

Little Waldingfield Design Guide

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Quality information

Prepared by

Ela Michaluk

Graduate Landscape Architect, AECOM

Checked by

Tom Beck

Senior Landscape Architect, AECOM

Approved by

Jon Rooney

Technical Director, AECOM

Revision History

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Name

Position

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position

Prepared for:

Locality and Waldingfield Neighbourhood Group
Prepared by: AECOM Infrastructure and Environment Limited

Unit 1 Wellbrook Court
Girton
Cambridge CB3 0NA
United Kingdom

T: +44 1223 488 000

aecom.com

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1. Introduction

This report presents a summary of the character of the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Area and a set of design guidelines. It has been prepared by consultants at AECOM on behalf of Locality, working closely with the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Group and is based on a detailed appraisal of the area carried out through a desk study and fieldwork.

The document uses landscape character assessment techniques to inform the creation of specific Design Guides for the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Design Guide seeks to inform development proposals, address existing townscape issues and enhance the character of Little Waldingfield. This approach is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states that neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies based on an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics (MHCLG, 2018). In doing so, policies can ensure that development responds to local character and history, and reflects the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

1.1 Aims of the Design Guide

This guidance has been prepared to set out clear design principles to guide future development within the area and to encourage a design-led approach to development. This Design Guide aims to provide general guidance on the form that new development should take.

1.2 How to use the Design Guide

This Design Guide is intended for frequent reference and will be essential for all those involved with preparing or assessing the quality of planning applications. It is designed to be read by councils, applicants and householders. Compliance with the design guide will help speed up the planning process by reducing the chance of objections due to poor design.

It is expected that future development proposals show evidence in their design of having visited the site and conducted effective site analysis. This analysis will identify the opportunities and constraints offered by the site. This may include

design features that could be incorporated into the proposals that will complement the local character and contribute to the local distinctiveness of Little Waldingfield.

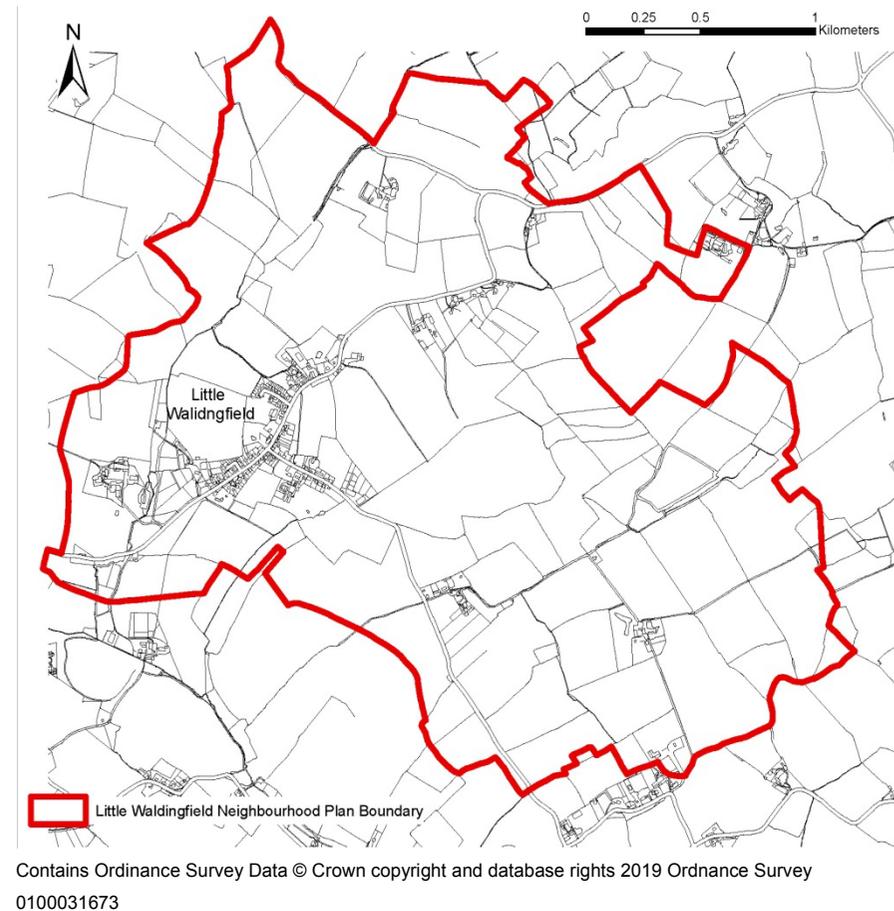


Figure 1 Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Area

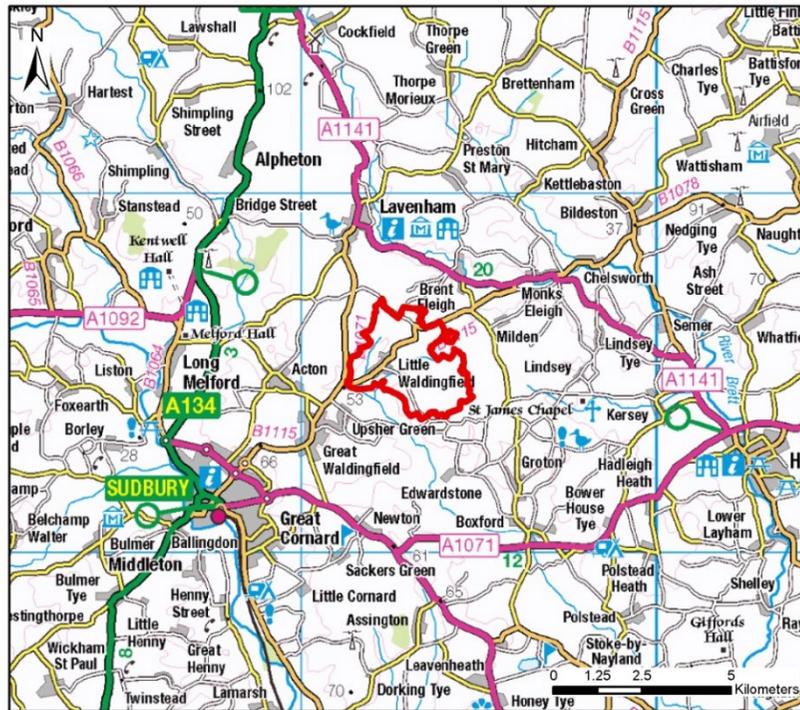


Bramley Cottage

2. Context

This section of the report describes the location and context of the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan area and summarises current planning policies which are relevant to the study.

2.1 Location



Legend

 Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

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Figure 2 Location

Little Waldingfield is a small settlement located in south west Suffolk, within the District of Babergh. The nearest towns are Lavenham, located approximately 4 km north and the market town of Sudbury located approximately 6km south west, as shown in Figure 2. The total area of the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Area is approximately 660 ha and, according to the census 2011, the population is 366.

The village is surrounded by arable fields which create an open setting to the village. The settlement with its distinctive landmark formed by the tower of St. Lawrence Church is visible from many directions, with only a few places where views are obscured by small woodlands and groups of trees.

Little Waldingfield is connected to Sudbury by the B1115 which continues north east to Stowmarket. The B1115 links with other country roads which create a network of local roads connecting small towns, villages and hamlets in this part of Suffolk. The A131 and the A134 are located south east of Little Waldingfield and provide long distance links. The A131 runs south from Little Waltham into Essex whilst the A134 connects Colchester to the south-east and King's Lynn to the north.

The nearest railway station is located in Sudbury and provides services to Marks Tey via Bures, Chapel and Wakes Colne.

The network of Public Rights Of Way, predominantly footpaths, provides connections between the village and the surrounding countryside.

2.2 Planning Policy Context

2.2.1 National planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2019

The NPPF sets out that a key objective of the planning system is “to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”, which will be achieved through three overarching objectives including “an environmental objective - to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...” (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, MHCLG 2019).

Part 12, Achieving well-designed places, states that “Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development”. Part 12 goes on to state: “policy and decisions should ensure that developments... are visually attractive... (and) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)”. An understanding of history and heritage is therefore important in developing neighbourhood plans to explain how this should inform future development.

Part 16, Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, states that “Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment... (taking) into account: ...the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place.”

Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance was reviewed, catalogued and published on the internet by the government in 2014 (MHCLG, 2018). The section on design includes guidance on promoting landscape character (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 26-007-20140306). It states that “*development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally*

distinctive patterns of development” and that the “*successful integration of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective*”.

Paragraph 041 Reference ID: 41-041-20140306 states that policy should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context.

2.2.2 Local planning policy

Babergh Local Plan: Core Strategy & Policies, 2014

This Development Plan Document (DPD) is the central part of the Babergh Local Plan, which will guide development across the District until 2031. It establishes the overarching vision of the district to 2031, which is to “*continue to be an attractive, high quality place in which to live and work, and to visit. The local character and distinctiveness of South Suffolk will be further enhanced by a strong economy and healthier environment providing the framework for a well connected network of places that is made up of mixed and balanced communities.*” The document includes strategic policies related to sustainable development, housing, economic development and the environment. Many of these policies are relevant to the design of development within Little Waldingfield, including:

- Policy CS2 - Settlement Pattern Policy
- Policy CS4 - Chilton Wood Strategic Land Allocation and Strategy for Sudbury / Great Conrad
- Policy CS11 - Strategy for Development for Core and Hinterland Villages
- Policy CS13 – Renewable / Low carbon Energy
- Policy CS14 – Green Infrastructure
- Policy CS16 – Town, Village and Local Centres
- Policy CS18 – Mix and Types of Dwellings
- Policy CS 19 – Affordable Homes
- Policy CS20 – Rural Exception Sites
- Policy CS21 – Infrastructure Provision

Babergh Local Plan remaining 'Saved Policies', 2006

The remaining 'saved' policies from the Babergh Local Plan, 2006 will remain until replaced by a New Joint Local Plan being developed by Babergh and Mid-Suffolk District Councils. The policies of most relevance to this document are described below:

- Policy HS03 – classifies Little Waldingfield as non-sustainable village;
- Policy HS27 – sets out density for residential development;
- Policy HS28 – sets out rules for infill planning applications;
- Policy CN01 – states that *'all new development proposals will be required to be of appropriate scale, form, detailed design and construction materials for the location'* and *'Proposals must pay particular attention to the content of any adopted Village Design Statement'*;
- Policy CN03 – explains that development leading to the loss of important open space, visually important gaps in the street scene or recreational facilities within towns and villages will not be permitted;
- Policy CN06 – sets out rules for proposed alterations, extensions or changes of use for listed buildings;
- Policy CN08 – states the requirements for new development in conservation areas or developments which will have an impact on views into or out of the conservation area;
- Policy EN22 – sets out rules for outdoor lighting;

This report is also informed by a number of other studies relevant to the local area, which have been considered in developing the principles set out in this guide.

The Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance was published in 2015. The purpose of the document is to improve the quality of new development coming forward in the countryside as defined in the Core Strategy.

The Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Village Character Assessment was prepared by the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee in 2018 to identify and describe the distinctive features, appearance and character of Little Waldingfield.

The Little Waldingfield Conservation Area Appraisal was published by Babergh District Council in 2007. This document provides details and identifies particular

features which contribute to the character of Little Waldingfield and justifies its status as a Conservation Area.

The Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Site Options and Assessment was prepared by AECOM in 2018. The document provides assessment of two potentially suitable site options to allocate land for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan in line with Local Plan policy.

2.2.3 Topography and hydrology

Little Waldingfield lies in the valley formed by two tributaries of the River Box. Both tributaries are small concealed watercourses flowing from north east to the south west joining the river Box just south of the neighbourhood plan boundary. The river valley is the lowest point in the area at approximately 50m Above Ordinance Datum (AOD). Land gently rises north east with the highest point near Long Wood at approximately 85 m AOD. The undulating topography of the neighbourhood area enables long distance views to the surrounding countryside and informs the setting of Little Waldingfield.

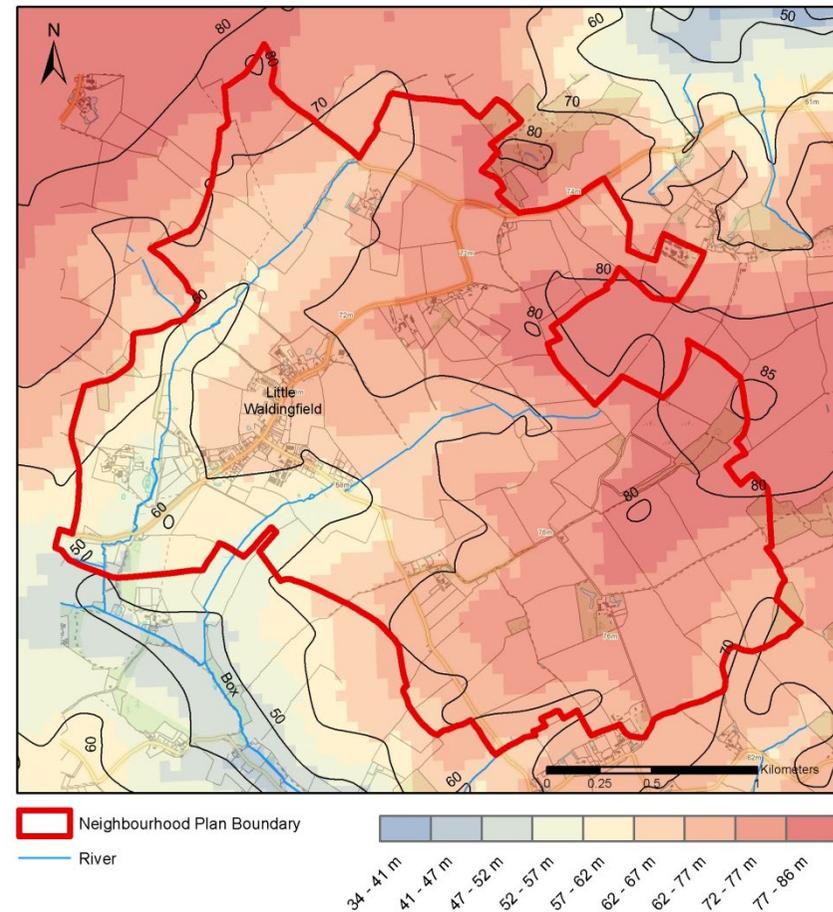
2.2.4 Landscape designations

Statutory and non- statutory designations have been distinguished in the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Long Wood and Hall Wood are part of the Mildens Thicks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ancient Woodland. Woodlands included within the Mildens Thicks are of national significance due to their biodiversity. Other ancient woodlands within the neighbourhood area include Walding Wood and Camps Wood.

The Little Waldingfield Conservation Area was designated in 1973 to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of the centre of the village. In addition over 20 buildings in the village have been listed by the Historic England. Locally listed buildings have been identified in the *Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Village Character Assessment, October 2018*.

The Brett Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) was designated in the Suffolk Country Structure Plan in 1980. A very small part of the Brett Valley SLA crosses the northern boundary of Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Area.



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Figure 3 Topography and Hydrology

2.2.5 Existing Landscape Character Assessment

Existing character assessments have been reviewed to provide some context to this more detailed assessment. The study area falls within National Character Area (NCA) 86: South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands, as defined by Natural England (Natural England, 2014). This NCA is broad but provides some context to the character of the study area. The key characteristics of this area which are of particular relevance to this assessment are:

- *An undulating chalky boulder clay plateau is dissected by numerous river valleys, giving a topography of gentle slopes in the lower, wider valleys and steeper slopes in the narrower upper parts;*
- *Fragments of chalk give many of the soils a calcareous character, which also influences the character of the semi-natural vegetation cover;*
- *South-east-flowing streams and rivers drain the clay plateau. Watercourses wind slowly across flood plains, supporting wet, fen-type habitats; grazing marsh; and blocks of cricket-bat willows, poplars and old willow pollards. Navigation locks are present on some rivers;*
- *Lowland wood pasture and ancient woodlands support the dormouse [habitats] and a rich diversity of flowering plants on the clay plateau. Large, often ancient hedgerows link woods and copses, forming wooded skylines;*
- *The agricultural landscape is predominantly arable with a wooded appearance. There is some pasture on the valley floors. Field patterns are irregular despite rationalisation, with much ancient countryside surviving. Field margins support corn bunting, cornflower and brown hare;*
- *There is a dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, parishes and small settlements around 'tyes' (commons) or strip greens and isolated hamlets. The NCA features a concentration of isolated moated farmsteads and numerous well-preserved medieval towns and large villages;*
- *Traditional timber-frame, often elaborate buildings with exposed timbers, colour-washed render, pargeting and steeply pitched roofs with pegtiles or long straw thatch. Sometimes they have been refronted with Georgian red brick or Victorian cream-coloured bricks ('Suffolk whites'). Clay lump is often used in cottages and farm buildings.*

At a local level, the study area falls mostly within the 04 Ancient Rolling Farmland landscape character area (LCA), as defined within Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance, August 2015.

04 Ancient Rolling Farmland

- *The rolling clayland landscape is dissected by river valleys including The Brett and Box;*
- *Ancient and species-rich hedgerows (mainly oak, ash and field maple, with suckering elm) and associated ditches have a strong visual impact as they are frequently high and wide;*
- *Ancient woodland is scattered throughout in blocks consisting largely of oak, lime, cherry, hazel, hornbeam, ash, holly and elm. The woodlands provide strong visual features within the landscape;*
- *Although there are some extensive field amalgamations resulting in a much more open landscape, overall the landscape is largely intact, and accessible through a dense network of winding roads and wide verges;*
- *At Lavenham and Chilton there are areas of flat interfluves (area between valleys that is adjacent to a watercourse) which were used for military airfields in World War II;*
- *The current crop production of cereals and oilseed rape and increasing equine use has a significant visual impact on the landscape;*
- *Wide panoramic views are offered in all directions of the compass from this landscape character;*
- *The small narrow winding lanes and roads that pass through the villages of this landscape character retain the tranquil, rural feel with only the occasional small hamlet or isolated farmstead to break up this gently rolling landscape;*
- *The settlement pattern mainly consists of dispersed farmsteads of mediaeval origin with the some larger hamlets and small villages that complement the rural land form and landscape.*



3. Design Guide

The following section is divided into two parts.

The first is a set of key elements to consider when assessing any design proposal. These are presented as general questions the neighbourhood group are seeking clarification on from applicants and their design teams.

The second is a set of outline design guidelines illustrating the aspirations of the neighbourhood group identifying built form characteristics that are considered to be locally important.

3.1 Key elements to consider when assessing applications

This section states a general design principle followed by a number of questions against which the design proposal should be judged. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment overview as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution. The following issues need to be considered when assessing the suitability of applications. Do the proposals:

3.1.1 Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, pattern or movement and land use.

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design?
- Is the proposal within a conservation area?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?

3.1.2 Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long distance views.

- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between villages?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the identified views?
- Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height, massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.
- Has careful attention been paid to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a proposal is an extension, is it subsidiary to the existing property so as not to compromise its character?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?

- How are long distance views incorporated in the design?

3.1.3 Reinforce or enhance the established village character of streets, squares and other spaces.

- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- What is the character of the adjacent streets and does this have implications for the new proposals?
- Does the new proposal respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Does the proposal positively contribute to the quality of the public realm/streetscape and existing pedestrian access?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area?
- Can any new views be created?

3.1.4 Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness.

- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?
- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

3.1.5 Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development.

- What are the important features surrounding the site?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- How can the important existing features including trees be incorporated into the site?
- How does the development relate to any important links both physical and visual that currently exists on the site?

3.1.6 Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing.

- Is the scale and height of the proposal appropriate to the area?
- Should the adjacent scale be reflected?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Would a higher development improve the scale of the overall area?
- If the proposal is an extension, is it subsidiary to the existing house?
- Does the proposed development compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens?

3.1.7 Adopt appropriate materials and details.

- What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local material?
- Does the proposal use high quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?

3.1.8 Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity.

- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?
- Do the new points of access have regard for all users of the development (including those with disabilities)?

3.1.9 Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality.

- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Are there existing trees to consider?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how will this be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

3.1.10 Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features.

- What effect will services have on the scheme as a whole?
- Can the effect of services be integrated at the planning design stage, or mitigated if harmful?
- Has the lighting scheme been designed to avoid light pollution?

3.1.11 Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other, to provide a safe and attractive environment.

- Has the proposal been considered in its widest context?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?
- What are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Have all aspects of security been fully considered and integrated into the design of the building and open spaces?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?
- In rural locations has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?

3.1.12 Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours.

- Has adequate provision been made for bin storage?
- Has adequate provision been made for waste separation and relevant recycling facilities?
- Has the location of the bin storage facilities been considered relative to the travel distance from the collection vehicle?
- Has the impact of the design and location of the bin storage facilities been considered in the context of the whole development?
- Could additional measures, such as landscaping be used to help integrate the bin storage facilities into the development?
- Has any provision been made for the need to enlarge the bin storage in the future without adversely affecting the development in other ways?

3.1.13 Use of energy efficient technologies.

- Use of energy saving/efficient technologies should be encouraged
- If such technologies are used (e.g. solar panels, green roofs, water harvesting, waste collection, etc.), these should be integrally designed to complement the building and not as bolt-ons after construction.
- For standalone elements (e.g. external bin areas, cycle storage, etc.) materials and treatment should be of equal quality, durability and appearance as for the main building.

3.2 Design Guidelines

This section identifies the design elements which need to be considered when reviewing proposals. The local pattern of streets and spaces, building styles, materials and ecology should all help to determine the character and identity of a development. Design should not stifle innovation and should recognise that new building technologies are capable of delivering acceptable built forms and may sometimes be more efficient. It is important with any proposals that full account is taken of the local context and that the new design embodies the “sense of place” and also meets the aspirations of people already living in that area. The aim of this section is to produce design guidelines that help to assess the design quality and appropriateness of the proposed development.

When assessing each element of the design the assessor should consider how the proposals respond to the existing landscape character identified in section 2.

3.2.1 Positive aspects of character

There are a number of positive aspects of character which should be sustained, reinforced or enhanced. These relate to the small scale rural character of Little Waldingfield.

- Traditional linear settlement pattern with one plot deep development concentrated along The Street, with less development on the smaller side roads;
- The buildings within the conservation area and listed buildings in the village contribute to the historic character of the village;
- Front gardens and boundary features contribute to the rural character of the village;
- The key gateway identified on Church Road emphasises the sense of arrival to Little Waldingfield;
- Traditional Suffolk materials and architectural detailing contribute to the historic character of Little Waldingfield;
- A rich palette of colours present on building façades emphasise the quality of the place;
- Mature trees contribute to the rural character of Little Waldingfield;

- Playing fields make an important contribution to open space in the village used for regular events;
- The malt kiln attached to the Malting Farm is a distinctive feature;
- The tower of St. Lawrence Church is an important landmark and is present in views from around the village.

3.2.2 Issues to be addressed

The following issues have been identified which could be addressed through new development or active management. These are principally related to the increasing development pressure.

- Increasing housing requirement to allocate sites to deliver 5% to 15% of the District Growth identified by the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council by 2036 poses a risk of changes to the small scale character of the village;
- Lack of off street parking provision;
- Primarily residential land use compromises the sustainability of the village through a lack of land use diversity;
- Lack of designated public green space;
- A limited palette of materials in the public realm;
- Extensive overhead wires disrupt short distance views and the setting of the conservation area and listed buildings.

3.2.3 Opportunities for positive change

The combination of the character assessment of Little Waldingfield and the Design Guides offer the best method for achieving appropriate future development in Little Waldingfield. This provides a baseline against which change can be monitored and managed.

The evolution of the landscape will continue and therefore the management of change is essential to ensure that sustainable social, environmental and economic outcomes are achieved. This section therefore considers various factors which may influence change and inform the policies set out in the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan.

There are some areas within Little Waldingfield which could benefit greatly from development in line with these Design Guides. These relate to improving the sustainability of the village and provision of local amenities.

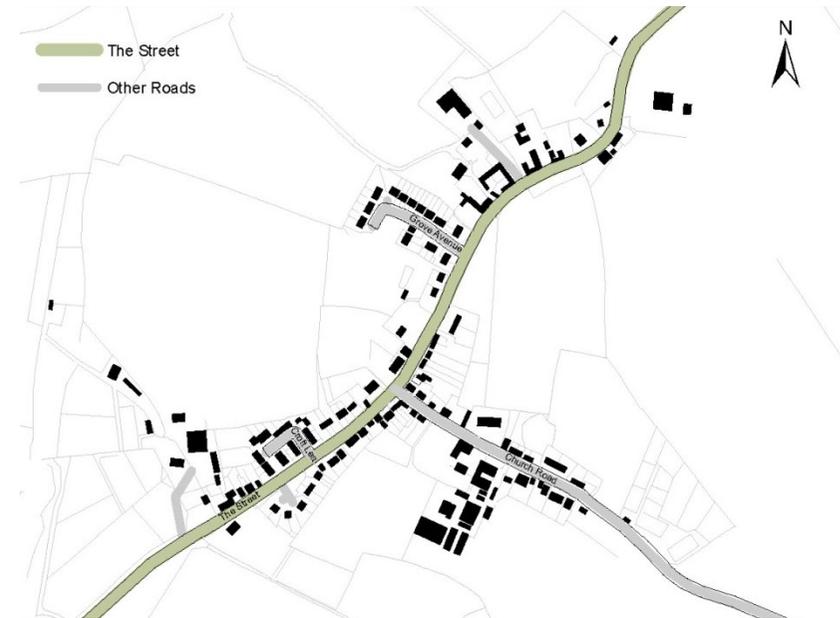
- New development should include residential, commercial and recreational land uses;
- The importance of trees in both public and private spaces needs to be recognised, as they are significant contributors to the character of Little Waldingfield. New development should not normally result in the loss of existing trees and tree groups. Proposed trees should be incorporated into new development especially where trees have been lost or removed.

3.2.4 Street pattern



Little Waldingfield has retained a historic linear layout concentrated along The Street (B1115). Predominantly one plot deep, development is distributed along both sides of The Street up to the junction with Grove Avenue. North of this junction the majority of the development is located east of The Street. Along Church Road residential development continues with the addition of larger farm buildings set back from the street. Church Road gives a more rural feel in comparison to The Street as it continues into a narrow winding country lane framed by tall hedgerows, typical in the Suffolk countryside. Minor roads coming off The Street, such as Croft Lea, Wade Cres and Grove Avenue focus small clusters of recent development and deviate from the linear layout of the village. Car parking provision is limited to off street parking.

The junction of The Street and Church Road defines the centre of the village due to its spacious character. This is emphasised by wide pavements on both sides of the road, front gardens and open space in front of the derelict Swan public house. Other elements such as a post box and historic K6 telephone kiosk indicate that it was also historically recognised as a centre of the village.



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Figure 4 Street Pattern

Design Principles

- New development should respond to the historic linear layout of the village and one plot deep built form.
- New development should enhance the centre of the village through a formal type of paving and retain existing historic elements such as K6 telephone kiosk.
- Development proposals in or adjacent to the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings should consider the setting and context within which the application site is set; whilst clearly demonstrating that the proposals complement the local character.

New development should include off street parking provision.

3.2.5 Building type and layout



Little Waldingfield comprises a wide range of different types of buildings. Detached and semi-detached houses are the most common and their number is approximately equal. There are examples of short terraces usually joining three houses. One such example is the Churchside north of St. Lawrence's Church. These almshouses together with the church and Priory create an important group of historic buildings on Church Road. Working farms and converted barns strengthen the rural character of the area. The circular brick built malt kiln attached to the Malting Farm is a distinctive feature in the village.



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Figure 5 Pattern and Layout of Buildings

Little Waldingfield comprises primarily residential land use. The Swan public house is the only remaining commercial building, but this is currently closed. Regular community events are held in The Village Hall and on the Playing Fields making them central to local community.



Example of semi-detached house and a short terrace



Example of barn and detached house

The different scale, form and design of buildings results in two distinctive development types in Little Waldingfield.



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The first development type comprises up to two storey houses set on a medium size plot. The majority are semi-detached and detached with some short terraces. Primarily buildings are set behind front gardens which emphasise the small scale and rural character of the village. Although there are examples of buildings which front directly onto the street, such as 54 to 58 The Street, and these contribute to the townscape rather than rural character of the village.



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The second development type comprises large houses that originate from farms, manors and institutions such as a school. This type of development creates a complex of buildings set on larger plots. Residential buildings form part of the cluster and often front onto the street. Neighbouring buildings are set back in the plot and are rarely visible from the street. These clusters of buildings are complemented by large rear gardens which often include formal planting, recreational grounds or mature specimen of trees. This type of development adds to the historic character to the village.



2010



The Church Road 2010, © 2019 Google

The low density development in Little Waldingfield contributes to the small scale, rural character of the village. Building plots create an irregular grid, typical for local villages.

While it is important to make the best use of land, density should be appropriate to the location and enhance the character of the village. The images above show an example of where a single detached house in the centre of a large plot was replaced by a pair of detached houses fronting the street. These new buildings increase the density of development but the architectural detail, materials and low boundary wall are in keeping with the neighbouring buildings. This enhances the existing character of the street.

2019



The Church Road 2019

Design Principles:

- Future development should include a mix land use and the necessary infrastructure to ensure the sustainability of the village and a high quality of development.
- New development should respond to the type, scale and form of existing buildings.
- New development should be responsive to the plot widths, proportions, building lines and positions within the plots.
- The density in new development proposals should be appropriate to the location and respond to the existing character of Little Waldingfield.
- New built form should emphasise historic and rural character of the village and complement the existing buildings.

3.2.6 Buildings heights and roof lines



Little Waldingfield consists mainly of one and a half and two storey buildings. Steep pitched roofs with gables are common and often decorated with white bargeboards and dormers. Exposed red brick chimney stacks are characteristic in the village. Most of these decorative features are present within the conservation area, although more recently built and renovated roofs retain the structure but lack the same level of detail.

There are several clusters of bungalows which create a lower level of roofline in the village. Pitched roofs are often covered with concrete pantile, with small simple chimneys and a lack of decoration.

Typical roof materials comprise slate, thatch, red terracotta and in more recent development concrete and terracotta pantile.

Roof Materials Palette



Examples of roof materials such as: flint, slate, thatch, red terracotta.



Consistent roofline across the village



Group of taller buildings north of The Street

Up to two storey buildings are focused in the central part of Little Waldingfield and create a consistent roofline present in views across the village. There is a group of taller three story buildings, located at the northern edge of the village and therefore do not influence the consistent roofline in the central part of the village.

Design Principles:

- The height of proposed development should respond to adjacent buildings and should not generally exceed two storeys.
- New development proposals should consider steep pitched roofs prevalent in the village.
- Extensions are more likely to be successful if they do not exceed the height of the original or adjacent buildings. Two storey extensions should be constructed with the same angle of pitch as the existing roof.
- High quality roof materials consistent with the rural character of the village should be used in new development. Concrete tiles and artificial slates should be avoided.
- Typical roof features such as chimney stacks, gables, and bargeboards should be incorporated into new development proposals to correspond with the historic and rural character of the village.

3.2.7 Boundary treatments



Many buildings in Little Waldingfield are set behind small front gardens. Residential fences and walls are usually of a similar height which gives a unified boundary structure, particularly on the southern end of The Street. Typical boundary treatments are red and white brick walls, flint walls, picket fence and hedgerows with gates. Low walls combined with topiary hedgerows reflect an original boundary treatment and enhance the historic character of the village. Materials and attention to detail contribute to the quality of the place.

Design Principles:

- The position of boundary features in proposed development should correspond with the existing alignment and tie in with neighbouring properties.
- New development should use boundary treatments which are common or complementary to the street and enhance the historic and rural character of the village.



- The materials proposed for new boundary features should be of high quality, responding to the character of the buildings in the area, and have strong attention to architectural detailing. Modern materials that complement the street scene may be appropriate where they enhance the local character.

3.2.8 Architecture, material and surface treatments

Little Waldingfield comprises examples of most of Suffolk's building materials such as brick, render, flint and weatherboarding. White Suffolk Brick and red brick are dominant and are sometimes used together to create polychrome brick patterning. Older timber framed constructions are hidden behind brick or rendered fronts. Black weatherboard barns are often converted to dwellings retaining and enhancing the rural character of the village.

Façade Materials Palette



Examples of façade materials such as: red and white brick, painted brick, timber frame covered by render and black weatherboard

Colour Palette

A rich palette of colours present on buildings façades emphasises the quality of the place and builds upon diverse character. Warm tones of orange and brown relate to the building materials such as brick and tile. Other colours such as various tones of green, blue and brown related to the range of colours present in the surrounding landscape. This range of colours is appropriate for Little Waldingfield and appears in other towns and villages across Suffolk.



Architectural Detail: Doors



Examples of painted timber doors with portico and modern wooden doors with porches

Architectural Detail: Windows



Examples of sash windows with glazing bars and modern uPVC windows

Elaborate windows and doors decorate façades of historic houses in Little Waldingfield. Multiple ranges of sash windows embedded by stuccoed reveals and heads are characteristic for historic buildings. High quality materials and detailing contribute to the quality of the place. There are also less decorative uPVC windows present in more recent development in Little Waldingfield.

Timber doors of historic houses are often emphasised by porticos with decorative elements such as capitals, columns and cornices. A wide range of timber porches emphasise the entrance to buildings in the modern development proposals across the village.

Design Principles:

- Design should demonstrate an understanding of the historic context and complement the existing materials and architectural detailing.
- New development proposals are likely to be more successful if they comprise high quality, traditional materials such as red brick, White Suffolk Brick, render, flint and weatherboard.
- The choice of exterior colour should help to integrate new building into its context.
- Future development should consider sash windows to emphasise the historic character of the village.
- Future development should consider doorways emphasised by porticos and porches.

3.2.9 Open space and public realm



Playing fields comprise approximately 1.5ha of green space, which is bounded by houses and adjacent fields. The playing fields are recognised by the community as very important open space for regular events and are a focus of activities in the village.

Private gardens are an important part of the streetscape. Trees, hedgerows and the composition of plants in front gardens contribute to the rural character of the village and quality of the streetscape. Well maintained front gardens with topiary hedgerows adjacent to low brick walls relate to the historic character of the village.

There are distinctive trees and groups of trees, some of which are protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO). These are located along The Street north of the junction with Church Road, around the Priory and in close proximity of St. Lawrence Church.

Lime trees north of the church are the last remnants of an avenue which once crossed the field to Wood Hall.

A limited palette of materials has been used in the public realm and is largely restricted to asphalt roads and pavements. This provides an opportunity for the creation of a new palette of materials inspired by local examples.

Design principles:

- New development should provide sufficient open space appropriate to the location and size of the dwelling, preferably through including front and rear gardens.
- Playing fields should be retained and enhanced as a community hub through new development.
- Front gardens in new development proposals should add to the quality of the surrounding landscape and contribute to the rural character of Little Waldingfield.
- Trees protected by TPO should be retained in new development. Historic groups of trees should be reinstated where appropriate.
- Materials used in the public realm should be of high quality and respond to the character of the village. A more formal type of paving could be introduced in the centre of the village to emphasise the focal point in Little Waldingfield.

3.2.10 Views



The open rolling landscape enables wide panoramic views from the village towards the countryside and views from the countryside towards the village. The tower of St. Lawrence Church is a distinctive landmark present in many views.

A key gateway is formed at the entrance to the village from the Church Road. Tall hedgerows, welcoming signs and the tower of St. Lawrence Church present in long distance view emphasise the sense of arrival to Little Waldingfield.

Wiring and numerous poles present on streets of Little Waldingfield create visual clutter and have negative impact on short distance views within the village. The setting of Listed Buildings and Conservation Area is especially affected by these elements.



Design Principles:

- The Important Vistas identified in the Little Waldingfield Conservation Area Appraisal, 2007 and should be retained and enhanced.
- The key gateway on the Church Road should be retained and enhanced in future development.
- New development proposals should propose underground services where appropriate, to reduce the impact of overhead wiring on the streetscene.

3.2.11 Design Guide check list

Design Element	Description	Proposals consistent with design guide (yes / no)
Street pattern and building layout	Do the development proposals respect and respond to the linear pattern of development in the village?	
Building type and layout	Do the development proposals respond to the existing type and building layout?	
Buildings heights and roof lines	Do the development proposals respond to the context of the built environment with regards to the height, structure and continuity of the roofline?	
Boundary treatment	Do the development proposals use boundary treatments which are common or complementary to the street and reinforce the continuity of the building line?	
Architecture, materials and surface treatments	Do the development proposals complement materials and architectural detail?	
Open space and public realm	Do the development proposals contribute to the quality and provision of open space and public realm in the village?	
Views	Do the development proposals retain and emphasise identified important views and gateways?	



4. Next steps and sources of further information

A wealth of further information and support is available to assist Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Group in applying the principles set out in this assessment. The Locality website is a useful starting point and is updated regularly. Current guidance which may be of interest includes:

- Good Design in Neighbourhood Planning:
<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/good-design-neighbourhood-planning/>

Further technical support is also available to priority neighbourhood planning groups and forums through Locality, funded by MHCLG. The other packages of support currently available are:

- Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)
- Site Options and Assessment
- Masterplanning
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
- Evidence Base and Policy Development
- Plan Health Check Review

Further information is available in the Neighbourhood Planning Grant Guidance Notes produced by Locality: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/about/grant-funding/>.

4.1.1 Embed guidelines into draft neighbourhood plan

The report can be used as evidence to support the Little Waldingfield neighbourhood plan and its draft policies where the analysis highlights relevant issues and opportunities that can be influenced by land use planning interventions.

4.1.2 Engage with the council

The inputs from the District Council's policy and development management specialists would be invaluable in advance of formal consultation and submission. A Steering Group should consider how these guidelines can be transposed into policy. A starting point would be Locality's 'Writing Planning Policies' guidance which sets guidance on how different planning policies are designed to achieve different things.



5. References

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