

North Luffenham Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan

2022 - 2037



RCC Screening Version

March 2022

Contents

1 Introduction	3
2 Community and Stakeholder Engagement	4
Key Outcomes and Issues	6
3 Vision and Aims	7
Vision	7
Aims	7
4 Planning and Technical Support	9
5 Policies	11
Policy Context	11
National Policy	11
Sustainable Development	12
Climate Change	12
Local Strategic Policy	13
North Luffenham Policies	13
5.1 Employment and Community Facilities	14
5.2 Residential Development	20
5.3 Natural Environment	25
5.4 Local Green Spaces	32
5.5 The Water Environment	36
5.6 Placemaking and Sustainable Design	41
5.7 Historic Environment and Landscape Setting	48
5.8 Transport and Walking	56

The following Supporting Documents are an integral part of the Neighbourhood Plan. They have been produced as separate documents to aid readability.

Supporting Document No.1: Local Green Space

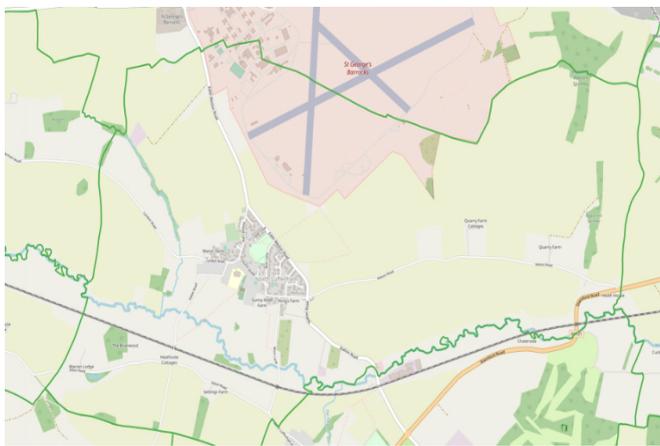
Supporting Document No.2: Access for All

Supporting Document No.3: Swifts

1 Introduction

This draft North Luffenham Neighbourhood Plan sets out the Vision, Aims and planning policies of the parish. It will ensure the parish maintains its uniqueness over the period 2022 to 2037 and that sustainable growth and development, particularly in the St. George's Barracks (SGB) area of the parish, will comply with design codes and master planning as mandated in this Plan.

In 2017 the Ministry of Defence announced that it was vacating SGB in 2021/22 and that the land would be sold for development. A Memorandum of Understanding was drawn up between the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Rutland County Council (RCC) and in February 2020 RCC produced its Submitted Local Plan 2018-2036 (Submitted Local Plan) for Regulation 19 Consultation. In September 2021, RCC withdrew the Submitted Local Plan. The MoD is currently seeking separate advice about the development potential for SGB.



On 12th February 2020, the whole of North Luffenham Parish was formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area by RCC. **Figure 1.1** shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area (green line), which is the same as that of the Parish boundary, along with the boundary of the SGB site (beige shading). North Luffenham Parish Council is the formally designated 'qualifying body' responsible for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

Figure 1.1 Neighbourhood Area Map '© Crown copyright'

The NP has been drawn up by a Steering Group made up of Parish Councillors and local residents, working under the guidance of North Luffenham Parish Council as the qualifying body for the plan area. The Parish Council secured the funding and professional support to enable the plan to go ahead. The NP has been developed involving Parish residents and key stakeholders through an extensive consultation process.

The NP will go to an Independent Examination and will finally be subjected to a local Parish referendum. For the NP to be accepted it will require the majority of those voting in the referendum to vote yes. In the event of a "yes" vote, RCC will proceed to "make" (legally adopt) the NP for the Parish of North Luffenham. It is intended that the policies will be reviewed periodically (at least annually) to monitor the cumulative effects of the policies and, if necessary, make changes to keep them up to date and relevant.

Once made, the NP will form part of the statutory development plan together with the adopted Local Plan current at that time. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the policies of the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NP does not deal with excluded matters such as waste, mineral extraction or nationally significant infrastructure.

2 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Fundamental to the creation of a NP is the need for it to reflect the wishes of the community both now and in the future. Hence, meaningful engagement with all interested parties is vital to ensure that the Vision, Aims and planning policies important to the community are identified and used to formulate the NP.

At a strategy meeting in 2019, the Parish Council discussed the initiation of a NP. In view of the need to engage the community, a public meeting was held on 9 December 2019 to determine if there was sufficient interest to proceed.

At a Parish Council meeting on 6 January 2020, it was agreed that sufficient interest had been shown by the community and resolved that a Steering Group be formed. This was enacted at a meeting on 27 January 2020 with the appointment of a Steering Group consisting of Parish Councillors and local residents.

A NP requires the engagement and support of the community and this became problematic with the Covid-19 restrictions. A Village Plan Survey had been undertaken in 2017 [Village Survey 2017](#) and a new survey was undertaken to update and refresh the previous findings.

The initial engagement to seek the views of residents was a detailed questionnaire, delivered to/collected from each household and also available to complete online. The responses to the questionnaire were analysed and used as evidence to drive the production of the policies embedded in this NP. [Village Survey 2020](#)



A virtual presentation of the aims of the NP and the results of the survey were given on three occasions with residents being encouraged to ask questions and make comments. A poster demonstration, within the Covid guidelines, was displayed in the Community Centre on two occasions and later in the village church.

A summary of the consultations and engagement carried out is given in **Table 2.1** below.

An interactive NP site has also been created on the village website (also on social media such as Facebook) (<https://northluffenham.com/nlpc/neighbourhood-plan/>) with news, updates and the presentations available.

In addition to the consultation and engagement to date, the NP will be the subject of the following statutory consultation:

- Pre-submission consultation (to be carried out by the Parish Council)
- Publicity following submission (to be carried out by RCC)
- Parish Referendum (to be carried out by RCC)

Table 2.1 Summary of Consultations and Engagement

Date	Action	Purpose
Dec 2019	Flyer to each household, post on website and newsletter regarding interest in a NP	To establish if sufficient interest in the community for a NP
Jan 2020	Public Village Meeting	Communicate the aim of the NP, and gauge interest of the parish
Jan 2020	Steering Group formed following Parish Council resolution to initiate a NP	To enable a programme of community engagement to inform, scope and shape the NP.
Jan 2020	Application to RCC for formation of a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the Parish	To request the start of the formal process of preparing a NP
Feb 2020	Neighbourhood Area designated by RCC	To confirm start of formal process
Aug - Sept 2020	Distribution and collection of NP questionnaire - also available for completion online	To seek the opinions and comments of the residents of the parish
Sept - Oct 2020	Analysis of questionnaire	Amendment of draft policies in view of findings
Nov 2020	Virtual Presentation on three occasions of NP and results of questionnaire.	Information and feedback to residents. Replying to questions and taking note of comments.
Dec 2020	Poster demonstration in the Community Centre on two occasions	As above for residents who may not have or are not used to the Internet
Nov – Dec 2021	Consultation on proposed Local Green Spaces (LGS) with a flyer to the whole parish. Questionnaire available for completion online and at an Exhibition in the Community Centre on three occasions	To seek the opinions and comments of all the residents of the parish on the proposed LGS
Dec 2021	Analysis of questionnaire	Amendment of proposed LGS in view of findings/responses
Jan 2022	Steering Group meeting with major landowners	To present/discuss proposed Landscape Setting Policy and amendments to LGS
Jan 2022	Meeting between external representatives of NLPC and major landowners	To review the level of protection given by the NPPF against speculative development

Key Outcomes and Issues

The SWOT (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats) analysis of the main issues raised through the consultation process and issues relating to the withdrawal of the Submitted Local Plan is shown below.

Strengths

- Village setting and the surrounding landscape
- Access to the countryside
- Tranquility of the area
- Primary School

Opportunities

- Safeguard rural character and local green spaces
- Preserve and enhance the heritage and historic buildings
- Encourage sustainable development according to evidenced need in appropriate locations with good design
- Increase and improve sports and recreation facilities
- Identify suitable measures to manage/calm traffic
- Create a mix of housing types, including affordable housing
- Consider the needs of the disabled and the infirm in all aspects of parish life
- Develop a pro-active approach to Climate Change

Weaknesses

- Lack of robust planning controls on development
- Poor public transport links
- Lack of non-vehicular routes to surrounding areas
- Lack of parking space and inconsiderate parking
- Speeding in areas of the village
- Poor pavement maintenance
- Overgrown hedges

Threats

- The main perceived threat is the potential development of SGB
 - Increase in volume of traffic
 - Impact on the landscape
 - Noise and pollution of a quarry
- Uncontrolled expansion of the village beyond its present envelope.

As a result of the community engagement and SWOT analysis, the key issues and themes for the NP were identified. From this process the Vision and Aims were formed.

3 Vision and Aims

Vision

The village and parish of North Luffenham will always be a sustainable, safe, sociable and happy place for the whole community to live and work. We will welcome and support young and old from any background by pursuing policies that put community priorities at the heart of all that we do and enable individuals and families to live rewarding and productive lives.



Aims

We will achieve our Vision through the following Aims, based on the conclusions of surveys conducted in 2017 and 2020 and a range of consultations. Through our NP Policies we will:

1. Pursue policies that put community priorities at the heart of all we do and have pride in our village and community.
2. Whilst preserving the rural nature of the parish we will carefully encourage small scale economic developments/businesses in sustainable locations.
3. Develop new community facilities whilst maintaining and enhancing existing facilities, for the enjoyment and benefit of all, including the disabled and infirm
4. Maintain and enhance the quality of life in the parish through improvements in our environment and conservation of the surrounding countryside.
5. Encourage a healthy lifestyle by identifying, publicising and promoting walks, trails and cycle paths.
6. Promote and support the transition to sustainable transport
7. Ensure that the historic identity of the village and parish is retained whilst encouraging limited, sustainable, infill development that is sympathetic to the parish's rural setting.

Later in this Neighbourhood Plan we set out the policies that describe in more detail how we intend to deliver the Vision.

Table 3.1 Correlation of Policies and Aims

	Aims						
Policies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.1 Employment and Community Facilities							
NL1.1: Employment and Community Facilities		✓	✓				
NL1.2: Broadband		✓					
5.2 Residential Development							
NL2.1: Residential Development		✓					✓
5.3 Natural Environment							
NL3.1: Natural Environment	✓			✓			
5.4 Local Green Space							
NL4.1: Local Green Space	✓			✓	✓		
5.5 Water Environment							
NL5.1: Water Environment				✓			
5.6 Sustainable Design							
NL6.1: Placemaking and Sustainable Design	✓			✓			✓
5.7 Historic Environment							
NL7.1: Historic Environment	✓						✓
NL7.2: Landscape Setting				✓			
5.8 Transport and Walking							
NL8.1: Transport and Walking						✓	✓

4 Planning and Technical Support

Whilst able to draw upon some technical and management skills within the parish, the Parish Council recognized that it would be prudent to seek appropriate professional advice to ensure the production of the most relevant and authoritative NP. Accordingly, the Parish Council obtained Government grant funding for specialist consultant input for Professional Advice, Design (including Design Codes) and Masterplanning.

The work undertaken by the consultant has culminated in two significant documents:

- Parish Analysis & Design Codes
- St George's Barracks Masterplan Guidance and Design Codes

By reference to these two documents in this NP, the Parish Council accepts the Design Codes contained in each document and will use them in the planning process as if they had been generated by the Parish Council. Should any conflict between the Design Codes and the NP Policies be identified, the NP Policies will govern.

Parish Analysis & Design Codes (NL Design Codes)

This document (NL Design Codes) was commissioned to develop Design Codes and a framework that would inform best practice development within the Neighbourhood Area.

The first major activity was the production of a Parish Base Line, which provides analysis of the Parish within its national, regional and local context as well as its physical and historical context. The Base Line was then used to inform the development of a series of strategic design codes and a framework for design guidance that aligns with the Vision and Aims outlined within the NP.

This report can be found here: [North Luffenham Design Codes](#) and informs the NP in the following areas:

- Introduction
- Regional Analysis
- Local Analysis
- Design Codes
- Development Management Checklist

The second major activity was the formulation of Policies. These were based upon:

- The Community and Stakeholder Engagement leading to
- The Vision and Aims of the NP supported by
- The specialist consultants

Hence, the Policies are the distillation of the ideas and concerns voiced by the Community and the expertise and advice received from our Consultant advisors.

St. George's Barracks Masterplan Guidance & Design Codes (SGB Design Codes)

This document (SGB Design Codes) was prepared as a separate document, complimenting the NL Design Codes and outlining the local community's preferred design principles and guidance for the potential SGB site development. As the potential SGB development lies within both North Luffenham and Edith Weston parishes, this document addresses the physical and historic environment of the two parishes as well as the two community's visions for their parishes. This report can be found here: [SGB Masterplan and Design Code](#)

At the time of undertaking this technical support, the masterplanning referenced site (SGB) was a proposed strategic allocation in the Submitted Local Plan. At a committee meeting in early September 2021, the Local Planning Authority (RCC) resolved to withdraw the Submitted Local Plan. A new local plan timetable is in the process of being prepared. This will include an evidence base review, including an assessment of the level of growth needed in the county and a revised site allocation process.

Given that the previously proposed SGB site is no longer a proposed strategic allocation, this document can be used as evidence to support the identification of key features of the Neighbourhood Area. These codes aim to clarify the expectations of the North Luffenham community regarding any new major settlement within their parish. It must be clearly understood that at the time of concluding this technical support, SGB was/is no longer a proposed strategic allocation.

5 Policies

Policy Context

Neighbourhood Plans must meet certain “basic conditions”. These will be tested through the independent examination and will be checked by the local planning authority before the plan is able to proceed to the referendum. The Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans are that:

- They must have appropriate regard to national policy;
- They must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- They must be in general conformity with strategic local policy; and
- They must be compatible with EU obligations.

In addition, Neighbourhood Plans must be compatible with human rights legislation.

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework, July 2021 (NPPF) requires neighbourhood plans to set out a positive vision for the future of the local area and planning policies to guide decisions on planning applications. This NP has been written having regard to national planning policy and guidance.

The NPPF, paragraph 8, identifies three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development of which this NP seeks to positively address:

“a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

These themes are reflected in the policies that follow, acknowledging the point raised in the NPPF, paragraph 9, which states that:

“These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in

guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.”

Sustainable Development

One of the basic conditions for a NP is to help achieve sustainable development. A key principle of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is defined clearly in paragraph 11. This means planning positively, identifying opportunities to meet the development needs of the Neighbourhood Area. Sustainability has social, economic and environmental dimensions, and through the policies of this NP we seek to ensure the viability and sustainability of our diverse rural Parish.

Growth across the Neighbourhood Area of North Luffenham should not be to the detriment or loss of valued landscape and will be concentrated around the potential development of strategic sites and appropriate infill. The NP promotes the re-use of existing buildings. This will be augmented by the usual smaller-scale incremental development that is typical of rural villages and small settlements.

The NPPF, paragraph 13, states that in pursuing sustainable development, neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies within the adopted Local Plan. Through the policies in this NP we aim to achieve these, ensuring growth is sustainable through policies on:

- Employment and Community Facilities;
- Residential Development;
- Natural Environment;
- Local Green Spaces;
- Water Environment;
- Placemaking and Sustainable Design;
- Historic Environment;
- Transport and Walking;

Climate Change

As already noted, the NPPF has a clear environmental objective for *“mitigating and adapting to climate change”*. Based on responses to the village consultation, Climate Change is a noted consideration of the residents, a view that is shared by the Parish Council. This NP is crucial in ensuring that the Parish leads by example and that the village and its community play their part in reducing their individual and collective actions that cause Climate Change whilst also adapting to its impacts and building community resilience. The Parish Council is keen to work with local climate action groups to benefit the community.

Climate Change causes and impacts are far reaching and complex and, in our view, cannot be addressed through one or more specific policy. We have therefore focussed this NP, through policies on such topics as residential development, natural environment, water environment, sustainable design and transport amongst others, so that the carbon footprint of our village remains low and continues to reduce.

Local Strategic Policy

The RCC adopted Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2026 (adopted Local Plan) was current in 2017 when the Ministry of Defence announced its withdrawal from SGB and remains the adopted Local Plan at this time.

<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/the-adopted-local-plan/>

The NP Steering Group has consulted with RCC throughout the preparation of the NP to ensure general conformity with strategic local policy embodied in the adopted Local Plan.

North Luffenham Policies

Policy Conformity - Summary

- All Policies have been formulated having regard to the NPPF.
- All Policies have been formulated to contribute to achieving sustainable development.
- All Policies are in conformity with the strategic local policy as defined in the adopted Local Plan.
- All Policies are compatible with EU obligations

5.1 Employment and Community Facilities

Purpose

To support more sustainable life-work patterns, with local economic opportunity and a range of local community and leisure facilities.

Employment

National Policy

The NPPF, paragraph 84, advises:

“Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

The NPPF, paragraph 85, further states:

“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.”

Local Strategic Policy

The Current Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document, Core Strategy Policy CS13 (Employment and economic development) sets out the approach to local employment uses. This will be to safeguard local employment uses outside the employment areas where they are important to sustaining the role of the settlements and the local economy.

Local employment sites in the towns/villages and rural areas include small business/industrial areas, individual buildings, garage premises and converted buildings on

existing farmsteads in the open countryside. A number of these small employment sites have been lost in recent years through redevelopment for housing.

The Core Strategy, paragraph 4.16 indicates that there is a presumption in favour of retaining local employment sites, otherwise, some settlements could be considered no longer sustainable if all employment sites are redeveloped for housing.

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

North Luffenham Parish is a rural area, with little local employment, and this was corroborated by the Neighbourhood Plan Survey (2020). Of parish residents, 49% were retired and 30% in full time employment. Of those who travelled to work, 84% did so by car.

[Village 2020 Survey: Employment and Training](#)

The aim of this policy is to develop more employment opportunities locally and to ensure North Luffenham is digitally ready for future employment. North Luffenham village is currently enabled for fibre optic cable (FTTP) and any larger developments should continue this policy, without impacting the current capacity for existing residents.

Community Facilities

National Policy

The NPPF includes:

- Paragraph 93 states that there should be positive planning for shared community facilities.
- Paragraph 98 and 99 state the importance of open spaces and opportunities for sports. Existing facilities should be retained or if replaced should be with equivalent or better facilities.

Local Strategic Policy

The adopted Local Plan, Policy CS7 – Delivering socially inclusive communities, supports proposals that maintain or enhance community facilities and states that their loss will not be supported. It also states that these facilities should be available to all the community including those with disabilities.

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

The Neighbourhood Area has a number of community facilities and services (defined as land and buildings which benefit local communities) including a community centre, a church, bowls club with bowling green and allotments. The Oval, a designated local green space, has a children's play area, cricket pavilion and pitch and a small football field. The Neighbourhood Area also has a public house and a primary school. Adjoining the village perimeter there has been created a "field gardens walk" with a newly planted area of trees.

The community facilities and services are within or contiguous to the village of North Luffenham and are valued by residents of the parish: The surveys of 2017 and 2020 rated The Oval as very important or important by over 80% of respondents and similarly for The Fox at over 70%. 2017 [The Fox and Oval](#) [2020 The Oval and Fox](#)

These facilities and services are considered fundamental to maintaining a good quality of life within the Neighbourhood Area and ensuring that its current level of sustainability is not diminished.

The intention of the policies of the NP is to ensure that such facilities and services are safeguarded, enhanced or increased in the future development of the Neighbourhood Area.

Table 5.1.1 Current Community Facilities

Type	Name and Description
Public House	The Fox. Highly valued by the community as a venue for meeting and dining. Host various social events and activities: mike night, darts, quiz night, knit and natter. Room available for village groups.
Church	St. John the Baptist. Grade 1 listed and valued by the community as a beautiful building. As well as religious services, hosts concerts. In the cemetery there are Commonwealth War Graves.
School	St. Mary & St, John Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. From comments the school is well regarded by parents.
Community Centre	In 2021 the management of the community centre was taken over by North Luffenham Parish Council. It is a meeting place for village groups and societies as well as private hire.
Cricket Pavilion	The cricket club looks after the pavilion and maintains the pitch. The pavilion is used as a centre for events on The Oval
Bowls Club	Club house and full-sized bowling green.
Allotments	Actively used with 48 plots available.
Field Gardens Walk	Created in 2016 on land owned by the Parish and planted with trees and shrubs.
The Oval	Local Green Space in the centre of the village. Highly valued by the community. Play areas for children.

Policy NL1.1: Employment and Community Facilities

- 1. Development to provide new or improved employment and/or community facilities will be supported, especially where it would help to diversify the rural economy and range of facilities in the locality. Such support is subject to there being no significant adverse impact on:**
 - **The amenities of nearby residential properties by reason of noise, disturbance, vibration, pollution or other impacts;**
 - **The rural and landscape character and natural environment of the area, including rural lanes, meeting the requirements of all policies**

- 2. The loss of community facilities will only be supported where:**
 - **A similar or enhanced facility is provided in close proximity; or**
 - **It can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer viable.**

Interpretation

This policy augments, but does not modify or replace, Policy CS7 of the Local Plan.

The intention of the policies of the NP is to ensure that such facilities and services are safeguarded, enhanced or increased in the future development of the Neighbourhood Area.

In considering impacts on the amenities of residential properties, noise and disturbance from additional or altered traffic movements should be included.

Quite often, employment facilities and community facilities are one and the same thing, for example pubs and shops.

Community facilities include sports and recreational facilities (such as the swimming pools and pitches), shops, public buildings such as the Community Centre and sports pavilions.

In 'close proximity' would be within walking distance.

Traffic and other requirements for employment development are dealt with in the other policies of this plan.

Broadband

National Policy

The NPPF, paragraph 114, advises:

"Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution)."

Local Strategic Policy

The adopted Local Plan, paragraph 4.13 states:

"The development of superfast broadband and information and communication technology will be important in helping to diversify and modernise the types of businesses that can operate in the area. Working from home can also reduce the need to travel and help meet wider sustainability objectives."

Furthermore, the adopted Local Plan, Policy CS13 – Employment and economic development states:

"The strategy is to:

h) support the introduction and development of the superfast broadband and information and communications technology networks to support local businesses and flexible working in particular in the rural areas."

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

The 2020 village survey found that just over 40% of the working population of North Luffenham worked from home for at least a proportion of their time. Of these, over 75% worked from home for 40% or more of their time (although the survey was taken during 2020 COVID restrictions). [2020 Working from home](#)

Therefore, the ability to work from home is an important asset for the village population. North Luffenham has been at the forefront of recent Government initiatives to upgrade broadband infrastructure; it was the first exchange to be funded for an upgrade to FTTC (fibre to the cabinet) under the Rural Broadband programme and the school and Community Centre were upgraded to FTTP (Fibre to the Premises) in 2021.

Maintaining this investment in Internet connectivity is a key part of retaining and increasing the employment possibilities in the Parish.

Policy NL1.2: Broadband

- 1. New-build development, including employment space and all new houses, must include high-speed fibre optic (FTTP) cable broadband infrastructure within the site, linking to the building.**

Interpretation:

High Speed Broadband should be Gigabit capable where the supporting infrastructure is available but as a minimum 24Mb/Sec connectivity should be provided.

To comply with the policy, broadband infrastructure should be for general use, rather than being restricted to one supplier. Also, to comply, provision of high-speed broadband connections should not be to the detriment of existing connection use/provision/speed.

5.2 Residential Development

Purpose

To support residential development in sustainable locations, to meet local housing need.

National Policy

Under the heading “*Identifying land for homes*”, the NPPF, Paragraph 68 states:

- *Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability.*

Local Strategic Policy

The adopted Local Plan does not have an allocation of residential development within the North Luffenham Parish. Nonetheless, it is considered likely that some development will be proposed and Policy NL2.1 has been created principally to give high level guidance on acceptable development locations.

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

Housing Stock

The age of housing stock in North Luffenham ranges from centuries old to the most recent decade. For the village, the older historic properties are largely defined as being in a Conservation Area and are shown on the parish map as such. Many of these properties are



of attractive local stone construction, which gives great appeal to the older part of the village.

Running generally outside the Conservation Area is the Planned Limits of Development. This boundary also includes almost all the major modern housing developments and hence nearly all the houses in the village.

See **Figure 5.2.1** (below) for the location of each of the boundaries.

A significant majority of the village housing is owner occupied (82%). The rest of the housing is fairly evenly split between private renting and housing association. Virtually all the housing stock in the village is either houses or bungalows (98%). [Housing](#)

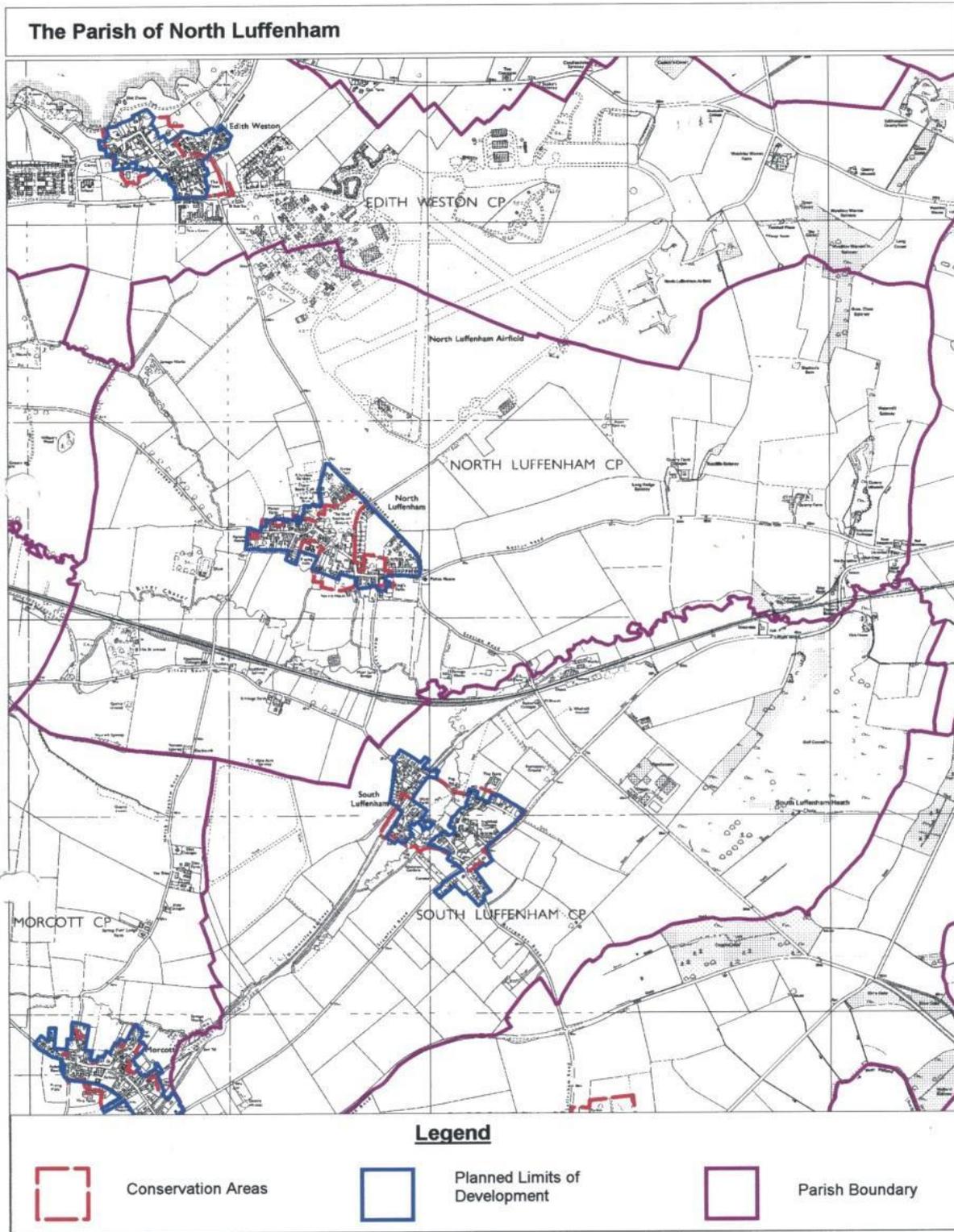


Figure 5.2.1 Village and Parish Boundaries '© Crown copyright'

Limitations and Opportunities

The 2020 village survey requested comments on housing. There were 135 responses to this request with four dominant themes, as follows:

Some limited development in the village is supported by 57% of responders

Just under 55% of comments supporting limited development specifically propose the provision of affordable/low-cost housing, many noting that young people find it difficult to buy property in the village

Just under 60% of comments supporting limited development specifically want houses to be in keeping/in similar style/in similar character/traditional/stone

Any further development in the village is opposed by 34% of responders

Hence, future housing developments should consider a range of properties, including those required for growing families, downsizers and for affordable/low-cost housing. Furthermore, any development should be sympathetic and maintain the character of the village and should not spoil the green spaces and aspect of the village.

Parish-wide Development

It is clearly understood that the Parish is far more than the village alone. Wherever housing and businesses are located in the Parish, be they geographically in the centre or on the edge, they bring value to the community. These outlying settlements and areas outside the village are covered by the Local Plan policy of no further development and this status remains unchanged. Accordingly, only the replacement of existing dwellings will be allowed in these locations.

Given the restrictions of the Conservation Area and the Planned Limits of Development, the immediate opportunity to expand the housing stock within the village is likely to be limited to appropriate in-fill development.

Policy NL2.1 has been included to:

- support housing development at suitable locations within the parish
- ensure that development is in keeping with the character and setting of the existing housing and landscape setting

Policy NL2.1: Residential Development

- 1. In addition to any allocated site and the defined North Luffenham Planned Limits of Development, residential development will be supported in the following locations:**
 - **Within the Planned Limits of Development;**
 - **Conversion of existing buildings;**
 - **Infill development of gaps within existing built frontages.**
- 2. Affordable housing provision should be an integral part of any scheme and be tenure blind.**
- 3. Residential schemes must include discretely located and screened storage for bins and recycling for all properties.**
- 4. For any sites allocated for residential development, inclusion of mixed-use elements will be supported, including employment space, life-work units and community facilities.**

Interpretation:

The Planned Limits of Development (PLD) mark the limit of the built-up area, beyond which is classed as open countryside. The Planned Limits of Development comprise:

- a) The curtilage of properties which form the main built-up part of the settlement but excluding:
 - Any part of the curtilage of a property which is extensive and does not relate to the main-built up part of the settlement;
 - Peripheral modern agricultural buildings;
 - Peripheral playing fields, except those abutted on three or more sides by existing development or approved development excluding modern agricultural buildings.
- b) Any abutting land with the benefit of planning permission for built development excluding agriculture, affordable housing exception sites and rural exception sites covered under Local Plan Policy H10 (Rural Exception Housing).
- c) Any land allocated in this plan for built development.

The Policy makes clear where residential development may be accommodated, without creating incursions into the rural area. It should be noted that the Local Plan makes provision in certain circumstances for development in the rural area. The NP does not limit or modify this provision.

Infill development applies to gaps in existing built frontages but the Policy would not support development to extend the ends of existing frontages.

The Policy does not seek to amend affordable housing requirements in terms of proportions. However, it does set requirements for the nature and location of affordable provision. Tenure

blind affordable housing means that it should be of similar design and specification as market housing.

The encouragement of mixed-use elements for potential future allocated residential sites should be interpreted as being additional to achieving the housing numbers envisaged by that site allocation.

The screened storage for bins should be of sufficient size to accommodate refuse and recycling bins.

Construction of housing that meets Lifetime Homes standards or any equivalent is encouraged.

Design, transport and other requirements for housing are dealt with in other policies.

5.3 Natural Environment

Purpose

To protect and enhance the green and natural environment of North Luffenham.

National Policy

The Natural Environment is covered by NPPF paragraphs 174 to 178. Habitats and biodiversity are covered by NPPF paragraphs 179 to 182. The policies relevant to the North Luffenham NP are summarised below:

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Paragraph 174 - Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity value and should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. They should also provide net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as water quality.

Paragraph 175 - Plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of national and locally designated sites and allocate land for development with the least environmental or amenity value. They should also take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure.

Habitats and biodiversity

Paragraph 179 - To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation. They should also promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Paragraph 180 - When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should refuse permission for development if significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for. It is expected that development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported and opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged.

Planning Practice Guidance

The [Planning Practice Guidance](#) that supports the NPPF contains guidance on the Natural Environment that are relevant to the North Luffenham NP. These are referred to where relevant.

Local Strategic Policy

The Local Plan Policy that relates to the Natural Environment in part reflects the national policies. However, since the Local Plan was adopted, the protection afforded to biodiversity by national planning policy and new approaches supported by the government (such as ‘net gain’) has increased and in some cases national policy now affords more protection than that afforded by the existing local policies. The relevant Local Plan policy is set out below:

Policy CS21 - The natural environment

Development should be appropriate to the landscape character type within which it is situated and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration, or the creation of appropriate new features.

The quality and diversity of the natural environment of Rutland will be conserved and enhanced. Conditions for biodiversity will be maintained and improved and important geodiversity assets will be protected.

Protected sites and species will be afforded the highest level of protection with priority also given to local aims and targets for the natural environment.

All developments, projects and activities will be expected to:

- a) Provide an appropriate level of protection to legally protected sites and species;*
- b) Maintain and where appropriate enhance conditions for priority habitats and species identified in the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan;*
- c) Maintain and where appropriate enhance recognised geodiversity assets*
- d) Maintain and where appropriate enhance other sites, features, species or networks of ecological interest and provide for appropriate management of these;*
- e) Maximise opportunities for the restoration, enhancement and connection of ecological or geological assets, particularly in line with the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan;*
- f) Mitigate against any necessary impacts through appropriate habitat creation, restoration or enhancement on site or elsewhere;*
- g) Respect and where appropriate enhance the character of the landscape identified in the Rutland Landscape Character assessment;*
- h) Maintain and where appropriate enhance green infrastructure.*

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

North Luffenham is committed to protecting and conserving the natural environment of the parish including its wildlife and landscapes. Both the 2017 village survey and the 2020 parish survey undertaken in support of the Neighbourhood Plan showed that the local natural environment, and opportunities to enjoy and appreciate it, is highly valued by residents.

National planning policy and the Rutland Local Plan provide a policy framework for conserving the natural environment, while this Neighbourhood Plan translates these policies into local priorities and actions.

Natural environment – what matters in North Luffenham

The parish has one nationally important wildlife site, [North Luffenham Quarry](#) Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and a number of Local Wildlife Sites, the most important of which is North Luffenham Airfield. The SSSI is located near Foster’s Bridge just to the north of the telephone exchange (an online detailed plan is available [here](#)).

Management of protected wildlife sites is generally the responsibility of the landowner. There are also a significant number of veteran trees within the parish (although there is no register of these) that are afforded special protection by the NPPF.

Although there are no formal nature reserves within the parish it still supports a wide variety of wildlife including species such as Otter, breeding Curlew, four species of Orchid, White-clawed Crayfish and Marbled White and Purple Hairstreak butterflies; all of these are scarce in Rutland. A number of priority species (as identified by the [Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan](#)) also occur within or close to the parish.

There are opportunities within the urban area to deliver tangible benefits for nature conservation, for example by growing wildflower plots on public open spaces, planting native species of trees (introduced species are generally poor in wildlife as they do not support native insects) and providing nest boxes for birds.

New development can also benefit wildlife for example by including integral nest boxes for swifts (or special swift bricks), an action specifically suggested in the Government’s [Planning Practice Guidance](#); these will also provide nest sites for other species such as sparrows and starlings. The following link gives more details about helping swifts. [Swift Information](#)

The 2020 parish survey undertaken as part of the development of this NP showed that there was strong support for measures to conserve and enhance the parish’s wildlife. This included (but was not limited to) support for measures to conserve and protect hedgehogs, the creation of wildflower areas, the desire for a ‘village pond’ and the provision of bird nest

boxes. Parishioners placed particular emphasis on the conservation of the River Chater. Other wetland habitats (ponds – see **Figure 5.3.1**, springs and wet flushes) are also of conservation interest and, because of their dependence on water, are covered in the water environment section.

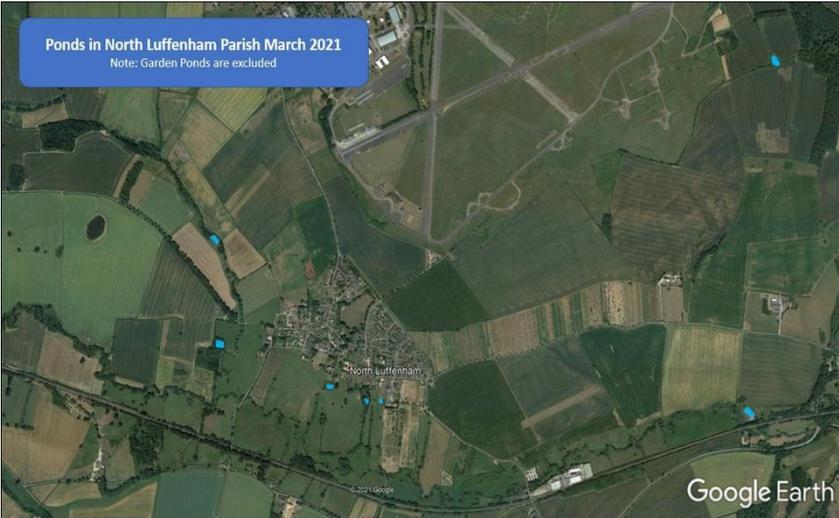


Figure 5.3.1: Location of Ponds (excluding garden ponds) *Note: there is no public access to any of these locations*

The [Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan](#) identifies five priority areas for local conservation action. Of these one, *Rutland limestone and calcareous grassland*, is relevant to

North Luffenham due to the presence of limestone across much of the parish and so is protected by the polices within the NPPF and the Local Plan.

The [Making Space for Nature](#) report published by the Government in 2010 identified the importance of linking together small fragmented sites of conservation interest. Discussion with the neighbouring parishes of Ketton and South Luffenham has identified two ecological networks that extend across parish boundaries and would help achieve this objective.

These are effectively key connecting corridors for wildlife where, in the long-term (if funding was available), habitat management has the potential to deliver significant benefits for local wildlife. Delivering these opportunities will be dependent on the support of the relevant landowners and the availability of incentives such as appropriate agri-environment scheme options. This plan seeks to encourage development proposals to make a positive contribution to the conservation and enhancement of these wildlife corridors.

These corridors are shown on **Figure 5.3.2** below, as follows:

- The River Chater Wildlife Corridor;
- The Rutland Limestone Corridor.

The River Chater Wildlife Corridor is broadly based on the floodplain mapping produced by the Environment Agency. The Rutland Limestone Wildlife Corridor, is based on the presence of limestone at or close to the surface; the boundary shown is indicative only due to the complexities of the geological strata locally. Habitat management and creation within this area also has the potential to link together a number of nationally important wildlife sites whose nature conservation interest is dependent on the presence of limestone.



Figure 5.3.2: Map of Wildlife Corridors

Note: The boundaries shown are 'soft' – they give a broad indication of where there is existing wildlife interest or where, with appropriate management, there is the potential to create or re-create habitats linking together sites of existing wildlife interest.

The landscapes of England have been divided into 159 [National Character Areas](#) (NCAs) and our parish is split between two of these; the majority is [in High Leicestershire NCA](#), while SGB and the old airfield sit within the [Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds NCA](#). The NCA assessments provide a broad overview of landscape character and suggest ways in which that local character can be conserved and enhanced.

The parish’s landscape is dominated by the valley of the River Chater; this combined with a mix of permanent pasture and arable land create a classic rural landscape. This rural character is enhanced by extensive views westwards and southwards from the village itself and on approaches to the village particularly from the south.



The 2020 village survey showed that parishioners attach particular importance to and highly value the landscape views both southwards and along the Chater valley from the village as well as views back towards the village from the south and south-west.

Individual features encompassed by these views, such as historic ridge and furrow cultivation, the presence of old pollarded trees along the River Chater (and its tributaries) and the network of hedgerows and small woods, enhance the landscape of this part of the parish. The area of the parish that constitutes this much-admired landscape is discussed further in Section 5.7 (Landscape Setting).

Policy NL3.1: Natural Environment

- 1. Development must have no overall adverse impact on the rural and natural environments, taking account of mitigation measures, including consideration of impacts on landscape, hydrology, ecology, and wildlife.**

- 2. In considering impacts on the rural and natural environment, particular attention should be paid to the following sensitive features**
 - North Luffenham Quarry SSSI;
 - Local Wildlife Sites;
 - Calcareous (limestone) grassland;
 - Neutral grassland;
 - Wildlife habitats (and potential wildlife habitats), including those for bats, black hairstreak, water vole, otter, white-clawed crayfish, curlew;
 - Springs, ponds and wet flushes

- 3. Development should take opportunities to enhance landscape, ecology and wildlife, and must create a net gain in biodiversity. Ways of achieving this could include:**
 - Tree, hedge or other planting using native species;
 - Inclusion of integral swift bricks (or swift boxes), bat boxes and other features to support wildlife;
 - Green or brown roofing or living walling features.

- 4. Appropriate development that helps conserve and enhance the following wildlife corridors will be supported:**
 - The River Chater Wildlife Corridor
 - The Rutland Limestone Corridor

- 5. Mature trees and native hedgerows, including ancient and species-rich hedgerows, should be retained and incorporated into the landscape design and layout of development schemes. Where loss of trees, hedgerows or hedges is demonstrably unavoidable, replacements must be of native species and should create an equivalent or greater level of amenity.**

Interpretation:

Net gain in biodiversity may be achieved through various means, such as compensatory habitat creation, careful landscape design, green features in built development, and wildlife friendly features like integral swift and/or bat boxes.

The British Standard for Bird Boxes (BS 42021 Biodiversity and the built environment: Specification for the Design and Installation of Bird Boxes) may be helpful in complying with the policy. As a parish, North Luffenham places particular emphasis on the inclusion of integral swift bricks in new development.

Swift bricks/boxes are multi-purpose as they provide space for swifts and other hole nesting species such as sparrows, starlings and tits. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA 2013) recommend the inclusion of one built-in nestbox for each residential unit though this

can be averaged over the development as some buildings – and some locations - will be more suitable than others.

In considering impacts on roadside verges, it is important to consider the impacts on the specific species that they support. The roadside verges identified are of known wildlife importance and support specific species.

Note that calcareous (limestone) and neutral grasslands often occur as a mosaic, with patches of each type occurring alongside each other as a result of the underlying geology and soil depth.

Design features to support wildlife include:

- Integral bat boxes and bird boxes (these can support species such as swift, starling, house sparrow and barn owl);
- Hedgehog gaps in fences;
- Badger routes;
- Wildlife connectivity via green corridors, grass verges and footpath edges;
- The use of grass species and wildflowers that are already native to Rutland) (those that are bee and insect friendly are desirable).

5.4 Local Green Spaces

Purpose

To protect key Local Green Spaces within the Neighbourhood Area.

National Policy

The NPPF paragraphs 98 to 103 cover Open space and recreation. The paragraphs relevant to Local Green Space designation for the North Luffenham NP are summarised below:

Paragraph 101: The designation of land as Local Green Space allows communities to identify and protect green areas particularly important to them. Designations should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services

Paragraph 102: The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves. The space must be demonstrably special to the local community and hold a particular local significance.

Local Strategic Policy

The adopted Local Plan, Policy SP21 Important open space and frontages, states that development must not have an adverse impact on an Important open space with regards to a range of conditions including:

- its intrinsic environmental value, including landform, streams and important wildlife habitats

the views and/or vistas out of or within the village that contribute to the character and attractiveness of the settlement

- its peripheral or transitional open character in contributing to preserving the overall character of the settlement
- its contribution to the form and character of the settlement in terms of relationship to other open spaces or natural features

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

The parish environment, with its natural and semi-natural habitats and green spaces (including pathways and recreational 'green' areas), is a highly valued aspect of life in North Luffenham.

This value is evidenced in the community feedback that was highlighted in our 2020 and 2017 parish surveys; this includes requests to enhance social opportunities in our rural setting as well as exercise, provide a means of getting around, growing food, general enjoyment of the countryside and its historic sites. Many residents commented within our survey that the vistas around the parish are of great significance and value to those living here.

A selection of these elements along with other site-specific values, combine to create Local Green Spaces – places of special significance that require protecting for the community and the wider population.

It is also vitally important to identify and take accountability for the conservation of wildlife habitats and to ensure our community contributes positively to the fight against climate change. Our community wants to play its part in the wider picture, as guided by the recognised specialist local and national organisations.

Through the process of consultation and discussion, a number of areas within the parish are considered appropriate for designation as Local Green Spaces. Full details of the proposed Designations, including location and individual assessments of suitability, are quite extensive and so are given in separate Supporting Document No.1, Local Green Space.

[Local Green Space Supporting Document](#) Brief descriptions of the proposed Designations are given below to summarise the proposals.

Designation LGS1

Field Gardens Woodland Walk (including Woodland and Allotments)

This is a short walk with two points of pedestrian access, one via Pinfold Lane and the other via a gate leading from Edith Weston Road. The Walk follows a permissive path around the north edge of the allotments and around the boundary of a field (owned by North Luffenham Parish Council). It includes a section of woodland and popular rural views.

The allotments are accessed from Pinfold Lane and are highly valued by the village. They are currently fully utilised with indications that interest in the village is continuing to grow - demand often exceeds availability.

The proposed Designation is:

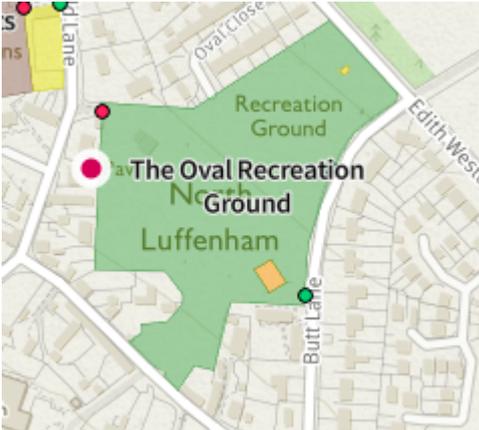
- LGS1: The Field Garden Woodland, Woodland Walk and Allotments

Designation LGS2

The Oval

Due to its rural nature North Luffenham has a limited amount of formal recreational and socialising facilities compared to urban and suburban locations where there is more lucrative appeal for private enterprises to deliver such facilities. What we do have is highly valued and utilised by many groups across the parish.

The village is fortunate to have a large area of open space in the heart of the village – The Oval. This parcel of land, officially known as the Recreation Ground (approximately 30,105 square metres), is shown on the map below.



'© Crown copyright'

This is the central village focal point for walkers and locals to enjoy sporting and leisure activities. General social gatherings (e.g. fireworks displays) are also held in the Oval. Facilities include a cricket pavilion with a cricket pitch and practice nets, along with basketball and football areas. There is a secure play area for

children with climbing frames, activity structures and a zip wire alongside.

The proposed Designation is:

- LGS2: The Oval

Designation LGS3

Butt Lane from the junction of Edith Weston Road, and the section of land, up to the SGB boundary

With a limited number of walking options within the parish, it is vital to protect long-standing corridors that have been used on a regular basis by residents of the parish.

The area of North Luffenham, accessed via Butt Lane on the east side of Edith Weston Road, is currently used by residents and offers one of the highest viewing points across the valley. Importantly, it fulfils a need for more general walking, rambling and dog walking. Strong opinion has been expressed, particularly by dog walkers, that without this facility there would be a large gap in the opportunity for residents to walk and allow their dogs off their leads without having to drive anywhere.

The proposed Designation is:

- LGS3: Butt Lane from the junction of Edith Weston Road, and the section of land, up to the SGB boundary

Designation LGS4

The Water Garden

As a matter of principle, it is important that we protect and preserve elements of our parish that are of historic significance. Whilst public access is not always available to such locations, this should not stop them being recognised and designated as Local Green Space.

The Garden was designed in 1929 for the owners of North Luffenham Hall and was a highly acclaimed piece of work. Although it does not have public access, it is visible from the public footpath adjacent to the site. It is considered to be of Historic Significance to the parish.

The proposed Designation is:

- LGS4: The Water Garden

Policy NL4.1: Local Green Spaces

1. The following spaces are designated as Local Green Spaces.

- **LGS1: The Field Garden Woodland, Woodland Walk and Allotments**
- **LGS2: The Oval**
- **LGS3: Butt Lane from the junction of Edith Weston Road, and the section of land, up to the SGB boundary**

- **LGS4: The Water Garden**
- 2. Development must not encroach into designated Local Green Space areas. An exception may be made for small-scale development that has the specific purpose of supporting the community use of the space and where it would not cause significant harm to the green and open character of the space.**
 - 3. Development adjacent to or affecting Local Green Space must cause no harm to, and where possible enhance, the community value, accessibility, safety or amenity of the space.**

Interpretation:

The NPPF makes clear that Local Green Space has similar protection to Green Belts. In decision making, it is important to note that the purpose of Local Green Space is different from the purposes of Green Belt.

An example of harm to the safety or amenity of Local Green Space would be if development involved erection of high walls or enclosures adjacent to the space or limited existing access to the space.

5.5 The Water Environment

Purpose

To protect North Luffenham's blue infrastructure and support the restoration of the River Chater to 'good ecological status'.

National Policy

The Water Environment is covered by NPPF paragraphs 152 to 169 (climate change and flooding) and elements of the policies that cover the natural environment (paragraphs 174 to 181). The policies relevant to the North Luffenham NP are summarised below:

Paragraph 152 & 153 – Says the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. It should help shape places by ensuring the future resilience of communities and enabling radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, taking full account of issues like flood risk and water supply.

Paragraph 159 to 166 - Sets out the need to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and provides restrictions and a series of tests where development is necessary in such areas. It provides safeguards from development for land that is required, or likely to be required, for current or future flood management.

Paragraph-167 & 168 - Local planning authorities are required to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere by development proposals. New development is required to incorporate sustainable drainage systems.

Paragraph 169 - Major developments should normally incorporate sustainable drainage systems. The systems used should have appropriate minimum operational standards and have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; they should also provide multifunctional benefits wherever practical.

Paragraph 174e – Unusually for the NPPF, this paragraph says development should: '.... wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as.... water quality'

Linked to the NPPF there is also detailed Planning Practice Guidance on [flooding](#) and on [water supply, wastewater and water quality](#). This includes seeking opportunities to improve the water environment. There is also guidance on how water quality can be improved in the NPPF guidance on the [Natural Environment](#).

The Environment Agency has recently (2020) published a new [National Flood and Coastal Risk Management Strategy for England](#) that identifies the important part that Natural Flood Management Measures can play in reducing flood risk.

Local Strategic Policy

The adopted Local Plan includes the following relevant policies:

All new development will be expected to contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place, being appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, density, layout, appearance, materials, and its relationship to adjoining buildings and landscape features, and shall not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shading, noise, light pollution or other adverse impact on local character and amenities.

All new developments will be expected to meet high standards of design that:

- d) minimise water use and the risk of flooding to and from the development including the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems wherever possible;*
- f) allow the sorting, recycling and biological processing of waste through the development's operational life.*

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

River Chater - The River Chater (a major tributary of the River Welland) flows through North Luffenham and makes a considerable contribution to its landscape and sense of place. The village itself has evolved on a spring line where limestone meets more impermeable geology, and small tributaries flow down to join the Chater. In addition, there are a number of other springs and seepage lines within the parish that feed small tributary streams and support locally valuable wildlife sites.

The most recent Water Framework Directive Ecological assessment (2019) of the River Chater, classifies its ecological status as 'Bad'; this is the lowest (worst) category. There is a national commitment to restore all rivers to good ecological status by 2027. New development within the parish may provide opportunities to secure enhancements to the ecological condition of the River Chater and its tributaries and assist in achieving this ambition.

The parish survey showed that residents place great value on the presence of the River Chater, the wildlife that it supports and a healthy water environment. Therefore, our aim, through this Neighbourhood Plan, is to conserve and enhance the Parish's water environment with the ambition of seeing the River Chater restored to 'good ecological status'.

Groundwater - Groundwater is a vital resource. It supplies about one third of mains drinking water in England, although the proportion of drinking water supplied by groundwater varies regionally. Historically our village developed where it is because of the presence of a series of springs on the slopes leading down to the River Chater. Over time these were supplemented by wells and the public pump at the bottom of Butt Lane. Today, as far as we are aware, all the parish receives a mains water supply; for the majority of the village water the supplier is Severn Trent Water.

However, groundwater still provides water for the River Chater, its tributaries and a series of small spring fed wetlands that support some of the village's most interesting wildlife

habitats. Groundwater is the primary source of water for these sites in summer or at times of drought, making it vital in sustaining their wildlife interest.

Any future major redevelopment proposal, including for SGB, could pose a risk to the groundwater resource of the parish and the wildlife habitats that depend on this water source, if not carefully designed and constructed. Examples include polluted runoff entering the aquifer and proposals for limestone quarrying that could disrupt groundwater flows.

Water Supply & Foul Drainage – The mains water supply to the village is understood to be adequate to meet current needs. However, any major redevelopment is thought likely to require trunk main reinforcement if the development exceeds 250 to 350 residential dwellings.

Our parish is currently served by two sewage works, one to the south of Station Road is run by Anglian Water and serves the village. Its treated effluent discharges into the River Chater. The other is to the west of Edith Weston Road and serves SGB; it is run by Severn Trent Water and discharges into the Lyndon Brook. It is understood to need upgrading to meet current regulatory standards.

Treated discharges from sewage works, if poorly managed, can have a significant impact on the environment leading to a reduction in oxygen within the river and, through nutrient enrichment (notably phosphates), eutrophication. This can have very significant impacts on the biodiversity of streams and rivers. The Chater (though not necessarily Lyndon Brook) has a relatively rich ecological interest supporting such species as Brown Trout, Otter, native Crayfish and dragonflies.

Improvements to or any extension of the foul water infrastructure in the parish or discharging into water courses that run through the parish, provide an opportunity to secure improvements for local biodiversity and general amenity. This could include a robust water quality monitoring regime, phosphate stripping prior to discharge and reedbed filtration.

It is also important that any new development separates foul water drainage from surface water and storm drainage, so avoiding the discharge of untreated sewage into the River Chater and its tributaries (for example during storm events).

Managing Surface Water - Surface water from SGB (including areas both within and outside our parish) is discharged into a tributary of the Lyndon Brook 300m west of the main entrance to the camp. The increased flow following storm events has led to erosion and over-deepening of both the tributary and Lyndon Brook.

Any major development, including redevelopment of SGB, could lead to an increase in surface water needing disposal. It is understood that in some areas of the site this could be through deep borehole soakaways; in other areas, it is understood that the underlying geology prevents this approach and potential options include the use of detention basins that would then discharge (at a controlled rate) to land in our parish.

Surface Water discharges and deep borehole soakaways from urban areas also pose a pollution risk (e.g. oil spills and excess nutrients) and any development could impact on the water quality of both groundwater and the River Chater and its tributaries.

Flood Risk Management - While fields in the valley of the River Chater are subject to flooding after periods of heavy rain, the parish is fortunate in not having any homes identified by the Environment Agency as being at risk from fluvial flooding. The only built assets that are at risk are the four roads that cross the River Chater and the staff car park for the Linecross factory on Station Road. These roads and the car park can all be covered by flood waters after periods of sustained heavy rainfall and on very rare (and short-lived) occasions become impassable to traffic.

Climate change predictions are for warmer and wetter winters and drier, hotter summers. There is also an increasing risk of periods of sustained heavy rainfall. While this is unlikely to significantly change fluvial flood risk in the parish it may lead to an increase in flooding problems both up and down stream. In recognition of these changing risks there is an increasing interest in the use of Natural Flood Management techniques to address such issues (<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/fcrm/fcrm-national-strategy-info/>).

Such measures generally aim to slow the flow of flood waters and can be achieved through changes in agricultural practice and new approaches to river management. They have the added advantage of helping to delivery more diverse habitats and so benefit wildlife. There may be options for the adoption of such approaches in North Luffenham to reduce downstream flood risk in other parishes.

Managing the Risk of Drought - The current climate change predictions for the United Kingdom (<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/index>) indicate that we are likely to have hotter drier summers. This combined with changes in rainfall patterns suggest that the risk of drought conditions will increase, indeed the East Midlands came very close to a significant drought in 2019.

While many of the ways of managing these risks are outside of the parish's control (reducing leakage from water mains, reducing water use by individual households) there are ways that the parish can help communicate and demonstrate best practice. An obvious example is encouraging the use of water butts for watering gardens; it might be possible to use rainwater harvesting (from say the roof of the Bowls Club) to provide at least part of the water needs of allotment holders.

New development provides an opportunity to design in water efficiency methods in terms of both rain water and grey water 'harvesting'. Any new public buildings in the parish could also be required to incorporate such an approach, thereby demonstrating best practice.

Policy NL5.1: Watercourses and Surface Water

- 1. Development must have no overall adverse impact on watercourses (including springs, ponds and wet flushes) or surrounding land, taking account of measures for mitigation, including consideration of impacts on (or arising from) surface water runoff, flood risk, storm discharge or pollution.**
- 2. Development must have no adverse impact on the River Chater, including its tributaries, banks, flood plain and landscape setting. This includes consideration of adverse impacts on water quality and its value for wildlife, its contribution to rural character and as a local amenity.**
- 3. Major developments should include measures that contribute to the restoration of the River Chater to good ecological status.**
- 4. Development should incorporate sustainable urban drainage with sufficient capacity to accommodate additional flow rates.**
- 5. Support will be given to appropriate Natural Flood Management measures within (and upstream of) the parish that reduce downstream flood risk**
- 6. Permeable materials should be used for hard ground surfaces.**

Interpretation:

The policy considers impacts of surface water runoff in terms of over-deepening of water courses, flood risk impacts on surrounding land and pollution. Application of the policy should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development.

Natural flood management refers to using natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. Examples include: restoring river meanders, slowing the flow of flood waters and changing the way land is managed so that the soil can absorb more water.

Planning applications should demonstrate that the requirements of the policy have been met through proper assessment of surface water impacts, storm discharges and the impact on water courses. Major developments should adopt measures that lead to the improvement of the quality of water discharged into the River Chater and contribute towards the restoration of its 'good ecological status'.

5.6 Placemaking and Sustainable Design

Purpose

To create a well-designed, sustainable community and a well-designed environment.

National Policy

The NPPF confirms that good design is indivisible from good planning and emphasises the making of beautiful and sustainable places. It recognises that well-designed buildings and places improve the quality of people's lives and that it is a core planning principle always to secure good design, particularly where developments are in an isolated location.

To be sustainable, new development needs to be well designed, constructed using materials with the lowest possible environmental footprint and be energy and water efficient (including the ability to generate renewable energy); it should be above and beyond the minimum levels specified in Building Regulations wherever possible.

The NPPF includes:

- Paragraph 92, which states *“Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which”*...paragraph 92(c) *“enable and support healthy lifestyles”* with *“layouts that encourage walking and cycling”*
- Paragraphs 101 to 103, which discuss the circumstances under which Local Green Space can be designated.
- Paragraph 127, which notes the important role neighbourhood plans can play in identifying *“the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.”*
- Paragraph 130, which states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments...paragraph 130b) *“are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping”* and are sympathetic to local character and history and landscape setting.
- Paragraph 131, sets out the important contribution trees make to the character and quality of urban environments; *“planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined and that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments”* and *“measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees and existing trees are retained wherever possible”*
- Paragraph 134, reiterates the importance of policies and guidance which states that development that is not well designed should be refused *“especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design”*.

Local Strategic Policy

The adopted Local Plan includes:

- Policy CS19 – Promoting good design, states how all new development should contribute to the local distinctiveness and sets out how good design can be achieved, in particular to have no adverse effects on the surrounding environment.
- Policy CS20 - Energy efficiency and low carbon energy generation, sets out the requirements for carbon reduction
- Policy CS23- Green infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation, safeguards existing green spaces and their improvement by the linking of green spaces and the provision of paths and cycleways.

Design Guidelines for Rutland & South Kesteven

Separately from the adopted Local Plan, Design Guidelines for Rutland & South Kesteven have been developed as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). These are referenced as Design Guidelines (R&SK) throughout this NP.

The key aims of this Design SPD are to:

- Establish the requirements for a high level of design and build quality;
- Set out the design steps and considerations that planning applicants need to undertake; and
- Provide applicants with a clear understanding of good quality design.

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

As previously described, North Luffenham is a small village of about 350 houses in a rural setting. The submitted Local Plan, now withdrawn, proposed the development of the SGB site that is just to the north of the village. The parish survey of 2020 sought views on this proposed development as well as any within the parish.

In the 2017 Village Survey, 76% of respondents said that the general environment was very important and a further 22% that it was important. This was confirmed in the 2020 survey on the NP. [Village 2020 Survey:Environment](#)

Of the 220 responses to the SGB development proposal, 93.2% were divided between those supporting limited development (62.3%) and those totally opposed (30.9%).

Many of the comments were concerned that the development would significantly affect the rural nature of the area and that the scale and design needed to be in keeping with those of surrounding villages. [SGB 2020 Survey](#)

The NL Design Codes identified that the south facing aspect of the village gives the opportunity to use sunlight and heat for energy. New homes and buildings should be designed and constructed to use these natural resources to encourage zero carbon developments. (Reference: Current regulations, BREEAM, Guide for Sustainable Homes)

The Village Survey in 2017 covered Healthcare Facilities and Social Care Services available in the village and more widely in nearby towns. Although the numbers of responses were low (45 of 315), 53% indicated there was insufficient understanding of the problems and restrictions for those with disabilities. [Disability and Care](#)

The Village Survey in 2020 received a similar response with 50% of respondents expressing concern about the poor condition and maintenance of pavements and the difficulty and hazards posed to those using them.

The footways in the conservation area are not wide enough in many places to accommodate wheelchairs or mobility scooters (700mm or more in width) and open spaces, such as The Oval, are not easily accessible. The following link connects to Supporting Document No.3 that discusses these issues in more detail [Access for All](#)



The Parish Council is also concerned about climate change. It is committed to reducing climate change as well as adapting to its inevitable impacts. This commitment is reflected, for example, in the transport policies contained within this Plan but sustainable design of future developments also has a crucial role to play.

Development should be digitally well connected through its broadband connectivity, to enable people to work and study efficiently and effectively at home; this has the added benefit of reducing the need to travel.

New developments should also be “future proofed” by building-in the requirements of a shift from petrol and diesel-powered vehicles to fully electric alternatives (ELVs); these should be in line with the Government’s current target of 100% of vehicles to be electrically powered by 2040 (although there are moves to bring this forward). In terms of development, this means the provision of domestic charging points (or the infrastructure to facilitate future installation) as well as other charging points in community settings.

Sustainable development should complement the existing character and quality of the individual villages. New buildings, streets and spaces should be integrated within their setting, both functionally and aesthetically.

Neighbourhood Plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.

Policy NL6.1: Placemaking and Sustainable Design

- 1. Development must be well-designed and sustainable, meeting the requirements of this policy in a way that is proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme.**
- 2. Green infrastructure and the public realm, including paths and green space, must be designed as an integral part of design and layout of development and should include any existing landscape features, including trees or hedges. Where a site is developed incrementally, it should be clear how the scheme relates to green infrastructure and public realm in the wider site. The design of green infrastructure and the public realm should support multiple purposes, including recreation, wildlife, biodiversity, movement, and safety.**
- 3. The convenience, safety and amenity of pedestrians and cyclists should be a priority in the design and layout of development. Footpaths and footways within a scheme should allow for ease of movement and connect to paths around the edge of a site.**
- 4. Development must be designed to accommodate the needs of people with a range of mobilities or impaired vision.**
- 5. Development must complement the surrounding area in terms of scale, massing, set-back from the road, spacing between buildings and the pattern of garden spaces. This includes complementing the predominant height and character of buildings based on 2 storeys or 3 storeys one of which is within the roof space.**
- 6. Housing should avoid excessive uniformity by using different styles, materials, heights and orientations.**
- 7. All dwellings should have private garden space or shared amenity space in very close proximity. Flats or apartments should include external balconies, shared space or other external amenity space.**
- 8. Extensions to existing buildings must have no significant adverse impact on the amenities of surrounding properties and must meet the same design requirements set out in this policy as with newbuild development.**
- 9. Development should use high quality materials to complement local character and reduce carbon impact. This includes use of local, recycled or green materials. Local materials include limestone, slate, Collyweston slate, thatch and plain clay tiles.**
- 10. Boundary treatments should complement the existing historic character of the area. Particular support will be given to use of limestone stone walls and hedges of native species.**
- 11. Development should aim to achieve zero carbon impact and should include design and landscape features to help achieve this.**
- 12. Innovative and creative design solutions will be supported, especially where they incorporate green design features and superior environmental performance.**

Interpretation:

The policy applies according to the scale and nature of development. For example, some parts of the policy only apply where a new layout is being created.

The policy is not intended to impose stylistic copying, but to encourage locally distinctive design that takes account of existing townscape, materials and landscape characteristics. Indeed, the policy encourages creative and green design. It should be noted that there is no conflict in principle between creative design and historic environments. Indeed, many protected buildings were creative designs in their day.

Varied building heights and rooflines will help to create a more interesting and less uniform skyline. This could be illustrated through sketches and sections to show schemes in relation to the context.

Green materials could include those with low-embodied energy, superior insulation properties or from sustainable sources.

Good design of the public realm includes making it accessible for all members of the community. This is not just in terms of mobility but also access for those who are partially sighted or registered blind.

Reference to the Design Council's 'Building for Life 12' may be useful in meeting the requirements of the policy. Similarly, reference may be made to the current NL Design Code document and the current Design Guidelines for Rutland & South Kesteven. The Government's National Model Design Code should also be considered.

Ways of building climate resilient developments can include:

- rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling;
- use of efficient heating and cooling systems, or design to reduce dependency on heating and cooling systems;
- superior insulation properties and airtightness;
- natural ventilation and air flow (for warmer months) to help avoid overheating;
- use of local, low-embodied energy, recycled and recyclable materials;
- living (green) walls or roofs;
- orientation to maximise passive solar gain;
- incorporation of micro-generation features, including solar panels;
- flexible spaces and layouts to accommodate changing demands.

For further information visit the BREEAM technical standards guides at:
<https://www.breeam.com/discover/technical-standards/>

Meaningful community engagement is strongly encouraged from the early (pre-design) stage of schemes as mentioned in the NPPF.

Careful selection of an experienced professional design team is likely to help in meeting the requirements of the policy.

Design and access statements provide an opportunity to demonstrate how the requirements of the policy have been met. Development proposals should contain sufficient detail to demonstrate compliance with the policy, including a masterplan where necessary (see following guidance note).

Masterplanning Guidance Note

Need for Masterplans

If larger sites are allocated in the future, it is likely that a masterplan will be necessary to demonstrate compliance with the design and other policies in this plan. A masterplan should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of any scheme. Where such sites are developed incrementally, schemes should demonstrate how they fit into the planning of the wider site.

Key masterplanning principles include enabling sustainable movement and life/work patterns, reducing carbon use and supporting biodiversity net gain.

Masterplans should show how the development integrates with its surroundings and responds to the features of the site and its context. This includes links to surrounding roads and paths, green infrastructure and the wider public realm.

Engagement

Meaningful engagement is strongly encouraged from the early (pre-design) stage of schemes, as stated in the National Planning Policy Framework. Early stage engagement can inform the fundamentals of design and help to avoid conflict, cost and delay at later stages. Early engagement on key masterplanning principles is far more meaningful than late stage engagement on subjective stylistic matters or fine detail of design.

Landscape Infrastructure

The starting point in determining the layout of any site should be green and blue infrastructure. This relates to key green spaces, green routes and water features, but also to things like green verges in streets and street trees.

Masterplanning should take account of the need to achieve biodiversity net gain and this can include things like habitat recovery, compensatory habitat creation, and landscape design using native species.

The layout and landscape design of development proposals should incorporate existing positive landscape elements. This means that development proposals should be supported by an analysis of the site, landscape and context. This could include an arboriculture survey to assess the quality of existing trees.

Landscape buffer zones should be incorporated into the layout of development to prevent coalescence between different built settlements and maintain their landscape settings.

Connectivity

Particular emphasis should be placed on creating safe, attractive and convenient pedestrian and cycle connectivity with links through and around any site. This includes taking opportunities to link to key local features and facilities, for example Rutland Water.

Character

Layouts and patterns of development should reinforce the distinctive local identity of the area. This puts emphasis on good design principles, creation of interesting townscapes, creation of a green and attractive public realm, safe and convenient paths. It is essential to design for the specific site and context.

For larger sites, the scale and density of development should reduce towards the edges, to create a softer transition to the surrounding open areas. A suitable transition from the edge of settlement to open countryside can also be achieved through use of landscaping features, such as hedges rather than hard wall of fencing for boundary treatments and by orientating the fronts of buildings to face the open countryside.

Public Realm

The public realm is an important part of character and also in the creation of a well-functioning place, supporting the needs of the community. This includes paths and spaces to support social activities and interactions.

The provision of community green space for allotments, recreation and to support natural habitats would help to make development more sustainable, supporting biodiversity.

Views and Vistas

The design and layout of development should respond to views through a site and beyond, including to landmarks and landscape. Some views may be towards features outside of the neighbourhood area, such as local heritage features associated with the previous airfield or military use.

5.7 Historic Environment and Landscape Setting

Purpose

To protect North Luffenham’s historic environment and the character of the Conservation Area.

Historic Environment

National Policy

The NPPF, Section 16, focuses on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. In paragraph 189, it recognises that historic assets:

“are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations”.

To achieve this the NPPF, paragraph 190, recognises the important role that neighbourhood plans have in setting out:

“a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment”

Local Strategic Policy

The adopted Local Plan, Policy CS22, states that *“the quality and character of the built and historic environment will be conserved and enhanced.”* The policy outlines that particular protection will apply to a number of instances relevant to North Luffenham, namely listed buildings and features, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.

To achieve this, Policy CS22 establishes that: -

“All developments, projects and activities will be expected to protect and where possible enhance historic assets and their settings, maintain local distinctiveness and the character of identified features.

Development should respect the historic landscape character and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration, or the creation of appropriate new features. The adaptive re-use of redundant or functionally obsolete listed buildings or important buildings will be supported where this does not harm their essential character.”

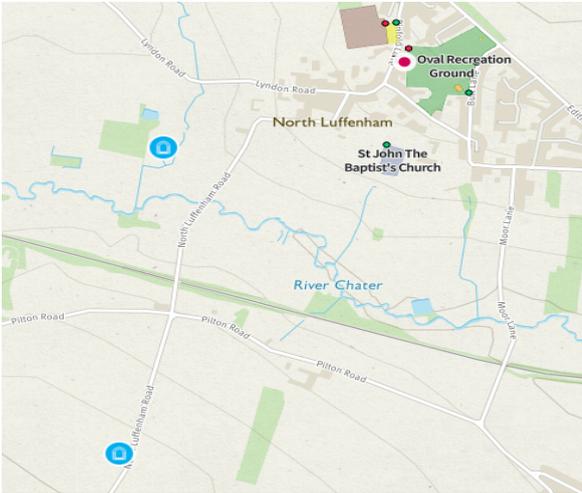
North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

The unspoilt beauty and historic nature of the Parish feature highly amongst its most notable characteristics. North Luffenham has a unique, defined character encompassing a variety of building ages and styles, an attractive Conservation Area (designated in 1981) with a central and accessible community green space known locally as the Oval.

There are approximately fifty officially listed buildings within the village boundary including the Church of St. John the Baptist (dating back to the 13th and 14th centuries), North

Luffenham Hall and Barn (dating back to the mid 16th century) and Manor Farm on the Lyndon Road, which bears the date 1640.

Two sites within the parish of North Luffenham are listed as Scheduled Monuments under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The most notable of these is the Moat Site, located to the immediate west of the village as indicated by the upper blue circle on **Figure 5.7.1** below.



The Moat Site

The Site is situated on low lying ground on the west bank of Lyndon Brook, a tributary of the River Chater, and is associated with the former Luffenham Hall. It is thought to have been constructed in the late medieval period. Nothing remains of the Hall itself although the uneven surface indicates the layout of the buildings that were once there. It is thought that further medieval artifacts of historical significance are likely to be hidden in and around this area.

Figure 5.7.1 Location of Scheduled

Monuments

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Morcott Spinney

The second Scheduled Ancient Monument is known as Morcott Spinney, located just inside the North Luffenham parish boundary (indicated by the lower blue circle on **Figure 5.7.1**). It is located on the northwest corner of where the green lane (bridleway) crosses the North Luffenham Road.

In addition to these scheduled sites, some other locations are of national and local historic interest.

Thor Missile Site and Associated Buildings

On the edge of the parish is a nationally important relic of the Cold War, the Thor Missile Site. While the launch pads are located outside the parish boundary, the Surveillance and Inspection building is within the parish and has Grade II* status, arguably making it the most important historic structure in the village. Its historical importance is increased because at no other British Site (of which there were 20) does the missile base remain within its contemporary military context of a World War II airfield (Historic England 2021).

The old airfield at SGB also supports a Bloodhound Missile Tactical Control Centre and its associated radar tower as well as the old airfield control tower, the former feature was closely linked to the Thor Missile Site and although not listed is considered by Historic England to be of national importance.

Sculthorpe Spinney

Sculthorpe Spinney is thought to be associated with the old village of Sculthorpe which is referred to in the Domesday Book. Sculthorpe was a hamlet of North Luffenham which was destroyed by the Parliamentary Army in 1642. The Spinney is located to the south of the railway line near Settings Farm. A number of medieval items have been discovered in the surrounding area with the expectation of more to still be found.

Ha-ha

The ha-ha is a recessed landscape design element that creates a vertical barrier while preserving an uninterrupted view of the landscape beyond. The design includes a turfed incline that slopes downward to a sharply vertical face constructed of local stone. Originally part of the old North Luffenham Hall (demolished during the Civil War) it now provides the Southern boundary to school playing fields. This historic feature is visible from the church yard and enhances the North Luffenham Circular Walk. The ha-ha falls outside the village conservation area and is not currently listed or designated. The photograph is taken from the churchyard looking south.



Policy NL7.1: Historic Environment

- 1. Development must protect North Luffenham’s historic environment and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the North Luffenham Conservation Area.**

Key characteristics of the Conservation Area include:

- **Variation in building types and orientation of properties;**
 - **Limestone boundary walls and hedges;**
 - **Walling and roofing materials that include limestone, slate, Collyweston slate, thatch, plain clay tile;**
 - **Variations in setback, including roadside walls and elevations.**
- 2. Conversion of non-designated heritage buildings should preserve or enhance their character and avoid the loss of architectural features.**

Interpretation

The policy highlights some of the key characteristics of the North Luffenham Conservation Area. This should be useful in applying the special statutory duties relating to the Conservation Area.

The policy should not be interpreted as implying stylistic imitation or falsification of heritage, but as complementing the essential characteristics of the area, as set out in the policy.

Non-designated heritage assets include any buildings on a local list or other features on the historic environment record that do not have statutory protection.

Landscape Setting

National Policy

The NPPF, paragraph 130 (c), requires that developments are *“sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting”* It also recognises, in paragraph 174 (a), that *“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, ...”*

Local Strategic Policy

The spatial strategy, Strategic Objective 1, of the adopted Local Plan aims to *“promote the efficient use of land while protecting the natural environment, landscape, the unique character and identity of the towns, villages and countryside.”*

CS21 states; *‘The quality and diversity of the natural environment of Rutland will be conserved and enhanced. Conditions for biodiversity will be maintained and improved and important geodiversity assets will be protected.*

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

The village of North Luffenham was already in existence at the time the Domesday Day book was written in the 11th century. It, like many Rutland villages, is established on a spring line that provided a reliable water supply. Development and expansion of the village was relatively slow until the 20th century when a series of more substantive housing developments saw it expand in size. These developments have all been clustered around the Oval or within or adjacent to the roads that effectively delineate the boundaries of the built-up area.

This layout has ensured that the village itself has retained its distinctive, nucleated character and sense of place, being separated from other settlements by a mix of permanent pasture, arable land and small copses. Aside from a small cluster of homes near Foster’s Bridge there are relatively few dispersed homes and buildings elsewhere in the parish; these are almost all associated with farming or former industrial sites such as quarrying.

This rural landscape setting is greatly appreciated by parishioners as it gives the village its own independent identity and a clear sense of place. In the village survey 2017, the general

environment was considered by 76% of the 305 respondents as being very important and a further 22% as being important [2017 Village Survey: General Environment](#) . The percentages were almost identical on being asked how important proximity to the countryside was.

The overwhelming comments on this subject were about the beauty of the landscape and the countryside that surrounds the village.



The 2020 survey section on the environment [2020 Survey: Environment](#) reinforced these opinions and from the many comments received it was clear that parishioners value both the village as an identifiable place and the surrounding countryside (and in particular the vistas to and from the village) as a result of the fine setting. A number of opinions were that the landscape should be protected and if possible enhanced.

For example, North Luffenham has a limited number of off-road rights of way (RoW) within the parish. Walking the existing RoW has proved to be popular with residents and is vital for well-being and recreation as well as allowing an appreciation of the rural aspects the parish has to offer.

The North Luffenham Circular Walk (informal title)

This is a 6.6 kilometre circular route primarily used for walking, trail running, and nature trips. The route begins/ends in the village by the church, leads across fields and the River Chater towards Pilton, continues along the southern boundary of North Luffenham parish (also a bridleway) then briefly enters South Luffenham before returning to the village. It offers a wide variety of wild flowers and beautiful views, including a particularly favoured vista from the bridleway to the north towards the village.

The historic character of the village and its setting are not just about the built form. For example, the fields that lead from Glebe Road down to (and then across) the River Chater

contribute immeasurably to the village setting. Further examples come from earlier in this section (Historic Environment), where features such as the *The Moat Site* and the *Ha-ha* contribute by virtue of the landform they display.

Southern Landscape Setting Area

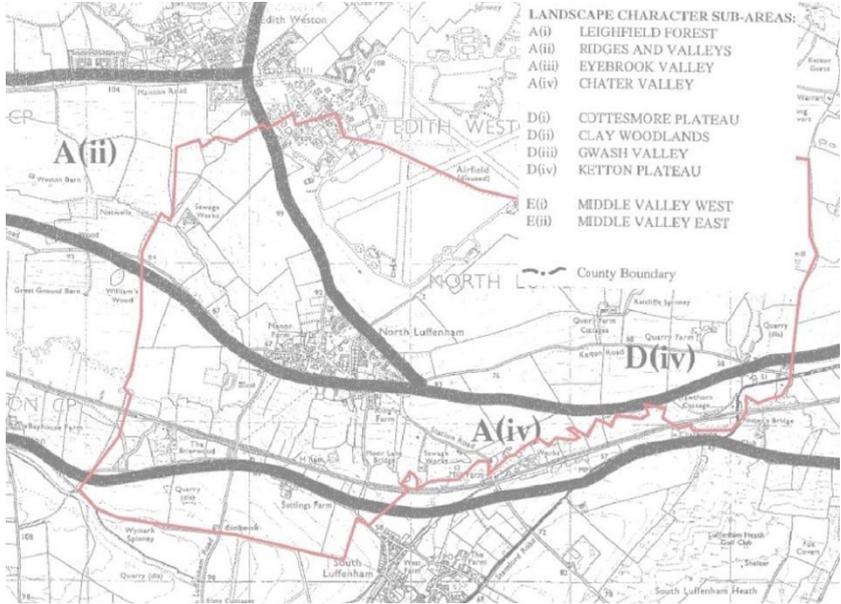
In conjunction with the strong feelings expressed in the surveys about the landscape setting of the village, it was identified that the Rutland Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) 2003, carried out by David Tyldesley and Associates under a commission from RCC, recognised the unique and valued relationship between the village and the Chater Valley. In particular, it defines a specific area adjacent to the village – Character Sub-area A(iv) – with the following recommendation:

“Recommended Landscape Objectives High Rutland - Chater Valley

To sustain and reinforce the small-scale, enclosed, intimate, rural, quiet, calm, well-wooded and pastoral valley with its semi-natural habitats, notable lack of villages and very few buildings. To protect its historic features and carefully control any road, railway, water services or other infrastructure improvements in the valley, including any further modifications to the river and its riparian features and habitats.”

Character Sub-area A(iv) is defined on the LCA Map7 and is shown below on **Figure 5.7.1**. The red line indicates the Parish boundary and defines the part of Sub-area A(iv) that constitutes the Southern Landscape Setting Area. The area identified for the Southern Landscape Area has not changed since before the production of the LCA with the land usage remaining the same.

Figure 5.7.1. Southern Landscape Setting Area



Northern Landscape Setting Area

The existence of the World War II Airfield and, since 1959, the *Thor Missile Site and its Associated Cold War Buildings*, has helped create (and now sustain) the landscape setting to the north of the village. As a consequence, it has added support to the argument for maintaining a ‘green gap’ between the potential SGB development and the village.

Conserving the village’s landscape setting depends on sustaining its identity as a separate settlement. Given the proximity of the old airfield to the village, the potential development of the SGB site poses a real risk to this ‘sense of place’. At the moment, much of the existing infrastructure, when viewed from the village or from south of the River Chater, is screened by shelter belts of trees and shrubs and small copses.

These features, along with adjacent fields and open grassland create an important green gap between the village and SGB that, if protected from development, would help protect the village’s identity as an independent settlement.

Furthermore, the LCA also supports the proposal to maintain a “green gap” between the village and potential development at SGB in the recommendations for the Ketton Plateau D(iv) – see **Figure 5.7.1** above for Sub-area D(iv) definition.

Hence, **Figure 5.7.2** below, identifies the Northern Landscape Setting Area (green gap) to the north of the village.



Figure 5.7.2 Northern Landscape Setting Area

Policy NL7.2: Landscape Setting

- 1. Development must not compromise or harm the open and green landscape setting of North Luffenham Village. In particular, it must not have adverse impacts on the landscape (including its constituent features) of the “Landscape Setting Areas”.**

Interpretation

The policy is concerned with conserving the historic character of the Village, of which the landscape setting is a key part.

It may be useful to refer to the Rutland Landscape Character Assessment, which has informed the policy.

5.8 Transport and Walking

Purpose

To support more sustainable life-work and travel patterns.

National Policy

The NPPF, paragraph 104, promotes that:

“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:

- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
- b) Opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
- c) Opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
- d) The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and*
- e) Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.”*

Further, the NPPF, paragraph 105, also states that:

- Patterns of growth should be actively managed in support of the above objectives
- Significant development should limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes.

These are key issues for the NP with particular reference any future proposal for major development, including SGB.

Local Strategic Policy

The adopted Local Plan, Policies CS4 and CS18 state that new development should focus on providing a range of sustainable forms of transport, improved transport choice and encourage travel by foot, cycling and walking. Note should also be made of the recommendations of Rutland’s Fourth Road Transport Plan 2019 - 2036:

<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/transport/transport-strategy/>

Design Guidelines (R&SK)

- RCC also has the aim of making sure its activities achieve a net zero carbon footprint before 2050
- At a wider scale, the promotion of walkable neighbourhoods that minimise the need to travel is vital in the response to the climate emergency, as well as improving air quality.

This approach is critical for any future proposal for major development, including SGB, which the policies of the NP seek to influence.

North Luffenham Supporting Evidence

The Village Surveys of 2017 and 2020 identified roads and transport as significant issues and the NP has responded to these by including this policy on transport.

The main issues identified by the Village Surveys are:

- Car dependency: the car was the main means of transport for over 90% of respondents
- Poor public transport: 14% of households use public transport to and from the village. There were many comments as to the poor provision of public transport.
- Provision of cycleways and footways for alternative transport to the car.
- Parking
- The effect on the parish as a result of any future development of the SGB site.
- At a wider scale, the promotion of walkable neighbourhoods that minimise the need to travel is vital in the response to the climate emergency, as well as improving air quality.
- Parking on pavements: parking is always an issue in relation to residential development as shown not only in the village centre but in new large developments in the locality

The NP seeks to reduce car journeys by identifying and encouraging alternative modes of transport, linking to nearby transport hubs such as Oakham and Stamford train stations. It promotes healthy lifestyles to maximize the usage and creation of footways and cycle networks.



Policy NL8.1: Transport and Movement

- 1. Development that has the potential to generate additional journeys should include a balanced provision of transport options, meeting the requirements of this policy in a way that is proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme.**
- 2. Development must include secure and covered storage for cycles and/or scooters, including for all new dwellings.**
- 3. Development specifically designed for older people or reduced mobility people should include covered parking and charging facilities for mobility vehicles.**
- 4. Parking areas should include charging points for electric vehicles.**
- 5. Priority should be given to the convenience, safety and amenity of pedestrians.**
- 6. Traffic generated by development must have no significant adverse impact on the amenities of residential properties or the rural and historic character of the village, in particular where additional journeys by heavy vehicles are involved. This includes consideration of cumulative impacts with other approved schemes and site allocations.**
- 7. Highway infrastructure improvements that are required to enable development must preserve or enhance and cause no significant harm to the rural and historic character of the village, including rural lanes.**
- 8. Development must not encroach onto footpaths, cycle paths or bridleways, including the North Luffenham Circular Walk. Development nearby to or adjacent to footpaths, cycle paths and bridleways must have no adverse impact on their amenity, safety or accessibility.**
- 9. A mix of parking provision should be provided for new dwellings, including garages, curtilage parking and street parking, designed so that it does not dominate the public realm.**

Interpretation:

The policy seeks to ensure that there is not a narrow focus on vehicular transport in development proposals, placing emphasis on walking and sustainable forms of transport.

In considering the impacts of highway infrastructure, it is appreciated that detailed highway proposals will not form part of the application. However, the scale and likely impact of highway works should be fairly clear, based on the scale and nature of development.

The policy does not modify parking standards but does shape the way in which parking is incorporated into the design.