

Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2037



Referendum version
November 2023



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A letter from the Steering Group

Dear Walsham le Willows,

Welcome to the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan. The 15 policies in coloured boxes and the design codes have been amended following the consultation exercises and the public examination. We very much appreciated hearing from you, about what you thought of the draft policies as they progressed, and we have taken on board your comments.

The Plan's purpose remains to support the village's character and community of people and wildlife to survive and thrive in respect of housing and planning development for the needs of the village and wider community. We are working to a vision expressed in section 5. It has been important to us to get our Neighbourhood Plan as right as we can for all residents, businesses, families, walkers, gardeners, land managers and devoted community members so that it serves you and the people of Walsham le Willows as a whole. We have used your feedback to make sure we can do that as it is a living community led plan that speaks up for your rights in local planning law.

We have so many people to thank for the many layers and levels of contribution, from the 200 people who joined events and the mailing list in the early days, to all those who attended the Housing Exhibition, kept up with us on the website, or through the Observer and took time to fill in questionnaires. Our gratitude to the Parish Council for their steadfast support, time and guidance. Thank you also to Ian and all the team who deliver the Observer, Kevin for taking care of the Neighbourhood Plan website and form filling and to all those who have helped us with the mapping, photographs, historical and architectural references. Now we are at the end of the process, we are confident that this document fits neatly alongside a great many other important contributions towards community life and can never be definitive when there are so many small acts of kindness and consideration that happen every day.

Looking back, developing the Plan with the local community during the Covid-19 measures was a challenge. For almost two years the Steering Group kept the



process going through Zoom meetings. We are so grateful that Andrea and Rachel were able to join us as consultants. They have helped us draft the formal written plan deploying their high level of professional expertise and design skill. We produced the draft document with their help and then sought your views; you very kindly took the time to read it and comment on it.

There is still much that can change in local and national planning legislation and while we can review it every 5 years, this plan is looking forward 15 years into the future. Who knows what life will be like then? Our hope is that what we have done will be flexible enough to plan and adapt to change and be clear and well researched enough to legally protect and safeguard all that we love and cherish in Walsham le Willows.

With deep appreciation,

The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Development Plan will provide the first ever statutory planning policy document specifically for the Parish of Walsham le Willows. Neighbourhood Plans such as this were made possible by powers contained within the 2011 Localism Act which sought to decentralise policy making to the local level giving more powers to communities and the right to shape future development where they live.
- 1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led document for guiding the future development of the Parish. It is about the use and development of land up to 2037. Once the Plan is ‘made’ and comes into force, Mid Suffolk District Council will use it to determine planning applications. Walsham le Willows Parish Council will also use the Plan to respond to planning applications.
- 1.3 A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, comprising local residents from around the Parish and Parish Councillors, has led on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Walsham le Willows. The process of preparing the Plan has involved several stages of public consultation and community engagement and originally began in 2018 (see **Appendix A** for Steering Group members).



Figure 1: The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at work.

- 1.4 The Plan looks 14 years ahead to 2037, which is consistent with the Plan period of the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP). It

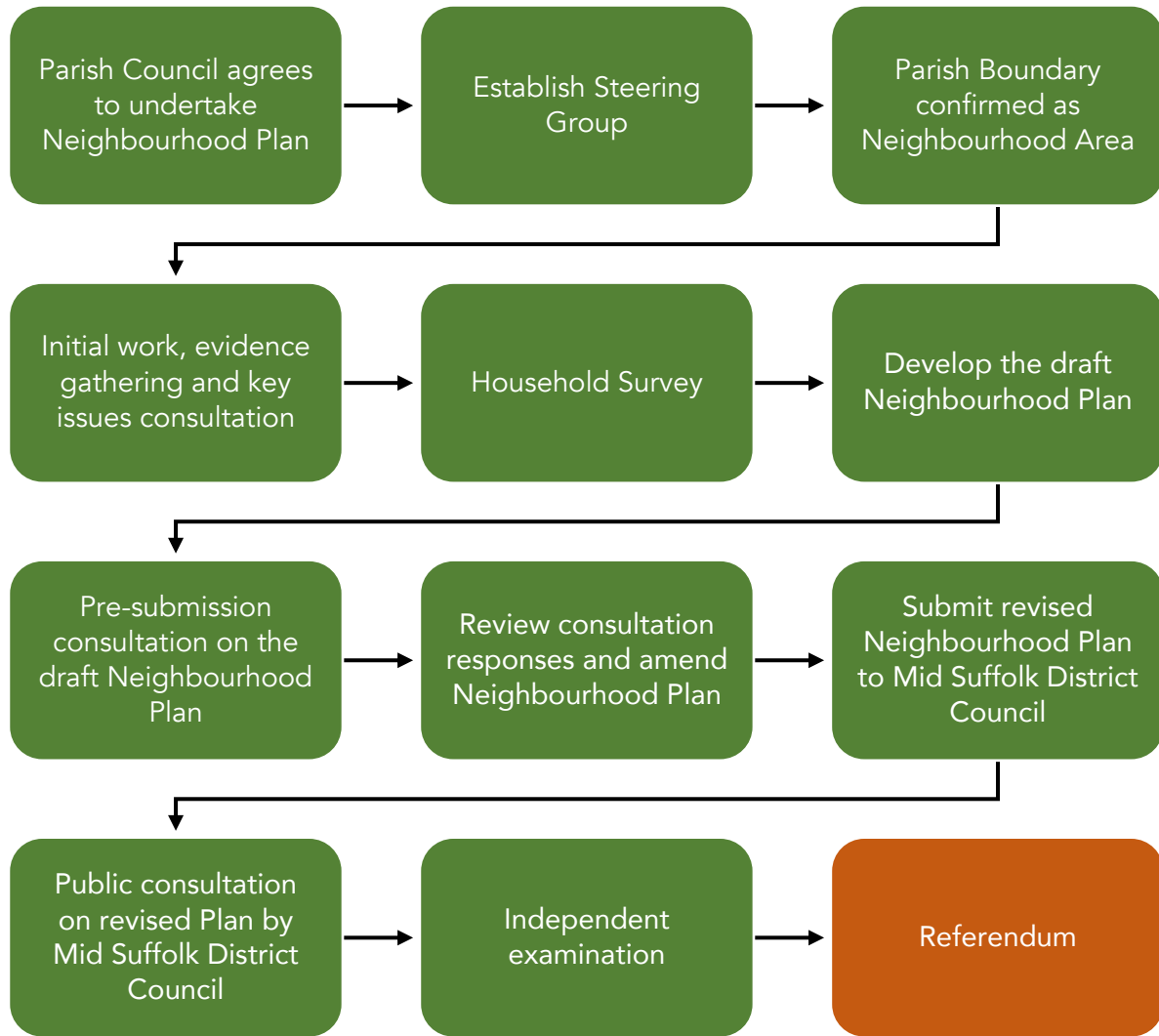


recognises that there has been development in the Parish and that there will continue to be so over the plan period. The Plan seeks to manage development proactively to ensure it meets local needs, whilst ensuring that the historic and natural environment of the Parish and the current community facilities are preserved and enhanced and encouraged to thrive. The key issues facing the Parish, which have been highlighted through public participation, include concerns about the design and impact of new development, impacts on the village centre from traffic, the need to protect the environmental assets of the Parish and to ensure that housing in the parish meets the current and future needs of residents.

- 1.5 The Plan operates in the context of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan and the Suffolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Most policies will guide new development across the whole Plan area and the Parish Council will promote, and collaborate with others, to identify community projects which will produce benefits for the Parish.
- 1.6 The Plan's policies and proposals will rely on collaboration and investment in the Parish by private, public, and voluntary agencies. Specific proposals will only happen through partnerships and collaboration. Part of the purpose of the Plan is to give the sense of direction and momentum which will build confidence and commitment.
- 1.7 By undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan, the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group aims:
 - To enable residents to influence and shape new development.
 - To establish what is special about Walsham le Willows.
 - To allow the village and surrounding area to develop sensitively, in terms of design, character, heritage, amenities, and enhance wildlife and the environment.
 - To identify community needs for the use of developer contributions and other possible funds.

Neighbourhood Plan process

- 1.8 The Referendum Version of the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Parish and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). The flow chart below (**figure 2**) outlines the stages that have been completed



Key

■ Completed stage ■ Current stage

Figure 2: Stages of the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan.

- 1.9 This Referendum version of the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan, was the subject of consultation with local residents, businesses, and statutory agencies throughout its evolution. All had the opportunity to comment on the draft Plan and all comments were collated and considered. The Plan was amended in a number of ways as a consequence.

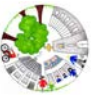


Accompanying supporting documents

- 1.10 The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan is supported by the following documents:
- **Walsham le Willows Design Guidance and Codes** - undertaken by consultants AECOM and completed in September 2022 – a focus on design elements to inform policy making and application determination across the Neighbourhood Area.
 - **Housing Needs Assessment** - undertaken by consultants AECOM in March 2022, a desk top study of the likely needs within the Parish.
 - **Walsham le Willows Data Profile** - a compendium of statistical and local evidence covering key themes within the Parish.
 - **Non-Designated Heritage Assets** - Supporting Assessments
 - **Basic Conditions Statement** – outlines how the statutory basic conditions have been met.
 - **Consultation Statement** – outlines how and when the public have been consulted on the content of the Plan.
 - **Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report** – to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.
 - **Habitat Regulation Screening Report** – identifies any potential impacts on protected species and habitats.

Referendum

- 1.11 At referendum, every resident of Walsham le Willows, who is entitled to vote in the Council elections will have the opportunity to vote on whether or not they agree with the Neighbourhood Plan. At referendum, residents will be asked, 'Do you want Mid Suffolk District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Walsham le Willows to help it decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood area?'. If the Plan gets over 50 per cent support from those who vote in the referendum, Mid Suffolk will 'make' (adopt) the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory development plan.
- 1.12 The statutory purpose of the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that development takes place in an appropriate way for the Parish. It has been positively prepared, with the purpose of supporting and managing the growth of Walsham le Willows. The plan is required to be 'positively' prepared and should not act as a rigid barrier to growth or unnecessarily restrict it. Its purpose is to manage and shape future development. In practice, higher level planning documents, such as the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan, cannot feasibly deal with all of the issues



particular to every Parish and village across the entire district, whereas the Neighbourhood Plan can add considerable value to the planning process by providing additional details which reflect specific local circumstances and conditions.

- 1.13 The Neighbourhood Plan provides clarity on what will be expected from development proposals in the Parish. A Neighbourhood Plan is a significant document and once ‘made’ (adopted), will carry legal weight which developers must take into account when considering future developments in the Parish.
- 1.14 The Neighbourhood Plan Area covers the entire Parish of Walsham le Willows and was formally designated by Mid Suffolk District Council on 30th July 2018.

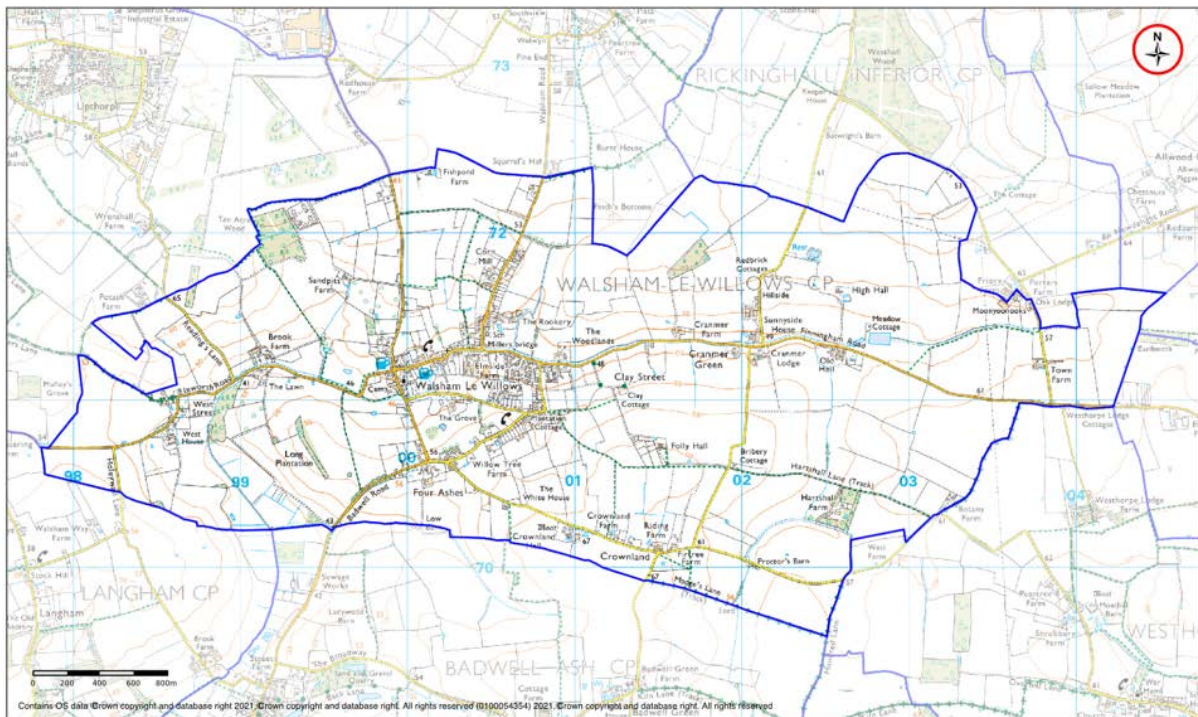


Figure 3: The designated Neighbourhood Plan area follows the Walsham le Willows parish boundary (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.





2. National and local planning policy context

- 2.1 Every local planning authority in England is required to prepare a Local Plan. Local Plans include all of the local planning policies for the district's area and identify how land is used, determining what will be built and where. Not every parish is compelled to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, however those that are produced are required by the Neighbourhood Plan regulations to 'have regard to national policies and advice', to 'contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' and to be in 'general conformity with the strategic policies for their area' e.g. the Local Plan. The relevant Local Plan for Walsham le Willows is the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy which was adopted in September 2008 and the Core Strategy focused review which was adopted in 2012. There are also some 'saved' policies still in force from the Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998. The Adopted Core Strategy, along with any relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies and the Adopted Neighbourhood Plan, provides the basis for determining planning applications and future development in the local area and should be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.2 The existing policies in the adopted Core Strategy are to be superseded by those in the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) once adopted. The pre-submission version of the BMSJLP published in November 2020 was submitted for examination on the 31st March 2021, and examination hearings were held in July 2021 and Autumn 2021 before being paused in December 2021. The BMSJLP is to be progressed in two parts. Part 1 will contain the strategic policies and development management policies for the two districts except for the spatial distribution/settlement hierarchy, open spaces, and site-specific allocations. Part 1 is due to be adopted in November 2023. Part 2 will contain those other elements and is expected to be concluded in 2025.
- 2.3 The current 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF) was published in September 2023. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan has been produced to be in conformity with the revised NPPF, in particular, taking a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development.



- 2.4 Planning law defines ‘development’ as ‘the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land’.¹ Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 emphasises that the planning system continues to be a ‘plan-led’ system and restates the requirement that ‘determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise’.
- 2.5 The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan once ‘made’ (adopted) will form part of the statutory Development Plan for the area and future planning applications for new development in the parish will be determined using its policies.



Figure 4: Spatial and strategic policy context, relationship between the National Planning Policy Framework (overarching national policy), the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy, the emerging Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan, and the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan which sits alongside the Local Plan.
Source: own diagram.

Local Policy framework for Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan

Adopted Core Strategy 2008 and 2012

- 2.6 Policy CS1 of the Adopted Core Strategy identifies Walsham le Willows as a ‘primary village’ in the settlement hierarchy. The Adopted Core Strategy classifies those villages which have basic local services including a primary school and food shop, as ‘**Primary Villages**’, where small scale housing growth to meet local needs, particularly affordable housing, will be appropriate.

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



- 2.7 The Core Strategy limits development to sites within settlement boundaries or, by allocation in the Site-Specific Allocation document, to sites adjacent to settlement boundaries. Policy CS1 of the Adopted Core Strategy does allow for development to meet other local needs such as employment, amenity and community facilities. The need for housing may be identified through annual monitoring or in locally generated documents such as parish plans or local needs surveys. The Core Strategy envisaged 300 new dwellings coming forward in the 11 Primary Villages collectively between 2010 and 2025 but did not make specific allocations in those villages. Specific allocations were envisaged to come forward in the Site-Specific Allocations document that would follow on however, it was never completed and was overtaken by the emergence of the BMSJLP.

Emerging Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan 2019/20

- 2.8 The emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) identified Walsham le Willows as a Core Village in the Mid Suffolk settlement hierarchy – this is tier 2. Core Villages were envisaged to act as a focus for development, which will be delivered through site allocations in the Plan and/or in Neighbourhood Plans, and windfall development in accordance with the relevant policies. The accuracy of the scoring used to determine which layer of the hierarchy that Walsham le Willows falls into was disputed by the Parish Council who were of the view that the scoring was too generous and had included ‘services and facilities’ in the village that no longer exist. The issue of the Settlement Hierarchy for the Districts will now fall into Part 2 of the Local Plan expected to be completed by 2025 and therefore representations to ensure the accuracy of the hierarchy will be made by the Parish Council at the relevant time. These issues are covered in more detail in the Housing chapter.



3. Walsham le Willows parish

Origins and history

- 3.1 Walsham le Willows is a thriving, rural village lying on the edge of the central boulder clay area of Suffolk in the Ancient Plateau Clayland area known as High Suffolk with gravels and loams to the south and west and heavier land to the east. The parish is located within Mid Suffolk District and lies approximately 10 miles (16 km), northeast of Bury St Edmunds, 9 miles (14.5 km) southwest of Diss and 11 miles (17 km) west of Stowmarket. The main village settlement is supplemented by four outlying hamlets, West Street to the west, Four Ashes to the immediate south, Crownland lying southeast and Cranmer Green to the east. Between The Street and Four Ashes lies an area of parkland surrounding a Georgian mansion known collectively as The Grove.
- 3.2 The village is surrounded by farmland which gently slopes down towards the stream in the valley bottom which divides the parish longitudinally. The surrounding landscape is interspersed with woodland, copses and mature hedgerows. These form wooded horizons and combine with the wide-open views, to provide a strong and rural sense of place. The historic settlement is predominantly along the underlying gravel terrace of the stream. This runs along a shallow valley draining the surrounding fields and broadening as it travels west towards Badwell Ash where it forms a water meadow.
- 3.3 Evidence of human activity in Walsham le Willows dates back to Neolithic times. The earliest archaeological indication of permanent settlement here was during the Romano-British period. The place name 'Walsham' is Saxon in origin and the village appears as Wal(e)sam in the Domesday survey. Surviving manorial court documents reveal that by the beginning of the 14th century, a sophisticated system of local administration and justice was already operating within a populous and prosperous community.²
- 3.4 Elizabethan Walsham le Willows is also extremely well chronicled, largely thanks to Nicholas Bacon, Queen Elizabeth I's Chancellor. He was gifted the Manor of Walsham in 1559 and kept copious notes. He also ordered a written survey of his holdings the archive of which can be found in **The Field**

² Ray Lock, **The Court Rolls of Walsham le Willows 1303-50** and **The Court Rolls of Walsham le Willows 1351-99** are published by The Suffolk Records Society in two volumes.



Book Of Walsham le Willows 1577. The remarkable survival of the village's 14th century Manorial Court Rolls, additionally provide eloquent and important detail for historians seeking to understand how rural life was changed by The Black Death of 1349. Walsham le Willows was recorded as having between 1250 and 1500 inhabitants at the beginning of the year, nearly half of whom perished when plague struck that spring. This death toll had far-reaching effects on the local economy and society. The story of how the residents of Walsham le Willows responded during this period was portrayed in the BBC documentary 'Lucy Worsley Investigates: The Black Death' (BBC2, 24th May 2022).³

- 3.5 Another notable local resident was landowner and Puritan Ralph Margery who in 1643, as England descended into civil war, raised his own cavalry of 112 men, later known as the 'Thirteenth Troop of Ironsides' to fight for Parliament in the New Model Army. With reference to Margery, Cromwell wrote: "I had rather have a plain russet coated captain that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows, than that what which you call a gentleman and is nothing else". Walsham le Willows is privileged to have had a comprehensive archaeological field survey of the entire parish carried out during the early 1980s by village volunteers under the guidance of Suffolk County Archaeologist Dr Stanley West which contributes to the wealth of documentary evidence charting the parish's evolution and development.⁴
- 3.6 The historic core of Walsham le Willows runs east west alongside a tributary to the Little Ouse, known locally as The Stream. The majority of the parishes 60 listed buildings, many of them built during the 16th century are found here. A large number of the pre-20th century houses lining The Street reveal, by way of their large rectangular or bay windows, rear wooden workshops, backyards and side tracks, their former incarnations as shops, weaving rooms, bakeries, shoe repairers, butchers, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, ironmongers, watchmakers, schools and the Reading Room. The presence of so many trading establishments is evidence that Walsham le Willows comprised a relatively complex, flourishing and self-sufficient community until at least the early 20th century.

³ "Programme based largely on The Black Death - The Intimate Story of a Village in Crisis, 1345-1350" by John Hatcher published in 2008.

⁴ Towards a Landscape History of Walsham le Willows, S.E West and A McLaughlin SCC 1998.

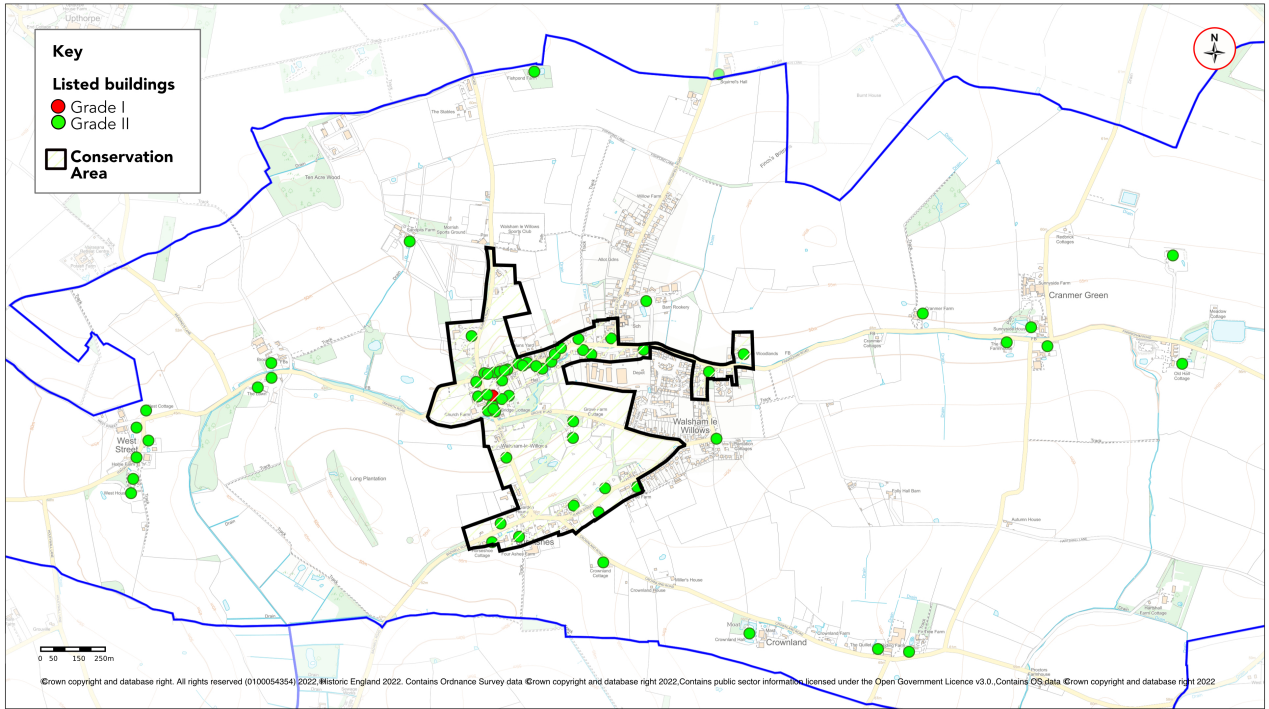


Figure 5: Listed buildings and the Conservation Area in Walsham le Willows (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.



Figure 6: Listed buildings and the Conservation Area in the village centre, Walsham le Willows (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).



- 3.7 In the 19th century the Martineau family moved to Walsham. They were businessmen, intellectuals, and philanthropists. They saw how badly housed their farm workers were. The Martineaus began a programme of creating new homes for their employees. Designed as terraces of 2, 3 or 4 dwellings, these intricately detailed brick and oak buildings were constructed in a distinctive Arts and Crafts or mock Jacobean style with short non-biblical inscriptions carved into their beams, bressumers and bargeboards. These buildings, along with the Priory Rooms, the former Reading Room and the Lych Gate to the cemetery, are now much treasured icons of the village. Each property offered accommodation for a family, with outhouses for washing, latrines and bakehouses and a quarter of an acre of land so that families could grow their own food and keep chickens. A pigsty was sited at the end of each garden, wells to provide water for each little community and in some places a widow's room, the 19th century version of a granny annex where the widows of deceased farm workers could live out their days safely, within their community.
- 3.8 Council house building began in the 1920s. On Grove Road, the Parish Council instigated new building in order to rehouse local people from elsewhere in the village. In 1930, the Parish Council proposed the demolition of 6 existing village properties to be replaced by a total of 12 new houses on the Wattisfield Road. A further 16 houses were built along Palmer Street in 1937 and in the 1960s more single storey dwellings for the disabled and elderly were provided in Grove Park and Miller's Close. Thus resulting in an extensive provision of council houses in Walsham le Willows. Two small late 20th century developments at Broad Meadow and Jolly's Way were built on land sold by local farmers at a discount with the proviso that priority should be given to first time buyers with connections to the village.
- 3.9 The Church of England Temperance Society founded its branch in Walsham le Willows in the 1860s and villagers were encouraged to sign the 'pledge book' and thus refrain from drinking. The Society was successful in reducing opening hours and introducing punishments for transgressors but during the time of its existence there were still five pubs in the village. Nonconformist worship has also held a significant presence here. A Baptist Chapel, now disappeared, was established at Cranmer Green in 1818. Palmer Street hosted the iron chapel of the Plymouth Brethren from the late C19th until 1996 by which time the number of its worshippers had dwindled and the site was sold to make way for a private home. On The Street, opposite the bend, where the stream flows under the bridge, and away from view, stands the grand flatly pedimented classical red and white brick façade of the early Victorian Congregational chapel. The chapel hosts regular services and for



the past fifty years has been the venue for an Easter Convention with preachers and worshippers attending from across the country. Note: another good source of historic data is the Suffolk Historic Environment Record, which is managed and maintained by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

Walsham le Willows today

- 3.10 The most recent population figures are from 2019, when Mid Suffolk estimated the parish population was approximately 1,213 residents living in 512 households.
- 3.11 Two local trusts, The Old Town Trust and the Town Farm Charity have remits to provide help for those in need within the community. The Old Town Trust holds land for locals to farm. It owns the 16th century weatherboarded Guildhall on The Street which provides accommodation for local people and the rents raised from the farmland are donated to charitable purposes within the village. The Town Farm Charity gives grants from the proceeds of the sale of former common land at the far east of the parish. Its object 'for the general benefit of the inhabitants...which provision cannot be made out of rates, taxes or public funds'.
- 3.12 Recent development during most of the last half of the 20th century continued to be small scale with infill along roads, small pockets of development such as Upper Meadow, or clusters of housing around an open central space such as Postmill Gardens, Mill Close, Broad Meadow or Staple Close.
- 3.13 Two of the latest housing developments (Elmside Lea and The Acorns), have however been altogether significantly larger. **Elmside Lea**, 79 houses of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedrooms was completed in 2011. Façade design nods towards local architectural styles, using decorative bargeboards, orange brick, flintwork, jettied overhangs, sash and casement windows. The estate does contain a central open space which many houses directly overlook. There are a variety of building heights and designs and mixed use of ground materials. Curving pathways run through the estate linking Townhouse Road and Grove Park to the centre of the village.
- 3.14 **The Acorns**, still under construction in 2022, is an estate of 60 houses and bungalows of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedrooms. Properties are at a higher density than at Elmside with less or no garden frontage and more hard standing between buildings. Architectural design is less varied across the estate than that which



is more commonly found throughout the village core, which is characterised by changes in roof height and pitch. The new development also has an absence of chimneys, which would have served to break the skyline, and this, together with an absence of decorative or individualised detailing, which is occurs regularly elsewhere in the village, is uncharacteristic of this area. (See the Design Code for more details). Surface water drainage is managed by way of an attenuation pond excavated in the northern part of the site to capture run off water.

Employment

- 3.15 Despite its agricultural location, there is less visible full-time labour on the land. However, several family farming businesses still operate here, each with small numbers of full-time employees. The local area, renowned for its large dairy industry in the Elizabethan age, is now predominantly arable with most farmers growing a rotation of wheat, barley, oil seed rape and sugar beet, with some land given over to government schemes such as Countryside Stewardship. The largest employer in the village is Clarke's of Walsham, a well-known East Anglian builders' merchant. It employs about 100 people and also has a country retail store. There is also a hairdresser's and the only surviving shop in the village is Rolfe's, a highly regarded and long-established butchers. Other notable businesses include H G Moores and Ashwell Construction (see paragraph 11.3).
- 3.16 Outside of the main built-up area of the village and running parallel along the Parish boundary is a commercial employment area. The area can be viewed as forming two distinctive parts joined by a private road running east west at some 800 metres long. The land adjacent to the Summer Road has a development of two modern, large single story office buildings in a black timber cladding and red pantile and metal roofing which reference a traditional Suffolk barn style. These buildings are surrounded by open fields, graveled car parking and road frontage. Serving as office spaces the premises are currently occupied by civil engineering, utilities and accountancy businesses as well as other similar employers. The area to the west is occupied by civil engineering groundworks, storage and operating compound. The depot area is locally known as 'The Old Bomb Store'. This name derives from the fact it sits in the curtilage of what was a nuclear bomb store on the southern edge of RAF Shepherds Grove. Now decommissioned, Shepherds Grove was formerly occupied by the Royal Air Force serving as an active RAF Station from 1943 to 1966. The nuclear store was built during 1957 for the early American nuclear bombs. During the Cold War, Shepherds Grove played an important role as one of the 20 Thor IRBM bases



established in the country. Historical evidence of its important role during this era is witnessed by the presence of two surviving and relatively complete igloo type buildings. These once housed the thermonuclear weapons. There are also two surviving fortified outlook posts positioned at the southern and eastern perimeter of the site.

- 3.17 Many residents from Walsham le Willows commute to Bury St Edmunds, Diss, Stowmarket and Ipswich via the increasingly congested A143 to the north and the A14 to the south, whilst others work from home. Walsham le Willows is served solely by C-roads and several single-track lanes. These routes are also much valued as leisure amenities for walking and cycling, not least during term time when parents walk their children through the village to the primary school on the Wattisfield Road.

Community facilities

- 3.18 The School is **Church of England Voluntary Controlled (CEVC)**. The Parish is predominantly within the catchment area of Walsham le Willows CEVC Primary School with a small area to the east within the catchment area of St Botolph's CEVC Primary School. Walsham le Willows CEVC Primary School is not currently expected to exceed 95% capacity during the forecast period. The current forecast takes account of the two housing sites referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan; these had been allocated as sites LA091 and LA092 in the November 2020, Regulation 19 Joint Local Plan. For secondary education, the Parish is within the catchment area of Thurston Community College, with pupils also attending SET Ixworth School and Hartismere School. Thurston Community College is expected to exceed 95% capacity during the forecast period. A project is currently being developed to expand the 11-16 accommodation to provide additional places, with the potential of a further phased expansion in the future.
- 3.19 The Little Willows Pre-school at the same site, is a registered charity offering pre-school places for 2- to 5-year-olds.
- 3.20 The **Church of St Mary** is one of a benefice of 6 parishes. It holds regular services and provides the venue for the flower and art show during the Open Gardens Weekend and periodic music events. In recent times the church tower has provided the location for an annual 'teddy bear parachute jump'.
- 3.21 Adjacent to the church is the **Priory Room**, commissioned in 1902 by John Martineau and intended 'for meetings connected to the church'. It was designed by his cousin the architect Edward Henry Martineau. The Priory



Room provides a smaller venue than the Village Hall and was the location for the church Sunday School. It is maintained and managed by the Parochial Church Council.

- 3.22 The **Memorial Village Hall** in the centre of the village was built to commemorate the victory of WWII and is in frequent use. Newly refurbished it provides a large indoor space available for hire. It is used for meetings, plays and exercise classes as well as weekly community coffee mornings. It is also the hub for the village food bank, an initiative that has expanded since its beginnings during the Covid pandemic. The foodbank is run by volunteers from the Walsham le Willows Community Council, one of only two such surviving bodies in Suffolk. The Community Council manages the Hall, garden, grounds, bowling green and carpark and pays for the upkeep of the building and land via fundraising. The hall also used to host the satellite postal service and offers local entertainment such as cinema screenings, music, drama performances and dance.
- 3.23 The Community Council is also responsible for the funding and monthly publication of the **Walsham Observer** which is distributed free of charge to every household in the parish as well as being accessible in an online version. The magazine remains the principal and most important recorder of current events as well as the main means of communication. The community also has a very active Facebook page, the 'Walsham le Willows Community Hub' and at the time of writing is running at a total of 1300 members.
- 3.24 The **Sports Club** on Summer Road is a hugely successful and vibrant organisation originally established on Martineau land, now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It hosts a number of highly successful football and cricket teams and offers many other sports including tennis, fitness classes, darts, running and even a walking netball group. An invaluable community asset, it continues to grow, offering new sporting, fitness and social activities to the wider community. It also hosts concerts and gatherings, including in June 2022, the parish Platinum Jubilee 'family fun day'. In August 2022 the club gained planning approval to build a community gym providing a small bespoke fitness cabin on the opposite side of the road to the main sports pavilion. This will be equipped with gym equipment where up to 4/5 people can train at any one time. The facility will be available for hire and use by the local community on a daily basis throughout the year, with a lead fitness trainer providing management and supervision as well as offering a personal training service.



Figure 7: Walsham le Willows Sports Club.

3.25 One of the great success stories over the past 42 years has been the **Walsham le Willows Open Gardens Weekend** which, at the time of writing, had just celebrated its 40th year. The annual event takes place over the August bank holiday weekend and villagers open their gardens to raise money for the church and other village charities. The event was founded by the then vicar John Rutherford and village doctor Alec Russell with his wife Hilary, and was the first of its kind in the country. It continues to attract a huge number of visitors from Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire and beyond. For a small fee, they come to enjoy the beauty of the village and view a range of gardens from the large, formal and established to the petite and modest. In 2022 some 2000 people came to explore 45 gardens, the allotments and the Wild Wood as well as to enjoy art and floral exhibitions, plant and craft stalls, music performances, cream teas and a barbecue. Planning and staging this annual occasion brings together a wide, cross-section of people in the community and the event is responsible for raising an impressive amount of funding all of which goes towards the fabric of the church as well as other local causes.



Figure 8: Walsham le Willows Open Gardens Weekend, 2022.



3.26 In 2010 Walsham le Willows Primary School won a National Lottery grant of £4500 to create a local woodland. Two years later a group of volunteers, began the inaugural planting of 420 saplings on land next to the allotments leased from The Old Town Trust. The saplings were donated by the Woodland Trust. Among their number was a young oak tree from the Sandringham Estate which was included to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee. The **Wild Wood** has been planted in such a way as to create a vista towards the church as well as serving its purpose of providing a haven for wildlife and contributing to the biodiversity of the area. Now a thriving and much valued community asset, the Wild Wood continues to provide amenity for the local community as well as a place for contemplation and rest. The area is also the venue for the primary school's forest school programme as well as activities such as easter egg hunts, picnics, butterfly counts and yoga sessions. In 2022 to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, the Wild Wood Group announced plans to plant a second phase of Woodland on an adjacent 2 acres of land, to be known as **Jubilee Wood**. As well as more trees, there are also plans to include an area of edible wild planting and a wildflower meadow.



Figure 9:
The Wild
Wood and
Jubilee
Wood.

Walsham Wildwood
Scything workshop
Saturday 1st September 10 - 3pm



Join us for a scything workshop in the
After Scything we will have a
Lunch and you can see the effect of scything
on the landscape. For information see website or call
01493 810000

There's a lovely "scything" smell and healthy green grass
to be seen just after a 6th scything in the
Landscape after scything. www.walshamwildwood.co.uk



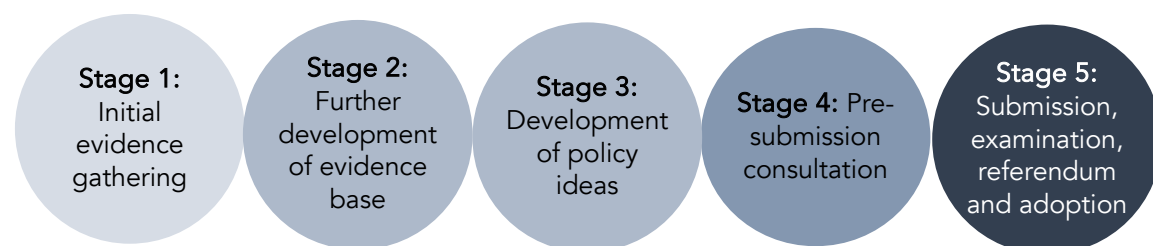


4. How the Plan was prepared

- 4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been responsible for the preparation of the Plan and has been supported by a small team of independent consultants who were appointed in September 2021. The process began for the Steering Group in July 2018 when the Neighbourhood Area was designated by Mid Suffolk District Council.
- 4.2 The Plan has been commissioned by Walsham le Willows Parish Council. Funding for its production has come from a central government Locality grant.

Community engagement and consultation

- 4.3 The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken with community engagement and consultation although this was challenging during the COVID-19 restrictions. The Steering Group have been innovative in their approach, using ZOOM for a number of Steering Group meetings when social distancing restrictions were in place. However face to face public engagement was possible in the early stages. This began with a parish drop-in session in June 2018 which sought to develop some draft objectives, which was followed by a specific Housing Session in July 2020. A Neighbourhood Plan household survey was distributed to all 528 households in the parish in November 2021. The survey asked a series of more detailed questions about the future of development in the parish. 142 responses to the survey were received and these helped to form the foundation of the draft policies in the plan. Full details of all of the community engagement events will be contained in the Consultation Statement that will accompany the submission version of the Plan.
- 4.4 Below is a summary of each of the community engagement and consultation stages.





Stage 1: Initial evidence gathering (2018 and 2019)

- Neighbourhood Area designation, July 2018.
- Initial evidence gathering. First community drop-in day, June 2018.



Figure 10: Initial evidence gathering. First community drop-in day, June 2018.

Stage 2: Further development of the evidence base (2020 and 2021)

- Second community drop-in day with housing focus, July 2020.
- Vision and objectives drafted, September 2021.
- Character appraisal of the parish undertaken by the Steering Group.
- Commissioning of Housing Needs Assessment (produced by AECOM).
- Commissioning of Design Guidance and Codes document (produced by AECOM).
- Household Survey distributed to all Walsham le Willow households in the parish, November 2021.
- Data profile for the parish completed in January 2022.



Figure 11: Second community drop-in day with housing focus, July 2020.

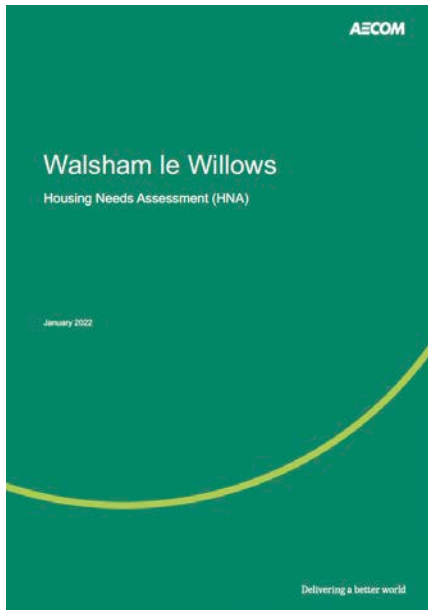


Figure 12: Left, Housing Needs Assessment.
Figure 13: Above, Design Guidance and Codes.

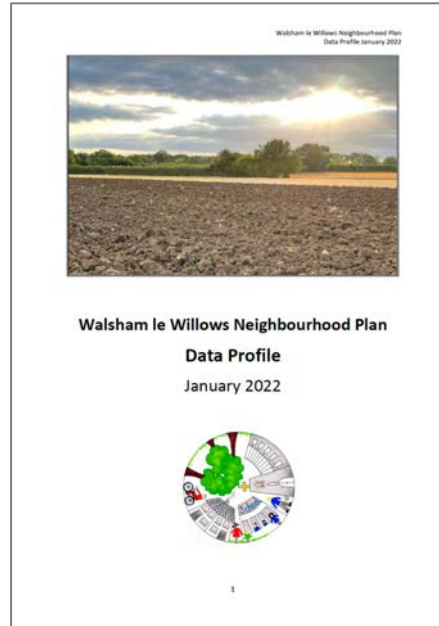
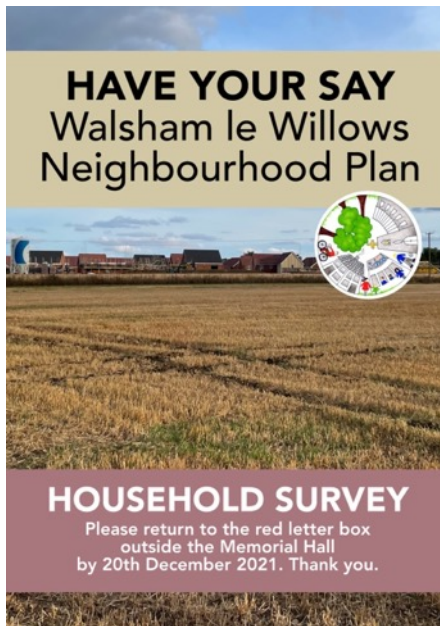


Figure 14: Left, Household survey.
Figure 15: Right, Data Profile.

Stage 3: Development of policy ideas (Spring and Summer 2022)

- Following analysis of the household survey results and the data profile, together with a review of the information collected from the drop-in days, draft policy ideas were developed.
- Housing Needs Assessment completed in April 2022.
- Design Guidance and Codes document completed in July 2022.
- Drafting of the Neighbourhood Plan took place from April 2022

- 4.5 Neighbourhood Plans are not required to have policies on all areas identified by the local community. Their purpose is to add a local dimension to the decision-making process where it is practical and beneficial to do so, however feedback from the community on initial themes from the drop-in days and through the household survey has been beneficial to help identify the need for policy topics and to indicate the direction that those policies should move in.

Stage 4: Pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 14 (Autumn 2022)

- The draft Neighbourhood Plan was issued for pre-submission consultation (from 17th October to 2nd December 2022). It was sent to statutory agencies and available for residents to comment.



- Approximately 60 local residents responded together with the following Statutory Consultees: Mid Suffolk District Council. Suffolk County Council, Historic England, Natural England, Anglian Water, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Defense Estates and National Highways.



Figure 16: Flyer/poster for the pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan.



Figure 17: Pre-submission consultation exhibition, 17th October 2022.



Stage 5: Submission, examination, referendum and adoption (2023)

- Modifications to be made to the Neighbourhood Plan following pre-submission consultation.
- Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to Mid Suffolk District Council with supporting documents took place in April 2023.
- Examination took place between July and August 2023.
- Referendum and adoption (expected Autumn 2023).

Communication

- 4.6 Communicating with residents and businesses throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan is particularly important and all relevant information was placed on the Neighbourhood Plan page of the Parish Council website: <https://www.walsham-le-willows.org/neighbourhood-plan/> The website also contained information on how to contact the Steering Group and receive updates on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan
- 4.7 The Walsham le Willows monthly parish magazine, the Walsham Observer, which is delivered monthly to every house in Walsham le Willows has featured regular articles about the Neighbourhood Plan, made requests for feedback and comments at various stages, and has advertised the consultation events.
- 4.8 Facebook, posters, and flyers were used to promote the work of the Neighbourhood Plan. An update for the Parish Council on the Neighbourhood Plan progress was presented at monthly meetings and the Parish Council website contains the Neighbourhood Plan webpage.



Figure 18: Banner and logo for the Neighbourhood Plan designed by Evie Howes in 2020, former pupil of Walsham CEVCP School. Used on publicity, the website and the household survey.







5. Vision, objectives and policies

Challenges for Walsham le Willows

- 5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible through land-use planning, the challenges that face the community of Walsham le Willows.
- 5.2 Early consultation with the community, undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group revealed a number of key issues of importance to the community as shown below:
- Concerns over traffic movements, particularly HGVs in the village centre.
 - Traffic from the new housing development under construction (Acorns) travelling through the village centre.
 - Impediments for access for emergency vehicles in the village centre.
 - Desire for a Post Office.
 - Concerns over the designs of the houses on the new development.
 - Concerns over pedestrian safety on Summer Road – where the sports facilities are located.
 - On-street carparking in the village centre.
 - Concerns over the scale of proposed new development.
 - Concerns over loss of green space and natural habitat.
 - Impacts of new development on the charm of the conservation area.
 - Some support for sustainable design.
 - Support for increased tree planting.
 - Importance of gardens.
 - Parking provision in new housing developments.
 - Support for housing for elderly people.
 - Protect the footpath network.
 - Concerns over flood risk/surface water.
 - Existing heritage should be cherished.
 - Lack of shop for a village of this size.
 - School capacity.
 - Support for the facilities at the Sports Club.
- 5.3 The household survey sought to establish more detail and aimed to tease out key themes that the Neighbourhood Plan would need to address and set the



direction for the Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is acknowledged that not all issues raised by the community are necessarily issues that can be dealt with by the Neighbourhood Plan through a planning policy. Not all issues raised necessarily are directly related to development requiring the benefit of planning permission, however, this should not underestimate the importance of the issues raised. The Neighbourhood Plan does allow for the incorporation of 'projects' or 'actions' that can be taken forward by the community often, but not exclusively by the Parish Council, to address these other issues.

Pre-Submission Consultation – Regulation 14

- 5.4 The pre-submission consultation took place between October and November 2022. Responses were received from both statutory consultees and approximately 60 local residents. The key issues raised were as follows:
- Factual updates required relating to the progress of the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan.
 - General support for the policies in the plan and the approach to managing new development.
 - Support for the Design policy and the Design Code.
 - Some concerns over the identification of specific Non-Designated Heritage Assets.
 - Support for the environmental and community policies.
 - Lack of references to climate emergency.
 - Need for a policies map.
 - Suggestions for inclusion of wildlife corridors.
- 5.5 In order to address the issues raised above the following amendments have been made to the Neighbourhood Plan:
- Factual updates, correction of errors.
 - Inclusion of policies map.
 - Inclusion of references to climate change in the objectives and vision.
 - Deletion of some specific Non-designated Heritage Assets.
 - Changes to policy wording to aid clarity.



Neighbourhood Plan Vision for 2037

VISION 2037	<p>Walsham le Willows will continue to be a well-loved, historic Suffolk parish with a unique character and identity.</p> <p>The natural environment, biodiversity and heritage will be enhanced and protected. Future development will be environmentally sustainable, adapted to mitigate the impacts of climate change, well designed, and suitably located, integrated, and connected.</p> <p>The Parish will have a range of housing types and tenures to suit all ages and incomes, supported by appropriate infrastructure.</p> <p>The area will continue to be a desirable place for current and future generations.</p>
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5.6 It is important that any Neighbourhood Plan contains a simple vision statement which sums up the community’s aim for the future of the parish. The Neighbourhood Plan vision is an overarching statement describing what Walsham le Willows should be like at the end of the Plan period i.e., 2037. It has been developed by the Steering Group and based on the initial feedback from local people.

5.7 The vision underpins the objective and policies of the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan and is referred to throughout.

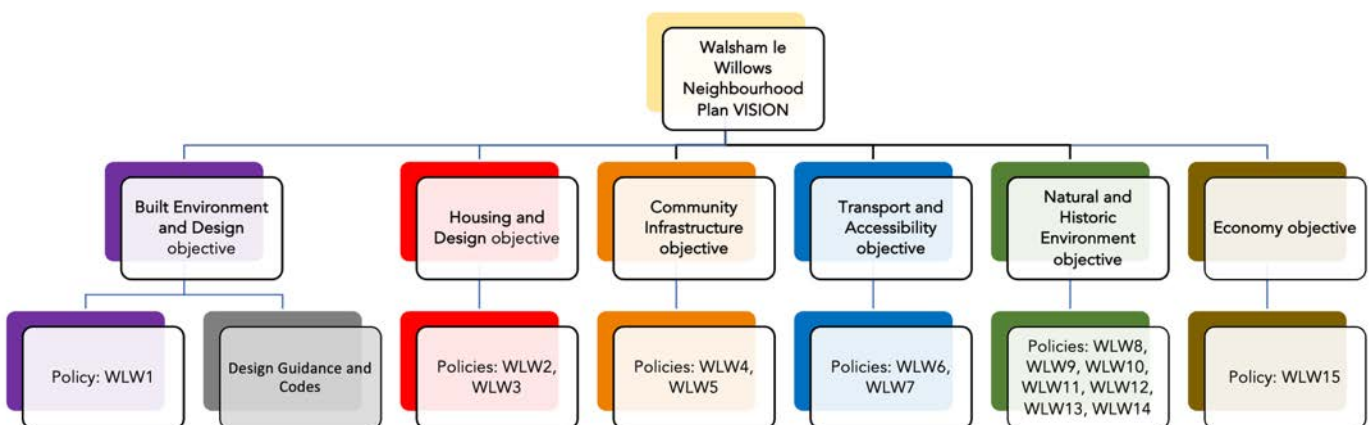


Figure 19: Structure of the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan.



- 5.8 From the vision flow the different objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and from there, the policies. The diagram above outlines this relationship.
- 5.9 Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives are required to be consistent with those at a national level. The Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development as outlined in the NPPF. Sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development through planning requires the balancing of three interdependent and overarching objectives:
- An economic objective: to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and co-ordinating the provision of infrastructure.
 - A social objective: to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and.
 - An environmental objective: to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment,; including using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.10 These broad, high-level objectives, along with the six specific Neighbourhood Plan objectives set out below, are reflected throughout the Plan. The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan guide development proposals and decisions, taking account of these objectives and local circumstances and reflect the character, needs and opportunities of the area. The approach supports the delivery of sustainable development in a positive way, so that opportunities to secure net gains across each objective can be taken.
- 5.11 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are broad statements of intent which are there to help deliver the vision and link to the issues that Walsham le Willows is seeking to address. They have been drafted using themes picked up at an early stage and have been refined through the community consultation exercises.



Neighbourhood Plan objectives

Built Environment and Design objective

Objective 1: To ensure that all new development enhances and respects the existing character of the village, minimises its impact upon the natural environment and enhances the built environment by encouraging high quality design through innovation.

Housing objective

Objective 2: To provide housing that maintains a mixed and balanced community, by meeting the present and future needs of Walsham le Willows in terms of size, type and affordability.

Community Infrastructure objective

Objective 3: To encourage the provision of first-rate infrastructure for the parish by protecting existing community facilities and encouraging new creative spaces and expanded services.

Transport and Accessibility objective

Objective 4: To promote the environmental wellbeing and health of the residents of Walsham le Willows by providing safe and convenient access, by foot, by bicycle and for disabled users, reducing congestion and pollution through encouraging the use of sustainable transport.

Natural and Historic Environment objective

Objective 5: To enhance and safeguard the Parish's natural assets (wildlife, landscape, green spaces, water courses), and to preserve and enhance the built heritage), supporting them to adapt to the effects of climate change whilst retaining the important distinctive character and identity of individual parts of the settlement.

Economy objective

Objective 6: To support local business, including opportunities for home working and encourage appropriate growth where it contributes to the sustainability of the community.



- 5.12 The vision and objectives have provided the framework to develop the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Each policy relates to a particular objective under the following area wide themes: **Built Environment and Design, Housing, Community Infrastructure, Transport and Accessibility, Natural and Historic Environment** and **Economy**. The Neighbourhood Plan is first and foremost a land-use document for planning purposes. All policies in the Plan have been derived from a series of consultation exercises, stakeholder engagement and specific research, which provide the justification and evidence base for their selection.
- 5.13 The Neighbourhood Plan policies follow the government’s guidance. They exist to:
- Set out locally led requirements in advance for new development in the Parish.
 - Inform and guide decisions on planning applications.
 - Ensure that the multitude of individual decisions add up to something coherent for the area as a whole.⁵
- 5.14 To aid interpretation for decision makers and planning applicants, each policy is accompanied by supporting text, which includes context for the theme, the views of residents, guidelines, and reference to strategic plans. This is set out before each of the policies.

Neighbourhood Plan policies

Built Environment and Design policies.

WLW1: High quality and sustainable design

Housing policies

WLW2: Scale and location of new housing

WLW3: Housing size, type, and tenure

Community Infrastructure

WLW4: Community Facilities

WLW5: Drainage and floodrisk

⁵ Tony Burton, Writing Planning Policies, Locality.



Transport and Accessibility policies

- WLW6: Pedestrian and cycle connectivity
- WLW7: Public rights of way

Natural and Historic Environment policies

- WLW8: Area of local landscape sensitivity
- WLW9: Important views
- WLW10: Dark skies
- WLW11: Local green spaces
- WLW12: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity
- WLW13: Renewable Energy
- WLW14: Non-designated heritage assets

Economy policies

- WLW15: New and existing businesses

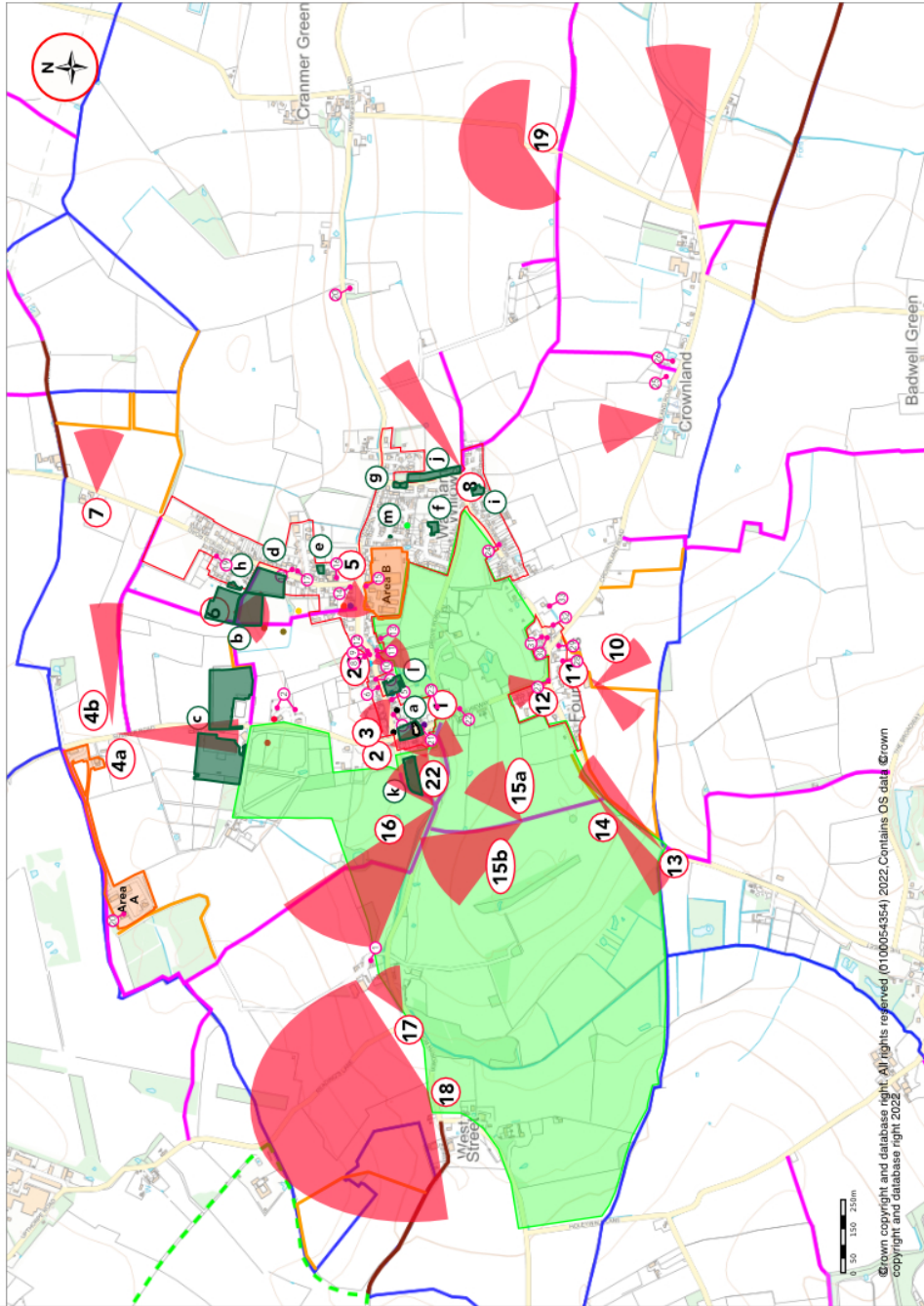


Figure 20: Policies map (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Key	
	Settlement boundaries
Community facilities (in WLW4)	
	Little Willows Pre-School
	Walsham le Willows CofE VC Primary School
	Memorial Hall
	Priory Room
	St. Mary's Church (excluding churchyard)
	Congregational Church
	Sports Club pavilion and car park
	Public Houses (Six Bells Inn and The Blue Boar)
Others, identified as Local Green Space (policy WLW11)	
	Allotments
	Play area
	Wild Wood and Jubilee Wood
	Cemetery
	Bowling Green
Public Rights of Way and permissive paths (WLW7)	
	Footpath
	Restricted Byway
	Bridleway
	Byway open to all traffic (BOAT)
	Permissive path
	Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity (WLW8)
	Important Public Local Views (WLW9)
	Local Green Spaces (WLW11)
	Non-designated Heritage Assets (WLW14)
	Existing employment use (WLW15)



6. Built Environment and Design

Objective 1: To ensure that all new development enhances and respects the existing character of the village, minimises its impact upon the natural environment and enhances the built environment by encouraging high quality design through innovation.

- 6.1 One of the determinants of whether any new development is deemed successful, is how well it is considered to sit within its surroundings. Design, local character, layout, and scale of development are community concerns. The NPPF makes clear that local planning authorities should ensure that visual tools such as design codes and guides are used to inform development proposals to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage and reflect local character and preferences. They should provide a framework for creating high-quality places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design to inform development proposals.⁶
- 6.2 Residents were asked in the in the Neighbourhood Plan survey 'What features would you like to see included in any new housing development? '.

⁶ National Design Code, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2021.

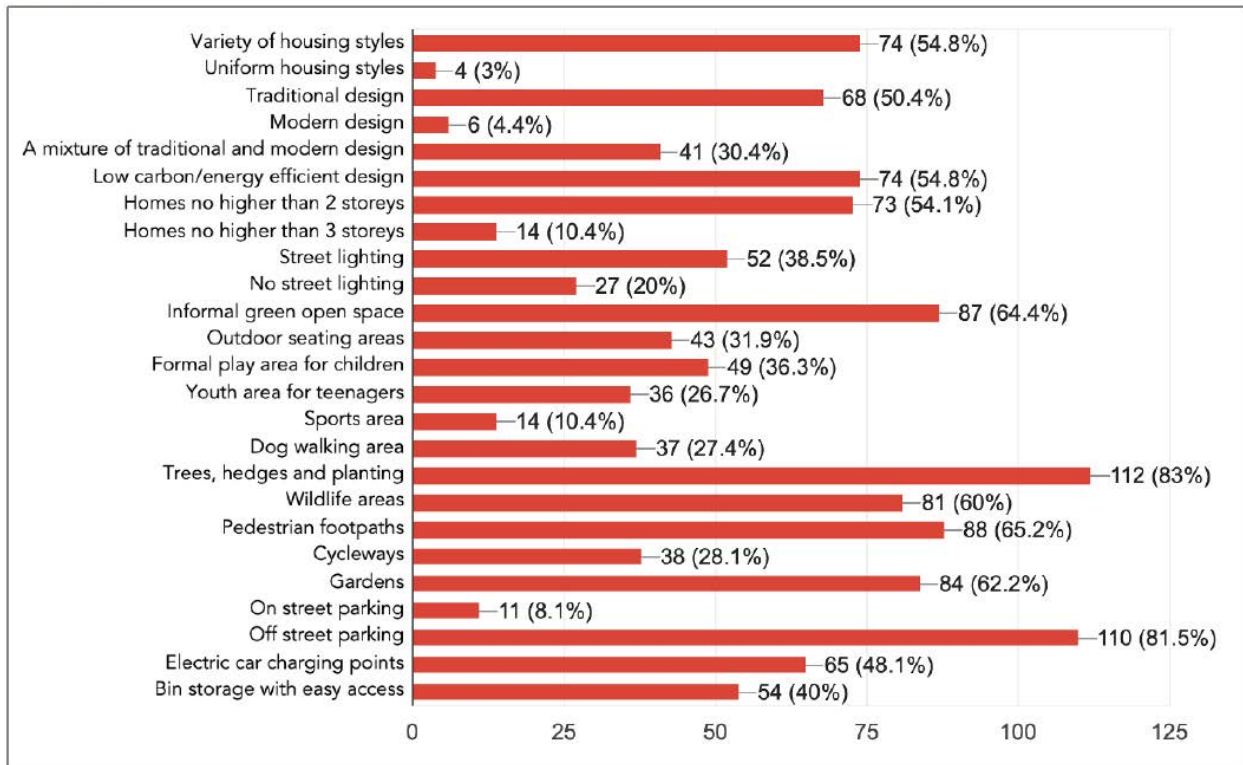


Figure 21: Answers to the Household Survey question 'What features would you like to see included in any new housing development?'

6.3 The most popular answers were trees, hedges and planting and off-street parking followed by informal open space, gardens, pedestrian footpaths and wildlife areas. These responses are consistent with earlier questions in the survey which asked residents about what they valued about Walsham le Willows and where words such as community, countryside, village, rural quiet and friendly were commonly used. There were also a significant number of comments about respecting the current character of the Parish, retaining it as a village and green spaces. The things that residents wished to see improved were all linked thematically – parking, transport, and traffic were easily the most common suggestions.

6.4 If a community believes that it has been involved in and been able to influence the design of a development at an early stage, the higher the likelihood that the development will be considered to be acceptable. This was prevalent in the results of the survey. The development south of Finningham Road which comprises Elm Drive and Willow Close, was built by Hopkins Homes in the early 2000s. Despite being a sizeable development (at 79 homes) it is considered locally to have assimilated well into the built form of the village with sympathetic treatment of external facades. The development has a number of informal and formal green spaces, which the dwellings are arranged around. There is a mix of housing styles and good



levels of detailing and a mix of materials which relate well to the vernacular. A more recent development west of Wattisfield Road, which is currently under construction has received more mixed reviews from local people.

- 6.5 Whilst to an extent design and impact on local character are subjective judgments, these can be influenced by breaking design elements down into component parts and attempting to address them. Whether a proposed new development is acceptable and appropriate and relates well to its surroundings, is one of the most common judgments to be made, yet historically there is often very little evidence or guidance to assist local people (or decision makers) in making that judgement.
- 6.6 The government is placing significant importance on the quality of design through the development of design codes which aim to set standards for design upfront and provide firm guidance on how sites should be developed. The role of design guidelines and codes in the development of a Neighbourhood Plan is expressed in the NPPF 2023, paragraph 128 which states that *'To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans... should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design. However, their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.'* Given this emphasis placed on good quality design at a national level through the promotion of Design Codes, including the National Model Design Code⁷ and also at county level through the Suffolk Design Guide⁸ and Suffolk Design: Streets Guide 2022.⁹ The Neighbourhood Plan steering group commissioned AECOM to undertake a 'Design Code' for Walsham le Willows.
- 6.7 The Walsham le Willows Design Guidance and Code completed in (September 2022) draws on detailed work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in producing the Character Appraisal for the Parish. It provides a detailed framework that should be followed by any future design proposals that come forward within the neighbourhood area to ensure it meets a consistent, high-quality standard of design and positively contributes to the unique character of Walsham le Willows. The Design Code is intended to inform policies that will influence the design of new development and

⁷ National Model Design Code - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

⁸ Suffolk Design, <https://www.suffolksdesign.uk>.

⁹ <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/suffolk-design-guide-for-residential-areas>.



have weight in the planning process and is a supporting document to the Neighbourhood Plan (see **Policy WLW1** below).

Gardens and amenity

- 6.8 The NPPF recognises the important beneficial contribution to health and well-being that access to open spaces and outdoor amenity areas such as allotments and communal gardens can bring to a community in addition to the opportunity to grow one's own food. Private outdoor amenity space in the form of private gardens is also important.
- 6.9 Given that any new housing development in Walsham le Willows is likely to be in an edge of village location and immediately adjacent to open countryside, it is important that the outside space (including gardens), around any dwellings makes a positive contribution in visual and biodiversity terms, to the transition between open countryside and built development.
- 6.10 It is recognised that any policy should not be overly prescriptive and to allow for flexibility in order not to stifle innovation or for there to be an adverse impact upon affordability. However development should respond to its location. This is particularly important where new development will mark the transition from urban to rural. A garden that is smaller than the footprint of its house for a rural or edge-of-village new development is unlikely to be appropriate. The more rural a property is, the more garden it needs. Rural properties, outside town or village boundaries, need a great deal more space.
- 6.11 In the late 1990s the national emphasis on re-using brownfield land and using higher dwelling densities in order to minimise the need to release greenfield land for housing, led to gardens in newly built developments to feel uncomfortably small and become increasingly inadequate. The experience of the Covid-19 pandemic reinforced the importance of gardens in terms of physical and mental wellbeing as well as the opportunities they provide to enhance biodiversity. Outdoor garden space should be of a size and dimension to suit the requirements of the building's occupants for informal recreation and enjoyment. Storage sheds and space for drying areas and wheeled bins are usually required and allowance for this should be made within any scheme design without compromising the space available for the overall enjoyment of the garden.
- 6.12 The orientation and amount of sunlight a garden enjoys is also an important feature. A report by the British Research Establishment (BRE) "Site Layout



Planning for Daylight and Sunlight”¹⁰ advises on planning developments for good access to daylight and sunlight and is widely used by local authorities during planning applications to help determine the impacts of new developments. The guide recommends that certainly no more than two fifths and preferably no more than a quarter of the garden should be prevented by buildings, walls, or fences from receiving sunshine on 21 March.

- 6.13 While size and sunlight are important, shape and access are too. Rear gardens will, ideally, be equally as wide as the property itself, and will be accessed from the rear of the property. Front garden space is good if it’s in addition to rear garden but compromises a property if it’s the only garden space it has and is less private. The best gardens wrap around the property on three or four sides. Other issues that play an important part are aspect and gradient, whether a garden is overlooked, and how it integrates with the property. One of the most vital aspects of any rear garden, regardless of size, is that it can be accessed without having to go through the house.

POLICY	<p>WLW1: High quality and sustainable design</p> <p>The design of all new development in Walsham le Willows will reflect the local distinctiveness and character of the Parish and seek to enhance its quality.</p> <p>Proposals for all new development should respect the existing context of the proposed development and that of the relevant Character Area (as defined in the Character Appraisal within the Walsham le Willows Design Guidance and Codes (2023)), including the character of adjacent properties where this provides a positive contribution. Detailed consideration should also be given to the specific design guidance and codes for each character area contained in the Walsham le Willows Design Guidance and Codes (2023).</p> <p>Residential development</p> <p>Proposals for all new housing development (including barn conversions and extensions) should be of a high standard of design and have due regard to the following design elements as appropriate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pattern of development: Any future development within the settlement boundaries should seek to conserve and enhance the
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¹⁰ BRE, <https://bregroup.com/services/testing-certification-verification/indoor-environment-testing/natural-light/>.



character of the existing settlement in terms of form and character as well as reflecting the local context and making a positive contribution to the existing built form.

- b. **Layout and grain:** New development should be properly integrated with the existing settlement and should not result in a loss of local distinctiveness. Any proposed development should respect the historic pattern and little lanes of the Conservation Area as well as the mix of form and a layout that compliments Walsham's straight roads and distinctive orientation of buildings. The siting and layout of new development must be sympathetic to the specific character areas, any heritage assets, and the landscape setting.
- c. **Orientation:** The layout of sites and individual buildings are encouraged to be designed to maximise solar gain, daylight and sun penetration while avoiding overheating. Passive solar design principles are encouraged to be incorporated from the start of the design process taking into account topography and surrounding existing buildings.
- d. **Settlement edges:** Settlement edges should provide a soft transition from the built environment to the surrounding countryside.
- e. **Parking:** New development should accommodate parking consistent with the Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019 or successor documents, including secure cycle parking and a proportion of well-designed and integrated on street parking spaces for visitors. Where garages are proposed, they should be of sufficient dimensions to accommodate an average sized car and allow for the opening of the car doors. Proposals should provide for electric vehicles on both on-street and off-street car parking spaces.
- f. **Boundary treatments:** Boundary treatments should provide good separation between public and private spaces. A range of high-quality materials should be used, such as brick or flint wall, hedges, planting, and occasionally wooden fences. In addition, the height of the boundary treatment should not intrude on neighbouring views and light or alter the level of enclosure along a street.
- g. **Scale, form, and massing:** New development should create a harmonious relationship with the neighbouring buildings, spaces, and streets as well as enhancing the best characteristics of Walsham le Willows.
- h. **Materials:** The combination of architectural features, materials and the colour palette found in Walsham le Willows are unique to the place and create an important link between the built environment and the village's history. Development within the village should



closely align with the materials and colour palette set out in Walsham le Willows Design Guidance and Codes (2023).

- i. **Landscaping and trees:** The provision of street trees and landscaping within the built environment is supported due to the interesting and varied streetscape it creates and the physical and mental health benefits derived. The provision of street trees within the built-up areas of the village creates variation and interest along the street, adds to the identity of a place and acts as a traffic calming measure. All new development should include tree-lined streets unless in specific cases there are clear justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate.

Sustainable and environmental design features

Proposals for all forms of development that incorporate measures that will help to offset or mitigate climate change whilst minimising visual impact will be encouraged. Such measures could include energy efficiency measures and water management features such as rainwater harvesting.

Energy efficient or eco design measures should be adapted to fit the character of the area and solutions used for traditional buildings may need to be different to those used in modern buildings. Traditional buildings are encouraged to use a 'whole building' approach to energy efficiency by finding balanced solutions that save energy, sustain heritage significance, and maintain a comfortable indoor environment. Techniques and materials that have been demonstrated to be appropriate for the building fabric will be supported. The appearance of buildings should not be compromised by the installation or incorporation of such features.

Gardens and outdoor amenity space

The design of new gardens should take account of the contribution gardens can make to enhancing wildlife and include trees and hedgerows in boundary treatments. Gardens and outdoor amenity space should be provided, taking account of the following:

- i. Outdoor garden space should be of a size, shape and dimension to suit the requirements of the building's occupants for informal recreation and enjoyment including children's play; and allow the opportunity for residents to grow their own food e.g., vegetable gardens. Proposals where the amenity space is of a size or shape that is not suitable for such use and enjoyment will not be supported.
- ii. The orientation of outdoor garden space should aim to retain natural features of the site, maximise natural light and afford neighbours and future occupants a reasonable level of privacy.



- iii. Outdoor garden space for homes should be directly accessible from the house to allow for secure, private outdoor relaxation, entertainment, and children’s play.
- iv. Garden space should include room for the installation of water butts, refuse and recycling, storage areas and composting bins.
- v. In edge of settlement locations, gardens should contribute to the transition between open countryside and built development taking into account the edge of settlement location.

Also see **Policy WLW12 Protecting and enhancing biodiversity.**



7. Housing

Objective 2: To provide housing that maintains a mixed and balanced community, by meeting the present and future needs of Walsham le Willows in terms of size, type, and affordability.

Scale and location of new housing

- 7.1 Housing is often one of the key reasons why a community decides to embark upon the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. The issue of future housing development in Walsham le Willows has been a key topic of conversation and interest during the production of this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.2 Government guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹¹ advises that Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area. In the case of this Neighbourhood Plan this is the Adopted Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (2008) and Core Strategy Focused Review (2012). In addition, there are some 'saved' policies from the 1998 Mid Suffolk Local Plan that are still relevant to the determination of applications. All of these documents are in the process of being superseded by the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan. The BMSJLP is to be split into two parts – Part 1 includes all strategic and development management policies except for those relating to Spatial Distribution/Settlement Hierarchy and Open Spaces. Part 2 will contain those items, together with settlement boundaries and the site-specific policies and allocations.
- 7.3 Neighbourhood Plans should be used to set out more detailed policies for specific areas or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the

¹¹National Planning Policy Framework, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> (accessed 18.09.23).



provision of community facilities, establishing design principles, conserving, and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out detailed policies for the management of development. The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to both existing and emerging development plan policies. The NPPF requires Neighbourhood Plans to support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans and shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.

- 7.4 In terms of rural housing, the NPPF states that, 'To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby'. The NPPF also states, 'Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for small and medium-sized sites and work with developers to encourage the sub-division of larger sites.'
- 7.5 Figures from the 2011 census indicate that the population of Walsham le Willows parish was 1,213 people, living in 512 dwellings. A further 16 dwellings were unoccupied at that time. Figures from Mid Suffolk District Council's Annual Monitoring report indicate that between April 2013 and March 2018 a further 8 dwellings were constructed.

Allocations

- 7.6 The BMSJLP submitted for Examination in March 2021, made two specific housing allocations within the Neighbourhood Area. While the allocations have now been removed from the BMSJLP, both sites have had the benefit of outline or full planning permissions. These are:
- **LA091 – Allocation: Land west of Wattisfield Road, Walsham le Willows** Size of site – 2.7ha. Approximately 60 dwellings with associated infrastructure. Development for this site is expected to comply with the relevant Plan policies and contributions to the satisfaction of the LPA towards education provision. The site has the benefit of planning permission granted in July 2018 and is currently under construction.
 - **LA092 – Allocation: Land east of Wattisfield Road, Walsham le Willows** Site Size 0.53. Approximately 22 dwellings with associated infrastructure. Development for this site is expected to comply with



the relevant Plan policies and contributions to the satisfaction of the LPA towards education provision. The site was granted outline permission in May 2018.

Existing commitment

- 7.7 In table 4 on page 44 of the submitted BMSJLP, the minimum local housing requirement for each neighbourhood area for the plan period (2018-2037) is set out. However, following the Examination Hearings in December 2021, when the decision was made to split the emerging BMSJLP into two parts, the figures are now 'indicative'. For Walsham le Willows the figure is 90 dwellings which is comprised as follows:
- Outstanding planning permissions at 01.04.18: 8 dwellings.
 - Allocations: 82 dwellings.
 - Local Housing Requirement 2018-2037: 90.
- 7.8 As part of the Local Plan Examinations in September 2021, the Councils published their updated housing information and confirmed the 90-dwelling figure for Walsham le Willows over the BMSJLP plan period. The revised figures indicated that between April 2001 and March 2020, there had been 88 dwellings completed in the Parish with 8 being completed between April 2018 and January 2022. At 1st April 2021, there were 84 dwellings with outstanding planning permission which is in part reflected by the planning status of the sites referred to above.

Planning permission reference number	Site address	Total number of new dwellings	of which 'x' are affordable	Status
DC/17/02783/OUT	Land Opposite Broad Meadow	22	7	Not Started
DC/19/04273/RES	Land West Of Wattisfield Rd	60	31	Under Construction
DC/20/03436/RES	Rookery Barn, Rookery Lane	1	0	Not Started
M /3940/15/FUL	Hartshall Farm, Crownland Rd	1	0	Under Construction

- 7.9 At the time of writing (September 2023) according to the Mid Suffolk planning register, there have been no further permissions for new dwellings granted in the Parish since 1st April 2021.



- 7.10 In December 2022, the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils published their Housing Land Supply Position Statement, which has been prepared by independent consultants Lichfields. This indicated that Mid Suffolk had a 10.88 year land supply. It was concluded at the Local Plan hearings that 90 per cent of the housing land requirement for the two Districts had already been met through existing commitments.
- 7.11 The Neighbourhood Plan is not compelled to make further provision although it can choose to do so if there was sufficient community support for it and suitable sites could be identified.
- 7.12 The Submitted BMSJLP made an allowance for windfall sites as part of the overall housing figure. The NPPF defines ‘windfall’ as ‘sites not specifically identified in the development plan’. These can include previously developed land that has unexpectedly become available, new dwellings formed through the sub-division of an existing property, barn or building conversions and small infill plots within the existing settlement boundaries.
- 7.13 The adopted settlement boundaries for the Parish as set out in the Adopted Local Plan 1998 is shown in figure 22.

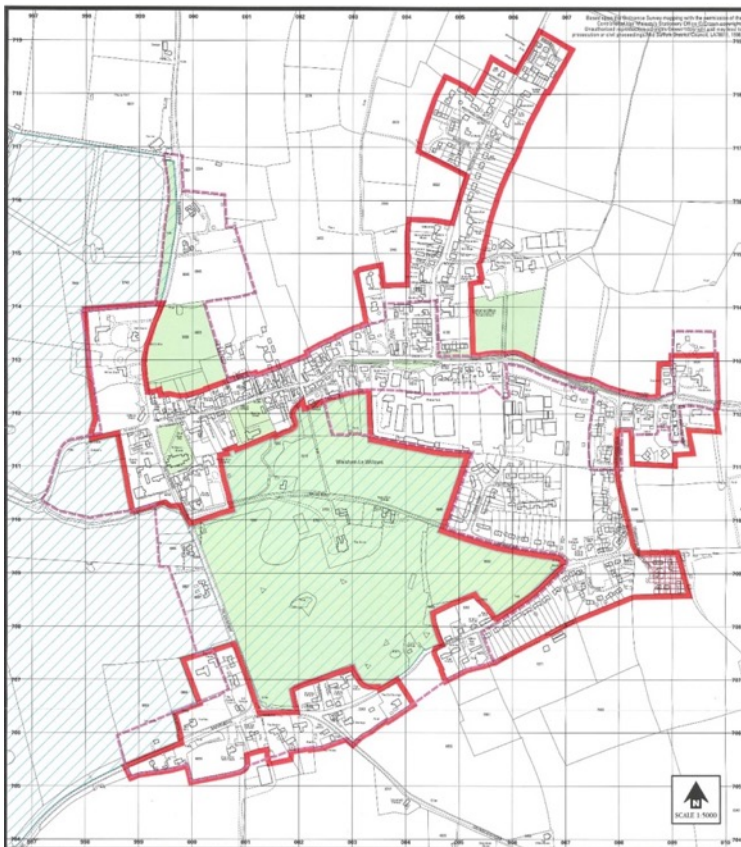


Figure 22: Walsham le Willows settlement boundary. Source: Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998, inset map 84.



7.14 The Submission Version of the BMSJLP 2020, defined a settlement boundary for the main built-up area of the village as shown below and a further one covering Four Ashes. These settlement boundaries took on board a number of suggestions previously made by the Parish Council and therefore these settlement boundaries will be adopted by this Neighbourhood Plan for the purposes of the delineation of the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

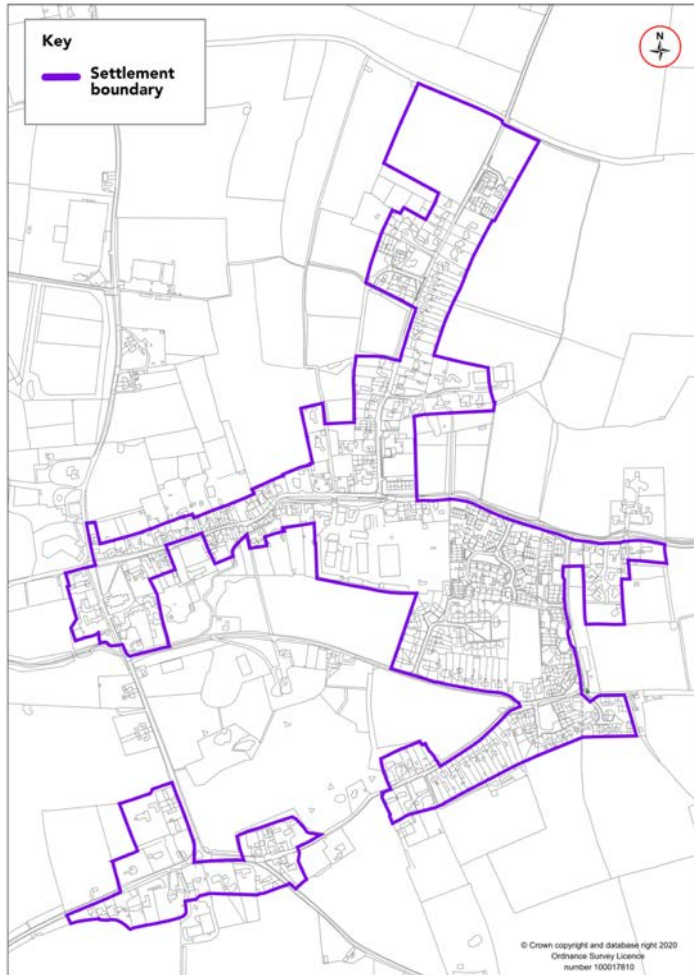


Figure 23: Walsham le Willows settlement boundary. Source: Emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan, with own annotations. Purple line denotes settlement boundary.

Community consultation on housing issues

7.15 Over the last 30 years there has been a considerable amount of community consultation in the Parish. Much of which has gathered community views on a wide range of issues including housing. Much of the evidence from the historic surveys remains and provides a useful context. Consultation to date has included the following:

- 1984 Village Appraisal
- 2002 Village Appraisal and Youth Survey
- 2003 Village Action Plan
- 2007 Village Design Statement



- 2015 Housing Needs Survey
 - 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Consultation 1
 - 2020 Neighbourhood Plan Consultation 2
 - 2021 Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey
- 7.16 Responses to the question of new housing in the Parish – how much and where it should go – have been broadly consistent across the various surveys. There has been a general acceptance from some, that new housing will continue in the Parish, but concerns have been consistently raised over scale, density, design, parking, impact on the village centre of traffic generated from new development, flooding and also the impact on village services and infrastructure. Concerns over ribbon development encroaching into the countryside is a key concern and there is a clear steer that developments of a small scale - up to 5 dwellings - are more likely to be considered to be acceptable. The recent Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey results also revealed that there is still a relatively strong feeling within the community that the current proposed level of new housing as identified in the emerging Local Plan allocations is enough.
- 7.17 In terms of the location of future housing, the Household Survey did not reveal a preferred location or consensus for new growth although it was clear that new development should be located sensitively to try to minimise the need for traffic to travel through the centre of the village and the historic core.
- 7.18 Over the last 30-40 years there has been significant housing growth in the village. Notably much of this has been on large development sites. 79 dwellings were constructed by Hopkins Homes at Willow Close/Elm Drive from 2006 onwards and Lovells are currently building out the 60 dwelling site west of Wattisfield Road (LA091), which is to be known as The Acorns. Developments of this scale can have considerable impacts upon their immediate environments but also the settlement as a whole in terms of traffic generation and routing, landscape and nature conservation impacts, and those relating to the historic environment and community infrastructure.
- 7.19 One of the key determinants of whether any new development is considered to be successful is defining whether it is considered to integrate well with the immediate and wider community. This is even more important for larger developments where the impacts are likely to be more widely felt. If a community believes that it has been involved in and been able to influence the location and design of a development at an early stage, the higher the likelihood that the development will be considered to be acceptable. It is



therefore considered imperative that the local community has a high degree of involvement in the details of new developments at as earlier stage as possible, so that they may be given the opportunity to actively shape proposals. This should not just be through the Neighbourhood Plan but also at individual application level ideally at Pre-Application or inception stage where developers are strongly encouraged to undertake a ‘masterplan style’ approach to influencing proposals.

- 7.20 As mentioned earlier, it is recognised that there will continue to be applications submitted for development on sites within the settlement boundaries, for small groups of dwellings, for single infill plots or other developments (barn conversions, changes of use etc.) within the Parish. This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to direct new housing development to within the identified settlement boundaries. Where sites over 5 dwellings are proposed, developers are strongly encouraged to include the community at an early stage when proposals are being developed.
- 7.21 In order to be considered by the local community to be successful, proposals for new housing development would need to be small scale, suitably located within the defined settlement boundaries and be able demonstrate that there would not be adverse effects upon highway safety, heritage or the natural environment. Proposals for new development outside of the settlement boundaries particularly those that would result in the physical coalescence of the main built-up area of the village and the smaller distinct hamlet of Four Ashes will not be supported. This approach does not restrict the conversion of agricultural buildings to new uses, proposals for replacement dwellings, agricultural workers dwellings, or new single dwellings required to meet an essential need as outlined in the NPPF¹², where proposals meet the government regulations and local planning policies for such conversions.

¹² Paragraph 80, National Planning Policy Framework 2023.



POLICY

WLW2: Scale and location of new housing

The overall scale of new housing within the Parish up to 2037 will reflect its position within the Adopted settlement hierarchy for the District. New housing development within the Parish over the plan period, will be focused within the defined settlement boundaries as shown on **figure 23**.

The location of new development should be carefully considered. Development proposals should be located where it can be realistically demonstrated that they will minimise the amount of additional traffic flowing through The Street and past the school.

Proposals for all new infill or windfall development (including individual houses or small groups) within the existing defined settlement boundaries will only be supported where the site:

- a. would maintain and enhance the form, character and setting of the area.
- b. will not have an adverse impact upon the historic environment or natural environment of the Parish.
- c. is well related to the existing pattern of development.
- d. has self-contained, logical, natural boundaries.
- e. would not have an adverse impact upon highways.

Where a development of more than 5 dwellings is proposed, developers are strongly encouraged to undertake a 'Masterplan' style approach informed by public engagement and collaboration. Proposals should deliver a sustainable development within the built-up area, with a seamless relationship between the existing development and the new development, in terms of connections, layout, design, density, character and natural environment.

Outside of the settlement boundaries, proposals for development will only be supported where they are in accordance with national and local policies. The physical coalescence of the settlements (the main part of the village and Four Ashes) will not be supported.

Also see **Policy WLW1 Design**.



Housing mix (size, type and affordability)

- 7.22 The size, type and tenure of any new housing is also a key issue for local communities in respect of new housing. The specific mix of housing will clearly have an impact on the existing community and therefore careful thought needs to be applied to determining that mix. The site east of Wattisfield Road is believed to be owned by the District Council and therefore scope exists for the delivery of affordable housing above that which might be achieved on a site wholly in private ownership.
- 7.23 Delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes is essential to support a sustainable, vibrant, and mixed community. There is a wide range of forms of housing that contribute to the creation of mixed and balanced communities with the aim of meeting specific needs.
- 7.24 **Affordable housing** is housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market, which includes housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers. Annex 2 of the NPPF (2023) sets out the definition of affordable housing and is split into the following four main categories:
- affordable housing for rent,¹³
 - starter homes,
 - discounted market sale housing
 - and other affordable routes to home ownership.¹⁴
- 7.25 **Specific Needs** housing is that which includes housing with enhanced accessibility features and the potential to be further adapted in future to meet the needs of the occupant.
- 7.26 **Custom and Self Build Housing** can provide a cost-effective route to home ownership, a high degree of specialisation to meet individual needs, and add valuable architectural interest to residential areas. However, it tends to be provided in the form of serviced plots on large-scale development sites that are less likely to come forward in small parishes.

¹³ Includes **Social Rented Housing** – owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in Section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.). Guideline target rents for this tenure are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with Homes England.

¹⁴ Affordable home ownership tenures include products for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels. The three most widely available are discounted market housing (a subset of which is the new First Homes product), shared ownership, and rent to buy.



7.27 At the end of 2021 the Steering Group commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for the Parish to explore the issues of housing type and tenure in more detail. The work was undertaken by consultants AECOM and the final report is a submission document that supports this Neighbourhood Plan.

Housing Needs Assessment 2022 (AECOM)

7.28 The final HNA was received in March 2022, and the key findings are as follows:

General

- Home ownership is less common in the Parish than the wider district,
- A relatively strong supply of Affordable Housing tenures exists.
- Figures supplied by Mid Suffolk Council from 2021 and 2017 suggest that there are 85 units of affordable rented housing and 9 units of shared ownership in the Neighbourhood Area (NA).
- The former is 3 units greater than the tally at the time of the 2011 Census and the latter is one unit fewer. These changes are due to development in the intervening years combined with the transfer of dwellings into home ownership through the Right to Buy scheme and the staircasing of equity shared in shared ownership.
- Home values in Walsham le Willows have increased over the past ten years despite a number of year-on-year fluctuations.
- Annual movement within the Parish is small with transactions averaging around 20 sales per year.
- The current median house price is £316,000, representing a growth rate of 71 per cent on the 2012 starting figure. The current lower quartile price is £243,125, representing growth of 75 per cent over the same period.
- A household looking to buy today is faced with funding an additional £100,000 through savings or mortgage costs, even for an entry-level home, on top of what they would have needed if buying just ten years ago. This is a significant impediment to home ownership for local people, considering that incomes across Mid Suffolk have risen on average by just 19 per cent over the last decade (according to ONS estimates of gross weekly earnings).
- House prices in the Parish are 6-7 per cent higher than across the wider district.
- The average household income in Walsham le Willows is £46,300, and the lower quartile income (per person) for Mid Suffolk was £15,704 in 2020.



- Private renting appears much more accessible from a financial perspective but although there is a lack of current listings for rental homes which is also a signal of limited choice in the housing market and/or high demand for any rental properties that do come available.
- There is a relatively large group of households in Walsham le Willows who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership. They are typically earning between around £27,000 per year (at which point entry-level rents become affordable) and £62,000 (at which point entry-level market sale homes become affordable).
- This 'can rent, can't buy' cohort may benefit from the range of affordable home ownership products such as First Homes and shared ownership.

Affordable Housing

- Neighbourhood plan qualifying bodies have discretion to increase the discount on the new First Homes product from 30 per cent to 40 per cent or 50 per cent where there is evidence to suggest this is appropriate. This HNA finds that a discount of at least 40 per cent would be necessary from an affordability perspective in Walsham le Willows.
- On the basis that the share of the district wide need attributable to the Neighbourhood Area is in proportion to its share of the district population (1.25 per cent), Walsham le Willows will need 28 affordable homes over the Neighbourhood Plan period, 14 of which should be for affordable rent and 14 of which should be for affordable home ownership.
- The total potential delivery of Affordable Housing over the Neighbourhood Plan period is expected to be in the range of 38-53 units, which would be more than sufficient to meet the NA's share of Mid Suffolk's needs and may also address the potential demand for affordable home ownership identified here.
- Walsham le Willows is in the unusual position for a rural parish of having higher rates of social renting and shared ownership than the wider district, coupled with a projected (moderate) surplus of affordable rented housing over the coming years, and a large upcoming injection of Affordable Housing supply.
- AECOM recommends that roughly 36 per cent of Affordable Housing should take the form of rented tenures such as social and affordable rent (preferably the former), with the remaining 64 per cent as affordable routes to home ownership, fulfilling the requirements of the new First Homes product and allowing for shared ownership and rent to buy to widen the choice in the market.



Type and Size

- It is important to remember that other factors should be considered in determining the dwelling mix that is desirable in the Parish or on any particular site. These include the specific characteristics of the nearby stock of housing (such as its condition and design), the role of the NA or site within the wider housing market area (linked to any Local Authority strategies or plans) and site-specific factors which may justify a particular dwelling mix.
- Walsham le Willows has a housing mix that is dominated by detached and semi-detached housing. This is not unusual for a rural village and to diversify the stock towards flats in particular may not be appropriate in this location given its character, density and constraints. However, terraces and flats (or maisonettes separating houses into smaller units, which tend to be more in keeping with the character of villages) are generally the most affordable home types.
- Bungalows are a clear preference among local people according to the household survey results. Across an area that extends beyond the Parish, 15 per cent of homes are bungalows, compared with 19 per cent across Mid Suffolk and 9 per cent across England as a whole. This demonstrates that there is no major deficit of bungalows locally compared with wider averages.
- There may be justification for further encouraging this option due to the ageing of the population (see below) and the clear demand expressed in the survey.
- The dwelling size mix in Walsham le Willows is relatively well-balanced, with a majority of 3-bedroom homes (as is the case nationwide) and nearly equal proportions of homes that have fewer and more bedrooms. There is, however, a clear lack of 1-bedroom homes (3 per cent of the stock), which aligns with the absence of flats.

Demographics

- Walsham le Willows had a generally younger population profile than Mid Suffolk but significantly older profile than England in 2011. The older age brackets have also grown the fastest between the 2011 Census and the latest ONS estimates for 2020. Currently around 56 per cent of the population are aged over 45 and 24 per cent are aged over 65. There is a clear trend toward ageing, and current estimates also suggest that young adults are leaving the area, which may reflect a lack of suitable options for newly forming households.
- Applying ONS household projections - by 2038 the 65 and over cohort could increase by 80 per cent from 2011 levels to become by



far the dominant group at 42 per cent of the projected total. The youngest age groups remain stable or decline. It is clear that ageing will be a major driver of housing need in Walsham le Willows going forward, whether older households intend to occupy the same dwellings they currently live in, or perhaps move within the community to a home better suited to the size of their household or their evolving needs.

- Most households in Walsham le Willows are families and substantially more families have dependent children than no children. There are slightly more families with non-dependent (older children) and single person households in Walsham le Willows than Mid Suffolk. While still low by national standards, the number of 'other' households (such as multigenerational units, house sharers and students) increased by 53 per cent between 2001 and 2011 in the Neighbourhood Area. This may be indicative of affordability challenges driving more people into shared houses.
- Walsham le Willows has a high rate of under-occupancy, with 97 per cent of households living in a home with at least one bedroom more than they would be expected to need (at the time of the last Census). The percentage of people living in homes with fewer bedrooms than they might be expected to need is marginal at 1 per cent.
- The largest homes are not necessarily occupied by those with the largest families but by those with the financial capacity to do so.
- Under-occupancy is strongly correlated with age, with couples aged over 65 being the most likely to have more bedrooms than they would be expected to need.

The future dwelling mix

- The dwelling stock by size needs to become slightly smaller with less emphasis on the 3-4 bedroom homes that dominate at present.
- Around half of new housing should have 1-2 bedrooms, with another quarter composed of 3-bedroom homes, and a final quarter composed of 4+ bedroom homes.
- Small and mid-sized homes would improve affordability as well as Walsham le Willows' offering for younger households who have few options for their next step on the property ladder.
- It may also enable older households currently under-occupying larger homes to downsize and in so doing potentially create churn in the market, although it is acknowledged that many of the larger historic properties may be too expensive to be taken up by younger local families.



Housing Needs Survey 2014, published in 2015

- 7.29 The Walsham le Willows Housing Needs Survey 2014 received a 21.12 per cent return rate, with the majority of respondents in favour of a small affordable housing scheme for people with a local connection. Out of 131 HNS returned, 11 households responded that the current household have a need totalling 17 people. Out of 131 HNS returned, 4 of those households responded identifying a need for 7 people (with a local connection) wishing to return to or live in the Parish.
- 7.30 Of those respondents that described themselves as in need, the preferred form of housing was housing for rent (64 per cent) local market sale (14 per cent) and bungalows to rent (14 per cent). There was interest in shared ownership at 7 per cent. The Gateway to Home Choice (GTHC) register indicated that there were 16 households registered, of this 14 had a local connection to Walsham le Willows.

Community consultation

- 7.31 The Neighbourhood Plan household survey had broadly similar responses to the Housing Needs Survey with a 27 per cent response rate. Results revealed that residents have a wide range of views about the types of accommodation within their parish that might be required in the future. 79 per cent of the respondents considered that their current home would be suitable for their needs for the next 5 years. Of those looking for different accommodation the split between looking for larger or smaller accommodation was equally split. Two thirds of respondents (66 per cent) wanted to buy on the open market and 40 per cent were interested in self build and custom build housing. The most popular forms of future housing were 2-bed starter homes, 3-bedroom homes and bungalows. There was some limited support for sheltered housing, retirement housing and adapted housing (suitable for wheelchairs).

Housing conclusions

- 7.32 Taking all of the above into account the following policy has been devised. The Steering Group considered that there is a broad balance of housing that exists in the Parish at present and that no specific dwelling type or tenure should dominate the housing mix of the Parish in the future. The existing balance should be maintained into the future and that there should be a choice of housing for all residents irrespective of whether they were seeking their first home, large family housing, looking to downsize, or in need of



some accessible housing. Further information on the needs of residents who are living with dementia in the community, and the potential for making Walsham le Willows a “Dementia-Friendly” village can be found in The Royal Town Planning Institute guidance on Town Planning and Dementia.¹⁵

POLICY

WLW3: Housing Size, type and tenure

New housing should be provided in line with the latest evidence of need¹⁶. Proposals should provide for and contribute to, housing that meets local needs (both now and in the future) and enables the continuation of the current broad mix of housing that enables a balanced community.

The following housing mix should be provided:

Size

- 1 and 2-bedroom starter homes suitable for those seeking their first home
- 3-bedroom family homes
- 4+ bedroom family homes

Type

Support will be given for smaller 2 and 3 bedroomed detached and semi-detached homes that are adaptable, in order to meet the needs of the aging population, without excluding the needs of the younger buyers and families.

Tenure:

Where affordable housing is proposed, a minimum of 25 percent must be First Homes, with a 40 per cent affordability discount.

Affordable housing provision should include social and affordable rented accommodation and affordable routes to home ownership.

¹⁵ Dementia and Town Planning, <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/practice/2020/september/dementia-and-town-planning/>

¹⁶ This can include the AECOM HNA, plus any SHELAA or district level information.



8. Community Infrastructure

Objective 3: To encourage the provision of first-rate infrastructure for the Parish by protecting existing community facilities and encouraging new creative spaces and expanded services.

Existing community infrastructure

- 8.1 The NPPF encourages planning policies to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities that the community needs and to support the provision of shared spaces and community facilities (such as local shops, schools, meeting places, sports venues, open spaces, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship). In addition the NPPF indicates that plans should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. **Policy WLW4** below, does not seek to protect unviable services in perpetuity but recognises that the lack of viability needs to be demonstrated, and for alternative configurations of provision to be investigated before proposals that would result in their loss are approved.
- 8.2 Within the parish of Walsham le Willows there are the following 'community facilities':
- Little Willows Pre-School
 - Walsham le Willows Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
 - Memorial Hall
 - Priory Room
 - St Mary's Church
 - Congregational Church
 - Sports Club comprising football pitches, cricket pitch, tennis court, pavilion, artificial football pitch and a 50-space car park
 - Allotments



- Play areas
- Wild Wood and Jubilee Wood
- Cemetery
- Bowling Green
- Public Houses (Six Bells Inn and The Blue Boar)

Note: A number of the above are identified as Local Green Spaces in Policy WLW11 and are therefore not included in Policy WLW4 below.

8.3 There is no medical practice in the Parish and the nearest Doctors surgeries are in Ixworth, Stanton, Botesdale, Woolpit and Bacton. There is only a mobile Post Office and no permanent Post Office facility.

New community infrastructure

8.4 The Neighbourhood Plan is able to influence provision and there is community support from the Household Survey for new or improved services including shared spaces. Provision that includes useable and adaptable spaces which suits the need of a range of potential service providers and local people will be supported. One of the most common responses to the Household Survey questions about things to be improved was the desire for a shop which was mentioned 63 times. There is no general store/local convenience shop in the Parish although there is a Butcher's Shop that stocks some other household items. Proposals for the creation of a new convenience shop in the Parish might be relatively remote, however there may be opportunities which arise over the plan period which would allow for the creation of community based 'pop up shops', cafés, markets or shared community spaces which include an element of community food provision. Where such proposals arise these will be supported.



POLICY

WLW4: Community facilities**Existing facilities**

The Parish has the following community facilities (shown in **figure 24**):

- a. Little Willows Pre-School
- b. Walsham le Willows C of E VC Primary School
- c. Memorial Hall
- d. Priory Room
- e. St. Mary's Church (excluding churchyard identified as a Local Green Space in Policy WLW11)
- f. Congregational Church
- g. Sports Club pavilion and 50 space car park (excluding football pitches, cricket pitch, tennis court and artificial football pitch identified as Local Green Space in Policy WLW11).
- h. Public Houses (Six Bells Inn and The Blue Boar)

Proposals including changes of use that would involve the potential loss of an existing community facility will not be supported except where an improved or equivalent facility can be located elsewhere in the Parish in an equally convenient, safe, and accessible location or where there is no reasonable prospect of continued viable use where this can be sufficiently demonstrated.

New or enhanced facilities

Proposals that would provide for new, expanded or improved community facilities including the provision of new sports and recreation facilities which would extend the range of facilities available will be supported.

Particular support will be given to proposals that would allow for the wider community use of existing facilities, the provision of multi-use and shared spaces, including 'chatty benches', 'pop-up shops, markets, and community cafés.

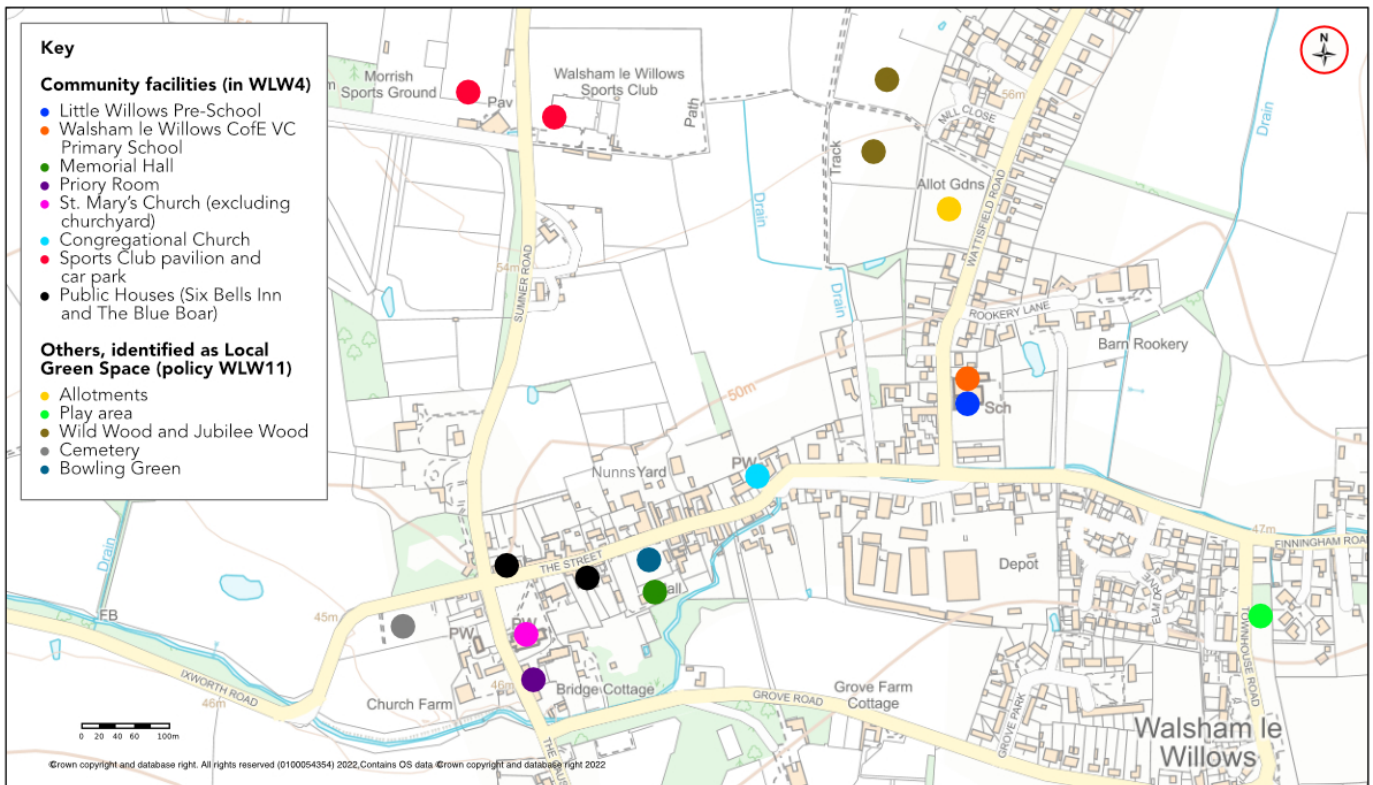


Figure 24: Community facilities in Walsham le Willow identified in policy WLW4 (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).

Drainage and flood risk

- 8.5 The results of the household survey indicated that there are some surface water, ground water and drainage concerns in the Parish. There are areas of Walsham le Willows parish at low to high risk of flooding from rivers as shown on the Environment Agency Flood maps and the Mid Suffolk Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The main areas of risk are along the Finningham Road, at Cranmer Green and also in the central part of the main built-up area of the village.
- 8.6 The NPPF advises that inappropriate development in areas at high risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or in the future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Strong support from Government and from Suffolk County Council is also given to the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems into new developments even minor developments particularly due to the benefits they can provide for biodiversity and prevention of pollution. The Design Code provides further guidance on the design of such systems.



- 8.7 The stream which runs through the central part of the built-up area of the village is prone to flooding after periods of high rainfall, particularly the area east of Rolfe’s Bridge which tends to act as a bottleneck for water which enters the river system quickly.
- 8.8 As part of Anglian Water’s ‘Get River Positive’ commitment, they have pledged to be as transparent as possible with the data they collect about the water recycling network and the improvements that are being made, especially around storm overflows. An online map has been produced that shows the latest investment schemes to improve the environment, including 2021 storm overflow data and the river network. Investment schemes to improve the local environment and river health include storm tank enhancement at Badwell Ash water recycling centre, the receiving WRC for Walsham le Willows, which was completed 31 March 2022. This follows the installation of event duration monitoring of storm overflows at the Walsham le Willows Causeway terminal pumping station. These measures help to provide environmental benefits including to the receiving river, Stowlangtoft Stream.¹⁷

POLICY

WLW5: Drainage and flood risk

All new development including some minor development is required to use appropriate sustainable drainage systems to mitigate and protect against pollution, provide drainage and wider amenity, recreational and biodiversity benefits, if appropriate (see **figure 25**).

All new major development and some minor development, will be expected to demonstrate how it can mitigate its own flooding and drainage impacts, avoid increases of flooding elsewhere and seek to achieve lower than greenfield run off rates.

Also see **Walsham le Willows Design Guidance and Codes (LO4)**.

¹⁷ Anglian Water: <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/services/sewers-and-drains/storm-overflows/improving-rivers-and-coastlines>.

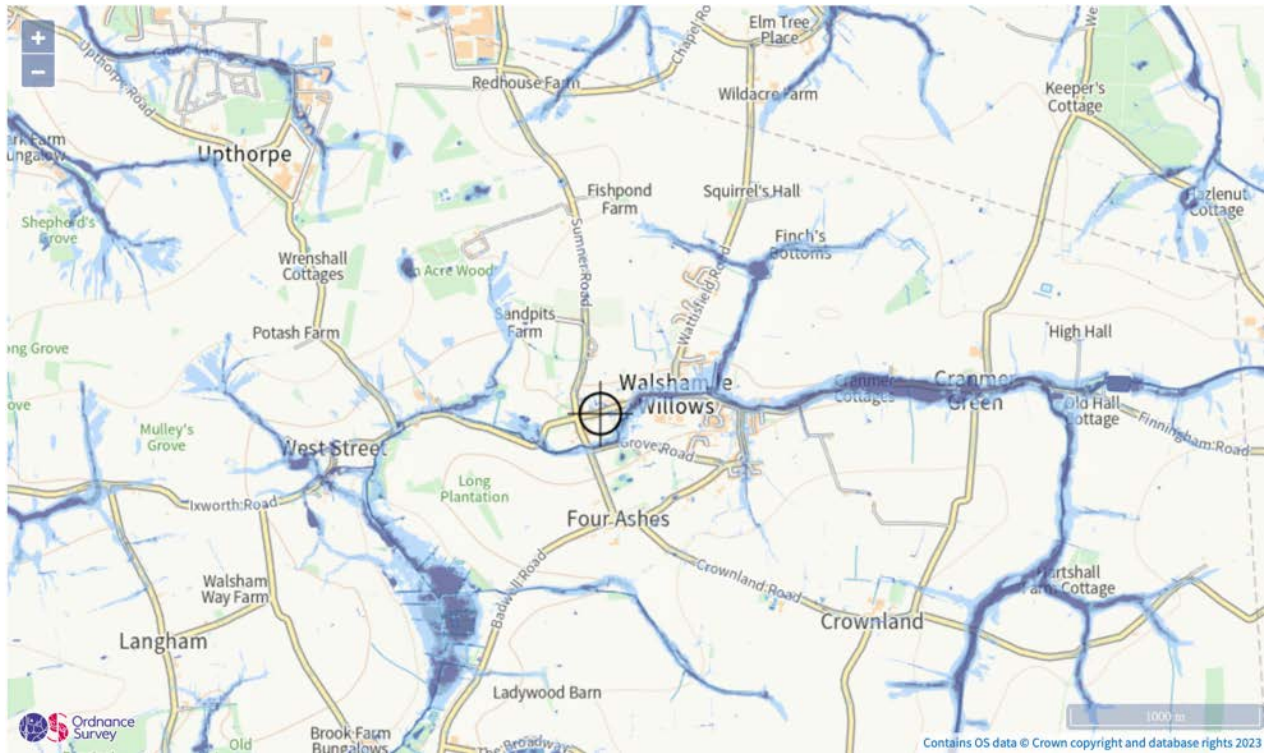
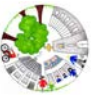


Figure 25: Flood risk (source: Gov.uk¹⁸).

¹⁸ Gov.uk: <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map?easting=600048.52&northing=271199.67&map=SurfaceWater> (accessed 20.03.23).



9. Transport and Accessibility

Objective 4: To promote the environmental wellbeing and health of the residents of Walsham le Willows by providing safe and convenient access, by foot, by cycle and for disabled users, reducing congestion and pollution through encouraging the use of sustainable transport.

Traffic generation, speeding, congestion, parking

- 9.1 One of the most often mentioned concerns raised through the Household Survey was the issue of traffic in the centre of the village particularly along The Street and The Causeway. Specific concerns included the sheer volume of traffic passing along The Street, coupled with issues of on street parking reducing the width of the carriageway forcing vehicles at time to mount the pavements in order to pass each other, causing pedestrian safety issues and the impact of HGVs. HGV traffic is considered locally to have increased significantly over the last two years and has included considerable levels of construction traffic and large vehicles travelling through the centre of the village on their way to and from large scale businesses located outside of and to the north of the Parish but further along Summer Road.

Figure 26: Heavy Goods Vehicle on Summer Road.





- 9.2 In relation to the Causeway, the issues relate to vehicle speeds on the approach roads. The issue were considered to be exacerbated by a lack of accessible, viable and frequent public transport which could act as an alternative.
- 9.3 Whilst these are clearly important issues for the Walsham le Willows community, they are existing issues and the ability to address them lies largely outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan can, however, seek to ensure that the situation is not significantly exacerbated through the advent of new development. **Policy WLW2** makes clear this intention. The solution to some of these issues will require an approach that combines liaison and close working with a range of parties including the County Council, the District Council and local businesses.

Pedestrian and cycling connectivity

- 9.4 Pedestrian footways (65 per cent) and cycleways (28 per cent) were both commonly mentioned as important elements to be included within any new housing development. In addition the need to connect new development to existing facilities and the centre of the village is an important way of ensuring that a development is fully integrated into the community both physically and socially. Equally one of the items much valued by the community was the ability to use the Public rights of Way (PRoW) network to enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the countryside and the rural setting of the village.
- 9.5 Opportunities to encourage and facilitate the use of sustainable transport in particular walking and cycling should be maximised. Government guidance encourages development proposals to provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking. Suffolk County Council has produced a Green Access Strategy (2020-2030) which sets out the Council's commitment to enhance public rights of way, including new linkages and upgrading routes where there is a need. The strategy also seeks to improve access for all and to support healthy and sustainable access between communities and services through development funding and partnership working.
- 9.6 Such networks should be comprehensive and provide not only for recreational routes but also for meaningful routes that can realistically be used for school. In addition, new routes should connect to the existing network and be suitable for use by people with disabilities and reduced mobility. New cycling and pedestrian routes should be safe, secure, and



attractive, maximise the scope for pedestrians and cyclists and respond to the character of the area and any relevant design standards. Such links will also serve to further other aims, including promoting health and wellbeing.

- 9.7 The Health and Wellbeing benefits to the individual of increasing levels of walking and cycling are well documented and include the following:
- Cycling reduces stress by lowering the body's stress hormone, cortisol.
 - Exercise helps with anxiety too - cycling and walking both release endorphins which help to relax mind and body.
 - Increase your self-esteem. Getting active can improve positivity.
 - Good for fighting depression. Getting out for a short walk or bike ride can boost mood.
 - Helps socialisation. Cycling and walking can be enjoyed with friends or family.
- 9.8 The Plan gives consideration to new routes and one specific new connection that has been identified is the potential for a pedestrian/cycle link from the Sports Club at Summer Road to the village centre. Such a route would provide a safe route for sports club users including a high number of children. It would enable access to the sports club and also return to the village without the need for the private car and also promote health and wellbeing. Currently there is no safe direct walking route available and as mentioned earlier this route is often used by HGVs and other vehicles. Therefore proposals that would enable such a route to be provided would be supported locally. The need at Summer Road (from the Northern parish boundary to the six Bells Crossroad) - along with the need for a safe pedestrian route on Palmer Street - is also captured within, and supported by, the Mid Suffolk District Council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, which identified these two schemes through a public consultation around active travel infrastructure.'
- 9.9 An additional but related connection that is considered to be necessary locally is for a safe crossing point on Summer Road between the Sports Club facilities on the west of Summer Road and the sports pitches to the east. This would provide a safe crossing point for users of the pitches and the facilities many of which are groups of children.



POLICY

WLW6: Pedestrian and cycling connectivity

Opportunities will be sought to make the Parish safer and more accessible, and to contribute to the health and well-being of residents. This will be achieved through the provision of new, safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes, public rights of way and crossings, suitable for all users which link new development with the village centre and with community facilities.

Development that will improve or contribute to improved connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists, and users with a mobility impairment, both within Walsham le Willows and in and out of Walsham le Willows to neighbouring villages will be supported.

New routes, including new public rights of way, should form a cohesive network for users and allow for access to the wider countryside, where opportunities should be taken to create green corridors connecting with neighbouring villages.

New pedestrian and cycle provision

Proposals that would enable the creation of the following provision for pedestrians and cyclists will be supported:

- New safe pedestrian and cycle route along Summer Road to link the Sports Club and the village centre.
- Safe crossing point on Summer Road between the Sports Club and the sports pitches.
- New safe pedestrian route at Palmer Street.

Public Rights of Way

9.10 The NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance Public Rights of Way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails. Opportunities to improve facilities for walkers and cyclists in the Parish would be supported.

9.11 Where development proposals are likely to affect an existing Public Right of Way, these should take account of its route and incorporate it into the overall layout of the scheme. Where this is not considered possible, this will need to



be justified. Where Public Rights of Way may be unavoidably impacted or lost, appropriate diversions or new routes should be provided that are safe, equally accessible, and convenient for users.

- 9.12 Existing Public Rights of Way which are incorporated into new developments, including bridleways and footpaths, should be protected and enhanced. Enhancement can take the form of new routes, connections, improved surfaces and/or signage increasing access to the countryside and connectivity between communities.
- 9.13 Responses to the Household Survey suggested a number of new routes. One of the key formal rights of way in the Parish is FP13 which is currently unusable in places and would benefit from a diversion which would enhance the value of the route. Other suggestions for new routes or enhancements included establishing the permissive route at Hatchmere Lane as a public footpath down to Finningham Road and also to Wattisfield Road.

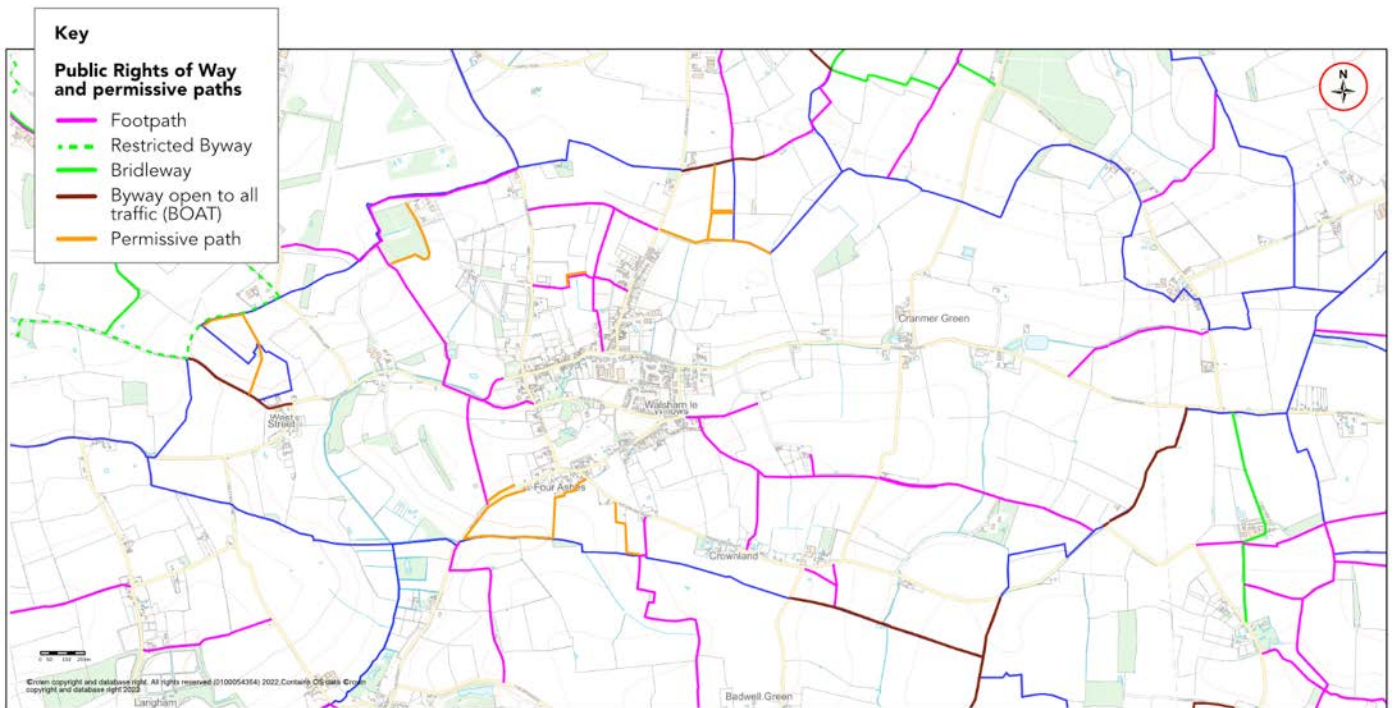


Figure 27: Public Rights of Way and permissive paths in Walsham le Willow (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).

Permissive paths

- 9.14 The Parish also contains a number of ‘permissive paths’. These are not public rights of way but paths where the landowners have given the public



permission to use them. The use of permissive paths can be subject to conditions on their use such as when they can be used and types of users.

POLICY**WLW7: Rights of Way**

Existing Public Rights of Way, including bridleways and footpaths (**figure 27**), will be protected and enhanced. Enhancement can take the form of new routes, connections, improved surfaces and/or signage increasing access to the countryside and connectivity between parts of the village and other settlements.

Public Rights of Way should be retained, except where it can be demonstrated that there is strong community support for it to be re-routed. Where Public Rights of Way are to be unavoidably impacted or lost, appropriate diversions or new routes will be provided that are equally as safe and convenient for all users.



10. Natural and Historic Environment

Objective 5: To enhance and safeguard the Parish’s natural assets (wildlife, landscape, green spaces, dark skies, water courses) and to preserve and enhance the built heritage, supporting them to adapt to the effects of climate change, whilst retaining the important distinctive character and identity of individual parts of the settlement.

Landscape Quality and Sensitivity

- 10.1 The National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 10.2 Walsham le Willows is located within the natural landscape character area defined by Natural England as the South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands (National Character Area, 83)¹⁹. This Character Area (NCA) occupies a large area of central East Anglia stretching from just below Norwich in the north down to the River Gipping in the south. The area is bounded to the north by Mid Norfolk and The Broads NCAs and to the east by the sandy heathland of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths NCA. To the west the landscape merges into the drier and more open character of The Brecks NCA and to the south it meets the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland NCA with its noticeably more undulating topography. ‘High’ Suffolk originally derives its name from the contrast between this formerly well-treed area and the openness of the

¹⁹ NCA Profile: 83 South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands - NE544, <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6106120561098752?category=587130> (accessed 20.03.23).



adjacent areas to the east and west. Today it is probably better understood as meaning the high and predominantly flat clay plateau that dominates the character of the NCA. The plateau is incised by numerous small-scale wooded river valleys with complex slopes that in places are much unexpected for East Anglia. The underlying geology is chalk, which forms the principal aquifer, and shallow marine deposits overlain with glacial till, buried river gravels, lake sediments and bands of glacial outwash deposits.

- 10.3 The Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance²⁰ produced in August 2015, to support the emerging BMSJLP, provides a more in-depth assessment of the particular character and qualities of this landscape area and identifies Walsham le Willows as falling within the ‘Ancient Plateau Claylands’.
- 10.4 The landscape is a gently rolling heavy clay plateau with mature woodlands. On the north side of the Gipping Valley, the character sweeps up in an arc on the north-east edge of the central clay plateau and westwards from Creting St Peter and Stowupland through to Haughley, Elmswell, Walsham le Willows, crossing the district boundary into St. Edmundsbury and then eastward to Wattisfield, Wortham, Mellis, Burgate and the western side of Eye in the Dove Valley.
- 10.5 The top of the plateau is generally flat or only gently undulating, with attractive small valleys. Towards the edges it is more dissected with greater more complex slopes. Land cover is predominantly arable farmland retaining much of the older field patterns of irregular partitions, along with numerous areas of pastureland with substantial blocks of woodland and established hedgerows.
- 10.6 The settlement lies within an agricultural landscape and is characterised by dispersed farmsteads and open land. This land drops from north to south creating long views of the church from the southwest but obscuring views from the northeast. There are also important views from the north into the settlement when entering along Summer Road. The parkland in which the Grove is situated is an important landscape feature, sited to the south of the centre of the settlement.
- 10.7 The main settlement is linear in character, with buildings largely located on the road frontage. The church and vicarage are located at the southwestern

²⁰ Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance, August 2015, <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/DM-Planning-Uploads/Joint-Landscape-Guidance-Aug-2015.pdf> (accessed 20.03.23).



end of the settlement, set to the south of the main road. Within the settlement there is an abundance of flint used in not only the church but also in cottages and boundary walls. A large open area of grassland with parkland trees is located on the southern side of the settlement forming the historic grounds of The Grove. The main settlement is connected to the hamlet of Four Ashes by The Causeway and is one of four outlying hamlets (the others being West Street, Crownland and Cranmer Green).

10.8 The Joint Landscape Guidance outlines the key aim for the consideration of development within this landscape character type as: *'To retain, enhance and restore the distinctive landscape and settlement character. In particular strengthening the woodland, parkland and prairie landscape with appropriate planting and safeguarding the dispersed settlement pattern'*.

10.9 The key objectives are:

- To maintain and enhance the landscape areas and settlement pattern, ensuring the sense of separation between settlements is maintained where appropriate.
- To reinforce and enhance the existing field boundaries.
- To safeguard the plantation and ancient woodland areas
- Safeguard the parkland areas.

10.10 In addition the identified key design principles to govern development within this landscape are:

- i. This is quite open landscape with the potential of any form of development to be visibly intrusive if it has been designed without sufficient screening or an appropriate landscape design plan.
- ii. Reinforce and enhance parkland features in new developments where appropriate.
- iii. Ancient woodlands and old existing hedge lines are to be protected and maintained within this landscape character.
- iv. To maintain the character and condition of the landscape. Any major developments will enter into a Section 106 Legal Agreement for landscaping.

10.11 The 1998 Adopted Local Plan identified an area immediately to the west of the main built-up area of the village between the village and Badwell Ash as a Special Landscape Area (SLA). The Special Landscape Area designations tended to follow river valleys but retained high levels of traditional features, such as patterns of small fields formed by hedges, ditches and ponds and interspersed with mature woodland, give many parts of the District's landscape an interest and variety that is worthy of conserving in its own right.



It gives a diversity of habitat that is essential for wildlife. Where these features combine with an interesting topography or as part of a river valley, they create a special quality of landscape.

- 10.12 The Special Landscape Area within the Parish marked the very eastern limit of a larger Special Landscape Area covering Badwell Ash, Hunston and Stowlangtoft. The policy attached to the SLA designation sought to safeguard its landscape quality and ensure that where new development did occur it should be sensitively designed with high standards of layout materials and landscaping.
- 10.13 The emerging BMSJLP does not propose to continue the SLA designation. However, the importance of the high-quality landscape in and countryside in the Neighbourhood Plan area, is recognised and valued by the community as evidenced in the consultations to date, including most recently the Household Survey. It is therefore proposed to retain this area with some landscape protection and identify it as an Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity (ALLS).
- 10.14 The ALLS designation does not seek to prevent development from taking place (similar to the SLA) but instead seeks to ensure that development within the area should be designed to be in harmony with the special characteristics of the area and follows the broad design objectives and principles referred to above.

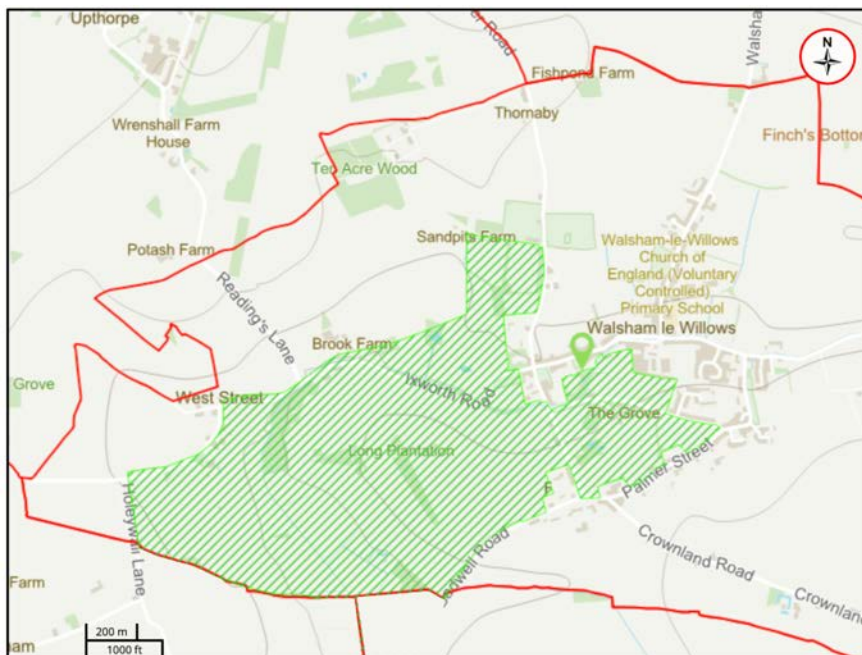


Figure 28: Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity within Walsham le Willows neighbourhood area (source: <https://bmsdc.cloud.cadcorp.com/WebMap/Map.aspx>). Red line denotes parish boundary.



POLICY	<p>WLW8: Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity (ALLS)</p> <p>Development within the Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity (as defined in figure 28) will only be supported, provided that the proposal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conserves or enhances the special qualities of the landscape.²¹ b. Is designed and sited to be sympathetic to the scenic beauty of the landscape setting. c. Includes high standards of layout, materials and landscaping (lighting). <p>Natural features associated with this landscape character type such as trees, ancient woodlands and existing hedge lines should be retained by development proposals.</p>
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Important views

- 10.15 As part of the Neighbourhood Plan Survey, residents were asked whether they would support a policy that would seek to retain important views and vistas. Residents were also asked to identify any specific views.
- 10.16 In analysing the results of this exercise it is important to ensure that any 'views' chosen are 'public views' i.e. can be seen or enjoyed from a public viewpoint e.g. footpath, an open space, a gap between buildings and not from private viewpoints e.g., from rear gardens. It is important that any policy that seeks to protect views should focus on those views that are truly 'important' or special to the character of the Parish and that are publicly viewable.
- 10.17 The Mid Suffolk District Council Settlement Sensitivity Assessment produced in 2018 identified 5 key views for Walsham le Willows. Other views were suggested via the Household Survey or through the local knowledge of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Members.
- 10.18 These have been brought together to create the following list (* denotes view identified in the Mid Suffolk Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment 2016):
1. **View from the Causeway along Footpath 9 across Gallants Meadow.**
The view looking west follows the path of the river, initially with a

²¹ As set out in the Joint Babergh Mid Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment August 2015.



relatively narrow channel view framed by mature trees either side before it broadens out.

2. **View from the crossroads looking down The Causeway to the bridge.*** The view looking south-east from crossroads shows the relationship between the church and the hall and allows the best short views of the church.
3. **View from the crossroads along The Street*.** View looking west along The Street, which allows the best understanding of the historic linear core of the settlement.
4. **Continuous view down Summer Road from Garage* (30mph sign).** View looking into settlement from the north along Summer Road (4a) . This view looks southwards down the slope towards the core of the settlement around the church and highlights its prominent siting. View looking east along Fishponds Way (4b)
5. **View from Millers Bridge along stream and road towards Rolfes Bridge***
This view from Millers Bridge looks westwards from the junction of Wattisfield Road along the Stream into the Street.
6. **Views from Wild Wood towards the Church tower.** This specifically constructed view was created when the original plans for Wild Wood and Jubilee Wood were first drawn up.
7. **Views from Wattisfield Road towards Finch’s Bottoms and Burnt House.** This view east is a long view over gently rolling farmland and large fields which gently rises as you move eastwards. Fields are delineated by distinct patterns of mature tree belts.
8. **Views from close to Plantation Cottage towards Cranmer Green.** Wide expansive view over farmland with distant views of Cranmer Green, distinctive pattern of field boundaries delineated by mature lines of trees and the ground gradually rises to the east.
9. **Views from close to Crownland Hall towards Palmer Street, Jollys Way and Bribery.** Wide open view with big skies across uninterrupted farmland with thin lines of trees.



10. **View from permissive footpath in Four Ashes towards Badwell Green** This is a pleasant rural view across a shallow valley occupied by fields, hedgerows and woods. There are no obvious buildings and at night it presents a completely dark landscape.
11. **View from permissive footpath in Four Ashes towards Badwell Ash and Langham.** This is a view down a shallow tributary valley of fields, meadows, hedges and small woods, and then across the main valley to the higher ground in Langham.
12. **View from Four Ashes Corner down The Causeway towards the bridge.** This view follows the channel of the road looking north towards the bridge. The channel is framed on either side by mature green hedgerows and trees.
13. **Continuous view along Badwell Road from the bridge to Four Ashes*.** This view marks one of the entrances to the village and is characterised by thick and mature hedgerows and trees creating a 'green entrance'.
14. **View from Rottells Lane (Footpath 10) towards Badwell Ash.** This narrow view to the southwest away from the village has a distinctly rural feel characterised by thick green verges and mature hedgerows.
15. **View from Rottells Lane (Footpath 10)**
 - (a) **towards Church and The Causeway.** View from the west looking northeast from the fields adjacent to Badwell Road. This view provides a clear view of the prominence of the church from the surrounding landscape and the view from the hamlet of Four Ashes.
 - (b) **View from Rottells Lane (Footpath 10) towards Ten Acre Wood.** This view provides a long-distance sweeping view across the valley floor towards Ten Acre Wood on the valley sides.
16. **View from Footpath 20 near Betty's Bridge towards Noah's Ark.** This north westerly view has a parkland feel with enclosed and fenced grazing land punctuated by mature trees as singles or couples of varying species.
17. **Continuous view along Ixworth Road from The Lawn to crossroads.** View from the west looking east. This view looks eastwards slope towards the core of the settlement around the church and highlights the interrelationship of this important group.



18. **View from Ixworth Road towards Hillwatering, Mulley's Grove and Potash Farm.** This view northwards is obtained through gaps in the field hedgerows and is across a wide expanse of farmland towards a treeline in the middle distance.
19. **View from Bribery Lane west towards the village and north along Hartshall Lane.** A wide almost 180 degree view over rolling open fields with land rising to the north and east with distinct pattern of field boundaries punctuated by lines of poplar trees.
20. **Views both north and south along 'The Avenue' between the Street and Grove Road.** An historic, treelined and intimate view along a narrow pathway characterised by well kept, picture post card cottages
21. **View from junction of Crownland Road with Bribery Lane looking east towards Westhorpe.** This view affords views over an expansive elevated and gently rolling landscape offering far reaching views across fields, hedgerows, trees and blocks of woodland towards Westhorpe, Finningham and beyond.
22. **View from Betty's Bridge at West Street looking across the Meadow to Church Farm and then to St Mary's Church.** This view looks back towards the settlement from the bridge, over the meadow towards the rear of Church Farm with a striking view of St Mary's Church behind.

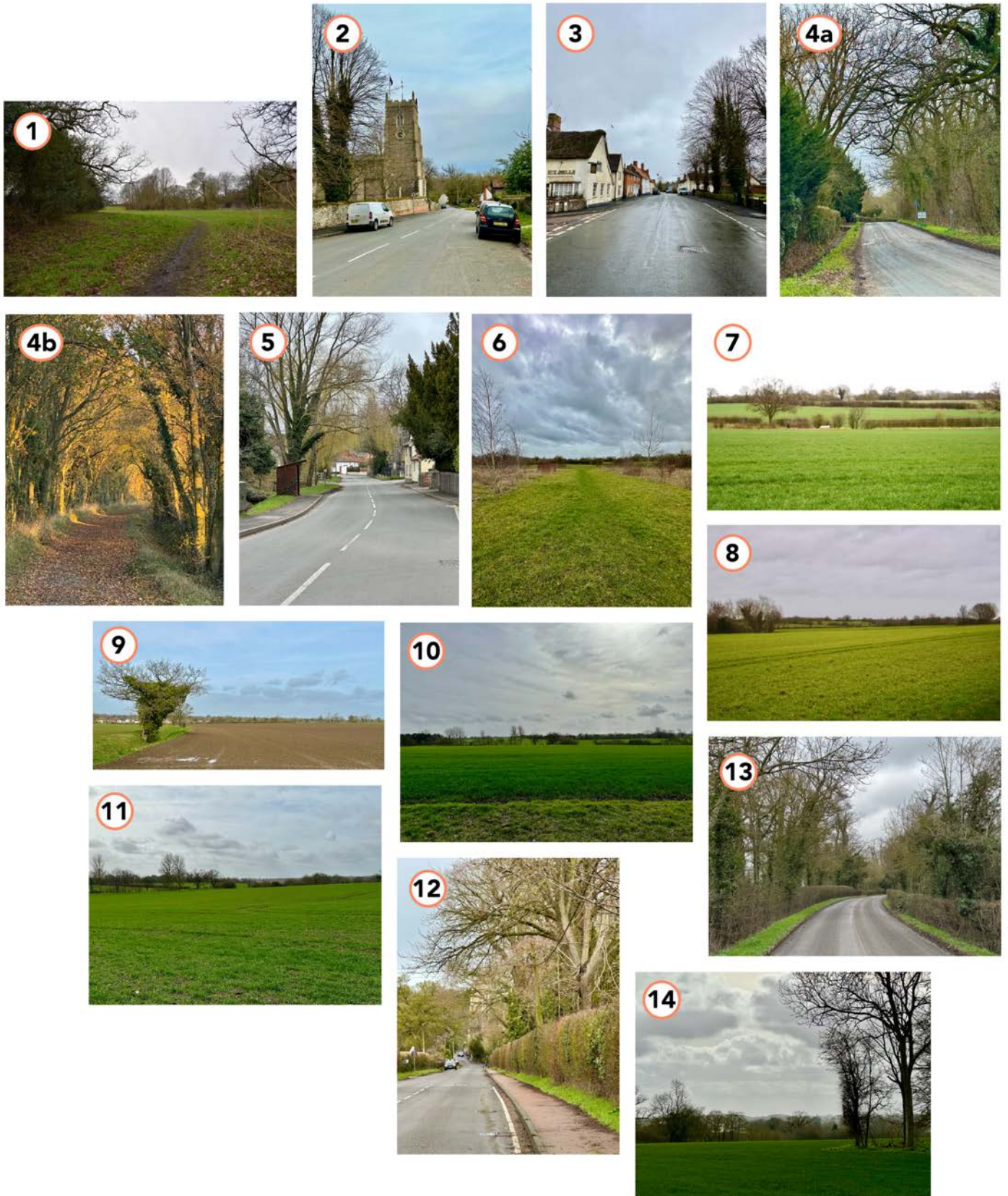


Figure 29: Photographs of Important Public Local Views (source: own).

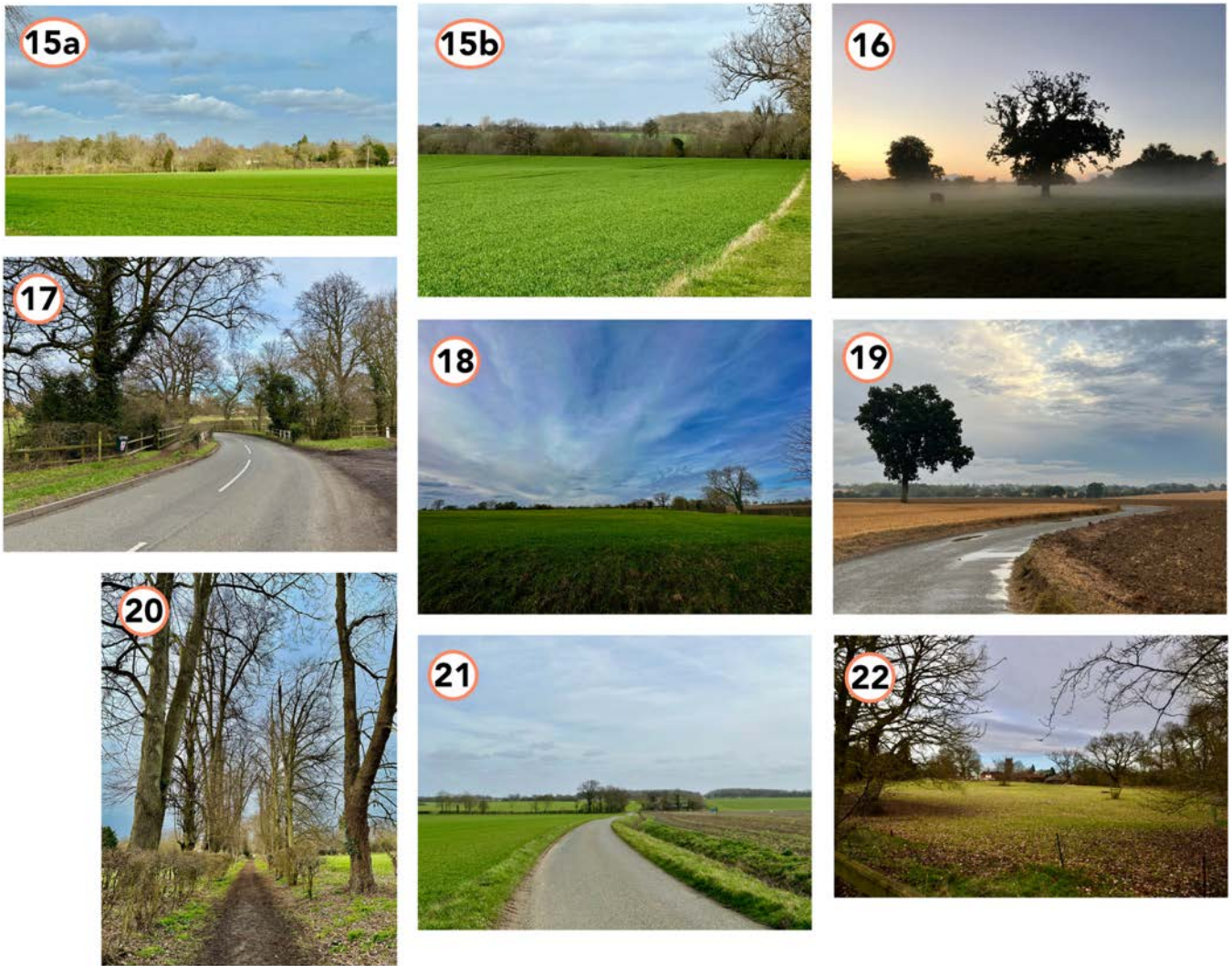


Figure 30: Photographs of Important Public Local Views (source: own).



POLICY

WLW9: Important Public Local Views

The following views and vistas (as shown on **figures 29, 30 and 31**) are identified as Important Public Local Views:

1. The Causeway along Footpath 9 across Gallants Meadow
2. Crossroads, down The Causeway to the bridge*
3. Crossroads, along The Street*
4. Views from Summer Road
 - a) Continuous view down Summer Road from Garage (30mph sign)*
 - b) View looking east along Fishponds Way
5. From Millers Bridge along stream and road towards Rolfes Bridge*
6. Wild Wood to Church tower
7. Wattisfield Road towards Finch's Bottoms and Burnt House
8. Plantation Cottage towards Cranmer Green
9. Crownland Hall towards Palmer Street, Jollys Way and Bribery
10. From the permissive footpath in Four Ashes towards Badwell Green
11. From the permissive footpath in Four Ashes towards Badwell Ash and Langham
12. From our Ashes Corner down The Causeway towards the bridge
13. Continuous view up Badwell Road from bridge to Four Ashes*
14. From Rottells Lane (Footpath10) towards Badwell Ash
15. From Rottells Lane (Footpath 10)
 - a) towards Church and The Causeway
 - b) towards Ten Acre Wood
16. From Footpath 20 near Betty's Bridge towards Noah's Ark
17. Continuous view along Ixworth Rd. from The Lawn to crossroads
18. Ixworth Road towards Hillwatering, Mulley's Grove and Potash Farm
19. View from Bribery Lane, looking west towards the village and north along Hartshall Lane
20. Views both north and south along 'The Avenue' between the Street and Grove Road
21. View from junction of Crownland Road with Bribery Lane, looking east towards Westhorpe
22. View from Betty's Bridge at West Street looking across the Meadow to Church Farm and then to St Mary's Church

Development proposals within or that would affect an important public local view should take account of the view concerned and developments which



would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape or character of the view concerned will not be supported.

* Denotes view identified in the Mid Suffolk Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment 2016.

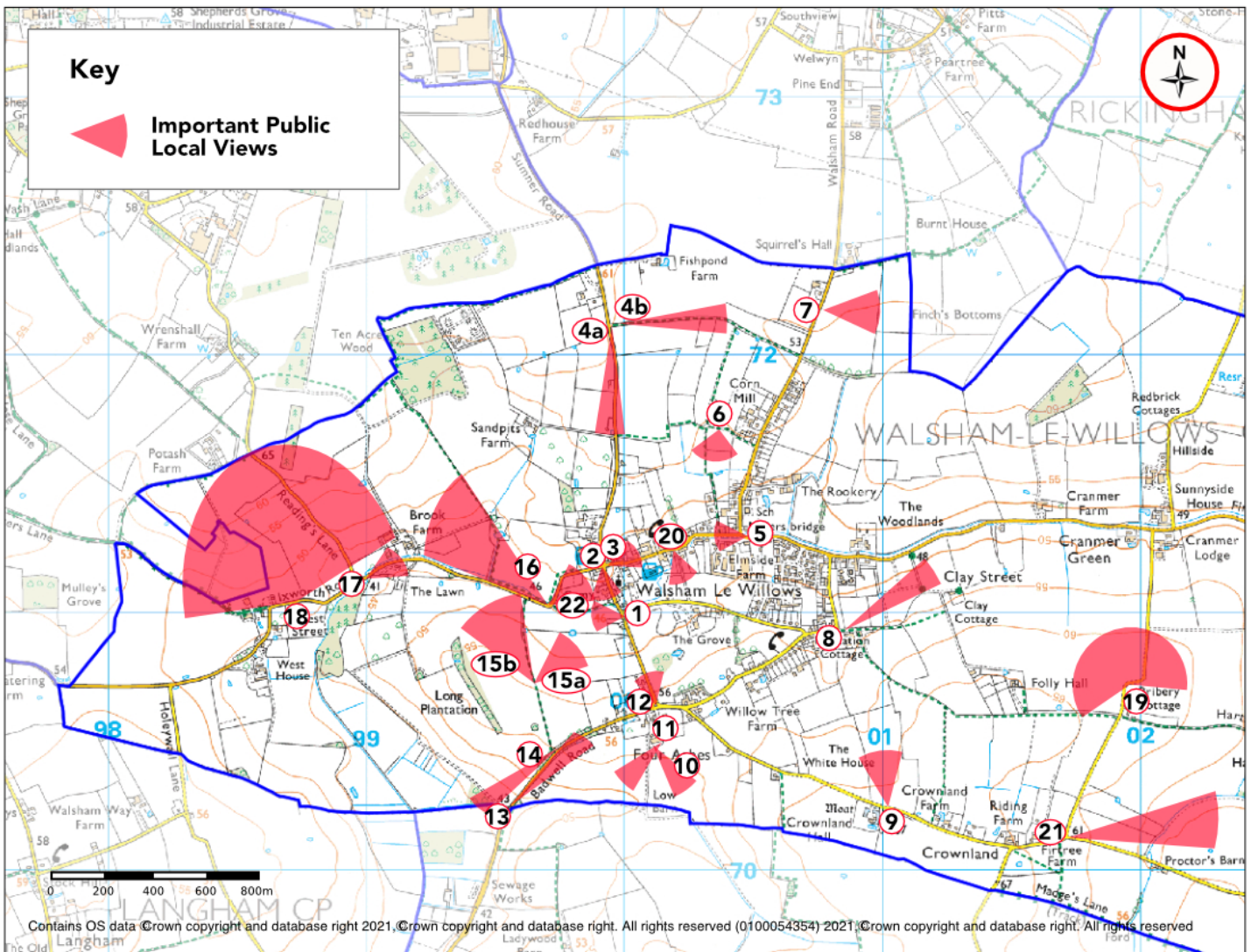


Figure 31: Important Public Local Views (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Dark skies

10.19 The NPPF indicates that development proposals should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation.

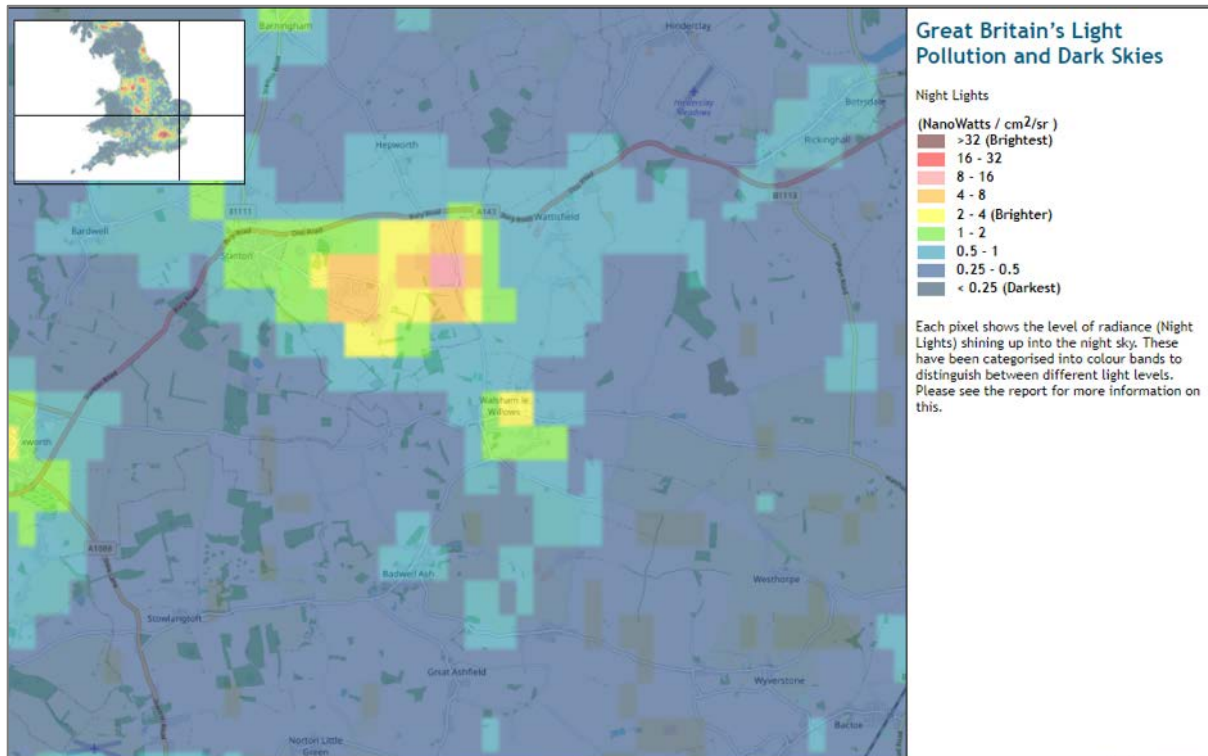


Figure 32: Light pollution map covering Walsham le Willows (source: Commission for the Protection of Rural England).

10.20 According to the CPRE light pollution maps,²² part of the Parish falls within some areas of polluted skies e.g. 1-2 and 2-4 nano watts/cm² (category 4 and 5 of 9 with 9 being the most polluted). High levels of lighting can affect the health, wellbeing and amenity of adjacent residents but also have impacts for natural habitats and species.

10.21 Nil or low levels of light pollution are an important aspect of tranquillity. This is also an important characteristic of the Parish that people value. Light pollution comes in many forms – sky glow as a consequence of water droplets in the air, illumination from artificial light and glare. Artificial light is not detrimental in all cases and the solution to light pollution is not turning off all lighting. Light pollution is where light is excessive or intrudes where it is not wanted or expected. Well-designed lighting sends light only where it is needed and without scattering it elsewhere (see also the Design Guidance and Codes for further information). The NPPF advises that by encouraging good design in planning policies this should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature

²² England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies, <https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/>



conservation. (Note: not all lighting schemes require planning permission, however where they are part of a proposal it is reasonable to seek to control them – on residential or commercial buildings.)

POLICY	<p>WLW10: Dark skies</p> <p>Development proposals will be expected to minimise light spillage and glare and ensure good lighting management and design to protect those areas of the Parish with intrinsically dark skies and to minimise further increases of light pollution within the Parish as a whole.</p> <p>Where planning permission is required, all outdoor lighting schemes (including street-lighting), should be designed so that they minimise their overall impact on the environment, including through making use of energy efficient technologies and using technologies that minimise adverse impacts on wildlife.</p> <p>The use of down lighting and environmentally efficient lighting particularly where adjacent to the countryside, heritage assets and priority habitats and species as identified in Policy WLW12 is encouraged. While ensuring that new development proposals are secure in terms of occupation and use, and vehicle safety, dark skies are to be preferred over lighting.</p>
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Local Green Spaces

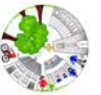
10.22 The National Planning Policy Framework 2023, at paragraphs 101-103 introduces the concept of Local Green Spaces which can be identified through neighbourhood plans by local communities and allows green areas identified as being of particular importance to be protected. Paragraph 102, sets out 3 broad criteria for identifying and designating such spaces as follows:

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

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



- 10.23 The NPPF at paragraph 103 then goes on to state that ‘policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for green belts’ and therefore affords them a very high level of protection. It is also clear that the designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used as a mechanism to try to block or resist development on agricultural land immediately adjacent to village development boundaries and that a successful designation must meet the criteria outlined above. Such spaces can be viewed locally as equally as important as the landscape setting of an area. Such spaces are green spaces found within the built-up area that contribute to the character of a settlement. These can vary in size, shape, location, ownership and use but such spaces will have some form of value to the community particularly for benefits to mental and physical health and wellbeing and help define what makes that specific settlement what it is. Support is given for proposals that would enable green spaces and facilities accessible to residents with limited mobility for example the inclusion of benches, including Chatty Benches and well-maintained paths etc.
- 10.24 Areas of open space in the Parish include St Mary’s churchyard, Wild Wood, recreation areas, playing fields, and small grassed amenity areas. Each of the candidate spaces have been assessed against the NPPF criteria. Each space that meets the criteria should be protected because of its value to the local community. The result is the 13 spaces shown in **figure 33** and listed within **Policy WLW11**. Assessments for each one against the criteria set out in the NPPF are shown in **Appendix B**.



POLICY	<p>WLW11: Local Green Spaces</p> <p>The following are identified as Local Green Spaces (as shown on figure 33):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. St. Mary’s churchyardb. (i) Wild Wood and (ii) Jubilee Woodc. Two recreational areas at Walsham le Willows Sports Clubd. Allotments off Wattisfield Roade. Wild area adjacent Walsham le Willows Primary Schoolf. Green area on Grove Park in front of the bungalowsg. Green area in front of properties on Town House Roadh. Green area at the end of Mill Close (Wattisfield Road)i. Green area in front of Staple Closej. Play area at Town House Roadk. Cemetery at Ixworth Roadl. Bowls green and green area surrounding the Memorial Village Hallm. Play area and green space at Elm Drive <p>Development within Local Green Spaces will be managed consistent with the approach taken for Green Belts.</p>
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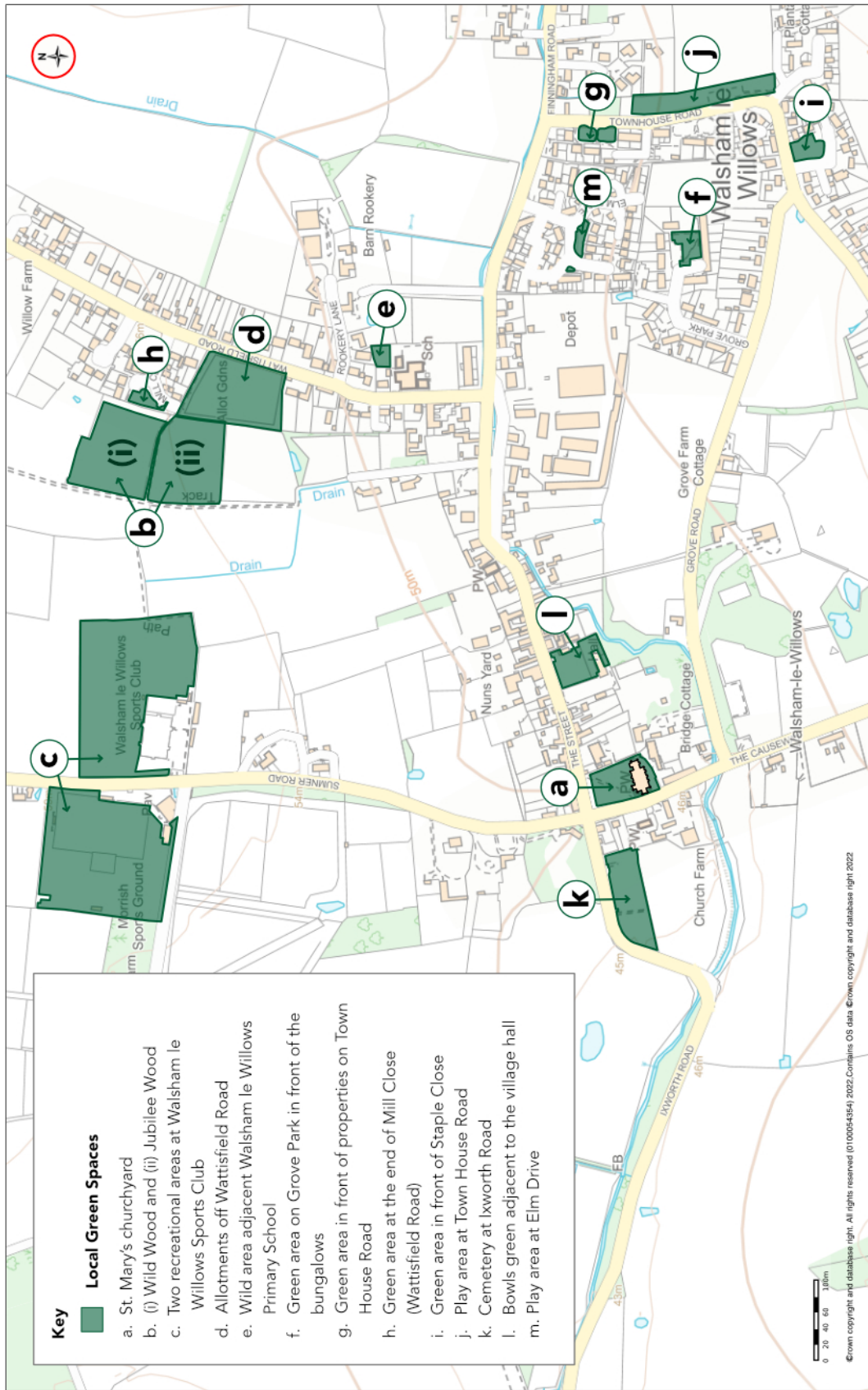


Figure 33: Local Green Spaces (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). See Appendix B for detailed site maps.



Biodiversity

10.25 The Neighbourhood Area does not contain any international or national nature conservation designations. This does not mean that the Parish does not have a wealth of wildlife habitats and species. There is a local designation of Roadside Nature Reserve No 156 identified by Suffolk County Council which is located just south of Potash Farm in the northwest of the Parish. The designation is made due to the presence of the Adder's Tongue Fern.



Figure 34 left: Photograph of the Adder's Tongue Fern.

Figure 35 right: Location of the Roadside Nature Reserve No 156.

10.26 Under the Roadside Nature Reserve Scheme, the grass verges are individually managed to benefit the scarce or unusual plants or fungi growing in the stretch protected from normal highways management. RNRs are marked by two white posts, one at each end, with a black arrow on both posts pointing inwards to the RNR. This is to indicate to the grass verge cutters that this specific site is an RNR and is not to be cut outside of its designated cutting times.

10.27 In addition, the Parish contains a number of identified habitats such as deciduous woodland, parkland, veteran trees, ponds, hedgerows, meadow which support species such as otters, swifts, hares, owls, red kites, buzzards and water voles.

10.28 As mentioned earlier, there are also surface water issues regarding run off and flood management. Walsham le Willows lies within Low to High priority areas for vulnerability for groundwater and a high priority area for safeguarding groundwater particularly around phosphate run off. Mid Suffolk is listed as having moderate to poor status under the Water Framework



Directive with issues related to groundwater, flooding and also droughts with implications for water management in the parish as well as water quantity and quality. This could be improved by ensuring that surface and foul water drainage systems remain separate thus preventing rainwater entering sewers which increases the volume and dilutes the sewage, potentially overwhelming treatment works and leading to discharge of effluent into watercourses after storm events. Whilst new development should ensure that these connections remain separate there is a need for the retrofitting of measures such as swales, tree pits and rain gardens next to roads to prevent highway run off from getting into combined systems.

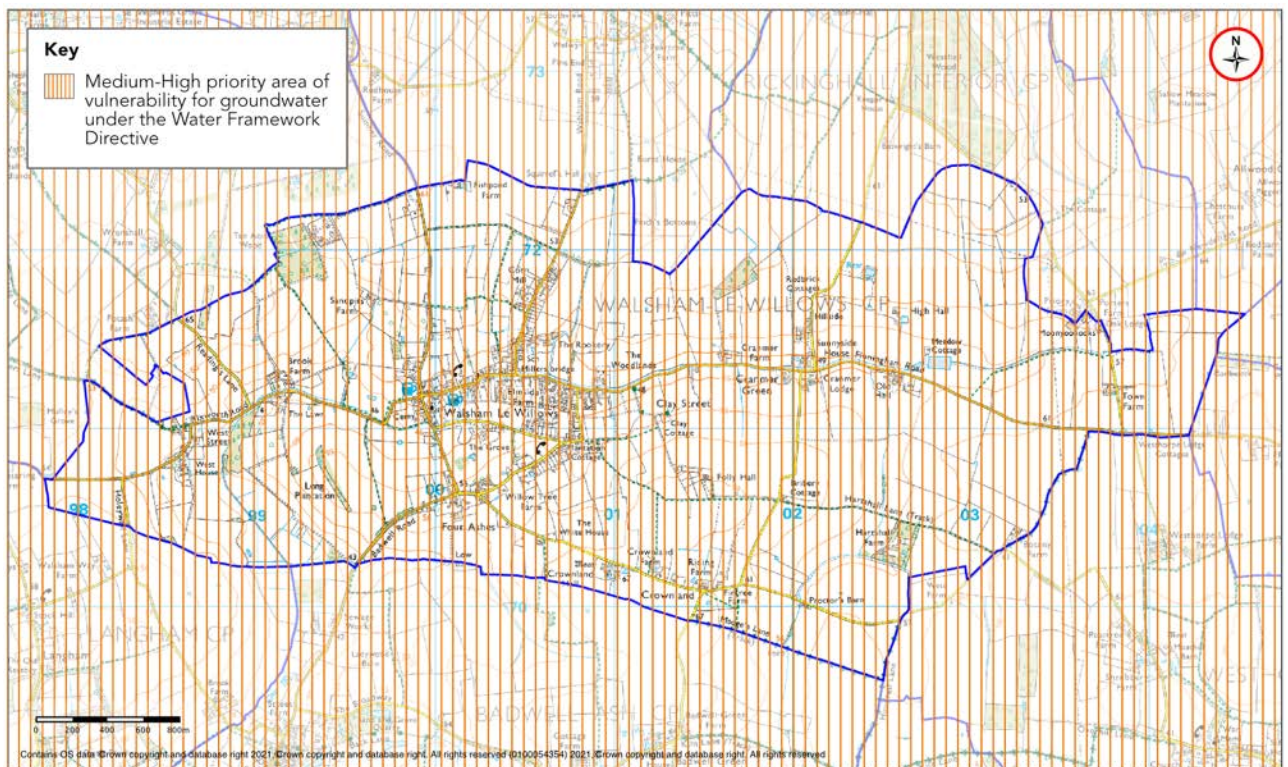


Figure 36: Area of vulnerability for groundwater under the Water Framework Directive (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Planning policy for biodiversity

10.29 The NPPF indicates that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity or geological value and minimising impacts on and providing measurable net gains for biodiversity. This Plan identifies that net gains for biodiversity should include like for like net gains to enable the community to



safeguard and enhance the habitats of the existing species that live within the Parish.

10.30 The Environment Act 2021 received Royal Assent in Autumn 2021 and introduces a new system for the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). In simple terms, BNG is an approach to development which aims to leave the natural environment in a *measurably* better state than it was beforehand. Planning policy that seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity is not new, but this latest approach focuses in more on the *measurability* aspect. Planning applications will need to quantify the different habitat types on site both before and after the proposed development using the latest Biodiversity Metric. A minimum of 10 per cent gain in biodiversity will be required either on-site or via enhancement elsewhere. BNG is not mandatory until 2023 and its importance in the planning process will be elevated. Whilst not yet mandatory, many Districts have begun to embed BNG as a policy requirement in their Local Plans, which is the level at which a consistent and districtwide policy will apply. Neighbourhood Plans therefore need not repeat or duplicate such matters unless there is clear, robust local evidence for doing so. The emerging BMSJLP policies already require that development proposals create, protect, and enhance ecological networks and seeks to ensure that all new development secures high standards of design and green infrastructure which creates attractive and sustainable places where people want to live and spend time. Networks of green infrastructure should be provided across new developments linking with existing networks of open space.

Mitigating the impact of development

10.31 Mitigating the impacts of development proposals is managed using the mitigation hierarchy which is a widely used tool that guides users towards limiting as far as possible the negative impacts on biodiversity from development projects. It emphasises best-practice of avoiding and minimising any negative impacts, and then restoring sites no longer used by a project, before finally considering offsetting residual impacts.

10.32 Following the hierarchy is crucial for all development projects aiming to achieve no overall negative impact on biodiversity or on balance, a net gain – also referred to as no net loss and the net positive approach, respectively. It is based on a series of essential, sequential – but iterative – steps taken throughout the project’s life cycle in order to limit any negative impacts on biodiversity.



Sequential steps of the mitigation hierarchy

1. **Avoidance:** the first step of the mitigation hierarchy comprises measures taken to avoid creating impacts from the outset, such as careful spatial placement of infrastructure, or timing construction sensitively to avoid or disturbance. Examples include the placement of roads outside of rare habitats or key species' breeding grounds. Avoidance is often the easiest, cheapest, and most effective way of reducing potential negative impacts, but it requires biodiversity to be considered in the early stages of a project.
2. **Minimisation:** these are measures taken to reduce the duration, intensity and/or extent of impacts that cannot be completely avoided. Effective minimisation can eliminate some negative impacts, such as measures to reduce noise and pollution, designing powerlines to reduce the likelihood of bird electrocutions, or building wildlife crossings on roads.
3. **Rehabilitation/restoration:** The aim of this step is to improve degraded or removed ecosystems following exposure to impacts that cannot be completely avoided or minimised. Restoration tries to return an area to the original ecosystem that was present before impacts, whereas rehabilitation only aims to restore basic ecological functions and/or ecosystem services – such as through planting trees to stabilise bare soil. Rehabilitation and restoration are frequently needed towards the end of a project's life cycle but may be possible in some areas during operation.

Collectively, avoidance, minimisation and rehabilitation/restoration serve to reduce, as far as possible, the residual impacts that a project has on biodiversity. Typically, however, even after their effective application, additional steps will be required to achieve no overall negative impact or a net gain for biodiversity.

4. **Offset:** offsetting aims to compensate for any residual, adverse impacts after full implementation of the previous three steps of the mitigation hierarchy. Biodiversity offsets are of two main types: 'restoration offsets' which aim to rehabilitate or restore degraded habitat, and 'averted loss offsets' which aim to reduce or stop biodiversity loss in areas where this is predicted. Offsets are often complex and expensive, so attention to earlier steps in the mitigation hierarchy is preferable.



Ecological corridors

10.33 **Policy WLW12** below mentions protecting and enhancing existing ecological networks. The river in the centre of the village is a good example of such a corridor. The mapping of existing ecological corridors in the Parish is a project that can be undertaken by the community to inform future development proposals and any reviews of the Neighbourhood Plan. Such a project would contribute to enhancing the natural environment within the parish and seek to buffer existing ecological assets for example, woodland, parkland and hedgerows. For example, future development could help to enhance habitats surrounding the community woodland in the parish. Community woodlands could be linked to other areas of woodland and parkland in the parish for wildlife and people. This could be achieved by targeting biodiversity net gain required from development towards these areas to enable improvements such as hedgerow planting, wildlife friendly arable margins and pond creation.



POLICY

WLW12: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity

Development proposals will be expected to protect and enhance existing ecological networks, wildlife corridors and priority species in accordance with the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimise, restore, offset).

Net gain and benefits to wildlife

Otherwise acceptable development proposals will be supported where they provide a measurable increase of net gain in biodiversity through for example:

- a. The creation of new, restoration and enhancement of existing natural habitats
- b. The planting of additional trees and hedgerows (reflecting the character of the areas traditional hedgerows),
- c. the restoration and reparation of fragmented ecological networks, for example, the river.

The extent of any net gain in biodiversity should be in accordance with national policy.

New tree planting should be of a scale, location and type which adds value and optimises benefits to wildlife. New and replacement planting should be native or near native species and preference is given to tree species that provide maximum benefit for biodiversity. Landscape maintenance and management plans should be agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Every effort should be made by scheme designers to incorporate existing trees and landscape features into their designs. Proposals should avoid loss or damage of features in the first instance. Where a tree is to be lost as the result of development proposals, it should be replaced elsewhere on site before the development is completed. The replacement should be an equivalent or better tree (or trees) in respect of size, amenity value, contribution to carbon sequestration and benefit for biodiversity.

Proposals for new buildings (including non-residential development) should incorporate measures to protect and enhance wildlife species and habitats including the incorporation of wildlife friendly measures such as:

- i. bat, swallow, and swift boxes/bricks, house martin cups/towers
- ii. hedgehog highways doors and tunnels, to enable hedgehogs and other small mammals/amphibians etc to move freely
- iii. insect bricks



iv. new garden hedgerows and trees.

Support is given for measures to enhance existing areas for the benefit of wildlife, e.g. the Churchyard, the allotments, and the Wild and Jubilee Woods.

Mitigation

Development proposals should seek initially to retain existing features of biodiversity value within the Parish such as ponds, hedgerows, trees (including veteran trees), traditional orchards, woodlands, wood pasture and parkland and any other semi natural habitats within the Parish.

Proposals should avoid loss or damage of biodiversity. Where loss or damage is unavoidable, it must be demonstrated that the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the impacts and the development shall provide for mitigation in the form of appropriate on-site replacement, replanting or appropriate natural feature on site together with a method statement for the ongoing care and maintenance of that planting or feature.

As a last resort, compensation measures will be sought with a preference for these to be provided within the Neighbourhood Area unless there is an ecological reason that it should be provided elsewhere.. If suitable mitigation or compensation measures cannot be provided within the neighbourhood area, then planning permission should be refused.

Renewable energy

10.34 With the ever- increasing need for security of energy supply and the impacts of climate change, it is likely that more and more applications for renewable based energy developments will occur during the plan period.

10.35 Government guidance in the NPPF advises that planning policies should help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat and provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts).

10.36 Furthermore Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments



outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.

- 10.37 In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.
- 10.38 The emerging BMSJLP supports renewable energy sources and distribution subject to criteria.
- 10.39 Given the current issues around the security of energy supply, it is anticipated that proposals for renewable energy development are likely to come forward within the Plan period. Solar the most likely to arise within the Parish and therefore the following policy has been prepared which seeks to manage such potential developments and safeguard the important environmental assets of the Parish. Note: the parish of Walsham le Willows lies within the Bird Strike Safeguarding Zone for RAF Honington and therefore are a statutory consultee for relevant planning applications within the area.



POLICY	<p>WLW13: Renewable energy/solar</p> <p>Proposals for renewable, decentralised and community energy generating proposals such as solar arrays including associated development such as cables, fencing, ancillary buildings, overhead wires, will only be supported where the proposal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Will not have an adverse impact upon biodiversity interests including habitats, species and natural features and where it will contribute to a measurable net gain in biodiversity, in accordance with Policy WLW12. Is located outside of the Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity as identified in Policy WLW8 and would not have an adverse impact upon the landscape character of the Parish. Is located outside of any of the views identifies in Policy WLW9. Will not have any adverse impacts upon the significance of designated or Non-designated Heritage Assets (and their settings) including those identified in Policy WLW14. Will not have any adverse impacts upon residential amenity in terms of noise, glare, dust. Can be safely accessed from the highway without detriment to the above criteria. <p>Development proposals for renewable, decentralised and community generating proposals on previously developed land will be prioritised, where appropriate, to minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where such development needs to take place on greenfield land, avoidance of the best and most versatile agricultural land will be preferred.</p>
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Historic environment: Non-designated Heritage Assets

10.40 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG²³) recognises that there are buildings, monuments, sites and places, areas of landscapes identified as having a degree of local significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets e.g. Listed buildings. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'. The PPG goes on to explain that these can be identified through Neighbourhood Plans (and Local Plans) and can be a positive way for the local authorities and the community to identify Non-

²³ Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Historic England, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>



Designated Heritage Assets against consistent criteria to improve the predictability of the potential for sustainable development.

- 10.41 There is a wide range of archaeology recorded on the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (HER) from within the parish, which ranges in date from the prehistoric to post-medieval periods. For some detail, the HER indicates the finds spot of a Mesolithic half bifacial flake (HER reference number: WLW 068), a neolithic polished flint axe head (WLW 001), multiple artefact scatters of Roman pottery (WLW 012, WLW 041, WLW 066, WLW 069, WLW 073) and Roman and Saxon metalwork scatters (WLW 091). There are also several medieval moated sites, such as Crowland Hall (WLW 004), High Hall (WLW 005) and possible moated enclosure (WLW 036). Based on information held in the County Historic Environment Record it is highly likely that archaeology would be identified through archaeological investigation in most areas of the parish.
- 10.42 Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service manages the Historic Environment Record for the County and holds numerous records for the parish relating to historic settlement and other cultural activity. Non-designated archaeological heritage assets would be managed in development through the National Planning Policy Framework. Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service would advise that there should be early consultation of the Historic Environment Record and assessment of the archaeological potential of any potential development sites at an appropriate stage in the design stage, in order that the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Mid Suffolk Local Plan are met. Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service as advisors to Mid Suffolk District Council would be happy to advise on the level of archaeological assessment and appropriate stages to be undertaken.
- 10.43 The NPPF indicates that the effects of an application on the significance of a Non- Designated Heritage Asset should be taken into account in determining applications.
- 10.44 The preliminary survey work undertaken as part of the Character Appraisal and other work carried out by the Parish Council and local residents has identified a number of potential Non-designated Heritage Assets. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan Survey sought further suitable candidates that would be worthy of a form of local protection due to their contribution to the character of the Parish. The list has been revised and the candidates have been assessed against the criteria shown in **Appendix C**.



POLICY	<p>WLW14: Important unlisted buildings (Non-designated Heritage Assets)</p> <p>The following (as shown on figure 37 and 38) are heritage assets that are considered to be locally important to Walsham le Willows in terms of their architectural, historical, or cultural significance and these will be treated as Non-designated Heritage Assets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brook Farmhouse, West Street 2. Martineau Cottages, Summer Road 3. Cold War Shelters and Watch towers, Summer Road 4. St. Catherine, The Street 5. Maplestead, The Street 6. Barn Cottage and South Side, The Street 7. Lime Tree Cottages, The Street 8. Harry Nunn's Yard including Moriarty's café, The Street 9. Clematis, The Street, 10. The Old Bakehouse, The Street 11. The Old Bakery, The Street 12. The Old Infants School, The Street 13. Avenue Cottages, The Street 14. Vine Cottages, The Street 15. Cygnet House, The Street 16. The Maltings, Wattisfield Road, 17. Fuschia Cottage (and adjacent), Wattisfield Road 18. The Mill (base only), Wattisfield Road 19. Cranmer Cottages, Cranmer Green 20. Church Farm Barns, The Causeway 21. Martineau Cottages, The Causeway²⁴ 22. Bridge Cottage, Grove Road 23. Hunts End Cottage, Palmer Street 24. Crownland Farmhouse, Crownland. 25. The Quillet, Crownland 26. Garden House, Four Ashes 27. The Rosary, Four Ashes 28. Clipper Cottage, Four Ashes 29. Gurnard Cottage and Jackdaw Cottage, Four Ashes 30. The Mount, Four Ashes 31. Flint Wall opposite Moore's, Four Ashes
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²⁴ The other set of Martineau Cottages on Summer Road are listed.

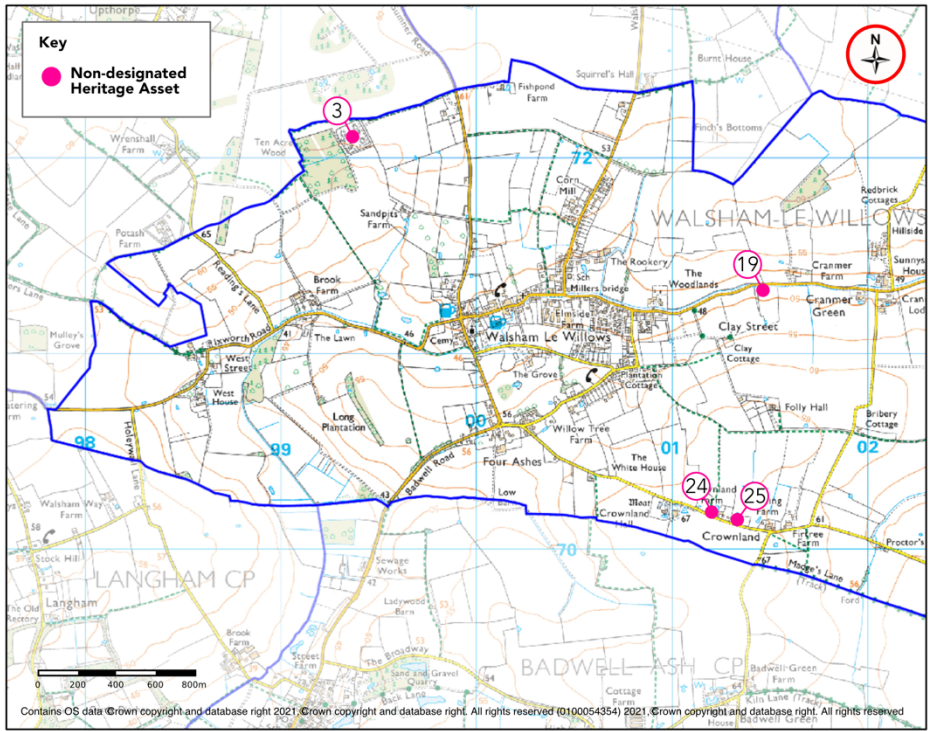


Figure 37: Identified Non-designated Heritage Assets in Walsham le Willows parish (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).

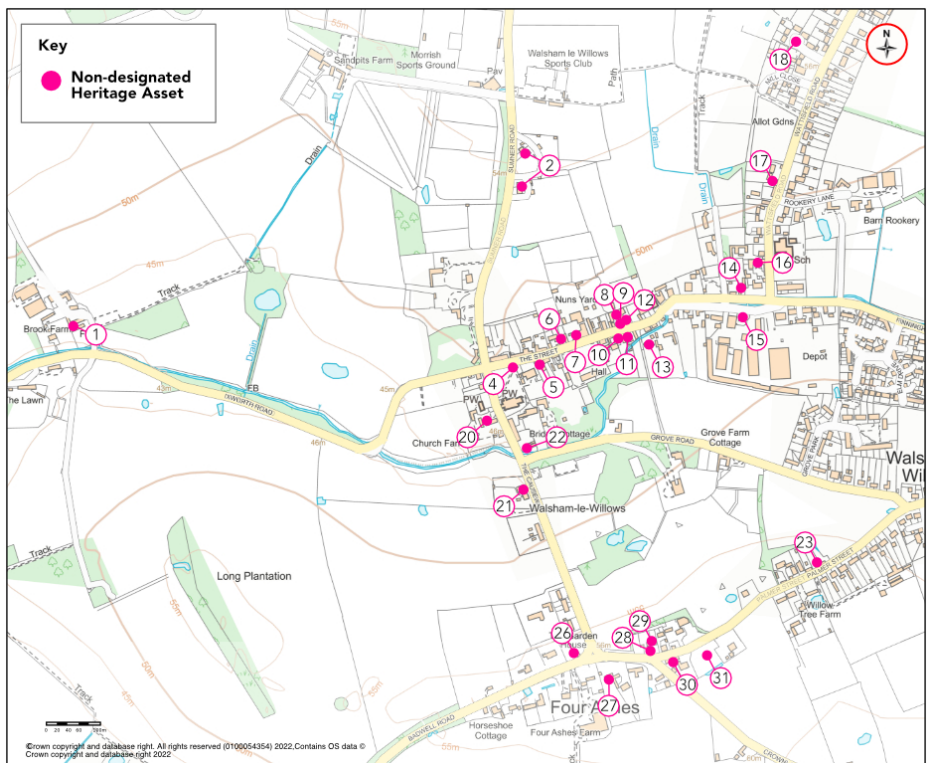


Figure 38: Identified Non-designated Heritage Assets in village centre (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).



11. Economy

Objective 6: To support local business, including opportunities for home working and encourage appropriate growth where it contributes to the sustainability of the community.

New and existing business

- 11.1 In addition to environmental and community roles that deliver sustainable housing growth and protect important assets, the third key role of Neighbourhood Plans is to deliver the economic objectives related to sustainable development that are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 11.2 These are to help build a strong, responsive, and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places to support growth, innovation, and improved productivity by identifying and coordinating the provision of physical infrastructure.
- 11.3 The Neighbourhood Plan also has a role in considering the future employment needs of the Parish. Walsham le Willows supports a variety of businesses, the largest and one of the most well-known is Clarkes of Walsham one of the largest independent suppliers of building, farming and garden materials in the East of England. Clarkes makes up to 200 deliveries daily with a fleet of fifteen lorries and smaller crane delivery vehicles. The last 30 years have seen steady expansion and Clarkes now employ 100 people and run a large fleet to deliver their goods. Other notable local businesses include HG Moores & Sons who operate a road haulage business from Four Ashes and Ashwell Construction Ltd, who offer civil engineering and ground works.



- 11.4 Businesses serving day to day needs include Rolfe’s the butchers, the two public houses and a range of other businesses including cleaning companies, and electricians, There are several major family farming businesses in the area that are employers of local people.
- 11.5 Other businesses in the Parish tend to be smaller in nature and are often run from home or small units. These include the following sectors: hair and beauty, dog walking, Solar Energy providers, road haulage, landscaping, gardening and building services, boat hire and sail making, candle makers, secretarial and accountancy services, interior design, heating and plumbing, childminding and children parties, web design and marketing, driving school and domestic cleaning.

Employment sites

- 11.6 The NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Weight should be given to the need to support economic growth and productivity taking into account local business needs. Planning policies should enable the sustainable growth of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. The use of previously developed land and sites that are well related physically to existing settlements should be encouraged.
- 11.7 Data from the 2011 Census shows that 8 per cent of residents of Walsham le Willows work from home, compared to 6 per cent for Mid Suffolk and 4 per cent for Suffolk. Anecdotally, the percentage of people home working in Walsham le Willows has increased significantly due to the Covid-19 pandemic causing changes to working patterns and it is expected that the 2021 census results will reveal a significant shift.
- 11.8 The two most significant areas of employment use in the Parish are located to the far north of the Parish off Summer Road (Area A) which comprises civil engineering, utilities and office ²⁵ (and the Clarkes of Walsham site (Area B) within the main part of the village.

²⁵This site is a Minerals and Waste safeguarded secondary aggregate recycling site SAR30.



POLICY

WLW15: New and existing business

Proposals for the expansion of existing businesses in Walsham le Willows including small scale extensions will be supported where they do not have a significant adverse impact upon the character of the area, adjoining uses, or the amenity of local residents either through their built form, proposed use or traffic generated.

Proposals for change of use involving a potential loss of existing land or premises currently in employment use will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. there is no reasonable prospect of continued viable use, and no alternative viable employment use can be found or is likely to be found in the foreseeable future, or
- b. the existing use has generated significant environmental problems (e.g. traffic, noise or odour) and the permitting of an alternative use would be a substantial environmental benefit that would outweigh the loss of an employment site.

Where a site currently in employment use is considered to have no reasonable prospect of continued viable use this will be demonstrated through:

- i. Six months of marketing in appropriate publications, for the permitted and similar uses, using an appropriate agent; on realistic terms first agreed with the Local Planning Authority, and
- ii. Confirmation that it has been offered on a range of terms (including price) agreed to be reasonable on the advice of an independent qualified assessor.

New small-scale businesses appropriate to a rural area, particularly those that result in the reuse of redundant or unused historic or farm buildings, and new buildings to accommodate new business or agricultural uses will be positively encouraged, provided that they do not have a significant adverse impact upon the character of the area, the amenity of residents or result in an unacceptable increase in traffic generation.

Services and facilities which would support and add value to homeworkers e.g., facilities for shared printing and media services, meeting rooms and IT access will be supported.



Figure 41: Inset map, existing employment use, area B (source: Parish Online with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.





12. Projects and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding

- 12.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008, to help deliver in the infrastructure required to support the development of an area. The CIL is levied on practically all new development within a given area. Mid Suffolk District Council has introduced CIL across its administrative area and has an adopted CIL Charging Schedule which sets out the charges levied on various forms of development. Mid Suffolk is responsible for levying and collecting the CIL payable and they retain 5 per cent of the overall CIL collected in the District to administer the scheme.
- 12.2 **District CIL** is the remaining percentage of CIL that goes into the District Infrastructure fund which is pooled and allocated to infrastructure projects that make the development in the area sustainable, e.g. extensions to schools and health. This may be spent on infrastructure projects identified in the Local Plan.
- 12.3 **Neighbourhood CIL** is the percentage of the CIL that is payable to the parish or neighbourhood within which eligible development takes place. At present Walsham le Willows Parish Council receives 15 per cent of the CIL levied on development in its area but this will rise to 25 per cent once the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made'. Walsham le Willows Parish Council regularly reviews its priorities for spending the Neighbourhood CIL and consults with the community accordingly including inviting bids from the local community to identify projects on which future CIL monies can be spent within the Parish.
- 12.4 The Neighbourhood Plan is principally concerned with land use planning matters. However, through community consultation it is clear there are other issues that are of legitimate concern to the community, that fall outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan policy but are worthy of future exploration through other mechanisms. Such issues are identified below as community projects that can be taken forward outside the Neighbourhood Plan process. These are not exhaustive and there will be others which arise during the plan period.



Community projects

12.5 One mechanism for facilitating and funding community projects is through the Parish Council. The Parish Council has been in receipt of CIL monies for some time including those generated by the Acorns on Wattisfield Road. If and when future CIL monies become available, the Parish Council would like to be able to support projects which address community concerns raised through the Neighbourhood Plan consultation such as the examples provided below. The following list includes the questions from the **Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan Survey conducted in November/ December 2021**, the most frequent responses received and some examples of potential projects which could address these responses.

12.6 *“What do you value most about Walsham Le Willows?”* (Survey question 3). Frequent response words were ‘Community/Countryside/Rural/Quiet/Access’.

Potential projects:

1. The provision of equipment to village organisations which clearly demonstrate value in bringing the community together. The Memorial Village Hall is seen as a major asset to the wider village community and as a potential future hub in terms of environmental, business and energy sustainability.
 - Memorial Hall Staging I.²⁶
 - Catering equipment for expansion of coffee morning and meal provisil(C).
 - The provision of Community food growing opportunities.
2. Improved pedestrian access to the footpath network
 - Fishponds Lane.
 - Summer Road.
 - Hatchmere Lane.
 - The Wattisfield Road to Sports Club footpath link.
 - Palmer Street.

²⁶ (C) = indicates projects which have already applied for funding and are to receive CIL monies generated by the Acorn development on Wattisfield Road.



12.7 This is further supported by Question 16 where 62.8 per cent of respondents would like to see new country footpaths, where the main concern was walking along narrow busy roads.

12.8 ***“What would be the one thing you would improve”*** (Survey Question 4). Frequent response words were ‘Shop/Traffic/Parking/Public/Transport/Speed’.

Potential projects:

3. The provision of green spaces:
 - Jubilee Wood and the ongoing provision of quiet areas to promote wellbeing. The Sports Club is a thriving facility which caters for the health and welfare of village residents and the wider district.
4. Provision of pedestrian crossing between the east and west parts of the Sports Club fields and clubhouse.
5. Traffic calming measures on the entrance roads to the village.
6. Extending the 30mph zones on main through roads.

12.9 ***“How would you like to see Walsham le Willows develop for the better within the next 20 years?”*** (Survey Question 21). Frequent response words were ‘Play equipment/All ages/Basketball’.

Potential projects:

7. Redevelopment of the Town House Road play la. (C)
8. Provide seeding monies for the development of a community fitness/gym centre at the Sporlclub. (C)
9. Projects to meet the needs of young adults within the village.

12.10 The Parish Council has published guidance and an application form on its website to assist community groups or individuals who may wish to apply for CIL funding for specific projects.

- Walsham le Willows Parish Council CIL Grant Awarding Policy: https://www.walsham-le-willows.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/020-CIL-funding-policy_20220511.pdf



- Application for CIL funding: <https://www.walsham-le-willows.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/021-cil-application-form.pdf>

After the Neighbourhood Plan

- 12.11 Once the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made', there is considerable scope for 'legacy' projects to emerge, building on the momentum and interest generated by the community engagement exercises undertaken to support the development of the Plan, should the desire to do so be identified within the community.
- 12.12 Common approaches include the delivery of specific projects (as identified above) or the establishment of specific groups to carry out particular research that can be used to inform future reviews of the Neighbourhood Plan and to aid the Parish Council in responding to planning applications e.g. ecological mapping; collecting housing data etc..



which thou sowest is not quickened except it die
raised in power

Entrance
to the Cemetery



13. Implementation and monitoring

Implementation

- 13.1 The Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to assist with the planning of sustainable growth across the Parish for a period up to 2037. The implementation of the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan will require the co-ordinated input and co-operation of a number of statutory and non-statutory agencies, private sector organisations, landowners, and the local community.
- 13.2 Alongside other strategic documents and policies, the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan is intended to provide a starting point for working together to implement positive sustainable growth in the Parish.
- 13.3 The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan shape the way in which development will happen within the Parish of Walsham le Willows. Some of the policies included within the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan have a delivery element, often a requirement of development or 'planning obligation'. Planning obligations (often referred to as section 106 agreements) are legal agreements negotiated between the District Council and a developer or landowner (usually in the context of a planning application). Planning obligations are typically used to ensure that new developments:
- Comply with planning policy - for instance, by requiring affordable housing or public open space to be provided; and
 - Do not impose undue burdens on existing facilities - for instance, by requiring financial contributions to improve local services such as schools, libraries, or transport.
- 13.4 In order to see delivery realised, it will require Walsham le Willows Parish Council and partner organisations to be proactive in getting the best results for Walsham le Willows. Working in partnership with the District Council and Suffolk County Council will be particularly important regarding strategic matters such as addressing traffic and highway safety issues.



- 13.5 In addition to its role as part of the statutory Development Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan will be the key document used by Walsham le Willows Parish Council in formulating their responses to Mid Suffolk District Council in respect of consultations on planning applications.

Monitoring

- 13.6 A formal review process in consultation with the local community and the District Council will be undertaken every five years, to ensure that the Plan is still current and remains a positive planning tool to deliver sustainable growth. In order to determine when a review is necessary, the District and Parish Councils will monitor development in Walsham le Willows along with the local and national policy and legislative context.
- 13.7 It is understood that the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan will require review during its life and that it will be the role of the Parish Council to update the Neighbourhood Plan at the appropriate time. Some of the first Neighbourhood Plans that were “made” (adopted) across the country are now in the process of review and alteration.
- 13.8 The Parish Council will report annually on the implementation of policies, and the progress made on taking forward any Community Projects.





Appendix

Appendix A – Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members

- Jimmy Bailey, local resident
- Richard Belson, local resident and Chair of the Parish Council
- Ian Campbell, local resident
- Sally Johnston, local resident
- Alison Martin, local resident
- Suzi Martineau, local resident
- Gordon Murray, local resident
- Nick Mecrow, local resident and Parish Councillor
- Phil Newby, local resident, Chair of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Supported by

- Parish Clerk: Kevin Boardley
- Consultants: Rachel Leggett, Andrea Long and Emma Harrison

Thank you also to previous Steering Group members and other helpers specifically Maggie Barber for making the process happen, Trevor Roberts and John Martineau.

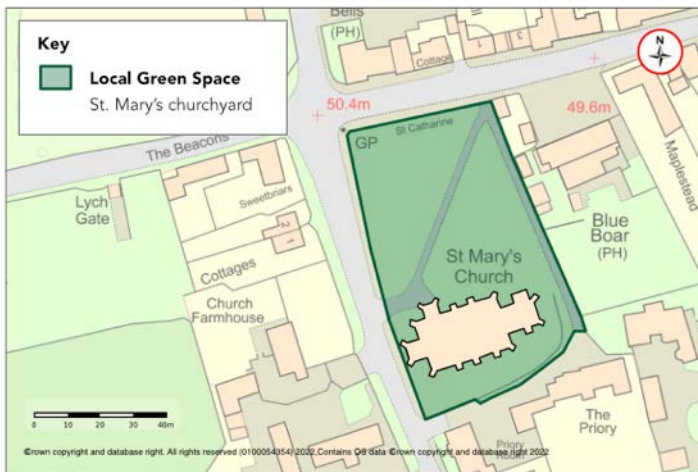
Photograph acknowledgements: Drone photography courtesy of Tim Lodge of Agrostis.



Appendix B – Local Green Space justification

The following have been assessed using the criteria in NPPF 2023, paragraph 102.

a. St Mary's churchyard	
Description: Churchyard surrounding St Mary's Church, corner of The Street and The Causeway	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located within the main built up area of the village, surrounded by development.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Community value through its role as a churchyard and an historic value due to the setting it provides to the Church (a listed building). Provides a tranquil, green oasis for this part of the village
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Area is 0.89 acres and therefore is not an extensive tract of land.
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



b. Wild Wood and Jubilee Wood	
Description: Two areas of community woodland located west of Wattisfield Road	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located on the edge of the built up area of the village but easily accessed via a number of footpaths.



Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Both areas are owned and maintained for the benefit of the community and community access is encouraged. Provides habitat for wildlife.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Approximately 4.5 acres in total (Wild Wood is 2.5 acres and Jubilee Wood is 2 acres) in size which is not extensive in the context of the overall built-up area of the village.
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



c. Two recreational areas at Walsham le Willows Sports Club	
Description: Two areas of formal, recreational open space at Walsham le Willows Sports Club either side of Summer Road. Includes pitches for football, cricket etc	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located on the edge of the north-western part of built-up area.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Both areas are owned and maintained for the benefit of the community and have community and recreational value
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	2.2 hectares and 2.1 hectares respectively



<p>Include in NP y/n?</p>	<p>Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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Note: the above map is a different scale from the other Local Green Space maps.

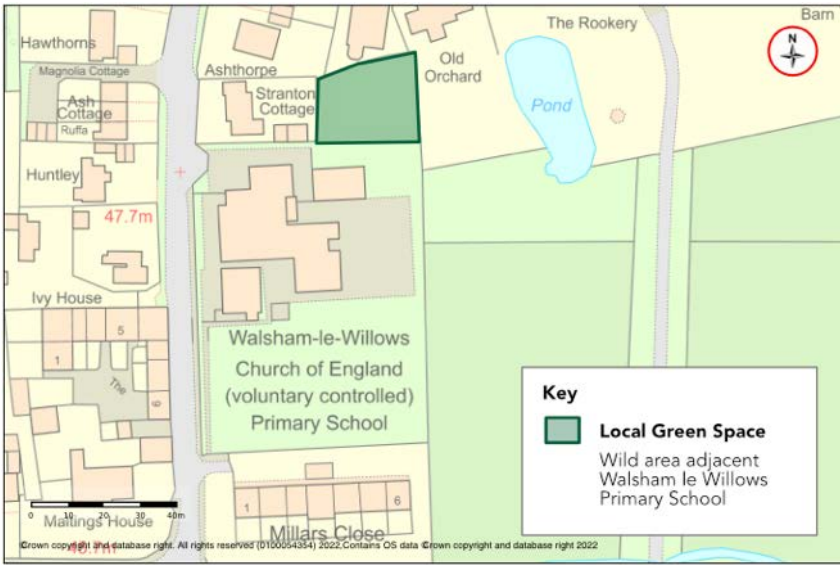
<p>d. Allotments off Wattisfield Road</p>	
<p>Description: Area of allotment land located west of Wattisfield Road</p>	
<p>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</p>	<p>Located on the edge of the built-up area, residential development to the north and south</p>
<p>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</p>	<p>Communal and amenity value due to its use as allotments;</p>



Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	1.9 acres; not an extensive tract of land in the context of the settlement as a whole
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



e. Wild Area adjacent Walsham le Willows Primary School	
Description: An area of green space adjacent to the Primary School	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located immediately adjacent to the Primary School
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Communal value due to its connections with the school; the playing field has a recreational value, and the wild area provides wildlife habitat
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	0.13 acres in total; not extensive tracts of land in the context of the settlement as a whole
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



f. Green area at Grove Park in front of bungalows

Description: An area of green space, with trees within the Grove Park housing development

In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located within the main built-up area and is surrounded by development
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Communal and amenity value due to its open undeveloped nature within the residential development.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	0.43 acres; not an extensive tract of land
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.





g. Green area in front of properties at Town House Road	
Description: Areas of informal green space in front of properties at Town House Road	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located within the main built-up area, immediately adjacent to development
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Communal and amenity value due to its open undeveloped nature within the residential development and its use for informal children's play.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	0.24 acres; not extensive tracts of land
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



h. Green area at the end of Mill Close (Wattisfield Road)	
Description: An area of informal green space with some trees at the end of Mill Close	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located within the main built-up area, immediately adjacent to development
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Communal and amenity value due to its open undeveloped nature within the residential development



Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	0.24 acres; not an extensive tract of land
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



i. Green area in front of Staple Close	
Description: An area of informal green space located at Staple Close	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located within the main built-up area, immediately adjacent to development
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Communal and amenity value due to its open undeveloped nature within the residential development; used as informal play space by local children
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	0.29 acres; not an extensive tract of land
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



j. Play area at Town House Road	
Description: Children’s play area	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located close to the main built-up area, residential development on two sides
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Recreational, communal and amenity value due to its use as a play area
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	1.37 acres; not an extensive tract of land
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



k. Cemetery at Ixworth Road

Description: Cemetery on Ixworth Road

In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves

Located outside of the main built-up area of the village but close to it

Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance

Community value due to its use as a cemetery

Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

1.27 acres, not an extensive tract of land in the context of the Parish

Include in NP y/n?

Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.



m. Play area at Elm Drive	
Description: Equipped children’s play area within Elmside development	
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Located within the main built-up area of the village and surrounded by development
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Recreational, communal and amenity value due to its use as a children’s play area
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	0.15acres; not an extensive tract of land
Include in NP y/n?	Meets all criteria. Include in the Neighbourhood Plan.





Appendix C: Non-designated Heritage Assets justification

The table below outlined the justification for the inclusion of important character buildings and historic features. The criteria is based on the Historic England's Local Heritage Listing criteria²⁷ but slightly modified to relate to Walsham le Willows.

Key to criteria:

- 1: Age and Rarity
- 2: Aesthetic Interest
- 3: Group Value
- 4: Archival Interest
- 5: Landscape value
- 6: Economic Heritage
- 7. Cultural Heritage

Col: indicates a property which was identified by Sylvia Colman, when she completed her detailed survey of buildings in the Parish in the 1960s, as one which merited listing.

Area	Number	Name of property	Historic England criteria	Col.
West Street	1	Brook Farmhouse	1 2 4 6	Col
Summer Road	2	Martineau Cottages	2 3 6 7	
	3	Cold War shelters & watchtowers	1 4 6	
The Street	4	St. Catherine	1 4 5	Col
	5	Maplestead	1 2	Col
	6	Barn Cottage & South Side	1 2 3	Col
	7	Lime Tree Cottages	2 3 5 6	Col
	8	Harry Nunn's Yard	2 3 6 7	
	9	Clematis	2 3 5	
	10	The Old Bakehouse	1 4 6	Col
	11	The Old Bakery	1 4 6	Col
	12	The Old Infants School	2 4 5 7	

²⁷ Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage Historic England Advice Note 7 (2nd edition), <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/> (accessed 20.03.23).



	13	Avenue Cottages	1 2 4 5	Col
	14	Vine Cottages	2 3 4	Col
	15	Cygnets House	1 2 4 5 6 7	Col
Wattisfield Road	16	The Maltings	1 2 3 5 6	Col
	17	Fuschia Cottage + adjoining	2 3 5	
	18	The Mill (base only)	5 6	
Cranmer Green	19	Cranmer Cottages	2 5	
The Causeway	20	Church Farm Barns	2 5 6	
	21	Martineau Cottages	2 3 6 7	
Grove Road	22	Bridge Cottage	2 5	Col
Palmer Street	23	Hunts End Cottage	1 2 5 6	Col
Crownland	24	Crownland Farmhouse	2 4 5 6	
	25	The Quillet	2 4 5 6	Col
Four Ashes	26	Garden House	1 2 4 5 6	
	27	The Rosary	1 2 4 5 7	Col
	28	Clipper Cottage	1 2 3 4 5	Col
	29	Gurnard & Jackdaw Cottages	1 2 3	
	30	The Mount	1 2 3 5	Col
	31	Flint wall (opposite Moore's)	2 5	



1. Brook Farmhouse, West Street	
Age	In origin the farmhouse is late 16 th century, but there were alterations in the 18 th century.
Rarity	Quite typical of many farmhouses in this part of Suffolk dating from that period. Has been described as a typical Yeoman's house.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A timber framed building with pan-tiled roof; plain, but good quality beams. Substantial red brick chimney stacks.
Group value	The farmhouse forms a traditional group with the neighbouring Brook Farm Cottages (grade II listed), and a series of farm buildings of various ages.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	Quite extensive documentary evidence relates to this house; some reference also to the tenement which pre-dates the present house.
Landmark status	The farmhouse and the neighbouring cottages occupy a prominent position on an approach road to the village and are attractively surrounded by gardens and trees.



2. Martineau Cottages, Summer Road	
Age	Late 19 th century – dated on front as 1890.
Rarity	Six cottages in two blocks of three built for estate workers by the Martineau Estate in Walsham; similar cottages also built in two neighbouring parishes. Architect designed and probably unique to this estate.



Architectural and Artistic interest	Good quality brick and peg-tile construction with considerable attention to architectural detail including decorated chimneys, jettied first floor, exposed beams, ornate barge boards, and biblical texts carved into beams.
Group value	Two blocks of three adjoining cottages built at slight angle to the road and forming a pleasing group.
Archaeological interest	None known.
Historic interest	Important record of village history reflecting the economic and social life of the village in the past.
Landmark status	Picturesque cottages occupying a prominent elevated site on one of the approach roads to the village.



3. Cold War Shelters and Watch towers, Summer Road	
Age	1950s
Rarity	An excellent example of Cold War facilities which are “now very unusual and surprisingly complete”. See: heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/ Monument/MSF23795
Architectural and Artistic interest	Storage facility for early American nuclear bombs. Two long igloo type buildings used for Mk 7s and later Mk 28 thermonuclear weapons; of massive construction designed to withstand attack. Also brick and concrete watchtowers used to guard site.
Group value	The component parts gain enormous significance as a closely related group.
Archaeological interest	Non known.
Historic interest	Important reminder of when this area served firstly as a base for RAF Stirling bombers, then for USAF nuclear bombers, and finally for Bloodhound missiles.
Landmark status	Situated on a secluded, but locally well-known site.



4. St. Catherine, The Street

Age	17 th century - the remains of a larger building. It is the sole survivor of a set of cottages which originally projected in front of The Blue Boar.
Rarity	Unusual within the village.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A simple building, but the roof structure indicates its earlier manifestation.
Group value	Very important part of the street scene because of its position immediately next to the churchyard of St. Mary's; gives scale and context to the church.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	Quite extensive records going back to the mid-16 th century for this house and also for the house and shop which occupied the site before the present building.
Landmark status	Very important as a focal point on The Street - appears in many village photographs over the past hundred years.



5. Maplestead, The Street

Age	Probably late 17 th century.
Rarity	A traditional building for this area.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A well-proportioned brick faced building with front garden, and large internal chimney stack.
Group value	Sits well with neighbouring properties. Because it is slightly set back from the road it has the effect of funnelling the view down The Street - because of this, historic photographs have nearly always been taken from the pavement on this side of the road.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	
Landmark status	Occupies a very visible position on The Street, creating a pleasing transition between the Blue Boar, which is set well back from the road, and the neighbouring cottages which are built right up to the pavement.





6. Barn Cottage and South Side, The Street	
Age	Probably 18 th century.
Rarity	Two of only three domestic buildings on the village street which are still clad in weatherboarding, the other being The Guildhall. This was formerly a much more common local construction method, but many have had the boarding replaced by plaster or brickwork.
Architectural and Artistic interest	The two buildings occupy two sides of what was probably a farmyard or similar workplace. Barn cottage is taken locally to be the village's earliest "barn conversion".
Group value	They form a very pleasing group around what now appears as a courtyard; highly visible from The Street.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	
Landmark status	Visually very prominent, a characteristic enhanced by virtue of the buildings being painted white.



7. Lime Tree Cottages, The Street	
Age	Early 19 th century.
Rarity	The only pair quite like this on the street.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A pair of small, well-proportioned red brick cottages with pan tile roof. Attractive local brick, including alternating red and cream brick arches over doors and windows.
Group value	Distinctive part of the street scene.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	Both cottages have in the past been occupied by village tradesmen including Mr. Lovick the local watchmaker and jeweller.



Landmark status	Despite their limited scale they are prominent features of the street.
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8. Harry Nunn's Yard including Moriarty's café, The Street	
Age	Various ages dating back to early 19 th century.
Rarity	Very unusual indeed and unique in this area.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A collection of one and two storied buildings originally used as workshops and storerooms. Various constructions using timber, corrugated metal, brick and glass and built over a number of years.
Group value	Much of the value of these old commercial buildings lies in their existence as a cohesive group.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	These are very tangible remains of village industry which included a forge, a carpenter's shop, builders' merchants and coffin makers. The yard employed a large number of local people and provided work which was more skilled and better paid than the traditional farm work. At one time the site also included a Temperance Hall which was an important centre of social activity, and the base for a community band.
Landmark status	Adds immense character to the street scene; part of the site is now used as a residential property, known as Top Shop; the section nearest the road is separately owned and has of late been used as a cafe it is particularly important because of its unique construction and its focal position.



9. Clematis, The Street

Age	Probably early 19 th century.
Rarity	Has the best examples of a style of rustication found on several buildings in the village and probably produced by a local builder. Includes unusual patterning around the front porch and a large six-pointed star high on the gable end.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A very attractive cottage with good proportions and interesting design features, set off by a pleasant front garden.
Group value	Provides some of the huge architectural variation found along The Street which is an important characteristic of the village.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	
Landmark status	A small but prominent feature in the street scene on a natural focal point.





10. The Old Bakehouse, The Street	
Age	17 th century - probably built in 1670s.
Rarity	Typical house of its period, but one of a very limited number of properties in the village centre which remain thatched.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A pleasant timber framed building with a thatched roof - some of the timbers appear to be from an earlier building.
Group value	Forms part of a group half-way along the village street.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	A significant former commercial building which for many years served as the village bakery. Some written records going back to the original building of the house.
Landmark status	Holds a prominent position in The Street.



11. The Old Bakery, The Street	
Age	18 th century.
Rarity	Typical house of its period although roof structure with four sloping sides is less common in the village.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A pleasant timber framed building faced with white brick which has since been painted. Side of regular flintwork. Includes modillion cornice and the earlier shop window.
Group value	Forms part of a group half-way along village street and is again important in adding to the architectural variety which can be found along The Street.
Archaeological interest	Not known.



Historic interest	A significant former commercial building which for many years served as the baker's shop alongside the neighbouring bakehouse.
Landmark status	Holds a prominent position in The Street.



12. The Old Infants School, The Street	
Age	19 th century
Rarity	Unique within Walsham le Willows.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A fine example of a late Victorian village school made predominantly of red brick with a slate roof and stonework around the windows. Retains virtually all its original features including the heavy school door and window fittings. Considerable care and sensitivity has been involved when it was converted into a two storied domestic property.
Group value	An individual building.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	This was the third school to be built in the village following the original Boys School and the later school for Girls and infants, both of which are nearby on the opposite side of the street.
Landmark status	A prominent building in a slightly elevated position. It exemplifies much that is characteristic of Walsham Street in that the dimensions, roof angle, building materials and orientation all contrast with its neighbours.



13. Avenue Cottages, The Street	
Age	Both parts are from the 17 th century but were dramatically altered in the late 19 th century.
Rarity	A unique situation.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Good quality timber framed buildings with a thatched roof and very unusual arrangement.
Group value	Much of the value lies in having the two cottages linked together.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	The site has been occupied from the early 14 th century and there are comprehensive records from there onwards. From the early 16 th century through to the 19 th century the occupiers were the locally important Rainbird family. One cottage consists of the remains of a larger house which was truncated in about 1860 in order to allow the creation of The Avenue linking The Grove to The Street; the second cottage is the attached barn which was converted into a house at roughly the same time.
Landmark status	Avenue Cottages occupy an important location where that part of the Conservation Area covering The Street joins the section of the CA that includes all the parkland around The Grove.



14. Vine Cottages, The Street	
Age	Partly late 16 th century but modified over the years and substantial sections are early 18 th century.
Rarity	An unusual evolution of a domestic building.
Architectural and Artistic interest	One late 16 th century room is part of an earlier house built on the same site but the building developed over the years and one cottage is 18 th cent.
Group value	Much of the value is in the fact that it is the remains of a group of buildings once standing around a yard.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	There was certainly a cottage here in the 15 th century and the earliest written record dates to 1505. Records show that in 1612 the property was divided into two separate dwellings, and it seems likely that division and subsequent amalgamation happened on various occasions.
Landmark status	The collection of small cottages on this section of The Street makes a pleasing contrast to the rather grand neighboring property.



15. Cygnet House, The Street	
Age	Early 17 th century
Rarity	A typical building of that period, but the sole survivor of a line of cottages in this part of The Street.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A typical timber framed building of that age; originally thatched but now roofed with pantiles. Unlike most of its contemporaries it was built end-on to the road.
Group value	Although on the main street part of its impact lies in the fact that it appears quite isolated. This is largely the result of many of the former neighbouring properties being demolished in the mid-20 th century.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	Fondly known as being one of the village's former inns. It was known as "The Swan", probably relating to its position next to the stream, but became a private residence in the late 20 th century when it was renamed. It gave its original name to the pedestrian pathway running along this section of the stream - it is always known as Swan Path.
Landmark status	It occupies a slightly elevated position close to the stream. In this area the stream banks are occupied by an attractive selection of native trees surrounded by natural vegetation. This is one of the more picturesque parts of the central village and Cygnet House is an important component of this scene.



16. The Maltings, Wattisfield Road

Age	Early 19 th century.
Rarity	An unusually complete set of industrial buildings located near to the centre of the village, and subject to an award winning conversion to residential use in the later 20 th century.
Architectural and Artistic interest	This was a substantial range of very well constructed outbuildings adjoining an oasthouse. Made largely of unknapped flint cobbles with local white brick surrounds to doors and windows, except on the rear of the building where red brick is used. Original rooflines have been retained as has the sack-hoist which projects out over the road.
Group value	The existence of the complete group of buildings is a vital aspect of their value.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	Clearly of great interest and value as an extremely tangible reminder of what would have been a very important local industry.
Landmark status	This is the largest old building in the village after the church; it is up to four storeys high, and being situated right next to the road it has a considerably impact on the street scene.



17. Fuschia Cottage (and adjacent), Wattisfield Road	
Age	19 th century
Rarity	Originally a terrace of three houses. Similar in style to Lime Tree Cottages (Bldg. 7) but the only terrace of this age and style in the village.
Architectural and Artistic interest	In design these are very “ordinary” workers cottages built in their thousands all over the country. These are made of good quality red brick and within the context of Walsham le Willows stand out as being unusual, a fact probably related to the relative inaccessibility of the village.
Group value	The value lies largely in the existence of the complete group.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	A reminder of cottage life in a rural village.
Landmark status	Occupy quite a prominent position and present a relatively substantial frontage to the road.





18. The Mill (base only), Wattisfield Road	
Age	19 th century
Rarity	Like most villages in this area Walsham le Willows was dependent on wind power for milling and bread. At one time there were four mills operating in the parish, but this structure is the only solid evidence of their existence remaining.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Shows the traditional method of constructing the base of a post-mill. It now forms an attractive and highly distinctive centre piece to a small late 20 th century housing development.
Group value	Individual.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	The site is relatively elevated and at one time contained two windmills – an earlier weatherboarded wooden tower mill, and a later post mill with a brick base and a wooden superstructure. The earlier mill was taken down in the 1940s and the later mill gradually fell into disuse from the 1960s onwards. When the modern houses were built the old brick base was renovated, given a new roof, and sold as an annex to one of the new houses.
Landmark status	A very distinctive feature but only visible in the immediate vicinity.



19. Cranmer Cottages, Cranmer Green	
Age	19 th century



Rarity	This was originally one house, but later divided. Many older properties in the village were encased at a later date, but this building is very unusual in the area in that it was encased with flint and only used red brick on window and door surrounds and at the corners.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Well-built with pleasing proportions and details.
Group value	Form a semi-detached pair.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	Traditional farm workers cottages.
Landmark status	Occupy a prominent position on one of the main approaches to the village.



20. Church Farm Barns, The Causeway	
Age	Probably 18 th century.
Rarity	Very unusual to find a group of barns still being used for agricultural purposes right in the centre of a village. Unique in Walsham le Willows.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Traditional design with huge central doors to former threshing floor of main barn; subsidiary barn includes large storage area and open sided cart-shed; traditional construction with heavy timber frames, weatherboarding and pantile rooves.
Group value	Their value as a group is fundamental, particularly when seen within the curtilage of the neighbouring Church Farmhouse, (late 16 th / early 17 th century - grade II listed).
Archaeological interest	Not known.



Historic interest	These barns represent a very tangible reminder of the village's agricultural past.
Landmark status	These are very prominent buildings in the village street-scene, occupying a highly visible, elevated position near to the central village cross-roads and immediately opposite the grade I listed Church of St. Mary.



21. Martineau Cottages, The Causeway	
Age	Late 19 th century.
Rarity	Another block of three cottages built for workers on the Martineau estate. The mock Jacobean design with Arts and Crafts influences is probably unique to Walsham.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Very well-built houses with generous proportions and considerable detail. Ground floor is brick built with stone window surrounds and stone mullions; the jettied first floor is rendered but faced with mock woodwork; the main external beams carry a carved text.
Group value	Although a single, relatively isolated block of cottages its nearest neighbour is a slightly earlier block of estate cottages with a higher level of decoration and elaborate Jacobean-style chimney stacks – this block is grade II listed, and together they give an interesting record of developments.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	These buildings are a wonderful, and much loved record of the benevolent paternalism and philanthropy shown by the Martineau family to the village over many decades. The central section of the building was at one time used as the village police station.



Landmark status	The two blocks of cottages are the dominant features to be found on The Causeway and are central to giving the road its character.
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22. Bridge Cottage, Grove Road	
Age	Early 18 th century
Rarity	It is very unusual for such a small detached cottage to survive for so long without later additions and extensions.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A very attractive picture-postcard cottage with considerable charm. It sits in a small cottage garden and is reached by crossing a private footbridge across the village stream.
Group value	An individual building.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	
Landmark status	Although a very small building it has considerable visual impact and gives much character to this corner of the village.





23. Hunts End Cottage, Palmer Street	
Age	Early 18 th century.
Rarity	Because of its construction it is thought to now be unique in Walsham.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A timber framed building with a thatched roof and walls of a predominantly clay-lump construction. Although clay-lump is quite widely seen in farm buildings, outhouses and minor extensions in the area it is unusual in this village for it to survive as such a major part of a domestic building. Recent restoration work has included quite elaborate pargeting on part of the frontage; this may well echo earlier decoration.
Group value	The building is currently in two units; in the past it has been occupied as one unit and may well have been subdivided into three at times.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	Mainly because of its construction.
Landmark status	It has considerable impact on the street scene as virtually all the houses in this part of the village are from the 20 th century.



24. Crownland Farmhouse, Crownland	
Age	Late 16 th century farmhouse built on the site of an earlier house.
Rarity	A good example of a simple four-square farmhouse built by a yeoman farmer on a holding well away from the main village.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Simple design with internal chimney and the later addition of a front porch.



Group value	Well distanced from neighbouring properties, but one of a line of four holdings set at equal spacing along the northern side of Crownland Road.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	There are extensive historical records relating to this property. The house was built by Richard Cook in c. 1580 and went with a barn, a pightle and an orchard. There were 19 acres of land which were later extended to 38 acres. The same family retained the holding for about a hundred years; they were members of the Separatist Brethren and some of the family were buried in the orchard.
Landmark status	The four, equally spaced, former farms along this section of road are a very distinctive feature of the landscape of the hamlet of Crownland.



25. The Quillet, Crownland	
Age	Records suggest that the present house was built in about 1520 on the site of an earlier house; probably built by William Rampley.
Rarity	It is very unusual to find a set of four similar farms arranged in this manner.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A simple four-square house with a central internal chimney, and later extensions to the rear.



Group value	Well distanced from neighbouring properties, but one of a line of four holdings set at equal spacing along the northern side of Crownland Road.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	There are extensive records relating to this property going back to the late 14 th century. It was owned by members of the Rampley family for almost two hundred years. The name Quillet means a strip of arable land and for much of this time the holding extended to 38 acres.
Landmark status	The four former farms along this section of road are a very distinctive feature of the landscape of the hamlet of Crownland.



26. Garden House, Four Ashes	
Age	One of the very oldest houses in the village with parts dating back to the 15 th century.
Rarity	There is nothing comparable in Walsham le Willows.
Architectural and Artistic interest	A small cottage with a slightly later extension. High angled roof which was originally thatched; a fine set of exposed external beams and studwork.
Group value	
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	Value lies in the age of the building, the attractiveness of the construction and design, and the fact that a small, detached house has survived without the addition of modern extensions.
Landmark status	Garden House sits in a relatively secluded position partly surrounded by mature trees and shrubs; very attractive and much admired.



27. The Rosary, Four Ashes	
Age	Early to mid-16 th century but the exterior was remodeled in the early 19 th century.
Rarity	The fine Georgian frontage is unusual in Walsham.
Architectural and Artistic interest	The basic structure is of a timber framed house but from the outside we see a very fashionable white brick house with a slate roof and gable-end chimneys; there are five symmetrically placed 16 pane sash windows, and a central door with fanlights. The property is bounded on the roadside by a low brick wall surmounted with metal railings.
Group value	Detached house in what were extensive grounds.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	There are extensive written records covering the history of the house and extending back to the 14 th century for previous houses on the site. The Rosary was used as a private girls boarding school for much of the 19 th century.
Landmark status	It occupies a very prominent position on Four Ashes Corner and at the head of The Causeway. This is a house built to be seen.



28. Clipper Cottage, Four Ashes	
Age	At least early 18 th century but possibly earlier.
Rarity	Although once very typical of village cottages in the area this is one of only a few still surviving in Walsham with its thatched roof.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Traditional timber framed cottage with thatched roof, two gable-end chimneys, and a rear outshut. Main windows enlarged and replaced with modern designs in second half of 20 th century.
Group value	The street-scene in this part of the village has remained largely unchanged for the past two hundred years. Clipper Cottage holds a prominent and central position in a group of eight cottages.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	There are extensive written records relating to this piece of land and the buildings which have stood on it going right back to the 14 th century.
Landmark status	This group of cottages is one of the focal points in the hamlet of Four Ashes and they are vital in creating its distinctive character.



29. Gurnard Cottage and Jackdaw Cottage, Four Ashes

Age	At least early 18 th century but possibly earlier.
Rarity	Although once very typical of village cottages in the area many of them were demolished in the mid-20 th century and these are a nice example of a surviving pair.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Traditional timber framed building with pan-tiled roof, a single central chimney stack, and a rear outshut. Two characterful dormer windows to southerly aspect, one with original catslide roof and the other with a modified gabled roof.
Group value	The street scene in this part of the village has remained largely unchanged for the past two hundred years and these cottages are important in helping to create an intimate and close-knit atmosphere which is characteristic of this hamlet.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	There are extensive written records relating to this piece of land and the buildings which have stood on it going right back to the 14 th century.
Landmark status	This group of cottages is one of the focal points in the hamlet of Four Ashes and they are vital in creating its distinctive character.



30. The Mount, Four Ashes	
Age	Second half of 18 th century - contains a date mark of 1760.
Rarity	One of a small number of similar design in the village.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Timber framed building with pan-tiled roof; one large central chimney stack and a gable end external chimney. Fenestration for front of house similar to building 32 on the opposite side of the road.
Group value	The street scene in this part of the village has remained largely unchanged for the past two hundred years and this cottage is in a prominent position within the group.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	When Mrs. Sylvia Colman completed her survey of village buildings on behalf of the County Council in the 1960s she described The Mount as "A pleasing traditional building in a prominent corner position" and included it in her list of buildings "worthy of inclusion in the Statutory List".
Landmark status	This group of cottages is one of the focal points in the hamlet of Four Ashes and they are vital in creating its distinctive character.





31. Flint wall opposite Moore's, Four Ashes

Age	Probably 19 th century.
Rarity	Flint walls are a common feature of the village, but this one is unique in terms of its dimensions and position. It forms the boundary between a small field, currently down to grass, and the road. The wall runs along the road for about 55 yards and is generally in the region of 5 to 6 feet high.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Made of large natural cobbles with a few random red bricks; there are vertical courses of red brick at intervals and there is a capping of shaped red bricks.
Group value	An isolated feature.
Archaeological interest	Not known.
Historic interest	The nearest house is known as The Maltings and it is possible that the wall represents the final remains of an earlier industrial development.
Landmark status	It is a very prominent and characterful feature on this section of Palmer Street.





Appendix D: Glossary

Glossary of terms used and/or relevant to the Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan and supporting submission documents.

Definitions are taken directly from the glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework July 2023, except where stated.

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

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

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



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

Build to Rent: Purpose built housing that is typically 100 per cent rented out. It can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses but should be on the same site and/or contiguous with the main development. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control.

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

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

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

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

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

Heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

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

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

Local planning authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority,



the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

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

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

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

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

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

Older people: People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Wildlife corridor: Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations. Also known as Ecological Corridor

Windfall sites: Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

Appendix E: Walsham le Willow Design Guidance and Codes

See 'Walsham le Willows Design Guidance and Codes final report', AECOM, March 2023.



Walsham le Willows Neighbourhood Plan