

6.7 Objective 7 – Enhancement of Community Assets

6.7.1 This policy is to prioritise and support the development of multi-use, flexible, modern community facilities within the village which will cater for a wide range of current and future social, sporting, and recreational village activities. The implementation of the policy will help to create a more cohesive and supportive village environment by creating financially viable and sustainable facilities for local residents.

6.7.2 Policy WNDP7: Enhancement of Community Assets.

WNDP7: The following community assets, as shown on the Policies Map (Fig 4 below), are safeguarded for their existing use:

- Holy Trinity Church
- The Village Hall
- Cradhurst Recreation Ground
- The Village Green
- Riverbank Surgery
- St John's Chapel and The Westcott Village Hub
- The Sports Club
- Surrey Hills All Saints School
- Faurefold

Proposals for the provision and maintenance of flexible, accessible, energy efficient and modern community assets will be supported, where they would help to maintain and extend the vibrant social, sporting, recreational, and educational activities in the Plan area and where they comply with national and local Green Belt policy.

The change of use of existing community assets to other uses will not be supported unless:

- Any partial loss of the site/floorspace will not undermine the viability of the asset;
- The asset is surplus to requirements or there is no reasonable prospect of the existing use continuing;
- An alternative asset of equivalent or better quality or scale is available nearby or will be re-provided nearby or the use will be provided in a different way serving the same community; and
- The property has been marketed for a minimum period of twelve months on reasonable market terms with a recognised agent for alternative community uses without success.

- 6.7.3 **Justification:** Westcott is a village of around 2,300 residents with 8 principal community facilities which cater individually for a very wide range of activities in premises of varying age and quality. The survey indicated that at least 60% of respondents saw each of the following facilities as being important or very important to have in the village: Surrey Hills All Saints Primary School, Holy Trinity Church, St Johns chapel, The Village Hub, Community Fridge, Westcott Cricket Ground, Sports club, Village Hall, Cradhurst Recreation Ground, The Village Green.
- 6.7.4 Policy WNDP7 provides a strong framework to retain the area's valued community assets which aligns with Local Plan Policy INF4 (Community Facilities). Similar to the Local Plan, Policy WNDP7 is flexible and allows a change of use of community assets, where justified by robust evidence.
- 6.7.5 Over the next 10-15 years some of these facilities will require significant financial investment in order to remain usable. Policy WNDP7 therefore also supports the provision of new community facilities which aligns with Local Plan Policy INF4 (Community Facilities). It is anticipated that there may be opportunities to enhance, re-provide and create new facilities in accordance with the identified needs of the survey. In any new development, research into occupancy and usage of existing facilities would be carried out to ensure that there was no loss of capacity for activities.
- 6.7.6 22% of people living in the Neighbourhood Area are under 18. A need for nursery provision within the Neighbourhood Area was identified in the Community Survey. The survey also identifies there is a significant demand for clubs, societies and activities for people of all ages but particularly for the young, and for those who have retired.
- 6.7.7 76% of survey respondents believe it is very important to have a GP surgery in Westcott (88% important or very important).
- 6.7.8 Various proposals to improve facilities at Cradhurst Recreation Ground were suggested including a running track, outdoor gym and footpath.

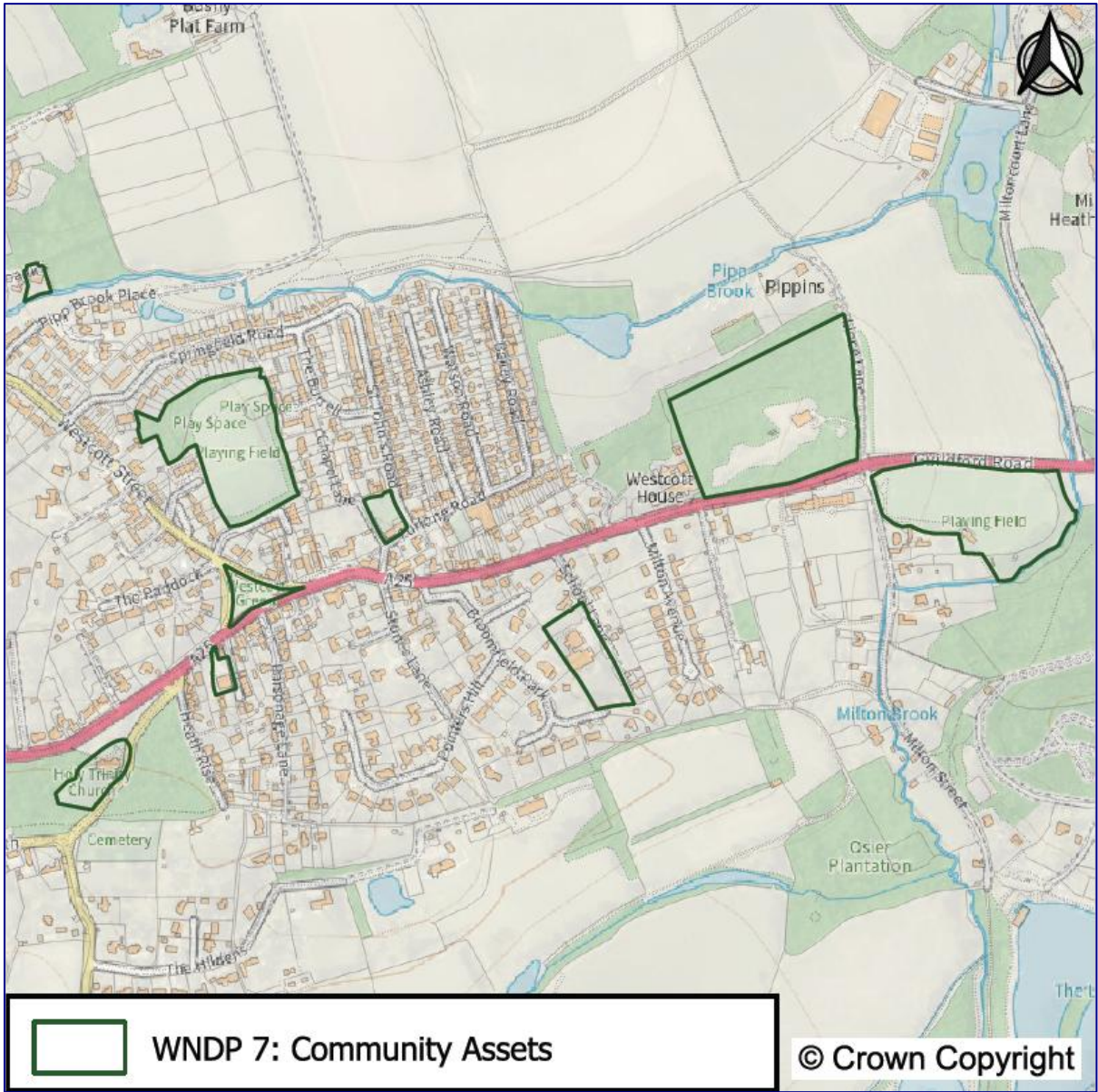


Fig 4 - Westcott Community Assets