

LAVENHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2

PART B



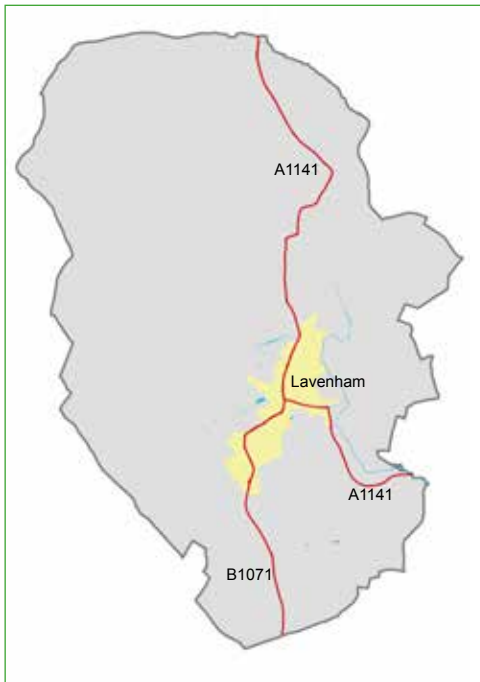
**DESIGN GUIDE
2023**



Not to Scale



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- Lavenham Parish boundary
- Lavenham Village

Lavenham Design Guide

Acknowledgements

The guide was prepared by Out Design and the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan Group between December 2021 and September 2022. Workshops took place on-line on the 14th January 2022 and in person in Lavenham on the 4th February 2022 to shape the scope and content of the document.

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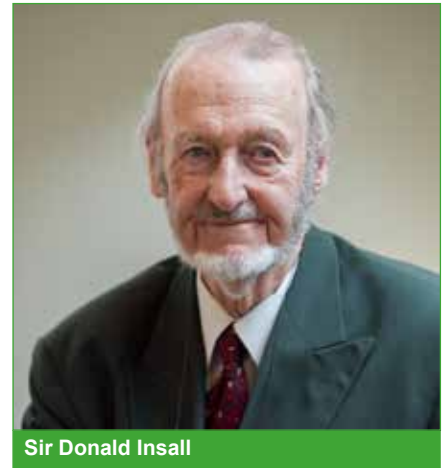
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Foreword

Every truly enjoyable place has its own special personality. But in particular, there is only one Lavenham.

This latest and loving example of an appreciative Country Town Study comes more than half-a-century since one of the first of its kind, and is a model of study and observation, positive in spirit and warm with suggestions. Engagingly written and beautifully illustrated, it develops and follows upon the ideas of a far-seeing County of West Suffolk and wider National mentors. The author is an Architect and presents us with an unusually real understanding. Here is a guiding hand to the future of an outstandingly lovely historic place, seen and studied from inside.

Sir Donald Insall CBE LLD FSA RWA FRIBA FRTPI(Rtd) SpDip(Hons)



This guide provides a splendid narrative to explain how Lavenham has developed through successive eras over 600 years, to become the place we know and love today. It also sets out a vision of how we can balance desire for continuous improvement with protection of our environment. A transition path to a more green, sustainable, inclusive and healthy community is creatively explained. Lavenham will be able to offer the generations to come the same sense of appeal and pleasure that we are able to enjoy today, by application of this guide in future development.

The Parish Council welcomes this addition to our Neighbourhood Plan to help our community choose attractive and effective ways of conserving the rich legacy we have inherited.

Irene Mitchell MBA Chair Lavenham Parish Council during 2023



*Lavenham is the
'most complete
example of a small
medieval town in
East Anglia'*

Lavenham Past + Present + Future

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Guide

This Design Guide seeks to strengthen the advice the village is able to offer on development at all scales, including new build and adapting older and historic buildings for modern living.

Building on the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the National Design Guide (NDG) and the statutory development plan (comprising the Local Plan and the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan), the guide aims to influence development proposals to respond to Lavenham's unique built and natural environment, leading to better quality, locally distinctive, sustainable development.

In addition, the guide suggests an opportunities plan. This puts forward suggestions on improvements that may be taken forward by landowners and residents, in partnership with local authorities and statutory agencies, to help create a sustainable village resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Who is this guidance for?

The guide should be read by all those considering proposals including:

- developers, property owners and their design and planning consultants who are preparing planning applications
- Parish Councillors, members of the community and planning officers assessing planning applications
- householders and others who wish to undertake renovations but who don't need planning permission

Assessing a development scheme against this guide

The guide identifies village character areas and sets out design principles to which improvement and proposals should adhere. Checklists are provided to help ensure the guidance is considered when proposals are being prepared and when proposals are being reviewed by others.



Lavenham Guildhall, Market Place

1.1.1 Lavenham Neighbourhood Plans

The first Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in 2016, described Lavenham as a vibrant and self-reliant community, fortunate to live in what has often been described as England’s finest medieval village.

The 2016 Plan covered the period to 2031. It has been revised to reflect Lavenham’s changing challenges:

- The Climate Emergency – declared by Lavenham Parish Council in 2022 (in alignment with Suffolk County Council, Ipswich Borough Council and all the Suffolk district councils)
- Changes to central Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for England
- The impact on Lavenham of the Covid19 pandemic
- Changes in Lavenham itself since 2016, including more houses and population growth

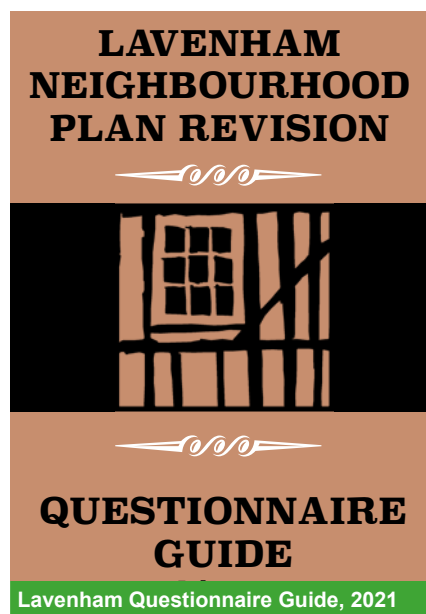
The revision process included gathering views from the local community, in the form a questionnaire that went to every household and business in Lavenham in 2021. Among the many informative responses to this questionnaire, considerable concerns were expressed about the quantity and quality of new build housing that has taken place since 2016. These concerns have informed this guide.

The 2016 Plan was supported and informed by a Lavenham Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), prepared in 2015. This valuable tool for safeguarding the village has been updated to support the revised Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan.

This Design Guide is Appendix B of the revised Plan. It should be read in conjunction with the updated Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment 2023 (LCSA), and the Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils’ Joint Local Plan.



Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan, 2016



National	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance
	Statutory Development Plan	Supplementary Planning Guidance Documents
Regional: Suffolk County Council	Suffolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan	
Local: Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils	Babergh & Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan	Supplementary Planning Documents
Neighbourhood: Lavenham Parish Council	Neighbourhood Plan (including Part B, the Lavenham Design Guide, and Part C the LCSA 2023)	

National, Regional & Local Planning Policy

‘Recent developments in Lavenham have followed generic models designed by volume house builders’

Resident Response to 2021 Questionnaire



Chapter 2: Context

This chapter sets out the planning context and the contribution made by Lavenham's built and natural environment (including streets, landscape, and local building vernacular) in shaping the village's character. This is in line with The National Design Guide (NDG) which notes that local design policies and guides should set out a baseline understanding of the local context and an analysis of local character and identity (Paragraph 35).

2.1 Lavenham, its historic character and built heritage

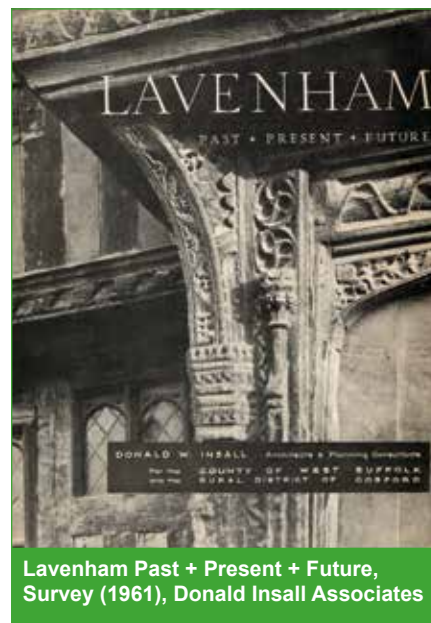
The report Lavenham Past + Present + Future was published in 1961, at a time when many of the medieval buildings in the village were neglected and in a state of advanced decay from lack of maintenance. Following a review of Lavenham's history, buildings and townscape, the report called for action to preserve the village through informed building repair and sympathetic conversion.

The report proposed a Preservation Programme that prioritised infill and repair over back land development and, whilst the intervening period has seen the preservation of the historic core through the efforts of residents and the local authority. Lavenham now faces new challenges. These include: climate change, increasing traffic, and social changes such as greater emphasis on working from home, an ageing population and social fragmentation.

The village has grown since the Tudor period with successive generations adapting existing buildings to their needs. Whilst some new housing development has been built within the historic core, perhaps the greatest challenge for the village is the continuing demand for housing growth which has led to some development - primarily located on former green fields on the periphery of the village - that does not reflect Lavenham's intrinsic qualities. These qualities include the picturesque historic core which is defined by the interrelationship between the streets, buildings, open spaces and the surrounding countryside.

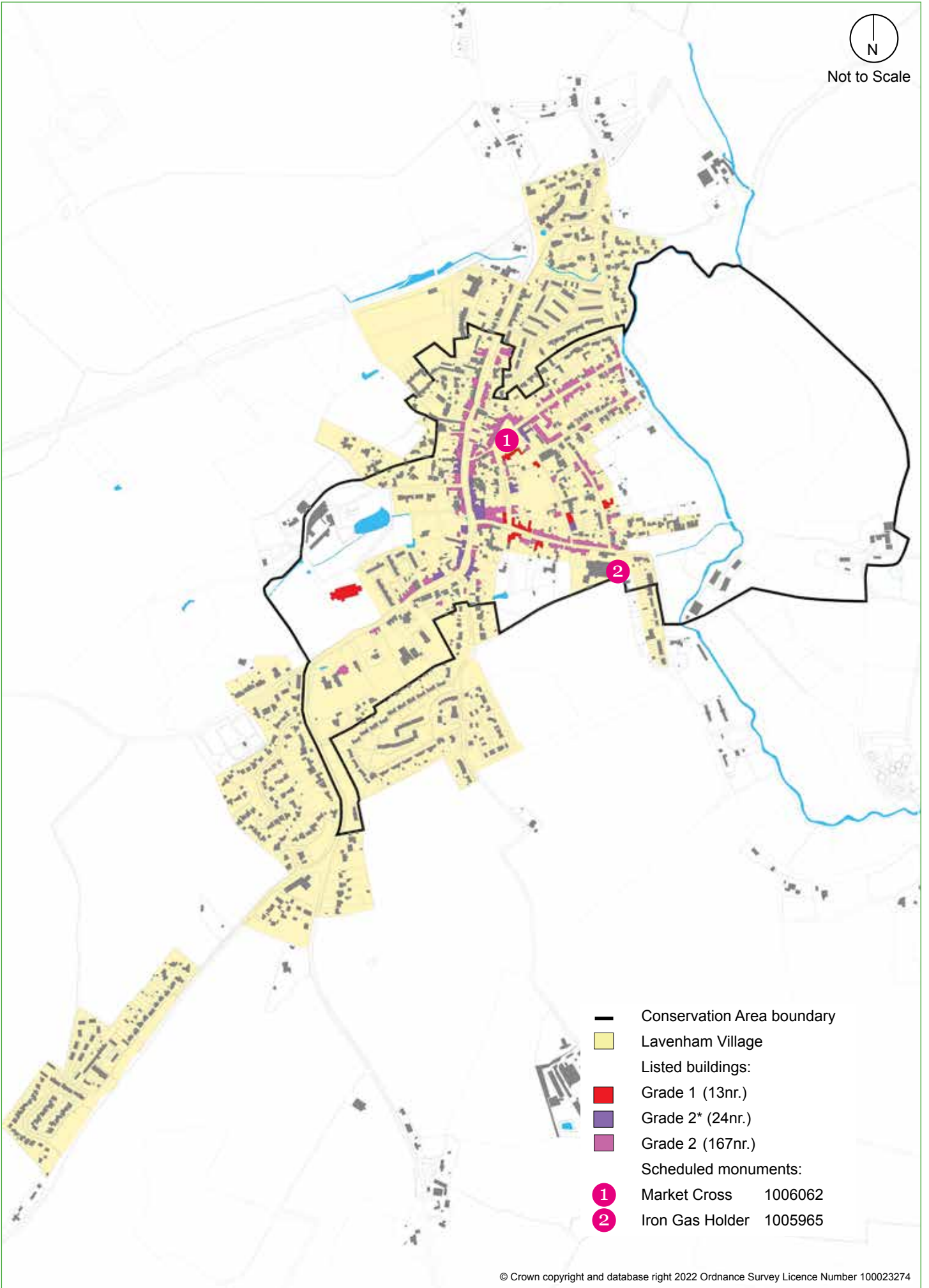
The village has grown over four distinct phases: Medieval, Victorian, post World War 2 and more recent development leading up to the present day. The adjacent built environment & heritage plan identifies the Conservation Area boundary which broadly corresponds with the village's historic growth during the medieval period, 1460 - 1530. The setting of the historic core is characterised by its close links with, and views into and out onto, the surrounding countryside.

Lavenham's listed buildings are of national importance. The village has 13 Grade 1 buildings which are of exceptional interest and 24 Grade II* buildings which are considered to be particularly important buildings of more than special interest. Grade II buildings, of which there are 167 in Lavenham, are considered to be of particular historic and/or architectural significance. To put this in context Historic England notes that only c.2.5% of listed buildings are classified as Grade I in England. Lavenham's Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Market Cross in the historic Market Place, and the Iron Gas Holder located at the former gas works off Water Street are also highlighted in the adjacent plan.





Not to Scale



- Conservation Area boundary
- Lavenham Village
- Listed buildings:
- Grade 1 (13nr.)
- Grade 2* (24nr.)
- Grade 2 (167nr.)
- Scheduled monuments:
- ① Market Cross 1006062
- ② Iron Gas Holder 1005965

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2.1.1 Medieval Lavenham

Lavenham is well known for its rich history of medieval Tudor buildings, characterised by timber frame and clay tile roofs, which are rightly cherished.

The historic core is laid out in a connected, permeable network of streets that are defined and overlooked by buildings that form a clear building line, and building frontages that are typically located at the back of the footway.

The historic core is home to the majority of the village's shops, services and community facilities and continues to contribute greatly to the economic life and well-being of the village.



The Priory, Water Street



Swan Hotel, High Street



Lady Street

‘The majority of buildings in the central area are of traditional construction. This is the Suffolk timber-framed vernacular of steep plaintiled roofs and gables, some with jetties, some rendered, many here with exposed straight framing designed to be seen.’

Lavenham Conservation Area Appraisal, 2010

2.1.2 Victorian Lavenham

Nineteenth century additions to Lavenham's established vernacular include short terraces and cottages. These are typically two storeys high and set close to the back of footway respecting the established building line. The Victorian period also saw infill development within the historic core, mainly of small two bedroomed terraced properties as well as community buildings including the Lavenham Community Primary School and the Church Rooms, and industrial buildings such as Ropers Court and Bakers Mill.



Bakers Mill



Lavenham Primary School

These predominantly brick built, slate roofed buildings have mellowed over the years and add variety to the historic fabric. As the Lavenham Village Design Statement, 2002 notes 'Any one structure may be of interest on its own, but it is the way in which it sits in relation with its neighbours which gives the village its particular character and quality.'

The soft landscaping of the village is also a key contributor to Lavenham's local distinctiveness. Whilst there are very few mature street trees in the historic core, glimpses of well planted rear gardens enrich the built environment.



Pyghtle Terrace



Lavenham Village Design Statement, 2002

'The few newer buildings are mostly local brick Victorian terraced cottages for mill workers, variously Suffolk soft reds or whites, often rendered and painted to blend in with the colour-washed local vernacular.'

Lavenham Conservation Area Appraisal, 2010

2.1.3 Post-war Lavenham

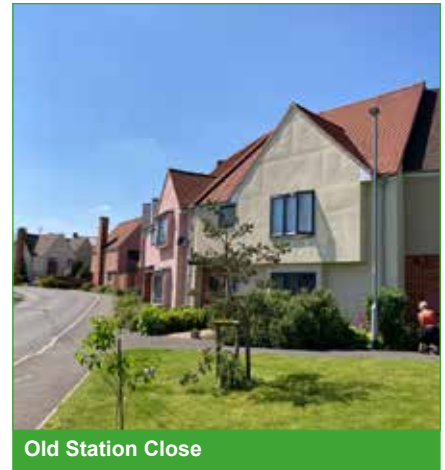
The post-war period saw the development of social housing in the village with the building of Meadow Close, Spring Street, Spring Lane, Tenter Piece and Harwood Place. Open market housing was also built at Weavers Close and Green Willows. This period also saw infill development continue within the historic core.

2.1.4 Recent development

More recent development includes three estates of larger houses in Lower Road, the Glebe and White Gates. Social housing has been added in Bears Lane and Brent Eleigh Road. Market led housing has been developed at Osier View and Indigo Fields and on a brownfield former factory site, at Old Station Close. Peek Close, a development of affordable homes now occupies former local authority land.

The adjacent post war development plan identifies those housing developments which have been built from the post-war period to the present day.

Whilst the older development is within close proximity to the historic village, more recent development is largely on the periphery of the settlement.

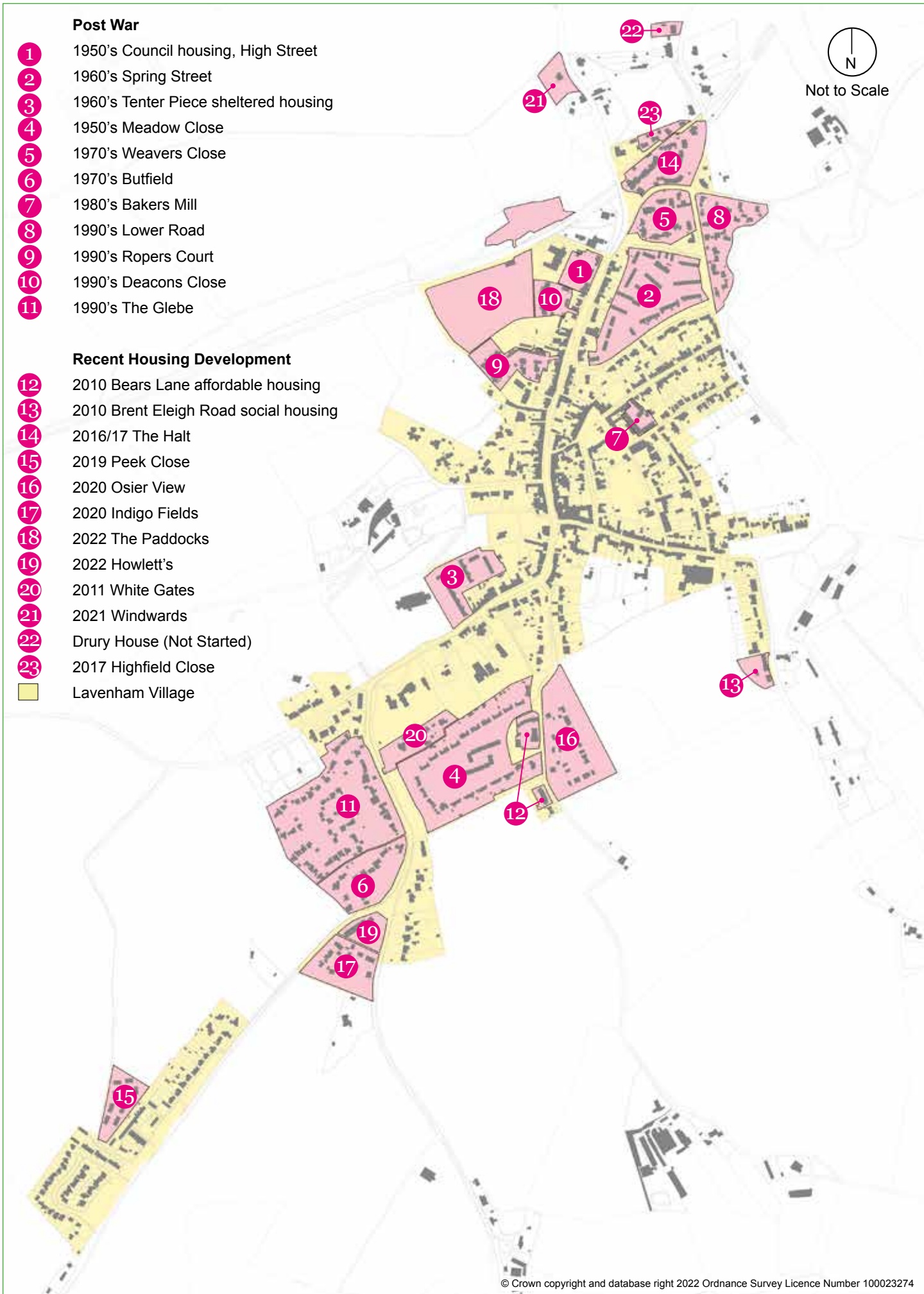
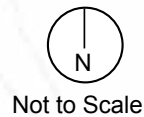


Post War

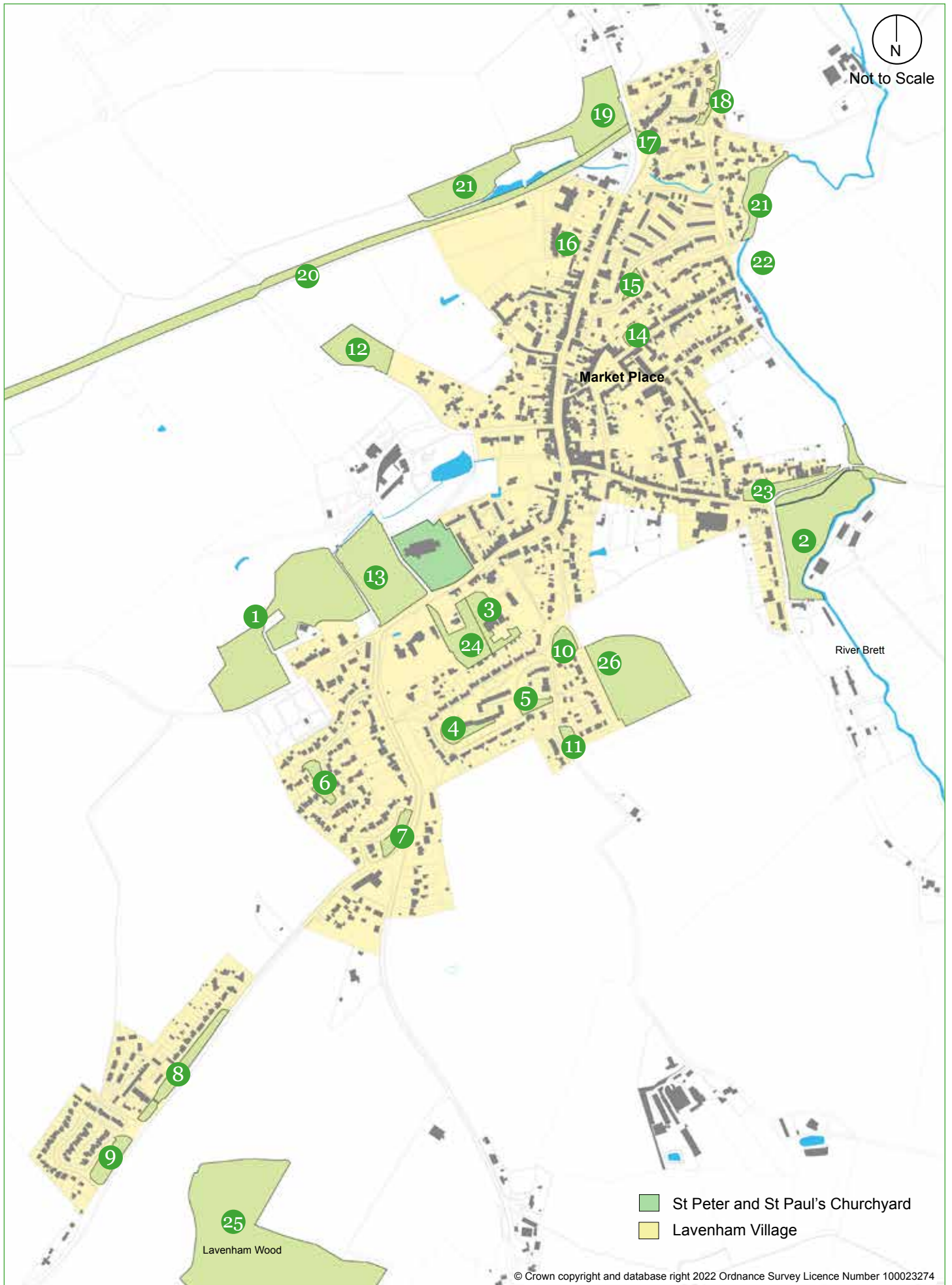
- 1 1950's Council housing, High Street
- 2 1960's Spring Street
- 3 1960's Tenter Piece sheltered housing
- 4 1950's Meadow Close
- 5 1970's Weavers Close
- 6 1970's Butfield
- 7 1980's Bakers Mill
- 8 1990's Lower Road
- 9 1990's Ropers Court
- 10 1990's Deacons Close
- 11 1990's The Glebe

Recent Housing Development

- 12 2010 Bears Lane affordable housing
 - 13 2010 Brent Eleigh Road social housing
 - 14 2016/17 The Halt
 - 15 2019 Peek Close
 - 16 2020 Osier View
 - 17 2020 Indigo Fields
 - 18 2022 The Paddocks
 - 19 2022 Howlett's
 - 20 2011 White Gates
 - 21 2021 Windwards
 - 22 Drury House (Not Started)
 - 23 2017 Highfield Close
- Lavenham Village



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Lavenham landscape setting and open spaces plan

2.2 Lavenham's landscape setting and open spaces

Lavenham's character is defined by the expression of culture and trade through its built form - the layout of the streets, spaces, civic and residential and non-residential buildings and the relationship between the place and its landscape.

The Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment, 2023 discusses Lavenham's landscape setting and identifies the rural character areas, their nature and sensitivity to development and should be read in conjunction with this document. Open spaces and recreation areas are identified in the map on page 14.

- 1 Recreation ground on Bridge Street Road
- 2 Recreation ground at First Meadow on Brent Eleigh Road
- 3 Village Hall recreation ground
- 4 Green space at Meadow Close
- 5 Green space adjacent to Meadow Court with trees
- 6 Green space at the Glebe
- 7 Green space at Butfield
- 8 Green space at Harwood Place
- 9 Green space at Green Willows
- 10 Green space at Bears Lane (north)
- 11 Green space at Bears Lane (south)
- 12 Permanent pasture to the north of Park Road
- 13 Permanent pasture to the west of Potlands Lane
- 14 Green space in Prentice Street car park
- 15 Green space at Spring Street
- 16 Green space at Deacon's Close
- 17 Pond at junction of Bury and Preston Road
- 18 Preston Road play space
- 19 Dyehouse Field Wood
- 20 Lavenham Railway Walk
- 21 Riverside Footpath
- 22 Riverside opposite the bottom of Prentice Street
- 23 The Common
- 24 Rectory Meadow
- 25 Lavenham woods ancient woodland
- 26 Osier View



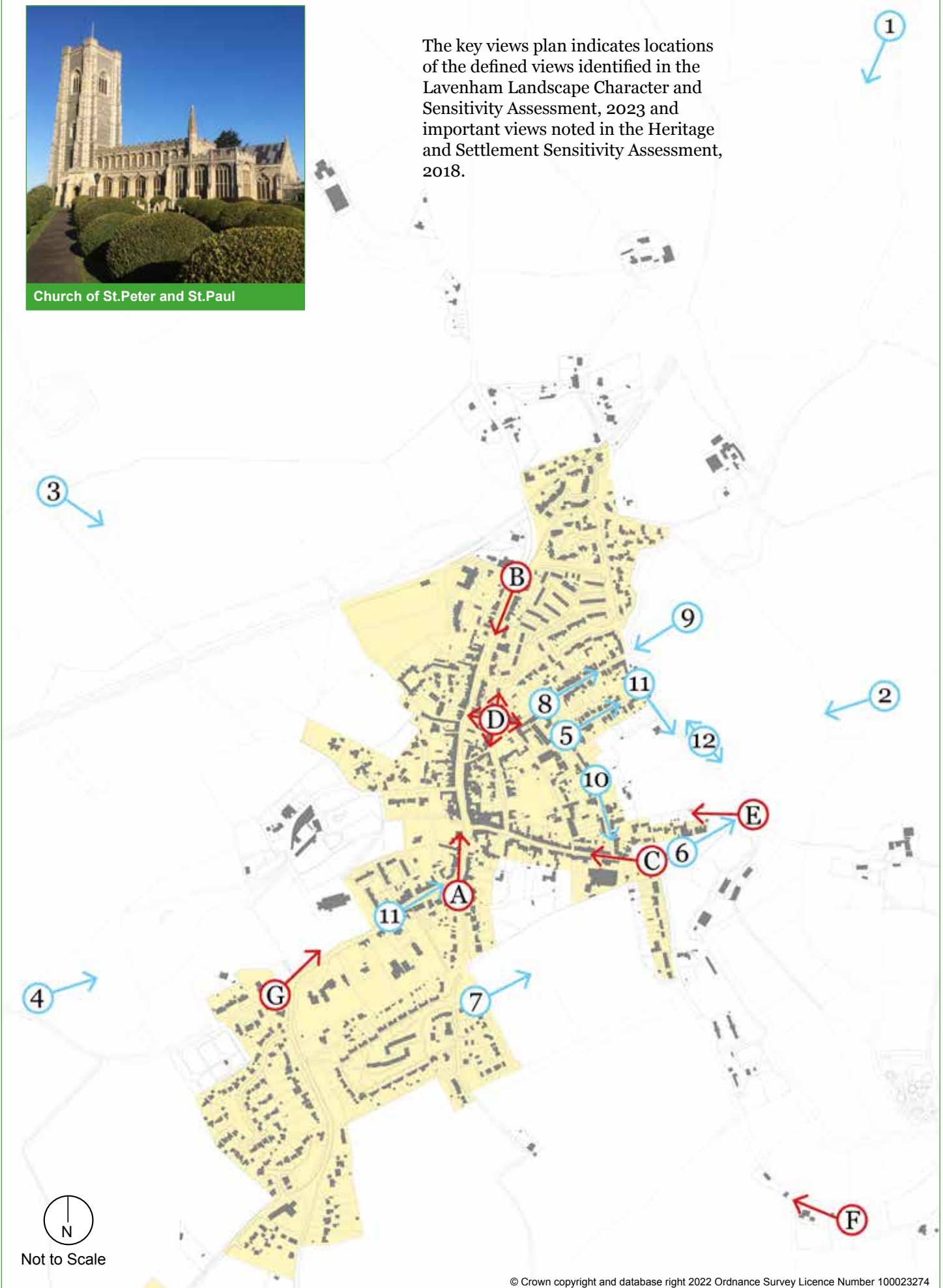
‘The layout of the town owes much to the natural ground contours and is full of variety’

Lavenham Past + Present + Future



Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

The key views plan indicates locations of the defined views identified in the Lavenham Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment, 2023 and important views noted in the Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment, 2018.



Not to Scale

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Key views plan

2.3 Views

Other aspects which contribute to the character of the village are the views of the countryside afforded from numerous streets in the village. Good examples are to be found on Bolton Street, Prentice Street and views looking east along Water Street where these streets frame views looking towards nearby agrarian landscape. The transition into the countryside is typified in the journey west along Hall Road from the High Street. The visual interface between the village and the surrounding countryside is also evident in views from residents' homes out to the landscape.



Defined view locations

- ① Moneyhole Corner (to the SW)
 - ② Clay Hill footpath (to the SW)
 - ③ Brights Lane (to the SE)
 - ④ Bridge Street Road footpath (to the east)
 - ⑤ Bolton Street (to the east)
 - ⑥ The Common (to the east)
 - ⑦ The Lolls (to the east)
 - ⑧ Prentice Street (to the east)
 - ⑨ Nether Hall Farm footpath (to the west)
 - ⑩ Shilling Street (to the south)
 - ⑪ Church Street (to the east)
 - ⑫ Lavenham Brook (River Brett) to the SE
- Source: Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment, 2023

Important views

- A View looking north along the High Street
 - B View looking south along the High Street
 - C View looking west along Water Street
 - D View from within the Market Place
 - E View looking west from Lower Road
 - F View looking north from Brent Eleigh Road
 - G View looking north east from the junction of Bridge Street Road and Sudbury Road
- Source: *Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment for Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts. Place Services, 2018*
- NB: All Viewpoint locations are indicative



Defined View 5 - Bolton Street



Defined View 8 - Prentice Street



Defined View 11 - Church Street



Defined View 2 - Clay Hill footpath

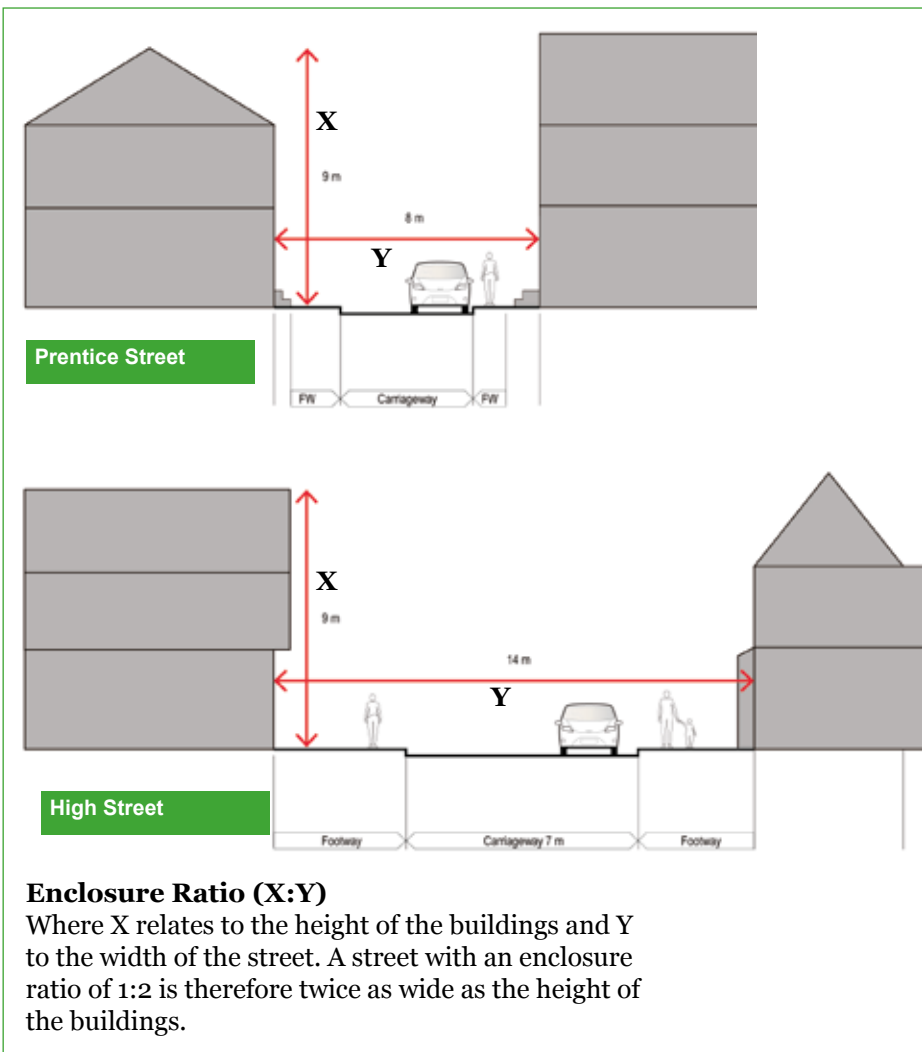
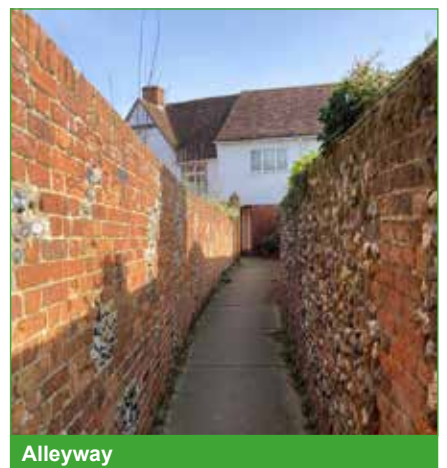
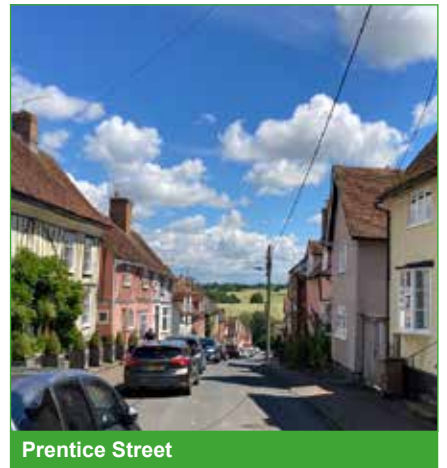
2.4 Streets and movement

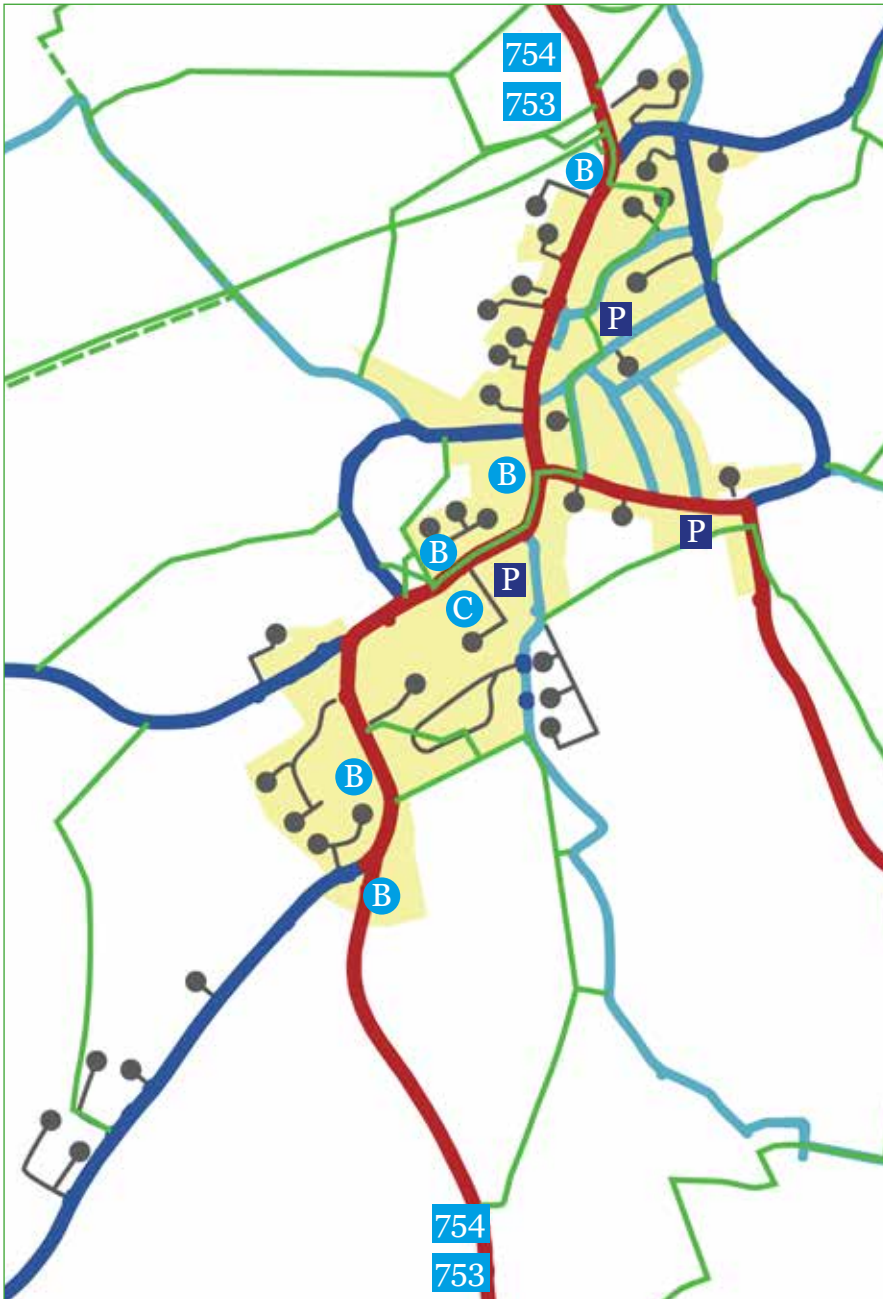
2.4.1 Lavenham's streets and pedestrian routes

The High Street, designated A1141, forms Lavenham's main thoroughfare. Aligned broadly north-south the route provides connections between Lavenham to Sudbury to the south and Bury St Edmunds to the north. The A1141 follows Water Street running east-west to the south of the historic village providing a connection to Ipswich via Hadleigh. The north south route continues south towards Sudbury along Church Street which is designated B1071.

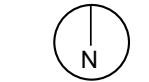
Secondary, predominantly residential streets including Lady Street, Barn Street and Shilling Street progress northwards up the hill in gentle curves from Water Street towards the Market Place. Prentice Street and Bolton Street are straighter, aligned broadly southwest - northeast and provide links with Lower Road and the Market Place. Other narrow streets such as Market Lane and pedestrian routes combine with the primary and secondary streets to create a permeable network of routes through the village.

Lavenham's streets can be congested with general traffic and oversized vehicles. Parked cars, often parking on the pavements, can obstruct pedestrians and discourage people from walking and cycling.





- Primary route
- Secondary route
- Minor route
- Cul de Sac
- - - St. Edmund's Way
- Rights of Way
- P Car Park
- B Bus Stop
- C Coach Park
- 754 Bus Routes



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Oversized vehicle on the High Street

Streets & movement plan



Railway Walk route along the former rail-line connects to the recent Halt development.

In addition to the rights of way shown on the streets and movement plan above, the village has numerous pedestrian links of varying quality, connecting more recent development to surrounding streets and spaces including:

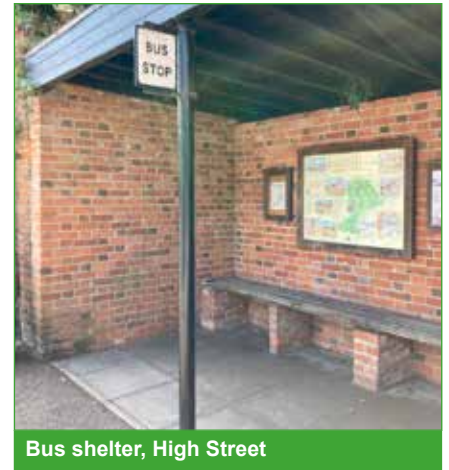
- A link to the recent Old Station Close development and Railway Walk.
- A pedestrian link from Osier View to Bears Lane.
- The riverside walk linking Lower Road with Preston Road.

2.4.2 Public transport

As noted in the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan 2023, the village does not benefit from an integrated public transport service. Hourly bus services connect the village to Bury St Edmunds, Sudbury and Colchester. Evening and Sunday services operate on a limited timetable.

Lavenham is located 6 miles from Sudbury Railway Station. Sudbury Railway Station links, via an hourly train service to Marks Tey, with trains to Colchester and London Liverpool Street. Bury St. Edmunds Station is 11 miles from Lavenham providing connections via Cambridge to London and to Ipswich, via Stowmarket. The bus terminus and train station are a short distance apart in Sudbury, and a greater distance apart in Bury St Edmunds. Stansted airport is 28 miles away by road and Southend airport is 37 miles away.

Public car parking spaces are provided at Prentice Street Car Park, Water Street Car Park and Cock Horse Inn Car Park.



Bus shelter, High Street



Cock Horse Inn Car Park



Charge point, Cock Horse inn Car Park



Public toilets, Cock Horse Inn Car Park



Water Street Car Park



Prentice St Car Park and public toilets



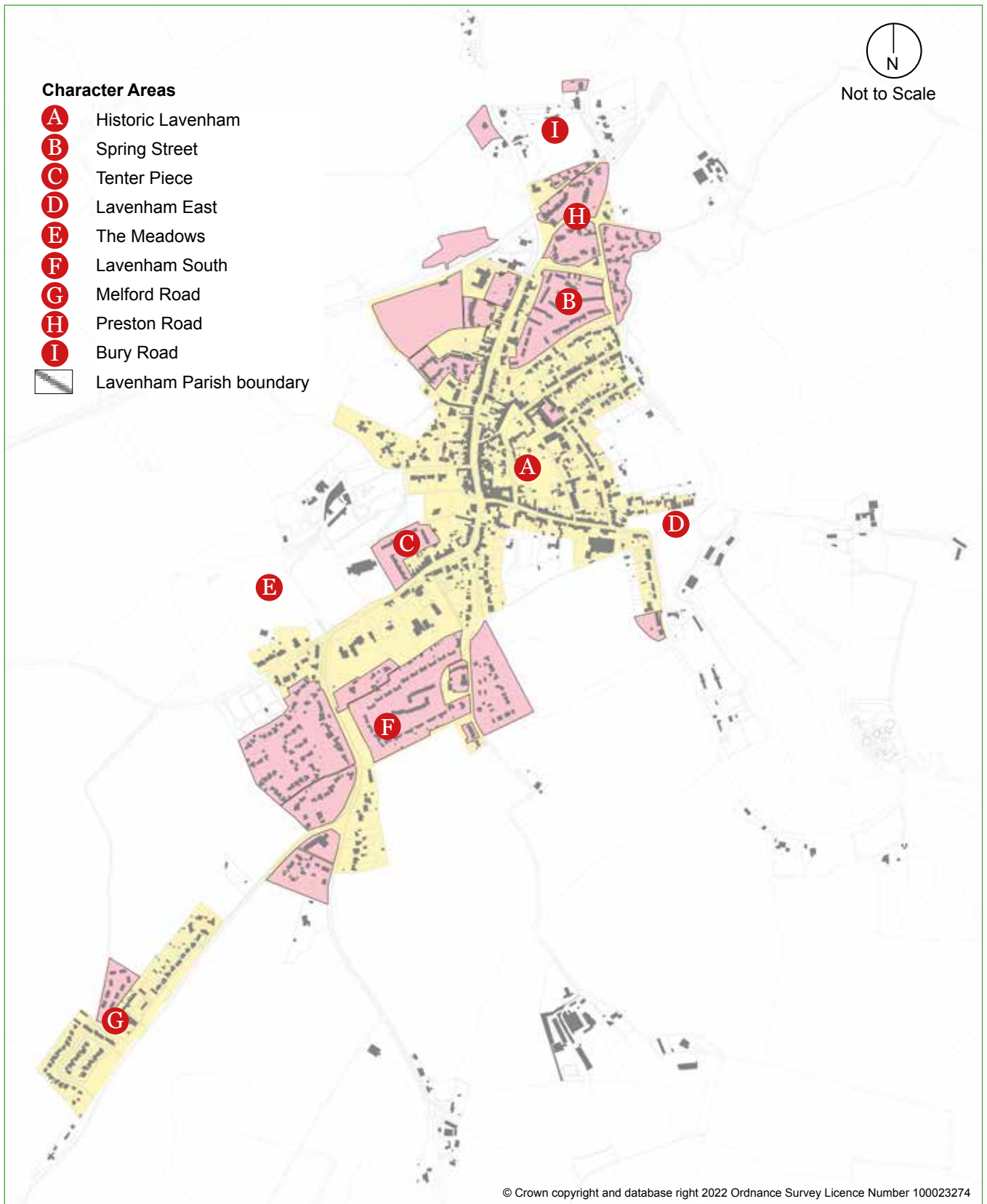
Market Place bike parking



Historic Photos of Lavenham
Courtesy of the Lavenham Exhibition and Museum Trust

Chapter 3: Village character areas

This chapter identifies Lavenham's distinct village character areas which are shown on the plan below. The key features and qualities that identify each character area are discussed. Any improvement and development proposals should respond to its respective character area.

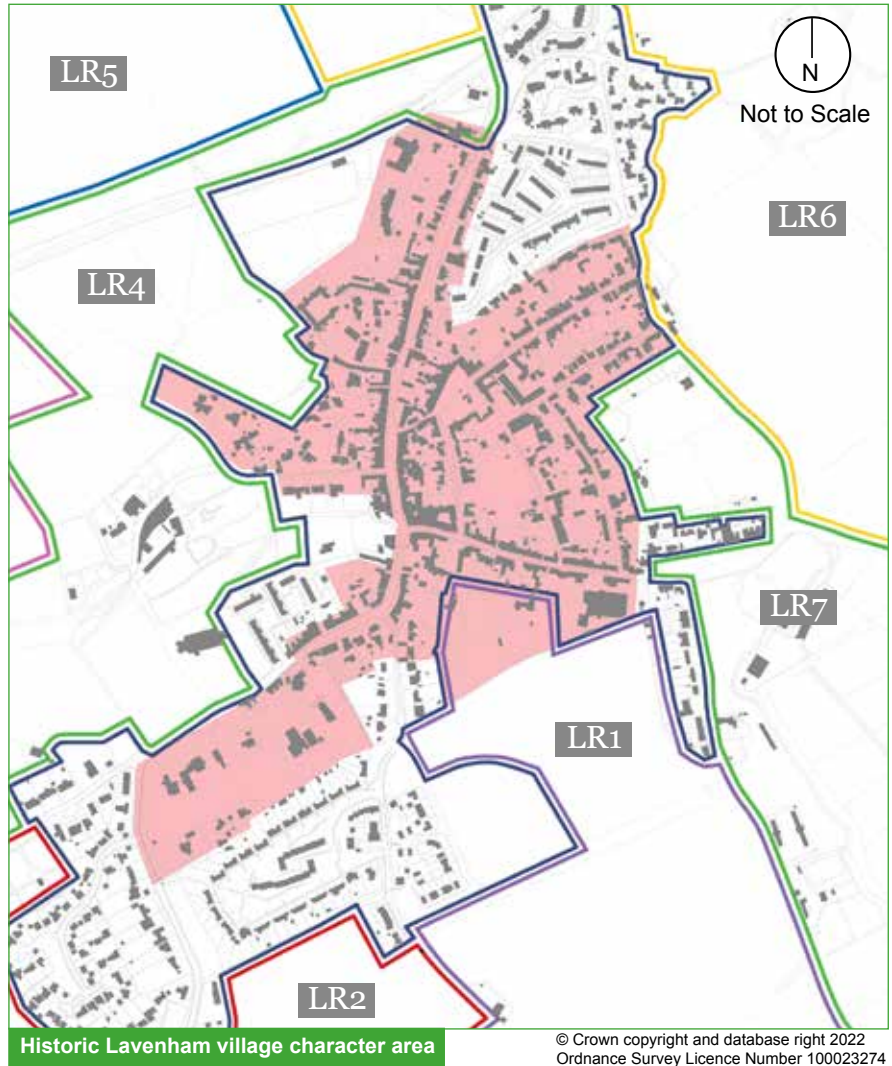


Character areas plan

3.1.1 Historic Lavenham

Located at the heart of the medieval village this character area lies wholly within the Conservation Area. Bounded to the east by Lower Road and the High Street and its culs-de-sac to the west the area includes the historic streets of Prentice, Bolton, Shilling, Barn and Lady Streets. In addition to the High Street the area includes Lavenham's main thoroughfares: Church Street and Water Street.

As noted previously the area is characterised by numerous historic buildings, many subject to statutory listing. Properties typically front onto and enclose streets, often forming terraces with near continuous frontage. Most properties are positioned to the front of the plot with no set backs or front gardens. Where they do exist front gardens are well kept with low boundary hedges that offer a convivial relationship between the private and the public realm. This creates a welcoming form where streets and spaces are clearly defined, and overlooked, by adjacent buildings.



Rural landscape character areas:

LR1	Pit Meadow	LR4	Western Meadows
LR2	Lavenham Wood	LR5	Brights Drift
LR3	Bridge Street Road	LR6	Clay Hill
		LR7	The Common

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

Historic Lavenham village character area



Buildings are typically two storeys with occasional three storey buildings where the third storey is accommodated within the roof space. Whilst medieval timber-framed plaintile roofed buildings are predominant, the area also has numerous good examples of brick-built, slate roofed Victorian homes and community buildings. These complement the former by respecting traditional building forms and layouts, whilst providing gentle contrast, both architecturally and in material choice.

Whilst the majority of the properties are residential in nature, Lavenham's shops, pubs, cafés/restaurants and other community buildings are concentrated along the High Street (the village's primary retail frontage) and Market Place.

The Market Place, Lavenham's primary open space, is located on higher ground to the east of the High Street. Home to the Market Cross, the Market Place is enclosed by some of the finest buildings in Suffolk, including the renowned Guildhall. Despite its status as the village's primary public space and the exemplary built form that defines and encloses Market Place, it currently functions as a thoroughfare and car parking area. The complete lack of street trees and greenery and limited opportunity for other activities severely detract from its setting.

Resident parking is primarily on-street with some properties benefiting from on-plot parking. This is generally provided to the side of the property and does not detract from the overall street scene. Public car parking is also provided at Water Street Car Park, Cock Horse Inn Car Park and Prentice Street Car Park.

Tourism is a key element of Lavenham's economy. Hotels including the Swan and the Angel Hotel add to the rich mix of buildings and uses at Market Place which is also home to institutional uses such as the Guildhall and the Little Hall Museums and the contemporary information centre on Lady Street. Lavenham Primary School is housed in a fine Victorian building located off Market Place, however there is no parking on site.



Bolton Street



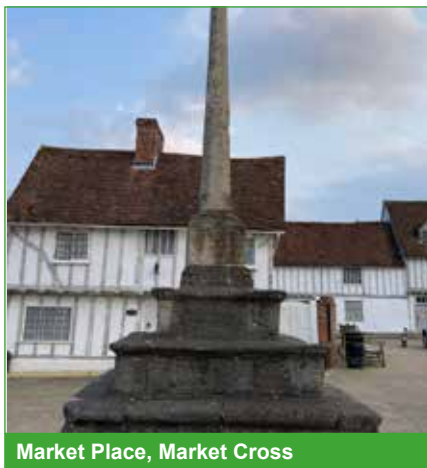
Market Place



Market Place



Information Centre, Lady Street



Market Place, Market Cross



Lavenham Primary School

Whilst the public realm is predominantly hard surfaced with few street trees and soft landscaping, well maintained front gardens and private rear gardens that are well stocked with trees and shrubs help soften the character area.

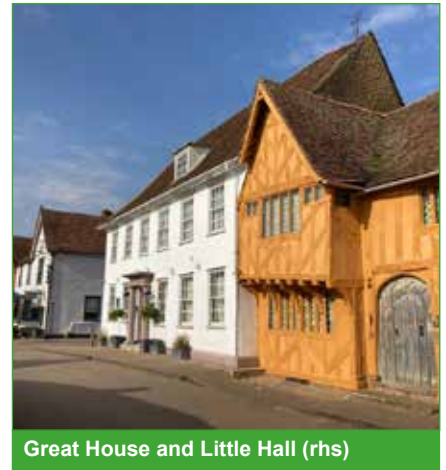
This character area includes Lavenham's retail core; home to the majority of the village's retail and commercial businesses and within easy walking distance for the majority of residents. Lavenham's retail core is wholly inside the Conservation Area and comprises parts of various streets within the village's historic core.

The curved High Street gains height as it travels north from its junction with Water Street providing a pleasing vista of historic, predominantly two storey buildings - often with gable fronts - that create a varied, attractive roofscape of steep red plintile roofs punctuated with brick chimneys. Whilst many of the historic timber-frame buildings are rendered - to resist the worst of the British climate - some buildings have exposed timbers, adding to the street's character. The carriageway is approximately 7m wide and accommodates two way traffic, on-street parking and loading. Whilst footway widths vary they are wider than the narrow footways of adjacent residential streets, typically 3m (see diagram page 18).

The retail and commercial frontages are well maintained and signage is generally well designed and in keeping with the historic character of the area.

Whilst the High Street comprises a mix of residential, retail and commercial uses, development to the west of the High Street is generally residential in nature and arranged around small informal yards accessed via narrow carriageways to the side or via undercroft of properties fronting onto the High Street. Much of the small scale infill development has grown organically over the years, whilst developments such as Ropers Court have seen former industrial buildings adapted to residential use. More recently, a variety of traditionally styled house types at Deacons Close have been laid out around an attractive central green with mature trees.

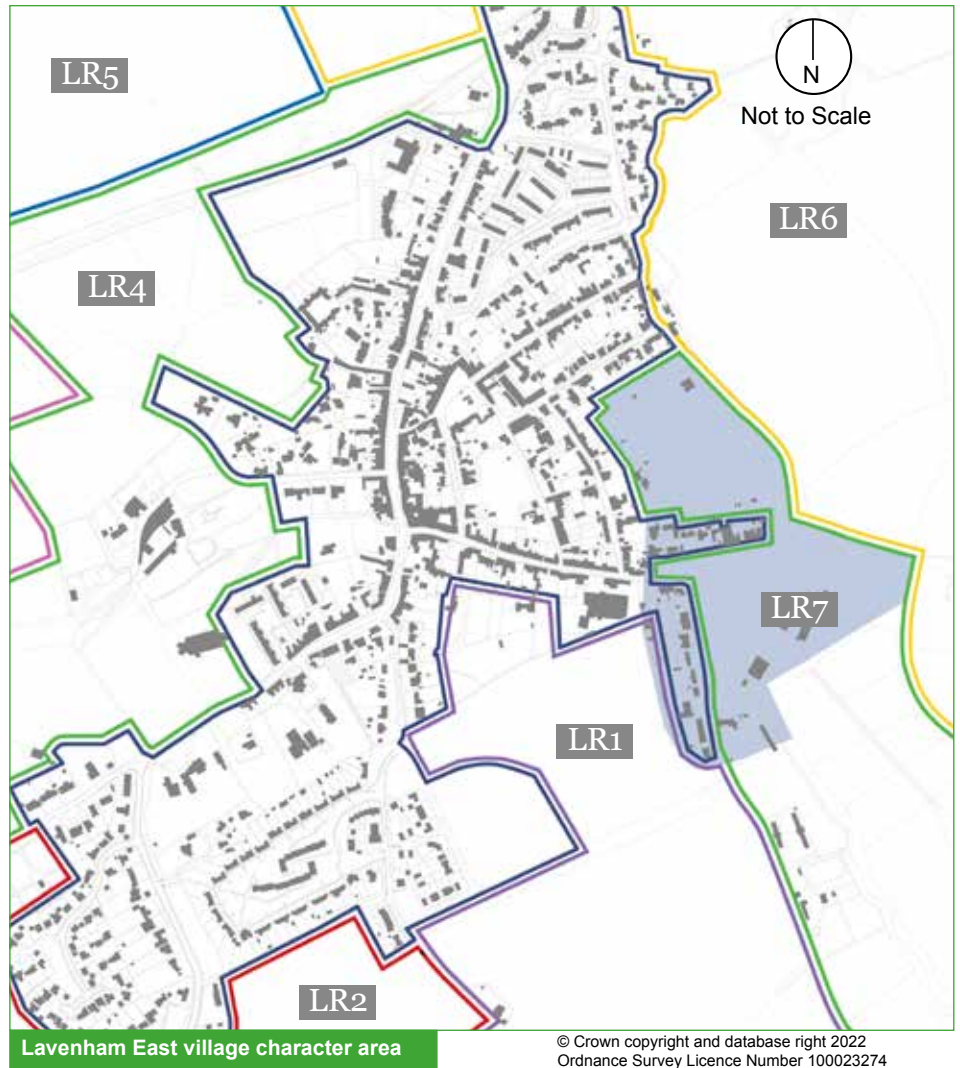
The area incorporates the Rural Character Area LR4 Western Meadows; characterised by small-scale and intimate landscape of small irregular fields that gently slope towards a tributary valley to Lavenham Brook, which is part of the River Brett main river system (Lavenham Brook is often referred to as the River Brett and is classified as a main river). The area benefits from several public rights of way linking to the Railway Path and St Edmund's Way long distance footpath. LR4 covers much of the western edge of the village including land within this character area.



3.1.2 Lavenham East

Located towards the eastern edge of the settlement within the flat valley bottom of the Lavenham Brook, this area is characterised by the large distinct open spaces of The Common and First Meadow, that connect the village to the rising ground of Clay Hill to the east. The built environment comprises a dispersed mix of detached buildings and short terraces to the north of the Common and more recent, predominantly social housing of semi-detached properties and short terraces that front onto Brent Eleigh Road. Non-residential buildings include the Salvation Army and Lavenham Telephone Exchange.


Lavenham East incorporates the Rural Character Area; LR7 The Common. Mature trees and planting along the Water Street tributary, the Lavenham Brook and farm buildings off Clay Lane add to the essentially rural character of the area. First Meadow caters for young people with play facilities and also provides residents with the opportunity for passive recreation. LR6 Clay Hill lies at the eastern boundary and LR1: Pit Meadow is situated to the west.



Rural landscape character areas:

LR1	Pit Meadow	LR4	Western Meadows
LR2	Lavenham Wood	LR5	Brights Drift
LR3	Bridge Street Road	LR6	Clay Hill
		LR7	The Common

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

 Lavenham East village character area



Salvation Army premises



Lower Road



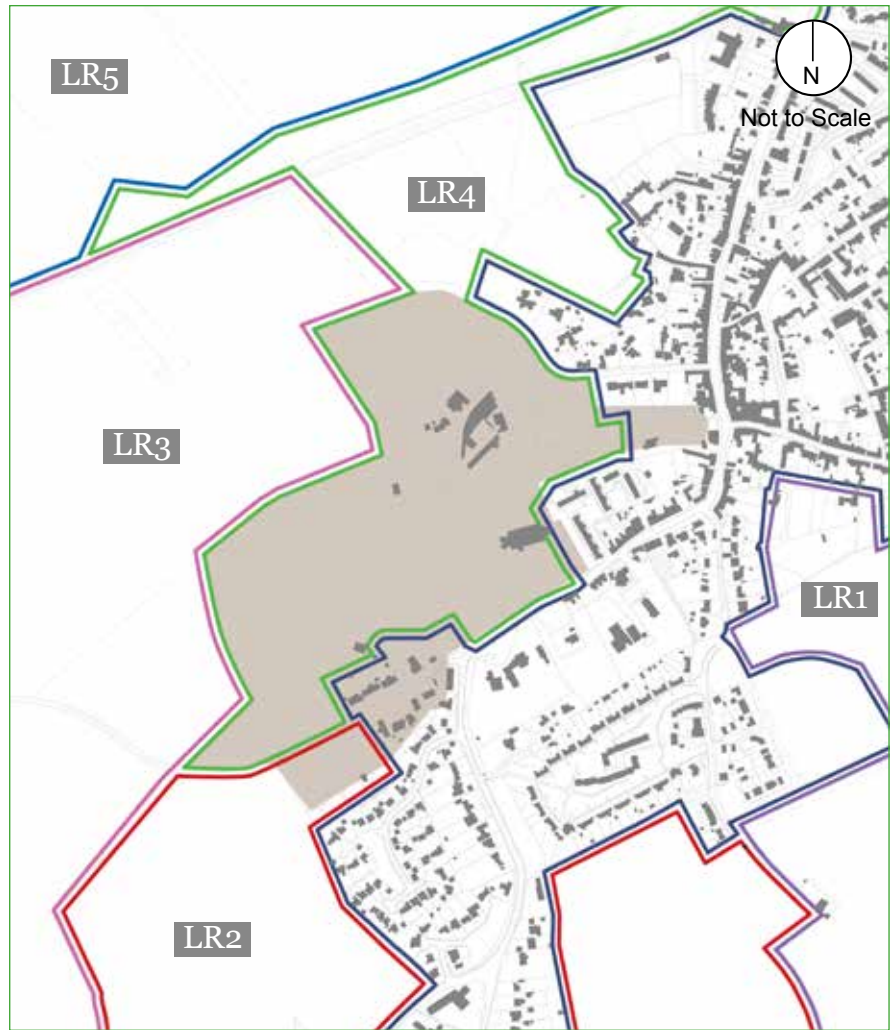
Well considered social housing, Brent Eleigh Road

3.1.3 The Meadows

Located to the south west of the village and abutting the flat landscape of large arable fields that characterise the Bridge Street Rural Character Area LR3, the Meadows character area incorporates some of Lavenham's more substantial open spaces including playing fields and historic landscapes, Lavenham Hall, the graveyard and the setting of St Peter and St Paul's Church. These open spaces are rich in stately, mature trees with well vegetated boundaries. The built environment is characterised by a variety of buildings including the historic church, farm buildings along Potland Lane and more recent ribbon development including detached bungalows along Bridge Street Road.

Note that St. Peter and St. Paul's is late perpendicular in its design, and is regarded as one of the finest churches built in that style. It was also one of the last churches to be completed before the English Reformation. The extraordinary cost of the work was paid for by the local merchant families, who had become amongst the wealthiest in England. Internal improvements including seating, the visitors shop and vestry/robing cupboards were undertaken recently.

The Meadows is within the LR4: Western Meadows Rural Character Area. LR3: Bridge Street Road, a flat landscape of large arable fields lies to the west. LR2: Lavenham Wood is located to the south (note there is no public access).



The Meadows village character area

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Rural landscape character areas:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| LR1 Pit Meadow | LR4 Western Meadows |
| LR2 Lavenham Wood | LR5 Brights Drift |
| LR3 Bridge Street Road | LR7 The Common |

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

 The Meadows village character area



Potland Lane



Lavenham Cemetery



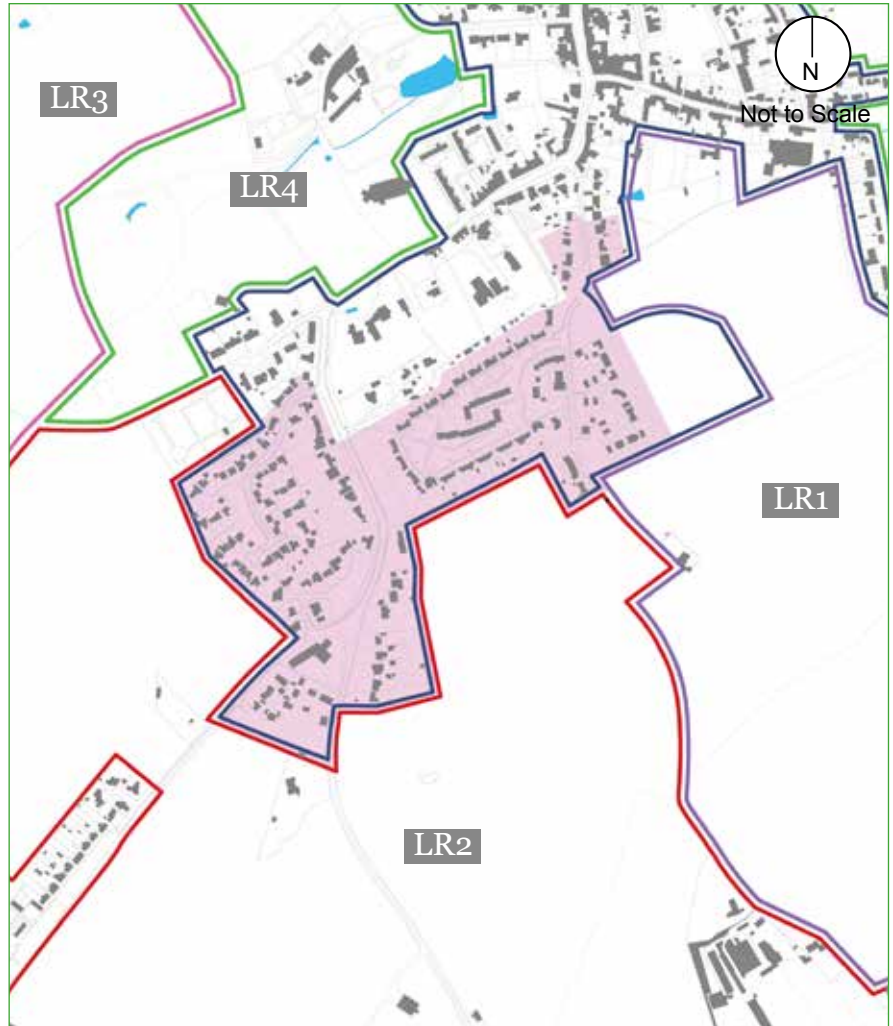
Playing Fields overlooked by St. Peter and St. Paul's Church

3.1.4 Lavenham South

The Lavenham South village character area is located on gently undulating land to the south of the village. The built environment here is characterised by relatively recent housing developments from post-war to the present day. This includes the social housing estates of Meadow Close and more recent private estates including the Glebe and Osier View on Bears Lane.

Sudbury Road, Melford Road and Bears Lane are typically lined with ribbon development of primarily detached properties that are set back from the road. Suburban in nature and quite different from the traditional arrangement seen in historic development in the Conservation area, the estates are typically served by a single access loop-road or culs-de-sac.

The Lavenham Wood Rural Character Area LR2 abuts the Lavenham South character area to the south.



Lavenham South village character area

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Rural landscape character areas:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| LR1 Pit Meadow | LR3 Bridge Street Road |
| LR2 Lavenham Wood | LR4 Western Meadows |

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

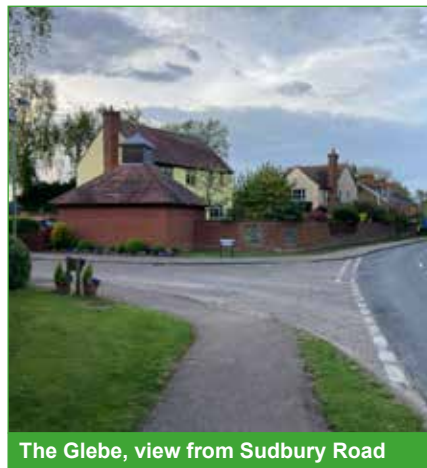
Lavenham South village character area



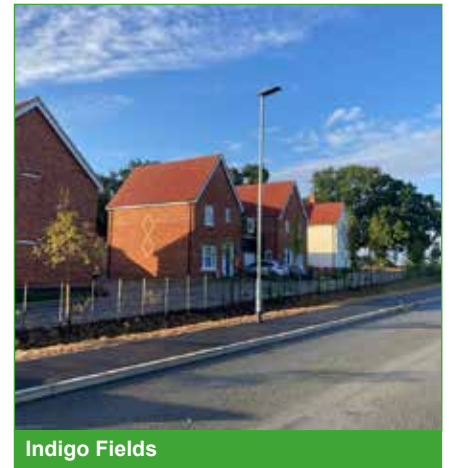
Meadow Court, Bears Lane



Meadow Close, Play Area



The Glebe, view from Sudbury Road



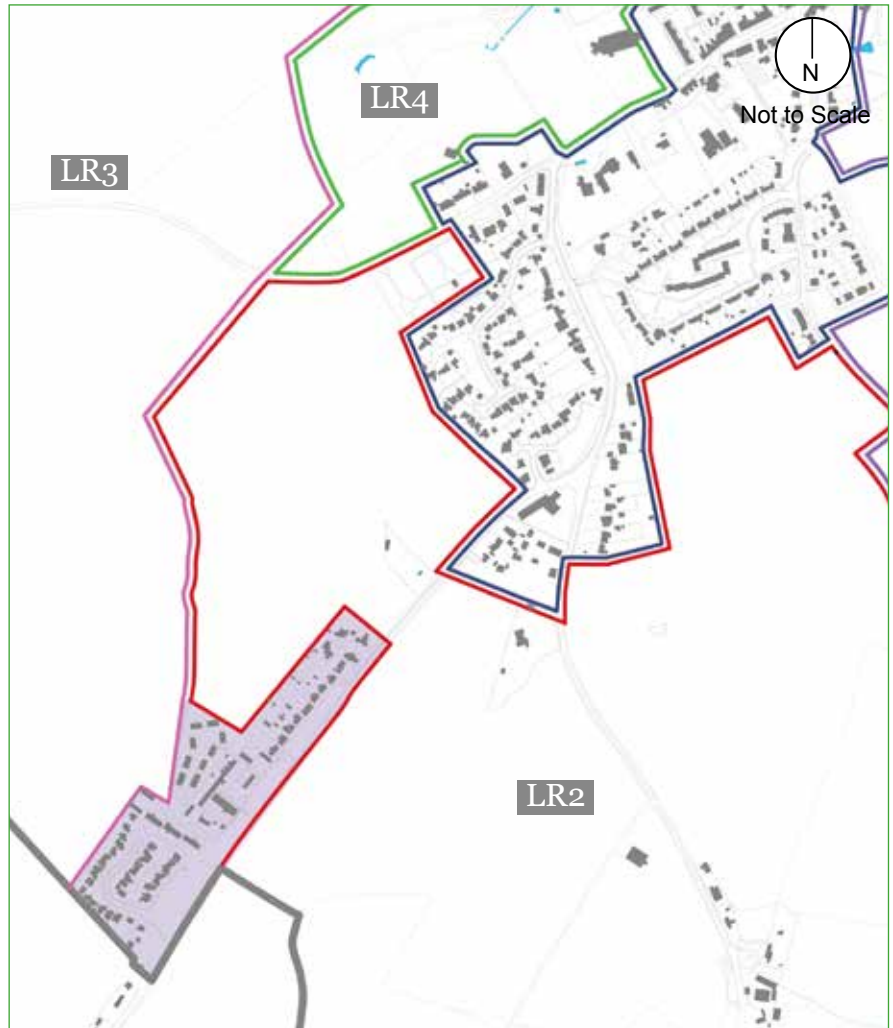
Indigo Fields

3.1.5 Melford Road

Melford Road village character area lies to the south of the village. Characterised by post-war, primarily semi-detached suburban housing, the ribbon development is set back from the western side of Melford Road by a wide tree lined verge. The housing area is approximately 1km south of Lavenham and forms a physically separate and remote settlement. Culs-de-sac provide access to the Green Willows and Harwood Place estates which provide a variety of housing types: detached, semi-detached and terraces. The brick built properties are constructed with a variety of roof tiles, many are rendered and painted in various colours; pinks and white primarily.

Peek Close is a notable recent sustainable development on former brownfield land. The development of 18 much needed affordable homes won Babergh Community Project of the Year Award 2018.

The Rural Character Area LR3, Bridge Street Road, a flat landscape of large arable fields lies to the north. Rural Character Area LR2, Lavenham Wood, is located to the north and east.





Melford Road village character area

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Rural landscape character areas:

- LR2** Lavenham Wood
- LR3** Bridge Street Road
- LR4** Western Meadows

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

-  Melford Road village character area
-  Lavenham Parish boundary



Melford Road



Peek Close

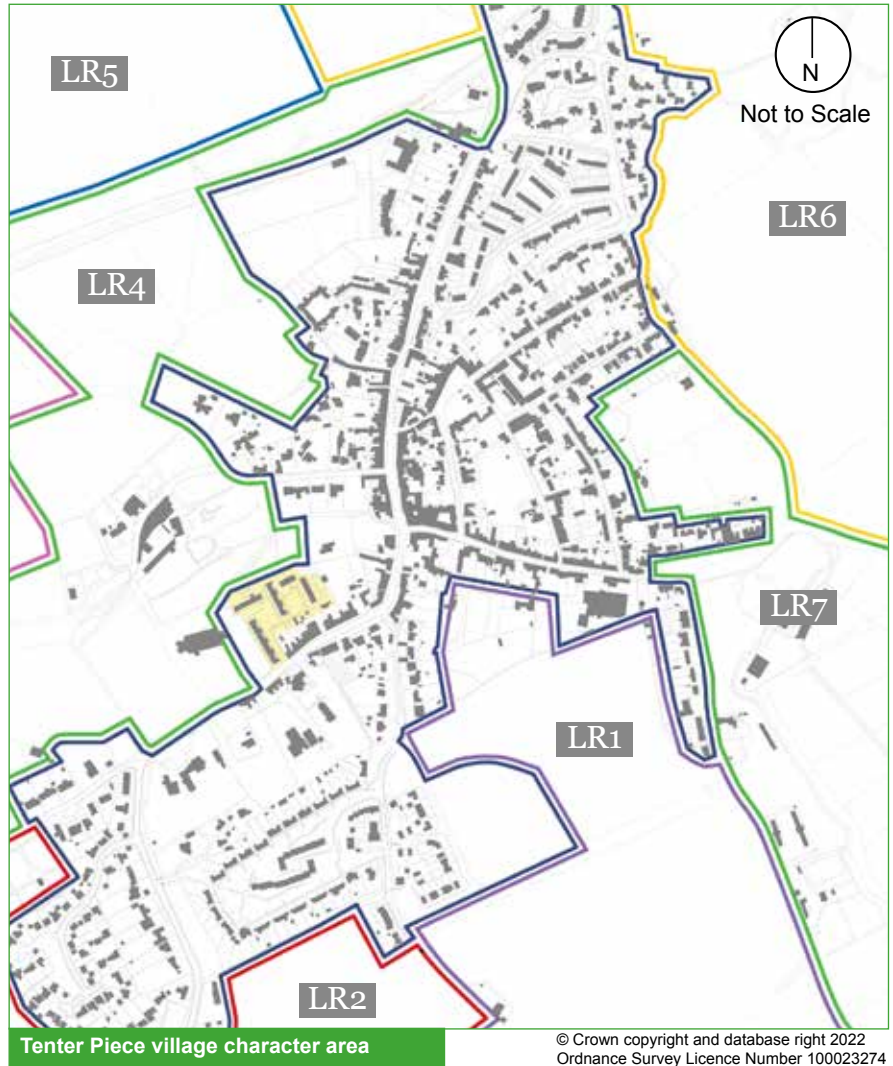
3.1.6 Tenter Piece

The Tenter Piece village character area sits to the north of Church Street between Historic Lavenham and The Meadows character areas. Accessed from Church Street, the mid-century social housing is laid out in a series of single and two storey terraces that enclose parking courts and open space. Constructed in brick with tiled roofs the two storey properties are clad with weather boarding on the second floor elevations.

Whilst the estate is not of any particular architectural merit its small scale and simple elevations are not unattractive and its layout, specifically the orientation of the single storey terraces perpendicular to Church Street, overlook adjacent green space and do not adversely impact on the nearby Church and the historic Church Street.

Tenter Piece belongs to Babergh District Council.


The Rural Character Area LR4: Western Meadows lies to the north and west.



Rural landscape character areas:

LR1	Pit Meadow	LR5	Brights Drift
LR2	Lavenham Wood	LR6	Clay Hill
LR4	Western Meadows	LR7	The Common

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

 Tenter Piece village character area



View from Tenter Piece



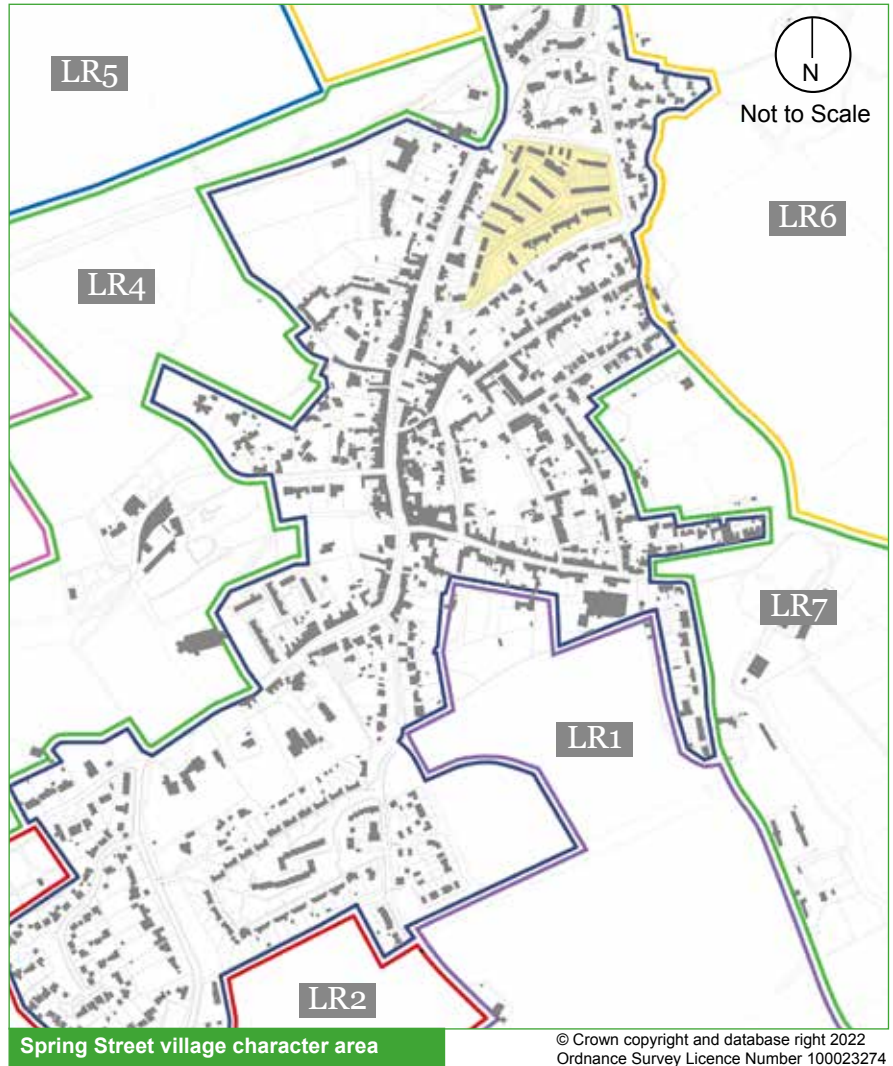
Tenter Piece

3.1.7 Spring Street

The Spring Street village character area lies to the north of historic Lavenham. Spring Street provides the primary vehicle access to this mid-century housing development, initially created as social housing. In connecting the High Street with Lower Road, Spring Street's alignment mirrors the historic, broadly east-west alignment of Prentice and Bolton Streets. Terraced brick-built properties south of Spring Street descend towards Lower Road creating a pleasing and varied roof-line in common with Lavenham's prevailing historic character.

Whilst these properties are set back from the street the short front gardens are well maintained and provide enclosure and good overlooking of the street. Housing to the north primarily takes the form of single storey terraces. However, those properties that are laid out perpendicular to the road are less successful, presenting long solid brick boundary walls and blank frontages to the street.

The Spring Street character area does not directly adjoin a Rural Character Area, however LR6: Clay Hill lies to the east and can be seen from Spring Street.



Spring Street village character area

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Rural landscape character areas:

LR1	Pit Meadow	LR5	Brights Drift
LR2	Lavenham Wood	LR6	Clay Hill
LR4	Western Meadows	LR7	The Common

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

 Spring Street village character area



Spring Street



Spring Street



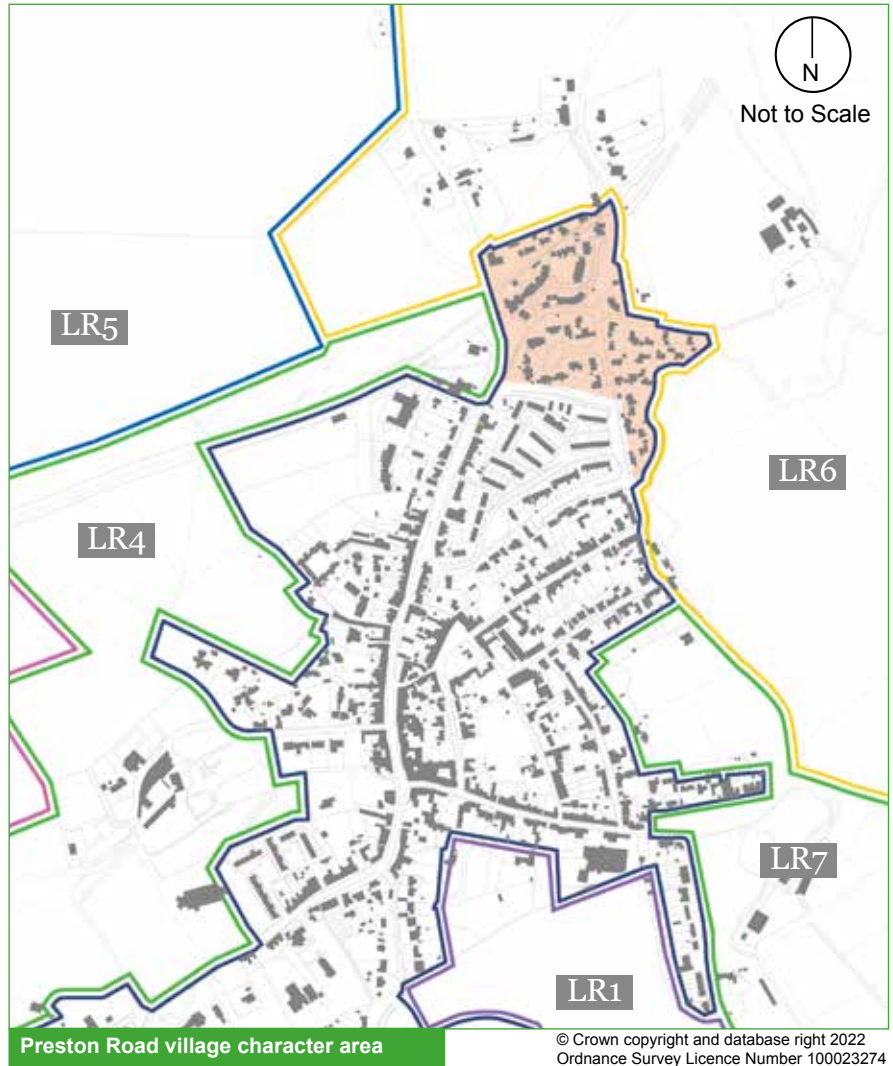
Spring Street open space

3.1.8 Preston Road

Preston Road character area, to the north of Spring Street and Lower Road, comprises detached market housing estate of Weavers Close and the more recent Old Station Close development and Lower Road.

The Halt is a more dense and compact development laid out around a central shared space with other properties fronting onto and overlooking Preston Road. Whilst an attempt has been made to create a contemporary version of the Lavenham vernacular the central shared space is predominantly hard surfaced and urban.


The area is enclosed by the Rural Character Area LR6: Clay Hill rolling valley-side land. LR4: Western Meadows lies to the west.



Rural landscape character areas:

LR1	Pit Meadow	LR5	Brights Drift
LR4	Western Meadows	LR6	Clay Hill
		LR7	The Common

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

 Preston Road village character area



Old Station Close



Shared Space, Old Station Close

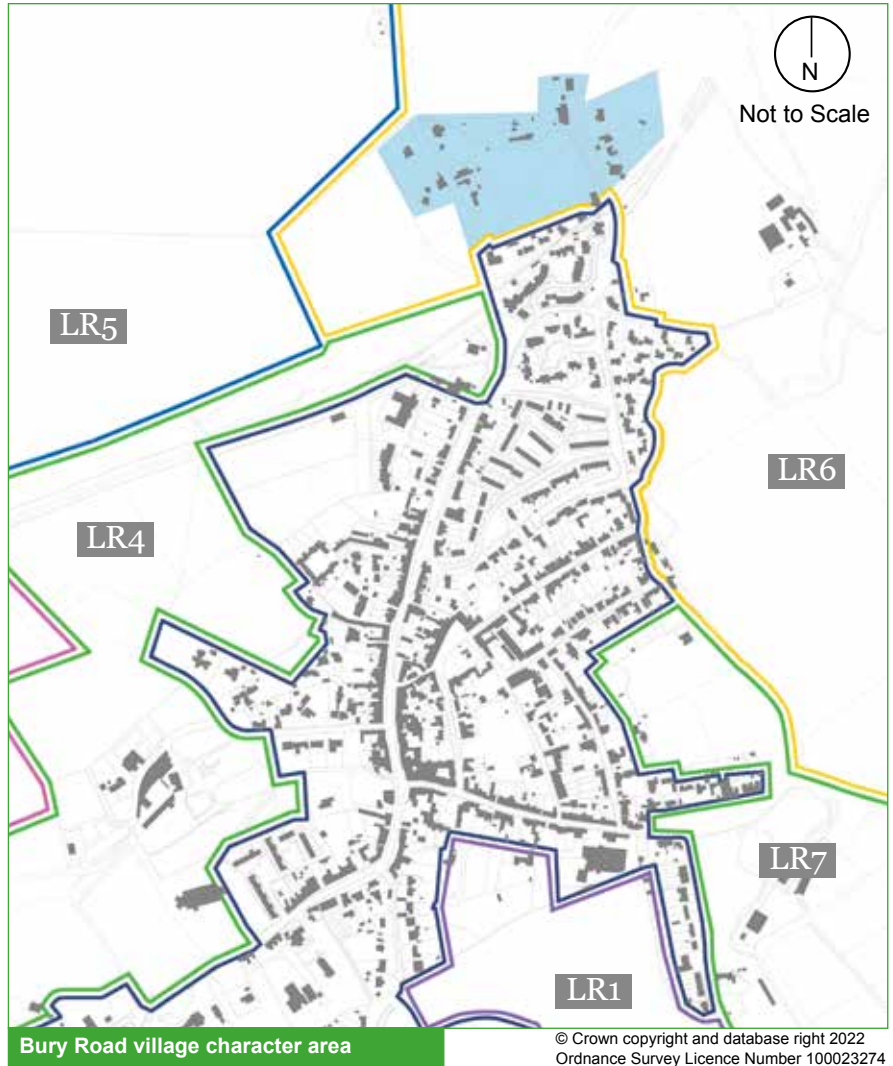


Weavers Close

3.1.9 Bury Road

Bury Road character area in the north of Lavenham is bounded by Bury Road A1141 to the west and Frogs Hall Road to the east. Whilst the built environment includes some historic buildings, recent development is characterised by over-scaled detached properties in a mixture of styles and materials.

The area is enclosed by the Rural Character Area LR6: Clay Hill rolling valley-side land.



Rural landscape character areas:

LR1	Pit Meadow	LR5	Brights Drift
LR4	Western Meadows	LR6	Clay Hill
		LR7	The Common

Source: Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment (2021)

 Bury Road village character area



Highfield House, Bury Road



New Houses, Bury Road



Approach to Village on Bury Road

Chapter 4: Sustainable place-shaping

This section identifies the sustainable design principles which improvement and development proposals should adhere to. An opportunities plan is provided to highlight those areas where positive change can help address residents' concern over the impact of climate change on Lavenham and the surrounding countryside. Additional resources and examples of best practice are provided for further information.

4.1 Sustainable design principles for Lavenham

There are many ways in which planning and design can address the climate and biodiversity emergency and help create a sustainable, net zero carbon future for Lavenham. A walkable village with a good mix of homes, employment, shops and services reduces the need for people to travel by car and improvements and any new development should be located within easy walking distance of Lavenham's High Street and community facilities such as the village hall, primary school and pre-school. Whilst Lavenham already benefits from a good network of footpaths, improvements and any new development should extend connections to bus services and walking and cycling networks.

Improvements to existing buildings and constructing any improvements or new development will have a big impact on Lavenham's carbon footprint. This guide supports low emission, adaptable development that reduces waste, conserves water, improves biodiversity and delivers smart infrastructure. A sustainable place prioritises the needs of the whole community to foster social cohesion. In practice this means that improvements or any development should be neighbourly, with welcoming streets and public spaces.

The Babergh & Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 (JLP 1) acknowledges the national requirement to future proof against climate change including reducing carbon emissions, diversifying energy provision and using sustainable construction and design methods and promote sustainable modes of transport. Policy SP10, Climate Change, requires all developments to take a proactive approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes and visual impacts, and the risk of extreme winter and summer temperatures, overheating from rising temperatures. JLP 1 notes that proactive approaches may include sustainable construction techniques that regulate building temperatures encourage tree planting and biodiversity net gain. Also shelter in public realms including public transport nodes and stops.

Improvements and additions to Lavenham's built fabric should contribute positively to the village's long term legacy and respond to the sense of place outlined in previous sections of this document. Any improvements and development proposals should be founded on the following principles:

4.1.1 Respect Lavenham's built heritage

Understand what is distinctive about Lavenham, its statutory and non statutory heritage assets and draw on the strengths of the village's existing character when drawing up plans and proposals. Specify the high quality design construction techniques and materials to ensure that proposals will be beautiful and provide a suitable legacy for the village that will reduce carbon use, be durable and age gracefully. Provide a high quality of life for residents through their life with fully accessible and adaptable homes where privacy and overlooking is carefully considered.

4.1.2 Strengthen Lavenham's Landscape Character

This guide encourages attractive, high-quality, innovative and sustainable improvements and development that mitigates the effects of climate change and prioritises new development on brownfield sites over greenfield development. Development pressure is most acute at the periphery of the village and any improvements and new development should respond and integrate into the adjacent countryside and include proposals for substantial green infrastructure that mitigates any potential impact on sensitive views and the village's heritage setting.

4.1.3 Create healthy streets and spaces

Whilst motorised vehicles are a necessary part of 21st century living, the negative impacts of vehicles should be minimised through good street design and management. Should the opportunity arise new pedestrian and cycle routes should be provided that connect people to the village's shops and community facilities. An expanded footpath network would help to keep pedestrians safe from vehicle traffic, particularly on those roads where footways are not provided.



The National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. The National Design Guide (NDG) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. It sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places that together create its physical character and help sustain a sense of community and address climate change.

The NDG notes that a well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels including: layout; form and scale of buildings; appearance; landscape; and detailing.

The National Model Design Code (NMDC) provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide, which reflects the government’s priorities and provides a common overarching framework for design.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/962113/National_design_guide.pdf
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

‘Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical character’

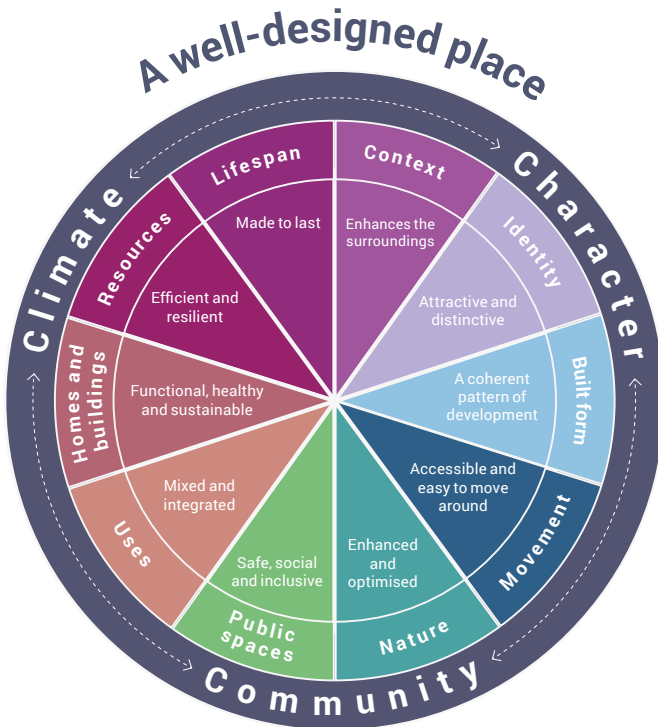
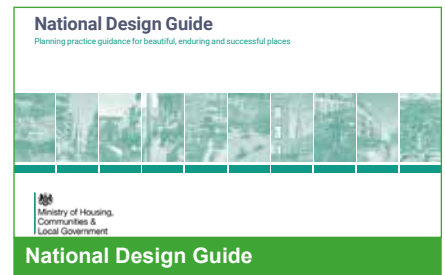
National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Advisory Service

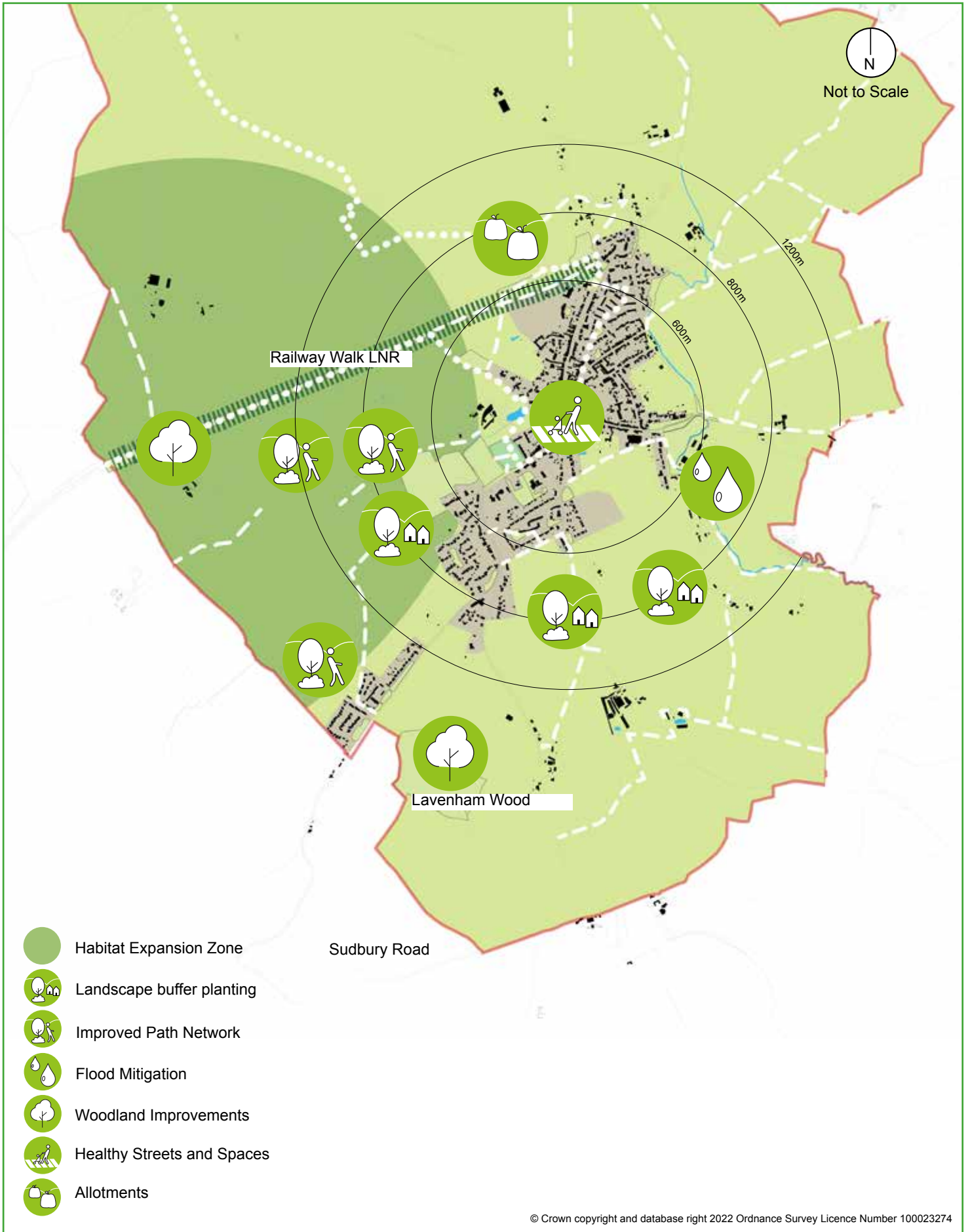
For further information on sustainable place-shaping please refer to advice the Planning Advisory Service for guidance.

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/councillor-workbook-local-pathway-net-zero>
Neighbourhood Planning in Climate Emergency guide:

<https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/policy/planning/renewables/neighbourhood-planning-in-a-climate-emergency-feb-2020.pdf>



The ten characteristics of well-designed places, National Design Guide



Opportunities plan

4.2 Opportunities plan

Responses from the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan Revision Questionnaire highlight residents concern over the impact of climate change on the village and the surrounding countryside and the desire to create a resilient Lavenham. This section presents a range of environmental and infrastructure improvements arising from those concerns. These improvements may be brought forward in tandem with any new development in the village and in partnership with public bodies, landowners and the local community.

The MAGIC website (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk>) provides authoritative geographic information about the natural environment from across Government. It brings together environmental data from a variety of sources including Natural England data layers. Natural England have identified a Habitat Expansion Zone in the western part of the parish where there is potential to expand and join networks across the landscape such as the ancient woodland at Lavenham Wood and the Railway Walk Local Nature Reserve.

Any development on the edge of the settlement should show consideration on its impact on the wider landscape. This should include the creation of landscape buffers to mitigate visual impact and strengthen Lavenham's historic boundaries and field patterns. Opportunities to create productive landscapes, including allotments, and support amenity space and verge management that encourages biodiversity should also be identified.

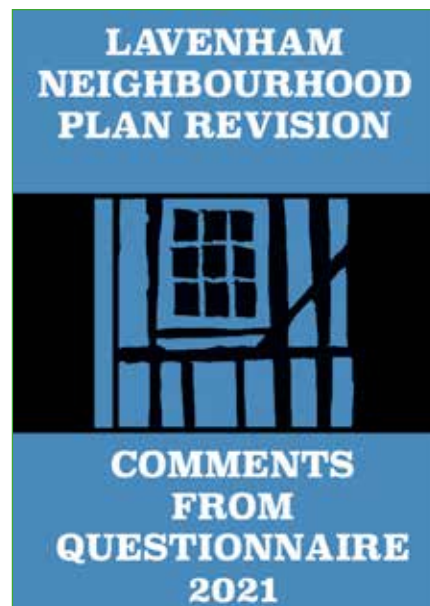
Partnership working should be sought with Anglian Water, the water authority, and landowners to create a water management plan for the village that adopts best practice and Sustainable drainage solutions (SuDS) to address flooding, improve biodiversity and reduce pollution.

SuDS can help address surface water run off from impermeable surfaces such as car parking and surface water management to reduce flooding of public footpaths including those at Mud Lane and Lavenham Walk.

This Design Guide complements and supports designation of the Lavenham Brook (River Brett) valley as an Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity (ALLS, see Part A of the Plan, Policy LAV 34), and encourages woodland creation, hedgerow planting and maintenance within the ALLS.

Introducing river bank habitats here will help the landscape to be more resilient to climate change and improve the environment for nature and wildlife. Signage to improve awareness of flooding for drivers, particularly at Lower Road is also encouraged.

For more information refer to Part A of the Plan, Chapter Ten, Objective Thirteen Community Initiatives.



‘Recent changes in agricultural production have altered the landscape in many ways, and maintaining the remaining permanent pasture, hedges and woodland is now of critical importance.’

Lavenham Village Design Statement



Flooding in Lavenham

The following improvements to the footpath network should be considered:

- Reinstatement of 'lost' footpaths.
- Provide clear way-finding to encourage people to use the footpath network.
- Encourage partnership working with volunteers, land owners and farmers to maintain footpaths and improve designated walks such as Lavenham Walk and Clay Lane and the footpath near Weaners Farm on Bears Lane.
- Downgrade those 'byways open to all traffic' to 'restricted byways' to stop unsuitable vehicles from using footpaths.
- Provide footway on Preston Road to connect people to riverside footpath.
- Plans are well advanced for a new pedestrian route linking Green Willows to the village footway network.
- Improve footpath on west bank of Lavenham Brook south from First Meadow.
- Provide a pedestrian link to/from Lavenham Studios.
- Provide new footpath linking northern end of existing footpath from Weavers Farm to Brent Eleigh Road.

Although some overhead cables have been removed from parts of the historic core, where the opportunity arises overhead cables should be completely removed throughout historic Lavenham.

4.2.1 Healthy streets and spaces

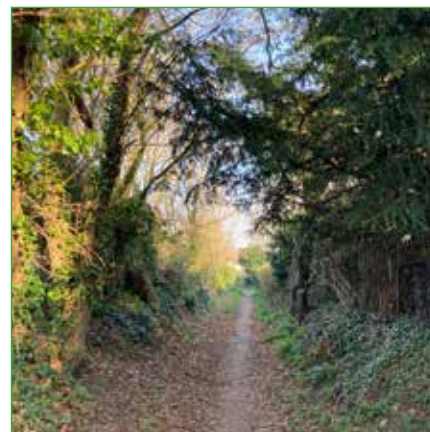
A Village Public Realm & Movement Review was undertaken in 2023. Based on its findings, a follow-up study should be undertaken to determine a design approach. The study should consider measures to reduce congestion, traffic speed and dominance of vehicles in the public realm and develop public realm improvements that protect and enhance the village's historic setting.

The study should address climate change by prioritising walking and include tree planting and rain gardens where appropriate. A cultural programme should be drawn up in tandem with physical improvements to benefit local residents and visitors and help strengthen the local economy. Street and building lighting that accentuates Lavenham's exemplary built heritage should also be considered.

The study should also address access and parking and prepare recommendations for managing vehicle access such as Traffic Orders to allow for timed deliveries at different times of the day. Seasonal time controls may also be considered with restrictions relaxed during the quieter winter months. The study should investigate the suitability of restricted parking and pedestrian zones to manage traffic and identify ways to reduce street clutter and line markings. Restricted parking zones are marked with entry signs defining the timing controls and parking and loading is typically confined to marked bays. Pedestrian zones are typically adopted in shopping streets, often without lines and kerb markings and the traditional separation between the footway and carriageway.

The study should also consider the potential to provide park and walk facilities at the periphery of the village. This may help reduce congestion, particularly along Church Street and the High Street, and reduce parking stress within the village. This in turn will free up highway to be reallocated for pedestrian crossings, street trees and rain gardens.

Low and zero carbon emission road transport should also be supported through measures such as the provision of further electric vehicle charging points and ensuring there is equitable access to these, particularly for residents who are unable to charge an electric vehicle at home. There will need to be consideration on integrating and managing electric vehicle



Pedestrian link from Green Willows to Melford Road



Bridge Street Road, a narrow highway which does not benefit from a footway



There is no footway between Green Willows and Peak Close



Alleyway from Market Place

charging points throughout the village. On-street charging, especially within the Conservation Area will be a challenge and alternative solutions should be considered.

The Government has recognised the importance of slow speed in creating safe, sociable, attractive streets where people want to walk and where children can play. As traffic speeds increase, so too does both the likelihood and severity of a collision. The Highway Authority and the Parish Council have reached an advance stage of planning in 2023 for a 20mph speed limit covering most of Lavenham's central area.

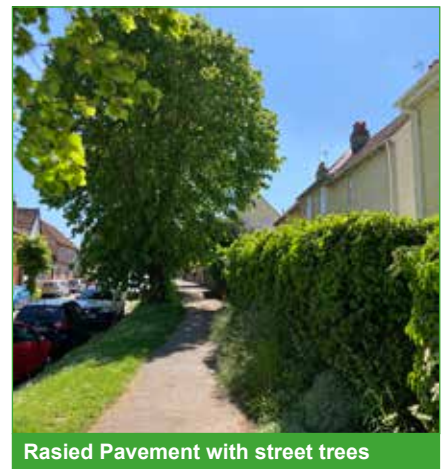
The follow-up study should consider the benefits and challenges in delivering a village wide 20mph speed limit and the nature of any associated physical traffic calming measures and community engagement to encourage compliance. This study should also consider the nature and location of pedestrian crossings to enable people to cross streets easily and safely.

A community wide consultation programme should be undertaken in parallel with the study and include the Highway Authority, residents and businesses to ensure that people are involved in the design process.

Market Place is currently dominated by traffic and car parking and proposals to improve the amenity value of Market Place by increasing its use for community and leisure purposes are welcomed. This guide encourages improvements proposals to come forward for Market Place that seek to maximise the potential of the space and provide wider footways and space for seating, greening and opportunities for activities and outdoor dining that would make the area more attractive for visitors and residents alike and help improve the economic prospects of the shops and businesses in the village.

Low cost, temporary improvements that change the character of a street or space should be considered as these can positively impact upon the way vehicles and pedestrians use the public realm. Improvements should not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area including the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Lavenham has a history of using wind power. There were two windmill sites; Mill House on Bury Road, where the original post mill was replaced by a brick tower in 1830 and part demolished in 1921, and Mill Cottage in Bear's Lane where another post mill stood until it was demolished circa. 1883. The guide encourages partnership working to explore ways to harness the wind and sun to generate green community energy. Renewable energy projects should be supported where they are located to avoid any significant adverse effects on the defined views or the historic core of the village.



Chapter 5: Design guidance

Chapter 5 provides design guidance for sustainable homes, and general design guidance. Developers are not required to employ qualified and experienced architects and landscape architects. Consequently new housing development can be brought forward with very little attention paid to historic precedent, detail and the considered use of appropriate materials. In absence of design professionals this section highlights good practice in place making.

Checklists are provided to help ensure the guidance is considered when improvement and development proposals are being prepared. Residents, Parish Councillors and Local Authority Officers are encouraged to use the checklists when reviewing proposals to ensure they address the sustainable design principles outlined in Chapter 4.

5.1 Sustainable homes guidance

The following section presents guidance on reducing carbon and links to tool-kits for retrofit improvements, improvements to historic and traditional buildings, and new build homes. Key performance targets are provided for retrofit improvements and new build homes.

5.1.1 Retrofit improvements

The great majority of homes and buildings in Lavenham have already been built. Existing buildings provide the greatest challenge to reducing carbon by improving energy efficiency and generating renewable energy. Low carbon retrofit measures can help to improve health and well-being by making the property warmer in winter and cooler in summer, improving indoor air quality through better ventilation and reducing energy bills.

Whilst there is a small cost premium in creating low carbon buildings, simple steps can be taken to achieve this in planning small scale improvements such as extensions. When considering the scope and costs of extending a home, the following opportunities should be considered:

Reduce the need for energy through passive design

The orientation and massing of the building and its elevations should be optimised to allow solar gain and prevent significant overshadowing in winter. Ensure the building form and thermal envelope is as simple and compact as possible to reduce the exposed surface area of the building for heat loss. New build and retrofit projects should be designed to be highly insulated with an airtight building fabric.

As excessive glazing is the main cause of overheating in the summer and heat loss in the winter, window design should be based on orientation, daylight and summer comfort, and should work in tandem with other design factors like proportion and elevational composition. The recommended glazing to wall ratios for external façades are:

- north facing façades 10-15%
- east and west facing façades 10-20%
- south facing façades 20-30%

Efficient energy use and ventilation

Effective ventilation is vital for ensuring good indoor air quality, to mitigate heat build-up and to remove excess moisture. Ideally homes should include background mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) to maintain good air quality and reduce heat loss. Residents can still open windows to provide bursts of fresh air but it is not strictly necessary where MVHR has been installed. Please refer to The West Oxfordshire Net Zero Carbon Toolkit for more detail, links are provided in the resource section on page 45.

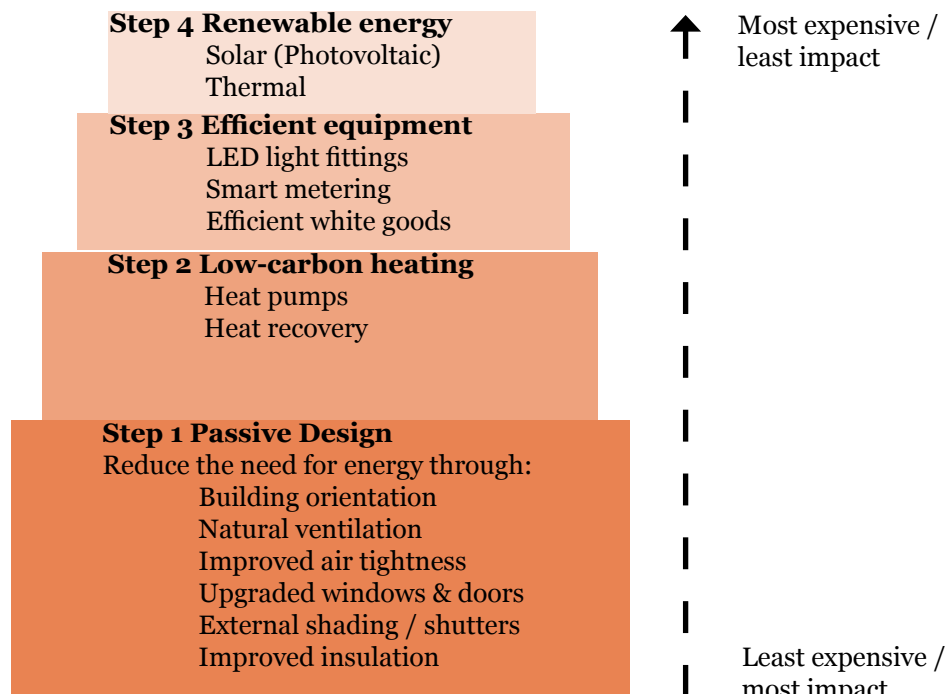
For retrofit projects existing windows should be replaced with double or triple glazed windows. Fossil fuel heating should be upgraded with a low carbon alternative and a heat recovery system should be installed. External shading and opening windows should be considered to reduce overheating.



Generate renewable energy

The West Oxfordshire Net Zero Carbon Toolkit notes that Solar PV panels are a simple, mature and reliable renewable energy technology. The majority of new homes have sufficient space on site to generate as much energy as they need on an annual basis. They are a particularly good match for heat pumps, where much of the solar electricity can be used to provide heating and hot water. Solar panels are typically installed on south or east-west facing unshaded roofs that face the sun for much of the day.

The diagram below shows the steps householders can take starting with the least expensive, most effective energy saving methods.



Steps to Low Carbon Building
Adapted from The Energy Pyramid
LBC, 2021

5.1.2 Improvements to historic and traditional buildings

Although low carbon retrofit of historic buildings and buildings in the Conservation Area is challenging, householders are encouraged to undertake measures to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions as part of a considered approach to the conservation, maintenance and repair of their buildings.

Historic England is one of the supporting organisations that make up the Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance (STBA), a forum for sustaining and improving traditionally constructed buildings. The STBA's website offers guidance on:

- Planning Responsible Retrofit of Traditional Buildings
- The Responsible Retrofit Guidance Wheel
- What is Whole House Retrofit?

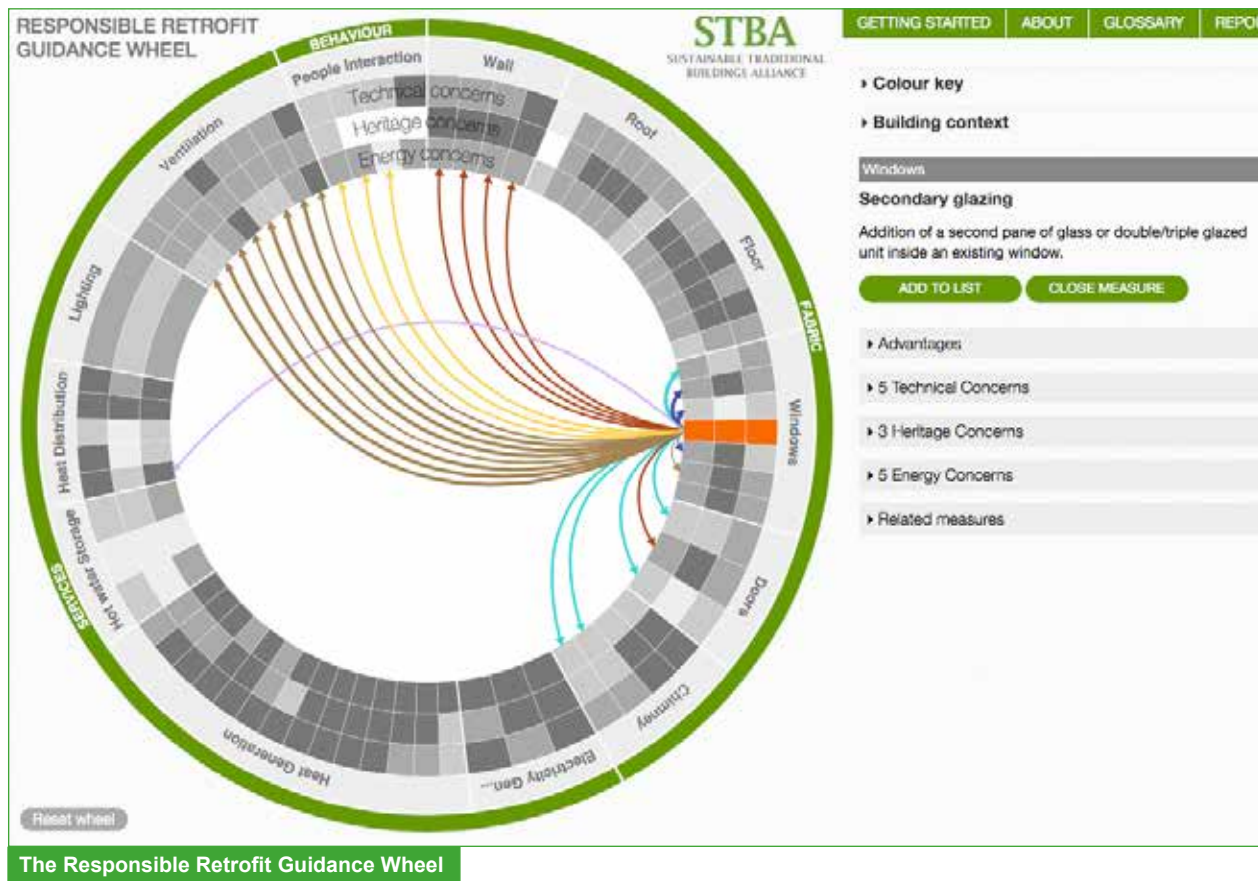
The guidance is useful for owners of traditional buildings (usually built before 1919) and likely to have solid walls who wish to improve the energy and environmental performance of their building. The guide highlights the risks involved when seeking to retrofit traditional buildings for the purpose of enhancing the environmental performance of a building including: risks to building fabric, human health and heritage value. The guide stresses the importance of taking a whole building approach to avoid pitfalls and the risks summarised above. The whole building approach is a joined-up process focusing on achieving benefits to energy and the environment, heritage and community as well as the building health.

The Responsible Retrofit Guidance Wheel was funded by the Department of Energy, Security & Net Zero. The guidance wheel is a free to use online interactive tool to enable informed decision-making about retrofit strategies. Users can set the context for the building concerned and select the desired retrofit measures. It lets users look at how over 50 measures interact, and the risks to consider before installing.

🔍 Resources

Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance

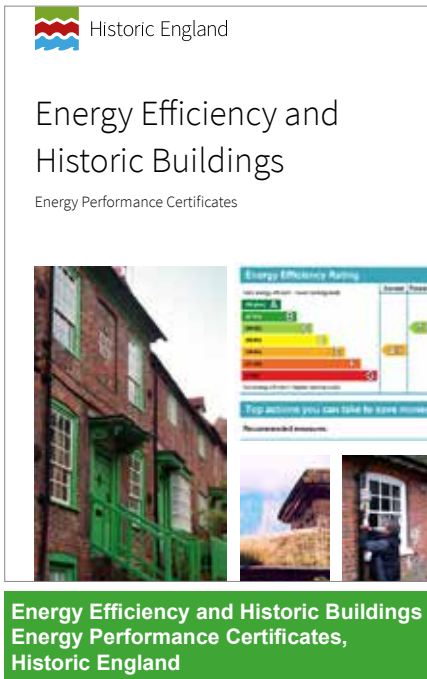
<https://responsible-retrofit.org/>



Historic England

Historic England provides free to download publications that include a suite of technical advice and guidance on improving the energy efficiency of historic buildings. The guidance includes a whole building approach to improving energy efficiency, advice on statutory requirements and guidance on installing energy efficiency measures.

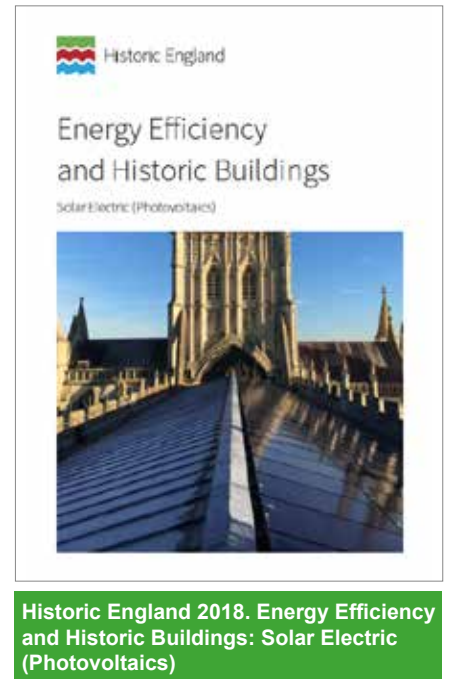
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/planning-responsible-retrofit-of-traditional-buildings>



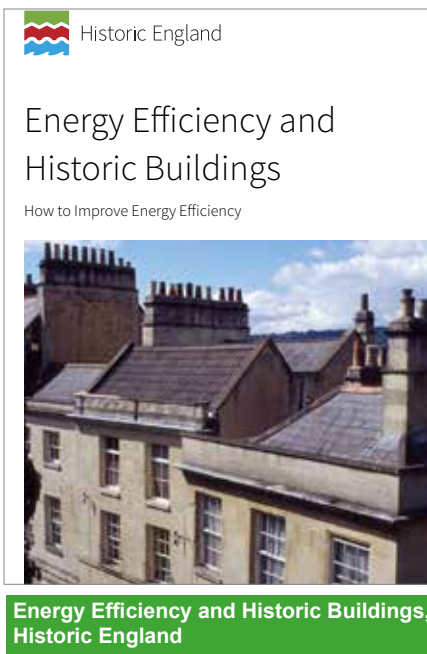
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eehb-energy-performance-certificates/>



<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/energy-efficiency-and-historic-buildings/>



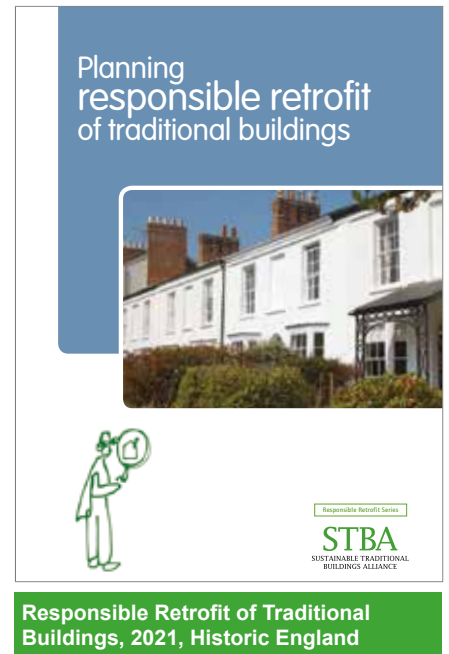
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eehb-solar-electric/heag173-eehb-solar-electric-photovoltaics/>



<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/energy-efficiency-historic-buildings-pt1/>



<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/energy-efficiency-and-traditional-homes-advice-note-14/>



<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eehb-solar-electric/heag173-eehb-solar-electric-photovoltaics/>

5.1.3 New homes

Net Zero carbon homes are not only good for the planet; they will also be much cheaper to run than standard new build homes. This is due to the combined effects of a lower energy demand alongside greater flexibility of energy use during the day and of solar electricity generation and consumption. Challenges to the delivery of low carbon buildings include initial capital cost, identification of opportunities, and the need for clear project planning that sets clear targets for energy use. Upfront costs should be balanced against the lower operating and long term costs low carbon homes offer.

All new development should achieve high levels of environmental performance, and achieve the minimum standards required by building regulations. But new development is encouraged where possible to exceed these standards. New homes that do not commit to deliver high levels of environmental performance when measured against recognised standards should be discouraged.

The recently revised Building Regulations aim to reduce carbon emissions and promote higher standards of sustainable design in advance of the planned Future Homes Standard, which is scheduled for 2025. Changes to Approved Documents Part L (Conservation of fuel and power), Part F and the new Part O for overheating in homes seek to reduce emissions from new homes by around 30%. Part L is a measure of energy efficiency, i.e. how improved is a building over a standardised (“notional”) building and as there are no targets within the standard this Design Guide adopts the following performance targets as set out in the LETI Climate Guide (see page 45).

Applicants are encouraged to adopt the following operational targets for retrofit and new homes. These are in line with the West Oxfordshire Net Zero Carbon Toolkit and the LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide below:

	New Housing	Retrofit Housing
% Reduction in CO2 emissions	>80%	
Energy-use and efficient heating	35 kWh/m2/yr for homes 50 kWh/m2/yr for commercial	
Space heating demand	15 kWh/m2/yr	50 kWh/m2/yr
Electricity generation intensity	120 kWh/m2 fp/yr	120 kWh/m2 fp/yr
Embodied carbon* target	500 kgCO2/m2	-
Overheating compliance	TM59/TM52	
U-values (Thermal efficiency)	0.15 - 0.08 W/m2.K (0.8 windows W/m2.K)	
Wall/roof/floor thickness	600/450 mm-1,100 mm/200 mm	
Form factor**	<1.5	
% window to wall areas	LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide	

The Design Guide supports development proposals that:

- Set out to achieve Passivhaus certification***
- Comply with AECB good water standard. The emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk JLP highlights the need to introduce measures that address water scarcity and water efficiency is a key aspect of addressing this.
- Adhere to the principles of the Building Research Establishment(BRE) site layout planing for daylight and sunlight a guide to good practice’
- Comply with CIBSE TM59 guidance on overheating risk

Notes (note these figures may be revised over the life of this document):

* Embodied carbon is the total carbon emissions associated with the extraction, processing, transport, construction maintenance and demolition of a building at the end of its life.

** The Heat Loss Form Factor is effectively the ratio of surface area that can lose heat (the thermal envelope) to the floor area that gets heated and is a useful measure of the compactness of a building.

*** Passivhaus is a standard for the design and construction of comfortable, highly energy efficient buildings with set performance targets. It is the first step towards achieving a net zero operational carbon building.



Resources

This sustainable homes guidance is informed by best practice including;

The West Oxfordshire Net Zero Carbon Toolkit, a practical and easy-to-navigate guide on how to new build and retrofit homes

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/netzerocarbontoolkit>

The Leti Retrofit Guide and Climate Emergency Design Guide

The Leti Retrofit Guide <https://www.leti.london>

LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide <https://www.leti.london/cedg>

The EnerPHit Retrofit Plan

The EnerPHit Retrofit Plan provides a detailed methodology for phased improvements made over time, making the process more affordable.

https://passipedia.org/planning/refurbishment_with_passive_house_components/overall_retrofit_plan_for_step-by-step_retrofits_to_enerphit_standard

AECN Water Standard

<https://aecb.net/aecb-water-standard/>

A simple guide to the changes to Building Regulations

<https://www.buildenergy.co.uk/blog/8-things-to-know-about-the-new-building-regulations/>

An introduction to the future buildings standard

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-buildings-standard>

Part L Building Regulations

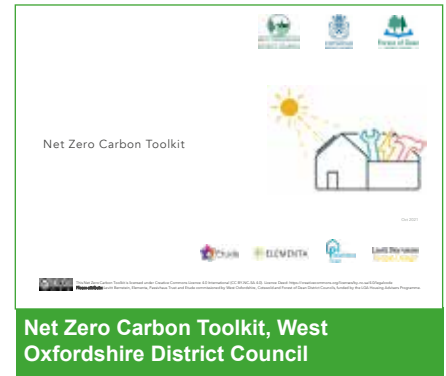
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conservation-of-fuel-and-power-approved-document-1>

Association for Environmentally Conscious Building

<https://aecb.net>

Low Carbon Homes

<https://lowcarbonhomes.uk>



Best Practice

Larchwood, Polstead Heath

The house is designed with 2 parallel wings. The south wing contains the living rooms and bedrooms and benefits from passive solar gain and the north wing contains bathrooms, utility, pantry and the stairs. Small windows face north to limit heat loss. The house is constructed using hemp and lime with larch cladding on the south wing and lime render on the north wing. There is a wood pellet stove for hot water and background heating and a log stove augments heating in the winter. Solar water panels and MVHR complete the green package.

Awards

RIBA Suffolk Design Award 2014

<https://www.modece.com/larchwood>



Low carbon homes, Polstead
Modece Architects

5.1.4 Solar panels

As noted previously, there is an interest in how the building fabric of existing and historic buildings can be upgraded to reduce carbon use. This includes the considered use of discrete solar panels within the Conservation Area and secondary glazing in listed buildings for good thermal management. All new development outside the Conservation Area is encouraged to incorporate solar panels, heat pumps and exemplary insulation.

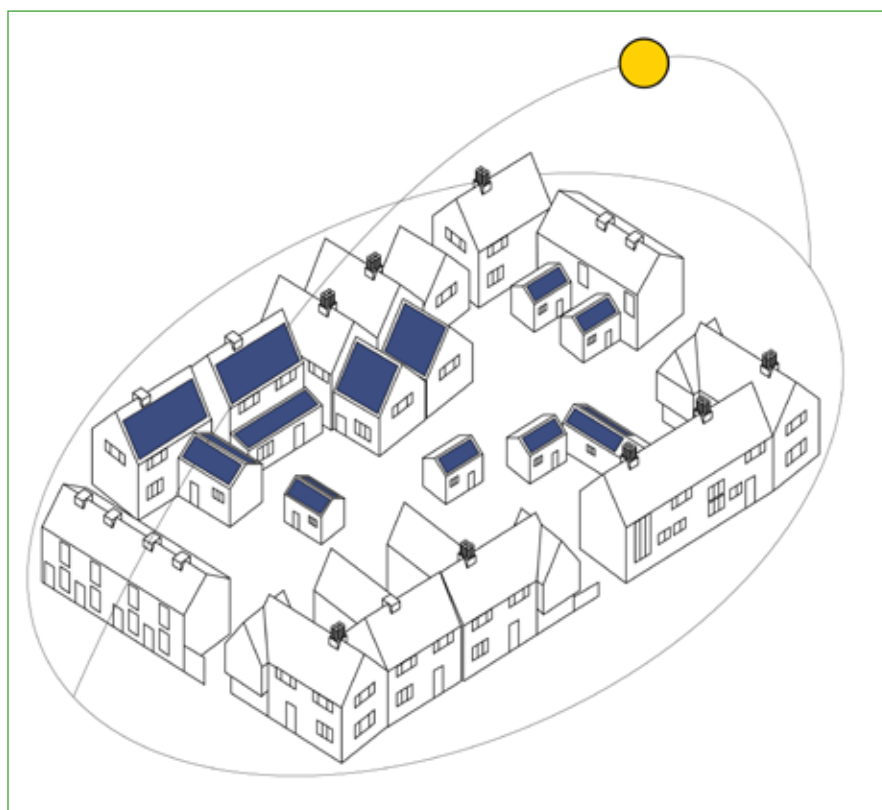
Solar panels may be located within the historic village where they do not provide an adverse visual impact on the setting of the Conservation Area. In practice this means that panels should not be located where they can be viewed from the street.

Those considering improvement proposals should familiarise themselves with English Heritage guidance which notes that:

- The colour of the photovoltaic panels (PV) panel, reflectance, and finish should be chosen to complement the colour of the existing roof covering. PV panels tend to be of a dark blue or black colour although there are different finishes and tones available.
- Careful selection and design of the colour, contrast, framing, size and symmetry of PV panels can reduce the visual impact.
- Panels arranged symmetrically and evenly spaced between chimneys and eaves tend to look better.



Solar PV panels, Lavenham



Solar panels arranged to minimise visual impact



A solar PV array integrated into the slate roof. Image © Historic England



A domestic building with the existing roof covering replaced by PV slate tiles. Image © Historic England



Resources

English Heritage

English Heritage has published a paper on energy efficiency for historic buildings. The guidance covers the issues associated with installing solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on a historic building or on the land of a historic site. It describes the different options available and how they work. Advice is also provided on how to minimise the potential damage to the fabric and the visual impact of a renewable installation on the character and appearance of the building or site.

The Campaign to Protect Rural England

The Campaign to Protect Rural England has produced design guidance in relation to solar PV on buildings encouraging an approach that is sympathetic to the visual appearance of the building and the local area from which it can be seen.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eehb-solar-electric/heag173-eehb-solar-electric-photovoltaics/>

Cambridge University

Research by Cambridge University suggests that installing solar panels could help historic buildings beat the rising costs of energy. Might St Peter and St Paul's Church benefit from generating its own renewable energy?

<https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/historic-buildings-could-use-solar-panels-to-protect-from-rising-energy-costs>



Roof-mounted photovoltaic installation on Gloucester Cathedral's south nave. Image © St Anns Gate Architects



Best Practice

Green Cottage, Birdbrook

A new sustainable house constructed to Passivhaus standards. This house is designed to be self-sufficient with a wind turbine, log burning stove and cooker powered by fuel grown on site, rainwater collection for toilets and washing, reed-beds for sewage treatment and earth pipes for natural ventilation. The house is built from timber with recycled paper insulation and uses eco-friendly paints to reduce emissions. Small windows and service rooms on the north side limit heat loss from the main living spaces. The principles of ecological building are to design the building for orientation to use solar gain, then maximise insulation and airtightness to reduce energy requirements, only then will you need a heat source which will be much reduced, or possibly not necessary at all.

RIBA East Building of the Year 2011

<https://www.modece.com/green-cottage>



Low carbon home Birdbrook, Suffolk Modece Architects

5.1.5 Flood risk

The River Brett corridor, including Lavenham Brook, is subject to periodic flooding, the frequency of which is likely to increase with frequency and intensity of rainfall events due to climate change. Suffolk County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority and a statutory consultee for surface water drainage proposals for major developments. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that all major development incorporates Sustainable Drainage Systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate.

The definition of major development is:

- The number of dwellings to be provided is 10 or more, or the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more (and it is not known if 10 or more dwellings are to be provided).
- The provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more.
- Development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.
- Any minor applications in areas at risk of surface water flooding.

5.1.6 Archaeology

Lavenham's historic core is archaeologically sensitive and applicants of infill development proposals must budget and plan for undertaking an archaeological assessment. Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service routinely advises that there should be early consultation of the Historic Environment Record and assessment of the archaeological potential of proposed sites at an appropriate stage in the design of new developments, in order that the requirements of the NPPF and Babergh Local Plan policies are met.

5.1.7 Professional advice

Design guidance alone cannot guarantee good design. That comes about through the analysis of, and response to surrounding context and constraints. Applicants should engage planning and design professionals to advise on the brief, design, planning and construction of the project. The early appointment of an energy consultant with a specialism in Passivhaus or ultra low energy design, as well as early consideration of embodied carbon, is also recommended.

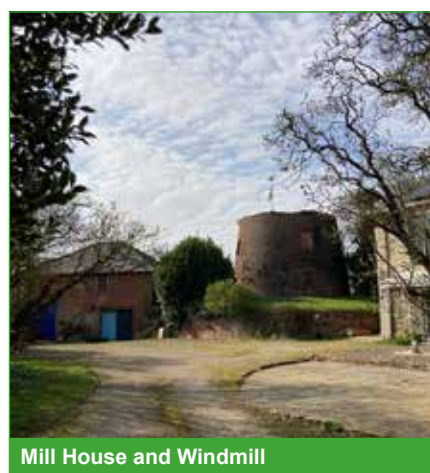
5.1.8 Design review

Design review helps to improve the quality of the built environment. Design review provides independent design advice from a Panel of multi-disciplinary professionals including architects, landscape architects, planners and engineers. Typically design review occurs as part of the pre-application discussions between the developer and the local authority and can be funded through a Planning Performance Agreement. The advice helps to inform the planning process at an early stage and gives greater confidence to decision makers to support innovative, high-quality design.

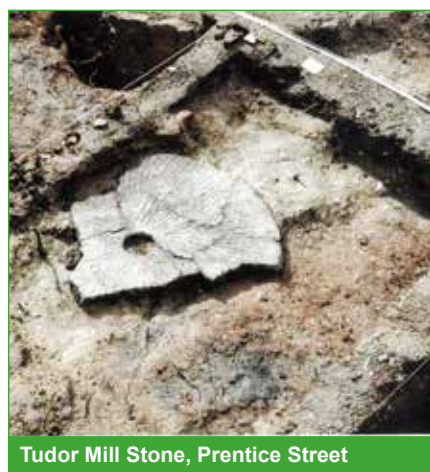
<https://www.ribasuffolk.com/suffolk-design-review-panel>



Flooding in Lower Road, Lavenham



Mill House and Windmill



Tudor Mill Stone, Prentice Street



Marmalade Lane Co-housing, Cambridge

Marmalade Lane comprises 42 homes and is the first developer led co-housing scheme in Cambridge. The shared spaces and communal facilities are designed to foster community spirit and sustainable living. These include extensive shared gardens as the focal space of the community, with areas for growing food, play, socialising and quiet contemplation, and a flexible ‘common house’ with a play room, guest bedrooms, laundry facilities, meeting rooms, and a large hall and kitchen for shared meals and parties.

The scheme is designed to exceptionally high environmental standards, using passive design principles and ensures exceptional thermal efficiency and airtightness (and thus low energy bills for residents) and consistently high build quality. The pre-fabricated timber panel system comprises structural timber, plasterboard, triple-glazed composite aluminium and timber windows and electrical ducting, which are all factory-fitted, making for rapid construction on site, with a single house being able to be erected in two days. Mechanical ventilation and heat recovery (MVHR) systems in all homes ensure a comfortable internal environment, and air source-heat pumps provide low carbon electricity. *Mole Architects*

<https://www.molearchitects.co.uk>



Image: Mole Architects

Peek Close, Lavenham

The site was a redundant former Suffolk County Council (SCC) Highways maintenance depot within the parish boundary. The Lavenham Community Land Trust partnered with Hastoe Housing Association Ltd. Parsons & Whittley architects worked up a design which gained full planning permission in January 2017. The scheme provides 18 dwellings for people with a local connection - twelve affordable homes, four shared ownership homes, and two starter homes. From the outset the approach was to deliver homes that were affordable to occupy and run.

A principal element of the brief was to construct the houses to a high sustainability standard, to meet AECB Silver standard. This standard obliges homes to be constructed to have very low energy requirements, and is generally achieved through the use of very high levels of insulation and air tightness, with controlled mechanical ventilation and heat recovery systems to reduce the occupier’s reliance on energy resources. In 2018 it won Babergh Community Project of the Year Award.



Peek Close, Parsons & Whittley architects



Checklist 1: Sustainable homes

The National Design Guide notes that sustainable places include a mix of uses that support everyday activities, including live, work and play. Well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development can reinforce existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use.

The National Design Guide also notes that a well designed place has homes and buildings that are functional, healthy and sustainable. Well-designed places and buildings conserve natural resources including land, water, energy and materials. Their design responds to the impacts of climate change by being energy efficient and minimising carbon emissions to meet net zero by 2050.

- Is the proposal in line with planning policy (as per the adopted Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan) and the guidance set out in this document?*
- Is the development easily accessible to Lavenham's shops and community facilities by welcoming walking and cycling routes?*
- Has the applicant appointed professional and experienced planning, design and energy advisors?*
- Does the proposal adopt key performance targets for retrofit improvements and new development proposals?*
- Does the proposal follow a stepped approach to delivering zero carbon homes?*
- Does the development seek to reduce the need for energy through passive design approach?*

Does the proposal incorporate low carbon heating?

Does the proposal include renewable energy generation such as Solar PV panels?

Does the development consider flood risk and incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems?

Has the applicant investigated the need for and undertaken archaeological assessment?



Resources

Applicants are encouraged to seek Pre-application advice from the planning authority on flooding and drainage issues

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/guidance-on-development-and-flood-risk/>

Babergh and Mid Suffolk validation list for planning applications

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/planning/development-management/apply-for-planning-permission/national-and-local-validation-requirements/>

Maps created by the Environment Agency can help determine whether a site may be at risk of surface water flooding

<https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/postcode>

Open source flood data is available from getthedata.com

<https://www.getthedata.com/flood-map/lavenham> and Babergh

Mid Suffolk's webdata mapping which includes a wide variety of data including planning and environmental information

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/planning/pre-application-advice/free-online-planning-guidance/interactive-mapping-service/>

Building Research Establishment(BRE) Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice

<https://www.brebookshop.com/details.jsp?id=326792>

The following professional institutes can connect people with local practices:

The Royal Institute of British Architects

See www.architecture.com/find-an-architect

The Landscape Institute

<https://my.landscapeinstitute.org/directory>

The Royal Town Planning Institute

<https://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-advice/>

RIBA Suffolk offers a design review service

<https://www.ribasuffolk.com/suffolk-design-review-panel>

5.2 Design guidance

Section 5.2 provides design guidance under each of the following sustainable design principles to which improvement and development proposals should adhere: Respect Lavenham's built heritage, Strengthen Lavenham's landscape character, and Create healthy streets and spaces. Checklist questions are provided to ensure the guidance is considered when improvement and development proposals are being prepared and reviewed.

Respect Lavenham's built heritage

5.2.1 Layout, height and massing

This guide does not seek to create replicas of Lavenham's historic building stock, but rather to employ the materials and craftsmanship inherent in those buildings to inform all improvement and infill proposals, and any new home proposals in the village. All proposals should respond to Lavenham's built fabric and include a well considered architectural strategy that responds to the village's cherished architectural vernacular. Proposals should not seek to stand out as statement buildings that are seen as being separate from the village, but rather help provide a composite picture of the village where the historic and modern work together in harmony.

Proposals should respond to context and be laid out in a manner that integrates the proposal into the village and the surrounding landscape through a considered design that responds to sensitive edges and views.

Lavenham's built environment displays strong rooflines as a consequence of its relation to the prevailing slopes, and intended massing of proposals should reflect this.

Proposals should protect and enhance the historic character of streets and open spaces, and should respect the prevailing building height and scale, plot size and building line.

Where new streets are proposed they should respond to local topography and be laid out in gentle curves to provide variety and reveal serial views of the surrounding development and the wider village and countryside. New streets should reflect those streets found nearby and ensure that the proportion of width of spaces to height of buildings ratio should not exceed 2.5 to 1. For amenity and public realm spaces this ratio should not exceed 4 to 1.

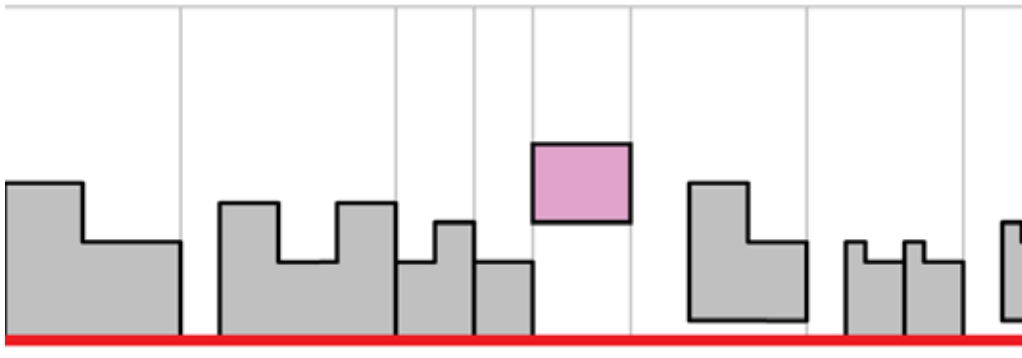
Public rights of way should be provided as part of any development to connect to existing routes and enhance the existing network of routes.

'The curving street fronts and stepped roof lines produce a sense of enclosure which is domestic in scale and harmonious to the eye.'

Lavenham Village Design Statement, 2002



High Street



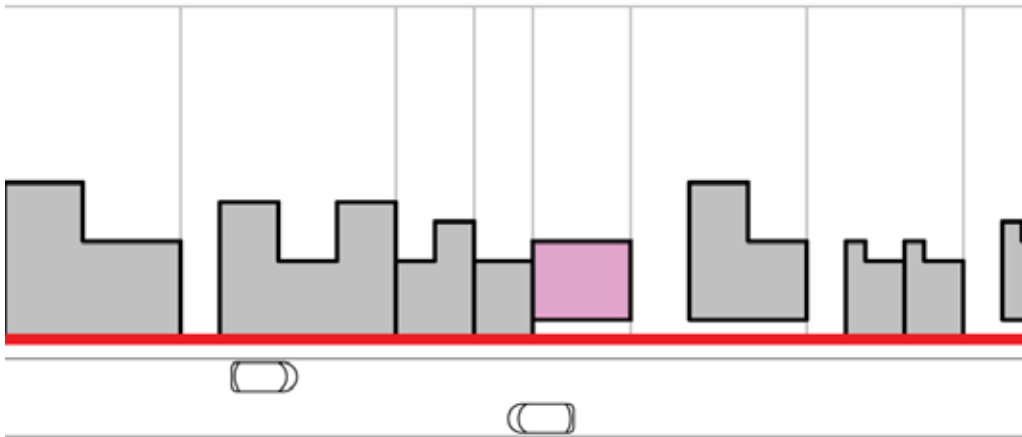
Proposed building (pink)

Existing buildings (grey)

Common building line

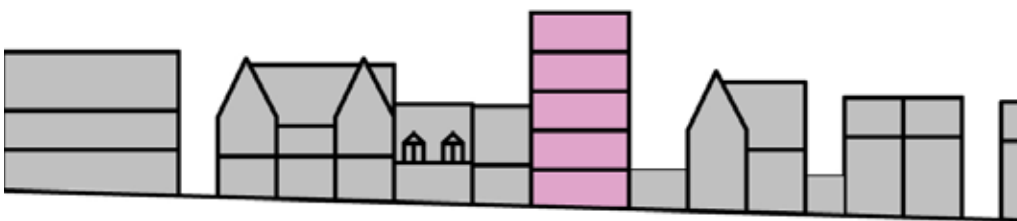
Highway

Plan nts

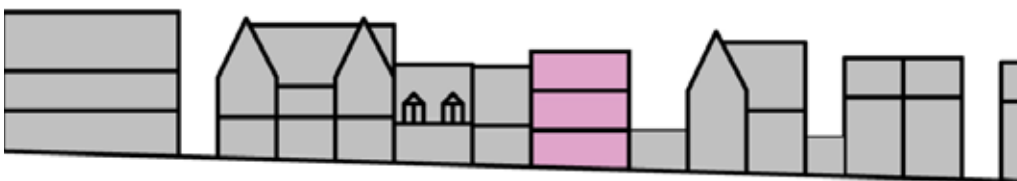


Buildings should be placed towards the front of the plot with minimum set backs.

Plan nts



Section nts



Proposals should respect the prevailing height and scale of Lavenham's historic townscape.

Section nts

5.2.2 House types

Standard generic house types which do not enhance the character or respond to the architectural vernacular of the village should be avoided. New homes should be designed to respect traditional house forms found in Lavenham.

Traditional Suffolk House types are outlined in the Suffolk Design Guide and shown here for information.

Groups of identical house types should be avoided. A variety of housing types and sizes should be provided for larger developments of more than 5 dwellings and these should include a mix of short terraces, semi-detached and detached house types.

New homes should be designed to provide a varied and interesting roofscape both individually and where they form part of a larger development.

All homes should be arranged to positively enclose generous open spaces that are designed to offer a distinctive identity using high quality materials and green infrastructure.

New individual, or semi-detached homes should not be over-scaled for their plot and should respect the scale of neighbouring development. New homes should provide generous open space to accommodate views and connections to the surrounding neighbourhood and the wider landscape.

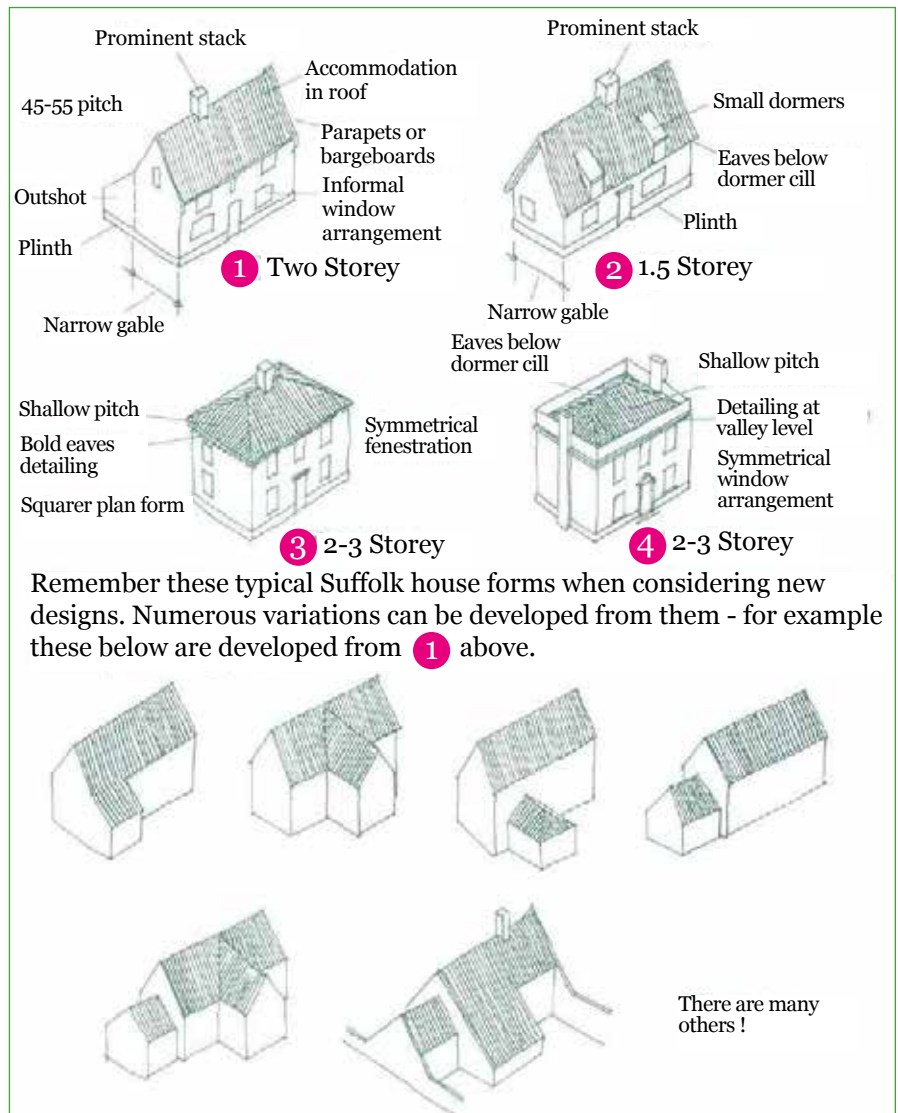


Image and text: Suffolk Design Guide



A large house set in spacious grounds can look attractive, but the same house on a small plot and repeated over and over will look progressively less attractive.

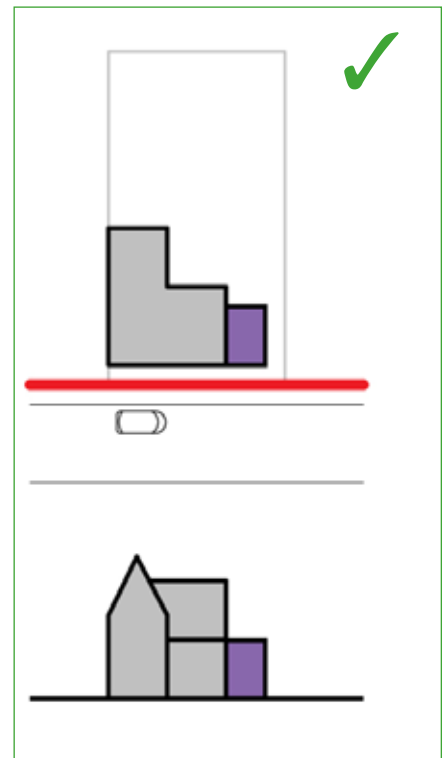
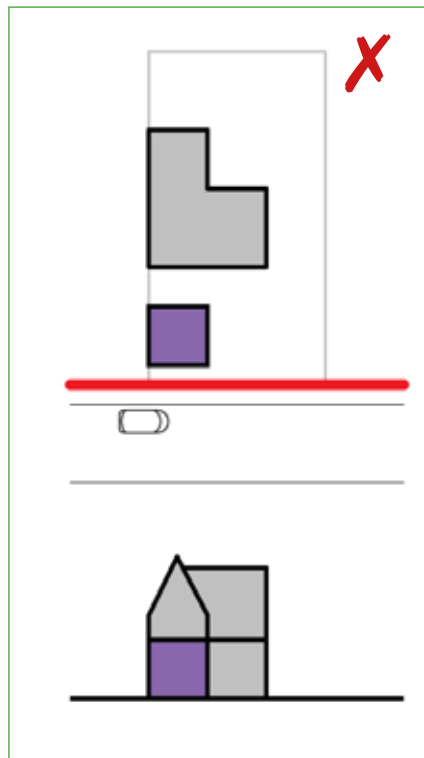
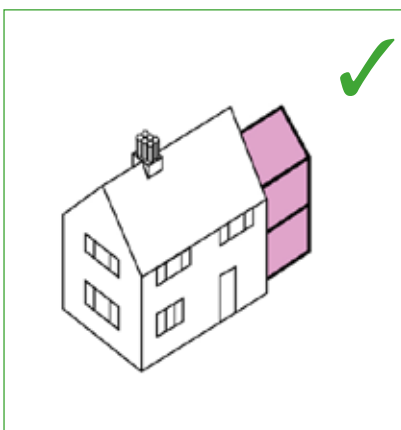
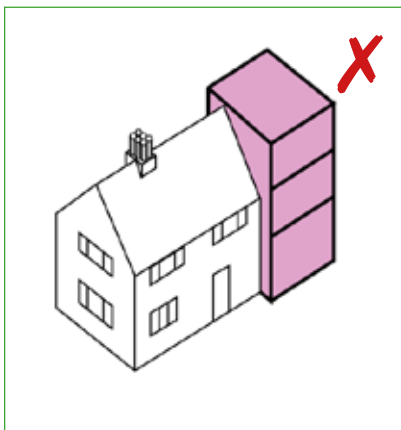
Suffolk Design Guide



Image: Suffolk Design Guide

Where existing homes are being extended care must be taken to ensure the home is not over-scaled in relation to its plot and neighbouring buildings.

Extensions should be designed to be subordinate to the existing building in scale and proportion and be harmonious in detailing and material choice.



‘Any new development dwelling or extension must not only be successful within its own plot, but also in relationship with its neighbouring properties and with the prevailing character and layout of that part of the village.’

Lavenham Village Design Statement

The Suffolk Design Guide notes that the way buildings are grouped and the way they relate to each other is one of the most powerful influences on how we react to the built environment. Successful buildings are laid out in a manner that responds to topography and is efficient in the use of space. In practice this means that buildings should typically be placed towards the front of the plot with minimum set backs and external spaces should be laid out with clear definition of what is public space and what is private space for the use of the resident. Development proposals should respond to and seek to be harmonious with neighbouring buildings and respect the common building line.

Buildings within Lavenham's historic built up area are typically arranged to enclose and overlook streets and public spaces, whereas more recent development on the periphery of the built up area tends towards more inward looking suburban cul-de-sac layouts which detract from the historic character of the village.

Where development is proposed on the periphery of the village this form of a development should be avoided. Where infill development is proposed outside of the conservation area it should be limited to a small number of properties and laid out around an accessible, green public open space planted with trees.

Development should seek to provide public access to the surrounding countryside via a connected network of public footpaths and be arranged in a manner that allows views of the countryside. Substantial structural buffer planting will be required to reduce the visual impact of the development on the village's heritage setting and strengthen existing hedgerows and wildlife corridors.

Existing landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and water courses should be retained, protected and incorporated within the proposal.



View along level access route to cluster of homes arranged around a shared space.



Deacons Close. Mature trees and shrubs within open space.

“We need to reproduce the charm of existing settlements in a new way. We must create a variety of spaces and not allow the car and road to dominate...we want new designs with vigour, clarity and authenticity, which also respect local building traditions, materials and details.”

Suffolk Design Guide



Best Practice



Image: Hoare Ridge + Morris Architects

Housing, Risby, Suffolk

These 18 houses were built on the site of redundant outbuildings, and includes affordable housing. The buildings are generally restrained in character and use a coherent palette of good quality local materials, creating interest through the configuration of the houses and public spaces.

A generous green square addresses the street and helps to connect the new development to the village. Boundaries are defined by the buildings themselves and by brick and flint walls and native hedges.

Hoare Ridge + Morris Architects

<https://hrma.co.uk>

5.2.3 External storage

Adequate storage space for bins and recycling, as well as vehicles and cycles should be considered early in the design process and form part of the architectural design. External waste storage should be accessible from the street and integrated into the building design and not detract from the building elevations or the street scene.

5.2.4 Parking

Sufficient space for safe and attractive parking should be provided that does not dominate the design. Where parking is provided on-plot it should be arranged in a manner that does not dominate the view of the building. Large areas of hard standing should be avoided and parking areas should include green infrastructure and sustainable drainage. Where allocated residential parking is not provided on-plot it should be built to Secured by Design standards and located where it is overlooked from adjacent properties.

Garages should be set back behind building line.

Isolated parking courts should be avoided.

All new development should include EV charging points and cycle storage.

5.2.5 Daylight and sunlight

All development proposals should adhere to the principles of the Building Research Establishment (BRE) 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice'. All new development should be orientated to:

- Maximise daylight and sun-lighting outlook and views, and
- Respect the privacy of existing homes and rear gardens and avoid overlooking.

Q Best Practice

Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge

Built on the former Clay Farm site, Abode at Great Kneighton is a key part of a major new housing and mixed-use development in South Cambridge. The design consists of a hierarchy of spaces and housing types to suit the transition from urban to rural edge. *Proctor and Matthews Architects*

<https://www.proctorandmatthews.com>



In this Morris & Company mews house in Sevenoaks waste storage integrated into the building frontage.



Image: Proctor and Matthews Architects

5.2.6 Sustainable drainage

Rain gardens deliver the four principles of sustainable drainage in that they, reduce the quantity of surface water run off, improve water quality, increase biodiversity and public amenity.

All new development should actively manage flood risk and minimise surface water run-off, including through the use of sustainable drainage systems and flood resilient design.

In addition all new development should deliver biodiversity improvements and protect, maintain and enhance existing green infrastructure.



The 4 pillars of SuDS



Best Practice



Image: Bell Phillips Architects

St Chad's Tilbury, Thurrock

Award winning social housing for Thurrock Council, Bell Phillips Architects new housing that mixes social rented, private sale and shared ownership in 'tenure blind' designs.

Bell Phillips Architects

Civic Trust Awards 2019

<https://www.bellphillips.com>

5.2.7 Elevations

Whilst medieval building construction emphasises the horizontal, the Suffolk Preservation Society notes that traditional Victorian and Georgian façades were typically designed to emphasise the vertical aspect of the building elevations. Traditional Suffolk architecture is simple, even ‘austere’ and building aesthetic relies on elegant proportion rather than ornamental features. Whilst some historic buildings in Lavenham have retained original pargetting, it is not typical.

Designers should take account of the scale of the building elevations, floor to ceiling heights, roof pitch and heights and scale and location of openings such as windows and doors to create a well proportioned façades. This can be achieved without resorting to pastiche.

Development should adopt a simple architectural treatment that presents simple frontages with a sense of rhythm and proportion.

Corner buildings perform a more public role in helping with legibility and may be designed with more variety in scale and articulation in elevations.

Bolt-on details that do not express the internal layout and structure of the building should be avoided.

Whilst simple façades with regular patterns of openings are to be recommended in most cases, as the Suffolk Design Guide notes, in exception a skilled designer can achieve satisfactory results with a less regular pattern.

Designers should seek a solid to void (i.e. windows and doors) ratio not in excess of 1/3 of the total wall area.

Where dormer windows are proposed they should not be over bearing and kept small.

Designers should provide depth within the proposed elevations. The measured use of projecting bay windows, windows and door reveals and generous projecting eaves provide depth of relief through shadow which may also be highlighted through use of contrasting materials.

Where 2 or more buildings are proposed the designer should consider a variety of materials.

Colour is an important consideration in the design of housing, and designers should develop a coherent colour palette based on traditional colour ranges found in Lavenham and Suffolk. These include: orange / red, cream / white and grey / black. In general roof materials of red / orange clay pantiles or black / grey slates should be selected that are darker than walls which should be more neutral in colour, brick and render.

Plinths, typically in brick, or painted darker to contrast with the lighter elevations serve to visually ground the building and highlight subtle changes in topography.

‘Above all simplicity. Suffolk’s traditional houses rely on their superb proportions to give them their wonderful sense of dignity and innate comfort’

Suffolk Preservation Society



The Priory, an historic asset with generous eaves, decorative barge boards and pargetting.



Well detailed cat-slide windows.



Striking conversion of weather board and brick barn to contemporary workspace.



Poorly proportioned elevations with overbearing curved roof line



Church Street, a simple elegant composition. Generous eaves, projecting bay windows and first floor gable with projecting jetty provides variety and depth to the elevation. comprising a restrained palette of rendered walls and clay plantiles. The walls are neutral in colour in contrast to the dark plinth and roof, timber window and door openings are painted in a complementary pale green.




Bolton Street, unusual curved brick elevation and roof form provide variety and help turn the corner.



> Victorian terraces regular, well proportioned brick façades. Door and window openings with simple reveals and stone lintels and cills provide shadow depth which is emphasised through generous projecting eaves. High Street terrace.

< The simple elevations of these homes display with a pleasing variety of complementary materials. Brick façade with contrasting pale opening surrounds and projecting horizontal band contrast with a simple off-white painted render.



 Best Practice



Shilling Street, Lavenham



Side elevation

< Contemporary family home in Shilling Street with white painted brickwork and contrasting dark plinth detail and first floor weather boarding.

Architect Adrian Palmer
Awards
Civic Trust Design Award

v Meadow Court development for Babergh District Council provides 12 one-bedroom apartments.
BCR Infinity Architects
<https://www.bcr-infinityarchitects.co.uk>



Meadow Court, Lavenham

5.2.8 Roof line and pitch

One of the key aspects of Lavenham's character is the variety in its roofscape created over a long period of incremental growth where small scale extensions to original buildings have resulted in a pleasing informal layering of roof pitch and layout.

Designers should respond to this picturesque characteristic by paying careful attention to the grouping and form of buildings, varying roof pitches, providing well considered eaves and roof details and choice of materials.



Social housing, Brent Eleigh Road. These modern homes reflect Lavenham's architectural vernacular. They provide a consistent building line and varied roofscape.

*Roofs should be...
'simple brick stack
set at ridge or
gable no room for
stone American
'ranch' or other
eclectic variants'*

Lavenham Past + Present + Future



Water Street. Whilst not typical this substantial, well detailed chimney stack provides a point of orientation at the junction.



Gabled side elevations include window openings allowing daylight into the building and providing residents with views out over the village.



Primary School: a varied roofscape.



Shilling Street: Rich in variety and detail.



An attractive side gable with openings.

‘one of the most important characteristic of mediaeval Suffolk houses; the depth of the roof compared to the elevation is often more than 50%’

Suffolk Preservation Society



The Priory, Lavenham



Best Practice

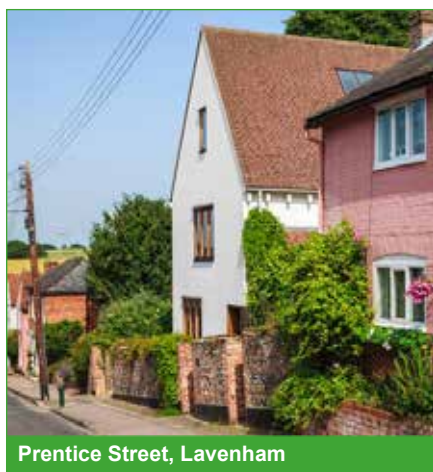


Hill House, Hintlesham. Image: wk-architects

Hill House, Hintlesham

Hill House is a new dwelling overlooking the valley of Flowton Brook built in a modern farmhouse style which expresses the Suffolk vernacular. *wk-architects*

<https://www.wk-architects.co.uk>



Prentice Street, Lavenham



Rear elevation

Prentice Street, Lavenham

This new-build 200 sqm timber framed house is situated in the heart of Lavenham. All the neighbouring buildings are listed. Located behind an existing brick and flint wall, the form of the house, with its steeply pitched roof, is a version of the local vernacular and continues a rhythm of cascading gables when viewed from the street. The street elevation using a simple language of solid oak casements and lime-washed render over a red brick plinth. To the rear the composition of central gable, brick lean-to and chimney is more purposeful and modern. *Project Orange Architects*.

<http://www.projectorange.com>

5.2.9 Building materials

A traditional palette of materials and construction techniques have shaped Lavenham's characteristic architectural vernacular. This palette includes traditional timber-framed steep plaited roofs and local soft red or white brick occasionally rendered and painted to blend in with the colour-washed local vernacular. Other less common materials include weather-boarding and flintwork found as infill panelling on brick buildings. Rare examples of thatch roofs are also found in the village.

As noted in the Suffolk Design Guide bricks should be good quality facing bricks. Designers should avoid selecting square cut and machined bricks and coloured mortars.

Yellow / brown bricks and brown roof-tiles are not typical in Lavenham and should be avoided.

Smooth faced rendering is acceptable in contrast with brick and designers should ensure colours reflect the traditional colour palette and natural colour washes found in the village.

All new development should be very well constructed with robust resilient detailing to meet the latest building regulations. But new development is encouraged to go beyond these regulations, in order to mitigate the multiple challenges of the climate crisis. The use of traditional materials and traditional techniques is accepted as being one way of integrating into the setting through paying careful attention to the specific character of Lavenham. Where designers are proposing innovative low carbon and Passivhaus construction, the use of non-traditional materials and techniques is acceptable where the designer can demonstrate the chosen materials do not negatively impact on the setting of the conservation area, nearby listed buildings, or the setting of the village. This Guide encourages architecture that seeks to offer exemplary design solutions.

Patterns for Suffolk Buildings - A Simple Design Guide by The Suffolk Preservation Society and the Conservation Area Appraisal provide more details on materials.

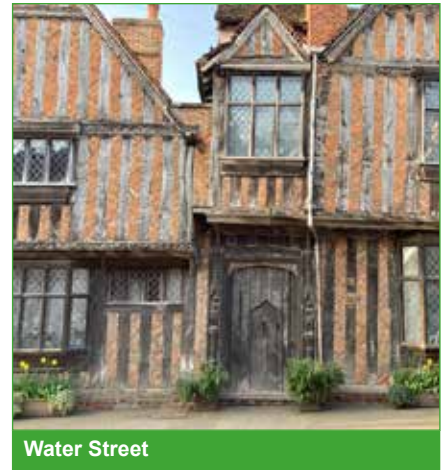




Image: wk-architects

Lavenham Pharmacy

A contemporary single storey extension to provide additional retail space for the Lavenham Pharmacy. The 2007 extension is to a listed building in the heart of historic Lavenham. The considered design uses high level clerestory glazing to provide natural light to the deep plan floor area whilst maximising useable wall space.

Wincer Kievenaar

Awards

SAA Design Award

<https://www.wk-architects.co.uk>



Image: Embrace Architecture

Lavenham Pre-School

This new building by Embrace Architecture for Lavenham Community Council, sits well in the established context of the new Lavenham Village Hall and has many similarities, being designed by the same architect. Internally and externally the materials and details are of high quality and the open and airy spaces are comfortably occupied by the full house of active children.

Embrace Architecture

Awards

RIBA Suffolk Design Award Winner, 2018

<https://www.ribasuffolk.com/suffolk-design-awards>



Lavenham Village Hall

Lavenham Village Hall, 2005

The building, designed by Wincer Kievenaar Architects for Lavenham Community Council, is a modern meeting place providing an accessible and welcome venue for local groups and individuals. It was designed with a high specification to meet the needs of older people and the requirements of the disability discrimination act. It is also designed to attract younger people with specific activities aimed at pre-school and school aged children. The hall provides an environment where people can feel safe, relaxed and welcome. *Wincer Kievenaar*

RIBA East Spirit of Ingenuity Award

<https://www.wk-architects.co.uk>



Edge and cobbled set-back demarcating ownership boundary.

5.2.10 Boundary conditions

Buildings in Lavenham are typically located to the front of the plot and define a common building line and positive boundary with clear demarcation between public and private space. Where there is a threshold between the building and public thoroughfare it is typically hard paved with cobbles retained with a narrow stone or brick trim.

Residents take pride in planting small shrubs and flowers in pots in attractive arrangements, often below windows to provide a modicum of privacy from passers-by. This practice is encouraged where the adjacent footway is no less than 1.8m wide and provides unobstructed access for all including those with buggies and those who are visually and/or mobility impaired.

Stepped entrances typically include simple wrought iron handrails.

Boundary details contribute to the village's character and designers should ensure they are of high quality and demonstrate good attention to detail. Boundary details should reflect construction details and materials which are common to Lavenham.



Edge and cobbled set-back demarcating ownership boundary.

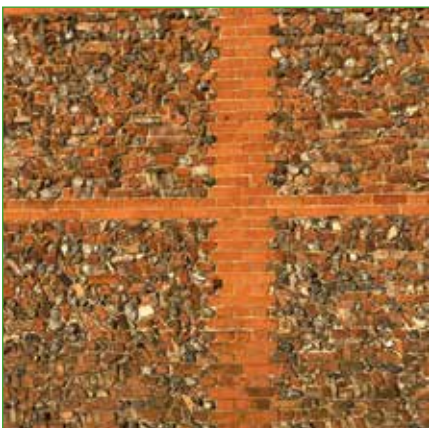
5.2.11 Public realm materials

Public realm materials in the village are simple and durable. Footways and carriageways in the historic core are typically asphalt with rolled aggregate with simple granite stone kerbs and edges. Threshold details are picked out in granite setts and cobble stones are commonly employed to the front of properties to provide demarcation between the footway and the private realm.

Natural stone kerbs and edging details are preferred over concrete which should be avoided.

Public realm materials should be of high quality and reflect existing vernacular.

Designers should provide a high standard of planting design, specification and robust maintenance and management plans to ensure green infrastructure will be climate resilient, achieve healthy growth and be long lived.



Brick and flint walls



Plaster pargeting to facades



Bound gravel surfaces



Low timber fence with hedge.



Low brick wall with planting.



Stepped entrance with elegant handrail.



Barn St: Traditional flint and brick wall.



Low brick wall with planting.



Small front gardens.



An attractive building and boundary wall constructed in brick.



Simple front step and rail

5.2.12 Windows and doors

Lavenham's windows and doors are typically constructed in timber, an attractive, durable material that adds value to properties modern and historic buildings. Recent research shows that new timber windows have a longer lifespan and are more environmentally friendly than uPVC alternatives.

All new development should have timber windows and door sets and existing uPVC windows should be replaced with timber as they reach their end of life.

Windows and doors should demonstrate good, simple quality detailing using natural materials that enhances the appearance of building.

'the windows in its walls are the eyes of a house; and the proportion of its panes are in turn the expression of light in its eyes'

Lavenham Past + Present + Future





Traditional timber sash windows with ornate moulded linings.



Traditional timber window.



Ornate door surround.



Traditional timber door.



This brick facade includes the use of segmented arch to window and plinth opening.



Window openings in this predominantly flint elevation have been enhanced with use of brick surround and segmented arch.



High quality timber doors with simple high quality detailing



Simple, contemporary timber windows.



Checklist 2: Respect Lavenham's built heritage

The National Design Guide notes that the character of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them. Development proposals should respond to Lavenham's unique local character and village character areas and respect Lavenham's built heritage.

- Does the scheme directly affect a heritage asset or its setting (including the Conservation Area)? If so is it accompanied by the Heritage Statement?*
- Does the scheme require a Townscape Impact Assessment due to its scale or sensitive location? (seek confirmation with Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils)*
- Do the proposed building materials complement local material palette?*
- Are the proposed construction techniques and materials chosen for their durability and are they made to last?*
- Is the development attractive and distinctive and does it contribute to Lavenham's character and identity?*
- Does the development provide a coherent and outward looking pattern of development with proposed layout height and massing that is in harmony with the surrounding context ?*
- Does the proposal ensure people enjoy private good amenity are not overlooked and provide homes that offer exemplary levels of daylight and sunlight?*

Is car parking provided in a manner that is safe, accessible and preferably off-street, and that does not visually dominate the streetscape or negatively impact on pedestrian routes?

Does the proposed roof line and pitch reflect traditional proportions found in Lavenham?

Do the proposed elevations relate to the internal layout of the building and offer an attractive well proportioned façades that have well considered landscape and boundary and external storage detailing?

Are the boundary conditions in keeping with existing boundary and threshold details?

Does the development respond positively to the surrounding built environment, topography and landscape?

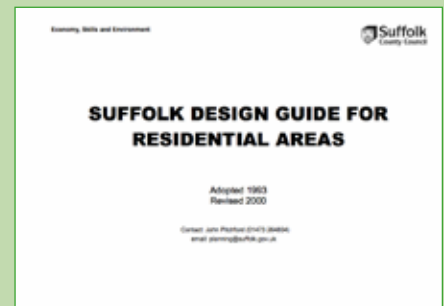


Resources

Suffolk Design Guide for residential areas

Suffolk County Council produced the Suffolk Design Guide for Residential Areas to advise house builders about the design of residential areas in Suffolk including; choice of materials, individual dwellings and roads. The Guide is used as supplementary planning guidance by all local authorities in Suffolk.

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



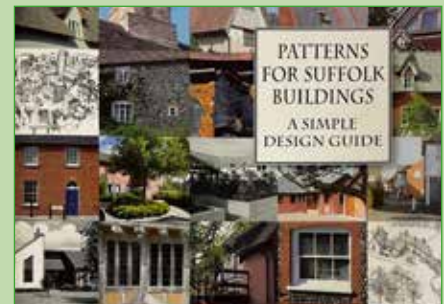
Suffolk Design Guide (2000)

Suffolk Preservation Society

Based in Market Place, the Suffolk Preservation Society is a county-wide amenity society dedicated to protecting and promoting the special historic and landscape qualities of Suffolk.

Patterns for Suffolk Buildings sets out the principles of good design in Suffolk. Analysing the qualities which make traditional buildings both practical and attractive the guide aims to help people develop an informed constructive response to new housing development.

<https://www.suffolksociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/sps-manifesto.pdf>



Patterns for Suffolk Buildings (1995)

Heriot-Watt University

Research undertaken by Heriot-Watt University concludes that new timber windows have a longer lifespan and are more environmentally friendly than uPVC alternatives.

<https://www.bwf.org.uk/choose-wood/wood-windows/>

Strengthen Lavenham's landscape character

5.2.13 Views

Greenfield development on the edge of Lavenham can impact on cherished views of the village from the surrounding countryside.

The defined view 2 on page 73 shows the recently completed Osier View development off Bears Lane (to the left of the image on the ridge line) and demonstrates how poorly conceived site planning and layout can impact on the historic skyline. Located on high ground, the development breaks the ridge line and detracts from the primacy of St Peter and St Paul's Church.

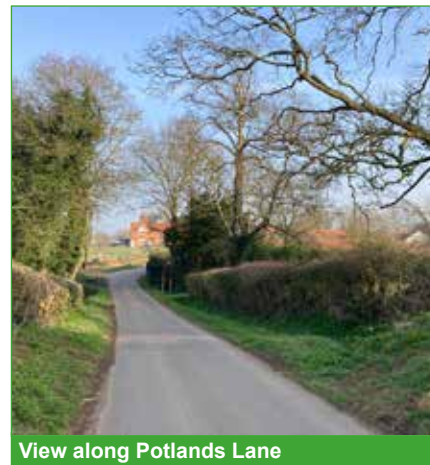
All new development should be laid out in a manner which does not negatively impact on Lavenham's skyline. A Heritage Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (HTVIA) should be prepared in parallel with the design process to help shape the proposal.

3D Modelling of development proposals and edge conditions should be undertaken to understand the impacts on long distance views and help to determine the nature and extent of mitigation.

5.2.14 Landscape buffers: greening the built edge

The Woodland trust note that landscape buffer zones can protect the natural environment from harmful effects arising from new development and mitigate impacts on existing buildings by providing screens, improving views and reducing noise. There is no 'one size fits all' with buffer design. Each one should be designed to fulfil the specific requirements of its location.

For advice on appropriate landscaping at the settlement edges, reference should be made to the Change Management guidance for settlement edge areas, as set out in Section 1.5 of LCSA 2023 (Part C of this Plan).



View along Potlands Lane



Railway Walk provides an important ecological corridor and walking route.



The Common



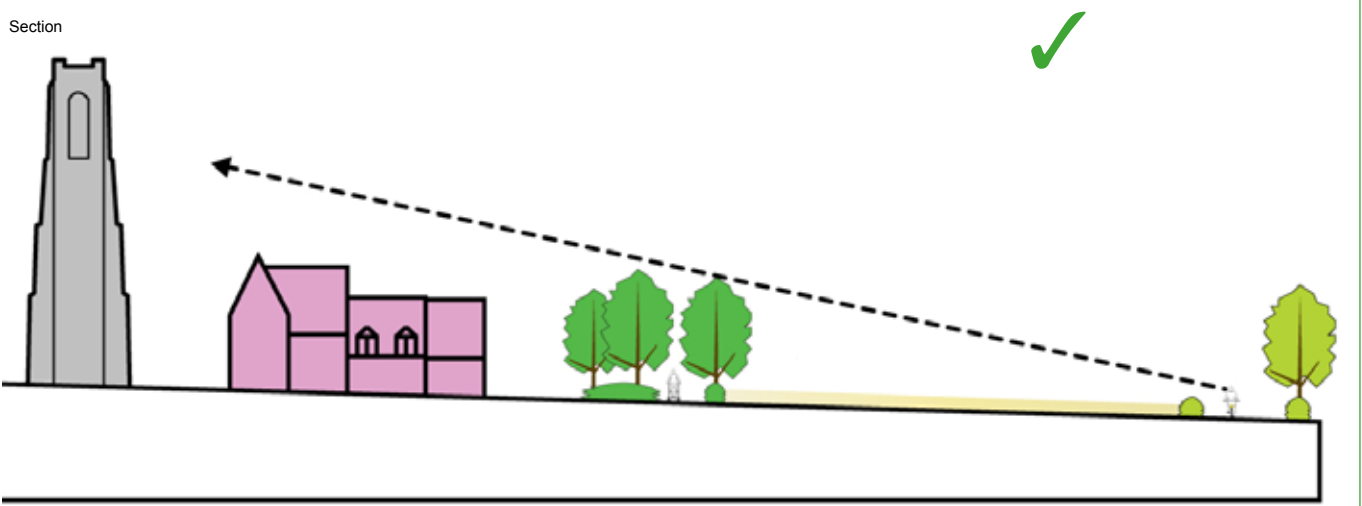
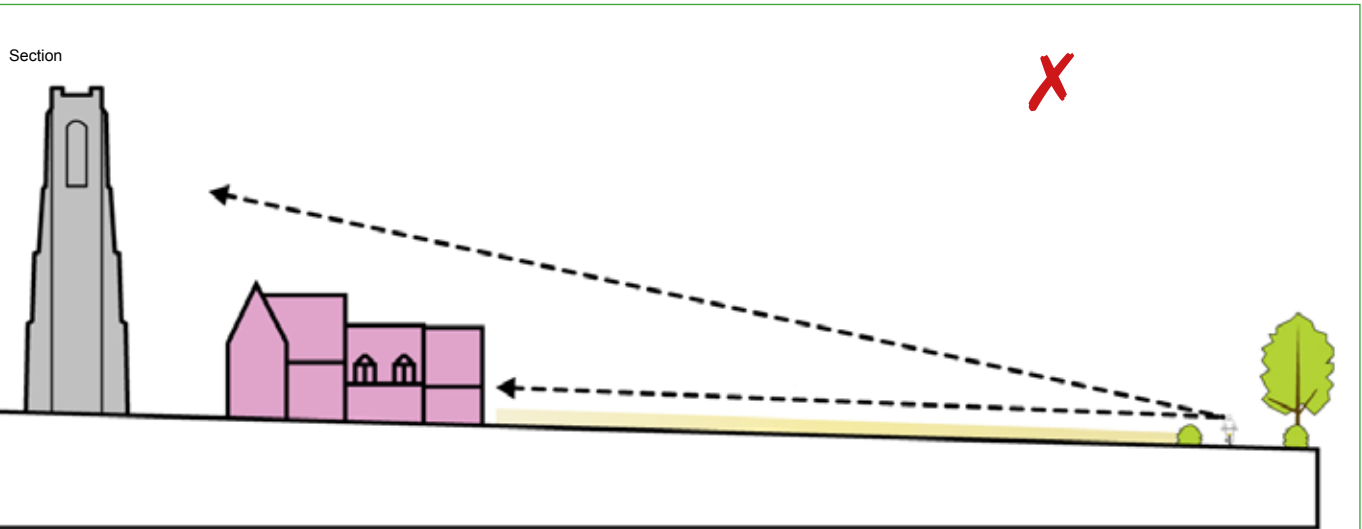
Railway Walk



Dyehouse Field Wood



Defined View 2 - Clay Hill footpath



Landscape buffer planting provided in advance of new housing development will, over time, reduce the visual impact of new development on the heritage setting of the village and the setting of the Grade 1 listed Church of St Peter and St Paul.

Any development on the edge of the settlement should show consideration for the impact on the wider landscape. Development that has one or more boundaries adjoining open countryside needs to integrate new edges sensitively into the surrounding landscape, especially where they will be seen from roads, footpaths, a heritage asset or other dwellings. This should take the form of a landscape buffer - the minimum required is a wide, tree-studded native hedge, or where space allows, a 10m woodland belt. Early negotiations with landowners to achieve these depths are encouraged. Access for maintenance purposes is also an essential early consideration.

Design considerations

Buffer depth may be varied to give a more naturalistic effect to views in/out. In all cases it must be sympathetic to the surrounding landscape character and seek to tie in with existing farmland hedge networks. Native vegetation represents a good opportunity for Biodiversity Net Gain, and for integrated recreational opportunities in the form of footpath/cycle links, where feasible.

Tree belts should be native species planted at spacings of 1 - 1.5m centres mixing smaller and larger sized stock. These should be staked, adequately protected from rabbit/deer damage and mulched to retain moisture and hinder weed growth. Hedge mixes should be native clayland species planted at 5 to 6 plants per metre and protected with guards and mulched to 50mm. Appropriate species mix could include hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, hazel, elder, dog rose, wild cherry, dogwood, guelder rose, holly and spindle. The use of alternatives to the standard plastic guards, ties etc is encouraged.

Gardens adjoining the countryside should not be enclosed by close board timber fencing - instead post and rail fencing with native hedging is more appropriate.

Future management

A plan for management should be submitted for approval to ensure successful establishment. This should cover good woodland/hedge management operations including weed management, periodic coppicing or formative pruning, and dealing with failed plantings.

Any boundary planting should be located in the public domain, or under single ownership for management purposes. It must not be conveyed to individual dwellings where future stewardship cannot be guaranteed. Ongoing management and maintenance must be secured through the planning process. Consult with a landscape architect for advice.



Buffers should be designed to have a multi-layered structure of native trees as well as an understory shrub layer and woodland edge. Edge planting is particularly important if located adjacent to a garden boundary.

Note: 5.2.14 Images and commentary provided courtesy of Lucy Batchelor-Wylam Landscape Architecture



Native woodland buffer provides a soft edge that successfully assimilates development over time



Restored 'Farmland' hedges should replicate local character and tie in with the existing network



Biodegradable tree guards are being developed

5.2.15 Lavenham's village gateways

Gateways to the village provide a picturesque setting and view of the village. Lavenham has multiple arrival points by road and further arrival points by public rights of way.

The arrival points by road are:

Principal routes

- Bury Road (A1141) from the north
- Brent Eleigh Road (A1141) from the south
- Sudbury Road (B1071) from the south
- Secondary routes
- Melford Road (from the south)
- Bridge Street Road (from the west)
- Preston Road (from the north east)

Design principles

Any proposals which impact the village gateway points should adhere to the following principles:

- So as to successfully assimilate development comfortably into the existing settlement, ensure any development near to the village edges and gateways is design and landscape-led, taking its cues from the positive features in the predominant built form, scale and materials in surrounding plots.
- Take opportunities to strengthen interface with the open countryside, where settlement character is poor or lacking at the village edges such as along Sudbury Road and the newly created edges along Melford Road.
- Where new edges are created, they must be assimilated by native planting of hedges, trees and copses to frame and soften the village gateway.
- Proposals resulting in obtrusive breaks into the countryside should be opposed.

The tranquillity and rural character of the lanes at Bears Lane, Clay Lane and Park Road should be protected because of their role as principal walking routes into the settlement.

Poor quality or insensitively designed schemes which do not respect their visually prominent position at or near the village edges should be opposed.

Village fringes are particularly sensitive at gateway/arrival points to a settlement.

The Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment 2023 gives village edges and gateways different ratings with respect to landscape value and sensitivity and should be consulted when considering any improvements or development proximate to Lavenham's village gateways.

Due to its contribution in providing a rural interface with the historic village edge, keeping intact the rural backdrop provided by the valley side to the west of Brent Eleigh Road is important.



View coming in from Sudbury



New Garage on Sudbury Road



View coming in from Brent Eleigh



Checklist 3: Strengthen Lavenham's landscape character

The National Design Guide notes that well-designed places are based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, integrated into their surroundings responsive to local history, culture and heritage and influence their context positively. Nature contributes to the quality of a place, and to people's quality of life, and it is a critical component of well-designed places.

For Lavenham this means that applicants should commission baseline landscape, ecology and heritage studies to ensure proposals respond to and enhance the character of the village. Development proposals should respond to Lavenham's unique local character and strengthen Lavenham's landscape character.

Where development is proposed at the edges of Lavenham:

Has a landscaping scheme being prepared and does it accord with the guidance in this document?

Has a built heritage statement landscape and Visual Impact Assessment been prepared to help shape the proposal?

Does the scheme draw on and is it informed by the guidance and recommendations in the Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment 2023?

Is landscape buffer planting proposed to reduce the visual impact on the heritage setting of the village?

- Where boundaries adjoin open countryside are they integrated sensitively into the surrounding landscape?*
- Do the development proposals use boundary treatments which are common or complementary to the street and reinforce the continuity of the building line?*
- Are details provided on species mix, planting specification and long term management to ensure long term growth of green infrastructure?*



Resources

Trees and green infrastructure

Woodland Trust
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/43634/buffers-an-overview-factsheet.pdf>

Trees in Hard Landscapes A Guide for Delivery
 Tree Design Action Group (2014)
www.tdag.org.uk

Trees Species Selection for Green Infrastructure
 Tree Design Action Group (2019)
www.tdag.org.uk

British Standards

BS5837: Trees in relation to Design, Construction and Demolition
 British Standards (2012)

BS8545: Trees from nursery to establishment in the landscape
 British Standards (2014)

Sustainable Drainage

SuDS Manual (CIRIA)
<https://www.ciria.org/>

Plantlife

The charity Plantlife has produced a verge management best practice guide for highways managers and road engineers to provide habitat for wildflowers and wildlife and the principles in this document should be adopted by the highway authority.

<https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign>



Create healthy streets and spaces

Lavenham's streets account for a significant proportion of the public realm and fulfil a range of vital functions including: movement of people and goods, and providing access for all to homes, services, shops and businesses.

To reduce traffic speed and severance and improve the quality of the public realm, Lavenham's streets should be designed to address more than traffic capacity. Street design should address the following objectives: economic benefit, quality of place, safety and public health, ease of movement and inclusive access.

Development proposals and highway works (both capital and maintenance) should be shaped by the road user hierarchy principles where the needs of pedestrians are considered first and are prioritised over service vehicles and private cars. This aligns with Lavenham's ambition to address climate change by prioritising sustainable and healthy travel.

The mitigation hierarchy, set out in national planning policy needs to be applied to the process of avoiding, mitigating and compensating for harm to biodiversity. All development will be required to deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG - measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development) of at least 10% and are strongly encouraged to achieve higher BNG.

5.2.16 Street trees

The NPPF and the National Model Design Code (NMDC) prioritise the planting of street trees. Street trees can help reduce traffic speed, improve air quality, sequester carbon, mitigate against storm water surges and intercept storm water, provide living heritage, biodiversity, cooling and bring identity and seasonal beauty. Street trees and rain gardens can also deliver the four principles of sustainable drainage in that they; reduce the quantity of surface water run off, improve water quality, increase biodiversity, and improve public amenity. Strategically located trees can help shelter buildings from the wind, help cool streets and gardens in summer months via shade and transpiration, and reduce household energy bills.

5.2.17 Footpaths and access

New development should provide safe and attractive paths and routes within the development site suitable for those pushing a pushchair, in a wheelchair, walking with a stick or walking frame or using a mobility scooter. These paths and routes should be designed to link up easily with existing pedestrian networks outside the development site and follow desired lines where practically possible, to facilitate access to the village centre and other key services such as schools, community centres, GP and dental surgeries. Similarly, new development should provide safe and attractive routes for cyclists linking up, where practical to do so, with the existing cycle network within the village.

Development proposals coming forward on the edge of the built up environment should also:

- Incorporate good pedestrian and cycle permeability out into the countryside.
- Apply a lower density to ensure an appropriate transition to the countryside.
- Avoid hard edges directly into open farmland and creating landscape buffers.



Prentice Street. Unsightly overhead cables should be removed.



EV Charging points should be located where they do not harm the character of Lavenham's streets.



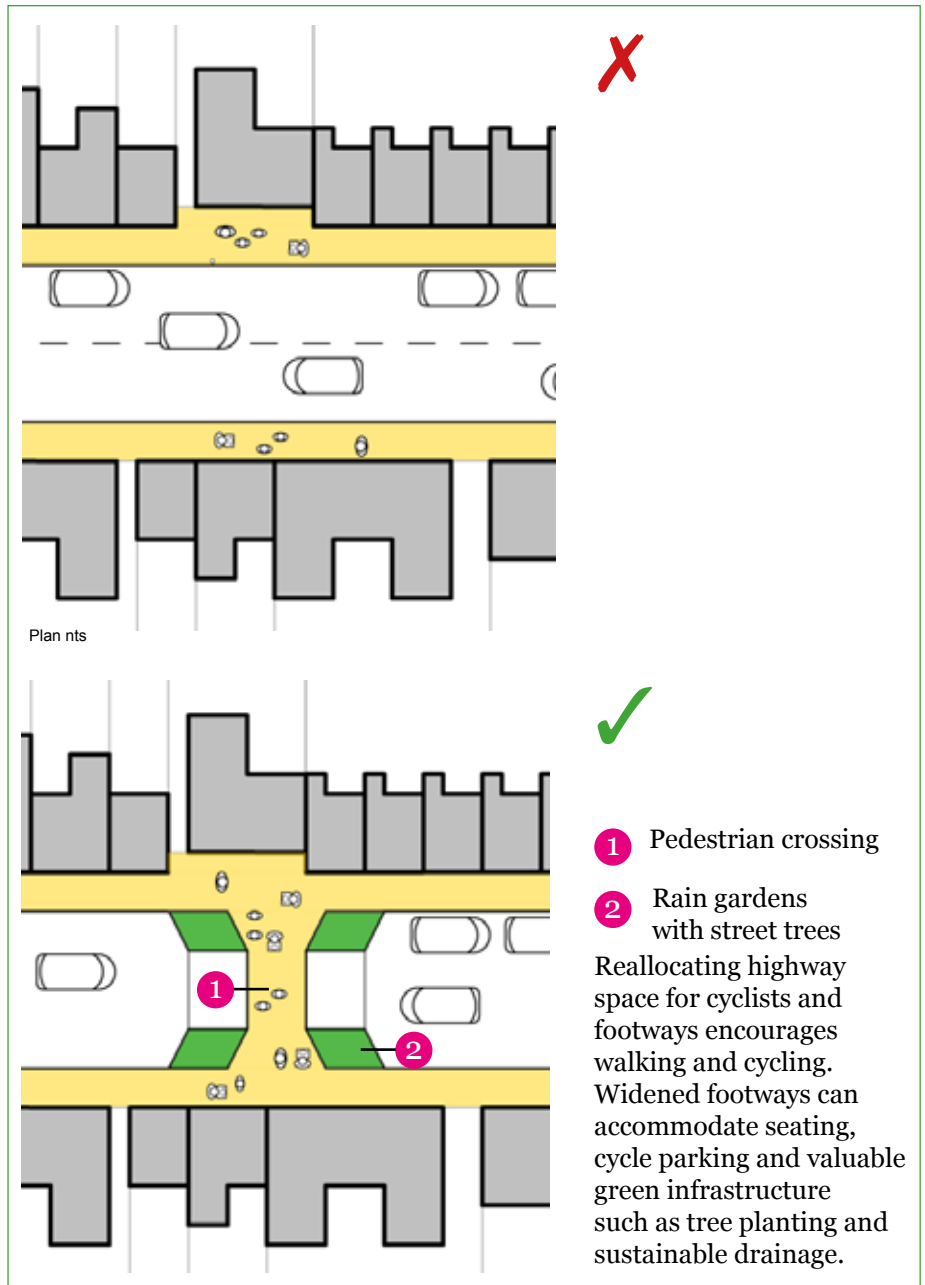
Footpaths with clear way marking encourage people to enjoy the village and the surrounding countryside.

‘The fundamental thread in design, maintenance and operation of the highways and transport network should be that the needs of all users should be considered to create an inclusive public realm.’

Creating better streets: Inclusive and accessible places CIHT 2018



Water Street. Unsightly highway signage now improved



Bike Rail, Market Place



Footpath



The Fish Van in Market Place



Checklist 4: Create healthy streets and spaces

The National Design Guide notes that well-designed places benefit from a movement network that is accessible and easy to get around and public spaces that are safe, social and inclusive. Development proposals should help create climate resilient, healthy streets and spaces throughout the village.

- Does the proposed movement network define a clear pattern of well-overlooked and attractive streets for all?*
- Does the scheme limit the impacts of car use by prioritising and encouraging walking, cycling and public transport?*
- Does the scheme promote activity and social interaction, contributing to health, well-being, accessibility and inclusion?*
- Are public spaces well-located, safe, attractive and designed to support a wide variety of activities and encourage social interaction?*
- Are public spaces, trees and other critical green infrastructure and sustainable drainage to improve biodiversity and mitigate against climate change?*



Do streets and routes incorporate green infrastructure, including street trees, to help soften the impact of car parking?



Does the street designed to prioritise walking and cycling over vehicles include ample well-designed footpaths that provide unimpeded access for all?



Resources

Street design

Manual for Streets

Department for Transport (2007)

Manual for Streets 2 CIHT (2010)

Inclusive Mobility

Department for Transport (2005)

Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle infrastructure design

Department for Transport (2020)

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

Creating better streets: Inclusive and accessible places

CIHT (2018)

https://www.ciht.org.uk/media/4463/ciht_shared_streets_a4_v6_all_combined_1.pdf

Healthy Streets Toolkit (TfL, 2007)

20's Plenty For Us

20'S Plenty For Us is a campaigning organisation for 20mph to become the default speed limit on residential and urban streets

www.20splentyforus.org.uk



This Lavenham Design Guide was commissioned as part of a wider piece of work that created the revised Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan (LNP2). The Design Guide is just that, a guide not an instruction manual. Its first purpose is to say what is unique about Lavenham, and to celebrate a community and their buildings that has sustained itself over 500 years.

Planning positively for the future is essential, given the problems we face over sustainability and resilience in the face of the climate emergency. The Guide's second purpose is to promote high standards of design and use of materials that protect the best of the past and looks for the same high standards in the future.

An updated Lavenham Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (LCSA) was also commissioned to describe, help protect and cherish the Suffolk countryside within which the village sits.

The Design Guide, along with the LNP2 and the LCSA, work together as a suite of documents, intended to help face the future in an informed, supportive and proactive way, whilst protecting a much loved village that is our home.

