

# Wherstead Neighbourhood Plan

2018-2037

Submission Draft Plan



Wherstead Parish Council - September 2022





Wherstead Neighbourhood Plan Committee on behalf of  
Wherstead Parish Council with the support of

**PLACES4PEOPLE** **P4P**  
PLANNING CONSULTANCY

# CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	5
2.	Wherstead Past and Present	8
3.	Planning Policy Context	11
4.	Vision and Objectives	13
5.	Planning Strategy	14
	Policy WTD 1 - Spatial Strategy	15
6.	<b>The Natural Environment and Landscape</b>	17
	Policy WTD 2 - Development Affecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	19
	Policy WTD 3 - Protecting Habitats and Wildlife Corridors	22
	Policy WTD 4 - Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation	23
	Policy WTD 5 - Protection of Important Views	24
	Policy WTD 6 - Dark Skies and Street Lighting	25
7.	<b>The Historic Environment</b>	27
	Policy WTD 7 - Heritage Assets	27
	Policy WTD 8 - Buildings of Local Heritage Significance	28
8.	<b>The Local Economy and Tourism</b>	29
	Policy WTD 9 - Existing Employment Sites	30
	Policy WTD 10 - Agricultural Related Employment Development	31
9.	<b>Development Design</b>	33
	Policy WTD 11 - Design Considerations	34
	Policy WTD 12 - Sustainable Building Practices	36
	Policy WTD 13 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage	37
	Policy WTD 14 - Parking Standards	38
10.	<b>Infrastructure and Services</b>	39
	Policy WTD 15 - Protecting Existing Services and Facilities	39
11.	<b>Travel and Highways</b>	40
	Policy WTD 16 - New Highways Infrastructure	40
	Policy WTD 17 - Public Rights of Way	41
	Policies Map	42
	Detailed Inset Maps	43
	Appendix 1 - Supporting Evidence Documents	45
	Glossary	46







# 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans, which establish planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood. These Plans, when properly made become part of the legal planning framework for the designated area.

1.2 A Neighbourhood Plan is, therefore, 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, objectives, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development.

1.3 Town and Parish councils are encouraged to produce their own Neighbourhood Plans enabling local people to have a say as to 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, that council is responsible for the preparation of the Plan. 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 adopted Local Plan.

## Why a Neighbourhood Plan for Wherstead

1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to provide a detailed layer of local policies which reflect the specific context of Wherstead, as well as providing up-to-date planning policies that complement those in the adopted Babergh Local Plan. When considering planning applications, the District Council will use the Neighbourhood Plan policies relevant to the proposal, as well as those in the adopted Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Occasionally the NPPF is updated and, in such circumstances, such changes will supersede the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.5 Under a planning strategy that focuses new development on the existing built-up areas of the village, the Plan covers six main topic areas:

- The natural environment
- The historic built environment
- The local economy and tourism
- Development design
- Infrastructure and services
- Travel

1.6 These areas form the basis for the content of the Plan and the distinct chapters cover the policies and aspirations for each topic. Each chapter contains a reminder of the relevant objectives and a summary of the relevant evidence collected during the preparation of the Plan, culminating in planning policies and, where appropriate, community aspirations and projects. Community aspirations do not form part of the “statutory” Neighbourhood Plan but are included to identify other areas of improvement and change residents have identified during the preparation of the Plan. The planning policies appear in boxes numbered WTD1, WTD2 etc, while separate boxes contain the non-statutory community aspirations.

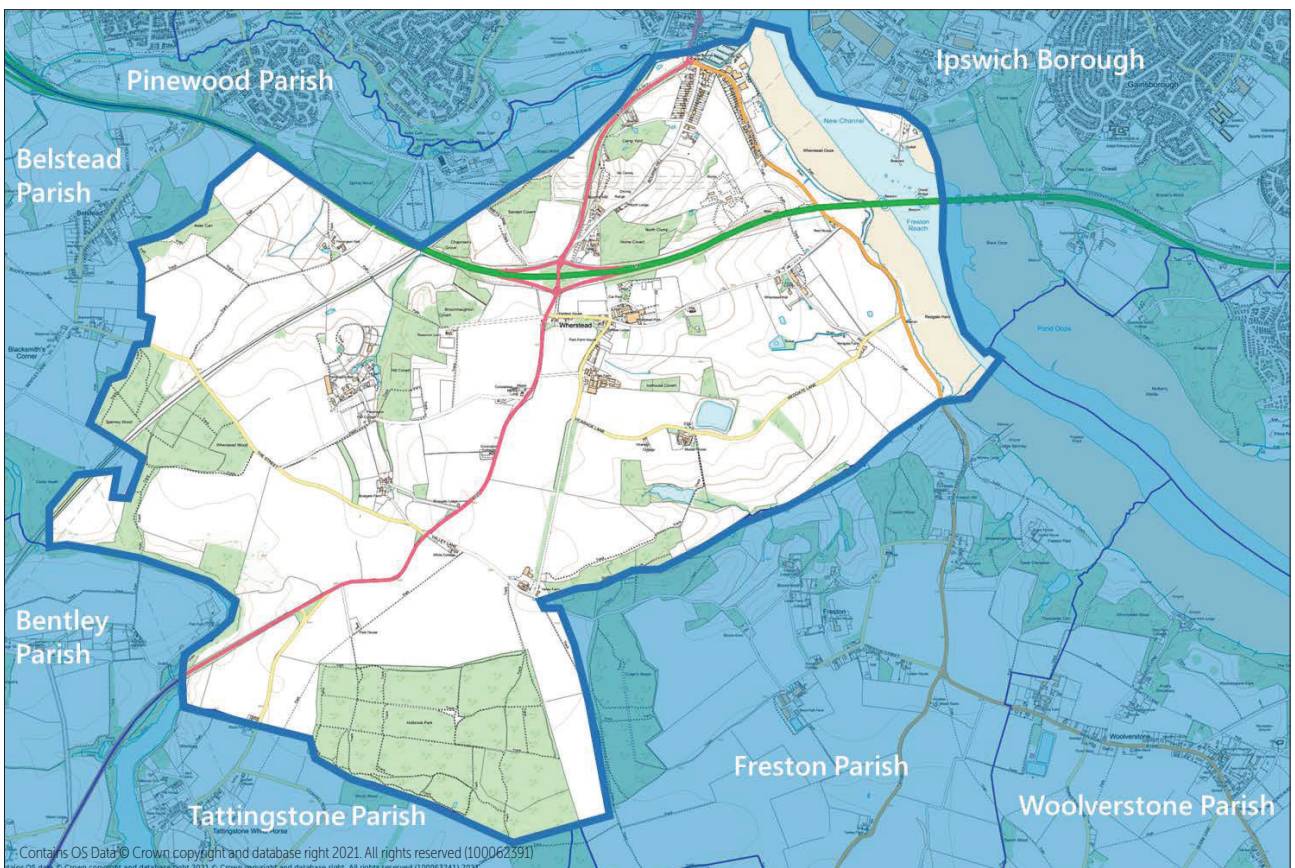
## How the Plan Has Been Prepared

1.7 The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require a neighbourhood plan to:

- 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.



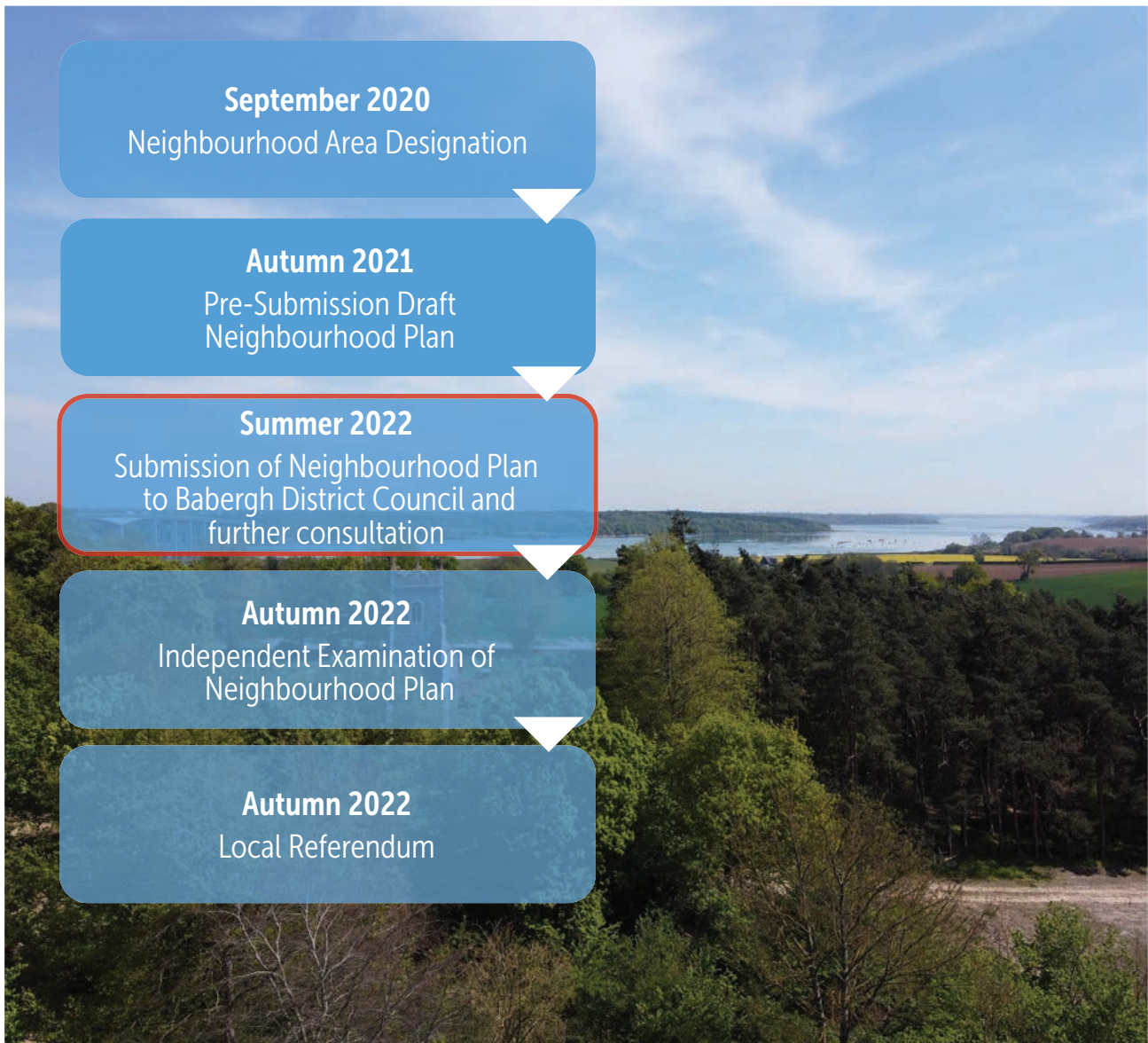
1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government's Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and, in particular, has involved local community engagement and the preparation of specialist reports to support the content of the Plan as identified in Appendix 1. In September 2020 the Parish Council submitted a request to Babergh District Council to designate the Parish, as illustrated on Map 1, as a Neighbourhood Area. That designation was made on 14 September 2020. A Residents' Survey was undertaken at the end of 2020 which allowed both online or paper responses and a total of 62 completed responses were received, representing just over 20% of the adult population. The results of Survey can be viewed on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website and have informed the content of the Neighbourhood Plan.



Map 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area



- 1.9 The Draft Neighbourhood Plan was the subject of the statutory “Pre-Submission” consultation for six weeks in October and November 2021. Following the consultation on this Draft Neighbourhood Plan, it needs to follow the steps illustrated before it can be adopted by Babergh District Council and be used when considering planning applications across the Parish.



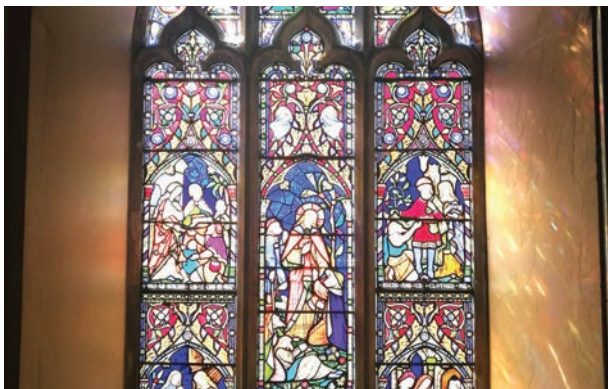


## 2. WHERSTEAD PAST AND PRESENT

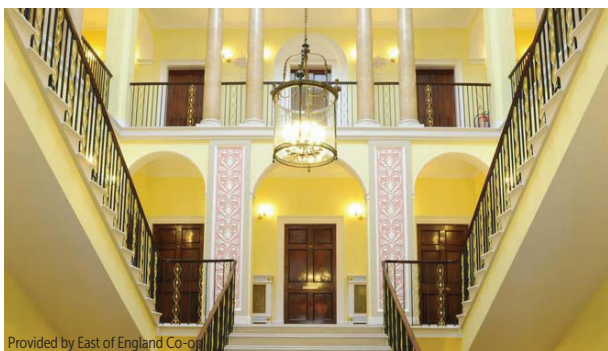
- 2.1 The first evidence of human activity in the Parish is represented by Palaeolithic implements found in a quarry in the Thorington Hall area. Finds of the Neolithic period include stone axe-heads, indicating forest clearance by the first farmers, and rubbish pits with pottery, indicating settlement, from a quarry at the top of Bourne Hill.
- 2.2 There is more evidence of the following Bronze Age and Iron Age old tracks and the ditches of fields and enclosures, long since filled and ploughed over, show as crop-marks from the air over much of the Parish, indicating extensive farming. There are also the remains of nine circular burial mounds, probably of Bronze Age date. The mounds have long since been ploughed flat and only the ditches which surrounded them remain to be seen from the air. A further burial mound probably existed near Thorington Hall as the skeleton of a late Neolithic or earlier Bronze Age youth, buried with a Beaker pot, was found there in the early 20th century.
- 2.3 Two of the ploughed burial mounds and some Iron Age rubbish pits were excavated by Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Unit prior to the construction of the A14/Ipswich Southern Bypass at the top of Bourne Hill in 1982. A further ring ditch was excavated in 1980 on the site of allotments south of the Belstead Brook and another at Valley Farm in 1999.
- 2.4 The sites of six Roman settlements, presumably small farms, are known in the Parish. An aerial photograph of one of these shows two large aisled buildings and a series of adjacent enclosures. A coin hoard was found in 1985 consisting of over 100 coins dating from AD 260-274. Two pottery kilns were excavated at the top of Bourne Hill in advance of quarrying in 1989-90.
- 2.5 The crossing of the Orwell, known in the Middle Ages as Downham Bridge, might well have started as a causeway and ford during the Roman period, with the Wherstead end at Redgate Hard and the other side at Pond Hall.
- 2.6 There are only a few recorded finds of Anglo-Saxon date from the Parish, but the pattern of settlement at the Norman Conquest is known from the account in the Domesday Book (1086 AD).
- 2.7 The entries, relating to what is now Wherstead Parish, can be fairly confidently identified with existing farming units which have survived more or less intact since that time: Wherstead Hall, Redgate Hall, Bourne Hall, Lees Farm, Pannington Hall, Bluegates and Thorington Hall. It is clear that in 1086 Wherstead, Pannington and Thorington were still separate settlements, all of which could have earlier Anglo-Saxon origins. Churches are mentioned for Pannington and Thorington but not for Wherstead.
- 2.8 The pattern of settlement throughout the medieval period varied very little from that at Domesday but Pannington and Thorington had been absorbed by Wherstead and formed one Parish and a new farm was established probably as a result of 13th century woodland clearance in Stall's Valley (Valley Farm).
- 2.9 The Churches of Pannington and Thorington disappeared during this time but Wherstead Church was built during the 12th century, and became the Parish Church. The Church of St Mary, Wherstead, is basically a Norman Structure. The Norman south doorway remains in use to enter the church and a similar doorway can still be seen, although now blocked on the north side. When the church was restored in 1862 Norman windows were found in the Nave walls at the tower end.
- 2.10 The chancel was built in the early 13th century probably replacing a Norman apsidal east end. The two small lancet windows are of this date, but the other Nave and Chancel windows were inserted in the 14th century. The tower was added in the 14th century and one bell, the tenor, is of this original date and was probably made in Norwich foundries.



2.11 Apart from the Church no medieval buildings survive in Wherstead. The church is isolated from the village which may indicate some medieval depopulation. The site of the medieval Wherstead Hall was surrounded by a large moat which can be seen south of the present Hall which replaced it in the 16th/ 17th century. All the farmhouses were rebuilt between 1500 and 1700 AD. Two ancient woodlands are known in the Parish (Spring Wood and Spinney/ Wherstead Woods) and a medieval deer park lay south of the church.

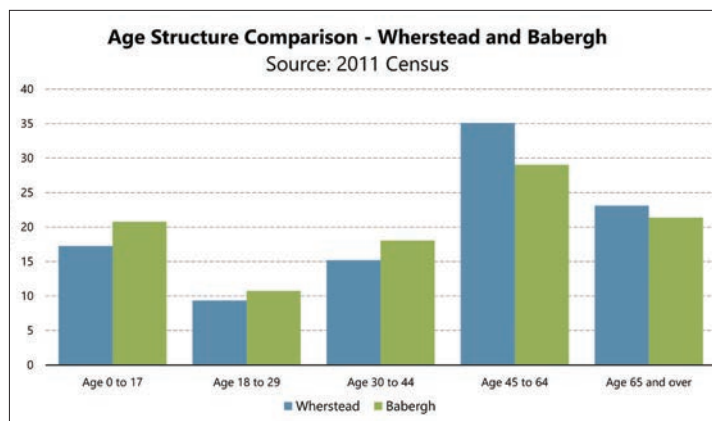


2.12 The Parish has sixteen domestic buildings of 16th-18th century date which are dispersed across the Parish. The Manor of Bourne Hall was granted to Henry VIII in 1528 and the hall dates to this period. A 5-bay timber-framed barn with brick noggin was unfortunately dismantled in the mid-1970s for re-erection in Surrey.



2.13 Wherstead Park is a fine two storied white brick mansion, with stone cornice and other dressings, largely the work of Sir Robert Harland in 1792 and set in parkland. A brickworks was in operation in the earlier 20th century adjacent to Bourne Terrace and clay extraction pits are visible as ponds in Camp Yard.

2.14 The village is now divided by the A14/Ipswich Southern Bypass built in 1982. Until the early 20th century, the only buildings to the north were Bourne Hall, The Ostrich Inn and Ostrich Cottages opposite. From the 1920s onwards, houses were built along Bourne Hill and The Strand.



### Wherstead Today

2.15 The most recent estimates suggest the Parish has a population of 337, a 4% decrease on the population in 2001. This can probably be accounted for by people living in smaller households, for example there may be more people living alone while the number of new homes had not significantly change during this time. The Parish is home to a significant number of businesses and the 2011 Census identified that 978 people worked in Wherstead at the time. Until the results of the 2021 Census are published, we will not know how this has changed although businesses have expanded in this period, and we know that new business development is in the pipeline.

2.16 Wherstead cannot help but be impacted by the growth of Ipswich which manifests itself in pressure for development as well as vehicular traffic and noise. Junction 56 of the A14 provides access to the Port of Ipswich via the A137 and has become a major factor in bringing pressure for additional business floorspace due to the direct access onto the strategic road network.

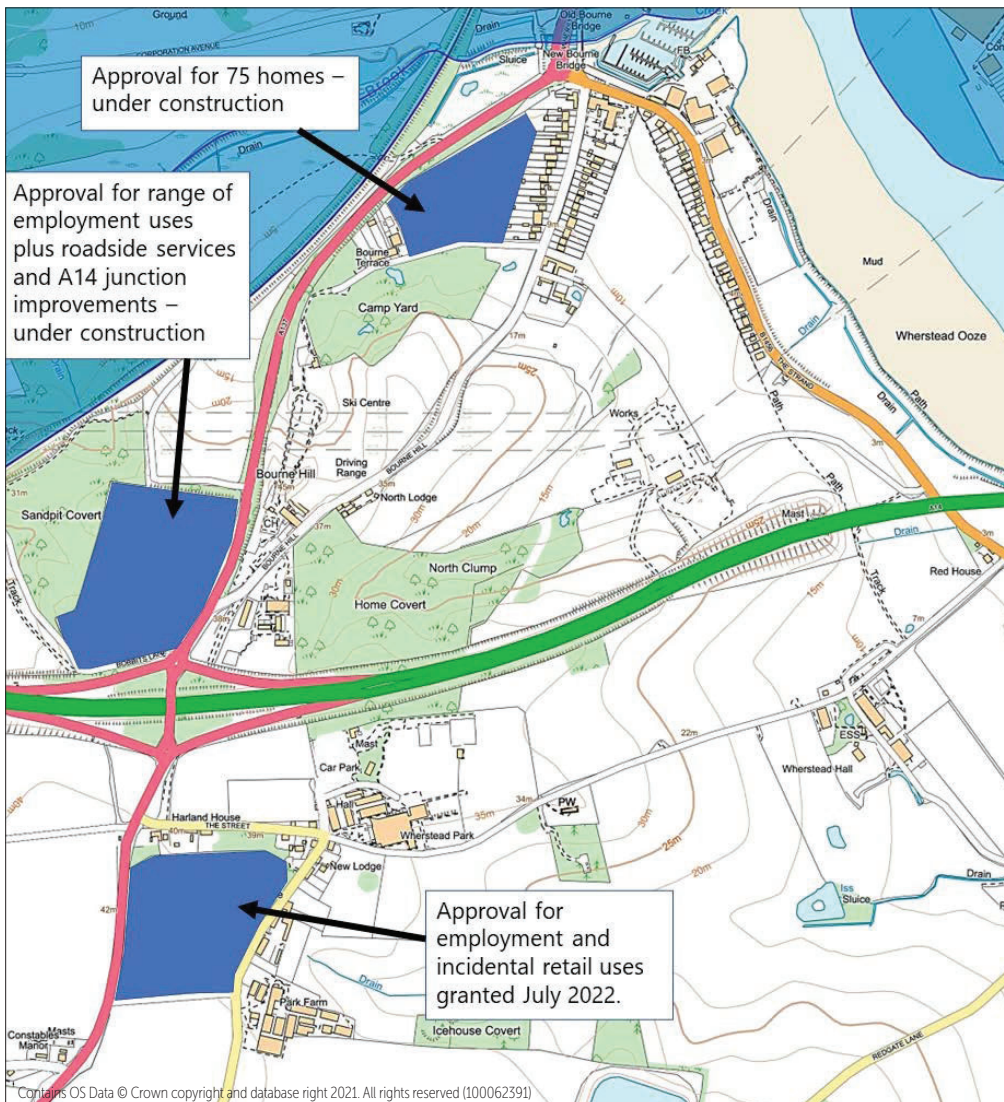
2.17 There are currently a number of leisure businesses in the Parish that are destinations for travellers from a wider area, including Jimmy's Farm, Suffolk Food Hall, Wherstead Park Events Venue, Suffolk Leisure Park, the Premier Inn Hotel and Beefeater Public House and the radio-controlled car track.

2.18 Some 35% of the Parish is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty while the River Orwell is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a RAMSAR and a Special Area of Conservation. Holbrook Park Wood and Cutler's Wood are also Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are also County Wildlife Sites designated within the Parish and outside but adjoining the Parish Boundary.



2.19 In recent years, the lack of an up-to-date local plan for Babergh and the District Council's inability to demonstrate a five-years supply of available housing land has meant that a number of speculative housing and employment developments in the Parish have been approved. The most significant housing development is currently taking place at Klondyke Field, off Bourne Hill, where 75 new homes are being constructed representing a 57% increase in the number of dwellings in the Parish compared with the 2011 Census figures. In addition, two major employment developments have been approved in recent years as well as roadside services. A further

major development has received a resolution to approve by Babergh District Council, but the decision has yet to be issued. The locations of these proposals are shown on Map 2.



Map 2 - Recent Major Planning Proposals

### 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The regulations governing the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans require that they conform with the National Planning Policy Framework ("the NPPF") and the strategic policies of the Local Plan. In July 2021, the Government published changes to the NPPF, and the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared within the context of the July 2021 version.
- 3.2 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.
  - Plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan.
- 3.3 At a more local level, the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in the context of the current Babergh Local Plan, which comprises the Core Strategy (2014) and the "saved policies" of the 2006 Babergh Local Plan. For present purposes, these documents will be collectively referred to as "the Local Plan". The Local Plan provides the current strategic planning framework for Wherstead which the Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to.
- 3.4 The adopted Core Strategy identifies a hierarchy of settlements ranked according to their size and the services they provide. It recognises that there are several larger villages (core villages) that provide a range of services and facilities for a cluster of villages around them (a functional cluster). Wherstead is identified as being within the "Ipswich Fringe" as well as the Holbrook functional cluster, albeit that the village does not feature in the hierarchy of settlements. Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy also identified the Wherstead Office Park as a Strategic Employment Site Allocation supporting the retention of employment uses.
- 3.5 Babergh District Council is currently in the final stages of preparing a new Joint Local Plan with Mid Suffolk District Council that will provide a planning framework for the management of growth across the two Districts up until 2037. In November 2020 the District Council published the "pre-submission" Joint Local Plan for a final round of consultation ahead of its submission to the Secretary of State and the subsequent examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The examination hearings took place during 2021 and in December 2021 the Planning Inspectors, in agreement with the District Council, recommended that the Joint Local Plan should be modified, amongst other things, to exclude housing site allocations, the proposed "settlement boundaries" and the proposed distribution of housing growth across the district. Those matters would be addressed in a new Part 2 Joint Local Plan to be prepared at a later date. It is unlikely that the content of Part 1, which will identify the level of housing growth and contain policies for the day-to-day determination of planning applications, will be adopted until 2023. For the purposes of this draft of the Neighbourhood Plan, this will be referred to as the "emerging Joint Local Plan".
- 3.6 The November 2020 version of the Joint Local Plan identified Wherstead as being within the Ipswich Fringe, while designating Bourne Hill as a "Hinterland Village", although the document does not identify what a Hinterland Village is and the role it plays in the delivery of the Joint Local Plan strategy. The Settlement Boundary in Wherstead is defined to include Bourne Hill, Bourne Terrace and the existing housing on The Strand as well as the current development site between Bourne Hill and the A137 where 75 houses are being built. Wherstead Park is identified as a Strategic Employment Site which is expected to continue to provide local employment opportunities during the lifetime of the Plan.



3.7 A main function of the Joint Local Plan is to identify how the housing needs of the District will be met during the period to 2037. The submitted Joint Local Plan identifies a minimum requirement of 7,904 additional homes across Babergh between 2018 and 2037, of which 4,036 already had planning permission but had not been built in April 2018. However, the Joint Local Plan actually makes provision for at least 9,611 new homes by 2037. Despite the Neighbourhood Area being designated in September 2020, Table 04 of the Joint Local Plan does not identify a minimum housing requirement that the Neighbourhood Plan should meet. The District Council's Hearing Statement for the Joint Local Plan examination addresses the methodology for identifying a minimum housing requirement, as "expected to be the sum of extant planning permissions as at 01/04/18 and any site allocations made in the Plan". On this basis, there was planning permission for one additional dwelling that had yet to be completed as at 1 April 2018 (at Bournehaven, Bourne Hill) and the Joint Local Plan allocates the site west of Bourne Hill currently being developed for 75 new homes by Bellway Homes. On this basis, there is no requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to identify additional housing sites and therefore matters relating to housing development are not addressed.

3.8 The Suffolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (SMWLP) was adopted in September 2020. It contains planning policies for determining planning applications for minerals and waste development, as well as safeguarding sites and areas from other forms of competing development. Sand and gravel quarrying operations are currently permitted at Pannington Hall Quarry, while the MWLP allocates a site for the extension of these workings. In addition, the whole of the Neighbourhood Area is within the identified Minerals Consultation Area where Babergh District Council are required to consult the County Council on planning applications that fall within this area. The MWLP does not identify any waste collection sites within the Neighbourhood Area.



## 4. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 The following four-part vision statement for the future of Wherstead has been created and tested with residents as part of the 2020 household survey:

### Wherstead will be a Parish where:

1. The village landscape, with its many historic and listed structures and links back to Wherstead's past, is maintained.
2. Links between the two population centres of the village are strengthened and the more remote homes in the village retain their setting and independence.
3. Wherstead's separate identity from Ipswich and the surrounding villages is maintained.
4. The unique, distinct character of the village is maintained by ensuring additional housing and business development is in proportion to the current size and needs of the Parish.

4.2 Having regard to the identified topic areas of the Plan, the Vision is translated into the following objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Ensuring we have the tools and processes to meet future challenges and to enhance our unique rural, coastal nature and agricultural setting.
2. To ensure Wherstead is a safe and exciting community to live in for now and for future generations.
3. To preserve Wherstead as a rural village with a separate identity from Ipswich and the surrounding villages.
4. The village landscape, with its many historic and listed structures and links back to Wherstead's past, are maintained.
5. Links between the two population centres of the village are strengthened and ensure that the more remote homes in the village retain their setting and independence.
6. The unique, distinct character of the village is maintained by ensuring additional housing and business development is in proportion to the current size and needs of the Parish

and the Parish is not swamped by business or retail development.

7. Preserve the integrity of our village by enhancing and encouraging the sense of community
8. Maintain employment opportunities that do not result in a detrimental impact on local infrastructure, the environments and resident's amenity
9. Protect and enhance the local landscape and its significant views
10. Ensure new development is of a scale and design that reflects local character.
11. Improve road safety, protect and enhance Wherstead's public rights of way and reduce the impact of traffic passing through the Parish





## 5. PLANNING STRATEGY

- 5.1 As noted above, the planning policy framework for Babergh is currently evolving from the existing Local Plan to a new Joint Local Plan for the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts. Given that, at the time the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared, the Joint Local Plan is at examination before Government Planning Inspectors, significant regard has therefore been afforded to the content of the draft Joint Local Plan in terms of what it says for the Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- 5.2 In accordance with the Policy SP03 of the emerging Joint Local Plan, the principle of development within the defined Settlement Boundaries will be supported, subject to the appliance of other relevant policies in the Joint Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, and in accordance with the Joint Local Plan, the further development of employment uses within Wherstead Park Strategic Employment Site will be supported in principle, subject to the provisions of the Joint Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan. Outside the Settlement Boundaries, development will not normally be permitted unless, as defined by the Joint Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, there are exceptional circumstances that would justify its approval.
- 5.3 It is essential that any development in the Parish does not have a detrimental impact on the landscape setting of the Parish and the wider area, especially the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the setting of heritage assets. All development sites will need to have particular regard to the potential for adverse noise and air quality impacts on new development arising from the presence of the A14 and the capacity of the highways network to accommodate additional traffic resulting from the proposal. Landowners and developers are especially encouraged to facilitate pre-application discussions with the Parish Council for projects to identify matters of local concern and how they might be addressed.

- 5.4 The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the existence of the development at The Klondyke, referred to earlier and on **Map 2**, for 75 new homes which is being developed at the time the Plan is being prepared. Neither the Joint Local Plan nor the Neighbourhood Plan make provision for any additional major residential development outside the Settlement Boundary during the period to 2037, but there may be opportunities for the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential use which, in most instances, do not require planning permission.



## POLICY WTD 1 - SPATIAL STRATEGY

The Neighbourhood Plan area will accommodate development commensurate with Wherstead's designation in the District's Settlement Hierarchy.

New development within the Settlement Boundary, or employment development within the Wherstead Park Strategic Employment Site, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported in principle.

Proposals for development located outside the Settlement Boundary will only be permitted where they are in accordance with national and District level policies.

Except on sites allocated for such uses in the development plan, proposals that constitute "major" development as defined by The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 or subsequent amendment will not be supported.





**IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT NEW  
DEVELOPMENT SHOULD HAVE  
REGARD TO THE CHARACTER  
AND SETTING OF THE AONB'S  
NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT  
LANDSCAPE.**



## 6. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE

### Ambition

To make a positive contribution to the reduction of pollution both at a Parish and Global level, by:

- minimising noise disturbance from existing and new activities;
- ensuring that new developments incorporate features that reduce noise transmission from existing polluters within the Parish, e.g. the highways network;
- encouraging the use of alternative low carbon and low emission transport within the parish;
- ensuring that new and existing illuminated sites, minimise light spill into neighbours and the general area and seek to maintain the dark skies policy within Wherstead;
- discouraging signage which detracts from the beauty of our unique landscape;
- reducing litter around the village and the AONB by ensuring sufficient and appropriately placed bins have capacity for the litter generated by the number of visitors attracted to our uniquely beautiful estuary area, and that they are regularly emptied;
- encouraging the collection and use of rain and grey water; and
- encouraging and supporting the adoption of appropriate green solutions.

To improve the wildlife environment within the Parish, by:

- maintaining and improving connectivity between habitats to ensure the longer-term survival of biodiversity in an increasingly fragmented landscape and with a changing climate; and
- ensuring that where possible the guidelines in the Wherstead Biodiversity Report are followed.

Specifically in the landscape types within Wherstead:

- In Ancient Estate Farmlands:-
  - reinforce the historic pattern of regular landscape boundaries;
  - restore, maintain and enhance the network of tree belts and pattern of small plantations found across much of this landscape type;
  - restore, maintain and enhance the historic parklands and the elements within them; and
  - restore and enhance the condition of ancient woodlands including the effective control of deer grazing and browsing.
- In Rolling Estate Farmland:-
  - reinforce the historic pattern of sinuous field boundaries;
  - recognise localised areas of late enclosure hedges when restoring and planting hedgerows;
  - maintain and increase the stock of hedgerow trees; and
  - maintain the area of woodland cover.
- In Coastal Levels
  - restore and retain the historical pattern of drainage ditches and dykes, delivering ecological benefit.
- In Saltmarsh and Intertidal Flats
  - wherever possible, maintain the processes that allow the formation of this landscape type;
  - maintain the structural diversity of upper, lower and middle saltmarsh habitats within this landscape;
  - minimise disturbance on important wader feeding areas within estuaries; and
  - minimise the impact of erosion caused by boat wash.





### Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 6.1 As noted earlier, a large extent of the Parish is within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. It is essential that new development should have regard to the character and setting of the AONB's nationally significant landscape. In accordance with the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Partnership Position Statement (December 2015)<sup>1</sup> the setting, including the views into and out of the AONB, is considered to be the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature, size, scale, siting, materials, or design, can be considered to have an impact, positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the nationally designated landscape. Such an approach to the consideration of development is an essential element of this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.2 Paragraph 176 of the NPPF states that *"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest."*



- 6.3 The AONB Management Plan (2018)<sup>2</sup> sets a vision for the area as: "An area of special wildlife, landscape, seascape and heritage qualities that are conserved and enhanced with the needs of people living, working and visiting the AONB" and provides a large number of objectives to deliver it. Many of the objectives are not planning related but, notwithstanding this, development proposals should have regard to the special qualities of the AONB and include measure that will mitigate any impacts on those qualities.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ENDORSED-SCH-AONB-Position-Statement-on-Development-in-Setting-of-AONB-2015.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/managing/reference-librarymanagement-plan/>

## POLICY WTD 2 - DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING THE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

The Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is identified on the Policies Map.

Proposals for major development (as defined within Annex 2 of the NPPF) within the AONB should normally be refused unless otherwise justified. Such applications will be determined in accordance with the approach set out in national planning policy.

Proposals for non-major development within the AONB will only be supported where they:

- i. do not detract from the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB and its setting; and
- ii. contribute to the delivery of the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB Management Plan; and
- iii. support the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area or support the understanding and enjoyment of the area.

Proposals on sites that contribute to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where they would not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB and, having regard to the incorporation of mitigation measures, would not adversely affect the views into, within, and out of the AONB by virtue of its location or design.

All proposals within the AONB or on sites that contribute to the setting of the AONB should be accompanied by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment at a level of detail proportionate to the scale of the development and its location. All proposals shall include appropriate landscaping to mitigate impact identified in the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

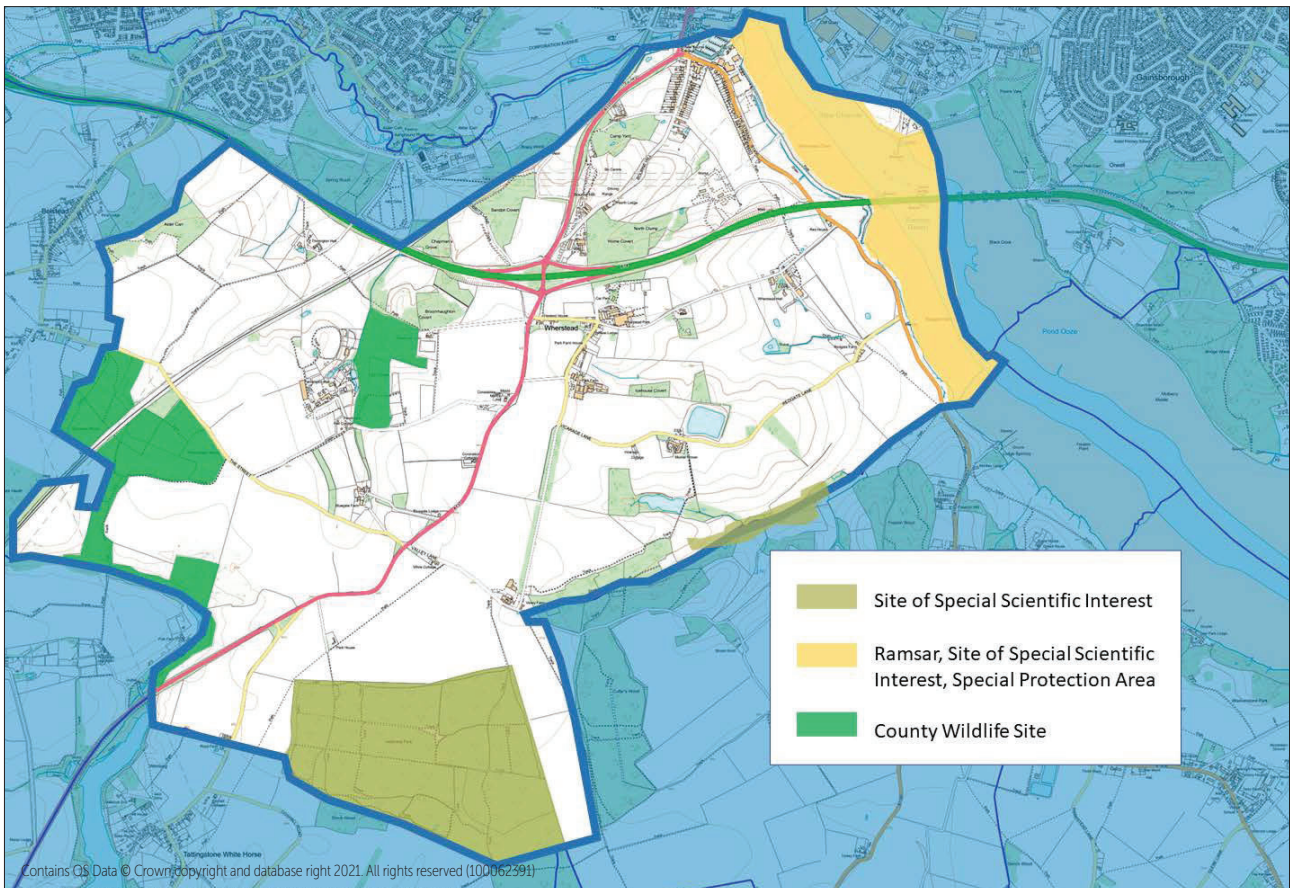
6.4 Map 3 illustrates the international, national and local natural conservation sites that are present in the Parish. The Orwell Estuary is particularly important, having the following designations:

- Ramsar (A Ramsar site is the land listed as a wetland of international importance under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as waterfowl habitat (the Ramsar Convention 1973)).
- Special Protection Area (A designation under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. Under the Directive, Member States of the European Union have a duty to safeguard the habitats of migratory birds and certain particularly threatened birds and is still in force)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (These are the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in England, supporting many characteristic, rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features.) Holbrook Park, in the south of the Parish and Stalls Valley are also SSSIs.

As well as the internationally and nationally designated wildlife sites, the Neighbourhood Area is rich in locally important sites and habitats. In preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, a Landscape and Wildlife Evaluation Report was commissioned from Suffolk Wildlife Trust. The report is available to view and download on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website.

6.5 The Landscape and Wildlife Evaluation Report notes that there are four County Wildlife Sites associated with Wherstead: Spinney/Wherstead Wood with southern linear woodland, Wherstead Heath, Hill Covert and Bourne Bridge grassland. The extent of these areas is indicated in the report.





Map 3 - International, national and local natural conservation sites

6.6 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP, 1994) was the UK Government response to the 1992 International Convention on Biological Diversity. In January 2014, Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership (SBP) - a consortium of over 20 organisations working for wildlife within the county - published revised statutory lists of Priority Habitats and Species occurring in Suffolk. For Wherstead, nine of the 24 Suffolk Priority habitats are known to be present in Wherstead Parish, namely:

- Lowland Mixed deciduous woodland
- Wet woodland
- Wood pasture and parkland
- Hedgerows
- Ponds
- Lowland Dry Acid grassland
- Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
- Coastal saltmarsh
- Mudflats

The Priority Habitats are described in more detail in the Landscape and Wildlife Evaluation Report.

6.7 The protection of designated wildlife sites is highly important to residents of the Parish. We recognise that the loss of features through actions not requiring planning permission cannot be prevented by the

Neighbourhood Plan but, where development proposals do come forward through the planning system, there will be an expectation that existing habitats will be protected and enhanced. In order to demonstrate this, proposals should be accompanied by sufficient information, including any proposed prevention, this, proposals should be accompanied by sufficient information, including any proposed prevention, mitigation or compensation measures, for Babergh District Council to assess the effects of development on priority habitats and species, protected sites, protected species, biodiversity or geology.

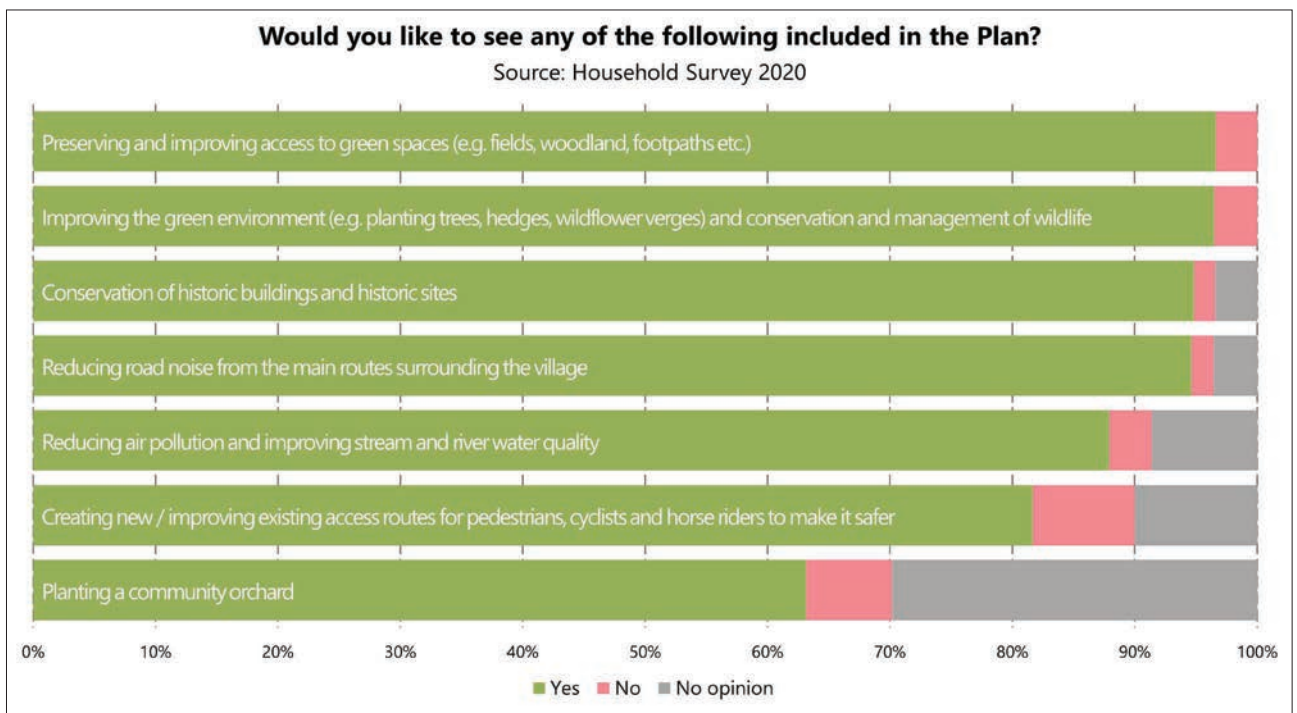
6.8 The NPPF encourages net gains for biodiversity to be sought through planning policies and decisions. Biodiversity net gain, in relation to planning, is when development leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before and is a mandatory consideration for all development through the Environment Act which received Royal assent in November 2021. Whilst the mandatory targets of the Act have yet to come into force, the policy direction is clear, that all future development deliver at least a 10% calculated biodiversity net gain that will be secured for a period of 30 years. It remains reasonable and sensible that given Babergh District Council's declaration of climate



emergency that the Neighbourhood Plan includes such a policy approach. The creation of new habitats as part of a planning proposal should ensure that these are appropriate to the location and sustainable. The Household survey asked residents about their views on a number of matters relating to the environment of the Parish. The table below illustrates the results.



Orwell Estuary Saltmarsh





## POLICY WTD 3 - PROTECTING HABITATS AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

Development must achieve a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, or higher as stipulated in national legislation, over the pre-development biodiversity value as measured by the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric or agreed equivalent.

Biodiversity improvement must, where possible, form an integral part of the design of any proposal, for example through:

- a) the creation of new natural habitats including ponds;
- b) the planting of additional native trees and hedgerows of local provenance;
- c) restoring and repairing fragmented biodiversity networks; and
- d) the creation of wildlife corridors.

Contributions to off-site mitigation in respect to Policy WTD 4 will be additional to the biodiversity net gain requirements of this policy.

Development proposals should protect and avoid the loss of, or substantial harm to priority habitats and species, as well as the protection of wildlife corridors and trees (including veteran trees), hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds. In the extremely rare cases where such losses or harm are unavoidable, adequate mitigation or compensatory habitat creation will be sought. If suitable mitigation or compensation measures cannot be provided, then planning permission will be refused.

Any development with the potential to impact on a Special Protection Area, Special Area for Conservation or Ramsar site within or outside of the plan area will need to be supported by information to inform a Project Level Habitat Regulations Assessment, in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended (or subsequent revisions).

Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened through an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species of local provenance shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to restore and maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.

### Impact of Development on Internationally Important Habitats

- 6.9 The whole of the Neighbourhood Plan area is located within a 13 kilometres "Zone of Influence" (ZOI) of the Stour and Orwell Special Protection Area (SPA) and Stour and Orwell Estuaries Ramsar. Unless mitigated against, Natural England consider that additional residential development within the ZOI could have a detrimental impact on the designations due to an increase in residential trips.
- 6.10 Ipswich Borough, Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts and East Suffolk Council are taking a collaborative approach to strategic mitigation to support development and avoid impacts on internationally important designated wildlife sites. Wherstead residents believe that all inappropriate development must be avoided, but in the extremely rare instance this does occur, the Recreational Disturbance, Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (Suffolk RAMS) prepared and adopted jointly by these Councils identifies and costs measures necessary to mitigate recreational impacts and confirms how they will be

funded and delivered over the lifetime of the Local Plans. Such measures are to be delivered strategically through the Suffolk Coast RAMS to make the sites more resilient to increased recreational pressures. A proportionate financial contribution should therefore be secured from proposed residential development in the ZOI in line with the Suffolk Coast RAMS.

Although such developments would be contrary to the strategic policies of the Local Plan and Policy WTD 1, for developments of 50 or more dwellings the Suffolk Coast RAMS requires that proposals should include provision of well-designed open space/green infrastructure on-site, proportionate to its scale. Combined with the financial requirements, such measures are predicted to minimise any predicted increase in recreational pressure to the European sites by containing the majority of recreation within and around the development site boundary.

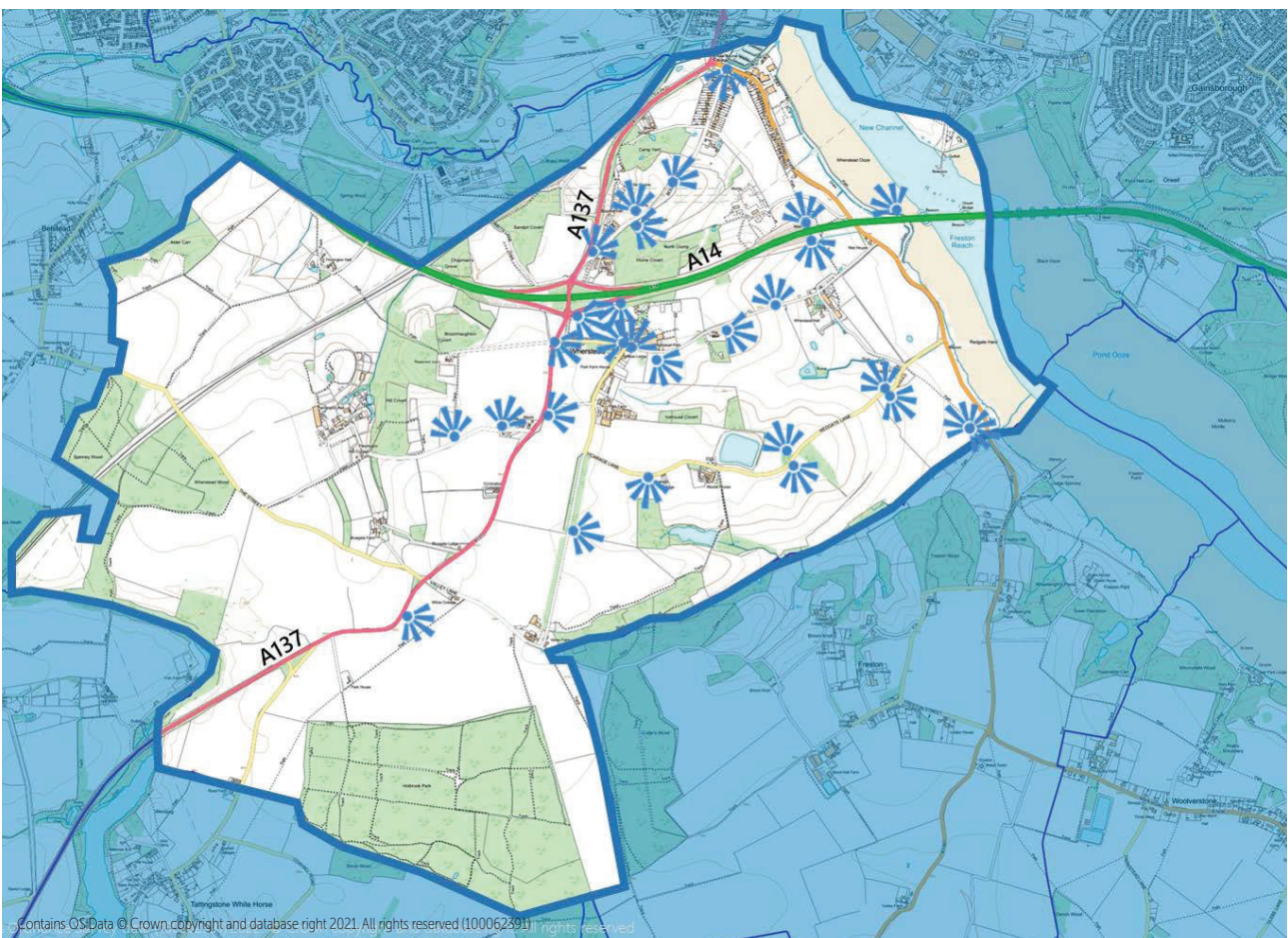
## POLICY WTD 4 - RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION

All residential development within the zones of influence of European sites will be required to make financial contribution towards mitigation measures as detailed in the Suffolk Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS), to avoid adverse in combination recreational disturbance effects and the integrity of the habitats of the European sites.

Should proposals of 50 or more dwellings be submitted, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) should be provided on-site or in its proximity in order to contain the majority of recreation within the site and minimise disturbance.

### Important Views

- 6.11 The nature of the landscape in and around Wherstead means that there are a number of distinct views into, out of and within the village that are of high importance to its character and sense of rurality, especially given the presence of the Area of Outstanding Beauty. Proposals for development that do not consider their potential impact on these views could have a significant detrimental impact on the setting of the village. During the preparation of the Plan, a separate Assessment of Important Views from public areas was undertaken and the most significant views that need protection are identified on **Map 4** and the Policies Map. In order to understand how a proposal might impact on the identified important views, planning applications outside the Settlement Boundary should be accompanied by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment prepared in accordance with the Landscape Institute "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition" (2013) or subsequent guidance, or appropriate and proportionate evidence relevant to the scale of the proposal, that demonstrates how the key features of the important views will be protected in all seasons.



Map 4 - Important Views



## POLICY WTD 5 - PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS

Important views from public vantage points either within the built-up area or into or out of the surrounding countryside, are identified on the Policies Map. Any proposed development should not detract from the key landscape features of these views.

Proposals for new buildings outside the Settlement Boundary will be required to be accompanied by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, or other appropriate and proportionate evidence, that demonstrates how the proposal:

- i) can be accommodated in the countryside without having a significant detrimental impact, by reason of the building's scale, materials and location, on the character and appearance of the countryside and its distinction from the main built-up areas as identified by the Settlement Boundaries; and
- ii) conserves and enhances the unique landscape and scenic beauty within the Parish.



### Reducing Impact from Light Pollution

- 6.12 The installation of floodlighting and security lights on sites can, without careful consideration, have a significant detrimental impact on the rural character of the village, residential amenity, and its setting within the Orwell Estuary. While there are already instances of light spillage from floodlighting across the Parish, there is no desire to add to this light pollution. Paragraph 185 (c) of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should “limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation”. Areas of the Parish away from the A14 and the Ipswich conurbation enjoy the benefits of dark skies and additional lighting in these areas could have a significant detrimental impact on this benefit as well as natural habitats.
- 6.13 Artificial lighting of development, while increasing security, can also impact upon residential amenity, the character and appearance of an area (particularly rural locations) and the environment. Aspects such as poor design, location or the expulsion of unnecessarily high levels of light can also have a harmful impact.
- 6.14 In the residents’ survey, 90% of respondents were concerned about increased pollution, including light, arising from new development. Proposals will therefore be required to ensure that lighting schemes will not result in additional and unacceptable light pollution and, where feasible, proposals should seek to rectify existing spillage from the site.

### POLICY WTD 6 - DARK SKIES AND STREET LIGHTING


While ensuring that new developments are secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety, dark skies are to be preferred over lighting. Any future outdoor lighting systems should have a minimum impact on the environment, minimising light pollution and adverse effects on wildlife, subject to highway safety, the needs of particular individuals or groups, and security of individuals and premises.

Proposals for lighting schemes should be supported by a lighting study and be designed to reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the night-time skies dark, reducing glare and be of a frequency (spectrum) of illumination to reduce wildlife impact.

The lighting should only be operational during times when it is essential for the operation of the business and out of operational hours security trigger lighting should be installed.







**THE NPPF DEFINES BUILDINGS,  
MONUMENTS, SITES, PLACES,  
AREAS OR LANDSCAPE  
IDENTIFIED AS HAVING A  
DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE  
MERITING CONSIDERATION IN  
PLANNING DECISIONS AS  
"HERITAGE ASSETS".**



## 7. THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 The NPPF defines buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions as “heritage assets”. In simple terms, these features make up our historic environment.
- 7.2 Although there is not a designated conservation area in Wherstead, there are a number of buildings and features which are “listed” as being of historic or archaeological interest. The Historic England register identifies that there is one Grade II\* listed building and a further 21 Grade II listed buildings. In addition, the Parish is known to be rich in archaeological finds and records. Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service’s Historic Environment Record provides details of finds and the Service should be consulted at the earliest possible stages of preparing a planning application.



### POLICY WTD 7 - HERITAGE ASSETS

To ensure the conservation and enhancement of the village’s designated heritage assets, proposals must:

- a. Preserve or enhance the significance of the designated heritage assets of the village, their setting and the wider built environment within which they are located;
- b. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits, alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the heritage asset and its context; and
- c. Provide clear justification, through the submission of a heritage statement, for any works that could harm a heritage asset yet be of wider substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis of the asset and the proposal.

Owners of heritage assets should, as appropriate, maintain and/or restore the asset in good order and not allow it to become “at-risk” of loss.

Proposals will not be supported where the harm caused as a result of the impact of a proposed scheme is not justified by the public benefits that would be provided.

Where a planning proposal affects a heritage asset and its setting, it must be accompanied by a heritage statement identifying, as a minimum, the significance of the asset, and an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the heritage asset. The level of detail of the heritage statement should be proportionate to the importance of the asset, the works proposed and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance and/or setting of the asset.



### Local Heritage Assets

7.3 In addition to the statutory register of listed buildings, there are opportunities for local planning authorities and neighbourhood plans to identify buildings and features having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. Some local planning authorities create a "Local Heritage List" so that their significance can be taken into account in planning applications affecting the building or site or its setting. Babergh District Council does not currently operate such a list and therefore a separate piece of work in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan has identified a number of buildings and features across the Parish that have a local heritage significance. The work has been informed by Historic England's guidance note "Historic England 2021 Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage."

7.4 The outcome of that work is published in a report entitled "Local List of Buildings and Structures of Architectural and Historic Interest" which is available to download on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website. While there has been some informal discussion with Babergh District Council concerning their formal recognition, their designation as Local Heritage Assets by the District Council will be pursued. In the meantime, while the identification of a Building of Local Heritage Significance in the Neighbourhood Plan does not carry the same weight as if it were Listed, their heritage significance will be taken into account when determining planning applications. Paragraph 203 of the NPPF states "*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*"

## POLICY WTD 8 - BUILDINGS OF LOCAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The retention, protection and the setting of the following Buildings of Local Heritage Significance, as identified on the Policies Map, will be secured.

- 1 1-3 Bourne Cottages, Bourne Hill,
- 2 The Barn, Bourne Hill
- 3 Bourne Terrace
- 4 Holly Cottage/Walnut Tree Cottage, Constables Corner
- 5 Lychgate to St Mary's Church
- 6 Lodge adjacent to Mansion Stables
- 7 New Lodge, The Street
- 8 North Lodge, Bourne Hill
- 9 Pannington Hall barns
- 10 Pannington Hall Cottages
- 11 Units 1-5, Peninsula Business Centre (Park Farm Barns)
- 12 Red House, Peppers Lane/ The Strand
- 13 The Old Byre, 44 Bourne Hill
- 14 The Old School (Harland House), The Street
- 15 Walled Garden, The Street
- 16 The Water Tower, Walled Garden, The Street
- 17 Units 1-5 Alton Business Centre (Valley Farm Barns)
- 18 Vicarage Cottages
- 19 Vicarage, Vicarage Lane
- 20 Well Cottage, The Street
- 21 Wherstead Hall Lodge, Church (Peppers) Lane

Proposals for any works that would cause harm to or negatively impact the significance of the structure or setting of buildings of local significance should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset to enable a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

## 8. THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND TOURISM

THE 2011 CENSUS IDENTIFIED THAT, AT THE TIME, ALMOST THREE TIMES AS MANY PEOPLE WORK IN WHERSTEAD THAN LIVED THERE.



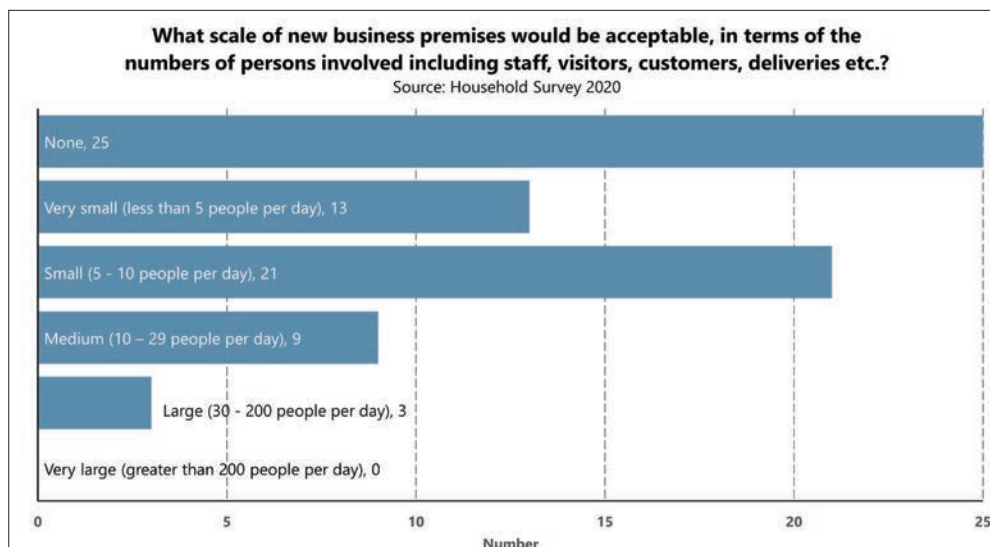
8.1 Wherstead is playing an increasingly important role in the economy of the local area, due largely to its location on the edge of Ipswich, straddling the A14 and on the banks of the River Orwell. Although the emerging Joint Local Plan identifies Wherstead Park as a strategic employment site, there are a number of additional employment locations in the Parish that offer a wide range of jobs. The main employment focused sites are illustrated on the Policies Map.

8.2 The 2011 Census identified that, at the time, almost three times as many people worked in Wherstead than lived there. With the expansion of existing businesses and creation of additional premises since that time this proportion is likely to have increased.

8.3 In recent years planning permission has been granted by Babergh District Council on a greenfield site to the North and East of Bobbits Lane for a range of employment uses while the redevelopment of Park Farm Barns on Vicarage Lane for employment development has also been approved. A further planning application for new commercial buildings providing primarily employment floorspace and some retail floorspace between Vicarage Lane and the A137 was submitted to Babergh District Council in December 2019. The District Council resolved to approve the proposal in July 2020, subject to a legal planning agreement being signed. The permission was eventually issued in July 2022.



8.4 The residents' survey did not identify any support for additional largescale employment development in the Parish, as illustrated below. There was some support for small business development which is something that might be suitable for projects to convert farm buildings should their location and potential impact on the local area be acceptable.



8.5 In some instances there can be pressure to redevelop or convert existing premises to residential uses. Such proposals can have a potential detrimental impact on the local economy through the loss of jobs but there might be occasions where the nature of the business is such that its operation has a detrimental impact on the locality and the residents that live there. Where such proposals come forward, a number of factors will have to be taken into account to demonstrate that the existing use is no longer suitable for the site and that alternative employment uses are not viable, as set out in Policy WTD9.

## POLICY WTD 9 - EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES

The retention and intensification of employment uses within sites identified on the Policies Map will be supported in principle provided such proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character, or residential amenity or generate unacceptable levels of vehicular traffic on access roads.

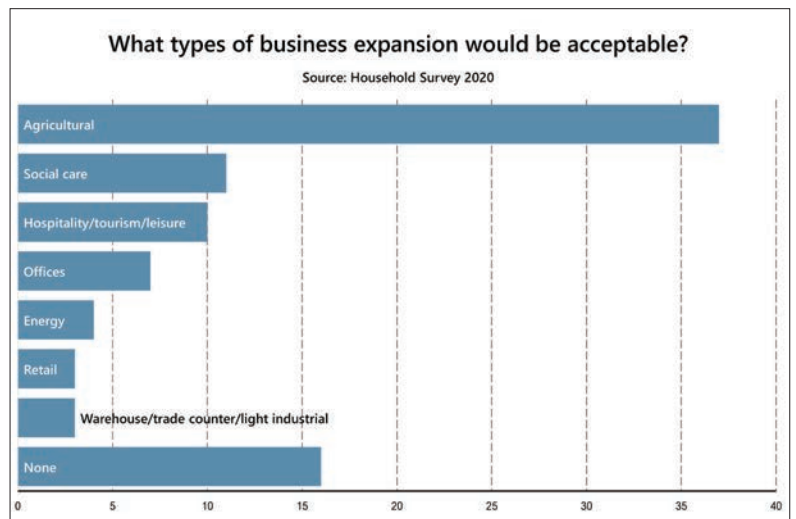
Proposals for non-employment uses of existing employment sites that are expected to have an adverse impact on employment generation will only be permitted where one or more of the following criteria has been met:

- evidence can be provided that genuine attempts have been made to sell/let the site in its current use at a realistic market price, and that no suitable and viable alternative employment uses can be found or are likely to be found for the foreseeable future;
- the existing use has created overriding environmental problems (eg noise, odours or traffic) and permitting an alternative use would be a suitable environmental benefit that would outweigh the loss of an employment site;
- an alternative use or mix of uses would assist in regeneration and offer greater benefits to the community in meeting local business and employment needs;
- it is for an employment related support facility such as employment training / education, workplace creche or workplace dining / café;
- an alternative use or mix of uses would provide other sustainability benefits that would outweigh the loss of an employment site.

### New employment facilities

8.6 Given the level of existing planning permissions for employment use and the planning strategy of both the emerging Joint Local Plan and this Neighbourhood Plan, additional development for employment uses in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and outside the existing sites will not be supported as the emerging Joint Local Plan identifies deliverable locations for strategic employment growth to meet forecasted needs (Policy SP05).

8.7 The Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey identified that agricultural expansion would be the most acceptable type of employment use, as illustrated in the chart below. Most agricultural buildings do not require planning permission, but reflecting residents' preferences, support for small scale agricultural related employment development outside the Settlement Boundary may be supported if the impacts of the proposal can be demonstrated to be satisfactory to the local community.




## POLICY WTD 10 - AGRICULTURAL RELATED EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for agriculture related employment development will be supported where:

- i. it is not located within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or would have an impact on its setting;
- ii. it is of a scale and nature appropriate to a countryside location,
- iii. does not result in an unacceptable impact on the landscape and highways infrastructure and
- iv. it can be satisfactorily be demonstrated that it needs to be located outside the Settlement Boundary.





An aerial photograph showing a stone church with a tall, crenellated tower and a red-tiled roof, situated in a lush green landscape. The church is surrounded by a dense forest of tall trees. In the background, there are rolling green fields, a large body of water with many sailboats, and a distant shoreline with more trees and buildings. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing text.

**HOW A NEW DEVELOPMENT  
IS DESIGNED CAN HAVE A  
SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE  
HEALTH AND HAPPINESS OF  
PEOPLE THAT LIVE IN IT OR ITS  
VICINITY.**



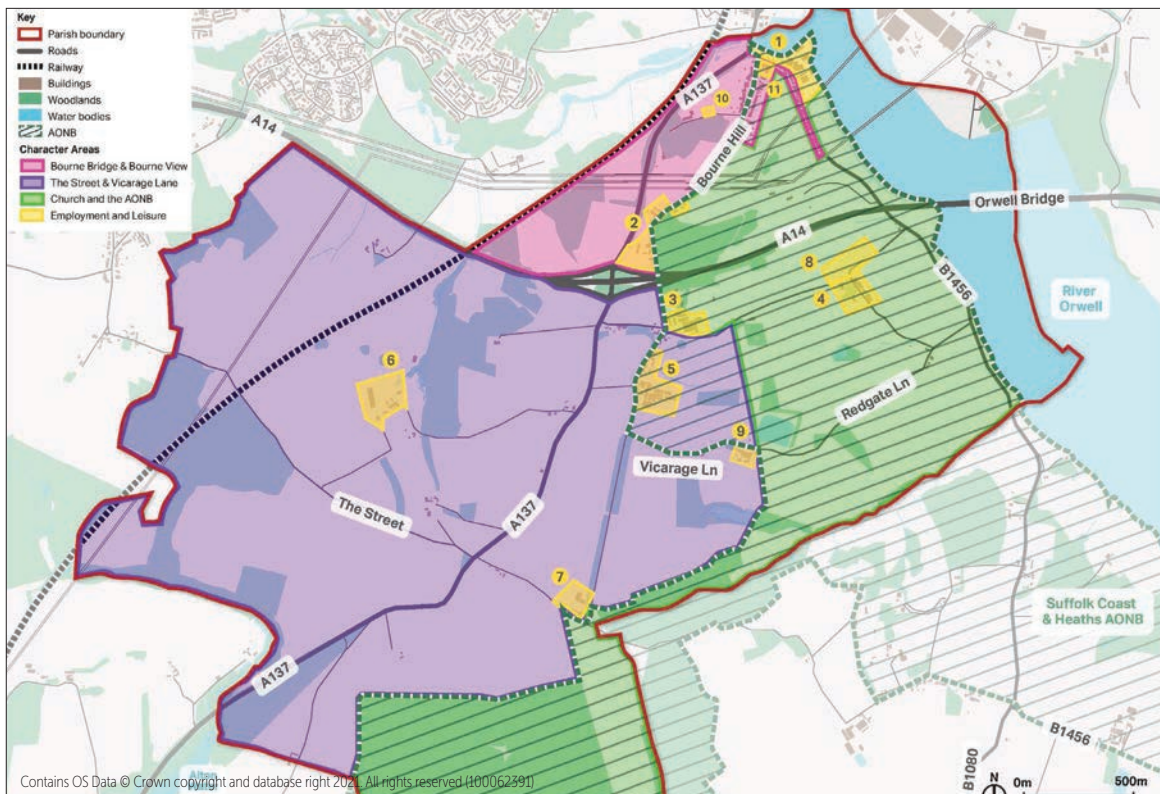
## 9. DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

### Objectives

- 9.1 How a new development is designed can have a significant impact on the health and happiness of people that live in it or its vicinity. No matter what the nature of a proposal, well designed schemes that are sympathetic to their surroundings and the natural and built character of the area will help reduce its impact.
- 9.2 As part of the government-funded Neighbourhood Planning Technical Support package, the Wherstead Design Guidance and Codes (August 2021) has been prepared by AECOM Consultants and is available to download on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website. The document should be used to inform and assess the design of future development in the Parish and demonstrate that an appropriate design solution is provided. In addition, developers should take reference to the Suffolk Constabulary Residential Design Guide and should

seek advice from the Designing Out Crime Officer at Suffolk Constabulary at an early stage to ensure that proposals positively impact on crime prevention objectives. Depending upon the nature of the proposal, particular attention should be paid to minimising opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

- 9.3 As well as providing generic design guidelines, the Design Guidance and Codes document identifies four distinct "character areas" across the Parish and provides specific guidance on how new development can be designed to reflect and enhance the character of these areas. Map 5 illustrates these areas and development proposals will be expected to have regard to the identified characteristics of the particular area.





## POLICY WTD 11 - DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Proposals for new development must reflect the local characteristics in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and create and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.

Planning applications should, as appropriate to the proposal, demonstrate how they are designed to take account of the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code 2021, or subsequent versions, the Wherstead Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidance and Codes, the Suffolk Constabulary Residential Design Guide and for commercial sites, advice from the Designing Out Crime Officer at Suffolk Constabulary.

In addition, proposals will be supported where they:

- a. Recognise and address the key features, characteristics, landscape/building character, local distinctiveness and special qualities of the area in order to maintain the rural feel of the Parish and prepare a landscape character appraisal to demonstrate this;
- b. Produce designs that maintain the local character of the area as defined in the Wherstead Design Guidance and Codes;
- c. Do not involve the loss of gardens, open, green or landscaped areas, which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of that part of the village;
- d. Taking mitigation measures into account, do not affect adversely:
  - i. Any historic, architectural or archaeological heritage assets of the site and its surroundings;
  - ii. Important landscape characteristics including trees and ancient hedgerows and other prominent topographical features;
  - iii. Sites, habitats, species and features of ecological interest as noted in the Wherstead Neighbourhood Plan Landscape and Biodiversity Evaluation 2021;
  - iv. The amenities of adjacent areas by reason of noise, smell, vibration, overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light, other pollution (including light pollution), or volume or type of vehicular activity generated, and/or residential amenity;
- e. Do not locate development where its users and the amenity of nearby residents would be significantly and adversely affected by noise, smell, vibration, or other forms of pollution from existing sources, unless adequate and appropriate mitigation can be implemented;
- f. Where appropriate, make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins;
- g. Include suitable ducting capable of accepting fibre to enable superfast broadband;
- h. In the case of new access roads, design them for speeds of no more than 20 mph;
- i. Will not generate additional vehicles on a designated Quiet Lane such that it would likely to immediately or subsequently exceed average movements in excess of 1,000 vehicles a day and/or 85th percentile speeds in excess of 35 mph in that designated Lane;
- j. As appropriate to the proposal, include measures to promote public safety and deter crime and disorder that might include:
  - i. public spaces that are overlooked and which avoid the creation of concealed areas
  - ii. entry barriers that would not result in queuing on the highway
  - iii. out-of-hours security patrols
  - iv. secure fencing
  - v. well-lit and secure areas whilst also complying with the dark skies policy
  - vi. as appropriate, the provision of CCTV and automatic number plate recognition systems with appropriate monitoring and support services; and
  - vii. signage to support police prosecutions.
- k. For every new residential car parking space, one electric vehicle charging point shall be provided. Non-residential development should include electric vehicle charging provision in accordance with the minimum standards in the current Suffolk Parking Guidelines.
- l. Design and access to off-street parking should otherwise comply with the current standards in the Suffolk Parking Guidelines.
- m. Cycle parking provision shall be in accordance with the adopted cycle parking standards and shall include secure and covered storage where appropriate to the development.

*continued*

Proposals for major development should be accompanied by a construction management plan that will address, as relevant to the proposal, operational hours, material delivery arrangements and measures for controlling noise and dust during construction.

### Community Aspiration 1: Designing out crime

The Parish Council will seek to work with landowners and developers to incorporate features that deter, discourage and prevent antisocial and nuisance behaviour around the Parish, with specific focus on;

- illegal riding of motorised vehicles,
- illegal advertising and
- fly tipping,
- littering

by:

- i. Seeking conditions on relevant planning approvals that require six monthly reviews with the Parish Council to identify problems in the implementation of site security measures and the delivery of new measures;
- ii. Proactively working with Land owners to find solutions when incidents of anti-social behaviour occur to find long term solutions;
- iii. Ensuring that all Business park / industrial sites include features to minimise antisocial behaviour and ensure they do not create opportunities to allow it to occur;
- iv. Incorporating deterrent and guidance signage in line with Police Design out Crime recommendations;
- v. Collaborative working between; the owner / developer, Police Design Out Crime team and the Parish Council to achieve the creation and operation of a safe secure and anti-social free site(s); and
- vi. Providing on-site CCTV and ANPR systems with appropriate monitoring and support services community security and, where this is not possible, employing security management with very frequent (hourly) visits to all parts of the site.



### Climate Change

- 9.4 Energy use in the construction and operation of development is currently a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. In 2019, Babergh District Council voted to support Suffolk's county-wide aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Minimising energy demands from development and increasing the generation of energy from renewable sources can make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions. The starting point for minimising energy use is to maximise energy efficiency, both in new developments and through the retrofitting of existing buildings. This can have a direct economic benefit in terms of significantly lowering the running costs of new and existing buildings,

helping to address fuel poverty, as well as tackling the Climate Crisis. Exceeding the minimum energy efficiency requirements of Building Regulations will be necessary if emission reduction targets are to be met, but the Neighbourhood Plan is restricted by Government regulation as to what additional measures it can apply to new residential development. Policy LP25 of the emerging Joint Local Plan sets out a number of measures for sustainable construction and design of all new development and it is not the intention of the Neighbourhood Plan to undermine whatever requirements the final adopted Local Plan policy sets.



Example of High Performance Energy Saving House



## POLICY WTD 12 - SUSTAINABLE BUILDING PRACTICES

### This policy only applies to non-residential development.

Proposals that incorporate current best practice in energy conservation will be supported where such measures are designed to be integral to the building design and minimise any detrimental impact on the building or its surroundings.

Proposals should:

- a. Incorporate best practice in energy conservation, be designed to achieve maximum achievable energy efficiency through the use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials;
- b. Maximise the benefits of solar gain in site layouts and orientation of buildings;
- c. Where viable, incorporate other renewable energy systems such as Ground Sourced Heat Pumps or Air Sourced Heat Pumps; and
- d. Avoid fossil fuel-based heating systems.

Proposals that include measures that, minimise water consumption, maximise water use efficiency and incorporate the reuse of greywater will be supported.

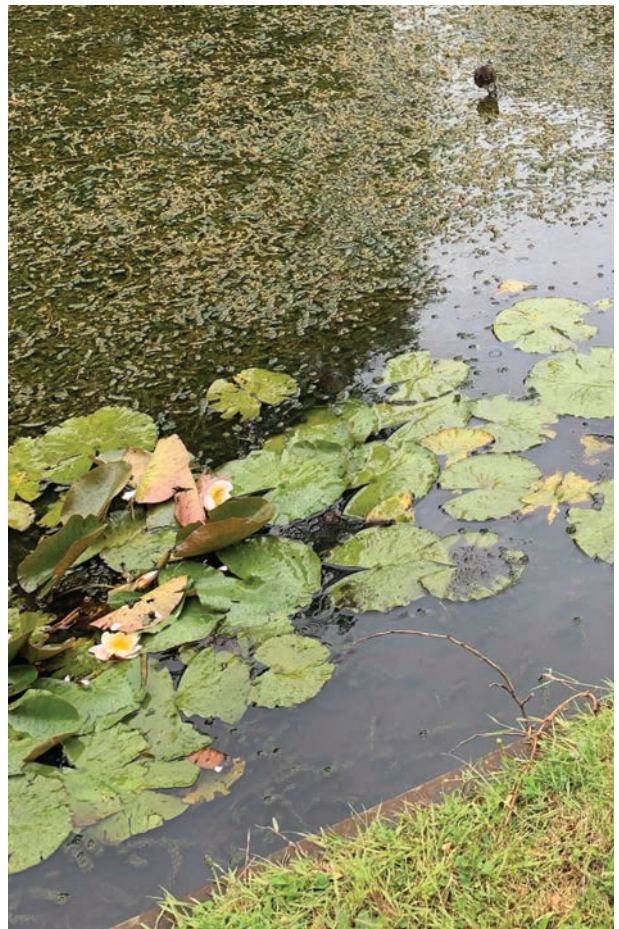
### Flooding and Drainage

9.5 Properties along The Strand and the road itself are at a high risk of surface water flooding, as well as flooding from the tidal Orwell Estuary, with all properties being within Flood Zone 2 and some in Flood Zone 3. Instances of flooding appear to be increasing over recent years and it is essential that the Neighbourhood Plan does not promote development that will make the situation worse.

9.6 Paragraph 166 of the NPPF provides guidance for considering flood risk in development proposals. It requires that, where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. The NPPF further states that "development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that:

- a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;
- b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment;
- c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;

- d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and
- e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan."





9.7 For all development, regardless of whether the site is within a flood zone, it is essential that on-site drainage is managed to capture surface water run-off in a sustainable manner. All proposals should, as appropriate to the proposal, be supported by a flood assessment, with details of mitigation methods where necessary. The installation of grey water recycling and rainwater and stormwater harvesting within schemes will also be sought in order to reduce the potential for development to worsen surface water flooding and minimise the consumption of treated water.

## POLICY WTD 13 - FLOODING AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE

Proposals for all new development will be required to submit schemes appropriate to the scale of the proposal detailing how on-site drainage and water resources will be managed so as not to cause or exacerbate surface water and fluvial flooding elsewhere. Proposals should, as appropriate include the use of above-ground open Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These could include:

- wetland and other water features designed not to allow anti-social behaviour, which can help reduce flood risk whilst offering other benefits including water quality, amenity/ recreational areas, and biodiversity benefits; and
- rainwater and stormwater harvesting and recycling; and
- other natural drainage systems where easily accessible maintenance can be achieved.

## Community Aspiration 2: The Strand flooding

The Parish Council will continue to lobby and work collaboratively with the appropriate authorities and landowners to ensure that:

- existing flood defences within the Parish are maintained and where appropriate enhanced, i.e., ditches, drains, barriers, water courses, bunds and sluices; and
- parishioners are informed about flooding issues.

## Parking Provision

9.8 Despite the proximity of Wherstead to Ipswich, car ownership levels across the Parish are generally higher than Babergh as a whole. The most recent published data is now ten years old, but it indicates that, at the time, there was an average 1.74 cars per household in the Parish compared to 1.48 across Babergh as a whole. Some 58 percent had 2 two or more cars compared with 45 percent across Babergh as a whole. The high levels of car ownership are expected to continue, especially given the trend over recent years for adult children to remain in the family home for longer and the continuing decline of bus services. These higher levels of car ownership lead to an increased pressure on space both within the grounds of established dwellings and on the roads in the vicinity.

9.9 Paragraph 107 of the NPPF states that, "If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:

- a) the accessibility of the development;
- b) the type, mix and use of development;
- c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
- d) local car ownership levels; and
- e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles."





9.10 The Suffolk County Council Parking Guidance (2019) for residential development acknowledges that providing a reduced number of parking spaces at a travel origin does not effectively discourage people from owning a car unless heavily restricted and alternative modes of transport are available. It states that parking guidance for origins should be used as a minimum advisory standard. The 2019 standards for residential development are reproduced below:

House Size	Current Minimum Requirement
1 bedroom	1 space per dwelling
2 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
3 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
4+ bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling

9.11 Given the higher levels of car ownership in Wherstead, it is therefore reasonable that parking standards should also be set at a higher level than the recommended minimum requirements. For all developments, the minimum parking spaces required for each new dwelling shall be as set out below:

House Size	Wherstead Minimum Requirement
1 bedroom	2 spaces per dwelling
2 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
3 bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling
4+ bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling

9.12 On-street car parking can have a significant impact on a locality and have a detrimental impact on the ability for emergency services to respond to calls. Given the road structure in Wherstead, comprising narrow lanes or A or B class roads, it is generally not appropriate to make provision for visitor car parking on the highway. It is therefore essential that all vehicle parking is integrated into the development site without creating an environment dominated by vehicles.

9.13 The transition from petrol/diesel vehicles to electric during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan is going to require retro-fitting vehicle charging points at homes and businesses. For new developments, it is essential that adequate provision is made for the emergence of electric vehicles. Although the 2019 "County Council Guidance for Parking" provides minimum requirements for electric vehicle charging, it is considered that the residential requirements (to provide ducting and suitable consumer unit to allow the install of one wall charging unit per dwelling when required by householder) does not future proof development and that every new residential parking space required by the minimum standards should also have a charging point.

## POLICY WTD 14 - PARKING STANDARDS

Development proposals should maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network ensuring that all vehicle parking is designed to be integrated into the site without creating an environment dominated by vehicles.

In residential developments the following minimum provision shall be made within the curtilage of the dwelling:

House Size	Minimum Requirement
1 bedroom	2 spaces per dwelling
2 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
3 bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling
4+ bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling

## 10. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

10.1 The proximity of the village to Ipswich probably accounts for the lack of day-to-day facilities and services in the village. There is no school in the village and the only meeting space is the small village hall, known as 'The Room', in the Wherstead Park Stable Block. There is no dedicated playing field for recreation or organised sports. However, commercial facilities serving a wider catchment exist including:

- Suffolk Food Hall,
- Jimmy's Farm,
- Suffolk Leisure Park snow sports and golf driving range,
- Puddleducks Kindercare children's nursery,
- Blue Cross animal rehoming centre,
- The Oyster Reach Beefeater public house and restaurant,
- Premier Inn Hotel,
- Fox's Marina Chandlery, and
- The Outlook Café, Bar and Bistro
- Wherstead Park

10.2 The retention and enhancement of services and facilities are important for the economy of the village as well as their availability for the wider catchment area. The loss of retail, leisure and recreation facilities will generally not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that it is no longer financially viable and that there is no longer a demand for the facility.

10.3 The Residents' Survey has demonstrated some support for additional facilities in the village which require local initiatives, outside the town planning system, to deliver. The Parish Council and community volunteers will have an important role in delivering such a facility.



### POLICY WTD 15 - PROTECTING EXISTING SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Proposals that will enhance the viability of any community facility and which provide additional recreation and community facilities will be encouraged.

Proposals that would result in the loss of facilities or services, including those identified on the Policies Map which, which support the local community (or premises last used for such purposes) will only be permitted where:

- a. It can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable and is not likely to become viable. Supporting financial evidence should be provide including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 6 months; and
- b. It can be demonstrated, through evidenced research, that there is no local demand for the use and that the building/site is not needed for any alternative social, community or leisure use; or
- c. Alternative facilities and services are available, or replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent standard, in a location that is accessible to the community it serves with good access by public transport or by cycling or walking.

### Community Aspiration 3 - Improving Facilities and Amenities in Wherstead

The Parish Council will encourage the improvement of facilities and amenities in the Parish, including:

- The creation of a new community amenity space to cater for the increasing numbers of residents through the Bourne View development.
- The creation of recreational facilities centrally within the village.
- The establishment of community land/open space.
- Retaining, enhancing and encouraging local natural habitats including woodland, hedgerows, ponds and water meadows.



## 11 TRAVEL AND HIGHWAYS

11.1 Many travel and highways matters fall outside the remit of town planning as planning permission is not required for road improvements within the highway boundary. Traffic and road safety is, however, a major concern of residents given the position of the village on the A14, the A137 and the B1456. Many of the roads do not have safe pedestrian routes alongside them or safe crossing points, limiting the ability to travel around the village by means other than the car. Ensuring this is maintained appropriately to keep the rural feel is important. Proposals that are likely to generate significant volumes of traffic must demonstrate how it would contribute to the achievement of transport mode shift identified in the Transport Mitigation Strategy for the Ipswich Strategic Planning Area. Financial contributions or works in kind will be sought from development to assist with delivery of the Transport Mitigation Strategy for the Ipswich Strategic Planning Area, sustainable transport measures identified in the most up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the most up to date walking and cycling infrastructure plans.

11.2 The proliferation of business and commercial uses across the Parish does generate additional journeys on the road network from employees, visitors



and deliveries. It is not possible to retrospectively restrict these permitted journeys but, where new development does come forward, existing planning policies can be used to ensure that the road network is satisfactory or is capable of being made satisfactory to accommodate the additional vehicles. At the same time, it may be appropriate to reconsider access arrangements to commercial premises to assess whether improvements can be made to the public highway and traffic circulation. Where new streets do come forward as part of a development, they should be designed in a way that encourages low vehicle speeds and allows them to function as social spaces, thereby contributing to the quality of the built environment.

### POLICY WTD 16 - NEW HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE

Proposals for major development should include provision for:

- Safe, connected, and inclusive walking and cycle routes;
- Secure cycle parking/storage;
- Linkages to existing pedestrian and cycle networks and improvements to those routes if necessary;
- Public transport, such as new or revised services, and physical measures such as bus stops, improvements; and
- Incentives to use sustainable modes of transport and encourage behaviour change, including through Travel Plans.

Where possible any development proposals in the South side of the village should include highway solutions to ensure employment traffic volumes created by existing and future business park developments, e.g. Wherstead Park, Peninsula and Park Farm Barns redevelopment and the emerging HomeField development, are routed away from the existing residential areas through the creation of dedicated access routes.

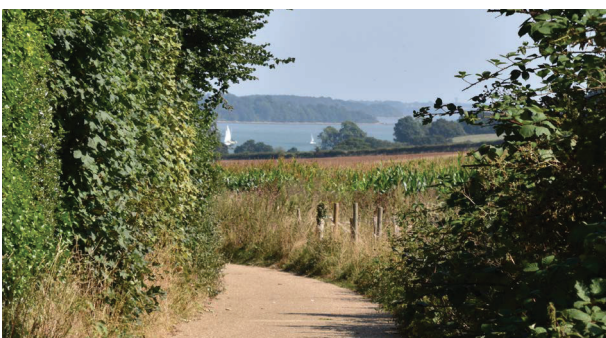


#### Community Aspiration 4

The Parish Council will lobby the relevant authorities to improve road safety and traffic management through:

- Improving road signage to give information and clear direction (e.g. HGV usage in The Street)
- Providing more bus shelters and canopies.
- Reducing the speed limits to improve safety. Specifically, reducing Bourne Hill to a lower limit over its entire length and on the A137 as it passes through Wherstead from the end of the Wherstead Road out to and including Valley Lane
- Enforcing the existing speed limits within the village.
- Prevention of illegal and nuisance parking, e.g. vehicles parking on pavements and over drives, or parking in areas that reduce visibility

- 11.3 The Parish has a good network of public rights of way providing recreational routes to the wider countryside. Generally, the paths are in good condition although 22% of residents in the Household Survey stated that there are paths within the Parish that cannot be used for all 12 months of the year. Initiatives to improve the condition of existing public rights of way or increase the network as part of a development will be supported where the proposal is otherwise acceptable.



## POLICY WTD 17 - PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Measures to improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way will be supported, particularly if their value as biodiversity corridors is recognised and protected and efforts are made to enhance biodiversity as part of the proposal.

#### Quiet Lanes

- 11.4 The Parish Council has worked with Suffolk CC to designate some of the narrower lanes which are popular with walkers, cyclists and horse riders as "Quiet Lanes" in recognition that these lanes are also used for non-motorised travel and that drivers should expect to consider the needs of users. Development proposals that are likely to immediately or subsequently exceed average movements in excess of 1,000 vehicles a day and/or 85th percentile speeds in excess of 35 mph in that designated Lane could result in the designation being lost. Such proposals would not be supported. Vicarage Lane - for its length from The Street to The Strand - and Valley Lane have been designated as Quiet Lanes.

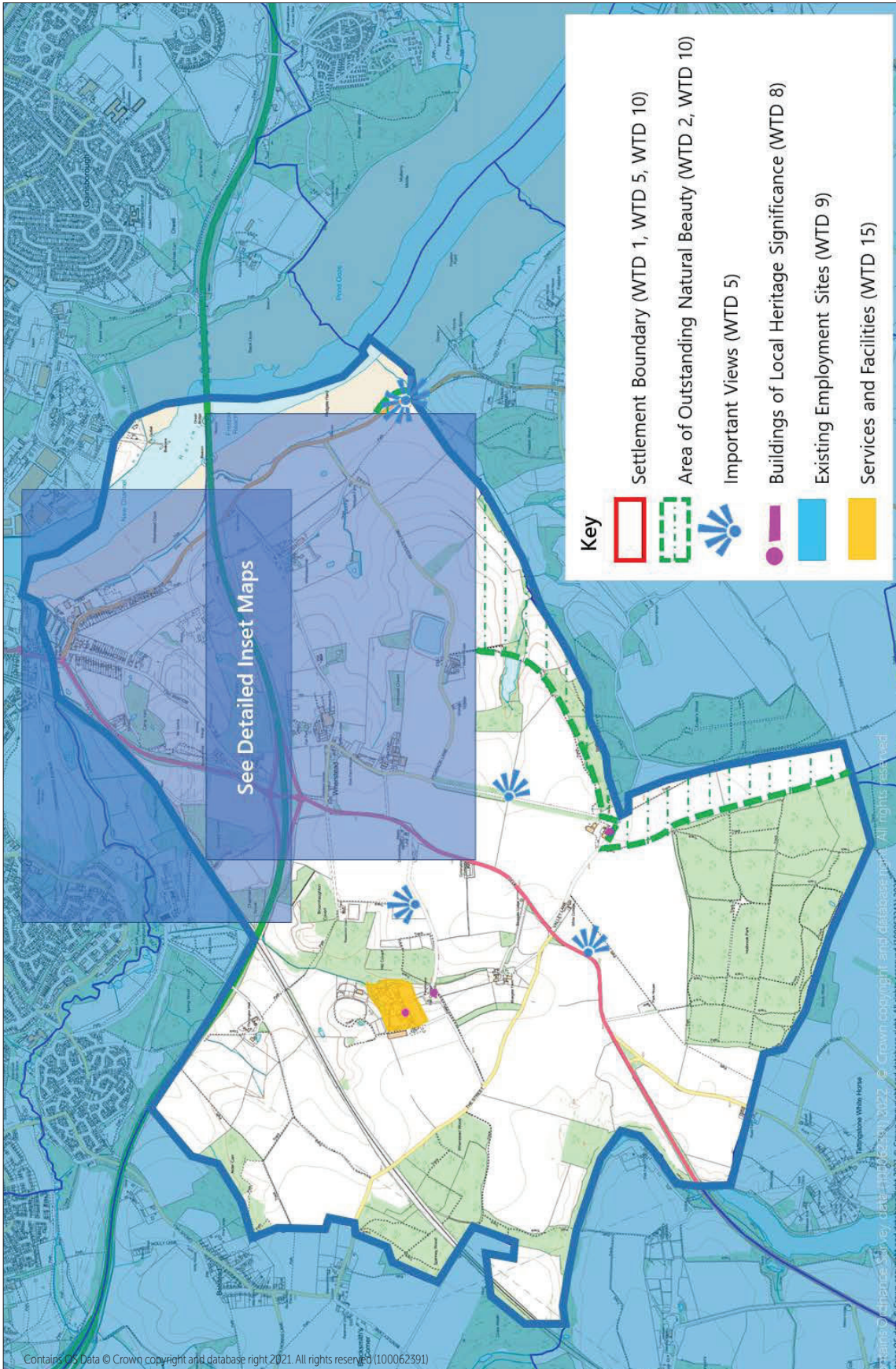
#### Community Aspiration 5

The Parish Council will pursue the provision of safe pedestrian and cycle routes to create a network connecting all parts of the Parish and improve access out into the countryside and adjacent villages, by:

- Establishing more Quiet Lanes within the Parish, connecting established footpaths, bridleways and rural areas.
- Establishing a Parish wide cycle lane and multiuser footpath network.
- Creating safer crossings over major roads
- Completing the circular walk around the village with a multi user hard all-weather surface connecting the Southern end of the Strand to Church / Peppers lane.
- Improving the quality and maintenance of established footpaths and verges.
- Providing information and waymarking references around the village to enhance the experience.

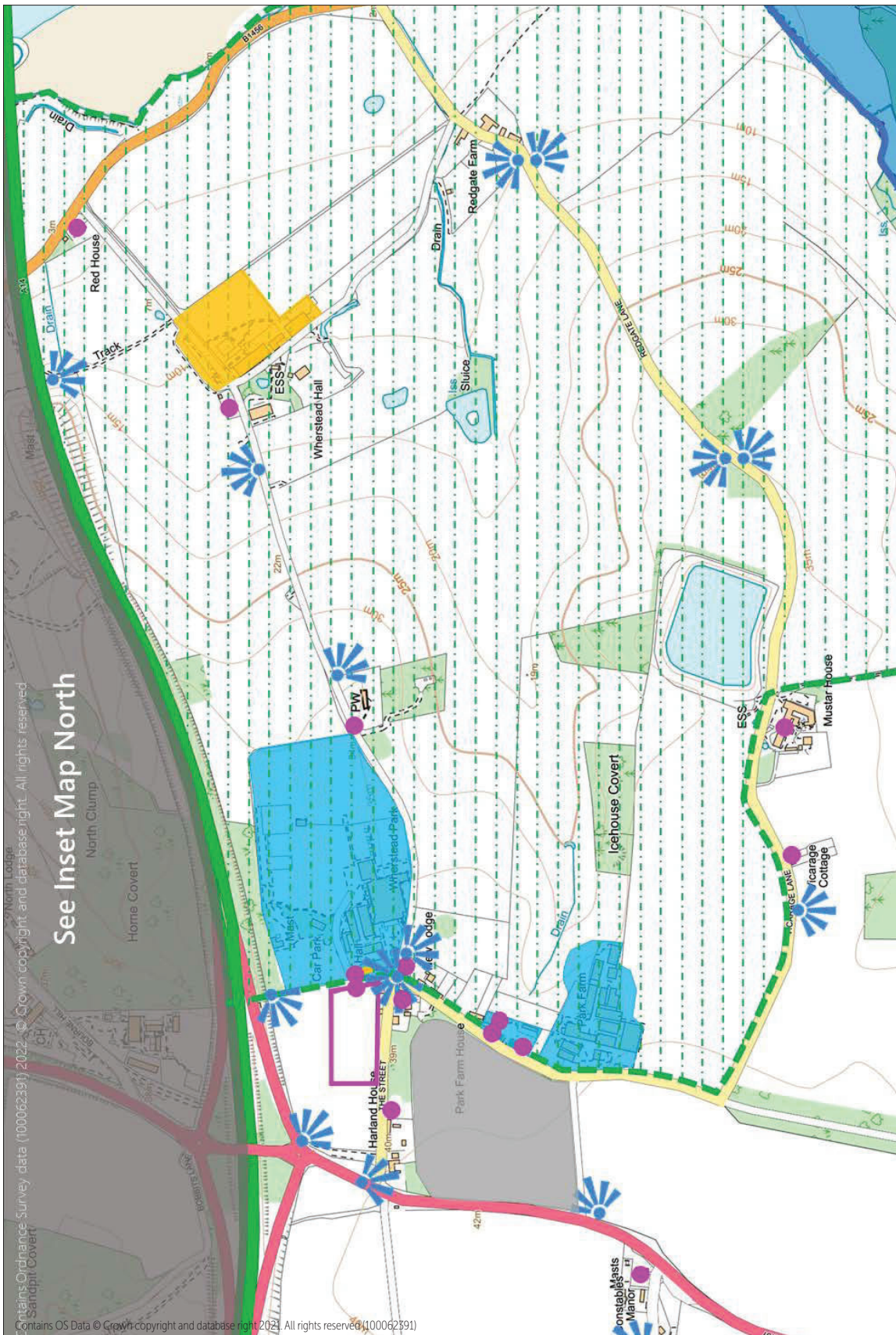


# POLICIES MAP



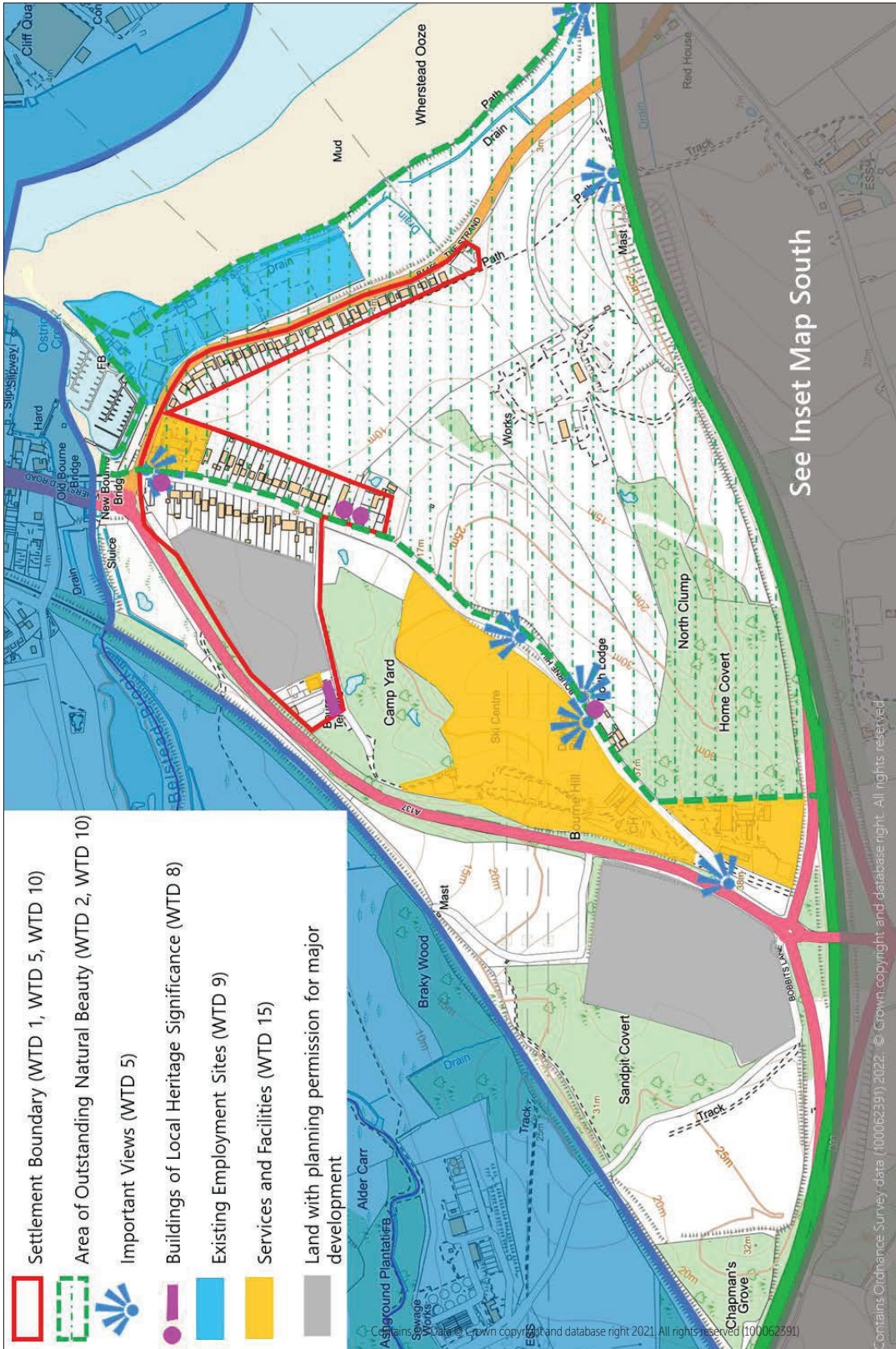


# INSET MAP SOUTH





# INSET MAP NORTH



## APPENDIX 1 - SUPPORTING EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS

The following supporting documents have been prepared to support the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. They can be viewed and downloaded on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website at <http://wherstead.onesuffolk.net/neighbourhood-planning/>

Wherstead Local List of Buildings and Structures of Architectural and Historic Interest; Wherstead Parish Council (2021)

Landscape and Biodiversity Evaluation; Suffolk Wildlife Trust (2021)

Appraisal of Views in Wherstead; Wherstead Parish Council (2022)

Wherstead Design Guide and Codes; AECOM (2021)



## GLOSSARY

**Archaeological interest:** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

**Biodiversity:** Describes the range and variety of living organisms within an ecosystem. It can include all living organisms, plants, animals, fungi and bacteria and is often used to indicate the richness or number of species in an area. Such an area can be defined at different levels across the globe or be limited to a local area such as a parish.

**Buildings of local significance:** Locally important building valued for its contribution to the local scene or for local historical situations but not meriting listed status.

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

**Settlement Boundary:** These are defined in the Development Plan. Settlement Boundaries are a planning term and the Limits do not necessarily include all buildings within the boundary.

**Development Plan:** This includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans as defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Habitat:** The natural home of an animal or plant often designated as an area of nature conservation interest.

**Heritage asset:** A term that includes designated heritage assets (for example, listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and battlefields) and non-designated assets identified by the local planning authority. Non-designated heritage assets include sites of archaeological interest, buildings, structures or features of local heritage interest listed by, or fulfilling criteria for listing by, the local planning authority.

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

**Infrastructure:** The basic physical and organisational structures and facilities (for example, buildings, roads and power supplies) necessary for development to take place.

**Local planning authority:** The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area which in this case is Babergh District Council.

**Local Plan:** The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

**Neighbourhood Plans:** A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

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

**Significance (for heritage policy):** The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

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

**Wildlife corridor:** A wildlife corridor is a link of wildlife habitat, generally native vegetation, which joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat. Corridors are critical for the maintenance of ecological processes including allowing for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations of plants and animals.







**Wherstead  
Neighbourhood Plan**

2018-2037

Submission Draft Plan