

Great Houghton

Neighbourhood Development Plan

2011-2029



Foreword

The Great Houghton Neighbourhood Development Plan (GHNDP) has reached the referendum stage. The GHNDP has been prepared to help shape future development in the parish. It seeks to further build on and to strengthen the Great Houghton Design Statement (GHDS) which was compiled in 2019 following a survey of residents. The GHDS identifies the village's unique character and the important features stemming from its design and history. The GHNDP has been written by local parishioners so that local knowledge, informed views, and ideas will contribute to the village's future growth, development, and environment. This version of the GHNDP has also been informed by feedback provided by residents, key stakeholders and planning officers at West Northamptonshire Council.

The GHNDP's 9 policies cover issues such as how future planning applications for new housing in Great Houghton village should be managed; which green spaces, recreation areas, local facilities, environment, and heritage assets should be protected; how we can best utilise development in securing carbon free alternative means of travel, and best mitigate and control traffic to improve safety for motorists and pedestrians alike.

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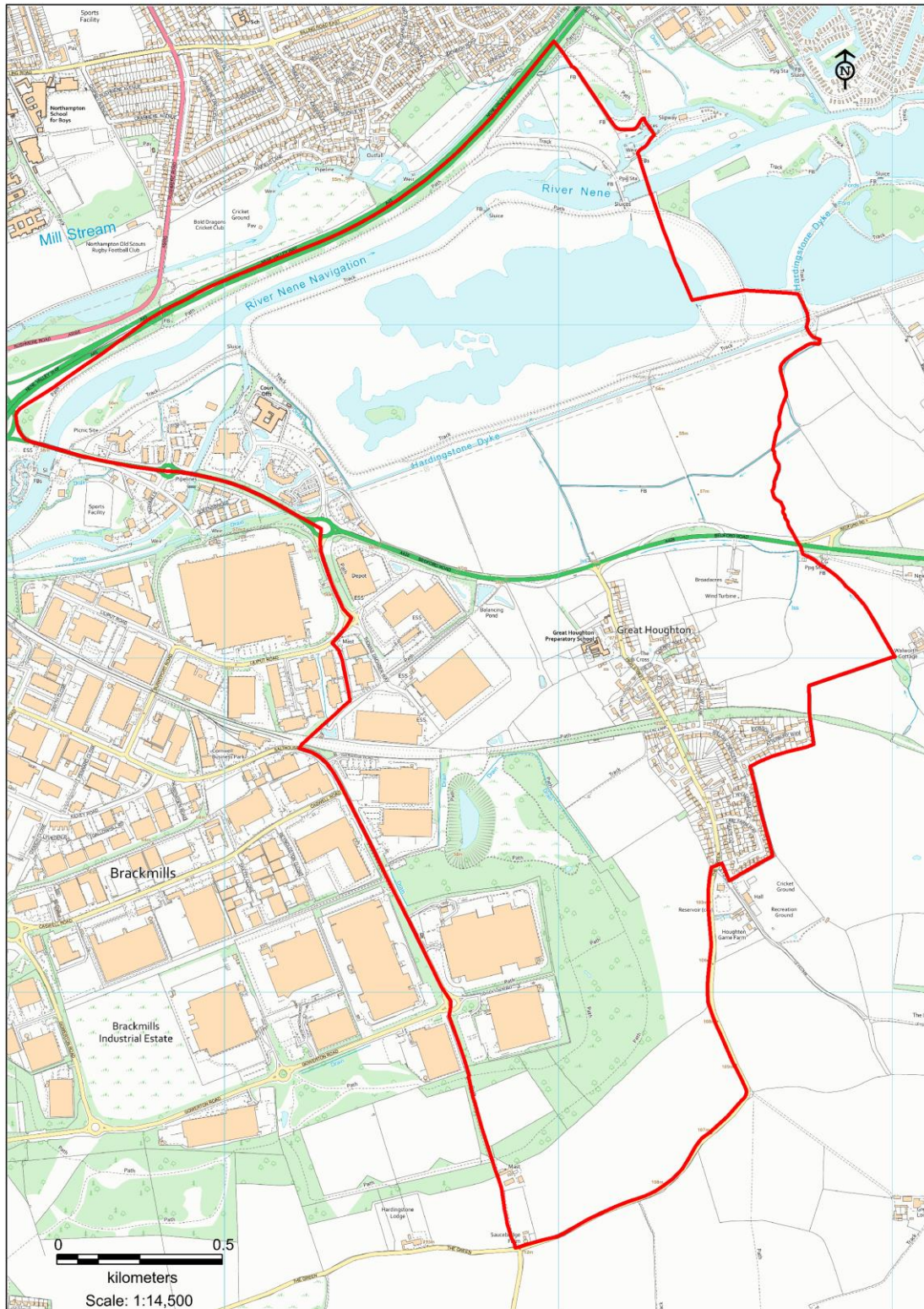
1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 gave Parish Councils the power to prepare neighbourhood development plans (NDPs). Plans to help guide development in a community's local area. Through this NDP, local people in Great Houghton parish now have the opportunity to help shape future development in the area. This is because planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.2 When complete the Great Houghton NDP (GHNDP) will sit alongside the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy that was adopted on 15th December 2014, and the saved policies of the Northampton Local Plan (1997) (until superseded by the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2)). The Northampton LPP2 has reached examination stage. A significant step in LPP2's preparation. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) advises that when a new strategic plan is being prepared that whilst an NDP is "not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested" ([NPPG, Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 41-009-20190509](#), Revision date: 09 05 2019). The GHNDP has, therefore, been prepared to take account of the reasoning and evidence informing the emerging Northampton LPP2.

Neighbourhood Plan Process and Preparation

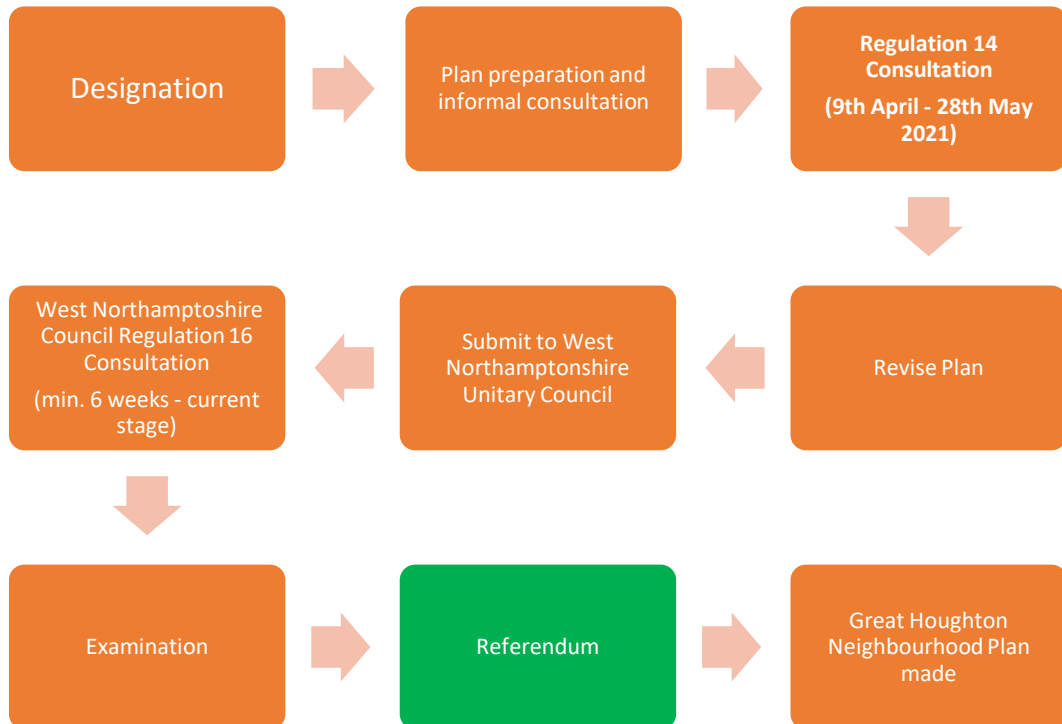
- 1.3 Great Houghton Parish Council, as a qualifying body, believe neighbourhood planning is an important power for local people to use and decided to prepare an NDP for the area. The Parish Council applied to Northampton Borough Council (NBC) for the parish to be designated as a neighbourhood area on 6th March 2020. The application for designation was approved by NBC on 10th June 2020. The designated Neighbourhood Area is shown on Figure 1.

Figure 1. Designated Area © Crown copyright [and database rights] 2021 OS licence number 0100055940 on behalf of Great Houghton Parish Council Licence Number PSL05334]



- 1.4 A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) comprising Parish Councillors and local residents was established to progress work on the plan. Further information on the background and work undertaken so far on the GHNDP can be found at <https://www.greathoughton.org.uk/>. The steps in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan are set out in Figure 2 below. The GHNDP has now reached the referendum stage.

Figure 2. Neighbourhood Plan Preparation Process



2.0 Great Houghton Neighbourhood Development Plan Key Issues, Vision and Objectives

Design Statement Questionnaire

- 2.1 In January 2019 a Design Statement Questionnaire was circulated in the village (Appendix 1) This piece of work was considered to be beneficial by the Parish Council and Action Group. The aim was to have a Design Statement for the village to aid the maintenance, enhancement and development of the village. The Design Statement is available at <https://www.greathoughton.org.uk/planning/>
- 2.2 Table 1 summarises the responses to the Design Statement Questionnaire (see also <https://www.greathoughton.org.uk/survey/>). Given the crossover with the work on the GHNDP these results have been used to inform the Draft GHNDP.

Table 1. Design Statement Questionnaire Summary

Question	Summary of Responses
General – Describe your sense of community & identity of village.	The village people care for the village with its special sense of identity. While not far from town it feels rural. Lovely community and strong sense of belonging with the population of the village about right to keep and ensure the wellbeing of the people and general community. Good mix of people going through from the young to the older generations. Kind and pleasant people.
Character and Setting – What are your perspectives of the surrounding aspects of the village and what do they bring to it?	The setting of the village is a great balance between amazing rural countryside, with plenty of walks but close to the town and local amenities, a wonderful balance to be preserved. We must endeavour to maintain this situation – we have already lost a good amount of our 'buffer zone' to Brackmills further development. We must maintain our villages character and integrity, cherish that which we have. – every lane, avenue or road off from the main through road offers a footpath through to the local countryside. The village has good road links to most resources. Local wildlife must be maintained.
Building style, type, form & layout and what they bring overall to the village.	Around 90% of the questionnaire replies were very happy with the mix of housing in the village together with the varied styles with one or two exceptions. It was felt that, given the size of the village, there was a reasonable balance of housing. Some of our village builds do go back to the 17 th century right up to some built in the 20 th century.
The close industrial and commercial units and their effect on the village.	Most people feel that the industrial area of Brackmills is too close i.e. encroachment into the village buffer zone. This is something the village residents fiercely object to. The village is also subject to significant noise levels, particular on the west side where the houses can, but not always, act as a buffer for the rest of the village, in fact, some houses have had noise meter checks. Further development eastward would, we suspect, meet with fierce objection.
Comment on traffic movements – through traffic, main roads each end of the village, parking and care for pedestrians	The concerns on traffic movement are as follows :- The village High Street is used as a 'Rat Run' between the Newport Pagnell road and the Bedford Road. Traffic travels too fast through the village.

Question	Summary of Responses
	<p>Heavy Goods vehicles frequently using the village some because of Sat-Nav. Information.</p> <p>Unacceptable parking.</p>
<p>Your overall view of our village – what made this the place you wanted to live?</p>	<p>Respondents agreed the benefits of Great Houghton are because it is close to main roads, town, and other amenities but was still a nice relatively quiet village.</p> <p>The main concern of villagers is a large housing/ other development that would change it all.</p> <p>Roads and other facilities would not be able to take any such development.</p>
<p>If you had a `magic wand` and could improve just one aspect of the village – what would it be?</p>	<p>To this question there were many different answers and here are a few that got repeated :- the return of the shop & post office, to magic the industrial estate away, no more major development, better road manners, more off road parking and some houses for young persons starting off in life.</p>
<p>List 3 things that would make Great Houghton an outstanding village.</p>	<p>There are too many different items to include so the 3 main ones are shown. Others can be seen via the Parish Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Village Shop & Post Office. ii. No further major development to or near the village. iii. Maintain green areas surrounding village.
<p>Other comments.</p>	<p>Many varied comments but generally villagers love the village with its diversity in all aspects but with its togetherness. Generally people wish it to retain that which it has with slow progression to allow to keep what it has but with gentle progression enhance it.</p>

Key Issues

2.3 The Key Issues that have been identified by the NPSG for the GHNDP are set out below:

- The impact of existing and planned major development at Brackmills and The Green
- The need to protect the local environment in all its aspects – natural heritage, built heritage, landscape etc.
- Transport and traffic impacts
- The need to preserve the villages separate identity, character, rural setting and separation from existing and planned major development
- The protection of existing community facilities and assets and green spaces
- Retaining and enhancing access to amenities, jobs and services in Northampton and other larger centres.

Vision

- 2.4 The GHNDP will help to address some of these key issues with the aim of achieving our Vision for Great Houghton in 2029. Why 2029? This is the same plan period as that for the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

Great Houghton Neighbourhood Plan Vision Statement

To ensure that changes are based on a considered understanding of the village's past, present and future and that they bring a positive contribution to Great Houghton, its residents and visitors.

Objectives

- 2.5 To achieve this Vision the following objectives have been set for the GHNDP. The objectives are not ranked in order of importance, seeking to achieve all of them is integral to delivering the 2029 Vision for Great Houghton.

Great Houghton Neighbourhood Development Plan Objectives

1. To minimise the impact of major development on the village and surrounding rural character.
2. To conserve and enhance the character and natural environment of the neighbourhood area and ensure a net gain in biodiversity.
3. To protect local green spaces and open spaces within the area.
4. To protect the surrounding countryside and natural resources.
5. To protect and enhance community and recreation facilities.
6. To ensure that the area has appropriate levels of transport infrastructure.

3.0 Great Houghton Neighbourhood Area

Introduction

- 3.1 The designated neighbourhood area is shown on Figure 1, this broadly includes the village of Great Houghton in the east, the village is surrounded by a rural landscape, but to the west is part of the Brackmills Industrial Estate. The northern part of the neighbourhood area includes the Upper Nene Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA), the River Nene forms the neighbourhood area's northern boundary. This northern section also includes modern employment related development centred on The Lakes.
- 3.2 Topographically the parish lies on land sloping gently north down towards the River Nene between 108m and 52m above sea level. The higher south and south-east parts are covered by boulder-clay, the centre of the area stands on limestone and sands, while to the west and north there are extensive areas of boulder clay. There are broad tracts of gravel close to the river, which are now obviously being excavated and have produced the Gravel Pits SPA. As a result of modern boundary divisions (1974) the parish lost almost one half of its former area to Little Houghton to the east and now covers just over 366 hectares.

History of the Village

Pre-historic and Roman

- 3.3 There earliest archaeological finds are of pre-historic nature, e.g. a ring ditch 150ft in diameter with worked flints and iron slag at the end of Glebe Lane, but nothing of great significance has been found.
- 3.4 An Iron Age well has also been found to the south of the village in the field adjacent to the last bungalows in the village.
- 3.5 There are numerous examples of Roman presence or even settlement in the area. Roman pottery and kiln debris were found in a drainage ditch near the Cherry Tree Inn (1959-1960), and Roman pottery, baked clay, and worked flints in ditches and fields near Great Houghton Lodge (1866). Immediately to the east of the village Roman pottery including Samian ware was found in a sewer trench.
- 3.6 Although there is little archaeological evidence of Saxon settlement, the village was recorded in the Domesday survey in 1086 as Hohton. This Saxon name means "farm or place on a spur of land". It was distinguished from Little Houghton by the 12th century. There were at least 10 alternative medieval spellings of the name.

The Medieval Village (The Manorial Descent)

- 3.7 The Manorial Descent is unusually complicated. At Domesday the largest manor belonged to William Peverell, with Robert de Pavely as tenant. It descended with the Pavely family of Paulerspury until the early 15th century, when it changed hands several times, coming to William Tresham in 1448. After being forfeited and leased, the manor, now known as "Tresham Manor" descended to Francis Tresham (of the Gunpowder Plot), and then became the property of James Smith of Little Houghton in 1635.

- 3.8 The Hohtons were in the gift of William the Conqueror to his niece Judith on her marriage to Waltheof, Earl of Northampton and Huntingdon. Their daughter married Simon de Senlis and on his death, she married King David of Scotland. The property came to the de Houghton family by 1230, and was split between three daughters of Simon de Houghton, Isabel, Christina and Joan, upon his death in 1272. Isabel's third was sold to her two sisters. After changing hands several times, Joan's moiety came to the family of Parks in 1407, who retained it until a descendant and heiress, Isabel, passed the property to her husband, Lewis Atterbury, in the late 16th century. He was Lord in 1612, and the Manor was variously called Houghton, Parke's or Atterbury Manor.
- 3.9 The other part of the Manor, belonging to Christina de Houghton in 1272, was split between her three daughters in 1339, but all three parts were acquired by Henry Green of Drayton in the 1360's. The Green's land at Great Houghton was divided into two manors in the early 16th century -
- 3.10 Vaux's manor and Mordaunt's manor. These were in the hands of Ferdinand Bawd and Daniel Ward by 1612, but by 1614 Vaux's manor was absorbed into Tresham's.
- 3.11 The manors had little real significance after 1612. Much of the land was acquired by Edward Bouverie of Delapre in the later 18th century and was dispersed again upon the death of his descendant Miss Mary Helen Bouverie in 1943.
- 3.12 No houses or sites relating to the other two manors (Vaux or Mordant) are identifiable physically or described in any surviving documents. However, the Vaux manor may have been in the vicinity of Rectory Close. The manors were never large nor had they resident lords. It is unlikely that any substantial related building existed.
- 3.13 Great Houghton Hall (until recently a `Prep. School) is on the site of the 17th century Atterbury Manor. In 1690 it had a dovecote. The site of Tresham Manor, already derelict by 1612, was in the Willow Crescent area.
- 3.14 The early Manor, Pavely's, in 1346 had two dovecotes, a windmill called Twygrist, and a watermill called Clak. The watermill probably stood on the brook east of the village, later called Hollowell, but whose upper reaches are still called Claxwells.

Topography and Form

- 3.15 This early development influenced the form of the village, a form that can still be identified today. In these earlier times the village form consisted of a north-south road that split into two at its southern end. At the northern end there was a rectangular loop (East Street) now lost, and east of the central Main Street, now High Street, another loop road was attached, known as Back Lane (now Willow Lane). The remains of East Lane are visible as a sunken lane behind the 'bus shelter at The Cross descending the field to the Bedford Road.
- 3.16 Fishponds lay to the east of the village in a shallow valley, intact until filled up in 1978 by spoil from the by-pass roadworks. The village pound (animal enclosure) stood east of the Main Street, on part of The Green.
- 3.17 The medieval fields, an example of which is to be found at the end of Glebe Lane, show the result of medieval farming. The land was divided into long, narrow strips, (about 15 feet wide), and for almost 1000 years was ploughed by teams of oxen. The ridges developed from the constantly repeated action of turning the soil inwards to

the centre of the strip. The ridges often appear to continue through hedges; this is because the activities of medieval farmers predate hedgerows by many centuries.

- 3.18 The headland was untilled land held in common at the head of the strips in the open fields upon which the plough was turned. Some headlands formed winding routes between fields - the forerunners of today's lanes.
- 3.19 Hollow ways were sunken lanes between higher fields resulting from treading by cattle, and water erosion on a slope. An example can be seen near the public footpath that descends the field towards the Bedford Road behind the line of garages in Willow Lane.
- 3.20 The development of the village from around 1600 onward was predominantly to the northern end of the village and based loosely around the Manor House and the Church and of course close to the main road running from Bedford to Northampton. The hostelrys were in this vicinity, although The Red Lion was up the hill to the southern extreme of the village along with a few cottages and farms.
- 3.21 There were a number of farms within the village which were one of the main hubs of employment. The grazing land in this area was exceptionally good with lots of herbage including sorrel, so there was much livestock reared in this area. In fact, in earlier times, cattle were walked from Wales to this valley to be fattened before being taken to market. This land is still good for grazing as can be witnessed by the livestock.
- 3.22 Progressively the village extended slowly up towards the southern end creating offshoots along the way. In more recent times, 1960/70's, as the village developed, and more employment was found outside the village some farms were lost. This land then went initially to limited housing in keeping with the needs of the day. Latterly, in the 1980's a larger estate of housing was built stopping at Leys Lane, which is the boundary of the populated village.
- 3.23 However, the village is still blessed with being a lovely place to live and having a lovely community. However, one must say that the village has become much more dormitory which so many of the inhabitants working away from the immediate vicinity

History of the Village since Medieval Times

- 3.24 Apart from the brief manorial records little is known about the village until the late 16th century. It has to be assumed that the village was a normal agricultural community independent from the nearby town of Northampton.
- 3.25 The first thing of importance about which something is known is the enclosure of the village lands. The agricultural land of Great Houghton was enclosed by private agreement between fifteen parties in 1612, in plots varying in size from 3 to 280 acres. The enclosure seems to have been an improvement made by a few families since many of them were related. Most of the original enclosure hedges survive, although some of the larger plots were subsequently further divided.
- 3.26 At this time there was a fairly large area of woodland to the south of the parish that was probably part of the royal hunting forest of Salcey. None of this remains today and it has become agricultural land.
- 3.27 After the enclosures came the Civil War. Although Northampton was a Parliamentary stronghold and some battles took place in the area (Naseby,

Cropredy Bridge) there is no strong evidence of any great effect on the village. Soldiers may have been billeted here as they were in Little Houghton.

- 3.28 The village was touched by the great plague of 1665 since the parish registers note that four London people died of it and, also, two villagers.
- 3.29 In 1826 the main road that passed through the parish was made a turnpike road, the Northampton to Cold Brafield Turnpike. One of the road's three turnpikes or toll-gates was built in the parish. This stood to the west of where the unfenced road from Hardingstone joins the main road. The road remained a turnpike until well into the 19th century (the records from the baptism register mention a turnpike keeper in 1860). The toll-gate remained until the early years of the 20th century.
- 3.30 Village life in Victorian times was full and enjoyable. The activities in the 1860's described below came from the Parish Almanac which was replaced in 1901 by the Parish Magazine.

"There is a Coal and Clothing Club, a Sunday School Club, a Lending Library, a Benefit Club, a Cottage Gardeners' Club, a Cricket Club, a staff of volunteer Sunday School teachers and an organised choir. There are fifty allotments on the Glebe. Money had to be raised for the alterations in the church and this was partly done by private subscription and partly by evening 'Entertainments' organised by the school-children and villagers which were very well supported. Great Houghton Feast was celebrated every year in what was the skittle alley of the "White Hart". A public house having an alley is very unusual in Northamptonshire which has its own version of the game, called Table Skittles.

- 3.31 Under the Rev. Woodhams, who was rector at the beginning of the 20th century, social life increased with choir parties and outings, mothers' meetings and then-excursions by brake and horses to different parts of the county, and the annual Hospital Sunday organised by the village lodge of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows. This latter event was a band-led parade round the village followed by a service when money was collected for the Hospital.
- 3.32 Thirty men served in the First World War, but only sixteen returned. General Lord Home KCB gave the address at the ceremony which marked the completion of the War memorial in 1920. It had been built on the site of a tree around which many of the dead had played as children. The names of two villagers who died on active service in the Second World War are also recorded on the memorial. One (Roberts) is survived by a younger brother who is now (1994) publican at the "King William IV" in Kingsthorpe, Northampton.
- 3.33 The rapid growth of car ownership in the post-war years, particularly since the 1960's, has of course wrought dramatic changes in village social life. However, despite its proximity to a rapidly growing Northampton (which has ambitions to becoming a city), Great Houghton still preserves an active social life which now centres on the Village Hall in Leys Lane. The Village Hall and the playing field are managed by the Great Houghton Playing Field Association which was founded shortly before the Village Hall was erected in 1976.

The Parish Church

- 3.34 The first church in the Anglo-Saxon parish of Great Houghton was built in the early 13th century. Following the reformation, an inventory of the church was taken in 1552. At that time the church apparently had 'Very few pictures' and had been 'purged of popery with thoroughness'. In the middle of the 16th century the church was given a silver chalice by the Atterbury family. This is so valuable that it is presently held in safe keeping in Peterborough Cathedral.



- 3.35 Although there are records of repair work being carried out in the 16th and 17th centuries, the church gradually fell into disrepair. By 1753 the building was in such a poor state that it was pulled down. There may have been a period before the church was rebuilt, but it was around this time that it got its present name, St. Mary Blessed Virgin. The rebuilt church is almost certainly on the same site as the original - the spiral staircase and lower portion of the bell tower retain the old stone and are much older than the rest of the building. The rebuilding was carried out in the Italianate style fashionable at that time.
- 3.36 By 1780 repairs were needed to the roof, walls, bells and windows. In 1842 a gallery was installed at a cost of £48, and four years later a new font was installed. In 1878 further restoration work took place, and the windows were divided into two lights. The gallery was removed, the lower arch opened, the south porch added and the interior re-seated. The stained glass window in the north wall is likely to have been added at this time. The window in the south wall is a much more recent addition, being commissioned by the Preparatory School in 1977 to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee and the school's first quarter century.
- 3.37 The church clock was installed in 1884 by Smith and Son of Derby. As well as the clock, the bell tower houses six bells. These are not pealed in the usual way, but chimed via a mechanism linked to the lower bell chamber. It is possible for one person to operate these bells, and ring modified versions of traditional changes.

Great Houghton Today

- 3.38 Great Houghton, despite nearby employment related development at Brackmills, retains its village character and sense of community. The village is surrounded by open land and woods and sits close to the boundary of Northampton.
- 3.39 The village has two well supported hostelries, The White Hart (opened 1715) and The Old Cherry Tree (opened 1695).



Old Cherry Tree



White Hart

- 3.40 The John Parsons Memorial Hall (Village Hall) set nicely in the corner of the playing field is now 18 years old, an excellent hall, sizeable with good facilities including kitchen, bar, changing rooms each with showers and toilets, storage and meeting room. There are many village clubs/organisations using it.
- 3.41 The Playing Field itself has a cricket pitch, football pitch, tennis court and enclosed play area for young children. There is a separate area within the field with an astro-turf surface, a shelter and a fixed backdrop from which a selection of sports can be played. This is where the older young people have their own space. Hopefully, soon to be completed, will be a bespoke picnic area.

- 3.42 The field is surrounded by trees, bushes and hedgerows and the field perimeter has a selection of exercise machines and seating at intervals on two sides, terrific for watching a game of cricket.
- 3.43 The pocket park provides a haven for wildlife and a tranquil spot for local residents to sit and relax. In 2013 it was awarded Green Flag status for nature conservation.
- 3.44 There is a tree lined cemetery at the end of Cherry Tree Lane.
- 3.45 The village is served by a newspaper delivery service from Little Houghton Post Office and there is also a milkman that delivers to the village, though not used so frequently now. There is also a daily minibus service which comes into the village, funded by local Parish Councils, and also a normal and frequent type bus service that runs along the Bedford Road. The old village shop no longer exists as a shop.
- 3.46 The village has an active Church which is well supported, see the earlier piece on its history.
- 3.47 The Village has a website, Facebook page, Twitter and a bi-monthly parish magazine. Notice boards are situated at key locations in village and there is also one inside the Village Hall.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

4.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans must be consistent with national planning policies and advice; and be in general conformity with the strategic planning policies for the area. It is therefore important that as the GHNDP is prepared, the emerging draft policies reflect this higher-level planning framework.

4.2 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ published in revised form in July 2021. This sets out in paragraphs 7 and 8 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and that the planning system performs an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.

4.3 The benefit of neighbourhood planning is set out in paragraph 29 of NPPF:

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies¹⁸.”

Footnote 18: Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.”

4.4 Strategic planning policy is set out in several local development plan documents (DPD) as follows:

- Saved policies of the 1997 Northamptonshire Borough Local Plan
- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, adopted 2014
- Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, adopted 2017.²

4.5 The Northampton Borough Local Plan 1997 ‘Saved’ policies, will eventually be superseded by the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2). The Northampton LPP2 is progressing through its own preparation process. It was submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2021 and the Examination in Public took place in November 2021. Further details can be found here:

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200205/planning-for-the-future/2553/northampton-local-plan-part-2-submission>. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) advises in such instances that whilst an NDP “is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan [such as LPP2] the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested” ([NPPG, Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 41-009-20190509](#)).

4.6 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) was adopted in December 2014 and the policies underwent a review in December 2019. The WNJCS sets out an overall vision setting out how the area and places within it should evolve; strategic

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

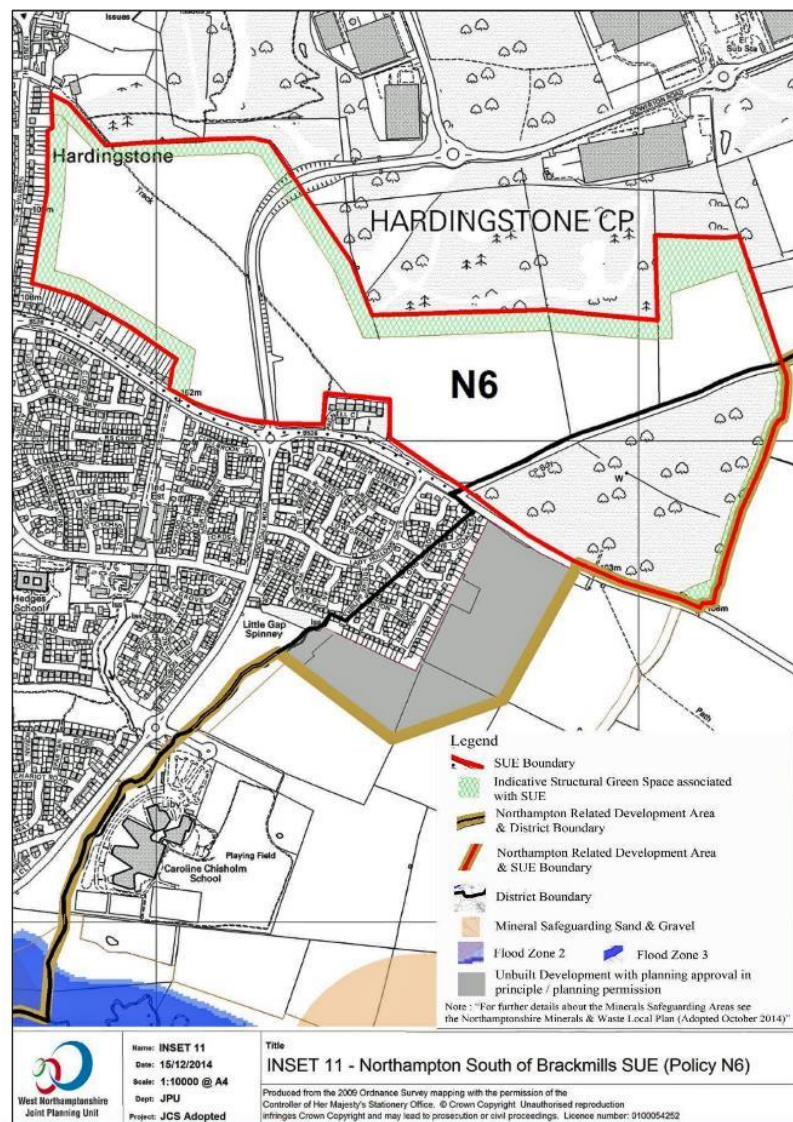
² Minerals and waste are not matters to be covered by an NDP.

objectives for the area focusing on key issues; a strategy for the delivery of these objectives; and an explanation of how the delivery process will be monitored. An Options Consultation on the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan closed on 6 December 2021.

<https://westnorthantsplan.inconsult.uk/WNSPOptions/consultationHome>

- 4.8 Also impacting on the neighbourhood area and included as a policy of the WNJCS is the Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA). The WNJCS identifies the NRDA to meet the longstanding issue that Northampton is unable to meet its own housing needs: the WNJCS, therefore, identifies a series of Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUE). One of these SUEs is Northampton South of Brackmills where Policy N6 of the WNJCS makes provision for in the region of 1,300 dwellings, a primary school, and a local centre (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Northampton South of Brackmills Sustainable Urban Extension
(Source: WNJCS)



- 4.9 In addition, Policy 13 of the emerging Northampton LPP2 that was examined in November 2021 identifies a large site for housing development in Great Houghton – The Green. This would extend the Northampton SUE further eastwards towards Great Houghton village (Figure 4). The Green allocation would be for an indicative 800 new homes. In more detail, section 13 of LPP2 states the following:

c. The Green, Great Houghton (LAA1098)

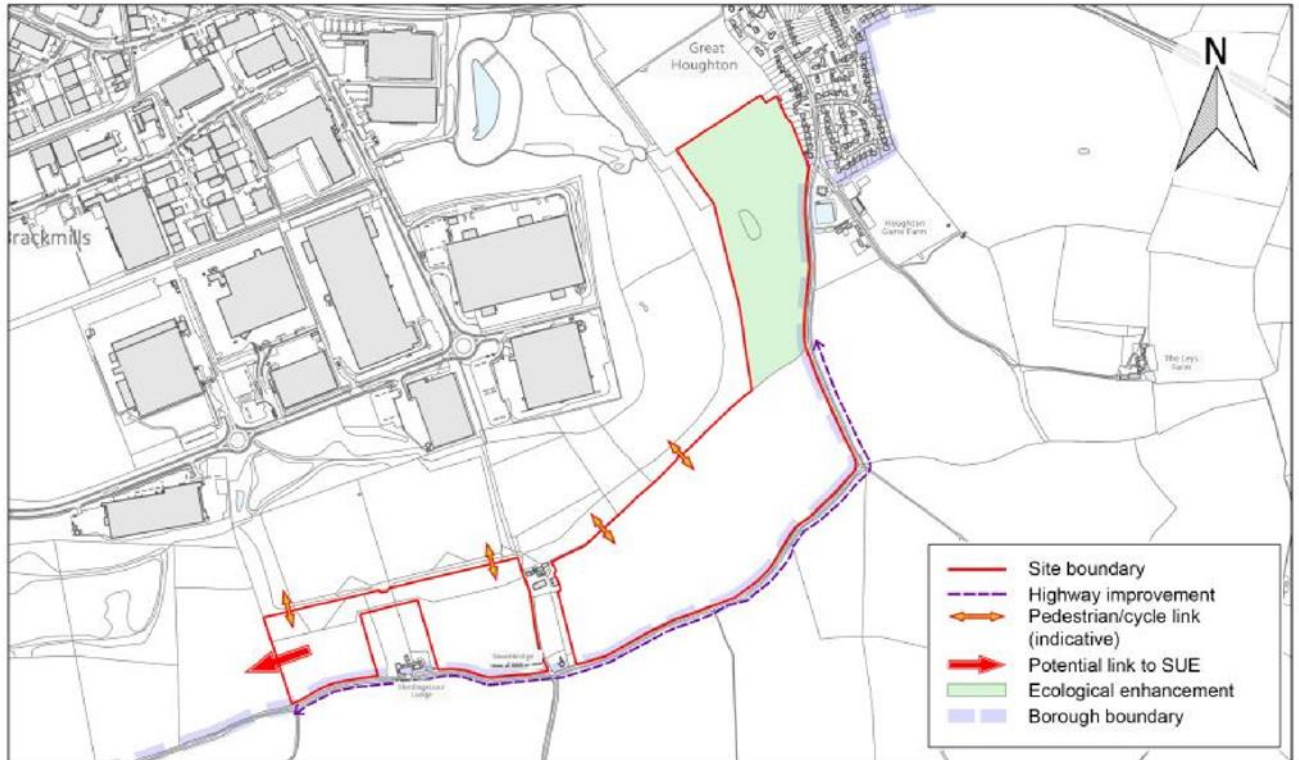
“13.12 The site is located to the south west of Great Houghton Village, part of which is within a Conservation Area and accommodates listed buildings. It lies to the east of the South of Brackmills Sustainable Urban Extension. This is primarily agricultural land, which can be accessed from Bedford Road or from Newport Pagnell Road. It borders onto designated woodland area which create a buffer from Brackmills Employment Area. This agricultural land is relatively flat, and there are some electricity pylons across pockets of the site.

13.13 The allocated site is within 3km of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) / Ramsar site. In accordance with the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA Supplementary Planning Document and the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Policy BN4, development will need to demonstrate through the development management process that there will be no significant adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA and Ramsar site and the species for which the land is designated including the loss of supporting habitat. Development should be undertaken in a sensitive manner, ensuring that disturbance from construction and operational activities do not impact upon the SPA / Ramsar bird features.

13.14 The Heritage Impact Assessment concluded that the site has high/ medium sensitivity within its eastern portion and low/ medium sensitivity within its western portions. It was recommended that development should be set away from the south western boundary of Great Houghton, and an undeveloped buffer zone between the proposed development and the existing settlement is advised. The HIA adds that within the buffer zone, opportunities for ecological enhancement should be established. Great Houghton Village commands an important elevated setting on the edge of the Borough and forms the skyline for many views south. There is potential for small scale development within the eastern portion of the site but these need to remain sensitive to the surrounding context and allow for greenspace to be retained. For the medium portion, the HIA concluded that medium and small new development could potentially be accommodated without eroding positive key features and characteristics identified to the east. Development on the site will almost certainly impact on the surviving below ground archaeological assets as they will sit just below the subsoil and cut into the natural deposits. It is recommended that a programme of archaeological investigation consisting of geophysical survey and targeted evaluation trenches take place to determining the presence/ absence, nature and extent of any such remains. This should inform a mitigation strategy for any subsequent development.”

- 4.10 Policy 41 of the emerging LPP2 sets out the requirements for The Green, Great Houghton. The final requirements of this Policy are not yet fixed but will need to take account of the Inspector’s Post Hearing Note (dated January 2022) which can be found here: <https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200205/planning-for-the-future/2553/northampton-local-plan-part-2-submission>.

Figure 20 from the submission LPP2 is reproduced below.



LAA1098 The Green, Great Houghton

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5.0 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- 5.1 This section of the GHNDP sets out the planning policies (yellow boxes) to manage development in the Parish of Great Houghton up to 2029. The policies are defined below each GHNDP objective. Whilst the policies are divided between the objectives the policies of the plan should and will be read as a whole.

GHNDP OBJECTIVE 1 - To minimise the impact of major development on the village and surrounding rural character.

Introduction

- 5.2 Great Houghton village retains its separate identity and character. From the Design Statement Questionnaire Survey we know that this is very important to local people. Development pressure from major development within the neighbourhood area, for example, at Brackmills and potentially at The Green are a threat to this separate identity and character. Policy GHNDP1 seeks to address these issues.

Policy GHNDP1 – Protecting Village Character and the Rural Environment

To retain the character and identity of Great Houghton village and the rural character of the area, planning proposals should:

- a) Provide a clear separation between the development site and Great Houghton by retaining the Green Buffer area (shaded green on the map on Figure 20 of Northampton LPP2, presented on page 21 of the Neighbourhood Plan) for ecological enhancement. As part of an anticipated strategic allocation of the LPP2 the area identified for ecological enhancement is expected to include, to an extent yet unidentified, a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). This will include walking routes, connections to Great Houghton and neighbouring areas, an off-lead dog walking area and protection, enhancement and creation of habitats in line with other policies of the Northampton LPP2.**
- b) Be of high-quality design, and must take into account and be sensitive to the significance and the setting of the Great Houghton Conservation Area, evident through a Heritage Impact Assessment;**
- c) Take into consideration and be sympathetic to the surrounding rural landscape and sensitive to the existing small-scale residential development within Great Houghton;**
- d) Include suitable measures to mitigate the impact of any significant volume of additional traffic generated by the development, particularly along The Green and The High Street, Great Houghton;**
- e) Minimise any negative impacts on air quality and noise.**

Background/Justification

- 5.3 Great Houghton village and the surrounding countryside are the subject of significant development pressure arising from the need to meet Northampton's strategic development requirements for new employment and housing land. In the recent past this has included development at the Brackmills Industrial Estate, more recently proposals for the SUE at Northampton South and subsequently the emerging planning proposal for 800 new homes at The Green contained in LPP2. The Parish Council has made representations seeking to have this proposed allocation removed from LPP2.

- 5.4 Policy GHNDP1 seeks to identify those aspects of the local environment that are central to preserving the village's separate identity from Northampton and the neighbourhood area's village and rural character.
- 5.5 LPP2 proposes an area of search for an area of ecological enhancement – the area shaded green on Figure 20 of LPP2 (see page 20). The GHNDP proposes that this is retained as a green buffer area for ecological enhancement and to provide clear separation between the development site and Great Houghton – criterion a) of Policy GHNDP1. The policy also reflects emerging Northampton LPP2 policy which requires the site to provide a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), walking routes, off-lead dog walking area, connections and protection, enhancement and creation of habitats. Any such use will have to be of a sensitive design in order to ensure that the ecological enhancements are not disturbed. More intensive uses such as cycling or horse riding would have to be given very careful consideration. In time, as the site matures, and has been indicated in the response of Homes England to the Regulation 14 consultation on the GHNDP this may site may be the subject of a future Local Green Space designation.
- 5.6 Policy GHNDP1 also identifies other key elements of the local environment that need to be suitably managed to maintain the area's village and rural character – scale of development, setting of the Conservation Area, traffic impacts and other environmental considerations such as noise.

GHNDP OBJECTIVE 2 - To conserve and enhance the character and natural environment of the neighbourhood area and ensure a net gain in biodiversity.

Introduction

- 5.7 Great Houghton has a Conservation Area and a number of heritage assets on the National Heritage List for England, including statutory listed buildings (Appendix 2).

Policy GHNDP2 – Great Houghton Conservation Area

To retain the character and identity of the village of Great Houghton planning proposals should have regard to the Great Houghton Conservation Area Appraisal and will be assessed against the following:

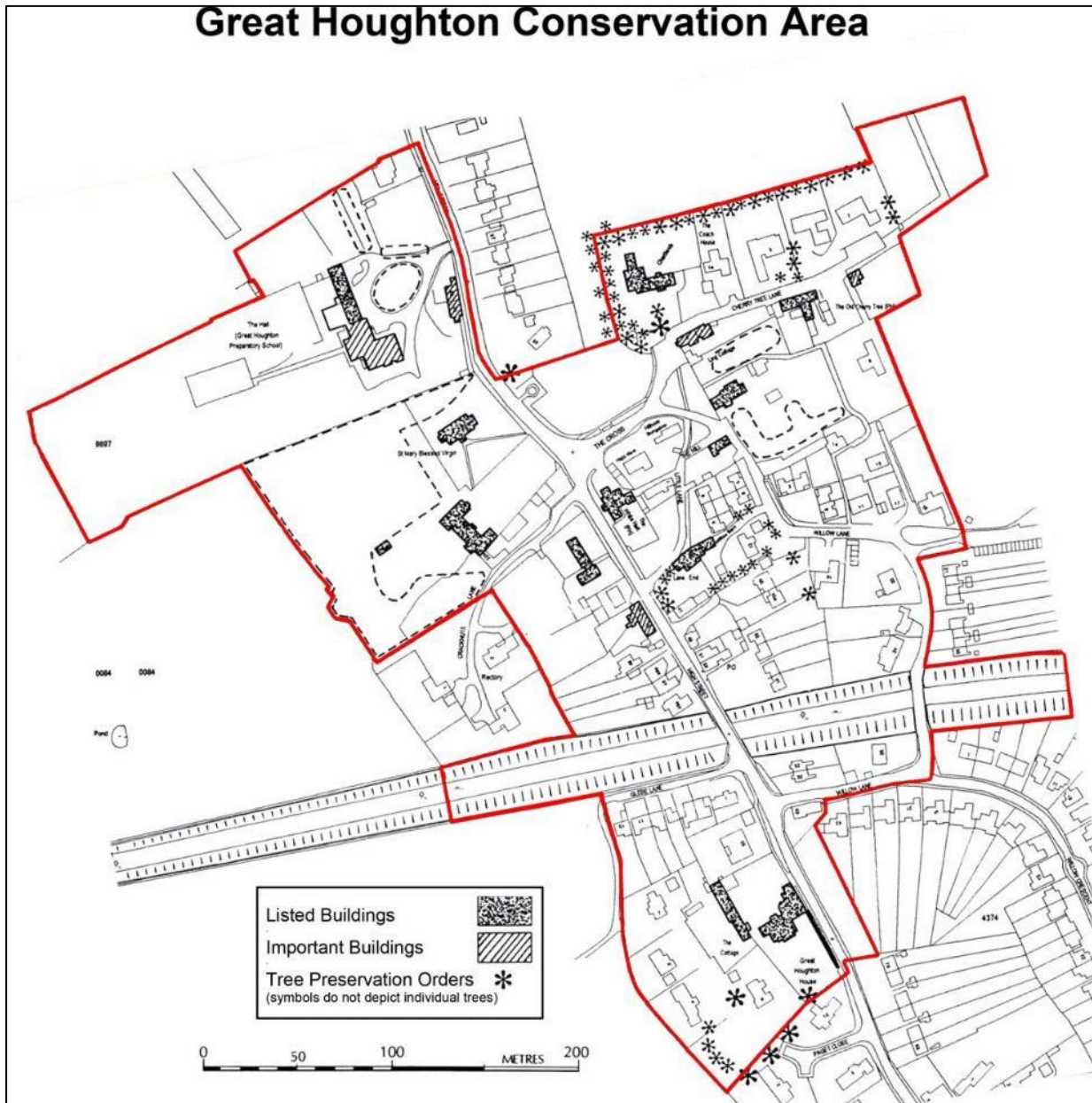
- a) Where infill housing development is proposed, this should be of a design, scale and materials that are sensitive to the character and rural setting of the Conservation Area, including retaining important street scenes, features and views;
- b) Retain original features e.g. windows, doors, and stone walls;
- c) Sympathetic location of solar panels to inconspicuous building elevations where they will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- d) Opportunities to reduce the clutter of street furniture and signs that affect the appearance of the Conservation Area have been taken e.g. removal of overhead cabling and other obtrusive features in the street scene (e.g. unused satellite dishes);
- e) Mature trees that make a positive contribution to the appearance of the Conservation Area should be retained and opportunities to plant new trees should be taken where they arise.
- f) Boundary walls which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area and their copings should be retained. New boundary treatments should fit with the character of existing boundary walls; and
- g) Buildings of Local Importance as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and other non-designated heritage assets³ should be conserved in manner appropriate to their significance and in accordance with the scale of any harm or loss proposed.

Background/Justification

- 5.8 Great Houghton Conservation Area was designated in 1976 and reviewed in April 1989. The Conservation Area covers 12.2 hectares at the heart of the village (Figure 4). The Latest Conservation Area Appraisal was undertaken in 2018 (https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200207/building_conservation_and_trees/1629/great_houghton_conservation_area).

³ A Northampton Local Heritage List is being prepared further information can be found at <https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200205/planning-for-the-future/2482/northampton-local-heritage-list>

- 5.9 Great Houghton village is situated on rising ground and forms a linear pattern of development along the minor road which runs between Bedford Road and the village of Preston Deanery.
- 5.10 Great Houghton is bisected by a deep cutting containing the former Northampton to Bedford branch railway line. The village rises on the southern side of the Nene Valley from 200' O.D. to a height of 326' O.D. at the present southern limit of settlement. It is quite detached and is completely surrounded by green open fields. The village commands an important elevated setting on the edge of the Borough and also forms the skyline for many views across the Town and the Nene Valley.
- 5.11 The old linear pattern of the village has recently been further disrupted by expansion on the east side of the village. Similarly, that part of Great Houghton south of the former railway is largely comprised of groups of recently constructed dwellings. On the west side of High Street, Great Houghton House is an attractive feature with its stone wall frontage. This building, together with the adjoining stable block, is a protected Listed Building.

Figure 4. Great Houghton Conservation Area (Source: Northampton Borough Council)

- 5.12 To the north of the former railway is a nucleus of older buildings with some infilling by more modern houses. This part contains the Church of St. Mary Blessed Virgin, the village's two public houses and many listed buildings. This, the core of the village has many buildings of local stone along High Street and around The Green.
- 5.13 The conservation area includes most of the original part of the village on the north side of the railway. To the south of the railway the important buildings, which are in any case listed, are more scattered and therefore less suitable for inclusion in the conservation area.
- 5.14 There is a mixture of building materials within the conservation area. The older buildings along the High Street and Cherry Tree Lane are generally built in stone whilst the more recent dwellings between High Street and Willow Lane are built in old

red brick. The visual impact of bricks is lessened to an appreciable extent by the stone walls which are found on at least one side of all roads in the approved conservation area.

- 5.15 The village as a whole is loosely knit together, many of the significant buildings like the former School and the Rectory having large gardens. This lack of unity has been compensated by the many groups of trees within the conservation area which bind the village together and create important features in the landscape of the village.
- 5.16 The significant area of open space is that by the War Memorial and the green by the Cross. In addition there are a number of undeveloped and incidental open spaces within the approved conservation area. There are large gardens to the former preparatory school and the Rectory; several of the dwellings have large gardens and there is open grazing land off Cherry Tree Lane.
- 5.17 Overhead cables in the High Street are rather unsightly and present an obtrusive element.
- 5.18 From the village there are impressive outward views north and west across and along the valley of the River Nene and of the town beyond. To the east, the view is of open countryside along the valley to the villages of Ecton and beyond to Earls Barton on the skyline.

Policy GHNDP3 – Sustainable Design and Construction

All new development should be sympathetic to local design features.

Development will not be supported where it is of poor design that has an adverse impact on the character of the area. To ensure good design is achieved development should be designed to take account of, and will be assessed against, the following criteria, where relevant:

- (a) It promotes or reinforces local distinctiveness by demonstrating that appropriate account has been taken of existing good quality examples of street layouts, blocks and plots, building forms and styles, materials and detailing and the vernacular of the settlement;**
- (b) It is designed in such a way so as to make a positive use of local landform, trees, hedgerows and other vegetation and for larger proposals has had suitable regard to landscape setting and settlement pattern;**
- (c) It conserves or enhances existing wildlife habitats and incorporates new native planting (if appropriate to the site and its context) and landscaping that create new habitats, provides nesting and foraging opportunities (e.g. for birds and bats), and encourages pollinators. Overall, a net gain in biodiversity should be demonstrated in line with the National Planning Policy Framework;**
- (d) It uses space and creates new public open spaces that are enclosed, integrated and overlooked by buildings and are in prominent useable locations. Such spaces should use native planting (if appropriate to the site and its context) and planting to encourage pollinators;**
- (e) It includes sufficient amenity space to serve the needs of the development and its users;**

- (f) It includes appropriate boundary treatments that reflect local context and landscaping using predominantly native species to support a net-gain for wildlife. It provides for access through boundary walls and fences by hedgehogs;
- (g) It does not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of existing or future occupiers in neighbouring property;
- (h) It does not have a severe cumulative adverse effect on the safe and efficient operation of the existing transport and road infrastructure;
- (i) It includes measures that seek to improve pedestrian facilities and linkages in the Parish and beyond to encourage walking and cycling, wherever possible;
- (j) It makes a contribution to local identity, and sense of place. Proposals should not feature generic designs and should set out how they take account of the locally distinctive character of the area in which they are to be located within any submitted Design and Access Statement;
- (k) It respects the height of the buildings in the immediate surrounding area;
- (l) It uses, and where appropriate re-uses, local and traditional materials appropriate to the context of the site, or suitable high quality alternatives that authentically reinforce or positively contribute towards local distinctiveness;
- (m) It contributes to reducing carbon emissions by incorporating measures to reduce energy consumption (e.g. building orientation, siting, areas for outdoor drying) and, where possible, sources of renewable energy. Where such features are included, they should be appropriate in scale to the building of good design and well sited. Such features should also be sympathetic to the surrounding area;
- (n) It uses existing watercourses and ditches, sustainable drainage systems (SUDS, such as swales) to hold rainwater in storms. SuDS should be planted with native vegetation to support wildlife. All paving should be semi-permeable to allow run-off to drain away;
- (o) It includes features to minimise light spillage beyond the development site;
- (p) It includes space for off road/pavement storage of refuse and recycling bins;
- (q) It has appropriate car parking in accordance with locally adopted standards. Car parking should be sited in such a way that it is unobtrusive, does not dominate the street scene, and minimises the visual impact of car parking;
- (r) It links to existing rights of way and does not restrict the use and enjoyment of such routes;
- (s) It is designed to enable the charging of electric vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations. As a minimum:
- every new dwelling with an associated dedicated car parking space within its curtilage must include ducting to facilitate the future installation of a vehicle chargepoint; and
 - residential development with communal parking areas, should include ducting to facilitate the future installation of vehicle chargepoints.”
- (t) It avoids unnecessary loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodland. Where trees or woodland cannot be retained they should be replaced

preferably on site, where this cannot be achieved suitable offsetting measures to provide replacement should be provided off-site; and

(u) Applicants will be required to demonstrate how green infrastructure is integrated into the development in accordance with the Northampton Green Infrastructure Plan. Applications should demonstrate how the development links to the existing green infrastructure network and how any open spaces and garden areas will be permeable to wildlife.

Background/Justification

- 5.19 Campaign for Rural England's (CPRE) *Northamptonshire Countryside Design Guide* highlights that in Northamptonshire the County's villages combination of building style, settlement pattern and countryside setting create a distinctive character. The historic cores of Great Houghton village, centred on the Conservation Area, can still be seen today. As with many areas in the County more recent development has failed to take appropriate account of its context. Poor choice of materials and standardised suburban design solutions threaten to erode the character of the villages. Policy GHNDP3 sets out a criterion based policy that will be used to encourage development that positively contributes to and enhances the character of the neighbourhood area.
- 5.20 Policy GHNDP3 will provide a distinct, neighbourhood area specific, set of criteria against which to judge planning proposals and which should be used by prospective applicants and their design teams in the preparation of planning proposals. The aim of the policy is to promote design and construction that make development in the area as sustainable as possible, construction that moves towards zero carbon emission and enables people to live more sustainably and reduce modern life's impact on the environment.
- 5.21 By setting this local policy the GHNDP is helping to meet one of the key aims of national planning policy – achieving well-designed places. Fostering “well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being” is a key element of the overarching social objective of sustainable development (NPPF, paragraph 8b).
- 5.22 In the future, Design and Access Statements should demonstrate how applicants have had regard to the criteria listed in Policy GHNDP3, for smaller proposals not all will be relevant, but applicants should still explain why they have reached this conclusion in their Design and Access Statement.
- 5.23 Policy GHNDP3 does not seek to stifle innovation or produce pastiche copies of the past. Innovation and contemporary design are encouraged, but here, as with all new development, applicants and their architects should draw on the past to inform their proposals to ensure that new development is in keeping and harmonises with that of the past.
- 5.24 In seeking to achieve good design it can often be the small details that result in a development achieving or failing to achieve this objective. This can be the result of a single poor choice, for example the wrong brick colour, or use of the wrong window shape. In these days of mass production and standardised house types the

temptation to produce a “could be anywhere” solution is strong. But such solutions fail to undertake a proper analysis of local context. In doing this, such an approach is not in line with national planning policy which states that “development that is not well designed should be refused”. (NPPF, paragraph 134).

- 5.25 The Building Regulations set standards for energy efficiency and resource use e.g. that of water. Government is committed to zero carbon homes by 2050 to reduce the impact of new build housing on the environment, especially the impact of climate change. The GHNDP, through Policy GHNDP3 encourages developers to reduce carbon emissions so that new development in the neighbourhood area makes the move to zero carbon sooner rather than later.

GHNDP OBJECTIVE 3 To protect local green spaces and open spaces within the area.

Policy GHNDP4 - Protecting Local Green Space

The following areas are designated Local Green Spaces (Figure 5) in accordance with paragraphs 101 and 102 of the NPPF:

**GHNDP4/1 – The Green
GHNDP4/2 – The Cross
GHNDP4/3 – Pocket Park
GHNDP4/4 – War Memorial**

Development of the designated Local Green Spaces will only be permitted when consistent with national planning policy for Green Belt.

Background/Justification

- 5.26 Paragraph 101 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) allows local communities, through neighbourhood plans, to protect green areas of particular importance to them by designating Local Green Space.
- 5.27 Paragraph 102 of the NPPF goes on to advise that *“the Local Green Space designation should only be used where 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 or richness of its wildlife; and*
 - c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”*
- 5.28 A number of open spaces in the neighbourhood area have been assessed to see if they meet the designation criteria set out in national planning policy (Table 2). These include the 4 green spaces in the village: The Green, The Cross, the Pocket park and War Memorial. All of these are considered to meet the designation criteria and are, therefore, identified for such protection in the GHNDP.

Table 2. Local Green Space Assessment

Site Name	Proximity to the community it serves	Demonstrably special?	Local in character?	Any other comments?
The Green Great Houghton	Located in the upper half of the village alongside the main road that runs through the village. Easily and regularly accessed by residents and visitors alike	A small grass area protected from traffic by way of low-level chain-link fencing around its perimeter. It houses the Village sign, includes trees, spring flowers that attract the birds and bees, and a bench for residents and visitors to relax	It is fully representative of a traditional village green.	Registered as Village Green VG37.
The Cross Great Houghton	Located in the lower half and the dedicated conservation area of the village at a major junction where the streets have no footpaths. Easily and regularly accessed by residents and visitors alike	A small grass area protected from traffic by way of low-level chain-link fencing around its perimeter. It houses, trees and spring flowers that attract the birds and bees and a bench for residents and visitors to rest and relax.	It is fully representative of a traditional village green	It has a footpath running through it connecting Willow Lane, Little Lane, and Cherry Tree Lane. It provides excellent views of the village Church and the War Memorial. Registered Village Green VG36.
The Pocket Park	Located between two existing and later development estates at the entry to the village from footpath across fields from neighbouring villages	This small area was originally a play area for children but with the later development of the community playing fields including outdoor play equipment was transferred into a green haven for birds, insects and a number of bats that nest		Green Flag Conservation Award 2013

Site Name	Proximity to the community it serves	Demonstrably special?	Local in character?	Any other comments?
		amongst the planted trees and shrubbery. Includes benches and feeding tables providing residents and visitors with opportunity to observe nature.		
Brackmills Employment Estate Buffer Zone	Located between the village and the Brackmills Employment Area and more recent development of The Point employment area	With the initial development of Brackmills, land between that and the village was designated as a green space including Brackmills Park which provides lakes, walks and woodlands easily accessed by footpaths from both the industrial estate and the village. Further industrial development at The Point has eroded the area of the green space which has been banked and planted with trees to offset increased noise pollution to residents in the village	It is considered most necessary for local residents that there is no further erosion and that all remaining open space between these developments and the village needs to be protected from further commercial or industrial development to ensure the overall integrity of a rural village and the benefit of residents.	
The War Memorial	Located alongside the High Street opposite the Church and adjacent to The Cross	Set on a raised grass bank surrounded by a privet hedge. This monument was first erected in 1920 and is	A monument to those local lives lost in both the first and second world wars. Contains inscriptions of	

Site Name	Proximity to the community it serves	Demonstrably special?	Local in character?	Any other comments?
		now a protected historic building and war memorial (Ref 13154)	the names of those residents in the parish who gave their lives. Is the focus point for annual remembrance services	

Policy GHNDP5 – Protecting Incidental Public Green Spaces

Development that would result in the loss of incidental public green spaces within the existing built-up area of the village will be only supported when:

- a) Equivalent or better provision is provided elsewhere within a suitable location in the built-up area of the village; or**
- b) It can be clearly demonstrated by the applicant that the green space no longer performs a useful green space function in terms of the local environment, amenity, or active public recreation use.**

Background/Justification

- 5.30 As well as the key green spaces that are suggested for the highest level of protection as designated local green spaces under Policy GHNDP5, the neighbourhood area also has several other important incidental public green spaces that perform a variety of useful functions. These smaller, incidental open spaces help to make the area a greener place and all add to the quality of life enjoyed by residents and visitors. It is proposed that these spaces are also protected, but not with the high degree of protection offered to designated local green spaces that precludes most built development. These spaces, being less important, could be developed in certain circumstances that are set out in Policy GHNDP5.

GHNDP OBJECTIVE 4 - To protect the surrounding countryside and natural resources.

- 5.31 The neighbourhood area is also valued for the surrounding local countryside. This provides a number of benefits: it can be accessed along the network of footpaths and bridleways that provide opportunities for recreation; it provides valuable separation between the villages and the Northampton urban area; it separates the villages and helps retain their separate identities; and it is valued for the visual and other qualities of the local landscape.

Policy GHNDP6 - Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape

New development should conserve or enhance the local landscape by:

- (a) Respecting and enhancing the landscape setting, landscape features, field and settlement pattern of the neighbourhood area;**
- (b) Having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset, seeking to conserve in situ or by record known heritage assets of archaeological value, including ridge and furrow;**
- (c) Retaining or enhancing ponds, streams, mature trees, woodland, ancient and mature hedgerows, or where removal is unavoidable, providing by way of offsetting replacement habitat elsewhere on-the site or within the neighbourhood plan area;**
- (d) New planting and landscaping should use native and other suitable species and be designed in such a way so as to ensure that it is suitable when considered in the wider local landscape, and provides stepping-stones or links to existing woodland and hedgerows;**
- (e) Promote high quality residential design that respects local townscape and landscape character and is sympathetic to local vernacular building styles, layouts and materials;**
- (f) Seek to minimise the encroachment of development into visually exposed landscapes and where development is proposed on the edge of the village, it enhances views of the settlement edge from the surrounding countryside and does not lead to inappropriate incursion into the surrounding countryside by reason of its siting, design, materials or use of landscaping;**
- (g) Maintaining and, where practical, improving access to the surrounding countryside; and by:**
- (h) Seeking to conserve and enhance the integrity and fabric of historic buildings and their settings, particularly where new uses are proposed through the use of appropriate styles and sustainable locally distinctive materials.**

Background/Justification

- 5.32 Natural England has produced profiles for England's 159 National Character Areas (NCAs). These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment. Great Houghton lies within NCA 89 – Northamptonshire.
- 5.33 The Northamptonshire Vales National Character Area (NCA) consists of a series of low-lying clay vales and river valleys, including the valleys of the rivers Nene and Welland and their tributaries. The area is 10% urban, and settlement is often visually dominant. Major road networks that traverse the area include the M1, A45, A6 and A5.
- 5.34 Despite the predominance of built settlements and related levels of low tranquility, this contrasts strongly with a distinctly more rural feel and higher levels of tranquility particularly along river corridors and in areas of arable and pastoral farmland.
- 5.35 Challenges for this area include retaining the sense of place in light of ongoing pressure for development growth and protecting and enhancing key features such as the many heritage assets, meadows, woodlands and hedgerows in the light of new development, continuing gravel extraction and the pressure to produce more food. However, these issues also provide opportunities to strengthen and increase habitat networks and appropriate recreational provision for the surrounding urban communities.
- 5.36 This area is rich in historic character, with country houses, historic parkland, ridge and furrow and open field patterns, especially in the valleys of the Welland, Ise and Nene. These river valleys are striking features of the area, with their riverside meadows and waterside trees and shrubs.

GHNDP OBJECTIVE 5 - To protect and enhance community and recreation facilities.

Policy GHNDP7 – Protection of Existing Community Facilities

The change of use or redevelopment of local community facilities, as listed below, will only be supported for other health, education or community type uses (such as village halls, local clubhouses, health centres, schools and children’s day nurseries), unless one of the following can be demonstrated:

1. The proposal includes alternative provision, on a site within the locality, of equivalent or enhanced facilities. Such sites should be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and have adequate car parking; or
2. Satisfactory evidence is produced which includes an active marketing exercise to be agreed with the local planning authority which demonstrates there is no longer a demand for the facility. The marketing exercise will usually be required for a minimum period of 12 months.

The facilities are listed as follows and shown on Figure 6:

GHNDP7/1 - Great Houghton Village Hall

GHNDP7/2 - St Mary, Blessed Virgin

GHNDP7/3 - The Old Cherry Tree

GHNDP7/4 - White Hart

GHNDP7/5 – The Cemetery

Proposals that would enhance the appearance, improve access and accessibility to these facilities will be supported.

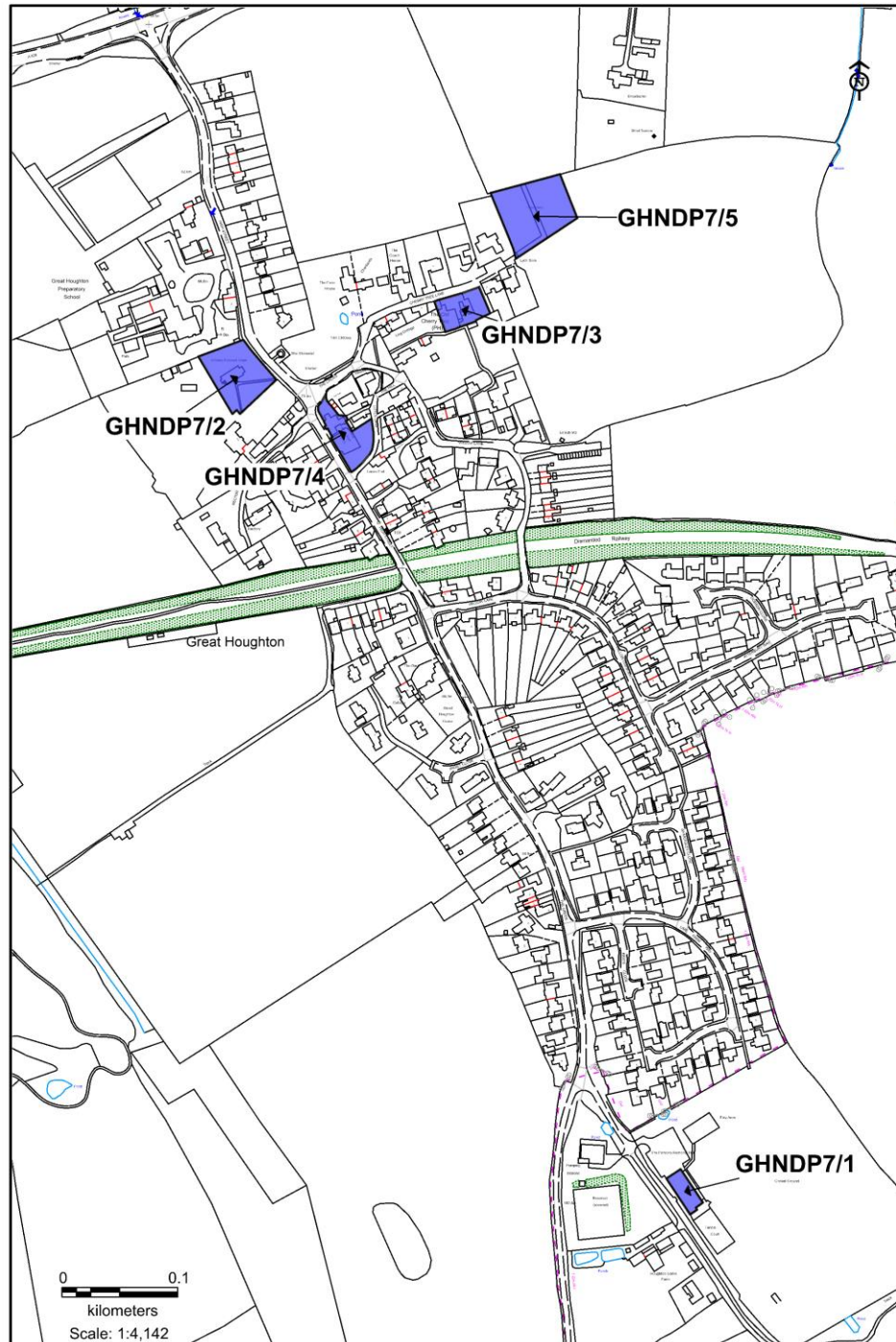
Background/Justification

5.37 Community facilities are the essential glue that help bind a community together. They provide important services, places for people to meet and interact contributing to individuals’ and the community’s health and well-being. The facilities listed include the parish church, village hall and the village’s two public houses.

5.38 National planning policy acknowledges that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. The facilities identified in Policy GHNDP7 contribute to all to these aspects of the local community.



Figure 6. Protected Community Facilities © Crown copyright [and database rights] 2021 OS licence number 0100055940 on behalf of Great Houghton Parish Council Licence Number PSL05334]



Policy GHNDP8 – Sport, Recreation and Leisure Facilities

The following sport, recreation and leisure facilities (Figure 7) will be protected:

GHNDP8/1 - Great Houghton Playing Field (including all related facilities and buildings)

GHNDP8/2 – The Cemetery, Cherry Tree Lane

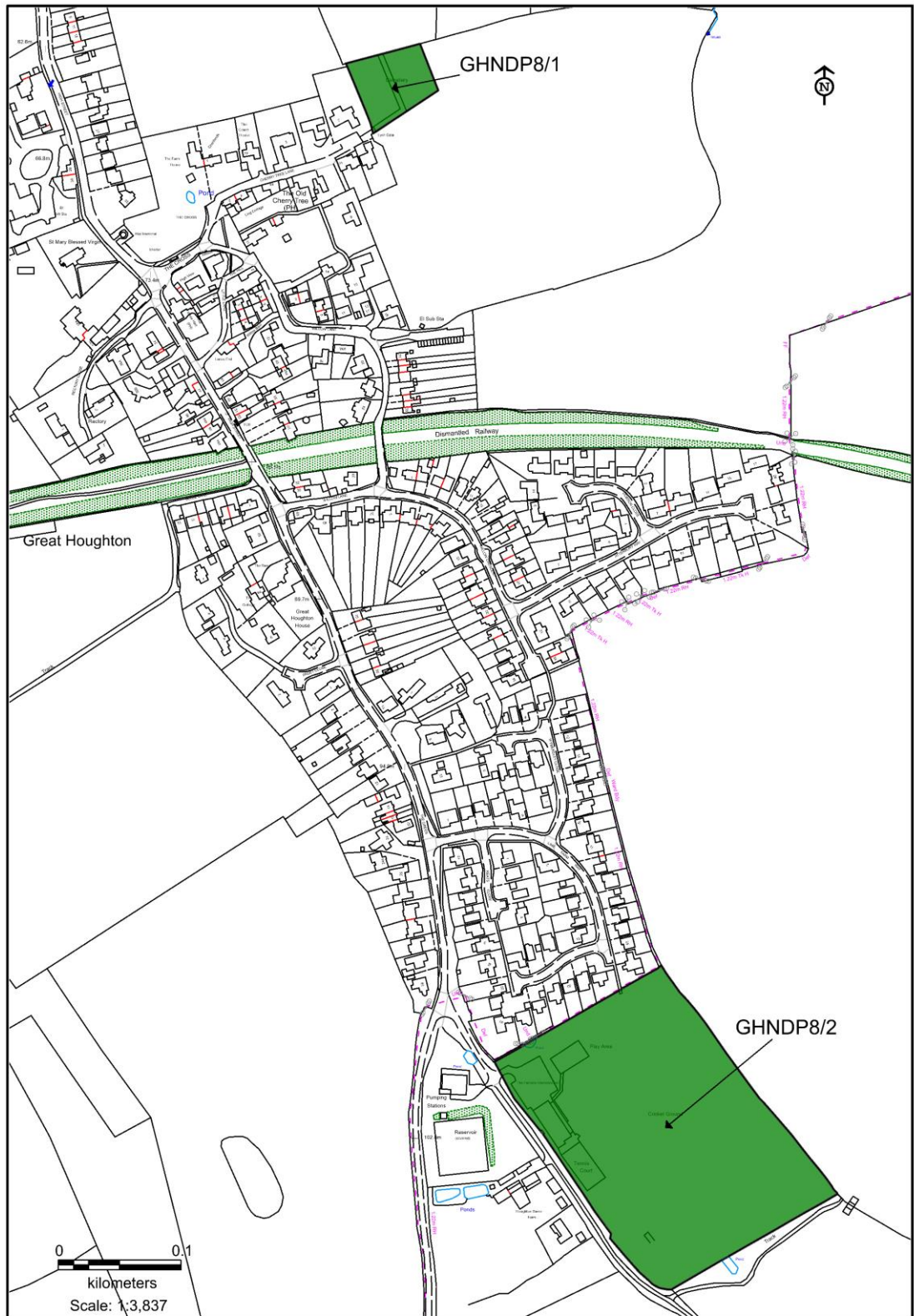
Development proposals that enhance the existing sport and recreation facilities on these sites will be supported when such proposals would not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity.

Development proposals that would result in the loss of these facilities will only be supported when the applicant can demonstrate that the facility is no longer needed for recreational use or suitable alternative provision can be provided elsewhere within the neighbourhood area to an equivalent or better standard and in a location that is in close proximity to the community it serves.

Background/Justification

- 5.39 Great Houghton has one significant recreation facility – the Playing Fields - this is home to a number of formal and informal recreation activities. To support the health and wellbeing of those living in the area, and to offer opportunities for people to meet and interact with people from different groups, the Playing Fields will be protected by Policy GHNDP8. Proposals to enhance and improve these facilities will be supported. Policy GHNDP8 sets out those circumstances when it may be acceptable for the protected recreation facilities to be developed for other uses. This will only be when the facility is no longer needed for recreational use or suitable alternative provision can be provided.

Figure 7. Protected Recreation Facilities © Crown copyright [and database rights] 2021 OS licence number 0100055940 on behalf of Great Houghton Parish Council Licence Number PSL05334]



GHNDP OBJECTIVE 6 -To ensure that the area has appropriate levels of transport infrastructure.

Policy GHNDP9 - Traffic Management and Transport Improvements

Proposals to improve road safety and traffic management throughout the Parish will be supported, including:

- a) Minimising traffic impacts on The High Street and The Green, by restricting HGV's and implementing traffic calming measures through Great Houghton.**
- b) Improving road safety for motorists and pedestrians along the A428, in particular at the junction of High Street and the A428.**
- c) Improving walking, cycling and public transport links to key services in Northampton and surrounding Schools, including the extension of the National Cycleway and footpath to link other nearby villages.**

Background/Justification

- 5.40 The neighbourhood area has a number of transport, traffic and accessibility issues. Policy GHNDP9 identifies a number of areas where such issues can be improved through the planning system and should be considered for inclusion in planning applications. Some of the areas identified could also form separate distinct projects and the Parish Council will pursue these or work with other agencies to implement these.
- 5.41 Great Houghton already has a number of traffic issues that impact negatively on quality of life and the amenity of residents. Further strategic related development at the Northampton South SUE and The Green (if adopted) will generate additional traffic in particular on Great Houghton High Street and at the junction with the A428 Bedford Road at the northern end of the village.
- 5.42 The junction of High Street with the A428 is also concern. The A428 has a 60mph speed limit. There have been accidents, including fatalities, at the junction. The east turn (e.g. to go the local school/Post Office/church which are all in Little Houghton) is difficult and dangerous to make, often with a significant wait. Although there are two lanes at the junction, the two-lane stretch is only a few car lengths long. This means that once a handful of cars is waiting to turn east, those wishing to turn west and head into Northampton cannot get past them to access the west-hand lane and a queue forms up into the village.
- 5.43 This effect is exacerbated when there is any problem on the A45 or the M1. The Green is an alternative route from Wootton to the A428 and cars use the High Street and Green as part of this alternative route between the A45/M1 and the A428

- 5.44 More cars, moving more slowly mean more exhaust emissions and environmental pollution. Villagers (including increasing numbers of very young children) would be exposed to this pollution, with the consequent effects on their health and wellbeing.
- 5.45 There is no way to widen the High Street, as there are houses on either side all the way down. It is also within the Conservation Area.
- 5.46 Development at The Green is a further concern. The Green is an unlit, single track road with passing places and blind bends. The edges of the road break down, especially during winter, creating large potholes which need regular repair. There is frequent fly tipping in the passing places. It does not stand up to its current usage, which in previous plans has been clearly underestimated, any development at The Green must address these traffic impacts.

Appendix 1. Design Statement Questionnaire

Initial Survey.

Dear Parishioners,

The Parish Council is currently writing a Village Design Statement for the benefit of the parishioners, the village itself and the immediate surrounding areas. There follows below an explanation of its purpose. There also follows a questionnaire for parishioners to complete and return to the Parish Council via E-mail or by hand.

It is extremely important that this is completed to aid the council with the Design Statement.

What is a Village Design Statement?

It is a detailed description of the village as it is today and highlights the qualities valued by its parishioners. It defines its unique character and the important features of its design and history. It has been written by the parishioners so that local knowledge, informed views and ideas will contribute to the village's future growth, development and environment. The aim is to ensure that any changes are based on a considered understanding of the village's past, present and future and that they bring a positive contribution to Great Houghton.

Who is it for?

Change is brought about by many things. Some changes are very apparent i.e. large development. Some changes go almost unnoticed, smaller day to day adjustments to gardens, homes, open spaces, wooded areas, hedgerows and paths. These can all alter the looks and the feel of the village.

This statement is therefore addressed to:

Primarily to Statutory Bodies & Public Authorities, and Planning of course, because of the influence they have over development and area growth. Also not forgetting Developers, Builders, Architects, Designers and Utility providers. Local Community Groups, Householders, Businesses & Business Properties.

Plus other outside sources that influence or have an interest in the village.

How does the Village Design Statement work?

This statement can be adopted and used by the relevant councils / planning bodies or other authorities as supplementary planning guidance and for its recommendations to be taken into account when applications are assessed. It will also be used when other bodies or persons within or outside the village effect the parish as it stands.

There will be further consultations with yourselves as villagers as we progress. We would very much appreciate it if you would complete the table of questions that follows and please add any comments you feel worthwhile at the bottom of the sheet.

The Questionnaire itself.

The completing of the questionnaire is extremely important to bring true meaning and body to the Design Statement. It will mean the persons from each household have had the opportunity to make a real and meaningful contribution to the Statement and to those agencies that will be compelled to read it they will know and understand that this is a true village document – for the village, by the village.

Village Survey for use with Village Design Statement.**Householders answering this survey.**

No. of persons in household	Age Group 0-10 yrs.	Age Group 11-16 yrs	Age Group 17-20 yrs	Age Group 21-35yrs	Age Group 36-45 yrs	Age Group 46-60 yrs	Age Group 60-75 yrs	Age Group 76 onwards

Questions.

General – Describe your sense of community & identity of village.	
Character and Setting – What are your perspectives of the surrounding aspects of the village and what do they bring to it?	
Building style, type, form & layout and what they bring overall to the village.	
The close industrial and commercial units and their effect on the village.	
Comment on traffic movements – through traffic, main roads each end of the village, parking and care for pedestrians	
Your overall view of our village – what made this the place you wanted to live?	
If you had a 'magic wand' and could improve just one aspect of the village – what would it be?	

List 3 things that would make Great Houghton an outstanding village.	1. 2. 3.
Other comments.	

Appendix 2 – National Heritage List for England

17 results found (January 2021 <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>).

GREAT HOUGHTON HOUSE

- List Entry Number: 1372217
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II*
- Location: GREAT HOUGHTON HOUSE, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

Great Houghton War Memorial

- List Entry Number: 1428182
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: High Street, Great Houghton, Northamptonshire, NN4 7AF, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

OUTBUILDING, FORMERLY STABLES, GREAT HOUGHTON HOUSE

- List Entry Number: 1039651
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: OUTBUILDING, FORMERLY STABLES, GREAT HOUGHTON HOUSE, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

GARDEN WALL BORDERING ROAD, GREAT HOUGHTON HOUSE

- List Entry Number: 1190701
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II

- Location: GARDEN WALL BORDERING ROAD, GREAT HOUGHTON HOUSE, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

OUTBUILDING (FORMERLY STABLES OF GREAT HOUGHTON HALL)

- List Entry Number: 1039646
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: OUTBUILDING (FORMERLY STABLES OF GREAT HOUGHTON HALL), HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

CHURCH OF ST MARY BLESSED VIRGIN

- List Entry Number: 1039647
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II*
- Location: CHURCH OF ST MARY BLESSED VIRGIN, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

HILL COTTAGE

- List Entry Number: 1293636
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: HILL COTTAGE, Great Houghton, THE HILL, Northampton, Northamptonshire

THE MANOR HOUSE

- List Entry Number: 1039729
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II*

- Location: THE MANOR HOUSE, 1, WILLOW LANE, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

34, HIGH STREET

- List Entry Number: 1039649
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 34, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

20 AND 22, THE GREEN

- List Entry Number: 1039673
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 20 AND 22, THE GREEN, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

36, HIGH STREET

- List Entry Number: 1039650
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 36, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

THE FARM HOUSE

- List Entry Number: 1039685
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: THE FARM HOUSE, 1, THE CROSS, Great Houghton, THE CROSS, Northampton, Northamptonshire

SUNNYBANK

- List Entry Number: 1039672
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: SUNNYBANK, 1, THE GREEN, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

LANE END

- List Entry Number: 1190717
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: LANE END, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

THE WHITE HART INN

- List Entry Number: 1372218
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: THE WHITE HART INN, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

THE OLD RECTORY

- List Entry Number: 1039648
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: THE OLD RECTORY, HIGH STREET, Great Houghton, Northampton, Northamptonshire

THE OLD CHERRY TREE INN

- List Entry Number: 1039686
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: THE OLD CHERRY TREE INN, THE CROSS, Great Houghton, THE CROSS, Northampton, Northamptonshire

Glossary

Accessibility: The extent to which employment, goods and services are made easily available to people, either through close proximity, or through providing the required physical links to enable people to go to locations where they are available.

Affordable Housing: Housing that is provided to eligible households at a price/ rent below the market rate, whose housing needs are not met by the market. It includes socially rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing.

Ancient Woodlands: These are defined as areas where there is believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. It can include both ancient semi natural and ancient replanted woodlands. They are irreplaceable habitats.

Appropriate Assessment (AA): Under the Habitat Regulations Assessment, stakeholders such as developers/ Local Authorities are required to undertake this assessment when a plan or project is likely to have an impact on any European Environmental conservation designations (i.e. Natura 2000 sites consisting of Special Protected Areas of Conservation, Special Protected Areas, etc.). The overall aim of this assessment is to demonstrate that the plan/ project will not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the environmental designation. Alternatively, the AA will need to demonstrate why the proposed project/ plan is in the overriding public interest and the compensatory measures that will be taken to ensure the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 sites is protected.

Biodiversity: The variety of plants, animals and other living things in a particular area or region. It encompasses habitat diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity.

Blue infrastructure; refers to water elements such as rivers, streams, canals, ponds, wetlands and floodplains.

Brownfield Land: See definition for Previously Developed Land.

Carbon Footprint: The amount of greenhouse gas produced in daily life through the burning of fossil fuels.

Community Infrastructure Levy (C.I.L): This allows Local Authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. This is used to fund a wide range of infrastructure (i.e. transport schemes, schools, etc.) that are needed to support the development of their area.

Connectivity: The linkages that exist between key locations.

Developer Contributions: Contributions made by a developer to remedy the impact of development, either by paying money for work to be carried out or by directly providing facilities or works either on or off-site.

Development Plan Document (DPD): These are planning documents forming part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and which have a status of being part of the development plan. In order to acquire this status, they will be subject to independent scrutiny through a public examination. Certain documents within the LDF must be DPDs, for example a Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations of land and Area Action Plan where produced. There must also be an adopted Policies Map which may be

varied as successive DPDs are adopted. Current Local Planning Regulations no longer use the term DPD and refer to Local Plans instead.

Dwelling: A self-contained building or part of a building used as a residential accommodation, and usually housing a single household. A dwelling may be a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette or residentially converted farm building.

Evidence Base: The information and data gathered to justify the policy approach set out in the Neighbourhood Plan including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area. It consists of consultation responses and the finding of technical studies.

Greenfield Land: Land which has not previously been developed, including land in agriculture or forestry and land in built up areas used for outdoor sport and recreation (including public and private open space and allotments).

Green Infrastructure: A strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It is designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green Infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens.

Grey infrastructure: the built environment in all its aspects.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP): The IDP identifies the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure required to support the new development proposed in the Joint Core Strategy for West Northamptonshire up to 2029. The document will be subject to monitoring and regular review.

Lifetime Homes: The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes. This standard is widely used in planning policies and forms part of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Listed Building: a building listed because of its special architectural or historic interest considered to be of national importance and therefore worth protecting and listed on the statutory list of 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest'. For the listed buildings in Great Houghton see Appendix 2 of this document.

Local Plan: 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 and 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.

Localism Act: This is an Act of Parliament that changes the powers of local government in England. The Act includes provisions for local government finance, town and country planning, the Community Infrastructure Levy and the authorisation of nationally significant infrastructure projects.

Mixed Use (or Mixed Use Development): Provision of a mix of complementary uses, such as residential, community and leisure uses, on a site or within a particular area.

Mode: The type of transport being used for a journey.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): This document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

Nature Improvement Area: Following the Natural Environment White paper (2011) Nature Improvement Areas were designated and granted government funding in February 2012. They should aim to achieve significant and demonstrable enhancements of the ecological network by undertaking the actions prioritised in the review.

Non-designated heritage assets: buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets, such as Listed Buildings.

Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP): Lists the most threatened habitats and species in the county, and sets out targets for action to aid their recovery.

Parish Plans: Are prepared by Parish Councils and other local community groups and set out a vision for their local area and usually include an action plan of how to achieve the vision. Parish Plans can be used to inform the development of planning policy at the local level.

Physical Infrastructure: Includes existing and future development required to support utilities, transport and waste management.

Previously Developed Land (PDL): Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural and forestry buildings) and associated fixed surface infrastructure, including the curtilage of (land attached to) buildings. It includes defence buildings and land used for mineral or waste extraction when there is no requirement for subsequent restoration. Land in built up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments are not considered as PDL. PDL is still commonly referred to as brownfield land.

Public Realm: Areas available for everyone to use, including streets, squares and parks.

Ramsar sites: Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

River Nene Regional Park (RNRP): An independent community interest company creating a green infrastructure network of environmental projects along the River Nene.

Section 106 Agreement/ Contribution: Refers to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and is a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner in association with the granting of planning permission. These agreements are a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. They are increasingly used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): A site or area designated as being important due to its wildlife plants or flowers and/ or unusual or typical geological features. SSSIs are identified by Natural England and have protected status under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Social Infrastructure: Includes education, healthcare, sports facilities, cultural and community facilities.

Special Protection Area (SPA): A SPA is a designation under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. Under the Directive, Member States of the European Union (EU) have a duty to safeguard the habitats of migratory birds and certain threatened birds.

Strategic Environment Assessment: A generic term used to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The European 'SEA Directive' (2001/42/EC) requires a formal 'environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA): A technical document which assesses the amount and nature of land which could be made available for housing development. It is part of the evidence base that will inform the plan making process.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA): A technical study which assesses housing need and demand across a defined market area, and which is used to inform housing and planning policies.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Provides additional guidance on matters covered by a DPD/ Local Plan. They will be an important consideration in determining planning applications.

Sustainable Development: Development which meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable Urban Extensions: These are defined as a planned expansion of a city or town that can contribute to creating more sustainable patterns of development when located in the right place, with well-planned infrastructure including access to a range of facilities and when developed at appropriate densities.

Topography: The gradient and variations in height within a landscape.

Viability Appraisal: An assessment of a proposed development to ensure all elements for the development, including required infrastructure and any required financial contributions can be successfully delivered in an economic context.

Wildlife corridors: Areas of habitat that connect wildlife populations.

