A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in the **CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2026** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES

1. **MINUTES** (Pages 7 - 10)

   To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2026.

   Contact Officer: Democratic Services - (01480) 388169

2. **MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

   To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary, other registerable and non-registerable interests in relation to any Agenda item. See Notes below.

   Contact Officer: Democratic Services - (01480) 388169

3. **STRATEGIC CIL FUNDING ALLOCATION** (Pages 11 - 34)

   To receive a report inviting the Cabinet to consider recommendations relating to infrastructure projects seeking funding of more than £100,000.00 in whole or in part from an amount of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies.

   Contact Officer: R Lyons
   (01480) 388782

4. **PROCUREMENT OUTCOMES - THE SOCIAL VALUE POLICY** (Pages 35 - 50)

   To receive a report presenting the proposed Procurement Outcomes - Social Value Policy.

   Contact Officer: M Parker
   (01480) 388475

5. **BRINGTON AND MOLESWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION OUTCOME AND PROGRESSION TO REFERENDUM** (Pages 51 - 214)

To receive a report seeking agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan.

Contact Officer: N Elworthy
(01480) 388433

6. **GIDDINGS, HAMERTON AND WINWICK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION OUTCOME AND PROGRESSION TO REFERENDUM** (Pages 215 - 334)

To receive a report seeking agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the joint Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan.

Contact Officer: N Elworthy
(01480) 388433

7. **RAMSEY COMMUNITIES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION OUTCOME AND PROGRESSION TO REFERENDUM** (Pages 335 - 472)

To receive a report seeking agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan.

Contact Officer: N Elworthy
(01480) 388433

8. **ALCONBURY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION OUTCOME AND PROGRESSION TO REFERENDUM** (Pages 473 - 636)

To receive a report seeking agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan.

Contact Officer: N Elworthy
(01480) 388433

12 day of October 2026

Michelle Sacks

Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests.

Further information on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution

Filming, Photography and Recording (including Live Streaming) at Council Meetings

This meeting will be filmed for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's YouTube site. The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items. If you make a representation to the meeting you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed. By entering the meeting you are also consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If you have any queries regarding the streaming of Council meetings, please contact Democratic Services on 01480 388169.

The District Council also permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council.

Please contact Democratic Services, Tel No: (01480) 388169 / e-mail: Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business**.**

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website.

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

Attending Council and Committee Meetings

Huntingdonshire District Council welcomes members of the public to attend meetings that are open to the public.

Members of the public may attend, film, photograph, and report on meetings that are open to the public. *

In some circumstances, a meeting may resolve to exclude the public and press to consider confidential or exempt information. Where this occurs, members of the public and press will be asked to leave the meeting room for that part of the meeting.

Most public meetings are webcast live, and recordings are available afterwards. This means you do not need to attend in person to follow proceedings.

The council permits public speaking at the Development Management Committee (planning) meetings.

View further information about **public speaking at Development Management Committees [PDF, 0.5MB]**

The council permits public questions at full council meetings. View further information about **submitting a question [PDF, 0.1MB]**.

Public access and seating

Meetings that are open to the public can be attended by anyone.
Seating in public areas is limited. Where demand exceeds the number of seats available, admission will be managed on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given in the following order:

1. People who live, work or own property within the Huntingdonshire District
2. Other interested members of the public.

This means that attendees within each priority group will be admitted in the order they arrive, subject to the number of seats available.

Reserved seating

Council Meetings - If you have registered in advance to ask a public question at a meeting of Full Council in accordance with the Council's **Constitution [PDF, 1.5MB]**, a seat will be reserved for you.

Development Management, Licensing and Other Regulatory Hearings - If you have registered to speak or make representations in relation to an application or matter being considered by the Committee, a seat will be reserved for you.

You do not need to arrive early to secure your place.

When seating is full

Once all public seats are occupied, no further admission will be possible.
Standing is not permitted in meeting rooms. Additional seating cannot normally be provided, except where required as a reasonable adjustment for accessibility needs, including carers or support workers.
For meetings of the Development Management Committee, Licensing Committee and other regulatory hearings, priority will be given to applicants, objectors, registered speakers and other parties directly involved in agenda items.

Arrival, sign-in and security

All visitors must sign in on arrival.

If attendance is expected to exceed capacity, you may be asked to provide evidence that you live, work or own property within the Huntingdonshire District so that seating priority can be allocated fairly. In these circumstances, we would request a photographic ID and evidence of your address or work premises
We recommend bringing only essential items.

Bags and personal belongings may be subject to security checks. Where necessary, security staff may also conduct further searches.

These arrangements apply equally to all public attending and are intended to help ensure meetings can take place safely and without disruption.

Any personal information collected as part of the sign-in process will be used only for meeting management and safety purposes in accordance with the **Council's Privacy Notice**. Information will be retained no longer than is necessary.

Items not permitted

- Placards, banners, flags or similar items
- Knives, scissors or other sharp objects
- Whistles, air horns, loudhailers or other noise-making devices
- Bottles or other containers containing liquids, except drinking water intended for personal use during the meeting
- Any item that security staff reasonably believe could compromise safety or disrupt the meeting.

If you wish to bring large or specialist equipment into the meeting, such as recording equipment, please contact **Democratic Services** in advance via email to help avoid delays when entering the meeting.

Behaviour at meetings

Everyone attending a meeting is expected to treat others with courtesy and respect. Any form of verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated. Anyone presenting such behaviour will be asked to leave immediately.

Accessibility

If you have any accessibility requirements, it would be helpful to contact **Democratic Services** before the meeting so we can fully support you.

Speaking at a meeting or asking a question

Members of the public may ask questions at meetings of Full Council.

Members of the public may also speak or make representations at meetings of the Development Management Committee, Licensing Committee, and other regulatory hearings where public participation arrangements apply.

Please note that this must be arranged in advance in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Feedback

If you have concerns about how these arrangements were applied at a meeting, please contact **Democratic Services**.

Legal framework

*Public access to meetings, and the right to film, photograph, record and report proceedings, are governed by legislation including the Local Government Act 1972, Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 15 September 2026.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Conboy – Chair.

Councillors L Dewey-Beckett, N J Hunt, J E Kerr, B A Mickelburgh and D L Mickelburgh.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Claffey, J E Harvey and T D Sanderson.

21. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

22. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 14th July 2026 and 9th September 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23. CAR PARKING STRATEGY

A report by the Head of Economy, Regeneration & Housing Delivery and the Operations Manager, Parking & Markets Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking the endorsement of the Parking Strategy.

The Executive Councillor for Economy, Regeneration & Housing Delivery, Councillor B Mickelburgh introduced the report, and made reference to the comments of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth).

In discussing the report, the Cabinet made the following comments:

- there had been extensive public engagement undertaken during the development of the Strategy;
- respondents had consistently identified parking as important in supporting town centres, improving accessibility, enabling access to businesses and services and supporting local economic activity;
- particular emphasis was placed on existing parking provision where evidence demonstrated an ongoing need;
- existing car parks should be retained unless robust evidence indicated they were no longer required;
- any proposal involving repurposing or redevelopment should demonstrate that parking demand could continue to be met; and
- replacement capacity should be available before the loss of any existing parking provision.

The Cabinet welcomed the Strategy and highlighted the importance of maintaining an evidence base that would enable future parking decisions to respond to changing travel patterns and support sustainable town centres.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Parking Strategy be adopted.

24. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1

A report by the Data and Insight Analyst was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) presenting the Council's progress against the Corporate Plan Actions and Corporate Performance Indicators during Quarter 1 (April to June) 2026/27.

The Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance, Councillor Hunt introduced the report.

The Cabinet noted key achievements relating to the One Leisure Huntingdon redevelopment, Active Lifestyles Programme, and the Community Health and Wealth Fund. Discussion took place regarding the small number of missed bins during June, and it was emphasised that the performance remained stronger than national benchmarking, despite the indicator being rated red. Reference was made to instances of challenging operating conditions, including periods of extreme heat and staff absences which had affected service delivery, however it was recognised that high standards were applied by the service. It was noted that targets were intentionally ambitious, and missed collections were generally rectified quickly where issues occurred.

The Cabinet commended the commitment and performance of staff across the Council.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet has considered and commented on progress and performance during Quarter 1, as summarised in the Corporate Performance Report attached and detailed in Appendices A, B & C.

25. FINANCE PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1

A report by the Head of Finance was submitted (a copy of which is appended to the Minute Book) presenting the forecast outturn for the financial year 2026/27, for both revenue and capital as forecast at the end of Quarter 1.

The Executive Councillor for Economy, Regeneration & Housing, Councillor B Mickelburgh introduced the report.

The Cabinet noted that while the current position remained positive,

there were indications of longer-term financial challenges, particularly if current trends continued and uncertainties surrounding Local Government Reorganisation persisted.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet has

(1) considered and commented on the revenue financial performance for the financial year 2026/27 Q1, as detailed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2;

(2) considered and commented on the capital financial performance for 2026/27 Q1, as detailed in Appendix 3;

(3) approved the funding proposals relating to the Priory Centre and wider regeneration schemes (Housing and Regeneration team), and One Leisure St Ives Outdoor Pitch funding (Option 3) (Leisure and Health). An explanation of the funding proposals can be found in the comments against these projects within the capital programme (Appendix 3) and within section 4.3 of the report; and

(4) considered and commented on the Treasury Management 2026/27 Q1 Report attached as Appendix 4.

26. APPOINTMENT(S) TO THE TREASURY AND CAPITAL MANAGEMENT GROUP

RESOLVED

that the Executive Councillor for Governance and Democratic Services be appointed to serve on the Treasury and Capital Management Group.

27. HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK MINUTES / APPOINTMENT OF 4TH MEMBER

RESOLVED

that

(1) the Minutes of the Hinchingbrooke Country Park Joint Group meeting held on 16th July 2026, be noted; and

(2) Councillor R Coogan be appointed to serve on the Hinchingbrooke Country Park Joint Group.

Chair

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Agenda Item 3

O&S (P&G) – 30th September 2026
Cabinet – 20th October 2026

Report by: Head of Planning, Infrastructure & Public Protection

Lead Cllr: Cllr Tom Sanderson
Executive Councillor for Planning

Wards	Open / Exempt	Key Decision?
All	Open	Yes

Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy Allocation, round 1 2026/27

Executive Summary: CIL is restricted in how it can be used through Legislation, and under Regulations 59 (1) and (3) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) local authorities must spend the levy on delivering infrastructure needed to support the development of their area through:

- increasing the capacity of existing infrastructure or
- repairing failing existing infrastructure, if that is necessary to support new development.

This report contains information on the CIL funding round that closed 31st July 2026.

Recommendations

1.1. Agree officer recommendation at Paragraphs 3.1-3.5 to APPROVE funding for the remodelling of Ramsey Junior School.

1.2. Agree officer recommendations at Paragraph 3.6-3.10 to APPROVE funding for a community sports hub at Longsands School, St Neots.

1.3. Note the updates on delivery in relation to the projects previously allocated or in receipt of CIL funding commitments (see Appendix 1).

1.4. Note any new allocated CIL projects for £100,000.00 or less approved by delegation on 8th September 2026 (see Appendix 2).

	Key Corporate Plan Priorities
1	Improving quality of life for local people
2	Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations

	Place Strategy Priorities
1	Pride in Place
2	Health embedded

Report Author(s)

Row Lyons, Funding Project Manager (row.lyons@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to invite the Cabinet to consider recommendations relating to infrastructure projects seeking funding of more than £100,000.00 in whole or in part from an amount of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies.

2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 Up to 5% of CIL receipts each financial year may be retained for administration costs. 15% - 25% of CIL receipts, the meaningful proportion, are passed to parish/town councils in line with the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) and the Localism Act 2011. The remaining 70-80%, the strategic proportion, which is available for Huntingdonshire District Council as the charging authority to spend on the provision, improvement, replacement, operation, or maintenance of infrastructure to support the growth/development of its area.

2.2 CIL is intended to be used on the provision of new infrastructure and should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies in infrastructure provision unless those deficiencies will be made more severe by new development. It can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure if that is considered necessary to support new development.

2.3 Under the stage 1 governance arrangements approved by Cabinet in June 2024, Cabinet is to consider applications for CIL funding over £100,000.00. Any requests of £100,000.00 or less have been considered and approved in line with delegated authority and are detailed for information at Appendix 2. The total amount of funding to be considered for allocation in a financial year will not exceed £500,000 for allocations of £100,000.00 or less, including those for non-parished areas.

2.4 Prior to this funding round, approximately £45 million of CIL has been allocated to 77 projects across Huntingdonshire, supporting the delivery of over £145 million of infrastructure. This has contributed to delivering infrastructure across the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 to meet Local Plan growth.

2.5 The stage 2 governance review was set out to Cabinet and approved by them in February 2026. This has set out the Strategic Allocation of CIL to form the Strategic Priority Programme for delivery along with the use of CIL funding, or 'forward funding', towards infrastructure projects that form part of the Council's wider Capital Programme. Within this the Corporate Director (Place) and the Corporate Director (Finance and Resources and Section 151 Officer) in consultation with the Leader, Executive Councillor for Finance, and the Executive Councillor for Planning have delegated authority to determine the level of allocation of CIL funding to be awarded towards projects which form part of the Councils agreed Capital Programme.

2.6 The determination of CIL requests as set out in this paper have been considered in accordance with HDCs interim governance procedures for CIL, as well as ensuring compliance with the fundamentals as set out in the established legislation. This is important to ensure a fair, transparent and lawful process, which

is robust to challenge and/or complaint. Officers have undertaken the assessments on this basis.

2.7 As the review of the CIL funding process and its associated governance is now moving to the next phase, to link into the Infrastructure Delivery Strategy and Plan being prepared to support the update to the Local Plan; once this work is completed, future rounds of CIL awards are likely to be judged against any updated processes.

2.8 It is important to be able to demonstrate how a decision has been reached, with clear reasons, in order to uphold the integrity of the process, and ensure that the decision can be understood even if it is not agreed with. If Members are minded to reach alternative conclusions to those as recommended in this report, reasons for this should be clearly articulated and evidenced where possible.

2.9 Going forward it is intended that the CIL funding rounds will follow the following structure with round 1 opening 1st week June – Last week of July, decisions in September. Round 2 opening 1st week November - Last week of December, decisions in March. Outside these dates should the CIL funding be more urgent then the 'Exceptional Circumstances' option may be followed as applicable.

2.10 For the avoidance of doubt a summary of progress on successful bids to date can be found at Appendix 1. Appendix 2 sets out the decision made on bids of <£100k.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Ramsey Junior School reconfiguration & Expansion

3.2 Applicant: Cambridgeshire County Council Parish: Ramsey

CIL Funding Requested: £234,939.59 (50%) Total project cost: £469,879.17

3.3 Assessment:

Statement of intent	Met and reason
The primary use of CIL is to fund infrastructure that is directly linked to supporting or mitigating the impact of growth and new development.	Met – The project clearly links the need for additional school places to local housing growth in the catchment area.
CIL funded projects can also contribute towards achieving the outcomes identified in the Council's Corporate Plan and Place Strategy.	Met – This project aligns with Priority 2 – Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations of the Corporate Plan and Journey 1 – Pride in Place of the Place Strategy.

CIL should be used in a way which leverages other sources of funding for greater impact.	Met – This is a 50% CIL ask which represents good value for money, with the County Council funding the rest of the cost.
A new approach to allocating CIL should follow a programme-led, evidence-based approach.	Met – The supporting information shows the link between the need for this project and local growth.
A new approach to CIL should recognise the Importance of working with partners to deliver infrastructure.	Met – This project represents partnership working between the County Council and the school.
There should be greater alignment between local and district-wide priorities.	Met – As the need for this project is linked to local housing growth and this will mitigate it this is a district wide priority. The need for further junior spaces was also highlighted in the Local Plan to 2036 Infrastructure Delivery plan – Infrastructure Schedule.

3.4 Summary: The need for this project was anticipated in the Local Plan to 2036, and the supporting evidence links local growth to the need for this project.

This project will increase the Published Admission Number (PAN) of the junior school to match the infant school; it is a 50% CIL ask and so represents good value for money.

This project aligns to the Corporate Plan, the Futures Place Strategy and the need for local education is featured in the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan.

3.5 Recommendation: **Approve, subject to:**

• Planning permission being granted

• Any surplus project funds reducing the CIL contribution accordingly.

3.6 St Neots pitches & community sports hub

3.7 Applicant: Astrea Academy Trust Parish: St Neots

CIL Funding Requested: £540,000.00 (24%) Total project cost: £2,230,000.00

3.8 Assessment:

Statement of intent	Met and reason
The primary use of CIL is to fund infrastructure that is directly linked to supporting	Met - There has been growth in St Neots and Little Paxton, and these additional sports facilities would support this growth. Not only will it be used by the

or mitigating the impact of growth and new development.	school but also by the wider community with good links to local sports clubs.
CIL funded projects can also contribute towards achieving the outcomes identified in the Council's Corporate Plan and Place Strategy.	Met - This aligns with Priority 2 - Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations of the Corporate Plan and Journey 1 – Pride in place & Journey 3 – health embedded of the Futures Place Strategy.
CIL should be used in a way which leverages other sources of funding for greater impact.	Met – This is a 24% CIL ask with multiple funders.
A new approach to allocating CIL should follow a programme-led, evidence-based approach.	Met – The supporting evidence showed the links to growth and the partnership working.
A new approach to CIL should recognise the importance of working with partners to deliver infrastructure.	Met – This is linking Astrea Academy, Longsands and several sports clubs. They have also included a neighbouring Parish Council. It's great to see how having the sports clubs on-site is planned to increase membership.
There should be greater alignment between local and district-wide priorities.	Met – With links to the Local Plan and sports strategies this is a district priority.

3.9 Summary: This is an ambitious project which is looking to increase the sports provision within St Neots. The additionality to sports would include hockey pitch, a 3G pitch and a table tennis provision amongst others. The need for additional sports provision was noted in the Local Plan and in HDC sports strategies.

The school has worked hard to look at opportunities within the community to use the additional sports facilities and, even how they can advertise the out of hours clubs to their students.

The project has support from within the Town, the neighbouring Parish, the local M.P. and even national sporting institutions.

With the support of the Football Foundation and the partnerships in place the outcomes of this for the district will be fantastic.

3.10 Recommendation: **Approve, subject to**:

• Full project funding being secured

• Planning permission and all other necessary consents being obtained.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & NOT RECOMMENDED

4.1 In June 2026, stakeholders were invited to submit on-line proforma applications for funding from the Strategic Proportion of CIL, in line with Council Guidance on Allocation and Spending webpage. Communications were issued to infrastructure providers including the County Council, NHS, Emergency Services, Town & Parish Councils and HDC Members. The Council website was also updated to announce a new round; plus social media posts were issued. The projects submitted during this funding round have been reviewed to ensure they meet the criteria for Strategic CIL funding.

4.2 CIL is intended to be used on the provision of new infrastructure and should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies in infrastructure provision unless those deficiencies will be made more severe by new development. It can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure if that is considered necessary to support new development.

4.3 There is further information on CIL available on the HDC website Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk. This includes detail on the Statement of Intent key principles:

- the primary use of CIL is to fund infrastructure that is directly linked to supporting or mitigating the impact of growth and new development.
- CIL funded projects can also contribute towards achieving the outcomes identified in the Council's Corporate Plan and Place Strategy
- CIL should be used in a way which leverages other sources of funding for greater impact.
- the use of CIL should be considered alongside other developer contributions to maximise site-specific benefits (for example: Affordable housing).
- a new approach to allocating CIL should follow a programme-led, evidence-based approach.
- a new approach to CIL should recognise the Importance of working with partners to deliver infrastructure.
- there should be greater alignment between local and district-wide priorities.

4.4 There is currently approximately £22 million of unallocated CIL available for future infrastructure projects, and of this a minimum of £3-5million has been committed for non-HDC projects.

5. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

5.1 The Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel discussed the report at its meeting on 30th September 2026.

5.2 The Chair sought clarification on how CIL performance was monitored and whether any key performance indicators were in place. Officers explained that performance was monitored through service targets relating to the collection of CIL receipts, response times to enquiries, assessment of applications and statutory reporting

requirements. Whilst no specific CIL KPIs existed, performance was measured through officer objectives and wider Planning Service reporting.

5.3 In response to questions regarding demand for funding, Officers confirmed that information on the number of CIL enquiries received between funding rounds could be circulated following the meeting. It was noted that the latest funding round had been launched within a relatively short timeframe, which may have affected the number of submissions received. To address this, future funding rounds had now been scheduled in advance to provide greater certainty for applicants.

5.4 Members sought assurance that smaller Parish Councils and community organisations were not disadvantaged compared with larger organisations when applying for funding. Officers explained that all applicants receive the same level of support through the enquiry process, including detailed feedback on their proposals, assessment against the Statement of Intent, identification of potential weaknesses and advice on additional funding opportunities. Officers emphasised that support is available to organisations of all sizes, from parish councils and sports clubs to the NHS and County Council.

5.5 Officers further advised that, as part of the pre-application process, they regularly direct potential applicants towards alternative grant funding streams and appropriate council services where projects may not meet the criteria for Strategic CIL funding.

5.6 Members discussed the relationship between the Local Plan, infrastructure requirements and future CIL commitments. Officers explained that future infrastructure needs identified through the Local Plan are considered alongside annual reporting through the Infrastructure Funding Statement, which records CIL and S106 receipts, expenditure and strategic infrastructure commitments.

5.7 Questions were raised regarding the collection of CIL payments from developers. Officers outlined the process whereby invoices are issued following commencement of development and confirmed that payment compliance rates were generally high, with only occasional instances requiring further enforcement action.

5.8 The Panel considered the delegated authority decisions included within the report and requested additional information regarding the rationale for approvals and refusals. Officers acknowledged that previous reports had included more detail and agreed to consider reinstating this information in future reporting.

5.9 Councillor Ashcroft raised concerns regarding transparency and requested greater visibility of how delegated decisions align with the strategic objectives of the CIL programme. Officers advised that work was underway to explore options for making CIL and Section 106 information more publicly accessible through the Council's website.

5.10 Discussion took place regarding the monitoring of approved projects and the management of allocated funding. Officers explained that each project is monitored through an agreed programme of milestones, reporting requirements and funding agreements. Larger projects are supported through regular progress meetings, whilst all projects are subject to ongoing monitoring by Officers.

5.11 Members were advised that where projects experience delays or require an extension to agreed timescales, these requests are considered through the appropriate governance process. Funding agreements include completion dates and conditions that applicants must meet before payments are released.

5.12 Councillor Tomlinson sought clarification regarding the refusal of the Digital Hub application under delegated authority. Officers explained that, whilst the proposal was recognised as a valuable community project, insufficient evidence had been provided to demonstrate the required connection between the project and the mitigation or support of growth, which is a statutory requirement for Strategic CIL funding. Officers emphasised that unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to resubmit applications where identified issues can be addressed.

5.13 Officers further confirmed that the refusal of an application in one funding round does not prevent it being reconsidered in a future round following revisions.

5.14 Councillor Gardner praised officers for their work with parish councils and commented positively on the support provided throughout the application process. He stated that, in his experience, smaller parish councils were not disadvantaged when applying for CIL funding and thanked officers for their assistance.

5.15 Members discussed the level of information provided regarding live projects and requested enhanced reporting on project delivery, expenditure, milestone achievement and overall progress. Officers acknowledged these comments and agreed to explore mechanisms for providing greater transparency whilst balancing commercial confidentiality considerations.

5.16 Further discussion took place regarding the use of Strategic CIL funding for Council-owned capital projects. Councillor Martin requested greater visibility of expenditure on such projects and suggested that future reports should provide a more comprehensive overview of all CIL expenditure, including allocations made under separate governance arrangements.

5.17 Officers clarified that only the Huntingdon Sports and Health Hub had received funding under the revised governance arrangements for Council projects. It was agreed that opportunities for broader reporting on Strategic CIL expenditure and governance arrangements would be explored.

5.18 The Chair sought clarification regarding the Longsands Academy Community Sports Hub proposal and noted that Strategic CIL represented 24% of the total project cost. Officers confirmed that a detailed breakdown of funding sources had been submitted as part of the business case and that no CIL funding would be released until all remaining funding had been secured. This requirement would form part of the funding agreement and ongoing monitoring arrangements.

5.19 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.

6. POST-DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Depending on the decision made by Cabinet the following next steps will happen.

6.2 Approve – If approved the applicant will be contacted and offered the funding with any conditions approved by Cabinet. A legal agreement will be completed and then the funding will be paid as per the schedule in the agreement. Projects are monitored regularly and details of these projects are noted in the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS).

6.3 Decline – If the project is declined, we reach out to the applicant to explain why, and if applicable support them through re-applying.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

7.1 Council Key Priorities and Performance

- **Improving quality of life for local people** through investment in education, recreation, health and community infrastructure.
- **Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations** by ensuring that infrastructure keeps pace with housing growth and supports sustainable communities.
- **Doing our core work well** through the transparent and evidence-based allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy funding in accordance with adopted governance arrangements.

The proposals also support the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy, particularly the themes of Pride in Place and Health Embedded, through investment in educational provision and community sports infrastructure.

7.2 Financial Implications

7.2.1 There is currently approximately £51.9 million within the CIL fund, comprising amounts held for parish and town council payments, CIL administration, previously allocated projects and the unallocated strategic CIL balance. CIL is levied on qualifying development, and receipts are received over time as developments commence and progress. In accordance with legislation, the relevant proportion of receipts is paid to town and parish councils twice annually. Given that future receipts and neighbourhood payments are dependent on the timing and delivery of development, the overall CIL fund balance [1]cannot be forecast with certainty. The table below therefore sets out the impact of currently approved expenditure commitments on the known CIL balance.

7.2.2

Financial Year	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Expenditure (allocated)	£9,604,039	£1,640,369	£11,128,000	£7,013,388
Net Impact (CIL Pot balance)	£42,269,231	£40,628,861	£29,500,861	£22,487,473

7.3 Policy Implications

[1] The table above illustrates the impact of current expenditure commitments on the CIL balance. Future CIL receipts have not been included, as income is dependent on the timing, commencement and delivery of development and cannot be forecast with sufficient certainty. The projected balances therefore represent a prudent position based on current known commitments only and do not take account of future CIL income that may be received during the period. As a result, the actual balance is likely to be higher, subject to future development activity and the associated CIL receipts generated.

7.3.1 The proposals are considered to be in alignment with the Councils agreed policy framework.

7.4 Legal & Constitutional Implications

7.4.1 Regulation 59 (1) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) requires a charging authority to apply CIL to funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of] infrastructure to support the development of its area. It may also, under Regulation 59 (3), support infrastructure outside its area where to do so would support the development of its area.

7.4.2 Passing CIL to another person for that person to apply to funding the improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of] infrastructure is also permitted under Regulation 59 (4).

7.4.3 Section 216 (2) of the Planning Act 2008 as amended by Regulation 63 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended) stated that infrastructure 'includes [and is therefore not limited to]:

a) roads and other transport facilities,
b) flood defences,
c) schools and other educational facilities,
d) medical facilities,
e) sporting and recreational facilities,
f) open spaces.'

7.4.4 The levy may not be used to fund affordable housing.

7.4.5 Under current governance for CIL decisions for application for £100,000.00 or less are delegated to the Executive Leader, Executive Councillor for Planning, Corporate Director (Place) and the Head of Planning, Infrastructure & Public Protection.

7.5 Community Impact

7.5.1 Each CIL funded project should have a positive impact on its local community through improving the local infrastructure and this will be noted in the summary of the project.

7.6 Environment & Climate Change Implications

7.6.1 If a project includes environmental benefits that have been included in its application submission, then this will be noted in the project summary.

7.7 Equality & Diversity Implications

7.7.1 The proposed projects are expected to have a positive impact on equality of opportunity. The expansion of educational provision at Ramsey Junior School will improve access to school places for local families, while the St Neots Community Sports Hub will provide enhanced access to sporting and recreational facilities for

a wide range of users. There is no evidence that the recommendations would have an adverse impact on any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

7.8 Implications on Resources

7.8.1 Staff resource to administer and monitor the allocation of the CIL. This is funded, in part, by the administration costs permitted from the CIL receipts.

7.8.2 Staff resource from elsewhere in the Council will be used in preparing funding bids and implementing successful cases.

7.9 Health & Wellbeing Implications

7.9.1 The proposed investment in sports and recreation infrastructure at Longsands School will directly support improved physical activity, health and wellbeing outcomes across the local community. Improved educational infrastructure at Ramsey Junior School will contribute to community wellbeing by ensuring adequate local school capacity to meet the needs arising from growth.

7.10 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

7.10.1 CIL funding rounds are anticipated to continue throughout the LGR process, with a minimum of £3-5 million being allocated for the rounds.

7.10.2 Legal agreements are entered into with all third parties who are allocated CIL funding to ensure a smooth transition into the new authority.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1.1 The key impact from not considering the CIL spend will be the potential for certain infrastructure projects not being delivered and match funding lost.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS– LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

9.1

Document List	Custodian	File Location
Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019
Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Infrastructure Delivery Plan - Infrastructure Schedule	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Infrastructure Delivery Plan - Infrastructure Schedule
Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Delivery Plan Addendum	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Delivery

		Plan – Delivery Plan Addendum
Community Infrastructure Levy Governance Review June 2024	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Community Infrastructure Levy Governance Review June 2024
Community Infrastructure Levy Governance Review June 2024 Appendix 1	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Community Infrastructure Levy Governance Review June 2024 Appendix 1
Community Infrastructure Levy CIL Governance – Phase 2 – Strategic Allocation	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Community Infrastructure Levy Governance Review June 2024
Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Funding Statement 2025/26	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25
Corporate Plan	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Corporate Plan 2025-26
Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy
Huntingdonshire Leisure and Sports Facility Strategy	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Huntingdonshire Leisure and Sports Facility Strategy
Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Strategy 2025-2030	Huntingdonshire District Council Joint Administration	Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Strategy 2025-2030

APPENDIX 1 - Update on 'live' Projects previously approved to-date.

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
New village hall, Fenstanton Approved by Cabinet - 16th July 2020	Funding a new village hall in Fenstanton	£880,000.00	£75,000.00	**COMPLETED**
B1040 Wheatsheaf Road/Somersham Road Accident Reduction Scheme Approved by Cabinet - 18th March 2021	Junction safety improvements	£1,200,000.00	£500,000.00	The land for the scheme has been secured and they will be moving towards construction starting later this year.
High Street improvements, St Neots Approved by Cabinet 28 July 2020	A comprehensive programme of schemes designed to enable the redevelopment of several strategically chosen areas of St Neots town centre and bring change to strengthen the economy of St Neots.	£15,422,033.00 (funding envelope as project details developed)	£4,830,000.00	They have had delays but the forecast is still to complete in 26/27.
Hinchingbrooke Country Park Improvement Project, Huntingdon.	Part of larger project, the bid seeks funding for: •Pathway improvements and	£2,995,184.00	£1,495,184.00	•Phase 1 of the project has now been successfully completed, including contractor mobilisation, site establishment, access road works and the associated

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
Approved at Cabinet 17th March 2022	associated lighting and signage. • Upgrading the existing car park. • 5 new play zones Associated management costs			temporary arrangements required to enable the main construction programme. The project has now progressed into Phase 2, which includes the main construction and landscaping works. •The project remains on programme, with completion currently forecast for spring 2027. There are currently no anticipated delays to the overall completion programme.
New health facility, Alconbury Weald. Approved by Cabinet – 18th October 2022	New primary health care facility at Alconbury Weald.	£7,888,400.00	£6,013,388.00	The ICB has commissioned the support of NHS Property Services (NHSPS), including its Development Management and Town Planning teams, to support the development and delivery of a new primary care health centre. The project represents a significant milestone in planning healthcare infrastructure to support the continued growth of the Alconbury Weald community. Net steps include RIBA Stage 2 concept design and preparing the Reserved Matters submission strategy.

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
Car park extension, Somersham.	Community car park extension	£20,480.90	£15,480.90	The car park extension is due to begin early September and should take two weeks to complete.
Approved by delegation– 7th February 2023				
Community Centre Extension, Ramsey.	Extend and re-configure the layout of the Ramsey Community Centre including a commercial sized kitchen. The re-configuration from one to three rooms will allow more groups access to an oversubscribed building.	£260,000.00	£100,000.00	**COMPLETED**
Approved by delegation – 16th April 2024				
Guardroom community hub, Bury.	To transform the former RAF Guardroom building into a multifunctional hub including the Parish Council, hot desk space, and community space for sports and social activities.	£2,359,900.00	£1,500,000.00	Contractor selection and announcement are imminent, ecological work begins in September, and completion is anticipated by Spring/Summer 2027.
Approved by Cabinet – 15th April 2025				

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
Leisure improvements, Sawtry. Approved by Cabinet – 15th April 2025	Replacement & reinstatement of the pool plant and reconnecting the heating, air handling and water, replacement of the pool cover and disabled hoist.	£600,000.00	£360,000.00	**COMPLETED**
Regional College 'Retrofit' skills training facility, Huntingdon. Approved by Cabinet - 14th October 2025	A training centre at Huntingdon Campus to provide for retro fit skills, including solar panel installation, various insulation techniques, heat pump installation and associated electrical skills.	£725,912.00	£200,000.00	Works are well underway and are due to finish at the end of September.
Replacement playground, Kimbolton. Approved by Cabinet – 14th October 2025	Replacement play equipment at Mandeville Hall Community playground.	£106,115.56	£61,632.81	**COMPLETED**
New 3G Pitch, HDC One Leisure St Ives.	Installation of a second full size third generation floodlit artificial turf pitch at One Leisure, St Ives.	£1,400,031.26	£300,000.00	Planning permission for the additional 3G pitch was granted in August 2026. The project is currently expected to be completed by April 2027;

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
Approved by Cabinet - 14th October 2025				however, this is an indicative timescale and remains subject to final funding approval, the outcome of the procurement process and any subsequent changes to the delivery programme.
Cromwell Museum Expansion Project, Huntingdon. Approved by Cabinet – 14th October 2025	Funding to restore, convert and fit out a new museum.	£6,308,000.00	£1,000,000.00	Working with Caroe Architecture & working with the Conservation Officer, they have an initial proposed solution to how they will use the building and the beginnings of detailed plans, they have started consulting with key stakeholders. The plans will be used next to consult with specialists on fire, structural integrity, environmental impact, catering and our museum designers. Invasive surveys on the building have been completed, and this information will be used to further refine the plans along with the stakeholder feedback and specialist advice, meaning that they will have plans up to RIBA Stage 2 by late September/early October. This and detailed costings by a Quantity Surveyor will enable us to develop and submit their first stage Heritage Lottery Fund bid

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
				after Christmas.
King George V Pavilion redevelopment, Huntingdon. Approved by Cabinet - 14th October 2025	Demolition of the existing structure and creation of a new pavilion with compliant changing rooms, modern support facilities, social space and equipment storage.	£1,000,000.00	£125,000.00	The Cricket Pavilion project, the contract has been awarded to the Universal Group and phase one of the project is due to commence on the 24th August 26 with the demolition of the Old Cricket Pavilion.
Grafham community shop replacement Approved by delegation – 5th February 2026	Replacement of community shop.	£91,457.00	£46,415.00	Works due to be completed by 31st December 2026.
Sports and Health Hub improvements, HDC One Leisure Huntingdon Approved by Cabinet – 17th March 2026	Improvements and extension to One Leisure Huntingdon to create a new Sport and Health Hub	£30,500,000.00	£10,000,000.00	Construction works have started and works are due to complete in 2028.
3 New Padel courts, Huntingdon.	To install three covered and floodlit padel courts at King George V playing fields.	£600,000.00	£300,000.00	Works are being carried out alongside the Huntingdon Hub programme and are due to complete in June 2028.

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
Approved by Cabinet - 17th March 2026				
New construction skills workshop at Cambridge Reginal College, Huntingdon. Approved by Cabinet - 17th March 2026	Purchase and installation of a workshop for construction students at the Huntingdon Campus of Cambridge Regional College.	£350,540.00	£150,000.00	Good progress has been made on the installation of the non-permanent workshop and it is almost complete. Final installations are due during August and early September.
Enhancements and improvements to Paxton Pits, Little Paxton. Approved by Cabinet - 17th March 2026	Enhancement of the site by creating new pathways, new play features and additional shelters and seating.	£375,000.00	£200,000.00	Currently going through procurement, working with HDC Officers to commence shortly after.
Relocation of Abbey 6th form college, Ramsey. Approved by Cabinet - 17th March 2026	To move the 6th Form College onto the Cambridgeshire County Council-owned part of the site through repurposing/refurbishing an existing building.	£2,620,065.65	£1,310,032.80	Project on track to complete in August 2027.

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
Reconfiguration and refurbishment of fire station, St Ives. Approved by Cabinet - 17th March 2026	Modernisation of the fire station in St Ives.	£962,700.00	£400,000.00	Project has been expanded but it is still on track to complete by December 2027.
SAPHIRE (St. Neots Academy for Professional and Higher Innovation, Research and Education) constructional skills centre, St Neots Approved by Cabinet - 17th March 2026	Installation of a new occupational skills training facility within a new Skills Build Centre.	£1,748,000.00	£450,000.00	This project continues to make positive progress, with key legal, funding and delivery arrangements being advanced to support the development of the new facility. The professional delivery team is now established, with project management, design and cost consultancy support in place, enabling the project to progress through its next phase of planning and development. The project team continues to work collaboratively with stakeholders and delivery partners to progress the necessary agreements and project planning activities.

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
Youth centre, St Neots.	Conversion of a retail unit on the Market Square to create a Youth Centre.	£998,819.00	£500,000.00	Contractor selection and announcement are imminent, ecological work begins in September, and completion is anticipated by Spring/Summer 2027.
Approved by Cabinet - 17th March 2026				
Increase in primary school of two classrooms, Warboys.	Expansion of Warboys Primary Academy to support SEND places locally.	£2,758,266.00	£828,000.00	CCC are reviewing the business case for this project with a further update due mid-September.
Approved by Cabinet - 17th March 2026				
Internal improvements to community centre, Ramsey	To make internal improvements to the community centre including an industrial kitchen.	£355,217.00	£97,000.00	**COMPLETED**
Approved by delegation -18th May 2026				

Project Name	Description	Project cost at allocation	CIL funding offered	Update
Works to Warner Pavilion to create a youth centre, St Ives.	To refurbish and extend the Pavilion to create a Youth Hub and improved community space.	£217,000.00	£100,000.00	Preparing to go to tender for electrical and mechanical surveyors, shortly after will be able to go to tender for the building works.
Approved by delegation - 15th May 2026				

APPENDIX 2 - Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Project Bids submitted for consideration in first funding round 2026/27 for £100,000.00 or less – Decisions.

Further detail on the reason for decline has been provided to the applicants.

Project proposed	Location	CIL funding requested	Total project cost without VAT	CIL as a % of total EXCL VAT	Decision
New play area	Buckden	£100,000.00	£200,000.00	50%	Decline
Solar battery storage to create resilience.	Fenstanton	£22,680.00	£25,200.00	90%	Decline
Footpath improvements	Great Gransden	£40,000.00	£80,000.00	50%	Approve
New footpath	Holywell-cum-Needingworth	£48,000.00	£80,000.00	50%	Approve
New MUGA at Holywell school	Holywell-cum-Needingworth	£47,500.00	£86,195.00	55%	Approve
Library improvements	Huntingdon	£65,000.00	£165,000.00	39%	Approve
New play hub	Ramsey	£37,500.00	£75,000.00	50%	Decline
Financial & digital skills hub	St Neots	£50,000.00	£100,000.00	50%	Decline
Infrastructure expansion at MAGPAS	The Stukeleys	£100,000.00	£440,000.00	23%	Approve

Cabinet – 20th October 2026

Report by: Mark Parker – Procurement Manager

Lead Cllr: Stephen Claffey
Executive Councillor for Climate, Transformation and Workforce

Wards	Open / Exempt	Key Decision?
ALL	Open	No

Procurement Outcomes - the Social Value Policy

Executive Summary: This report presents the proposed Procurement Outcomes - Social Value Policy for consideration and comment by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel prior to its submission to Cabinet for approval. The Policy establishes a consistent, outcomes-led approach to securing additional economic, social and environmental benefit through the Council's procurement and commissioning activity. It aligns Social Value activity with the Corporate Plan and the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy and sets out six locally relevant outcomes, proportionate requirements for different procurement activities and arrangements for monitoring and reporting delivery.

Recommendations

1.1. Approve the proposed Procurement Outcomes - Social Value Policy attached at Appendix 1.

	Key Corporate Plan Priorities
1	Improving quality of life for local people.
2	Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
3	Doing Our Core Work Well

	Place Strategy Priorities
1	Inclusive Economy

Report Author(s)

Mark Parker, Procurement Manager mark.parker@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable Cabinet to approve the proposed Procurement Outcomes - Social Value Policy. The report outlines the rationale for replacing the existing framework and how the proposed Policy will provide an updated, outcomes-led approach to securing social, economic and environmental benefits through relevant Council activity.

2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 The Council's existing Social Value Policy and Framework was approved in 2019 and was developed to support the objectives contained within the 2018-2022 Corporate Plan. The framework sought to secure additional social, economic and environmental benefits through procurement activity, with a particular focus on employment, skills, community resilience, environmental sustainability and business growth. It also established a limited framework for evaluating and measuring social value commitments through contracts.

Since the existing framework was adopted, the Council's strategic priorities have evolved significantly. The current Corporate Plan 2023-2028 places greater emphasis on improving quality of life, preventing residents from falling into crisis, supporting an inclusive economy, creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations and delivering high-quality services. These priorities are further complemented by the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy, which promotes ambitions around an inclusive economy, health and wellbeing, pride in place, environmental innovation and transformed travel.

2.2 The procurement landscape has also changed significantly. The Procurement Act 2023 places increased emphasis on delivering public benefit through procurement and requires contracting authorities to have regard to maximising public benefit when undertaking procurement activity. National procurement guidance has similarly evolved to encourage public bodies to secure wider economic, social and environmental outcomes and to demonstrate how those outcomes contribute to strategic objectives and community needs.

The Council therefore has an opportunity to move beyond a compliance-based approach to social value and adopt a more strategic and outcomes-focused framework that reflects both local priorities and emerging best practice.

2.3 The proposed Procurement Outcomes - Social Value Policy has been developed to provide a clear and consistent approach to securing social value across procurement, commissioning, grant funding, partnerships and wider Council activity. Rather than focusing solely on procurement processes, the Policy establishes a set of locally relevant outcomes that support delivery of the Corporate Plan and Huntingdonshire Futures ambitions. These outcomes are intended to provide a clear "golden thread" between the Council's strategic priorities and the benefits delivered through its spending and influence.

The Policy replaces the existing 2019 framework with a modernised approach that places greater emphasis on measurable outcomes, local impact, supplier engagement, monitoring and continuous improvement. It is intended to provide sufficient flexibility to be applied proportionately across a wide range of Council activities whilst maintaining a consistent strategic focus on delivering additional value for residents, communities, businesses and the environment.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 Retaining the existing Social Value Policy and Framework was considered but is not recommended. The current framework was developed in 2019 to support the Council's 2018-2022 Corporate Plan and reflects the legislative and policy context of that time, including a more limited focus on social value considerations within procurement activity. Since then, the Council's priorities have evolved through the Corporate Plan 2023-2028, with greater emphasis on quality of life, prevention, inclusive economic growth, environmental sustainability and community wellbeing. The Procurement Act 2023 and updated Government guidance place increased emphasis on securing wider public benefit, delivering measurable outcomes and aligning procurement activity with strategic objectives. The proposed policy provides a modern, outcomes-led framework that aligns with current legislation, national best practice and local priorities, ensuring that procurement, commissioning, grants and partnerships maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits delivered for Huntingdonshire.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.1 The Overview & Scrutiny (Environment, Communities & Partnerships) Panel discussed the report at its meeting on 1st October 2026.

4.2 It was observed that Point 5.5 of the report looked at post decision implementation, and it was advised to the Panel that a follow up report on outcomes once the policy was in place could be brought to a further meeting of the Panel if it were to be requested.

4.3 It was confirmed that the policy would be applied to all future procurements once approved and would not be retrospectively applied to previous agreements although it was noted that social value was already built into public sector frameworks so would have already been applied where this framework had been applied. It was noted that procurement was influenced by several internal factors including the MTFS, and that the policy itself which established mitigation of risks. In terms of liaising with local businesses, it was noted that the Council’s Economic Development Team had established networks which could be utilised for this purpose. It was further acknowledged that local businesses may also see this as a risk but that work and legislation was in place to collaborate and work for the benefit of local communities.

4.4 It was noted that whilst the Council had a database of current contractors, some had a national office with local branches therefore data from the database would not give a full picture of current local connections but that this reporting would be possible through the social value engine tool.

4.5 The Panel heard that support for bid writing was available for local businesses through Support Cambridgeshire. It was also noted that the Council organised Business Breakfasts allowed for networking and information sharing with local businesses. Work to understand further opportunities to engage small businesses and co-operative models of delivery would continue to be investigated. The importance of maintaining a balance between the social value and quality of fulfilment whilst remaining mindful of spending public money was noted as well as the importance of measuring the tangibility of social value versus value for money.

4.6 Following a question on how applications could be weighed against each other if offering different social and financial benefits, the Panel were advised that any social value related to a specific contract would be stipulated in the procurement process with the investment into the CHAWs fund an alternative route rather than a preference.

4.7 The Panel were keen to see specific codification of Council priorities and how that would adapt to different contracts. Following which the Panel heard that there were two ways to stipulate weighting which were detailed within the policy and that each procurement was dealt with on a project by project basis to ensure that the right weighting had been applied.

4.8 The six social value outcomes were discussed and how these would be met using the software to the social value engine where each of the metrics is responded to and then the evidence against them is gathered back and flagged against the outcomes. The scoring process was noted to be established before the contract was tendered and that a balanced perspective was maintained through an officer Panel and scoring process.

4.9 The Panel requested tangible examples to fully understand the process and how the weighting would be applied and expressed concern that without this, it would be difficult to establish a full understanding of the potential outcomes of the policy. They were advised that whilst it would be possible to provide examples it would not be a quick process. It was reiterated that the importance and weighting of each of the six social value outcomes was established before the tender process. It was suggested that three hypothetical examples be worked up and brought back to a future scrutiny meeting or via a briefing note. Following this discussion, and having been duly proposed and seconded, the Panel voted in favour of forwarding a proposed recommendation to the Cabinet;

> 1.2) that Cabinet do not go ahead with the approval of the policy until such a time as work to provide examples as requested has been completed and reported back through the democratic process and to establish a framework to monitor and to include penalties through reporting upon that process.

4.10 It was noted that the policy had been developed following recent government legislation and took into account best practice from other local authorities. It was confirmed that measures would be in place to ensure compliance with the terms of contracts awarded to ensure promised social value elements were fulfilled.

4.11 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for Cabinet to make a decision upon the recommendations within the report, and additionally, the Panel request that the Cabinet consider adding the following recommendation to their report;

> 1.2) that Cabinet do not go ahead with the approval of the policy until such a time as work to provide examples as requested has been completed and reported back through the democratic process and to establish a framework to monitor and to include penalties through reporting upon that process.

5. POST-DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the Policy will be implemented through updated procurement guidance, templates, supplier communications and officer training. Social Value outcomes will be monitored and reported through the Social Value Engine and existing governance arrangements.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

6.1 Council Key Priorities and Performance

- Improving quality of life for local people
- Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
- Doing our core work well

The proposed Policy supports all three priorities within the Corporate Plan by establishing a consistent approach to securing additional economic, social and environmental benefits through the Council's procurement and commissioning activity.

It supports Improving quality of life for local people by encouraging procurement outcomes that contribute to employment and skills opportunities, improved health and wellbeing, reduced social isolation, stronger community organisations and increased community resilience.

It supports Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations by encouraging sustainable supply chains, carbon reduction, biodiversity, waste reduction, climate adaptation and investment in accessible and thriving places. It also seeks to improve access to procurement opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations and other local suppliers, where lawful and proportionate.

It supports Doing our core work well by aligning procurement decisions with the Council's strategic priorities and the statutory objectives of delivering value for money and maximising public benefit. The Policy establishes clearer responsibilities for planning, evaluating, recording and monitoring Social Value commitments.

Delivery will be monitored through proportionate contract-management arrangements and the Social Value Engine, with outcomes reported annually through procurement governance and performance reporting. This will provide greater assurance that commitments made through procurement activity are translated into demonstrable benefits for residents, communities, businesses and the environment.

6.2 Financial Implications

6.2.1 N/A

6.3 Legal & Constitutional Implications

6.3.1 The Policy supports the Council's compliance with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, the Procurement Act 2023 and the National Procurement Policy Statement by establishing a consistent approach to considering and delivering wider public benefit through procurement activity. The Policy does not, in itself, require any amendment to the Council's Constitution.

6.4 Community Impact

6.4.1 The Policy is intended to maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits generated through the Council's procurement, commissioning and partnership activity. It will support outcomes relating to employment and skills, community resilience, health and wellbeing, inclusive growth and thriving local places, whilst encouraging greater participation from SMEs and VCSE organisations where lawful and proportionate

6.5 Environment & Climate Change Implications

6.5.1 The Policy includes climate, nature and environmental resilience as one of its six Social Value outcomes. It will encourage consideration of proportionate environmental benefits through relevant procurement activity, including carbon reduction, sustainable supply chains, waste reduction, biodiversity and climate resilience, where these are relevant to the subject matter of the contract.

6.6 Equality & Diversity Implications

6.6.1 The Policy supports inclusive access to procurement opportunities and may contribute to wider equality, inclusion and community wellbeing outcomes through relevant procurement and commissioning activity. No adverse equality impacts have been identified.

6.7 Implications on Resources

6.7.1 N/A

6.8 Health & Wellbeing Implications

6.8.1 Health wellbeing and prevention is one of the six outcomes contained within the proposed Policy. Relevant procurement and commissioning activity may therefore seek proportionate commitments that improve physical or mental wellbeing, reduce loneliness and social isolation, support prevention and strengthen community resilience.

The Policy also supports wider health outcomes through its focus on employment and skills, accessible places, stronger communities, environmental resilience and support for residents who may otherwise be at risk of entering crisis.

The inclusion of health and wellbeing outcomes will be determined according to the nature and potential impact of each procurement or commissioning activity. Commitments will be required to be relevant, proportionate, additional to the core contractual requirement and capable of being monitored.

6.9 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

6.9.1 N/A

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The proposed Policy is intended to reduce the risk that Social Value is considered inconsistently, too late in the procurement process or without a clear connection to the Council's strategic priorities and local needs.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

8.1

Document List	Custodian	File Location
Social Value Policy and Framework 2019	Procurement Team	Appendix 1 - Social Value Policy and Framework 2019.pdf
Corporate Plan 2023–2028	Business Intelligence and Performance / Corporate Policy	Corporate Plan Refresh 2026 27 - Appendix A - Corporate Plan.pdf
Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy	Relevant corporate strategy owner	Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk
HDC Climate Strategy	Climate Team	Climate Strategy - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy	Communities Team	Huntingdonshire Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	The National Archives	Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012
Procurement Act 2023, Section 12	The National Archives	Procurement Act 2023
National Procurement Policy Statement	Cabinet Office	National Procurement Policy Statement - GOV.UK

9. LIST OF APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1 – Procurement Outcomes – The Social Value Policy**

APPENDIX 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Procurement Outcomes - the Social Value Policy

Introduction and purpose

This policy sets out Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC's) approach to Social Value and the implementation of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 (the Act), as strengthened by the Procurement Act 2023 and the National Procurement Policy Statement. It explains how HDC will use procurement, commissioning, funding, partnerships and influence to create additional public benefit for residents, communities, businesses and the environment.

The policy is intended to define the outcomes HDC wants to achieve and provide a consistent policy basis for procurement and commissioning decisions. This policy establishes HDC's Social Value framework and sets out the outcomes, principles, governance arrangements and procurement requirements that will apply. Supporting procurement guidance may be developed from time to time to assist officers with implementation, evaluation, scoring and contract management.

The policy will:

- define what Social Value means to HDC;
- set out the relevant legislative requirements that govern HDC's procurement processes;
- demonstrate HDC's commitment to delivering Social Value;
- introduce HDC's Social Value outcomes and objectives so that procurement outcomes are relevant and meaningful; and
- set out how Social Value will be built into procurement and commissioning activity in a way that is proportionate to the size, subject matter, duration and impact of the activity.

Definition of Social Value

Social value in procurement is about making sure that what we buy creates an overall positive impact on our people and communities, the local economy and the environment. For HDC, this is linked to both the Corporate Plan and Huntingdonshire Futures.

For practical purposes, Social Value can be divided into three main areas:

- social: improving the wellbeing of individuals and communities, encouraging interconnectedness and mutual support among people;
- economic: promoting economic policies and business practices that support society's wellbeing by strengthening the local economy through increased local spend, SME access and supplier diversity;
- environmental: encouraging sustainable processes that take care of the social and physical environment, ensuring a viable future for everyone.

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Corporate Plan priorities	Place Strategy journeys	What this means for Social Value
Improve quality of life for local people Create a better Huntingdonshire for future generations Do our core work well	Pride in Place Inclusive Economy Health Embedded Environmental Innovation Travel Transformed	Every significant opportunity should show how it contributes to locally important outcomes, not just compliance, price or outputs.

Outcomes that matter for Huntingdonshire

HDC will prioritise six Social Value outcomes. These are broad enough to apply across services, but specific enough to guide commissioning, grant-making, supplier engagement and partnership conversations.

Outcome	What HDC wants to see	Corporate Plan fit	Place Strategy fit
1. Stronger local economy and good growth	More local spend where lawful and proportionate; greater access for SMEs, VCSEs and local suppliers; stronger supply chains; support for entrepreneurship and business resilience.	Forward-thinking economic growth; doing core work well	Inclusive Economy; Pride in Place
2. Jobs, skills and opportunity for local people	Employment pathways, apprenticeships, work experience, return-to-work routes, volunteering, digital inclusion and skills linked to growth sectors and community need.	Quality of life; economic growth	Inclusive Economy; Health Embedded
3. Health, wellbeing and prevention	Activities that improve physical and mental wellbeing, reduce loneliness and social isolation, keep people out of crisis and support community resilience.	Improve quality of life; keeping people out of crisis	Health Embedded; Pride in Place
4. Strong, connected and inclusive communities	Support for resident-led activity, community organisations, volunteering, local networks, safer communities and places where people feel they belong.	Quality of life; helping people in crisis	Pride in Place; Health Embedded
5. Climate, nature and environmental resilience	Carbon reduction, sustainable supply chains, biodiversity, waste reduction, climate adaptation, active travel and support for lower-carbon communities and businesses.	Better Huntingdonshire; lowering carbon emissions	Environmental Innovation; Travel Transformed
6. Accessible and thriving places	Improvements that support town centres, rural communities, visitor economy, safe and accessible public spaces, community assets and pride in local identity.	Better Huntingdonshire; quality of life	Pride in Place; Travel Transformed

In prioritising these six outcomes, the Council will seek proportionate evidence of the Social Value achieved. This should demonstrate what changed, who benefited, how the learning will inform future decisions, and how the public benefit created compares with the Council's investment, expenditure or influence. The nature and level of evidence required will be proportionate to the scale, value, duration and potential impact of the activity.

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Legislative Requirements

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public services contracts. Under the Procurement Act 2023, contracting authorities must now also have regard to the importance of maximising public benefit when awarding all contracts, whether for goods, services or works.

In accordance with section 1 of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, the Council will consider, before commencing a relevant procurement, how the proposed procurement might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area and how the procurement process might secure that improvement. Consideration will be limited to matters that are relevant to what is being procured and proportionate in all the circumstances. The Council will also consider whether consultation should be undertaken to help identify relevant needs, outcomes or opportunities.

This now represents a broader and stronger policy expectation, because it supports a move away from a narrow cost-focused approach and more towards procurement decisions that take account of wider public benefit, value for money and the Most Advantageous Tender.

The Procurement Act 2023 also strengthens planning, transparency and accountability by requiring Social Value to be considered early in procurement activity where relevant and proportionate. This includes considering whether larger contracts could be divided into Lots to encourage SME and VCSE participation and for relevant £5 million plus contracts, setting up and publishing at least three Key Performance Indicators.

Where Social Value commitments are captured as contract commitments or KPIs, they must be capable of monitoring through contract management arrangements and, where applicable, public reporting on supplier performance.

HDC commitment and policy principles

HDC is committed to making the most out of every pound it spends and will embed a Social Value approach into procurement and commissioning activity. The Council will pursue outcomes that contribute to Corporate Plan priorities, Huntingdonshire Futures and the needs of local communities.

The Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy is a long-term, community-shaped vision developed with residents, businesses and partners. HDC's Social Value approach will support delivery of the Place Strategy journeys through procurement, commissioning and partnership activity.

Integrating Social Value into procurement and commissioning should not only support delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan objectives, but also provide wider benefits, including greater supplier diversity, increased stakeholder engagement, improved collaboration and stronger, mutually beneficial relationships with the VCSE sector.

HDC will apply the following principles:

Principle	What this means in practice
Local relevance	Social Value should respond to Huntingdonshire's needs, not generic promises. Offers should be linked to one or more of the outcomes above.

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Principle	What this means in practice
Proportionality	Expectations should be relevant to the scale, duration, subject matter, and market for the activity, avoiding unnecessary barriers for SMEs and VCSE organisations.
Additionality	Benefits should go beyond normal contract delivery, statutory duties, or basic good practice wherever possible.
Partnership and co-production	Where outcomes affect communities directly, HDC will value approaches shaped with residents, community groups, town and parish councils and partners.
Transparency and evidence	Outcomes should be capable of being monitored through quantitative data, qualitative evidence, case studies, or Social Return on Investment analysis.
Learning and improvement	Monitoring should not just prove value; it should help HDC and partners understand what works, replicate good practice, and improve future decisions.

Applying Social Value through procurement and commissioning

This policy applies to all contracts whether or not the value of the contract is above the relevant threshold for goods, services or works. HDC will look to incorporate a Social Value element in procurement and commissioning activity where this is lawful, proportionate, and relevant to the subject matter and impact of the requirement.

Low value procurement processes below £100k

For lower value purchases, the focus will be on encouraging local supplier (PE postcode) participation where permitted, making the process straightforward and reducing unnecessary barriers for SMEs and VCSE organisations. Service leads should consider:

- inviting local suppliers where possible to participate in the procurement process;
- setting minimum requirements at an appropriate and proportionate level;
- ensuring specifications are achievable by smaller businesses while still meeting the Council's needs;
- engaging the market early where this will improve participation and outcomes; and
- supporting suppliers to understand HDC processes and systems.

Higher value or higher impact procurement processes above £100k

For higher value or higher impact procurements, HDC will take a more targeted approach. This policy will assist commissioning leads and Procurement in identifying relevant outcomes, designing proportionate tender requirements and ensuring commitments can be effectively monitored.

Service leads and the Procurement Team will, during the pre-procurement stage, consider whether proportionate consultation or engagement is required and assess the market as appropriate. The decision, including where consultation is considered unnecessary, should

be recorded in the procurement planning documentation. Where consultation or engagement is undertaken, it may involve relevant service users, residents, community and VCSE organisations, town and parish councils, internal stakeholders, partners or potential suppliers, depending on the nature of the requirement. This will assist the Council to establish:

- the Social Value outcomes that are relevant and proportionate to the contract;
- how the procurement process can be designed to encourage delivery of those outcomes;
- whether the contract should be divided into Lots to support SME/VCSE participation; and
- what evidence, KPIs or contract management arrangements will be needed to monitor delivery.

Where appropriate, HDC will consider dividing larger contracts into Lots to make opportunities more accessible to SMEs, VCSE organisations and specialist suppliers. Decisions will take account of the nature of the requirement, market capability, value for money, effective contract management and the need to avoid unnecessary barriers to participation.

Prospective suppliers will be required to provide evidence of a Social Value offer that aims to meet specified outcomes. HDC will typically apply a minimum Social Value weighting of 10% in applicable procurements, proportionate to the scope, value, risk, market and potential impact of the contract.

The weighting can be applied in one of two ways:

1. The Social Value weighting will form part of the overall Quality score. Where this applies, Officers should look to maintain the minimum 10% e.g., if the total Quality weighting is 50% and Price is 50% the specific Social Value question/s should have a minimum 20% weighting that sits within the Quality section
2. The Social Value weighting is standalone, outside of Quality and Price weightings. Where this applies, Officers should apportion specific weightings on Quality, Price and Social Value e.g., Quality 40%, Price 50% Social Value 10%

The Procurement Team will provide further practical guidance for suppliers to support transparency and equal access. HDC's Social Value outcomes and objectives will be clearly communicated through procurement documentation and supplier engagement activities so that suppliers can tailor their proposals accordingly.

Monitoring: Social Value Engine

The Social Value Engine will be HDC’s primary monitoring tool for Social Value outcomes. It will be used to evidence the impact of activity where outcomes need to be quantified, compared, reported or learned from across projects, grants, partnerships and relevant supplier commitments.

The Social Value Engine is an online Social Return on Investment platform. In practical terms, it helps convert agreed outcomes into a consistent estimate of value by using

recognised outcome measures and financial proxies. It supports both forecasting and post-delivery evaluation, enabling HDC to understand not only what was delivered, but what changed for residents, communities, businesses and the environment.

Monitoring through the Social Value Engine should be proportionate. Some activity will need detailed quantitative evidence; some will be better supported by narrative reporting, case studies, resident feedback or partner evidence. The key test is whether the evidence is sufficient to show the outcome achieved and to support learning and accountability.

The Council will identify appropriate officers to act as Social Value Engine Champions. These officers will support service leads, contract managers and procurement officers in identifying relevant outcomes, selecting suitable measures, reviewing evidence and ensuring consistent reporting.

Monitoring focus	Example evidence	Why it matters
Inputs and activity	Funding, spend, supplier commitments, volunteer hours, project reach	Shows what HDC and partners invested or enabled.
Outputs	People supported, businesses engaged, sessions delivered, tonnes of carbon avoided	Shows delivery against agreed commitments.
Outcomes and value	Wellbeing, resilience, employment, local income, carbon, community connection, SROI ratio	Shows whether activity made a meaningful difference.

Robust information on the type and impact of Social Value gained through the Council's procurement and commissioning activity will be reported annually as part of procurement governance and performance reporting. Reporting should summarise outcomes delivered, who benefited, where benefits were created, learning for future commissioning and opportunities to scale or replicate successful activity.

Direct investment in the Community Health and Wealth Building Fund (CHaWS)

Where a supplier, partner or organisation cannot reasonably make direct, contract-specific commitments - or where a financial contribution would create clearer and more locally targeted impact - HDC may invite or accept a direct investment into CHaWS as an alternative Social Value route. This must not be treated as a way to buy advantage in a procurement process; it is an outcomes-led option for delivering public benefit where it is proportionate, transparent and aligned to the Council's priorities. HDC should always look to encourage suppliers to make an impact through their individual direct action.

CHaWS sits alongside the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy and supports community-led activity that improves quality of life by addressing the root causes of poor health and economic inequality. Direct investment into CHaWS enables contributions to be pooled and targeted at local projects with clear governance, monitoring and evidence of impact.

Contributions into CHaWS should be monitored through the Social Value Engine wherever appropriate so that HDC can report value created, learn from funded activity and

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demonstrate how business investment is improving outcomes for Huntingdonshire communities.

CHaWS outcome focus	What investment should support	Policy fit
Economic resilience	Projects that help residents, community organisations and local places build financial confidence, skills, enterprise, volunteering and local income.	Inclusive Economy; quality of life; doing core work well
Social connection	Community-led activity that reduces isolation, strengthens volunteering, builds local networks and helps people participate in community life.	Pride in Place; Health Embedded
Physical and mental wellbeing	Initiatives that improve wellbeing, support prevention, build confidence and help keep people out of crisis.	Health Embedded; quality of life

Supplier engagement and inclusive access

The Procurement Team and Economic Development Team will work together to maximise knowledge of, and access to, local businesses. This will make it easier to identify local businesses, promote relevant opportunities, support suppliers to understand HDC procurement processes and encourage stronger relationships with SMEs, VCSE organisations and community-led providers.

HDC will seek approaches that reduce unnecessary barriers to participation while maintaining fair competition, transparency, value for money and compliance with procurement legislation.

Governance and review

Ownership of this policy should sit with the Council's senior leadership arrangements for Social Value, with input from Procurement, Communities, Place and Climate, Finance, Performance, Legal and relevant service leads. Responsibility for Social Value does not sit solely within Procurement; it is a shared responsibility across commissioning, procurement, contract management and supplier delivery.

The policy should be reviewed alongside the Corporate Plan annual refresh, changes to the Place Strategy delivery plan, procurement legislation and learning from Social Value Engine reporting.

Together, the Social Value outcomes, implementation requirements, monitoring arrangements and governance provisions contained within this document form HDC's Social Value framework.

Appendix A – Social Value Governance and RACI Matrix

The RACI matrix below sets out the respective roles and responsibilities for implementation of this policy and should be used alongside relevant procurement governance arrangements.

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Activity	SL	P	ED	T	SRO	PB	CM	CD	SUP
Determine whether Social Value applies	R	C	C	I	A	I	I	-	-
Determine appropriate Social Value weighting	R	C	C	I	A	I	-	-	-
Approve exception or non-application of Social Value	C	C	I	I	R	I	-	-	-
Consider and record whether consultation or engagement is required	R	C	C	C	A	I	C	-	I
Undertake market engagement	R	R	C	I	A	I	-	-	I
Identify relevant Social Value outcomes	R	C	C	C	A	I	-	-	-
Develop Social Value questions and evaluation approach	R	C	C	I	A	I	-	-	-
Promote opportunities to local suppliers	I	C	R	I	A	I	-	-	-
Evaluate Social Value submissions	R	I	C/R	I	A	I	-	-	-
Approve award recommendation	C	C	I	I	A	I	-	R	-
Incorporate commitments into contract documents	C	R	I	I	A	I	-	-	-
Monitor delivery of Social Value commitments	I	C	I	C	I	I	R	-	R
Collect KPI and evidence data	I	I	I	C	I	I	R	-	R
Annual reporting on Social Value delivered	C	R	C	C	A	I	R	-	I
Review Social Value Policy	C	R	C	C	A	I	I	-	I

Key: R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

Abbreviation	Role	Abbreviation	Role
SL	Service Lead / Contract Owner	PB	Procurement Board
P	Procurement Team	CM	Contract Manager
ED	Economic Development Team	CD	Corporate Director
T	Transformation Team	SUP	Supplier
SRO	Senior Responsible Officer / Budget Holder		

Agenda Item 5

Cabinet – 20 October 2026

Report by: Chief Planning Officer

Lead Cllr: Executive Councillor for Planning

Wards	Open / Exempt	Key Decision?
Kimbolton Ward (Brington and Molesworth Parish)	Open	Yes

Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan examination outcome and progression to referendum

Executive Summary: Following the examination of the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan this report proposes acting upon the Examiner's report to accept the modifications proposed and progress to referendum.

Recommendations

1.1. That Cabinet agree that the District Council should act upon the Examiner's report to accept the recommended modifications and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum.

	Key Corporate Plan Priorities
1	Improving quality of life for local people.
2	Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations.

	Place Strategy Priorities
1	Pride in Place.

Report Author(s)

Natalie Elworthy, Senior Planning Policy Officer (natalie.elworthy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
Xinyue Dong, Planning Policy Officer (xinyue.dong@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report seeks agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan. It also sets out a timetable for this process.

2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 Brington and Molesworth Parish Council produced a submission version of their Neighbourhood Plan which was available for comment between 26 May 2026 and 7 July 2026. The Examiner's Report on the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan was received on 27 August 2026. The Examiner recommended that with appropriate modifications the neighbourhood plan would meet the basic conditions against which it is required to be tested and so should progress to referendum.

2.2 The Examiner proposed a number of modifications to the submitted neighbourhood plan. These have been discussed and agreed with representatives of Brington and Molesworth Parish Council.

2.3 The modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Examiner's report and draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions are all included as Appendices to this report.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 Following the examination of a neighbourhood plan the Examiner sends their report to the local planning authority and the town/parish council preparing the neighbourhood plan. The examiner is required to set out one of three options:

1. That the neighbourhood plan proceeds to referendum as submitted
2. That the neighbourhood plan is modified by the local planning authority to meet the basic conditions and the modified version proceeds to referendum; or
3. That the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to referendum as it fails to meet the basic conditions and/ or legislative requirements and cannot be modified to do so.

3.2 The local planning authority has limited options in how to respond to the examiner's recommendations:

a) Act upon the Examiner's report and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum, whether or not the Examiner recommends modifications are necessary to meet the basic conditions;
b) Propose to take a decision substantially different from the Examiner's recommendation which is wholly or partly as a result of new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact; or
c) Decide not to progress the neighbourhood plan in light of the Examiner's report - this is only permissible where '3.' above is the case.

3.3 Having regard to the options set out in paragraph 3.2:

- It is considered that the modifications will enable the Neighbourhood Plan to meet the basic conditions required; and

- There is no new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact to indicate that option ‘b)’ in paragraph 3.2 should be followed.

4. POST-DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Following approval by Cabinet, preparations will be made for a referendum to be held on the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Regulations.

4.2 In addition to considering whether the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions the Examiner is required to recommend on the area to be covered by the referendum. In this instance he recommended that the referendum area be the same as the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan area, approved by the District Council.

4.3 There is a statutory requirement through The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended) for 28 workings days’ notice to be given before the referendum is held. There is also a requirement that the referendum is held within 56 working days of the decision that the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum, unless there is an existing planned polling opportunity that the referendum could be combined with which the qualifying body (Brington and Molesworth Parish Council) have agreed. A potential date for the referendum has been discussed with Democratic Services. Holding the referendum on 3 December 2026 is proposed, which would meet both time requirements. This provisional date has been discussed with representatives of Brington and Molesworth Parish Council, and they have indicated that they support this date.

4.4 At the referendum residents will be able to vote on the question: ‘Do you want Huntingdonshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Brington and Molesworth to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?’

4.5 If a majority of votes cast by residents are ‘yes’, Full Council will be asked to ‘make’ the neighbourhood plan at its next available meeting, which, assuming that the referendum is held on 3 December 2026, would be on 16 December 2026. The plan will then become part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

5.1 Council Key Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities of ‘improving quality of life for local people; and ‘creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations’ as it will be used to shape the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.2 Financial Implications

5.2.1 As in previous years an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

5.3 Policy Implications

5.3.1 If successfully made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of Huntingdonshire's Development Plan used to determine planning applications.

5.4 Legal & Constitutional Implications

5.4.1 A Neighbourhood Plan must meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Examiner's report has confirmed that Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan, as proposed to be modified, meets all the basic conditions. Officers are satisfied that there are no conflicts with the basic conditions and legislative requirements.

5.5 Community Impact

5.5.1 The Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan has a significant potential community impact for the Neighbourhood Plan Area through shaping the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.6 Environment & Climate Change Implications

5.6.1 The Examiner's report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not conflict with the aims of securing development which contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

5.7 Equality & Diversity Implications

5.7.1 The Examiner's report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998) and meets all relevant legal requirements including those relating to equality.

5.8 Implications on Resources

5.8.1 As in previous years an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

5.9 Health & Wellbeing Implications

5.9.1 The Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan has potential to enhance health and wellbeing within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through shaping the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.10 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

5.10.1 Progressing the Neighbourhood Plan towards Referendum does not result in implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

5.10.2 It is expected that adopted plans will remain in force for the part of the new unitary area to which they relate until they are superseded by a new unitary wide plan.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Not progressing the Neighbourhood Plan to referendum could result in a challenge from the Parish Council as this would deviate from the recommendations made by the independent Examiner where it was concluded that the Plan, once modified, meets all relevant legal requirements.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS– LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Localism Act 2011

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

National Planning Practice Guidance (Neighbourhood Planning)

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan (as modified)

Appendix 2 – The Examiner's Report of Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions.

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Referendum Version
December 2026

Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan

2021-2036

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council



Foreword

Welcome to the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan.

This document is prepared by Brington and Molesworth Parish Council. It seeks to help guide planning applications and decisions in the Parish. Neighbourhood Plans were introduced by the 2012 Localism Act as a way for local communities to make planning policies tailored to their areas, adding local detail and considerations to be read alongside the wider-reaching Local Plan for the district.

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council has undertaken a substantial amount of work beginning in 2022, starting with a consultation on the views and aspirations of the local community in respect of planning for their area. This Plan is the result of that process and sets out a vision for the sustainable future of the parish. We have undertaken two public consultations, and we have ensured all feedback was considered and incorporated in the final draft, where appropriate. The final stage is a public referendum, to formally 'make' the plan.

The Plan would not have been possible without the support of many individuals and organisations. The Parish Council would like to thank residents who contributed their time and insight through consultation events and surveys. We also acknowledge the valuable input and ongoing support of officers from Huntingdonshire District Council, and technical assistance provided by AECOM (infrastructure consultants) previously through the Locality support programme.

This version of the Plan has been prepared with the help of planning consultants from Pellegram Ltd., who were appointed to support the Council in completing the work required to take the Plan through consultation and towards formal submission.

It is intended that this document provides a clear and constructive framework for guiding development in a way that respects and enhances what makes Brington and Molesworth special.





Glossary

Active Travel - any form of human-powered transportation, primarily walking and cycling, used for purposeful journeys.

Affordable housing - housing options priced below market value, specifically designed for individuals and families who cannot afford market-rate housing.

Local Plan - document created by a local planning authority that sets out a vision and framework for future development in a specific area.

Mineral and Waste Local Plan - sets the framework for all minerals and waste developments until 2036 in Cambridgeshire.

National Planning Policy Framework - outlines the UK government's planning policies for England.

Qualifying Body - an official organisation authorised to lead a neighbourhood planning process (e.g. a Parish Council).

Regulation 14 - requires the draft neighbourhood plan proposal to be the subject of a pre-submission consultation before it is submitted to the local authority for independent examination.

Regulation 15 – requires the submission of a draft neighbourhood plan to the local planning authority, leading to a basic conditions statement to demonstrate how the plan meets legal requirements.

Regulation 16 - requires that local planning authorities publicly consult on proposed neighbourhood plans or modifications by publishing details and inviting representations before making a decision.

Windfall Development – Unplanned housing developments that come forward on sites not specifically allocated in a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.

How the Neighbourhood Plan is Organised

The Neighbourhood Plan is set out in six sections:

- Part 1: Introduction
- Part 2: Context
- Part 3: Local Consultation
- Part 4: Vision and Objectives
- Part 5: Policies
    - BM 1 – Brington Built-Up Areas
    - BM 2 – Housing Mix
    - BM 3 – Affordable Housing Tenure
    - BM 4 – Economic Development
    - BM 5 – Delivering Good Design
    - BM 6 – Addressing Climate Change
    - BM 7 – Public Rights of Way
    - BM 8 – Traffic and Transport
    - BM 9 – Biodiversity and Nature Recovery
    - BM 10 – Flood Risk and Drainage
    - BM 11 – Community Facilities
    - BM 12 – Local Green Spaces
    - BM 13 – Green Amenity Areas
- Part 6: Appendices
    - Appendix 1: Design Codes
    - Appendix 2: Flood Events in the Parish
    - Appendix 3: Local Green Spaces
    - Appendix 4: Green Amenity Areas

The Neighbourhood Plan is supported by several Evidence Documents (EDs):

- ED1: Community Survey (2022)
- ED2: Built-Up Areas Evidence Document
- ED3: Housing Needs Assessment (Prepared by AECOM)
- ED4: Housing Needs Assessment Analysis
- ED5: Brington and Molesworth Design Code (Prepared by AECOM)

1. Introduction

1.1 Neighbourhood Plans (also referred to as Neighbourhood Development Plans or NPs) were introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and enacted in the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012.

1.2 The purpose of NPs is to ensure that decisions on planning applications or planning appeals consider the unique aspirations and needs of local residents and businesses, such as those within the parish of Brington and Molesworth.

1.3 The policies in this plan reflect the aspirations and address the challenges identified by the community and seek to help guide development in Brington and Molesworth to 2036. This plan has been shaped by local community consultation feedback from its outset and will continue to be up to the point of its adoption.

1.4 The NP, when complete, will form part of the statutory development plan for an area. Currently, the development plan for the Parish consists of planning policies in the Adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan (HLP) prepared by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) and the Mineral and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) 2021 adopted by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC).

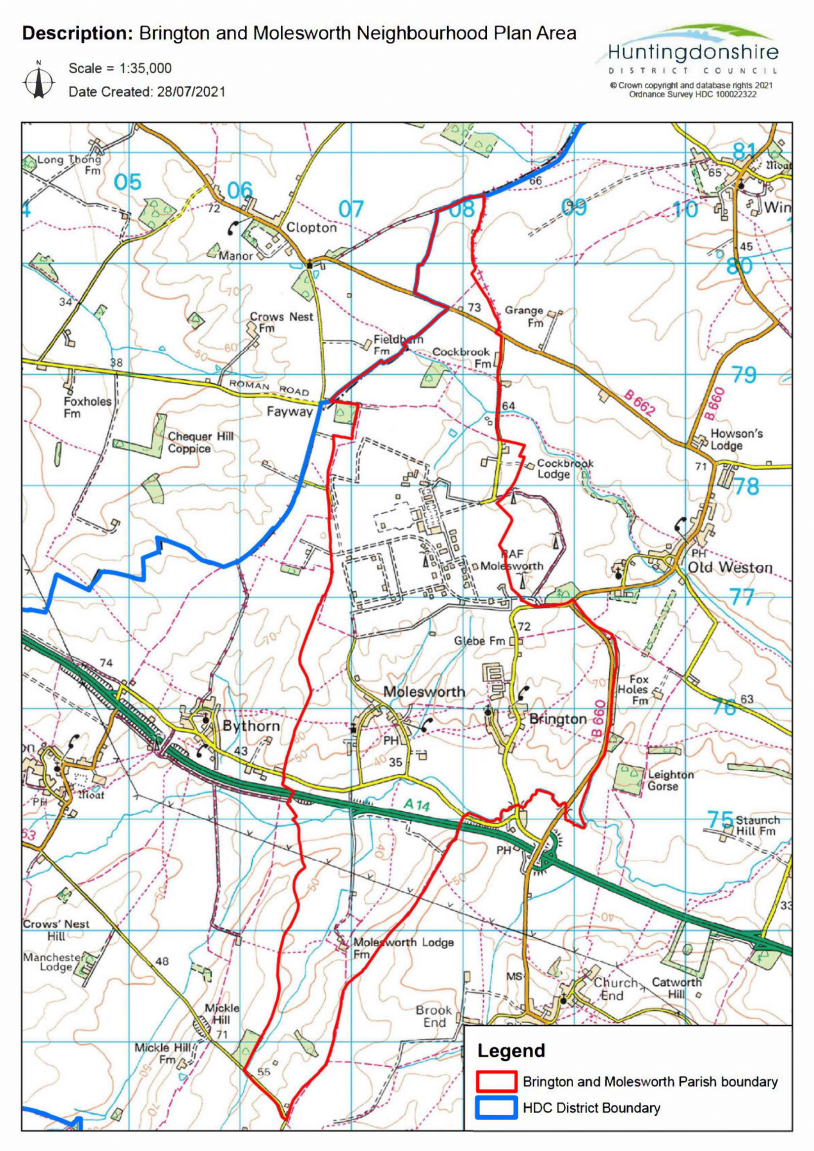
1.5 The NP, once adopted, will provide the local community with a powerful tool to help guide the long-term future of Brington and Molesworth and protect their surrounding countryside for the period 2021 to 2036. Although this has been prepared by the Parish Council, it is made for all residents, both current and future.

Neighbourhood Area Designation

1.6 The Brington and Molesworth Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body (QB), notified HDC in 2021 of its wish to prepare a NP. The NP Area was formally designated in July 2021.

1.7 Figure 1 (below) shows the boundary of the NP area, which is the same as the administrative boundary of Brington and Molesworth Parish. There are no adopted NPs covering this area.

Figure 1. Neighbourhood Area Designation



The Plan-Making Process

1.8 There are several stages in the preparation of a NP and this version is the result of that process.



1.9 Before any work was undertaken on the plan, a survey of residents and local businesses in the Parish was carried out between the end of June 2022 and the middle of August 2022. We had an excellent response rate with 53% of households completing the survey. This provided a valuable understanding of the community aspirations, challenges and opportunities and informed the scope and intent of the policies contained within this version of the Plan. The findings of this survey are set out within ED1.

1.10 The community engagement process with local residents and businesses identified a number of issues and potential projects that are not related to planning and therefore could not be addressed through the policies in this document. The Parish Council will continue to consider how these issues and ideas might be taken forward in partnership with residents and other organisations.

1.11 The draft plan was then subject to a parish-wide community consultation, where residents were invited provide comments over six weeks during January and February 2026. Overall, there was positive support for the proposals and comments received on this plan were incorporated into this draft where appropriate. Statutory consultees and Huntingdonshire District Council were also invited to provide comments, and these have been addressed accordingly. For further information, see the 'Consultation Report'.

1.12 Following this, the Plan was handed over to Huntingdonshire Council for a second parish-wide consultation. Residents and stakeholders were given further opportunities to provide feedback during these stages.

1.13 Finally, the Plan went to examination. The Examiner considered the proposed draft and all comments on the plan. His report concluded that the Plan meets all Basic Conditions, meaning HDC can hold a Parish-wide Referendum allowing residents to vote on whether to adopt the Plan. If more than 50% of the votes cast are in favour of the Plan, the Plan can be "made", and it will carry full weight in the planning process, meaning planning applications must address its policies.

2. Context

General Overview

2.1 Brington and Molesworth Parish is a small rural parish located in the western part of Huntingdonshire District, within Cambridgeshire. It lies approximately 12 miles west of Huntingdon, the nearest market town and administrative centre. The parish comprises two distinct villages – Brington and Molesworth – both set within an attractive countryside setting and surrounded by high-quality agricultural land and isolated properties.

Photo 1: View of East Molesworth and The Green from Millenium Field



2.2 A key defining feature of the parish is RAF Molesworth, an active United States Air Force base located north of the two villages. Originally developed as a bomber airfield in the Second World War, the site now houses the US European Command's Joint Intelligence Operations Centre (JIOC). The base plays a significant role in the local economy, attracting a substantial number of daily in-commuters and serving as an anchor of international defence infrastructure. A major redevelopment project is currently underway, including a £219 million investment into new facilities expected to be completed by 2028.

2.3 Molesworth village has a substantial Conservation Area which includes the surrounding countryside. Brington, despite being host to a number of historic buildings, does not have a conservation area and has seen a number of small housing developments in recent years. Most development has been minor in quantum however there was a notable development of 52 dwellings north of the historic settlement for the replacement of outdated service accommodation previously supporting RAF Molesworth. As a result, a significant number of new families have recently moved to private housing in the parish at Hill Place and The Green, now unconnected to RAF Molesworth . Figure 2 shows the key areas of the parish.

Figure 2. Key Areas

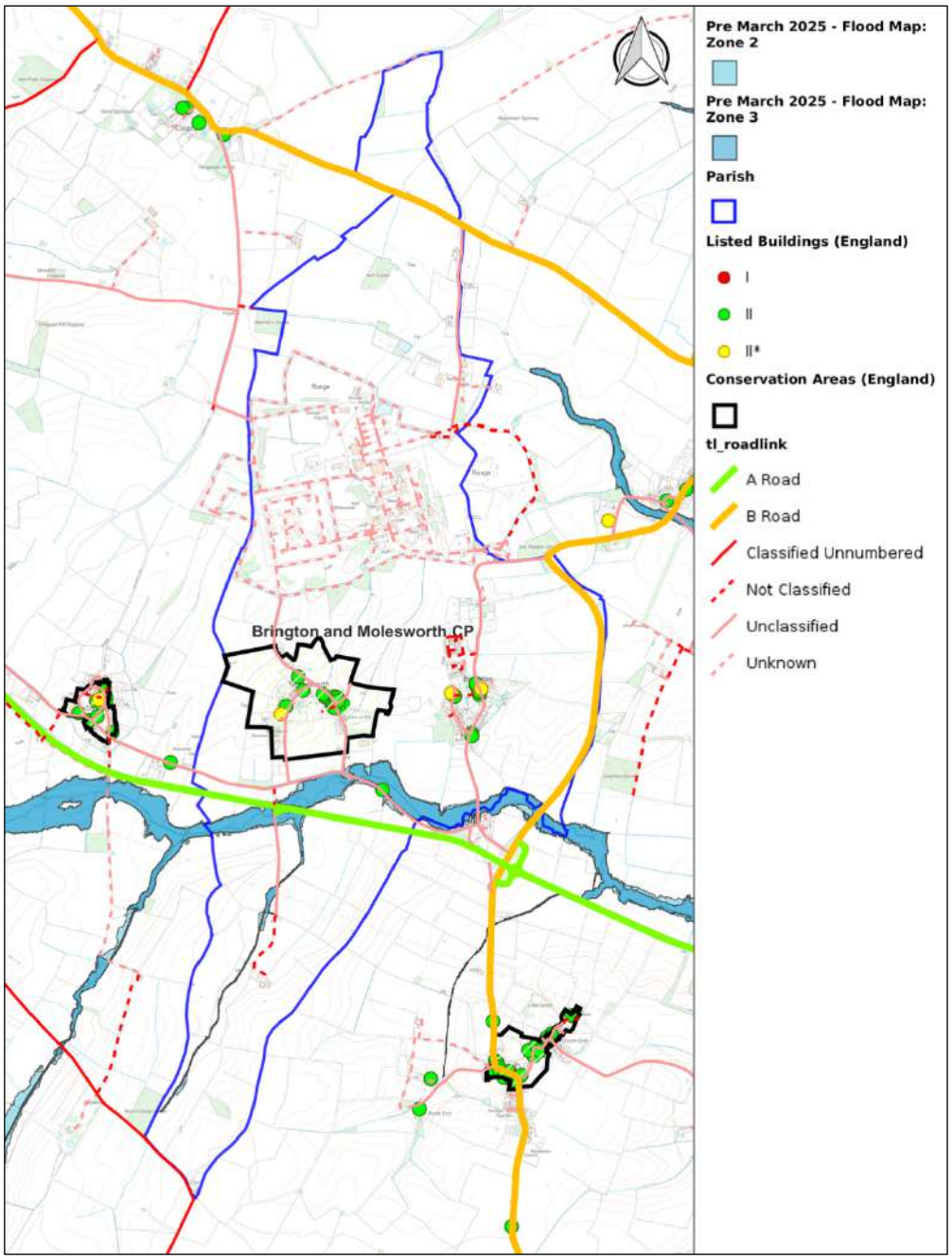


Source: Satellite Image from Landstack

2.4 The A14 runs along the southern edge of the parish (Figure 3), providing a strategic and efficient connection to both east and west. The A1 lies to the east of the two villages and additionally provides a strategic and effective link to the north and south (Figure 4). Huntingdon has a mainline station providing a good railway service to London, and Peterborough (for the

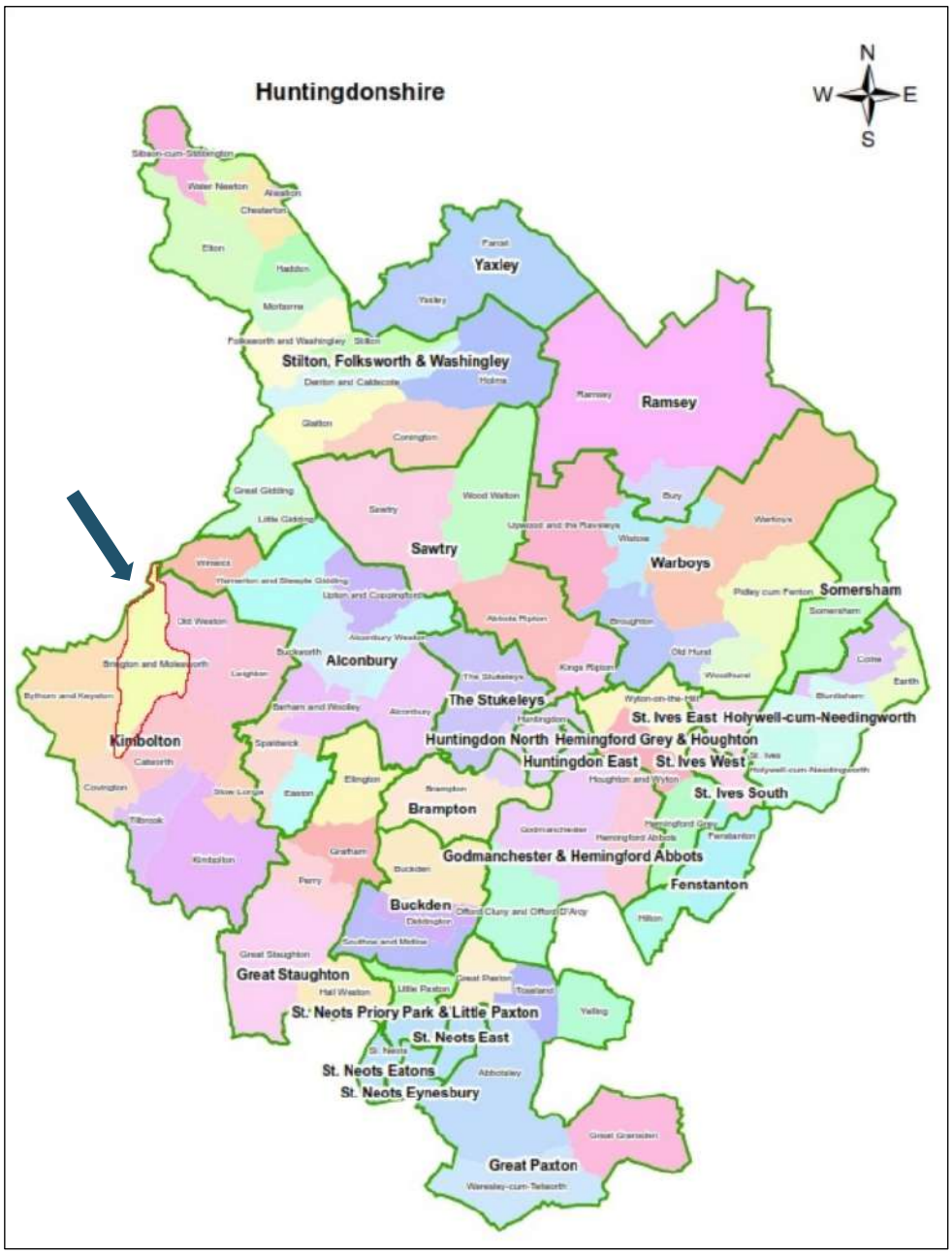
North). However, the parish has a very limited public transport offer, meaning what existing jobs, facilities and services do not exist within the parish require a car. The villages experience heavy traffic, including HGV traffic, when the A14 is closed, although the Highways Agency has been encouraging the use of other routes.

Figure 3. Parish, Roads, and Key Constraints



Prepared under OS License AC0000853571

Figure 4. Map showing the location of the Parish



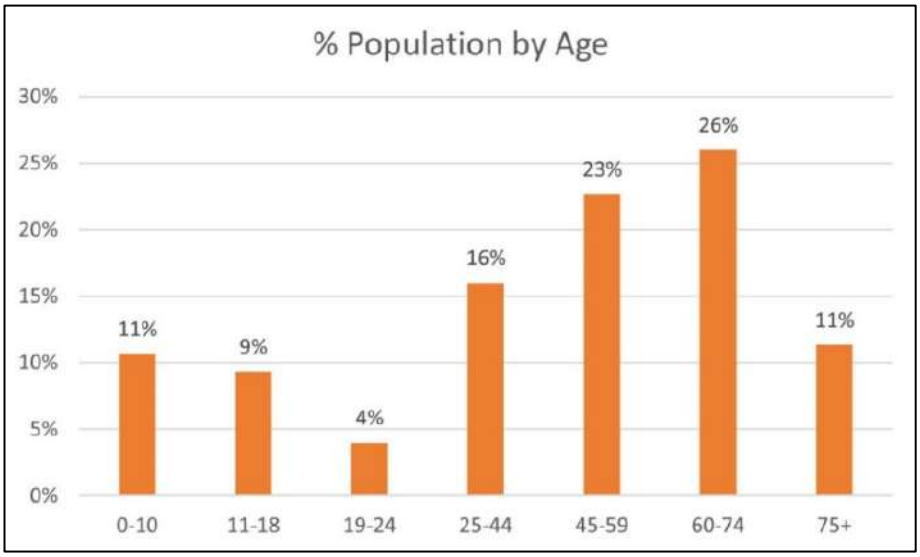
Prepared under OS Licence AC0000853571

Population

2.5 The number of residents in the parish has fluctuated over the last 20 years. The 2001 Census (https://www.ons.gov.uk/census) reported that the resident population was 412. 10 years later, the 2011 Census reported that the population had decreased significantly to 342 within 123 households. However, the 2021 Census reports that the population of the parish has regained the losses reported during the 10 years to 2011, now having a total population of 417 within 164 households.

2.6 The age profile of the population from the parish survey is shown below in Figure 5. This graph indicates that some 60% of the population is over the age of 45.

Figure 5. Population by Age



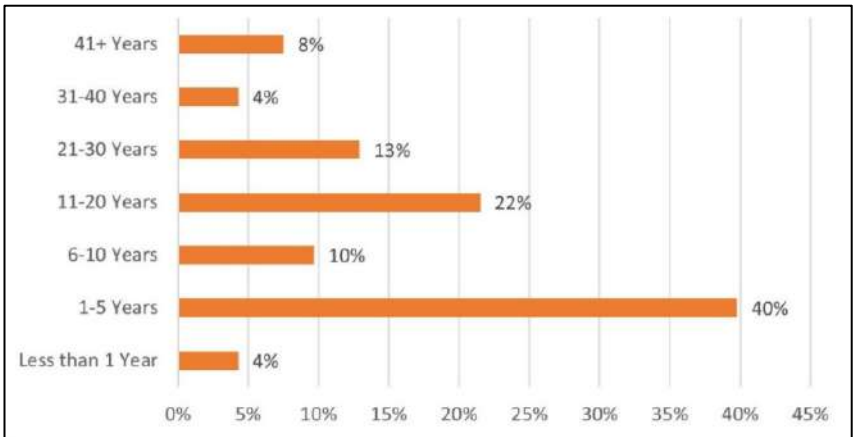
Source: Parish 2022 Survey (ED1)

2.7 Parish Survey 2022 data reports that there are 78 residents under the age of 15 years (18%); 261 residents between the ages of 16 and 64 (61%) and 84 residents over the age of 65 (19%). This population profile is very similar to the wider Huntingdonshire District population profile.

2.8 In the 10 years 2011-2021, the parish has seen a significant increase in the number of resident population and number of households, representing a 22% increase in population and 35% increase in number of households. This

is predominantly as a result of the new developments to replace outdated RAF /USAF accommodation at Hill Place and The Green. The extent of the new population is shown through the village survey results below in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Years Living in the Parish



Source: Parish 2022 Survey

2.9 In terms of health, the ONS Census 2021 indicates at 2021, 56% of the population reported that they had Very Good Health and 32% were in Good Health. 12% reported that they had Fair to Bad Health and only 1% reported they were in Very Bad Health. The population of Brington and Molesworth is in better health than the broader population of the district where 16% of the population reported that they were not in good health. The villages are served by a number of surgeries but none lie within the parish. 91.4% of residents said they use Kimbolton Medical Centre, which is 9 minutes-drive from Brington, outside the Parish.

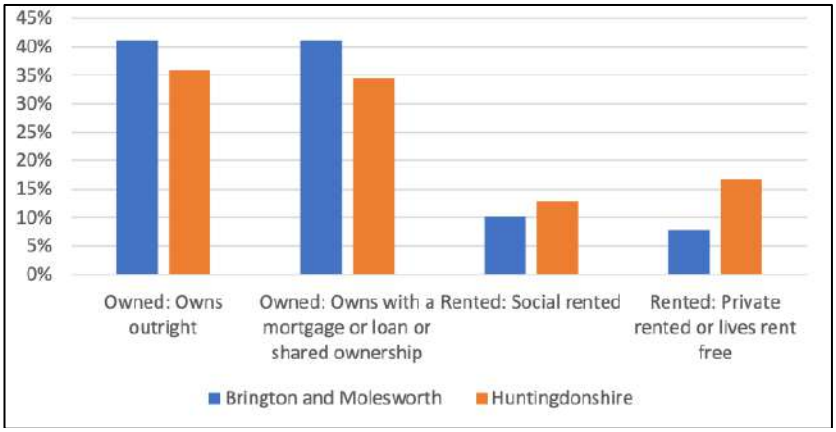
Photo 2: Two Sports Pitches, The Green (left) and Millenium Field (right)



Housing

2.10 The census indicates that there were 164 households in the parish during 2021. It notes that 82% of this housing is owner occupied (figure 7), this is higher than the district average. Social rental tenure is 10% and 8% private rented housing.

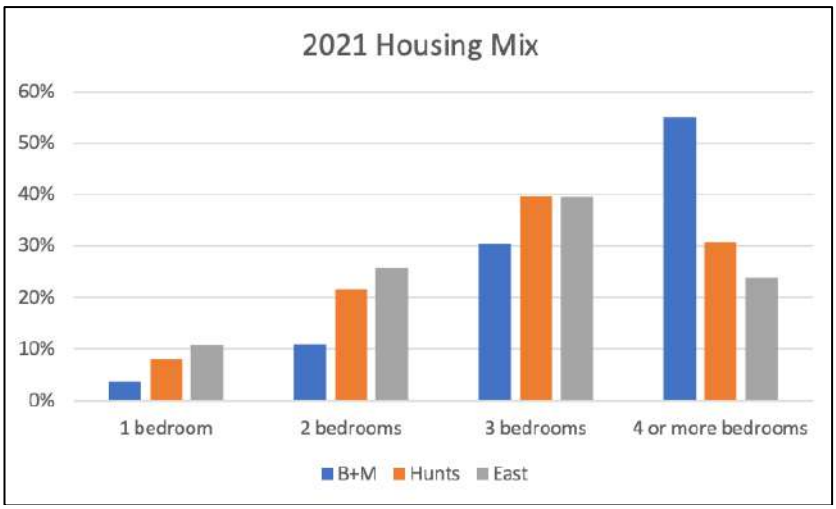
Figure 7. Housing Tenure



Source: ONS 2021 Census

2.11 The parish has a significantly higher level of larger 4-bedroom homes than the district or regional average and a lower proportion of smaller 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes (figure 8).

Figure 8. 2021 Housing Mix in the Parish



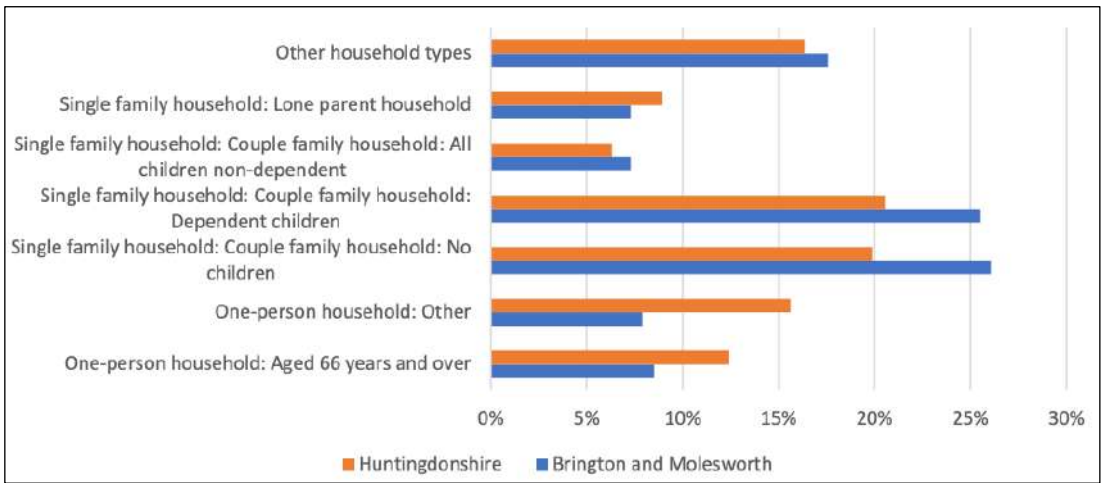
Source: ONS 2021 Census

Photo 2: Recent Developments, The Green (left) and Brington High St (right)



2.12 Brington and Molesworth has a higher proportion of single-family households than Huntingdonshire (figure 9). Notably, there is a distinctly higher proportion of family households both with dependent children and no children. There are fewer one person households than the district average.

Figure 9. Household Types



Source: ONS 2021 Census

2.13 The median price paid for a property in Kimbolton Ward, in the year ending March 2023, was £484,750. This compares to a median price of £319,500 in Huntingdonshire (House Price Statistics for Small Areas, Office for National Statistics). It is important to note that average house price statistics for wards are not mix-adjusted, i.e. weighted by type of housing sold, so a higher average house price may reflect a high proportion of large housing sold during the period, and vice versa. These statistics could therefore be influenced by the very high proportion of 3 and 4-bedroom homes in the parish, as indicated by Figure 7.

Employment

2.14 Whilst there is still agricultural activity in the Parish and some industrial premises, mainly in Molesworth, the Parish now has a relatively even split between those who commute to work by car or van and, following the changes in work patterns resulting from the COVID Pandemic, work from home. There is also a significant proportion of the population who are retired or semi-retired (31%) but statistics would suggest that 20% of those over 65 years of age are still economically active (ONS Census 2021).

2.15 RAF Molesworth dominates the local economy and is a focus for in commuting. It has recently been awarded a £219 million contract, funded by the US, for the construction of the new facility to support US Visiting Forces. The two-storey facility, with supporting infrastructure and warehouse, is estimated to be completed in 2028. The 25,000 sq. m building, in the centre of the former bomber airfield, would house 1,750 of the 2,000 staff, many in buildings considered to be no longer fit for purpose, including a Second World War hangar.

2.16 The villages have a number of small businesses on Molesworth Business Estate and warehousing at TSA Parking at Brook Lane, Molesworth. The small businesses include KN Autocare, Pontillion Vehicle Sales, Esco Refresh Janitorial Supplies at Church Lane, Molesworth. Business units are also available at Manor Farm to the north of Brington Village including The Rustic Wood Barn. The Village Primary School includes public sector employment.

Photo 3: Employment Uses



Settlement Character

2.17 The presence of settlements in Brington and Molesworth Parish dates back to the Early Paleo/Neolithic periods. However, the broad layout of existing settlements is Saxon/Early Medieval. Molesworth is listed in the Domesday Book as Molesworde and there is evidence of a single Manor and seventeen households at that time. Brington was also listed, as Breninctune, a single Manor is recorded but it is not clear if this is the same Manor as Molesworth. There were recorded fourteen households at that time.

2.18 There is record of a church in Brington in 1178 and in Molesworth in 1270. The Enclosure Act of 1774 enabled landowners to acquire and enclose the large open medieval Common Fields. This took place in Molesworth in 1799 and Brington five years later in 1804. A major change occurred in the Transport environment with the conversion of the Brampton-Thrapston road to a Turnpike in 1753.

2.19 Photo 4: All Saints Church, Brington



2.20 In 1935 the civil parish of Brington and Molesworth was formed. An extensive area of Molesworth was designated as a Conservation Area although there is no Conservation Area Appraisal available. Development within the Molesworth Conservation Area is required to preserve or enhance the character of the area.

2.21 Molesworth and Brington are two distinct and separate villages in a predominantly rural area. Indeed, data from the Office of National statistics (ONS) on "journey time statistics" from local residential neighbourhoods for counties around the UK revealed that Molesworth is ranked as the 'most isolated' village in Cambridgeshire. Molesworth has limited facilities but does have a village hall and a playing field. The village pub has been closed since COVID lockdown and shows no likelihood of reopening despite demand evidenced by a 'pop up pub' in Molesworth Village Hall once a month.

2.22 Brington has a pre-school and primary school and a small children's play area located on a private estate at the north of the village. Neither village has a restaurant or shop of any type. Future facilities in the villages need to reflect the evolving demographics.

Photo 5: Brington Streetscapes – Hill Place (top) and Church Lane (bottom)





Landscape Character

2.23 Brington and Molesworth are located within National Character Area 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands. At a more local level, the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2022) defines the Parish within the Northern Wolds and Brington and Molesworth stand within Area 3: Western Claylands, of the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (1991). The Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (1991) identifies Brington and Molesworth as an area as a gently undulating landscape which is subdivided by the shallow Ouse Valley. The area generally consists of large-scale arable farmland with open fields, sparse and trimmed hedges and watercourses which are cleared of bankside vegetation.

2.24 The area is distinctive for a number of reasons. Firstly, the area is characterised by remnants of deserted medieval villages including ridge and furrow fields, medieval settlement earthworks, moated sites and ruined churches. Secondly, scattered woodlands and particularly ancient, semi natural woodlands which are of importance in terms of their visual and nature conservation interest but which can appear isolated. Church spires enliven the skyline and views. Finally, existing and former wartime airfields have a significant impact on the area.

2.25 The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2022) defines the Parish within the Northern Wolds. The key characteristics are defined as a strong topography of ridges bisected by pronounced valleys; valleys are well vegetated and intimate in scale, while ridges/ plateaux feel more open; an historic landscape, containing many medieval features, dispersed pattern of historic villages, with little modern development and distinctive square church towers topped with spires form characteristic landmarks.

2.26 Key issues for the Northern Wolds landscape character area looking forward include:

- Protection and enhancement of the distinctive characters of the valley and plateaux landscapes through retention of the established pattern of smaller fields and meadows in the valleys, and the maintenance of long views from the upland areas

- Protection of key views towards the distinctive skyline of ridge tops, church towers and woodland
- Preservation of archaeological features, with improved public access and enhanced interpretation where appropriate
- Retention of historic settlement character through maintenance of village greens and other distinctive features and good siting and design of new buildings
- Protection of the existing watercourses in the area and enhancement of their biodiversity value
- Protection of ancient hedgerows and oak trees within the valleys

Photo 6: Landscapes – All Saints Church (1), Walk to Molesworth from Brington PRoW (2), View South West from PRoW 29/9 connecting The Green to Brington (3).







Relevant Planning Policy

2.27 Planning law[1] states that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. NPs become part of the development plan for their area once made and therefore carry weight in the decision-making process.

2.28 NPs operate within a broader planning framework and must meet a set of legal "basic conditions" to be formally made. One of these conditions is that they must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. NPs do not replace these higher-level policies, but instead provide a valuable opportunity to add local detail, shape development in a way that reflects community priorities, and guide how planning decisions are made within the designated area.

2.29 The remainder of this section sets out the relevant national and local policy context within which the NP has been prepared.

National Policy Context

2.30 National planning policy is primarily set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was most recently updated in December 2024 and amended in February 2025. The revised NPPF introduced further emphasis on plan-led growth and the need for local plans to demonstrate a clear pipeline of housing delivery. Local planning authorities are expected to maintain a clear five-year housing land supply and to allocate sufficient land to meet identified needs, particularly in rural areas.

2.31 NPs are required to have regard to the NPPF and are encouraged to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. While they are not required to allocate sites for development, they can influence how future development comes forward. In this context, the Brington and Molesworth

[1] Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

NP does not propose to allocate housing sites, leaving this to the emerging Local Plan process. However, it does seek to identify how future needs, including housing, infrastructure, and community facilities, might be met in a way that is consistent with local character and widely supported by residents.

Local Planning Policy Context

2.32 At the local level, the *Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036*, adopted in 2019, is the key planning document for development in the parish and directs most growth to the district's market towns and more sustainable service centres such as Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey. In smaller villages, such as Brington and Molesworth, development is expected to be more limited and commensurate in scale. Around a quarter of the district's housing need is expected to be delivered through small settlements, including rural exception sites, infill plots, and windfall developments that respect local character and sustainability objectives.

2.33 The Local Plan does not define built-up area boundaries for all settlements. As a result, proposals for development outside defined areas are generally subject to strict countryside protection policies unless clear justification can be demonstrated. As such, the NP does not need to have policies for this.

2.34 Huntingdonshire District Council is currently undertaking a full review of its Local Plan, which will set out a strategy for growth and development well beyond 2036. The NP will as far as practicable be prepared to align with future policy aspirations and relevant emerging evidence. This ensures that the policies contained within this Plan will remain relevant and adaptable once the new local plan has been adopted.

2.35 As of June 2025, Huntingdonshire District Council is progressing with a Regulation 18 (preferred options) consultation which is targeted for Autumn 2025. The Council's published timetable anticipates consultation on a draft (Regulation 19) Plan in 2026, with submission for examination later that year and adoption expected in 2028, following examination in public.

3. Local Consultation

3.1 To begin the plan-making process, extensive engagement was undertaken to understand the community's aspirations, challenges, and priorities and shape this NP. Between June and August 2022, surveys were distributed to all households and local businesses in the parish. The results of this engagement have directly informed the scope and content of the policies contained within this Plan.

3.2 The consultation survey achieved a strong response rate, with approximately 53% of households completing the questionnaire. The responses broadly reflected the diversity of households across the parish, although the Parish Council recognises that residents over the age of 65 were somewhat overrepresented when compared to the 2021 Census profile. Nonetheless, the views expressed are considered to be a reliable and robust representation of the concerns and ambitions held by the local community. Questionnaires were sent to all major businesses and sole traders operating within the parish.

3.3 The NP also builds on earlier community-led work. Notably, the Parish Plan prepared in 2010–2011 (see ED7) identified many of the same themes that continue to be raised today. These include concerns about the lack of bus services, localised flooding, the pace and location of development, road safety and speeding, and the need for a meeting point or village hall in Brington. The consistency of these issues across more than a decade has provided a clear basis for the priorities of this plan. In this context, it is recognised that community views on development are often nuanced; whilst housing growth is identified as a potential threat in terms of its impact on the rural character, scale and infrastructure capacity of the parish, mechanisms such as Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy are recognised as opportunities to secure mitigation and local benefits where development does occur.

3.4 It is important to note, the NP process ensures that the community will continue to be able to have a say on the plan up to the point of its adoption, ending with a referendum on whether to adopt it. The next stage is a

community consultation on this draft plan. All comments received will be individually considered and actioned, where appropriate.

3.5 To help summarise the key issues facing the parish, the NP Working Group undertook a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. This analysis draws upon the planning policy context, demographic and socio-economic data, and the results of the community consultation. This is provided below and informs the Vision and Objectives.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Village Community ▪ Strong rural character and village lifestyle valued by residents ▪ New homes replaced outdated RAF accommodation at Hill Place and The Green bringing new families ▪ Has met the parish's housing requirement to 2036 ▪ Generally healthy population **Economy** ▪ Relatively wealthy parish with higher proportion of residents working in professional or managerial roles ▪ High rates of employment including 20% of those over 65 years still economically active ▪ Some local employment opportunities in small businesses ▪ 33% businesses expect to expand over the next 5 years ▪ Significant investment at RAF Molesworth **Key Services** ▪ Has retained Village Hall (Molesworth), pre-school and primary school (Brington) **Character and Heritage** ▪ Conservation Area including surrounding countryside (Molesworth) ▪ Strong historic character ▪ 27 Listed Buildings including Church, residential properties, barns and street furniture ▪ Valued vistas and views ▪ County Wildlife sites and woodland, grazing and lowland meadows designated as priority habitats ▪ Edges of villages remain rural in character **Open Space** ▪ Valued informal and formal Green Spaces. Rich in wildlife sites, biodiversity including Lapwings **Getting Around** ▪ Access to strategic road network – A14, A1 and access to rail network at Huntingdon	**Population** ▪ Significant proportion of population moved to parish in last 10 years with a 34% increase in households ▪ Ageing population – In 2021, 24% of the population is over 65 years increasing to 30% by 2036 **Housing** ▪ High average house prices ▪ Lower share of social and private rented housing ▪ High share of larger 4 bedroom homes and significantly fewer 1 and 2 bed homes. ▪ The community of Hill Place and The Green are perceived as separate from two villages ▪ Deprivation indicators include barriers to housing and services **Economy** ▪ Some local employment opportunities but distinctly a commuter location **Services and Infrastructure** ▪ The villages lack key services such as a shop / Post Office, Pub or café and a Village Hall/ meeting point in Brington ▪ Doctors' surgery is outside the parish ▪ Need to improve Broadband **Village Character** ▪ No Conservation Area Appraisal ▪ No definition or protection of the village boundaries or important green spaces ▪ Most isolated village in Cambridgeshire **Getting Around** ▪ Limited bus service - both timetabling and frequency issues ▪ Cars speeding and road safety ▪ Issues with lorries /HGVs when A14 closed ▪ Lack of footpaths within the parish, between the villages and no cycle route ▪ Parking issues at school events **Flooding** ▪ Increasing surface water flooding events

Opportunities	Threats
Village and Landscape Character ▪ Define settlement boundaries which supports development inside the boundaries and protects countryside ▪ Promote good design to ensure development in keeping with scale, location and appearance of buildings using traditional materials ▪ Protect property character. ▪ Identify any heritage assets that are not currently designated ▪ Protect visually important gaps including the area between Hill Place and Brington ▪ Protect, enhance landscape and protect and identify green areas for recreation, sports and allotments use **Climate Change** ▪ Encourage sustainable energy production and zero carbon developments ▪ Enhance biodiversity and wildlife habitats ▪ Improve flood prevention measures within the design of buildings and elsewhere ▪ Promote insulation, solar panels, air/ground source heating ▪ Increase water efficiency ▪ Promote EV charging **Getting Around** ▪ Improve public rights of way and reduce speed of traffic through the villages ▪ Improve active travel connections between Hill Close/The Green and the rest of the parish settlements ▪ Improved bus services ▪ Promote village hall, community meeting space; improve lighting at school ▪ S106 / CIL funding to secure supporting infrastructure and facilities **Housing** ▪ Starter or smaller family homes to address the current shortfall in this type of accommodation **Economy** ▪ Opportunity to retain and accelerate small local employment and start-ups	**Housing Growth** ▪ Although housing need to 2036 is met, further housing growth to meet housing requirement may come forward as part of the Local Plan Review ▪ Housing that is not in character with the villages or results in the loss of valued views or garden space ▪ It is important that any such future growth is of an appropriate scale, quantum and layout, to respond to the sensitive rural and historic character of the parish. **Services / Infrastructure** ▪ Loss of jobs, facilities and services making the village less sustainable ▪ Changing needs - Ageing population - 32% will be over 65 with 5% over 85 by 2036 ▪ Further loss or downgrading of limited local facilities with lack of planning control **Traffic/parking issue** ▪ Traffic/parking issues exacerbated by further development including at RAF Molesworth **Village and Landscape Character** ▪ Deterioration of rural character, green spaces, vistas and views ▪ District wide Policy LP9 supports proposals for development on land well-related to the built-up area but does not define the built-up area **Natural Environment** ▪ Flood Risk and water management issues deteriorate ▪ Increased light pollution

4. Vision and Objectives

4.1 Taking into account the results of the village surveys, as well as information, intelligence and evidence gathered through the NP process, the following vision and objectives were developed which have guided the proposed policies.

> *"In 2036, Brington and Molesworth will be one of the most desirable rural parishes in Huntingdonshire, characterised by its strong sense of community, distinctive character and heritage assets."*

4.2 To underpin the vision, this NP identifies 14 strategy objectives addressing the key issues facing Brington and Molesworth during the life of the NP.

Growth and the future	Relevant Policies
To support housing through appropriate infill and windfall development on land within or well related to the built-up areas.	**BM 1** – Built-Up Areas **BM 2** –Housing Mix **BM 3** – Affordable Housing **BM 5** – Design **BM 8B** – Landscape and Settlement Character
To ensure new homes reflect residents' desire to provide more affordable, small family/starter homes.	**BM 2** – Housing Mix **BM 3** – Affordable Housing
Climate Change	**Relevant Policies**
To ensure that Brington and Molesworth is resilient against the future impacts of climate change by ensuring new development is built to the highest environmental standards in order to meet zero carbon targets.	**BM 5** – Climate Change **BM 9** – Biodiversity and Nature Recovery **BM 10** - Flood Risk and Drainage

To ensure new development will incorporate environmental adaptations to mitigate the impact of climate change.	**BM 5** – Climate Change **BM 9** – Biodiversity and Nature Recovery **BM 10** - Flood Risk and Drainage
To ensure the village is sustainable by reducing the carbon footprint of travel for work, essential goods, services and leisure.	**BM 11** – Community Facilities **BM 12** – Local Green Spaces
To ensure development coming forward in the parish will not exacerbate existing flood risk and, where appropriate, take any opportunities to reduce existing flood risk.	**BM 10** - Flood Risk and Drainage
Active Travel	Relevant Policies
To safeguard and enhance public Rights of Way, including footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths by improving connections to existing routes between the villages and thereby encouraging active lifestyles, and promoting the use of non-motorised transport.	**BM 7** – Public Rights of Way **BM 8** – Traffic and Transport
To improve highway safety including promoting traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speeds in the two villages.	**BM 7** – Public Rights of Way **BM 8** – Traffic and Transport

Landscape, Conservation and Heritage	Relevant Policies
To protect the very limited green spaces and play areas available for recreation and enjoyment ensuring they are maintained and enhanced for future generations.	**BM 12** – Local Green Spaces **BM 13** – Green Amenity Areas
To protect and enhance the historic and rural character of Brington and Molesworth that is considered distinctive and make the villages special through sympathetic design.	**BM 1** – Built-Up Areas **BM 5** – Design
To protect and enhance the rural setting of the villages ensuring development complements the existing rural landscape.	**BM 1** – Built-Up Areas **BM 7** – Public Rights of Way **BM 9** – Biodiversity and Nature Recovery
To protect and enhance biodiversity including establishing, enhancing or extending green corridors and the connectivity between habitats.	**BM 9** – Biodiversity and Nature Recovery
Community Facilities and Employment	Relevant Policies
To retain and encourage more local businesses and jobs.	**BM 4** – Economic Development
To support the retention of and enhance village facilities including a village hall in Brington, local shop (fixed or mobile) and a public house.	**BM 1** – Built-Up Areas **BM 11** – Community Facilities

5. Policies

Local Plan - Guiding Growth

5.1 Brington and Molesworth Parish is rural in character, due to its small population, separation from major service centres, and sensitive landscape setting. Brington and Molesworth are identified in Policy LP9 of the Local Plan as Small Settlements where proposals for development which are within the built-up area are supported subject to a range of criteria. The built-up area is not defined and the local plan instead uses a methodology to determine what is classed as the built-up area.

5.2 An indicative housing requirement figure of 25 dwellings was identified by the HDC Local Plan for the period 2011–2036. This figure was based on a proportionate share of the district's overall housing need, considering the characteristics of the parish, its small settlement classification, and its capacity to accommodate sustainable development. Monitoring data confirms that the parish has already exceeded this figure, 11 years early, with 43 net new dwellings completed between 2011 and 2023, and a further 5 committed at the time of writing. This NP therefore does not propose to allocate land for new housing development given that the housing need has already been met. However, it recognises that small-scale windfall and infill proposals may still come forward over the plan period. In this context, the NP aims to identify where such development will be the most appropriate.

5.3 The Local Plan does not include a settlement boundary or envelope which identifies the built-up area for Brington and Molesworth. Planning Officers therefore assess each proposal in the Parish on a site by site basis using the methodology outlined in paragraph 4.85 of the Local Plan. The Local Plan notes that one of the primary reasons that small settlements are not given a built-up area boundary is because there is a risk that this could promote development within boundaries where this may negatively impact the rural, often sparse, characteristics of rural villages including Brington and Molesworth.

5.4 Brington and Molesworth is identified in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan as a Small Settlement where proposals for development located within the Built Up Area are supported subject to passing the criteria set out in LP9, also proposals on land well related to the Built Up Area may be supported where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies in the Local Plan.

5.5 However, it is important to note the importance to the community that the boundaries of the villages and their separate identities are preserved – 94% of respondents in the community survey 2022 (ED1) consider this to be important or very important. Therefore, the intent of Policy BM 1 is to identify the built-up area boundaries which direct development to within the settlement whilst protecting their separate identifies.

5.6 Brington comprises two physically separate clusters of development: the historic village core to the south, and a more modern group of post-war dwellings to the north, including former MOD housing. Both areas contain more than 30 permanent, non-agricultural dwellings and therefore meet the Local Plan definition of a built-up area set out in LP para 4.82. However, there is a clear and valued landscape gap between them that contributes to the rural setting and reinforces their distinct identities as settlements both with unique origins.

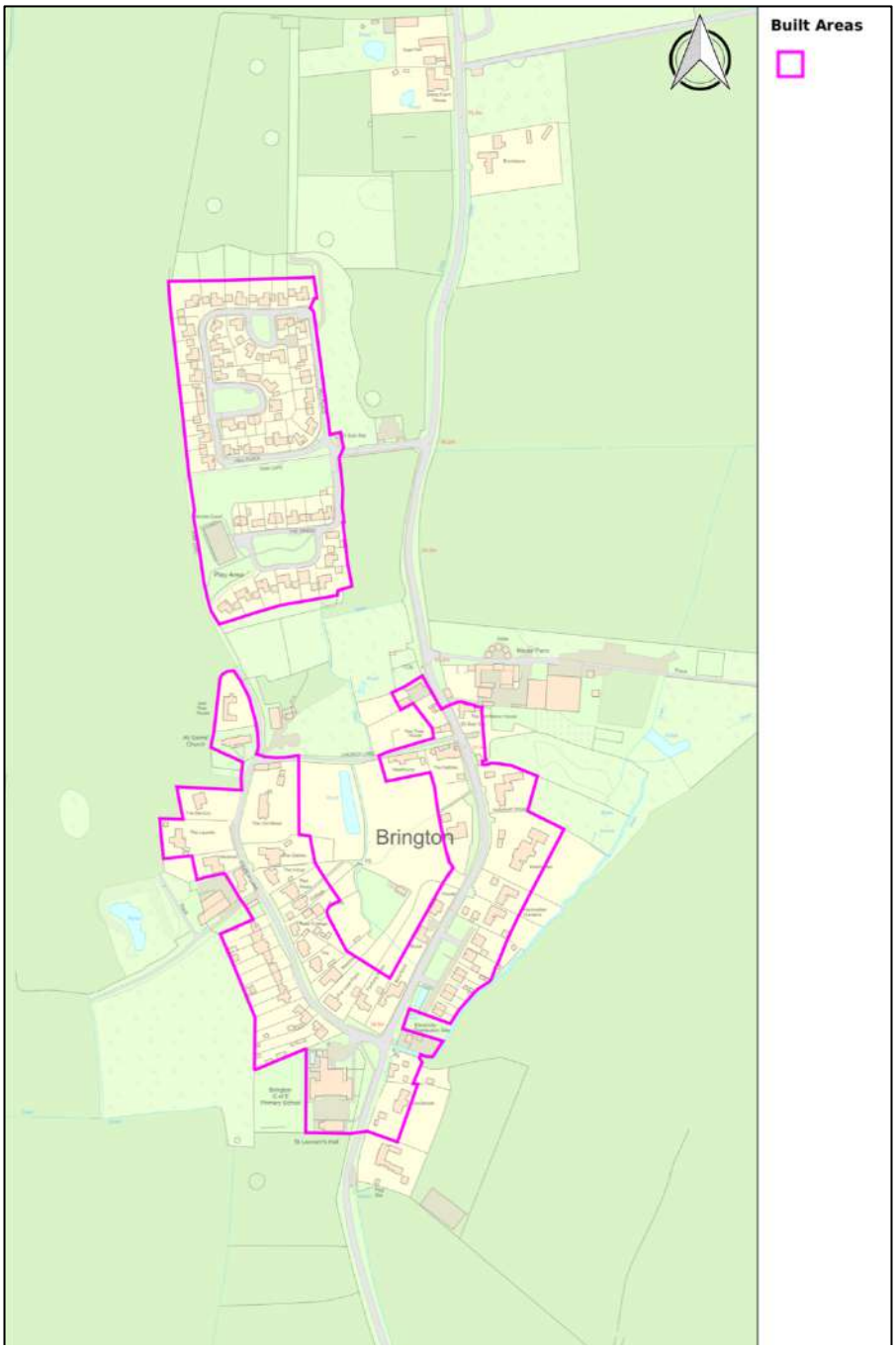
Photo 7: Visual Gap between Brington and The Green/Hill Place



5.7 In accordance with the principles set out in the Local Plan, the NP defines two separate built-up area boundaries for Brington, one for each of the northern and southern clusters. This seeks to ensure that each part of the village, which have very different historical origins, are recognised as built-up areas in their own right while protecting the intervening countryside from inappropriate development (Figure 10).

5.8 The approach to drawing a boundary for Brington, and not Molesworth, which has a defined conservation area, is explained in ED2. Policy BM 1 sets out a clear expectation that this gap an important characteristic of Brington which must be preserved, and that development should not erode the settlement's loose-knit character or blur the distinction between the two clusters.

Figure 10. Built-Up Area Boundaries



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5.9 Molesworth, by contrast, is already subject to Conservation Area designation, which offers a strong degree of control over the scale and location of development. This village has not experienced recent housing

growth, and no housing need has been identified that would justify allocating sites or defining a built-up area boundary. For these reasons, a Built-Up Area is not appropriate for Molesworth.

5.10 Overall, Policy BM 1 seeks to promote development in the right places, by ensuring that development is directed to areas with urban character, and away from locations that would undermine the villages' rural and historic identity. The process for this designation is set out in ED2.

Policy BM 1 – Brington Built-Up Areas

A. For the purposes of Policy LP 9 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan, the Built-Up Area Boundaries for Brington are defined on Figure 10.

B. Within the defined built-up areas, development proposals will be supported where they:

   i) Maintain the loose-knit and rural character of the settlement.

   ii) Respect the transition between the built-up area and the surrounding countryside, avoiding development that appears as an incongruous or prominent extension to the settlement.

   iii) Preserve the landscape setting of Brington and the amenity of neighbouring uses.

   iv) Safeguard the areas of Local Green Spaces and Green Amenity Areas (Policies BM 12 and BM 13) which contribute to the character of the built up area.

C. Outside the defined built-up areas, development will only be supported where it:

   i) Preserves the separate identities of North and South Brington; and

   ii) Meets an evidenced, identified local need or accords with other policies in this Plan, the Local Plan or the NPPF.

Housing Mix

5.11 Brington and Molesworth is characterised by a rural and low-density housing environment, comprising two small villages. The existing stock is dominated by large, detached dwellings, with 2021 Census data showing a significantly higher proportion of 4-bedroom homes in the parish compared to district and national averages. While residents who responded to the 2022 NP Survey generally expressed satisfaction with the current mix of housing, evidence prepared by AECOM (ED3) highlights a notable underrepresentation of smaller homes, particularly 1- and 2-bedroom properties, which presents implications for housing accessibility and affordability, especially for younger families looking to stay or move into the area and older residents looking to downsize.

5.12 The community survey (ED1) showed that over half of respondents did not identify a current housing need for family or friends, given that most households in the parish own the home they live in. However, among those who did, the most common response was a need for smaller family homes. When asked what types of housing should be prioritised if development were to take place, the community expressed a clear preference for starter homes and modest-sized family dwellings. This supports a policy approach that rebalances the housing mix to include a greater number of smaller, affordable homes to help residents stay within the parish.

Photo 8: Two semi-detached 4-bedroom dwellings on High Street, Brington



5.13 Policy LP 25 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan requires that all new housing proposals deliver a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures which respond to evidence on local housing need, but it does not prescribe precise proportions by bedroom number. Instead, it asks developers to have regard to sources such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, local demographic projections and parish-level surveys. In Brington and Molesworth, ED4 shows that the HNA provides a new important source of evidence which demonstrates an oversupply of large homes and a shortage of smaller and mid-sized dwellings.

5.14 The following policy translates LP 25 into a locally specific framework for Brington and Molesworth. It requires that at least 60 per cent of new dwellings comprise two- or three-bedroom units, while allowing for alternative mixes which are justified by site-specific evidence. Proposals dominated by four-bedroom or larger homes must demonstrate clear evidence of local need.

Policy BM 2 – Housing Mix

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that residential development delivers a mix of dwelling sizes that responds to local housing needs, supports affordability and contributes to a more balanced housing stock in Brington and Molesworth.

A. New development should aim to deliver a >60% of homes as 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that an alternative mix better addresses local needs or is justified by site-specific circumstances.

B. Proposals for smaller and mid-sized homes that are suitable for younger families, first-time buyers, and older residents seeking to downsize will be particularly supported. Proposals that deliver a predominance of 4-bedroom or larger dwellings will not be supported unless clearly justified through local housing need evidence.

Affordable Housing

5.15 In terms of affordable housing provision, the Housing Needs Assessment indicates that Brington and Molesworth faces significant affordability challenges. Median house prices in 2022 were around 45% higher than the Huntingdonshire average, while average household incomes and lower-quartile earnings leave many local households unable to access even entry-level homes without a substantial deposit. Private rents are marginally affordable to average-income earners and remain beyond the reach of those on lower incomes. Overall, this points to a need to ensure what affordable housing is delivered in the parish will address local affordability issues.

5.16 Policy LP24 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan seeks to address affordability by requiring development sites of eleven dwellings (or 1,000m^2 of floorspace) or more to deliver 40 per cent affordable housing. Of that 40 per cent, approximately 70 per cent must be provided as social or affordable rent, with the remaining 30 per cent divided among 'other affordable tenures'.

5.17 The AECOM Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (ED3) tested the viability of various affordable home-ownership products and concluded that, while the overall 70:30 rent to purchase split remains appropriate, there is a need to prioritise those home-ownership tenures most accessible to local incomes. First Homes, even when offered at a 50 per cent discount, remain unaffordable for most (see Figure 11, below). In contrast, Shared Ownership at 10% equity shares and Rent to Buy emerge as the only affordable routes for average-income households lacking substantial deposit savings.

5.18 Brington and Molesworth Parish Council has therefore chosen to maintain the 70:30 rent to purchase tenure ratio set out in Local Plan Policy LP24, and to focus the 30 per cent affordable home-ownership element specifically on Shared Ownership (with initial equity shares of around 10 per cent) and Rent to Buy. This seeks to ensure that new affordable housing genuinely meets the needs of local households, maximises access to home ownership for those without substantial deposit savings, and remains fully in conformity with the strategic requirements of the adopted Local Plan. This rationale is set out within ED4.

Figure 11. Affordability thresholds in the Parish

Tenure	Mortgage value (90% of price)	Annual rent	Income required	Affordable on average incomes? £56,800	Affordable on LQ earnings (single earner)? £21,923	Affordable on LQ earnings (2 earners)? £43,846
Market Housing						
Median House Price	£418,500	-	**£119,571**	No	No	No
Estimated NA New Build Entry-Level House Price	£528,029		**£150,866**	No	No	No
LQ/Entry-level House Price	£365,063	-	**£104,304**	No	No	No
LA New Build Median House Price	£348,750	-	**£99,643**	No	No	No
Average Market Rent	-	£17,088	**£56,960**	Marginal	No	No
Entry-level Market Rent	-	£10,032	**£33,440**	Yes	No	Yes
Affordable Home Ownership						
Discounted Market Sale (-20%)	£422,423	-	**£120,692**	No	No	No
First Homes (-30%)	£369,621	-	**£105,606**	No	No	No
First Homes (-40%)	£316,818	-	**£90,519**	No	No	No
First Homes (-50%)	£264,015	-	**£75,433**	No	No	No
Shared Ownership (50%)	£264,015	£7,334	**£99,879**	No	No	No
Shared Ownership (25%)	£132,007	£11,001	**£74,385**	No	No	No
Shared Ownership (10%)	£52,803	£13,201	**£59,089**	Marginal	No	No
Affordable Rented Housing						
Affordable Rent	-	£7,099	**£23,663**	Yes	No	Yes
Social Rent	-	£5,009	**£16,695**	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: AECOM Calculations

Source: ED3

Policy BM 3 - Affordable Housing Tenure

A. The ratio of affordable housing for rent and purchase should be secured in accordance with Huntingdonshire Local Plan requirements, which currently seek approximately 70% of affordable homes to be provided as social or affordable rent. The remaining share should include no less than 30% affordable home ownership.

B. Within the affordable home ownership portion, proposals should prioritise products that are genuinely accessible to households on average and below-average local incomes (see Figure 11). The preferred tenures are:

- Shared Ownership, particularly at 10% equity shares where this can be demonstrated to be viable and deliverable. Where it is demonstrated that a 10% share cannot reasonably be achieved, the applicant should provide the lowest practicable initial equity share consistent with the viability and deliverability of the development.
- Rent to Buy

C. First Homes or Discounted Market Sale products may also be acceptable where there is clear evidence that they are affordable to the intended target groups in Brington and Molesworth, particularly through delivery of smaller property types at substantial discounts.

Economic Development

5.19 The parish has a varied local economy. Agriculture and agricultural services reflect the rural nature of the parish, whilst the provision of small business units at Molesworth Business Estate and excellent road links support a small number of businesses ranging from professional and scientific to transportation. Sole traders and independent businesses also operate from some residential properties.

5.20 RAF Molesworth is a significant part of the parish economy and attracts in commuting from surrounding areas. The site has recently been awarded a £219 million contract for the construction of the new facility which will support US Visiting Forces. The two-storey facility, with supporting infrastructure and warehouse, is estimated to be completed in 2028. The 25,000 sqm building, in the centre of the former bomber airfield, would house 1,750 of the 2,000 staff, many of whom are currently employed in buildings considered to be no longer fit for purpose, including a Second World War hangar.

5.21 When local businesses were asked about where they expected to be in the next 5 years, 33% stated that they would look to expand their operations, 71% of whom would be looking to do so within the parish. Additionally, several economic opportunities were identified by residents and sole traders, such as improved broadband, a village shop, and a new village pub. Overall, this suggests that there is reasonable demand for a NP policy which promotes local business or important infrastructure or facilities which could facilitate and encourage business.

5.22 When residents were asked about their preferences regarding business activity in the area, the majority were in favour of encouraging more local jobs and local businesses, however the majority were against more starter units/business premises and tourism opportunities. Overall, this points to a need to promote the right type of business development, by optimising the use of existing business premises and ensuring development and activities align with the rural character of the area.

5.23 Policy LP 19 (Rural Economy) in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan acknowledges there are limited and specific opportunities for sustainable development related to maintaining a healthy rural economy. Given that the Parish does not accommodate any Established Employment Areas (see Policy LP 18), proposals for new business uses are only supported where (a) it involves the reuse of land in use or last used for business uses (class 'B') such as the Molesworth Industrial Area, or (b) it involves the reuse or replacement of existing buildings, provided it can meet specific development criteria as set out in Policy LP 33 Rural Buildings.

5.24 Additionally, Policy LP 19 supports the expansion of existing businesses within existing sites, and proposals for the expansion existing operational sites in the open countryside where a number of criteria are met which collectively ensure the development would be appropriate and makes efficient use of land. Accordingly, the NP seeks to add on local detail to Policy LP19's framework by identifying and promoting specific opportunities or requirements as part of any future development.

Policy BM 4 – Economic Development

A. Existing clusters of business activity at Molesworth Business Estate and Manor Farm (Figure 12 and Figure 13) are recognised as locally important employment areas. Proposals for the redevelopment, intensification, or change of use within these areas will be supported where they reinforce their function in providing local employment opportunities and comply with Policy LP19 and LP33, or any subsequent policy, where relevant.

B. Proposals for small-scale* business, commercial or service uses will be supported within the built-up areas of Brington and Molesworth (see Policy BM 1), particularly where they are designed to meet local needs and would not result in significant harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

C. Proposals which deliver multiple business units must include smaller units suitable for start-up or incubator businesses.

* Additional floorspace of less than 1,000 sq m or a site of less than 1 ha.

Figure 12. Molesworth Business Estate



Figure 13. Manor Farm



Source: Prepared under OS Licence AC0000853571

Delivering Good Design

5.25 Ensuring that proposals are well integrated, sympathetic to their setting, and responsive to local distinctiveness is a primary objective of this NP. Built development in Brington and Molesworth should help to conserve and enhance existing positive character features within the parish.

Photo 9: Some architectural examples from the area, new and old



5.26 Policy LP11 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan sets out a framework for securing high-quality and context-sensitive design. It requires all development to respond positively to the character of its surroundings, taking into account scale, layout, materials, and landscape features. Proposals must protect and enhance features of architectural or historic interest, promote safe and legible environments, and avoid adverse impacts on residential amenity. LP11 also expects development to support sustainability and climate resilience through thoughtful design.

5.27 A Design Code has been prepared by AECOM on behalf of Brington and Molesworth Parish Council (ED5, summarised in Appendix 1). This was informed by community consultation and shaped through engagement with the NP Steering Group. Three core design themes emerged as central to the character and future development of the area: Rural Character, Healthy Design, and Sustainability. These themes now form the structure of the Design Code and underpin the design-related policies of the Plan.

5.28 Brington and Molesworth are defined by their compact settlement forms, generous landscaping, and open views into surrounding countryside. Narrow lanes, a range of traditional building materials, and distinctive boundary treatments contribute further to the villages' sense of place. The surrounding rural landscape reinforces this identity, with clearly defined settlement edges and open fields offering separation from neighbouring villages. These characteristics are consistently valued by the community: over 50% of survey respondents cited "village and country life" as their main reason for living in the parish, with open views, historic settings, and local distinctiveness among the most mentioned benefits (ED1).

5.29 The NP provides a summary table below setting out each code alongside its purpose. Policy BM 5 below requires applicants to demonstrate how their proposals reflect this guidance and respond meaningfully to the local built environment.

Policy BM 5 – Delivering Good Design

A. All residential development proposals must demonstrate how they have had regard to the Brington and Molesworth Design Codes (Appendix 1 and ED5), where relevant. All proposals should be supported by the Design Code Compliance Statement (DCCS), which can be downloaded from the neighbourhood plan webpage. Proposals should use the DCCS to show how the relevant design codes have informed the layout, scale, materials, and landscaping of the scheme, and how the design responds positively to the local character of the area.

The DCCS template can be downloaded from the dedicated webpage for the BMNP on the Huntington District Council Website.

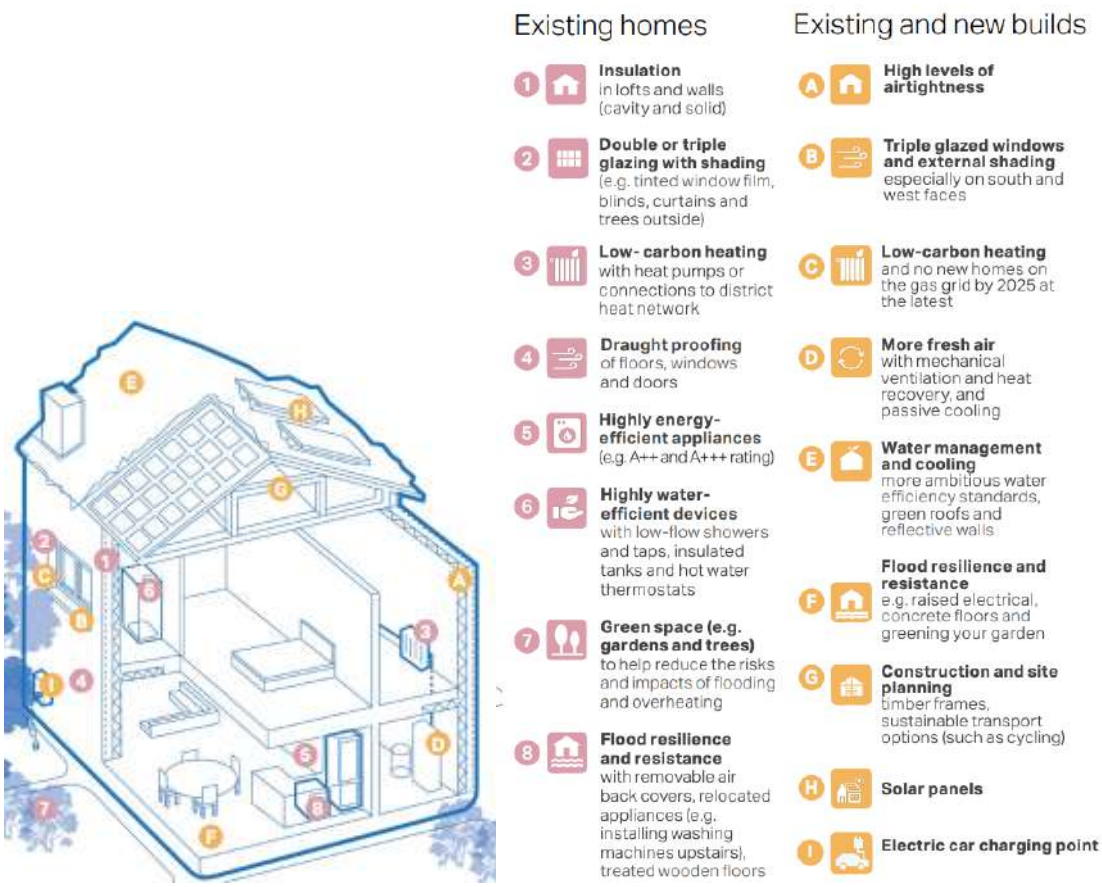
Climate Change

5.30 Mitigating the Impacts of Climate Change is an increasingly important consideration for development proposals. The UK Government has set a statutory target using the Climate Change Act 2008 for at least a 100% net-reduction of UK greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (compared to 1990 levels). The UK's strategy for achieving net zero is set out in its report Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, published in October 2021.

5.31 At the local level, Cambridgeshire Council's vision is to deliver net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050 in partnership with all stakeholders, whilst Huntingdonshire District Council adopted a climate strategy in response to recognising the climate crisis in February 2022. The parish survey results indicate that residents feel strongly about caring for the environment and many are interested in investing in renewable technology (figure 14).

5.32 HDC adopted a Sustainable Design and Construction Technical Advice Note (TAN) in November 2025 which has been prepared to support the Council's Climate Strategy and Place Strategy, guiding individuals, developers, businesses, and communities on the pathway to Net Zero. It offers practical, topic-based guidance on key sustainable design and construction principles - such as energy efficiency, water management, materials, and biodiversity - for all scales of development. Applicants are encouraged to refer to this document in addition to policy BM 5 and BM 6.

Figure 14. Low-Carbon Opportunities for Dwellings



Source: AECOM Design Code (ED5)

Policy BM 6 - Addressing Climate Change

A. As appropriate, all development proposals are expected to contribute to the transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future. All proposals should demonstrate how they reduce greenhouse gas emissions, minimise environmental impact, and increase resilience to climate risks through design, layout, materials, and technology.

B. As appropriate, all new development shall to incorporate water efficiency measures such as low-flow fixtures, rainwater harvesting, or greywater recycling. Proposals are encouraged to meet a water efficiency standard of 90 litres per person per day. Major non-residential development must be accompanied by a water conservation strategy that demonstrates compliance with the BREEAM standard equivalent of 3 credits for water use, unless it is demonstrated that this is not practicable.

C. As appropriate, all new development proposals must make provision for the storage of recycling and composting containers.

D. Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy technologies, including those on domestic properties, will be supported in principle where they are appropriate to the building and also in terms of siting and design. The Parish Council particularly supports the retrofitting of older properties to improve energy performance provided that proposals are sensitively designed and do not harm the historic fabric of buildings or the character and appearance of conservation areas.

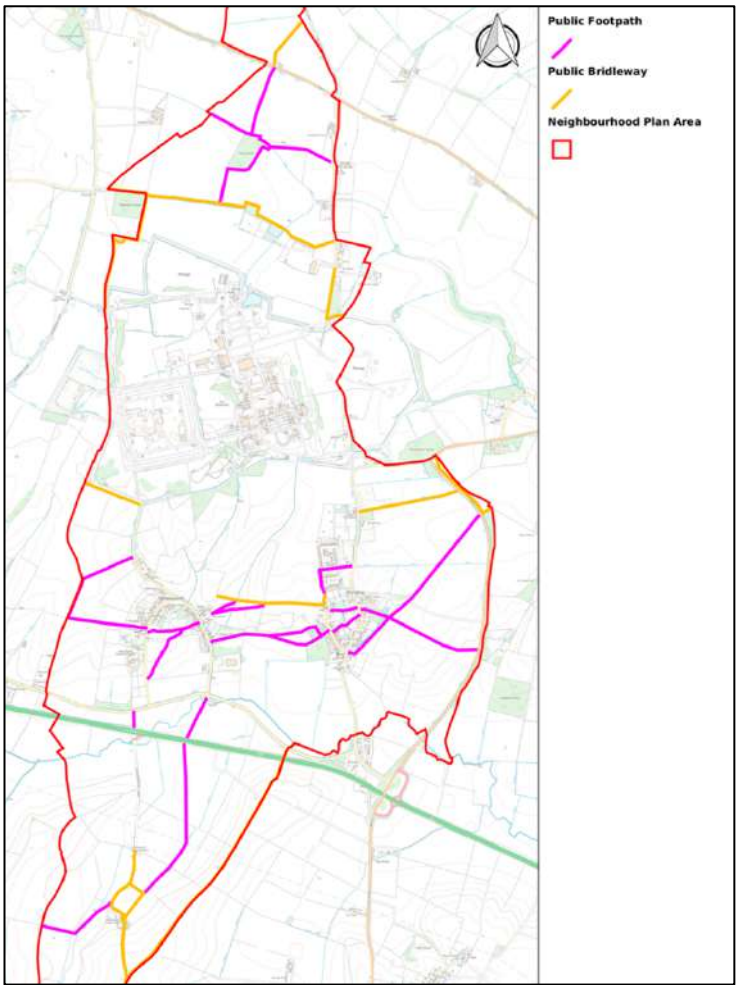
E. Community-scale renewable energy proposals and associated low carbon technologies will be supported provided they do not result in significant adverse impacts on landscape, heritage assets, residential amenity, or the highway network. Wind energy proposals will be considered in line with Local Plan Policy LP35 and national guidance.

F. Proposals that incorporate the reuse of existing resources and materials will be supported, including through the conversion or refurbishment of existing buildings.

Public Rights of Way

5.33 Brington and Molesworth Parish benefits from a good level of public rights of way provision (see Figure 15). A network of footpaths connects the two villages and extends into the surrounding countryside, providing links to neighbouring parishes such as Old Weston, Catworth, and Leighton Bromswold. While these routes often require a reasonable walking distance, they give residents and visitors the option to access the surrounding villages and wider rural landscape on foot.

Figure 15. Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Network



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5.34 Access to the countryside is a key part of the Parish's identity and is highly valued by the local community. The rural setting and open character of the area contribute significantly to residents' quality of life, sense of place, and

opportunities for informal recreation. Protecting and enhancing this network is therefore essential to maintaining the special character of the Parish.

Photo 10: Examples of Views from PRoWs within the Parish







5.35 Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP16 sets out a strategic requirement for all new development to integrate with the existing movement network and

to improve accessibility and connectivity for all users. It also encourages development to enhance public rights of way and create new links.

5.36 The NP supports the principles set out in LP16 and builds on these by setting locally specific expectations for development. It seeks to ensure that new development in the Parish not only connects to the existing PROW network, but also respects their rural character, enhances its accessibility, and contributes to opportunities for recreation and wellbeing.

Policy BM 7 - Public Rights of Way

A. Development that affects or adjoins a Public Right of Way shall maintain or enhance the Parish's rural walking, cycling, riding and wheeling network as shown on Figure 15. Where appropriate, having regard to the scale, location and nature of the development, and viability, proposals are expected to:

   i) Connect to existing Public Rights of Way

   ii) Support the increased legibility and awareness of the Public Rights of Way network.

   iii) Retain and protect the rural character of PROWs, avoiding high fencing, urbanising features, or lighting that would harm their setting or tranquillity.

   iv) Incorporate natural surveillance, such as dual-aspect or outward-facing buildings, where development adjoins a PROW.

   v) Support opportunities for circular or recreational walking routes, particularly those linking the two villages or enhancing access to the countryside.

   vi) support proportionate improvements to the quality and accessibility of existing Public Rights of Way, including surface treatment, signage and access for people with limited mobility, where directly related to the development.

B. Proposals that would obstruct, sever, or detract from the usability of existing PROWs will not be supported unless an alternative of equal or greater quality is provided.

Traffic and Travel

5.37 Transport in Brington and Molesworth is influenced by limited public transport links and the predominance of car-based travel. While Huntingdon provides access to national rail services, there are currently no regular bus routes serving either village directly, with the nearest service over an hour's walk away. As a result, local journeys are almost entirely dependent on private vehicles. This reflects the challenges identified in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, which recognises that rural areas such as Brington and Molesworth experience high levels of car dependency and are influenced by strategic routes such as the A14, and seeks to improve local sustainable transport options and connectivity.

5.38 This presents barriers for those without access to a car, including young people, older residents, and those with limited mobility. Safety concerns are widespread, especially relating to speeding, the lack of safe pedestrian and cycle routes, and the volume of HGV traffic that occasionally diverts through the villages due to wider road closures. These problems are especially acute around sensitive locations such as the school, where parents and residents have reported daily issues with safety and access.

Photo 11: Parking next to the Primary School along Brington Road



5.39 Recent initiatives led by the Parish Council, including speed limit reduction proposals and funding bids for traffic calming, reflect strong local concern

and a clear appetite for change. Community consultation has shown a desire to promote walking and cycling, especially for school-aged children, but current infrastructure does not make this a safe or attractive option. Improvements to the footpath network, safer junction layouts, and clearer pedestrian links between residential areas and community facilities are seen as essential.

5.40 The NP seeks to ensure that new development, where feasible, supports improvements to movement and accessibility. Development should contribute to a safer, more inclusive transport environment and help deliver a connected, walkable community that works better for residents of all ages and abilities.

Policy BM 8 - Traffic and Transport

A. Development proposals should, where feasible and appropriate, contribute to improved access and movement by:

   i) Providing or enhancing direct, safe, and convenient pedestrian or cycle connections between residential areas, the school and the community facilities identified in Policy BM 11;

   ii) Supporting enhancements to the layout, width, and surface quality of existing pavements to improve accessibility for all users, including children, older residents, and those with disabilities;

   iii) Providing off-street parking or drop-off facilities at or near the Primary School and Pre-School to reduce congestion and improve safety;

   iv) Facilitating integration with other sustainable transport modes, such as local bus or rail services, where appropriate to the scale and location of development.

B. Proposals that contribute positively to public bus services, active travel, road safety, or inclusive access to local services and facilities will be supported, particularly where they are proportionate to the scale of development and designed in consultation with the local community or relevant infrastructure providers.

Natural Environment

5.41 The Neighbourhood Area contains substantial areas of land which supports wildlife. Brington and Molesworth is rich in biodiversity with diverse wildlife habitats and connectivity via hedgerows to the wider ecological network.

5.42 Within the Neighbourhood Area, there are no statutory ecological sites, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, Bridleway 28 (1.48 ha) and Dog's Teeth Field (4.83 ha) both to the southern boundary of RAF Molesworth are identified as Cambridgeshire Wildlife Sites. These sites are not statutorily defined but provide important habitats to sustain a wealth of biodiversity and are recognised in Local Plan Policy LP30.

Photo 12: Parish Wildlife






5.43 Natural Cambridgeshire published a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Cambridgeshire in December 2025. The LNRS sets out spatial priorities for protecting, restoring, and enhancing habitats and ecological networks, identifying opportunity areas where coordinated action will deliver the greatest environmental benefit. It is supported by the Huntingdonshire Nature Recovery Network (2024), which provides an evidence base that identifies priority landscapes and opportunities for habitat creation and restoration, to guide biodiversity enhancement.

5.44 The intent of this plan is to support the delivery of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy by ensuring that development contributes to the creation, restoration, and connection of habitats across the parish. Policy BM 9 seeks to ensure that proposals respond positively to identified nature recovery priorities, strengthen ecological networks, and incorporate biodiversity enhancements that reflect the local context and contribute to the wider nature recovery effort.

5.45 Green Infrastructure can be defined as a network of natural and semi-natural spaces, such as parks, woodlands, rivers, wetlands, and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and should provide a range of environmental, ecological, and social benefits, including biodiversity enhancement, climate resilience, and promoting health and wellbeing.

Photo 13: Local Green Space south of Manor Farm



Policy BM 9 – Biodiversity and Nature Recovery

A. Development proposals within, on land adjoining or on land immediately adjacent to areas identified as Nature Recovery Opportunity Areas (as defined by the latest Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough), or designated river corridor priority areas within the Huntingdonshire Nature Recovery Network Report (2024), must demonstrate how the proposal contributes to the delivery of strategic nature recovery objectives. This may include on-site habitat creation or enhancement, restoration of priority habitats, or interventions that support the strengthening of identified ecological corridors. Proposals will be expected to reflect the guidance set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Nature Recovery Strategy, and applicants should engage with relevant datasets, mapping tools, or ecological advice to demonstrate how local habitats will be protected, connected, or enhanced.

B. Major development proposals should incorporate wildlife corridors or green infrastructure features that enable species movement across the site and connect to existing habitats or networks.

C. All proposals should retain and protect existing hedgerows, mature trees, and other linear or connective habitats wherever possible. Where loss is unavoidable, mitigation planting using appropriate native species will be required.

D. Development in or adjacent to residential areas should support urban biodiversity by incorporating measures such as, but not limited to, integrated bird and bat boxes, hedgehog highways, native planting schemes, and lighting strategies that avoid disturbance to nocturnal wildlife.

Flood Risk and Drainage

5.46 Although Brington and Molesworth Villages are not located within Flood Zones 2 or 3 (and are therefore not considered at high risk of fluvial flooding), both villages have experienced recurring surface water flooding events. These incidents are documented in Appendix 2, and include flooding of listed buildings and public highways.

Photo 14: Deep Water Sign along Molesworth PRoW, Millenium Field



5.47 The primary cause of flooding in the parish is surface water runoff resulting from heavy rainfall events. This is exacerbated by the clay soil conditions, which become saturated in winter and make conventional soakaway drainage systems ineffective. In Brington, the natural slope of the village and recent development have contributed to faster runoff and pooling, while in Molesworth, surface water discharge from RAF Molesworth remains a concern despite mitigation measures planned as part of redevelopment. Photo evidence of such events are documented in Appendix 2.

5.48 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan already includes a comprehensive policy framework for managing flood risk and drainage, particularly through Policy LP5: Flood Risk, which aligns with national planning policy. LP5 requires

development to avoid areas of highest flood risk wherever possible and to be supported by site-specific flood risk assessments where appropriate, including for surface water flooding. Furthermore, Policy LP15: Surface Water must also be complied with. Additional technical guidance is provided through the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD, which covers sustainable drainage system (SuDS) design, soil infiltration testing, and climate change allowances and aims to minimise The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPD) is adopted by Huntingdonshire District Council and promotes the use of SuDS to mimic natural drainage within new developments. It should be noted that the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Review will include updated policies related to flood risk and drainage.

5.49 The NP seeks to support this framework by highlighting specific localised flooding events on land not recognised as having flood risk. All development proposals should have regard to the locally recorded evidence in Appendix 2 when preparing Flood Risk Assessments or drainage strategies to ensure that new development does not exacerbate existing problems and, where feasible, contributes to improved surface water management and resilience.

5.50 Additionally, Policy BM 10 seeks to promote a standard for new SuDS which ensures that their potential for multi-reaching benefits is achieved. As set out in Planning Practice Guidance (Flood Risk and Coastal Change, Paragraph 055), effective SuDS should deliver improvements across water quantity, water quality, biodiversity, and amenity. This means they not only reduce flood risk, but can also enhance water quality, support habitat creation, and contribute to attractive, usable green spaces within development.

Policy BM 10 - Flood Risk and Drainage

A. All Flood Risk Assessments, Technical Notes and Drainage Strategies must (where relevant) have regard to the flooding evidence set out in Appendix 2, and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that this is not increased on- or off-site.

B. Surface water drainage strategies should:

   i) Avoid discharge or risk of discharge to the foul-only sewer systems serving the villages;

   ii) Avoid the use of soakaways where heavy clay soils are likely to render them ineffective;

   iii) Prioritise the use of alternative natural drainage methods such as swales, ponds, and wetlands unless demonstrated to be technically unviable.

   iv) Where a site is served by or adjacent to an existing ditch or watercourse, ensure they are retained, function effectively, and are not culverted or obstructed. Opportunities should be taken to improve their condition and flow capacity where feasible.

Community Facilities

5.51 Preserving community facilities is particularly important in Brington and Molesworth, given existing access to services is limited. Community consultation, consisting of resident and youth surveys, confirmed that a range of local facilities are regularly used and appreciated. Residents consistently expressed support for the provision of new essential services, such as a shop or post office, either through permanent or mobile facilities.

5.52 In terms of play and recreation, engagement with parents and children under 13 identified that there are some gaps in provision. While facilities like the Millennium Field and MUGA are well-used by younger residents in Molesworth, there is no formal children's play area in the village. In Brington, the existing play area is small, and there is no accessible grassed area for informal sports. The community has expressed support for enhancements or new provision to meet these needs.

5.53 Events and groups such as the Molesworth Pop-Up Pub, Quiz Nights, Crafters and Knit & Natter groups, Parents and Toddlers, and seasonal events are well supported, and survey data indicates that 81% of respondents would support the creation of a new village hall or community space in Brington to accommodate more events, meetings, and wider activities.

5.54 Other enhancements identified include improved recreational equipment, access to healthcare services, and provision for older children and teenagers. It is recognised that delivery of new facilities will depend primarily on community-led initiatives and external funding, such as grants or charitable support, given the limited scale of development in the parish and therefore limited developer contributions. It is important to ensure that planning policy enables rather than obstructs such initiatives.

5.55 Policy LP 22 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan provides a strategic framework for safeguarding local services and community facilities, supporting their retention and enabling new provision where appropriately located and scaled. It sets out criteria to manage proposals involving the loss of such facilities, including tests of viability and accessibility. Policy BM 10 of this NP complements and reinforces LP 22 by identifying the specific community facilities within Brington and Molesworth that are valued by residents and warrant protection. It provides locally tailored criteria for

assessing loss, including marketing and demand evidence, and expresses strong support for new or enhanced provision where it meets evidenced local need.

5.56 It is important to note that the list of community facilities in this section is distinct from those identified as Local Green Spaces in Policy BM 11. While both sets of assets are valued, LGS designations offer a higher level of long-term protection and are therefore not included in Policy BM 10.

5.57 Whilst the following policy is a list of the community facilities currently available at the time of writing, this list should not be treated as exhaustive, and others may be appropriate for consideration under Policy LP 22 in future.

Policy BM 11 - Community Facilities

A. The following should be included as community facilities for the purposes of Policy LP 22:

Molesworth (Figure 16):

1. Village Hall
2. All-weather pitch (Multi-use games area)
3. St Peters Church

South Brington (Figure 17):

4. All Saints Church
5. Brington Church of England Primary School
6. Brington Pre-School

The Green/Hill Place (Figure 17):

7. Small public children's play area
8. Hard surfaced sports pitch

B. Proposals for new or enhanced community facilities will be supported where there is an evidenced need and it is of an appropriate scale, within or on land immediately adjoining the built-up area (See Policy BM 1).

Figure 16. Molesworth Community Facilities

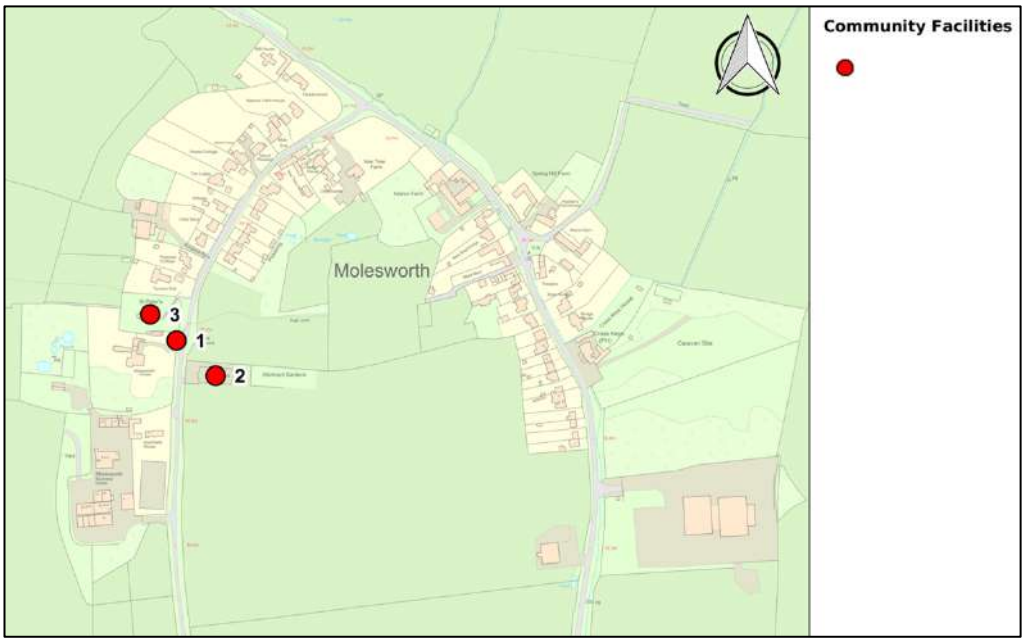


Figure 17. Brington Community Facilities



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Local Green Spaces

5.58 This policy relies on paragraphs 106-108 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024):

> NPPF (2024) Paragraph 106 states:
>
> *"The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and NPs allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period."*
>
> Paragraph 107 states:
>
> *"The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:*
>
> *a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
>
> *b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
>
> *c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*
>
> Paragraph 108 states:
>
> *"Policies and decisions for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with national policy for Green Belts set out in chapter 13 of this Framework."*

5.59 There are very few green spaces that provide opportunities for informal and formal recreation. The intent of this policy is to ensure that these vitally important spaces are protected for future generations.

Policy BM 12 - Local Green Spaces

A. The spaces listed below (Spaces i) to vi)) and identified in Appendix 3 are designated Local Green Space in Brington and Molesworth Parish. Development proposals on these sites will not be supported unless they are consistent with national policy for Green Belts and where it would support their reason for designation:

i) Village Green, Molesworth

ii) Millenium Field, Molesworth

iii) Village Green, Brington

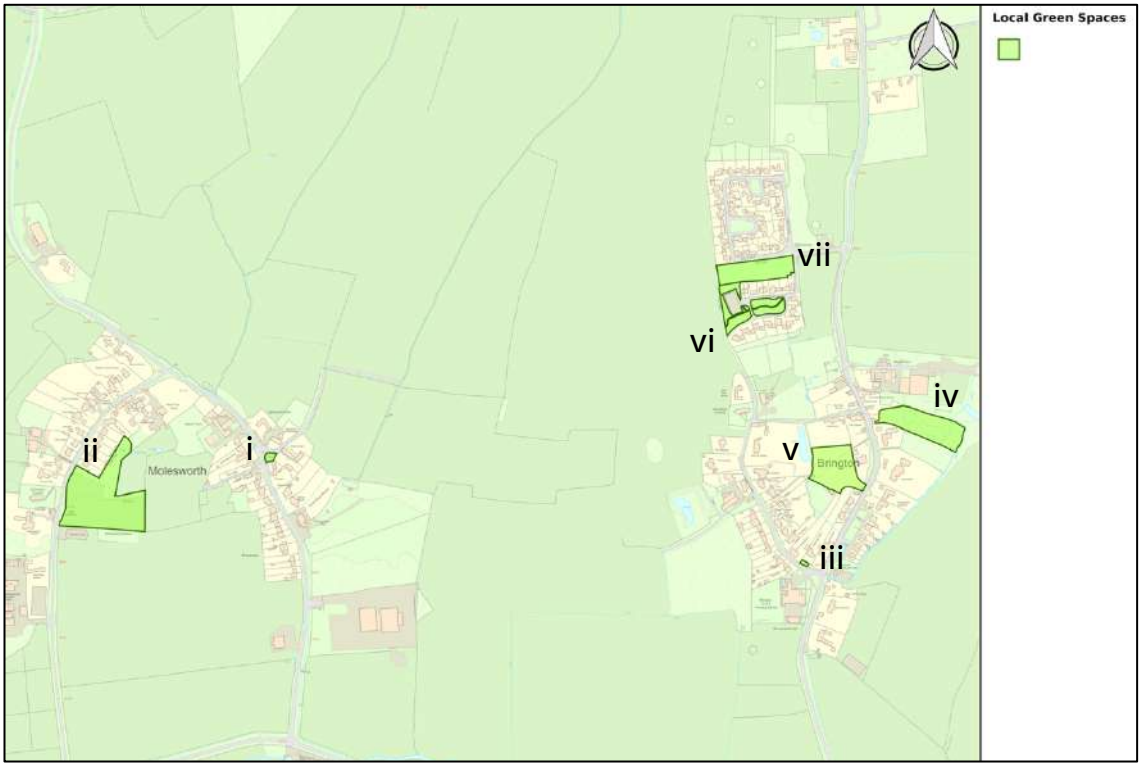
iv) The Orchard, Brington

v) Nature Area, Brington

vi) The Green, Brington

vii) Hill Place Open Space

Figure 18. Local Green Spaces



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5.60 There are other green spaces that are vital community assets. These provide a important benefits for townscape, amenity and wildlife. However, they do not comply with the Local Green Space test. Local Plan Policy LP 32 sets out a policy that protects open space of public value subject to a series of safeguarding conditions. The intent of this policy is also to identify those open spaces which should be protected by this district wide policy.

BM 13 – Green Amenity Areas

A. The Green Amenity Areas listed below (Areas i) to vi)) and identified in Appendix 4 shall retain their green and open character and will remain free of hard surfacing, except for the purposes of pedestrian access where this is appropriate.

i) North Molesworth Verges

ii) Verges around Molesworth Village Green

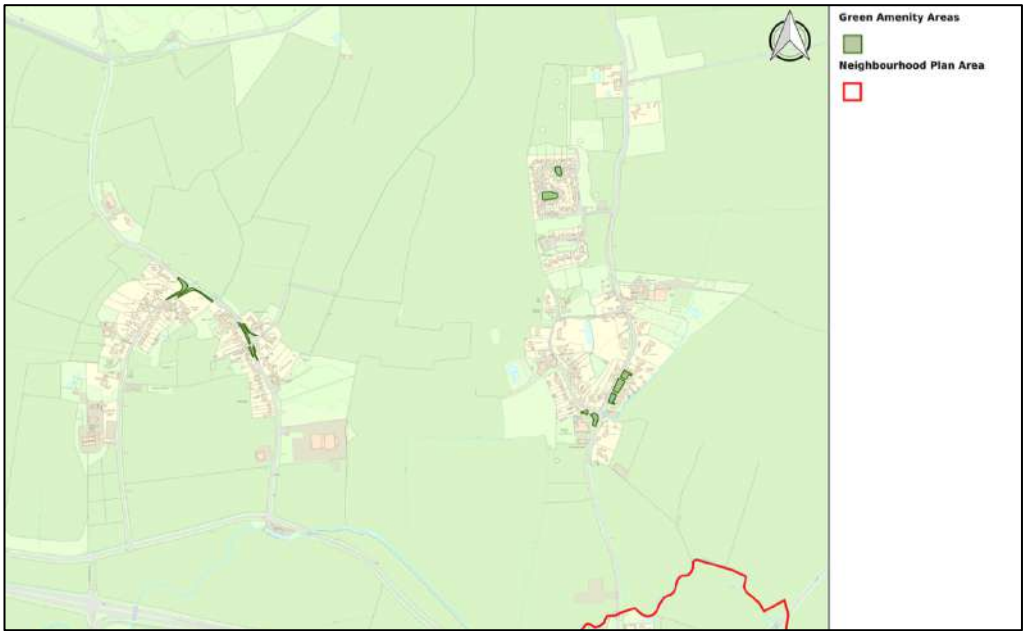
iii) Hill Place POS 1

iv) Hill Place POS 2

v) Brington High St, Housing Development

vi) Brington School Verges

Figure 19. Green Amenity Areas



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6. Monitoring and Implementation

Monitoring the policies

6.1 Huntingdonshire District Council will monitor planning applications and decisions against the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

6.2 The Parish Council will use relevant planning policies in its response to planning applications and will raise any issues with Huntingdonshire District Council where policies are not being applied.

6.3 Local groups and residents are encouraged to feed back to the Parish Council if they feel the Plan's policies are not being followed.

6.4 If data supporting planning policies are found to be out of date, through the assessment of development proposals or otherwise, then the parish council will prepare updated supporting information where possible to ensure that development plan polices are not out of date.

Indicators of progress

- Number and type of planning applications granted or refused in line with the policies.
- Delivery of new homes and employment uses that meet the specific needs of the Neighbourhood Area.
- Protection and enhancement of local facilities, green spaces as set out in the Plan.
- Increased ecological baseline achieved through a range of developer and non-developer funded initiatives.

Appendix 1. Design Codes

How to use these codes

This appendix contains key information from the Design Code prepared by AECOM in January 2025. The full design code is available to download from the Neighbourhood Plan Webpage.

Three overarching themes are used to structure the design codes – Rural Character, Healthy Design, and Sustainability. Under each theme, individual codes address specific design considerations relevant to the parish.

The design codes apply across the entire Neighbourhood Area, including allocated sites, infill development, and windfall proposals. While the primary focus is on residential development and householder planning applications, relevant codes may also apply to other development depending on the nature and scale of the proposal.

All planning applications should be supported by a Design Code Compliance Statement (DCCS), which demonstrates how the proposal has had regard to, and accords with, or is not relevant to, the design codes. The DCCS is available to download from the Neighbourhood Plan webpage.

Where it is not possible to comply with all relevant design codes, proposals should demonstrate how they have achieved a balanced and integrated design response. In such cases, particular weight should be given to conserving rural character, responding to landscape and topography, and protecting important views and historic character. Any departure from individual design codes should be clearly justified within the Design Code Compliance Statement.

Rural Character

A1 Access to the countryside

Maintaining good access to the surrounding countryside is very important for physical and mental health.

- Within built-up areas, footways created as part of new development should be well lit and overlooked by buildings to ensure passive, natural surveillance. New development should avoid having rear boundaries or blank side gables facing directly onto new and existing footpaths and cycleways. Developments connecting to the PRoW network should support opportunities to increase knowledge and legibility of routes into the countryside through appropriate signage.
- Outside built-up areas, new and existing footpaths should be unpaved, contributing to the tranquil and rural character of the area. A made surface such as gravel may be appropriate to improve access for people with varying physical mobility and during poorer weather conditions. Where new footpaths are not in immediate proximity to development, opportunities should be explored for these to be lined with hedgerows along the edges to support visual screening and wildlife mobility.

A2 Countryside views and vistas

To respect the rural character of the Neighbourhood Area, new development must:

- Consider how the spacing and layout of buildings will affect key views, particularly long-range vistas across the landscape toward modest buildings set within informal tree-lined boundaries.
- Respond to the natural shape of the land, using changes in ground level to help integrate buildings into the landscape rather than placing them in visually prominent or elevated positions.
- Recognise key views of landmarks and landscapes which must then be maintained and incorporated as development features to safeguard settlement's distinctive identity.

- Ensure building heights and massing retains existing key long distance views.

A3 Tree planting and green infrastructure

Where possible, development should:

- Retain existing trees and hedges and incorporate them into new landscape design. Proposals must demonstrate how existing trees and hedges have been considered at the earliest design stage.
- Ensure that any trees lost due to development (such as due to poor condition) are replaced with at least one new tree. New trees must be extra heavy standard as a minimum.
- Plant new trees ideally within hedgerows to reflect the local landscape character, or as individual specimen trees positioned separately to serve as focal points within a space.
- Provide setbacks that allow for front gardens or else a small area to provide a planted buffer zone between the private space and public space.
- Provide new trees to strengthen vistas, focal points and wildlife movement corridors, while retaining clear visibility into and out of amenity spaces. This should, however, not block key view corridors and vehicular circulation sight lines.
- Where new trees are integrated, they should be integrated within new development from the outset rather than left as an afterthought, in turn avoiding conflicts with above- and below-ground utilities.

A4 Landscape setting and the settlement edge

Both villages are surrounded by well-preserved natural spaces, including farmland and agricultural land that define their rural character. This verdant setting is key to local identity and should be protected and reflected in the design of new development.

- Roads should be well vegetated with grass verges to preserve the green nature of the villages.

- Abrupt edges with minimal vegetation or open landscaping at the development's perimeter should be avoided. Instead, new developments should incorporate dense vegetation to create a seamless transition from urban areas to the rural landscape. Most of the existing built environment within all four villages upholds and maintains this feature, as numerous properties have generously sized rear gardens surrounded by sizable trees and abundant vegetation.
- While vegetation should be retained and enhanced, important views along the settlement edges must also be considered and preserved as part of the design process.
- Any new vegetation should be native, suitable for the environment in which it is placed and in keeping with surrounding vegetation to maintain fluidity throughout the Neighbourhood

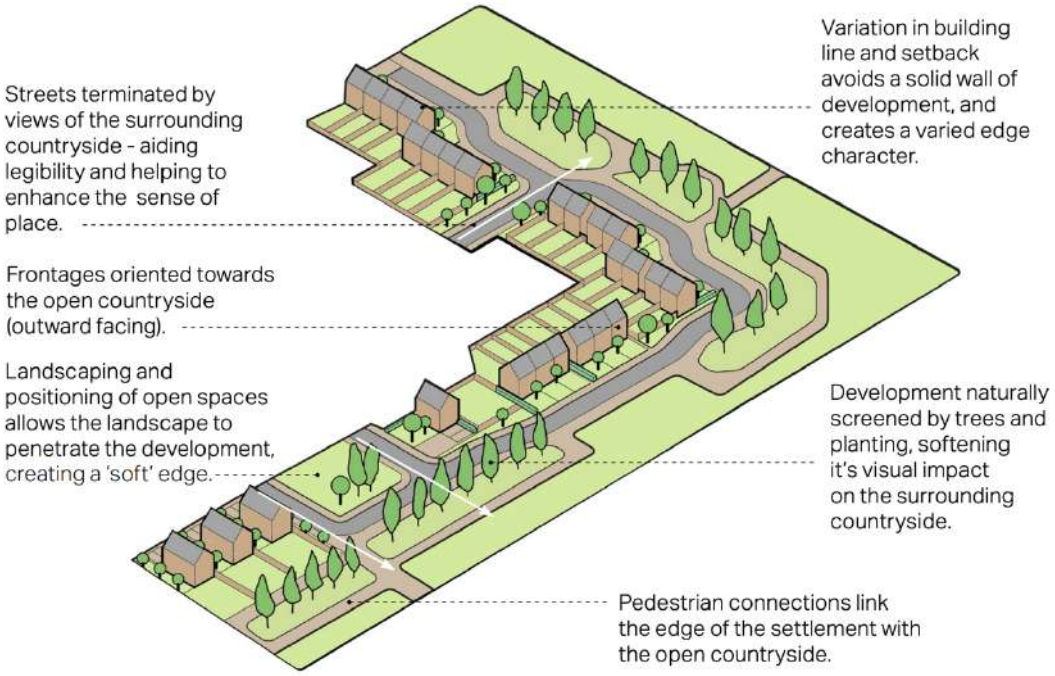
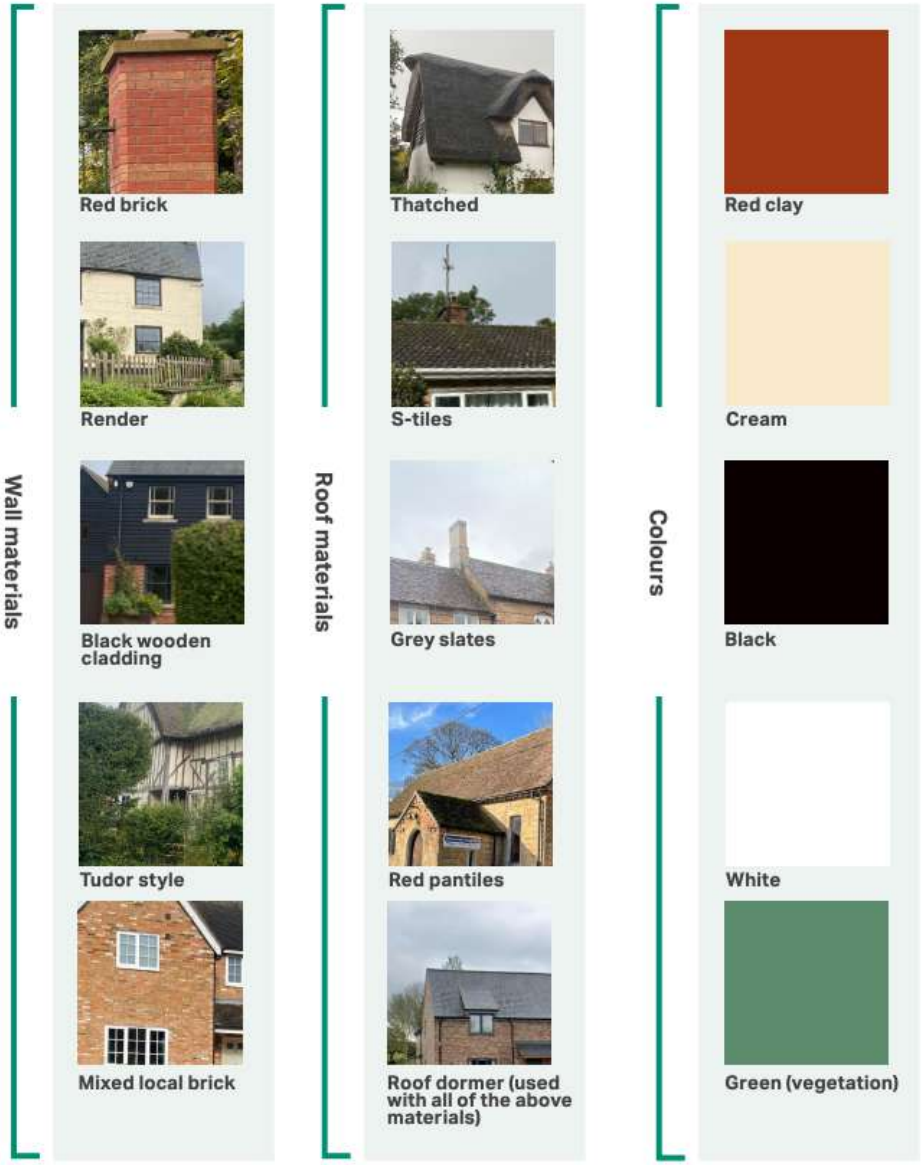


Figure 24: Indicative edge lane development model example (built form facing surrounding landscape), including trees and hedgerows that soften views to development.

A5 Architectural details and materials

Guiding principles for development to respond to the local character include to:

- Demonstrate that the material palette reflects the local character of the Neighbourhood Area.
- Use building materials and colours that work well with the colour tones of the surrounding countryside.
- The use of red brick, render, black wooden cladding and real slates should be encouraged as this is in keeping with many of the traditional and pre-existing buildings in Molesworth and Brington.
- Any new development should acknowledge, respect and enhance these features in their design and execution.

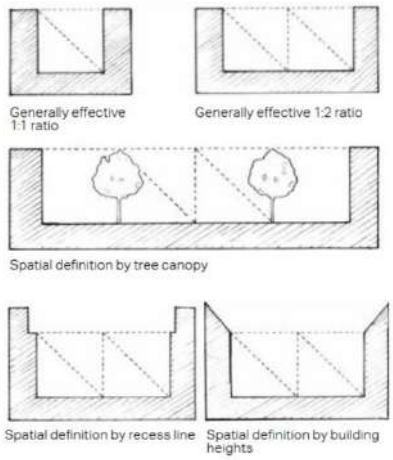


Healthy Design

B1 Enclosure

Focal points and the public realm in new developments should be designed in good proportions and delineated with clarity. Clearly defined spaces help in achieving a cohesive and attractive built form. They also create an appropriate sense enclosure. Enclosure describes the relationship between a given space and the vertical boundary elements, whether that be building façades or vegetation. The enclosure level of new developments should reflect that of their surrounding built environment. The following principles serve as a general guide that should be considered for achieving a proportioned sense of enclosure:

- When designing building setbacks, there must be an appropriate ratio between the width of the street and the building height.
- Trees, hedges, and other landscaping features can help create a more enclosed streetscape in addition to providing shading and protection from heat, wind, and rain.
- In the case of terraced and adjoining buildings, a variety of plot widths, building heights, and façade depths should be considered during the design process to create an attractive streetscape and break the monotony.
- Walls, landscaping and paving could achieve visual continuity and well-defined open spaces to link buildings together and define public and private spaces.



B2 Traffic Calming Initiatives

To help achieve a desired, safer and calmer speed of 20mph or lower, designing for lower speeds must be integral to the design of the road space. Proponents should prioritise the incorporation of appropriate horizontal design measures including:

- Road alignment;
- Shared surfaces;
- Staggered junctions;
- Reducing carriageway widths;
- Incorporating non-typical highway uses - e.g. planting, sculpture etc. which must be considered for any highways scheme.
- Vertical design measures including speed bumps must be a last resort.



Figure 30: A sketch showing a road with on-street parking and chicanes. New development should consider integrating traffic calming measures such as these to help reduce traffic speeds without the need for speed bumps.



Figure 31: A sketch highlighting pedestrian crossings and on street trees - inclusion of these features can also help to reduce traffic speeds.

B3	Space to Rest It is important that the design of streets and spaces encourage those of all physical abilities to use them. The addition of frequent seating in comfortable and safe locations is one way to support this. ▪ Resting points should be located in areas of natural surveillance, overlooked by primary frontages to improve feelings of safety. ▪ Resting points should include a level of shelter if possible - for example, being located under a tree or within a bus stop. ▪ Resting points should include some form of seating, with at least 50% including arm rests and back rests to aid accessibility. ▪ At least 1sqm of level hard standing should be provided adjacent to seating areas to allow space for a wheelchair.
B4	Plot Layout Throughout the Neighbourhood Area the plots are defined by building setbacks, varying in depth. The buildings themselves are typically generous in size and tend to have large private gardens with off-street parking. These features, along with the grass verges and street trees contribute to the rural village character of the area. ▪ Buildings should ordinarily front onto streets. The building line can have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions, but will generally follow a consistent line. ▪ Buildings should reflect the setback of surrounding buildings also leaving space for grass verges. ▪ On-plot car parking is preferable due to the narrow nature of the streets in Brington and Molesworth. ▪ On-plot parking should be located to the side of the building where possible to preserve the frontage.

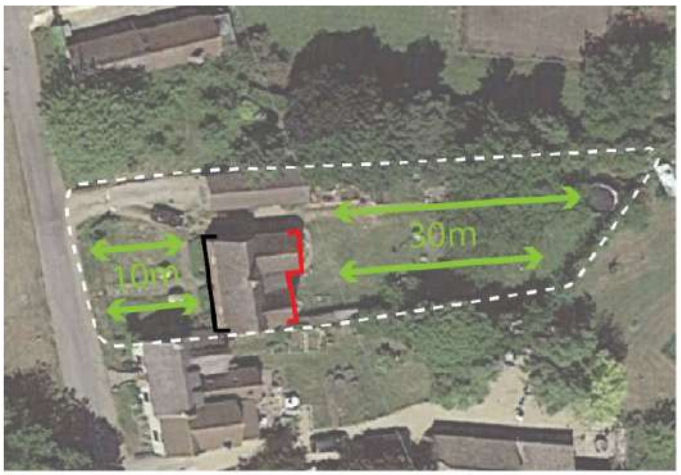


Figure 33: Aerial image of a property in Molesworth which shows what a general plot arrangement looks like in the parish.

B5 Feelings of safety and surveillance

Passive surveillance is one method of improving safety along streets, protecting residents and creating improved levels of personal comfort.

- 90% of buildings should have a primary frontage which faces the street to encourage overlooking and passive surveillance.
- Where setbacks are less than 12m, boundaries should generally be less than 1m in height. These should comprise natural boundary treatments in accordance with Code B6. Exceptions include where setbacks are larger than 12m, where boundary treatments are used to enhance enclosure, or where boundary treatments help to intermittently screen front-of-plot parking from view.

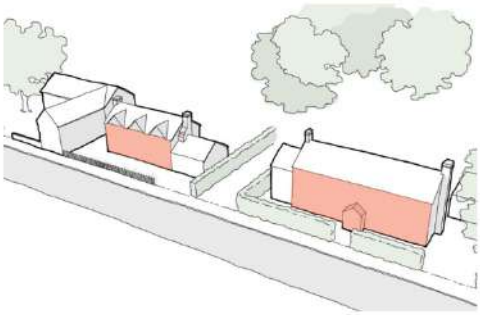


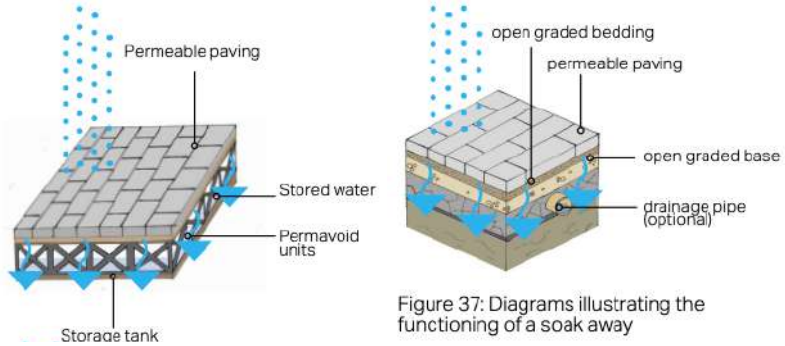
Figure 35: Sketch showing buildings with main facades which face the street.

B6 Boundary treatments

- Natural boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate to the character of the area. They should be mainly continuous hedges and low walls, as appropriate, made of traditional materials found elsewhere in the parish.
- Locally distinctive landscape features and planting, such as low wall boundary and hedges of native species should be used in new development to define boundaries. Any material that is not in keeping with the local character should be avoided.
- If placed on the property boundary, waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall landscaping and design of the property.



Figure 34: Example of vegetation integrated into the boundary of a historic plot in the parish, creating a rural villagey identity.

Sustainability	
C1	Permeable paving It is recommended that the majority of the unbuilt areas in the plot (i.e. gardens) are permeable by means of landscape such as grass or earth as well as permeable and filtrating pavements. As a rule of thumb the % permeable area should be between 30% to 70% of the unbuilt areas. Permeable pavement must also comply with regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to permeable paving and sustainable drainage: ▪ Sustainable Drainage Systems - non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems; ▪ The SuDS Manual (C753); ▪ BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites to ensure that surface water is properly managed; ▪ BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers; ▪ Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens.  Figure 37: Diagrams illustrating the functioning of a soak away
C2	In the design of SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems), developments should: ▪ Manage surface water as close to where it originates as possible; ▪ Reduce runoff rates by facilitating infiltration into the ground or by providing attenuation that stores water to help slow its flow down, so that it does not overwhelm water courses or the sewer network;

	▪ Improve water quality by filtering pollutants to help avoid environmental contamination; ▪ Integrate into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices; ▪ SuDS are often also important in areas that are not directly in an area of flood risk themselves, as they can help reduce downstream flood risk by storing water upstream; ▪ Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water, whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area; ▪ Best practice SuDS schemes link the water cycle to make the most efficient use of water resources by reusing surface water; and ▪ SuDS should be designed sensitively to augment the landscape and provide biodiversity and amenity benefits.
C3	<u>Water and slow release</u> Rainwater harvesting refers to the systems allowing the capture and storage of rainwater as well as those enabling the reuse in-site of grey water. Simple storage solutions, such as water butts, can help provide significant attenuation. However, other solutions can also include underground tanks or alternatively overground gravity fed rainwater systems that can have multiple application areas like toilets, washing, irrigation. In general, some design guidelines to well integrate water storage systems are: ▪ Consider any solution prior to design to appropriately integrate them into the vision; ▪ Conceal tanks by cladding them in complementary materials; ▪ Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes; and ▪ Combine landscape/planters with water capture systems.

- Downpipes of buildings should be resilient and fitted in a location that maximises slow release.

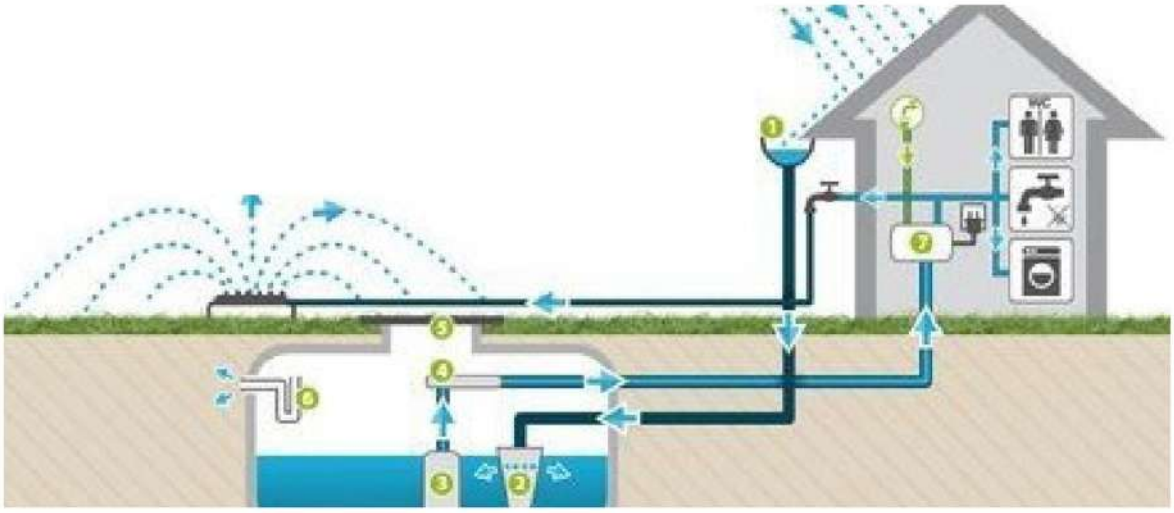


Figure 39: Diagram illustrating rainwater harvesting systems that could be integrated into open space and residential developments.

C4 Eco friendly features for dwellings

Thermal mass describes the ability of a material to absorb, store and release heat energy. Thermal mass can be used to even out variations in internal and external conditions, absorbing heat as temperatures rise and releasing it as they fall. · Thermal mass should be used to store high thermal loads by absorbing heat introduced by external conditions, such as solar radiation, or by internal sources such as appliances and lighting, to be released when conditions are cooler.

Thermal storage in construction elements could be provided, such as a wall placed in front of a south facing window or concrete floor slabs that will absorb solar radiation and then slowly re-release it into the enclosed space.

Vegetation strategies could be considered in the form of green roofs of wall climbing plants to provide a further level of insulation while also removing carbon from the atmosphere.

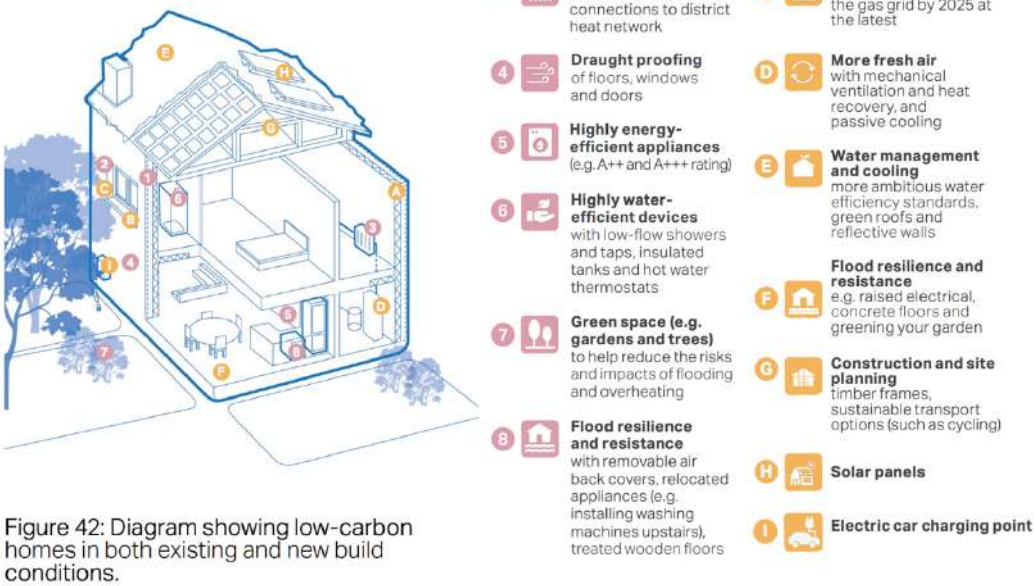


Figure 42: Diagram showing low-carbon homes in both existing and new build conditions.

C5 <u>Solar panels</u>

Solar panels over a rooftop can have a positive environmental impact, however their design and installation should be handled sensitively, particularly within conservation areas. Preserving the character of the villages should be a priority. Some solutions of sensitive implementation of solar roof panels are suggested as follows:

On new builds

- Design solar panel features from the start, forming part of the design concept. Some attractive options are solar shingles and photovoltaic slates.
- Use the solar panels as a material in their own right.

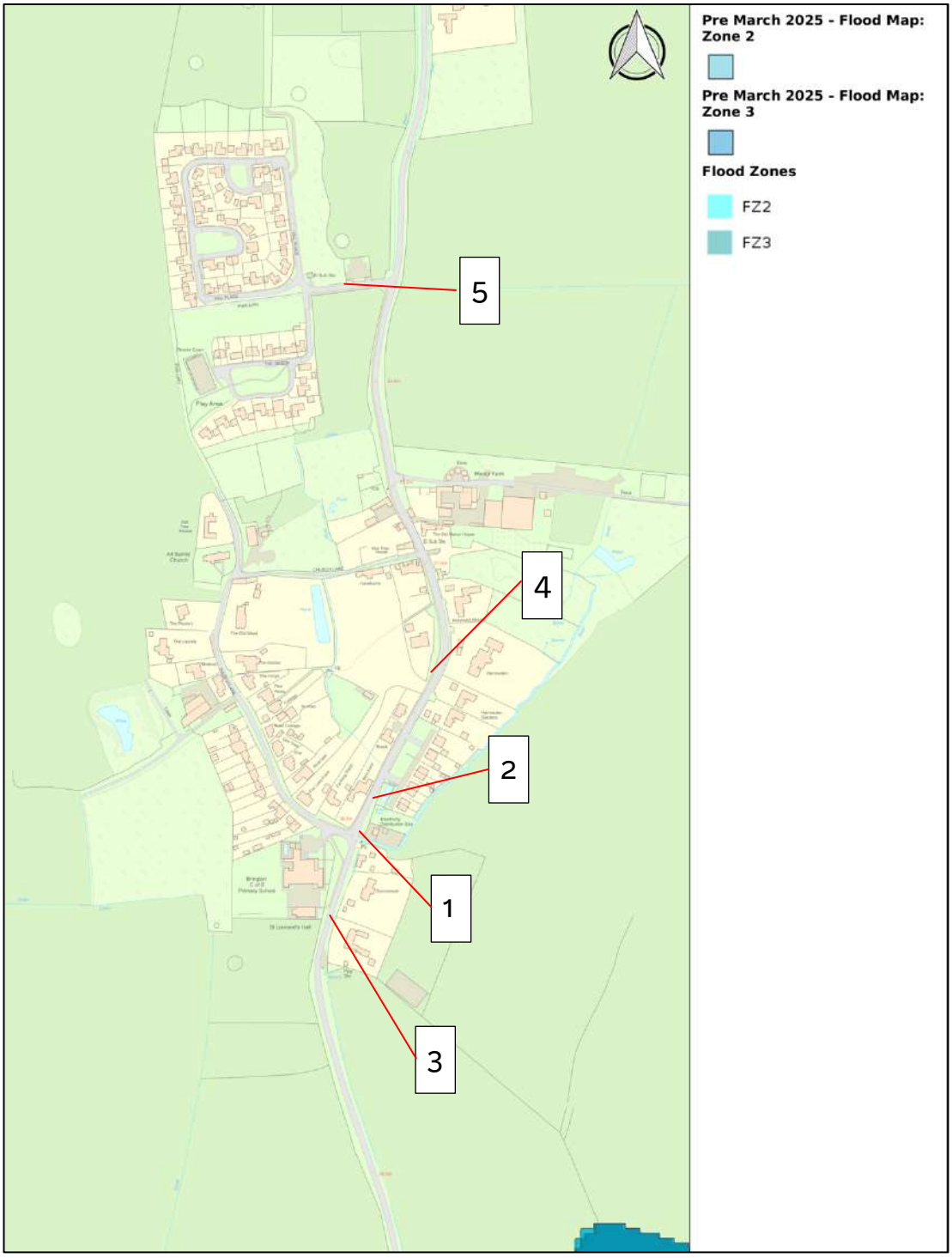
On retrofits

- Analyse the proportions of the building and roof surface in order to identify the best location and sizing of panels.
- Consider introducing other tile or slate colours to create a composition with the solar panel materials.
- Conversely, aim to introduce contrast and boldness with proportion. There has been increased interest in black panels due to their more attractive appearance. Black solar panels with black mounting systems and frames can be an appealing alternative to blue panels.
- Carefully consider the location of solar panels on buildings within the villages. It might be appropriate to introduce solar panels to areas of the building that are more concealed in order to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area in Molesworth.
- Solar panels can be added to listed buildings, but they need to be carefully sited and Listed Building consent will be required.

Appendix 2. Flooding Events

Brington

https://bringtonmolesworth-pc.gov.uk/brington-and-molesworth-flood-action-group/



1. Electric Substation, Brington
10 March 2023 
2 January 2024 

2 January 2024



2. Bus Stop, Brington

2 January 2024



3. High Street (South)
2 January 2024 
4. High Street (South)
2 January 2024 

4. High Street (South) (continued)

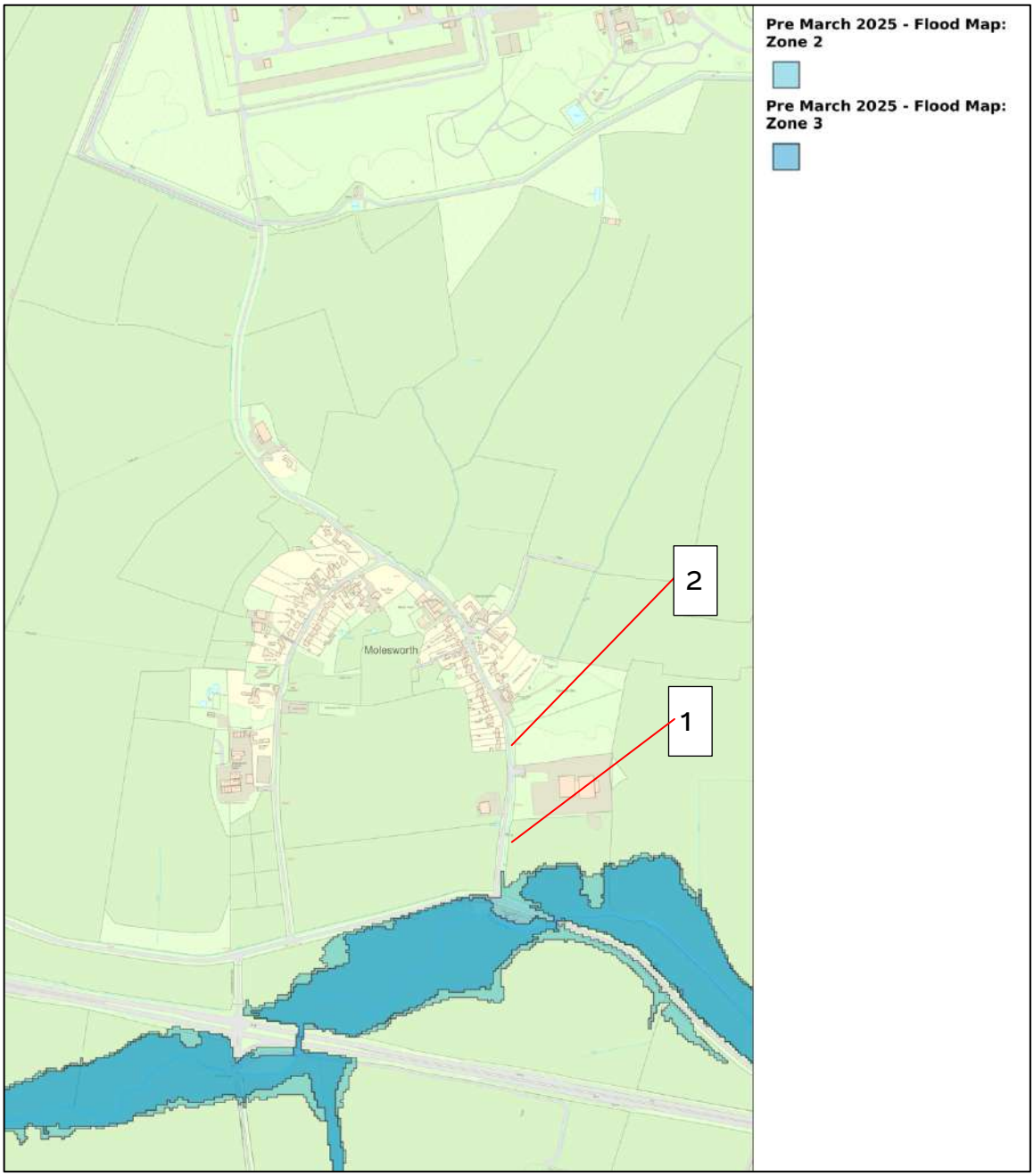


5. Hill Place

2 January 2024



Molesworth


Pre March 2025 - Flood Map: Zone 2
Pre March 2025 - Flood Map: Zone 3
Molesworth
2
1

1. East Molesworth Rd

20 October 2023



2. Entrance to Brookside Employment Site and Molesworth

20 October 2023



January 2024

https://bringtonmolesworth-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/240102_142138_684_FL.mp4







February 2026





Appendix 3. Local Green Spaces

Site Name	***Millenium Field***
Plan Site Reference	
Site Address	land on the east side of Church Road, Molesworth, PE28 0QF
Grid Location	*TL 07118 75792*
Site Area (ha)	1.33
Site Ownership	Brington and Molesworth PC
Site Attributes and Use	
Description of Use	*Recreational field. Used for sport, play, dog walking and general recreation. Also supports wildlife including a large bug house.*
Description of public access to the site	*Open to the public. PRoW connects into site. Accessible from Molesworth Rd.*

Does the site have any special features such as trees, wildlife, landscape, heritage etc?	*Open field which provides great opportunities for a range of activities. Includes a wooded area to the north which hosts a range of wildlife and a pond.*
Is the site formally designated for any special features? Eg Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve, designated public open space, designated playing field, key walking and cycling route, designated heritage asset, local heritage asset, green belt, landscape designation, important trees and woodland etc	*Part of Molesworth Conservation Area.*
Development potential and development pressure	
Is the site the subject of planning applications for development?	*No (23/06/2025)*
Is the site allocated or safeguarded for development or proposed for allocation?	*No*
Landowner Consultation	*Regulation 14 Consultation*
Assessment of site potential against NPPF Criteria:	
in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	*Yes, within 5 minutes of Molesworth and 15 minutes from Brington via PRoW.*
demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for	*It is the main recreational field in Molesworth and serves as a place for community gatherings, play, and dog walking. There is no*

example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife	*other large public open space in the village. There is also rich wildlife in the wooded area and pond to the north.*
local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	*Yes, the site is small and compact within the village.*
Summary of Designation	*To protect Molesworth's main public recreation and community space, together with the wildlife value of its wooded area and pond.*





















Site Name	***Molesworth Village Green***
Plan Site Reference	
Site Address	Manor Farm, Molesworth, Huntingdon (PE28 0QF)
Grid Location	*TL 07430 75883*
Site Area (ha)	*0.025ha*
Site Ownership	*Private freehold*
Site Attributes and Use	
Description of Use	*Small green area which supports village post box, village sign, PRoW signage, public notice board, telephone box (public library and defibrillator). Important for local amenity and a sense of a historical village nucleus.*
Description of public access to the site	*Public via main road.*
Does the site have any special features such as trees, wildlife, landscape, heritage etc?	*Supports a small number of trees in addition to the various items listed above.*

Is the site formally designated for any special features? Eg Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve, designated public open space, designated playing field, key walking and cycling route, designated heritage asset, local heritage asset, green belt, landscape designation, important trees and woodland etc	*Part of Molesworth Conservation Area*
Development potential and development pressure	
Is the site the subject of planning applications for development?	*No (23/06/2025)*
Is the site allocated or safeguarded for development or proposed for allocation?	*No*
Landowner Consultation	*Part of Regulation 14 consultation*
Assessment of site potential against NPPF Criteria:	
in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	*Yes, within the village. Brington residents can access this space within 15 minutes.*
demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife	*Locally significant as perceived as the village core. Supports a number of public objects and a small grassed area which serves important amenity benefits.*

local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	*Yes.*
Summary of Designation	*To protect the small green area that forms a community and historic focal point within Molesworth and provides the setting for the village sign, noticeboard, post box, telephone box and other community facilities.*





Site Name	***The Green***
Plan Site Reference	
Site Address	Land and buildings to the west of Old Weston Road, Brington, Huntingdon
Grid Location	*TL 08262 76135*
Site Area (ha)	*0.34 ha*
Site Ownership	Private
Site Attributes and Use	
Description of Use	*Public Open Space including play area. Adjoins Sports Pitch.*
Description of public access to the site	*Publicly accessible*
Does the site have any special features such as trees, wildlife, landscape, heritage etc?	*Number of trees on site that are recently planted (new development). Also a number of play features and direct access to countryside PRoW to the west.*

Is the site formally designated for any special features? Eg Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve, designated public open space, designated playing field, key walking and cycling route, designated heritage asset, local heritage asset, green belt, landscape designation, important trees and woodland etc	*No*
Development potential and development pressure	
Is the site the subject of planning applications for development?	*No (23/06/2025)*
Is the site allocated or safeguarded for development or proposed for allocation?	*No*
Landowner Consultation	*Regulation 14*
Assessment of site potential against NPPF Criteria:	
in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	*Yes, close to residents of the green and hill place. Residents can access facilities via PRoW which directly connects to site.*
demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as	*The site is considered the largest and main location for play, dog walking and amenity in Brington. There are no other play equipment facilities in the Parish.*

a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife	
local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	*Lies within parcel of residential development.*
Summary of Designation	*To protect Brington's main public play and amenity space, including the Parish's only public play equipment, its trees and its direct connection to the surrounding countryside.*

















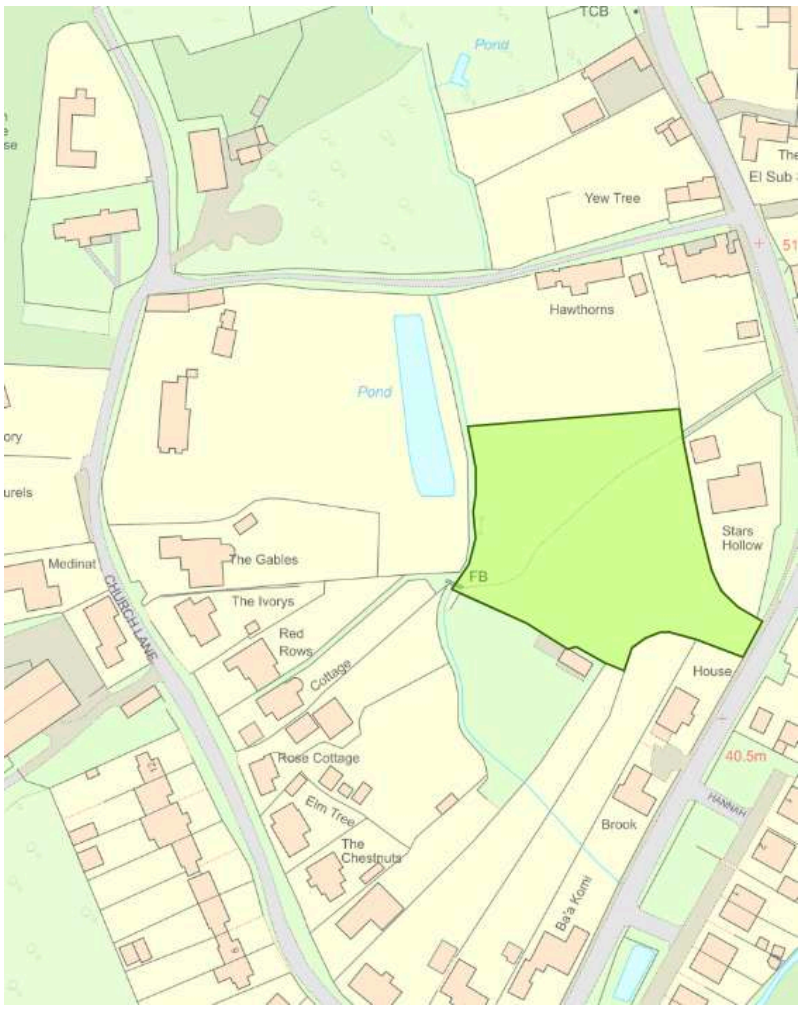
Site Name	***Brington Village Green***
Plan Site Reference	
Site Address	*South of Farthing Patch, Church Lane, Brington, Huntingdon (PE28 5AE)*
Grid Location	*TL 08367 75694*
Site Area (ha)	*0.0089*
Site Ownership	*Unregistered Title*
Site Attributes and Use	
Description of Use	*Recreation, public notices.*
Description of public access to the site	*From Church Lane.*
Does the site have any special features such as trees, wildlife, landscape, heritage etc?	*Bench and public notice board*

Is the site formally designated for any special features? Eg Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve, designated public open space, designated playing field, key walking and cycling route, designated heritage asset, local heritage asset, green belt, landscape designation, important trees and woodland etc	*No*
Development potential and development pressure	
Is the site the subject of planning applications for development?	*No (23/06/2025)*
Is the site allocated or safeguarded for development or proposed for allocation?	*No*
Landowner Consultation	*Regulation 14 consultation*
Assessment of site potential against NPPF Criteria:	
in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	*Yes, within the core of the village.*
demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife	*The site is at the perceived core of the village and is used as a place of recreation. There are few other benches in the village, and none of the other benches are on grassed areas. It is important that this space is preserved so that residents have an option to rest outside/in public. The village notice board also serves an important purpose of keeping everyone*

	informed of community related issues and activities.
local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	*Yes, very small land parcel and within the core of the village.*
Summary of Assessment	*To protect a small green focal point within the village core that provides seating, informal recreation and a place for public notices.*





Site Name	***Nature Area***
Plan Site Reference	
Site Address	land lying to the south of Church Lane, Brington
Grid Location	*TL 08418 75865*
Site Area (ha)	*0.56*
Site Ownership	*Private*
Site Attributes and Use	
Description of Use	*Green open space*

Description of public access to the site	*The land is private however there is a public footpath through it. The footpath is lined by fencing which prevents access into the wider landholding.*
Does the site have any special features such as trees, wildlife, landscape, heritage etc?	*The site features an attractive open space with varied types of vegetation. This provides important benefits for amenity and wildlife.*
Is the site formally designated for any special features? Eg Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve, designated public open space, designated playing field, key walking and cycling route, designated heritage asset, local heritage asset, green belt, landscape designation, important trees and woodland etc	*No, however, it lies within proximity to a traditional orchard and listed buildings.*
Development potential and development pressure	
Is the site the subject of planning applications for development?	*Yes, there is a withdrawn PIP application on the site for 3 residential dwellings* (20/02207/PIP).
Is the site allocated or safeguarded for development or	*No*

proposed for allocation?	
Landowner Consultation	*Regulation 14*
Assessment of site potential against NPPF Criteria:	
in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	*Yes, it lies within the heart of the village and is an important connection between the east and west of the village.*
demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife	*The site acts as a through point for pedestrians between the east and west of the village. The site is attractive and dense in vegetation and also accommodates a number of trees, making it a pleasant local route and a key area for wildlife within the village. It is locally important for amenity. The tranquillity and openness of the site plays a key role in preserving the settlement pattern of Brington as a village with little to no back land development.*
local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	*Yes. The site is a tight parcel of land within the village.*
Summary of Designation	*To protect its tranquil, open and well-vegetated character, wildlife value and role as a pleasant pedestrian connection through the village.*



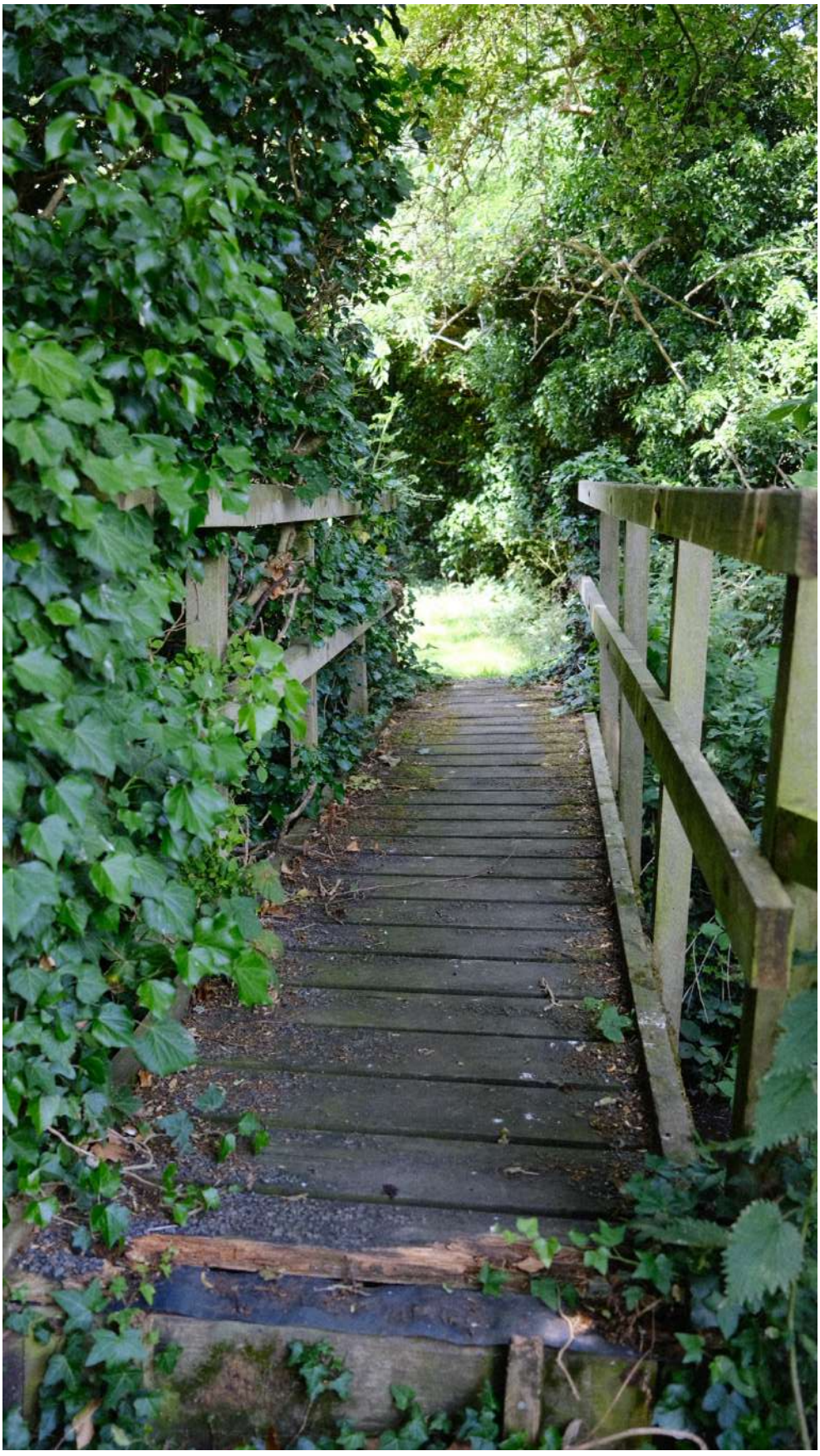












Site Name	***The Orchard***
Plan Site Reference	
Site Address	Manor House, Brington, Huntingdon (PE28 5AF)
Grid Location	*TL 08565 75937*
Site Area (ha)	*0.6 ha*
Site Ownership	*Private*
Site Attributes and Use	
Description of Use	*Wildlife area / footpath*
Description of public access to the site	*PRoW runs through site, accessed from main road and provides access to footpaths outside of the village.*
Does the site have any special features such as trees, wildlife, landscape, heritage etc?	*Rich in wildlife, including a number of fruit trees and dense vegetation, providing important opportunities for mammals and birds.*

Is the site formally designated for any special features? Eg Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve, designated public open space, designated playing field, key walking and cycling route, designated heritage asset, local heritage asset, green belt, landscape designation, important trees and woodland etc	*No*
Development potential and development pressure	
Is the site the subject of planning applications for development?	*No (23/06/2025)*
Is the site allocated or safeguarded for development or proposed for allocation?	*No*
Landowner Consultation	*Regulation 14 consultation*
Assessment of site potential against NPPF Criteria:	
in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	*Site is part of Brington. It can be accessed in 2-8 minutes from anywhere in the village using the PRoW network.*
demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife	*The site is considered to be one of the most biodiverse areas in t he village that is open to the public. It provides important opportunities for wildlife and amenity that is close to the village community.*

local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	*The site in terms of its character is more closely associated with the village than open countryside. It would not project into the open countryside through its designation as an LGS.*
Summary of Designation	*To protect its orchard and wildlife-rich character, including its fruit trees and dense vegetation, and the public footpath linking the village with the surrounding countryside to the east.*





























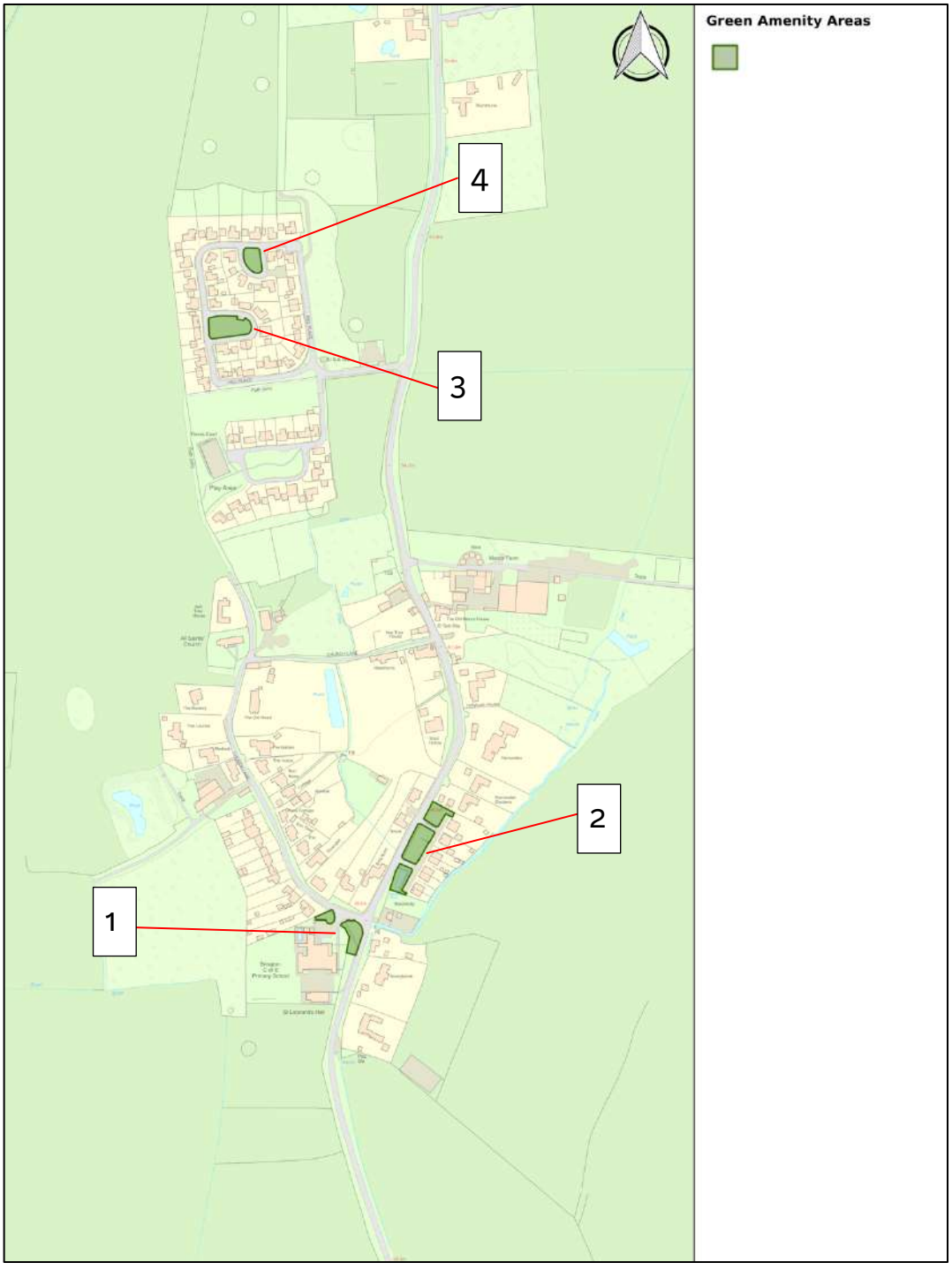
Site Name	***Hill Place Open Space***
Plan Site Reference	
Site Address	Land South of Hill Place, Brington, Huntingdon
Grid Location	*TL 08283 76210*
Site Area (ha)	*0.47 ha*
Site Ownership	CAMPBELL MELHUISH AND BUCHANAN LIMITED (Limited Company or Public Limited Company), 10 Old Houghton Road, Hartford, Huntingdon PE29 1YB
Site Attributes and Use	
Description of Use	*Public Open Space including community orchard.*
Description of public access to the site	*Publicly accessible*
Does the site have any special features such as trees, wildlife, landscape, heritage etc?	*Number of trees on site that are recently planted (new development). Also a number of play features nearby and direct access to countryside PRoW to the west.*

Is the site formally designated for any special features? Eg Site of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve, designated public open space, designated playing field, key walking and cycling route, designated heritage asset, local heritage asset, green belt, landscape designation, important trees and woodland etc	*No*
Development potential and development pressure	
Is the site the subject of planning applications for development?	*No (10/04/2026). Refused appeal and withdrawn application on site* ((Appeal ref: 3262053 and Planning Ref 23/02123/FUL)
Is the site allocated or safeguarded for development or proposed for allocation?	*No*
Landowner Consultation	*Regulation 15 consultation*
Assessment of site potential against NPPF Criteria:	
in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	*Yes, close to residents of the green and hill place. Residents can access facilities via PRoW which directly connects to site. Community orchard provides access to fruit and provides a sense of community ownership.*
demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as	*The site is considered part of the largest and main location for play, dog walking and amenity in Brington. There are no other community orchards in the parish.*

a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife	
local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	*Lies within parcel of residential development.*
Summary of Designation	*To protect the publicly accessible community orchard as a recreation and amenity space, including its fruit trees and connection to the countryside.*

Appendix 4. Green Amenity Areas

Brington



1. Brington School Verges





Owner - Cambridgeshire County Council

2. Brington High St, Housing Development









Landowner - Private

3. Hill Place – POS 1







Landowner – see below

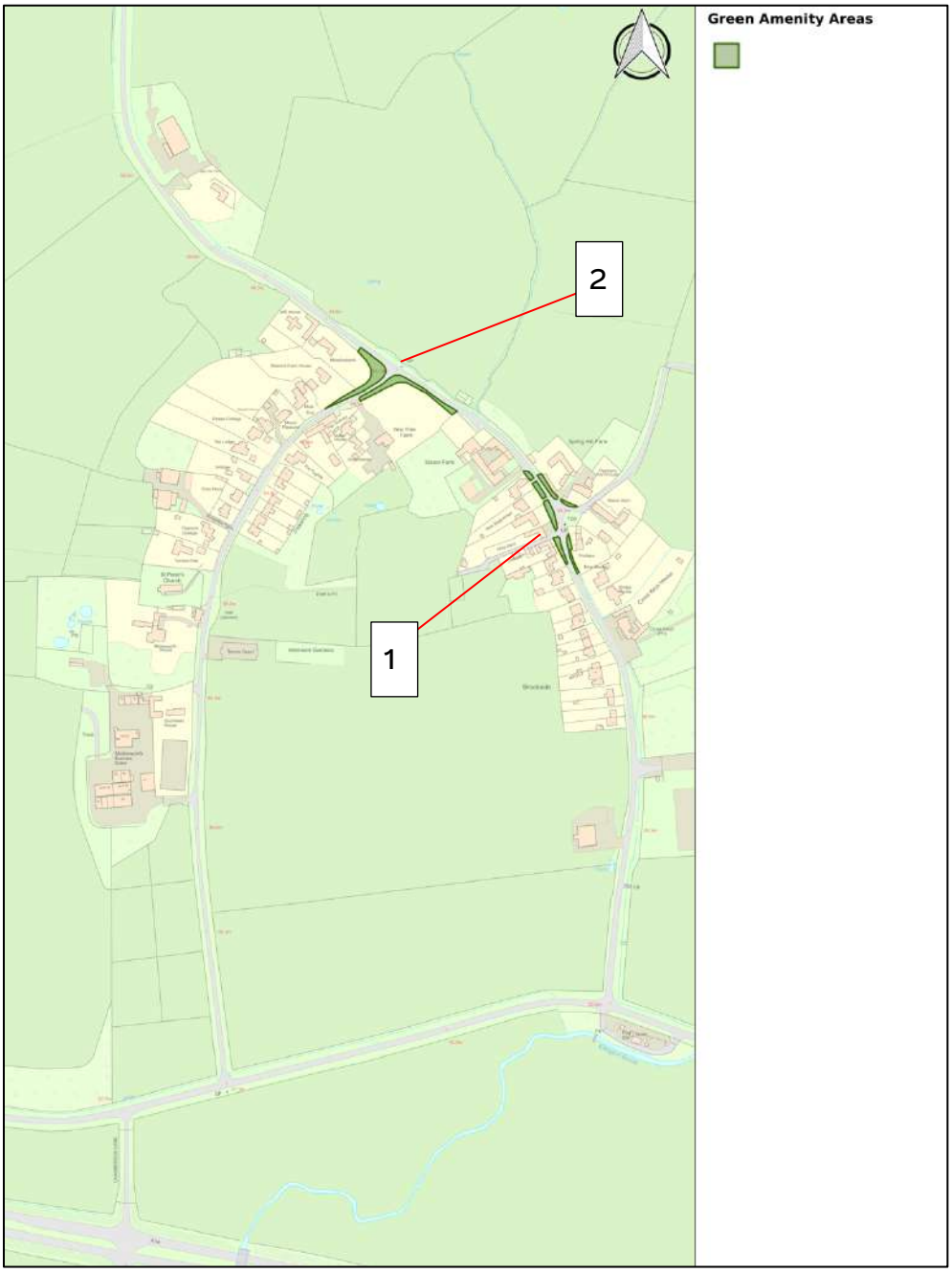
4. Hill Place – POS 2





Private

Molesworth



1. Verges around Molesworth Village Green











2. North Molesworth Verges







Report on the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2036

An Examination undertaken for Huntingdonshire District Council with the support of Brington and Molesworth Parish Council on the April 2026 submission version of the Plan.

Independent Examiner: Andrew S Freeman BSc(Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI

Date of Report: 27 August 2026

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and its supporting documentation, including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- the Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Brington and Molesworth Parish Council;
- the Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan Area – Figure 1 on Page 5 of the Plan;
- the Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2021 – 2036; and
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan 2021 - 2036

1.1 The civil parish of Brington and Molesworth is within the administrative area of Huntingdonshire District Council in the county of Cambridgeshire. The parish straddles the A14 just west of its junction with the B660, approximately 12 miles to the west of Huntingdon.

1.2 The parish is centred on the two attractive villages of Brington and Molesworth which are just under a mile apart and are set in a rolling arable landscape. Brington is in two parts, a younger, northern part and an older, southern part. Molesworth is less well defined. RAF Molesworth is an active United States Air Force base (a NATO Intelligence gathering centre) to the north of the village.

1.3 The parish was confirmed as a neighbourhood area in July 2021. Since then, plan preparation has proceeded under the auspices of a working group. Engagement with the public included the issuing of a questionnaire survey. This informed early policy formulation and the drafting of the Plan. Professional and technical help was also available to the working group. The resultant Plan has an overarching vision, 14 strategic objectives and 13 policies on a variety of topics.

The Independent Examiner

1.4 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan by Huntingdonshire District Council, with the agreement of Brington and Molesworth Parish Council.

1.5 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector with over forty years' experience. I have worked in both the public and the private sectors. I am an independent examiner and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

The Scope of the Examination

1.6 As the independent examiner I am required to produce this report and recommend either:

(a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or

(b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or

(c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

1.7 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ("the 1990 Act"). The examiner must consider:

- Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions;

- Whether the plan complies with provisions under Section 38A and Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ("the 2004 Act"). These are:
  - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
  - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land and does not go beyond the scope of what may be included in a draft plan[1];
  - it specifies the period during which it has effect;
  - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;

[1] See Section 38B(A1) and Section 38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.

- it does not include provisions and policies for "excluded development";
- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it is designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change[2]; and

- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it takes account of any local nature recovery strategy, under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021, that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood area.[3]

- Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.

- Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the 2012 Regulations").

1.8 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

1.9 The "Basic Conditions" are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;

- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;

- not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made[4];

---

[2] This additional requirement was commenced on 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force section 98 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.
[3] See footnote above.
[4] This Basic Condition applies from 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force section 99 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. This replaces the former Basic Condition which required a neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

- be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations (under retained EU law)[5]; and

- meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.10 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.[6]

2.Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Development Plan for this part of Huntingdonshire District Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, is Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 as adopted in May 2019. A full update to the Local Plan is in progress, with publication of a Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan to 2046 anticipated in September 2026, and its submission for examination by the end of December 2026.[7]

2.2 This Plan has been prepared in the context of the version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024. A revised NPPF was published during the examination on 17 August 2026. However, the revised version does not apply for the purposes of this examination.[8] Unless otherwise stated, all references in the report are to the December 2024 NPPF and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Submitted Documents

2.3 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including those submitted which comprise:

- the draft Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2036, April 2026;
- a map which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates;
- the Consultation Statement, April 2026;
- the Basic Conditions Statement, April 2026;

[5] The existing body of environmental regulation is retained in UK law.
[6] This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.
[7] Local Development Scheme, May 2026: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/cnpkcvla/local-development-scheme.pdf
[8] See the transitional arrangements provided by Annex A, Paragraph 6 of the August 2026 NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK

- all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation;
- the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Assessment, January 2026, prepared by Huntingdonshire District Council;[9] and
- the request for additional clarification sought in my letter dated 23 July 2026 and the responses from Brington and Molesworth Parish Council received on 7 August 2026 and that from Huntingdonshire District Council dated 29 July 2026.[10]

Site Visit

2.4 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 8 August 2026 to familiarise myself with it and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.5 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I considered hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulated the objections to the Plan and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum.

Modifications

2.6 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

3.1 The Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by Brington and Molesworth Parish Council, which is a qualifying body for an area that was designated by Huntingdonshire District Council on 28 July 2021.

3.2 It is the only Neighbourhood Plan for Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan Area and does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

[9] View at: https://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/kse/event/38557
[10] View at: https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/huijwifr/brington-parish-councils-response-to-examiner-s-questions-7-august-2026.pdf

Plan Period

3.3 The Plan specifies clearly the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2021 to 2036.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

3.4 Application for neighbourhood area status was sought by Brington and Molesworth Parish Council in an application to Huntingdonshire District Council dated 23 July 2021. The Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan Area was subsequently designated by the district council on 28 July 2021.

3.5 Details of plan preparation and consultation are set out in the Parish Council's Consultation Statement dated April 2026. Statutory consultation under Regulation 14 took place between 18 December 2025 and 5 February 2026.

3.6 Details of persons and bodies consulted are set out in Section 3 of the Statement, together with an explanation of how they were consulted. For statutory consultees, this is in Section 3.1 of the Statement. Sections 3.2 to 3.3 set out the arrangements for consulting residents. There is a summary of the main issues and concerns raised and a description of how these were considered and addressed in Section 4 of the Consultation Statement.

3.7 Statutory consultation under Regulation 16 was held between 26 May 2026 and 7 July 2026. Some 44 separate representations have been recorded. In addition to detailed responses from the District Council, these were submitted by the County Council as well as by various public bodies, consultants, community campaigners and individuals.

3.8 I am satisfied that, at both the Regulation 14 and the Regulation 16 stages, the consultation process met the legal requirements and there has been procedural compliance. Regard has been paid to the advice on plan preparation and engagement in the PPG.

Development and Use of Land

3.9 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with Section 38A of the 2004 Act and does not exceed the appropriate scope of a neighbourhood plan.[11]

Excluded Development

3.10 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for "excluded development".[12]

---

[11] See Section 38B(A1) and Section 38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.

[12] The meaning of 'excluded development' is set out in s.61K of the 1990 Act.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

3.11 Huntingdonshire District Council has advised that a nature recovery strategy is in place for the area that includes the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan Area. In my assessment, none of the Plan's policies are in direct conflict with the strategy.

Climate Change

3.12 Having regard to the responses received to my letter of 23 July 2026, I am satisfied that, overall, the Plan policies do not conflict with the aims of securing development which contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

Human Rights

3.13 Brington and Molesworth Parish Council is satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). From my independent assessment, I see no reason to disagree.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

Assimilated Obligations

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by Huntingdonshire District Council, which found that it was unnecessary to undertake SEA. Having read the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, I support this conclusion.

4.2 The Neighbourhood Plan was further screened for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), which also was not triggered. The Neighbourhood Plan will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally designated sites either on its own or in combination with other plans. Natural England agreed with this conclusion.[13] From my independent assessment of this matter, I have no reason to disagree.

Main Issues

4.3 Having regard for the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan, the consultation responses and other evidence, and the site visit, I consider that there are eight main issues relating to the Basic Conditions for this examination. These concern:

- Guiding Growth
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Design Matters

[13] Email dated 9 January 2026 in Appendix 1 of the Screening Report.

- Movement
- Natural Environment
- Community Facilities
- Green Spaces

4.4 Before I deal with the main issues, I have a few observations to make with regard to the representations. First, the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan should be seen in the context of the wider planning system. This includes Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 as well as the NPPF and PPG. It is not necessary to repeat in the Neighbourhood Plan matters that are quite adequately dealt with elsewhere.[14] Having said that, there may be scope to give emphasis to matters particularly relevant in the context of Brington and Molesworth.

4.5 Secondly, the Neighbourhood Plan does not have to deal with each and every topic raised through the consultation. In this regard, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and the scope of the policies is largely at the discretion of the qualifying body, albeit informed by the consultation process and the requirements set by the Basic Conditions.

4.6 Thirdly, my central task is to judge whether the Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the Basic Conditions. Many of the representations do not demonstrate or indicate a failure to meet those conditions or other legal requirements. Similarly, many of the suggested additions and improvements are not necessary when judged against the Basic Conditions.

4.7 The following section of my report sets out modifications that are necessary in order to meet the Basic Conditions. Some of the proposed modifications are factual corrections.[15] Others are necessary in order to have closer regard to national policies and advice. In particular, plans should be succinct and contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous.[16] A decision maker should be able to apply them consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. In addition, the policies should be supported by appropriate evidence.[17]

Issue 1 – Guiding Growth

4.8 Policy BM 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan (Brington Built-Up Areas) seeks to promote development in the right places. For accuracy and consistency, a number of focused amendments are necessary:

- Part A of the policy should refer to Figure 10, not Map 10.

- Figure 10, in both the title and the key, should refer to "Built-Up Area Boundaries".

[14] See NPPF Paragraph 16 f).
[15] Modifications for the purpose of correcting errors is provided for in Paragraph 10(3)(e) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.
[16] NPPF, Paragraphs 15 and 16 d).
[17] PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.

- Part B iii) of the policy should refer to preserving the landscape setting.

- Part B iv) of the policy should define the areas of open green space that are to be safeguarded.

4.9 These matters are addressed in proposed modification **PM1**.

4.10 In addition to the above, I have considered whether a built-up area for Molesworth should be defined in a way similar to that of Brington. To my mind, this is not necessary to meet the Basic Conditions. Development in Molesworth can continue to be assessed using the built-up area guidance set out in Policy LP9 of the Local Plan.

4.11 I have also considered whether any housing allocations should be made as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. As stated above, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan is largely at the discretion of the qualifying body, albeit informed by the consultation process and the requirements set by the Basic Conditions. From what I have read, the Neighbourhood Plan would not lead to less housing being provided than would otherwise be the case (the relevant Basic Condition). I conclude that there is no need for the Parish Council to make housing allocations under the Plan.

Issue 2 – Housing

4.12 Part A of Policy BM 2 (Housing Mix) implies that applicants would need to analyse local housing need, affordability and the nature of the existing housing stock in drawing up proposals for residential development. However, as indicated in the Parish Council's answers to my questions[18], the envisaged requirements are set out in Parts B and C of the policy. For clarity, a re-wording of Part A is appropriate, as in proposed modification **PM2**.

4.13 Part B of Policy BM 3 (Affordable Housing Tenure) indicates that shared ownership is a preferred tenure, "particularly at 10% equity shares". In this regard, Huntingdonshire District Council has suggested that the first ownership tranche could be 25%.

4.14 In my experience, it may be difficult to secure viable and deliverable schemes at the 10% level. Whilst this could be expressed as a preference, there should be a statement of action to be taken in alternative circumstances. Proposed modification **PM3** reflects a form of wording suggested by the Parish Council.[19]

Issue 3 – Economic Development

4.15 Part A of Policy BM 4, Economic Development, refers to Molesworth Business Estate and Manor Farm. Neither is shown on a plan and this

[18] See Parish Council's answers dated 7 August 2026 to my questions.
[19] See Parish Council's answers dated 7 August 2026 to my questions.

could lead to confusion over the precise areas covered by the policy. The Parish Council has now produced plans that define the respective employment areas[20] and these are the subject of proposed modification **PM4**.

4.16 The modification also clarifies the meaning of "small-scale", as referenced in Part B of the policy. A footnote would indicate that this means having a floorspace of less than 1,000 square metres (sq m) or involving a site with an area of less than 1 hectare (ha).

Issue 4 – Design Matters

4.17 Policy BM 5 (Delivering Good Design) states that all development proposals must demonstrate how they have had regard to the Design Codes in Appendix 1; also, that they should be supported by the "Design Code Compliance Statement".

4.18 Having reviewed the Design Codes, and the Parish Council's answers dated 7 August 2026 to my questions, I agree that the policy should be amended to refer to residential development. I have considered whether household applications should be excluded, but I can see that some of the Design Code provisions could be relevant.

4.19 For clarity, a link to the Design Code Compliance Statement should be provided. Necessary amendments are set out in proposed modification **PM5**.

4.20 Climate change in developments is addressed under Policy BM 6. The policy, as drafted, applies to all developments. In addition, there is a requirement for renewables and low carbon energy technologies to be "correctly sited and designed".

4.21 In both cases, the requirement should be appropriate to the circumstances of the case. There will be instances where the application of low carbon initiatives would not be relevant; and as to correct siting and design, the reference should be to appropriate solutions rather than to solutions that are "correct" and difficult to define. Appropriate amendments are set out in proposed modification **PM6**.

Issue 5 – Movement

4.22 Policy BM7 (Public Rights of Way) refers to a number of matters that are unclear or uncertain:

- The first concerns developments that are "in reasonable proximity" to Public Rights of Way. In practice, action can only be required where there is a direct effect upon a Right of Way.

[20] See Parish Council's answers received on 7 August 2026 to my questions.

- Secondly, there is reference to the "Parish's rural walking, cycling, riding and wheeling network"; but this is not identified anywhere.

- Thirdly, there is a call for various actions to be taken "where practicable". Such actions may be practicable in a wide range of circumstances but they can only be required where the tests for planning conditions or obligations are met. In alluding to such matters, "As appropriate" should be used.

- Fourthly, there is rather vague reference to enhancing the quality of existing Public Rights of Way. The expectation needs to be expressed in more specific terms and, only then, where there is a direct link to the associated development.

4.23 Appropriate amendments are set out in proposed modification **PM7**.

4.24 Policy BM 8 concerns Traffic and Transport. There is a call to contribute to improved access and movement "where feasible". In this regard, connections would no doubt be feasible in a good many circumstances. However, it is necessary to consider whether the requirement would be appropriate (for example in terms of requirements concerning conditions and obligations) in the circumstances of the case.

4.25 Another point concerns connections to "key community facilities". For clarity, these need to be defined. I have considered the appropriateness of the requirement in terms of the facilities identified under Policy BM 11 (I am unable to sanction unidentified facilities that could be promoted in the future). Such facilities should be referenced in the policy. This is addressed in proposed modification **PM8**, along with the matters of the feasibility of connections.

Issue 6 – Natural Environment

4.26 Policy BM 9 (Biodiversity and Nature Recovery) requires a demonstration of how proposals contribute to the delivery of strategic nature recovery objectives. This is applied to development proposals within or adjacent to areas identified as Nature Recovery Opportunity Areas or designated river corridor priority areas. Evidence from Huntingdonshire District Council[21] indicates that the policy could be too broadly applied. The provision should apply to land that is within, adjoining or immediately adjacent to such areas.

4.27 Also, for succinctness, Parts A and E of the policy (which both relate to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy) could be merged. Text from Part B of the policy, which is contextual rather than policy, could be moved to the accompanying text.

[21] Regulation 16 representations.

4.28 In its Regulation 16 representations, Huntingdonshire District Council has suggested appropriate amendments. These are the basis of proposed modification **PM9**.

Issue 7 – Community Facilities

4.29 Policy BM 11 identifies eight community facilities in the settlements of Molesworth, South Brington and The Green/Hill Place. For clarity, the community facilities should be numbered and identified on a plan. In its answers to my questions[22], the Parish Council has numbered the facilities and provided two plans showing their location. Proposed modification **PM10** refers.

Issue 8 – Green Spaces

4.30 Policy BM 12 (Local Green Spaces) indicates that proposals will not be supported unless, amongst other things, the development would support their reasons for designation. The reasons for designation are not immediately clear from a perusal of Appendix 3. However, the Parish Council has prepared some extra information for incorporation into the appendix.[23] This information will provide the necessary clarity and is the subject of proposed modification **PM11**.

4.31 The proposed modification also addresses the identification of the sites. The policy refers to Figure 14; but Figure 14 is at a scale too small to be used for development management purposes. Use should be made of the site plans included in Appendix 3.

4.32 Subject to these two alterations, I am satisfied that the six designations would meet the criteria set out in Paragraphs 106 to 108 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.33 A similar problem regarding the identification of the sites occurs in regard to Policy BM 13 (Green Amenity Areas). In addition, consistency is needed in the naming of the areas. Proposed modification **PM12** refers.

Other Policies

4.34 There is one policy that has not been the subject of commentary in the above report. This concerns Flood Risk and Drainage (Policy BM 10). To a greater or lesser extent, this topic is covered in NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change). I find that there has been regard for national policy and that the Basic Conditions have been met.

Other Matters

[22] See Parish Council's answers received on 7 August 2026 to my questions.
[23] See Parish Council's answers received on 7 August 2026 to my questions.

4.35 All policy areas have been considered in the foregoing discussion. With the modifications that I have recommended, the Plan would meet the Basic Conditions. Other minor changes (that do not affect the Basic Conditions), including those suggested by Huntingdonshire District Council, as well as consequential amendments, corrections and up-dates, could be made prior to the referendum at the Councils' discretion.[24]

5. Conclusions

Summary

5.1 The Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan and the evidence documents submitted with it.

5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. The Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan as modified has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond the Plan boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Overview

5.4 It is evident that a considerable amount of time and effort has been devoted to the development and production of this Plan and I congratulate those who have been involved. The Plan should prove to be a useful tool for future planning and change in Brington and Molesworth over the coming years.

Andrew S Freeman

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

[24] PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509.

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no	Modification
PM1	Page 34	In Part A of Policy BM 1, replace "Map" with "Figure". In Part B iii), insert "the" before "landscape". In Part B iv), replace "open green spaces" with "Local Green Spaces and Green Amenity Areas (Policies BM 12 and 13)". In the title and key of Figure 10, replace "Built Areas" with "Built-Up Area Boundaries".
PM2	Page 36	Substitute the following for Part A of Policy BM 2: "The purpose of this policy is to ensure that residential development delivers a mix of dwelling sizes that responds to local housing needs, supports affordability and contributes to a more balanced housing stock in Brington and Molesworth."
PM3	Page 38	At the end of the first bullet point in Part B of Policy BM3, add the following: "Where it is demonstrated that a 10% share cannot reasonably be achieved, the applicant should provide the lowest practicable initial equity share consistent with the viability and deliverability of the development."
PM4	Page 40	In Part A of Policy BM 4, after "Molesworth Business Estate and Manor Farm", add "(Figures X and Y)". Add to the supporting text the two related figures supplied in the Parish Council's answers dated 7 August 2026 to my questions.[25] In Part B of the policy, in reference to the usage of "small-scale", add a footnote saying, "Additional floorspace of less than 1,000 sq m or a site of less than 1 ha."

[25] View at: https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/huijwifr/brington-parish-councils-response-to-examiner-s-questions-7-august-2026.pdf

PM5	Page 42	At the commencement of Policy BM 5, insert "residential" after "All". Provide a link to the Design Code Compliance Statement.
PM6	Page 45	In Parts A, B and C of Policy BM 6, insert "As appropriate" before "All developments". In Part D, replace "and correctly sited and designed" with "and also in terms of siting and design".
PM7	Page 48	In Policy BM7, replace Part A with the following: "Development that affects or adjoins a Public Right of Way shall maintain or enhance the Parish's rural walking, cycling, riding and wheeling network as shown on Figure X. Where appropriate, having regard to the scale, location and nature of the development, and viability, proposals are expected to:". Insert, in the text, a figure showing the Parish's rural walking, cycling, riding and wheeling network. For Part A vi), substitute the following: "support proportionate improvements to the quality and accessibility of existing Public Rights of Way, including surface treatment, signage and access for people with limited mobility, where directly related to the development."
PM8	Page 50	In Part A of Policy BM 8, after "where feasible", add "and appropriate". Change the ending of Part A i) so that it reads, "the school and the community facilities identified in Policy BM 11."
PM9	Page 53	Amend Policy BM 9 in line with the related "Required change" set out in the Regulation 16 representations of Huntingdonshire District Council.[26]

[26] View at: https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/huijwifr/brington-parish-councils-response-to-examiner-s-questions-7-august-2026.pdf

PM10	Page 58	In line with the Council's answers received on 7 August 2026 to my questions[27], number the community facilities the subject of Policy BM 11 and insert within the text the two plans that show their locations. Reference the plans in the policy.
PM11	Page 60	Change the beginning of Policy BM 12 so that it reads, "The spaces listed below (Spaces i) to vi)) and identified in Appendix 3 are designated…". Incorporate in Appendix 3 the summary reasons for the designation of the sites as set out in the Parish Council's answers received on 7 August 2026 to my questions.[28]
PM12	Page 61	Change the beginning of Policy BM 13 so that it reads, "The Green Amenity Areas listed below (Areas i) to vi)) and identified in Appendix 4 shall retain their green and open character…".

[27] View at: https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/huijwifr/brington-parish-councils-response-to-examiner-s-questions-7-august-2026.pdf

[28] View at: https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/huijwifr/brington-parish-councils-response-to-examiner-s-questions-7-august-2026.pdf

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Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement

Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Decision Statement

Following an independent examination Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet confirmed on the 20 October 2026 that the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.

Background

The Brington and Molesworth neighbourhood area was designated on 28 July 2021 under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). The plan area covers the parish of Brington and Molesworth and is contiguous with the Parish council's administrative boundary.

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council, as the qualifying body, submitted the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting evidence to Huntingdonshire District Council 11 May 2026. The statutory six week submission consultation was held from 26 May 2026 and 7 July 2026.

Huntingdonshire District Council, in discussion with Brington and Molesworth Parish Council, appointed an independent examiner, Andrew S Freeman BSc(Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI, to review whether the submitted Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions as required by legislation. Andrew S Freeman issued his report on 27 August 2026 which recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the modifications proposed in his report, met the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum.

Following discussions with the qualifying body it was decided that the Examiner's recommendations would be accepted in full.

The Basic Conditions are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations; and
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended) set out two basic conditions in addition to those set out in primary legislation and referred to above. These are:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.
- Having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that the neighbourhood development order is made where the development described in an order proposal is Environmental Impact Assessment development (this is not applicable to this examination).

Decision and Reasons

Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet considered the recommendations on 20 October 2026 and agreed to accept the Examiner's proposed modifications and approve the Brington and Molesworth Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

The modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan, as needed to ensure it meets the Basic Conditions and in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations are listed in the following table.

Examiner's Recommended Modifications Received 27 August 2026

The statement below sets out the modifications considered by the examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions. Strike-through text indicates a deletion and bold indicates the insertion of additional text.

Proposed modification (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Page 34	In Part A of Policy BM 1, replace “Map” with “Figure”. In Part B iii), insert “the” before “landscape”. In Part B iv), replace “open green spaces” with “Local Green Spaces and Green Amenity Areas (Policies BM 12 and 13)”. In the title and key of Figure 10, replace “Built Areas” with “Built-Up Area Boundaries”.
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PM3	Page 38	At the end of the first bullet point in Part B of Policy BM3, add the following: “Where it is demonstrated that a 10% share cannot reasonably be achieved, the applicant should provide the lowest practicable initial equity share consistent with the viability and deliverability of the development.”
PM4	Page 40	In Part A of Policy BM 4, after “Molesworth Business Estate and Manor Farm”, add “(Figures X and Y)”. Add to the supporting text the two related figures supplied in the Parish Council’s answers dated 7 August 2026 to my questions. In Part B of the policy, in reference to the usage of “small-scale”, add a footnote saying, “Additional floorspace of less than 1,000 sq m or a site of less than 1 ha.”
PM5	Page 42	At the commencement of Policy BM 5, insert “residential” after “All”. Provide a link to the Design Code Compliance Statement.
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PM8	Page 50	In Part A of Policy BM 8, after "where feasible", add "and appropriate". Change the ending of Part A i) so that it reads, "the school and the community facilities identified in Policy BM 11."
PM9	Page 53	Amend Policy BM 9 in line with the related "Required change" set out in the Regulation 16 representations of Huntingdonshire District Council.
PM10	Page 58	In line with the Council's answers received on 7 August 2026 to my questions, number the community facilities the subject of Policy BM 11 and insert within the text the two plans that show their locations. Reference the plans in the policy.
PM11	Page 60	Change the beginning of Policy BM 12 so that it reads, "The spaces listed below (Spaces i) to vi)) and identified in Appendix 3 are designated…". Incorporate in Appendix 3 the summary reasons for the designation of the sites as set out in the Parish Council's answers received on 7 August 2026 to my questions.
PM12	Page 61	Change the beginning of Policy BM 13 so that it reads, "The Green Amenity Areas listed below (Areas i) to vi)) and identified in Appendix 4 shall retain their green and open character…".

Agenda Item 6

Cabinet – 20 October 2026

Report by: Chief Planning Officer

Lead Cllr: Executive Councillor for Planning

Wards	Open / Exempt	Key Decision?
Alconbury and Stilton, Folksworth & Washingley Wards (parishes of Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick)	Open	Yes

Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan examination outcome and progression to referendum

Executive Summary: Following the examination of the joint Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan this report proposes acting upon the Examiner's report to accept the modifications proposed and progress to referendum.

Recommendations

1.1. That Cabinet agree that the District Council should act upon the Examiner's report to accept the recommended modifications and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum.

	Key Corporate Plan Priorities
1	Improving quality of life for local people.
2	Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations.

	Place Strategy Priorities
1	Pride in Place.

Report Author(s)

Natalie Elworthy, Senior Planning Policy Officer (natalie.elworthy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
Xinyue Dong, Planning Policy Officer (xinyue.dong@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report seeks agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the joint Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan. It also sets out a timetable for this process.

2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 The joint neighbourhood plan covers the parishes of Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick. Great and Little Gidding Parish Council has taken the lead in preparing the joint plan for the three parishes and, with the consent of the two other parishes, is authorised to act in relation to the neighbourhood area.

2.2 A submission version of their Neighbourhood Plan which was available for comment between 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026. The Examiner's Report on the Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan was received on 27 August 2026. The Examiner recommended that with appropriate modifications the neighbourhood plan would meet the basic conditions against which it is required to be tested and so should progress to referendum.

2.3 The Examiner proposed a number of modifications to the submitted neighbourhood plan. These have been discussed and agreed with representatives of the Parish Councils.

2.4 The modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Examiner's report and draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions are all included as Appendices to this report.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 Following the examination of a neighbourhood plan the Examiner sends their report to the local planning authority and the town/parish council preparing the neighbourhood plan. The examiner is required to set out one of three options:

1. That the neighbourhood plan proceeds to referendum as submitted
2. That the neighbourhood plan is modified by the local planning authority to meet the basic conditions and the modified version proceeds to referendum; or
3. That the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to referendum as it fails to meet the basic conditions and/ or legislative requirements and cannot be modified to do so.

3.2 The local planning authority has limited options in how to respond to the examiner's recommendations:

a) Act upon the Examiner's report and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum, whether or not the Examiner recommends modifications are necessary to meet the basic conditions;
b) Propose to take a decision substantially different from the Examiner's recommendation which is wholly or partly as a result of new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact; or
c) Decide not to progress the neighbourhood plan in light of the Examiner's report - this is only permissible where '3.' above is the case.

3.3 Having regard to the options set out in paragraph 3.2:

- It is considered that the modifications will enable the Neighbourhood Plan to meet the basic conditions required; and
- There is no new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact to indicate that option 'b)' in paragraph 3.2 should be followed.

4. POST-DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Following approval by Cabinet, preparations will be made for a referendum to be held on the Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Regulations.

4.2 In addition to considering whether the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions the Examiner is required to recommend on the area to be covered by the referendum. In this instance he recommended that the referendum area be the same as the Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan area, approved by the District Council.

4.3 There is a statutory requirement through The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended) for 28 workings days' notice to be given before the referendum is held. There is also a requirement that the referendum is held within 56 working days of the decision that the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum, unless there is an existing planned polling opportunity that the referendum could be combined with which the qualifying body (Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick Parish Councils) have agreed. A potential date for the referendum has been discussed with Democratic Services. Holding the referendum on 3 December 2026 is proposed, which would meet both time requirements. This provisional date has been discussed with representatives of the Parish Councils, and they have indicated that they support this date.

4.4 At the referendum residents will be able to vote on the question: 'Do you want Huntingdonshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'

4.5 If a majority of votes cast by residents are 'yes', Full Council will be asked to 'make' the neighbourhood plan at its next available meeting, which, assuming that the referendum is held on 3 December 2026, would be on 16 December 2026. The plan will then become part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

5.1 Council Key Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities of 'improving quality of life for local people; and 'creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations' as it will be used to shape the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.2 Financial Implications

5.2.1 As in previous years an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

5.3 Policy Implications

5.3.1 If successfully made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of Huntingdonshire's Development Plan used to determine planning applications.

5.4 Legal & Constitutional Implications

5.4.1 A Neighbourhood Plan must meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Examiner's report has confirmed that Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan, as proposed to be modified, meets all the basic conditions. Officers are satisfied that there are no conflicts with the basic conditions and legislative requirements.

5.5 Community Impact

5.5.1 The Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan has a significant potential community impact for the Neighbourhood Plan Area through shaping the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.6 Environment & Climate Change Implications

5.6.1 The Examiner's report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not conflict with the aims of securing development which contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

5.7 Equality & Diversity Implications

5.7.1 The Examiner's report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998) and meets all relevant legal requirements including those relating to equality.

5.8 Implications on Resources

5.8.1 As in previous years an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

5.9 Health & Wellbeing Implications

5.9.1 The Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan has potential to enhance health and wellbeing within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through shaping the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.10 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

5.10.1 Progressing the Neighbourhood Plan towards Referendum does not result in implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

5.10.2 It is expected that adopted plans will remain in force for the part of the new unitary area to which they relate until they are superseded by a new unitary wide plan.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Not progressing the Neighbourhood Plan to referendum could result in a challenge from the Parish Councils as this would deviate from the recommendations made by the independent Examiner where it was concluded that the Plan, once modified, meets all relevant legal requirements.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS– LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Localism Act 2011

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

National Planning Practice Guidance (Neighbourhood Planning)

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan (as modified)

Appendix 2 – The Examiner's Report of The Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions.

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REFERENDUM VERSION OCTOBER 2026

This Neighbourhood Plan for the Parishes of Great & Little Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding has been produced in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulation 2012 and has gone through both a consultation period and been reviewed by an independent examiner in 2026.

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1. Abbreviations

DC	District Council
CCC	Cambridgeshire County Council
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy (paid when new development occurs)
ECP	Electric Charging Point
GP	General Practice - NHS doctors surgery
GWH	Great & Little Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding
HDC	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP	The HDC Local Plan that covers changes from 2011 to 2036
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
MUGA	Multi User Games Area
NHS	National Health Service
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OFGEM	The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
PCP	Public Charging Point
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document

2. Accessibility

If someone would like a larger font version of the report, please email: hamwicking@gmail.com

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4. Summary

4.1. This Neighbourhood Plan covers the 3 parishes of Great & Little Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding which border Northamptonshire in the Northern Wolds of Huntingdonshire covering 3,258 hectares, 3 villages , 2 hamlets and approximately 520 people in 260 households[1].

4.2. Once approved in a referendum organised by HDC, the NP will form a part of the HDC statutory documentation on what the area wants until 2036.

4.3. Across the GWH Neighbourhood the community only has two shops (including an Equestrian centre), a single pub, no schools but does have a wildlife park!

4.4. In May 2023, the GWH Neighbourhood was asked to fill in a business and residential survey. 126 households and 20 businesses responded to the request. Along with other documents (notably the HDC Local Plan, the Local Green Spaces report and the GWH Contextual Analysis) and sources, this has formed the basis of the plan.

4.5. On many subjects, the residents and businesses want more of the same, i.e. the vision of the GWH NP is to provide a planning framework and policies that will result in small sustainable growth for the local community, ensuring that appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities are provided whilst simultaneously conserving the village and countryside environment.

4.6. There will be more demands for electricity (electric vehicles, heating and even cooling) which will put pressure on the National Grid.

4.7. The community also wants HDC and CCC to invest in our community in terms of pavements, roads, flood prevention and the public transport system. The needs extend to thirteen aspirations such the need for more events with better communication, which have been highlighted in green.

4.8. Highlighted in yellow the NP incorporates the following 5 policies throughout the document:

- 4.8.1. Sensitive future development – see 9.9
- 4.8.2. Utilities – see 10.9
- 4.8.3. Promote a biodiverse, natural environment – see 12.9
- 4.8.4. Protect heritage assets – see 13.12.
- 4.8.5. Protect local green spaces – see 15.12.

4.9. Progress on these aspirations will be monitored via the Community Action Plan that will be updated by the Parish Council and the Parish Meetings.

4.10. Overall, the NP reflects positively on the future. This is a great, but generally forgotten, area of Huntingdonshire that should be preserved.

[1] The 2021 National Census states 240 whilst HDC states it's 260 (the latter aligns to the 2011 census https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/

5. Introduction

5.1. Purpose of the Plan

5.1.1. The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new type of Community Led Plan. Communities now have the right to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, setting out policies on the development and use of land. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan is a way for communities to play a greater role in determining the future of their area. A plan period of 2023 to 2036 has been chosen to match the end date of the HDC Local Plan to 2036.

5.1.2. Neighbourhood planning is a tool to promote sustainable growth and will not be able to prevent development in an area. Neighbourhood plans can only include proposals for an equal (or greater) amount of growth than is set out in the local authority's development plan and the NPPF.

5.1.3. The 3 parishes of Great & Little Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding (GWH) covers the following area in the Huntingdonshire Wolds:

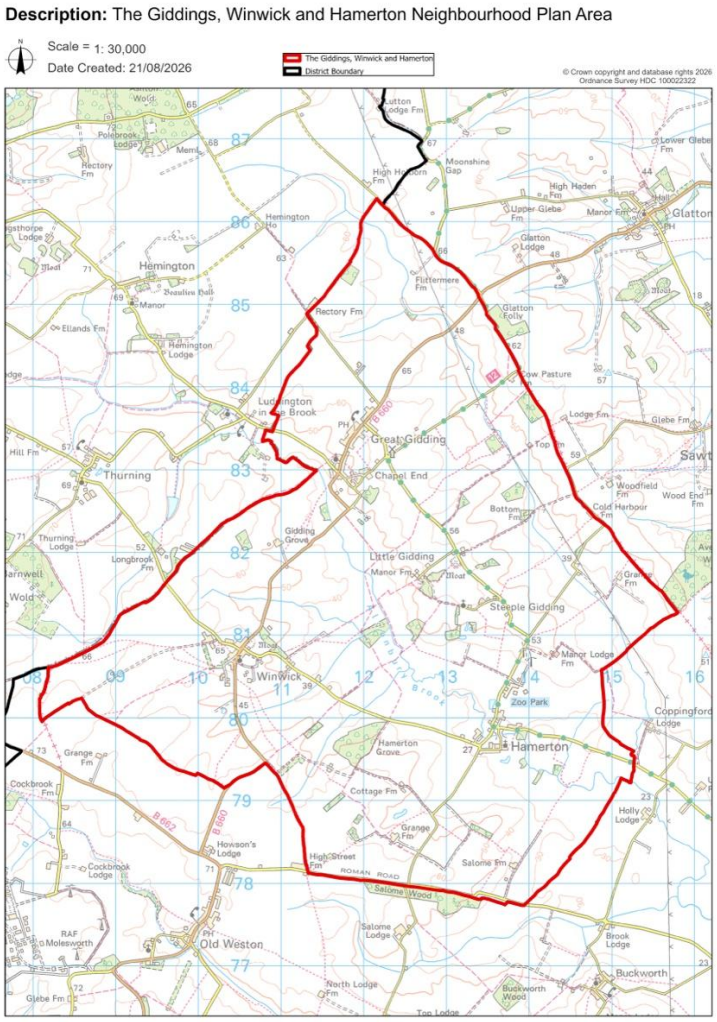


Figure 1: The GWH NP Area shown by the red line

5.1.4. The GWH Neighbourhood consider that creating a Neighbourhood Plan is an important right to exercise, and in 2022 the Great and Little Gidding Parish Council[2] applied for the combined parishes (see Figure 1) to be designated a neighbourhood planning area. HDC approved this application in March 2023. Following the designation and much consultation (including an 8-week period from August / September 2025), the NP Working Group (see appendix for members) has prepared and published this version of the NP to HDC (with the GWH Green Spaces and Contextual Analysis reports).

5.1.5. The policies in this Plan take account of HDC's LP[3], which came into force in 2019 and covers the period up to 2036. The Plan therefore provides the local community with a powerful tool to guide the long-term future of the GWH Neighbourhood for the time up to 2036.

5.1.6. The NP allows all residents to exercise an element of control of the LP's management of planning issues and and developments within the community. It is not just for the Parish Council and Parish Meetings but for all residents both current and future. The NP contains a vision for the future of the GWH Neighbourhood and sets out clear recommendations to realise this vision.

5.1.7. In order to develop the NP, the working group has developed surveys (checked by a certified Full Member of the Market Research Society to avoid leading questions with unconscious bias) and reviewed numerous documents. It has been prepared with extensive support from the local people, statutory bodies, local businesses and HDC.

5.2. GWH Neighbourhood

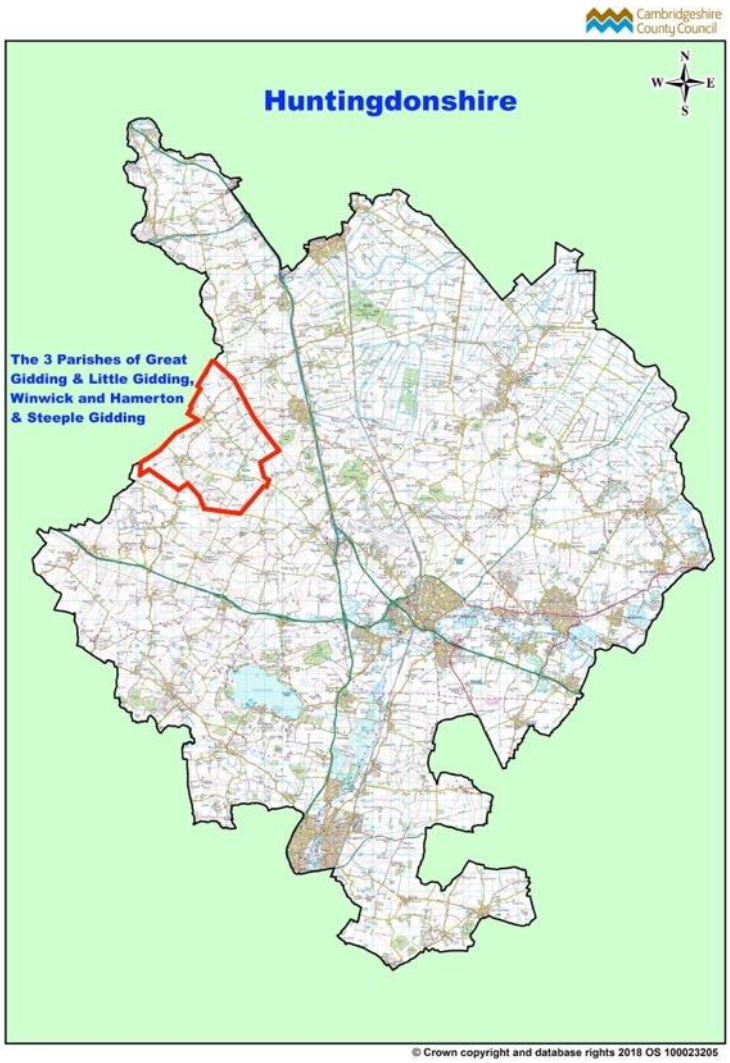
5.2.1. The GWH Neighbourhood is located in Northern Wolds of the Huntingdonshire district of Cambridgeshire, bordering the unitary authority of North Northamptonshire. The nearest towns are Oundle, and Huntingdon, with the city of Peterborough 16 miles away. The A14 runs to the south of GWH, which provides an efficient connection to Birmingham and Cambridge. The A1 lies to the east of the GWH Neighbourhood and provides an effective link to the north and south. Huntingdon and Peterborough are mainline stations providing a regular railway service to London, York and Edinburgh.

5.2.2. Figure 2 shows where the GWH Neighbourhood (shown in red) is positioned in relation to the remainder of Huntingdonshire:

[2] Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding have Parish Meetings rather than a Council.

[3] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/190516-final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf

Figure 2: GWH within Huntingdonshire



5.3. Preparing the Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document and is about the use and development of land. Neighbourhood planning gives communities more control over the future of their area by giving local people the chance to have their say on what happens where they live. It can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a particular area. Plans can include local priorities, planning policies, proposals for improving an area or providing new facilities or infrastructure and allocation of key sites for development. The NP will be revised following responses from residents, the Regulation 14 and 16 consultations and then passed to an independent examiner.

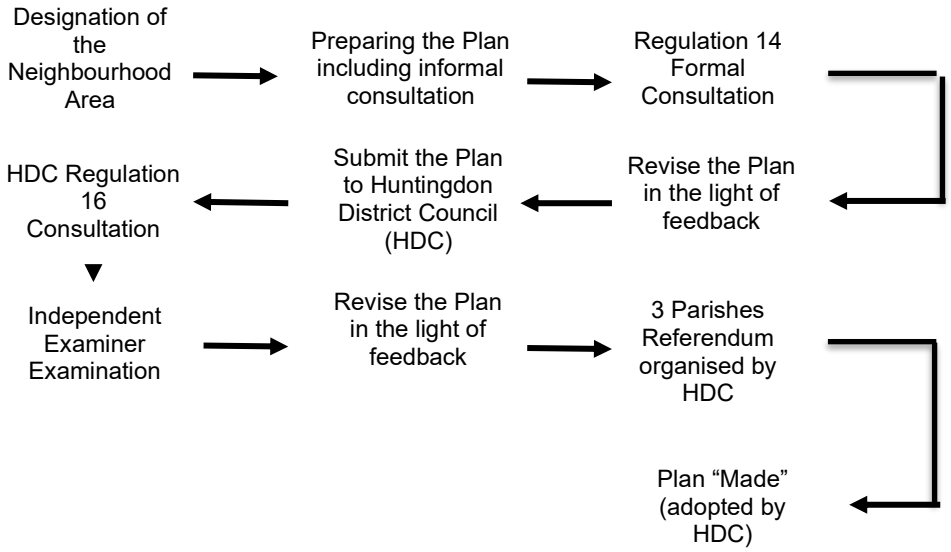
Neighbourhood Plans have to be prepared following a procedure set by the Government in the 2011 Localism Act, summarised in Figure 3 below.

5.3.1. After a series of informal consultations with both interested parties and the local community, the NP will be submitted to HDC for feedback. Once the feedback is agreed and incorporated it will then be sent to an independent examiner who can again give feedback.

5.3.2. A GWH Neighbourhood wide referendum will then be organised by HDC, allowing residents to vote on whether to accept the NP.

5.3.3. If more than 50% of the votes cast are in favour of the NP, the NP will be "made" i.e., accepted at HDC's Full Council meeting, and carry full weight in the planning process.

Figure 3: The Neighbourhood Planning Process



5.4. Monitoring the Plan

5.4.1. Great Gidding Parish Council and the Parish Meetings (in Hamerton and Winwick), as the 'Qualifying Body', will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery.

5.4.2. The Parish Council and two Parish Meetings will actively monitor how the policies and aspirations within the NP are being implemented.

5.4.3. This will be summarised in a report produced by the Gidding Parish Council and separate Hamerton and Winwick Parish Meetings annually and published on the Parish Councils websites and discussed at the Parish Meetings.

5.5. Community Action Plan

5.5.1. The consultation process has identified a number of issues and potential projects that could not be addressed through the policies in this document but are recorded as Aspirations (in green).

5.5.2. The Parish Council and Parish Meetings[4] will consider how these issues and ideas might be taken forward in partnership with residents and other organisations.

5.6. Basis of the Plan

5.6.1. The results of surveys of residents and local businesses in the GWH Neighbourhood conducted in 2023 provides the basis for the policies contained within this Plan.

5.6.2. There was a high response rate from over 48% of households.

5.6.3. Business questionnaires were sent to all major businesses in the GWH Neighbourhood. Businesses were also invited to complete the questionnaire through the link provided in the Residents Questionnaire.

5.6.4. The team have also used data from the LP, National Census[5], plus Cambridgeshire Insight. Other sources include HDC, OFCom, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, the Environment Agency, the estate manager of the major landowner and the Alconbury Flood Group.

5.6.5. The conclusions we have come in the NP are based on our May 2023 survey data plus the village meetings that were held in November 2023.



Photo1: Neighbourhood Meeting in Great Gidding Village Hall

5.6.6. Informal consultation was sought from HDC during early 2024. This led to changes to the NP but a more involved analysis of the area (which is incorporated in the Local Green Spaces report and the larger Contextual Analysis).

5.6.7. In August and September 2025 a large consultation was undertaken. The 3 documents were hosted on the Gidding Website, sent out to 18 organisations and over 50 people who asked for the information. A village hall meeting was also arranged answering any queries and questions.

5.6.8. All feedback has been incorporated in the respective documents and they will be sent to HDC as part of the middle step in Figure 3.

I

[4] Great and Little Gidding have a parish council. Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding have their own respective parish meeting

[5] https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/draw/

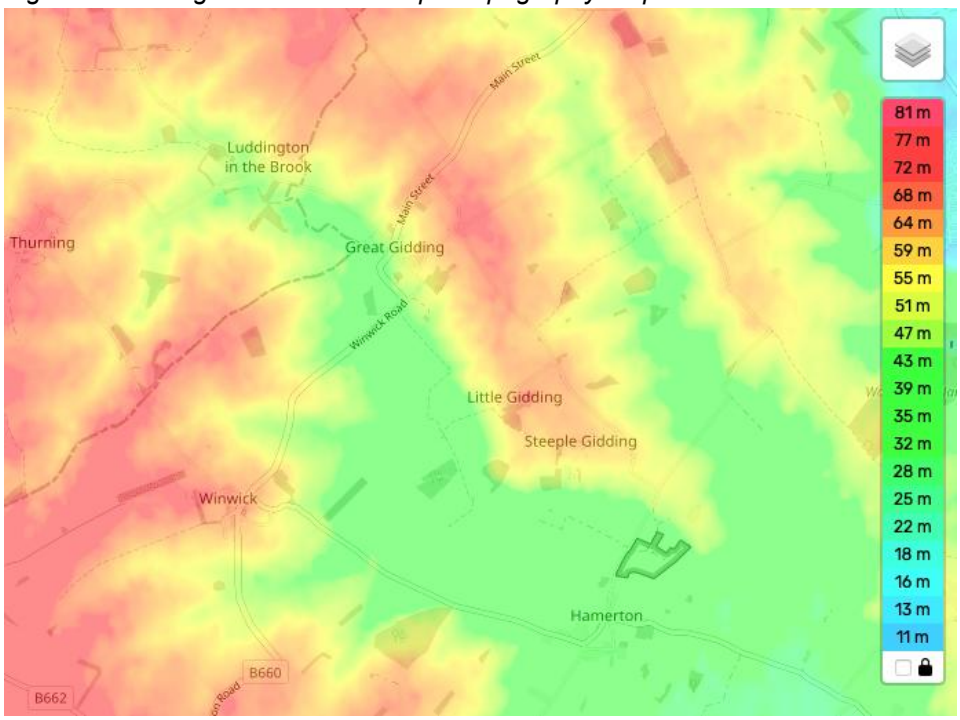
6. Characteristics and history of the area

6.1. Topography

6.1.1. As described in Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document 2022[6], the area has been shaped by both the underlying landform and mediaeval settlement. The area contains the highest land in Huntingdonshire with a distinctive ridged topography formed by streams flowing down from this higher land towards the Fens and Central Claylands.

6.1.2. As shown in the topological map below Great / Little / Steeple Gidding all exist on a ridge, whilst Winwick is also 70m above sea level on another ridge (shown in red / orange. By contrast Hamerton, at around 30m above sea level (shown in green), is much lower and therefore prone to flooding.

Figure 4: Huntingdonshire Landscape Topography Map[7]



6.2. Historical context

6.2.1. There is evidence from both artefacts and archaeology of Roman farms and villas. Research at Grange Farm, Hamerton, discovered Romano-British pottery dating back to 200 AD, perhaps associated with the Roman potteries known to have existed at what is now Sawtry, some 5 miles away. Occupation of the area may well have occurred during the Neolithic Age or earlier.

[6] https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/6117/3-chapter-3-landscape-character-areas.pdf
[7] https://en-gb.topographic-map.com/map-p9gmgt/Willis/?center=52.42514%2C-0.35414

6.2.2. The names of the parishes are of Anglo-Saxon origin, from the time of their arrival in 500 AD. Gidding is the place of Gydela's people, Hamerton uses both the Anglo-Saxon place descriptors Ham and Tun and Winwick is either Win's people or specialist farm.

6.2.3. The area has a long history of farming, with little other industry known, although Winwick and Great Gidding had brickworks in the recent past.

6.2.4. Prior to the Norman Conquest, the GWH Neighbourhood was within the area of the forest of Bruneswald, which covered vast swathes of the Midlands from what is now Birmingham to the edge of Fenland and down to Hertfordshire. Settlements were gradually hewn from the forest as a network of small farms and homesteads using the good soil and water supplies.

6.2.5. All the parishes are listed in the Domesday Book. Great Gidding (Geddinge), Little Gidding (Gedelinge) and Steeple Gidding (Redinges) had a population of about 320. Hamerton (Hambertune) was about 120 and Winwick (Winewyck) slightly smaller at about 100 people. No churches are listed in the Domesday Book, but there is evidence of early places of worship, and the 5 churches in the Neighbourhood begin to be recorded from the 12th to 15th Centuries, with the chapels later. The parishes were clearly based on self-supporting villages between two and three miles apart.



Photo 2: Winwick Church

6.2.6. In 1252 Geddinge became Great Gidding and Gedelinge became Little Gidding. In 1303 Edward 1 authorised a weekly Wednesday market in Great Gidding, making it a small market town serving the needs of the local area.

6.2.7. By the Middle Ages all the villages had moved from the Anglo-Saxon 2 field system to the Norman 3 field system, making better use of the land. Common Land was used for grazing, with households growing food on strips still clearly discernible today because of the ridge and furrow ploughing systems.

6.2.8. All the parishes were recorded as having several manor houses, but there is little evidence of them today, apart from in Hamerton where Manor Farm

incorporates mediaeval parts, and elsewhere there are some protected sites.

6.2.9. Prosperity came to the area with the development of trading routes. The Great North Road and its Roman predecessor saw constant traffic North/South, and the parallel droving routes (Bullock Road and Gibbet Lane) provided by-ways for walking produce and animals (cattle and poultry) to London. Winwick, became an overnight stop over point for travellers with inns providing food, water shelter and meeting other travellers' needs.

6.2.10. The population of the area grew steadily throughout the early mediaeval period, although the plagues and Black Death had serious effects. Greater reductions took place with the move away from arable farming to sheep and enclosure of common land. By 1594 all the houses in Little Gidding had become derelict and there were no inhabitants. It was purchased by Nicholas Ferrar in 1620 who restored the village to the extent that Charles 1 visited 3 times, and Nicholas lived there with his family until he died in 1637. His family continued to live there, but the village was plundered by Cromwell's troops in 1646.

6.2.11. Great Gidding was less affected by enclosures, which was more gradual, taking until 1869 (one of the latest dates in England) when common grazing rights were extinguished. Winwick also has less evidence of strip farming, though the large number of dew ponds that exist today show that the village was considerably bigger in the past.

6.2.12. From the early 1600s there was significant diversification of religion. The Quakers formed in about 1650, and Winwick has a Quaker Burial Site dating from 1670, one of the earliest known. Great Gidding has a Baptist Chapel built in 1790, and a Wesleyan Chapel built in 1839. Winwick also had a Methodist Chapel which became the Village Hall in about 1970. The various Protestant churches were repaired, rebuilt, and strengthened throughout this history, but continue to need even more extensive repairs today.

6.2.13. The network of farm tracks linking the settlements probably date back to the early mediaeval period, or earlier, supplemented by footpaths and bridleways that provide access to churches and chapels. The B660 is the major road running from the Bedford area towards Peterborough. The farm tracks were gradually macadamised from the 19th and 20th centuries but remain as narrow twisting routes, often with unofficial passing places.

6.2.14. During the 19th Century the villages became less self-sufficient with Great Gidding developing into a service industry for the area. In 1871 the census recorded 3 bakers, 9 blacksmiths, 2 butchers, 4 carpenters, 2 masons and 5 shoemakers just in this village. There was also a windmill, although Winwick also had a mill and bakery.

6.2.15. Little Gidding was purchased in a run-down state by William Hopkinson in 1848. He built a new farmhouse and outbuildings, parts of which still exist. On his death in 1865, it was inherited by his nephew, Rev William Hopkinson, vicar of Great Gidding. who created a 'pure' cultural society, lauded in the 1881 historical novel *John Inglesant* by Joseph Henry Stonehouse.

6.2.16. Much of the housing stock was originally wood framed thatched cottages. Major fires in Great Gidding (1861) and Winwick (c1910) destroyed large numbers which have been replaced with dwellings using locally produced yellow or salmon pink bricks with red pantile roofs. Although local limestone was available, there are few stone houses, but stone dressings and sills are more common. In Hamerton thatched cottages survived into the 1970s, before being condemned as not fit for habitation.

6.2.17. Houses were originally heated by open fires, which eventually changed to wood burners and oil-fired boilers. A few houses have been converted to, or been built with, Air Source Heat Pumps. Although 2 National Grid Gas Pipelines pass through the Neighbourhood (built late 1990s) there is no mains gas. Electrification took place in the late 1950s, and mains sewage schemes appeared (where possible) in the early 20th century.

6.2.18. Little Gidding continued as a cultural centre, being visited by T S Eliot, one of whose *Four Quartets* is titled *Little Gidding* (1942). In July 1946, the Friends of Little Gidding was formed, raising funds for the maintenance of the Church.

6.2.19. In the early 1970s, a commune (Community of Christ the Sower) took over at Little Gidding, and gradually transformed the outbuildings into dwellings. Although self-sufficient, it gradually reduced in size, and in and by the late 1990s was transformed into the Little Gidding Trust with Manor Farmhouse becoming Ferrar House.

6.2.20. Parish schools developed from about 1750. The main village school in the area in Great Gidding opened in 1846, eventually subsumed the other schools in the area, but closed in 2023. The school in Hamerton took over the schoolchildren of Little and Steeple Gidding in 1945 and closed in 1963. Winwick had a School House which closed around 1960. Hamerton built a Village Hall in 1902 and Great Gidding also has a Village Hall from the 1950s. Winwick's Village Hall was converted from a Methodist Chapel in the 1970s.

6.2.21. Formal inns existed in all the main villages from at least as early as 1753; small pubs probably existed throughout the mediaeval period. Today only the Fox and Hounds in Great Gidding continues to trade. Post Offices were opened in the early 20th century, but the last one in Great Gidding was replaced by a mobile van in the early 21st century. Similarly, shops closed in the 20th century, apart from the small convenience store which continues in Great Gidding.

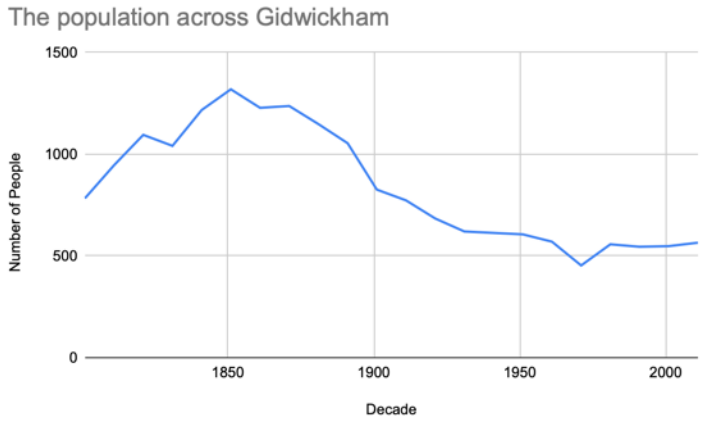
6.2.22. Hamerton has the major tourist attraction of the Neighbourhood, the Zoo. Opened in 1990, the zoo attracts visitors from a wide area and successfully breeds endangered species. The roaring of the big cats makes for a slightly surreal experience linking the plains of Africa to the edge of Fenland.

6.2.23. The parishes were part of Huntingdonshire for many centuries, except for Winwick, which until 1895 was divided between Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire, but then all became part of Huntingdonshire. From 1965 the villages were in the administrative county of Huntingdon and Peterborough. Since 1974 they have been part of Cambridgeshire.

6.2.24. The Neighbourhood remains a peaceful and lovely place to live. Whilst the age of the inhabitants has risen and numbers reduced over the years, a considerable proportion commute to work, work from home or engage in farming.

6.2.25. As shown in Figure, 5 based on the National Census (*2021 figures are provisional) the population since 1801 has declined from the peak in 1850 to just over 500 people.

Figure 5: Population Decline since 1850



6.3. Agricultural Land

6.3.1. The ridges are generally used for arable (crops) farming and have a relatively open feel with big fields, long views and few hedgerow trees. There are however some sheep and cattle kept in the area. In contrast, the valleys have a higher proportion of land in pastoral (livestock) use and have smaller field sizes and less views. Alconbury Brook is quite narrow, with its route identifiable by a line of trees along the bank.

6.3.2. The area is primarily grade 3 (shown below in green) agricultural land with a small portion of better grade 2 (shown in blue) in the below map. The main arable crops are wheat and oats, although linseed, oil seed rape and borage are also to be found. Due to new environment policies various bird seed mixes are also to be found as well as legumes to improve the soil.

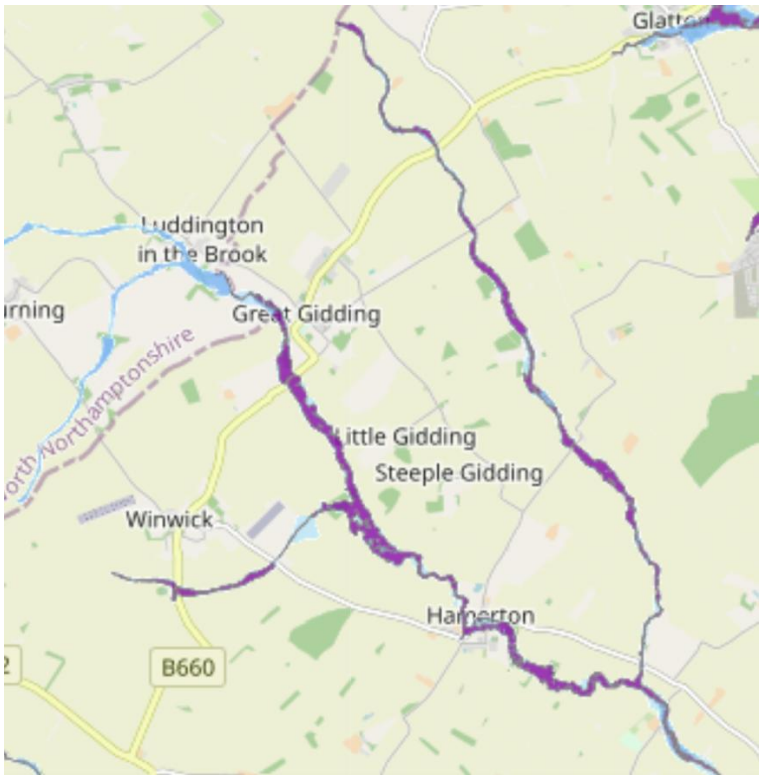
Figure 6: Quality of agricultural land



6.4. Flood risk

6.4.1. A high risk of flooding in the area is primarily concentrated around Hamerton. The Alconbury Brook catchment is relatively 'flashy' in comparison to the wider River Great Ouse catchment, meaning that it reacts quickly to rainfall and flooding can be rapid. See Chapter 17 for more details although Figure 7 shows the areas at risk in purple.

Figure 7: Flood risk[8]



[8] https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/environmental-issues/flooding/strategic-flood-risk-assessment/

6.5. Dark skies / light encroachment

6.5.1. The GWH Neighbourhood has very little light encroachment.

6.5.2. The notable exception is the streetlights on Main Street in Great Gidding (shown by the yellow patch in Figure 8).

6.5.3. All other village in the GWH Neighbourhood do not have streetlights.

Figure 8: Dark Skies[9]



[9] https://geo.nls.uk/maps/light-pollution/index.html#/ol3

7. Summary of the current situation

The following 31 points primarily came out of the Residential and Business Surveys (greater detail can be found in Appendix A) but also the Local Green Space Report and the GWH contextual analysis:

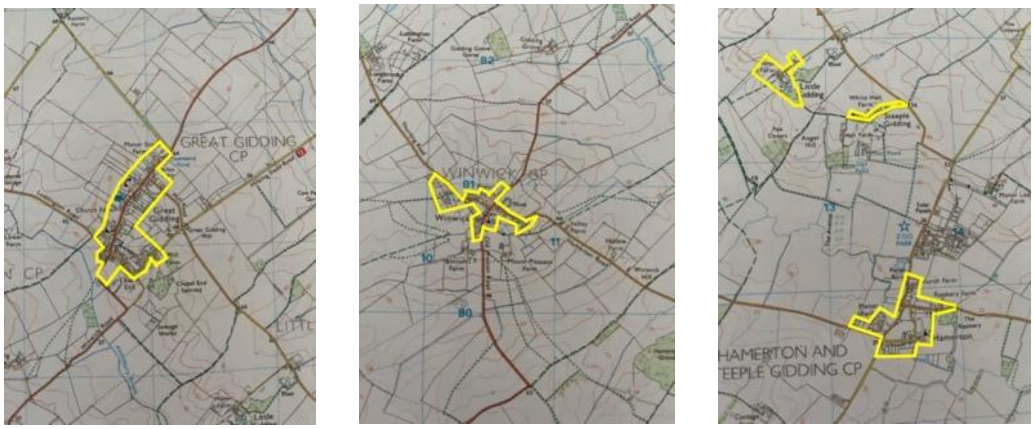
7.1. The gently rolling landscape has remained fundamentally unchanged for a great many years despite the proximity of intense development beyond, notably Sawtry and Peterborough. The development pattern, mediaeval villages linked by lanes outlining ridge and furrow marked fields, is a product of ancient rural traditions and economy. Modern agriculture and modest rural development have, largely, been successfully accommodated within the existing matrix.

7.2. The residents of the NP area enjoy the peace and agricultural rhythm of life and are resistant to inappropriate change. They share an enchantment with their place but enjoy the proximity of larger settlements nearby e.g. Oundle. The area has an older demographic profile than either Huntingdonshire or nationally and the biggest response to the employment question was retired.

7.3. There are approximately 520 people in 260 houses across the area, mostly within the 5 GWH settlement, the area of which are shown below in yellow. Great Gidding is by far the biggest village with 126 houses, whilst Hamerton and Winwick both have 35, whilst Little and Steeple Gidding are small hamlets. More details (and bigger maps) on the characteristics and how they have evolved can be found in the accompanying, but separate, document GWH Contextual Analysis document.

Figure 9: The 5 villages

Great Gidding *Winwick* *Hamerton,Little/Steeple Gidding*



7.4. Most people moved to GWH because of either the type of housing available, the country lifestyle or due to work. Nearly 65% of the households in the area have lived here for over 10 years and 45% have been here for more than 20 years which is reflected in the older population profile when compared to the rest of Huntingdonshire or England & Wales (based on the 2021 Census): see appendix A (19.1) for more details on this.

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7.5. 48% of employed people work from home (more than England at 31.5% or Huntingdonshire at 34.9%) some or all of the time.

7.6. Whilst the internet is relatively good, some outlier properties do not have it at all and there is a lack of speed (over 100mbs) that towns such as Huntingdon benefit from. The mobile phone coverage is generally viewed as average or worse. EE currently offers the best service, with no operator yet offering 5G.

7.7. Few of the roads inside villages have footpaths: pedestrians share the limited space with cyclists, motorists, and delivery trucks. Even where footpaths exist, they are often narrow, in disrepair and without dropped kerbs.

7.8. GWH Neighbourhood inhabitants are hugely dependent on cars for transport. According to the survey most households had two or more cars (the average across the area is 1.9). The vehicles are mostly fossil fuel powered (123 Petrol, 99 Diesel, 12 Electric/Hybrid).

7.9. The age of the housing stock means that a minority of cars are garaged overnight, with the majority parked on drives. Narrow roads means that few are parked on the roadside. In Great Gidding some are parked on roads, primarily on B660.

7.10. Houses in the area are on average larger and more detached than the Huntingdon or national average with the most common type having 4 double bedrooms and detached.

7.11. The area is very safe with a very low amount of recorded crime over the last 5 years. Compared to the national crime rate, the NP area's crime rate is at 60% ie a lot lower[10].

7.12. Over 50% of houses are heated by oil with various other sources of heating such as gas and wood burners but none being that dominant. See Appendix A 19.4.8 for more details.

7.13. The electrical supply occasionally (once a month) fails momentarily. Most of the network is via overhead cables as shown in Figure 9:

[10] Source Plumplot

7.14. On the left the high voltage (11Kw) in shown in red, low voltage in amber and source 33Kw cable from Wood Walton substation to Brington[11] in green (bottom right). On the right[12], the diagram from UK Powernetworks shows that the GWH area in red which indicates it is more than 5% over capacity and therefore more likely to suffer from power cuts.

Figure 10 - UK Power overhead cables and overdemand



7.15. According to the 2021 National Census:

- 83.7% of people in GWH rated their health as very good or good. By comparison Huntingdonshire was 83.6% and England was 82.2%.
- 13.9% of people in GWH are registered disabled. Huntingdonshire was 16.4% and England was 17.3%.

7.16. In terms of GP practices, over 70% of the population go to Wellside surgery at Sawtry whilst more than 20% go to Alconbury.

7.17. There was some development in Great Gidding in the 1970's notably Dells Close and along Chapel End and the eastern end of the village but since then the GWH Neighbourhood has primarily seen single one-off developments.

7.18. Since 2011 a further 16 houses have been added (or are in the process of being completed) to the housing stock i.e. 6.5%. These 16 new houses have generally been unique, detached and had a range of bedrooms from 2 to 5.

7.19. The prime open spaces within the 5 villages are both in Great Gidding, notably the Recreation Ground and Jubilee Wood.

7.20. In terms of public transport, the GWH Neighbourhood is relatively isolated, bounded by the A1 to the East, the A14 to the South and the Northamptonshire border to the

[11] https://ukpowernetworks.opendatasoft.com/pages/network-infrastructure-usage-map/

[12] https://ukpowernetworks.opendatasoft.com/explore/dataset/ukpn_primary_postcode_area/custom/

West. The links across these boundaries are poor. There are no public transport facilities to areas further afield e.g. to the nearest town, Oundle or Peterborough.

7.21. The only bus route through the Neighbourhood is the once a day 401 to Huntingdon. The time that can be spent in Huntingdon is only 2 hours, which restricts potential appointments and is barely adequate for shopping. There are no direct links to Oundle, Peterborough or even Sawtry.

7.22. Only 11 respondents, almost all over 60, had used the Ting on-demand bus service with varying success. Just under 50% found it excellent, though limited, the rest found it poor, difficult, or impossible to book, with worries about the return journey.

7.23. Footpaths and bridleways are very important and well used by all age groups.

7.24. Public footpaths also caused concern, as there are few between villages, and gaps in the network where paths can only be accessed by walking on the roads.

7.25. Community activities (fetes, clubs etc) have not yet returned to pre-covid levels.

7.26. The businesses in the area (who participated) are a spread of manual and professional services. Almost all are micro sized, operating with 1-5 people and more than half work from home/farm. The majority do not plan to expand. Constraints in ease of operation are an issue for all businesses including the 40% who plan to expand in the GWH Neighbourhood.

7.27. Three main constraints to business growth were slow planning permission, poor broadband/mobile reception, and poor local/transport infrastructure.

7.28. Residents are keen to encourage more local jobs and more local businesses – from artisan crafts to local produce / goods to services such as dry cleaning, florists, and coffee shops. Currently 75% of the businesses are servicing customers who are over 50 miles away.

7.29. All children go by car to school in Alconbury, Brington, Folksworth, Kimbolton, Oundle and Peterborough. There is school bus to Sawtry.

7.30. Great Gidding Playing Fields are a key green space for the children, as is Jubilee Wood but generally there is little to do for this age group.

7.31. Hamerton Zoo Park, attracting visitors all year round, especially in the summer months, including coach parties from schools as well as family groups, but these mainly come from outside the area.

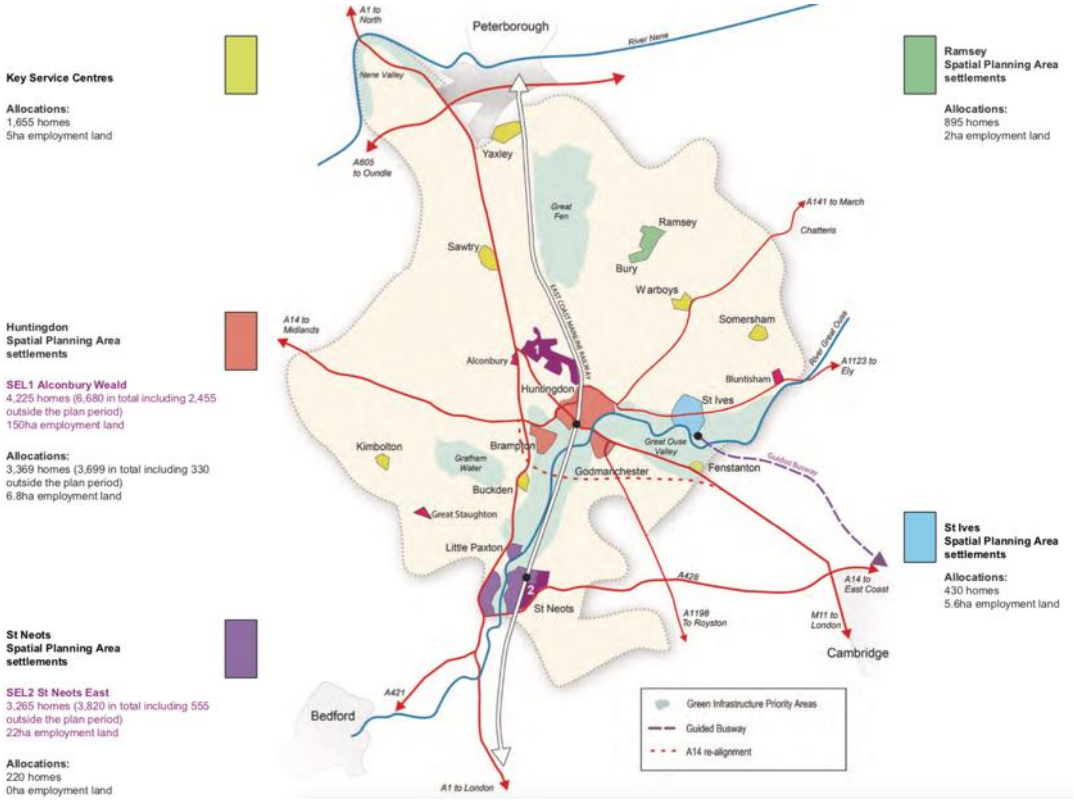
7.32. The other significant location that creates a tourist pull, albeit on a much smaller scale, is the hamlet of Little Gidding, with historical links over different centuries. Ferrar House hosts day visitors and overnight conferences and Duke of Edinburgh Award Camping Groups, and in the past, a large international TS Elliott Festival.

8. Summary of the Local Plan policy context

8.1. The Government sets out the structure for planning the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In the Section 3 of the NPPF it requires that each local planning authority should prepare a Local Plan (LP) for its area.

8.2. Huntingdonshire's (HDC) Local Plan[13] to 2036 sets out the Council's approach to securing sustainable development from 2011 to 2036 in order to meet identified needs, which is covered by a strategy statement and 38 planning policies and supporting text. It envisages provision will be made for at least 20,100 new homes (both market and affordable), and 14,400 additional jobs[14]. This will be concentrated in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities. As shown by the key diagram below this focuses on Alconbury Weald, Buckden, Fenstanton, Huntingdon, Kimbolton, Ramsey, St Ives, St Neots, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley

Figure 11: The LP's prime areas of development



8.3. The policies in this NP have been produced to align (where applicable) to the 38 policies contained in the HDC LP. LP9 Small Settlements is arguably the most important one to GWH – more details are shown in the appendix (Section 20)

[13] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-to-2036

[14] Cambridge County Council Research Group https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2643/huntingdonshire-objectively-assessed-housing-need.pdf

8.4. It should be noted that the LP will be reviewed every 5 years and the policies updated where necessary.

8.5. Whilst the LP is very important to the GWH Neighbourhood because we are within the boundaries of HDC, it also borders North Northamptonshire District Council. The villages of Luddington In The Brook, Thurning and Litton (all in North Northamptonshire) are intertwined with those of Great Gidding and Winwick. As such decisions in one District can impact the other, such as a planned bio-digester just inside North Northamptonshire. Wider afield policies across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire County Council can also impact GWH. Therefore, there is an aspiration for greater communication and cooperation across different authorities.

8.6. GWH NP ASPIRATION 1 - **WORK CLOSELY WITH HDC**

The GWH Neighbourhood supports HDC's need for wider consultation with other entities and key parties (such as councils, MPs and unity authorities) especially when infrastructure decisions are being considered. This NP seeks to:

1. Encourage HDC and North Northants DC to work together whenever a development impacts both communities across the county boundary.
2. Support Cambridge and Peterborough County Councils, plus neighbouring villages, to develop integrated solutions for planning, transport, roads, and utilities.
3. As mentioned in Section 7, develop practical bus routes to not only Huntingdon but also to Oundle, Peterborough and Sawtry.
4. Ensure any developments in adjoining communities do not degrade the services received in this Neighbourhood.
5. Improve services and supply from utility companies so that this rural Neighbourhood can comply with Government's sustainability requirements.

9. Small scale residential development

9.1. As stated in the LP, HDC aims to increase the number of households by 20,100 (or 28%) between 2011 and 2036. The vast majority of these will be in the settlements highlighted in Section 8 Figure 11. There is, however, scope for additional houses in small settlements in line with the planning policies highlighted in Appendix C. Such developments need to be sympathetic to the local area and on a small scale, as mentioned in the HDC Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document[15].

9.2. In the 2011 Census there were 244 households across the GWH Neighbourhood. Over the last 11 years a further 16 houses[16] have been added (or are in the process of being completed) to the housing stock i.e. a 6.5% increase. The largest single development was 3 houses on a brownfield site in the centre of Winwick.

9.3. In 2023 several houses were approved in terms of planning permission. In Great Gidding there are 13, whilst in Hamerton a further 5 are approved. This will bring the growth from 2011 to 2036 to 14%. Based on a small settlement target of 20% growth, this equates to 15 more houses to be built until 2036 in the GWH Neighbourhood's to support the targets in the HDC LP.

9.4. The GWH Neighbourhood agrees with the stated aims of LP9 in the LP i.e. the community would be against any large-scale residential estate development of more than 10 houses because it would be utterly out of keeping with the area (as outlined in the GWH Contextual Analysis):

9.4.1. In response to the residential survey, 40% of respondents stated that they favoured in-filling between existing houses on land not used.

9.4.2. The idea of cul-du-sac developments was rejected by 70% of respondents.

9.4.3. A further 26% were only in favour if it was on a very limited scale of 12 houses or less.

9.5. The biggest need for housing in the residential survey was energy efficient low-cost starter homes: 69% stated there was much or some need for these types of houses.

9.6. There is very limited desire for residential care homes (10% said much need), shared accommodation (1% much need) or shared ownership (4% much need).

9.7. All parishes within the GWH Neighbourhood want a conservation zone (58% Hamerton, 62% Winwick), complete with guidelines (57% Great Gidding).

9.8. The people in the GWH Neighbourhood cherish the unspoilt, quiet nature of the area. Our settlements should remain small rural places within an agriculture-based countryside. The NP supports LP11 Design Context in terms of our settlements can

[15] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2573/huntingdonshire-design-guide-2017.pdf
[16] 8 in Great Gidding and 8 in Winwick.

be seen as having an aspect out to (and from) the surrounding countryside and another from within. Both are distinctive and often linked through long views over open spaces.

9.9. GWH NP POLICY 1 - **SENSITIVE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

The GWH Neighbourhood believes that all new development proposals should be sensitive to the existing Neighbourhood appearance where the building survey of the villages points to predominately unique individual houses. This NP requires that new developments should demonstrate that:

1. The size and layout of proposed developments enhance the village to which they are attached avoiding the introduction of incongruous and / or intrusive elements into the important views shown in Figure 15, in so far as they relate to land within the Neighbourhood Plan.

2. With reference to built form, scale, proportions, details and materials, new developments should reflect and respect the existing character and identity of the villages as set out in the GWH Neighbourhood Plan – Village Contextual analysis. The GWH Village Contextual Analysis provides several surveys with information on existing structures as a guide to proposed new developments

3. Demonstrate that they complement the best of local design responding positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from its surroundings to help to produce a high-quality development.

4. Consider the relationship of buildings to each other and the public space to be as important as the design of the buildings themselves.

5. Demonstrate how it will enhance/complement the appearance, form and layout of existing buildings in the Neighbourhood.

6. Demonstrate how the Neighbourhood would be enhanced in terms of appropriate design, build quality and spatial relationships with existing buildings and landscape.

7. If it includes affordable housing, ensure it is fully integrated and indistinguishable from the rest of the development's market housing in terms of all aspects such as the density, garden size, the arrangement of parking, the quality of landscaping, details and materials.

8. All new residential units would be expected to have direct access to an area of private amenity space which is designed to be of a shape, size and location allowing effective and practical use of the space by residents. Garden sizes should reflect those within the existing villages where appropriate.

9. New residential units should reflect the size and nature of existing properties in the parishes, which are predominantly medium to large detached houses.

10. The Green Agenda

10.1. The main implication from the responses in the Residential Survey is how to maintain the status quo i.e. keeping the rural nature of the GWH Neighbourhood, whilst dealing with the concerns about the environment and impact of global warming such as more extreme weather.

10.2. The potential solutions, such as more electric vehicles, and radical changes to energy supply for heating will require much thought and planning and considerable work on the built environment. There will be particular pressure on the electricity grid in the GWH Neighbourhood. Community heating schemes supported by CCC may be one solution.

10.3. Whilst certain residents may have the space and money for private charging points for their electric vehicles, many will not. HDC needs to consider the introduction of public charging points.

10.4. The bus service needs to be improved to be a credible alternative to use of the private car and go to the major local towns including Oundle in Northamptonshire and Peterborough rather than just Huntingdon.

10.5. It is recognised that technology may hold the key to mitigating the effects of humans. Often the countryside lags behind with advances in technology due to remoteness and sparsity of population. In our society where innovation relies on commercial enterprises that have profit as the no.1 priority, developments are often easier in areas of higher population density.

10.6. As a predominantly agricultural area, changes in farming practices will be important. They are already taking place with AI technology, and this will continue the trend for larger machinery and fewer workers, but new, targeted practices could improve the environment for wildlife, which has been in severe decline due to the use of insecticides, herbicides and pesticides.

10.7. The Alconbury Flood Group is also promoting the use by farmers of deep rooted crops / vegetation to promote water absorption by the soil (and therefore reduce run-off).

10.8. The responses from the survey would suggest that the population of the area, which is about half of what it was in the 19th century, will remain quite low due to the lack of jobs and the desire to restrict house building to infilling.

10.9. GWH NP POLICY 2 – **UTILITIES**

Power, water and telecom supplies are currently stretched with existing residents and businesses. This NP requires that new developments should demonstrate that:

1. They can demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity for power, water drainage and wastewater before any new development commences.

Developers should undertake pre-planning engagement at the earliest opportunity with Anglian Water and the CCC.

2. If upgrades are necessary, the proposal will need to include a plan for delivery, agreed with the relevant agency, including phasing of development where necessary.

3. As set out in the Surface Water Planning Guidance[17] the rate of surface water discharge from any new development on previously developed land shall not exceed the existing run off rate.

4. All homes and businesses are capable of being served by super-fast broadband through the integration of appropriate measures such as open access ducting to industry standards[18].

10.10. The MHCLG has commenced public consultation on the review of the Water Efficiency Standard(s). This includes an option to revise the standard from 125 litres per person per day to 105 and in areas of stress 100.

10.11. Anglian Water has supplied more information on their strategy in their WRMP report[19] (where GWH is in the area called Ruthamford North). It should also be noted that Anglian Water prefer nature based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

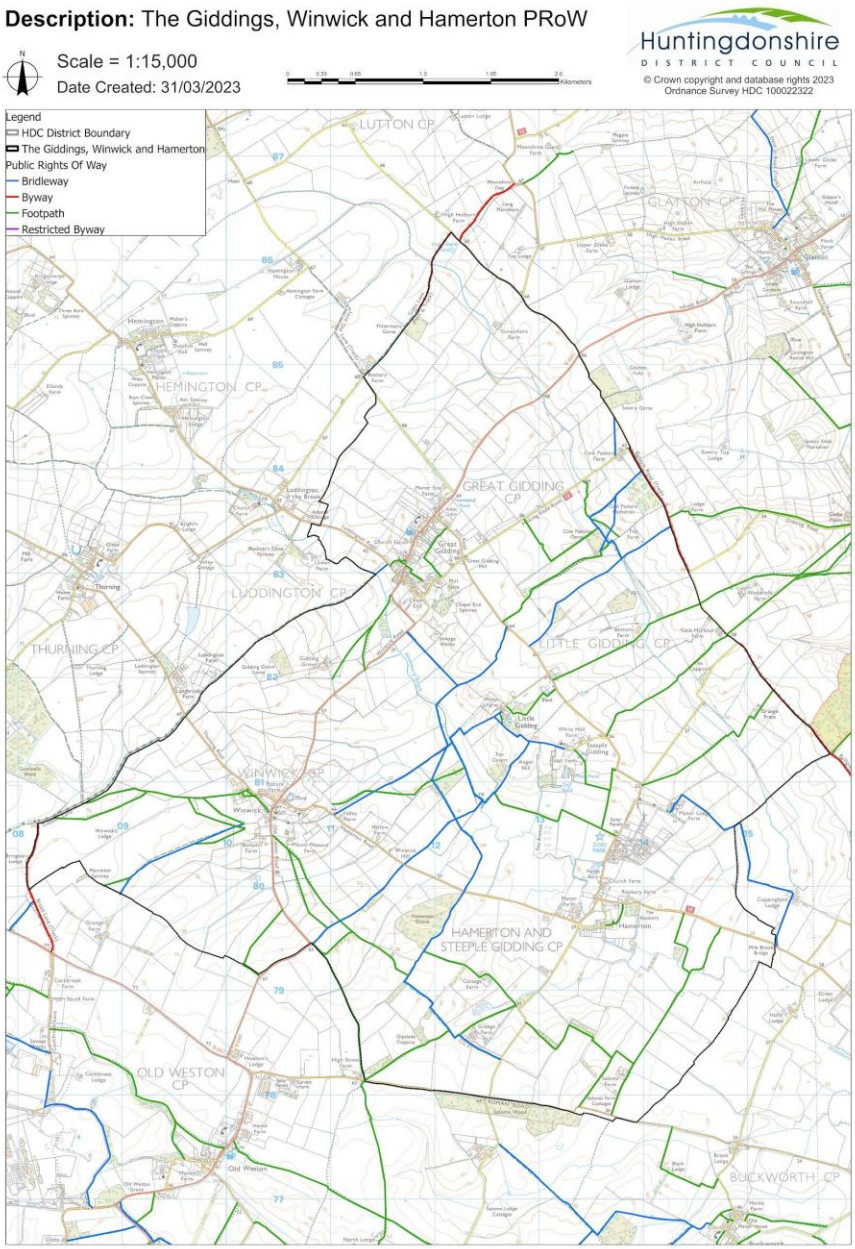
[17] https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/siteassets/household/about-us/wrmp/revised-draft-wrmp24-main-report-v2.pdf

[18] In the UK, broadband ducting standards are heavily governed by Openreach installation guides to ensure that telecommunications pathways are future-proofed and safely separated from other underground utilities. These standardized pathways prevent redundant digging and simplify network upgrades – for more details see https://www.powerandcables.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Cable-Laying-A-Cable-Duct-Laying-Guide-From-BT-Openreach.pdf

11. Transport and exercise

This NP supports the improvement of active travel options to improve health and wellbeing as well as promoting environmentally friendly activities. However, there are several issues which need to be addressed.

Figure 12 Bridleways and Footpaths in the GWH Neighbourhood



11.1. The HDC Footpath map for the GWH Neighbourhood shows that there are a considerable number of cross-country footpaths in the Neighbourhood, but that they form a very broken network, with many coming to a dead end, with others only linked by public roads which in many cases lack verges for safe walking or riding. The King's Escape footpath from Steeple Gidding towards Coppingford Lodge, used by

King Charles I after the Battle of Naseby in 1646 is a good example of this problem. Many walkers and riders use field edges with the passive connivence of local farmers to complete walks.

11.2. There are no safe cycle routes in the GWH Neighbourhood. Even in the villages, there are very few areas where young children can cycle safely. Although some of the bridle paths provide cycle transit paths, they are also used by scramble type motorcycles which leave deep ruts dangerous to horses, cyclists, and walkers alike.

11.3. Within the villages there are very few pavements for pedestrians; only Great Gidding and Winwick have a proportion of their roads with a pavement.

11.4. In many places, visiting neighbours or accessing facilities can only be achieved by walking on the roadway in places where there is limited grass verges. Residents walking with children, pushchairs, dogs or horses, or users of mobility scooters, are in danger from fast moving traffic, especially where there are bends, blind spots and poor light or a low sun. Residents entering and exiting their property are also in danger.

11.5. Existing pavements are generally narrow, in disrepair, with uneven surfaces, substandard repairs, and lack dropped kerbs, making them particularly difficult to use by those with limited mobility.

11.6. Where cross-country footpaths exist, stiles are often not dog-friendly, and crossing them involves lifting animals over them. They are also impassable on horseback. Gates and bridges are in a poor state of repair, with repairs often taking many months to be implemented.

11.6.1. Residents want cross-country footpaths and bridle paths linked up and extended to provide safe cross-country routes between the villages, adjourning neighbourhoods and isolated areas of the GWH Neighbourhood such as Winwick Hill.

11.6.2. Maintenance of existing cross-country footpaths should be improved, and repairs implemented more speedily. Stiles should be replaced with gates that meet the needs of dog-walkers and horse-riders.

11.6.3. Residents wanted pavements to be implemented where spaces and verges exist to provide safe access routes in villages alongside road traffic. This is a particular problem in Hamerton. Where space is insufficient, pedestrian painted lanes could be instigated with suitable warning signs for road users.

11.6.4. Maintenance of existing pavements should be improved to ensure that they are safe for all pedestrians to use.

11.7. GWH NP ASPIRATION 2 - **IMPROVE TRANSPORT AND SAFETY**

The GWH Neighbourhood recognises that as a rural community it is dependent on connection to the wider society. This NP seeks to:

1. Promote the widespread understanding that our road and path network is a shared space for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians.
2. Implement speed reduction measures such as chicanes, speed awareness camera and passing places.
3. Have more white lines, pedestrian signs and mirrors (on blind bends) to improve safety.
4. Encourage CCC to repair potholes and disintegrating roads quicker.

11.8. GWH NP ASPIRATION 3 - **IMPROVE PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Encourage CCC to extend and link footpaths and bridleways to allow for greater choice and safety of non-motorised travel in the GWH area.

1. Replace stiles with kissing gates (or similar) to improve access for the less able.
2. Refresh and put up more sign posts for footpaths and bridleways.

11.9. GWH NP ASPIRATION 4 – **BETTER PAVEMENTS**

The current pavements are in a poor state of repair and a danger to mobility scooters and prams. There is also no circuit of pavements around any of the villages. The aspiration is for CCC to:

1. Resurface and widen existing pavements and put in more dropped curbs.
2. Put in a circular pavement around the main villages to encourage exercise and improve safety.

12. The Natural Environment

12.1. The Giddings and Winwick within the GWH Neighbourhood are some of the highest villages in Cambridgeshire. The Mediaeval population of rural Huntingdonshire was considerable.

12.2. Within the landscape there remain many features from the Mediaeval period, including deserted villages, green lanes, churches, castles, bridges, numerous moats, manors and ridge and furrow.

12.3. The majority of these features are now only visible as earthworks, but some, such as green lanes, churches and bridges remain in use.

Photo 6: Steeple Gidding church



The vast majority of Scheduled Monuments within the district are from the Mediaeval period.

12.4. Most of the GWH Neighbourhood is still rural and contains substantial areas of farmland which contributes significantly to the character of the Parishes and the setting of the villages.

12.5. The GWH Neighbourhood is rich in biodiversity due to their rural setting, plentiful green space, and diverse wildlife habitats. There was extremely strong feedback from the residential surveys (97% wanted to maintain open green spaces, 87% wanted enhanced protection of the landscape) that people want to preserve this environment.

12.6. This NP actively encourages the provision of additional benefits for biodiversity which contribute to future-proofing the natural environment at a landscape scale and contributing to mitigating climate change, while ensuring existing important sites, habitats and priority species[20] such as the European (brown) hare, the Song thrush, the Yellowhammer and the Common Starling are protected, maintained, and enhanced.

[20] See the UK Biodiversity Action Plan https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-bap/ for details

12.7. The NP actively promote the "conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species".

12.8. Natural England's biodiversity net gain study (Vivid Economics, June 2018) considered the impacts on the economics and viability of development and concluded that a biodiversity net gain requirement was not expected to effect the financial viability of housing developments in scenarios incorporating up to 20% biodiversity net gain.

12.9. GWH NP POLICY 3 - **PROMOTE A BIODIVERSE, NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

In-line with LP 30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, the GWH Neighbourhood believes that the restoration of redundant land and habitats is key to sustainability and an attractive and healthy landscape. This NP requires that new developments should:

1. Incorporate a 10% net gain in local biodiversity and a richer natural environment. Net gain at a level of 20% will be supported and encouraged.

2. If a loss of natural habitats is unavoidable, include mitigation and reinstatement within the Neighbourhood area in the first instance before looking to the wider HDC area and then the CCC area.

Greater guidance for developers on this policy can be found in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority[21].

12.10. GWH NP ASPIRATION 5 – **PLANT MORE TREES**

There are too many trees that are dying either due to diseases such as Ash Die Back or old age. HDC in the 1990's offered small trees to residents to plant. The Parishes will investigate into similar schemes that could be implemented within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

12.11. GWH NP ASPIRATION 6 – **ORGANISE LITTER PICKING EVENTS**

From the survey one of the most popular events was organised litter picking to reduce the amount of litter within villages and the road verges. The Parish Council / Parish Meetings are asked to organise such events in the Autumn.

21 https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/lnrs/consultation/supporting_documents/Local%20Nature%20Recovery%20Strategy%20for%20Cambridgeshire%20and%20Peterborough%20Part%202.pdf

13. Heritage asset

13.1. Paragraph 206 of the NPPF states any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

13.1.1. Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

13.1.2. Assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional

13.2. As HDC state in their LP key assets that contribute to the distinct identity of Huntingdonshire that are a priority for conservation and enhancement include:

13.2.1. listed buildings with a wider visual and economic benefit;

13.2.2. registered parks and gardens;

13.2.3. listed churches;

13.2.4. historic built form including distinctive street patterns and traditional building materials, whether it is part of designated conservation areas or not;

13.2.5. historic landscape features, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and the many ancient and semi-natural woodlands;

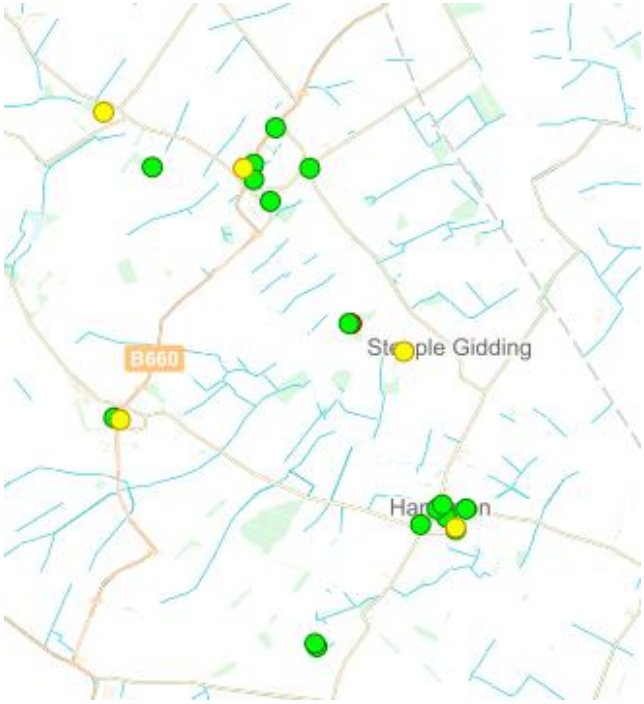
13.2.6. the heritage associated with significant historic figures with a local connection

13.3. As LP34 states great weight and importance is given to the conservation of heritage assets and their settings. The statutory presumption of the avoidance of harm can only be outweighed if there are public benefits that are powerful enough to do so

13.4. The three parishes contain 25 listed buildings or sites (shown in Figure 13 and listed in table A) considered to be worthwhile preserving for their historical and architectural significance. Six churches are listed with Little Giddings Church of St John the Evangelist rated highest at Grade 1. Several private dwellings are listed, as is the Fox and Hounds Public House in Great Gidding.

Figure 13: The Location of heritage sites

Listed (green) and scheduled areas (yellow) in the GWH Neighbourhood



13.5. Most interestingly there are several unusual listings including a Hovel, a Barn, a Bridge, the Tomb of Nicholas Ferrar and Hamerton's Church Yard Cross. There are also five areas of land including a mediaeval moat, two deserted villages and parkland that are identified, although nothing remains of any structures, only indentations in the land.

13.6. For such a small rural area this is quite a significant number of heritage assets (see 9.8) and whilst the private listed buildings are generally well maintained, the public buildings are in danger of deteriorating.

Photo 3: The Grade 2 Elm Cottage at Hamerton



13.7. These buildings, such as the churches were originally financed and constructed by the lord of the manor or by communities who used them regularly. Today the users are very few in number and the churches, being very old structures, require a lot of maintenance. These buildings and the land around them are significant to the scenery and ambience of the villages, so maintaining them and finding constructive uses for them was deemed important to respondents.

Table A Heritage Assets[22] within Gidwickham

Village	Listed Assets	Designation	Listing ID
Great Gidding	33 Chapel End	2	1330512
Great Gidding	Tower Mill	2	1130106
Great Gidding	Fox and Hounds Public House	2	1222762
Great Gidding	Crown Cottage	2	1130105
Great Gidding	Parish Church of St Michael	2*	1130104
Great Gidding	Baptist Chapel	2	1222773
Hamerton	Sycamore Cottage	2	1130109
Hamerton	Manor Farm	2	1222827
Hamerton	ChurchYard Cross	2	1130107
Hamerton	Parish Church of All Saints	2	1222799
Hamerton	Elm Cottage	2	1222843
Hamerton	Church Bridge Crossing	2	1130103
Hamerton	Church Bridge Crossing	Scheduling	1006803
Hamerton	Rookery Farmhouse Park and Garden	2	1130110
Hamerton	Barn south of Grange Farmhouse	2	1222855
Hamerton	Hovel south of Grange farmhouse	2	1130111
Little Gidding	Chest Tomb of Nicholas Ferrar	2	1267524
Little Gidding	Parish Church of St John the Evangelist	1	1130115
Little Gidding	Deserted village (site of)	Scheduling	1006814
Steeple Gidding	Deserted village (site of)	Scheduling	1006818
Steeple Gidding	Parish Church of St Andrew's	2	1130118
Winwick	Moated site & shrunken mediaeval village	Scheduling	1006805
Winwick	Parish Church of All Saints	2*	1223069
Winwick	Westwood Farmhouse	2	1130517

13.8. Our settlements contain a variety of Heritage Assets in the form of archaeology, listed buildings and conservation areas. They are irreplaceable. Their continued use is an imperative caveated by the need to avoid destruction through neglect, carelessness, or an excess of changes.

[22] https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/

13.9. The policy below relates to heritage assets in total including, but not limited to, listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, historic parks and gardens, and non- heritage assets.

13.10. It should be noted that there are currently no non-designated heritage assets in Huntingdonshire (although there are in Cambridgeshire) but this aspiration covers the future eventuality when there may be some.

13.11. GWH NP ASPIRATION 7– **CLASSIFY NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS**

Proposals affecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets will be judged having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset which may include its setting to its surroundings and the contribution it makes to the character of the local area'

13.12. GWH NP POLICY 4 - **PROTECT HERITAGE ASSETS**

The GWH Neighbourhood believes that Heritage Assets must be protected from inappropriate or disproportionate development. This NP requires that proposals to Heritage Assets:

1. Should demonstrate the significance of the heritage asset including their setting and their relative importance including their architectural, historic and archaeological value.

2. Should demonstrate that adverse impacts are avoided as far as possible, or if unavoidable how they will be minimised as far as possible

3. Be retained where reasonably possible. A proposal which would result in the loss of a heritage asset will be required to provide clear and substantial justification.

4. Be repaired and restored using appropriate materials, respecting the historic form, fabric and special interest that contributes to the significance of the affected heritage asset.

5. Should demonstrate that any necessary alterations and extensions to a heritage asset reflects the nature, materials, and form of the asset itself

6. Should be regarded as gifts we pass to the future. Almost all buildings are subject to repair and alteration using appropriate materials and building techniques. However, if a case can be made for the use of modern materials of comparable longevity it could be used, the proposal should demonstrate that proposed materials do not harm the significance of the heritage asset and are fully justified.

14. Community utilities and facilities

14.1. The GWH Neighbourhood supports the Government's commitment to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. For guidance this is summarised by CCC using the following 5 sectional diagram:



The GWH Neighbourhood has no piped gas for domestic or commercial heating. It relies on a combination of electricity, oil storage, LPG and wood burning for heating. In the transition away from fossil fuels the difficulties inherent in isolated rural housing should be noted. The demand for electricity will increase due to the installation of air and ground source heat pumps, the transition to electric cars and maybe even air conditioning as temperatures rise. The existing UK Power network is under strain (as shown by the occasional power cuts) and the community concern is that our rural Neighbourhood power supply will be restricted in favour of larger settlements.

The internet will play an increasing role in the village lives and the new opportunities with 5G such as individual health monitoring tools. Overall this will result in more home working, greater use of home deliveries and better computer connectivity

Voice and data coverage is currently poor in the villages and outlying houses and farms. The GWH Neighbourhood is being left behind in terms of mobile phone and data coverage. This needs to be addressed if people / businesses are going to thrive,

14.2. GWH NP ASPIRATION 8 - **POSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

Power, water, wastewater, drainage and telecom supplies are currently stretched with existing residents and businesses. The GWH Neighbourhood believes that demand for electricity will dramatically increase[23] with the Net Zero transition, plus a robust internet will be essential for future development. This NP requests that there should be:

1. A proven documented capacity headroom for all utilities for any new developments before any new development commences
2. An improved and more reliable power supply, free of interruptions.
3. A reasonable period for replacing fossil fuels in older buildings to allow for technological improvements and reduced costs of transition

[23] OFGEM estimate per household uses approximated 3 times as much gas as electricity https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/average-gas-and-electricity-usage

4. If approved by the majority, schemes that provide community energy to the villages in the form of ground sourced heat pumps[24] should be supported.
5. The development of Fibre and ultra-high-speed broadband and 5G networks to support the 5 villages.
6. Improved connections to outlying households and businesses which currently suffer from a sub-optimal service which is hindering their development.

14.3. There are now not many facilities across GWH. The prime facilities consist of:

14.3.1. 5 churches, all with graveyards.

14.3.2. 3 village halls in Great Gidding, Hamerton and Winwick.

14.3.3. 1 Baptist Chapel in Great Gidding (being converted to residential use).

14.3.4. 1 local shop in Great Gidding.

14.3.5. 1 Equestrian shop (The Den) in Great Gidding.

14.3.6. 1 pub (the Fox and Hounds) in Great Gidding.

Photo 7: Looking down from the top of Main Street passed the pub



14.3.7. Jubilee (communal) Wood and allotments at the top of Great Gidding

14.3.8. The Kings Wood planted at the bottom of Great Gidding.

14.3.9. 1 recreation ground in Great Gidding.

14.3.10. 1 wildlife park (zoo) in Hamerton.

14.4. There were provisional plans in Great Gidding for a Multi User Game Area (MUGA) on the recreation ground, although planning lapsed and there was no funding.

[24] CCC has supported the development of over 100 boreholes and associated ground source heat pumps to migrate Swafham Prior from oil-based heating

14.5. GWH NP ASPIRATION 9 - **SUPPORT COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The GWH Neighbourhood recognises that its population is older than the national average population and surrounding towns. The GWH Neighbourhood clearly attracts a demographic that seeks a quieter settled life. This NP encourages measures that support our elderly by:

1. Resisting the loss of community services and facilities.
2. Encouraging HDC to ensure adequate capacity for our community services are maintained.
3. Ensuring that sufficient medical support services, GPs and hospitals are provided within easy reach.
4. Working to meet the need for quality of life. This includes opportunities for leisure, spiritual engagement, social, education and retail facilities.

14.6. GWH NP ASPIRATION 10 – **BETTER RECREATION GROUND APARATUS**

The equipment in the Recreation Ground is in need of improvement. This NP encourages the Great Gidding Parish Council to apply for CIL money to create the funding to improve the equipment.

14.7. GWH NP ASPIRATION 11 – **BETTER ADVERTISEMENT OF EVENTS/SERVICES**

The Parish Councils / Parish Meetings need to consider ways to improve the advertisements of events across the 3 parishes eg via a cross community website, facebook, and easily accessible noticeboards. A regular newsletter would also be useful.

15. Designated Local Green Spaces and View

15.1. In 2012, the Government introduced a new designation of Local Green Space through the NPPF allowing local communities to put forward green areas of particular importance to them for protection.

15.2. Paragraph 103 of the NPPF identifies that policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts. That means that, once designated, planning permission will only be granted for the development of the sites in very special circumstances or if the development clearly enhances the Local Green Space

15.3. Paragraph 106 of the NPPF states the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

15.3.1. in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

15.3.2. demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and

15.3.3. local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

15.4. The questionnaires in the community consultation emphasised the importance of protecting the environment and implicitly supporting national initiatives such as the Queen's Green Canopy and the Woodland Trust tree planning scheme.

15.5. Aside of purely climate change considerations, increased areas of green spaces and woodland will enhance the appearance of the countryside. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF specifies the conditions for the designation of Local Green Spaces which are then protected from development.

15.6. NPPF paragraphs 174 and 179 supports measures to protect and enhance the natural environment, biodiversity and geodiversity. HDC's Local Plan policies 30, 31 and 32 aims to avoid adverse impacts resulting in loss of biodiversity and geodiversity

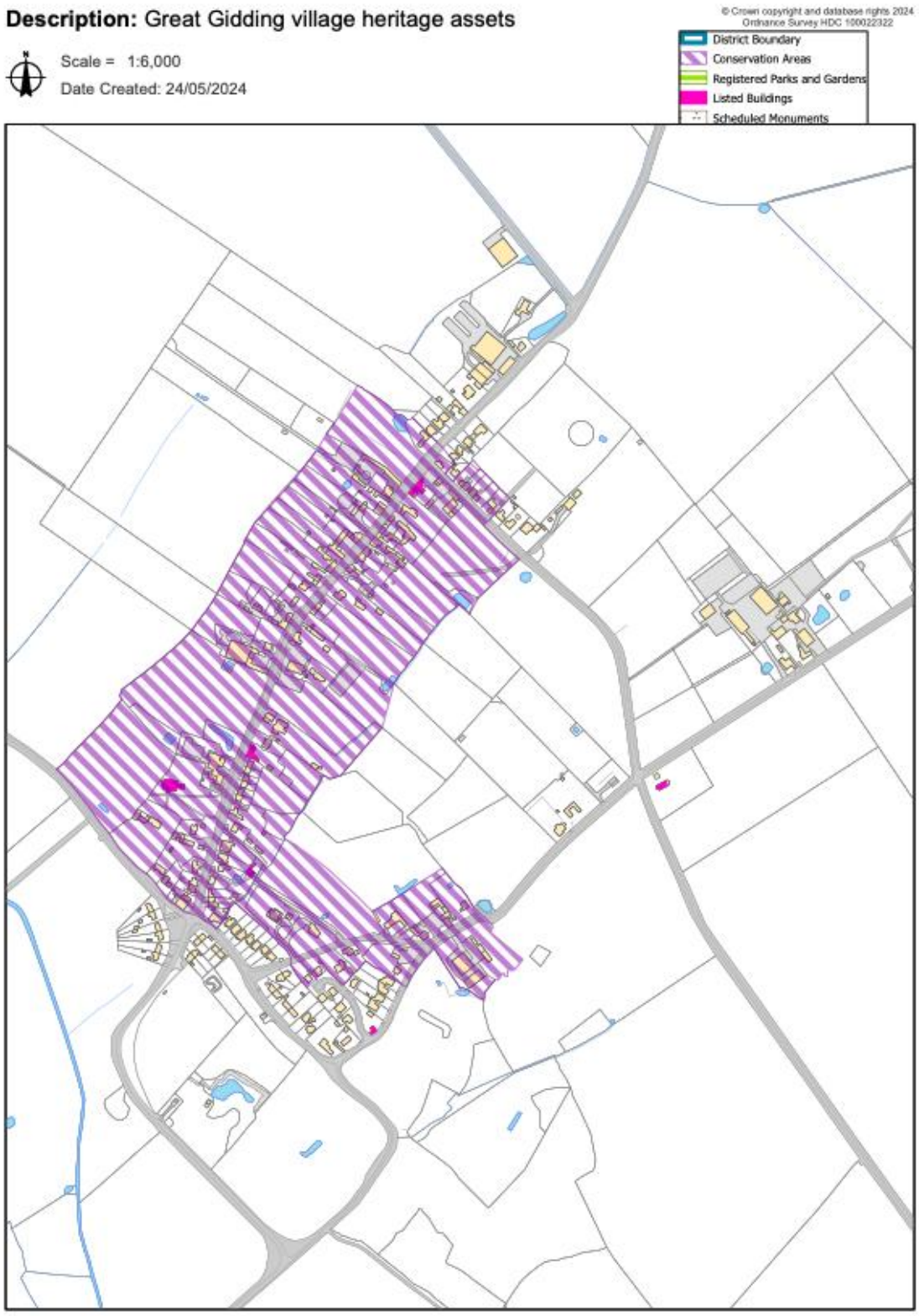
15.7. Local Green Spaces may be suitable to accommodate biodiversity enhancement or flood risk attenuation measures where this doesn't undermine the purpose of identifying the site as Local Green Space in the first place.

15.8. The "sense of place" and character of GWH is preserved by ensuring that the existing green spaces are protected from development. As part of the NP process, the community was asked to consider if there were any important green open spaces of value in the GWH Neighbourhood. The NP seeks to protect such sites.

15.9. Only Great Gidding currently has a conservation zone which is shown in purple shading below in Figure 14.

15.10.

Figure 14 – Great Gidding Conservation Area



15.11. The GWH Green Spaces report outlines the criteria and areas (the number against the below list references the respective places in the report and on the maps below)

that were considered for protection from insensitive forms of physical development. Within (ie inside) the villages and hamlets:

15.11.1. The 6 churchyards of the 5 churches and the Baptist Chapel due to their historic significance

15.11.2. Great Gidding -

15.11.2.1. The Recreation Ground - recreational value (4)

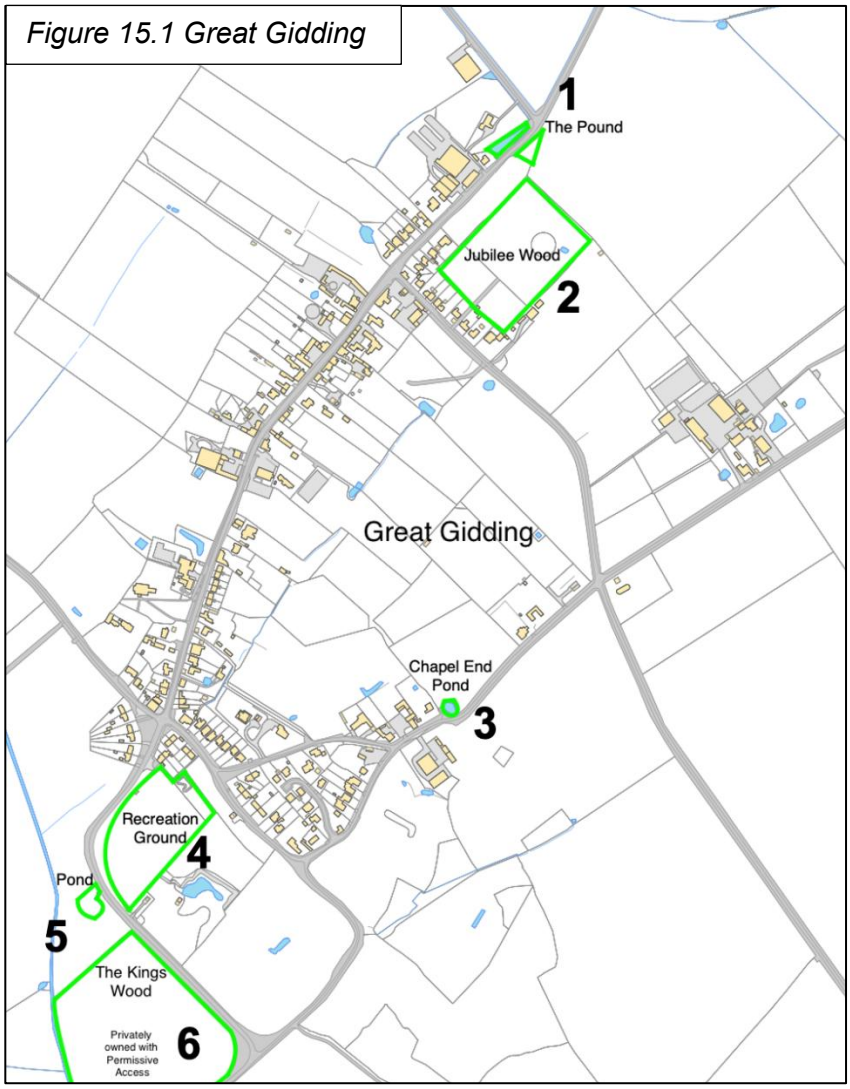
15.11.2.2. Jubilee Wood - recreational value and richness of wildlife (2)

15.11.2.3. The new Kings Wood - richness of wildlife and tranquillity (6)

15.11.2.4. The Pound - richness of wildlife (1)

15.11.2.5. Chapel End Pond - richness of wildlife (3)

Figure 15.1 Great Gidding



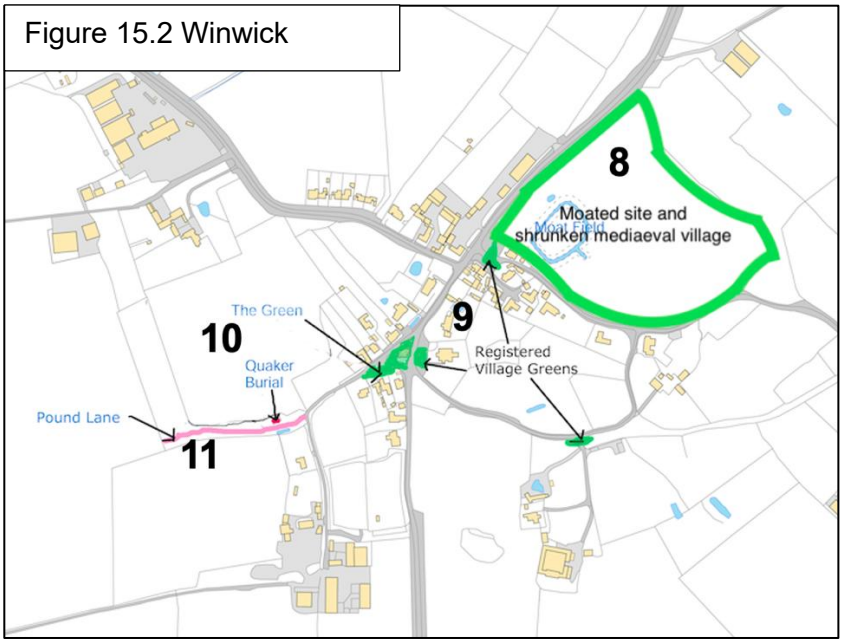
15.11.3. Winwick

15.11.3.1. The Quakers Burial Ground - historical significance, (10)

15.11.3.2. Pound Land (11)

15.11.3.3. The Greens (9)

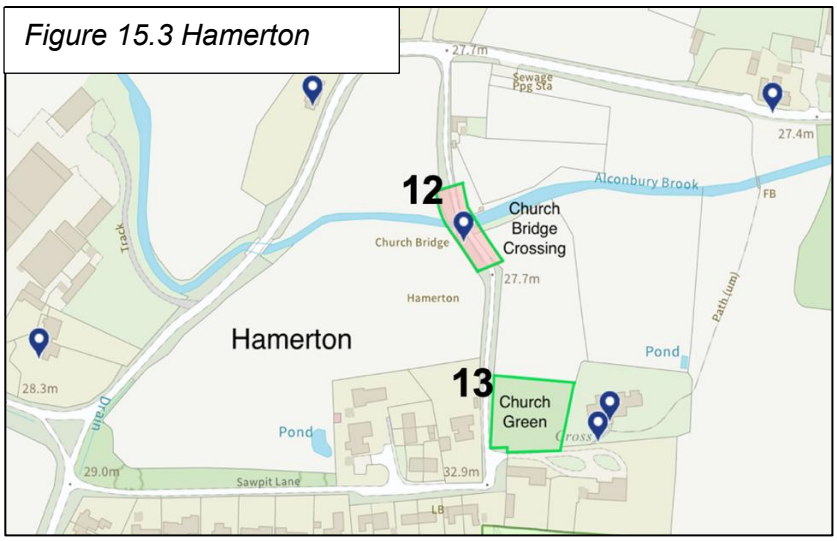
Figure 15.2 Winwick



15.11.4. Within Hamerton

15.11.4.1. Outside the church (13)

Figure 15.3 Hamerton



15.12. GWH NP POLICY 5 - **PROTECT LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

The GWH Neighbourhood believes that green spaces should be protected in accordance with the NPPF (section 105 to 107) and the LP. This NP requires that:

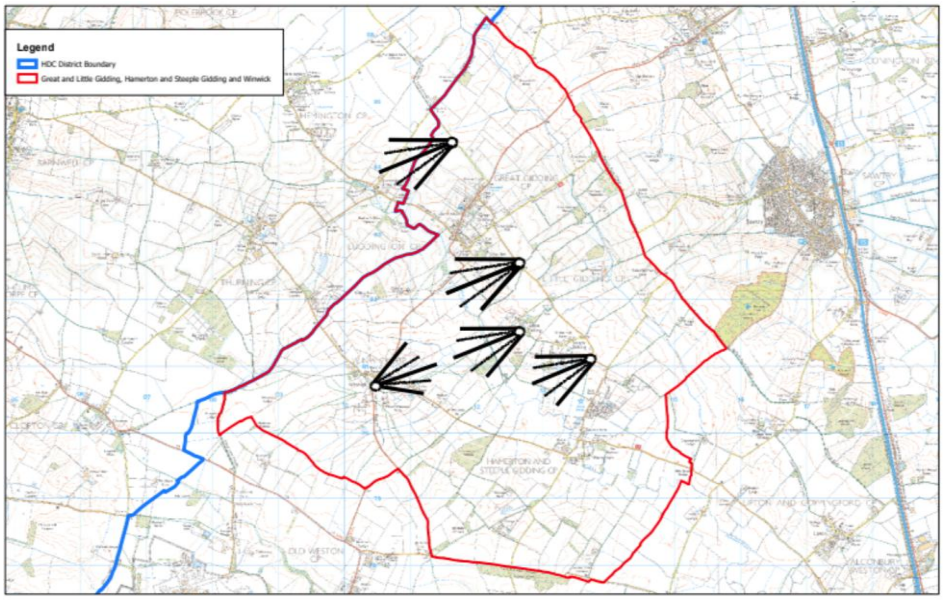
1. The nine spaces identified in Paragraphs 15.10.2, 15.10.3 and 15.10.4 and mapped as 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 13 in the GWH Local Green Spaces report are designated as Local Green Spaces.

2. Any new proposal affecting the Local Green Spaces or their setting should respect their use, scale, aspect and visual contribution to the settlement.

3. Development proposals on these sites will not be supported unless they are consistent with the National Policy for Green Belts.

15.13. There are several superb wide open sky views in the area particularly over the valley of Alconbury Brook (shown below) from either the Little Gidding side of the valley or conversely Winwick.

Figure 16: Important views across GWH



The views

Photo 8: Mill Lane towards Winwick





Photo 9: View towards Hamerton from Steeple Gidding

Photo 10: View from Winwick towards Hamerton





Photo 11: View from Little Gidding towards Winwick



Photo 12: View from Hemington Lodge Road towards Winwick



Photo 13: View from Gypsy Lane towards Luddington in the Brook

15.14. These views need to be protected from such things that spoil the views e.g.:

15.14.1. Wind farm developments and individual wind turbine.

15.14.2. Large warehouses.

15.14.3. Large scale residential development.

15.14.4. More electricity pylons.

16. Tourism

16.1. In the Residential Survey only 32% of respondents stated they wanted to encourage tourism. The Local Plan however has LP23 which promotes tourism within certain constraints.

16.2. The prime tourist destination within the GWH Neighbourhood is Hamerton Zoo/ Wildlife park that has a wide selection of animals and birds.

16.3. The area in its rural location, has footpath and bridleway networks and rural lanes, surrounded by major transport roads. It could promote circular and historic walks.

16.4. These are enjoyed by comparatively small numbers of visitors either travelling through by car, mainly on road cyclists, and some walkers.

16.5. The parishes have not developed an offering as a tourist destination such as the history around Nicholas Ferrar and the Grade 1 Listed Church at Little Gidding.



Photo 14: The only Grade 1 building in GWH Parish Church of St John the Evangelist at Little Gidding

16.6. Two businesses on the edges of the area, at Holly Lodge Café and Rectory Farm Kitchen are providing ‘go to destinations’ for cyclists and walkers and this area provides routes to either / both.

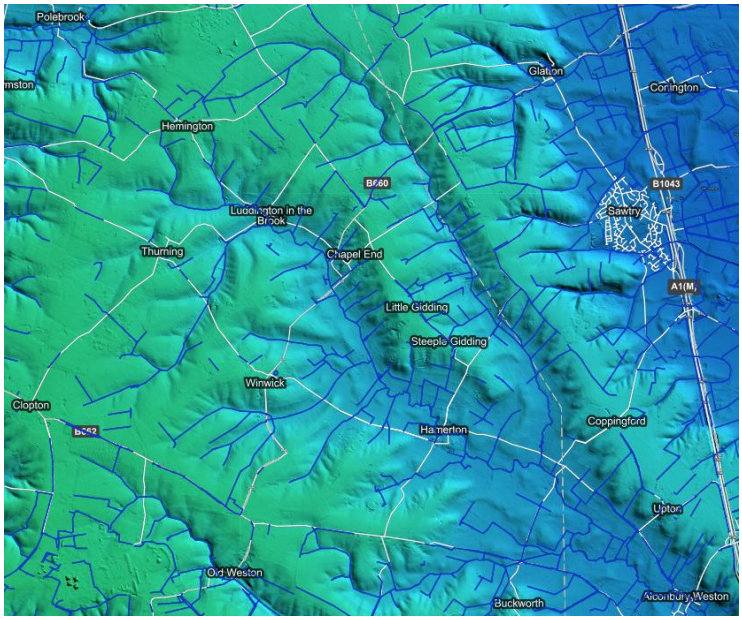
16.7. Equally there are no hotels, bed and breakfasts or Airbnbs in the parishes, although there are Airbnb accommodation offers within the A605 / A14 / A1 triangle.

16.8. Tourism, with a focus on environmentally sensitive activities, travel and history within the area, could be appropriately developed, opening up potential for small local enterprises.

17. Flood risk and drainage

17.1. The Alconbury Brook catchment covers 84km2 (see below). The clay soils and rolling valley sides make the Brook very quickly responsive to heavy rain on saturated soils. Climate change is increasing flood risk by increasing the frequency and scale of larger rainfall events (1% rise in global temperature equates to the atmosphere holding 7% more moisture[25]) .

Figure 17: Topography and water courses in GWH Neighbourhood[26]



17.2. Various properties in Hamerton get periodically impacted by flooding due to Alconbury Brook bursting its banks (it is worse in Alconbury). Other people in the community are affected by being cut off from emergency services, schools, doctors' surgery and shops. There have been at least 2 recorded deaths associated with flood water since 1987.

17.3. Serious floods have occurred 1987,1998, 2012, 2016 and 2020 with the Brook flooding many domestic properties (e.g. 1998: 103 homes, 2020: 73 homes). Minor flooding is a frequent winter event with flood water from the Brook causing road closures annually.

17.4. The Government[27] publishes the following map highlighting flood risk

[25] https://climate.nasa.gov/explore/ask-nasa-climate/3143/steamy-relationships-how-atmospheric-water-vapor-amplifies-earths-greenhouse-effect/#:~:text=For%20every%20degree%20Celsius%20that,to%20the%20laws%20of%20thermodynamics.&text=Some%20people%20mistakenly%20believe%20water,driver%20of%20Earth%27s%20current%20warming.

[26] www.parish-online.co.uk

[27] https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map?easting=511820&northing=283285&map=RiversOrSea

Figure 18 Flood Risks in the GWH Neighbourhood



17.5. The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD31 sets out relevant advice regarding allowing future developments to be built in ways that are considerate of flood risk. The Cambridgeshire County Council's Surface Water Planning Guidance also provides technical guidance for developers. The GWH NP supports the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems including grey water systems.

17.6. To alleviate flooding The Alconbury Flood Group[28] is also working with Anglian Water & the Environment Agency to reduce the flow of water during deluges by:

17.6.1. Offline ponds - fill when water levels rise.
17.6.2. Leaky dams - hold back the initial deluge of water.
17.6.3. Green and grey water capture schemes – reduce run-off.
17.6.4. Meandering stream - replacing straight ditches and reduce speed.

17.7. GWH NP ASPIRATION 12 - **IMPROVE FLOOD PREVENTION**

The GWH Neighbourhood supports a robust approach to ensuring that any development reduces flood risk in the Neighbourhood. This NP seeks to implement this by encouraging The Environment Agency, CCC, Anglian Water and the Cambridgeshire Highways Authority [29]to:

1. Increase the on-site storage of water, which significantly delays flows into the Alconbury Brook system: trickle dams, swales, off-line ponds, and wetland features in any developments.
2. Follow the Environment Agency standing advice and HDC LP 15 for mitigation measures that reduce the risk of flooding.
3. Regular dredge and clean out of the existing drains and water courses.

[28] https://www.alconburybrookfloodgroup.uk/
[29] See appendix D for Flood Prevention responsibilities

18. Employment, the local economy

18.1. According to the 2021 Census fewer people (53.9%) in GWH are economically active than in Huntingdonshire (61.6%) or England (57.4%).

18.2. Of those people not employed:

18.2.1. 13.1% in GWH have worked in the last 12 months - England is 13.2%.

18.2.2. 71.4% in GWH have not worked in the last 12 months - England 61.1%.

18.2.3. 15.5% in GWH have never worked - England 25.6%.

18.3. As the current businesses in the area are almost entirely micro-sized, expanding the number of new companies in the future will require targeted planning and support, including proof of local demand.

18.4. Improving the broadband and mobile services, especially in the Giddings and Hamerton, will be essential for certain types of service and technology companies.

18.5. The largest business type according to the survey results is agricultural - arable and mixed farming.



Photo 15: Arable crop near Great Gidding



Photo 16: Cow pasture near Great Gidding from Mill Lane

18.6. A consultation with these farmers would be a starting point for establishing what type of local farm produce shop could be viable in the GWH Neighbourhood.

18.7. In terms of future planning permissions, the replies received indicate a focus for locally sensitive growth with independents rather than large national chains.

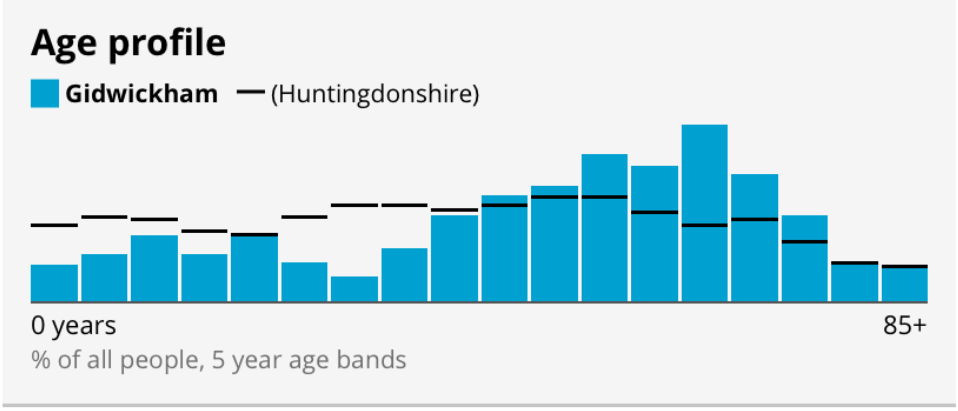
18.8. GWH NP ASPIRATION 13 – CREATE A SMALL BUSINESS MEETING ROOM

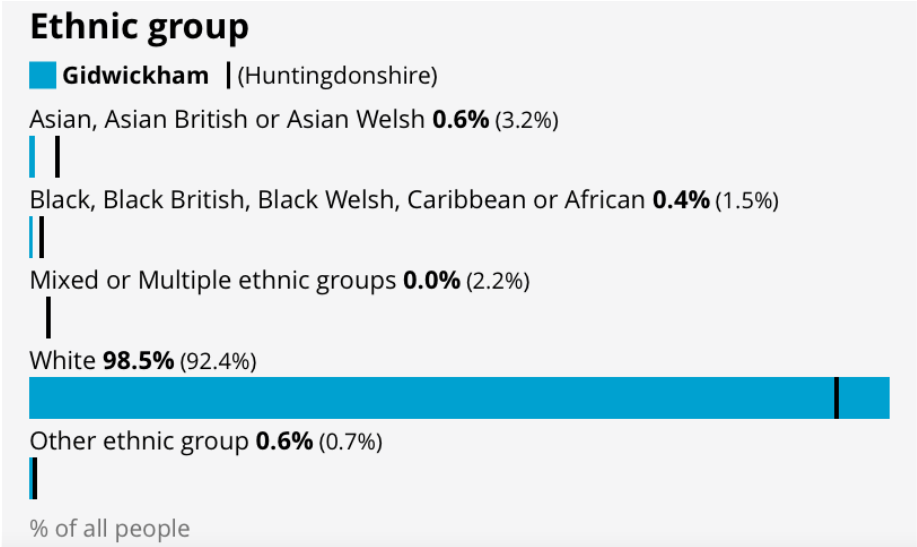
The occasional use of meeting room would be useful for small businesses. This NP aspires to create such a facility in the Great Gidding Village Hall.

19. Appendix A - Conclusions from the Surveys

19.1. Our Households

19.1.1. When viewing the 2021 National Census[30] or the Residential Survey they point to an older and less diverse demographic than the national average. The GWH Neighbourhood compared to Huntingdonshire from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) shows the following graphs.

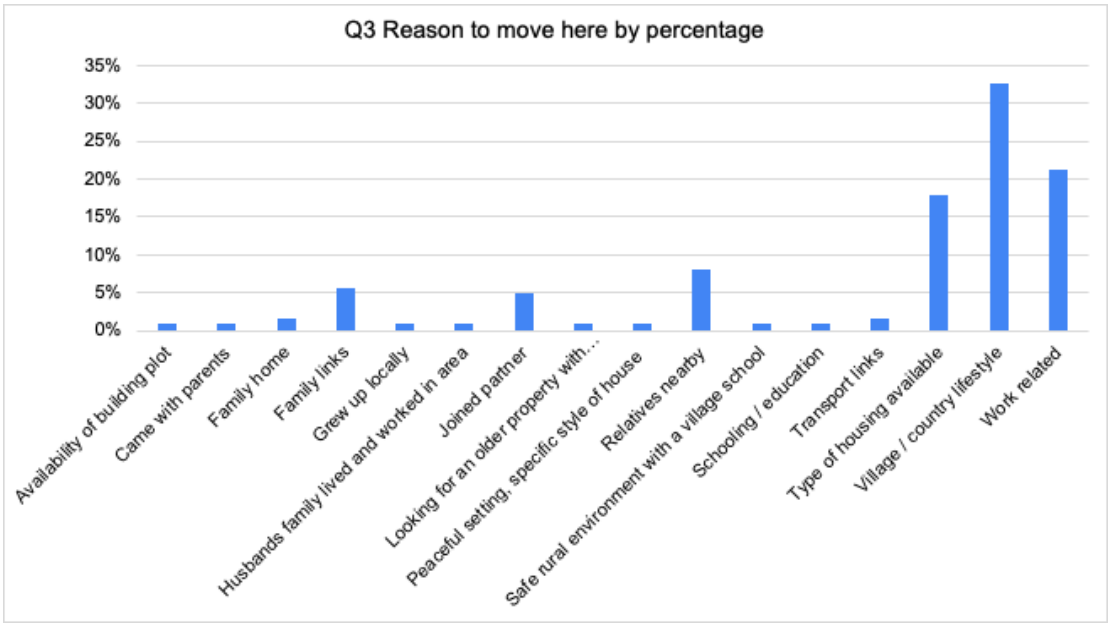




19.1.2. Reason for living here

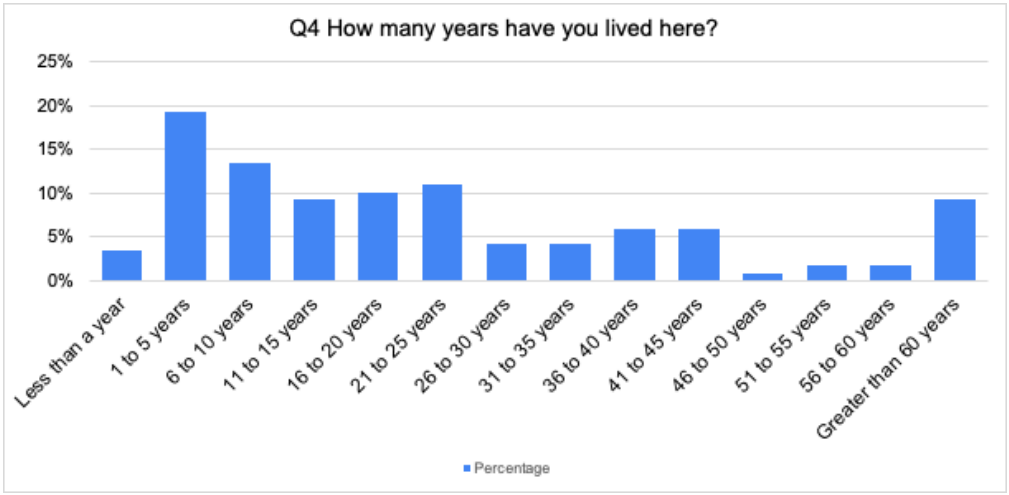
Most people moved to the area because of either the type of housing available, the country lifestyle or it was work related. Family links / relatives nearby also played an influence on why people live in the area, as shown below.

[30] https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/

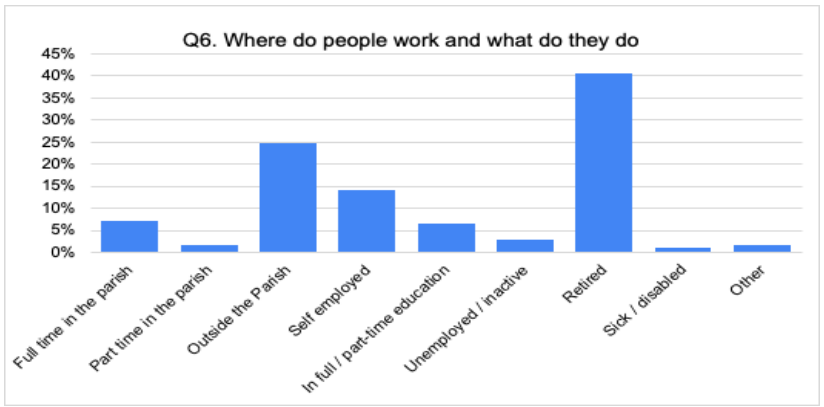


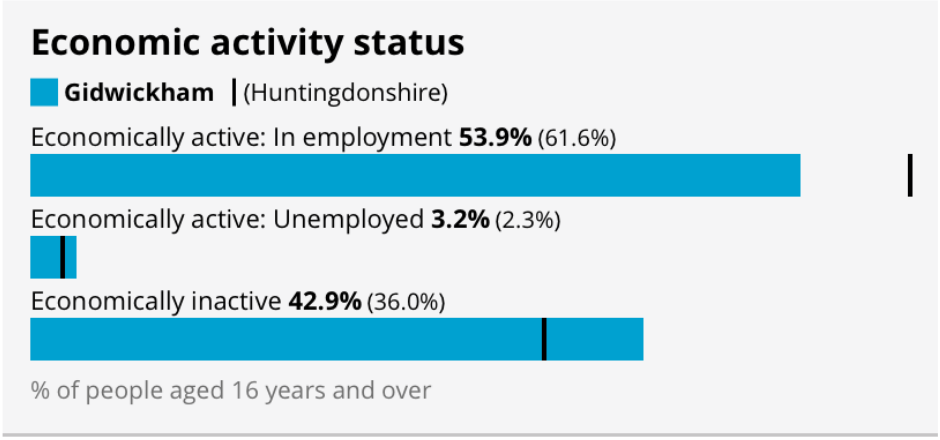
19.1.3. Based on the Residential Survey, whilst there has been churn over the years (the largest single group has been here less than 5 years), there is a central core of long-term residents.

19.1.4. Nearly 65% of the households in the area have lived here for over 10 years and 45% have been residents for more than 20 years i.e. very stable.

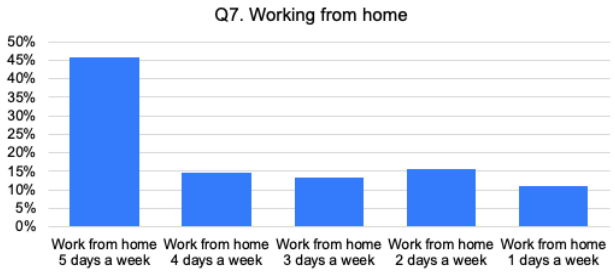


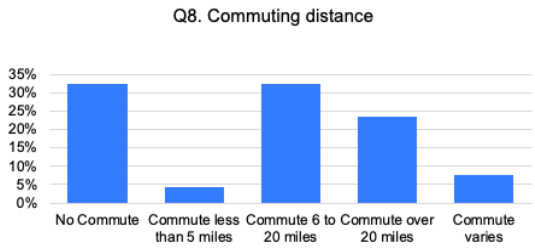
19.1.5. The retired group is the biggest segment in the community:



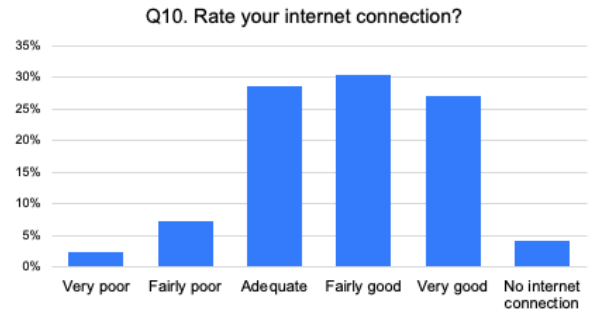


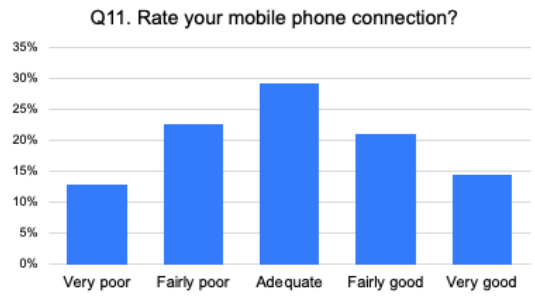
19.1.6. Of the households who have people who do work, as shown below, 46% work from home 5 days a week. Also, the majority of people work within 20 miles of their house. The 2021 Census recorded 47.2% worked from home compared to Huntingdonshire at 34.9%.





19.1.7. This working profile has been facilitated by the internet. Although the area is very rural, over the last 10 years the internet has become increasingly important for both business and domestic use. The 2 closest exchanges are in Winwick and Sawtry. As shown by the residential survey the internet is rated far better than mobile phone connectivity - the area has no 5G coverage.

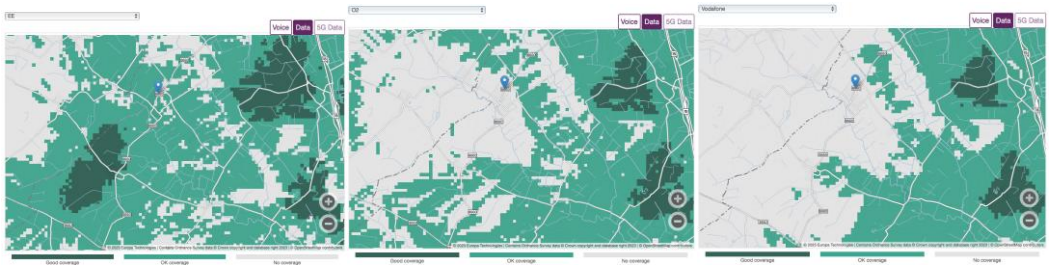




19.1.8. Indoor coverage of the mobile phone network[31] varies greatly by network. The area to the top right in dark green (good) is Sawtry. EE also gives good coverage for parts of Winwick but generally coverage is average to poor.

[31] https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/en-gb/mobile-coverage#pc=pe285nu&uprn=100090108007&vw=map

EE O2 Vodafone



19.1.9. As shown below, Winwick has its own Exchange for the 01832 area code and therefore it is not surprising that most respondents in the Winwick residential survey rated their internet speed as very good. Hamerton and the Giddings are less impressed, being further from the Exchange.

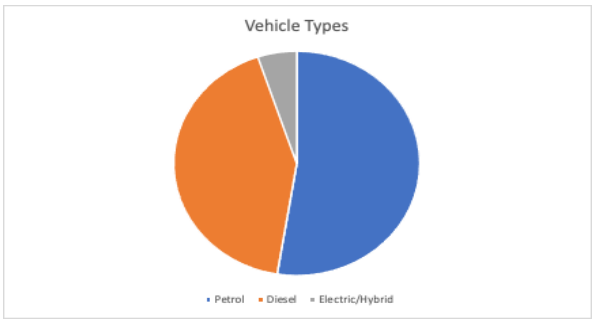


19.2. About Your Vehicle

19.2.1. The GWH Neighbourhood is hugely dependent on cars for transport. Due to the relatively isolated nature of the area, and lack of amenities and public transport, cars are used by almost every household and adult; only one respondent did not admit to having a car.

19.2.2. Most households had two or more cars (the average across the area is 1.9).

19.2.3. The vehicles are mostly fossil fuel powered: 123 Petrol (in blue), 99 Diesel (in orange), 12 Electric/Hybrid (in grey).



19.2.4. Within the Neighbourhood there are a limited number of private Electric Charging Points (ECPs) (10) and no public charging points (PCPs). The nearest public ECPs are low-rate points in the towns of Sawtry, Thrapston and Oundle, 20 minutes' drive away, with higher rated PCPs half an hour away in Huntingdon and Peterborough.

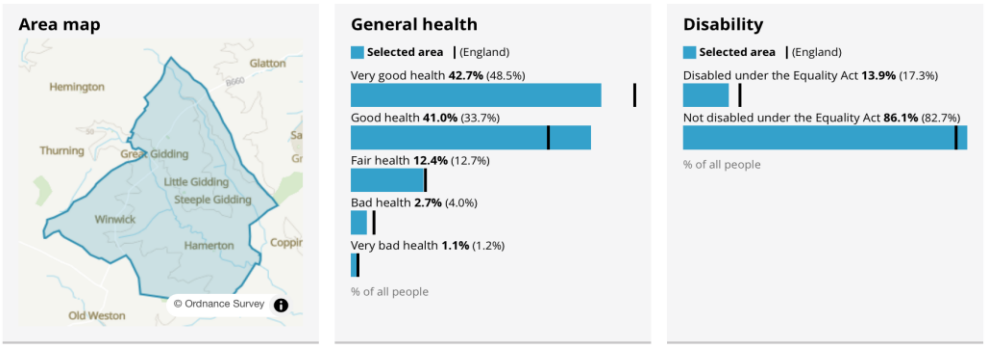
19.2.5. The age of the housing stock means that a minority of cars (64) are garaged overnight, with the majority parked on drives. Narrow roads means that few are parked on the roadside (8).

Location	Gt Gidding	Hamerton	Winwick	Total
Garage/Carport	29	15	20	64
Drive	87	25	46	158
Roadside	7	1	0	8
Other	5	1	2	8

19.3. Health and A Healthy Lifestyle

19.3.1. As shown by the 2021 census, the residents of Gidwickham rate their health as above average for those who consider themselves in good health and slightly below average for those who view their health as bad. This is encouraging given the higher age demographic of the GWH Neighbourhood.

19.3.2. Of the people responding to the survey only two classed themselves as 'permanently sick or disabled.' The 2021 Census below shows that Gidwickham is lower than England and Huntingdonshire as a whole for those who class themselves as 'Disabled under the Equality Act.



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

19.3.3. The majority (73%) attend the Wellside Surgery at Sawtry, with a much smaller proportion using Alconbury Surgery and six households using alternatives, including two who attend the Lakeside Surgery in Yaxley.

19.3.4. Exercise is obviously key to maintaining good health and the opportunity to exercise in remote villages can be limited. Use of a gym requires a drive

of around twenty minutes. 38% of respondents said that they used the local footpaths on a daily basis.

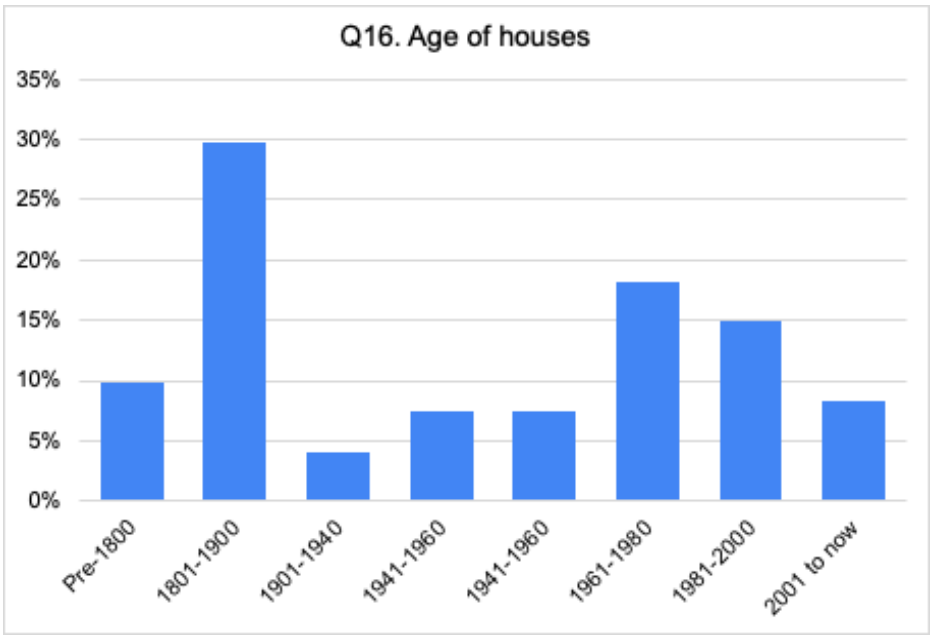
19.4. Our home

19.4.1. Most of the dwellings in the GWH Neighbourhood are owner occupied. The residential survey concluded 89% are owner occupied, with 6% privately rented, 3% social rented and 2% houses provided with the job.

19.4.2. The 2021 National Census similarly concluded owner occupied was higher across the GWH Neighbourhood than Huntingdonshire. The Census stated GWH: had:

- 47.1% owned outright as opposed 35.9%.
- 25% owned with a mortgage as opposed to 34.4%.
- 11.7% socially rented as opposed to 12.9%.
- 16.2% private rented or living rent free as opposed to 16.8%.

19.4.3. There is a good mixture of ages of the housing stock with many being built between 1801 and 1900. The fewest houses were built between 1901 and 1940, although after 1980 house building has tailed off:

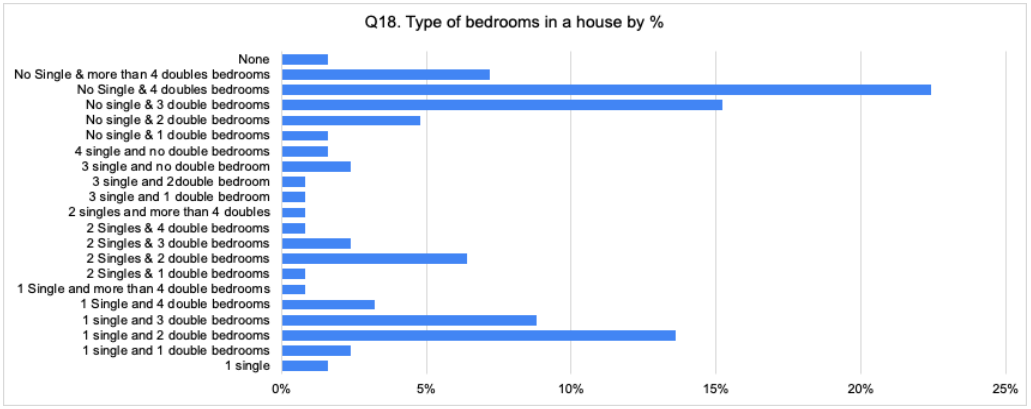


19.4.4. Most responders considered their homes to be well insulated, 57% v 43%.

19.4.5. Across the GWH Neighbourhood most households are occupied by 2 people. There are less people living on their own than the Huntingdonshire average but more couples than is normal for Huntingdonshire:

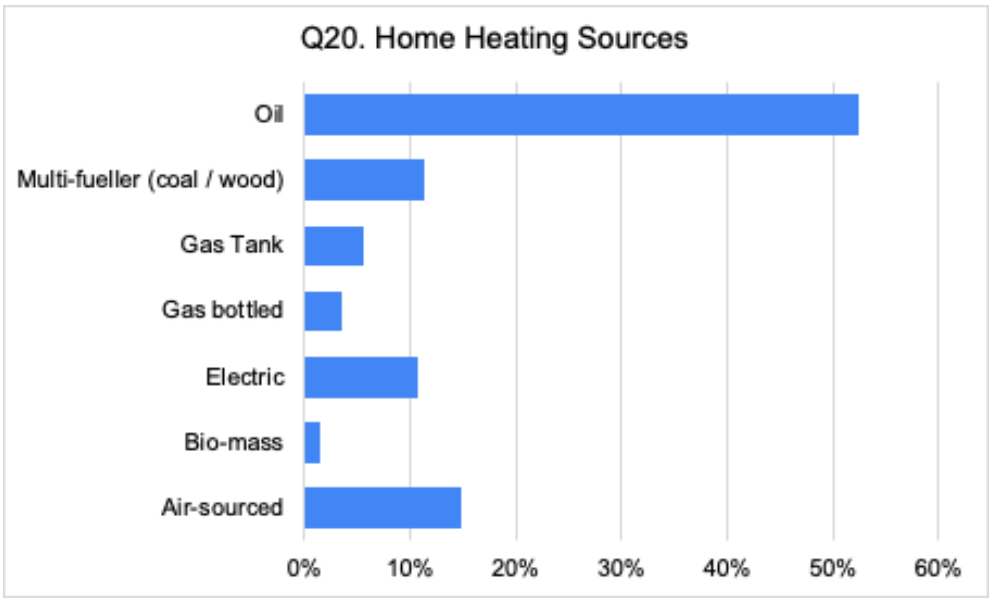
- - 1 person in a household 23.8% (28.4%).
- - 2 people in a household 50.8% (36.4%).
- - 3 people in a household 12.1% (16.0%).
- - 4 or more people in a household 13.3% (19.3%).

19.4.6. There is a wide spread of the number of bedrooms in the houses although 4 double bedrooms followed by 3 double bedrooms are the two most frequent.



19.4.7. The number of homes with an extension or annex is 47% with and 53% without an extension.

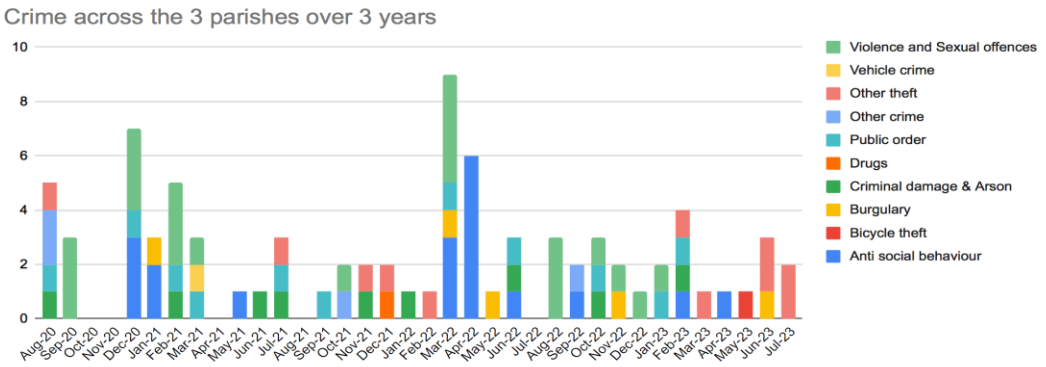
19.4.8. Most homes are fuelled by oil. These are the 7 fuel types although 41% of respondents stated they had more than one of these i.e., a combination of fuels.



19.4.9. There are only 11% of homes with solar panels i.e. 89% without. 55% would consider installing them. Across the 3 parishes only 12 homes are restricted from installing solar panels.

19.4.10. All our community feel either very safe or safe, 36% very safe and 64% safe. The incidence of crime is exceptionally low in the parishes as only 5 incidents were reported to the police in the last year. There were very few crimes noted with no one being assaulted and a single and a multiple burglary, a theft of a car, a few thefts from cars or sheds and some fly tipping. One incidence of drug taking and 2 of drunkenness. There were 6 incidents of verbal abuse and one multiple incidences.

Based on the crime map from Cambridgeshire constabulary[32] these are the reported crimes over the last 3 years.



19.5. Housing Development

19.5.1. There are currently approximately 260 households[33] across the 3 parishes. It is recognised that new houses will be built across the GWH Neighbourhood over the coming 13 years. 16 houses have been built since 2011 and a number of additional houses are already approved in Great Gidding and Hamerton. During the Residential Survey, the households were asked to give their opinion on what type of development would be acceptable. Over 120 households responded. They were given a series of ideas on how development could take place.

19.5.2. **Infilling the existing village or extending along existing roads**

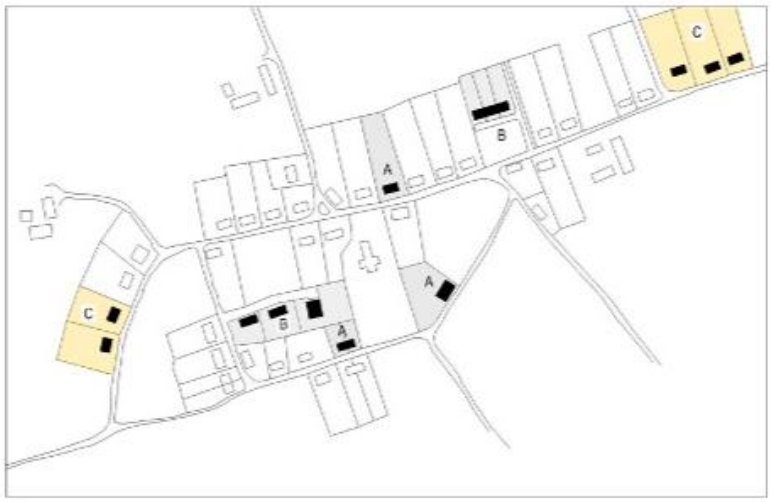
19.5.3. Option A: Represents the infill of individual plots currently vacant and placed within the village curtilage. It appears the least disruptive as it follows the historic pattern, but it is also limited to, generally, individual houses. It offers a low density (again, to match the existing pattern) and is not appropriate for commercial development as much as it is for self-builders, etc. The properties being built tend to be larger and suit families, but the low density suggests the greater expense that is not conducive to family starter homes.

19.5.4. Option B: This form of development is a variation of A) where larger infill plots (such as redundant farms) become available. Housing can be built off short lanes perpendicular to the existing road pattern and several, possibly, smaller houses built in the traditional pattern but taking advantage of deep plots. A further variation of B) could allow for an access in a perpendicular lane but with new houses set away from the existing road to create an open space adjacent to the road. The traditional pattern of development could be copied but set back deeper into a long plot.

[32] https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/cambridgeshire-constabulary/huntingdon/?tab=crimemap

[33] Results from the HDC

19.5.5. Option C: This emulates the traditional development pattern but, instead of filling 'empty' sites within the villages, allows the settlement to grow (in a controlled manner) out into the countryside along the roads.



19.5.6. The respondents to the survey preferred infilling the existing village as shown below:

Option A	Infilling between the houses on land that is not used? This option may lead to individual houses such as self builds.	40%
Option B	Larger plot infill for instance on redundant farms. Houses are built off short lanes taking advantage of deep plots.	29%
Option C	Expand the village out into the countryside along existing roads in the traditional development pattern.	17%
Would prefer something else		13%

19.5.7. **Option D - Larger scale development options using existing roads** This is a more ambitious proposal for a full village extension into the surrounding fields. Carefully designed it would emulate the development pattern of the village and could offer the establishment of internal green spaces (Village Green). By concentrating village expansion in a single location, this extension could protect the existing settlement pattern from excessive infilling while being compatible with such changes (types A & B)

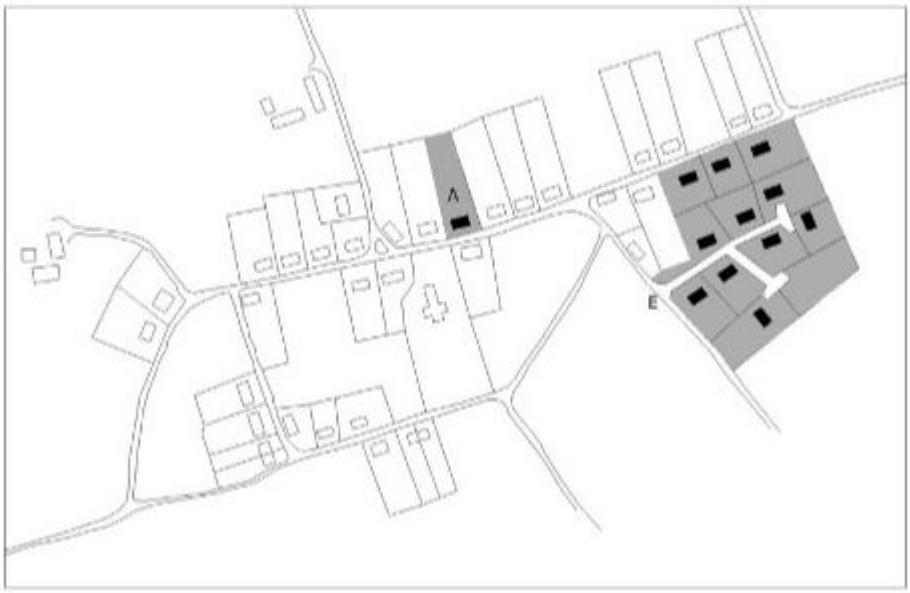


19.5.8. The general consensus was that this was too intrusive and dramatic. The results of from the Residential Survey were:

Yes I think this is a good solution	15%
It could be a good solution as long as the buildings were well designed	29%
I do not support this type of development because it would change the village too much	56%

19.5.9. **Option D - Larger scale development options - cul-du-sac estate** This represents a more typical modern village extension. It is positioned on the edge of Gidwickham and away from the existing settlement. By concentrating village expansion in a single location, this extension could protect the existing settlement pattern from excessive infilling while being somewhat compatible with such changes (type A).

19.5.10. The layout of the development would be compact, dense, and arranged in a modern pattern of cul-de-sac roads, garaging etc. It does not contribute any shared space with the existing village but is economical to construct and might provide an element of affordable housing.



19.5.11. This was the least popular option across the 3 parishes. Only 4% supported this type of development.

Yes, I think we need to keep up with the way things are done in other villages	4%
Yes, if it is on a limited scale of 12 houses or less	26%
No, having seen how other villages have adopted this.	70%

19.5.12. Further conclusions can be drawn from the residential survey, namely in this very independent contented community:

19.5.12.1. Low-cost starter homes are well supported:

- Owner occupied: 69% said there was some or much need.
- Rented homes: 48% said there was some or much need.

19.5.12.2. Efficient homes: 82% said there was some or much need.

19.5.12.3. Homes for local people: 68% said there was some or much need.

19.5.12.4. Residential care homes 57% said there was no need.

19.5.12.5. Retirement homes 56% said there was no need.

19.5.12.6. Shared accommodation 82% said there was no need.

19.5.12.7. Shared ownership 59% said there was no need.

19.5.13. In terms of conservation zones:

19.5.13.1. 57% of people supported conservation zone guidelines.

19.5.13.2. 61% want a conservation zone in Hamerton & Steeple Gidding.

19.5.13.3. 67% want a conservation zone in Little Gidding.

19.5.13.4. 64% want a conservation zone in Winwick.

19.6. The natural landscape, built up areas and design

Comments received were consistent throughout the three parishes There were 3 main issues.

19.6.1. **What do you like about living in this area?**

19.6.1.1. Living within a rural landscape – able to enjoy nature, walks in the countryside with easy access to towns and cities not too far away.

19.6.1.2. Quietness and the benefits of countryside views, open spaces and little traffic.

19.6.1.3. A good community spirit – due to the small size of the villages that offer a friendly and safe environment.

19.6.2. **Protecting the built environment**

The vast majority of respondents supported the measures suggested to protect the built environment (question 35). They also approved the environment proposals in question 36 as the two graphs below show.

19.6.3. **Importance of community items**

19.6.3.1. Although few properties are directly affected by flood water, the flooding of roads does impact a larger number of people that can be cut off or may have to travel further to avoid floodwater and 77% of replies supported flood prevention measures.

19.6.3.2. Only street lighting proved divisive (Q37 in the residential survey) with 49% wanting street lighting and 51% against it. This was very much split by village, with those not having them, not wanting them (except Little Gidding). The rest of the items, the controlling of traffic speeds, cleanliness, safety and the maintenance of footpaths and community spirit were heavily supported.

19.7. Public Transport and Traffic

19.7.1. The Neighbourhood is relatively isolated, bounded by the A1 to the East, the A14 to the South and the Northamptonshire border to the West. The links across these boundaries are poor, there are no public transport facilities to areas further afield. It is possible to arrange a taxi (at high expense) into the area, but more difficult to get one out of the area. As a result, and as noted earlier, the rural population is heavily dependent on

personal cars. Rail services can only be accessed by travelling out of the Neighbourhood.

19.7.2. Bus Service

Getting a bus to Peterborough involves **driving** to Sawtry and picking up the route that runs along the A1. There are no buses to the nearby towns in Northamptonshire such as Oundle or Thrapston, except by travelling via Huntingdon or Peterborough.

19.7.3. The only bus route through the Neighbourhood is the 401. Its route is shown in the picture below.

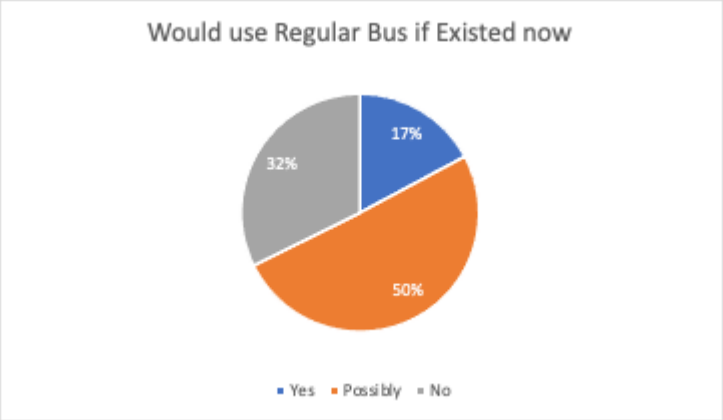


19.7.4. It runs twice daily (Mon-Fri) to the following timetable:

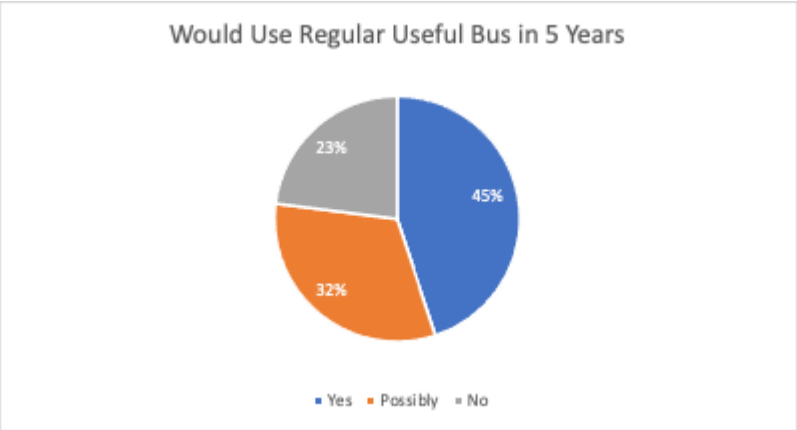
Stop	Time Out	Time Return
Winwick	0940	1323
Gt Gidding	0945	1318
Little Gidding	0947	1316
Steeple Gidding	0948	1315
Hamerton	0952	1311
Huntingdon Bus Station	1030	1230

19.7.5. The time that can be spent in Huntingdon is therefore only 2 hours, which limits potential appointments and is barely adequate for shopping.

19.7.6. Very few residents use the 401 service, though some (17%) would use a bus service now if there was a convenient route.

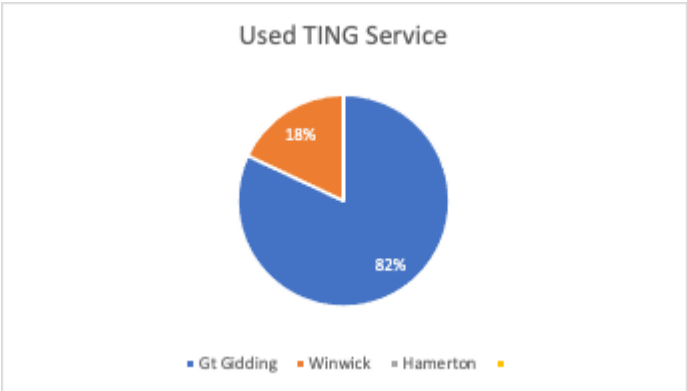


19.7.7. An increased number (45%) felt they might use one in 5 years' time, reflecting the ageing populations foreseen needs.



19.7.8. TING

Residents were asked if they had used the trial TING (on demand) service as an alternative to Public Service Buses.

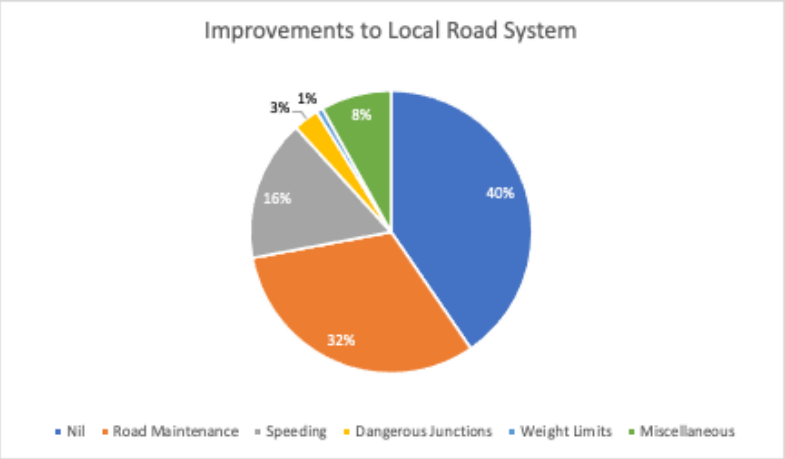


19.7.9. Only 11 respondents, almost all over the age of sixty, (9 Gt Gidding, 2 Winwick & 0 Hamerton) had used it with varying success. Just under ½ found it excellent, though limited, the rest found it poor, difficult, or impossible to book, with the worry that it might only be possible to go from the area and impossible to get back.

19.7.10. It was not felt to be an acceptable substitute for a proper bus service and needed considerable development to make it usable, including linking across the county border into Northamptonshire.

Suggesting Improvements to Local Road System

19.7.11. Residents were asked to suggest improvements to the local road system. Whilst nearly half made no suggestions, the other half expressed concerns which fell into five categories. There was widespread realisation that changing the existing road network to a significant extent was unlikely to be affordable, and that any improvements would be incremental.



Road Improvement Area	Gt Gidding	Hamerton	Winwick	Total
Nil	37	9	9	55
Road Maintenance	14	14	15	43
Speeding	18	2	2	22
Dangerous Junction	3	0	1	4
Weight Limits	0	0	1	1
Miscellaneous	6	2	3	11

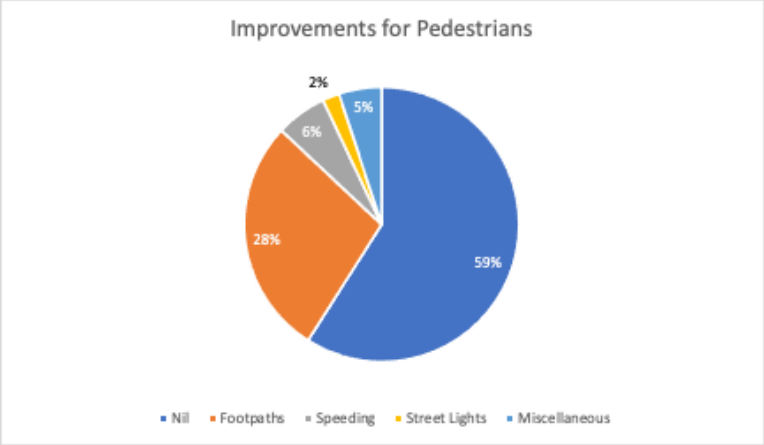
19.7.12. The chief stated concern was the poor state of local roads, with multiple potholes causing damage to tyres and suspensions. The second major concern was speeding vehicles, with many residents feeling that excessive speed by transiting vehicles threatened other road users in many areas.

19.7.13. Data from speed cameras showed that most vehicles were law-abiding. However, there were daily occurrences of vehicles travelling on the B660 at up to 80mph in villages, particularly during the night.

19.7.14. Traffic police vehicles are rarely seen in the Neighbourhood.

19.7.15. Remaining concerns covered a multitude of issues with no clear patterns for improvement.

19.7.16. Residents were also asked to suggest improvements for pedestrians. The majority (78) made no suggestions, but those who did can be split into four areas:



Pedestrian Improvement Area	Gt Gidding	Hamerton	Winwick	Total
Nil	46	15	16	77
Footpaths	22	7	8	37
Speeding	5	2	1	8
Streetlights	0	0	2	2
Miscellaneous	4	0	2	6

19.7.17. The largest stated category was the lack of footpaths in the villages, with small children and walkers felt to be especially vulnerable. Where footpaths exist, mainly in Great Gidding, there was general concern that they were in a poor state of maintenance and lacked dropped kerbs for those of limited mobility or using mobility scooters.

19.7.18. Public footpaths also caused concern, as there are few between villages, and gaps in the network where paths can only be accessed by walking on the road.

19.7.19. Speeding vehicles was also a major concern to pedestrians who share the road space because of the lack of footpaths. There were no other clear patterns for improvement.

19.7.20. Recommendations

19.7.20.1. As the elderly local population ages further, the District and County Public Service providers need to develop services such as more frequent bus services that will link up the villages to the towns.

19.7.20.2. Foot-traffic - whilst it would be exceedingly difficult to install pedestrian footpaths in many areas within the Neighbourhood, there are areas where existing grass verges could be converted into paths usable by walkers and mobility scooter users. We need to work with CCC Highways Department to make this happen.

19.7.20.3. Speeding - Cambridgeshire Police need to become more active in rural areas to enforce speed limits.

19.7.20.4. Road repair - CCC Highways Department needs a more proactive approach to deal with the myriad of road defects and potholes across the rural roads in the Neighbourhood and should investigate possible solutions to improve car and personal safety in general by ensuring that existing footpaths, dropped kerbs, etc are maintained to a safe standard.

19.8. Infrastructure and Amenities

19.8.1. Great Gidding is by far the largest village in terms of size and population across the 3 parishes and as such it has more facilities: a corner shop, an equestrian outlet, a pub, a recreation ground and a community wood. None of the other villages have anything similar. It should also be noted that there are no schools across the 3 parishes (after Great Gidding's Primary School closed in June 2023) nor a fixed Post Office (which closed in 2008).

19.8.2. People liked the area because of its rural, quiet, friendly, and safe aspect, whilst also within reach of towns.

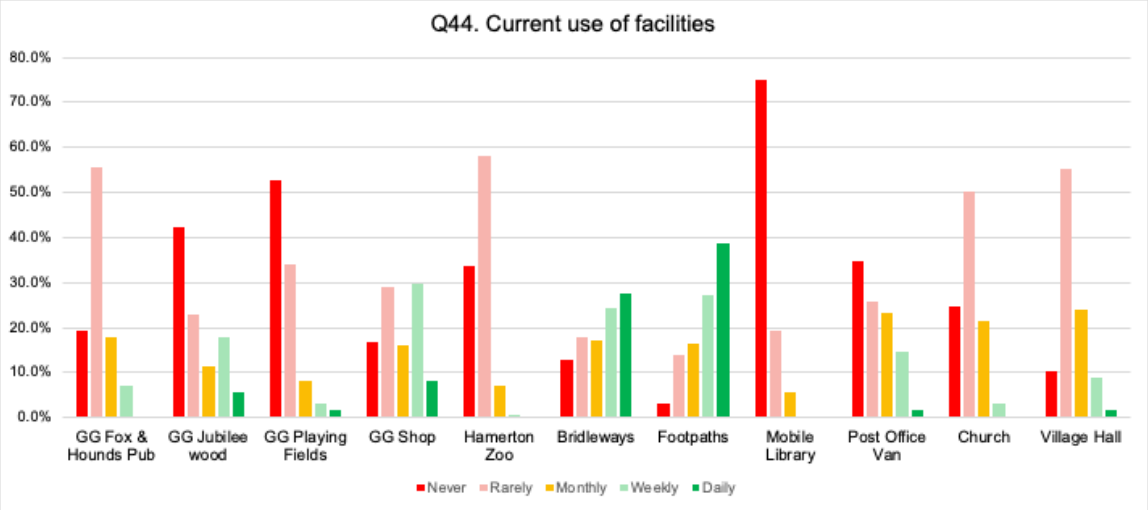
19.8.3. The survey asked people to rate their usage of various facilities across the 3 parishes. As shown by feedback in the graph below from the Survey

19.8.3.1. The bridleways and footpaths are the most popular amenities,

19.8.3.2. The shop at Great Gidding (GG) is frequently used as is the post office van (which 9.30-11 Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday)

19.8.3.3. Jubilee Wood in Great Gidding (GG) and village halls being used moderately,

19.8.3.4. The mobile library is very poorly used.



19.8.4. Feedback in the Survey stated that Jubilee Wood and the Recreation Group in Great Gidding are a valuable resource that should be designated as protected green spaces.

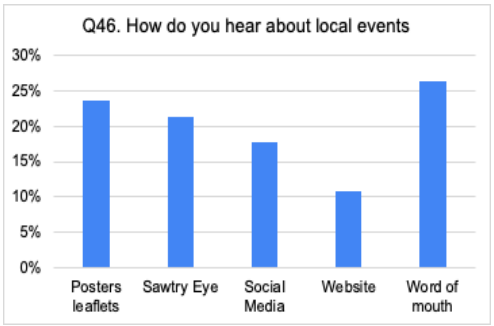
19.8.5. As expected, these are more popular with the residents of Great Gidding than other villages: over 30% of the Great Gidding respondents go to Jubilee Wood every week.

19.8.6. Compared to 20 years ago, exacerbated by Covid-19, social events across the Parishes have fallen off. Winwick has some major events such as fetes a year whilst Hamerton has started to run a breakfast club every other month. Great Gidding's events are more spasmodic.

19.8.7. **Hearing about local events**

Communication across the NP is by various methods. Feedback from the Residential Surveys showed word of mouth was the most effective way to communicate. Hamerton and Winwick both have an extensive email distribution whilst Great / Little Gidding primarily use Whatsapp.

19.8.8. In terms of posters, leaflets, the local paper (the Sawtry Eye), social media and websites results varied by Parish. It seems that the existing Great Gidding website[34] is the least effective medium. The Sawtry Eye is not delivered to Hamerton, so it is underrepresented in that parish.



[34] https://www.thegiddings.org.uk

19.8.9. Posters and leaflets still seem the most effective way to raise awareness.

19.8.10. **Cycling**

The Government is pushing for more walking and cycling in the community as seen by its last paper on the subject in March 2023 entitled "the Second cycling and walking investment strategy".

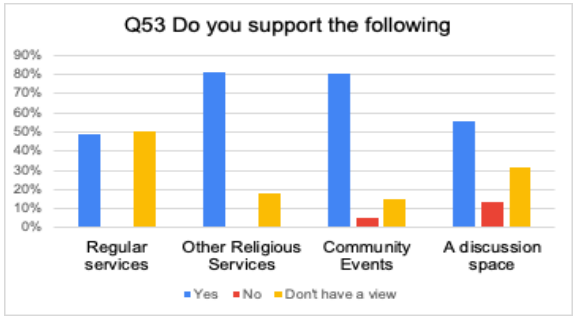
19.8.11. There are no dedicated cycle paths in the area. Government funding included £35m to be spent on the National Cycle Network. The only National Cycle Network route in the parish is the Cycle Route 12 which goes down Milking Slade Lane. This Lane is in a dreadful state of repair (as shown below) and is a sad advert for the state of Huntingdonshire roads and Cambridgeshire's commitment to cycling[35].



Photo Milking Slade Lane Cycle Route 12

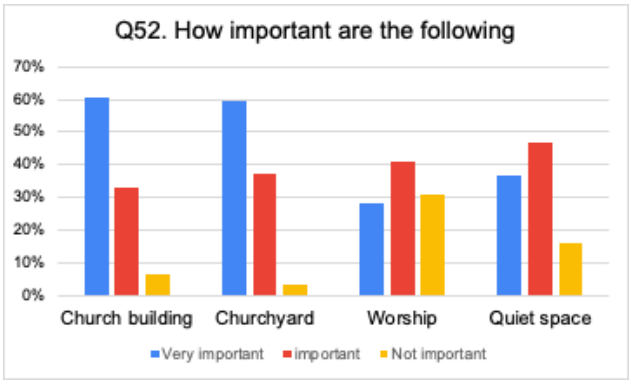
19.8.12. **Church and Churchyards**

Although attendance at the 5 churches and the Baptist Chapel is relatively low (attendance at "regular" services is often less than 10 people) and it is not hugely supported as a place of worship, 61% of respondents stated that the church building and the church yard were very important:



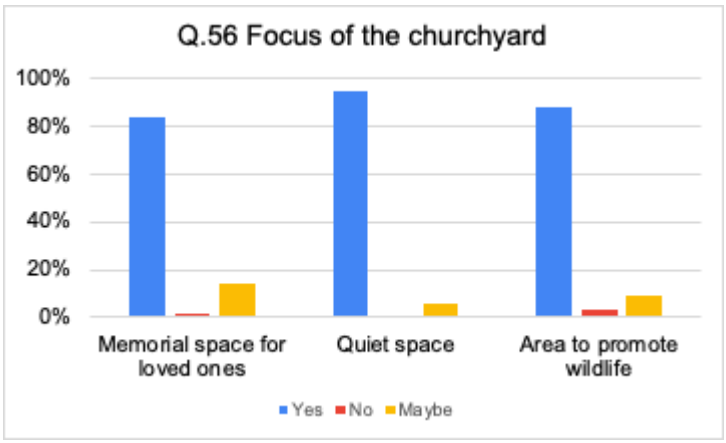
[35] It also reflects poorly on Cambridgeshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which includes the comment:

> We very much recognise the importance to residents in smaller villages of being able to walk or cycle to the nearest larger village, market town or Cambridge city in order to access education, public transport and employment as well as leisure and retail destinations. This is a very strong message from both district councils and from villages.



19.8.13. As shown above, the support for other religious services (81%) and community events (80%) is extremely high although regular services were 30% lower at 49%.

19.8.14. Support for the church yard being a Memorial space for loved ones, an area to promote wildlife and quiet space, was over 90%:

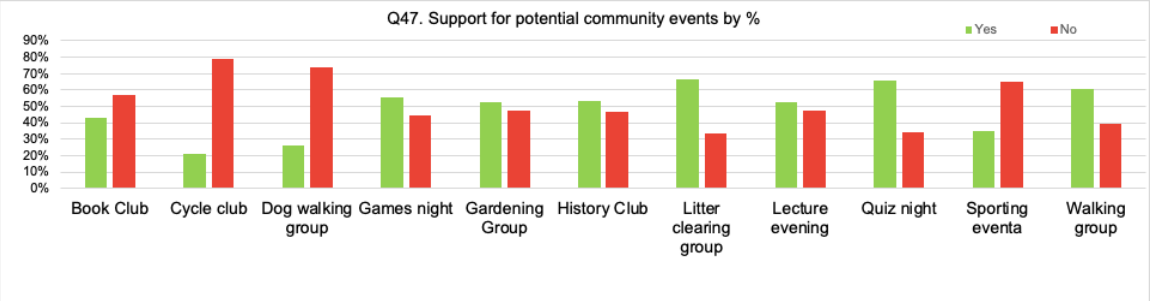


Suggested improvements

19.8.15. The Survey showed that most people across the 3 parishes like the open spaces, the safety and quietness of the area.

19.8.16. In terms of footpaths all stiles should be replaced with gates to encourage walking.

19.8.17. There should be more cross-parish community activities and events. The Survey highlighted 11 potential events:



19.8.17.1. Clear favourites were a litter cleaning group, a quiz night, and a walking group.

19.8.17.2. Least popular were a cycling club, a dog walking group and sporting event.

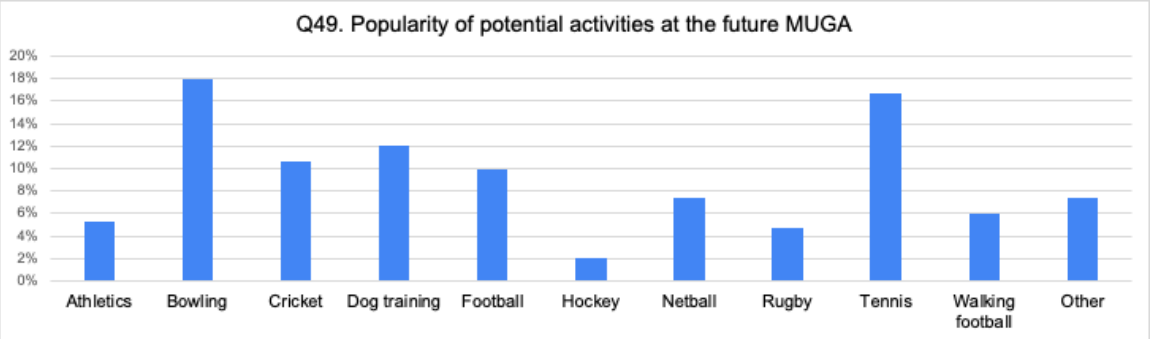
19.8.18. These could start or be hosted at the three existing village halls.

19.8.19. The Sawtry Eye coupled with posters / leaflets would advertise these parish events across the area.

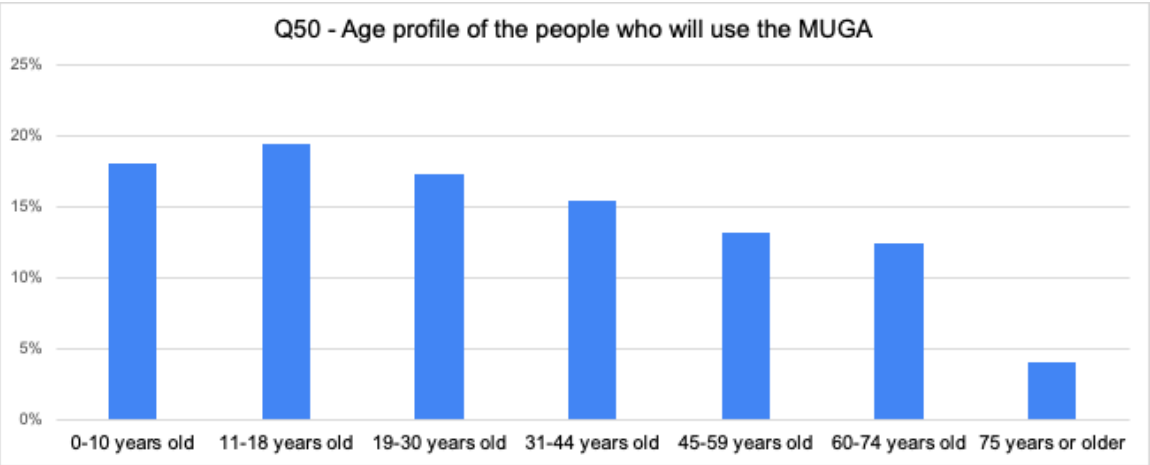
19.8.20. To improve usage of the churches, heating and toilet facilities could be added along with publicised service / event times. The services could be more modern and include popular hymns.

19.8.21. A more significant investment (£80,000) would be the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on the Great Gidding Recreation Field. The MUGA was supported by 58% of the respondents (regardless of if they lived in Great Gidding or not).

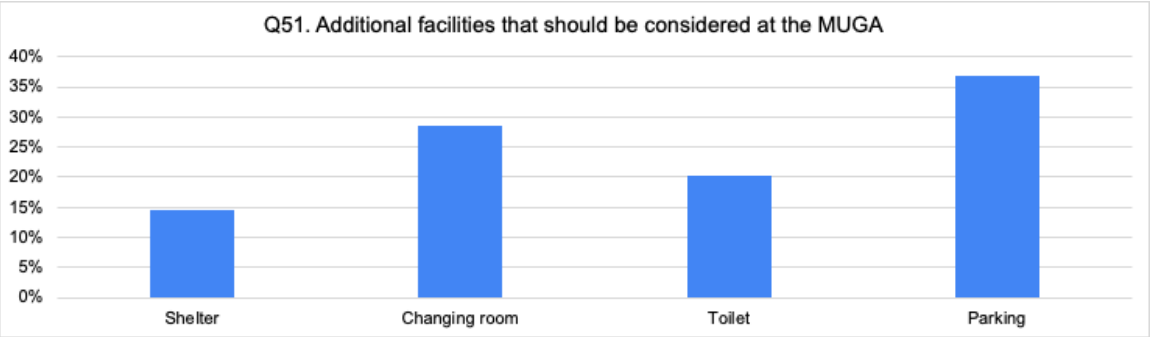
19.8.22. Bowling and tennis were the most popular activities as shown in the graph below:



19.8.23. Other activities mentioned included rounders, basketball, and keep-fit classes. A wide age profile would use the MUGA, although like all activities, it will need people with the enthusiasm to organise such activities:



19.8.24. 35% of those respondents who responded regarding additional facilities thought that parking would be important especially for those living in the Winwick, Hamerton & Steeple Gidding parishes.



19.9. Business and Employment

19.9.1. A separate Business Survey, of 15 questions including voluntary contact information, was hand distributed to the known businesses within three villages, with a choice of on-line completion or hard copy paper return.

19.9.2. 20 completed responses were received. This low number was in line with expectations from 3 villages with an older age profile (nearly 33% over 75 years of age and nearly 60% not working/retired).

Business Category

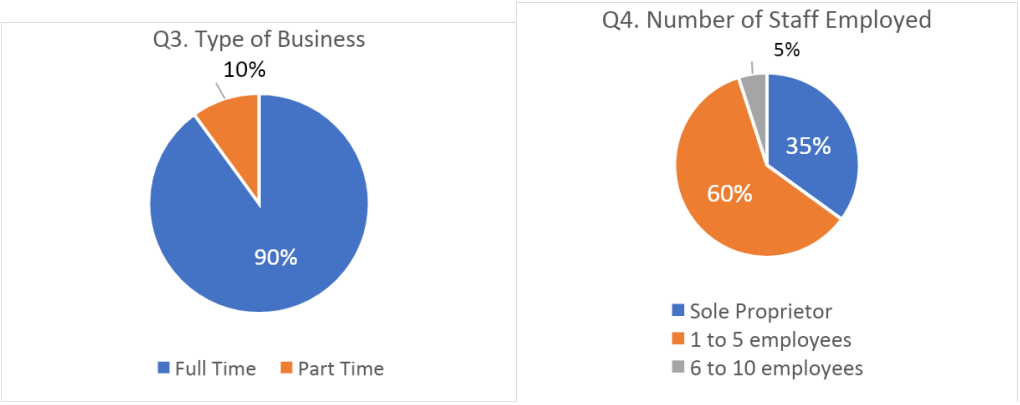
19.9.3. The largest business type (Q1) was Agricultural - arable and mixed farming (40%), followed by Professional, Scientific, and Technical (20%).

19.9.4. The remaining businesses (40%) were single business vertical specialists ranging from the sale/hire/repair of construction equipment to internet based professional services to personal face-to-face services such as hairdressing & pet grooming (Q2 – Other).

Type of Business and Number of staff employed

19.9.5. Almost all businesses were full time (90%).

19.9.6. All businesses, bar one, were micro sized, employing under 5 employees. The majority (60%) employed between 1-5 employees.



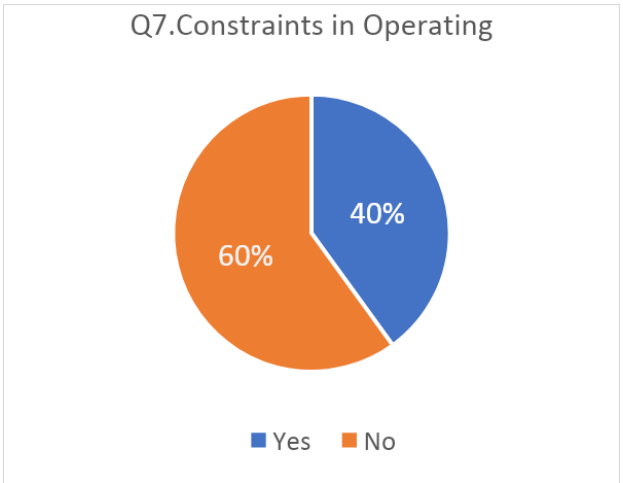
19.9.7. 85% of the businesses employed staff who lived in the parish (Q5).

19.9.8. 55% of the businesses are based at home, either from a home office/workshop or because the business is the farm. A further 25% are based in the parish as they had found suitable premises. The remaining 20% because their business and the parish go hand in hand, for example serving the local community (Q6).

Constraints in Operating Business

19.9.9. A noticeable minority experienced constraints in operating their business (40%), citing three main reasons - slow planning permission, poor broadband/mobile reception, and poor local/transport infrastructure (Q8). Three quarters of those saying 'Yes' to a constraint worked from home/farm.

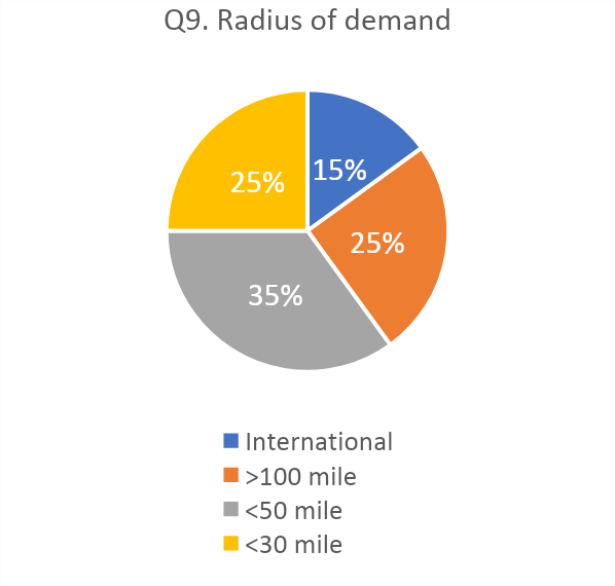
19.9.10. Over half (60%) did not experience any constraints.



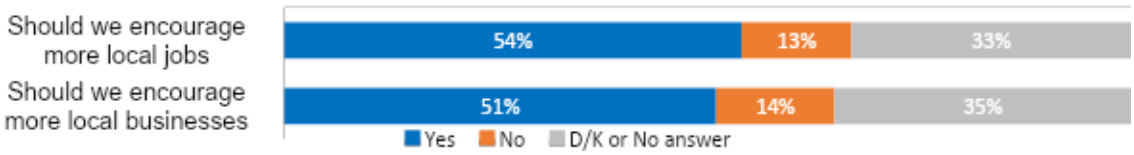
Radius of Demand

19.9.11. Demand is not local; 40% trade with customers over 100 miles away or internationally.

19.9.12. A further 35% see business demand from over 50 miles to 100 miles away. A minority of local businesses (25%) work with customers within 30 miles.



19.9.13. In parallel, it is interesting to note that a majority in the Residential Survey (base n=126) expressed an attitude towards encouraging more local jobs (54%) and encouraging more local businesses (51%).



19.9.14. Suggestions from those who answered 'Yes' to more local businesses and more local jobs in the Residential Survey (Q57) reflected a local, traditional, touch and feel:

"Local farm produce, locally made goods- perhaps a market (if not permanent building)"; "Local craftsman and tradesman"; "A coffee shop, encouraging Great Gidding to be a destination of choice - for walking or cycling. For example, the Victorian school building becomes a cycle shop and coffee shop". "Cafe, small units for starter businesses, artisans, crafts, exhibition spaces, public access to toilets"; "Bakery"; "Useful services like florists, dry cleaner, ironing, farm shop".

19.9.15. Several comments were keen to emphasise locally sensitive growth:

"I would be nervous of the impact on the village and village life, if larger, more corporate organisations entered the arena". "Any business that is not a chain company and serves the locals would be ideal".

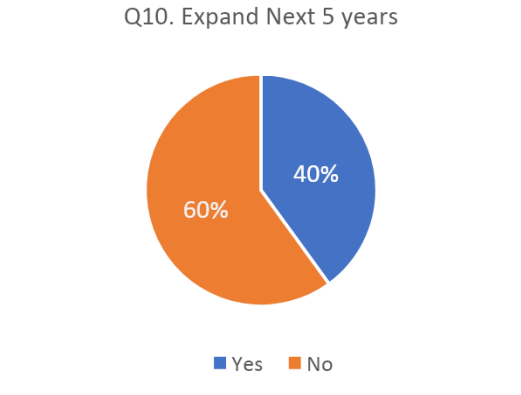
Expansion Plans in next 5 years

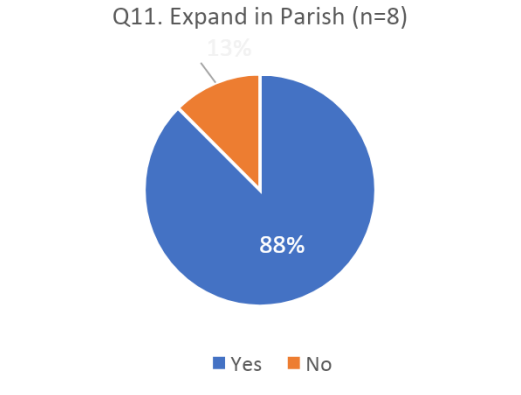
19.9.16. Less than half of these local businesses replied that they planned to expand their business in the next 5 years (40%). A majority (60%) do not. When prompted on why 'no', some of the main reasons behind why not reflected

a quality of life and work/life balance mentality of the older age profile in this area:

"The business is at a size that suits my work life balance"; "Heading towards Retirement"; "We are in our 80s".

19.9.17. Of those who plan to expand in the next 5 years, nearly all think this will be in the parish (88%).



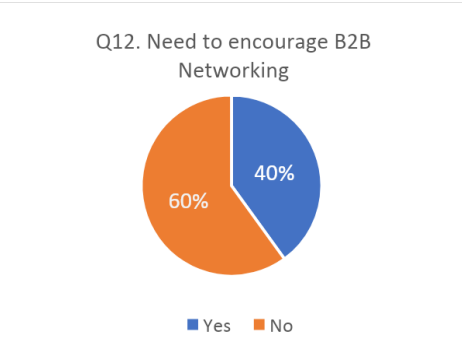


Business Networking and Meeting Rooms

19.9.18. Less than half (40%) see a need to encourage business to business networking in the villages and an even lower number (30%) felt they would use available meeting rooms for business meetings.

It should be noted that not all businesses use meeting rooms for networking, one farmer remarked that

"In the farming world, business to business networking is part of the role".





19.10. People under 18 years old

19.10.1. With the shock to the community of the Primary School closing after over 150 years, to write about children and young people across the three communities is tricky as the focus for children under 11 has been closed.

19.10.2. And from this the current closure and patterns of what children and young people wish to have in their community or gain from living here is more complex to understand.

19.10.3. We have few children across the communities, but significant numbers of children and young people visit the three villages' areas for a variety of reasons:

19.10.3.1. Thousands of children every year visit Hammerton, with the attraction of the Zoo Park.

19.10.3.2. Several hundred teenagers visit Little Gidding and camp there for one night on their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition.

19.10.3.3. Many others visit Grandparents and relatives in our communities.

19.10.3.4. Some of the local businesses offer employment for young people but this is extremely limited.

19.10.4. From the households who responded to the survey only 12 households responded to the question about where they went to school, indicating the lower number of children in the area. And, their response reflects the breadth of schools being used before the school in Great Gidding closed.

School	Number	Transport
Alconbury	2	Car
Brampton	1	Car
Brington	1	Car
Folksworth	2	Car
Kimbolton	3	Car
Oundle	3	Car
Sawtry	1	Bus
Other	5	Car

19.10.5. Only one household said that their children went to school by bus, and this reinforces other parts of the survey that the GWH Neighbourhood is a car dependent community.

19.10.6. There are only a few pre-school age children, and these households were very vocal about the positive attraction that they saw within the village of the Playing field, and also Jubilee Wood, as places that offered things to do and activities. Could the two locations offer more activities to young people, with discovery trails and other activities, hosted on the Great Gidding website and downloadable?

19.10.7. From these households and others, the Playing Field deserves a special mention. Even households with no young children saw value in its green space, maybe a grandparent /grandkids factor of usage but all reflected that the equipment needed serving and repair. Some asked for more

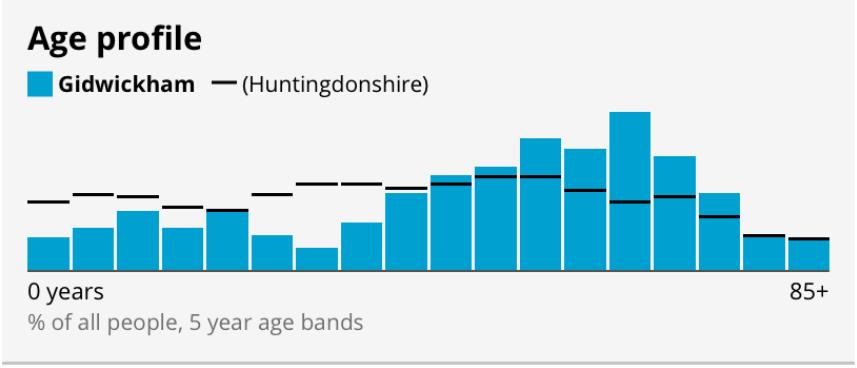
equipment and for the wider variety of play equipment, that covered a wider variety of ages.

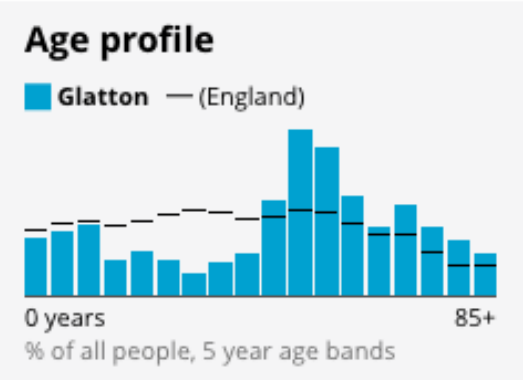
19.10.8. The MUGA received support from this age group, seen as a place where more activity could be provided and where they could invite their friends into the village.

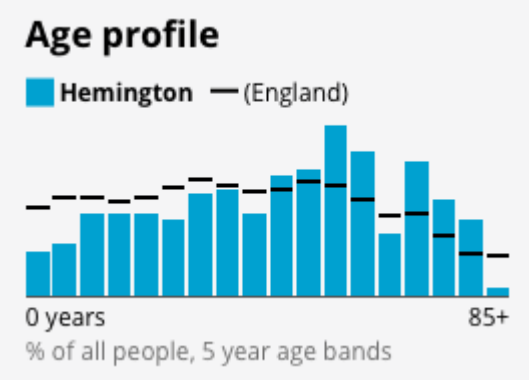
19.10.9. The MUGA and play equipment combined with a shop opposite, could create a play venue for children to travel to, but would require some further equipment and as mentioned equipment upgrades, but some spin offs for the shop and use of the field and then into the wood.

19.10.10. A Play / Nature / Newt trail journey around a village could be a development focus for Great Gidding for families with young children, bringing them into the village, with walking trails for older children with families between Winwick, Little Gidding, Steeple Gidding and back or development of some excellent mountain bike trail riding on our network of bridleways and smaller roads for teenage riders.

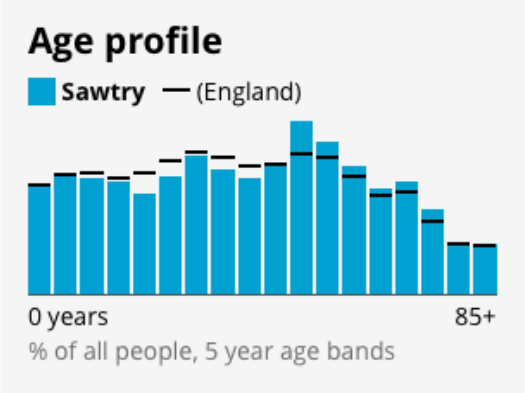
19.10.11. The 2021 National Census shows the age profile of Gidwickham, compared to the average in England is skewed to older people:

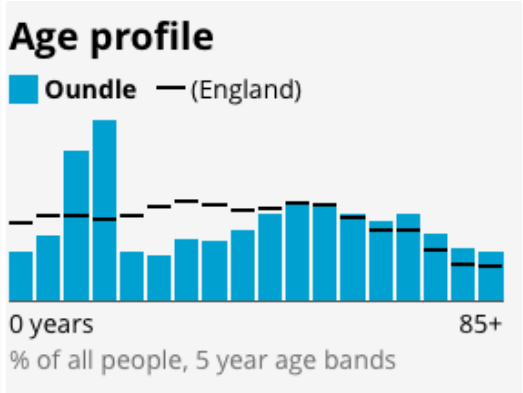






The age of the community stays below the national and Huntingdon average until 45-50 years old when it exceeds it. This profile is also true of other rural villages in the area such as Glatton and Hemington. Compare this to Sawtry which is almost typical of England or Oundle where the large school impacts the results:





19.10.12. The data implies that many people have stayed in the area whilst their children have moved away or moved into this area, after their children have grown up.

19.10.13. The pattern of age profile of the community is reflected in national trends statistics, with younger age groups living in more urban areas, and as age increases, a move to the country takes place. This is also reflected in the average property size with most houses being 3 or more bedrooms. It is hard to determine that even if more smaller, two-bedroom properties existed, would it increase younger age groups living in the area? National statistics suggest not.

19.10.14. The survey discovered that young people not only travelled away from the area for schools but also their leisure time, in our surrounding larger communities. There are insufficient numbers of children to justify a youth club or youth activities. This might have implications for activities offered on the MUGA proposal.

19.10.15. Even if there were a structural change to the housing stock, with more smaller houses, they would probably not be filled by younger people but older single older age adults. To increase the numbers of younger age adults in our villages, a societal change about younger age groups living more rurally would have to occur, which is not indicated in long term national trends. Therefore, the need for youth provision is of a lower priority.

20. HDC Local Plan – A Summary

20.1.1. The Local Plan defines Great Gidding, Hamerton and Winwick as Small Settlements. Little and Steeple Gidding are considered hamlets and as such are not referenced.

20.1.2. The most important Local Plan policy for the Neighbourhood Plan is LP9

20.2. LP9 Small Settlements

A proposal that is located within a built-up area of a Small Settlement will be supported where the amount and location of development proposed is sustainable in relation to the:

20.2.1. Level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement.

20.2.2. Opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.

20.2.3. Effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole. A proposal for development on land well-related to the built-up area may be supported where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed through other policies of this plan.

20.2.4. The Local Plan makes no allocations for development in Small Settlements. However, the strategy does set out a role for a limited amount of sustainable development in contributing to the social and economic sustainability of Small Settlements and in supporting a thriving rural economy.

20.2.5. The potential benefits of promoting some growth within Small Settlements includes helping to create a more balanced and diverse local population.

20.2.6. A Small Settlement which offers a range of services such as a shop, village hall, public house and primary school offers far greater opportunities in principle for sustainable development than one with few or no services.

20.2.7. All development proposals will be carefully considered in terms of their sustainability.

20.2.8. Need to consider their availability, capacity and accessibility. This includes the bus service, walking and cycle ways.

20.2.9. Need to consider maintaining the nature of the settlement & preventing adverse landscape and visual impact.

Proposals for development on land well-related to the built-up area will be considered subject to the provisions of the following policies:

20.3. LP10 'The Countryside'

All developments must

20.3.1. Seek to use land of lower agricultural value, avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible.

20.3.2. Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and

20.3.3. Not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.

20.4. LP11 'Design Context'

20.4.1. A proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings, including natural, historic, and built environment, to help create distinctive, high quality and well-designed places.

20.5. LP 19 'Rural Economy'

20.5.1. A proposal for the expansion of an established business within its existing operational site will be supported. A proposal for the expansion of an established industrial or rural business on land outside of its existing operational site in the open countryside will be supported where it is demonstrated that:

- Opportunities to reuse existing buildings have been fully explored; and replacement or new build are only proposed where it can be demonstrated that no suitable reuse opportunities are available;
- Any opportunities to make more efficient use of land within the existing site boundary are not suitable for the proposed use;
- It avoids the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) particularly Grade 1 where possible and should use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value; and
- The scale, character and siting of the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape.

A rural business is one which has a legitimate reason to be located in the countryside, including but not limited to agriculture, horses, horticulture or forestry.

Farm diversification

A proposal for farm diversification will be supported where it is demonstrated that it is complementary and subsidiary to the ongoing agricultural operations of the farm business, and that it meets the criteria above.

20.6. LP22 'Local Services and Community Facilities'

20.6.1. Local services and community facilities include, but are not limited to, shops, public houses, places of worship, cemeteries, health centres, libraries, fuel filling stations and public halls.

20.6.2. A proposal for a new local service or community facility within a built-up area, or the extension of an existing local service or community facility on land immediately adjoining the built-up area, will be supported where it:

A. Is of a scale to serve local needs;

B. Comprises up to a maximum of 600m2 net internal floorspace for a main town centre use.

C. Provides for a new service or facility or it retains or enhances an existing service or facility, including through the provision of premises suitable for mixed use or multiple community functions.

Where permitted development rights do not apply a proposal which involves the loss of a local service or community facility will only be supported where:

D. An equivalent service or community facility will be provided in a location with an equal or better level of accessibility for the community it is intended to serve; or

E. It demonstrates that there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restored because either:

a. there is insufficient community support for its continuation; or

b. reasonable steps have been taken to effectively market the property for its current use without success.

A proposal will not be supported where the proposed loss is within a Key Service Centre, and it would undermine the settlement's role in provision of services.

20.7. LP 23 'Tourism and Recreation'

20.7.1. A proposal for a new or expanded tourism, sport or leisure use in the countryside will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- It is well-related to a defined settlement unless there are robust operational or sustainability reasons why it needs to be located elsewhere;
- It does not cause harm to, and where appropriate, enhances the ecological, landscape and heritage significance of the proposed location;
- The impact of the scale, character, and location of the development on both its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape are minimised as far as possible;
- Adequate servicing can be provided, including water supply, electricity and for sewage and waste disposal; and
- It will not have an adverse impact on any internationally or nationally designated wildlife site through increased visitor pressure.

20.7.2. Where tourist accommodation is approved appropriate planning conditions will be used to prevent occupation as a person's permanent sole or main residential use.

20.7.3. A proposal for tourist accommodation, including touring caravan and camping sites, should be supported by a robust business plan demonstrating that it is viable in the long term.

20.8. LP 28 'Rural Exceptions Housing'

20.8.1. A proposal for housing will be supported on a site well-related to a built-up area, as an exception to the requirements of relevant policies, where it can be demonstrated that:

- At least 60% (net) of the site area is for affordable housing for people with a local connections.
- The number, size, type, and tenure of the affordable homes is justified by evidence that they would meet an identified need arising within the settlement or nearby small settlements (as defined in 'Small Settlements') through a local needs survey or other local needs evidence.
- The remainder of the site area is available as open market housing or plots suitable for custom or self-build homes tailored to meet locally generated need.
- The amount of development and location of the proposal is sustainable in terms of:
    - Availability of services and existing infrastructure.
    - Opportunities for users of the proposed development to travel by sustainable modes.

- Effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole.

- Mechanisms, including planning conditions / obligations, will be put in place to ensure that the affordable housing is delivered and remains affordable in perpetuity or for the appropriate period as applicable to the form of housing.

  - To ensure that market housing and affordable housing elements are delivered concurrently a planning condition will be applied.

20.9. LP33 'Rural Buildings'

20.9.1. A proposal for the conversion of a building in the countryside that would not be dealt with through 'Prior Approval/ Notification' will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- The building is:
  i. Redundant or disused.
  ii. Of permanent and substantial construction.
  iii. Not in such a state of dereliction or disrepair that significant reconstruction would be required.
  iv. Structurally capable of being converted for the proposed use.
- The proposal:
  i. Would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting; and
  ii. Any extension or alteration would not adversely affect the form, scale, massing, or proportion of the building.

20.9.2. A proposal for the replacement of a building in the countryside will be supported where the criteria for the building above are fulfilled and the proposal would lead to a clear and substantial enhancement of the immediate setting. A modest increase in floorspace will be supported.

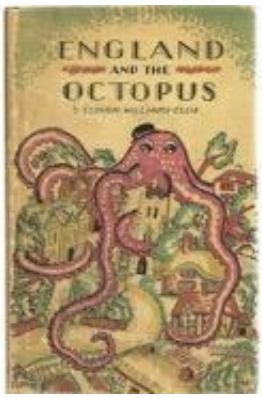
20.9.3. The position of the replacement buildings within the site should be considered comprehensively so that it is located where it would have the least possible adverse impact on the immediate surroundings, the wider landscape, and the amenity of the users of existing buildings nearby.

21. Appendix C: The Planning System

21.1.1. It is said that 'Town Planning' was created in 1947 under the Town and Country Planning Act. This act was, indeed, sweeping in its ambitions and centralising in its wartime origins but it was, in reality, a marker in a long thread of legislation as a result of industrialisation of the United Kingdom in the 19th century.

21.1.2. Until the arrival of industrialisation, the United Kingdom was based on an agricultural economy that, in turn, relied on generations of rural workers based in small settlements throughout the countryside. Market towns were small and functioned as transactional hubs for the rural hinterland. The introduction of the factory system to manufacturing enterprises saw a general exodus from the country into towns. The rural areas became sparsely populated but, with the greater efficiencies of industrialised agriculture, still able to function as food production.

21.1.3. It was soon clear that the towns were becoming intolerable with congestion and overcrowding. Standards of construction were low and the resulting slums unsanitary with the result that from 1848 a series of public health laws were introduced. The first planning legislation in 1909 was the result of concern over basic living standards and the wider campaign for high-quality place making, led by the Garden Cities movement.





21.1.4. However, the planning system was weak and fragmented and could not properly deal with the chronically-poor housing conditions; nor could it deal with expansion of private sector housing which, particularly in London, had begun to sprawl along arterial routes.

21.1.5. The architect of Portmeirion, Clogh Williams Ellis, published a 1928 book titled England and The Octopus. Octopus being London spreading out into the country. On the front was a cartoon of a man leaving his rural home to fight in the Great War to preserve his native soil. He returns in uniform to find his home is now an industrial landscape.
He writes that,
"…having made our town with such careless incompetence, those of us who have the means to be choosers are…now proceeding with the same recklessness to disperse ourselves over the countryside, destroying and dishonouring it with our shoddy but all-to-permanent encampments."

21.1.6. The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 – steeped in the wartime experience of top-down planning - repealed all previous planning legislation. It contained some of the most drastic provisions ever enacted in Britain affecting the ownership of land and buildings. In effect it took away the liberty of all landowners to develop or use their land as they might wish. The case for effective planning was not just limited to technical planning reports; it was a mainstream part of the wider construction of the welfare state and was featured strongly in the 1942 Beveridge report.

21.1.7. After the 1948 Act, ownership of property carried with it only the right to use it for its existing purpose. Any change of use or material development required permission and the general process of obtaining Planning Permission was born.

Planning Policy had and has four principal aims:

21.1.7.1. Prevent urban sprawl into the countryside - Green belts etc.

21.1.7.2. Improve living conditions (slum clearance and new tower blocks) in towns and cities to counteract sprawl.

21.1.7.3. Protect the rural agricultural economy by restricting rural residential development to New Towns.

21.1.7.4. Protection of Heritage Assets through a centrally administered Listing (Grade 1, 2* and 2), Conservation Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks.

21.1.8. From its inception Planning Policy in Britain has been centrally organised to principles generated by the Westminster Government. These principles are implemented by Local Governments by way of their own local policies within their own purpose made Local Plan.

21.1.9. Over the last 76 years the Planning ‘system’ has had to evolve to deal with the detail and complexity of human needs, changing uses and an expanding population. The act of ‘freezing’ land uses in 1947 has made the “change of use” (even if the building was materially unaffected) a matter for control. Whilst this has caused immense difficulties in urban areas the same has affected the countryside in adapting small settlements and isolated structures from the age of agriculture in 1947 to modern needs.

21.1.10. Perhaps because of its over-ambition the 1947 system was operational for just six years before major reform in 1954. Reform has continued until the present day as the fundamental dichotomy of having a centrally planned land use system, implemented at a local level searches for a resolution that is seen to be both fair and have a democratic acceptance.

21.1.11. The latest centralised reform occurred in March 2012 with the Department of Communities and Local Government introducing a National Policy Planning Framework. Known as “The Framework” or “NPPF” it

consolidated a conflicting myriad of supporting policy guidance with the aim of promoting the concept of “Sustainable Development”.

Sustainable development is defined in the NPPF as having 3 objectives:

21.1.11.1. *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive, and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

21.1.11.2. *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*

21.1.11.3. *an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built, and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

21.1.12. The NPPF is a long and complex document but clauses affecting the implementation of development policy in rural areas (with a focus on the GWH Neighbourhood Plan) are listed as the following clauses.

12. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any Neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

13. The application of the presumption has implications for the way communities engage in Neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

18. Policies to address non-strategic matters should be included in local plans that contain both strategic and non-strategic policies, and/or in local or Neighbourhood plans that contain just non-strategic policies.

28. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, Neighbourhoods, or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design

principles, conserving, and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.

29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct, and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies18.

30. Once a Neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the Neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

37. Neighbourhood plans must meet certain 'basic conditions' and other legal requirements before they can come into force. These are assessed through an independent examination before the Neighbourhood plan may proceed to referendum.

64. Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount.

69. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

1. Identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;…

70. Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 69a) suitable for housing in their area.

78. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.

79. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies

should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

80. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

1. There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;

2. The development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;

3. The development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;

4. The development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or

5. The design is of exceptional quality, in that it:

    a. is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and

    b. would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

84. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

1. The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;

2. The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

3. Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

4. The retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses, and places of worship.

85. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development

is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

112. Within this context, applications for development should:

1. Give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

2. Address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;

3. Create places that are safe, secure, and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;

4. Allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and,

5. Be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible, and convenient locations.

119. Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.

120. Planning policies and decisions should:

1. Encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;

2. Recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;

3. Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.

126. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be assessed, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

127. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers.

159. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future).

Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

1. Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

2. 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;

3. Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;

4. Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

5. Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

6. Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

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

1. 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;

2. 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;

3. 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

4. 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.

190. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay, or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

1. The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

2. The wider social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

3. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

4. Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

1. Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
2. Assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Planning control is delivered at the local level and this Neighbourhood Plan will be a material factor in that implementation, restrictions, and aspirations.

22. Appendix D – Flooding Responsibility

No one organisation is responsible for flood prevention. CCC is the Lead Local Flood Authority who write several planning documents on the subject. In terms of prevention, CCC is responsible for highway drains whilst a Landowner is responsible for ditches, culvert and piped water courses. Anglian Water is responsible for public surface water, sewers and foul sewers. The Environment Agency is responsible for critical water courses, main rivers and emergency response. Within GWH there are no critical water courses.

23. Appendix E: The Team

The core team that put the Neighbourhood Plan together was:

- Graham Evans (Winwick).
- Iain Ladds (Little Gidding).
- Jan Maciag (Great Gidding).
- Jeff Deighton (Winwick).
- John Clarke (Winwick).
- John Souter (Hamerton & Steeple Gidding).
- Kirsten Zamo (Hamerton & Steeple Gidding).
- Paul Hargrave (Great Gidding).
- Stephen Brown (Great Gidding).

Help and support was greatly received from:

- Great Gidding Parish Council, particularly the Parish Clerk Julie Trolove.
- Huntingdonshire District Council, particularly Frances Schultz.

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Report on The Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2036

An Examination undertaken for Huntingdonshire District Council with the support of Great and Little Gidding Parish Council on the October 2025 submission version of the Plan.

Independent Examiner: Andrew S Freeman BSc(Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI

Date of Report: 27 August 2026

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of The Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and its supporting documentation, including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- the Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Great and Little Gidding Parish Council;
- the Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick Neighbourhood Plan Area (map on Page 6 of the Plan);
- the Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2023 – 2036; and
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

The Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2036

1.1 The Giddings, Winwick & Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan 2023 – 2036 (the GWH Neighbourhood Plan) covers the parishes of Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick. The parishes lie within Huntingdonshire District in the county of Cambridgeshire. Great and Little Gidding Parish Council has taken the lead in preparing the joint plan for the three parishes and, with the consent of the two other parishes, is authorised to act in relation to the neighbourhood area.

1.2 The neighbourhood area is a broadly triangular-shaped area in northwestern Cambridgeshire, on the border with Northamptonshire, generally to the north of the A14 and west of the A1(M). Within this rural area, the larger villages are Great Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton. Smaller villages are Little Gidding and Steeple Gidding. The city of Cambridge is over 25 miles away to the southeast.

1.3 Since designation as a neighbourhood area by Huntingdonshire District Council in March 2023, work on the Plan has progressed under the direction of a working group. In addition to input from statutory consultees, the content of the Plan has been informed by a survey of both

residents and businesses. Many of the issues raised are not land-use matters. They have led to the inclusion in the Plan of thirteen aspirations. Other planning matters are expressed in 5 key policies.

The Independent Examiner

1.4 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the GWH Neighbourhood Plan by Huntingdonshire District Council, with the agreement of Great and Little Gidding Parish Council.

1.5 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector with over forty years' experience. I have worked in both the public and the private sectors. I am an independent examiner and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

The Scope of the Examination

1.6 As the independent examiner, I am required to produce this report and recommend either:

(a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or

(b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or

(c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

1.7 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ("the 1990 Act"). The examiner must consider:

- Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions.
- Whether the plan complies with provisions under Section 38A and Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ("the 2004 Act"). These are:
  - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
  - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land and does not go beyond the scope of what may be included in a draft plan[1];
  - it specifies the period during which it has effect;

[1] See Section 38B(A1) and Section 38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.

- it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;

- it does not include provisions and policies for "excluded development";

- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it is designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change[2]; and

- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it takes account of any local nature recovery strategy, under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021, that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood area.[3]

• Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.

• Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the 2012 Regulations").

1.8 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

1.9 The "Basic Conditions" are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;

- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;

- not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made[4];

[2] This additional requirement was commenced on 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force section 98 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.
[3] See footnote above.
[4] This Basic Condition applies from 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force Section 99 of the Levelling-up and

- be compatible with, and not breach, assimilated obligations[5]; and

- meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.10 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.[6]

2. Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Development Plan for this part of Huntingdonshire District Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, is Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 as adopted in May 2019.

2.2 Planning policy for England is set out principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented. All references in this report are to the December 2024 version of the NPPF and its accompanying PPG.

Submitted Documents

2.3 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including:

- the draft GWH Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2036, October 2025;
- a map which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates;
- the Statement of Consultation, October 2025;
- the Basic Conditions Statement, October 2025;
- the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report, January 2026, prepared by Huntingdonshire District Council;
- GWH Local Green Spaces Evidence Report, October 2025;

Regeneration Act 2023. This replaces the former Basic Condition which required a neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

[5] See: The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 (Consequential Amendment) Regulations 2023, which replaced the previous reference to 'EU' obligations.

[6] This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

- all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation;[7]
- the request for additional clarification sought in my letter dated 2 July 2026 and the response from Great and Little Gidding Parish Council received on 27 July 2026 and from Huntingdonshire District Council on 17 July 2026 ; and
- the responses to my letter of 2 July 2026 concerning the revisions to the legal compliance and Basic Conditions requirements from Huntingdonshire District Council and from one other party who took the opportunity to comment.[8]

Site Visit

2.4 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 1 August 2026 to familiarise myself with it, and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.5 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I consider hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulate the objections to the Plan and present arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum.

Modifications

2.6 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

3.1 The GWH Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by Great and Little Gidding Parish Council being a qualifying body for an area that was designated by Huntingdonshire District Council on 30 March 2023.

3.2 It is the only Neighbourhood Plan for the GWH area and does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Plan Period

[7] View at: https://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/kse/event/38477
[8] View at: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/

3.3 The period during which the Plan is to have effect is clarified in the main issues below.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

3.4 On behalf of the three parishes, Great and Little Gidding Parish Council applied for neighbourhood area designation in November 2022. The Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick Neighbourhood Plan Area was formally approved by Huntingdonshire District Council on 30 March 2023. Since then, work on formulating the Plan has proceeded under the auspices of a neighbourhood plan working group.

3.5 Key events have included comprehensive residential and business surveys, community meetings in the village halls of all three parishes and the development of supporting documents such as the Local Green Spaces Report and the Contextual Analysis. In addition, informal consultation took place with Huntingdonshire District Council officers.

3.6 Details of persons and bodies consulted at the Regulation 14 stage (1 August 2025 to 26 September 2025) are set out in the Statement of Consultation, mainly in Section 9. Section 8 of the Statement explains how they were consulted. A summary of the main issues and concerns raised is contained in Section 10 of the Statement whilst modifications made following consultation are summarised in Section 11. There is a separate report "Summary of Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Responses" which records the representations of Anglian Water, Cambridgeshire County Council, Natural England and Historic England.

3.7 Consultation under Regulation 16 took place between 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026. Some 35 discrete representations have been recorded. These are from community campaigners, public bodies and statutory consultees as well as from Cambridgeshire County Council and from Huntingdonshire District Council.

3.8 I have had regard to changes made to the legal compliance requirements and Basic Conditions, applying from 25 March 2026.[9] In order to provide an opportunity for the qualifying body, local planning authority and other interested parties to comment, Huntingdonshire District Council contacted those who had made representations at the Regulation 16 stage. A two-week period was advertised by Huntingdonshire District Council on its website inviting further comments, focused only on the legislative changes. Two responses were received, including one from Huntingdonshire District Council itself. I have taken those responses into account in my assessment.

3.9 I am satisfied that, at both the Regulation 14 and the Regulation 16 stages, the consultation process met the legal requirements and there has

[9] See paragraphs 1.7 – 1.9 above and the associated footnotes.

been procedural compliance. Regard has been paid to the advice on plan preparation and engagement in the PPG.

Development and Use of Land

3.10 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with Section 38A of the 2004 Act and does not exceed the appropriate scope of a neighbourhood plan.[10]

Excluded Development

3.11 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for "excluded development".[11]

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

3.12 Huntingdonshire District Council has advised that a nature recovery strategy is in place in relation to the neighbourhood area. In my assessment, none of the Plan's policies are in direct conflict with the strategy.

Climate Change

3.13 Having regard to the responses received to my letter of 2 July 2026, I am satisfied that, overall, the Plan policies do not conflict with the aims of securing development which contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

Human Rights

3.14 Great and Little Gidding Parish Council is satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). From my independent assessment, I see no reason to disagree.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

Assimilated Obligations

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by Huntingdonshire District Council, which found that it was unnecessary to undertake SEA. Having read the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, I support this conclusion.

4.2 The GWH Neighbourhood Plan was further screened for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), which also was not triggered. The site is within 15km of four Special Areas of Conservation/Special Protection

[10] See Section 38B(A1) and Section 38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.
[11] The meaning of 'excluded development' is set out in s.61K of the 1990 Act.

Area/Ramsar Sites. However, there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of any of the internationally designated sites as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan either on its own or in combination with any other plans. Natural England agreed with the screening opinion (Screening Report, Appendix 1). From my independent assessment of this matter, I have no reason to disagree.

Main Issues

4.3 Having regard for the GWH Neighbourhood Plan, the consultation responses and other evidence, and the site visit, I consider that there are five main issues relating to the Basic Conditions for this examination. These concern:

- Procedural Compliance;
- Future Development;
- Utilities;
- Natural Environment; and
- Local Green Spaces.

4.4 Before I deal with the main issues, I have a few observations to make with regard to the representations. First, the GWH Neighbourhood Plan should be seen in the context of the wider planning system. This includes Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 as well as the NPPF and PPG. It is not necessary to repeat in the Neighbourhood Plan matters that are quite adequately dealt with elsewhere.[12] Having said that, there may be scope to give emphasis to matters particularly relevant in the context of GWH.

4.5 Secondly, the Neighbourhood Plan does not have to deal with each and every topic raised through the consultation. In this regard, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and the scope of the policies is largely at the discretion of the qualifying body, albeit informed by the consultation process and the requirements set by the Basic Conditions.

4.6 Thirdly, my central task is to judge whether the Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the Basic Conditions. Many of the representations do not demonstrate or indicate a failure to meet those conditions or other legal requirements. Similarly, many of the suggested additions and improvements are not necessary when judged against the Basic Conditions.

4.7 The following section of my report sets out modifications that are necessary in order to meet the Basic Conditions. Some of the proposed modifications are factual corrections.[13] Others are necessary in order to have closer regard to national policies and advice. In particular, plans should be succinct and contain policies that are clearly written and

[12] See NPPF Paragraph 16 f).
[13] Modifications for the purpose of correcting errors is provided for in Paragraph 10(3)(e) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.

unambiguous.[14] In addition, the policies should be supported by appropriate evidence.[15]

Issue 1 – Procedural Compliance

4.8 In terms of procedural compliance, there is a requirement for the Plan to specify the period during which it has effect.[16] The front cover of the Plan shows the date "2023". Paragraph 5.1.1 of the Plan states, "A plan period of 2036 has been chosen to match the plan period of the HDC Local Plan to 2036." The assumed date is therefore 2023 to 2036.

4.9 In answer to my questions[17], the Parish Council has confirmed that the Plan is indeed intended to have effect over the period 2023 to 2036. Clarity in the made version of the Plan would be ensured through proposed modification **PM1**.

4.10 A further requirement is to submit a map (or statement) which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development relates.[18] On Page 6 of the Plan, Figure 1 arguably satisfies this requirement. However, the figure is lacking in clarity and has the appearance of an out-of-focus photograph of the designation plan, taken at an oblique angle. For clarity, a copy of the designation plan should be used in place of Figure 1 (proposed modification **PM2**).

Issue 2 – Future Development

4.11 Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan concerns Sensitive Future Development. The first point of the policy seeks to avoid the introduction of incongruous and/or inclusive (sic) elements into key views and vistas. In its answers to my questions[19], the Parish Council confirms that the provision is intended to refer to *intrusive* elements; also, that the key views are essentially those illustrated in Figure 15, "Important views across GWH". However, further views are outlined elsewhere.

4.12 I see that some 23 views are referenced in the Village Contextual Analysis. However, these are not specifically referred to in the Plan. There would not have been a realistic opportunity for all interested parties to comment on those views. In my opinion, the policy should only apply to the views shown on Figure 15, and then only in respect of views within the parish (part of the view from Hemington Lodge Road is over land outside the designated area).[20]

4.13 With regard to Point 2 of the policy, there are a number of confusing references, including to the "Gidwickhams Contextual Analysis". The

[14] NPPF, Paragraphs 15 and 16 d).
[15] PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.
[16] Section 38B(1)(a) of the 2004 Act.
[17] See Parish Council's response received on 27 July 2026.
[18] Regulation 15(1)(a) of the 2012 Regulations.
[19] See Parish Council's response received on 27 July 2026.
[20] See Section 38A(2) of the 2004 Act.

related proposed modification adds clarity to the policy and requires the provision of a link to the Analysis.

4.14 Point 9 of the policy seeks to apply Nationally Described Space Standards (which can only be applied in certain circumstances). However, it is clear from the Parish Council's answers to my questions[21] that the purpose is to avoid properties out of keeping with the existing housing stock. That is a very different matter and can be covered in an appropriate amendment to the policy.

4.15 Proposed modification **PM3** sets out amendments to Policy 1 that will address the three matters described above.

Issue 3 – Utilities

4.16 In Policy 2 – Utilities, the Parish Council's answers to my questions[22] confirm that a reference to Surface Water Planning Guidance has been added in the wrong place; and industry standards for open access ducting have not been referenced. Matters would be corrected under proposed modification **PM4**.

Issue 4 – Natural Environment

4.17 Policy 3 has the title "Promote a Biodiverse, Natural Environment". As part of this ambition, Point 1 of the policy indicates that new development should incorporate a 20% net gain in local biodiversity".

4.18 In regard to the percentage of biodiversity net gain, the Planning Practice Guidance states, "Plan makers should not seek a higher percentage than the statutory objective of 10% biodiversity net gain, either on an area-wide basis or for specific allocations for development and less justified. To justify such policies they will need to be evidenced including as to local need for a higher percentage, local opportunities for a higher percentage and any impact on viability for development."[23]

4.19 Whilst the ambitions of the Parish Councils are laudable, the evidence advised under the PPG has not been provided. As such, the reference to 20% net gain will have to be re-phrased. Proposed modification **PM5** refers.

[21] See Parish Council's response received on 27 July 2026.
[22] See Parish Council's response received on 27 July 2026.
[23] PPG Reference ID: 74-006-20240214.

Issue 5 – Local Green Space

4.20 The protection of Local Green Spaces is dealt with in Policy 5. Aside from one or two errors in the text, there are a number of matters that require modification:

- For clarity, the policy needs to state that the candidate spaces are designated through the policy.
- Reference to proposals "in the vicinity of green spaces" should be replaced by reference to the *setting* of the green spaces. This is a clearer concept that will assist in development management.
- There is confusion over the inclusion or otherwise of the churchyards referred to in Paragraph 15.10.1.
- The spaces should be mapped in the Neighbourhood Plan, not in a supporting document, so as to give clarity to the areas affected by the policy.

4.21 To meet these points, an alternative form of wording is recommended in proposed modification **PM6**.

Other Policies

4.22 There remains one policy in the Plan that has not be the subject of commentary in the above report. This is Policy 4, "Protect Heritage Assets". To a greater or lesser extent, this topic is covered in NPPF Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

4.23 Subject to the modifications that I have recommended, I find that there has been regard for national policy and that the Basic Conditions have been met in the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Minor Amendments and Updates

4.24 Minor amendments to the text and numbering (sections, paragraphs etc) can be made consequential to the recommended modifications, alongside any other minor non-material changes or updates, in agreement between Huntingdonshire District Council and Great and Little Gidding Parish Council.[24]

[24] PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509.

5. Conclusions

Summary

5.1 The GWH Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, and the evidence documents submitted with it.

5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. The GWH Neighbourhood Plan, as modified, has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond the Plan boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Overview

5.4 It is evident that a considerable amount of time and effort has been devoted to the development and production of this Plan and I congratulate those who have been involved. The Plan should prove to be a useful tool for future planning and change in GWH over the coming years.

Andrew S Freeman

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no	Modification
PM1	Front cover	On the front cover of the Plan change "2023" to "2023 to 2036".
PM2	Page 6	For Figure 1, substitute a copy of the plan accompanying the neighbourhood area designation approval dated 30 March 2023.
PM3	Page 24	Change the ending of Point 1 of Policy 1 so that it reads, "intrusive elements into the important views shown in Figure 15, in so far as they relate to land within the Neighbourhood Plan Area." Amend Point 2 of the policy so that it reads, "With reference to built form, scale, proportions, details and materials, new developments should reflect and respect the existing character and identity of the villages as set out in the GWH Neighbourhood Plan - Village Contextual Analysis." Provide a link to the Contextual Analysis. Substitute the following for Point 9 of the policy: "New residential units should reflect the size and nature of existing properties in the parishes which are predominantly medium to large detached houses."
PM4	Page 26	In Policy 2, substitute the following for Point 3: "As set out in Surface Water Planning Guidance, the rate of surface water discharge from any new development on previously developed land shall not exceed the existing runoff rate." Provide a link to Surface Water Planning Guidance. In Point 4, quote the document where industry standards on open access ducting can be found and add a link thereto.
PM5	Page 31	In the first point in Policy 3, replace 20% with 10%. Add, "Net gain at a level of 20% will be supported and encouraged."

PM6	Pages 41 and 42	Replace Policy 5 with the following: "1. The nine spaces identified in Paragraphs 15.10.2, 15.10.3 and 15.10.4, and mapped in the [refer to the figures identifying the spaces], are designated as Local Green Spaces. 2. Any new proposal affecting the Local Green Spaces or their setting should respect their use, scale, aspect and visual contribution to the settlement. 3. Development proposals on these sites will not be supported unless they are consistent with national policy for Green Belts." Include, in Section 15, plans from the Local Green Spaces Evidence Report, October 2025, that identify the respective spaces.

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Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement

The Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Decision Statement

Following an independent examination Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet confirmed on the 20 October 2026 that the joint Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.

Background

The Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated on 30 March 2023 under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). The plan area covers the parishes of Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick and is contiguous with the combined Parish council's administrative boundaries.

The joint neighbourhood plan covers the parishes of Great and Little Gidding, Hamerton and Steeple Gidding, and Winwick. Great and Little Gidding Parish Council has taken the lead in preparing the joint plan for the three parishes and, with the consent of the two other parishes, is authorised to act in relation to the neighbourhood area.

The joint neighbourhood plan submitted the Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting evidence to Huntingdonshire District Council 19 March 2026. The statutory six week submission consultation was held from 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026.

Huntingdonshire District Council, in discussion with the Parish Councils, appointed an independent examiner, Andrew S Freeman BSc(Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI, to review whether the submitted Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions as required by legislation. Andrew S Freeman issued his report on 27 August 2026 which recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the modifications proposed in his report, met the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum.

Following discussions with the qualifying body it was decided that the Examiner's recommendations would be accepted in full.

The Basic Conditions are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;

- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations; and
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended) set out two basic conditions in addition to those set out in primary legislation and referred to above. These are:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.
- Having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that the neighbourhood development order is made where the development described in an order proposal is Environmental Impact Assessment development (this is not applicable to this examination).

Decision and Reasons

Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet considered the recommendations on 20 October 2026 and agreed to accept the Examiner's proposed modifications and approve the Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

The modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan, as needed to ensure it meets the Basic Conditions and in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations are listed in the following table.

Examiner's Recommended Modifications Received 27 August 2026

The statement below sets out the modifications considered by the examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions. Strike-through text indicates a deletion and bold indicates the insertion of additional text.

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Front cover	On the front cover of the Plan change “2023” to “2023 to 2036”.
PM2	Page 6	For Figure 1, substitute a copy of the plan accompanying the neighbourhood area designation approval dated 30 March 2023.
PM3	Page 24	Change the ending of Point 1 of Policy 1 so that it reads, “intrusive elements into the important views shown in Figure 15, in so far as they relate to land within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.” Amend Point 2 of the policy so that it reads, “With reference to built form, scale, proportions, details and materials, new developments should reflect and respect the existing character and identity of the villages as set out in the GWH Neighbourhood Plan - Village Contextual Analysis.” Provide a link to the Contextual Analysis. Substitute the following for Point 9 of the policy: “New residential units should reflect the size and nature of existing properties in the parishes which are predominantly medium to large detached houses.”
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		the [refer to the figures identifying the spaces], are designated as Local Green Spaces. 2. Any new proposal affecting the Local Green Spaces or their setting should respect their use, scale, aspect and visual contribution to the settlement. 3. Development proposals on these sites will not be supported unless they are consistent with national policy for Green Belts." Include, in Section 15, plans from the Local Green Spaces Evidence Report, October 2025, that identify the respective spaces.

Agenda Item 7

Cabinet – 20 October 2026

Report by: Chief Planning Officer

Lead Cllr: Executive Councillor for Planning

Wards	Open / Exempt	Key Decision?
Ramsey Ward (Ramsey Town Council)	Open	Yes

Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan examination outcome and progression to referendum

Executive Summary: Following the examination of the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan this report proposes acting upon the Examiner's report to accept the modifications proposed and progress to referendum.

Recommendations

1.1. That Cabinet agree that the District Council should act upon the Examiner's report to accept the recommended modifications and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum.

	Key Corporate Plan Priorities
1	Improving quality of life for local people.
2	Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations.

	Place Strategy Priorities
1	Pride in Place.

Report Author(s)

Natalie Elworthy, Senior Planning Policy Officer (natalie.elworthy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
Xinyue Dong, Planning Policy Officer (xinyue.dong@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report seeks agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan. It also sets out a timetable for this process.

2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 Ramsey Town Council produced a submission version of their Neighbourhood Plan which was available for comment between 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026. The Examiner's Report on the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan was received on 25 August 2026. The Examiner recommended that with appropriate modifications the neighbourhood plan would meet the basic conditions against which it is required to be tested and so should progress to referendum.

2.2 The Examiner proposed a number of modifications to the submitted neighbourhood plan. These have been discussed and agreed with representatives of Ramsey Town Council.

2.3 The modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Examiner's report and draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions are all included as Appendices to this report.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 Following the examination of a neighbourhood plan the Examiner sends their report to the local planning authority and the town/parish council preparing the neighbourhood plan. The examiner is required to set out one of three options:

1. That the neighbourhood plan proceeds to referendum as submitted
2. That the neighbourhood plan is modified by the local planning authority to meet the basic conditions and the modified version proceeds to referendum; or
3. That the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to referendum as it fails to meet the basic conditions and/ or legislative requirements and cannot be modified to do so.

3.2 The local planning authority has limited options in how to respond to the examiner's recommendations:

a) Act upon the Examiner's report and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum, whether or not the Examiner recommends modifications are necessary to meet the basic conditions;
b) Propose to take a decision substantially different from the Examiner's recommendation which is wholly or partly as a result of new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact; or
c) Decide not to progress the neighbourhood plan in light of the Examiner's report - this is only permissible where '3.' above is the case.

3.3 Having regard to the options set out in paragraph 3.2:

- It is considered that the modifications will enable the Neighbourhood Plan to meet the basic conditions required; and

- There is no new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact to indicate that option ‘b)’ in paragraph 3.2 should be followed.

4. POST-DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Following approval by Cabinet, preparations will be made for a referendum to be held on the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Regulations.

4.2 In addition to considering whether the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions the Examiner is required to recommend on the area to be covered by the referendum. In this instance he recommended that the referendum area be the same as the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan area, approved by the District Council.

4.3 There is a statutory requirement through The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended) for 28 workings days’ notice to be given before the referendum is held. There is also a requirement that the referendum is held within 56 working days of the decision that the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum, unless there is an existing planned polling opportunity that the referendum could be combined with which the qualifying body (Ramsey Town Council) have agreed. A potential date for the referendum has been discussed with Democratic Services. Holding the referendum on 26 November 2026 is proposed, which would meet both time requirements. This provisional date has been discussed with representatives of Ramsey Parish Council, and they have indicated that they support this date.

4.4 At the referendum residents will be able to vote on the question: ‘Do you want Huntingdonshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Ramsey to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?’

4.5 If a majority of votes cast by residents are ‘yes’, Full Council will be asked to ‘make’ the neighbourhood plan at its next available meeting, which, assuming that the referendum is held on 26 November 2026, would be on 16 December 2026. The plan will then become part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

5.1 Council Key Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities of ‘improving quality of life for local people; and ‘creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations’ as it will be used to shape the growth in the area up to 2046 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.2 Financial Implications

5.2.1 As in previous years an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

5.3 Policy Implications

5.3.1 If successfully made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of Huntingdonshire's Development Plan used to determine planning applications.

5.4 Legal & Constitutional Implications

5.4.1 A Neighbourhood Plan must meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Examiner's report has confirmed that Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan, as proposed to be modified, meets all the basic conditions. Officers are satisfied that there are no conflicts with the basic conditions and legislative requirements.

5.5 Community Impact

5.5.1 The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan has a significant potential community impact for the Neighbourhood Plan Area through shaping the growth in the area up to 2046 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.6 Environment & Climate Change Implications

5.6.1 The Examiner's report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not conflict with the aims of securing development which contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

5.7 Equality & Diversity Implications

5.7.1 The Examiner's report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998) and meets all relevant legal requirements including those relating to equality.

5.8 Implications on Resources

5.8.1 As in previous years an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

5.9 Health & Wellbeing Implications

5.9.1 The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan has potential to enhance health and wellbeing within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through shaping the growth in the area up to 2046 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.10 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

5.10.1 Progressing the Neighbourhood Plan towards Referendum does not result in implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

5.10.2 It is expected that adopted plans will remain in force for the part of the new unitary area to which they relate until they are superseded by a new unitary wide plan.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Not progressing the Neighbourhood Plan to referendum could result in a challenge from the Parish Council as this would deviate from the recommendations made by the independent Examiner where it was concluded that the Plan, once modified, meets all relevant legal requirements.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS– LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Localism Act 2011

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

National Planning Practice Guidance (Neighbourhood Planning)

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan (as modified)

Appendix 2 – The Examiner's Report of Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions.

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Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan 2026-2046

Referendum Version

September 2026

The Parish of Ramsey covers the settlements of Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's; together with the area of Ramsey Hollow & a small part of Pondersbridge

Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan 2026-2046

Referendum Version of Neighbourhood Plan September 2026

The Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Ramsey produced in accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

The Parish of Ramsey covers the settlements of Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's; together with the area of Ramsey Hollow & a small part of Pondersbridge

Ramsey Town Council

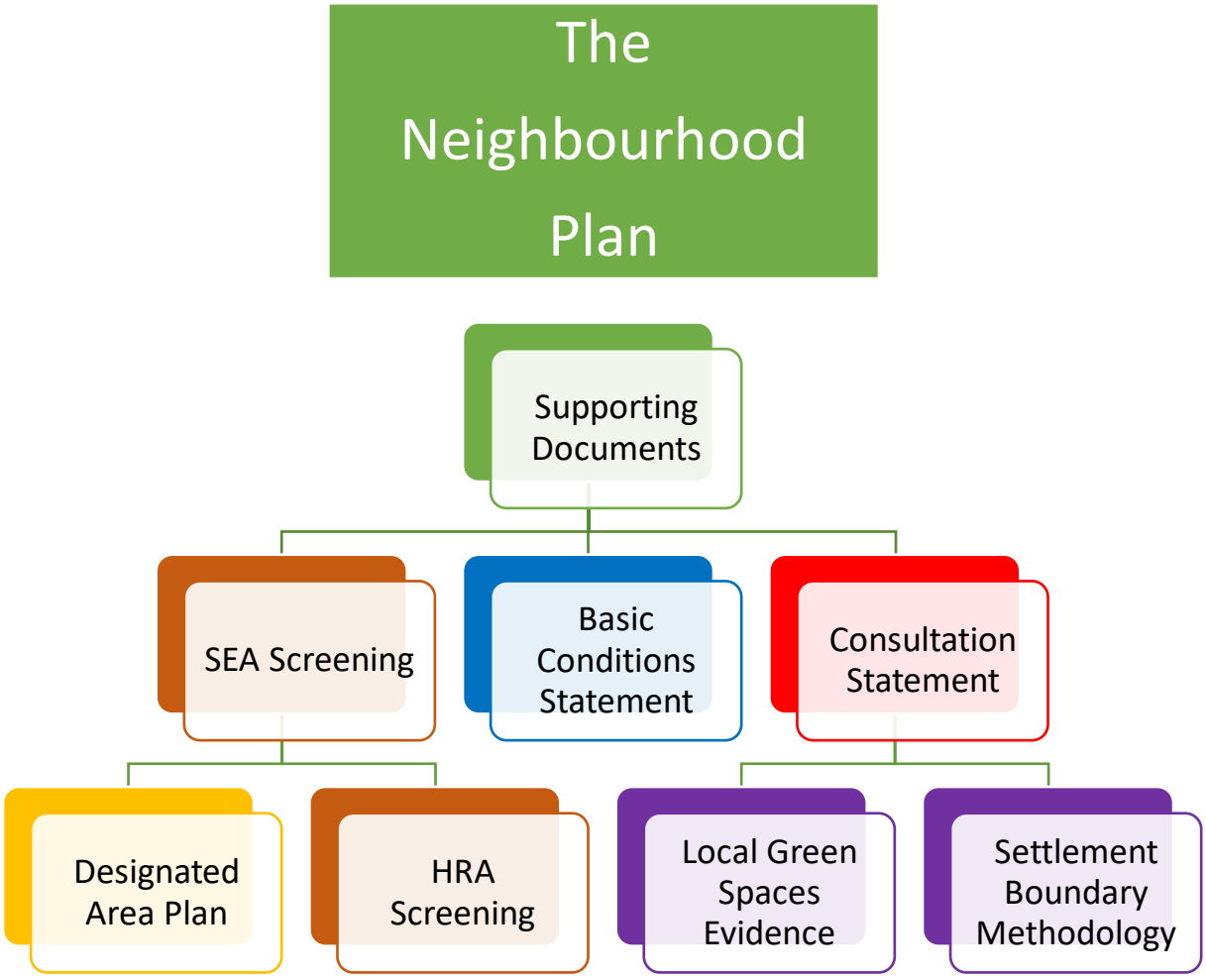
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NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN.CO.UK

For any query relating to the Neighbourhood Plan contact:
Clerk to Ramsey Town Council
Email: neighbourhood.plan@ramseytowncouncil.gov.uk

Website - https://www.ramseytowncouncil.gov.uk/
Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/RamseyNeighbourhoodPlan/

Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan 2026-2046



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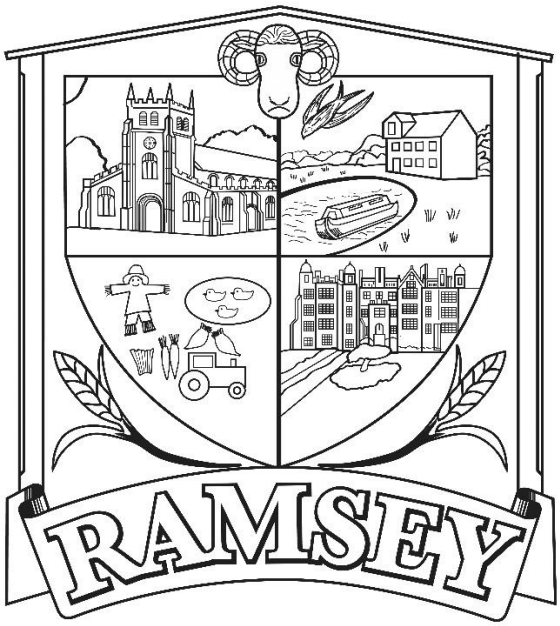
Steering Group

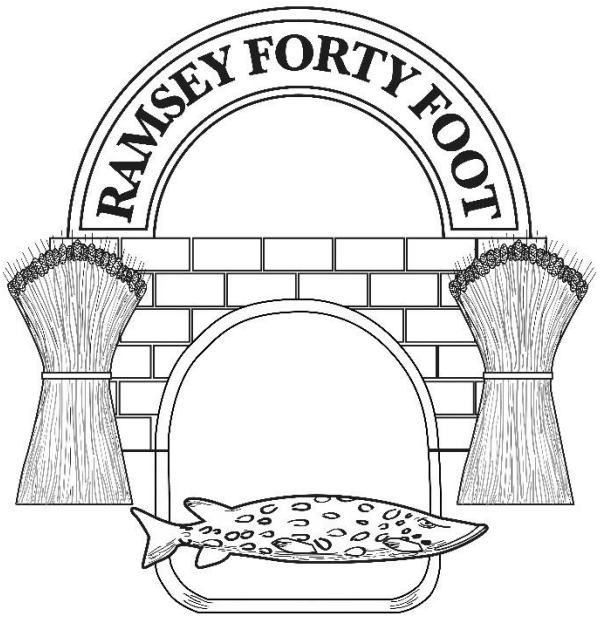
The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Ramsey Town Council:

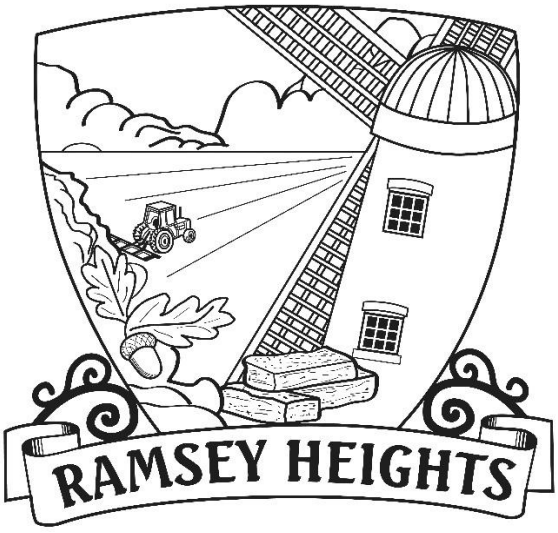
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Carol Cornfield
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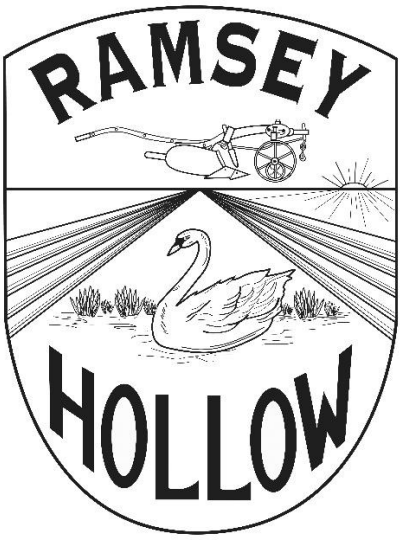


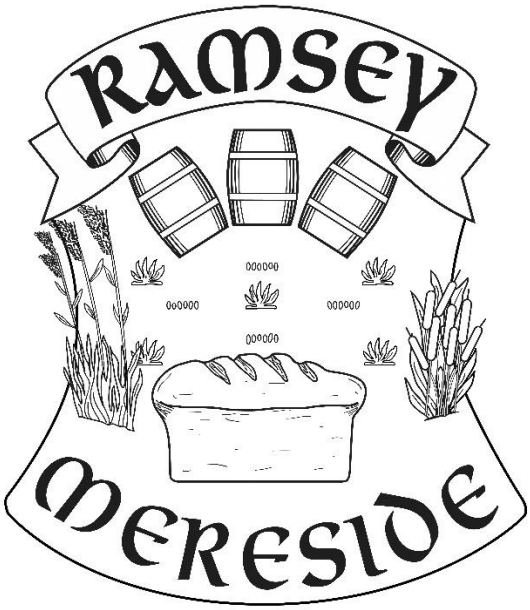
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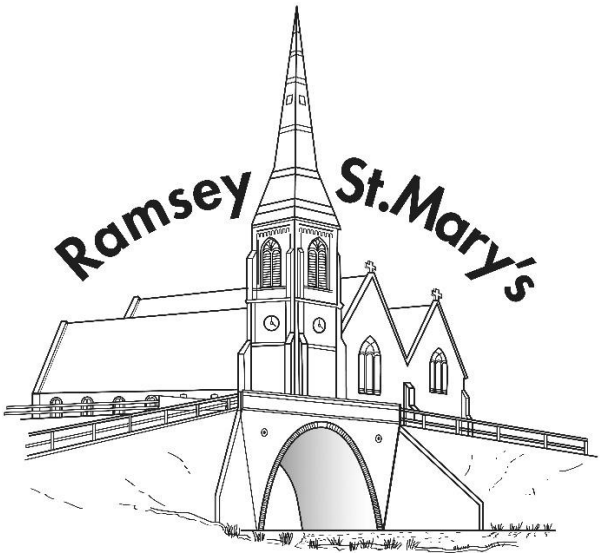

RAMSEY


RAMSEY FORTY FOOT


RAMSEY HEIGHTS


RAMSEY
HOLLOW


RAMSEY
MERESIDE


Ramsey St.Mary's

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Foreword

On behalf of Ramsey Town Council, welcome to the Neighbourhood Plan for our Parish area which covers the settlements of Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's; together with the area of Ramsey Hollow & a small part of Pondersbridge.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out the vision, objectives and policies to ensure that the town and the villages maintain their character, appearance and uniqueness over the period up to 2046; whilst helping to facilitate growth. The town is undergoing significant planned development, and the Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure that the planned growth respects the important features that make our communities distinctive.

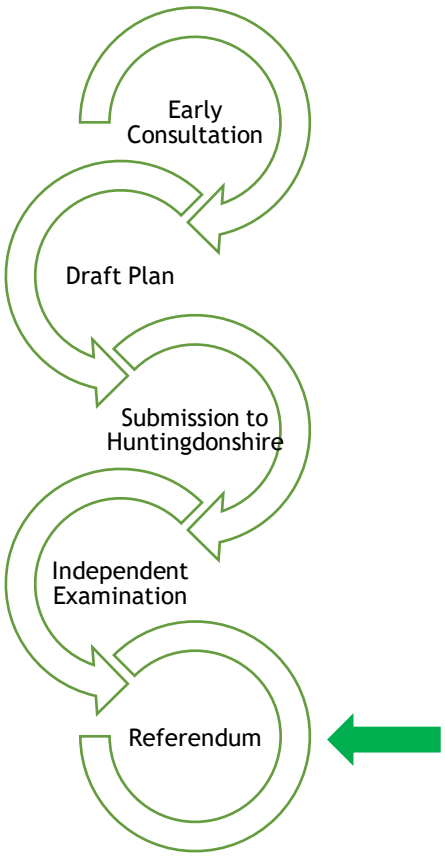
The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and enhance the natural and built environment of the parish which forms the character of where we live.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been drawn up by a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Ramsey Town Council which is the designated body for the plan area and provided the funding and support to enable the plan to go ahead. The Neighbourhood Plan has gone through a number of stages including statutory public consultation and an Independent Examination. The Neighbourhood Plan was found to be appropriate by the Independent Examiner who published their report in late August 2026.

The process now involves a local referendum requiring a majority 'Yes' vote of all those voting in the referendum for it to be accepted. In the event of a 'Yes' vote, Huntingdonshire District Council will proceed to 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Ramsey.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets down a series of planning policies which will form part of Huntingdonshire's wider statutory development plan. The Neighbourhood Plan will be used for determining planning applications alongside the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

It is intended that the policies will be reviewed periodically to monitor the cumulative effects of the policies and, if necessary, make changes to keep them up to date and relevant.



So, our personal thanks to all those who have driven the process so far and thank you for taking the time to consider the Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Mrs Val Fendley
Mayor of Ramsey Town Council

Sarah Mullineux
Lead of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Introduction

1. Background

1.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new type of Community Led Plan. Communities now have the right to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, setting out policies on the development and use of land. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan is a way for communities to play a greater role in determining the future of their area. A plan period of 2046 has been chosen to match the plan period of the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046.

1.2 The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory Development Plan. This means that Huntingdonshire District Council will determine planning applications within the Parish in accordance with the development plan which includes this Neighbourhood Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise (see section 38(6)[1] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).



1.3 This Neighbourhood Plan is a Community Led Plan. It has been prepared by a Steering Group made up of local residents and councillors on behalf of the Town Council with professional support. It has been informed by public participation and consultation firstly carried out informally in 2025 with the local community. The formal Neighbourhood Plan preparation process will involve two statutory periods of public consultation; this is the first statutory consultation to undertaken in 2026 as prescribed in Regulations[2].

1.4 A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document and is about the use and development of land. Neighbourhood planning gives communities more control over the future of their area by giving local people the chance to have their say on what happens where they live.

1.5 A neighbourhood plan can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a particular area. Plans can include local priorities, planning policies, proposals for improving an area or providing new facilities or infrastructure and allocation of key sites for development.

1.6 Neighbourhood planning is a tool to promote sustainable growth and will not be able to prevent development in an area. Neighbourhood plans can only include proposals for an equal (or greater) amount of growth than is set out in the local authority's development plan. They must also accord with national planning policy

2. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

2.1 Every Neighbourhood Plan needs to consider the need for a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) for the Neighbourhood Plan. SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key sustainability issues.

[1] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/38
[2] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made

2.2 The Town Council considers that there will be no significant environmental effects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan. They have produced a SEA and HRA Screening Assessment for the Neighbourhood Plan which has demonstrated that a SEA is not required. Consequently, no SA incorporating an SEA has been undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan.

3. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

3.1 Throughout this Neighbourhood Plan reference is made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It was first published on 27 March 2012, with the NPPF version[3] against which the Neighbourhood Plan was produced and examined being published in December 2024. It is also supplemented by Planning Practice Guidance.

3.2 The NPPF provides a framework to produce locally distinctive Neighbourhood Plans which reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

3.3 The Government had consulted on a new draft NPPF[4] over the period from December 2025 to March 2026. The draft NPPF proposed for the first time there is a clear set of separate policies for both plan-making and decision-making. This is intended to achieve three principal objectives, namely to:

- Ensure national planning policy is accessible and understandable for everyone who uses it;
- Establish a comprehensive suite of national policies on general planning matters which will apply across the country, to avoid these matters being repeated or deviated from in locally-produced plans; and
- Make the policy which it contains more 'rules-based' and certain, and so more capable of supporting timely and consistent.

3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan preparation did take account of the new draft NPPF as it gave a clear direction of travel. The Government then published the new NPPF[5] in mid-August 2026 shortly before the Independent Examination of the Neighbourhood Plan ended. The Government has incorporated policies relating to traveller sites, previously set out in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, within the relevant chapters of the NPPF.

3.5 The Neighbourhood Plan contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development. More detail on the ways in which this Plan addresses sustainable development is included within the Basic Conditions Statement that accompanies the Plan.

4. Planning Practice Guidance

4.1 Planning Practice Guidance[6] sets out the government's advice on how to undertake neighbourhood planning within England. This is set out in detail within Section 41 of Planning Practice Guidance. Planning Practice Guidance also sets out national advice on a wide range of planning topics.

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[3] https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20250225172715/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-proposed-reforms-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system

[5] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework

[6] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance

5. Structure of Neighbourhood Plan

5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan includes three themed sections: Community; Heritage & Environment; and Infrastructure.

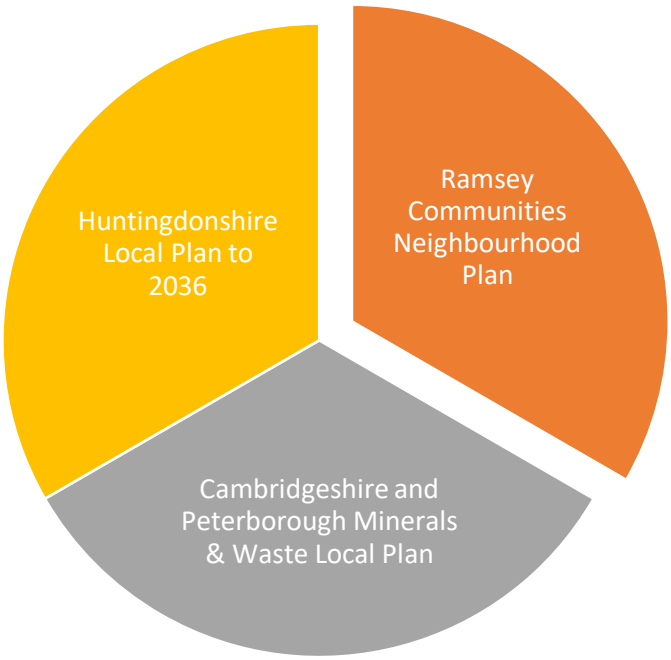


5.2 These are issues that are important to the community and within each section policies are included to guide the development and use of land. Each Policy contains an introduction and explanatory text followed by the Policy itself in coloured text. Following the themed sections, the Neighbourhood Plan contains an implementation and delivery section.

The Development Plan

6. Background

6.1 The 'Development Plan' for Ramsey Parish (Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's; together with the area of Ramsey Hollow & a small part of Pondersbridge) is made up of 3 main components as follows:



6.2 All policies within the Neighbourhood Plan should be read in conjunction with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. When determining proposals for development, no policy will be applied in isolation and account will be taken of all relevant policies. Even if the proposed Local Government Reorganisation occurs, the Development Plan will not change until any replacement Development Plan is adopted.

7. Relationship to Huntingdonshire Local Plan

7.1 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036[7] was adopted in May 2019. Any reference in this Neighbourhood Plan to 'Local Plan' or 'Huntingdonshire Local Plan' means the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

7.2 The purpose of the Local Plan is to set out:

- the strategy for development in the whole of Huntingdonshire;
- policies for managing development; and
- details of sites for development to meet the needs of Huntingdonshire.

7.3 The District Council is in the process of undertaking a Local Plan Update[8] to be known as the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046. The Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 was published for consultation during November and December 2025. There is no obligation for a Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with an emerging Local Plan; although it is sensible to look to ensure that inconsistency is avoided. Although, there is no certainty that allocations or proposals identified in the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan will be carried forward into the later stages.

7.4 In broad terms the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046[9] looked to continue the same approach to the settlement hierarchy. Limited additional allocations for housing and employment are proposed at Upwood Airfield (in both Bury and Ramsey parishes) and on the north-eastern and south-eastern sides of Ramsey town. A that time there were two main areas of consistency that need to be considered in the context of future general conformity between the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and the emerging Local Plan Review. These were in relation to a protected settlement break between Ramsey and Upwood Airfield/Bury, and the area between Ramsey Rural Museum and Ramsey 1940s Camp which the Neighbourhood Plan proposes as Local Green Space.

7.5 Any reference in this Neighbourhood Plan to 'Local Plan Update' means the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046. Huntingdonshire District Council are scheduled to publish the Proposed Submission Local Plan Update to 2046 for consultation across September and October 2026. That will then need to be submitted to the Secretary of State which is anticipated to be in December 2026. Followed by the examination process during 2027, with adoption anticipated in 2028.

7.6 The Proposed Submission Local Plan Update to 2046 still proposes allocations for housing and employment at Upwood Airfield (in both Bury and Ramsey parishes) and on the south-eastern side of Ramsey town. Together with a housing allocation at Ramsey Forty Foot on the southern side.

7.7 Even if the proposed Local Government Reorganisation occurs, the Local Plan Update would still be likely to be completed by the new Council if appropriate.

[7] http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf
[8] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-update/
[9] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-update/preferred-options/

8. Strategic policies for the purposes of neighbourhood planning

8.1 The system of neighbourhood planning allows Parish and Town Councils to produce neighbourhood plans to guide development at a local level. One of the requirements of such plans was that they should be in line with the 'strategic policies' of the adopted development plan for the local area. Although, this legal requirement was removed in late March 2026 during the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan. As preparation started with this requirement in place, reference is still made to it.

8.2 Huntingdonshire District Council as the Local Planning Authority defines which policies are to be considered 'strategic' with regard to the production of a neighbourhood plan. They consider that some of the policies and all the allocations within the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 are to be considered 'strategic' for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. Details of which policies are deemed 'strategic' is set out in the introduction of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036[10].

9. Surrounding Neighbourhood Plans

9.1 The Neighbourhood Plan was developed with consideration of whether there are any other Neighbourhood Plans being developed which share a boundary with Ramsey Parish. To the south of Ramsey is the village of Bury. Ramsey, Bury and the former Upwood Airfield collectively form the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area in the Local Plan.



9.2 The Bury Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' on 19 May 2021. The Bury Neighbourhood Plan is now part of the adopted Development Plan. The Bury Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of issues that have cross boundary implications including a settlement boundary and a protected settlement break. Strategic extensions to the village of Bury at Upwood Airfield also have cross boundary implications for the Parish of Ramsey.

9.2 Bury Parish Council are in the early stages of undertaking the First Review of the Bury Neighbourhood Plan, having undertaken consultation on a draft of the First Review from July to September 2026.

9.3 The other neighbouring Parishes in Huntingdonshire are Farcet, Holme, Wood Walton, Upwood and the Raveleys and Warboys. None of these Parishes are working on Neighbourhood Plans.

9.4 The Parish of Ramsey lies on the northern edge of Huntingdonshire and abuts the neighbouring District of Fenland to the north. Whittlesey to the north has a Neighbourhood Plan that was 'made' on 22 May 2023. Doddington lies to the north-east, it is working on a Neighbourhood Plan having produced a Draft Plan in 2025. Whittlesey Parish covers the majority of the village of Pondersbridge, but there are no particular cross boundary

[10] See the yellow box between paragraphs 1.12 and 1.13 on Page 4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

implications that need considering. The other neighbouring Parish in Fenland is Benwick, they are not working on a Neighbourhood Plan.

10. Designation of Ramsey Parish as a Neighbourhood Planning Area

10.1 A formal application[11] was made by Ramsey Town Council in January 2024 as a 'relevant body' under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the designation of a neighbourhood area in order to develop a neighbourhood plan. The area of the Neighbourhood Plan is based upon the parish boundary, which was seen as appropriate as this area is recognised as the distinct communities of Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's; together with the area of Ramsey Hollow & a small part of Pondersbridge. The request was that the Parish be recognised as a Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of producing a neighbourhood plan, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.

10.2 Huntingdonshire District Council designated[12] the Parish of Ramsey as a neighbourhood area on 6 February 2024.

11. Consultation with the Local Community

11.1 Since the designation of Ramsey as a neighbourhood area, various elements of consultation have been undertaken regarding the future planning of the Parish. Details of the consultation undertaken to date are set out in the Consultation Statement that accompanies this Plan. Early informal public participation and consultation was undertaken in 2025. The preparation process for a Neighbourhood Plan is prescribed in Regulations[13] and this involves two statutory periods of public consultation.

11.2 Consultation on the draft plan was undertaken in early 2026. The comments received from local residents and consultees were considered and influenced this Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan. The process then involved further consultation on this Submission Plan undertaken by Huntingdonshire District Council in May and June 2026. The Independent Examiner then considered the representations made on the Submission Plan during July and August 2026 before producing their Independent Examiner's Report in late August 2026.

Other Planning Documents

12.1 In addition to the Development Plan there are also a number of other planning documents known as Supplementary Planning Documents[14] which cover the whole of Huntingdonshire. These include:

- Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017)
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017)
- Wind Energy Development in Huntingdonshire SPD (2014)
- Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (with updated costs annually or successor documents)
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)

12.2 The following documents are also a material consideration:

[11] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/qrnnghtu/ramsey-designation.pdf
[12] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/qrnnghtu/ramsey-designation.pdf
[13] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made
[14] http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-documents/

- Great Fen Masterplan (2010)[15]
- Cambridgeshire Surface Water Planning Guidance[16]
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy[17]

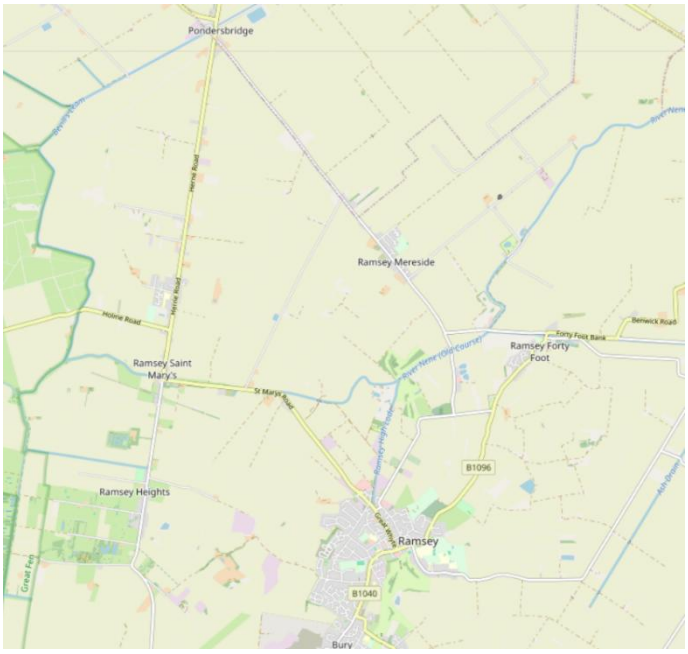
12.3 Part of the town of Ramsey is within the Ramsey Conservation Area. Somewhat confusingly, the Ramsey Conservation Area extends across part of the neighbouring village and Parish of Bury. There is a Conservation Area Character Assessment[18] for this Conservation Area. A character appraisal where published has a purpose to identify and record those special qualities that make up the architectural and historic character.



The Communities of Ramsey

13.1 The Parish covers an area of 6,361 hectares. The Parish of Ramsey comprises the distinct communities of Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's; together with the area of Ramsey Hollow & a small part of Pondersbridge.

13.2 The town is the largest settlement and is about 14 miles (22 km) north of Huntingdon. The town of Ramsey grew up around Ramsey Abbey, an important Benedictine monastery. In the order of precedence for abbots in Parliament, Ramsey was third after Glastonbury and St Albans. The town manor is built on the site of (and using materials from) the ancient Abbey and is the seat of the Lords de Ramsey, major landowners in Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire. The remains of the Abbey are now home to part of the town's secondary school.



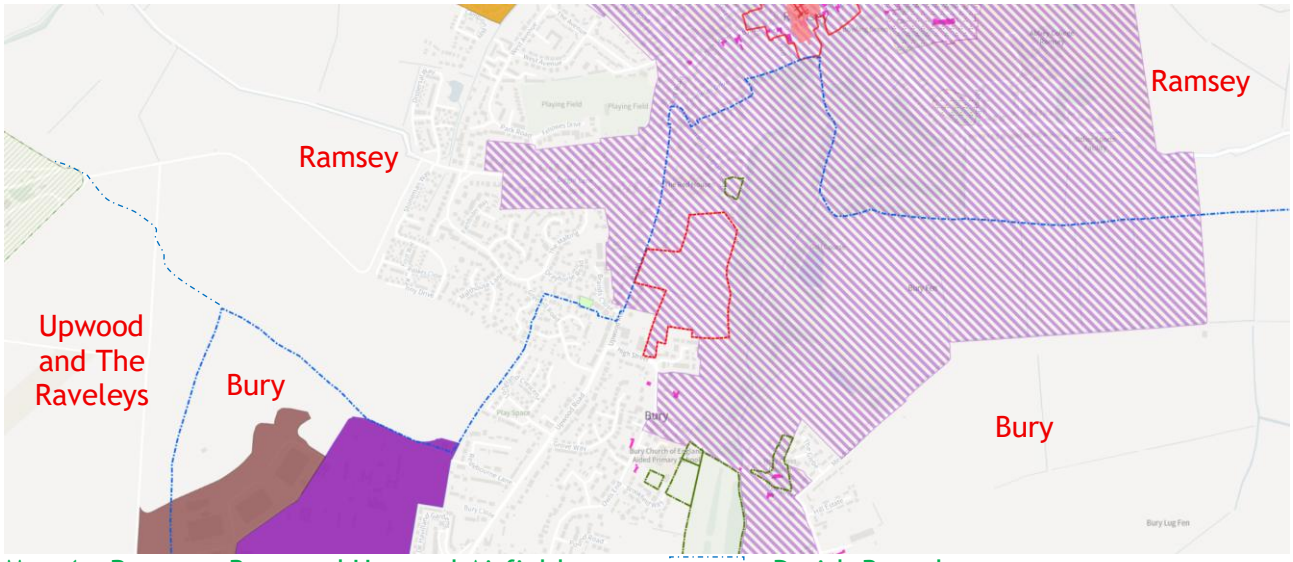
13.3 The Ramsey Conservation Area Character Assessment[19] describes the historical development of the town of Ramsey. The villages in Ramsey have their origins as agricultural settlements, with growth often connected to the land being drained. The mid-year ONS 2024 population estimate for the Parish of Ramsey is 9,349, living in 3,819 households[20].

[15] https://www.greatfen.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-10/env03-great-fen-masterplan-2010.pdf
[16] https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Surface-Water-Planning-Guidance.pdf
[17] https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/local-nature-recovery-strategy-lnrs/
[18] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2329/ramsey-conservation-area-character-assessment-adopted-december-2005.pdf
[19] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2329/ramsey-conservation-area-character-assessment-adopted-december-2005.pdf
[20] 2021 Census Figure

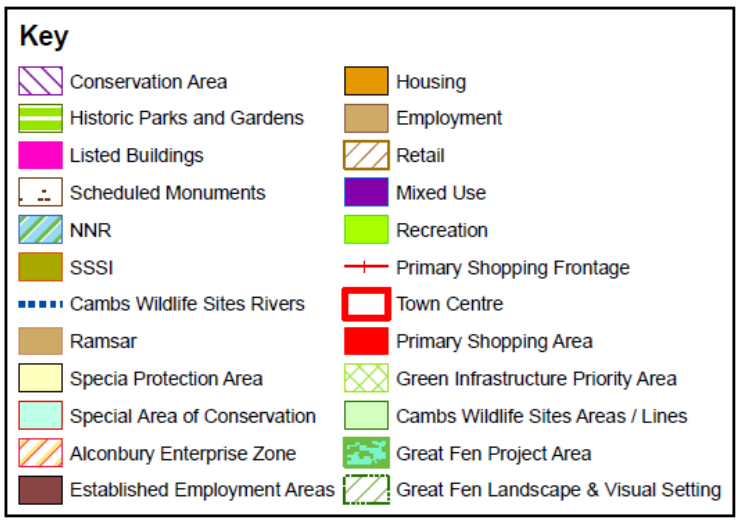
Relationship to Bury and Upwood Airfield

14.1 Ramsey, Bury and the former Upwood Airfield collectively form the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The focus of strategic growth in the Local Plan was primarily on the Upwood Airfield area. Most, but not all of Upwood Airfield lies in the neighbouring Bury Parish with parts also lying within the Parish of Ramsey as well as part in the Parish of Upwood and the Raveleys.

14.2 Parts of the town of Ramsey immediately abut the village of Bury, that village has a population of 2,263[21]. Bury and Ramsey are settlements with distinct histories, and many local residents attach importance to their distinct identities. Bury relies upon the town of Ramsey to provide a number of higher order local services and facilities that are used by the residents of Bury Village. Some parts of Ramsey are closer to the services and facilities in the neighbouring village of Bury. The relationship between Ramsey Parish and these neighbouring areas is shown on Map 1 below.



Map 1 – Ramsey, Bury and Upwood Airfield Parish Boundary

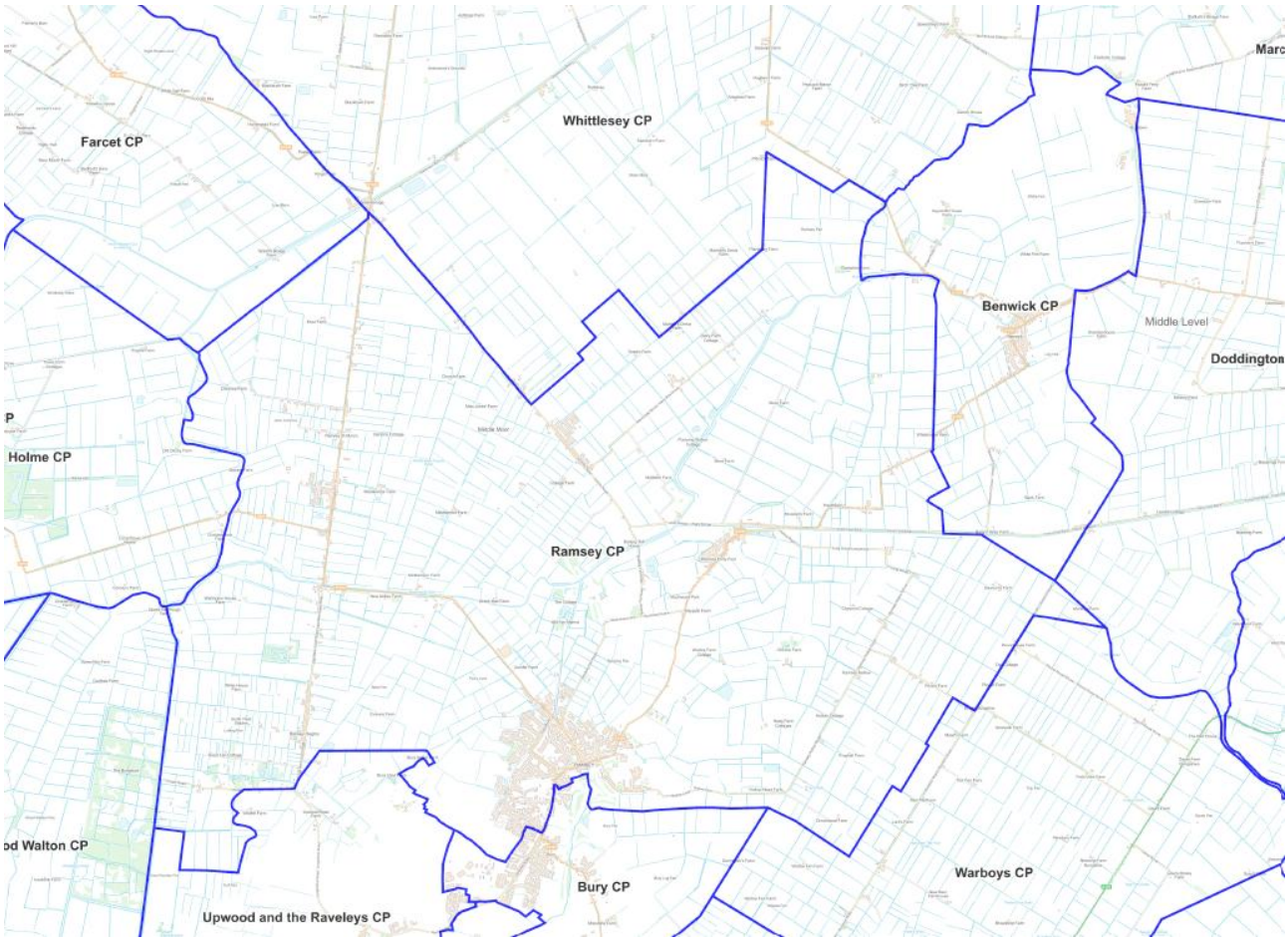


Extract from Huntingdonshire Local Plan © Ordnance Survey – OS Licence 100022322

[21] 2024 ONS mid-year population estimate

The Neighbourhood Plan Area

15.1 The plan below identifies the designated Neighbourhood Area:



Map 2 – The Ramsey Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area © Crown Copyright

Parish Boundaries



Vision

16.1 The following vision has been developed for the Neighbourhood Plan:

To provide a planning framework and policies that will result in sustainable growth for the local community, ensuring that appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities are provided whilst also conserving the distinct character of the town and villages that form the overall community of Ramsey.

Objectives

16.2 The following objectives have been set out for the Neighbourhood Plan:

(A) Promote sustainable development and infrastructure

- Collaborate through the production of development plans and the determination of planning applications including pre-application engagement with Huntingdonshire District Council and developers of individual parcels to ensure that growth of the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area delivers sustainable growth without resulting in further coalescence with Bury and Upwood Airfield.
- Ensure that new development is of high-quality design, is built to a high sustainability standard and includes or contributes to open space and community facilities.
- Ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.
- Ensure that new development integrates into the existing town or village including linking all developments to the rest of the town or village with footpaths, where appropriate.
- Locate new development such that current problems with congestion, parking and road safety are not exacerbated and, if possible, reduced.

(B) Conserve and enhance the built and natural environment

- Protect, enhance and conserve the open spaces; landscape; views; and biodiversity across the town and villages.
- Use land efficiently and to preserve high quality agricultural land.
- Conserve and enhance the built environment of the town and villages, including through ensuring that new development respects or enhances the distinctive character and appearance of the area in which it is sited.

(C) Protect and develop the communities of Ramsey

- Protect and preserve important community assets including its local services and facilities by encouraging the retention and growth of community facilities.
- Continue to improve the facilities on offer to support the local community, including through outreach services.
- Continue to support community events.

(D) Protect and enhance the heritage value and historic environment of Ramsey

- Enhance the historic character arising from the heritage assets present and their settings such as the historic built form of the Ramsey Conservation Area.
- Protect and enhance the setting of heritage assets across the villages and countryside of the Parish.

Policy Delivery of Objectives

16.3 The following table demonstrates how the policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan meet the objectives contained within the previous chapter. The policies that have been developed seek to address at least one of the objectives:

	Objective A	Objective B	Objective C	Objective D
Theme - Community				
Policy 1 – Definition of 'Built-up Area' (Settlement Boundary)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy 2 – Protected Settlement Break	✓	✓	✓	
Policy 3 – Community Facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy 4 – Community Engagement	✓	✓	✓	✓
Theme - Heritage and Environment				
Policy 5 – Local Green Space	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy 6 – Views and Vistas	✓	✓		✓
Theme - Infrastructure				
Policy 7 – Infrastructure Provision	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy 8 – Sustainable Transport	✓	✓		✓
Policy 9 – Highway Impact	✓	✓		✓
Policy 10 – Rights of Way Network	✓	✓		✓



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Theme - Community



Theme - Community

Community Aspirations

The Neighbourhood Plan includes community aspirations for each themed section of the Plan. For the Theme – Community, the following are the community aspirations:

Community



The Town Council and Neighbourhood Plan want to support the various communities that collectively make up the parish of Ramsey. A vibrant and flourishing community includes supporting families; encouraging the provision of places to live, work, stay and play; with suitable provision of housing including a local connection for housing and affordable housing.

The communities of Ramsey need suitable resilience to adapt to changing circumstances and be supported to allow suitable access to services and facilities despite the relative geographic isolation.

Resilience also needs to cater for ageing population needs; this includes the provision of specialist supported accommodation such as extra care housing or supported living schemes for people of all ages with care and support needs. Provision of adult mental health supported accommodation and provision for adults with learning disabilities needs to be provided as part of an overall balanced and mixed community.

It is an aspiration to ensure that community clubs for all ages are available and that access to adult education is available locally.

Adequate provision of services in proportion to the growth is imperative. Additional services or replacement or extension of existing community buildings such as the library, community centre needs to be factored in. The communities want a holistic and joined up approach so that development, infrastructure and services are set up in a harmonious, cohesive and sustainable way.

Education

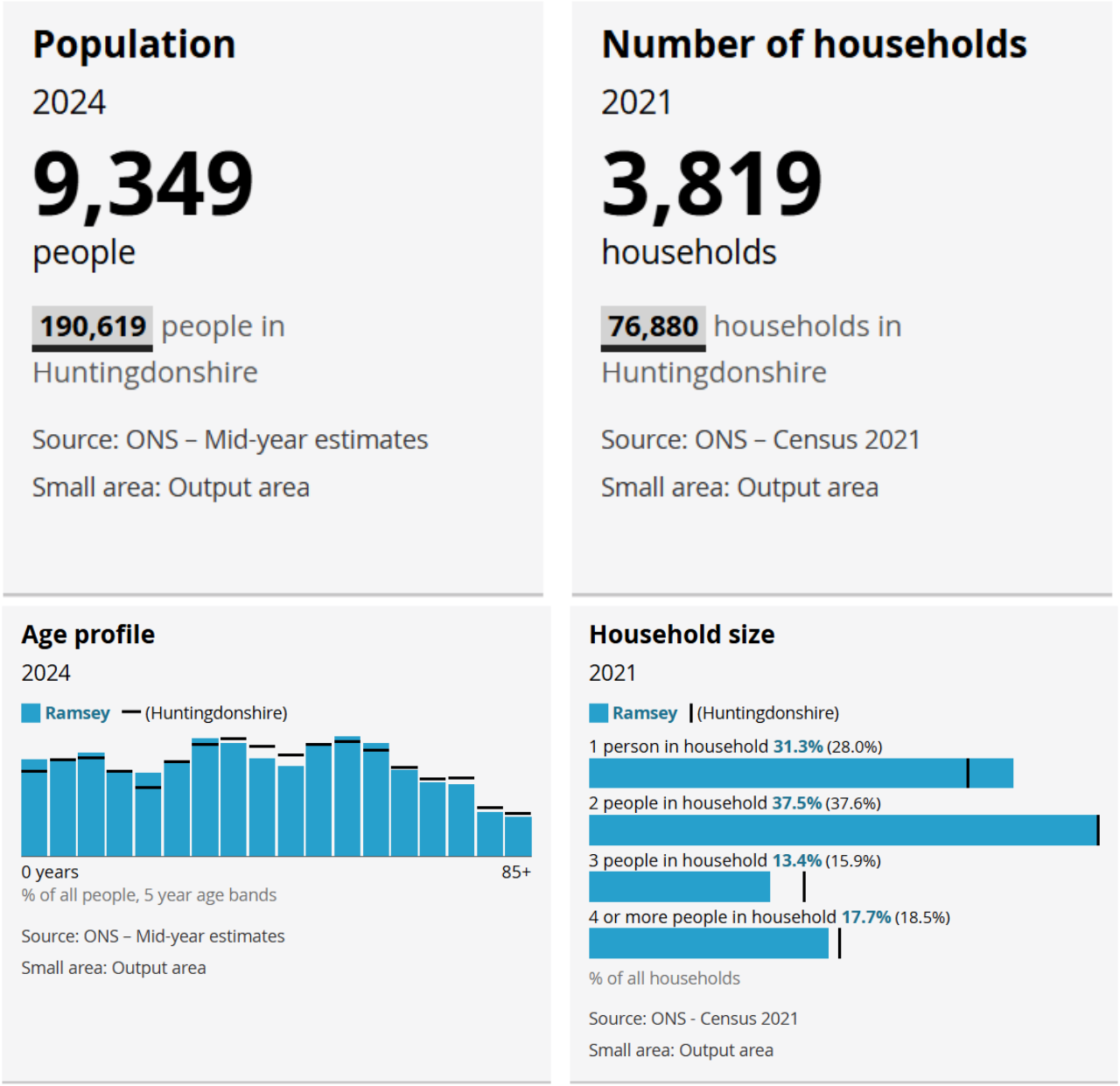


Education needs to be fit for purpose and be well located; including being accessible safely for all ages by active travel methods including by foot and bicycle.

Suitable and adequate early years provision to meet the differing needs of families. Such as through day nurseries, full day care, sessional provisional, childminders and wraparound care to provide breakfast and after school provision term-time between the hours of 8am and 6pm; need to be available in order to allow parents the opportunity to return to work. Additional capacity is required across schools to meet demand. In terms of wider education, access to adult education should be available locally.

17. Profile of Ramsey Parish

17.1 The parish of Ramsey is mostly rural and is located in the north-eastern part of Huntingdonshire and lies on the edge of the Cambridgeshire Fens. The town of Ramsey is located at the southern edge of the parish, and it lies to the north of the adjacent village of Bury which lies in a separate parish. The parish also contains four distinct villages of Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's. The parish also contains the area of Ramsey Hollow & a small part of Pondersbridge.



(Extract from ONS Census Area Profile[22] - Ramsey Parish Compared with Huntingdonshire District)

17.2 The B1040 runs through the town of Ramsey and the village of Ramsey St Mary's linking to the primary road network (A605) at Whittlesey to the north and with Warboys (A141) to the south-east. The parish wraps around but does not include the adjoining village of Bury; it includes part but not most of Upwood Airfield, the remaining parts of the airfield fall within the parishes of Bury and Upwood and The Raveleys. Ramsey Forty Foot lies on the B1096 that also links the town north-eastwards to the A141 at Wimblington. The B660 links Ramsey St Mary's to the A1(M) to the west via the B1043. As such the parish is remote from the primary

[22] https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/

road network, which gives the area a feeling of isolation. Ramsey is the only town in Huntingdonshire that is not served directly by the primary road network.

17.3 The Parish of Ramsey has a 2024 mid-year population estimate (ONS) of 9,349; with 3,819 households (2021 Census). In strategic planning terms the town of Ramsey together with the adjacent village of Bury and Upwood Airfield form the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area. The villages in Ramsey Parish do not technically form part of the Spatial Planning Area. If the neighbouring village of Bury and the area of Upwood Airfield is added to these figures, then the collective 2024 mid-year population estimate (ONS) becomes 11,612; and 4,583 households (2021 Census).

17.4 It does need to be borne in mind that although the latest ONS population figures include some recent growth, the Census figures do not include recent growth completed or underway in Ramsey or neighbouring Bury & Upwood Airfield. We know from the Huntingdonshire monitoring data[23] for 2024/2025 (the latest published) that since the date of the 2021 Census the following housing completions have occurred:



Ramsey
2021/22 – 150 dwellings
2022/23 - 129 dwellings
2023/24 - 127 dwellings
2024/25 - 75 dwellings

Adjoining Village of Bury
2021/22 - 45 dwellings
2022/23 – 101 dwellings
2023/24 – 0 dwellings
2024/25 - 0 dwellings

17.5 It should be borne in mind that these figures are completions, they do not show development under construction nor development with planning permission. As such they do not quantify the pipeline of development planned to come forward.

17.6 The figures show growth in the last three-year period for which data is available, completions of 481 dwellings in Ramsey and 146 dwellings in adjacent Bury have occurred. Increasing the collective number of households across Ramsey and Bury to 5,210 in 2024/25. As context, over the 13-year period from 2011/12 to 2023/24 the total completions were 685 for Ramsey and 204 for the adjacent village of Bury.

17.7 Accordingly, it can be seen that in the last four-year period for which data is available, there has been a significant increase in dwelling completions. Since the 2021 Census base, the number of households has increased by almost 13% in Ramsey and by just over 13% across the wider area of Ramsey and the adjacent village of Bury and Upwood Airfield.

17.8 In terms of commitments on large sites (sites with planning permission or allocated for housing) the position for 2024/2025 was as follows:

Ramsey
112 dwellings (42 on West of The Avenue, 30 on RA3 & 40 on RA5)

Bury
377 dwellings (87 on RA7 and 290 on RA8)

[23] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/p2lhfkoj/annual-monitoring-report-part-1-housing-supply-2024-25.pdf

17.9 As the above figures demonstrate there is still a significant level of committed development planned to come forward in the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area. In addition to these figures there are planning applications currently under consideration, as well as the potential future allocations in the emerging Local Plan Update to 2046.

17.10 Splitting the parish down, the approximate 2024 mid-year population estimate (ONS) figures for each settlement are:

- Ramsey Town – 6,570
- Ramsey Forty Foot – 560
- Ramsey Heights – 560
- Ramsey Mereside – 720
- Ramsey St Mary's – 940

The approximate 2021 Census number of households in each settlement are:

- Ramsey Town – 2,730
- Ramsey Forty Foot – 240
- Ramsey Heights – 200
- Ramsey Mereside – 280
- Ramsey St Mary's – 370

Therefore, approximately just over two-thirds of people in the parish live in the town with around just under a third of people living in the villages and countryside.

17.11 Ramsey parish outside of the settlements is agricultural land and contains numerous drains and watercourses. The parish also contains two areas of solar farms between Ramsey and Ramsey Heights and a group of wind turbines to the north of the town.

18. Strategic Planning Framework

18.1 The adopted strategic policies for Ramsey parish are contained in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. This forms the strategic planning framework; one of the requirements of a Neighbourhood Plan is that they should be in line with the 'strategic policies' of the adopted development plan for the local area[24]. Paragraph 30 of the NPPF (December 2024 version) states: *"Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies."*

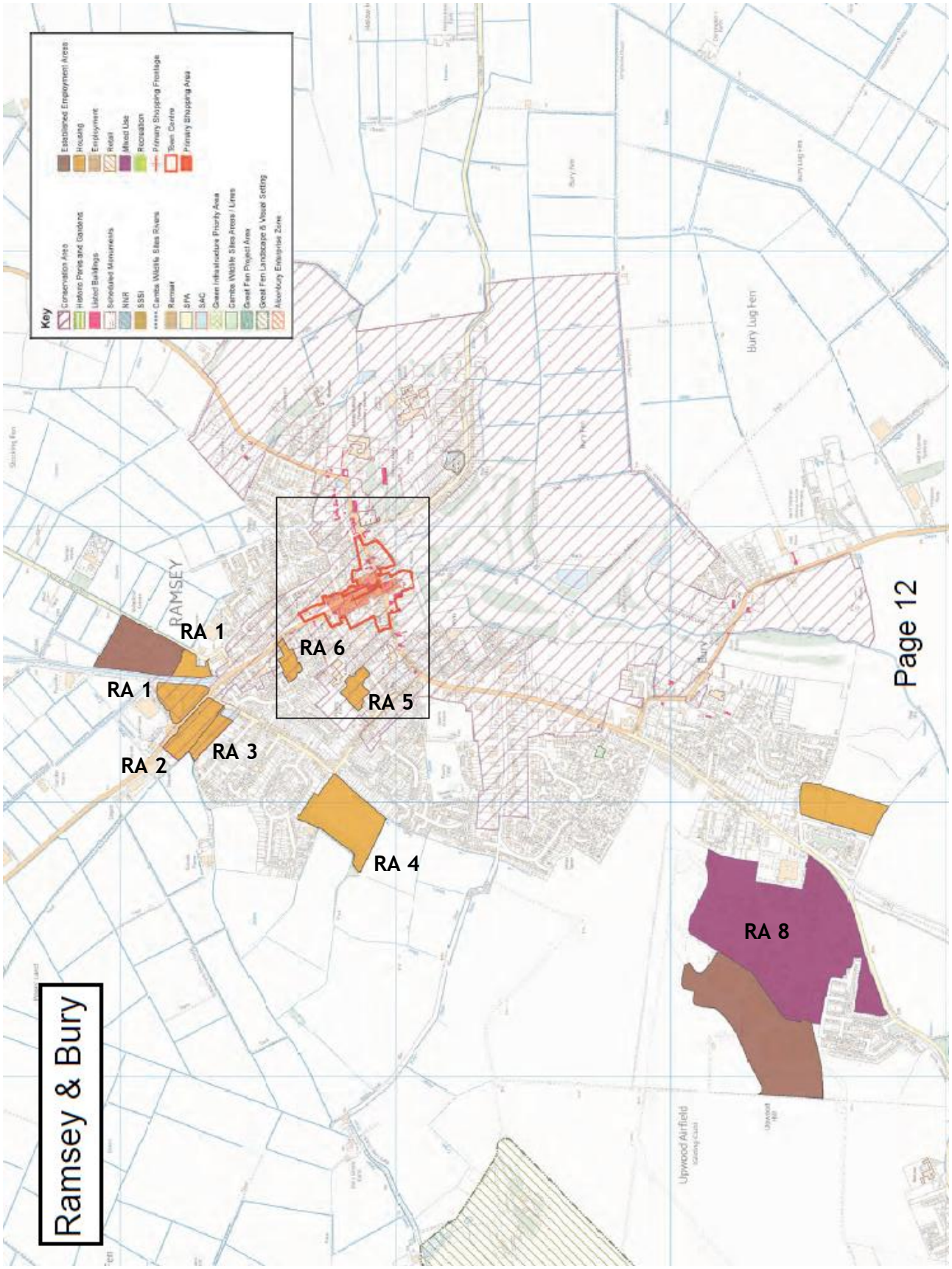


18.2 The town of Ramsey is part of the 'Ramsey Spatial Planning Area' in Policy LP 2 - Strategy for Development. The Spatial Planning Area covers the adjoining neighbouring village of Bury and Upwood Airfield. The villages in Ramsey Parish do not technically form part of the Spatial Planning Area[25].

[24] This legal requirement known as a 'Basic Condition' ceased to apply in late March 2026, but as it was in place when the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan began it is still referred to. It was replaced with a new 'Basic Condition' to: not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made

[25] See the yellow box below paragraph 4.87 on page 55 of the Local Plan which forms part of Policy LP 7 Spatial Planning Areas

The Local Plan to 2036 does not set out any unmet housing requirement that the Neighbourhood Plan needs to account for.



Map 3a - Extract from Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Policies Map © Huntingdonshire District Council

18.3 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 proposes that the 'Ramsey Spatial Planning Area' has allocations for 895 homes and 2 hectares of employment land. The allocations in the town of Ramsey are as follows:

RA 1 - Ramsey Gateway (High Lode) (2.6ha of land at Ramsey Gateway (High Lode) is allocated for residential development of approximately 110 homes) **[Built]**

RA 2 - Ramsey Gateway (1.8ha of land at Ramsey Gateway is allocated for residential development of approximately 50 homes) **[Built]**

RA 3 - West Station Yard and Northern Mill (1ha of land at Ramsey Gateway is allocated for residential development of approximately 30 homes)

RA 4 - Field Road, Ramsey (5.2ha of land at Field Road, Ramsey is allocated for residential development of approximately 90 homes) **[Built]**

RA 5 - Whytefield Road, Ramsey (0.9ha of land at Whytefield Road, Ramsey is allocated for residential development of approximately 40 homes)

RA 6 - 94 Great Whyte, Ramsey (0.7ha of land at 94 Great Whyte, Ramsey is allocated for residential development of approximately 35 homes) **[Built]**

18.4 The strategic allocation RA 8 - Former RAF Upwood and Upwood Hill House (25ha of land at the former RAF Upwood and Upwood Hill House is allocated for development for a mix of uses to comprise: 2ha of employment land for business uses (class 'B1'); approximately 450 homes; community facilities appropriate to the scale of development) lies almost entirely in the adjacent parish of Bury. Although a very small corner containing the Air Training Corps building does actually lie in the parish of Ramsey.

18.5 Of the six Local Plan allocations, four of them have already been built, with just RA 3 - West Station Yard and Northern Mill and RA 5 - Whytefield Road, Ramsey still to be constructed. In recent years significant further development has occurred on the western edge of Ramsey to the north and south of Biggin Lane. This development has not taken place on sites allocated in the Local Plan, so is known as 'windfall development'.



18.6 In adjacent Bury, windfall development took place at Longland Crescent off Upwood Road, that site butts up to the Ramsey parish boundary. Continuing pressure for windfall development on the edge of Ramsey town is occurring. No allocations were made in the Local Plan for any of the villages in Ramsey parish.

18.7 Policy LP 7 - Spatial Planning Areas is clear that the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area specifically excludes the villages of Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's. The four villages of Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's are therefore classified as small settlements[26]. The part of Pondersbridge that is in Ramsey parish and Huntingdonshire district is also classified as a small settlement[27]. Ramsey Hollow is an area of the parish, but it is not a settlement identified in the Local Plan.

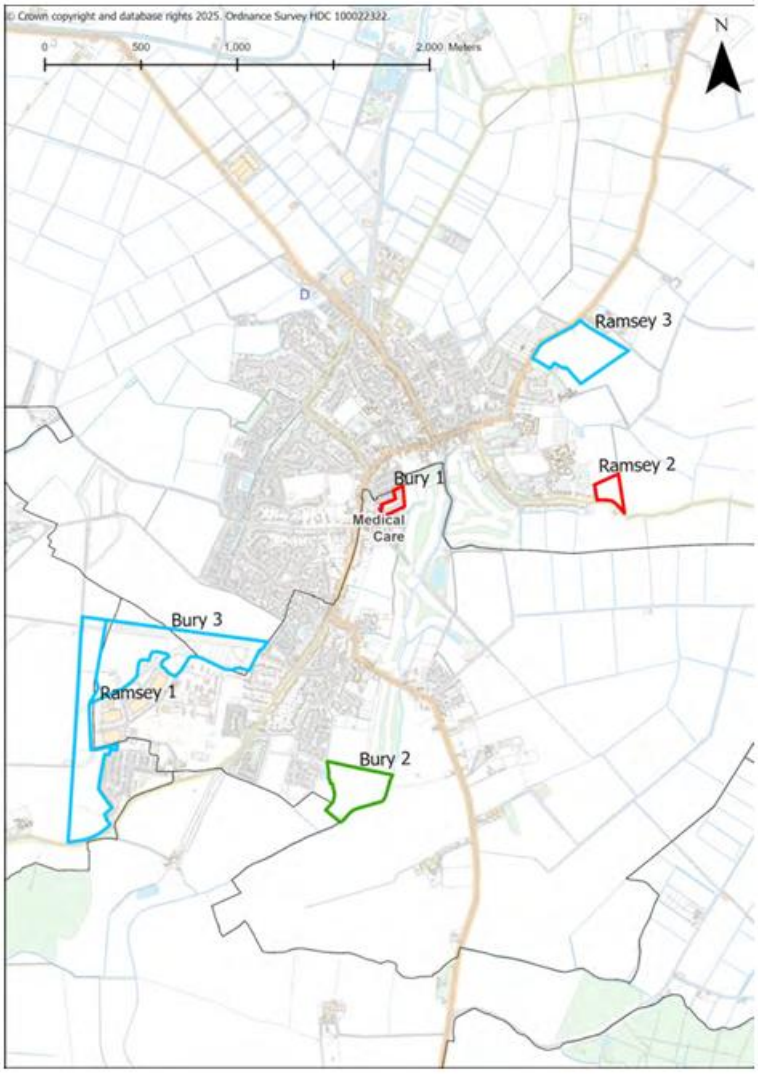
[26] See the yellow box on page 60 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan which is part of Policy LP 9
[27] See the yellow box on page 60 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan which is part of Policy LP 9

18.8 The framework for development on unallocated sites in small settlements is therefore set out in Policy LP 9 - Small Settlements of the Local Plan. That supports development where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of a defined small settlement. It also allows for proposals on land well-related to the built-up area where this is allowed for through other policies in the Local Plan. An example could be rural exceptions housing as allowed for under Policy LP 28 of the Local Plan.

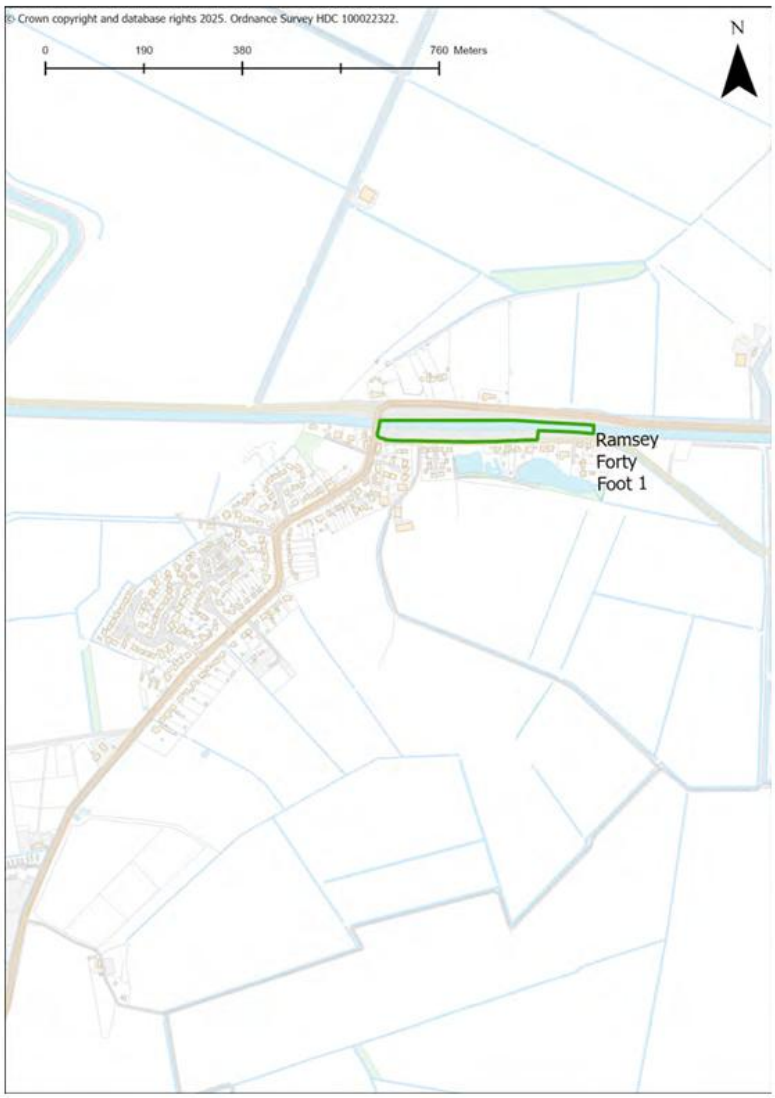
18.9 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 sets out a comprehensive definition of 'built-up area' in paragraphs 4.84; 4.85; and the table following paragraph 4.85. The four villages of Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's as small settlements are locations where windfall development can be expected over the plan period. To assist with this the Neighbourhood Plan defines the 'built-up area' for Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's through use of a settlement boundary.

18.10 The District Council is in the process of a Local Plan Update to be known as the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046. The Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 was published for consultation during November and December 2025.

18.11 There is no obligation for a Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with an emerging Local Plan; although it is sensible to look to ensure that a potential lack of consistency is avoided. Although, there is no certainty that allocations or proposals identified in the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan will be carried forward into the later stages.



Map 3b - Extract from Huntingdonshire Local Plan Update to 2046 Policies Map (Preferred Options Document) © Huntingdonshire District Council



Map 3c - Extract from Huntingdonshire Local Plan Update to 2046 Policies Map (Preferred Options Document) © Huntingdonshire District Council

18.12 In broad terms the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046[28] looked to continue the same approach to the settlement hierarchy. Limited additional allocations for housing and employment are proposed at Upwood Airfield (in both Bury and Ramsey parishes) and on the north-eastern and south-eastern sides of Ramsey town. At that time there were two main areas of consistency that need to be considered in the context of future general conformity between the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and the emerging Local Plan Review. These were in relation to a protected settlement break between Ramsey and Upwood Airfield/Bury, and the area between Ramsey Rural Museum and Ramsey 1940s Camp which the Neighbourhood Plan proposes as Local Green Space.

18.13 Huntingdonshire District Council are scheduled to publish the Proposed Submission Local Plan Update to 2046 for consultation across September and October 2026. That will then need to be submitted to the Secretary of State which is anticipated to be in December 2026. Followed by the examination process during 2027, with adoption anticipated in 2028.

18.14 The Proposed Submission Local Plan Update to 2046 still proposes allocations for housing and employment at Upwood Airfield (in both Bury and Ramsey parishes) and on the south-eastern

[28] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-update/preferred-options/

side of Ramsey town. Together with a housing allocation at Ramsey Forty Foot on the southern side. Limited additional allocations are proposed at Upwood Airfield (in both Bury and Ramsey parishes) and on the north-eastern and south-eastern sides of Ramsey town.

18.15 The Local Plan Update to 2046 at the Preferred Options Stage was proposing seven potential allocations as follows:

Ramsey Parish

- Ramsey 2: North of Hollow Lane. This is allocated for residential development for 20 dwellings.
- Ramsey 3: East of Wood Lane. This is allocated for a mixed-use development comprising of residential development and community open space uses comprising approximately 14 homes and 7.7 ha of community open space uses. *[see Note Below]*

Partly in Ramsey Parish and Partly in Bury Parish

- Bury 3: RAF Upwood - Phase 3, Bury. This is allocated for a mixed-use development comprising of commercial development and open space comprising 170 homes and about 11.5 ha of land for green infrastructure.

Bury Parish

- Bury 1: Bury Industrial Estate, Old Station Road. This is allocated for residential development for 30 dwellings.
- Bury 2: Off Cheveril Lane. This is allocated for open space uses including land to safeguard against flooding.

Upwood and the Raveleys Parish

- Ramsey 1: RAF Upwood phase 4. This is allocated for a mixed-use development comprising of commercial development and open space comprising 4.8 ha for office, research and development, industrial and general industrial uses within use classes E(g)(i-ii) and B2 and about 9.2 ha of land for green infrastructure.

Ramsey Forty Foot *[see Note below]*

- Ramsey Forty Foot 1: Ramsey Forty Foot Village Rural Mooring. This is allocated for leisure moorings and open space uses.

[Note - the Proposed Submission Local Plan Update to 2046 scheduled for consultation across September and October 2026 intends to not take forward Ramsey 3. It proposes to add an additional allocation, Ramsey Forty Foot 2 at Woodlane Farm, Ramsey Forty Foot for residential development of about 30 homes]

19. Definition of 'Built-up Area' (Settlement Boundary)

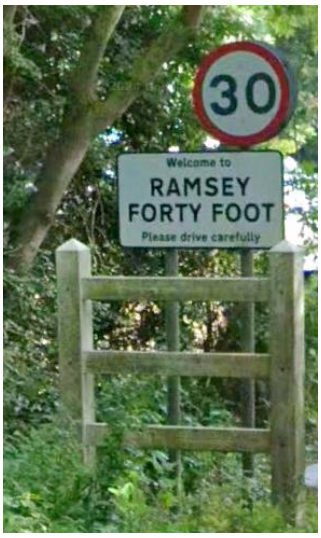
19.1 Ramsey town has planned strategic growth on sites allocated in the Local Plan. However, there has been pressure for planning applications to come forward for residential development on greenfield sites which are not allocated. Such speculative development in addition to the allocated sites has the potential to undermine the strategic policies of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 in terms of the distribution of housing across the district. It also has the potential to affect the distinctive character and separate identity of Ramsey and the adjacent village of Bury as separate and distinct settlements.

19.2 Ramsey town is part of the 'Ramsey Spatial Planning Area' in Policy LP 2 - Strategy for Development. Policy LP 7 - Spatial Planning Areas, supports development where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement. The Local Plan does not specify any specific housing requirement for the villages of Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's; nor for the

part of Pondersbridge which are all deemed as 'small settlements' in the Local Plan. There is an overall allowance for windfall development to come forward across the collective 73 small settlements in the Local Plan.

19.3 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 does not identify a settlement boundary for these villages; instead, it moves to use of a definition of 'built-up area'. Policy LP 9 – Small Settlements, supports development where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of a small settlement. This is what is known as windfall development as it relates to housing coming forward on sites not specifically allocated for housing.

19.4 A settlement boundary is proposed for the town of Ramsey. As this will be contiguous with the built-up area of the adjoining village of Bury in some places; as explained in the Settlement Boundary Methodology document we have ensured that consistency with the settlement boundary in the Bury Neighbourhood Plan has taken place.



19.5 For Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's a settlement boundary is proposed to be identified to define the 'built-up area' as referred to in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The small part of Pondersbridge in the Neighbourhood Plan area on its own falls below the size parameter of 30 homes in the Local Plan to be identified as a built-up area. Therefore, as explained in the Settlement Boundary Methodology document, no settlement boundary for Pondersbridge has been established in the Neighbourhood Plan.

19.6 The settlement boundary of these settlements serves a specific purpose in that it is intended to direct the growth of the settlement and enable development to take place in a coherent manner, maintaining the structure and form of the existing settlement geography as the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 envisages. In addition, the boundary will protect the landscape setting of the villages.

19.7 The Huntingdonshire Townscape SPD for Ramsey identifies wording that says, 'Reflect the existing built forms and local relationship with the street in any new development'. Policy 1 of the NP refers to taking into account the existing built form, layout and structure of the surrounding area.

19.8 This is intended to cover the wide array of factors that contribute to the distinctiveness of how a place looks, works and functions. In terms of structure, we mean factors such as the configuration, the arrangement of the built elements in a particular form, figure, or combination.

19.9 The National Design Guide suggests that structure can be a separate consideration to built form or layout. For example, M2 of National Design Guide looks for a clear structure and hierarchy of streets. It goes on to identify in relation to Layout that:
"A layout shows how routes and blocks of development are arranged and relate to one another to create streets, open spaces and buildings. It defines:
the structure or settlement pattern;
the grain, or the pattern of development blocks and plots; and
the broad distribution of different uses, and their densities or building heights."

19.10 The National Design Guide also refers to the structure of blocks and routes that this creates; as well as open space, its location and structure need careful consideration.

19.11 Policy LP 9 - Small Settlements of the Local Plan does also support development where it is on land well-related to the built-up area where this is allowed for through other policies in the Local Plan. Paragraph 4.107 of the Local Plan sets out a definition of what is meant by Policy LP 9 as: *"Proposals for development on land well-related to the built-up area will be considered subject to the provisions of policies LP 10 'The Countryside', LP 19 'Rural Economy', LP 22 'Local Services and Community Facilities', LP 23 'Tourism and Recreation', LP 28 'Rural Exceptions Housing', LP 33 'Rural Buildings' and LP 38 'Water Related Development'."*



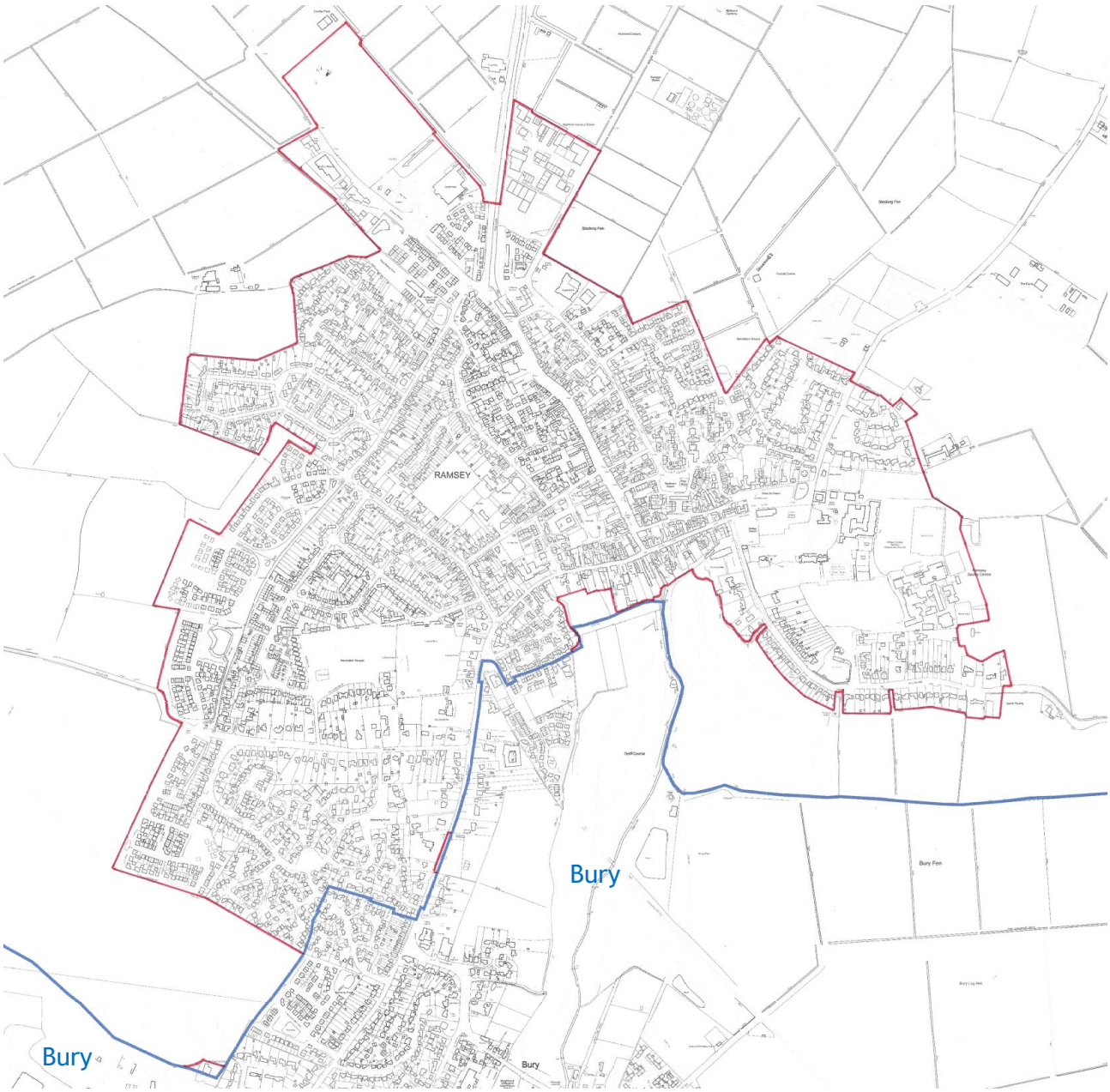
19.12 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 sets out a comprehensive definition of 'built-up area'. Regard has been had to this definition in drawing the settlement boundary in this Neighbourhood Plan in order to define the 'built-up area'. Details of the criteria used to define the settlement boundary in this Neighbourhood Plan, is set out in the Settlement Boundary Methodology document. The methodology used is based on that used in the made Bury Neighbourhood Plan, which Huntingdonshire District Council and the Independent Examiner concluded to be in general conformity with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

Policy 1 – Definition of 'Built-up Area' (Settlement Boundary)

The settlement boundary of Ramsey (town) is defined on the Map 4a. The settlement boundaries of Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside; and Ramsey St Mary's are defined respectively on the Maps 4b, 4c, 4d and 4e. This defines the 'built-up area' for the town and villages. It serves the purpose of directing the growth of the settlement and protecting the countryside from encroachment.

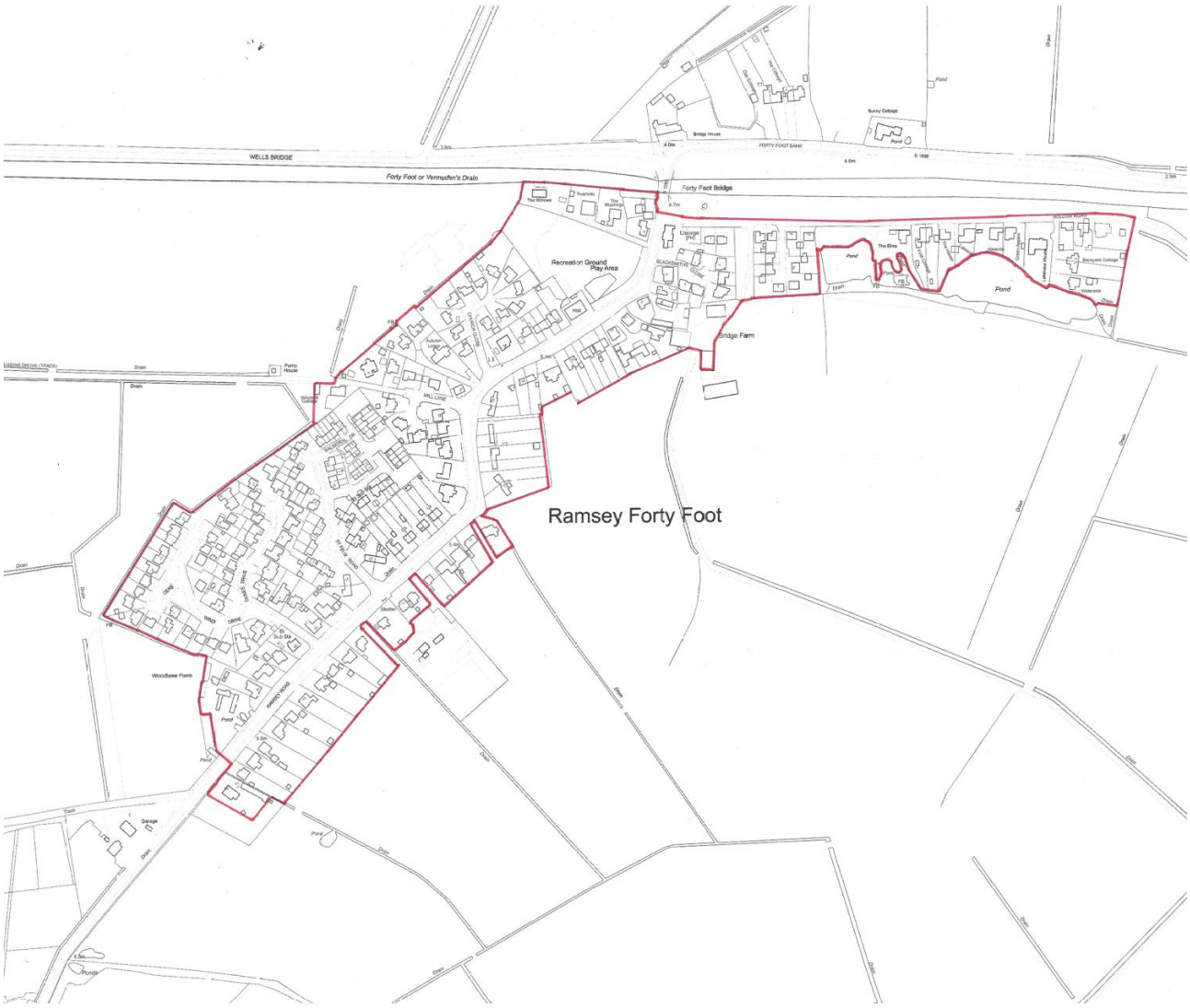
Within the settlement boundary, proposals will be supported where development would not adversely affect the established character and appearance of the existing settlement; the undeveloped nature of the surrounding rural areas; and the landscape setting of the respective town or village. Planning applications will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken into account the existing built form, layout and structure of the surrounding area; the contribution of spaces between buildings; views and vistas as defined under Policy 6; and the design and visual appearance of nearby buildings in the surrounding area.

Development of land outside the settlement boundary should be determined in accordance with the relevant Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies.



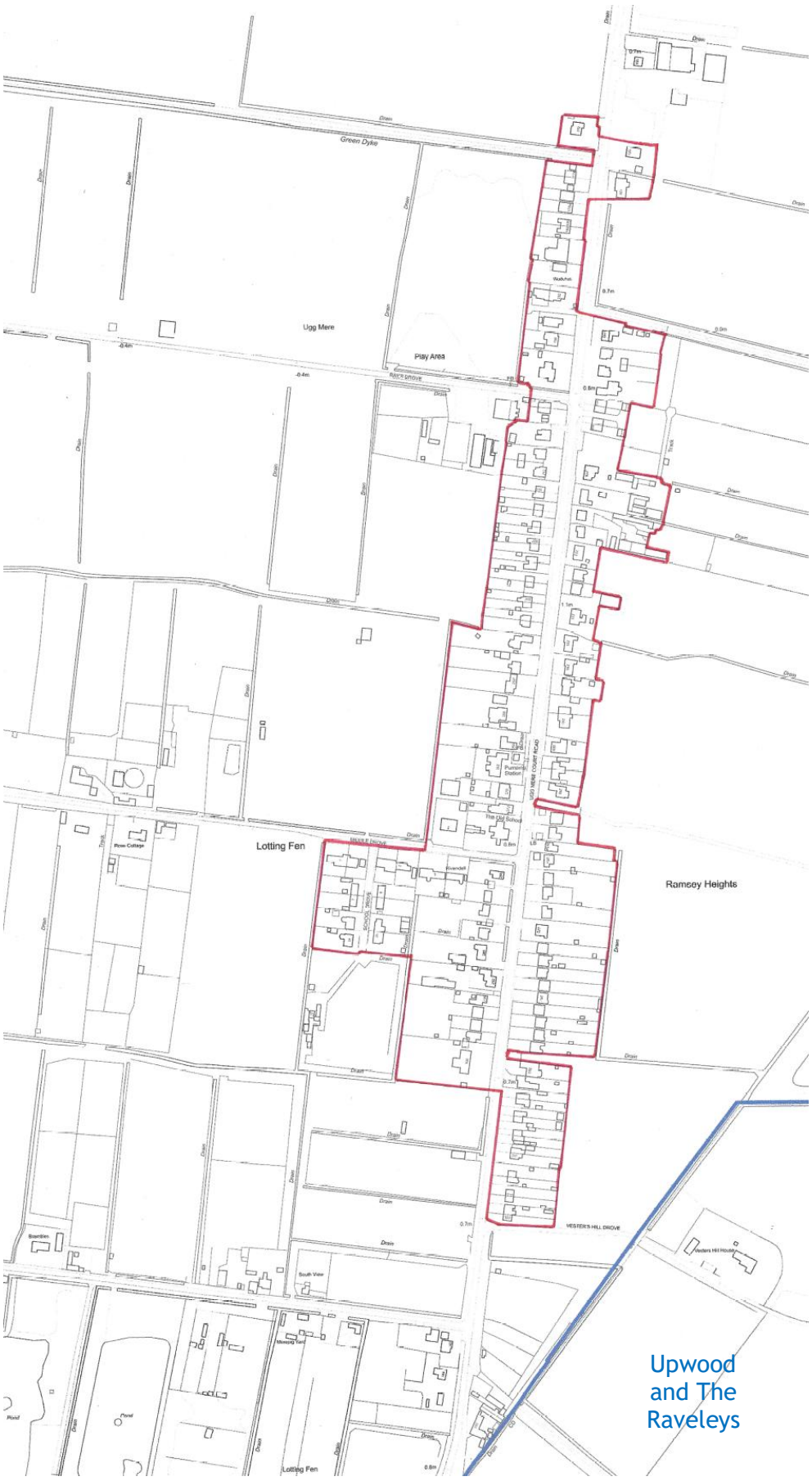
Map 4a – Settlement Boundary – Ramsey (town) © Crown Copyright

Settlement Boundary Plan Area Boundary



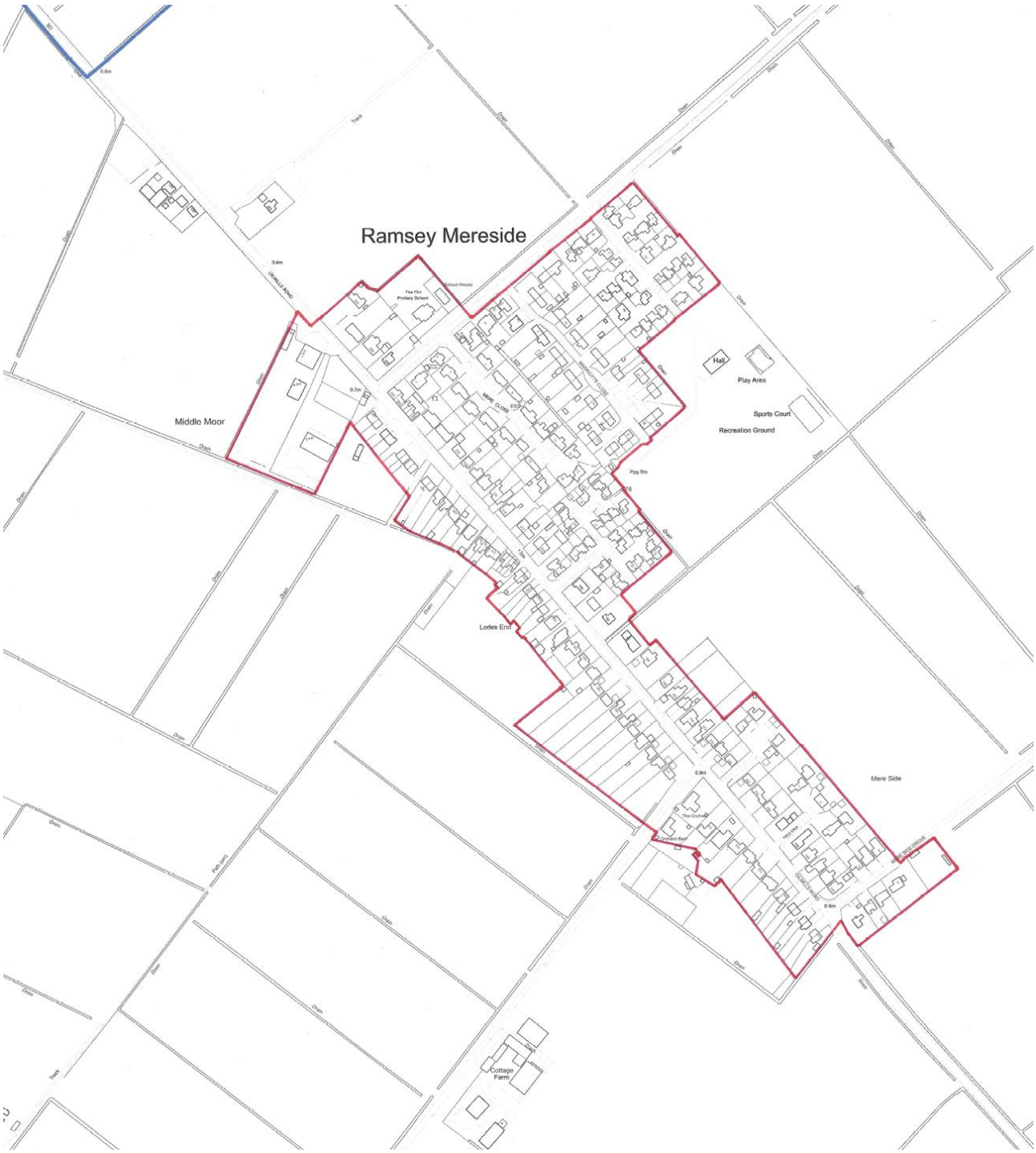
Map 4b – Settlement Boundary – Ramsey Forty Foot © Crown Copyright

Settlement Boundary Plan Area Boundary



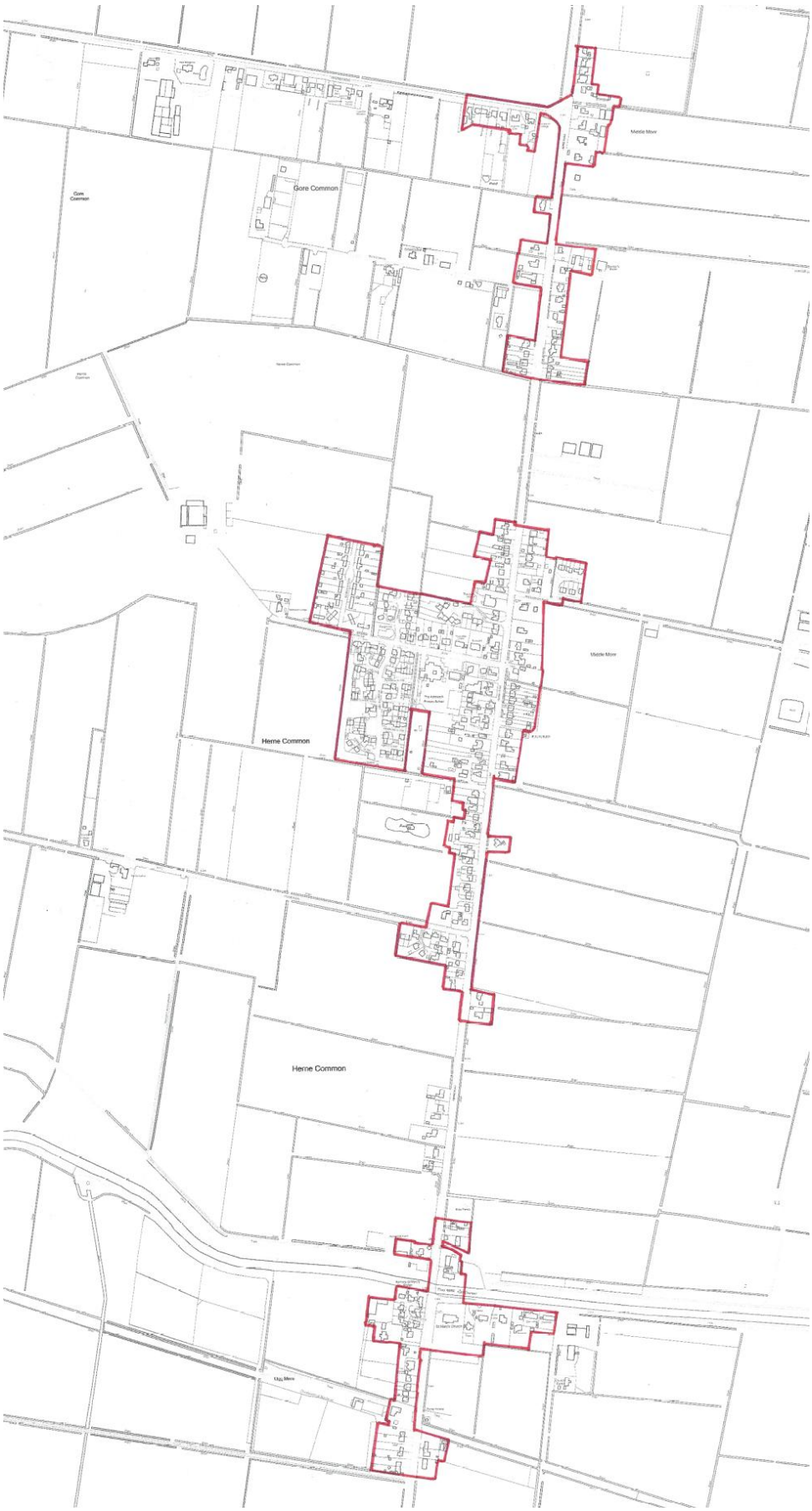
Map 4c – Settlement Boundary – Ramsey Heights © Crown Copyright

Settlement Boundary Plan Area Boundary



Map 4d – Settlement Boundary – Ramsey Mereside © Crown Copyright

Settlement Boundary Plan Area Boundary

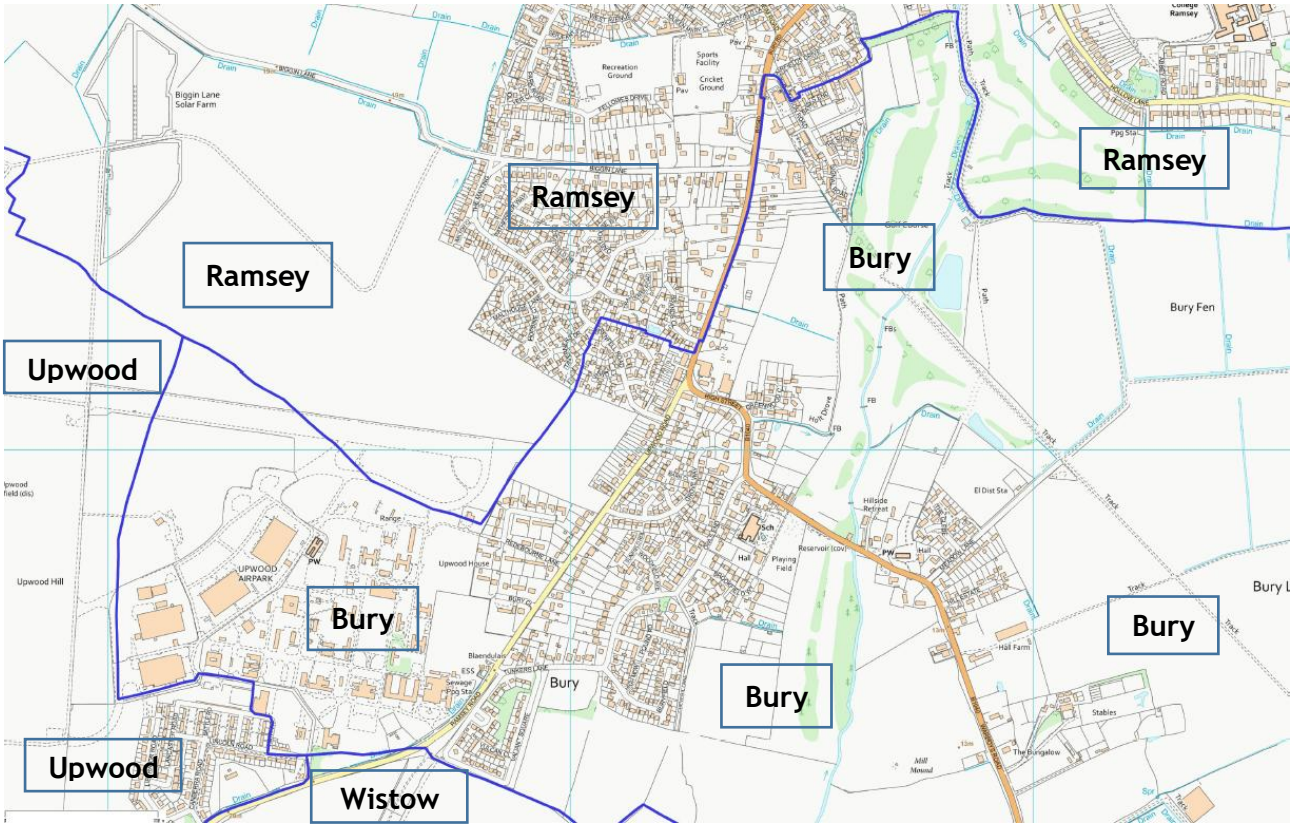


Map 4e – Settlement Boundary – Ramsey St Mary's © Crown Copyright

Settlement Boundary Plan Area Boundary

20. Protected Settlement Break

20.1 Parts of Bury immediately abut the town of Ramsey, together with Upwood Airfield the two settlements form the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area. The Upwood Airfield area actually falls mostly in the Parish of Bury, with the northern part partly in the Parish of Ramsey and the western side in the Parish of Upwood. The inter-relationship between the various Parishes can be seen on the map below.



Map 5 - The Upwood Airfield Area Showing the Various Parishes © Crown Copyright

Parish Boundaries

20.2 The Parish boundary between Bury and Ramsey was established before much of the growth and development occurred. Over time a degree of coalescence between Bury and Ramsey has already occurred. The northern part of Bury around Signal Road is contiguous with the main part of Ramsey, as such although spatially part of Bury, it physically and visually appears as an extension to Ramsey. The two settlements are however two distinct communities and are in two separate but contiguous Parishes.

20.2 The inter-relationship between Ramsey and Bury can be considered in relation to the two broad areas of: 1. East of the B1040; and 2. West of the B1040. As the B1040 for part of its length forms the Parish boundary on the north-south alignment, this provides a logical feature to choose as the central point to work from in order to undertake an assessment.

20.4 East of the B1040 - There are in fact no gaps remaining between the two Parishes of Ramsey and Bury to the east of the B1040. However, there is a gap between the northern part of Bury around Signal Road and the main part of Bury village. This remaining gap is the only visual and physical separation between the main cores of Bury and Ramsey. Consequently, the Bury Neighbourhood Plan has identified this as a Protected Settlement Break as the only gap remaining to prevent the complete coalescence of Ramsey and Bury.

20.5 The importance of the gap between Low Bury and White Arches on Bury Road was confirmed in appeal APP/H0520/W/16/3155400 which was dismissed in November 2016. Ramsey and Bury have already coalesced in part over past decades, this means that the remaining physical and visual breaks that remain are even more important to protect. Land to the east of Bury Road between Low Bury and White Arches along with the land to the rear running back to the golf course was deemed important to retain as undeveloped to prevent coalescence. Consequently, that area became a protected settlement break in the made Bury Neighbourhood Plan. There is no need for the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan to do anything further in this area to prevent coalescence.

20.6 West of the B1040 - Bury has grown, including through the recent development of Longland Crescent to the west of Upwood Road. Ramsey has grown, including through the recent development of Frost Way and Stonemason Way. This recent housing development has led to the greater threat of coalescence on the western side between Ramsey, Bury and Upwood Airfield. There is a wedge of countryside remaining between the northern side of Upwood Airfield, the western side of Longland Crescent and the southern side of housing on the south-western fringe of the town of Ramsey.

20.7 Given that the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 proposes that the 'Ramsey Spatial Planning Area' has allocations for 895 homes and 2 hectares of employment land there is a real threat that unchecked growth could lead to further coalescence between Ramsey and Bury. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 does not include any policy to prevent the coalescence of Ramsey and Bury, although the Bury Neighbourhood Plan does. In terms of consistency, it is appropriate for the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan to also secure this important community objective of retaining the distinct settlements of Ramsey and Bury.

20.8 There is also the potential through further urban extension for development on Upwood Airfield to lead to coalescence on the western side between Ramsey and Bury. Part of the northern part of Upwood Airfield lies within Ramsey Parish, although if developed spatially this area would effectively operate as part of Upwood Airfield. The allocations at Upwood Airfield as a whole visually and spatially appears to be part of Bury. The northern side of the Airfield in this area is rather distinctively formed by the former runway and the hedgerow and treed boundary. To the north of this is a wedge-shaped agricultural field that currently provides a visual and physical separation in the built form between Ramsey and Bury including Upwood Airfield. The area has a width of around 130m at its eastern end rising to around 230m at the western end.



20.9 The emerging Local Plan Update to 2046[29] proposes to allocate the northern side of the Airfield including the area formed by the former runway up to the hedgerow and treed boundary as Bury 3: RAF Upwood - Phase 3. This proposed allocation would be for a mixed-use development comprising of commercial development and open space comprising 170 homes and about 11.5 ha of land for green infrastructure. This emerging allocation in the Local Plan Update to 2046 would bring built development on Upwood Airfield closer to the existing built development in Ramsey. Leaving just a single field that would prevent Ramsey and Bury completely coalescing. Development pressure from windfall proposals has been significant in the Ramsey Spatial Area and is likely to continue for some time given the fact that Huntingdonshire does not have a demonstrable 5-year housing land supply.

[29] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-update/preferred-options/

20.10 Retaining a physical and visual separation in this area would be important to retain the distinct separate identity of Ramsey and Bury. The principle of preventing further coalescence between the two settlements has been established in the made Bury Neighbourhood Plan. As such it has been found to be an appropriate strategy by the Independent Examiner who undertook the examination of the Bury Neighbourhood Plan. It is important that adjoining Neighbourhood Areas have regard to cross boundary issues in the interest of consistency and so as not to undermine other parts of the Development Plan.

20.11 Consequently, it is considered to be necessary and appropriate in the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan to set out a suitable policy approach to prevent further coalescence between Ramsey and Bury. As such a protected settlement break between Ramsey and the planned urban edge of Upwood Airfield is therefore included in the Neighbourhood Plan. This is important to protect distinct identities of Ramsey and Bury as separate settlements.

20.12 Although the northern end of the airfield is not currently allocated for development, it is an integral part of the wider airfield that has been identified for strategic growth in the Local Plan to 2036. In the Land Availability Assessment (LAA), the site on the northern end of the airfield is known as Bury 7: RAF Upwood - Phase 3, Bury. In the LAA, Huntingdonshire have identified that Bury 7 would be suitable for future development. Given its inter-relationship to the existing development on Upwood Airfield, without pre-determining future decisions; it is considered reasonable to take the position that development continuing on the airfield is likely to occur. The Local Plan to 2046 is considering it as an emerging allocation now known as allocation 'Bury 3'.



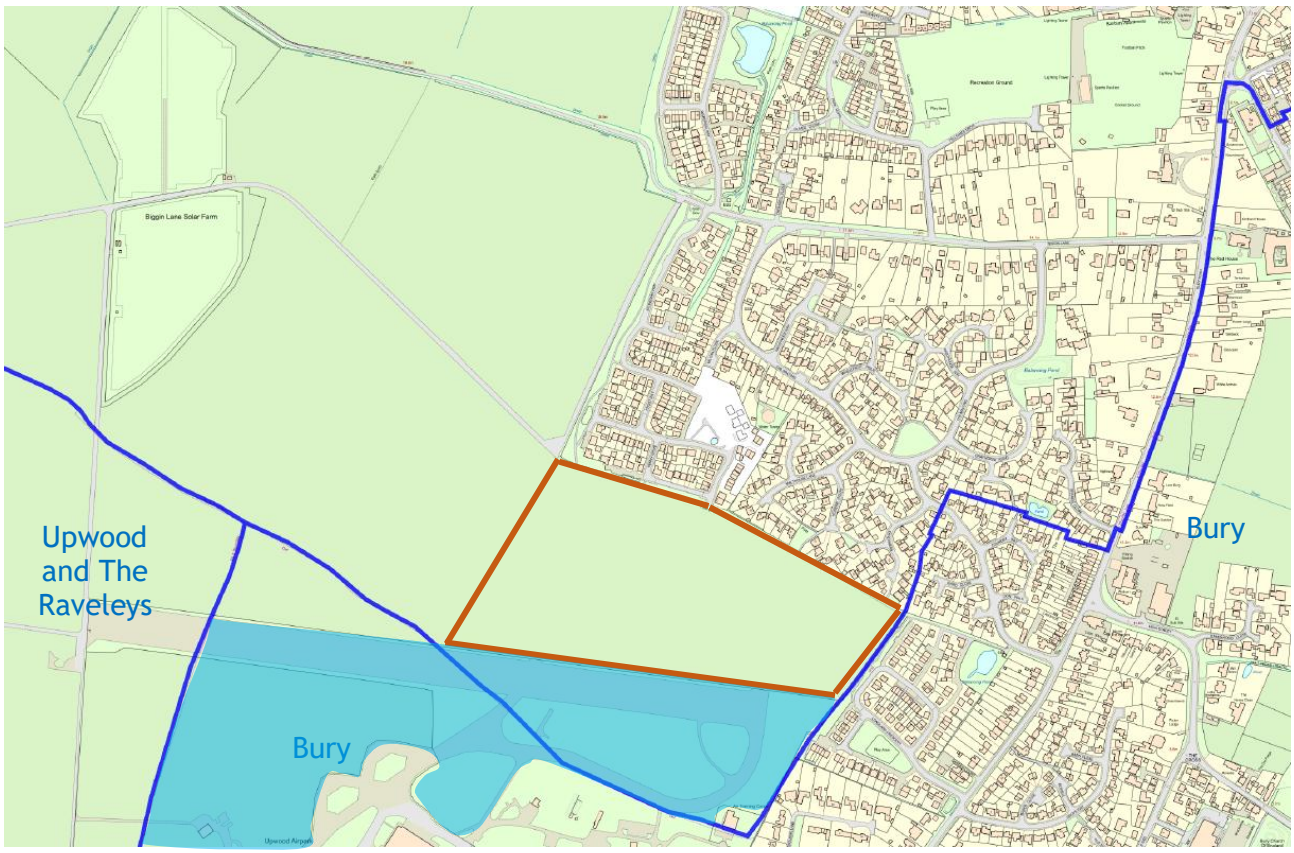
20.13 The protected settlement break forms an important green corridor which would assist in retaining the identity of the two existing settlements. It also provides opportunities for new green infrastructure and/or biodiversity enhancement to support the delivery of the strategic allocations. It is considered that the edge of the former Upwood airfield runway forms an existing defensible boundary that is more appropriate to form the southern boundary of the protected settlement break, rather than the current allocated site boundaries which are further south. The northern and eastern boundaries of the protected settlement break is to be the existing and planned current edge of the built-up area of Ramsey and Bury respectively.

20.14 More information on the importance of the Protected Settlement Break is contained in the Settlement Boundary Methodology document.

Policy 2 – Protected Settlement Break

The area shown on Map 6 is identified as a protected settlement break to prevent the coalescence of Ramsey with Bury.

Proposals for built development within the protected settlement break will not be supported unless the purpose of preventing coalescence and retaining spatial, physical and visual separation between Ramsey and Bury is secured.



Map 6 – Protected Settlement Break © Crown Copyright

Protected Settlement Break Plan Area Boundary

Proposed Bury 3 Allocation in the emerging Local Plan Update to 2046

21. Community Facilities

21.1 Community Facilities is a generic term used for community infrastructure, services and facilities. This includes village halls, church halls, community centres and multi-use facilities. These facilities typically provide opportunities for community uses such as events, sports and activities. Community facilities can also provide space for arts or cultural activities and serve wider purposes such as providing affordable space for events or small businesses to hire. As a town, Ramsey has a wider range of community facilities than the villages. Ramsey Town Council provides and hosts a number of community services[30]. Ramsey is also blessed to have community organisations including the Ramsey Neighbourhoods Trust[31].



21.2 Ramsey Forty Foot has limited community facilities comprising a village hall, a recreation field and a public house. Ramsey Heights doesn't have any meeting facilities; it does have a community park that includes some outdoor gym equipment and children's play area. Ramsey Mereside also has limited community facilities namely a village hall and a recreation field which incorporates a children's play area and outdoor exercise equipment. In addition, the village

[30] https://www.ramseytowncouncil.gov.uk/community
[31] https://ramseyneighbourhoodstrust.org/

hall hosts a public bar open on Friday evenings year-round and through the summer on Sunday afternoons. Ramsey St Mary's has a wider range of community facilities, including St Mary's Church, post office/store, primary school & pre-school and children's play area. Ramsey St Mary's no longer has a village hall. The part of Pondersbridge in Ramsey parish contains the church and village hall. The area of Ramsey Hollow does not contain any community facilities.

21.3 Ramsey town contains a number of important community facilities including library (with WC on the outside), infant school, junior school, secondary school, nurseries/pre-schools, GP surgery, health centre, dentist, fire station, community centre, supermarket, discount store, petrol filling stations, post office, numerous retail stores, car repairs/servicing, public houses, skate park, children's play areas, recreation fields, football clubs including Ramsey Town Football Club and Colts Football Development team, cricket club & pavilion, cemetery, St Thomas a Becket Church, Methodist Church, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Baptist Church, Ramsey Rural Museum, Ramsey 1940s Camp and leisure centre.



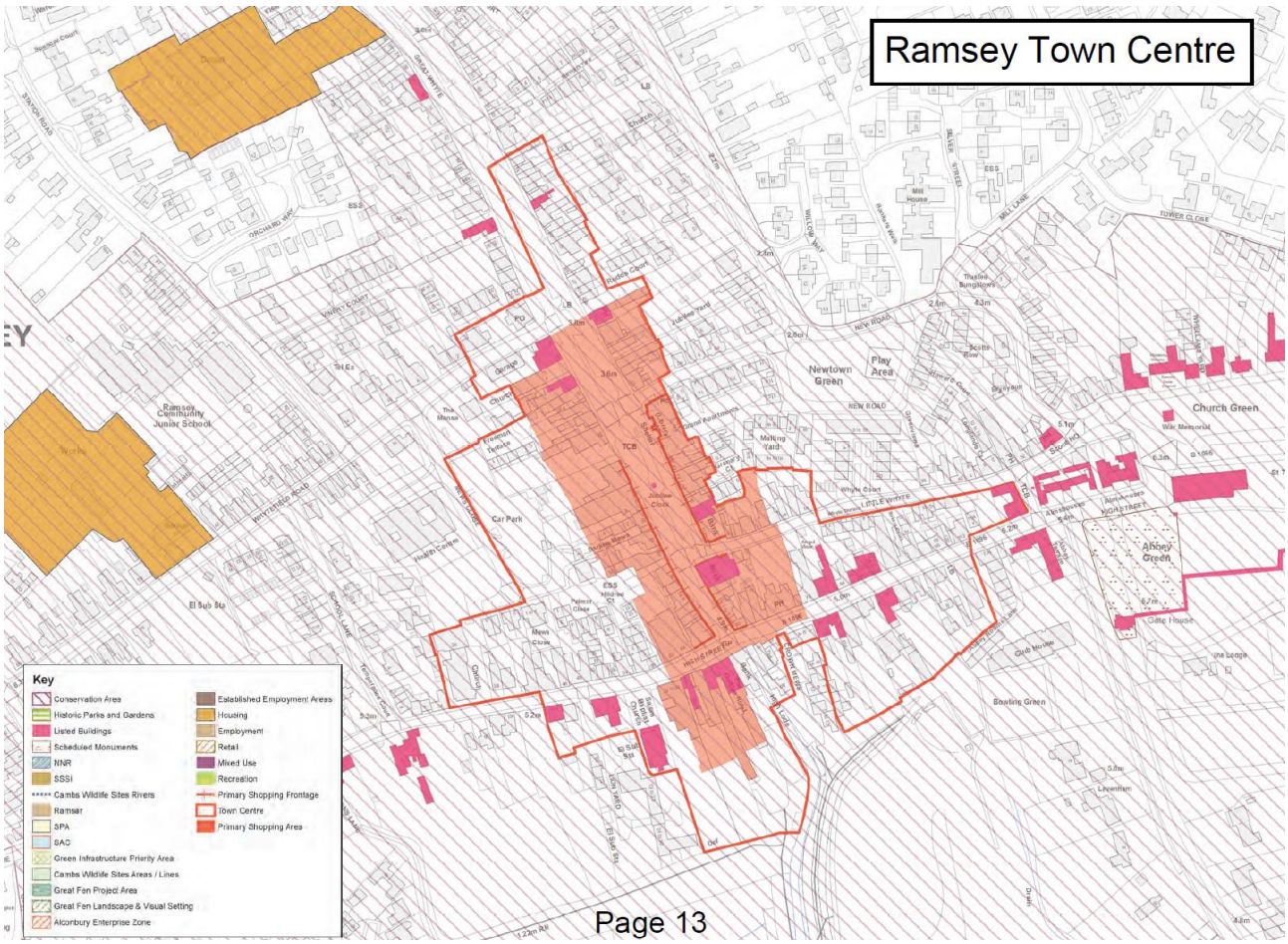
21.4 Important areas of open space and green infrastructure include the allotments at Stocking Fen Road, Muchwood & Mary's Wood[32], Ramsey Heights Nature Reserve, Ramsey Golf Club, The Old Nene Golf & Country Club, Bill Fen Marina and Ramsey Abbey Grounds. Open space can take many forms including parks, village/town greens, play areas, sports pitches, allotments, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. Many provide important recreational and sporting facilities or are important for biodiversity.

21.5 Policy LP 22 - Local Services and Community Facilities of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 looks to support new community facilities and to safeguard against their loss. The supporting text to Policy LP22 in paragraphs 6.47 to 6.49 on page 92 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 details the type of evidence necessary to demonstrate how it can be shown that community facilities might be considered to be poorly used or not viable[33]. This is equally relevant to the application of this Neighbourhood Plan policy.

21.6 Policy LP 32 - Protection of Open Space is also relevant as it looks to protect against the loss of open space, outdoor recreation facilities, allotments and areas of garden land that provide amenity value. The town and villages in the parish of Ramsey have a number of highly valuable community facilities within the respective communities which are vital to be retained in order to help protect the distinct identity of the villages and the town.

[32] Muchwood and Mary's Wood is a small 2-hectare wood owned by The Woodland Trust, a small meadow with a bench in the north of the site was designed as a special feature to commemorate the Millennium

[33] In particular paragraph 6.49 states: *"Assessing the level of community support for a local service or facility is a matter of judgement, but could be informed by information such as evidence of the level of recent usage, as well as the number and nature of comments made on an application by members of the local community. For commercially run facilities such as local shops and pubs, the Council considers that a robust marketing exercise is the most transparent way of demonstrating that such facilities are no longer viable. This should be of sufficient duration to allow the local community time to consider making a bid to run or acquire premises of value through the Community Right to Bid. In seeking to justify the loss of local services or community facilities, applicants will also be required to consider whether existing premises or sites can be adapted to retain a viable community facility or service. Effective marketing will in most cases need to be for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting its permitted use with details kept of any offers received and detailed reasoning for declining them. However, in particular circumstances it may be appropriate for alternative arrangements to establish if there is any realistic prospect of maintaining the service or facility."*



Map 7 - Ramsey Town Centre Extract from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Policies Map
© Huntingdonshire District Council

21.7 Policy LP 21 Town Centre Vitality and Viability define a town centre boundary for Ramsey. The policy looks to protect the role of the town centre and the services and facilities it provides.

21.8 Another mechanism to protect and keep valued buildings or land in use for the community is the Community Right to Bid Scheme. It gives local community groups the opportunity to nominate buildings or other land to be included on the Huntingdonshire Council's list[34] of Assets of Community Value. An asset should contribute to the community's social well-being or social interests. Once on the register, if an asset comes up for sale or lease, a community group has a period of time in which they can register their interest as a potential bidder, delaying a sale on the open market. Currently Ramsey parish has no recorded Assets of Community Value.



21.9 The planned growth will necessitate additional or enhanced provision of community facilities. Consequently, the Neighbourhood Plan sets out a framework to address the specific requirements of community facilities in Ramsey. Any new community facilities should be accessible to the community they are intended to serve.

[34] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/council-democracy/community-right-to-bid/

21.10 Development proposals regarding the relocation of Ramsey Town Football Club will be supported and could bring significant long-term benefits to the local community for all ages and genders, creating a modern hub for sport, recreation, and social connection. A new site would allow the club to develop upgraded pitches, accessible spectator areas, and improved changing rooms, while also unlocking space for multi-use facilities such as meeting rooms, community groups and all-weather training areas. Overall, the relocation could act as a catalyst for increased participation in sport, stronger community engagement and a more vibrant local environment.

21.10 In early consultation, when questioning people about what they valued most about living within Ramsey these key themes came out: People, community, countryside, quiet, friendly, rural area, shops and customer service, amenities. Concerns in early consultation included how the area is being built up with a lack of infrastructure. The policy is intended to apply to existing community facilities; any future community facilities provided as part of new development will also be protected under this policy. The main community facilities in the Parish are shown on Maps 8a to 8e below.

Policy 3 - Community Facilities

Development proposals that result in the improvement/enhancement of existing community facilities including meeting/event spaces (such as village halls or community centres); play areas; leisure/recreation/sports facilities; allotments; education facilities (pre-schools/nurseries, primary schools, secondary school or adult/community education); churches; library; Ramsey Rural Museum; Ramsey 1940s Camp; cemeteries/burial grounds; or small-scale local retail facilities in the villages will be supported subject to their compliance with other development plan policies.

Development proposals that result in the provision of new community facilities both within and outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary of Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside; and Ramsey St Mary's will be supported subject to their compliance with other development plan policies; provided the scale is commensurate with size of facility to meet the needs of the respective settlement and where relevant the catchment hinterland. In particular proposals for new play areas; sports/recreation facilities; and local health provision will be supported. Proposals for local small-scale retail provision will be particularly supported in or adjacent to the villages.

Proposals that would result in the loss of the following community facilities will be resisted unless it can be shown[35] that they are poorly used, not viable or adequate replacement provision is made elsewhere in Ramsey parish which is an equivalent service or community facility located where it is equally or more accessible to the existing and planned new community it is intended to serve:

Ramsey (town)

- Ramsey Welfare Allotments (A)
- Ramsey Library (B)
- Ramsey Spinning Infant School (C)
- Ramsey Community Junior School (D)
- Abbey College, Ramsey (Secondary School) (E)
- Ramsey Health Centre (F)
- Rainbow GP Surgery (G)

[35] See paragraph 21.5 and footnote 22

- Ramsey Dental Surgery (H)
- Fire Station (I)
- Ramsey Community Centre (J)
- Petrol Filling Stations (K)
- Post Office (L)
- Skate Park (M)
- Children's Play Areas (N)
- Recreation Fields (including King George V Playing Field and Tom Jones Memorial Fields - Ramsey Colts FC Ground) (O)
- Football Club and Cricket Club & Pavilion (P)
- Cemetery (Q)
- St Thomas a Becket Church (R)
- Methodist Church (S)
- Sacred Heart Catholic Church (T)
- Great Whyte Baptist Church (U)
- Salem Baptist Church (V)
- Ramsey Rural Museum (W)
- Ramsey 1940s Camp (X)
- Leisure Centre (Y)



Ramsey Forty Foot

- Village Hall (1)
- Recreation Field (2)
- Children's Play Area (3)
- The George Public House (4)

Ramsey Heights

- Community Park and Children's Play Area (5)



Ramsey Mereside

- Village Hall (6)
- Recreation Field (7)
- Children's Play Area (8)

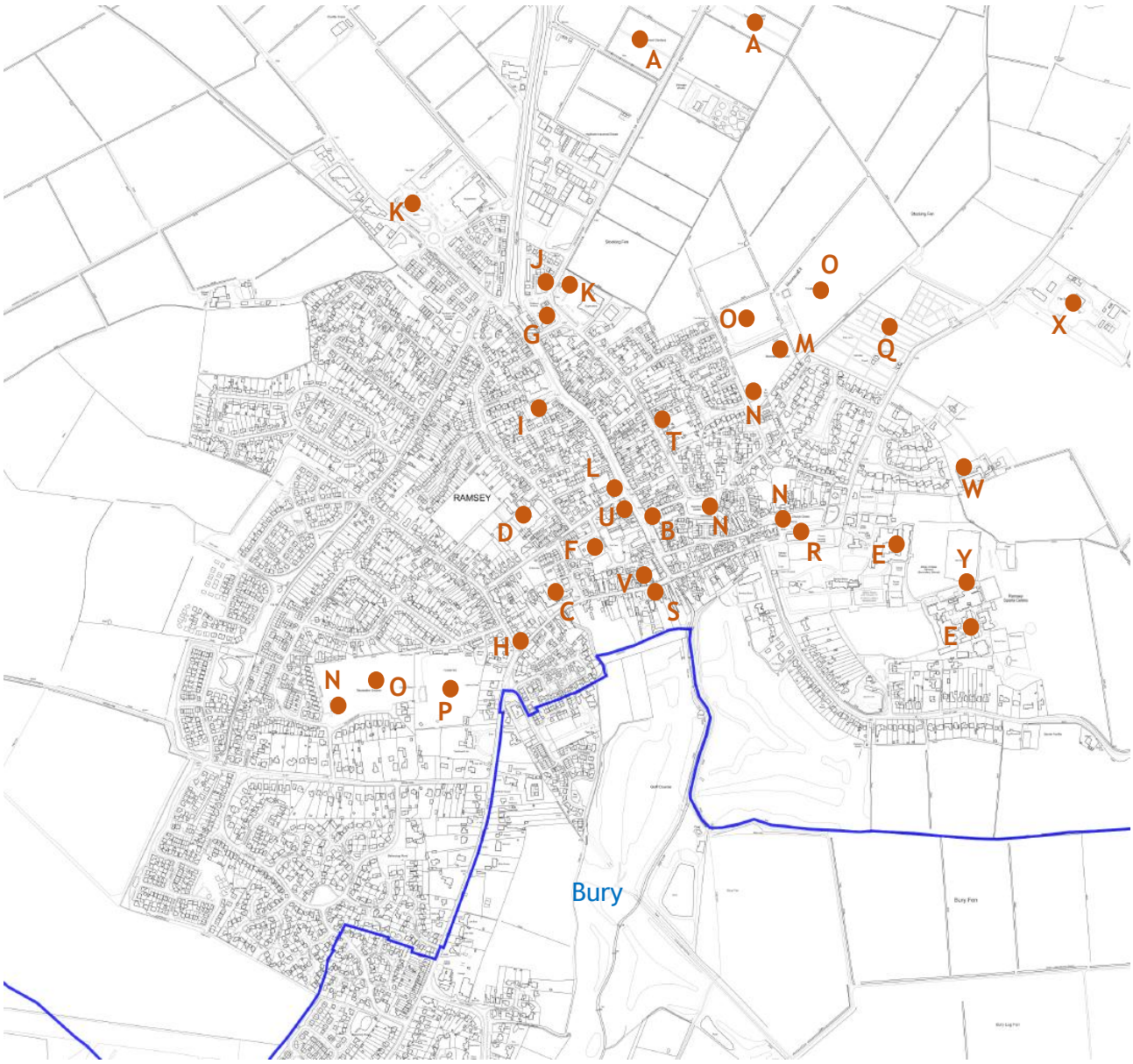
Ramsey St Mary's

- St Mary's Church (9)
- Post Office/Store (10)
- Ashbeach Primary School & Pre-school (11)
- Children's Play Area (12)

Pondersbridge

- Church of St Thomas (13)
- Village Hall (14)

(Note the letters in the bullets in the policy for Ramsey Town and the numbers for the Villages are reference letters and numbers respectively on the maps below)



Map 8a – Main Community Facilities – Ramsey (town) © Crown Copyright

● Main Community Facilities (approximate location) ▭ Plan Area Boundary

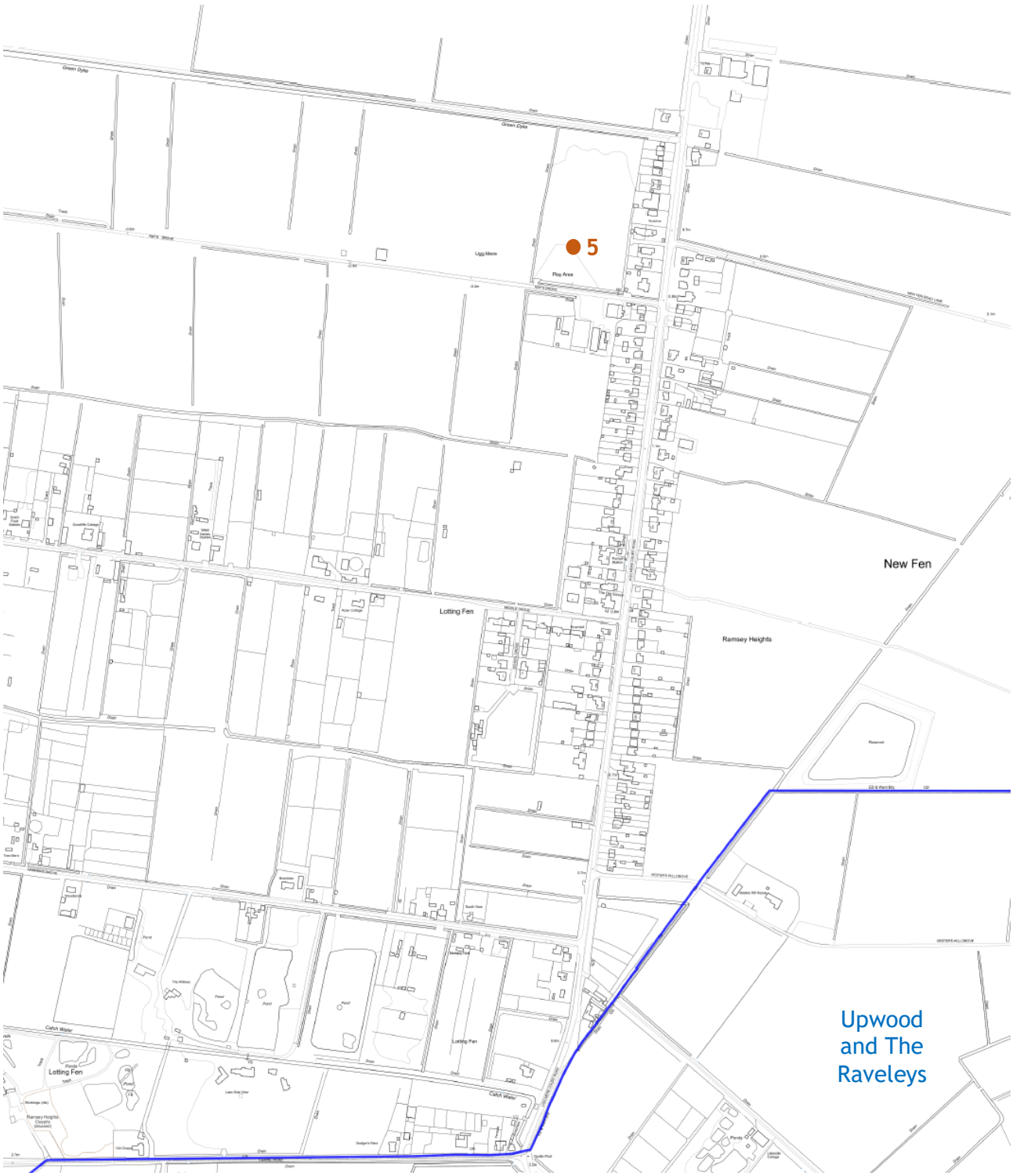




Map 8b – Main Community Facilities – Ramsey Forty Foot © Crown Copyright

● Main Community Facilities (approximate location) ▭ Plan Area Boundary

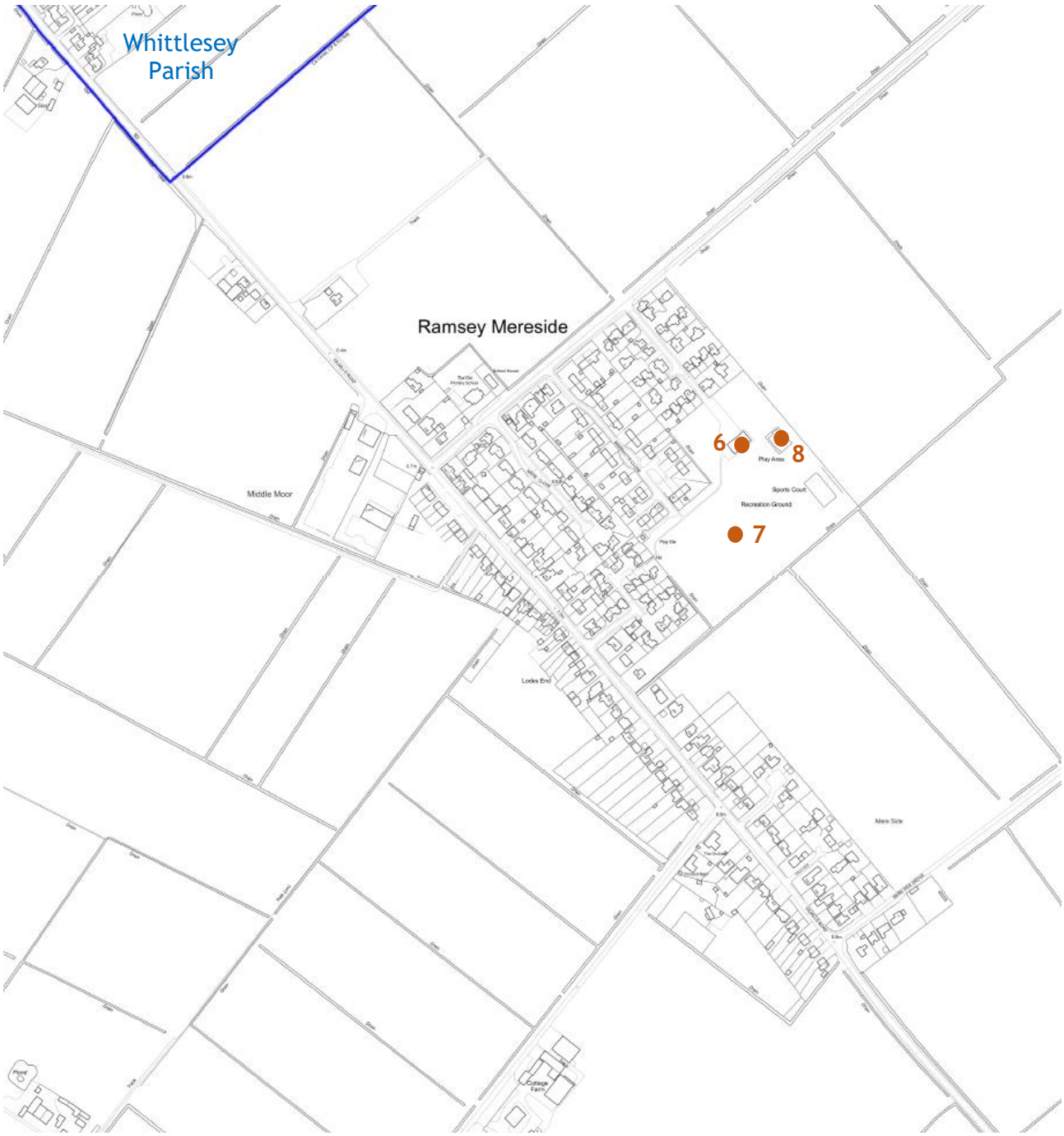




Map 8c – Main Community Facilities – Ramsey Heights © Crown Copyright

● Main Community Facilities (approximate location) ▭ Plan Area Boundary





Map 8d – Main Community Facilities – Ramsey Mereside © Crown Copyright

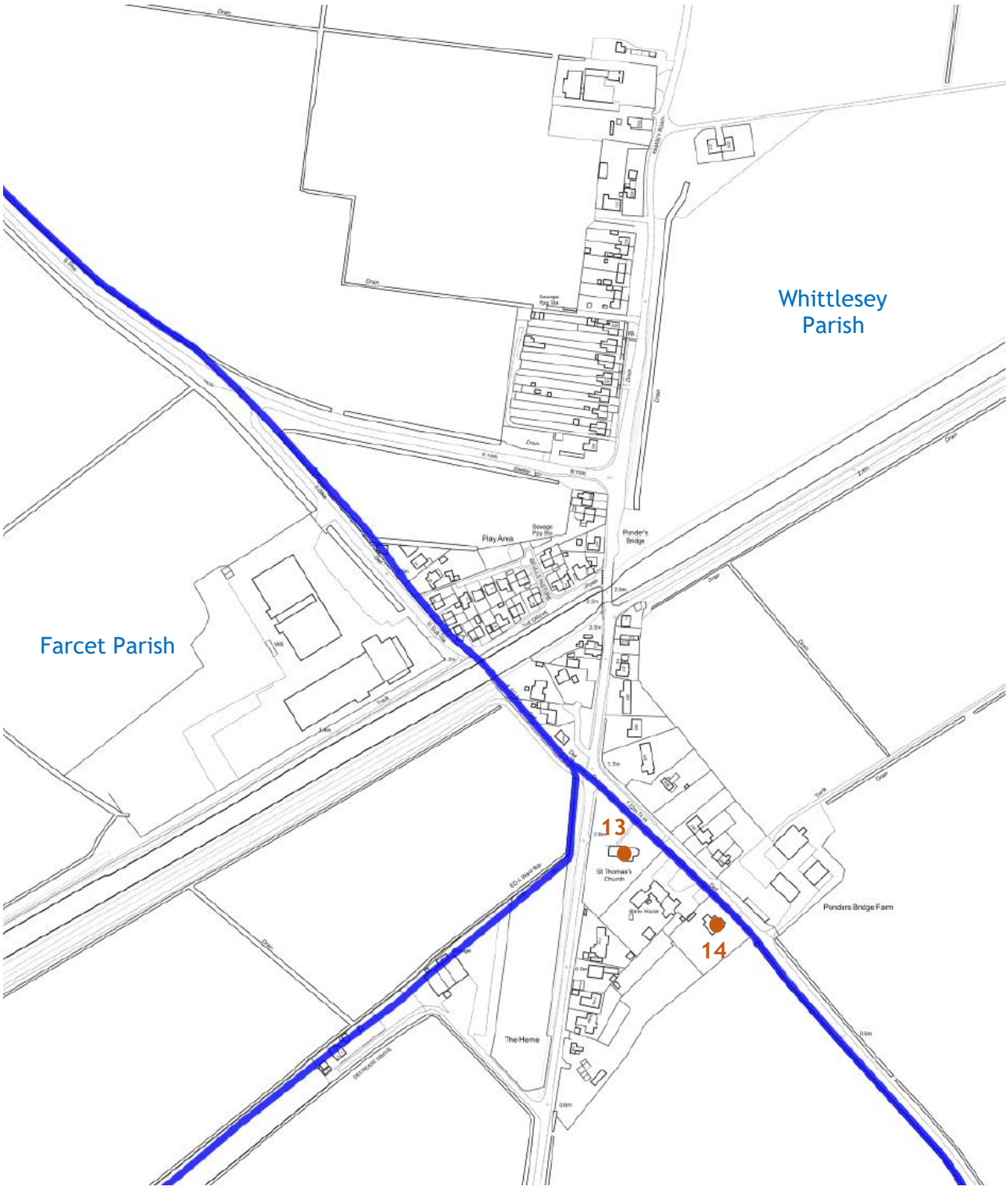
● Main Community Facilities (approximate location) ▭ Plan Area Boundary





Map 8e – Main Community Facilities – Ramsey St Mary's © Crown Copyright

● Main Community Facilities (approximate location) ▭ Plan Area Boundary



Map 8f – Main Community Facilities – Pondersbridge © Crown Copyright

● Main Community Facilities (approximate location) ▭ Plan Area Boundary

22. Community Engagement

22.1 The Neighbourhood Plan area is undergoing a significant level of change. The Neighbourhood Plan should support the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to deliver the development envisaged.

22.2 The local community also wishes to encourage developers to proactively engage in community engagement with the Town Council and local residents in developing new sustainable additions to the existing communities which also benefit the existing host community. There is a limited range of applications for which compulsory pre-application community engagement is required.

22.3 Through the Neighbourhood Plan proactive community engagement is encouraged, this is considered to be in the best interests of both those proposing development and the local community that wants to help ensure that appropriate balanced growth and development is secured. Some developers have a good track record of community engagement in relation to sites being proposed. The Neighbourhood Plan wants to ensure that effective community engagement is maintained and improved.

Policy 4 – Community Engagement

Developers considering making proposals for major[36] development within Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside; and Ramsey St Mary's shall demonstrate that they have undertaken early discussion with the Town Council to discuss how pre-application community engagement can be undertaken. The Town Council will work with developers to facilitate effective and proactive community engagement and to ensure that the requirements of this Neighbourhood Plan are taken into consideration.

Proposals for development which are accompanied by a statement of community involvement that details how pre-application community engagement has been addressed in a positive way will be supported.



[36] 'Major development' in terms of this policy means development of 10 or more dwellinghouses (or a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more where dwelling numbers are not known); the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or any development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more

Theme - Heritage & Environment



Theme – Heritage & Environment

Community Aspirations

The Neighbourhood Plan includes community aspirations for each themed section of the Plan. For the Theme – Heritage & Environment, the following are the community aspirations:

Heritage & Tourism



The parish is home to a wealth of heritage assets, and the historic environment has been identified through public consultation as being of particular importance to local residents. Specifically, it is a community aspiration to ensure that the heritage is adequately protected and supported. Events and assets such as the rural museum and Ramsey 1940s Camp are important both to the heritage of the area and the tourism offer.

Potential linkages to proposed major tourism provision at Bedford should be considered to see how the wider sub region can benefit from tourism investment and visitors.

In order to protect the heritage of the area, protection of areas like Stocking Fen and the area north of Tesco should be secured. Retaining Ramsey and Bury as distinct settlements is fundamental to the history of Ramsey; so, protecting a gap between Bury and Ramsey through maintaining a settlement break is a significant community aspiration.

The agricultural origins of the parish are a fundamental part of the character of the area. The preservation of agriculture and the agricultural heritage and culture is therefore important.

Great Fen & Biodiversity



The Great Fen project extends into Ramsey Heights and Ramsey St Mary's, linkages to the Great Fen waterways plan and visitor centre is important.

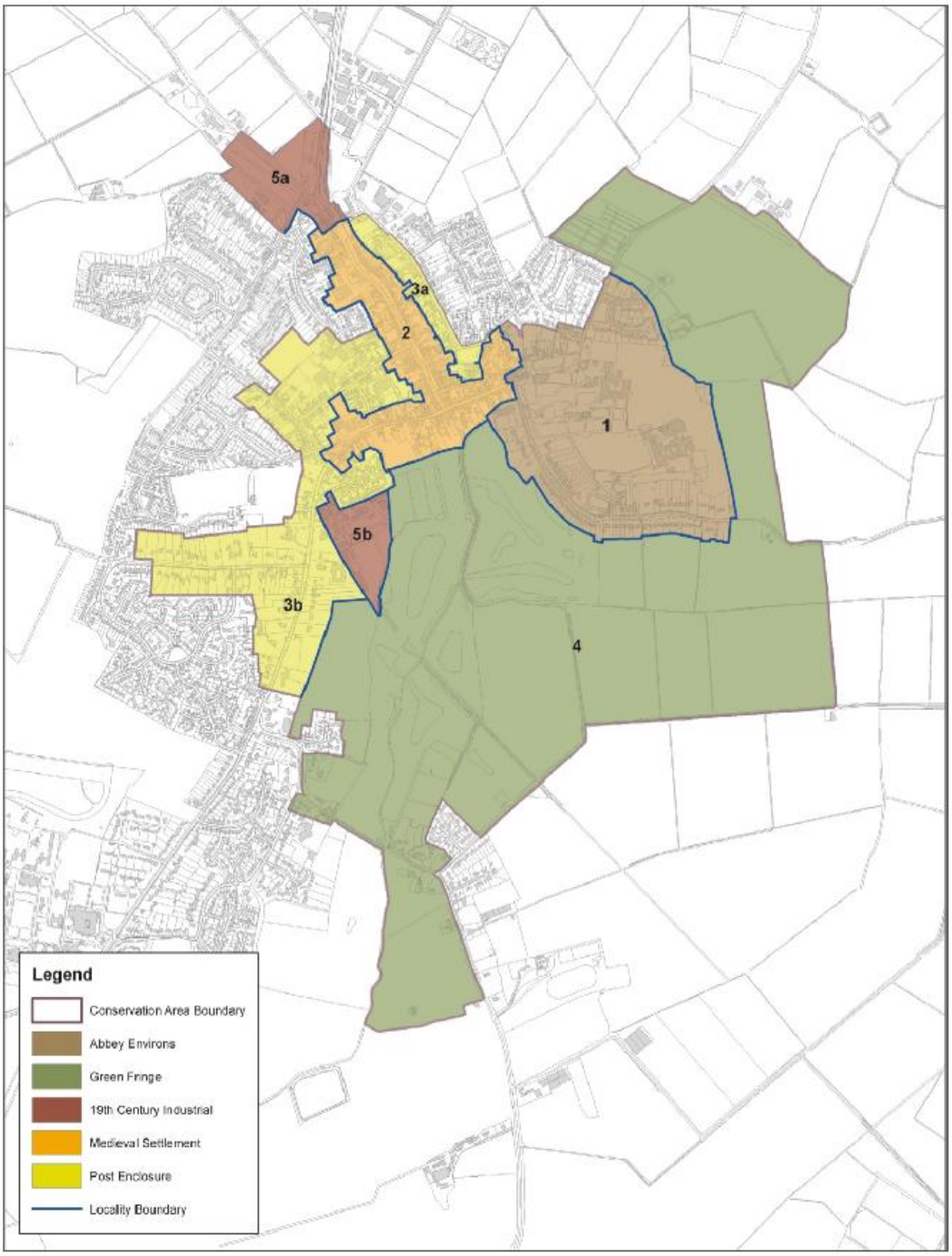
The biodiversity of the area and the protection of green spaces is important to allow the communities to enjoy the outside for recreation and views; whilst limiting recreational disturbance to Woodwalton Fen which is a designated nature conservation site.

Protecting and enhancing the rights of ways and paths would contribute to the health and enjoyment of the local community.

The implications of flood risk should be considered in all aspects of life and development.

23. Built Environment and Heritage Assets

23.1 Heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, landscapes and townscapes which have historic or architectural significance; collectively they help make the historic environment. The protection of individual heritage assets is important not only to safeguard the significance of the asset itself but also to protect the wider historic environment. Early consultation identified that almost all those responding considered it necessary to protect the heritage assets of the parish. People spoke about Ramsey being unique and distinctive, having historical significance, rural character and charm, agricultural heritage and rural traditions, as well as the community events, support and community spirit.



Map 9a – Ramsey Conservation Area Boundary, Extract Taken from Conservation Area Character Appraisal[37] © Huntingdonshire District Council

[37] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/conservation-areas/

23.2 A large part of Ramsey is covered by the Ramsey Conservation Area; the Conservation Area also extends across parts of the neighbouring village of Bury. The Ramsey Conservation Area Character Statement was published in December 2005 by Huntingdonshire District Council. This is a character appraisal[38] whose purpose is to identify and record those special qualities that make up the architectural and historic character. This includes significant trees; significant green spaces; landscape views; and native hedgerows. The plans and text within the Conservation Area Statement provide additional information on the architecture of the conservation area, including the distinctive building materials. This Neighbourhood Plan draws upon this Statement as part of its evidence base.

23.3 Areas of special architectural or historic interest are designated as Conservation Areas to help preserve and enhance them for future generations. Once designated, there are restrictions on the nature of works within Conservation Areas that can be carried out to properties and trees without permission from the local planning authority. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires that "*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*". The effect of development proposals on the special character and significance of Conservation Areas should be given considerable weight when determining planning applications.



23.4 Ramsey Town has a locally distinctive conservation area, the town and the villages have an important fen-edge setting, and the area is under increasing development pressure. Care with design in relation to new development need to take into account factors including:

- Settlement form and grain.
- Connectivity and walking/cycling permeability.
- Street hierarchy and enclosure.
- Landscape led-design.
- Treatment of rural edges.
- Integration with heritage assets.

23.5 Two existing documents already provide helpful design advice, these are the Conservation Area Character Assessment[39] for the Ramsey Conservation Area. Together with the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD[40]. Chapter 8 of the SPD provides specific advice for Ramsey[41].

23.6 The Neighbourhood Plan area contains numerous heritage assets, this includes designated heritage assets such as Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area. In addition, the area contains non-designated heritage assets which can include archaeology and buildings or structures that are locally important but are not statutorily Listed. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies some non-designated heritage assets. The

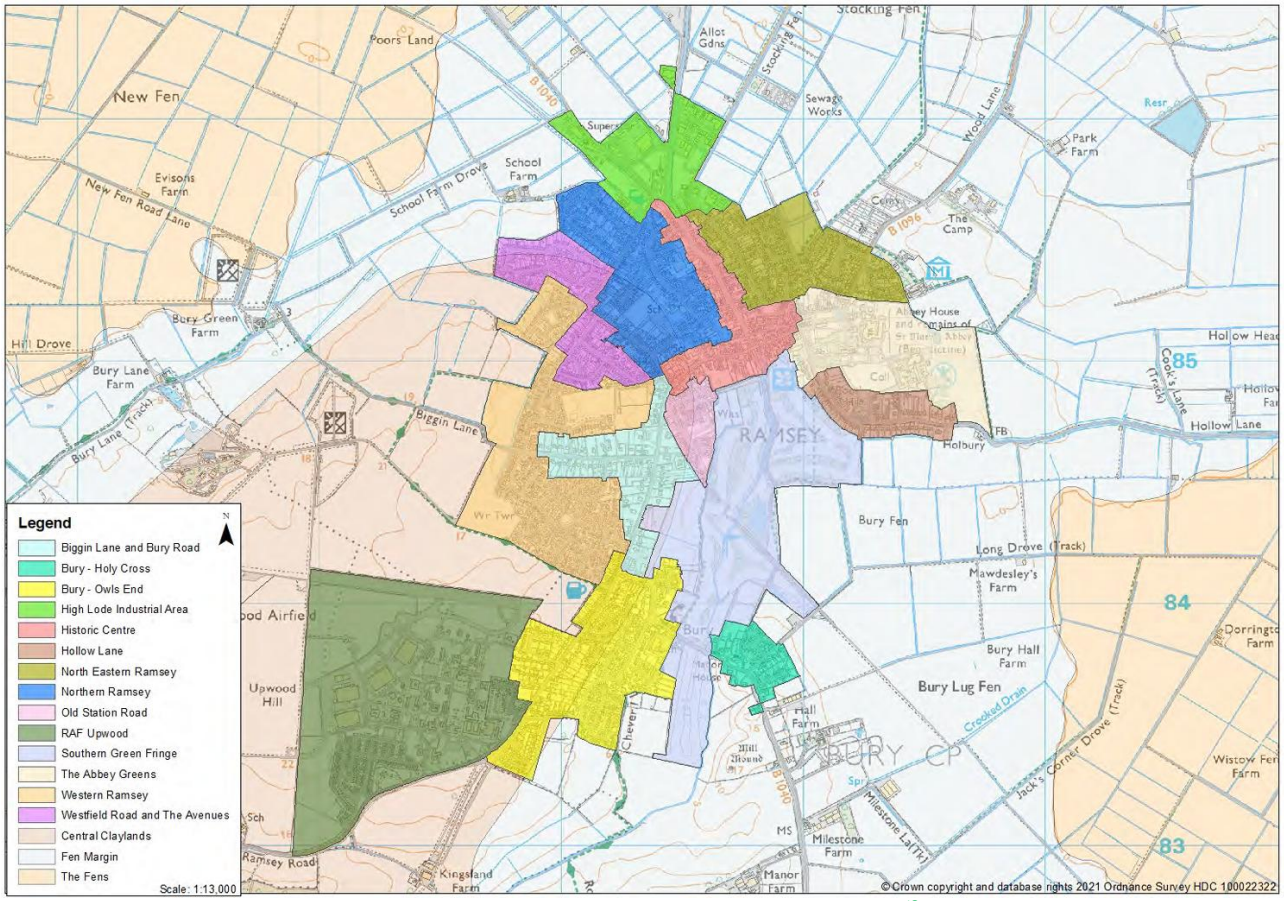
[38] http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2329/ramsey-conservation-area-character-assessment-adopted-december-2005.pdf

[39] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2329/ramsey-conservation-area-character-assessment-adopted-december-2005.pdf

[40] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-documents/landscape-and-townscape-spd-2022/

[41] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/6108/11-chapter-8-ramsey-spa.pdf

Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record[42] also identifies a number of non-designated heritage assets.



Map 9b – Character Areas from the Landscape and Townscape SPD[43] © Huntingdonshire District Council

23.7 There are five Scheduled Monuments (SAMs) within the Plan Area as follows:

Ramsey (town)

- Booth's Hill, Ramsey Abbey
- Ramsey Abbey (remains of)

Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey St Mary's and Pondersbridge

- Two bowl barrows 320m NNW of Waypost Farm: part of a barrow cemetery south of Ramsey Forty Foot
- Worlick moated site and fishponds (south-east of Ramsey Forty Foot)
- Five bowl barrows 100m north of Waypost Farm: part of a barrow cemetery south of Ramsey Forty Foot

23.8 The Neighbourhood Plan area contains sixty Listed Buildings as follows:

Ramsey (town)

Grade I

- Gatehouse To Ramsey Abbey, Abbey Green, Ramsey

[42] https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/archaeology/cambridgeshire-historic-environment-record-cher

[43] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-documents/landscape-and-townscape-spd-2022/

- Ramsey Abbey School, Ramsey *(now known as Abbey House)*
- Church of St Thomas Ã Becket, Church Green, Ramsey

Grade II*

- The Gables, 31 High Street, Ramsey
- Fountain Approximately 50 Metres South of Ramsey Abbey, Ramsey
- Precinct Wall Running Along the Eastern and Southern Side of Church Green, Along the Eastern and Southern Side of Abbey Green, and Along the Eastern Side of Hollow Lane, Church Green, Ramsey

Grade II

- The Bow Window, 6 High Street, Ramsey
- 29 High Street, Ramsey
- Small Barn to The Gables, High Street, Ramsey
- Detached Kitchen to The Gables, High Street, Ramsey
- 49 High Street, Ramsey
- Salem Chapel, High Street, Ramsey
- 59 High Street, Ramsey
- George Hotel and Box O Chicken, 63 High Street, Ramsey
- 79 and 81 High Street, Ramsey
- 80 High Street, Ramsey
- 83 High Street, Ramsey
- 84, 86 and 86a High Street, Ramsey
- 89 High Street, Ramsey
- 108 High Street, Ramsey
- 110-118 High Street, Ramsey
- 120-124 High Street, Ramsey
- K6 Telephone Kiosk, High Street, Ramsey
- Lion Yard, High Street, Ramsey
- The Unicorn Public House, 56 Little Whyte, Ramsey
- 11 Great Whyte, Ramsey
- 13 Great Whyte, Ramsey
- 34 Great Whyte, Ramsey
- 38 Great Whyte, Ramsey
- Clarence House, 58 Great Whyte, Ramsey
- 63 Great Whyte, Ramsey
- 76 and 78 Great Whyte, Ramsey
- 113 Great Whyte, Ramsey
- Jolly Sailor Public House, Great Whyte, Ramsey
- Clock Tower, Great Whyte, Ramsey
- Abbey Stable Flats, 1-5 Church Green, Ramsey
- 6 Church Green, Ramsey
- 7 Church Green, Ramsey
- 8 Church Green, Ramsey
- 9 Church Green, Ramsey
- 10-11 Church Green, Ramsey
- 12 Church Green, Ramsey
- 13 and 14 Church Green, Ramsey
- 15 Church Green, Ramsey
- Churchyard Cross to East of Church of St Thomas A Becket of Canterbury, Church Green, Ramsey
- War Memorial, Church Green, Ramsey
- Stone Wall Marking Roadside Boundary To 'Abbey Garden', Wood Lane, Ramsey
- Pair of Mortuary Chapels, Wood Lane Cemetery, Ramsey



- Abbey Garden, Wood Lane, Ramsey
- Lodge at Cemetery, Wood Lane, Ramsey
- Abbey Terrace, 1, 2 and 3 Abbey Green, 105 High Street, Ramsey
- Stile, Abbey Green, Ramsey
- Gateway Approximately 150 Yards North of Ramsey Abbey, Within the Grounds of Ramsey Abbey School, Ramsey
- Garden Terrace Wall to the East and South of Ramsey Abbey, Within the Grounds of Ramsey Abbey School, Ramsey

Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey St Mary's and Pondersbridge

Grade I
- Bodsey House, Toll Road, Ramsey (Between Ramsey and Ramsey Forty Foot)

Grade II*
None

Grade II
- Bridge House, Approx 20 Metres North of Forty Foot Bridge, Ramsey Road, Ramsey Forty Foot
- Bridge Farmhouse, 15 Ramsey Road, Ramsey Forty Foot
- Dairy Farmhouse, Mereside Drove, Ramsey Mereside
- Church of St Mary, Ugg Mere Court Road, Ramsey St Mary's
- Church of St Thomas, Oils Mills Road, Pondersbridge

24. Natural Environment

24.1 Most of the parish of Ramsey is rural and contains substantial areas of farmland which contributes significantly to the character of the parish and the setting of the town and villages.

24.2 There is a need to assess the likelihood of proposals or policies within a Neighbourhood Plan having a significant effect on the 'National Sites Network' consisting of areas designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA's). Consideration of the internationally designated Ramsar sites is also necessary; many Ramsar sites are also SACs or SPAs. In the vicinity of the Neighbourhood Plan area the 'National Sites Network' of interest are the Orton Pit SAC (Peterborough); Nene Washes SPA/Ramsar (East of Peterborough); Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar (North-west of Ely); Portholme SAC (Huntingdon/Godmanchester); and Fenland SAC/Woodwalton Fen Ramsar.

24.3 The closest to the Neighbourhood Plan area is the Fenland SAC/Woodwalton Fen Ramsar which immediately abuts the south-west corner of the parish near Ramsey Heights.

24.4 SACs were previously classified in accordance with EC Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). Article 3 of this Directive requires the establishment of a European network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive. These sites are now designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

24.5 SPAs were sites first classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC), more commonly known as the Birds Directive. They were classified for rare and vulnerable birds, listed in Annex I to the Birds Directive, and for regularly occurring migratory species. These SPA sites are now designated under the Wildlife

& Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 2010 (as amended).

24.6 Ramsar Sites are designated under the International Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention, Iran 1971 and amended by the Paris Protocol 1992). Although Ramsar Sites are not protected in law by domestic UK legislation as a matter of policy government, has decreed that unless otherwise specified procedures relating to SPAs and SACs will also apply to Ramsar Sites.



24.7 The Habitats Regulation Assessment screening identifies that the Neighbourhood Plan proposals would not individually or cumulatively result in any potential significant effects on any designated site.

24.8 The plan area contains no National Nature Reserves (NNR), Woodwalton Fen is also a NNR in addition to being a SAC and Ramsar site. The other nearest NNR are at Upwood Meadows around 2km to the south-west and Holme Fen around 2km to the west of Ramsey St Mary's. The Plan area contains no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Woodwalton Fen is also a SSSI in addition to being an NNR, SAC and Ramsar site; Holme Fen is also a SSSI as well as being an NNR. Warboys and Wistow Woods SSSI lies around 3km to the south of Ramsey (town).

24.9 There are impact zones defined around the various designated sites to identify what scale of different types of development need consultation with Natural England. This principally impacts on Ramsey Heights and Ramsey St Mary's, although the impact zones do extend further across the Parish. These impact zones are shown in Appendix 1.

24.10 In terms of County level locally designated sites (County Wildlife Sites), the plan area contains Ramsey Heights Nature Reserve and Reservoir East of Park Farm which lies north-east of Ramsey towards Ramsey Hollow.

24.11 The Great Fen Project Area extends into the western part of the parish near Ramsey Heights and Ramsey St Mary's. The Great Fen Landscape & Visual Setting boundary extends across the western part of the parish, covering land west of Ugg Mere Court Road in Ramsey Heights and west of the B1040 in Ramsey St Mary's.

24.12 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS[44]) is a bold new plan to revive and protect nature across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It's a locally driven, government-backed initiative that maps out where and how we can restore habitats, boost biodiversity, and reconnect people with the natural world, from countryside to city parks.

25. Trees and Woodlands

25.1 As much of the parish of Ramsey contains substantial areas of farmland there are actually few areas of trees and no large woodlands. There are no ancient woodlands within the plan area. The Ward of Ramsey has the lowest amount of tree cover within Huntingdonshire at

[44] https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/local-nature-recovery-strategy-lnrs/

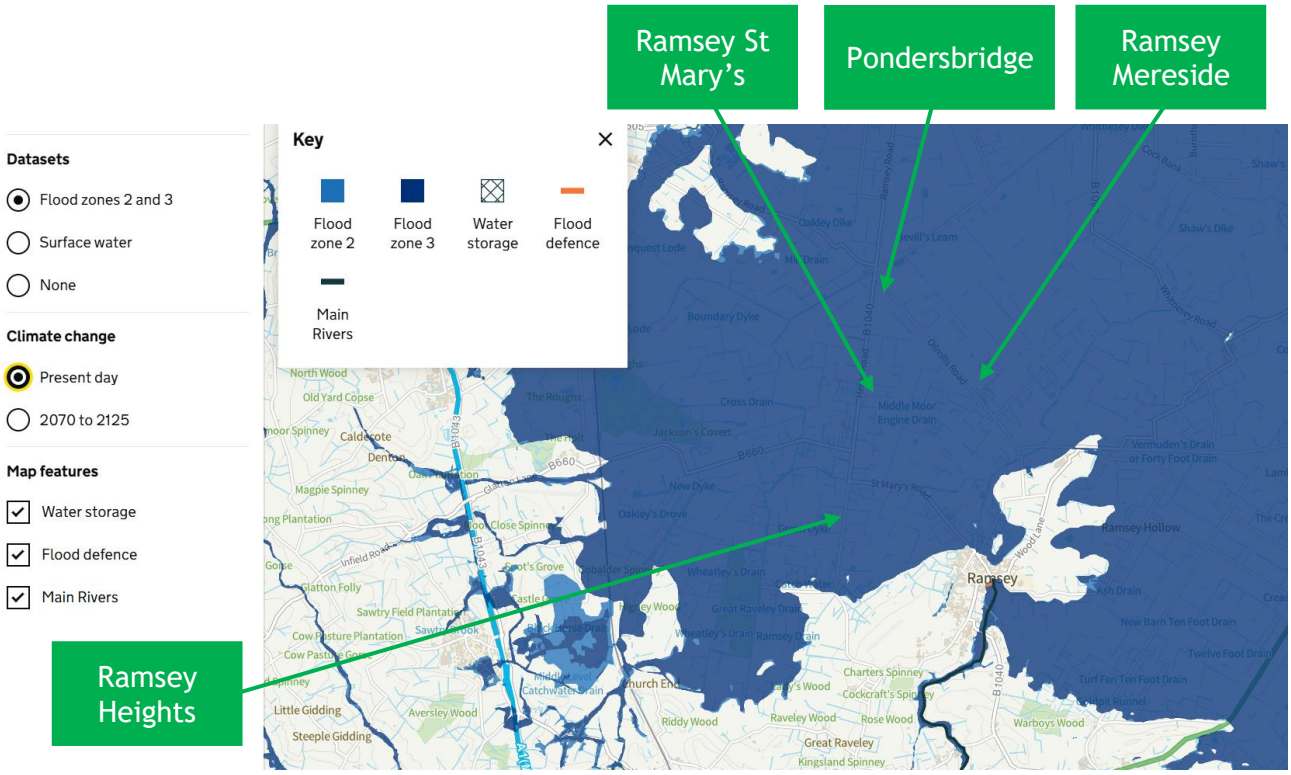
only 3% canopy cover[45]. Field hedgerow and tree planting is therefore important as part of the landscape character. There are some trees and small woods at Muchwood & Mary's Wood and across the two golf courses as well as at the Ramsey Abbey grounds.

25.2 Additional tree and woodland planting within developments should consider the opportunity to increase tree and hedgerow canopy cover across Ramsey. Such planting can perform a dual purpose of enhancing the environment and contributing to biodiversity net gain[46].



26. Flood Risk and Drainage

26.1 Most of the parish is subject to fluvial (river) flood risk as shown on the map below. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided, by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere[47]. Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey St Mary's and Pondersbridge lie within Flood Zone 3 and is therefore at a risk of flooding greater than 1 in 100 years. Ramsey Hollow is also in the flood zone 3.



Map 10a – Flood Zones 2 and 3 © Environment Agency

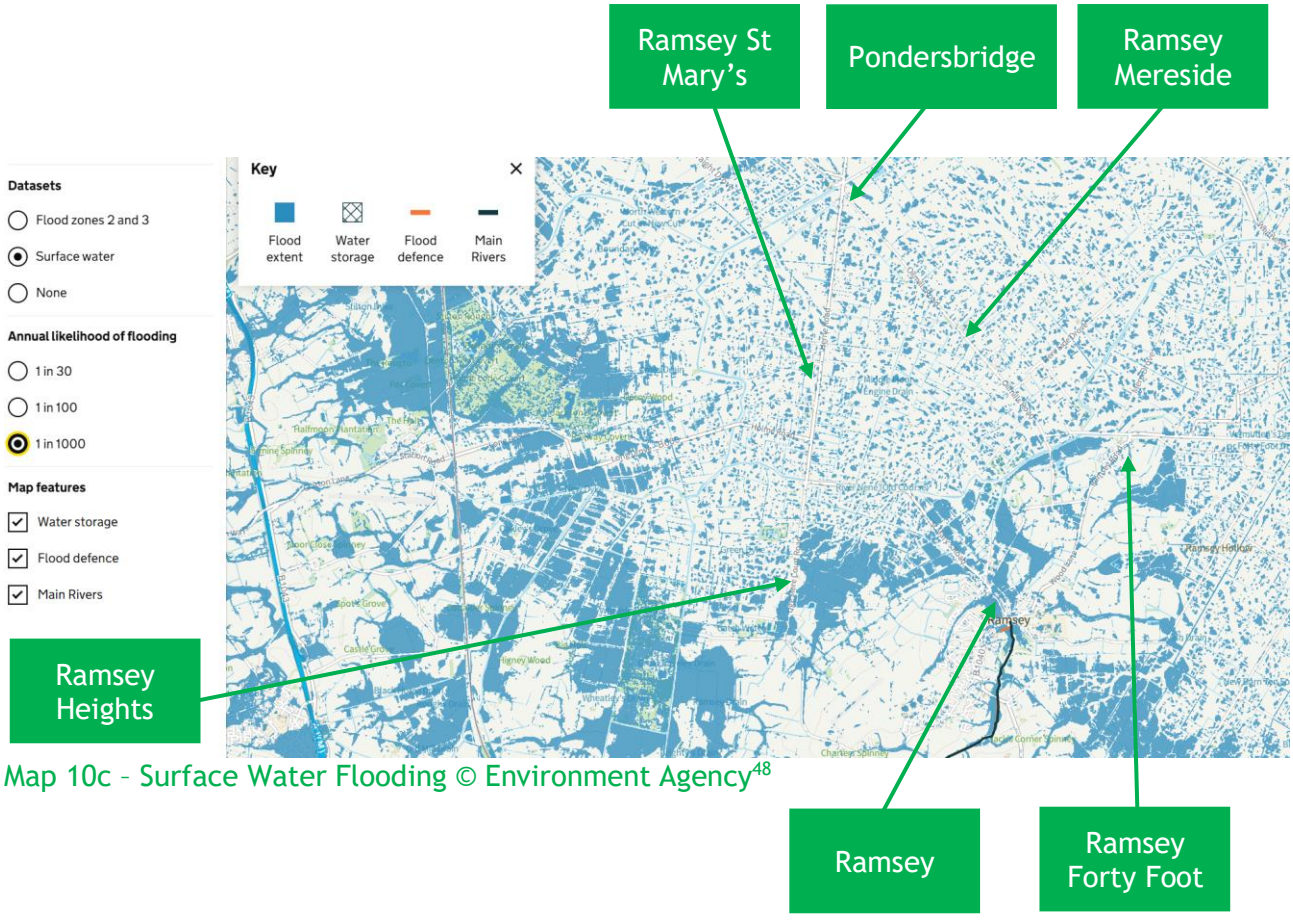
[45] Huntingdonshire District Council Tree Canopy Cover Assessment (Draft) July 2021

[46] Development that is not exempt is subject to a mandatory requirement to achieve a 10% net gain post development habitat above the pre-development value

[47] See NPPF paragraphs 170 to 182; policy LP 5 (Flood Risk) of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan; and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017). The NPPF aims for development to be safe for the lifetime without increasing flood risk and where possible reducing flood risk overall



Map 10b – Flood Zones 2 and 3 © Environment Agency



Map 10c – Surface Water Flooding © Environment Agency[48]

[48] More detailed surface water flood mapping can be viewed at https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk

26.2 Ramsey Forty Foot mostly lies outside of the flood zones, apart from the western end of Hollow Road. Parts of Ramsey lie within Flood Zone 3, this extends across the northern part of the town including Stocking Fen Road, The Moorings, Kingfisher Way, Mallard Close, Millfields, Turvers Lane and parts of Mill Lane. Recent areas along the western edge of Ramsey that have been developed north and south of Biggin Lane contain a watercourse route that also lies within Flood Zone 3. The Ramsey Golf Course area including the southern side of Hollow Lane is also within Flood Zone 3. There has been significant flooding in the past.

26.2 Surface water flooding potential affects much of the parish of Ramsey. Surface water flooding is a matter to be taken into account in the planning application process[49]. The Neighbourhood Plan alongside the Local Plan and the NPPF strives to promote sustainable drainage techniques (SuDS).

26.3 Fluvial (river) flooding and surface water flooding risks change over time, in part at least due to the impact of climate change. Developers when designing surface water systems have to design them with an allowance for climate change[50]. During December 2020 there were a large volume of flood incidents across Cambridgeshire, Ramsey was affected. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) undertook a statutory flood investigation and produced the relevant report[51].



26.4 SuDS are an approach to managing surface water run-off which seeks to mimic natural drainage systems and retain water on or near the site as opposed to traditional drainage approaches which involve piping water off site as quickly as possible. SuDS offer significant advantages over conventional piped drainage systems in reducing flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water run-off from a site, promoting groundwater recharge, and improving water quality, biodiversity and amenity. The LLFA would particularly support above-ground open SuDS such as wetlands, attenuation basins, ponds and swales as they provide additional amenity and biodiversity benefits.

26.5 Opportunities for increasing biodiversity at opportunity sites and in the protected settlement breaks are discussed within the Neighbourhood Plan. There is a potential for increasing biodiversity through the use of SuDS features such as attenuation basins, ponds and swales in these circumstances.

27. Local Green Space and Green Infrastructure

27.1 In early consultation people were asked about green spaces and how important they were to them. Ramsey is a rural area but much of the surrounding countryside is agricultural land rather than accessible green spaces. People were using the green spaces for leisure and recreation – walking, sport, quiet reflection, events, and family time. All green spaces were identified as being well used, with the following scoring most highly in consultation: Church Green, Abbey Green and Rural Museum Field. Residents were asked how they would like to see recreational spaces improved and gave the following responses: more bins, better/more

[49] Policy LP 15 (Surface Water) of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan
[50] https://environment.data.gov.uk/hydrology/climate-change-allowances/rainfall
[51] https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Ramsey-December-2020-Flood-Investigation-Report.pdf

play equipment, more for teenagers, more planting and trees. There were general comments about leaving them alone and not building on them.

27.2 In 2012, the Government introduced a new designation of Local Green Space through the NPPF allowing local communities to put forward green areas of particular importance to them for protection. Once designated, planning permission will only be granted for the development of the sites in very special circumstances or if the development clearly enhances the Local Green Space for the purposes it was designated.



27.3 Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used where the green space meets the criteria set out in the NPPF. Namely that it is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. Green space within the Ramsey Conservation Area can be protected by the conservation area designation, green space used for recreation use can also be protected under the Policy dealing with community facilities.

27.4 A total of 45 potential sites were identified by the Steering Group for possible designation as Local Green Space. These were assessed through a process described in the Local Green Spaces Evidence document. The five sites listed in the policy have been assessed as according with the criteria for Local Green Space as set out in the NPPF. A tabular assessment of each of the designated Local Green Spaces against these criteria is set out below the maps following the policy. A brief written summary describing what makes each of the Local Green Spaces demonstrably special to the local community is set out in the following the respective map.

27.5 The Local Green Space Mooring at Ramsey Forty Foot is proposed to be allocated in the emerging Local Plan Update to 2046[52] for leisure moorings and open space uses as Ramsey Forty Foot 1: Ramsey Forty Foot Village Rural Mooring. That proposed allocation is not inconsistent with the Local Green Space designation.

Policy 5 - Local Green Space

The following sites are designated as Local Green Spaces and are identified on Maps 11a to 11e:

Ramsey Town

A. Green Opposite Thomas A Becket Church (Church Green)
B. Land at New Road (Newtown Green & Play Area)
C. Area East of Rural Museum
D. Ramsey Town Moorings

Ramsey Forty Foot

[52] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-update/preferred-options/

E. Ramsey Forty Foot Moorings

The sites listed above and shown on the respective map will be protected in a manner consistent with the protection of land within Green Belts. Proposals to improve mooring infrastructure, install flood mitigation infrastructure and to improve public access including suitable community infrastructure will be supported.

Description of Local Green Space in Ramsey Town

Ramsey Town

Local Green Space Name: A. Green Opposite Thomas A Becket Church (Church Green)

Owner: Ramsey Town Council

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

This area is part of the Abbey Environs character area in the Ramsey Conservation Area. Church Green is one of the important open areas in this part of the town that forms part of the overall significance of the Conservation Area. The greens in this area form part of a network of open spaces with mature trees that give the Abbey Environs part of the town a distinctive character and appearance.

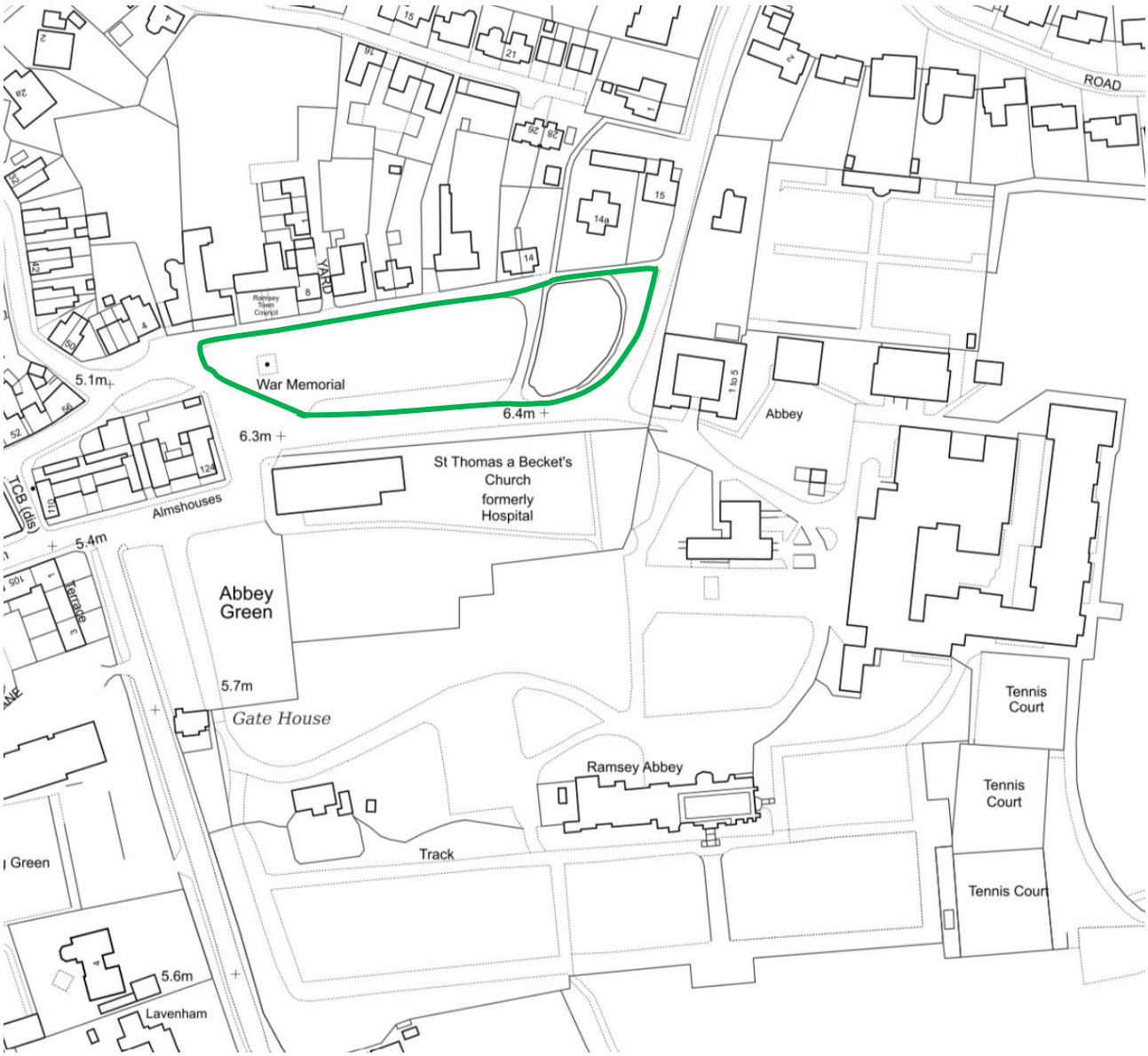


Church Green is abutted to the north by a whole series of listed buildings. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies this green as being 'an elegant urban space with rural undertones created by the large pond there.' The trees on the green are also identified as important trees in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

The green has natural beauty, and it offers significant opportunities for informal recreation. The pond and the mature trees make a significant contribution to wildlife richness. Despite its location within the heart of the older part of the town, the nature of the Abbey Environs area gives opportunities for peace and tranquillity.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies this green as: *"Church Green has less formality than Abbey Green, despite the regularity of the space. The built form and building lines are more relaxed, creating an intentionally 'Picturesque' townscape. The green edges to the south, east and north reinforce its edge-of-town location and the pond gives it a rural feel."*

Church Green is home to the War Memorial, which is a Grade II Listed Building, which contributes further to the historic significance of the area.



Map 11a – Local Green Spaces © Crown Copyright

Local Green Spaces Plan Area Boundary



Ramsey Town
Local Green Space Name: B. Land at New Road (Newtown Green & Play Area)

Owner: Ramsey Town Council

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The area at New Road, known as Newtown Green & Play Area, is part of the Post Enclosure character area in the Ramsey Conservation Area.

Newtown Green is one of the important open areas in this part of the town that forms part of the overall significance of the Conservation Area. Although slightly away from the Abbey Environs, nevertheless Newtown Green still forms part of a network of open spaces with mature trees that give the eastern part of the town a distinctive character and appearance.



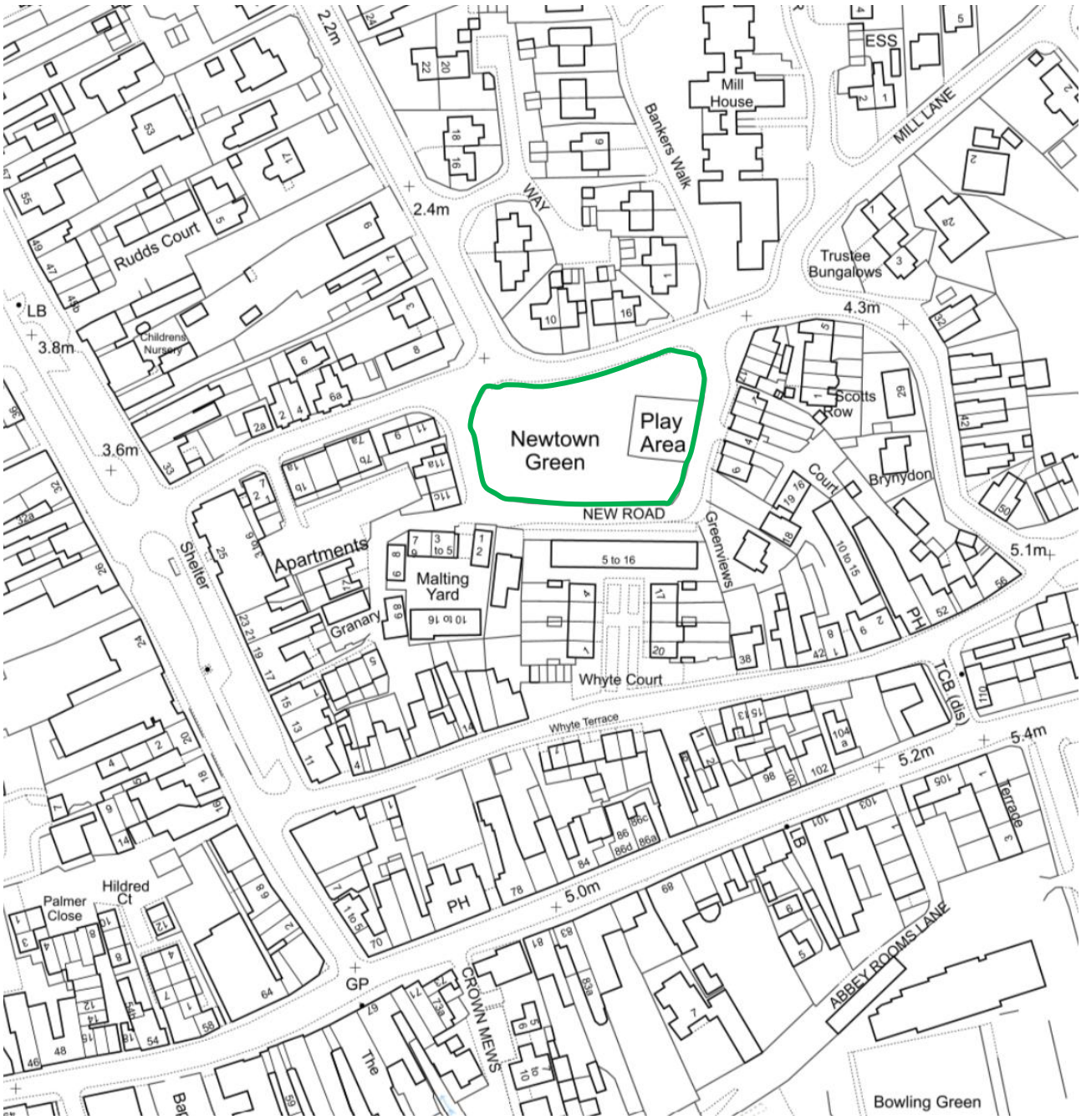
The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies this green as: *"Newtown Green is a charming example of late Victorian town planning within Ramsey. Its scale and location makes it complimentary to the much grander Church Green. A narrow passage separates the cottages on the east side of the Green from the area of Little Whyte."*

The trees on the green are not identified as important trees in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal; but they are very important to the character and appearance of this area.

Newtown Green has natural beauty, and it offers significant opportunities for informal recreation. The mature trees make a significant contribution to wildlife richness. Despite its location within the heart of the Victorian part of the town, the nature of Newtown Green gives opportunities for peace and tranquillity.



Newtown Green contains a defined children's play area within a fenced area. This is included within the overall Local Green Space designation. However, the Local Green Space designation is not intended to prevent play equipment being replaced or indeed new play equipment being sited within the defined children's play area. The Town Council has active plans to improve and potentially extend the children's play area. Such a proposal would not be incompatible with the Local Green Space Designation.



Map 11b – Local Green Spaces © Crown Copyright

Local Green Spaces Plan Area Boundary



Ramsey Town
Local Green Space Name: C. Area East of Rural Museum

Owner: The Right Honourable John Alwyn Fellowes Fourth Baron De Ramsey

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The area is one of the important open areas in this part of the town that forms part of the overall significance of the Conservation Area. The area is part of the Green Fringe Character Area of the Conservation Area identified in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal. As such it forms part of a network of open spaces with mature trees that give the eastern fringe part of the town a distinctive character and appearance. The field has a parkland character from the mature trees within it.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies that the Cemetery and Rural Museum form a buffer between the housing area of the town and this open land. The verdant and undeveloped nature of the area contributes strongly to the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.



The land is abutted on both sides by the Ramsey Rural Museum and the Ramsey 1940s Camp. It has historical significance through helping both of those attractions tell the story of the history of the town through the various events hosted on the land.

This space is an integral part of Ramsey's heritage. Currently, the field is used for the maximum allowable events throughout the year. It links the Rural Museum and the Ramsey 1940s Camp and allows for highly successful joint ventures as well as solo events. Without it, large community and nationally recognised events will no longer be able to occur causing loss of funding for both the Ramsey 1940s Camp and Ramsey Rural Museum. This could jeopardise the viability of both sites.



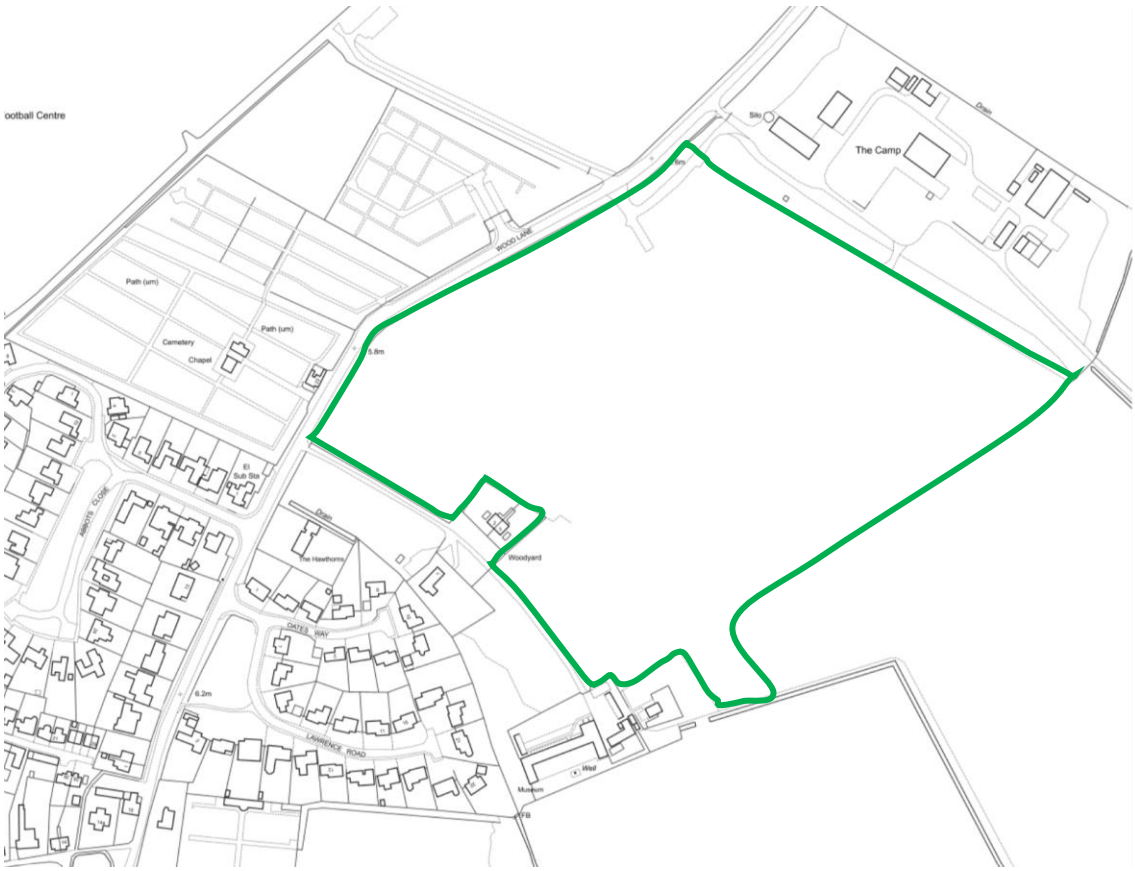
Historically, the side of the Museum protruding into the field was identified as an historic track and is adjacent to what is believed to be the boundary of the Abbey precinct[53]. There is also a possibility of ordinance from the Ramsey 1940s Camp from when it was a searchlight facility during World War II. The area of the Camp was used during World War I, but documentation associated with that appears to be sealed, possibly under the Official Secrets Act.

The area is effectively an events space and showground where a significant number of public events are held. These events are integral to the cultural, social and economic life of the community, local businesses and attractions. Events held include the 1940s Weekend, the Fen Fair, Country Fair and Plough Day, Ramsey Steam & Fire Show. These events can have up to 3,500 people attending. The area is also used for other events including Dog Shows and Scooter Rallies.

[53] As mentioned in Oxford Archaeology CCCAFU report 894-page 18 map

It is understood that the land is licensed to the 1940s Committee, and it has been maintained as grassland for event purposes since 2009. The green area has natural beauty arising from its undeveloped nature, its parkland trees and its juxtaposition to the Rural Museum and the Ramsey 1940s Camp. It offers significant opportunity for recreation through participating in and attending organised events. The mature trees and hedgerows make a significant contribution to wildlife richness.

The area is bounded to the western and southern sides by a public footpath. This is part of the promoted public footpath circular route to 'Discover Ramsey's Rural Charm'.



Map 11c – Local Green Spaces © Crown Copyright

Local Green Spaces Plan Area Boundary



Ramsey Rural Museum

Ramsey Town
Local Green Space Name: D. Ramsey Town Moorings

Owner: Middle Level Commissioners and Ramsey Town Council

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The area of Ramsey Town Moorings on the High Lode has been partially altered through the development The Moorings off Stocking Fen Road. It lies close to the Ramsey Community Centre and Rainbow Surgery. It is at the point where High Lode changes from being an open-air waterway to becoming an underground waterway running southwards under The Great Whyte through the Ramsey Tunnels after going through the Mill Sluice.



In around 2022 some 120m of new permanent visitor moorings were completed on the eastern side. These visitor moorings are owned and maintained by the Middle Level Commissioners and were made possible following the change in focus and funding arising from the 2018 Middle Level Act and the introduction of licensing. The land beyond the bank has recently transferred from the housing developer to Ramsey Town Council.

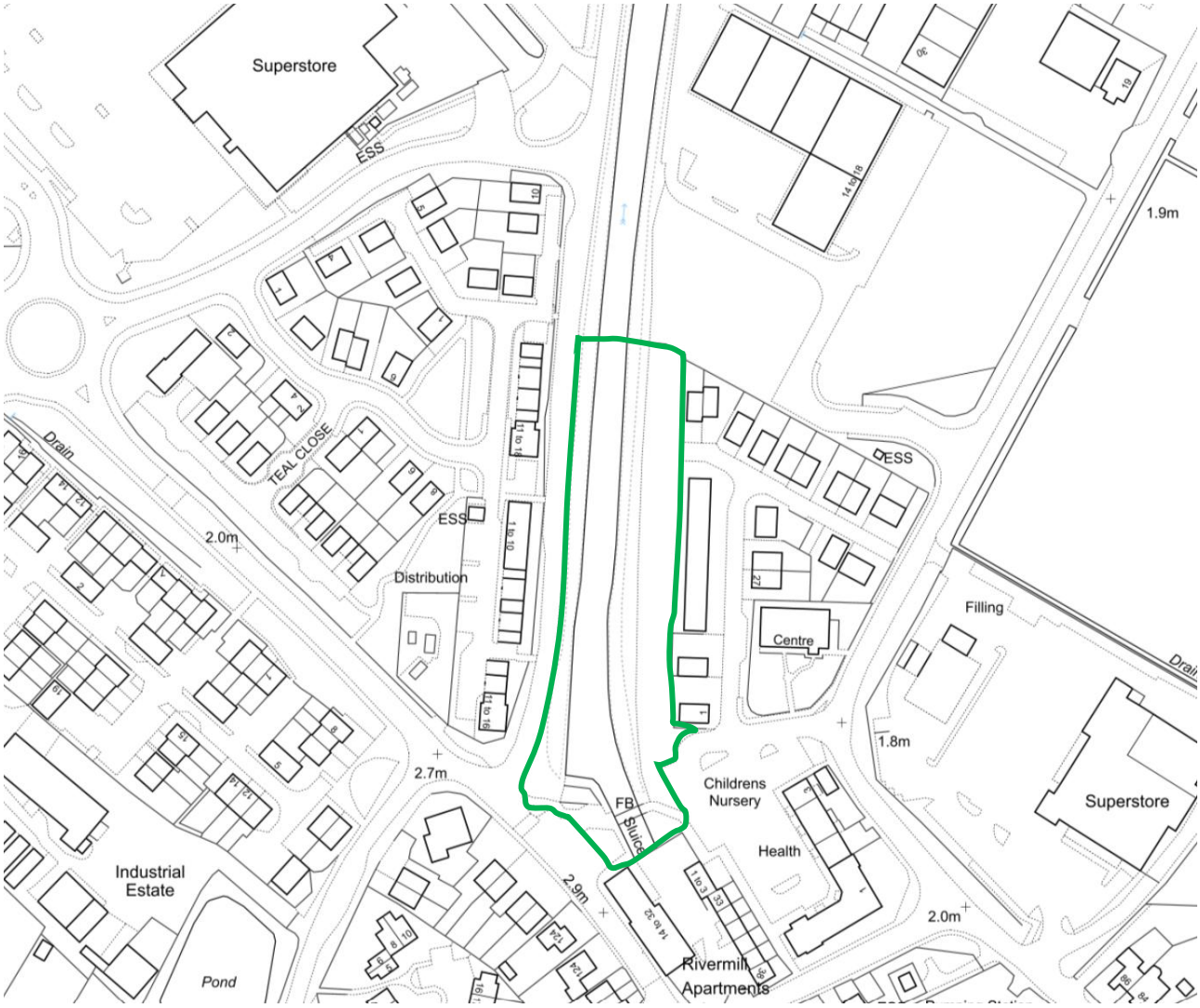
It has historic significance as the waterway adjacent to the Corn Mill now known as Rivermill Apartments and as part of the nineteenth century industrial area. That character area within the Ramsey Conservation Area contained the LNER Holme & Ramsey Branch line which hosted the North Station, where North Station Close is currently sited. The importance of the Ramsey northern gateway goes back to Saxon times, which is the most likely time that the navigable Lodes became the chief form of commercial transport for the town.

The waterway has a natural beauty although further enhancement of the public realm would improve the overall beauty of this gateway. The eastern side of the moorings has a modern quay; the western side of the moorings has an older quayside. The moorings support recreational use of High Lode as a navigable waterway and provides a modern recreational gateway into the town which could be developed further.



The waterway and its banks provide an important contribution to wildlife richness, in an area which has over time become quite densely developed. Notwithstanding the nature of the B1040 passing by the moorings, the area still provides an opportunity for tranquillity.

Horse Drove, which is an unmade track, runs along the western side of the moorings. Its physical condition has suffered in recent years from use and could benefit from improvement.



Map 11d – Local Green Spaces © Crown Copyright

Local Green Spaces Plan Area Boundary



Description of Local Green Space in Ramsey Forty Foot

Ramsey Forty Foot
Local Green Space Name: E. Ramsey Forty Foot Moorings

Owner: Middle Level Commissioners

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The area of Ramsey Forty Foot Moorings on the Forty Foot or Vermuden's Drain Lode is an undeveloped area between the Drain and Hollow Road. Over time a small part seems to have become used as a beer garden for the nearby George Inn on the southern side of Hollow Road.



In relation to the call for sites exercise undertaken by Huntingdonshire DC for the Local Plan Review, the Middle Level Commissioners have suggested the land to be suitable for natural, green or open spaces; and land to safeguard against flooding. In the emerging Local Plan Update to 2046 it is proposed to allocate the land for leisure moorings and open space uses. This is not inconsistent with Local Green Space Designation and for the avoidance of any doubt the improvement of moorings and associated built infrastructure would be acceptable.

As part of their plans for future navigation, the Middle Level Commissioners would like to turn Ramsey Forty Foot rural mooring into a permanent mooring; however, they may need partnership funding to make this happen.

It has historic significance as part of the waterway drainage network. The watercourse was cut c1651 under the direction of Vermuyden from the River Nene (old course) at Wells Bridge near Ramsey Forty Foot and Ramsey Mere to Welches Dam Lock where it joins the Counter Drain (later the Old Bedford River), a total of 9½ miles (17km).

The waterway has a natural beauty although further enhancement of the mooring would improve the function and overall recreational purpose without harming the overall beauty of this area. The mooring supports recreational use of Forty Foot as a navigable waterway and provides a modern recreational gateway into the village which could be developed further. The Local Green Space designation is not intended to prevent the mooring being replaced, improved or extended, to the contrary this would be supported as being complementary to its designation as Local Green Space.

The waterway and its banks provide an important contribution to wildlife richness, in an area which has over time become quite densely developed. The nature of the mooring provides an opportunity for peace and tranquillity.

Hollow Road, which is a rural lane, runs along the southern side of the mooring.



Map 11e – Local Green Spaces © Crown Copyright

Local Green Spaces Plan Area Boundary



28. Views and Vistas

28.1 Local distinctiveness includes many facets which make the parish of Ramsey what it is. That includes how buildings look, how the open spaces operate, important views and vistas, how the public realm looks and the relationship between the settlements and the countryside.

28.2 The Ramsey Conservation Area Character Statement was published in December 2005 by Huntingdonshire District Council. This is a character appraisal[54] whose purpose is to identify and record those special qualities that make up the architectural and historic character. This includes significant trees; significant green spaces; landscape views; and native hedgerows.



28.3 The policy below in relation to Ramsey includes a number of significant views within, into and out of the Conservation Area identified in the character appraisal. It doesn't include the glimpsed views identified in the character appraisal. All of the views included in the policy in relation to Ramsey are drawn from the character appraisal and do not require further justification.

Policy 6 - Views and Vistas

In regard to land within the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan Area, proposals should not result in the loss of the following important public views and vistas shown on Maps 12a to 12d:

Ramsey
- Vista Looking South from Hollow Lane (A) *
- View of Booth's Hill (B) *
- View into Abbey Green (C) *
- View of Church, Almshouses and Abbey Green & Gatehouse (High Street) (D) *
- View of Church and Church Green from the town (E) *
- Ramsey Abbey from the bus parking area (F) *
- Great Whyte Looking North (G) *
- Great Whyte Looking South (H) *
- View of Newtown Green (I) *
- Vista North-west from Rural Museum (K) *
- View of Cemetery (L) *
- View of Ramsey Tunnels and Mills (M) *

Ramsey Forty Foot
- View Looking North-east towards Bridge House and Forty Foot Drain (N)

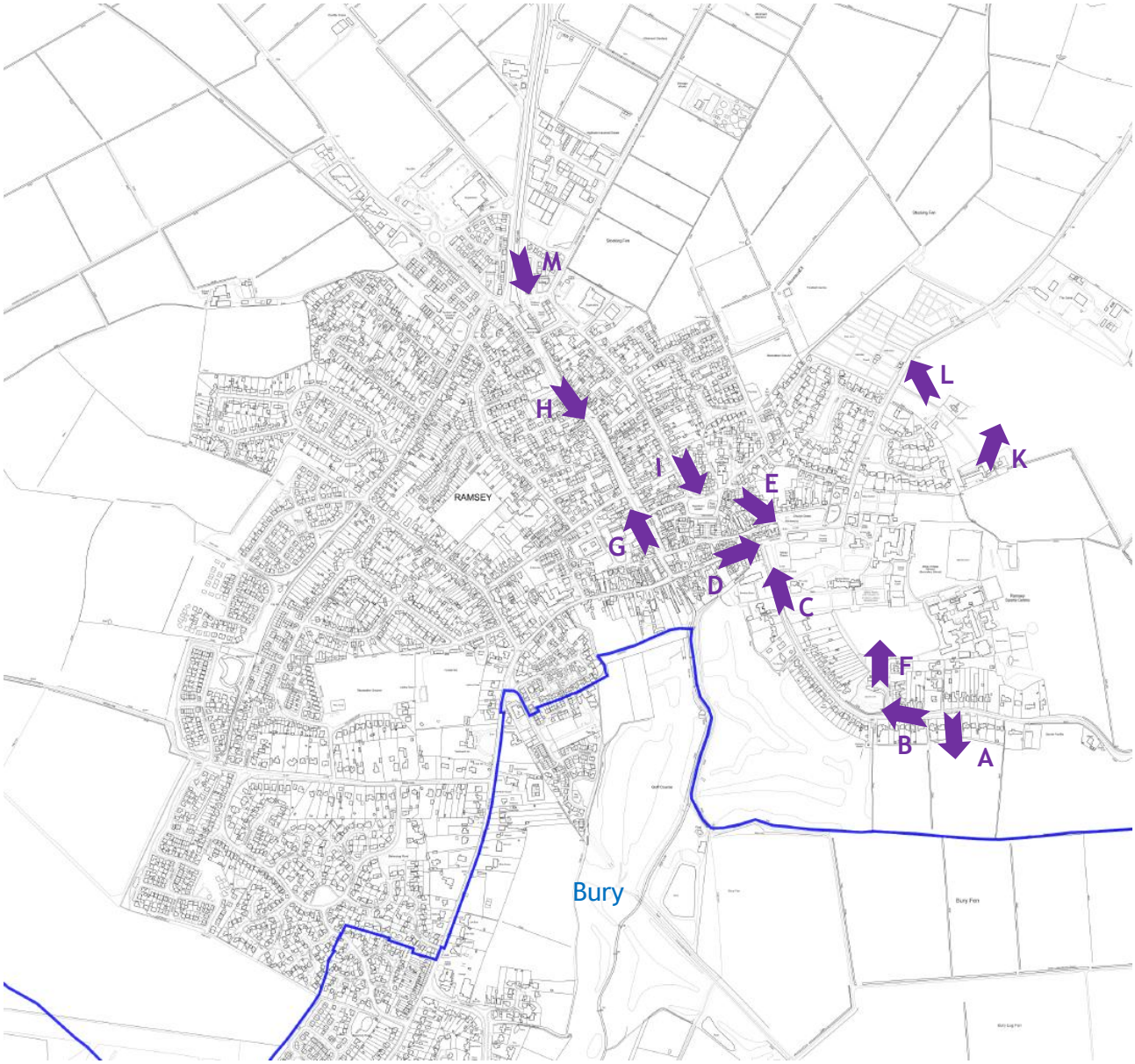
Ramsey Heights
- Vista Looking West along Chapel Road towards Woodwalton Fen (O)

Ramsey St Mary's
- View of Church Looking South Across River Nene (Old Course) Bridge (P)

[54] http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2329/ramsey-conservation-area-character-assessment-adopted-december-2005.pdf

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should actively enhance or promote the identified important views and vistas.

(Note the letters in the bullets in the policy are reference letters on the maps below, there is no reference letter (J) following the Independent Examination)
*(Note views marked * are in the Conservation Area character appraisal)*

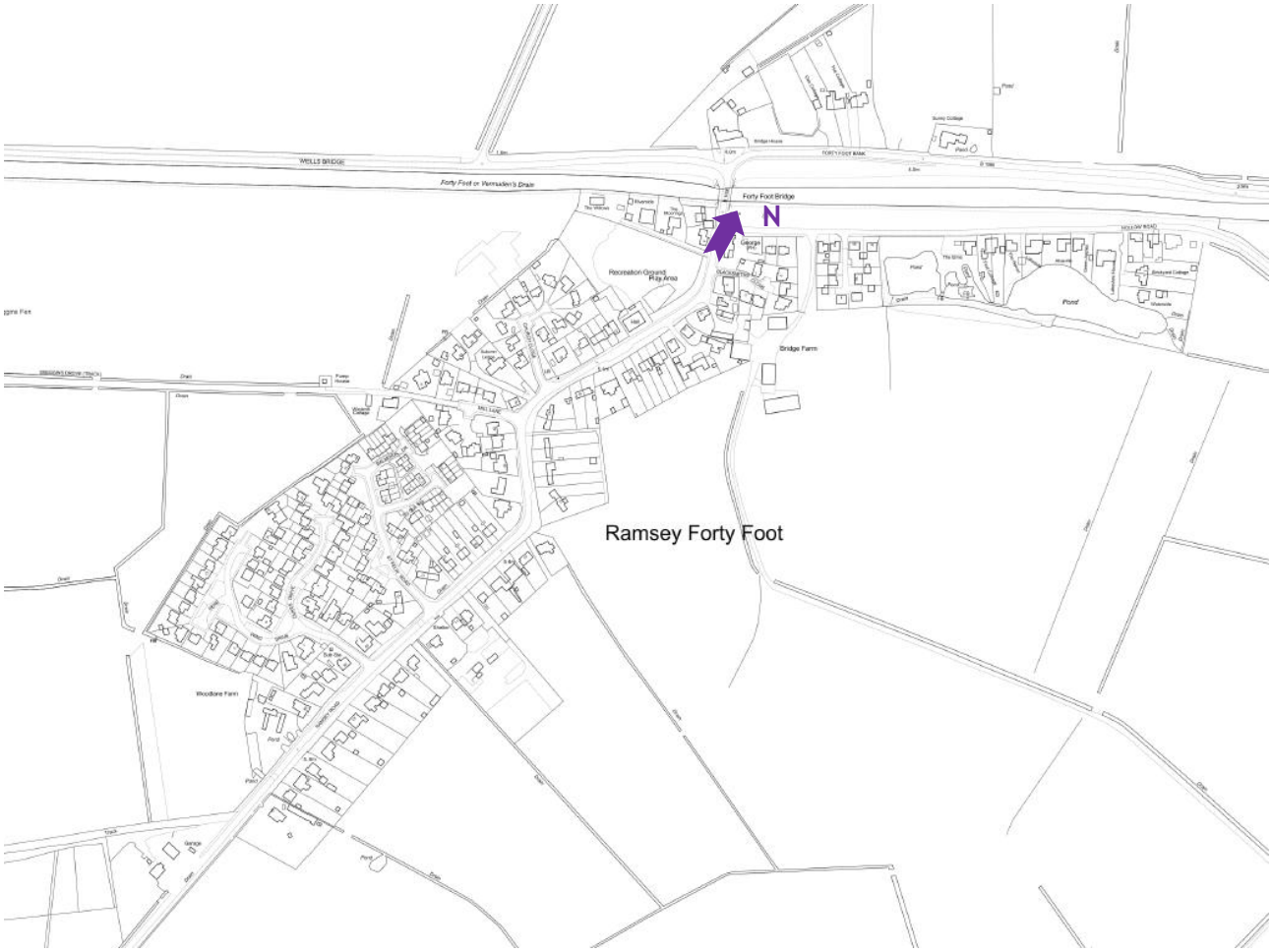


Map 12a – Important Views and Vistas – Ramsey (town) © Crown Copyright

Important View and Vistas Plan Area Boundary

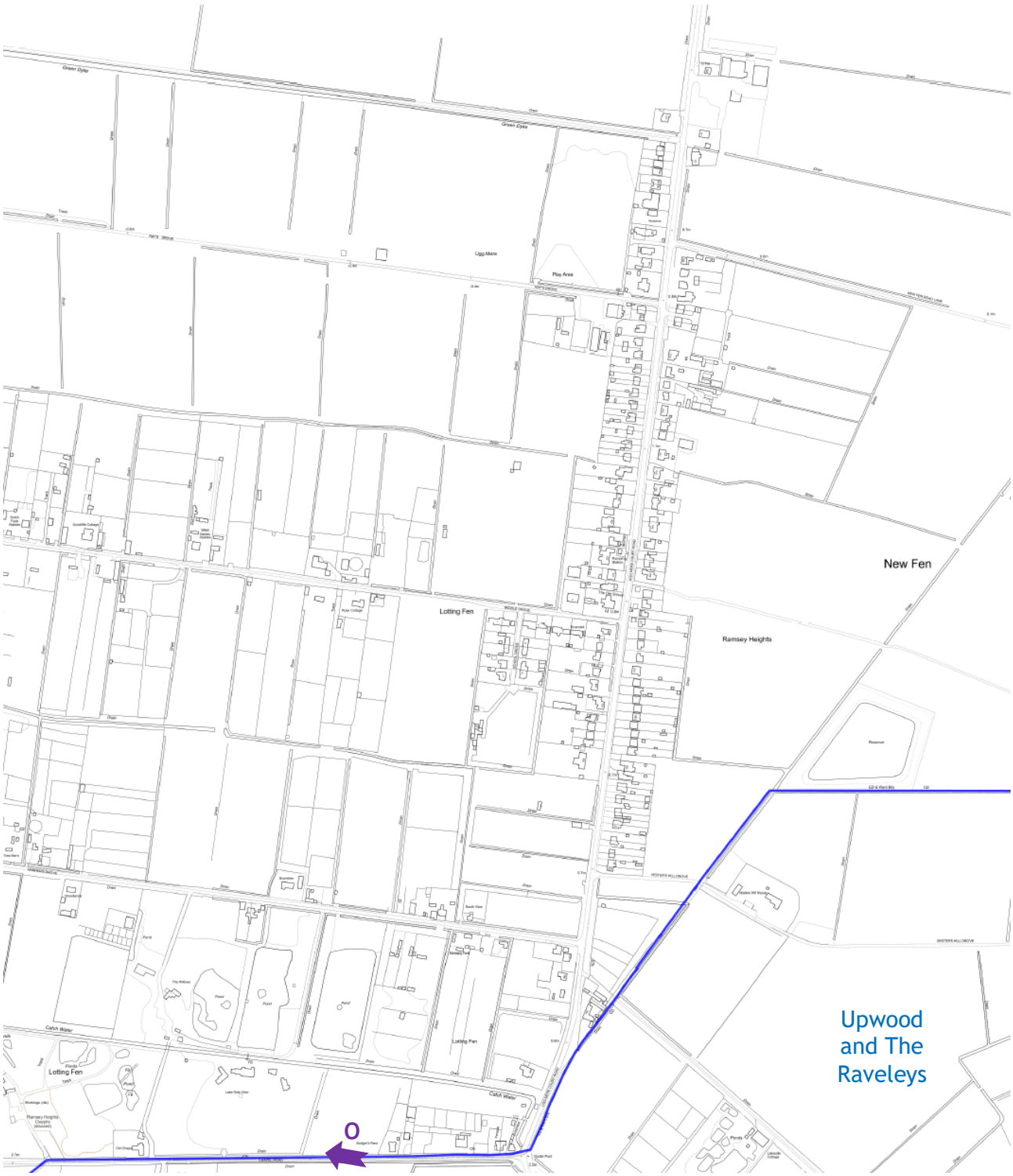
28.4 In addition to the views and vistas in the Conservation Area character appraisal, there are a number of public views and vistas around the villages and the wider parish that contribute to the sense of place and are worthy of protection. In Ramsey Forty Foot the view across the drain is a wide-open view, the waterway has historic significance as part of the waterway drainage network. The watercourse was cut c1651 under the direction of Vermuyden. The drain provides the setting for the village together with the mature trees to the north.

28.5 In Ramsey Heights the view looking towards Woodwalton Fen along Chapel Road looks along the tree lined road and across the Ramsey Height Nature Reserve with Woodwalton Fen being the focal point in the vista. This vista emphasises the importance of the natural fenland environment. The view in Ramsey St Mary's looking south across the River Nene (Old Course) bridge has the impressive Church as its dominant focal point set within a mature treed setting.



Map 12b – Important Views and Vistas – Ramsey Forty Foot © Crown Copyright

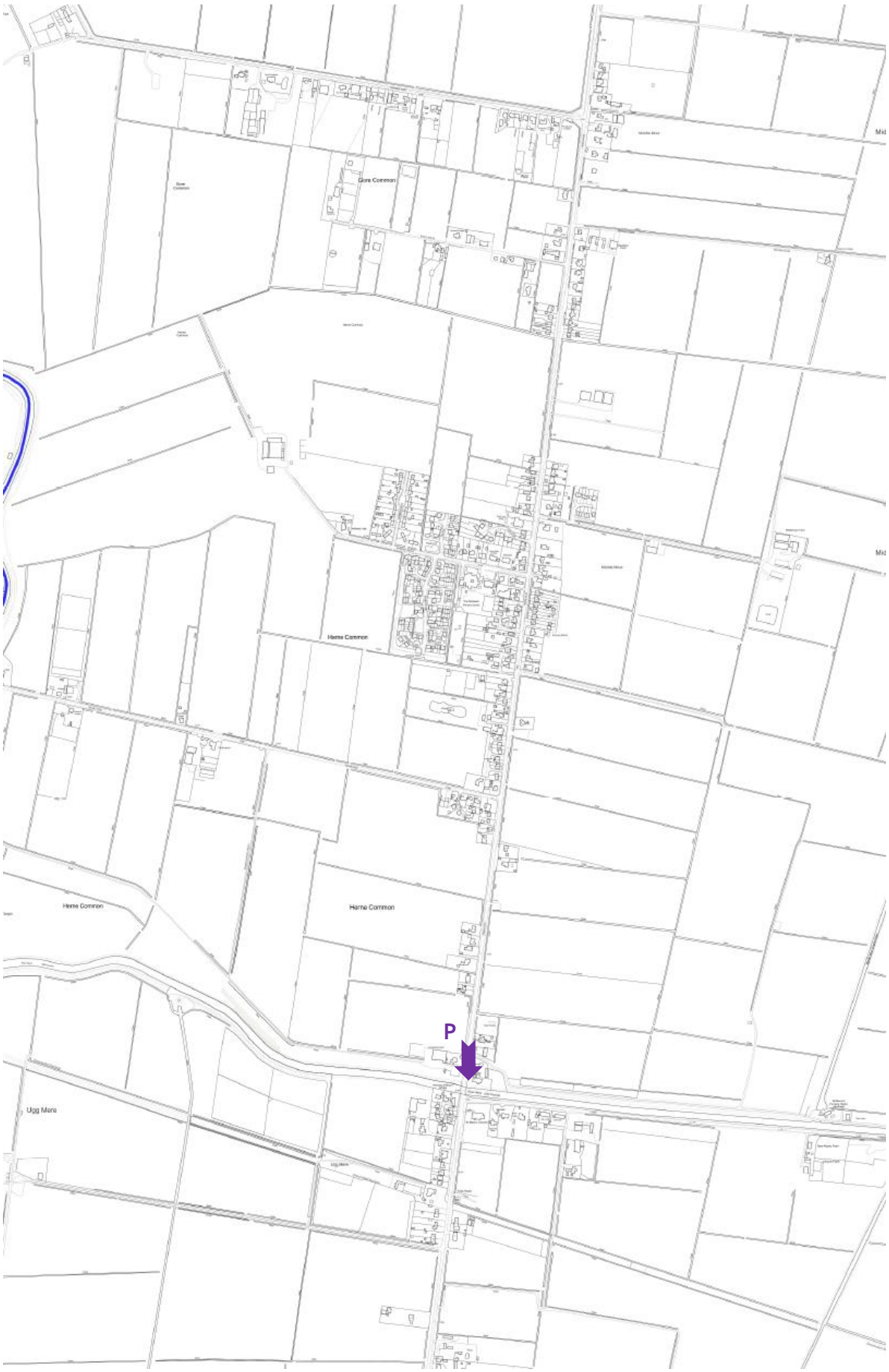
Important View and Vistas Plan Area Boundary



Map 12c – Important Views and Vistas – Ramsey Heights © Crown Copyright

Important View and Vistas

Plan Area Boundary



Map 12d – Important Views and Vistas – Ramsey St Mary's © Crown Copyright

Important View and Vistas Plan Area Boundary



View in Ramsey Fort Foot



View Along Chapel Road in Ramsey Heights



View Across Bridge in Ramsey St Mary's

Theme - Infrastructure



Theme – Infrastructure

Community Aspirations

The Neighbourhood Plan includes community aspirations for each themed section of the Plan. For the Theme – Infrastructure, the following are the community aspirations:

Transport & Parking



The road network across the villages is in a poor physical condition and a solution to the roads being susceptible and badly impacted by ground movement needs to be explored.

The villages have a lack of footways; in the town the footways are narrow and are a challenge to navigate at certain times, such as on bin day. As the number of bins increases there needs to be exploration into different solutions, solar compacting bins for example that might assist in mitigating the size and number of bins on the footway.

Ramsey town has high levels of on-street parking, and the town centre struggles with not having sufficient parking provision to meet the needs of shoppers and those who live and work within the town centre. Opportunities to secure additional provision and access to cost-effective public electric vehicle charging also need to be explored.

Accessibility/Connectivity



Connectivity between the villages is poor, as is connectivity between the villages and the town. The geographic isolation of the parish means that the provision of good phone and internet connection / signal/ coverage is vital. Local support for the services in town – dentists, GP's, district nurses, physios etc. needs to occur. This can include support for these services to diversify their health offer and provide the opportunity for outreach hospital services where feasible. Hospital facilities are difficult to get to if you do not drive.

Balanced development is wanted to support a thriving community of all ages. Including support for family members to stay in the area throughout their lives; thereby keeping and supporting the local connection which is a vital component of the community spirit which was evident in the public consultation responses. Employment opportunities with small start-ups and industrial units as well as shops is important.

Ensuring that we signpost services for those with disabilities, children and the elderly is an important aspiration. An aging community needs support for aspects like the community bus/ cars to provide connection to the larger towns and cities.

We recognise that the villages around Ramsey are growing and are bringing more traffic, shoppers and people wanting to access services in the town. Due to the poor accessibility and connectivity, new development results in use of the private car rather than active travel modes such as walking and cycling. It is a community aspiration to maintain the culture, the things that make the villages and town unique and the community feel. Overall rural tourism is preferrable and more appropriate than housing to maintain that culture.

29. Infrastructure Provision

29.1 The Huntingdonshire Developer Contributions SPD[55] sets out the need to secure infrastructure and developer contributions from new development in the form of:

- Affordable Housing
- Green Space
- Footpaths and Access
- Health
- Community Facilities
- Libraries and Lifelong Learning
- Education and Schools
- Residential Wheeled Bins

(Note - The costs are updated regularly the 2023/2024 updated costs can be found on the Huntingdonshire website[56])

29.2 Policy LP 4 - Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 sets out the focus at the district level to secure infrastructure and developer contributions from new development in the form of:

- Affordable housing
- Recreation (including leisure and sports facilities)
- Green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement/mitigation
- Transport
- Community facilities
- Education, health and social care and community safety
- Utilities infrastructure and energy
- Emergency and essential services
- Environmental improvements
- Drainage and flood prevention and protection
- Waste recycling facilities
- Public art, heritage and archaeology

29.3 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)[57] allows local planning authorities to raise funds from new development. The money raised is used to fund district-wide and local infrastructure projects that benefit local communities. The CIL charges are based on the size and type of development. For most developments the CIL charges are designed to cater for the required infrastructure provision. For large scale major development[58] there is still a need for infrastructure provision that will not be CIL funded. Therefore section 106 planning obligations will still be used as appropriate. The CIL Charging Schedule[59] has to be kept under review with regard to viability considerations so may change during the lifetime of this Neighbourhood Plan.



[55] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1127/developer-contributions-spd.pdf
[56] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/brhi2y15/developer-contributions-updated-costs.pdf
[57] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/community-infrastructure-levy-cil/
[58] Defined on the Huntingdonshire CIL web page as residential development of 200 or more dwellings
[59] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1048/cil-charging-schedule.pdf

29.4 In addition section 106 planning obligations and planning conditions also continue to be used for local infrastructure requirements on development sites for things such as site-specific local provision of open space, affordable housing, habitat protection and access roads.

29.5 As CIL is a mandatory process, this policy applies where it is appropriate for section 106 planning obligations and planning conditions to be used. Early consultation identified concern that the area is being developed without an increase in infrastructure.

29.6 The Town Council obtains 15% of the CIL collected from new development within the parish of Ramsey to spend locally on infrastructure provision. When the Neighbourhood Plan is finalized and 'made' the Town Council will receive 25% of the CIL collected from new development within the parish of Ramsey to spend locally on infrastructure provision. It should be noted that CIL monies can only be spent on infrastructure, in particular it cannot be spent on supporting private enterprises. The geographic isolation of Ramsey makes the need to secure the rollout of superfast broadband more important.



29.7 Huntingdonshire District Council and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority produced the Ramsey Prospectus for Growth[60]. Huntingdonshire District Council has secured funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to deliver redevelopment works[61] in Ramsey that will build on the heritage, character and independent shopping experience that underpins the small but busy town centre. This includes a number of proposals relating to Great Whyte and car parking[62].

29.8 Improvements to local infrastructure are underway. Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust have been working on The Pavilion, which is much more than a building, it is a place where the community are able to meet and learn new skills through the combination of community and sporting activities. The Pavilion will continue to be the home of Ramsey Cricket Club and other community activities such as BOSH & CRUNCH youth clubs and Community Café, as well as enabling new groups and activities. Co-location and multi-functional spaces can offer real benefits to the local community.

Policy 7 – Infrastructure Provision

Proposals for residential development will only be supported where it provides for as appropriate, the required community infrastructure including improvements to village halls/community centres; the pavilion; existing schools; and primary healthcare provision commensurate with the need arising from the new development. This is to ensure that the existing and new population have access to community infrastructure.

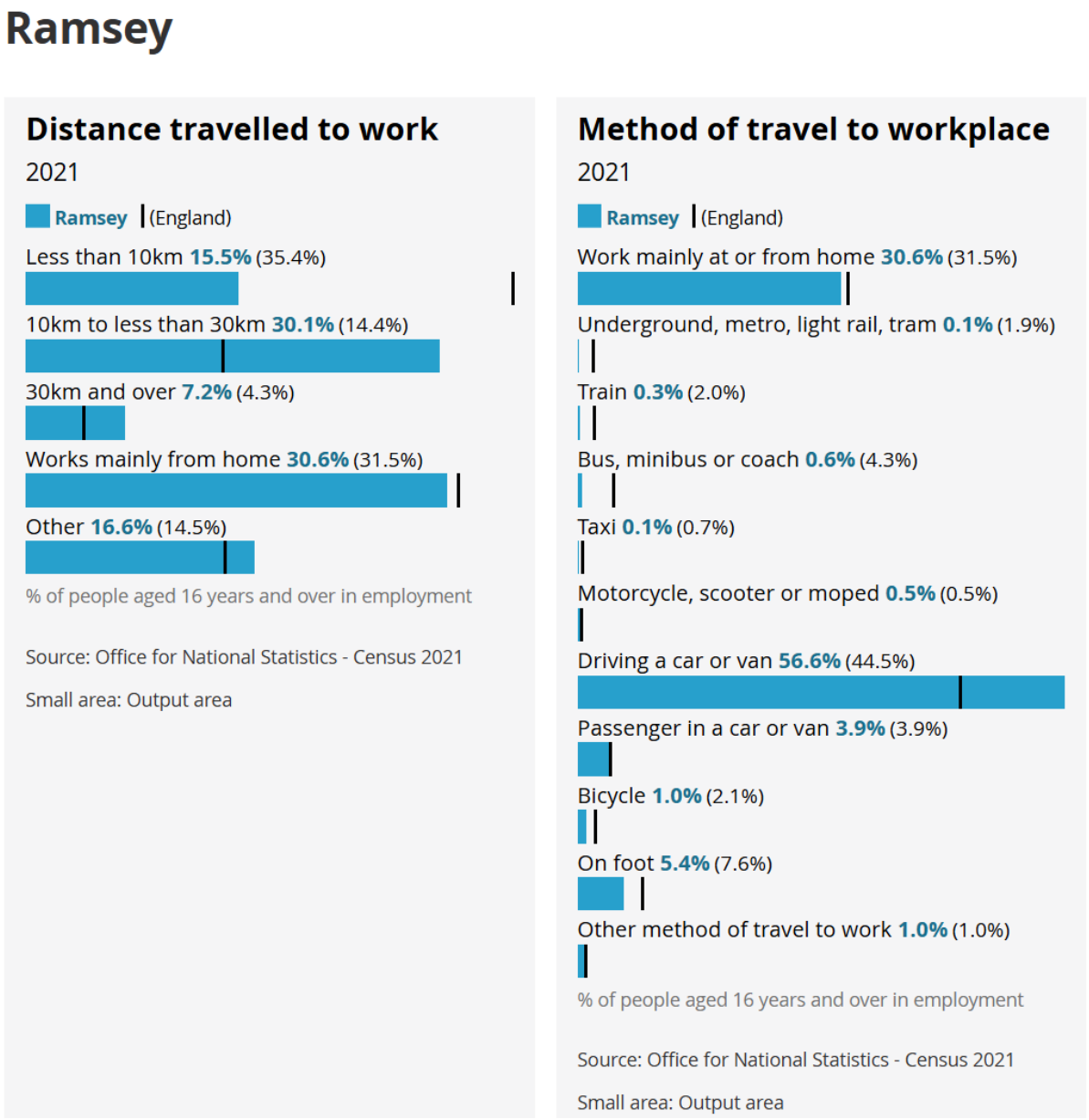
[60] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/5028/ramsey-a-prospectus-for-growth.pdf
[61] See - https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/people-communities/market-towns-programme/investment-in-ramsey/
[62] See - https://letstalkhuntingdonshire.net/36214/widgets/106021/documents/69415

Residential development proposals will only be supported where they provide for as appropriate, the necessary green community infrastructure, relevant to the size of the development, including children's play areas; sports playing pitches; open space; natural greenspace; and allotments.

Development proposals will be supported where they can demonstrate that there is capacity in the local surface water drainage system, the water supply network and the sewerage network, or capacity can be made available in time to support the development, having regard to the advice of Anglian Water.

30. Sustainable Transport

30.1 Local planning policy recognises that Ramsey and the surrounding area has relatively poor transport infrastructure, being well off the primary road network and relatively remote. Its comparatively limited services, facilities and employment opportunities make it a less sustainable location in terms of travel than some of the other market towns in Cambridgeshire.



(Extract from ONS Census Area Profile[63] - Ramsey Parish Compared with Huntingdonshire District)

[63] https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/

30.2 Ramsey and the surrounding villages are classed as a rural area, there are high levels of car ownership and reliance on the car to maintain access to key services. Some 87.7% of households in the parish of Ramsey have one or more cars/vans, with almost half of the households having two, three or more cars/vans. In addition, high house prices and lack of affordable housing has led to more people travelling further to work, with the average length of commute in Ramsey greater than the national average. Access to employment, education and services can be a real challenge without a car in rural areas.



30.3 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 contains Policy LP 16 which indicates that new development will be expected to contribute to an enhanced transport network that supports an increasing proportion of journeys being undertaken by sustainable travel modes.

30.4 Access to high quality public transport is known to be hugely beneficial to improving access to services for those members of society who cannot, for a variety of reasons, access a car. This is particularly acute in rural areas such as Ramsey where distances between households and essential services are often large, making walking and cycling less practical than in urban areas. The villages in the parish are reliant upon Ramsey town for many higher order services and facilities. However, the town doesn't provide all essential services and journeys to larger settlements such as Peterborough or Huntingdon are necessary, for example to access hospital services, higher education and many public services. The Town Council alongside the Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust[64] does look to support the provision of outreach public services to improve accessibility.

30.5 It has recently been announced that there will be a new direct bus service (X31) from Upwood, Bury and Ramsey to Peterborough from January 2026. This will be operated under the new Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority contract[65].

30.6 The geographic nature of the parish makes it difficult for residents of the villages to access the services and facilities in Ramsey town centre by walking and cycling. The distances in combination with the lack of footways and uneven road surfaces due to the fenland geology are barriers to walking and cycling.

30.7 The Vision for Ramsey document (extract overleaf) sets out a number of transport initiatives that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Huntingdonshire District Council have developed.

30.8 The Government through Active Travel England is looking to make walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England. Active travel is the term often used to encompass elements such as walking to school, cycling to work, or other everyday journeys you make to get from place to place, rather than just walking or cycling solely for leisure or fitness. In addition, active travel can offer a convenient, accessible and affordable way to move more for shorter journeys. National policy in the NPPF does not refer to active travel but instead refers to sustainable transport but includes that policies should look for opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued. Active travel and sustainable travel modes not only positively contribute to addressing climate change but also can assist in maintaining a healthy community.

[64] https://ramseyneighbourhoodstrust.org/

[65] https://www.ramseytowncouncil.gov.uk/uploads/ramsey-bus-route-update-31-and-x31.pdf?v=1760700733

No.	Title	Project	Description	Rationale
R1	Cycle & Digital Infrastructure	Cycle and Digital Connections Pilot Project	Up to 17km of cycle route improvements with new digital infrastructure. The first 2.3km route selected as pilot project from Ramsey Town Centre to Ramsey Forty Foot	Alignment with town strategies seeking improved transport connections
R2	Pedestrian Friendly Space	Public Realm Improvements to Great Whyte	6588sqm of Public Realm improvements overall. A 1st phase of 1588sqm is suggested as part of this project.	Integrating the town centre landscape to improve visitor experience
R2	Traffic Calming	Pedestrian Crossings	3 Pedestrian Crossings	Integrating the town centre landscape to improve visitor experience
R3	Great Whyte: A Destination	Market/Produce Hall	370sqm Footprint	Few retail options within the town. This will improve tourism offering and encourage local business growth.
R3	Great Whyte: A Destination	Accessibility Hub	150sqm cycle hire and EV charging hub	Encouragement of use of sustainable modes of transport for town centre visits
R3	Great Whyte: A Destination	Business, Work Space & Learning Centre	1350sqm Footprint	Residents' desire for more independent businesses to operate in Ramsey and provision of space to improve learning options
R4	Fen Links Visitor Economy	Moorings	3 new moorings at public realm around High Lode to the north of Great Whyte	Potential to increase tourism and expenditure from tourism
R4	Fen Links Visitor Economy	Public Realm Improvements	2,500sqm public realm improvements	Potential to increase tourism and expenditure from tourism
R5	Ramsey Abbey School Redevelopment	Former Country House Redevelopment	Estimated 2300sqm Floorspace	Provision of high quality accommodation in an underutilised building
R6	Housing Delivery	Northern Stocking Fen Rd	125 housing units in a waterside development	Option to provide funding for shove through capital receipts

Extract from Vision for Ramsey Document © Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Huntingdonshire District Council

30.9 The Neighbourhood Plan can support the ambitions and promote sustainable transport modes such as public transport, walking and cycling. Opportunities within the town itself for walking and cycling are greater. A move away from the use of private car for short journeys would help tackle climate change, pollution and congestion. Many routes within Ramsey, particularly the through routes that go through the town centre are already at or close to capacity in peak times and managing travel demand must form a key part of the approach to transport planning.

30.10 Community transport services[66] within Ramsey include the following:

- Huntingdonshire Association for Community Transport[67] - Offers regular 'Ring-and-Ride' services into Huntingdon, Peterborough, St Ives and St Neots, plus frequent

[66] http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/people-communities/community-transport/
[67] http://www.hact-cambs.co.uk/

trips to other destinations and places of interest, including excursions and pub lunches.

- Ramsey, Warboys & District Volunteer Centre operates as part of the Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre[68] (HVC) - For residents of Ramsey, Warboys, Bury, Upwood, Broughton and area for social and medical purposes, i.e. GP surgery appointments, opticians, dentists, picking up prescriptions, visiting friends, and shopping. Can undertake journeys to visit friends and family in hospital and outpatient department appointments. The service operates from the Town Council offices; and

- Rural Hoppa Services - Ramsey & District Community Bus Association[69] run three weekly "Rural Hoppa" services into Ramsey and Huntingdon. These services are open to members of the public (there is no membership), and bus pass holders can use their passes on Rural Hoppa services for discounted journeys. RH3 runs every Thursday, covers Upwood to Huntingdon through the villages on route ending at the Bus Station and returns two hours later. RH2 & RH5 run on Friday's, they start at Upwood and come into the town centre and on out to Tesco before circumnavigating Ramsey's villages starting at Heights, through St Marys to Pondersbridge, turn right at the church to Mereside, on to Forty Foot, then into Ramsey shopping centre and the Tesco store.



Policy 8 – Sustainable Transport

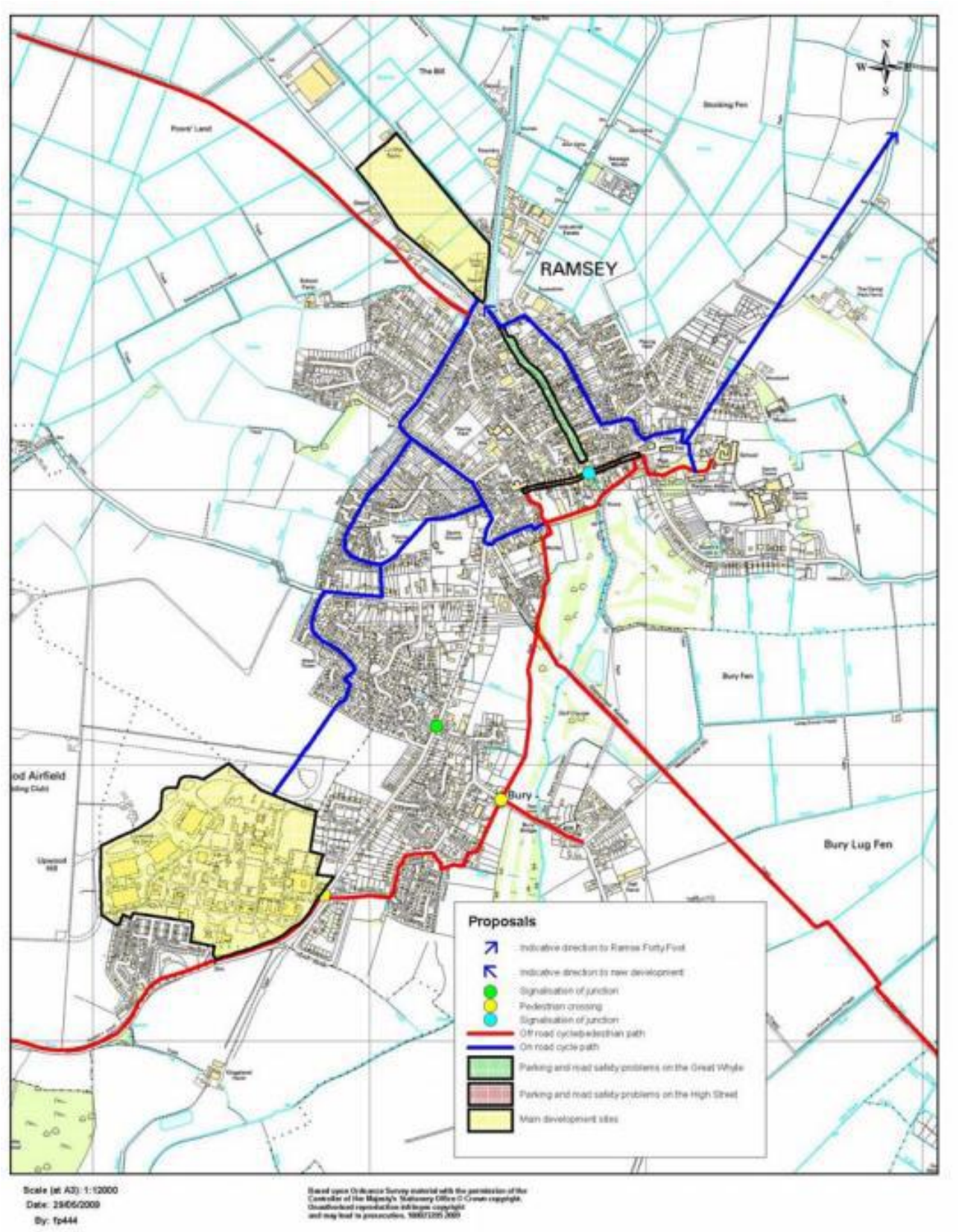
Development proposals will be supported where they demonstrate how opportunities for the use of sustainable modes of transport are maximised. This should be achieved through maximising the potential for cycling and walking throughout the site; provision of safe crossings; secure cycle storage in public places, workplaces and in new dwellings; and linkages through to adjacent sites and existing parts of Ramsey and further afield including Bury and Upwood Airfield. Where a proposal will have a significant impact on the existing transport network this would be best demonstrated through a transport assessment.

Development proposals should include recreational routes for pedestrians which link into existing and proposed green infrastructure in order to contribute to health and well-being.

In all proposals consideration should be given to how the development can contribute to the delivery of the provision of a network of walking and cycling linkages[70] to the key services & facilities in the town or village as relevant.

Major development proposals should demonstrate how they ensure accessibility to existing public transport and community transport provision. Development proposals will be supported where, as appropriate, they secure improvements to public transport provision such as waiting facilities, raised kerbs, signage and real time information systems.

[68] https://huntsvc.org.uk/car-scheme/
[69] http://ramseybus.org.uk/
[70] As shown in the Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy



Extract from Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy © Huntingdonshire District Council

31. Highway Impact

31.1 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 contains Policy LP 16 on Sustainable Travel and Policy LP 17 on Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement. This latter policy indicates that

proposals must incorporate adequate parking for vehicles and cycles. Advice on parking arrangements is contained in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017)[71].

30.2 Early consultation identified a significant level of concern regarding the volume of traffic and road safety. There was also a significant level of concern about the road infrastructure and difficulties with parking. Improving road safety would enhance the quality of life of some of the most vulnerable members of the community. Unfortunately, traffic management is not an issue over which the Town Council has direct control. Most of the traffic originates outside the parish. As a consequence, traffic management cannot be easily addressed by this Neighbourhood Plan. However, the Town Council will seek to support road safety improvements around the plan area.

30.3 As part of the overall approach, the Neighbourhood Plan can support and ensure that new development does not adversely affect the highway network; or that where it does, contributions through a Planning Obligation address the impacts appropriately. However, a Planning Obligation can only be sought where it meets the relevant tests; namely: it is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; is directly related to the development; and is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. In some cases, Cambridgeshire County Council is seeking more direct off-site delivery of highway improvements, i.e. rather than paying the County Council a fee the developer will undertake the works in the highway directly. As such in some cases a planning condition may be the appropriate implementation measure. In some cases, Community Infrastructure Levy monies will cover highway improvements.



30.4 The policy includes reference to the storage and collection of refuse bins as where insufficient on-site provision is made this can result in a highway impact. This impact involves bins blocking pedestrian use of footways that can lead to pedestrian and vehicle conflict. The Cambridgeshire RECAP Waste Management Design Guide SPD[72] sets out advice on access, maximum travel distances, number of bins per property type etc. and takes into account the Council's Waste Collection Policies. The policy looks to provide the opportunity for developers to promote alternative or innovative methods of storage such as underground bin storage, for example on larger sites if viability and operational practicalities support this approach in a development. Alternative or innovative methods of storage could have the added benefit of improving the visual aspects of recycling and waste management for the benefit of the community, particularly where smaller dwellings are concentrated, and the provision of wheeled bins may be less desirable.

30.5 Where parking courts are proposed, care needs to be taken. These spaces often suffer from poor natural surveillance, limited overlooking and can become unsafe or underused. It is recommended in the policy that parking courts should only be used where they are small, well-overlooked, incorporate high quality and subtle use of materials, integrated landscaping and trees. The HDC Design Guide SPD 2017 on page 89 provides more detailed advice.

[71] http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2573/huntingdonshire-design-guide-2017.pdf

[72] https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/planning-policy/recap-waste-management-design-guide/

Policy 9 – Highway Impact

Proposals will be supported where they would not adversely affect the local highway network. Where proposals would negatively impact on the local highway network, contributions will be sought, where appropriate, through a Planning Obligation to minimise and mitigate those impacts associated with the development.

Any new development which involves alterations to existing highways and the provision of new highways would be supported where it meets the following design criteria:

- Provides suitable measures to accommodate traffic (including at peak times);
- Improve the safety and attractiveness of the street scene; and
- Integrate appropriate traffic-calming measures within the development.

Development should incorporate adequate dedicated on-site provision for parking within the curtilage of properties or in small and well-overlooked parking courts or similar. Development proposals which would result in the displacement of existing off-street parking provision to on-street parking will not be supported. Proposals that incorporate car-free areas such as play streets would be supported.

New development should incorporate adequate on-site provision for the storage and collection of refuse bins. Where appropriate refuse collection storage should be screened and be easily accessible to the collection point. Where developers want to promote alternative or innovative methods of storage such as underground bin storage where viability and operational practicalities allow this would be supported; particularly where this improves the visual aspects of recycling and waste management for the benefit of the community.

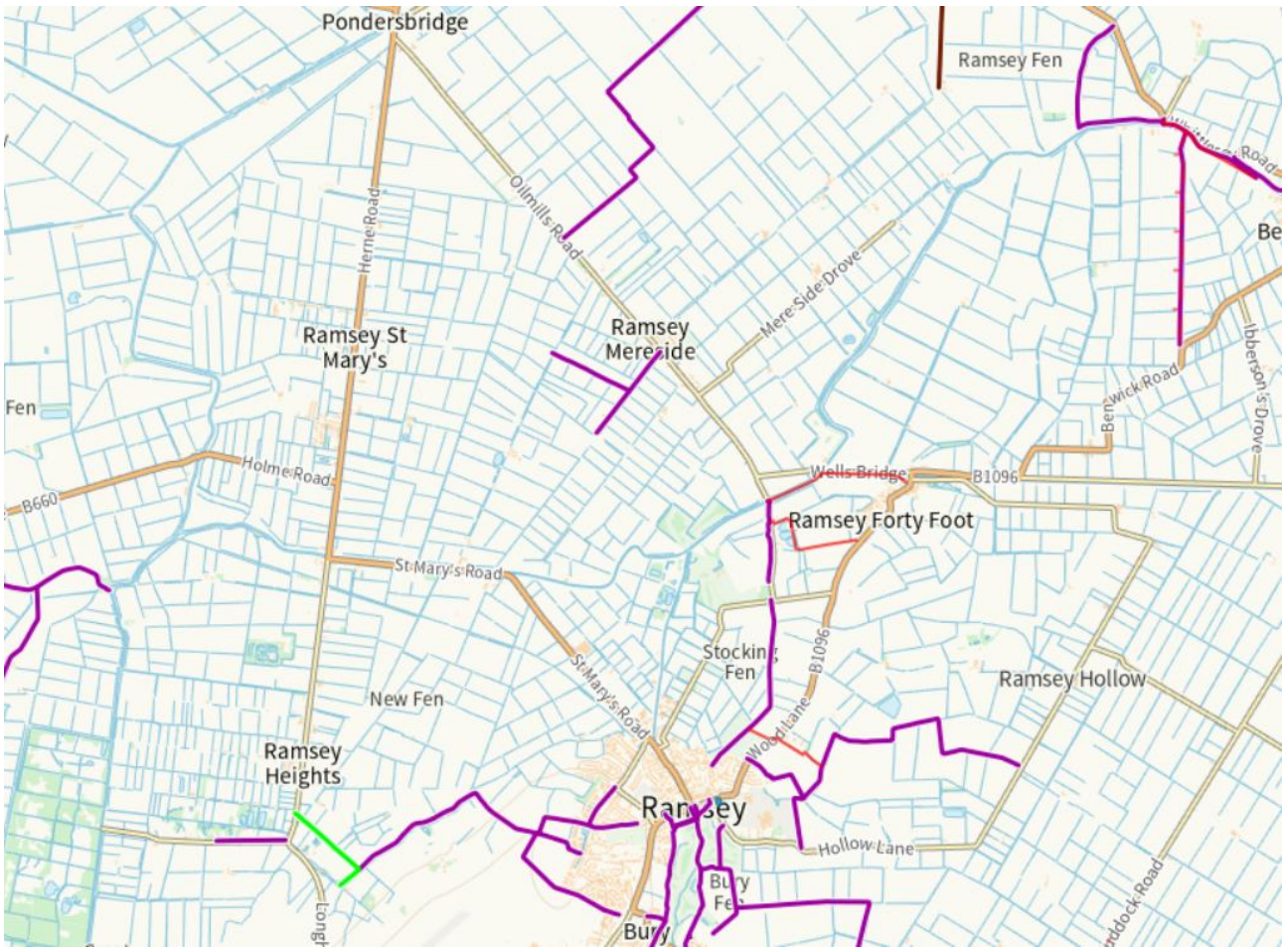
32. Rights of Way Network

32.1 Ramsey covers a large area of countryside and as a consequence it would be expected that it may benefit from an extensive and well-used rights of way network. However, across the parish as a whole there are relatively limited public rights of way. It is possible to get from Ramsey Forty Foot and Ramsey Heights to Ramsey. Ramsey St Mary's by contrast has no public rights of way.



32.2 An effective rights of way network provides a dual role for recreation and for sustainable travel. Their recreational use makes an important contribution to health and well-being. The areas allocated for housing are distant from the main services and facilities in Ramsey. As such the right of way network contributes to accessibility and providing the opportunity for sustainable travel using non-vehicle modes. The Neighbourhood Plan looks to improve and extend the rights of way network.

32.3 Current provision for pedestrians and cyclists is not significant. Consultation identified the lack of connection between the villages and town to be an issue. There are a number of footpaths and footways that pass through the town, including footways in the centre of the town that are narrow and/or are in poor quality, with the High Street being a particular example. Narrow streets and on street parking also make cycling difficult and increase the feeling of danger, particularly for young people travelling to school.



Map 13 – Rights of Way in Ramsey © Cambridgeshire County Council

Permissive Access Paths

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Byway
- Restricted Byway

Permissive Access Paths

- Permissive Bridleway
- Permissive Footpath
- Permissive Byway
- Permissive Cycleway
- Permissive Pedestrian and Cycle Track

32.4 The Rothschild Way is a footpath extending to Woodwalton Fen from Wicken Fen commemorating the early wildlife conservation work of Charles Rothschild. It is 39 miles in length and is recognised as a long-distance route, it runs through Ramsey.

32.5 The community have long suggested use of the old railway line route to provide improved access from Ramsey (town) to Ramsey Heights and then beyond to Ramsey St Marys. Another long held desire is the improvement along Stocking Fen Road down to the industrial area and ideally all the way to Ramsey Forty Foot. The Vision for Ramsy sets out a number of suggested routes to include improved accessibility between the town and villages, many of which would use improved rights of way. The Great Fen Masterplan also included a number of ideas to improve accessibility for walking and cycling based on a number of potential new bridleways

and footpaths. The principal hurdle to achieving new and improved public rights of way is financing.



Extract from Vision for Ramsey Document © Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Huntingdonshire District Council

Policy 10 - Rights of Way Network

Measures to support and improve green infrastructure across the parish of Ramsey through the improvement of the existing network of public rights of way and proposals to extend the network of public rights of way will be supported where this does not result in harm to ecology or landscape character. In particular schemes that contribute to the improvement of accessibility between new development and services and facilities within Ramsey Town Centre would be supported.

Implementation and Delivery

33.1 The implementation and delivery section sets out what actions are required to turn this Neighbourhood Plan into reality on the ground.

33.2 The Town Council needs the help of public and private partners to create a sustainable community and deliver the policies set out in this Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council will work with a number of partners, including the following, to implement the Plan:

Delivery Partners
Ramsey Town Council (TC)
Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC)
Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)
Health Providers (HP)
Private Developers (PD) Local Schools (LS)
Infrastructure Providers (IP)
Community Groups[73] (CG)
Local Residents (LR)
Local Businesses or Local Organisations (B)

33.3 New development creates a need to provide new infrastructure, facilities and services to successfully incorporate new development into the surrounding area to benefit existing, new and future residents. As provided for within national planning policy, appropriate financial contributions will be obtained from developers to combine with public funding to deliver the necessary facilities in infrastructure. The determination of planning applications also allows matters to be secured through planning conditions. The table below sets out the relevant implementation partners for the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

33.4 The Neighbourhood Plan provides a positive framework to ensure that development in Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside; Ramsey St Mary's; or Pondersbridge will bring positive benefits to the Parish.

Policy	Delivery Partners	Implementation Method
Theme - Community		
Policy 1 – Definition of 'Built-up Area' (Settlement Boundary)	TC, HDC, PD & LR	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy 2 – Protected Settlement Break	TC, HDC, PD, LR, B & CG	Pre-Application Consultation, Determination of Planning Applications or Community Initiatives
Policy 3 – Community Facilities	TC, HDC, PD, HP, LR, LS & CG	Determination of Planning Applications or Community Initiatives
Policy 4 – Community Engagement	PD, TC, HDC, CCC, LR, CG, B & IP	Pre-Application Consultation and Determination of Planning Applications

[73] Including the Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust

Policy	Delivery Partners	Implementation Method
Theme – Heritage and Environment		
Policy 5 – Local Green Space	TC, HDC, PD, LR, B & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives
Policy 6 – Views and Vistas	PD, HDC, TC, LR, CG, B, LS & IP	Pre-Application Consultation and Determination of Planning Applications
Natural and Built Environment		
Policy 7 – Infrastructure Provision	TC, HDC, CCC, HP, PD, LS, LR, B & CG	Pre-Application Consultation, Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives
Policy 8 – Sustainable Transport	TC, HDC, CCC, PD, LR, B & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives
Policy 9 – Highway Impact	TC, HDC, CCC, PD, LR, B & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives
Policy 10 – Rights of Way Network	TC, CCC, HDC, PD, LR, B & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives

33.5 Ramsey Town Council is committed to bringing greater locally informed influence over planning decisions and it will be the key organisation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will build upon its excellent track record in engaging in planning decisions (reactively through being consulted and proactively through promoting the policies and proposals of this Plan), and by delivering projects and infrastructure for the local community. However, the Council recognises the need to involve a range of other organisations if the potential of this plan is to be realised.

33.6 In England, communities that draw up a Neighbourhood Plan and secure the consent of local people in a referendum, which is then legally 'Made', benefit from 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) revenues arising from development that takes place in their area. However, this only applies to development permitted after the making of the NP and is not applied retrospectively. Up until that time the provision of eligibility for 15% of the CIL generated in the area applies, subject to a cap per annum as specified in CIL Regulations.

33.7 Some new development taking place in the Parish will be liable for CIL[74] contributions[75]. The money raised through CIL is used to fund district-wide and local infrastructure projects that

[74] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/community-infrastructure-levy-cil/

[75] The charge is levied on most new building developments that people would normally use. It is chargeable in pounds per square metre on the net additional floorspace if that floorspace is more than 100m^2. However, if the development involves the creation of a new dwelling, even if it is less than 100m^2, it is still liable to pay CIL. In certain circumstances CIL may also be charged where planning permission is granted to change the use of existing floorspace.

benefit local communities as set out in Section 216 (2) of the Planning Act 2008. The element of CIL which is the district portion will be spent by Huntingdonshire District Council on district-wide infrastructure in line with the priorities that HDC has set. The neighbourhood proportion of the CIL monies goes to the Town Council and will be spent on local infrastructure as required by law.

33.8 The Town Council is currently going through a programme of defining its future priorities which will follow this Neighbourhood Plan. Projects already underway include the car park extension in Ramsey town centre.

33.9 In addition, the Town Council will seek to influence annual and other budget decisions by Huntingdonshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority on housing, open space and recreation, economic development, community facilities and transport, through respective plans and strategies. The Town Council will also work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to develop funding bids aimed at achieving Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives. This might include the Lottery, UK Government programmes and any partnership programmes.

Monitoring and Review

34.1 Continual plan review is a fundamental element of the planning system. It is important to check that the plan is being implemented correctly, ensure that outcomes match objectives and to change the plan if they are not. This Neighbourhood Plan will be carefully monitored by the Town Council and reviewed if it becomes apparent that the vision, goals and objectives of the Plan are not being met.

34.2 Monitoring is a shared responsibility of the Town Council as the qualifying body; Huntingdonshire District Council as the Local Planning Authority; and users of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council will consider the effectiveness of the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan each time it makes representations on a planning application; alongside seeking views on the Neighbourhood Plan at each Annual Parish Meeting. The Town Council will request Huntingdonshire District Council to raise with it any issues arising out of the development management process in determining individual planning applications. Users of the Neighbourhood Plan are encouraged to make comments on monitoring of the Neighbourhood Plan to the Town Council at any point.

34.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to guide development up to 2046. It is unlikely that the Neighbourhood Plan will remain current and entirely relevant for the entire plan period and may, in whole or in part, require some amendments before 2046.

34.4 There are a number of circumstances under which a partial review of the plan may be necessary, in accordance with best practice, the Town Council and its partners will consider undertaking a partial review of the Neighbourhood Plan no later than 5 years following its finalisation.



Glossary

35.1 The majority of the glossary is copied from the NPPF to ensure consistency[76]. The terms set out below are either included within the Neighbourhood Plan or are within parts of the NPPF or the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 that is referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Affordable housing *: Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following categories: affordable housing for rent; starter homes; discounted market sales housing; and other affordable routes to home ownership including shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). *[Note a more detailed definition is included in the NPPF[77]]*

Amenity *: A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.

Ancient Woodland: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Conservation (for heritage policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) *: A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Development plan: Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Economic development *: Development, including those within the B and E Use Classes, public and community uses, and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).

Green infrastructure: 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.

Heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites),

[76] Those items in the glossary which do not match the NPPF (December 2024 version) or are not defined in the NPPF (December 2024 version) glossary are marked with an Asterix *

[77] See Annex 2 in the NPPF

national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Living Conditions *: The circumstances affecting the way in which people live, especially with regard to their well-being. Relevant factors include: internal space; access to external space; outlook; privacy; daylight; sunlight; overbearing impact; impact from pollution including noise.

Local planning authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority, the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities. *[The local planning authority for this area is Huntingdonshire District Council]*

Local Plan: A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Neighbourhood plans: A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

NPPF *: National Planning Policy Framework, this forms the overall planning policy produced by the Government to inform the making of Development Plans including Neighbourhood Plans and decision making on planning applications.

Open space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Policies Map *: A document which illustrates on a base map all the policies and proposals contained in this Neighbourhood Plan or another document which forms part of the Development Plan.

Planning condition: A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning obligation: A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Planning Practice Guidance *: this forms the overall national planning practice guidance and advice produced by the Government to inform the making of Development Plans including Neighbourhood Plans and decision making on planning applications.

Ramsar sites: Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

Rural exception sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding. *[Also see Policy LP 28 of the Local Plan]*

Scheduled Monument *: Those monuments that are given legal protection by being scheduled by Historic England.

Self-build and custom-build housing: Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

Setting of a heritage asset: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Settlement Boundary *: The boundary drawn around various towns and villages to limit new development and define the 'built-up area' of the settlement. Outside of the settlement boundary is considered to be the countryside.

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC): Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.

Special Protection Areas (SPA): Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Strategic Environmental Assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

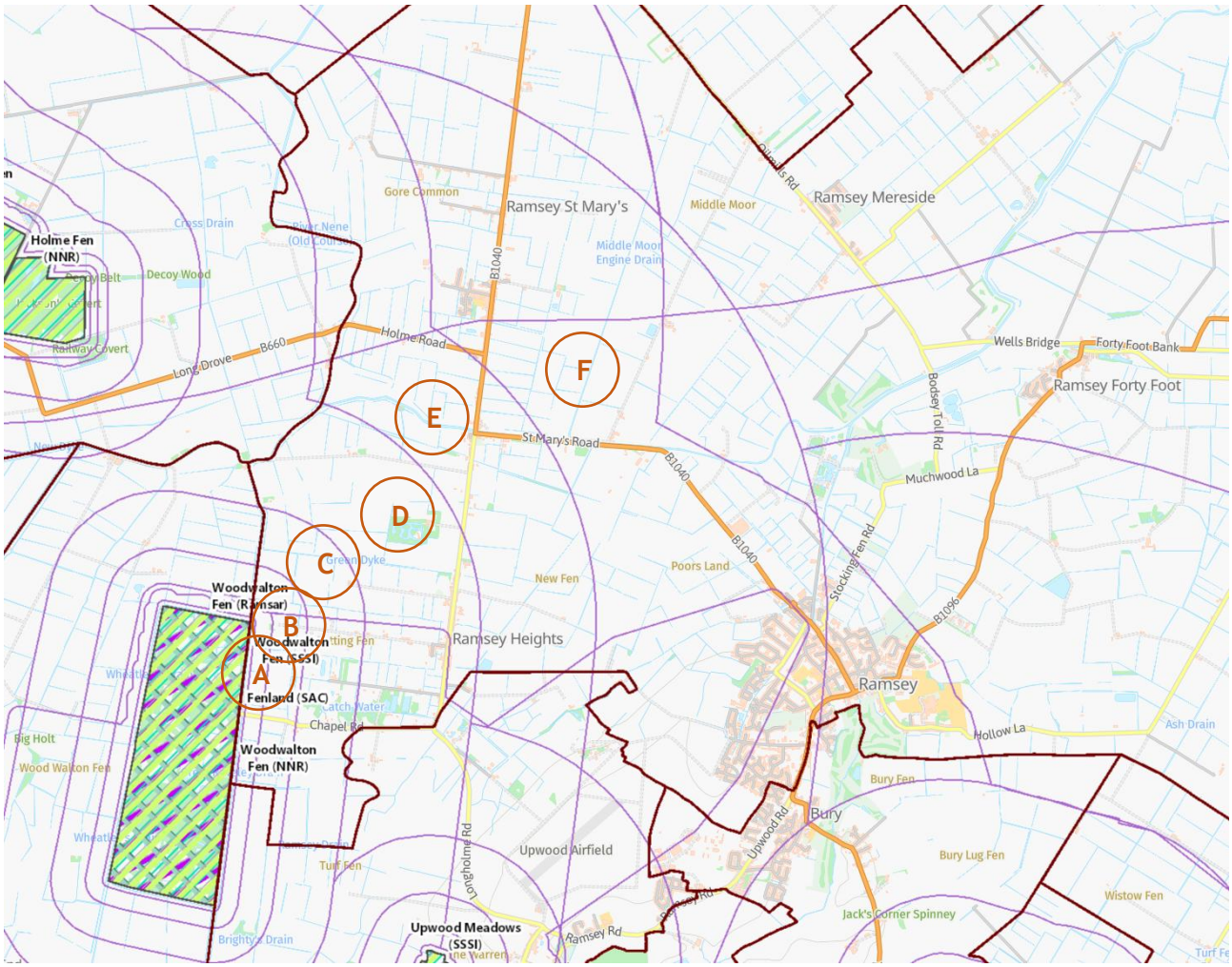
Supplementary planning documents: Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainable transport modes: Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Windfall sites: Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

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Appendix 1 – Nature Site Impact Zones



Extract from Magic.gov.uk website © Defra

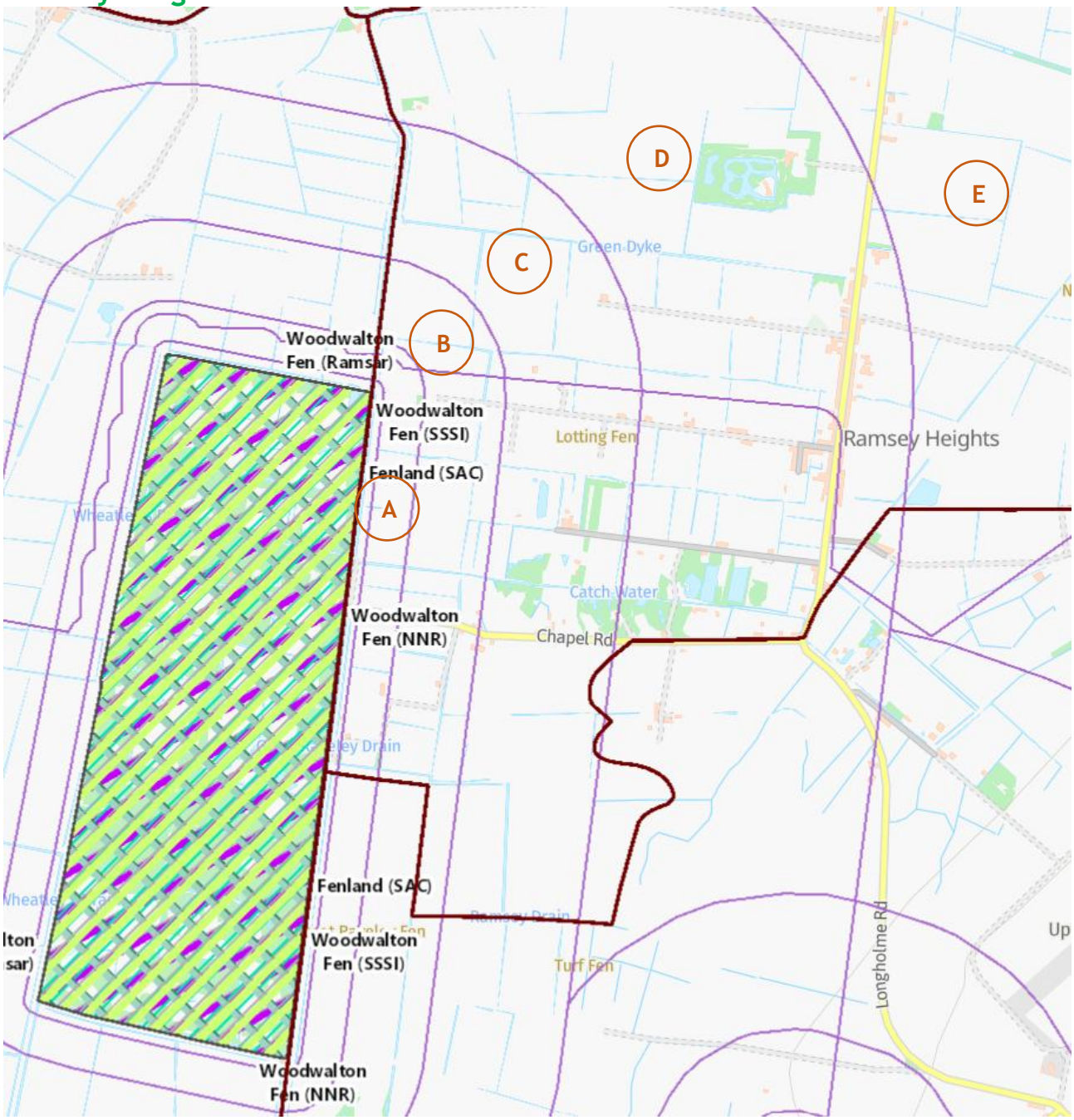
SSSI Impact Zones (Labels A & B etc. have been added by us purely for identification)

The impact zones, using the labels that we have added only for ease of identification can be summarised as follows in relation to new housing, which is the most common land use:

(A) Residential development of 50 units or more in settlements or 10 or more outside of settlements
(B) Residential development of 100 units or more in settlements or 50 or more outside of settlements
(C) Residential development of 100 units or more in settlements or 50 or more outside of settlements
(D) N/A
(E) N/A
(F) N/A

The details of the impact zones do actually confirm that they are to be used to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites. The details of the impact zones for Ramsey Heights and Ramsey St Mary's as the closest settlements are detailed below:

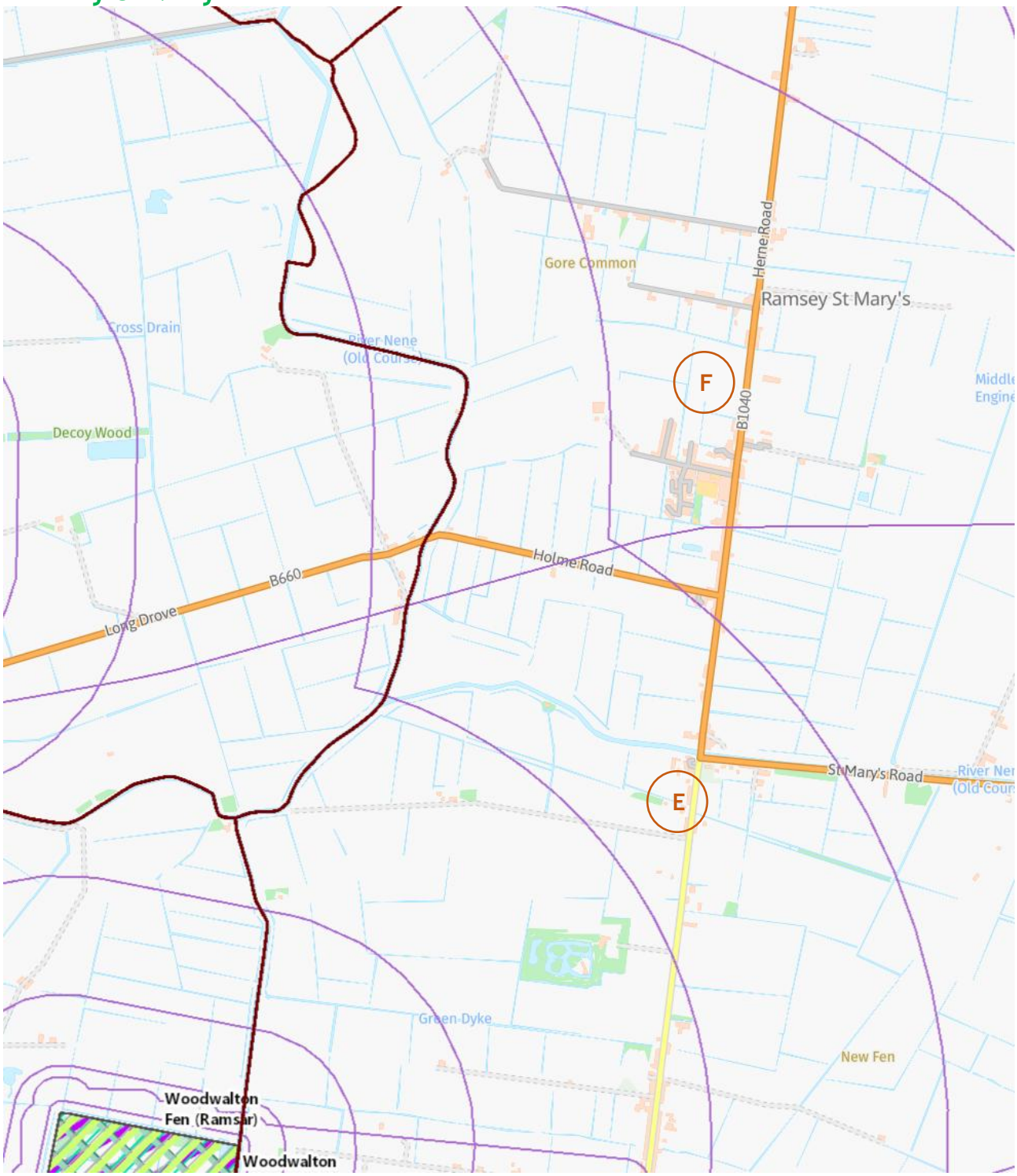
Ramsey Heights



Extract from Magic.gov.uk website © Defra

SSSI Impact Zones (Labels A & B etc. have been added by us purely for identification)

Ramsey St Mary's



Extract from Magic.gov.uk website © Defra

SSSI Impact Zones (Labels A & B etc. have been added by us purely for identification)

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?

A

- **Infrastructure:** Pipelines and underground cables, pylons and overhead cables (excluding upgrades and refurbishment of existing network). Any transport proposal including new or extended footways, cycleways, roads/car parks, railways and waterways (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- **Minerals, Oil and Gas:** Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction.
- **Rural Non-Residential:** Large non-residential developments outside of existing settlements/urban areas where the net additional gross internal floorspace is > 1,000m^2 or the footprint exceeds 0.2ha.
- **Residential:** Residential development of 50 units or more.
- **Rural Residential:** Any residential development of 10 or more units outside of existing settlements/urban areas.
- **Air Pollution:** Any development that could cause AIR POLLUTION or DUST either in its construction or operation (including: industrial/commercial processes, livestock & poultry units, slurry lagoons/manure stores).
- **Combustion:** All general combustion processes. Incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.
- **Waste:** Mechanical and biological waste treatment, inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill, household civic amenity recycling facilities construction, demolition and excavation waste, other waste management.
- **Compost:** Any composting proposal. Incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.
- **Discharge:** Any discharge of water or liquid waste that is discharged to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream.
- **Water Supply:** Any development needing its own water supply e.g. remote rural housing that is not connected to a mains water supply, OR large infrastructure such as warehousing/industry where the total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is > 1,000m^2.

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?

B

- **Infrastructure:** Pipelines and underground cables, pylons and overhead cables (excluding upgrades and refurbishment of existing network). Any transport proposal including new or extended footways, cycleways, roads/car parks, railways and waterways (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.

- **Minerals, Oil and Gas:** Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction.
- **Rural Non-Residential:** Large non-residential developments outside of existing settlements/urban areas where the net additional gross internal floorspace is > 1,000m^2 or the footprint exceeds 0.2ha.
- **Residential:** Residential development of 100 units or more.
- **Rural Residential:** Any residential development of 50 or more units outside existing settlements/urban areas.
- **Air Pollution:** Any development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (including: industrial/commercial processes, livestock & poultry units, slurry lagoons/manure stores).
- **Combustion:** All general combustion processes. Incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.
- **Waste:** Mechanical and biological waste treatment, inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill, household civic amenity recycling facilities construction, demolition and excavation waste, other waste management.
- **Compost:** Any composting proposal. Incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.
- **Discharge:** Any discharge of water or liquid waste that is discharged to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream.
- **Water Supply:** Any development needing its own water supply e.g. remote rural housing that is not connected to a mains water supply, OR large infrastructure such as warehousing/industry where the total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is > 1,000m^2.

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?

C

- **Infrastructure:** Pipelines and underground cables, pylons and overhead cables (excluding upgrades and refurbishment of existing network). Any transport proposal including new or extended footways, cycleways, roads/car parks, railways and waterways (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- **Minerals, Oil and Gas:** Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction.
- **Rural Non-Residential:** Large non-residential developments outside of existing settlements/urban areas where the net additional gross internal floorspace is > 1,000m^2 or the footprint exceeds 0.2ha.
- **Residential:** Residential development of 100 units or more.
- **Rural Residential:** Any residential development of 50 or more units outside existing settlements/urban areas.

- **Air Pollution:** Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (including: industrial processes, livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m^2, slurry lagoons > 200m^2 & manure stores > 250 tonnes).
- **Combustion:** General combustion processes >20MW energy input. Incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.
- **Waste:** Landfill. Including: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill.
- **Compost:** Any composting proposal with more than 500 tonnes maximum annual operational throughput. Incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.
- **Discharge:** Any discharge of water or liquid waste of more than 2m^3/day that is discharged to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream.
- **Water Supply:** Any development needing its own water supply e.g. remote rural housing that is not connected to a mains water supply, OR large infrastructure such as warehousing/industry where the total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is > 1,000m^2.

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?

D

- **Infrastructure:** Pipelines and underground cables, pylons and overhead cables (excluding upgrades and refurbishment of existing network). Any transport proposal including new or extended footways, cycleways, roads/car parks, railways and waterways (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- **Minerals, Oil and Gas:** Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction.
- **Air Pollution:** Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (including: industrial processes, livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m^2, slurry lagoons > 200m^2 & manure stores > 250 tonnes).
- **Combustion:** General combustion processes >20MW energy input. Incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.
- **Waste:** Landfill. Including: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill.
- **Compost:** Any composting proposal with more than 75000 tonnes maximum annual operational throughput. Incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.
- **Water Supply:** Large infrastructure such as warehousing/industry where the total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is 1,000m^2 or more.

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?

E

- **Infrastructure:** Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- **Minerals, Oil and Gas:** Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction.
- **Air Pollution:** Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (including: industrial processes, livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m^2, slurry lagoons > 750m^2 & manure stores > 3500 tonnes).
- **Combustion:** General combustion processes >50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?

F

- **Infrastructure:** Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- **Wind and Solar:** Solar schemes with a footprint > 0.5ha, all wind turbines.
- **Air Pollution:** Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (including: industrial processes, livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m^2, slurry lagoons > 750m^2 & manure stores > 3500 tonnes).
- **Combustion:** General combustion processes >50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.
- **Waste:** Landfill. Including: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill.

Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan 2026-2046

Referendum Version September 2026

The Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Ramsey produced in accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

The Parish of Ramsey covers the settlements of Ramsey; Ramsey Forty Foot; Ramsey Heights; Ramsey Mereside & Ramsey St Mary's; together with the area of Ramsey Hollow & a small part of Pondersbridge

Ramsey Town Council

https://www.ramseytowncouncil.gov.uk/

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Report on The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan 2026 - 2046

An Examination undertaken for Huntingdonshire District Council with the support of Ramsey Town Council on the April 2026 submission version of the Plan.

Independent Examiner: Andrew S Freeman BSc(Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI

Date of Report: 25 August 2026

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and its supporting documentation, including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- the Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Ramsey Town Council;
- the Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan Area (Map 2 on Page 17 of the Plan);
- the Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2026 – 2046; and
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan 2026 - 2046

1.1 The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan 2026 – 2046 covers the civil parish of Ramsey, located within Huntingdonshire District in the county of Cambridgeshire. Included within the parish are the settlements of Ramsey itself together with Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey St Mary's, the area of Ramsey Hollow and a small part of Pondersbridge. The parish is sited generally to the north-northeast of Huntingdon and south-southeast of Peterborough.

1.2 Since designation as a neighbourhood area by Huntingdonshire District Council in February 2024, work on the Plan has progressed under the direction of a steering group. This was formed after holding a neighbourhood plan meeting to which all households were invited. A further meeting and a community consultation survey followed. Throughout the exercise, publicity has been achieved through postcards to all households, a Facebook page, newsletter and local engagement events.

1.3 The resultant Plan has a broad vision, four objectives and 10 policies. The policies fall into one of three themes: community, heritage and environment, and infrastructure.

The Independent Examiner

1.4 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan by Huntingdonshire District Council, with the agreement of Ramsey Town Council.

1.5 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector with over forty years' experience. I have worked in both the public and the private sectors. I am an independent examiner and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

The Scope of the Examination

1.6 As the independent examiner, I am required to produce this report and recommend either:

(a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or

(b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or

(c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

1.7 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ("the 1990 Act"). The examiner must consider:

- Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions.

- Whether the plan complies with provisions under Section 38A and Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ("the 2004 Act"). These are:

  - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;

  - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land and does not go beyond the scope of what may be included in a draft plan[1];

  - it specifies the period during which it has effect;

  - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;

  - it does not include provisions and policies for "excluded development";

[1] See Section 38B(A1) and Section 38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.

- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it is designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change[2]; and

- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it takes account of any local nature recovery strategy, under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021, that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood area.[3]

• Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.

• Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the 2012 Regulations").

1.8 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

1.9 The "Basic Conditions" are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;

- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;

- not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made[4];

[2] This additional requirement was commenced on 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force section 98 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.
[3] See footnote above.
[4] This Basic Condition applies from 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force Section 99 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. This replaces the former Basic Condition which required a neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

- be compatible with, and not breach, assimilated obligations[5]; and

- meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.10 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.[6]

2. Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Development Plan for this part of Huntingdonshire District Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, is Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 as adopted in May 2019. A full update to the Local Plan is in progress, with publication of a Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan to 2046 anticipated in September 2026, and its submission for examination by the end of December 2026.[7]

2.2 This Plan has been prepared in the context of the version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024. A revised NPPF was published during the examination on 17 August 2026. However, the revised version does not apply for the purposes of this examination.[8] Unless otherwise stated, all references in the report are to the December 2024 NPPF and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Submitted Documents

2.3 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including:

- the draft Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan 2026 - 2046, April 2026;
- a map which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates;
- the Consultation Statement, April 2026;
- the Basic Conditions Statement, April 2026;

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[5] See: The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 (Consequential Amendment) Regulations 2023, which replaced the previous reference to 'EU' obligations.
[6] This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.
[7] Local Development Scheme, May 2026: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/cnpkcvla/local-development-scheme.pdf
[8] See the transitional arrangements provided by Annex A, Paragraph 6 of the August 2026 NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK

- the SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Screening Report, April 2026, prepared by consultants acting for Ramsey Town Council;
- the HRA (Habitats Regulations Assessment) Screening Report, April 2026, prepared by consultants acting for Ramsey Town Council;
- Ramsey Local Green Spaces Evidence, April 2026;
- Ramsey Settlement Boundary Methodology, April 2026;
- all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation;
- the request for additional clarification sought in my letter dated 7 July 2026 and the responses from Ramsey Town Council dated 14 July 2026 and from Huntingdonshire District Council dated 16 July 2026 ; and
- the responses to my letter of 7 July 2026 concerning the revisions to the legal compliance and Basic Conditions requirements from Huntingdonshire District Council and two other parties who took the opportunity to comment. [9]

Site Visit

2.4 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 19 July 2026 to familiarise myself with it, and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.5 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I consider hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulate the objections to the Plan and present arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum.

Modifications

2.6 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

3.1 The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by Ramsey Town Council being a qualifying body for an area that was designated by Huntingdonshire District Council on 6 February 2024.

[9] View at: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/

3.2 It is the only Neighbourhood Plan for the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan Area and does not relate to land outside the designated area.

Plan Period

3.3 The Plan specifies clearly the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2026 to 2046.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

3.4 Designation of the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan Area was granted by Huntingdonshire District Council on 6 February 2024. Since then, work on formulating the Plan has proceeded under the auspices of a neighbourhood plan steering group. Key events have included public meetings and a community consultation survey accompanied by several engagement events. There was also a separate survey of local businesses.

3.5 In response to the formal consultation under Regulation 14 (19 January 2026 to 9 March 2026), representations were received from statutory consultees, landowners and developers, local groups and members of the public. The whole process is described in the Consultation Statement, April 2026.

3.6 Details of persons and bodies consulted are summarised on Pages 17 and 18 of the Consultation Statement. An explanation of how they were consulted is to be found on Pages 18 to 25 and in Appendixes A and B. The main issues and concerns that were raised are described in Pages 26 to 27 of the Statement. A description of how those issues and concerns were considered and addressed is set out on Pages 28 to 31.

3.7 The Regulation 16 Consultation was carried out between 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026. Representations were received from various public bodies and from planning consultants acting for landowners and developers. Comprehensive comments from Huntingdonshire District Council were included.

3.8 I have had regard to changes made to the legal compliance requirements and Basic Conditions, applying from 25 March 2026.[10] In order to provide an opportunity for the qualifying body, local planning authority and other interested parties to comment, Huntingdonshire District Council contacted those who had made representations at the Regulation 16 stage. A two-week period was advertised by Huntingdonshire District Council on its website inviting further comments, focused only on the legislative changes. Three responses were received, including one from Huntingdonshire District Council itself. I have taken these responses into account in my assessment.

[10] See paragraphs 1.7 – 1.9 above and the associated footnotes.

3.9 I am satisfied that, at both the Regulation 14 and the Regulation 16 stages, the consultation process met the legal requirements and there has been procedural compliance. Regard has been paid to the advice on plan preparation and engagement in the PPG.

Development and Use of Land

3.10 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with Section 38A of the 2004 Act and does not exceed the appropriate scope of a neighbourhood plan.[11]

Excluded Development

3.11 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for "excluded development".[12]

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

3.12 Huntingdonshire District Council has advised that a nature recovery strategy is in place in relation to the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan Area. In my assessment, I consider that none of the Plan's policies are in direct conflict with the strategy.

Climate Change

3.13 Having regard to the responses received to my letter of 7 July 2026, I am satisfied that, overall, the Plan policies do not conflict with the aims of securing development which contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

Human Rights

3.14 Ramsey Town Council is satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). From my independent assessment, I see no reason to disagree.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

Assimilated Obligations

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by consultants acting for Ramsey Town Council, which found that it was unnecessary to undertake SEA. Having read the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, I support this conclusion.

[11] See Section 38B(A1) and Section38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.
[12] The meaning of 'excluded development' is set out in s.61K of the 1990 Act.

4.2 The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan was further screened for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), which also was not triggered. There would be no adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally designated sites as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan, either on its own or in combination with any other plans. Natural England agreed with the screening opinion (Screening Report, Appendix 1). From my independent assessment of this matter, I have no reason to disagree.

Main Issues

4.3 Having regard for the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan, the consultation responses and other evidence, and the site visit, I consider that there are seven main issues relating to the Basic Conditions for this examination. These concern:

- Built-up Area Boundary
- Settlement Break;
- Community Engagement
- Local Green Space
- Views and Vistas
- Infrastructure Provision
- Transport Matters

4.4 Before I deal with the main issues, I have a few observations to make with regard to the representations. First, the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan should be seen in the context of the wider planning system. This includes Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 as well as the NPPF and PPG. It is not necessary to repeat in the Neighbourhood Plan matters that are quite adequately dealt with elsewhere.[13] Having said that, there may be scope to give emphasis to matters particularly relevant in the context of Ramsey.

4.5 Secondly, the Neighbourhood Plan does not have to deal with each and every topic raised through the consultation. In this regard, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and the scope of the policies (including housing allocations) is largely at the discretion of the qualifying body, albeit informed by the consultation process and the requirements set by the Basic Conditions.

4.6 Thirdly, my central task is to judge whether the Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the Basic Conditions. Many of the representations do not demonstrate or indicate a failure to meet those conditions or other legal requirements. Similarly, many of the suggested additions and improvements are not necessary when judged against the Basic Conditions.

4.7 The following section of my report sets out modifications that are necessary in order to meet the Basic Conditions. Some of the proposed

[13] See NPPF Paragraph 16 f).

modifications are factual corrections.[14] Others are necessary in order to have closer regard to national policies and advice. In particular, plans should be succinct and contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous.[15] In addition, the policies should be supported by appropriate evidence.[16]

Issue 1 – Built-up Area Boundary

4.8 Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan defines a settlement boundary for Ramsey and other settlements. In order to protect the countryside from encroachment, growth is directed to the built-up area of the settlements as defined by the settlement boundaries.

4.9 Huntingdonshire District Council is concerned that proposed or built rural exception sites are excluded from the built-up area boundaries and that opportunities for sustainable development could be compromised, contrary to the Local Plan.

4.10 For my part, I note that none of the settlements have any proposed or built rural exception sites.[17] Such sites could be developed in the future without compromising sustainable development and incorporated within settlement boundaries, where logical, upon future revision of the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.11 The second paragraph of Policy 1 states that applications will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken into account the existing built form, layout and *structure* of the surrounding area. To my mind, the meaning of "structure" is not entirely clear. In its response to my questions, the Town Council has clarified the meaning.[18] To add clarity to the policy, such an explanation should be included within the supporting text.

4.12 Under the policy, developments are also expected to take account of "views and vistas". The Town Council has confirmed that, in part, these are the views and vistas the subject of Policy 6.[19] However, the reference is not intended to prevent consideration of views and vistas that may become apparent during the design process. In response, I would say that I have had the opportunity to consider the appropriateness of the views and vistas defined under Policy 6. However, the same cannot be said of views and vistas that may emerge in the future. The policy should be limited to views and vistas identified in Policy 6.

4.13 On a final point, the ultimate paragraph of Policy 1 states that land outside or not well related to the settlement boundary should be

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[14] Modifications for the purpose of correcting errors is provided for in Paragraph 10(3)(e) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.
[15] NPPF, Paragraphs 15 and 16 d).
[16] PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.
[17] See Town Council's answers dated 14 July 2026 to my questions.
[18] See Town Council's answers dated 14 July 2026 to my questions.
[19] See Town Council's answers dated 14 July 2026 to my questions.

determined in accordance with the relevant Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies. Strictly speaking, it is the *development* of such land that should accord with the policies. In addition, the provision will relate to all development outside the settlement boundary, whether or not it is well related to the boundary. This and other necessary amendments are the subject of proposed modification **PM1**.

Issue 2 – Settlement Break

4.14 In respect of Policy 2, Protected Settlement Break, both Huntingdonshire District Council and Savills, acting on behalf of David Wilson Homes South Midlands, have drawn attention to a live planning application, primarily for residential development, across the whole of this site.[20] The proposed development includes an undeveloped landscape buffer with a minimum width of about 12m across the site's southern boundary. In addition, an adjacent landscape buffer could be sought as part of the development of the RAF Upwood site to the south.

4.15 Savills consider the policy fails the Basic Conditions. Savills assert, inter alia, that in the absence of national and local planning policy specifically related to Protected Settlement Breaks (or similar), Local Green Space policy should be applied, principally the criteria set out in NPPF, Paragraph 106. Whilst I accept that the practical effect of both mechanisms is to restrict development, Local Green Space and Settlement Breaks fulfil distinctly separate planning purposes. Settlement breaks aim to maintain the physical and visual separation of distinct communities and prevent coalescence, whilst Local Green Space designations protect areas special to a local community—such as for beauty, historic significance, tranquillity, or wildlife.

4.16 To my mind, to separate the settlements of Ramsey and Bury through a settlement break is a laudable objective. Overall, I am satisfied 'The Ramsey Settlement Boundary Methodology, April 2026' provides a sufficiently comprehensive assessment of the rational and approach taken to defining the Protected Settlement Break and is robust.

4.17 The District Council considers that sufficient landscaping can be secured through the planning application and through a draft policy in the emerging Local Plan with regard to the RAF Upwood site ("Bury 3") to provide the desired visual separation. Although the landscape buffer envisaged by the District Council could go some way to achieve visual separation, it would do nothing to prevent coalescence and achieve separation from the western fringe of Bury in the vicinity of the Longland Crescent area. The overall objective of Policy 2 would not be met.

4.18 I am not recommending any modification of Policy 2. I appreciate that, in the event of the planning application being approved by Huntingdonshire District Council, then the District Council's solution remains the best fallback option and modification in line with the "required change" would

[20] Planning Application Ref: 25/01382/OUT.

be the sensible course of action. However, given what I have seen and read, it is not a solution that I would seek to promote as the preferred course of action.

Issue 3 – Community Engagement

4.19 I have two points of concern in relation to Policy 4, Community Engagement. First, the policy refers to contact by developers with the Town Council to discuss pre-application community engagement. Although the wording says that developers "should" contact the Town Council, this cannot be required through a development plan policy. An alternative form of wording is required.

4.20 Secondly, the policy indicates that applications that detail how the outcome of pre-application community engagement have been taken into account will be supported. I appreciate that this form of wording has been used elsewhere. However, to my mind, it is not sufficient to support a proposal just because the outcome of community engagement is detailed. The details should demonstrate a *positive response*. The two necessary amendments are addressed in proposed modification **PM2**.

Issue 4 – Local Green Space

4.21 Under Policy 5, five sites would be allocated as Local Green Spaces (LGS). With particular regard to Site E, Ramsey Forty Foot Moorings, Huntingdonshire District Council is concerned that LGS designation could create an unnecessary policy barrier to the delivery of flood mitigation infrastructure, open space and moorings access.

4.22 I note that proposals to improve mooring infrastructure and to improve public access are already supported through the policy. Explicit support for flood mitigation infrastructure and suitable community infrastructure could be ensured through simple amendment, as proposed by the Town Council.[21]

4.23 In all other respects, I am satisfied that the proposed designations meet the criteria and other considerations for designation, as set out in Paragraphs 106 to 108 of the NPPF. They can be supported subject to proposed modifications **PM3**.

Issue 5 – Views and Vistas

4.24 Policy 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan concerns views and vistas. Vista J is towards the golf course, across the settlement break in the Bury Neighbourhood Plan. In this way, the policy attempts to control the potential loss of views across land that is outside the boundary of the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Plan has no locus outside its

[21] See Town Council's answers dated 14 July 2026 to my questions.

designated area. The related views cannot be controlled in this way. View/Vista J should be omitted from the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.25 In regard to View/Vista O, this runs along the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area.[22] It should be made clear that control is exercised only over proposals within the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan Area. Proposed modification **PM4** refers to these two matters.

Issue 6 – Infrastructure Provision

4.26 In Policy 7, Infrastructure Provision, it is clear that the words "where appropriate" are intended to cover the need for contributions to meet the tests for planning obligations.[23] However, the reference should apply to the circumstances of the application, not to the proposals as such. Focused amendment is necessary.

4.27 With regard to the provision of water and drainage infrastructure, this should be, if it is a necessity, expressed as a requirement. Proposed modification **PM5** applies to these two matters.

Issue 7 – Transport Matters

4.28 Policy 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires proposals to consider how development can contribute to the delivery of the provision of a network of walking and cycling linkages to the key services and facilities in the relevant town or village. However, for clarity, details should be added of the existing network towards which development proposals can contribute.

4.29 The Town Council has provided details of an existing network.[24] This network should be referenced in a footnote to the policy and a copy provided within the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.30 Under the fourth paragraph of the policy, major developments will be supported where they secure improvements to public transport provisions. The words "where appropriate" should be added to make clear that the provision of improvements will be subject to the tests for planning obligations and the like.

4.31 The various necessary amendments are included in proposed modification **PM6**.

4.32 In the opening paragraph of Policy 9, Highway Impact, there is a reference to seeking contributions through planning obligations or planning conditions. In this regard, planning obligations are the principal way in which financial contributions can be sought. The text should be amended as in proposed modification **PM7**.

[22] See Section 38A(2) of the 2004 Act.
[23] See Town Council's answers dated 14 July 2026 to my questions.
[24] See Town Council's answers dated 14 July 2026 to my questions.

Other Policies

4.33 There are two policies that have not been the subject of commentary in the above report. These are Policy 3, Community Facilities and Policy 10, Rights of Way Network. To a greater or lesser extent, these topics are covered in NPPF Section 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities).

4.34 Subject to the modifications that I have recommended, I find that there has been regard for national policy and that the Basic Conditions have been met.

Minor Amendments and Updates

4.35 Minor amendments to the text and numbering (sections, paragraphs etc) can be made consequential to the recommended modifications, alongside any other minor non-material changes or updates, in agreement between Huntingdonshire District Council and Ramsey Town Council.[25]

5. Conclusions

Summary

5.1 The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, and the evidence documents submitted with it.

5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. The Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan, as modified, has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond the Plan boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Overview

[25] PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509.

5.4 It is evident that a considerable amount of time and effort has been devoted to the development and production of this Plan and I congratulate those who have been involved. The Plan should prove to be a useful tool for future planning and change in Ramsey over the coming years.

Andrew S Freeman

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no	Modification
PM1	Pages 31 and 32	In regard to Policy 1, add to the accompanying text a meaning of "structure" as used in the second paragraph of the policy. After "views and vistas" add "as defined under Policy 6". Change the beginning of the final paragraph of the policy so that it reads "Development of land outside the settlement boundary…".
PM2	Page 51	In the first sentence of Policy 4, replace the wording commencing with and following "should contact" with the following: "… shall demonstrate that they have undertaken early discussion with the Town Council to discuss how pre-application community engagement can be undertaken." In the second paragraph, replace the wording commencing with and following "the outcome of" with the following: "…pre-application community engagement has been addressed in a positive way will be supported."
PM3	Page 65	In the paragraph that follows the list of sites in Policy 5 (ending with E. Ramsey Forty Foot Moorings), replace the second sentence with: "Proposals to improve mooring infrastructure, install flood mitigation infrastructure and to improve public access including suitable community infrastructure will be supported."
PM4	Page 75	From Policy 6, delete View/Vista J. Carry out consequential amendments elsewhere in the Plan. At the beginning of the policy, add the words: "In regard to land within the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan Area, proposals…".

PM5	Pages 84 and 85	"In the first sentence of Policy 7, delete the words "where appropriate" and replace with the insertion of the words "as appropriate" after "it provides for". "In the second paragraph of Policy 7, delete the words "where appropriate" and replace with the insertion of the words "as appropriate" after the words "they provide for". Replace the third paragraph of the policy with the following: "Development proposals will be supported where they can demonstrate that there is capacity in the local surface water drainage system, the water supply network and the sewerage network, or capacity can be made available in time to support the development, having regard to the advice of Anglian Water."
PM6	Page 88	In the third paragraph of Policy 8, following reference to a network of walking and cycling linkages, add a footnote referencing the Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy. Add an extract from the Strategy to the Neighbourhood Plan. In the fourth paragraph, change the beginning of the second sentence so that it reads, "Development proposals will be supported where, as appropriate, they secure improvements…".
PM7	Page 90	In Policy 9, delete the words "or Planning Condition".

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Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement

Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Decision Statement

Following an independent examination Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet confirmed on the 20 October 2026 that the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.

Background

The Ramsey neighbourhood area was designated on 6 February 2024 under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). The plan area covers the parish of Ramsey and is contiguous with the Town council's administrative boundary.

Ramsey Town Council, as the qualifying body, submitted the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting evidence to Huntingdonshire District Council 28 April 2026. The statutory six week submission consultation was held from 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026.

Huntingdonshire District Council, in discussion with Ramsey Town Council, appointed an independent examiner, Andrew S Freeman BSc(Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI, to review whether the submitted Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions as required by legislation. Andrew S Freeman issued his report on 25 August 2026 which recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the modifications proposed in his report, met the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum.

Following discussions with the qualifying body it was decided that the Examiner's recommendations would be accepted in full.

The Basic Conditions are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations; and
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended) set out two basic conditions in addition to those set out in primary legislation and referred to above. These are:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.
- Having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that the neighbourhood development order is made where the development described in an order proposal is Environmental Impact Assessment development (this is not applicable to this examination).

Decision and Reasons

Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet considered the recommendations on 20 October 2026 and agreed to accept the Examiner's proposed modifications and approve the Ramsey Communities Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

The modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan, as needed to ensure it meets the Basic Conditions and in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations are listed in the following table.

Examiner's Recommended Modifications Received 25 August 2026

The statement below sets out the modifications considered by the examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions. Strike-through text indicates a deletion and bold indicates the insertion of additional text.

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Pages 31 and 32	In regard to Policy 1, add to the accompanying text a meaning of “structure” as used in the second paragraph of the policy. After “views and vistas” add “as defined under Policy 6”. Change the beginning of the final paragraph of the policy so that it reads “Development of land outside the settlement boundary…”.
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PM6	Page 88	In the third paragraph of Policy 8, following reference to a network of walking and cycling linkages, add a footnote referencing the Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy. Add an extract from the Strategy to the Neighbourhood Plan. In the fourth paragraph, change the beginning of the second sentence so that it reads, “Development proposals will be supported where, as appropriate, they secure improvements…”.
PM7	Page 90	In Policy 9, delete the words “or Planning Condition”.

Agenda Item 8

Cabinet – 20 October 2026

Report by: Chief Planning Officer

Lead Cllr: Executive Councillor for Planning

Wards	Open / Exempt	Key Decision?
Alconbury Ward (Alconbury) Parish	Open	Yes

Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan examination outcome and progression to referendum

Executive Summary: Following the examination of the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan this report proposes acting upon the Examiner's report to accept the modifications proposed and progress to referendum.

Recommendations

1.1. That Cabinet agree that the District Council should act upon the Examiner's report to accept the recommended modifications and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum.

	Key Corporate Plan Priorities
1	Improving quality of life for local people.
2	Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations.

	Place Strategy Priorities
1	Pride in Place.

Report Author(s)

Natalie Elworthy, Senior Planning Policy Officer (natalie.elworthy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
Xinyue Dong, Planning Policy Officer (xinyue.dong@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report seeks agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan. It also sets out a timetable for this process.

2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 Alconbury Parish Council produced a submission version of their Neighbourhood Plan which was available for comment between 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026. The Examiner's Report on the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan was received on 17 September 2026. The Examiner recommended that with appropriate modifications the neighbourhood plan would meet the basic conditions against which it is required to be tested and so should progress to referendum.

2.2 The Examiner proposed a number of modifications to the submitted neighbourhood plan. These have been discussed and agreed with representatives of Alconbury Parish Council.

2.3 The modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Examiner's report and draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions are all included as Appendices to this report.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 Following the examination of a neighbourhood plan the Examiner sends their report to the local planning authority and the town/parish council preparing the neighbourhood plan. The examiner is required to set out one of three options:

1. That the neighbourhood plan proceeds to referendum as submitted
2. That the neighbourhood plan is modified by the local planning authority to meet the basic conditions and the modified version proceeds to referendum; or
3. That the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to referendum as it fails to meet the basic conditions and/ or legislative requirements and cannot be modified to do so.

3.2 The local planning authority has limited options in how to respond to the examiner's recommendations:

a) Act upon the Examiner's report and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum, whether or not the Examiner recommends modifications are necessary to meet the basic conditions;
b) Propose to take a decision substantially different from the Examiner's recommendation which is wholly or partly as a result of new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact; or
c) Decide not to progress the neighbourhood plan in light of the Examiner's report - this is only permissible where '3.' above is the case.

3.3 Having regard to the options set out in paragraph 3.2:

- It is considered that the modifications will enable the Neighbourhood Plan to meet the basic conditions required; and
- There is no new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact to indicate that option 'b)' in paragraph 3.2 should be followed.

4. POST-DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Following approval by Cabinet, preparations will be made for a referendum to be held on the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Regulations.

4.2 In addition to considering whether the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions the Examiner is required to recommend on the area to be covered by the referendum. In this instance he recommended that the referendum area be the same as the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan area, approved by the District Council.

4.3 There is a statutory requirement through The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended) for 28 workings days' notice to be given before the referendum is held. There is also a requirement that the referendum is held within 56 working days of the decision that the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum, unless there is an existing planned polling opportunity that the referendum could be combined with which the qualifying body (Alconbury Parish Council) have agreed. A potential date for the referendum has been discussed with Democratic Services. Holding the referendum on 3 December 2026 is proposed, which would meet both time requirements. This provisional date has been discussed with representatives of Alconbury Parish Council, and they have indicated that they support this date.

4.4 At the referendum residents will be able to vote on the question: 'Do you want Huntingdonshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Alconbury to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'

4.5 If a majority of votes cast by residents are 'yes', Full Council will be asked to 'make' the neighbourhood plan at its next available meeting, which, assuming that the referendum is held on 3 December 2026, would be on 16 December 2026. The plan will then become part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

5.1 Council Key Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities of 'improving quality of life for local people; and 'creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations' as it will be used to shape the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.2 Financial Implications

5.2.1 As in previous years an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

5.3 Policy Implications

5.3.1 If successfully made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of Huntingdonshire's Development Plan used to determine planning applications.

5.4 Legal & Constitutional Implications

5.4.1 A Neighbourhood Plan must meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Examiner's report has confirmed that Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan, as proposed to be modified, meets all the basic conditions. Officers are satisfied that there are no conflicts with the basic conditions and legislative requirements.

5.5 Community Impact

5.5.1 The Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan has a significant potential community impact for the Neighbourhood Plan Area through shaping the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.6 Environment & Climate Change Implications

5.6.1 The Examiner's report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not conflict with the aims of securing development which contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

5.7 Equality & Diversity Implications

5.7.1 The Examiner's report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998) and meets all relevant legal requirements including those relating to equality.

5.8 Implications on Resources

5.8.1 As in previous years an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

5.9 Health & Wellbeing Implications

5.9.1 The Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan has potential to enhance health and wellbeing within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through shaping the growth in the area up to 2036 alongside other plans in the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

5.10 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

5.10.1 Progressing the Neighbourhood Plan towards Referendum does not result in implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

5.10.2 It is expected that adopted plans will remain in force for the part of the new unitary area to which they relate until they are superseded by a new unitary wide plan.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Not progressing the Neighbourhood Plan to referendum could result in a challenge from the Parish Council as this would deviate from the recommendations made by the independent Examiner where it was concluded that the Plan, once modified, meets all relevant legal requirements.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS– LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Localism Act 2011

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

National Planning Practice Guidance (Neighbourhood Planning)

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan (as modified)

Appendix 2 – The Examiner's Report of Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions.

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Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan

2025 to 2036

Referendum Version

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 About this document

1.1.1 This document is the draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Alconbury Parish for the period 2025 to 2036. Its purpose is to set a framework for future development in the parish, focusing on Alconbury-specific issues rather than strategic planning matters that are addressed in the Local Plan prepared by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC). Once adopted, the Alconbury NP will carry the same weight as the Local Plan drawn up by HDC.

1.1.2 Planners must use the adopted neighbourhood plan as well as HDC's Local Plan when making decisions about planning applications in the parish.

1.1.3 The NP area is shown on Map 1. The vision, objectives, planning policies and **community action points** apply to this area of land.

1.1.4 As the "qualifying body", Alconbury Parish Council is responsible for the production of the Alconbury NP. Progress on the NP is reported at the parish council's monthly meetings which are open to the public.

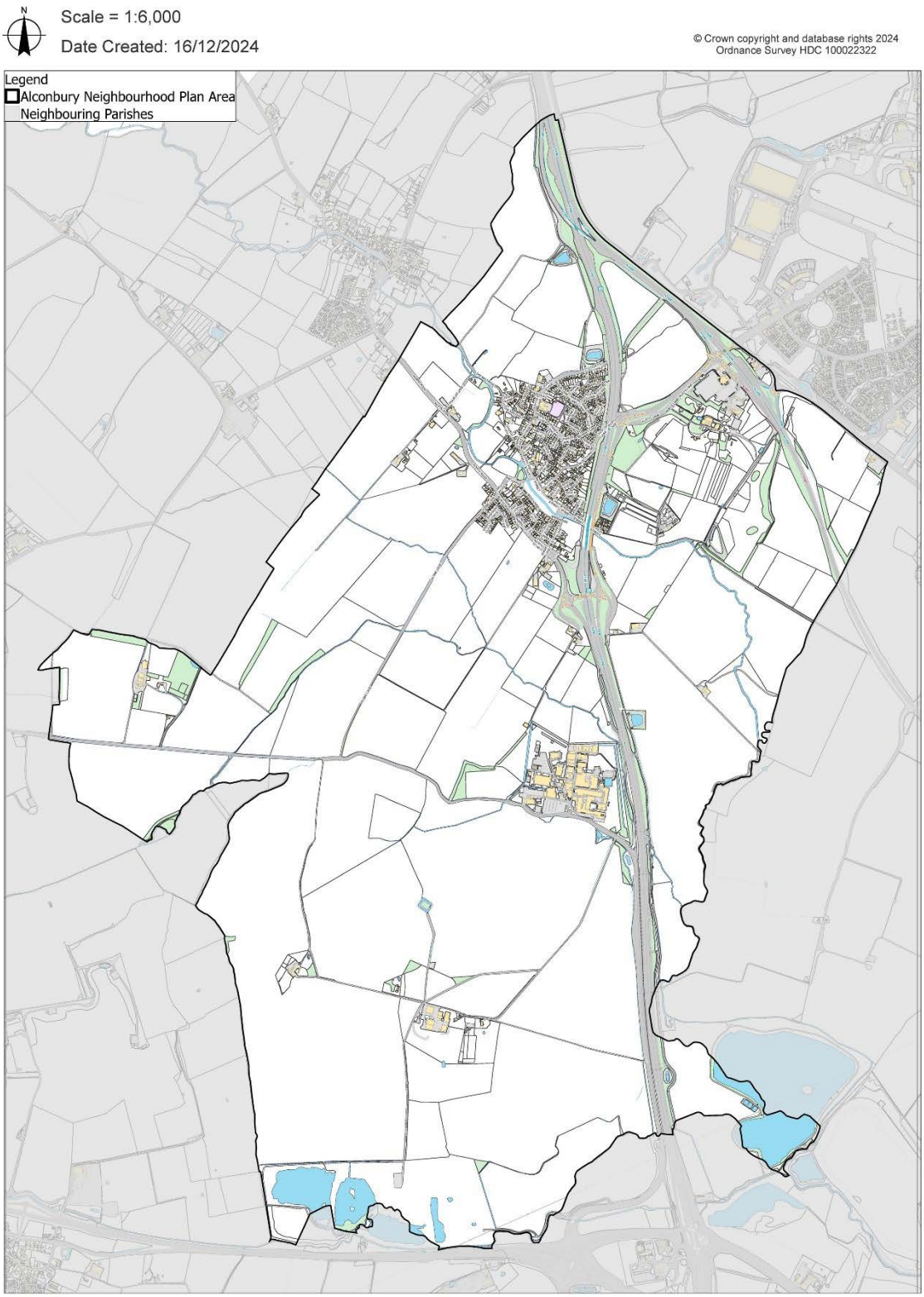
1.1.5 Residents are kept informed of progress on the NP via regular updates in the local magazine 'Parish Pump' which is produced quarterly and via the Parish Council website.

1.2 Why are we preparing a neighbourhood plan for Alconbury Parish

1.2.1 The parish council resolved to prepare a neighbourhood plan in April 2022. The drive to bring forward this neighbourhood plan is in response to the increasing encroachment of developments, both residential and commercial on Alconbury and its surrounding area. There is a community-wide shared desire to maintain the rural aspects of the village.

1.2.2 A key priority identified in this plan is a clear desire for Alconbury to remain a village with an identity clearly distinct from nearby settlements. With larger sites being built out in nearby areas, especially at Alconbury Weald there is a sense of threat that the different settlements may merge. For the detail on what this plan is seeking to achieve, please see Chapter 5.

Description: Alconbury



Map 1: the designated Alconbury neighbourhood plan area

1.3 What are the requirements of a neighbourhood plan?

1.3.1 There are certain requirements, referred to as basic conditions that all neighbourhood plans will be tested against as part of an independent examination. The planning policies will need to:

- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan (currently Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC's) 2019 Local Plan[1]
- contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development
- be appropriate having regard to national policy and guidance (such as the National Policy Framework 2023, due to be updated by early 2025)
- be compatible with environmental and human rights legislation.

1.3.2 Details describing how the plan meets the Basic Conditions are provided in the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement, which can be found on the Parish Council's website.

1.4 What community engagement has been undertaken so far?

1.4.1 A paper survey was distributed to every household in the parish in July 2023 the purpose of which was to collate information with respect to aspirations and issues shared by parish residents in so far as they are relevant to land use planning. The survey included 73 questions around several topic areas: households, built environment, business, vehicles, buses, natural environment, community and flooding. The survey generated a strong return rate with 212 households, representing 33% of all households[2], submitting completed returns.

1.4.2 To complement the initial survey work, members of the parish council engaged with parish residents during the 2023, 2025 and 2025 village fetes, through facilitating neighbourhood plan related discussions with those visiting the parish council stall. Parishioner drop-in sessions, to specifically discuss the Neighbourhood Plan, were also held in February 2025 and during the Regulation 14 consultation in June 2025.

1.4.3 The Regulation 14 consultation was undertaken between 6 June and 15 August 2025. Feedback regarding the plan was received and evaluated. As a result of the consultation replies, changes to the plan were made. Where changes were not made justification was provided. Full details of all consultation undertaken are provided in the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement accompanying the plan which can be found on the Parish Council's website.

[1] This basic condition is subject to change through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023

[2] 644 households were recorded in the Census 2021

1.5 Evidence informing this plan

1.5.1 This neighbourhood plan is supported by a range of evidence that is available to view alongside this plan. See www.alconburyparishcouncil.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/

1.5.2 The evidence includes:

- Alconbury Demographic and Socio Economic Review, prepared for the Parish Council in August 2024 by Cambridgeshire ACRE. The work pulls together a range of published data to paint a picture of the parish in terms of its demography, housing profile, socio-economic characteristics and local labour market.
- Alconbury Design Guidance and Codes, prepared for the Parish Council in February 2025 by AECOM. This document sets out design guidance and codes based on the existing characteristics of the parish. The document informs policies in this neighbourhood plan.

1.6 What happens next

1.6.1 This plan will be submitted to HDC for the next round of consultation (Regulation 16). This will give everyone a further opportunity to provide input, prior to the start of an independent examination into the plan.

1.6.2 The examiner will be tasked with testing the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan against the 'basic conditions' (see above). Subject to our neighbourhood plan succeeding at examination, the plan will proceed to a parish-wide referendum where every member of the electorate in the parish will be invited to participate. The plan will need to be agreed by a majority vote in order for it to be formally adopted by HDC and become part of the statutory development plan for Alconbury Parish.

Chapter 2 The wider policy context to the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan

2.1 Policy context

2.1.1 There is an existing planning policy context in place that sets a strategic policy framework within which the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan (NP) will sit.

2.1.2 The role of the Alconbury NP is to provide parish-specific policies rather than duplicate policies that already exist at the district or national level.

2.2 National planning policy and advice

2.2.1 National planning policy is mainly set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which at the time of writing was last updated in December 2024. The NPPF provides important context to the emerging Alconbury NP. Of key importance it:

- states planning should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development where this is defined by three overarching economic, social and environmental objectives
- establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and states that for plan-making this means "all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;"[3]
- states "Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies."[4]

2.3 Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

2.3.1 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 was adopted in 2019 and is referred to, from this point onwards, as HDC's 2019 Local Plan. Its overarching strategy can be summarised as:

- Planning for the delivery of at least 20,100 new homes and approximately 14,400 additional jobs during the period 2011 to 2036
- Defining a hierarchy for the distribution of growth across the district comprising:

[3] Paragraph 11a in NPPF 2024

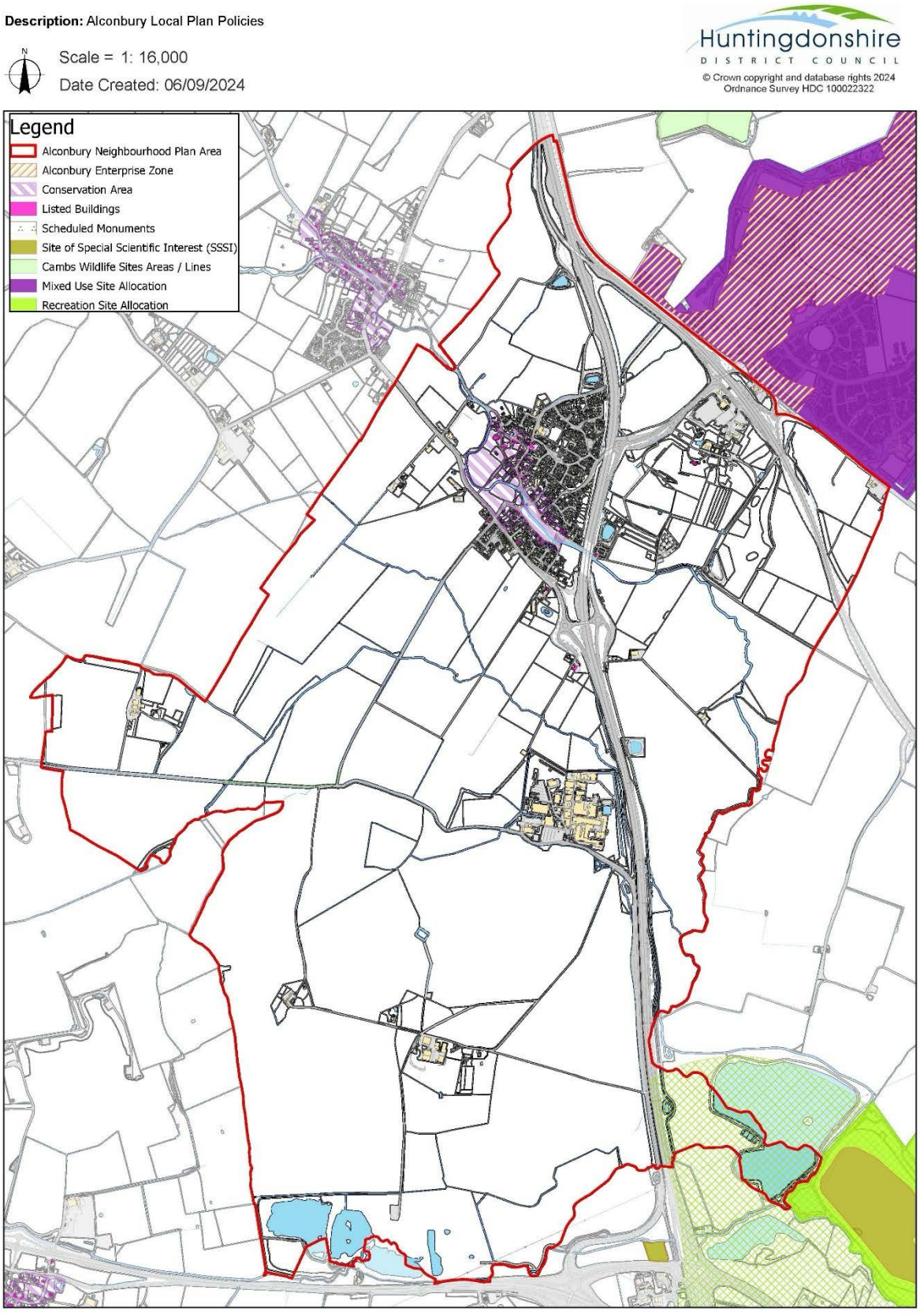
[4] Paragraph 13 in NPPF 2024

- four ‘Spatial Planning Areas’: Huntingdon (including Brampton and Godmanchester and the strategic expansion of Alconbury Weald), St. Neots (including part of Little Paxton) St Ives and, finally, Ramsey (including parts of Bury parish). Three quarters of the district’s housing growth and the majority of its employment and retail growth is planned to come forward in these four spatial planning areas.
- seven ‘Key Service Centres’ (Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley) which are recognised in the Local Plan as concentrations of services and facilities
- ‘Small Settlements’ - This includes all other settlements with a single built up area of 30 dwellings or more (73, including Alconbury Parish, are listed in Policy LP 9).

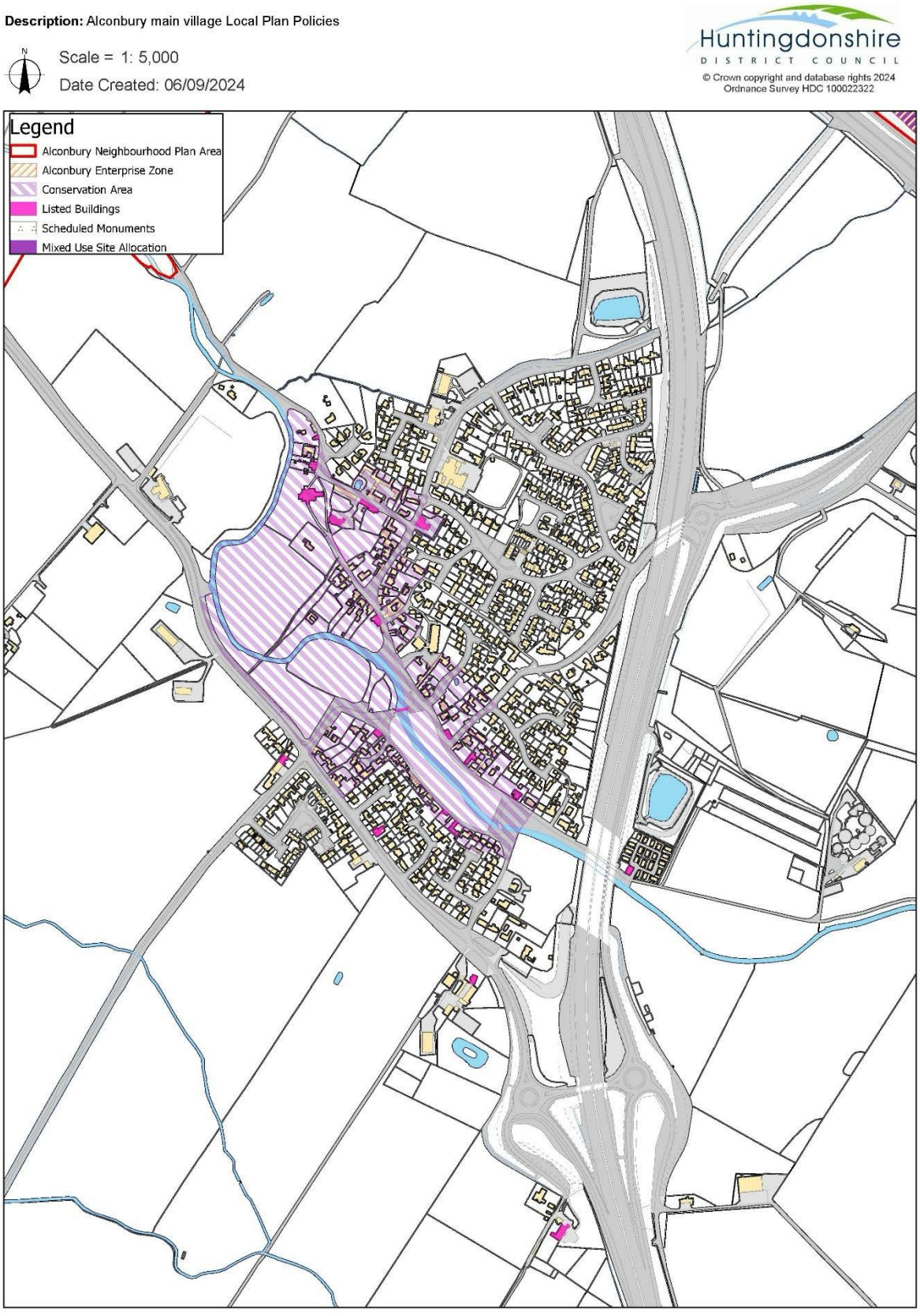
2.3.2 Policy LP2 ‘Strategy for Development’ in HDC’s 2019 Local Plan plans for a quarter of the district’s growth to be accommodated on sites dispersed across the key service centres and the small settlements. However, the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 consultation which closed on Wednesday 17 December 2025 included two proposed sites one, south of Great North Road and another east of Glove Lane to accommodate about 90 homes.

2.3.3 Map 2 shows site specific designations from HDC’s Local Plan that are applicable to Alconbury Parish. Map 1 provides a closer view of the same information but for the village only. These maps show that site specific designations applicable to the Plan area are few:

- a range of heritage assets comprising the Alconbury Conservation Area, one scheduled monument at Alconbury Bridge, one Grade I listed building (the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul), one Grade II* listed buildings and twenty-four Grade II listed buildings, mostly located in the village. Local Plan Policy LP 34 ‘Heritage Assets and their Settings’ will apply to these assets.
- Woolley Leys roadside verge County Wildlife Site. Local Plan Policy LP 30 ‘Biodiversity and Geodiversity’ will apply to this site
- south-eastern corner of the Plan area falls within the Green Infrastructure Priority Area for the Great Ouse Valley. Local Plan Policy LP 30 ‘Biodiversity and Geodiversity’ will apply to this.



Map 2: Site specific designations in Alconbury Parish as per HDC's 2019 Local plan, parish wide



Map 3: Site specific designations applicable to the Alconbury Parish as per HDC's 2019 Local Plan, Village only

Chapter 3 About the neighbourhood plan area

3.1 An overview

3.1.1 The Plan area (also the area of the parish) covers an area of 1,242 hectares, mostly comprising agricultural land, five miles to the north west of Huntingdon and within Huntingdon district. Alconbury village is located in the north of the parish. Within the parish, to the south and some way from the centre of the village, there is located a large industrial site housing a lab diagnostics and drug development company, Labcorp. Other land uses include a service station and lorry park to the east of the village and strategic road infrastructure – see below.

3.1.2 The parish is home to 1,464 people (Census 2021), making it the 25th largest settlement of all 81 parishes in Huntingdonshire. 697 dwellings were recorded in the parish at the Census 2021, comprising 0.9% of all dwellings in the district.

3.1.3 Alconbury is an area of net in-commuting, with 717employed people living in Alconbury in 2021, compared to 1,009 people working in Alconbury – with net in-commuting of 292 people. Of the 1,009 people working in Alconbury, 368 were Alconbury residents (including those working from home) and 641 commuted into Alconbury parish from elsewhere (representing 64% of Alconbury's workforce). Over a third of people who work in the parish also live in the parish, a good proportion of which work from home.

3.2 Alconbury village

3.2.1 The village is well placed on the strategic road network. The A1(M) runs through the parish, providing direct links to Peterborough and the north and to London. The A1307, formerly the A14, runs along a section of the parish's eastern boundary, linking it to the A1(M) to the north and to the A141 at Huntingdon in the south. Towards the south of the parish is the A14, providing a direct link to the east and the Midlands.

3.2.2 Running through the centre of the village is Alconbury Brook, a tributary of the River Great Ouse.

3.2.3 Alconbury benefits from a range of local services including a village shop (open daily), housing a post office (open six days a week) and a pharmacy (open weekdays), the Alconbury Church of England (CofE) Primary School and Pre-school, a GP surgery, a pub "The Manor", the Alconbury Sports and Social Club, the Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul and the Memorial Hall and public car park.

3.2.4 The Alconbury CofE Primary School has a catchment covering Alconbury, Alconbury Weston, Little and Great Stukeley and Upton. With regards to secondary education, the parish is in the catchment for Sawtry Village Academy.

3.2.5 Public transport is, at time of writing, limited to one bus service, the AW1 service that provides a regular weekday and weekend service to Huntingdon (a 30 minute journey). As recorded in the Demographic and Socio-Economic Review (DSER) supporting this plan 7.9% of households did not have a car or van at the time of the Census 2021, indicating a dependency on public transport provision in the parish.

3.3 Landscape

3.3.1 As with the majority of the district, Alconbury Parish is located within national landscape character area 88: Bedfordshire Cambridgeshire Claylands. Detail on this character area can be found here: www.nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/bedfordshire-and-cambridgeshire-claylands/

3.3.2 The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (2022) provides an analysis of landscape character at a finer grain of detail. It divides the district into different landscape character areas. This finds that Alconbury Parish falls within the "Central Claylands" Landscape Character area with the exception of the very southern part of the parish that falls within the "Southern Wolds" Landscape Character area.

3.3.3 In terms of geology, the bedrock in Alconbury parish is 'Kellaways Formation and Oxford Clay Formation – mudstone, siltstone and sandstone'[5] and the superficial geology comprises sand and gravel.

3.4 Flood Risk

3.4.1 As well as being a distinctive and important feature in Alconbury, Alconbury Brook is also a source of flooding. The brook flows through the historic core of the village and continues in a south easterly direction before heading to the southern part of the parish. Significant flood events have occurred many times during this and last century, leading to significant harm and disruption to people's lives.

3.4.2 The wider parish landscape is also at risk from both fluvial and surface water flooding.

3.4.3 Flood risk is covered in more detail under Chapter 4 'Key Issues' and in Chapter 6 – see Policy AL 6.

3.5 Heritage & Character

3.5.1 Designated heritage assets in the parish include the Alconbury Conservation Area, one Grade I listed building (the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul), one Grade II* listed buildings (the Manor Farmhouse at the Maltings), twenty-four Grade II listed buildings and one scheduled monument (Alconbury Bridge).

3.5.2 The Alconbury Conservation Area was designated by HDC in 1995. HDC's Conservation Character Area Statement, published in 1995 describes the

[5] As per Huntingdonshire Integrated Water Management Strategy: Stage 1 Water Cycle Study March 2024

essential character of the conservation area as being formed by the inter-relationship of Alconbury Brook, the village green and the local vernacular architecture. It describes Alconbury Brook as "a distinctive, important physical feature of the village and its course runs through the whole Conservation Area, bordered by large meadows and the village green and the banks of the brook also contribute to the character"



Image 1: Alconbury Brook and village green looking in a north westerly direction towards the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

3.5.3 HDC have also designated a number of Tree Preservation Orders in the parish. A TPO is registered wherever a tree or a group of trees are of such value that their removal would have a significant impact on the local environment and the enjoyment of this by the public. The TPOs include an area TPO in the grounds of Alconbury House, as well as trees that contribute to the quality of the public realm in other parts of the parish.

3.6 The Natural Environment

3.6.1 Priority habitats in the parish include areas of deciduous woodland, many of which are located along road corridors including the A1(M), the A1307 and the B1043. There are also two areas of traditional orchard in the parish, also a priority habitat.

3.6.2 Outside of the village to the south, along Woolley Road, there is a designated County Wildlife Site, "the Woolley Leys roadside verge", qualifying because it supports frequent numbers of at least eight neutral grassland indicator species.

3.6.3 In addition, there are areas within the parish, including the north-west of the village that are identified through Natural England's magic mapping (www.magic.gov.uk) as providing suitable habitat for great crested newts.



Image 2: Great crested newt found in garden in Alconbury.

Chapter 4 Key Issues

4.1.1 The identification of key issues presented in this chapter has been informed by community feedback from the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan Residents' Survey, undertaken in 2023. The survey was undertaken in mid-2023 and closed on 21 July 2023. The survey included 73 questions around eight topics areas: households, built environment, business, vehicles, natural environment and flooding.

4.1.2 There was an impressive response rate from the survey with 212 households out of a total of 644 households (2021 Census) returning completed survey forms. It is noted that some parts of the community were under-represented in the survey return as follows:

- Of those responding, 89% owned their own homes whereas at the time of the 2021 Census 78 % were recorded as owning their own home, 10% were recorded to live in privately rented accommodation and 12% were recorded as living in affordable rented accommodation.

4.1.3 The identification of key issues has also been informed by feedback received from residents and stakeholders as part of ongoing community engagement activity including that received at the Parish Council stalls at the village fetes in 2023 and 2024.

4.1.4 All the issues listed below are important to residents. The Alconbury NP seeks to address those issues that are capable of being addressed via a planning policy in a neighbourhood plan. Alconbury Parish Council will seek to address other issues (those issues that fall outside the remit of a neighbourhood plan) through **community action points**. These are set out in Chapter 7 to this plan.

4.2 A desire to protect village and settlement character

4.2.1 The 2023 householder survey indicated a concern felt by some that additional housing in the village would undermine character or sense of place in Alconbury. Whilst very little development has occurred in the parish since 2011, this concern is likely a response to:

- A 6.3 hectares area of land being previously proposed for residential development (95 homes) on the edge of Alconbury Village (North of School Lane) by HDC in the past as part of the submission version of the Local Plan. The proposed allocation was removed following the examination by the Planning Inspectorate into the Local Plan.
- A significant amount of development having come forward immediately adjacent to the parish as part of Alconbury Weald, allocated for the delivery of 4,225 within the current Local Plan period (up to 2036) with a further 2,455 to be delivered beyond the plan period.

4.2.2 The 2023 householder survey included, at question 9, a number of statements applicable to the quality of the built environment with respect to development. Residents were asked to indicate their support to each of the statements. Headline results from this are:

- 98% of respondents attach importance (either 'important' or 'very important') to ensuring any new development is sympathetic to existing character
- 93% of respondents attach importance (either 'important' or 'very important') to ensuring building design is in keeping with the scale and appearance of existing buildings
- 93% of respondents attach importance (either 'important' or 'very important') to defining and preserving the boundaries of the village
- 74% of respondents attach importance (either 'important' or 'very important') to using traditional building materials.

4.2.3 Residents were given opportunities to provide free text responses to open questions under each topic. Common themes appeared in the 'Built Environment' topic; the predominant two expressing 'no more/too much development' and 'residential garden development'.

What the data tells us

4.2.4 As noted in Chapter 3, the parish, in particular the village has some distinctive characteristics including the Alconbury Brook and its medieval village green, the Conservation Area and the statutorily listed buildings and structures such as Alconbury Bridge.

4.2.5 The setting of Alconbury village within the wider landscape is also of key importance. The village is located within the valley of Alconbury Brook and with the help of vegetation comprising mature trees and established hedgerows, particularly lining the corridor of the brook, the built form of the village is mostly hidden from view in the surrounding landscape.

4.2.6 It is important the features that are distinctive to a settlement are maintained and that new development does not undermine or detract from what is special about Alconbury



Image 3: view to south from public footpath 7/6 towards wind turbines (to the southwest of the parish in the neighbouring Ellington Parish) with Alconbury's built form largely hidden from view. The church spire is a distinctive feature in the wider landscape.



Image 4: The church is a prominent feature from all directions. Here it can be seen from the southern approach into the village along Globe Lane.

4.3 Alconbury Weald and development pressure

4.3.1 The building out of a new community so close to the village at Alconbury Weald, comprising 6,500 homes in total and 150 hectares of employment land, inevitably impacts Alconbury residents, both directly and indirectly. In particular, it has an impact on how some residents feel about more development in their own parish. Because so much development is coming forward at Alconbury Weald including residential, employment uses, shops and services, many people feel there is less reason for it also to come forward so close by in Alconbury. Comments include:

"There are lots of opportunities and space for businesses at Alconbury Weald. It would be unnecessary to develop Alconbury when there is already space available."

Resident comment, 2023 Householder Survey

"The village does not need to increase in size especially with so many unsold houses in Alconbury Weald. Neither the doctors nor the school/pre-school has the capacity"

Resident comment, 2023 Householder Survey

4.3.2 Alconbury village, whilst located on the other side of the A1(M) from Alconbury Weald is located to the west of the A1(M) corridor and the village shares the same link road off the A1 (the B1043) as Alconbury Weald itself. Unsurprisingly, the 2023 householder survey indicated that residents in Alconbury village feel impacted by the development at Alconbury Weald. Concerns relate to the heavier use of the B1043, including with HGV traffic leading to high levels of noise and tremors experienced by residents living at the eastern end of the village. Other concerns relate to the impact that residential development at Alconbury Weald may be having on services in Alconbury village.

4.4 Flooding

What people have told us

4.4.1 As highlighted in Chapter 3, Alconbury village and the wider parish is at risk from flooding. This is a key concern for people living and working in Alconbury. Flood risk issues are well documented and affects every day living in the village.

4.4.2 One of the statements included at Question 9 in the 2023 householder survey related to flooding. 97% of respondents considered it important ('important' or 'very important') that flood prevention measures in buildings and elsewhere were improved.

What the data tell us

4.4.3 **Historic flood events:** alongside its neighbouring parish at Alconbury Weston, Alconbury suffered significant flooding from the brook on over 20 occasions during the 20th Century, including 1987, 1998 (when more than 100

properties suffered internal flooding across both villages), November 2000, October 2004, January 2007, November 2012, March 2016 and winter 2020/2021 (when nearly 80 properties flooded internally). The Environment Agency also reports that records indicate that properties flooded in March 1947 and July 1968[6].

4.4.4 **Sources of flooding:** The principal source of flooding in the village is from Alconbury Brook, but there is some risk arising from surface water flooding.

4.4.5 Fluvial flooding also arises from Cock Brook that runs to the south of the village. During flood events, this floods a large area of agricultural land in the parish, Labcorp laboratories and the A1(M) motorway.

4.4.6 Flood risk mapping data is available to view at: www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk.

4.4.7 HDC has also made flood risk mapping data available via its 2024 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (prepared to inform its emerging Local Plan). Its mapping data is available to view https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/environmental-issues/flooding/strategic-flood-risk-assessment/.

4.4.8 The Environment Agency carried out a new survey of Alconbury Brook in 2022 as part of work to determine the feasibility of a Flood Alleviation Scheme for the villages. New modelling of flood risk is currently underway and may result in further updates to the flood risk map.

4.4.9 Surface water flood risk maps show that areas at risk in the parish correlate with the river corridors with additional areas in the parish away from the river corridors including

- residential areas in the north of the village, such as land to the west of the A1(M) corridor and land around the Memorial Hall and abutting School Lane and Alconbury Surgery
- land north and south of the Great North Road, affecting properties in the Bird's Estate.

4.4.10 Alconbury Brook runs through an 80km^2 heavy clay agricultural catchment[7] before reaching the Alconbury villages. In the winter, run-off from the catchment is rapid and brook levels respond quickly. The brook rises by 1 to 2 metres in a few hours after 20mm of rain, and nearly 3m after 30mm of rain. This is illustrated in Figure 1. The floodplain is relatively narrow, and this contributes to the flashiness of the flood events.

4.4.11 Surface water run-off from higher land in and around Alconbury Village flows along overland flow paths that are located up to and along the village perimeter as well within the village. This, together with the extent of

[6] https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-anglia-c-e/alconbury-flood-scheme/

[7] A map of the entire catchment is available to view here: https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/WaterBody/GB105033042820

impermeable surfaces in the village, then contributes to the rapid response and volume and depth of the water in the brook.

4.4.12 **Impact of flood events:** Flood events directly affect village life and infrastructure. In Alconbury Parish, this has very sadly led to loss of life. Other consequences are property damage and significant disruption to lives and businesses that in turn often lead to severe knock-on implications including financial loss, social and emotional distress and health disorders. In addition to those people with flooded properties, many others are affected by the lack of access to village services.

4.4.13 Properties and businesses in nearby Hamerton and Stukely are also affected by flood risk associated with the Alconbury Brook.

4.4.14 **Management of flood risk in the parish:** In response to the significant risk of flooding in the area, the community has set up a catchment-wide Flood Group[8]. The Flood Group has the support of the parish councils and includes parish council members. The Flood Group is an independent charity working on long term flood risk reduction. Its stated ambition is 'to store, slow and stretch the flow of the brook to reduce risk of flooding to homes in the Alconburys and Hamerton'. The group liaises with landowners and developers to explore and promote initiatives that can help alleviate current flood risk across the area such as:

- construction of ponds and other structures to store water upstream of the two Alconbury villages
- work with landowners to reduce sediment run-off, and provide advice to developers and contractors to increase soil porosity (see Appendix 5)
- construction of 'rainwater gardens' to reduce surface water flooding in key locations.

4.4.15 In addition, the Alconbury and Alconbury Weston Parish Councils have set up their own flood warden groups which respond to flood emergencies. The Alconbury group have produced the Alconbury Village Community Flood Plan.

4.4.16 The Environment Agency are working with the communities to develop a way forward through the Alconbury Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme[9].

How can the Alconbury Neighbourhood plan help?

4.4.17 Whilst a key concern and priority, national and Local Plan policies will apply to all development proposals in the parish. The Alconbury NP can only set out additional policy requirements if these add to what is already existing when it comes to requirements of new development at the planning application stage. Please see Policy AL 6 in Chapter 6 for further detail.

[8] https://www.alconburybrookfloodgroup.uk/

[9] https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-anglia-c-e/alconbury-flood-scheme/



Figure 1: The speed at which Alconbury Brook river height (blue line) responds to rainfall (orange line) 2024/2025 data, taken from recording device in Alconbury Brook

4.5 Infrastructure

Infrastructure to help manage existing flood risk

4.5.1 There is an identified priority for additional infrastructure to be provided in the parish for the purpose managing flood risk in the parish. To date the measures delivered to help with management of water during periods of heavy rainfall include:

- Ponds and other storage structures at Alconbury Weston, Buckworth, Upton and Little Gidding
- Rainwater gardens at the Memorial Hall, and the Sports and Social Club
- Deep rooted amenity and agricultural planting in Alconbury, Alconbury Weston and Little Gidding.

4.5.2 The above initiatives have been funded by Anglian Water, FWAG, the Wildlife Trust, Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, the SHAWL fund, Cambridgeshire County Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, the Alconbury Villages Parish Councils, the Jockey Club and various private donors.

4.5.3 Further infrastructure is needed to manage flood risk in the future, especially as the risk of flooding increases with climate change leading to more frequent events of periods with heavy rainfall. This includes:

- including further storage facilities upstream of the two villages
- possible channel improvements downstream of the two villages
- a possible relief channel linking Alconbury Brook to Cock Brook via Globe Lane
- infrastructure to help existing building stock manage surface water run-off closer to source.

Water treatment system is ageing and has limited capacity

4.5.4 There is a water recycling centre in Alconbury parish, located to the east of the A1(M) motorway. The facility has reached its capacity and its expected discharge rates from the facility into waterbodies is close to or exceeding the limit allowed via its environmental permit. One of the reasons for the Alconbury Brook not achieving a 'Good' status is the discharge of sewage into it[10].

[10] See Appendix C, HDC Integrated Water Management Strategy: Stage 1 Water Cycle Study, Final Report March 2024

Heritage at risk

4.5.5 There is concern that the Alconbury Bridge, locally referred to as the 'Heritage Bridge' and a scheduled monument and Grade II listed structure is vulnerable to damage caused by too much traffic passing over it and by vehicles which exceed its structural weight limit of 3 tonnes. This concern is shared by Historic England who have categorised Alconbury Bridge scheduled monument as being 'vulnerable' due to 'vehicle damage/erosion'[11].

4.5.6 Cambridgeshire County Council advise that vehicles carrying freight do not use or travel through Alconbury village[12]. Nevertheless, it is not uncommon for heavy goods vehicles to use the Mill Road Bridge which is cause for concern considering its significance as a heritage asset.

4.5.7 Whilst it is not within the remit of a planning policy to address the issue of unauthorised use of the bridge by heavy vehicles, the vulnerability of the bridge to harm is an issue to be mindful of when considering land use planning matters, such as development proposals that could generate movement of heavy goods vehicles in and out of the village.

Primary school capacity

4.5.8 Alconbury Church of England Primary School has a catchment that covers the two villages of Alconbury and Alconbury Weston, Great Stukeley, Little Stukeley and Upton.

4.5.9 The school has a capacity of 210 pupils. According to government records[13] During the academic year 2023/2024 it had 199 pupils attending.

4.5.10 In its role as education authority, Cambridgeshire County Council maintains forecasts of children living in the catchment area or expected to be living in the catchment area (e.g. due to new build development wherever applicable). The forecasts, last updated in December 2024 show that pupils within the catchment exceed capacity by 3 (213) and 15 (225) for the academic years 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 respectively but that following this, numbers are expected to decline. The capacity issues in 2025/2026 are specific to year group 5, which will then be an issue for year group 6 in 2026/2027.

4.5.11 The forecasts described above assume no additional new build housing in Alconbury village or within the catchment for the school. If new housing development is proposed within the catchment, capacity issues at Alconbury Primary School could arise in the future.

GP Surgery

4.5.12 Alconbury village has a popular and busy GP surgery that is part of a larger Alconbury and Brampton GP practice. This practice is due to expand to cover

[11] https://www.myshinedata.org.uk/look-up-a-record

[12] www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/cambridgeshire-advisory-freight-map.pdf

[13] https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/Establishments/Establishment/Details/110809

three sites, with the third site due to open at Alconbury Weald.

4.5.13 Figures from 26 August 2022[14] show the combined practice then had a patient population of 12,882. As at January 2025, the combined practice is reported by the practice to have 14,245 registered patients.

4.5.14 The Alconbury Surgery is located on School Lane, to the south of Memorial Hall. The surgery has off road car parking that is often full. This leads to surgery visitors parking along School Lane which exacerbates daily congestion issues during the morning and afternoon peak times (at school drop off/pick up times).

4.6 Housing

What people say

4.6.1 When asked what types of housing people would prefer to see built in the village, 52% of respondents stated they would prefer to see small family homes with 2-3 bedrooms, 46% stated they would like to see starter homes, 30% said they would like to see 'retirement homes' and 28% said they would like to see larger family homes of 4 and more bedrooms.

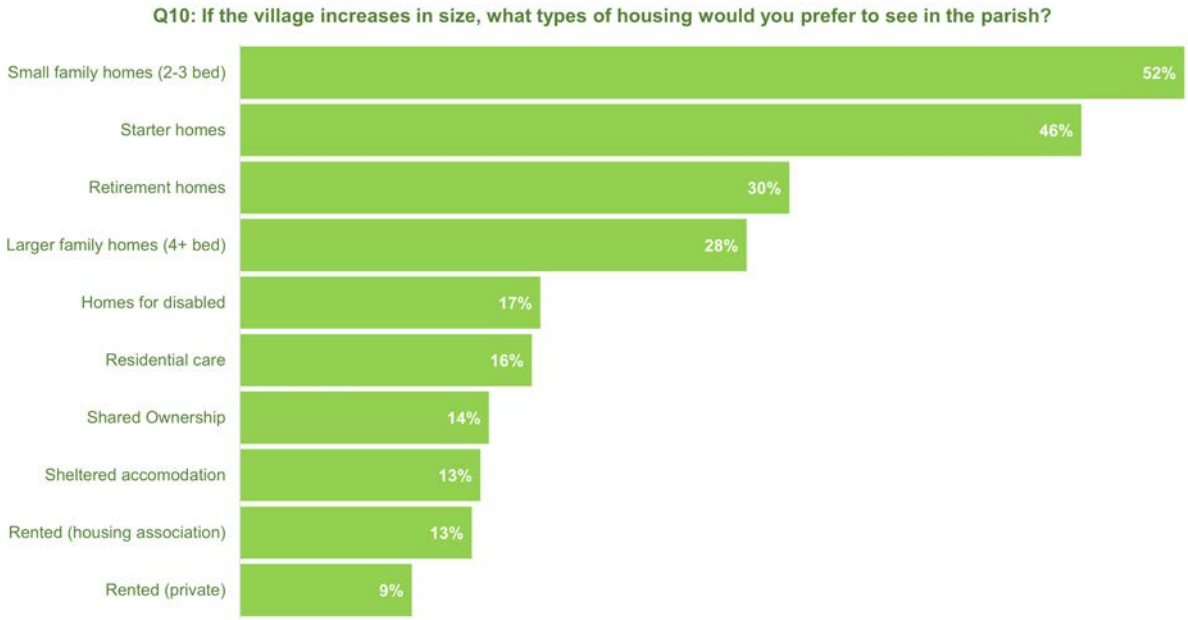


Figure 2: Preferred housing type, Alconbury NP survey 2023

What the data tells us

4.6.2 This preference expressed by the community is supported by demographic and socio-economic data. As at the 2021 Census, 80% of all of the housing stock were either 3 or 4-bedroom properties whereas average householder size is at 2.27 (decreased from 2.4 at the 2021 Census).

[14] https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-569340564/inspection-summary

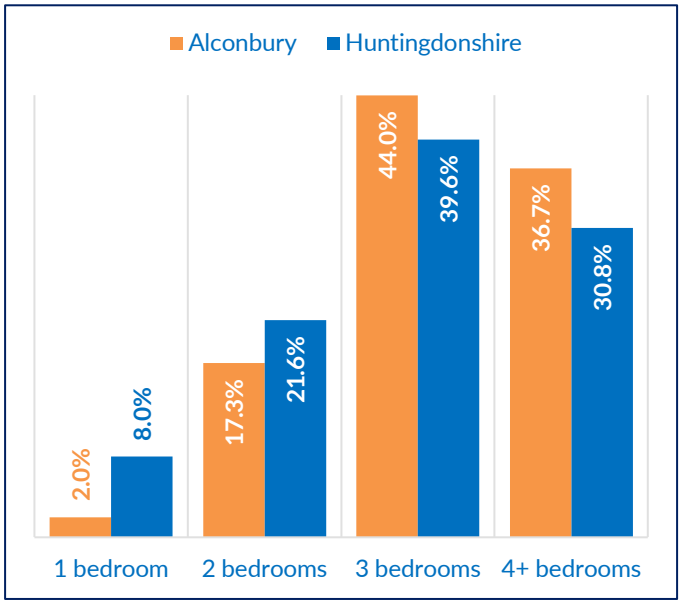


Figure 3: Chart 3.5 in Alconbury DSER - % of all occupied dwellings by number of bedrooms (Census 2021)

4.6.3 One-person households accounts for just over a quarter of all households. At just under 16% of all households, the parish also has an above average share of one-person households where the resident is aged 66 years or above.

4.6.4 The majority of households in Alconbury are single family households (69.4%). The largest share of all households is single family households aged under 66 years with no children (21.8% of all households), followed by 19.9% of all households being single-family households with dependent children. Compared to the district averages, Alconbury has a particularly high share of single family households with adult (non-dependent) children (13.5% vs 9.7% across Huntingdonshire) in 2021.

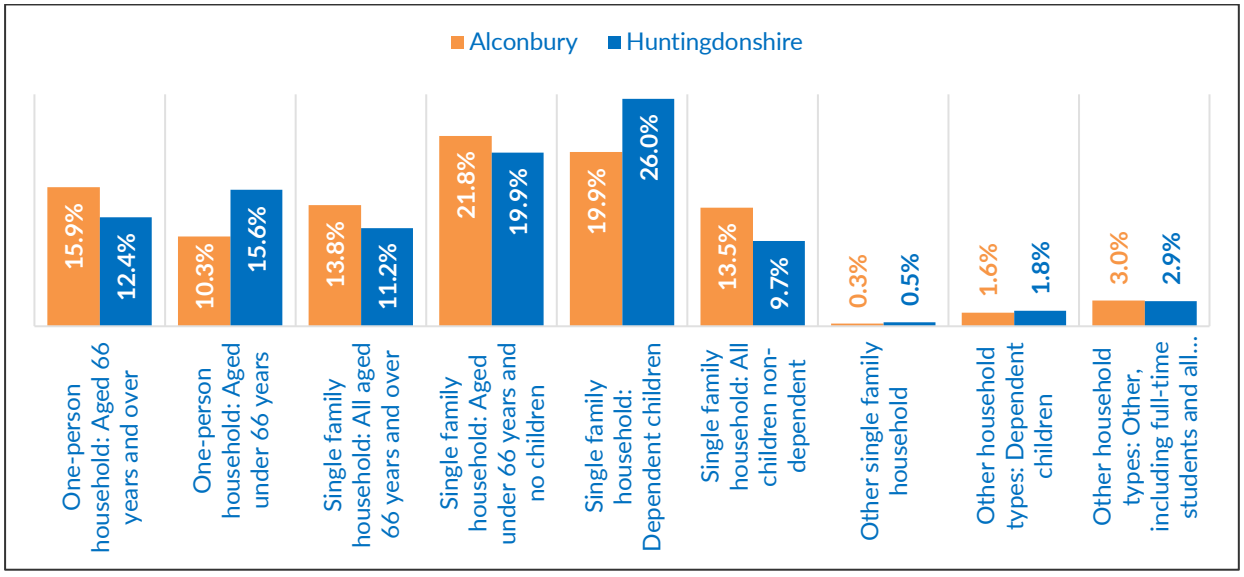


Figure 4: Chart 2.9 in DSER: household composition (% of all households) (Census 2021)

4.7 An overview of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

4.7.1 The NP working group have used the 2023 householder survey results to identify the strengths in the plan area that should be protected, the weaknesses that should be addressed, the opportunities that could be realised and the threats that needs to be managed, including threats to the strengths.

4.7.2 Key identified strengths are:

Community

- S1 - Good community spirit. A friendly and active community with many clubs. Good, free local magazine informing people of event and activities.
- S2 - A safe, calm and peaceful village.
- S3 - A cohesive village that is, in the main, easy and safe to walk around.

Village and settlement character

- S4 - A picturesque village with an historic core with large medieval village green and Alconbury Brook running through its centre.
- S5– St Peter and St Paul Church (13th Century and grade I listed) is prominent visual landmark from all directions. Other key landmark is Alconbury bridge (15th Century), both a scheduled monument and listed structure. In addition, 24 grade II listed buildings in parish (mostly in village) and one grade II* listed building.

Infrastructure

- S6 - Well placed on road network (A1/A1307 (formally A14), A141 and A14).
- S7 - Active flood group in place trying to alleviate flood risk.
- S8 - Good local services – shop, post office, pharmacy, pre-school, primary school, doctors, pub/hotel, Sports and Social club, church, village hall (Memorial Hall) and allotments. GP surgery highly rated and school and pre-school both rated GOOD.
- S9 - Good dog walking opportunities both in the village and in the wider countryside.

Off road walking routes

- S10 –Good access to countryside, allotments and neighbouring settlements via off road routes.

Biodiversity

- S11 – Variety of wildlife and habitats; trees (some with TPOs), hedges and ponds (on farms) and brook. Species include egret, muntjac deer, roe deer, Chinese water deer, great crested newts, grass snakes, otters, water voles.

4.7.3 **Key identified weaknesses are:**

Flooding

- W1 – Extremely high and increasing risk of flooding
- W2 – Disruption to accessibility throughout the village and out of the village when flooding occurs

Infrastructure

- W3 - Lack of amenities for teenagers
- W4 - Poor mobile reception in parts of village and poor internet connectivity
- W5 – Water treatment system is ageing and has limited capacity
- W6 – Poor public transport and therefore difficult to work outside village without car – limited bus services in the evening

Housing

- W7 - High cost of housing and shortage of affordable housing
- W8 - Ageing population and lack of capacity for specialist homes for the elderly.

Motorised traffic

- W9 - Concerns regarding speeding and HGVs in the village using the village as a cut through using vulnerable, weight restricted bridge. Bridge is heritage asset that is vulnerable to damage
- W10 – Underneath the approach to Luton Airport – 'Luton Stack'
- W11 – Noise from A1 (M) adversely affecting residential amenity – need to close windows and doors, spoils enjoyment of garden
- W12 - On street parking visually poor and creates congestion
- W13 - Great North Road is not pedestrian friendly
- W14 - Unsafe blind junction (Rusts Lane/High Street)



Image 5: The speed of traffic along the Great North Road combined with the wide junctions, create a considerable barrier to getting around the village

4.7.4 **Identified opportunities are**

Village and settlement character

- O1 - Protect rural nature of village.
- 02– Define the settlement boundary.
- 03 – Designation of Local Green Spaces and other green spaces to recognise their importance to the community.
- 04 – Designate non designated heritage assets such as ridge and furrow fields.

Flooding

- O5 - Flood Group making progress in alleviating flood risk.

Infrastructure

- O6 - Improvements to school and pre-school to be rated as 'Outstanding'.
- O7 - Further public transport links.
- O8 - Improve facilities for teenagers.
- O9 - Internet and mobile home connectivity improvements possible.

Housing

- O10 - Limited housing development to provide affordable properties to meet local needs – e.g. 1 bed or smaller units.

Sustainable (active travel) routes to countryside and neighbouring settlements

- 011 – Opportunity to extend cycle path to Brampton Hut and Brampton.

Biodiversity

- 012 – Identify sites of biodiversity and wildlife value.

Local businesses

- O13 - Promote local businesses.

4.7.5 **Identified threats are:**

Village and settlement character

- T1 - Further development may cause loss of village identity:
  - Erosion of gap between Alconbury Weston and Alconbury; and/or
  - Expansion of Weald towards Alconbury
  - Impact of new industry and infrastructure on noise, air pollution.

Flooding

- T2 - High risk of flooding from river flow and hard landscaping.

Infrastructure

- T3 - Damage/danger from HGVs in village.
- T4 – Impact of growth on surgery, primary school capacity.

Housing

- T5 – Indications that housing stock could be increasingly unsuitable for meeting needs
    - high levels of under-occupation in dwellings
    - relatively low proportion of 1 and 2 bed dwellings and high proportion of 3 and 4 bed dwellings
    - small households (average is 2.27 persons per household)
    - out-migration of certain age groups between 2011 and 2021 census, indicating families moving out of the parish.

Population

- T6 – Declining population, particularly among younger people and young families (under 20 and 35 – 49 year olds). Conversely an ageing population.
- T7 - Village events may no longer happen due to ageing population.

Other items

- T8 - Drugs and antisocial behaviour (location close to A1(M)).
- T9 – Dog poo not cleared.
- T10 - Overhanging trees and undergrowth obstruct some public footpaths.

4.7.6 The NP vision that is presented in the next chapter is the response to issues identified in this chapter.

4.7.7 Importantly, not all issues or concern to the community are addressed in this Plan. This is because planning policies in a neighbourhood plan:

- can only address issues that are applicable to land use planning
- only become relevant when a development that requires planning permission is proposed in the Plan area, which in our case is the area covered by Alconbury Parish
- should be specific to Alconbury Parish and not duplicate planning policies that exist in HDC's Local Plan or at the national level, in the National Planning Policy Framework. Not all issues are capable of being addressed through a planning policy in a neighbourhood plan

Chapter 5 Vision, themes and objectives

5.1 The vision for Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan is:

> "To steadfastly preserve and enhance the distinctive rural character and unique identity of Alconbury Parish. We are committed to ensuring that every development aligns seamlessly with the village's historical character, maintaining its size and amenities, while proactively advancing flood risk management to safeguard our community for future generations."

5.1.1 The vision is underpinned by a nine objectives and eleven planning policies, organised under 6 broad themes as follows:

Theme 1: Village and Settlement Character

Objective 1: Alconbury to remain a village with an identity that is clearly distinct from nearby settlements

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 1: A spatial strategy for Alconbury

Objective 2: To safeguard Alconbury's rural quality by preserving and enhancing the landscape characteristics that are considered to be distinctive and make it special

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 2: Protecting and enhancing Alconbury's landscape and settlement character

Objective 3: Conserve and enhance Alconbury's valued heritage assets and its historic environment

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 3: Conserving and enhancing Alconbury's non-designated heritage assets

Objective 4: Maintain and enhance open, green spaces of particular significance to the community, identified in the Neighbourhood Plan

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 4: Local and 'other' Green Spaces

Linked community action point:

- **1. The Parish Council will seek the delivery of improved play equipment on village playgrounds, including at Bramble End**

Theme 2: Built Environment

Objective 5: New development will be of a high quality design and contribute positively to village character

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 5: Delivering high quality design that is sensitive to Alconbury's distinctive character

Theme 3: Flooding

Objective 6: New development will not exacerbate existing flood risk in the parish and all opportunities must be taken to reduce levels of risk

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 6: Addressing flood risk appropriately when development is proposed via a planning application

Linked community action point:

- **2. The PC will continue to support the work of the Alconbury Brook Flood Group**

Theme 4: Moving around the village and parish safely and through active travel modes

Objective 7: Our village streets will retain their rural character where it is enjoyable and safe to walk around, and opportunities will be taken to improve and expand:

- walkable routes between residential areas and village services
- the network of safe and attractive off-road routes that link Alconbury village with neighbouring settlements.

Linked policies:

- Policy AL 7 'Maintaining well connected neighbourhoods and addressing barriers to moving around the village more safely using active travel choices'
- Policy Al 8 'Protecting and improving Alconbury's network of rural routes'

Linked community action point:

- **3. The Parish Council will, through liaising and working with stakeholders (landowners, highways authority) seek the delivery of a safe crossing point on the Great North Road to enable safer travel via active travel choices (e.g., walking, cycling, mobility scooter) from residential areas to village community infrastructure (shop, play space, primary school, Memorial Hall, pub).**

Theme 5: Infrastructure

Objective 8: Ensure infrastructure is always capable of providing good provision for the village for both hard infrastructure such as roads and soft infrastructure such as services and facilities

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 9: Protecting and improving Alconbury's community facilities
- Policy AL 10 'Alconbury community infrastructure priorities'

Theme 6: Natural Environment

Objective 9: Biodiversity in the parish will be protected and enhanced. Its contribution to supporting key sites of ecological value in neighbouring parishes will be recognised and reinforced

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 11 'Protecting and enhancing the natural environment'

Chapter 6 The Planning Policies

This chapter contains the planning policies. Planning decisions made by the local planning authority (HDC) will be guided by these planning policies. The policies have been developed to reflect the priorities of residents and seek to influence development outcomes in order to achieve the vision underpinning this Plan.

Theme 1: Landscape and settlement character

There are four objectives sitting under this theme.

Objective 1: Alconbury to remain a village with an identity that is clearly distinct from nearby settlements

Objective 2: To safeguard Alconbury's rural quality by preserving and enhancing the landscape characteristics considered to be distinctive and make it special

Objective 3: Conserve and enhance Alconbury's heritage assets and its historic environment

Objective 4: Maintain and enhance open, green spaces of particular significance to the community, identified in the Neighbourhood Plan

Objective 1: Alconbury to remain a village with an identity that is clearly distinct from nearby settlements

6.1 Policy AL 1 'A spatial strategy for Alconbury'

Policy context and rationale

6.1.2 Alconbury village is described by its residents as a safe, calm and peaceful village. It has a friendly and active community. The village has a nucleated built form and has a good network of pedestrian routes, some of which provide off-road direct links from one part of the village to the other. This enables most residents to access core village services (shop, primary, school, church and Memorial Hall, sports and social club) via safe and accessible routes.

6.1.3 Alconbury village has a distinctive built form and landscape character that is described in more detail in Policies AL 2 and AL 5.

6.1.4 Whilst the village is located within walking distance (approximately 1km using the public rights of way network adjacent to the Maltings NP group to check they agree with this) to Alconbury Weston and located a 2 minute drive away from Alconbury Weald the village is very much a separate village, distinct from its neighbouring settlements. It is also located some distance away from Labcorp, the diagnostics and drug development company (located in the south of the parish) that employs circa 1,000 people.

6.1.5 This separate identity is of high importance and also one that is vulnerable to erosion if further development comes forward in inappropriate locations.

6.1.6 Similarly, whilst the A1(M) runs along the eastern boundary of the village, on

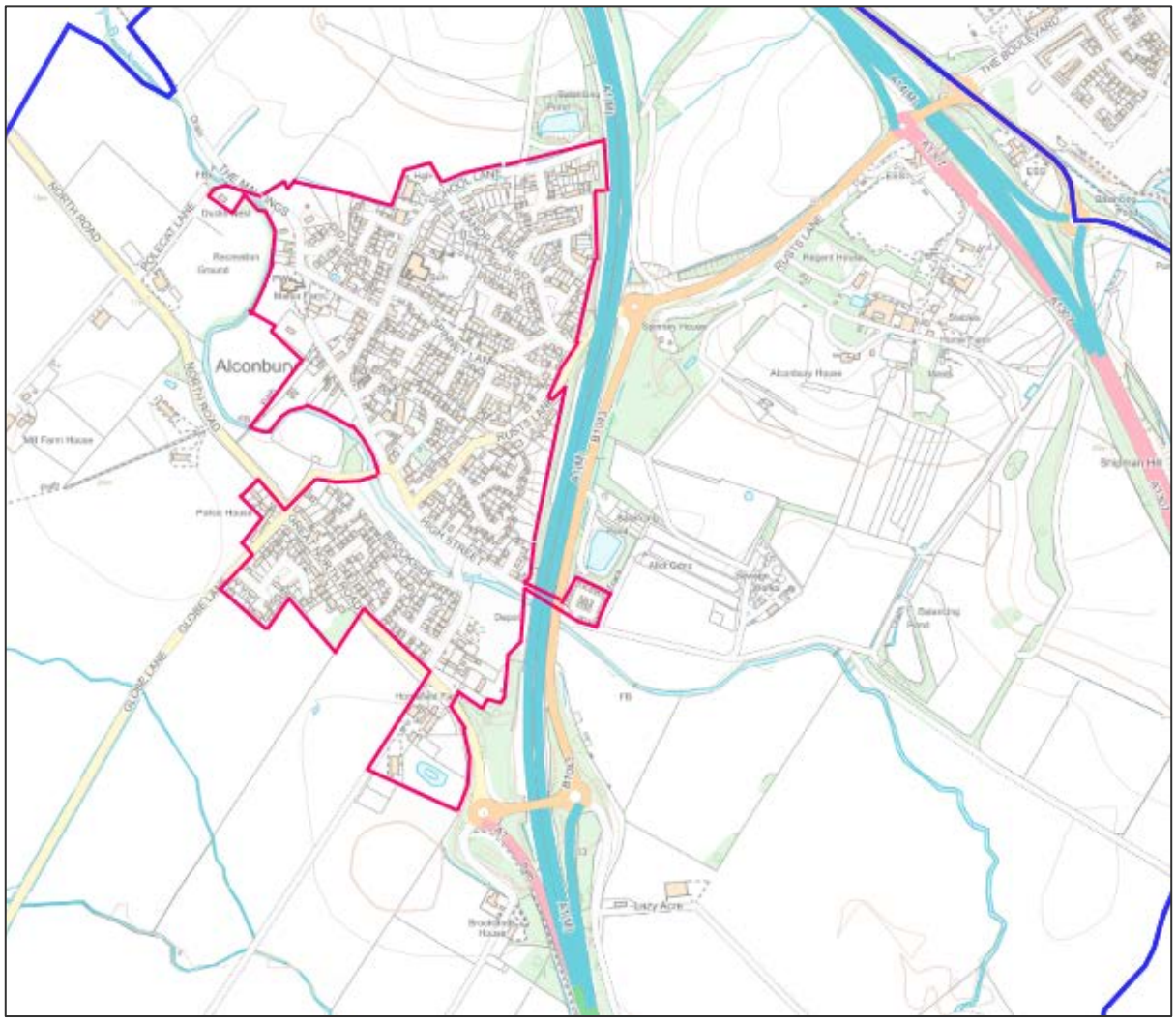
arrival into the village, whether this is off the A1 via the Great North Road to the south of the village or off the A1(M) via the B1043 before entering into the village via Rusts Lane (under the A1(M) underpass), the village itself has a strong rural character, a world away from the busyness of the A1(M).

6.1.7 Whilst in the eastern part of the village, traffic along the A1(M) can be heard, this busy strategic highway is not visually dominant or seen at all in many areas.

6.1.8 Policy AL 1 1. refers to the built up area of Alconbury Village. This is not currently defined on a map but HDC's 2019 Local Plan defines the built up area as:

"a distinct group of buildings that includes 30 or more homes. Land which relates more to the group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the built-up area."

6.1.9 In discussion with Huntingdonshire District Council and having regard to the Local Plan definition of built up areas, and pages 53 to 55 of the Local Plan to 2036, Map 4 below shows the indicative built up area of Alconbury to provide certainty for the application of Policy AL 1 below.



Map 4: Indicative Built Up Area of Alconbury Village

6.1.10 Outside the built area of the village, affordable housing on a rural exception site could provide one bedroom homes for children of Alconbury residents, or single storey homes for older residents, as identified in the Alconbury Residents Survey 2023, or one bedroom homes for households on the Huntingdonshire Housing Register with a connection to Alconbury parish, as identified in the Alconbury Demographic and Socio-economic Review (Cambridgeshire ACRE August 2024).

Policy AL 1: A spatial strategy for Alconbury

1. **Development proposals will in principle be supported within the built up area of Alconbury Village, provided they accord with policies in the statutory development plan[15] and are sensitive to Alconbury's distinctive character (see Policy AL 2 and Policy AL 5).**
2. **Development proposals outside the built up area of Alconbury Village that are on land well related to the built up area or are acceptable in a countryside location will be supported where:**
   - **It provides affordable housing on a rural exception site which meets the requirements of village residents and is in accordance with identified housing needs and**
   - **Development respects and does not undermine Alconbury village's identity as a rural settlement that is visually and physically distinct and separate from Alconbury Weston and**
   - **Alconbury's defining characteristic as a rural village distinct from other settlements and development in the wider area including Alconbury Weald and employment uses remains intact.**
3. **Any development that results in a fragmentation of village connectivity either through locating residential development too remote from village services or through creating barriers or otherwise undermining active travel choices will not be supported.**
4. **Proposals for development on land well-related to the built-up area will be considered subject to the provisions of Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policies LP 10 'The Countryside', LP 19 'Rural Economy', LP 22 'Local Services and Community Facilities', LP 23 'Tourism and Recreation', LP 33 'Rural Buildings' and LP 38 'Water Related Development'.**

6.1.11 Relevant policies from HDC's adopted Local Plan:

- Policy LP 2 'Strategy for Development'
- Policy LP 8 'Key Service Centres'
- Policy LP 10 'The Countryside' and • Policy LP 19 'Rural Economy
- Policy LP 22 'Local Services and Community Facilities
- Policy LP 23 'Tourism and Recreation and •Policy LP 33 Rural Buildings
- Policy LP 38 'Water Related Development

[15] The planning policies in this neighbourhood plan and HDC's Local Plan

Objective 2: To safeguard Alconbury's rural quality by preserving and enhancing the landscape characteristics that are considered to be distinctive and make it special

6.2 Policy AL 2 'Protecting and enhancing Alconbury's landscape and settlement character'

Policy context and rationale

6.2.2 Alconbury Parish takes in a large, mainly rural hinterland that extends to the south, and southeast (across the A1(M)) and to the west. Policy LP10 'The Countryside' in HDC's Local Plan restricts development in countryside locations to "limited and specific opportunities" set out in other policies in the plan. The policy requires that all development in the countryside:

- seeks to use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value
- recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and
- does not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.

6.2.3 Specific opportunities for development in countryside locations would apply to employment uses that are appropriate for supporting the rural economy (see Local Plan Policy LP 19 'Rural Economy'), dwellings that are essential for rural workers (see Local Plan Policy LP 20 'Homes for Rural Workers'), uses related to tourism and recreation (see Local Plan Policy LP 23 'Tourism and Recreation') and affordable housing to meet parish-specific needs under (see Local Plan Policy LP 28 'Rural Exceptions Housing'.

6.2.4 Whether a development comes forward within Alconbury village, on the edge of the village or in the wider countryside (under circumstances allowed for in the Local Plan), it is important that development proposals are designed to recognise and maintain landscape character and wherever relevant and possible take opportunities to enhance it.

HDC's Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

6.2.5 HDC has identified nine landscape character areas in its 2022 Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Alconbury Parish falls within landscape character area 'Central Claylands'. This is a large character area covering the central part of the district and encompasses the airfields at Alconbury, Upwood, Warboys and Wyton and a total of 33 parishes (fully or partially). The identified key characteristics within the landscape character area that are applicable to Alconbury Parish are:

- gently undulating arable farmland
- relatively large scale developments, including airfields at Alconbury and Wyton, the major transport corridors of the A1(M)/A14, and significant northern extensions to the towns of Huntingdon and St Ives, and

- regularly spaced traditional villages, often clustered around village greens.

6.2.6 Distinctive features described for this landscape character area are mostly relevant to land outside of Alconbury parish but includes:

"A strong topographic feature is the plateau to the north west of Huntingdon formerly occupied by Alconbury Airfield and now being redeveloped as Alconbury Weald. Large field sizes create a strong sense of openness which is enhanced by the lack of trees and hedgerows across much of the area. Away from the main settlements the landscape is tranquil and there is a sense of remoteness within much of the open arable farmland."

"Several villages are located at crossing points of streams with some such as Alconbury Weston retaining their fords"

"Village greens are common and vernacular buildings materials include brick, render, thatch, tile and timber"

6.2.7 The SPD includes recommendations for managing issues looking forwards. The recommendations relevant to Alconbury Parish are:

- plant new blocks of native woodland and hedgerows to provide a stronger sense of structure to the landscape
- protect the remaining orchards and where appropriate extend them or establish new orchards
- protect village greens and their immediate surrounding character
- retain the built form of distinctive nucleated villages
- sensitively redevelop redundant airfields reflecting their prominence in local and long distance views.

6.2.8 The SPD states that alongside other villages, Alconbury is influenced by the Northern Wolds landscape character area. This landscape character area forms a broad north-south strip on the western edge of the district extending to the south east with the Central Claylands to the east. The area contains the highest land in the district with a distinctive ridged topography formed by streams flowing from this higher land towards the Fen and Central Claylands.

Defining landscape character in Alconbury

6.2.9 HDC's SPD provides some useful context to help understand landscape and settlement character in Alconbury Parish.

6.2.10 Distinctive features in Alconbury's settlement and landscape character include:

- the Grade I listed Church of St. Peter and St. Paul that can be seen from all directions in the surrounding landscape and from many directions within the village itself
- the picturesqueness of the historic core of the village
- The Alconbury Brook, a key feature in the Conservation Area (see Map 5 below), its associated medieval green and banks. This important

landscape feature is interspersed with mature planting of Horse Chestnuts, Weeping Willows, Limes and Poplars and provides an attractive green swathe of open land through the heart of the village.

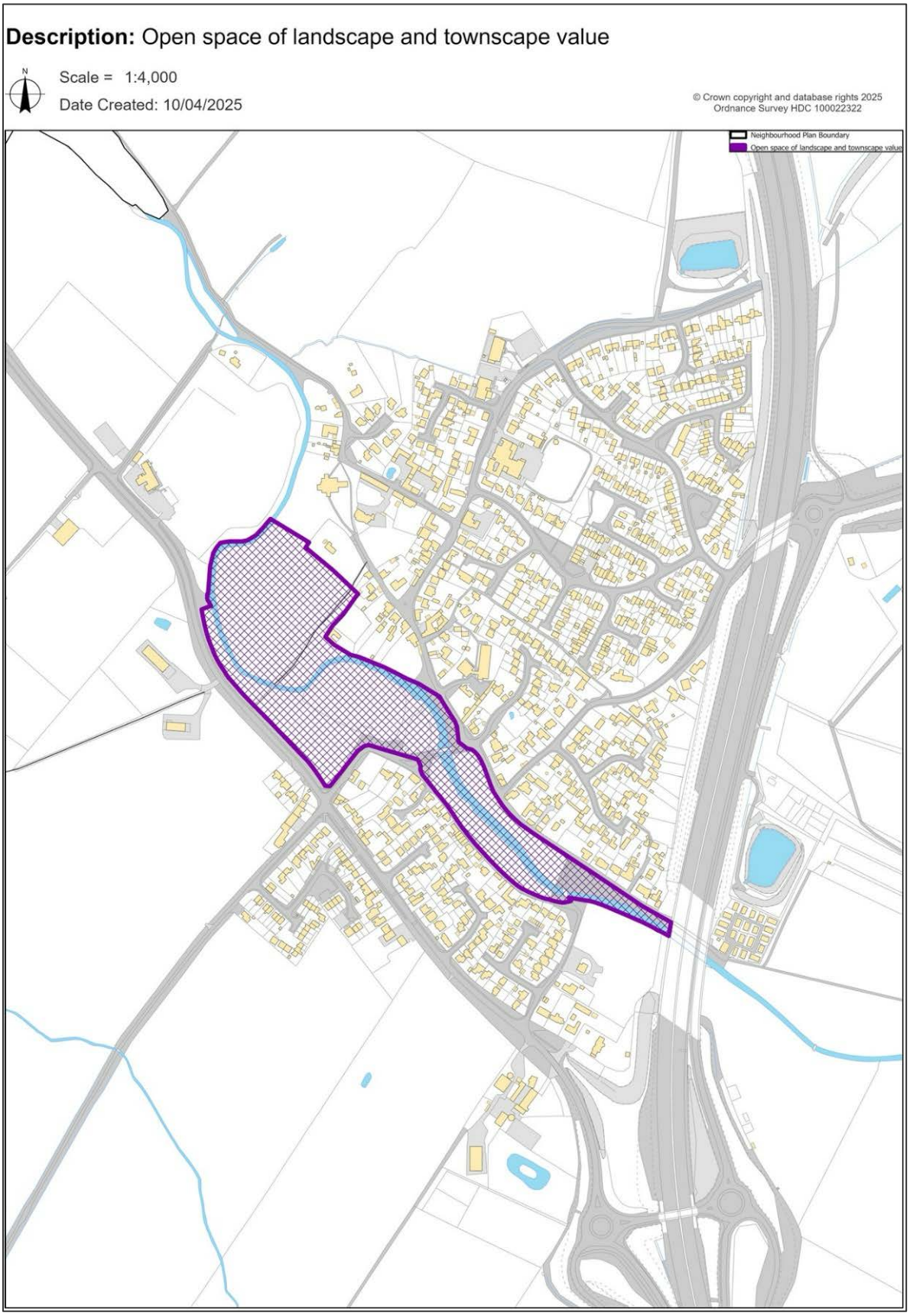
- the setting of the village within the valley of Alconbury Brook with the built form largely hidden from view in the wider landscape (ss seen in image 3 in Chapter 4)
- the extent of mature and established trees and hedgerows that lines the corridor of the brook as it snakes through the settlement and wider parish
- the rural routes (The Maltings, Globe Lane) and field boundaries which are lined with established hedgerows with mature trees, often with ditches. These provide structure to the landscape, visual amenity, habitat for wildlife and assist with surface water management.



Image 6: Village Green and Alconbury Bridge, looking west (view 28).



Image 7: established corridor of trees along the corridor of the Alconbury Brook, taken on a winter's day 2024



Map 5: Open space of landscape and townscape value in Alconbury Brook corridor



Image 8: public footpath from the Maltings looking north east is lined with established hedgerow, ditch and mature trees creating distinctive features in the landscape even on a winter's day.



Image 9: The Maltings, providing both a rural route connecting Alconbury with Alconbury Weston and a landscape feature

6.2.11 Other distinctive landscape features in Alconbury Parish include the grounds around Alconbury House and relatively extensive network of off-road pedestrian routes.

6.2.12 The parkland grounds at Alconbury House, separated from the village by the A1(M), was the first area to be protected by a Tree Preservation Order in 1951. They are noted as an important element of the local landscape in the Alconbury Conservation Area Character Statement, published by HDC in 1995[16].

[16] https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/conservation-areas/conservation-area-documents/

Locally important views

6.2.13 The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul is located to the north west of the village and on an elevated position on the eastern bank of the brook. Views of the church spire can be seen from all directions both within the wider landscape and within the built form of the village.

6.2.14 Extensive views are also enjoyed from within the settlement and the settlement edges looking out towards the wider countryside such as those shown in Image 10 from Globe Lane to the south towards the wind turbines in to the south west of the parish, in Ellington Parish.

6.2.15 Twenty-nine locally important views have been identified as part of preparing this NP. The location of these views is shown on maps and described in detail in Appendix 1.



Image 10: view 11 towards the church from the recreation fields, Alconbury Sports and Social Club

Sensitive settlement edges and village gateway points

6.2.16 Settlement edges including village gateway points are particularly sensitive when it comes to protecting or enhancing settlement character. These locations are a key component of the experience when arriving and leaving the settlement.

6.2.17 One 'Sensitive Settlement Edges' and four 'Important Village Gateways' have been identified.

6.2.18 **School Lane Sensitive Settlement Edge.** When entering the village from the A1(M) to the north of the village and when wishing to access the Primary School or the Memorial Hall, the route taken would be along the residential road Manor Lane up to School Lane. The northern edge of the village is reached on arriving at this junction. School Lane was the northern gateway point into the village prior to the building of the A1(M).

6.2.19 Land to the north of School Lane rises up the valley and the field immediately adjacent to School Lane, known locally as 'the Cow Field' contributes greatly:

- to the rural character and setting experience in this part of the village:
- by providing an appropriate setting to the Conservation Area to the south including its Grade I listed church
- by providing a rural backdrop to the Conservation Area.

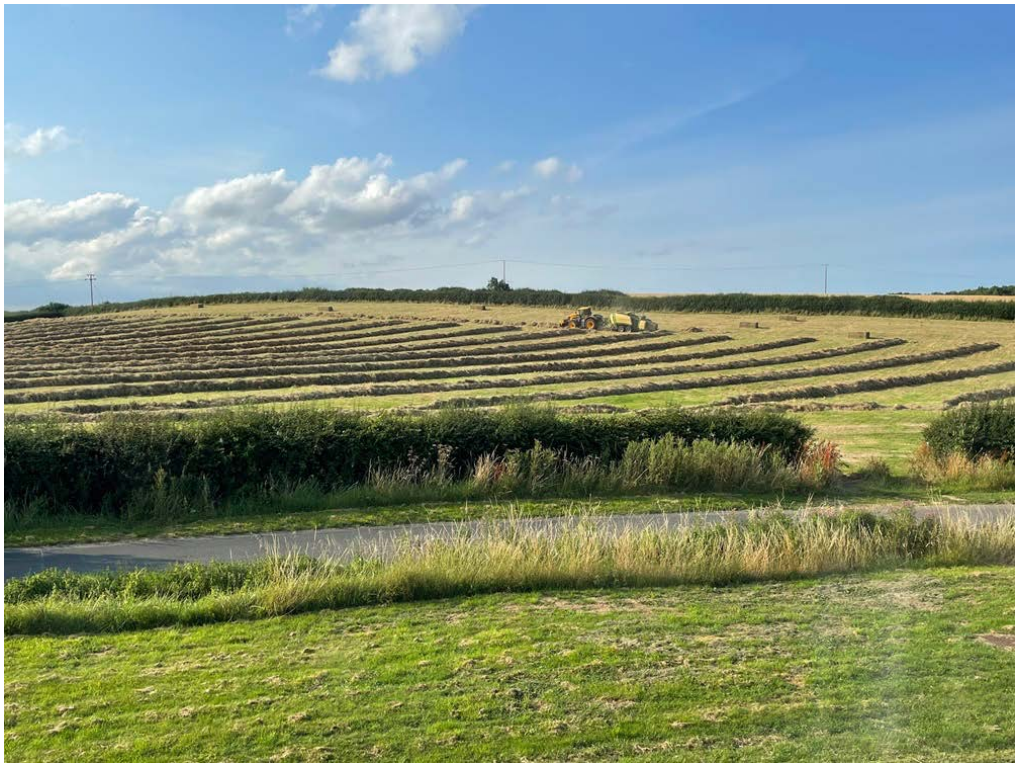


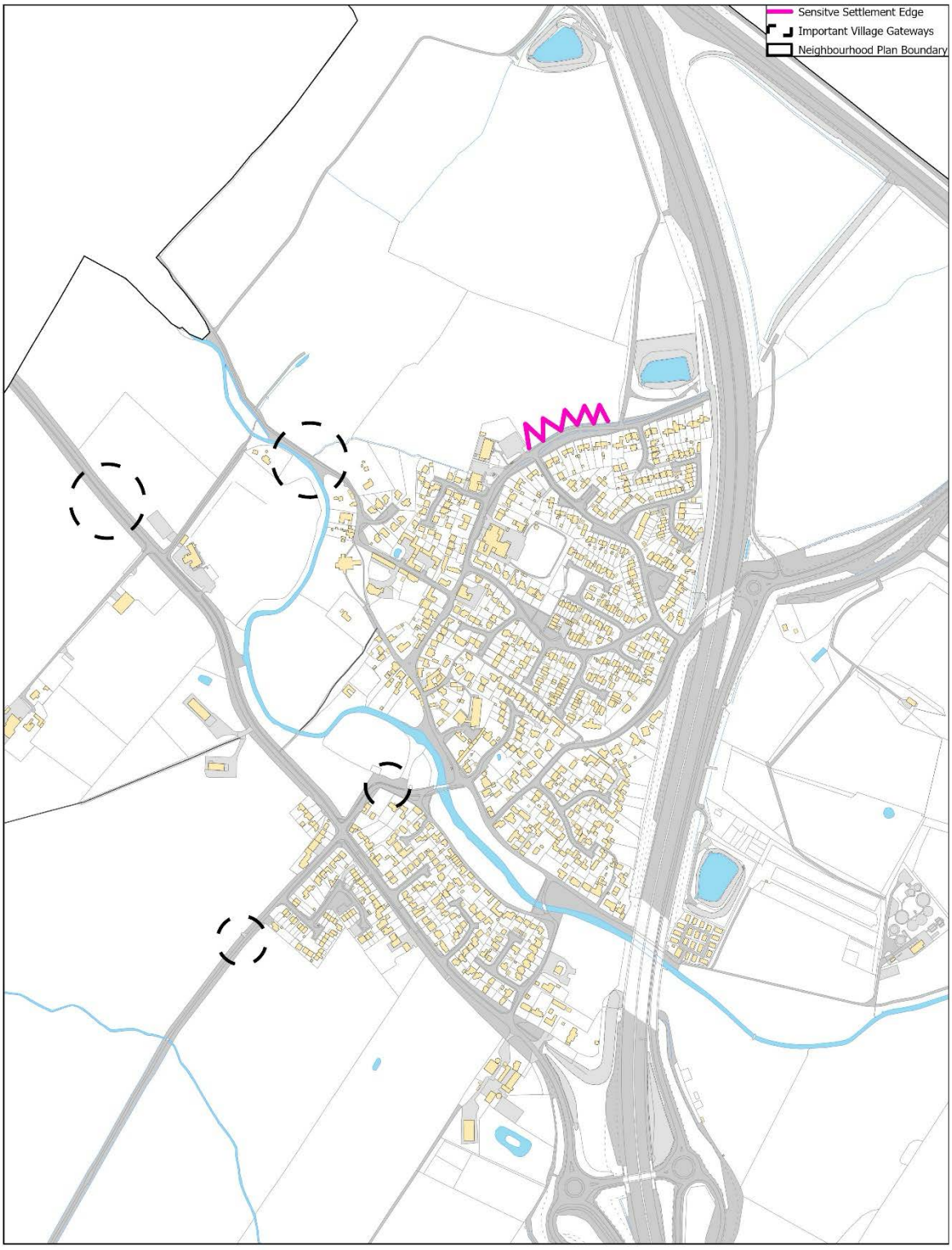
Image 11: The 'Cow Field' viewed from School Lane verge

Description: Alconbury's sensitive settlement edge and important village gateways

Scale = 1:5,000

Date Created: 10/04/2025

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Map 6: Alconbury's Sensitive Settlement Edge sites and Important Village Gateway Points



Image 12: Land rises up the valley from School Lane



Image 13: The 'Cow Field is currently (2024) used as a paddock



Image 14: The School Lane sensitive settlement edge (on right) provides important setting to the entrance into the village, and the Grade I listed church located in the Alconbury Conservation Area



Image 15: The 'Cow Field' provides a rural backdrop to Alconbury's historic core

Important Village Gateways

Maltings Village Gateway

6.2.20 The Maltings Village Gateway is an important arrival and departure point when travelling between the two villages of Alconbury Weston and Alconbury. The Maltings is part of National Cycle Route 12. As well as a popular route for walkers and cyclists, this is a key walking to school route for children and carers living in Alconbury Weston.

6.2.21 This gateway is located in the heart of Alconbury Conservation Area and is located alongside Alconbury Brook. The sense of arrival and departure is strong, as is the sense of tranquillity.



Image 16: arriving at Alconbury from Alconbury Weston, looking towards the southeast



Image 17: the anticipation of arriving at Alconbury starts some distance away along the Maltings



Image 18: Maltings village gateway, departing Alconbury towards Alconbury Weston

Globe Lane Village Gateway

6.2.22 A route into Alconbury village is via Globe Lane travelling from the south. This route is taken by employees travelling by car from Labcorp. It is also a popular rural route taken by non-motorists such as cyclists and pedestrians.



Image 19: Arriving at Alconbury from the south along Globe Lane

6.2.23 This settlement edge has a strong rural character, provided by landscape features comprising open fields, hedgerows and ditches lining the single track road, together with trees and hedges aligning the settlement edge which partly screening the dwellings from view. Towards the north, the Church of St. Peter and St Paul is clearly visible, dominating the skyline and indicating the point of arrival into Alconbury.

Mill Road Village Gateway

6.2.24 Located close to the Globe Lane village gateway, and looking in the same direction, the Mill Road Village Gateway has a distinctly different feel. Here the sense of arrival into the historic village core is strong once the turning into Mill Road has been taken from the Great North Road. There is soon a sharp right hand bend at which point the Church can be clearly seen to the left and the Village Green and Alconbury Brook can be glimpsed straight ahead. A shorter distance ahead is the 15th Century Alconbury Bridge and at this point, the attractive swathe of open land running through the heart of the historic open has a strong presence on both sides of the bridge.



Image 20: Mill Road Village Gateway, looking north towards the church



Image 21: Village Sign on Mill Road/Brookside junction, looking south east across the Village Green.

North Road Village Gateway at point of social club

6.2.25 A key feature at this arrival point into Alconbury is the green infrastructure provided by areas of woodland, hedgerows with trees and the expanse of open space in the grounds of the sports and social club.



Image 22: Great north road arrival point into the village

Other village gateways

6.2.26 The gateways described above have important characteristics that contribute positively to sense of place and distinctiveness in Alconbury. There are other arrival points into the village where character is less distinctive:

- northern village entrance along Rusts Lane after passing under the A1(M). The most noticeable experience when arriving in the village at this point is the sudden change of street scene, with the A1(M) and the B1043 left behind, helped by the wooded landscape buffer that lines the A1(M) corridor, to enter a village street scene.
- eastern village entrance along the High Street by foot, using the byway from the east. Here the countryside to the east of the A1(M) corridor with far reaching views is left behind to enter the historic core of the village with the Alconbury Brook on the southern side and the medieval village green ahead to the west. A most unusual feature here is passing under the A1(M) at this arrival point into the village (see image below).
- south-eastern village entrance along the Great North Road, arriving from the Brookland's Lane/A1(M) link road roundabout. Unlike Rusts Lane, the Great North Road feels like a road travelling through the settlements rather than village street. The change of scene when departing the A1(M) or the B1043 is therefore more gradual than at the northern village gateway and arrival into the village does not occur immediately.



Image 23: View to east from Byway at eastern village gateway



Image 24: A most unusual village entrance, Eastern village gateway on the edge of the historic core looking towards the medieval village green

Policy AL 2: Protecting and enhancing Alconbury's landscape and settlement character

1. **Development proposals will be supported where they recognise, maintain and where possible enhance landscape and settlement character in Alconbury Parish. This means proposals should, where relevant:**
   - **Protect or reinforce the character of the swathe of open land that runs through the heart of the village comprising the meadows, the greens and fields along the Alconbury Brook corridor (see Map 5).**
   - **Development at Sensitive Settlement Edges and Important Village Gateways (see Map 6) must demonstrate how they do not adversely impact and where possible enhance their contribution to rural character and Alconbury's distinctive landscape and settlement character.**
   - **Take opportunities to enhance landscape character wherever relevant to a proposal, having regard to recommendations identified in the supporting text to this policy including the recommendations set out in HDC's Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document 2022, or successor documents. Suitable landscape enhancements include additional buffering of native trees and hedgerows between Alconbury village and the A1(M) corridor.**
2. **Within a development site, proposals will be expected to retain or enhance features of landscape value including trees, hedgerows and water features.**
3. **Where development proposals are otherwise acceptable in locations on the edge of Alconbury's built up area they will be expected to produce a Landscape and Townscape Assessment in accordance with HDC's Landscape and Townscape SPD 2022, as part of a Design and Access Statement (or a separate document) This should identify local landscape character and incorporates substantial landscape buffering so as to avoid harsh settlement edges and ensure development can be successfully and sensitively assimilated into its surroundings.**
4. **Development proposals should respect the Locally Important Views as shown on the Maps and detailed in Appendix 1. This means ensuring any development proposal does not detract from the significant features identified in each view and wherever relevant and practicable enhance the key features in the view.**

Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan:

- Policy LP 11 'Design Context'
- Policy LP 12 'Design Implementation'
- Policy LP 31 'Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows'

Objective 3: Conserve and enhance Alconbury's valued heritage assets and its historic environment.

6.3 Policy AL 3 'Conserving and enhancing Alconbury's non designated heritage assets'

Policy context and rationale

6.3.1 The NPPF 2024, defines a heritage asset as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'

6.3.2 As set out in Chapter 3, Alconbury Parish has a number of nationally recognised designated heritage assets:

- Alconbury village Conservation Area (see Map 2 and Map 3)
- 1 Grade I listed building (the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul)
- 1 Grade II* listed building (Manor Farmhouse along the Maltings)
- 24 Grade II listed buildings and structures

6.3.3 Development proposals that affect a designated heritage assets will be managed in line with policies contained in HDC's Local Plan and at the national level, in the NPPF.

6.3.4 Through its work, the NP group has identified a number of other buildings and structures that are of local historic importance, and their preservation or enhancement is important to maintaining settlement character. These buildings or structures are referred to as non-designated heritage assets. The location of these assets is shown on Map 7 and the process of assessing the assets is described in detail in Appendix 2.

Policy AL 3: Conserving and enhancing Alconbury's non-designated heritage assets

1. Non-designated Heritage Assets have been identified on Map 7 as:

- **Ridge and Furrow**
- **Wooden Footbridges**
- **Wooden Footbridges Polecat Lane**
- **Corn Mill House**
- **No. 2 Rusts Lane**
- **Footbridge adjacent to Heritage Bridge**
- **Footbridge Sharps Lane**
- **Ford**
- **Ford adjacent to 8 High Street**
- **Village Pump**
- **Blacksmith's Cottage and Forge**
- **Wesleyan Chapel**
- **Old School Building**

Policy AL 3: Conserving and enhancing Alconbury's non-designated heritage assets

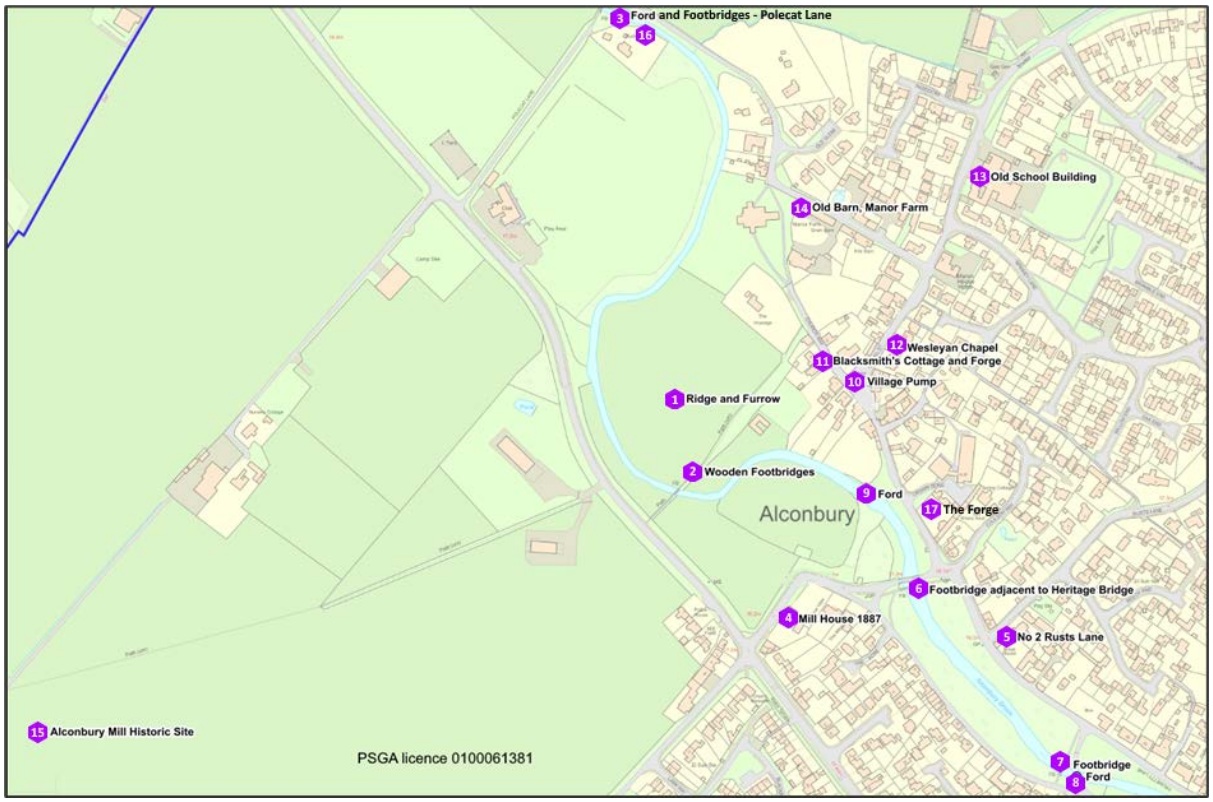
- Old Barn, Manor Farm
- Alconbury Mill Historic Site
- Ford at Polecat Lane
- The Forge.

2. Where proposals affect a non-designated heritage asset or its setting, a balanced judgement will be applied having regard to the scale of harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

3. Where a development proposal affects a non-designated heritage asset, the applicant should prepare a statement (proportionate to the asset's importance and so that the potential impact of a proposal on the significance of the asset can be understood), which describes the significance of the asset affected, including any contribution made by its setting.

6.3.5 Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan:

- Policy LP 34 'Heritage Assets and their Setting'



Map 7: Alconbury's non designated heritage assets

Objective 4: Maintain and enhance open, green spaces of particular significance to the community, identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Policy AL 4 'Local and 'Other' Green Spaces'

Policy context and rationale

6.3.6 The criteria for Local Green Space designation are set out in paragraph 107 of the NPPF 2024. This states that Local Green Spaces should be:

a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

6.3.7 An assessment of Alconbury's open spaces against the criteria for Local Green Spaces has been undertaken and is available to view alongside this plan.

6.3.8 Two of the spaces assessed for Local Green Space were categorised as 'Other' Green Spaces. These areas represent areas that are important to the character of the village, or important for children to play away from traffic, and it is expected that they be preserved as green spaces.

Village Green

6.3.9 The Village Green, which extends along the length of the village from the shop to the A1, is a vital green space with many mature trees and wide green spaces. It is used by the residents of the village for socialising, dog walking and the Village Show.

6.3.10 It is in the heart of the conservation area of the village and provides a delightful, peaceful aspect to the village

Churchyard at Church of St Peter and St Paul.

6.3.11 This is an essential space for the village, both in terms of the location and nature of use, but for the solace it provides people who spend time there next to the Brook.

Manor Lane Green

6.3.12 Manor Lane Green affords the residents in this neighbourhood with a precious open space providing both access and visual amenity. The space is particular valued due to the proximity of the A1 (M) in this part of the village. Manor Lane/Field Close Green

Bramble End Green and Spinney Lane Green

6.3.13 This is an area of green amenity land with an associated play park that extends to the Spinney Lane area. The space is popular with children and adults who use it for recreation and exercising.

Community Orchard at the Sports and Social Club

6.3.14 The Village has held many Apple Days in the Orchard since its planting. The area borders the Brook and provides a border for the Playing field at the Alconbury Sports and Social Club.

Recreation fields at Alconbury Sports and Social Club

6.3.15 The recreation fields are used by various sporting teams for cricket and football, with an outdoor gym and children's play area. The field is used throughout the year for special events, such as children's holiday activities and the annual fireworks display.

Alconbury Memorial Green

6.3.16 This is an area of outdoor amenity land adjacent to Memorial Hall, School Lane.

Old Cow Field

6.3.17 Also known as the School Lane Field, this area of land is located at the northern edge of the main village. The elevation and sloped nature of the land ensure it is dominant over the rest of the village, contributing to its rural setting and contributing to the setting of the Alconbury Conservation Area and Grade I listed Church of St. Peter and St. Paul. The field is also a site of archaeological interest due to presence of ridge and furrow. This space has been categorised a 'Other' Green Space.



Image 25 The Old Cow Field

Sparrow Drive/Blackbird Way Green

6.3.18 This is a small but precious publicly accessible area of open green space for children in particular to enjoy. Mature trees surround the green and provide bird and insect life with a habitat and shade, while the green is large enough for children to play away from local traffic. This space has been categorised as 'Other' Green Space.

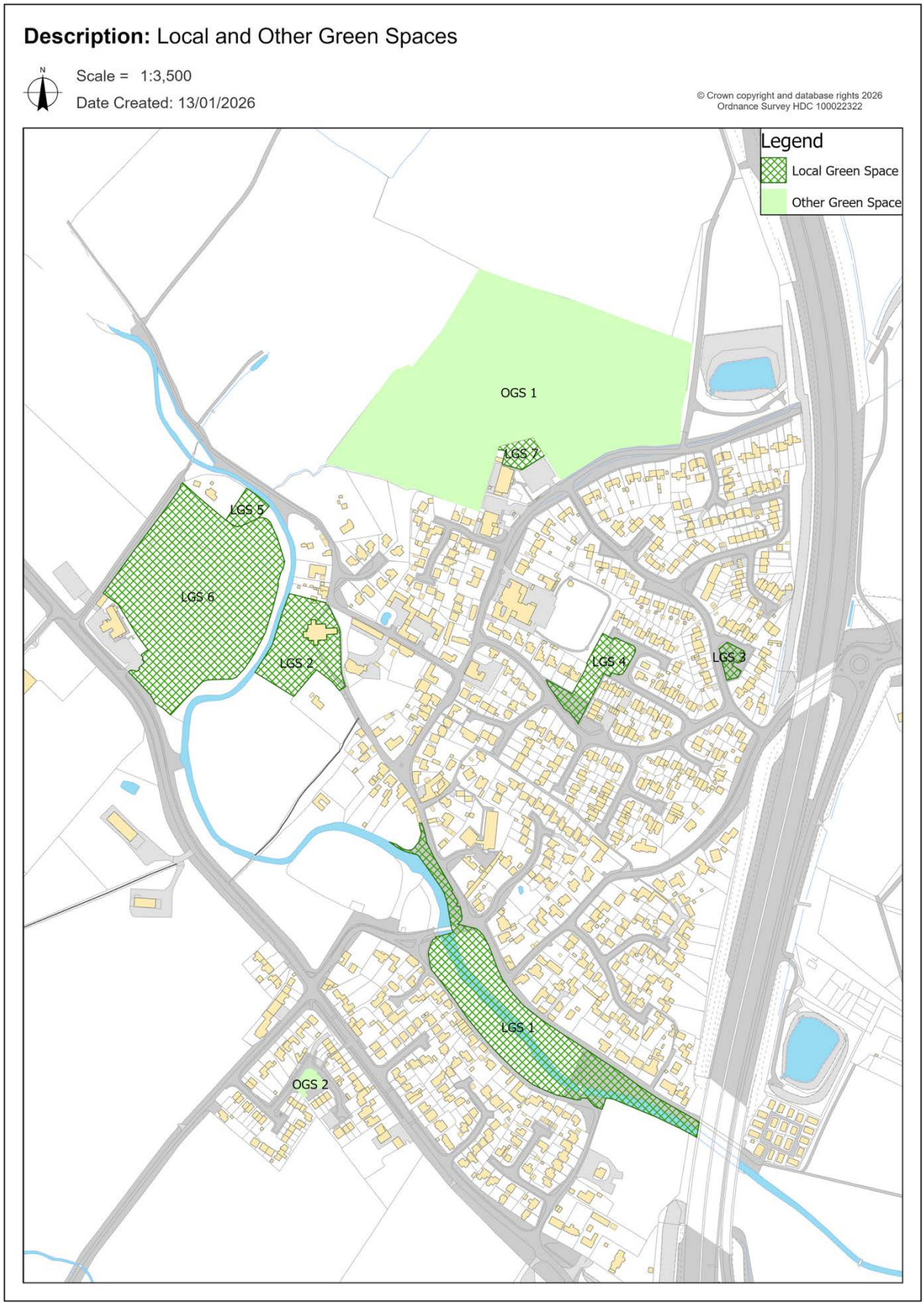
Community Action Point 1: The Parish Council will seek the delivery of improved play equipment on village playgrounds, including at Bramble End.

Policy AL 4: Alconbury's Local Green Spaces

1. **The following sites, as shown on Map 8 are designated as Local Green Spaces:**
   - **LGS 1 Village Green**
   - **LGS 2 Church yard**
   - **LGS 3 Manor Lane Green**
   - **LGS 4 Bramble End Green and Spinney Lane Green area**
   - **LGS 5 Community Orchard, at Alconbury Sports and Social Club**
   - **LGS 6 Recreation Fields at Alconbury Sports and Social Club**
   - **LGS 7 Alconbury Memorial Hall Green.**
2. **They will be protected from development in line with national policy.**
3. **The map also shows those areas classed as 'Other' Green Spaces which represent areas that are important to the character of the village, or as informal space for children to play away from traffic, and it is expected that they be preserved as green spaces:**
   - **OGS 1 Old Cow Field**
   - **OGS 2 Sparrow Drive/Blackbird Way Green.**

6.3.19 Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan

- Policy LP 32 'Protection of Open Space'



Map 8: Designated Local Green Spaces and Other Green Spaces.

Theme 2: Built Environment

There is one objective sitting under this theme:

Objective 5: New development to be of a high quality design and will fit comfortably with the existing village character

6.4 Policy AL 5 'Delivering high quality design sensitive to Alconbury's distinctive character'

Policy context and rationale

6.4.2 As noted in Chapter 3 to this plan, residents attach importance to ensuring development is in sympathy with the area and that building design is in keeping with the scale and appearance of existing buildings.

Alconbury Design Guide, 2025

6.4.3 This Plan is informed by the Alconbury Design Guide, prepared by AECOM in 2025 for the parish. The Parish Council had received direct support for the undertaking of the work via the government's neighbourhood planning support programme.

6.4.4 The Design Guidance and Codes document provides an analysis of the village and parish in terms of build layout, history, heritage assets, access and movement, green and blue infrastructure, assets and challenges. In doing this, three 'settlement focus areas' are identified:

- The Conservation Area
- Linear development. This character area runs along School Lane starting at the edge of the Conservation Area and runs up to the northeastern edge of the village.
- Mid/late 20th century residential areas. This refers to three areas comprising residential streets and cul-de-sacs.

6.4.5 The work identifies three overriding design objectives: 'rural character', healthy street design' and sustainability', under which topic specific design guidance sits.

A: Rural character
A1: Countryside views and vistas
A2: Tree planting and green infrastructure
A3: Rural streets
A4: Landscape setting and settlement edge
A5: Housing variety
A6: Architectural materials and details
A7: Parking
A8: Repurposing agricultural buildings
B: Healthy street design
B1: Enclosure
B2: Plot layout

B3: Feeling of safety and surveillance
B4: Boundary treatments
B5: Traffic calming
C: Sustainability
C1: Permeable paving
C2: SuDs
C3: Water and slow release
C4: Eco-friendly features for dwellings

Alconbury Conservation Area Character Statement

6.4.6 The Alconbury Conservation Area Character Statement was published in 1995 when the Conservation Area itself was designated. The document describes its character. Key findings include:

6.4.7 The essential character of the Conservation Area is formed by the inter-relationship of Alconbury Brook, the village green and the local vernacular architecture.

6.4.8 The most important grouping of buildings within the Conservation Area is in the northern end, containing the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Manor Farm and The Manor public house.

6.4.9 The church occupies a slightly elevated position on the eastern bank of Alconbury Brook, and its spire is a prominent visual landmark from all directions, but especially from Alconbury Weston.

6.4.10 Whilst there is no predominant architectural style in the Conservation Area, the southern end of the village along High Street and Brookside is mainly characterised by rendered, timber-framed cottages, but infilling and replacements are interspersed with the remaining traditional buildings.

6.4.11 Because of the problem with flooding in the village, several cottages are set gable end on to the road frontage.

Policy AL 5: Delivering high quality design sensitive to Alconbury's distinctive character

1. A design-led approach should be taken for all proposals. In doing so, applicants should be:

- **guided by the Alconbury Design Guide 2025**
- **informed by the design principles set out in Appendix 3, using wherever applicable the Alconbury Design checklist as provided in Appendix 4, and**
- **accord with the design principles set out in this policy.**

2. Descriptions as to how a development complies with this policy should be provided in the Design and Access Statement or Planning Statement, as applicable.

Policy AL 5: Delivering high quality design sensitive to Alconbury's distinctive character

Design Principles:

Preserving Rural character - Proposals must preserve the strong rural character within the village, characterised by the verdant street scene, front gardens, hedgerows, street trees, and interrelationship between settlement and surrounding countryside by:

- **maintaining the leafy village streetscape and incorporating new landscape features where appropriate**
- **maintaining visual connections to surrounding countryside and village historical landmarks including the Church of St Peter and St Paul, the Village Green and Alconbury Brook**
- **ensuring building and street layouts result in active frontages and slow traffic – this means prioritising the movement of pedestrians and other non-motorised users over the movement of motorised vehicles.**

Built Form:

- **proposals should respond positively to the prevailing character in the pattern of buildings found in the vicinity of the development site (e.g., informal arrangement of buildings, variety or uniformity of building types)**
- **new dwellings should conform to the front and back garden dimensions typical of the neighbourhood in which a proposal is located**
- **proposals should follow any consistent building line and set back distances and new buildings should front onto the street**
- **the height of buildings should accord with the settlement character of one and two storey dwellings and must not overwhelm the existing massing and scale of neighbouring buildings or undermine the visual dominance of the Church in the village streetscape and on the village skyline**
- **new roof types and pitch should reflect characteristics in the vicinity and the scale of the roof should be in proportion to the dimensions of the buildings**
- **choice of buildings materials should be informed by existing materials in the vicinity of the development site, unless those materials are not sympathetic to the character and distinctiveness of the village as a whole. Suitable materials could be:**
  - **Wall materials: red brick, yellow brick, render, tile hanging, weather boarding.**
  - **Roof materials: clay tiles, grey slate tiles.**
  - **Boundary treatments: low stone/brick wall boundary, hedgerows.**

6.4.12 Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan

- Policy LP 11 'Design Context'
- Policy LP 12 'Design Implementation'
- Policy LP 14 'Amenity'
- Policy LP 17 'Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement

Theme 3: Flooding

There is one objective sitting under this Theme:

Objective 6: New development will not exacerbate existing flood risk in the parish and opportunities must be taken to reduce levels of risk.

6.5 Policy AL 6 'Addressing flood risk appropriately when development is proposed via a planning application'

Policy context and rationale

6.5.2 HDC's 2019 Local Plan includes Policy LP 5 'Flood Risk'. This states that a proposal will only be supported where all forms of flood risk including breaches of flood defences or other defence failures have been addressed as detailed in national policy and guidance and with reference to the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document [17] (SPD). The policy also sets out what will be expected where a proposal is considered acceptable within the 1% annual probability flood extent.

6.5.3 Local Plan Policy LP 15 'Surface Water' sets out the Council's approach in relation to the management of surface water. This policy is clear that a proposal will only be supported where surface water has been considered from the outset as an integral part of the design process and the proposal meets specific requirements to manage surface water.

6.5.4 Chapter 6 in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD focuses on surface water and sustainable drainage systems. In its capacity as lead local flood authority covering the area, the County Council has also updated and published its Surface Water Planning Guidance [18], this is a guidance for developers that sets out requirements for surface water management and drainage strategies for new development.

6.5.5 The Local Plan is supported by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2017.

6.5.6 More recently, in 2024, HDC published its updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and it is the 2024 document that is being used to inform the direction of the update to HDC's Local Plan. The 2024 SFRA and the Integrated Water Management Strategy Stage 1 Water Cycle Study 2024 are available to view here:

www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-update/evidence-library-for-local-plan-update/

[17] www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Cambridgeshire-Flood-and-Water-Supplementary-Planning-Document.pdf
[18] www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Surface-Water-Planning-Guidance.pdf

6.5.7 The Environment Agency maintains flood risk mapping data and in early 2025 updated all maps. For up to date flood risk extents, the maps maintained by the Environment Agency should therefore also be consulted. These are available to view here: www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk

6.5.8 Figures 5 to 8 below show the EA's mapping data associated with long term flood risk, as accessed in March 2025.

6.5.9 The maps show that the main areas at risk from fluvial flooding in the village include the High Street, Brookside, Mill Road, Rusts Lane, Maple End, Frumetty Lane, Ford End, Coulson Way, Sharps Lane, Great North Road and The Maltings. It also shows that land at Labcorp is also at risk from fluvial flooding.

6.5.10 The maps also show that the village is at risk from surface water flooding. Areas at risk include a broad area focused around the Alconbury Brook corridor, taking in:

- residential streets at the Leys Estate
- the Great North Road
- the residential area between the Great North Road and the brook follows the path of the Alconbury Brook as well as ponding and flowing along roads and
- the residential area to the north of Alconbury Brook including the High Street, Rusts Lane, Maple End and Beech End.

6.5.11 It also covers residential areas away from the Alconbury Brook corridor, reflecting the topography of the village as land slopes downwards towards the brook:

- residential area to the west of the A1(M) corridor
- land around Memorial Hall and abutting the northern fringes of the village on land to the north of School Lane and abutting the surgery, and
- Chapel Street.



Figure 5: Long Term risk of fluvial Flooding Alconbury Village (accessed 26 March 2025 www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk)

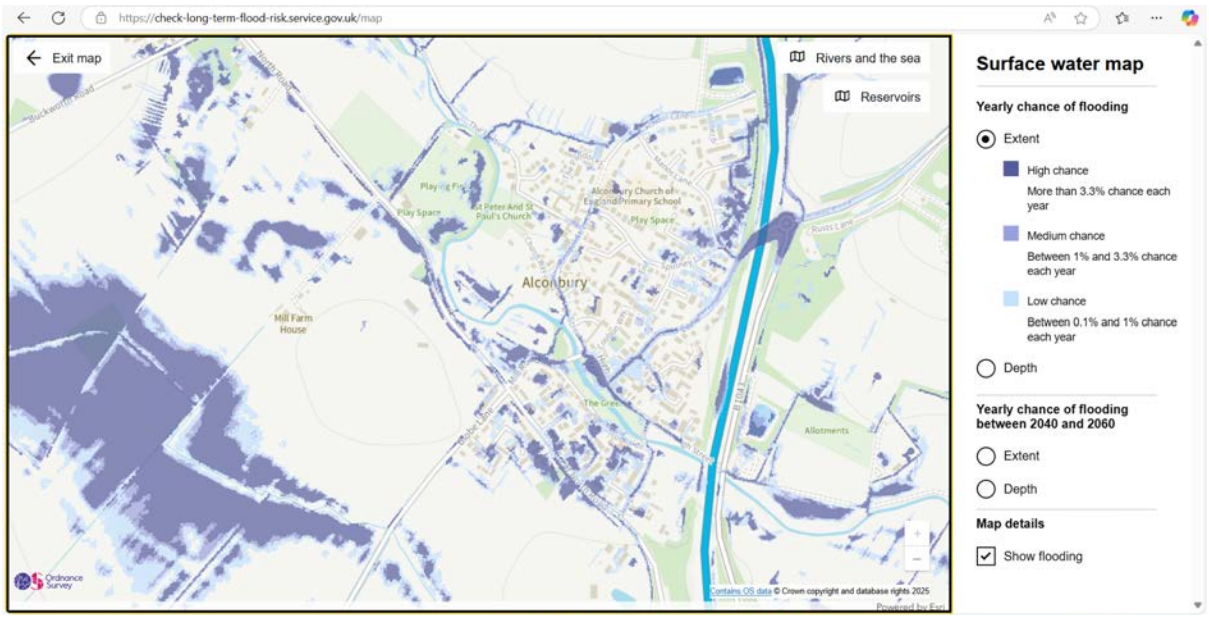


Figure 6: Long term risk of flooding from surface water, accessed 26 March 2025 www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk

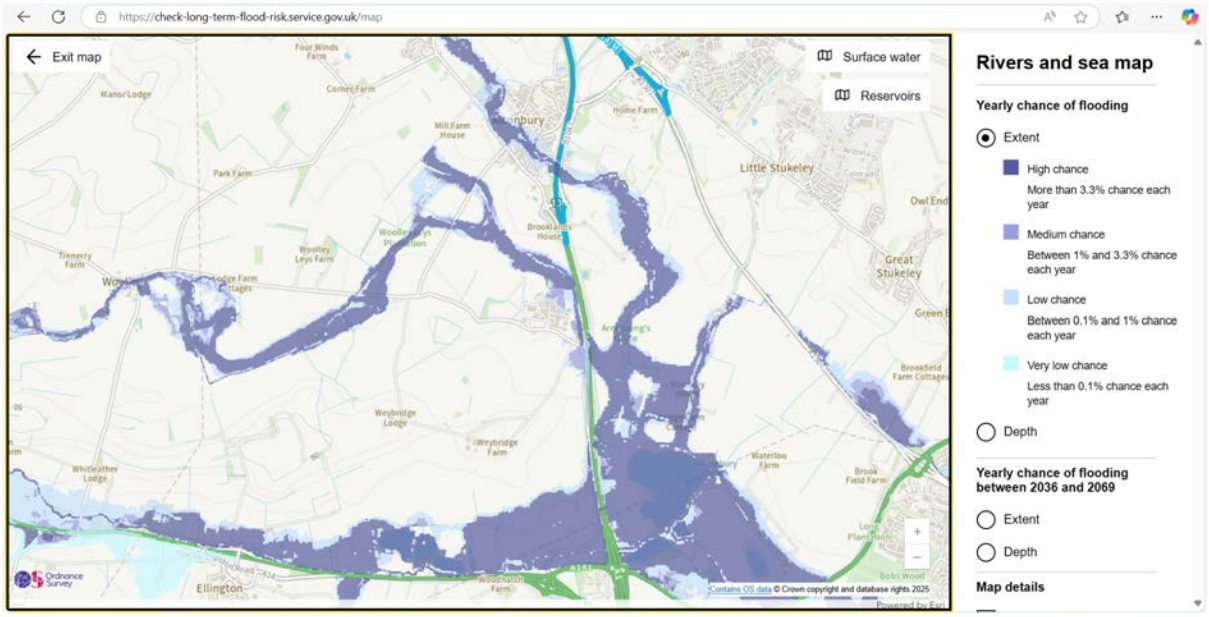


Figure 7: Long term risk of fluvial flooding parish wide, data accessed 26 March 2025 from www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood -risk

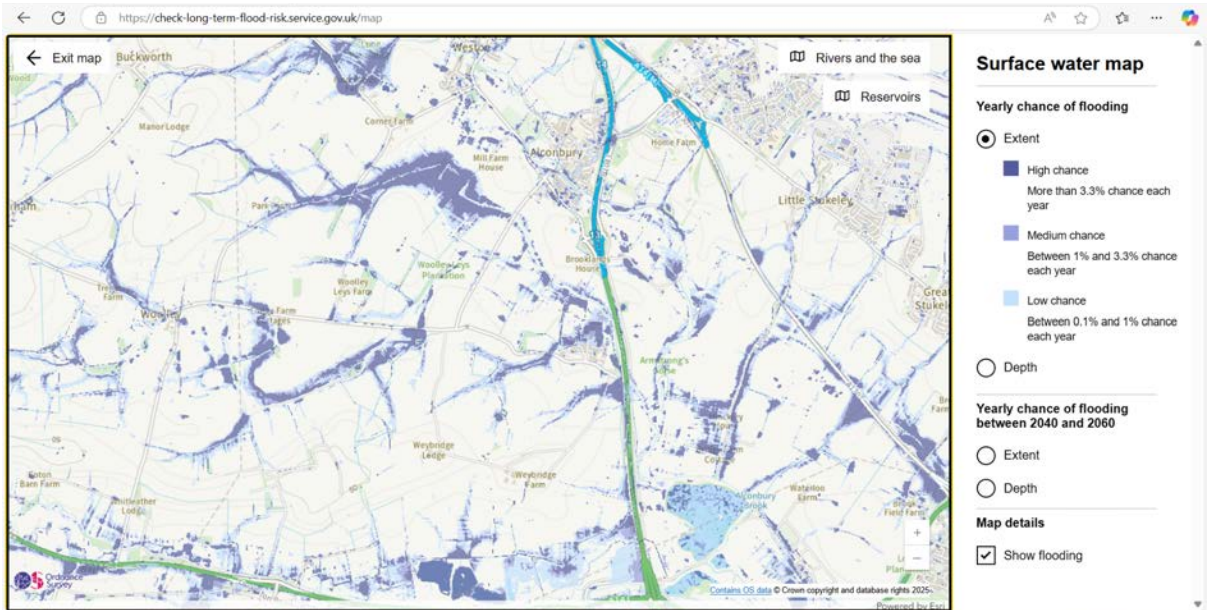


Figure 8: Parish-wide Long term risk of flooding from surface water. Data accessed 26 March 2025 from www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk

6.5.12 Alconbury village is located within a wider Flood Alert Area identified by the Environment Agency (EA). The EA issues 'Flood Alerts' earlier than 'Flood Warnings' to provide people with advance notice of the possibility of flooding.

6.5.13 As recently as 5 January 2025, a flood alert was issued for the area by the Environment Agency. This followed a previous flood alert issued 28 November 2024. See Figure 9.

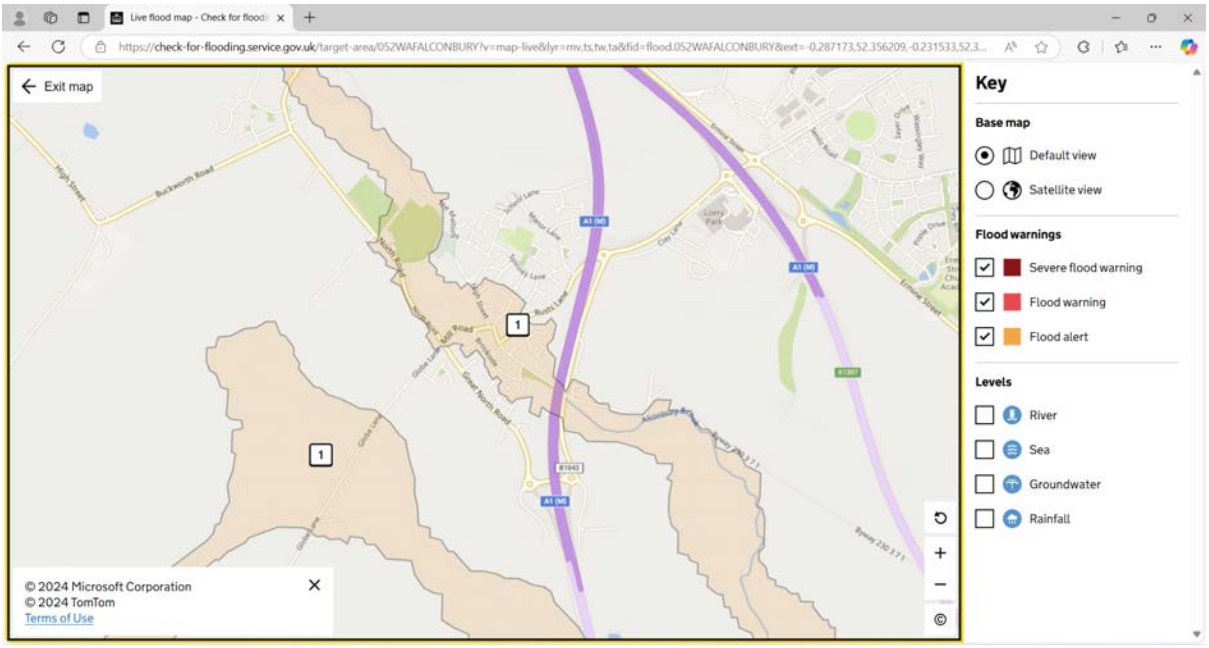


Figure 9: Flood Alert issued by The Environment Agency 28 November 2024

Proposals within the Alconbury Brook corridor

6.5.14 Land that is at risk of flooding due to the Alconbury Brook is shown on 10, below. As can be seen there are a significant number of properties that are located along this corridor.

6.5.15 During the plan period, planning applications may come forward involving minor development such as householder extensions and alterations. Policy AL 6 seeks to ensure firstly that flood risk is not exacerbated by such proposals, secondly that opportunities are taken to improve the management of flood risk in the corridor and thirdly opportunities are taken to improve the resilience of properties during flood events. The approach is similar to the approach taken in Local Plan Policy LP5. A key difference is that the Local Plan only takes this approach to land falling within the functional flood plan (flood zone 3b) whereas the Alconbury Brook corridor defined in Map 9 shows all the land at risk within the corridor. Given the historical flood events in the parish and the way fluvial flooding combines with surface water flooding in Alconbury, this approach is considered to be an appropriate response.

Local Plan Policy LP5 Includes the statement:
Where a proposal would occupy functional flood plain (flood zone 3b), the developer must ensure that it does not impact upon the ability of the floodplain to store or convey water, and seek opportunities to provide floodplain betterment. Development will only be support where it results in no loss of floodplain performance within the undefended floodplain.'

6.5.16 Opportunities for reducing flood risk via individual development proposals may be limited when it comes to minor applications e.g., residential alterations but nonetheless may exist. Opportunities to manage flood risk include:

- measures to divert or slow run-off from roofs, especially where this is currently being directed into combined sewers (which may be the case on older properties) through strengthening the contribution to be made through green infrastructure (green roofs, trees and hedgerows) and increasing water storage capacity.

6.5.17 Opportunities to improve the resilience of properties include measures designed to reduce the damage caused by floodwater entering a property such as raised electricity sockets, tiled floors at ground floor and high level wall fixings for electrical equipment (televisions, computers). Helpful resources are available at www.floodmary.com and include a 'Householders Guide to Property Flood Resilience' and a 'Householders Guide to Flood Recovery'

All proposals

6.5.18 Clause 3 in Policy AL 6 would apply to proposals in any location in the parish. Areas of land at risk of surface water flooding affects a considerable proportion of the building stock. The rate at which surface water flooding can impact village buildings and infrastructure including the Alconbury Brook itself is of key relevance and is linked to the topography of the land where water will flow downwards including from higher land outside the parish, e.g. from Alconbury Weald down into the Alconbury Village and down towards Alconbury Brook.

6.5.19 Surface water flooding in the parish could be better managed if the built form had increased capacity to absorb rainfall (again through green infrastructure, increasing permeable surfaces and minimising run-off from roofs) and if development were designed to accommodate and better manage the overland flow paths that will always exist, thus allowing water to be channelled slowly and safely through the village during periods of heavy rainfall.

6.5.20 Given the level of risk in the parish, it is only common sense that all development in all locations in the parish incorporate appropriate measures that contribute to improving the management of surface water in the village. Likewise, it is only common sense that proposals should be refused where

they would result in an increase in surface water flooding.

Community Action Point 2: The PC will continue to support the work of the Alconbury Brook Flood Group.

6.5.21 The Alconbury Brook Flood Group will work with existing landowners in the parish to improve flood management infrastructure, and the planning and implementation of natural flood management initiatives that are designed to reduce flood risk in the Alconbury Brook catchment area19. More information on work undertaken by the Alconbury Flood Group is provided in Chapter 4.

Policy AL 6: Addressing flood risk appropriately when development is proposed via a planning application

1. **Land falling within the Alconbury and Cock Brook corridors on land at risk from flooding, as shown on Map 9 and Map 10, will be kept free from further development other than:**
   a) **essential infrastructure and water compatible development (e.g. flood control infrastructure) listed in Annex 3 to the NPPF 2024**
   b) **development which would satisfy the tests of Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP 5.**
2. **For such development, proposals will be expected to maintain or enhance the functionality of the open land within the Alconbury Brook corridor as an essential flood management asset. This means:**
   - **ensuring development doesn't undermine the capacity of the open land from managing water during times of high river levels or rainfall levels**
   - **taking opportunities to improve the capacity of the open land to manage flood water**
   - **liaising with relevant stakeholders such as affected neighbours, the Internal Drainage Board, the Alconbury Flood Group, the lead local flood authority, Anglian Water, and the Environment Agency.**
3. **For all new build development proposals, regardless of scale or location:**
   - **The incorporation of appropriate sustainable drainage systems will be required in line with current guidance[20] unless it is demonstrated that drainage on or around the site will not be affected by the proposal.**
   - **Full account must be taken of any existing features that assist with storing water (e.g. ponds) as well as overland flow paths on or within the vicinity of the site.**

[19] A map of the entire catchment is available to view here: https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/WaterBody/GB105033042820

[20] National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) July 2025

Policy AL 6: Addressing flood risk appropriately when development is proposed via a planning application

This means assessing:

- **whether the function of existing flood management assets including ponds and ditches is at risk of being undermined as a result of the proposed development**
- **risk of flooding arising from overland flow paths during periods of heavy rainfall and identifying the additional impact of the proposed development; as well as identifying**
- **any positive contribution the proposed development could have in terms of leading to an overall reduction to flood risk.**

4. Development proposals must not lead to existing emergency escape routes being blocked through food events:

- **Flood Risk Assessments should ensure all routes remain viable in a flood emergency, across the village**
- **Vulnerable points on primary escape routes are via the northern end of Rusts Lane before it meets the A1(M) underpass and Great North Road where it meets Sharps Lane (see Map 11) Escape routes out of the village during flood events)**
- **Flood Risk Assessments should identify the emergency escape route for each development site i.e.:**
  - **Huntingdon Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Site CfS:164 – Great North Road**
  - **Huntingdon Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Site CfS:359 – Globe Lane.**

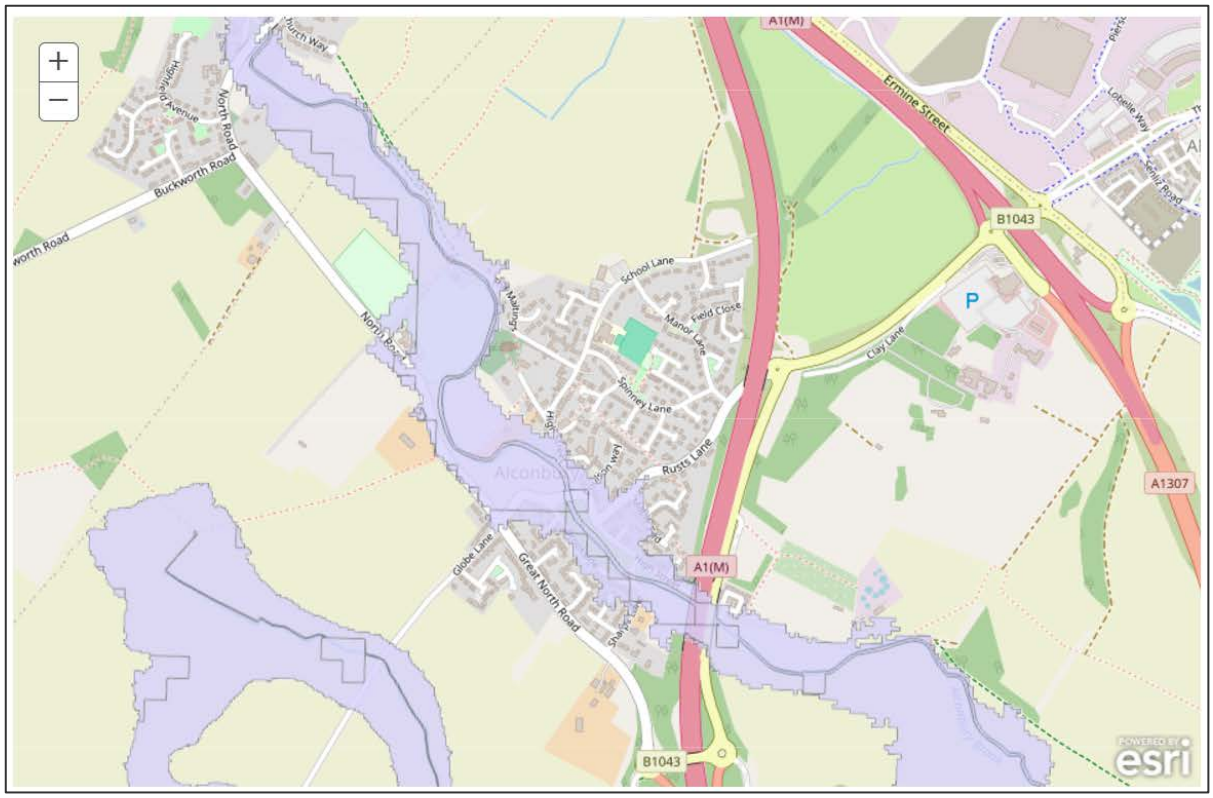
NOTE 1: The incorporation of sustainable drainage systems is required at the national level (see NPPF 2024) for all major and larger development.

6.5.22 Relevant policies from HDC's adopted Local Plan:

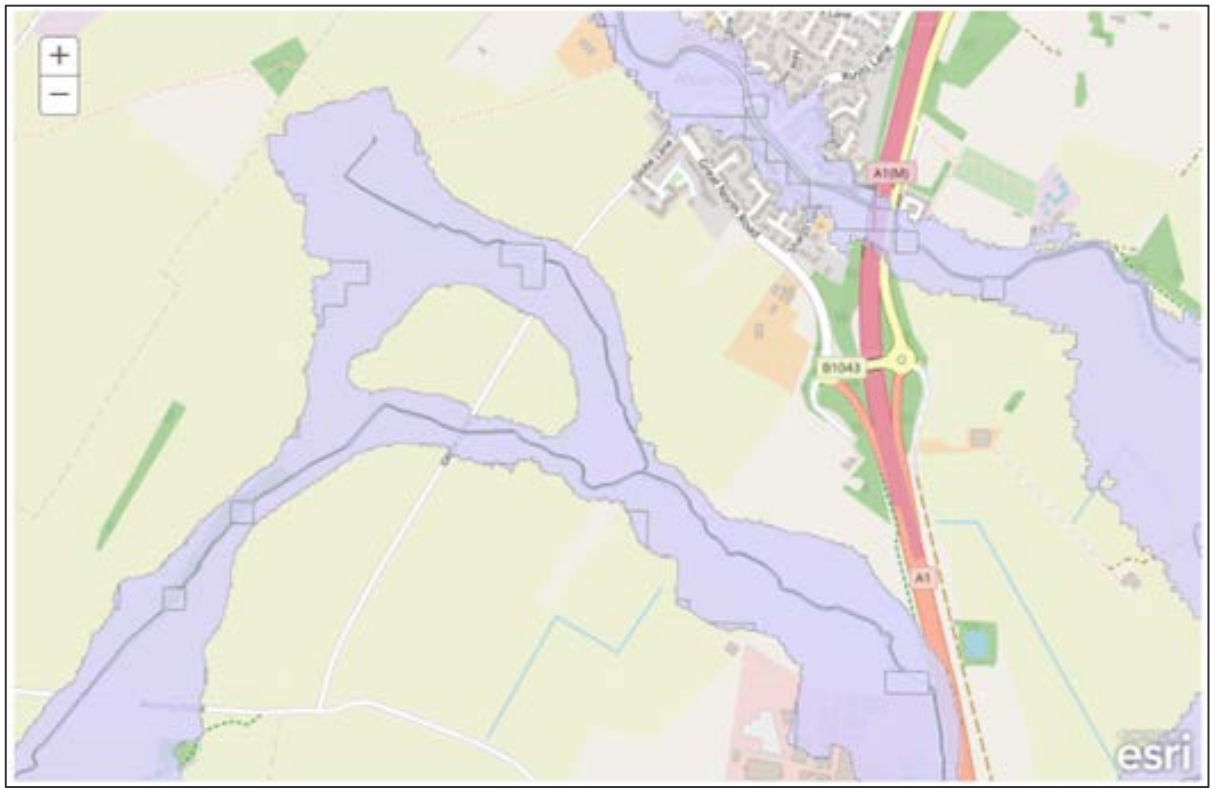
- Policy LP 5 'Flood Risk'
- Policy LP 6 'Waste Water Management'
- Policy LP 15 'Surface Water'

6.5.23 Also relevant:

- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document, adopted by HDC
- Cambridgeshire County Council Surface Water Planning Guidance, updated March 2025



Map 9: Alconbury Brook corridor to be kept free from further development (overall risk area of flooding from rivers as per the 2024 SFRA)



Map 10: Cock Brook corridor to be kept free from development (overall risk area of flooding from rivers as per the 2024 SFRA)

Description: Existing emergency escape routes

Scale = 1:4,000

Date Created: 10/04/2025

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Map 11: Escape routes out of the village during flood events.

Theme 4: Moving around the village and parish safely and through active travel modes

There is one objective sitting under this theme.

Objective 7: Our village streets will retain their rural character where it is enjoyable and safe to walk around and opportunities will be taken to improve and expand:

- walkable routes between residential areas and village services
- the network of safe and attractive off-road routes that link Alconbury village with neighbouring settlements

6.6 Policy AL 7 'Maintaining well connected neighbourhoods and addressing barriers to moving around the village more safely using active travel choices

Context and rationale:

6.6.2 Other than during flood events, it is relatively easy to and safe to move around the village and parish through active travel methods (walking, cycling, with mobility scooter etc). This is due to the design and layout of buildings and the presence of a good network of off-road walking routes including pavements throughout the village. In the event of new development coming forward, it is important proposals are designed so as enable safe and easy movement for pedestrians and other non-motorised users.

6.6.3 Whilst on the whole Alconbury is generally well-connected there are some issues that create particular issues for pedestrians and other non-motorised users:

a) The Great North Road that runs from the southwest of the village, linking the A1(M) with Alconbury Weston can be a difficult road to cross, particularly during busy times of the day. Junctions are very wide which encourages motorised vehicles to turn in and out of junctions quickly but creating problems for those who need to cross the road. A safe crossing point is needed along the Great North Road to ensure safe and convenient access via non-motorised forms of transport for residents needing to access village shops and services from the residential area located along Globe Lane.

b) Further north along North Road, and close to the parish boundary, residents using the pavement to walk into Alconbury, need to cross the North Road just south of Polecat Lane since the pavement stops on the western side to continue on the eastern side.

c) Mill Lane at the junction with Brookside. To continue a route along the pavement there is a need to cross the road close between a blind corner and Alconbury Bridge.

d) Another barrier to getting around the village safely and easily is the route of footpath number 2 where it crosses Rusts Lane on a blind bend. The footpath is a key route for residents as it links the Spinney Lane Estate

where the primary school is located with Maple End and Beech End.

Community Action Point 3 The Parish Council will seek the delivery of a safe crossing point on the Great North Road to enable safer travel via active travel choices (e.g., walking, cycling, mobility scooter) from residential areas to village community infrastructure (shop, play space, primary school, Memorial Hall, pub).

Policy AL 7: Maintaining well connected neighbourhoods and addressing barriers to moving around the village more safely using active travel choices

1. **The design and layout of development proposals should incorporate direct, safe, and attractive walking and cycling routes (including adequate pavement or footpath provision) within the scheme and utilise opportunities to link directly with neighbouring areas and village shops and services.**
2. **A Road Safety Audit should be submitted with planning applications for development proposals which are likely to impact adversely on pedestrian safety or the safety of other road users. They will be expected to mitigate their impact by providing or contributing to road safety measures. All impacts should be capable of being mitigated, particularly if they are likely to occur at the known road safety hotspots listed below:**
   a) **Great North Road/Globe Lane/Mill Road junction**
   b) **North Road crossing point near Polecat Lane**
   c) **Mill Road/Brookside junction**
   d) **Rusts Lane, Footpath 2 crossing point.**
3. **Proposals that have an unacceptable impact on road safety after considering mitigation will be refused and proposals that lead to an overall improvement in road safety in the village will, in principle, be supported.**
4. **To improve road safety in Alconbury's active travel network, the following optional initiatives are sought:**
   - **The creation of a conveniently located and safe pedestrian crossing along the Great North Road in order to facilitate a safe active travel route from the Globe Lane residential area to the shop and services located in Alconbury village.**
   - **Measures that facilitate a safer use of the key active travel route currently linking the primary school with residential area, including facilitating a safer crossing point at Rusts Lane.**
5. **Where necessary to deliver sustainable development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale, location and kind to the proposed development, off-site contributions will be secured to achieve required improvements (such as those listed in clause 4) to road safety in Alconbury's active travel network.**

6.6.4 Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan

- Policy LP 12 'Design Implementation'
- Policy LP 16 'Sustainable Travel'

6.7 Policy AL 8: protecting and improving our valued network of rural routes.

6.7.1 Alconbury is fortunate to have a good network of public rights of way that allows residents to access and enjoy the wider countryside.

6.7.2 As well as providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, the public rights of way network provides direct links between the village and neighbouring settlements. This includes:

- a direct off-road and tranquil route, along Maltings Lane, to Alconbury Weston
- a direct off-road route linking the eastern end of Alconbury village (at the High Street) with the village of Little Stukeley
- a rural route leaving the village at the west of the Great North Road, heading across agricultural land towards Buckworth Road where a wider network or rural routes linking further villages can be accessed.

6.7.3 In addition to the network of public rights of way, national cycle route number 12 runs to the middle of Alconbury village (from Alconbury Weston along the Maltings) although it does not continue beyond the High Street.

6.7.4 There is also an off-road cycleway that links a location to the south of Alconbury Village (just off the Great North Road) with Brampton Hut to the south. This runs parallel to the A1 and is accessed from the roundabout that links Brooklands Lane and the Great North Road with the link road to the A1(M).

Existing barriers and opportunities for enhancements

6.7.5 **Alconbury to Brampton Cycleway:** Whilst a valued asset to Alconbury residents who enjoy being able to access Brampton without using a car, there is currently no safe way to access the cycleway without the use of a motorised vehicle. The start of the cycleway is located off the Brooklands Lane access road that can only be accessed if using the roundabout and there is pedestrian access at the roundabout. The provision of a route, segregated from road traffic and suitable for use by both pedestrians and cyclists, that links the cycleway with Alconbury village would address this barrier. There could also then be scope to link this up with the National Cycle Network Route 12.

6.7.6 **Linking the north of the village with the public rights of way network via an existing farm track at School Lane.** Providing a direct off-road route for pedestrians and cyclists from School Lane, via an existing farm track, to the public rights of way further to the north would provide a circular route for all to enjoy and, if opened up and made suitable for cyclists (the existing routes

to the north are currently footpaths) could provide an off-road route for cyclists too.

Policy AL 8: Protecting and enhancing the provision of rural routes for non-motorised users in the parish

1. The network of rural routes shown on Map 12 is valued in providing both important outdoor recreational opportunities and choice in terms of active travel routes to neighbouring settlements. Where appropriate, development proposals should safeguard this network and where possible enhance it. Where opportunities arise, development proposals should:

- **create links into the existing PROW network or**
- **help to deliver quantitative and qualitative improvements to the network having regard to the community-shared aspirations identified in the supporting text to this policy and as shown on Map 13.**

6.7.7 Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan:

- Policy LP 16 'Sustainable Travel'

Description: Alconbury Village - Public Rights of Way

Scale = 1: 4,000

Date Created: 16/12/2024

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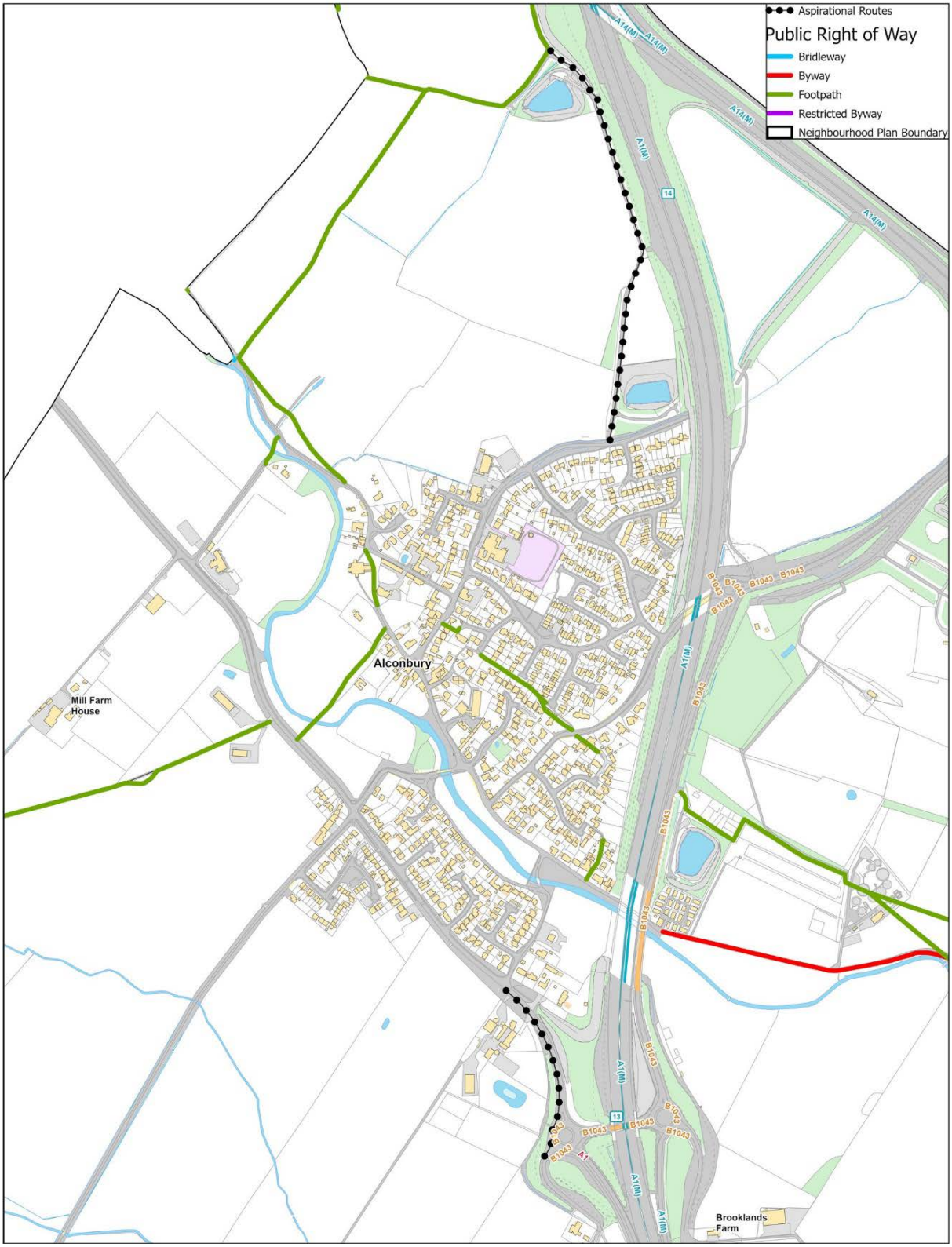
Map 12: Existing public rights of way network

Description: Aspirational routes to connect to existing PROW and cycleway

Scale = 1:5,500

Date Created: 10/04/2025

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Map 13: Existing rural routes and aspirations for improving the network.

Theme 5: Infrastructure

One Objective and two planning policies sit under this theme:

Objective 7: Ensure Infrastructure is always capable of providing good provision for the village for both hard infrastructure such as roads and soft infrastructure such as services and facilities

Policy AL 9 'Protecting and improving Alconbury's community facilities' This policy is specific to existing local services and community facilities in the parish

Policy AL 10 'Alconbury community infrastructure priorities' This policy identifies the existing priorities for improvements for the purposes of influencing development that delivers infrastructure via S106 contributions or through on-site measures.

6.8 Policy AL 9 'Protecting and improving Alconbury's community facilities'

6.8.1 Policy LP 22 'Local Services and Community Facilities' in HDC's Local Plan supports, subject to criteria, the development of new local services or community facilities (e.g. shops, public houses, places of worship, cemeteries, health centres, libraries, fuel filling stations and public halls) within or immediately adjacent to a built-up area of a settlement. The policy also resists the loss of a local service or community facility stating such as loss would only be supported where either 'an equivalent service or facility is provided in a location with equal or better level of accessibility' or where it can be demonstrated 'there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restored…'

6.8.2 Local services and community facilities in Alconbury Parish include the following:

- Shop including post office and chemist. The shop is open daily, the post office six days a week and the chemist is open weekdays.
- Manor House Hotel and Pub
- Hair salon
- Church of St. Peter and St. Paul. This serves the parishes of Alconbury and Alconbury Weston
- Alconbury Sports and Social Club
- Memorial Hall
- Alconbury Surgery and Dispensary. This is rated strongly by its patients, with 93% describing their overall experience as 'good' in 2024 – well above the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough integrated care system area average of 72% and the national average of 74%[21] The surgery was also rated 'Good' in the Care Quality Commission's latest inspection.

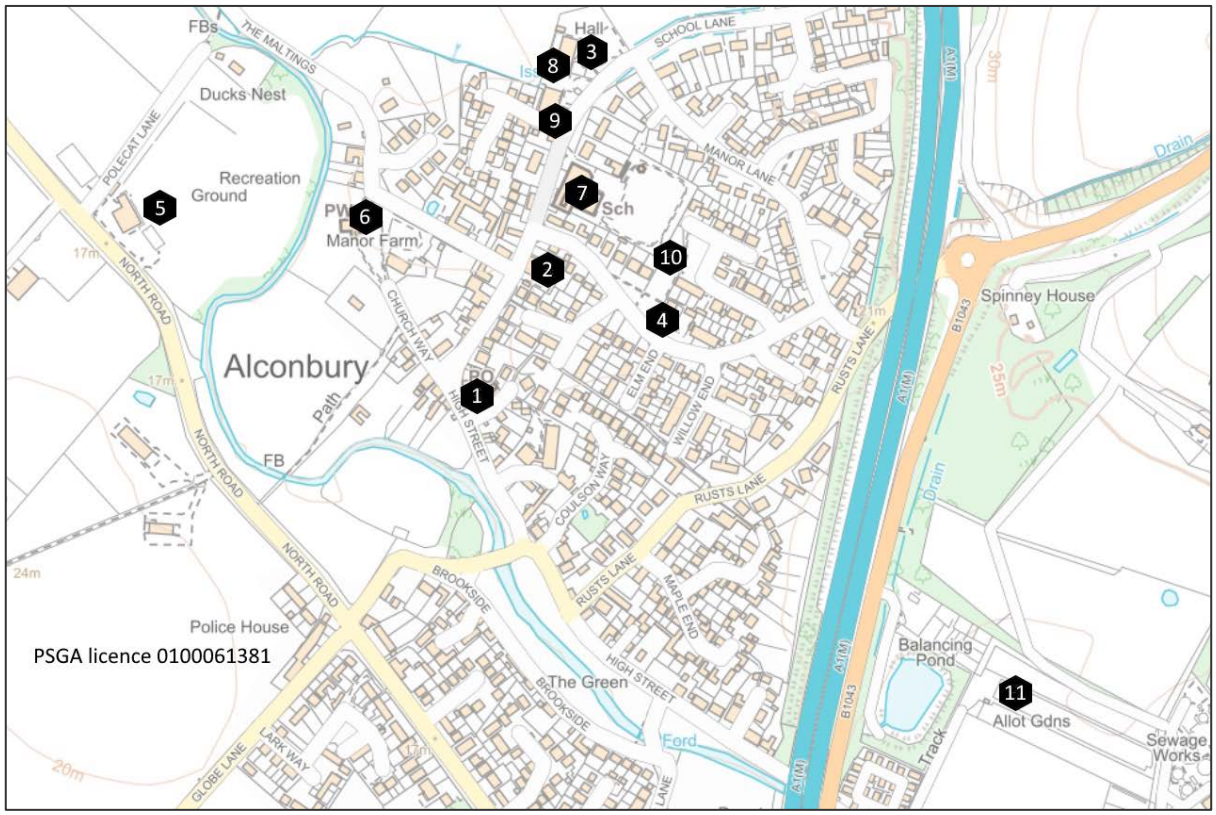
[21] https://www.gp-patient.co.uk/

Alconbury and Brampton surgeries combined have a wide catchment area, with a patient population of almost 13,000 in 2022[22].

6.8.3 Changes took place to the Uses Classes Order, the national system of categorising different types of land uses, following amendments made by the government in 2020. A new Class E was created to cover the wide range of use to be found in town centres (shops, financial services and businesses). However, Class E does not include the full range of town centre uses. It does not include pubs or hot food takeaways both of which fall within a sui generis use.

6.8.4 Also in 2020, the Government relaxed the permitted development regime allowing a change of use from Class E to residential uses, subject to certain criteria including the need to seek a prior approval from the local planning authority. As with all planning policies in this Plan, Policy AL 9 only applies where a development proposal requires planning consent before it can take place.

6.8.5 The purpose of Policy AL 9 is to complement the approach taken in the Local Plan and ensure that the importance of Alconbury's shops, services and facilities are considered as part of all development proposals.



Map 14: Local Services and Community Facilities

[22] https://www.cqc.org.uk/

Policy AL 9: Alconbury's local services and community facilities

1. The following local services and community facilities have been identified on Map 14 as:

1 The shop, post office and chemist
2 The Manor House Hotel and Pub
3 Memorial Hall
4 Hair salon
5 Alconbury Sports and Social Club, play area and outdoor gym, including the community orchard
6 Church of St. Peter and St. Paul
7 Alconbury Church of England Primary School
8 Alconbury Pre-School
9 GP surgery
10 Bramble End play area including adult outdoor gym
11 Allotments

2. Proposals for improvements and additions which will help sustain these key community facilities will in principle be supported.

3. Development proposals requiring planning permission and resulting in the loss of the pub (Use Class Sui Generis), or the shop, the Memorial Hall (Use Class F.2) will only be supported where the criteria within Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP22 are met.

4. Development proposals that result in the provision of new or enhanced community assets will be supported subject to their compliance with other development plan policies.

6.8.6 Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan:

- Policy LP 22 'Local Services and Community Facilities'

6.9 Policy AL 10 Alconbury Community Infrastructure Priorities

6.9.1 It is important that any increase in the number of dwellings in Alconbury should be accompanied by improvements in community facilities and infrastructure (such as open spaces, play spaces etc). The types of improvements being provided for should be appropriate reflecting existing identified shortfalls in the parish as well as the nature of the development proposal itself.

6.9.2 How improvements are delivered via a development proposal will vary from case to case. For some proposals, there will be a need for a Section 106 agreement to be tied to a planning consent to ensure necessary improvements e.g. highway safety measures take place to make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms. In other cases, a development proposal could be designed in a particular way so that an existing shortfall in a community is addressed. An example could be where the development of a site provides a much needed public footpath allowing

for better ‘active travel’ connections in a settlement.

6.9.3 HDC have adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This is separate to S106 contributions. The CIL is a charge levied on most new buildings that people use. It is chargeable in pounds per square metre on the net additional floorspace if that floorspace is more than 100 square metres, or if a new dwelling is created. Different charges are applied for different development types (i.e. residential, retail etc). For further detail see www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1048/cil-charging-schedule.pdf

6.9.4 For the purpose of funding locally specific community priorities, the Parish Council receives 15% of any CIL raised from development coming forwards in the parish. This is increased to 25% on the adoption of this neighbourhood plan.

6.9.5 The purpose of Policy AL 10 is to set out Alconbury specific community infrastructure priorities when it comes to the delivery of infrastructure through development proposals. Planning policy is capable of influencing infrastructure improvements being delivered as part of S106 contributions and as part of the scheme itself.

6.9.6 Planning Policy is not directly relevant to the spending on CIL. Any CIL funds that Alconbury Parish Council receive can be spent in line with Parish Council priorities at the time. Notwithstanding this, the priorities set out in Policy AL 8 will be a key consideration in any future CIL monies that the Parish Council receives.

6.9.7 Other funding opportunities will be actively pursued such as lottery funding and make the best use of funding from local businesses such as Woolley Hill Wind Farm, and the Mick George Community Fund.

6.9.8 Projects will include providing a crossing for between Alconbury Primary School and housing areas beyond the Great North Road. This could be funded through the Local Highways Initiative. A 20 mph zone is also being progressed through this initiative. Linkages between cyclepaths and bridleways and the village will be pursued using S106/CIL.

Policy AL 10: Alconbury Community Infrastructure Priorities

1. Provision of new and improved infrastructure coming forward as part of new development in the parish should be informed by the following identified priorities:

a) a need to strengthen the resilience of the village during flood events and a need to implement measures that minimise the risk of flooding in the village

b) improving the pedestrian environment, in particular key walking to school routes, within the village so that residents find it easier to access village services

c) improving the network of rural routes so that residents have more choice when it comes to accessing neighbouring settlements via active travel modes, and

d) strengthening valuable habitats in the parish including deciduous woodland, the community orchard, the Alconbury Brook corridor and our network of hedgerows and trees.

2. **All development proposals should contribute towards infrastructure priorities, where they are necessary to make the development acceptable and where they are directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development in compliance with Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP4 Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery and the Developer Contributions SPD (or successor documents).**

6.9.9 Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan:

- Policy LP 4 'Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery'

Theme 6: Natural Environment

The objective sitting under this theme is:

Objective 9: Biodiversity in the parish will be protected and enhanced. Its contribution to supporting key sites of ecological value in neighbouring parishes will be recognised and reinforced.

6.10 Policy AL 11 'Protecting and enhancing the natural environment'

6.10.1 Locally important habitats in the parish include:

- Alconbury Brook, and its associated green corridor that meanders from the parish boundary with Alconbury Weston in a south easterly direction from the parish boundary with Alconbury Weston alongside 'the Maltings', through the heart of Alconbury's historic core, under the A1(M) and towards the parish boundary with the Stukeleys.
- Areas of deciduous woodland – see Map 15, a priority habitat, in the northern half of the parish including along the A1(M) and A14 corridors and in the grounds of Alconbury House (to the east of the A1(M)), comprising wooded parkland.
- A small area of traditional orchard – see Map 15 (also a priority habitat) located to the north west of the village.
- Wildlife corridors provided by numerous established tree-lined hedgerows along field boundaries and rural routes such as the Maltings and Globe Lane
- There is a County Wildlife Site located along Woolley Road.

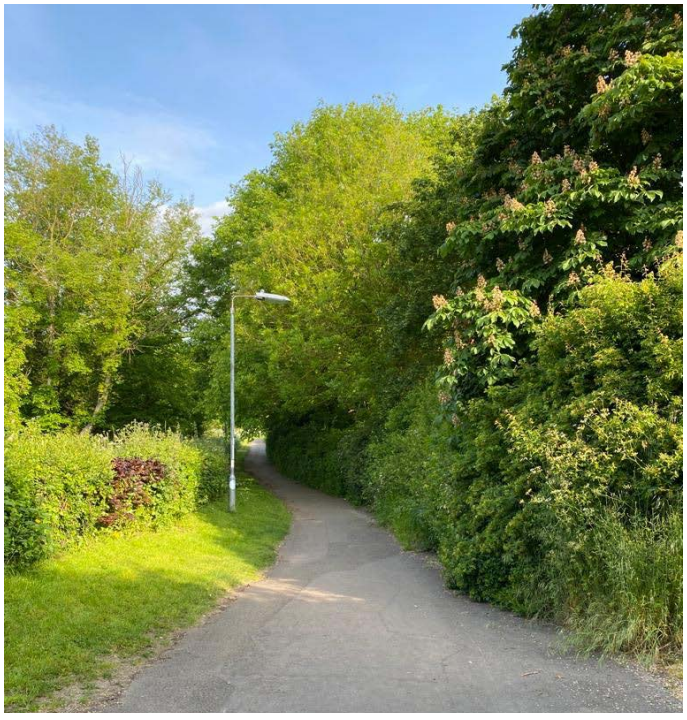


Image 26: The tree-lined hedgerow along the Maltings

6.10.2 The parish is home to a number of species including great crested newts. A number of areas in the parish provide suitable habitat for newts as can be seen from the great crested newts strategic opportunity area as identified by Natural England - see Map 16.

6.10.3 Other species known to be present in the parish:

- **Birds:** Red Kites, Skylarks, Swifts, Little and Barn Owls and Sparrowhawks. A breeding colony of Red Kites are regularly observed above the School Lane Cow Field, with Skylarks in the fields to the North)
- **Mammals**: Water voles are prevalent around the entire Alconbury Brook catchment and signs of Otters have been seen in Cock Brook. Foxes, Badgers and Hedgehog populations are present in and around the village. Many species of deer roam the surrounding fields. Muntjac and Chinese Water and Roe have been seen. There are large bat populations throughout the village, including sitings of Barbastelle, Pipistrelle (Common, Soprano and Nathusius'), Brandt's, Brown long-eared, Daubenton's, Leisler's, Natterer, Noctune and Serotine.
- **Amphibians:** Common Frogs and Great Crested Newts are to be found in and around the Brook and village ponds.
- **Reptiles**: Adders are found in the local fields.
- **Invertebrates**: Many species of butterfly are found all along the Alconbury and Cock Brooks and in the villages.

6.10.4 There is a network of ancient woodland, a rare and precious habitat, on land outside and to the north of the parish (Hermitage Wood, Hill Wood, Little Less Wood, Bevill's Wood, Monks Wood, Upton Wood, Coppingford Wood) as well as to the south (Brampton Wood, West Wood).

Strategic Green Infrastructure initiatives

6.10.5 The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011 provides a county-wide framework upon which to provide or enhance green infrastructure across the county up to and beyond 2031. It is informed by spatial information, expressed through a series of mapping layers, that illustrates the range of characteristics (or themes) relevant to green infrastructure covering biodiversity; climate change; green infrastructure gateways; heritage; landscape; publicly accessible open space and finally, rights of way. At the heart of the strategy are four objectives:

- Reverse the decline in biodiversity
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Promote sustainable growth and economic development
- Support health living and well-being.

6.10.6 The report defines a geographical area, that covers about 50% of the county, including the parish of Alconbury, as the 'Strategic Green Infrastructure Network'. Within this, the strategy defines six priority areas under which target areas and target area projects are defined, as follows:

- River Nene
- Huntingdonshire Fens and Woods
- Great Ouse
- Eastern Fens and Towns
- Chippenham Fen
- Cambridge and surroundings areas.

6.10.7 Alconbury Parish falls within the strategic area defined as the 'Huntingdonshire Fens and Woods', under which three target areas sit, the relevant one being 'Huntingdonshire Ancient Woodlands'. As Alconbury Parish is surrounded by parishes where ancient woodland is located, rather than having ancient woodland of its own, Alconbury's role in this aspect of the strategic green infrastructure network is likely to be through providing important links between areas of rare and precious habitat located outside the parish. Cambridgeshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy does not specify a specific role to Alconbury Parish but it is assumed, its own network of deciduous woodland habitat, together with the Alconbury Brook itself must themselves be important local habitats that support the network of green infrastructure beyond.

6.10.8 HDC's 2019 Local Plan identifies four green infrastructure priority areas for the district:

- Nene Valley
- Great Fen
- Grafham Water
- Great Ouse Valley

6.10.9 The Local Plan states that these have the potential to consolidate and link important habitats and facilitate access improvements and that a proposal within a priority area will be supported where the requirements for that areas will be achieved.

6.10.10 These priority areas are all located outside the neighbourhood plan area. However, HDC's Local Plan Policy LP 3 'Green Infrastructure' expects development proposals to support green infrastructure and states it will support proposals where they are consistent with the objectives of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011 or its successor documents.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy

6.10.11 The Local Nature Recovery Strategy programme is a national government initiative designed to set priorities for nature recovery across England and is a key component of the Environment Act 2021. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is the responsible body for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and has contracted the responsibility to

Cambridgeshire County Council who is collaborating with Natural Cambridgeshire in the production of the strategy.

6.10.12 The LNRS was published on 17th December 2025. Two of the priorities for this Neighbourhood Plan, flood risk and alleviation, and increasing local biodiversity, are recognised in the LNRS. The strategy promotes ecosystem habitat restoration and natural flood management such as woodland planting, to reduce the impact of flooding.

Opportunities to improve biodiversity

6.10.13 The Alconbury Brook and Alconbury's network of deciduous woodland (including the community orchard) are key local biodiversity assets in the parish, and as such, the improvement or strengthening of these habitats present good opportunities for improving biodiversity across the parish.

6.10.14 With regards to the deciduous woodland, increased planting and management could help deliver biodiversity improvements.

6.10.15 With regards to improving the Alconbury Brook corridor as a habitat, less frequent flooding events would help as would a reduction in the number of times that sewage is discharged into the brook. From this perspective, an upgrade to the infrastructure capacity will help as would better management of surface water run-off (i.e. at source) throughout the village so that there is less volume of water that finds its way into the foul drainage systems.

6.10.16 HDC's Local Plan Policy LP 30 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity' requires of all development proposals that they demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated. The policy also states that where a proposal is likely to have an impact, either direct or indirect, on biodiversity or geodiversity, it will need to be accompanied by an appropriate appraisal, such as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. The policy also applies the mitigation hierarchy to be applied to development proposals whereby consideration should first be given to avoiding impacts and only where impacts are unavoidable consideration should then be given to minimising impacts and mitigating impacts. Only where the process of avoidance, minimising and then mitigation has been followed and still found to be insufficient should compensation measures come in.

6.10.17 As an example of mitigation, integrated living, brown or green roofs are considered particularly suitable for slowing water run-off from buildings and on brownfield sites to accommodate invertebrates that are displaced through the development.

6.10.18 HDC's Local Plan Policy LP 31 'Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows' requires proposals to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated and stipulates how decisions affecting these important assets will be taken.

6.10.19 The Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan supports the policy approaches set out in Local Plan. The intention of Policy AL 11 is to ensure the biodiversity value of assets at the neighbourhood plan level are given due regard in the application of Local Plan policies.

Policy AL 11 'Protecting and enhancing Alconbury's natural environment'

Recognising and protecting existing features:

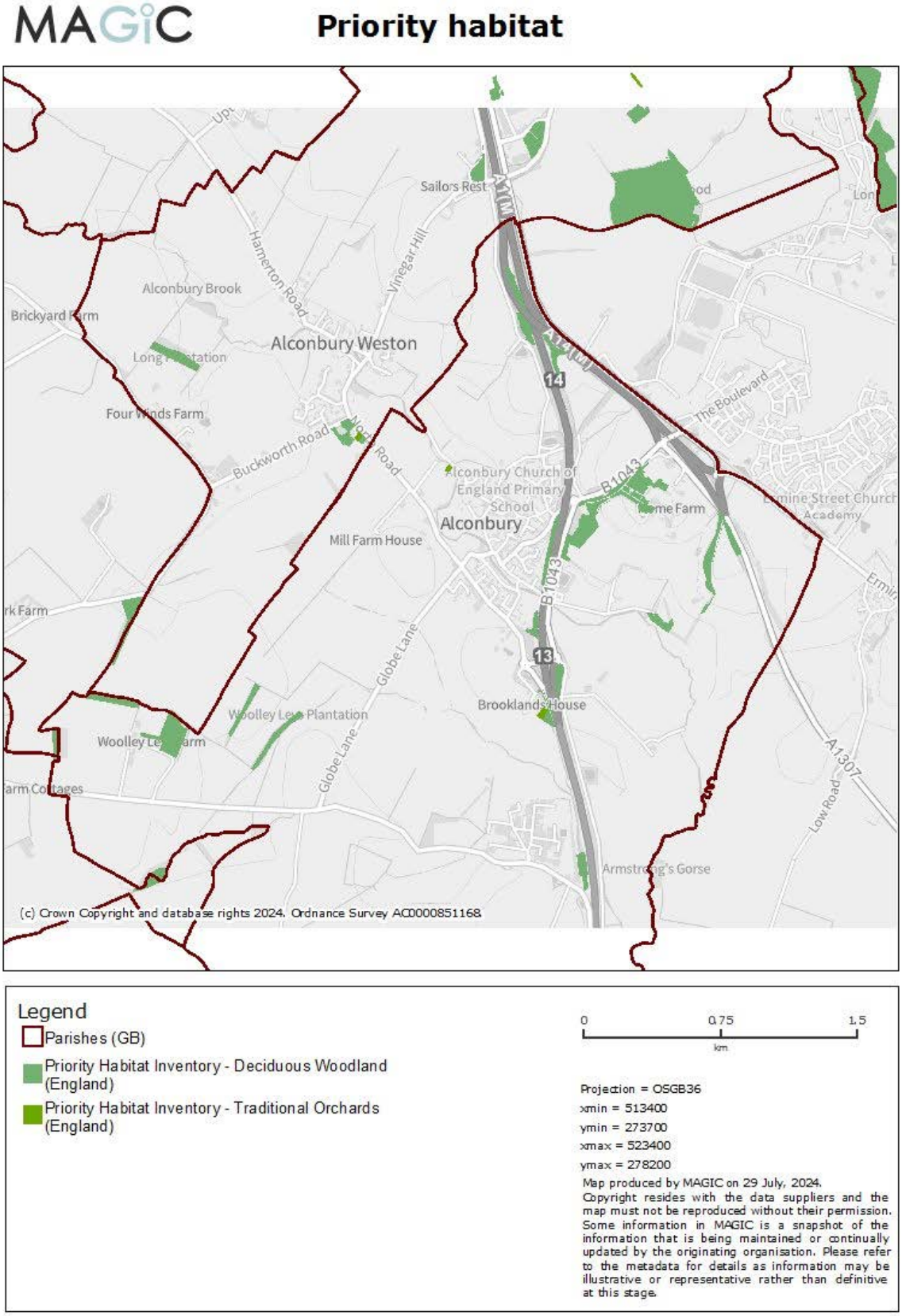
1. **Development proposals coming forward adjacent or otherwise being assessed as having the potential to impact an identified site or feature of biodiversity value (in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP30), should respond positively to its value. The plan identifies the following sites of local importance:**
   - **The Alconbury Brook corridor**
   - **Areas of deciduous woodland**
   - **Areas of traditional orchard**
   - **Woolley Road Roadside Verge County Wildlife Site (a Protected Road Verge)**
   - **Protected Road Verge Alconbury ID – W2 on unclassified road TL182742/TL184742**
   - **Water features and habitat likely to be suitable for great crested newts**
   - **Existing natural wildlife corridors provided by hedgerows along field boundaries and rural roads.**

Delivering biodiversity enhancements:

2. **Appropriate measures for delivering biodiversity enhancements (including achieving more than the national requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), where applicable) include:**
   - **interventions that result in less surface water finding its way into the foul water system and Alconbury Brook itself**
   - **delivering habitat enhancements in the environs of Alconbury Brook**
   - **restoration of the existing network of hedgerows**
   - **additional tree planting, especially in locations that expand or join parts of the existing network or creating buffer zones around ancient woodland**
   - **on-site planting of drought and flood-resistant trees and plants (native where possible) which supports pollinators**
   - **off-site interventions or contributions toward strengthening existing areas of ancient woodland to the north and south of the parish.**
3. **Where appropriate, proposals should take opportunities to integrate biodiversity measures within a building through the provision of integrated bird and bat or insect boxes to be targeted at protected species known to be in the parish.**

6.10.20 Relevant policies from HDC's Local Plan

- Policy LP 3 'Green Infrastructure'
- Policy LP 30 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity'
- Policy LP 31 'Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows'



Map 15: Priority habitats in Alconbury Parish identified by MAGIC, July 2024

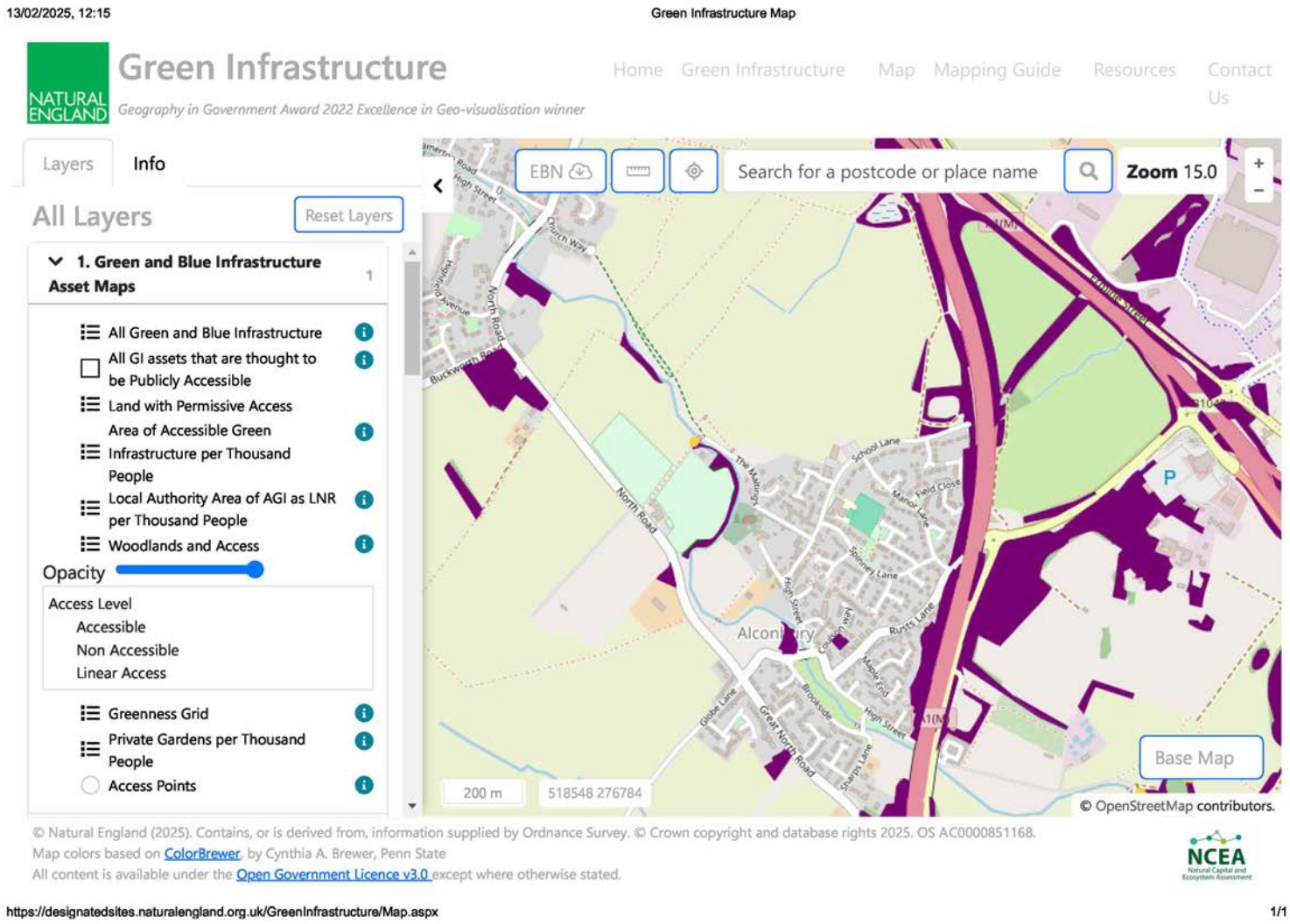
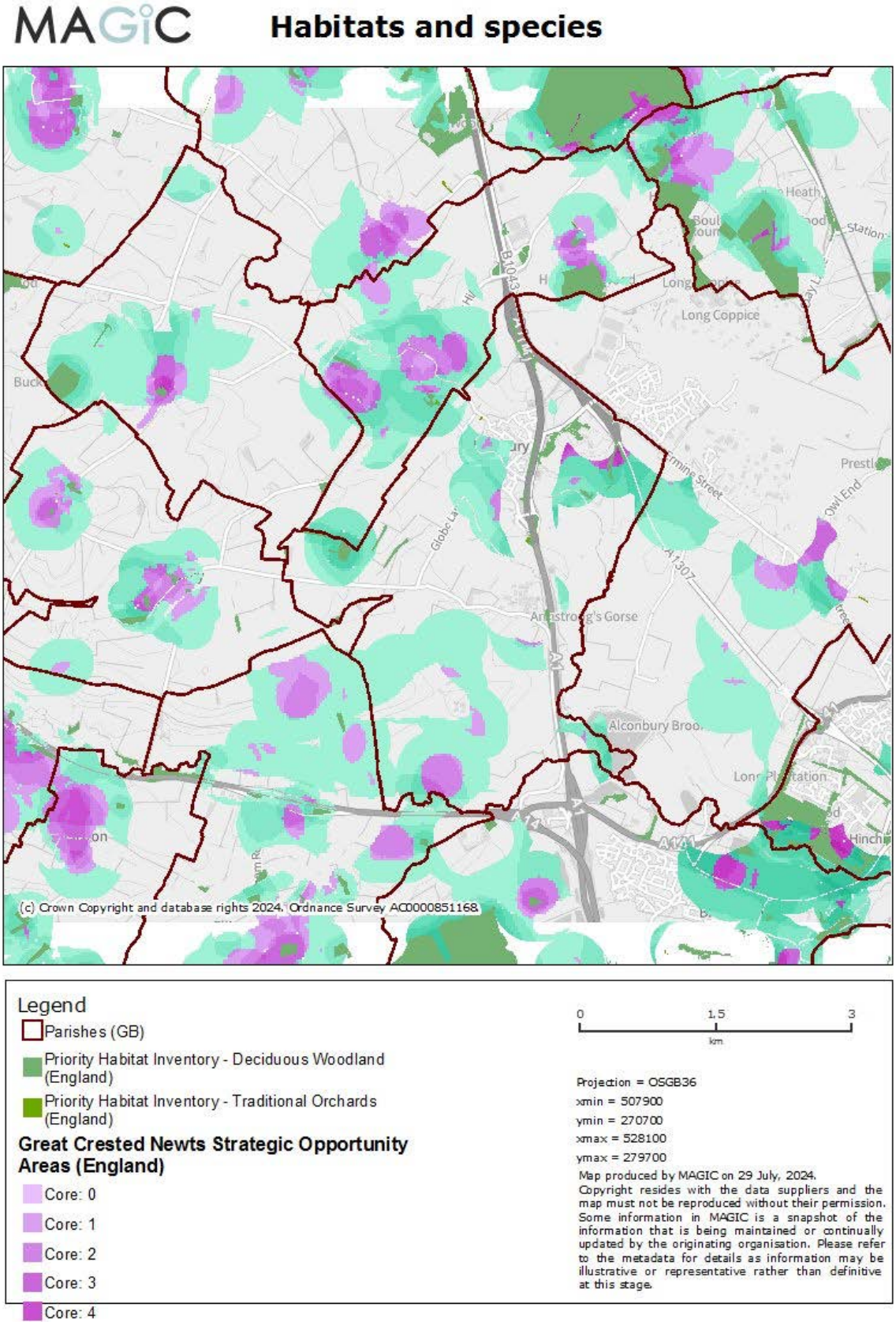


Image 27: Whilst much of it is inaccessible, Alconbury village has an extensive network of woodland as illustrated in Natural England's Green Infrastructure mapping tool



Map 16: Great crested Newts Strategic opportunity Area, as identified by MAGIC July 2024

Chapter 7 Community Action Points

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 In the process of preparing this neighbourhood plan, a number of action points have been identified that the Parish Council is keen to commit to as a way of complementing the planning policies set out in Chapter 6. The **community action points** share similar desired outcomes to the planning policies but are not capable of being brought forward via a planning policy.

7.1.2 The community actions points are summarised in Chapter 5 and set out in more detail below:

Improving play equipment in the Plan area – **Community Action Point 1**

7.1.3 To complement Policy AL 4, 'Alconbury's Green Spaces' the Parish Council will seek the delivery of improved play equipment on existing play areas including at the Bramble End play area.

Managing flood risk in Alconbury – **Community Action Point 2**

7.1.4 To complement Policy AL 6 'Addressing flood risk appropriately when development is proposed via a planning application' the Parish Council will continue to support the work of the Alconbury Brook Flood Group.

Promoting walkable routes between residential areas and village services - **Community Action Point 3**

7.1.5 To complement Policy AL 7 'Maintaining well connected neighbourhoods and addressing barriers to moving around the village more safely using active travel choices', the Parish Council will through liaising and working with stakeholders (landowners, highways authority) seek the delivery of a safe crossing point on the Great North Road to enable safer travel via active travel choices (e.g., walking, cycling, mobility scooter) from residential areas to village community infrastructure (shop, play space, primary school, Memorial Hall, pub).

Chapter 8 Monitoring the implementation of the NP policies.

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The parish council acknowledge that circumstances and local priorities may change during the Plan period. In addition, some policies will be more effective than others in addressing the vision and objectives set out in Chapter 5.

8.1.2 The parish council will therefore commit to reviewing the effectiveness of the NP's policies and the appropriateness of its vision and objectives on a regular basis, and at the very least once annually as part of the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

8.2 Mechanisms for reviewing planning applications and monitoring planning decisions

8.2.1 The parish council will maintain a record of the recommendations it makes to the local planning authority with respect to planning applications in its parish, including the extent to which the policies in the NP are relevant.

8.2.2 The parish council will also monitor planning decisions made by the local planning authority, recording:

- whether relevant policies in the NP are being appropriately cited in planning decisions, and
- whether decisions by the local planning authority are compatible with the policies in the NP.

8.2.3 These processes will provide a record of the role made by the NP in decision making by the local planning authority.

8.2.4 In the event of there being concerns that the local planning authority has not used applicable NP planning policies in its decision making, these will be raised directly with the local planning authority.

8.3 Indicators to monitor the effectiveness of this Plan

8.3.1 Periodic reviews will be made of the effectiveness of the Plan based on the following indicators:

- Are the Vision and Objectives are being achieved
- Have any policies had unintended consequences (positive or negative)
- Have changes to national (NPPF) or local policy made parts of the Plan redundant
- Have there been significant changes in the local area (e.g. large developments) or unprecedented events (e.g. severe flooding).

8.4 Delivering aspirations set out in this Plan

8.4.1 Over time, the parish council will also monitor and reflect on:

- the success of the NP in achieving the objectives set out in Chapter 5 of the neighbourhood plan
- the success of the NP in delivering the **community action points** set out in Chapter 7.

8.5 Summary

8.5.1 If, over time, it becomes evident the NP is either no longer effective at influencing planning decisions or no longer appropriate given community aspirations and priorities, a full or partial review of the NP will be considered.

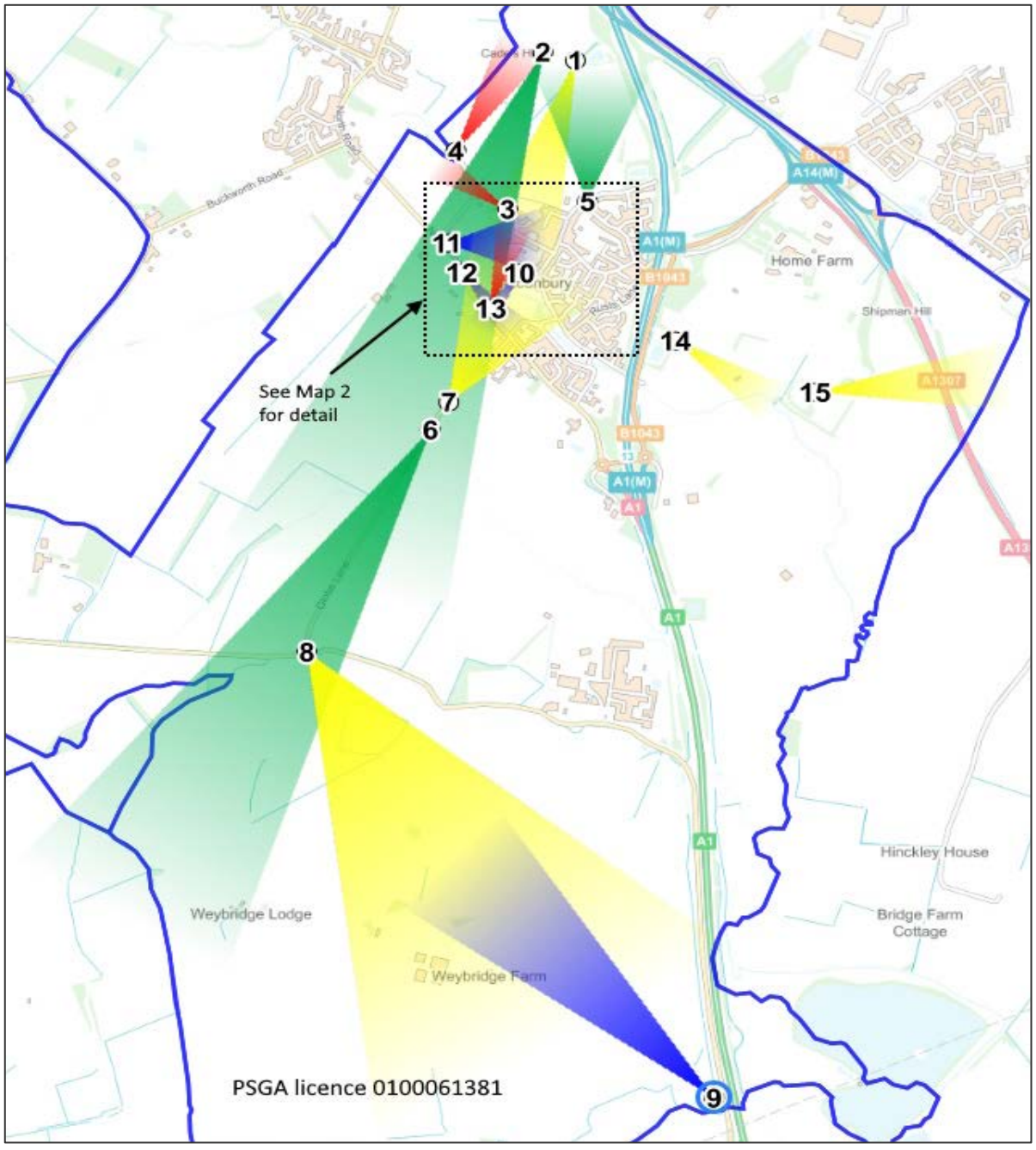
Appendix 1: Locally Important Views

This Appendix contains a series of maps with a photo and description of each of the 29 Locally Important Views.

These are by no means all the important views and when proposals for development in the village are being prepared, it will be necessary to take account of the impact on views and demonstrate how the buildings can be satisfactorily accommodated within the landscape.

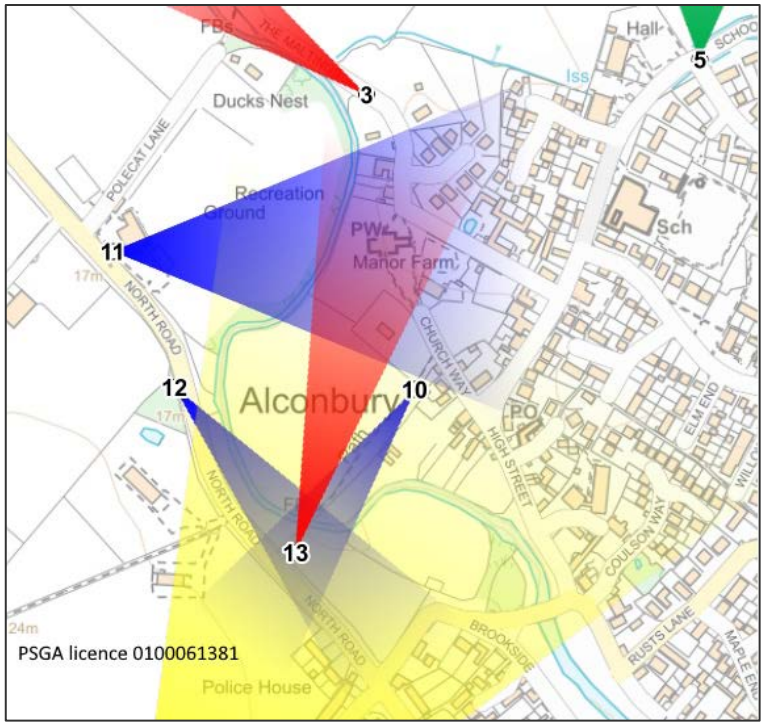
Views are from publicly accessible land including public footpaths.

<u>LANDSCAPE</u> – views of the wider Parish and around the Village perimeter



Landscape Map 1

LANDSCAPE – views of the inner village perimeter



Landscape Map 2

	**View 1** This view is taken from the Public Right of Way to the north of the Village. Although Alconbury is bounded by the A1 down the eastern side, the main view to the west is open countryside, with Alconbury down in the valley giving beautiful views of the Church and the village at sunset. It illustrates the patchwork of arable fields defined by woodland and hedgerows, and the deeply rural landscape which surrounds the west side of Alconbury.
	**View 2** This view is taken from the Public Right of Way looking southwest across the rural landscape with Church Way being to the left of the image. The topography demonstrates the descent down to the valley with Alconbury Brook meandering through arable fields and areas of woodland and pasture before rising back up towards Woolley Hill and the wind farm on the horizon.



View 3

This view is the northeast Public Right of Way from The Maltings running towards Alconbury Weston and following the Alconbury Brook. It is a wonderful, heavily used footpath between the two villages, avoiding the main road and traffic, with small footbridges giving access to both Polecat Lane and the Alconbury Sports & Social Club.



View 4

This view is taken further along The Maltings which progresses onto Church Way in the direction of Alconbury Weston, with the path wending through fields following Alconbury Brook. The topography rises to the north-east with the A1 beyond and provides beautiful views, especially early mornings and evenings.



View 5

This view is taken from the bottom of Manor Lane at the junction with School Lane at the Village edge looking northeast.
Affectionately known as the “old cow field” it is located beside the Memorial Hall and is ridge and furrow, a diminishing resource in this area. The view rises gently away from the road on the edge of the village and is part of the rural character.
Noted in the Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Record number HER 10503 as a ridge and furrow monument appearing as crop marks running SSW-NNE, directly north of School Lane.
Also identified as a Non-designated Heritage Asset in the NP.



View 6

This view is taken on the south edge of the Village at Globe Lane, which is down in the valley, looking back up towards Woolley Hill. During misty mornings, sunny afternoons or dusky sunsets, many people enjoy walking along Globe Lane and looking at the Wind Turbines, which are an extra special hit with young children.



View 7

This view is taken from the middle point of Globe Lane, looking north back towards the Village entrance. The topography is another example of the arable fields surrounding the Village defined by hedgerows and pockets of woodland, with the Church within the Conservation Area to the left of the view. This view shows the gateway into the village from the south.



View 8

This view is taken from the bottom of Globe Lane looking south up towards Weybridge Farm on the hill. The topography shows that the arable fields is a theme of the surrounding countryside to the south and west of Alconbury. To the left of this image is the Labcorp site located beside the A1 and the wind turbines at Woolley Hill are to the right, as seen in View 6.



View 9

This viewpoint is the opposite side of Weybridge Farm as seen in View 8 above. It is taken from Woolley Road looking northwest beside the junction of the A1 and A14 crossing at Brampton Hut roundabout. This is the southern boundary of the Parish which is bounded by the A14 and A1. The well-managed arable land on the southern side of the Parish is a major flood mitigation resource of the Alconbury Brook, which frequently floods Alconbury village, through to Brampton and further on to the Ouse Valley.



View 10

This beautiful viewpoint is taken from the Public Right of Way on the edge of the Conservation Area on Church Way looking towards the Great North Road, with a footbridge in the distance to cross the Alconbury Brook.
This Public Right of Way serves as a very popular and well used link from the village core.



View 11

This view is taken from the boundary line of the cricket field at the Alconbury Sports & Social Club located on Great North Road. Key features important to maintaining this sense of place are the open, unrestricted view of the Church, with the tree-lined Alconbury Brook passing along the eastern edge of the sports field.



View 12

This view is taken from the Great North Road, looking south and reflects the approach into the Village from the west and illustrates the visual importance of the areas of woodland and open green areas on the western side of the Village where the Alconbury Sports & Social Club is located.



View 13

This view is taken from a field gate along the Great North Road, looking north towards the Church on the edge of the Conservation Area on the west side of the Village.
A Public Right of Way on the far side of the hedge leads to the village core.





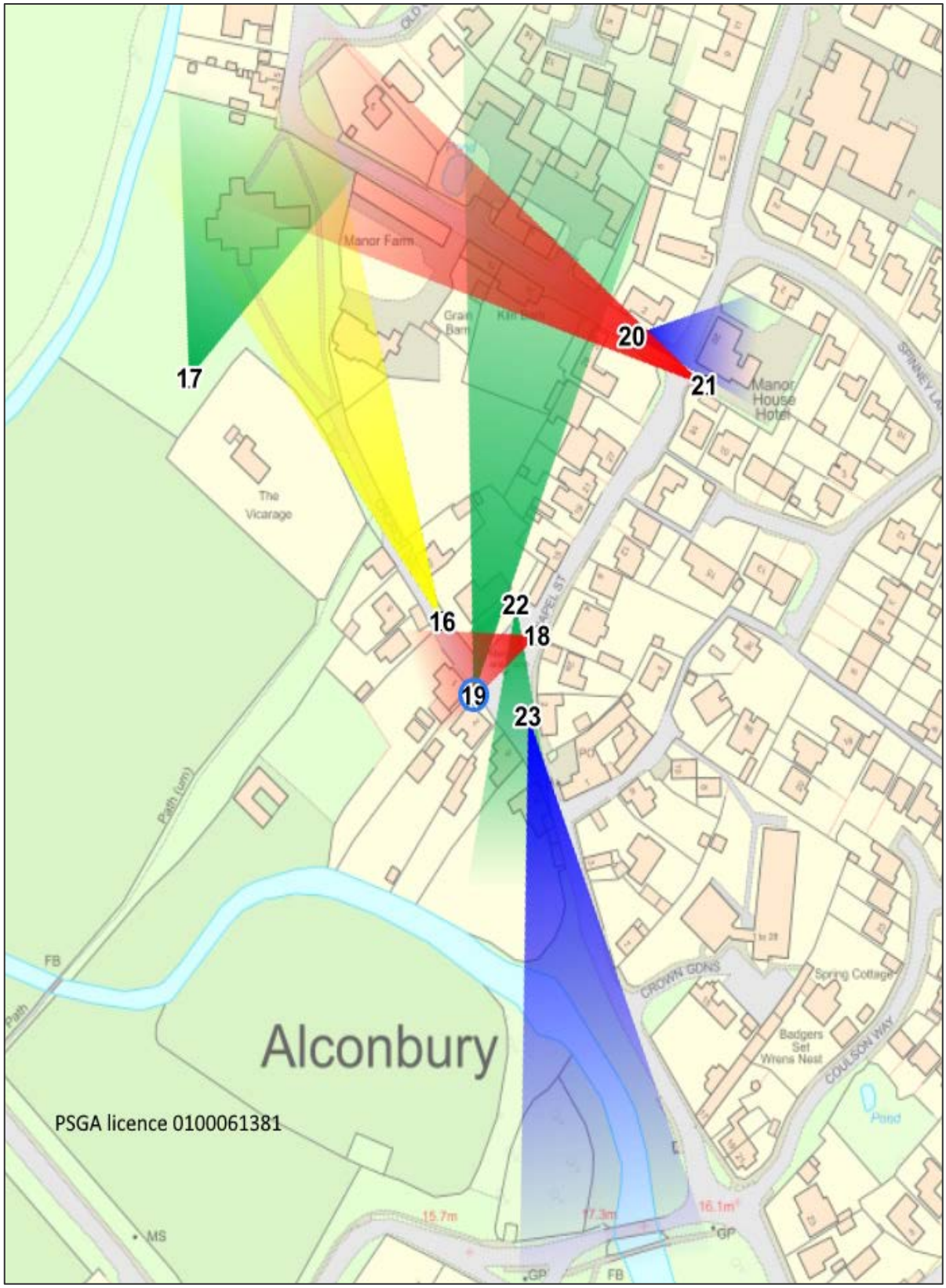
View 14

This (top) view from the allotments is taken from the Public Right of Way beside the eastern side of the A1. The location shows a northeastern viewpoint of Alconbury House which is a distinguishing feature at the top of Rusts Lane, down towards the Alconbury Brook to the south. The Brook continues downstream in the direction of Huntingdon racecourse and Brampton.

This lower view shows the allotments where many residents hold plots to grow produce.

	**View 15** This view is taken from the Public Right of Way just on the eastern boundary of the Parish. Affectionately known locally as the Sheep Field, located beside Alconbury Brook, this illustrates the continuation of the arable fields that have been dissected by the A1 dual carriageway on the eastern side of the village. On the horizon, the village of Little Stukeley can be seen. This land to the east of the Parish forms part of the flood plain of the Alconbury Brook, which frequently floods downstream of the Parish. In the distance to the right of this image is Huntingdon Racecourse and Hinchingbrooke Park at Brampton, which frequently floods during peak events and the floodwater can take several days to recede.

VILLAGE CORE – core features of the Village



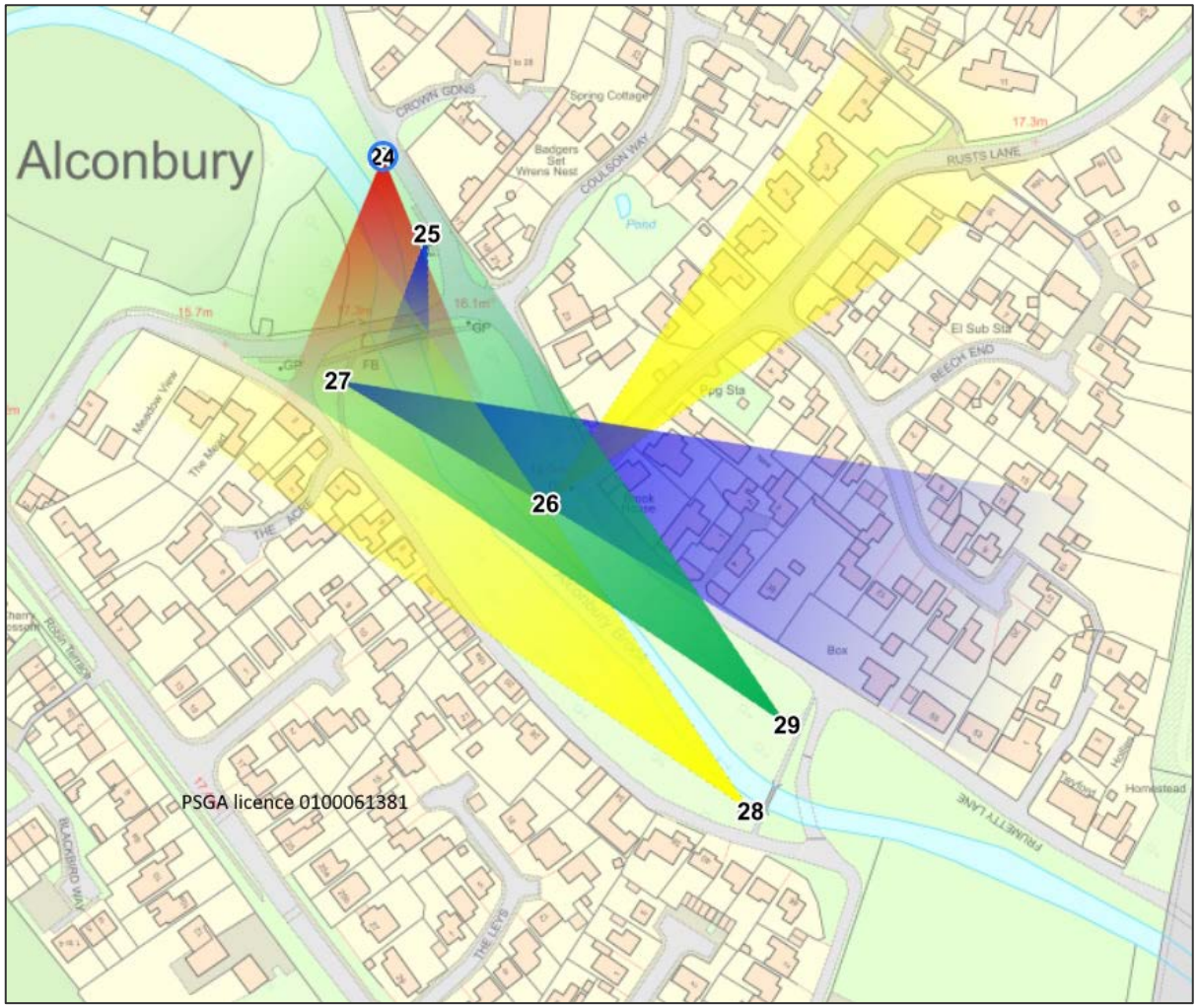
Village Core Map 3

	**View 16** View of Church Way (taken from Maypole Square), Alconbury This lane from Maypole Square going up towards the Church has a number of Grade II Listed Building assets within the Conservation Area. Of particular note is the boundary wall to Manor Farmhouse to the right of Church in this image. These structures are listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for their special architectural or historic interests.
	**View 17** Church of St Peter and St Paul, Alconbury The Parish Church mostly dates from the 13th and 14th centuries although some elements originate from as early as the 12th century. This structure is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest under number 1330549.
	**View 18** Village Pump, Maypole Square, Alconbury This view is taken at the heart of the village, at the junction of High Street and Chapel Street. Maypole Square was the site of a 14th century market. Today it hosts maypole and morris dancing with pupils from the Primary School during May. It is also where the village Christmas Tree is displayed by Neighbourhood Watch and the Parish Council.

	**View 19** Chapel Street, Alconbury looking up towards The Manor Pub and School Lane There are a number of feature buildings within this viewpoint, namely the Wesleyan Chapel that has been converted to a domestic dwelling, as well as mixture of terraced cottages and more modern dwellings.
	**View 20** The Manor Public House, Church Way, Alconbury Originally the manor house to the village of Alconbury, this 16th century building features original timber frame and other period features including exposed oak beams. This structure is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest under number 1130241.
	**View 21** View of The Maltings from The Manor Pub, looking towards the Church, Alconbury This lane runs parallel to Church Way and is the main entry to Manor Farmhouse which is situated adjacent to the Church. The original red brick barns that were part of Manor Farm have now been converted to domestic accommodation and are listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest. The dwellings along The Maltings are a mix of historic barn conversions on the left hand side of this viewpoint, with modern barn style dwellings on the right in keeping with the listed buildings.

	**View 22** Maypole Square looking towards High Street, Alconbury This view is taken at the heart of the village with dwellings a mix of brick and coloured render. Feature buildings with brick wall and hedge boundaries and five bar gates are key elements of this local vernacular.
	**View 23** High Street, Alconbury looking towards the Heritage Bridge This view shows the Grade II Listed building known as Bell House which was formally the Bell Inn and of late 16th century construction with timber frame and thatched roofs. This structure is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest under number 1130247.

<u>VILLAGE CORE</u> – the village green



Village Core Map 4

	**View 24** Heritage Bridge and Village Green, Alconbury Continuing along High Street and beyond Bell House, this view shows the Heritage Bridge dating from the 15th century and spanning Alconbury Brook from east to west. This important feature is constructed of limestone ashlar with brick parapets, four pointed segmental arches. This structure is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest under number 1317661.
	**View 25** Heritage Bridge, Alconbury Local farmer with his steam engine, who regularly visits the Village during the summer months.
	**View 26** Village Green, High Street, Alconbury looking towards Rusts Lane This view taken from the Village Green east of the Alconbury Brook shows the Grade II Listed cottage at the bottom of Rusts Lane on the left. This building was originally The Crown Inn dating from the 17th century. Beyond this historic building, housing from the mid 20th century are evident on the gentle incline of Rusts Lane which eventually leads out of the eastern side of the village. This structure is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest under number 1164691.

	**View 27** Village Green along Brookside, Alconbury looking towards the Ford On the western side of the Alconbury Brook, this lane has a mixture of brick terraced cottages, Grade II Listed buildings and housing from the mid 20th century running adjacent to the Village Green. A number of these structures are listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for their special architectural or historic interests.
	**View 28** Heritage Bridge and Village Green, Alconbury This image of Alconbury Bridge offers a beautiful view of the medieval construction and demonstrates why it has been a constant feature throughout Alconbury's history. It stands at the western end of the Village Green, spanning the Alconbury Brook.
	**View 29** Alconbury Brook and Village Green, Alconbury looking from the Bord Alconbury was given a charter for markets and fairs in 1304, which led to the expansion of the Village. To this day, there is the Annual Village Fete held on the Green every July.

Appendix 2: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The NP group identified a number of buildings and structures that are of local historic importance, and their preservation or enhancement is important to maintaining settlement character. This appendix relates directly to Policy AL 3: Conserving and enhancing Alconbury's non-designated heritage assets. Details of these buildings and structures referred to as non-designated heritage assets are described below, along with a description of the assessment process followed to assess the assets for inclusion and a map showing their location.

Assessment of Assets

All items have been assessed in terms of their significance in relation to archaeological interest, architectural and artistic interest, group value, historic interest, rarity and landmark status (see detailed criteria below). All identified assets meet one or more of the criteria, consistent with the advice provided by Cambridgeshire County Council at https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire

A variety of asset types have been considered including:

- Landscape features e.g. medieval ridge and furrow
- Buildings
- Built structures

Criteria

Archaeological interest: Provides evidence about human activity in the locality, which may be in the form of buried remains, crop marks or earth works, but may also be revealed in the structure of assets or in a designed landscape. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are primary sources of evidence about the substance and evolution of places and of the people and cultures that made them.

Architectural and artistic interest: Demonstrates some of the following attributes: local and/or national styles, materials, plan form, construction (including traditional, innovative or modern) and craft techniques, or any other distinctive characteristics. An asset with striking aesthetic value, may be singled out as a landmark within the local scene.

Group value: Contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of assets of which it forms part, particularly where assets comprise an important architectural or historic unity or a fine example of planning, where they make a significant contribution to the streetscape or where there is a historic functional relationship between the assets.

Historic interest: Significant historic association of local or national note, including links to acknowledged important figures or events, for example landowner, commemorative event, charity, ecclesiastical or other community group or former

resident. Social and communal interest has special value in local listing as it provides meaning for communities derived from collective experience of a place and can symbolize wider values such as faith and cultural identity. It therefore relates to places perceived as a source of local identity distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence, contributing to the 'collective memory' of a place.

Rarity: Rare to Alconbury parish or rare to the district or region.

Landmark status: Landmark status within the local scene where it has a strong communal or historical association, or because it has especially striking aesthetic value.

	**1. Ridge and Furrow** **Location** Church Close Ridge and Furrow grass field. Between Great North Road and Church Way alongside Church Way Footpath No 4. ///spring.lays.tacky **Description**: Medieval and later ploughing technique - the land was divided into narrow strips and the ridges were formed by ploughing the soil repeatedly. Size approx 4 acres. Used for livestock grazing and hay and as a flood meadow during flooding. **Significance:** Historic. Archaeological interest. Landscape.
	**2. Wooden Footbridges** **Location**: Church Close Footpath No 4 includes 3 bridges on this stretch - one crossing the Alconbury brook close to Great North Road and two smaller bridges. ///situates.supposes.bikers **Description:** Mainly to be used in times of flooding to provide access/egress for residents. This footpath and the small bridges will have been in place in one form or another for hundreds of years, and link to Footpath No 10 on the other side of the Great North Road up to the mill on the hill, south west of the village. **Significance:** Historic. Group value. Rarity - local.

	**3. Wooden Footbridges – Polecat Lane** **Location**: Polecat Lane Bridges. 2 white bridges for villagers to access Polecat Lane and Great North Road from Ducks Nest and The Maltings. On Footpath No 17. ///undertone.major.index **Description:** Approx 1900 or older. Cannot be accessed during a flood but add to the many village walks in dry times and access to the Sports and Social Club clubhouse and playing fields. **Significance:** Historic. Group value. Architectural interest. Rarity – local.
	**4. Corn Mill House** **Location**: Corn Mill House, Mill Road Alconbury, PE28 4BN. ///cuddled.typically.recorded **Description:** Dated 1887. Walking distance from the Mill on the hill. Landmill for villagers to acquire flour. **Significance:** Historic. On 1842 OS map as Corn Mill. Architectural interest. Rarity – local to Alconbury.

	**5. No 2 Rusts Lane** **Location**: 2 Rusts Lane, Alconbury, PE28 4DN. On the corner of Rust Lane and High Street on the east side of the village green facing the Heritage Bridge. ///seabirds.another.simulator **Description:** Built approx 1790 as two cottages, one being a village Cobblers cottage/shop at some point. 1924 the two cottages became one house.1970 the property was saved from demolition and stands proud today. **Significance:** Historic. Landmark status. Architectural interest.
	**6. Footbridge adjacent to Heritage Bridge** **Location**: White Foot bridge beside the Heritage "hump back bridge" Located in the centre of the village crossing Alconbury Brook. ///filled.royal.intricate **Description:** No historic photos pre 1900 - probably built for pedestrians once motor vehicles started using the road bridge. **Significance:** Historic. Group value. Landmark status. Rarity – important architectural development as horse and cart moved aside for the motor car.

	**7. Footbridge Sharps Lane** **Location**: Located over Alconbury Brook next to Brookside/Sharps Lane with access to the High Street. ///steady.whistling.marmalade **Description:** Iron Foot bridge. In a historic village photo 1923. Enables crossing of the brook and the village green. High usage. **Significance:** Historic. Group value. Landmark status. Rarity – local.
	**8. Ford** **Location:** Located between the High Street and Sharps Lane /Brookside. ///turkeys.harnessed.gather **Description:** Originally used as a safe crossing place to herd livestock between pastures or herded to market. Now used by vehicles when the brook is low. **Significance:** Historic. Group Value. Rarity - local. On 1842 OS map.

	**9. Ford adjacent to 8 High Street** **Location:** Alconbury Village brook ford crossing point from Mill Road to the High Street, next to Bell House. PE28 4DU ///cement.decorator.harmony **Description:** Historically used as a livestock crossing point to move pastures or going to market and as the route for access to the local smithy. Now a little over grown. **Significance:** Historic association with the smithy. On 1842 OS map.



10. Village Pump
Location: Maypole Square, Alconbury, PE28 4DS. ///headboard.commoners.perplexed
Description: Hand water pump. Was once used as a water pump possibly by villagers and their livestock. Dated Victorian or older. Traditionally now danced around on May Day with a maypole by children from the village school and serves as the location for the village Christmas tree and community carol singing event.
Significance: A significant and prominent landmark in the street scene and reference point for the community. Also supports a positive local identity.
Rarity - local, group value, historic.

	**11. Blacksmith's Barn** **Location:** on Church Way between Maypole Square and the Church. ///outhouse.outlast.grips **Description:** The barn was a carpenter's shop and a forge, one of the 3 forges marked on a historic OS map dated 1865. This forge specialised in making and fixing cartwheels and carts and, fittingly with its close proximity to the church, coffins were made here. Many years ago, the tools and benches found in the barn indicated what it was used for and it's said to have been the last resting place for a few bodies before entering the church for their funeral. **Significance:** Historic. Rarity - local. Artistic interest. Group historic interest to the village
	**12. Former Wesleyan Chapel** **Location:** Chapel street. Alconbury, PE28 4DY. ///call.fluid.pokes **Description:** Former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel dated 1867 with modillioned gable pediment and pilasters dividing the façade into bays. The Chapel had a healthy congregation up to the late 20th century when the building was sold and the congregation moved to St Peters and St Pauls church. Became a private residence approximately 2010. **Significance:** Historic. Architectural interest. Rarity.

	**13. Old School Building** **Location:** School Lane, Alconbury, PE28 4EQ. ///lemons.ringers.dress **Description:** A Victorian building in the centre of the modern school buildings making up Alconbury Church of England Primary School. Built in the Victorian era, this building holds many memories from the countless village children who have passed through it and is also home to "The School Bell". The large brass bell is more than 100 years old. The School Bell was originally rung at the beginning of the school day. Now it's a tradition to be rung by year 6 on the day they leave school and move on to secondary school. Located at the back of the school in a wooden box for protection. **Significance: Old School Building,** Historic. Group Value. **Significance: The School Bell,** Historic**.** Group Value**.** Rarity – local. Architectural interest.
	**14. Old Barn, Manor Farm** **Location:** The Maltings, Alconbury, PE28 4DZ. ///baseline.mistaking.legwork **Description:** Used to store farm equipment and once attached to a cattle shed that was taken down in the 1970's. Attractive building with slate tiled roof and oak beams, possibly recycled from a ship. Probably built in mid Victorian times. A suitable front and protection for Manor Farm House. **Significance:** Historic. Architectural interest.





15. Alconbury Mill Historic Site
Location: Mill Field which can be reached via Globe Lane or Great North Road (old A1). At the highest point along the footpath heading SW to Buckworth Road. Footpath No 10.
///panic.tweezers.brittle
Description: View of site where Alconbury Wind Mill was located. Made from wood - possibly made use of livestock to turn as well as wind.
Significance: Historic. Archaeological interest. Rarity - local. On 1842 OS map.

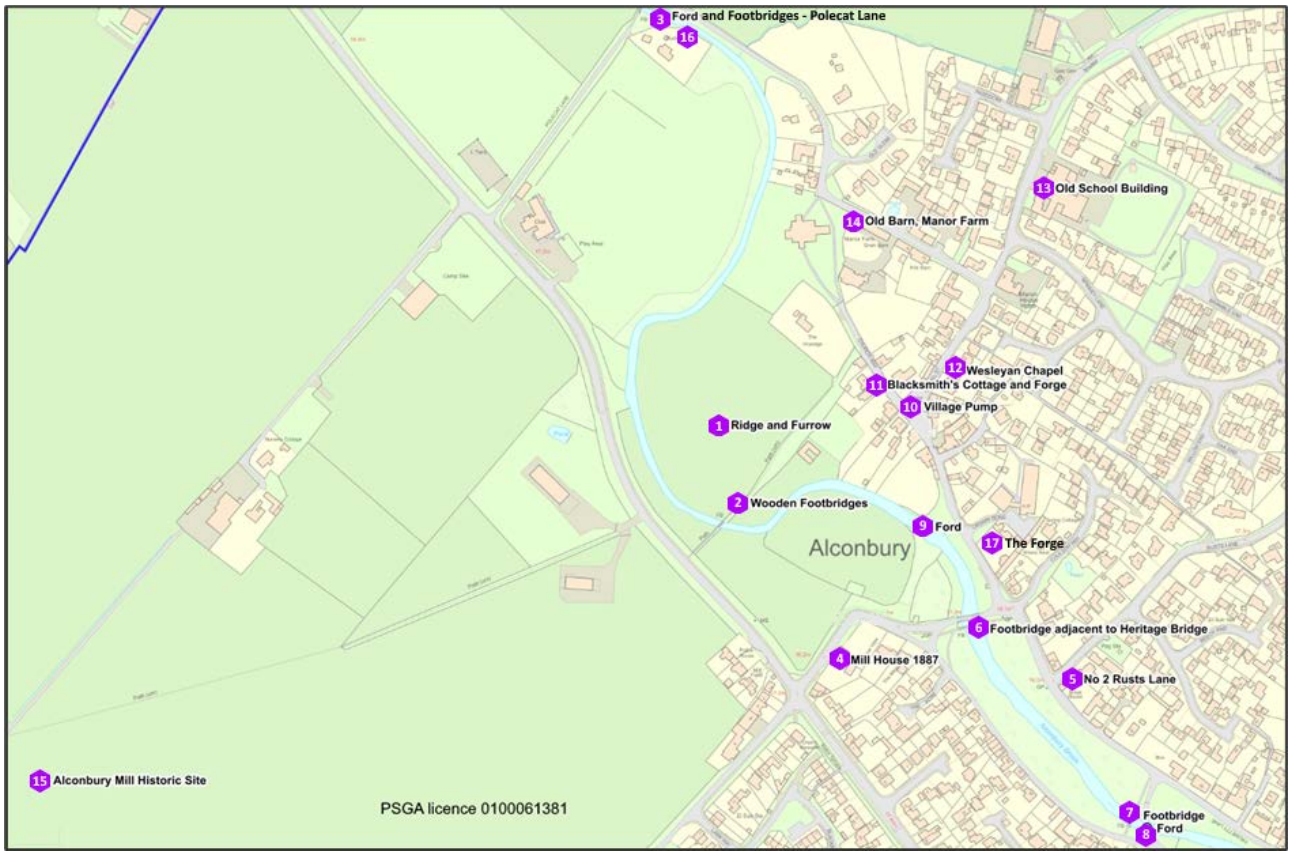


16. Ford at Polecat Lane
Location: Polecat Lane Ford - where Polecat Lane meets Ducks Nest/The Maltings roadway. On Footpath No 17.
///metro.hasten.vowell
Description: The ford is now predominantly used by horse and riders almost daily. Traditionally used by farm machinery accessing the land between the two villages (right up until the 1990's). Also used by livestock crossing the brook in more ancient times.
Significance: Historic. Group Value. Rarity - local.



17. The Forge
Location: High Street, Alconbury PE28 4DS.
///prices.rate.unhappily
Description: The Forge (dated 1729) situated on The High Street - facing the village Green close to the historic "Hump back Bridge". On 1842 OS map as "smithy"
Significance: Historic. Architectural interest.

Map Showing Location of Non-designated Heritage Assets



Appendix 3: Design Guidance

The design guides are reproduced here for ease of reference. Please see the Alconbury Design Guide 2025 for full explanation for these.

*Please also note that as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan Examination, some minor amendments have been made to the Design Guidance – see **Addendum***

Rural Character
A1: Countryside views and vistas
Views and vistas towards the countryside from and to the village and landmarks within Alconbury are fundamental to the village's landscape and historic setting. One such example of this is the Church, as displayed in the figure on this page. It along with other landmarks should be preserved in alignment with the following guidance:
• Ensure the scale and design of development, and including landscape screening where appropriate, is not visually intrusive;
• Respect the existing elements of the village by protecting and enhancing the setting and views of notable and listed buildings and features;
• Where appropriate, incorporate landscape and built features to create and strengthen views and vistas or create landmarks, helping with legibility. For example, mature trees and other landscape features at entrances to the development provide visual sequences of experience for pedestrians;
• Maintain existing visual connections to the surrounding countryside and long views out of the settlement;
• Create short-distance views broken by buildings, trees or landmarks to help create memorable routes and places, and easily intelligible links between places. Orientate buildings to maximise the opportunities for memorable views and visual connectivity from the public realm.
A2: Tree planting and green infrastructure
The abundance of trees is one of the parish's greatest assets. The following guidelines focus on the design aspects and appearance of planting and trees in private gardens as well as public open spaces and streets.
• Aim to preserve existing mature trees, incorporating them into the new landscape design and using them as accents and landmarks, where appropriate;
• Consider canopy size when locating trees; reducing the overall number of trees but increasing the size of trees is likely to have the greatest positive long-term impact;
• Size of tree pits should allow sufficient soil around the tree. Ensure tree stems are in the centre of the verge to provide a 1m clearance of the footway or carriageway;
• Tree root zones should be protect-ed to ensure that trees can grow to their mature size. Root barriers must be installed where there is a risk of damaging foundations, walls and underground utilities;
• New trees should be integrated into the design of new developments from the outset rather than left as an afterthought to avoid conflicts with above- and below-ground utilities;
• To ensure resilience and increase visual interest, a variety of tree species is preferred over a single one. Tree species should be chosen to reflect the prevailing

character of the landscape, soil conditions and the associated mix of native species, but should also have regard to climate change, environmental/ habitat benefits, size at maturity and ornamental qualities.
A3: Rural streets
The leafy streetscapes within the parish are a reoccurring characteristic and create the canvas for the rural identity of the settlements. Overhanging trees, hedges and grass verges, in particular alongside the Brook, make for a pleasant experience when travelling through the village that is distinctive to the parish. The following guidelines should be considered by developers to ensure that streets are locally distinctive.
• Ensure streets are laid out to encourage connectivity, including direct access to key destinations such as the church of St Peter & St Paul and the Alconbury Memorial Hall. Designers should collaborate with adjacent landowners and provide connections to existing and future development areas, particularly via walking and cycling routes;
• Encourage public access to community facilities, green space and the countryside by ensuring publicly accessible streets are adjacent, and provide direct access and views, to these places;
• The grass verges along the Brook are vital components of Alconbury's character and therefore should not be impacted by any future development;
• Streets should be designed to have the appearance of a rural village by incorporating: • *Narrow geometric street lay-outs that encourage active frontages, slow traffic and avoid large impervious areas; and • Minimal street furniture and road markings. The limited use of timber bollards and wayfinding signs that are already present in the Neighbourhood Area may be appropriate.*
A4: Landscape setting and settlement edge
The neighbourhood area features well preserved green gaps, hedgerows and arable farm fields. As well as this the main part of Alconbury is set in a valley. These features play a significant role in shaping how the built up area interacts and creates a seam-less relationship with the surrounding countryside. The following guidance will help ensure that this continues.
• Abrupt edges with minimal vegetation or open landscaping at the development's perimeter should be avoided. Instead, new developments should incorporate dense vegetation to create a seamless transition from urban areas to the rural landscape. Most of the existing built environment within the parish upholds and maintains this feature, as numerous properties have generously sized rear gardens surrounded by sizable trees and abundant vegetation;
• Any new development should aim to preserve the green gaps as far as possible.
A5: Housing Variety
One of the characteristics of Alconbury is the vibrant mix of building types which helps create an interesting street scene (please refer to the guidance for images to support A5: Housing Variety. The following guidance should be considered by developers:
• Any new development should reflect the built form of any surrounding properties.
• Subtle variation in building setback is encouraged.
• Contemporary design may be acceptable if it still follows the rules set by the existing typologies as shown opposite.
A6: Architectural details and materials
Future constructions must demonstrate respect for existing architectural styles and utilise materials that are considerate of those employed in nearby residences. Key materials and finishes found across the villages are listed in the Design Guide.

- New developments should draw inspiration from the high-quality local design references. It is essential for these designs to make a meaningful contribution to pre-serving the rural character of the village.
- New development should ensure that it puts forward a comparable level of greenery, incorporating native and context-appropriate plant species, to establish a cohesive setting that aligns with the existing natural environment.

A7: Parking

Due to the remote location of the parish, the demand for private cars and car parking remains high. Car parking typologies across villages include on-plot parking (front and side), on-street parking, and garages. Therefore, the design guidelines on the next pages will focus on the prevailing typologies.

On-plot parking:

- On-plot parking should be sufficient to the local residents' needs to avoid issues of parking over-flow along the narrow rural lanes. The level of car parking provision should be in accordance with cur-rent district guidance
- As a general rule, a third of the front garden space should be dedicated to parking, while two-thirds of the front garden should remain as green space.
- Parking should be well integrated into design so as not to dominate the public realm. Especially, high-quality and well-designed soft landscaping, hedges, hedgerows, and trees, should be used to increase the visual appeal of the parking, at the same time increasing local biodiversity and enhancing the natural character of the Parish.

Garages

- Garages must not dominate the appearance of dwellings and must not reduce the amount of active frontage to the street.
- The design of any garage enclosure should integrate well with the surroundings in terms of visual and physical impact.

A8: Re-purposing agricultural buildings

The parish's agricultural legacy is evident through the good number of historic farmhouses and barns spread across the Parish area. Many of these structures will provide opportunities for modification and reuse.
Extensions should be designed to an appropriate scale and be secondary to the original building. As well as this detailing and materials should be in keeping with that of the host building.
Future conversions and modifications will be controlled by the following guidance:

- External additions should be sub-ordinate in scale to the original or primary form of the building.
- Extensions should be designed to match or complement the existing façade material of the structure.
- Modifications must retain evidence of a structure's previous use where possible.
- Modifications must respect or enhance the appearance of the original building and the wider scene.
- External add-ons should be designed unobtrusively or fitting with the surrounding context and should not detract from the sur-rounding character.
- Security systems, external lighting and satellite additions should be placed discretely to minimise their impact on the street scene.

Healthy street design

B1: Enclosure

Focal points and the public realm in new developments should be de-signed in good proportions and de-lineated with clarity. Clearly defined spaces help in achieving a cohesive and attractive built form. They also create an appropriate sense enclosure. Enclosure describes the relationship between a given space and the vertical boundary elements, whether that be building façades or vegetation. The enclosure level of new developments should reflect that of their surrounding built environment. The following principles serve as a general guide that should be considered for achieving a proportioned sense of enclosure:
• When designing building setbacks, there must be an appropriate ratio between the width of the street and the building height (see page 41 of the Design Guide).
• Trees, hedges, and other landscaping features can help create a more enclosed streetscape in addition to providing shading and protection from heat, wind, and rain.
• In the case of terraced and adjoining buildings, a variety of plot widths, building heights, and façade depths should be considered during the design process to create an attractive streetscape and break the monotony.
• Walls, landscaping and paving could achieve visual continuity and well-defined open spaces to link buildings together and define public and private spaces.
See Alconbury Design Guide for further guidance on enclosure
B2: Plot layout
Throughout the Neighbourhood Area the plots are defined by building set-backs, varying in depth. The buildings themselves are typically generous in size and tend to have large private gardens with off-street parking. These features, along with the grass verges and street trees contribute to the rural village character of the area.
• Buildings should ordinarily front onto streets. The building line can have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions but will generally follow a consistent line.
• Buildings should reflect the set-back of surrounding buildings also leaving space for grass verges.
• Any form of new development should be well spaced out to avoid inappropriate overlooking into back gardens and house windows.
B3: Feelings of safety and surveillance
Passive surveillance is one method of improving safety along streets, protecting residents and creating im-proved levels of personal comfort.
• 90% of buildings should have a primary frontage which faces the street to encourage overlooking and passive surveillance.
• Where setbacks are less than12m, boundaries should generally be less than 1m in height in line with guidance provide within the, to prevent them obstructing natural surveillance onto the street. Exceptions include where setbacks are larger than 12m, where boundary treatments are used to enhance enclosure, or where boundary treatments help to intermittently screen front-of-plot parking from view.
B4: Boundary treatments
• Natural boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate to the character of the area. They should be mainly continuous hedges and low walls, as appropriate, made of traditional materials
• Locally distinctive landscape features and planting, such as low wall boundary and hedges of native species should be used in new development to define

boundaries. Any material that is not in keeping with the local character should be avoided.

- If placed on the property boundary, waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall landscaping and design of the property.

B5: Traffic calming

Alconbury has high levels of traffic moving through the parish on both the A1 and the Great North Road, and this is only increasing with the growth at Alconbury Weald. The traffic often travels through the village too quickly to be safe for pedestrians and cyclists. The design of the highway needs to be rebalanced in their favour. Through traffic that does not need to pass through the village should also be discouraged. Imaginative solutions to the traffic problems ones that do not detract from Alconbury's special character and allow agricultural vehicles to pass need to be explored.

The Huntingdonshire Design Guide puts importance on traffic calming and suggests that carefully considered urban design (such as the above-mentioned arrangements of buildings and enclosure) will provide natural traffic calming. Having said that some speed control options that developers could use include:

- Reduced visibility at junctions
- Narrow carriageway widths
- Shared surfaces
- Encouraging walking and cycling. The Netherlands leads the field in this area. Common techniques for slowing traffic include narrowing street widths, changes in texture (such as pavers and cobblestones) and introducing friction.

Alconbury is a working agricultural farming village with many local businesses relying on farm machinery which should still be able to pass freely through the village.

Sustainable Design

C1: Permeable paving

It is recommended that the majority of the unbuilt areas in the plot (i.e. gardens) are permeable by means of landscape such as grass or earth as well as permeable and filtrating pavements. As a rule of thumb the % permeable area should be between 30% to 70% of the unbuilt areas. Permeable pavement must also com-ply with Regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to permeable paving and sustainable drainage, some of which are listed below:

- Sustainable Drainage Systems - non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems;
- The SuDS Manual (C753);
- BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites;
- BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers; and
- Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens.

C2: SuDs

- Surface water should be managed as close to where it originates as possible.
- Runoff rates should be reduced by providing attenuation that stores water to help slow its flow down.
- Water quality could be improved by filtering pollutants to help avoid environ mental contamination.
- Given Alconbury's rural setting natural SuDS such as swales, ponds and wide ditches could be more appropriate.

- Peak flood flows occur about 30hours after heavy rain so retention structures are ideal. These should have controlled flow using hydrobrakes and stop valves which should have the minimum practical capacity.
- Best practice SuDS schemes link the water cycle to make the most efficient use of water resources by reusing surface water.
- Sediment release should be reduced where possible to avoid the flow of the brook being blocked.
- Where the right mix of plants is used, hedging could be used as barriers to surface runoff while also contributing to local biodiversity.

C3: Water and slow release

Simple storage solutions, such as water butts, can help provide significant attenuation. However, other solutions can also include underground tanks or alternatively overground gravity fed rainwater systems that can have multiple application areas like toilets, washing, irrigation. In general, some design guidelines to well integrate water storage systems are:

- Consider any solution prior to design to appropriately integrate them into the vision;
- Conceal tanks by cladding them in complementary materials
- Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes; and
- Combine landscape/planters with water capture systems.

C4: Eco Design – refer to Design Guide for additional detail

Buildings contribute almost half (46%) of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in the UK. The government has set rigorous targets for the reduction of CO2 emissions and minimising fossil fuel energy use.

Given the acknowledged urgency of responding to climate change a universal commitment needs to be made by communities and developers to achieve carbon net zero by designing houses and environments that would be adaptable to the climate.

Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan aspires to have a positive impact to the environment. Any future development should aim to minimise energy use and contribute to biodiversity.

There are a good number of energy efficient technologies that could be incorporated in buildings. The use of such principles and design tools is strongly encouraged to futureproof buildings and avoid the necessity of retrofitting. Energy efficient or eco design combines all around energy efficient appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar panels for electricity generation and/or water heating.

Figure 49 (see Guide) features an array of sustainable design features, where the top ones are strongly encouraged to be implemented into existing homes, while those on the bottom show additional features that new build homes should be encouraged to incorporate from the onset.

- Lifetime homes. See Guide
- Building fabric – thermal mass. See Guide
- Insulation. See Guide
- Airtightness. See Guide

Appendix 4: Design Checklist

This checklist has been taken from the Alconbury Design Guide 2025. It sets out a list of considerations and questions that can be used when considering individual schemes.

*Please also note that as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan Examination, some minor amendments have been made to the Design Guidance – see **Addendum***

The following questions should be considered when new development proposals come forward in the parish, as applicable.

General design guidelines for new development:

1. Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
2. Reinforce or enhance the character of streets, greens, the brook and other spaces;
3. Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
4. Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
5. Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development
6. Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
7. Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
8. Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
9. Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
10. Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
11. Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
12. Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
13. Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
14. Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

Street grid and layout:

15. Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
16. Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists, and those with disabilities?
17. What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern? Are these reflected in the proposal?
18. How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
19. Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
20. Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Green spaces, views and character:

21. What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
22. Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
23. How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
24. Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter
25. Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
26. Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
27. In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
28. How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
29. Can any new views be created?
30. Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
31. Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
32. Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
33. Will any communal amenity spaces be created? If so, how will this be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
34. Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
35. Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
36. Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
37. Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

Gateway and access features:

38. What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
39. Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between villages?
40. Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building?
41. Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

Buildings layout and grouping:

42. What are the typical groupings of buildings?
43. How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
44. Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
45. What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
46. Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
47. Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
48. Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
49. Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak

loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

Building line and boundary treatment:

50. What are the characteristics of the building line?
51. How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
52. Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Building heights and roofline:

53. What are the characteristics of the roofline?
54. Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing, and scale?
55. If a higher-than-average building is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
56. Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
57. Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

Household extensions:

58. Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, or does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing, or overshadowing impact?
59. Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
60. Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
61. In case of side extension, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
62. Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
63. Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
64. Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
65. Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

Building materials and surface treatment:

66. What is the distinctive material in the area?
67. Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
68. Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
69. Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves, and roof been addressed in the context of the overall design?
70. Do the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
71. Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
72. Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.

73. Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

Car parking solutions:

74. What parking solutions have been considered?
75. Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
76. Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
77. Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
78. Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
79. Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
80. Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
81. If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

Appendix 5: Soil Handling in the Alconbury Brook area

This advice to developers and contractors on soil handling, that minimises unnecessary flood risk has been prepared by the Alconbury Flood Group.

Soil is a flood mitigation resource

- Alconbury Brook has a catchment area of about 80km^2
- The topsoil has low permeability
- Where badly managed, soils remain virtually saturated for most of the winter. Consequently, run-off is rapid after heavy rain
- Where there is surface run-off, watercourses in the catchment are quickly responsive to rainfall. Flooding in the villages at the bottom of the catchment has occurred 25 times in the last 100 years.
- Research by us in the catchment, agricultural 'regen' and agri-environmental schemes and farming methods that reduce soil compaction have shown that the porosity and permeability of the catchment soils can be improved along with overall soil health and productivity.
- Many of the farms in the catchment are improving soil health while contributing to flood risk reduction.

Development proposals often underestimate loss of soil flood mitigation value.

There is increasing development pressure on the Alconbury Brook catchment. Nearly 1000ha of land in the catchment may be developed by 2046.

In designing flood risk mitigation developers are expected to compensate for differences between greenfield run-off with that from impermeable areas within the development.

This approach is not an adequate estimate of increased flood risk because soil will probably have been damaged by construction activities.

What do developers need to know about soil in Alconbury?

- Good soil in the Alconbury Brook catchment is approximately 50% solid material, largely made up of mineral particles. It also crucially contains decaying organic material, carbon, invertebrates and microbes. The other 50% is air and water.
- Many of the mineral particles are very small and hold on to water molecules hence permeability is slow.
- The basic unit of soil is an aggregate. These tiny particles often form around a little piece of organic material and are held together by microbes and sticky chemicals they and plants produce. Stable aggregates maintain soil structure and water pathways through soil.
- Our work using DNA sequencing has shown that some types of microbes are associated with healthy porous permeable soil and stable aggregates.
- Our work with farmers in the catchment has shown that good soil management enhances healthy microbial populations AND that bad practice reduces the populations of the most useful microbes.
- Soil regeneration and recovery can take between 5 and 15 years after damage.
- Healthy Alconbury Brook catchment soil is slowly porous; water takes 1-3 days to run through it and away. Compacted catchment soil is almost impermeable, ponding and rapid surface run-off is common.

Healthy Alconbury brook catchment top soil	Compacted top soil
 **diagram courtesy of bioRender**	 **diagram courtesy of bioRender**
50% space for air and water. Modest porosity, oxygen for roots and microbes	**As little as 25% space for air and water, little porosity, high likelihood of surface run-off and ponding. Poor for plant roots and microbes**

Good Soil Management at all stages of Planning and Construction

Although not a statutory requirement, we ask that developers consider their impact on soil as a flood mitigation resources at all stages of the development process.

Planning

- At an early stage a baseline evaluation of soil on site should be conducted: porosity infiltration, structure, aggregate stability and organic matter, respiration. At least 5 samples/ha in a W pattern
- Construction soil planning should be simple with an on-site person responsible
- Areas where topsoil disturbance is necessary should be minimised and protected areas signposted.
- Machine movement areas and routes should be minimised to avoid compaction
- Wet Alconbury Brook catchment soil types are particularly susceptible to compaction and damage at and beyond their plastic limit, winter soil movement scheduling should be avoided.
- Topsoil storage heaps should be planned to be less than 3m high.
- There should be a post construction soil plan.

Implementation

- Excavator and lorries should avoid work directly on topsoil, but from the side to avoid compaction.
- Experienced excavator drivers should be employed to minimise sub-soil/topsoil contamination
- Tacked vehicles or those with partially deflated/large surface area tyres should be used.

Soil storage

- The longer and wetter soil is stored and the larger the storage heaps the greater the likelihood that anaerobic conditions in the core will seriously damage the structure and ecology of the soil.
- Storage heaps should be constructed without vehicles having to drive on the heaps

Reinstatement

- Subsoil should be mole drilled before any reinstatement
- Top soil is best replaced when dry and mixed with at least 10% manure/organic matter to help the regeneration of soil structure and the microbiome
- Top soil should be loosely tipped without vehicles driving over soil
- Spreading should be done by the lightest possible vehicle with tracks or large contact area tyres
- Top soil should be reinstated to at least its' original depth e.g. >30cm.

5 year programme of soil regeneration

- Express (shallow) cultivation in year 1, then move towards a min-till (minimum till)
- Use deep rooted plant varieties
- Use appropriate microbiome additives, for example mycorrhizal fungi, rhizobium
- Carry our ongoing testing and monitoring of soil recovery.

Notes:

The geology of the Alconbury Brook catchment is fairly uniform consisting of the Evesham and Hanslope soil series. (top to bottom).

- 30cm limey clay rich topsoil low permeability
- 60 cm dark brown silty clay very low permeability
- 100 cm orange brown gravelly clay, gravel fine to course, permeability falling with depth
- 200 cm + stiff grey oxford clay impermeable

Addendum

This addendum relates to **Appendix 3 Design Guidance** and **Appendix 4 Design Checklist**. As the Alconbury Design Guide was prepared by an independent body, and these appendices are extracted from the complete Design Guide, an addendum was considered the most appropriate way to highlight the amendments.

The following changes were made as a result of the Examination of the Neighbourhood Plan:

Appendix 3 Design Guidance (page 122)

A7: Parking

On-plot parking

Second bullet, to read "As a general rule, a maximum of one third of the front garden space…"

B2: Plot layout
Second bullet – add "and front gardens." after "grass verges…."

B3: Feelings of safety and surveillance
First bullet – amend to read "All buildings should have a primary frontage which faces the street, and on both frontages of corner plots to encourage overlooking…"

B3: Feelings of safety and surveillance
Second bullet, first sentence to read "Where setbacks are less than 12m, boundaries should generally be less than 1m in height in line with guidance provided within the HDC Design Guide SPD 2017, to prevent them from obstructing natural surveillance onto the street." and, add to the end of second sentence "These should comprise hedge planting/soft landscaping to reflect **B4: Boundary Treatments"**.

Appendix 4 Design Checklist (page 127)

Household extensions

Add bullet point "65a. Is the extension subservient to the main dwelling in terms of height and overall scale and massing?"

Report on the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan 2025 - 2036

An Examination undertaken for Huntingdonshire District Council with the support of the Alconbury Parish Council on the submission version of the Plan.

Independent Examiner: Andrew Mead BSc(Hons) MRTPI MIQ

Date of Report: 17 September 2026

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan/the ANP) and its supporting documentation including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- The Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – the Alconbury Parish Council;
- The Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated as shown on Map 1 on page 7 of the Plan;
- The Plan specifies the period during which it is to take effect: 2025 - 2036; and
- The policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan 2025 – 2036

1.1 The village of Alconbury lies in the shallow valley of the Alconbury Brook within a countryside setting just to the west of the A1(M) linking Peterborough to London. In 2021, the population of the Plan area was 1,464.[1]

1.2 The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan began in 2023 after initial discussions in June 2022. The Plan was submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) on 6 March 2026 and represents about four years work by the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party.

The Independent Examiner

1.3 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC), with the agreement of the Alconbury Parish Council (APC).

[1] 2021 Census: See paragraph 3.1.2 of the Plan.

1.4 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector, with over fifty years' experience in planning and with extensive experience of examining neighbourhood plans. I am an independent examiner, and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

The Scope of the Examination

1.5 As the independent examiner I am required to produce this report and recommend either:

(a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or

(b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or

(c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

1.6 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)('the 1990 Act'). The examiner must consider:

- Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions.
- Whether the plan complies with provisions under s.38A and s.38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ('the 2004 Act'). These are:
  - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
  - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land and does not go beyond the scope of what may be included in a draft plan[2];
  - it specifies the period during which it has effect;
  - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;
  - it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development';
  - so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it is designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area

[2] See s.38B(A1) and s.38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.

contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change[3]; and

- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it takes account of any local nature recovery strategy, under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021, that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood area.[4]

- Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.

- Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)('the 2012 Regulations').

1.7 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

1.8 The 'Basic Conditions' are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;

- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;

- not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made[5];

- be compatible with, and not breach, assimilated obligations[6]; and

[3] This additional requirement was commenced on 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force section 98 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.
[4] See footnote above.
[5] This Basic Condition applies from 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force section 99 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. This replaces the former Basic Condition which required a neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.
[6] See: The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 (Consequential Amendment) Regulations 2023, which replaced the previous reference to 'EU' obligations.

- Meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.9 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.[7]

2. Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Development Plan for this part of Huntingdonshire District Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, is the Huntingdonshire Local Plan (HLP), adopted in 2019.

2.2 The planning policy for England is set out principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented. A revised NPPF was published in December 2024 and a new NPPF was published in August 2026. However, the new version does not apply for the purposes of this examination.[8] Unless otherwise stated, all references in the report are to the December 2024 NPPF and the accompanying PPG.

Submitted Documents

2.3 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including:

- the draft Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan 2025 -2036;
- Map 1 on page 7 of the Plan which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates;
- the Consultation Statement (undated);
- the Basic Conditions Statement (undated);
- the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report (March 2025);
- Alconbury Design Guide (March 2025);
- all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation; and
- the joint response dated 6 August from the APC and HDC to my letter of 21 July 2026.[9]

[7] This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.
[8] See the transitional arrangements provided by Annex A, Paragraph 6 of the August 2026 NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK
[9] View all the documents at: https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/

Site Visit

2.4 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 14 July 2026 to familiarise myself with it, and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.5 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I considered a hearing session to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulated the objections to the Plan and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum.

Modifications

2.6 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

3.1 The Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by the Alconbury Parish Council, which is the qualifying body for an area that was designated by Huntingdonshire District Council in February 2023.

3.2 It is the only Neighbourhood Plan for the Alconbury Parish and does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Plan Period

3.3 The Plan specifies clearly the period during which it is to take effect, which is from 2025 to 2036.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

3.4 Details of the preparation of and the consultation on the Plan are contained in the Consultation Statement (CS) submitted with the Plan. Work commenced in 2022. The previous Parish Plan, developed in Alconbury Parish, dated 2006, was considered to be out of date and did not comply with the present neighbourhood planning statutory framework. A Working Party was formed. A community questionnaire was distributed as a hard copy to all Alconbury residents in 2023. The summary of the responses was posted on the APC website. A wide variety of means of communication with parishioners was employed, including Facebook and

the local Parish magazine. A stall was manned at the annual village fete and a public meeting took place in February 2025.

3.5 The Regulation 14 consultation took place between 6 June 2025 and 15 August 2025. A letter was sent to all residents. A drop-in session was held and the Parish Council were available at the village fete to answer questions. A full list of statutory consultees is at Appendix 9 of the CS. Appendix 12 summarises the comments from consultees and members of the public and the action taken.

3.6 Consultation under Regulation 16 took place between 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026. 48 responses were received, including one from HDC. I confirm that the legal requirements have been met by the consultation process. In addition, there has been regard to the advice in the PPG on plan preparation and engagement.

Development and Use of Land

3.7 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with s.38A of the 2004 Act and does not exceed the appropriate scope of a neighbourhood plan.[10]

Excluded Development

3.8 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'.[11]

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

3.9 There is a local nature recovery strategy (LNRS) (under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021) in place that relates to all or part of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, which is The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) published in 2025. According to the published Local Habitat Map which supports the LNRS, no part of the Neighbourhood Area has been designated as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) or targeted for mapped nature recovery measures. An Interim Nature Recovery Network (INRN) for Huntingdonshire has also been prepared by the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire and informs implementation of biodiversity policies and delivery of the LNRS. The INRN report identifies several priority areas, the only priority areas the report identifies that fall within the Neighbourhood Plan Area is the Great Ouse Valley and the river corridors of Alconbury Brook and Ellington Brook. In my assessment, I consider that none of the Plan's policies are in direct conflict with the LNRS strategy or the objectives of the INRN.

[10] See s.38B(A1) and s.38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.
[11] The meaning of 'excluded development' is set out in s.61K of the 1990 Act.

Climate Change

3.10 I am satisfied that overall, the Plan policies do not conflict with the aims of securing development which contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

Human Rights

3.11 The Basic Conditions Statement (BCS) notes that the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared having regard to the fundamental rights and freedom guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights. The Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of extensive consultation with local people who could be affected by its policies and their views have been taken into account in finalising the Plan. An assessment has been carried out on the policies in the Plan to ensure that the implementation of the Plan would not lead to increased inequalities or discrimination in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, in each of the protected characteristics categories as identified in the Equality Act 2010. The APC are satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998) and, from my independent assessment, I see no reason to disagree.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

Assimilated Obligations

4.1 HDC made a determination in May 2025, concluding that the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant effects on the environment and, therefore, an assessment is not required. In relation to the Habitats Regulations Assessment, the determination concluded that as the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally designated sites either on its own or in combination with any other plans, an assessment is not required. Having read the combined Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report, together with the responses from statutory consultees[12], I support these conclusions.

Main Issues

4.2 Having considered whether the Plan complies with various procedural and legal requirements, it is now necessary to deal with whether it complies with the remaining Basic Conditions, particularly the regard it pays to national policy and guidance and the contribution it makes to the achievement of sustainable development. I test the Plan against the Basic Conditions by considering specific issues of compliance of all the Plan's policies.

[12] Historic England 1 dated May 2026; Environment Agency dated 28 April 2026; Natural England dated 1 May 2026.

4.3 As part of that assessment, I consider whether the policies are sufficiently clear and unambiguous, having regard to advice in the PPG. A neighbourhood plan policy should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence.[13]

4.4 Accordingly, having regard to the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan, the consultation responses, other evidence and the site visit, I consider that the main issues in this examination are whether the draft Plan's policies: (i) have regard to national policy and guidance; (ii) do not result in the development plan for the area proposing less housing development than would have been the case if the plan were not to be made; and (iii) would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Vision and Objectives

4.5 The vision for the ANP is based on issues raised by the community during the initial stages of the consultation process. The succinct vision is set out at the beginning of Chapter 5 on page 33 of the Plan. Nine objectives have then been developed and which are listed on pages 33 and 34 to help to achieve the vision. The objectives provide the context for the eleven land use based policies organised into six broad themes.

Policy AL 1: A spatial strategy for Alconbury

4.6 The policy supports development within the built-up area of Alconbury village and outside the built-up area subject to three criteria. HDC suggest adding a fourth criterion which would enable development outside the built-up area where it accorded with the policies of the HLP, as follows: *"Proposals for development on land well-related to the built-up area will be considered subject to the provisions of Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policies LP 10 'The Countryside', LP19 'Rural Economy', LP22 'Local Services and Community Facilities', LP23 'Tourism and Recreation', LP33 'Rural Buildings' and LP38 'Water Related Development'."* I support the suggestion which would then enable Policy AL 1 to have regard to national guidance[14] and would meet the Basic Conditions. **(PM1)**

Policy AL 2: Protecting and enhancing Alconbury's landscape and settlement character

4.7 Policy AL 2 seeks to protect and enhance the landscape and settlement character of Alconbury. In order to be positive and proactive towards development, I agree that the amendment suggested by HDC in their Regulation 16 representation is preferable to the version I canvassed in my questions. However, with this recommendation, the second and third bullet points of AL 2 Clause 1 should be combined to: *"Development at*

[13] PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.
[14] NPPF: paragraphs 61, 82 and 84.

Sensitive Settlement Edges and Important Village Gateways (see Map 6) must demonstrate how they do not adversely impact and where possible enhance their contribution to rural character and Alconbury's distinctive landscape and settlement character". The policy would then enable Policy AL 2 to have regard to national guidance[15] and meet the Basic Conditions. **(PM2)**. I have no comments or concerns regarding the Locally Important Views identified in Appendix 1.

Policy AL 3: Conserving and enhancing Alconbury's non-designated heritage assets

4.8 Policy AL 3 aims to conserve and enhance non designated heritage assets (NDHA) in the Plan area. The policy has regard to national guidance[16] and meets the Basic Conditions, subject to the correction of one error[17] which is the deletion of the second mention of "Ridge and Furrow" from the list of NDHA in Clause 1. **(PM3)**

Policy AL 4: Alconbury's Local Green Spaces

4.9 Policy AL 4 defines seven Local Green Spaces (LGS) and two Other Green Spaces (OGS). LGS designation should only be used where the green space is:

a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.[18]

LGS should also be capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period.[19]

4.10 I queried the policy difference between the two types of Green Space and I am content with the explanation from HDC. There was an objection to the inclusion of OGS 1 "The Cow Field", but I agree with APC that the area is part of the local character and rural setting for the village, due partly, in my opinion, to its slightly elevated position in mostly level surroundings. Overall, I am thus satisfied that the proposed LGS designations meet the criteria and other considerations for designation, as set out in Paragraphs 106 to 108 of the NPPF. I also agree that the two Other Green Spaces be defined in the terms proposed in order to recognise their importance to

[15] NPPF: paragraph 187.
[16] NPPF: paragraph 216.
[17] Modifications for the purpose of correcting errors is provided for in Paragraph 13(1)(e) of Schedule A2 to the 2004 Act.
[18] NPPF: paragraph 107.
[19] NPPF: paragraph 106.

the community. Therefore, the policy has regard to national guidance[20] and meets the Basic Conditions.

Policy AL 5: Delivering high quality design that is sensitive to Alconbury's distinctive character

4.11 Policy AL 5 sets out a series of Design Principles for delivering high quality design. I queried whether the principles applied exclusively to residential development and was informed by HDC that the Alconbury Design Guide introduction states that it applies to all new development proposals within the Neighbourhood Area. Furthermore, this is reinforced in Section A8, which addresses the re-purposing of agricultural buildings for non-residential uses. Accordingly, rather than including the phrase "where appropriate", I shall not recommend any modification. The evidence base does not support treating the Design Guide as applicable only to residential development. The policy has regard to national guidance[21] and meets the Basic Conditions.

Policy AL 6: Addressing flood risk appropriately when development is proposed via a planning application

4.12 Policy AL 6 considers development and flood risk. HDC commented that Clause 1 could mean that new buildings in the village centre which would otherwise be sustainable, would not be supported, even though national and local plan tests on flood risk could be met. To satisfy that valid concern, I shall recommend a revision to Clause 1.b) to become: *"development which would satisfy the tests of Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP5."* Additionally, HDC stated that, in Clause 3, the requirement to incorporate sustainable drainage for all development proposals, even householder extensions no matter the location, is an onerous requirement that exceeds national and local policy. I agree and shall recommend a modification to include *"appropriate sustainable drainage systems"* within the first rephrased bullet point to link the particular drainage systems employed to the scale of the development. Furthermore, *"Anglian Water"* should be added to the list of relevant stakeholders in the third bullet point of Clause 2. Incorporating these recommended modifications, Policy AL 6 would have regard to national guidance[22] and meet the Basic Conditions. **(PM4)**

Policy AL 7: Maintaining well connected neighbourhoods and addressing barriers to moving around the village more safely using active travel choices

4.13 The aim of Policy AL 7 is to enhance and increase walkable routes between residential areas and village services, and safe and attractive off-road routes linking Alconbury village with neighbouring settlements. Subject to the inclusion of *"location"* in the first phrase of Clause 5, I agree that the policy would directly, fairly and reasonably relate to

[20] NPPF: paragraphs 106 – 108.
[21] NPPF: Section 12.
[22] NPPF: paragraphs 162, 170, 181 and 182.

development where off-site contributions could be secured. The policy would then have regard to national guidance[23] and meet the Basic Conditions. **(PM5)**

Policy AL 8: Protecting and enhancing the provision of rural routes for non-motorised users in the Parish

4.14 Policy AL 8 seeks the protection of all rural routes with the Plan area. I agree with the comments of HDC that not all development proposals will have a direct impact or relationship on these routes and so it would not be appropriate to require them to contribute to these enhancements. Therefore, I shall recommend the inclusion of *"where appropriate"* within the second sentence of Clause 1. The policy would then have regard to national guidance[24] and meet the Basic Conditions. **(PM6)**

Policy AL 9: Alconbury's local services and community facilities

4.15 Policy AL 9 supports the community facilities listed in Clause 1, a locational map of which has now been helpfully submitted for inclusion by APC. Responding to comments from HDC about the policy, APC supported the revisions suggested by the District Council, with which I agree and shall recommend as a modification. **(PM7)** The policy would then have regard to national guidance[25] and meet the Basic Conditions.

Policy AL 10: Alconbury community infrastructure priorities

4.16 Policy AL 10 describes priorities for the provision of new and improved infrastructure about which the suggested revision to Clause 2 by HDC has the support of APC. I agree with the revision which I shall recommend as a modification. **(PM8)** The policy would then have regard to national guidance[26] and meet the Basic Conditions.

Policy AL 11: Protecting and enhancing Alconbury's natural environment

4.17 Policy AL 11 aims to protect and enhance the natural environment. Following criticisms of some details of the policy by HDC, I shall recommend that Clause 3 is modified by the inclusion of *"where appropriate, …"* and the removal of the final sentence of Clause 3 from the policy to the reasoned justification. **(PM9)** The policy would then have regard to national guidance[27] and meet the Basic Conditions.

Appendix 3: Design Guidance and Appendix 4: Design Checklist

[23] NPPF: paragraphs 109 – 111.
[24] NPPF: paragraphs 105.
[25] NPPF: paragraphs 8b) and 98.
[26] NPPF: paragraphs 29 and 199.
[27] NPPF: paragraph 198.

4.18 Appendices 3 and 4 each derive from the Alconbury Design Guide 2025, which was a document publicised on the HDC Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 web site, but which does not form part of the Development Plan. APC has responded to comments made by HDC about the Guidance, the Checklist and the Design Guide including a proposal, to which I am sympathetic, that an Addendum to the guidance be produced which could include the HDC suggested amendments and correct any typographical or formatting errors. I also recognise that changes to Appendices 3 and 4 might incur either a conflict with, or an ambiguity within, the Design Guide. Therefore, I shall not recommend modifications to either Appendix 3, Appendix 4 or the Alconbury Design Guide.

4.19 In so doing, I recognise that Policy AL 5 states that applicants should be "guided" by the Design Guide; and "informed" by the design principles set out in Appendix 3; using "wherever applicable the Alconbury Design Checklist as provided in Appendix 4". I consider that, although the advice to applicants is strongly and appropriately phrased, it also provides sufficient flexibility for variations to be argued should the need arise. I shall recommend that an Addendum to Appendices 3 and 4 should be produced for the reasons outlined above. **(PM10)**

Alterations to the Text

4.20 A consequence of the acceptance of the modifications would be that amendments might have to be made to the explanation within the Plan in order to make it logical. Other amendments might also include minor contextual updates, correcting minor inaccuracies or typographical errors, cross referencing and any renumbering of paragraphs and policies. None of these alterations would affect the ability of the Plan to meet the Basic Conditions and could be undertaken as minor, non-material changes.[28]

Community Action Points

4.21 Section 7 contains a short list of actions to be carried out by the Parish Council. These are outlined in Section 5 of the Plan: improving play equipment; supporting the work of the Alconbury Brook Flood Group and promoting walkable routes between residential areas and village services. They are described in more detail in Section 7. These are items which the community is seeking but cannot be delivered through planning policies, which are not considered as part of the examination and which will not form part of the statutory Development Plan. Nevertheless, they represent aspirations or actions which would benefit the community and demonstrate one of the valuable associated attributes of the neighbourhood planning process.[29]

5. Conclusions

[28] PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509.
[29] PPG Reference ID: 41-004-20190509.

Summary

5.1 The Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard to all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, and the evidence documents submitted with it.

5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. The Plan as modified has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary and which would require the referendum to extend to areas beyond the Plan boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Overview

5.4 The Alconbury Parish Council, the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party and other voluntary contributors are to be commended for producing a succinct and comprehensive Plan. The Plan benefitted greatly from the Regulation 16 comments from HDC and from the constructive and cooperative attitude by HDC and APC to answering my questions. Subject to the recommended modifications, the Neighbourhood Plan will make a positive contribution to the Development Plan for the area.

Andrew Mead

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Policy AL 1	Add a fourth bullet point to Clause 2: ***"Proposals for development on land well-related to the built-up area will be considered subject to the provisions of Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policies LP10 'The Countryside', LP19 'Rural Economy', LP22 'Local Services and Community Facilities', LP23 'Tourism and Recreation', LP33 'Rural Buildings' and LP38 'Water Related Development'."***
PM2	Policy AL 2	Combine the second and third bullet points bullet points in Clause 1 to: ***"Development at Sensitive Settlement Edges and Important Village Gateways (see Map 6) must demonstrate how they do not adversely impact and where possible enhance their contribution to rural character and Alconbury's distinctive landscape and settlement character."***
PM3	Policy AL 3	Delete the second "Ridge and Furrow" from the list in Clause1.
PM4	Policy AL 6	Delete Clause 1.b) and substitute: ***"development which would satisfy the tests of Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP5."*** Clause 2 add ***"Anglian Water"*** to the list of relevant stakeholders in the third bullet point. Amend Clause 3 and the first bullet point to: ***"For all new build development proposals, regardless of scale or location:***

		• ***The incorporation of appropriate sustainable drainage systems will be required in line with current guidance unless it is demonstrated that drainage on or around the site will not be affected by the proposal".*** The second bullet point remains as drafted.
PM5	Policy AL 7	Amend Clause 5 to: ***"Where necessary, to deliver sustainable development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale, location and kind to the proposed development, etc."***
PM6	Policy AL 8	Amend the second sentence of Clause 1 to: ***"Where appropriate, development proposals should safeguard this network and where possible enhance it."***
PM7	Policy AL 9	Delete Clause 3 and substitute: ***"Development proposals requiring planning permission and resulting in the loss of the pub (Use Class Sui Generis), or the shop, the Memorial Hall (Use Class F.2) will only be supported where the criteria within Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP22 are met."*** Add a fourth Clause: ***"4. Development proposals that result in the provision of new or enhanced community assets will be supported subject to their compliance with other development plan policies."*** Include the map and key: ***"Local Services and Community Facilities"*** adjacent to Policy AL 9.
PM8	Policy AL 10	Delete Clause 2 and substitute: ***"All development proposals should contribute towards infrastructure***

		priorities, where they are necessary to make the development acceptable and where they are directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development in compliance with Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP4 Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery and the Developer Contributions SPD (or successor documents).”
PM9	Policy AL 11	Amend Clause 3 to: ***“Where appropriate, proposals should take opportunities … etc.”*** Remove the final sentence of Clause 3 and include it in the reasoned justification.
PM10	Appendix 3 Appendix 4	An Addendum to Appendices 3 and 4 should be produced by Alconbury Parish Council which incorporates the modifications sought by Huntingdonshire District Council but which are also compatible with the Alconbury Design Guide 2025.

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Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement

Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Decision Statement

Following an independent examination Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet confirmed on the 20 October 2026 that the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.

Background

The Alconbury neighbourhood area was designated on 9 February 2023 under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). The plan area covers the parish of Alconbury and is contiguous with the Parish council's administrative boundary.

Alconbury Parish Council, as the qualifying body, submitted the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting evidence to Huntingdonshire District Council 6 March 2026. The statutory six week submission consultation was held from 11 May 2026 and 23 June 2026.

Huntingdonshire District Council, in discussion with Alconbury Parish Council, appointed an independent examiner, Andrew Mead BSc(Hons) MRTPI MIQ, to review whether the submitted Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions as required by legislation. Andrew Mead issued his report on 17 September 2026 which recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the modifications proposed in his report, met the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum.

Following discussions with the qualifying body it was decided that the Examiner's recommendations would be accepted in full.

The Basic Conditions are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations; and
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended) set out two basic conditions in addition to those set out in primary legislation and referred to above. These are:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.
- Having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that the neighbourhood development order is made where the development described in an order proposal is Environmental Impact Assessment development (this is not applicable to this examination).

Decision and Reasons

Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet considered the recommendations on 20 October 2026 and agreed to accept the Examiner's proposed modifications and approve the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

The modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan, as needed to ensure it meets the Basic Conditions and in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations are listed in the following table.

Examiner's Recommended Modifications Received 17 September 2026

The statement below sets out the modifications considered by the examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions. Strike-through text indicates a deletion and bold indicates the insertion of additional text.

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Policy AL 1	Add a fourth bullet point to Clause 2: ***"Proposals for development on land well-related to the built-up area will be considered subject to the provisions of Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policies LP10 'The Countryside', LP19 'Rural Economy', LP22 'Local Services and Community Facilities', LP23 'Tourism and Recreation', LP33 'Rural Buildings' and LP38 'Water Related Development'."***
PM2	Policy AL 2	Combine the second and third bullet points bullet points in Clause 1 to: ***"Development at Sensitive Settlement Edges and Important Village Gateways (see Map 6) must demonstrate how they do not adversely impact and where possible enhance their contribution to rural character and Alconbury's distinctive landscape and settlement character."***
PM3	Policy AL 3	Delete the second "Ridge and Furrow" from the list in Clause1.
PM4	Policy AL 6	Delete Clause 1.b) and substitute: ***"development which would satisfy the tests of Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP5."*** Clause 2 add ***"Anglian Water"*** to the list of relevant stakeholders in the third bullet point. Amend Clause 3 and the first bullet point to: ***"For all new build development proposals, regardless of scale or location:*** • ***The incorporation of appropriate sustainable drainage systems will be required in line with current guidance unless it is demonstrated that drainage on or around the site will not be affected by the proposal".*** The second bullet point remains as drafted.

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
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PM6	Policy AL 8	Amend the second sentence of Clause 1 to: ***"Where appropriate, development proposals should safeguard this network and where possible enhance it."***
PM7	Policy AL 9	Delete Clause 3 and substitute: ***"Development proposals requiring planning permission and resulting in the loss of the pub (Use Class Sui Generis), or the shop, the Memorial Hall (Use Class F.2) will only be supported where the criteria within Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP22 are met."*** Add a fourth Clause: ***"4. Development proposals that result in the provision of new or enhanced community assets will be supported subject to their compliance with other development plan policies."*** Include the map and key: ***"Local Services and Community Facilities"*** adjacent to Policy AL 9.
PM8	Policy AL 10	Delete Clause 2 and substitute: ***"All development proposals should contribute towards infrastructure priorities, where they are necessary to make the development acceptable and where they are directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development in compliance with Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP4 Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery and the Developer Contributions SPD (or successor documents)."***

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM9	Policy AL 11	Amend Clause 3 to: ***"Where appropriate, proposals should take opportunities … etc."*** Remove the final sentence of Clause 3 and include it in the reasoned justification.
PM10	Appendix 3 Appendix 4	An Addendum to Appendices 3 and 4 should be produced by Alconbury Parish Council which incorporates the modifications sought by Huntingdonshire District Council but which are also compatible with the Alconbury Design Guide 2025.

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