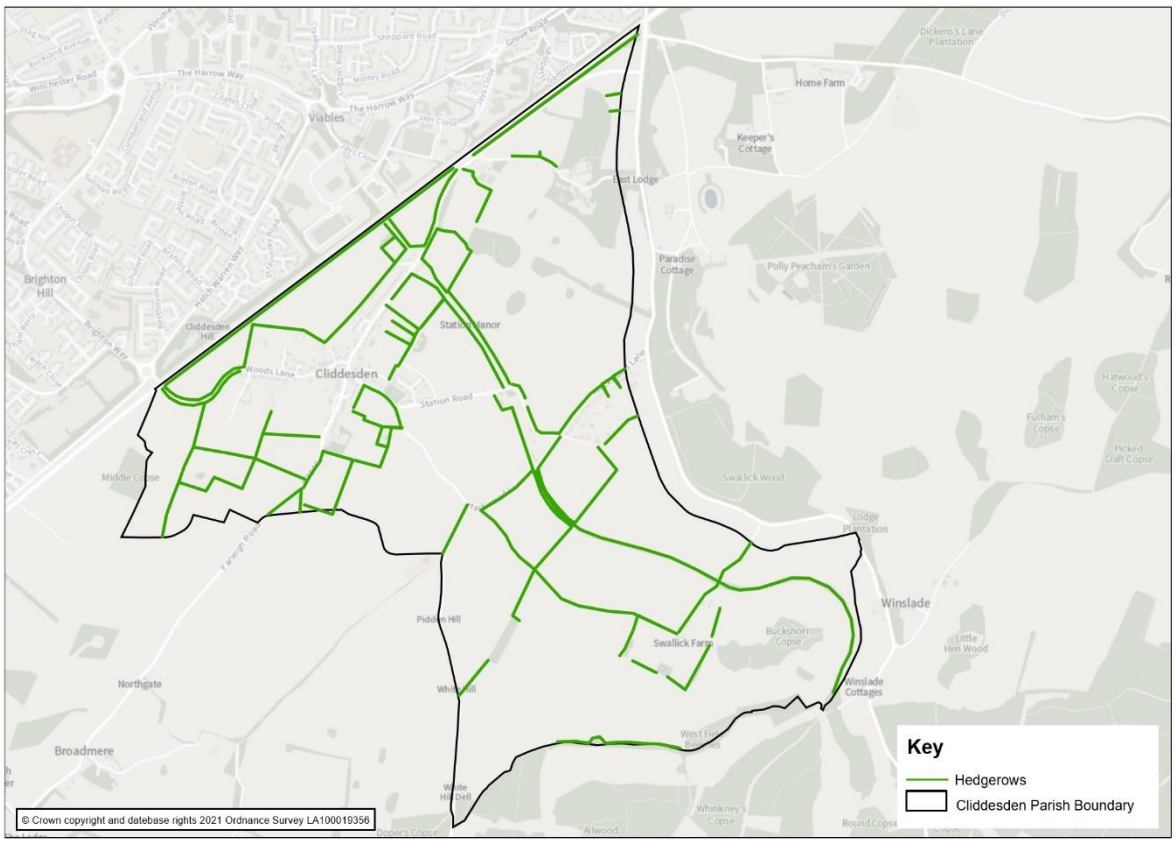


Fig 4 MAP of HEDGEROWS indicated by green lines

The CAA did not show hedgerows but they have been included in this map.

Photographs of some important hedgerows in and around Cliddesden

Hedgerow along Footpath 1

Hedgerow along Farleigh Road northern end

Hedgerows bordering the lane towards the village

Hedgerow along Hackwood Lane

Hedgerow at the rear of Southlea

Hedgerow along Footpath 2

5. WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

The term 'wildlife corridor' is used to refer to any linear feature in the landscape that can be used for migration or dispersal of wildlife. Wildlife or biological corridors offer the possibility of linking habitats and reducing the isolation of populations. Wildlife corridors are found at all levels: tree canopies, hedgerows and verges which connect together to form vital important habitats and migratory routes for wildlife to disperse to find food, shelter, breeding sites and potential mates. These corridors extend beyond the parish boundary to neighbouring areas. Plants and fungi colonise new areas by seed and spore dispersal so need connecting areas of suitable ground as do animals migrating on foot or by wing.

The aim of the network of green infrastructure corridors is to promote connectivity between core areas and through the wider landscape, thus allowing wildlife to move in response to environmental change and other factors. Cliddesden is working to link sites, buffer sites, restore areas of habitat and allow wildlife to move more easily through the landscape.

The local conservation group has been engaged in tree and hedge planting schemes throughout the parish since 2004. www.cliddesdenconservation.org

Species that have been planted include Field Maple, Beech, Silver Birch, Hawthorn, Spindle, Alder Buckthorn, Ash, Common Holly, Wild Privet, Blackthorn, Oak, Purging Buckthorn, Dog-rose, Goat Willow, Hazel, Common Whitebeam, Rowan, Yew, Small-leaved Lime, Wayfaring-tree, Wild Service tree, Guelder-rose, Crab Apple, Bramble.

This ongoing planting complements existing species such as Norway Maple, Sycamore, Swedish Whitebeam, Horse Chestnut, Walnut, Common Lime.

Road verges and a wildlife meadow have been sown with many species of native wildflowers.

St Leonard's Churchyard is a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Basingstoke & Deane are exploring the opportunity to set up a new Biodiversity Improvement Zone (BIZ) in the Cliddesden area and are working alongside the parish council, who are keen to develop biodiversity.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) states that:

***15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment* -** Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

174 b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

(d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

Habitats and biodiversity

179. *To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:*

(a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity ; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and

(b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Basingstoke & Deane Living Landscape 2014

6.5 Habitat isolation and fragmentation are major contributors to biodiversity loss. Smaller habitats tend to support proportionately fewer species than larger ones and are more vulnerable to other pressures. Where similar habitat types are isolated from one another, species that are unable to cross the intervening land are particularly vulnerable because a decline in the population of one site cannot be boosted by immigration from other sites.

Basingstoke & Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy November 2018

4.2 In common with much of the country, the borough has suffered a significant net loss of biodiversity assets during the last century, especially during the post war years of agricultural intensification and expansion of urban areas. Whilst the borough contains many designated sites, many are small, isolated, fragmented and/or subject to pressures arising from human activity.

4.3 Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) has produced a detailed Ecological Network Map on behalf of the Hampshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP). The network aims to:

- Improve current wildlife sites through better habitat management
- Increase the size of existing wildlife sites
- Enhance connections between sites, either through physical corridors or through stepping stones
- Create new sites
- Reduce the pressure on wildlife by improving the wider environment around sites

B&DBC Policy EM5 – Green Infrastructure recognises the importance of wildlife corridors and states

"Development proposals will only be permitted where they do not:

a) Prejudice the delivery of the council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (and subsequent updates);

b) Result in the fragmentation of the green infrastructure network by severing important corridors/links; or

c) *Result in undue pressure on the network which cannot be fully mitigated."*

Quoting from the **National Trust**: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lodge-park-and-sherborne-estate/features/keeping-wildlife-connected-

"What are wildlife corridors? Hedgerows, field margins, wetlands and woodland are all 'wildlife corridors' and act as a link from one environment to another. They connect individual - and sometimes isolated - habitats, allowing wildlife to move freely and safely between them, without threat from predators or traffic. "Corridors are about ways to link pockets of different wildlife rich habitats" -Simon Ford, National Trust Wildlife Adviser. Roads, buildings and arable fields create huge barriers to wildlife. By filling in the gaps and connecting what must seem like an impossible obstacle course, wildlife - both great and small - can move safely from one place to another."

Criteria for Wildlife Corridors

The CNP team has identified on a map many “important wildlife corridors”, these could include, but were not limited to, hedgerows, verges, woodlands, areas of vegetation and water courses.

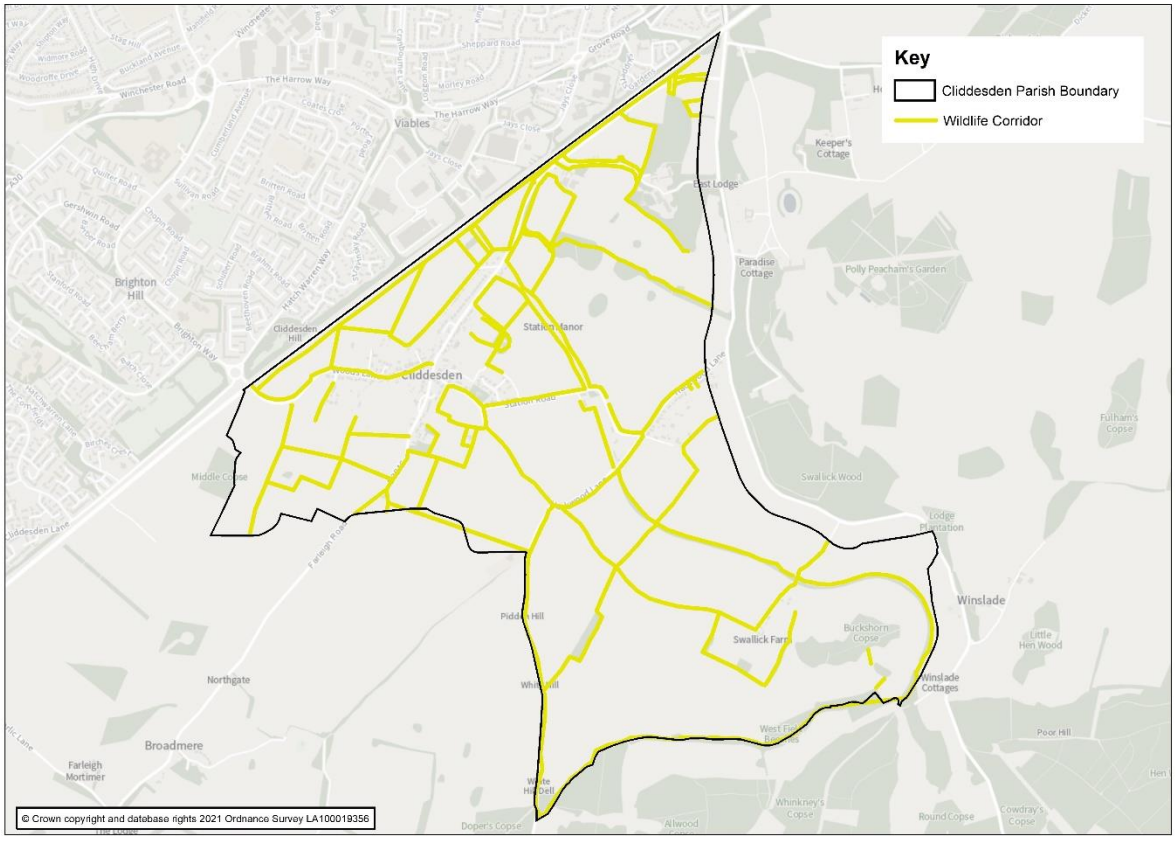


Fig 5 MAP of IMPORTANT WILDLIFE CORRIDORS indicated by yellow lines

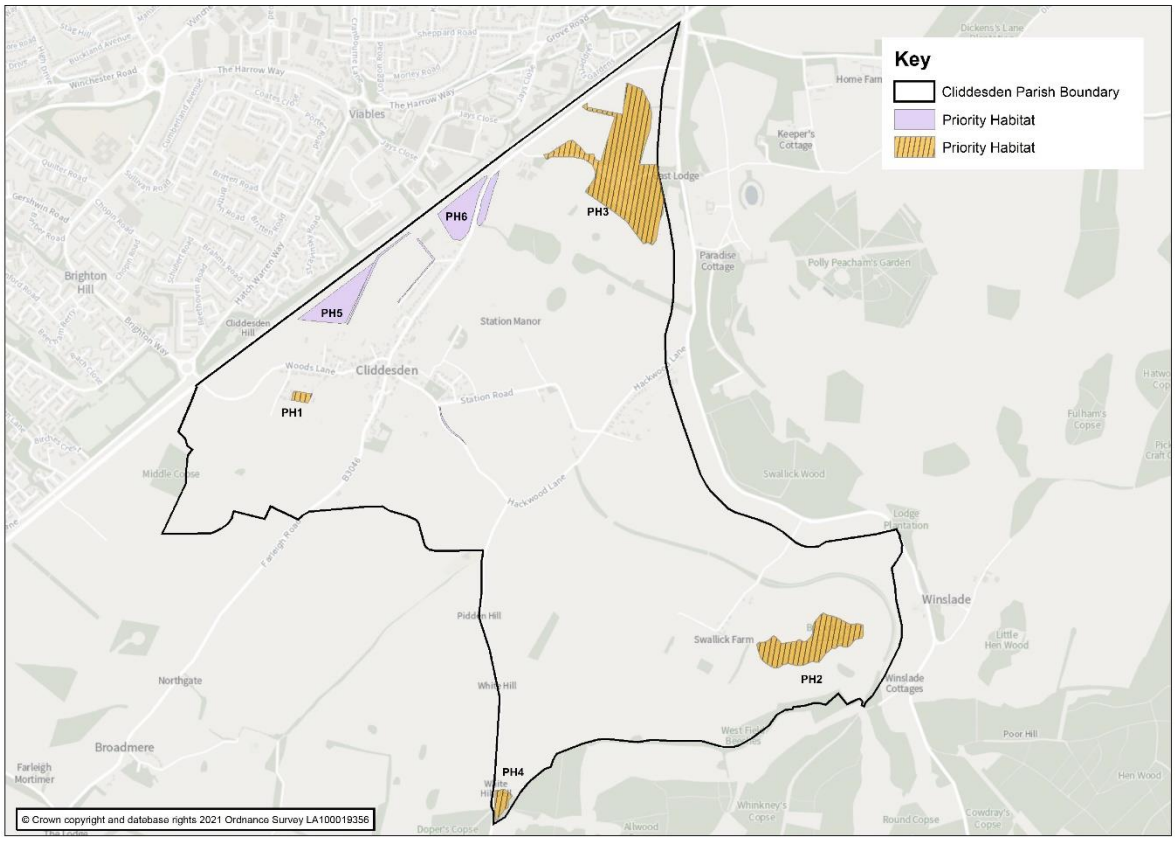


Fig 6 MAP of PRIORITY HABITATS bounded by Hackwood Park to the east and Herriard Park to the south (both areas of priority habitat)

PH1: Orchard (shaded brown)
PH2: Ancient Woodland Buckshorn Copse (shaded brown)
PH3: Ancient Woodland Audley's Wood (shaded brown)
PH4: Ancient Woodland White Hill Copse (shaded brown)
PH5: Wildflower Meadow (shaded purple)
PH6: Wildflower Meadow (shaded purple)

Photographs of some Wildlife Corridors throughout Cliddesden village

PH6 Cleresden Meadow

Wildflower bank in Church Lane

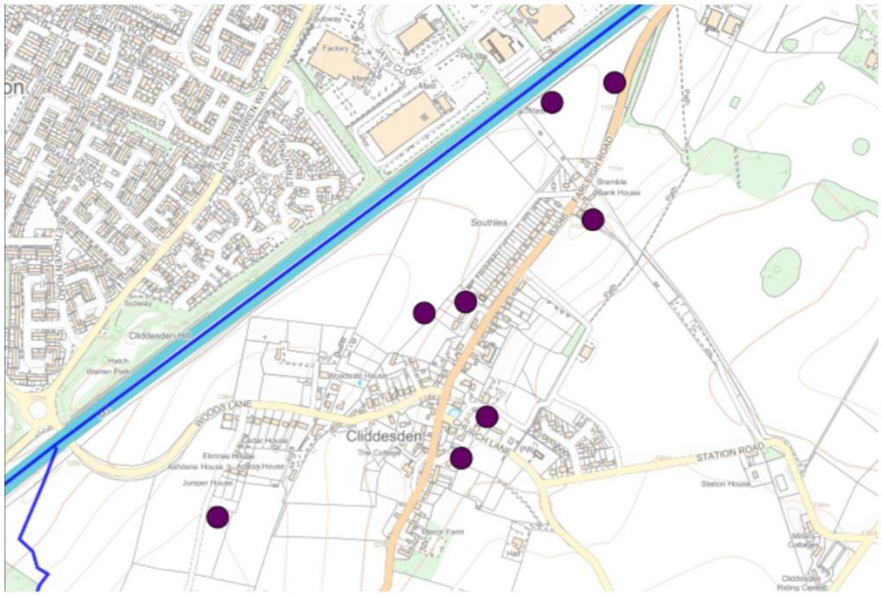


Fig 7 MAP of confirmed badger sightings between 2019 and 2022, indicated by purple dots, within the parish. One of the many protected species that make their homes in the parish.

Native daffodils in Farleigh Road verge

6. HEALTH & WELLBEING

The health and wellbeing of Cliddesden's residents depends heavily on the green space in which they live. This has been shown dramatically during the 2020/2021 Covid 19 global pandemic. Not only local people but visitors to our parish taking allowed exercise along the many footpaths and bridleways have found fresh air, peace and relaxation contributing beneficially to both physical and mental health. This is in stark contrast to the urban areas on the other side of the M3 motorway that are always polluted and noisy.

The rural landscape of the parish acts as a "green lung" for the conurbation of Basingstoke. The importance of the parish's green infrastructure is shown below.

Trees, hedges and all plants absorb atmospheric carbon and trees lock it up for centuries through photosynthesis. The entire woodland ecosystem plays a huge role in locking up carbon, including the living wood, roots, leaves, deadwood, surrounding soils and its associated vegetation.
Trees, whether in woodland, stand-alone or in hedgerows, do more than just capture carbon and many other harmful pollutants.

Climate control is obtained by moderating the effects of sun, wind, and rain. Radiant energy from the sun is absorbed or deflected by leaves on deciduous trees in the summer and is only filtered by branches of deciduous trees in winter. Trees lower air temperature in summer by evaporating water in their leaves and the leaves filter dust and other particulates from the air and rain washes them down to the ground. Roots stabilize the soil and prevent erosion, provide food and shelter for wildlife from fungi to invertebrates, birds and mammals.

Trees and hedges intercept rain helping to reduce storm run-off and the possibility of flooding. Just one large tree can hold 57,000 gallons of rain water. They then clean the water, filter it and gradually release it back into the aquifer so we can extract it to use in our daily lives.

The leaves absorb the carbon dioxide we humans produce and lock it safely away. They also absorb other air pollutants—such as ozone, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide then release life-giving oxygen into the atmosphere so we can breathe. In one year, an acre of trees can absorb as much carbon as is produced by a car driven up to 8700 miles but a tree does not reach its most productive stage of carbon storage for about 10 years

Wind speed and direction can be affected by trees. The more compact the foliage on the tree or group of trees, the greater the influence of the windbreak. The downward fall of rain, sleet, and hail is initially absorbed or deflected by trees, which provides some protection for people, livestock, and buildings.

Trees and hedges act as sound barriers against the noise of traffic and industry reflected off hard surfaces and, where located along roads, act as a glare and reflection control. Natural green boundaries in the environment add to its visual attractiveness and can increase house prices.

APPENDICES

Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre Survey Reports

1. Cleresden Meadow
2. Church Lane Wildflower Bank
3. Pensdell Wood
4. Buckshorn Copse
5. Middle Copse – Although within the neighbouring parish of Farleigh Wallop, Middle Copse lies right on the boundary with Cliddesden and, as ancient woodland, is an essential reservoir of endangered and rare species that migrate into the Cliddesden countryside.
6. Woodland Trust Research Report- The benefits of trees outside woods