

# Newton Neighbourhood Plan



Today, Tomorrow, Together  
2018 to 2036

Referendum Version Autumn 2021

# Foreword

## Today, Tomorrow, Together



*A central principle of the Newton Neighbourhood Plan (NNP) is to incorporate appropriate and sustainable growth in Newton that has a positive impact on the historic and natural environment of our Parish. In the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Emerging Joint Local Plan, as a hinterland village, Newton is expected to accommodate at least 23 new dwellings between 2018 and 2037. This includes dwellings approved since 2018.*

*By November 2020, permission had already been granted for 30 new dwellings so any further residential development will be minimal and should be focused within the settlement boundary of our village where there is integration and accessibility to services and facilities. This will ensure that the undeveloped rural countryside is preserved and remains a distinctive feature of Newton.*

This is the Neighbourhood Plan (The Plan) for the parish of Newton (NNP). It has been prepared by a steering group of local residents, established in February 2018 by the Newton Parish Council under agreed Terms of Reference. It articulates a clear vision for the village's development up to 2036 and identifies the residents' aspirations for well being, growth and sustainability.

From the outset, the Steering Group has consulted and listened to village residents' comments on a wide range of issues related to the aforementioned aspirations. Every effort has, and will continue to be made, to ensure that the policies and actions contained in this document reflect the views of the majority of Newton residents.

This document is the referendum version of the NNP. It has been prepared in accordance with the regulations that govern the preparation of such Plans and it has been modified in accordance with the Independent Examiner's Report published in June 2021.

If the referendum shows local support; i.e., more than 50% of those voting being in favour, then the NNP will be 'made' (adopted) by Babergh District Council (BDC) as part of the statutory development plan and be used in the

determination of future planning applications in Newton.

### Vision

In 2036 Newton will be a sustainable hinterland village and will have balanced housing growth within the historic environment and provide safe access to community assets while protecting wildlife habitats and open green spaces.

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# Supporting Documents

## **Appendices**

1. Surveys
  - a. Housing and Historic Environment (Sections A-G)
  - b. The Natural Environment and Sustainability (Sections A-D)
  - c. Amenities Survey (Sections A -C)
  - d. Local Business Survey
2. Newton Character Assessment
3. Local Green Spaces Justification
4. History of Newton (A.Vince, 2018)

## Supplementary Information Sources

*Reference has been made to the following websites;*

**National Planning Policy Framework**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

**Babergh Core Strategy 2014**

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/adopted-documents/babergh-district-council/core-strategy/>

**The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan**

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/new-joint-local-plan/>

**Babergh Choice Based Letting Scheme**

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/housing/looking-for-a-home/about-gateway-to-homechoice/>

**Suffolk Heritage Explorer**

<https://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk>

**Suffolk Observatory**

<https://www.suffolkobservatory.info/quick-profile/?geographyId=355e134d218e43fda37e52fb98024d6f&featureId=E05007081>

**Suffolk County Council Green Access Strategy**

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-rights-of-way-in-suffolk/green-access-strategy/>

**Suffolk Climate Emergency Declaration**

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/initiatives/pledge-to-climate-emergency-declaration/>

**Babergh Open Space Study (May 2019)**

[www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/Current-Evidence-Base/Babergh-and-Mid-Suffolk-Open-Space-Study-May-2019.pdf](http://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/Current-Evidence-Base/Babergh-and-Mid-Suffolk-Open-Space-Study-May-2019.pdf)

**Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service**

[www.suffolkbis.org.uk](http://www.suffolkbis.org.uk)

**Biodiversity in Newton (2019)**

<http://newton.onesuffolk.net/assets/NP-Regulation-14/Biodiversity-in-Newton.pdf>

**Newton Green Golf Course Pond Management Recommendations 2015**

<http://newton.onesuffolk.net/assets/Newton-Green-Trust/Trust-Other-Papers/NGT-Suffolk-Wildlife-Trust-Pond-Recommendations-2015-12.pdf>

**English Nature's Inventory of Ancient Woodland**

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/55203>

**Babergh Climate Emergency Declaration**

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/environment/climate-change/>

## Supplementary Information Sources cont

### ***Babergh Website for Newton NP***

*<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-planning-in-babergh/newton-neighbourhood-plan/>*

### ***Suffolk Parking Guidance***

*<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/parking-guidance/>*

# 1. Introduction

## Background

1.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to prepare a document that establishes local planning policies for the development and use of land within a designated area. This document, defined in the Act as a Neighbourhood Development Plan, has been prepared by a Steering Group established by the Parish Council which are the 'qualifying body' as defined by the same Act.

1.2 The Plan focuses on local planning-related matters and provides the village with greater opportunities than ever before to influence change and development within our area, based upon a fair and democratic consultation process supported by Babergh District Council and the Parish Council.

1.3 The local community wishes to preserve the character and services of the village as much as possible. It has a charming and unique character but is vulnerable to external change and, hence, needs to be protected and preserved. There is a recognition that outside pressures will have a growing impact upon the village and we will need to be prepared to respond. This has already materialised in the form of unexpected rapid housing growth in the village and it is essential that any future growth has regard to the importance of ensuring that services and facilities have the capacity to cope with growth and that there is no adverse impact on our natural and historic environment.

1.4 The Plan is structured to provide information about The Neighbourhood Plan process, the village's distinct character and its history and geography. It includes a Vision and Objectives which have been agreed by villagers. The Plan itself contains planning policies and community actions. The latter do not form part of the development plan but identify local initiatives to address issues and concerns raised during the community engagement undertaken in preparing The Plan. The community actions are

identified differently from the planning policies to avoid confusion.

### Why a Neighbourhood Plan for Newton?



*View across the fields to our 14<sup>th</sup> Century Church*

1.5 In 2017 Babergh District Council announced that there was no longer a 5 year supply of available housing sites in the district\*. The consequence of this was that their Local Plan policies for the location of new housing developments were deemed, under government planning guidelines, to be out of date. This resulted in speculative and unplanned housing proposals across the district, including Newton (\* see paragraph 4.5).

1.6 At its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Newton Parish Council formally agreed to call for volunteers from the community to begin writing a Neighbourhood Plan. Villagers were invited to two public meetings, the first on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and the second on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February to discuss the proposal and the process. 15 villagers volunteered to form a strategic working group and their first meeting took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018.



*War memorial established 1920*

1.7 The Localism Act 2011 provides the opportunity and tools for communities to shape how areas will change and grow through the preparation of their own Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans, when properly made will become part of the legal planning framework for the designated area.

1.8 A Neighbourhood Plan is a community- led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It is about the use and development of land and contains a vision statement, aims, planning policies and actions for improving the area.



*Former village shop now Haward's cottage*

1.9 Town and Parish councils are encouraged to produce their own Neighbourhood Plans enabling local people to have a say in how their neighbourhood grows and develops. In a designated neighbourhood area which contains all or part of the administrative area of a town or parish council, the town or parish council is responsible for neighbourhood planning.

1.10 Neighbourhood Plans cannot contradict the main government planning policies or the strategic policies in the Local Plan for the area. For example, they cannot propose less development than is planned for in the Local Plan.

1.11 This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by a steering group representing Newton Parish Council. Preparation of The Plan has been supported by Babergh District Council, along with a professional consultant providing advice. The content of The Plan has been led by the community and shaped by results of surveys, public meetings, coffee mornings and drop-in

events to ensure that The Plan reflects the aspirations of the community.

1.12 This Neighbourhood Plan represents the conclusion of that work and provides a Plan that conforms with the strategic planning policies of the Babergh Core Strategy 2014 and the saved policies of the Local Plan 2006. It also follows national planning practice guidance that it should take into account the evidence and policies of the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan. (Emerging Joint Local Plan). Most importantly, it reflects the aspirations of the local community.

### **Purpose and Scope of Plan**

1.13 When work on The Plan started, its purpose and scope was agreed. In summary, The Plan was to be an approved, legally recognised planning document that would describe how Newton should develop as a sustainable, mixed, thriving community of residents and businesses over the next 18 years. Any recommendations for development would be judged by the views and opinions expressed by the community, informed by analysis of the historical and current physical characteristics and demographic composition of the village.

1.14 The Plan will be confined to the area within the Newton parish boundary. It was agreed that it would concentrate mainly on the needs and planning aspirations of residents regarding housing development and would identify the demographic development of the village over the past 10 years and consider likely changes in the future.

- The likely requirements for the range of accommodation needed for a sustainable future mixed community of businesses and homes was considered.
- Possible locations which may provide suitable locations for development and the planning restrictions necessary to protect the character of the village were discussed.
- It also considers those valued environmental, material and social assets that should be protected.



1.15 The Plan therefore focuses on the provision of homes but will also consider the natural environment, safe environment, community assets and business needs. However, given the limited scale of growth required to be supported, the Plan does not allocate specific sites for development.

1.16 The Plan has had regard to the originally agreed purpose and scope of a neighbourhood plan. It is in line with the saved policies of the adopted Babergh Core Strategy 2014 and Local Plan 2006 as well as the Emerging Joint Local Plan. It therefore provides a framework for the village for the period until 2036.



*Mission Statement discussion*



*First public meeting*

## 2. How The Plan Was Prepared

### The Stages of Preparation

2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government's Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and, in particular, has involved considerable local community engagement to gather evidence for the content of The Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require a neighbourhood plan to meet the following 'Basic Conditions':

- Be appropriate, having regard to National Planning Policy.
- Contribute to achieving sustainable development.
- Be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area;  
and
- Be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.

2.2 Newton Parish Council agreed to progress a Neighbourhood Plan at its meeting in November 2017. Following that decision, a mail drop to every household in the village invited all villagers to attend a public consultation morning in January 2018. The meeting was very well supported with 60 villagers attending. Villagers heard presentations by the Chair of the Parish Council and our District Councillor who outlined the reasons why Neighbourhood plans are so important to communities. The aims of our Neighbourhood Plan were clearly articulated.

2.3 Villagers were able to view information boards and to share ideas over a cup of tea. At the end of the morning, villagers came together to ask further questions and seek guidance from members of the Parish Council. The Chairman then summarised the Neighbourhood Planning process and asked for volunteers to join the planning team. 15 villagers took up the baton

and agreed to attend an inaugural planning meeting.



*Villagers consultation*

2.4 The planning group met in February 2018 and positions of responsibility were agreed. The team comprised of a cross section of villagers from differing backgrounds, ages and professions. The planning team became the Newton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and agreed to meet on a monthly basis. Since that time, with the exception of August 2019 the NNP team has met every month.

2.5 Villagers have been involved at each stage through meetings, surveys and a regular newsletter. An analysis of their views informed key issues and objectives. These subsequently formed Newton policies 1 - 9.

2.6 A comprehensive Housing and Historic Environment Survey was distributed to all homes in September 2018 and 50% of villagers responded. The responses were matched with the results of the 2015 Household Survey and the content of both surveys were informed by comments received at the drop-in events between 2015-18.

2.7 The following surveys were undertaken by the Neighbourhood Planning Committee to gather the views and opinions of villagers.

- a. Housing and Historic Environment
- b. The Natural Environment and Sustainability Survey

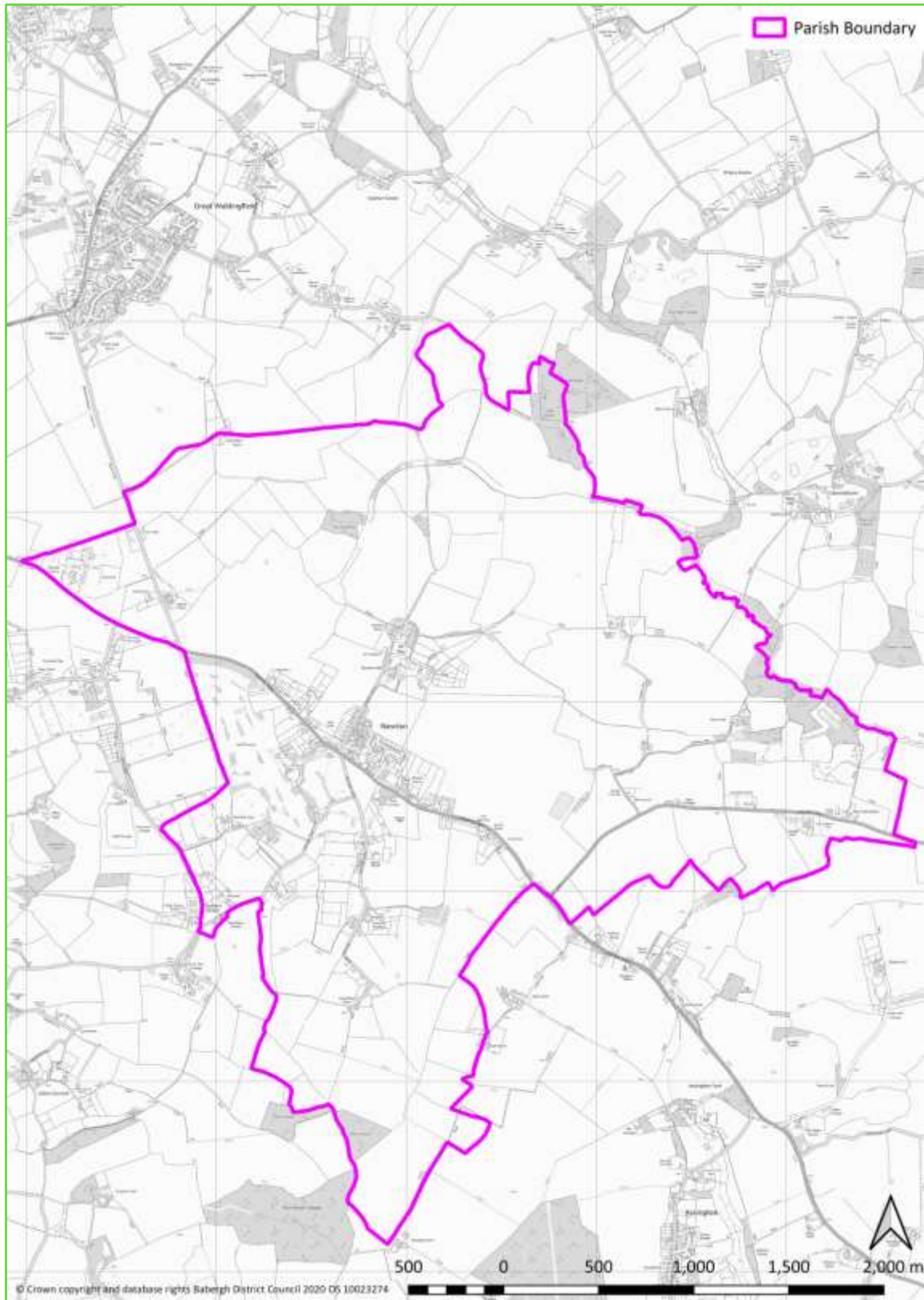
- c. Amenities, Leisure and Recreation
- d. Local Business Survey

2.8 The information gained from these events and surveys informs Newton's key issues, objectives and policies. A detailed set of survey results appear later in the Appendix 1.

### **The Plan Area (see over)**

2.9 On the 23rd March 2018, in accordance with Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, Babergh District Council formally designated the whole parish as The Neighbourhood Plan Area. Details of the application publication can be viewed on the District website under Neighbourhood Planning in Newton.

2.10 There are no other designated Neighbourhood Plan areas within this boundary. Newton Parish Council is the 'qualifying body' responsible for the preparation of The Neighbourhood Plan for this area.



**Map 1. Neighbourhood Plan Area**

### 3. Newton in Historical Context

3.1 Newton was a Saxon settlement for protection from the Danish threat, as its Saxon name Neuton suggests. The Domesday Book shows the name as Neutune, Neutuna or Niwetuna. The name Niewetuna is Saxon. A Tun was a collection of dwellings fortified in an enclosure. It was probably formed when the Danish incursions resulted in the defeat and death of St Edmund in the 9th century.

3.2 The Domesday Book tells of Neuton and the important buildings that were the Church, Newton Hall, Seyham (Siam) Hall, and the Boteliers (Butlers). Unfortunately Siam Hall burnt down but the others remain today. There is a wealth of information about the ownership of these Manors and the church over the centuries and of their importance.

3.3 After 20 years of Norman rule, Seyham (Siam) Hall was rated higher than Newton Hall. In that period Newton settlement was based

around the church and the afore- mentioned Manors.

3.4 So if the village originally centred around the Church, how and when did that change to where it is today, around The Green? Were the original buildings so dilapidated that they fell or burnt down or were destroyed? An article in the East Anglian Daily Times in 2007 quoted an extract from "What's in a name – Newton" by Simon Young, historian and author of AD 500. In the early 8th century villages often broke up in the search for better land; this is why many ancient villages have a church at the edge or outside their bounds, the church stands on the original site of the village."

3.5 In 1801 there were 47 inhabited houses in Newton and a population of 354. By 1901 there were 90 inhabited houses and 205 by 2015.

3.6 The postal address of the village for much of the 20th century was Newton Green, near Sudbury, so that it was not confused with Old Newton near Stowmarket. In many people's opinion, the name Newton Green better



Newton's 14<sup>th</sup> Century church

describes the village, and many people still refer to it as such.

3.7 A proposal to build a golf course on The Green was mooted in 1901 but firmly rejected by the Parish Council. A few years later in 1906, under pressure from the then Lord of the Manor, Earl Howe, the village gave in and the golf course was laid out, with play commencing in 1907. No doubt the presence of the gentry and then businessmen playing golf had an effect on the village, but a great rapport grew up between the villagers and the golfers. Many of the village lads were encouraged to learn to play golf, and they later represented the club on many occasions. The Golf Club continues to be a very important part of the village.



*Brook House from the golf course*

## **The Village Hall**

3.8 The Village Hall is an important meeting place and was originally the village school.

3.9 By the 1830s the village needed a place of education for its children. The site which was chosen was part of the village green. The attractive building was erected in 1835 and was paid for by public subscription.

3.10 It operated as a school for just over 100 years, closing in 1938 because there were too few children attending to make it viable. The village children were subsequently bussed to other local schools, firstly Great Waldingfield, then Assington, and later Boxford. After closure as a school the building began to be used as the

village hall (it had previously been used as a village meeting place).



*Newton School pupils 1903*

3.11 In 1943 Diocesan Trustees were appointed and there followed protracted negotiations to claim village ownership of the building. In 1948 the Diocesan Board and the Parish Council signed an agreement on the use of the hall, but it was not until 1957 that the hall and land was sold to the Parish Council for a sum of £550, which again was raised by public subscription. In effect having originally given the land and paid for the cost of construction, the village had to buy it back again!



*Village Hall*

3.12 Subsequently renovation work was carried out. There had been a wood and glass partition to form the large room we have now, and the floor was replaced. An extension was built on the rear of the building to provide toilets and a kitchen, and a committee room was constructed at the side. Beyond this the outside lavatories were incorporated into the building to create a store room. In 1961 a management committee to be responsible for the running and maintenance of the hall was appointed.

3.13 The land at the side of the hall had been used as allotment gardens, the hall being approached by a single driveway with a gate at the road end. To celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977 it was agreed to use the land on the left to create the Jubilee Garden. A few years later the land on the right was used to create the car park. In the early years of the 21st century major works were carried out to modernise the kitchen and toilets; the front porch was redesigned, the committee room extended and a much needed larger storeroom was built. With gardens and a patio area being created outside we now have an attractive and well used village hall in very pleasant surroundings and with excellent facilities.

### Newton Green Trust

3.14 The ownership of The Green had traditionally been regarded as being in the hands of The Lord of the Manor. Following the passing of The Common Lands Registration Act in 1965, the then Lord of the Manor, Roland Oliver, took the opportunity to transfer the ownership of The Green to the Village. This involved The Green being registered as a village green, and the creation of the Newton Green Trust to receive ownership and be responsible for the future management of The Green for the benefit of the village. Complying with all the legal requirements took several years and it was not until 1976 that the Trust was formally created.



Arthur Davey Hut at Newton Green Golf Club

3.15 Following this a formal licence was granted to the golf club with provision for an agreed annual rental. The Trust Deed provides that the income received by the Trust is to be applied for the benefit of the village.

### The Playing Field



Playing field and play area

3.16 One of the problems which arose from The Green being used as a golf course was that there was nowhere available for other sports, particularly football and cricket, to be played. In 1966 Roland Oliver approached Cecil Smith the owner of the field behind the village hall to ask whether he would be prepared to let or sell the land to the Parish Council for use as a sports field. He was agreeable to making the field available to the village, but would only let it to Mr Oliver, not to the Parish Council. This was agreed and Mr Oliver arranged for the Golf Club to maintain the field in return for being able to use it as a practice ground. Football and cricket pitches were created on the field and were well used for many years. Sadly, there is now no football or cricket club in the village and the pitches have become disused. Following Mr Smith's death negotiations began to purchase the field and the ownership passed to Newton Green Trust in 1978 at a cost of about £8000, which was initially raised by interest free loans within the village. It is interesting to note that when this land came up for sale by auction in 1929, it was bought by Cecil Smith for £160! It was described as 'The valuable freehold enclosure of highly productive arable land known as Gravel Pit Field No 166 on the OS map with a long road frontage.'

3.17 Further information about the history of the parish can be found at:  
<https://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk>

## 4. Planning Policy Context

4.1 The regulations governing the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans require that they conform with the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] and the strategic policies of local development plans. In 2019 the Government published a revised NPPF that was to be used straight away for the purposes of making decisions on planning applications. This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared within that context.<sup>1</sup>

4.2 The NPPF requires that communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans should develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development. They should plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan.

4.3 At a more local level, The Plan has been prepared in the context of the current status of the Babergh Core Strategy 2014 and Local Plan 2006 and the Emerging Joint Local Plan. It provides the current strategic planning framework for Newton which this Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to. These documents are collectively referred to as “the Local Plan” in this document.

4.4 In both documents a hierarchy of settlements ranked according to their size and the services is provided. Newton is classed as a “hinterland village” within the “functional cluster” of Great Waldingfield, acknowledging that Great Waldingfield provides a range of services and facilities to meet many of the needs of Newton’s residents. In so far as Newton is concerned, the saved policies of the Babergh Core Strategy 2014 and the Local Plan 2006 and, to a lesser degree, the policies in the Emerging Joint Local Plan are those by which planning applications will be judged. The Joint Local Plan will run to 2037.

4.5 As previously noted, when work commenced on the preparation of The Plan, Babergh District Council did not have a 5 year supply of available housing land. However, in July 2019, Babergh and Mid Suffolk confirmed that it now has this 5 year supply. This is a ‘rolling’ assessment so at any time this position could change.

4.6 Given the status of the Emerging Joint Local Plan and the fact that the Newton Neighbourhood Plan may be completed before the new Joint Local Plan is adopted, the saved policies of the Babergh Core Strategy 2014 and Local Plan 2006 remain the district planning policies, along with the NPPF. Regard has been given to these factors and documents in preparing this Neighbourhood Plan. Every effort has been made not to contradict the emerging strategic policies of the Joint Local Plan.

<sup>1</sup> The NPPF was subsequently updated again in July 2021. The Newton Neighbourhood Plan was submitted and examined prior to this revision therefore reflects the February 2019 version of the NPPF.



## 5. Vision, Themes and Objectives

### Vision

In 2036 Newton will be a sustainable hinterland village and will have balanced housing growth within the historic environment and provide safe access to community assets while protecting wildlife habitats and open green spaces.

5.1 Three themes and six objectives form the foundation for the content of The Plan. (See table below). Each objective is informed by key issues identified by Newton villagers. Each section identifies our local context and background and identifies local policies emerging from our research.

5.2 These policies will, when The Plan is complete, form part of the statutory development plan which will be used for determining planning applications in the parish.

5.3 Where appropriate, community actions and projects are described. These are set out in Section 9, Table 9.1.



*Village sign made by villager the late Gordon Mortlock*

Theme	Objectives
Development and Character	1.To ensure new development will meet Newton’s needs
	2. To preserve and enhance the character of Newton as a rural village
Natural Environment and Sustainability	3. To protect local green spaces and wildlife habitats that are valued by the community
	4. To improve the resilience of the village against the impacts of climate change
Safer Environment, Community Assets and Amenities	5.To promote a safer environment for pedestrians and other road users throughout the village
	6. To identify and enhance community assets and identify opportunities for new amenities.

## 6. Theme 1. Development and Character

### Objective 1: Development

To ensure new development will meet Newton's needs:

- Ensure growth is appropriate in scale to the role of the village
- Ensure new homes meet the needs of current and future residents
- Ensure any development is of a high-quality aesthetically and architecturally, and sustainable

### Key Issues

- Housing should be provided on infill sites and at a scale appropriate to the character of the village
- New development must be integrated within the community and not extended beyond the Parish Boundary
- Some affordable housing must be considered in future development
- Consideration must be given to future housing needs of local and older people

### Background

6.1 A key role of The Neighbourhood Plan is to plan for the amount of new housing required to be provided during the period of The Plan. Draft Policy SP03 of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Emerging Joint Local Plan identifies Newton as a 'hinterland village'. Such villages are considered to have the capacity to accommodate some development to help meet the needs within them.

6.2 The Newton Housing and Historic Environment Survey (2018) illustrated future potential changes to the demographic of the village. Currently 54% of villagers are above the age of 55. The average price paid for a home in Newton between 2015 and 2020 was £411,378 compared with the England average of

£288,584 (source: Zoopla) Affordability is a specific concern locally. There is limited rental property. Appendix 1a.

6.3 Villagers identified the need for more affordable homes as young family members begin to consider their future in the village. Some smaller homes to allow downsizing for older members of the community was also seen as an important part of maintaining balance.

6.4 A number of sites in Newton have been granted planning permission since April 2018, resulting in the provision of 30 more homes. Their location and status are illustrated in Map 2 overleaf.

6.5 The NPPF (Feb 2019) states that Neighbourhood Plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in Local Plans or Spatial Development Strategies; and should shape the direct development that is outside of these strategic policies (paragraph 13).

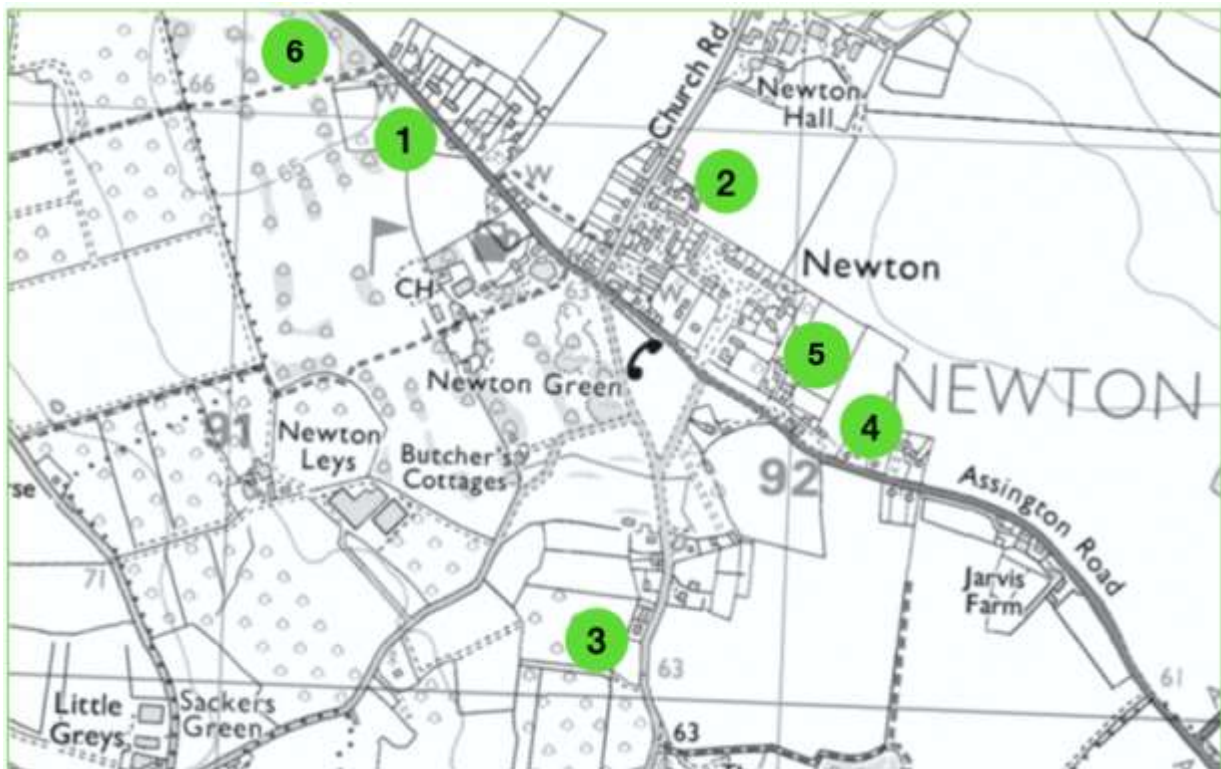


*Red House Farm development*

6.6 Additionally, NPPF guidance (September 2019) states that neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their area.

6.7 Within this context, relevant guidance also states the NPPF expects most strategic policy-making authorities to set housing requirement figures for designated neighbourhood areas as part of their strategic policies. In setting requirements for housing in designated neighbourhood areas, plan-making authorities consider the areas or assets of particular importance, which may restrict the scale, type or distribution of development in a neighbourhood plan area.

6.8 The housing requirement for Newton, as set out in Policy SP04 of the Emerging Joint Local Plan is a minimum of 23 homes over the period to 2037. Given the 30 units either completed or in the planning pipeline (as shown and described in Map 2), Newton has achieved its minimum requirement already.



**Map 2: Sites under construction or in planning pipeline, April 2020**

**Location**

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1. Redhouse Farm | Phase 1 9 dwellings now completed<br>Phase 2 9 dwellings yet to be constructed |
| 2. Alston Close  | 4 affordable dwellings yet to be constructed                                   |
| 3. Marks Meadow  | 3 dwellings yet to be constructed  |
| 4. Airey Close   | 2 dwellings under construction   |
| 5. Brook Farm    | 2 dwellings yet to be constructed  |
| 6. Jordans       | 1 dwelling yet to be constructed   |

6.9 Along with the sites shown in Map 2, there will be other ‘windfall’ developments that are likely to come forward over The Plan period. Draft Policy SP03 of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Emerging Joint Local Plan identifies the settlement boundaries within which development is to be focused. It states that within the settlement boundaries, development will be permitted if:

- Design is sympathetic to its rural surrounding and demonstrates high-quality design by having regard to the relevant policies of The Plan;
- A high standard of hard and soft landscaping, appropriate for the location is used;
- Hedgerows and tree lines which make an important contribution to the wider context and setting are protected, particularly in edge of settlement locations; and
- The cumulative impact of proposals will be a material consideration.

6.10 Within this context, villagers agreed that it was very important that development within Newton should take account of the specific characteristics of the area:

- reflecting the size, scale, and character of the village setting;
- relating to the existing pattern of development within the immediate local area;
- preserving and enhancing existing historic character with a clear legibility of phasing;
- preserving and enhancing the significance of any heritage asset, including their setting, ensuring their contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place.

6.11 Development outside the settlement boundary should only be permitted where it is an appropriate use in the countryside (as defined by various policies in the Emerging Joint Local Plan) or demonstrates that it provides clear benefits to the community of Newton which cannot be met within the settlement boundary. This could be in the form of affordable housing for people with a local connection (see below) or the provision of a facility that will address a clear need which is lacking in the community, e.g. a community shop. The settlement boundary is shown in Map 3.



**Map 3. Extent of Newton settlement boundary**

## **POLICY NEWT 1: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

1. New development proposals in Newton should be commensurate with its designation as a hinterland village. Development will be prioritised on underused parcels of land within the defined settlement boundary (as shown on the Policies Map) and must reflect the character of the surrounding area.
2. Proposals for development located outside the settlement boundary will only be permitted where they are in accordance with national, District or neighbourhood level policies.

## **Affordable Housing**

6.12 The Newton Housing and Historic Environment Survey (2018) identified a range of housing needs of existing Newton households, many of which reflect a desire to stay within the village. These include:

- A need for smaller homes as older people 'downsize'
- Housing for grown-up children as they leave their family home
- A more accessible/adaptable home for care/disability needs.

6.13 The NPPF (para 77, Feb 2019 version) states that, in some circumstances small, Rural Exception Sites may be used for housing if and when the needs of the community, such as those with existing family members or those with an employment connection, need accommodation. These sites would not normally be used for housing but can be identified and used for affordable homes for local people in perpetuity. Currently a site for 4 affordable units has been identified in Alston Close. These have yet to be constructed but planning permission has been granted. The site will solely provide affordable homes, exceeding the Emerging Joint Local Plan draft Policy SP02 - Affordable Housing recommendation for any site of 0.5 ha or more.

6.14 As the specific needs of people with a local connection to Newton change over The Plan period to 2036, it is considered important that opportunities for new residential development providing rural exception housing are taken. Any

such proposals would need to satisfactorily address the wider policy matters in The Plan, including design and views.

6.15 Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes outside the settlement boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:

- always remains affordable;
- is for people in housing need that are unable to buy or rent properties in the village at open-market prices; and
- is offered to people with a demonstrated local connection such as through direct family connections or work.

Where there is no need, is then offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.

6.16 This should be achieved through a legal agreement attached to any planning consent. More guidance on local connections criteria is provided in the Babergh Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

## **POLICY NEWT 2: AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON RURAL EXCEPTION SITES**

1. Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites outside the settlement boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:
  - a. remains affordable in perpetuity;
  - b. is for people that are in housing need because they are unable to buy or rent properties in Newton village at open-market prices;
  - c. is offered, in the first instance, to people with a demonstrated local connection, as defined by the Babergh Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Where there is no local connection, a property should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.
2. These restrictions should be delivered through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing. Applications for such development will be considered in relation to the appearance and character of the surrounding area, the potential impact on residential amenity and highway safety.
3. To be acceptable, proposals should demonstrate that a local need exists which cannot be met by applying normal planning policy for the provision of affordable homes in association with market housing. Any application for affordable housing in respect of this policy should be accompanied by a detailed needs assessment and the accommodation proposed should contribute to meeting this proven need.
4. In exceptional circumstances, a small number of market homes will be permitted where demonstrated that these are financially essential to facilitate the delivery of affordable units.

## 6. Theme 1. Development and Character

### Objective 2: Character

To preserve and enhance the character of Newton as a rural village

### Key Issues

- Ensure new development preserves and enhances the character of Newton
- Design and build characteristics of small developments to be appropriate to the layout and character of Newton village

### Background

6.17 Newton's population according to the census of 2011 was 495. It is believed to be closer to 505 in 2019.

6.18 There are 229 dwellings in the village of which 37 are Grade II listed properties. The 14th century All Saints Church is Grade II\*. Additional buildings include the Saracens Head public house, a village hall, formerly the village school (1835 - 1938), and the War Memorial, laid down in 1920 to remember the considerable loss of 20 men to the village, in WW1. Another name was added in memory of the single soldier lost between 1939 - 1945.

6.19 All Saints Church is of flint construction, rebuilt in the 14th century to replace an earlier Norman structure including the north, oldest, doorway, believed to date from the mid 12th century. Following extensive renovation in the 20th century the Nave is now overseen by the Churches Conservation Trust, leaving the chance to accommodate monthly Church services. The Church is located in the north of the village, curiously further than a mile from the Old Rectory, in Rectory Road, which dates from the 17th century.



*Door into the nave of Newton Church*

6.20 The Saracens Head is arguably the most significant village amenity for villagers and passers-by alike. Its present structure is predominantly 18th century timber frame built on fragments of an existing 15th century frame, with further refurbishments in the 20th century. The building is L-shaped, and there are two storeys. From around 1850 - 1950 the Saracens Head was owned by the Glass family, during which time it served as an ale house and provided accommodation.



*The Saracens Head*

## Heritage Assets

6.21 Although there is no designated Conservation Area in the village, there are a number of distinctive historic assets that, in combination, are essential to maintain and preserve because they reflect the local character of Newton. In particular, the area around The Green is of significant importance because the 45-acre open space is flanked by listed buildings, dwellings of significant interest and a designated ancient monument. Numerous important trees, hedges and other natural features such as ancient ponds are also situated within The Green. Consequently The Green is classified in draft Policy LP30 of the Emerging Joint Local Plan as a Designated Open Space. Therefore, any development proposals within this area will need to demonstrate how they are sensitive to the special characteristics of this area.

6.22 Within the parish boundary there are 37 Listed Buildings. All are protected by national planning policy. They make an important contribution to the distinctiveness and character of the parish.



*Newton Hall*

## Development Design Considerations

6.23 In 1953 dwellings in Newton were a mixture of historic buildings, farms and tied cottages aligned to Newton Hall. Newton's architecture changed significantly between 1970 and 1978 with the development of Links View situated off the A134 and the small estates leading from Church Road. House designs were a mixture of privately owned, sheltered accommodation and council housing. Between 1978 and the early

part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century new development slowed considerably. In 2011 3 large detached dwellings were built in Whisper Wood followed by a further 8 in 2017 located opposite the Saracens Head Public House. The Housing and Historic Environment Survey (2018) raised a number of concerns about the location of new buildings and their impact on the character and appearance of the village. Villagers felt that in the future, new developments should respect the scale, layout and design of existing dwellings in the vicinity of the site.



*Long range of 17<sup>th</sup> Century cottages*



*17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Century timber frame house*



*18<sup>th</sup> Century cottage*

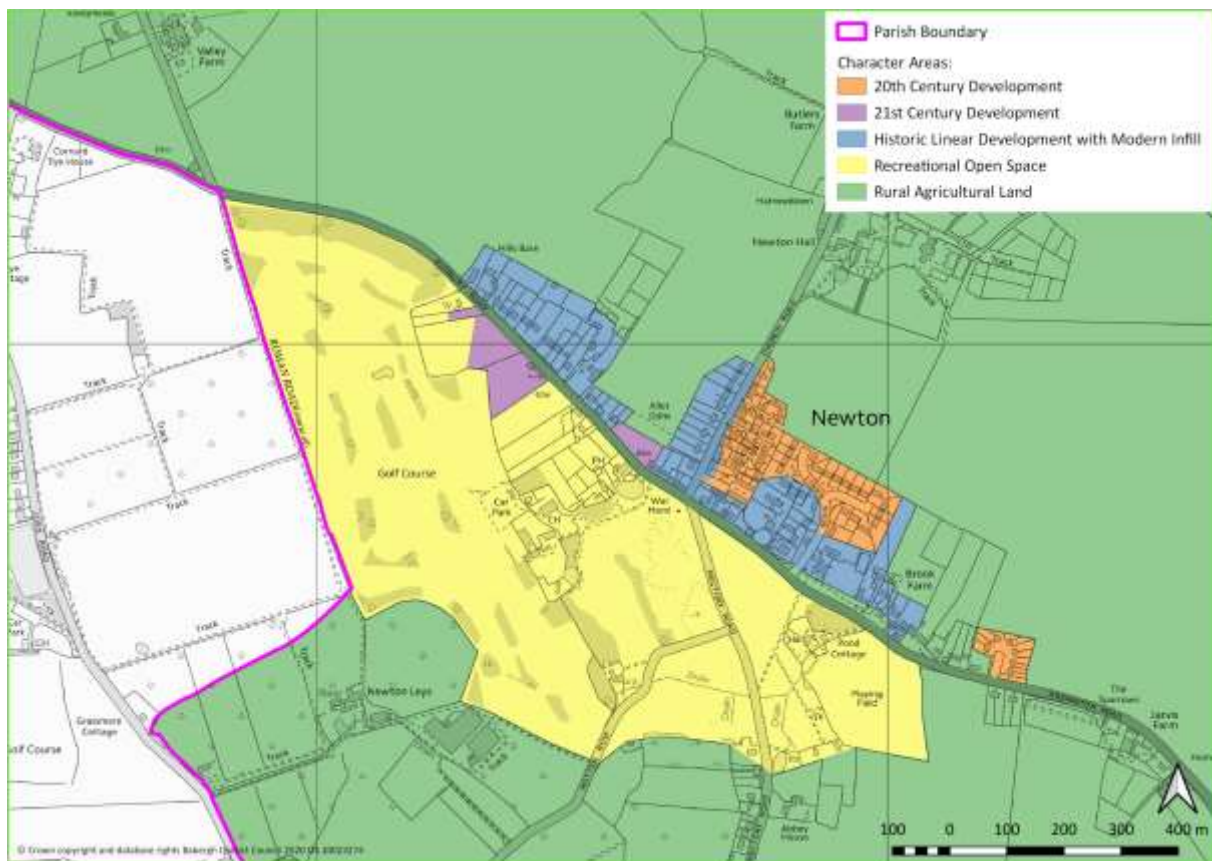


6.24 As part of the development of The Neighbourhood Plan, a Character Area Assessment was undertaken for Newton. Appendix 2. Five distinct character areas were identified in Newton parish and are shown on Map 4:

1. Rural Agricultural Land
2. Recreational Open Space
3. Historic Linear Development with Modern Infill
4. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Development
5. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Development

6.25 It is important that development respects and contributes towards the positive characteristics of each character area. This should include matters such as boundary treatments.

6.26 One particularly notable feature of the residential development in Newton – mainly in Character Areas 3 to 5 – is the presence of private gardens. Whilst not an uncommon feature for most areas, these are particularly sensitive areas in Newton, as most development has been – and will continue to be – infill development. As a result, large residential gardens could be brought forward for development. In most cases, such development would result in the unacceptable loss of residential gardens through development ‘cramming’. Not only would this result in a loss of amenity for residents but would have a major detrimental impact on the setting of the character areas of Newton, a rural village. It is therefore necessary for policy to prevent such development.



**Map 4: Newton Character Areas**

### **POLICY NEWT 3: CHARACTER AND DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT**

1. Proposals for new development must reflect the character and appearance of the surrounding area and demonstrate high quality design. Where applicable, reference should be made to the identified features of the relevant character area as identified on the Policies Map.
2. The design and layout of development must recognise key features of the landscape, built character and heritage and seek to reflect these through:
  - a. the use of good quality materials that complement the existing palette of materials used within the area; and
  - b. the scale and mass of buildings being in keeping with those that surround them.
3. Boundary treatments are particularly important to the setting of development. Residential proposals should include details of boundary treatments and other means of enclosure and demonstrate how the boundaries between properties and public space will enhance the environmental setting. Boundary treatments must be appropriate to ensure they are long lasting.
4. Development is encouraged to maximise sustainable design and construction techniques and to incorporate a range of energy efficiency features into any new or renovated buildings and supporting infrastructure.
5. Development of new dwellings that involves the loss of garden space where this would cause harm to the local area's prevailing character and setting will not be permitted.

## 7. Theme 2 Natural Environment and Sustainability

### Objective 3: Natural Environment

To protect local green spaces and wildlife habitats that are valued by the community

#### Key Issues

- Protect and preserve Newton's open green spaces, footpaths, ponds, allotments and countryside views
- Protect and preserve the rich wildlife, ecology and biodiversity in and around the village
- Promote an environmentally friendly village and preserve environmental assets

#### Background

7.1 Newton is a rural area with a wealth of green spaces hosting flora, fauna and wildlife, some of which are rare and protected species. A local village survey (2018) reports the importance villagers place on these local environmental amenities such as parks, golf course, walks and allotments. Appendix 1b. These help to improve the health and wellbeing of adults and children alike.

7.2 Many would like to see more circular walks around the village.

7.3 The range of wildlife, flora, fauna and ecology is well documented in English Nature's Inventory of Ancient Woodland, The Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service, Biodiversity in Newton (2019) and the Newton Green Golf Course Pond Management Recommendations (2015). Parts of the churchyard surrounding All Saints Church are designated and managed conservation/ wildlife areas.

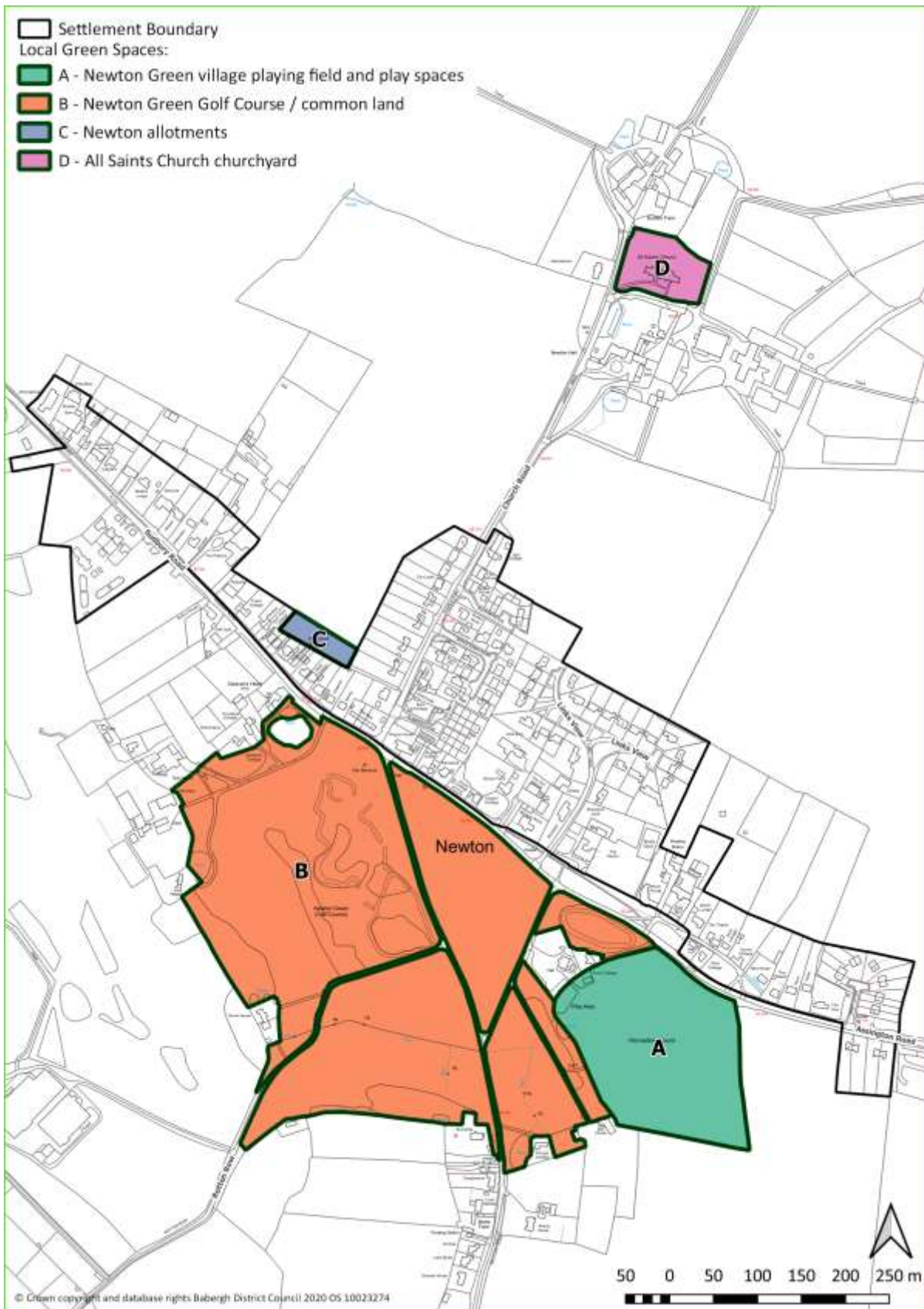


*Managed Wildlife Area*

#### Local Green Spaces

7.4 The Green and open spaces in the village, in particular those south of the A134, play an important and historic part in the village and its setting. This is also recognised in the recently published Babergh and Mid Suffolk Open Space Study (May 2019). With reference to that and our own assessment (see Local Green Spaces Justification document Appendix 3) four sites have been identified that qualify for designation as Local Green Spaces: These are shown on Map 5 and are:

- a. Newton village playing field and play spaces – the only recreational area of significance serving the village and a common location for community events.
- b. Newton Green Golf Course/common land – an area with many ecological assets where villagers can take a walk and enjoy the panoramic vistas that define Newton.
- c. Newton allotments – the only allotments serving Newton, located in a tranquil and peaceful spot.
- d. All Saints Church churchyard – a managed wildlife area which, along with the church, roots the village to its historical past in a tranquil setting.



Map 5 Local Green Spaces



Newton Green village playing field and play space



Newton Green golf course / common land



Allotments



All Saint's Church

#### **POLICY NEWT 4: LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

1. The following areas shown on map 5 and on the Policies Map are designated as Local Green Spaces:
  - a. Newton Green village playing field and play spaces
  - b. Newton Green Golf Course / common land
  - c. Newton allotments
  - d. All Saints Church churchyard
  
2. Development in the Local Green Spaces will be consistent with national policies for Green Belts.

## Local landscape features

7.5 Parts of the grounds of the 14th century All Saints Church are designated as Commonwealth War Graves but there are no designated conservation areas in the village. However, there are several distinctive landscape features and environmental assets that are essential to the character of Newton. In particular the area around The Green has a number of important trees, hedgerows and other natural features including the ponds.



*Notable features include 5 fluctuating ponds*

7.6 A large proportion of The Green is mowed regularly and is used and managed by Newton Golf Club and Newton Green Trust. Areas cut less frequently continue to support a species-diverse acid grassland flora such as Heather, Mouse-Ear Hawkweed, Heath Bedstraw and Tomentil. Notable features include 5 fluctuating ponds which are colonised by a range of Aquatic and emergent vegetation including Water-Crowfoot and Yellow Flag, Water Mint, Water Forget-Me-Not, Water Pepper and Water-Starwort. Great Crested Newts and Common Lizards (protected priority species) have been recorded as well as the rare Purple Stem Cat s Tail.



It is important that development does not have a detrimental effect not only on these significant wildlife assets but also on the landscape features which define Newton.

## Views

7.7 Given the location of Newton, views across the village green and surrounding countryside are of high importance to its character and sense of rurality.

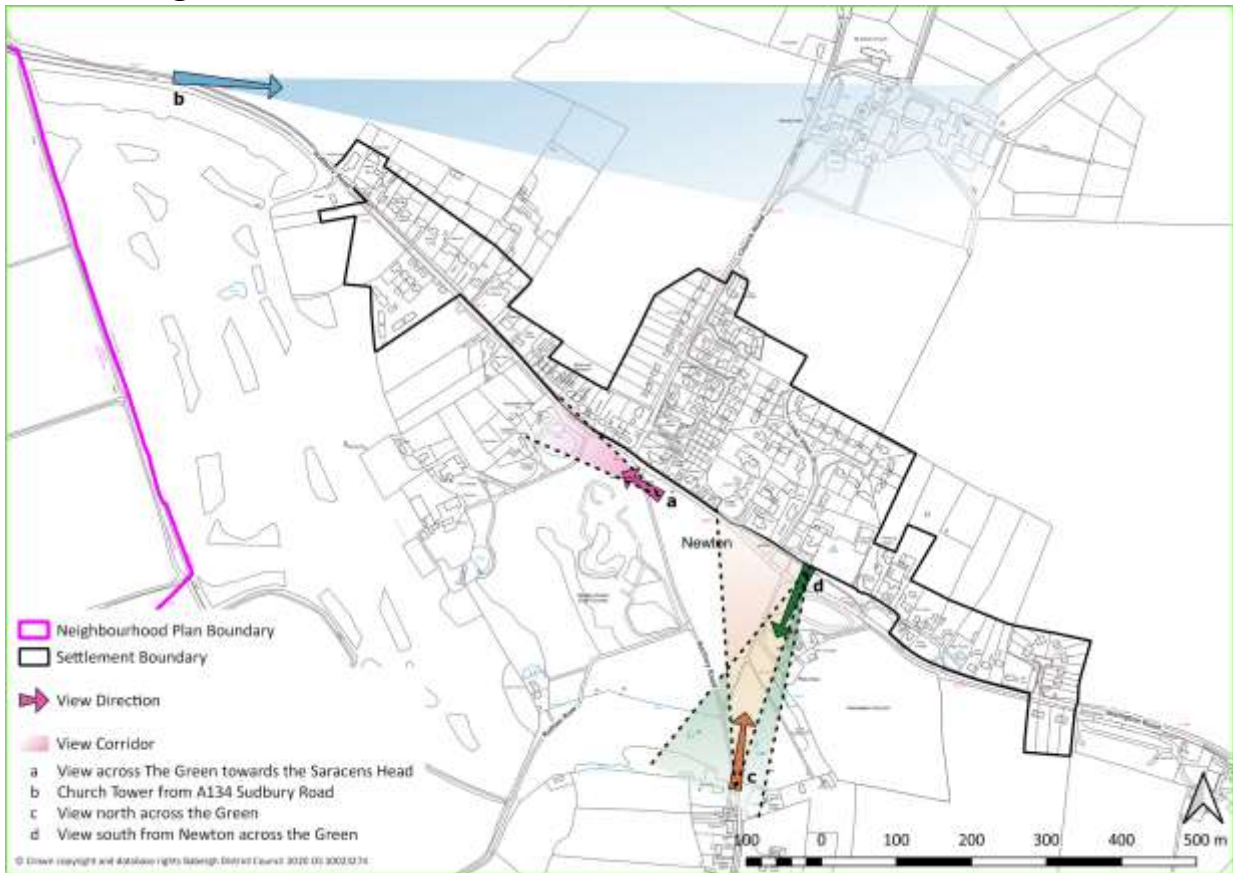
7.8 During the preparation of this plan, an assessment of views from public areas was undertaken to determine which are the most important in terms of the village landscape. These are farmland views, the village green/golf course, the range of trees and natural hedgerows which give varied colours and texture throughout the seasons. Map 6 shows the four views which are considered to be of significance.



*View across the fields to the church*

7.9 Inconsiderate development will have a detrimental impact on the landscape setting of the village and will not be supported. When proposals for development in the village are being prepared, it will be necessary to take account of the impact on views and demonstrate how the buildings can be satisfactorily accommodated within the landscape.

## Views of Significance



### Map 6 Views of Significance



*View A. Across The Green to the Saracens Head*



*View B: Church tower from A134 Sudbury Road*  
Newton Neighbourhood Plan







*View C. North across The Green*



*View D. South from Newton across The Green*



### **POLICY NEWT 5: PROTECTION OF LOCAL LANDSCAPE AND VIEWS**

1. Development proposals are expected to preserve or enhance the high quality landscape of Newton Parish.
2. Notable features on the landscape such as mature trees, hedgerows and ponds must be retained and incorporated into the design and layout of any development. Any proposals for development outside the settlement boundary must demonstrate that they will not have a detrimental impact on the landscape, particularly in terms of their location, layout and scale.
3. Development proposals should not detract from the key features of the following views of significance as shown on Map 6 and the Policies Map:
  - a. View across The Green towards the Saracens Head
  - b. View to church tower from A134 Sudbury Road
  - c. View north across The Green
  - d. View south from Newton across The Green

## 7. Theme 2 Natural Environment and Sustainability

### Objective 4: Sustainability

To improve the resilience of the village against the impacts of climate change

- Support for the development of renewable energy schemes
- Promotion of energy efficiency measures
- Safeguarding of green spaces, wildlife and biodiversity
- Support for forms of low carbon transport

### Key Issues

- The potential impact of Climate and Species Emergency on the village of Newton
- The range and extent of possible actions relevant to a hinterland village in responding to the challenges of climate change
- The requirements and limitations of current and future regulations and legislation
- Concern to maintain green spaces, wildlife and biodiversity

### Background

7.10 The UK Government has committed the UK to be net zero carbon by 2050; Suffolk County Council declared a Climate Emergency in April 2019, pledging to make Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030. Babergh District Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019. Newton's Neighbourhood Plan aims to support both local and national policy in achieving these goals.

7.11 In September 2019 The Neighbourhood Plan team held a consultation morning in the Village Hall. Residents of Newton were invited to

complete a survey with the aim of gauging the level of interest in working to mitigate the effects of climate change. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with over 70% of respondents consistently backing measures to tackle energy efficiency, support wildlife and biodiversity, improve sustainable transport and potentially support community renewable energy schemes. Appendix 1b.

7.12 The effects of climate change are far-reaching and will affect all aspects of life in Newton. In reflection of this, measures which may mitigate some of the effects of climate change have been integrated into The Plan where they fit best.



*Country lane*

### Energy efficiency

7.13 According to data from Suffolk Observatory, in 2017 11% of houses in Newton ward experienced fuel poverty, which is above the Suffolk average. An estimated 96% of fuel poor houses have poorly insulated homes and a high proportion of households in Newton rely on oil central heating.

7.14 With fuel prices set to rise it is vital that we ensure that new developments are energy efficient. Alterations to existing buildings should also be designed with energy reduction in mind. High priority must be given to renewable energy measures within building design.

7.15 The design and standard of any new development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions. This includes:

- Siting and orientation to optimise passive solar gain.
- The use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials.
- Installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing; grey water collection and recycling systems installed in new developments as standard.
- Non-residential developments should aim to meet the Buildings Research Establishment BREEAM building standard excellent.
- Any new development to incorporate on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels.
- The retrofit of heritage properties/assets is encouraged to reduce energy demand and to generate renewable energy where appropriate, providing it safeguards historic characteristics and development is done with engagement and permissions of relevant organisations.
- Alterations to existing buildings must be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with sustainable design and construction standards.

7.16 Accordingly, Policy LP25 of the Emerging Joint Local Plan already requires development to maximise its contribution to the mitigation of climate change through sustainable energy use and energy-efficient design.

## Potential for renewable energy schemes

7.17 In order to meet net zero carbon targets it is necessary that we use renewable sources of energy. Solar photo-voltaic panels, anaerobic digestion and local biomass facilities are renewable sources of energy that could potentially be utilised by a Community Energy Group to power Newton's energy needs and bring revenue back into the village.



*Installing solar panels*

7.18 Proposals for individual and community scale energy from projects including solar photo-voltaic panels, anaerobic digestion and local biomass facilities will be considered taking into account the following three issues:

- The siting and scale of the development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape.
- The proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents.
- The proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on any features of biodiversity or natural importance.

7.19 Sites suggested by villagers during a consultation include the Village Hall, the field behind the allotments, Rogers Farm and part of the former Wheldons orchards. It will be necessary to engage with landowners to see if these community aspirations can be taken forward.

## **POLICY NEWT 6: RENEWABLE ENERGY**

Renewable energy schemes, particularly those that provide a direct benefit to the community, will be encouraged, subject to their impact on the landscape.

## Maximising wildlife and biodiversity

7.20 Newton has several significant biodiversity assets, including Edwardstone Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the County Wildlife Sites of Newton Green, Alstrop Wood and Lord's Wood. In addition, there are several protected species records including the otter and water vole along the River Box. This sensitive habitat is a vital part of the wider ecological network.

7.21 Newton has lost a significant number of its orchards in the last 5 years, with the consequent loss of habitat for many native wildlife species and migratory visitors, eg, hedgehogs, fieldfares. Insect and plant populations will continue to decline as habitats adapt to the changing climate.

7.22 The incorporation of green walls and green roofs will be encouraged in the design of new development to encourage insects and other wildlife.



*Hedgehog hollow*

7.23 Planning applications for new dwellings should clearly demonstrate how they have incorporated measures to encourage biodiversity and encourage movement of species through the neighbourhood, e.g. bat boxes, hedgehog tunnels. New planting schemes can support bees and other pollinators by including nectar-rich plants. Also, veteran trees should be incorporated into landscaping in new developments and protected from damage by fencing or provision of circular hedging.

7.24 Surface water flooding created by development can also be an issue. Well-designed Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) can address these impacts. They also provide an opportunity to enhance biodiversity as well-designed schemes can provide amenity value and green infrastructure of benefit to wildlife.

7.25 Poorly designed SuDS schemes typically fail to mitigate the growing threat of water stress through effective water capture and management. For example, when rainwater or greywater is captured, it can be used to keep greenery adequately watered and to generally cool the ambient temperature of the built development. There are many other examples of creative use of space within developments where a 'multi-value' approach to SuDS provision has been adopted. Such an approach is encouraged where SuDS provision is required.



*Allotment maintenance*

## **POLICY NEWT 7: MAXIMISING WILDLIFE AND BIODIVERSITY**

1. Development proposals should provide biodiversity net gain and protect County Wildlife Sites and the sensitive environment of the River Box in the neighbourhood area. Proposals should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habits, ecological networks and protect and restore priority species.
2. All new housing proposals shall incorporate provision for local wildlife to thrive. Specific examples of such provision include but are not limited to:
  - a. Bird and bat boxes and hedgehog runs;
  - b. Measures to support character species of fauna and flora;
  - c. Planting schemes including native species of trees and shrubs and nectar-rich plants for bees and other pollinators;
  - d. Veteran tree retention;
  - e. A sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) approach to natural water management and flood resilience, including soft, green landscaping and wetland habitat close to where people live.
3. Planting, landscaping and features which encourage the net gain of habitats for wildlife in new development should connect wider ecological networks where possible.
4. Development that is required to provide SuDS is expected to be provided on site, unless there are clear reasons why this is not possible. SuDS provision must demonstrate how its design will enhance wildlife and biodiversity as well as minimise the impacts of flooding. Such development is encouraged to demonstrate the use of a wide range of creative SuDS solutions, for example through the provision of SuDS as part of green spaces, green roofs, permeable surfaces and rain gardens. Only where it is demonstrably unviable or not feasible will an absence of any on-site SuDS provision be permissible in such developments. Increasing the sustainability of water resources through rain water harvesting and grey water recycling is encouraged.
5. Development proposals should be supported by a drainage scheme maintenance plan which demonstrates a schedule of activities, access points, outfalls and any biodiversity considerations. The maintenance plan should also include an indication of the adopting or maintaining authority or organisation and may require inclusion within a register of drainage features.

## 8. Theme 3 Safer Environment, Community Assets and Amenities

### Objective 5: Safer Environment

To promote a safer environment for pedestrians and other road users through the village

- Promote safe crossing solutions for the A134
- Promote environmentally friendly, accessible transport option
- Appropriate access and safety on minor roads considered in relation to new development

### Key Issues

- The need for safe crossing points along the A134 in our village
- Reduction in the speed of traffic using the A134 with high visibility speed signs and appropriate traffic calming systems
- Speed restriction measures and safe passing points required for minor roads
- New business developments to access public highways of the appropriate quality and must not use minor roads, private roads or tracks
- Provide for sufficient parking for new dwellings
- The need for accessible walking and cycling routes to and from Sudbury and adjacent villages
- Improved frequency of public transport to and from the village. Encourage car sharing schemes in the village

### Background

8.1 The A134 is a very busy road that runs through the centre of Newton, effectively separating the village into two sections. For many years villagers have expressed their deep concern about how difficult and dangerous it is to cross this increasingly busy road. To access almost all local leisure activity and amenities a large proportion of the village has to cross this road. This objective comes under the umbrella of promoting a safe, sustainable and active transport system identified in the Emerging Joint Local Plan and the NPPF (Feb 2019). This Plan aims to promote increased walking for local journeys and one important aspect of this is improving the safety of pedestrians.

8.2 The A134 takes traffic to and from Sudbury, Colchester, Hadleigh and Ipswich. There is little doubt that the volume of traffic will increase in the coming years due to the small infill developments that have taken place in our village and the significant housing developments as identified in the Emerging Joint Local Plan. We recognise and accept that it is beyond our remit to reduce the amount of vehicles passing through our village. However, it is incumbent on Newton Parish Council to lobby Babergh and Mid Suffolk to ensure its Travel Plan delivers a safe, sustainable and active transport system.



*Residents requested a safe crossing point on the A134*

8.3 In addition to the main road the village has a number of minor, often single track roads. Increasing traffic on these roads has identified a need for speed restrictions and dedicated passing points to promote safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Recently the unauthorised redevelopment of the orchard barns has led to an increase in traffic in Rotten Row and across the golf course private road.

8.4 New homes require sufficient parking to avoid obstruction of the highways. Development must demonstrate that it meets the standards required by the Suffolk County Council Parking Guidance.



*Promote environmentally friendly transport*

8.5 A survey of Newton villagers identified a wish to promote environmentally friendly and accessible transport, including identifying increased cycle and walking routes and improving public transport to local towns. Development must consider these issues and, where possible, use good design to provide meaningful alternatives to the car for local journeys. Appendix 1b

8.6 Villagers are also concerned about road safety and the speed of traffic using the A134. The installation of permanent, high visibility speed signs and appropriate traffic calming systems, including the reintroduction of the community speed watch scheme, can go some way to ensuring that the roads are safer for all. Villages are also seeking the installation of a zebra crossing to provide a safe place to cross. Whilst this is not a policy matter, it is an important action which will continue to be advocated by the Parish Council.

8.7 The Plan supports Suffolk County Council's Green Access Strategy (2020-2030), which sets out the Council's commitment to enhance public rights of way, including new linkages and upgrading routes where there is a need. The strategy also seeks to improve access for all and to support healthy and sustainable access between communities and services through development funding and partnership working.

#### **POLICY NEWT 8: ENSURING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND ENCOURAGING WALKING**

1. Development proposals are encouraged to incorporate features and layouts in their design which encourage people to walk rather than use less sustainable modes of travel such as the private car for local journeys. This includes providing access and improvements to footways, public rights of way, circular walks and other routes into the countryside and to local services and facilities.
2. Proposals for new development must provide safe access for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians with adequate visibility. In particular, development proposals that generate an increased need for parking must ensure that all vehicle parking is provided in accordance with adopted SCC Parking Standards in order to minimise obstruction of the local road network.

## 8. Theme 3 Safer Environment, Community Assets and Amenities

### Objective 6: Community Assets and Amenities

To identify and enhance community assets and identify opportunities for new amenities

- Enhance community facilities and services
- Extend physical amenities
- Utilise CIL money to provide improved recreational facilities

### Key Issues

Promotion of a vibrant village community by:

- maintaining and promoting the use of green spaces and community assets
- extending the range of physical amenities available for community use
- identifying additional circular walks not involving crossing the A134
- pursuing avenues to re-open a village shop

### Background

8.8 Newton's current community amenities include the 14th Century All Saints Church, the Saracens Head Public House (a former 14th century coaching inn), a village hall, playing field, local walks and a community allotment. The village green was converted to a golf course. Villagers can play the first nine holes of golf on The Green for free. A mobile library visits fortnightly.

8.9 The Saracens Head Public House and Restaurant is owned by a Newton resident and is a valued community hub used by the majority of

villagers. In addition to normal business it is frequently used to celebrate family events. It is also used to host events to raise funds for charity and cater for annual village celebrations.



*Saracens Head*



*Village Hall*

8.10 The village hall was originally built as Newton Village School in 1835. It is used extensively by residents and non-residents for a range of purposes and is managed by a Village Hall Committee. Some of the uses include hosting The Fireside Club for older village residents, children's party venue, village meetings and whole village entertainment e.g. quiz nights, coffee mornings to raise funds for village societies and charities. A wide range of physical activities suitable for all ages also take place e.g. yoga, dancing.

8.11 The village Playing Field provides an important resource, easily accessible for those with reduced mobility. Villagers of all ages value this amenity for walking, playing sport and general physical activities. Seating enables residents to relax and gives opportunities for social interaction. It also hosts annual community events including bonfire nights, summer fetes. The field provides a wildlife habitat particularly around the margins adjoining farmland.





*Playing field and play area*

8.12 The attractive 14th century church is used for baptisms, weddings and funerals. A religious service is held monthly and regular prayer groups take place. Community events such as the Autumn Show and Carol Concert are held there. The good acoustics are much appreciated by professional musicians and their audience when concerts are held in this historic building.



*Village 14<sup>th</sup> Century Church*

8.13 Newton Green Golf Club provides local employment and is a sports resource giving free use to villagers on parts of the course. They maintain the local village green and playing field in collaboration with Newton Green Trust. The golf club also welcomes villagers to their clubhouse and restaurant.



*Newton golf course*

8.14 The creation of Newton Community Allotments has promoted the development of a new social group and working party. They have taken unused land and turned it into a productive plot growing vegetables and flowers.



*Community allotments*

8.15 The Amenities Survey (2018) highlighted that these amenities are valued by the community with many using The Green, golf course and playing field. Footpaths are well used, however additional circular walks would be valued. Appendix 1c.

8.16 The village shop closed in 1995/96 and its re-establishment has been identified as a key issue over time. This could possibly be undertaken in the form of a community shop which could also provide a café to act as a meeting place. Unlike facilities such as the Saracens Head, this would be in community ownership and therefore its future would be in the hands of the villagers that use it. Realistically such a facility would need to be either in an existing building or in the grounds of an existing community facility such as the village hall. Proposals for such uses, including those outside the settlement boundary, will be supported.

8.17 Villagers also highlighted a desire for increased physical amenities such as a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), tennis court and outdoor gym equipment to benefit the community. In February 2020, Newton Parish Council was granted planning permission to install the MUGA, new play equipment and outdoor adult fitness equipment. Having secured the necessary funding, the Parish Council is now installing the MUGA and equipment.

8.18 In providing improved sports facilities the Parish Council support West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in its role of ensuring suitable and sustainable primary health care services for the residents of Newton.

### **Businesses and employment**

8.19 The Local Business Survey, undertaken in February 2019, showed that at that time there were 7 operational businesses within the Newton settlement area. In addition there are also a small number of people working from home. Appendix 1d.

8.20 The most significant businesses provide a wide range of services – there is Newton Green Golf Club, the Saracens Head Public House, Mills Building Company, Homefield Shed Builders, Manders Auctioneers and Perrywoods Garden Centre. People working from home also provide a range of services including beauty and cosmetics, real estate, building work and garden maintenance.

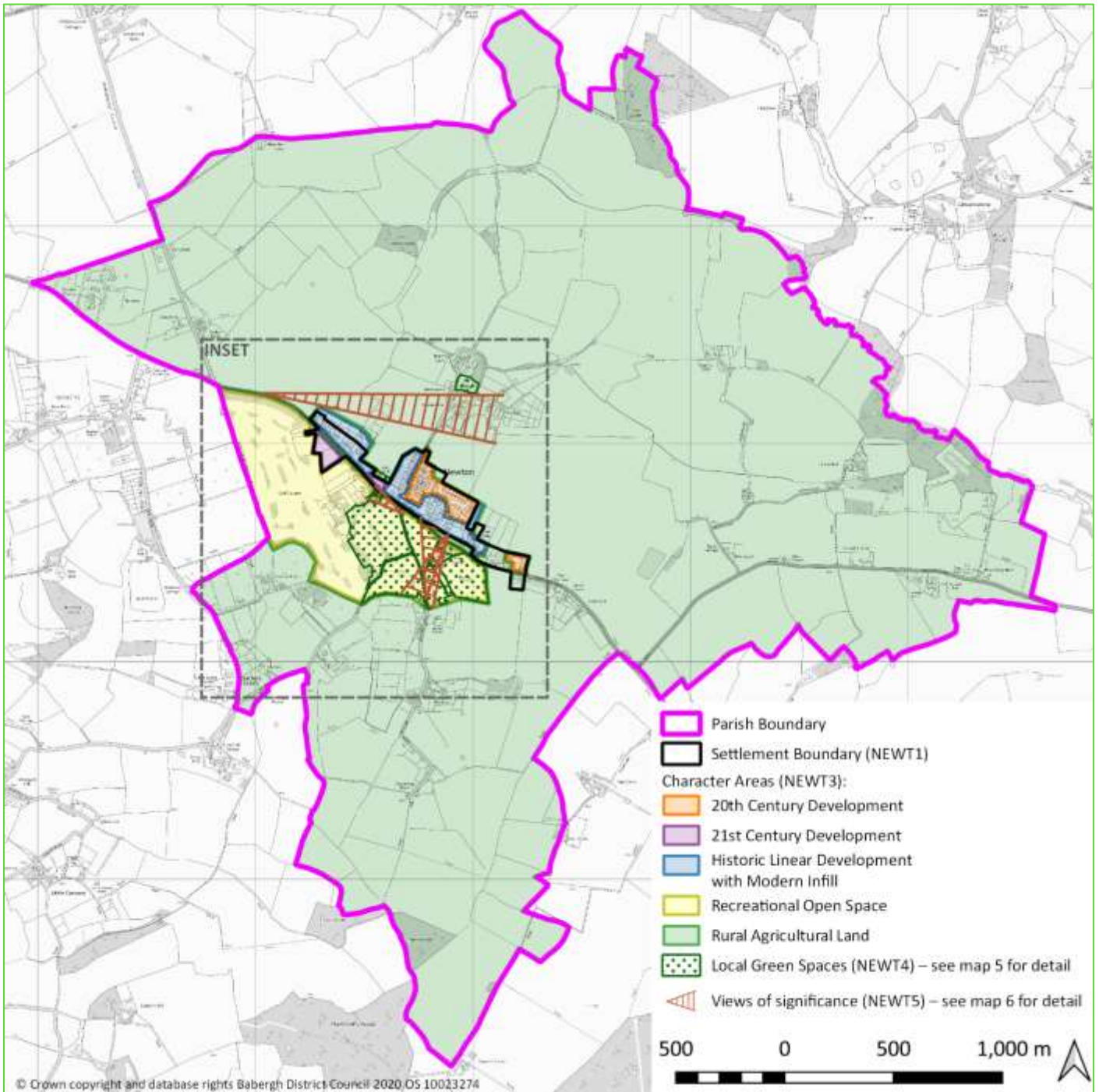
8.21 Although the number of businesses in Newton is very small, they contribute significantly to the prosperity, wellbeing and sustainability of the Parish. It is important to protect their businesses moving forward.

8.22 From the responses received to the survey, none of the businesses are requiring further land to expand in the future. Peerywoods Garden Centre plans to create 150 additional job opportunities but no additional agricultural land will be used. In light of this and the policies in the Emerging Joint Local Plan which protect and give flexibility to businesses when they do need to expand, it is not considered necessary for the Neighborhood Plan to include an employment policy.

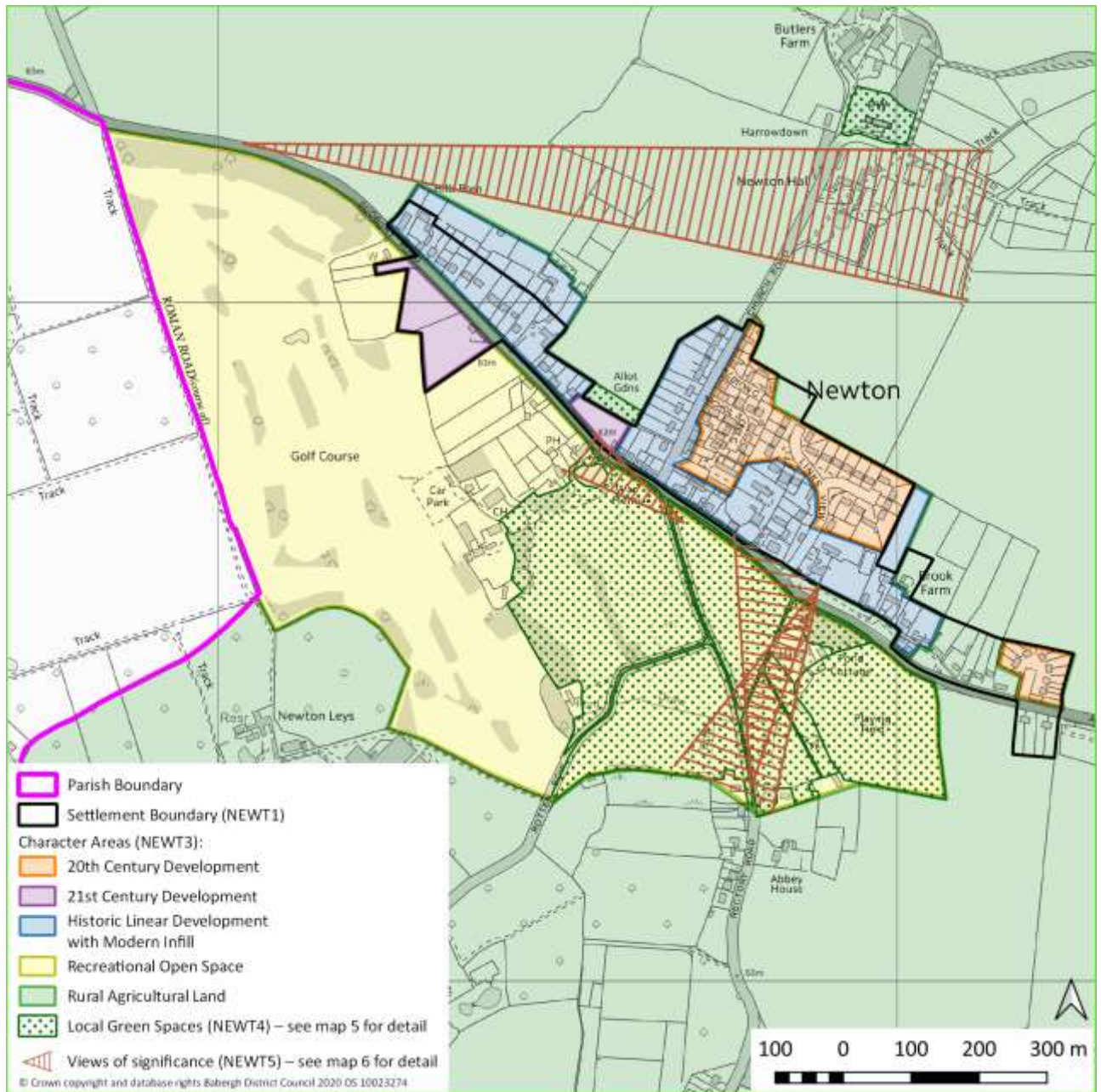
### **POLICY NEWT 9: PROVISION AND ENHANCEMENT OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

1. The provision and enhancement of community facilities and services in Newton that contribute to the quality of village life and improve the sustainability of the village are encouraged. In particular, proposals to provide a community shop/café will be strongly supported.
2. Proposals for the flexible use and/or expansion of existing buildings for community uses will be permitted, subject to demonstrating good design and that they do not have a significant impact on the landscape.

# Policies Map



# Inset Policies Map



## 9. Non-policy actions

9.1 Table 9.1 below identifies a series of actions that have arisen through the community engagement in preparing The Neighbourhood Plan. These were considered by the community to be important matters but do not necessarily require planning permission. As such, they are not the subject of planning policies in The Neighbourhood Plan. These non-policy actions will be reviewed in line with the rest of The Neighbourhood Plan as part of any subsequent review, to take account of changing circumstances and community aspirations.

9.2 Alongside the range of existing community facilities, it is considered that the provision of these additional facilities will be important to the continued prosperity of Newton and the wellbeing and resilience of the community.

**Table 9.1: Non-land use issues to be addressed**

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partner	Priority
<b>Theme 3 Objective 6: Community Assets and Amenities</b>			
Leisure facilities	To complete the upgrade of the playing field, including provision of a new Multi-Use Games Area, and gym equipment and develop the existing play areas.	Newton Parish Council, Babergh District Council	1st
Communications	To ensure the village hall has superfast broadband provision.	Newton Parish Council, Suffolk County Council	
<b>Theme 3 Objective 5: Safer Environment</b>			
Pedestrian safety	To continue working with both the District Council and County Council to ensure that traffic calming measures through Newton remain a priority.	Newton Parish Council, Babergh District Council, Suffolk County Council	2nd
Pedestrian safety	To lobby for the provision of a zebra crossing of the A134	Newton Parish Council, Babergh District Council, Suffolk County Council	
<b>Theme 2 Objective 1: Natural Environment</b>			
Biodiversity	To promote the ongoing natural environment survey identifying the diverse flora and fauna to secure, maintain and protect the diversity of species across local green spaces.	Newton Parish Council,	3rd
<b>Theme 2 Objective 3: Natural environment</b>			
Accessibility	To work with the community to develop more circular footpaths within the parish boundary.		4th

## Acknowledgements

Special thanks are due to.....

I would like to thank the Newton village community for their excellent support, engagement and interaction at each stage of The Plan's development. Little did we know what a challenge we were taking on when the Parish Council asked for volunteers. Throughout the process villagers have been actively involved and their views have informed a clear vision for the future.

I have special thanks to the Newton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group volunteers for their hours of commitment and tireless efforts to gather information, keep villagers informed and the production of our plan.

Many thanks go to:

Our area and road representatives who distributed surveys and newsletters ensuring villagers had up to date information:

Barry Coleman, Louise Evers, Paul and Sue Presland, Melanie Yolland,(2018) Laura Smith, Rita Schwenk, Teresa Parry, Jonathan Acton and John Hill.

Paul Presland, Vice Chair, provided the motivation and co-ordination to keep us on track, contributed to the safety theme and linked together key aspects of The Plan to the highest standard.

Kate Waterworth, Louise Evers & Jonathan Acton – Led environmental workshops and designed surveys to gather villagers' views on community assets and amenities. Their commitment and enthusiasm not only informed The Plan but led to the formation of the Community Allotments.

Jonathan Acton – led on the history of the village, defining key areas of importance of our heritage assets for inclusion in The Plan.

Teresa & Graham Parry – undertook secretarial duties superbly and ensured we were financial compliant.

Louise Evers, Laura Smith, Sue Presland, Rita Schwenk, Teresa Parry & John Hills – Their support and drive at the coffee mornings was key to the village interaction and evidence gathering on Sustainability, Environment, Community Assets and Safer Environment Themes.

Anthony & Kathryn Burdis – compiled the newsletters keeping villagers up to date and developed a plan format to integrate the outcomes of the fact finding and hard work of the committee.

Sarah Burdis – provided time and expertise to produce the Village Character Assessment.

In addition thanks are due to –

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Joanne Atkins: Wildlife Learning Officer, Suffolk Wildlife Trust

Thank you to all.

Barry Coleman  
Chair

# Newton Neighbourhood Plan



Today, Tomorrow, Together  
2018 to 2036

