

EDWARDSTONE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led document for guiding the future development of a particular area. The primary function of the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan (ENP) relates to the use and development of land within the civil parish of Edwardstone between 2021 and 2037.
- 1.2 The Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan will provide the first ever statutory planning policy document specifically for the parish of Edwardstone. Neighbourhood Plans such as this were made possible by powers contained within the 2011 Localism Act which sought to decentralise policy making to the local level giving more powers to communities and the right to shape future development where they live. Neighbourhood Plans, when properly “made” become part of the legal planning framework for the designated area.
- 1.3 The Government encourages parish councils to produce Neighbourhood Plans, thereby enabling local people to have a say as to how their area grows and develops. In a designated neighbourhood area, which contains all or part of the administrative area of a parish council, that council is responsible for the preparation of the Plan. Neighbourhood Plans are required to have regard to the main government planning policies and be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the relevant District Council’s own Local Plan for the area and should not undermine those strategic policies. For example, they cannot propose less development than is planned for in the adopted Local Plan.
- 1.4 Once this Neighbourhood Plan is made and adopted, Babergh District Council will use it to determine planning applications and Edwardstone Parish Council will use the Plan to respond to planning applications.

Neighbourhood Area

- 1.5 On 16th March 2021, the Parish Council applied to Babergh to designate a Neighbourhood Area for the whole parish, as identified in **Figure 1** below. The designation was confirmed on 30th March 2021.
- 1.6 The Neighbourhood Plan for Edwardstone has been prepared by a volunteer team on behalf of Edwardstone Parish Council (EPC), comprising local residents from around the parish including two Parish Councillors. The process of preparing the plan has involved several stages of public consultation and community engagement and originally began in 2021. (See **Appendix A** for Steering Group members). Since that time the Steering Group has managed the gathering of information to support the preparation of the Plan.

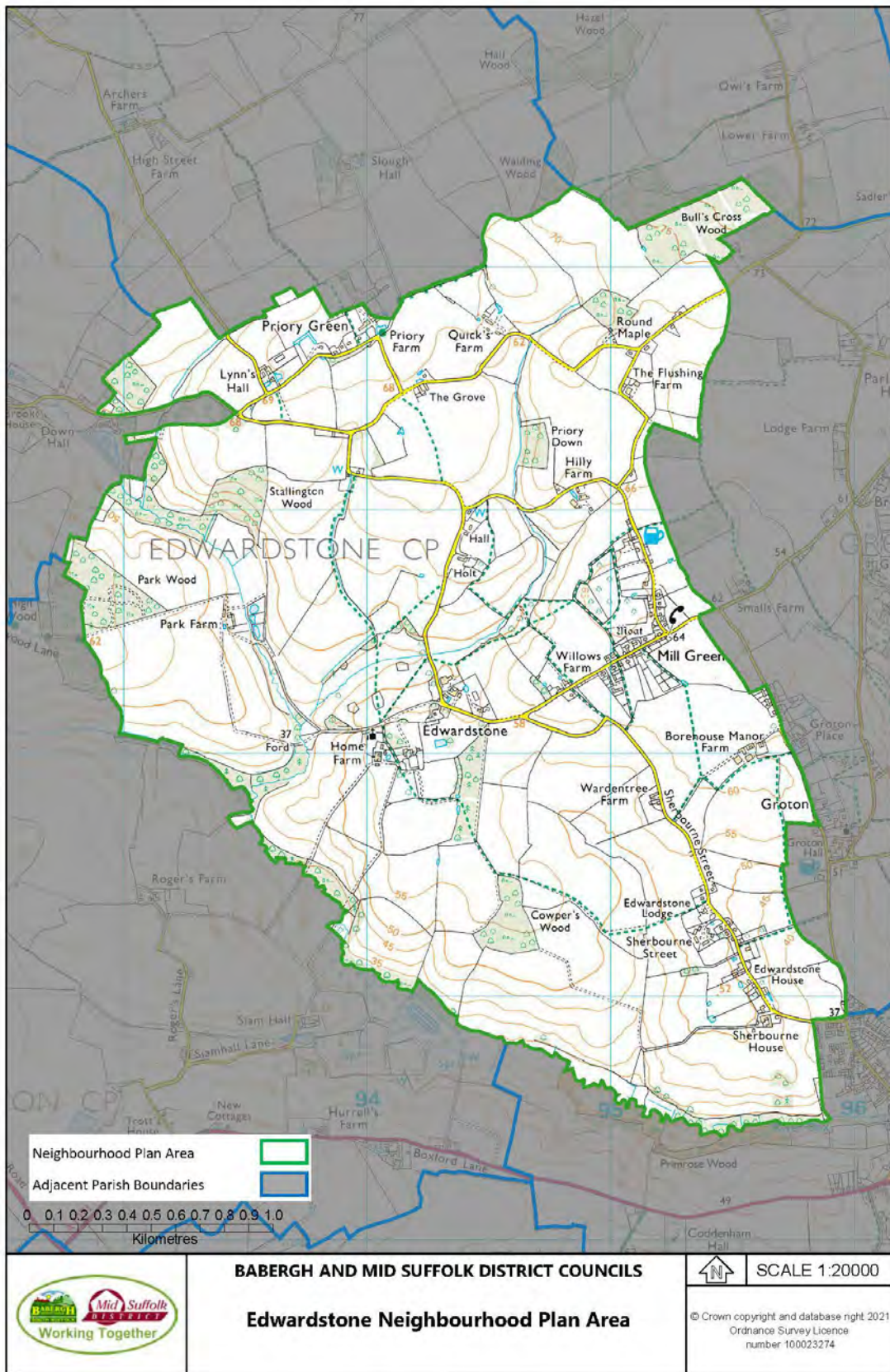


Figure 1 : Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.7 The Neighbourhood Plan looks ahead to 2037, which is consistent with the plan period of Part 1 of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Local Plan (BMSJLP), adopted in November 2023. It recognises the development that has taken place within the parish and that there will continue to be some form of future development over the Plan period. The Plan seeks to manage development proactively to ensure it meets local needs, whilst ensuring that the historic and natural environment and landscape of the parish and the current community facilities are preserved and enhanced and encouraged to thrive.
- 1.8 The key issues facing the parish, which have been highlighted through public participation, include concerns about the design and impact of new development, the sustainability of the community facilities, impacts on the environment, (including protecting landscape quality), and ensuring that housing in the parish matches the current and future population.
- 1.9 The Plan operates in the context of Babergh District Council’s Local Planning Policies. The Neighbourhood Plan’s vision and objectives will be realised through policies and projects identified in this Plan. Most policies will guide new development across the whole Plan area, and the Parish Council will promote, and collaborate with others, to realise projects which will further the vision for the parish.
- 1.10 The Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan is there to ensure that development takes place in an appropriate way for the parish. It has been positively prepared, with the purpose of supporting and managing future development in Edwardstone. In practice, higher level planning documents such as the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan cannot feasibly deal with all of the issues particular to every parish and village across the entire district, whereas the Neighbourhood Plan can, by providing additional details which reflect specific local circumstances and conditions.
- 1.11 The Neighbourhood Plan provides clarity on what will be expected from development proposals in the parish. A Neighbourhood Plan is a significant document and will carry legal weight so that developers have to take note when considering future developments in the parish.
- 1.12 This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). The flow chart below outlines the stages the Steering Group has completed to date together with an indication of the future process following submission.

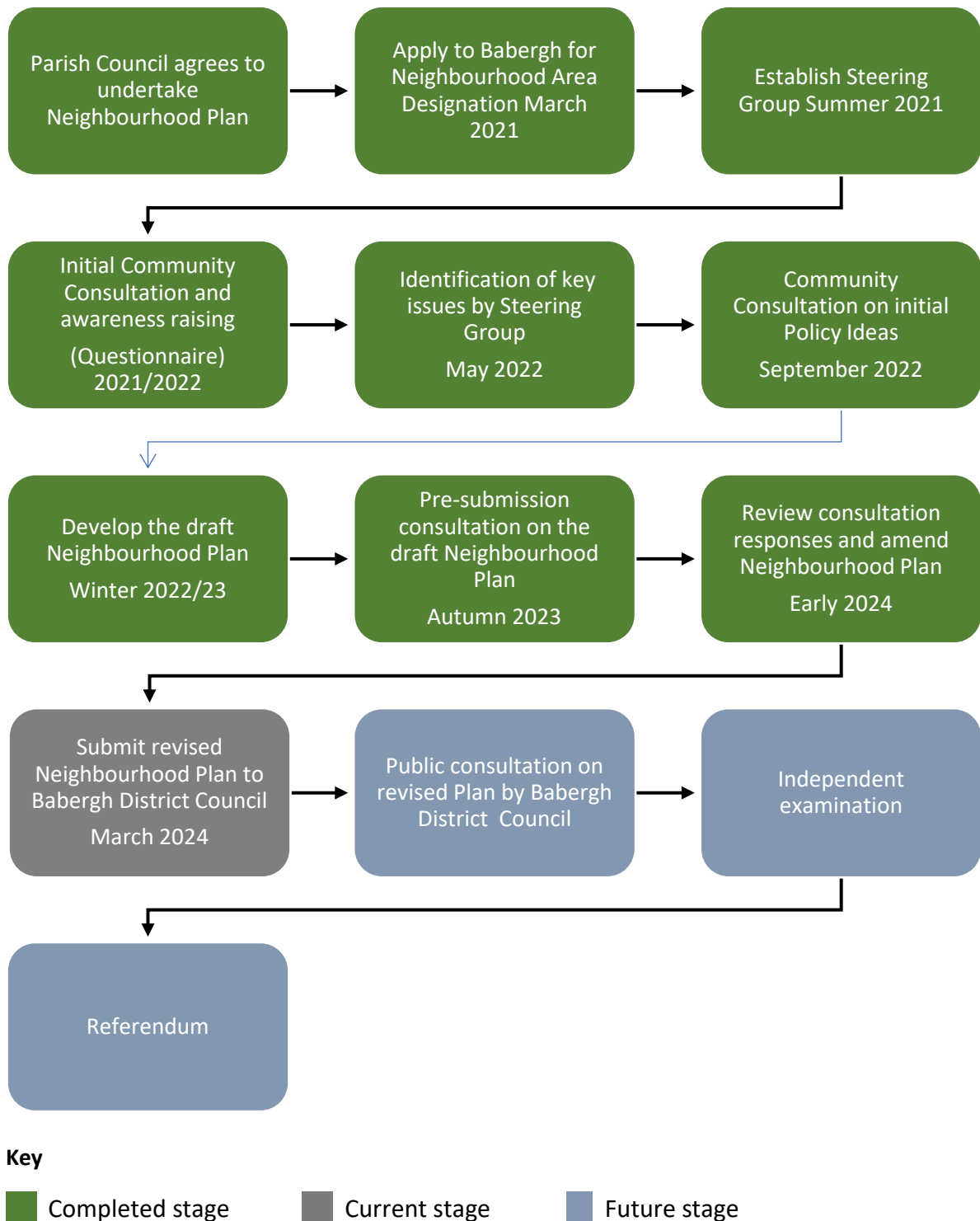


Figure 2: Stages of the Neighbourhood Plan

Accompanying supporting documents

1.13 This submission version of the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by the following documents:

- **Edwardstone Design Codes and Guidance** - undertaken by consultants AECOM completed in September 2022 and updated in February 2024 – a focus on design elements to inform policy making and application determination across the Neighbourhood Area.
- **Data Profile** – A compendium of factual evidence about the Parish
- **Edwardstone Green Corridors and spaces assessment** – undertaken by Suffolk Wildlife Trust in September 2023

1.14 Public consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting documents took place between **30th October and 11th December 2023**. At the end of the consultation period, all comments received were reviewed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and changes to the Plan made, as appropriate. The Parish Council agreed for the amended Neighbourhood Plan to be submitted to Babergh District Council at its meeting on **18th March 2024**.

Examination and referendum

1.15 After submission, Babergh District Council will undertake a checking process and further public consultation will take place. The Neighbourhood Plan will then go through an independent examination. The Examiner will be appointed by Babergh District Council in consultation with the Steering Group. Subject to the Examiner's report, the Neighbourhood Plan should then proceed to referendum.

1.16 At referendum, every resident of Edwardstone who is entitled to vote in the District Council elections will have the opportunity to vote on whether or not they agree with the Neighbourhood Plan. At referendum, residents will be asked: ***'Do you want Babergh District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Edwardstone to help it decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood area?'***. If the Plan gets over 50 per cent support from those who vote in the referendum, Babergh will 'make' (adopt) the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory development plan.

2. Edwardstone Parish



Figure 3: Gate and lodge at entrance to former Edwardstone Hall

- 2.1 Edwardstone is a rural parish comprising the hamlets of Mill Green, Priory Green, Round Maple and Sherbourne Street. There are also small clusters of houses at Tye Went, School Green, Groton Street and Temple Bar near the parish Church. The parish is located approximately 1.8 kilometres (1.1 miles) north of the A1071 between Hadleigh and Sudbury in the South Suffolk District of Babergh. The surrounding parishes consist of Boxford to the south east, Great Waldingfield to the west, Groton to the east, Little Waldingfield to the north west, Milden to the north-east and Newton to the south west.
- 2.2 The name "Edwardstone" means 'Eadweard's farm/settlement'. Edwardstone was listed in the Domesday Book as Eduardestuna. In 1114, two monks were sent to Edwardstone by the Abbot of Abingdon, to pray for the soul of Hubert de Monchesney, the Lord of the Manor at Edwardstone. Fifty years later, they were moved to Earl's Colne Priory in Essex and the name of the hamlet, Priory Green is thought to be a reference to the establishment at Earl's Colne, rather than any priory in Edwardstone.
- 2.3 Edwardstone's most famous son is John Winthrop, who was born in the village in 1587, he emigrated to America in 1629 and was elected Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the second major settlement in New England. Until his death in 1649, he served 18 terms in this role. 'The Winthrops', a residential road off Sherbourne Street is named after him.
- 2.4 A red brick archway and lodge to Edwardstone Hall was built in 1840 at the entrance to the drive leading to the Church and named Temple Bar after the original Temple Bar Gate in the City of London, designed by Sir Christopher Wren. It bears no resemblance to the gate in the City, but it is a noteworthy building in its own right in the village context and is Grade II listed.

- 2.5 Mill Green had a working ‘smock’ windmill in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There was still a miller in residence in 1939. It is not known exactly when the mill was decommissioned, but the brick base was finally demolished in 1965 leaving only the name of the hamlet as a memento.
- 2.6 There are 32 nationally listed buildings in Edwardstone Parish. This includes the Church of St. Mary The Virgin, which is a Grade I listed building, whilst the others are Grade II listed buildings. None of the listed buildings are on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk register and there is no Conservation Area designated.

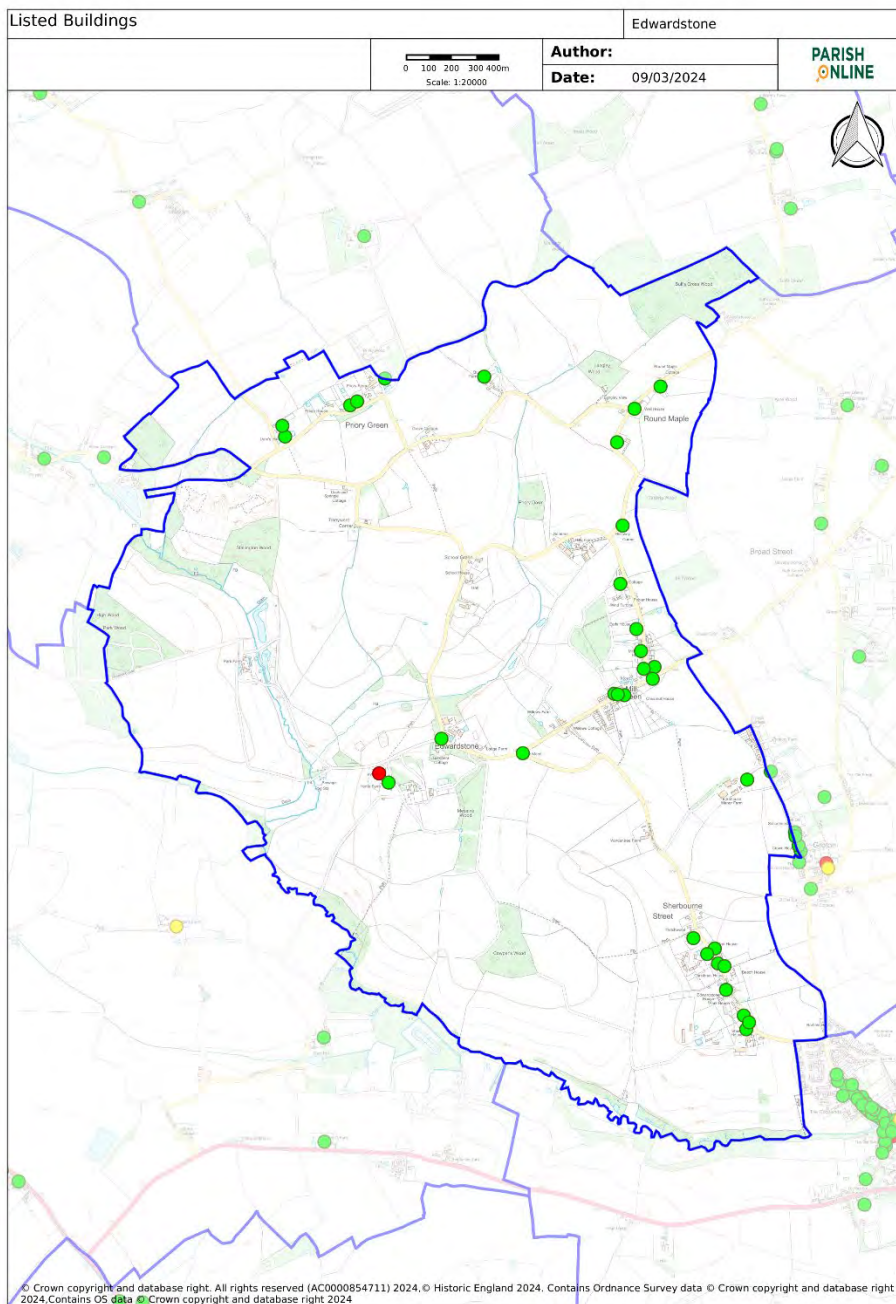


Figure 4 : Listed Buildings in Edwardstone Parish (Grade 1; Grade II*, Grade II)

Population and Housing

- 2.7 According to the 2011 Census, the population of Edwardstone was 352. This had risen to 375 in 2021, although the mean age of residents which was 44.8 years in 2011, was unchanged. This mean age remains slightly higher than the figures for Babergh as a whole (43.1 years) and Suffolk (41.7 years). The age structure of Edwardstone Parish from the 2021 Census data is shown below. The population in 2021 was 52.5% male and 47.5% female compared with 51.7% male and 48.3% female in 2011.



Figure 5: Age of the Edwardstone Population – Census 2021

- 2.8 In terms of household size for Edwardstone in 2021, almost half the population (49.4%) live in a two-person household, which generally comprised a married or cohabiting couple. 59% of Edwardstone residents live in a detached property with a further 32% living in semi-detached housing. Just over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the population are owner occupiers (which is higher than both the Babergh and Suffolk figures), 12% rent from the local authority or other social housing provider and approximately 10% rent privately in some form. The 2021 Census records low levels of deprivation in the parish and 97% of residents have access to at least one car or van for transportation.
- 2.9 In 2011, there were 154 dwellings in the parish. There have been three housing completions between 2011 and 2021, and at March 2022, permission existed for a further 9 dwellings, although only one was under construction. It is therefore assumed that the number of dwellings in the parish is approximately 158 dwellings and could rise to 166 as those outstanding permissions are implemented.
- 2.10 In terms of dwelling size, 45.3% of dwellings in Edwardstone have 4 or more bedrooms, 31.4% have 3 bedrooms, with just over 23% of the population living in properties with 2 or less bedrooms. The occupancy rating for the parish reveals that 85% of residents live in a property with 1 or 2 spare bedrooms.
- 2.9 In terms of economic activity, 46.4% of Edwardstone's resident population work mainly from home and 71% of working residents do so within 10km of Edwardstone

and use their cars to do so. Just over 60% of the overall population is economically active and almost all of those who are economically inactive (excluding children and students) are retired. 56% of those economically active residents work in senior managerial or technical or professional positions with less than 2% engaged in manual labour.

- 2.10 The census data from 2021 (and 2011) begin to provide an overall picture of the resident population of Edwardstone which appears to be slightly older, wealthier, more mobile and with larger properties than the Babergh and Suffolk averages.
- 2.11 Historic information provided by Babergh District Council shows affordable housing need in Edwardstone Parish:
- May 2020: 4 applicants with a local connection, (2 aged over 55). One required a 1-bed property, two required a 2-bed property and one required a 3-bed property. None identified having any special needs (level access shower and/or ground floor accommodation).
 - Oct 2015: 9 applicants (4 aged over 55) stating a local connection BUT only 6 applicants (2 aged over 55) with a confirmed connection. Of all applicants, four wanted a 1-bed property, three wanted a 2-bed property and two wanted a 3-bed property.
- 2.12 The 2014 Suffolk Housing Survey shows that, across Babergh district:
- 12% of all existing households contain someone looking for their own property over the next 3 years (mainly single adults without children). The types of properties they are interested in are flats / apartments, and smaller terraced or semi-detached houses. Although this is not their first preference, many accept that the private rented sector is their most realistic option.
 - 25% of households think their current property will not be suitable for their needs in 10 years' time.
 - 2 and 3 bed properties are most sought after by existing households wishing to move.
 - Suitable housing options for elderly people are less available within the current housing stock. 6% of all households have elderly relatives who may need to move to Suffolk within the next 3 years.

Crime

- 2.13 Crime data for Box Vale ward (which includes Edwardstone and the surrounding parishes) shows 76 crimes committed in the period April 2020 to March 2021, this is a rate of 32 per 1,000 persons. This is lower than the rate of 50 crimes per 1,000 persons for Babergh district and 63 per 1,000 persons for Suffolk.

Education and Libraries

2.14 There is no primary or secondary school in the parish. Pre-school provision for the parish can be found at Sunflowers Childcare Pre-School in the grounds of Boxford CEVC Primary School. Pre-School, breakfast and after school clubs and holiday clubs are also provided. Primary school pupils are served by Boxford CEVC Primary School. High School pupils are served by Ormiston Sudbury Academy or Thomas Gainsborough School in Great Cornard. Edwardstone is in the Sudbury library catchment and has a mobile library that visits Mill Green every 4 weeks on a Saturday.

Community facilities

2.14 **Edwardstone Parish Hall** is located at School Green and is a charitable organisation run by Trustees on behalf of the parish/village. The hall was used to host the Neighbourhood Plan Policy Ideas Exhibitions in September 2022 and the Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Exhibition in November 2023.



Figure 6: Edwardstone Parish Hall

2.15 Edwardstone **Millennium Green** is located in Mill Green. This is one of the 250 Millennium Greens established in the year 2000 by an initiative of the Countryside Agency and supported by the Millennium Commission. The green includes both open space and a children's playground. The play area is in the hamlet of Mill Green, opposite the White Horse Inn public house. There is also an area of public open space behind the small housing estate off Mill Green, which Babergh Council own and has been planted as a Community Orchard in 2023.



Figure 7: Millennium Green

- 2.16 The parish has a public house which is the White Horse Inn located in Mill Green. The pub has a campsite adjacent which is owned and operated in conjunction with the pub and there is an onsite brewery known as ‘Little Earth Project’ which specialises in producing beers using organically farmed and foraged ingredients.



Figure 8 : Edwardstone White Horse Inn

Transport and access

- 2.17 **Public transport:** There is no public bus service provision although Hadleigh Community Transport provides some bookable services from Sherbourne Street to Hadleigh via Boxford. This may account for the high proportion of car ownership in the parish, recorded in the 2021 Census. There is also a school bus service. The nearest mainline train stations to Edwardstone are located at Colchester (20km),

Manningtree (27km) and Ipswich (27km). Sudbury train station is 11km from Edwardstone where services to Marks Tey can be accessed. The majority of Edwardstone residents will use their car to travel to work and for day to day needs such as shopping.

- 2.18 **Walking and cycling:** Public Rights of Way in Edwardstone can be seen on the map in **Figure 9** below and there is also a relatively extensive network of footpaths both public and permissive throughout the parish, however there are no bridleways. South Suffolk Cycle Route A also passes through the parish. (see **Figures 9 and 10**)
- 2.19 Many of the roads in the parish are single track with passing spaces and are shared by farm vehicles, cars, motor cyclists, delivery vans, pedestrians, cyclists, horse-riders and the school bus. The parish does not currently have any designated Quiet Lanes.

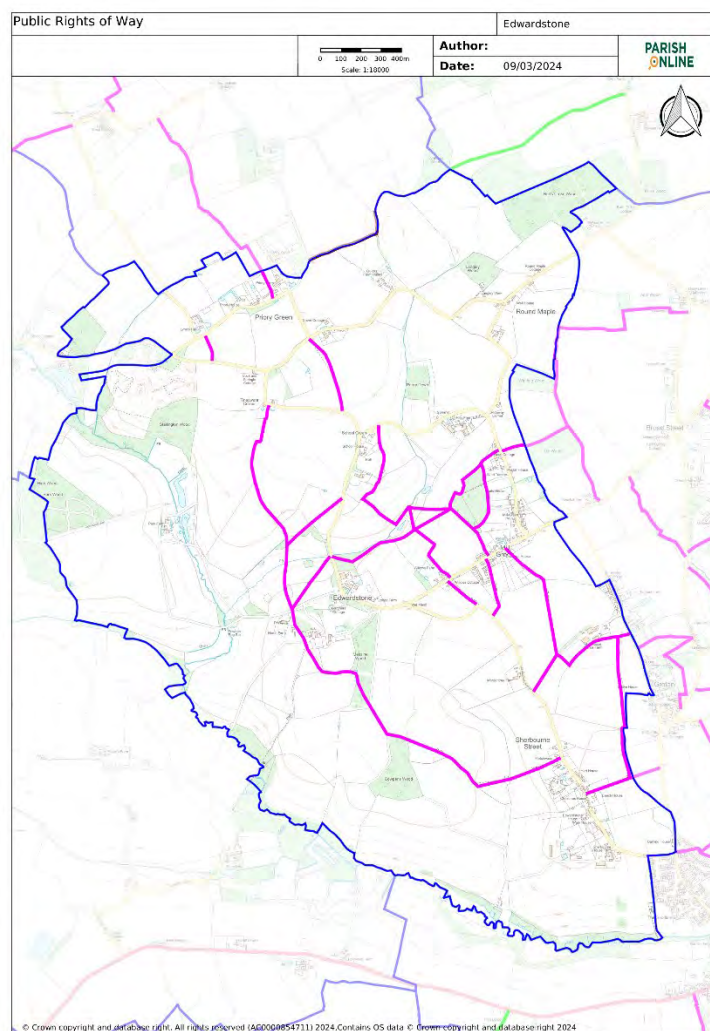


Figure 9: Public Rights of Way in Edwardstone (Pink: Public Rights of Way, Green: Bridleway, Blue: Parish Boundary)



Figure 10: South Suffolk Cycle Route A

Landscape

2.20 According to the Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance August 2015, Edwardstone falls within the Ancient Rolling Farmlands and Rolling Valley Farmlands landscape character types. The key characteristics of Ancient Rolling Farmlands is a rolling landscape of medium clay soils studded with blocks of ancient woodland. The Rolling Valley Farmlands are characterised by valley sides with some complex and steep slopes in some places with deep well drained loamy soils and often sunken lanes. The main areas of this character type are found along the River Stour from the Cattawade and upstream (to Haverhill, across the district boundary) including tributary valleys of the Newmill Creek (to Little Wenham), the Brett (to Hitcham and Thorpe Morieux), the Brad (to Lavenham), the Box (to Edwardstone), the Chad Brook and the Glem. An area of the parish following the river valley, was formerly identified in the Babergh Local Plan as a ‘Special Landscape Area’. **(See Policy EDW8)**

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

2.18 There are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Edwardstone parish.

i) **Edwardstone Woods SSSI** consists of four areas of broadleaved woodland. These are Park Wood, High Wood, Cowper’s Wood, Stallington Wood and Priory Down. These woods consist mainly of ash, maple and hazel with some large areas of hornbeam and small leaved lime. The diverse ground flora is typical of Suffolk boulder clay soils and includes species only generally found in ancient woodland.

ii) **Bulls Cross Wood** in the north-east of the parish forms part of **Milden Thicks SSSI** . it lies on the site of four ancient woods which were combined in the late Middle

Ages. It has an elaborate patchwork of different types of woodland in Suffolk including oak, ash, maple, hornbeam, lime, aspen, wild cherry, birch and elm.

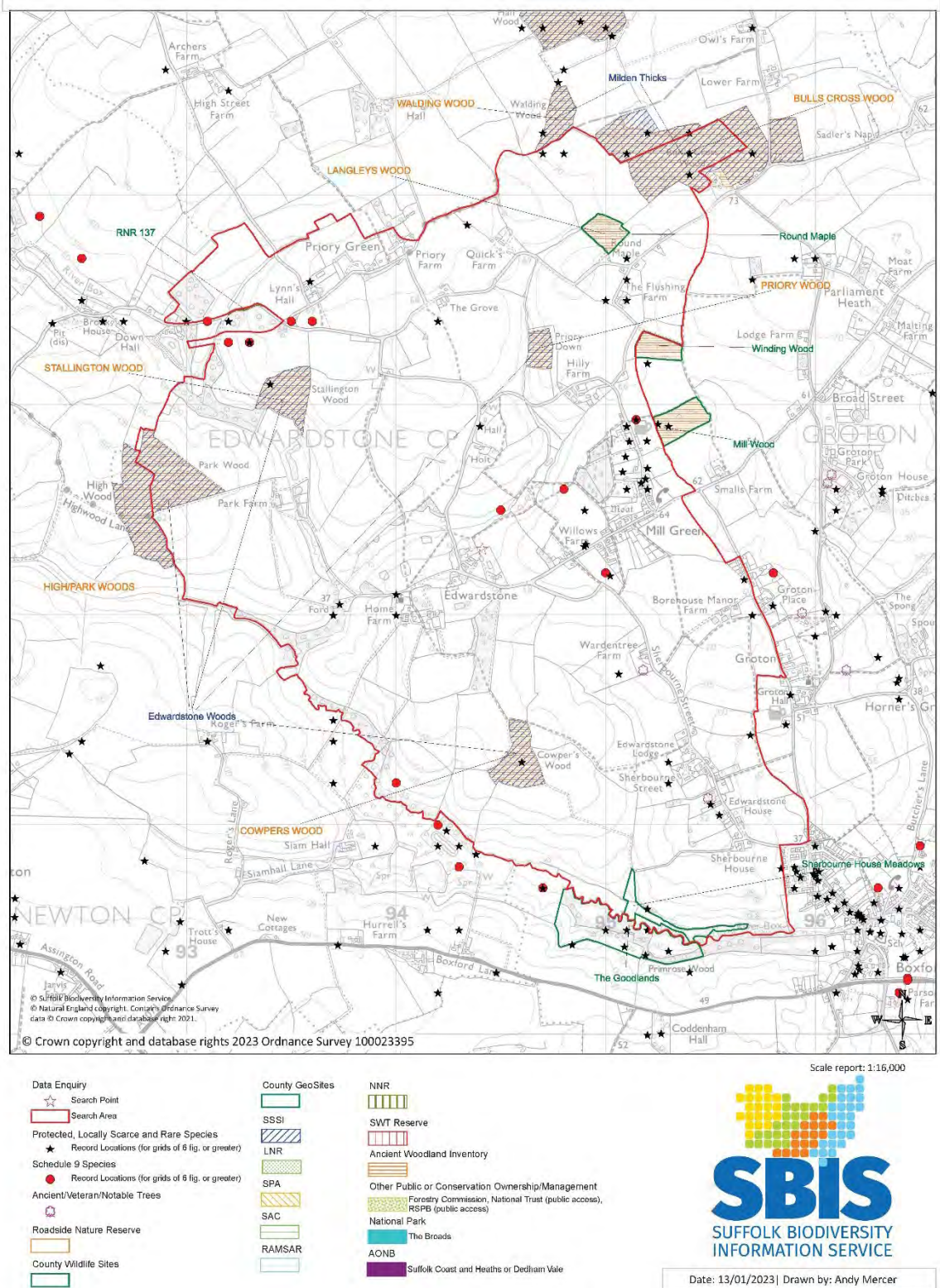


Figure 11: Environmental Designations in Edwardstone

- 2.19 In addition there are two County Wildlife Sites (CWS) – Langley Wood in Round Maple and Sherbourne House Meadows at the southern tip of the parish. The latter forms the Goodlands/Primrose Wood which falls in both Edwardstone and Boxford parishes.
- 2.20 There is a Roadside Nature Reserve (RNR 137) in the parish which is identified for its flora specifically the Sulphur Clover, Grass Vetchling, Bee Orchid and Zig Zag Clover. The RNR is on the border between Edwardstone and Great Waldingfield.
- 2.21 The parish is also home to a number of ancient woodlands which are a typical feature of the landscape character types referred to above. There are also species-rich hedgerows forming valuable wildlife corridors between them, such as the one between Langley Wood and Bulls Cross Wood. In addition to the above, Messine Wood, which lies between Edwardstone Hall and Cowper’s Wood, is not listed as ancient woodland by Natural England, but it has significant amenity value as it is crossed by a public footpath connecting the parish Church and Sherbourne Street. A further patch of privately owned woodland (not named on the OS map and not listed by Natural England) also has significant amenity value because it is traversed by a public footpath connecting Temple Bar and the White Horse Inn in Mill Green.
- 2.22 A number of protected species have been recorded in Edwardstone, in particular the Great Crested Newt, Otters and a range of Bat species. In addition, the following Red List birds (that is, birds identified as in danger of extinction in the UK, in the 5th (latest) Birds of Conservation Concern report) have been recorded in Edwardstone: Skylark, Swift, Cuckoo, House Martin, Yellowhammer, Linnet, Spotted Flycatcher, House Sparrow, Marsh Tit, Turtle Dove, Starling, Mistle Thrush, Fieldfare. Some endangered wildflower species have also been recorded, for example, Shepherds Needle, which is becoming increasingly rare in Suffolk.
- 2.23 Edwardstone is in the Site of Special Scientific Interest Risk Zones for Edwardstone Woods SSSI and Mildens Thicks SSSI. The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks to SSSIs posed by development proposals. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposals which could potentially have adverse impacts.

Rivers and flooding

- 2.24 Areas of Edwardstone are at risk of flooding from rivers as shown on the map below. Flood Zone 2 is shown in pale blue, and this shows a medium risk of flooding with land having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding. Flood Zone 3 is shown in dark blue, and this shows a high risk of flooding with land having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding.

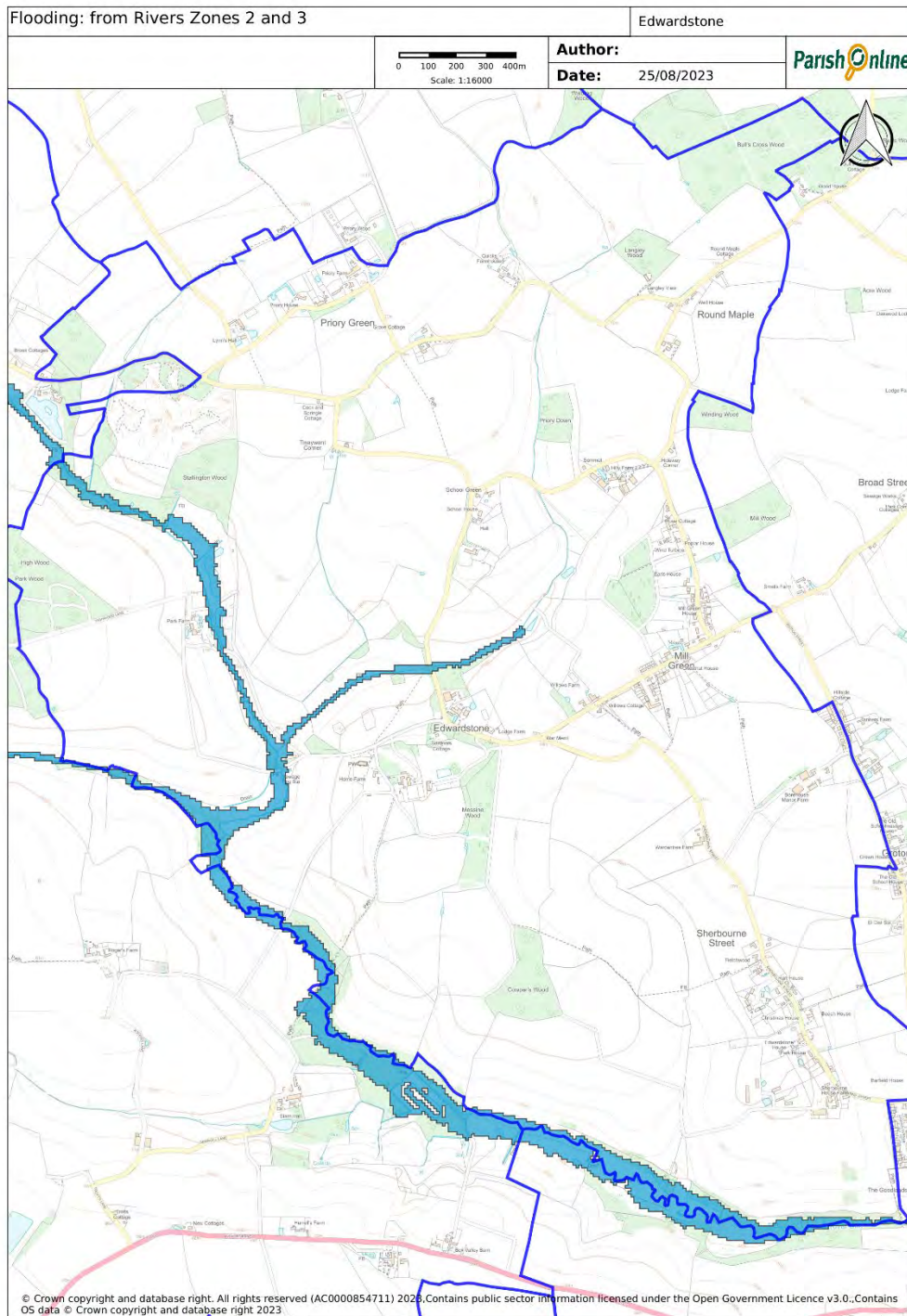


Figure 12: Floodrisk Zones 2 and 3 Source: Parish online

2.25 There are some areas of the parish at risk from surface water flooding. Some areas are at low, medium and high risk of flooding. High risk means that each year this area has a chance of flooding of greater than 3.3%. Flooding from surface water is difficult to predict as rainfall location and volume are difficult to forecast. In addition, local features can greatly affect the chance and severity of flooding. Medium risk means that each year this area has a chance of flooding of between 1%

and 3.3%. Low risk means that each year this area has a chance of flooding of between 0.1% and 1%.

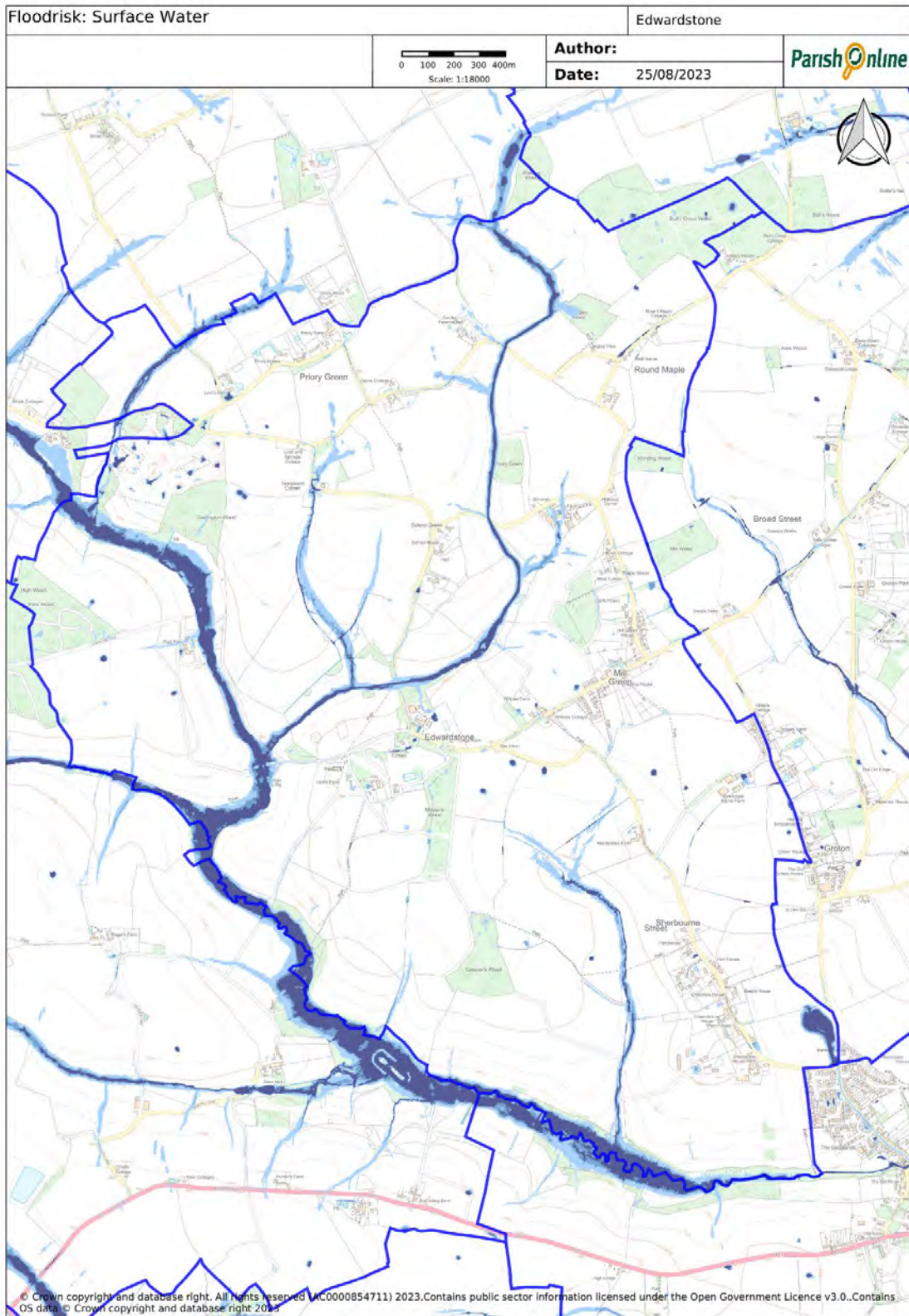


Figure 13: Floodrisk from Surface Water

Business and Employment

- 2.26 Edwardstone supports a variety of businesses most of which are home operated , but nevertheless include such diverse sectors as holiday cruises, design and marketing, printing, heating engineers, holiday accommodation and pest control. There are also a number of working farms in the parish.
- 2.27 Figures from the 2011 and 2021 census, indicated that Edwardstone was home to a higher percentage of the population in associate professional and technical occupations, professional occupations and managers and directors and senior officials compared to Babergh District and Suffolk.

3. National and local context

National Planning Policy

- 3.1 Neighbourhood Plans are prepared in the context of the existing national and local planning policy that is in force at the time that the Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared. National planning policy is found in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the most recent version of which was published in December 2023. This sets out the government’s broad intentions in terms of the purposes of the planning system and their expectations in terms of the delivery of sustainable development. National Planning policy is not part of the ‘development plan’ that is used to determine planning applications but is a material consideration which is given due weight depending upon the age of the various components of the development plan in force for the area. Local planning policies are required to have regard to national planning policies as set out in the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.2 Every local planning authority in England is required to prepare a Local Plan. Local Plans include all of the local planning policies for the district’s area and identifies how land is used, determining what will be built and where. Babergh District Council is currently working with Mid Suffolk on replacing the existing local plan policies by producing a Joint Local Plan for the area – known as the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) which has a plan period that looks to 2037. Part 1 of the BMSJLP was adopted in November 2023. Work has begun on Part 2 and a Call for Sites was made in January 2024. The BMSJLP, along with any Neighbourhood Plan, provides the basis for determining planning applications and future development in the local area and should be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3.3 Development is defined as ‘the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land’.¹ Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 emphasises that the planning system continues to be a ‘plan-led’ system and restates the requirement that ‘determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise’.
- 3.4 The Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan once ‘made’ (adopted) will form part of the statutory Development Plan for the area and future planning applications for new development will be determined using its policies.
- 3.5 Currently, the statutory development plan for the area consists of the BMSJLP, any relevant saved policies from the Babergh Core Strategy adopted in 2014 and the Babergh Local Plan adopted in 2006. The Plan period for the Core Strategy runs to

¹ Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2031. In addition, Suffolk County Council is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority for Suffolk and makes planning policies and decisions in relation to minerals and waste. The Suffolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan, adopted in July 2020 also forms part of the Local Development Plan for Edwardstone.

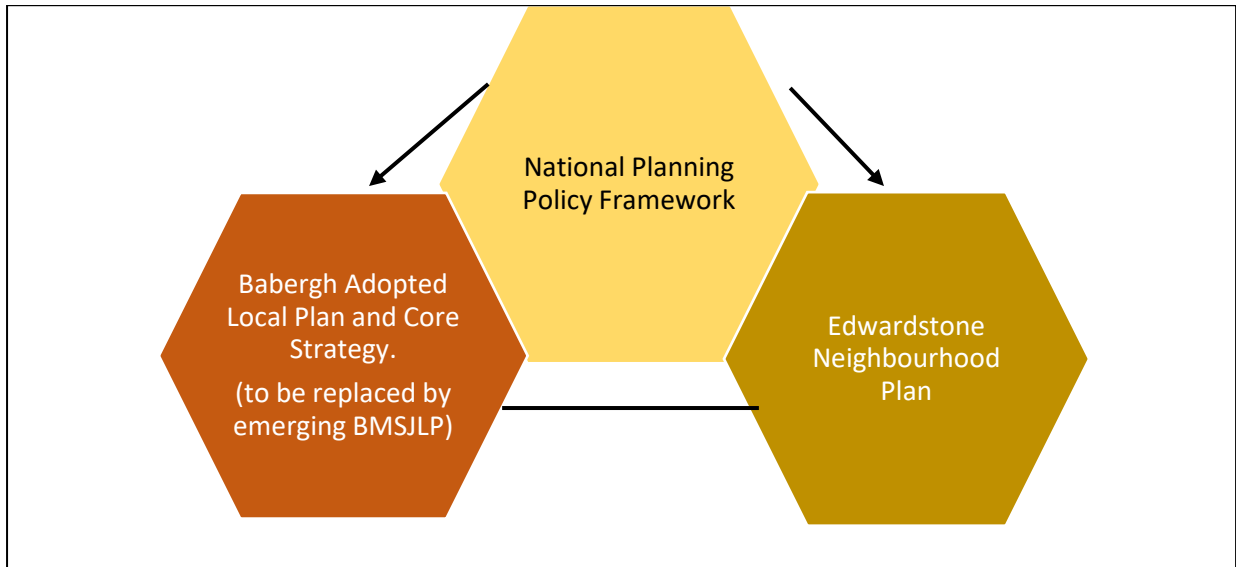


Figure 14: Spatial and strategic policy context: relationship between the NPPF, Babergh Core Strategy and emerging BMSJLP, and the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan. Own diagram.

Policy framework for Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan

Adopted Local Planning Policy

- 3.6 The part of Edwardstone known as Mill Green was identified as a ‘Hinterland village’ in the settlement hierarchy of the adopted Core Strategy under Policy CS2 which looks to the period 2031. The Core Strategy approach to development in Hinterland villages is that most new development (including employment, housing, and retail, etc.) in Babergh will be directed sequentially to the towns / urban areas, and then to the Core Villages followed by the Hinterland Villages. In all cases the scale and location of development will depend upon the local housing need, the role of settlements as employment providers and retail/service centres, the capacity of existing physical and social infrastructure to meet forecast demands and the provision of new /enhanced infrastructure, as well as having regard to environmental constraints and the views of local communities as expressed in parish / community / neighbourhood plans.

Edwardstone



Figure 15: Edwardstone Inset Map from Adopted Core Strategy (Red line denotes settlement boundary; green denotes listed buildings))

Emerging Local Planning Policy

3.7 The emerging Part 2 of the BMSJLP is yet to publish any information on the classification of the parish in the proposed settlement hierarchy. The built-up area of Mill Green was proposed as a ‘hamlet’ rather than a ‘hinterland’ village in the version published in November 2020, which was subsequently divested from the Joint Local Plan. Mill Green, itself hosts a number of the parish’s community facilities (e.g. the Public House, the Millennium Green and the play area), however the other facilities e.g. the Church and the Parish Hall are located in other parts of the parish

which as a whole has poor public transport provision and therefore there are no easy connections between the various hamlets. The November 2020 version of the BMSJLP identified a settlement boundary for the area of built settlement at Sherbourne Street in addition to the one proposed for Mill Green. The proposed settlement boundaries from that document are shown below. However it should be noted that these have no formal status and the adopted settlement boundary currently in force in the parish is that shown in **Figure 15**. The Adopted Part 1 of the BMSJLP does not include a specific housing requirement figure for Edwardstone.

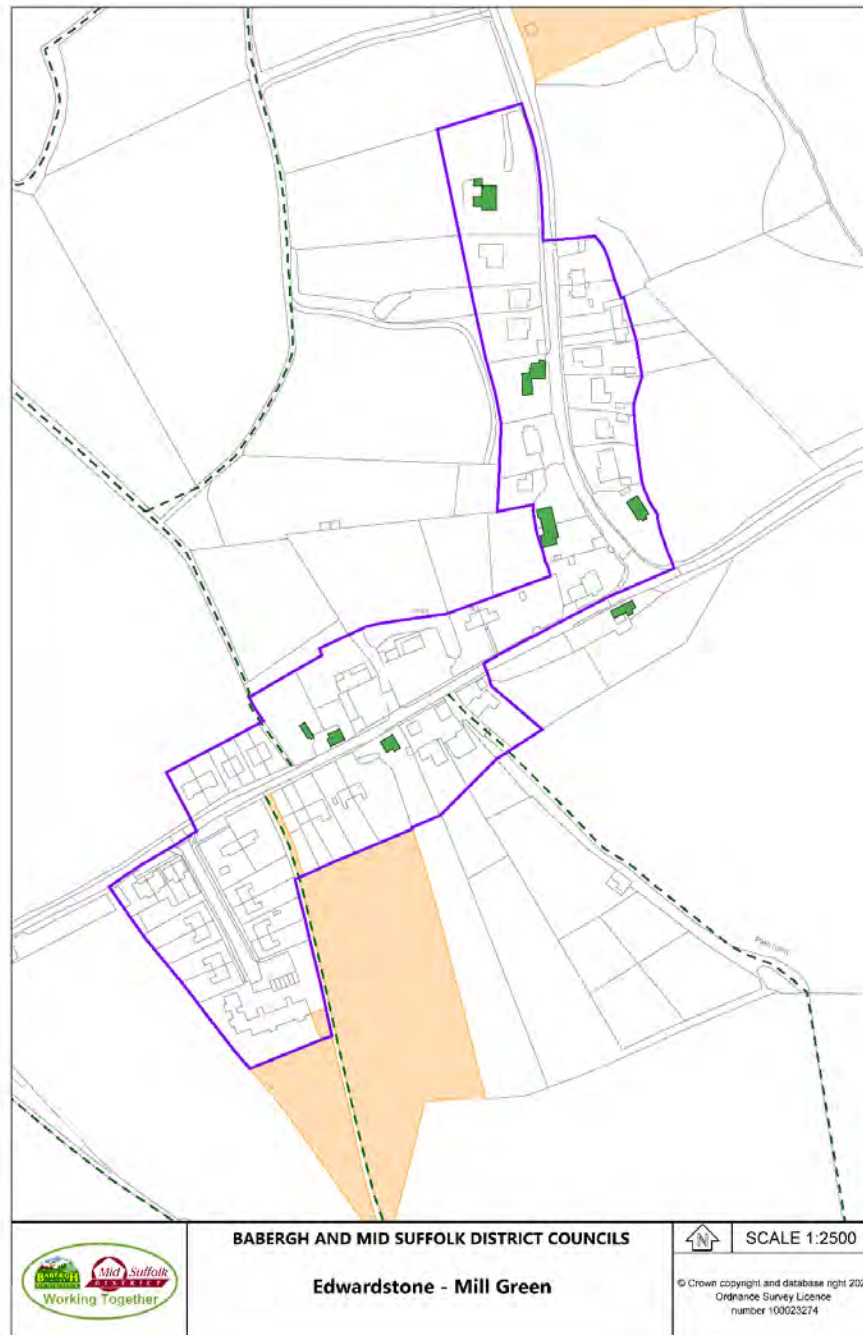


Figure 16: Edwardstone – Mill Green Inset Map from BMSJLP 2020 (Purple lines denotes settlement boundaries, green denotes listed buildings and red shading is open space)



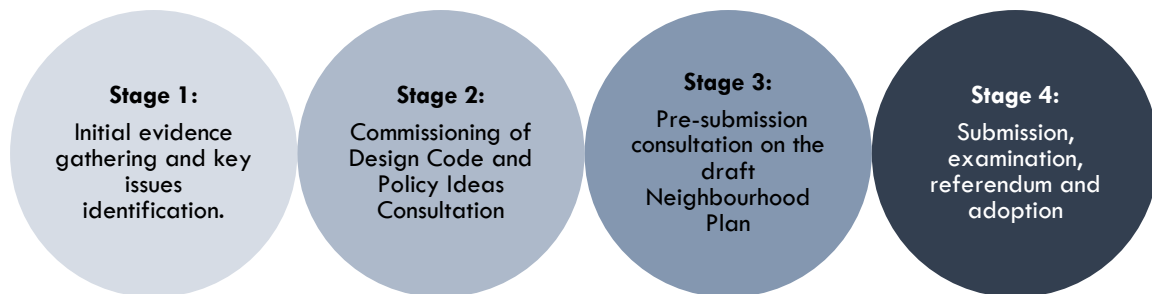
Figure 17 : Edwardstone – Sherbourne Street Inset Map from BMSJLP 2020

4. How the Plan was prepared

- 4.1 The Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared the Plan with support from an independent consultant. The formal process began in March 2021 when the Neighbourhood Area was designated.
- 4.2 The Plan has been commissioned by Edwardstone Parish Council who are the ‘Qualifying Body’ under the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations. The funding has come from a central government Locality grant.

Community engagement and consultation

- 4.3 The Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken with community engagement and consultation at its heart. The Steering Group have used a range of engagement methods including a household questionnaire and a face-to-face drop-in exhibition. More details of all the consultation will be outlined in the Consultation Statement, accompanying the submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to Babergh Council in 2024.
- 4.4 Below is a summary of each of the four-community engagement and consultation stages.



Stage 1: Initial evidence gathering and key issues consultation (September 2021- Spring 2022)

- **Questionnaire:** A short questionnaire aimed at identifying key issues in the parish was delivered to every household. Questions were asked about the key things that were important to Edwardstone residents, what they felt needed to improve and what the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to achieve. 36 responses were received, and the results were used to help draft a vision, objectives and policy ideas.
- **Data profile for Edwardstone (March 2022):** document containing key data for the parish, to inform policy writing.

Stage 2: Commissioning Design Code and Policy Ideas Consultation (May to September 2022)

- **Edwardstone Design Code and Guidance** (Completed September 2022). Steering Group commissioned AECOM, via the Locality technical support package, to provide design codes for the built up parts of Edwardstone with a focus on small scale and infill development. Final report has been used to support the Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- **Policy Ideas Exhibition:** Drop in style public exhibition held in the Parish Hall over two days in September 2022, where members of the community were invited to leave feedback on the draft policy ideas covering a range of themes such as Housing, Natural Environment, Landscape, Heritage, Community and Access. Event was publicised through a leaflet drop undertaken by Steering Group Members. 71 local people attended the exhibition. The results of the feedback were written up and have helped inform policy development.

Figure 18: Edwardstone Design Codes and Guidance (top right). Data Profile (bottom left) . Photographs from the Policy Ideas Exhibition in September 2022.



Figure 19: Exhibition flyer (left) and exhibition photos (right).



Stage 3: Policy drafting and pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14) (October 2022- March 2023)

- Policy drafting began in October 2022, with the preparation of draft policies which were built on the feedback from the Exhibition.
- The Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan was published for pre-submission consultation (from 30th October 2023 until 11th December 2023).
- An exhibition was held on the 6th November 2023 at the Parish Hall which was open to the public and copies of the Plan were sent to statutory agencies and available for residents to comment.
- The documents and response form were available at the White Horse Inn and the Post Office in Boxford and on the Parish Council website.
- At the end of the consultation period over 87 separate comments had been received from 15 individuals and a range of statutory consultees

Key Issues arising from the Pre-Submission Consultation were:

- General support for the Plan
- Comments made in respect of proposed settlement boundaries
- Objection and support in respect of the identified Non Designated Heritage Asset
- Support for landscape and biodiversity policies
- Support for the identified footpath connections
- Requests for factual updates and minor clarifications to policy wording

Following consideration of the Pre-Submission consultation comments the following amendments to the Plan were agreed:

- Factual updates to reflect publication of new NPPF in December 2023
- Factual updates to reflect the adoption of Part 1 of the BMSJLP in November 2023

- Additional text to support the identification of the Non Designated Heritage Asset
- Mapping updates and corrections
- Changes to policy wording to reflect the most up to date position with Biodiversity Net Gain
- Changes to policy wording to align with BMSJLP and for clarity

Stage 4: Submission, examination, referendum and adoption (2024)

- Modifications to be made to the Neighbourhood Plan, following pre-submission consultation.
- Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Examination took place.
- Referendum and adoption.

Communication

- 4.5 Communicating with residents through the development of the Neighbourhood Plan was particularly important during the initial stages of forming an evidence base and establishing key issues and themes
- 4.6 A dedicated Neighbourhood Plan webpage was established on the Parish Council website to contain information about the developing Plan.
<http://edwardstonepc.onesuffolk.net/edwardstone-neighbourhood-plan/>
- 4.7 The Box River News which is delivered monthly to every house in the parish has featured update articles about the Neighbourhood Plan at key points, made requests for feedback and comments at various stages, and has advertised the consultation event.
- 4.8 Facebook, 'WhatsApp', posters and flyers were used to promote the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan. An update for the Parish Council on the Neighbourhood Plan progress was presented at most meetings. A special meeting of the Parish Council was convened in September 2023 to consider the draft Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.9 A summary of the results of the household survey and the Policy Ideas Exhibition were made available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

5. Vision and Objectives

5.1 It is important that any Neighbourhood Plan contains a short and simple vision statement. Our vision describes what Edwardstone should be like at the end of the Plan period i.e., 2037. It has been developed, and adapted through consultation and captures the overarching spirit and ambition of the local community and the Neighbourhood Plan.

Vision:

In 2037, Edwardstone will still be a small, secluded, peaceful and safe place with protected open spaces, big skies, open views, and valued community facilities.

New development will respect and enhance the existing rural character and agricultural heritage of the distinct hamlets and surrounding countryside, protect, and encourage biodiversity and be environmentally sustainable in the context of the climate emergency.

5.2 The vision underpins the objective and policies of the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan and is referred to throughout.

5.3 From the vision flow the different objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and from there, the policies. The diagram below outlines this relationship.

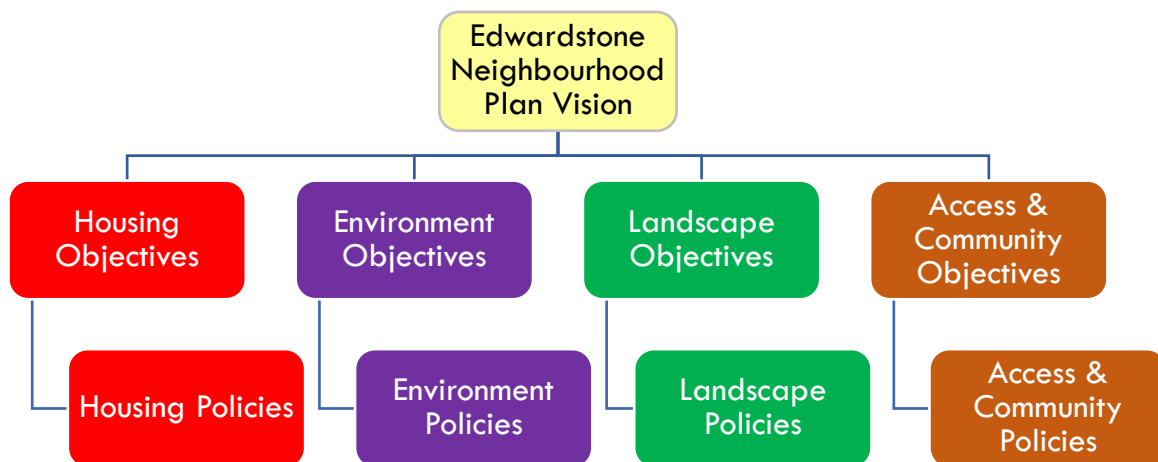


Figure 20 above: Structure of the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan.

- 5.4 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are broad statements of intent which are there to help deliver the vision and link to the issues that Edwardstone is seeking to address. They have been drafted using themes picked up at an early stage and have been refined through the community consultation exercises.
- 5.5 The overarching aim of the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development as outlined in the NPPF. Sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 5.6 The four specific objectives set out below, are reflected throughout the Plan. The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan guide development proposals and decisions, taking account of these objectives and local circumstances and reflect the character, needs and opportunities of the area. The approach supports the delivery of sustainable development in a positive way, so that opportunities to secure net gains across each objective can be taken.

Housing

Objective 1: To ensure that all new development is sustainable in terms of its scale and location, meets proven local needs and complements the existing character of the parish.

Environment

Objective 2: To protect and enhance the natural environment, wildlife, and built heritage of the parish.

Landscape

Objective 3: To maintain the existing peace and tranquility of the parish, whilst protecting its distinctive rural landscape character.

Access and Community

Objective 4: To protect the parish's existing community facilities and green spaces and to improve pedestrian accessibility both within Edwardstone and with neighbouring parishes

6. Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Introduction to policies

- 6.1 The vision and objectives have provided the framework to develop the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Each policy relates to a particular objective under the following four themes: Housing, Environment; Landscape; and Access and Community.
- 6.2 The Neighbourhood Plan is first and foremost a land-use document for planning purposes. All policies in the Plan have been derived from a series of consultation exercises, stakeholder engagement and desk research, which provide the justification and evidence base for their selection.
- 6.3 The Neighbourhood Plan policies follow the government’s guidance. They exist to:
- Set out locally led requirements in advance for new development in the parish.
 - Inform and guide decisions on planning applications.
 - Ensure that the multitude of individual decisions add up to something coherent for the area as a whole².
- 6.4 To aid interpretation for decision makers and planning applicants, each policy is accompanied by supporting text, which includes context for the theme, the views of residents, guidelines and reference to strategic plans. This is set out before each of the policies.

Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan policies:

Housing EDW1: Location and scale of new housing development
EDW2: Housing Mix and Affordable Housing

Environment EDW3: Design
EDW4: Pollution and Amenity
EDW5: Energy sustainability and Climate Change
EDW6: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity.
EDW7: Heritage Assets

Landscape EDW8: Landscape

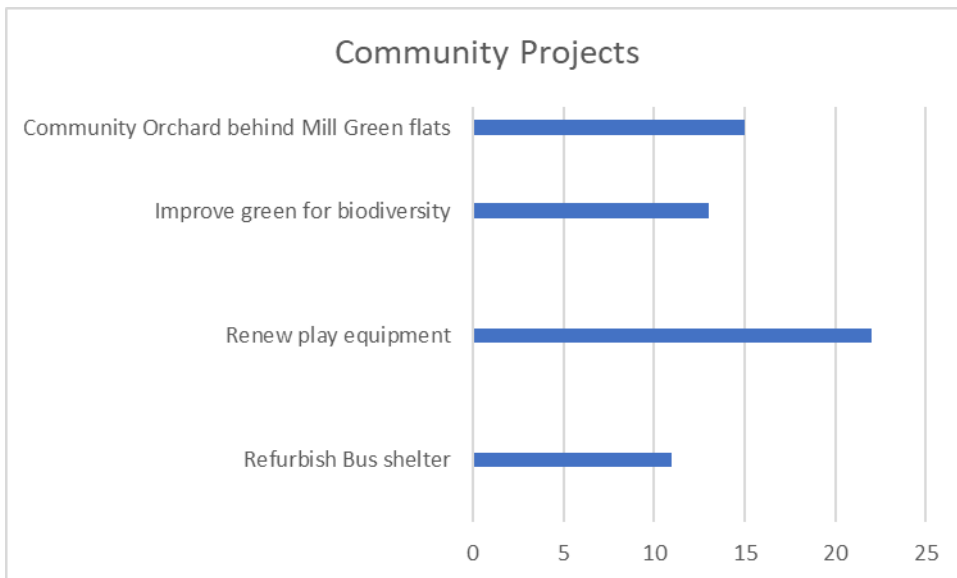
Access and Community EDW9: Community Facilities
EDW10: Local Green Spaces
EDW11: Accessibility

² Tony Burton, Writing Planning Policies, Locality.

Potential community projects

6.5 The Neighbourhood Plan is principally concerned with land use planning matters. However, it is inevitable that through public consultation and discussion with local stakeholders, that issues will emerge that are not land use planning matters and therefore not within the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan but are of legitimate concern to local people. It is important that such issues when raised are acknowledged and that the most appropriate mechanism to deal with them is identified. Where non- Neighbourhood Plan issues have been raised these issues can be dealt with separately by the Parish Council as ‘projects’ or community aspirations.

6.6 At the Policy Ideas Exhibition held in September 2022, community were asked for their views on some potential projects. The results were as follows:



6.7 Some progress has already been made on a number of these projects and the latest position is shown below:

Improve Millennium Green biodiversity: wildflower seeds have been supplied by Babergh and an area was planted in April 2023.

Community Orchard: This was agreed by Babergh in 2022 and the orchard has now been planted.

Renew play equipment on Millennium Green: the Millennium Green Trust’s application for Community Infrastructure Levy funding has been approved by Babergh. Together with a contribution from Edwardstone Parish Council, the new equipment has been installed.

Refurbish Bus Shelter: Edwardstone Parish Council has engaged a contractor and the required repairs have been completed. The re-painting work will be completed by volunteers in October 2023.



Figure 21 above: new play equipment, refurbished bus shelter and new planting of Community Orchard



7. Housing

Objective 1: To ensure that all new development is sustainable in terms of its scale and location, meets proven local needs and complements the existing character of the parish.

Scale and location of new housing

- 7.1 The prospect of new housing development is often one of the key reasons why a local community decides to embark upon the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.2 Government guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023 advises that Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area. The planning policy context for this Neighbourhood Plan is discussed in **Chapter 3**.
- 7.3 Neighbourhood Plans should be used to set out more detailed policies for specific areas or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of community facilities, establishing design principles, conserving, and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out detailed policies for the management of development. The Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan (ENP) has been prepared with regard to both existing and emerging development plan policies. The NPPF requires Neighbourhood Plans to support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans and shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.
- 7.4 Figures from the 2021 census indicate that the population of Edwardstone was 375 people living in occupied 158 households with a further 4 dwellings that appeared to be unoccupied. Figures from Babergh District Council's Annual Monitoring reports up to March 2022 indicate that three dwellings were completed in the parish between 2009 and 2022, and that nine further dwellings had the benefit of planning permission but had not been delivered. As at February 2023, planning permission

for a further seven dwellings had been granted since March 2022, although six of these are part in the parish of Boxford.

- 7.5 In September 2022, Babergh published its Five-year Housing Land Supply Position Statement 2022, (This confirmed that the District had a 7.13-year housing land supply against its 5-year requirement. The parish has no formal housing requirement and there is little expectation that there will be development of any scale in the parish given the land supply position. The Neighbourhood Plan is not compelled to make further provision for new housing.
- 7.6 It is also acknowledged, however, that throughout the plan period of the Neighbourhood Plan it is likely that applications will be submitted for infill or other development within the parish. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore makes an allowance for windfall sites in its policies. The NPPF defines ‘windfall’ as ‘sites not specifically identified in the development plan’. These can include previously developed land that has unexpectedly become available, new dwellings formed through the sub-division of an existing property, barn or building conversions and small infill plots within the existing settlement boundaries.³ However, the adopted strategic policies for the area indicate that the focus of development should be on specifically allocated sites or within identified settlement boundaries. Applications for new development outside of the settlement boundaries should usually be refused unless they are for a specific purpose or to meet an identified need (as set out in the NPPF⁴) that cannot be met within the identified settlement boundaries in the parish. (i.e. at Mill Green or Sherbourne Street).

Results of public consultation

- 7.7 Public consultation in the form of the short questionnaire (2021) and the policy ideas exhibition in 2022, revealed a strong preference that there should be no specific housing allocations although here was some recognition that development would continue to take place in the parish albeit at a small scale e.g. individual houses or the occasional small group. The policy ideas exhibition asked about the preferred locations for new development and the results indicated that new development should take place close to existing housing, with infill within the existing boundaries being the preference. In addition there was support for maintaining the current linear character of existing housing, which comprises a largely one plot deep building line with road frontage and little backland development. The results revealed a preference that new housing should not take place where it would erode the current undeveloped gaps between the distinct hamlets within the parish nor should it begin to join up built areas of settlement within Edwardstone with development in the adjoining parishes.

³ A settlement boundary is a line drawn round the main built up area of a settlement that defines where certain policies apply. Inside the settlement boundary new dwellings are usually acceptable subject to details and outside of the settlement boundary new dwellings are generally unacceptable unless consistent with the exceptions outlined in national or local policy.

⁴ Para 84 of the NPPF 2023

- 7.8 There was some support for new housing in the parish including affordable housing but only where the need for it could be proven, (for example through a Housing Needs Survey) although this was qualified on the basis of the recognition that the parish has few community facilities to support new residents and that housing in all forms might be better directed to other parishes with more facilities i.e. those located higher up the settlement hierarchy.
- 7.9 The policy ideas exhibition indicated that there was in principle support from residents to better utilise existing buildings i.e. support for conversions and for extensions subject to controls over design, scale and impacts upon amenity.
- 7.10 Given the above and recognising that applications for future development can be made at any time, the Neighbourhood Plan makes it clear that in order to be successful such proposals would need to be sustainable, small scale, suitably located within the existing settlement boundaries without adverse effects upon heritage, natural environment, or highways.

Settlement Boundaries

- 7.11 Settlement boundaries are a line drawn around the main built settlement in a parish, within which certain policies will apply. They are often known as 'development boundaries' as they seek to consolidate existing development and prevent ribbon development and encroachment into the countryside. Development within the settlement boundary is generally acceptable in principle and development outside is generally restricted.
- 7.12 It is recognised in this Neighbourhood Plan that there are limited local services and facilities in the parish to provide for new residents (e.g. no shop or school), few public transport opportunities exist, and travel is very much dependent upon the private car. Proposals for new development outside of the settlement boundaries, particularly those that would result in the erosion of the gaps between the distinct hamlets in the parish will not be supported in line with national and strategic policies. This approach does not restrict the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential uses, provided that these do not adversely impact upon the environment or the amenity of local residents. Proposals for replacement dwellings or development required to meet an essential need as outlined in the NPPF⁵ is also supported. In addition, new annexes which may be required to facilitate support and care to a family member or to create more flexible use of accommodation to respond to changing family circumstances over time are supported and these are covered by Adopted BMSJLP Policy LP02.
- 7.13 For the purposes of the implementation of **Policy EDW1** below, two settlement boundaries are identified and shown below. These are based on those from the BMSJLP November 2020 for Mill Green and Sherbourne Street, with some minor

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/5-delivering-a-sufficient-supply-of-homes> National Planning Policy Framework 2023, para 84

additions which reflect recent completions or dwellings under construction. The settlement boundaries have been drawn in order to prevent further ribbon development extending outside of the main built-up areas of settlement, to protect development from adversely affecting the historic character and setting of listed buildings located on the settlement edges and to prevent further encroachment into the open countryside.



Figure 22: Settlement Boundary at Sherbourne Street

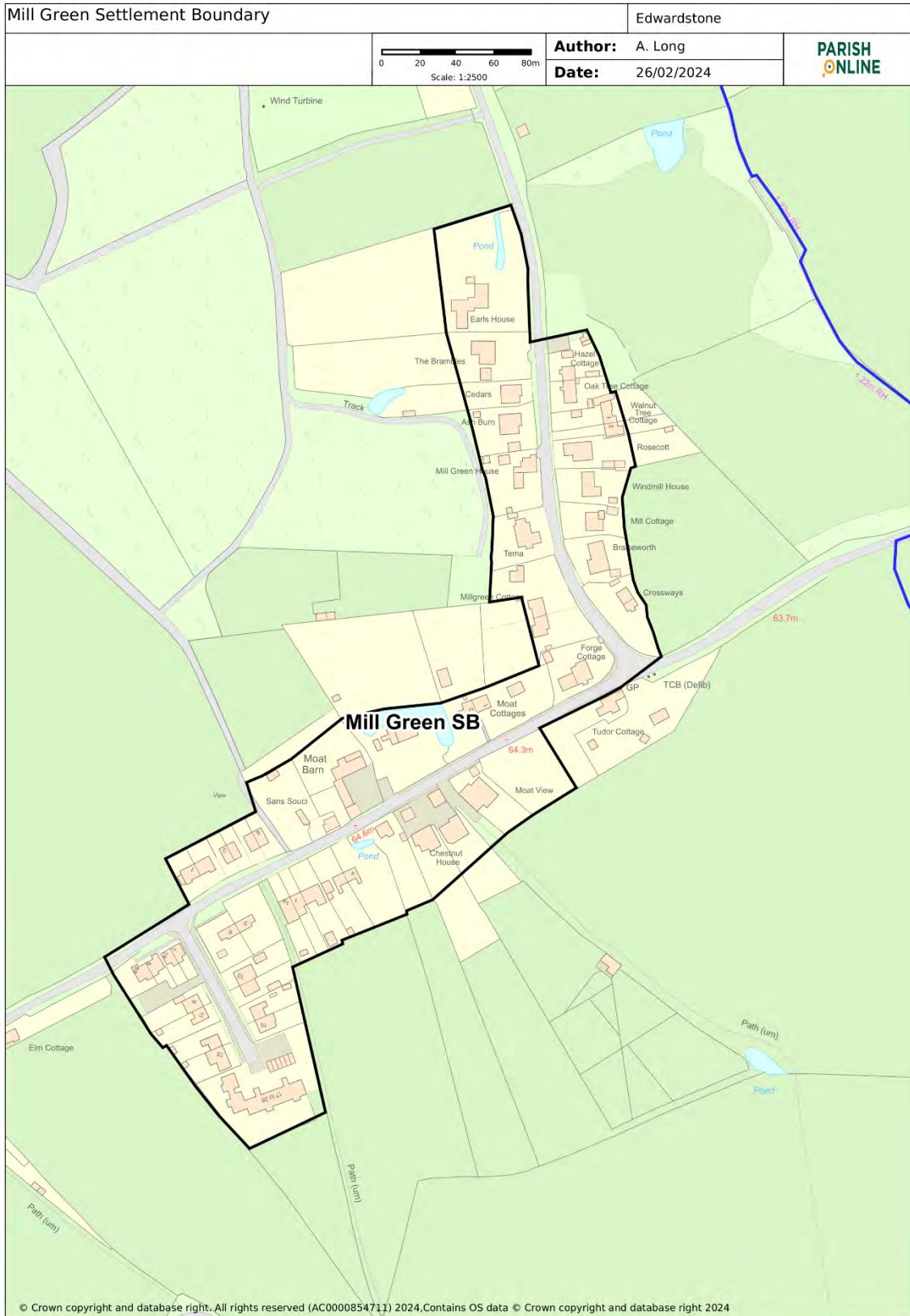


Figure 23 Settlement Boundary at Mill Green

POLICY

EDW1: Location and scale of new housing development

New housing development within the parish of Edwardstone over the Neighbourhood Plan period will be sustainable in terms of location and of a scale commensurate with the scale and form of the existing built settlement.

Proposals for new housing will be supported where they are located within the existing defined settlement boundaries of Mill Green or Sherbourne Street and would enhance the form and character of the area, provided they comply with the following criteria:

- a) The development represents a logical linear extension or infill to existing development and has a highway frontage,
- b) Development would not have an unacceptable impact upon the historic or natural environment of the parish,
- c) Development would not have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety
- d) The site has a close functional relationship to the existing settlement,
- e) The proposal is self-contained and has logical, natural boundaries
- f) The proposal is well designed and landscaped and is appropriate in size/scale, layout, and character to its setting and to adjacent properties.

Development outside of the defined settlement boundaries will only be supported where it meets the criteria set out in paragraph 84 of the NPPF 2023 or is an exceptions site for affordable housing and meets the criteria in this Neighbourhood Plan.

The existing physical undeveloped separation between the distinct hamlets within the parish will be maintained and not eroded by new development. The physical separation between existing built development in Edwardstone and adjoining parishes should be maintained to prevent coalescence.

Conversions

Proposals for the conversion of existing buildings such as barns to form new residential dwellings are supported in principle provided that the proposal would not result in an extension to the overall built footprint, would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety and would not result in an adverse impact on the amenity of adjoining residents. Ancillary buildings such as cart lodges/garages would need to be justified in design terms.

Extensions

Proposals for the extension of existing residential dwellings are supported in principle provided that:

- i) The proposed extension is subordinate in size and scale to the existing dwelling.
- ii) The proposal would not result in a significant loss in the private amenity area of the dwelling
- iii) The proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or the amenity of adjacent residents.

- | | |
|--|--|
| | iv) That the proposal is appropriate in form, materials and design to the character of the area. |
|--|--|

Housing Mix

- 7.14 As the results of the 2011 and 2021 census imply, the existing housing stock in the parish is predominantly detached or semi-detached dwellings. These tend to be larger properties with over 76% of residents living in a property with 3 or more bedrooms and 31% having 4 or more bedrooms. When matched against the population characteristics of the parish, which is dominated by two person households, and the fact that over 55% of the population live in a house with one or more spare bedrooms, a high level of ‘underoccupancy’ is revealed, which is an indicator of a potential imbalance between population and housing stock.
- 7.15 Of the 9 dwellings given planning permission in the parish since 2011, 7 are dwellings proposed to be 3 bedrooms and above.
- 7.16 Furthermore, when this is considered against parish level information provided by Babergh District Council or the district level work undertaken for and on behalf of the Suffolk Strategic Housing Partnership (as outlined in Chapter 2), in which those who identified themselves as being in ‘housing need’ in the parish, express a preference for smaller dwellings (1-3 bedrooms) coupled with the results of the Neighbourhood Plan Policy Ideas exhibition, it would seem sensible for new dwellings in the parish to be these smaller units. This would offer opportunities for downsizing for those who already live in the parish and wish to remain to find a smaller home, thereby releasing larger properties for some families as well as providing entry level dwellings for first time buyers or smaller families. This would also help to ensure a broader housing mix where the existing housing stock better matches the needs of the resident population.
- 7.17 Taking all of the above into account **Policy EDW2** below expresses a policy preference for new dwellings in Edwardstone to be smaller properties.

Affordable Housing

- 7.18 The community consultation exercises revealed some support for new affordable housing in the parish provided that it was to satisfy a local need and that need had been proven.
- 7.19 Affordable Housing is housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market, which includes housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers. Annex 2 of the NPPF (2023) sets out the definition of affordable housing and is split into the following four main categories:
- Affordable housing for rent
 - Starter homes

- Discounted market sale housing, and
- Other affordable routes to home ownership.

- 7.20 Affordable Housing can be delivered through the planning system broadly in two ways.
- A) As a proportion of housing on a wider development site – in Babergh this equates to 35% affordable housing contribution, required on sites of ten or more dwellings or 0.5ha or more.
 - B) As a ‘rural exception site’ or an exception site for Community-Led housing.
- 7.21 Affordable housing that is delivered as a proportion of a wider development site will typically be used to accommodate those in housing need from across the district. Households will need to have pre-registered on the Councils ‘Gateway to Home choice’ system (a choice based letting model), with homes offered in the first instance to those ‘most in need’.
- 7.22 ‘Rural Exception sites’ are small sites immediately adjacent to or otherwise well connected to the settlement boundary that would not otherwise get planning permission for housing. Such sites usually comprise only affordable dwellings that will be made available at an appropriate tenure mix. The housing should also remain affordable in perpetuity and is usually offered in the first instance to households who are able to demonstrate a local connection to the parish. Such schemes typically arise where a specific need for affordable housing has been identified in the area and are delivered and managed by a Social Housing provider. An alternative delivery option could be a Community Land Trust, who would then own and manage the properties themselves. Community-led developments may be permitted on sites that would not otherwise be suitable as rural exception sites, should comprise one or more types of affordable housing and be proportionate in size to the settlement, whilst complying with any local design policies and standards. The policy is exceptional in that it allows residential development in areas that would not otherwise be policy compliant and evidence that they are fulfilling a genuine identified housing need is required together with evidence of community support and participation in the proposal.
- 7.23 If affordable housing is to be delivered in Edwardstone, it is most likely to be achieved through the second mechanism given that sites of 10 dwellings or above are unlikely to be supported in the parish by the District’s strategic policies. This is due to the level of community facilities in the parish, its rural character and poor levels of public transport. If the clear steer given by the results of the Policy Ideas Exhibition is to be followed, then the preferred mechanism for the provision of new affordable housing in the parish is via an exceptions site where the needs of the parish can be given priority.
- 7.24 Should a local need for affordable housing be proven and community support for the principle of an ‘exception’ site be demonstrated then, the Neighbourhood Plan provides in principle for support for such a scheme and a policy framework for the

selection of a suitable site. Proposals seeking to provide new affordable housing will be expected to provide evidence of need demonstrated through a specific Local Housing Needs Survey which will directly influence the size, type and tenure of the affordable housing to be proposed. There are a number of organisations⁶ who work with local communities and Parish Councils to assist in bringing forward affordable housing to meet local needs.

- 7.25 Through **Policy EDW2** below, this Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of affordable housing through rural exception sites provided that proposals are compliant with other planning considerations such as design, layout, highway safety, impact upon natural and historic environment and amenity etc.

⁶ <https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/communities/rural-housing/>

POLICY

EDW2: Housing Mix and Affordable Housing

Where new housing development in Edwardstone is to be provided, encouragement will be given to housing of a size and type that enables a better balance between the population and the housing stock

Otherwise acceptable development proposals which provide opportunities for downsizing or would meet the accommodation needs of first time buyers and smaller families wishing to access 1-bed, 2-bed, or 3-bed properties will be supported.

Support will be given to homes that are adaptable and accessible (meaning built to optional M4(2) standards) in order to meet the needs of the ageing population, without excluding the needs of other occupants

Affordable Housing

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on sites outside of, but immediately adjacent to⁷ the settlement boundaries will be permitted on an exceptional basis where they are accompanied by specific Housing Needs Survey which identifies a proven local need.

Where this need is demonstrated, proposals for new affordable housing will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- a) The proposal is consistent with the requirements of **Policy EDW1** in terms of scale and location, form, and character and **EDW3** in respect of design.
- b) The housing remains affordable and available in perpetuity⁸
- c) The housing is available for people identified as being in housing need by virtue of being unable to buy or rent properties in the parish at open market prices
- d) The housing is offered in the first instance to people with a demonstrated local connection as identified in the Babergh Choice Based Lettings Scheme 2016 (or successor document). Only where there is no local connection, a property should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.

The occupation of this housing should be secured through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing.

The development of such housing should be consistent with policies in this plan governing design, appearance, layout, amenity, highway safety and impacts on historic and natural environment.

⁷ i.e. the application site touches the existing settlement boundary



8. Environment

Objective 2: To maintain the existing peace and tranquility of the parish, whilst protecting its wildlife, distinctive rural character, and heritage.

Design

- 8.1 Government guidance places considerable emphasis on achieving well-designed Places and this has been reinforced in the most recent revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2023. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF describes it as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work, and helps make development proposals acceptable to communities. Effective engagement between applicants, communities, and local planning authorities is essential.
- 8.2 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states ‘Design policies should be developed with local communities so that they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics.’ Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of an area and how they should be reflected in development.
- 8.3 One of the key determinants of whether any new development, irrespective of scale or use, is successful or not is its quality and how well it is considered to integrate with its surroundings. Matters such as design, materials, form and massing, the

⁸ Permanently

impact on local character, layout and scale are the most common issues that will cause the local community concerns about any proposed new development.

- 8.4 If a community believes that it has been involved in and been able to influence the design of a development at an early stage, the higher the likelihood that the development will be considered to be acceptable.
- 8.5 Whilst to an extent design and impact on local character are subjective judgments, these can be influenced by breaking design elements down into component parts and attempting to address them. Whether a proposed new development is acceptable and appropriate and relates well to its surroundings, is one of the most common judgments to be made, yet there is often very little evidence or guidance to assist local people (or decision makers) in making that judgement.
- 8.6 A key purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is not only to help influence the designers and proposers of development at an early stage of formulating their proposals, but also to help promote an understanding of what elements make up the character of the area and what constitutes good design that respects local character.
- 8.7 In addition, the NPPF makes clear that local planning authorities should ensure that visual tools such as design codes and guides are used to inform development proposals to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage and reflect local character and preferences. They should provide a framework for creating high-quality places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design to inform development proposals. It also makes clear that the level of detail and degree of prescription within design codes and guides should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.
- 8.8 Design coding is one tool available to local planning authorities, communities, and developers to define and deliver design quality, in addition to design guides, planning briefs, heritage characterisation studies, standards and masterplans as set out in the NPPF and planning practice guidance. A design code is a set of simple, concise, illustrated design requirements that are visual and numerical wherever possible to provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.
- 8.9 The Government is heavily advocating the use of design codes and expects all local planning authorities to prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide⁹ and National Model Design Code¹⁰ and which reflect local character and design preferences.

⁹ National design guide - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹⁰ [National Model Design Code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

8.10 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group commissioned consultants AECOM to produce some Design Guidelines for the whole of the parish. This work was completed in September 2022, updated in February 2024, and is a supporting document to the Neighbourhood Plan. The Design Guidelines reflected a detailed analysis of the local character of the parish, developed some strategic design guidelines and identified a palette of materials which should influence the design of future development. In addition, the report provided specific guidance to be used by the Parish Council when assessing and responding to consultation in future planning applications for new development.



The report provided specific guidance to be used by the Parish Council when assessing and responding to consultation in future planning applications for new development.

Consultation results

8.11 The results of the Policy Ideas Exhibition revealed that the design of new development was a key factor for the local community. There was general support for policies that would seek to raise the standard of design of new development in the parish and ensure that new development enhances the character of the area. Design elements such as layout, style, scale, landscaping, parking and materials were all identified at the event as requiring careful consideration together with sustainability measures such as electric charging points and energy consumption

8.12 Comments left at the exhibition included the following:

- “Must include sufficient parking”
- “Protection for existing trees - TPOs to be included”
- “Criteria too restrictive - unacceptable to enforce boundary treatments or energy alternatives +1”
- “Realistic car parking important i.e. no presumption that one space sufficient”
- “Ensure choice of fuel is maintained. Do not insist on oil alternatives only +2”
- “Solar panels on all new builds +1”
- “Renewable energy not always practical”

8.13 Given the increasing importance that both local people and national Government are placing on design, it is considered that achieving well designed places and promoting high quality design should also be fundamental to this Neighbourhood Plan and go to its heart.

8.14 New development should contribute to the general health and well-being of the local community by prioritising movement by foot, bicycle, and public transport over other modes, where appropriate, protect the amenity and health of residents and consider the needs of the disabled and the ageing population.

8.15 **Policy EDW3** below therefore sets out its key design criteria in the following policy which is applicable to all new development irrespective of scale (e.g. residential extensions, conversions, changes of use and non-residential developments).



POLICY	<p>EDW3: Design</p> <p>Proposals for new development in Edwardstone should have regard to the guidelines set out in the Edwardstone Design Codes and Guidance (February 2024). This policy is applicable to both residential and non-residential proposals.</p> <p>New development should be informed by the wider context and proposals should also take account of the individual characteristics of each hamlet in the parish and seek to enhance and reflect its distinctive features. This will be achieved as follows:</p> <p>Layout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Proposals for all uses should respect the historic grain of the individual hamlets and consider existing building patterns and the relationship between buildings and plot sizes. b) Where residential development is proposed the use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of a street frontage should be avoided for visual interest and to reflect the architectural diversity of the architectural diversity of the individual hamlets and other dwelling clusters which has developed over time. c) Residential proposals must respect the overall spacious and linear settlement pattern, characterised by one-plot deep arrangements along the road and frequent gaps between buildings that enable views into the countryside. d) Variations in architectural details as well as building heights, widths, and depths should be sought to create variety and reflect the rural and informal character e) Where development is located at the edge of the hamlet of Mill Green, particularly the western and southern edges of the built-up area which are exposed to long distance views from the open countryside, it should be carefully designed to guarantee a successful visual integration. f) Dwellings should be oriented to face roads. The building line should have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions but should generally form a legible line. Building setbacks must strike a balance between creating a satisfactory sense of enclosure while respecting Edwardstone’s rural character. <p>Scale and Massing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g) New buildings, conversions and extensions should be sympathetic in mass, height, and scale of the existing context. Subtle variation in massing and height is encouraged to add visual interest and respect Edwardstone’s architectural diversity. h) The massing of buildings should ensure a sufficient level of privacy and access to natural light for their occupants, taking into account the proposed use and avoid overshadowing existing buildings.
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Building Height

i) Residential dwellings should generally be one or two storeys in height.
j) Variations in the roofline should reflect the informal and rural nature of Edwardstone, where rooflines show diversity in roof shapes, orientations, and materials. The repetition of a standardised and uniform set of roof shapes and materials should be avoided. In residential development where appropriate, dormers and chimney stacks may be used as design elements to add variety and interest to roofs

Boundary treatments and Gardens

k) Boundary treatments should be used that contribute to Edwardstone’s rural character, for example continuous hedges, low picket style fencing and low brick walls, composed of local species or traditional materials found elsewhere in Edwardstone.

l) The use of panel fencing or metal or concrete walls in publicly visible boundaries should be avoided because they conflict with the rural character.

m) New development should reuse and integrate existing boundaries in the form of hedges and mature trees where possible.

n) In residential proposals, front gardens should be provided in all but exceptional circumstances.

Materials

o) High quality materials which fit with the context of the area are encouraged. The use of these should be character led and appropriate for the development being proposed and include:

Elevations: render, red brick and rendered brick, black weatherboarding

Roofs: clay pantiles, slate, clay plaintiles, thatch, green roofs

Sustainability

p) The arrangement of buildings should seek to optimise daylighting and passive solar gains to reduce energy consumption.

q) Proposals should, where appropriate, incorporate domestic scale sustainable and environmental design features or technologies such as electric car charging points, solar, air/ground source heat pumps, rainwater capture, passive ventilation, permeable pavements

Sustainable Drainage

r) Sustainable Drainage Systems should be integrated into development to manage drainage and the volume of water being discharged from the proposed development for all events up to and including the 1:100 plus climate change allowances. The SuDs shall manage pollution and also provide gains for biodiversity and amenity.

Parking

s) Proposals should avoid over-providing parking and take measures to integrate parking areas into the fabric of the settlements. Parking standards for residential developments in Edwardstone can be found in the

Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2023) which outlines minimum requirements for off-street parking provision.

t) When parking is placed at the front of dwellings, the area should be designed to minimise its visual impact and to blend in with the existing streetscape and materials. For residential properties, cars should be placed at the front or side of the property and as appropriate, sufficient room for front gardens should also be made.

u) Parking areas and driveways should be designed to minimise impervious surfaces through the use of permeable paving and soft landscaping.

v) Residential garages should be designed to be subservient to the main building, for example with a setback from the main building line and a roof lower than that of the main building.

w) Cycle parking should be integrated into all new housing in accordance with the Suffolk Guidance for Parking Document (2023, or any successor document).

Storage

x) Waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall design of the development and not stored/presented on the highway. Landscaping should be used to minimise the visual impact of bins and recycling containers.

Pollution and Amenity

8.16 The NPPF requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate to its location taking into account, the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution (light, noise, air, and dust) on the health, living conditions and amenity of residents as well as the impacts on the natural environment. The NPPF also requires that development proposals should seek to mitigate and reduce to a minimum, potential adverse impacts resulting from noise (and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life).

8.17 Community consultation through both the questionnaire and the policy ideas exhibition revealed that the rural character and high-quality environment of the parish are elements that are highly valued. There was strong support (49 responses) for a policy that would protect the existing dark skies of the parish, and which sought to restrict the outside lighting of new development. There was also support for broadening this to cover all forms of pollution that might affect residential amenity such as air pollution, dust, and smell.

Dark Skies and light pollution

- 8.18 The NPPF indicates that development proposals should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation.
- 8.19 According to the CPRE light pollution maps¹¹, the entire parish falls within the most category of the darkest skies e.g. <math><0.25</math> nano watts/cm² (Category 1 of 9 with 9 being the most polluted). High levels of lighting can affect the health, wellbeing and amenity of adjacent residents but also have impacts for natural habitats and species.

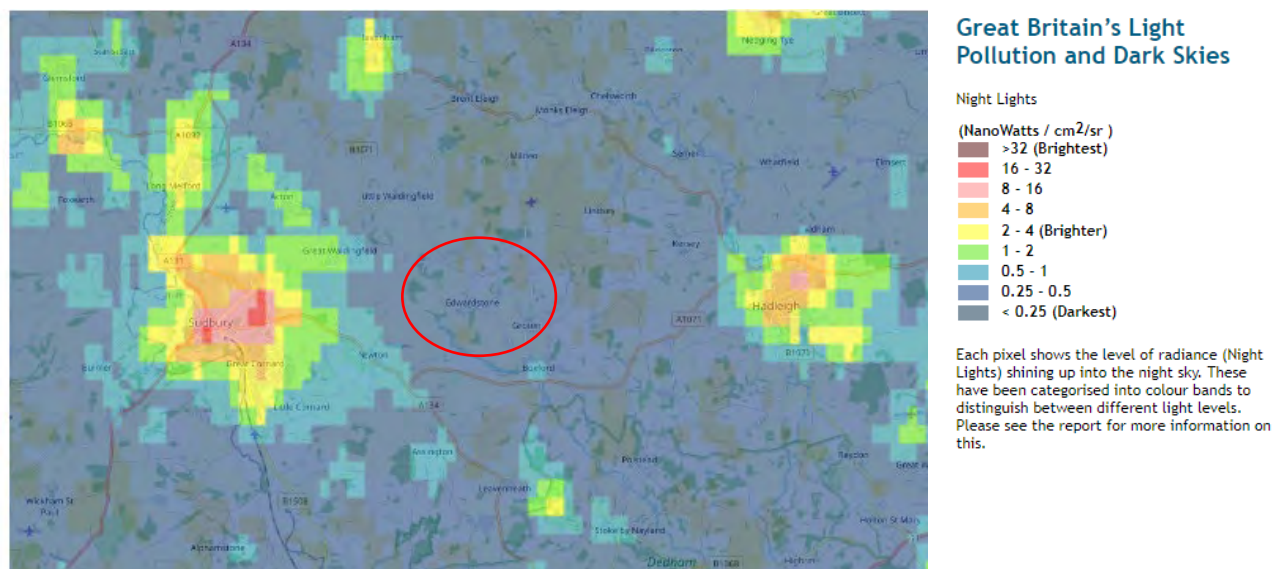


Figure 24: Dark Skies Map

- 8.20 Nil or low levels of light pollution are an important aspect of tranquility which was also an important characteristic of the parish that people valued. Light pollution comes in many forms – sky glow as a consequence of water droplets in the air, illumination from artificial light and glare. Artificial light is not detrimental in all cases and the solution to light pollution is not turning off all lighting. Light pollution is where light is excessive or intrudes where it is not wanted or expected. Well-designed lighting sends light only where it is needed and without scattering it elsewhere. The NPPF advises that by encouraging good design in planning policies this should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation.
- 8.21 Light pollution can be omitted from a variety of sources including windows, residents illuminating their houses and gardens with upward-facing lighting, courtyard lighting, and car parks for instance. However not all lighting schemes or emitters require planning permission, but where they are part of a proposal it is reasonable to seek to control them – on residential, commercial or other developments.

¹¹ [England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies \(cpre.org.uk\)](https://www.cpre.org.uk)

POLICY	<p>EDW4: Pollution and Amenity</p> <p>Dark Skies New lighting should be strictly limited in order to preserve Edwardstone’s rural character, tranquility and intrinsically dark skies. Proposals should seek to minimise light pollution in order to benefit both people and wildlife, thereby preserving the dark skies enjoyed by the parish.</p> <p>Where lighting is essential for reasons of safety and security, low-level lighting solutions should be applied, including lighting schemes that can be turned off when not needed (‘part-night lighting’). Lighting likely to cause disturbance or risk to wildlife should be avoided.</p> <p>Reference should also be made to the Edwardstone Design Codes and Guidance 2024</p> <p>Residential Amenity Proposals for all new development (including extensions, conversions and changes of use) should not adversely affect the amenity of adjacent users, exacerbate existing or cause new pollution problems (air, noise, dust, vibration, and light) either from the use itself, its built form or that from traffic generated.</p> <p>Proposals should not have a harmful effect on neighbouring properties in terms of overshadowing, overbearing, or privacy.</p>
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Energy Sustainability and Climate Change

- 8.22 Government guidance in the NPPF advises that planning policies should help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat and provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, which maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts).
- 8.23 Furthermore, local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.
- 8.24 In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

- 8.25 The emerging and adopted strategic policies for the area support renewable energy sources and distribution subject to criteria.
- 8.26 Given the current issues around the security of energy supply, and the impacts of climate change, it is anticipated that proposals for renewable energy development are likely to come forward within the Plan period. Solar is the most likely to arise within the Parish and therefore the following policy has been prepared which seeks to manage such potential developments and safeguard the important environmental assets of the Parish.

POLICY	<p>EDW5: Energy Sustainability and climate change</p> <p>Proposals for renewable, decentralised and community energy generating schemes including development required to facilitate them , will be supported provided the proposal meets all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is located outside of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1, 2 or 3a). b. will result in a measurable net gain for biodiversity interests by supporting habitats, species and natural features. c. is located outside of the Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity (Policy EDW8) and would not have an adverse impact upon the landscape character of the parish. d. does not adversely impact upon views of the Church or its setting. e. will not have any adverse impacts upon the significance of designated or Non-designated Heritage Assets or their setting. (Policy EDW7) f. will not have any adverse impacts upon residential amenity in terms of noise, glare, dust (Policy EDW4) g. can be safely accessed from the highway without detriment to the above criteria.
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Biodiversity

- 8.27 The NPPF indicates that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity or geological value and minimising impacts on and providing measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- 8.28 The Environment Act 2021 received Royal Assent in Autumn 2021 and introduces a new system for the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). In simple terms, BNG is an approach to development which aims to leave the natural environment in a *measurably* better state than it was beforehand. Planning policy that seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity is not new, but this latest approach focuses in more on the *measurability* aspect. Planning applications will need to quantify the different habitat types on site both before and after the proposed development

using the latest Biodiversity Metric. Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design to secure a minimum of 10% net gain firstly onsite or if not locally. Where this cannot be achieved a developer can secure the shortfall by securing a site for biodiversity uplift elsewhere. BNG is now mandatory for all new development except for small sites¹², which are included from April 2024. Measures are included that allow planning authorities to recognise any habitat degradation since 30th January 2020 and to take the earlier habitat state as the baseline for the purposes of biodiversity net gain.

- 8.29 Many Districts have begun to embed BNG as a policy requirement in their Local Plans, which is the level at which a consistent and districtwide policy will apply. Neighbourhood Plans therefore need not repeat or duplicate such matters unless there is clear, robust local evidence for doing so. Policy LP16 in the Adopted Part 1 BMSJLP (November 2023) requires that development proposals create, protect, and enhance ecological networks and seek to ensure that all new development secures high standards of design and green infrastructure which creates attractive and sustainable places where people want to live and spend time. Networks of green infrastructure should be provided across new developments linking with existing networks of open space.

Edwardstone's Biodiversity

- 8.30 As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, Edwardstone parish is currently home to two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), one Roadside Nature Reserve (RNR) and two County Wildlife Sites (CWS). The national designations (SSSI) are protected under legislation, national and strategic policies whilst the more local designations (RNR and CWS) would benefit from protection by this Neighbourhood Plan. There are also other important habitat features such as trees, ponds and woodlands which are common features within the parish which contribute to its overall landscape character and biodiversity value.
- 8.31 The Policy Ideas Exhibition revealed considerable support from attendees for the protection of natural asset in the parish including habitats and species, together with support for the creation of new habitats, biodiversity net gain and the protection of the County Wildlife Sites.
- 8.32 In September 2023, the Parish Council commissioned a report on Edwardstone's Biodiversity by Suffolk Wildlife Trust. The report looked at the ecological corridors and green spaces of the parish and the results of that work has influenced policy development.
- 8.33 **Policy EDW6** below has been developed taking all of this into account. It refers to 'wildlife' corridors which is a term used to refer to any linear feature in the landscape that can be used for the migration or dispersal of wildlife. Such corridors allow for the linking of habitats and reduce the isolation of populations. Linear

¹² under 10 dwellings.

features may vary and may also not be continuous however patches of natural habitat can benefit wildlife and occasionally the terms ‘stepping-stones’ is used to refer to these. The role of wildlife corridors is assuming greater importance and opportunities should be taken to create these as a consequence of new development.

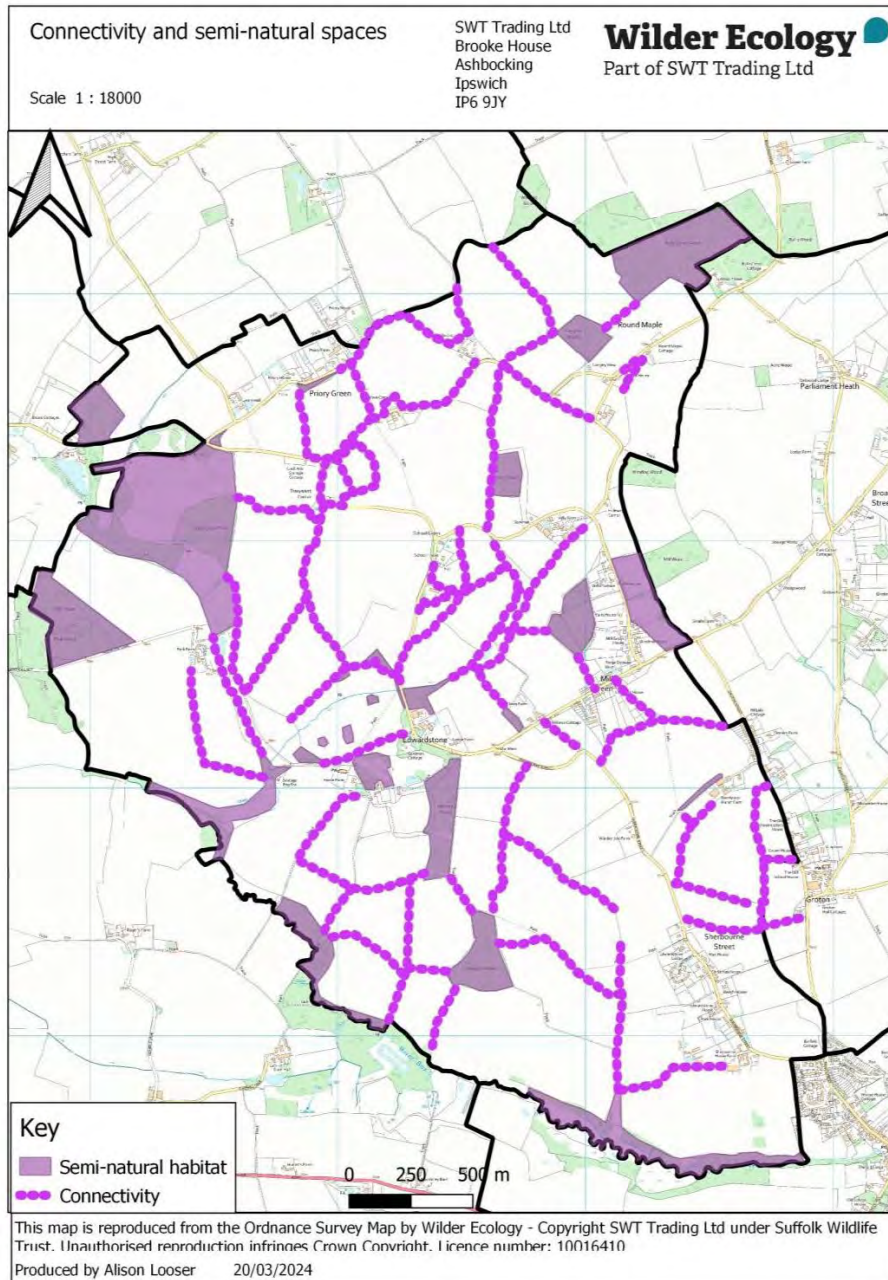


Figure 25: Wildlife Corridors in Edwardstone parish. Source: SWT Report

POLICY	<p>EDW6: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity.</p> <p>Proposals for new development in the parish will be expected to protect and enhance existing ecological networks and wildlife corridors. Proposals should retain existing features of biodiversity value including blocks of ancient woodland, trees including veteran trees, hedgerows, ponds and verges.</p> <p>Development proposals should provide an overall measurable net gain in biodiversity in line with national policy through, for example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the creation of new natural habitats b) the planting of additional trees and hedgerows c) the restoration and repair of fragmented habitats to create new ecological corridors. d) the incorporation of wildlife species friendly measures in new development e.g. bat and owl boxes, swift bricks etc <p>Proposals should prioritise the achievement of Biodiversity Net Gain on site and only when this cannot be practically achieved should consideration be given to off-site delivery. Biodiversity net gain should be targeted to improve habitats for key species recorded in the parish.</p> <p>Where a proposal will result in the unavoidable loss or harm to biodiversity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) the benefits of the development must be demonstrated to clearly outweigh any impacts; and ii) suitable mitigation measures that include better replacement of the lost features will be secured. <p>Mitigation proposals should form an integral part of the design concept and layout of any development scheme and that development will be landscape led and appropriate in relation to its setting, context, and ongoing management.</p> <p>Where planning permission is required for a new access is to be created, or the widening of an existing access which results in the loss of part of a hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.</p> <p>New development should avoid locations where damage could be caused to identified natural features or designated wildlife sites in the parish such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edwardstone Woods (SSSI) : – which consists of Park Wood, High Wood, Cowper’s Wood, Stallington Wood and Priory Wood. • Bulls Cross Wood (part of Mildens Thicks SSSI) • Langley Wood in Round Maple (CWS) • Sherbourne House Meadows (CWS) • Messine Wood
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- Woodland crossed by FP9 between the Church and Mill Green
- Area of new Community Orchard at Mill Green
- Roadside Nature Reserve 137 at Great Waldingfield/Edwardstone

Information on natural environment data within the Plan is obtainable from the Defra Magic Website ¹³ and from the Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service.

Development proposals should have regard to the advice set out in the **Edwardstone Design Codes and Guidance**.

Edwardstone's Heritage Assets

- 8.34 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG¹⁴) recognises that there are buildings, monuments, sites and places, areas of landscapes identified as having a degree of local significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets e.g. Listed buildings. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'. The PPG goes on to explain that these can be identified through Neighbourhood Plans (and Local Plans) and can be a positive way for the local authorities and the community to identify Non-Designated Heritage Assets against consistent criteria to improve the predictability of the potential for sustainable development.
- 8.35 Edwardstone possesses a high quality and varied historic environment with a considerable number of listed buildings (**See Chapter 2**) although there is no Conservation Area. There are 32 Nationally Listed Buildings within the parish. The Church of St Mary the Virgin is Grade I listed with the remaining all Grade II. There are no buildings within the parish that are on Historic England's 'At Risk' Register.
- 8.36 The Suffolk County Historic Environment Record (HER) for Edwardstone lists over 61 records for the parish. The HER is maintained by Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service. Publicly available information is also available via the Heritage Explorer. It includes monuments such as Edwardstone Hall and Edwardstone Hall Farmstead and its post medieval icehouse, to iron age and bronze age coins, roman artefacts and coins and oval crop marks.
- 8.37 The policy ideas exhibition sought to gauge support for a policy that identifies and reinforces the importance of the heritage assets in the parish, including Non-Designated Heritage Assets (buildings or structures that are not nationally listed but are locally significant and make a contribution to the historic character of the parish) and archaeological features. There was a high level of support for this, and

¹³ [Magic Map Application \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.magicmap.gov.uk/)

¹⁴ Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Historic England, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

comments left at the exhibition included reference to the protection of Edwardian/Victorian buildings within the village.

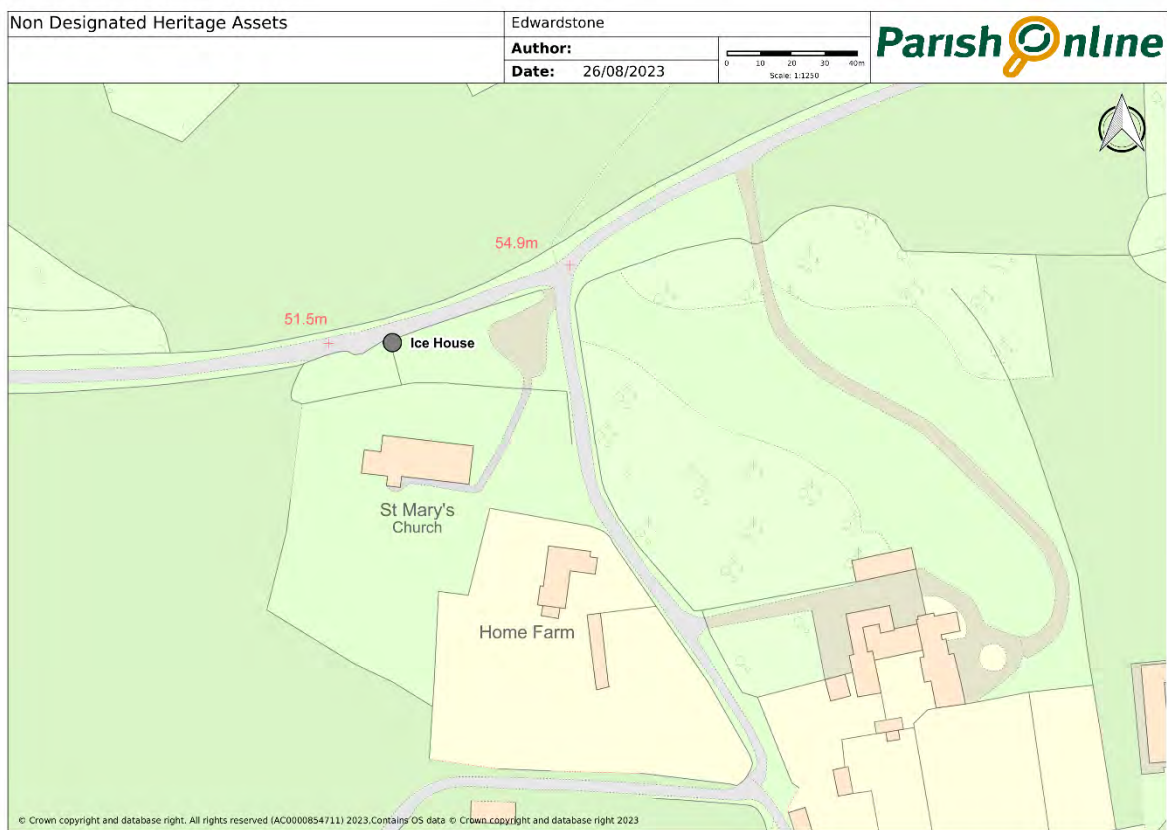
- 8.38 One potential candidate Non-Designated Heritage Asset has been identified – this is The Icehouse which is believed to have been associated with the former Edwardstone Hall. The Icehouse has been assessed against the Criteria in the Historic England Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7 and the assessment is shown in Appendix B. **Policy EDW7** below has been informed by this.

Note: Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) would advise that there should be early consultations of the Historic Environment Record (HER) and assessment of the archaeological potential of any potential development site at an appropriate stage in the design stage, in order that the requirements of NPPF and Babergh Local Plan are met. SCCAS as advisors to Babergh District Council would be happy to advise on the level of archaeological assessment and appropriate stages to be undertaken

POLICY	<p>EDW7: Heritage Assets – Designated and Non Designated</p> <p>The historic significance of existing heritage assets, including non-designated heritage assets and archaeological features within the parish will be protected.</p> <p>New development should ensure that the design of new development complements the shape and form of the settlement and the relationship between heritage assets and the spaces around them.</p> <p>Development proposals should avoid harm to these heritage assets having regard to their character, important features, setting and relationship with surrounding buildings or uses.</p> <p>Proposals should demonstrate that consideration has been given to retaining:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The important asset or historic feature itself. b. Its most distinctive and important features. c. The positive elements of its setting and its relationship to its immediate surroundings. d. The contribution that the building or historic feature and its setting makes to the character of the local area. <p>Non Designated Heritage Assets</p> <p>The following structure, the Icehouse as shown in Figure 26 is identified as Non-Designated Heritage Asset due to its locally important character and historic significance.</p>
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Figure 26: Map and photograph of the Ice House





9 . Landscape

Landscape

Objective3: To maintain the existing peace and tranquility of the parish, whilst protecting its biodiversity, distinctive character, and heritage.

- 9.1 The National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscape and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 9.2 Edwardstone parish is located within the natural landscape character area defined by Natural England as the South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands (National Character Area, 86¹⁵). This Character Area (NCA) stretches from Bury St Edmunds in the north-west to Ipswich in the north-east, roughly following the line of the A14 trunk road through the Gipping Valley. It then embraces the Colchester hinterland before encompassing the urban areas of Braintree and Chelmsford in the south and stretching to Bishop's Stortford and Stevenage in the west.
- 9.3 It is an ancient landscape of wooded arable countryside with a distinct sense of enclosure. The overall character is of a gently undulating, chalky boulder clay plateau, the undulations being caused by the numerous small-scale river valleys that dissect the plateau. There is a complex network of old species-rich hedgerows, ancient woods and parklands, meadows with streams and rivers that flow eastwards. Traditional irregular field patterns are still discernible over much of the area, despite field enlargements in the second half of the 20th century. The widespread

¹⁵<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5095677797335040?category=587130>,

moderately fertile, chalky clay soils give the vegetation a more or less calcareous character. Gravel and sand deposits under the clay are important geological features, often exposed during mineral extraction, which contribute to our understanding of ice-age environmental change.

- 9.4 The Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk Landscape Guidance (BMSLG) produced in August 2015 identifies Edwardstone as falling within two specific landscape character types - the '**Ancient Rolling farmlands**' and the '**Rolling Valley Farmlands**'.
- 9.5 The **Ancient Rolling Farmlands** landscape character type is characterised by a rolling landscape of medium clay soils studded with blocks of ancient woodland – this landscape type encompasses a large area of the Babergh District including to the south the Dedham Vale AONB, River Stour Project, Polstead and Stoke by Nayland, continuing west as far as Little Cornard to the eastern side of Hadleigh and north through Cockfield and beyond the boundary of the District. The rolling clayland landscape is dissected by river valleys including The Brett and Box. In some areas deposits of glacial sand and gravel produced heathland which were enclosed in the 18th and 19th century. However, only the names are left to denote these areas such as Babergh Heath in Great Waldingfield, Cornard Heath, Castling's Heath and Parliament Heath in Groton, Leavenheath and Polstead Heath. Ancient and species-rich hedgerows (mainly oak, ash and field maple, with suckering elm) and associated ditches have a strong visual impact as they are frequently high and wide. Ancient woodland is scattered throughout in blocks consisting largely of oak, lime, cherry, hazel, hornbeam, ash, holly and elm. The woodlands provide strong visual features within the landscape. Between Hadleigh and Sudbury orchards are a more prominent feature. Although there are some extensive field amalgamations resulting in a much more open landscape, overall the landscape is largely intact, and accessible through a dense network of winding roads and wide verges. At Lavenham and Chilton there are areas of flat interfluves (area between valleys that is adjacent to a watercourse) which were used for military airfields in World War II. The current crop production of cereals and oilseed rape and increasing equine use has a significant visual impact on the landscape. Wide panoramic views are offered in all directions of the compass from this landscape character.
- 9.6 Within this character type, there are frequent occurrences of small to moderate sized greens. Some have been enclosed and even lost through infill development over the years, however, the remaining open spaces are very important as they shape the relationship of buildings to each other and define the form of settlements. The small narrow winding lanes and roads that pass through the villages of this landscape character retain the tranquil, rural feel with only the occasional small hamlet or isolated farmstead to break up this gently rolling landscape.

9.7 The aim in the Landscape Guidance for the Ancient Rolling Farmlands landscape is to retain, enhance and restore the distinctive landscape and settlement character, and in particular safeguarding the influences of the area. The Objectives in the Landscape Guidance for the Ancient Rolling Farmlands landscape are:

- To maintain and enhance the landscape and the settlement pattern, ensuring the sense of separation between settlements is maintained.
- To reinforce hedgerows of locally native species and retain the existing field boundaries.
- To safeguard the ancient hedgerow and woodland areas.
- To safeguard the orchard areas.

9.8 The Key Design Principles in the Landscape Guidance for the Ancient Rolling Farmlands are:

- i) There are significant sized areas of open landscape providing wide panoramic views, with the potential of any form of development to be visibility intrusive if it has been designed without sufficient screening, appropriate landscape design plan or appropriate siting.
- ii) Maintain the distinctive settlement pattern, ensuring the sense of separation between settlements is maintained.
- iii) Retain rural character of the small settlements, by avoiding the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials and features; conservation areas and areas that fall within the AONB are particularly sensitive in this respect.
- iv) Minimise the cumulative visual impact of equine development and ancillary equipment within this landscape character.
- v) Restore, maintain and enhance Greens and Tyes, orchards and woodland areas.
- vi) Hedging for boundaries will be designed to reflect the local character of existing planting to minimise the landscape and visual impacts on the distinctive character of the area.

9.9 The **Rolling Valley Farmlands** landscape character type comprises valley sides with some complex and steep slopes in some places with deep well drained loamy soils and often sunken lanes - This type of valley is only found south of the River Gipping. This landscape makes a significant contribution to the specific local character of the district because it is the focus of historic settlement and wealth creation. It is found along the River Stour from the Cattawade and upstream (to Haverhill, across the district boundary) including tributary valleys of the Newmill Creek (to Little Wenham), the Brett (to Hitcham and Thorpe Morieux), the Brad (to Lavenham), the Box (to Edwardstone), the Chad Brook and the Glem.

- 9.10 The sloping valley sides with easily worked soils are ideal for farming and have been divided up into small and medium sized fields. Excavation of minerals is evident with disused chalk pits and lime kilns can be seen throughout this landscape. Ancient woodlands exist in small parcels on the upper slopes of the valleys. From elevated locations within this landscape character substantial views are obtained. This area is considered to have a wide zone visual impact.
- 9.11 Settlement character within this landscape retains its historic field patterns, of both the agricultural and built environment and has been influenced by the river. There are a number of villages of distinctive character and a large portion of Conservation Areas, AONB and AONB project areas within this landscape. Isolated halls and churches provide significant architectural features within the landscape, Small narrow winding lanes and roads that pass through the villages retain the rural character with only the occasional small hamlet or isolated farmstead to break up this gently rolling landscape.
- 9.12 The aim in the Landscape Guidance for the Rolling Valley Farmlands is to retain, enhance and restore the distinctive landscape and settlement character. In particular strengthening the rolling valley landscape with appropriate planting and safeguarding the dispersed settlement pattern . The objectives are as follows:
- To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape and settlement pattern.
 - To safeguard the parkland areas, Village Greens and Tyes.
 - To safeguard and appropriately increase the woodland cover.
- 9.13 Due to the rolling landscape development in this area is considered to have a wide zone visual impact. All development must take into consideration the cultural and historic importance of this area and the potential visual impact on AONB and Conservation Areas. They should reinforce the parkland and village green features in new developments whilst protecting and maintaining woodlands within this landscape character.
- 9.14 The Adopted Babergh Local Plan 2006 identified a significant portion of land along the entire valley of the River Box as ‘Special Landscape Area’ (SLA). The SLA was designated because of its landscape sensitivity and scenic quality. The original SLA was non-statutory, and these have not been carried through into the Joint Local Plan. However it can be seen from the above that a degree of extra protection is required for the whole of the Box Valley including that within Edwardstone. This Neighbourhood Plan therefore proposes to continue the designation but replaces the term SLA with a new term - Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity(ALLS) consistent with the approach taken in the neighbouring Adopted Boxford Neighbourhood Plan (Policy BOX11) and other Neighbourhood Plans within Babergh.
- 9.15 The river valley in Edwardstone provides interest and variety of landscape which is worthy of protection in its own right and gives a diversity of habitat which supports

varied wildlife. Special attention should be paid to conserving and enhancing the visual quality of the area and minimising the environmental impacts of development in the ALLS through detailed consideration of the siting, materials and design of any development.

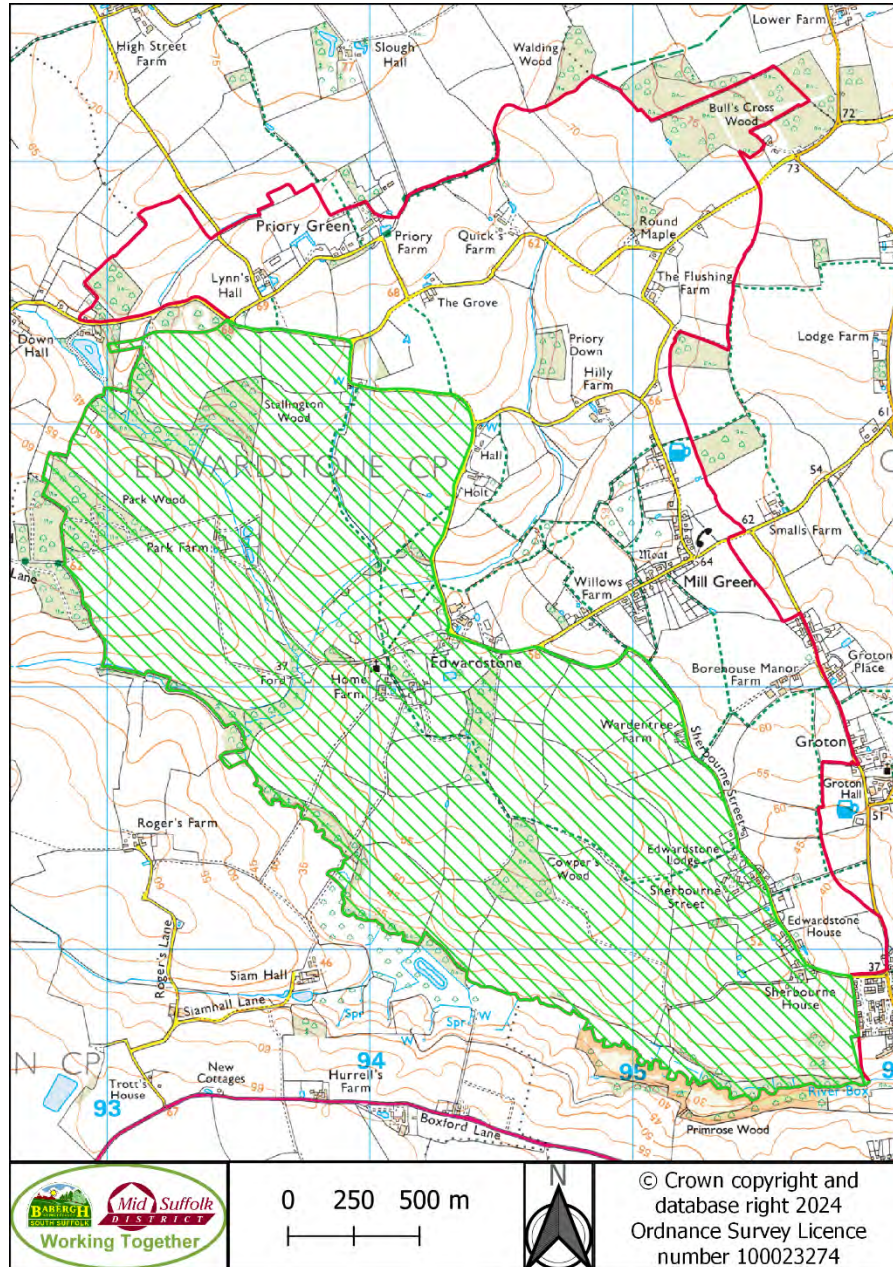


Figure 27: ALLS along the River Box Valley (parish boundary in red) Note: the ALLS designation only applies within the Edwardstone and Boxford Parish Boundaries only

9.16 The ALLS designation does not seek to prevent development from taking place (similar to the SLA) but instead seeks to ensure that development within the area should be designed to be in harmony with the special characteristics of the area and follows the broad design objectives and principles referred to above.

- 9.17 The policy ideas exhibition results reflected the great value that local residents place on the rural setting and landscape of the parish. Attendees to the exhibition were invited to suggest areas of landscape value and important views in the parish that the Neighbourhood Plan might seek to identify. It was made clear that these views could be looking towards the settlement or looking out of the settlement but that they must be ‘public’ views i.e. viewable from a public place such as road, a footpath or a gap between buildings and should not be private views to the rear of residential dwellings. Whilst a number of views were suggested, the most valued were those that involved views towards and from the Church which are reflected in the policy. However the majority of suggestions did not meet the criteria in that they were either views outside of the parish or they were from private gardens or spaces.



POLICY

EDW8: Landscape

Development proposals outside of the defined settlement boundary should have consideration for the visual scenic value of the landscape and countryside which will be protected from development that may adversely affect this character.

Where a development would include any parts of the neighbourhood area that have sensitive features typical of the Ancient Rolling Farmlands and the Rolling Valley Farmlands Character Areas such as blocks of ancient woodland, greens, orchards, mature hedgerows and areas of parkland, these should be incorporated into the design and layout of development proposals such that locally characteristic patterns can be retained within new land uses.

Settlement Gaps

The existing clear settlement gaps which physically separate the distinct areas of built settlement within the parish shall be maintained in order to prevent coalescence and loss of individual settlement identity and distinctiveness.

Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity (ALLS)

Development within the Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity located to the south-west of Mill Green (as defined in **figure 27**) will only be supported, provided that the proposal:

- a. conserves or enhances the special qualities of the landscape.¹⁶
- b. is designed and sited to be sympathetic to the scenic beauty of the landscape setting.
- c. include high standards of layout, materials and landscaping (including lighting design).

Natural features associated with this area such as trees, ancient woodlands and existing hedge lines should be retained by development proposals.

Views

Development proposals within or that would affect views of the Church of St Mary the Virgin and its setting should take account of that view and developments which would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape or character of that view will not be supported.

¹⁶ As set out in the Joint Babergh Mid Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment August 2015.



10. Access and Community

Access and Community

Objective 4: To protect the parish's existing community facilities and green spaces and to improve pedestrian accessibility both within Edwardstone and with neighbouring parishes

Existing community infrastructure

- 10.1 The NPPF encourages planning policies to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities that the community needs and to support the provision of shared spaces and community facilities (such as local shops, schools, meeting places, sports venues, open spaces, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship). In addition the NPPF indicates that plans should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. **Policy EDW9** below, does not seek to protect unviable services in perpetuity but recognises that the lack of viability needs to be demonstrated, and for alternative configurations of provision to be investigated before proposals that would result in their loss are approved.
- 10.2 Edwardstone has a limited number of community facilities . These are the Church, the Public House, the Parish Hall and the Millennium Green. These in turn are spread out around the parish and there is no nucleated cluster of services. The Public House and the Millennium Green are in Mill Green, the Parish Hall in School Green and the Church close to Home Farm
- 10.3 The Policy ideas exhibition results revealed that there was support from local residents for a Policy that protects the existing community facilities of Edwardstone from development (including change of use) that would reduce or remove their value to the community. There was also support for development that would

improve or extend the community value of existing facilities and for the provision of allotments.

POLICY

EDW9: Community Facilities

Existing facilities

Proposals including changes of use that would involve the potential loss of an existing community facility (church, parish hall, millennium green, play area, public house) will not be supported except where an improved or equivalent facility can be located elsewhere in the parish in an equally convenient, safe, and accessible location or where there is no reasonable prospect of continued viable use. A lack of viable use will need to be sufficiently demonstrated through:

- i) Twelve months of marketing in appropriate publications (online, in print and through agencies) for the permitted and similar uses, using an appropriate agent taking account of the nature and type of the asset; and
- ii) Confirmation that it has been offered on a range of terms (including price and tenure) agreed to be reasonable on the advice of an independent qualified assessor.

New or enhanced facilities

Proposals that would improve or extend the community value of existing facilities or provide for new facilities such as allotments will be supported in principle subject to compliance with other policies in this plan.

Local Green Spaces

10.4 The National Planning Policy Framework 2023, at paragraphs 105-107 introduces the concept of Local Green Spaces which can be identified through neighbourhood plans by local communities and allows green areas identified as being of particular importance to be protected. Paragraph 106, sets out 3 broad criteria for identifying and designating such spaces as follows:

‘The Local Green Space designation should only be used when the green space is:

- a. in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.*
- b. demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field) tranquillity and richness of its wildlife: and*
- c. local in character and not an extensive tract of land’.*

10.5 The NPPF at paragraph 107 then goes on to state that ‘policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for green belts’ and therefore affords them a very high level of protection. It is also clear that the designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used as a mechanism to try to block or resist development on agricultural land immediately adjacent to village

development boundaries and that a successful designation must meet the criteria outlined above.

- 10.6 Such spaces can be viewed locally as equally as important as the landscape setting of an area. Such spaces are green spaces found within the built-up area that contribute to the character of a settlement. These can vary in size, shape, location, ownership and use but such spaces will have some form of value to the community particularly for benefits to mental and physical health and wellbeing and help define what makes that specific settlement what it is. Support is given for proposals that would enable green spaces and facilities accessible to residents with limited mobility for example the inclusion of benches, and well-maintained paths etc.
- 10.7 Areas of existing open space in the Parish include the Millennium Green, the green hosting the war memorial, the play area and the Churchyard. At the Policy ideas exhibition local residents were asked to identify areas of land that could be identified as Local Green Spaces. Each of these spaces have been assessed against the NPPF criteria. Each space that meets the criteria is to be protected because of its value to the local community. The result is the 5 spaces shown in **Figure 28** and listed within **Policy EDW10** below. Assessments for each one against the criteria set out in the NPPF are shown in **Appendix B**.

Figure 28: Local Green Spaces



a) Millenium Green



b) Play Area



c) War Memorial Green



d) Churchyard



e) New community orchard and area adjacent

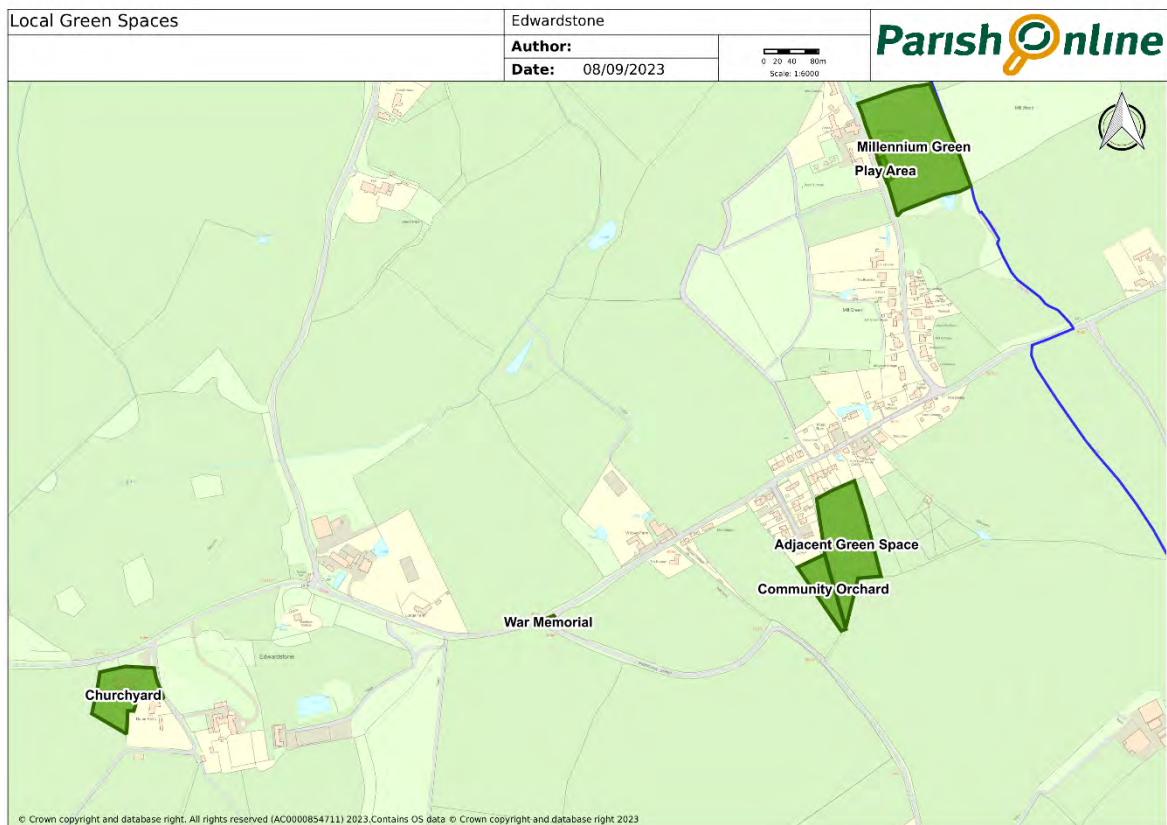


Figure 29 Local Green Spaces

POLICY	<p>EDW10: Local Green Spaces</p> <p>The following areas are designated as Local Green Spaces for special protection (as shown on figure 29):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Millennium Green b) Play area c) War Memorial Green d) Churchyard e) New Community Orchard at Mill Green and area immediately adjacent <p>Development within Local Green Spaces will be managed consistent with the approach taken for Green Belts.</p>
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Accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists

- 10.8 Government guidance encourages development proposals to provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking. This is expected to be equally applicable in rural areas. Such networks should be comprehensive and provide not only for recreational routes but also for meaningful routes that can be realistically used for commuting to work or school. In addition new routes should connect to the existing network and be suitable for use by people with disabilities and reduced mobility. New cycling and pedestrian routes should be safe, secure and attractive, minimise the scope for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists and respond to the character of the area and any relevant design standards. **(See Edwardstone Design Codes and Guidance)**
- 10.9 Edwardstone has several formal public rights of way and a number of permissive paths. In some parts of the parish they form a cohesive network and elsewhere there are some gaps which can usefully be bridged.
- 10.10 Community consultation has revealed a desire to extend the permissive path network to form enhanced connections between existing routes within the parish but also to connect with routes in the adjoining parishes. The results of the Policy Ideas exhibition revealed support from local people for protecting and enhancing the existing rights of way network, joining up existing routes in the parish and beyond and promoting new pedestrian and cycling routes. Comments expressed by attendees at the Policy Ideas Exhibition included:
- *“Very pleased that health and well-being is included in relation to footpaths and walking”*
 - *“When footpaths are inaccessible you can feel very cut off”.*
 - *“We can walk to Boxford from Edwardstone.*
- 10.11 The Suffolk Green Access Strategy (2020-2030) promotes the importance and the growing relevance of the public rights of way and green access network. The network provides the means for encouraging sustainable travel choices, such as walking or cycling to work, and enables people to live healthier lives by using the countryside for leisure. The Strategy details why green access is so relevant to

Suffolk's population and its visitors. It focuses on how green access can benefit the quality of life of residents and encourages initiatives that positively impact on people's physical and mental health.

10.12 A number of parishes close to Edwardstone are also engaging in the Neighbourhood Plan process, although they are at differing stages: Great Waldingfield, Long Melford and Boxford have 'made' plans Acton is at Examination and Groton is at an earlier stage. Where there is the potential for pedestrian and cycle links within the parish to connect with routes outside of the Neighbourhood Area but within an adjoining parish, this Neighbourhood Plan will seek to support such routes to provide a more consistent and cohesive network in the wider area. It is important to improve air quality and mitigate any risk to human health due to manmade emissions such as nitrogen oxides and particulate matter. Encouraging and facilitating active and sustainable travel can reduce vehicles on the road and therefore pollution and poor air quality, as well as improve people's mental and physical health. Where new cycling infrastructure is proposed it should accord with recognised standards.¹⁷

10.13 Community consultation within Edwardstone identified support for two new footpath extension/links:

- from the Church of St Mary the Virgin to High Wood Lane .
- From Priory Green, via Walding Wood to Owls Farm. Coincidentally the Emerging Great Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan has identified the need to restore the links to Edwardstone and Newton from High Wood as follows:
“A dead-end public highway called High Wood Lane leads from Badley's Road to the ancient woodland where the three parishes meet. Previously this connected to Edwardstone Church, Newton Church and New Barn but the paths were not designated post war. The omission should be corrected, preferably as bridleways or byways”

10.14 These potential new footpath connections are shown in **Figure 30** below.

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

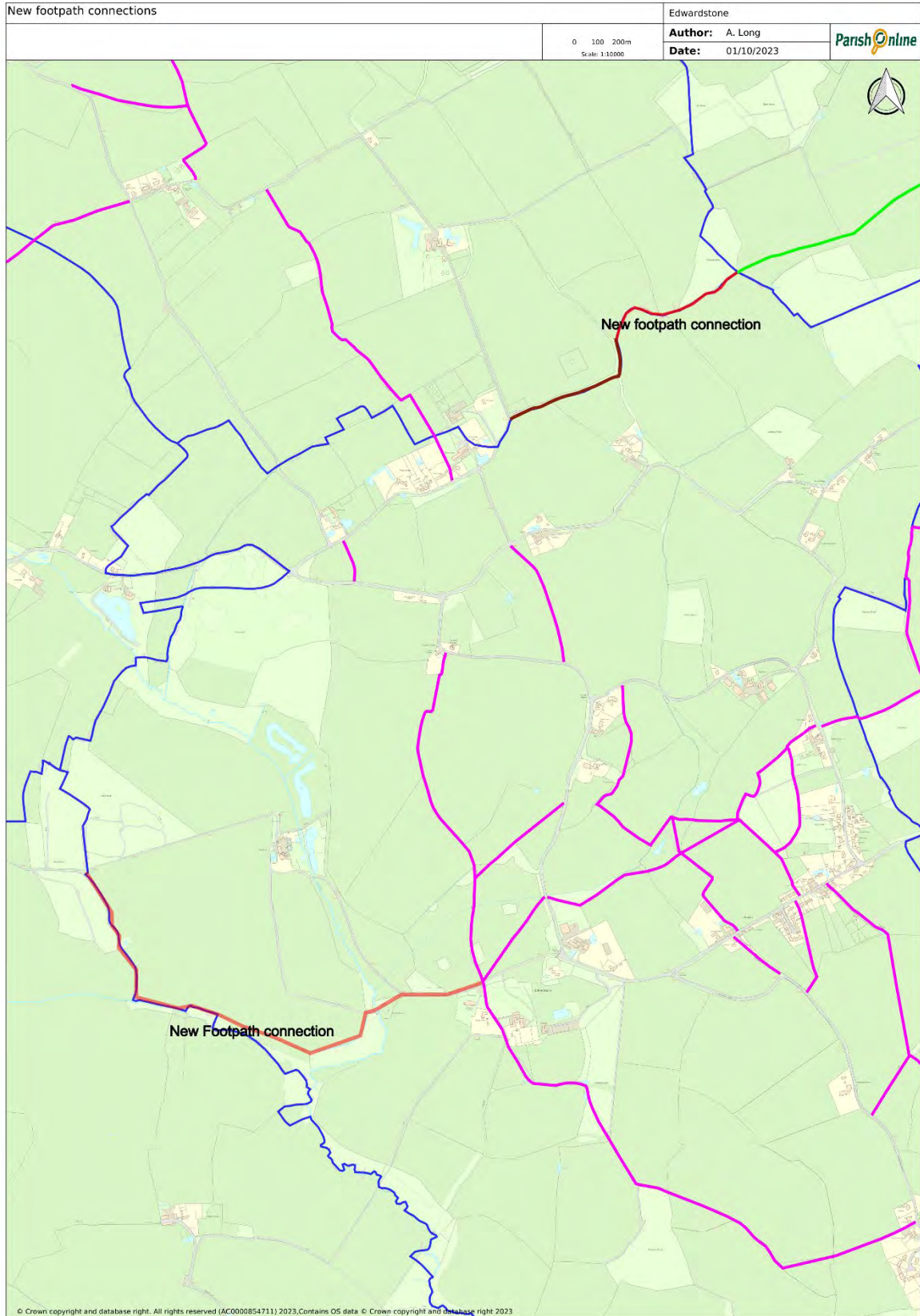


Figure 30: potential new footpath link (parish boundary: public right of way: potential new footpath connection)

POLICY

EDW11: Accessibility

All new developments should contribute towards improving accessibility both within the parish but also with neighbouring parishes through the provision of safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes that are suitable for all users.

Measures that would contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents by encouraging increasing levels of walking and cycling will be supported.

Support is given in principle for new routes which would create a cohesive network for users and allow for access both within the areas of built settlement but also to the wider countryside and adjoining parishes, where opportunities should be taken to maintain, join up and connect to existing routes in order to provide a comprehensive and connected network. Opportunities should be taken to link routes and connections identified in the Neighbourhood Plans of adjoining parishes.

Public Rights of Way

Where development proposals are likely to affect an existing Public Right of Way, these should take account of its route and incorporate it into the overall layout of the scheme. Where this is not considered possible, this will need to be justified. Where Public Rights of Way may be unavoidably impacted or lost, appropriate diversions or new routes should be provided that are safe, equally accessible, and convenient for users. Existing Public Rights of Way which are incorporated into new developments should be protected and enhanced. Enhancement can take the form of new routes, connections, improved surfaces and/or signage increasing access to the countryside and connectivity between communities.

See Edwardstone Design Codes and Guidance (2024) and Suffolk Design Streets Guide ¹⁸

¹⁸ <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/suffolk-design-guide-for-residential-areas>

11. Implementation and Monitoring

Implementation

- 11.1 The Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to assist with the planning of sustainable growth across the parish for a period up to 2037. The implementation of the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan will require the co-ordinated input and co-operation of relevant statutory and non-statutory agencies, private sector organisations and the local community.
- 11.2 The policies in this document shape the way in which development will take place within the Parish .
- 11.3 In order to see the Neighbourhood Plan implemented, it will require the Parish Council and partner organisations to be proactive in getting the best results for Edwardstone. Working in partnership with Babergh District Council and Suffolk County Council will be particularly important.
- 11.4 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008, to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of the area. Babergh District Council has an adopted CIL Policy in place for the District and once the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made,' Edwardstone Parish Council will benefit from 25% of the levy revenues arising from development that takes place in the parish. This revenue will be used to fund projects , some of which are identified in the Neighbourhood Plan as well as other community priorities that may be identified during the plan period.

Monitoring

- 11.5 There is no formal requirement or timetable for the review of Neighbourhood Plans. However it is good practice to report on the use of the Neighbourhood Plan and monitor the use of its policies, ideally on an annual basis through a report to the Parish Council. This information would be used to identify the need for any formal reviews – either partial or in full. Any review process would need to be undertaken in consultation with the local community and Babergh District Council and will be instigated by the Parish Council to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is still current and remains a positive planning tool to deliver sustainable growth. In order to determine when a review is necessary, the Parish Council will monitor development in the parish along with local and national planning policy and the appropriate legislative context.

Appendix A: Steering Group Members

The Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group included the following members:

- Phil Baker, local resident and Chairman of Edwardstone Parish Council
- Matthew Glason, local resident
- Mike Gibson, local resident, Parish Councillor and Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- Erica McDonald, local resident

With thanks also to the following, who were members of the Steering Group for part of the project:

- Nick Raymond
- Tom Bird

Supported by:

- **Emma Harrison** – Independent consultant (data profile) for the Neighbourhood Plan
- **Andrea Long** – Independent consultant (policy) for the Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix B: Non-Designated Heritage Assets Justification

The table below outlined the justification for the inclusion of The Icehouse as a Proposed Non-Designated Heritage Asset. The criteria are based on the 'Local Heritage Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7', page 9.

Age: The age of an asset may be an important criterion, and the age range can be adjusted to take into account distinctive local characteristics or building traditions.

Rarity: Appropriate for all assets, as judged against local characteristics.

Architectural and Artistic Interest: The intrinsic design and aesthetic value of an asset relating to local and/or national styles, materials, construction and craft techniques, or any other distinctive characteristics.

Group Value: Groupings of assets with a clear visual design or historic relationship.

Archaeological Interest: The local heritage asset may provide evidence about past human activity in the locality, which may be in the form of buried remains, but may also be revealed in the structure of buildings or in a designed landscape, for instance. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are primary sources of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

Historic Interest: A significant historical association of local or national note, including links to important local figures, may enhance the significance of a heritage asset. Blue Plaque and similar schemes may be relevant.

Social and communal interest may be regarded as a sub-set of historic interest but has special value in local listing. As noted in the PPG: 'Heritage assets ... can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity'. It therefore relates to places perceived as a source of local identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence, contributing to the 'collective memory' of a place.

Landmark Status: An asset with strong communal or historical associations, or because it has especially striking aesthetic value, may be singled out as a landmark within the local scene.

Property Details

The Icehouse:

A brick and flint Icehouse, located near to Edwardstone Church, and identified in the Suffolk Heritage Explorer as (EDN015) and described as a post-medieval icehouse sometime between 1540-1900. Believed to have originally be constructed in association with the former Edwardstone Hall which was a Victorian building, although there was an earlier 18th Century Hall on the same site. The Hall was demolished in 1952, leaving only the gatehouse (Temple Bar).

The Icehouse is built using regular bricks with the area above the door and the end piers built in English bond and the curved walls in header bond.

The strongest bond is header bond and English bond is the second strongest bond. This reflects the fact that the walls are retaining walls and are holding back the weight of the soil. The way the wing walls slope diagonally forward is both for architectural effect and also helps retain the earth bank, in effect creating a horizontal 'arch'. The doorway surrounds and the top courses have had more recent repairs. The walls have penny struck pointing (created by running a penny along the wet mortar joints). It is used to give the optical illusion that the relatively thick mortar joints are narrower than they are, to give the impression that the bricklaying technique is better than it is and that the bricks are more regularly made and therefore more expensive than they are.

English bond was extremely rare from c. 1700 to the end of the 18th century and the bricks are too thick and regular to date before the early 18th century. Taking this into account the Icehouse is most likely to be c.1800- late 19th century.

(Age, Rarity, Architectural and Artistic Interest, Group Value, Historic Interest and Landmark Status)



Appendix C : Local Green Spaces justification

Name of Space	In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Compliant y or N
a) Millennium Green	Located close to the Public House just north of the built up area of Mill Green. Planning permission exists for new dwellings to be built adjacent.	Community and recreational value due to its amenity use by local residents. Specifically provided through the Millennium funding to act as a community resource	Approximately 1.89 hectares in area.	Y
b) Play area	Located close to the Millennium Green and the Public House in Mill Green	Recreational and community value due to its use as a children’s play area	Approximately 0.03 hectares in area.	Y
c) War memorial green	Located at Junction of Mill Green and Sherbourne Street. Nearest properties are 200m in either direction.	Historic significance as the location for the village War Memorial. Amenity value as informal space	Approximately 0.02 hectares in area.	Y
d) Churchyard	Located adjacent to the Church of St Mary the Virgin	Historical and communal significance through its use as a churchyard	Approximately 0.61 hectares in area.	Y
e) New Community Orchard at Mill Green and open space adjacent	Located to the rear of Mill Close.	Specifically provided as a community facility through its use as a community orchard. Has communal, amenity and biodiversity value.	Orchard is approximately 0.3hectares in area. Adjacent space is approximately 1.072 hectares.	Y

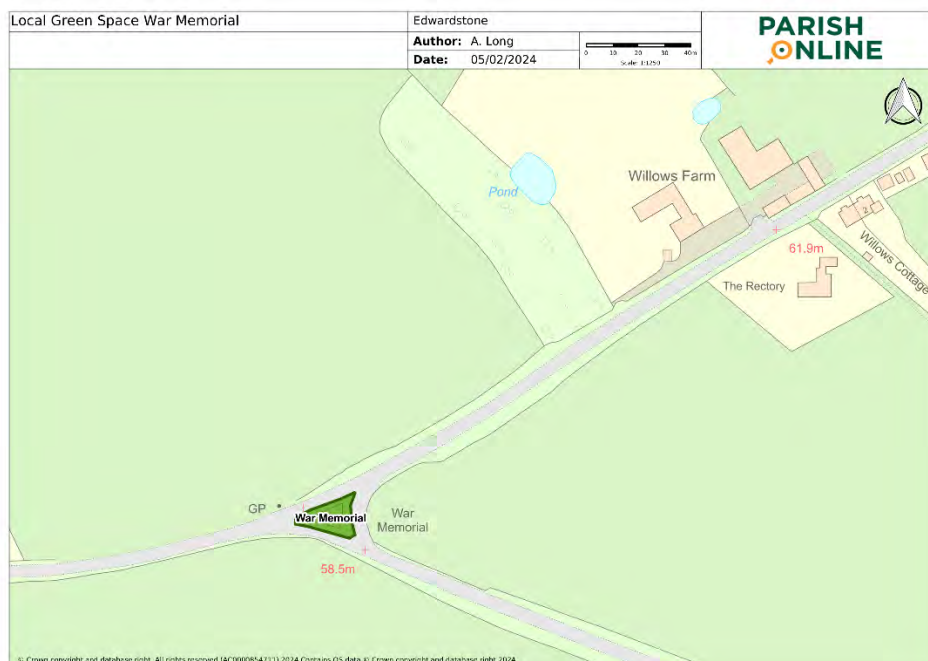
Local Green Spaces – Individual Maps



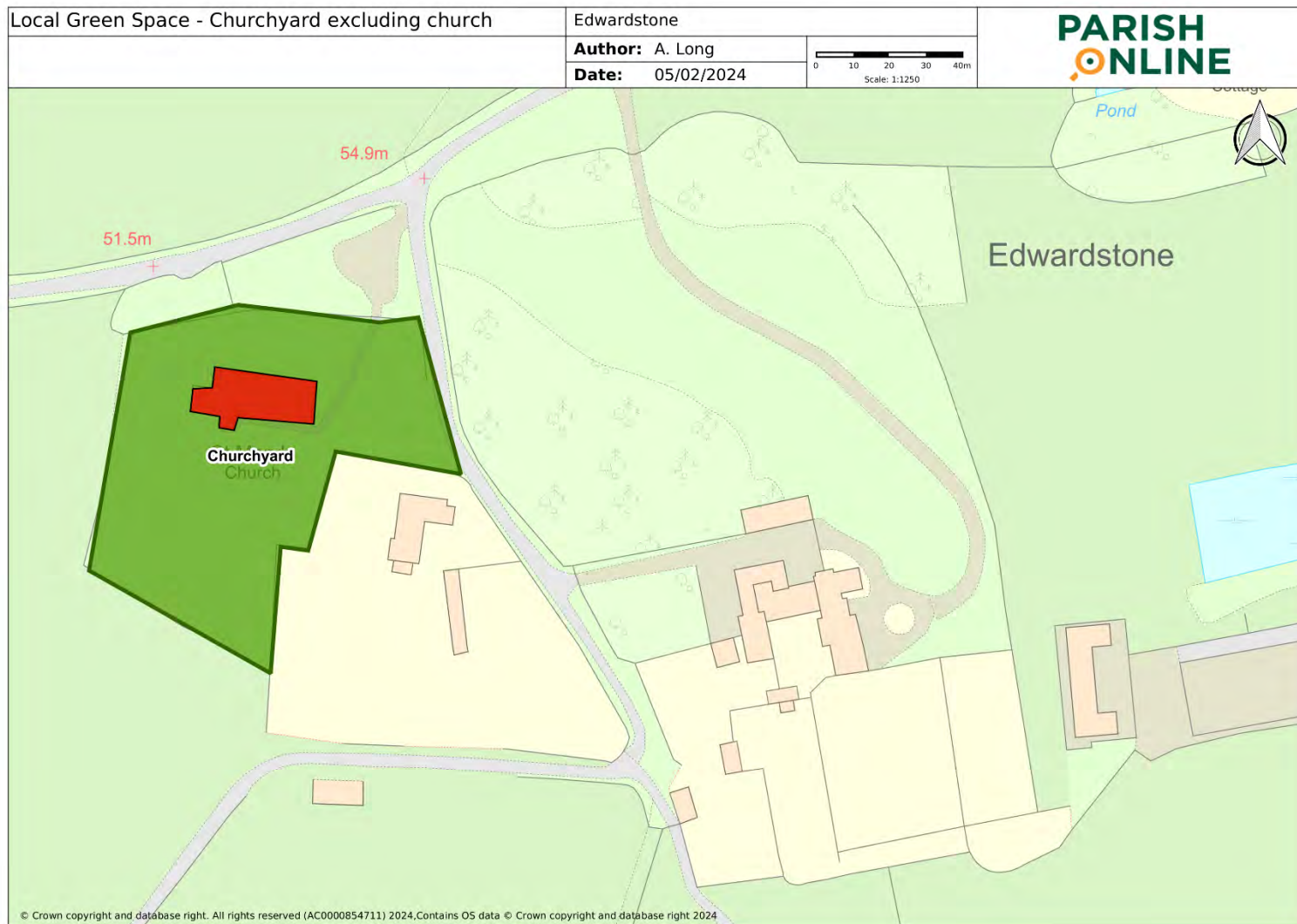
a) Millennium Green and b) Play Area



e) Community Orchard and adjacent land



c) War Memorial Green



d) Churchyard (excluding Church building)

Appendix D: Glossary

Glossary of terms used and/or relevant to the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan and supporting submission documents. Definitions are taken directly from the glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2023, except where stated.

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

- a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20 per cent below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of Plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household’s eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.
- c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20 per cent below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20 per cent below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Ancient or veteran tree: A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient, but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

Archaeological interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Climate change adaptation: Adjustments made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Climate change mitigation: Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Community-led developments: A development instigated and taken forward by a not-for-profit organisation set up and run primarily for the purpose of meeting the housing needs of its members and the wider local community, rather than being a primarily commercial enterprise. The organisation is created, managed and democratically controlled by its members. It may take any one of various legal forms including a community land trust, housing co-operative and community benefit society. Membership of the organisation is open to all beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of that organisation. The organisation should own, manage or steward the homes in a manner consistent with its purpose, for example through a mutually supported arrangement with a Registered Provider of Social Housing. The benefits of the development to the specified community should be clearly defined and consideration given to how these benefits can be protected over time, including in the event of the organisation being wound up.

Conservation: The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Deliverable: To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. Sites that are not major development, and sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (e.g. they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans). Sites with outline planning permission, permission in principle, allocated in the development plan or identified on a brownfield register should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.

Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Development plan: Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Habitats site: Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

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).

Historic environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Local housing need: the number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance, or a justified alternative approach.

Local planning authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority, the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local plan: A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Major development: For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floor space of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Statement of overarching Government policy for plan making and the determination of planning applications. First issued in 2012 then updated in 2018, 2021, September 2023 and December 2023

Neighbourhood plan: A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Non-strategic policies: Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.

Non-designated heritage asset: Local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets. These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'. A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage interest for their significance to be a material consideration in the planning process. (*Definition from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment#non-designated-heritage-assets>*)

Open space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Planning condition: A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Playing field: The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Priority habitats and species: Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Renewable and low carbon energy: Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Self-build and custom-build housing: Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be

either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

Setting of a heritage asset: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Settlement Boundary (sometimes referred to as built-up-area boundary or development boundary). A line drawn around the main built settlement in a parish, within which certain policies will apply. Boundaries seek to consolidate existing development and prevent ribbon development and encroachment into the countryside. Development within the settlement boundary is generally acceptable in principle.

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

Strategic environmental assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Strategic policies: Policies and site allocations, which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Strategic policy-making authorities: Those authorities responsible for producing strategic policies (local planning authorities, and elected Mayors or combined authorities, where this power has been conferred). This definition applies whether the authority is in the process of producing strategic policies or not.

Supplementary planning documents: Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainable transport modes: Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Windfall Site: A site not specifically identified in the development plan that unexpectedly becomes available

Appendix E: Policies Map

