

Grafham and Ellington Neighbourhood Plan

2020 – 2036

Referendum Version

Dated: 7th Oct 2021

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Abbreviations

BEIS	Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (<u>government department</u>)
C	Century
CCC	Cambridgeshire County Council
GENP	Grafham and Ellington Neighbourhood Plan (policy reference)
HDC	Huntingdonshire District Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PC	Parish Council
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the Plan

- 1.1.1. The purpose of Grafham and Ellington having a neighbourhood Plan is to define the aspirations and needs of residents and businesses within these areas so that they have to be taken into account when local planning authorities, such as Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC), Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and the secretary of state can take the democratic wishes of the area into account.
- 1.1.2. Neighbourhood Plans, when complete, form part of the statutory development plan for an area. They will be used to promote and guide what goes where and, importantly, will be used to help determine planning applications.
- 1.1.3. The Grafham and Ellington Parish Councils consider that this is an important right to exercise, and in 2019 the Parish Councils applied for their combined parish areas (see *Figure 1*) to be designated a neighbourhood planning area. Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) approved this application in September 2019. Following designation and consultation, the Parish Councils steering group has prepared and published this version of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.1.4. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to represent one part of the development plan for the two parishes over the period 2020 to 2036. For clarity, the development plan consists of any planning policies currently adopted by the local planning authority, Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC), Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.1.5. The policies in this Plan take account of HDC's Local Plan [Ref 1], which came into force in 2019 and covers the period up to 2036.
- 1.1.6. The Plan therefore provides the local community with a powerful tool to guide the long-term future of Grafham and Ellington and their surrounding countryside for the period 2020 to 2036. The Plan allows all residents to exercise an element of control of the management of planning issues and developments within the community. It is not just for the Parish Councils but for all residents both current and future. The Plan contains a vision for the future of Grafham and Ellington Parishes and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.
- 1.1.7. In order to develop the Neighbourhood Plan, Grafham and Ellington Parish Councils set up a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group which comprised two Parish Councillors and a number of other local volunteers. It has been prepared with extensive support from the local people, statutory bodies, local businesses and Huntingdonshire District Council.
- 1.1.8. An application for Neighbourhood Area designation was approved by HDC in September 2019.
- 1.1.9. The map in Figure 1 below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is the same as the combined administrative boundaries of Grafham and Ellington Parishes.
- 1.1.10. The principal purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish and provide guidance to anyone wishing to submit a planning application for development within the parish. The process of producing a plan has sought to engage and involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are considered important to Grafham and Ellington, its residents, businesses and community groups.



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Figure 1: Neighbourhood Area of Grafham and Ellington

- 1.1.11. Grafham and Ellington are located in the Huntingdonshire district of Cambridgeshire. The nearest town is Huntingdon, located approximately 7 miles to the East. The A14 runs along the northern edge of Ellington, which provides an efficient connection to Cambridge. The A1 lies to the East of the two villages and provides an effective link to the North and South. Huntingdon has a mainline station providing a good railway service to London and Peterborough (for the North).

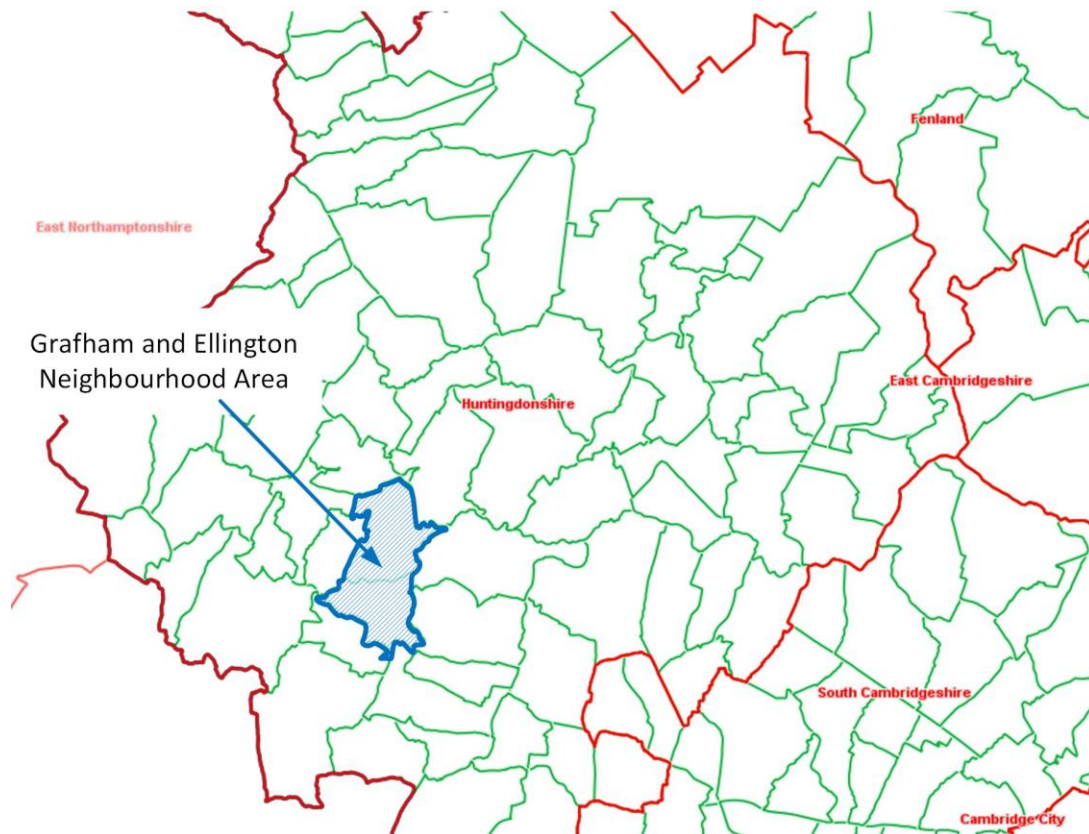


Figure 2: Map showing how Grafham and Ellington relate to Huntingdonshire

1.2. Preparing the Plan

- 1.2.1. Neighbourhood Plans have to be prepared following a procedure set by Government, summarised in Figure 3. The Plan will be revised following responses from residents, the Regulation 14 and 16 consultations and will then be passed for referendum by the independent examiner. A Parish wide Referendum will then be organised by Huntingdonshire District Council, allowing residents to vote on whether to accept the Plan. If more than 50% of the votes cast are in favour of the Plan, the Plan will be “made” i.e., accepted at HDC’s Council meeting, and carry full weight in the planning process.

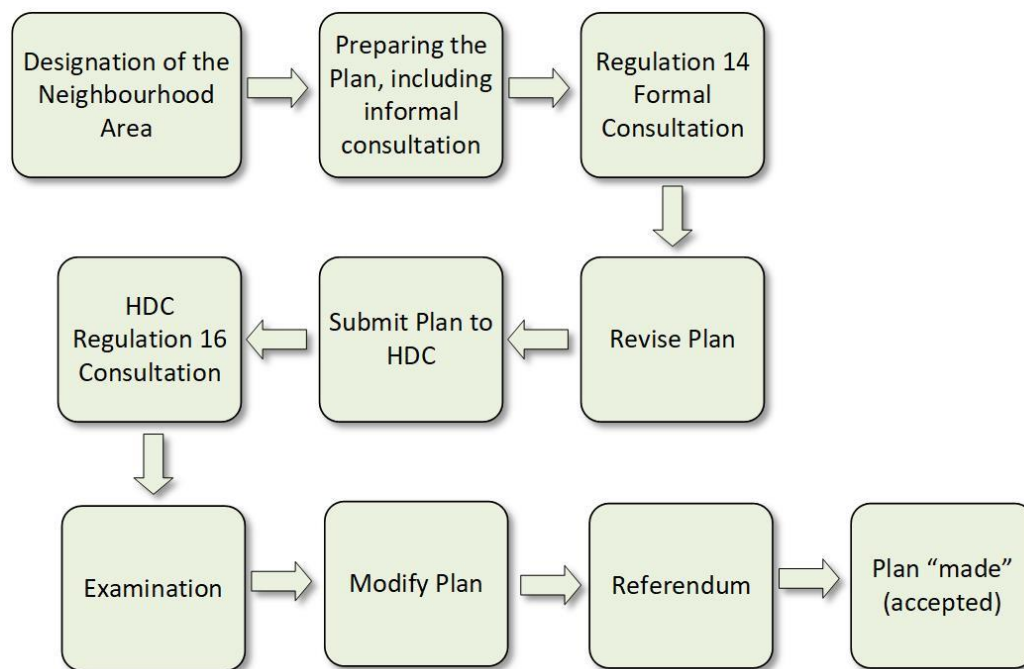


Figure 3: The Neighbourhood Planning Process

1.3. Monitoring the Plan

- 1.3.1. Grafham and Ellington Parish Councils, collectively as the 'Qualifying Body', will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery.
- 1.3.2. The Parish Councils will actively monitor how the policies within the neighbourhood plan are being implemented. This will be summarised in a report produced by the Parish Councils annually and published on the Parish Councils websites.

1.4. Community Action Plan

- 1.4.1. The consultation process identified a number of issues and potential projects that could not be addressed through the policies in this document. These are captured in a separate document as a Community Action Plan [Ref 21], on the Parish Council websites. The Parish Councils will consider how these issues and ideas might be taken forward in partnership with residents and other organisations.

1.5. How the Neighbourhood Plan is Organised

- 1.5.1. The Plan is divided into the following sections:
 - § 2: Local Context – a history of Grafham and Ellington, along with a summary of the way we are today.
 - § 3: The vision for Grafham and Ellington and the key issues that have influenced the Plan.
 - § 4: District and County Planning – where we fit within the Local Plan [Ref 1].
 - § 5: Demographic Profile and Social Trends – a statistical look at the population, their age, health, work profile and house ownership.
 - § 6: Grafham and Ellington: 2020 – 2036 (Community and Development Objectives) – Demographic profile and trends, along with land use, businesses, transport, leisure

and community facilities. Community and development objectives, along with the associated policies.

- Appendix A: History and Heritage – A more detailed look.
- Appendix B: A list of the referenced documents.
- Appendix C: Local Green Spaces – A summary of their attributes.

1.6. Basis of the Plan

- 1.6.1. The results of surveys of residents and local businesses in the Neighbourhood Area carried out in September 2020 provides the basis for the policies contained within this Plan.
- 1.6.2. We had a very high response rate from 66% of households, which also reflects the household diversity found in our plan area. Throughout this Plan we have therefore reflected the concerns and desires expressed by residents in the survey we carried out.
- 1.6.3. Business questionnaires were sent to all major businesses in the Neighbourhood Area. Sole Traders were also invited to complete the questionnaire through the link provided in the Residents Questionnaire.
- 1.6.4. Where we have drawn conclusions about local demographics we have compared our numbers with that found for our Parishes in the “Cambridgeshire Insights” data. This data in turn is estimated and the website contains the following warning: *Please note that these most recent estimates are not released officially at parish level or to the latest parish boundaries by the Office of National Statistics or Cambridgeshire County Council. The data contained within this report has derived from a best-fit aggregation of smaller level geographies to try and give the best possible insight into parish level.*
- 1.6.5. Our survey data was similar to that reported by Insights and we feel justified in drawing the conclusions used in the Plan from our survey data.

2. History of Grafham and Ellington

2.1.1. We have an **early history** and settlement in the parishes dates back to the Neolithic. In the Roman period the road from Alconbury to Bedford and beyond ran through the parishes and Romano-British farms have been found on the south side of Grafham Water.

2.1.2. But our **broad layout is Saxon/Early Medieval**, and the moats/sites of six manorial complexes are known: that at Ellington Thorpe was excavated in 1965; this air view of 1954 (right) shows it clearly, with its associated fishponds site. A similar site down Grafham's Brampton Road was listed as a 'scheduled' monument in 2003. A bit lower in the social order, the relatively high medieval Freeman and Smallholder population has led to the survival of the Ellington Thorpe and Grafham Church Road property layouts, both on long-standing medieval roads. The only surviving medieval buildings are the churches, both showing signs of earlier buildings on their sites.



2.1.3. Historically, ownership of Ellington church and a large part of the parish was held by Ramsey Abbey, while Grafham was owned by the King and the lords under him, although later pious donations led to large holdings by Sawtry Abbey. **Monastic Seizure** under Henry VIII and



subsequent disposal led to Ellington's longer-term association with Peterhouse College, Cambridge, while Grafham had a shorter association with the Cromwell family. A century later those Grafham lands were for a short time with the Biggs family, who endowed the Town Farm and Biggs' Charity, whose successor is still associated with All Saints, Grafham (left).

2.1.4. The **Enclosure Act of 1774** enabled landowners to acquire and enclose the large open medieval Common Fields, leading to today's farm network and the current north-south road alignments. It also reinforced the Bernards of Brampton and the Montague Dukes of Manchester as the major landowners. Later marriage between the two consolidated the Montague holdings.

2.1.5. A major change in the **Transport** environment was the conversion of the Brampton-Thrapston road to a Turnpike in 1753, which made Ellington's Inns more prosperous. The '**Industrial**' scene started with the arrival of the brickworks around 1850, and the development of 'model' (organised but not yet mechanised) landowner/tenant farming at around the same time. The opening of the railway in 1866 put Grafham as the larger settlement, requiring an expanded school. Apart from the opening of the Rifle Range in Grafham in 1904 things then remained more or less static for a century.

2.1.6. From the 1960's it was an era of **change**; the railway closed in 1959, the schools closed - Grafham's became houses, Ellington's a village Hall and a house; the new Thrapston Road diverted traffic from Ellington High Street; and in the mid '60's Grafham lost half of its area to Grafham Water.

2.1.7. Resurgence began later in the 1970's, but as commuter rather than self-supporting agricultural villages.

2.1.8. A more detailed history, with additional illustrations, is to be found in Appendix A.

3. Our Vision

- 3.1.1. In 2036, Grafham and Ellington will be one of the most desirable rural parishes in Huntingdonshire, characterised by its strong sense of **community, distinctive character** and **heritage** assets.

Delivered by:

Housing / Development

- 3.1.2. **Housing** expansion will be as a result of **infill** and **windfall** development, limited to small housing **clusters**, within the **built-up areas**, avoiding **back-land** development, unless there is direct highway frontage. **New homes** will use **sustainable** materials wherever possible, and complement the existing surroundings and rural landscape; be of sympathetic design with adequate off-street parking and allow for a sense of space and greenery. Development will protect and enhance **biodiversity** and establish, enhance or extend **ecological** corridors and the connectivity between them.
- 3.1.3. The significance of **heritage** assets and settings will be preserved and enhanced by development control.
- 3.1.4. Homes will be **insulated** to the **highest standards** in order to meet **zero carbon** targets and the majority of homes will have installed alternative fuel **domestic heating** as **oil-fired boilers** are phased out.
- 3.1.5. Development will be designed in a way which does not exacerbate existing **flood risk or drainage** issues.
- 3.1.6. New homes will reflect residents desire to provide more, affordable **small/starter homes**.

(Policy GENP 1, Policy GENP 2, Policy GENP 3, Policy GENP 4 and Policy GENP 13)

Enhancement of local facilities and employment

- 3.1.7. **Village Halls, sports** facilities, **pubs, restaurants** and **retail** and **small business** units will provide local services to both villages and beyond, creating a central meeting point and enhancing **community resilience**.
- 3.1.8. **Small business** units will provide additional space for micro-businesses to grow and to encourage **local employment**, with improved parking, cycle bays and footpaths access.
- 3.1.9. **Grafham Water** will provide a focal tourist attraction for visitors, supported by local **hospitality businesses** and an **improved transport** and **public rights of way infrastructure**.

(Policy GENP 5, Policy GENP 6 and Policy GENP 11)

Reduction of Carbon Footprint

- 3.1.10. There will be a reduction of the **carbon footprint** of **travel** for **work**, essential **goods, services** and **leisure**.

(Policy GENP 5, Policy GENP 7, Policy GENP 8 and Policy GENP 11)

Green spaces, Public Rights of Way and Play areas

- 3.1.11. **Green** spaces and **play** areas will provide a central focal point for **recreation** and will be protected as **open** spaces, maintained and enhanced through scrupulous management to ensure their retention and enjoyment for future generations.
- 3.1.12. **Public Rights of Way**, including **footpaths**, **bridleways** and **cycle paths** will be enhanced, including new and improved connections to existing routes between the villages and onwards to **Grafham Water** and **Huntingdon** to encourage **active lifestyles**, and to promote the use of **non-motorised transport**. **Traffic calming measures** will be installed where appropriate to **reduce vehicle speeds** between and approaching the two villages.

(Policy GENP 9, Policy GENP 10 and Policy GENP 12)

4. Local Planning Policy Context

4.1. Summary

- 4.1.1. The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan have been produced with due regard to the Huntingdonshire Local Plan [Ref 1]. The Neighbourhood Plan adds detail to the Local Plan, specific to the residents and businesses of the Neighbourhood Area.
- 4.1.2. The extracts below have been taken from the Local Plan which identifies the classification of Grafham and Ellington, along with the potential for limited development, although the Local Plan specifically makes no allocations for any development.
- 4.1.3. Section numbers below refer to those in the Local Plan.

4.2. Classification of Grafham and Ellington

4.2.1. **Section 4.100 Small Settlements**

The Local Plan defines Grafham and Ellington as Small Settlements.

4.2.2. **Section 4.101 Reasoning**

There are many settlements across Huntingdonshire that have limited or no services or facilities available. Such settlements are identified as Small Settlements. Small Settlements are less sustainable than settlements in the Spatial Planning Area settlements and Key Service Centres due to the need to travel to access services and facilities elsewhere on a regular basis. As such 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. Given the variation in size and availability of services and facilities between Small Settlements it is recognised that varying levels of development could sustainably be accommodated depending on nature of the individual Small Settlement.

- 4.2.3. **Sections 4.102 to 4.107** expand on this statement in more detail. See the Local Plan [Ref 1] for further information.

4.3. Small Settlements (LP9): Development Proposals within the Built-up Area

4.3.1. **Development Proposals within the Built-up Area**

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:

- a. level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement;
- b. opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport;
- c. effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole.

4.3.2. **Development Proposals on Land well-related to the Built-up Area**

A proposal for development on land well-related to the built-up area may be supported where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies of this plan.

4.4. Green Infrastructure (LP3)

4.4.1. **Extract from LP3:**

A proposal within the Grafham Water Landscape Character Area, defined in the “Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment Supplementary Planning Document” [Ref 3], will be supported where it enhances or creates ecological or landscape linkages between Grafham Water and woodland in the vicinity. Enhanced access will also be supported subject to compatibility with the landscape and biodiversity.

4.4.2. A proposal will be supported where it involves the role, function and continued operation or enhancement of Grafham Water Reservoir, its Treatment Works and associated networks.

4.4.3. **Section 4.35:**

There are opportunities to improve the links between Grafham Water and areas of woodland such as Brampton Wood, although care must be taken to ensure that improvements to public access do not impact adversely on areas of ancient woodland.

4.5. Tourism and Recreation (LP23)

4.5.1. **Section 6.54:**

A high proportion of trips to the district are from day visitors and one of the greatest challenges is to encourage overnight stays and longer breaks. Tourist accommodation, including touring caravan and camping sites, facilitates longer visitor stays with potential to increase the contribution of visitors to the local economy. However, a proposal should demonstrate that it expects to be viable and is supported by well thought out research and a business plan, particularly for new build tourist accommodation. Where tourist accommodation is proposed in locations where new dwellings would not normally be acceptable planning conditions will be imposed restricting the use to holiday accommodation.

4.5.2. **Section 6.55:**

This policy is intended to guide the smaller scale, lower impact proposals which may be appropriate within a countryside setting. Proposals for development in association with strategic sites such as the Great Fen and Grafham Water will be considered under policy LP3 'Green Infrastructure'.

5. Demographic Profile and Social Trends

5.1. Summary

- 5.1.1. The nature of the two villages is rural. Ellington and Grafham have a village hall. Ellington has a restaurant/pub; Grafham has a both a shop and pub set up by the community. Grafham also has an Indian restaurant / take away. Both villages have playing fields and children's play areas.
- 5.1.2. Both Grafham and Ellington have access to good road and rail links which allows the villages to act as dormitories for larger conurbations.
- 5.1.3. Local Grafham Water is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). A cycle track circles the reservoir and there is a thriving sailing club.
- 5.1.4. The charts below describe the population for Ellington and Grafham parishes taken from the parish profiles published by "Cambridgeshire Insight" [Ref 4]. The numbers are for 2018 and it should also be noted that Cambridgeshire Insight data is only an approximation.¹
- 5.1.5. Of the 231 households in Ellington, 156 responded to the Residents' Survey Questionnaire; this represents a 68% response rate. The 156 households included 355 people, which suggests that the total population of Ellington is 526 people; less than the 2018 "Insight" estimate.
- 5.1.6. Of the 252 households in Grafham, 161 responded to the Residents' Survey Questionnaire; this represents a 64% response rate. The 161 households included 345 people, which suggests that the total population of Grafham is 540 people; significantly less than the 2018 estimate.
- 5.1.7. The Survey's lower estimate of population perhaps reflects an aging population and the consequent reduction in household size as children leave home, or possibly this is due to the approximate nature of the Cambridge Insight data. See the survey results below:

¹ Cambridgeshire Insight: "Please note that these most recent estimates are not released officially at parish level or to the latest parish boundaries by the Office of National Statistics or Cambridgeshire County Council. The data contained within this report has derived from a best-fit aggregation of smaller level geographies to try and give the best possible insight into parish level."

Ellington

Population at a glance...



573

Total population estimate
(2018) [i](#)



284

(49.6%)

Male population estimate
(2018) [i](#)

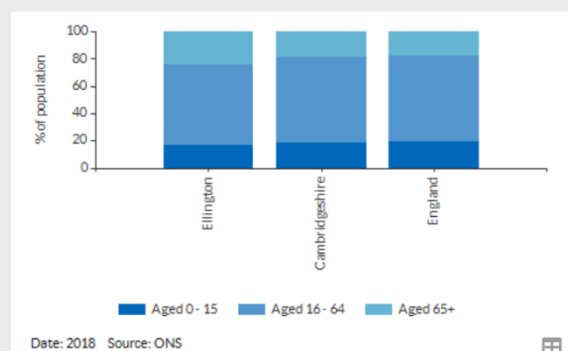


289

(50.4%)

Female population estimate
(2018) [i](#)

Estimates by broad age group, all persons



Estimates by 5-year age group, all persons

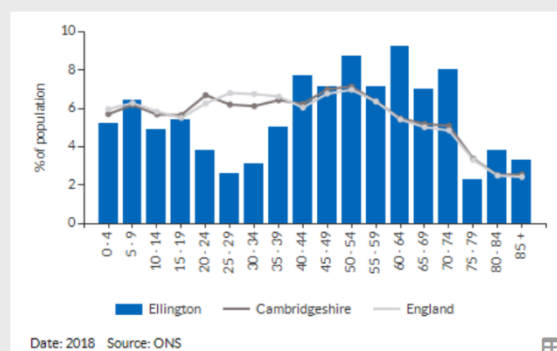


Figure 4: Ellington population profile according to Cambridgeshire Insight

Grafham

Population at a glance...



696

Total population estimate
(2018) [i](#)



397

(57%)

Male population estimate
(2018) [i](#)

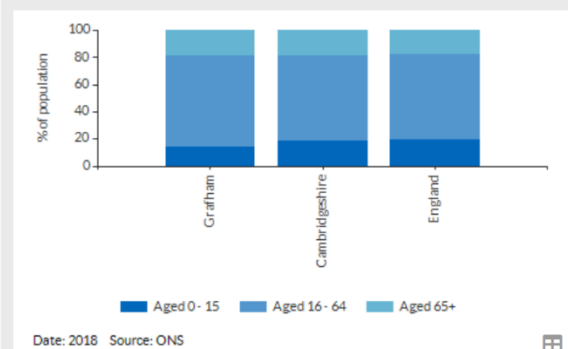


299

(43%)

Female population estimate
(2018) [i](#)

Estimates by broad age group, all persons



Estimates by 5-year age group, all persons

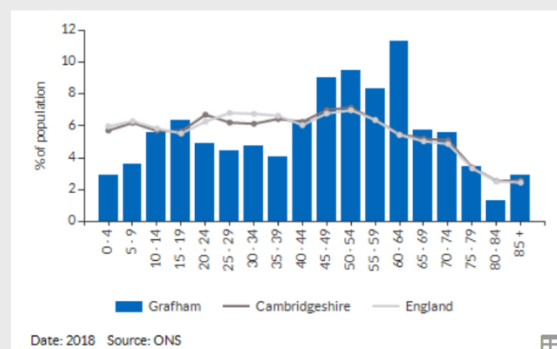


Figure 5: Grafham population profile according to Cambridgeshire Insight

5.2. Age Profile

5.2.1. The age profile of the population from the Survey is shown below for both villages:

Ellington

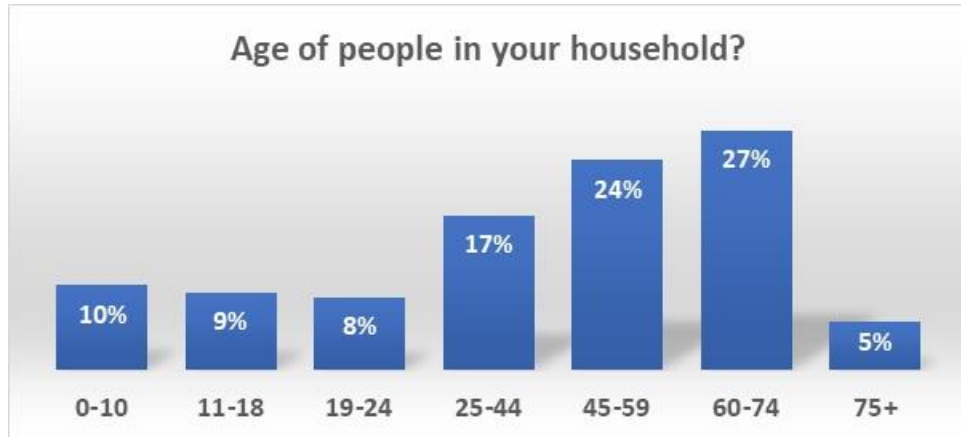


Figure 6: Age profile of Ellington residents

Grafham

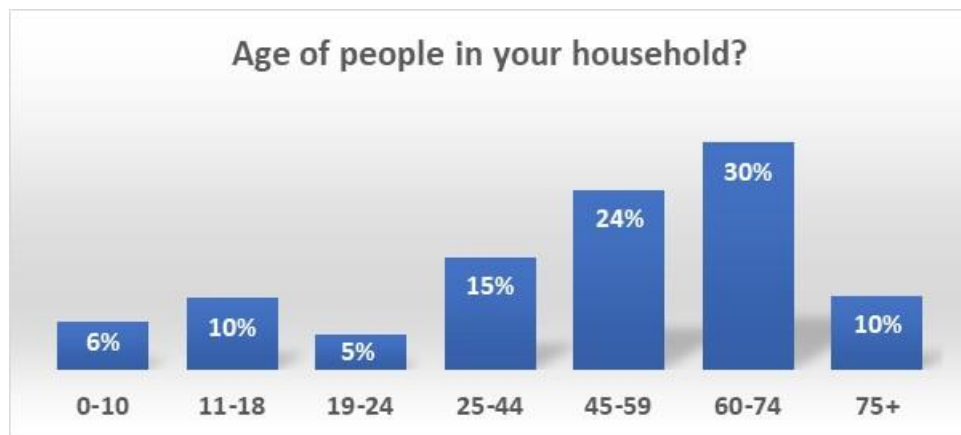


Figure 7: Age profile of Grafham residents

- 5.2.2. These graphs indicate that in Ellington some 56% of the population is over the age of 45 and in Grafham 64%. The figures given in the Cambridgeshire Insights data are 56.0% and 57.4% respectively.
- 5.2.3. The “Insight” data both for Ellington and Grafham, says that the age profile of the population is greater in the 45 to 74 age range and less in the 20 to 39 age range when compared to both Cambridgeshire and National data.
- 5.2.4. The 2011 Grafham Parish Plan survey indicated that most of the population was in the 25 to 59 age group. This perhaps indicates that people have not moved in the last 10 years. The Residents Survey indicated that 65% of households have lived in the village more than 10 years.

5.3. Economic Activity / Fulltime Education

Ellington

- 5.3.1. Cambridge Insight estimated that in 2011, 71.2% of the population in Ellington were economically active, with less than 2% unemployed. Again, although the unemployment rate is confirmed, by the Resident Survey at 2%, 43% of the population are retired or in fulltime education.

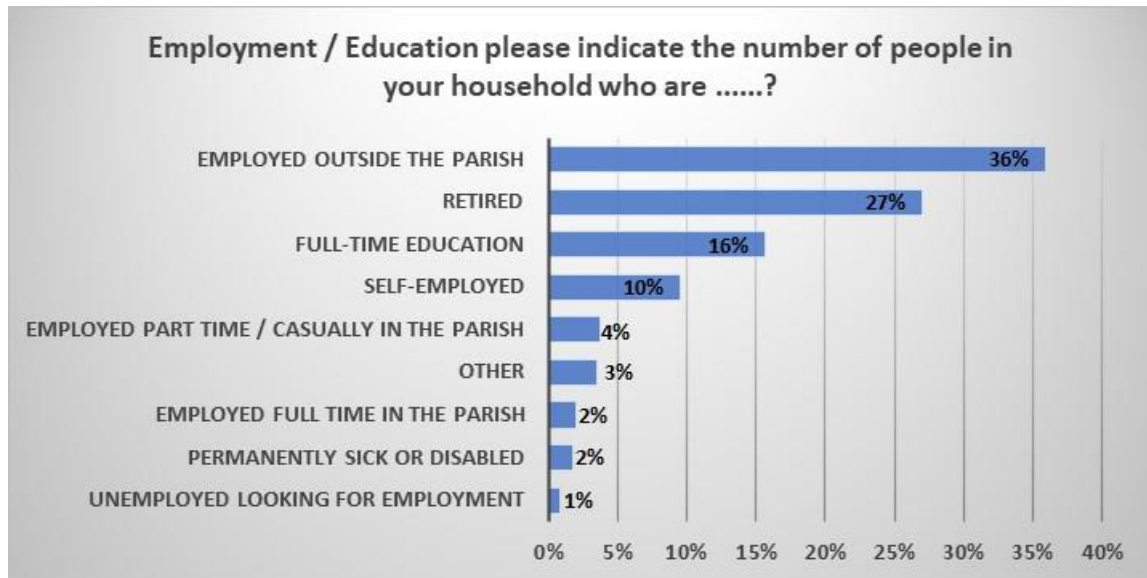


Figure 8: Employment profile for Ellington residents

Grafham

- 5.3.2. Cambridge Insight estimated in 2011, 75.7% of the population in Grafham was economically active, with less than 1% unemployed. Although the unemployment rate is confirmed, by the Resident Survey, at 1%, 46% of the population are retired or in fulltime education.
- 5.3.3. The Resident Survey shows the following:

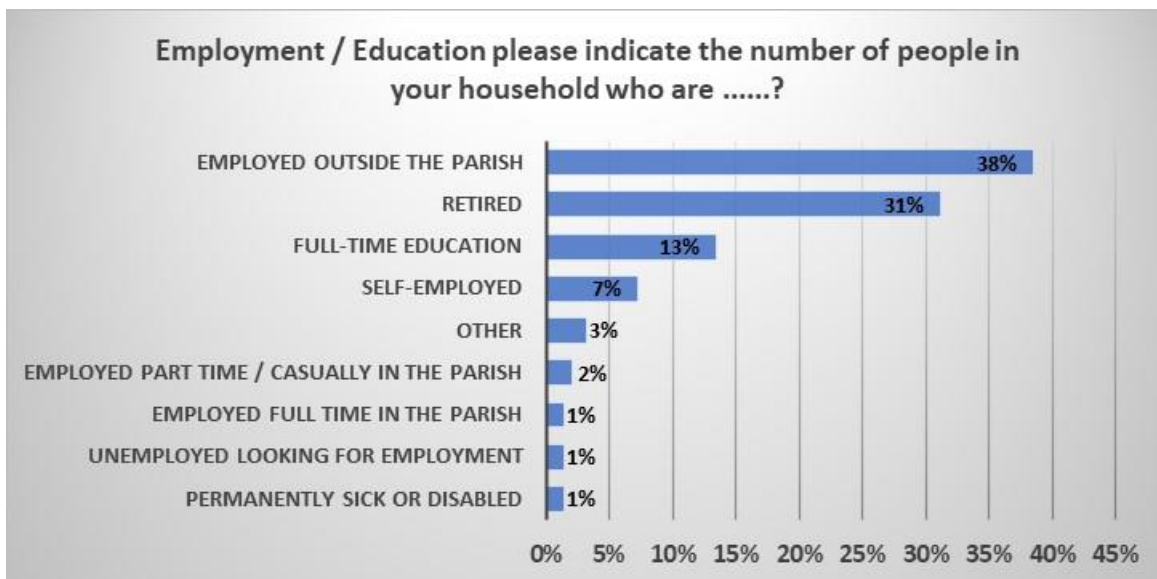
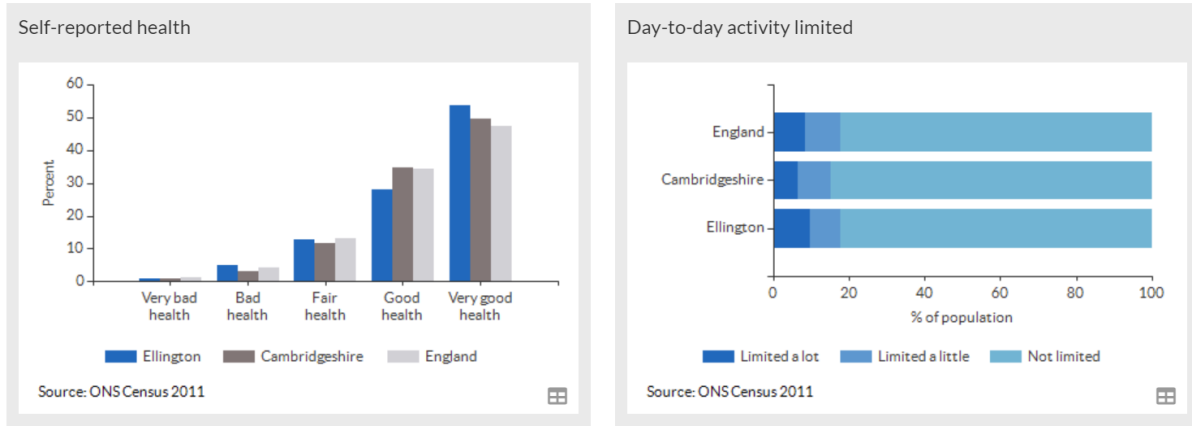


Figure 9: Employment profile for Grafham residents

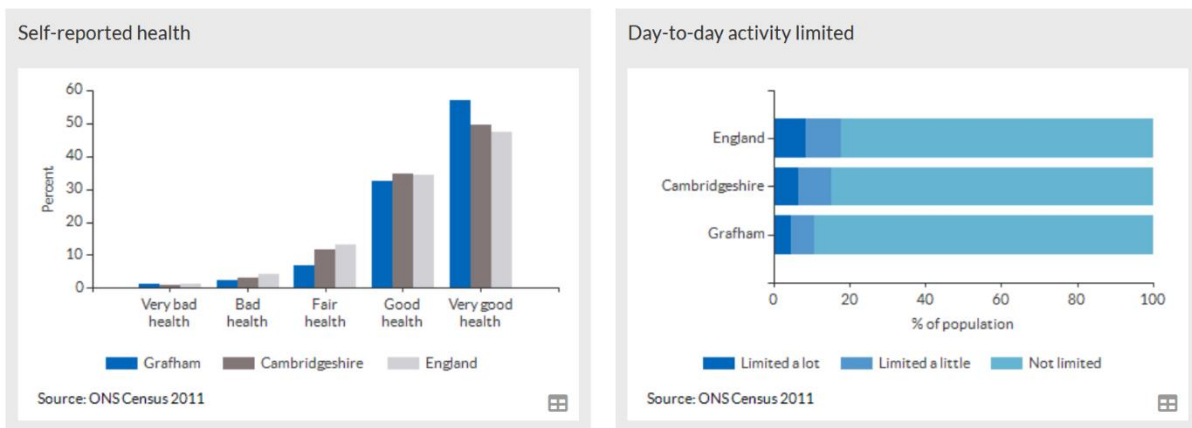
Health

- 5.3.4. “Cambridgeshire Insights” has the following data on the health of our villages based on 2011 census data, and made the point that “the health of people in our communities faces a range of complex and linked challenges, such as the increase in people living with chronic illness and long-term illness linked to our ageing society, and growing health inequalities”.

Ellington



Grafham



- 5.3.5. This picture of the health of our population is confirmed by the Resident Survey, which gave the following additional view:

Ellington

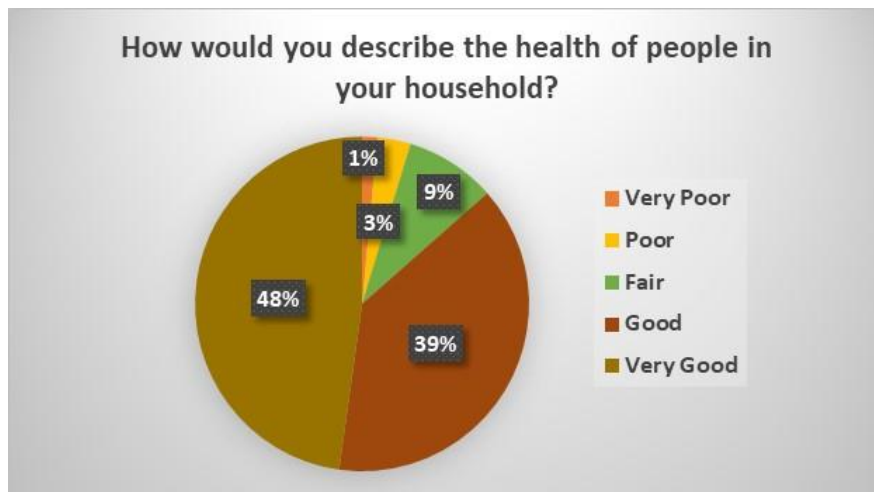


Figure 10: Health profile of Ellington residents

Grafham

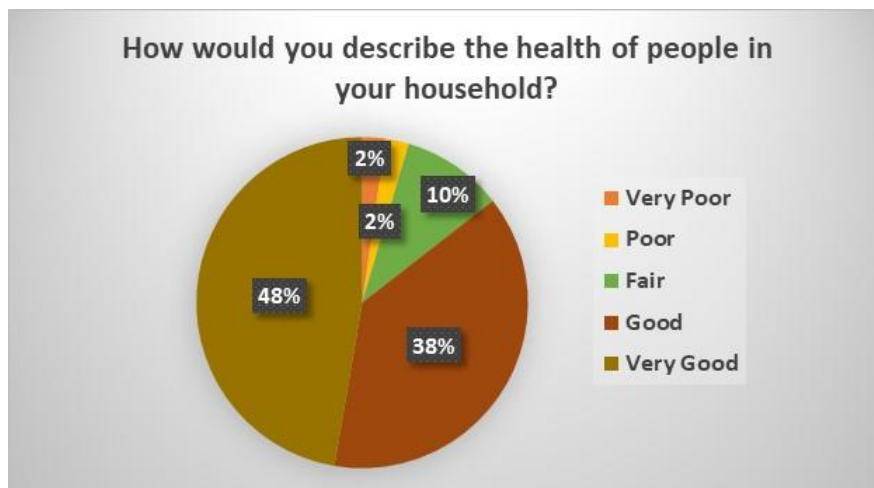


Figure 11: Health profile of Grafham residents

5.3.6. The villages are served by the following surgeries:

Ellington

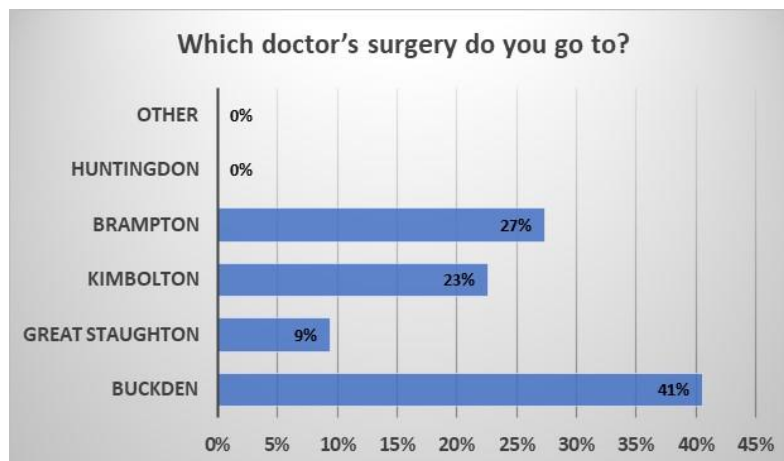


Figure 12: Doctor's surgery profile for Ellington

Grafham

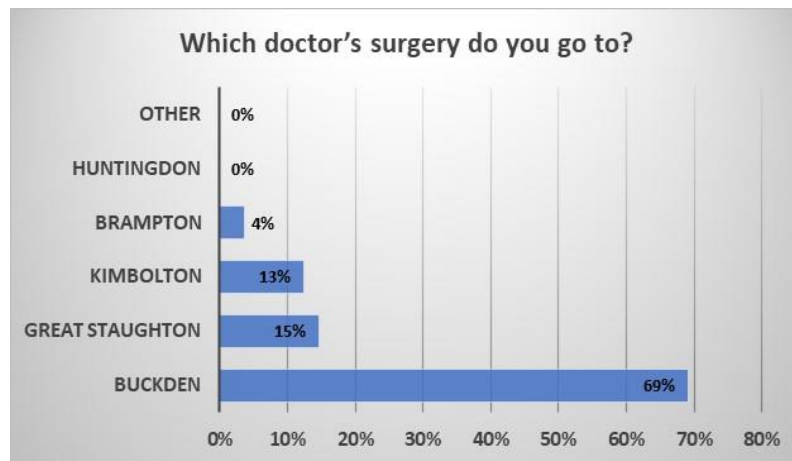


Figure 13 Doctor's surgery profile for Grafham

5.4. Population Trends

- 5.4.1. The Cambridgeshire data indicates a slight decline in population in the Ellington Ward up to the year 2036. In the Brampton Ward which includes Grafham a slight increase in population is forecast.
- 5.4.2. No major development is planned for Ellington and Grafham. When asked how long residents intended to stay in the villages the following responses were obtained.

Ellington

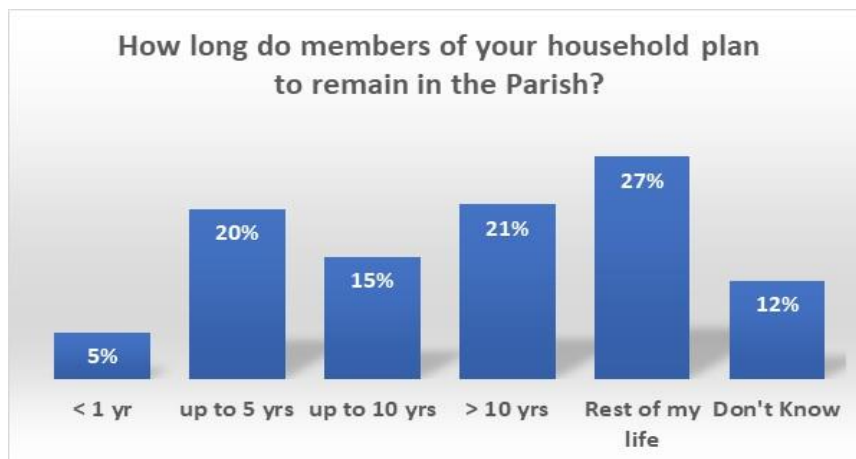


Figure 14: Household mobility of Ellington residents

Grafham

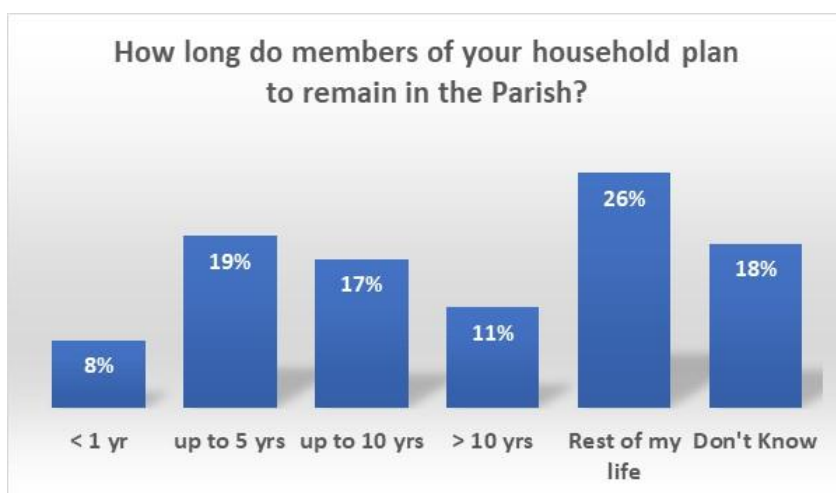


Figure 15: Household mobility of Grafham residents

5.5. House Ownership

- 5.5.1. As shown by the graphs below most of the housing, over 85%, in both Grafham and Ellington is owner occupied. Just 7% of properties in Ellington are socially rented, 3% in Grafham.

Ellington

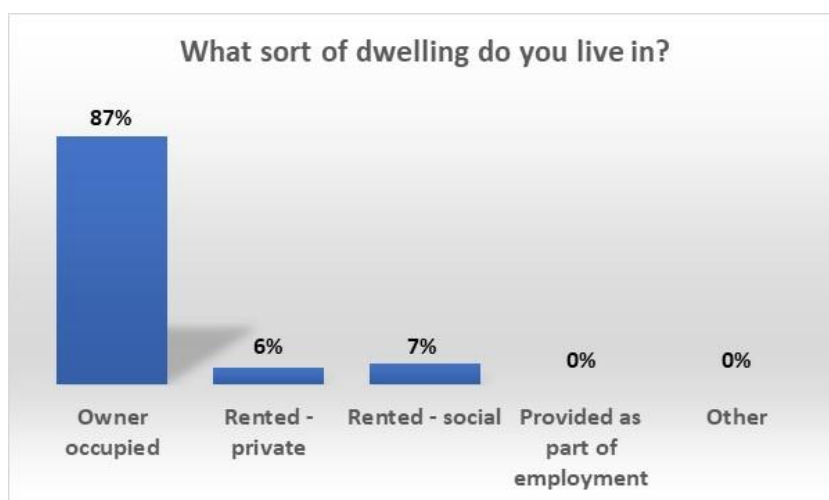


Figure 16: Property ownership in Ellington

Grafham

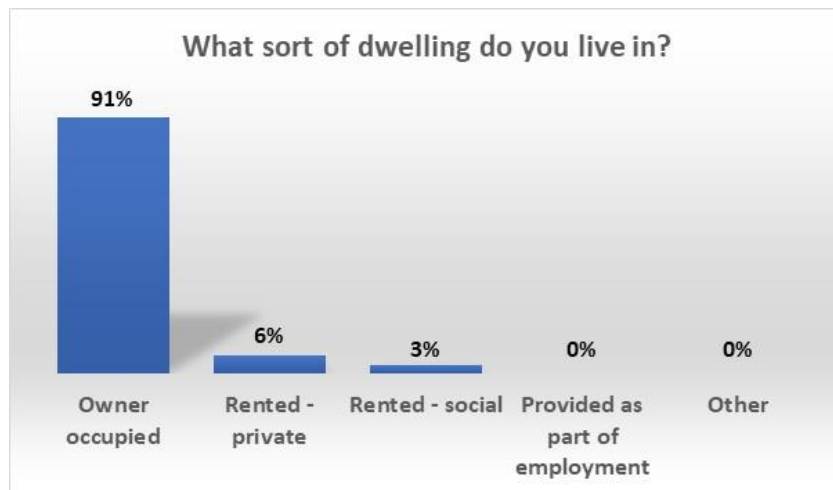


Figure 17: Property ownership in Grafham

5.5.2. From the data above, it is fair to draw the following conclusions:

- Because there are no major developments planned (see § 4) and the village average age of residents is likely to increase; population in the villages is likely to remain constant or decline slightly.
- Around 30% of the population of the villages is retired and this number is likely to increase.
- The number of school children is likely to decline.
- The health of the village residents is reasonably good with around 80% of people reporting their health as good or very good in the Resident Survey.
- The housing in both Ellington and Grafham is over 85% owner occupied, with a relatively low demand for additional housing.

5.5.3. Future facilities in the villages need to reflect the evolving demographics. There are a growing number of retired residents. There is also a significant number of people working from home all, or part of the time; our survey found it was around 50%. This probably reflects the superfast broadband in the village and a workplace trend likely to continue post Pandemic. The number of people at home during the daytime is likely therefore to increase.

6. Grafham and Ellington: 2020 - 2036 – Community and Development Objectives

6.1. Built-up Areas

- 6.1.1. The NPPF makes clear distinctions between built-up areas and the countryside. To assist with interpretation of the Neighbourhood Plan's policies, built-up areas have therefore been defined and mapped; all land outside the defined boundary is deemed to be countryside and subject to policies influencing development outside the built-up area.
- 6.1.2. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 sets out a comprehensive definition of 'built-up area' in its § 4.85. Regard has been given to this definition in drawing the settlement boundary in this Neighbourhood Plan in order to define each 'built-up area'.
- 6.1.3. The built-up areas for Grafham and Ellington are shown in Figure 18 and Figure 19 respectively.
- 6.1.4. "Isolated properties or areas of ribbon and fragmented development which are physically and visually detached from the main built form" are not included within the built-up areas. Ellington Thorpe falls into this category as it comprises just 14 properties.

Policy GENP 1 – Definition of 'Built-up Area' (Settlement Boundary)
The settlement boundaries of Grafham and Ellington are defined in Figure 18 and Figure 19; this defines the 'built-up areas' for Grafham and Ellington. This 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 structure and form of the existing settlement and the undeveloped nature of the surrounding rural areas; and would respect its landscape setting. The land outside of the built-up areas is considered to be countryside where a proposal will only be supported where there is material evidence of a local community need, a need that would be met by the proposal, or where the proposal complies with requirements of other policies in national or local policy; including but not limited to development that requires a countryside location; is for agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or is related to community, leisure or recreation uses.

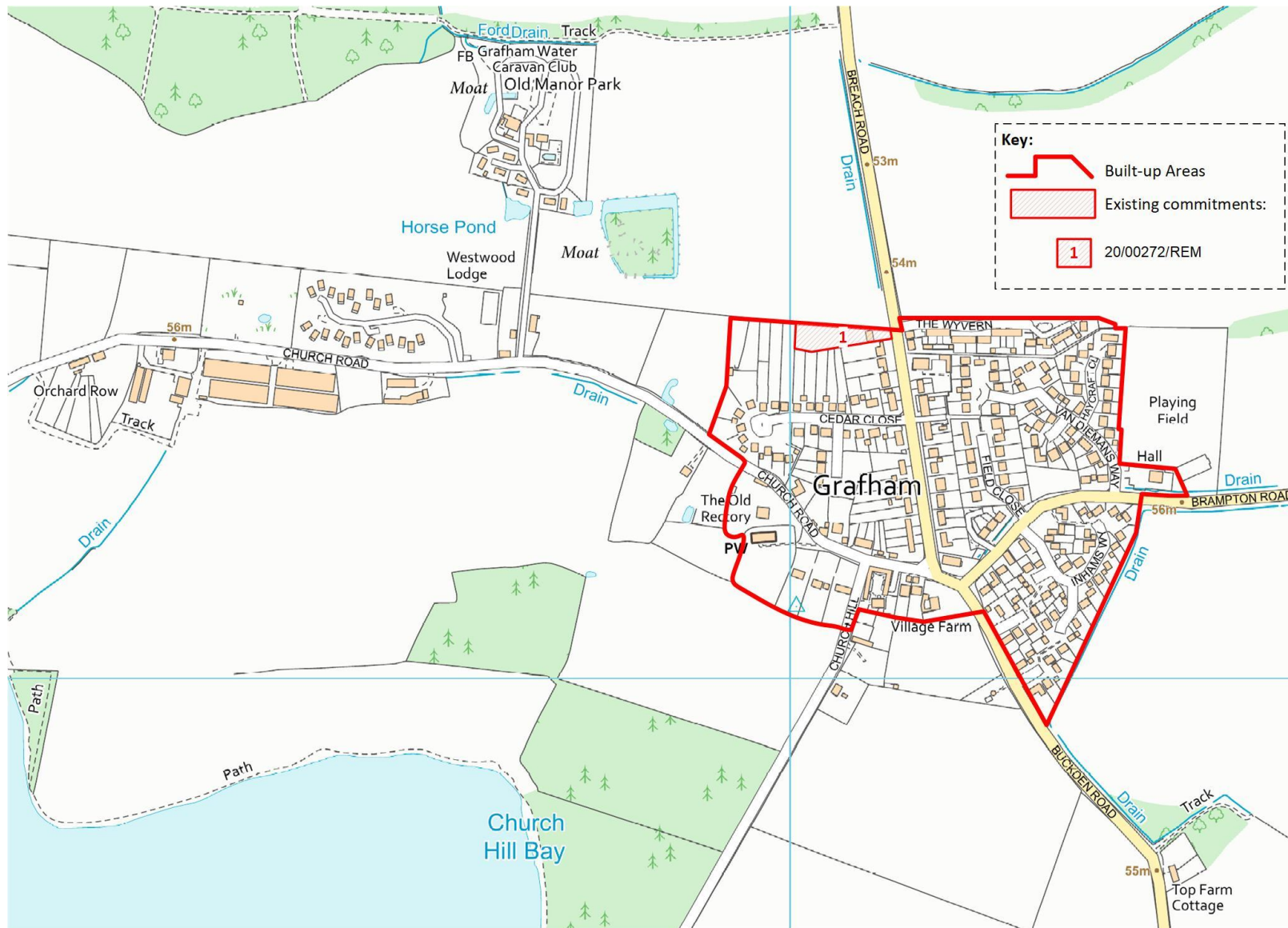


Figure 18: Built-up Area of Grafham

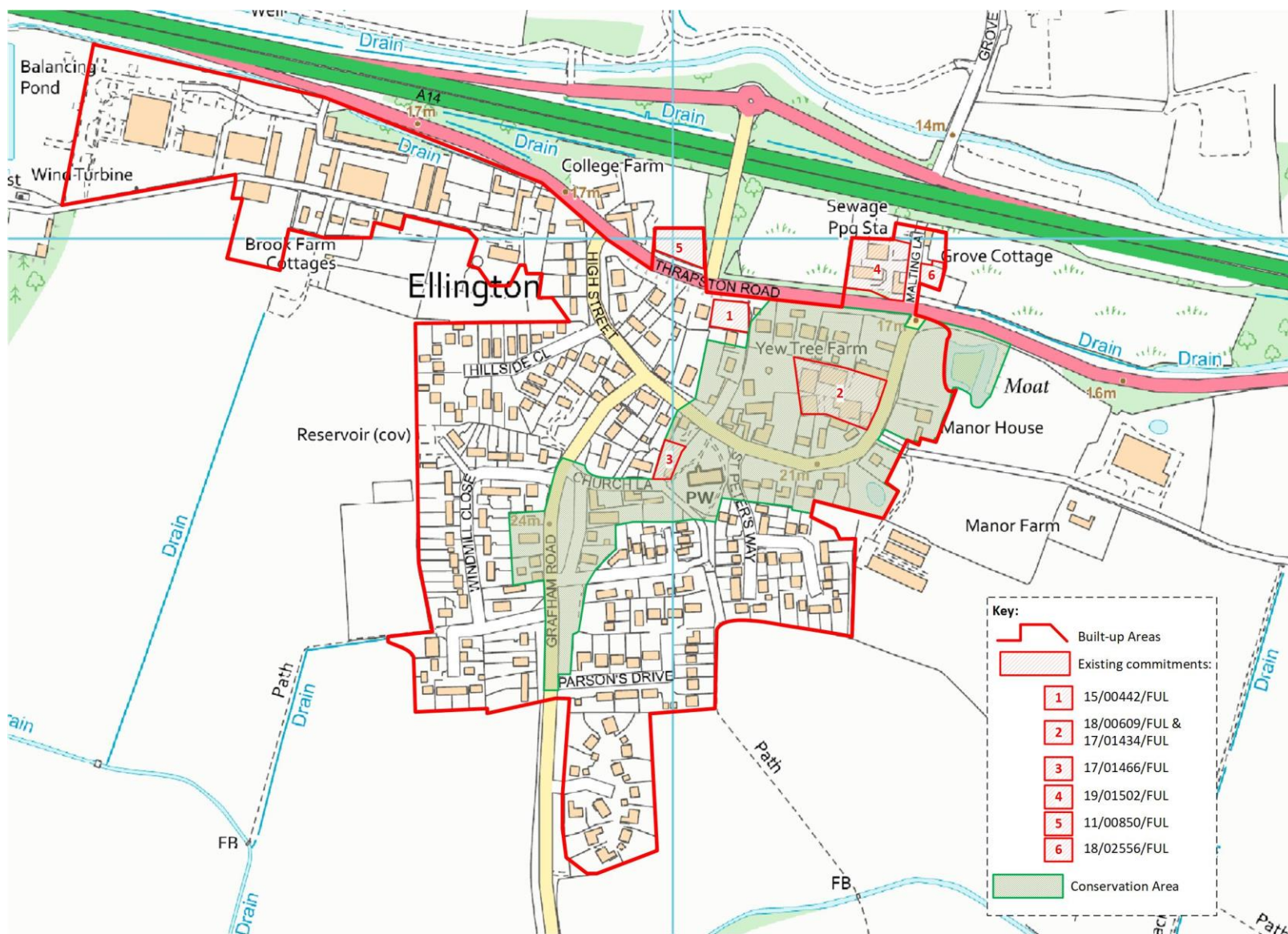


Figure 19: Built-up Area of Ellington

6.2. Heritage Assets

- 6.2.1. The “Heritage Assets”² of Grafham and Ellington broadly comprise buildings, structures and sites thought to have been built before 1900, the most important of which have been “listed” or “scheduled”. In Ellington many of the 'listed' buildings, and most of the unlisted ones, are included in a Conservation Area. Appendix A discusses the context of these buildings, and section A.27 refers to maps showing the Built Heritage in the central village areas. Sections A.40 – A.41 provide references to published sources and a link to an on-line illustrated listing of buildings considered to comprise our “Heritage Assets” [Ref 22].
- 6.2.2. No remains exist of the houses of the medieval manors in either parish but the sites are known and may need archaeological recognition.
- 6.2.3. **Timber-framed, and largely thatched, houses** of 16th /17th C date are a visual feature of Ellington village, where there are eleven, and the essential feature of Ellington Thorpe where they comprise all but one of the six pre-20th C houses. Only one house of this date survives in Grafham but is brick with a tiled roof. The photo shows the former Crooked Billet pub in Ellington Thorpe.
- 
- 6.2.4. A modest number of 18th/early 19th C houses survive in Grafham and are important for the appreciation of their histories. They include the Old Rectory and a house that was once the village pub, the village’s only thatched house, and part of what was once the school.
- 6.2.5. The 19th C **agricultural revolution** produced a collection of farms with farmworkers cottages important enough for three of the buildings to be ‘listed’ in Grafham and one in Ellington. In particular the Manchester Estate’s use of polychrome brickwork is noticeable.
- 6.2.6. **The mid-19th C Industry and Transport** improvements – the brickworks, the railway – required newly constructed workers houses (esp.in Breach Road, Grafham). These village expansions required extended/new school constructions under the 1870 Education Act.
- 6.2.7. Housing then remained relatively static until the modest arrival of Council and private housing in the 1950’s. However, a gradual process of consolidating historic multi-occupant properties into single occupancy has reduced the number of older dwellings but not the built heritage.
- 6.2.8. Maps in Appendix A show the housing heritage in Grafham, Ellington Thorpe and Ellington, showing all houses thought to date before 1887 and highlighting those that are formally ‘listed’. Note also, the conservation area within Ellington shown on the map in Figure 67.
- 6.2.9. Appendix A also has a more detailed discussion of the parishes’ older buildings together with some more illustrations, and contains a link to an on-line illustrated report of the pre-1887 Heritage Assets of Grafham and Ellington [Ref 22]. The Report also covers archaeological sites and major vanished buildings.

² NPPF definition of **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. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).*

- 6.2.10. The aim underpinning Policy GENP 2 requires sensitive development that integrates well with the rest of the villages, and design standards that ensure that Grafham and Ellington retain their distinctive character. It also looks to respect the rural setting within the Huntingdonshire countryside.
- 6.2.11. The community considers these matters to be very important and places high value on the character as villages. There is high regard for the local traditional character of the historic buildings and their distinctive use of local materials and for the green spaces, gardens and hedging. There is a desire that any new development should complement the existing surroundings and be of good design, practical and sustainable, whether traditional or modern. There is also an expectation that it should provide off-street parking and that it should allow for a sense of space and greenery. There is also strong feeling that design should call for the use of sustainable materials and look to save energy.
- 6.2.12. The survey identified the importance to the community that the boundaries of the villages are preserved – 87% consider this to be important or very important (see Figure 20).

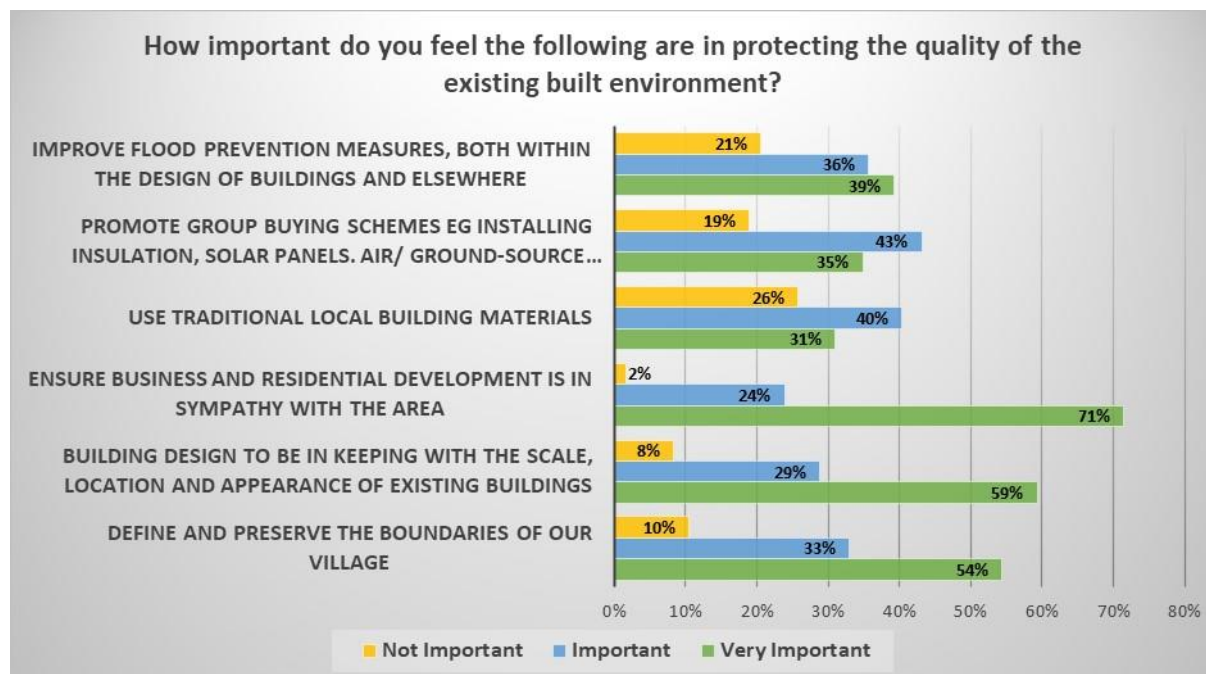


Figure 20: Protecting the existing built environment

- 6.2.13. Reference to Cambridgeshire County Council's "Historic Environment Record" [Ref 25] and "Historic Assets of Grafham and Ellington" [Ref 22] will be of assistance in identifying archaeological sites of likely significance.

Policy GENP 2 – Protecting Heritage Assets

The significance of heritage assets and their settings shall be celebrated and preserved or enhanced through retaining any key features that show their past use.

A development proposal affecting a heritage asset or its setting is required to:

1. Demonstrate that it is sympathetic to the asset(s) in terms of scale, materials and architectural distinctiveness and will not adversely affect the setting of the asset;
2. Be accompanied by archaeological investigations where relevant and in the event of significant and/or extensive remains being found, they shall be preserved in-situ; and
3. Ensure every effort is made to retain and conserve heritage assets, especially historic farmsteads and other traditional rural buildings, including their contribution to the rural landscape, through allowing sensitive conversions and regeneration proposals where appropriate.

6.3. Small-scale Residential Development

- 6.3.1. There are 252 occupied dwellings in the parish of Grafham and 231 in Ellington. The large majority are located within the villages whilst the remainder are spread around the parishes, e.g. Ellington Thorpe.
- 6.3.2. Like many old villages, development initially occurred slowly over many centuries and resulted in a stock of very individualistic housing. Recent developments over the last 40 years have tended to be medium scale and of a similar type. However, the parishes remain rural in nature and housing at the edges blends well into the countryside which completely surrounds them and provides important separation, distinct from neighbouring settlements.
- 6.3.3. Protecting the separate identities of Grafham and Ellington is a key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan, and retention of this surrounding countryside is crucial to retaining the distinctiveness of the villages. Policy GENP 4 seeks to focus development within the built-up area boundaries, as defined in Figure 18 and Figure 19 – development in open countryside should not be permitted if it would have the effect of reducing the separate identities of Grafham and Ellington. In addition, the policies in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan pertaining to the impact of development in the countryside will apply to restrict any such development.
- 6.3.4. The Neighbourhood Plan Survey 2020 demonstrated broad satisfaction with the mix of houses currently available, reflecting the broad range of accommodation that residents enjoy across the two parishes.
- 6.3.5. The demographics of the villages reflect those of Huntingdonshire generally with the largest proportion of the population being of retirement age. (See § 5) There is no significant growth envisaged in the local population and very low levels of net migration are expected (based on this limited growth and the popularity of the parish with those already living there) – see Figure 21.

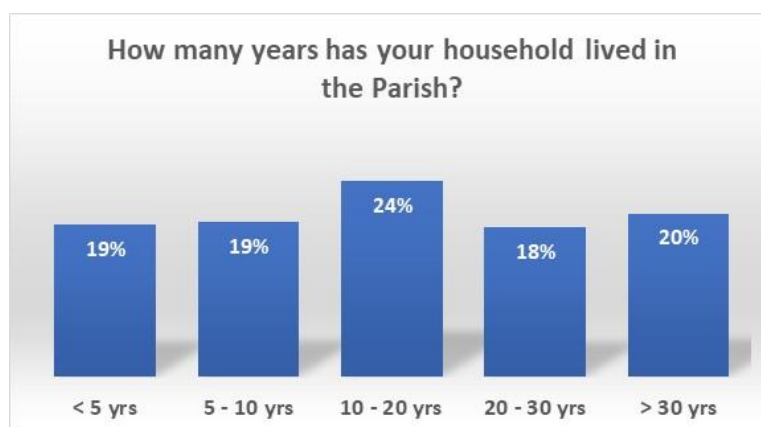


Figure 21: Number of years spent living in the parish

- 6.3.6. The survey identified a preference for “small family homes (2/3 bedrooms)” and “low cost starter homes to own”, as shown in Figure 24, making house purchasing more affordable, particularly for young families. Albeit only to be built by infilling (52% agreed) or in clusters of 10 houses or fewer (31% agreed) (see Figure 22).
- 6.3.7. There is also some preference for dwellings that suit the needs of older people, as indicated by support for bungalows, retirement homes, sheltered accommodation and homes for disabled people – see Figure 24. Some residents may want to be able to downsize as they get older but not be forced to move out of the village. Having a stock of smaller properties for downsizing also means that these older people will be more willing to move and release their larger properties back to the housing stock in order that they become family homes again. The age profile shown in Figure 23 further supports this premise.
- 6.3.8. Whilst neither the Local Plan nor the Neighbourhood Plan allocate sites for development in either village, it is expected that there will be windfall sites that come forward over the plan period. It is important that they are of a suitable scale to be in keeping with the parishes and the villages.
- 6.3.9. To reflect the small scale of Grafham and Ellington villages any proposal for an entry level exception homes to meet the needs of first time buyers and renters should be limited to a maximum of 5% of the existing parish housing stock over the life of this Neighbourhood Plan. This reflects the wishes of the residents, as shown in Figure 22 and Figure 24.

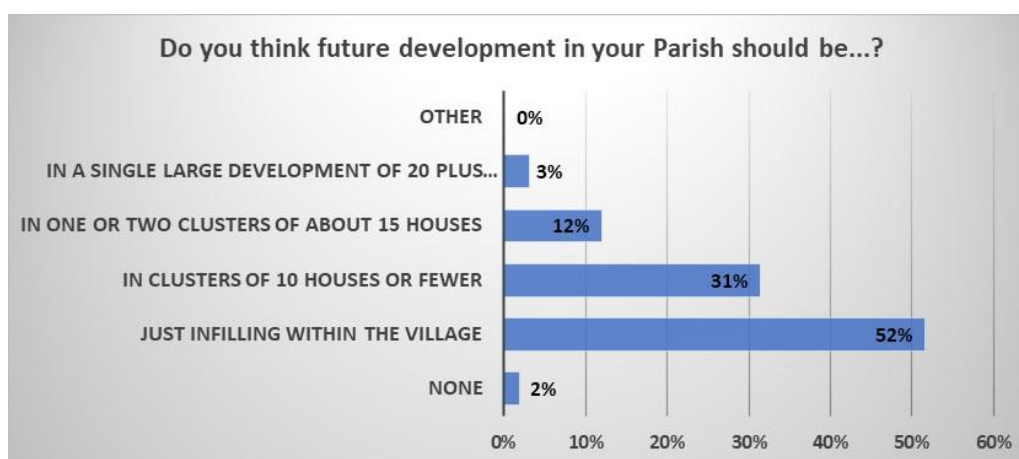


Figure 22: Preference for scale of any future developments

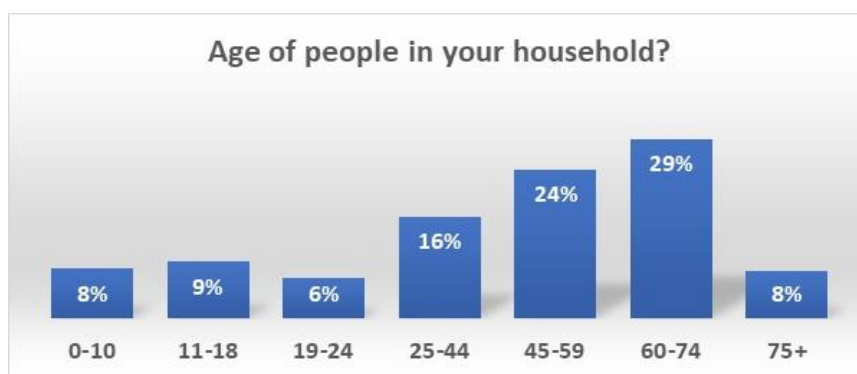


Figure 23: Age profile of residents

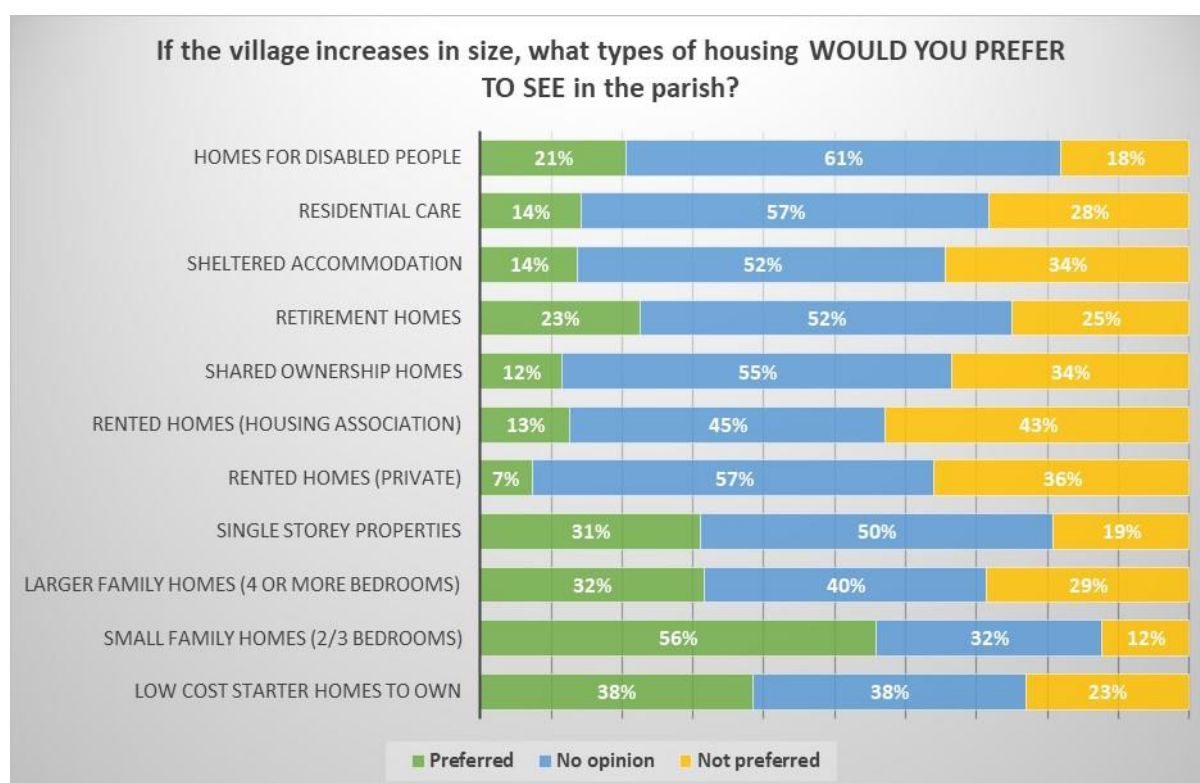


Figure 24: Preference for types new housing

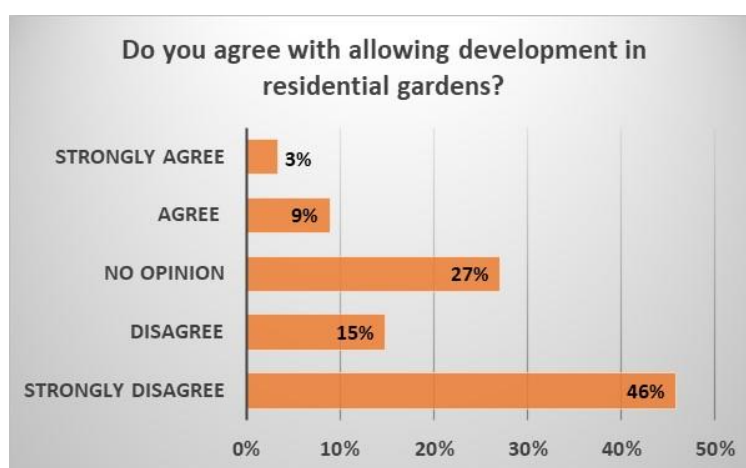


Figure 25: Acceptability of development in gardens

- 6.3.10. The Neighbourhood Plan Survey showed that residents are strongly against housing development in the gardens of existing properties, as can be seen in Figure 25. Thus, where infill development does occur, it is essential that it does not detract from the character of existing housing or adversely impact on adjacent properties. Proper access for waste collection and delivery services is required. Back land or tandem development must therefore provide the proposed property a full frontage, the width of property, onto the highway.
- 6.3.11. Note: As this Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for examination before 28th December 2021, Policy GENP 3 does not need to reflect the First Homes requirement as per the transitional arrangements (PPG First Homes Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 70-018-20210524).

Policy GENP 3 – Affordable Housing

A proposal for an affordable housing scheme comprising homes with 2/3 bedrooms will be supported where the number of homes is justified by an up-to-date local housing needs survey. To reflect the small scale of Grafham and Ellington villages any proposal for housing on an entry-level housing site shall be limited to a maximum of 5% of the housing stock in the parish within which it is located. A proposal must be on land within or well related to the identified built-up areas of Grafham or Ellington, appropriate to the rural setting and respect the character of the village, the countryside and wider landscape including views in and out of the area.

Policy GENP 4 – Minor Residential Development Proposals

Well designed residential sites for a maximum of 9 homes within the built-up area will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they will not have a material detrimental effect on the surrounding area and neighbouring properties and the full width of the proposed property frontage will be on to an adopted highway.

Where the proposal involves back land or tandem development in gardens of existing properties it will only be supported where it will not cause material loss of amenity of neighbouring properties including through loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion by a building or structure, loss of car parking, loss of mature vegetation or landscape screening and additional traffic resulting from the development.

The impact of such windfall development will be incorporated into the ongoing monitoring and review process.

6.4. Employment, the Local Economy and Tourism

Employment Overview

- 6.4.1. 50% of residents were economically active at the time of the survey and of those in employment the majority work outside of the two parishes, with 77% commuting 2 or more miles to work.

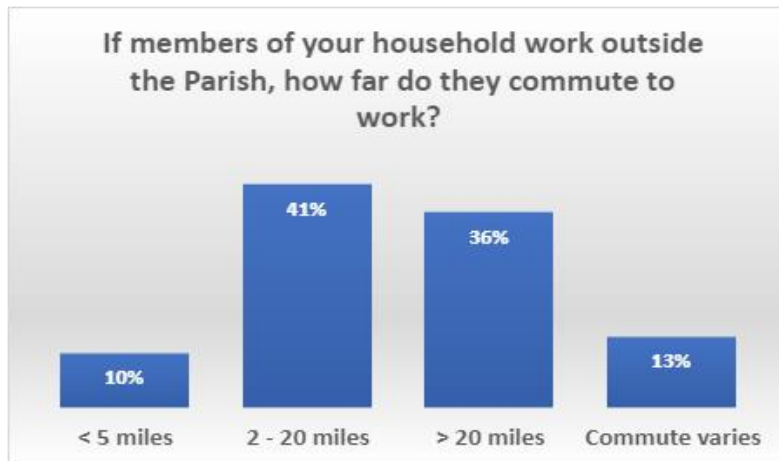


Figure 26: Commuting distances

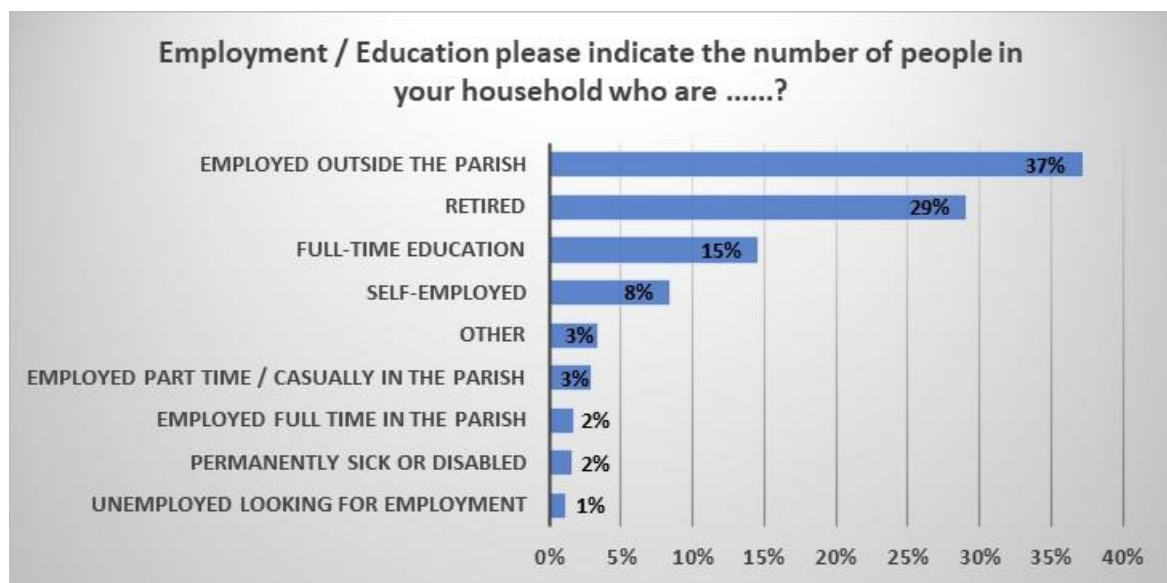


Figure 27: Employment profile

- 6.4.2. However, it is evident that of those in employment, the nature of their work and the use of technology is enabling people to choose to work from home more often, for all or part of their working week.

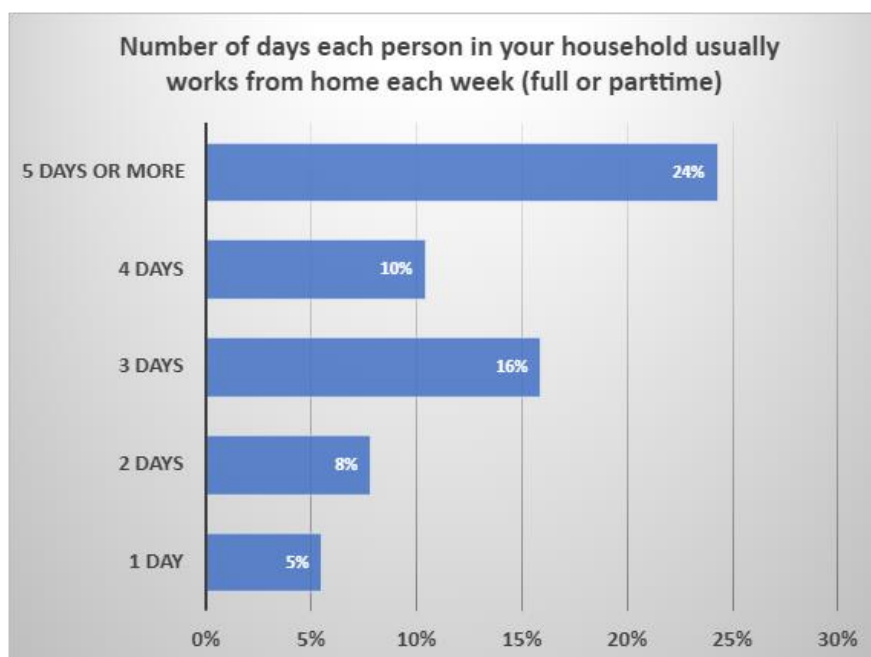


Figure 28: Working from home

Local Business Overview

- 6.4.3. Some 69 diverse, mainly small businesses operate from the two parishes.
- 6.4.4. Agriculture and agricultural services reflect the rural aspect of our location, whilst the provision of small business units at Brook Farm Ellington and excellent road links support a wide variety of businesses ranging from warehousing to manufacturing. Grafham Water also draws a significant number of visitors to the area, supporting businesses linked to the reservoir as well as local services, such as The Mermaid Inn at Ellington and Grafham's community run pub and village shop.

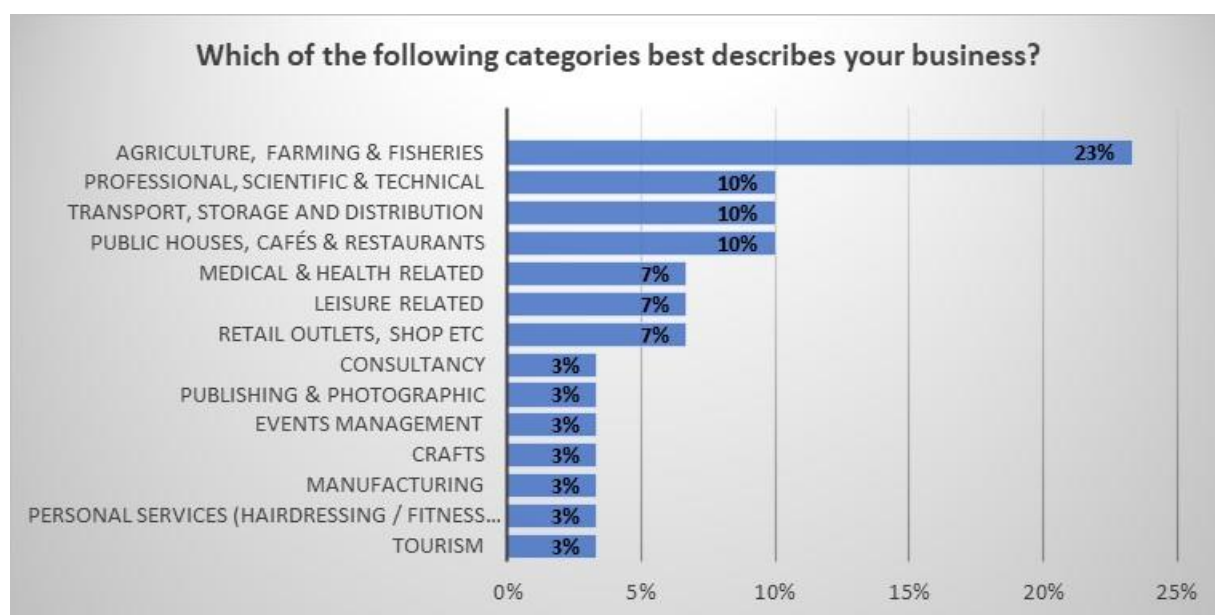


Figure 29: Business categories

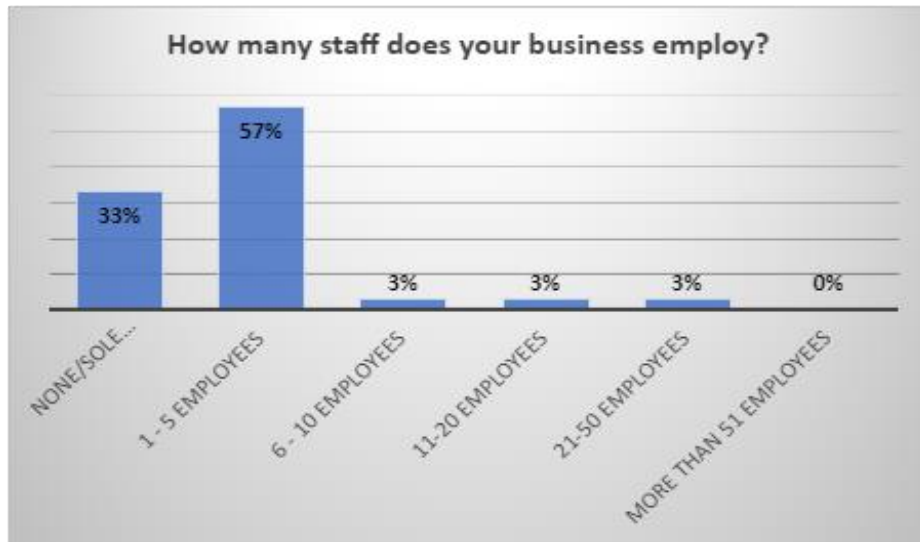


Figure 30: Number of employees

- 6.4.5. The businesses employing more than 10 people are: in Ellington; Oak Bank Game and Conservation, Ben Burgess Farm Equipment, Buffaload Logistics and Hill House Care Home and in Grafham; Rutland Cycling and Anglia Water's Visitor Centre.

Supporting the Local Economy - Business

- 6.4.6. When asked via the local business questionnaire, some 50% of our local businesses stated that they expected to expand over the next 5 years, and of these 68% would do so within the two parishes. Several businesses quoted the excellent transport links for basing themselves and planning to expand in the area, with the owner of the Brook Farm industrial units also stating that "the proximity of the A14 will always mean the area is attractive for business use."
- 6.4.7. Whilst 70% of businesses who responded to the survey stated there were no constraints to their operation from being based in the parishes, there were several opportunities highlighted which the Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies will support.
- 6.4.8. These can be categorised as:
- Available premises for new start-ups and to "grow into."
 - Improved Broadband.
 - Improved networking opportunities.
 - Improvements to the local postal service, particularly collections from business premises.
 - Improvements to the local bus and train timetables to assist employees and customers who don't have or wish to use private cars.
 - A shop in Ellington.
 - Improved car parking arrangements in the villages to ensure access.

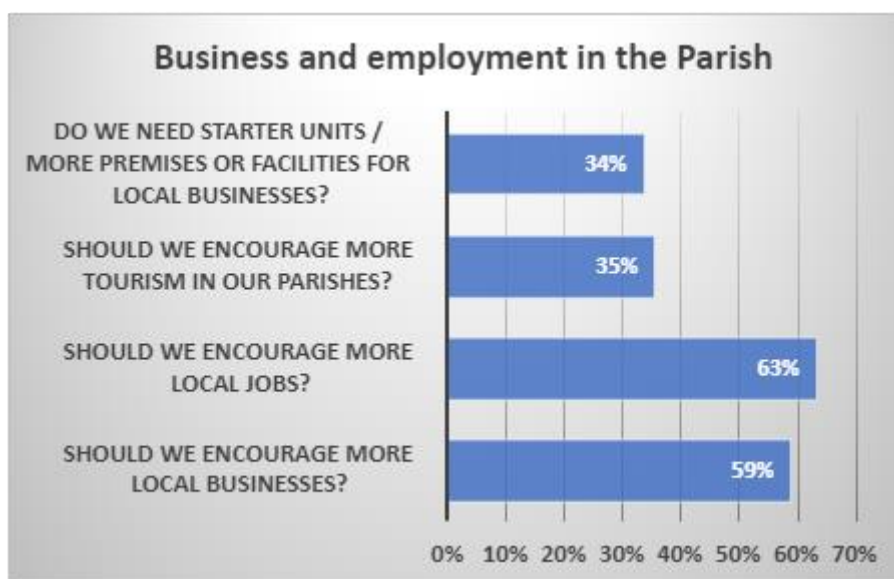


Figure 31: Residents preferences for business development

- 6.4.9. The local community is also very supportive of encouraging local business and employment in the area, albeit mindful that it doesn't detract from the rural nature of the area, this is reflected in Policy GENP5. Brook Farm is a key source of employment; therefore, it has been identified as a Local Employment Area (see Figure 32). Policy GENP5 seeks to support the continued use of the area as an important source of local employment.

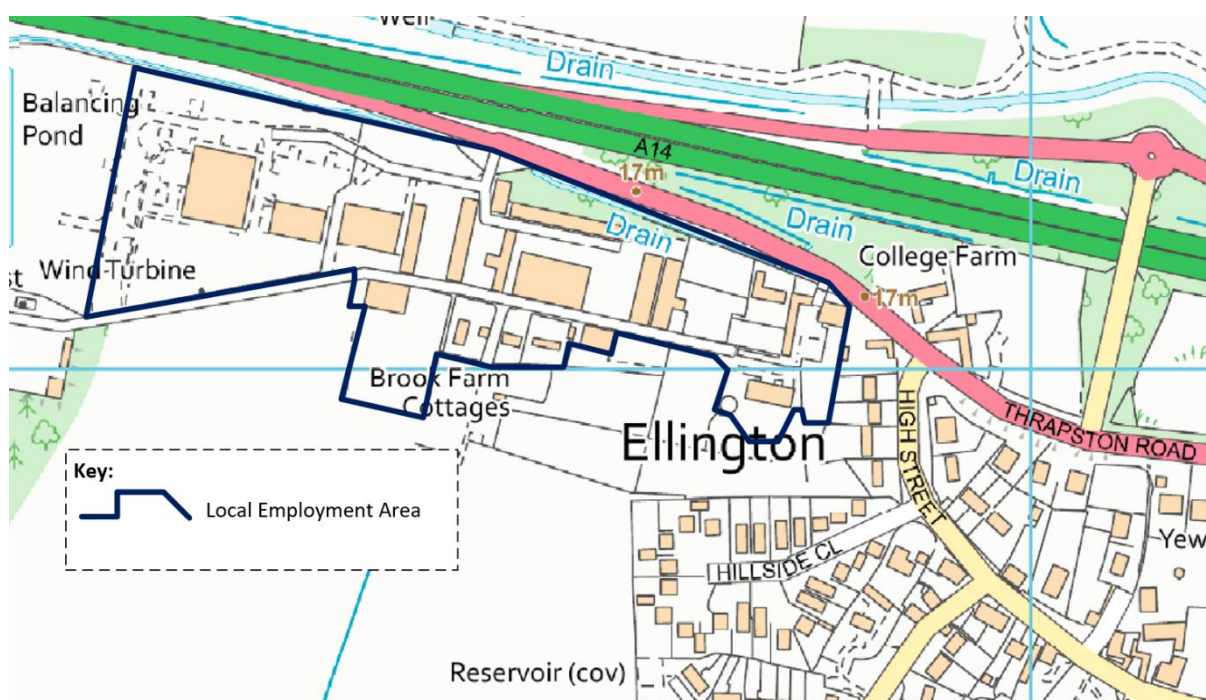


Figure 32: Local Employment Area

Policy GENP 5 – Supporting the Local Economy

Proposals for commercial, business and service uses (Class E) will be supported within the built-up area where they are of a scale to serve local needs and will not have a material detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. Proposals are particularly encouraged that provide suitable space for start-up or incubator businesses that develop the parishes' agricultural base or that provide local scale retail provision.

Brook Farm Local Employment Area

Brook Farm is identified as a Local Employment Area for which the existing boundary is outlined in Figure 32. Development proposals located within the Local Employment Area will be supported where they reinforce its role in providing local employment, are appropriate to the rural setting, and will not have material detrimental impacts on the amenity of nearby properties. Any proposal shall also demonstrate that expected traffic can be safely accommodated on the highway network.

Outside of the built-up areas

A proposal for new development, or the expansion of an existing business, outside the built-up areas of Grafham and Ellington, will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that there are operational requirements for a countryside location and the scale, character and siting of the proposed use will not have a detrimental impact on the countryside or the amenity of nearby properties. Any proposal shall also demonstrate that expected traffic can be safely accommodated on the highway network.

Supporting the Local Economy - Tourism

- 6.4.10. In addition to its primary role of supplying water to thousands of homes, Anglian Water's waterpark is a wonderful resource for the public, offering people of all ages and abilities the chance to spend time outdoors, enjoying a variety of pursuits – from fishing and sailing to walking, cycling, wildlife watching and more. It is England's third largest reservoir can be found nestled in 1,500 acres of beautiful countryside.
- 6.4.11. Grafham Water has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest for over 30 years. Its western end features a 280-acre nature reserve and is home to ancient woodlands, reed beds and important populations of several bird and amphibian species.
- 6.4.12. There are several businesses that support the large number of annual visitors (over 300,000), such as Rutland Cycling, Rumble Live Action Gaming and two campsites within Grafham and several B&B facilities, along with Anglian Water's Visitor Centre. Visitors also utilise the Grafham community shop and pub, enhancing their trade and financial viability.
- 6.4.13. There are several car parks, with the main one located at the visitor centre, in Grafham. Most visitors use the car parks, but a significant number prefer not to pay the "high prices" charged by Anglian Water and so park within the village of Grafham, which at times causes significant access issues to residents.
- 6.4.14. The survey identified that only some 35% of residents felt we should encourage more tourism in our parishes.

- 6.4.15. The Local Plan [Ref 1] includes provision for growth in tourism and recreation under its policy LP23 – the relevant section is included in § 4.5. LP23 also references LP3 – the relevant section is included in § 4.4.

Policy GENP 6 – Tourism
The expansion of existing tourist, recreation or leisure facilities will be supported as will a proposal for the creation of new sustainable tourist, recreation or leisure facilities where identified needs are not met by existing facilities.
A proposal for new or expanded tourism, recreation or leisure facilities is required to demonstrate that all possible efforts have been taken to avoid harm on the Grafham Water SSSI and other designated nature sites and habitats and not cause harm to the countryside, resident amenity and to heritage assets and their setting. If harm is unavoidable, it must be minimised as much as possible and then mitigated.
Any such expansion would also need to include sufficient parking within the site to ensure there is no material detrimental impact on access and street parking within the village. And also ensure there is appropriate access by multi-use paths (see Policy GENP 9).

6.5. The Green Agenda

National and Local Government Policy

UK Government

- 6.5.1. The Government has set a statutory target using the Climate Change Act 2008 for at least a 100% reduction of UK greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (compared to 1990 levels). It is known as a net zero target because some emissions can remain if they are offset (i.e. by removal from the atmosphere and/or by trading in carbon units). If met, this target would effectively mean the UK would end its contribution to global emissions by 2050. [Ref 6]

Cambridgeshire County Council

- 6.5.2. Our vision is to deliver net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050 in partnership with all stakeholders, whilst supporting our communities and Cambridgeshire's biodiversity and environmental assets to adapt and flourish as our climate changes.



<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/climate-strategy>

Huntingdonshire District Council

- 6.5.3. HDC's Local Plan policy LP2 is to: "..... Protect the character of existing settlements and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside; Conserve and enhance the historic environment; and Provide complementary green infrastructure enhancement and provision to balance recreational and biodiversity needs and to support climate change adaptation." [Ref 1].

Grafham Parish Council

- 6.5.4. The PC has an Environmental Policy which supports a green agenda [Ref 7].

Support for Zero Carbon Initiatives

- 6.5.5. Support for preserving the nature of our villages is very high according to the Residents Survey.

- 6.5.6. Residents often commented in the Survey about the environment, for example:

I would like to see all decisions from this questionnaire being made with consideration of their environmental impact. My priority is wanting to protect and increase the wildlife locally, and to have affordable renewable energy.

Given the Climate Crisis I believe more should be done locally via the Parish Councils to encourage activity to reduce the community's carbon footprint and to work with local landowners to protect and encourage wildlife.

were two of the comments.

- 6.5.7. People do care about the environment. Indeed, no doubt encouraged by government incentives, our survey revealed that residents are prepared to invest in renewable technology. 9% of houses have solar panels and 5% of people have air source heat pumps. 78% of people thought it was important or very important to promote group buying schemes to improve the quality of the existing built environment (e.g. installing insulation, solar panels, air/ground source heating).

Domestic Heating

- 6.5.8. Domestic energy consumption accounts for 28.9% of UK total [Ref 9] and of that, 78.4% is used for domestic space and water heating [Ref 10]. Thus, approximately 23% of UK energy consumption is used for domestic heating.
- 6.5.9. As shown by the Resident Survey 81% of homes in Ellington and Grafham are heated by Oil. There is no mains gas in the Neighbourhood Area.

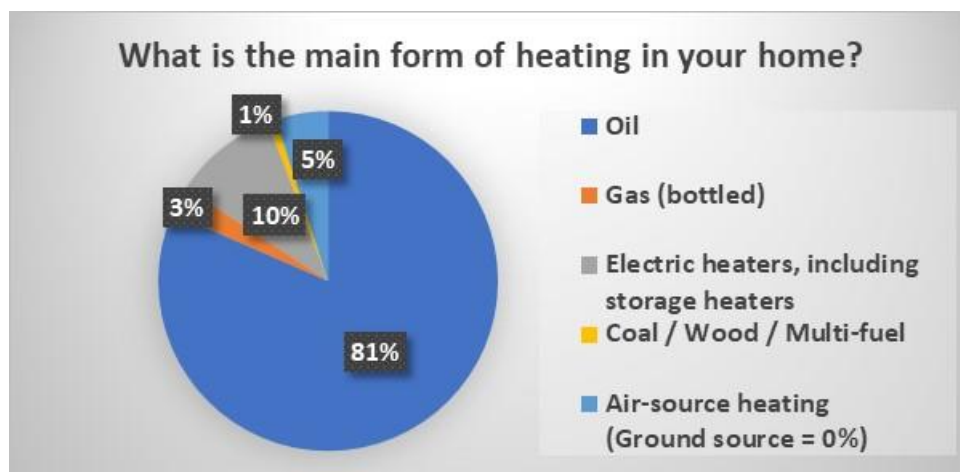


Figure 33: Means of household heating

- 6.5.10. It also should be noted that the survey found that 29% of the population was retired and 34% of the working population spent 4 or more days a week working from home, as shown in Figure 28. A substantial number of homes will therefore be heated during the day.
- 6.5.11. Clearly if the government is to meet its 2050 zero carbon initiative, then the decarbonisation of heating has to be tackled and the Government has announced its Clean Growth Strategy [Ref 8] to “phase out the installation of high carbon fossil fuel heating in new **and existing buildings** in areas off the gas grid, during the 2020s”.³
- 6.5.12. Providing an affordable low carbon alternative to oil heating for our villages is therefore an important priority.
- 6.5.13. If more households adopt air-source heat-pumps there is likely to be an impact on the capacity of the electric power network and so it is assumed that UK Power Networks will ensure there is sufficient capacity, in order to meet the government’s objectives.
- 6.5.14. At the time of writing, Grafham together with Perry and Great Staughton (villages situated round Grafham Water) are in the process of assessing a ground or water source district heating scheme. More details can be found on the website [Ref 11].

Policy GENP 7 – Zero Carbon Initiatives

All development proposals shall minimise their energy, water and resource consumption and, where possible, exceed the minimum standards set by legislation.

The transition from fossil fuel heating systems to low carbon alternatives will be supported.

New developments shall provide sufficient space for recycling and composting containers in order to encourage recycling and composting through the District Council schemes or home composting for garden use.

³ Item 18 of the “Key Policies and Proposals in the Strategy” in the Clean Growth Strategy.

6.6. Zero Carbon Transport

- 6.6.1. As described in § 6.5, the Residents Survey indicated that there is a desire to see improved cycle routes and public transport. The survey also indicates some 34% of those employed worked from home. Following the pandemic, it is likely that more people will work at least some days from home and the extent of work to home journeys will reduce.
- 6.6.2. By 2035 the Government proposes to ban the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars in the United Kingdom. At the moment it would seem that electric car (EV) technology will power our personal transport.
- 6.6.3. At the moment, only 1% of residents have an electric vehicle (another 3% have hybrids) and 4% of households have a charging point. However, it would seem that 80% of residents park their car on a drive or in a garage or carport making the installation of a charging point possible.
- 6.6.4. The advent of electric cars is likely to have an impact on the capacity of the electric power network and so it is assumed that UK Power Networks will ensure there is sufficient capacity, in order to meet the government's objectives. There are also proposals being developed to use the capacity of car batteries as storage to smooth peaks and troughs of renewable power generation.
- 6.6.5. The issues and aspirations identified in this section will also be supported through the Community Action Plan [Ref 21].

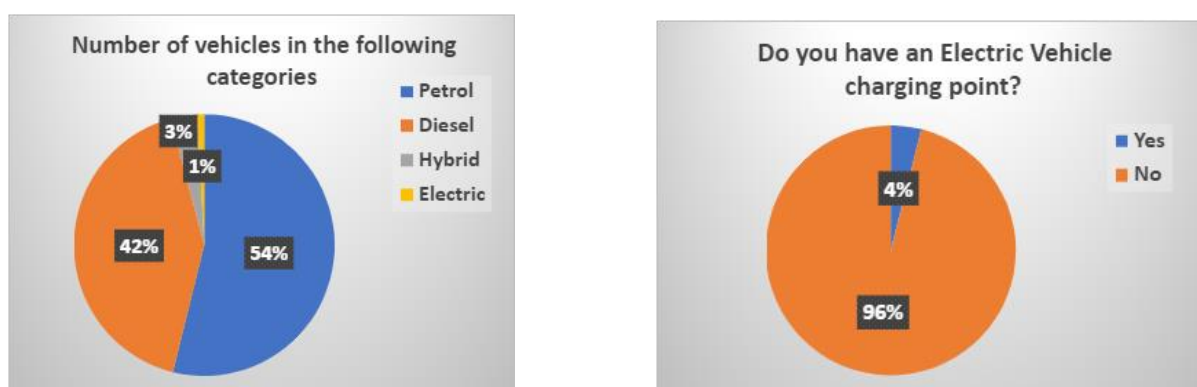


Figure 34: Types of vehicle and EV charging

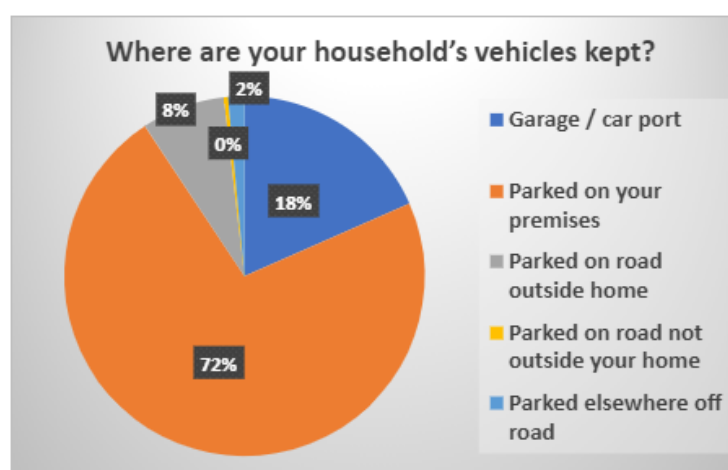


Figure 35: Parking of vehicles

Policy GENP 8 – Electric Car Infrastructure

A proposal that provides electric vehicle charging points that are available to the community and visitors will be supported.

A proposal for new developments which include EV charging points that are appropriate to the scale and nature of the development concerned will be supported.

6.7. Traffic and Transport

Footpaths and Cycle Routes

- 6.7.1. There is a good network of footpaths within the parishes, but with some specific limitations that need addressing (see Pedestrian Hazards later in this section). The cycle routes are very limited and the community feels strongly that this should be improved both for use by residents and by the tourists that are attracted to the area.
- 6.7.2. Children are particularly affected by the inadequacy of safe cycle routes, which they would like to use for access to school, leisure activities and visiting friends. Currently only 8% of children are cycling on a daily basis (to school) and 31% either rarely or never cycle. The large majority (71%) of parents/guardians would encourage their children to cycle more if the cycle routes were safer.
- 6.7.3. This Neighbourhood Plan supports the growth of active travel, as it is beneficial to not just the environment but to health and wellbeing.

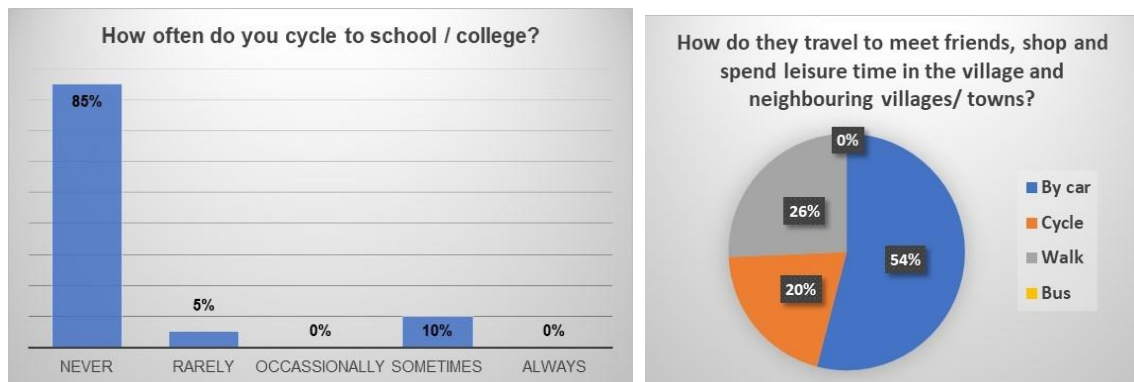


Figure 36: The need for improved cycle routes for children

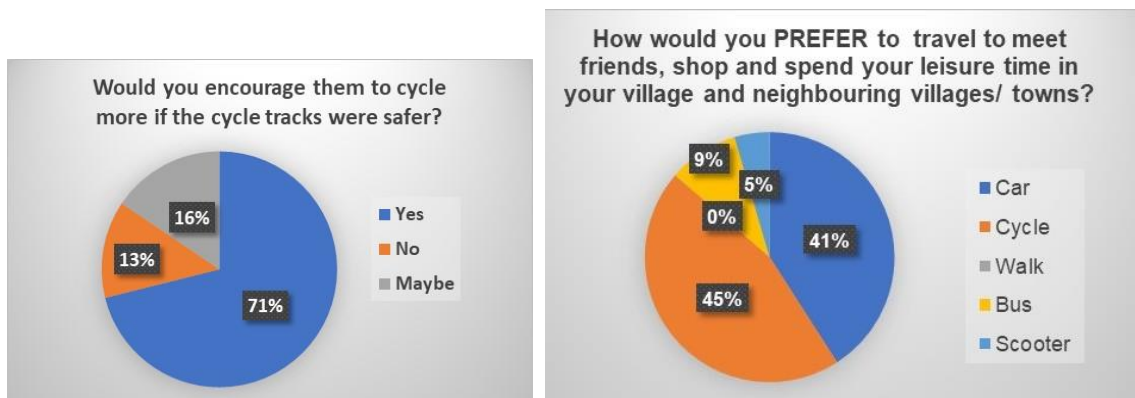


Figure 37: Preferred means of transport for young people

Bus Services

- 6.7.4. There is a very limited regular bus service through the villages, serving the needs of school transport and providing transport for recreational, medical, shopping, etc. for a small minority of residents, as indicated in Figure 38.
- 6.7.5. The low use may be due to the inadequacy of the service (Figure 39) or a preference for the flexibility of cars. It is particularly noticeable that the bus service is considered quite unsuitable for commuting.
- 6.7.6. A significant percentage (23%) would like to see the bus service improved and presumably then make greater use of it.
- 6.7.7. The survey identified a need for earlier and later services for work and commuting, and older pupil school runs. There is some sadness at the loss of the periodic Peterborough and St Neots services.
- 6.7.8. This Neighbourhood Plan supports the growth of sustainable travel.

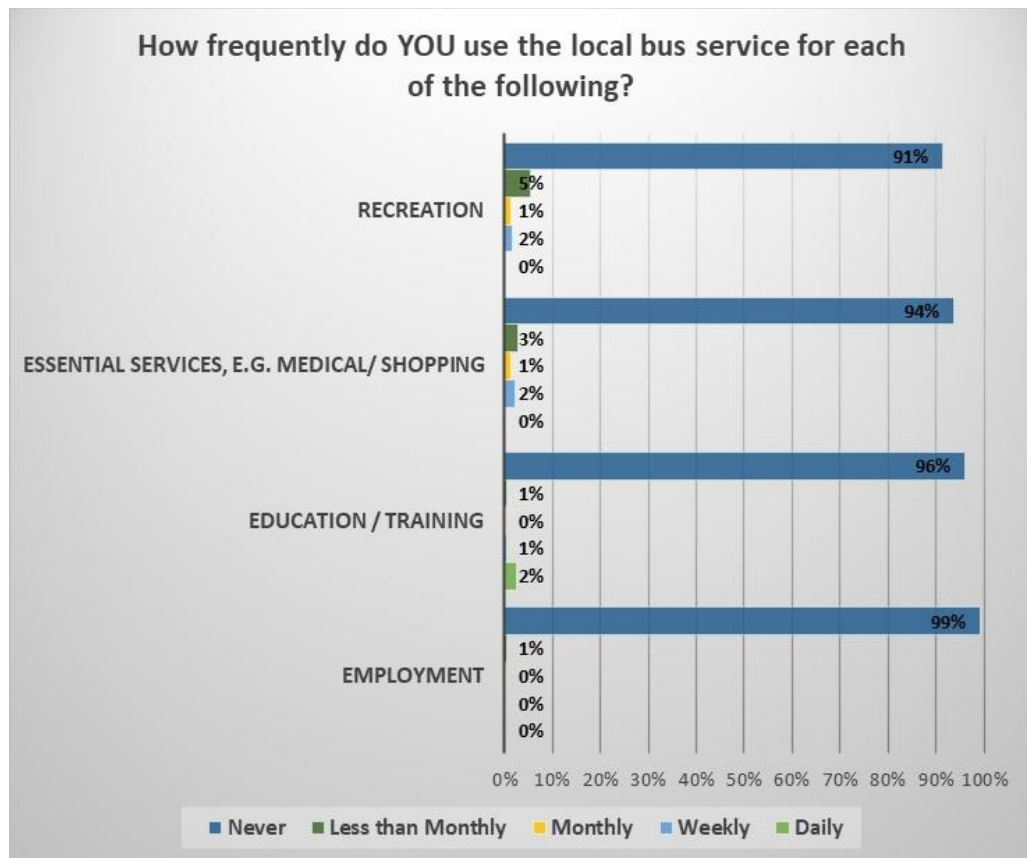


Figure 38: Usage of local buses

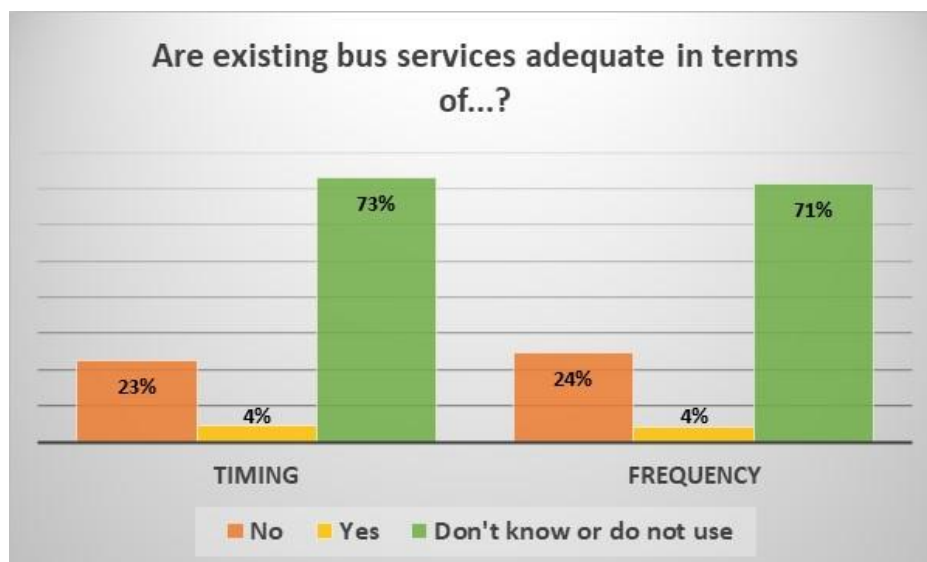


Figure 39: Adequacy of bus services

Road User Hazards

- 6.7.9. The most mentioned hazards are potholes and other road maintenance defects, along with car and HGV speeds on our local roads – including village roads such as Buckden Road in Grafham and Grafham Road in Ellington, along with speeding through Ellington Thorpe; the interaction of these speeds with the nature of the roads and the presence of cyclists and horse-riders have generated a high demand for lower speed limits on our rural and village roads.
- 6.7.10. In Grafham, the S-bend and junctions by the Old Schoolhouse are of particular concern, due to the poor visibility and speed of through traffic. There are also significant concerns about the hazards along the road to Brampton relating to the untrimmed hedges reducing visibility, particularly causing hazards to cyclists.
- 6.7.11. In Ellington the use of local roads by HGVs, and the use of the Ellington-Grafham-Buckden road as a short-cut to the A1 generating unwanted traffic, are of great concern.
- 6.7.12. The requests for investment in proper cycle tracks towards Brampton/Huntingdon are quite large, notably in Ellington where the motorised traffic on the upgraded A14 is even more dangerous to cyclists.
- 6.7.13. Vehicle parking is a problem of several facets – roads narrowed by properties not having on-site parking (St Peter's Way in Ellington, Breach Road and Orchard Row in Grafham), parking at road junctions blocking views of approaching traffic (High Street/Grafham Road in Ellington and Cedar Close/Breach Road in Grafham), and the perennial use of Grafham village for visitors to Grafham Water.

Pedestrian Hazards

- 6.7.14. The overwhelming demand seems to be for a proper footpath connecting the two villages, with the installation of footpaths along Ellington Green, with a pedestrian crossing leading towards the playing field at one end, and a proper footpath connecting the Cinnamon to Three Shires Way at the other end, having decided priority. There is some desire in Grafham for a new direct footpath from the village to the Anglian Water Visitor Centre at Marlow car park.

- 6.7.15. There are no footpaths by the side of the road through Ellington Thorpe. Visiting neighbours or using the post box can only be accessed by walking on the roadway in places where there is no grass verge. Residents walking with children, pushchairs, dogs or horses 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.
- 6.7.16. In Grafham village the main concern, as with cars and cycles, is the corner junctions by the Old Schoolhouse, which is seen as decidedly unsafe, and even requiring a pedestrian crossing.
- 6.7.17. Bad pavement condition, including cars parked on them, hedges growing over them, and holes in them, was a concern in both parishes, as was the speed of vehicles on the minor roads.
- 6.7.18. Traffic calming measures are being implemented on the southern edge of Grafham that should address some of the issues.

Policy GENP 9 – Multi-use paths
A proposal that enhances the footpath, cycleway or bridleway network within the neighbourhood plan area will be supported where it: • Extends public rights of way, enables opportunities to connect public rights of way into the wider public rights of way network or delivers new public rights of way in suitable locations; or • Develops links to other forms of sustainable transport such as bus or rail; or • Improves existing pavements to make them more accessible for all users including children and the disabled; or • Provides cycle routes which enable direct, convenient and safe connection to other routes, including a link between Ellington and Grafham and onwards to Grafham Water and Huntingdon.

- 6.7.19. The issues and aspirations identified in this section will also be supported through the Community Action Plan [Ref 21].

6.8. Natural Environment

- 6.8.1. Most of the Neighbourhood Area is rural, and contains substantial areas of farmland which contributes significantly to the character of the Parishes and the setting of the villages.
- 6.8.2. Grafham and Ellington are exceptionally rich in biodiversity due to their rural setting, plentiful green space, diverse wildlife habitats and connectivity to the wider ecological network, most notably, Grafham Water and its surrounds.
- 6.8.3. The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy [Ref 5] identifies Grafham Water as Target Area 3.1 within Strategic Area 3 (Great Ouse). This includes the ancient woodlands surrounding Grafham Water and linking the woodlands in this area (particularly Grafham to Brampton) are also important.

- 6.8.4. An extract from “Figure 4-5 Strategic Area 3” in the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy is given in Figure 40 to indicate the main themes for this Neighbourhood Area (Target Area 3.1). The Strategy states (on page 80):
- “Looking at the Strategy’s objectives there is a particular emphasis in the strategic area on Green Infrastructure reversing the decline in biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change, promoting sustainable growth and economic development, and supporting healthy living and well-being.”
- And in particular for Target Area 3.1:
- “Grafham Water and the circle of ancient woodlands around it provide a local biodiversity hotspot. The clusters of ancient woodland are one of the most important in the county and would benefit from the creation of linkages between the woods...”.
- 6.8.5. The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2007) [Ref 3] provides the basis for the Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure boundary. The Great Ouse Valley is also designated as a Green Infrastructure Priority Area in the HDC Local Plan [Ref 1].
- 6.8.6. Despite “The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy” [Ref 5] identifying Grafham Water as being within Strategic Area 3 (Great Ouse) (see Figure 40), the two parishes are predominately within, or surrounded by, the Southern Wolds Landscape Character Area. Which happens to border some of the Ouse Valley Character Area to the East, and have a small influence from the Northern Wolds, the Central Claylands and the Grafham Water Landscape Character Areas, according to the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2007) [Ref 3], which lists the nine district landscape character areas on page 16.
- 6.8.7. This Neighbourhood Plan 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 are protected, maintained and enhanced.
- 6.8.8. This Plan actively promotes the “conservation, restoration and enhancement of Priority Habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of Priority Species” as per 179 b) of the NPPF [Ref 2].
- 6.8.9. The NPPF recognises the local ecological networks and the hierarchy of designated sites. This Plan seeks to recognise all the designated areas and welcomes developments that enhance or extend ecological corridors connecting them.
- 6.8.10. Within the Neighbourhood Area there is only one nationally recognised Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Grafham Water, as shown in Figure 41. The purpose of Policy GENP 10 is to highlight those sites already designated and to provide a level of protection for non-statutory areas. This includes the three specific habitats recognised as County Wildlife Sites (CWS)⁴ within the Neighbourhood Area, to which the policy also aims to prevent harm through the direct and indirect impacts of development.

⁴ <http://www.cpbiodiversity.org.uk/county-wildlife-sites-group>

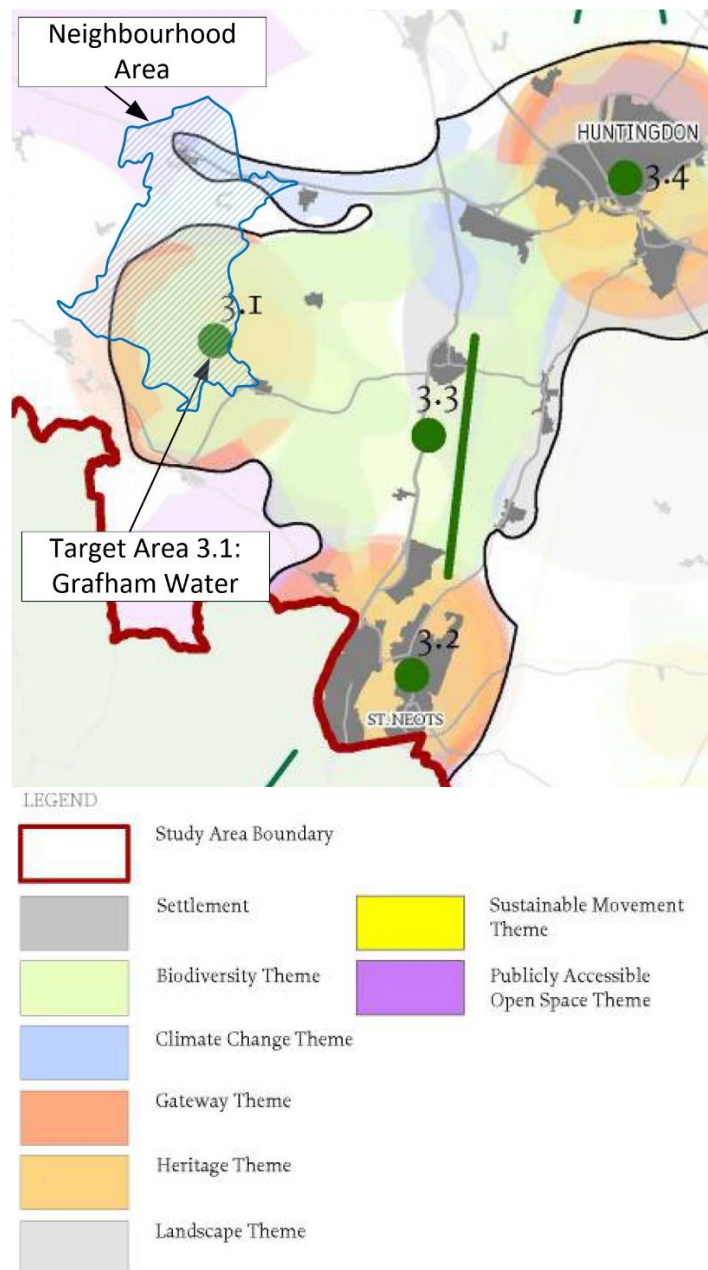


Figure 40: Green infrastructure strategy for this area

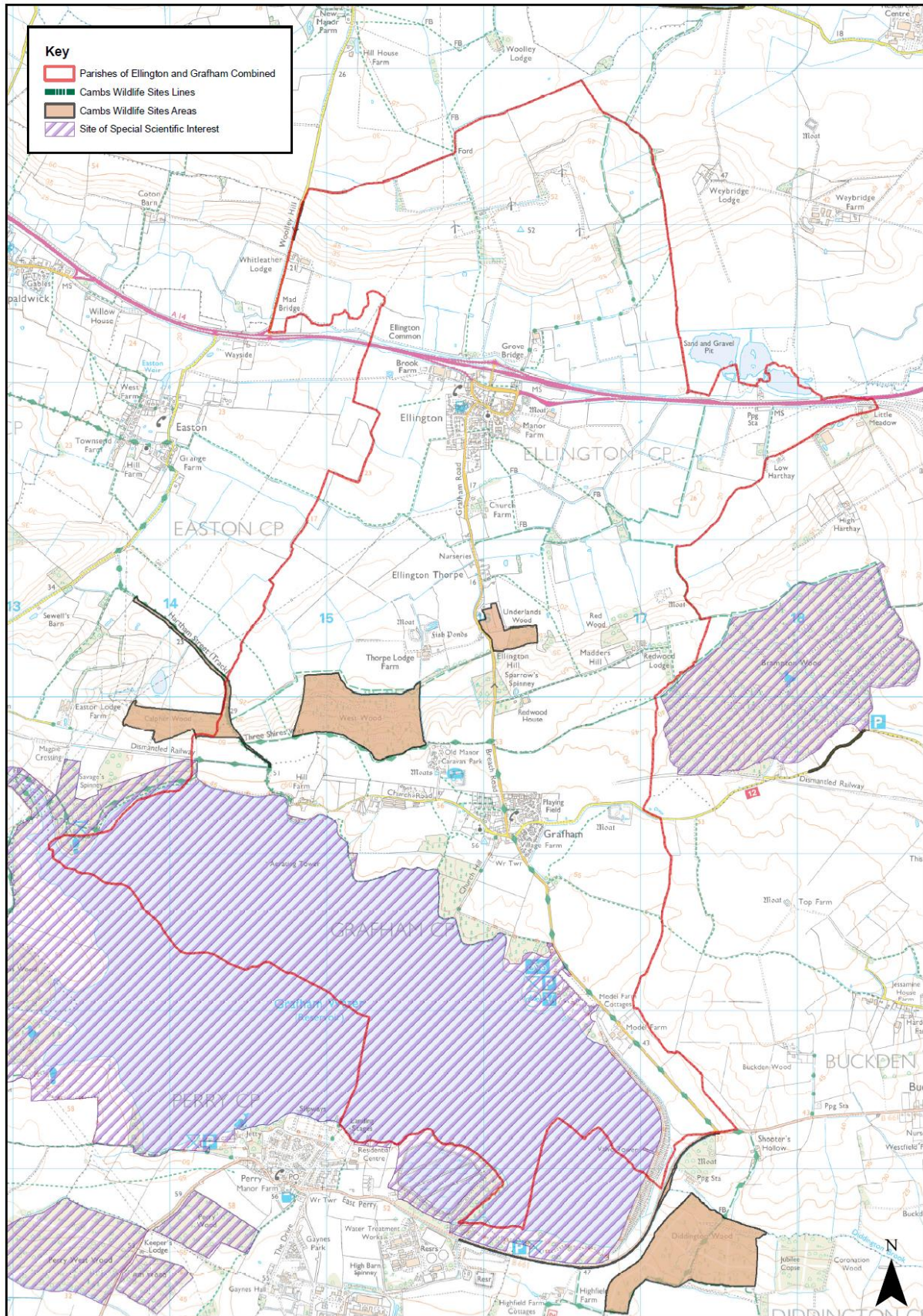


Figure 41: SSSI and County Wildlife Sites in Grafham and Ellington

- 6.8.11. The survey highlighted the importance of the natural environment and associated aspects, as shown Figure 42:

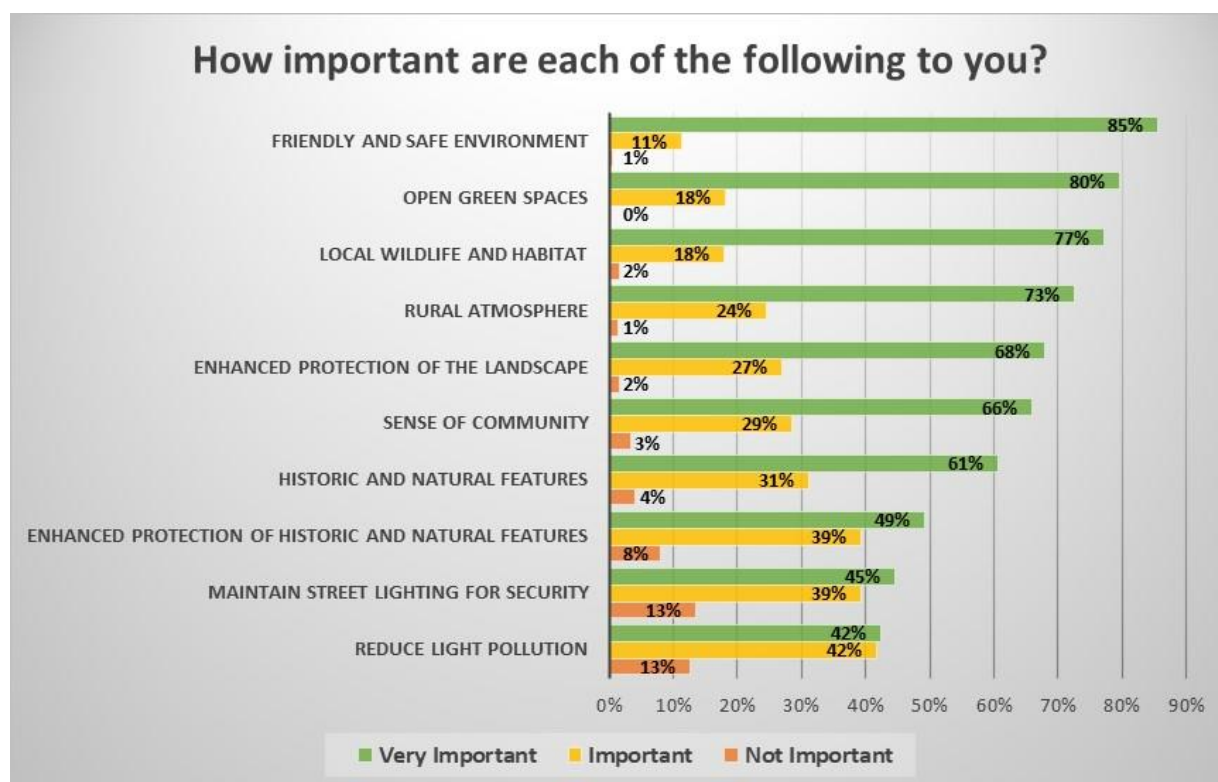


Figure 42: Importance of the natural environment and green spaces

Policy GENP 10 – Biodiversity and Natural Environment
All new development shall protect biodiversity and the natural environment and provide a biodiversity net gain and establish, enhance or extend ecological corridors and the connectivity between them. A proposal within the neighbourhood plan area on land within, adjoining or outside Grafham Water SSSI that is likely to have an adverse effect upon the SSSI or other protected nature sites and habitats, either individually or in combination with other developments, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that all possible efforts have been taken to avoid harm, if harm is unavoidable, it must be minimised as much as possible and then mitigated. Mitigation measures can include additional landscaping, habitat creation, tree planting or the reinstatement of features. Developers shall apply Natural England’s Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) tool [Ref 23], available via Magic [Ref 29], to identify potential risks, including recreational pressure, to SSSIs such as Grafham Water. Developments are to avoid adverse impact to such sites and the wider natural environment through application of the ecological mitigation hierarchy. Developments shall seek to deliver environmental enhancements having appropriate regard to the Nature Recovery Network [Ref 26], Natural Cambridgeshire’s “doubling nature” target [Ref 27], relevant aspirations in the NPPF and DEFRA’s 25-Year Environment Plan [Ref 28].

6.9. Community Facilities

6.9.1. The intentions of Policy GENP 11, in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan, are to ensure that there is maintenance and further development, when required of enough locations and places to meet the recreational, educational, social and cultural needs of the residents of the parish.

6.9.2. The following facilities are available and used by many residents, as illustrated by the residents survey (see Figure 43):



Grafham Facilities:

- Village Hall
- Community Shop
- Community Pub (The Grafham Trout)
- All-weather pitch – multi-use games area
- Playground, with facilities for young children and adults gym equipment
- Cinnamon Restaurant/take away
- Playing Field
- Church

Ellington Facilities:

- Village Hall
- The Mermaid Pub
- Recreation ground, with facilities for young children and adults gym equipment, plus a tennis court
- Church

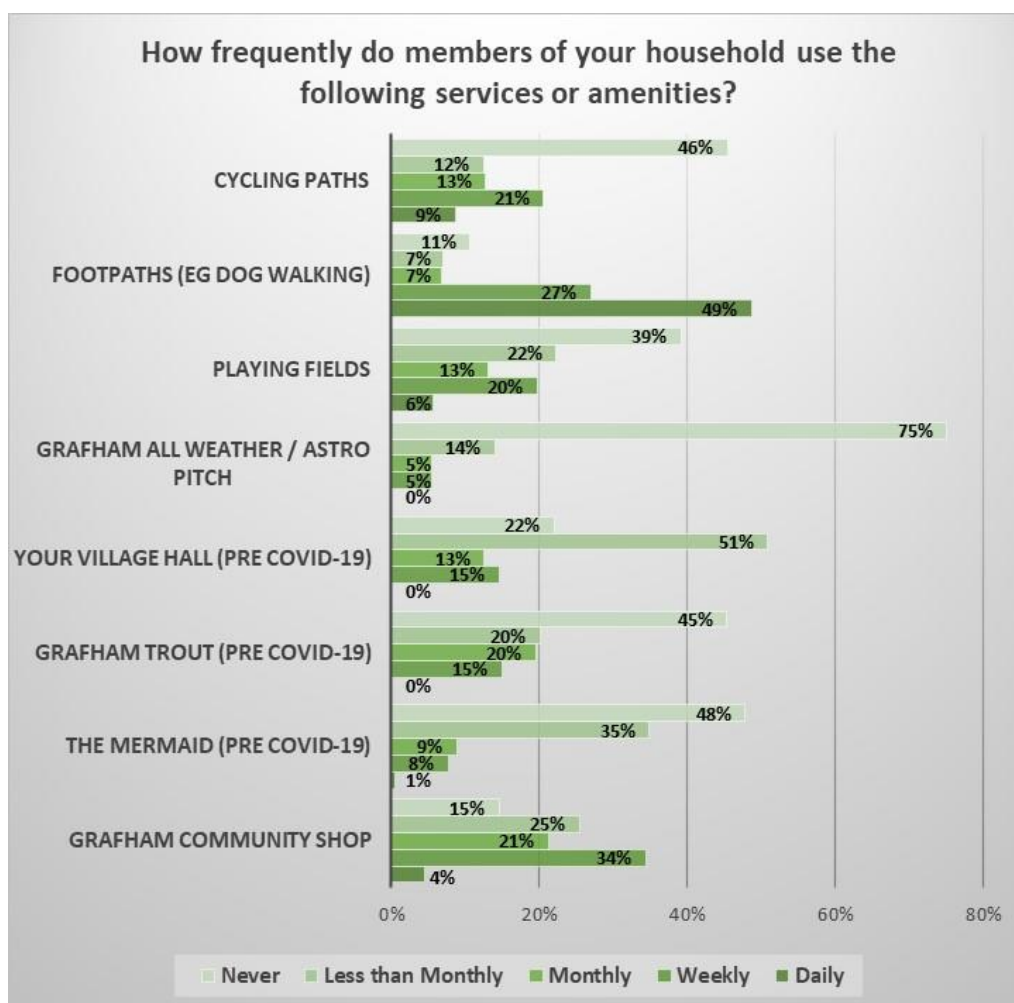


Figure 43: Use of facilities by all residents

- 6.9.3. The residents survey included a separate questionnaire for “young persons”, aged 13 – 19. And the survey also included a section for parents or guardians of children under 13 years to identify their usage of local facilities. The results for each age group are shown in Figure 44 and Figure 45 respectively.
- 6.9.4. In both villages, the playing fields are used regularly (at least monthly by 39% of respondents overall) football pitches / playing fields are clearly important to younger people in both villages with at least 65% using them at least monthly. This is clearly a facility which should be safeguarded. The Astro is important to our young people with nearly half stating they use this on at least a monthly basis from both villages.
- 6.9.5. The Playgrounds are clearly well used by our younger children with 60% using them on a daily or weekly basis (Figure 45).

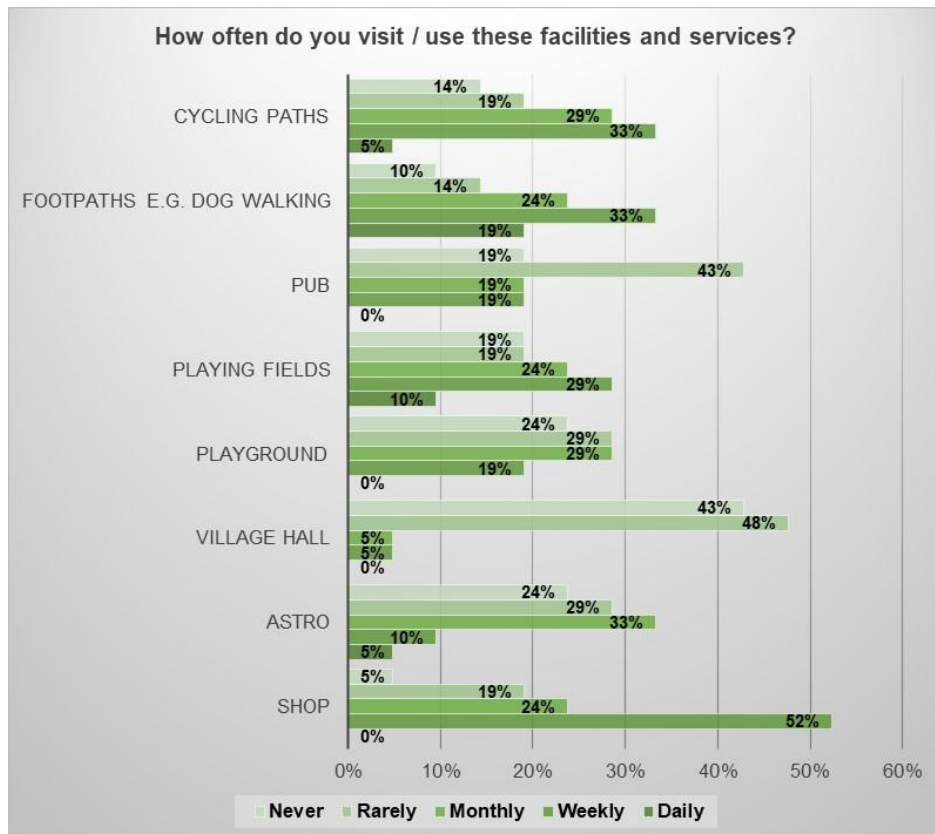


Figure 44: Use of facilities by teenagers

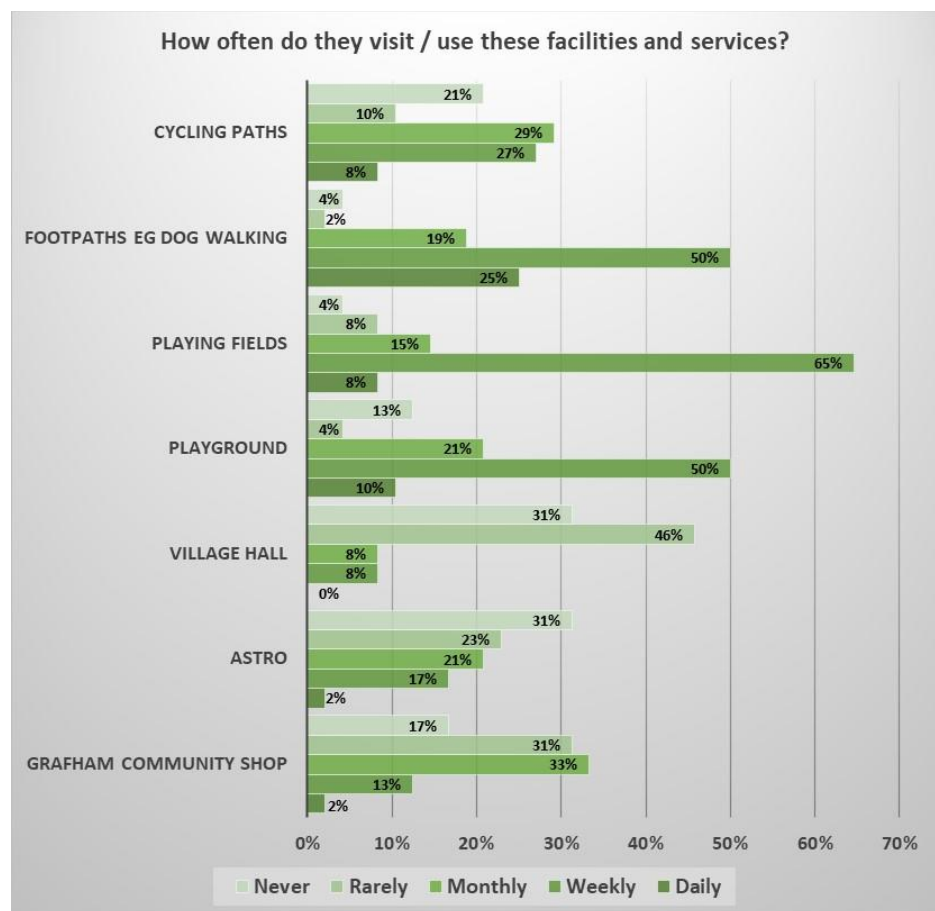


Figure 45: Use of facilities by children under the age of 13

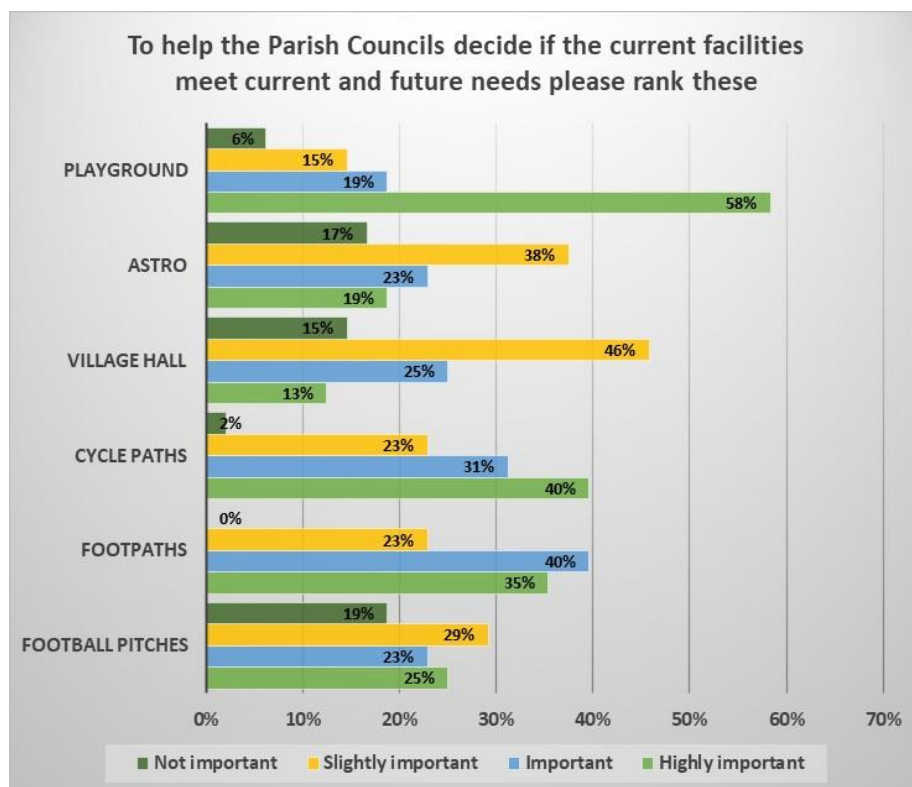


Figure 46: Importance of facilities by under 13-year-old children

- 6.9.6. There is also a strong desire in Ellington for the relaunched Mermaid Inn to succeed as a traditional village pub, and for it to be as well supported as the Grafham Trout community run pub and the Cinnamon restaurant in Grafham.

Community Activities

- 6.9.7. As shown later in this Plan (in Figure 42), 95% of residents believe that the sense of community was 'very important' or important to them and would clearly wish to ensure this remains. The rural atmosphere (97%) and the friendly safe environment (96%) are also highly valued by the vast proportion of the villagers.



- 6.9.8. This social environment leads to support for a wide range of activities and community events (pre Covid-19), including: the Annual Village Gala, Family Sports Day, Fireworks, Sports events e.g. Wimbledon finals, Rugby and FA Cup key matches, quiz nights, board games evenings, New Year celebration, Car Treasure Hunt, Cider and Sausages, Beer festival, Flower festival, Little Fishes, Women's Institute, Curry and Carols evening and Coffee mornings.



Provision of New/Enhanced Community Facilities

- 6.9.9. Enhancements to a range of community facilities has been identified as being needed by the community; see Figure 47 and Figure 48. It is also recognised that, over the plan period, it is likely that other new or larger facilities will also be needed. Furthermore, existing facilities will need replacing once their ongoing maintenance is no longer financially viable.
- 6.9.10. Therefore, Policy GENP 11 seeks to provide general support for the provision of such community facilities, as opposed to identifying a finite list or specific locations for the provision of such facilities. It is recognised that the funding of such facilities is constrained and that the limited amount of residential development in the parish means that developer contributions will also be limited. Therefore, it will be important that the local community uses its resources to lever in funds through grants and other means in order to fund the bulk of the cost of any new facility. It is therefore important, where appropriate, that the planning process does not provide costly and unnecessary delays in their subsequent provision.
- 6.9.11. Where appropriate, the use of private facilities to address the needs of the community and general public will be supported. In particular this could include the provision of public conveniences to serve the village.

Examples

- 6.9.12. There is a significant percentage of Ellington residents expressing a desire to open a food shop in the village to avoid driving into Grafham, St Neots or Huntingdon for food.



Figure 47: Improvements to facilities – Ellington residents

- 6.9.13. The Grafham Community Shop is used daily or weekly by 61% of Grafham residents and also by people from the surrounding villages. The shop building is in need of improvement and suggestions for a café, a meeting room and a public toilet were mentioned by residents.
- 6.9.14. A post office seems to be a facility over 40% of respondents from both villages would like to have access to more locally – once again to avoid unnecessary journeys. In both villages an interest has been shown to improve the village hall – this is particularly important to the residents of Ellington.



Figure 48: Improvements to facilities – Grafham residents

- 6.9.15. There are a number of activities that take part in the village halls such as yoga, the Art Club, Martial arts, etc., which it is anticipated will continue in the future. Some residents have expressed an interest in having more activities for retired people and 43% young

people expressed an interest in having a Youth Group in the villages. The Village Halls seem an obvious meeting point for these groups.

- 6.9.16. There is also a significant desire by younger people for a skatepark.
- 6.9.17. The "Huntingdonshire Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-21" [Ref 24] states in section 5.5 "Gaps in Provision" (page 34) lists Ellington as being a large enough settlement to support additional facilities yet has a gap in provision for grass pitches which is an obvious discrepancy in level of provision compared to similar settlements. This strategy, or any successor beyond 2021, should be considered in conjunction with this Neighbourhood Plan, and as part of any future development in the villages.
- 6.9.18. The issues and aspirations identified in this section will also be supported through the Community Action Plan [Ref 21].

Policy GENP 11 – Support and provision of community facilities
The loss of existing retail or other community services and facilities will be resisted unless alternative or enhanced provision is made elsewhere in suitable and accessible locations in the parishes or it can be demonstrated that the use is no longer viable. Where there is material evidence of the needs of residents, needs that would be met by the proposal, the provision of new or enhanced community facilities of an appropriate scale, within or on land immediately adjoining the built-up area, will be supported. These needs could relate to recreation, leisure, spiritual, social, education, medical and retail facilities. (See also Policy GENP 5.)

6.10. Designated Local Green Spaces

- 6.10.1. The “sense of place” and character of Grafham and Ellington is preserved by ensuring that the existing green spaces are protected from development.
- 6.10.2. As part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, the community was asked to consider if there were any important green open spaces of value in the Parishes. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect such sites.
- 6.10.3. Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to them. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF [Ref 2] says that Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:
 - “in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - 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
 - local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”
- 6.10.4. Whilst the villages have seen some development during the second half of the twentieth century, they retain a number of green spaces that contribute to their character and provide opportunities for informal and formal recreation. This policy wishes to see these important spaces are protected for future generations.

- 6.10.5. Public green spaces are vital community assets. They provide a wide array of benefits such as recreation, including formal sports and natural play facilities. They provide associated health benefits, space for hosting community activities, space for growing food in allotments and meeting the needs of wildlife; and, increasingly, providing for services such as flood attenuation and carbon capture.
- 6.10.6. This Plan seeks to protect Grafham's existing green spaces from development, other than for needs that are key to their function, by designating them as Local Green Spaces or Other Green Spaces.
- 6.10.7. Ellington's green spaces are mainly Registered Common – Common Land with Public Access. However, they are all privately owned and will not be designated as Local Green Spaces. Nonetheless, these green spaces remain very important to the local community and are identified within this Plan as Other Green Spaces.
- 6.10.8. Figure 49 shows the designated Local Green Spaces in Grafham and includes the playing field and a village playground with exercise equipment, plus Grafham's designated Village Green which runs along Church Road from Church Hill towards the Church. It also includes Meadowground, an "other green space" highly valued by the local community, which has been defended as such by HDC in support of local wishes.



Figure 49: Grafham's Green Spaces

- 6.10.9. Figure 50 shows the green spaces in Ellington. Ellington's green space runs along Grafham Road and includes an area near the Church. Also included is the village playing field with play and exercise equipment.



Figure 50: Ellington's Green Spaces

- 6.10.10. Public green spaces are often multifunctional and it is not always possible to achieve all aims in the one green space. For example, allotments, whilst often offering wildlife benefits if managed correctly tend not to be suitable for other community uses. In addition, recreation is sometimes incompatible with the needs of certain wildlife and meeting people's needs for space for quiet reflection. Any new green spaces in Grafham or Ellington should be designed to meet a range of distinct uses that are appropriate for the topography and the ecological significance of each site.
- 6.10.11. The criteria for each of the green spaces are provided in Appendix C.
- 6.10.12. Surrounding both villages floodplain habitats studded with open water, wetland woodland, scrub and grassland provide significant wildlife value to the area.
- 6.10.13. The countryside surrounding both villages is crucial in providing them with their rural character and reflecting its historic past. It is a well-defined semi-rural settlement with a

clear built-up form and boundaries. The character is derived from this separation and should be retained so that they remain settlements significantly removed from neighbouring villages.

- 6.10.14. Over one third of the respondents across both villages stated village and country life as the main reason for living in the Parish, as shown in Figure 51. The most mentioned benefit are the views over the fields which surround our villages followed by the panoramas from various viewpoints over Grafham Water. Long vistas from the top of hill slopes, the views of - and inside - woods, and enjoying the historic centres of our villages, also have significant scores.

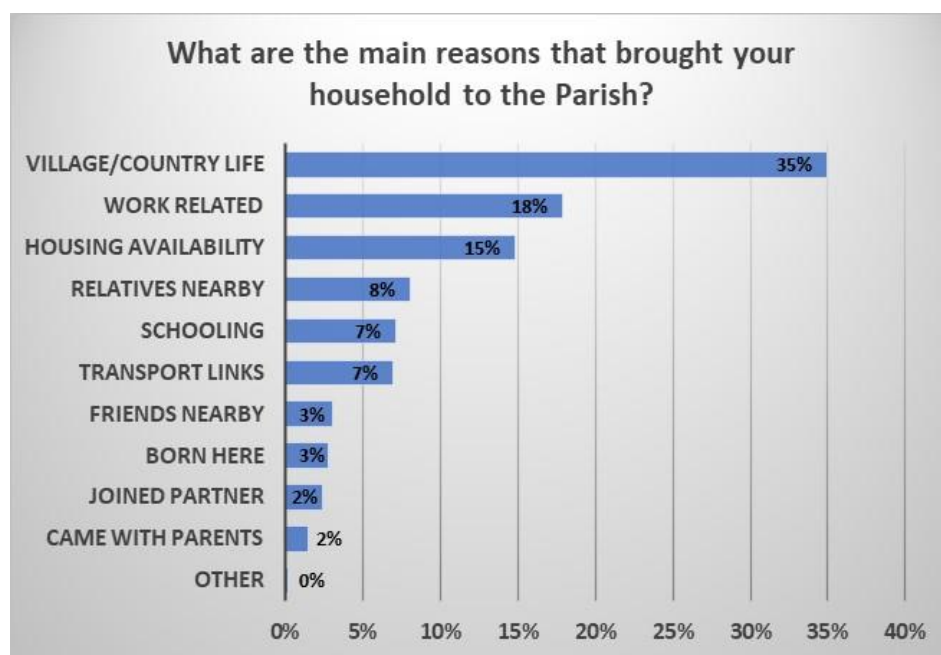


Figure 51: Main reasons for living in the Parish

- 6.10.15. Figure 42 highlights many of the aforementioned points in statistical form. The vast majority of topics having answers with a significant proportion as “very important”. Topics include open green spaces, historic and natural features, rural atmosphere, local wildlife and habitat, protection of the landscape, and so on.
- 6.10.16. Figure 43 highlights the popularity and use of many of the green spaces in both villages by their residents, along Figure 44 and Figure 45 for the younger members of the community. As shown for cycling and footpaths, playing fields and playgrounds, the percentage of people never using them is low and, cycle paths aside, all other spaces are used more on a daily basis than not. The spaces are used mostly on a weekly and monthly basis, as shown by the much larger percentages, including fifty percent or higher of people using playing fields, playgrounds and footpaths on a weekly basis.

Policy GENP 12 – Local Green Spaces
Grafham’s designated Local Green Spaces are set out in § 6.10 of this Neighbourhood Plan. Proposals shall be consistent with Green Belt policy as set out in the NPPF.
Grafham’s and Ellington’s Other Green Spaces listed in Appendix C are small scale public amenity, recreational and informal play spaces within the Parish that are important to the character of the village and it is expected that they be preserved as green spaces.

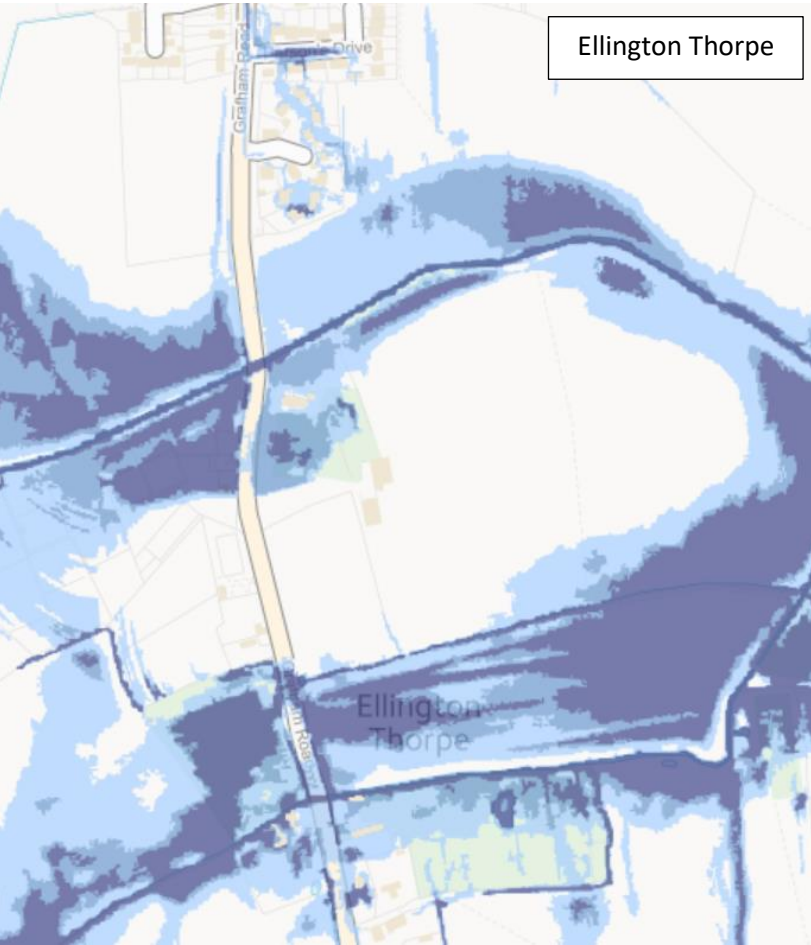
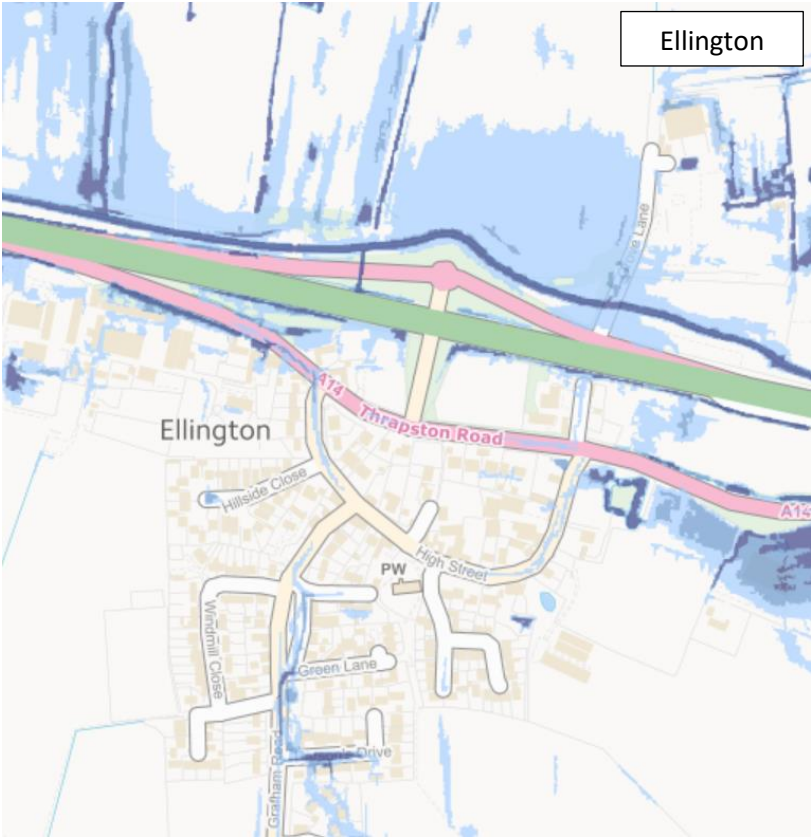
6.11. Flood Risk and Drainage

The Impact of Climate Change

- 6.11.1. Like the rest of the UK, our villages will be subject to the effects of climate change which will increase the frequency and intensity of rainfall events. However current projections suggest that the impact on the East and South East of the country will be muted. See “UK Climate Projections: Headline Findings” [Ref 12].
- 6.11.2. However, developments are required to manage surface water for the lifetime of the development, including a suitable allowance for climate change. For any housing development, they have a lifetime of 100 years, and therefore have to consider the worst case additional 40% rainfall due to climate change. See the information given on the government’s website: “Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances” [Ref 18].

Stormwater Drainage Systems

- 6.11.3. Rainfall events will impact both our stormwater drainage systems and the flooding from rivers. Although there are exceptions, drainage in our villages is generally provided by pumped sewage systems designed principally to take foul flows. The systems are not “combined” sewers designed to take foul and surface water. These systems are impacted by connected surface water systems and by surface water soakaways not functioning efficiently in our clay soils. This results in the sewer systems surcharging as the result of heavy rainfall events.
- 6.11.4. Both Grafham and Ellington are sited on heavy clay soils and in winter these soils become saturated making them impermeable. Surface water soakaways in these soils are thus ineffective. Section 7 Appendix F of the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD [Ref 15] and para 5.12.1 of the CCC Surface Water Drainage Guidance for Developers [Ref 16], specify that soakaway design infiltration rates should be no lower than 1×10^{-6} m/s. It is expected that in our villages that an infiltration rate higher than this will not be met at the wettest times of the year.
- 6.11.5. The problem of creating sustainable drainage systems has long been recognised. The “Sustainable drainage systems” strategy is outlined by the Local Government Association [Ref 13].
- 6.11.6. The maps below take from the flood risk warning service website [Ref 17] show the extent of flooding from surface water across the plan area:



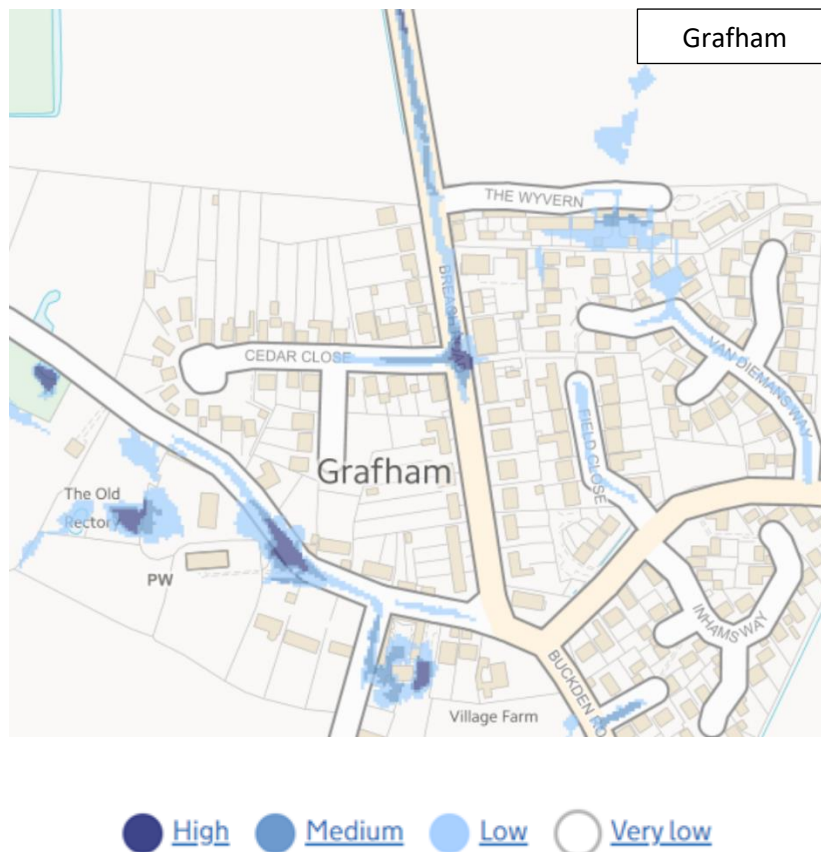


Figure 52: Extent of surface water flooding

River Flooding

- 6.11.7. Ellington sits adjacent to a river, fed a by a network of local drains, collectively known as Ellington brooks. The Government's Environment Agency flood risk map⁵ shows that areas of Ellington and Ellington Thorpe are in flood zone 3 and as such any future development work must be subject to a full flood risk assessment:

⁵ Source: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

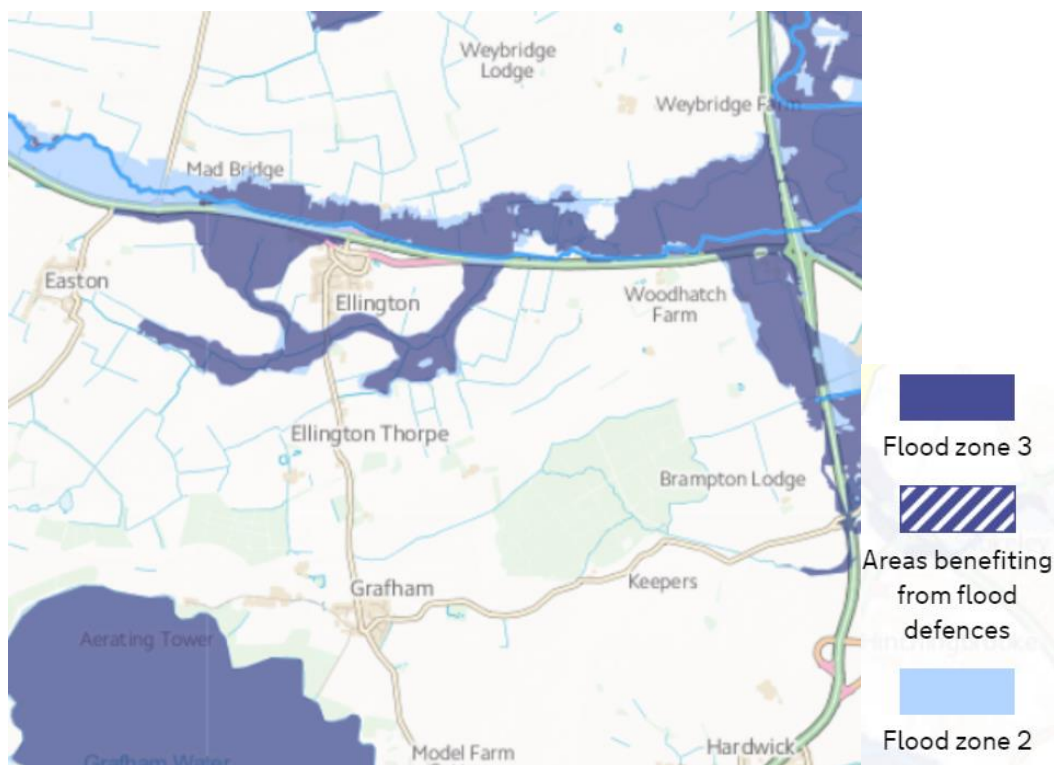


Figure 53: Map of flood risk areas in Grafham and Ellington

Policies and Strategies

6.11.8. The following are existing policies and strategies that deal with flooding:

- Cambridgeshire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015- 2020 [Ref 14]
- Huntingdon District Council – Local Plan Policy LP 5 [Ref 1]
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2016) [Ref 15]

Recent Flooding Incidents

Grafham:

6.11.9. Grafham has no fluvial flooding, due to its location on a modest hill. However, this “hill” comprises boulder clay which reduces the effectiveness of soakaways. Once garden soakaways become saturated, some of the surface water enters the sewage system. Sewage surcharge incidents occur frequently in some parts of the village, particularly during the winter months. (see also paragraph 6.11.4.)

6.11.10. The map in Figure 52 shows the consequential extent of flooding from surface water within Grafham.

Ellington:

Flooding associated with the Ellington brooks:

6.11.11. The following map shows four views – West through South and to the East – from the southern tip of Spinney Field in the South of Ellington. The pictures following said map highlight the annual flooding that occurs around the brooks to the South of the village over Winter.



Figure 54: Flooding in Ellington in 2020

- 6.11.12. Significant flooding occurs just north of the A14, as can be seen from the photos taken in December 2020, shown in Figure 55 and Figure 56. This area is a designated flood plain, but nonetheless has a major impact on Buffalod, Ellington's largest employer.
- 6.11.13. As shown in Figure 57, the Buffalod site was seriously flooded, affecting the access road and car park; cars had to be parked on A14 slip road. Lorries seemed to be able to wade through, with water levels above their wheels, as shown in Figure 58.



Figure 55: Flooding to the North of the A14, looking West

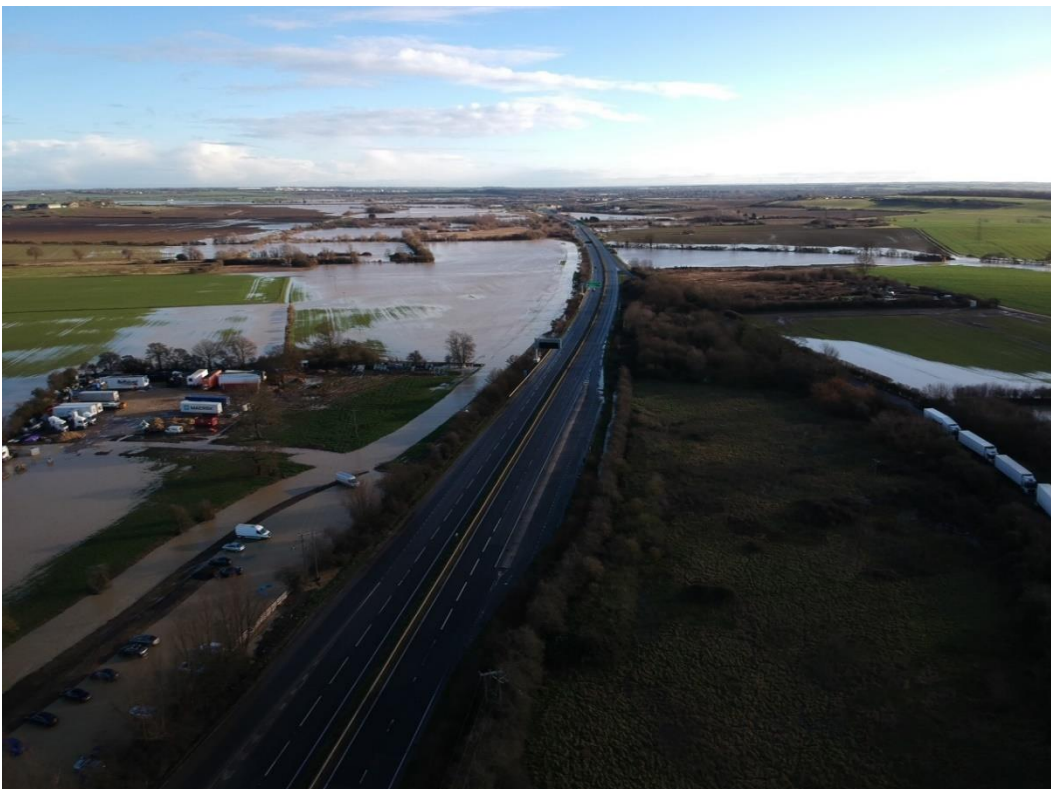


Figure 56: Flooding to the North of the A14, looking East



Figure 57: Buffaload site under water in December 2020



Figure 58: Buffaload site (flooding on the road greater than wheel depth)

6.11.14. Figure 59 shows flash flooding occurring in February 2020, on the northern edge of the built-up area.

6.11.15. Flash floods in the height of Summer also cause problems on the roads, paths, verges and driveways. The following picture is from June 2020 from a car traveling south on Grafham Road. The water on the road is almost the height of the curb.



Figure 59: Flooding in North Ellington in February 2020



Figure 60: Flooding in Ellington (Grafham Road) in June 2020

6.11.16. Around the same time – June – but four years prior, on the day of the village Gala, Ellington suffered heavy rainfall and flooding. Blocked surface water drains in the village led to flooding in some areas. Water was running down Grafham road (as per the picture from

2020, above) on top and underneath (in the drains) but the water flow was blocked at the outlets near Spinney Field so it found its first available escape route – the manhole near Spinney Field.

- 6.11.17. The water couldn't escape and forced its way out around the manhole - there was a 4-foot fountain coming out of the ground (no photo, sadly) but the resultant damage was a hole in the ground.



Figure 61: Flood damage in Ellington in June 2014

- 6.11.18. One of the main causes for this damage was a blocked outfall in front of the Anglian Water pumping station at the southern end of Spinney Field. The following photos highlight the overgrown drainage ditch and pipes (not visible at the bottom of the brick wall in the photo).



Figure 62: Reason for flood in Ellington in June 2014

- 6.11.19. Worryingly, the same ditch three years later in 2017, as shown in the following figures, looks very overgrown again!



Figure 63: Drains becoming blocked again in Ellington in June 2017

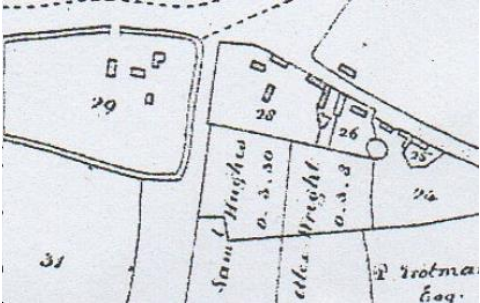
- 6.11.20. A site-specific flood risk assessment will be required in accordance with Policy GENP 13. This includes on sites where the requirement is based on local knowledge and notified by the local planning authority on the advice of the LLFA, Anglian Water, CC Highways, the Environment Agency or, in Ellington, the Alconbury and Ellington Internal Drainage Board (bodies from which pre-application advice should also be available).

Policy GENP 13 – Flood Risk and Drainage
A proposal shall neither exacerbate existing water supply or wastewater issues nor create water supply or disposal issues for properties elsewhere in the neighbourhood plan area. A proposal for a new development shall provide a surface water drainage solution using a sustainable drainage system that does not discharge or risk discharge, to the existing foul sewer systems in the villages. Surface water drainage design shall comply with the guidance given in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document [Ref 15] and the CCC Surface Water Drainage Guidance for Developers [Ref 16]. It shall be noted that these documents prohibit soakaway design infiltration rates lower than 1×10^{-6} m/s. It is anticipated that soakaways in the heavy clay soils in the neighbourhood plan area will not be possible. Where this is the case, other infiltration methods such as swales, ponds and wetlands shall be explored or, where demonstrably unsuitable, such alternatives as may be acceptable to the local planning authority with the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority. A proposal shall not increase flood risk from any form. A site-specific flood risk assessment in line with the requirements of local and national policy advice shall accompany a proposal on a site with an identified risk of flooding or where otherwise justified by the local planning authority.

Appendices

Appendix A. History and Heritage

History of Grafham and Ellington

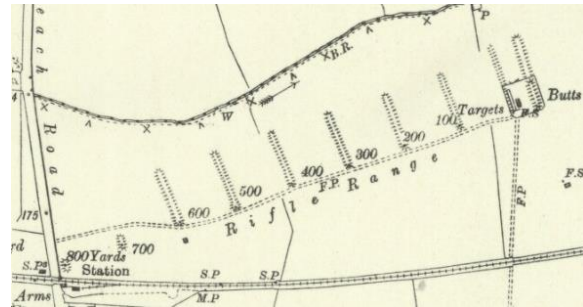
- A.1. The first signs of any permanent settlement in our area comes in the Neolithic Age, when the valley of the Ellington Brook has cropmarks consistent with permanent occupation – and next door in Brampton excavations in advance of road improvements have uncovered ritual sites as well as domestic occupation. That occupation continued through the Bronze and Iron Ages, but only slowly extended up on to the Boulder Clay plateau on which Grafham sits which was more heavily forested. Activity in the Roman period is more widespread, with a road running south from Alconbury to Bedford and further south, the *agger* of which was probably reused in the 18th C as the foundation of Church Hill road in Grafham. Certainly Romano-British farms were present around Ellington and at the eastern end of Grafham Water, and the occasional finds of Roman coins on the banks of the Water suggest that something was present on the flatter ground now covered by the reservoir.
- A.2. The names of both Ellington (Elintune in 1086, the Tūn (fence, usually a fenced house, farm or village) of Ella's people and Grafham, the grove Hām (village), are of Saxon origin, and would imply that Grafham continued to be the more forested of the two parishes. In between the two villages is Ellington Thorpe, originally Sibthorpe, which is of Danish origin, Sibba's or Sibbi's thorp (a subsidiary hamlet or farm). Grafham used to include East Perry (Pirie in 1086) derived from Old English pirige or pear tree.
- A.3. When the Domesday Book was compiled in 1086 Grafham was a small rural community of around 120 but Ellington was a bit larger at around 170 – that included Sibthorpe, now Ellington Thorpe. The inhabitants were largely Freemen, Villagers and Smallholders and their families – estimates of family size range from 3½ to 5. However, Ellington also had two 'men-at-arms', and Grafham had Odilard the Larderer. The principal land holder in Ellington was the Abbey of Ramsey, and in Grafham it was the King. However, the King also had a bit of Ellington, as part of his hunting Forest of Wauberghe (a name which survives as the Weybridge Lodge and Farm just over the border in Alconbury), and in Grafham Eustace the Sheriff was accused of illegally seizing some of the King's land with Odilard as his tenant.
- A.4. At this point it is likely that both villages had dispersed hamlets as well as a small core, and cropmarks and field boundaries can suggest their location – we know of at least four in Ellington and two in Grafham – one of which, the original Odilard manor, survived as a farmhouse and half a dozen cottages in the medieval manner up to the 18th C, as is shown on the 1774 Enclosure map (right). The site is now 'scheduled'.
- 
- A.5. A church is mentioned for Ellington, but not for Grafham - it may not have had a resident priest, therefore not taxable, therefore not mentioned, or it may have been serviced by itinerant priest from another church.

- A.6. Domesday accounts are not necessarily exact but suggest that around 1100 AD Ellington had 1200 acres of farmland and 1500 acres of forest, while Grafham had 600 acres of farmland and 1200 acres of forest – which may account to the smallness of Grafham’s population.
- A.7. In 1124 Henry II declared the whole of Huntingdonshire a royal forest – a hunting ground, not necessarily trees – which local people could not use for foraging or for grazing animals and which led to the abandonment of settlements perhaps even constricting the road from Ellington to Huntingdon. One such settlement has been discovered west of Brampton as a result of the A14 works, and may account for one or more of the Ellington sites. A further upset of local communities was the enclosure of the western part of Buckden parish as the Bishop of Lincoln’s deer park, and in 1215 the Bishop was given permission to divert the Kimbolton to Huntingdon road to the outside of his enclosure – which is why the Brampton road twists so much.
- A.8. The oldest buildings in both parishes are the churches, and in both cases the earliest extant work is 13th C. However, there were earlier churches on both sites – evidenced by the reference to a church in Domesday for Ellington and the erratic planning for Grafham.
- A.9. By the end of the 13th C both Ellington and Grafham had three moated manorial sites, each with its own settlement; some of which could be earlier but without excavation it is difficult to tell: the one which has been excavated, at Thorpe Lodge, had an earlier timber hall demolished by the 13thC moat only to go out of use a century later.
- A.10. In 1349 The Black Death reduced England’s population by one third, and a number of recurrences reduced the population still further. The Sibthorpe manor and hamlet seems to have gone out of use after one of these later outbreaks, and the central part of Grafham, between the Church and the Manor, more or less disappeared – the earthworks of the ‘tofts’ were visible in the early 1980’s but are now partly built over.
- A.11. One result was a shortage of labour, and peasants could now ask for better working conditions. Certainly, there was sufficient money 50 years later for a north aisle of Ellington Church to be rebuilt and for the tower and spire to be built or rebuilt (photo right), and for a tower to be added to Grafham Church. The construction of the stone bridge in Spaldwick at this time would also indicate that the Thrapston to Huntingdon road was of importance, even though it did a U-bend through Ellington.
- A.12. Although Ellington remained under the Abbey of Ramsey throughout the medieval period, Grafham had a more changing ownership; the Eustace lands were acquired by the Lovetots and later the Engaines under whom the Clare Earls of Gloucester became overlords. But then one of their other tenants, the de Moynes family, became very devout and started leaving bequests of land to Sawtry Abbey.
- A.13. The Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII brought significant changes. The Ramsey Abbey lands and church patronage in Ellington were eventually given to Peterhouse College, Cambridge, while the Sawtry Abbey lands in Grafham were bought by Sir Richard Williams Cromwell, uncle to Thomas (of whom Hilary Mantel has written) and great grandfather of Oliver.



- A.14. Cromwell's lands passed to Edmund Anderson, a commission judge at the trial of Mary Queen of Scots, and his line merged with the Bernards by the end of the 17th C. By a different succession the Engaine lands passed to the Marquess of Winchester, who sold it by 1667 to the widow of Walter Bigg, sheriff of London; her son and her nephew, both named John and both at one time Members of Parliament for Huntingdonshire (and the Duke of Manchester's interests), left money to Grafham charities which became the Town Farm and Biggs' Charity. The grandson's will left the estate to his friend Sir John Bernard of Brampton Park, and hence, in the 19th C, to the Duke of Manchester, whose family name since 1447 has been Montagu - hence Grafham's former pub (spelt over the years with and without an 'e' at the end).
- A.15. The rest of the manor of Ellington was acquired at the Dissolution by the Throckmorton family, who became more and more involved in America so that by 1767 it was sold on to Sir Robert Bernard, whose family became the Bernard Sparrows of Brampton Park.
- A.16. In 1750 the land in Grafham was still recognisably medieval open field, with the large field made by clearing woodland between West Wood and Brampton Wood (a 'breche') named as Breach Field. By 1774 most of the Enclosure was done, the new fields hedged, Breach Road laid out, and dwelling construction in the village begun.
- A.17. The Bernard's were the principal land owners in Ellington when the Enclosure Act was implemented in 1774, although a large tongue of land, now in Spaldwick, was owned by the scientist Doctor William Watson, later Sir William Watson, a friend of Benjamin Franklin. The Enclosure map does not directly identify the Ellington Windmill, which is said to have dated from the 16th C, but the land was not affected by the enclosure. The windmill was demolished in 1935 (right) and the upper part rebuilt at Madingley near Cambridge.
- 
- A.18. A major change in Ellington from 1753 was the conversion of the Thrapston to Brampton road to a Turnpike, whereby a lessee paid the local parishes a sum to maintain the road in return for the right to levy tolls. Travelling westward the first toll house was just in Ellington, by the track up to Low Harthay, and was still there in the 1950's. The Turnpike was abolished in 1877.
- A.19. No doubt the traffic on the Turnpike justified the existence of two inns in Ellington. The Mermaid, a 17th C building, is still with us, but The Wheatsheaf, also in a 17th C building, ceased to be a pub some time around 1915/20 and was demolished to make way for Thrapston Road. In Grafham the original pub was the Pied Horse, which probably closed when the Montagu Arms opened around 1860.
- A.20. In the 19th C the population of Ellington declined from about 450 down to 250, and at one time the civil parish ceased to be a district under Huntingdon and became a sub-district under Spaldwick. However, the population of Grafham rose from around 180 to around 340. Although technically in Ellington, the 'Graffham Brickworks' opened around 1850, and was boosted by the arrival of the railway at Grafham in 1866 and may well have influenced population levels; it produced many of the bricks used in the older Grafham houses as well as their tiles and the land drainage pipes.
- A.21. The school in Grafham is said to date from 1815, but for some reason the 1870 Education Act required the school board to establish a 'board school' here as Grafham was a 'deprived area' and the Duke of Manchester made a grant for building a new schoolroom. The school closed in 1964. The Ellington school, now part of the village hall, was an 1870 school.

- A.22. Within 75 years of the Enclosure Act many of the farms were modernised and the north-south roads straightened out to their modern routes. One farm in particular, Model Farm in Grafham (1834-1854), was meant to demonstrate a modern efficient layout and operation and this was recognised in its 'listing' in 1983.
- A.23. Ellington's population for the first half of the 20th C remained at a low of about 225, but nevertheless managed to hang on to a shop and Post Office; Grafham, with a population of around 200 only had a Post Office. We were so rural that the first telephones only arrived in 1936 and mains electricity in 1953.
- A.24. One change that happened early in the 20th C was the building of the Grafham Rifle Range, which started life as a local Militia Rifle Range in 1904 and was finally closed in 1992 (1924 plan right).
- A.25. The 1960's started the era of change; the railway closed in 1959, Grafham school in 1964, and half of Grafham was flooded in 1966 to create Grafham Water. In Ellington, the great U-bend through the village was removed with the opening of Thrapston Road, but the shop closed. Later on, the great St Peter's College Farm was flattened to be replaced by a housing estate. And in Grafham the Wyvern estate eliminated the old railway station, which had served as post office.
- A.26. A map of Ellington in 1880 is shown in Figure 64 and for Grafham in 1920 is shown in Figure 65. In both cases, the pre-1900 buildings are coloured in orange.





Scale =1:5,000

Date Created: 30/01/2020

Title:Ellington 1880

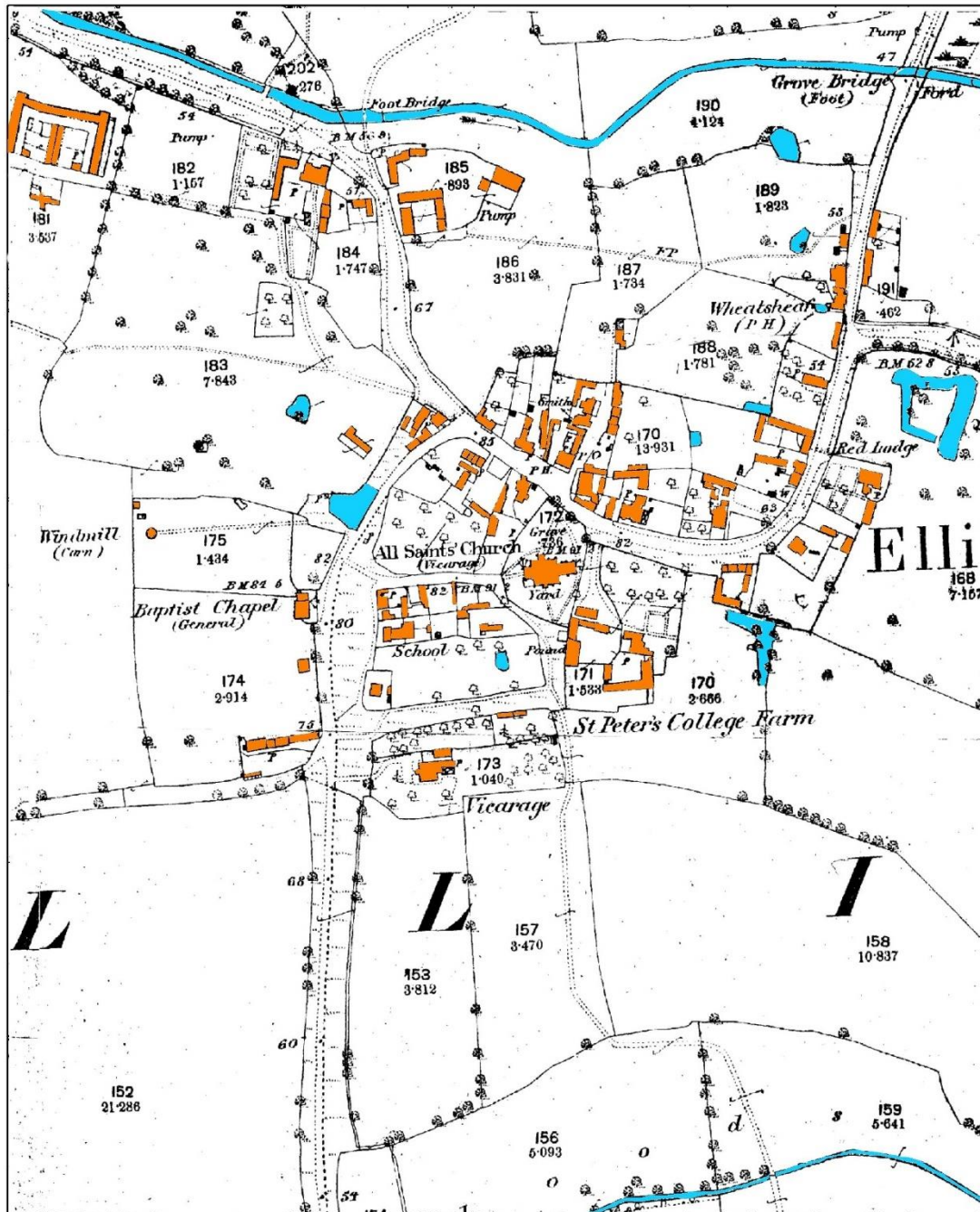


Figure 64: Ellington in 1880

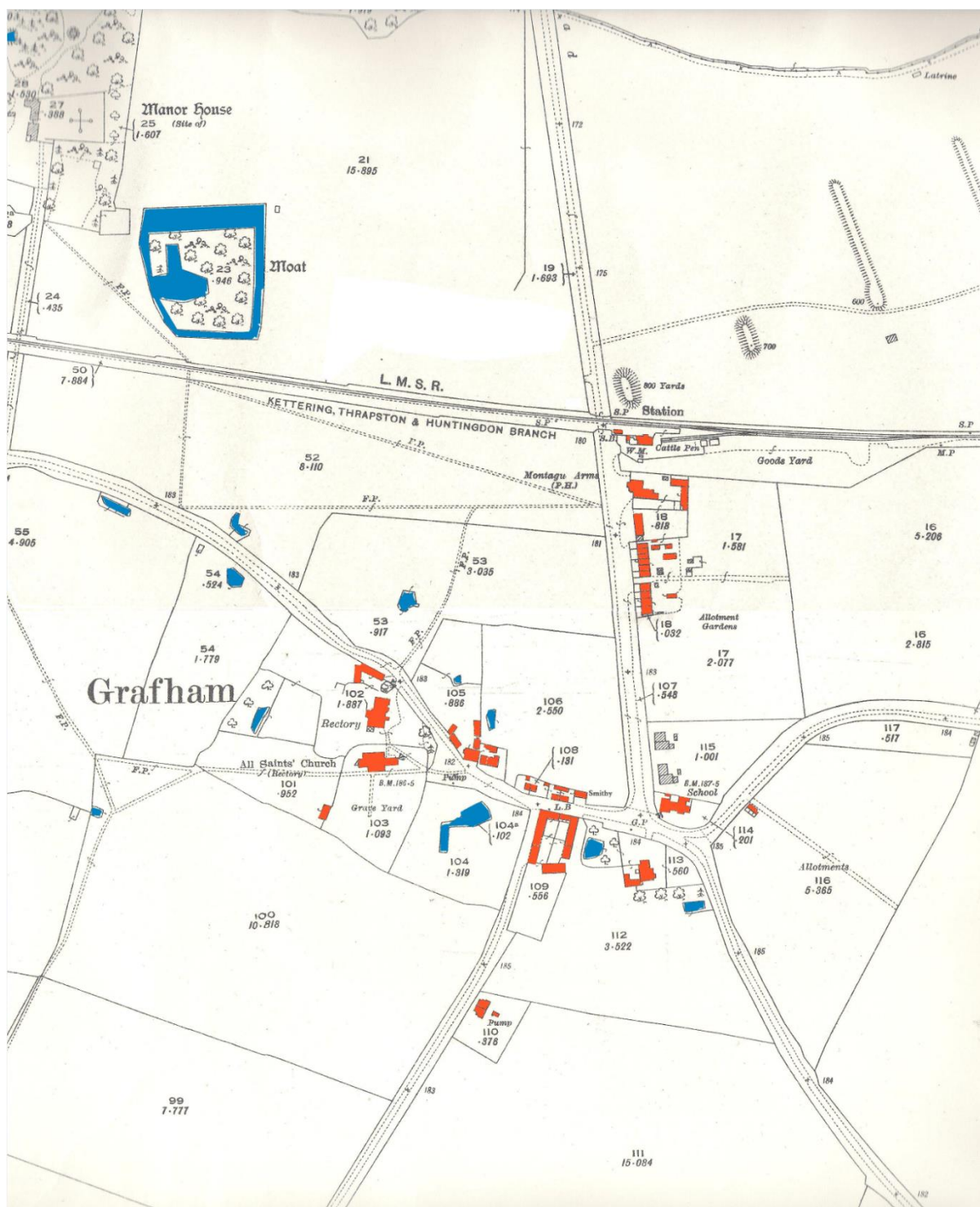


Figure 65: Grafham in 1920⁶

⁶ Scanned, combined and edited from original 1926 OS paper maps held by E H Biffin

Heritage Assets

- A.27. Maps of buildings, both listed and unlisted, dating before 1900, for central Grafham, Ellington and Ellington Thorpe are shown in Figure 66, Figure 67 and Figure 68 respectively. Figure 67 also shows the Ellington conservation area.
- A.28. The first data on the villages is from the 1086 Domesday, from which it might be deduced that there were around 25 dwellings somewhere in Grafham and around 35 in Ellington, probably in dispersed hamlets. There are no domestic built-heritage survivals from the medieval period, and only the moats survive of the four manor houses – sites that may need archaeological recognition. The two churches are the only medieval buildings to come down to the present day.
- A.29. There are some remains of the 16th C in half a dozen houses in Ellington. At least one more was present in 1926 when the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments recorded this house in the High Street (photo right). More remains exist from the 17th C in both villages, but estimating the number of dwellings has to await the 18th C, when the Enclosure Acts (breaking up the communal medieval open fields into privately owned farms with smaller ‘enclosed’ fields) required maps to be drawn; for Grafham two maps – 1750 and 1774 – exist, while for Ellington there is a single map of 1774. Examination of these maps suggest that the number of dwellings in Grafham in the 1770’s was around 35, with around 65 in Ellington plus another 20 in Ellington Thorpe. Note that the figures in this section apply to the present-day boundaries of both villages – the loss of the Coton Barn area of Ellington to Spaldwick does not affect the rounded totals, but the loss of Grafham’s East Perry area (including ‘Grafham Farm’!) to the new Perry parish has reduced the 18th/19th C dwellings by around 10.
- 
- A.30. By the time that the first Ordnance Survey 25” maps for the two parishes were produced in 1887 the numbers of dwellings in the parish had risen to 60 in Grafham, but fallen slightly in Ellington to 80. Over the 110 years some smaller outlying properties had been abandoned and the consolidation of older small multi-tenant dwellings into single family homes had begun in both parishes, but in Grafham that had been offset by a triple modernisation – the need for farm workers cottages out by the farms for the new-style farming, the opening of the brickworks (actually just in Ellington parish) to supply the building materials and which itself required workers houses, and the arrival of the railway in 1866. Examples of this era are the Montague Arms (now Cinnamon) with its outbuildings and the two rows of 1860’s cottages at the north-east end of Breach Road; if only we still had the station building, lost early this century!
- A.31. With the exception of a few infill houses in the 1920’s, the housing stock remained static until the 1950’s when ‘council houses’ arrived in Breach Road, Grafham and new developments were tentatively started at the south end of Ellington.
- A.32. With improvements to roads, particularly what is now the A14, the development of the Huntingdon industrial area, and the electrification of the London commuter service, demand for houses rose. And the demand was for larger-than-rural-farmworkers dwellings, so not only were new small estates of detached/semi-detached houses the norm, but older multi-occupant dwellings became single family houses. This is particularly noticeable in our stock of

16th /17th/18th C dwellings, both listed and unlisted, but also applies to some of the 19th C farmworkers cottages.

- A.33. A further factor was the construction of Grafham Water reservoir, where the immediate loss of six dwellings was later offset by the construction at an out-of-village site of 21 chalets intended for holiday/tourist use and where some are now in permanent occupation.
- A.34. A policy by the Church of England to sell glebe and vicarage land in Grafham to raise funds, and a similar policy by both the church and Peterhouse College, Cambridge, in Ellington, plus the desire by some farm owners to similarly profit on marginal/allotment land adjacent to village boundaries has contributed to the current landscape of small estates on what were village peripheries.
- A.35. So, while the number of dwellings in Grafham extant in 1887 fell from 60 to 40 by 2020, new build since 1887 now stands at 220. In Ellington Thorpe the number of dwellings fell from 19 to 8, partly offset by 6 new build; it should be noted that a large part of this decline is not a decline in buildings but that consolidation of multi-occupancy to single occupancy. In Ellington Village the 1887 dwellings more-or-less halved, from 62 to 34, but new build has added 186 dwellings.
- A.36. Some of the earlier buildings in both villages have been recognised as being of national significance and have been ‘listed’. Statutory ‘listing’ of a building marks and celebrates its special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system, so that it can be protected for future generations. The older a building is, and the fewer the surviving examples of its kind, the more likely it is to be listed and the general principles are that all buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are likely to be listed, as are most buildings built between 1700 and 1850. There are three levels listing: I - buildings of exceptional interest, II* - particularly important buildings of more than special interest, and II - buildings that are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them. In Grafham and Ellington we have two grade I buildings – the parish Churches. All the rest are grade II – six in Grafham, five in Ellington Thorpe, eleven in Ellington. Table 1 below identifies the “listed” buildings and structures of each parish.
- A.37. While there are no 16th/17th C timber-framed thatched dwellings on the Grafham list, they predominate in Ellington – all five in Ellington Thorpe, and another five in Ellington itself, which also has another four and a half similar buildings which have tile roofs. The remaining one and a half houses on the Ellington list are solid brick mid-19th C style; the half-and-half dwelling being Brook House, where the two-storey brick extension on the north, road, side hides the timber framed original farmhouse behind. The old photo of two of the thatched houses in central Ellington shows why it is now called The Old Stores.



- A.38. Grafham’s ‘list’ is more varied, from a 17th C cottage built on the medieval manor site via an 18th C house which was once the village’s pub to the 17th/18th/19th C Old Rectory. The mid-19th C agricultural revolution provides the remaining three listed properties – the polychrome brickwork of Village Farm, the magnificence of Model Farm’s residential block, and the contrast of the (separately listed) adjacent covered yard and barns of 1835/54, all part of the Duke of Manchester’s agricultural revolution.

- A.39. Both villages have a number of older buildings that add to the architectural ambience of the community – our “Built Heritage”; in Ellington this has been recognised by the introduction of a Conservation Area which encompasses area around the Green and the eastern half of the High Street. There is no equivalent area in Grafham, although a case might be made for the area between the Old School and the Rectory, where a number of older buildings survive or have been adapted to modern use; these include the 19th C smithy and the re-use of the shell of the agricultural stables as a small mews residential block, and, of course, the historic village school & schoolmaster’s house, now two semi-detached dwellings (photo right). Grafham is particularly endowed with out-of-village agricultural cottages associated with farming developments of the 1850’s/60’s; this includes a number of polychrome cottage-pairs on the Manchester estate, as well as more basic cottages on the rival Armstrong estate.



- A.40. In Grafham a series of articles on the 'listed' buildings and the 'unlisted old buildings' have appeared in the Grafham Gossip newsletter – see Grafham Gossip [Ref 19]. No similar survey of Ellington is available. The following table identifies the ‘listed’ buildings and structures in each parish, plus the one ‘scheduled’ archaeological site in Grafham. Details of listed buildings are to be found on the appropriate parish entry in British Listed Buildings [Ref 20].

Table 1: Listed Buildings and Structures in Grafham, Ellington and Ellington Thorpe

Grade	Source ID	Listing date	Name
<u>Grafham</u>			
II	1214372	28/04/1983	Village Farm
II	1288616	28/04/1983	20, Church Road
I	1288615	14/05/1959	Church of All Saints
II	1214373	14/05/1959	The Old Rectory
II	1214374	28/04/1983	Old Manor Park Cottage
II	1214370	28/04/1983	Barn North of Model Farmhouse
II	1288614	28/04/1983	Model Farmhouse
Scheduled	1020909	28/01/2003	Moated site on Brampton Road 700m ENE of Village Farm
<u>Ellington Thorpe</u>			
II	1165200	21/10/1983	The Crooked Billet
II	1130195	21/10/1983	Pear Tree Meadow
II	1130196	21/10/1983	Honeysuckle Cottage
II	1165192	21/10/1983	Albion Cottage
II	1130194	21/10/1983	Tudor Cottage

Grade	Source ID	Listing date	Name
<u>Ellington</u>			
II	1165278	02/12/1980	Brookside
II	1130201	02/12/1980	College Farmhouse
II	1330477	02/12/1980	Brook House Farmhouse
II	1165237	21/10/1983	The Mermaid
II	1130200	21/10/1983	The Stores
II	1330476	21/10/1983	Oakley Cottage
II	1456855	08/08/2018	Ellington War Memorial
I	1165216	28/01/1958	Parish Church of All Saints
II	1130198	21/10/1983	Table Tomb in Angle of Chancel and South Aisle
II	1393652	02/02/2010	Pair of Table Top Tombs near South Porch
II	1317410	21/10/1983	Hill House Residential Home
II	1130197	21/10/1983	The Cottage
II	1317430	21/10/1983	Manor Farmhouse
II	1130199	02/12/1980	Yew Tree Farmhouse
II	1317379	02/12/1980	Grove Cottage
II	1165294	21/10/1983	Milestone near Low Harty

- A.41. A key source of the location of older buildings are the Ordnance Survey 1/2500 maps published in 1887, and tabulated pictorial description of existing buildings shown on those maps is available as a standalone report [Ref 22]. It also includes an illustrated list of the major archaeological sites, together a number of interesting buildings which were extant in 1887 but have now disappeared – including some recorded in the Huntingdonshire volume of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in 1926. The on-line standalone report is to be found on the Ellington PC website [Ref 22].



Original Map Scale = 1:3,000
Date Created: 30/01/2020

Title: Grafham Heritage Constraints

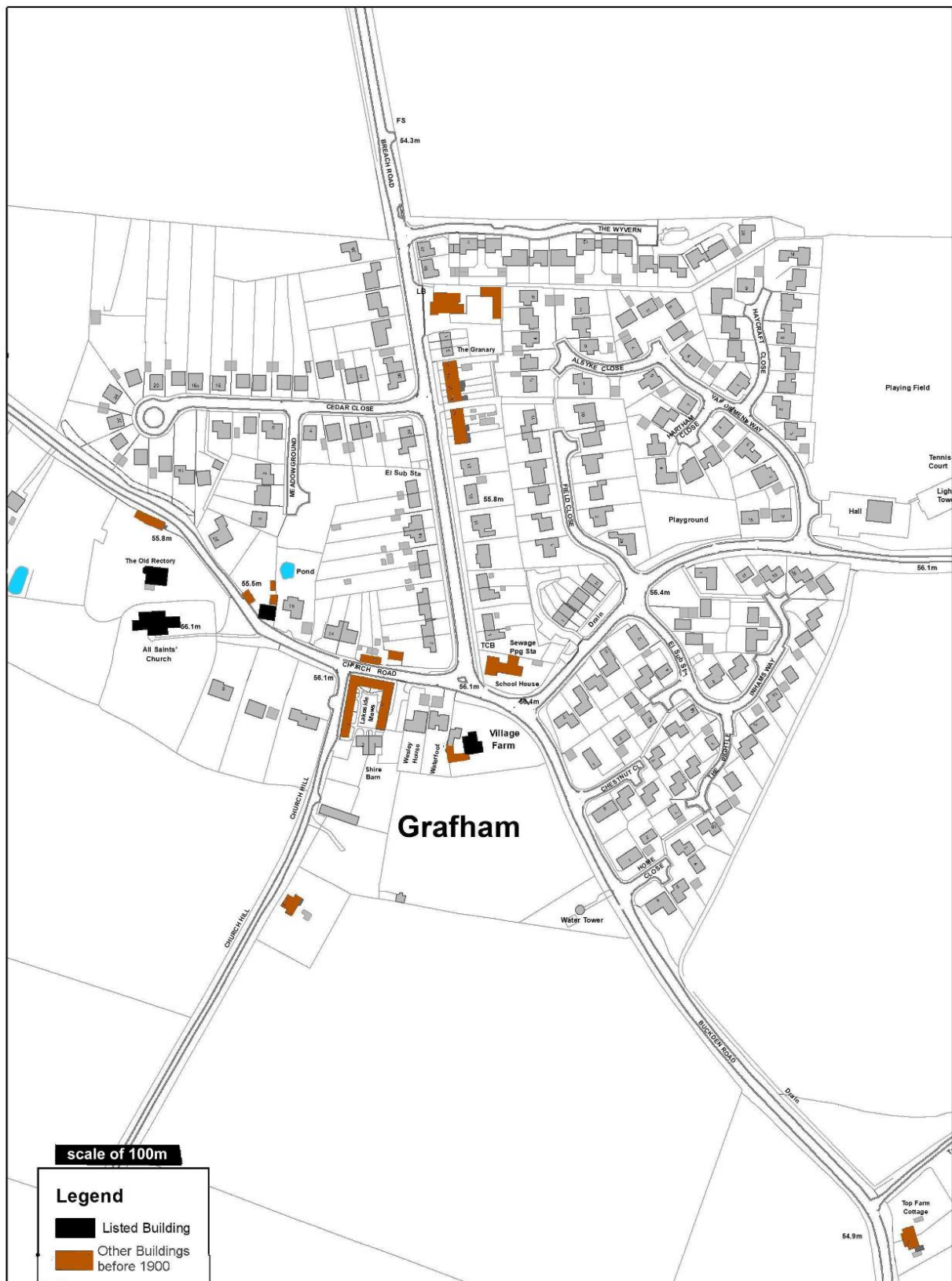


Figure 66: Built Heritage of Grafham



Original Map Scale = 1:3,000
Date Created: 30/01/2020
Edited: 29/03/2020

Title: Ellington Heritage Constraints

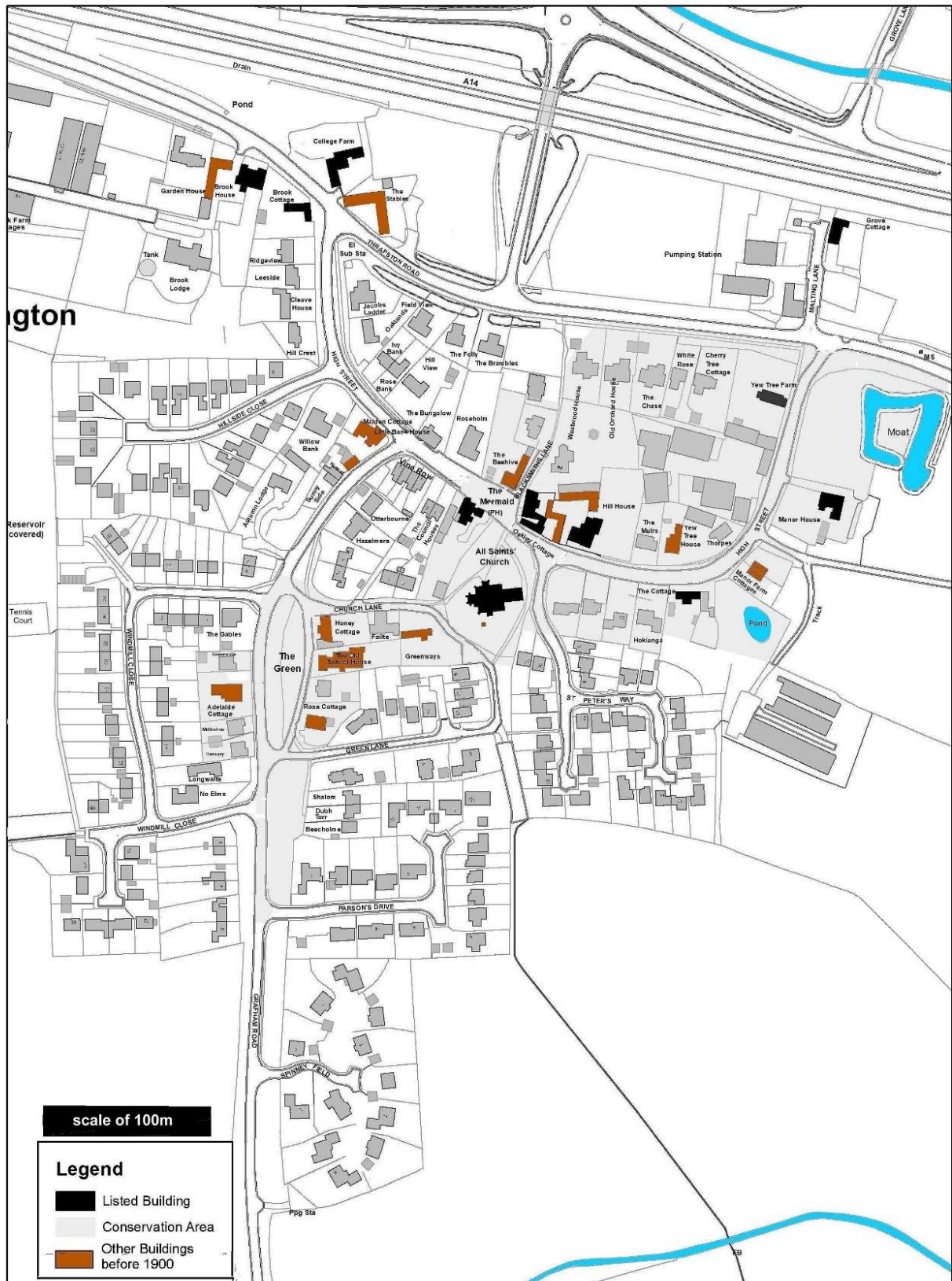


Figure 67: Built Heritage of Ellington

Description: Ellington Thorpe Heritage Constraints



Scale = 1:2,500

Date Created: 16/11/2020

Edited 17/11/2020

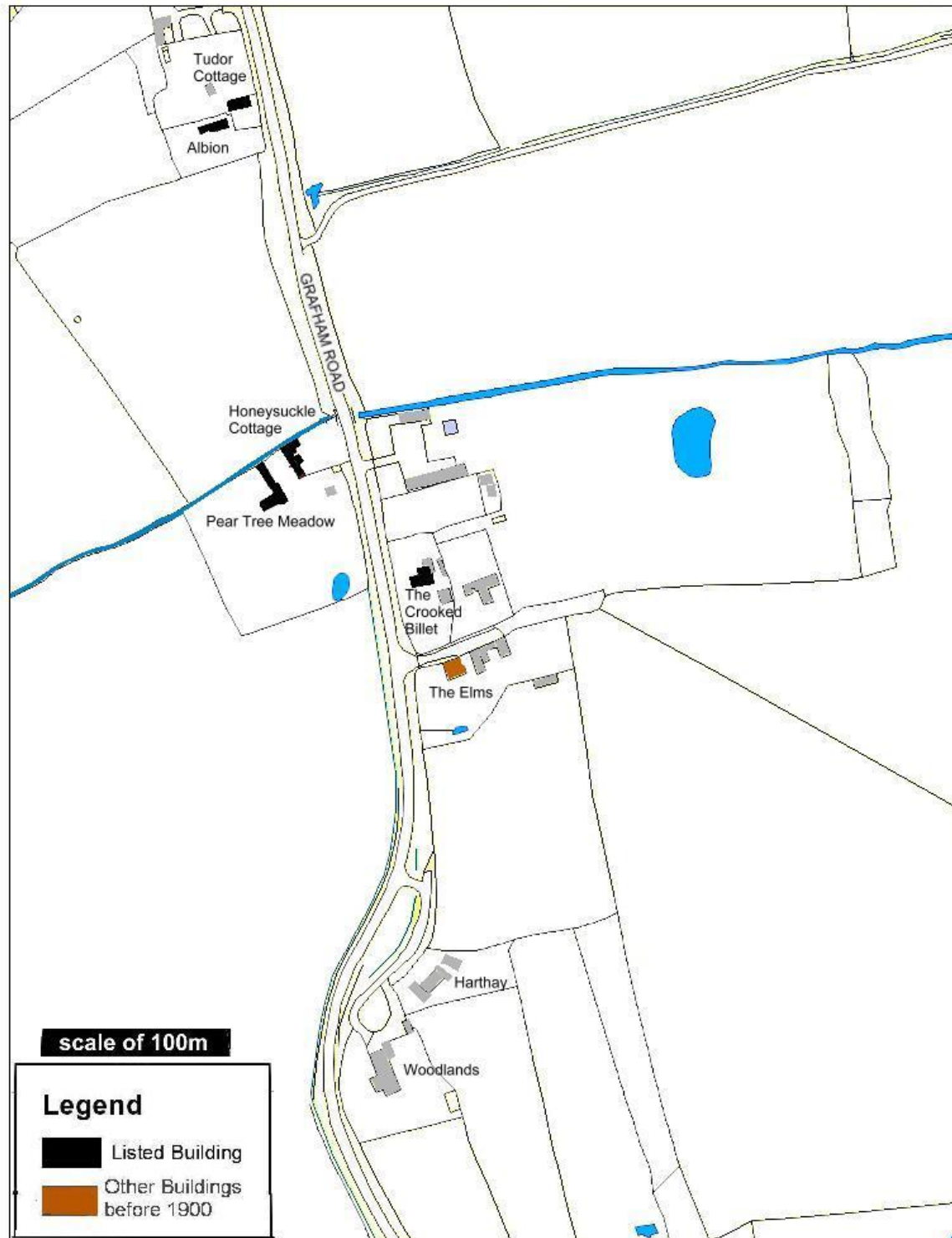


Figure 68: Built Heritage of Ellington Thorpe

Appendix B. References

Ref	Title	Source	URL
1.	Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036	HDC	https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/190516-final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf
2.	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021) (or successor document)	UK Government	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf
3.	Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (June 2007) (or successor document)	HDC	https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1240/landscape-guide.pdf
4.	Parish Profiles for Grafham and Ellington	Cambridgeshire Insight	https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/parish-profile/?geographyId=7f94ea12b8914d3cb0c0c29bc9ad1767&featureId=E04001702 https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/parish-profile/?geographyId=7f94ea12b8914d3cb0c0c29bc9ad1767&featureId=E04012023
5.	Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (June 2011) (or successor document)	CCC	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/Cambridgeshire_Infrastructure_Strategy_2011.pdf
6.	Acting on climate change: The plan for net zero emissions in the UK	UK Government	https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/acting-on-climate-change-the-plan-for-net-zero-emissions-in-the-uk/#:~:text=Net%20zero%20is%20a%20statutory,emissions%20by%2080%25%20by%202050.
7.	Grafham PC: Environmental Policy	Grafham PC	https://grafham.org.uk/index.php/parish-council-policies/
8.	Heat Buildings	The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)	https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/heat-in-buildings
9.	Energy Consumption in the UK	BEIS	https://beis1.shinyapps.io/ecuk/#section-by-sector
10.	Final energy consumption in the residential sector by use	Eurostat	https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Final_energy_consumption_in_the_residential_sector_by_use,_EU-27,_2018.png
11.	Community Heat Scheme: Grafham Going Zero	Joint investigation by Grafham, Perry and Great Staughton PCs	http://www.g0grafham.co.uk/
12.	UK Climate Projections: Headline Findings	Met Office	https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/metofficegovuk/pdf/research/ukcp/ukcp-headline-findings-v2.pdf

Ref	Title	Source	URL
13.	Sustainable drainage systems	Local Government Association	https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/severe-weather/flooding/sustainable-drainage-systems#:~:text=Sustainable%20drainage%20systems%20(SuDS)%20are,infiltration%2C%20attenuation%20and%20passive%20treatment.&text=With%20this%20in%20mind%2C%20the,SuDS%20should%20always%20be%20considered
14.	Cambridgeshire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015- 2020 (or successor document)	CCC	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/cambridgeshirestrategyforfloodriskv1.pdf
15.	Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (Apr 2017) (or successor document)	CCC	https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2609/cambridgeshire-flood-and-water-spd.pdf
16.	Surface Water Drainage Guidance for Developers (Nov 2019) (or successor document)	CCC	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/SWGFDF%20FINAL%20-%20November%202019.pdf
17.	Long term flood risk for an area in England	UK Government	https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk
18.	Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances	UK Government	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change-allowances
19.	Articles on the history of Grafham	Grafham Gossip	https://grafham.org.uk/index.php/grafham-gossip/
20.	Listed buildings in Grafham and Ellington	British Listed Buildings	https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/cambridgeshire
21.	Community Action Plan	Neighbourhood Plan Team	https://www.ellingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk/np/documentation/
22.	Heritage Assets of Grafham and Ellington	Edward Biffin MA	https://www.ellingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk/np/documentation/
23.	Natural England's Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Natural England	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/5ae2af0c-1363-4d40-9d1a-e5a1381449f8/ssi-impact-risk-zones-england
24.	Huntingdonshire Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-21 (or successor document)	HDC	https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1542/sports-facilities-strategy.pdf
25.	Historic Environment Record (CHER)	CCC	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/archaeology/cambridgeshire-historic-environment-record-cher
26.	Nature Recovery Network	UK Government	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nature-recovery-network
27.	Natural Cambridgeshire "doubling nature" target	Natural Cambridgeshire	https://naturalcambridgeshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Doubling-Nature-LR.pdf
28.	25-Year Environment Plan	DEFRA, UK Government	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan
29.	Magic Map	DEFRA	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/

Appendix C. Local Green Spaces

Grafham's Local Green Spaces

Playing Field

- C.1. The current playing field was created as a replacement to the original playing field around 1995 when the Van Diemens Way housing development was constructed, and is now held in trust by the Parish Council.
- C.2. It comprises a large flat grass area, which has been used for cricket and football matches, but now mainly used informally for recreation. The site includes a Multi-Use Games Area, which is primarily used for tennis, football and basketball.
- C.3. The area is surrounded by trees and includes a wildlife corridor along its northern edge, linking Brampton Woods to West Wood, running along what was the old railway line.
- C.4. The playing field can consequently be a vibrant area with friends and families enjoying the recreational value. At other times, it is peaceful and a place of tranquillity, made even more pleasant with the ability to wander among the wooded areas that surround three sides.



- C.5. The playing field has a covenant stating it can only be used as a playing field – it cannot be sold for development or incur any change of use. It is to be available to the village as a playing field in perpetuity.

Owner: Grafham Parish Council

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Playground

- C.6. The first playing field was associated with the development of Field Close and its boundaries can still be traced to the east of Field Close and the south of the Wyvern. It was sold to build the Van Diemens estate and only the south-west corner was retained as the playground.



- C.7. The playground comprises a flat grass area equipped with recreational equipment for young children and also outdoor gym equipment designed for older children and adults.

C.8. At times this can be a vibrant area with young families interacting and enjoying the recreational value. At other times, it is peaceful and a place of tranquillity.

Owner: Grafham Parish Council

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓			✓	✓		✓

Village Green

C.9. The core of the otherwise dispersed medieval village was quite small, as was the village green, which lay along the medieval track from Kimbolton/Spaldwick to Buckden. In the 1880's it had the two important village assets – the public water pump and the village post box.

C.10. The village green comprises a grass area in front of the church entrance, fringed by trees. It extends as a narrow grass strip along Church Road and has a historic hedgerow along its southern edge.

C.11. This large hedgerow, dating back before 1887, contains a wide diversity of plants and provides an excellent habitat for wildlife.



C.12. The area also carries protected status as a Village Green.

Owner: Grafham Parish Council

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Grafham's Other Green Spaces

Meadowground

C.13. The land between Cedar Close and Church Road was originally Vicarage land and was called Town Close, comprising two cottages, a blacksmith's shop and about 3 acres of land, the rentals of which were applied to the maintenance of the church and the support of the poor of the parish as part of the Town Farm and Biggs Charity. Meadowground is now the only undeveloped part of Town Close.

C.14. Meadowground comprises a flat grass area with a small number of trees, popular with families for playing ball games, etc., and is also used for exercising dogs.



C.15. Its central location provides convenience for residents and safety for children, avoiding the need to cross the main road to use the playing field.

C.16. Meadowground is owned by HDC, who “wish to support the aspirations of the Grafham and Ellington Neighbourhood Plan in providing a high quality residential environment for residents with appropriate provision of open space and community facilities”. However, HDC do not wish Meadowground to be designated as a Local Green Space, “due to the long term nature of the designation and the constraints it imposes upon the Council as landowner of the site”.

C.17. However, a previous planning application on this land has been turned down by HDC, in support of community’s clear wishes to maintain this area as a green space.

C.18. And Meadowground is entirely consistent with the requirements for designation as a Local Green Space as defined in LP 32 and the NPPF (see [paragraphs 101-103](#)).

C.19. Although owned by HDC, Meadowground is maintained by the Parish Council as an important amenity for the community.

Owner: Huntingdonshire District Council

Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

Ellington – Other Green Spaces and Village Green

C.20. Ellington’s green spaces are mainly Registered Common – Common Land with Public Access. However, they are all privately owned and will not be designated as Local Green Spaces. Nonetheless, these green spaces remain very important to the local community and are identified within this Plan as Other Green Spaces.

Playing Field

C.21. Marked on OS maps as a recreation ground, this area is known locally as the Playing Field. It comprises a playing field for football and a separate enclosed tennis court, with an area equipped with recreational equipment for young children and also outdoor gym equipment designed for older children and adults.

C.22. The playing field is also used as a site for village events, which include the annual treasure hunt and Gala sports day.

C.23. It is surrounded by trees and hedgerows creating a pleasant environment for residents and well suited to wildlife.

Owner: Privately owned



Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

Village Green

C.24.The village green comprises a grass area located in the centre of the village and carries protected status as a Village Green.

C.25.It is used for hosting village events, including the annual Gala and the Christmas tree and light event. It is also equipped with some children's recreational equipment.

Owner: Privately owned



Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓	✓			✓

Upper Green

C.26.Ellington's upper green comprises a small grass area that hosts the iconic village sign and historically was the site of the village pond.

C.27.It is a Registered Common – common land, with public access.

Owner: Privately owned



Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓				✓

Church Green

C.28.Church green comprises a small grass area closely associated with the church, fringed by trees, enhancing visibility of All Saints church, which dates back to 1086.

C.29.It is a Registered Common – Common land, with public access.

Owner: Privately owned



Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓				✓

Lower Green

C.30.The lower green extends the Village Green area to the edge of the built-up area. It is used for some of the stalls and events associated with the Gala day.

C.31.The area is tree-lined providing habitats for wildlife, enhancing the visual appearance along Grafham Road and also providing an amenity for dog walkers.

C.32.It is a Registered Common – Common land, with public access.

Owner: Privately owned



Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓		✓		✓	✓