



**DECISION TO
DESIGNATE THE WHOLE
OF AKELEY PARISH A
NEIGHBOURHOOD
AREA**

Date: 31 October 2023



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1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the request to designate the whole of Akeley Parish as a Neighbourhood Area.

Recommendation

1.2 That the Planning Policy Team Leader uses their delegated powers to declare that the whole of the Akeley Parish be designated as a Neighbourhood Area in accordance with Regulation 5A of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended.

Background

1.3 On the 27 October 2023, Akeley Parish Council submitted a Neighbourhood Area Application requesting that the whole of its parish area be designated as a Neighbourhood Area.

1.4 Akeley Parish Council's application was submitted in accordance with Regulation 5A that was inserted into the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (1) by amended regulations which came into force on 1 October 2016 (2).

1.5 The effect of Regulation 5A is that, if a parish council submits a Neighbourhood Area Application that requests that the whole of its parish area is designated a Neighbourhood Area, the Local Planning Authority (Buckinghamshire Council) must use its powers under the Act³ to designate the whole of the parish area as a Neighbourhood Area.

1.6 The regulations also state that, where a parish has submitted a Neighbourhood Area application to include the whole of its parish area, the Local Planning Authority is not required to consult or publicise the Neighbourhood Area Application. Therefore, Buckinghamshire Council does not need to carry out any publicity of the Neighbourhood Area Application in advance of the Neighbourhood Area being designated.

Next Steps

1.7 Following designation of the Neighbourhood Area, and in accordance with Regulation 7 of the 2012 Regulations, the Local Planning Authority must publicise the Neighbourhood Area Designation on its website and in any other way they consider would let people who live, work or carry out business in the neighbourhood area that the area has been designated.

1.8 The published information should include the name of the neighbourhood area; a map which identifies the area; and the name of the relevant body who applied for the designation.

1.9 In terms of notification, in addition to the website, the Buckinghamshire Council procedure note advises that the Director of Planning and Environment, the Head of Planning and Development and the Head of Planning Policy and Compliance be advised of the designation together with Development Management Team Leaders in the relevant development management team.

¹ The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

² The Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016

2.0 Notification of the designation is also sent to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration and relevant Council ward members in the area covered by the Neighbourhood Area Designation.

2.1 Akeley Parish Council will be advised of the designation and invited to publicise the decision on their own website and on local notice boards throughout the designated area.

What designating a Neighbourhood Area Means

2.2 In most cases, the designation of a Neighbourhood Area is in relation to the proposal to create a neighbourhood plan for the area. Before a neighbourhood plan can be produced for an area, there must be a designated neighbourhood area in place. In this case it means that Akeley Parish Council can now go on to produce a neighbourhood plan for their area.

Financial and Legal Implications

2.3 Financial – There are no significant costs, other than officer time, involved in the designation of a neighbourhood Area. Potentially there may be some postage costs if it is necessary to notify anyone by post of the neighbourhood area designation. Councils can receive grants from government for the designation of a neighbourhood area, however this is limited to five per council area and Buckinghamshire Council has already exceeded this limit. Further grant funding is available should a neighbourhood plan pass an examination, and the Council determines that the plan should proceed to a referendum. This grant is available per neighbourhood plan. However, it should be kept in mind that the Government could amend the neighbourhood grants scheme or end the grants at any time.

2.4 Legal – The Council is legally required to designate a neighbourhood area where a valid application has been made by a Parish Council (Akeley Parish Council in this case) for a neighbourhood area covering the whole of its parish area.

Delegated authority

Part I Section 2 (Scheme of Delegation to Officers) Para 2.21 of Buckinghamshire Council's Constitution authorises the Director of Planning and Environment to determine all decisions relating to neighbourhood planning. The Director of Planning and Environment has further delegated authority to the Head of Planning Policy and Compliance, the Planning Policy Manager and Planning Policy Team Leaders to make decisions relating to neighbourhood planning in a note dated August 9th 2021 titled 'Non-Financial Delegations to Officers'; 'Relating to Planning and Development Management'.

Exercise of Delegated Authority

I, Chris Schmidt Reid Team Leader Planning Policy on behalf of Colin Walker, Interim Director of Planning and Environment on 31st October 2023 agree the above recommendation.

Signed: 

Dated: 31st October 2023

Chris Schmidt Reid Team Leader Planning Policy on behalf of Colin Walker, Interim Director of Planning and Environment.

Background papers

Akeley Parish Council Neighbourhood Area application letter

Proposed Neighbourhood Area Map.



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27th October 2023

Application for Designation of a Neighbourhood Area

Dear Neighbourhood Planning Team,

Akeley Parish Council wish to apply for the designation of the Parish of Akeley as a Neighbourhood Area with the intention to develop a Neighbourhood Plan as defined by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. A Steering Group was set up to compile the application at our last Parish Council meeting on 25th September 2023. Meeting Minute Reference:81/23/e. Akeley Parish Council is a relevant body as defined by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 section 61G. The Neighbourhood Area is to incorporate the entire parish area (as shown on the map attached). Akeley Parish Council intend to keep the Planning Authority updated on the Neighbourhood Plan's progression throughout its process.

Statement in Support of a Neighbourhood Area

The Parish of Akeley comprises of mainly farmland and borders the Foscoote Reservoir & Woodland SSSI. The main village is a Conservation Area, containing a number of listed buildings. Akeley Wood is an area of ancient woodland with a few scattered houses, it is also home to the Akeley Wood Senior School which is a co-educational private school. From the 2021 census, we know that there are just over 200 dwellings in the Parish, housing a community of approximately 593 people. Many of these dwellings are located in the heart of the village itself but the Parish also encompasses the Akeley Wood and Stockholt areas.

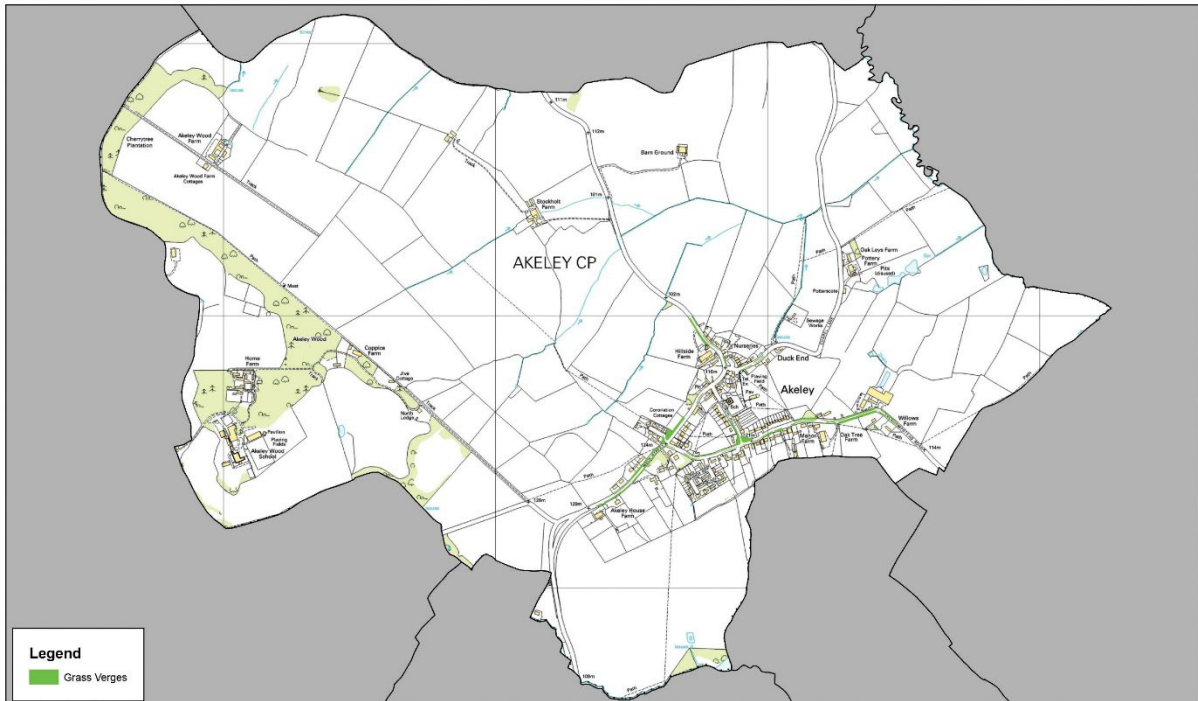
Within the Parish there is also a Church of England Primary School St James & St Johns, a village halls, a churchyard, recreational field , County Wildlife area, a play area, allotments, and a public house. The village hall is an excellent facility well used by various groups including exercise classes, NCT, Minnows toddler/preschool group and a monthly afternoon tea open to all residents and visitors run by Innovations a group that provides opportunities for people with support needs to achieve their ambitions and dreams through social, enterprise and vocational pathways. An annual Pig Roast is held at the village hall each summer.

The Parish Council is responsible for providing many essential services for its residents and believes it is in the best interest of the Akeley community that the Parish is designated as a Neighbourhood Area, in order to work with residents to develop a plan that best suits the

community's existing and future needs. Akeley Parish Council look forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely

Helen Butcher
Parish Clerk



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Akeley Parish



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