



LITTLE **Waldingfield**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
2018 - 2036**

**Made Plan
March 2022**

Little Waldingfield Parish Council



Housing Policies

15

Natural Environment Policies

21

Historic Environment Policies

25

Development Design Policies

28

Services and Facilities Policies

32

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

Tim Sheppard (Chair); Jennie Jordan;
Chris White; Barbara Campbell and
Richard Furlonger
Cover photograph: Frances Gregor-Smith

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FOREWORD

In September 2016, a public meeting was held at the Parish Rooms to provide residents with information on the options available for the preparation of a community-led plan for Little Waldingfield. A subsequent parish-wide ballot identified that 87.4% of the votes cast were in favour of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. The following November, the Parish Council resolved to commence work on the Neighbourhood Plan and to establish a Steering Committee of volunteers to manage its preparation.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan (or "Neighbourhood Plan") is a community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It is about the use and development of land and contains a vision statement, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development.

Residents and other national and local bodies were consulted on the draft Plan in June and July 2020 and all comments received were considered and the Plan amended and brought up-to-date. The amended Plan was then submitted to Babergh District Council where further consultation took place ahead of the independent examination of the Plan early in 2021.

The amendments required by the Inspector, together with other minor amendments to bring the Plan up-to-date, were made ahead of the Parish Referendum of the Plan.



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans, which establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in their neighbourhood. These Neighbourhood Development Plans, when properly “made” become part of the legal planning framework for the designated area. During the preparation of the Plan, a number of potential community projects were suggested including the provision of allotments; biodiversity enhancement through wildlife meadow/tree planting and underground power/phone lines. While not forming part of the Plan, these could be initiated if there is sufficient interest from residents to help deliver them.
- 1.2 A Neighbourhood Development Plan (or “Neighbourhood Plan”) is a community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It is about the use and development of land and contains a vision statement, aims, planning policies, and proposals for improving the area, providing new facilities, or the allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development.
- 1.3 Town and Parish councils are encouraged to produce their own Neighbourhood Plans enabling local people to have a say as to how their neighbourhood grows and develops. In a designated neighbourhood area which contains all or part of the administrative area of a town or parish council, the town or parish council is responsible for neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood Plans cannot contradict the main government planning policies or the strategic policies in the Local Development Plan (or “Local Plan”) for the area. For example, they cannot propose less development than is planned for in the adopted Local Plan.
- 1.4 This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in the Localism Act 2011 (“the Plan”) and has been prepared by a Steering Committee established by the Parish Council, which is the “qualifying body” as defined by the Act.
- 1.5 The Plan focuses on local planning-related matters and provides Little Waldingfield (also “the Village”) with greater opportunities than ever before to influence change and development within its area, based upon a fair and democratic consultation process supported by Babergh District Council and the Parish Council.
- 1.6 The local community wishes to preserve the character and services of Little Waldingfield as much as possible. It has a charming and unique character but is vulnerable to external change and, hence, needs to be protected and preserved. There is a recognition that outside pressures will have a growing impact upon the Village, and the community will need to be prepared to respond. These pressures have

already materialised in the form of a number of proposals for housing growth in the Village and it is essential that any future growth has regard to the importance of ensuring that services and facilities have the capacity to cope with growth and that there is no adverse impact on the natural and historic environment.

- 1.7 The Plan is structured to provide information about the neighbourhood plan process; the Village’s distinct character, history and geography; the Vision and Objectives and the Plan itself. The Plan contains both specific planning policies and community actions. The latter do not form part of the development plan but identify local initiatives to address issues and concerns raised as part of the community engagement undertaken during the preparation of the Plan.
- 1.8 This Neighbourhood Plan represents the culmination of several years’ work, commissioning expert reports and consulting with parishioners. It conforms with the strategic planning policies of the current Babergh Local Plan, the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and, most importantly, reflects the aspirations of the local community.

Purpose and Scope of Plan

- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to provide a layer of local policies which reflect the specific context of Little Waldingfield, as well as providing up-to-date planning policies in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan. At important points during the preparation of the Plan, the wishes and opinions of the local community have been sought. The Plan covers five main topic areas:
 - Housing
 - The natural environment
 - The historic built environment
 - Development design
 - Services and Facilities
- 1.10 The content of the Plan is structured around these areas and the distinct chapters cover the policies and aspirations for each topic. Each chapter contains a reminder of the relevant objectives and a summary of the relevant evidence collected during the preparation of the Plan.
- 1.11 The Neighbourhood Plan contains planning policies that form part of the statutory development plan which will be used for determining planning applications in the Parish. The planning policies appear in boxes numbered LWD1, LWD2 and so on. During the preparation of the Plan, a number of potential community projects were suggested, including: the provision of allotments; biodiversity enhancement through wildlife meadow/tree planting and underground power/phone lines. While not forming part of the Plan, these could be initiated if there is sufficient interest from residents to help deliver them.

- 1.12 The Plan sets out, in particular, how Little Waldingfield can play its part in meeting the identified housing needs of the area over the period of the Plan (to 2036) while safeguarding Little Waldingfield from speculative planning applications should the District Council be unable to demonstrate a five-years' supply of land for housing. As such, it has been prepared to conform with paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework ("the NPPF").

How the Plan Has Been Prepared

- 1.13 The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require a neighbourhood plan to:

- Be appropriate, having regard to National Planning Policy;
- Contribute to achieving sustainable development;
- Be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area; and
- Be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.

- 1.14 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the government's Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and, in particular, has involved considerable local community engagement in order to gather evidence for the content of the Plan.

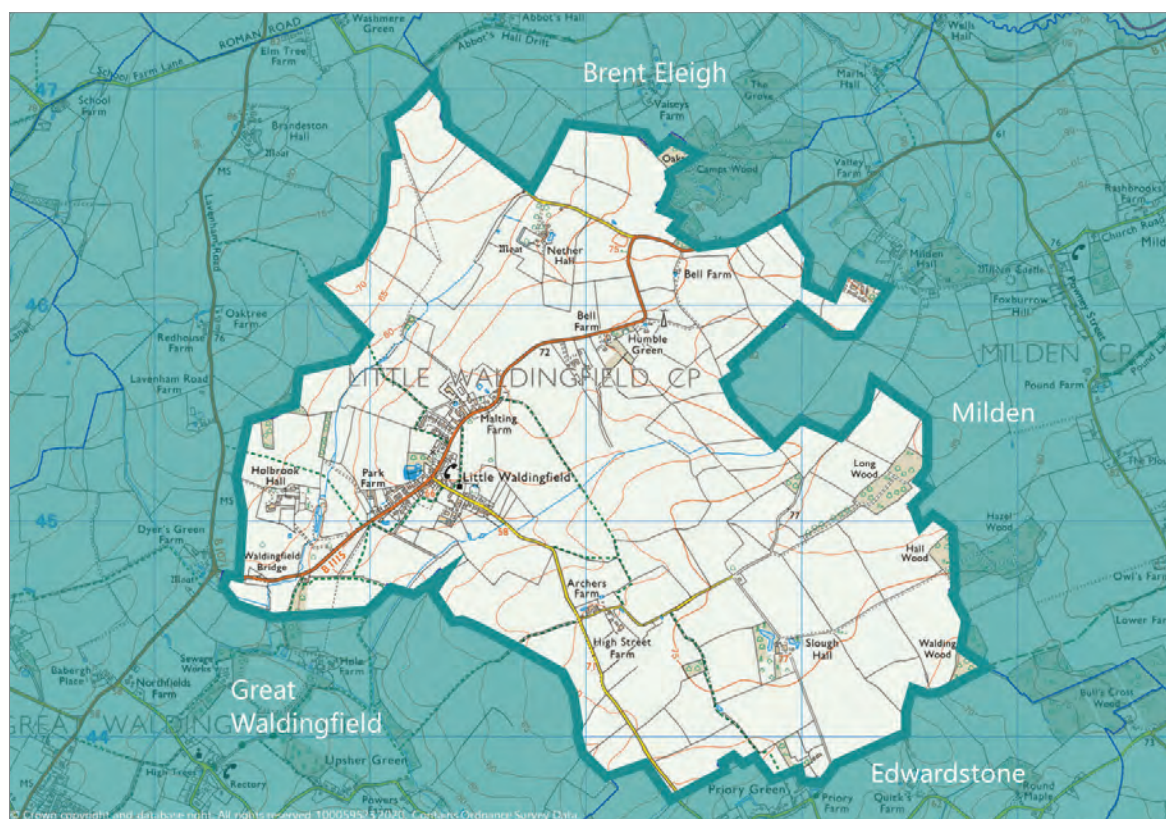
- 1.15 In September 2016, a public meeting was held at the Parish Rooms to provide residents with information on the options available for the preparation of a community-led plan. A parish-wide ballot was then conducted in November 2016

and 81 forms were returned from around 160 dwellings, with a total of 151 votes cast from a population of around 360 residents, including children. Some 87.4% of the votes cast were in favour of preparing a neighbourhood plan for the Parish.

- 1.16 At a meeting of the Parish Council on 15 November 2016, it was resolved to commence work on the Neighbourhood Plan and to establish a group of volunteers to manage its preparation. On 13 March 2017, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, Babergh District Council formally designated the whole parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area, as illustrated on Map 1. Details of the application, its publication and the designation can be viewed on the District Council's website under 'Neighbourhood Planning in Little Waldingfield'. There are no other designated neighbourhood plan areas within the Parish boundary.

- 1.17 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by a Steering Committee representing Little Waldingfield Parish Council which, for the purposes of the Localism Act 2011, is the "qualifying body" responsible for putting together the Plan. Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has been supported by the Planning Consultancy 'Places4People'. The local community has taken the lead on the content of the Plan and it has been shaped by results of surveys and drop-in events, which ensures that the Neighbourhood Plan properly reflects the aspirations of the local community.

Map 1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area





The key stages:

July 2017

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee ("the SC") was formed, comprising Tim Sheppard (Chair); Jennie Jordan; Chris White; Barbara Campbell and Richard Furlonger.

October 2017

Initial Neighbourhood Plan ("NP") grant funding was secured from 'My Community'.

December 2017

The Household Survey was circulated to all residents.

The results were collated in early 2018. There were over 200 responses-64 percent of residents completed a questionnaire-a very good response rate. The Household Survey Results are attached under the Evidence Base section of the Little Waldingfield website Neighbourhood Plan pages ("the NP web pages").

March 2018

The NP photographic competition was launched and it was won by Frances Gregor-Smith.

June 2018

The first NP drop-in event for residents took place, at which the Household Survey Results and the draft Village Character Assessment was displayed, amongst other information about the NP process. The turnout was pleasing and the display boards used are also available to download on the NP web pages.

July 2018

Further funding and technical assistance was secured to help towards the NP.

October 2018

The Village Character Assessment was published, following evidence gathering by the SC; the collation of the consultation responses from residents and drafting of the Report by the retained Consultants, Places4People.

March 2019

The Housing Needs Assessment Report was published.

April 2019

The Design Code for the Parish was published.

May 2019

As part of a national support package, the government's retained Neighbourhood Plan consultants prepared a Site Options and Assessment Report. The work looked at the planning merits of the 3 sites identified in Babergh's 2017 Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). Parishioners were then consulted on the resulting options for the potential allocation of housing sites in the Neighbourhood Plan at a further drop-in event.

September 2019

The Parish Council consultation on the draft Joint Local Plan and its consequences for the NP was held.

January 2020

The Little Waldingfield Masterplanning document was published.

June-July 2020

Formal public consultation on Draft Plan.

August 2020

Submission of Draft Plan to Babergh District Council.

Autumn 2020

Babergh District Council undertook consultation on the submitted Plan.

Winter 2020/21

The Plan was examined by an Independent Examiner

- 1.18 The Neighbourhood Plan has now reached the Referendum stage which will be open to everyone on the Electoral Register in the Parish. A simple illustration of the main stages is shown below.



2. Little Waldingfield in Context

History

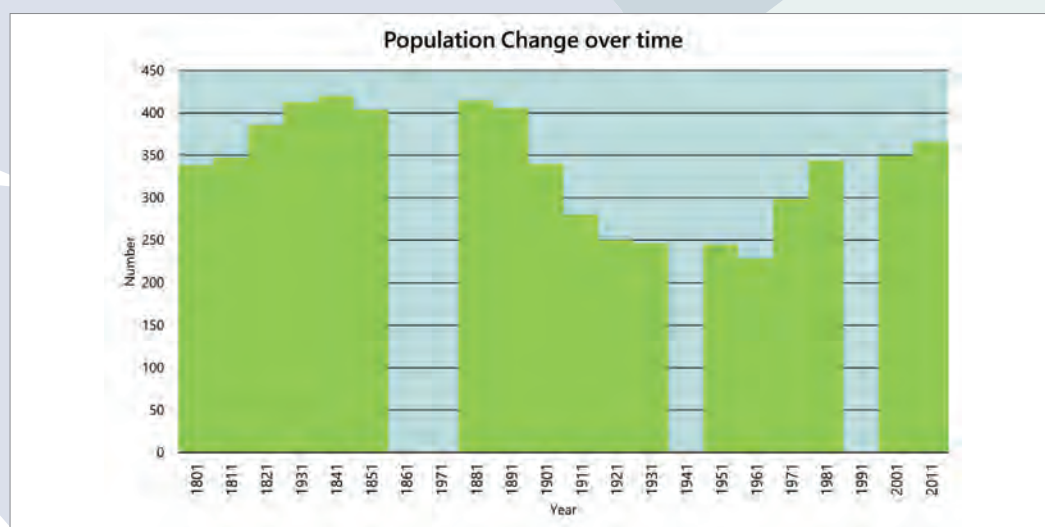
- 2.1 Little Waldingfield lies about four miles north-east of the market town of Sudbury and is a similar distance south of the historic village of Lavenham. It is situated on a spur of higher land between 60 and 70 metres above sea level and generally slopes down from east to west towards Waldingfield Bridge, as identified on the contour map below. Waldingfield Bridge crosses a tributary at the head of the River Box, itself a tributary of the River Stour. The built-up area of the Village runs north-eastwards for about half a mile along the B1115 from Sudbury, extending roughly an equal distance either side of a T junction, where a minor road meets it from the south-east.
- 2.2 The Village lies in an area of glacial sand and gravel, surrounded by a sea of chalky boulder clay. Its geological characteristics allowed early settlers to clear vegetation and then to cultivate the land. In Old English Little Waldingfield means: "The open land of the forest dwellers".
- 2.3 The Village was mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon will dating from 962-991 and it is referred to in the Domesday Book of 1086. Some 900 years later, it also merited a mention in the respected architectural history by Nikolaus Pevsner, "The Buildings of Suffolk".
- 2.4 In the late Saxon period, the dominant land-use at Little Waldingfield was agriculture, with the fields put to raising sheep and growing crops including: wheat, barley and oat. From 1066 until the early Eighteenth Century, the Village's history was dominated by the story of its medieval manors and from the Fifteenth Century onwards, by the cloth trade. The wealth of the Village under the cloth trade reached its peak in the early Sixteenth Century, when Little Waldingfield was one of the richest villages in the East of England. In 1636, Samuel Appleton of Holbrook Hall emigrated to North America and helped to found Massachusetts. By the early Eighteenth Century, the Village had lost its wealth and thereafter slid back into relative obscurity.
- 2.5 At the end of the Nineteenth Century, the Village had a school; a shop; 2 pubs; a Methodist Chapel and latterly a reading room, which became the Parish Rooms. The Playing Field has been well-used since the mid-1960s and in the last few decades, Little Waldingfield has developed a reputation as a friendly, active community, known for its various members clubs and social events.

Map 2 The Village in 1902



Village Demographics

- 2.6** The most recent estimate puts the population of Little Waldingfield at 359 (mid-2018). This compares with a population of 420 in 1841 but does not show the full picture of population decline and growth over time.



The Historic Built Environment

- 2.7** There has been a church at Little Waldingfield since at least the Domesday Book (1086) and there is likely to have been an earlier Saxon church. This was probably of a simple timber, wattle and daub construction, located on the same site as the present building. The Almshouses that adjoin the Church were built in late Sixteenth Century by Thomas Appleton.
- 2.8** The Village had three medieval manors, Holbrook Hall (originally located elsewhere in Holbrook Park, but demolished in the 1870s and rebuilt on its current site); Wood Hall and Nether Hall, the latter two retain some original features. The Parish has other buildings of historic and architectural importance, including Slough Hall (1635); Archers Farm (originally late Seventeenth Century but the house was destroyed by fire and a replacement house built in the early 21st Century) and the various listed buildings situated in the main built-up area, which include: Park House; The Grange, Enniskillen; the Old Vicarage; Malting Farm; Malting Cottage; The Priory and Pink Cottage.
- 2.9** A series of Victorian Cottages was built around the central T junction, and more recent developments include: Wade Crescent (1949); Croft Lea and Grove Avenue (1960s).



Landscape Setting of the Village

- 2.10** The Village sits within an area classified in the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment as Ancient Rolling Farmlands, which are clayland landscapes dissected, sometimes deeply, by river valleys. The Assessment notes that the landscape retains much of the organic pattern of ancient and species-rich hedgerows and associated ditches. The hedges are frequently high and wide and have a strong visual impact. There are however some areas of field amalgamation and boundary loss. The dissected form of the landscape reduced the scope for the extensive field amalgamation found in some other parts of the County. Ancient woodland is scattered throughout, in blocks that are often larger than the surrounding fields.

The Natural Environment

- 2.11** The Parish has remnants of ancient woodland to the North-East at Camps Wood. It is characterised by a series of arable fields and mature hedgerows, containing indigenous plants such as hazel; blackthorn; hawthorn and dogwood. It has a variety of mature trees, often located in areas associated with human activity, including: Oak, Walnut, Birch, Ash and Elder.
- 2.12** Little Waldingfield is rich in native fauna and various species live or have been recorded at the Village, including: Deer; Dormice; Badgers; Hedgehogs; Adders; Great Crested Newts; Bats; Hawks; Owls; Kingfisher; Stag Beetles; Bees and other animals.



3. Planning Policy Context

3.1 The regulations governing the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans require that they conform with the National Planning Policy Framework ("the NPPF") and the strategic policies of the Local Plan. In February 2019, the Government published changes to the NPPF and the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared within the context of the 2019 NPPF *.

3.2 The NPPF requires that communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans should:

- Develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development.
- Plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan.

3.3 At a more local level, the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in the context of the current Babergh Local Plan, which comprises the Core Strategy (2014) and the "saved policies" of the 2006 Babergh Local Plan. For present purposes, these documents will be collectively referred to as "the Local Plan". The Local Plan provides the current strategic planning framework for Little Waldingfield which the Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to. In 2015, Babergh District Council announced its intention to produce a new Joint Local Plan with Mid Suffolk District Council that would provide a planning framework for the management of growth across the two Districts up until 2037. At the time of the Referendum of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Joint Local Plan had yet to be adopted.

3.4 The adopted Core Strategy identifies a hierarchy of settlements ranked according to their size and the services they provide. It recognises that there are several larger villages (core villages) that provide a range of services and facilities for a cluster of villages around them. It identifies Little Waldingfield as a "hinterland village" within the "functional cluster" of Lavenham, acknowledging that Lavenham provides a range of services and facilities to meet many of the needs of Little Waldingfield's residents. In so far as Little Waldingfield is concerned, the saved policies of the 2006 Local Plan and the policies in the Core Strategy are those by which planning applications will be judged until replaced by a new Local Plan.



3.5 The July 2019 Joint Local Plan consultation identified a hierarchy of settlements according to the level of their services and function within the District. Little Waldingfield is proposed to be categorised as a "Hamlet" and draft Policy SP03 states that development will be permitted within settlement boundaries where:

- I. "Design is sympathetic to its rural surrounding and demonstrates high-quality design by having regard to the relevant policies of the [local] plan;
- II. A high standard of hard and soft landscaping, appropriate for the location is used;
- III. Hedgerows and treelines which make an important contribution to the wider context and setting are protected, particularly in edge of settlement locations; and
- IV. The cumulative impact of proposals will be a major consideration."

3.6 In November 2020 the District Council published the Pre-Submission Draft Joint Local Plan for consultation ahead of its submission to the Secretary of State. Given the emerging status of the Joint Local Plan and the fact that the Neighbourhood Plan has been completed before the Joint Local Plan is adopted, regard has been had to the adopted Local Plan in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan while not seeking to contradict the emerging strategic policies of the Joint Local Plan.

* In July 2021 the Government published a further revised NPPF. However, the Neighbourhood Plan was examined under the 2019 version and the decision by Babergh District Council to proceed to Referendum was made before the July 2021 NPPF was published.

4. Vision and Objectives

- 4.1 The vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan have been prepared taking into consideration the outcomes of the community engagement referred to earlier in this document, as well as the evidence collected from published data, surveys and assessments. They also take account of the need to prepare a neighbourhood plan that conforms with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. The Vision sets out the over-arching approach as to how future development of Little Waldingfield will be delivered through the Neighbourhood Plan. This is refined through the Objectives established for each of the topic areas which have guided the identification of the planning policies contained in the Plan. The planning policies do not repeat the policies in the Local Plan or the NPPF but supplement them by adding local detail or addressing locally specific matters.
- 4.2 Little Waldingfield is a small rural community with some local businesses but it currently has no permanent services.

Vision

In 2036 Little Waldingfield will be a distinct vibrant rural village accommodating limited sustainable development together with facilities and services that:

- Meet the needs of the local community;
- Respect the high quality historic and natural environment; and
- Embrace new technology.

Objectives

- 4.3 The Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan have been developed from the information gathered during its preparation. Each Objective has informed and guided the content of the planning policies that follow.

Housing Objectives

1. Meet the projected housing requirement for the Village to 2036.
2. Ensure that new residential development responds to the identified local needs of Little Waldingfield.

Natural Environment Objectives

1. Minimise the impact on the natural environment and improve biodiversity
2. Protect and enhance the rural setting of the Village.

Historic Environment Objectives

1. Ensure new development is appropriate to the historic character of the Village.
2. Recognise and protect the historic importance of buildings and character areas.

Development Design Objectives

1. Have a positive effect on the environment, by promoting actions that contribute to mitigating the Climate Crisis and achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions, reducing our carbon footprint.
2. Influence and guide suitable designs of new developments within the Village.

Services and Facilities Objectives

1. Retain existing facilities and encourage the provision of new services and facilities.

5. Planning Strategy

- 5.1 As noted above, the planning policy framework for Babergh is currently evolving from the existing Local Plan to a new Joint Local Plan for the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts. The emerging Joint Local Plan (November 2020) identifies Little Waldingfield as a hamlet for the purposes of its settlement hierarchy.
- 5.2 Until such a time as the Joint Local Plan is adopted, the Core Strategy (2014) and saved policies of the 2006 Local Plan remain the District planning policies, along with the NPPF.
- 5.3 Core Strategy Policy CS2 designates Little Waldingfield as a Hinterland Village which will:
- "accommodate some development to meet the needs within them" and where "All proposals will be assessed against Policy CS11."*
- 5.4 Core Strategy Policy CS11 has three key strands that are relevant to setting the policy context to the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan. In summary, the policy provides that development proposals will be approved where:
- Proposals score positively when assessed against Policy CS15;
 - A series of matters identified in the Policy are addressed; and
 - Proposals are able to demonstrate a close functional relationship to the existing settlement sites.

The sites identified for development in the Neighbourhood Plan satisfy these criteria.



value of the countryside that surrounds the built-up area. The Settlement Boundary is based on the Built-Up Area Boundary defined in the 2006 Local Plan but has been reviewed to reflect recent changes and the outcomes of the detailed Village Character Assessment carried out as part of the preparation of the Plan. In order to manage the potential impacts of growth, new development will be focused within the Settlement Boundary. This will ensure that the undeveloped rural countryside is preserved and remains largely undeveloped.

The Little Waldingfield Planning Strategy

- 5.5 Given the lack of services in the Village and the poor connectivity to larger settlements by anything other than the car, it is not sustainable to promote significant growth in the Neighbourhood Plan. The "hamlet" designation in the emerging Joint Local Plan recognises this.
- 5.6 The Neighbourhood Plan supports limited growth in the Village commensurate with its lack of services and the poor accessibility to the services and facilities provided by the nearest, larger settlements. It is essential that the growth is focused on the existing built-up area of the Village in order to limit the potential detrimental impact on the surrounding landscape, as well as the need to stop "ribbon" development along the roads. The Neighbourhood Plan also recognises that the presence of heritage and landscape assets within the Parish, means that development will need to be carefully designed and, where necessary, mitigate any impact on the historic and natural landscape and existing infrastructure.
- 5.7 A Settlement Boundary, illustrated on Map 3, is defined for the main built-up area of the Village in order to manage the location of future development and to protect the intrinsic

- 5.8 There may be situations where it is necessary for development to take place outside the Settlement Boundary. Such circumstances might be through the conversion of existing agricultural buildings to residential uses, where any such proposals meet government regulations and local planning policies for such conversions. In exceptional circumstances, and only where there is a proven need, affordable housing to meet identified local needs will also be permitted provided that the proposal is in accordance with the provisions of Policy LWD4.

Policy LWD 1 - Spatial Strategy

Map 3 - Settlement Boundary



6. Housing

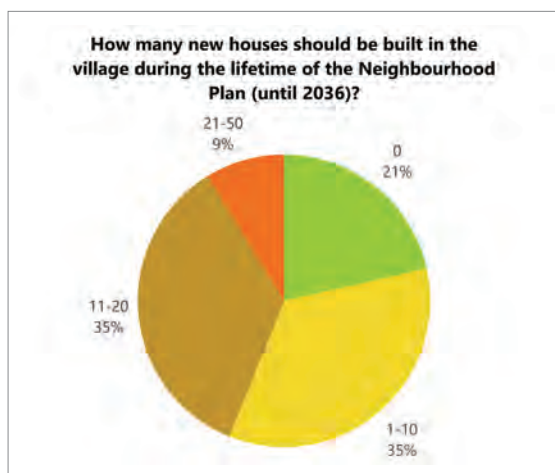
Objectives

1. Meet the projected housing requirement for the Village to 2036.
2. Ensure that new residential development responds to the identified local needs of Little Waldingfield.

New house building

6.1 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF provides that Neighbourhood Plans should identify how their housing need will be met if they are to carry weight in the determination of proposals for housing where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five years' supply of housing land. Paragraph 65 states that strategic policies should: "set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations."

6.2 Just over 30 percent of residents who completed the Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey stated that there was a need for more homes in the Village. In relation to the number of extra homes, residents were generally split between building 1 and 10 and 11-20 additional homes, during the lifetime of the Plan, as illustrated in the chart below.



6.3 Between 2001 and 2017 10 new homes were built in the Parish, all of which were classed as "windfall" development because they had not been allocated in a Local Plan document. The Pre-Submission Draft Joint Local Plan document (November 2020) identified a need to deliver at least 7,904 new homes between 2018 and 2037 across Babergh District, while actually making provision for building 9,611 homes over that period. It proposed that 4 percent of the housing would be built in Babergh District's Hamlets. Table 04 of the Joint Local Plan document proposed a minimum of 4 new homes, including outstanding planning permissions, in Little Waldingfield up to 2037.

6.4 The 2019 "Preferred Options" Joint Local Plan identified a Settlement Boundary extension to include land east of The Street and opposite Grove Avenue within the Settlement Boundary. The Babergh Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (July 2019) had concluded that this land would be suitable for the construction of 12 dwellings. The Parish Council, a significant number of residents and other organisations, including Historic England and the Suffolk Preservation Society, objected to the inclusion of this land within the Settlement Boundary and it was subsequently deleted from the Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan (November 2020).

6.5 In preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, it has been concluded that a more realistic level of housing growth for the Village is around 10 residential dwellings between 2018 and 2036. This figure will be achieved primarily through:

- Outstanding planning permissions at 1 April 2018 that have not been completed;
- Planning permissions for new dwellings granted between 1 April 2018 and 1 January 2020

A list of these commitments is included as Appendix 3 of the Plan.

6.6 There may be further opportunities for development that satisfy the Spatial Strategy set out in Policy LWD1 of the Plan, such as infill plots and barn conversions. It is not possible to predict how many such opportunities might arise during the Neighbourhood Plan period, however, and no estimate has therefore been made for any such housing provision.

Policy LWD 2 - Housing Development

This Plan provides for around 10 additional dwellings to be developed in the Neighbourhood Plan area between 2018 and 2036. This growth will be met through:

- i The allocation of sites as identified in separate policies in this Plan and on the Policies Map; and
- ii Small brownfield "windfall" sites and infill plots of one or two dwellings within the Settlement Boundary that come forward during the Plan period and are not identified in the Plan.

Housing Sites

6.7 As noted above, 5 dwellings (net 4) have been granted planning permission since 1 April 2018, the base date of the emerging Joint Local Plan. Given that the principle of development on these sites is accepted and, even though the planning permissions might expire before work commences, the Neighbourhood Plan allocates two sites for development in Policy LWD3. Development on these sites is expected to take place in accordance with the planning consents that were in place at the time the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared, unless superseded by the subsequent grant of planning permission for residential development on either of those sites. These sites are also identified on the Policies Map at the rear of the Plan. The existing planning permissions for barn conversions and other dwellings outside the Settlement Boundary are not allocated in Policy LWD3 and, should the planning permissions expire before development commences, future planning applications for such development will be considered in accordance with the locational policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and Joint Local Plan.

Policy LWD 3 - Housing Allocation

The following sites, as identified on the Policies Map, are allocated for housing development. Development will be expected to take place in accordance with the current planning consent for each site (as noted) unless superseded by a subsequent planning permission for residential development.

- i Land adjoining The Swan PH, The Street (1 dwelling and 1 conversion - Babergh DC ref DC/19/01283);
- ii Land at The Grange, The Street (1 dwelling - Babergh ref DC/20/00899)

Affordable Housing

6.8 The latest government figures identify that median house prices in Babergh District are equivalent to 9.5 times the median gross annual earnings of residents. This disparity has a huge impact on the ability of people to buy housing, especially those on lower incomes. Affordable housing provides a potential accommodation solution for those that need to live in the Village but are unable to access open market housing. The adopted Local Plan policy for affordable housing requires new developments, on sites of over ten

houses, to provide up to 35% of the total as housing that meets the “affordable” definition (see Glossary).

6.9 The AECOM Housing Needs Assessment, which was carried out in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, reached the following conclusions on affordability:

- Households within the lower quartile of household income are unable to afford even the most affordable tenure of home without diverting resources from other forms of expenditure.
- Market, Affordable and Social rent in addition to Starter homes offer a route to home ownership for those households with a median income.
- Affordable Housing Tenures should offer access to housing for those households in receipt of income above £19,556.
- Given that Affordable rent and Social rent are the most affordable tenures, it makes sense for the Neighbourhood area to seek this tenure so as to minimise deprivation in the Neighbourhood Area.
- The only affordable tenure in Little Waldingfield is Social rent. Market and Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership options are still unaffordable to those who earn an income within the District lower income quartile.
- If Little Waldingfield is to achieve a more balanced community, it is necessary to explore the possibility of local connection test policies such as local lettings to ensure homes are available to those on all income levels. Moreover, a housing needs survey may prove necessary as it has the opportunity to provide more robust evidence and record local need for Social Housing within the Neighbourhood Area based on income levels and concealment.

6.10 An up-to-date affordable housing needs survey for the Village had not been completed at the time of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan but Policy LWD4 puts in place a mechanism for delivering local needs affordable housing for residents during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan.

6.11 Granting planning permission on an exceptional basis for affordable housing on land next to but outside the defined Settlement Boundary, is one way to provide affordable housing which will continue to meet local needs. Through small-scale schemes, including entry level homes for purchase or “rural exception sites” outside the Settlement Boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted. In order to deliver affordable housing through “exception sites” the following are required:

- A need for affordable housing has to be established;
- A willing landowner has to come forward who is prepared to sell land at a price significantly below the market value for housing land;
- A registered social landlord (housing association) needs to come forward, which is willing to work with the Parish Council and District Council to fund and manage a housing scheme.

6.12 Where a “rural exception” site is proposed for development, it must be demonstrated that there is an identified local need in the Village and its hinterland, and that the site is suitable to meet that local need. In exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate to permit an element of open market housing to facilitate the delivery of the affordable housing. This is in accordance with paragraph 77 of the NPPF which provides that local authorities should consider whether this approach would help to provide additional affordable housing. The exceptional circumstances, in which a small number of market homes will be permitted could include, for example, where there is insufficient government grant available, and it is demonstrated, through financial appraisal, that the open market housing is essential to enable the delivery of the affordable housing. In these cases, the applicant would need to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the District Council, that the inclusion of open market housing is the minimum necessary to enable the delivery of the affordable housing and is not being developed to generate uplift in land values for the landowner. This could be demonstrated through the provision of affordability/profitability modelling data. Where an element of open market housing is proposed as part of an affordable housing exception site, it should be sympathetic to the form and character of the settlement and in accordance with local needs. Local needs can vary and it could be that smaller market homes are required to meet the needs of first-time buyers, or people wishing to downsize to a smaller home. This would need to be established at the time in consultation with the District Council’s Housing Service.

Policy LWD 4 - Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes, including entry level homes for purchase (as defined by paragraph 71 of the NPPF) on rural exception sites outside the Settlement Boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:

- i Remains affordable in perpetuity; and
- ii. Is for people that are in housing need because they are unable to buy or rent properties in the Village at open-market prices; and

- iii. Is offered, in the first instance, to people with a demonstrated local connection, as defined by the Babergh District Council Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Where there is no need, a property should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.

These restrictions should be delivered through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing.

Applications for such development will be considered in relation to the appearance and character of the surrounding area, the potential impact on residential amenity and highway safety.

To be acceptable, proposals should demonstrate that a local need exists which cannot otherwise be met by applying normal planning policy for the provision of affordable homes in association with market housing.

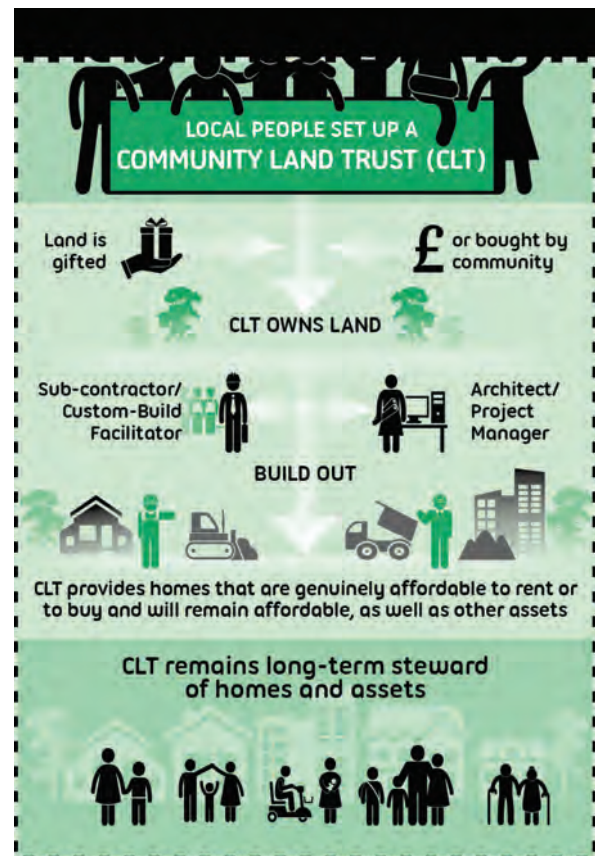
Any application for affordable housing in respect of this policy should be accompanied by a detailed need assessment and the accommodation proposed should contribute to meeting this proven need.

In exceptional circumstances, a small number of market homes will be permitted where it can be demonstrated:

- a. That no other means of funding the construction of the affordable homes is available; and
- b. The market housing is subsidiary to the affordable housing element of the proposal and the amount of market housing required is, as demonstrated through a viability assessment, the minimum required to deliver the affordable housing.

Where sites for affordable housing in the countryside are brought forward with an element of market housing, both housing tenures should be built to the same design standards and contribute towards the character of the area.

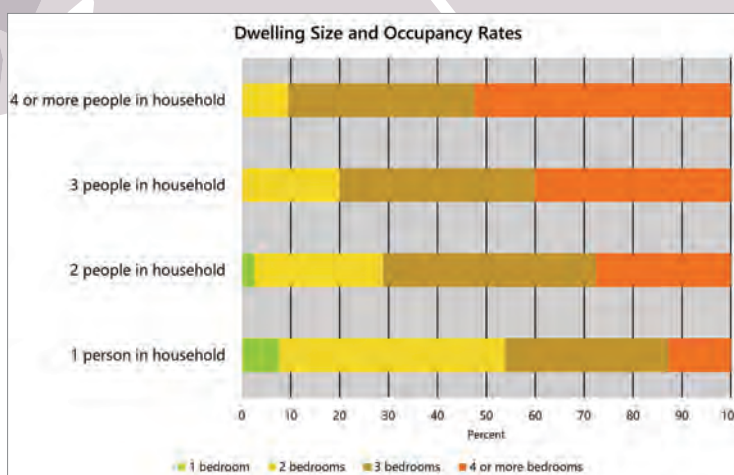
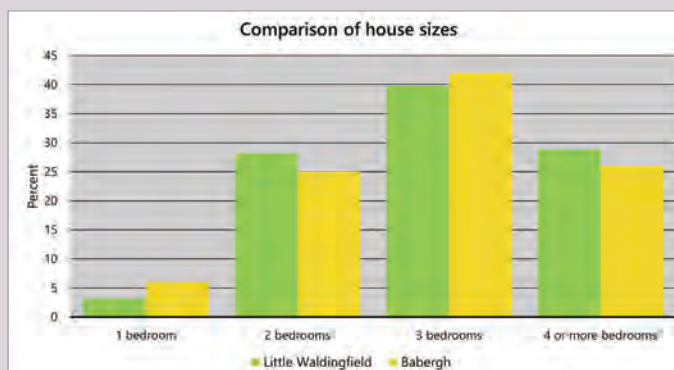
- 6.13 One option for securing affordable housing that remains available for the local community is through the establishment of a Community Land Trust (CLT). This is a form of community-led housing, set up and run by local people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets. CLTs act as long-term stewards of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier. A CLT scheme has recently been delivered at Lavenham and opportunities for a similar scheme in Little Waldingfield can be considered should there be an identified local need for affordable housing for those with a local connection.



Dwelling Sizes

6.14 Research undertaken in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan identified that the Village has a higher proportion of two and four-bedroom houses compared to the rest of Babergh District, as illustrated in the graph opposite.

There is also a high proportion of larger homes that are lived in by one or two people. At the time of the 2011 Census, over 40% of four-bedroomed homes were occupied by up to two people.



6.15 The AECOM Housing Needs Assessment included the following conclusions in relation to house size:

- Little Waldingfield, in line with the District, is dominated by medium and large properties. Properties tend to be larger in the Neighbourhood Area than in the wider District: the average number of rooms per household space in Little Waldingfield is 6.4, compared to 6.1 in the District. The vast majority of homes (87.3%) are detached and semi-detached homes, which consist of 5 rooms or more (this equates to 3 bedrooms or more).
- There is a growing demand for medium to large 3 to 4 bedroom homes.
- There is a demand for slightly smaller medium homes (2-3 bedroom homes), which may increase significantly in the Neighbourhood Area due to a growing older population.
- Given the characteristics of the current housing stock, to avoid any misalignment about 45% of new homes should be between 1 or 2 bedrooms, while 50% should be 3 bedrooms and 5% 4 bedrooms.

6.16 The planned growth in Little Waldingfield will not deliver sufficient housing to address the identified misalignment. Every effort will be made, however, through the consideration of planning applications, to deliver homes with 1 - 3 bedrooms.

Policy LWD 5 - Housing Mix

Housing development that provides homes with three bedrooms or less will be supported in order to contribute to meeting the existing and future identified needs of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Proposals for four or more bedrooms homes will not be supported unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there is a particular need for dwellings of that size.



7. Natural Environment

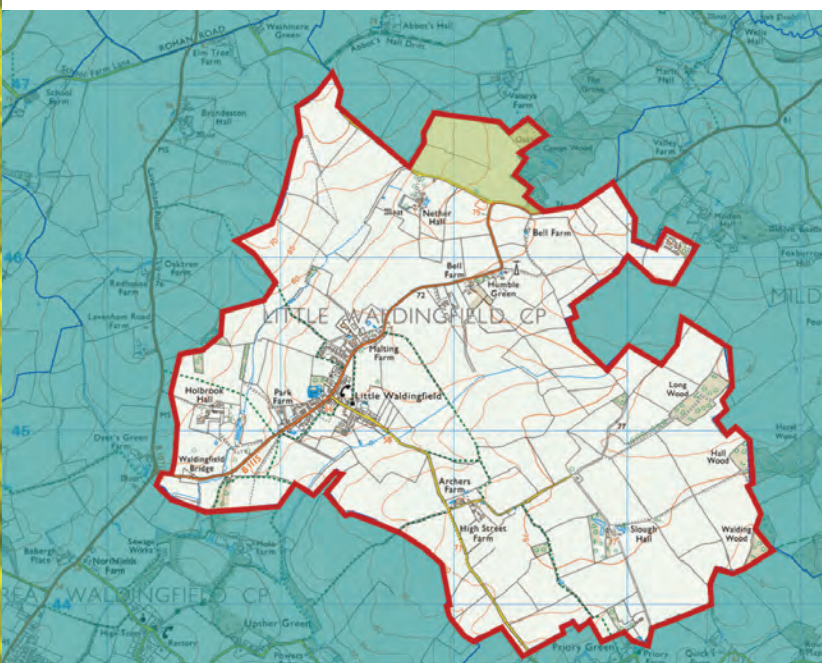
Objectives

1. Minimise the impact on the natural environment and improve biodiversity.
2. Protect and enhance the rural setting of the Village.

Little Waldingfield's Landscape Setting

- 7.1** The Village sits within an area classified as Ancient Rolling Farmlands in the Suffolk Landscape Character Appraisal. The Landscape Appraisal identifies the following characteristics:
- Rolling clayland landscapes dissected, sometimes deeply, by river valleys.
 - The landscape retains much of the organic pattern of ancient and species-rich hedgerows and associated ditches.
 - The hedges are frequently high and wide and have a strong visual impact. There are however some areas of field amalgamation and boundary loss.
 - The dissected form of this landscape has reduced the scope for the really extensive field amalgamation found in some other parts of the county.
 - Ancient woodland is scattered throughout in blocks that are often larger than the surrounding fields.
 - The settlement pattern is one of dispersed farmsteads of medieval origin interspersed with some larger hamlets and occasional villages. The farms are large but are mainly owner-occupied rather than estate owned.

Map 4 - Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity



- The farmstead buildings are predominantly timber-framed, the houses colour-washed and the barns blackened with tar. Roofs are frequently tiled, though thatched houses can be locally significant.
- Medieval moats surrounding the farmhouses are common in the northern parts of both areas, but are much less prevalent in the south.
- This area has a network of winding lanes and paths often associated with hedges that, together with the rolling countryside, can give a feeling of intimacy.
- However, the areas of field amalgamation have also created longer views of a rolling lightly wooded countryside.

- 7.2** The Appraisal identified distinct pressures for change that are taking place across the different landscape typologies. For the Ancient Rolling Farmlands, the pressures are:

- Expansion of garden curtilages.
- Change of land use to horse paddocks and other recreational uses.
- Impact of deer on the condition of woodland cover.
- Settlement expansion eroding the characteristic form and vernacular styles.
- Conversion and expansion of farmsteads for residential uses.
- Large-scale agricultural buildings in open countryside.
- Development of former airfield sites.
- Development of large-scale wind turbines.

The Neighbourhood Plan has taken account of these pressures in its policies.

- 7.3** Land to the northern edge of the Parish is within the Brett Valley Special Landscape Area. This was originally designated in the Suffolk County Structure Plan in the 1980s and has remained thereafter in local plans, albeit Structure Plans have long since been abolished. The designation extends northwards into adjoining parishes and has been retained in the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan. Given its retention in the Lavenham Plan and the fact that the Landscape qualities are the same in the Little Waldingfield section of the Special Landscape Area, the Neighbourhood Plan retains the designation, but designates it as an Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity to ensure consistency with other neighbourhood plans across Babergh District.

Policy LWD 6 - Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity

Development proposals in the Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity, as identified on the Policies Map, will be permitted only where they:

- Protect or enhance the special landscape qualities of the area; and
- Are designed and sited so as to harmonise with the landscape setting.

Dark Skies

- 7.4** There is currently minimal street lighting in Little Waldingfield and its expansion could have a significant detrimental impact on the rural character of the Village and add to light pollution. Paragraph 180 (c) of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should: “limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation”. Artificial lighting of development, while increasing security, can also impact upon residential amenity, the character and appearance of an area (particularly rural locations) and the environment. Aspects such as poor design, location or the expulsion of unnecessarily high levels of light can also have a harmful impact.

Policy LWD 7 - Dark Skies

While ensuring that new developments are secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety, dark skies are to be preferred over lighting. Any future outdoor lighting systems should have a minimum impact on the environment, minimising light pollution and adverse effects on wildlife, subject to highway safety, the needs of particular individuals or groups, and security. Schemes should reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the night-time skies dark and reducing glare.

Local Green Spaces

- 7.5** There are a number of open areas within the Village that make important contributions to the character and setting of the built environment.
- 7.6** The NPPF enables the designation and protection of land of particular importance to local communities as Local Green Spaces ('LGS') in neighbourhood plans. Such designations rule out new development on them other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 100 of the NPPF states that the designation should only be used where the green space is:
- In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - 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;
 - Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
 - It is recognised that the designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used simply to block development.



- 7.7** A separate Local Green Space Appraisal has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, which demonstrates how certain local spaces meet the criteria in paragraph 100 of the NPPF. The spaces that meet the criteria are identified in Policy LWD 8 and are illustrated on the Policies Map. The identification of these spaces as LGS means that managing any development will be consistent with national policy for Green Belts. Permitted development rights, including the operational requirements of infrastructure providers, are not affected by this designation.

Policy LWD 8 - Local Green Spaces

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in this Plan and identified on the Policies Map.

1. Church Field
2. Green space at Grove Avenue
3. Amenity space at Wade Crescent
4. Amenity space at the entrance to Croft Lea
5. Village sign green space, The Street
6. Churchyard and Cemetery

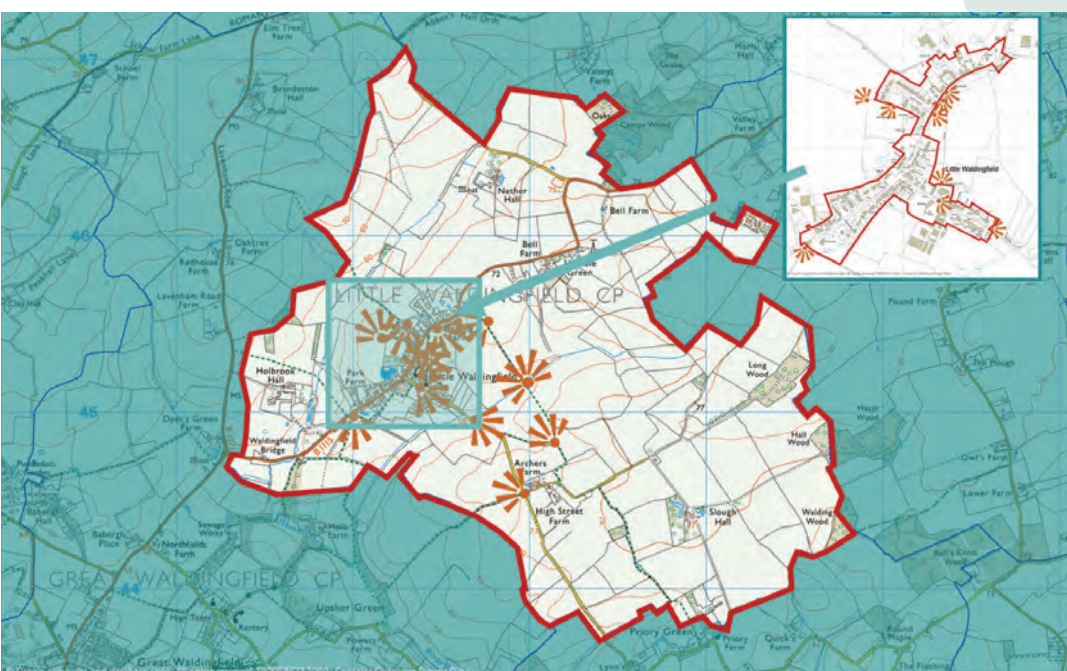
Development in the Local Green Spaces will be consistent with national policy for Green Belts

Important Views

7.8 The setting of the built-up area of the Little Waldingfield within the wider rolling farmlands means that views into and out of the Village are of high importance to its character and sense of rurality. Development that does not have regard to its potential impact on these views could have a significant detrimental impact on the setting of the Village. During the preparation of the Plan, an assessment of views from public areas was undertaken as part of the Village Character Assessment and the most significant views that need protection are identified on Map 5, as well as on the Policies Map.

7.9 Inconsiderate development could have a significant and unwanted detrimental impact on the landscape setting of Little Waldingfield and will not be supported. When proposals for development in the Village are being prepared, it will be necessary to take account of the impact on views and demonstrate how the buildings can be satisfactorily accommodated within the landscape. Landscape Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) are a recognised tool that specifically aims to ensure that all possible effects of change and development both on the landscape itself and on views and visual amenity, are considered in decision-making.

Map 5 - Important Views



Policy LWD 9 - Protection of Important Views

Important views from public vantage points either within the built-up area or into or out of the surrounding countryside are identified on the Policies Map. Any proposed development should not detract from the key landscape and built development features of those views as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Village Character Assessment.

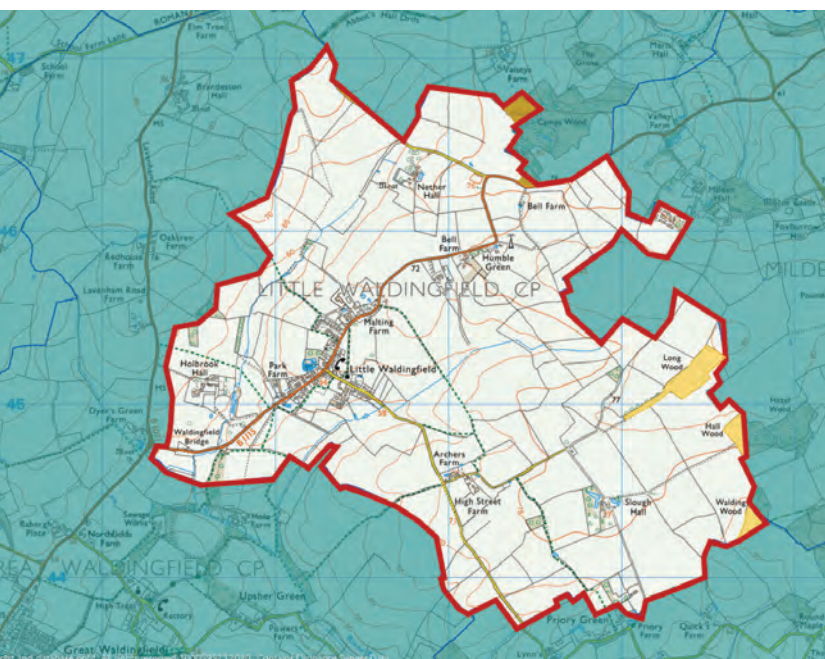
Proposals for new buildings outside the Settlement Boundary will be required to be accompanied by a Landscape Visual Impact Appraisal or other appropriate and proportionate evidence that demonstrates how the proposal:

- i Can be accommodated in the countryside without having a detrimental impact, by reason of the buildings scale, materials and location, on the character and appearance of the countryside and its distinction from the built-up area; and
- ii Conserves or enhances the unique landscape and scenic beauty within the Parish, having regard to the Suffolk Landscape Character Appraisal and the Neighbourhood Plan Village Character Assessment.

Biodiversity

7.10 Within the Neighbourhood Plan Area there are a number of important habitats including areas of ancient woodland that are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, as illustrated on Map 6. These, together with other woodland, hedgerows, ponds and streams play an important role in providing habitats and wildlife corridors across the Parish. The loss of natural habitats as part of a development can have a significant detrimental impact on the wider landscape and opportunities for maintaining and improving the biodiversity of the area. In such circumstances, a mitigation scheme will be required as part of the proposal that provides the equivalent or improved landscape features on site.

Map 6 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest



7.11 The National Planning Practice Guidance notes that: "The National Planning Policy Framework encourages net gains for biodiversity to be sought through planning policies and decisions. Biodiversity net gain delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Biodiversity net gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures." In Little Waldingfield, development proposals that deliver such improvements will particularly be encouraged. The Guidance sets out examples of such improvements, which might include creating new habitats, enhancing existing habitats, providing green roofs, green walls, street trees or sustainable drainage systems.

Relatively small features can often achieve important benefits for wildlife, such as incorporating 'swift bricks' and bat boxes in developments and providing safe routes for hedgehogs between different areas of habitat.

7.12 As explained in the Village Character Assessment, important trees are those subject to a Tree Preservation Order.



Policy LWD 10 - Biodiversity

Development proposals should avoid the loss of, or substantial harm to, important trees, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds.

Where such losses or harm are unavoidable, adequate mitigation measures or, as a last resort, compensation measures will be sought. If suitable mitigation or compensation measures cannot be provided, then planning permission should be refused.

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

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

- The creation of new natural habitats including ponds;
- The planting of additional trees and hedgerows (reflecting the character of Little Waldingfield's traditional hedgerows), and;
- Restoring and repairing fragmented biodiversity networks.

8. The Historic Environment

Objectives

1. Ensure new development is appropriate to the historic character of the Village.
2. Recognise and protect the historic importance of buildings and character areas.

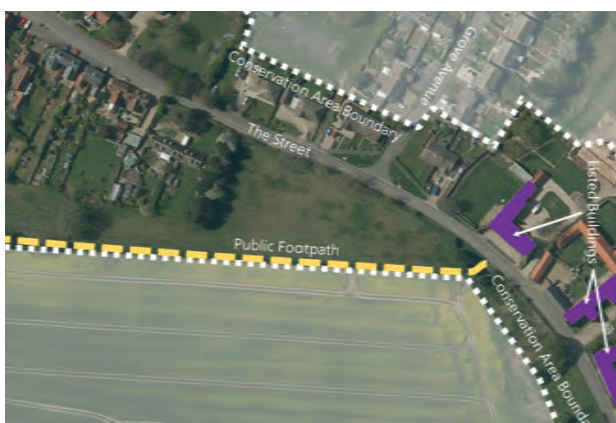
Service should be consulted at the earliest possible stages of preparing a planning application.

Conservation Area

8.1 A Conservation Area for Little Waldingfield was originally designated in 1973. A separate appraisal of the Conservation Area was completed by Babergh District Council in 2007. The Appraisal noted how the Village grew around the T-junction of The Street and Church Road and it is evident from old maps that Park Farm, Wood Hall and Malting Farm were once distinctly separate from the village centre.

8.2 The Appraisal noted that:
"The housing estate off The Street south of Wood Hall interrupts the rural road pattern with its grass-verged wide visibility splay. This could be improved if it became part of a greater green that could be created for village amenity out of the field opposite."

It recommended the extension of the Conservation Area to include public footpath no. 5 (from the Church to Wood Hall) and the thin triangle of land in between. This extension was later implemented by Babergh District Council.



Historic Buildings

8.3 Across the Parish there are a number of buildings designated as being of architectural and historic interest. There are currently 24 Listed Buildings, as detailed in Appendix 1. The Church is Grade I and the remainder are Grade II. In addition, the Parish is known to be rich in archaeological finds and records. Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's Historic Environment Record provides details of finds and the



Local Heritage Assets

8.4 Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan Village Character Assessment has identified a number of buildings in the village that are of local significance and which, while not yet formally designated as 'Local Heritage Assets', make a significant contribution to the historic environment and character of Little Waldingfield and may be worthy of being protected as Local Heritage Assets. The buildings are:

1. Parish Rooms, Church Road
2. Old School Rooms, Church Road
3. Cyprus Cottage, Church Road
4. Yew Tree Cottage, Bramley Cottage and Rose Cottage, The Street

Their registration as Local Heritage Assets will be pursued with Babergh District Council. In the meantime, they are identified in Policy LWD 11 as "buildings of local significance" and they are also identified on the Policies Map.



Parish Rooms

Old School Rooms



Cyprus Cottage



Yew Tree Cottage



- 8.5 The NPPF explains that the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in the determination of any planning application. A balanced judgement will be needed, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

Policy LWD 11 - Buildings of Local Significance

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

1. Parish Rooms, Church Road
2. Old School Rooms, Church Road
3. Cyprus Cottage, Church Road
4. Yew Tree Cottage, Bramley Cottage and Rose Cottage, The Street

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

- 8.6 The Local Plan policies for the consideration of development affecting heritage assets are significantly out-of-date and therefore planning decisions are reliant on the high-level guidelines provided in the NPPF. A planning policy is therefore included in the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that development proposals affecting heritage assets are given appropriate consideration.

Policy LWD 12 - Heritage Assets

To ensure the conservation and enhancement of the Village's designated heritage assets, proposals must:

- a. Preserve or enhance the significance of the designated heritage assets of the Village, their setting and the wider built environment, including views into, within and out of the Conservation Area as identified in the Village Character Assessment and on the Policies Map;
- b. Retain buildings and spaces, the loss of which would cause harm to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;
- c. Contribute to the Village's local distinctiveness, built form and scale of its heritage assets, as described in the Character Assessment, through the use of appropriate design and materials;

continued

- d. Be of an appropriate scale, form, height, massing, alignment and detailed design which respects the area's character, appearance and its setting;
- e. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits, alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the heritage asset and its context; and
- f. Provide clear justification, through the submission of a heritage statement, for any works that could harm a heritage asset yet be of wider substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis of the asset and the proposal.

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

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

Map 7 - The Special Character Area



Holbrook Park

- 8.7 Holbrook Park, including Brookwood Manor, contains a number of important buildings set within a parkland. The Hall is a large detached three storey Victorian manor house while the grounds were described as pleasure gardens and there was a brick bridge over the stream, near the fishpond, which was demolished in the 1950s.
- 8.8 However, none of the buildings are listed and they have no designations. In recognition of the historic importance of the area and its distinct character, the Neighbourhood Plan designates a "Special Character Area" to include the Hall and its grounds. Development proposals in the area will be required to demonstrate how they have regard to and will enhance the distinct characteristics of the buildings and its parkland landscape.

Policy LWD 13 - Holbrook Park Special Character Area

A Special Character Area is identified on the Policies Map. Within this area, proposals will only be supported where they preserve or enhance the distinct characteristics of the existing buildings and their parkland setting.

- 8.9 Within parts of the Village centre, overhead power and telephone wires have a detrimental impact on the quality of the area. The placing of these underground, especially in the light of current transmission methods, will be welcomed and would significantly improve the environment and setting of the Conservation Area.

9. Development Design

Objectives

1. Have a positive effect on the environment, by promoting actions that contribute to mitigating the Climate Crisis, achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing our carbon footprint.
2. Influence and guide the suitable design of new development within the Village.

9.1 As part of the government-funded Neighbourhood Planning Technical Support package, Design Guidelines have been prepared for the Village by AECOM Consultants. The Guidelines are published as supporting evidence to the Neighbourhood Plan and seek to inform the design that any future development should follow in order to retain and protect the rural, tranquil nature and scenic beauty of the area. Supporting this overall objective are a number of principles which development proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan Area are advised to adhere to, as follows:

1. Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
2. Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
3. Reinforce or enhance the established Village character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
4. Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
5. Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
6. Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
7. Adopt appropriate materials and details;
8. Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
9. Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
10. Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
11. Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
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;
13. Positively integrate energy efficient technologies.

9.2 The Design Guidelines provide a development design checklist which development proposals should seek to respond to. The checklist is attached as Appendix 2 of the Plan.

Policy LWD 14 - Design Considerations

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

Planning applications should, as appropriate to the proposal, demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan and take account of the AECOM Design Guidelines for Little Walsingham.

In addition, proposals will be supported where they:

- a. Recognise and address the key features, characteristics, landscape/building character, local distinctiveness and special qualities of the area and, where necessary, prepare a landscape character appraisal to demonstrate this;
- b. Maintain or create the Village's sense of place and/or local character;
- c. Do not involve the loss of gardens, open, green or landscaped areas, which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of that part of the Village;
- d. Taking mitigation measures into account, do not affect adversely:
 - i. Any historic, architectural or archaeological heritage assets of the site and its surroundings, including those identified Buildings of Local Significance and the Listed Buildings set out in Appendix 1;
 - ii. Important landscape characteristics including trees and ancient hedgerows and other prominent topographical features identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Village Character Assessment;
 - iii. Identified important views into, out of, or within the Village as identified on the Policies Map;
 - iv. Sites, habitats, species and features of ecological interest;
 - v. The amenities of adjacent areas by reason of noise, smell, vibration, overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light, other pollution (including light pollution), or volume or type of vehicular activity generated; and/or residential amenity;

continued

- e. Do not locate sensitive development where its users and nearby residents would be significantly and adversely affected by noise, smell, vibration, or other forms of pollution from existing sources, unless adequate and appropriate mitigation can be implemented;
- f. Produce designs that respect the character, scale and density of the locality;
- g. Produce designs, in accordance with standards, that maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network ensuring that all vehicle parking is provided in accordance with adopted guidance and designed to be integrated into the development without creating an environment dominated by vehicles and seek always to ensure satisfactory permeability through new housing areas, connecting any new development into the heart of the existing settlement;
- h. Wherever possible ensure that development faces on to existing roads;
- i. Do not result in water run-off that would add-to or create surface water flooding;
- j. Where appropriate, make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and cycle storage in accordance with adopted cycle parking standards;
- k. Include suitable ducting capable of accepting fibre to enable superfast broadband; and
- l. Provide one electric vehicle charging point per new off-street parking place created.



Responding to the Climate Crisis

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

Exceeding the minimum energy efficiency requirements of Building Regulations will be necessary if emission reduction targets are to be met.

- 9.5** Where energy use is necessary, then priority should be given to utilising the most sustainable sources. Many energy-saving initiatives can be installed on homes within permitted development rights (when full planning permission is not required) but there may be occasions where schemes that do require planning permission could have a potential adverse impact on the character of the area and the amenity of nearby residents. Due to its remoteness, Little Waldingfield does not have access to mains gas, and the principal fuel used for heating is oil, delivered by tanker. Oil is unsustainable and polluting in its production, shipping, distribution and use. In line with national government policy, the long-term aim should be to reduce the overall use of all fossil fuels - gas, oil and coal.

- 9.6 A heat network or district heating (DH) system conveys heat to multiple buildings through a piped supply of hot water to each building. This water is heated at a central location with heat provided from one or more sources. They range from communal heating systems in apartment blocks to city-wide systems with multiple heat sources, such as those found in Copenhagen. The heat can be waste heat from a power plant, dedicated heat from a boiler, or a secondary heat source for example from computer data centre chillers.

Long-Term Surface Water Flood Risk information map in Map 8. New development will be required, where appropriate, to make provision for the attenuation and recycling of surface water and rainwater through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SDS) that might include on-site rainwater and stormwater harvesting and greywater recycling, and the management of run-off and water management in order to reduce the potential for making the situation worse.

Policy LWD 15 - Sustainable Building Practices

This policy only applies to non-residential development.

Proposals that incorporate current best practice in energy conservation will be supported where such measures are designed to be integral to the building design and minimise any detrimental impact on the building or its surroundings. Development proposals should accord with the following energy hierarchy (in order of preference):

1. Minimise energy demand;
2. Maximise energy efficiency;
3. Utilise renewable energy;
4. Utilise low carbon energy;
5. Utilise other energy sources.

Proposals should:

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

Proposals that include measures that, firstly, minimise water consumption and, secondly, maximise water use efficiency will be supported.

- 9.7 Over the course of time, many ditches and ponds have been lost to development and landscape alterations. Surface water drainage is a problem in parts of the Village, namely at the eastern end of Church Road and on the B1115 near Holbrook Park, as illustrated on the extract from the government's



Map 8 - Surface Water Flooding Areas

Policy LWD 16 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage

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

- wetland and other water features, which can help reduce flood risk whilst offering other benefits including water quality, amenity/recreational areas, and biodiversity benefits; and
- rainwater and stormwater harvesting and recycling;
- other natural drainage systems where easily accessible maintenance can be achieved.



10. Services and Facilities

Objective

1. Retain existing facilities and encourage the provision of new services and facilities.

10.1 The Village currently has very little in the way of services and facilities, reflected by its "hamlet" designation in the emerging Joint Local Plan. The current services can be listed as:

- The Parish Rooms
- The Swan Public House (currently closed but being refurbished)
- The Playing Field including play equipment
- The Parish Church
- A twice weekly bus service
- Mobile library
- Mobile butcher

10.2 The likelihood of additional services being provided, such as a Village shop, appears remote but such provision will be especially welcomed. It is also vital that services and facilities are protected and enhanced for the use of current and future residents. It is recognised that demands change over time, however, and it would be unreasonable to require the retention of facilities if there is no longer a proven need or demand for them. In such circumstances, it might be appropriate for those uses to be lost where specific criteria can be met.



10.3 In some instances, the loss of a service might have a significant detrimental impact on the Village and its sustainability. The 'Assets of Community Value' / 'Community Right to Bid' scheme was introduced by the government in the Localism Act 2011 and came into force in September 2012. The aim was to give community groups time to make realistic bids to buy land or buildings that are of importance to the local community when they come up for sale. Under the Community Right to Bid, community groups are able to nominate non-residential buildings or land within their area as

'Assets of Community Value' which cannot be sold without the community group being given the opportunity to put together a bid to purchase the asset. A building or other land is an asset of community value if its main use has recently been, or is presently used, to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future. The Localism Act 2011 states that 'social interests' include: cultural, recreational and sporting interests.

Policy LWD 17 - Protecting Existing Services and Facilities

Proposals that would result in the loss of valued facilities or services which support the local community (or premises last used for such purposes) will only be permitted where:

- a. It can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable and is not likely to become viable. Supporting financial evidence should be provided including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 12 months; and
- b. It can be demonstrated, through evidenced research, that there is no local demand for the use and that the building/site is not needed for any alternative social, community or leisure use; or
- c. Alternative facilities and services are available, or replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent standard, in a location that is accessible to the community it serves with good access by public transport or by cycling or walking.

- 10.4** The Village Playing Field was once regularly used for cricket by the Village team and now provides an important open area. It remains capable of accommodating a football pitch and provides a separate children's play area and the Pavilion provides a changing room, kitchen and toilets. It is essential that these facilities are maintained and improved to support healthy lifestyles in future years. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to protect the Playing Field from being lost unless an equally good or better recreational open area is provided in an equally accessible location in the Village.



Policy LWD 18 - Protecting Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

Proposals for the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will be permitted subject to compliance with other Policies in the Development Plan. Development which will result in the loss of existing amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will not be allowed unless:

- a. It can be demonstrated that the space or facility is surplus to requirements as measured against the local planning authority's standards for the particular location, and the proposed loss will not result in a shortfall during the Development Plan period; or
- b. Replacement for the space or facilities lost is made available, which is of at least equivalent quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the needs of users of the existing space or facility.

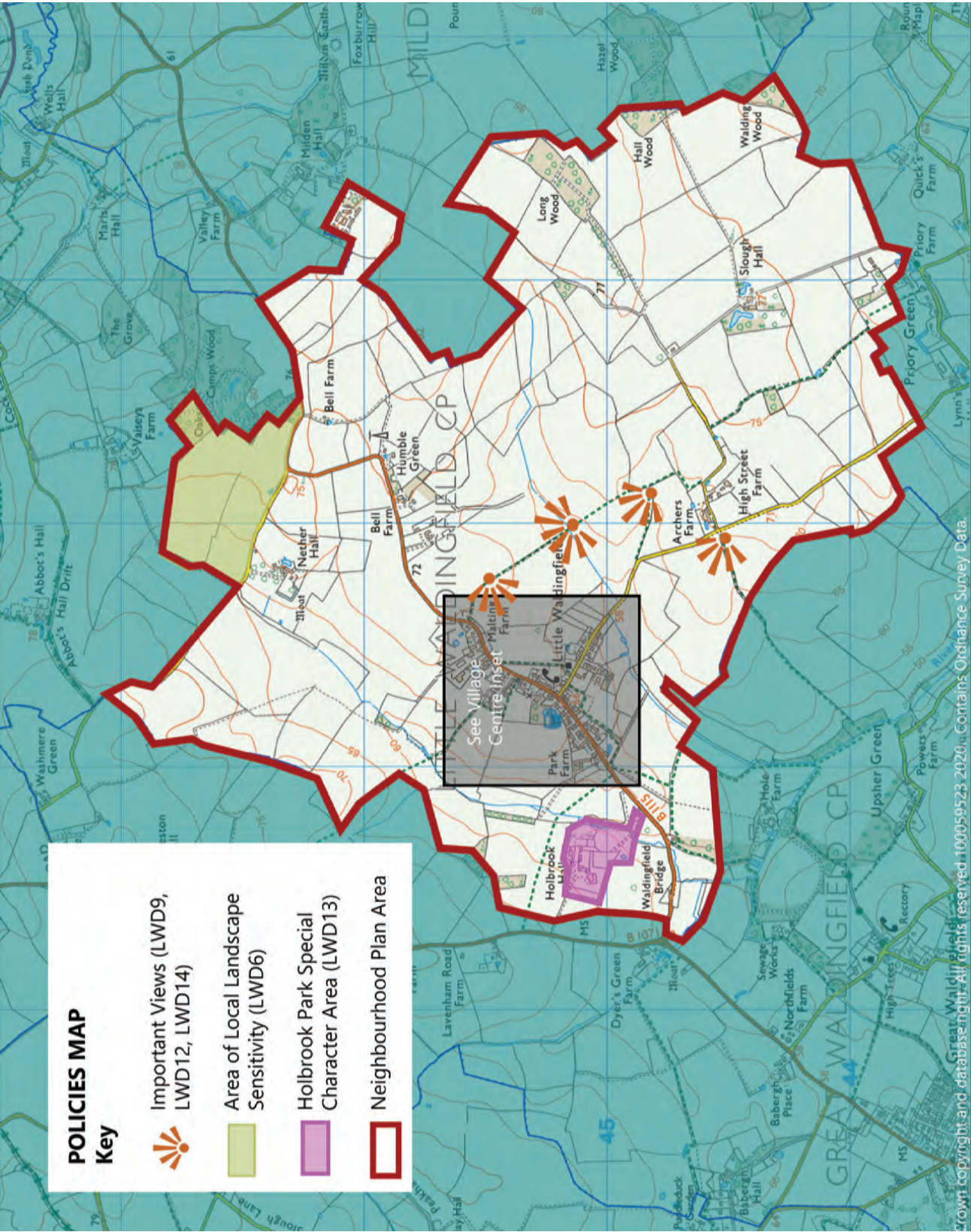
Any replacement provision should take account of the needs of the village and the current and future standards of open space and sports facility provision adopted by the local planning authority.

Where necessary to the acceptability of the development, the local planning authority will require developers of new housing, office, retail and other commercial and mixed development to provide open space including play areas, formal sport/recreation areas, amenity areas and where appropriate, indoor sports facilities or to provide land and a financial contribution towards the cost and maintenance of existing or new facilities, as appropriate. These facilities will be secure through the use of conditions and/or planning obligations.

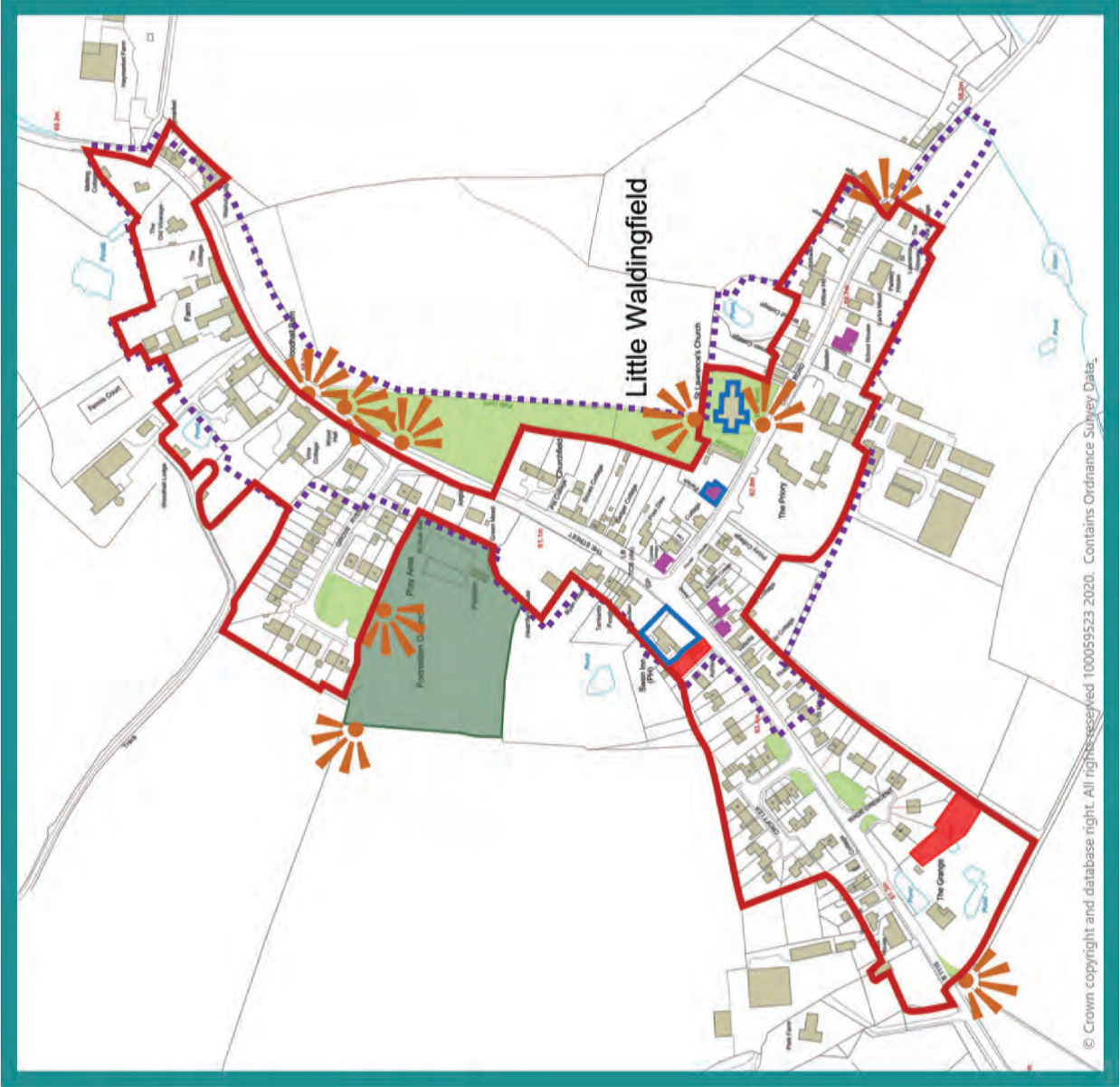
Any replacement provision should take account of the current and projected future needs of the village and the current standards of open space and sports facility provision adopted by the local planning authority.



Policies Map



Village Centre Inset Map



- KEY

Settlement Boundary (LWD1, LWD2, LWD4, LWD9)

Housing Allocation (LWD3)

Conservation Area (LWD12)

Local Green Space (LWD8)

Local Facility (LWD17)

Recreational Open Space (LWD18)

Important View (LWD9, LWD12, LWD14)

Local Heritage Asset (LWD11)

Glossary

Affordable housing: Housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market including social and affordable rented and starter homes. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

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

Best and most versatile agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3 a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

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

Building of Local Significance: Locally important building valued for its contribution to the local scene or for local historical situations but not meriting listed status.

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

Community Infrastructure Levy: A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

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

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

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

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

Hinterland Village: Defined in the Babergh Core Strategy (2014) as villages that tend to be small, with very limited facilities and so are dependent on nearby larger villages or urban areas for many of their everyday needs.

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

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

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

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

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

Neighbourhood Area: The Neighbourhood Area is that which the Neighbourhood Plan covers. It normally covers a whole parish and is formally designated by the local planning authority upon request of the Parish Council.

Neighbourhood Plan: A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular Neighbourhood Area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) and/or the Localism Act 2011

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

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

Rural exception sites for affordable housing: Sites for affordable housing development in rural locations where market housing would not normally be acceptable because of planning policy constraints. Homes can be brought forward on these sites only if there is a proven unmet local need for affordable housing and a legal

planning agreement is in place to ensure that the homes will always remain affordable, will be for people in housing need and prioritised for those with a strong local connection to the Parish.

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

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

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

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

Use Classes: The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'.

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

Appendix 1 - Listed Buildings

As at January 2020

Source - As described on Historic England's Register of Listed Buildings

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Grade I

CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE, CHURCH ROAD

Grade II

CHURCHSIDE, CHURCH ROAD

1 AND 2, CHURCH ROAD

PARK FARMHOUSE, THE STREET

WOOD HALL FARMHOUSE, THE STREET

BARN TO THE NORTH OF MALTINGS FARMHOUSE, THE STREET

THE COTTAGE, THE STREET

THE OLD VICARAGE, THE STREET

STORES COTTAGE, THE STREET

2 HOUSES OWNED BY F A BRAND AND C BUTCHER ADJOINING NOS 1 AND 2 CHURCH STREET ON THE SOUTH WEST, THE STREET

WHITE HORSE INN, THE STREET (Hostlers)

SWAN INN, THE STREET

MALTINGS FARMHOUSE, THE STREET

BARN TO THE SOUTH WEST OF MALTINGS FARMHOUSE, THE STREET

THE GRANGE, THE STREET

PRIORY FARMHOUSE, PRIORY GREEN

SLOUGH HALL

K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK, THE STREET

MALTING COTTAGE, HAYMARKET

THE PRIORY, CHURCH ROAD

ARCHERS FARMHOUSE

PINK COTTAGE, CHURCH ROAD

ENNISKILLEN, THE STREET

MORNING DAWN AND KILN COTTAGE, THE STREET

Appendix 2 - Development Design Checklist

Source: Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidelines – AECOM April 2019

The table below identifies general design principles followed by a number of questions against which the design proposal should be judged.

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 heritage asset?
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?
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?
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?
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?
Have the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?
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?

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 been addressed in the context of the overall design?
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)?
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?
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?
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?
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?
Use of energy efficient technologies.
Has the use of energy saving/efficient technologies been encouraged?
Has the proposed energy saving technologies (e.g. solar panels, green roofs, water harvesting, waste collection, etc.) been considered to be integrally designed to complement the building and not as a bolt-on after construction?
Are the materials and treatment for the main building of equal quality, durability and appearance as those for standalone elements (e.g. external bin areas, cycle storage, etc.)?

Appendix 3 - Housing Permissions in Little Waldingfield

Address	Proposal	Babergh Reference	Net Dwellings
Permissions not completed as at 1 April 2018 as identified in the Babergh Draft Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment - July 2019			
Hammonds Holt, Church Road	Erection of 1 no. dwelling and 1 no. grooms cottage	B / 13/01330/FUL	1
High Street Farm, Church Road	Change of Use from Agricultural Building to Dwellinghouses	B/ 14/00864/AGD	1
Coach House, Rear of Wood Hall, Haymarket,	Erection of 1 no. dwelling	B / 17/00369/FUL	1
Priory Farm, Church Road	Conversion and alteration of cartlodge to form 1 No self contained residential dwelling.	DC/17/03214/FUL	1
The Grange, The Street	Erection of dwelling	DC/20/00899	1
		Total	5
Net new dwellings granted planning consent between 1 April 2018 and 1 January 2020			
Ireland's Meadow, Holbrook Hall Park	Erection of 1 detached dwelling	DC/18/00781 /FUL	1
Priory Farm, Church Road	Conversion and alteration of cartlodge to form self contained residential dwelling	DC/18/03306/FUL	No net addition
Slough Hall, Church Road	Change of use from agriculture to residential use	DC/19/04324	1
The Swan, The Street	Conversion of existing out building to form 1 No dwelling and erection of new detached dwelling	DC/19/01283	2
		Total	4

LITTLE **Waldingfield**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
2018 - 2036**