

# Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan

2022-2038

Pre-Submission Consultation Draft



Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2038

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November 2021

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# 1. Preface

- 1.1 This is the Pre-Submission Consultation Draft of the Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan. It has been prepared over 2020 and 2021 by the Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan Team. To ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan reflects local views and is true to its statutory origin in the idea of Localism, this Team is made up of a mixture of local residents, representatives of community groups and elected Town Councillors.
- 1.2 The Team has worked hard on the plan since it was set up in 2020 undertaking research, holding workshops, site visits and facilitating discussions. It has also undertaken two major pieces of public consultation in winter 2020/2021 and summer 2021. The Team have listened to the feedback and incorporated it into every part of this document to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan reflects local views.
- 1.3 The Team is once again seeking the community's view, this time on the draft Neighbourhood Plan as a whole, set out in the remainder of this document. The Team would be hugely grateful if you could spare some time to review the document and provide feedback on the forms provided at the end of the Plan or as set out below.
- 1.4 Following this consultation the document will be amended and submitted to South Norfolk Council for their review. It will then be the subject of further consultation organised by South Norfolk Council and then an examination by an independent planning expert known as the independent examiner. If it passes a number of tests, called the basic conditions and other legal requirements, there will be a local referendum later in the year where residents will be asked to cast a vote about whether or not they want the Plan to be finally approved. If 50% of those voting, vote to approve the Plan, then it will be used by the Town Council in making recommendations and responding to planning applications and proposals in the area and by South Norfolk Council when they determine planning applications as well as by Planning Inspectors when they determine appeals.
- 1.5 This Pre-Submission Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan will be available for consultation from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The statutory six week period has been extended by two weeks to a total of eight to account for the holidays over Christmas. It has been published online and copies have been placed in community buildings around the town. Please do take the time to review the document and tell us what you think.

## **How to review online:**

Electronic copies of the Pre-Submission Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan and response form which you can print off or fill in and e-mail, can be found on Wymondham Town Council's website and Facebook page. Completed response forms should be e-mailed to [office@inghampinnock.com](mailto:office@inghampinnock.com) or posted to the Town Council.

## **How to review hard copy:**

Paper copies of the Pre-Submission Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan and response form can be found at the Town Council Offices and Library. Completed paper response forms should be posted to the Town Council by the end of January 2022.



## 2. Introduction

### **This document**

- 2.1. This is the Pre-Submission Consultation Draft Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan or the 'Regulation 14 Consultation Draft' as it is sometimes referred. The document is the culmination of around 18 months of work by a team made up of community representatives and Town Councillors and inputs from residents and stakeholders.

### **The Neighbourhood Area**

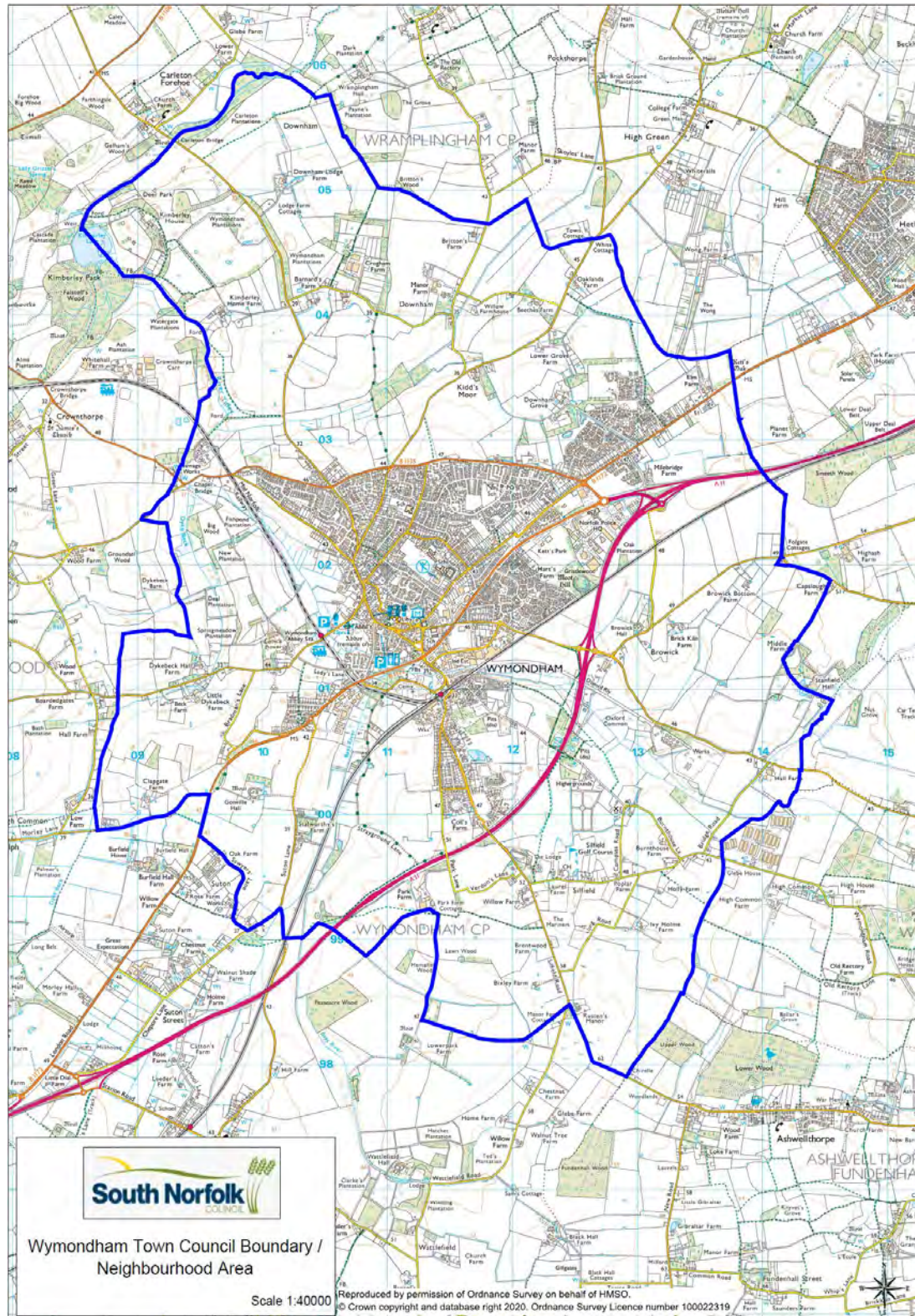
- 2.2. The area to which the Neighbourhood Plan relates is the whole civil parish of Wymondham (see overleaf). This includes the market town of Wymondham itself and its immediate rural hinterland which comprises open agricultural areas, various isolated homes, businesses and small hamlets. The Neighbourhood Area was formally established following a process of consultation in March 2020 in accordance with Regulation 5A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

- 2.3. Neighbourhood Plans such as this generally contain a vision and a series of policies and projects that seek to influence how an area changes over time. They achieve this by, once adopted, being part of the development plan. The development plan is at the heart of the planning system and there is a requirement that planning decisions must be taken in line with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This means the Plan will be one of the main considerations that the Local Authority (South Norfolk Council) will take into account when determining planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 2.4. What makes them different to most other forms of planning policy is that Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by local people for their own area, not by District or County Council officers or officers within central government departments. What is more, Neighbourhood Plans will only come into force if a majority of local people vote for them to do so in a local referendum; in this way they are strongly rooted in the views of local people.
- 2.5. The power for local community-based groups to write Neighbourhood Plans was established by the 2011 Localism Act which decentralised control over various local matters to local communities including the ability to create new planning policy via Neighbourhood Plans. Providing local communities with the ability to create their own formal planning policy means that they have a powerful say in what happens in their neighbourhoods. This is at the core of the idea of "localism" which whilst less frequently referenced these days, remains a significant innovation in planning policy.
- 2.6. The power to make planning policy comes with a responsibility to ensure that legal requirements and a number of 'basic conditions' are met. These include the need to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development, the need to ensure that local policies have regard to national policy and are in general conformity with the strategic policy in the local development plan such as the existing Joint Core Strategy (JCS). It is also useful to keep an eye on the strategy and policies in the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP). This means that Neighbourhood Plans cannot generally deviate significantly from the planning trajectory

set by national and local strategic policies for example, by seeking to veto housing development that is already allocated. So whilst Neighbourhood Plans give local communities a great deal of power, there are limits to what these documents can do.

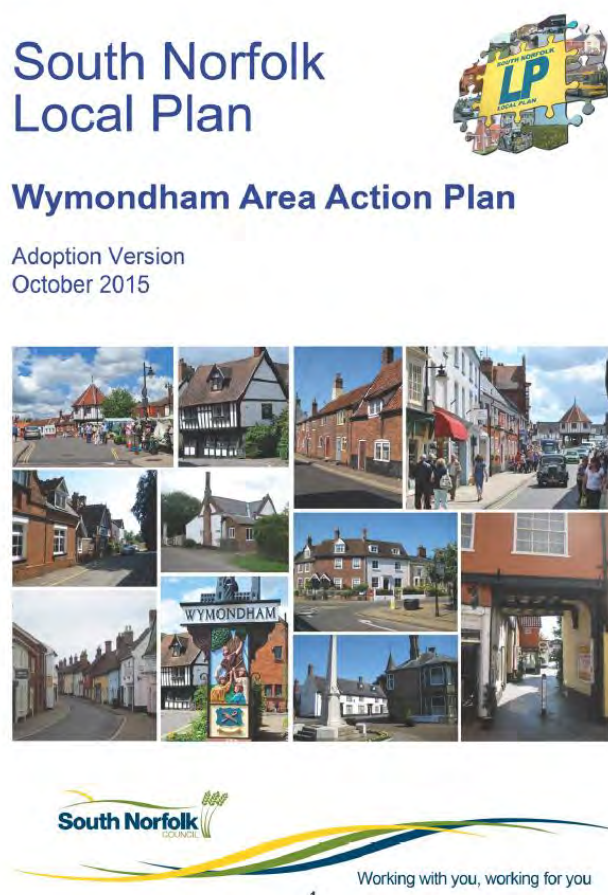
**Figure 1: Plan showing the extent of the Neighbourhood Plan area**





- 2.7. In addition to the existing JCS and emerging GNLP, Wymondham benefits from another layer of more localised planning policy in the form of an Area Action Plan that was adopted in 2015. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to replace the AAP, rather it seeks to supplement it and add a new layer of detail, where relevant.

**Figure 2: Image showing the front cover the Wymondham Area Action Plan (2015)**



- 2.8. Notwithstanding the constraints noted above, the real value and power of Neighbourhood Plans is their ability to deal with local level or fine-grained issues that planning policies covering much larger areas such as South Norfolk simply cannot accommodate. In this case, for example, they can help to safeguard views of Wymondham Abbey or deal with improvements to specific parts of the town centre such as Back Lane.

#### **Neighbourhood Plan lifespan**

- 2.9. The intended lifespan of the Plan is from 2022 to 2038 which reflects the lifespan of the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan. The GNLP is being produced by the Greater Norwich Development Partnership which comprises South Norfolk Council, Broadland District Council and Norwich City Council and covers an area that includes Wymondham.



### 3. About Wymondham

#### Location

- 3.1. The civil parish of Wymondham is located roughly in the centre of Norfolk, around 10 miles to the south-west of the city of Norwich. It is located by the A11 dual carriageway which is a major arterial route linking Norwich with Thetford and other towns and cities to the south.

**Figure 3: Map showing the location of Wymondham in the east of England (Wymondham is marked with a red pin)**



Source: Google Maps

#### Local government context

- 3.2. The Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan area is in South Norfolk District (Local Authority) within the County of Norfolk. It adjoins the parishes of Spooner Row to the south, Wicklewood and Kimberley to the west, Wrampingham and Great Melton to the north, Hetherset, Bracon Ash and Wreningham to the east. By geographic size, the civil parish of Wymondham is one of the largest parishes in Norfolk

#### Historical development

- 3.3. Archaeological investigations suggest that human activity in Wymondham dates back to at least the Iron Age and possibly earlier (Wymondham, A Pleasant Place, 2020). However, the

beginnings of the settlement we recognise today probably began in Saxon times around the site of the Abbey where there was thought to be a Saxon Church in the Abbey Meadows (Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan/CAAMP, 2012)

- 3.4. Thereafter the early history of the town is dominated by the Priory which was built between 1107 and 1130; by 1150 the market was thriving, a fair charter had been granted, and Wymondham developed into a recognisable market town. The CAAMP notes that the known history of the town at this time was dominated by quarrels between the monks and the parishioners!
- 3.5. With the dissolution of the monasteries under King Henry VIII the Abbey was all but demolished apart from the central tower and the nave. Only a few domestic buildings survive from this period such the Green Dragon pub primarily due to a major fire in 1615 which is thought to have destroyed around 300 buildings. Among the many casualties of the fire was the Market Cross; the present building was finished in 1618 and has since been restored several times (CAAMP, 2012).
- 3.6. The economy of the town at this time was driven by wood turning and a thriving weaving industry which provided the wealth to pay for many of the fine 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings we see today. Clues to this can be seen in the intricate carvings on the Market Cross which illustrate tops, spindles, spoons and other items being used or produced locally.
- 3.7. The CAAMP notes that with increasing competition from Yorkshire, the weaving industry, and with it the town, underwent a period of decline in the 19th century that was exacerbated by the agricultural depression in the 1870's. It notes that the town escaped large-scale development during this period which explains why Victorian buildings in the town are therefore relatively hard to find.
- 3.8. The majority of the footprint of Wymondham that we know today dates from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the land between arterial routes being gradually developed for housing on higher land away from the Tiffey valley. The eastern boundary of the town was set by the railway, and then by the old A11 (Harts Farm Road) and now by the new A11 dual carriageway with development hurdling the old boundary and edging closer to the new. Growth has been driven by proximity to Norwich and the enviable transportation links provided by the A11, with access to the A47 and the railway providing rapid access to the regional hubs of Cambridge and Norwich.

#### *Did you know...*

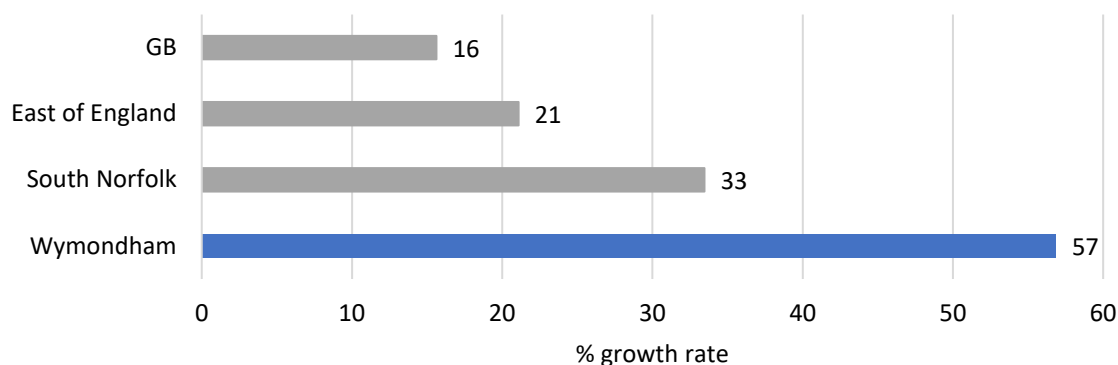
- 3.9. *The name "Wymondham" probably derives from the Old English "ham" (village or homestead) of "Wigmund" (a Saxon name).*

#### **The local community**

- 3.10. Wymondham is the largest settlement in South Norfolk. The population (of the parish) is around 17,000 which is around 12% of the total population of the District.
- 3.11. The population of Wymondham has grown significantly over the last few decades as can be seen from the numerous modern housing estates that have been built around the town. To give an indication of the scale of recent growth, in 1991 the population of the town was around 10,000 compared to nearly 17,000 today. The graph below puts this growth into context by

illustrating the percentage growth rate of the population of Wymondham relative to South Norfolk, East of England and Great Britain as a whole over the period 1991-2018; it clearly shows that the rate of growth in Wymondham is far greater than other areas.

**Figure 4: Graph showing the percentage change in population from 1991-2018**



Source: ONS

- 3.12. Analysis of various sets of demographic data from the 2011 Census combines to suggest that Wymondham is a popular town for families; age breakdown statistics for example illustrate that Wymondham has higher proportions of school age children and people in their 30s and 40s than is the case across the rest of South Norfolk. This is perhaps driven by the cluster of schools and services in the town (and Wymondham College) and accessibility to the major regional centre of Norwich which will doubtless act as a draw for working age families.
- 3.13. The analysis also suggests a relatively well educated and affluent town with limited evidence of deprivation. Levels of economic activity amongst residents are high, people are generally well qualified and working in higher order occupations, in line with trends across South Norfolk.
- 3.14. One of the most interesting statistics drawn out of the research relates to where people live and work. Data relating to the distance that people travel to work suggests that around 18% of working age residents probably live and work in Wymondham but around 45% of people are travelling between 5km and 20km to work, most probably to Norwich and its satellite of employment areas. This data highlights the economic pull factor of Norwich on Wymondham.
- 3.15. Alongside data on commuting distance, despite the fact that nearly 50% of people probably travel to Norwich for work and the presence of a direct rail link, only around 1% of people are travelling to work by train.

### **Community Infrastructure**

- 3.16. Wymondham contains several major community facilities including Wymondham Leisure Centre, Wymondham Library and the Ketts Park Community and Recreation Centre. The town also contains a number of important green spaces such as Tolls Meadow, the Lizard and several smaller formal and informal recreation grounds and informal green spaces.
- 3.17. In terms of education provision Wymondham has a large secondary school (Wymondham High) and several primary and nursery schools such as Robert Kett Primary School. Wymondham College is outside of the Plan area to the south. There are several GP surgeries and dentists.



- 3.18. The town centre contains various independent and national multiple retailers and retail services such as banks and building societies. Away from the town centre Wymondham benefits from a Morrisons supermarket, a Waitrose and Lidl.

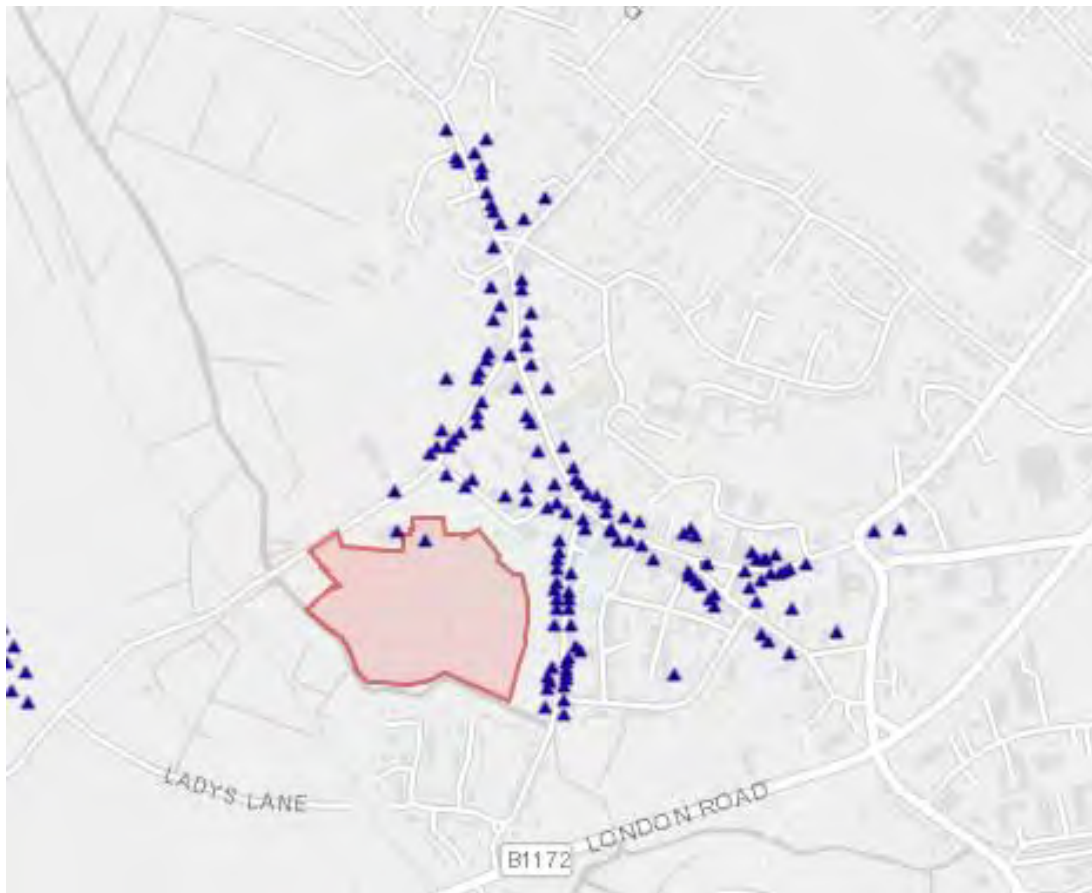
### **The local economy**

- 3.19. Historically employment was focussed around the town centre and, more recently in the early 20th century at the Ayton Road area which provides an historic traditional mixed industrial estate. Developing partly as a result of its proximity to the rail network, the area today includes a range of general and light industrial uses as well as some retail.
- 3.20. Wymondham is also the location of two more modern business parks. The A11 Business Park is located at the northern end of the town, as the name suggests on the junction of the A11 and is home to the HQ of Norfolk Police. The third and most modern employment area is Wymondham Business Park to the south of the town centre which contains a range of modern offices.
- 3.21. In addition to these traditional employment estates, Wymondham is home to a number of interesting heritage attractions that contribute towards the visitor economy of the town:
- Wymondham Abbey
  - Becket's Chapel (currently the subject of a live restoration proposal)
  - Wymondham Heritage Centre
- 3.22. These destinations are located along an axis from one end of the town centre to the other with the attractive Market Place in the centre which is home to the unusual Market Cross building which houses a small tourist information centre.

### **Heritage assets**

- 3.23. Wymondham is rich in heritage, most notably of course with the Abbey which is a scheduled monument and Grade I Listed. In total, the Plan area contains around 170 designated heritage assets, most of which are Listed buildings in the town centre. In addition to the Abbey and Listed Buildings, Wymondham is also the home of Moot Hill, a large earthwork to the north east of the town centre by the A11 which is a scheduled monument and Kimberley Hall park which is a registered parkland to designs by Capability Brown and itself contains a number of scheduled monuments and Listed buildings. In addition to these designations Wymondham also benefits from two Conservation Areas, one covering a large part of the town centre and another covering the Lizard.

**Figure 5: Plan showing the concentration of Listed Buildings in Wymondham town centre. Listed Buildings are indicated by the blue triangles, the red polygon is showing the extent of the Wymondham Abbey scheduled monument.**



Source: Historic England

### **Environmental assets**

- 3.24. In contrast to the large number of heritage designations in Wymondham, the town is the location of relatively few environmental designations with Toll's Meadow as the sole Local Nature Reserve, which is a statutory designation.

#### *Did you know...*

- 3.25. *Local Nature Reserves are for people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. They range from windswept coastal headlands, ancient woodlands and flower-rich meadows to former inner city railways, long abandoned landfill sites and industrial areas now re-colonised by wildlife. They are an impressive natural resource which makes an important contribution to England's biodiversity (Natural England).*
- 3.26. Away from Tolls Meadow, Wymondham is home to a large number of other pieces of green infrastructure including several County Wildlife Sites, Priority Wetland Habitats (Lowland Fens), Priority Grassland Habitats (floodplain, lowland meadows, semi-improved grassland such as the Lizard etc.) and other un-designated areas such as the woodland around Ketts Park.

## 4. A vision and objectives for Wymondham

- 4.1. The Neighbourhood Plan for Wymondham has at its heart a long-term vision for the area and a series of more detailed strategic objectives.
- 4.2. True to the ethos of Neighbourhood Planning the vision set out in this document is based on the views and aspirations of local people. In the winter of 2020/2021, the Neighbourhood Plan Team consulted with local residents and asked them for their ideas on a vision for the area. The local community stepped up to the challenge and responded in great number with over 250 different vision statements submitted.

**Figure 6: Illustration showing a ‘word cloud’ of popular words used by local people when asked to write down their vision for Wymondham**



- 4.3. Riven through the huge number of suggested visions provided by the community were a series of common themes such as maintaining a traditional character and peoples fondness for Wymondham’s market town identity. Following a process of analysis and testing within the team a draft vision statement for the Plan was prepared as set out below.

### **WYMONDHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VISION STATEMENT**

**‘ONE WYMONDHAM: A TRADITIONAL AND VIBRANT MARKET TOWN IN THE NORFOLK COUNTRYSIDE, WITH AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THAT VALUES ITS HERITAGE AND GREENSPACES WHILST EMBRACING THE FUTURE.’**

- 4.4. This vision was tested through a consultation that took place over summer 2021 and was met with overwhelming support.
- 4.5. The purpose of the vision is to provide an overarching direction for the Neighbourhood Plan. It is not supposed to be detailed or particularly technical but capture how local people see their part of the world and how they want it to be in the future.



- 4.6. Alongside the high-level vision, the Neighbourhood Plan Team has also developed a series of more detailed strategic objectives. In contrast to the vision, the objectives seek to address specific thematic or geographic issues. They provide a starting point for measuring progress and a point of reference for assessing performance and it should follow that, if the objectives are cumulatively met, the vision will be achieved.
- 4.7. The objectives for the Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan have emerged from consultation, research and discussion within the Neighbourhood Plan Team. Just like the vision, the draft objectives were tested with the community in 2021 and met with overwhelming support. They are set out below:

#### **WYMONDHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN OBJECTIVES**

**OBJECTIVE 1: INCLUSION: THE PLAN SHOULD PROMOTE IMPROVED PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OF ALL COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE TOWN**

**OBJECTIVE 2: TRADITIONAL MARKET TOWN CHARACTER: THE PLAN SHOULD SEEK TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE CHARACTERISTICS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF WYMONDHAM AS A LIVING, WORKING HISTORIC MARKET TOWN**

**OBJECTIVE 3: RURAL SETTING: THE PLAN SHOULD SEEK TO MAINTAIN THE SETTING OF WYMONDHAM AS A DISCRETE TOWN SURROUNDED BY HIGH QUALITY COUNTRYSIDE**

**OBJECTIVE 4: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE: THE PLAN SHOULD SEEK TO ENSURE THAT THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE KEEPS-UP WITH THE GROWTH OF THE TOWN**

**OBJECTIVE 5: TOWN CENTRE: THE PLAN MUST CONSERVE THE TRADITIONAL TOWN CENTRE AND HELP IT TO ADJUST TO CHANGING CONSUMER TRENDS AND PREFERENCES FOR SHOPPING, WORKING AND LEISURE**

**OBJECTIVE 6: SUSTAINABILITY: THE PLAN MUST SEEK TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF WYMONDHAM, MITIGATING THE IMPACTS OF A CHANGING CLIMATE AND ADAPTING TO FUTURE CONDITIONS**

**OBJECTIVE 7: THE PLAN MUST PROMOTE IMPROVING ACCESS AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED AND PROMOTE IMPROVED PERMEABILITY OF BUILT UP AREAS ACROSS THE TOWN FOR ALL**

**OBJECTIVE 8: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: THE PLAN MUST PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF STRATEGIC AND LOCAL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE SITES AND NETWORKS**

## 5. Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- 5.1. This section of the Plan sets out the policies that have been developed by the Neighbourhood Plan Team in response to their research and consultation with the local community. The policies are the main focus of the Plan as the tools that will be used by South Norfolk Council when they are considering planning applications that come forward in the Plan area.
- 5.2. There are nine policies in total covering a range of issues. The policies have been arranged under two headings as follows:

### **Town centre policies**

POLICY 1: TOWN CENTRE VIBRANCY  
POLICY 2: BACK LANE  
POLICY 3: PLANNING PUBLIC REALM

### **Thematic policies**

POLICY 4: EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN  
POLICY 5: IMPORTANT VIEWS AND VISTAS  
POLICY 6: STRATEGIC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK  
POLICY 7: WYMONDHAM GREEN RIBBONS/LOCAL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK  
POLICY 8: INTEGRATION AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL  
POLICY 9: ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

## **Town Centre Policies: Vibrancy**

### Background

- 5.3. Our town centres are going through a period of long-term and fundamental change. Shopping and related services such as banking, which for well over a century have formed the focus for our town centres and high streets, are taking place increasingly online and via large footprint out of town stores and supermarkets. This type of activity is happening less and less in our town centres and high streets and as a result we regularly see historic stalwarts closing stores or going out of business and the 'retail footprint' of town centres getting smaller.
- 5.4. This trend shows no sign of abating with the proportion of retail activity undertaken online in particular increasing consistently year after year. In many places, retailers with fixed premises and additional costs such as high-street rents and business rates are struggling to compete and many are closing and/or switching their trading platform to online.
- 5.5. The sudden impact of the coronavirus pandemic on this long-term trend is still being borne out. In some places there is evidence to suggest that smaller, local centres have fared well and people have re-connected with their local shops and their '15 minute neighbourhoods' but in others, the significant loss of trade has simply accelerated their decline.
- 5.6. Wymondham has a large and expansive historic retail centre; it extends from Town Green in the west through to Fairlands in the east with several side streets with shops branching off, in total this extends over a length of nearly 600 metres. Wymondham's retail footprint was established in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and in the face of the long-term shift in shopping habits will change and adapt over the coming years.
- 5.7. Whilst we are still very much in this period of transition and it is too soon to confidently predict what town centres will look like in 20 or 30 years, it does appear that there is a trend towards people using them more for leisure and lifestyle and less for everyday retail. So, for example the idea of 'café culture' and the growth in coffee shops is a sign that people are using town centres more to socialise than they did in the past and the occurrence of niche or lifestyle retailers such as antiques, crafts or speciality food and drink or services such as barbers and beauty salons is a sign that people are using town centres as part of a lifestyle rather than for pure convenience.

### Objective

- 5.8. The objective of this policy is not to try to second guess the role that town centres will play in the next 10 years but to create a framework to ensure that Wymondham town centre will be able to adapt whilst fundamentally continuing to play its role as the vibrant heart of Wymondham. In promoting vibrancy, the policy is seeking to encourage a varied mixture of uses, high levels of footfall throughout the day and evening, high levels of occupancy, attractive and well maintained buildings and varied patterns of use and activity taking place in the public realm



## **POLICY 1: TOWN CENTRE VIBRANCY**

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO, AND HELP TO IMPROVE THE OVERALL VIBRANCY OF THE TOWN CENTRE; THIS INCLUDES THE SENSITIVE REDEVELOPMENT OF POOR QUALITY BUILDINGS AND SITES. THE PLAN SUPPORTS PROPOSALS FOR SENSITIVE RETAIL, LEISURE AND EMPLOYMENT USES IN THE TOWN CENTRE THAT HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO GENERATE HIGH LEVELS OF FOOTFALL THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND EVENING AND HELP INCREASE ACTIVITY. THE PLAN ENCOURAGES PROPOSALS TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:

- **ACTIVE FRONTAGES THAT HELP TO MAKE THE TOWN CENTRE ATTRACTIVE TO BOTH RESIDENTS AND VISITORS AND FEEL BUSY**
- **USES THAT UTILISE OR HELP TO INCREASE ACTIVITY IN THE PUBLIC REALM**
- **EMPLOYMENT OR RESIDENTIAL USE AT FIRST FLOOR AND ABOVE**
- **IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PUBLIC REALM SUCH AS LIGHTING, PLANTING, SEATING AND IMPROVED SURFACING**
- **INSERTING NEW USES ALONG THE LENGTH OF ALLEYWAYS AND PEDESTRIAN LINKS**
- **IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS**
- **RETAINING OR PROVIDING COHERENT OPEN SPACES BETWEEN SEPARATE DEVELOPMENTS.**

*Did you know...*

- 5.9.** *The term 'active frontage' means 'ground floors with windows and doors onto the street which create interest and activity' (Bradford City Design Guide).*

### **Town Centre Policies: Back Lane**

#### Background

- 5.10. The historic nature of Wymondham and its prosperity during periods from the past has left a legacy in the shape and form of the town that we see today. Whether it is the large open medieval Market Place or the street pattern around the Abbey or more recently the limited Victorian growth around the two railway stations, the shape and appearance of the town is so often driven by the economics and politics of times past.
- 5.11. Back Lane is a good example of this. Historically development in Wymondham ran along main thoroughfares such as Damgate, Bridewell Street, Middleton Street and Market Street, centred around the Market Place. Individual properties or 'burghage plots' comprised narrow strips extending back from the street with most commonly a building at the front and open yards, workshops, barns or gardens to the rear. The front of the properties formed a neat and what is now, highly attractive street frontage filled with shops and businesses and homes. The very rear of the properties was much less defined often just petering out and merging into what was at the time likely to be open fields, lanes or countryside. You can see this quite easily today as you walk along Back Lane and view the rear of properties that front onto the Market Street, with, very often, historic barns and yard areas still visible.

- 5.12. Unlike parts of Brewery Lane on the other side of the Market Place, where the backs of the plots have been developed out to create a second contiguous street, Back Lane still feels very much like an area of back-lands, despite the fact that Wymondham has grown significantly beyond this point. The Lane itself snakes around from Bridewell Street to Pople Street; in some places there is a pavement, in others pedestrians are forced into the highway; the Back Lane Car Park, whilst vital, has a confusing layout; in some places the rear of properties on Market Place are open with bin stores and private car parks, in other places there are remnants of historic walls and gateways.

*Did you know...*

- 5.13. *Burghage plots are a typical form of medieval property which may have originally been owned by the Crown or local Lord of the Manor and rented to a local tenant and being the owner or tenant of a burghage was the basis of the right to vote in many boroughs!*

#### Objective

- 5.14. The objective of this policy is to improve the function and appearance of Back Lane; to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and improve and enhance the historic setting as well as more modern landmark buildings such as the Library.

#### **POLICY 2: BACK LANE**

**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS PROPOSALS FOR THE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT OF BACK-LAND PLOTS ALONG BACK LANE TO HELP IMPROVE THE FUNCTION AND APPEARANCE OF THIS AREA. THIS INCLUDES ANIMATING THE ALLEYS LINKING BACK LANE TO THE TOWN CENTRE BY INTRODUCING NEW USES WITH ACTIVE FRONTAGES AND GENERALLY IMPROVING THEIR ATTRACTIVENESS AND APPEAL.**

**WHERE RELEVANT, PROPOSALS SHOULD SEEK TO RATIONALISE CAR PARKING PROVISION AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC REALM. A PARTICULAR FOCUS SHOULD BE ON IMPROVING ORIENTATION BETWEEN THIS AREA AND THE TOWN CENTRE, IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY AND INTRODUCING SOFT LANDSCAPING AND PLANTING.**

**PROPOSALS SHOULD TAKE PARTICULAR CARE TO ENSURE THAT THEIR LAYOUT AND DESIGN, INCLUDING THE SCALE, MASSING AND EXTERNAL TREATMENTS CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCING THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE TOWN CENTRE AND HELP TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE CONSERVATION AREA AND THE SETTING OF ANY LISTED BUILDINGS WITHOUT REMOVING THE HISTORIC PATTERN OF BURGHAGE PLOTS.**

#### **Town Centre Policies: Public realm**

##### Background

- 5.15. The historic nature of Wymondham means that the town centre is full of small areas or pockets of public space or incidental public realm in addition to the more obvious formal example of the Market Place itself. Some of pockets these are well defined with clear boundaries such as Fairlands or the area around the Market Place, others have become established almost accidentally in the spaces between buildings and the highway such as outside Barclays or outside the bakers and chip shop on the corner of Queen Street and Market Place

*Did you know...*

*5.16. The term 'public realm' refers to the space between and within buildings that is publicly accessible, including streets, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces (The London Plan).*

- 5.17. Alongside this, the scale of some of the roads and junctions in Wymondham dates back to a time before the town centre was bypassed, firstly by Harts Farm Road and more recently by the A11. In these places the highway and junctions are designed to accommodate a volume of traffic that has long since gone; the most obvious example of this is perhaps the junction of Bridewell Street and Avenue Road where there is a huge expanse of highway, dominating the setting of the Wymondham Heritage Museum and making it difficult for pedestrians to cross.
- 5.18. Finally, it is symptomatic of many places that where there are pockets of public space that aren't part of the highway or apparently part of a pedestrian thoroughfare, clutter accumulates. This could be utilities cabinets, general waste bins, recycling bins, planters, street lighting, benches, bike stands, signage, interpretation, public art, railings, bollards and traffic signs. There is doubtless justification for each one of these items in its own right that makes them entirely necessary at a point in time. However, in many cases these things have collected over time without regard to the cumulative impact on the appearance or functionality of their location. In some places they occupy parts of the public realm in such number so as to create an obstruction and render a valuable part of the town centre unusable
- 5.19. The Wymondham Town Centre Strategy (2018) and the South Norfolk Place Making Guide (2021) provide more information and analysis of the above and are a useful reference.

Objective

- 5.20. The objective of this policy is to put the welfare and amenity of pedestrians and Wymondham town centre first. It is accepted that measures within the policy will not be implemented immediately or in a single phase but the objective is to establish a framework by which parts of the town centre can be improved or reclaimed for the local community over time and to ensure that future installation of infrastructure or street furniture is done in a coherent way that is mindful of cumulative impact.

**POLICY 3: PLANNING PUBLIC REALM**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THAT IMPROVE THE PUBLIC REALM ACROSS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA WILL BE SUPPORTED. FOR EXAMPLE, THE PLAN SUPPORTS A REDUCTION IN WIDTH OF THE ROADS IN THE TOWN CENTRE AND THE WIDENING OF PAVEMENTS, THE CREATION OF MORE PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY AREAS, BETTER STREET SURFACES, NEW PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS, DE-CLUTTERING, NEW PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES SUCH AS SEATING AND THE CAREFUL INTRODUCTION OF PLANTING AND STREET TREES**

**IN PARTICULAR PROPOSALS THAT CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS PLACEMAKING AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC REALM IN LOCATIONS IDENTIFIED BY THE WYMONDHAM TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY (2018) AND VIA CONSULTATION AS FOLLOWS WILL BE SUPPORTED**

- **BRIDEWELL JUNCTION**
- **TOWN GREEN JUNCTION**

- **MARKET PLACE**
- **MARKET STREET CAR PARK**
- **OLD FIRE STATION ARCH (ENTRANCE TO MARKET STREET CAR PARK) AND WHARTON COURT**
- **BACK LANE CAR PARK**
- **AROUND BECKET'S CHAPEL**
- **PRIORY GARDENS**
- **AROUND THE WAR MEMORIAL**
- **ALLEYWAYS IN THE TOWN CENTRE.**



## Thematic Policies: Design

### Background

- 5.21. Research undertaken in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan highlighted how significantly Wymondham has grown over the last few decades. This significant growth has occurred through the building of a large number of new housing estates such as at Harts Farm and more recently at Silfield. The quality of the urban design and architecture of these new estates has improved over time but is not consistently as high as it might be.
- 5.22. In parallel to undertaking this research, community consultation has highlighted that local people feel strongly about Wymondham's history and protecting its own unique appearance identity as a large, historic and important market town in Norfolk. These qualities are part of what attracts people to Wymondham and goes some way to explaining its enduring appeal
- 5.23. The Neighbourhood Plan Team recognise that the regulations around Neighbourhood Planning limit what the document can do in terms of new housing development; indeed there is a strong feeling coming from public consultation that the town does need to continue to evolve and change to remain relevant and attractive. However, the Team is keen that any new development is built to the highest possible standards of urban design and architecture. In this way, new development can enhance the existing character of the town and contribute positively to its identity in a range of ways such as through a sensitive choice of materials, architectural details, density, relationship to greenspaces.

### *Did you know...*

- 5.24. The South Norfolk Place Making Guide identified a series of characteristics that are particular to Wymondham and help to give the look and feel that local people value so much. These important characteristics include:*

- *A tightly defined 'urban grain'*
- *Narrow "burgage" plots in the town's historic core*
- *The Market Place and unusual Market Cross providing a focal point to the town*
- *Streets that vary in width with changes in level that often open up onto squares and crossing points*
- *A high quality of craftsmanship and design*

### Objective

- 5.25. The objective of this policy is to raise the standard of the design of new homes, employment space, infrastructure and public spaces in Wymondham in the future to a consistently high standard. In doing so, the policy will conserve and enhance the character of the town for future generations and ensure that Wymondham retains its unique identity and appeal
- 5.26. Rather than trying to prescribe what good design is, the policy points people in the direction of a range of guidance that already exists. This includes:
- National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places (2021), prepared by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities
  - South Norfolk Place Making Guide (2012), prepared by South Norfolk Council

- Wymondham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (2021), prepared by South Norfolk Council.

#### **POLICY 4: EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN**

**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS DEVELOPMENT WHICH DEMONSTRATES THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE TO HELP REINFORCE WYMONDHAM'S UNIQUE AND SPECIAL CHARACTER AND SENSE OF PLACE. THIS INCLUDES THE DESIGN OF NEW HOUSING, WORK SPACE, RETAIL SPACE, STREETS AND LANDSCAPE. PROPOSALS FOR NEW HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD REFER TO THE NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE AND OTHER LOCAL DESIGN GUIDANCE AND DEMONSTRATE THROUGH THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPROPRIATE AND PROPORTIONATE DESIGN STATEMENT HOW THEY HAVE RESPONDED TO THE 10 CHARACTERISTICS FOR GOOD DESIGN:**

- **CONTEXT**
- **IDENTITY**
- **BUILT FORM**
- **MOVEMENT**
- **NATURE**
- **PUBLIC SPACES**
- **USES**
- **HOMES & BUILDINGS**
- **RESOURCES**
- **LIFESPAN**

**HAVING TAKEN ACCOUNT OF DESIGN GUIDANCE PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ENSURING THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT BLENDS SEAMLESSLY WITH THE EXISTING TOWN, CREATING A COHERENT PLACE IN TERMS OF DESIGN AND CONNECTIVITY.**

**NEW DEVELOPMENT MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE PROVISION OF NECESSARY SOCIAL AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AND AT AN APPROPRIATE STAGE.**

#### **Thematic Policies: Views and vistas**

##### Background

- 5.27. Wymondham is located in an area of landscape characterised by the South Norfolk Place Making Guide (2012), as 'Wymondham Settled Plateau Farmland', the key characteristics of which include:

- Large expanses of flat landform with little variation over long distances with strong open horizons
- Settled landscape with large edge-of-plateau towns and villages such as Wymondham
- Long views from plateau edge

5.28. This plateau is dominated to the west of Wymondham by the much-loved Tiffey river valley, the Tiffey being a tributary of the River Yare. This valley is identified as a unique local landscape in its own right by the 2012 Placemaking work with a number of characteristics including:

- Presence of attractive historic bridges over the river, mostly constructed of brick
- Important buildings including Wymondham Abbey and churches and mills forming landmark features
- Important views including the view to Wymondham Abbey across the river valley

5.29. What is notable about both landscape characterisations is the frequent reference to the importance of views and how important they are in defining the places.

5.30. On a very practical level this characterisation is immediately familiar to anyone who has spent time in Wymondham. Travelling along Chapel Lane along the ridge of the Tiffey valley for example, the Abbey dominates the long-view, rising up above the horizon, or moving through the town centre there are glimpsed views of the tower rising above all of the other buildings such as on Brewery Lane. Venturing out into the countryside there are equally attractive views where the landscape starts to undulate as the river valley and ditch lines cut through farmland to shape long, winding views, highly attractive examples of which can be seen looking away from Wymondham along the Lizard or looking north and east towards Kids Moor.

5.31. Consultation established that these views and others are highly valued by local people and help to define Wymondham's own unique sense of place. The views of the Abbey are of a high heritage value and might be considered nationally significant, akin to glimpses of Ely Cathedral across the Fen, for example.

#### Objective

5.32. The objective of this policy is to preserve and enhance important views in and around Wymondham so that the features of these views and vistas can be enjoyed by future generations and go on defining Wymondham's unique character.

### **POLICY 5: IMPORTANT VIEWS AND VISTAS**

**THE PLAN SEEKS TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE VIEWS OF WYMONDHAM ABBEY, THE TIFFEY VALLEY, THE LIZARD AND ACROSS HIGH-QUALITY COUNTRYSIDE TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE TOWN. ANY DEVELOPMENT OR ALTERATIONS TO AN AREA WITHIN THESE VIEWS MUST ENSURE THAT KEY FEATURES OF THE VIEW CAN CONTINUE TO BE ENJOYED INCLUDING LANDMARK BUILDINGS, OPEN COUNTRYSIDE AND THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE TOWN AND ITS SURROUNDINGS. DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE VIEWS THAT IS OVERLY INTRUSIVE, UNSIGHTLY OR PROMINENT TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE VIEW AS A WHOLE SHOULD BE AVOIDED.**

**ABBAY VIEWS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE INCLUDE THOSE FROM:**

- I. CHAPEL LANE (LONG VIEW OF ABBEY IN DISTANCE ACROSS TIFFEY VALLEY)**
- II. BRADMAN'S LANE (LONG VIEW OF ABBEY IN DISTANCE ACROSS OPEN COUNTRYSIDE)**
- III. VICAR STREET (URBAN VIEW OF ABBEY TOWER FRAMED BY HISTORIC BUILDINGS)**
- IV. BREWERY LANE (URBAN VIEW OF ABBEY TOWER FRAMED BY HISTORIC BUILDINGS)**

**COUNTRYSIDE VIEWS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE INCLUDE THOSE FROM:**

- V. TUTTLES LANE WEST LOOKING NORTH TOWARDS KIDD'S MOOR & CARLTON FOREHOE  
(LONG VIEW ACROSS OPEN COUNTRYSIDE)**
- VI. THE LIZARD LOOKING EAST ALONG THE TIFFEY VALLEY (LONG VIEW ALONG TIFFEY  
VALLEY)**
- VII. BRADMAN'S LANE LOOKING WEST (LONG VIEW ACROSS OPEN COUNTRYSIDE)**
- VIII. CHAPEL LANE LOOKING WEST ACROSS THE TIFFEY VALLEY (LONG VIEW ACROSS TIFFEY  
VALLEY)**

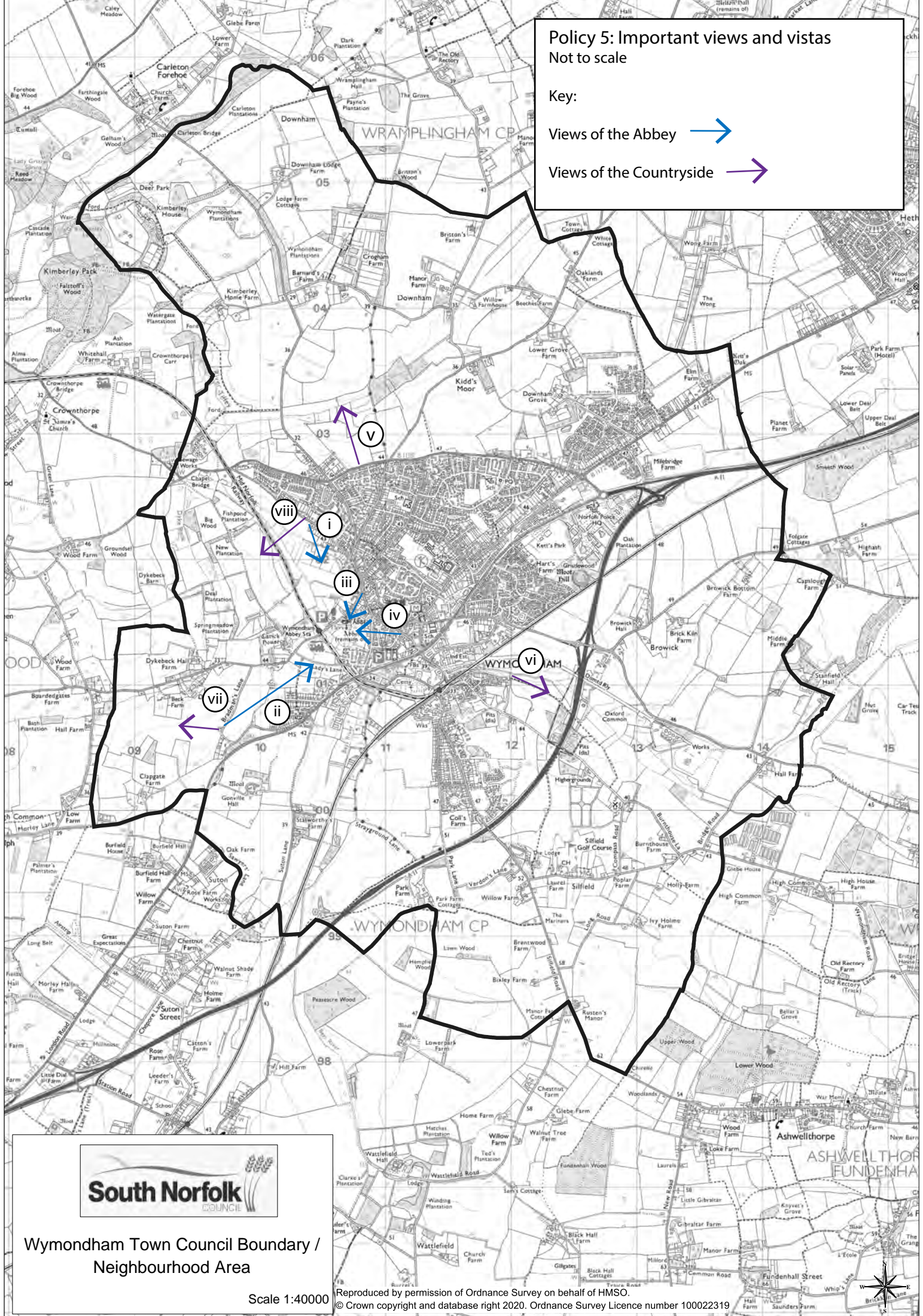


**Policy 5: Important views and vistas**  
Not to scale

Key:

Views of the Abbey →

Views of the Countryside →



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Scale 1:40000

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View i. Wymondham Abbey from Chapel Lane





View ii. Wymondham Abbey from Bradman's Lane





View iii. Wymondham Abbey from Vicar Street



View iv. Wymondham Abbey from Brewery Lane





**View v. Tuttle Lane West**



**View vi. The Lizard looking east along the Tiffey Valley**





**View vii. Bradman's Lane looking west**



**View viii. Chapel Lane looking west across the Tiffey Valley**



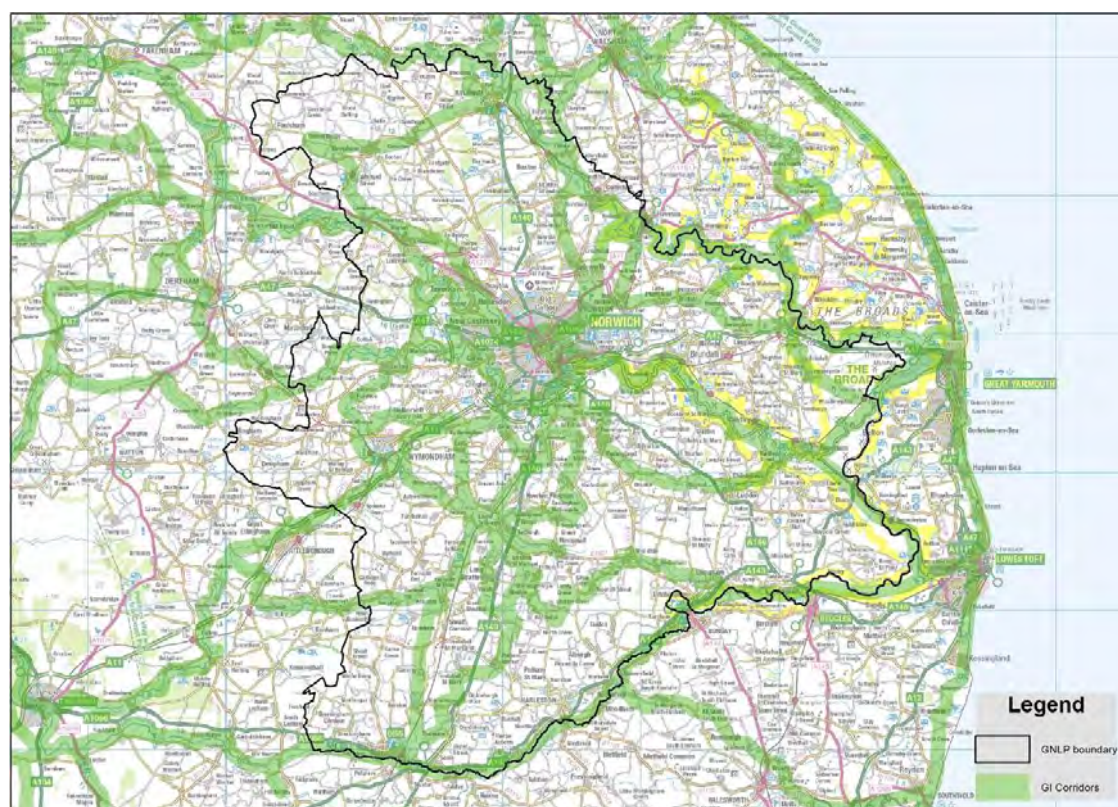


## Thematic Policies: Green infrastructure

### Background

- 5.33. Norfolk as a county is full of incredible green infrastructure including historic parkland, forests, valleys, heaths and much more. There is a good strategy and policy framework that maps existing provision at the County and Local level and this has been enshrined in planning policy since at least 2011 in the previous Local Plan (the Joint Core Strategy). Going forward this pattern looks set to continue with the emerging GNLP continuing to place a high priority on green infrastructure stating that it is 'essential that the network continues to be protected and developed further into the long term as green infrastructure aims to link fragmented habitats, allowing the movement of species and supporting biodiversity gain. It also has other benefits such as reducing flood risk and promoting active travel'.
- 5.34. In addition to a well-established and comprehensive policy framework, there is good representation from within local communities seeking to conserve and expand local provision. Greening Wymondham, for example, is a long-established and particularly proactive local group who were members of the Neighbourhood Plan Team.

**Figure 7: Plan showing the strategic green infrastructure corridors across Norfolk**



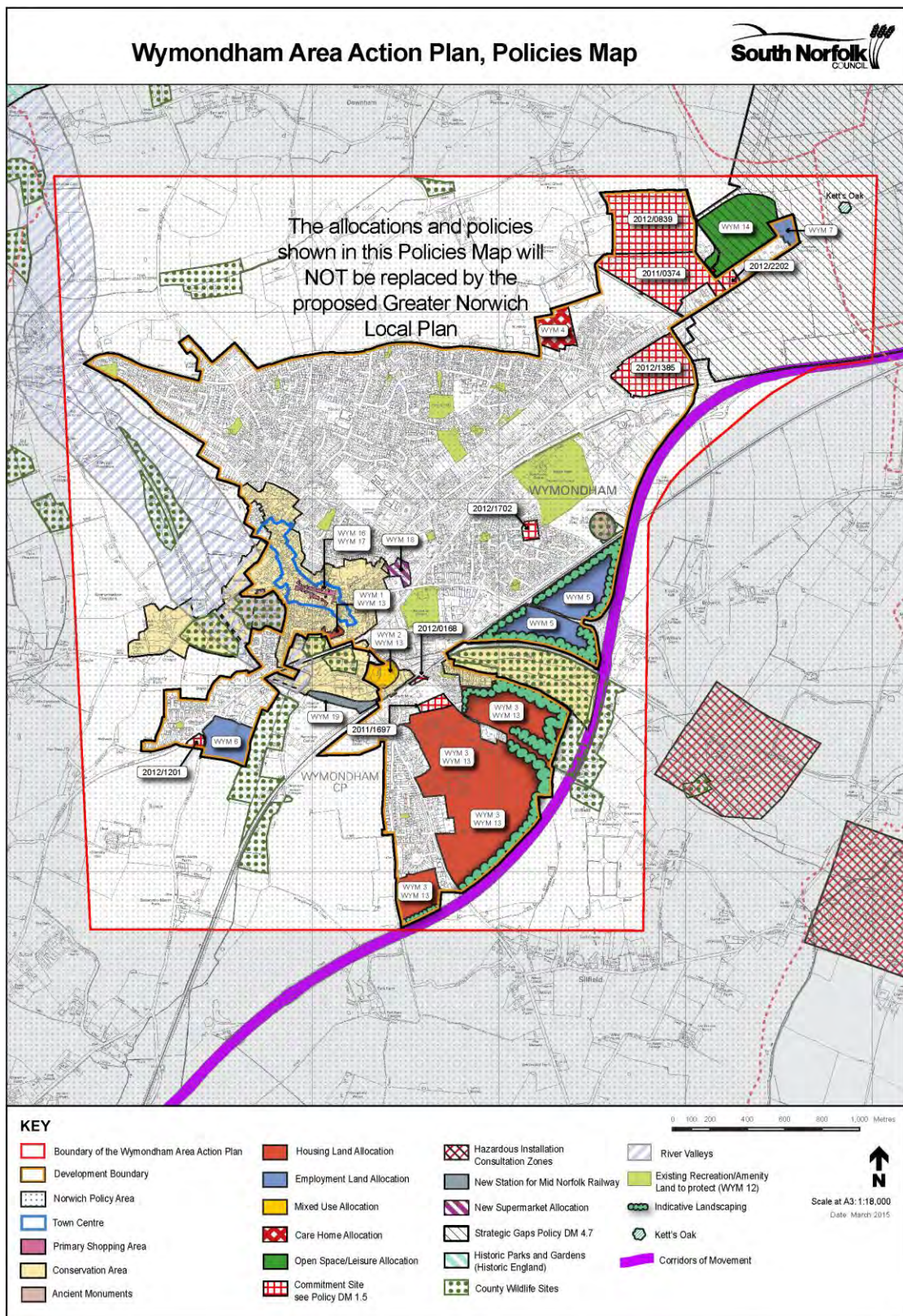
Source: Greater Norwich Local Plan (Regulation 19 draft), 2021

*Did you know...*

- 5.35. *Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space and other green features, urban and rural, which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities. Green infrastructure is not simply an alternative description for conventional open space. It includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands – and also street trees, allotments, private gardens, green roofs and walls, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and soils. It includes rivers, streams, canals and other water bodies, sometimes called ‘blue infrastructure’.*
- 5.36. *The key features of green infrastructure are that it is a network of integrated spaces and features, not just individual elements; and that it is ‘multi-functional’ – it provides multiple benefits simultaneously.*
- 5.37. *These can be to:*
- *Support people’s mental and physical health*
  - *Encourage active travel*
  - *Cool urban areas during heat waves*
  - *Attract investment*
  - *Reduce water run-off during flash flooding*
  - *Carbon storage*
  - *Provide sustainable drainage*
- 5.38. *The extent to which green infrastructure provides these benefits depends on how it is designed and maintained, and the maturity and health of the elements (such as trees) that form it (definition provided by the Town and Country Planning Association).*
- 5.39. Whilst Wymondham may not have many statutory designated pieces of green infrastructure it does benefit from several more informal sites and undesignated assets that are much loved such as walks along the Tiffey Valley and the woodland around Moot Hill. Many of these local assets are situated on or within a number of strategic green infrastructure corridors which traverse the Plan area such as the A11 corridor and the Tiffey Valley corridor.
- 5.40. Much of the local green infrastructure in Wymondham was captured in by the 2015 Area Action Plan which catalogues local green spaces and starts to establish enhanced protection for all the main green infrastructure sites in the town. The AAP puts forward an appealing vision of establishing a ‘Kett’s Country’ pastoral landscape of grassland, woodland, farmland, hedgerow and wetland habitats will be protected and enhanced with the aim of strengthening the role of the Tiffey valley, maintaining the open land between Wymondham and Hethersett, conserving the historic landscape setting of the town and abbey and creating connections and linkages between green infrastructure.
- 5.41. Further work is currently ongoing via the Wymondham/A11 Green Infrastructure Strategy that will take this even further. The purpose of the green infrastructure policies in this Plan is to add more weight and more information on local green infrastructure and to establish a more coherent strategy for linking sites in the town.



Figure 8: Plan showing the policies contained in the 2015 Wymondham Area Action Plan



Source: Greater Norwich Local Plan (Regulation 19 draft), 2021

### Objective

- 5.42. The objective of this policy is to reinforce and enhance the parts of the Norfolk-wide strategic green infrastructure network that runs through Wymondham and highlight the importance of local green infrastructure sites within this network.

### **POLICY 6: STRATEGIC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK**

**PROPOSALS THAT COMPLY WITH POLICIES WYM 8, 9, 10 AND 11 OF THE 2015 AAP AND MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT THE STRATEGIC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK IN WYMONDHAM WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED. PARTICULAR CONTRIBUTIONS THAT WOULD BE WELCOMED INCLUDE:**

- **LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT AND HABITAT CREATION THAT CREATE AND ENHANCE STRATEGIC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDORS**
- **INTERVENTIONS THAT ENHANCE PARTS OF THE NETWORK THAT RUN THROUGH BUILT-UP AREAS OF WYMONDHAM**

**WHERE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IS A REQUIREMENT OF A DEVELOPMENT, THE DEVELOPERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAKE PROPORTIONAL PROVISION FOR THE LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE.**

**DEVELOPMENT THAT IS DETRIMENTAL TO THE NETWORK WILL BE RESISTED.**



## Policy 6: Strategic Green Network

Key:

Strategic Green Network



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## Objective

- 5.43. The objective of this second green infrastructure policy is to seek to bridge the gap between the regional-scale, high level green infrastructure network noted in the previous policy that largely follows main river valleys or movement corridors and the smaller local areas and sites set out in the AAP. It seeks to establish larger contiguous areas of green infrastructure in Wymondham that join up individual local sites to create unbroken corridors or ribbons of habitat and greenspace for people and wildlife. The ribbons identified are based on the results of consultation and research into existing areas of green infrastructure that could potentially be linked or joined up to create larger contiguous pieces of locally strategic green infrastructure and link back into the regional network. They track linear features such as river valleys, major roads, railway lines or public footpaths which form the principal thread that will help to bind the ribbon together.

### **POLICY 7: WYMONDHAM GREEN RIBBONS**

**PROPOSALS THAT COMPLY POLICIES WYM 8, 9, 10 AND 11 OF THE 2015 AAP AND MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT A NETWORK OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RIBBONS OR WEDGES IN WYMONDHAM WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED. CONTRIBUTIONS THAT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY WELCOMED INCLUDE THOSE THAT SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREAS ILLUSTRATED:**

- **RUNNING EAST WEST ALONG THE HARTS FARM ROAD**
- **FOLLOWING THE TIFFEY VALLEY EASTWARDS FROM THE LIZARD OUT TO OXFORD COMMON**
- **RUNNING NORTH-SOUTH ALONG STRAYGROUND LANE AND BAYS RIVER VALLEY FORM THE A11 INTO THE TOWN CEMETERY**
- **FOLLOWING THE TIFFEY VALLEY AND MID NORFOLK RAILWAY NORTH-WEST FROM THE ABBEY**

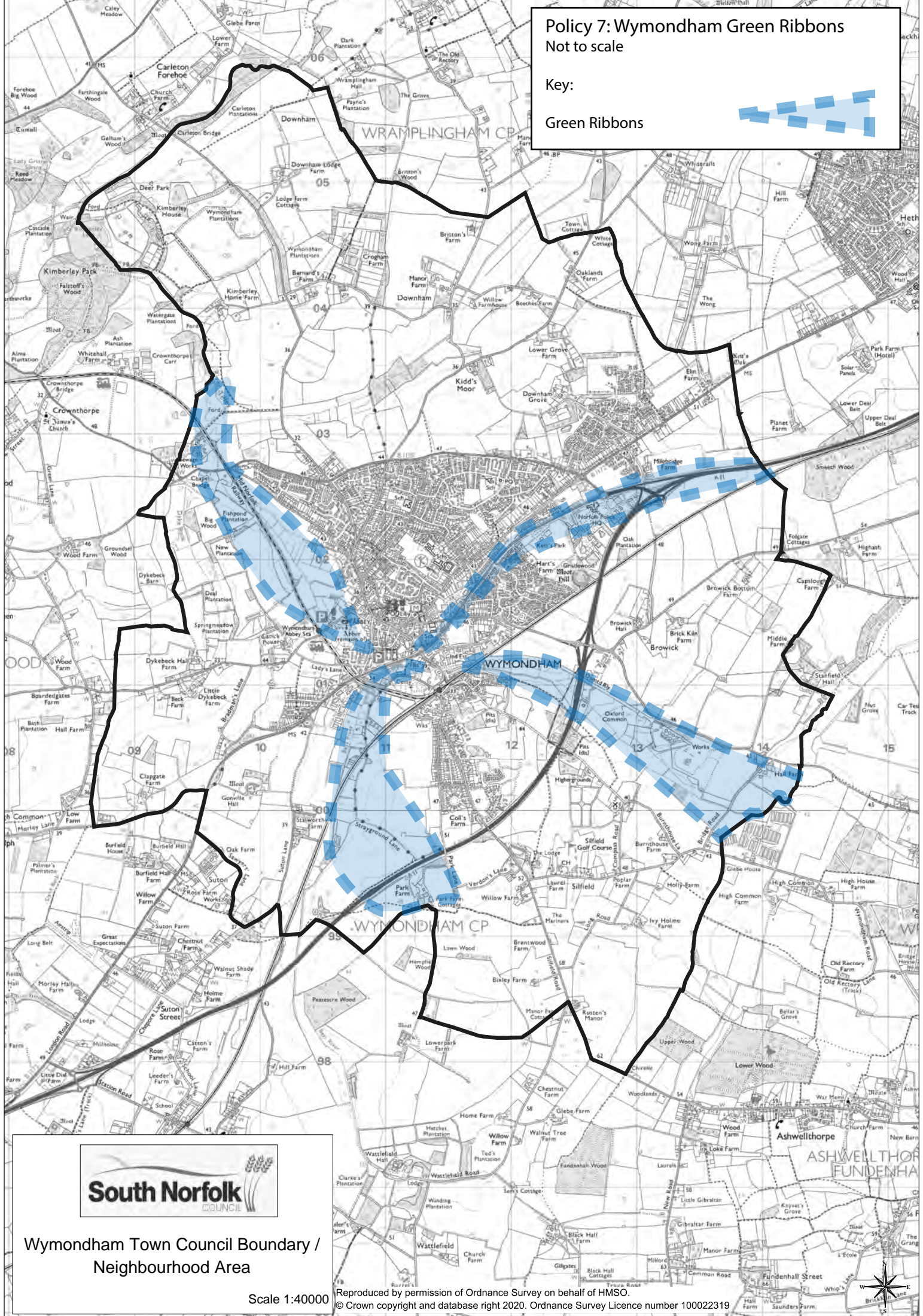
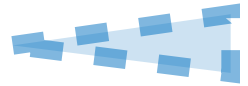
**HOUSEHOLD, COMMUNITY GROUP AND OTHER SMALL LANDOWNER INTERVENTIONS THAT MAKE MINOR CONTRIBUTIONS BUT THAT CUMULATIVELY CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE TO ENHANCE THE STRATEGIC NETWORK ARE ENCOURAGED.**



## Policy 7: Wymondham Green Ribbons

Key:

Green Ribbons



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## **Thematic Policies: Integration and accessibility**

### Background

- 5.44. Representations from two particular groups during the preparation of the Plan, backed up by the response from community consultation has identified significant issues around the physical integration of parts of Wymondham and the poor accessibility of particular parts of the town.
- 5.45. As well as including residents who have lived in Wymondham all their lives, the Neighbourhood Plan Team included people who have moved to the town more recently and live in some of the newer housing. Representation from this group helped to highlight how in some cases new developments are poorly integrated with the existing fabric of Wymondham and that not only does this create a degree of physical severance but it also makes it more difficult for new residents to socialise and interact with neighbouring residents
- 5.46. At the largest scale some of the most recent developments in Wymondham have occurred to the south of the railway off Silfield Road and the railway line creates a very real physical barrier between these areas and the rest of the town to the north. The fact that there is only a single and narrow underpass creating a pinch-point only serves to exacerbate this. Equally, the old A11 (Harts Farm Road) was and still is a major route through the town the scale of which and speed of traffic creates a degree of severance. At the neighbourhood scale there are examples of poorly integrated housing estates that have been built field-by-field as housing allocations have been made over time.
- 5.47. At best, these issues give rise to day to day inconveniences getting in and out of parts of town; at worst they can start to undermine the sense of community cohesion in Wymondham based on whether or not you live one side of the railway line or the other.
- 5.48. In addition and related these issues around physical severance, another series of representations made by the Wymondham Access Group highlighted numerous examples of where parts of the town simply do not work for disabled residents such as the visually or physically impaired. Examples included pedestrian routes spilling straight into the highway or poorly placed or unnecessary railings that create a hazard to the visually impaired or poorly placed bollards and railings or narrow/non-existent pavements that simply do not allow wheelchair users to pass.

### Objective

- 5.49. The objective of this policy is to promote and enhance the physical and social concept of One Wymondham as a single, integrated and joined-up town that is fully accessible to all.

## **POLICY 8: INTEGRATION AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL**

**PROPOSALS THAT MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY WITHIN THE PLAN AREA FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS WILL BE SUPPORTED. PROPOSALS THAT LINK EXISTING AND NEW PARTS OF THE TOWN CENTRE AND LINK TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT NODES SUCH AS THE RAILWAY STATION IS KEY TO THE PLAN'S AMBITION OF CREATING ONE WYMONDHAM AND ARE PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGED.**



**OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE MORE AND BETTER WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES AROUND THE TOWN WILL BE SUPPORTED; NEW AND IMPROVED ROUTES SHOULD SEEK TO BE MORE ATTRACTIVE AND PLEASANT AND INCORPORATE SOFT LANDSCAPING WHEREVER POSSIBLE. PARTICULAR ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY AND FACILITIES FOR DISABLED AND ELDERLY RESIDENTS WHERE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE IS EITHER LACKING OR UNFIT FOR PURPOSE.**

### **Thematic Policies: Access to the countryside**

#### Background

- 5.50. Wymondham is a classic historic market town notable in this case for the presence of the huge and impressive Abbey. It is characterised by a dense historic core and a central Market Place and a network of radial routes leading off from this point around which new homes and workspaces have been built over time.
- 5.51. Wymondham is also defined by its setting, in this case within a large plateau or gently rolling arable countryside. The South Norfolk Place Making Guide (2012) notes that beyond the town, the parish comprises a number of hamlets; small church/hall settlements, with dispersed farmsteads and country houses. The key defining characteristics of the countryside around Wymondham includes:
- The Tiffey valley and associated river meadows to the south and west making an important recreation and ecological green corridor
  - Outlying hamlets and settlements, landscape dominated and visually separate and distinct
  - Presence of large parkland estates with estate dwellings, railings and other features
- 5.52. As noted throughout this Plan, the character of the town and its setting in the countryside contributes significantly to the appeal of Wymondham which is why this characteristic is specifically referenced in the vision for the plan. People naturally therefore want to get out into the countryside and enjoy the area where they live whether they are walking the dog, exercising or simply exploring.
- 5.53. However, with just a few notable exceptions which are much used and much loved, it is relatively difficult to get out into the countryside on foot around Wymondham via formal public footpaths or cycleways. This issue was highlighted by the Neighbourhood Plan Team and during public consultation work and during site visits and highlighted in the Wymondham Network Improvement Strategy (2020).
- 5.54. One of the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic has been a marked increase in people using their local countryside. People are spending more time in the place that they live and have more time to spend locally; people are more mindful of needing to exercise for physical and mental wellbeing and people are less inclined to gravitate towards more obvious outdoor destinations that attract large concentrations of people. Whilst this trend may fade somewhat as the pandemic eventually passes, it is likely that it will have a lasting legacy which places even more of an impetus on finding ways to improve access to the countryside around Wymondham.

### Objective

- 5.55. The objective of this policy is to encourage landowners, developers and the public sector to facilitate or deliver new and/or improved footpaths and cycleways in the countryside around Wymondham. The specific elements of the network that this policy seeks to add is based on a review of where there are gaps in the existing network, for example between fragmented lengths of public footpaths. This will directly benefit the physical and mental wellbeing of the community and help to make Wymondham an even more attractive place to live, work and play.

### **POLICY 9: ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE**

**PROPOSALS TO INCREASE AND IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY TO THE COUNTRYSIDE AROUND WYMONDHAM TO PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING ARE ENCOURAGED. IN PARTICULAR, THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS THE PROVISION OF IMPROVED OR NEW FULLY ACCESSIBLE FOOTPATHS AND CYCLEWAYS BUILDING ON EXISTING ROUTES AND THE LOCAL GREEN RIBBONS IN A NUMBER OF AREAS:**

- **TO THE NORTH OF THE TOWN AND WEST TOWARDS THE TIFFEY VALLEY AND EAST TOWARDS HETHERSETT**
- **TO THE SOUTH OF THE TOWN AND EAST TOWARDS SILFIELD**
- **TO THE WEST OF THE TOWN ON A NORTH-SOUTH AXIS.**

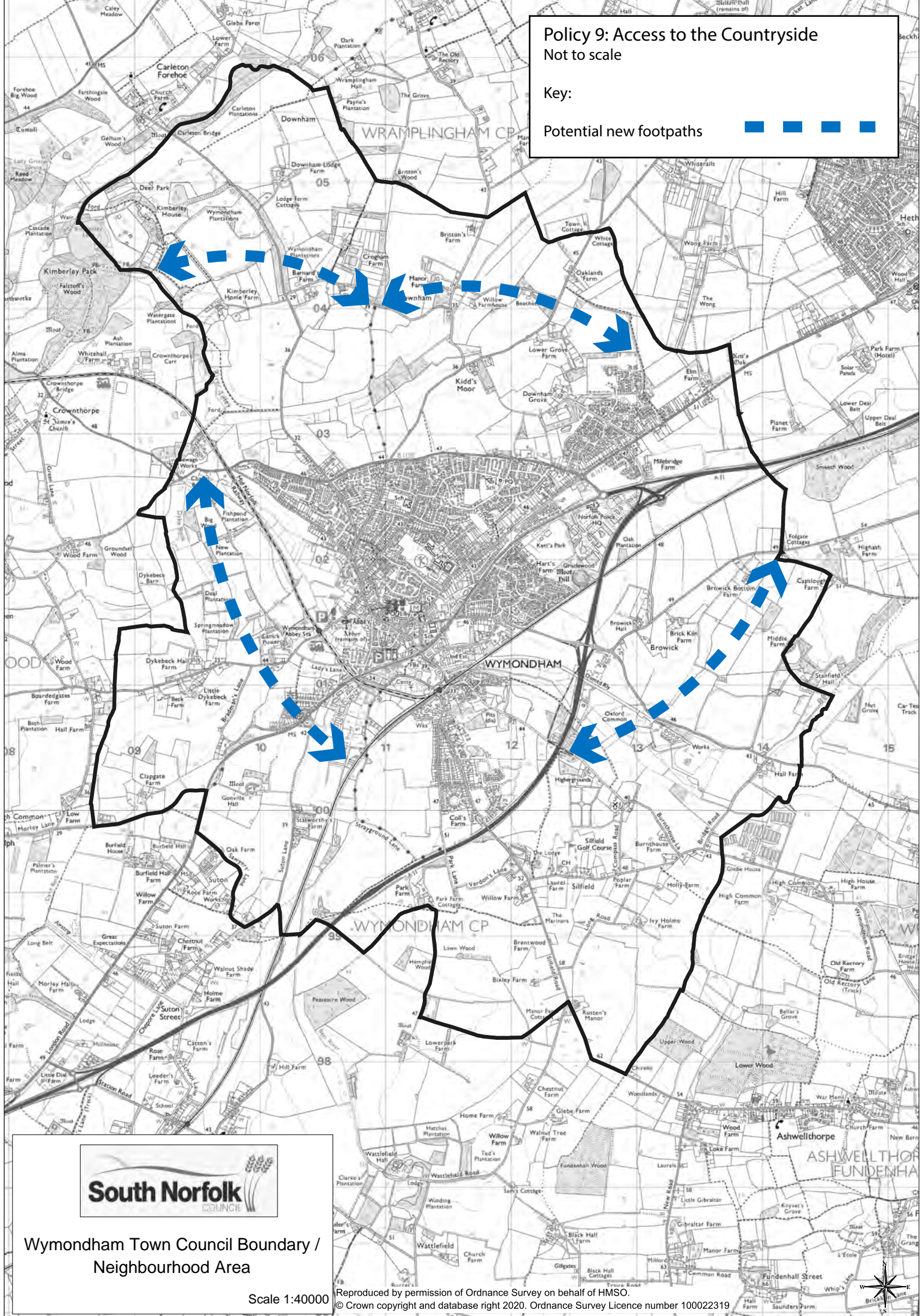
**FOOTPATHS SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO SUIT THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND BLEND WITH THE LANDSCAPE. THEY SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING. THE PLAN ENCOURAGES THE DESIGN OF FOOTPATHS TO REFLECT THE RURAL SETTING OF WYMONDHAM.**

**WHERE FOOTPATHS MAKE USE OF EXISTING ROADS APPROPRIATE MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO MAXIMISE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST SAFETY.**

## Policy 9: Access to the Countryside Not to scale

Key:

Potential new footpaths



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## 6. Neighbourhood Plan Projects

- 6.1. In addition to the Policies set out in the previous section, a number of local issues have been highlighted during the preparation of the Plan that are best captured as projects. These do not form part of the statutory architecture of the Neighbourhood Plan but seek to highlight how specific local issues might be addressed. These projects are set out below.

### **PROJECT 1: OLD SALE YARD SITE**

**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS IMPROVEMENTS TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE OLD SALES YARD SITE CLOSE TO WYMONDHAM STATION WHILST THE SITE REMAINS UNDEVELOPED.**

### **PROJECT 2: PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST WAYFINDING**

**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST WAYFINDING ACROSS THE PARISH AND THE DELIVERY OF A NEW, EFFECTIVE AND CONSISTENT STRATEGY AND SUITE OF ONLINE MEDIA, PHYSICAL MAPS, SIGNAGE AND WAY-MARKING. THE PROPOSED STRATEGY SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FULL RANGE OF TYPES OF FOOTPATHS AND CYCLE WAYS AND SEEK TO HIGHLIGHT AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES THAT IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE.**

### **PROJECT 4: DIVERSITY OF GREENSPACES**

**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS A REVIEW OF GREEN SPACES AND OTHER GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN WYMONDHAM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY THAT ENSURES THE VOLUME AND CHARACTER OF PROVISION MEETS COMMUNITY NEEDS. PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ENSURING THERE IS A BALANCE BETWEEN AMENITY GREENSPACE AND WILDER GREEN SPACES. WHERE CHANGES ARE PROPOSED STAKEHOLDERS WILL NEED TO IDENTIFY HOW LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE WILL BE ADDRESSED.**

### **PROJECT 5: DE-CLUTTERING**

**WHEN PUBLIC AREAS ARE REDEVELOPED OR NEW INFRASTRUCTURE IS ADDED OR UPGRADED, THE OPPORTUNITY SHOULD BE SEIZED TO REMOVE OBSOLETE ITEMS AND CONSOLIDATE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT REMAINS REQUIRED. PARTICULAR ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE TOWN CENTRE WHERE CLUTTER HAS ACCUMULATED IN PARTICULAR LOCATIONS WITH THE CONSEQUENCE OF REDUCING THE QUANTITY OR UTILITY OF PUBLIC SPACE.**

### **PROJECT 6: WYMONDHAM GATEWAYS**

**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS THE ENHANCEMENT OF GATEWAYS TO THE TOWN TO IMPROVE PEOPLE'S FIRST IMPRESSION OF WYMONDHAM AND IMPROVE OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF THE AREA. ENHANCEMENTS MIGHT INCLUDE THE INSTALLATION OF HIGH QUALITY TOWN SIGNAGE, PLANTING OR GATEWAY MARKERS. GATEWAYS WOULD INCLUDE JUNCTIONS OFF THE A11 AND ARTERIAL ROADS INTO THE TOWN.**

## **PROJECT 7: TOWN CENTRE SIGNAGE**

**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUPPORTS A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF SIGNAGE, INTERPRETATION AND MAPS IN THE TOWN CENTRE AND THE DELIVERY OF A NEW, EFFECTIVE AND CONSISTENT STRATEGY FOLLOWED BY THE NEW SIGNAGE ITSELF. NEW MATERIAL SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO HELP VISITORS ORIENTATE THEMSELVES AND IN PARTICULAR RECOGNISE THE 'STRING OF PEARLS' OF HERITAGE ASSETS IN THE TOWN FROM THE WYMONDHAM HERITAGE MUSEUM, MARKET CROSS, BECKET'S CHAPEL AND WYMONDHAM ABBEY.**

## 7. Implementation and Monitoring

### **Implementation**

- 7.1. The policies contained in this Neighbourhood Plan will be applied by South Norfolk Council to future development proposals. The policies and projects will also be used by Wymondham Town Council to shape future strategy and investment.
- 7.2. The implementation of the projects set out in the Neighbourhood Plan will require the co-ordinated input and cooperation of a number of statutory and non-statutory agencies, private sector organisations and the local community. In order to support the implementation of the projects, a separate implementation plan has been prepared. This document is not part of the Neighbourhood Plan but simply includes information on potential actions to progress the delivery of specific projects.

### **Monitoring**

- 7.3. Wymondham Town Council will monitor the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan and consider whether formal review and updates are required over the period to 2038.



## 8. Pre-Submission Consultation Response Form

Hard copy of this form should be posted to be the Town Council offices, Kett's Park Harts Farm Rd, Wymondham NR18 0UT or e-mailed to [office@inghampinnock.com](mailto:office@inghampinnock.com) **The closing date for submission of comments is midnight on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

Name:	
Address:	
Post code:	
E-mail address:	
Please state which parts of the draft Neighbourhood Plan your comments apply to:	
Please state fully and clearly your concerns (please use additional sheets if necessary):	
Please indicate what change or alternative approach would resolve your concerns (please use additional sheets if necessary):	
Are there any omissions from the draft Neighbourhood Plan (please specify):	
DATA PROTECTION NOTICE: Information given on this form will be used to help prepare the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Please be aware that your comments including personal details may be made publicly available.	
Signature:	
Date:	