



Rural Economy

Impact and Outputs

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

STANDING UP FOR RURAL BUSINESSES

PRESERVE OUR
HERITAGE

FEED THE
NATION

INVEST FOR
THE LONG TERM

DELIVER
FOR THE
ENVIRONMENT

CREATE JOBS

INNOVATE

MANAGE OUR
LANDSCAPES

PROVIDE
HOMES
AND BUILD
COMMUNITIES

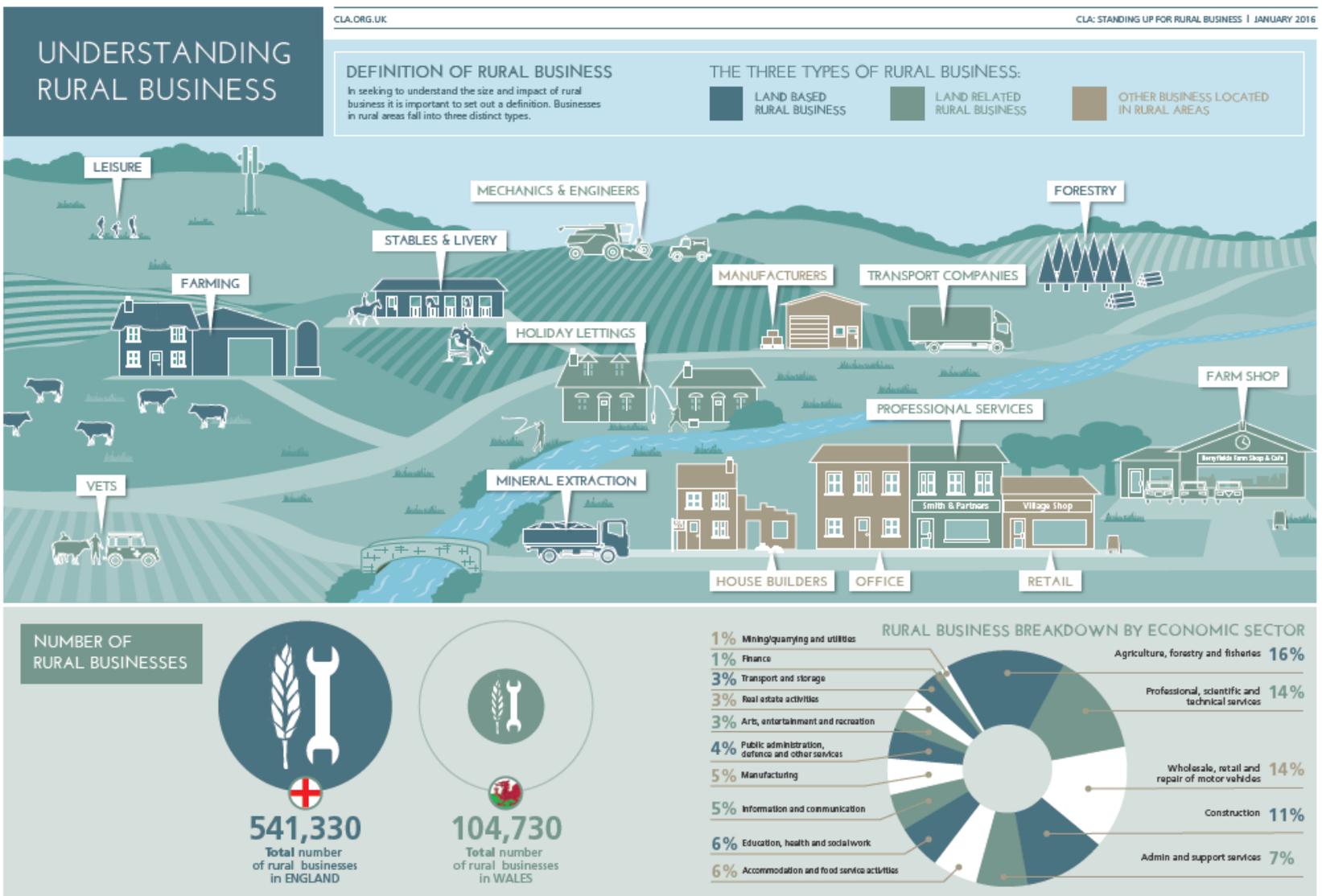




NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Rural Economy

Three Business Types - A complex picture



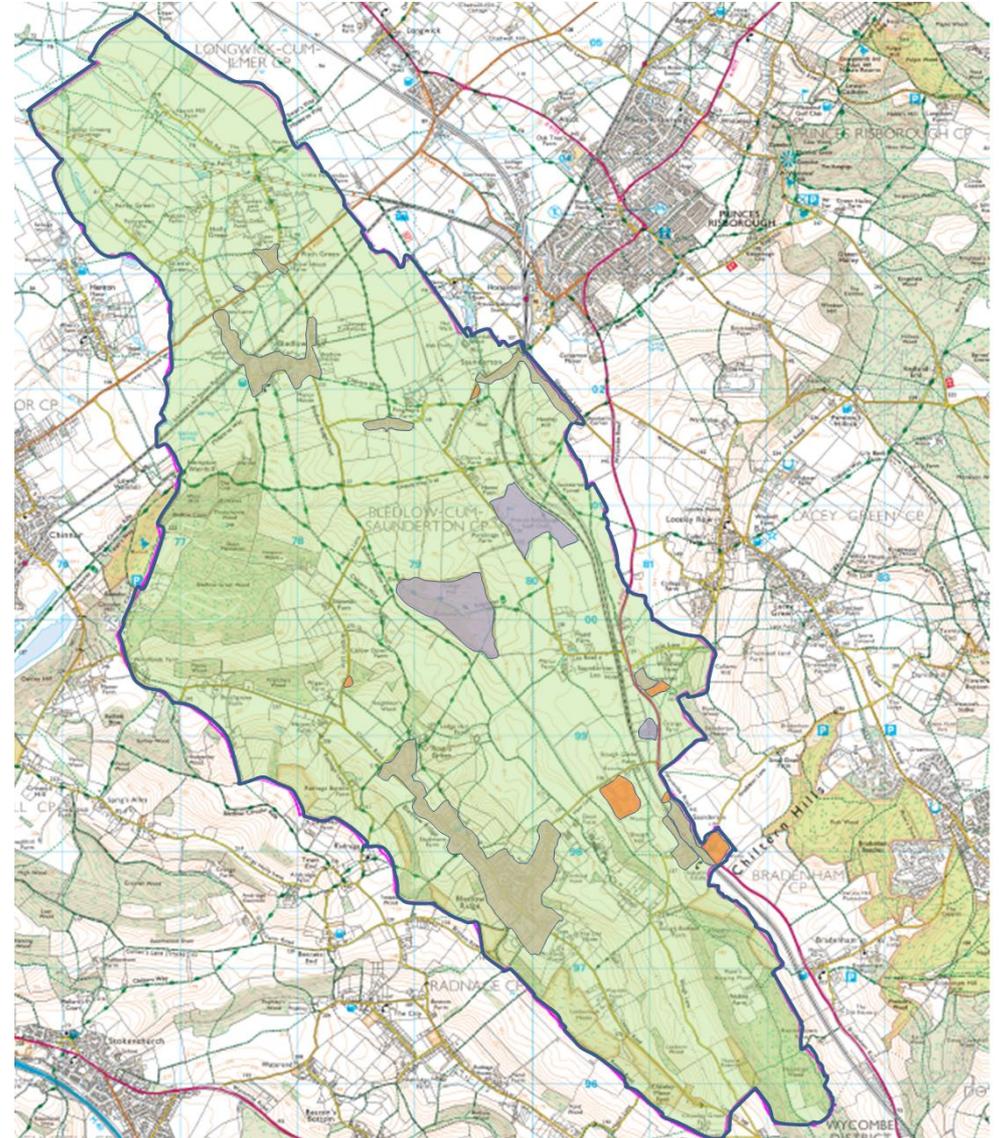


Rural Economy

Indicative Land Use by sector in the Parish

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-  Land based Rural Businesses
-  Other Businesses or former businesses
-  Residential areas
-  Land related Rural Businesses – including Lodge Hill SSSI





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Land based Business

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Evidence

- Land use in the Parish is predominantly for agriculture and forestry. These uses (see Indicative Map) fall outside the scope of planning legislation.
- However, changes from agriculture/forestry to residential use do require planning permission. Over the years, there have been a number of successful applications to remove historic agricultural occupancy ties and to convert land from agricultural to residential use. This is leading to creeping urbanisation of the landscape.
- Despite the fact that National and Local Planning policy encourages sustainable growth, there are few examples of economically viable farm diversification within the Parish.
- The Survey results show that 80% of people support the continued use of land for agricultural purposes and 51% support farm diversification.

Analysis

- Wycombe District Council (WDC) is in the process of updating its Local Plan. When adopted, that plan should include the criteria against which planning applications for new dwellings for agricultural workers are determined. At this stage, it is not possible for the Neighbourhood Plan to make recommendations on how those criteria might be so worded as to help prevent creeping urbanisation.
- The NPPF already promotes the development and diversification of agriculture and other land-based businesses and this will continue to be supported in the Local Plan. It is up to individual landowners to decide, where it is economic to do so, what form of diversification they wish to pursue. Again, there is nothing that we need to include in the Neighbourhood Plan to encourage diversification beyond what we already have at a national and local level.

Recommendations

- The Parish Council should engage with WDC to come up with appropriate criteria for deciding planning applications for new agricultural workers' dwellings.
- No other recommendations are made.



Evidence

- For many years, there has been a continuing loss in the Parish of light industrial and small business units.
- Recent independent evidence suggests that the demand for such units within the Parish is limited.
- The lack of high speed broadband and poor mobile phone reception were consistent themes in the survey responses.
- The Survey results show that 80% of people support the use of brownfield and/or existing units for business use, 64% support policies relating to working from home and 40% wish to encourage more visitors to the Parish to support local shops and public houses. The results also show that 41% of people work from home for at least one day per week.

Analysis

- The use of brownfield sites and/or existing units for business use is specifically encouraged in the National Planning Policy Framework. It is clear, however, that many businesses will tend to favour locations in nearby towns which have critical business mass and access to better transport and communications infrastructure. There are no easy answers to this problem.
- The Parish is not included in the current 'Connected Counties' broadband rollout and it appears unlikely that we will be receiving high speed broadband in the near future. However, the Parish Council is monitoring the situation and will continue to apply pressure to obtain funding where necessary. Nevertheless, the Neighbourhood Plan will need to include policies for the time when high speed broadband does become available.
- The local shop and pubs in the Parish rely primarily on local support to sustain their economic viability. To a large extent, this depends on people making purchasing decisions in favour of local enterprises, rather than attempting to use the planning system.

Recommendations

- The Neighbourhood Plan should include Home Working Policies to assist in the likely future growth of micro-businesses.
- Such policies might (i) require all applications for new dwellings to include a Connectivity Statement and (ii) require applications for residential conversions to business use to include provisions to protect local residential amenity and character.



Environment

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Evidence

- 70% of the Parish falls within Green Belt and Chilterns AONB designations. The latter is protected by policies in the Chilterns AONB Management Plan.
- Farmers in the DEFRA Basic Payment Scheme are required to keep their land in “Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition”.
- Natural England reports that, while the Lodge Hill SSSI is in an “unfavourable condition”, 31% of the site is ‘recovering’, with corrective action being taken;
- The Survey results show that 92% of people wish to protect views of and from the Chiltern AONB, 80% support the protection of existing trees, hedgerows and woodland, 80% want to minimise noise and other forms of pollution caused by development and transport infrastructure and 75% support preserving key local habitats and wildlife biodiversity.

Analysis

- The natural beauty and distinctive character of the landscape are already well protected by National and Local planning policies. However, a general Neighbourhood Plan policy protecting the landscape and biodiversity of the whole Parish might be appropriate;
- Other Neighbourhood Plans contain policies for protecting important trees, hedgerows and woodland. The Woodland Trust has policy examples we could adopt.
- Both National Planning policy and the Chilterns AONB Management Plan contain guidance on how new development should minimise noise and address environmental issues.
- The preservation of key local habitats (such as Lodge Hill) and wildlife bio-diversity form a key part of the Chilterns AONB Management Plan and are backed up by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Recommendations

- The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) should contain policies protecting the landscape and its biodiversity consistent with the local character of the AONB and its setting.
- The NP should contain policies (i) against development resulting in the loss or deterioration of important natural features, including trees and hedgerows and (ii) facilitating the use of conditions and/or planning obligations to secure landscaping schemes and the replacement of trees, hedgerows or other natural features or their protection during the course of development.
- The NP should contain a policy to help minimise the impacts of noise and pollution from development and infrastructure works, including through the use of conditions.
- The protection of key local habitats is covered by existing legislation and planning policy. No specific additional policies are recommended.