

Barton Mills Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2041

Pre-Submission Draft Plan

AUGUST 2025

Barton Mills Parish Council

Neighbourhood planning in a nutshell

The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans, which establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood. These Plans, when properly “made” become part of the legal planning framework for the designated area.

A neighbourhood plan is, therefore, a community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It concentrates on the use and development of land and can contain planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, and the allocation of sites for specific kinds of development.

Parish councils are encouraged to produce their own neighbourhood plans, enabling local people to have a say as to how their neighbourhood grows and develops. In a designated neighbourhood area, which contains all or part of the administrative area of a parish council, that council is responsible for the preparation of the Plan. Neighbourhood plans cannot contradict the main government planning policies or the strategic policies in the Local Plan for the area. For example, they cannot propose less development than is planned for in the adopted Local Plan.

Before a neighbourhood plan can be brought into force it needs to complete the following stages:

1 “Pre-submission” consultation on draft Plan by Parish Council

This is the stage we’ve now reached, allowing residents, businesses, landowners and a range of government bodies and service providers a first opportunity to comment on the Draft Plan.

2 Submission of draft Plan to West Suffolk Council

All comments received at the “pre-submission” consultation will be considered and reviewed and any necessary amendments to the Plan made. The Plan, together with supporting documents, will then be submitted to West Suffolk Council.

3 “Submission” consultation on draft Plan by West Suffolk Council

West Suffolk Council will carry out a further consultation on the submitted Draft Plan.

4 Independent examination of draft Plan

The Plan will be assessed to make sure that it conforms with national and district level planning policies and regulations.

5 Parish Referendum

Run in the same way as a local election and organised by West Suffolk Council. A simple majority of those that vote is required in order that the Plan can go forward to adoption

6 Adoption by West Suffolk Council

Subject to the outcome of the Referendum and taking place as soon as possible afterwards.

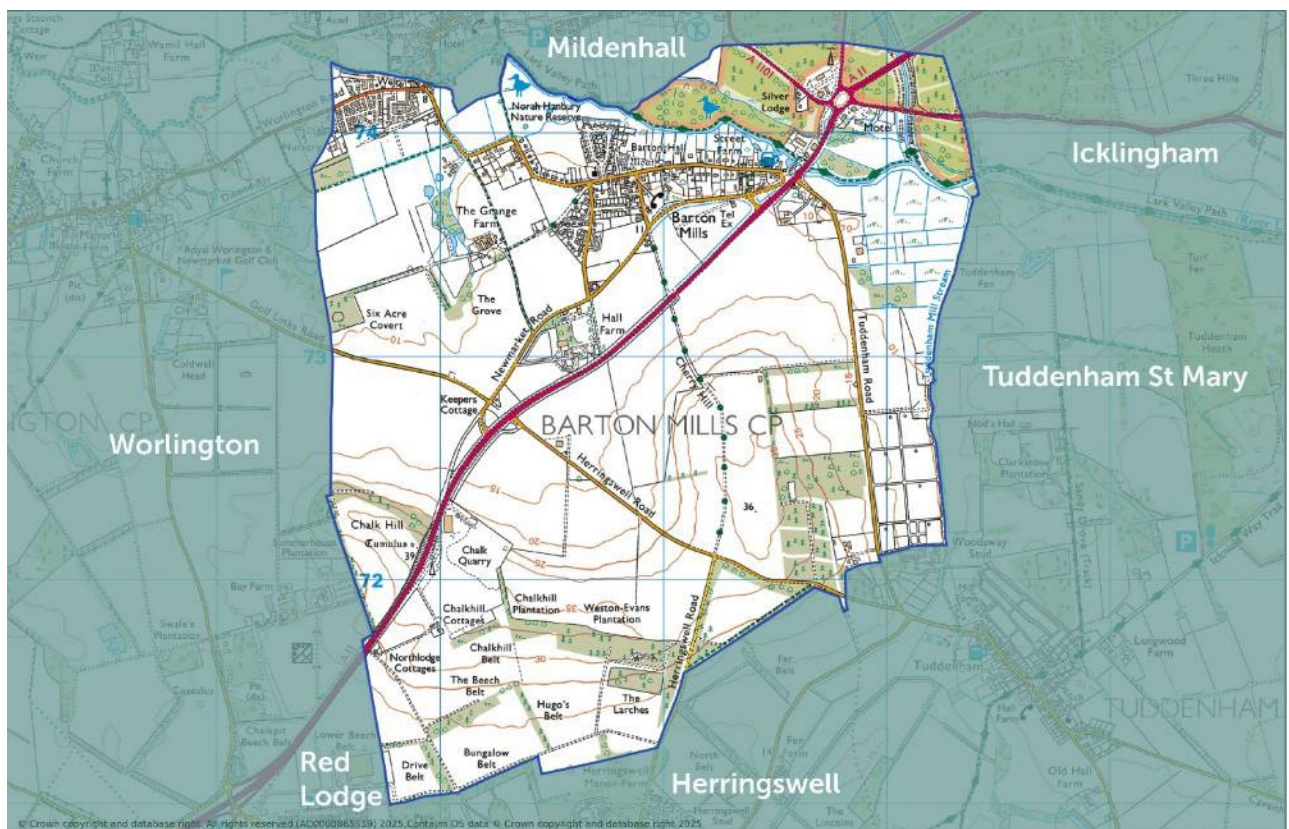
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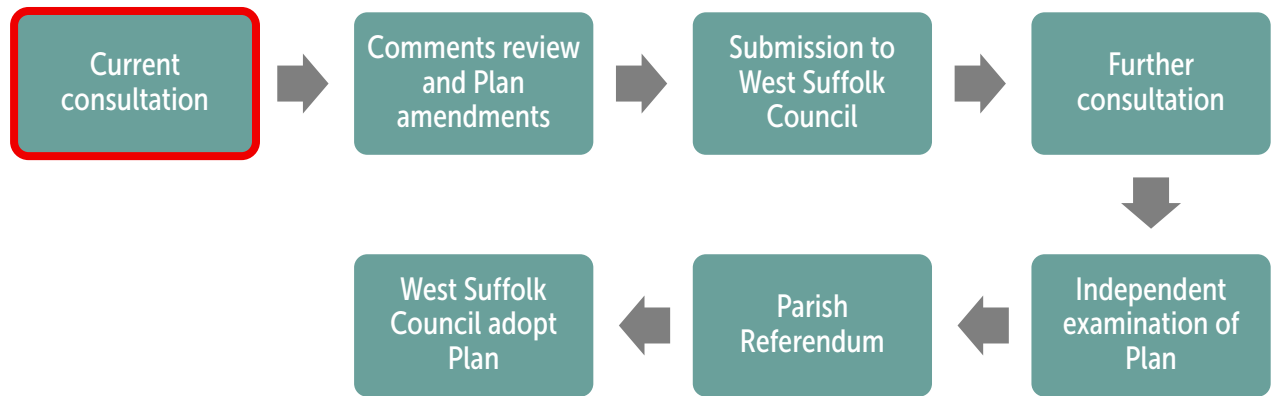
1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led planning framework for guiding future development, regeneration and conservation of a designated area. It contains planning policies along with proposals for improving that area. When complete, the Plan will be used by West Suffolk Council and Government Planning Inspectors to inform planning application decisions. The Localism Act 2011 introduced rights and powers to allow local communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans. In very simple terms, a neighbourhood plan is:
- A document that sets out planning policies for the neighbourhood area - planning policies are used when local authorities decide planning applications.
 - Written by the local community, the people who know and love the area, rather than the Local Planning Authority.
 - A powerful tool to ensure the community gets the right types of development, in the right place, something that can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood.
- 1.2 An application was made to West Suffolk Council to designate the whole of the Barton Mills Parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area, under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). On 4 March 2022, West Suffolk Council formally designated the area as shown on Map 1. The Plan period is 2025 to 2041.



Map 1 – Barton Mills Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.3 This is the “Pre-Submission” draft Neighbourhood Plan and provides the first opportunity to comment on the complete draft Neighbourhood Plan. Once the consultation is complete, the Plan will pass through the remaining stages, as illustrated on the diagram on the next page and explained in the text:



“Pre-submission” consultation on draft Plan by Parish Council

- 1.4 This version of the Neighbourhood Plan is when all the evidence and draft policies have been pulled together into one place and this is referred to as the Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan. It is the subject of public consultation for six weeks between 28 August and 17 October 2025.
- 1.5 Following the consultation, comments received will be reviewed and the Plan amended and updated as appropriate.

Submission of draft Plan to West Suffolk District Council

- 1.6 The updated Plan together with supporting documents will then be submitted to West Suffolk Council, who then carry out the following stages:
- “Submission” consultation – minimum 6 weeks
 - Independent examination of draft Plan
 - Parish Referendum
 - If Referendum returns a majority “yes” vote, the Plan is then ‘made’ (adopted) by West Suffolk District Council
- 1.7 The Neighbourhood Plan will, when complete, form part of the statutory “development plan” for West Suffolk, meaning that its planning policies and content will be taken into account when decisions on planning applications are made.
- 1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require a neighbourhood plan to:
- be appropriate, having regard to National Planning Policy;
 - contribute to achieving sustainable development;
 - be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area; and
 - be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.

How the Plan has been prepared

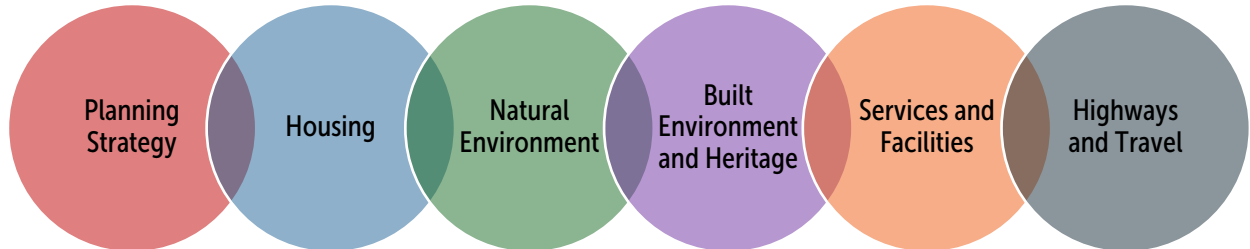
- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government’s Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and, in particular, has involved local community engagement to gather evidence for the content of the Plan.

Residents' Survey

- 1.10 A Household Survey for the village was carried out and a total of 172 responses were received. The results of the survey are available to view on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council's website. Over 50% of those that responded had been residents of Barton Mills for over 16 years. The village atmosphere and access to the countryside were the two key reasons people most liked about living in Barton Mills.

Plan content

- 1.11 The Plan covers six main topic areas:



- 1.12 Each theme has its own chapter in the Plan. Each chapter includes the relevant Plan objectives, links to the relevant planning policy context and a summary of the relevant evidence collected during the preparation of the Plan, culminating in a neighbourhood planning policy or policies which are distinctly identified in coloured boxes with a prefix of BM.
- 1.13 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to have regard to the content of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of Local Plan. The planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan supplement, rather than repeat, adopted planning policies.



2. About Barton Mills

- 2.1 Barton Mills is a small village and civil parish located in West Suffolk. It is set on the River Lark, which is a huge contributor to the character of the landscape of the area. Nearby settlements include Bury St Edmunds and Newmarket, however the town of Mildenhall directly borders the neighbourhood area to the north and its facilities serve the community of Barton Mills.
- 2.2 In recent years there have been two large residential developments on Worlington Road, on the northern edge of the Parish.
- 2.3 The A11 trunk road has a major impact on the Parish, running through the middle of the parish and includes the Fiveways interchange that frequently results in long queues on the northbound carriageway. To the north of this lies Thetford Forest Park. The A11 is a major road linking the area with Thetford to the northeast and Cambridge to the southwest. Other nearby key routes include the A14 and the A1065. The nearest railway station is at Kennett.
- 2.4 The majority of the village is designated as a Conservation Area and there are a number of listed buildings, including St Mary's Church in The Street. Parts of the Parish are within the Breckland Special Protection Area, a habitat of European significance originally designated in 2006.
- 2.5 The 2021 Census reveals a population of 1294, compared to 888 in 2001. Figure 1 illustrates the changes over that time by age group.

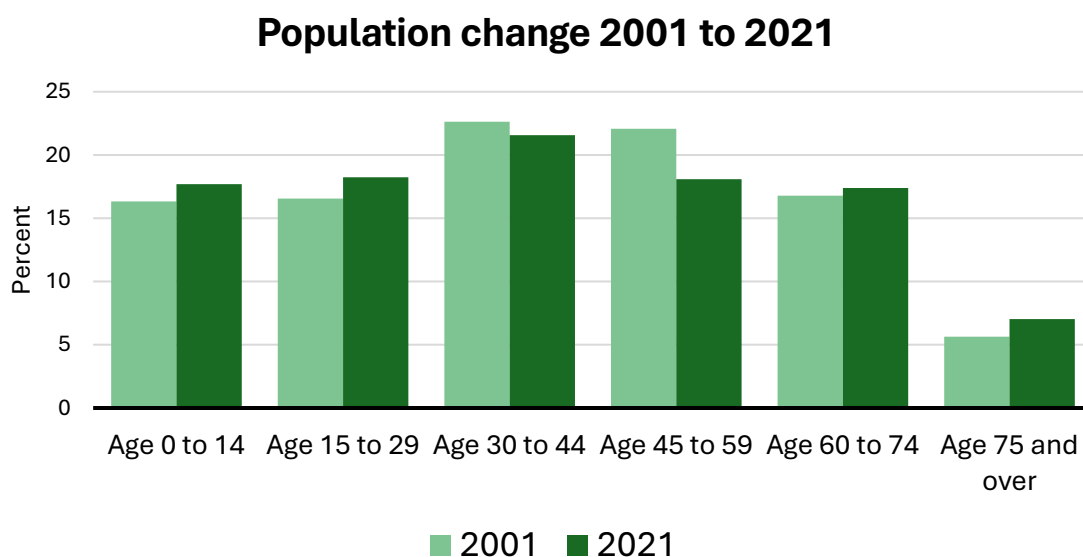
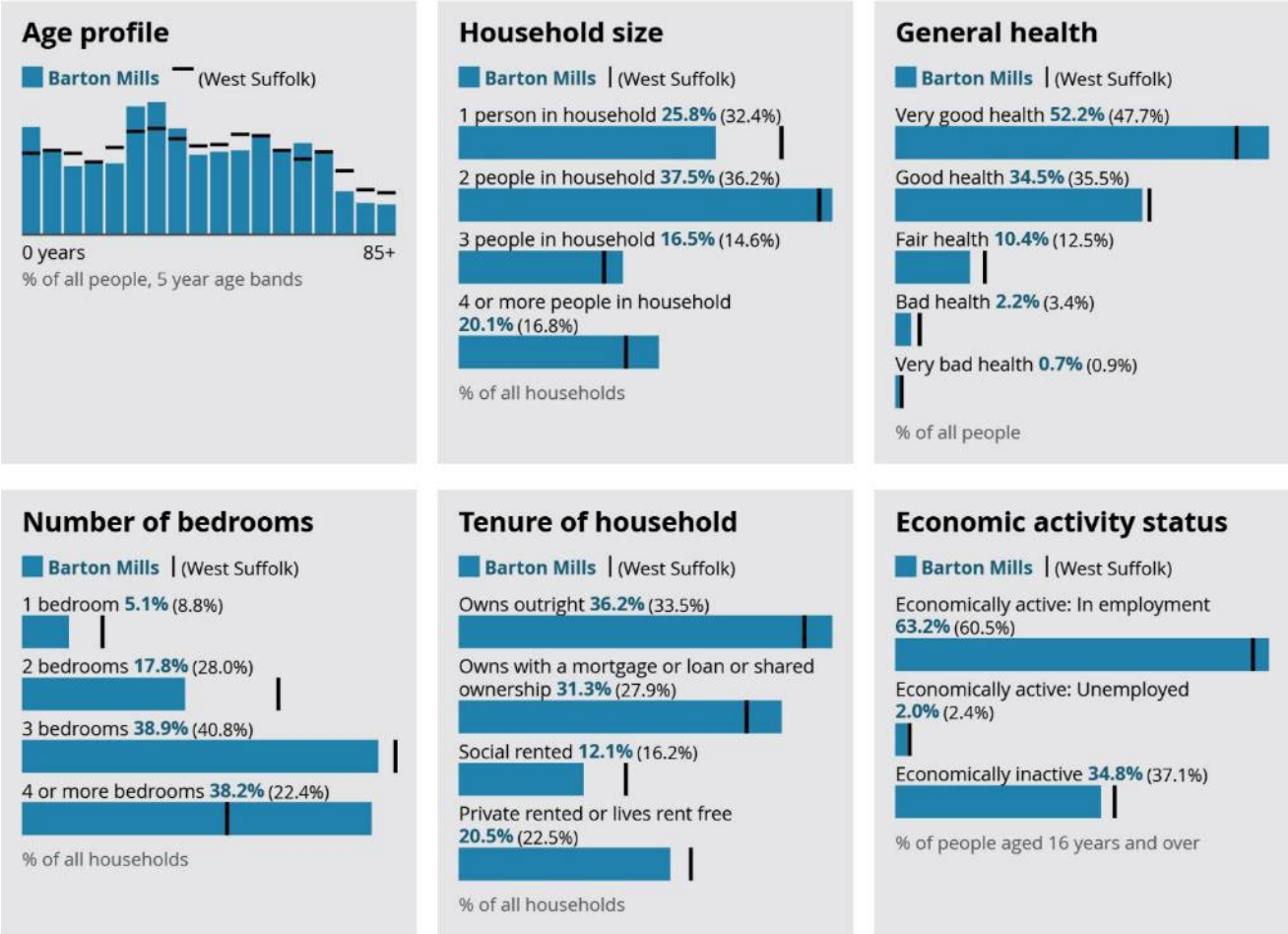


Figure 1 – Population change 2001 to 2021

- 2.6 Figure 2 illustrates the key results from the 2021 Census for Barton Mills compared with West Suffolk as a whole.

Barton Mills



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Figure 2 –2021 Census data comparison for Barton Mills and West Suffolk



3. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's high-level planning policies that must be taken into account in the preparation of development plan documents and when deciding planning applications. In December 2024 the Government published a Revised NPPF. The Framework sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states:

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:

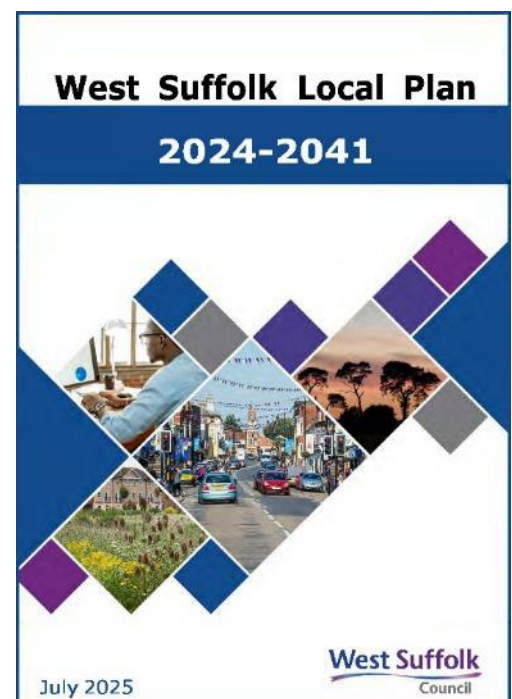
- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 3.2 Paragraph 29 of the NPPF states that: "Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies."

The Local Plan.

- 3.3 West Suffolk Council has recently completed the preparation of a new local plan covering the whole district. It covers the period 2023 to 2041 and, following examination by Government Planning Inspectors, was adopted in July 2025. The Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to the content of the Local Plan, particularly the strategic policies.

- 3.4 The Local Plan provides a settlement hierarchy across the district, with Barton Mills categorised as a "type A village", in recognition of its limited range of services and facilities. The Local Plan has assessed each type A village's capacity to support additional growth and a site for around 12 dwellings is allocated on land east of Church Lane. Further details of this are provided in Chapter 5.



Suffolk County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan

- 3.5 In July 2020, Suffolk County Council adopted the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Towards the south of the Parish lies the Barton Mills Chalk Quarry, a mineral extraction site shown on the Minerals and Waste Policies map, with a 250 metres buffer around the site to avoid potential sterilisation issues arising due to conflicts with potentially sensitive land-uses such as residential development. The site is operated by Needham Chalks (HAM) Ltd whose website describes the site as around 28 acres with over 1 million tons of reserves, with quarrying to continue until end of 2042. It is currently producing over 30,000 tons per annum. It is also noted that, since the closure of the Needham Market site, Barton Mills has seen massive investment in a new plant to mill chalk for industrial uses.



Aerial photograph of the Barton Mills Chalk Quarry

4. Vision and Objectives

- 4.1 The vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan have been prepared taking into consideration the outcomes of the residents' survey as well as the evidence collected from published data, surveys and assessments. They also take account of the need to prepare a neighbourhood plan that conforms with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. The Vision sets out the over-arching approach as to how development in Barton Mills will be delivered through the Neighbourhood Plan in the period to 2041. This is refined through the Objectives established for each of the topic areas which, in turn, have guided the identification of the planning policies contained in the Plan. The planning policies do not repeat the policies in the Local Plan or the NPPF but supplement them by adding local detail or addressing locally specific matters.

Vision

In 2041 Barton Mills will remain an attractive village where the designated historic and natural environments remain protected and, where feasible, enhanced. Limited development will have taken place that respects and maintains the character of the village and its surrounding countryside and does not have a detrimental impact on services and infrastructure.

Objectives

Location of Development

- Ensure development will be sympathetic to and reflect the existing form of the village
- Safeguard designated natural and historic environments from harm caused by development

Housing

- Support for small scale developments that meets local identified housing needs and enables families to remain in the community
- Ensure that new housing is designed to maximise opportunities for use of renewable energy
- Ensure that new homes are designed to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities

Natural Environment

- Protect and enhance the rural setting of the village
- Green spaces will remain valued and enhanced
- Protect valued views and links to the wider countryside

Built Environment and Heritage

- Ensure new development is appropriate to the historic character of the village as well as conserving and enhancing the village's heritage assets
- Maintain and enhance a strong rural identity and sense of place for the parish, through designs that reflect local character and incorporate measures that reduce environmental impact

Services and Facilities

- Protect and improve the range of existing facilities and services

Highways and Travel

- Reduce the impact of through traffic on the village
- Maintain and enhance existing public rights of way to improve safety and routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders while minimising potential impact on designated habitats

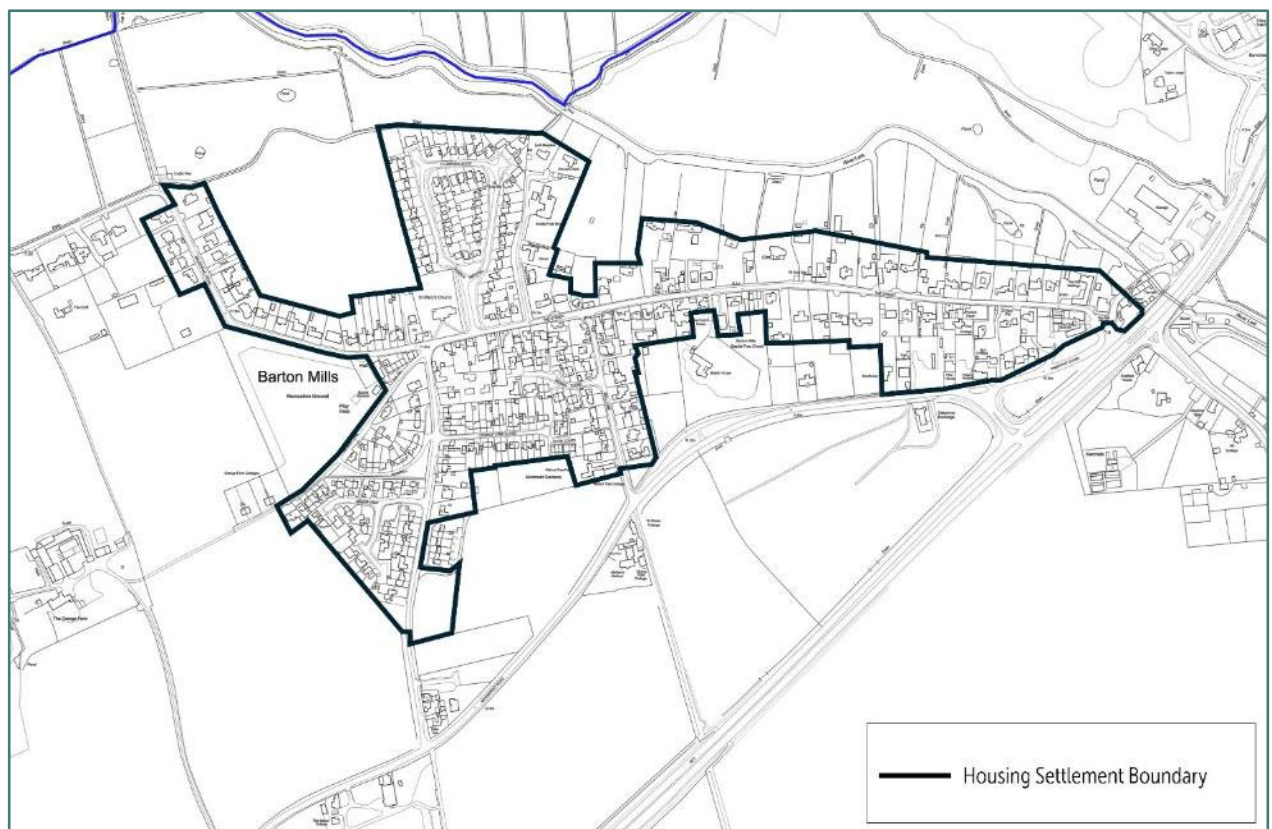
5. Location of Development

Context

- 5.1 The traditional main built-up area of the village is focused along The Street, as reflected by the designation of the Conservation Area. Later development has taken the form of ribbon development along Mildenhall Road and small estates at such as at Church Meadow and Manor View. More recently, the redevelopment of Bridge Farm Dairies on Worlington Road (Bridge Farm Close) and the adjoining site at Mace Road have resulted in an additional 161 homes in the Parish, albeit that have a greater functional relationship with Mildenhall to the north and are separated from traditional centre of the village. The remainder of the Parish is largely undeveloped with occasional isolated dwellings and farmsteads.

Local Plan context

- 5.2 Policy SP9 'Spatial strategy' sets out the expectations for sustainable development across West Suffolk, promoting a "sustainable pattern of development that conserves and enhances the natural, built and historic environment and seeks to mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects". Settlement boundaries are referred to in the policy which may not be the physical boundary of the settlements, but in planning policy terms "are the boundaries which manage development inside and outside of that area." Map 2 illustrates the Local Plan Housing Settlement Boundary. The principle of new built development is accepted within Housing Settlement Boundaries, but such proposals still have to be satisfactory in terms of impact and suitability. Outside housing settlement boundaries, land is defined as "countryside" which will be protected from unsustainable development.

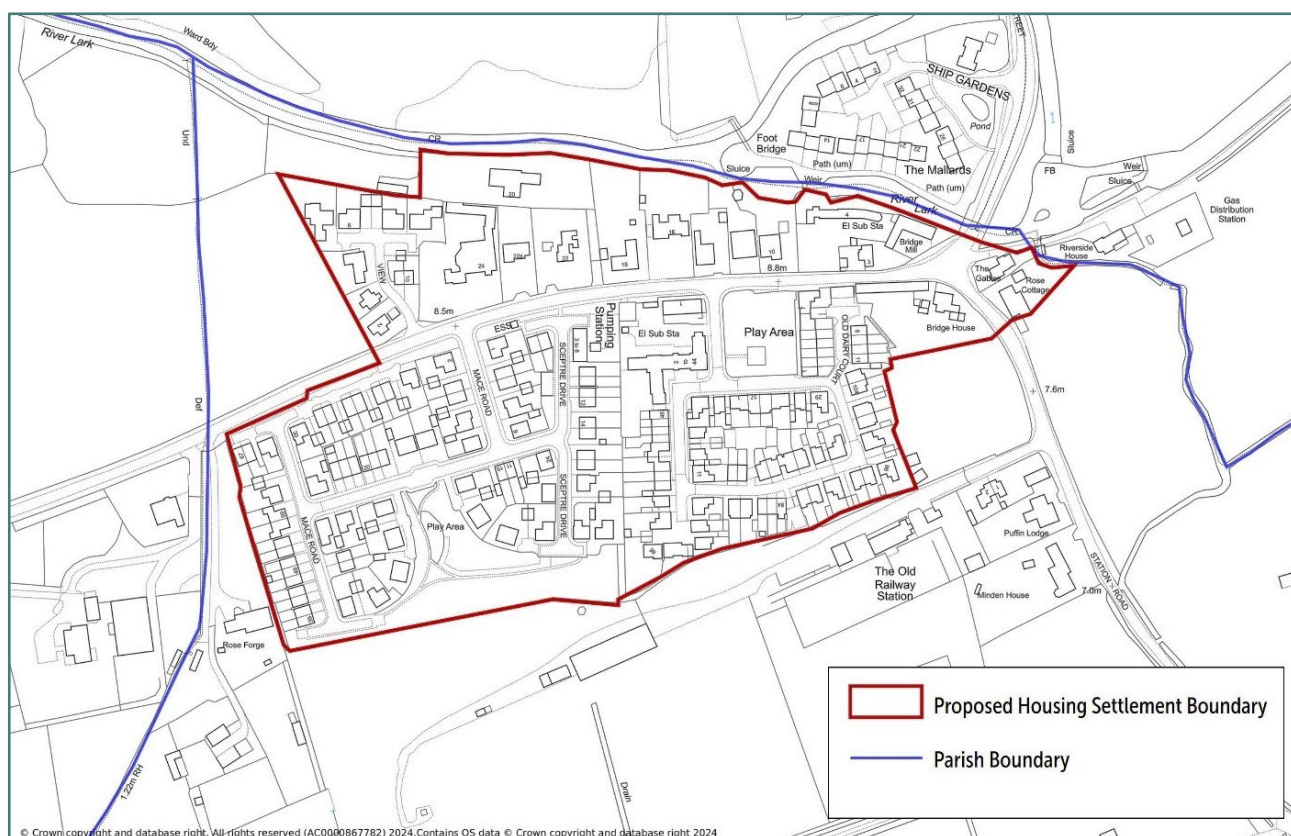


Map 2 – Local Plan Housing Settlement Boundary for Barton Mills

- 5.3 Policy SP13 'Settlement hierarchy' identifies categories for the towns and villages across West Suffolk according to their levels of service provision. Barton Mills is a "Type A Village", the fourth of five tiers of settlement. The Local Plan notes that Type A villages have a more limited range of services and facilities than the higher-tier local and key service centres, but which can still meet some of the day-to-day needs of their residents.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy

- 5.4 As a result of the development of two large housing sites off Worlington Road, this part of the Parish now accommodates in excess of 170 dwellings. However, the Housing Settlement Boundary has not been updated in the Local Plan and the area is effectively in the countryside in planning policy terms despite it having more homes than many small villages.
- 5.5 The Neighbourhood Plan rectifies this anomaly by defining a Housing Settlement Boundary around the main built-up area of the Worlington Road developed area, as illustrated in Map 3. The effect of this designation is to treat proposals for development in this area in the same way as those in the main built-up area of the village. For example, there may be future opportunities for the development of infill plots for housing, which would be supported subject to other considerations such as the suitability of access, impact of residents' amenity and whether the site were in the River Lark flood zone.



Map 3 – Proposed Worlington Road Housing Settlement Boundary

- 5.6 Outside the Housing Settlement Boundary, there may be exceptional situations where it can be adequately demonstrated that it is necessary for development to take place in accordance with the relevant policies in the Local Plan. However, and in accordance with the Local Plan, proposals will need to demonstrate that there would not be a detrimental impact on protected sites and species including residential development that is likely to increase recreational pressure on any European or nationally designated site for nature conservation.

Policy BM1 – Worlington Road Housing Settlement Boundary

A Housing Settlement Boundary is defined at Worlington Road, Barton Mills, as identified on the Policies Map.

Proposals for new residential development, residential conversion schemes, residential redevelopment and replacement of an existing dwelling with a new dwelling will be permitted within housing settlement boundaries where supported by other policies in the development plan.





6. Housing

Context

- 6.1 According to the 2021 Census over 90% of dwellings in the Parish are houses or bungalows, predominantly occupied by single family households. Over 67% are owner-occupied and 32% rented (20% private, 12% social).
- 6.2 In terms of house sizes the 2021 Census shows, there is a predominance of larger dwellings (3 and 4 beds), with significantly less smaller dwellings (1 and 2 bed) when compared with the mix across West Suffolk. This is amplified further as a result of the recent developments at Worlington Road. In the 2021 Census “lower output area” that includes Worlington Road developments some 43.7% of homes have four or more bedrooms compared with 38.2% for Barton Mills as a whole. Just under 47% of homes in the Parish with four or more bedrooms had one or two occupants at the time of the 2021 Census.

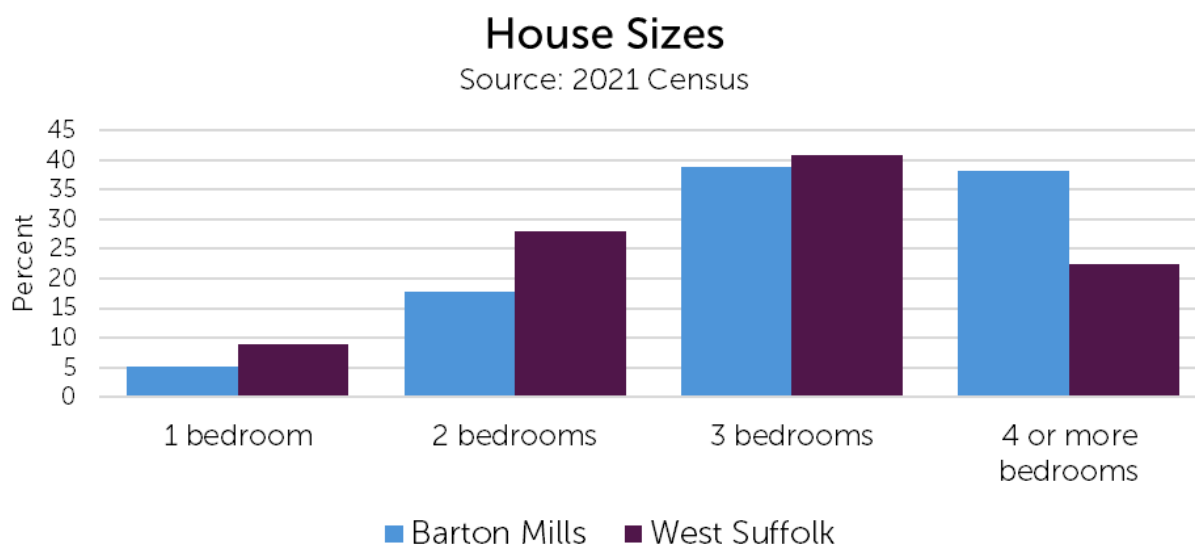


Figure 3 – House sizes

Residents' Survey

- 6.3 There were mixed outputs from the residents' survey in terms of how people felt about more or less development in the village, particularly in the context of the local plan already allocating a small site (12 dwellings) for development. when asked “*How many more homes do you think Barton Mills will need over and above the 12 between now and 2040?*”, the responses indicate some support for new development, as shown below:

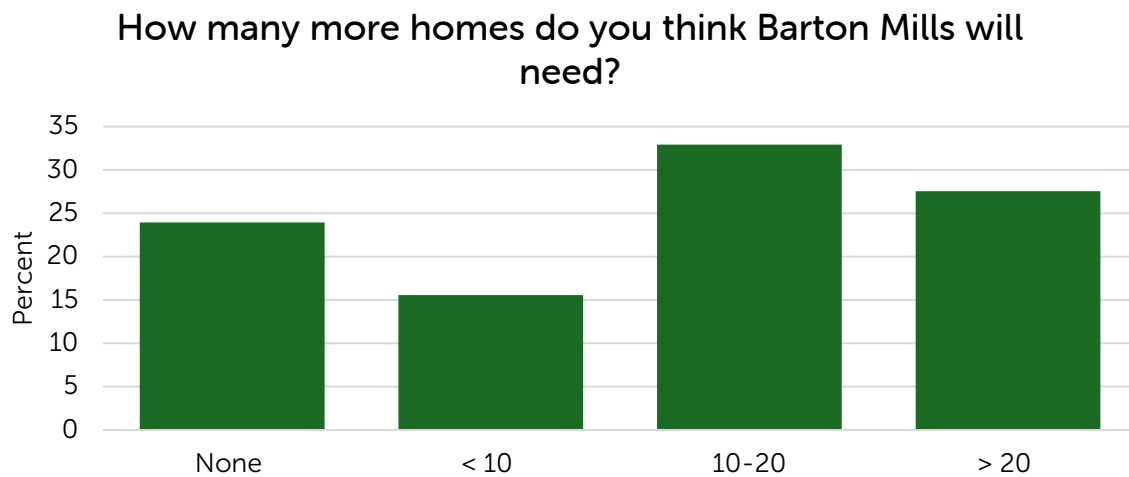


Figure 4 – Residents’ Survey response to number of houses needed

- 6.4 The survey also asked “*What type of house do you think Barton Mills needs?*” and there was positive support for smaller homes in recognition of both enabling young people to remain in the village and for older people to downsize to. Indeed, in response to the question “*What are your main reasons for wanting or needing to move?*” some 38% stated to have a smaller home.

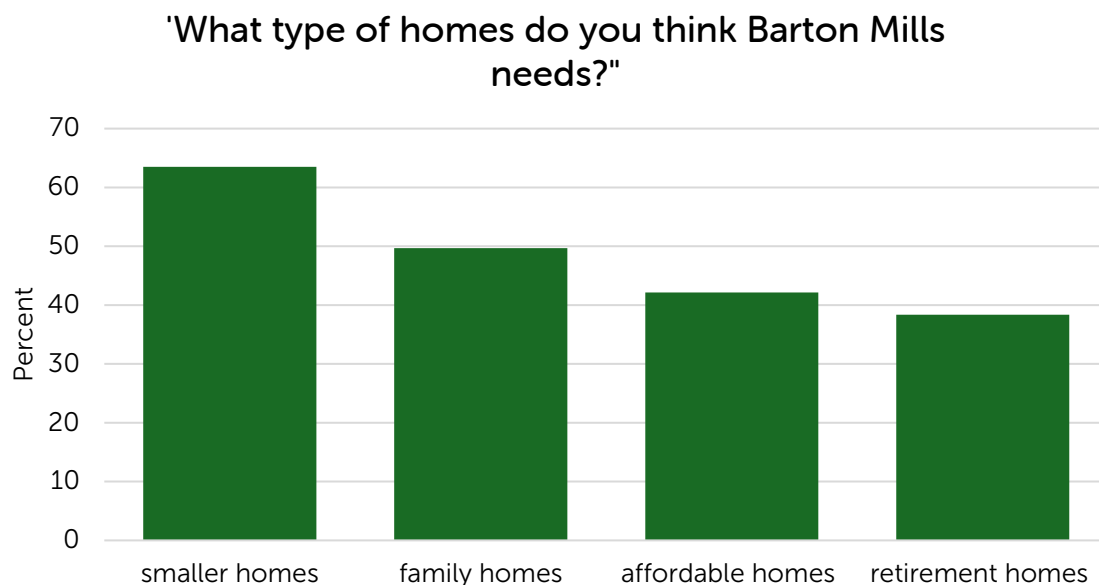


Figure 5 – Residents’ Survey response to type of homes needed

Local Plan

- 6.5 Policy SP15 ‘Neighbourhood plans’ refers to housing requirements for designated neighbourhood areas, which are then set out in Appendix G of the Local Plan. For Barton Mills, the minimum requirement is for 12 homes in the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2041.
- 6.6 Accordingly, the Local Plan allocates a small site for residential development at Church Lane for 12 dwellings (Policy AP54) as illustrated on Map 4.

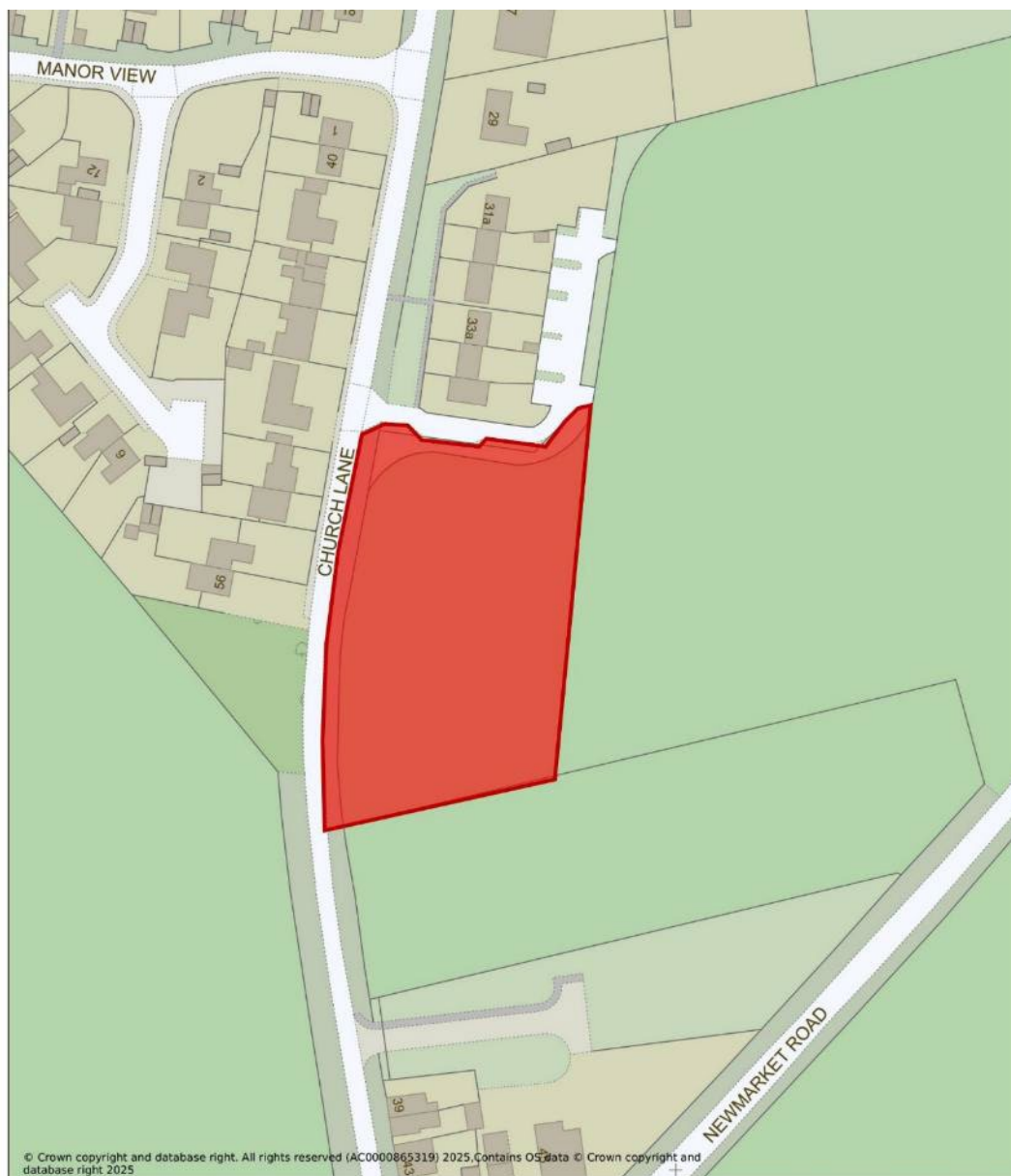
The Local Plan policy also states that the site should deliver:

“a. A safe and suitable access for all users should be provided onto Church Lane.

- b. Sustainable travel connections to existing local destinations, and nearby public rights of way including the provision of a pedestrian crossing to footway on western side of Church Lane in accordance with policy LP41.
- c. Fully accessible informal and formal open space and play space.
- d. Green and blue infrastructure that will include:
 - Strategic landscaping to soften the development edge and reduce the visual impacts when viewed from the surrounding countryside.
 - Sustainable drainage systems features.
 - Existing hedgerows and boundary features to be retained with appropriate buffers and enhanced.
- e. The development must mitigate for its recreational effects on Breckland Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation (SPA and SAC) in accordance with policy SP11.

Archaeology

An archaeological evaluation will be required in accordance with policy LP39.



Map 4 – Local Plan housing allocation

6.7 Policy AP54 does not specifically refer to the type, size or tenure of dwellings, which are covered by other Local Plan policies. With regard to affordable housing, Policy SP16 requires 40% of housing on sites of ten or more homes to be affordable, which,

rounded up, will equate to 5 homes on the allocated site. At present there is no planning application on this site and the exact size and tenure will be informed by the latest local housing need assessment, with a priority for affordable housing for rent.

- 6.8 The Local Plan includes Policy SP17 'Housing type and tenure' that covers a number of matters including space standards and accessible homes. It also specifies the mix of size of dwellings, dependent on tenure, on sites of ten or more homes as identified below.

Size	Market homes (per cent)	Affordable routes to home ownership (per cent)	Affordable housing for rent (per cent)
One bedroom	0 to 10	10 to 20	30 to 40
Two Bedrooms	30 to 40	40 to 50	30 to 40
Three bedrooms	40 to 50	30 to 40	15 to 25
Four bedrooms or more	10 to 20	0 to 10	5 to 15

- 6.9 The Local Plan also allows for new housing on rural exception sites in villages, such as Barton Mills, under Policy SP18. The policy, which reflects the content of the NPPF, requires proposals to address a locally identified need for affordable housing on sites adjoining but outside the Housing Settlement Boundary. At the time of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, a planning application submitted in 2021 for the construction of 15 affordable homes as a rural exception site on land south of Newmarket Road had yet to be determined by West Suffolk Council due to ongoing issues relating to the potential impact of the development on protected species.

Neighbourhood Plan approach to new housing

- 6.10 Given the up-to-date planning policies for the area in the Local Plan referred to above, the Neighbourhood Plan does not contain any locally specific policies for housing.



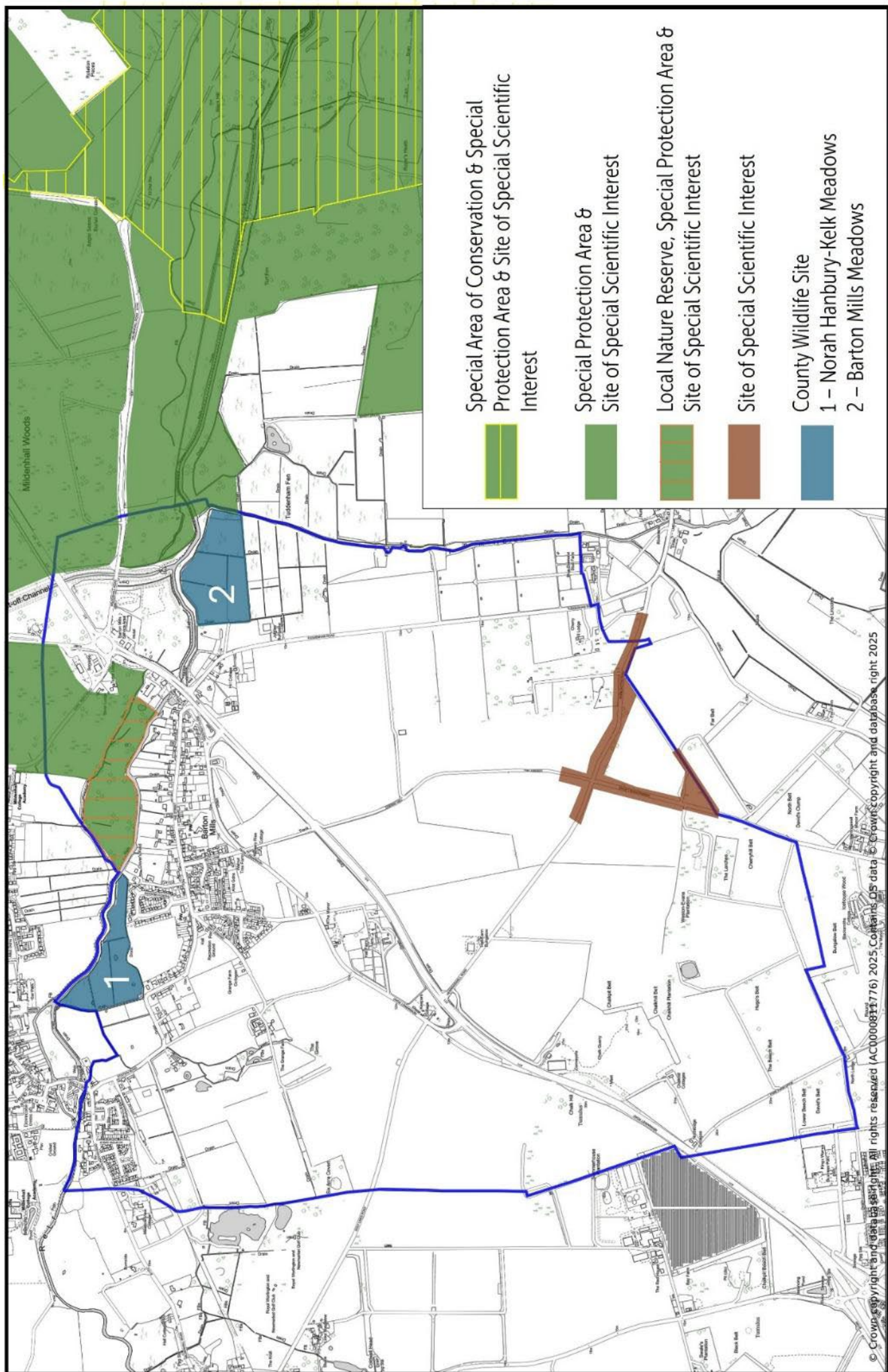
7. Natural Environment

Context

- 7.1 Barton Mills is largely a rural area with countryside surrounding the village. There are large areas of woodland scattered throughout the neighbourhood area, which add interest to the largely open landscape typical of the edge of The Brecks. The West Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (Alison Farmer Associates and Sheils Flynn for West Suffolk Council, March 2022) identifies a number of landscape character areas across the district, with the majority of Barton Mills Parish falling within the Lark Valley character area.
- 7.2 The Parish has a number of designated sites of more than local significance, namely:
- Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA), located in the north-east part of the Parish;
 - Cherry Hill and the Gallops Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located along Worlington Road, Herringswell Road and Cherry Hill at the southern end of the Parish;
 - Barton Mills Local Nature Reserve, located north of the River Lark and west of the A11
 - Norah Hanbury-Kelk Meadows County Wildlife Site, located in the meadows south of the River Lark and north of Church Meadow; and
 - Barton Mills Meadows County Wildlife Site, located south of the River Lark and to the west of Tuddenham Road.

The extent of these designations is illustrated on Map 5.





Map 5 – Wildlife designations

- 7.3 For the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA), the Local Plan identifies a 1500 metres buffer within which development proposals has the potential for 'likely significant effects' on the designated area. As such, all development that leads to a net increase in built development within the SPA or the buffer will require a project level habitats regulations assessment in order to ensure that the proposal does not adversely affect any European designated wildlife site alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.
- 7.4 Within the built-up area of the village there are a number of trees protected by preservation orders and the River Lark itself provides an important habitat for a range of species.

Residents' Survey

- 7.5 Generally, residents value the countryside setting of the village, with over 60% saying access to the countryside was one of the reasons they most liked living in Barton Mills.

Local Plan

- 7.6 The West Suffolk Local Plan includes a raft of policies for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, in recognition that it is a primarily rural district with locally distinct landscapes and is rich in biodiversity with international, national, and locally important assets located across the district. A Locally Valued Landscape is designated for much of the area east of Tuddenham Road and Fiveways junction.
- 7.7 The relevant Local Plan strategic policies are:
Policy SP5 Green infrastructure
Policy SP6 Locally valued landscapes
Policy SP7 Landscape
Policy SP8 Biodiversity net gain and enhancements
Policy SP9 Protected sites, habitats and features
Policy SP10 Special protection areas and special areas of conservation
Policy SP11 Recreational effects of development

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- 7.8 Given the extensive nature of recently adopted local plan policies, these do not need to be repeated in the Neighbourhood Plan, there are however valued views and local open spaces that warrant protection.

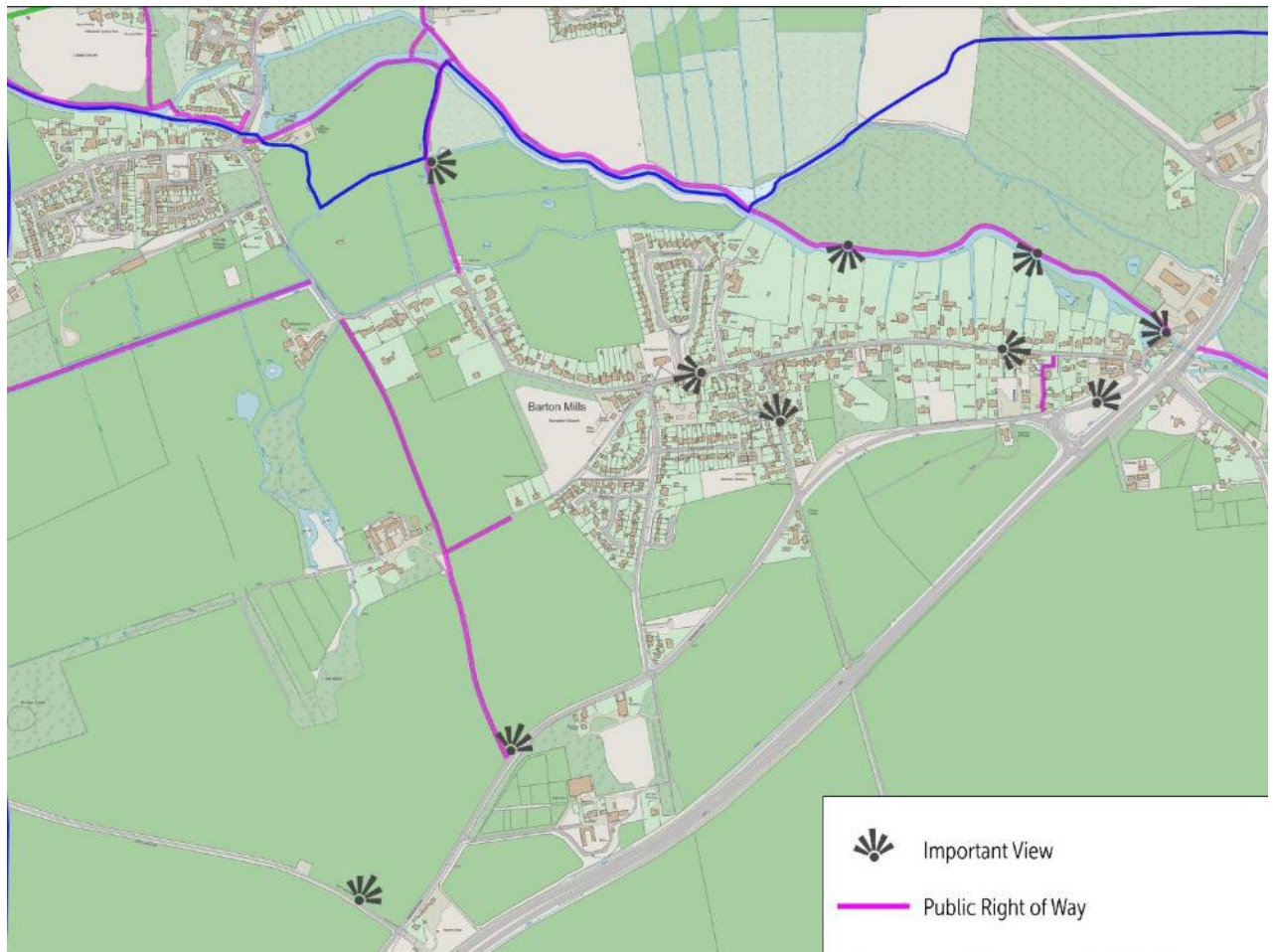
Important Views

- 7.9 The landscape of the parish is such that it lends itself to accommodating important views into and out of the built-up areas, albeit that distant views are limited by the level topography. There is an attractive long view of the village and St Mary's Church tower from south of Grange Farm on the Worlington Road and also from the A11 at Chalk Hill. The 2008 Conservation Area Appraisal identified a number of viewpoints and vistas, particularly along The Street, looking into the churchyard, views up Grange Lane and along Church Lane, together with views of the Bell Inn on the corner of Bell Lane and groups of buildings on the south side of The Street.
- 7.10 An important view is defined as one that would be generally recognised as having notable qualities or a particularly attractive composition that might cause people to pause and appreciate the scene. Not just an 'everyday' view, it is more likely to feature in people's perceptions of what Barton Mills looks like in their memories, and provide

heightened feelings of connectedness and wellbeing.

- 7.11 A separate Assessment of Important Views has been prepared to support the Neighbourhood Plan. In determining which views to identify, the following characteristics have been applied so each view must:
- be publicly accessible
 - be greatly valued by local residents
 - be enjoyed by visitors
 - contribute in an important way to the character and rural nature of Barton Mills and illustrate the village's history

Furthermore, the Plan focuses on designating and protecting views where development is most likely to take place rather than views across open countryside. The identified important views are illustrated on Map 6.



Map 6 – Important Views

Policy BM2 - Protection of Important Views

Important views from public vantage points either within the built-up area or into or out of the surrounding countryside, are identified on the Policies Map. Any proposed development should not detract from the key landscape features of these views.

Proposals for new buildings outside the Housing Settlement Boundaries should be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, or other appropriate and proportionate evidence, that demonstrates how the proposal can be accommodated in the countryside without having a significant detrimental impact, by reason of the buildings' scale, materials and location, on the key features of the views.

Local Green Spaces

- 7.12 National Planning Policy enables the designation and protection of land of particular importance to local communities as Local Green Spaces ('LGS') in neighbourhood plans. Such designations rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 106 of the NPPF states that the designation should only be used where the green space is:
- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
 - demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
 - where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*
- 7.13 It is recognised that the designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used simply to block development. The following spaces, which are illustrated on Maps 7 and 8, have been identified to meet the NPPF criteria:
1. St Mary's graveyard
 2. Parish allotments
 3. Mace Road open space
 4. Bridge Farm Close open space and play area

Details as to how they meet the NPPF criteria are set out in Appendix 1. The Recreation Ground is designated as a community facility under Policy BM6, recognising that development related to its recreation use might be necessary at some time, such as storage facilities or improvements at the pavilion.



Map 7 – Village Centre Local Green Spaces



Map 8 – Worlington Road Local Green Spaces

Policy BM3 - Local Green Spaces

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

1. St Mary's graveyard
2. Parish allotments
3. Mace Road open space
4. Bridge Farm Close open space and play area

Development in the local green spaces will be consistent with national policy for the Green Belt.

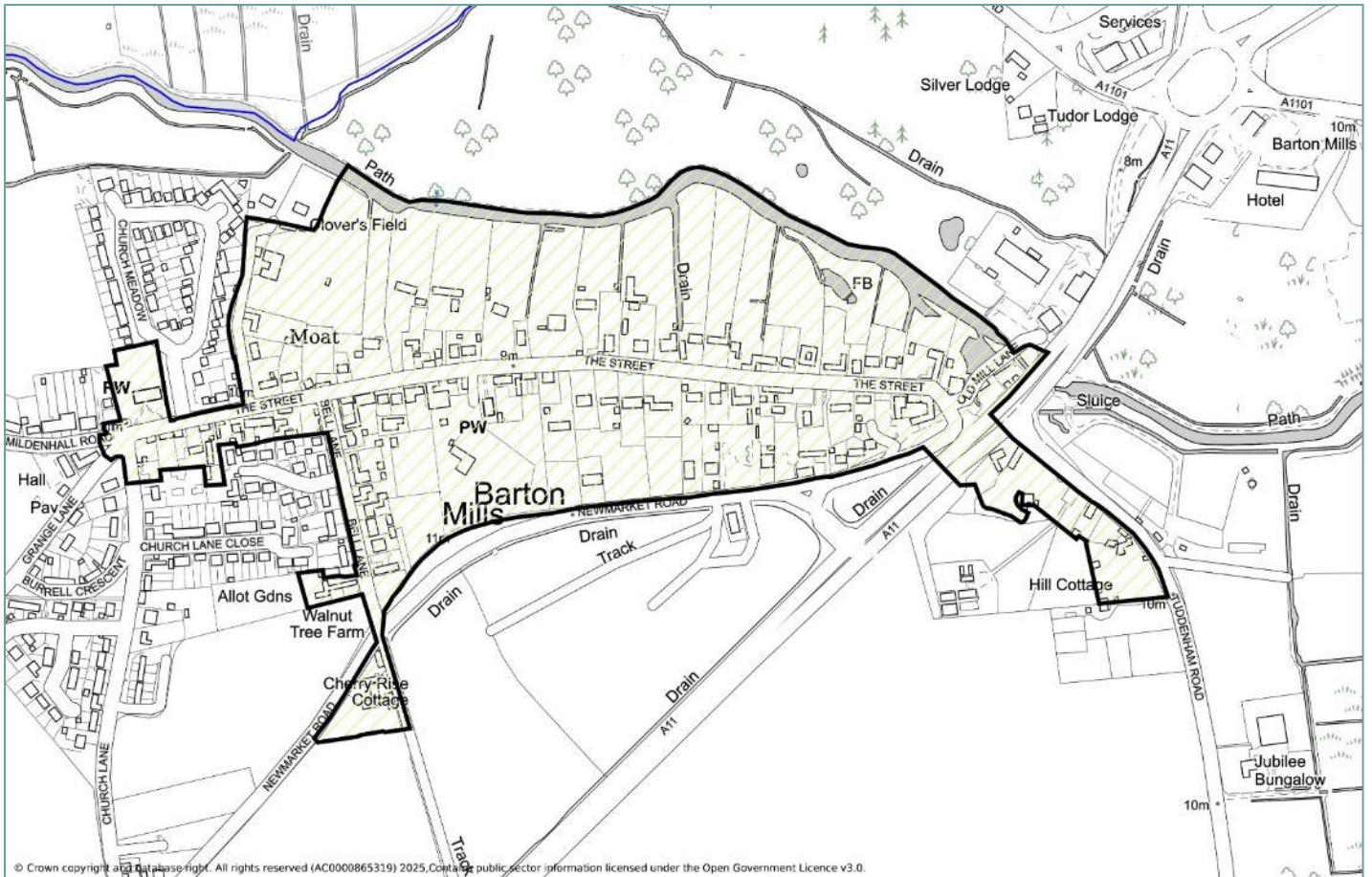


8. Built Environment and Design

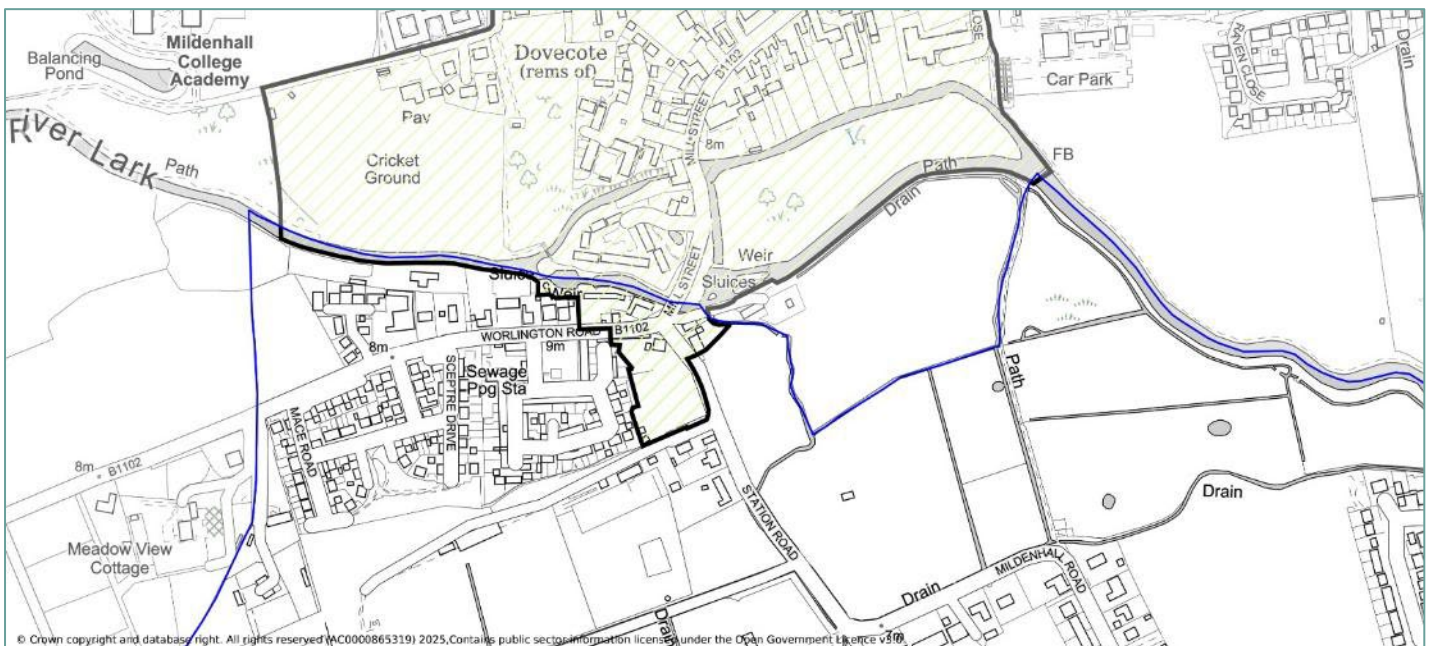
Context

- 8.1 The design of new development can have a significant impact on its surroundings if not given careful consideration. What is suitable for modern areas might not fit in with areas dominated by historic buildings and features and it is important that careful consideration is made at the outset as to how the proposal impacts on the character of the area and existing residents. Unsympathetic and poorly designed development, especially within the vicinity of a heritage asset can have a significant detrimental impact on the area. It will also be important that the design pays attention to minimising environmental impact through, for example, the incorporation of energy saving measures. Where planning permission is required for development, it will be important that careful consideration is given to the proposal to ensure that it enhances rather than detracts from the locality within which it is located. Building for a Healthy Life, published by Homes England, is a Design Code to help people improve the design of new and growing neighbourhoods and its use is encouraged.
- 8.2 Barton Mills is an area which is rich in history, a lot of which has been well preserved and plays a big part in the settlements character today. The Romans established a large settlement in the locality building a road linking it in one direction to the Icknield Way, an ancient trackway that connected Norfolk to Wiltshire, and in the other to the nearby River Lark. This made the ensuing bridge a strategic point at what is now Barton Mills, facilitating trade and communication between travellers which enhanced the importance of the developing settlement.
- 8.3 More recently, Barton Mills has experienced growth due to its proximity to Mildenhall and having good road connections. The historical importance of the village was recognised in 1992, when a significant part of the village was designated as a conservation area, as shown on Map 9. In addition, the area around the junction of Worlington Road, Mill Street (Mildenhall) and Station Road is within the Mildenhall Conservation Area, as shown on Map 10.





Map 9 – Barton Mills Conservation Area

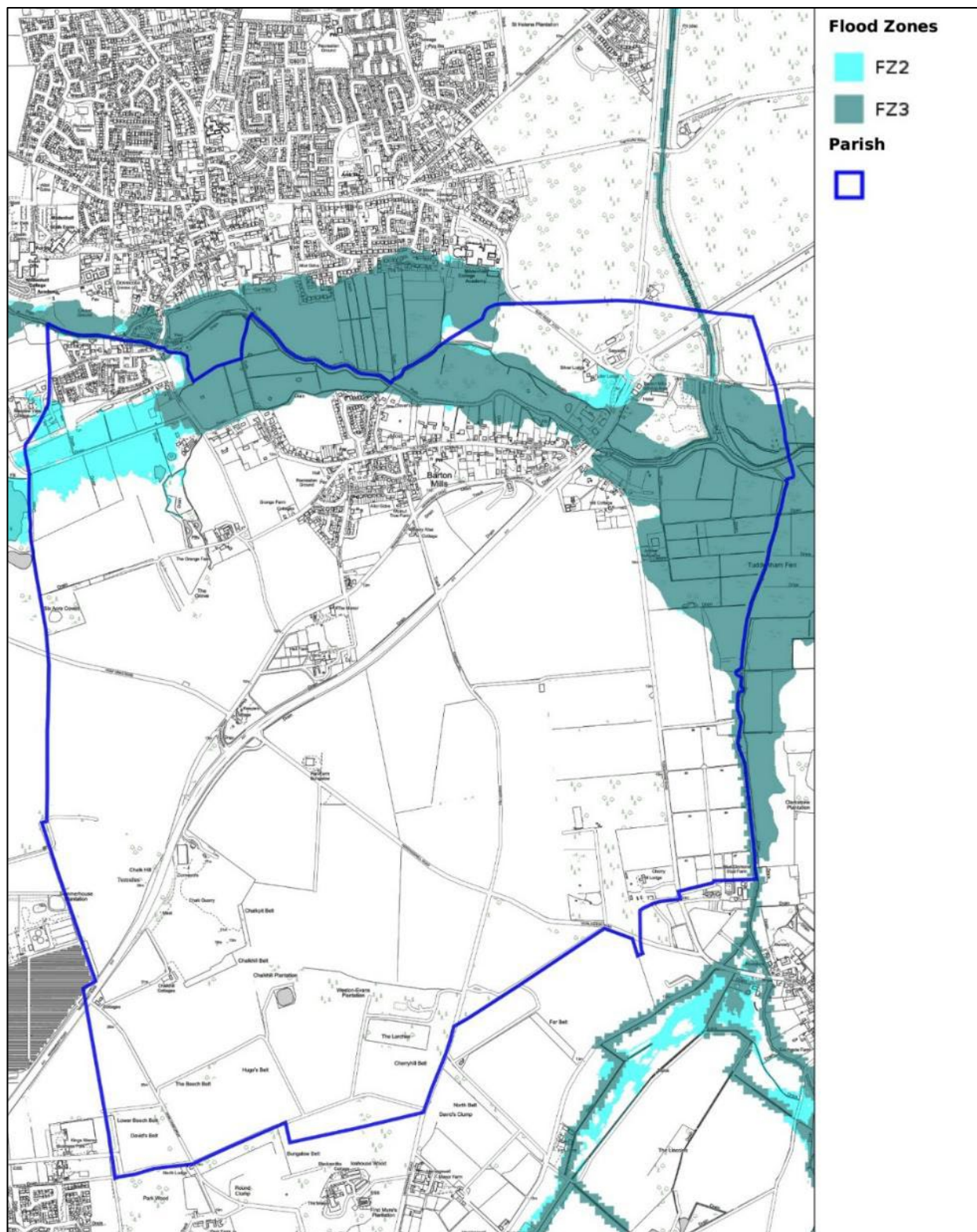


Map 10 – Extent of Mildenhall Conservation Area in Barton Mills Parish

8.4 There are also nine listed buildings in the Parish:

- Church of St Mary (Grade II*)
- Paradise Farmhouse (Grade II*)
- II Barton Hall (Grade II)
- Grange Farmhouse (Grade II)
- Lord Mayors Cottage (Grade II)
- Pedlars Patch (Grade II)
- The Bull Inn (Grade II)
- The Manor (Grade II)
- The Mill House (Grade II)

- 8.5 As well as the historic buildings, the Conservation Area Appraisal notes that the settlement layout is an important feature, with characteristics including: a 'linear plan and enclosed space with attractive serial views', 'low density, landscape dominated' and 'attractive variation in space between buildings'.
- 8.6 A large area to the north of the village lies within flood zone 3, due to the presence of the River Lark, as shown on Map 11



Residents' Survey

- 8.7 The residents' survey specifically asked about features to be included in the design of new houses, as the chart below shows, over 70% stated that new dwellings should reflect the varied building style and character of the village, there was also strong support (over 80%) for energy efficient dwellings.

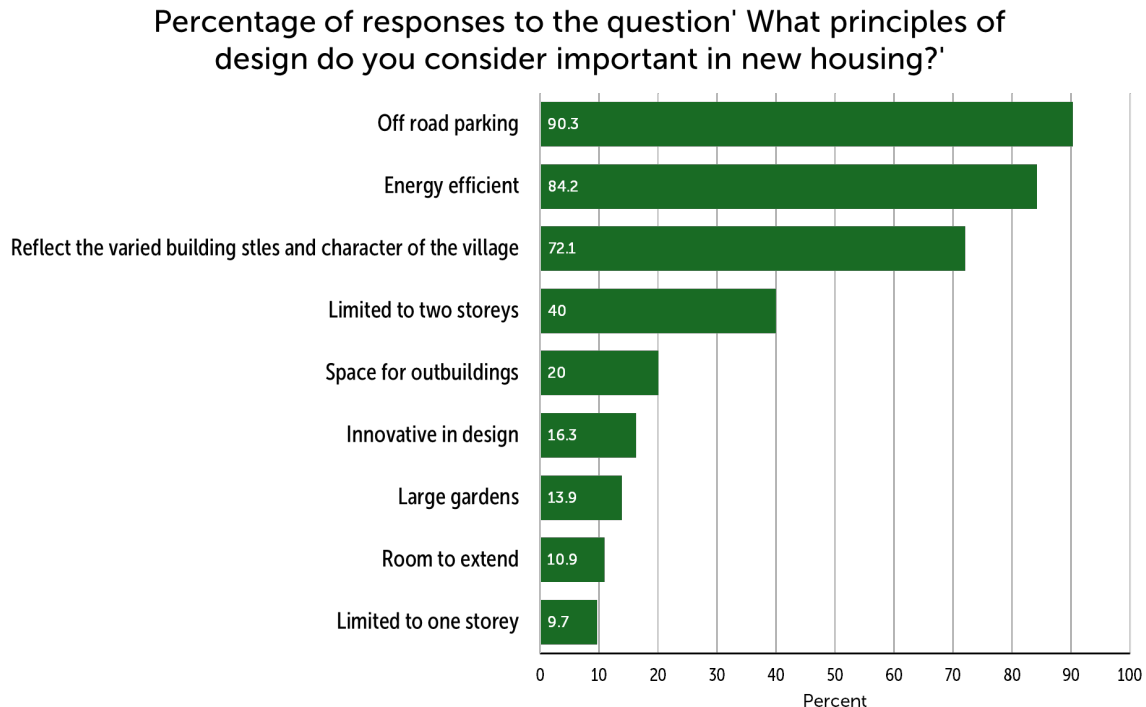


Figure 6 – Residents' importance to design features in new homes

Local Plan

- 8.8 The Local Plan includes numerous references to design, Policy SP3 Design, requires 'Proposals for all new development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings, must create and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment'.....and then lists 15 principles to be applied as appropriate to the scale and type of development proposed. Further details are also set out in Policy LP 12 Design codes and Appendix D of the Local Plan.
- 8.9 Policy LP1 Sustainable design and construction, requires details to be submitted with proposals to demonstrate principles of active travel, how the environment has been taken into account, and details on the actual design to maximise energy efficiencies. Policy LP5 Flood risk and sustainable drainage, requires a proportion of development sites to be set aside for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and encourages the inclusion of sustainable drainage features such as 'green roofs, rainwater harvesting, rain gardens, tree pits, flood meadows, wetlands, ponds and other grass or woodland habitats.'
- 8.10 In addition to a range of design policies the local plan also includes various references to heritage interest, Policy SP14 Historic Environment states that
'The council will balance the need for development with the proper conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the historic environment through a positive strategy to ensure that:
a. Heritage assets are sustained in viable uses which are compatible with their

significance.

- b. The wider social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits of conserving the historic environment are recognised and promoted.*
- c. The positive contribution made by the historic environment to local character and distinctiveness is understood and used to inform the design of new development so it respects its surroundings.'*

8.11 Further details, in relation to listed buildings are set out in Policy LP50 Listed Buildings and Policy LP51 Non-designated heritage assets. Policy LP53 Conservation Areas, lists the following considerations for matters which proposals should respond to:

- a. Preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area or its setting, and views into, within, and out of the area.*
- b. Be of an appropriate scale, form, height, massing, alignment and detailed design which respect the area's character and its setting.*
- c. Retain important natural features such as open spaces, plot divisions, boundary treatments, and trees and hedges, which contribute to the special character of the area.*
- d. Retain important traditional features that contribute to the area's character such as original doors, windows, shop fronts and boundary structures.*
- e. Include fenestration which respects its setting.*
- f. Use materials and building techniques which complement or harmonise with the character of the area.*
- g. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the conservation area and/or its setting. The proposal should demonstrate how the key characteristics of the character area have been addressed.*

Neighbourhood Plan Policy

Design

8.12 As part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood plan design guidance was specifically commissioned. The document, published separately on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council's website, provides guidance that seeks to inform the design that all development should follow to retain and protect the character and distinctiveness of Barton Mills.

8.13 The Design Guidance document contains design codes which work in tandem with the Barton Mills Neighbourhood Plan to provide guidance on the built form, layout and sustainability of development, which must be designed and constructed to perform to increasingly low-carbon requirements set by central and local government. The Guidance refers to four design objectives which have been influenced by the analysis of the area and community engagement. These objectives provide holistic and high-level guidance and apply to development in the whole Neighbourhood Area:

Integrate development with the historical architecture

- Development, whether traditional or contemporary, should integrate well with Barton Mills' historical architectural character areas. All designs should be of a high-quality and sustainable.
- Development proposals should provide specification on the architectural design, including materials, fenestration and detailing. Proposals should also demonstrate how the character of the local context, as defined by this design guide, has been considered.

Contribute to the rural village character and lifestyle

- The layout of new development should maintain the rural character of Barton Mills, which contributes to its leafy village feel.

- Connection and access to the rural landscape, particularly Barton Mills' open countryside and the Public Rights of Ways, are an important and highly valued part of the village setting and lifestyle

Protect and enhance the landscape setting

- Barton Mills landscape setting, which is formed by open countryside, the River Lark, mature trees, hedges and hedgerows, provides a sense of enclosure and a rural character to the Neighbourhood Area which must be protected and enhanced where possible.

Prioritise sustainable design

- New developments must prioritise high quality designs with energy saving measures incorporated.

8.14 The Design Guidance and Codes includes general design guidelines for new development, which are set out below and should be considered in designing schemes:

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long- distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Flood mitigation/drainage measures put into place for the proposed development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Positively integrate green infrastructure in accordance with national design guidance to positively contribute to liveability, biodiversity and climate change resilience;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

8.15 The Design Guidance and Codes provides a development management checklist against which development proposals should seek to respond where applicable. The checklist is included as Appendix 2 of the Plan.

Policy BM4 - Development Design Considerations

Development proposals should reflect the local characteristics and circumstances of the site by creating and contributing to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Management Checklist (Appendix 2):

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
 - Reinforce or enhance the established village character of streets, greens, and other spaces,
 - Include boundary treatments that reflect the character and traditional materials of the local vicinity;
 - Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
 - Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including retaining and preserving long distance views, as identified on the Policies map
 - Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness
 - Retain and incorporate important existing built and natural features into the development;
 - Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
 - Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
 - Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality, in accordance with the adopted standards of West Suffolk Council;
 - Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained built and natural features;
 - Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
 - Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste storage management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
 - Positively integrate energy efficient technologies
 - Produce designs that maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network in accordance with the Suffolk Design Streets Guide 2022 (or any successor documents) and ensuring that vehicle parking is designed to be integrated into the site without creating an environment dominated by vehicles.
-

Barton Mills Conservation Area

- 8.16 The protection of the existing designated heritage assets is already adequately addressed through the NPPF and emerging local plan policies. It is not therefore necessary for the neighbourhood plan to repeat these. The Conservation Area Appraisal identified a number of issues covering the following matters:

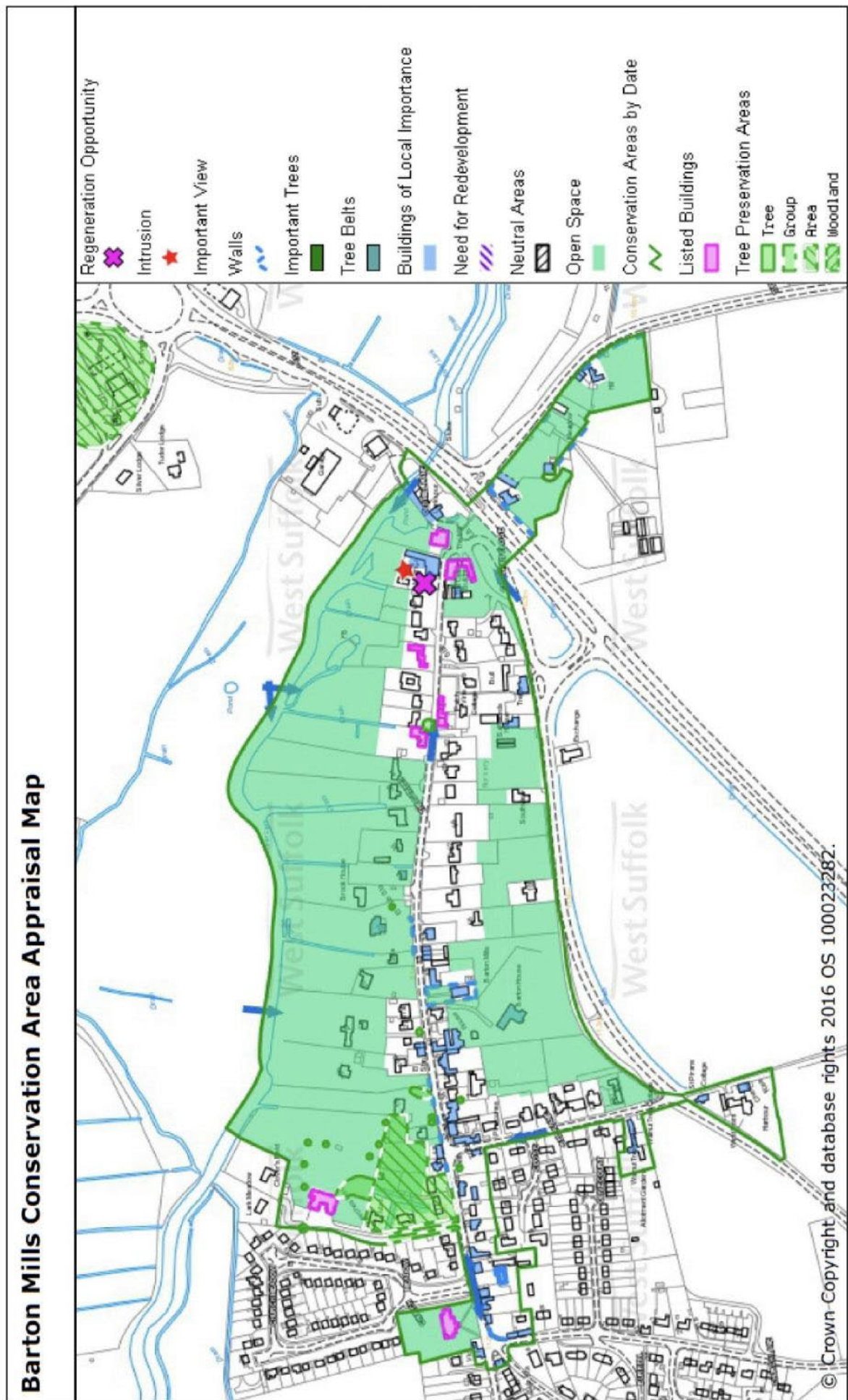
New Development - Inappropriate materials have been used to build new houses of alien scale, mass and detail to the detriment of the architectural and historic character of the area.

Doors and Windows - Traditional doors and windows have been replaced with new windows which are out of character in design and materials used.

Boundary Walls and overhead cables- Traditional boundary walls are eroded in some locations and there are unsightly overhead electricity and telephone cables.

- 8.17 The appraisal also identified a number of features and buildings of local importance as illustrated Map 12. However, the Parish Council considers that West Suffolk Council has incorrectly identified number 8 The Street as a Building of Local Interest given that it is a reasonably modern house. It is believed that number 14 The Street should be identified.





Map 12 - Barton Mills Conservation Area Features (source. Conservation Area Appraisal 2008).

- 8.18 Accordingly, Policy BM5 seeks to ensure the detail expressed in the Conservation Area Appraisal is reflected in development proposals.

Policy BM5 - Barton Mills Conservation Area

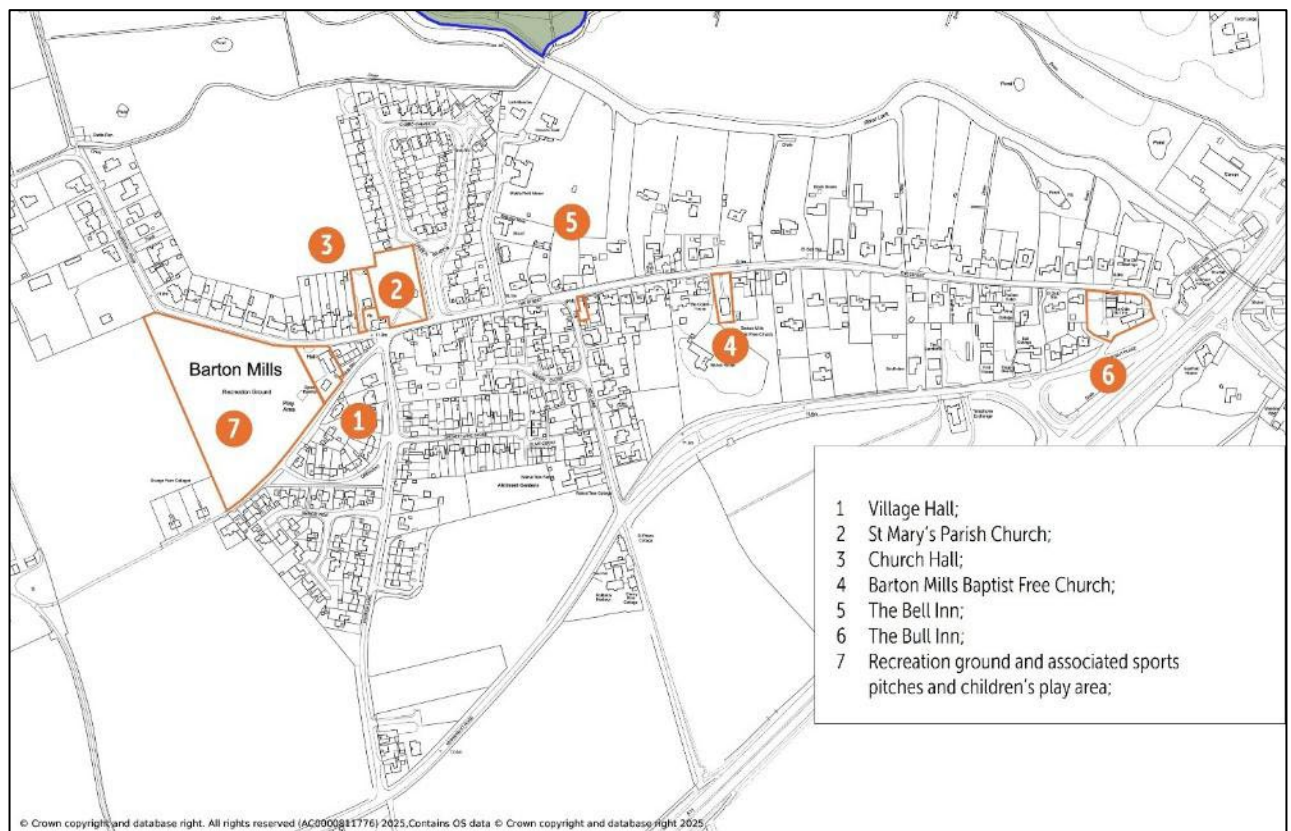
Development within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of the Conservation Area should conserve, or where appropriate enhance, features that contribute positively to the area's special character, appearance and setting, including identified important open areas and buildings of local importance, as identified in the Barton Mills Conservation Area Appraisal.



9. Services and Facilities

Context

- 9.1 Barton Mills has limited services and facilities, with residents travelling to nearby Mildenhall for education, health, sports and retail services.
- 9.2 At the time of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, the village had the following services and facilities, the locations of which are illustrated on Map 13:
- 1 Village Hall;
 - 2 St Mary's Parish Church;
 - 3 Church Hall;
 - 4 Barton Mills Baptist Free Church;
 - 5 The Bell Inn;
 - 6 The Bull Inn;
 - 7 Recreation ground and associated sports pitches and children's play area;



Map 13 – Village Services and Facilities

Residents' Survey

- 9.3 A number of comments in the residents' survey reflected the lack of a village shop and the need to travel to Mildenhall. Others referred to the need to update the village hall and for better parking at the village hall/recreation ground. Figure 7 illustrates whether residents used the village's facilities.

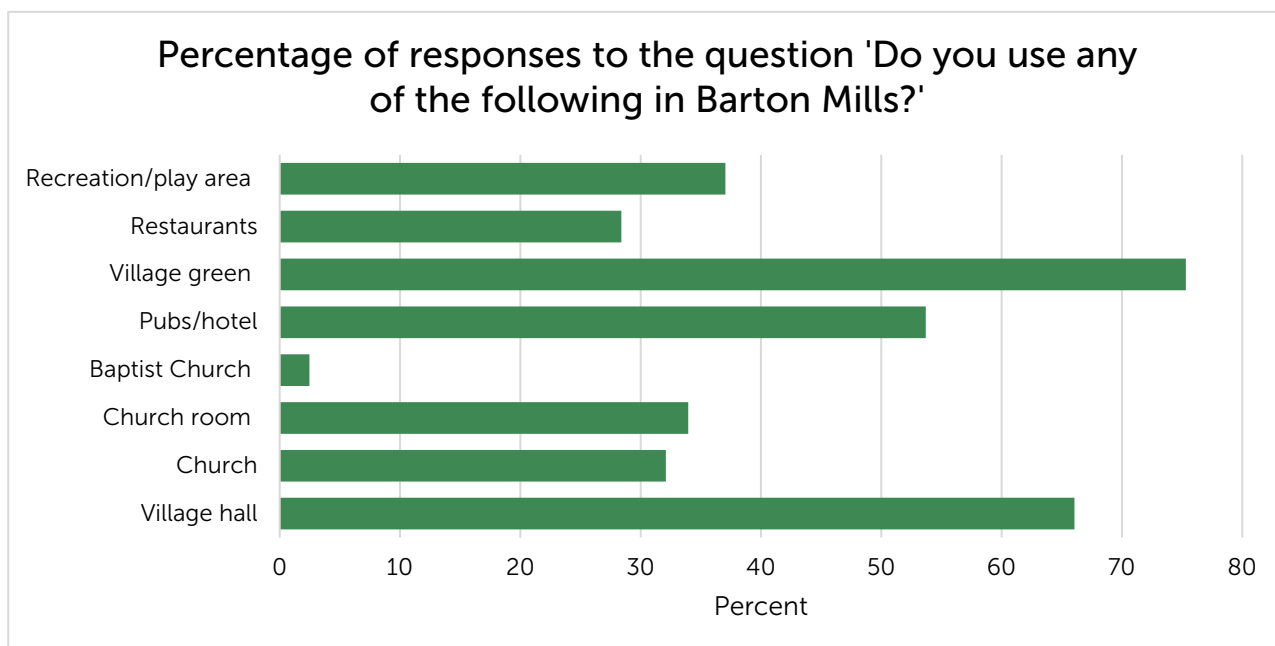


Figure 7 – Use of Village Facilities

- 9.4 The results indicate significant use of the village hall and associated green and play area, followed by the pubs/restaurant and churches.

Local Plan

- 9.5 The Local Plan includes the following policies in relation to village services and facilities:

Policy LP31 Community facilities and services – allows for the loss of such facilities subject to meeting certain conditions

Policy LP32 Leisure and cultural facilities – supports improvements to existing provision

Policy LP33 Open space, sport, play and recreation facilities - supports improvements to existing provision and only allows for the loss of such facilities subject to meeting certain conditions

Neighbourhood Plan Policy

- 9.6 The Neighbourhood Plan has an important role in making sure that there are sufficient and adequate services in the village to meet the needs of current and future residents. The Village Hall, Recreation Ground and play area provide a key facility for both formal and informal recreation. The Parish Church also has an important role in village life as do the existing pubs/restaurants.

Policy BM6 - Community Facilities

Proposals that will result in the loss of any the following existing community facilities:

- 1 Village Hall;
- 2 St Mary's Parish Church;
- 3 Church Hall;
- 4 Barton Mills Baptist Free Church;
- 5 The Bell Inn Public House;
- 6 The Bull Public House;
- 7 Recreation ground and associated sports pitches and children's play area;

as indicated on Map 8, will only be supported where:

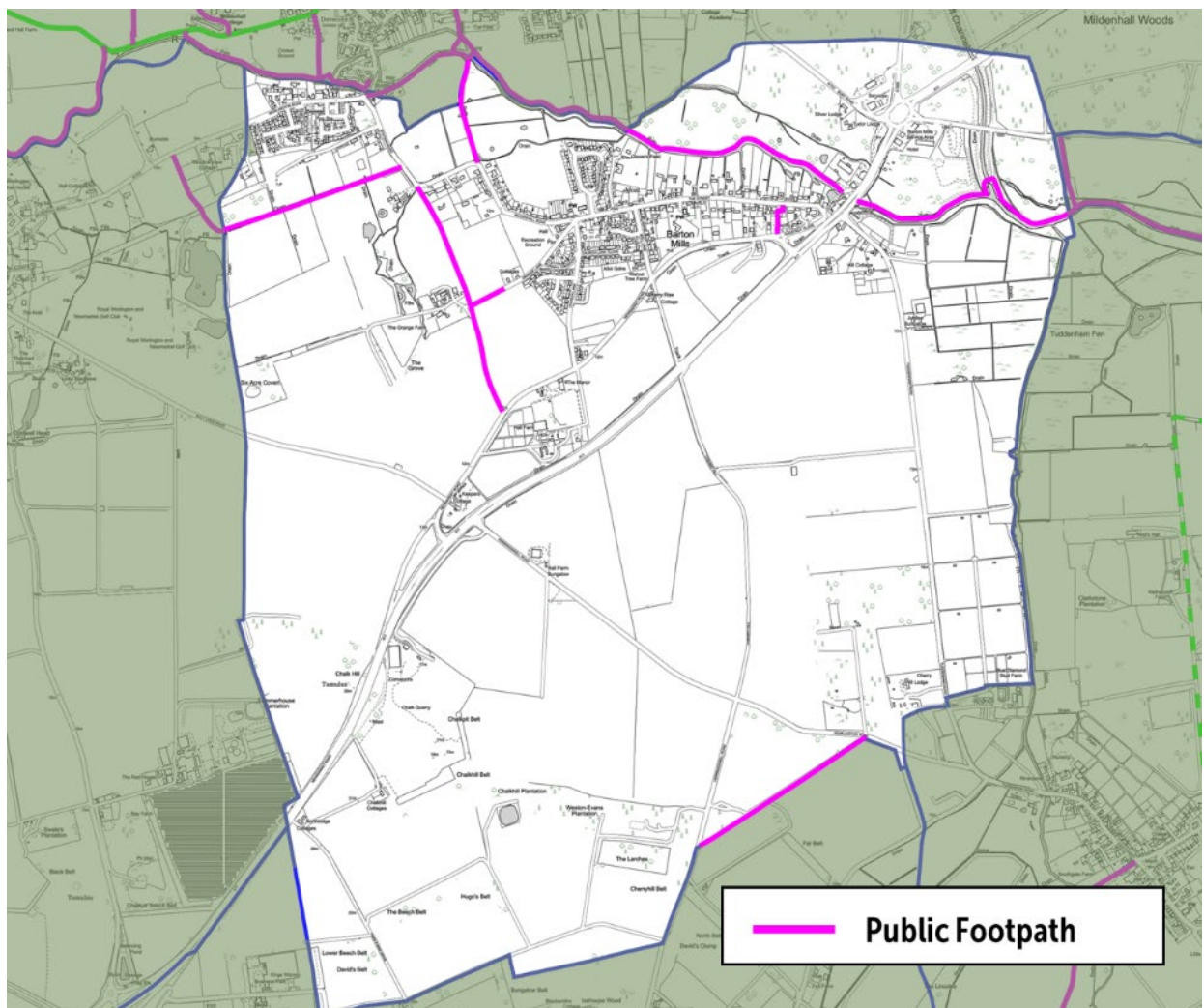
- a. it can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable not likely to become viable. Where appropriate, supporting financial evidence should be provided including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 12 months; and
- b. it can be demonstrated that there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



10. Highways and Travel

Context

- 10.1 Neighbourhood plans have little power to introduce highway improvements as most schemes will not require planning permission. Improvements are therefore reliant on Suffolk County Council, as the highways authority, for investment in projects or improvements required as part of the mitigation of the impact of development proposals.
- 10.2 Being adjacent to the A11 the village experiences significant noise disruption, also it is becoming increasingly challenging to cross the road due to the village being used as a rat-run when traffic is queuing for the Fiveways Roundabout (A11, A1065, A1101 junction).
- 10.3 The village is poorly served by buses, with a service focusing on access to Mildenhall College for students. There are a number of public footpaths in the parish, but these are primarily located in that part of the parish north of A11, as illustrated on Map 14. There are no bridleways.



Map 14 - Public Rights of Way Source: Suffolk County Council

Residents' Survey

- 10.4 Numerous comments were received on the issue of traffic through the village and the need for better parking facilities and public transport. Residents were specifically asked about speed management initiatives, as indicated in Figure 8.

Percentage responses to the question 'Do you think the road network in the parish should...?'

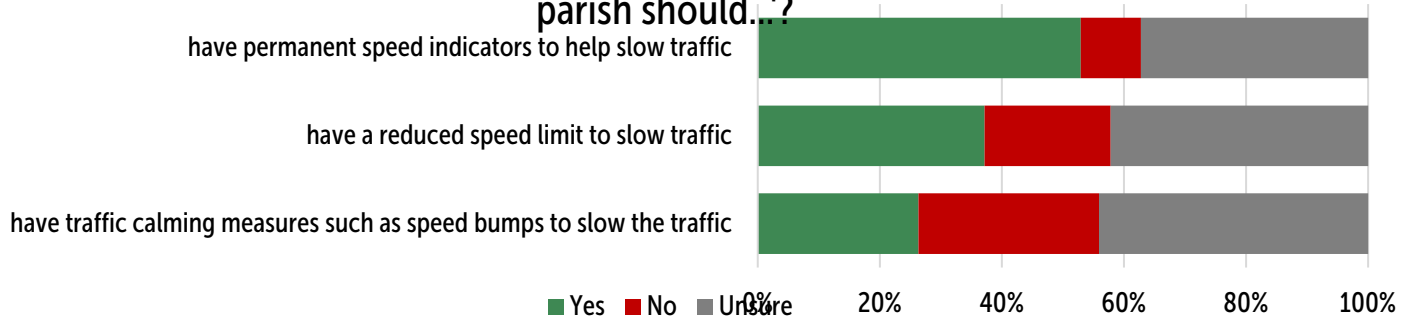


Figure 8 – Desired highway improvements

Local Plan

- 10.5 Both national and local policy promote active travel and sustainable transport through reducing the impacts of development on transport networks and promoting walking, cycling and public transport. Policy LP57 of the Local Plan requires development proposals to provide for active travel on and off site, through the following mechanisms:
- "a. Maximising walking opportunities for all levels of personal mobility and contributing to a positive public realm. Proposals must maintain, improve and create new safe and attractive routes suitable for pedestrians, push chairs and wheelchairs including appropriate street furniture such as seating and lighting as necessary.
 - b. Promoting opportunities for an accessible, safe, and segregated cycle network, including protecting existing routes, and providing appropriate facilities for the use of cyclists. Cycle infrastructure should be built to the requirements of Gear Change and Cycle Infrastructure Design Local Transport Note 1/20 and related guidance or successor documents.
 - c. All destinations, transport hubs and commercial, business and service premises are required to having facilities to allow people to cycle all year around including, but not limited to, workplace showers, covered cycle storage, changing rooms, drying rooms and lockers provided, with opportunities for the hire of bicycles, e-bikes and e-scooters as appropriate to the use and scale of the proposal.
 - d. Provide sufficient, secure, convenient and accessible undercover cycle spaces for a range of bicycles and installing and maintaining secure, undercover cycle parking spaces in line with Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2023 or successor document.
 - e. Ensuring new or improved sustainable links both within the site and to local destinations are provided to enhance access within the settlement, between settlements and/or provide access to the countryside or green infrastructure sites, local facilities, services, and other destinations as appropriate.
 - f. Improvements to public transport infrastructure through upgrading bus and/or rail links, providing well-designed facilities, passenger information infrastructure, protection and enhancement of public transport routes, bus stops, provision of shelters and by appropriate contributions as necessary.
 - g. Safe and suitable access to public transport through direct provision of suitable infrastructure."

Neighbourhood Plan Policy

- 10.6 Because most road improvements can take place within the highway, they do not require planning permission and, as such, the neighbourhood plan is not an appropriate place to contain policies for their improvement. Likewise, the provision of bus services is a decision made outside the planning system. However, although the Parish Council cannot deliver highway improvements, it does have a lobbying role in delivering such measures.
- 10.7 Public rights of way provide opportunities for recreational walking, horse riding and cycling. Where feasible, improvements to the quality and extent of the public rights of way network will be supported where provided as part of development proposals.

Policy BM7 - Public Rights of Way

Measures to improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way and bridleways will be supported where:

- i. they do not extend into the Brecks Special Protection Area or its Buffer Zone, as identified on the Local Plan Policies Map;
- ii. their value as biodiversity corridors is recognised and safeguarded; and
- iii. any public right of way extension is fit for purpose.

Where practicable development proposals should incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure within the improved or extended public right of way.

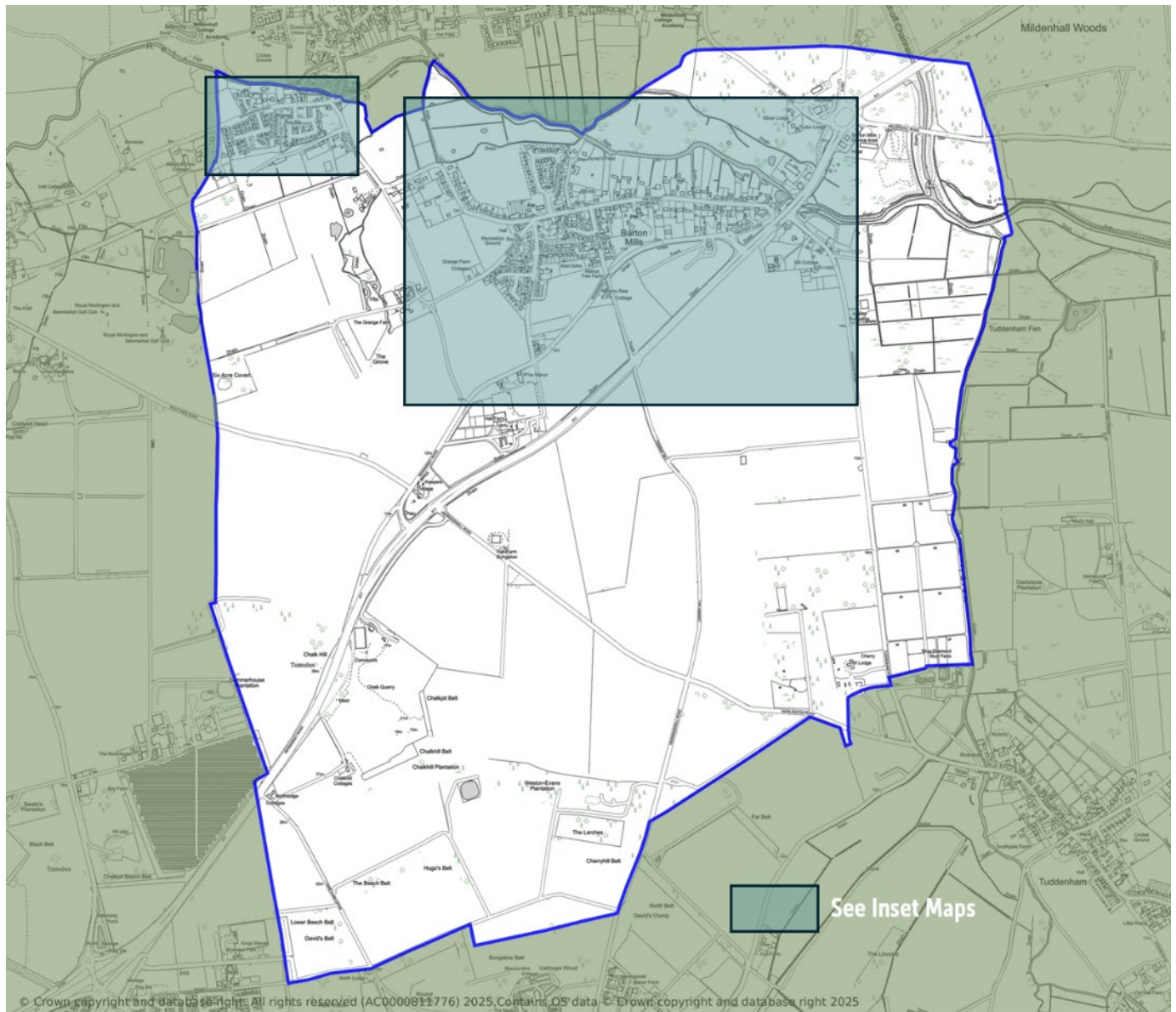
Community Aspiration

- 10.8 Our Survey contained residents' comments on issues that lie outside the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan. They can be summarised as the following:
- **A11/Fiveways.**
 - Speed and noise restrictions.
 - Peak time traffic build-up.
 - Accident risk at Worlington exit.
 - Crossing closures.
 - **Speed restrictions on Newmarket Road.**
 - Peak time traffic speed and high traffic volume through the village.
 - Concern for condition of Station Road due to high traffic volume.
 - **Lack of accessible, regular public transport.**
 - **Maintenance of public footways.**
 - Development of new pathway connecting Mace Road and Sapphire Gardens to the village.
 - **Maintenance of River Lark public footpaths.**

Community Aspiration

The Parish Council will continue to work with and lobby the various agencies responsible for the areas of highways concern raised by residents in the Neighbourhood Plan Survey as highlighted in this Plan.

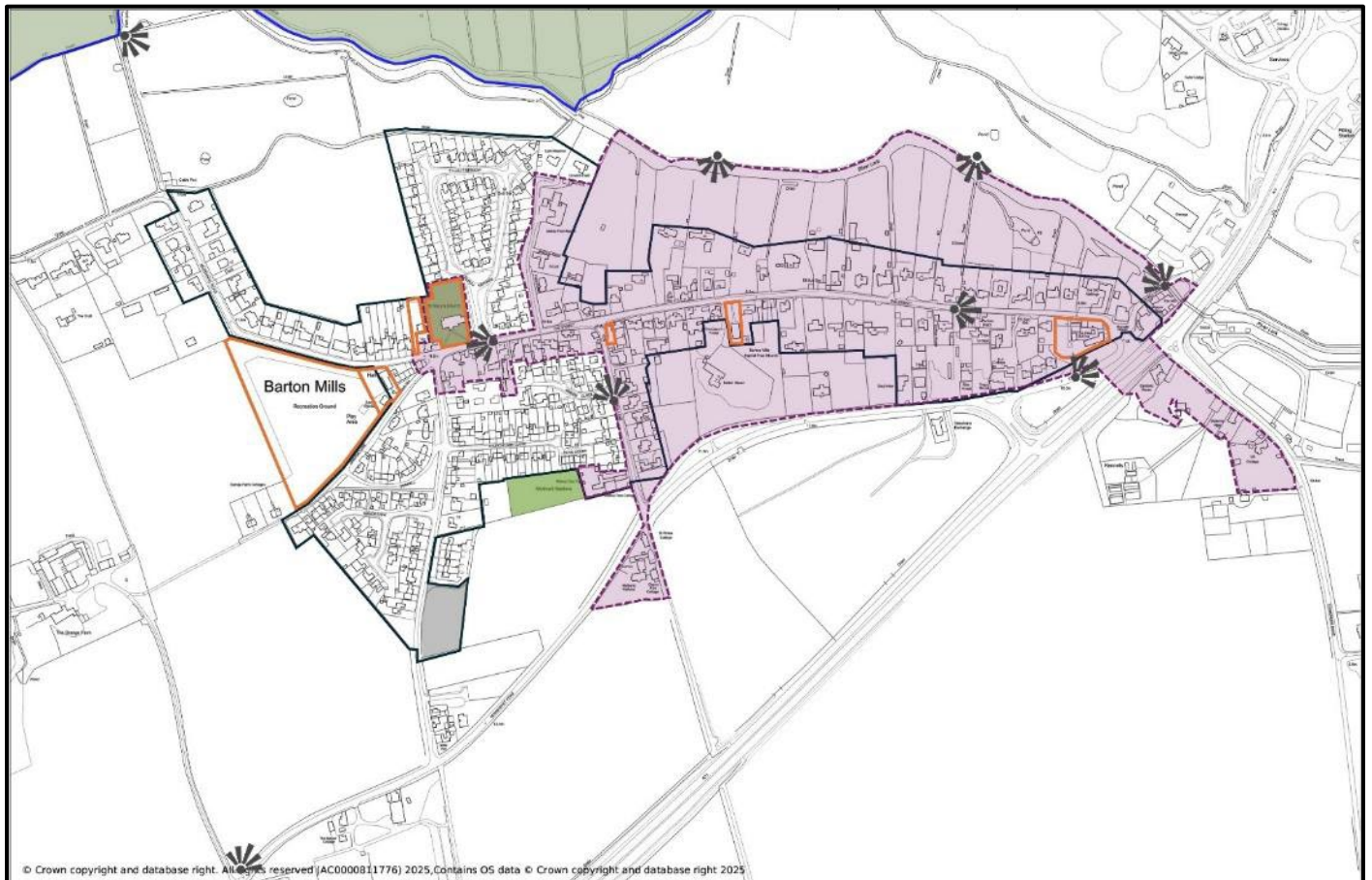
Policies Map



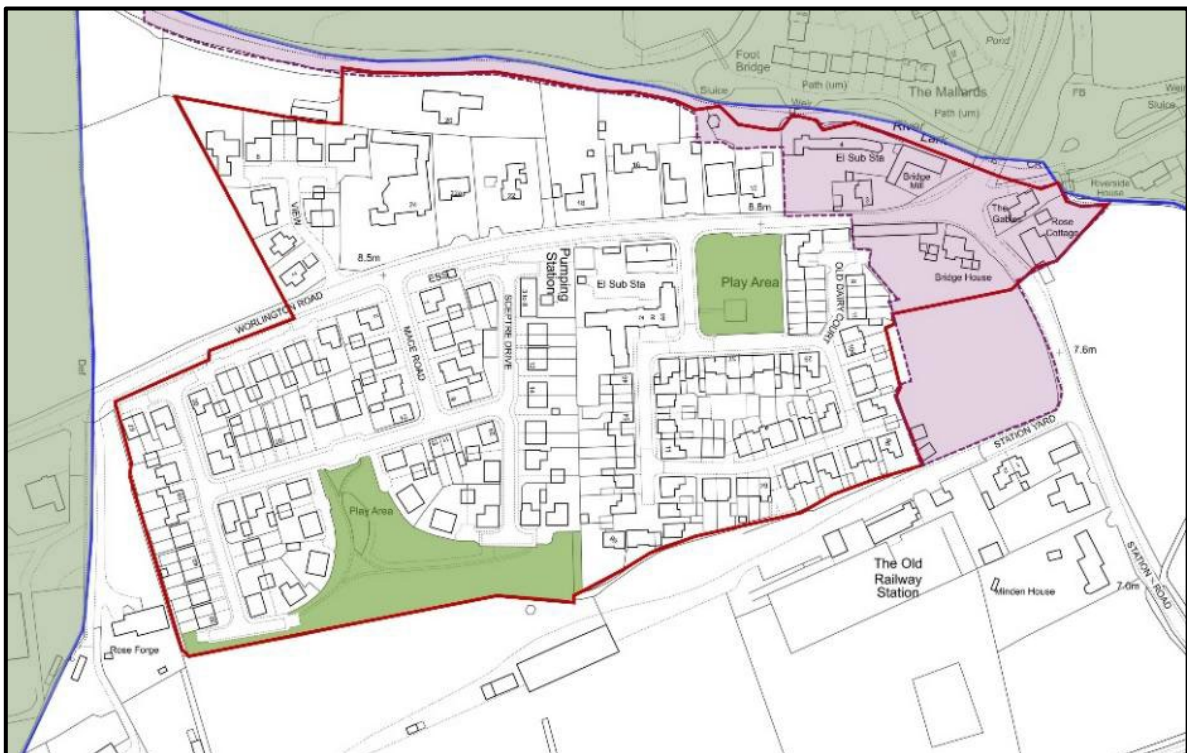
Policies Map and Inset Maps Key

	West Suffolk Local Plan Housing Settlement Boundary		Important View
	Worlington Road Housing Settlement Boundary		Conservation Area
	Local Green Space		Community Facilities

Village Centre Inset Map



Worlington Road Inset Map



Appendix 1 – Local Green Spaces Assessment

Barton Mills parish has several 'green spaces' that play a significant role in defining the character of the village and places for meeting and/or recreation. Paragraphs 106 and 107 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) identifies the possibility of identifying green spaces that meet certain characteristics as "Local Green Spaces". The paragraphs state:

'106. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

107. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.'

The following pages of this appendix provide an assessment of the green spaces in the parish identified in Policy BM3 against the criteria in paragraph 107 in order to support the designation of local green spaces in the Neighbourhood Plan.



1. St Mary's graveyard



Site Details	
Description and purpose	Parish church graveyard
Checklist	
Statutory designations	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	No outstanding planning consent
Area	0.42 Ha including church building
Ownership	Parochial Church Council
NPPF Criteria Assessment	
Close to the community it services	Centrally located in main built-up area of the village
Public access	Public access at all times
Ecologically significant	Many mature trees present within graveyard and along boundaries
Historically significant	Church is listed Grade II* The graveyard is major significance in tracing the history of the village and its residents.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The graveyard, associated with the church, is a focal point for the village.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.	Yes, totally self-contained
Is the space capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period?	Yes
Conclusion	Qualifies for Local Green Space designation

2. Parish allotments



Site Details	
Description and purpose	Parish allotments
Checklist	
Statutory designations	Statutory allotments
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	No outstanding planning consent
Area	0.41 Ha
Ownership	Parish Council
NPPF Criteria Assessment	
Close to the community it services	Centrally located on southern edge of main built-up area of the village
Public access	Access restricted to allotment holders
Ecologically significant	No ecological significance
Historically significant	No historic significance
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The allotments provide an important amenity for residents of the village.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.	Yes, totally self-contained
Is the space capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period?	Yes
Conclusion	Qualifies for Local Green Space designation

3. Mace Road open space



Site Details	
Description and purpose	Amenity open space within a recently constructed residential area that also provides a sustainable urban drainage pond
Checklist	
Statutory designations	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	No outstanding planning consent
Area	0.5 Ha
Ownership	West Suffolk Council?
NPPF Criteria Assessment	
Close to the community it services	Within the recently constructed residential development with many dwellings overlooking the space.
Public access	Public access at all times
Ecologically significant	No significance
Historically significant	No significance
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Provides important amenity and play area for the residents of this development.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.	Yes, totally self-contained
Is the space capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period?	Yes
Conclusion	Qualifies for Local Green Space designation

4. Bridge Farm Close open space and play area



Site Details	
Description and purpose	Amenity open space and equipped play area
Checklist	
Statutory designations	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	No outstanding planning consent
Area	0.18Ha
Ownership	West Suffolk Council?
NPPF Criteria Assessment	
Close to the community it services	Within the recently constructed residential development with many dwellings overlooking the space.
Public access	Public access at all times
Ecologically significant	No significance
Historically significant	No significance
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Provides important amenity and play area for the residents of this development.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.	Yes, totally self-contained
Is the space capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period?	Yes
Conclusion	Qualifies for Local Green Space designation

Appendix 2 - Design Guidelines Checklist

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Local green spaces, views and character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between hamlets?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical built pattern of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In the case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Do the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?