



**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**2022-2037**



**Pre-submission DRAFT  
June 2022**

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please contact the Steering Group at  
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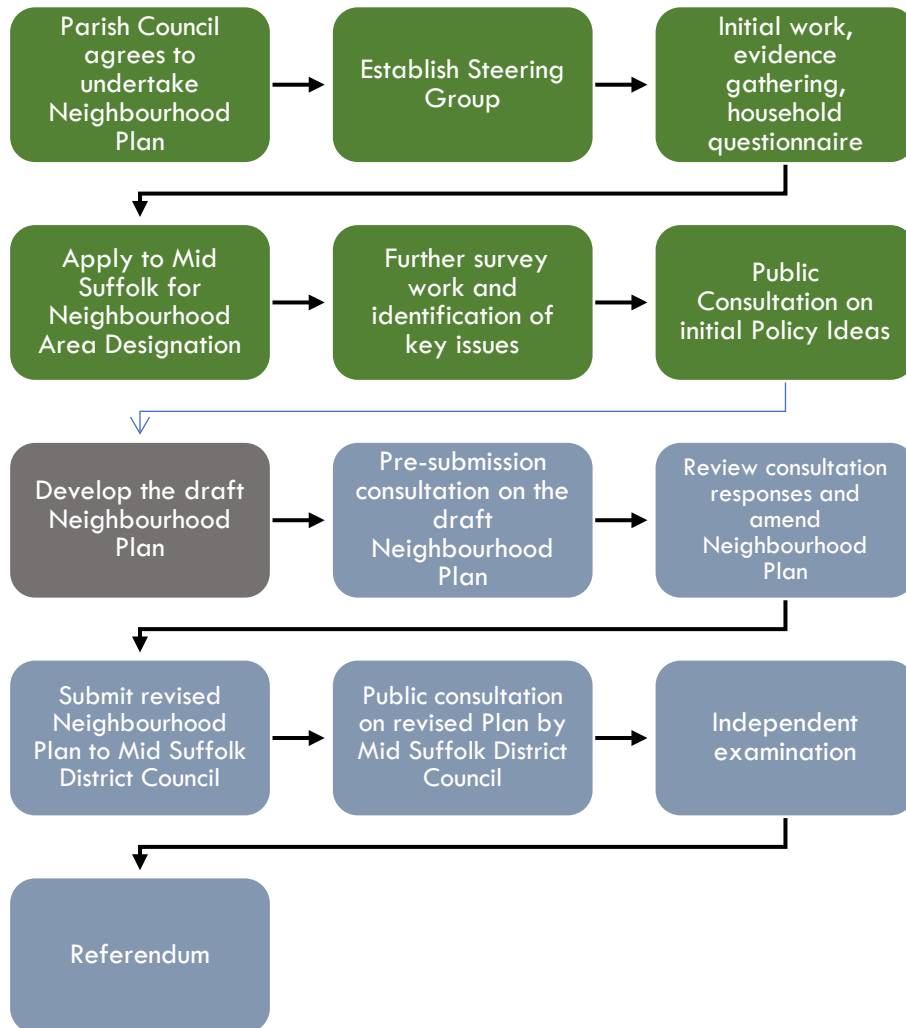
# 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 The Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Development Plan will provide the first ever statutory planning policy document specifically for the parish of Wetheringsett cum Brockford. 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 between 2021 and 2037. Once the Plan is made and adopted, Mid Suffolk District Council will use it to determine planning applications. Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council will use the Plan to respond to planning applications.
- 1.3 The Neighbourhood Plan for Wetheringsett cum Brockford has been prepared by a volunteer team on behalf of Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council (WCBPC), comprising local residents from around the parish including two parish Councillors. The process of preparing the plan has involved several stages of public consultation and community engagement and originally began in 2019. (See **Appendix A** for Steering Group members).
- 1.4 The Plan looks 15 years ahead to 2037, which is consistent with the plan period of the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk 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, the sustainability of the community facilities, impacts on the environment from traffic and employment development and ensuring that housing in the parish meets the current and future needs of residents. People wish to see the social and cultural role of the parish and its community spirit maintained.
- 1.5 The Plan operates in the context of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan's vision and objectives will be realised through policies and projects identified in this Plan but also from future promotions and advocacy. Most policies will guide new development across the whole plan area and the Parish Council will promote, and collaborate with others, to realise projects which will further the vision for the Parish.
- 1.6 The Plan's policies and proposals will rely on investment in the Parish by private, public, and voluntary agencies. Many of the 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 Steering Group aims:
  - To give a voice to the community to influence and shape future development.
  - To enhance the sense of community.
  - To ensure new development is sustainable and protects and maintains the rural character of Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
  - Allow the village to develop sensitively, in terms of design, local linear character, heritage, community facilities, and the natural environment.
  - Establish what is special about Wetheringsett cum Brockford

- Identify community needs for the use of developer contributions and other possible funds.

1.8 The draft 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 1) outlines the stages the Steering Group has gone through and the future work programme.



**Key**  
 Completed stage    
 Current stage    
 Future stage

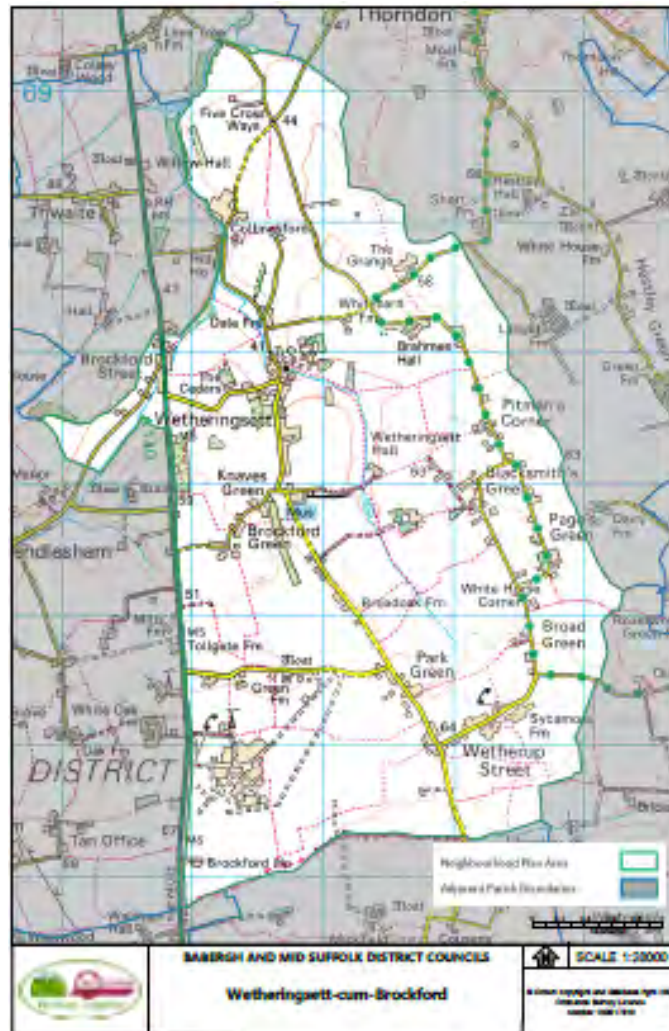
1.9 The Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan is there to ensure that development takes place in an appropriate way for the parish. It has been positively prepared, with the purpose of supporting and managing Wetheringsett cum Brockford’s growth, not preventing it. In practice, higher level 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 by providing additional details which reflect specific local circumstances and conditions.

1.10 The Neighbourhood Plan provides clarity on what will be expected from development proposals in the parish. A Neighbourhood Plan is a significant document and will carry legal

weight so that developers have to take note when considering future developments in the parish.

- 1.11 The Neighbourhood Plan Area covers the entire Parish of Wetheringsett cum Brockford and was formally designated by Mid Suffolk on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Fig1: Neighbourhood Area



- 1.12 This is the first draft version of the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan, prepared for 'pre-submission consultation'. For the six-week period **between 20<sup>th</sup> June and 5<sup>th</sup> August 2022**, local residents, businesses, and statutory agencies will have the opportunity to comment on the draft Plan. All comments will be collated and considered. The Plan will then be amended for submission to Mid Suffolk District Council in Autumn 2022.

### Accompanying supporting documents

- 1.13 When the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan is submitted for independent examination, it will also be accompanied by the following documents:
- **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 or habitats.
- **Wetheringsett cum Brockford Design Guidance and Codes** - undertaken by consultants AECOM and completed in March 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 October 2021 – a desk top study of the likely needs within the parish
- **Environmental Assets in Wetheringsett cum Brockford** – an audit of Environmental Assets in the parish, produced by a Steering Group member.

### Examination and referendum

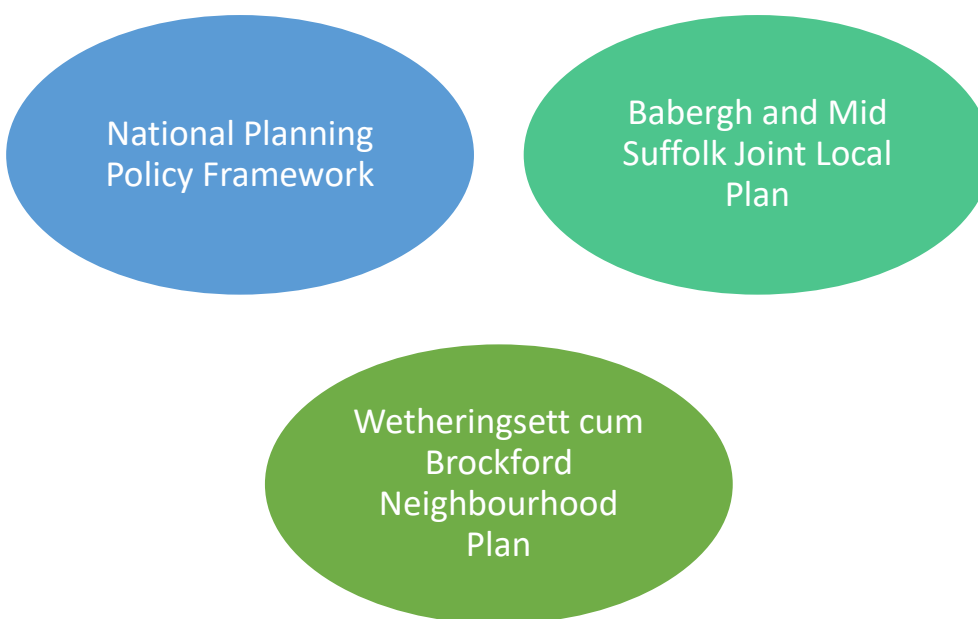
- 1.14 After submission, Mid Suffolk District Council will undertake a checking process and further consultation. The Neighbourhood Plan will then go through an independent examination. Subject to the Examiner’s report, the Neighbourhood Plan should then proceed to referendum.
- 1.15 At referendum, every resident of Wetheringsett cum Brockford, 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 Wetheringsett cum Brockford parish 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.

### National and local planning policy context

- 1.16 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. The relevant Local Plan for Wetheringsett cum Brockford is the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy which was adopted in September 2008. The Adopted Core Strategy, along with any Neighbourhood Plan, provides the basis for determining planning applications and future development in the local area and should be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.17 The policies in the Core Strategy are undergoing review in the form of the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) . The pre-submission version of the BMSJLP published in November 2020 was submitted for examination on the 31<sup>st</sup> 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 with modifications is expected to be published in Summer 2022. Part 2 will contain those other elements and is expected to be concluded in 2024.
- 1.18 The ‘National Planning Policy Framework’ (NPPF) was first published in March 2012 and revised in July 2018, February 2019, and July 2021. It sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The Wetheringsett cum Brockford 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.

- 1.19 Development is defined as ‘the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land’.<sup>1</sup> 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’.
- 1.20 The Wetheringsett cum Brockford 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 2: Spatial and strategic policy context: relationship between the NPPF, BMSJLP, and the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan. Own diagram.**



### **Policy framework for Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan**

- 1.21 Policy CS1 of the Adopted Core Strategy identifies Wetheringsett as a ‘secondary village’ in the settlement hierarchy. Secondary villages are identified as being unsuitable for growth but capable of taking appropriate residential infill and development for local needs only. Such villages will benefit from small-scale development to meet local needs but not the level of growth envisaged for primary settlements. Local needs include employment, amenity, and community facilities as well as small-scale infill housing and “rural exception” sites for affordable housing. Local needs may be identified through annual monitoring or in locally generated documents such as parish plans or local needs surveys. Development proposals should be accompanied by supporting evidence of the need that is being met.
- 1.22 The emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) made a distinction between the various parts of the parish. The historic core of the village around the Church was identified as a ‘hinterland village’ whilst Brockford Street and an area at Wetherup Street and Park Green are identified as ‘hamlets’ and a settlement boundary defined for each.

<sup>1</sup> Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 1.23 The emerging Plan indicated that ‘hinterland villages’ as a collective were expected to account for 10% of planned growth over the Plan period (April 2018 to March 2037) which equates to 1267 dwellings over approximately 43 settlements. The BMSJLP made it clear that not all ‘hinterland’ villages are equal and that there will be variance in the levels of growth based on a number of factors such as the availability of suitable development sites and considerations of the built and natural environment.
- 1.24 In addition the emerging BMSJLP indicated that ‘hamlets’ have been defined where 10 or more well related dwellings exist. Hamlets are expected to collectively provide 3% of proposed new growth which equates to 404 dwellings across approximately 75 settlements. In the context of this Wetheringsett, this relates to Wetherup Street/Park Green and Brockford Street, although it is acknowledged that there are several other hamlets within the parish, these have not been identified as suitable locations for new development in the Local Plan.
- 1.25 The BMSJLP defined three Settlement boundaries within the parish (See **Appendix F** for Inset Maps). Settlement Boundaries are a mechanism that helps to define the built-up area of settlements and indicates where in principle, development for housing (and employment) would be suitable. They help to avoid the loss of further undeveloped land in the countryside whilst directing new development to appropriate locations and restricting the scope and scale of development.
- 1.26 The settlement boundaries identified in the emerging Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) and shown in the Inset Maps in **Appendix F** are adopted by this Neighbourhood Plan for the purposes of its policies.

### **Local Housing Requirement**

- 1.27 The NPPF requires strategic policy making authorities (e.g. District Councils) to establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. The Neighbourhood Area for this Neighbourhood Plan was designated on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021, which was after the publication of the Pre-Submission version of the BMSJLP. Therefore the BMSJLP did not contain a specific housing requirement figure for the parish.
- 1.28 The BMSJLP, did however make two specific housing allocations at Brockford Street (see Fig 3 above) which are:
- land east of A140 – 10 dwellings, and
  - land north-east of The Street – 10 dwellings.
- 1.29 The District Council have since confirmed in their briefing note to parishes in December 2021, that the allocations and figures given in the Pre-Submission BMSJLP should be considered as ‘indicatively’ identifying the housing requirement for Neighbourhood Plans. Therefore the ‘allocation’ of 20 new dwellings within the parish should be taken to comprise the local housing requirement for the parish over the plan period to 2037.
- 1.30 The most northerly located of the two proposed allocations has a current permission for 9 dwellings which was granted in 2020. In addition a subsequent application for 14 dwellings was submitted in 2021 which is still awaiting determination. Meanwhile construction has begun on site to implement the 2020 permission. The southerly allocation has no current permission.



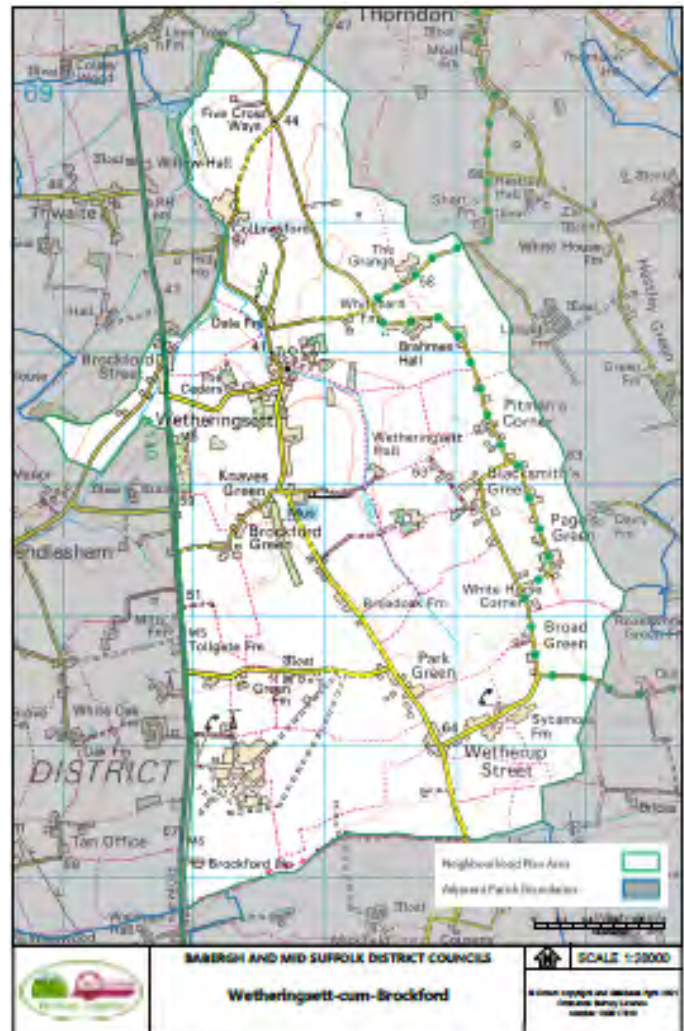


## 2. Wetheringsett cum Brockford parish

- 2.1 Wetheringsett cum Brockford is a civil parish in Hartismere Hundred within the Mid-Suffolk District of Eastern England. It is located 16 miles from Ipswich to the south, 9 miles from Stowmarket to the southwest and 10 miles from Diss to the North. Close by are local services at Debenham (4.5 miles) Mendlesham (2.5 miles) and Eye (6.5 miles)
- Perhaps the most familiar landmark locator for travellers on the A140 is the communications mast, which rises 1000 feet above the Mendlesham Industrial Estate and whose red lights punctuate the dark skies for miles around.

**Fig 3: Map of the parish of Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford**

- 2.2 The Saxons gave the village its name: “The settling place of the clan of Wedr”, and ‘forded’ the ‘brook’ at Brockford, making a great ditched land (Brook Lane) as a parish boundary, possibly as early as the 7<sup>th</sup> Century.
- 2.3 The parish consists of a central village – Wetheringsett and several outlying hamlets spread over a large area of nearly 4,000 acres (15.4 km<sup>2</sup>, Density 4.6/km<sup>2</sup>). To the east are Pitman's Corner, Blacksmith's Corner, Pages Green, White Horse Corner and Broad Green; to the south-east, Wetherup Street; due south, Park Green, to the west Knaves Green, Brockford Green and further to the west Brockford Street. The “Greens” were originally pasture-land with different grazing rights which were enclosed in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. While Wetheringsett and Brockford were always joined together for tax purposes, the identity of each part of the parish was recognised into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.



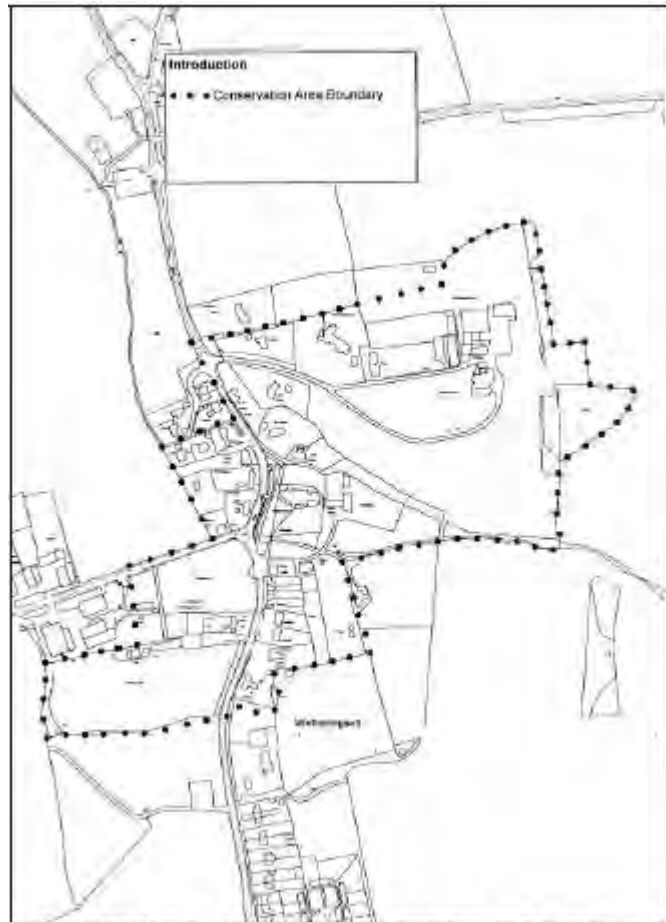
- 2.4 The Conservation Area around the church was designated in 1975, then appraised and extended in 2000. It lies in a wooded hollow at the head of a tributary of the River Dove which eventually joins the River Waveney north of Eye. In 2011, the Character Appraisal concluded: “The conservation area should continue to protect the ‘arcadian’ nature of the village within its wooded setting.”
- 2.5 The population (2011 census) was 669 in 263 households and 280 dwellings. There are 53 listed buildings in the parish, most of them converted farmhouses and agricultural buildings, with the largest concentration of post-war and modern developments in the main part of Wetheringsett itself.

## Fig 4: Wetheringsett Conservation Area

### History

#### Archaeology

2.6 The Suffolk County Historic Environment Record lists over 50 archaeological finds scattered across the parish. These include finds from the more distant periods such as a Neolithic axe, Bronze Age pottery and Iron Age (HER no WCB 010). More recent finds include Roman pottery and coins (WCB 028 & 062), a Saxon brooch (WCB 034 & 062) and some Medieval scatter finds (WCB 008, 010 and 061). Specific sites listed in the record include several Medieval moated sites, farmsteads, a fishpond, and a deer park. (Source: MSDC Conservation Area Appraisal 2011). In and around the Conservation Area alone are 11 HER sites



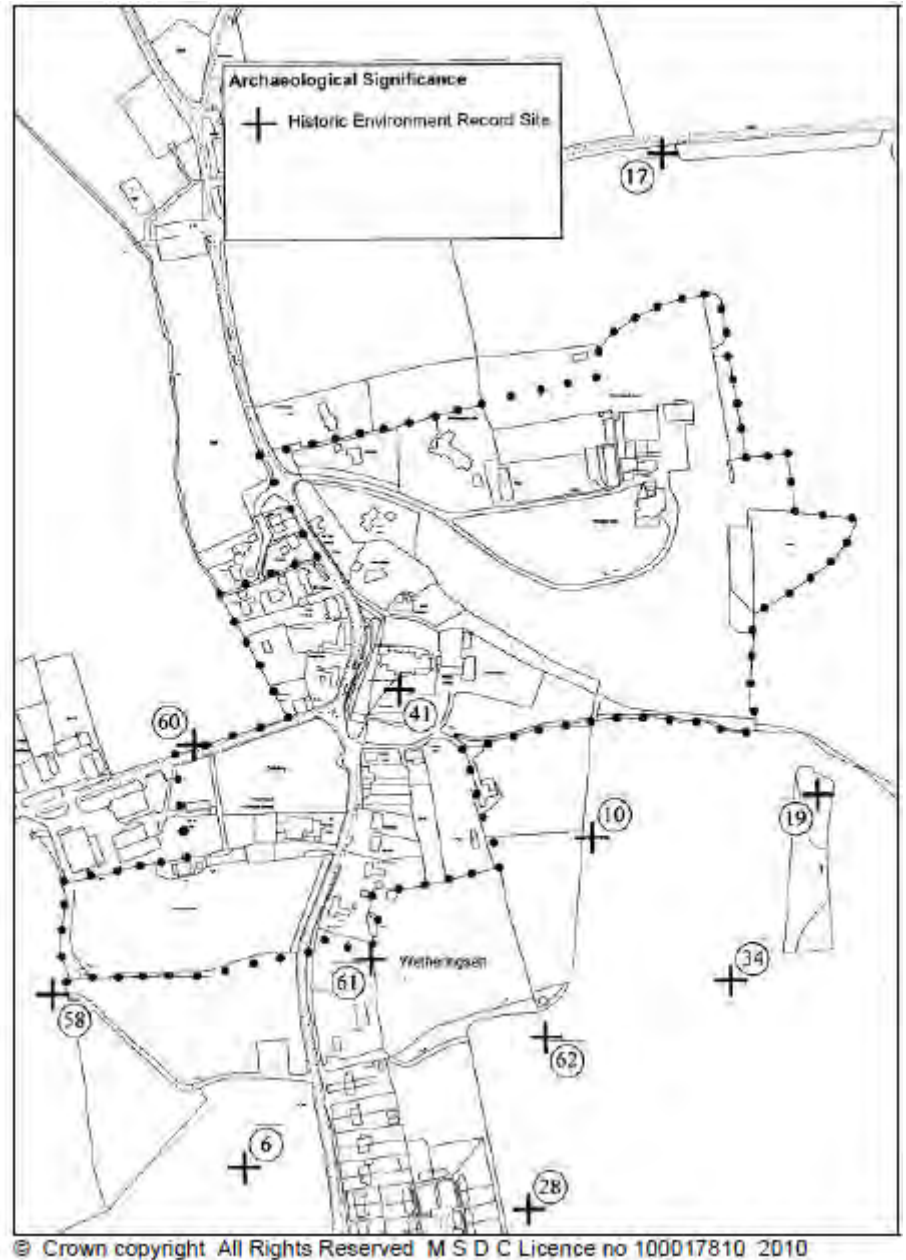
- 2.7 West of Hockey Hill is a series of undated cropmarks, showing a possible track or road along with fields and small enclosures. These provide a high potential for the discovery of further below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance in the area. (source: SCC Archaeological Service Dec 2020 in response to planning application). In relation to a planning application for land off the A140 near Brockford Street, the Service recorded that the western edge of the site is bounded by part of the Coddendam to Scole Roman road known as Pye Road during the medieval period (SAS 011).
- 2.8 Roman dated artefact scatters have been found close to the site, which include a scatter of grey ware pottery (THW 007) and a Colchester derivative brooch (WCB 013). Further, metal detector searches around the site have found artefacts from the prehistoric periods to the post-medieval period. As a result, in both cases they reported a high potential for the discovery of below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance within this area, with groundworks associated with the development have the potential to destroy any archaeological remains which exist”.

### Socio-Economic History

2.9 Evidence, including its name, suggests that the Saxons were the original settlers of Wetheringsett cum Brockford. The church they built (probably of timber) was replaced by a new building, the Church of All Saints, in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, large parts of which remain today.

**Fig 5: Historic Environment Record for Wetheringsett Church Area**

By 1066 most of the land in the parish was owned by the Abbeys of Bury and Ely until the Dissolution, when it reverted to wealthy landowners.



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2.10 Most of the timber-framed houses which form the bulk of the Parish's 53 listed buildings were built in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century though a significant number date back to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Most were built as the homes of farmers, their families, servants, and animals, and of artisans, though these would have had minimal comforts, unlike those restored in recent years. They were built as single dwellings, but as farms were amalgamated, they were divided into two, three or even four. Around a quarter of these buildings are rendered timber-frame with thatched roofs in the Suffolk vernacular, without exposed timber framing. Others are of render and pantile, red brick and pantile, or weatherboard and pantile.

2.11 As well as its characteristic domestic buildings, the parish has some larger buildings of architectural and historical interest including the Church; Wetheringsett Manor (built in Suffolk white brick in 1843 on glebe land in the early gothic revival style by the then rector); and Wetheringsett Hall, originally a Tudor moated hall now with an early 19<sup>th</sup> Century frontage in red brick and a slate roof.

2.12 The local authority-built houses in the inter- and post-war periods on Hockey Hill, with the most recent bungalows for elderly people finished in the 1980s. Further small "infill" developments, mainly of bungalows and larger detached houses have increased the number of residences in the parish subsequently, and many of the older buildings and redundant barns have been converted into desirable homes in the past 50 years or so.

2.13 For much of its history the parish had of necessity been self-sufficient. Occupations listed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century included: carpenter, spoon maker, cooper, thatcher, scrivener, tailor, and fletcher.

In 1841 we have: grocer, butcher, cobbler, draper, harness-maker, blacksmith, wheelwright, woolcomber, tailor, carpenter, baker, and tailor, with 15 shops in the parish.

- 2.14 With the decline in mixed farming, and the closure of local stock markets and abattoirs, by the 20<sup>th</sup> Century there were fewer working farms, and farmhouses were sold off separately from their land, some with paddocks attached, and redundant farm buildings converted into homes, or small business units. One by one, the pubs/beerhouses closed: The Trowel, now "Old Trowel Farm", had closed by 1871; The Old Dun Cow in Church Street (now "The Old Forge") in the early 1900's; The Fox in Station Road sometime between 1905 and 1923; the Trowel and Hammer in Wetherup Street in 1960; and finally the Cat and Mouse (formerly the White Horse) closed its doors in 1993.
- 2.15 Encouraged by the Light Railways Act of 1896, the Mid Suffolk Light Railway brought trains to Brockford as a branch from the main line at Haughley. Intended to go east through to Halesworth, and then to join the main line at Lowestoft, it only ever reached Laxfield and was plagued by financial problems. In fact in 1906 it was insolvent, but the receiver kept it going until the newly-created LNER was persuaded to take over an impoverished Middy, but it finally closed in 1952. In 1990 it was revived by volunteers as a heritage railway and museum with the original MSLR name. The track is now being extended, and with its museum, tea-room and shop it has become the parish's most famous tourist attraction. Converted railway carriages and buildings at Brockford Sidings now provide self-catering accommodation for visitors. Less romantic vestiges of a post-agricultural age include the old potato storage sheds at Old Station Yard, some large intensive poultry farms, and the 4-storey container stack which is the predominant feature of the landscape on Town Lane.
- 2.16 The parish's most famous resident was Richard Hakluyt, Rector of Wetheringsett from 1590 until his death in 1616. He is buried in Westminster Abbey. He is described by the Victoria History as "one of the greatest men of that age of great men" who compiled the work for which he is most famous: "The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English nation made by sea or over land...", first published in 1589, then superseded 10 years later while in Wetheringsett by a longer version, and described as "one of the prose epics of our language", a compilation of tales from merchants and sailors and the stories of voyages and explorations, finding new lands and planting the flag. Hakluyt's place in economic history is as an advocate of colonization though in the interests of mercantile, rather than imperialist, expansion. He is remembered to this day on the village sign, in the stained-glass panel on the telephone box, as a cycle route round the parish and in Hakluyt Close, a small modern development on Hockey Hill whose choice of name the local authority originally opposed on the grounds it was too difficult to pronounce, but gave in to parish pressure.
- 2.17 Also commemorated on the village sign is its more infamous cleric, George Ellis, who falsified documents to become rector of Wetheringsett from 1883 – 1888. Despite not being ordained, he baptised, buried, and married villagers. Subsequently these marriages had to be legitimised under The Marriages Validation Act 1888 by an order of the Queen. Ellis was imprisoned for his crime.

## Population

- 2.18 The table below summarises the changes in the population of Wetheringsett cum Brockford over 110 years.

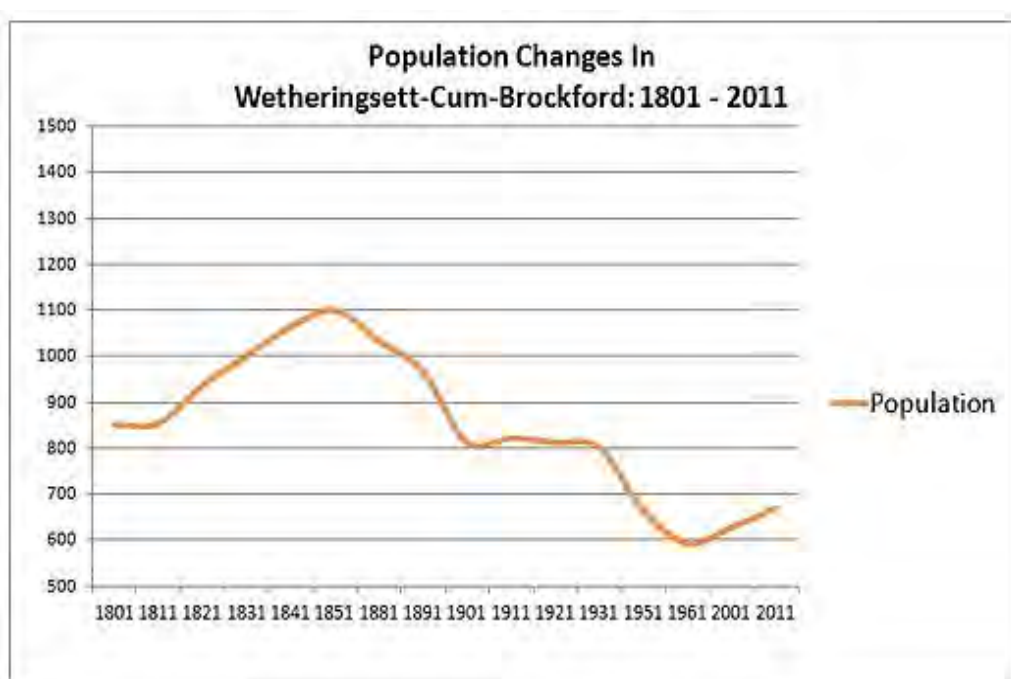


Fig 6

Source: Wikipedia

2.19 Today, the demographic profile of Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford suggests a relatively affluent, middle-aged to ageing population of white homeowners with spacious houses, who are either retired, running their own businesses or commuting to work. This however is unlikely to be the whole picture.

2.20 According to the 2011 Census, the population of the Parish was 669, an increase of 42 since 2001, with an estimated increase to 714 by 2019. There were 343 males and 326 females.

2.21 24% of residents were under 18, with 12% children under 9 years. 59% were aged 18 – 64 and 17% over 65. The estimate for 2019 suggested a slight decrease in the proportion those under 65, with a 7% increase in the over 65's. The median age of residents in 2011 was 45 years, with the mean age 41.8 years.

2.22 In terms of health, 84% of residents reported that their day-to-day activities were not limited by health issues, 10% said they were limited a little, and the remaining 6% said they were limited “a lot”. 85% of residents reported their health as good or very good, 10.5% as fair and 4% as bad or very bad.

96% of residents were born in the UK and 98% were white.  
69% identified as Christian, while 30% claim no religious affiliation.

Of the 280 dwellings in the Parish, 263 had at least one usual resident.

2.23 175 (62.5%) were detached houses or bungalows; 81 (29%) semi-detached homes; 13 (4.5%) were terraced; there were 2 flats/apartments, and 9 other forms of housing including caravans.

2.24 75% of households were owner-occupied – and of these more than half of were owned outright. 19 (7.2%) were socially rented and 38 (17.4%) were privately rented.

2.25 The average household size was 2.5, with homes having an average of 7 rooms including 3+ bedrooms.

- 2.26 More than 25% were single person households, with approximately half of these over 65 years old.
- 2.27 Almost 75% of residents aged 16 – 74 were economically active. The majority of those inactive were retired. 13 people were unemployed at the time, 6 of them long-term.
- 2.28 In terms of occupations, by 2011, less than 5% of the economically active population worked in agriculture, with the remainder of the workforce spread across all other sectors, with construction, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trades and education each accounting for around 10%. 43% were in managerial, professional, and associated professional and technical occupations, and 18% in skilled trades. According to the ONS, nearly 16% of residents were employers in small businesses or working on their own account. Around 10% were in “routine”/”elementary” occupations.

### **Business and Employment**

- 2.29 Local small businesses employ 69 people full time and 39 people part-time mainly in units on Cedars Hill, Old Station Yard and Town Lane. A further 150 are employed full-time and 40 part-time on the Mendlesham Industrial Estate. It is not known how many of these are Wetheringsett residents.
- 2.30 The largest employer on the business units at Cedars Hill is a medical services company with 32 fulltime staff. Other businesses, each employing 1 – 6 staff, include two upholsterers , a firm making soap and sanitizers, a recording studio, a photographer, a lawn care company, a pet food company, a hair and beauty salon, and a maker of curtains and blinds.
- 2.31 The Primary School and Nursery School employ 11 and 8 part-time staff respectively.
- 2.32 In Old Station Yard there are three businesses doing vehicle repairs including one specialising in classic cars, a firm making oak-framed buildings, an electrical company, and the Mid-Suffolk Railway. Numbers of employees range from 1 – 5. At Knaves Green the Sidings employs 2 people part time. There is a vehicle repair firm at Old Trowel Barn on Station Road and a garden machinery business at Park Green. At Town Lane is a large and expanding haulage depot, currently also storing shipping containers, and a steelwork fabrications company. Again these mainly employ between 1 and 4 people. However, on the Mendlesham Industrial Estate CEVA Logistics employs 150 people and Trade Counter Ltd a further 40. Significantly the only local agricultural employer is D. Alston Farms, as the arable farms in the Parish use subcontracted labour providers based elsewhere.

### **Parish Facilities**

- 2.33 Community facilities and services in Wetheringsett cum Brockford are limited, which may account for it being better than only 15% of other areas in England in terms of the “Living Environment”, and then only 6% in terms of access to services, despite ranking much better in terms of the other indices of deprivation in 2015.
- 2.34 In 1841 there were 15 shops in the parish, but the last general stores closed in 1978 and the Post Offices in Wetherup Street and Wetheringsett in 1984 and 2003 respectively, leaving the garage shop at Brockford and the Mendlesham stores and post office the nearest sources of basic supplies and services for those in the west and north of the parish and services in Debenham for the south and east of the parish. . The last public house of the six in the parish closed in 1993.

2.35 Community life now focuses on the Church, the Village Hall, the School, and the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway (“The Middy”).

2.36 **The Church of All Saints** is a Grade 1 listed building dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, which replaced a Saxon predecessor. Probably the oldest building in the Parish, it was enlarged and enriched in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and was described by Pevsner as “a stately church” – a large, handsome structure of stone and flint in the Perpendicular style with a slate roof.



2.37 Currently its bat population is causing problems for the internal fabric but the church is being supported to seek solutions through The Bats in Churches Heritage Lottery funded project. Until lockdown weekly coffee mornings as well as rostered religious services provided a meeting place for the community. The church has no toilets or basic kitchen (no running water) and the church community are looking into solutions to resolve this and make the building more accessible for the community.

2.38 **The Village Hall** has been the focus of activities, including drama productions and social events as well as private hire since it was bought as a timber ex-army hut in 1920 and placed on brick foundations on the playing field next to the School. It is now used during the day by the school as a dining room. It is a hugely important parish facility, but over the years the Village Hall Committee has had to rely on a massive amount of voluntary effort to maintain it and fundraise to patch up its ageing fabric. There have been several refurbishments to update basic facilities, but in 2021 storm damage necessitated the replacement of the roof, and the south wall was rebuilt, incorporating bi-fold doors, outside patio area and new windows. The floor had to be replaced and other improvement measures taken to meet current standards.

2.39 **The Primary School** was built in 1859 to cater for 130 pupils but came under threat in 1986 when the number fell to 40. A campaign to save small schools in Suffolk was successful and the school survived. Wetheringsett Church of England Primary School became an Academy in November 2019 and was rated “Good” by Ofsted. Then the number of pupils had dropped to 28 and a proportion of these travelled from outside the parish. However the situation is now being redressed as more children enrol, and the presence of a pre-school and after-school provision is expected to improve recruitment. There is an active parents’ association. Other local primary schools are at Debenham, Thorndon and Mendlesham.

2.40 A mobile library visits the parish every four weeks calling at Brockford St, Hockey Hill, Wetherup St and Park Green. (15 mins at each).

#### **Other educational provision:**

2.41 Next door to the Primary School, the old School House accommodates a pre-school/nursery, “Jungle Cubs and Jungle Giants”, for children 0 – 5 years with 50 places.

2.42 The catchment secondary school is Debenham CEVC High School (11 – 16 years), though pupils from the parish also attend Hartismere High School at Eye. Both these schools have had “outstanding” designations by Ofsted in recent years. Sixth Form provision is available at Hartismere High School and in schools at Framlingham, Ipswich, Woodbridge, and Bury St. Edmunds (some fee-paying), though Suffolk County Council’s recent policy change on funding school travel may restrict pupils’ options.



- 2.43 In 2020, an independent school for pupils 11 – 18 with special educational needs was opened in Wetheringsett Manor, but this draws its referrals from across East Anglia, and is not essentially a local facility.
- 2.44 The parish is in the catchment for two **Primary Care Centres**, at Debenham and Mendlesham. The nearest hospitals are at Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds.

## Tourism

- 2.45 **The “Middy”**  
Today the heritage Mid Suffolk Light Railway (the “Middy”) is the parish’s most important tourist attraction, providing short steam train rides, a museum, shop and tea-room. Residents can apply for free membership and enjoy real ales in the carriage bar which opens to residents on some Fridays in the summer. As such, it is a very welcome facility in an otherwise “dry” village.
- 2.46 Near to the Middy, at Knaves Green, is “Brockford Sidings”, a group of heritage railway buildings converted for use as holiday lets together with 18 camping pitches.

## Community Groups

- 2.47 Of the formal community groups, the Parish Council has 12 Councillors including the County & District Councillor and a Parish Clerk. 4 Councillors are represented on the Village Hall Committee which has 7 members in total and a bookings co-ordinator. The “Townlands Trust”(officially The Church and Town Estate including Allotment Lands”) is a registered charity originally set up ‘for the benefit of the Church, Education & the Deserving & necessitous of the village’ and has 10 trustees including 3 parish councillors, the churchwardens and parish priest. The Charity owns and leases plots of land in the parish and uses its income to make grants. The Primary School has an active Parents’ Association, the Friends of Wetheringsett Primary School. The Church has a regular congregation for its rostered services, and attracts families with its “Messy Church” sessions. Wednesday coffee mornings at the Church have been a popular feature of village life until curtailed by the pandemic.
- 2.48 The monthly Newsletter, circulated in both print and digital formats, is an important vehicle for communication in this scattered community. It has an editor, treasurer, and a team of distributors. There are also a number of “What’s-app” groups and social media forums used by parishioners, including the “official” village website.
- 2.49 The Drama Group ,“Curtains Up”, has produced its inimitable annual pantomimes and other ad hoc productions for many years in the Village Hall, which Eastern Angles (a touring Theatre Company) has also used as a regular venue. In previous years, committees have also organised the Village Fetes on the Playing Field and Harvest Suppers, with Christmas Lunches for over-60’s at a local hotel. However, these events have tended to rely on a small band of volunteers who are ‘not getting any younger’ and need support from others in the community.
- 2.50 The Village Hall has had limited capacity for regular activities as it has been used by the school during the day, a yoga class has recently restarted following the pandemic. Negotiations ongoing with the school may free up additional capacity, and the refurbishments which have taken place in 2021 will hopefully encourage more groups and private hirers to take advantage of its facilities.
- 2.51 There is anecdotal evidence of the existence of other informal groups in different parts of the village e.g. a book club in Wetherup Street, but wider community life has perhaps attenuated over recent years.

## Transport

- 2.52 The latest Conservation Area appraisal in 2011 describes this as “a very quiet backwater”. Nevertheless, only half a mile away to the West, traffic on the A140 – once a Roman road and later part of the Turnpike – roars by between Ipswich and Norwich, straddled by Brockford Street. Frequent mainline train services between Norwich and London Liverpool Street with connecting services east- and west-bound go from Stowmarket station (9 miles), Diss (10 miles) and Needham Market (10 miles), providing for commuters with the private transport to access them. However the only bus serving Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford is the 113 Simonds service from Ipswich to Diss via Mendlesham and Eye. The only bus stop in Wetheringsett is on Brockford Street at the turn for Cedars Hill, approximately 1km from the village centre.
- 2.53 There are 4 buses to Ipswich Mon-Fri, and 3 on Saturday, with no Sunday service. However, a SCC “Connecting Communities” service will collect people with no public transport to connect with appropriate bus/rail links, but has to be pre-booked. The main mode of transport for parishioners is therefore inevitably the private car. However, while 60% of households in 2011 had 2 or more cars, 33% had only one, and 7% had none, meaning that transport could well be a significant issue for them. There is also an issue with traffic on the parish’s narrow roads, especially with heavy agricultural vehicles during the grain harvest and sugar beet seasons. Although the speed limit on most roads into and through the parish, including the A140, is 30mph (20 by the school), there is evidence that this is widely disregarded: but without evidence of serious accidents, the local authority has not considered this an issue in recent planning applications.
- 2.54 Cycling and footpaths are potentially other ways of getting about within the village, and the Hakluyt cycle route links all parts of the parish. The footpath network, once pervasive, is now restricted and in places difficult to identify as fields are ploughed over. There are some circular walking routes and paths which join parts of the parish, but essentially they are recreational rather than a functional means of getting from place to place. Some still have stiles which restrict access for the less able.

## Natural Environment

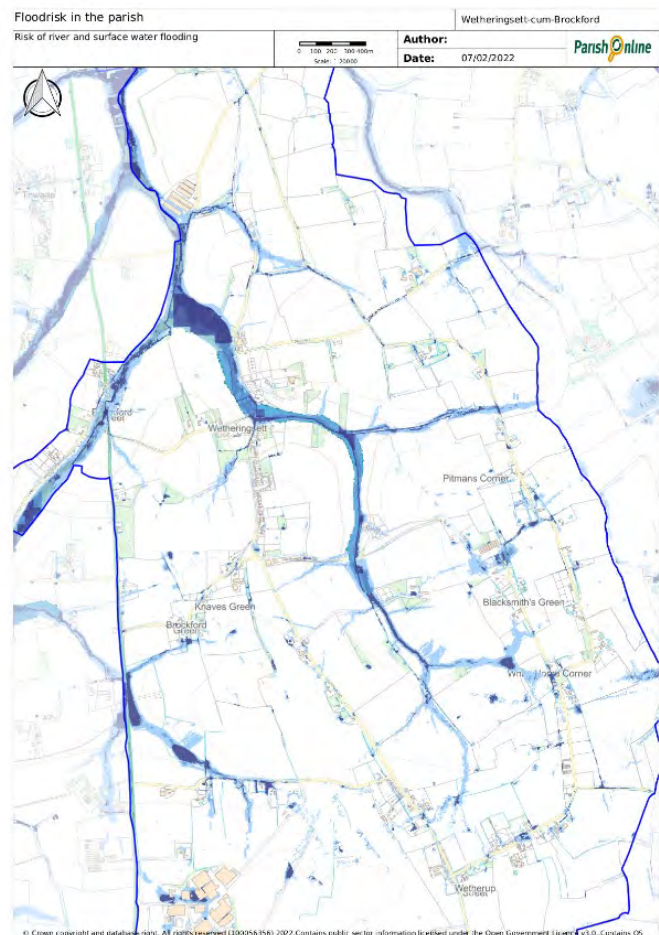
- 2.55 The geology of Wetheringsett cum Brockford is basically the clay of “High” Suffolk’s till formation, overlying crag deposits from the Pliocene and Chalk in turn, both of which stretch from here eastwards to the coast. There is fine loam over clay soil with a slowly permeable subsoil, which is subject to seasonal waterlogging.
- 2.56 The physical aspects of this agricultural parish have always been dictated by changing patterns of farming. While the edges of Suffolk were populated earlier, the boulder clay here was too heavy to be cultivated with wooden ploughs, and its thick forests remained undisturbed, probably until the Romans came. During Norman times, the landscape was characterised by great communal open fields – larger even than those familiar today – divided into strips. By Elizabeth 1’s time, much of the Saxon woodland must have been cleared, though the parish was still well wooded, and the Turnpike thickly bordered by trees. There was also a lot of water around, running off wet, undrained lands, as well as in moats and ponds, and streams crossed by a number of bridges, most of which have now disappeared. The Parish was also “riddled with roads” and on a map “ would have looked like a coarse sieve”. While most of these “roads” have disappeared, some are still marked by footpaths while others were enclosed for farming.

2.57 Perhaps the most dramatic changes have taken place since the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Until then, the landscape was still wooded with hedges and tree-lined roads. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century saw big changes, when small, mixed farms with meadows and pastures for horses and cattle gave way to larger farms and mechanisation, allowing the land to be drained and ploughed for arable crops such as potatoes, sugar beet, wheat, barley, and later oil seed rape. Economies of scale meant “prairie” fields and the destruction of hedgerows and much of the special flora and fauna such as the fritillaries which had thrived in the damp meadows and which are now isolated in rare meadows such as Mickfield Meadow SSSI. During WW2 around 500 acres of land southwest of the parish was taken over as an Airfield by the RAF, though subsequently it was returned for agriculture.

2.58 However, since the Millennium, tree planting schemes have at least alleviated some of the hedgerow loss; and the impact of “the desert of surrounding intensive agriculture” ( Character appraisal 2011) is mitigated by undulations in the landscape and the continued presence of some fine old trees and copses (of oak, copper beech, lime, ash, poplar, horse chestnut and willows )which in places are dominant feature of the local landscape. Much damage has however been caused by intensive agriculture to local flora and faun

## Flooding

2.59 Records and reminiscences speak of the general wetness of the countryside around the parish, and it sits on the floodplain of the River Dove. Normally a benign stream, it can rise significantly in wet weather, and parts of Church Street, where once there was a ford until the road was raised in the last century, are still at high risk of surface water flooding. Water running off from fields is also a recurrent problem on the parish’s roads.



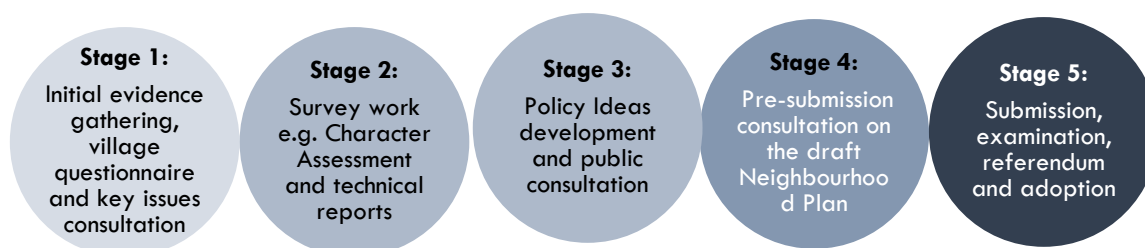
**Fig 7 Areas at risk of river or surface water flooding in the parish**

# 3. How the Plan was prepared

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been responsible for the preparation of the Plan and in the latter stages has been supported by an independent consultant. The formal process began in January 2021 when the Neighbourhood Area was designated by Mid Suffolk District Council.
- 3.2 The Plan has been commissioned by Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council. Funding for its production has come from a central government Locality grant and the Parish Council's own funding.

## Community engagement and consultation

- 3.3 The Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken with community engagement and consultation. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Steering Group had to be innovative in their approach, using TEAMS for almost all Steering Group meetings. However public engagement was possible in September 2021 and therefore a robust evidence was in place from which the draft Plan could be written. More details of all the consultation will be outlined in the Consultation Statement, accompanying the submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to Mid Suffolk District Council in 2022.
- 3.4 Below is a summary of each of the community engagement and consultation stages.



### Stage 1: Initial evidence gathering , household survey and key issues consultation. (2019, 2020 and early 2021)

- Village Questionnaire delivered to every household and placed on-line using survey monkey, 32 responses received and all comments analysed (2019)
- Initial Evidence gathering (2020) including business survey
- Work paused due to COVID-19 pandemic
- Place check launch <https://www.placecheck.info/app/maps/wetheringsett>
- Neighbourhood Area Designation in January 2021
- 5 Best Things survey in the Parish Magazine and online, to establish what residents value about the parish and what they felt needed to change.

### **Stage 2: Survey work e.g. Character Appraisal, commissioning of technical reports e.g. Housing Needs Assessment and Design Code. (April 2021-August 2021)**

- The Steering Group undertook a detailed character assessment of the parish and completed the Business Survey
- Evidence collected to date was reviewed and analysed
- Consultants AECOM were commissioned to undertake a Housing Needs Assessment and produce a specific Design Code for the parish.

### **Stage 3: Development of Policy Ideas and Public Exhibition (September 2021)**

- Following evidence review, draft policy ideas were developed
- Public exhibitions held in the Church over two days on 17 and 18 September 2021 seeking feedback from the public on the draft policy ideas
- Event advertised in the parish magazine and on social media via the village Facebook page
- 49 residents attended the exhibitions
- Results of the exhibitions written up and placed on the Neighbourhood Plan web page.
- Housing Needs Assessment concluded



### **Stage 4: Pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan (regulation 14) (Summer 2022)**

- The Draft Neighbourhood Plan was issued for pre-submission consultation (from 20th June to 5th August 2022). It was sent to statutory agencies and available for residents to comment in both hard copy and online.
- Flyers and posters were placed around the parish to advertise the consultation and an article featured in the parish magazine

Figure 10: Front and back of poster/flyer for pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Stage 5: Submission, examination, referendum, and adoption (Autumn 2022)**

- Modifications were made to the Neighbourhood Plan following pre-submission consultation.
- Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to Mid Suffolk District Council in 2022
- Examination, 2023
- Referendum and adoption, 2023

## Communication

- 3.5 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.  
[Neighbourhood Plan » Wetheringsett cum Brockford \(onesuffolk.net\)](https://www.onesuffolk.net/Neighbourhood-Plan-Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford).

The website also contained information on how to contact the Group.

- 3.6 The Wetheringsett cum Brockford monthly parish magazine , which is delivered monthly to most houses in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, has featured regular articles about the Neighbourhood Plan, made requests for feedback and comments at various stages, and has advertised the consultation events and the locations of the venues where a printed copy of the Neighbourhood Plan may be viewed.
- 3.7 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. a link to the bespoke Neighbourhood Plan website.

## Summary of key Issues from consultation

### Village Questionnaire

- Importance of the countryside and rural character
- Footpaths
- Tranquility
- Traffic speed and pedestrian safety
- Condition of the rural roads
- Environmental concerns – rubbish, fly-tipping, odor from pig farm, dog fouling
- Design of new housing development
- Too many large houses being built
- Community services – school, village hall and the Middy are valued
- More starter homes needed
- 2-3 bedroomed homes needed
- New development must not erode the village character
- Protect the green spaces
- Resist ugly and inappropriate development
- Protect wildlife
- No mass housing

### Policy ideas exhibition

- Protect green spaces – playing field, cemetery, churchyard, meadow, play area, Hockey Hill, allotments, war memorial field
- Encourage access by foot and by bicycle
- Protect wildlife habitats from development
- Keep indigenous hedges
- Don't develop between the hamlets
- Protect important views – those towards, church, from Hockey Hill, top of Hall Lane
- Protect dark skies

- Retain existing facilities e.g. church, hall, school and Middy
- Ensure pavements are clear and safe for people to use
- No suburbanisation of landscape
- 20mph speed limit through the village
- Protect heritage and the conservation area
- Need high quality design that reflects rural character
- Prevent development that doesn't fit with the aesthetics of the village
- No flats
- Off street parking for new development
- Protection for listed buildings
- Housing needs to be close to facilities
- No large-scale development in the village
- Infill is better than development on greenfield land
- Affordable housing for locals first
- Affordable housing to be integrated into a mix of developments
- Business use needs to be appropriate to a rural area and have noise, pollution, or other environmental impacts
- Barn conversions shouldn't just be for business.



# 4. Vision and objectives

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## A Vision for Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford 2037

*Wetheringsett will continue to be a quiet and peaceful place where the landscape, wildlife, open spaces, and heritage valued by its residents are protected and enhanced.*

*The school, the church and the village hall are at the heart of village activities and include and serve the whole parish.*

*New development is sustainable and well-designed, respecting the area's existing character, whilst meeting the economic and social needs of a range of people who choose to live, work, and participate in this thriving rural community.*

- 4.1 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 Wetheringsett cum Brockford should be like at the end of the Plan period i.e., 2037. It has been developed with local people and has been refined and adapted through consultation. The result is a vision statement which captures the overarching spirit and ambition of the local community and the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.2 The vision underpins the objective and policies of the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan and is referred to throughout.
- 4.3 The overarching aim of the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development as outlined in the NPPF. Sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development through planning requires the balancing of three interdependent and overarching objectives:
  - a. An economic objective - ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right location to build a strong, responsive economy which is supported by the right infrastructure;
  - b. A social objective - ensuring the sufficient number, type and quality of homes and jobs are provided to meet identified needs in inclusive, healthy communities;
  - c. An environmental objective - ensuring mitigation and adaptation to climate change, protecting the natural and built environment, enhancing biodiversity, and supporting the move to a low carbon economy.

These broad, high-level objectives, along with the 4 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.'

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



4.5 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 Wetheringsett cum Brockford 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.

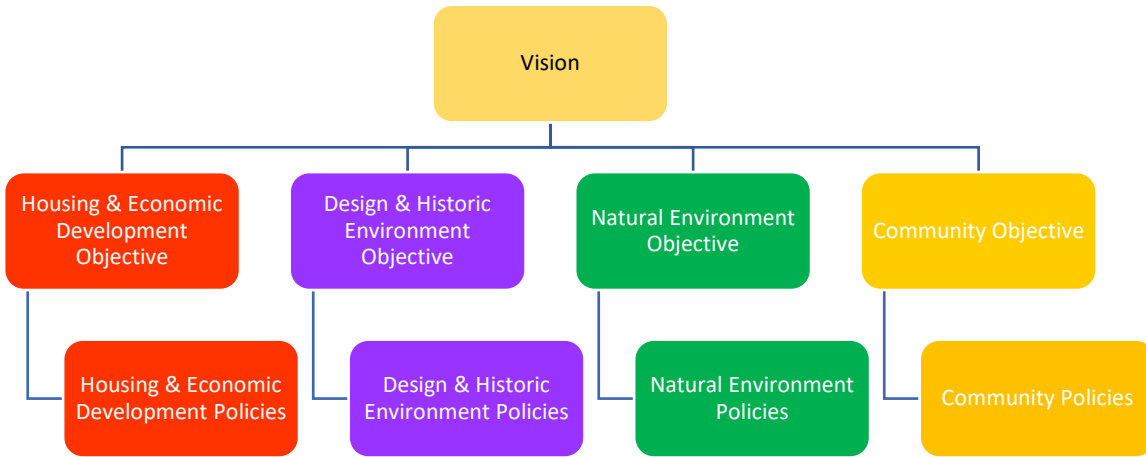


Figure 8 above: Structure of the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan.

**Area Wide Objectives**

**Objective 1: To manage appropriate new housing, business, and employment development for the benefit of the community and ensure it meets the needs of residents**

**Objective 2: To champion sustainable high-quality design and celebrate the village’s historic environment and heritage assets.**

**Objective 3: To protect the rural character, biodiversity, and open spaces of the parish.**

**Objective 4: To safeguard the parish’s existing facilities and encourage the greater use of the school, , church, and village hall buildings by the whole community.**

# Planning Policies

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## Introduction to policies

The vision and objectives have provided the framework to develop the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Each policy relates to a particular objective under the following four area wide themes: The Housing and Economic Development, Design and Historic Environment, Natural Environment and Community. The Neighbourhood Plan is first and foremost a land-use document for planning purposes. All policies in the Plan have been derived from a series of consultation exercises, stakeholder engagement and desk research, which provide the justification and evidence base for their selection.

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<sup>2</sup>.

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.

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<sup>2</sup> Tony Burton, Writing Planning Policies, Locality.



## Chapter 5: Housing and Economic Development

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**Objective 1: To manage appropriate new housing, business, and employment development for the benefit of the community and to ensure it meets the needs of residents**

### Housing

#### Scale and location of new housing

- 5.1 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 Wetheringsett has been a key topic of conversation and interest during the production of this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.2 Government guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>3</sup> 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. Paragraphs 1.20 to 1.29 set out the local planning policy context for this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.3 Neighbourhood Plans should be used to set out more detailed policies for specific areas or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of community facilities, establishing design principles, conserving, and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out detailed policies for the management of development. The Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan (WCBNP) 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.

#### Existing Housing Commitment

- 5.4 Figures from the 2011 census indicate that the population of Wetheringsett Parish was 669 living in 263 occupied households with a further 17 dwellings that appeared to be unoccupied. The total housing stock at that time being approximately 280 dwellings. Figures from Mid Suffolk District Council's Annual Monitoring reports indicate that between April 2001 and March 2021, a 36 dwellings were constructed in the parish.

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<sup>3</sup> [National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/432424/NPPF_Guidance.pdf)

5.5 Figures from the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Examination in September 2021<sup>4</sup>, indicated that there were 22 outstanding unimplemented planning permissions for new dwellings in the parish at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. (Some of these have now been constructed.) The paper also indicated that the Local Housing Requirement for the parish over the plan period 2018-2037 was 10 dwellings.

5.6 Furthermore, at the time of writing (March 2022) two further applications are still awaiting determination and one has recently been granted permission. One of these is for 14 dwellings on one of the proposed allocations at Brockford Street identified in the BMSJLP (a site that already has permission for 9 dwellings and is under construction). These additional applications are as follows:

- DC/21/04476 – 14 dwellings at Norwich Road, Brockford Street
- DC/21/06866 – Demolition of agricultural buildings and replacement with 2 residential dwellings (alternative scheme to prior consent under DC/20/03990)- granted February 2022
- DC/20/05495 – Change of use of land to Gypsy and Traveller site for stationing of 1 mobile home and 1 touring caravan.

5.7 Therefore the housing composition for Wetheringsett cum Brockford is as follows:

Unimplemented permissions at 01.04.21	22 dwellings
Recent permissions	2
Total Commitment	<b>24 dwellings</b>
<b>Plus</b>	
Applications awaiting determination:	6 dwellings ( + 14 <sup>5</sup> + 1 – 9)
Allocations (without permission)	10 dwellings
Overall Total should permissions be granted	<b>40 dwellings</b>

5.8 Furthermore, two applications were refused in Autumn 2021. The reasons for refusal given for the applications recently determined and referred to above are as follows:

- 11 dwellings – DC/20/04692 – Outside built limits of the village and within a rural area that is not planned to grow significantly, impact upon heritage, impact, unacceptable form of development behind existing dwellings
- 14 dwellings – DC/20/04921 - The proposed development would be located in a part of the Parish where it would not enhance or maintain the vitality of this rural community and would generate unsustainable traffic movements from future residents which will not support local services

Appeals have been lodged for both sites in January and February 2022, respectively and the outcome of both appeals is still unknown.

5.9 In November 2021, Mid Suffolk published its Housing Land Supply Position Statement which indicated that the District has a 9-year housing land supply against its requirement of 5 years.

<sup>4</sup> H31 Spatial Distribution Statement – September 2021

<sup>5</sup> Proposed allocation north and east of The Street has revised undetermined application for 14 dwellings

Taking this into account together with the recent refusals in the parish, the outstanding commitments, and the proposed allocations in the BMSJLP, it is considered that the housing requirement within the parish has been accommodated. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore 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.

- 5.10 This Neighbourhood Plan makes an allowance for windfall site 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. It is also acknowledged that throughout the plan period of the Neighbourhood Plan there will continue to be applications submitted for infill or other development within the parish, however the focus of development should be on allocated sites or within the identified settlement boundaries as set out in the BMSJLP Pre-Submission Version 2020. Applications for new development outside of the settlement boundaries should be refused. Applications for new residential development will be determined in accordance with Policy WCB1 below.

### **Results of Public Consultation**

- 5.11 The household questionnaire undertaken (in 2019), did not ask residents a specific question about the overall quantum of development in the village but did ask for views about potential locations. The response size for the overall questionnaire was relatively modest at 39 responses however 25 of those indicated that there were no suitable locations and only 3 suggestions were made. These were alongside the existing village envelopes (no specific location given) , Hockey Hill, and Town Lane next to the industrial area.
- 5.12 The Policy Ideas Exhibitions held in September 2021, were slightly better attended with 49 attendees. Respondents expressed agreement with the overall housing objective that new housing should be managed for the benefit of the community and to ensure it meets the needs of local residents. There were however divergent views on whether the Neighbourhood Plan should allocate any new housing sites. However there was a clearer steer that any new housing development should be small scale, infill to meet local needs. Infill should be focused within the existing settlement boundaries at Wetheringsett Church, Brockford Street and Wetherup Street/Park Green. Attendees also indicated that the Neighbourhood Plan should avoid development in the gaps between the distinct hamlets.
- 5.13 Given the above, the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan is not proposing to allocate additional sites for housing above those already committed or identified in the BMSJLP. However, given that one of the proposed housing allocations previously identified in the emerging BMSJLP (land east of the A140), does not yet have any permissions, proposals for increasing the housing numbers on this allocation will be supported in principle provided that it delivers a proportionate increase in affordable housing.
- 5.14 It is recognised that applications will continue to be submitted however, the Neighbourhood Plan is clear that in order to be successful these would need to be small scale, suitably located within the existing settlement boundaries without adverse effects upon heritage, natural environment, or highways. Proposals for new development outside of the settlement boundaries particularly those that would result in the erosion of the gaps between distinct hamlets will not be supported. This approach does not restrict the conversion of agricultural buildings to appropriate new uses, provided that these do not adversely impact upon the environment or the amenity of local residents, proposals for replacement dwellings or new single dwellings

required to meet an essential need as outlined in the NPPF<sup>6</sup>, where proposals meet the government regulations and local planning policies for such conversions.

**POLICY**

**WCB1: Location of new housing**

The scale of new housing within the parish up to 2037 will reflect its position within the overall settlement hierarchy for the District.

The focus of new housing development will be on the identified site known as Land east of the A140 (10 dwellings (LS083) or within the existing defined settlement boundaries of Wetheringsett Church, Brockford Street and Wetherup Street/Park Green. New infill or windfall development within these defined settlement boundaries will be small scale (individual houses or small groups) and proposals should enhance the area's form, character and setting and not have adverse impacts upon:

- Heritage assets (designated or undesignated)
- Nature conservation interests
- highway safety
- the amenity of adjoining occupiers.

New developments should actively seek to improve walking and cycling.

Where an increase in housing numbers on Site LS083 is proposed this will be supported in principle, subject to the provisions of other policies, where it delivers a proportionate increase in affordable housing preferably affordable housing to rent.

Proposals outside of the defined settlement boundaries, (except for the conversion of existing buildings) which would result in the erosion of undeveloped gaps between the distinct hamlets will not be supported.

**Objective 5:** To ensure that new housing, business, and employment development meets the needs of residents.

**Housing Mix and Housing Need**

- 5.16 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. At the time of writing one of the proposed allocations in the BMSJLP does not have a live permission and therefore this Neighbourhood Plan has the opportunity to influence the form of development on the site.
- 5.17 Delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes is essential to support a sustainable, vibrant, and mixed community.

**Affordable Housing**

- 5.18 As well as housing numbers, 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

<sup>6</sup> National Planning Policy Framework 2021, para 80.

impact on the existing community and therefore careful thought needs to be applied to determining that mix.

- 5.19 Government guidance indicates that delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes is essential to support a sustainable, vibrant, and mixed community. Community consultation, including the results from the questionnaire in 2019 and from the Policy Ideas Exhibitions in September 2021, revealed that residents have a wide range of views about the types of accommodation within their parish that might be required in the future. This included bungalows and smaller properties to allow for downsizing, support for smaller family homes (2-3 bedrooms) and for affordable housing. Families may want to move to larger homes, older residents may wish to down-size or move to specifically adapted accommodation, residents may be looking to start a family and find the right accommodation to allow that to happen. New homes should be of high quality, accord with environmental design standards and meet community aspirations for new and existing residents. The view was also expressed that affordable housing should be available for local people ahead of meeting general housing need.
- 5.20 In Summer 2020 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.
- 5.21 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 (2021) sets out the definition of affordable housing and is split into the following four main categories:
- affordable housing for rent,<sup>7</sup>
  - starter homes,
  - discounted market sale housing
  - and other affordable routes to home ownership<sup>8</sup>.
- 5.22 The HNA suggests that Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a notable undersupply of affordable housing, and that property is around 40-60% more expensive than the wider district. The report also noted that a household would need an income comfortably above the average (or a very large deposit) to qualify for a mortgage even for an entry-level home in the area. Home ownership through the mainstream market is therefore not an option for the majority of local first-time buyers. The median house price would require an annual income more than twice the current average. According to figures from 2010, indicate that there were 16 properties owned by registered social landlords – 2 in Knaves Green and the remainder at Hockey Hill. Only one has been identified as since being sold on the open market.
- 5.23 Private renting is broadly affordable to average earners and households however there is a general lack of homes to rent in Wetheringsett cum Brockford – which is itself an indicator of limited choice and a lack of more affordable, transitional options like renting. The HNA notes that rented housing appears comfortably affordable to Wetheringsett households and the evidence suggests that the small affordable rented sector performs a vital function in

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<sup>7</sup> includes **Social Rented Housing**

Social rented housing is 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

Wetheringsett cum Brockford as the only option for those in the greatest need. Being cheaper for the occupant, social rent performs this function best.

- 5.24 The Ipswich and Waveney Housing Market Areas SHMA Part 2 Partial Update 2019 finds that 1,298 social or affordable rented homes will be needed in 2018-36 across Mid Suffolk, and that there is potential demand for a further 1,391 affordable home ownership units. On the basis that the share of this need attributable to the Neighbourhood Area is in proportion to its share of the district population (0.69%), this suggests that Wetheringsett cum Brockford will need 15 affordable homes, 7 of which should be for affordable rent and 8 of which should be for affordable home ownership.
- 5.25 MSDC confirmed (in July 2021) that there were 5 households with a local connection to Wetheringsett cum Brockford on the housing register. However, if only a small proportion of the existing units of social rented housing come vacant each year this is expected to be able to satisfy newly arising need and lessen the backlog over time. The report therefore recommended that Wetheringsett cum Brockford seeks to deliver some affordable rented housing, particularly early in the Plan period.
- 5.26 There are households within Wetheringsett that are, by and large, adequately housed in rented accommodation already. They do not lack their own housing but would prefer to buy rather than rent. They have been included in the national planning definition of those in need of Affordable Housing, but their needs are less acute than those on the waiting list for affordable rented housing.
- 5.27 It may not be achievable or even desirable to deliver this volume of affordable home ownership properties in the plan period as even greater numbers of market homes would be required to cross-subsidise its delivery, and this may not be appropriate to the rural character of the parish.
- 5.28 Mid Suffolk's adopted policy in relation to Affordable Housing (H4) aims for up to 35% of all new housing (on sites above 5 homes) to be affordable. The emerging BMSJLP (Policy SP02) raises the threshold to sites with more than 10 dwellings and suggests that higher percentage requirements may be permitted.
- 5.29 The fact that Affordable Housing made up 0% of the new housing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford completed over the last decade is not surprising given all of the permitted schemes were below the relevant thresholds. Given the size of the parish, and the fact that the threshold will rise to 10 homes in future, it is realistic to expect that most future development will also fall below the threshold and will not be expected to contribute Affordable Housing. There is the potential for the proposed allocations in the emerging BMSJLP to provide affordable housing – the sites are currently allocated for 10 dwellings, but higher dwelling numbers will be supported in principle if it were to deliver an element of affordable housing.
- 5.30 The HNA recommends that roughly 40% of new Affordable Housing in the parish should take the form of rented tenures such as social and affordable rent (preferably the former), with the remaining 60% as affordable routes to home ownership. The Government's changes to the Planning Practice Guidance in May 2021, require that Neighbourhood Plans published for Regulation 14 consultation after 28 June 2021 include a policy requirement for 25% of affordable homes to be First Homes<sup>9</sup>. The HNA suggested 60% fulfils this requirement for the

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<sup>9</sup> **First Homes**

The Government has recently confirmed the introduction of First Homes as a new form of discounted market housing which will provide a discount of at least 30% on the price of new homes. These homes are available to first time buyers as a priority, but other households will be eligible depending on agreed criteria. New developments will be required to provide 25% of Affordable Housing as First Homes. A more detailed explanation of First Homes and its implications is provided in the main body of the HNA



new First Homes product and allows for some shared ownership or other tenures to widen choice.

- 5.31 The study also provides an indication of the likely need for different types and sizes of homes based on demographic change. Other factors will also determine 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) and site-specific factors which may justify a particular dwelling mix.

### **The existing housing stock**

- 5.32 Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a housing mix that is skewed toward larger homes – i.e. a far higher proportion of detached homes than the district and country and fewer other types. This is not unusual for a rural village.
- 5.33 Around 15% of homes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford are bungalows, which is a lower proportion than for Mid Suffolk overall. Although it is not necessarily a given that bungalows are be completely accessible (e.g. for an occupant using a wheelchair), and ground floor maisonettes can be equally suitable for people with mobility limitations, the relative lack of bungalows may be an additional factor, beyond the limited size options, obstructing downsizing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
- 5.34 As of 2021, the size mix of housing locally is dominated by larger homes, with 40% of homes having 4 or more bedrooms, compared with just 28% across Mid Suffolk and 19% across England. Correspondingly, Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a notable lack of 1 bedroom housing. Recent development has not meaningfully widened housing choice in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, though it also has not made the oversupply of large homes much worse.
- 5.35 Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a high rate of under-occupancy, with 78% of people 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 small at 4%, although this does indicate that a number of people may have been (or still be) living in inadequate housing conditions.
- 5.36 Given the high property values in the area, the largest homes are not necessarily occupied by those with the largest families but by those with the financial capacity to do so, irrespective of their household size. Indeed, over-occupancy is strongly correlated with age, with those aged 50 and over the most likely to have more than two additional bedrooms.

### **The future dwelling mix**

- 5.37 The results of the future dwelling mix modelling suggests that a focus on medium and smaller homes e.g. 2-3-bedroom properties, will continue to be needed as generally the most popular, suitable to many groups, and existing at lower proportions in the parish than across the district and country. The other clear direction is to boost the supply of smaller homes from the current low base, while avoiding too many additional large homes because there are already more than the population is expected to need
- 5.38 A further injection of small and mid-sized homes would both improve Wetheringsett cum Brockford's offering for younger households who have few options for their next step on the property ladder and 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 young local families).

- 5.39 The HNA found that affordability is a serious and worsening challenge in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. While the provision of Affordable Housing (subsidised tenure products) is one way to combat this, another is to ensure that homes come forward which are of an appropriate size, type, and density for local residents' budgets. Continuing to provide smaller homes with fewer bedrooms would help to address this situation. However, it is never advisable to entirely restrict the supply of specific size categories as is suggested here for homes with 4 or more bedrooms. Further considerations that would justify incorporating flexibility into this relatively imbalanced recommended mix are summarised below.
- 5.40 To best meet the needs of the large cohort of older households expected to be present by 2037, it should be considered whether the existing options are well tailored to older people's requirements in terms of space, flexibility, quality, location, and accessibility. Variety should be sought within the mid-sized homes that come forward in future to attract both newly forming households on lower budgets and older households with substantial equity from their existing larger homes, whose needs are far from identical. Facilitating downsizing among older households may release those larger homes for use by families who need more bedrooms.
- 5.41 It may not be realistic to expect growing families to be able to afford the larger detached homes that are currently under-occupied in the parish. Reducing the issue of dwelling size to a number of bedrooms is potentially unhelpful in this case. There may be a valid justification to continue supplying larger homes despite their abundance because a different kind of larger home is needed to accommodate growing families with less buying power.
- 5.42 Any new housing that does come forward needs to be delivered in a balanced way. Those wishing to move within or relocate to the area will have a range of circumstances and preferences, and they should be offered a range of choices. As such, it is recommended that priority is given to smaller homes but that this is done to a degree that aligns with the wider objectives of the community and does not limit choice or threaten viability. The evidence in this section represents a starting point for further thought and consultation.
- 5.43 ONS<sup>10</sup> 2019 population estimates suggest that there are currently around 60 individuals aged 75 or over in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. This is projected to grow to 91 by 2037 (an increase of 31 older people).

### **Specific Needs**

- 5.44 The potential need for housing with enhanced accessibility features and the potential to be further adapted in future can be estimated by bringing together data on population projections, rates of disability, and what tenure of housing the current 55-75 cohort occupy in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 5.45 This method of estimating the future need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford produces a range of 5 to 15 accessible housing units that might be required to accommodate older people with moderate mobility challenges during the Plan period. Providing this estimate as a range reflects uncertainty about the extent to which existing older households live in suitable homes: the lower end is a minimum for how many new older households are likely to need such homes, and the higher end assumes that existing households are likely to be in need as well. Note that 'new households' does not necessarily mean households arriving from elsewhere – it refers predominantly to existing residents who will enter the 75+ age bracket in the coming years.
- 5.46 This estimate does not include people in younger age brackets with similar needs, nor older people requiring more extensive support (such as the help of a carer). It would be wise to maximise the provision of this type of housing as a way of future proofing the parish for

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<sup>10</sup> Office for National Statistics [Home - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

further ageing, and to help accommodate other people who could potentially benefit but were not incorporated into the estimate.

- 5.47 Around one tenth of the households identified here are expected to require their accessible or adaptable homes to be offered as social or affordable rented tenures, with the majority likely being able to afford to buy their next home on the open market, assuming that it is of a value equivalent to or lower than the home they currently occupy. That said, it is generally desirable to achieve the same rate of Affordable Housing whether the homes in question are accessible or not, and to provide equal access to accessible housing irrespective of a household's financial situation. This point is simply to emphasise that all housing (both market and affordable) would benefit from increased accessibility standards.
- 5.48 While the adopted Local Plan is largely silent on this issue, the emerging BMSJLP Policy LPO6 states that 50% of dwellings on sites of ten or more units should meet the requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings under part M4(2) of Building Regulations.
- 5.49 The evidence gathered here would certainly appear to justify meeting or exceeding this target in the Neighbourhood Plan. 50% is a relatively robust requirement, however there are ways in which it could be strengthened in response to the clear need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. One would be to make the requirement apply to sites delivering fewer than 10 dwellings, which would help to ensure provision even if most schemes in future are on small infill sites within the parish. Another would be to increase the target up to 75% or higher because the overall delivery of housing in the NA is likely to be insufficient to meet the need identified here at a lower target (though this question cannot be firmly answered at this stage because the parish is not in receipt of a formal target from MSDC).
- 5.50 Finally there is the question of homes that meet an even higher standard of accessibility, namely Category M4(3) Building Regulations meeting the requirements of wheelchair users. There is no robust data on the number of wheelchair users at parish level, and this assessment has focused on the group of people whose day-to-day activities are limited 'a little'. This is because it is hard to separate out within the people whose activities are limited 'a lot', those who use a wheelchair and those who require a carer for medical or other reasons.
- 5.51 MSDC have confirmed that there is a household on the waiting list for Affordable Housing (representing 20% of those on the list, though this is a very small sample) who requires an adapted level-access dwelling. This demonstrates some need for homes with the highest standards of accessibility.
- 5.52 If the stock of housing in the parish is poorly equipped for wheelchair users and/or there are more residents who currently need such housing (which is likely given the age and difficulty in adapting many existing homes), there may well be justification for an additional target for the number of new homes that should be M4(3) compliant. This is usually much lower than targets set for M4(2) standards – typically around 3-10%.
- 5.53 Without a firmer understanding of the quantity of development expected in Wetheringsett cum Brockford during the Plan period overall, it is difficult to specify what targets would be appropriate. But it is clear that there is an ageing population and that a notable proportion of such people would need or benefit from highly accessible accommodation and this should be secured in the Neighbourhood Area to the greatest extent possible through planning policy in the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Custom and Self Build Housing**

- 5.54 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 most often to be provided in the form of serviced plots on large-scale development sites that may not be likely to come forward in the parish.

- 5.55 However, plots can also be offered by developers on their own or in conjunction with a housing association partner; a group of custom and self-builders can come together to secure economies of scale and reduce building costs; and landowners sometimes service and sell plots themselves. Self-build projects on infill sites within the parish may be the most realistic route in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, although the upcoming sites may be encouraged to supply a small number of plots to meet clear demand.
- 5.56 Demand for custom and self-build housing is generally captured on Mid Suffolk's Self Build Register. It is generally referred to as demand rather than need because it is not known how many people expressing interest on the register need a custom home because their needs (e.g. for specific features) are not being met by the market, and how many simply wish to be part of the process or influence aspects of aesthetic design.
- 5.57 Babergh and Mid Suffolk operate a joint Self Build Register, which had approximately 390 applicants as of the end of June 2021. The detail provided by each applicant varies considerably, and it is not known how many currently live in the parish. Most have stated that they wish to build 'in any location', and it should be noted that many applicants apply to the registers of multiple local authorities.
- 5.58 Filtering out the applicants who specifically identify a location other than Wetheringsett cum Brockford, reduces the figure to 130. Of these, 5 applicants specifically mention the area as their preferred location. Again it is not clear whether they already live in the parish, and it is therefore not possible to say what proportion of the local population want to self-build in the parish. However, 5 applicants is a reasonably large figure for a small parish, and it is common for Self-Build Registers to under-represent demand. As such, there appears to be some clear demand for self-build plots in the parish which would justify encouragement for custom and self-build provision in the Neighbourhood Plan.

**POLICY**

**WCB2: Housing Size, type, and tenure**

Proposals for new housing should provide for and contribute to, a mix of housing that meets local needs (both now and in the future) and enables the creation of a mixed and balanced community.

In line with the latest evidence of need <sup>11</sup>, proposals (including those for 10 dwellings or less) should in particular include elements of the following:

- Small and medium sized homes – 2-3 bedrooms
- Opportunities for Self-build or Custom Build
- Housing suitable for those with accessibility needs, including housing built to M4(2) / M4(3) standards

Where affordable housing is proposed it should comprise the following:

- 40% Social Affordable Rent
- 60% Affordable Routes to home ownership (25% of which should be First Homes)

<sup>11</sup> This can include the AECOM HNA, plus any HELAA or District level info

## Rural Exceptions Housing

- 5.59 Given that the Local Housing Requirement as set out in the emerging BMSJLP has already been met but that a need for specific forms of affordable housing has been identified within Wetheringsett cum Brockford, the Steering Group were keen to investigate how this need might be met, either in full or in part. In particular the Group were keen to explore how such housing might be delivered to meet the needs of the existing residents of the parish or those with a local connection. In addition, the Steering Group considered that the delivery of affordable housing as a % of an overall allocated or windfall site was extremely unlikely given the size of site likely to be considered acceptable within the parish i.e. below the 10-dwelling threshold and that other opportunities for delivering affordable housing should be explored.
- 5.60 One option considered would be to support the grant of planning permission for development on land outside of the settlement boundary but immediately adjacent to it on an 'exceptional basis'. Such sites are known as 'rural exception sites' and usually require the involvement of either the District Council or a Housing Association or other form of Registered Social Landlord. They also tend to be small scale. Where such sites are proposed, clear justification must be given that demonstrates that there is an identified housing need within the parish and that the proposed site is suitable to meet this need and is an acceptable site in overall planning terms (e.g. scale, design, location etc) . This housing must also remain available to meet identified housing need in perpetuity. The following Neighbourhood Plan policy supports the principle of the delivery of affordable housing through rural exception sites but does not identify any specific sites.

### POLICY

#### WCB3 Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on sites outside of but immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary will be supported in principle, on an exceptional basis where there is a proven local need in the parish and where the proposed site is suitable to meet this need.

Proposals will need to demonstrate that such housing:

- Remains affordable and available in perpetuity
- Is available for people identified as being in housing need by virtue of being unable to buy or rent properties in the parish at open market prices
- Is offered in the first instance to people with a demonstrated local connection

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

The occupation of this housing should be secured through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing. The development of such housing should also meet the criteria set out in **Policy WCB1**.

Proposals for housing of this kind should be accompanied by a detailed housing needs assessment which demonstrates that a local need exists, and that the accommodation proposed will contribute to meeting this proven need.

## Economic Development and Tourism

- 5.61 The role of Neighbourhood Plans within the planning system is not just about housing growth or environmental protection. They also have a role to play in delivering the economic objectives related to sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. National planning policy supports a prosperous rural economy and specifically encourages planning policies to enable sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas both through the conversion of existing buildings but also well-designed new buildings. Policies should also support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside and enable the diversification of agriculture.
- 5.62 The NPPF however does recognise that new employment or economic development should be sensitive to its surroundings and does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads. Planning policies and decisions should mitigate and reduce potential adverse impacts of developments such as noise, dust, light and air pollution. The strategic policies in the emerging BMSJLP support the change of use to small scale employment 'where the hours of operation are compatible with residential use and the business use does not involve significant dust, noise, fumes and outdoor storage which could adversely affect local amenity. The Neighbourhood Plan whilst supporting economic development similarly seeks to protect the amenity of adjoining uses and residents.
- 5.63 The 2011 Census<sup>12</sup> revealed that approximately 62% of Wetheringsett cum Brockford's residents were working age adults (416) of which 356 were economically active – i.e. they were in full or part time work, self-employed or students. Of those residents that were economically inactive 15% were retired and just over 1% were unemployed. Despite being a rural area with a landscape characterised by farming, there was no one employment sector that is a dominant employer in the parish with only 4% of residents employed in agriculture, 14% employed in wholesale and retail, 11% in manufacturing and 10% in education. The proportion of people in higher paid occupations (professionals, managers, and senior officials) is approximately 36% compared to a Mid Suffolk figure of 27% which would tend to indicate that the parish has a relatively high proportion of senior managers, professionals and directors living in it. When taken with the relatively low level of benefit claimants begins to paint a picture of a relatively affluent parish, very different from the Wetheringsett of the nineteenth century where employment was dependent upon the traditional forms of employment such as farming.
- 5.64 Within the parish there are a range of registered businesses. These vary in size and sector and include some large employers and some small scale and starter businesses. As part of the early evidence gathering for the Neighbourhood Plan, the Steering Group undertook a business survey of the parish in an effort to understand the composition of existing businesses within the parish and to try to identify any additional business needs that may need to be accommodated within the Neighbourhood Plan period.

### Employment Locations

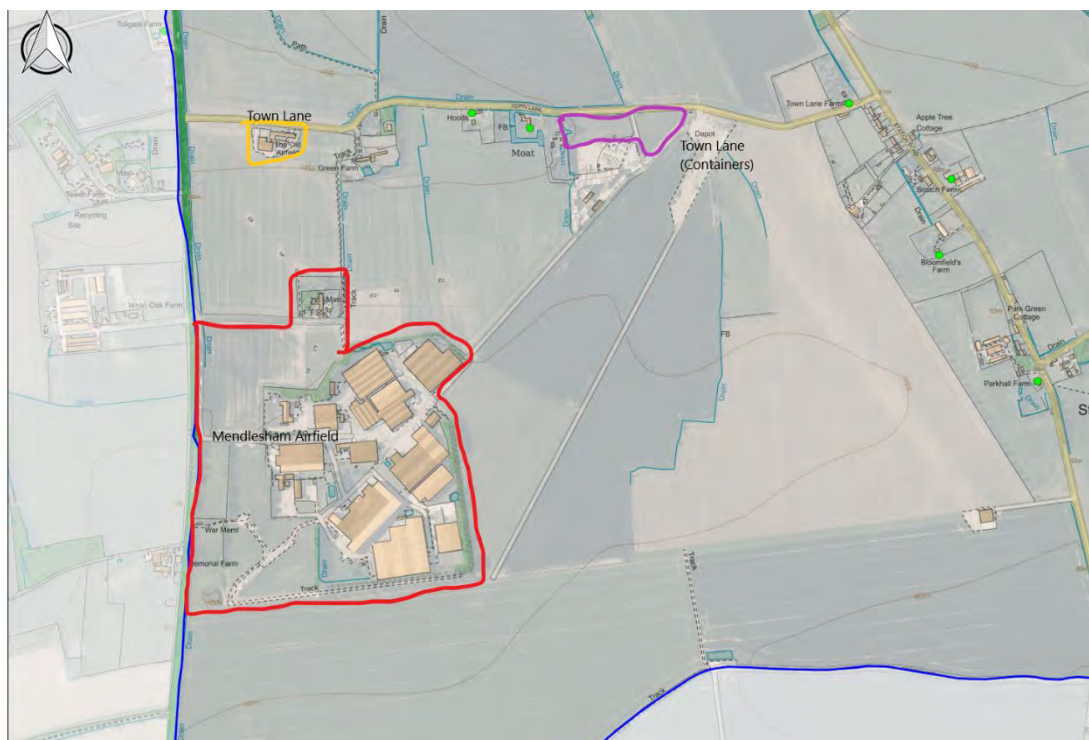
- 5.65 The Business Survey results identified that the principal locations for businesses within the parish were Mendlesham Airfield, Town Lane, The Old Station Yard and Cedars Hill. There were also individual businesses operating from converted farm buildings in a range of other locations such as Park Green and Station Road. There are no areas within the parish that are identified

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<sup>12</sup> Source: [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk)

as strategic employment locations in the emerging Local Plan and policies within the Local Plan seek to safeguard existing employment sites in employment uses where they remain viable.

- 5.66 **Mendlesham Airfield** is a former airfield site located in the south-west of the parish with access onto the A140, the airfield is home to some larger firms such as CEVA Logistics Ltd which has approximately 150 employees and Trade Counter Ltd with 40 employees. Permitted uses range from Storage and Distribution (B8) to B2 General Industrial and Offices (E(g)). The Mendlesham Telecommunications mast is also located here. The most recent application which is still undetermined at February 2022 is for 3 additional warehouses.
- 5.67 To the north-east of the Mendlesham airfield is an area known as the **Old Airfield, Town Lane**, which contains an extensive area for lorry container storage (James Kemball) and a manufacturing business A N Steel fabrications. These employ fewer people (4 and 6 respectively) but take up relatively large areas of land. Permitted uses here tend to be B8 Storage and Distribution with the most recent permission for the storage of shipping containers being granted in August 2021.
- 5.68 **The Old Station Yard** at Hall Lane contains a number of individual units that are occupied by a range of businesses including a small cluster related to vehicle repairs (including classic cars). This area is also home to the Mid Suffolk Light Railway and Museum (also known as the Middy).
- 5.69 Further north and west is a complex of former farm buildings known as **Cedars Hill**. The units include the offices of one of the major farming and agricultural businesses in the parish – D I Alston Ltd together with a range of other small businesses such as upholsterers, furniture, and blinds, medical (physio supplies), hand sanitiser production, hair and beauty, pet products and recording and photography studios.
- 5.70 Other notable businesses within the parish include a poultry farm at Collingsford Bridge in the north-east of the parish and The Sidings tourist accommodation at Knaves Green.
- 5.71 The Policy Ideas Exhibition sought views on the level of support for new business. The results revealed that there was a high degree for support for new business, provided it was in appropriate locations and there was also support for expansions to existing businesses subject to impacts such as landscape, traffic generation and amenity. There was also support for the reuse or conversion of barns and farm buildings for suitable employment and tourist uses again subject to the impact upon the amenity of adjoining occupiers.
- 5.72 There were two key concerns for residents in relation to the expansion of existing businesses – these were traffic generation – specifically HGVs and their use of rural roads which may be inappropriate for this use but also the visual and landscape impact of further expansion. This was largely in relation to the lorry container storage use currently located at Town Lane which has grown significantly in recent years, particularly in 2021 following delays at Felixstowe, and shipping containers now stacked 5 high dominate the landscape to the southwest of the parish and there have been local concerns over noise and light pollution Planning permission has recently been granted for an extension of the haulage depot site but with a condition that no containers are sited there. Currently an application for a Lawful Development Certificate to legitimise the existing container storage is yet to be decided. Any further extension of the site for its current usages would be unlikely to be acceptable in landscape terms.



**Fig 9 Employment/Industrial Areas at Mendlesham Airfield and Town Lane**

5.73 The NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should create the conditions in which business can invest, expand, and adapt. Weight should be given to the need to support economic growth and productivity taking into account local business needs and the impact upon the local character of the area.

**POLICY**

**WCB4: Employment and Economic Development**

Proposals for small scale new business uses will be supported at the existing employment locations shown on **Fig 9** where they do not have an adverse impact upon:

- a) the overall visual and environmental character of the area, including impact upon landscape, tranquility, nature conservation interests, the setting of heritage assets, and dark skies
- b) adjoining uses, or
- c) the amenity of local residents (including noise, dust, fumes, and light pollution) either through their built form, proposed use, outdoor storage, hours of operation or traffic generated.

Proposals for larger scale expansions on existing employment sites will only be supported where they can satisfy the criteria a-c outlined above and where an overall visual, landscape or environmental improvement to the site can be secured.

Proposals for the conversion of existing rural buildings for employment, business and tourist uses outside of the identified existing employment locations will be supported in principle, subject to the criteria a-c above.



## The Middy

5.74 As referred to earlier, the Middy acts as an increasingly popular tourist attraction. On site is a refreshment room, real ale bar, photographic display and artifacts museum, shop, carriage, and wagon works, with real vintage steam and diesel locomotives and rolling stock. The Middy is also a popular community facility with the real ale bar being open to residents at specific times.

**Fig 10 The Middy/Old Station Yard at Hall Lane**



5.75 The results of the Policy Ideas Exhibition revealed an appetite from local people to support the raising of the profile of The Middy as a visitor destination and tourist attraction and would therefore support proposals that would underpin its current role and proposals for expansion that would maintain its viability.

**POLICY**

**WCB5: The Middy**

Proposals that would reinforce the important role of The Middy as a tourist/visitor attraction and valued community facility will be supported in principle subject to their highways, amenity, and environmental impacts.

Proposals for the Old Station Yard site will be considered using the criteria in Policy WCB4 above.





## Chapter 6: Design and the Historic Environment

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**Objective 2: To champion sustainable high-quality design and celebrate the village's historic environment and heritage assets.**

### High Quality Design

- 6.1 One of the key determinants of whether any new development, irrespective of scale or use, is successful or not is its quality and how well it is considered to integrate with its surroundings. Matters such as design, materials, form and massing, the impact on local character, layout and scale are the most common issues that will cause the local community concerns about any proposed new development.
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Whilst to an extent design and impact on local character are subjective judgments, these can be influenced by breaking design elements down into component parts and attempting to address them. Whether a proposed new development is acceptable and appropriate and relates well to its surroundings, is one of the most common judgments to be made, yet there is often very little evidence or guidance to assist local people (or decision makers) in making that judgement.
- 6.4 A key purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is not only to help influence the designers and proposers of development at an early stage of formulating their proposals, but also to help promote an understanding of what elements make up the character of the area and what constitutes good design that respects local character.
- 6.5 Government guidance places considerable emphasis on achieving well-designed Places and this has been reinforced in the most recent revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2021. Paragraph 126 of the NPPF describes it as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work, and helps make development proposals acceptable to communities.

Effective engagement between applicants, communities, and local planning authorities is essential.

- 6.6 Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states ‘Design policies should be developed with local communities so that they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics.’ Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of an area and how they should be reflected in development.

### Village Design Statement

- 6.7 In 2003, a Village Design Statement (VDS) was produced for the parish by a group of local residents who formed a Village Design Committee. The VDS was adopted by both Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council as supplementary planning guidance. Local residents were able to contribute to the document through the various engagement methods used by the Village Design Committee which included a survey of the views of residents via a questionnaire, a specific school’s project and exhibition, discussion groups and public meetings, public exhibitions, and notices in the parish newsletter.

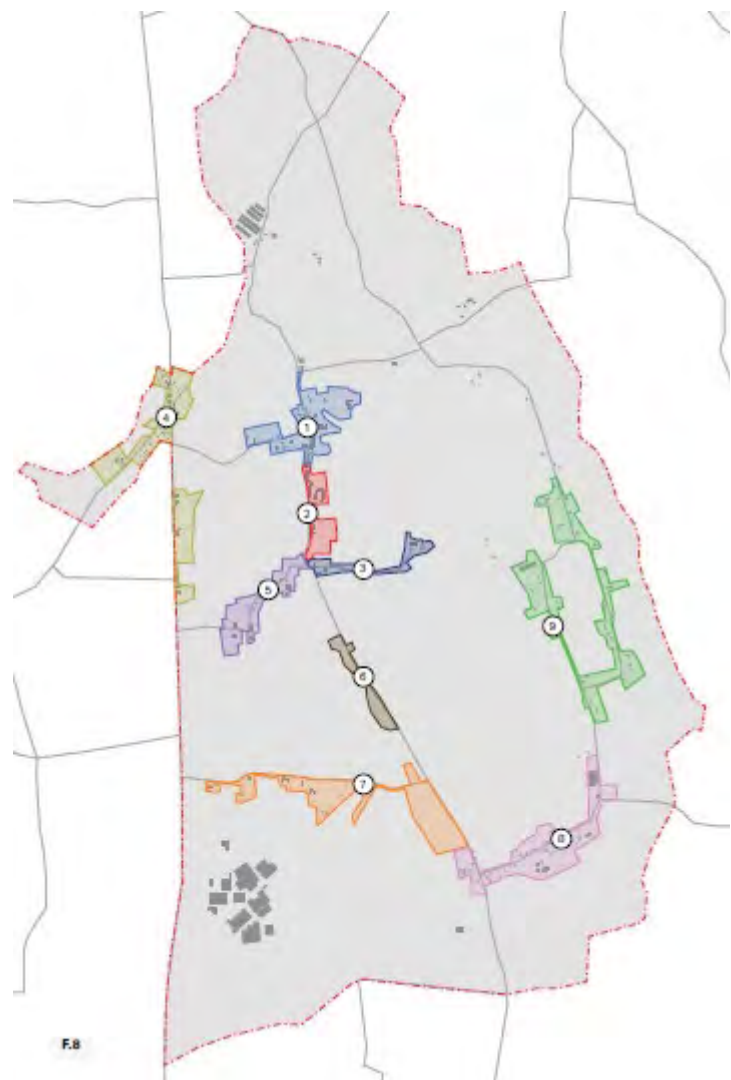
- 6.8 The work on the Village Design Statement resulted in the production of a series of themed guidelines (settlement design, landscape & wildlife, rural economy & roads) aimed at influencing new development and also a code of behaviour for developers.

### Character Assessment

- 6.9 An early stage of the Neighbourhood Plan process, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group undertook a Character Appraisal of the whole parish. The document is shown in **Appendix B**

- 6.10 The parish was divided into nine separate character areas based largely on the distinct hamlets that make up the settlement pattern within the parish. The Character Areas are as follows:

- 1: Church Street
- 2: Hockey Hill
- 3: Hall Lane
- 4: Brockford Street
- 5: Brockford Green & Knaves Green
- 6: Station Road
- 7: Town Lane
- 8: Wetherup St, Park Green & Broad Green
- 9: Pitman’s Corner, Blacksmith’s Green, Pages Green & Whitehouse Corner



6.11 The appraisal includes a brief overall description of each character area together with photographs illustrating key characteristics. Each character area is also appraised in detail under the following headings: layout, topography, spaces, access, notable, buildings and materials, landmarks, green and natural features, and important views. The Character Appraisal work has influenced a number of policies within this plan including those relating to Design, Historic Environment, Non-Designated Heritage Assets, Local Green Spaces, and Important Public Views.

## **Design Guidance and Codes**

6.12 In addition, the NPPF makes clear that local planning authorities should ensure that visual tools such as design codes and guides are used to inform development proposals to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage and reflect local character and preferences. They should provide a framework for creating high-quality places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design to inform development proposals. It also makes clear that the level of detail and degree of prescription within design codes and guides should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.

6.13 Design coding is one tool available to local planning authorities, communities, and developers to define and deliver design quality, in addition to design guides, planning briefs, heritage characterisation studies, standards and masterplans as set out in the NPPF and planning practice guidance. A design code is a set of simple, concise, illustrated design requirements that are visual and numerical wherever possible to provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.

6.9 The Government is heavily advocating the use of design codes and expects all local planning authorities to prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide<sup>13</sup> and National Model Design Code<sup>14</sup> and which reflect local character and design preferences.

6.10 In June 2021, the Steering Group commissioned consultants AECOM to produce some Design Guidelines for the whole of the parish. This work was completed in March 2022 and is a supporting document to the Neighbourhood Plan. The Design Guidelines reflected a detailed analysis of the local character of the parish, developed some strategic design guidelines and identified a palette of materials which should influence the design of future development. In addition, the report provided specific guidance to be used by the Parish Council when assessing and responding to consultation in future planning applications for new development.

## **Consultation results**

6.11 The Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire asked a specific question about the biggest concern that local people would have in relation to future development. The most highlighted answer related to mass housing (30 responses) and increased traffic (29 responses) although other popular answers related to the visual impact of development (26), wildlife impact (26), loss of green space (24). Other responses relating to design included concerns over 'ugly development', 'inappropriate development', 'materials and design not in keeping'.

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<sup>13</sup> [National design guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

<sup>14</sup> [National Model Design Code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

## Policy ideas exhibition

- 6.12 The policy ideas exhibition sought local views on what constitutes 'high quality design' and 'sustainable design'. There were high levels of support for a policy that recognises the important character of the different parts of the parish e.g. the distinct hamlets and also for guidance that encourages high quality design in all new development and provides design guidance specific to the parish covering, layout, materials, style, density, parking etc. There was also support for the promotion and incorporation of environmental measures into new developments e.g., electric car charging points, sustainable features e.g., solar, air/ground source heat pumps, rainwater capture, etc.
- 6.13 Comments left at the exhibition included the following:
- "Prevent the building of new house, flats that do not fit into the aesthetics of the village!"
  - "Prevent the style of new builds that do not suit the charm of this pretty village"
  - "In John Gummer's words 'stop building crap houses'"
  - "Use local materials/high quality design/sustainable practices"
  - "Any development should respect the existing gap from the highway to the building line to ensure that there is space for landscaping".
  - "Parking space is important to avoid further parking on the road which makes walking and cycling more dangerous".
- 6.14 Given the increasing importance that both local people and national Government are placing on design, it is considered that achieving well designed places and promoting high quality design should also be fundamental to this Neighbourhood Plan and go to its heart.
- 6.15 New development should contribute to the general health and well-being of the local community by prioritising movement by foot, bicycle, and public transport over other modes, where appropriate, protect the amenity and health of residents and consider the needs of the disabled and the ageing population. The Plan therefore sets out its key design criteria in the following policy which is applicable to all new development irrespective of scale (e.g. residential extensions, conversions, changes of use and non-residential developments).

## Policy WCB6 Design Principles

New development should contribute to improving the health and well-being of residents, increasing local community pride and cultural activity, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, and reducing pollution.

The design of all new development in Wetheringsett cum Brockford should be of a scale and design to reinforce the locally distinctive character of each character area and seek to enhance its quality. (See Appendix B)

This will be achieved through:

### Layout:

- a) Proposed densities should reflect the relevant character area of the parish, with regular breaks designed to increase visual permeability, opportunities for habitat corridors, contextual views, and new pedestrian/ bicycle access connections.
- b) The predominant one-plot deep development pattern of the hamlets in the parish should be retained to preserve its proximity to the open countryside.

### Scale and Massing:

- c) The scale and massing of new buildings should be consistent with the form and massing of neighbouring properties and would not be expected to exceed two storeys.
- d) The height of new buildings should respond to the surrounding context and should not be over-bearing.
- e) The massing of new buildings should ensure a sufficient level of privacy and access to natural light for their occupants and avoid overshadowing existing buildings.

### Details and Materials

- f) High quality and sustainable local materials which fit with the context of the area are encouraged. These include:

Roofs: Tiles (Grey and red), Slate, red and black pantiles, thatch

Elevations: Lime render construction, Red and white brick, white/cream and pink render walls, Weather board

### Landscaping and Gardens:

- g) Properties should comprise front and rear gardens which should be delineated with soft landscape elements. Native planting is encouraged as part of the boundary treatments to enable assimilation into the rural setting.
- h) Developments affecting the transitional edges between a settlement and farmland should be softened by landscaping to complement the character of the adjacent or surrounding countryside. Edge of settlement development should gradually transition to the surrounding landscape context.
- i) Development adjoining any of the open spaces should enhance the character of these spaces by either providing a positive interface or a soft landscaped edge.

### Sustainability:

- j) New development should respond to site specific micro-climates and sun paths and use these to increase the environmental comfort for building users, both internally and externally.
- k) Passive energy design: Development should be designed to optimise passive solar gain without risking overheating
- l) Sustainable Drainage Systems should be integrated into development to manage drainage and pollution but also to provide gains for biodiversity.

m) Encouragement is also given to proposals that incorporate sustainable and environmental design features or technologies such as electric car charging points, solar, air/ground source heat pumps, rainwater capture, passive ventilation, permeable pavements etc.

#### **Connections**

n) New development should be planned to be permeable, providing vehicular and non-vehicular connections to connect with existing public rights of way.

o) Convenient pedestrian connections through new developments should be encouraged and design features such as pedestrian barriers should be avoided.

#### **Parking**

p) The preference is for parking to be provided off-street. Residential car parking should be a mix of on-plot side, front, garage, and courtyard parking, depending on the most appropriate solution for each location.

q) Parking areas and driveways should be designed to minimise impervious surfaces, for example, using permeable paving.

r) Parking should be designed to minimise the visual impact of vehicles and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials, to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings.

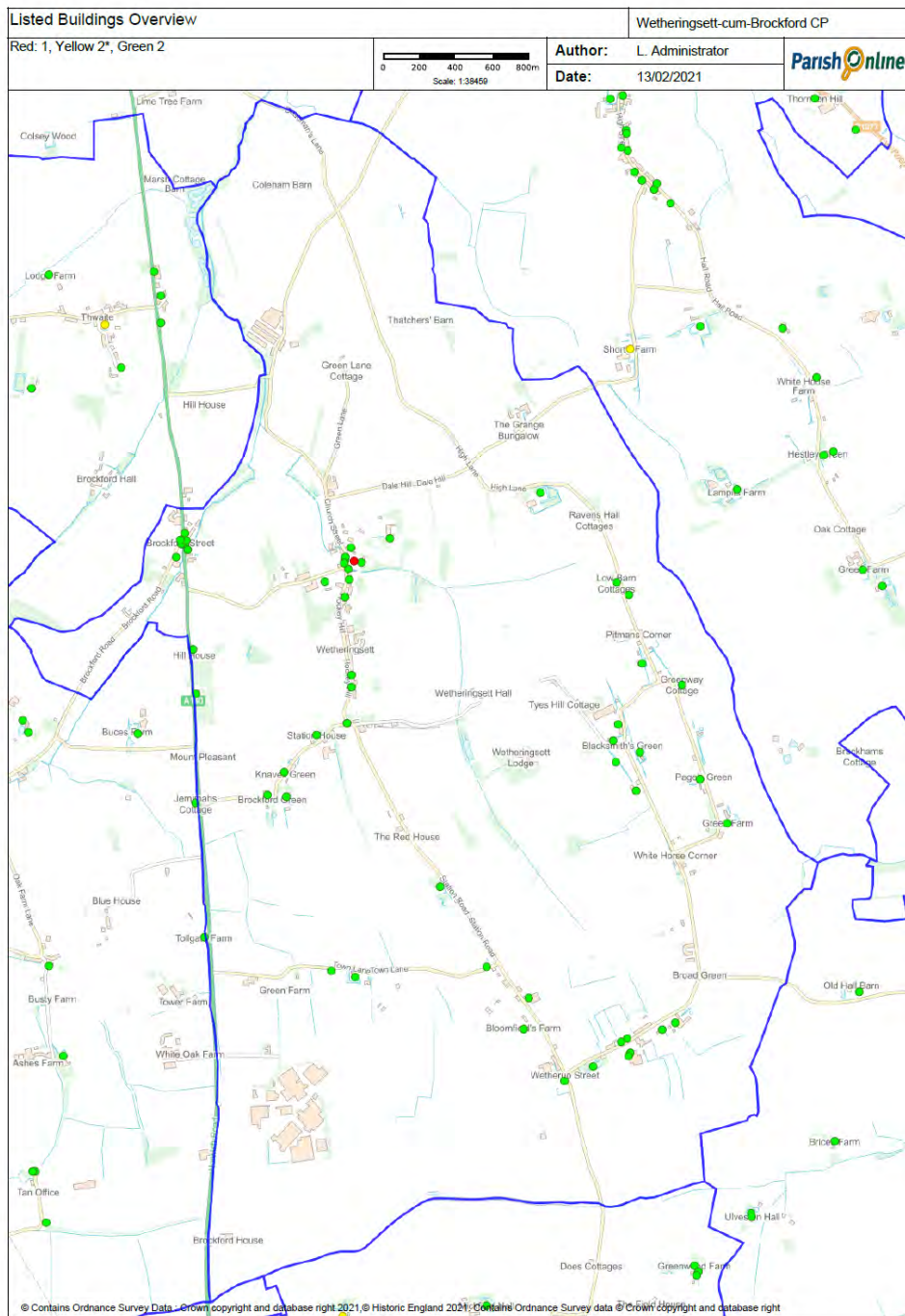
s) Cycle parking should be integrated into all new housing.

More detailed information on the above criteria is contained in the Wetheringsett cum Brockford **Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidelines**.

## **Heritage and the Historic Environment**

- 6.16 Wetheringsett cum Brockford possesses a high quality and varied historic environment. The current Conservation Area which is centred on Church Street was originally designated in 1975 by the newly formed Mid Suffolk District Council and was re-appraised and extended by the District Council in 2000. Local planning authorities have a duty to review their conservation areas from 'time to time' and the most recent appraisal of the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Conservation Area was carried out in 2011 and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 6.17 In addition, there are 53 Nationally Listed Buildings within the parish. The Church is Grade I listed with the remaining all Grade II. The central nucleus of the village around the church forms the heart of conservation area. Here can be found the greatest concentration of listed buildings, for the most part grade II 16th Century houses of timber-framed construction with thatched roofs.
- 6.18 The Church of All Saints itself is grade I listed and described by Pevsner as **'A stately church'**. Much 13th Century work can be seen: the nave arcades, chancel arch and various doors and windows, added to in the 15th Century with tower, porch and clerestory, and finally 'restored' in the 1850's.
- 6.19 Tucked away in the north-east part of the conservation area lies Wetheringsett Manor, a striking Suffolk white brick early gothic revival small country house, now used as a school . It was recently listed grade II and dates from 1843, designed by Samuel Teulon, one of the major High Victorian gothicists.





**Fig 11 Map of Listed Buildings**

6.20 The Suffolk County Historic Environment Record (HER) for Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford lists over 50 sites scattered far and wide within the large parish. These include finds from the more distant periods such as a Neolithic axe, Bronze Age pottery and Iron Age coins. More recent finds include Roman pottery and coins, a Saxon brooch and some Medieval scatter finds. More specific sites listed in the record include several Medieval moated sites, medieval greens, a fishpond and a deer park.”

6.21 As referred to in paragraph 2.7 earlier, the 2011 Conservation Area Appraisal includes a map of 11 HER sites in and around the Wetheringsett Conservation Area. Two of which have been the subject of recent planning applications.

### **Land to the East of Hockey Hill:**

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential recorded on the County Historic Environment Record (HER). Located close to finds scatters dating from the Iron Age (HER ref no. WCB 010), Roman (WCB 028 & WCB 062), Saxon (WCB 034 & WCB 062) and medieval (WCB 008, WCB 010 and WCB 061) periods. Additionally, the site is close to the location of a series of undated cropmarks, which show a possible track or road, along with fields and small enclosures. (WCB 006). As a result there is a high potential for the discovery of below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance within this area, and ground works associated with the development have the potential to damage or destroy any archaeological remains which exist.” From SCC Archaeological Service Dec 2020 to MSDC in response to planning application.

### **Land at Norwich Road (Planning App. DC/20/00324) – Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford plus part in Stoke Ash and Thwaite)**

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential recorded on the County Historic Environment Record. The western edge of the site is bound by part of the Coddendam to Scole Roman road known as Pye Road during the medieval period (SAS 011). Roman dated artefact scatters have been found close to the site, which include a scatter of grey ware pottery (THW 007) and a Colchester derivative brooch (WCB 013). Further this, metal detector searches around the site have found artefacts from the prehistoric periods to the post-medieval period. As a result, there is a high potential for the discovery of below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance within this area, and groundworks associated with the development have the potential to destroy any archaeological remains which exist.

## **Traditional Materials**

6.22 All Saints is largely of flint construction with a chequered flushwork to the tower and buttresses and a slate roof. A quarter of the buildings in the Conservation Area are rendered with timber frame with thatched roofs which is typical of this part of Suffolk. Other rendered buildings are roofed with either pantiles or plaintiles, slate or even occasionally concrete. More recent additional to the village have tended to be red brick with pantile roofs which have taken their lead from the re-front of the timber framed cottages at 1-4 Church Street which took place in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when a single house was subdivided into Almshouses for the poor.



6.23 The Victorians used red brick for the school and the schoolhouse along with white brick dressings, whilst Wetheringsett Manor was solely white brick.

6.24 Many buildings within the Conservation Area are set back within their own grounds, many well hidden behind mature hedges and trees, some even built up on the high banked valley sides. The screening and changes in level help create a feeling of enclosure in the valley, an element of the area's character well worth preserving. Wetheringsett Manor is perhaps the ultimate in

this trend, set up on the hillside, looking out across farmland and approached via a long tree-lined drive, it is almost totally separate from the rest of the village. The Conservation Area Appraisal recommends the conservation area should continue to protect the special 'arcadian' nature of the village within its wooded setting. Many of the trees are mature and efforts could be made to look for opportunities for future tree planting with younger specimens of local origin to secure succession. Defra has confirmed an area in the centre of the village as a Nature Improvement Zone. Historically the few areas of pavement within the village are generally blacktop with concrete kerbing. A flint chipping surface dressing could be more appropriately low key, perhaps with exposed aggregate kerbing to match.

- 6.25 The policy ideas exhibition sought to gauge support for a policy that identifies and reinforces the heritage importance of the conservation area and measures to control new development within it. There was a high level of support for this and also for a policy that identifies the important contribution to the overall character of the area made by the Listed Buildings. Comments left at the exhibition included:
- “Not just the Conservation Area. The context of all our wonderful, listed buildings is critical.”
  - “More help need to conserve and protect and make older houses in the village more energy efficient.”

**Policy WCB7** below has been informed by these views.

POLICY	<p><b>Policy WCB7 Historic Environment</b></p> <p>Proposals for development within the Conservation Area and/or which may affect a listed building should respect the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area and protect the heritage significance of listed buildings, protected trees, and other heritage assets.</p> <p>New development should ensure that the design of new development complements the shape and form of the settlement and the relationship between heritage assets and the spaces around them</p> <p>The special ‘arcadian’ character of the Conservation Area and its wooded setting will be protected and reinforced. This will be achieved by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Encouraging the retention and maintenance of designated and non-designated heritage assets which contribute to the overall character Conservation Area, and</li> <li>b) Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to the special qualities and character of the Conservation Area through the use of appropriate, high-quality materials.</li> <li>c) Protecting the setting of the Conservation Area from development which adversely affects views into or out of the Conservation Area</li> <li>d) Requiring the use of high-quality traditional building materials and detailing, (<b>See Policy WCB6</b>).</li> </ol> <p>Proposals for new or reconfigured signage within the Conservation Area should be sensitively designed with consideration given to size, design, materials, and siting to ensure that they do not detract from its character and appearance.</p>
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## Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 6.26 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG<sup>15</sup>) recognises that there are buildings, monuments, sites and places, areas of landscapes identified as having a degree of local significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets e.g. Listed buildings. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'. The PPG goes on to explain that these can be identified through Neighbourhood Plans (and Local Plans) and can be a positive way for the local authorities and the community to identify Non-Designated Heritage Assets against consistent criteria to improve the predictability of the potential for sustainable development.
- 6.27 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.
- 6.28 The preliminary survey work undertaken as part of the Character Appraisal identified a small number of potential non designated heritage assets within the parish. The policy ideas exhibition sought local feedback on the original list of candidates and asked for 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 in the Local Heritage Listing: Historic Advice Note 7 page 9. The results are shown in **Appendix C**.

### POLICY

#### **Policy WCB8 Important Unlisted Buildings (non-designated heritage assets)**

The following (as shown on Figs 12-16) are heritage assets that are considered to be locally important to Wetheringsett cum Brockford in terms of their architectural, historical, or cultural significance and these will be treated as Non-Designated Heritage Assets.

1. The School House
2. Willow Farm (Wetherup Street)
3. The Old White Horse Public House (also known as The cat and Mouse)
4. The former Trowel and Hammer
5. Former Windmill at Broad Green
6. Stone Cottage, Brockford
7. The Cedars

<sup>15</sup> [Historic environment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442412/Historic_environment_-_GOV.UK_(www.gov.uk).pdf)





**Fig 14 The former White Horse Public House, White Horse Corner**



**Fig 15 Stone Cottage, Brockford Road**



**Fig 16 The Roundhouse of the former Windmill, Broad Green**





## Chapter 7: Natural Environment

**Objective 3: To protect the rural character, biodiversity, and open spaces of the parish.**

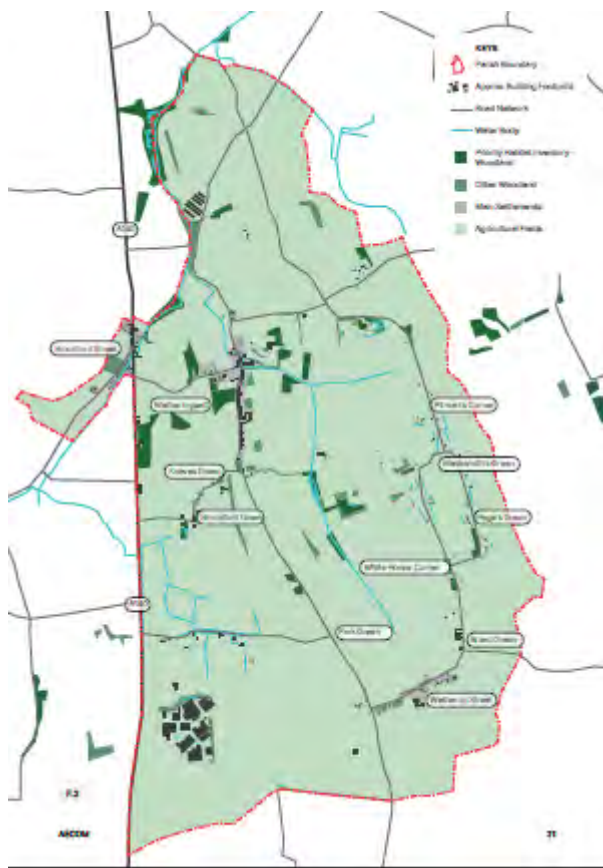
### Landscape

- 7.1 As mentioned in earlier chapters, the parish of Wetheringsett cum Brockford consists of a number of outlying hamlets spread over a large area, along with a small central village clustered around its church. This core lies in a well wooded hollow at the head of a tributary of the river Dove which flows northwards from the village to eventually join the Waveney north of the town of Eye.
- 7.2 Apart from alluvial deposits in the river proper, the geology locally is basically the clay of 'High' Suffolk's Till formation. This overlies crag deposits from the Pliocene and Chalk in turn, both of which stretch from here eastwards to the coast. The village itself presents a very quiet backwater, despite being very close to the increasingly busy A140 Ipswich to Norwich route.
- 7.3 The Parish is dominated by open fields interspersed with small woodland areas. Due to its layout, the village also offers direct connections with the open countryside. Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford is located with the National Character Area (NCA) 83: South Norfolk and Suffolk Claylands (NE544).<sup>16</sup> The character of the land centred around the course of River Dove is typified by wooded valley and meadowlands. The Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk Landscape Guidance (BMSLG) produced in August 2015 identifies Wetheringsett cum Brockford as falling within the 'plateau claylands' landscape character type<sup>17</sup>.
- 7.4 The BMSLG describes the key characteristics of this landscape character type as gently rolling heavy clay plateau with sparse woodland cover and some extensive areas of post WWII field boundary loss. This landscape type covers the majority of the Mid Suffolk district and is the core landscape of the High Suffolk and south Norfolk National Character Area. Typical characteristics include poorly drained areas of the clay plateau are covered with numerous extant or former greens and commons.

<sup>16</sup> [NCA Profile: 83 South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands - NE544 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://www.naturalengland.org.uk/nca-profiles/83-south-norfolk-and-high-suffolk-claylands-ne544)

<sup>17</sup> [Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance](#)





### Extract from AECOM Design Code

Although the loss of greens and commons within this landscape type overall was significant, they give their names to many of the hamlets within the parish e.g. Knaves Green, Park Green, Brockford Green, Pages Green and Blacksmith's Green. Remnants of the original green can be seen at Blacksmiths Green and the historic greens influence the housing layout such as that at Pages Green. The enclosure of former greens has left a very distinct landscape with straight "surveyors" roads running through the centre of the former greens.

7.5 The wet land of the plateau was often used for medieval deer parks, an example of which is land in the south of the parish around what is now Wetheringsett Lodge. The landscape was also extensively used for World War II airfields, such as Mendlesham airfield in the south-west of the parish.

7.6 Arable farming activity dominates this landscape with hedging providing a variable visual impact. Although some parts of the parish, particularly Broad Green are characterised by a pattern of smaller fields with hedged boundaries. Boundary trees (ash and oak in particular) are present in many of the hedges and poplars have a significant visual impact in this landscape. The trees around Wetheringsett village are for the most part fairly mature and consequently form a very dominant feature of the local landscape, particularly set against the open prairie of adjoining farmland.

7.7 The overall appearance is of wide-open views with small clusters of hedges, trees, and houses. The scattered historic settlement pattern range from farmsteads, clustered development of various sizes to the elongation (ribbon development) of larger groups. Many of the traditional farmsteads retain their historic farm ponds and moats which form characteristic features. Most of the hamlets within the parish offer a prominent shelter with mature trees and hedgerows throughout their farmlands and gardens. The private gardens within the residential settlements occupy a substantial proportion of land and contribute to the overall landscape character of the parish.

7.8 The BMSLG identifies a number of key design principles for this landscape type which are relevant to the rural character of Wetheringsett cum Brockford. These include:

- a) Maintain the distinctive settlement pattern, ensuring the sense of separation between settlements is maintained.
- b) Retain rural character of the small settlements and conservation areas by avoiding the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials and features.
- c) Restore, maintain, and enhance green and woodland areas.

d) Hedging for boundaries will be designed to reflect the local planting scheme to reduce visual impact on the distinctive character of the area.

d) To maintain the character and condition of the landscape any major developments will enter into a Section 106 Legal Agreement for on and off-site landscaping including enhancing field boundaries with local hedging and tree species.

7.9 The policy ideas exhibition results reflected the great value that local residents place on the rural setting and landscape of the parish (29 responses). The survey work undertaken by the Steering Group to inform the Character Appraisal identified a number of important views and vistas throughout the parish. These were highlighted at the exhibition and members of the public were invited to comments upon the value of the suggested views as well as to nominate any further candidates. The Steering Group have been mindful that any policy which sought to protect views should focus on those that are 'important' to the overall landscape character of the parish and should also be enjoyed from publicly accessible locations e.g. footpaths, public highway, an existing open space or through a gap between buildings. Some rationalisation of the original list has therefore been undertaken and the following have been identified:

**1) Views towards All Saints Church (looking east from Cedars Hill)**

Travelling east along Cedars Hill from the A140, tantalising glimpses of the church, nestling within the valley bottom are revealed.



**2) View from bridge adjacent to Mill Cottage overlooking River Dove.**

This is an attractive subsidiary view can be enjoyed from the bridge adjacent to Mill Cottage, overlooking the River Dove. Located close to the Church it again reinforces the well vegetated and arcadian feel to this part of the village.



**3) View down Hockey Hill towards the school, and then the church**

The road winds down the hill into the Conservation Area with the school to the west, and thence to the Church. The houses to the east of the road show the easy juxta position of old and new with elevated verges, gardens and trees framing the picture and blurring the differences in architecture. The view illustrates how mixed linear development can still retain a rural and indeed 'arcadian' feel.



**4) Views west from Hockey Hill**

This view is another archetypal parish landscape fringed by hedges and old oak trees across open fields to the far tree line and copses bordering the A140, from which they protect the

eye. Sunsets here are dramatic and enjoyed by the residents of Hockey Hill , the most populated area of the parish.



##### **5) View from the top of Hall Lane towards Wetheringsett Hall**

A view down the long lane to Wetheringsett Hall, which is partly obscured by large willows marking the valley of the River Dove, with a well-used public footpath alongside, which continues past the Manor and thence the Church. To the right of the Hall is a willow plantation which is regularly coppiced and glows red in the winter. A mature mixed hedge borders the Middy rail track on the south side of the lane and two majestic lone trees on the north side emphasise the wide-open field which stretches all the way down the lane to the river and across to the Manor. Beyond is the view – and the footpath – across to Pitman’s Corner.



**6) View from eastern end of Wetherup Street, south towards Debenham**

The view marks the junction between Broad Green, with its small, enclosed fields and a sweep in the road west towards the hamlet of Wetherup Street. Uninterrupted vistas of expansive skies over arable fields to trees in the distance and beyond where the ground gently slopes down to the village of Debenham.



**7) View looking from the footpath (south of and parallel to Wetherup Street) looking towards Broad Green and Pages Green.**

An open landscape viewed from the footpath which runs parallel and south of Wetherup Street gives wide reaching views across to Broad Green and north across to Park Green.

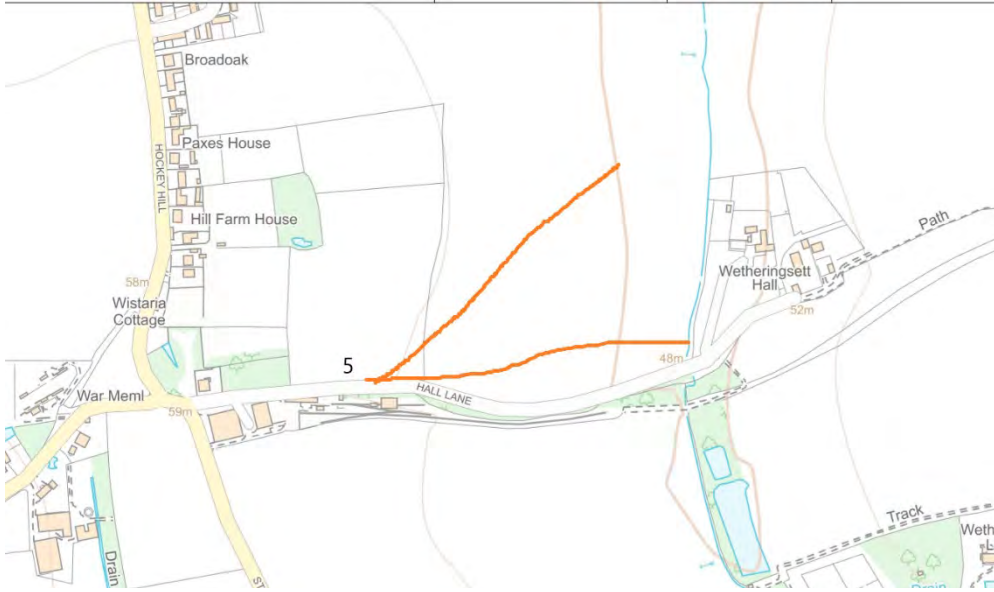


7.10 Taking the above into account **Policy WCB9** below has been developed which cover the distinct related elements of landscape character and the protection of important public views.

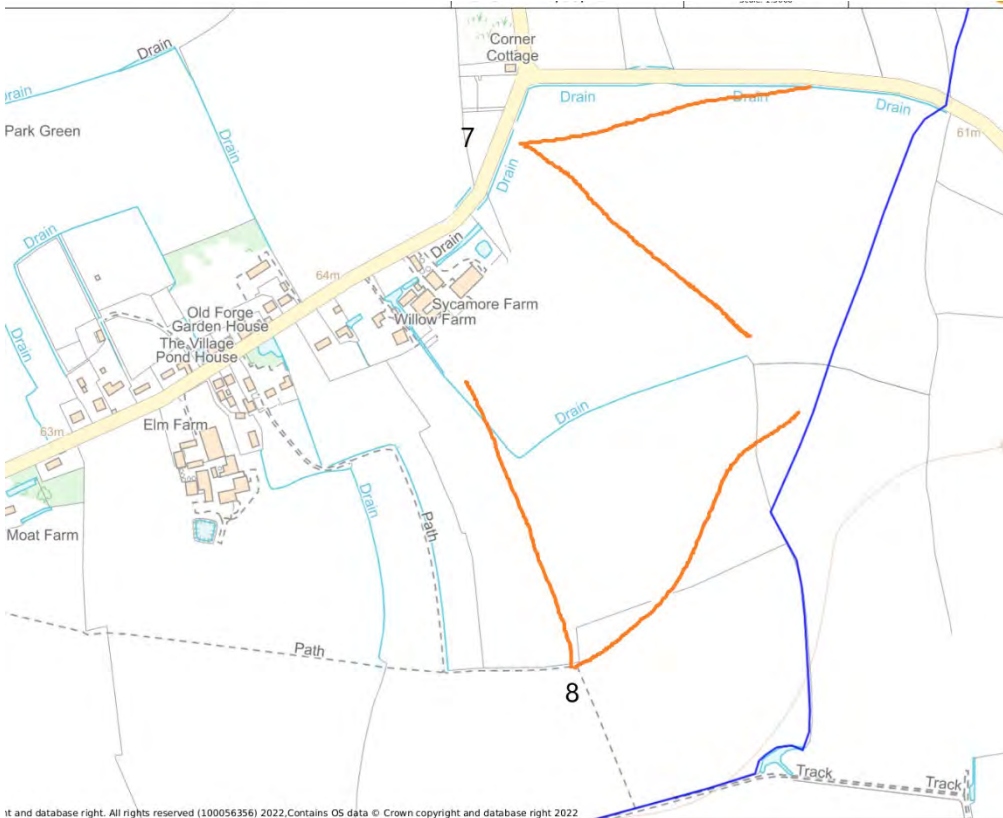
**Fig 17 Views 1-4 – Church Street and Hockey Hill**



**Fig 18 View 5 towards Wetheringsett Hall**



**Fig 19 Views 6 and 7 – Wetherup Street**



**POLICY WCB9: Landscape character and important views**

The visual scenic value of the landscape and countryside within the parish outside of the defined settlement boundaries will be protected from development that may adversely affect this character. The existing clear landscape breaks that physically separate different hamlets within the parish shall be maintained in order to prevent coalescence and loss of individual settlement identity and distinctiveness.

**Important Public Local Views**

The following views and vistas as shown on (**Figs 17-19**) below are identified as important public local views.

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. Identification of important public local views, where development that would adversely affect the view will be resisted.

Candidate views to date include:

- 1) Views towards All Saints Church from Church Street
- 2) View from bridge adjacent to Mill Cottage overlooking River Dove.
- 3) View down Hockey Hill towards the Church
- 4) Views west from Hockey Hill
- 5) View from the top of Hall Lane towards Wetheringsett Hall
- 6) View from eastern end of Wetherup Street, south towards Debenham
- 7) View from footpath (south of but parallel to Wetherup Street) towards Broad Green and Park Green.

**Biodiversity**

- 7.11 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.
- 7.12 The Environment Act 2021 received Royal Assent in Autumn 2021 and introduces a new system for the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). In simple terms, BNG is an approach to development which aims to leave the natural environment in a *measurably* better state than it was beforehand. Planning policy that seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity is not new, but this latest approach focuses in more on the *measurability* aspect. Planning applications will need to quantify the different habitat types on site both before and after the proposed development using the latest Biodiversity Metric. Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design to secure a minimum of 10% net gain firstly onsite or if not locally. Where this cannot be achieved a developer can secure the shortfall by securing a site for biodiversity uplift elsewhere BNG is not mandatory until 2023 and its importance in the planning process will be elevated but within Schedule 14 of the Environment Act, measures are included that allow planning authorities to recognise any habitat degradation since 30th January 2020 and to take the earlier habitat state as the baseline for the purposes of biodiversity net gain.



7.13 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.

7.14 The parish does not contain any formally designated international or national wildlife sites. Although Mickfield Meadow Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies just outside of the parish boundary. Mickfield Meadow is a rare example of hay rich meadow with associated boundary hedges. An area to the south of the parish does fall within the SSSI Risk Zone and therefore should be referred to when assessing development in Wetherup Street or to the south of it.

7.15 There are two Roadside Nature Reserves within the parish as follows:

- MDSC 186, Roadside verge, RNR 116. Designated for its' flora.
- MSDC 163, a ditch alongside Old Brook Lane. Designated for the rare Tassel stonewort.



**Tassel stonewort/Purple Orchids**

7.16 The land in the centre of the village has been identified as a Habitat Network Enhancement Zone One by Natural England. Within this zone is located Priority deciduous woodland habitat, priority parkland and traditional orchards. Furthermore, Natural England has recognised one traditional orchard in the centre of the village near Wetheringsett Manor and All Saints Church. A further 3 provisional traditional orchards have been identified within the Parish on Brockford Road, opposite the war memorial at Hockey Hill, and at Pages Green.

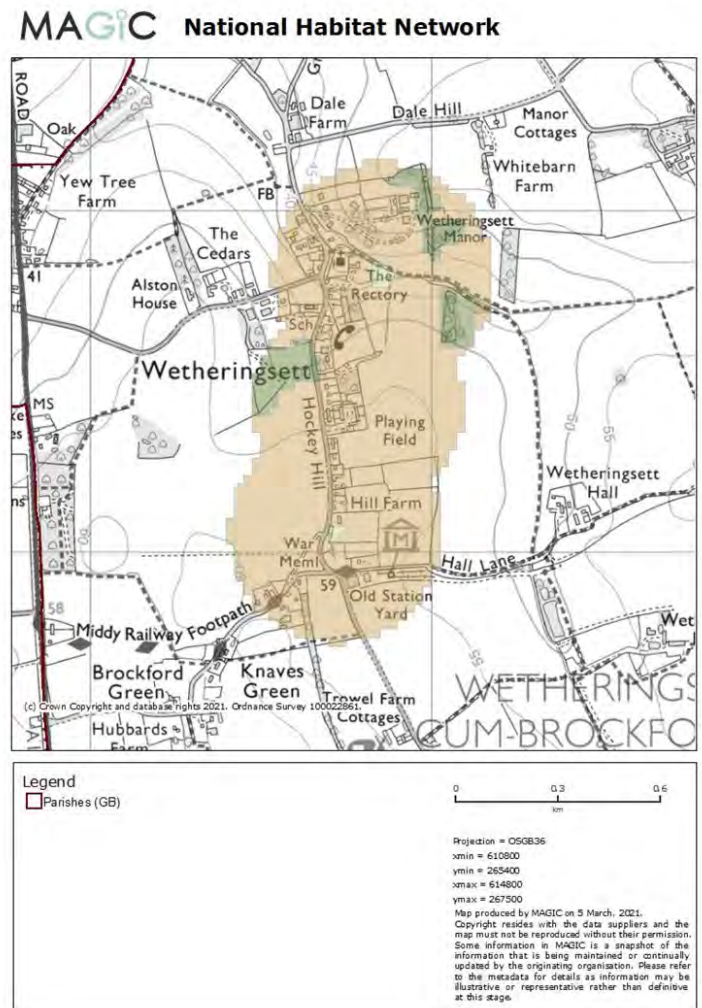
## **Trees**

7.17 Trees are an important feature throughout the parish but are particularly prevalent within the Conservation Area. Within the historic core of the village itself there remain fine examples of Oak, Copper Beech, Lime, Ash, Holly, Yew, Poplar, Horse Chestnut and Scots Pine. The approaches to Wetheringsett Manor include an avenue of Limes and within the grounds many other species abound including Corsican Pine and a large Wellingtonia. There are formal Preservation Orders on trees including two Horse Chestnuts at Wetheringsett Lodge (TPO 216) and an area of mixed woodland further south at Moat Farm, Wetherup Street, one of the outlying hamlets (TPO 215).

7.17 In addition there are records for a number of Veteran Trees within the parish. Veteran Trees are of interest biologically. Aesthetically or culturally because of their age or a tree in the ancient stages of its life or trees that are old relative to others of the same species. The parish hosts 33 pedunculate oak, 2 cedrus, 1 ash, 1 horse chestnut. The Churchyard hosts a number of specimen trees of red beech, lime, and oak. The NPPF considers veteran trees, along with ancient woodland as an 'irreplaceable habitat' and any development impacting on such features should be carefully considered.

7.18 Historic features such as ponds and moats, are found throughout the parish, some of which are large garden ponds, with a significant density in the southern hamlets of Pages Green, Blacksmith's Green and Wetherup- Street, forming an ecological network of drains.

**Fig 20 Ecological Networks in the parish**



### Priority Habitats and Species

7.19 Section 41 (41) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, which came into force on 1st October 2006, requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principle importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

7.20 There are a number of Priority Species and Habitats within the parish that have been identified through the Environmental Assessment as follows:

#### Habitats:

- a) **Hedgerows** – at Griffin Lane, Green Lane, and Broad Green; support species such as Bullfinch, Yellowhammer, Hare, Hedgehog, Pipistrelle bat
- b) **Deciduous woodland**
- c) **Pond and freshwater habitats**, supporting species such as toad, grass snake, grey heron, kingfisher
- d) **Traditional orchards**: confirmed in Church Street and proposed in Brockford Road, Hockey Hill (opposite war memorial field) and Pages Green (opposite Green Farm)
- e) **Wood pasture and parkland**: four provisional parklands, two at Wetheringsett Manor grounds, and two others near Seamans and Westwood House.

**Birds of Conservation Concern:** Lapwing Turtle dove, Yellowhammer, Skylark, Linnet, House martin and swift.

**Priority Species:** Common Toad, grass snake, hedgehog, brown hare

- 7.21 The policy ideas exhibition revealed a high degree of support from attendees (21) for a policy that would protect and enhance wildlife and that would require the creation of new habitats including woodland creation and new tree planting on development sites.
- 7.22 The following **Policy WCB10** below has been developed taking all of this into account. It refers to 'wildlife' corridors which is a term used to refer to any linear feature in the landscape that can be used for the migration or dispersal of wildlife. Such corridors allow for the linking of habitats and reduce the isolation of populations. Linear features may vary and may also not be continuous however patches of natural habitat can benefit wildlife and occasionally the terms 'stepping-stones' is used to refer to them. The role of wildlife corridors is assuming greater importance and opportunities should be taken to create them as a consequence of new development.

**POLICY WCB10: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity**

Development proposals will be expected to protect and enhance existing ecological networks, wildlife corridors and priority species. Proposals should retain existing habitats 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.

Development proposals should conform to the mitigation hierarchy and seek initially to retain existing features and avoid loss or damage of biodiversity. Where loss of damage is unavoidable, the benefits of the development must clearly outweigh the impacts and the development shall provide for mitigation in the form of appropriate replacement or replanting or appropriate natural feature on site together with a method statement for the ongoing care and maintenance of that planting or feature or as a last resort, compensation measures will be sought. If suitable mitigation or compensation measures cannot be provided, then planning permission should be refused.

Otherwise acceptable development proposals will be supported where they provide a minimum net gain of 10% in biodiversity through for example:

- a) The creation, restoration and enhancement of new natural habitats including ponds
- 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

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 landscape maintenance and management plans should be agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

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.

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,
- 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 school meadow, the Churchyard, the allotments, or the creation of a community orchard.

## Local Green Spaces

- 7.23 The National Planning Policy Framework 2021, 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'.*
- 7.24 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. The NPPF at paragraph 137 outlines the importance that the Government attaches to Green Belts, the fundamental aim of which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of green belts are their openness and their permanence. 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.
- 7.25 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.
- 7.26 Areas of open space in the parish include All Saints churchyard, the cemetery, the village hall field (all of which meet the criteria for designation as local green spaces), the war memorial field, the hockey hill football field which was recently subject to a planning application for 14 dwellings and Wetheringsett Manor grounds.
- 7.27 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group identified a number of spaces and asked for feedback from the local community at the policy ideas exhibitions. Following that feedback and the assessments of the candidate spaces against the NPPF criteria, this list has now been rationalised. Each space that meets the criteria should be protected because of their value to the local community. Each space has been assessed against the NPPF criteria. The result is the 9 spaces shown in figure 21 and listed within **Policy WCB**. Assessments for each one against the criteria set out in the NPPF have been carried out and these are shown in Appendix **D**

**POLICY**

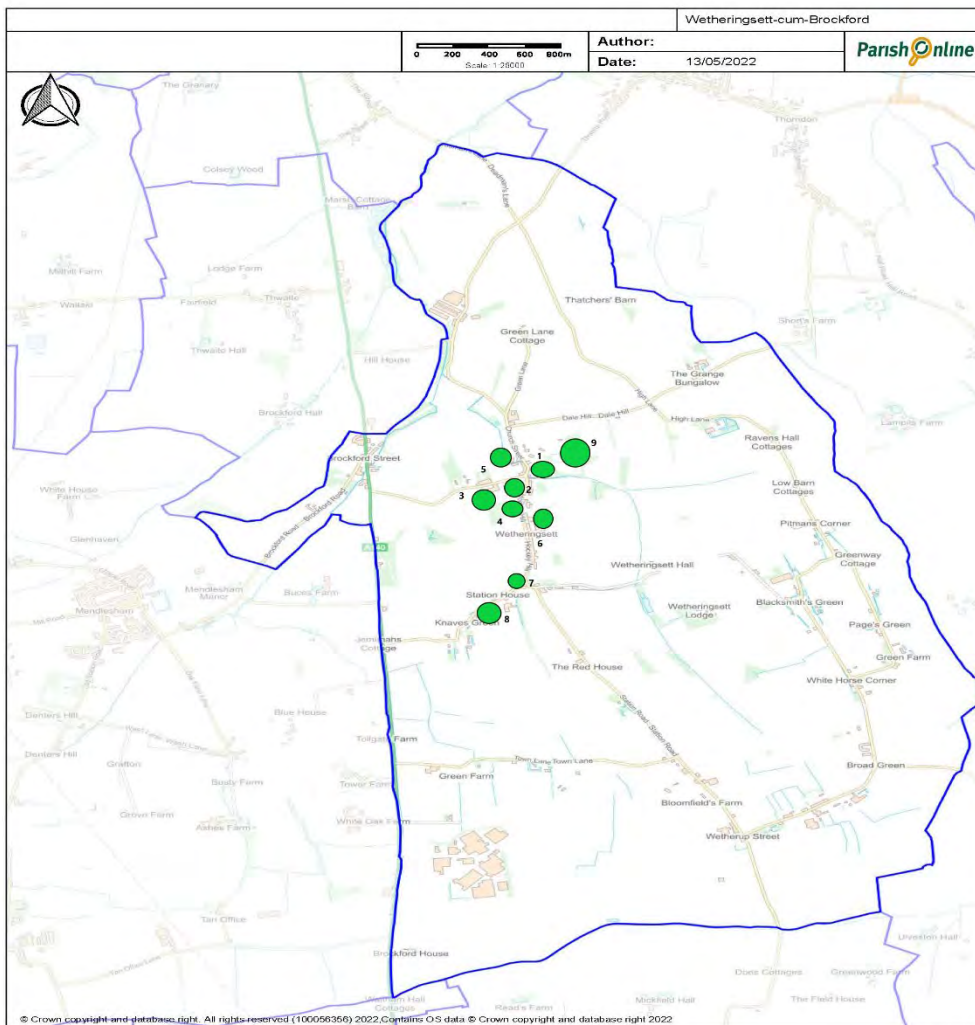
**POLICY WCB11: Local Green Spaces**

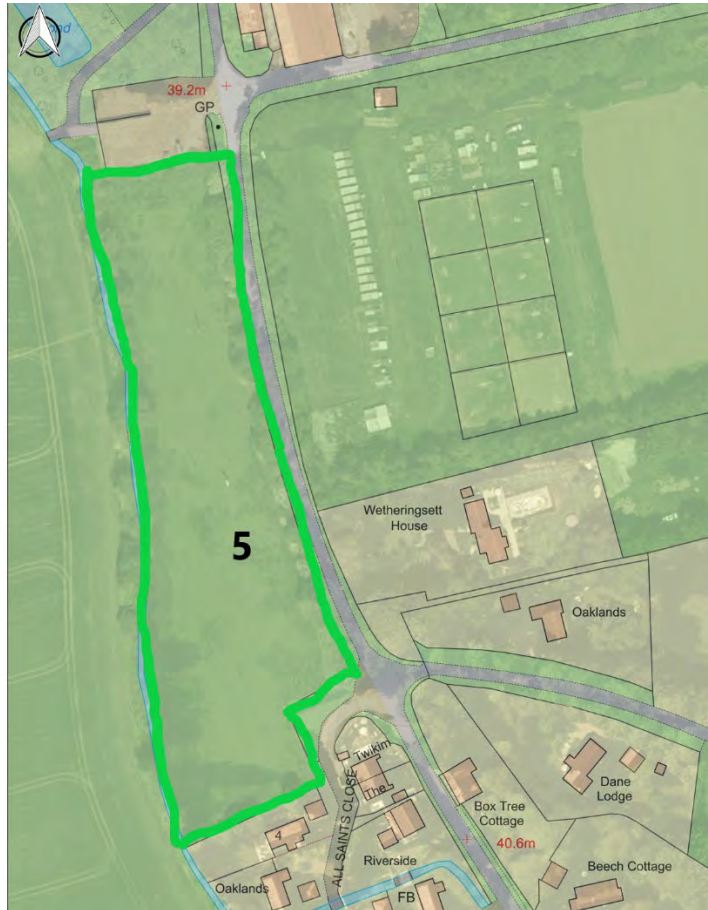
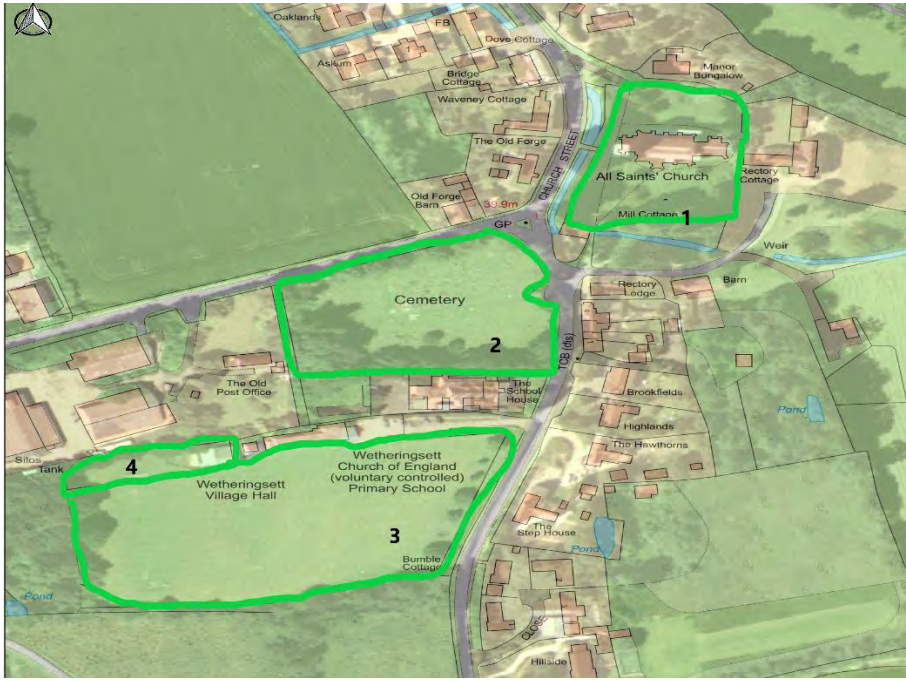
The following are identified as Local Green Spaces (as shown on Fig 21 ).

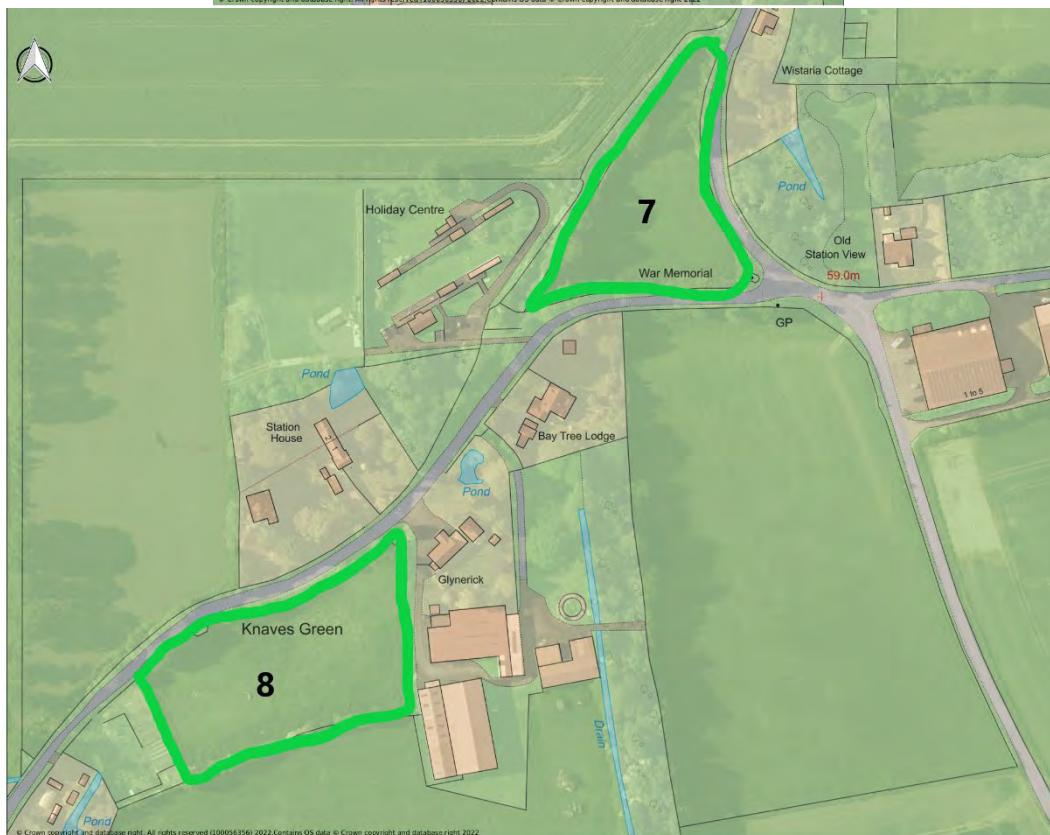
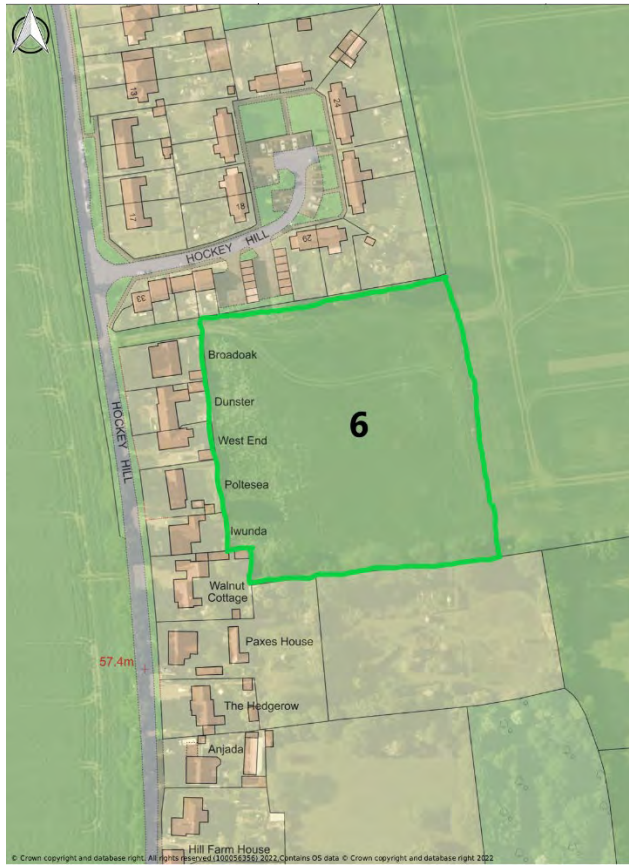
1. Churchyard of All Saints Church
2. Cemetery
3. Playing field adjacent Village Hall
4. Play area (with equipment)
5. Meadow at Church Street
6. Former Football field at Hockey Hill
7. War Memorial Field
8. Allotments at Knaves Green
9. Parkland at Wetheringsett Manor

Development within Local Green Spaces will be managed consistent with the approach taken for Green Belts.

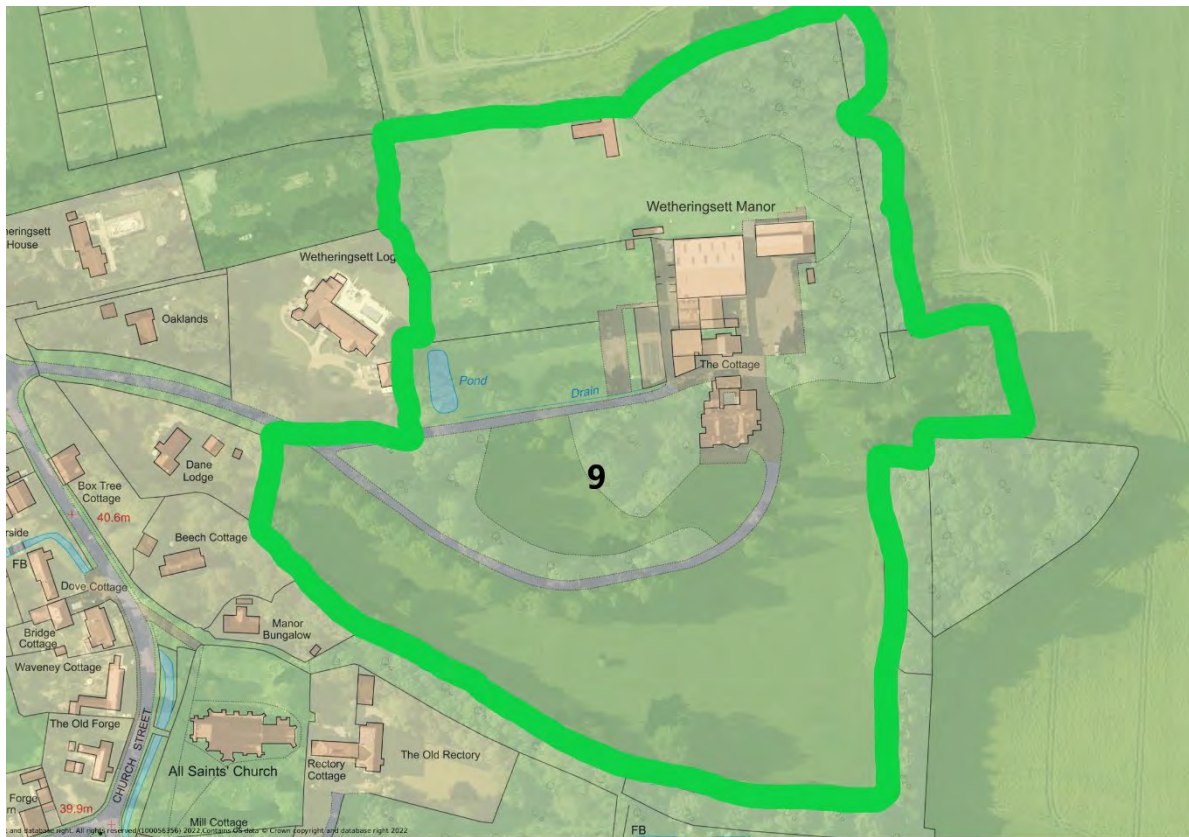
**Fig 21 – Local Green Spaces (see also Appendix D)**











## Amenity and pollution

- 7.28 The NPPF requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate to its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution (light, noise, air, and dust) on the health, living conditions and amenity of residents as well as the impacts on the natural environment. The NPPF also requires that development proposals should seek to mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise (and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life
- 7.29 Community consultation through both the questionnaire and the policy ideas exhibition revealed that the rural character and high-quality environment of the parish are elements that they highly value. There was support (23 responses) for a policy that would protect the existing dark skies of the parish, and which sought to restrict the outside lighting of new development. There was also support for broadening this to cover all forms of pollution that might affect residential amenity such as air pollution, dust, and smell. One of the most commonly cited forms of noise pollution was the A140 and in particular traffic noise.

## Dark Skies and light pollution

- 7.30 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.

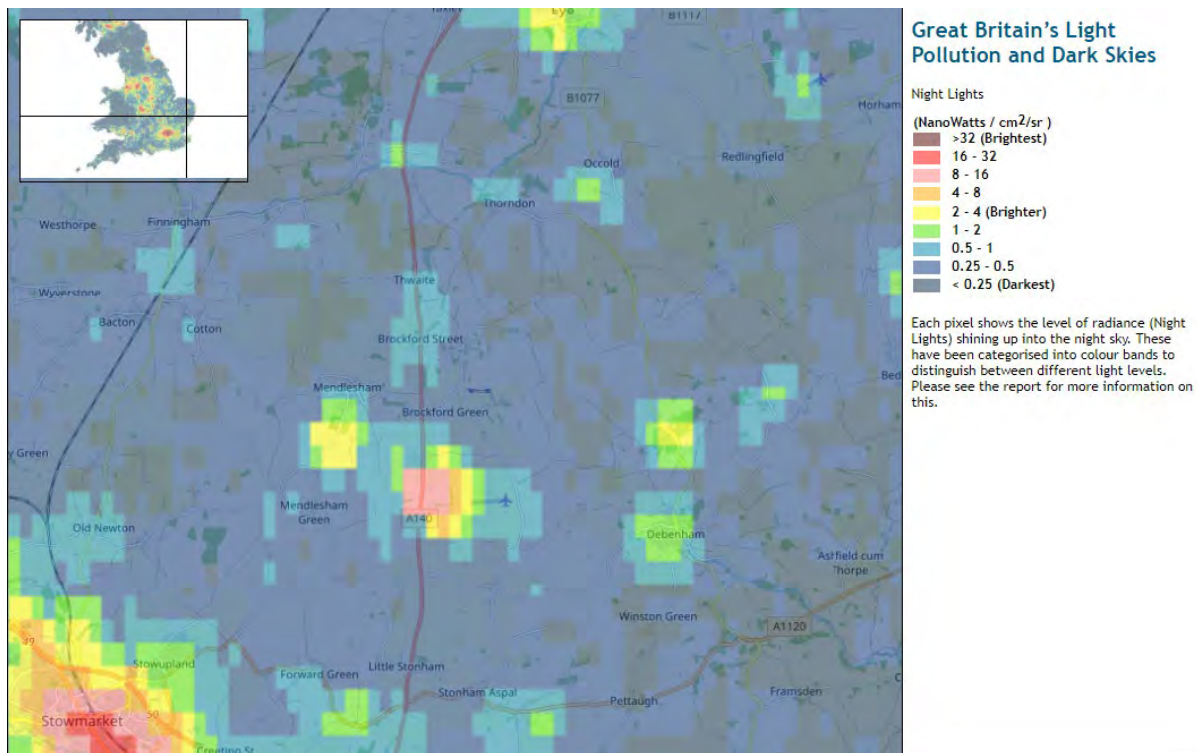


Fig 22 Source: CPRE Light Pollution Map covering the parish

- 7.31 According to the CPRE light pollution maps <sup>18</sup>, the majority of the parish falls within the most category of the darkest skies e.g.  $< 0.25$  nano watts/cm<sup>2</sup> (Category 1 of 9 with 9 being the most polluted) However there are some areas around Brockford Street along the A140, Mendlesham Airfield and Town Lane where this rises to 0.5 nano watts/cm<sup>2</sup> (Category 3). High levels of lighting can affect the health, wellbeing and amenity of adjacent residents but also have impacts for natural habitats and species.
- 7.32 Nil or low levels of light pollution are an important aspect of tranquility which was also an important characteristic of the parish that people valued. Light pollution comes in many forms – sky glow as a consequence of water droplets in the air, illumination from artificial light and glare. Artificial light is not detrimental in all cases and the solution to light pollution is not turning off all lighting. Light pollution is where light is excessive or intrudes where it is not wanted or expected. Well-designed lighting sends light only where it is needed and without scattering it elsewhere. The NPPF advises that by encouraging good design in planning policies this should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation.
- 7.33 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.

<sup>18</sup> [England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies \(cpre.org.uk\)](http://England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies (cpre.org.uk))

**POLICY WCB12: Amenity and dark skies****Amenity**

Proposals for new development should not adversely affect the amenity of adjacent users or exacerbate existing or cause new pollution problems. This includes pollution (air, noise, dust, vibration, and light) from the use itself and that from traffic generated.

**Dark Skies**

The existing intrinsically dark skies of the parish will be maintained. Development proposals will be expected to address light spillage and glare and ensure good lighting management and design (including down lighting and environmentally efficient lighting) particularly where adjacent to the countryside, heritage assets and priority habitats and species identified in **Policy WCB10** above.

While ensuring that new development proposals are secure in terms of occupier, other user and vehicle safety, dark skies are to be preferred over lighting. All outdoor lighting schemes (including street-lighting), should be designed to minimise the overall impact on the environment, including through making use of energy efficient technologies and using technologies that minimise adverse impacts on wildlife.

Where appropriate to the development proposal, planning applications should include a detailed lighting scheme/strategy that demonstrates how the proposal addresses both energy and environmental concerns without comprising safety.

Therefore, lighting will only be supported where:

- a) Any future external lighting systems should have minimal impact on the landscape.
- b) Any external lighting should minimise light pollution and the adverse effects on wildlife. Lighting should not exceed 700 lumens and be shielded with lighting beams directed downward. No 'permanently on' external lighting should feature in new developments, and security lighting should be motion activated.
- c) Schemes should reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the night-time skies dark and reducing glare.

**Environmental Projects**

1) Monitoring Indicators for development sites:

- no loss of species rich hedgerows
- no loss of ancient or veteran trees
- no loss of ponds, existing ponds restored
- no deterioration of biodiversity in the Parish

2) Hedgerow mapping and planting

3) Ancient/Veteran Tree Mapping

4) Roadside Verges scheme – possibly through SCC Community Self Help

5) Enhancement of allotment field (e.g., installation of standpipe)

6) Woodland creation/community orchard

7) Environmental enhancements to the playing field

8) Encourage cycling through the provision of cycle parking at the Village Hall



## Chapter 8 : Community and access

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### Community

- 8.1 The overarching social objective for the planning system as set out in the NPPF is 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, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and supports the health, social and cultural well-being of communities.
- 8.2 To achieve this, new development needs to be planned hand in hand with community services and facilities and a range of cultural facilities to support that new development. This includes transport, education, green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, footpaths, cycleways, allotments health and social care facilities. These are often collectively referred to as 'community infrastructure'.
- 8.3 Housing and other development will be expected to pay towards improving local services and infrastructure through either, the payment of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), planning obligations (via a Section 106 agreement/Section 278 agreement) or through the use of planning conditions.
- 8.4 Parish Councils receive 15% of CIL monies collected from development within their parish. This figure rises to 25% once a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan is in place. Where development is expected to take place within a parish, the Parish Council will often have a key list of projects that the community has identified as priorities for spending the CIL income. There are two proposed allocations in the parish as identified in the emerging BMSJLP which add up to at least 20 new dwellings within the parish over the Neighbourhood Plan period. In addition as outlined in earlier chapters there will be additional applications for new dwellings within the parish, which if approved will be liable for CIL contributions.

## Existing Community Facilities

- 8.5 The parish is identified in the emerging Local Plan as a hinterland village with two hamlets. The settlement classification is derived by the Districts using a number of criteria including those relating to the number of services and community facilities available in the parish. The parish contains a church, village hall and a primary school and pre-school/nursery. There is also a playing field and children's play area and a cemetery separate to the graveyard at the church. There is no shop although the Brockford garage petrol filling station which contains a small shop lies outside of the parish boundary and therefore the Neighbourhood Area. In addition there is a bar at The Middy which is open to local residents.
- 8.6 Those residents that responded to the Household Questionnaire clearly made some regular use of the church, school, and village hall although how this relates to their use by the wider community is less well documented.
- 8.7 The policy ideas exhibition revealed support from attendees (34 responses) for a policy that would safeguard the existing community facilities in the parish particularly in terms of resisting their loss or change of use. In addition, support was also expressed for the enhancement of the existing facilities to make them more attractive and useable for wider community uses which in turn would underpin their sustainability. Environmental enhancements were also suggested including the creation of a wildflower meadow adjacent to the school.

## Enhancing existing community facilities through the use of CIL monies

- 8.8 With one eye on the potential for future use of CIL monies that might be available in the future as a consequence of new development, the policy ideas exhibitions asked for feedback on a range of potential enhancement projects related to the existing community facilities as detailed below:
- 8.9 1) **All Saints Church:** The Church has played an important role (particularly during the covid-19 pandemic (and associated lockdowns)), in supporting local people including older people and vulnerable people. Prior to the pandemic the Church building was regularly used for hosting coffee mornings and fundraising events. Currently there are regular monthly services held at the church, along with monthly community events aimed at, but not specifically, for families. The church building itself however does limit the number and duration of such events due to a lack of facilities in terms of kitchen and toilets. There is support within the community (21 responses) and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to re-order the layout of the building, utilising space that is currently underused to provide toilets, a seating area, and a kitchenette. This is identified as a Project within the Neighbourhood Plan and could benefit from CIL funding as it provides a wider community benefit. Improved facilities would enable more events to take place, a greater and wider use of the building and encourage those to use it who may currently be unable to due to the lack of facilities.
- 8.10 2) **Wetheringsett Church of England Primary School and Pre-School/Nursery:** The primary school and makes use of the village hall during the day for lunches and indoor activities such as PE that require a larger space. The children have access to the playing field for PE and outdoor activities in the summer month and the adjacent woodland is used for Forest School. There is a keenness to use opportunities to provide environmental enhancements to the school grounds and areas where the children have access, to enhance the environmental



knowledge and wellbeing through specific nature conservation and wildlife projects such as tree planting and the creation of a wildlife meadow. In addition there is also support for the wider use of the meadow and adjacent green areas for wider community use outside of school hours e.g. hosting outdoor community events such as picnics, community celebrations, fetes, and charity events.



- 8.11 3) **Wetheringsett Village Hall:** As stated earlier the village hall is used by the school during the day but pre-pandemic was used by a range of organisations including a drama group, yoga, and the parish council. Due to its age and timber construction it has required a high degree of maintenance over the years, the most recent being a new roof, south wall, and floor in Autumn/Winter 2021.



A specific section of the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire related to the future use of the village hall and asked questions around the usage of the hall and any potential improvements that people wished to see. The most popular included improved kitchen and toilet facilities, parking, and access improvements, outside seating and terrace and internal improvements to heating and lighting.

- 8.12 4) **The Middy (Mid Suffolk Light Railway):** Many of the facilities provided by the Middy for tourists and visitors are also important facilities for and used by the local community e.g. the summer bar Measures that would enhance facilities for local people as well as visitors such (e.g. shop) would be supported including those to raise its profile as a visitor destination.
- 8.13 The NPPF advises that planning policies should promote social integration including opportunities for people to meet or otherwise come into contact with each other and to provide the social, recreational, and cultural facilities and services that the community needs. Plans should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly however would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. Facilities and services should be able to develop and modernise and be retained for the benefit of the wider community.

<b>POLICY</b>	<p><b>POLICY WCB13: Community Facilities</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Support is given for maintaining, developing, and enhancing the services offered by the Church, School, Village Hall, and the Middy including new facilities, alterations and extensions that would enable wider community usage and integration and provide a benefit to the environment.</p>
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## Access

### Walking and Cycling

- 8.14 Wetheringsett is relatively well served by rights of way which include the footpath network, circular routes, and bridleways National Cycle Route 40 (Eye to Framlingham stretch) goes through the eastern part of the parish and provides a north south route linking Pitman's Corner, (skirting Blacksmiths Green), Pages Green, White Horse Corner and Broad Green before continuing southeast on to Debenham. In addition, the parish accommodates the 'Hakluyt' cycle loop which is a six-mile cycle route along public roads which connects the various hamlets within the parish.

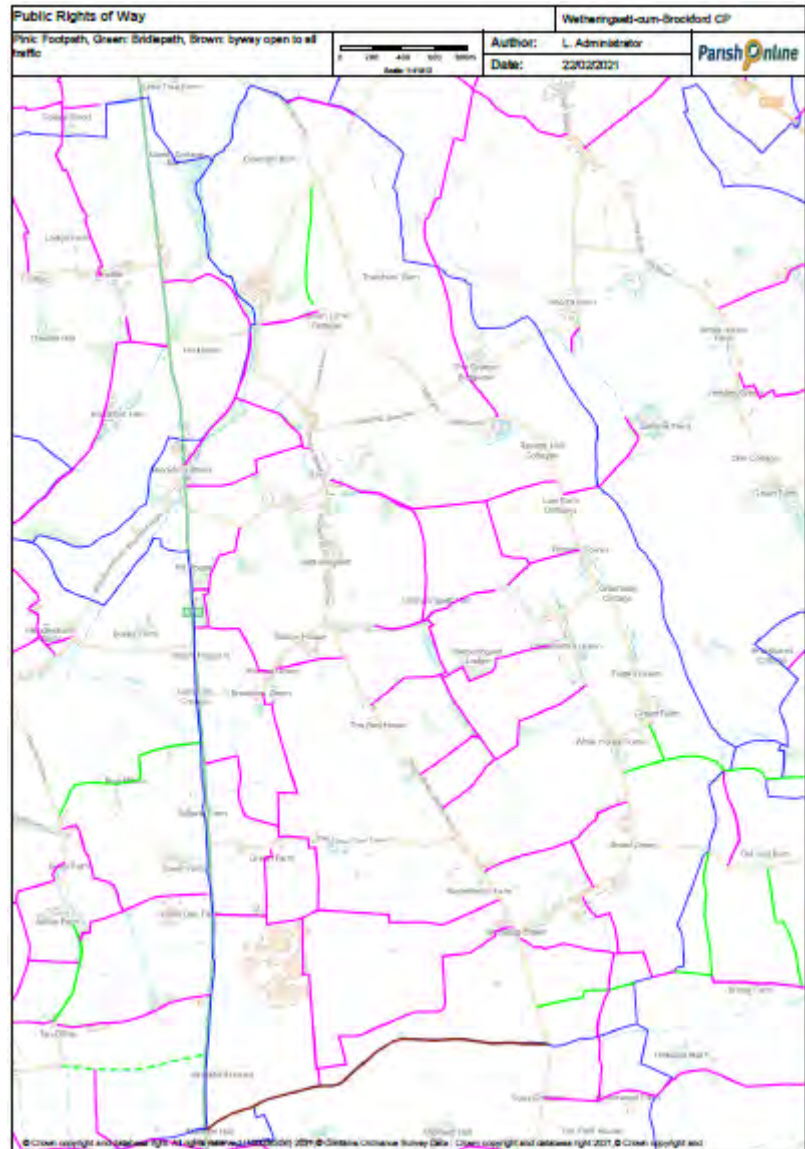


- 8.15 The Hakluyt route was developed as community initiative to help promote cycling with its associated health, wellbeing, and environmental benefits as well as to increase road users' awareness of cyclists. The route is largely circular and 'begins' at the junction of Church Street and Cedars Hill and is signed in a clockwise direction by green signs

8.16 The loop can also be cycled in an anticlockwise direction. The former telephone kiosk in Church Street, was adopted by the parish council and refurbished as part of the project to form an information point promoting the cycle loop.

8.17 The NPPF encourages development proposals to provide for high quality walking and cycling networks. New cycling and pedestrian routes should be safe, secure, and attractive and respond to the character of the area. The NPPF also advises that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance existing Public Rights of Way including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example adding links to existing networks.

8.19 The results of the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire revealed that walking and cycling and access to the countryside was one of the key benefits and attractions of living in the parish. The policies ideas exhibition sought feedback in respect of a policy that would promote safe and healthy access to the countryside although concerns were expressed about safety where footpaths and rural roads met and the safety of children going to school.





<b>POLICY</b>	<p><b>POLICY WCB14: Safe and healthy access</b></p> <p>New development proposals should demonstrate how they contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents by providing opportunities for safe walking and cycling, including to school, through the provision of safe and attractive routes and crossings suitable for all users.</p> <p>New routes could contribute to a cohesive countryside network by providing enhancements such as new links to existing routes, safe routes to facilities (e.g. the school), improvements to surfaces and signage and connections to green corridors.</p> <p>Where development is likely to affect an existing Public Right of Way these should take account of its route and incorporate it into the scheme, preferably in an open green corridor . Where Public Rights of Way are impacted, appropriate diversions or new routes should be provided that are more or at least, equally safe, accessible, and convenient for users.</p> <p>Development proposals should give consideration to both the levels of traffic generated and the wider impacts of this traffic. Measures should be included that address and mitigate potential impacts upon highway and pedestrian safety.</p> <p>Developments that would result in impacts that cannot be mitigated, and which would result in severe increases in traffic generation, or which would be detrimental to highway safety will not be permitted.</p>
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**Community Projects**

8.20 The Neighbourhood Plan is principally concerned with land use planning matters. However, where there are issues of legitimate interest to the community, which fall outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, these are featured in the plan in order for the community and the Parish Council to examine outside of the prescribed process of the Neighbourhood Plan. These are identified below:

<b>Project</b>	<p><b>Improvements to facilities at All Saints Church</b></p> <p>Incorporation of kitchenette and toilet facilities at All Saints Church to enable wider community use including events, coffee mornings etc.</p> <p>Project to be led by the Parochial Church Council with support from local volunteers and the Diocese with funding contributions from the local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).</p>
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<b>Project</b>	<p><b>Supporting the community</b></p> <p>Working with Community Action Suffolk <a href="https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/">https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/</a> to develop funding and a variety of resources including community and social enterprises, and establish a network of volunteers to provide assistance to specific groups within the community (e.g. the elderly, the vulnerable, the isolated) in times of emergency.</p> <p>Encourage the establishment of an internet café at the village hall</p> <p>Support for the establishment of a Toddler Group in the parish.</p>
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# Chapter 9: Implementation and Monitoring

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## Implementation

- 9.1 The Wetheringsett cum Brockford 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 Wetheringsett cum Brockford 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.
- 9.2 Alongside other strategic documents and policies, the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan is intended to provide a starting point for working together to implement positive sustainable growth in the parish.
- 9.3 The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan shape the way in which development will happen within the parish of Wetheringsett cum Brockford. Some of the policies included within the Wetheringsett cum Brockford 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.
- 9.4 In order to see delivery realised, it will require Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council and partner organisations to be proactive in getting the best results for Wetheringsett. 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.
- 9.5 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008, to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of the area. Mid Suffolk District Council has introduced CIL which currently operates at 15%, although Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council will benefit from 25% of the levy revenues arising from development that takes place in Wetheringsett cum Brockford once the Neighbourhood Plan is made (adopted).
- 9.6 In addition to its role as part of the statutory Development Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan will be the key document used by Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council in formulating their responses to Mid Suffolk District Council in respect of consultations on planning applications.

## **Monitoring**

- 9.7 A formal review process in consultation with the local community and the District Council should be undertaken at a minimum of 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 Wetheringsett cum Brockford along with the local and national policy and legislative context.
- 9.8 It is understood that the Wetheringsett cum Brockford 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.
- 9.9 The Parish Council will report annually on the implementation of policies, and the progress made on taking forward any Community Projects.

## **Appendix A – Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Members**

Ann Arnold, Parish Councillor, and resident (2022 onwards)  
Hilary Green, Parish Councillor, and resident  
Mike Laycock, resident  
Nigel Lingard, resident  
Emma Morris, resident  
Cathy Smith, resident  
Win Stenning, resident  
Robert Townshend, Chairman, and resident

Supported by Andrea Long, Compasspoint Planning

Thanks also to :  
Former steering group members (prior to 2021) who include  
Mark Allen  
Janine Hart  
Fiona McGillavray  
Grace Murray  
Camille Nickson  
Melanie Stevens  
Peter Stevens  
Sam Surl

Parish Council  
Charles Harvey – website  
Liz Cain – Chair  
Lynne Cockerton - Clerk

## Appendix B – Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford Character Appraisal

Below is a map and a description of distinct character areas within Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford, undertaken and written up by the Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

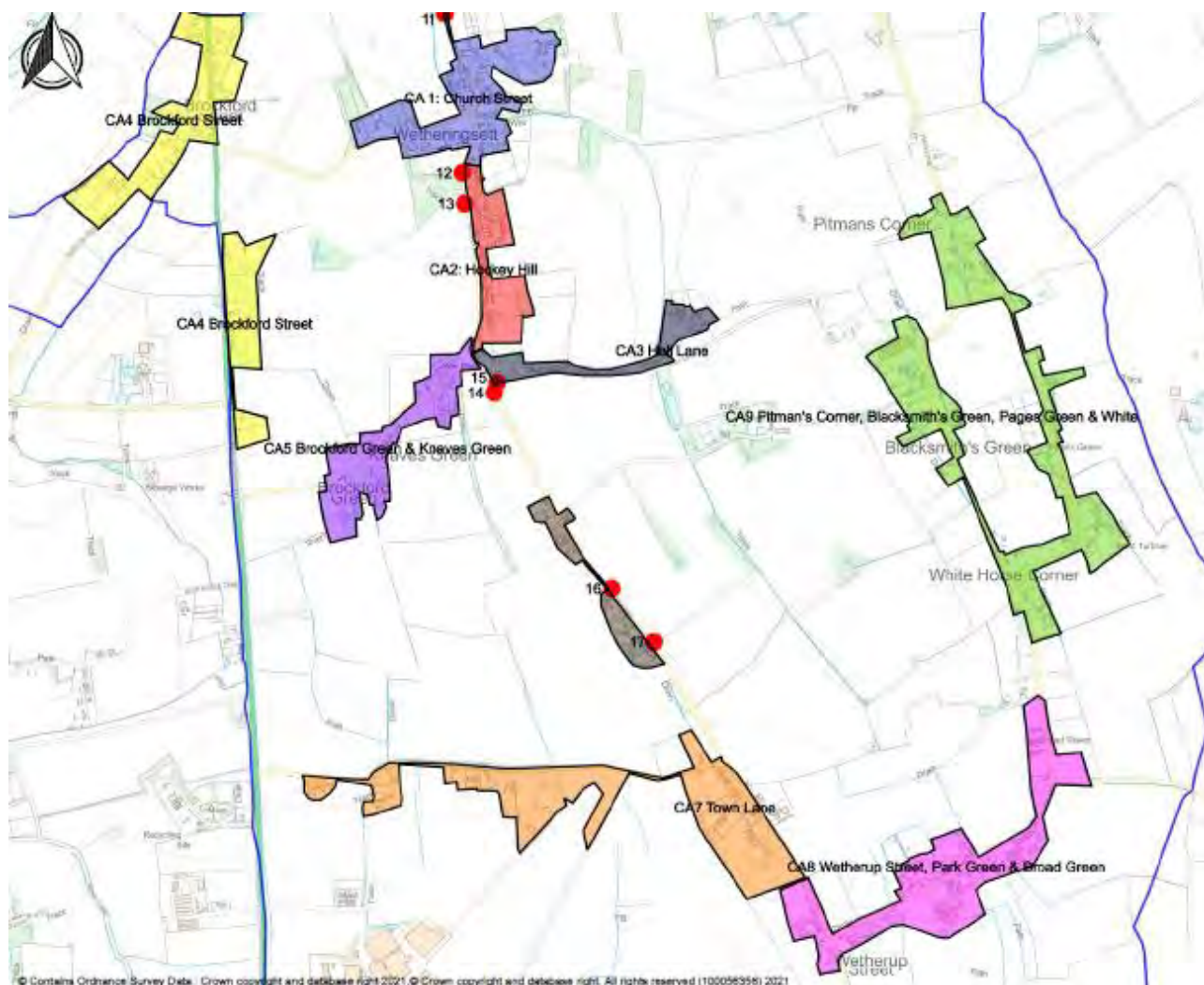
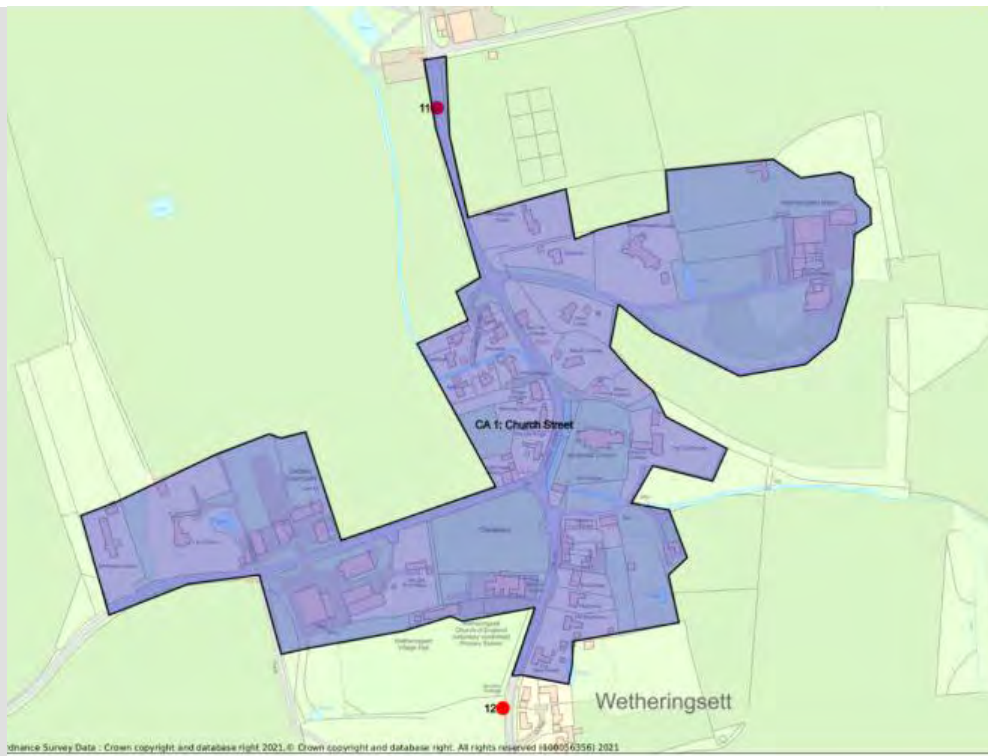


Figure 1 above: Character areas. Colours refer to table below (source: Parish Online mapping with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

### Area 1 (Blue area): Church Street

This character area includes the historic core of the village which is almost entirely within the Conservation Area. The area contains most of the parish facilities - Church, School, Playing Field, Cemetery, Village Hall, the K2 telephone box, and is home to the village sign. Primarily a residential area, with a mix of dwelling style and age, with a spattering of community buildings and spaces,

agricultural activity, and with some office and studio space from converted farm buildings.





## Layout

- The bulk of the buildings are in the 'historic' centre of the village, clustered around the church. Sequential development and building has taken place to the south end of Church Street, leading up the slope to Hockey Hill.
- Most development is single plot in width and linear in form following the main street.
- There is a modern cul-de-sac of detached dwellings northwest of the Church known as All Saints Close
- The area is characterised by a working farm, converted farm buildings, small cottages and the principal house for the farm 'The Cedars' is situated at the top of the rising ground to the west.

### **Topography**

- Church Street sits in a fold in the land, a small shallow valley, with gradients sloping down from the surrounding plateau to the east, south, and west. A stream, the River Dove, runs along the valley floor towards the north.

### **Spaces**

- The key spaces in this character area are the playing field, the cemetery, and the churchyard. All three meet the criteria for designation as Local Green Spaces (See Policy WCB11); they are in close proximity to a number of residential properties and have clear community and historic value.
- An additional space that adds to the character of the area is known as Church Street Meadow which is a relatively narrow strip of land which runs parallel to Church Street and lies just north of the modern development at All Saints Close. This area lies within the Conservation Area and affords footpath access over the River Dove.
- Immediately beyond the village curtilage to the north are two small grass fields, one used for grazing, the other as a game farm.

### **Access**

- Access in this area is via a two-way rural road in varying condition, with sections of pavement alongside it outside the Church and opposite the village school.
- The majority of the roadside has no footway, and some areas of highway are poorly maintained adopted tarmac road.

### **Notable Buildings and Materials**

- The Church dominates this area and is a distinguished Grade 1 listed medieval building.
- The remainder of the area is a mixture of detached and semi-detached cottages, in the cluster around the Church. Most of these are listed and comprise single storey or storey and a half and with a mixture of thatched and tiled roofs. These form the historic centre of the village.
- The majority are of wattle and daub/render construction.
- The Old Rectory is a larger two storey, Grade II Listed 19<sup>th</sup> C building, immediately to the east of the Church.
- Wetheringsett Manor is a mid 19<sup>th</sup>C former rectory, (Grade II) set in the remnants of its parkland.
- A number of more recent single and two storey buildings are located immediately on the north edge of the village conservation area.
- 20<sup>th</sup>C infill development of mixed styles, but notably using red brick has taken place towards the south end of Church Street, where it borders Hockey Hill.
- The school building is Victorian.
- There is also a terrace of late 18<sup>th</sup>C/mid19<sup>th</sup>C brick cottages, which are the former Almshouses (Grade II).



### **Landmarks**

- The most notable of these are:
  - All Saints Church,
  - Mill Cottage – a white rendered cottage with a thatched cottage which sits perpendicular to the roadway at the junction of Church Street and Cedars Hill and just southwest of the Church.
  - Waveney Cottage – another white rendered cottage with thatched roof that occupies a prominent position in the bend in the road almost opposite the Church.
  - The former post office, a pink rendered cottage situated off Cedars Hill and set amongst a number of mature trees.
  - The village sign at the entrance to the churchyard.
  - The telephone box, with a stained-glass memorial window.
  - The Alms Houses, a row of red brick cottages that hug the roadside northeast of the school.

### **Green and natural features**

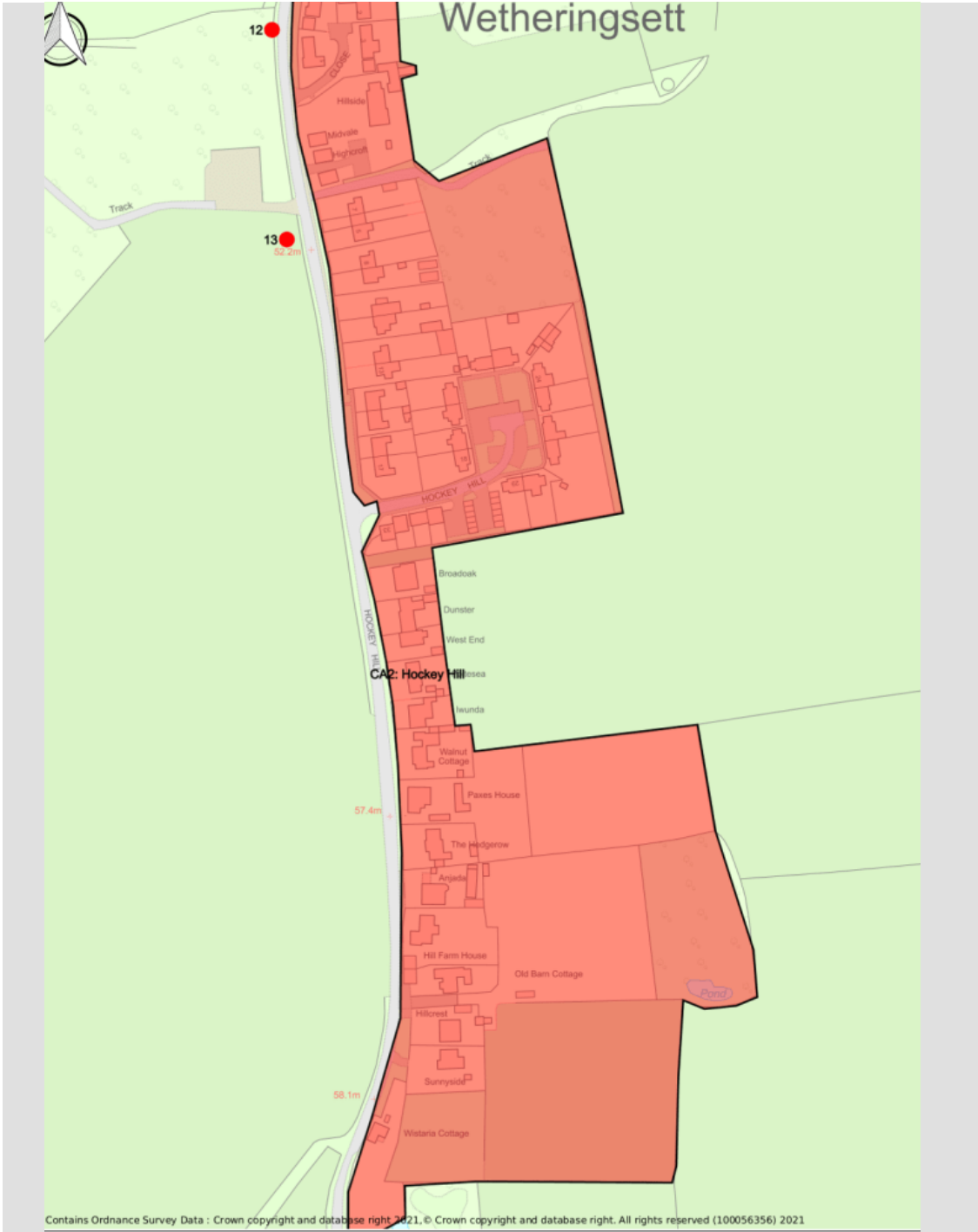
- The area is characterised by a substantial number of large trees interspersed throughout the area and around the Churchyard and the Cemetery.
- There are large specimens of purple beech, lime, and oak, with later plantings of poplar, Cupressus and some pine.
- The roads leading to the village are partly hedged, well treed and there is a definite rural feel to the area.

### **Views**

- The principal views in this area are towards the Church which sits at the heart of the village.
- An attractive subsidiary view can be enjoyed from the bridge adjacent to Mill Cottage, overlooking the River Dove. (See Policy WCB9

### **Area 2 (RED): Hockey Hill**

**This area is just south of Church Street and the historic core of the village. The area is almost exclusively residential and is located on a plateau at the top of the hill as you travel south from the village core. Development is confined entirely to the east of Hockey Hill and consists of a mix of single and two storey houses, set back from the road, in single width plots, with a small cul-de-sac of former local authority housing from the post-war period.**





**Layout**

- Hockley Hill is primarily a residential road, with some 50 homes. The Hill itself slopes down towards the historic core at the bottom of the river valley where it joins Church Street.
- The area is characterised by linear development extending south on the eastern side of Hockley Hill in the form of detached, semi-detached houses and bungalows as you reach the entrance to the cul-de-sac at the top of the hill and further south towards Hall Lane.
- The undeveloped western side affords with long views across the agricultural land. (See Policy WCB9)

- The area sits outside of the Conservation Area.
- The main building form is one plot width and linear, but there are two exceptions:
  - Hakluyt Close, which is a recent small development; and
  - A cul de sac comprising former local authority housing consisting of a mix of bungalows and semi-detached dwellings with separate garaging.

### Spaces

- Behind the cul-de-sac and the bungalows south and further up the Hill is 'Hockey Meadow' upon which football and cricket teams once played, and which is now used by dog walkers etc.
- It was the subject of a planning application for 14 houses which was refused in 2021 on the grounds of layout and sustainability. However, it does meet the criteria for Local Green Spaces (Policy WCB11)
- This area is characterised by being set back from the highway and most properties have both front and rear gardens; many are laid to lawn, and they are well kept.
- Another planning application for 11 dwellings behind Broad Oak and Walnut Tree Cottage in Hockey Hill which lies just to the rear of the cul-de-sac was refused in 2021.

### Access/Streetscape

- Hockey Hill is the main vehicular route through Wetheringsett, used primarily by cars and vans but also by agricultural vehicles and heavy lorries particularly during the sugar beet harvest. It is generally sufficiently wide for light vehicles to pass but larger vehicles regularly erode the verges.
- There is a continuous footpath from the cul-de-sac down to the bottom of the hill ending at the old almshouses on the eastern "residential" side of the road.
- There is no path on the school/cemetery /village hall side, nor beyond the cul de sac towards Hall Lane.
- The road is asphalt. There are no lampposts or benches. The only signage is the warning notices and 20 mph limit outside the school and the fingerposts at top and bottom. There are poles carrying power cables on both sides of the road.

### Notable Buildings and Materials

- There is a diverse mix of buildings on Hockey Hill, which begins in the core of the village and is characterised by the Victorian school, a number of Grade II listed houses, interspersed between properties representing most decades from WW2, earning the disparaging and misleading description "suburban sprawl" in the Conservation Area Review.
- The recent small development of detached houses in Hakluyt Close reflects some of the design characteristics of their listed neighbours, Step House e.g., brick and render exterior and dormer windows.
- Three recent distinctive detached homes, tall and narrow in red brick, follow this historic pattern.

- The former local authority housing is a mixture of bungalows and semi-detached and terraced homes in red brick, some of which have been substantially extended.
- Further along are a number of mostly detached bungalows dating from the 1960/70s. The remaining homes are 2-storey detached and in various styles, some mainly brick others brick and render.
- Paxes House at the top end of the Hill is thatched.
- All dwellings are in their own way distinct, but coherence is maintained by the verges and hedges which fringe gardens setting most of the modern housing back from the road, elevated from it on the rise of the hill.

#### **Landmarks**

- At the bottom of Hockey Hill, The School and Village Hall stand out on one side of the road.
- At the top end of the road at the junction Knaves Green is the listed War Memorial
- At the end of Hockey Hill, in Church Street, sits the old Almshouses.
- The houses at the bottom of the Hill are elevated above the road, with a mix of walls, hedges, trees, and verges on their garden boundaries. This mix continues to the top of the hill.
- On the western side after the village hall/playing field are arable fields bounded by mixed hedging and the characteristic oak trees lining the road, which increase in density and size at the top of the hill.

#### **Green and Natural Features**

- Most houses have verges to the front with mainly small hedges behind.
- The shortage of garaging and parking space means that cars are routinely parked on the roadside outside the semis down from the cu de sac.
- There are attractive views across the fields to the tree line adjacent to the A140.

#### **Views**

- The view down the Hill towards the Church and river, fringed by hedges and trees, captures its diversity and yet essentially cohesive character. (See Policy X)
- Facing west, homes have the benefit of dramatic sunsets.

### **Area 3 (dark blue): Hall Lane**

Hall Lane runs west-east from its junction with Hockey Hill and close to the junction of Hockey Hill and Knaves Green. This area is characterised by the business units in Old Station Yard including motor vehicle repairs and the site of the Mid Suffolk Light Railway (The Middy) at Brockford Station. The Railway track follows Hall Lane down to the river.



### Layout/Topography

- After the main concourse, the railway's various station buildings and workshops are screened from the Lane by trees and shrubs and include a pond.
- On other side is an area of woodland, with ditches on both sides of the road, followed by a large open field with a verge and a mature tree.
- At the end of the Lane is Wetheringsett Hall, with its outbuildings which include a number of barn conversions.

- The Railway has buildings running alongside the track to midway down the lane.
- There is a single bungalow at the top of the Lane on the other side, and no further development until the Hall and barn conversions at the bottom.

#### **Access/Streetscape**

- Hall Lane runs in a gentle gradient from the top of Hockey Hill to the river
- This is a narrow lane only suitable for single light traffic, shared with walkers. It is of ageing concrete for most of its length.

#### **Notable Buildings and Materials**

- The large utility buildings on business site are of agricultural vintage.
- Many of the railway buildings are of heritage stock, and in varied sizes and materials, mostly wood.
- The single bungalow is detached.
- The Hall is a substantial dwelling with an early 19<sup>th</sup> century frontage in red brick, with outbuildings, approached down a long drive.
- The barn conversions are in black weatherboarding with brick plinths.

#### **Landmarks**

- The Railway and its associated complex of buildings is itself distinct and recognisable, by its many visitors.
- The industrial/agricultural buildings are large and very visible. They are chiefly constructed of corrugated tin sheeting with concrete roofs.
- Wetheringsett Hall is distinctive, but not easy to see clearly especially when the trees are in leaf. It is largely red brick with grey slate roof tiles and a long, gated entrance drive.
- The neighbouring barns have been converted into substantial separate residences.

#### **Green and Natural Features**

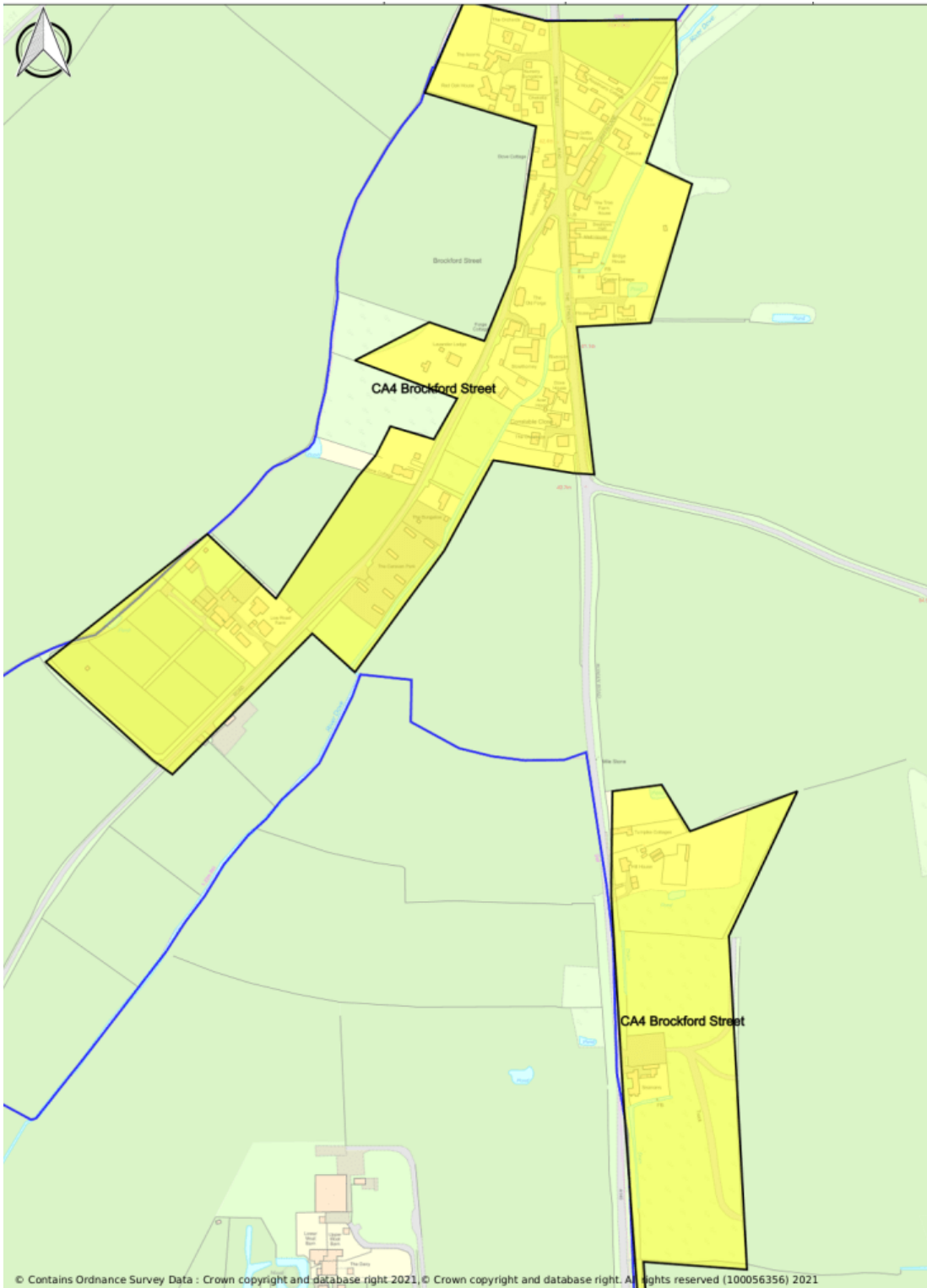
- There are hedges and trees screening the railway track and hedges and woodland at the top of the Lane on the other side.
- The river/stream winds its way past the Hall towards the Church with a footpath alongside and is bounded on the Hall side by mature trees – mainly willows.
- There is some signage relating to the Railway, some of it moveable. The remainder of the Lane is unsigned/uncluttered.

#### **Views**

- The view from the top of the Lane towards the Hall is particularly attractive, with the river valley running towards the Church and the willow plantation to the right.

**Area 4 (yellow): Brockford Street**

**This character area is dominated by the busy A140 (Norwich to Ipswich Road) which runs north-south through this part of the parish. There are a cluster of listed buildings (largely Grade II) which are located close to the junction of Brockford Road and the A140.**









### Layout/Topography

- The area is largely defined by the cluster of properties located at the of the A140 north-south route with Brockford Road, which connects the Parish with the village of Mendlesham to the southwest.
- The land uses are predominantly residential with some commercial/business and a predominantly arable farming landscape.
- The properties in the centre of the Brockford Street are clustered around the junction with Brockford Road.
- The centre of Brockford Street is in a slight dip, rising up to the north. The land to the east and west is largely flat.
- There are several small cul-de-sacs or closes along Brockford Street itself.
- Housing along Brockford Road is, on the whole, widely spaced along the road with housing becoming sparser towards Mendlesham.
- There is a caravan park for static caravans east of Brockford Road on land southeast of Low Road Farm (DC/20/05405)
- There are also other mobile homes/static caravans located further south along Brockford Road closer to Mendlesham, the largest concentration lies between the road and the River Dove. The emerging Babergh Mid Suffolk Local Plan (Submitted for Examination in March 2021) allocates two sites for Gypsy and Travellers.
- Brockford Road itself runs through a flat landscape.

## Spaces

- There are no notable green or community spaces within this character area.

## Access/Streetscape

- The A140 is a busy road with heavy HGV and other vehicular traffic. The traffic is a dominating factor here in terms of noise, movement, and dust.
- On the eastern side of the A140 there is a narrow, tarmacked pedestrian path runs which runs between Cedars Hill and the fuel station, just north of the Parish.
- South of Cedars Hill there is no footpath, only a rough grass verge. This isolates the footpaths from the rest of Brockford.
- There is no entry to traffic into Brockford Road from the A140. This is important for safety due to the width of the road at this point, which is largely single track with mature trees and hedges either side. but the restriction forces cyclists from Wetheringsett to ride along the A140 for a greater distance before they can travel to the west of the A140.
- Griffin Lane becomes a footpath which connects Brockford to the centre and north of the village of Wetheringsett. It appears well maintained and used. The footpath which runs parallel just to the south of Griffin Lane offers a circular route.

## Notable Buildings and Materials

- There is a distinct cluster of historic houses at the junction with Brockford Road.
- Notable materials include render (pink and white), thatch, grey tiles, and red pantiles.
- Many of the properties are cottage style and site very close to the road frontage including a characterful cluster.
- Many of the properties are cottages or detached dwellings.
- Older properties include architectural details such as pargetting and weather boarding.
- housing of varying proportions
- Many of the houses along the A140 are more modern late 20thC and early 21<sup>st</sup> C – these include large, detached family houses with red brick and tiled roofs.
- Interspersed are cottages and bungalows of more modest size.
- Both sites shown as allocations in the Local Plan are in this character area. The site furthest north site already has planning permission for 9 houses on a 2acre plot and will introduce a more contemporary style of housing to the mix.

## Landmarks

- The coloured properties along the A140 are very visible and have a landmark status visible for some distance.

- A large tree on the western side of the A140 just north of the junction with Brockford Road is visible in both directions.

### **Green and Natural Features**

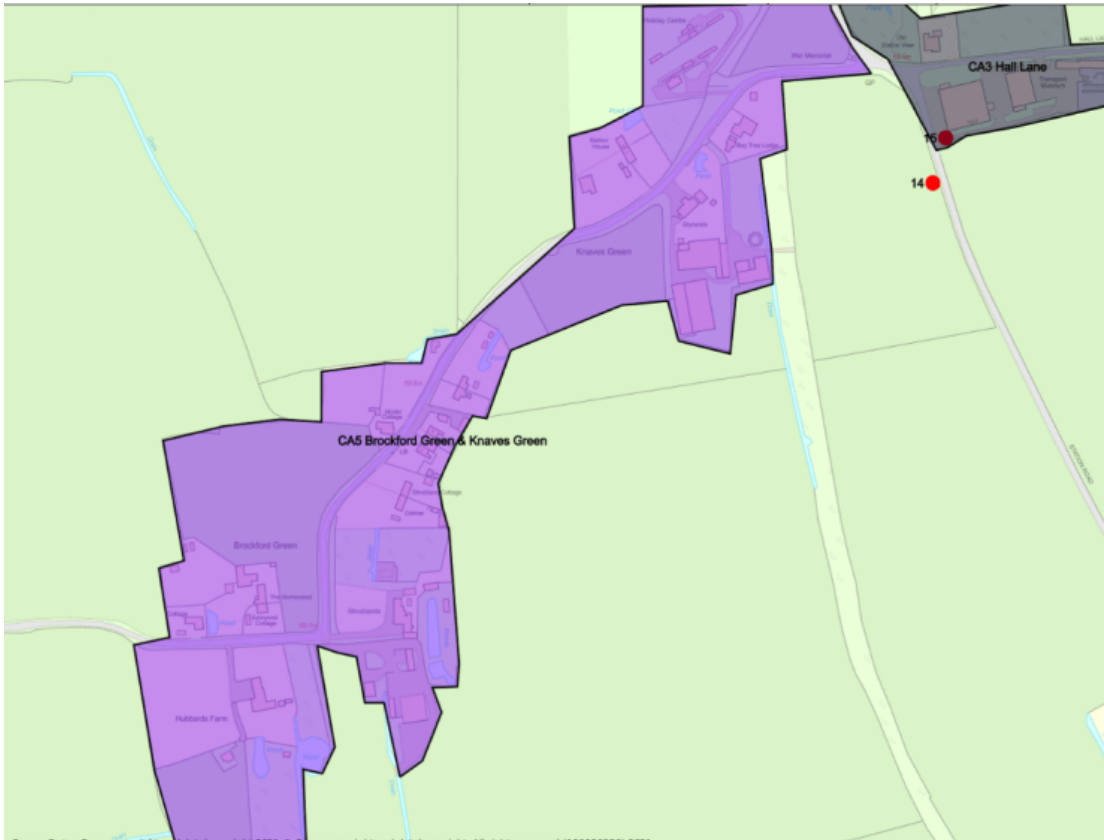
- Brockford Road is lined by hedges and mature trees.
- Boundary treatments for residential properties include low hedges and trees.
- The river Dove passes under the A140 at Brockford.
- The influence of the river is most seen from the footpath beyond Griffin Lane, here the river enters area of woodland with what appears to be an ancient bank and hedgerow to the north of the path.
- Natural England identifies potential parkland to the east of the A140 by Seamans.
- Viewed from the public right of way, there appear to be a few remaining mature trees, the woodland is dominated by more recent natural regeneration / planting.

### **Views**

- Due to clusters of continuous development, there are few long views or vistas in this area.
- Brockford Road has mature trees and hedges and these also channel views along the road rather than to the sides.
- At the southern end of Brockford, there are views over large arable fields in the parish of Mendlesham. (See Policy WCB9).

### **Area 5 (purple): Brockford Green and Knaves Green**

This area consists of the small largely residential hamlets of Knaves Green and Brockford Green and the triangle of land at the junction with Hockey Hill/Hall Lane which hosts the village's War Memorial.





### Layout

- The area is characterised by a small triangle of land which hosts the War Memorial which is Grade II Listed. Like most parish war memorials, it was constructed after the 1914-18 War in 1921.
- Constructed of Cornish Granite it has later additions in commemoration of the 1939-45 Second World War.
- Knaves Green lies just to the southwest of the War Memorial and broadly consists of the former Station House (Grade II Listed) and now two dwellings, some railway sidings that have been converted into self-catering tourist accommodation, a few residential properties and agricultural buildings.
- The road is largely single track and winds its way westward towards the A140 before becoming Brockford Green.
- Brockford Green is another small hamlet consisting of approximately 15 dwellings in the form of cottages.
- The most notable building is Shrublands, a large black and white timber framed house Grade II Listed and dating from 1450, set well back from the road behind mature trees and hedging and on to Hubbards Farm with sporadic residential dwellings of differing ages opposite.
- Most dwellings are well spaced with gardens and meadows between them.

### Topography

- The land is largely Flat Suffolk plateau with high levels of hedging and tree cover.

### Spaces

- Despite the names Knaves Green and Brockford Green there are no publicly accessible spaces.
- Dwellings are well spaced with green areas of largely meadow between.
- There are a number of privately owned green spaces, which are semi domestic in nature rather than farmland.
- This includes a meadow c. 1.5 hectares at Eversons Farm plus three areas owned by the Church & Town Estate
- One of the meadows circa. 0.5 hectares is used for dog-training.

- There are also some allotments c. 0.1 hectare used by local residents.
- The area behind the War Memorial is known as Memorial Field and is approximately 0.5 hectare of meadow.

#### **Access and Streetscape**

- The lane is largely used as a minor through-route between the A140 and the village centre.
- Mostly single width carriageway with verges regularly damaged by larger vehicles and agricultural machinery.
- Streetscape includes a mix of older farmhouses from the 17<sup>th</sup> C, some still thatched, others pantiled; 1950s semi and terrace council houses; 1970s detached bungalows.

#### **Landmarks**

- Southerly aspects looking out of this area are dominated by views of the feature the 'Mendlesham TV Mast' which is over 305m tall.

#### **Green and Natural Features**

- Farm and domestic hedgerows along much of the road.
- Several ancient oak trees.
- Green meadows between residential gardens.
- Several properties have large ponds to the rear.
- There has been recent hedge coppicing in Station Road.

#### **Views**

- Hedges tend to limit views from the road, although most properties enjoy extensive farmland views from their gardens.
- Any views towards the south are dominated by the TV Mast.

#### **Area 6 (brown): Station Road**

This area covers two groups of residential properties set out in linear form along Station Road which runs north-south and links the Station complex at the junction of Hall Lane and Knaves Green with the hamlet of Wetherup Street/Park Green and Town Lane.



### Layout and Topography

- Primarily arable farmland (Broad Farm), with a few residential properties in linear form located on the western side of Station Road.
- Just 10 houses on a one-mile length of road with open fields between them.
- The landscape is largely flat Suffolk plateau with few intervening features and no specific green spaces.

### Access and Streetscape

- Station Road is a relatively straight road running north to south linking Wetheringsett to Park Green.

### Notable Buildings and Materials

- There are three 17thC Farmhouses; 1 barn conversion; and three pairs 1950s farm cottages.



### Green and Natural Features

- There are roadside hedgerows and trees particularly along the eastern side of the road although the arable fields in this location tend to be large with far away boundaries.

### Views

- Good views across open farmland; however, these tend to be slightly featureless and there are no significant views.
- Southern views can just pick out the TV Mast.

### Area 7 (orange): Town Lane

This character area runs west-east from the A140 to Station Road and is characterised by widely separated residential properties, some of which have a historic character and high hedging. To the south lies the Mendlesham Airfield industrial estate.







### Layout and Topography

- The junction with Station Road is well hedged which breaks out into expansive views over arable fields to the north the further west you travel.
- Mixed native hedgerows are associated with two small pieces of land owned by a local charity and used as allotment land.
- There are few widely separated residential houses, mostly screened by high hedging.
- Business premises include Anglia Fabrications and Haulage Site located on the southern side of Town Lane.
- All buildings are situated on the southern side of the road.
- The landscape is largely wide-open clay plateau. The northern aspect is, in the main, characterised by expansive arable fields.
- The exception is a couple small fields, part enclosed by hedging, at the Park Green end of Town Lane.

### Access and Streetscape

- Town Lane provides access for the southern end of village to A140.
- It is not wide enough for two cars to pass along its entire length. The edges of the road have been eroded by HGV movements.
- A small section of footpath between Green Farm and Moat House runs parallel to the road.
- Generally, the highway is tarmacked road with broken and rutted edging.

### Notable Buildings and Materials

- There is a decorative village signpost at the junction with Park Green.
- To the south, the container stack and smell from material piled on the concrete pad is widely visible although not attractive.
- More intimate views created by the hedging of surrounding Church, Town, and Allotments fields.
- Residential buildings typify those of the area, two storey detached ex-farmhouses.
- Whilst most are tiled, Hoods and Town Lane Farm retain their thatch.
- Outbuildings opposite Town Lane Farm have been recently converted to provide a single detached single storey house.

### Landmarks

- The Mendlesham Mast, standing at 305.4m high is a significant landmark to the south of Town Lane.

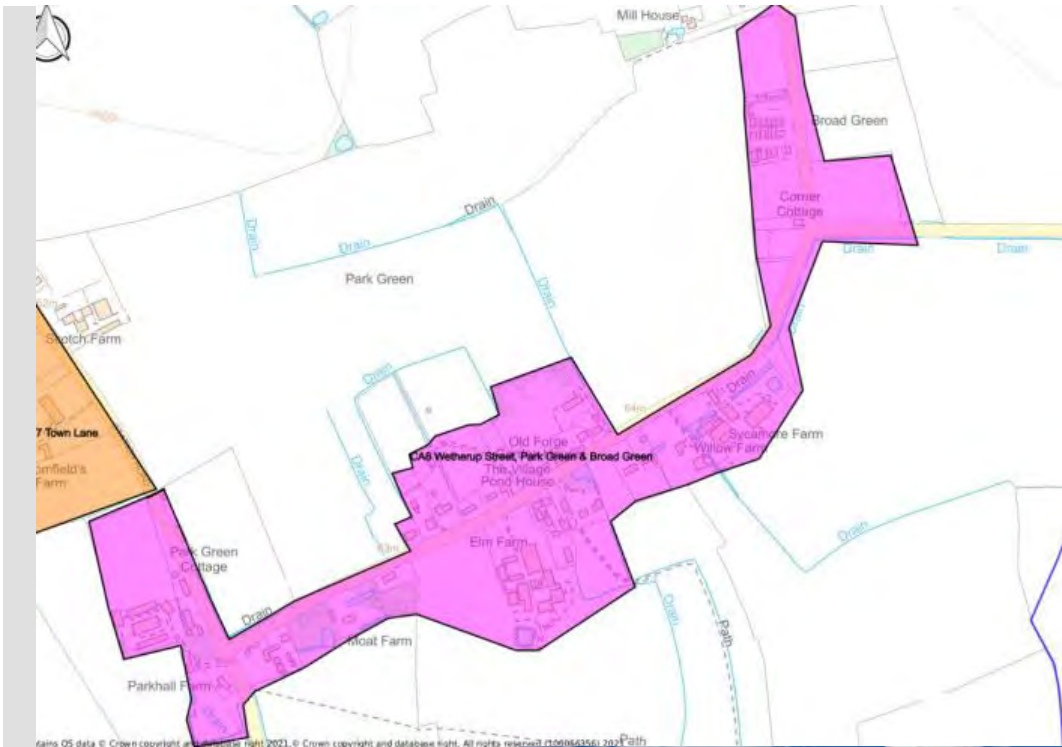
<https://www.thebigtower.com/live/Mendlesham/Index.htm>

#### **Views**

- Views to the south are dominated by the TV Mast and the industrial activity on the airfield.
- Views to the north are expanse over agricultural fields with distant tree lines.

#### **Area 8 (pink): Wetherup Street. Park Green and Broad Green**

**Wetherup Street and Park Green are distinct and separate hamlets consisting of predominantly linear development containing several notable Grade II Listed Buildings. The area is predominantly residential.**







### Layout and Topography

- This area is characterised by a linear largely residential form interspersed with pockets of arable land.
- There are three farms on the southern side of Wetherup Street – Sycamore, Elm and Willow Farms.
- The style and age of properties varies with listed buildings in proximity to modern detached dwellings.
- Housing along the southern side of Wetherup Street continues along most of the length of the street.
- Housing is generally widely spaced.
- Much of the housing is well set back and faces the carriageway.
- A new development of two houses and adjoining historic house overlook and open space set back from the road.
- Housing on the northern side of the road is concentrated in the central length of the street.
- Most housing faces the street and is closer to the road than on the northern side. A static caravan is set back.
- The land along this hamlet is on a flat plateau. Land falls away along a gentle gradient towards Mickfield and Debenham.
- There is a Caravan Park known as ‘Green acres’ which provides homes in static caravans for residents aged 50+.

### Spaces

- There are no publicly accessible spaces.
- A small space created when land was cleared to build two houses on a former coal yard site.
- Connection to a footpath network is accessed to the side of this space.
- There are some open areas between arable field between the hamlet of Broad Green and Wetherup Street.

### Access and Streetscape

- There is no surfaced footpath or continuous verge, pedestrians walk along the edge of the carriageway.

- Public rights (footpaths) of way run in and out of Wetherup Street to the south and north.

### **Notable Buildings and Materials**

- The majority of housing is detached.; many are rendered with a few brick faced houses.
- Large 'traditional Suffolk' farmhouses dominate the southern side of the road.
- There are also a couple of smaller detached properties.
- On the other side of the road there are more diverse housing, cottages with dormer windows, 20<sup>th</sup> C houses.
- A number of houses are thatched, others have red tiles.
- The names of now residential properties give clues to their former uses – The Old Forge, The Pump House and The Trowel and Hammer (Grade II Listed).
- There are no notable landmarks in this area.

### **Green and Natural Features**

- There are a number of mature garden trees, and the property names imply an area formerly characterised by trees and plants – Primrose Cottage, Cherry Bank, The Firs.
- Many of the ancient trees on the veteran tree register are found in and to the south of this hamlet.
- There are Preserved Trees noted in the gardens at the western end of the street.
- Houses fronted by a variety of hedging, although mainly mixed natives.
- Other houses fronted by picket or paddock fencing.

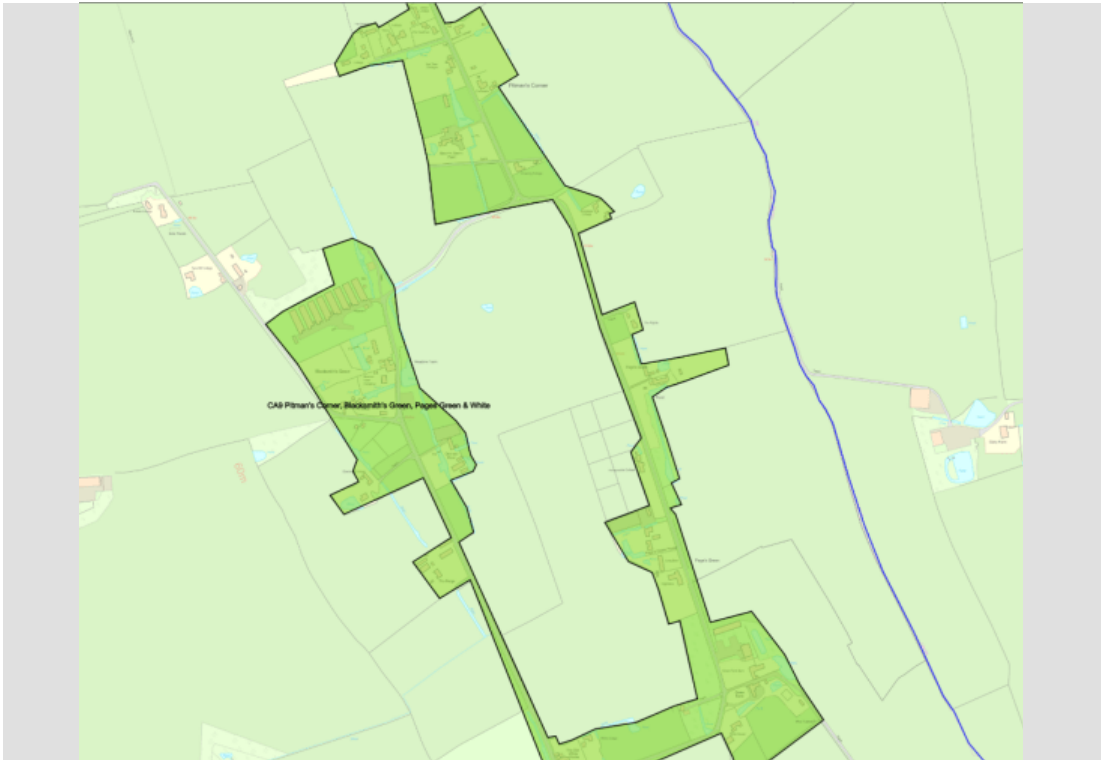
### **Views**

- Views from the eastern end of Wetherup Street, south towards Debenham across open fields. (See PolicyWCB9)
- An open landscape viewed from the footpath which runs parallel and south of Wetherup Street gives wide reaching views across to Broad Green and north across to Park Green.

### **Area 9 (green): Pitman's Corner, Blacksmith's Green, Pages Green and White House Corner**

**This area is a collection of four small hamlets connected by narrow unadopted rural lanes. Buildings are largely residential with a number of historic buildings and spaces.**









## Pitmans Corner

### High Lane and 'Clay Lane'

#### Layout and Topography •

- There are (in the main) widely separated residential houses on High Lane (also known as Rose Lane) and a narrow unadopted lane off High Lane known as 'Clay Lane')
- Residential properties are arranged on either side of High Lane, and most are built near the road.
- On 'Clay Lane', properties are built on the northern side with ponds on the southern side. The lane is also a footpath to farmland to the west through private land bounded by tall poplars.
- This area sits with the wide-open clay plateau.

- The surrounding land is characterised by expansive arable fields with occasional small strips of land adjacent to High Lane which are privately owned, arable farmland or farmland set aside as wildflower meadows.
- High Lane extends to Pages Green and Blacksmiths Green at its southern end. It is not wide enough for two cars and passing/larger traffic has affected the verges.

### **Spaces**

- The southern edge of 'Clay Lane' abutting the ponds has been subject to collective wild gardening by homeowners along the lane.

### **Notable Buildings and Materials**

- Residential buildings along High Lane and 'Clay Lane' are varied (detached and semi-detached) and a mixture of older and newer properties.
- Of note on High Lane is the converted level crossing gate lodge of the old Mid-Suffolk Light Railway

### **Landmarks**

- A small red post box is located on the corner of High Lane and 'Clay Lane'

### **Green and Natural Features**

- At the northern end of High Lane there is a pond on the east side of the road adjacent to residential buildings.
- 'Clay Lane' has ponds to its southern side.
- Hedgerows and trees characterise High Lane edges.
- High Lane is tarmacked. 'Clay Lane' is hardcore and maintained by its residents.

### **Views**

- Views to the east and west of High Lane are of arable farmland in the main

### **Blacksmith's Green, 'Joe's Road' and White Horse Corner**

#### **Layout and Topography**

- At the northern end of Blacksmiths Green is a poultry farm owned by Moy Park but is currently not operational.
- Otherwise, there are a few residential properties.
- Similarly, a cul de sac off Blacksmiths Green (known as 'Joe's Road'), has a few residential properties.
- White Horse Corner, at the southern end of Blacksmiths Green, has six residential properties
- Residential properties are arranged on either side of Blacksmiths Green and Joes Road, and most are built near the road.
- The area sits within the wide-open clay plateau.
- The surrounding land is characterised by expansive arable fields.
- The smell of waste material on the hard concrete pad by the pond at the northern end of Blacksmiths Green is unpleasant.

### **Access and Streetscape**

- Blacksmiths Green extends from High Lane/Pages Green/Blacksmiths Green crossroad in the north to White Horse Corner/Pages Green and Broad Green crossroad at its southern end.
- Blacksmiths Green is not wide enough for two cars and larger traffic has affected the verges.
- 'Joe's Road' is, similarly, a single lane tarmacked road.
- There is footpath off Blacksmiths Green on its western edge
- Blacksmiths Green, White Horse Corner and 'Joe's Road' are tarmacked
- The village Hakluyt route follows Blacksmiths Green.

### **Notable Buildings and Materials**

- The residential buildings along Blacksmiths Green and Joes Road are varied and a mixture of older and newer properties.
- The industrial buildings of the Moy Park poultry farm consist, broadly, of sheds, hoppers, and gas tanks.

### **Landmarks**

- The Mendlesham mast is visible from Blacksmiths Green.

### **Green and Natural Features**

- There is a large and recently re-dug pond at the northern end of Blacksmiths Green.
- Otherwise, the road (and 'Joes Road') is bordered by hedging, trees, or open farmland.

### **Views**

- Views to the east and west of Blacksmiths Green are of arable farmland in the main

### **Pages Green**

- Pages Green is a 'remarkably unaltered section of linear common that was formerly known as Wetheringsett Green and extended to over 100 acres.
- The relatively small area which survived the enclosure of the mid-19th century was re-named Page's Green after the tenant of the farm as recorded on the tithe survey of 1841: Thomas Page'. (Alston L, (2011), 'The Barn at Pages Green Farm, Wetheringsett, Suffolk, WCB 066', The Archaeological Service, Suffolk)

### **Layout and Topography**

- There are (in the main) widely separated residential houses at Pages Green.
- There is a hard pad at the southern end with an old barn and unused pig sheds which is currently being considered for housing development.
- Residential properties are arranged on either side of Pages Green, and most are built near the road.
- The land sits within the wide-open clay plateau.

- The surrounding land is characterised by expansive arable fields with occasional small strips of land adjacent to the Pages Green Road which are, in the main, privately owned.
- Alston's (2011) Historic Record of The Barn at Pages Green Farm describes it as adjoining 'a narrow strip of pasture defined by a metalled lane to the west and a broad ditch on the east which represents a remarkably well-preserved section of a large rectilinear common marked on Hodkinson's County map of 1783 as Wetheringsett Green'.

### **Access and Streetscape**

- Pages Green extends from the High Lane/Blacksmiths Green crossroads in the north to the Blacksmiths Green/White Horse Corner at its southern end.
- It is a single vehicle lane.
- Pages Green has a tarmacked road.
- The bridleway heading south from beside The White House leads towards Aspal then on to Debenham or to Broad Green.
- National Cycle Route 40 and the Heart of Suffolk Cycle route are signed from Broad Green through Pages Green and north to Thorndon via Pitmans Corner.

### **Notable Buildings and Materials**

- Residential buildings along Pages Green are varied and a mixture of older and newer properties.
- All are detached and are largely set well back from the road.
- Materials include red pantiles, red brick, and some coloured render.
- Some of the newer builds are single storey.
- A concrete pad on which there are redundant agricultural buildings has, subject to an official complaint, been granted planning permission for conversion to 4 residential properties.

### **Landmarks**

- A red post box is located just east of the green triangle at the junction of Pages Green and Blacksmiths Green
- 'Natural England' shows that a potential ancient orchard is located opposite Green Farmhouse

### **Green and Natural Features**

- Pages Green is heavily bordered by trees and hedgerows.

### **Views**

- Views to the east and west of Pages Green are of arable farmland in the main.

## Appendix C: Non-designated heritage assets justification

### Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The table below outlines the justification for the inclusion of important character buildings and historic features. The criteria are based on the 'Local Heritage Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7', page 9.

<b>1. Name of Asset : The School House</b>	
<b>Age</b>	Victorian
<b>Rarity</b>	Only surviving purpose-built school building in the parish.
<b>Architectural and Artistic interest</b>	Typical of the design of Victorian school houses built by Church/Diocese. Intricate cross detailing in entrance elevation, window arch detailing and brick quoins
<b>Group value</b>	School House linked to the Primary School
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	None known
<b>Historic interest</b>	Historical interest as being linked to the school
<b>Landmark status</b>	Centrally located in the village adjacent to the Primary School



<b>2. Name of Asset : Willow Farm and barns, Wetherup Street</b>	
<b>Age</b>	19th century farmstead and barn complex
<b>Rarity</b>	One of three farmsteads along Wetherup Street named after trees (Elm and Sycamore being the others)

<b>Architectural and Artistic interest</b>	Cream/white render with dark slate roof with central brick chimney. Sits perpendicular but well back from the road, entrance faces east with windows only on the northern elevation. Barn complex located on the rear – weatherboarding construction.
<b>Group value</b>	Close functional relationship between the farmhouse and the barns
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	None known
<b>Historic interest</b>	None
<b>Landmark status</b>	Farmhouse sits back for the road down a long drive punctuated by willow trees on the eastern side. Open grassed area between the farmhouse and the road provides a wide setting.



### 3. Name of Asset : The former White Horse Public House (former Cat and Mouse Public House)

<b>Age</b>	1837
<b>Rarity</b>	One of a series of former public houses in the parish. Traded as White Horse and latterly the Cat and Mouse until 1993. Now residential .
<b>Architectural and Artistic interest</b>	Two storey residential dwelling house. Cream rendered with dark tiles roofs with pantiled ridge (originally white render) . Single storey extension is rendered with red pantiles and a shallow pitch Both have tall red brick chimneys in central position on the roof.
<b>Group value</b>	None obvious
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	None known
<b>Historic interest</b>	Formerly the White Horse Public House and later the Cat and Mouse
<b>Landmark status</b>	Set back from the road and sits at 180 degrees from it. Good views from the street via the gateway.





<b>4. Name of Asset : Former Trowel and Hammer, now residential dwelling</b>	
<b>Age</b>	Circa 1851
<b>Rarity</b>	One of a series of former public houses within the parish. Closed in 1960.
<b>Architectural and Artistic interest</b>	1 <sup>1/2</sup> storey residential dwelling originally the Trowel and Hammer Alehouse. Constructed of red pantiled roof with rendered elevations. Has been extended. Retains at least one original chimney on gable. Now white rendered with black roof and window frames but contains examples of 'rat trap masonry'. The pub was struck by lightning in 1939 which destroyed the thatched roof & roof beams. The roof was replaced with a tiled roof
<b>Group value</b>	None. Original association as a public house.
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	None known
<b>Historic interest</b>	Formerly the Trowel and Hammer Public House.
<b>Landmark status</b>	Set well back from the road but with an open undeveloped frontage and is therefore visible. Provides a wide space of frontage development.



**5. Name of Asset : Roundhouse, remnant of former post mill, Broad Green, formerly used as a store following demolition of the post mill in 1957.**

<b>Age</b>	Built in 1882 by Whitmore G Binyon and the Clarkes to replace a post mill blown down in 1881. It ceased work circa 1936 and was pulled down in 1957.
<b>Rarity</b>	Only surviving remnant of this mill; only mill in the parish. There were four patent sails, two pairs of stones in the head and a fantail Post mill first mapped 1825/6.
<b>Architectural and Artistic interest</b>	Roundhouse is two storey and brick built. Mill had four patent sails, two pairs of stones in the head and a fantail Post mill first mapped 1825/6.
<b>Group value</b>	Association with the post mill.
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	None known
<b>Historic interest</b>	Constructed as a circular building at the base of a post mill to provide storage space and to give protection to the superstructure. The roundhouse is not attached to the mill itself. Some roundhouses were later converted for domestic purposes.
<b>Landmark status</b>	Visually prominent in this part of the landscape, located next to the road and visible from it.



<b>6. Name of Asset : Stone Cottage, Brockford</b>	
<b>Age</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C?
<b>Rarity</b>	Only Stone House of this type in Brockford. Unusual materials for this part of the parish
<b>Architectural and Artistic interest</b>	C19 <sup>th</sup> stone and flint cottage with interesting features including quoining and a detailed cornice. The building is unusual in that it was originally built as a square, so part of the building's importance comes from its symmetry and proportions. The building has a slate roof, central chimney stack and a central dormer in each elevation. The building is not listed but is considered to be an undesignated heritage asset with significant architectural and aesthetic qualities.'
<b>Group value</b>	Has the appearance of a Lodge or gatehouse at the entrance to larger estate which would be outside of the parish
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	None Known
<b>Historic interest</b>	Has the appearance of a Lodge or gatehouse at the entrance to larger estate which would be outside of the parish
<b>Landmark status</b>	Building is close to the road /public rights of way and is visible from it.




**7. Name of Asset : The Cedars (also known as Hawthorn House)**

<b>Age</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> century farmstead
<b>Rarity</b>	One of a number of farmsteads of this age found on key routes into the village.
<b>Architectural and Artistic interest</b>	Redbrick and slate roof mansion style house, with some gothic style features including windows with some arch window details on front elevation. Set in its own grounds and back from the road
<b>Group value</b>	Adjacent courtyard of outbuildings including stabling and groom flat.
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	None known
<b>Historic interest</b>	Unusual design for Wetheringsett
<b>Landmark status</b>	House is set back from the road behind mature hedges and is therefore not prominent.



## Appendix D: Local Green Space justification

The table below outlines the justification for the inclusion of each Local Green Space identified. The criteria are based on paragraph 102 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Spaces and should not be approved except in very special circumstances and the local planning authority should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm.

<b>1. All Saints Churchyard, Church Street</b>	
<b>Description:</b> Churchyard consisting of grassed area and mature trees, surrounding, and providing the setting for All Saints Church	
<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	Located adjacent to the church and within the main built-up part of the village
<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	Provides the historical setting to the Grade II* Listed church. Historical and community value through its use as a parish graveyard. Provides a tranquil area and is being actively managed for wildlife.
<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Area tbc but is an enclosed area with definable boundaries. Not an extensive tract of land. Area approximately 1.09 acres.
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria.
	

<b>2. Cemetery, Church Street</b>	
<b>Description:</b> Parish cemetery located on Church Street	
<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	Located within the main built-up part of the village and inside the Conservation Area. Close to the school and the village hall
<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	Community value through its use as a cemetery also provides an area of tranquility.

<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Area has definable boundaries and is not an extensive tract of land. Area approximately 1.62 acres
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria
	

### 3. Playing field, adjacent to the Village Hall

**Description:** Playing field immediately adjacent to the village hall and close to the school

<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	Within the main built-up area of the village. Close to other facilities such as the school and the village hall
<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	Community value through its use as a playing field used in conjunction with the village hall and by the school.
<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Area has definable boundaries and is not an extensive tract of land. Area approximately 3 acres.
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria

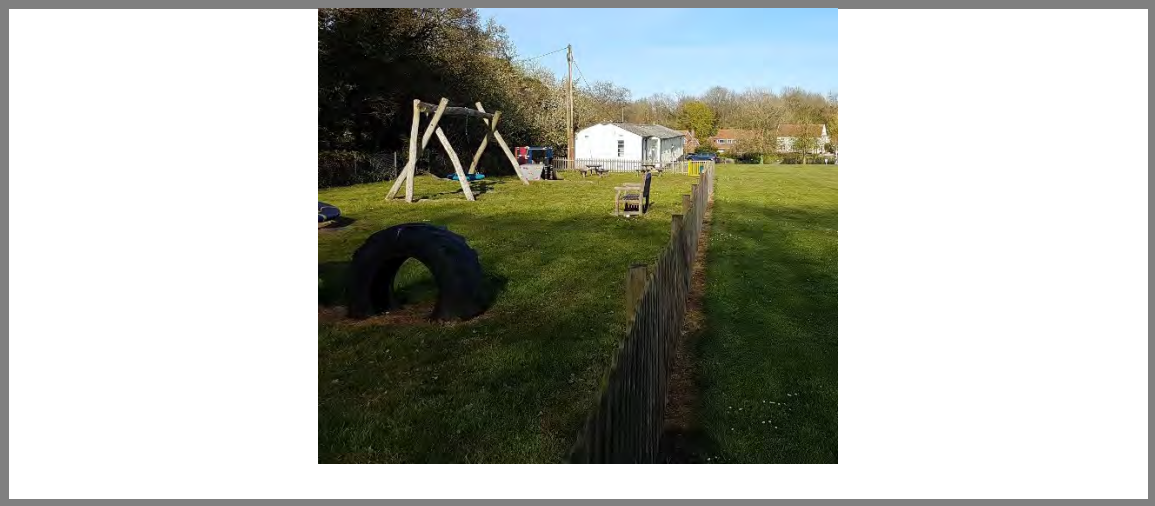


### 4. Play area (equipped)

**Description:** Children's equipped play area located within the wider playing field close to the village hall and the school

<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	Located within the main built-up part of the village; forms part of the wider playing field. Close to the school and the village hall
<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	Community value through its use as a play area. Used by the school and also the community more generally.
<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Smaller defined area within the wider playing field. Not an extensive tract of land. Area approximately 0.2 acres
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria







<b>5. Meadow at Church Street</b>	
<b>Description:</b> Area of meadow located at the periphery of the village centre and northwest of the Church. An area of improved grassland with hedges on three sides	
<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	Located close to the main built-up part of the village and adjacent to new development at All Saints Close
<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	An open area of land providing a tranquil location near the river, at the edge of the Conservation Area. Affords views to the church and provides a wider setting.
<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Area has well defined boundaries and is not an extensive tract of land. Area approximately 1.2 hectares.
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria



<b>6. Hockey Hill recreation field</b>	
<b>Description:</b> Area of open grassland to the east of residential development known as Hockey Hill. Area is identified as the 'football field' due to its historic recreational use.	
<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	High density development to the north and the west. Hockey Hill is one of the most densely populated area in the parish . Paxes House, Grade II listed is to the south.
<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	Historical use as a football field and playing field. OS base maps identify it as a playing field. Originally intended as open space to serve the Hockey Hill development. To the East are extensive views across agricultural fields to the river and Wetheringsett Hall, and thence to Pitman's Corner. The field has been leased for a peppercorn rent to the local football team, which played on it up to the 1980's . Since then, it has continued to be used by the local community for recreational activities. Whilst it is in the ownership of local farmers it has not been actively farmed due to the proximity of the surrounding residential development, its size and configuration
<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Area is approximately 1 hectare which is not an extensive tract of land in the context of this part of the settlement. Area has easily identifiable boundaries on three sides.
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria.
	

<b>7. War Memorial field</b>	
<b>Description:</b> Area of paddock/meadow which provides the setting for the War Memorial in the centre of the parish. Triangular in shape and forms the junction of Hall Road, Hockey Hill, and Knaves Green.	
<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	Development of Knaves Green to the southwest, residential developments on Hockey Hill to the northeast and the Old Station Yard units and the Middy to the east.

<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	Provides the setting to the War Memorial which has an historical and community significance. Is owned by a Charitable Trust and used by the Middy at certain times. Therefore ,has an historical and community value
<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Area has three easily definable boundaries and is not an extensive tract of land. Area approximately 1.15 acres.
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria and owners have indicated agreement
	

<b>8. Allotments at Knaves Green</b>	
<b>Description:</b> Area of allotment land. Owned by a Charitable Trust.	
<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	Within the hamlet of Knaves Green. Residential development to south-west and east.
<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	Community value by virtue of its use as allotment land.
<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Area has easily definable boundaries and is not an extensive tract of land. Area approximately 1.57 acres.
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria and owners have indicated agreement
	

<b>9. Parkland at Wetheringsett Manor</b>	
<b>Description:</b> Area of historic mature parkland surrounding Grade II Listed Wetheringsett Manor which is used as a special school.	

<b>In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves</b>	Located close to the main built-up part of the village north east of the church.
<b>Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance</b>	Provides the mature woodland/parkland setting to the Manor House. The Manor is used as a school and the parkland forms part of the school grounds. The parkland has an historical and community value.
<b>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</b>	Area has clearly defined boundaries and is not an extensive tract of land in the context of this part of the settlement as a whole. Area approximately 5 hectares.
<b>Include in NP y/n ?</b>	Meets all criteria and landowners have indicated agreement.



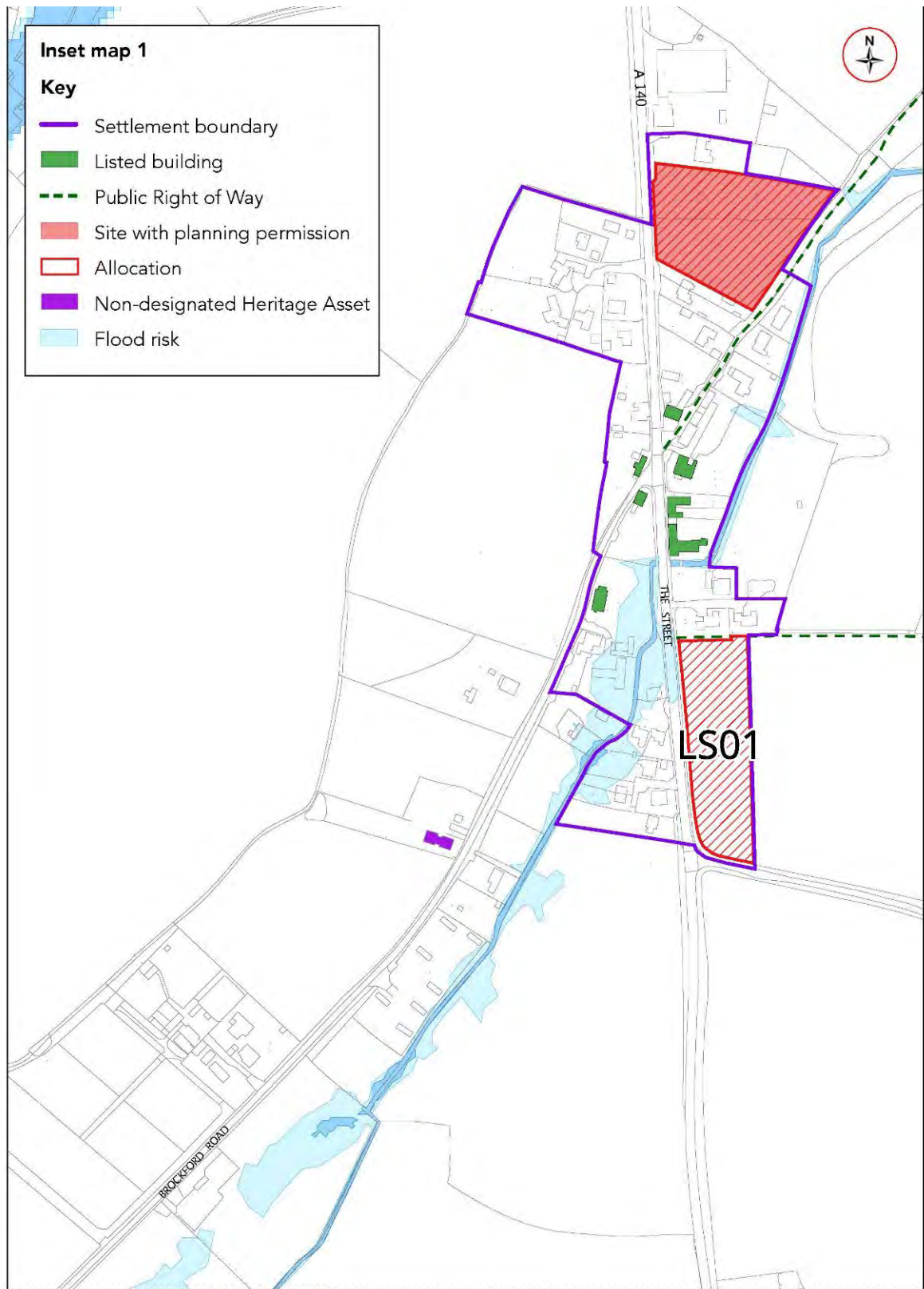
**Appendix E: Glossary**

<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
<b>Allocation</b>	An area of land identified for development in a development plan. The allocation will specify the type of development that will be permitted on the land.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variation including plants and animals.
<b>Community Facilities</b>	Facilities providing for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, leisure and cultural needs of the community.
<b>Conservation Area</b>	An area of special architectural or historic interest, designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, whose character and appearance is protected.
<b>Density</b>	Measurement of the number of dwellings per hectare and often in equivalent dwellings per acre.
<b>Development</b>	Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over, or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Most forms of development require planning permission.
<b>Greenfield Site</b>	Land that has not previously been used for urban development. It is usually land last used for agriculture and located next to or outside existing built-up areas of a settlement.
<b>Habitat</b>	The natural home of an animal or plant often designated as an area of nature conservation interest.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education, and health facilities.
<b>Landscape Character Assessment</b>	A tool to identify and understand the factors that give character to the landscape and to help inform policy and decisions about how the landscape may change in the future.
<b>Listed Building</b>	A building or other structure of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. The grades of listing are grade I, II* or II.
<b>Local List</b>	A list of buildings identified for their local historic,

	architectural, or cultural contribution to the character of an area. The Local List is compiled and adopted by the Local Planning Authority. See also Non-Designated Heritage Assets.
<b>Local Green Space</b>	An area of green space that is demonstrably special to a local community by way of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquility, or richness of its wildlife (see NPPF 2018 paragraph 100).
<b>Local Plan</b>	The plan for the future development of the 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. Current core strategies or other planning policies which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan. The term includes old policies which have been saved under the 2004 Act.
<b>Nature Conservation</b>	The protection, management, and promotion of wildlife habitat for the benefit of wild species, as well as the communities that use and enjoy them.
<b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</b>	The NPPF forms the national planning policies that Local Planning Authorities need to take into account when drawing up their Local Plan and other documents and making decisions on planning policies. The NPPF is published by the Department of Communities and Local Government.
<b>Neighbourhood Plans</b>	A Plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
<b>Non-Designated Heritage Asset</b>	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'.
<b>Open Space</b>	Open space is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as 'land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground'. Open space should be taken to mean 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 also act as a visual amenity.
<b>Protected Species</b>	Plants and animal species afforded protection under certain Acts of Law and Regulations.
<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</b>	A SSSI is identified by Natural England as requiring protection from damaging development on account

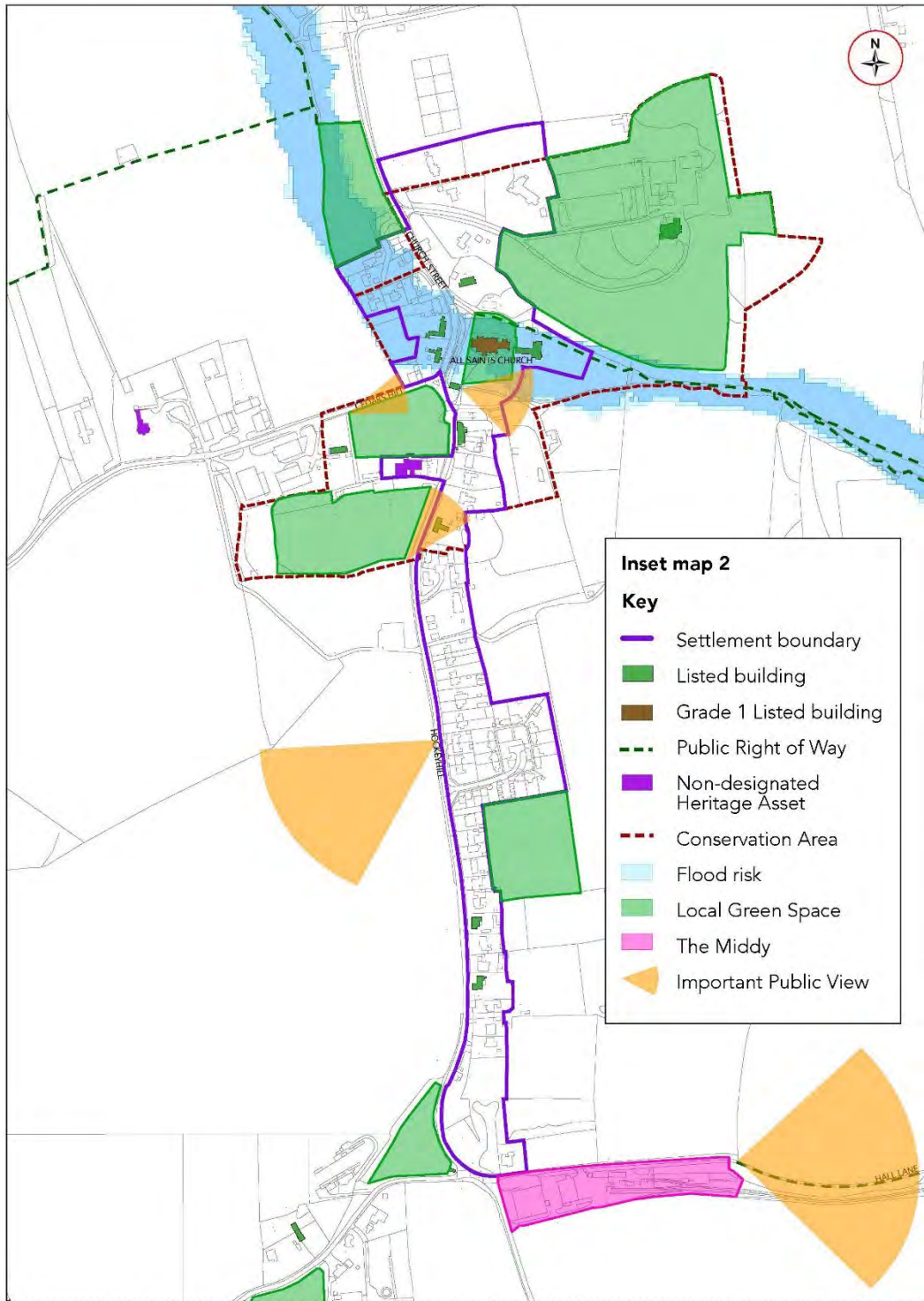
	of its flora, fauna, geological and/or physiological features.
<b>Sustainable Development</b>	Meeting peoples' needs now, socially, environmentally, and economically, without jeopardising the needs of future generations. There are three dimensions to sustainable development as seen in paragraph 7 of the NPPF: - economic contributing to a strong, competitive economy; - social-supporting strong, vibrant, and healthy communities and – environmental contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built, and historic environment.

**Appendix F – Parish Policies and Inset Maps**  
**Inset 1 – Brockford Street**





**Inset 2 – Church Street**



**Inset 3 – Wetherup Street**



### Parish Wide Policies Map

