



BRAYBROOKE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2022-2031



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Foreword from Chairman

Ever since the Localism Act 2011 introduced the concept of Neighbourhood Plans to give communities more say in how their Local Planning Authority decides planning matters, Braybrooke Parish Council has debated whether to embark on one, knowing how strongly protective our residents feel about their parish and its character.

The eventual decision to go ahead was a response to a positive vote of residents at the Annual Parish Meeting in March 2020, just as the country was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. “Lockdown” at least had the advantage that many residents were stranded at home, with time to carry out the considerable work such a project requires; but it also meant relying on the – for some – novel experience of “virtual” meetings.

The work was overseen by a Steering Group, established as an advisory committee to the Parish Council and consisting of both Parish Councillors and other residents. It conducted a survey of the views of residents. Based on the results of that, more residents and Parish Councillors were enrolled into working groups to gather supporting evidence and formulate a plan that we could put to our community. We received support and advice from officers of North Northamptonshire Council. All of this was under the gentle but expert guidance of YourLocale, a consultancy specialising in such work, whose costs were met by grant funding from Locality.

This document is the result. It is intended to catalogue those aspects of our parish that are precious to its residents, and thereby help us protect them while our community, our built environment, and our land use, continue to evolve in a way that meets future needs and challenges.

But this is not the end. As our community evolves, and as the world changes round us in an increasingly uncertain way, the plan will need to be updated from time to time. We hope our efforts have created a firm foundation so that can be done with less effort by succeeding generations of local volunteers.

I am grateful to all those involved for their support, their patience and good humour, and their generous commitment of time, energy, knowledge, and skills.

George Normand

Chairman of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and of Braybrooke Parish Council.

December 2021

1. Introduction

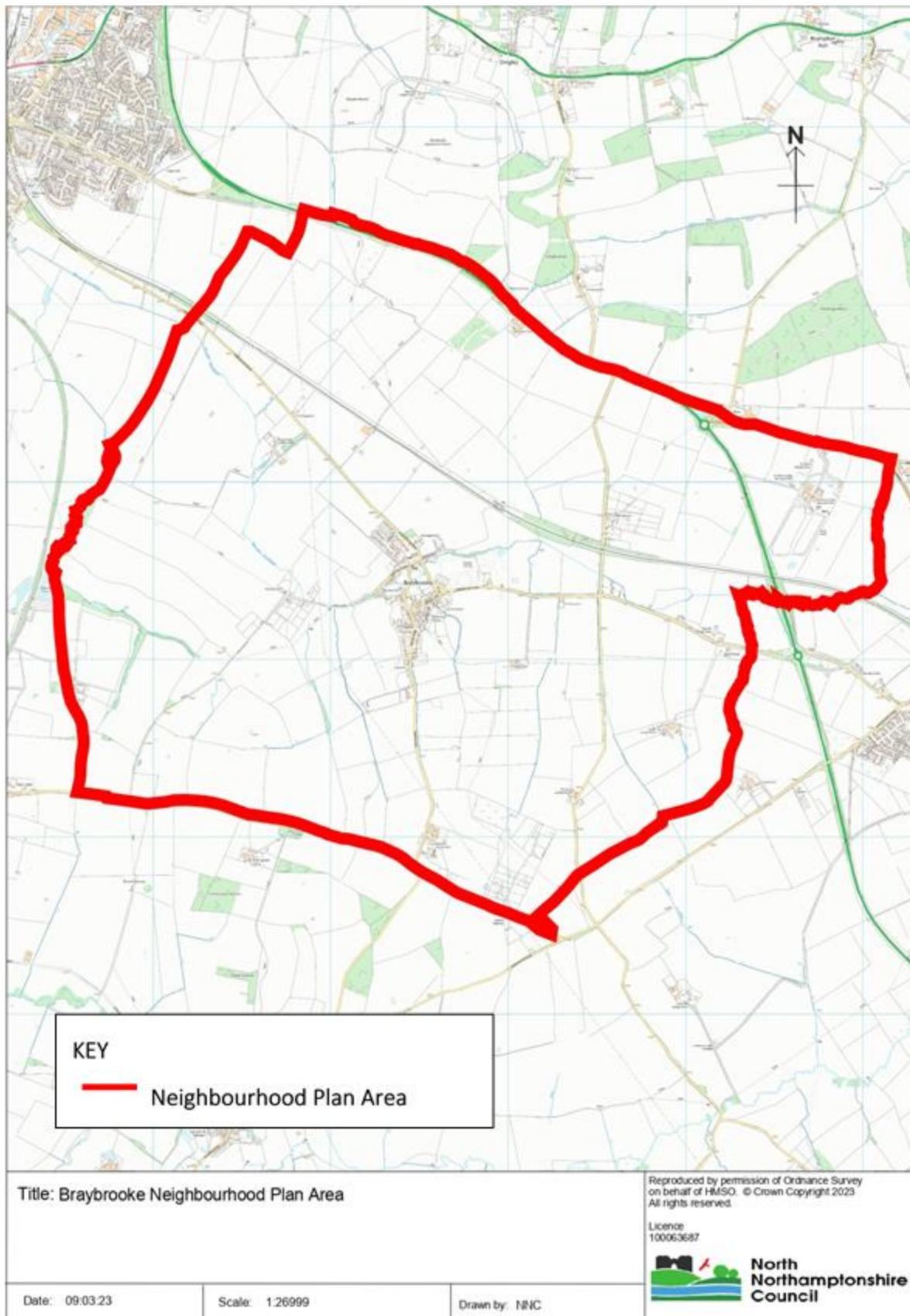
1.1. The Braybrooke Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been prepared by the Braybrooke NP Steering Group, which brings together members of the local community and Parish Councillors.

1.2. A key part of the Government's Localism agenda, a NP is a new type of planning document that gives local people greater control and say over how their community develops, now and in the future. This includes, for example, where new homes, shops, etc. should be built, what new buildings and extensions should look like, and which areas of land should be protected from development.

1.3. As the Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011 states, "Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live".

1.4. The NP covers the whole of the Parish of Braybrooke (Figure 1). It will sit alongside, and be aligned with, the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (SSP2). In accordance with the basic conditions set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) the NP is in general conformity with the strategic policies for the area set out in the Core Strategy and the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Plan. Other than that, the Braybrooke Neighbourhood Plan is able to shape and direct sustainable development in the Parish. The policies it contains will take precedence over non-strategic policies in that Local Plan.

Figure 1: Braybrooke Neighbourhood Plan Area



1.5. The NP sets out a long-term approach for the development of Braybrooke, and clear development related policies to realise this.

1.6. During the development of this Plan and the dialogue with residents and other stakeholders, it became evident that there were opportunities for the community to improve the Parish. These opportunities are included as Community Actions. The aspiration is to progress these Community Actions in support of the formal planning policies contained in this NP, that guide development.

1.7. In preparing a NP, a community is not working from ‘a blank piece of paper’. It is an important planning document with real legal force so it must be prepared in accordance with the TCPA and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The NP has been through the formal submission stage. All comments received during the Regulation 14 consultation from a wide range of stakeholders were recorded and responded to, indicating where the NP has changed, as appropriate.

1.8. The NP was then submitted to North Northamptonshire Council who, after making sure that the NP has followed appropriate processes, undertook further statutory consultation before the Plan proceeded to an independent examination. The Examiner’s Report was issued on 7th February 2023. This concluded that subject to the modifications recommended in the Report, the Braybrooke Neighbourhood Plan could proceed to referendum. All recommendations from the Examination were incorporated into the NP. The NP was then brought back to Braybrooke where a referendum was held. The referendum took place on Thursday 27th April 2023. A majority of those who voted, voted in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan, meaning the Plan could then proceed to being made at the Executive Committee for North Northamptonshire on 8th June.

1.9. The Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for North Northamptonshire. This means that it must be taken into account when considering planning applications affecting Braybrooke.

2. About Braybrooke Parish

2.1. The area now occupied by the village does not appear to have been settled until Anglo- Saxon times. The Domesday Book of 1086 records five separate estates, including two manors. 21 households and one slave worked the land, which roughly equates to a village population then of about 100. The church would have been well established by this time, but not the present building, which dates from the 13th century.

2.2. In 1317, the two manors merged when the West Hall was bought by Sir Thomas Latymer. He had obtained a licence from the crown to crenelate his manor and turn it into a castle in 1304. The new castle was a moated fortified mansion, but it eventually became sufficiently palatial to entertain royalty. By the late 14th century, the Latymer family were notorious Lollards, that is, followers of John Wycliffe, who believed the Catholic Church should be reformed. It is probable that the castle was the Lollard's East Midland Scriptorium and copies of Wycliffe's Bible may well have been transcribed there. In the late 16th century, the Griffin's moved to their new hall at Dingley and the castle was demolished in 1633. The family found themselves on the wrong side of the political and religious divide in the 17th century and following prohibitive fines were forced to sell most of their Braybrooke estate.

2.3. The parish was comparatively poor but the development of the domestic worsted industry in the 18th century enabled agricultural labourers to make an alternative living from weaving on looms set up in their own homes. This came to an abrupt end in the 1790's and following the resultant poverty most of Newland Street and Pudding End (Newton Way), was pulled down. The 1778 Enclosure Act, which had enclosed the remaining 1500 acres of open fields in the parish was also a problem as it took away the common from the landless poor. The 1801 census recorded a population of 378, coincidentally the same as in 2011, but the village by then was back to relying on agriculture while the women and girls were employed producing lace.

2.4. Education commenced in Braybrooke in 1684 when Rev. John Mapletoft left £50 to fund a teacher, and over the next 300 years the village had four different educational establishments starting with a small classroom attached to the chancel of Braybrooke Church. In 1966 Braybrooke and Arthingworth schools merged and the Education Authority built a new larger school off Church Close in 1972. This was closed in 2013 and pulled down to make way for Mapletoft Close, named in honour of the founder of education in the village. The Baptists became established in Braybrooke when the Baptist minister, John Ayers moved to the village from Walgrave in 1788 and a new chapel was constructed in 1829. The medieval church was also repaired when the Rector, Rev. James Hakewill organised the restorations of 1892 and 1898.

2.5. In 1900 the majority of parishioners still rented their houses and large families often lived in one up, one down cottages with no electricity, sanitation or running water. Electricity came to Braybrooke in 1926, but it was not until after the Second World War that mains water and sewers were installed in the village. In Braybrooke today most houses are privately owned by families who work in diverse careers outside the parish and the farms that once provided employment for all the village are now mainly worked by agricultural contractors from elsewhere.

Census and Land Registry Data

2.6. At the time of the 2011 Census, Braybrooke Parish was home to around 378 residents living in 167 households. Analysis of the Census suggests that, between 2001 and 2011, the population in the Braybrooke grew by around 12%. More recent population estimates suggest the number of residents living in the parish has continued to rise. Between 2001 and 2011 the number of dwellings increased by around 18%.

2.7. There is an over representation of older people and evidence of an ageing population with the number of over 65-year-olds rising by 65%. This is up from 17% of total population in 2001 to 25% in 2011. In line with national trends the local population is likely to get older as average life expectancy continues to rise.

2.8. Home ownership levels are very high with around 85% of households owning their homes outright or with a mortgage or loan and at 5% the share of households living in private rented accommodation is very low when compared with regional and national rates.

2.9. There is a predominance of large, detached houses and an under representation of housing for single people with just 2% of dwellings having one bedroom. Land Registry data indicates evidence of new build housing market activity over recent years and this is reflected in population growth estimates. House prices are higher than average which may result in housing accessibility difficulties for people on low incomes.

2.10. Deprivation and overcrowding are not significant issues. However, the area ranks relatively high (1st decile) on the Barriers to Housing and Services Index which means some residents may be disadvantaged due to financial accessibility to housing and physical access to local services.

3. How the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared

3.1. The Braybrooke Neighbourhood Area was formally designated by Kettering Borough Council (now North Northamptonshire Council) on 14 April 2020.

3.2. The NP has been prepared by the Braybrooke NP Steering Group comprising members of the local community and local Parish Councillors, with the support of North Northamptonshire Council, who have regularly attended Steering Group meetings and offered support and guidance, and Neighbourhood Plan consultants YourLocale, all under the direction of Braybrooke Parish Council (the Accountable Body for the NP).

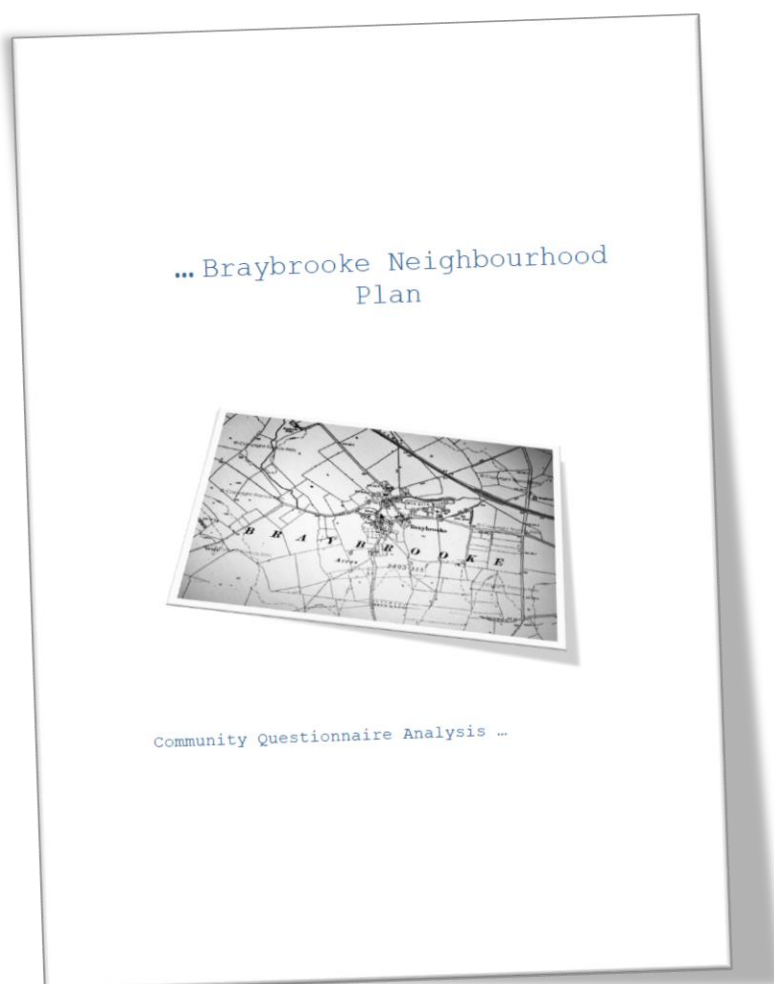
3.3. The Steering Group has met on a monthly basis since its inception in June 2020.

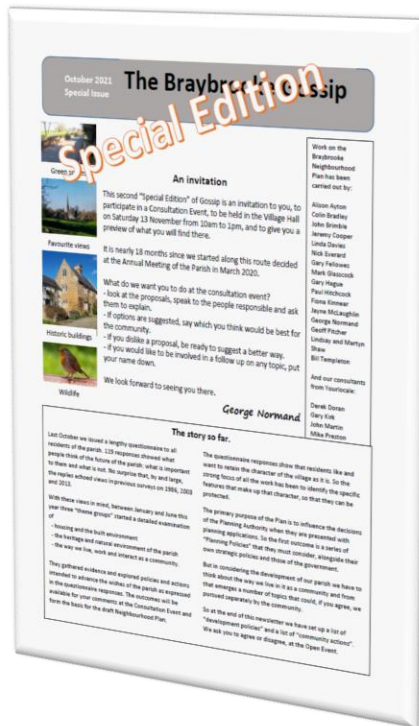
3.4. Effective and extensive consultation has been at the heart of its preparation in the most challenging of circumstances. This is key to ensuring that the NP fully reflects local needs and priorities. There have been a variety of consultation exercises, at which many local people have taken part.

3.5. A questionnaire was sent to all the households in the Parish in autumn 2020, to help define the priorities for the NP. There was an excellent response rate amounting to 36% of adults and up to 71% of households (119 actual responses) and the findings were used as the basis for three 'Theme Groups' involving members of the local community meeting throughout 2021 to consider in detail issues such as housing, the environment, and sustainability (community facilities, employment and transport).

3.6. The minutes of all Steering Group meetings are on the Parish Council website.

3.7. Regular newsletter articles informing the community of the progress of the NP were written





through the preparation of the Plan and the public were invited to attend all Steering Group meetings, some taking up that offer.

3.8. An open event was held on 13 November 2021 which attracted a total of 53 people, including 49 from the Parish.

3.9. Analyses of the Community Questionnaire and Open Event are available on the Parish Council website.

3.10. Further details regarding the extensive community consultation that has been undertaken in the preparation of the NP are provided in the Consultation Statement.



4. Vision and Objectives

4.1. The NP area encompasses the whole of the Parish of Braybrooke and covers the period up to 2031, a timescale which deliberately mirrors that for the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

4.2. A vision statement has been prepared by the Steering Group based on community input.

4.3. The purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan is to increase the involvement and influence of local communities in planning for their area. Hitherto, development planning for Braybrooke had been the responsibility of the former Kettering Borough Council. The responsibility now falls to the unitary authority North Northamptonshire Council. But with the Northamptonshire local government reorganisation, coupled with a government drive to increase housing provision and expansive proposals to boost the Oxford-Cambridge arc of which we are on the edge, it is increasingly important that the local community should use whatever means are available to influence local planning.

4.4. Successive surveys of local opinion in Braybrooke – in 2005 for the (unadopted) Village Design Statement, a survey in 2013, and the 2020 survey undertaken for this Neighbourhood Plan - showed a consistent view. For our residents, it is and should remain a place of quietness and greenery and space: well-spaced houses, stretches of open green space and wildlife corridor running through the village, a close relationship with the surrounding countryside, and distinctly separated from neighbouring settlements. If an incremental amount of new housing is needed, it should blend in, on a scale suitable for the present population, affordable, and suitable for small families and the elderly.

4.5. The purpose of this plan, therefore, is to reflect that view and to identify and protect the most prized characteristics of the village and its wider setting. Equally, though, we must allow for some change to meet the evolving needs of individuals and families. And we cannot ignore the way we live together in the Parish. We should aim to maintain and improve community facilities and communication; provide safe access to the wider facilities of nearby towns; promote recreation and enjoyment of the countryside; and adapt to evolving patterns of increasingly home-based employment and local commerce.

4.6. One unavoidable change is the threat to our lives of climate change, loss of biodiversity, and pollution. What we at local level can do is limited, but we must play our part. Unashamedly therefore, much of this plan is devoted to the natural environment; to protecting what we have and to enhancing it and making it more resilient. And we dare to hope that future revisions of this plan will be able to go much further.

Our vision, therefore, is of a rural parish and community that remains embedded in the land, changing only modestly and gradually, retaining its sense of space and calm. But we also hope to see it developing its resilience by, for example, protecting hedges and trees and planting more; improving the way watercourses are managed to mitigate flooding; enhancing wildlife habitats; and combatting the onslaught of human detritus. And we want to maintain and develop mutual support for the employment, recreation and wellbeing of its residents.

4.7. This plan sets out the policies we want the Local Planning Authority to operate on our behalf, in order to achieve that vision; and it proposes a number of actions to be taken forward by the community to address issues that are not amenable to the official planning system.

Objectives:

- Protecting and preserving the open countryside and rural character of the area.
- Ensuring that the style and design of developments maintain or enhance the character of the village.
- Supporting and protecting our village amenities, including the village hall, public house, open spaces, and church.
- Retaining and enhancing the character and appeal of the existing conservation area.
- Supporting small-scale sustainable development that does not detract from the character of the village and maintains a variety of housing stock.
- Ensuring that future developments do not cause any significant loss of amenity to existing residents including erosion of privacy, visual intrusion, noise disturbance, reduced space around buildings or loss of car parking.
- Ensuring that traffic and parking issues are managed to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and other road users, also that any future development provides adequate parking within the boundary of the site, avoiding the need for additional street parking.
- Supporting the continued viability of local farming and other endeavours that help maintain a rural economy.
- Supporting residents that want or need to work from home to continue to do so.

4.8. While every effort has been made to make the main parts of this NP easy to read and understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal, so that it complies with statutory requirements. The NP will be kept under review and may change over time in response to new and changing needs and requirements.

5. How the Plan fits into the planning system

5.1. The right for communities to prepare NPs was established through the Localism Act 2011, which set out the general rules governing their preparation.

5.2. A NP forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area in which it is prepared. This statutory status means that it must be taken into account when considering planning decisions affecting that area.

5.3. A NP is required to meet a set of basic conditions if it is to proceed to referendum. Firstly, it must not breach, and be otherwise compatible with EU obligations, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) European Directive and European Habitats Directive. Although Britain has formally left the EU, these laws still apply.

5.4. It also needs to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan. In the case of Braybrooke, this is the responsibility of North Northamptonshire Council.

5.5. A NP must also have regard to national planning policy and advice. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF requires the planning system (including NPs) to achieve sustainable development and details three dimensions to that development:

- **A social dimension** – they should support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities by providing the right supply of housing and creating a high-quality built environment with accessible local services;
- **An environmental dimension** – they should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built, and historic environment; and
- **An economic dimension** – they should contribute to economic development.

6. Sustainable Development

6.1. According to the key national planning document, the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development.

6.2. The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and to enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own social, economic, and environmental needs.

6.3. The NPPF carries a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, environmental, and economic, all of which are important and interrelated. In accordance with this, the NP's aims, and policies are centred on the achievement of sustainable development, including, for example:

Social

- Safeguarding existing open space for the enjoyment of residents;
- Protecting existing community facilities; and
- Delivering a mix of housing types, so that it can meet the needs of present and future generations.

Environmental

- Ensuring that housing development is of the right quantity and type in the right location, so that it does not harm but rather positively reflects the existing and historic character of the area;
- Protecting important environmental areas from development;
- Ensuring that the design of development protects the distinctive local character and identity;
- Conserving and, where possible, improving biodiversity and important habitats; and
- Making provision for improved pedestrian and cycling facilities.

Economic

- Protecting existing employment uses;
- Supporting appropriate small-scale business development and expansion; and
- Encouraging appropriate start-up businesses and home working

6.4. It is important to note that when using the NP to form a view on a development proposal or a policy issue the whole document and the policies contained in it must be considered together.

7. Policies

a. Housing and the Built Environment

Introduction

7.1. Ways in which the planning system can ensure sustainable development are to direct residential and employment growth to the most sustainable locations, and to shape the key characteristics of that development.

7.2. This is a core principle of the NPPF, which promotes “guiding development towards sustainable solutions” whilst recognising that in doing so it “should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area”. It is also at the heart of the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan which seeks to direct growth to the most sustainable settlements based on a Settlement Hierarchy.

Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan

7.3. In the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan, Policy RS1 designates Braybrooke as a Category A village within what is classed as the Rural Area; and Policy RS5 sets out General Development Principles for the Rural Area. The additional housing required in Kettering Borough’s Rural Area up to 2031 is 480 dwellings. Together with an allowance for windfall sites, those sites offered during the Local Plan's creation – which included three units at the Top Orchard site – satisfied this requirement. So, it was not necessary for the Local Plan to allocate specific further housing requirements to individual rural settlements such as Braybrooke.

7.4. In general terms, development in Category A villages needs to take into account existing infrastructure, proximity to larger settlements, be within the settlement boundary unless it meets specific Joint Core Strategy criteria described in Policies 13 (Rural Exceptions) and 25 (Rural Economic Development and Diversification) and needs to be sympathetic to the existing form, character and setting of the village.

7.5. These general development principles are expanded in Policy BRA1 which identifies seven further specific criteria. The Policy says that development in Braybrooke will:

- a) Reflect the character of the village. New development north of the river should be less compact and interspersed with green open spaces.
- b) Boundary treatments should be low and of an 'open' nature to avoid negatively impacting on the character of this part of the village.
- c) Improve, where appropriate, connectivity through the village through the inclusion of a consistent footpath connection along Griffin Road, running north/ south.
- d) Use building materials and boundary treatments which respect the character of existing properties, new development should avoid repetition of poorly designed

properties and take inspiration from the Historic Core, as outlined in the Rural Masterplanning Report, which makes a positive contribution to the character of the village.

- e) Protect and enhance the Lanes and Mews which are a characteristic of the village, these should provide inspiration for new development.
- f) Protect and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and its setting.
- g) Make adequate provision for off road parking.

North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

7.6. The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Policy 11 describes the approach to development in the network of urban and rural areas. It says the following in relation to rural areas including Braybrooke:

- a) Development in the rural areas will be limited to that required to support a prosperous rural economy or to meet a locally arising need, which cannot be met more sustainably at a nearby larger settlement;
- b) Small scale infill development will be permitted on suitable sites within Villages where this would not materially harm the character of the settlement and residential amenity or exceed the capacity of local infrastructure and services. Part 2 Local Plans and/or Neighbourhood Plans may identify sites within or adjoining Villages to help meet locally identified needs or may designate sensitive areas where infill development will be resisted or subject to special control;
- c) Local and Neighbourhood Plans will identify sites within or adjoining the villages to meet the rural housing requirements identified in Table 5. Other than small scale infilling or 'rural exceptions' schemes, development above these requirements will be resisted unless agreed through the Part 2 Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans to meet a particular local need or opportunity;
- d) Rural diversification and the appropriate re-use of rural buildings will be supported in accordance with Policy 25. Renewable energy developments will be considered under Policy 26. Other forms of development will be resisted in the open countryside unless there are special circumstances as set out in Policy 13 or national policy.

7.7. Policy 13 of the Joint Core Strategy outlines the 'Rural Exceptions' that may be permitted in rural areas as follows:

1. Development adjoining established settlements, beyond their existing built-up area or defined boundary, where the proposal satisfies all of the following criteria:
 - a) The form and scale of the development should be clearly justified by evidence that it meets an identified need arising within a village or network of villages through a local needs survey;

- b) Sites should be well-related to a settlement that offers services and employment to meet the day to day needs of occupants of the development;
 - c) Development should enable access to local services and facilities by foot, cycle, or public transport;
 - d) The scale and nature of the development will not exceed identified needs and must be appropriate to the surroundings, minimise impacts on the environment and be supported by existing or new infrastructure. Rural Exception Housing schemes should be purely affordable housing unless an element of market housing is essential to enable the delivery of the development. In such cases, the scale of market housing will be the minimum necessary to make the scheme viable and should be tailored to meeting specific locally identified housing needs;
 - e) Occupation of affordable units within the development will be controlled through a legal agreement or conditions to ensure that it remains available and affordable in perpetuity to meet local needs.
2. In open countryside, away from established settlements, permission will not normally be granted for new built residential development, with the exception of:
- a) Individual dwellings of exceptional quality or innovative design as set out in paragraphs 5.42 and 5.43; and
 - b) Dwellings for rural workers at or near their place of work in the countryside, provided that:
 - i. The dwelling is required to enable someone who is in full time employment in agricultural, forestry or similar rural businesses to meet the essential need of the enterprise concerned; and
 - ii. It can be demonstrated the functional, financial and viability tests in paragraph 5.41 have been met

7.8. Results from a Questionnaire completed in November 2020 revealed that the community do not wish to see significant housing growth in the Parish but are generally sympathetic to small-scale developments within the settlement boundary.

Residential Allocation

7.9. Through the Neighbourhood Plan, the opportunity has been taken positively to plan for development within Braybrooke to help meet local need and help to support local services. The Settlement Boundary has therefore been reinforced and updated in order to accommodate the potential for housing growth up to 2031 and to direct development to the most suitable locations.

7.10. An assessment of the limited options for residential development in the Parish was undertaken by the members of the Housing Theme Group (See Appendix 3).

7.11. All landowners whose land lies inside or adjoining the settlement boundary were invited to submit proposals for sites suitable for up to 4 residential units, and a total of 12 sites were put forward for consideration. The submitted sites were assessed and compared through a site assessment process which was independently led. One site is put forward in this Neighbourhood Plan with an allocation for 2 dwellings. The Braybrooke Settlement Boundary has therefore been relaxed in order to include this site.

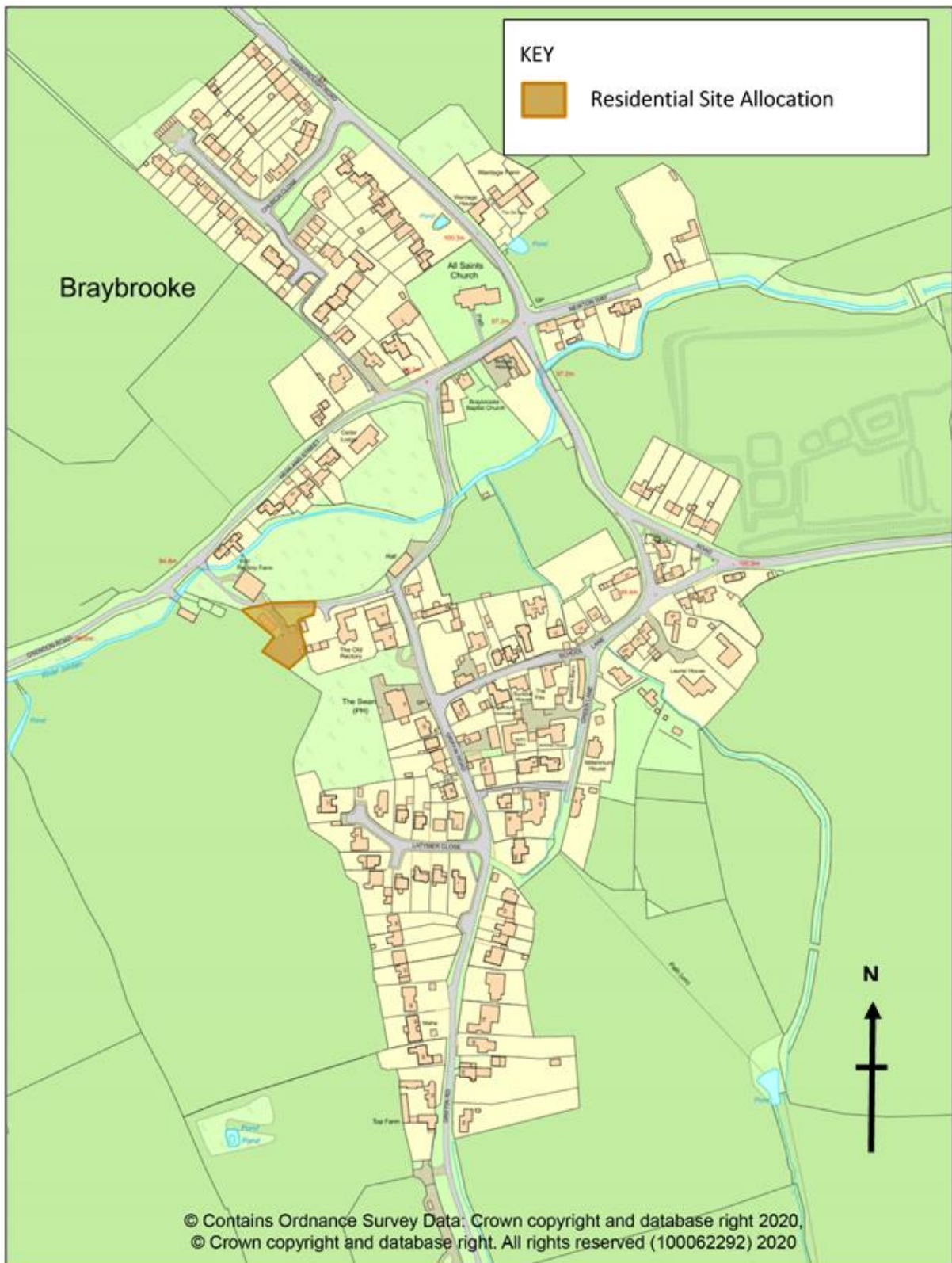
POLICY H1: RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATION

Land is allocated at Top Yard, west of the Old Rectory, Braybrooke, for 2 units of residential accommodation as shown on the site plan below (Figure 2). Development will be supported subject to:

- a) Any development of the site is limited to two residential units with no more than three bedrooms in each.
- b) Building design, layout, materials, and landscaping are in line with guidance contained in the Braybrooke Design Code (Appendix 5).
- c) Landscaping details being provided as part of the planning application. These shall indicate trees and hedgerows to be retained. Where retention is not possible, new trees and hedgerows shall be planted in suitable locations.
- d) Design of a suitable and safe access that avoids an increase in traffic congestion and is guided by the Highway Authority. The design shall ensure that any impact on wildlife and biodiversity is appropriately mitigated to avoid harm and will seek in particular to preserve the wildlife corridor afforded by the trees to the north side of the Rectory drive which is also within the Conservation Area.

Retention and restoration of the historic granary store on the eastern boundary of the site will be encouraged as will the provision within the northern part of the site of open spaces with public access and seating.

Figure 2: Residential site allocation



Settlement Boundary

7.12. The parish is predominately rural in nature with the built-up area of Braybrooke surrounded by open and attractive countryside.

7.13. In planning terms, land outside a defined Settlement Boundary, including any small groups of buildings or small settlements, is treated as countryside. This includes any small groups of buildings or small settlements that may be found there.

7.14. The purpose of a Settlement Boundary is to ensure that sufficient housing and employment land is available in appropriate locations that can be supported by existing infrastructure and avoid impinging into the local countryside.

7.15. It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully controlled. Supporting “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside” is identified as a key element in the NPPF. This approach is also supported by this Plan, in particular, because it will help ensure that development is focused in more sustainable locations with a greater range of services and facilities and infrastructure that has capacity for expansion, as well as helping to maintain the special landscape character of the Parish and protecting the countryside for its own sake as an attractive, accessible and non-renewable natural resource.

7.16. Settlement Boundaries were established by Kettering Borough Council in order to clarify where new development activity is best located.

7.17. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the retention of the Settlement Boundary for the built-up part of Braybrooke. The Settlement Boundary that was drawn up by Kettering Borough Council for inclusion within the Part 2 Local Plan has been reviewed through the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The opportunity has been taken to update the Settlement Boundary to better reflect the nature of the built-up area of Braybrooke.

7.18. Within the defined Settlement Boundary an appropriate amount of suitably designed and located development will be acceptable in principle, although all development will be required to take into account the policies within this Plan.

7.19. In redrawing the Braybrooke Settlement Boundary, the starting point has been the criteria for assessing settlement boundaries as defined by the Kettering Borough Council Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document (February 2012). Guidance has also been taken from YourLocale; an independent Neighbourhood Plan consultancy based in South Leicestershire.

Principle 1:

7.20. The Settlement Boundary has been defined tightly around the built-up framework and, wherever possible, follows defined features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, roads, gardens, and streams.

Principle 2:

7.21. The Settlement Boundary includes:

- a) an extant commitment for residential development with unimplemented planning permission;
- b) buildings on the edge of the settlement which relate closely to the economic or social function of Braybrooke e.g., the church, the village hall, the public house; and
- c) curtilages of buildings which closely relate to the character of the built form and are visually separated from the open countryside.

Principle 3:

7.22. The Settlement Boundary excludes:

- a) large gardens and curtilages which are visually open and relate more to the character of the countryside than the built form;
- b) open green spaces, including paddocks, meadows, orchards, and woodland whose inclusion or possible development would harm the structure, form, and character of the settlement;
- c) farm buildings and agricultural structures which are physically or visually detached from the settlement.

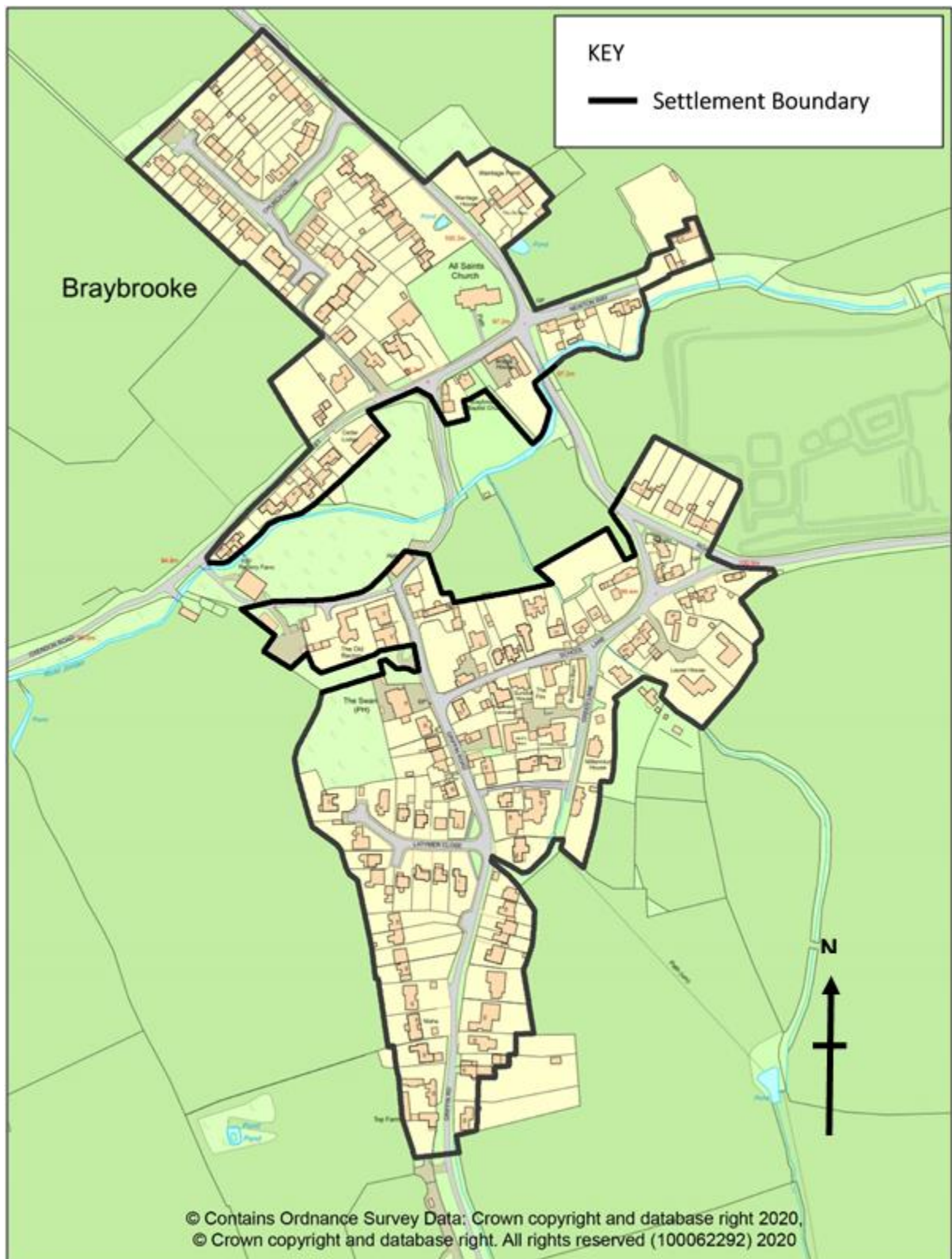
7.23. In order to best meet these criteria, it has been concluded that a non-continuous Settlement Boundary which excludes the open green spaces spanning the built environment from east to west, best serves the maintenance of the existing village character and visual appeal.

POLICY H2: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

Development proposals on sites within the Settlement Boundary, as identified in Figure 3, will be supported where they comply with the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Land outside the defined Settlement Boundary will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully controlled.

Figure 3: Settlement Boundary for Braybrooke



Housing Mix

7.24. The mix of housing proposed within the Neighbourhood Plan is based on statistical data and the views of residents obtained through various consultation exercises including an open event and a community questionnaire.

7.25. Analysis of the 2011 Census shows that home ownership levels are very high with 85% of households owning their homes outright or with a mortgage or loan. This is higher than the borough (69%), regional (67%) and national (63%) rates.

7.26. The majority (66%) of residential dwellings were detached which is significantly higher than the borough (29%), regional (32%) and national (22%) shares. Terraced housing, flats and apartments provide just 6% of accommodation spaces which is lower than the borough (37%), region (32%) and national (47%) shares.

7.27. Around two fifths (44%) of households live in houses with four or more bedrooms which is significantly higher than the borough (20%), regional (20%) and national (19%) averages. There is an under representation of housing for single people with just 2% of dwellings having one bedroom against 8% for the borough, 8% for the region and 12% for England as a whole.

7.28. Under occupancy in the Parish is particularly evident in larger properties with around 72% of households with 4 or more bedrooms occupied by just one or two people. This is higher than borough (41%), regional (43%) and England (41%) rates.

7.29. Census data also suggests that older person households are more likely to under-occupy their dwellings. Data from the 2011 Census allows us to investigate this using the bedroom standard. In total, around 73% of pensioner households have an occupancy rating of +2 or more (meaning there are at least two more bedrooms that are technically required by the household) and is somewhat higher than the 64% non-pensioner household rate.

7.30. In the Community Questionnaire, there was significant support for smaller houses of 2-3 bedrooms (63.36% of respondents saying they 'agree or strongly agree' with encouraging this form of housing). There was strong support for bungalows with 44% of respondents encouraging this type of housing.

7.31. A detailed assessment of need is available within an Assessment of Affordable Housing needs in Appendix 4.

POLICY H3: HOUSING MIX

The provision of smaller dwellings (1 – 3 bedrooms) that provide starter homes and / or new family homes and / or accommodation designed for older people will be supported providing they meet the provision set out in NNJCS Policy 30 (Housing Mix and Tenure).

Proposals for bungalows to meet the needs of older people will be supported.

There will be a presumption against dwellings providing 4 or more bedrooms.

Affordable Housing

7.32. Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF (2021 - annex 2) as “housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market”.

7.33. The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy defines Exception Sites as follows: ‘Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the discretion of the local planning authority, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding’.

7.34. According to the 2011 Census, around 9% of households in Braybrooke live in social rented accommodation which is lower than was the case in the borough (13%), regional (16%) and national (18%) rates.

7.35. Since 2011 there have been four additional 2-bed Shared Ownership dwellings built in Braybrooke, although this is balanced out by the sale of four former Council Houses through the Right to Buy.

7.36. In the Braybrooke Parish area in 2016 a low to mid-priced property cost on average £220,000 which was higher than the national average. Assuming a 15% deposit, those entering the property market in the area would require a household income of £41,556 (£26,444 E&W average) and savings of £36,900 which is a challenge for many households.

7.37. Consultation with the community has indicated broad support for affordable housing with 42.57% of respondents in the Community Questionnaire indicating agreement for encouraging Affordable Housing in the Parish against 30.69% who disagreed with it.

POLICY H4 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Development proposals for Affordable Housing through an Exception Site will be supported where they provide a mix of housing types and sizes to help meet the identified needs of the Parish and be available for people with a local connection.

The provision of smaller homes of up to 3 bedrooms, especially for young families and for older people who wish to downsize, will be supported.

Any Affordable Housing should be designed and delivered to be indistinguishable from market housing and must be distributed evenly through the development as a whole.

Conditions for rural exceptions, as defined by Policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire JCS must also be met.

Windfall sites

7.38. A windfall site is defined in the NPPF as one which has not been specifically identified as available through the local or neighbourhood plan process. Such sites normally comprise previously developed land that has unexpectedly become available. To help protect the character of the Braybrooke Parish, development beyond the housing allocation described above will be restricted to windfall sites within the Settlement Boundary, other than in exceptional circumstances.

7.39. The Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan Policy BRA1 provides a list of criteria that need to be met for a planning application to be successful. The Policy here adds further local detail to Local Plan requirements.

7.40. As with Policy H1 (Residential Site Allocation), Policy H6 applies to all forms of development. Given the nature of the policies in this Plan and the wider development plan it is anticipated that any new development proposals which may come forward within the Plan period will be of a residential nature.

POLICY H5: WINDFALL SITES

Development of infill and/or redevelopment sites comprising individual dwellings or small groups of dwellings within the Settlement Boundary will be supported where it:

- a) retains existing important natural boundaries such as trees, hedges and streams;
- b) provides for a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site;
- c) does not reduce garden space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area, the amenity of neighbours and the occupiers of the dwelling or has a significant detrimental heritage or environmental impact;
- d) is of an appropriate scale which reflects the size, character and level of service provision within the Parish; and
- e) does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers by reason of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion or noise.

Design and the built environment

7.41. The Parish of Braybrooke has a long and interesting history, resulting in a wide array of heritage assets, attractive landscapes, and a distinctive local character. This is reflected in the designation of a Conservation Area in Braybrooke village.

7.42. The biggest challenge facing the future of the Parish is to balance the desire to protect the character of the built-up area with the need for it evolve in a sensitive and proportionate manner in order to sustain the community and its facilities.

7.43. The Policy and Braybrooke Design Code (Appendix 5) highlighted in this section seek to reflect the design principles which the community believes will help to achieve this aim.

They reflect the outcome of work undertaken by a small group of people within the Housing Theme Group. The overall aim is to protect the settlement of Braybrooke to retain its character within a unique and distinctive Parish. This can be achieved by the use of the planning system to respond sensitively to the wide range of historic buildings, structures, landscapes, and archaeology situated within the Parish. These assets form many of the key characteristics of the Parish, and future development should seek to enhance, reinforce, and preserve this distinctive historic environment.

7.44. New development proposals should be designed sensitively to sit within the distinctive settlement patterns of the Braybrooke village. Existing settlement patterns have grown incrementally over time. The buildings date from many different periods, providing a richness and variety of styles and materials. This traditional rural character should be enhanced by new development and schemes should be designed to ensure that new buildings sit comfortably within the existing settlement pattern and are respectful of their surroundings.

7.45. The community consider it to be important that new residential development is of the highest standard to ensure that it is in keeping with the residential properties already in the village. It is not considered necessary to have a uniform series of properties that all look the same, rather to ensure that new developments respect the features of buildings which make the Parish a desirable place in which to live.

7.46. New development proposals should be designed sensitively to ensure that the high-quality built environment is maintained and enhanced, particularly where schemes are located within or in close proximity to the Conservation Area. New designs should respond in a positive way to the local character through careful and appropriate use of high-quality materials and detail. Proposals should also demonstrate consideration of height, scale, and massing, to ensure that new development delivers a positive contribution to the street scene and adds value to the distinctive character of the area.

7.47. The proposed location of any development should not adversely affect any of the Local Green Spaces or community-defined open spaces within the parish and show concern for bio-diversity features that make a strong contribution to the overall character and physical form of the Parish.

POLICY H6: DESIGN

Development proposals should demonstrate a high quality of design, layout and use of materials in order to make a positive contribution to the special character of the Parish by:

- a) having regard to and being in accordance with the recommendations set out in the Braybrooke Design Code (Appendix 5); and
- b) where a proposal does not comply with criteria (a) above but does demonstrate an innovative and outstanding design, clear and convincing justification will be provided to explain how the proposal retains the integrity of the respective character zone.

b. The Natural, Historical & Social Environment

Introduction

7.48. This chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan deals mainly with the *environmental* agenda of *sustainable development* together with open spaces of community value from the *social* agenda, as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), page 5. The chapter aims to balance the requirement for appropriate development in the Plan Area against the value of environmental and other features that are both *special* – appreciated, in their own right and as community assets, by local people - and *significant* for their wildlife and history. It also deals with broader environmental issues of concern to the community, including protection and enhancement of local biodiversity and planning for flood risk resilience to take account of the effects of climate change.

7.49. Care was taken during preparation of the Plan to ensure that the policies (and the sites and areas of environmental significance covered by them) were not unduly restrictive on development during the Plan’s lifetime. Only 1.4% by area of all the open and currently undeveloped land in the parish is protected from potential environmentally damaging development by national, Local Plan or this Neighbourhood Plan’s policies:

1. Total area of Neighbourhood Plan Area	c.1175 ha
2. Open countryside and undeveloped land	c.1150 ha
3. Area designated or recognised in this Plan for environmental protection	c.17 ha

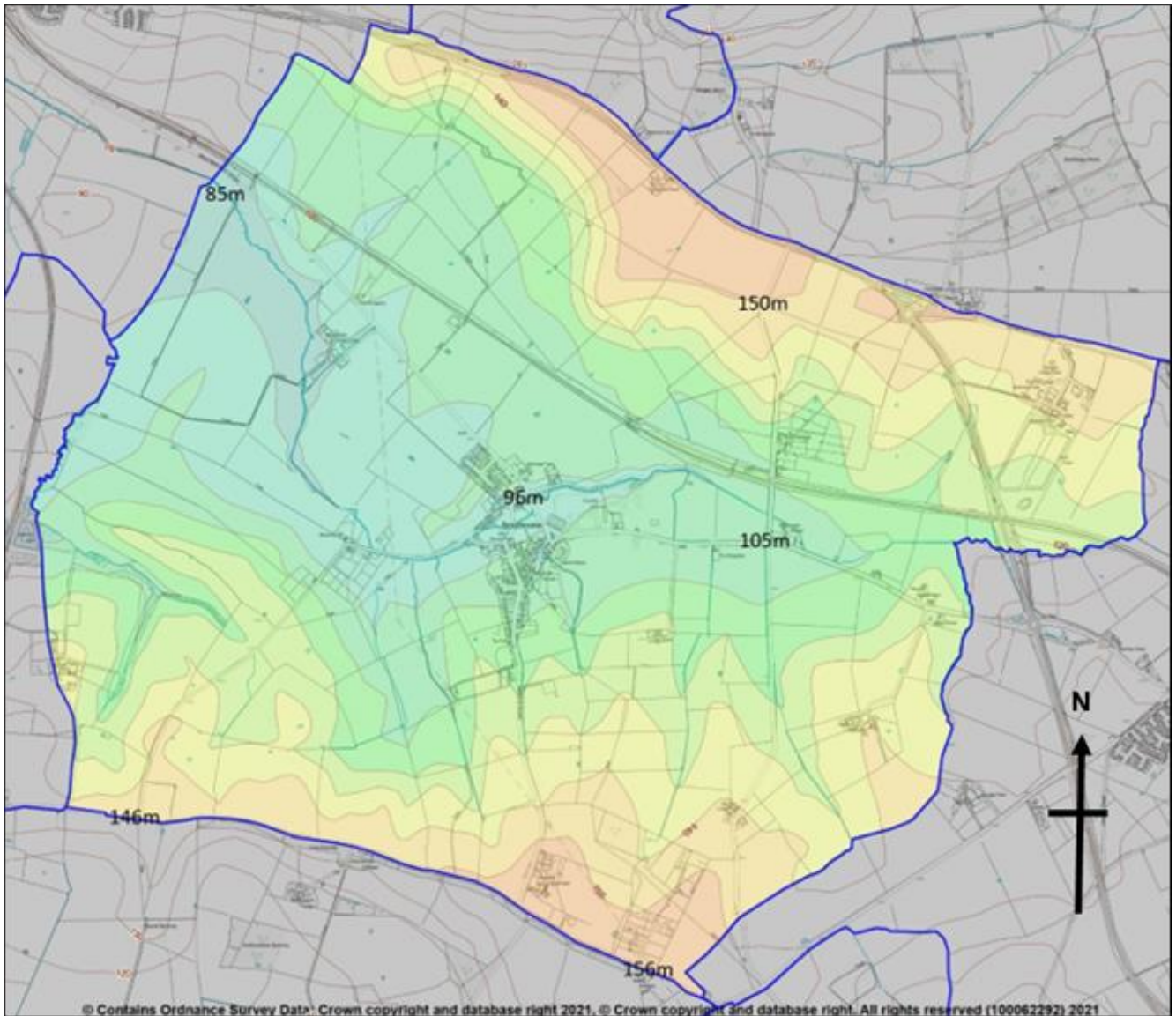
Landscape, geology and setting

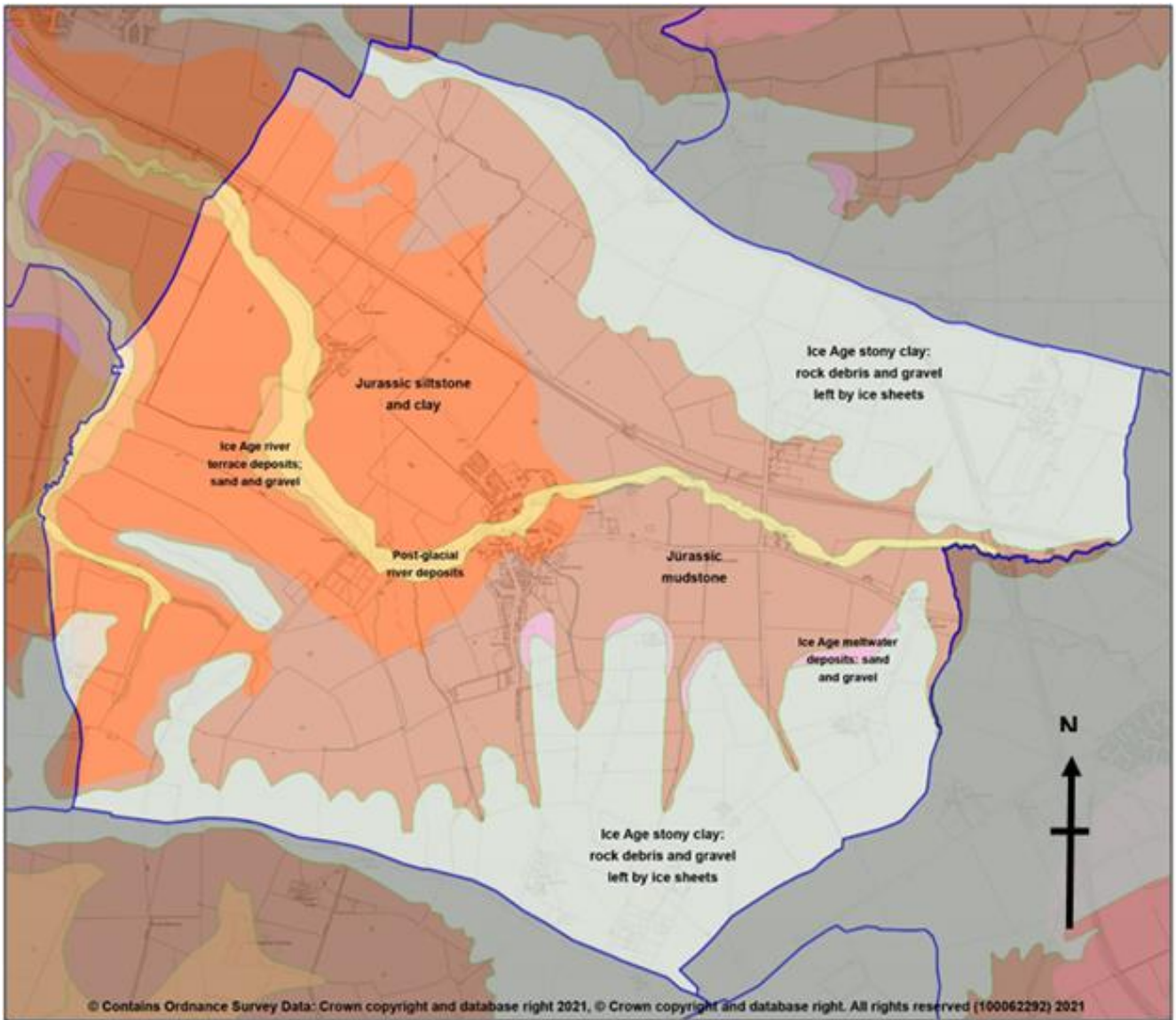
7.50. The Plan Area coincides with the Civil Parish of Braybrooke, a nineteenth century administrative unit which is the most recent in a series of ecclesiastical, manorial, agricultural, and even tribal land areas stretching back at least two millennia. All of them have enclosed a natural, roughly square, territory formed by the main valley, headwaters, and watershed hilltops of a tributary of the River Welland. This stream, known now as the River Jordan (but by the Anglo-Saxons as the ‘*brād brōc*’ (broad brook’), see ‘History’ below) has, on a geological timescale, cut deeply back into a ridge formed here by a resistant layer of Jurassic rocks running across England from northeast to southwest. Like the Welland into which it flows, the Jordan’s valley is wide and level, while its floor is underlain by impermeable clay; flooding, by the river and from surface water, has been an issue in and around Braybrooke for centuries, but the land is good for farming.

7.51. The Jurassic rocks mentioned above are siltstones, mudstones, and clays, and they outcrop across the lower parts of the Plan Area. They also form the high ground of the north, east and south but here the hilltops are cloaked in the debris (clay, boulders, gravel, and sand) deposited here by ice sheets and meltwater during the Ice Ages, the last of which ended about 14 thousand years ago.

7.52. The high ground to north and south rises to almost 160 metres above sea level, while the River Jordan leaves the parish 75 metres below, at 85 metres; this difference in height provides extensive views over the Plan Area and village.

Figure 4: Topography (below) and geology of the Plan Area (further below).





Geological map adapted from British Geological Survey online mapping. Both © Crown copyright and database rights. All rights reserved 100017647) 2021.

Historic environment

7.53. As in neighbouring parishes, people have lived in the Plan Area or passed through it since the end of the Ice Age; although prehistoric archaeological finds proving this are not currently recorded in the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record, this must be the result of missing finds data rather than an absence of pre-Roman occupation. Romano-British habitation sites dating from the time of the Roman occupation are known at six sites across the Plan Area.

Braybrooke

'The broad brook'

Elements and their meanings

- **brād** (Old English) Broad, spacious, wide, large
- **brōc** (Old English) A brook, a stream (used of a stream with a muddy bed and a visible sediment load)

Source: Key to English Place Names, University of Nottingham kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/

7.54. The present Braybrooke village was founded not long after the ending of Roman occupation, by settlers who moved into the Midlands area from north Germany via the North Sea and the Wash and up the River Welland and its tributaries. The Old English place name suggests a foundation date in the 5th century (panel, left), and apparently refers to both the village and its territory (see 'Landscape' above). Much of the layout of the medieval village, its manor house and its open fields can still be seen as streets

and house plots, archaeological finds, earthworks, and cropmarks (Policy ENV 7). Of particular historical significance are the ridges and furrows of the medieval ploughlands, whose layout, organisation and eventual enclosure are better known in Braybrooke than in most places thanks to surviving documents and to research by local historians and the Rockingham Forest Trust (Policy ENV 8). Buildings dating from the 17th and 18th centuries survive in the village and countryside, while the buildings and other structures from the 19th (related to Braybrooke's agricultural economy, weaving and other small-scale trades) and 20th (two world wars, intensification of agriculture and residential expansion) centuries provide most of the village's present built environment (Policies ENV 7: Sites of Historic Environment Significance; and ENV 8: Ridge and Furrow).

Natural environment

7.55. Two millennia of human habitation and farming mean that there is no entirely natural habitat in the Braybrooke Plan Area. But – because earlier methods of farming were not industrialised, did not use synthetic plant and pest control chemicals, and were inherently 'untidy' – until the mid- 20th century there were still many places where wildlife could adapt to living close to people. Some of these 'semi-natural' habitats – permanent pasture, woodland, wetlands, 'rewilded' corners of fields, churchyards, and others – still survive, although in decreasing amounts, while private gardens and public open spaces also provide refuges for biodiversity. These kinds of 'wild' spaces are threatened by misunderstanding of their value and new development, but this Neighbourhood Plan identifies the most significant in the Area and proposes them for protection (Policies ENV 3: Sites and Features of Natural Environment Significance; ENV 4: Woodland, Notable Trees and Hedges; ENV 5: Bat Conservation; and ENV 6: Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity).

Existing environmental designations

7.56. The Plan Area is located in National Character Area (as defined by Natural England to guide Planning) *89 Northamptonshire Vales*.

7.57. Two sites or features in the historic environment are *Scheduled Monuments*, and there are eight *Listed Buildings* at Grade II* (Figure 14) or II. Braybrooke's *Conservation Area* (Figure 15) was designated in 1985.

7.58. In the natural environment, there are five areas of *Priority Habitat* and two sites in the national *Forest Inventory* (both Natural England designations). At the time of preparation of this Plan, no habitats of conservation concern or Local Wildlife Sites had been mapped by the Northamptonshire Biological Records Centre. Borough and Local level *Green Infrastructure Corridors* cross the Plan Area and provide context for sites and features covered by Policies ENV 3 and ENV 4 in this Neighbourhood Plan.

Environmental inventory

7.59. An environmental inventory (Appendix 6) of Braybrooke was carried out between January and June 2021. The work comprised two elements:

- Review of all existing designations and other available information in the public domain and
- Fieldwork to identify and confirm environmentally significant (in the context of the Plan Area) sites and features.

7.60. The review compiled information from many sources, including DEFRA, Natural England, Historic England, Northamptonshire Historic Environment Records, Northamptonshire Environmental records (biodiversity and geology), Northamptonshire Council, Environment Agency, British Geological Survey, old maps (Ordnance Survey, archive), local history and archaeology, publications, and local knowledge.

7.61. Fieldwork reviewed all open and currently undeveloped land in the Plan Area. Significant species, habitats, public open spaces, landscape characteristics, earthworks and other extant heritage features, views and viewpoints were checked and recorded.

7.62. These data, along with all relevant site-specific information from the existing information review, were mapped and tabulated (Appendix 6). Of the approximately 180 parcels of open land in the parish, around 75 (some have more than one significant feature) have been identified for this Plan as having notable environmental (natural, historical and/or social) features.

Local Green Spaces

7.63. Paragraphs 101 and 102 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) empower local communities, through Neighbourhood Plans, to designate areas as Local Green Space. The NPPF also sets out the eligibility criteria for designation; the Planning Practice Guidance for Local Green Space (2014) provides more detail, including (paragraph 013) clarification that ‘whether to designate land [as Local Green Space] is *a matter for local discretion*’.

7.64. Kettering Borough Council undertook a site assessment (*Historically and Visually Important Local Green Space assessment*, KBC. 2019) of potential Local Green Spaces (LGSs) across the Borough in preparation for the Site-Specific Part 2 Local Plan. Although it referenced the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) criteria for LGSs, the focus of this exercise was to identify historically and visually important sites, placing little or no emphasis on, for example, community amenity/recreational value or wildlife (contribution to local

biodiversity). In Braybrooke two sites were identified and formed part of the submitted Local Plan in May 2020. However, these two Local Green Spaces were subsequently withdrawn from the Local Plan by KBC following its examination by HM Inspectorate; the Inspector had argued that these and most of the other LGSs in the draft Local Plan ‘had been included by the Borough Council without reference to the parishes in which they were situated’. The inspector invited Neighbourhood Plan groups to resubmit the sites where it could be demonstrated that they are special to the community and meet the requirements of paragraph 102 of the NPPF.

7.65. Removal of the two Braybrooke sites from the revised submission Local Plan was unpopular with residents; in fact, KBC’s draft LGS designations had been supported by Braybrooke Parish Council and no objections to their designation had been lodged during the public and stakeholder consultation on the draft Local Plan. Braybrooke Parish Council (as Qualifying Body for this Neighbourhood Plan) and the community (as represented by the Steering Group set up to draft the Plan) therefore determined to review the eligibility of, and resubmit, the two potential LGSs by using a robust methodology to:

- a) evaluate them by referring to the criteria for LGS designation in paragraphs 101 and 102 of the NPPF,
- b) engage the sites’ landowners in the decision-making process, and
- c) assemble evidence of community value of, and support for protection of, the sites

7.66. The outcome is that this Neighbourhood Plan designates three Local Green Spaces (Figure 5) that largely coincide with the KBC proposals but are in full conformity with the relevant NPPF criteria and guidance (as above) and take local sustainable development considerations into account. Their statutory protection will ensure that these most important open spaces in Braybrooke’s environment and landscape are protected for future generations.

7.67. The evidence base for the designations follows.

River Jordan Local Green Spaces, Braybrooke

7.68. The Local Green Spaces comprise three groups consisting of six plots (land parcels) in total and forming a single coherent open space through the village; the groups are separated only by roads (which are excluded by being part of the public highway and therefore outside the scope of Neighbourhood Plan policies).

Jordan Banks East: plot 013 (Castle Field), permanent pasture with hedged boundaries, the western part of this (larger) field that is *not* designated as Scheduled Monument 1016318 *Braybrooke Castle medieval moated manor and medieval settlement remains*.

Plot 013 'Castle Field' from northwest corner with Scheduled Monument 1016318 in middle distance, Rover Jordan to the left, houses on Desborough Road top right

Plot 013 Desborough Road and medieval Braybrooke Bridge (Scheduled Monument 1003891) forming the boundary. Central group is on right of road.

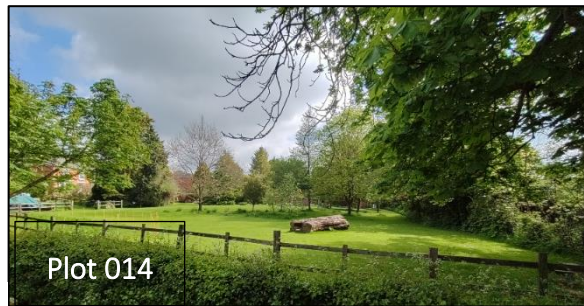


Jordan Banks Central: three plots – plot 014 (paddock and garden of The Elms, 1 Newland Street, a former farmhouse built 1823); plot 015 (paddock of The Walnuts, School Lane); plot 016 (paddock of 21 Griffin Road).

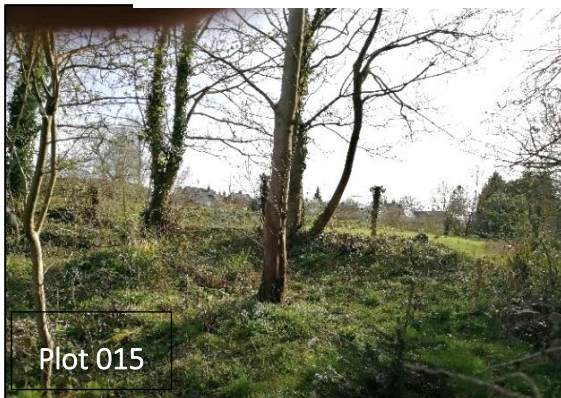
Plot 16 in distance



Plot 014 on left, beyond parapet)



Plot 014



Plot 015



Plot 016

Jordan Banks West: two plots – plot 017 (paddock of 5 Newland Street); plot 018 (former meadow of Rectory Farm, now the garden of 29 Newland Street).



Assessment against NPPF (2021) criteria

a) Reasonably close proximity to community.

7.69. The plots form a continuous band through the middle of the village and are bordered by 25 residential properties

b) Demonstrably special to local community.

7.70. 25 submissions to the Local Plan consultation in 2020 objected to the removal of LGS status. None supported it. A recurrent thread is that they are “a defining characteristic” of the village. Before this Plan was drafted, all five owners of the six plots were consulted orally and supported this sentiment; all read the draft Plan with care; a family member of one commented positively on LGS status and two supported it by omission in written comments about other aspects of the draft.

c) Particular local significance:

7.71. Beauty. Rural but, being in private residential ownership, they are well maintained. They provide views within the village, echoing earlier times, framing the focal points of Church corner and the Old Rectory. Some protected trees of considerable age include a particularly impressive one in 018. Sheep graze in 016, chickens in 014, cattle in 013.

7.72. Historic significance. This area was never developed, possibly due to its propensity to flood before the flood defence was installed in the 1980s. An Ancient Bridge (early 15th C) at the western edge of 013 links the medieval village north of the river to the Castle Site (scheduled monument, early 14th C). The Baptist Chapel (early 19th C) at north-west side of 014 was a regionally important centre for the Baptist community. The river Jordan was redirected and culverted to protect the Chapel: there are traces of the old bridge near the Chapel in the verge of Griffin Road between 014 and 017.

7.73. Recreational value. Use for community events: 017 will host the annual fete, and a new pedestrian gate has been installed for that purpose. 016 is used as a car park for large village events. No other part of the village can support community activity, there is no “village green” of the traditional kind.

7.74. Tranquillity. There is limited vehicle traffic, the village is distant from trunk roads, sounds are deadened by trees and hedges. Only birdsong can normally be heard, with occasional distant cattle.

7.75. Richness of wildlife. The spaces form a continuous corridor with a tree belt, running along the river whose banks are left wild. This tree belt forms an important habitat for the birds that are seen in the surrounding fields: skylarks, yellowhammers, fieldfare, and redwings. There are significant numbers of red-listed birds: a starling murmuration of 200-250 birds each winter; large numbers of song and mistle thrushes; house sparrow colonies in the bordering houses. Western Barbastelle, a near-threatened bat species, is regularly recorded in the village. Plot 015 provides an important environment for wildlife.

7.76. Characteristic of village. These spaces firmly place Braybrooke in its rural setting, in the village but of the countryside. Residents walking around the village, and particularly to and from the few community buildings (Church, Chapel, Village Hall, Pub) pass through the green spaces and find them calming, restorative of perspective and mental health. Children stop to look at the cows, sheep, and chickens.

d) Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

7.77. It is very unusual for Northamptonshire villages to have this configuration of surviving undeveloped streamside meadows, paddocks and (20th century) gardens separating two parts of the settlement. This layout is known to have remained effectively unchanged since medieval times, and possibly since Braybrooke village's foundation in the 5th century.

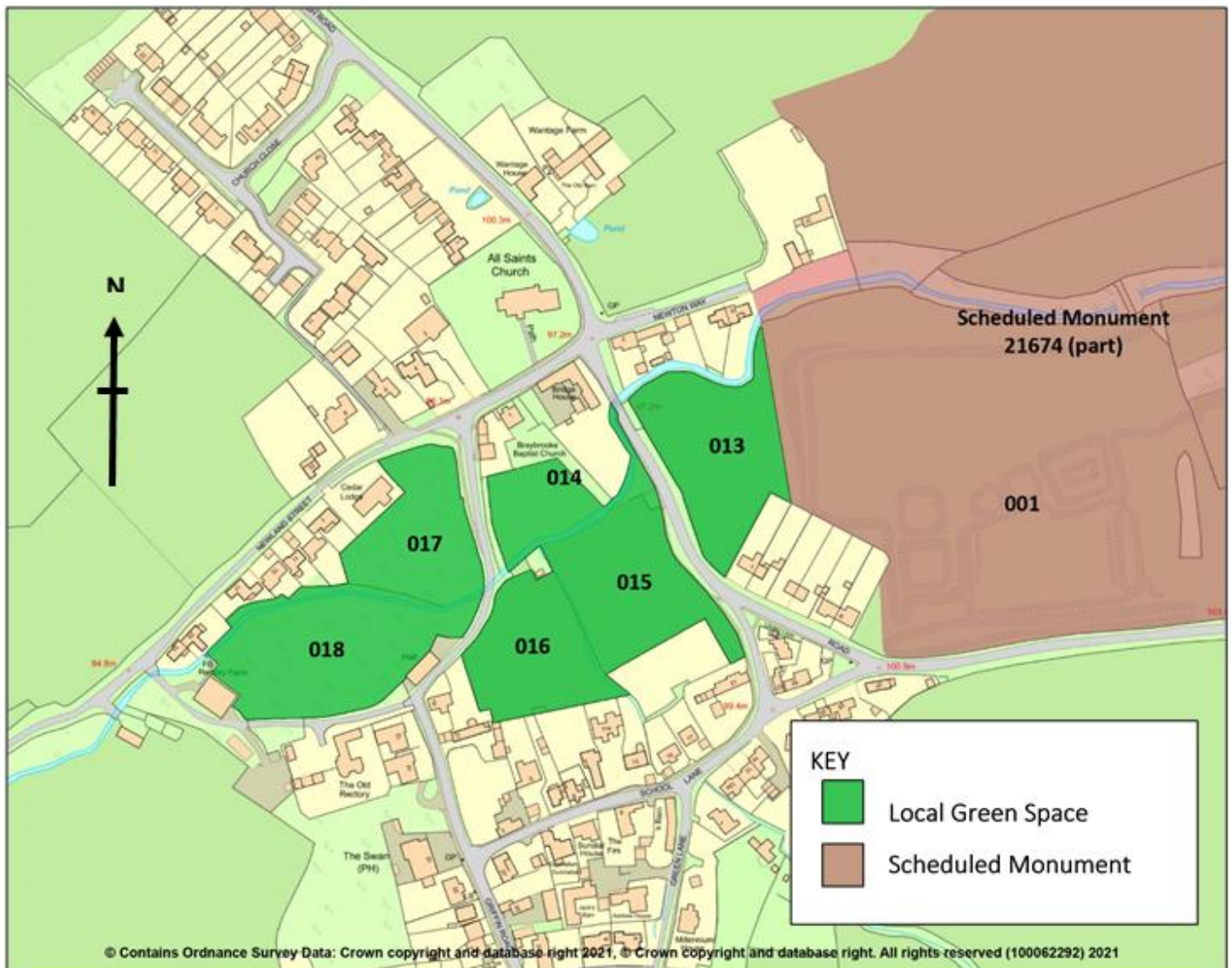
7.78. The total area of the Local Green Space is 2.8 hectares.

POLICY ENV 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, the following Local Green Spaces (map Figure 5) will not be permitted unless consistent with national Green Belt policy:

- River Jordan banks east (plot 013; area 0.5 ha)
- River Jordan banks central (plots 014/015/016; 1.2 ha)
- River Jordan banks west (plots 017/018; 1.1 ha)

Figure 5: Local Green Spaces



Important Open Spaces

7.79. A group of sites is demonstrably important for their sport/recreational, amenity and/or community value. They have been identified in fieldwork, community consultations and in Parish records; some are existing Kettering BC Open Space, Sport & Recreation (OSSR) sites as identified in the Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment 2020 and are shown on the North Northamptonshire Council interactive map for planning; the others are either more recent than the open space assessment survey or have been identified as being eligible for OSSR designation as part of the Neighbourhood Plan’s preparation.

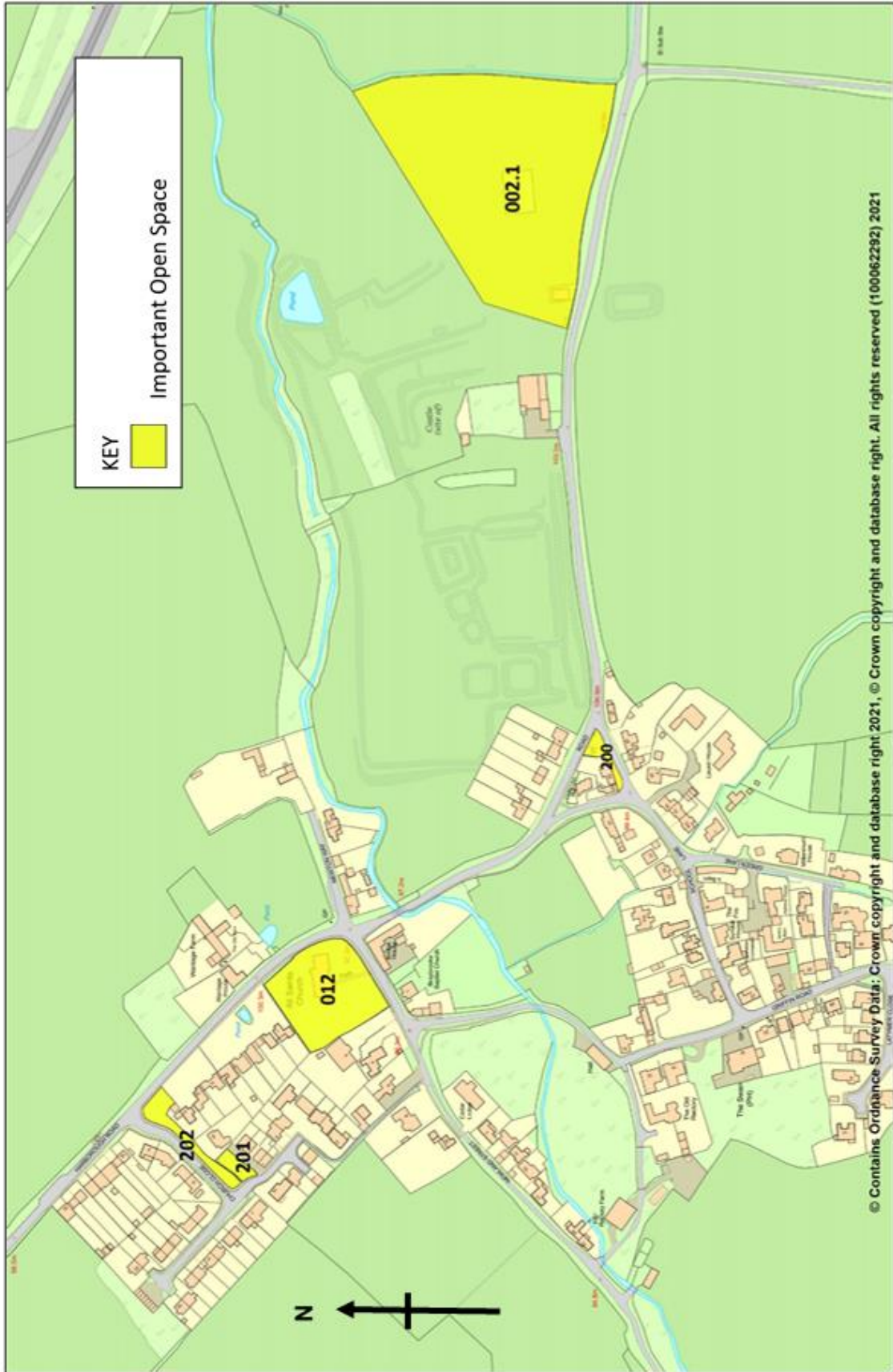
POLICY ENV 2: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES

The following open spaces (locations Figure 6; details Appendix 6) are of high local value for sport, recreation, amenity, beauty or tranquillity, and are within or close to the ~~bu~~up area. Development proposals that result in their loss, or have a significant adverse effect on them,

will not be supported unless the open space is replaced by at least equivalent provision in an equally suitable location, or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is no longer valued or required by the community.

- Braybrooke Cricket Club ground (site 002.1; site 03 in KBC Playing Pitch Strategy (2020))
- All Saints churchyard (012; site 493 in KBC Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment (2020))
- The Green, School Lane (200; *amenity open space*)
- Chase Park, Church Close (201; children and young people/*amenity open space*)
- Church Close corner and verge (202; *amenity open space*)

Figure 6: Important Open Spaces



Sites of natural environment significance

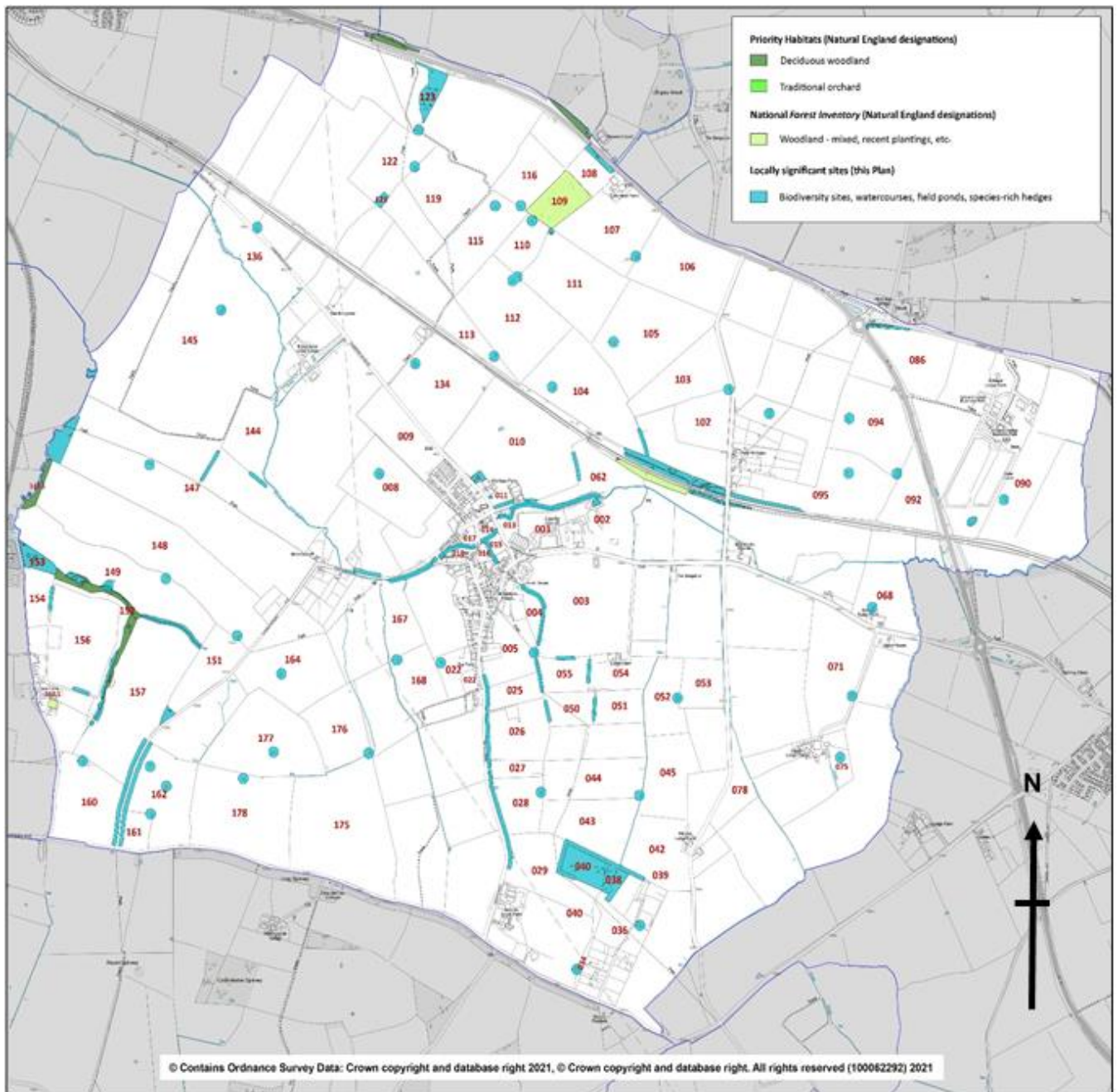
7.80. A group of sites in Braybrooke are characterised by natural environment features of at least local significance. They comprise a) sites where *priority habitats* occur, or which have been listed in the national *Forest Inventory* (both Natural England designations); and b) sites identified during the fieldwork for this Neighbourhood Plan as being of high biodiversity significance in the context of the Plan Area. The map (Figure 7) shows their locations; details in Appendix 6. Note that, although it is a NPPF requirement that Local Planning Authorities have such data for planning purposes, no habitat and biodiversity site designations (including Local Wildlife Sites) by Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre (NBRC) are shown on the relevant map ([https://maps.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Environment and planning/Habitats and Local Wildlife Site](https://maps.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Environment%20and%20Planning/Habitats%20and%20Local%20Wildlife%20Site)); this indicates absence of surveying, not absence of natural environment features at this level, and this Plan rectifies the omission by identifying sites and features of local biodiversity significance here, and in Figure 8 (Policy ENV 4).

7.81. Policy ENV 3 delivers site-specific compliance in the Plan Area with the relevant North Northamptonshire Council policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017-2019, and the UK Environment Act 2021.

POLICY ENV 3: SITES AND FEATURES OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE

The sites and features mapped here (Figure 7) have been identified as being of at least local significance for their natural environment significance. They are ecologically important in their own right, make a local contribution to carbon sequestration, and are locally valued. Development proposals resulting in any significant harm to, or loss of, these sites will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the local benefit of the proposal outweighs the harm.

Figure 7: Sites of natural environment significance



Woodland, notable trees and hedges

7.82. Although Braybrooke does not have much woodland, trees and hedges have an important role in the appearance and character of the parish.

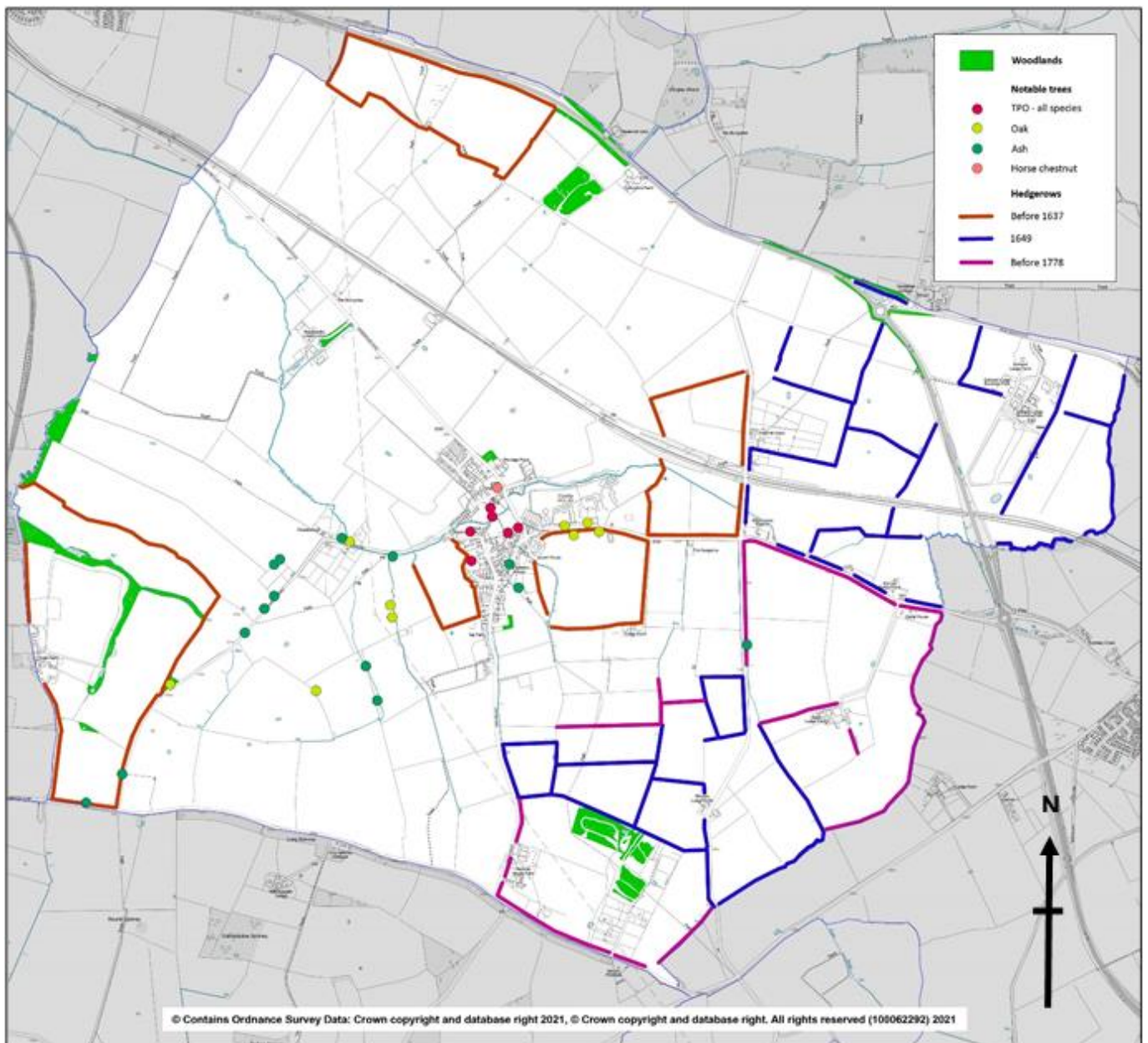
7.83. There are no large woodlands; the only significant areas are those adjoining Waterloo Lodge in the south-east, natural colonisation along the railway line in the centre of the parish, and a recently planted area in the north. There are, however, many small clumps of trees attached to hedgerows, such as a small group of oaks by the Jurassic Way in the west, all of which afford protection for wildlife. There are still many large standard oaks and ashes in the hedgerows that line the lanes.

7.84. The village has a good range of specimen and notable trees, both conifer and broadleaf. There are six TPOs (two walnuts, two horse chestnuts, a sycamore, and a magnificent copper beech) and other notables such as the horse chestnut in the Churchyard and the remaining two ash trees around Green Lane.

7.85. Hedges are an important component of the Plan Area's landscape, provide much-needed habitat for declining farmland and woodland species, and (thanks to information from the surviving archival documentation about land use, ownership, field names and enclosures) are of locally high historical significance. Application of the Hooper method of hedgerow dating shows that several hedgerows in the Plan Area (with 6-7 species per 30 metres) are likely to date from before the English Civil War, and that there were three clear phases of hedgerow establishment coinciding with successive enclosures of the open fields.

7.86. The Policy refers to BS5837 which is the industry standard tree survey that should be undertaken as part of preparation of all development proposals where there are trees etc. on-site.

Figure 8: Woodland, notable trees and hedges with biodiversity and historical significance



POLICY ENV 4: WOODLAND, NOTABLE TREES AND HEDGES

Woodland, notable trees and hedges of arboricultural, biodiversity, historical or landscape importance (including, but not restricted to, those shown in Figure 8), should be protected from loss or damage in development proposals and integrated into their design. Proposals which use trees and hedges to enhance their appearance, amenity and biodiversity value will be supported. As appropriate, proposals should be accompanied by a tree survey (BS5837 standard or its replacement) that identifies woodland, notable trees and hedges on the site and establishes their health and longevity. Where damage or loss is unavoidable, the developer should provide replacement plantings at a level that delivers net biodiversity gain.

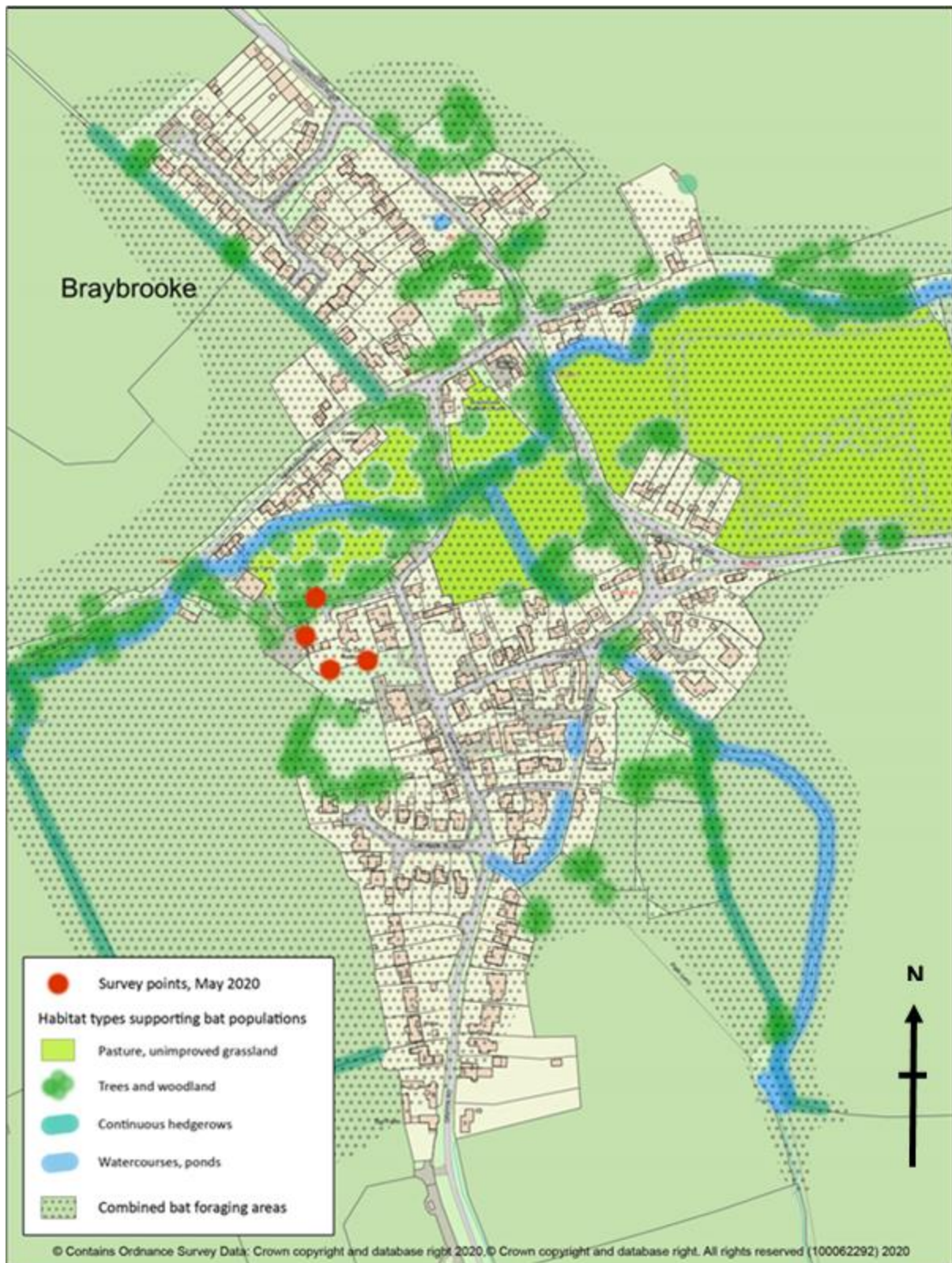
Bat conservation

7.87. The Plan Area appears to be one of the most important for bats in the North Northamptonshire Council area. A survey of bats in Braybrooke by N. Cossa (Bat Recorder, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust) in September 2020 (see Appendix 7) recorded bats by audio detection at a group of four locations in the village. At least seven bat species were recorded, including one national rarity, while the various species are known to require a wide range of foraging habitats and types of roosting sites. These comprise notable trees (in gardens and the countryside), grazing land, parkland and gardens, deciduous woodland, older buildings and – of particular significance in view of the species list – watercourses and ponds. Details of the bat records referred to here are available in Appendix 7.

“The 18 nights of recording has produced a large number of records which indicates that the areas very important for bats, especially as they appear to remain in the area most of the night, foraging on a plentiful supply of insects. The six species recorded at this location including the barbastelle bat is interesting as the different species have different roost and foraging requirements – roost in buildings or trees, feeding around trees or feeding out in the open. The range of species is likely to be due to the wide range of suitable habitat in the recording area. It would be really important to retain as much of this habitat as possible.”

7.88. Figure 9 is an informed interpretation of the survey results. It shows the locations of the main habitats in the village that are known to be needed by the range of bat species recorded; indeed, it could be argued that their extent in Braybrooke village is a significant explanation for the bat species diversity here. The conclusion to be drawn from this survey for planning purposes is that all development proposals in the Plan Area should be assumed to have at least some potential deleterious effect on local bats (breeding, roosting, hibernating, foraging) unless the opposite can be shown to be the case.

Figure 9: Bats in Braybrooke, September 2020.



NOTE: this map shows only the presumed situation at the date of survey. It should not be used as a substitute for the survey(s) required to accompany planning proposals in the Plan Area

7.89. English legislation (Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species regulations (2017) (as amended), Natural England standing advice on protection of bats, and building regulations and best practice should all be referred to when development proposals in the Plan Area are under consideration. The following Policy deals with the factors on which bat conservation relies:

- Availability of roosting and breeding site opportunities
- Availability of foraging and commuting habitat (including connectivity)
- Appropriate management and protection of existing roosts and areas
- Appropriate artificial lighting

Sources: Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Records Centre *Guidance Note*; Institute of Lighting Practitioners/Bat Conservation Trust *Guidance Note 8 Bats and artificial lighting*.

POLICY ENV 5: BAT CONSERVATION

Proposals that are likely to have a direct or indirect effect on bats shall be supported by an up-to-date bat survey showing, for areas within and adjacent to the development site, known bat habitat areas, potential bat habitat areas (those of a type of habitat that supports bats) and sensitive areas (providing roosting sites).

Based on the results, the development should:

- a) in known bat habitat areas, not incorporate exterior artificial lighting (on buildings or open areas) unless demonstrably essential
- b) in known or potential bat habitat areas, not remove trees unless demonstrably essential
- c) in all sensitive areas, apply mitigation methods in the design and location of artificial lighting using current best practice in respect of dark buffers, illuminance levels, zonation, luminaire specifications, curfew times, site configuration and screening
- d) in all locations, incorporate integral or external bat boxes in an agreed ratio of boxes to number of buildings or site size.

Biodiversity and habitat connectivity

7.90. It might be said that Braybrooke is a 'typical' area of English Midlands countryside because it has no nationally important wildlife hotspots, and thus that it has little or no biodiversity significance to be taken into account in the Planning system. This would be a misunderstanding of the concept of biodiversity. England's biodiversity is entirely and only the sum of the wildlife in all of its individual parishes: Braybrooke is as important in this regard as every other parish, and residents want it to play its essential part in protecting what remains of England's threatened and diminishing biodiversity.

7.91. Connectivity is an essential component of biodiversity. Isolated populations of animals and plants are at risk of destruction or of simply 'dying out'. Wildlife Corridors aim to re-connect populations and habitats within parishes and more widely. A wildlife corridor providing this connectivity in Braybrooke between identified sites of biodiversity significance and centred on the River Jordan and its main tributaries is mapped (indicatively) in this Plan (Figure 10) for consideration in the planning system.

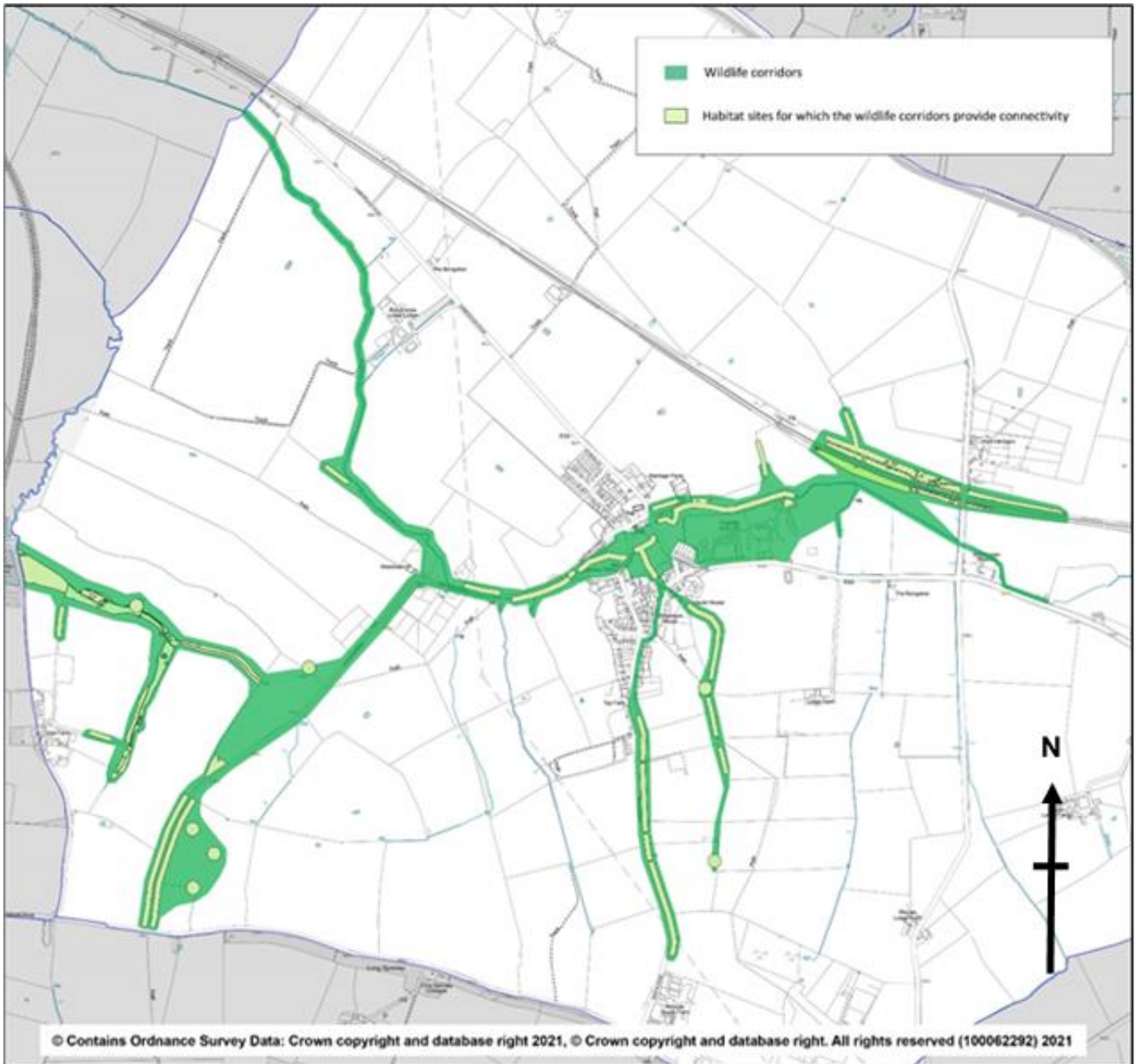
7.92. While Policy ENV 3 delivers site-specific compliance in the Plan Area with the relevant North Northamptonshire Council policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017-2019 and the UK Environment Act 2021, this Policy (ENV 6) does the same for strategic planning and future development proposals across the Plan Area. The Policy is explicitly supported by National Planning Policy Framework (2021) paragraphs 174 (a) and (d); 175; 179 and 180(a).

7.93. The community also expects all planning strategies, proposals and decisions affecting Braybrooke to comply with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008, to follow the spirit of the Paris Agreement (UK ratification 2017) and the UK's 25 year environment plan (2018), and to plan for biodiversity net gain through the mechanisms described in the Environment Act 2021 and subsequent regulation.

POLICY ENV 6 BIODIVERSITY AND HABITAT CONNECTIVITY

Development proposals shall safeguard significant habitats and species. Development proposals should not adversely affect the habitat connectivity provided by the wildlife corridors identified in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Braybrooke Wildlife Corridors

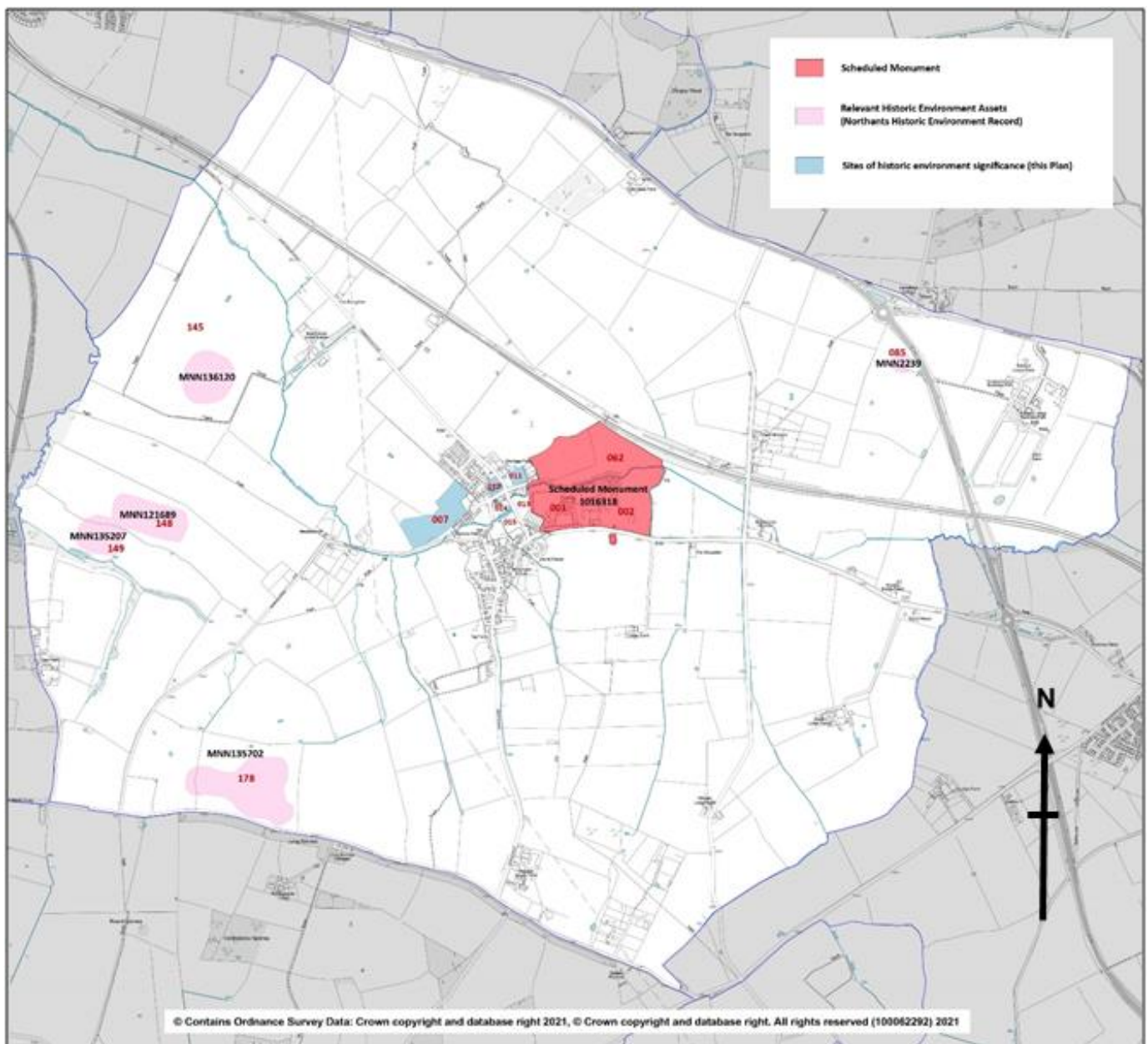


Sites and features of historical environment significance

7.94. A group of sites are already designated or have been identified during preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, for their historical significance. The map (Figure 11) shows their locations; detail in Appendix 6.

7.95. These historic environment sites comprise a) sites with *extant and visible* archaeological or historical features or *proven buried archaeology*, as recorded in the Historic England and Northamptonshire *Historic Environment Records* databases, b) other sites of historical and social environment significance identified locally for this Plan.

Figure 11: Sites and features of historic environment significance



NOTE: for ridge and furrow see Figure 13.2, Policy ENV 7

POLICY ENV 7: SITES OF HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE

The sites listed here and mapped in Figure 11 have been identified as being of at least local significance for their historical features. The features are extant and have visible expression or there is proven buried archaeology on the site, and they are locally valued. These designated and non-designated heritage assets should be safeguarded as set out in the NPPF.

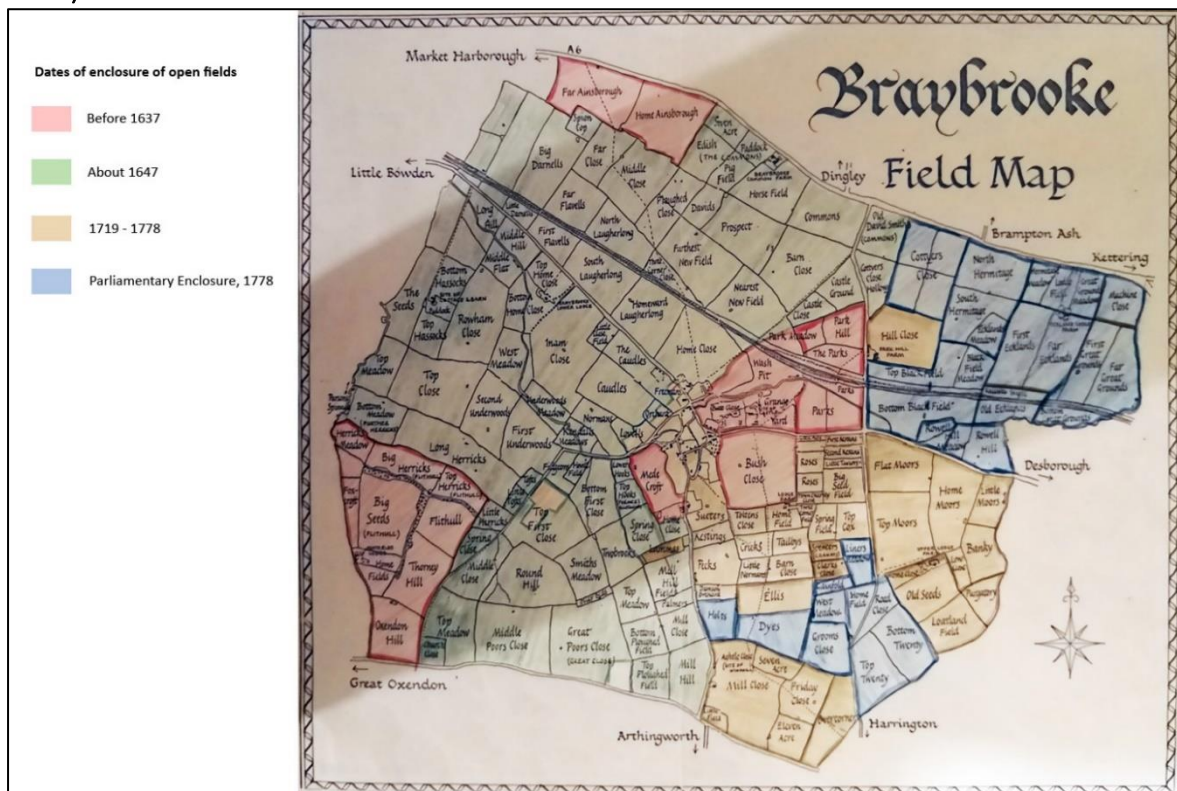
- Scheduled Monument 21674 Braybrooke Castle (inventory references 001, 002, 010 (part))
- Northants Historic Environment Record MNN136120 Possible Romano-British settlement (145)
- Northants Historic Environment Record MNN121689 Possible Prehistoric boundary ditch (148)
- Northants Historic Environment Record MNN135207 Possible Saxon settlement (149)
- Northants Historic Environment Record MNN135702 Possible late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement (178)
- Northants Historic Environment Record MMN2239 Possible Prehist/Romano-British settlement (085)
- Site identified locally: Lovells - medieval earthworks (shrunken village) (007)
- Site identified locally: medieval earthworks (shrunken village and lanes) (011)
- Site identified locally: churchyard of All Saints church (012)
- Site identified locally: Old course of River Jordan (014, 015)

Ridge and furrow

7.96. The medieval township of Braybrooke was primarily agricultural and, beginning in the 8th or 9th century AD, was farmed using the *Open Field* system. All the open land, other than small fields (closes) backing onto the houses, meadows in stream valleys and a few patches of woodland or waste, was worked in a seasonal and yearly rotation of arable crops (cereals, beans), grazing and fallow. Medieval ploughs were pulled by oxen and because they were not reversible, the soil was always turned rightwards as the plough team progressed up and down the furlongs, to produce a corrugated pattern of ridges and furrows whose dimensions increased with every season.

7.97 The open field system was practised for most of the medieval period until changes in land ownership and use gave rise to a change from large communal open fields to enclosed, privately-owned smaller fields with hedged boundaries, and a change from arable to pastoral (livestock) farming. The land in the Plan Area was enclosed (Figure 12) in this way in several phases, beginning in the Stuart and Commonwealth periods and ending with Braybrooke's Parliamentary Enclosure in 1778.

Figure 12: Dates of enclosure of Braybrooke's medieval open fields (map ©Geoff Pitcher, 1988)



7.98. The result of the enclosures, as well as being socially disruptive, was to ‘fossilise’ the ridges and furrows under grass and hedgerows, and this situation persisted until the mid-20th century, when a second agricultural revolution after the Second World War effectively reversed the first one. British governments, later the European Union, encouraged farmers, mainly through subsidies, to plough the pastures and turn them over to intensive arable production. Wherever this happened, modern reversible ploughs quickly obliterated the ridge and furrow. In most English open field parishes, the loss of ridge and furrow since 1950 has been over 90%. In the late 1990s, English Heritage (now Historic England), realising the scale of this destruction, undertook the first of a series of surveys (*‘Turning the Plough’*) across the Midlands, including Northamptonshire, and made recommendations for protection and management. Research using old maps and documents by Hill et al for the Rockingham Forest Trust and a Royal Commission study suggests that despite the age of early enclosure phases most of the parish’s original ridge and furrow (some 620 hectares) survived under permanent pasture until after the second world war.

7.99. The extent of ridge and furrow in Braybrooke mapped in the late 1990s for the *Turning the Plough* (Historic England and Northamptonshire CC) survey (Figure 13.1) provided the baseline for a new survey undertaken as part of the inventory for this Plan in 2021 (Figure 13.2). The summary results show the decline since World War II and since 1999; although the 2021 survey identified on the ground some areas missed by the 1999 study, the situation is now as follows:

1950s	[estimated] 620 ha
1999	c.85 ha
2021	c.35 ha

7.100. Rare survival of comprehensive archival (maps and documents) evidence for the layout of the medieval open fields and the history of their enclosure (Foard, Partida and Hall 2006, *Historic landscape of Braybrooke* in *An Atlas of the Medieval and Early Modern Landscape*, Rockingham Forest Trust) increases the historical and heritage value of the six fields in the Plan Area with still-surviving ridge and furrow:

“What should ... be given protection are the ridge and furrow earthworks, especially those immediately north of the existing Scheduled area. This is not only because they are well preserved, but also because they can be directly related to a very detailed open field strip map ... such a combined potential is [a] relative rarity anywhere”

Foard, Partida and Hall, 2006 *Historic landscape of Braybrooke*

7.101. In English legislation ridge and furrow fields (except for the few that are Scheduled Monuments) are not statutorily protected, despite recognition that, in view of the level of loss since the mid- 20th century, *“as the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international importance”* (English Heritage, 2001).

7.102. While the six individual fields with surviving ridge and furrow in Braybrooke are not claimed to be of international importance, their rarity across the Midlands and their relationship with the other important medieval heritage assets in the Plan Area means that any further, avoidable, loss would be irreversibly detrimental. In conformity with paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework (including footnote 68) and following the recommendation of Historic England, all surviving ridge and furrow in the Plan Area (Figure 13.2) should now be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset and taken into account in the planning system as the visible evidence of a component of national heritage comparable in significance to that of surviving medieval buildings. In future, and whenever possible, increased local housing need or new targets required at a higher level in the planning system should only be fulfilled by allocating development to available sites where there is no surviving ridge and furrow.

POLICY ENV 8: RIDGE AND FURROW

The areas of ridge and furrow earthworks shown on Figure 13.2 are identified as locally valued, non-designated heritage assets. They should be safeguarded as set out in the NPPF. In determining a proposal, the decision shall be a balanced judgement with regard to the scale of any harm or loss to the ridge and furrow as identified.

Figure 13.1: Ridge and furrow, c.1999
(in Northants Historic Environment Record (*Open Fields* project) for *turning the Plough* survey, NCC/English Heritage)

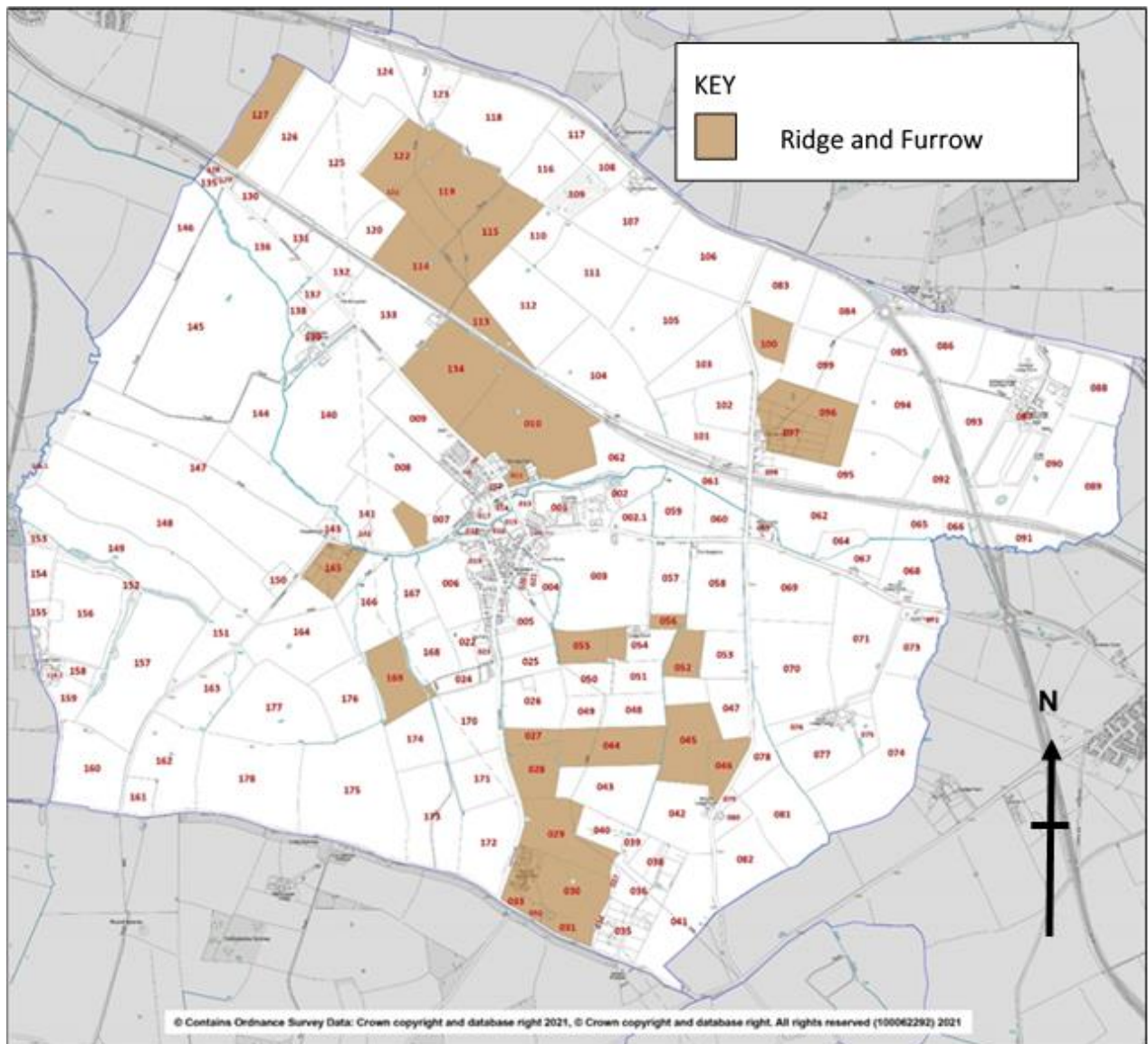
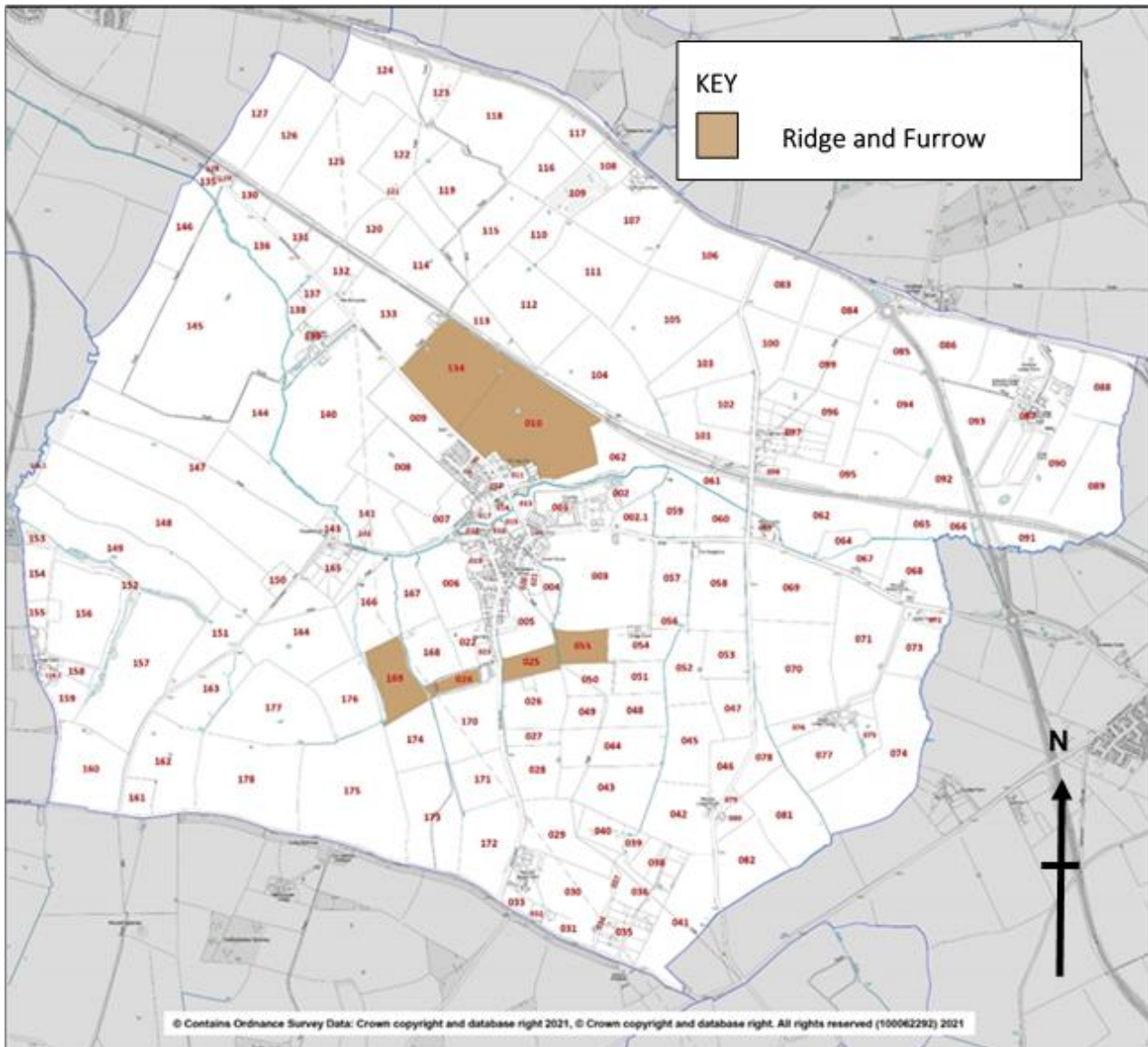


Figure 13.2: Ridge and furrow, 2021 (this Plan)

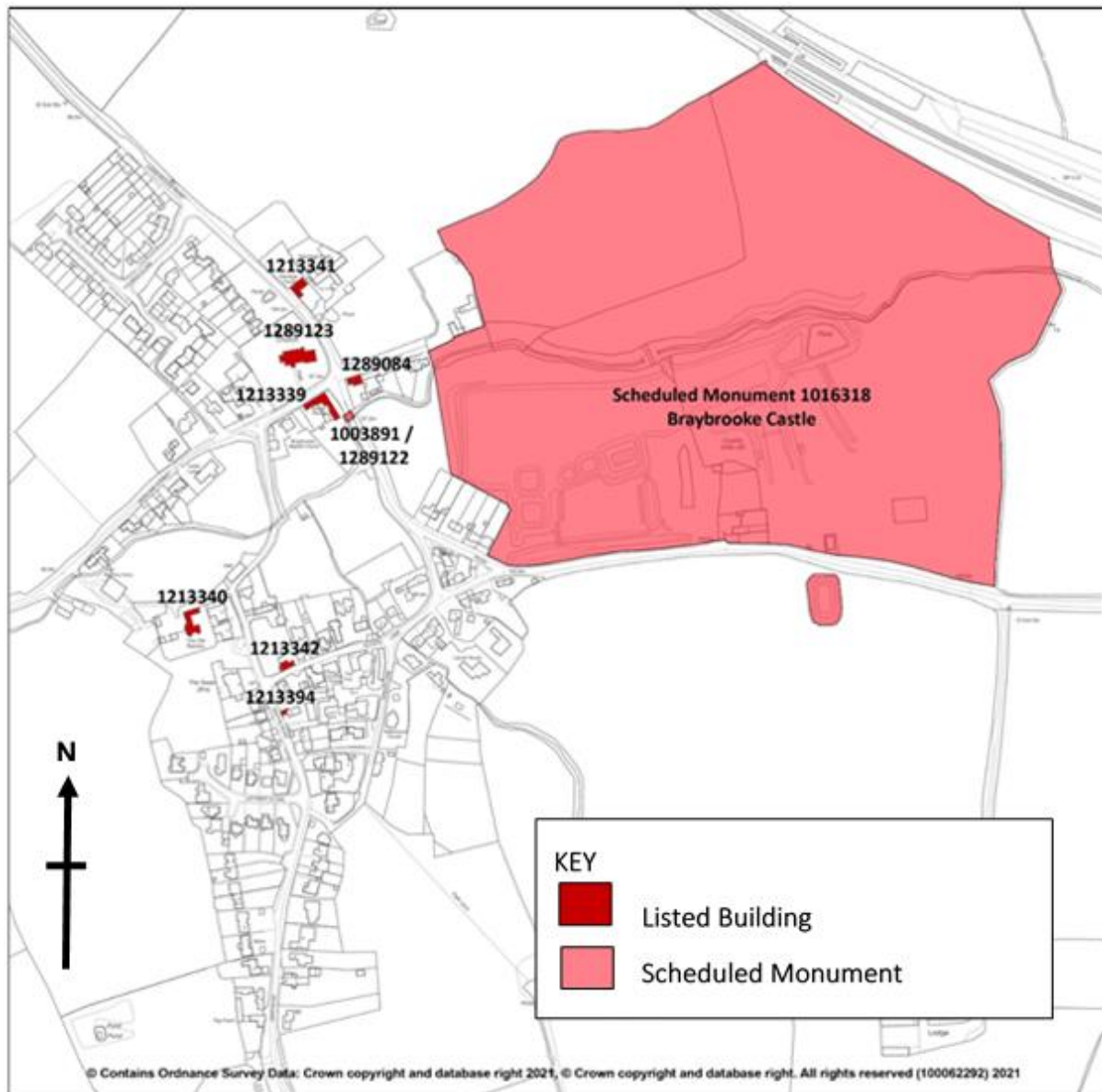


Statutorily protected heritage assets

7.103. The following nine buildings and structures in the Plan Area have statutory protection through Scheduling and/or Listing at Grade II* or II. They are listed here for reference and to note that new development will be required to take into account their *settings*, as defined on a case-by-case basis by Historic England. Full details and descriptions are to be found on the Historic England website. Their locations are shown at Figure 14.

- Braybrooke Castle (Scheduled Monument: UID 1016318)
- Wantage House (Grade II: UID 1213341)
- Church of All Saints (Grade II*: UID 1289123)
- Braybrooke Bridge (Grade II: UID 1003891; and Scheduled Monument: UID 1289122)
- Jordan House, 2 Newton Way (Grade II: UID 1289084)
- Bridge House (Grade II: UID 1213339)
- The Old Rectory (Grade II: UID 1213340)
- Pipwell Cottage (Grade II: UID 1213342)
- Bleak House (Grade II: UID 1213394)

Figure 14: Statutorily protected heritage assets

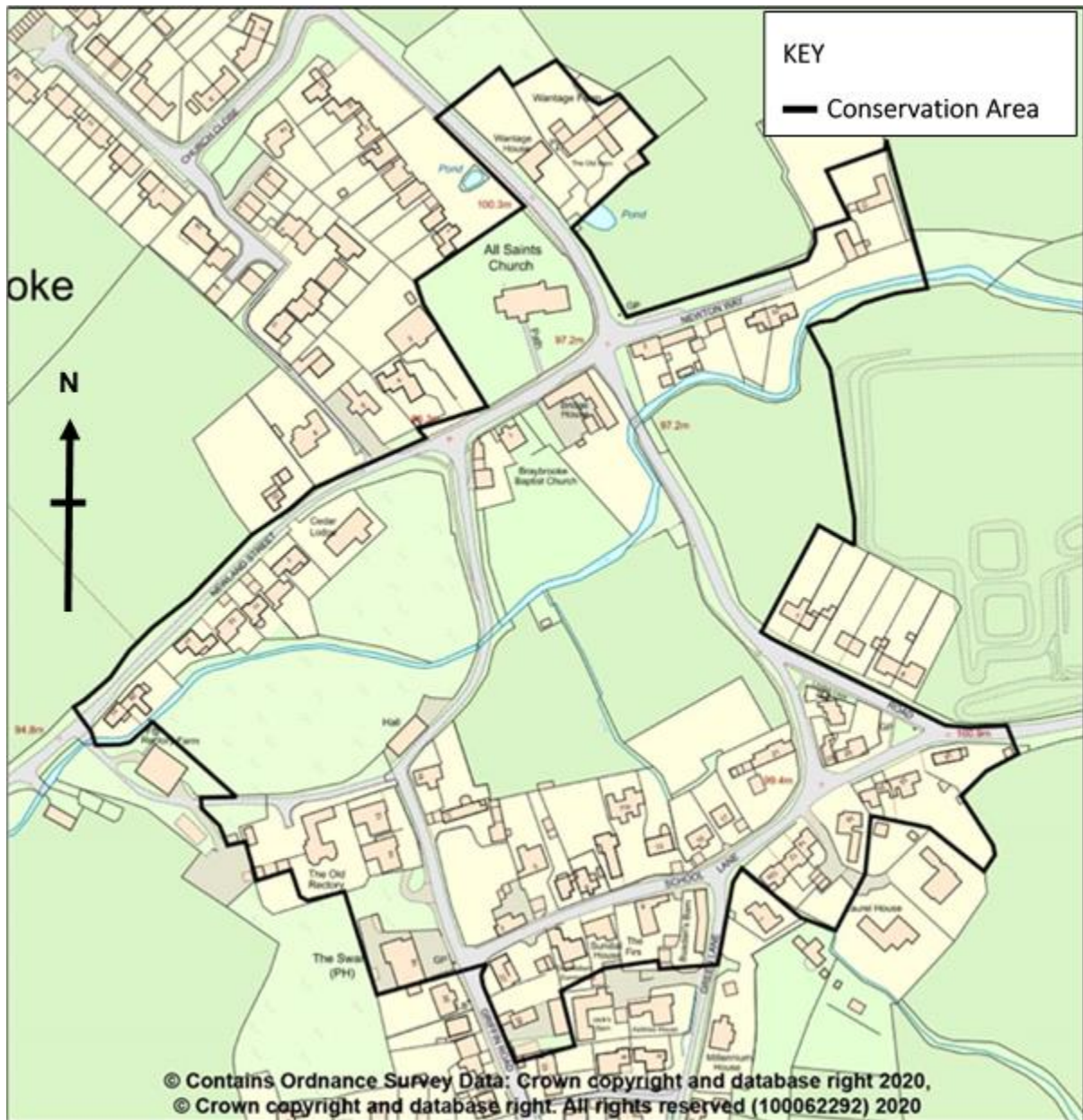


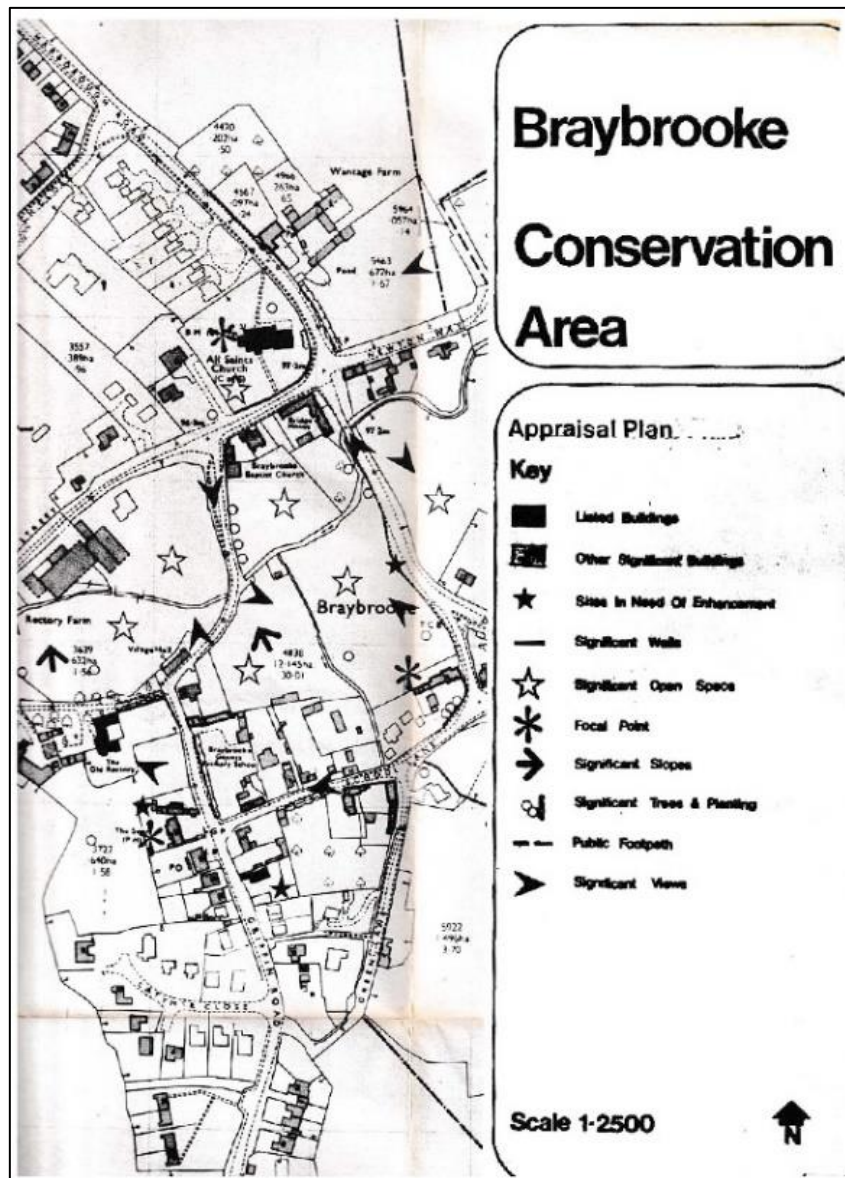
Braybrooke Conservation Area and locally significant heritage assets

7.104. A Conservation Area covering the historic core of Braybrooke (as defined in the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record) and adjacent areas of relevant heritage value was designated by Kettering Borough Council in 1985 following a detailed Appraisal, a public meeting in the Village Hall on 31 July 1985, and amendments responding to comments submitted by residents. The published Appraisal identified and mapped a number of buildings of local significance (for their architecture, history, and contribution to the character of the village), and – in common with all Conservation Areas in England – the merits of these buildings were an integral, explicit part of the Conservation Area designation. The ‘area of special architectural interest’ and ‘character or appearance’ of historic Braybrooke and the

buildings within it are therefore protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Figure 15: Braybrooke Conservation Area (top); part of the 1985 Appraisal map (bottom)





7.105. During preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan it became clear that there had been numerous detailed changes to the village since 1985. Because a Neighbourhood Plan is not empowered to do so, Community Action ENV 1 records the community's wish that the Conservation Area be reviewed at the earliest opportunity. An informal appraisal of locally significant buildings ('local heritage assets') was carried out, but the decision was taken to rely on the existing protection provided by the legislation. In anticipation of a collaboration between the community and NNC on an update of the Conservation area, the following general statement has been drafted.

7.106. The Conservation Area contains Listed Buildings (Historic England) and a number of other unlisted buildings which, although now interleaved between more recent developments, echo the history of the community, preserve its atmosphere, and form the skeleton of its shape. Most have been sympathetically updated for modern living without losing their character. They fall into three categories:

7.107. *Farmhouses and their outbuildings* Mainly constructed in the wake of 18th century enclosures, these retain their ancient footprints and historic shape. In addition to the (listed) Wantage House, Bridge House and Bleak House, there are The Elms (19th C) opposite the Church, The Old Bakehouse (18th C) at 21 Griffin Road, and The Firs (18th C) in School Lane with its updated barn now called Buadans Barn.

7.108. *Worker's cottages* Many cottages were demolished in the post war period as no longer suitable for habitation, but several groups remain and were converted and extended to support modern living while retaining their link with the past: Green Lane Cottage (16th C) in Green Lane, Castle Cottage (early 19th C) on Desborough Road, The Walnuts (18th C) in School Lane, Appin House in Newton Way, Pipwell Cottage in School Lane, Cotterbury (18th C) in Newland Street.

7.109. *Community buildings* The 17th Century Swan public house in Griffin Road is once again thatched and echoes the listed Pipwell Cottage opposite. The original early Victorian village school and schoolhouse have become the Village Hall; it was replaced as a school by the Arts and Crafts "Old School" and "Old Schoolhouse" that are now handsome residences in School Lane. The Baptist Chapel in Griffin Road, next to The Elms, is of considerable historical significance as the purpose-built centre of the late 18th Century non-conformist community in the area. And Bank House (16th Century) at the corner of Griffin Road and School Lane once contained in succession a bakehouse, a club house, and the shop and Post Office.

7.110. Other notable structures are the Millennium Monument on the Village Green – a modern gesture of the community's respect for local history – and the footings and other remains of WWII ordnance stores bordering the narrow rural roads around the village.

7.111. Braybrooke has had a long and relatively uneventful history, but these remaining links to that history are critically important to its character and are valued by its residents. They need to be protected, but in a way that makes them useful and not as museum pieces.

COMMUNITY ACTION ENV1:

The Parish Council will work with the community and North Northamptonshire Council to support a review of the Conservation Area (1985) in light of changes.

Important views

7.112. Consultation during the Neighbourhood Plan's preparation identified a widely held wish to protect Braybrooke's rural setting, in particular its visual relationship with the surrounding landscape, including its location in the landscape of Natural England National Character Area 89 *Northamptonshire Vales*.

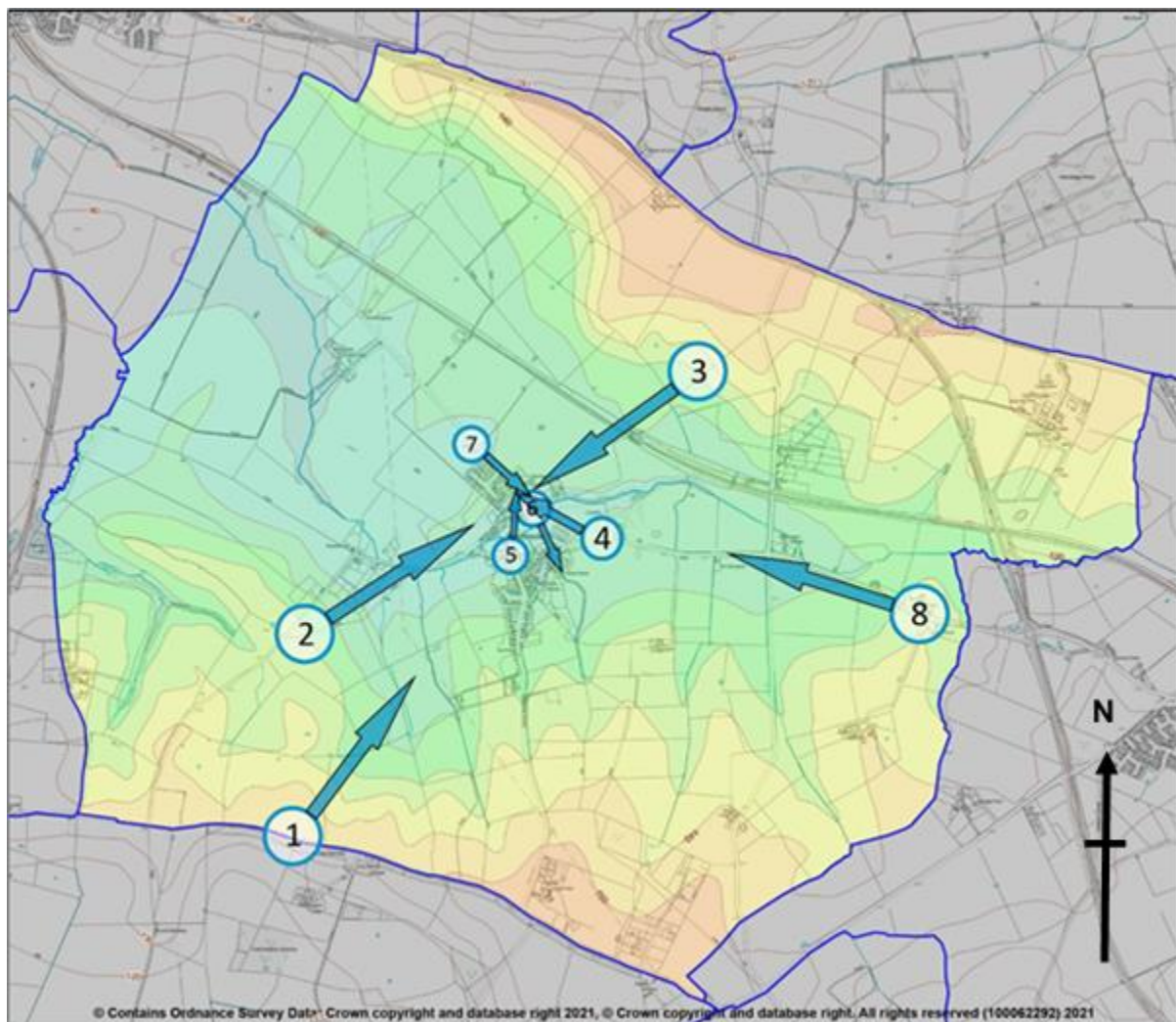
7.113. One of the main ways in which residents expressed this wish was by describing several highly valued views within and around the village and toward the surrounding countryside. These consultation findings were supported by fieldwork which confirmed the sightlines of the suggested views and mapped them (below, Figure 16, with supporting photographic evidence in Appendix 8). The community's objective of protecting the best views is also supported by the Braybrooke Village Design Statement (2005).

POLICY ENV 9: IMPORTANT VIEWS

The sites listed below and as identified in Figure 16 are important to the setting and character of the village. Proposals should protect and where possible, enhance them. Development which would have a significant adverse impact on the identified views will not be supported.

1. Panoramic view northeast from Oxendon Road to Braybrooke village
2. North-northeast from footpath GC9 from Oxendon Road, across the fields to the village and Old Rectory
3. Southwest from the Jurassic Way long-distance path, over the railway to the village in its valley, to the hills on the southern boundary
4. West from Desborough Road across Braybrooke Castle Scheduled Monument, the historic core of the village (three Listed Buildings), the parish church and Jordan House
5. Heart of the Local Green Space, north from the second River Jordan crossing with the church spire as the central landmark
6. From the medieval bridge southeast along Desborough Road, Local Green Space on either side
7. Gateway view of the village from Harborough Road
8. Westwards vista taking in the whole parish east to west down the River Jordan valley with the village its centre

Figure 16: Important views



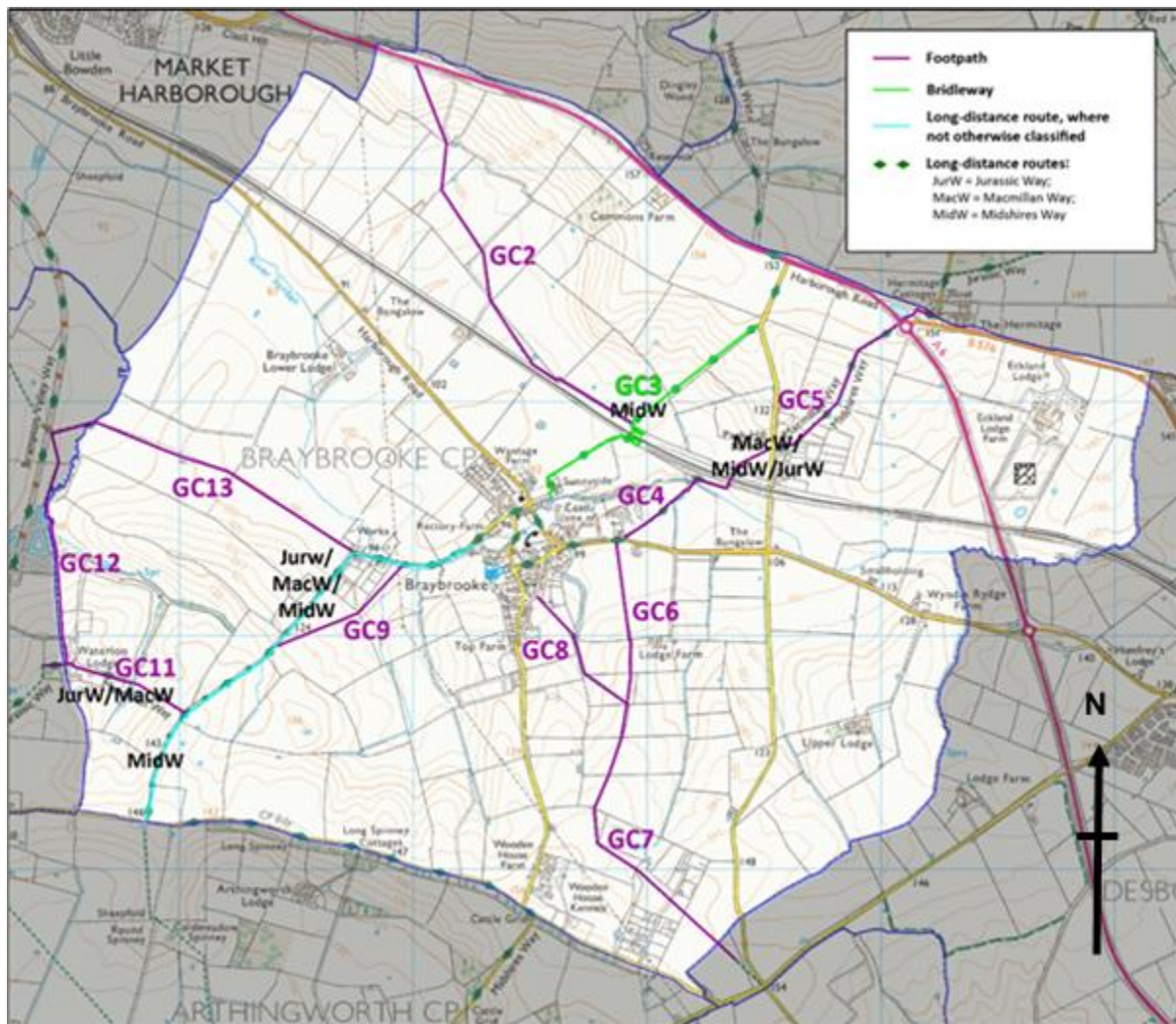
Footpaths and other walking routes

7.114. The network of footpaths and other rights of way in the Plan Area is not extensive compared with other parishes in North Northamptonshire. Walking routes everywhere tend to be survivors from around the time of the 18th century Enclosure of the farmed landscape, and from before the development of paved motor roads: so the reasons for their paucity in Braybrooke include the complex manorial and agricultural history of the area. However, with modern recognition of the value of walking routes for health and wellbeing, the lack is unfortunate and any erosion of the network's extent and character will be resisted.

POLICY ENV 10: FOOTPATHS AND OTHER WALKING ROUTES

Development proposals that result in the loss of or significant harm to the existing networks of footpaths identified in Figure 17 will not be supported without appropriate mitigation.

Figure 17: Footpaths and other walking routes



Dark Sky

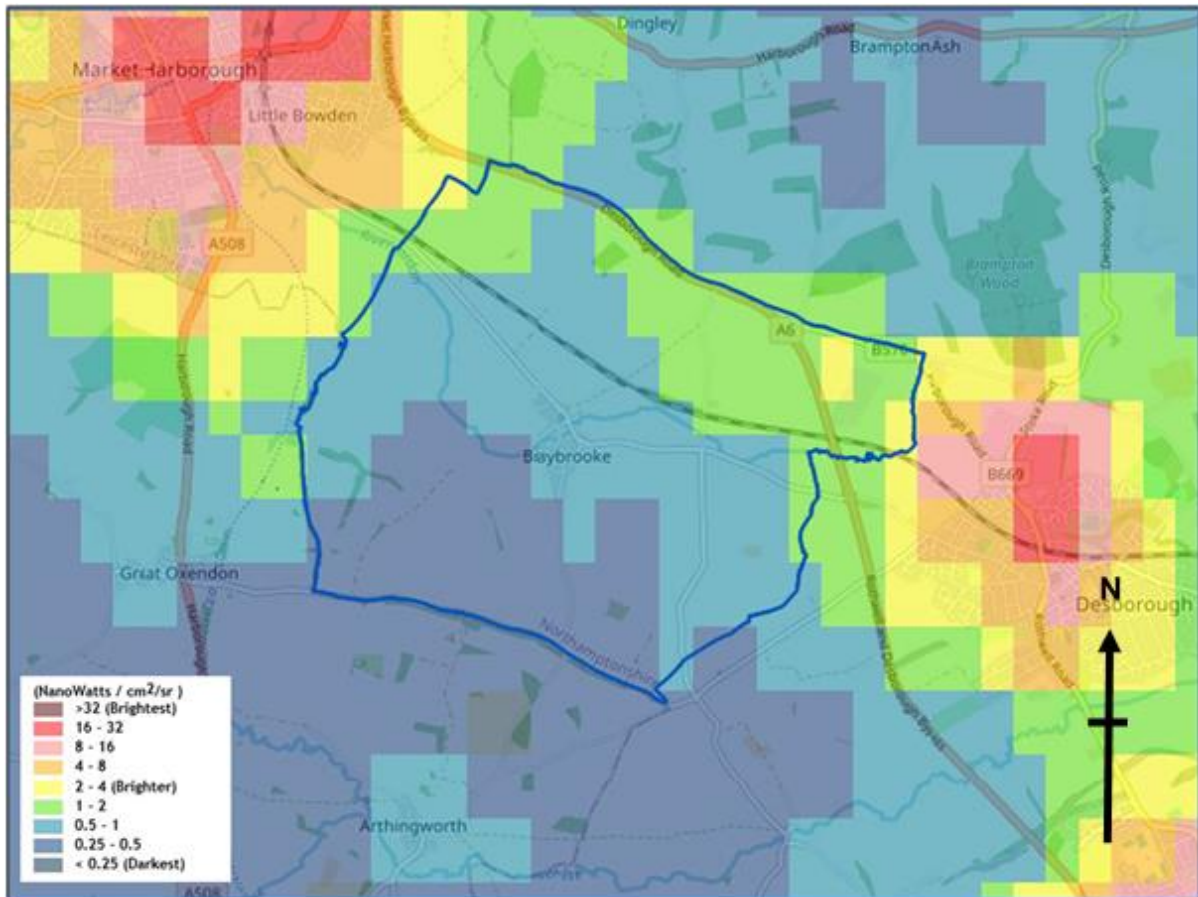
7.115. CPRE (previously the *Campaign to Protect Rural England*) has mapped areas of dark skies across the country. The Plan Area is demonstrably one of the relatively rare places in the East Midlands which fall in the lowest two categories of measured light pollution (Figure 18) and is also judged to be among the 'most tranquil'.

7.116. The closest locations to Braybrooke village with high light levels (over 2 $Nw/cm^2/sr$) are more than three kms away and partly hidden behind high ground, while the southern half of the village and Plan Area are in the darkest three (of nine) levels mapped by CPRE.

7.117. While this Neighbourhood Plan cannot influence development proposals outside the Plan Area, Braybrooke's present status as a dark sky location makes it susceptible to the adverse effects of uncontrolled artificial light within the Plan Area; this Policy aims to deal with this susceptibility. It has been guided by the DCLG and Dept. for Transport *Manual for Streets* (2007), the Institute of Lighting Professionals' *Guidance note 1 for the reduction of obtrusive light* (2020) and is in general conformity with NPPF paragraph 185(c) and North Northants Joint Core Strategy Policy 4 (iii).

7.118. Lighting schemes and times of use should also follow current best-practice for bats and other nocturnal wildlife, for example by applying the guidelines in Guidance note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK (Bat Conservation Trust / Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2018) or subsequent update.

Figure 18: Braybrooke in CPRE Dark Sky mapping
(data from <https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/>)



POLICY ENV 11: DARK SKY

In recognition of the Neighbourhood Area’s dark sky zoning status, development proposals for and/or incorporating external lighting should demonstrate that there would be no significant adverse effects individually or cumulatively on the character of the neighbourhood area, on the residential amenity of residents or on wildlife.

Lighting design, location, type, lux levels and times of use should follow current best-practice for bats.

Flood risk resilience and climate change

7.119. Even if international cooperation and national strategies and policies eventually succeed in halting the human and industrial contributions towards climate change, the

effects of recent and current warming on weather events will likely persist for decades. It is therefore desirable to plan for at least a medium-term future, in which weather events will continue to become more extreme, by putting in place measures that mitigate the challenge of climate change for the lifetime of this Plan and beyond. This objective is explicitly supported by the Environment Agency (EA) draft *National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England* (2019), in which the strategic emphasis for the EA shifts from mitigation to resilience; in other words from requiring new development to reduce its adverse effects on flood risk and to avoiding creating or adding to flood risk at all.

7.120. In light of this, it is particularly important that the location and technical standards of all new development proposals in the Plan Area should in future be judged on their likely contribution to flooding in a climate change world. To complement this objective, the community will support proposals to improve the infrastructure within the built-up areas for managing flooding from the river and from surface water run-off events, providing this is not unduly detrimental to the historic built environment, biodiversity sites, or open and green spaces.

7.121. The community will also support re-wilding of watercourses, by re-profiling, planting schemes or species reintroductions, when the objectives are biodiversity enhancement and flood event mitigation.

7.122. This Policy is in general conformity with North Northants JCS 2016 Policy 5 and The Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan Policy NEH1.

POLICY ENV 12: FLOOD RISK RESILIENCE

Development proposals within the areas susceptible to flooding (Figure 19) will be required to demonstrate, where appropriate, that any associated harm in relation to flooding or climate change and any conflict with local flood mitigation infrastructure are outweighed by the benefits of the development.

Proposals to construct new (or modify existing) floodwater management infrastructure (ditches, roadside gullies, retention pools, etc.), including within or close to the built-up area, will be supported, provided they do not adversely affect sites and features of natural or historical environment significance.

Proposals to re-profile and re-wild suitable sections of the River Jordan and its tributaries will be supported.

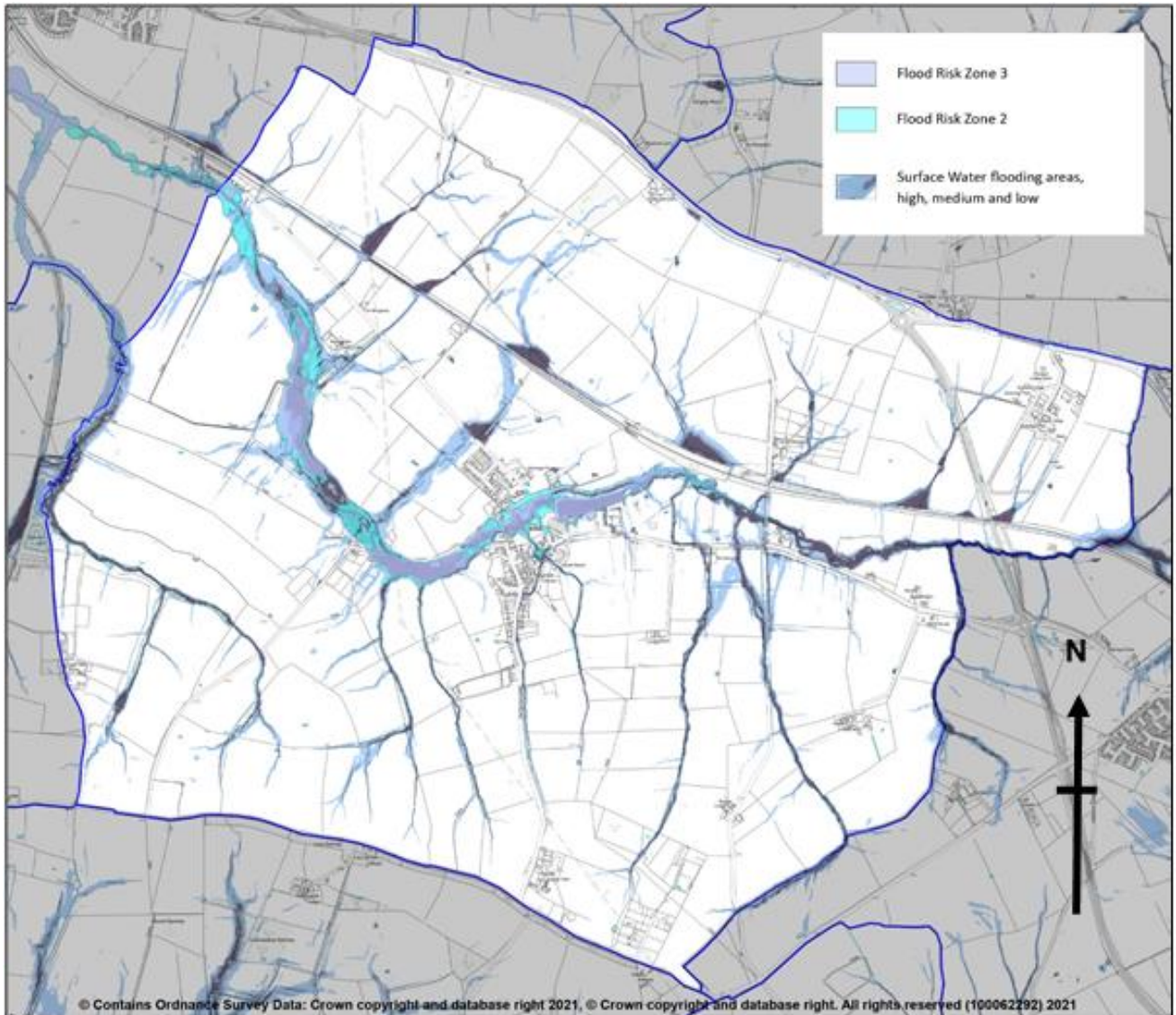
Development proposals of one or more dwellings and/or for employment or agricultural development should demonstrate in a proportionate way that:

- if in a location susceptible to flooding (Figure 19) from rivers or surface water, no alternative site to meet the local residential development need is available;
- its location and design respect the geology, flood risk and natural drainage characteristics of the immediate area and is accompanied by a hydrological study whose findings must be complied with in respect of design, groundworks and

construction;

- it includes a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that the proposed drainage scheme, and site layout and design, will prevent properties from flooding from surface water, including allowing for climate change effects, and that flood risk elsewhere will not be exacerbated by increased levels of surface water runoff and that the development will not threaten other natural habitats and water systems;
- its design includes, as appropriate, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) with ongoing maintenance provision, other surface water management measures and permeable surfaces;
- proposed SuDS infrastructure includes, where practicable, habitat creation comprising e.g., landscaping, access and egress for aquatic and terrestrial animals, and native species planting;
- it does not increase the risk of flooding to third parties; and
- it takes the effects of climate change into account.

Figure 19: Areas susceptible to flooding from watercourses and surface water
Based on Environment Agency mapping



Renewable energy generation infrastructure

7.123. The landscape of the Plan Area is dominated by three topographic areas, all open and with wide views: from north to south, these are the Braybrooke ridge, the Jordan Valley, and the Braybrooke escarpment and plateau (as shown in Figure 4). Their open aspect might make them practically suitable for wind generation, but the absence of woodland or topographic basins means there are no locations that are not in plain sight of most of the parish. Local opinion, as recorded in the Questionnaire conducted for this Plan, gives a majority (c.70%) who are concerned about the threat of renewable generation infrastructure in the Plan Area.

7.124. National Planning Policy Framework (2021) paragraphs 152-154 make it clear that all communities are responsible for reducing emissions as part of the necessary approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change. Residents of Braybrooke wish to play their part, but at a scale appropriate to the sensitive landscape of the Plan Area. The impact of wind generation projects on communities has been recognised by the government: a Ministerial statement made on the 18th June 2015, notes that suitable areas for wind energy development must be identified in local plans and that any such developments must have the support of local communities. Neither the North Northants Joint Core Strategy nor The Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan are currently supported by documentation quantifying the landscape sensitivity of the Braybrooke Plan Area to turbines or solar arrays. The following Policy is therefore in general conformity with North Northants JCS Policy 26, but takes its guidance on landscape sensitivity from the Northamptonshire *Landscape character strategy guidelines* 2009, and from the Natural England *National Character Area Profile* for LCA 89.

POLICY ENV 13: RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Proposals for small-scale, solar and/or wind generation infrastructure proposals instigated by local residents, businesses, and/or the community will be supported providing they comply with the provisions set out in NNJCS Policy 26 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy).

Medium and large-scale development proposals (for more than one turbine, and/or of tip height more than 10 m; solar arrays of more than 1 ha area) will not be supported.

Proposals for ground source heat pumps will be supported provided there is no adverse effect on biodiversity (habitats and species) or the historic environment.

Area of separation

7.125. Harborough Council has allocated an area for residential development (with partial planning consent and partially already built out) southeast of Little Bowden between Harborough Road, the railway, and the Braybrooke Plan Area boundary. This has caused concern in Braybrooke both because it is very visible on high ground north-west of the village, intruding on the rural landscape; and because of likely consequential traffic congestion on the roads into Market Harborough from Braybrooke. The 2020 survey did not

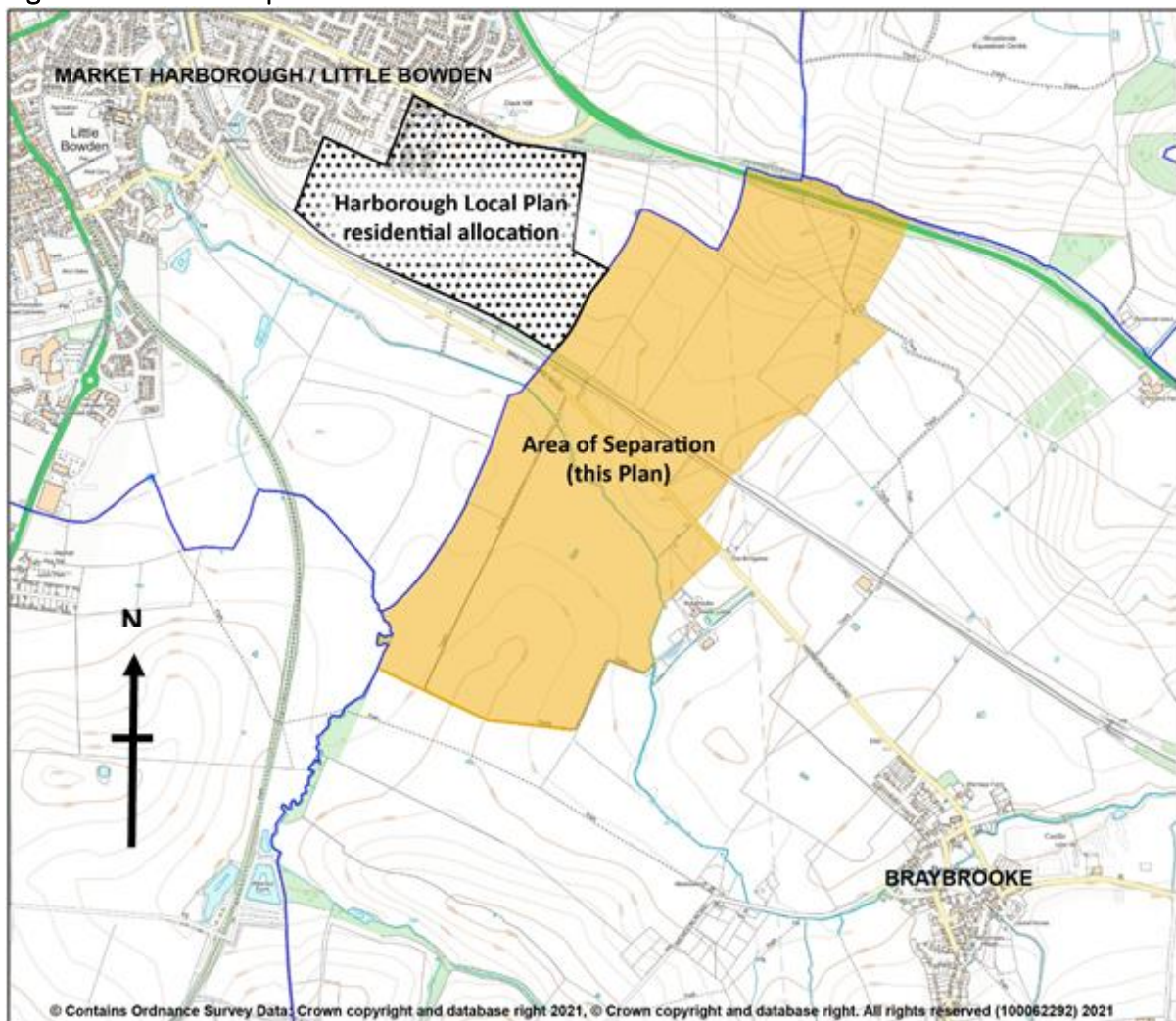
address this question. But when a draft policy on area of separation was introduced at the 2021 Open Event, 25 attendees voted for (none against) with one writing strongly in support. The principal landowner has also written in support.

7.126. Any new development in the area of Open Countryside (as defined by being outside the Braybrooke village Settlement Boundary) within the Braybrooke Plan Area but adjacent to the built-up area of Market Harborough (including the site allocated at Little Bowden and other land southeast of Harborough with future development potential) would encroach on a rural landscape and, by reducing the distance between the two settlements, compromise the principle supporting the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan Policy LOC1 for the separation and identity of settlements.

POLICY ENV 14: AREA OF SEPARATION

To retain the physical and visual separation between the expanding town of Market Harborough (including Little Bowden) and Braybrooke, the area indicated in Figure 20 is designated as an Area of Separation. Development proposals in this area should be only of types appropriate to Open Countryside.

Figure 20: Area of Separation



c. Community Sustainability

Community facilities, amenities and assets

Existing community facilities, amenities and assets

7.127. Community assets are premises and activities that make a significant contribution to the life of the Parish. They encourage social interaction, friendships, and learning, and also facilitate new opportunities. It is essential to the ongoing wellbeing of the community that Braybrooke retains and continues to build on these assets.

Village Hall

7.128. Originally the Victorian village school, including schoolmaster's residence. The present car park was the garden. It has been used as a village hall for many years and was substantially renovated in the early 2000s.

7.129. As a village hall it has always been owned and operated by an unincorporated charity whose trustees are appointed by village organisations and for whom the Parish Council is holding trustee.

7.130. The hall contains the Braybrooke Tapestries, which illustrate Braybrooke over the centuries, designed and created by local people.

7.131. It is fairly well used for community and private events. The toilets are used also to support events in the church, chapel, or adjacent paddocks. Parking is very limited.

All Saints Church

7.132. This grade II* building has parts dating back to the 13th century. The Griffin Chapel is dated 1520. The spire is a visual focal point of the village.

7.133. The building is expensive to maintain and with a declining congregation there are constant financial issues. However, the roof is currently under repair and there are plans to install a kitchen and toilets. With these additions, there is real potential for more community use.

Baptist Chapel

7.134. The beautiful small chapel was purpose built in 1829, replacing an outbuilding that in 1792 had been bought for the use of the Braybrooke Baptist community, converted as a meeting house, and then sold to a group of local trustees. It is now owned by the Baptist Union.

7.135. The building lacks toilets and a kitchen and is now used only for a few services each year. The chapel is of considerable historical significance to the Baptist movement. There has been a gradual decline in the size of the local Baptist community in recent years, but a strong

show of local support has secured the immediate future of the chapel and provided a positive basis for years to come.

The Swan public house

7.136. This is a 17th Century building (though the thatch is relatively recent). Now owned by Everard's Brewery and managed by a local resident, it is building a reputation as a dining venue.



7.137. Parking is inadequate for a pub attracting clientele from outside the village.

Millennium monument



7.138. The monument, designed and sculpted by Geoff Tiney and built by his son Gyles, sits on the village green.

7.139. The Green itself is small and owned by Highways as part of the public highway but is maintained by parishioners. It once featured a bus shelter (burnt down). A nearby telephone box was removed by vandals.

Castle site

7.140. A scheduled monument covering a large area east of Braybrooke including well preserved earthworks of the medieval settlement (north of the river) and of the moated manor including extensive fishponds and associated water management system (south of the river). A ruin at the site of the manor itself is the remains of a farm building.

7.141. Most of the area is used for livestock grazing. However, part of the site is used under licence by the Braybrooke Cricket Club, which has erected a pavilion there.

Children's play area

7.142. Created as part of the redevelopment of the primary school site (now Mapletoft Close), this small, fenced play area with swings, climbing frame etc. is still under the control of the developers and waiting for North Northamptonshire Council to take over its management. The delay is partly due to work needed on the trees.

Footpaths, bridleways, and single-track roads

7.143. In the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, 99% of respondents stated that they value the rural location of Braybrooke and access to the countryside whilst 94% said that the footpaths and bridleways of the parish are important.

7.144. Three major long-distance footpaths run through the village (Jurassic Way, Midshires Way and Macmillan Way) and these, with other rights of way and single-track roads are well used for recreation and exercise by ramblers, dog-walkers, joggers, cyclists, and horse riders.

7.145. Increasing traffic on the single-track roads has made recreational use less relaxing. There are few designated passing places, and disregard of those that are there is damaging the verges. In places, surface water has eroded the verges to create dangerous gulleys.

7.146. Fly tipping and littering are such a problem that an important recreation of many villagers is litter picking. But the local authority is efficient in clearing up fly tipping when it is reported.

7.147. There may be potential to make the footpaths and roads link up into more circular walks with landowner permission.

Village organisations and clubs

7.148. There is a range of village organisations, which help to bring the community together. These include: WI, Braybrooke Singers, Braybrooke Morris Men, Braybrooke Cricket Club, Table Tennis, Fete and Bazaar committees, BEER (social events and entertainments), plus a number of small groups covering knitting, books, keep fit/pilates etc.

Village communications

7.149. The parish has a range of communication methods: there are village hall notice boards; 'The Braybrooke Gossip' is a bimonthly printed newsletter delivered to each house in the extended parish; there are village and parish council websites; there is an "e-communications" email circulation and parish council email circulars. The Annual Parish Meeting is an opportunity to discuss community issues.

POLICY CF1: RETENTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES, AMENITIES AND ASSETS

Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility, including the village hall, All Saints Church, the Baptist Chapel, the Swan pub, the Millennium Monument, the castle site and the children's play area will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a) There is no longer any need or demand for the existing community facility; or
- b) The existing community facility is not demonstrably economically viable or able to be supported by the community – such viability and support includes fundraising and volunteering by parishioners and others; or
- c) The proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish which complies with the other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

COMMUNITY ACTION CF1:

The Parish Council will consider nominating the Swan public house as an Asset of Community Value (Localism Act 2011 Part 5 Chapter 3).

New or Improved Community Facilities and Amenities

7.150. The Parish encourages the provision of new and improved facilities. For example, a community recreational space, space for public parking, space for pop up shops or services, a bed and breakfast facility to encourage long distance walkers.

POLICY CF2: NEW OR IMPROVED COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, will be supported provided that the development:

- a) will not result in disturbance to residential properties including negative impacts as a result of changes in traffic flow, and,
- b) will not generate an additional need for on-street parking, and
- c) is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the village wishing to walk or cycle, and
- d) takes into full account the needs of people with disabilities.

Communications

7.151. The forms of communication currently being used by the parish can be divided into three categories: Electronic, Print and Face to Face. What could be the most all-encompassing and influential communication medium for the parish, the village website, distinct from the parish council website, is currently an underutilised means of communication.

7.152. The Braybrooke Gossip is a bi-monthly pamphlet delivered to all residents. It is a valued way for villagers to learn about issues, services, news, and events. However, the contents of The Gossip are not linked with the website, to ensure consistency of message and historical record. Similarly, issues and information communicated via social media channels, and via 'Fiona's regular circular email', could be more centrally recorded and made available for future access.

Communication objectives for the village

7.153. Ideally through a Communication Working Party the village website could be further developed, managed, and coordinated to consolidate village communication and help develop new initiatives, e.g., engagement with local businesses. It would serve as the central point for information collection, collaboration and dissemination as well as hosting the most complete and timely set of information for all prospective audiences.

Broadband and mobile infrastructure

7.154. The provision of broadband and access to the Internet is essential to all of us – not merely as a driver for business and innovation, but increasingly so in our personal lives. The 2020/2021 covid pandemic has accelerated existing trends for remote working, video communication, cloud document storage and editing, and social networks; many of which were initially thought to be exclusively business applications.

7.155. All of these depend on a reliable, high-speed connection, which in turn depends on a high-quality broadband and mobile communications infrastructure. For these reasons, the parish wishes to be at the forefront of any future communications technology enhancements.

7.156. The Braybrooke community has access to ‘fibre to the premises’ broadband, provided by Gigaclear, a business that uses commercial investment with the government-subsidised Broadband Delivery UK programme to build fibre communications networks in rural areas. This provides every household in the community with the option of ‘ultra-fast’ broadband (considerably faster than ‘fibre to the cabinet’ broadband, which is the offering provided to most households in the country) and makes the Parish a desirable location for anyone working remotely or flexibly. However, since Gigaclear built – and therefore owns – the fibre network, it is the sole supplier of superfast broadband to the Parish, and the cost of a Gigaclear package is an issue for some parishioners.

7.157. Obtaining a good mobile telephone signal is an issue within the Parish. While most mobile network operators now provide Wi-Fi-supported telephony and messaging (which allows you to make and receive calls and messages via Wi-Fi if you have no mobile network), this is limited to the home, or any businesses that offer access to a public Wi-Fi network.

POLICY PC1: BROADBAND AND MOBILE INFRASTRUCTURE

Proposals to provide improved access to faster broadband for businesses and households in Braybrooke Parish will be supported; this includes suitable connectivity for future generations of mobile technology.

Improvements to the mobile telecommunication network that serves businesses and households within the Parish will be supported. If a new mast is installed, this should be shared, where possible, by more than one provider.

Any infrastructure improvements requiring above ground network installations, must be sympathetically located, designed to integrate into the local area, and not be visually intrusive in open landscapes.

COMMUNITY ACTION PC1:

The Parish Council will facilitate and support discussions to improve information flow in the community

Transport and Road Safety

7.158. Transport and traffic are major issues in the parish. The roads around Braybrooke are narrow with some sharp bends and blind summits. They inevitably form a prominent feature in and around the village and are as important to the attractive character of the village as to its vital transport links. This balance is, however, fragile, and nearby development, at Clack Hill in Market Harborough, and new developments around Desborough, Rothwell and Kettering are increasing traffic through the parish.

7.159. Historically there have been concerns as to the number and weight of vehicles travelling over the bridge over the River Jordan on the Desborough Road, and along Griffin Road. The parapets of the bridge, and adjacent signs, are regularly damaged by large vehicles – especially combine harvesters. Now, all junctions to Braybrooke from the A6 are signed as “Unsuitable for HGVs”.

7.160. Away from the main thoroughfares, there are numerous sections of highway that do not have footpaths; in other areas, some exist but not to a modern standard.

7.161. Parking is inadequate for the Swan pub when at its busiest, with clientele from outside the village.

7.162. There are no cycle paths or designated cycle lanes within the parish boundary and few cycle ways exist within safe and easy reach of the village. Safer pedestrian and cycle ways are needed.

7.163. Future development should not result in increased traffic through the village. All future development should provide adequate access by major roads and discourage the use of unsuitable routes via country roads. Any additional traffic control measures should be sympathetic to the village character.

7.164. Braybrooke is fortunate to be intersected by several historic rights of way, footpaths, and bridleways, which are generally well maintained and clearly signed. These afford excellent views of the village and surrounding countryside, as well as providing a valuable recreational facility.

Speeding

7.165. Speeding is an issue for the parish. In the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, 83% of respondents expressed concern about speeding traffic. There are regular reports of speeding on the Desborough to Harborough Road. The Parish Council has frequently asked for traffic calming measures, but these are limited by policy and cost. Particular problems are at the Park Hill cross-roads where three car crashes in successive weekends led to improved warning signage; at the village entrance on the Desborough Road where a blind bend with no verges is part of the long-distance footpaths; at the Church corner where cars cut the corner at a blind junction; on Griffin Road which has a blind bend near the top; and on Harborough Road where within the village on-road parking has been encouraged to slow the traffic.

Parking

7.166. Parking is a problem throughout the village but particularly in School Lane and Griffin Road. Parking problems in Griffin Road were first reported in Parish Council minutes in the 1970s. Now, cars visiting the pub or hall regularly park close to the narrow blind corner at the Village Hall, and on the pavement on Griffin Road where they block the pavements to pedestrians. Cars are parked on the pavement in Mapletoft Close even though, as a new development, it should have had adequate parking. The village has however always opposed double yellow lines, which it is thought would spoil the appearance of the village.

Public transport

7.167. There is an hourly bus service through the village (not evenings or Sundays). This is unusual for a village of this size and much prized, though it had to be fought for.

POLICY T1: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

With particular regard to the rural highway network of the parish and the need to minimise any increase in vehicular traffic, all new housing and commercial development must:

- a) Be designed to minimize additional traffic generation and movement through the village and on single-track roads;
- b) Not remove or compromise the use of any existing off-road parking areas unless a suitable equivalent alternative is provided;
- c) Provide any necessary improvements to site access, communal parking and the highway network; and
- d) Provide for traffic calming measures as appropriate.

To avoid additional on-street parking and to ensure provision is made for cycle storage, development proposals will be assessed against Northamptonshire Parking Standards (2016)

Cycling and walking

7.168. There is a strong desire to promote and support walking and cycling in the parish, to reduce the number of vehicular journeys and to promote good health.

7.169. Pavements tend not to be maintained as well as the roads, so in many places they are broken or uneven, and unsuitable to wheelchairs and prams. The Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan suggests the extension of pavement to the full length of Griffin Road, but this may be contrary to the rural feel of the village, and it seems more important to maintain the existing pavements in a usable condition.

7.170. Harborough Road, outside the village centre, has no footpath, several blind summits, and is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. Market Harborough is at a good distance for walking, cycling, or running. In the interests of safety, a pavement or cycle path should be

provided along the Harborough Road to link with the pavement on the other side of the county boundary - this would also provide a means of connecting a local business, the micro-brewery at Lower Lodge Farm, with the village. Also, a cycle path should be created across the fields from Newland Street to join the Brampton Valley Way, giving a safe and healthy way to travel into Market Harborough.

7.171. There is also no pavement or footpath on the Desborough Road. This is dangerous for the many joggers and runners who use that road to complete a circuit, and especially at the blind bend at the entrance to the village, which is on the route of the long-distance paths. Beyond the village, at least as far as Park Hill, the verges are wide and could easily accommodate a path.

POLICY T2: CYCLING AND WALKING

Where appropriate, contributions shall be sought to enhance footpath/cycleway connectivity to increase opportunities for active travel to community facilities and destinations.

Electric Vehicles

7.172. 6% of all vehicles owned by respondents of the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire are electric.

7.173. The UK government has recently announced its intention to ban sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 to combat rising levels of air pollution and address climate change concerns. Vehicle manufacturers are quickly shifting their production to meet this target. The implication is that the number of electric vehicles on the road will certainly increase rapidly during the lifetime of this Plan.

7.174. This raises the question of battery recharging. Residential charging is a current norm. It is important to include requirements for home charging in all new developments within the parish.

7.175. However, residential charging is only possible where off-road parking is available. It does not help residents of houses without on-site parking in Braybrooke.

7.176. The number of commercial/communal rapid charging facilities is growing across the country making use of 3-phase supply, which is not usually available at the domestic level, and reducing the 7KW re-charge time by a factor of 3. Such charging points could be beneficial in Braybrooke Parish.

POLICY T3: ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Where possible, residential development of one dwelling or more or an extension involving an increased number of bedrooms should provide fit for purpose cabling, to the most practical point in the home to facilitate subsequent installation of a home electric vehicle charging point.

The provision of communal high speed vehicular charging points within the parish will be encouraged so long as there is universal access and they do not impact negatively on the availability of existing parking within the parish.

COMMUNITY ACTION T1: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The Parish Council will:

- a) Identify and support any opportunity to improve public parking facilities, encourage considerate parking, and consider whether formal parking restrictions are needed in the interests of safety.
- b) Work with other authorities to improve road safety in the Parish, focusing on the identified danger points by means, for example, of traffic calming measures, speed limits, improved signage, passing places on single track roads, improved and better maintained pavements.
- c) Pursue with North Northamptonshire Highways and landowners the maintenance of Rights of Way (including the part the Parish council and local community can contribute to this), and the provision and maintenance of permissive cycle and footpaths for safe travel and recreation.

Business and Employment

7.177. Up until the 18th century, Braybrooke was a predominantly agricultural village. By the late 18th century, the main industries were weaving and rush, with the militia list of 1777 additionally listing a butcher, a miller, a blacksmith, and a wheelwright.

7.178. The turn of the 19th century saw a diversification of occupations within the village. Occupations at this time included a grazier, shoemaker, and baker, and by the end of the century the census recorded a publican, railway signalman and a schoolmistress.

7.179. Improvement in transport links during the 19th century meant residents could rely on facilities provided in the nearest large communities, and specialist occupations no longer needed to be provided locally. So the main occupation within the parish reverted to farming.

7.180. The development of farm machinery in the 20th century meant farming no longer provided mass employment. Combined with the extension into the countryside of utilities like electricity, mains water and sewerage, and telephony, rural villages became attractive places to live, and housing quality improved. Now, with superfast broadband, they are also attractive as places of work.

Support for Existing Business

7.181. Good employment opportunities in the parish and the strength of the community go hand in hand. Supporting the growth of employment opportunities in the parish is therefore recognised as an important theme of the Neighbourhood Plan.

7.182. While Braybrooke is essentially a rural parish, it is home to a number of diverse businesses. Eckland Lodge Business Park – originally a farm diversification project – provides high quality office and industrial buildings and is home to the largest concentration of employers within the parish. In addition, Eckland Lodge, its farming estate and attached building company are family owned and employ a number of local residents.

7.183. Other principal employers in the parish include Braybrooke Brewery – started in 2017 on the family-owned farm, but already known and distributed throughout the country; Brookside Care Home; the Swan pub; Wooden House Kennels; and the Plant Man Nursery. The remaining businesses are largely home-based and include cake design, vehicle repairs, IT support and a nail specialist.

7.184. The parish is also close to several significant employment centres. It is less than three miles to Desborough and Market Harborough, and Kettering and Corby are close by. The high-speed rail service from Market Harborough to London also allows a number of residents to commute to London.

7.185. It is felt that more could be done to help promote a more cohesive local business community. Ideas include enhancing communication, information sharing and networking, as well as providing a directory of locally available services. This would be especially helpful to newcomers to the village and help both local businesses and those in the neighbouring area. This could also facilitate job opportunities, work experience and training opportunities for parishioners.

POLICY BE1: SUPPORT FOR EXISTING BUSINESSES & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land that provides employment or future potential employment opportunities. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that:

- a) The commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and
- b) The commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign to secure alternative business use lasting for a continuous period of at least 6 months.

Support for Growing and New Businesses and Employment

7.186. New employment initiatives can help to boost and diversify the local economy, thus providing more local employment opportunities.

7.187. However, parishioners have been clear that any new employment initiatives should be sensitive to the character of the parish, with a preference toward small businesses that benefit and employ local people.

7.188. Employment proposals should only be approved if they avoid harmful impacts on other matters agreed to be locally important such as increased traffic flows, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment. The impact of HGV traffic has already been noted under the heading of Transport and Road Safety. Large vehicles regularly damage the parapets of the narrow Jordan bridge. Traffic diverted when nearby trunk roads were repaired has caused extensive damage to the verges of narrow roads. While agricultural vehicles are an inevitable feature of a rural environment, any new business that attracts the movement of heavy vehicles is likely to have a harmful impact.

7.189. There is a particular desire for a small shop, café, or bakery. During the 2020/2021 covid pandemic, a pop-up greengrocer and fishmongers van have been well received and supported.

POLICY BE2: SUPPORT FOR GROWING AND NEW BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYMENT

New employment opportunities (including in Eckland Lodge Business Park) will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) The scale and nature of the proposals would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of adjoining activities;
- b) The proposal does not generate unacceptable levels of traffic movement on the local road network, particularly in respect of HGV traffic;
- c) Appropriate landscaping is built into the proposal, as necessary, to protect landscape character and to reinforce a sense of place and local distinctiveness;
- d) Where possible, development should be sited in existing buildings or on areas of previously developed land; and
- e) It does not generally involve the loss of dwellings.

Home Working

7.190. An already and increasing trend towards home working has been accelerated by the 2020/2021 covid pandemic, and with changing national employment patterns, this is likely to continue. Many parishioners work remotely – either entirely or for part of the working week

– and this means that the parish is a place where more of its population spends a lot of its time. This opens up the potential for new, related opportunities – for joint working, business hubs and support groups – potentially using the Village Hall, and promoted via the village website.

7.191. Home-working activity in the village includes software development, sales consulting, and various other types of consultancy.

7.192. It is recognised that people may not have a suitable space within their home from which to run a business, or they may wish to distinctly and deliberately separate their work and living spaces. The construction of extensions, the conversion of outbuildings, and the development of new freestanding buildings in gardens from which businesses can operate will be supported. This is intended to maximise the opportunities for entrepreneurial activity and employment in the parish.

7.193. Whilst it is acknowledged that it may not always be possible, there is also a strong desire for new housing to contain a small office space to accommodate home working.

7.194. Policy BE3 would apply where a material change of use occurs, such that planning permission is required. It reflects positive support for entrepreneurial activity.

POLICY BE3: HOME WORKING

Where a planning permission is required, proposals for the use of part of a dwelling for office and/or light industrial uses, and for small-scale free-standing buildings within its curtilage, extensions to the dwelling or conversion of outbuildings for those uses, will be supported where:

- a) Such development will not result in traffic movements that cause nuisance and parking provision will be made in accordance with the Northamptonshire Parking Standards (2016); and
- b) No significant and adverse impact arises to nearby residents or other sensitive land uses from noise, fumes, light pollution, or other nuisance associated with the work activity; and
- c) Any extension or free-standing building shall be designed to reflect local character and should not detract from the quality and character of the building to which they must be subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction.

COMMUNITY ACTION BE1: SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESS AND HOME-WORKERS

The Parish Council will facilitate the creation of a mutual support network for local businesses and home workers to enable information sharing, mutual service provision, employment and training opportunities.

Farm diversification

7.195. The agricultural land around the village provides access to the countryside and enhances the environment. Braybrooke still has more than a dozen active farms, but few parishioners outside of the land and farm owners are now employed in agriculture.

7.196. Farming has changed over the years, driven by economics, advances in knowledge and climate change. It will continue to evolve with new crops, technology, and processes. Farmers have diversified in the crops that they grow and in methods of farming. The proposed Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS), with a system of farming subsidies replacing those of the Common Agricultural Policy, will present financial challenges but offer opportunities for initiatives that benefit the environment and community.

7.197. Farmers have also diversified more broadly into different industries such as property, tourism, and storage. Other villages have seen the successful development of Farm Shops (e.g. Great Oxendon and Ashley) and this might be a possible option for one of the farms in the parish, subject to the provision of appropriate parking.

POLICY BE4: FARM DIVERSIFICATION

In order to support farm diversification and the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses, the conversion of existing agricultural and commercial buildings will be supported subject to:

- a) The use proposed is appropriate to the rural location;
- b) The conversion/adaptation works respect the local character of the surrounding area;
- c) The development will not have an adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;
- d) Proposals not generating unacceptable levels of traffic movement on the local road network and parking provision will be made in accordance with the Northamptonshire Parking Standards (2016); and
- e) There is no significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light or other pollution, increased traffic levels or increased flood risk.

COMMUNITY ACTION BE2: FARMING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Parish Council will facilitate a forum for local farmers to work with the community on projects that would benefit the environment or community and therefore attract subsidy under the ELMS grant.

Tourism

7.198. Braybrooke is an attractive rural parish, appealing to walkers, cyclists and other visitors. The Parish is keen to extend a welcome to visitors whilst ensuring that their visit does not have a negative impact on parishioners - for example, in the context of traffic and parking.

7.199. Local tourism attractions include: the 13th century All Saints Church, the site of Braybrooke Castle, the Jurassic Way footpath, the Mid-Shires Way, The Macmillan Way and the Swan pub. Circular walks can be found on the Ordnance Survey Map App and could be made more accessible via an enhanced village website.

7.200. The offer to visitors should be enhanced over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan through the development of activities, places to eat and stay, alongside additional infrastructure such as signage, seating, parking, and other amenities to welcome visitors. This, in turn would facilitate further business and employment opportunities.

POLICY BE5: TOURISM

Proposals for new facilities to enhance tourism will be supported where they:

- a) are within Braybrooke parish, on a scale appropriate to the settlement;
- b) do not have a detrimental effect on the distinctive rural character of the parish;
- c) do not adversely affect the surrounding infrastructure, particularly local road networks;
- d) benefit the local community through the provision of local employment opportunities or improvements to local service provision, and are proportionate to the size of the settlement;
- e) where feasible, involve the re-use of existing buildings or are part of farm diversification, and
- f) provide adequate supporting facilities such as parking, disability access and w.c. facilities.

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period up to 2031. During this time, it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change.

8.2. The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. This will be led by Braybrooke Parish Council on at least an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.

8.3. The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan in 2025 or to coincide with the review of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy if this cycle is different.