

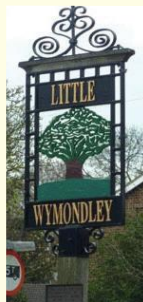
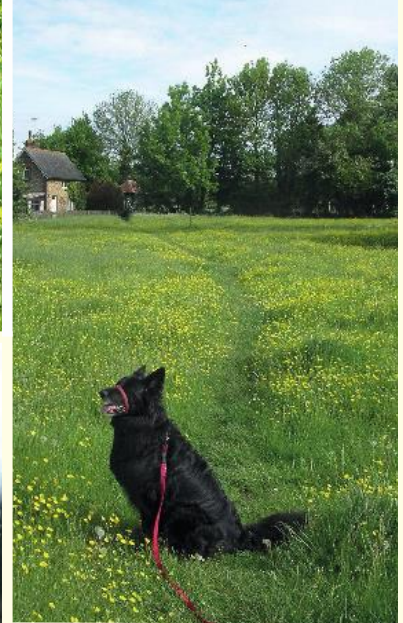


WYMONDLEY PARISH

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2015-2031

JUNE 2016



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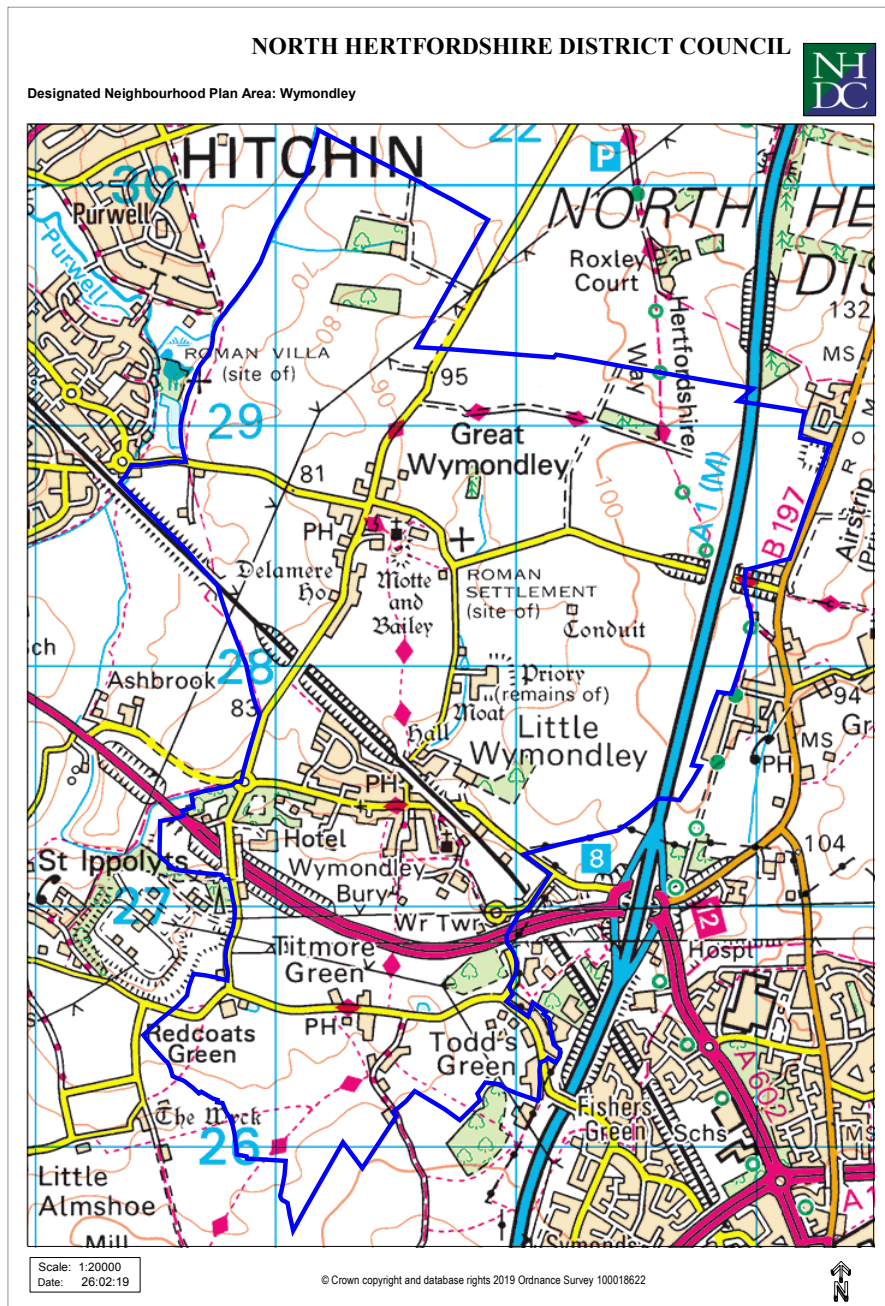
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For further details on this plan, please contact:

Chris Turvey
25 Tower Close
Little Wymondley
Hitchin
SG4 7JG
Tel: 0330 900 27777
Email: info@wymondley.org
www.wymondley.org

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are not a planning authority, but in creating this Neighbourhood Plan (NP) our intention has been to develop a series of policies covering key issues impacting on Wymondley Parish, and which local planning authorities must take into account when considering development proposals.
- 1.2 A map of Wymondley Parish can be found below:



- 1.3 Our policies are intended to ensure sustainable enhancement of the overall quality of life in the Parish; and to improve the health, well-being and social cohesion of our community now and for the future. They are underpinned by the need to protect its

character and natural and historic environments, as it is these which draw people to our community, and if we fail to protect them, we fail to protect our community.

- 1.4 The Plan sets out our aims and policy objectives in relation to key themes, and explains the reasoning behind them. It embraces and builds on current and future planned activity, and explains what the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee will work towards with other stakeholders. We cannot achieve our objectives in isolation.
- 1.5 Partnership working is vital, and this Plan is based on the premise that we will continue to work positively and collaboratively with other stakeholders to implement this NP for the greater good of the Parish.
- 1.6 Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee sincerely thank all those residents, and other contributors, who responded to our parish survey, attended public meetings, responded to our public consultations and otherwise freely gave up their time and expertise to assist in developing this NP. In particular we thank Muhammad Awais¹, for his research and other input.
- 1.7 Their contributions are set out in the Consultation Statement that will be produced as a companion document to this Plan, and have been its guiding force.

¹ MSc (Postgraduate Sustainable Planning) University of Hertfordshire, England. Internship Sustainable Planning, University of Cambridge, England. BSc (Hons.) (Geography, Environmental Science and Economics), Government College University, Lahore. Pakistan. FSc (Chemistry, Mathematics & Physics)

2. Why we need a Neighbourhood Plan

2.1 The neighbourhood planning regime offers us an opportunity to shape development in our home environment. By using this community-led, statutory framework we can put our first hand knowledge of living and working in a particular place to good use in guiding its conservation, regeneration and future development.

2.2 A Neighbourhood Plan is essentially about the use and development of land and may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. It can also deal with a wide range of socio-economic and environmental issues (such as housing, employment, heritage and transport).

2.3 Its key focus is determined by us, and its statutory status offers us a powerful set of tools to ensure we get the right types of development for our community; and that we can act to protect and improve the things that mean most to us about the area in which we live. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan gives us an important opportunity to influence the future of our community in ways we believe are best for it. So, use it or lose it....

3. How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning System

3.1 There are several key pieces of legislation relating to planning and development - not least the Town and Country Planning Act 1990². The Localism Act 2011³ is also relevant, as it provides a statutory regime for neighbourhood planning, and allows qualifying bodies, (such as parish councils or neighbourhood forums), to influence more directly the way in which their locality is developed.

3.2 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012⁴ set out the legal process by which this can be achieved. Essentially, Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy; and support strategic planning policies set out in Local Plans – in our case, that of North Herts District Council (NHDC). (Neighbourhood Plans must also comply with European Regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat.)

3.3 Through their Neighbourhood Plan, local people can set policies for their area on issues relating to new development and, once the Plan has been through the legal process and formally made, it becomes part of the strategic Local Plan for the area - and must be taken account of by local planning authorities when considering development proposals.

3.4 The Government's 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁵ sets out its planning policies for England, and how these are expected to be applied. It is based on the fundamental principle that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development, i.e. growth which ensures that better lives for us does not mean worse lives for future generations; and which reflects the fact that our natural environment is essential to our well-being.

3.5 In launching the NPPF, The Rt. Hon. Greg Clark MP (then Minister for Planning) said *"Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives"*.

3.6 The NPPF's key concept is the involvement of local people and their accountable councils, through producing their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of their communities. Consequently, in developing the Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Plan we have taken the NPPF principles into account and considered not only the current needs of our parishioners, but also likely future needs – particularly given the information and preferred options for development contained in the Consultation Paper published by our accountable council in December 2014: *"North Herts District Council Local Plan 2011 – 2031"*⁶; and in the draft *"Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031"*, published by our neighbouring local authority in January 2016.⁷

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>

³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made>

⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

⁶ http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/northherts-cms/files/local_plan_preferred_options_december_2014_0.pdf

⁷ <http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/26379/90035/Local-Plan-Draft-January-2016.pdf>

3.7 When considering positively the housing needs of our community, and the potential options for future development within Wymondley Parish, we have borne in mind the three mutually dependent dimensions of sustainable development, which require the planning system to perform a number of roles. These are:

- An economic role: contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- A social role: supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- An environmental role: contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

3.8 Alongside these, we have considered Wymondley Parish's particular characteristics such as location, historic environment, population, amenities, parking facilities, infrastructure etc; and the views of its parishioners on the key issues impacting on life in our community and future development within it.

3.9 In doing so we believe we have produced a balanced summary of those issues - and positive proposals to address them, as set out later in this Plan. By working in partnership with stakeholders we aim to achieve creative improvements to, and better future development of, our parish while protecting and enhancing its character and environment.

4. About the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee

Who we are

4.1 The Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee is a sub-committee of Wymondley Parish Council (WPC). The forum was appointed by the parish council as a sub-committee, in accordance with the WPC's constitution – extract below:

“Introduction

Pursuant to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Wymondley Parish Council ('the Council') has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members and co-opted members whenever they conduct the business of the Council, including the business of the office to which they were elected or appointed, or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council. This Code of

Conduct is based on the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code, a 'co-opted member' is a person who is not a member of the Council but who is either a member of any committee or sub-committee of the Council, or a member of, and represents the Council on any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Council, and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee.

For the purposes of this Code, a 'meeting' is a meeting of the Council, any of its committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees. For the purposes of this Code, and unless otherwise expressed, a reference to a member of the Council includes a co-opted member of the Council. “

The Wymondley Parish Council Meeting Minutes date 22nd June 2015, confirm this appointment.

The Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee comprises a panel of three members, elected to represent the Parish through the appropriate channels, and supported by other residents who make up its Committee. Members are:

- Adrian Hawkins (Chair)
- Chris Turvey (Treasurer)
- Hayley Ward (Secretary)
- Cathy Kerby (NP author)
- Derek Carter
- Ken Crowe
- Jennie Hawkins
- Robert Howard
- Simon Martin
- Julian Tribe

The Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee was formerly known as the Wymondley Action Forum (WAF).

4.2 Brief pen pictures are given at Annex 11, and member names and contact details are given at Annex 12.

Our mission

4.3 To develop and implement policies which will offer sustainable quality of life improvements to the thriving rural community of Wymondley Parish and its visitors, while taking account of our parish character and heritage, and protecting the intrinsic beauty of its surrounding countryside and Green Belt.

Our vision

4.4 That, through partnership working, Wymondley Parish will become a safer, healthier, greener place in which to live and work now, and for generations to come, and that its character, heritage and natural environment will be conserved and protected for current and future generations while planning positively for the future.

4.5 This vision for the future has been developed in the light of feedback from those who live, work and visit the Parish, and reflects and underlines their wishes and aspirations. We aim to make this vision a reality by:

- Conserving and enhancing our Parish's natural and historic environments, by ensuring that any proposed new development contributes positively to its distinctive character; takes into account its identified biodiversity and environmental issues; and does not negatively impact on its existing green infrastructure or its valuable archaeological heritage;
- Preserving the look and feel of the Parish, with particular importance being given to the protection of the Green Belt to prevent erosion of the Parish's character by urban sprawl;
- Contributing to the well-being of the Parish by seeking to address the current shortfall in Flood Prevention Measures; and working constructively with local planning authorities to pre-empt the future effects of climate change and ensure that any development proposals are sustainable, have no adverse effect on potential flood risk and will contribute to existing and necessary future infrastructures;
- Contributing to the health and well-being of our Parish, by ensuring community access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation - including consideration of Local Green Space designation; and by seeking to ensure that any proposed development within, (or impacting on), the Parish or its green infrastructure is consistent with national Green Belt policy;
- Promoting, facilitating and encouraging use of sustainable transport within the Parish; and working effectively with the Highways Agency, local authorities, landowners and other relevant stakeholders to support cyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorists in their use of "green" routes within the Parish;

- Working positively and collaboratively with local planning authorities to ensure that the traffic management needs of the Parish are met effectively; principally that there are sufficient measures available to identify, mitigate and resolve key issues relating to building developments;
- Working positively and collaboratively with local planning authorities to help ensure that the educational needs of the Parish are met, principally that there are sufficient school places available to meet its needs; and to identify and resolve key issues relating to developments intended to create, expand or alter our schools – or impacting on existing schools;
- Ensuring the Parish has a high-quality communications infrastructure, through on-going liaison with relevant telecommunications and broadband providers;
- Encouraging rural economic growth and employment, through support of business expansion and development which is appropriate and in keeping with the Parish's intrinsic character and environment;
- Improving quality of life, health, social cohesion and well-being for our community, through positive action to retain local services and community amenities and, where suitable opportunities arise, improve them to meet parishioners' needs; and
- Promoting sustainable development in our Parish, by ensuring any necessary development is well-designed and located appropriately, i.e. where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of our community; reflect the identity of our parish; and respond to its local character and history. Also, through consideration of demographic trends and community needs, and by identifying possible “deliverable”⁸ sites within the Parish, we will strive to ensure that any proposed housing is affordable and of a suitable size, type, tenure and range for the community.

Our stakeholders

4.6 We regard the Wymondley parishioners as our main stakeholder, and the driving force behind this Neighbourhood Plan. However, there are others who are influential in the future of the Parish (and on our ability to implement our Plan); have an interest in the Parish; or whom are affected by what happens there, or by our policies. These stakeholders include our accountable and neighbouring local authorities, i.e. North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC), Stevenage Borough Council (SBC), Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and North Herts Homes (NHH). A list of stakeholders we have consulted on this Plan is at Annex 10.

Our evidence base

4.7 In drafting this Plan we have gathered information from a variety of sources, covering a range of issues we believe are vital in planning a sustainable future for the Wymondley Parish community. Feedback from a survey of parish residents (see Section 5) forms an important part of this evidence base, and is incorporated into this Plan. The Plan also contains web-links and

⁸ In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), “deliverable” means available now, offering a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable. For further details see page 12 of the NPPF.

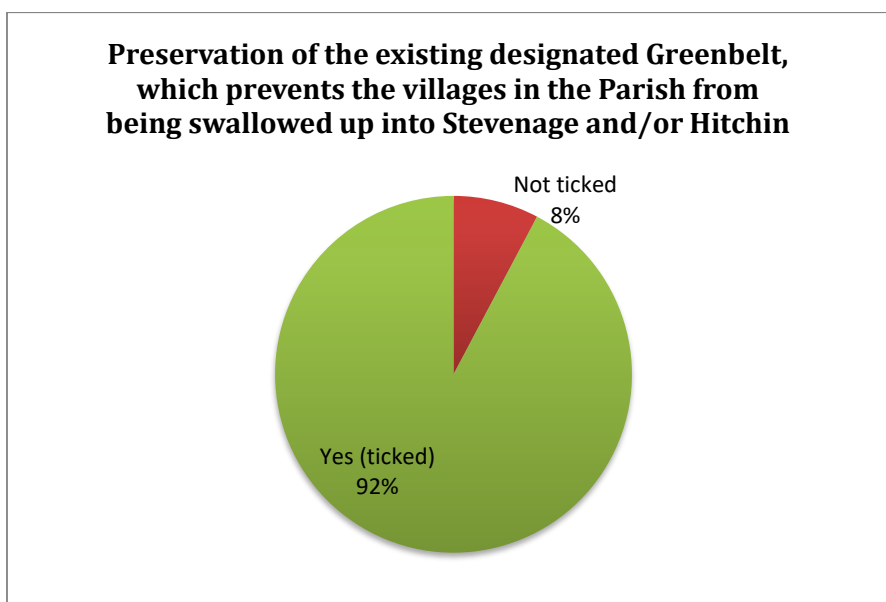
other references to key documents and photographic evidence, some of which have been annexed for ease of reference. We have used this evidence base to formulate the policies contained in this Plan, and it is available in full on our website at: www.wymondley.org

5. Strategic Overview of our Planning Policies

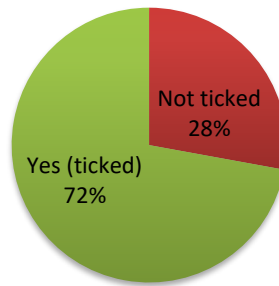
5.1 In July 2015, we conducted a survey of each property in the Parish, providing a questionnaire, which sought views on how residents would like to see their village develop over the coming years. The survey results conclusively identified the following key issues as being the top five in terms of importance to parishioners:

1. 92% of respondents want to preserve the Green Belt in its current form.
2. 72% of respondents are concerned about flooding in Little Wymondley.
3. 70% of respondents are concerned about traffic management.
4. 66% of respondents want to see improvements to IT communications.
5. 58% of respondents want appropriate housing for the community.

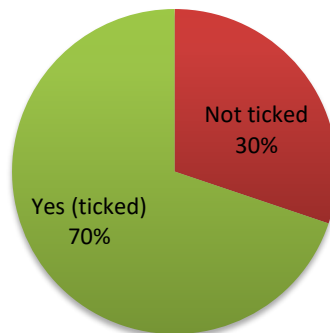
5.2 Annex 2 provides a copy of the survey form and an analysis of its results as at 21 September 2015 is shown below. Both are also available online at: www.wymondley.org



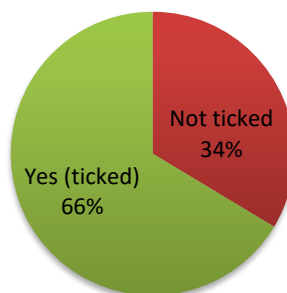
Improvements to flood risk management/improved drainage



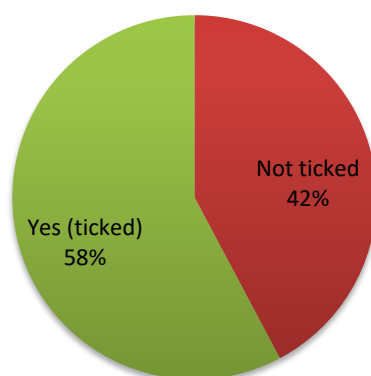
Improvements to traffic management (vehicles, cycles, pedestrian, horses, parking facilities etc.)



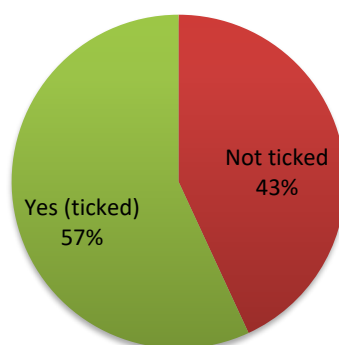
Improvements to the telecommunications network (for faster broadband)



Appropriate housing for the local community



Improvements/enhancements to the look and feel of the villages in the Parish



5.3 In developing our policies we have looked strategically at ways in which we might address these issues, to meet the needs not only of our current community, but also future generations. We have a thriving rural community, and our policies are intended to achieve sustainable quality of life improvements, (for residents and visitors alike), and encourage social cohesion. As well as the key issues listed above, a variety of other matters were raised as factors relevant to improving parish life, and these also contributed to the formulation of our policies.

5.4 Our policies are intended to be in line with core national planning policies, and relevant to our neighbourhood. They take into account not only the expressed wishes of our community, but the character and heritage of our parish, and the need to protect the intrinsic beauty of its surrounding countryside and Green Belt from piecemeal erosion by inappropriate development. We have taken a holistic approach, on the basis that overall improvements to our community's health and well-being cannot be achieved or sustained in isolation from its environment. To destroy what draws people to a community is ultimately to destroy the community itself.

5.5 Sections 6 to 16 of this Plan set out the reasoning behind each of our policies. In turn, our policies are designed to achieve our aims and make our vision a reality.

6. Natural and Historic Environments

Aim: to conserve and enhance our Parish's natural and historic environments, by ensuring that any proposed new development contributes positively to its distinctive character; takes into account its identified biodiversity and environmental issues; and does not negatively impact on its existing green infrastructure or its valuable archaeological heritage.

Background

6.1 Wymondley is essentially a small rural parish to the east of Hitchin, created in 1937 by merging the two former parishes of Great and Little Wymondley (which, contrary to its name, has since the mid-1850's had the greater population). Great Wymondley is situated approximately 1/2 mile to the north, and is substantially smaller.

6.2 The Parish includes the hamlets of Titmore Green, Redcoats Green⁹ and Todds Green and the surrounding rural area - stretching from the edges of Hitchin in the north, to the edges of Stevenage in the south. (The Wymondley Parish Map at Annex 1 refers.) Titmore Green is a farming community and Todds Green is a cluster of houses separated from Stevenage by the A1 (M), and from the Wymondley villages by the Wymondley Bypass (A 602). The East Coast Main Line railway also cuts through the Parish. (Further information on transport links is contained in Section 10.)

Natural environment and landscape character

6.3 The Parish is set in a historic rolling, agricultural landscape which is predominantly arable, with pockets of horse (and other) grazing near its settlements. Its historic settlement pattern is one of settlements and farms. The various enclosed field patterns tell their own tale of differing cultivation methods throughout the centuries. It is populated with a good variety of native species in small woodland copses and hedgerows, (which maintain the more enclosed historic character of the area); and characterised by expansive, open views of the countryside from its settlements – which create a sense of space and openness. There are spring-fed ponds at Wymondley Priory.

6.4 Winding country lanes edged by tall hedgerows (and some high hedge banks) abound; and the Parish is also crossed by a network of footpaths, some of Roman origin – which mainly connect urban areas and smaller settlements. These include two long-distance paths – namely the Hertfordshire Way and Gypsy Lane. These would be vulnerable to inappropriate or unsympathetic development, a fact which was recognised when the A602 was designed to allow continuity of rights of way where footpaths have been crossed by the road. (More detail on footpaths is given in Sections 9 and 10 on Green Infrastructure and Spaces and Transport Links.)

Policy NHE1 Landscape Character:

Where appropriate, planning applications should be accompanied by an assessment of the impact of the proposal on landscape character including historic landscape making reference to

⁹ Formerly the home of Mad James Lucas (1811 – 1874) the “*Hermit of Redcoats*”

the relevant character assessment documents including the North Hertfordshire Landscape Study.

6.5 The North Hertfordshire Landscape Study, (which includes character, sensitivity and capacity) is available online at <http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-emerging-policy/evidence-base/north-herts-landscape-study> Due to its size it has been split into a series of smaller sections. Those relevant to our parish are Wymondley and Titmore Green (Area 215) and Arlesey - Great Wymondley (Area 216).

6.6 The Study is based on the original Landscape Character Assessment work carried out for NHDC by Babbie in 2004 - and the subsequent Sensitivity and Capacity work carried out by The Landscape Partnership in 2011. The original location, assessment and evaluation remain the same, and the later work adds sensitivity and capacity to the evaluation and additional guidelines on built development guidelines to supplement the landscape management guidelines. It was agreed in 2011 as background evidence to support the Local Development Framework, and we therefore regard it as appropriate evidence for the purposes of our Neighbourhood Plan.

Biodiversity and environmental issues

6.7 While the Wymondley Transforming Station, located just outside Little Wymondley, may itself detract from the landscape, its site has much to commend it in terms of important flora and fauna. It is located within an old gravel pit, where there are interesting grassland habitats present – together with the small-leaved Sweet Briar Rose, which is a rare plant nationally. Additionally, it is the only location in Hertfordshire where there are important colonies of pyramidal bee orchids.

6.8 Little Wymondley itself has important Pipistrelle bat roosts; and polecats have been sighted near the allotments (and at Titmore Green). Other more common wildlife abounds, with a good variety of animals and birds throughout the Parish – including nesting Red Kites and Swallow and House Martin nests in Little Wymondley. A bat survey in Great Wymondley church has recorded three different species of bat in nursery roosts; and there are also swifts nesting in the church roof during the summer. There is also a large population of toads in the pond near Redcoats Green, and it has been long established practice, each year in the breeding season, for volunteer marshals to transport the toads across the busy road to the pond.

6.9 Wymondley Woods, situated to the north of the Parish, was planted in two stages between 1997 and 2000, amidst mature woodlands. Consisting primarily of locally-grown oak and hornbeam, it was created as an educational resource for managed groups. It features a special nature conservation and field study area, adjacent to existing and newly planted forest environments which provide food and cover for a wide variety of wildlife all year round – in marked contrast to the surrounding arable fields. It forms part of the Garden City Greenway, which was funded (and is owned and managed) by the Heritage Foundation, to act as a permanent commemoration of Letchworth Garden City's first centenary in 2003.

6.10 We expect that the planning system should contribute to the conservation and enhancement of these ecological assets and to the ecological systems that support them. In accordance with the NPPF, development policies will seek to maximise the benefits of planning decisions to biodiversity, within the context of sustainable development.

6.11 In order to accurately determine whether no net loss and enhancement to biodiversity can be delivered by development, we expect that, when requested, precise ecological assessment by suitably qualified people to accepted national standards be undertaken, sufficient to determine net gain.

6.12 The DEFRA and NE endorsed Biodiversity Impact Calculator (Environment Bank 2015 or as amended) has been designed to determine and quantify existing biodiversity value, in terms of habitats, and the consequent measures required to ensure no net loss and where possible net gain.

Policy NHE2 Biodiversity:

Proposals should, where appropriate be supported by a biodiversity action plan and measures to ensure net gains in biodiversity. The use of a Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator is encouraged.

Determining planning applications affecting sites of significant biodiversity interest

6.13 When determining planning applications where there is a requirement to conserve and enhance biodiversity the following principles will be applied.

6.14 Development proposals should seek to minimise harm to the natural and historic environment.

6.15 It is desirable that developments will not result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as; ancient woodland, traditional orchards, aged, veteran, champion trees, or trees of a high conservation value located outside ancient woodland, unless the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

Sites of acknowledged nature conservation value

6.16. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are non-statutory designated sites. There are also many non designated sites that conform to the definition of Priority Habitat, as defined by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006. These are of varying degree of importance for nature conservation and receive varying degrees of protection.

6.17 Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre (HERC) hold records of all known sites of nature conservation value in Wymondley.

6.18 There are also several known sites of critical importance to species of national and international importance, such as bat roosts. Records of these are held by HERC and/or specialist recording groups.

6.19 We will consider applications for development affecting any of these sites against criteria commensurate with their relative ecological status and protection within a local, national and international status. Their local context is particularly important. Development affecting any of these sites or species is expected to result in a net gain to their area or populations.

Policy NHE3 Wildlife and Ecology:

Development proposals affecting designated sites and Priority Habitats or Species, must comply with the relevant European, national and local policy requirements.

Networks of biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

6.20 The protection and enhancement of biodiversity assets is dependent on robust networks of Green Infrastructure, which facilitate movement and genetic exchange.

6.21 Green Infrastructure is expected to positively contribute to the conservation, restoration, re-creation and enhancement of networks of biodiversity on a landscape scale. The size and location of G.I. is expected to be suitable for the function it is intended to fulfill. Where required, G.I. should ensure permeability for wildlife through development and provide sufficient beneficial habitat to support target species, independent of its connective function.

6.22 Monitoring of G.I. and habitat creation to ensure that it develops in accordance with its stated intention will be expected. If it is not achieving satisfactory condition within stipulated time-frames, remedial measures will be required. Mechanisms to achieve this must be outlined in development proposals.

6.23 Buffering of watercourses is important to protect the aquatic environment from pollution and disturbance, and to create movement and habitat corridors for wildlife. Development will not be permitted within 12m of a watercourse.

6.24 Many species are entirely dependent on human habitation for their reproductive success. Modern housing standards virtually eliminate opportunities for these species. Consequently where appropriate, features for biodiversity within development will be expected. Simple inexpensive measures can result in significant gains such as, integrated bat roost cavities, integrated swift or house martin boxes. These measures, if required, are expected to be permanent in order to deliver meaningful ecological gain. Therefore, these features will be expected to be built into suitable structures, rather than provided as vulnerable, isolated and temporary boxes.

6.25 Bat populations are particularly sensitive to development that severs or disturbs movement corridors. Where appropriate, flight corridors should be identified and protected or enhanced to ensure the ecological functionality of bat populations. Examples of suitable measures include green bridges, underpasses or tunnels that are situated on the exact traditional routes of bat populations and free from disturbance.

Policy NHE4 Green Infrastructure:

Where appropriate, development proposals should be supported by a Green Infrastructure plan which will provide permeability for wildlife through and around development and should be connective and functional as wildlife habitat in its own right not just as a link between habitats.

Policy NHE5 Roosting Devices:

All suitable development will be expected to include integrated bat and bird roosting devices within the fabric of the brickwork.

Policy NHE6 Bats:

In considering development proposals that negatively impact upon bat movement corridors, we expect these corridors to be identified, protected and enhanced to ensure continued ecological functionality of bat populations. In considering ecological information in support of planning applications it is desirable that surveys are undertaken by suitably qualified personnel and are consistent with nationally accepted standards i.e. British Standard 42020: Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development.

Ecological survey standards

6.26 The provision of quality ecological information is desirable in determining the impacts of development and securing meaningful ecological gains. Survey and mitigation measures should therefore conform to the following principles:

6.27 It is desirable for ecological information to be provided by suitably qualified personnel. Details of qualifications and experience should be provided with all ecological reports.

6.28 Ideally, ecological surveys should answer the following questions; what features are present, what is the ecological value of these features, how will these features be affected by the development proposals, how can these impacts be avoided, mitigated or compensated so that there is a net gain to biodiversity.

6.29 Ideally, survey methodology and reporting should conform with nationally accepted standards. All surveys and reporting should be conducted in accordance with British Standard 42020: Biodiversity Code of practice for planning and development.

6.30 Ideally, where European Protected Species (EPS) licenses are required, it is desirable that answers to the 3 tests of the license be supplied to the Parish Council/planning committee.

Wildlife and Lighting

6.31 Lighting within and around development is expected to respect the ecological functionality of movement corridors. Certain species of invertebrate and mammal are highly sensitive to inappropriate lighting. In these circumstances surveys are expected to determine where these movement corridors are and measures put forward that demonstrate how these will be protected and enhanced.

Policy NHE7 Lighting:

On sites where, protected species have been identified, proposals should include mitigation measures to address potentially adverse lighting impacts.

Wildlife and Landscaping

6.32 Landscaping design can have a significant beneficial effect on wildlife. Landscaping schemes will be expected to maximise opportunities for wildlife. We expect the selection of ecologically appropriate species in such schemes, of local provenance where possible.

6.33 Tree planting schemes where the primary purpose is to provide ecological enhancement should look to maximise diversity of species. Species selected should be suitable to the soil

conditions and be comprised of appropriate vegetation communities consistent with National Vegetation Communities (NVC).

6.34 Naturalistic tree planting should not be in straight lines.

6.35 The establishment and management regimes of naturalistic planting schemes are critical to their success. We would expect these to be stipulated in development proposals together with mechanisms to monitor and address any deficiencies in the fulfillment of their stated objective.

Policy NHE8 Landscaping Schemes:

In considering landscaping schemes we will expect that appropriate native species are used whenever possible and that benefits to biodiversity are maximised.

Historic environment

6.36 The Wymondley Parish environment provides a rich tapestry of historical and archaeological features through which we can track its history and development through the ages. Some of these can be seen on the maps at Annex 3 and more comprehensive information is available from the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record held at County Hall and also available online.¹⁰

6.37 While we are constantly looking to the future, we believe it is imperative that we have due regard to our past, as it provides the cornerstones on which our parish's character is founded.

6.38 In 2001, for example, Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd. Undertook a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on land temporarily occupied by an easement in advance of the laying of electricity cables from Wymondley to Corey's Mill.¹¹ This revealed evidence of Romano-British occupation dating from the 1st to 3rd centuries – namely two buildings with masonry foundations, two kilns or ovens and several post holes and pits, one of which was filled with oven/kiln debris. The circular building had a diameter of 7.25 metres; and the rectangular building was 14.3 x 6.5 meters.

Heritage Assets

6.39 As mentioned in paragraph 6.10 above, the Parish is rich in historical and archaeological features, which provide a valuable insight into the development of the Parish through the centuries, and the differing cultures of our predecessors.

6.40 Wymondley's written history can be traced back to the Domesday Book, in which it warrants four entries. Archaeological discoveries have so far provided widespread evidence of Roman settlements in the Parish, including farms, villas, roads, footpaths and a cemetery; and indications are that further significant discoveries would be likely if surveys were undertaken. Aside from the extensive Roman remains, there are other sites indicating earlier occupation from the Stone Age and Mesolithic period onwards. Examples include the ring ditch at Titmore

¹⁰ See the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record at <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/envplan/archaeology/sites/>

¹¹ <https://csweb.bournemouth.ac.uk/aip/gaz2001/index.htm>

Green, and the particularly significant Grade 1 henge at Lower Titmore Green - which has already been protected by NHDC.

6.41 Great Wymondley is an historic settlement where Romano-British material has been documented. The village and its surrounding area have a particularly interesting history, and many significant heritage assets remain visible as evidence of it – not least those indicating connections with several monarchs, including Edward the Confessor, William I and Henry VIII. During the reign of Edward the Confessor 8 hides in Great Wymondley were held by the church of St. Mary of Chatteris, and by 1086 King William held 8 hides. Landscape features with specific designations include: the remains of Great Wymondley Castle, which consist of a motte and bailey and associated manorial enclosure 20 metres east of the 12th century church of St. Mary the Virgin. To the southwest are situated the remains of a medieval moated site at Wymondley Bury, and a former hospital and Augustinian house – Wymondley Priory, with its (Grade II listed) tithe barn, moat, associated earthworks, enclosures, platforms, holloway (sunken road) and (Grade II listed) conduit head.

6.42 As indicated on the maps at Annex 4, there are numerous listed buildings in both Great and Little Wymondley, and elsewhere in the Parish. Wymondley Hall is one of a number of early 17th century timber framed buildings in the vicinity and Grade II listed, as is the late Georgian Wymondley House in Little Wymondley. Wymondley Bury, The Priory and the (originally Norman) Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin are all Grade I listed. Hornbeam Court and the nearby thatched cottages are all Grade II listed, as is Little Wymondley's Church of St Mary the Virgin - which has a clock on the tower presented by the Little Wymondley villagers in commemoration of King Edward VII's coronation in 1902. The original church on this site was dedicated to St Peter, built in the middle 12th century and linked to the Priory in the 13th century. After falling into disrepair, it was rebuilt in the late 15th century and re-dedicated to St Mary.

6.43 Some other examples of listed buildings are Lower Titmore Farmhouse, outhouse and barn (Grade II); The Elms and its associated barn range at Elms Yard in Little Wymondley (Grade II premises of Stutley Brothers Ltd); granaries at Delamare House and Redcoats Farm (Grade II); and the Redcoats Farmhouse Hotel (Grade II). A more comprehensive list can be found at: <http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/hertfordshire/wymondley#.VsicxX2LRH0>

6.44 More modern monuments include memorials in both the Wymondley churches of St Mary to the soldiers of the Parish who died in World War 1; and a memorial on the Willian to Great Wymondley road, commemorating the deaths of two Royal Flying Corps airmen who died on 6 September 1912, when their monoplane crashed in 100 Acres Field near Graveley while on a reconnaissance mission.

Protecting our natural and historic environment, character and heritage

6.45 NHDC has recognised the value of the many significant heritage assets existing in Great Wymondley village and its vicinity, by designating most of the village as a conservation area. This has been crucial to preserving and protecting its character from inappropriate development, both in the village and on its fringes. We would wish this to continue, and see it as a key factor when considering potential development sites – particularly on Green Belt land - or initiatives relating to the Parish's roads or infrastructure.

6.46 We are supported in this by the conclusions of NHDC's own Landscape Survey. It identified particular vulnerabilities around Great Wymondley, relating to removal of hedgerows and loss of woodland, mainly due to potential improvement or upgrading of minor roads and development pressures. Resulting loss of historic character was highlighted as a specific sensitivity.

6.47 In terms of visual and sensory perception and visual impact, the setting of the traditional villages and village greens was identified as a visual sensitivity. The Survey found that the area generally was characterised by large scale open landscape, which provides views to the "*often poorly screened*" urban fringes of Letchworth, Hitchin, and the A1 (M); and that the impact of urban fringe and the A1 (M) were prominent in numerous locations. Expansive views from higher ground, which create a sense of space and openness, were found to be sensitive to the introduction of further urbanising features or elements detracting from the character of the landscape. As a result, in visual terms, the Wymondley and Titmore Green area was regarded as of low visual sensitivity.

6.48 While the wooded areas of the Parish help to integrate the settlements into the landscape, Wymondley Transforming Station, electricity pylons and our transport infrastructure, (i.e. the A1 (M), A602, several other busy roads and the East Coast Main Line railway), were found to detract from the character of the area, as well as raw urban settlement edges – many of which are unmitigated through screening with tree belts. The Wymondley and Titmore Green area was therefore regarded overall as of low to moderate landscape sensitivity.

6.49 Given that the core of the Arlesey - Great Wymondley area is defined by the extents of Hitchin and Letchworth, the Survey concluded it is vulnerable to development pressure – and went on to recommend: "*the area should be retained as a green wedge between the two towns.*"¹²

Policy NHE9 Historic Character and Heritage Assets:

Development proposals should reflect and where possible, enhance, the historic character of the area. Proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings including those with archaeological interest must comply fully with the requirements of National Planning Policy and the development plan

To protect our natural and historic environment, and retain the rural character and intimate scale of Wymondley Parish any new development should:

- ***be appropriately sited and of an appropriate scale, form and style;***
- ***avoid visually intrusive locations such as upper ground where they would be visible from the skyline;***
- ***avoid lighting that would create additional urbanising influences on the character of the area.***

6.50 Vulnerability to development was also identified in relation to smaller paddocks and fields dedicated to horses and equestrianism in close proximity to the settlements; and to the

¹²http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/northherts-cms/files/files/216_2011-2.pdf

woodland areas, which were found to be vulnerable to lack of management, incursion or removal.

Policy NHE10 Green Spaces:

We will also seek to protect our village greens (and other green spaces) from inappropriate development or unsympathetic management, as they form a key element of the character of the Parish. (Issues relating to green infrastructure are covered in more depth in Section 9 of this Plan.)

6.51 The above policies reflect the conservation and restoration strategies set out in the Landscape Survey, and the associated landscape management and built development guidelines – all of which we support. (For further commentary on these issues, see also Sections 6 and 9 of this Plan.)

6.52 The Survey's findings on Wymondley Parish's capacity to accommodate development are particularly relevant, and are also mentioned in other sections of this Plan. In summary they are:

- Large urban extensions (developments) and new settlements exceeding 5 hectares, commercial/warehouse estates, large scale open uses and waste disposal were found to be inappropriate due to the rural character of the area, the introduction of further urbanising elements, and the resulting alteration of its character and removal of existing key characteristics. The landscape capacity for such developments was considered to be low. (Waste disposal would be a problem throughout the area, due to the presence of aquifers);
- Smaller, carefully-designed urban extensions in keeping with the character of the area (and of less than 5 hectares) could be appropriate adjacent to the existing settlements of Hitchin and Letchworth – provided the importance of the separation between the settlements is retained; - but not in the more southern part of the Parish. Capacity was considered to be moderate to low in the Arlesey – Great Wymondley area and low in the Wymondley and Titmore Green area;
- There may be some limited capacity for sympathetically designed and located individual large or bulky buildings, particularly if they were of an agricultural character and in keeping with the rural character of the area. Large buildings should be balanced by woodland shelterbelts and hedgerows, to reflect the existing character of the area. Capacity was considered to be low to moderate;
- Major transport developments/improvements would only be appropriate for improvements of the existing infrastructure, such as the A1, A602 and railway lines; and it would be imperative that the existing shelterbelts and earthwork were maintained or replaced. (Upgrading of existing roads could erode the character of the landscape and additional traffic would also affect the tranquillity of the more rural sections of the area.) Landscape capacity for major transport developments/improvements was considered to be moderate;
- Some small-scale mineral extraction could be accommodated with careful design and mitigation measures. Larger scale extraction would not be in keeping with the character of the area. There would be knock-on effects, for example considerable upgrades of roads

necessary to accommodate larger HGVs, which would have a negative impact on the landscape character. Landscape capacity was considered to be moderate;

- There may be some very limited capacity for carefully located and designed small-scale developments, particularly if they were in keeping with the existing rural character of the area, and incorporated into existing settlements such as Little Wymondley. However, due to the intimate scale of the landscape, any proposals would need clear justification to avoid the erosion of the open gap between Hitchin and Letchworth and the rural character of the Wymondley and Titmore Green area. The landscape capacity for incremental small-scale developments was considered to be low to moderate; and urbanising elements existing in the area, for example the busy infrastructure system and electricity pylons already detract from the character of the area. New utilities developments would have an impact on the more intimate scale and rural character of the area, particularly adjacent to Great Wymondley. Large-scale developments and tall elements would be highly visible, as well as potentially visible from surrounding areas. Landscape capacity for utilities developments was considered to be low to moderate.

7. Green Belt

Aim: to preserve the look and feel of the Parish, with particular importance being given to the protection of the Green Belt surrounding it, to prevent erosion of the Parish's character by urban sprawl;

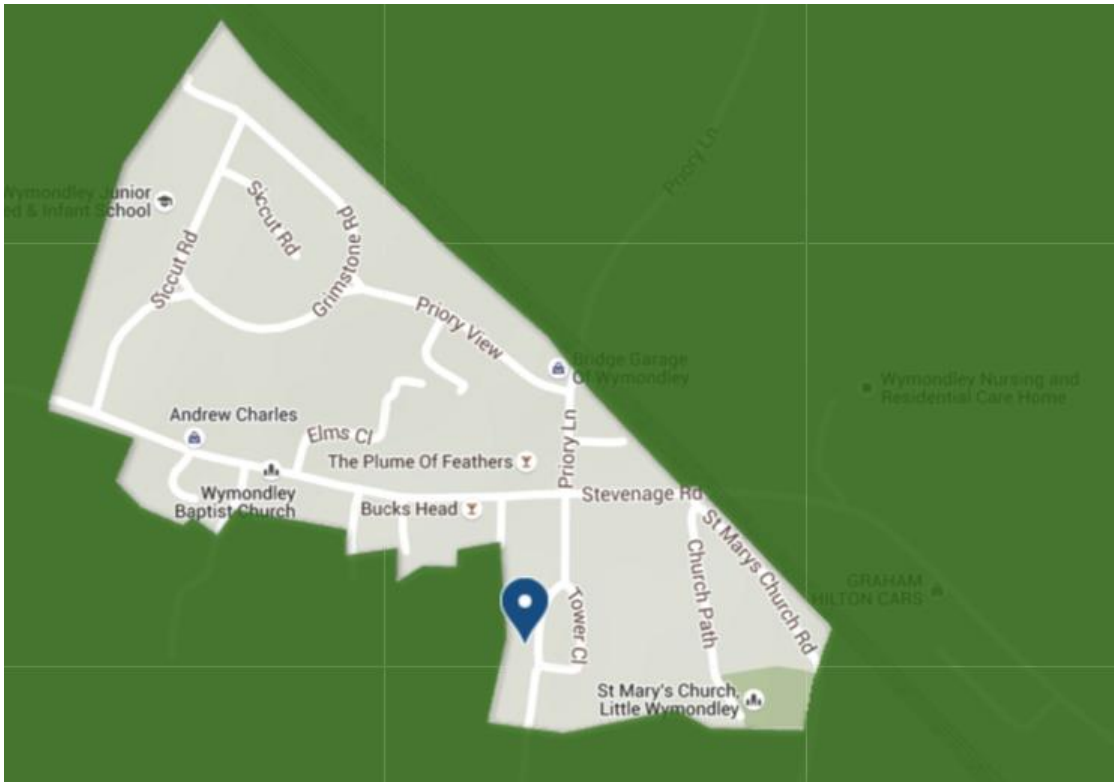
7.1 The location of our parish is a crucial factor - central to our deliberations on potential development sites to meet its future housing needs. Part of the Parish, and its immediate surrounding rural area, is designated Green Belt land, the fundamental aim of which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It serves five purposes:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

7.2 The NPPF provides that, once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in “exceptional circumstances”, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, regard should be given to their intended permanence in the long term, beyond the period of the Plan, and of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. Inappropriate development of Green Belt land should not be approved except in “very special circumstances” – which will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

7.3 Wymondley Parish in its entirety does not fall within the Green Belt. Great Wymondley, Todds Green, Titmore Green and Redcoats Green are all within the Green Belt. Little Wymondley is classed as a Category A village, i.e. its built core is outside, (but surrounded by), Green Belt land - as shown on the map below, which also indicates its settlement boundary. Great Wymondley is classed as a Category B village - where infilling that does not extend the built core of the village into the surrounding countryside may be allowed.

Little Wymondley shown within the Green Belt

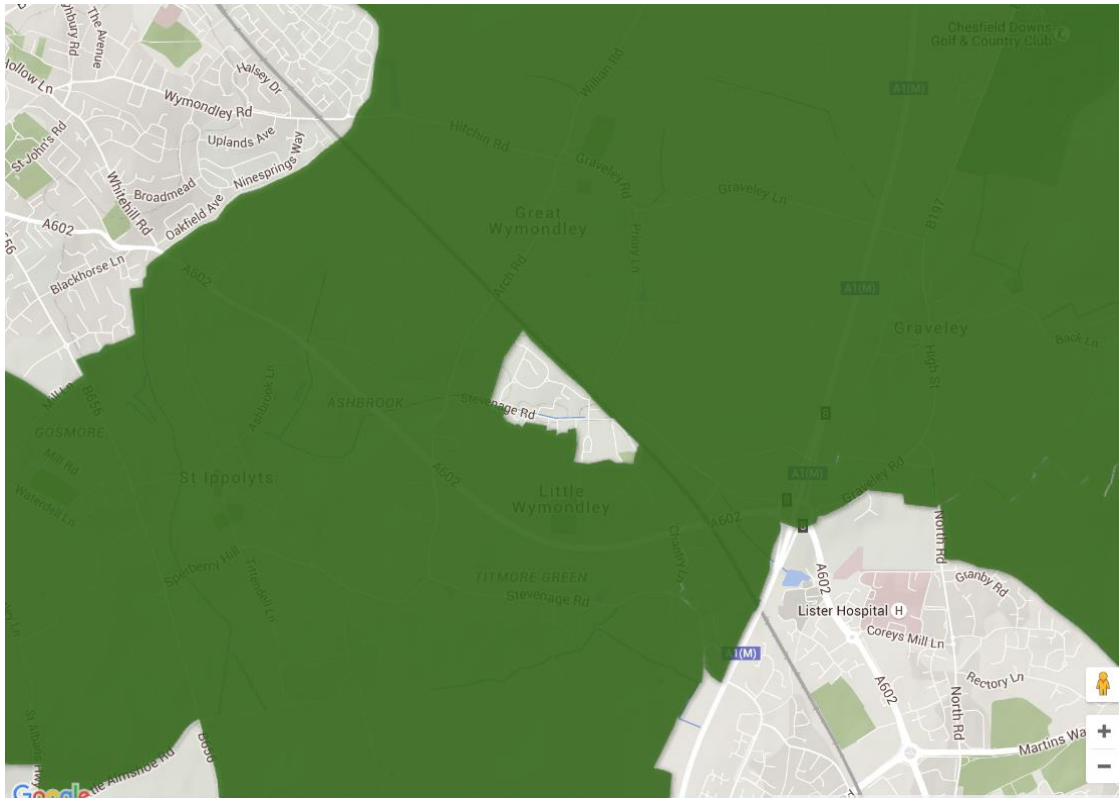


7.4 The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts – as do the Wymondley parishioners, illustrated by 92% of our survey respondents indicating that they objected to any development on Green Belt land within or surrounding the Parish. It is clearly the primary issue of concern to Wymondley parishioners, and one which significantly influenced our development proposals.

7.5 We strongly support those elements of the Government's Green Belt policy which are particularly relevant to our parish, given its close proximity to the nearby towns of Hitchin and Stevenage, i.e. designating land as Green Belt purposely to prevent the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; and assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

7.6 The following map clearly illustrates how close Little Wymondley, (being the main settlement of our parish), is to the neighbouring towns, and therefore how vulnerable our parish is to having its individuality obliterated by urban sprawl.

Little Wymondley, showing its position within the Green Belt between Hitchin and Stevenage



7.7 The NPPF states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt, but there are exceptions to this:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- Limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brown-field land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

7.8 Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. These are:

- Mineral extraction;

- Engineering operations;
- Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and
- Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

7.9 Preservation of the Parish's Green Belt land is fundamental to the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the Parish. It acts as a protective barrier, shielding the settlements from being swallowed up by urban sprawl from Stevenage, Hitchin and Letchworth; and by the same token protecting the historic character and heritage of the Parish – particularly around Great Wymondley. It affords residents and visitors the opportunity to enjoy the appearance and feel of rural village environments and small communities. The essence of what draws people to live in such environments as ours.

Policy GB1:

Development proposals impacting on Wymondley Parish must comply with Government Green Belt policy; primary consideration will be given to effective use of brown-field sites, which are not of high environmental value.

Development proposals should not impact negatively on Wymondley Parish - particularly in terms of visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt landscape and its important contribution to the character of our villages/hamlets.

8. Flood Risk

Aim: to contribute to the well-being of the Parish by seeking to address the current shortfall in Flood Prevention Measures; and to work constructively with local planning authorities to pre-empt the future effects of climate change and ensure that any development proposals are sustainable, have no adverse effect on potential flood risk and will contribute to existing and necessary future infrastructures.

Background

8.1 The landscape and topography of the land comprising and surrounding Wymondley Parish was sculpted and formulated by the advance and retreat of some twenty or so Ice Ages during the Pleistocene Era.

8.2 Since then, of course, there have been interventions and changes wrought by man. For example, the construction of the London to Scotland railway; the Great North Road; its conversion to the A1(M) and, latterly, the A602 Wymondley Bypass have all crossed or used the Wymondley Valley - in some cases altering the topography of the area through their construction.

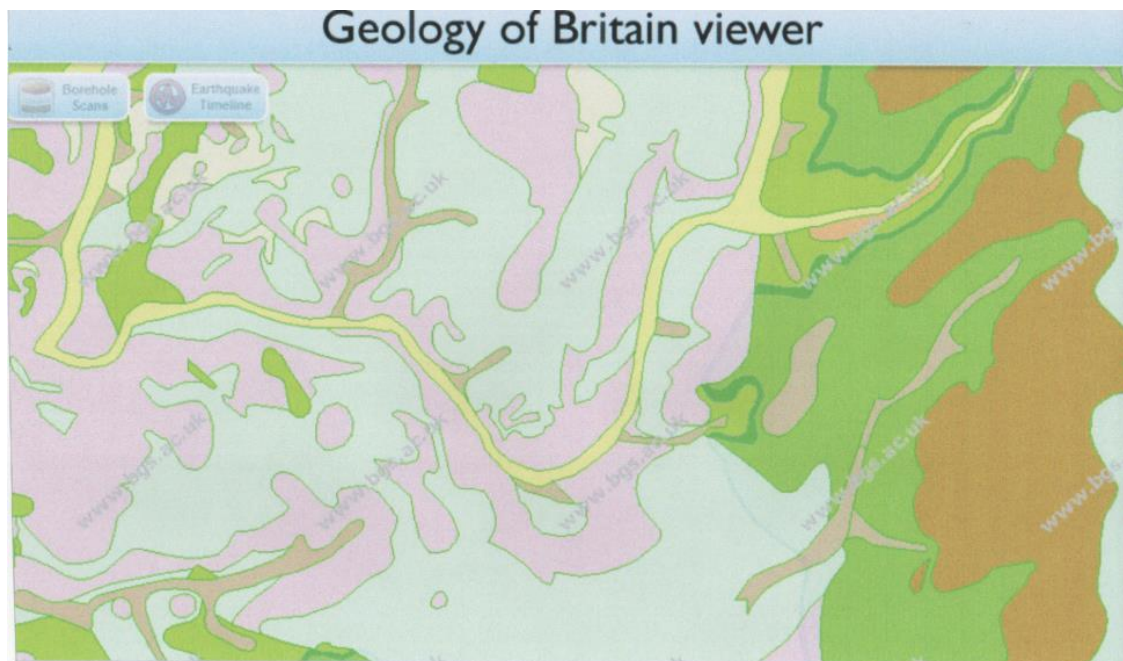
8.3 Wymondley Parish is essentially an old river valley, with Little Wymondley occupying the lower portion of the valley. Great Wymondley lies to the north, on slightly higher ground, and the hamlets of Todds Green, Titmore Green and Redcoats Green are to the south – again, on slightly higher ground.

8.4 The geological map below, (and the Environment Agency flood map of the same area which accompanies it), show the surface geology of the area and illustrate the flood route. The areas shown in yellow on the geological map, (which are Glaciofluvial deposits of mid Pleistocene sands and gravels), follow the course of Ash Brook from Graveley, through Corey's Mill and Little Wymondley, to join further tributaries of the River Purwell at Ninesprings.

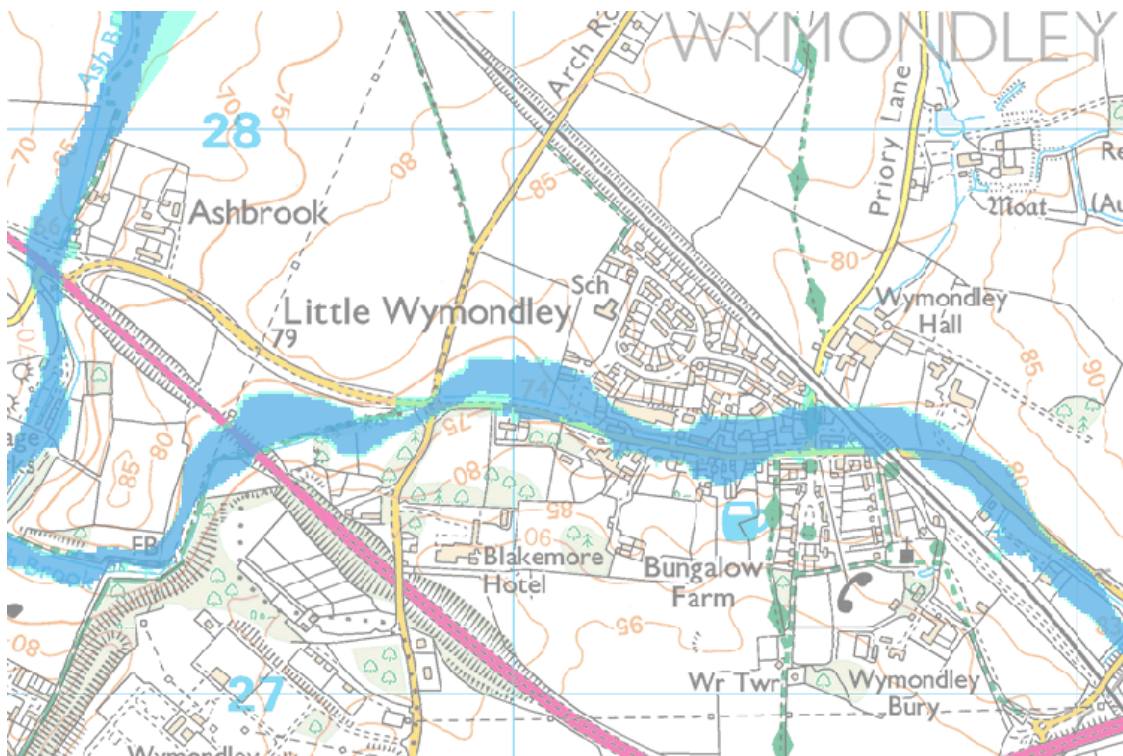
8.5 The photographs which follow the maps show examples of flooding in Little Wymondley.

Issues

8.6 Over recent years, (most notably in February 2014 and on 8 March 2016), the risk of flooding in Little Wymondley has become increasingly apparent - with greater disruption caused to properties in 2014 than in past years. The floods followed exactly the path of Ash Brook - and demonstrated the effects both of intervention by man, and the lack of maintenance of existing flood control measures during times of spate.



Wymondley geological map



Wymondley flood map



Siccut Road, near Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley 1968



Priory Lane, Little Wymondley 1968, looking up the Lane



Priory Lane, Little Wymondley 1968, near the Plume of Feathers, looking towards Stevenage Road and Tower Close



Priory Lane, Little Wymondley 2014, the same location 46 years later

8.7 As a consequence of the 2014 flood, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) commissioned a report into it. On 22 October 2015 it presented its findings to residents, business owners and other interested parties at a public meeting at Wymondley JMI School.

8.8 Opinions voiced there, and in response to our Parish survey carried out in July 2015, left stakeholders in no doubt as to the impact of the 2014 flood, and the level of importance parishioners attach to alleviating the flood risk; improving and properly maintaining the current Parish infrastructure; and ensuring that the consequences of any future development are properly and realistically assessed and accounted for in any such proposals.

8.9 The HCC Flood Investigation Report on the Little Wymondley flood and the associated Flood Alleviation Feasibility Study on Little Wymondley, undertaken for HCC by McCloy Consulting Ltd are attached as pdf documents and available online at: www.wymondley.org They clearly illustrate the inadequacies of the current installed system and its state of repair, notwithstanding that they failed to take into account the run-off from the southern side of the valley.

8.11 It can readily be seen that developments that could increase the strain on an already damaged, (and demonstrably inadequate), existing system should be implemented with no increase in risk or, preferably, reduce the existing problem.

Socio-economic impact

8.12 72% of survey respondents had concerns about flooding in the Parish, wanting to see improvements to flood risk management and drainage. Unsurprising, given the physical, emotional and economic impact of your home or business being subject to flooding; or affected by flooding to neighbouring roads and land, and related loss of access; or loss of telecommunications. Insurance cover, loss of revenue, additional costs and inconvenience come hand in hand with flooding risk. (The Plume of Feathers P.H. in Little Wymondley, for example, was flooded in 2014 causing £40,000 worth of damage, and cannot now obtain insurance.)



Flooding along Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley, February 2014



Little Wymondley Flooding, 9 March 2016 - Arch Road/Stevenage Road Junction

8.13 Horse riding is a very popular activity in the area, with a number of equestrian businesses in the Parish - as well as privately owned horses. Consequently, horse grazing fields are a common feature of our parish landscape, and flooding is a serious issue for them - not only in terms of loss of grazing, (and the resulting increased cost of providing replacement feed and bedding), but also in relation to access to, and condition of, fields and bridleways.

8.14 There is an economic impact, for example the knock-on effect on customers of increased livery and lesson prices, and inability to access stables etc, which may lead to loss of business – particularly in relation to businesses located near Priory Lane or Stevenage Road in Little Wymondley. It could also be argued that disabled riders might be disproportionately affected, as the Stevenage Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) uses Courtlands Riding Stables' ponies on a weekly basis. The Stables is situated off Chantry Lane in Todds Green, with fields adjacent to the Stevenage Road in Little Wymondley, which are prone to flooding.



Priory Lane, at the Junction with Stevenage Road, February 2014

8.15 As well as the domestic and business disadvantages of flooding, there are also repercussions for recreational activities in the Parish. Construction of the Multiple Use Games Area (MUGA) on the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields in Little Wymondley, for example, has exacerbated the pre-existing problems with flooding there - resulting in complaints about waterlogged and unplayable football pitches (and associated revenue and other consequences); and flooding on the MUGA itself on occasions.

8.16 Given the size of the MUGA, we can only wonder what the potential flooding impact would be of a large-scale housing development in the immediate vicinity, such as that proposed by NHDC and known as WY1¹³; or of proposals for an industrial estate on a flood plain adjacent to the village, as proposed by Stevenage Borough Council in its draft Local Plan.¹⁴ We raised our

¹³http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/northherts-cms/files/sheet_a_-_hitchin_letchworth_and_baldock.pdf

¹⁴<http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/149690/planning-policy/90175/154858/>

concerns when the proposals were first mooted, and our discussions with the relevant authorities are on-going.

8.17 Our petanque teams are similarly concerned about flooding, particularly in relation to the Little Wymondley pistes. If the pistes flood, (as they have done in the past), it has a detrimental effect on players' ability to participate in both social and league matches – and ultimately on individual/team performance and success.

8.18 As the premier stakeholder in this matter of flood risk evaluation for Wymondley Parish, our Neighbourhood Plan is intended to assist in developing sustainable and justifiable plans which could impact upon the flood risk to Wymondley. The well-being of our community is our primary consideration, and we would be failing in the stated aims of this Plan if we did not seek to address local concerns and remedy the situation. Our flood risk policies reflect this:

Policy FR1 Flood Risk:

Development proposals which would result in an increase in flood risk will not be supported. Development within 12m of a watercourse should be supported by any required Flood Risk Assessment and adequate information to assess the potential impact of the proposal on flooding both on and off site.

8.19 When considering development in an area such as Wymondley Parish, where the flood risk is high and there are major implications for residents and business arising from inadequate drainage and other Flood Prevention Measures, we believe it is essential that proposals comprehensively assess issues such as water run-off down roadways – and include adequate provision for their management and control.

8.20 There is currently no legislative requirement in England and Wales for designers and planners to consider, in an urban context, the interaction between drainage and roads – and ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect roads' structural integrity and address related issues. In Scotland, however, regulators, enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders have seen the light and through partnership working have produced practical guidance on the application of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)¹⁵ to road design – a key factor in achieving sustainable long-term environmental and social improvements.

8.21 When taken as part of a holistic flood risk and water management process, incorporating Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs)¹⁶ and Surface Water Management Plans (SWMPs)¹⁷, SUDS help create a vital tool for local organisations to develop a shared understanding of, and ability to manage, local flood risk. This includes setting out priorities for action, maintenance needs and links into Local Development Frameworks and Emergency Plans.

8.22 Annex 5 provides a brief explanation of the critical relationship between rainfall, surface water flooding and drainage – and the need for joined-up working by stakeholders to properly

¹⁵<http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/assets/business/files/connections%20documents/june%202015%20uploads/20100805sudsforroadsfinal.pdf>

¹⁶<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/strategic-flood-risk-assessment/>

¹⁷https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69342/pb13546-swmp-guidance-100319.pdf

assess and manage flood risk. More comprehensive information is contained in the DCLG Planning Guidance on SFRAs, the DEFRA technical guidance on SWMPs, and the Scottish guidance on SUDs. (See footnotes below.)

Policy FR2 Flood Risk Management:

We believe an integrated, risk-based approach to flood risk management is the way forward, and strongly support the inclusion of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in any development proposal.

8.23 Until now, it has been demonstrably apparent that our planning system has stratified responsibilities to such an extent that project planners are absolved of any responsibility to address infrastructure problems and costs arising from implementation of their plans. We are hopeful that the recently introduced concept of “locality”, (which allows communities and people most affected by planning and development decisions to have their say at Neighbourhood Plan level), will ensure that, from the beginning, adequate infrastructures are discussed, planned and implemented.

9. Green Infrastructure and Spaces

Aim: to contribute to the health and well-being of our Parish, by ensuring community access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation - including consideration of Local Green Space designation; and by seeking to ensure that any proposed development within, (or impacting on), the Parish or its green infrastructure is consistent with national Green Belt policy.

Background

9.1 The NPPF defines “Green infrastructure” as “a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities”.

9.2 Our natural and historic environments, their role in our green infrastructure, and the value they have to our community are a key factor in our efforts to ensure sustainable development within our parish and neighbouring areas. In a rural environment such as ours, there is a clear understanding of the need for careful management and best use of our local resources, to sustain the benefits we gain from them for ourselves and others; and to conserve the natural and historic environments of our parish – together with its character.

9.3 In a broader context, we recognise the importance of green infrastructure in reducing carbon footprints, for example through access for individuals and businesses to locally grown produce from our allotments and farms; and in actively encouraging sustainable forms of transport between urban and rural areas, such as walking, cycling and horse-riding. These issues, plus associated influences such as flood and traffic management are key considerations in the future development of Wymondley Parish, and are covered in various sections of this Plan.

9.4 Issues relating to application of the Government’s Green Belt policy in and near our Parish warrant special consideration, and are therefore covered separately in Section 7.

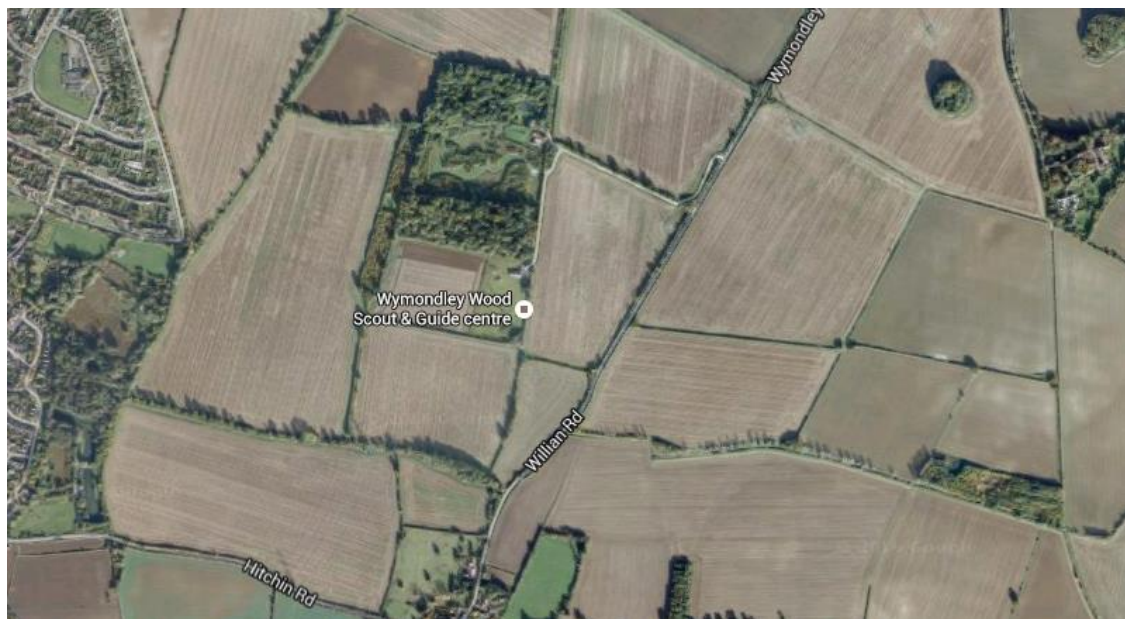
9.5 As a rural parish Wymondley is blessed with a considerable range of green spaces, all of which are greatly valued and regularly used; and which offer parishioners and visitors the opportunity to carry out a variety of different recreational activities. (Further details of recreational activities and their impact on community cohesion and well-being are contained in Section 15.) Details of our green spaces (and related issues) are set out below:

Wymondley Parish Green Spaces

9.6 As mentioned above, Wymondley Parish has a fairly wide variety of green spaces, some of which are protected from development by their current designation as common land, village green or playing field. Others, although equally beneficial to the health and social well-being of our community, have no such designation. The situation is as follows:

Wymondley Woods: was planted in two stages between 1997 and 2000, amidst mature woodlands. Consisting primarily of locally-grown oak and hornbeam, it was created as an educational resource for managed groups. It features a special nature conservation and field study area, adjacent to existing and newly planted forest environments which provide food and

cover for a wide variety of wildlife all year round – in marked contrast to the surrounding arable fields. It forms part of the Garden City Greenway, which was funded (and is owned and managed) by the Heritage Foundation, to act as a permanent commemoration of Letchworth Garden City's first centenary in 2003.



Wymondley Woods and Scout Hut

Church Green, Great Wymondley: was granted to the Wymondley Parish Council (WPC) on 7 August 1968 by a Deed of Gift from the late Captain Wilshire, and is registered Common Land.



Church Green, Great Wymondley

Siccut Road Green, Little Wymondley: is divided by Siccut Road, but counts as one plot of land, not two. It was transferred from NHDC to WPC in November 2007, and has Village Green status.



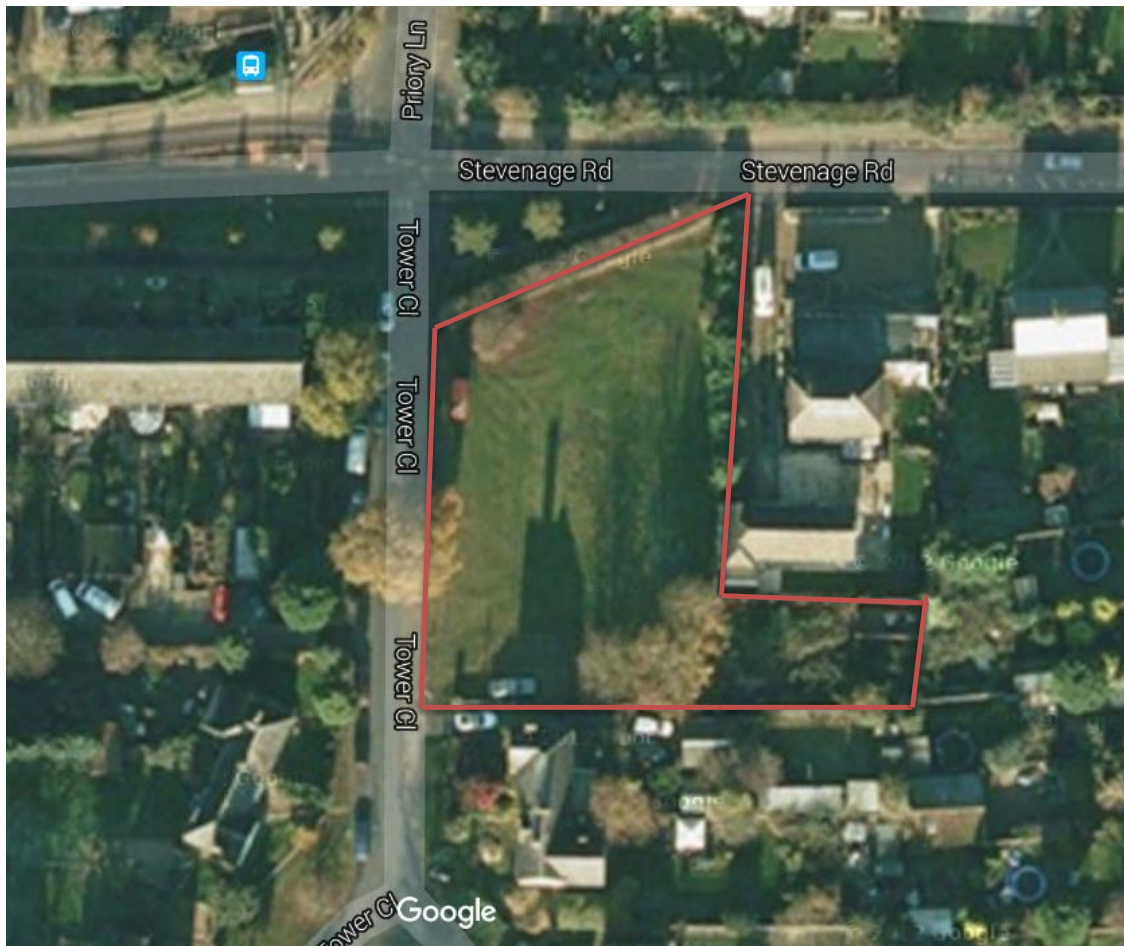
Sicut Road Green, Little Wymondley

Recreation Ground, Graveley Road, Great Wymondley: conveyed from Miss Wilshire to the Parish Council on 1st February 1929, '*for the purpose of playing fields*'. This land does not have Village Green status.



Recreation Ground, Gravely Road, Great Wymondley

Tower Close Green, Little Wymondley: which is on the left as you enter Tower Close from Stevenage Road, was transferred from North Herts District Council (NHDC) to WPC in November 2007, and has Village Green status.



Tower Close Green, Little Wymondley

Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields, off Tower Close, Little Wymondley: has, since 29 September 1947, been leased by its custodial trustee Fields in Trust (formerly the National Playing Fields Association) to its managing trustee Wymondley Parish Council. The lease runs for 99 years, with an annual peppercorn rent of 2/6d, which is not demanded. In July 2012, the playing fields acquired Queen Elizabeth II Field status, as part of the Fields in Trust Challenge, which established a grass-roots legacy of protected land in connection with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and Olympic and Paralympic Games. Consequently, it is protected in perpetuity for use as a public playing field and recreation ground.



Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields, Little Wymondley

Green space (Garden Plots/Allotments), Sicut Road, Little Wymondley: this land was transferred from NHDC to North Herts Homes (NHH) in 2003, and was used 'under licence' by WPC as allotments. This licence was cancelled in May 2012, as the plots were no longer being used.



Garden Plots/Allotments, Sicut Road, Little Wymondley

Garden Plots (Allotments), Great Wymondley: this land was transferred from NHDC to NHH in 2003, and was used 'under licence' by WPC. However, since February 2011 the licence agreement has been a direct arrangement between WPC and the plot holders there.



Garden Plots (Allotments), Great Wymondley

Tower Close, Central Green, Little Wymondley: is a large, green space in the centre of the Close, populated by a number of large, native trees and planted with spring flowers. It is used on a daily basis as a recreational facility by village children and dog walkers, and if lost it would totally change the character of that part of the village. (A smaller area of grass at the end of the Close has already been designated as a village green.)



Tower Close Central Green, Little Wymondley

Designating Local Green Spaces (LGS)

9.7 As part of the neighbourhood planning process, the NPPF enables local communities to identify, (for special protection), green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space (LGS) local communities can rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Designation can only take place when a plan is being prepared or reviewed; and needs to be consistent with sustainable development and complement investment in homes, jobs and other essential services. It also needs to be capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period.

9.8 The NPPF makes it clear that designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open spaces, and sets out criteria for its use, namely:

- The green space should be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- The green area should be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and
- The green area should be local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

9.9 Local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with Green Belt policy.

Policy GIS1 Local Green Spaces:

The following Local Green Spaces are designated:

- 1, Wymondley Woods and Scout Hut***
- 2, Church Green, Great Wymondley***
- 3, Siccut Road Green, Little Wymondley***
- 4, Recreation Ground, Graveley Road, Great Wymondley***
- 5, Tower Close Green, Little Wymondley***
- 6, Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields, Little Wymondley***
- 7, Allotments, Siccut Road/Grimstone Road, Little Wymondley***
- 8. Garden Plots (Allotments), Great Wymondley***
- 9. Tower Close Central Green, Little Wymondley***

Development will not be permitted except in very special circumstances.

Issues

9.10 Our survey of Wymondley parishioners specifically asked about the type of improvements or measures they would like to see in the Parish. 57% of respondents indicated that they would like to see improvements/enhancements to the look and feel of the villages in the Parish. Aside from the primary concern that our Green Belt land should be protected from development, other key “green” issues in this connection were the need for better maintenance of trees, hedges, grass verges and pavements; and preservation of our green spaces.

9.11 Additionally, 58% of respondents indicated that they wished to have additional or improved recreation areas for the children of the Parish. (Further background on this and our related proposals are contained in Sections 15 and 16 of this Plan.)

9.12 It is clear from the responses to our survey of Wymondley parishioners, that our green spaces are seen as vital to the health and well-being of the Parish, as well as to its social cohesion. We believe that steps should be taken to protect those green spaces that are not already safeguarded for use by our community and future generations. We have therefore designated the following green spaces – all of which are within the community they serve; meet one or more of the criteria required to demonstrate they are special to the local community; and are non-extensive, self-contained tracts of land, and which are local in character:

- Recreation Ground, Graveley Road, Great Wymondley: on the basis that it was originally conveyed from Miss Wilshire to the Parish Council on 1st February 1929, ‘*for the purpose of playing fields*’; is adjacent to a historic conservation area and used by parishioners as a recreational facility. It therefore meets all three required criteria;

- Garden Plots, (Allotments) Great Wymondley: on the basis that this land has been in use as allotments for some considerable time and, as with the other Great Wymondley green spaces, it is adjacent to a historic conservation area and valuable to the health and well-being of parishioners who use it as a calm and relaxing recreational facility;
- Tower Close, Central Green, Little Wymondley: on the basis that it is an unfenced and easily accessible green space; used “*as of right*” without force, secrecy or permission; and without interruption for at least the last 20 years, (i.e. since the houses were built in 1921), for lawful sports and pastimes by village children and dog walkers. (Section 16 of this plan sets out our proposals to redesign adjacent lay-bys and reduce the top end of this green by a small amount, to provide some additional parking spaces, but this would not be detrimental to the overall appearance and use of the green space or its locality.); and
- Green space (Former Garden Plots/Allotments), Siccut Road/Grimstone Road, Little Wymondley: on the basis that it is located in a residential area of the community; has recreational value, (with potential to return it to its former use as allotments); and is not an extensive tract of land.

10. Transport Links

Aim: to promote, facilitate and encourage use of sustainable transport within the Parish; and work effectively with the Highways Agency, local authorities, landowners and other relevant stakeholders to support cyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorists in their use of “green” routes within the Parish.

Our transport challenge

10.1 As detailed in Sections 6 and 7 of this Plan, Wymondley Parish comprises five small settlements located within a rolling agricultural landscape, characterised by narrow, winding lanes and tall hedgerows. Its individual settlements lie within, or are surrounded by, Green Belt land, which acts as a protection against urban sprawl from the neighbouring towns of Letchworth, Stevenage and Hitchin.

10.2 Its location and natural environment do not lend themselves to easy travel between the settlements, particularly for non-motorists, so getting around within the Parish is a challenge. This is likely to increase, given the ageing population of the area - and the fact that the Parish has not been planned as an area that people would live and work in, but one which they would commute to and from.

10.3 As a result, transport access via all modes is a major constraint to the growth of the economy and population of the Parish in the future, which could increase by around 1000 people if development proposals currently being mooted by NHDC¹⁸ and SBC proceed.¹⁹ Furthermore, development in or near the Parish, (whether domestic or industrial), is likely to add to existing traffic congestion and exacerbate related problems. (Section 11 on Traffic Management refers.)

10.4 Pressure to accommodate this growth also presents a challenge to protecting the existing natural, economic and social assets of the Parish. In rising to meet this challenge we have considered how we might make best use of the Parish's natural features to improve internal links between the settlements; as well as between the Parish and its neighbours. As part of this, we want to promote, facilitate and encourage more sustainable modes of transport; and greater use of “green” routes – thereby simultaneously supporting non-motoring residents, workers and visitors.

Transport links in the Wymondley Area

10.5 Our parish survey identified transport links as an issue of concern, particularly in relation to the local bus service and the Parish road infrastructure. Improvements to the latter were demanded, to increase safety and improve access. Most people felt there were sufficient footpaths and bridleways, although concern was expressed about their maintenance and comments made about connectivity.

¹⁸ <http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-emerging-policy/draft-local-plan-2011-2031>

¹⁹ <http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/149690/planning-policy/90175/>

10.6 Our rural location means we require good and reliable transport links, to enable non-motoring parishioners to access services and facilities; and to encourage motorists to use alternative means of transport for business, domestic and recreational purposes.

10.7 Walking in more rural areas is more ubiquitous than in urban areas, and the benefits of walking and cycling are demonstrated within the Department for Transport's document "*Local Area Walking and Cycling Statistics 2013/14*"²⁰

10.8 A network of public rights of way, including footpaths, green lanes, byways, white roads and bridleways crosses the Parish, connecting the settlements, and the A602 was designed to allow continuity of rights of way where paths have been crossed by it. These routes are frequently used by: ramblers/hikers, dog-walkers, joggers, horse-riders and cyclists. In particular, two long distance pathways, i.e. the Hertfordshire Way and Gypsy Lane pass through the Parish – attracting locals and visitors alike.

10.9 Increased use of these environmentally-friendly routes, not only for recreational purposes, but for travel to work - and to link urban and rural parts of the Parish, can only benefit the community. Aside from improvements to users' health and well-being, through increased exercise and decreased stress, the potential knock-on effects of decreasing the number of motorists also benefit the rest of the community. Traffic, noise and pollution levels would be reduced, for example, thereby improving air-quality and road-safety. Easily accessible, safe transport routes between the urban and rural parts of the Parish would also generate more interaction between the settlements – leading to more community cohesion.

Local bus services

10.10 Public transport links within the Parish serve the area well with regard to the two largest settlements. Regular connections between the two most popular destinations of Hitchin and Stevenage are frequently used, with the predominance of use being in Little Wymondley.

10.11 There are two bus routes serving the Parish, which connect Stevenage and Luton (Arriva UK Number 101); and Centrebus (Beds and Herts) Number 80, connecting Stevenage to Hitchin. Both services operate a regular service, with buses approximately every hour during the day and more frequently at peak travel times.

10.12 As with most rural communities, the bus services provide a valuable link to towns (and amenities) further afield. As well as needing to be regular and reliable, the specific bus routes need to be sustained because without them, various sections of the Parish population are disadvantaged.

10.13 To our knowledge, there is no intention to reduce the bus services which serve the Parish, which is fortunate, as older and/or non-motoring residents depend on the bus services to reach the local hospital and neighbouring towns. They rely heavily on buses as an alternative to costly services such as taxis - and utilise free bus passes where possible.

10.14 Section 12 of this Plan specifically mentions the need for a convenient and reliable bus service, and safe and well-maintained footpaths for school pupils to use. It particularly highlights

²⁰ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/437001/local-area-walking-and-cycling-statistics-england-2013-14.pdf

health and safety issues arising in relation to junior school pupils, (and others), due to inadequate footpaths between Great and Little Wymondley; and near St Ippolyts School.

10.15 Wymondley JMI School is on (or near to) the Hitchin to Stevenage bus routes through Little Wymondley; and Graveley School is also on a bus route. There are also safety risks to pupils attending St Ippolyts and Kingshott Schools, as neither school is on a direct bus route and nearby roads are very busy. (Road traffic and parking issues relating to our Parish schools are covered in Sections 11 and 12.)

10.16 Aside from those attending junior schools which serve the Parish, many secondary school students from the Parish use public transport to get to and from Schools in Hitchin and Stevenage

Railways

10.17 There is no railway station in the Wymondley area. The nearest railway stations are situated in the larger towns of Stevenage and Hitchin - both of which are approximately 3 miles away. Both stations access the East Coast Main Line and direct routes to Cambridge and beyond.

Car and road Infrastructure

10.18 As for the rest of Hertfordshire, reliance on the car within the Parish is above national averages – and likely to increase with any new housing provision, unless public transport services can be improved.

10.19 Like most roads in the North Herts District, Wymondley Parish's road network, was not designed for the volume of traffic now using it. The current road network linking areas within the Parish provides sufficient capacity for regular use of traffic. However, our recent traffic study shows increased pressure on the network makes road use difficult for residents - particularly in Great Wymondley, where there are considerable delays for residents' vehicles exiting their properties onto the carriageway, especially at peak times and there are also concerns relating to the corresponding levels of air pollution.

10.20 At peak times the network is characterised by congestion heading in several directions, mainly resulting from traffic trying to circumvent the A1(M) or A602 and using the Parish's narrow single carriageway roads as "rat-runs". This impedes accessibility within and between settlements, and causes a number of problems for residents and businesses, including detrimental effects on air quality to potentially dangerous levels.

10.21 Existing pinch points in Great and Little Wymondley are not adequate enough in reducing speed, which was another issue raised by our survey respondents. (See Section 11 on Traffic Management for further commentary on these and related issues including access, safety, air quality and noise.)

Pedestrian infrastructure

10.22 The route from Great Wymondley, along Hitchin Road to join Wymondley Road in Hitchin lacks a footpath (pavement), which makes it very dangerous for pedestrians, even with current traffic volumes. Similarly, there is no dedicated footpath between Little and Great Wymondley.

The main footpath linking the two areas ends in both villages at the final properties exiting them. A public right of way exists, but this borders privately owned fields, involves traversing uneven ground - and so not particularly user-friendly in the dark or during bad weather. This situation increases safety risks for pedestrians, particularly children or those taking them to and from school in Little Wymondley. Other sections of the community may also be disadvantaged, for example those who, for various reasons, are less able to cross fields, to make the journey between the settlements.

10.23 Similar safety issues arise in connection with pedestrians wishing to travel from Titmore Green to Little Wymondley, or cross the A602 or Corey's Mill roundabout; and responses to our parish survey included several demands for facilities such as subways or footbridges to minimise the risk.

10.24 The condition of existing pavements is inconsistent throughout the Parish, with some in a state of deterioration, and there were also calls for better and more regular maintenance of pedestrian walkways (and highways) generally – including weeding, clearing of drains/gutters, trimming of hedges and litter-picking etc.

11. Traffic Management

Aim: *to work positively and collaboratively with local planning authorities to ensure that the traffic management needs of the Parish are met effectively; principally that there are sufficient measures available to identify, mitigate and resolve key issues relating to building developments.*

Background

11.1 As stated elsewhere in this Plan, Wymondley Parish is bordered by the towns of Stevenage, Hitchin and Letchworth. In 1992, the A602 Wymondley Bypass was constructed to allow traffic flow from Hitchin (and surrounding areas) to access the Corey's Mill roundabout at the A1(M), Junction 8 (J8), for onward travel south to London, or to Stevenage without passing through Little Wymondley.



A602 Wymondley Bypass towards Hitchin 07.55 a.m. – 1 March 2016

11.2 The main road through Little Wymondley, (Stevenage Road), leads from the A602 Wymondley Bypass at Ashbrook to the Corey's Mill roundabout, at which point a number of roads coincide, including the slip-roads from and to the A1(M), J8. On the outskirts of Little Wymondley it meets Arch Road and Blakemore End Road at a crossroads, (which is prone to flooding), and where there is a mini-roundabout.

11.3 The following photographs show the most recent episode of disruptive flooding at the roundabout, and the resulting tailback from it to Great Wymondley:



Blakemore End Road roundabout (at Arch Road and Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley) 9 March 2016



Arch Road flooding tailback from Great Wymondley to Little Wymondley - 9 March 2016

11.4 Empirical traffic flow evidence regarding “rat runs” in Wymondley Parish indicates that:

- Traffic leaves the A1(M) at J9 (Letchworth Gate), travelling through Willian, Great Wymondley and Little Wymondley and onward, via the lanes and Codicote, to reach A1 (M), J6 (Welwyn);
- Traffic from the Ninesprings area of Hitchin travels along Hitchin Road to the Green Man intersection at Great Wymondley, and continues through the village along Arch Road to Little Wymondley, where it joins Stevenage Road at its junction with Blakemore End Road; and
- from there, the rat-runs continue either left along Stevenage Road to Corey’s Mill and beyond; or straight across the crossroads and onward to Stevenage, via the hamlets of Redcoats, Titmore and Todds Green.

The issues

11.5 The A1(M) is clearly inadequate for the current volume of traffic using it, particularly at peak times. This fact has been recognised by HCC and other relevant authorities²¹, (see Annex 6 and screen shot below), and is clearly highlighted by the resulting rat-runs created on the roads and lanes within Wymondley Parish by motorists trying to avoid the congestion.

Figure 3.2.2 Traffic Forecasts by District

Town	2021 (% increase from 2014)	2031 (% increase from 2014)
Great Britain	5.8%	13.0%
Eastern Region	7.2%	16.3%
Hertfordshire	6.2%	12.7%
Broxbourne	4.7%	9.6%
Dacorum	6.6%	13.8%
East Hertfordshire	3.5%	6.9%
Hertsmere	5.5%	11.9%
North Hertfordshire	6.8%	16.1%
St Albans	6.1%	12.2%
Stevenage	9.4%	19.0%
Three Rivers	5.3%	11.2%
Watford	6.9%	12.6%
Welwyn Hatfield	7.5%	15.1%

DTT - National Transport Model (NTM09) using TEMPro Version 6.2
Based on car driver trips for an average weekday

Figure 3.2.2 shows the latest predictions from the National Trip End Model (Tempo - dataset 6.2) and indicates that between 2014 and 2021 car traffic growth in Hertfordshire will increase at a faster rate than nationally, but thereafter will slow in Hertfordshire to become more in line with growth elsewhere.

There is considerable variation between districts in the predicted growth rates over the next twenty years. The main factor behind these growth rates are the proposed increases in the numbers of households and jobs in each of the districts in addition to continued increases in car ownership.

It should be noted that these projections are likely to change as district local plans are published.



11.6 Detrimental consequences of the inevitable, (at least) twice-daily tail-backs of traffic from Corey's Mill and rat-run usage include: increased noise, critically poor air quality and risk and inconvenience for parishioners experiencing difficulty in entering or leaving their driveways; crossing the road, or safely entering Corey's Mill roundabout itself.

11.7 Unsurprisingly, traffic management was highlighted as a major issue in our parish survey – with 70% of respondents seeking improvements to it. Suggestions included traffic calming measures (such as increased speed restrictions on the Stevenage Road); safety measures such as traffic lights at the Stevenage Road junction with Corey's Mill; and pedestrian footbridges/underpasses in relation to the A602, Corey's Mill roundabout - and to link Titmore Green with Little Wymondley.

11.8 In the light of feedback from our parish survey, and to inform this Neighbourhood Plan, we undertook a series of ad hoc Traffic Surveys at points in the Parish known to have significant traffic issues. The photographs included in this Plan, together with the survey results shown at Annex 7, indicate the levels of traffic using parish roads to try to circumvent the inadequacy of both the A1(M) generally - and J8 in particular.

²¹ www.hertsdirect.org/ttdr



A1 (M) South 08.09 a.m. – 1 March 2016



A1 (M) South 09.05 a.m. – 1 March 2016



A1 (M) South (from other side of the bridge) 09.05 a.m. - 1 March 2016

Safety issues

11.9 We have been informed that there is no prospect that the capacity of the A1(M) will be increased before 2031, save upgrading the motorway to smart status, whereby the hard shoulders of the motorway will be used as additional lanes. This being so, there will undoubtedly need to be better traffic control at the A1(M) J8 junction, to address not only congestion issues, but also related health and safety concerns.

11.10 Access onto the Corey's Mill roundabout from both Little Wymondley and Graveley is not currently traffic light controlled. Motorists accessing the roundabout from the preceding roads and traversing the traffic lights at amber, (and frequently at red), shorten the available time for egress from Little Wymondley and Graveley onto the roundabout.

Traffic calming

11.11 Associated traffic noise reduces the appeal of the Parish for residents and visitors; and affects their quality of life. Accident and speeding incidents on the road network are a cause for concern amongst residents and businesses, and there is a need to improve the network at certain locations to address these issues.

11.12 Traffic calming can employ a variety of methods, depending on the desired outcome. Its main purpose is to reduce the flow of traffic, which, in turn, has the desired effect of reducing speed. Both issues were identified by our survey as a concern of residents - who called for traffic calming measures, including speed restrictions on Stevenage Road in Little Wymondley.

11.13 All roads leading into Wymondley Parish are unrestricted single carriageway roads, which pose additional problems with speeding through the villages. There are several pinch points (build-outs) intended to reduce speed, located on Hitchin Road and Arch Road in Great Wymondley; and along the Stevenage Road in Little Wymondley. However, these pinch points are ineffective at reducing speed through both areas, as they do not restrict the flow of traffic in

either direction effectively. (They can have the reverse effect, as oncoming vehicles often speed up to beat oncoming priority traffic.)

11.14 Changes in speed have been shown to bring about reductions in injury accident numbers. A good rule of thumb is that a 5% reduction in injury accidents can be expected to result from a 1 mph reduction in mean speed (Taylor et al, 2000).²² The reduction varies according to road type, and is 6% for urban roads with low average speeds; 4% for medium-speed urban roads or lower-speed rural main roads; and 3% for higher-speed urban roads or rural main roads.

11.15 In some traffic-calmed areas, personal injury accidents have been reduced by 60–70% cent following speed reductions of about 9 mph. The proportion of accidents that are fatal or involve serious injury has also been reduced (Webster, 1993a; Webster & Mackie, 1996; Barker & Webster, 2003).²³

Air Quality management

11.16 Local authorities have a duty to monitor the air quality in their district under the Environment Act 1995, because poor air quality has the potential to adversely affect public health.

11.17 Our congested local road network (the A1(M), the A602 and our local access roads) increases pollution due to idling traffic, which in turn can cause or exacerbate existing health issues for our parishioners. Elevated levels and/or long-term exposure to air pollution can lead to more serious symptoms and conditions affecting human health. This mainly affects the respiratory and inflammatory systems, but can also lead to more serious conditions such as heart disease and cancer. People with lung or heart conditions may be more susceptible to the effects of air pollution.

11.18 In March 2016, the BBC produced a news article highlighting that local authorities across the country are failing to meet the central government targets. Particular emphasis was placed on Hitchin, as being amongst the worst areas in the country.²⁴ (The following charts illustrate the position.)

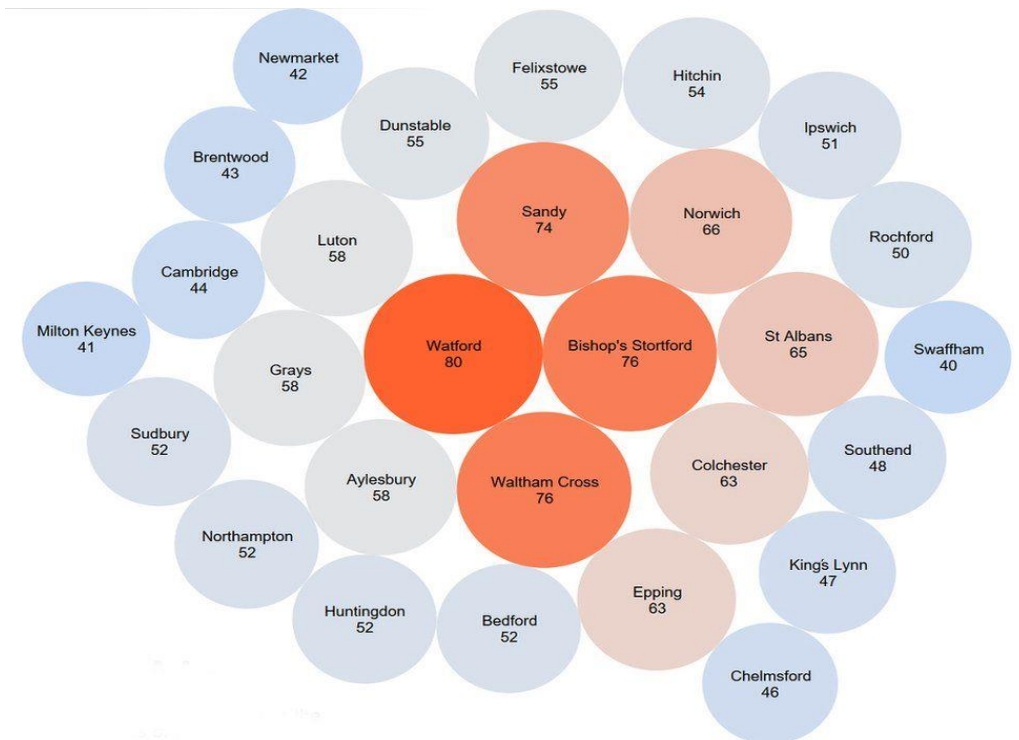
²² Taylor M C, Lynam D A and Baruya A (2000): *The effects of drivers' speed on the frequency of road accidents*. TRL Report 421. Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne.

²³ Webster D C (1993a): *Road humps for controlling vehicle speeds*. TRL Project Report 18. Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne. Webster D C and Mackie A M (1996): *Review of traffic calming schemes in 20 mph zones*. TRL Report 215. Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne. Barker, Judith and Webster, David (2003). *The Safety Benefits of 20 mph Zones Located Outside London*. TRL Annual Research Review 2003

²⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-35458600>

Air Quality

East England towns and cities that have illegal NO₂ levels



The highest nitrogen dioxide readings recorded at various towns and cities in the eastern region. The legal limit is 40 micrograms in each cubic metre of air

Illegally-high levels of nitrogen dioxide were recorded at more than 50 sites in the east of England, it has emerged. The legal annual mean limit is 40 micrograms of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) per cubic metre of air (µg/m³).

ClientEarth, a group of environmental lawyers, is planning High Court action against the government over illegally high readings. The government said it supported local authorities to tackle air quality.

NO₂ is released when fuels such as car diesel or in central heating boilers are burned. There is evidence high levels of NO₂ can inflame the lungs and cause long term health issues.

Bad Air

The number of illegally high NO₂ readings per county in the east of England

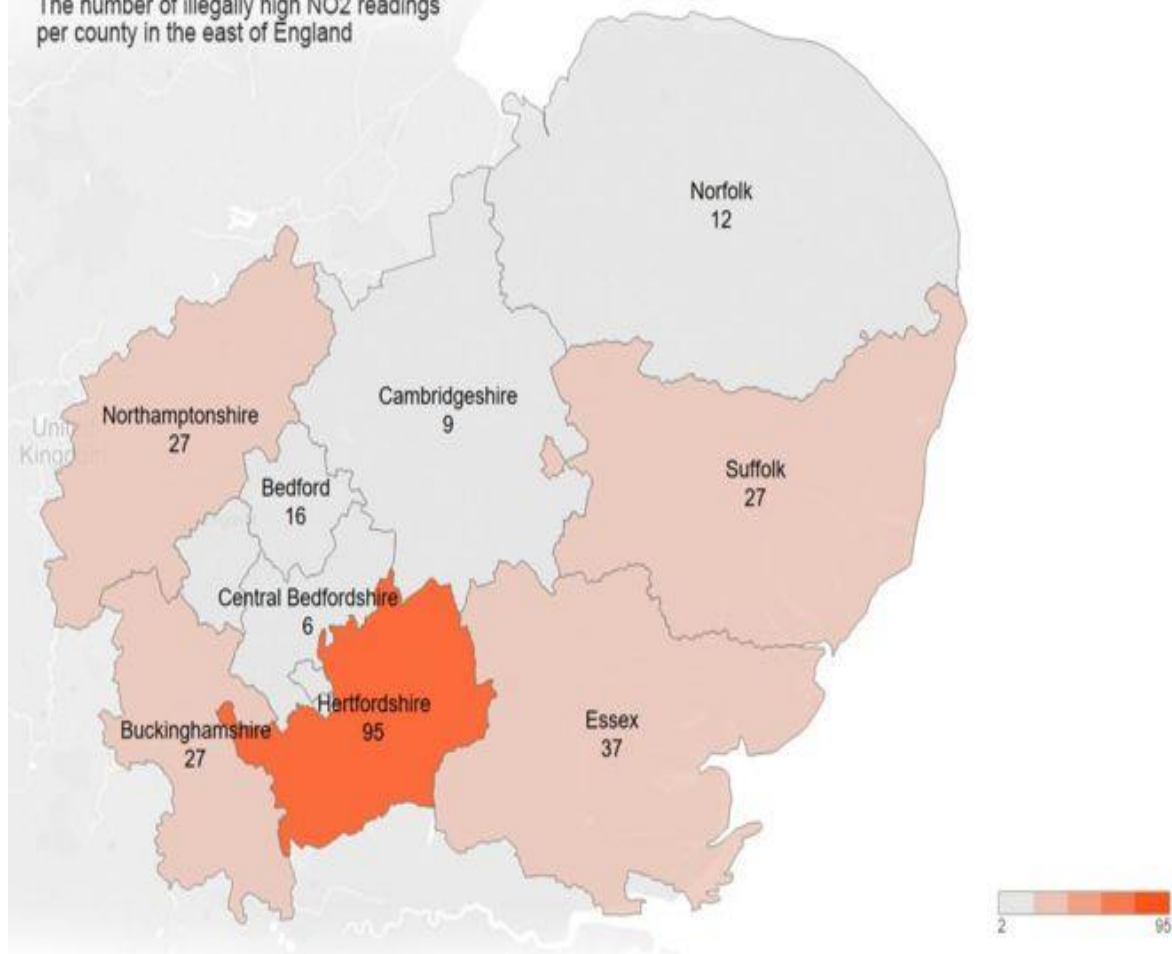


Image copyright Tableau Image caption the number of illegally high readings in the various counties of the east of England

The figures, although illegally high, are a far cry from some readings found in central London where the average annual level of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in Grosvenor Place, near the Queen's central London residence reached 152 µg/m³ in 2014.

Illegally high readings have also been frequently recorded in cities such as Leeds, Birmingham, Southampton and Derby

Alan Andrews, a lawyer with Client Earth, said they had been fighting a legal battle with the government for five years because "levels of air pollution in towns and cities across the UK are above legal levels".

'Create healthier air'

He said Client Earth was now planning High Court action against the government because its plans to deal with the problem were "just not good enough".

"Air pollution is one of the biggest public health issues we face as a society," he said.

"A plan which thinks it is okay for us to be breathing illegally high levels of pollution until 2020 to us isn't good enough and we're pretty confident judges looking at it will feel the same way."

A spokeswoman for the Department for Food and Rural Affairs, said: "Our plans clearly set out how we will improve the UK's air quality through a new programme of Clean Air Zones, which alongside national action and continued investment in clean technologies will create cleaner, healthier air.

11.19 Evidence gathered in a report published by NHDC identified congestion corridors that contribute heavily to Nitrogen Dioxide concentration levels. The report states: "*The main source of air pollution in the district is road traffic emissions from major roads notably the A1(M), A505 and A602. In terms of traffic congestion the most significant locations are associated with the A505 through Baldock and the A602 and A505 through Hitchin.*" The area east of the Three Moorhens Roundabout, on the A602 Stevenage Road in Hitchin is a designated Air Quality Management Area, where regular air quality monitoring is undertaken. More information can be found in the NHDC report, which is available online at:

http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/northherts-cms/files/USA_2015_North%20Hertfordshire%20final.pdf

There is a concern that the Parish of Wymondley currently has dangerous levels of NO₂ and CO₂, which need to be monitored at peak hours. Any development, which adds traffic to the parish, has the potential to cause rises in levels of NO₂ and CO₂ to illegal and health-damaging levels.

Parking issues

11.20 Due to the nature of the Parish being primarily residential there are no specific car parks for public use. Residential parking takes place on the already congested local roads or on off-street parking spaces on private property. 72% of parish survey respondents wanted improvements to traffic management, including issues such as parking facilities.

11.21 As highlighted in Section 12 of this Plan, there are clear concerns about the traffic and parking situation around Wymondley JMI School creating hazardous situations for pedestrians and vehicles, particularly at times when parents park outside the school when dropping off or collecting children. Such situations are well documented nationally as being dangerous to children, parents and residents in the school vicinity.

11.22 The road directly outside the School is already designated as a "No Parking" zone between the hours of 08.00 and 17.00 hours; and the entrance to the School is marked with yellow "Keep Clear" road markings which have little or no effect. With few alternatives for parents dropping off children by car, either on the way to work or travelling in from outside the Parish, control methods must be enforced or alternatives sought to prevent accidents from occurring.

11.23 Proposals for new housing development in the Parish could have a significant impact not only in terms of increased volume of traffic, but on the need for adequate parking provision. Depending on location, there may be specific implications, not least for parking and traffic management in the vicinity of Wymondley JMI. (Further consideration of these issues is given in Section 16 of this Plan.)

11.24 Provision of car parking in shared courts on new developments is generally unpopular with residents, who want their vehicles to be easily accessible, visible and less vulnerable to

crime. Sufficient spaces for residents' vehicles and visitor spaces are also deemed necessary, to avoid conflict over spaces and other parking difficulties.

11.25 Accessibility into new developments also needs to be properly considered. It is often overlooked, with roads being too narrow to accommodate parking for residents' vehicles and the need for service vehicle access, such as refuse and recycling collections, emergency services etc.

The way forward

11.26 Wymondley Parish residents have a right to expect the quiet enjoyment of their environment, and this remains a prime requisite of the Neighbourhood Plan. Our traffic management policies aim to help achieve this, together with a quieter, safer and healthier Parish.

Policy TM1 Roads:

Development proposals should, where appropriate, be supported by a Travel Plan assessing the impact on the Parish road infrastructure, including any mitigating measures. Development will be refused where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

12. Education

Aim: *to work positively and collaboratively with local planning authorities to help ensure that the educational needs of the Parish are met, principally that there are sufficient school places available to meet its needs; and to identify and resolve key issues relating to developments intended to create, expand or alter our schools – or impacting on existing schools.*

Background

12.1 One of the key principles underpinning our Neighbourhood Plan is that the children of the Parish represent the future of our community. It follows that their educational, health and social needs are of prime concern to us, and at the heart of our planning deliberations. The practical impact of any proposed developments within, or adjacent to the Parish, on those needs must be identified and closely examined if our children are to have a sustainable future within our community.

12.2 Wymondley Parish is currently served by four nearby junior schools, three of which are in neighbouring parishes. Children from our parish would be able to attend any of these schools subject, of course, to space requirements and other relevant criteria such as its Published Admission Number (PAN), i.e. the number of pupils in each year group that the admission authority has agreed will be admitted without causing problems for the school. These schools are:

A **Wymondley Junior Mixed and Infant (JMI) School**, situated in Siccut Road, Little Wymondley, Hitchin, SG4 7HN is our parish school: It is a mixed, all-ability school, currently with 109 pupils from 4 to 11 years, grouped according to age. It has a PAN of 15 children per year group, and is currently running at almost full capacity, so would be unable to accommodate a significant increase in demand for places – a fact which has already been recognised by NHDC. The school is situated in spacious grounds surrounded by hedges and trees. It has a large sports field, a hard play area, football, netball and rounders pitches; a nature reserve with a pond and a variety of gardens, including a set of raised beds where the children grow vegetables. Ofsted has recognised that “*pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in the school’s atmosphere of tolerance and harmony.*”

B **Graveley Primary School**, situated in Ashwell Common, Graveley, Hitchin, SG4 7LJ – is a small, 0.5 form entry village primary school, sited in our neighbouring small residential parish of Graveley. It has been at the heart of the community since 1874, and focuses on academic, moral, social and spiritual development of its pupils. It is currently operating at full capacity, with 110 pupils from 4 to 11 years, grouped according to age, with a PAN of 16 children per year group. Its catchment area has extended recently beyond Graveley village into the local area, including Great Ashby and Stevenage and its Old Town.

C **St Ippolyts Church of England Aided Primary School**, situated in Ashbrook Lane, Mill End, Hitchin, SG4 7PB – in St Ippolyts Parish: Founded in 1847, St Ippolyts Primary is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School enjoying strong links with St Ippolyts Church and within the Diocese of St Albans. Its principal aim is to provide the best possible education for each individual child, underpinned by Christian Values. It operates on the basis that each child

is unique, and seeks to provide academic, emotional, social and spiritual support for each one, working in partnership with parents and families. It wants its pupils to be spirited individuals who embrace challenge, think creatively, value achievement and strive to be the best they can be. Each pupil is encouraged to contribute actively to its community and to support others. The school currently has 153 pupils, from 5 to 11 years - grouped according to age, with a PAN of 20 children per year group. Its catchment area is essentially the St Ippolyts Parish boundary, although children from outside the Parish can attend. It is currently operating at full capacity and unable to admit any more children.

D **Kingshott School, Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7JX - a private preparatory school in St Ippolyts Parish:** Kingshott School was founded in 1931, initially as a small boarding school for boys in Oakfield House - a country house built in 1859. (It is believed that the school's name derives from King Henry VIII, as the area was part of his hunting ground.) In 1964 the last boarders left; and the first girls arrived in 1983. The school has expanded steadily over the years, and is now a thriving preparatory school with 408 pupils, which offers admission to any child from age 3 to 13 who the Headmaster believes will have a happy and fulfilling time at the school and therefore benefit from the type of education offered. The furthest south is currently Welwyn and furthest north is Ashwell, but pupils are mainly from Hitchin, Letchworth and Stevenage. Consequently, although outside our Parish, it is possible for children from the Parish to attend; and it currently has scope to take more children.

12.3 Attendance at these schools is determined by a series of admission rules applied by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)²⁵. Applications at Wymondley JMI School are all processed by the HCC Admissions Team. Children are submitted at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

12.4 The Parish does not have any nursery or secondary school facilities within walking distance. In this instance we have concentrated above on the schools close by, which do not truly reflect the needs of the Parish, or parishioners who are dependent upon school facilities available in local towns accessed by road.

The issues

12.5 A key issue for Wymondley Parish is undoubtedly the extent to which any future development will affect our children's ability to attend their parish school (or the nearby ones). Questions arise not only in terms of whether there will be sufficient places to meet demand, but whether children will be able to get to and from school safely, without inconvenience, and without greater risk to their health and safety from increased traffic or on-street parking – or from increased flood risk in the area.

12.6 Undeniably, major parking problems (and related traffic) issues already exist near our schools, principally arising from parents dropping-off and collecting children. (70% of our survey respondents indicated they wished to see general improvements to traffic management, i.e. vehicles, parking facilities etc.) Wymondley JMI School is not on the main road through the village, but there would undoubtedly be a knock-on effect if traffic volumes of through-traffic or on-street parking in the locality were increased. (Sections 11 and 16 of this Plan refer.)

²⁵ <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/admissions/links/admissionrules/>

12.7 Graveley School has an arrangement allowing parents to park in the car park of The Waggon and Horses P.H. opposite in the afternoons, as there is already insufficient parking space. St Ippolyts School has only six car parking spaces, which are insufficient for staff, let alone parents and visitors. Consequently, parking at peak times is such an issue that some parents arrive at the School an hour before they need to, in an attempt to obtain a parking space. Kingshott also has limited parking space in its grounds, so experiences similar parking and traffic problems. It is difficult to envisage how matters would be improved with any future increase in pupils.

12.8 Aside from those pupils who are driven to and from school, there are those who walk or use the local buses. It is vital for their health, safety and well-being that there is a convenient and reliable bus service; and safe and well-maintained footpaths for them to use en route to school. Such infrastructure and transport issues are covered generally in Section 10 of this Plan, but worthy of specific mention in relation to our schools, e.g. the lack of a complete footpath along the main road from Great Wymondley to Little Wymondley. This presents safety risks, particularly in the dark, and means some parents and children use cross-field footpaths to get safely to school – not always particularly practical in the winter months.

12.9 Wymondley JMI School is within walking distance for those pupils who live in Little Wymondley, (and possibly Great Wymondley, subject to the footpath issues mentioned above). It is also on (or near to) the Hitchin to Stevenage bus routes through Little Wymondley. Graveley School is similarly on a bus route.

12.10 Neither St Ippolyts nor Kingshott Schools are on a direct bus route, and the nearby roads are not child-friendly, so there are accompanying safety risks to pupils from both schools. The nearest bus route to St Ippolyts is on London Road, some 200 yards away; and Kingshott is on the A602, so most pupils arrive by car, although some walk. The pathways near St Ippolyts are not deemed wide enough for safe usage, thus presenting risks to safety to those using them. Any increased volumes of traffic resulting from development of the surrounding area are unlikely to improve matters.

12.11 Our recent enquiries indicate that the schools do not currently have direct problems with flooding.

12.12 The educational needs of the Parish must be met, and future needs will necessitate expansion or alteration of our existing schools, or creation of new schools to cope with an increased population. To aid learning, it is vital that our school buildings are conveniently located, (to reduce travel and the effects of it); are suitably equipped with modern technology; and provide healthy and environmentally friendly surroundings to support pupils' mental and physical well-being.

12.13 At the present time, no new schools are planned to open in North and East Herts in 2016 and 2017.²⁶ Recent enquiries of the four schools mentioned above indicate that consideration has not yet been given to expansion on current sites to accommodate any future demand arising from future development.

12.14 As stated at paragraph 12.2A above, Wymondley JMI School is the only school falling within our parish – and therefore the only one falling within the scope of our Neighbourhood

²⁶<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/admissions/links/admissionrules/Admarr1617/newschools/>

Plan. An Ofsted inspection of the School was carried out on the 29th and 30th November 2012 and the previously “Satisfactory” report was raised to “Good” during this inspection. It is also important to note that, in relation to “behaviour and safety of pupils” this school was found to be “Outstanding”. It would be a concern of the school governors and management team, (as well as of parents), that any form of expansion may create pressures affecting standards.

12.15 Operating almost at full capacity, and at the limit for its current buildings, there is no doubt that any expansion to the population of the Parish – in particular the villages of Little and Great Wymondley would require investment in the School.

12.16 HCC has already recognised that the number of additional local infant and junior age children that could potentially reside in NHDC’s proposed WY1 development south of Little Wymondley could not be accommodated at the village school.²⁷ Furthermore, Wymondley JMI School does not have existing development potential unless additional land is acquired or detached playing fields can be identified. Potentially, the School would need to be relocated – which would raise other issues for the Parish children.

12.17 Related issues arise in relation to secondary school children, whose ability to attend schools in Hitchin would seemingly be dependent on successful development expansion in South West Hitchin and the creation of two new secondary schools, as existing Hitchin schools would not have sufficient capacity to accommodate them.

12.18 Increased need for youth and library facilities would also need to be taken into account, and any significant residential development within the Parish is likely to generate an increase for additional services.

12.19 Other sections of this Plan provide more detailed coverage of our conclusions on issues highlighted here.

²⁷http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/northherts-cms/files/34_wymondley_ho_reps_as_at_28062013-3.pdf

13. Telecommunications and Broadband

Aim: *to ensure the Parish has a high quality communications infrastructure, through on-going liaison with relevant telecommunications and broadband providers.*

Introduction

13.1 For individuals and businesses alike, communication is one of the most important aspects of day-to-day life, and global adoption of telecommunications technology has impacted tremendously on society – influencing the way we live our life and conduct our business.

13.2 Long distance communication has been around for centuries, but we have moved on considerably from the eras of smoke signals, the telegraph and telephoning via a cable laid beneath the ocean. Satellite technology has released communications from the wired format, and Wi-Fi and 4G technologies are commonplace everywhere in the western world.

13.3 With the help of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) it is now possible to conduct virtually every aspect of business and domestic life from home. We depend routinely on e-mail, Internet, mobile phones and voice-mail access and, in some cases, functionality allowing remote control of home appliances. For most people, therefore, reliable and effective telephone and broadband services are an essential part of life. In relation to broadband, speed is of particular importance.

13.4 Broadband is inextricably linked to the emergence of greater Internet functionality, so its availability (or the lack of it), is a major factor in our ability to develop our local and national economy; to communicate with friends, family and business associates; and to seek and obtain information to educate ourselves

13.5 The advantages of a high-quality broadband service are many and varied:

- Support home working;
- improve access to Public Sector services
- support online learning and access to Cloud based facilities
- help us to stay in touch and maintain independence;
- support simultaneous use of smart phones, tablets, PC's and TV's;
- enable streaming of films and TV shows in seconds; and
- enable online games play.

Telecommunication and Broadband provision for Wymondley Parish

13.6 Wymondley Parish is served by two Telephone exchanges: Stevenage (01438) and Hitchin (01462). By following this link, <http://www.connectedcounties.org/home> and entering their postcode, residents can establish if fibre broadband is currently available to their property - and then make the necessary arrangements with their service provider to get connected.

13.7 As things stand at the moment, telecommunications and broadband services in the Parish fall somewhat short of state of the art. Cable TV is unavailable, and access to broadband Wi-Fi

services is therefore dependent on telephone landlines. Service outage difficulties often arise, due to flood damage to the BT lines, and there are also mobile phone signal problems, so telecommunications can be a somewhat haphazard affair.

13.8 Whilst the overall delivery is considered to be patchy throughout the Parish, many properties can currently receive high-speed fibre broadband of 75.28 Mbps. However, there is general dissatisfaction with the telecommunications and broadband services, which was demonstrated by 66% of our survey respondents indicating that they would like to see improvements to the telecommunications network, principally to achieve faster broadband – which would make it easier to gain the advantages listed at paragraph 13.5 above.

Future telecommunication and broadband service improvements

13.9 There are several telecommunication companies based in Hertfordshire that advertise an ability to provide fast speed Broadband services to Wymondley Parish. Residents believe that provision of their communication services can be further improved and, to this end, the WPNPF has established that responsibility for ensuring such improvements currently rests with the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

13.10 Adapting and improving Telecommunication facilities across Hertfordshire is an obvious means of establishing and maintaining the area's sustainable growth. Wymondley Parish wishes to benefit from such improvements, so that our local businesses, as well as local residents, are able to use them to their own advantage.

13.11 Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), which is part of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, is responsible for delivering superfast broadband and better mobile connectivity to the nation. In Hertfordshire the Connected Counties programme is targeted with making fibre broadband available to over 90% of homes and businesses in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire by April 2016 – which equates to approximately 734,500 premises in total, (682,000 from BT's commercial deployments and 52,500 as a result of the Connected Counties programme).

13.12 The programme is being funded jointly by: Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire County Councils, the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) for each county, BT and BDUK. Of the total contract valued at £18m, HCC has invested £5.08m. Herts LEP has invested £0.5m -to bring superfast broadband to key Business Parks (i.e. Maylands, Centennial and Gunnels Wood).

13.13 The programme aims to ensure that everyone in the two counties has access to a minimum of 2 Mbps broadband speeds (i.e. fast enough to watch BBC iPlayer). Herts LEP advises that 98% Broadband coverage is intended by 2018 and that many rural areas already receive the service following rollout of a previous similar Government scheme.

Importance of Telecommunication and Broadband for Little Wymondley

13.14 An area can have many advantages and an excellent environment, but cannot be considered well developed until, and unless, the operability of its telecommunications is also excellent. This is particularly important in a rural community, to facilitate access to services, which are not directly available in the neighbourhood, for example healthcare, supermarkets, retail outlets etc.; and also to maintain contact with friends and family who may live further afield.

13.15 A fast, efficient and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic and social development, as well as impacting on public safety, education, social cohesion and health care. Without it certain sections of the community, for example those who are unable to drive, have a disability, or are elderly or less mobile, may be disproportionately affected; and residents who work from home, and businesses in the Parish may be similarly disadvantaged.

13.16 We currently have a vibrant and cohesive local community in the Parish, and wish to sustain this for the future. To help us achieve this, and to improve quality of life and advancement of our neighbourhood, improvements must be made to the standard, extent and efficiency of our communications infrastructure.

14. Supporting Local Business and Employment

Aim: to encourage rural economic growth and employment, through support of business expansion and development which is appropriate and in keeping with the Parish's intrinsic character and environment.

Introduction

14.1 Located between the triangle of three large towns, (Stevenage, Letchworth and Hitchin), Wymondley Parish provides a unique and idyllic setting for numerous residential and commercial businesses. It combines easy access to and from arterial routes with the benefits of working in a rural village setting.

Business diversity

14.2 The Parish is populated with businesses which are diverse in nature. Similarly, the proportion of those people who are economically active and work from home covers a varied cross-section of skill sets, with approximately 40 businesses active within the Parish.

14.3 The Office of National Statistics (ONS) reported that, in the 2011 Census, of the recorded 975 residents in our neighbourhood catchment area, 133 people were self-employed. That equates to 13.6% of the total residents.

14.4 Whilst resident businesses provide employment in areas such as those set out below, they rarely employ large numbers of local residents and we seek to encourage this where we can:

- Farming
- Landscaping
- Arboriculture
- National grid
- Petro chemical
- Leisure and hospitality
- Nursing Home
- Used car Sales
- Wedding Venues (including churches)
- Equestrian

14.5 A harmonious balance presently exists between achieving economic prosperity for our resident businesses and preserving the rural character of our villages, and it is imperative to the community that this is maintained. The impact of any physical expansion of business premises is therefore a key factor in our consideration of any development proposals.

The hub of our community

14.6 Wymondley Parish has several public houses providing food, local ales and a meeting point for customers from near and far. Little Wymondley has the benefit of the newly opened Needham House Hotel, a facility which provides fine dining, accommodation and a new conference centre - to name but a few of its services. Similar facilities can also be found elsewhere, for example at Redcoats Farmhouse Hotel and Wymondley Priory Barn.

14.7 In more rural areas, when stand-alone post offices and village shops have become unviable, local pubs have often diversified to offer those additional services to the community. Many years ago, in recognition of this and other benefits of wider involvement with the local community, Adnam's Brewery coined the phrase "*The Pub is the Hub*". As the pub industry started to decline in popularity, the idea was that public houses became the "Hub" of the community – acting as a meeting place where people of all ages and abilities could enjoy a variety of refreshments, engage in recreational activities and share their experiences. This informal social and business networking has a positive impact not only on the publican's business, but also generates business (and other) opportunities for local tradesmen and residents, and is beneficial to the community's general well-being and socio-economic health.

14.8 We are fortunate that our parish hostelries play an active part in community life, not only as described above, but through charitable fund raising and practical support of village Fun Days etc. (Recent fund-raising examples are the acquisition of a defibrillator, (currently kept at the Plume of Feathers in Little Wymondley), and a CPR training pack for Wymondley JMI School.) We do indeed view our public houses as the hub of our community, and regard their continued existence as an important influence on the quality of life in a rural parish – from both a social and economic perspective.

Keeping Businesses local

14.9 In recent years, consumers have increasingly been encouraged to move away from large, impersonal "big-box" retailers, to support smaller and more local businesses in their own towns and villages. Such businesses include local farmers, craftsmen, mobile grocers, fish mongers and other product providers, with items made and produced locally and sold on a small scale.

14.10 By supporting our local businesses, both within the Parish and in neighbouring towns, we enjoy a number of direct and indirect benefits such as greater confidence in the origins and quality of the products; smaller carbon footprint; and an improved local economy, leading to increased local investment and better facilities. There are also other tangible benefits to be gained. Aside from convenience, availability of unique products unavailable in larger chain-stores, and the satisfaction of indirectly helping to make our communities better places in which to live, we can benefit from:

- Improved health: through access to fresh, locally-sourced, organic and free-range produce. (Such produce also benefits the environment, live-stock and natural flora and fauna);
- Improved local economy: as significantly more locally-spent money stays in the community. Local business owners often have incentive to support other local

businesses, for both business and personal reasons, whereas chains tend to have corporate suppliers and less opportunity (or interest) in buying locally;

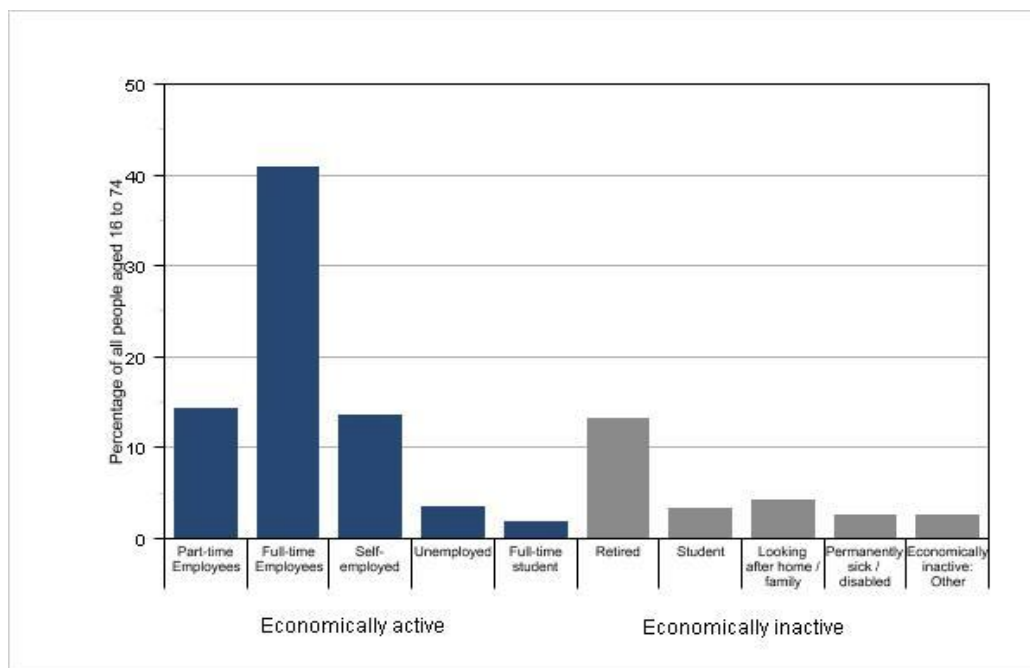
- Familiarity breeding content, (as opposed to contempt): as local business owners and staff are generally part of the community and therefore often keener to provide a better, more personalised service and quickly resolve any issues. Personally knowing who you are dealing with creates connections and personal investment, resulting in supplier and consumer being prepared to go that extra mile (literally) to keep their customers satisfied or support a particular business;
- Sustaining the unique character of our community: because local businesses help give a community its individual flavour and contribute to its character. Most towns across the UK have similar chain restaurants, grocery and department stores and are suffering an identity crisis. By supporting our unique local businesses instead of national chains we help to ensure that the individuality of our community's character is sustained; so
- Use it or lose it: for the reasons given above, the community genuinely cares when a local business does well, and mourns its loss; and such businesses often contribute to the life of the community through donations, sponsorship and involvement. In more rural areas, local businesses can be a vital part of life, but they need to be supported to survive.

14.11 As well as the types of resident businesses mentioned at paragraph 14.4 above, a good network of self-employed tradesmen exists within the Parish; and we are fortunate that neighbouring towns such as Hitchin, Letchworth, Baldock and Stevenage provide us with a wide range of local shops and businesses, as well as national chain stores. Hitchin Market, for example, is well known throughout the county and well supported locally - as are the regular Farmers/Food Markets and local butchers and fishmongers, (including mobile businesses serving our Parish).

Employment in our parish

14.12 Wymondley Parish, as reported by the 2011 Census, provides statistical data regarding the type of employment held within our community²⁸. (See graph below.)

Economic activity in your neighbourhood, March 2011



14.13 Small businesses can impact on the local community by employing local people in order to meet the market demand for goods and services; and this is certainly the case within our parish. Although 60% of employed parishioners hold senior and administrative jobs, there is also scope (particularly through local networking) for further such employment within the community and surrounding area, for example through contracting of self-employed workers.

14.14 New employment opportunities provide chances for previously unemployed or under-employed workers to increase take home pay and better meet their financial obligations. Increased employee earnings lead to a higher rate of consumer spending which, in turn, benefits other businesses which depend on consumer sales to stay open and pay vendors. A small business hiring additional employees can achieve these effects on a small scale and increase the money circulating in the marketplace, which leads to a healthier overall local economy and allows more businesses to thrive.

Summary

14.15 We believe that our community and businesses continuing to work together is key to the survival of the Parish in its current form.

14.16 We must nevertheless bear in mind the intrinsic rural nature and historic character of the Parish, and the need to ensure that any physical expansion of those businesses does not detract

²⁸<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/NeighbourhoodProfile.do?a=7&b=6275182&c=SG4+7HY&g=6433884&i=1001x1012&j=6305522&m=1&p=1&q=1&r=0&s=1456211492206&enc=1&tab=4&inWales=false>

from its key features and further urbanise it. (Issues relating to this are covered in more depth in Sections 6 and 7 of this Plan.)

Policy SLBE1 Business Development:

Any proposed business development within Wymondley Parish should be appropriate in terms of location, scale and type; in keeping with the character and environment of our parish.

14.17 Due to the surrounding Green Belt, and the associated development prohibitions, there are no justifiable opportunities for development of additional business premises outside of Little Wymondley. With limited space within Little Wymondley, expansion of the Parish's existing businesses, (or development of additional businesses), would therefore necessitate a move to a larger or more suitable location within existing industrial sites in nearby towns, or consider alternatives.

15. Social Cohesion and Well-being

Aim: to improve quality of life, social cohesion and well-being for our community, through positive action to retain local services and community amenities and, where suitable opportunities arise, improve them to meet parishioners' needs.

Introduction

15.1 The NPPF emphasises the role of neighbourhood planning in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities.²⁹ Section 8 of the NPPF, in particular, provides that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve places which promote opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through strong neighbourhood centres which bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity; and safe and accessible environments and developments which do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion – and which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.

15.2 The development of this Plan has been driven by the desire to enrich the overall quality of life and well-being of the people who live and work in Wymondley Parish; and of visitors. The policies it contains have therefore been developed with the overarching aim of protecting and enhancing the aspects of parish life which are fundamentally valuable to people, and addressing those which detrimentally affect their quality of life or threaten to undermine our community.

15.3 This particular section of the Plan covers some of the features of life in the Parish that encourage social cohesion, and what could be done in future to offer further opportunities for social interaction and to help create a healthy, inclusive community.

Improving health, well-being and social cohesion

15.4 Wymondley is a relatively small, but very busy, community whose members are involved in a varied mix of recreational activities and interests. As a rural Parish, we are fortunate to have easy access to the surrounding countryside, which enables parishioners and visitors alike to enjoy the benefits it brings in terms of associated leisure activities, not least their positive impact on fitness levels and well-being.

15.5 Field sports such as shooting and ferreting occur in and around the Parish and, (as mentioned in Section 6 of this Plan), our natural environment is also home to several rare and protected species of flora and fauna, which encourages more benevolent activities involving wildlife such as botany, bird watching and butterfly spotting. (Several parishioners are actively involved in the Herts Natural History Society and have recorded local sightings of protected species such as polecats, pipistrelle bats and red kites.)

15.6 The Parish chapel/churches actively encourage community interaction. In addition to their religious services, they offer a variety of secular opportunities for community engagement, such as plant sales, bring and buy events, bell-ringing, lunch, gardening and other clubs; and various

²⁹ <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/delivering-sustainable-development/8-promoting-healthy-communities/>

meetings. There is also an annual Christmas Nativity Procession from Wymondley JMI School to St Mary the Virgin in Little Wymondley, via the Baptist Chapel, which incorporates carol singing at various points en route, a nativity scene at the Buck's Head, ending with a carol service at St Mary's.

15.7 As mentioned in Section 14 of this Plan, the public houses in the Parish, (most of which are dog-friendly), are the hub of our community and undoubtedly play a key role in encouraging community cohesion in a variety of ways.

15.8 Sporting activities are a key feature of life in the Parish, and Petanque is a sport that is very popular with all age groups. Our teams have been very successful at local and national level, and have produced international players. The Plume of Feathers in Little Wymondley actively supports three Petanque teams and the Parish's football team via sponsorship and post-match refreshments; together with a darts team. (A "Past v Present" charity football match is currently being planned.)

15.9 The Bucks Head hosts further Petanque teams; and is the regular venue for meetings of a number of motorcycle and classic car owners' clubs.

15.10 Aside from sport related activities, the public houses actively encourage and participate in community activities, both recreational and social, (as do the churches/chapel). They and the other dining establishments in the Parish offer a wide range of dining options, from bar snacks and set lunch menus to wild food gourmet nights.

15.11 There are regular beer festivals and themed nights throughout the year; and they also support local singers/bands, (and traditional entertainers such as Morris dancers), by regularly providing buskers' evenings, gigs and a warm welcome.

Retaining and improving local services and community amenities

15.12 The generous and welcoming community spirit within the Wymondley Parish is supported and nurtured by regular, on-going social and recreational activities, which are inclusive by nature to parishioners and visitors alike. These make full use of our existing parish amenities, which include allotments and other green spaces (see Section 9). Great Wymondley comprises a church, village hall, recreation field with children's play area and space for sports area; and the Green Man public house. In Little Wymondley there is a school, church, chapel, non-food shop, tennis courts, Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), recreation field, children's play area and two public houses – the Buck's Head and Plume of Feathers.

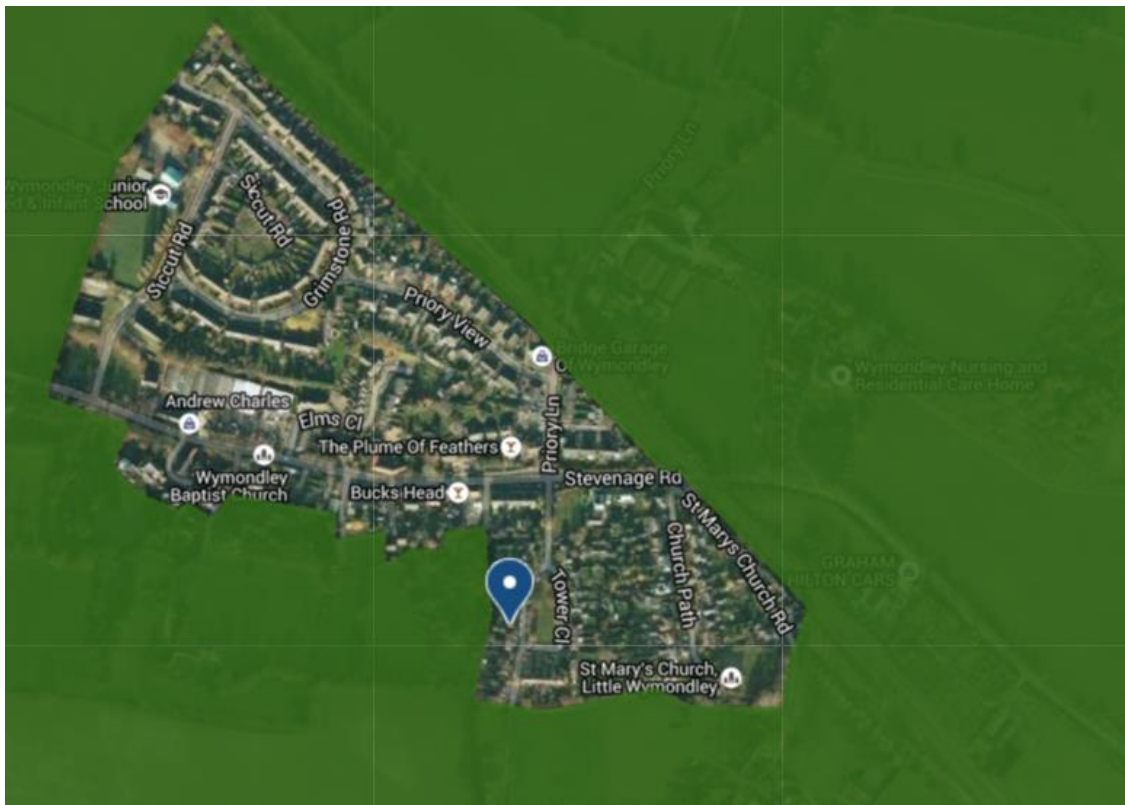
15.13 The following maps give an overview of the Parish settlements and an indication of their amenities:



Map of Great Wymondley, showing the Green Man P.H. (The village hall is on the left opposite the cottages. The recreation ground is in the top right hand corner.)

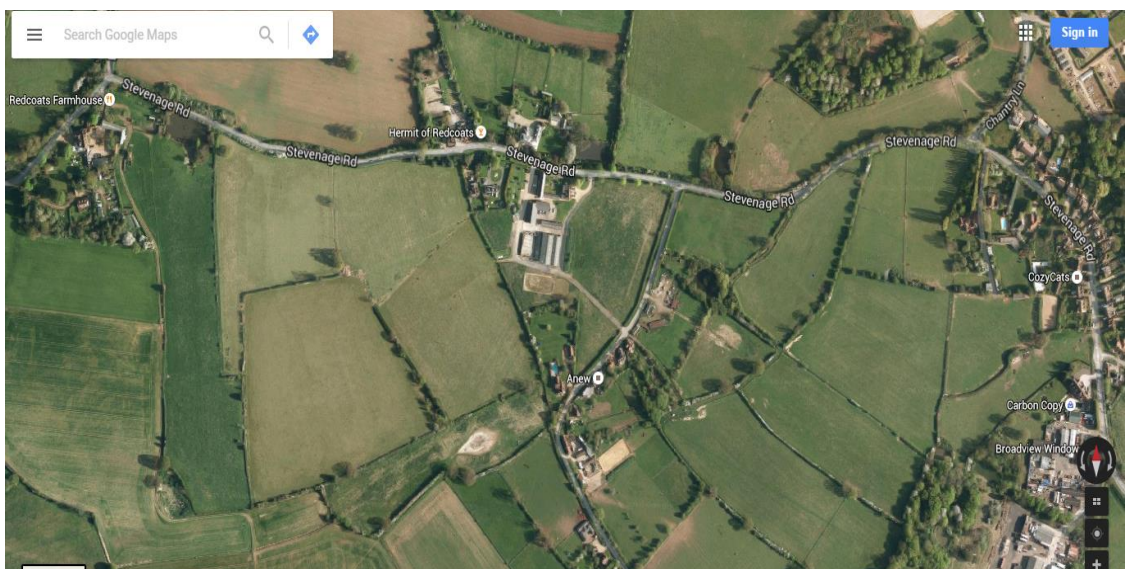


Map of Great Wymondley, showing the Green Man P.H., Wymondley Woods and the Scout Hut



Little Wymondley shown within the Green Belt, and with amenities indicated

15.14 Titmore Green has the Hermit of Redcoats public house; and Redcoats Green contains the Redcoats Farmhouse Hotel and restaurant. Other hotels in the vicinity include the Needham House Hotel (a conference and wedding venue, with brasserie, gymnasium and spa) in Little Wymondley; and The Priory Barn, also in Little Wymondley, which is a popular and picturesque celebratory venue for weddings etc.



Map showing the Parish hamlets and their amenities

15.15 The NPPF promotes the retention and development in villages of local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings,

public houses and places of worship. In devising our Neighbourhood Plan we have specifically explored possibilities for increasing amenities to compliment and expand existing parish activities, and for ensuring that current amenities are protected against the unintended consequences of proposals put forward in relation to other major issues. We do not wish to see the fabric of the community destroyed by inappropriate, large-scale developments, which negatively impact on integration and community cohesion.

15.16 Sadly, the Parish has lost some of its amenities over the years, i.e. a village shop, sub-Post Office and two petrol stations, mainly due to the arrival of the Sainsbury's store at nearby Corey's Mill. We have tentatively considered the potential for re-instating a village shop, however, as this has proved to be financially unviable in the past, further work needs to be done to establish demand and discover a suitable/available location.

15.17 As far as formal community centres are concerned, although facilities at the Baptist Chapel, School and public houses in Little Wymondley are utilised for community activities and meetings, there is only one purpose built village hall in the Parish. Situated in Great Wymondley, it can be hired for functions and is used by the community for social gatherings such as coffee morning's, children's parties etc. The Ramrugge Clog Morris dancers and local table tennis club also meet there.

15.18 Feedback from our survey results indicated a demand for a similar facility in Little Wymondley, to help increase social cohesion. As with the village shop, exploratory work needs to be undertaken in relation to demand and potential location.

15.19 Gardening is a keen interest of many of our parishioners, confirmed by the existence of a gardening club, and the fact that long-standing garden plots (allotments) in both Great and Little Wymondley are regularly and enthusiastically used - with plot holders forming their own informal community, based on common interest and applying to the National Allotment Society (National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Ltd.) for associate membership. We wish to secure these amenities permanently for residents, and will take steps to do so. (See Section 9 for further details, and related policies.)

Encouraging active and continual use of public areas

15.20 It is clear from the responses to our parish survey, that our green spaces and recreational facilities are an essential factor in improving the health and well-being of the Parish, and enabling social cohesion. We value them, along with our other existing amenities, and want to ensure they are maintained and upgraded where possible, to encourage their greater and continuing use.

15.21 Great and Little Wymondley host annual village gatherings that are well attended by local residents and by people from the neighbouring towns. The Great Wymondley Fete (which has run for over 40 years) is held on Church Green; and the Little Wymondley Fun Day is held on the Sicut Road green. In recent years, the latter green was enhanced by the addition of a boat made from recycled material, for use as a children's play area; and a nearby bench.

15.22 Both Great and Little Wymondley have playing fields for use by the community. Additionally, Wymondley Woods is a popular exercise and recreation spot for families, dog walkers, ramblers etc; and there is also a Scout Camp there. Other parish green spaces,

footpaths, bridleways and local lanes are similarly used by cyclists, runners and dog walkers, as well as a number of walkers/ ramblers groups, and we are keen to support measures that will encourage greater use of these “green routes” to improve movement and interaction between Parish settlements. (Sections 9 and 10 of this Plan cover related issues.)

15.23 We maintain, and progressively enhance, the recreational facilities in Wymondley Parish, so that they remain fit for purpose and meet parishioners’ requirements. Most recently, as part of that process, a new purpose-built changing facility was built on the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field in 2015, for use by local football teams and officials – replacing the container that had previously been utilised. (There are two football pitches with team's playing on Saturday, and the possibility of a Sunday team being explored.) Consideration is also being given to re-establishing the Great Wymondley cricket pitch on the recreation ground there.

15.24 The Little Wymondley playing fields also provide a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), suitable for adults or older children to play five-a-side football or basketball. There are adjacent tennis courts, which Wymondley Tennis Club leases from the Parish Council; and a young children’s playground equipped with swings, slide, climbing frame etc. (the land having been bequeathed to the village for use by its children).

15.25 When asked whether they would like to see additional or improved recreation areas for the children of the Parish, 58% of our survey respondents said they would. We have therefore considered how best to satisfy that demand, and our proposals for additional facilities are outlined in Section 16, together with the rationale behind them.

16. Housing and Other Development

Aim: to promote sustainable development in our Parish, by ensuring any necessary development is well-designed and located appropriately, i.e. where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of our community; reflect the identity of our parish; and respond to its local character and history. Also, through consideration of demographic trends and community needs, and by identifying possible “deliverable”³⁰ sites within the Parish, we will strive to ensure that any proposed housing is affordable and of a suitable size, type, tenure and range for the community.

Introduction

16.1 We recognise that, in order to help meet the needs of our Parish, consideration must be given to future housing development. This presents us with a significant challenge, given the location and character of the Parish and the need for us to represent the wishes of the parishioners accurately. In rising to that challenge we have taken a pragmatic approach, concluding that to safeguard best what is important to parishioners, we have to consider the unpalatable prospect of development on Green Belt land within and adjacent to the Parish.

16.2 However, for the reasons cited in Section 6, (and in line with the Government Green Belt policy), we have focused on possibilities for affordable housing and other facilities through limited infilling or partial redevelopment of brown-field sites; and re-use of existing permanent buildings on Green Belt land. (Green Belt issues are specifically covered in Section 7 of this Plan.)

16.3 A conservation area covers most of Great Wymondley village, and this has so far preserved and protected its character from inappropriate development – something we would wish to continue, and which has therefore been a key factor when considering potential development sites within the Parish.

16.4 Looking more broadly at the Parish: we are fortunate to have a wide variety of features illustrating its development through the ages, and we believe it is important to protect our heritage for the benefit of current and future generations. We therefore aim to ensure that any proposed development would not have a detrimental effect on them. As Section 6 of this Plan presents a broader picture of the particular historical and archaeological features of our parish heritage – and also deals with identified biodiversity and environmental issues, they are not covered here.

Community population and housing need

16.5 For the purposes of this Plan we have generally used demographic data taken from the 2011 census, that being the most recent available. (See Annex 8). At the time of the 2011 census, the parish had 480 dwellings, and a population of 1,153.³¹

³⁰ In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), “deliverable” means available now, offering a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable. For further details see page 12 of the NPPF.

³¹ <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/NeighbourhoodSummary.do?a=7&b=6275182&c=SG4+7HY&g=454879&i=1001x1012x1013&j=6305522&m=1&p=4&q=1&r=0&s=1456044632328&enc=1&tab=1&inWales=false>

16.6 With regard to the demographic of the Parish population, the 2011 census for North Hertfordshire indicates approximately 32% of the population is between the ages of 16-40; 34% between the ages of 40 and 59; and 33% 60+. We believe Wymondley Parish's current age demographic leans more heavily towards the older end of the age scale.

16.7 We estimate that approximately 30% of Parish housing is public sector, with the remainder privately owned dwellings, some of which are rented. There is a good mix of housing types - with good numbers of 2 and 3 bedroom family houses; and approximately 20% of the existing stock being 1 or 2 bed flats or starter homes, suitable for younger people. There are around ten public sector retirement bungalows in the Parish, (plus other privately owned bungalows), amounting to an estimated 6.5% of our housing stock. The remainder is made up of substantially larger properties and character properties.

16.8 Assuming that the Parish population concurs with national demographic trends, this indicates a potential shortfall in suitable accommodation for older parishioners. We believe that any plan to build new dwellings should reflect the needs of the community, and seek to address the current imbalance in terms of property type and tenure. A mix of affordable public and private sector retirement bungalows would therefore seem to be ideal, although more work may need to be done to confirm this.

16.9 With reference to the emerging North Hertfordshire District Council's Emerging Local Plan and the site allocation of WY1 within it, we have not seen any evidence that the housing needs of the Parish or Little Wymondley justify the number of homes proposed, which effectively doubles the number of dwellings within the Village of Little Wymondley.

We have not made provision for this site within our plan because our authority does not extend to converting Green Belt, nor are we able to establish the very necessary, "exceptional circumstances", to support its amendment from its Green Belt status.

The impact of the proposed site are as follows: The proposed site WY1 at Bungalow Farm is currently protected by Green Belt, which also acts to deter coalescence of Hitchin with Stevenage. The provision of this Green Belt area also provides respite from illegal Air Quality levels created by current levels of traffic in the area, particularly along the A1M and A602 (adjacent to site WY1) and the mainline rail link, which have been established at various points around the Parish.

These two aspects; the number of homes proposed, and the building on the Green Belt were identified at the beginning of our Neighbourhood plan creation, via our consultation with the residents of the Parish, where it was established that 92% of respondents were against building on the Green Belt and 58% were in favour of building up to 50 homes only.

The size and positioning of site WY1 make it impossible to sustainably support the development. The private car being the preferred and only practical mode of transport for residents to access the shopping centres and rail stations in Stevenage and Hitchin, due to the lack of green infrastructure and public transport links.

The village of Little Wymondley regularly suffers flooding events along the high street resulting from poor drainage and surface water run-off. This event happens annually to some degree and

always affects the roundabout at the junction of Stevenage Road and Blakemore End Road, the point where the proposed new development at WY1 emerges into the road network. Hertfordshire County Council have established an estimated cost approaching £4 million to resolve the existing issue.

It is believed that the proposed development at WY1, being placed on higher ground, will support an increased risk of flooding onto the areas already identified by the Environment Agency as categorised at Flood Risk 3a, the highest level applicable.

The increase in vehicular movements in and around the parish created by the additional population of motor vehicles as a result of the development of site WY1 would also detrimentally impact air quality in the locality, particularly around the areas already identified as currently in breach of the EU safe levels for pollutants.

As a consequence of these issues affecting many of our resident's health, enjoyment of their homes, and quality of life, there is a large vocal opinion in objection to this proposed development on site WY1.

Policy HOD1 Wymondley Parish Housing Needs:

In considering housing proposals impacting on the Parish we will consider demographic trends and community needs, and work with stakeholders to ensure that any housing delivered meets community needs in terms of affordability, type, tenure and range.

Potential development options

16.10 Responses to our survey, and discussions at local meetings on the issue, indicated a reluctant acceptance of future development, with many respondents commenting that they did not want to see any development at all. When asked how many homes they felt it would be proportionate and reasonable to build, 76% of respondents took the view that 50 or less was the appropriate number, (this being the minimum option offered for people to choose).

16.11 The overwhelming feeling in the Parish is that any development must be proportionate to the size and character of the Parish; appropriate in terms of type and location; suitable for parishioners; and affordable and available to them. Essentially, no more than 50 dwellings of the right type, in the right place, at the right price.

Policy HOD 2 Design:

All developments should be well-designed and located appropriately, i.e. where they will enhance or maintain the vitality of our community; reflect the identity of our parish; and respond to our local character and history.

16.12 Opinions voiced at the Parish public meeting held on 26th October 2015, (where the results of our parish survey were made public to the residents of the Parish), were robustly against any suggestion that 300 (or more) dwellings would be a proportionate or reasonable number to add to the Parish. Such numbers, particularly given the locations currently proposed by our accountable and neighbouring councils would be wholly disproportionate to the existing settlements. Aside from the fact that they fly in the face of Government Green Belt policy, they

would undoubtedly have a detrimental effect not only on the rural environment and intrinsic character of the Parish, but on its social and economic well-being and the quality of its parishioners' lives. Crucially, a number of pre-existing environmental and infrastructure problems, (covered elsewhere in this Plan), would be exacerbated.

16.13 The above figures cannot be viewed in isolation. They must be considered as part of the bigger picture, i.e. our overall objective of sustainably meeting the needs of our parish, while seeking to preserve its rural environment and intrinsic character. The clearest mandate (92% in favour) arising from our survey was that the existing Green Belt, (which prevents our villages being subsumed into Stevenage or Hitchin via their urban sprawl), should be preserved.

16.14 Having taken this and the Green Belt requirements into account, together with the principles of sustainable development and the relevant over-arching factors specific to the Parish, we identified and considered potential development options within the Parish – dividing them into the following categories:

- a) Green Belt – areas for consideration to convert existing buildings (brown-field sites) into dwellings;
- b) Non-Green Belt – areas for consideration to convert business units into dwellings;
- c) Non-Green Belt – areas for consideration for additional parking facilities; and
- d) Non-Green Belt – areas for consideration for additional children's play areas.

Green Belt – areas for consideration to convert existing buildings (brown-field sites) into dwellings

16.15 We believe there are several agricultural buildings on various Green Belt sites within the Parish, which are open to possible conversion to dwellings if they are classed as brown-field sites. The photographs below show three sites which have so far been identified, namely:

- a) Existing units near the allotments on Stevenage Road;
- b) Farm buildings on Wymondley Hall Farm; and
- c) Redcoats Farmhouse – where planning permission has already been granted for conversion of semi-derelict barns to residential accommodation. These barns are currently for sale with the Planning Permission.



Units on Stevenage Road, near the Allotments.



Wymondley Hall Farm



Redcoats Farmhouse

16.16 The relevant landowners will be specifically consulted on this draft Neighbourhood Plan, in line with our statutory obligations. Any development proposals for these sites will be considered in the usual way, in the light of relevant Government and other policies – including those contained in this Plan.

Non-Green Belt – areas for consideration to convert business units into dwellings

16.17 We considered the possibility of converting existing business units in Elms Yard, (and two other small business premises in Priory Lane), Little Wymondley into dwellings. However, given the arguments in favour of supporting local business and employment, (see Section 14 of this Plan), we did not feel it was appropriate to suggest redevelopment of established and thriving local businesses.

16.18 Additionally, while the two adjacent business sites in Priory Lane, (located near an existing residential area) may be suitable for a small number of dwellings with off-street parking, the undoubted flood risk may render them unsuitable, unless adequate control measures are in place to prevent further such incidences.



Non-Green Belt - Areas for consideration of additional parking facilities

16.19 Insufficient parking facilities are a current bone of contention within the Parish, particularly in the Wymondleys. A large percentage (70%) of our survey respondents sought improvements to traffic management, including parking, and we therefore considered options for developing brown-field sites to provide increased parking facilities within the Parish and alleviate concerns.

16.20 There are designated public parking areas in Little Wymondley, adjacent to the Tennis Club and football pitches on the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields, but these are exceptionally small for the facility itself. Other than that, parking facilities are residential, (as described below); attached to specific premises for use by their business customers or churchgoers; or on the public highway.

16.21 Many streets in Little Wymondley were built in the 1950's and earlier, so many houses have no direct parking facilities. Approximately ten years ago, NHDC added driveways to some houses on the north side of Grimstone Road, but these were generally single-space driveways, and most houses now have two or more cars. The council did not add driveways to the south side, nor on the adjoining Sicut Road, where parking facilities are still inadequate and there is general on-street parking on the public highway. Most of the privately owned houses have driveways, but by no means all, so installation by NHDC of additional driveways where appropriate may be a positive way forward in alleviating on-street parking problems in the vicinity.

16.22 Any increase in housing development and/or reduction in current available ad-hoc off-street parking opportunities would undoubtedly exacerbate the current parking situation. Issues relating to the inevitable increase in the volume of traffic passing through the village are primarily covered in Sections 10, 11 and 12 of this Plan. We believe there would be a corresponding increase in risk to the health and safety of children using Wymondley JMI School, (and to those who regularly use the adjacent green spaces and recreational facilities) if traffic congestion increases in Sicut and Grimstone Roads; or more on-street parking becomes necessary there.

16.23 Another unintended consequence of any increase in on-street parking in Sicut and Grimstone Roads will be that the road becomes obstructive to large vehicles such as buses, waste collection vehicles and emergency services vehicles. There is already evidence of these vehicles struggling to get through at present, with large stretches of the grass verges on the south side of Grimstone Road being driven on and churned up, causing water drains in the road to block and the road to flood under moderate rainfall. Apart from the obvious health and safety issues, there would be a negative impact on those parishioners who use the local bus service, (particularly elderly residents of the retirement bungalows), were the bus service to be withdrawn as a result of the road becoming impassable for such vehicles.

16.24 North Herts Homes (NHH) owns an area of land behind Sicut Road, which contains a green space (formerly allotments), and 30 parking spaces, which can be rented by village residents. Garages originally stood on each of these spaces, but many were removed when the land was sold to NHH in 2003; and must now be removed as and when individual spaces are given up by residents. Further garages may not be erected, but residents are still utilising the spaces to alleviate the parking congestion on Sicut/Grimstone Roads.

16.25 Elms Close and Tower Close, (both in Little Wymondley), also have inadequate residential parking facilities. Elms Close has driveways/allocated parking for all dwellings, with a large car park adjacent to the flats. However, as with Grimstone and Sicut Roads, the parking arrangements provide for only one car per dwelling – whereas most households tend to have more. Consequently, the parking facility is barely adequate for current needs, and frequently necessitates residents double-parking.

16.26 Tower Close dates from 1921, when cars were not commonplace, so some houses have driveways, but approx. 50% do not, and most residents currently park on-street outside their houses or in the lay-by areas around the central green. (There is another lay-by towards the Stevenage Road end of the Close, which is badly maintained and therefore discourages parking there.) Some residents of Tower Close have requested an increase in parking facilities there - particularly at the top of the Close, where there is little on-street parking available and the steep

gradient causes problems for less able residents, if parking spaces are unavailable near their homes.

16.27 We considered the possibilities for additional parking facilities, and identified three potential sites, photographs of which are provided in Section 9 or below. These are:

- a) The NHH land including a green space (formerly allotments) and garage plots in Sicut Road;
- b) A grassed area in Tower Close between Numbers 4 and 6; and
- c) Additional parking spaces to be created at the top of the central Tower Close green.

16.28 Option a) above would involve conversion of an existing, unused green space adjacent to the council-owned garages in Sicut Road; and potential use of vacant garage plots in the same location. The parking arrangements on this area would need to be redesigned to increase the number of garages/spaces available, possibly by building new ones that back onto residents' gardens, to make better use of the land and alleviate the on-street parking problems in the nearby roads. However, this may necessitate termination of existing contracts for rental of the parking spaces, removal of the existing garages and aggravating tenants and parking problems as a result – so is unlikely to be a viable option.

16.29 The site is currently unsuitable for residential development, as the entrance does not meet current legal requirements for emergency services' vehicle access. (Annex 9 refers.) There is little scope for widening because of the houses either side. Given its location, we have designated this area as a Designated Local Green Space, (it was formerly garden plots /allotments - see Section 9), as it is often used by children and so that it can once again be managed and used by the community.

16.30 Options b) and c) aim to improve the parking issues in Tower Close, and propose the creation of some additional spaces by removal of the grass verge between numbers 4 and 6, Tower Close; a small reduction in the central green at the top of the Close (and some slight amendment to the design of the existing lay-bys) to increase parking space; and allocation of parking spaces (to ensure those with health problems can park near their residences in light of the gradient). We will consult residents at a later stage to ensure any re-design plans meet their needs.

16.31 The Tower Close central green, which is designated in this plan as a Designated Local Green Space, is a fairly substantial green space, which contains a number of large trees and is a key environmental and recreational asset to the Close and village. It is regularly used by children living in the Close (and elsewhere in the village); and by local dog walkers. There are currently parking lay-bys on either side, which are used by those residents without garages or other off-street parking facilities; and there is scope to alleviate local parking issues slightly, by making a small reduction at the top end of the green.



Tower Close, Top of Green and Grass area No's 4&6

16.32 Redesign of the existing lay-bys (including the one further down the road), plus removal of the wide grass verge between numbers 4 and 6 Tower Close would also assist. However, this would mean loss of a cherry tree, and consideration of any related environmental implications or structural impact on the nearby houses relating to its roots etc.

16.33 Section 9 designates this area as a Local Green Space, excluding a small portion which could be used for additional parking spaces, as described above, without detriment to the overall appearance and use of the green space and its locality.

16.34 Although there could be scope to build a very small number of dwellings and linked parking facilities on the green, this would significantly alter the character of the road, which was laid out along garden city lines in 1921. It would also mean loss of a well-used green amenity, with the reduction in recreational opportunities for the village children, who play on and around the green daily outside the winter months.

Policy HOD3 Parking:

Development proposals should provide parking to meet the relevant adopted parking standards

Non-Green Belt - Areas for consideration of additional children's play area

16.35 Section 15 of this Plan covers social cohesion and well-being; and retention and extension of community amenities, including recreational facilities. Responses to our parish survey (58%) indicated that parishioners were keen to have additional children's play areas, which would be beneficial in encouraging children to engage in healthy, outdoor activities; provide a meeting place; and generally improve fitness, well-being and social cohesion in the Parish.

16.36 Three potential locations for additional children's play areas were considered. Section 9 contains photographs of these sites, which are:

- a) The green space (formerly allotments) and council-owned garage plots in Sicut Road/Grimstone Road;
- b) Sicut Road Green; and
- c) The Tower Close village green (near Stevenage Road).

16.37 Option a): has been covered in conjunction with potential developments for the existing green space and garages at Sicut Road/Grimstone Road, but has limited potential due to health and safety and access issues. (See paragraphs 16.27 and 16.28 above.)

16.38 Option b): considers the potential for an additional play area to be created on part of the green in Sicut Road. This land is designated as a village green, and used as a recreational area, particularly for village functions. It is also a flood plain (see the Environment Agency flood map below), so inappropriate for development in terms of dwellings or car parking. However, it would be ideal as an additional play area, as it already contains a wooden, seated play boat – and would be enhanced by the addition of other equipment such as swings, climbing frame etc.



Environment Agency flood map

16.39 Option c): involves a designated village green. We do not see this as a barrier, as the Sicut Road village green has play equipment located there. The Tower Close village green may also have potential as an additional children's playground as, although it is close to Stevenage Road, its designation as a village green rests on its use by generations of villagers for a variety of activities.

Impact assessment

16.40 Although we are not a regulatory body, we feel it is only right and proper that the impact of proposed development should be assessed in relation to the key economic, social and environmental features of the area to which they relate. This would include looking at any disproportionate impact on different parts of society likely to be affected; impact on social, well-

being or health inequalities; impact on provision of facilities or services that support community or cohesion, or in other ways that affect the quality of life in the local community. There may be unintended consequences to consider, (e.g. increased opportunities for crime), things that could go wrong, but also things that might work out better than expected. A whole host of environmental issues also fall to be considered – the most salient to us being rural v urban issues; water pollution; levels of water extraction; exposure to flood risk, air quality, infrastructure issues, safety and bio-diversity.

16.41 At this early stage, the above options are put forward merely for consideration, so that they may be aired, and discounted or pursued – with a view to further work being done at a later stage, dependent on stakeholders' views. At that time, we will ensure that a more detailed and wide-ranging, proportionate assessment is undertaken of the impact of any development proposals on the quality of life within the Parish.

17. Next Steps

17.1 There are a several key stages in neighbourhood planning, a summary of which forms part of the Government's Planning Practice Guidance, available online at:

<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/neighbourhood-planning/>

17.2 Wymondley Parish and the WPNPF having been legally designated as a neighbourhood area and neighbourhood forum; and having prepared our draft Neighbourhood Plan, we are now at Step 3 of the planning process, i.e. public consultation on the Plan and preparation of related documentation.

17.3 Public consultation began on 7 April 2016 and will end at 17.00 hours on 25 May 2016. Copies of the draft Plan, (together with a response form on which you can make constructive comments), are available on our website at: www.wymondley.org Library hard copies and response forms are also available at the Parish's public houses and places of worship.

17.4 Once the consultation period has ended we will analyse responses and review the Plan in the light of them. A Consultation Statement will then be prepared, summarising responses and how they have been addressed. Other required documentation will also be prepared and the Plan submitted to NHDC, with a view to it being publicised for 6 weeks and then submitted to an independent examiner. If the Plan is found to meet its legal requirements and otherwise be in order it will eventually be published before being subject to a local referendum. Subject to the results, it will then be brought into force.

18. Get Involved

18.1 The Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee have actively encouraged Wymondley Parish residents to become engaged in shaping its future. Without input from our community we cannot accurately determine what our community needs to enable it to enhance its quality of life and improve our environment sustainably for the future.

18.2 Responses to our parish survey indicated just how passionately residents felt about the need to preserve the feel of village life, and protect our parish environment – particularly the Green Belt. We will continue to consult them on progress being made, and we welcome comments from all stakeholders.

18.3 There are several ways of getting in touch with the group, which meets at 19.30 hours each Thursday in the Plume of Feathers P.H., Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley, (unless otherwise advised). Annex 12 provides members' names and contact details. So, please get in touch and get involved.

19. Community Aspirations:

1 Green Infrastructure:

We value our green infrastructure and its key role in maintaining the historic character and environment of Wymondley Parish. Consequently, as opportunities arise, we will continue to work with local authorities, landowners and other interested parties to encourage improved hedgerow and woodland management; maintain and extend the rights of way network; increase appropriate tree belt screening and field boundaries in our parish landscape; lessen the impact of the A1 (M) and other elements of our transport infrastructure; and create new accessible green infrastructure.

2 Flood Risk:

Aim: to contribute to the well-being of the Parish by seeking to address the current shortfall in Flood Prevention Measures; and to work constructively with local planning authorities to pre-empt the future effects of climate change and ensure that any development proposals are sustainable, have no adverse effect on potential flood risk and will contribute to existing and necessary future infrastructures.

We will rigorously pursue the need for implementation (and regular maintenance) of satisfactory Flood Prevention Measures in the Parish, particularly in relation to Little Wymondley.

We will continue to work with HCC to develop a SWMP for the Parish. We view this as particularly important, given the absence of a SUDS policy in relation to Stevenage Road in Little Wymondley, notwithstanding the fact that it follows the natural contour of an Ice Age riverbed.

We will work constructively with local planning authorities, flood authorities, and other stakeholders, to ensure that any development proposals are sustainable and address local concerns regarding exacerbation of flood risk.

We will work positively with local authorities and other stakeholders to ensure they are fully considered from the design stage onwards; and that development proposals include (and implement) measures to satisfactorily address issues highlighted in SFRAs and SWMPs.

3 Green Spaces:

We will conserve and, (where possible), enhance our green spaces for their positive impact on

the health, quality of life and social cohesion of our current community and future generations.

4 Transport Links:

We will support appropriate initiatives to maintain, extend, improve, promote or facilitate use of, these “green” transport routes; and make recommendations to Hertfordshire Highways, (and local landowners), with the intention of improving footpaths and bridleways to facilitate safe walking, riding and cycling within the Parish and reduce motoring, where possible.

We will support initiatives to increase provision of relevant local bus services, which would reduce the need for pupils to be driven to school or walk along unsafe footpaths; thereby also reducing traffic and benefiting the environment and Parish residents.

As part of our on-going liaison with the Highways Agency, local authorities and other relevant bodies, we will be proactive in ensuring necessary maintenance work is promptly and satisfactorily undertaken; and support appropriate initiatives to protect the safety of pedestrians within the Parish.

5 Traffic Management:

We support the need for safety cameras on the Corey’s Mill traffic lights to deter “red light runners”, thereby giving increased time and opportunity for motorists from Little Wymondley and Graveley to access the roundabout safely. We also support the need for traffic lights at those two junctions with the roundabout.

We will work with the Highways Agency, HCC, local planning authorities and other stakeholders to ensure improved traffic calming measures are put in place, in line with Government guidance, specifically the Local Transport Note 01/0727

We will press for air quality monitoring on all congested local roads at peak hours, and additional safety measures, in relation to the Corey’s Mill roundabout and other key traffic “hot-spots” identified as being of concern to residents.

We will work to identify and implement appropriate solutions to local parking problems.

6 Education:

Aim: to work positively and collaboratively with local planning authorities to help ensure that the educational needs of the Parish are met, principally that there are sufficient school places available to meet its needs; and to identify and resolve key issues relating to developments

intended to create, expand or alter our schools – or impacting on existing schools.

We will continue to work with authorities involved in local education and planning, to ensure that our children's educational needs are catered for in terms of sufficient school places and Information Technology infrastructure; and that they are not adversely affected by any future development activities.

As part of this process, we will seek to ensure that all key issues are taken into consideration, not only in our Neighbourhood Plan, but in neighbouring and cross- boundary plans and development proposals.

We will carefully consider, (in tandem with others), any knock-on effects of development on our children's health, e.g. through greater emissions and reduced air quality due to increased traffic; and on their ability to continue to use existing recreational facilities – particularly those involving enjoyment of designated Green Spaces and Green Belt.

7 Telecommunications and Broadband:

Aim: to ensure the Parish has a high-quality communications infrastructure, through ongoing liaison with relevant telecommunications and broadband providers.

We will work closely with the Herts LEP, local telecommunications, companies and other stakeholders, to highlight the Parish's communications infrastructure requirements and ensure that necessary service improvements are made.

8 Supporting Local Business and Employment:

Aim: to encourage rural economic growth and employment, through support of business expansion and development which is appropriate and in keeping with the Parish's intrinsic character and environment.

We will continue to support and seek to encourage the economic growth of our local businesses - particularly the public houses which form the hub of our community; our local farmers who manage and conserve our natural environment; and the hotels/wedding venues and other businesses which encourage visitors to the Parish, thereby boosting its economy.

9 Social Cohesion and Well-being:

Aim: to improve quality of life, social cohesion and well-being for our community, through positive action to retain local services and community amenities and, where suitable

opportunities arise, improve them to meet parishioners' needs.

We will encourage, support and promote initiatives aimed at improving health, well-being and social cohesion within our community; particularly those which make best use of our current amenities, public spaces and recreational facilities.

We will take action to ensure that our amenities, public spaces and recreational facilities are regularly maintained and upgraded; and seek to extend and enhance them when suitable opportunities arise.

10 Housing and Other Development:

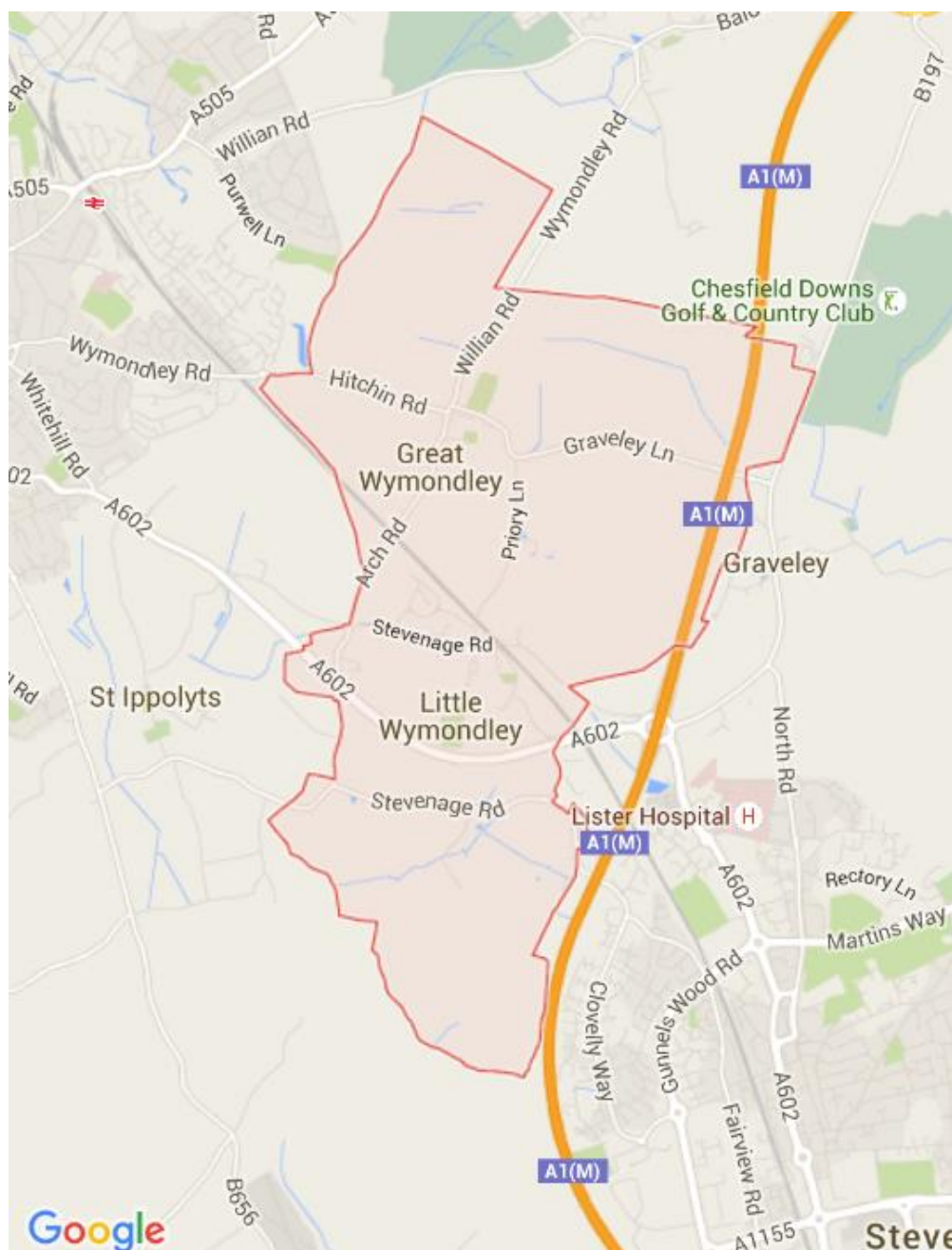
Aim: to promote sustainable development in our Parish, by ensuring any necessary development is well-designed and located appropriately, i.e. where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of our community; reflect the identity of our parish; and respond to its local character and history. Also, through consideration of demographic trends and community needs, and by identifying possible “deliverable” sites within the Parish, we will strive to ensure that any proposed housing is affordable and of a suitable size, type, tenure and range for the community.

We will continue to explore opportunities to increase available parking within the Parish and, when considering Development proposals work with relevant parties to ensure that adequate parking facilities are included in plans.

We will give further consideration to the provision of additional facilities for the Parish's children, to determine the most appropriate location(s) and type.

We will work positively and collaboratively with local planning authorities in considering planning applications, and other development proposals impacting on the Parish, to identify and resolve key issues affecting long-term sustainability.

Wymondley Parish Map



Wymondley Action Forum (WAF) Parish Survey Form



WAF - Wymondley Action Forum - Questionnaire

Welcome to the Wymondley (Parish) Action Forum resident's survey. This is your chance to have your say on what matters to you in the Parish – what improvements you want to see and to potentially have influence over the wider issue of housing in the immediate area (size, scale, mix).

With the North Herts District Council's local plan coming back for public consultation in October/November this year, we need ALL of you to tell us what you want, so we can present NHDC with a compelling weight of evidence of what YOU want for your Parish.

The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete, please ensure you fill in answers to all questions, and don't leave it to your friends and neighbours to do it instead! If everyone did that, no-one would fill in the survey.

The more of us who add their voice to this campaign, the more likely it is that we will influence the outcome of any improvements and developments where YOU live!

WAF

* Required

Which of the following improvements/measures would you like to see in the Parish? *

Please tick all that you want to see

- ☐ Improvements to flood risk management/improved drainage
- ☐ Improvements to the telecommunications network (for faster broadband)
- ☐ Improvements to traffic management (vehicles, cycles, pedestrian, horses, parking facilities etc.)
- ☐ Appropriate housing for the local community
- ☐ Improvements/enhancements to the look and feel of the villages in the Parish
- ☐ Preservation of the existing designated Greenbelt, which prevents the villages in the Parish from being swallowed up into Stevenage and/or Hitchin
- ☐ Additional/improved recreation areas for the children of the Parish
- ☐ Other:

How many new homes do you feel it is proportionate and reasonable to be built in your village? (please tick ONE only) *

- ☐ 50 or less
- ☐ 51 to 75
- ☐ 76 to 100
- ☐ 101 to 150
- ☐ 151 to 200
- ☐ 201 to 250

☐ 301 +

☐ Other:

Please indicate which village in the Parish you live in [please tick ONE only] *

We need your ideas and suggestions for improvements – have we missed anything? Do you have any further comments or suggestions to make? Please tell us here:

Please ensure you complete the below information – for your view to count, we must be able to prove you are resident in the parish and a real person! We will never sell your personal details or pass them to any 3rd party, other than for the purposes of representing the views of the residents of the parish, to Wymondley Parish Council, North Herts District Council and any other planning authority which request it. Thank you! *

Please tell us your name and address, including your postcode

By giving us your email address, you consent to receiving email communications from WAF about WAF activities and other issues affecting the area where you live. We will NEVER sell your email address or pass it onto any commercial organisation whatsoever, it is purely so we can keep you up-to-date on WAF's progress and let you know of other surveys we need your view on. THANK YOU *

Please complete your email address below:

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

100%: You made it.

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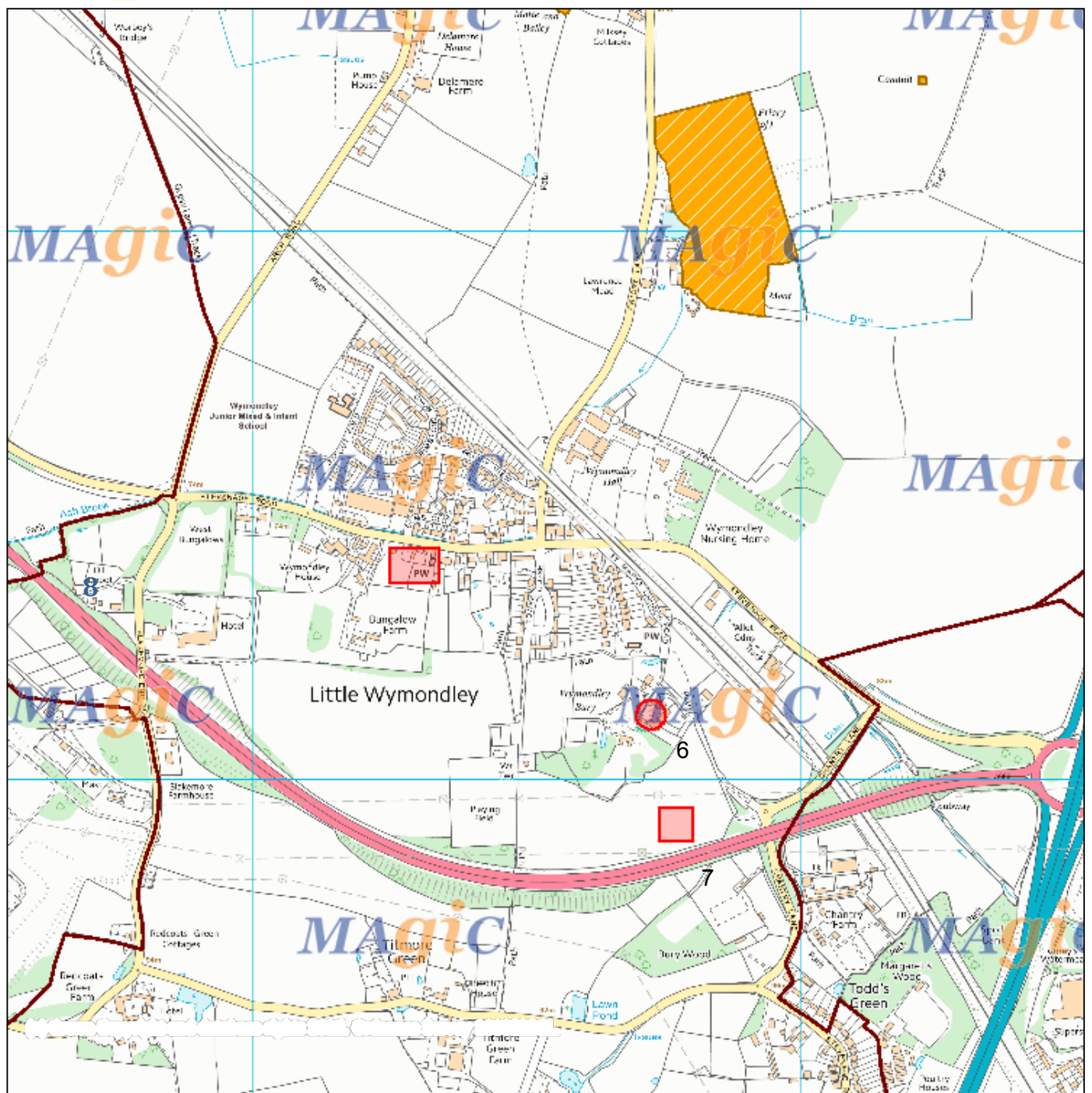
Key Points of Archaeological Interest in the Parish

MAGiC

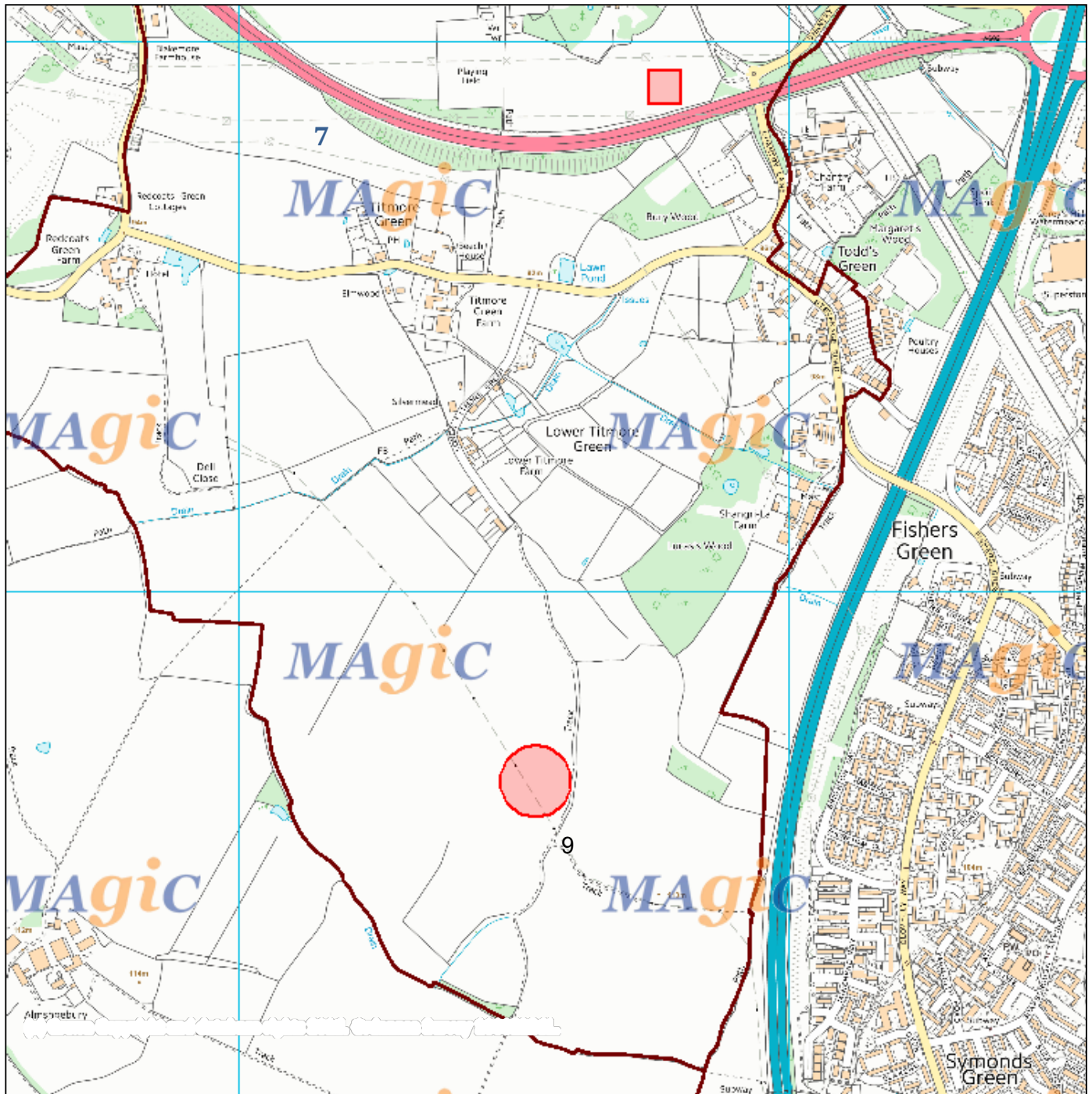
Wymondley Parish North.



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Habitation Timeline

- A. The Parish has been periodically inhabited since the Stone Age, 435,000 years ago. Flint tools have been found.
- B. Mesolithic occupation 11,000 years ago. Some 'microliths' found in Great Wymondley, including part of sophisticated modular hand tools.

- C. ~6,000 BC - the population became more settled, evidenced by hazel plantings nearby, plus a "Tranchet" hand axe found at Great Wymondley. There are also two ring ditches surrounding burial sites, (one just outside the Parish, the other at Titmore Green). At the same period an ovoid Neolithic Henge (Marked 9 on Map Wymondley Parish South) was constructed at Lower Titmore Green. It is archaeologically marked as a 'Grade One Henge', i.e. significant, and has been safeguarded by NHDC. The ditch is on the inside of a raised bank - not defensive, but religious or recreational.
- D. A stone mould from the same period, used to make socketed gauges, was found during the construction of the Wymondley Bypass in 1992.
- E. Roman occupation was pretty extensive in the area. Wymondley Parish is just off the main Roman Road North and there may also have been one running diagonally across the land, from the Stevenage settlement to Hitchin (Hicce).

There was a Roman Villa (Marked 1 on Map Wymondley Parish North) by Gipsy Lane/Purwell, which was partially excavated in 1882, but may be much more extensive than what has so far been found.

There was also a Roman cemetery just north of the Church in Great Wymondley, by the playing field, and it is likely that there would have been a settlement close by. This was probably built over when Hitchin Rural District Council built its Council houses there in the 1930's (Marked 4 on Map Wymondley Parish North). A number of Roman objects were found during foundations excavation.

In 1990 prior to the bypass being started a survey found remains of a large building south of The Bury (Marked 7 on Map Wymondley Parish Central) in Little Wymondley. This was probably two-storey and with some tessellated flooring and tiled roof ~100 AD; extended in ~150 AD, but abandoned in ~250 AD. It was robbed out, except for a 'cottage house' on the site, for materials for a new Romano-British building north of the pylon.

- F. There are two Wymondleys, probably because of two Roman villas. The field system carried on after the Romans left.

Secondary settlements by Saxons etc. include the 'greens' of Todds, Titmore and Redcoats. (....ley is a corruption of Old English 'Leah' - a woodland clearing - hence 'Wilmund's Clearing.) We were mostly woods during Saxon occupation.

- G. The Normans arrived after 1066 and were prolific in this area, following the English surrender at Berkhamsted. The Normans built a castle at Great Wymondley (Marked 2 on Map Wymondley Parish North), to guard the main road north and east-west route. The early one was wood, then stone later - but robbed out. With the Normans came the priests, evidenced by the Priory (Marked 3 on Map Wymondley Parish North5) and both St Mary's Churches.
- H. Medieval and somewhat later dwellings include Delamere (Marked 5 on Map Wymondley Parish South) and The Bury (Marked 6 on Map Wymondley Parish South); also two C14th cottages on the Stevenage Road (Boro Cottages). The land at the rear (Marked 8 on Map Wymondley Parish Central) is also of archaeological significance.

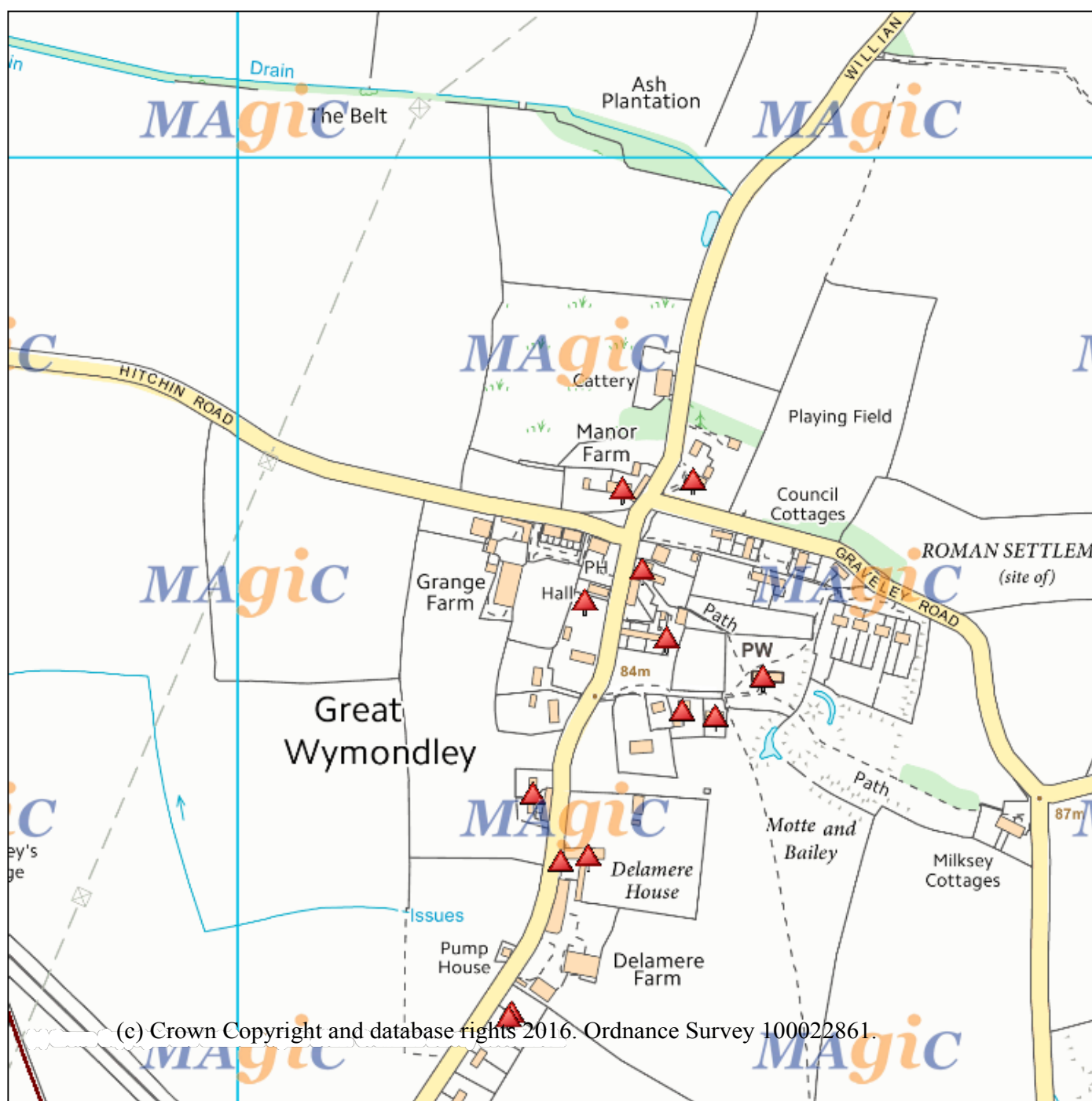
KEY TO MAPS

SITE NO.	DESCRIPTION.	MAP NAME.
1	Roman Villa	Wymondley Parish North
2	Motte & Bailey	Wymondley Parish North
3	Augustinian Priory	Wymondley Parish North
4	Roman Settlement	Wymondley Parish North
5	Delamere House	Wymondley Parish North
6	Wymondley Bury	Wymondley Parish Central
7	100 -150 AD House Remains	Wymondley Parish Central
8	Borough Cottages	Wymondley Parish Central
9	Neolithic Henge	Wymondley Parish South

Listed Buildings in Great and Little Wymondley

MAGiC

Great Wymondley, Listed Buildings.





Surface Water Management Plans – The Importance of an Integrated Regional Drainage Strategy

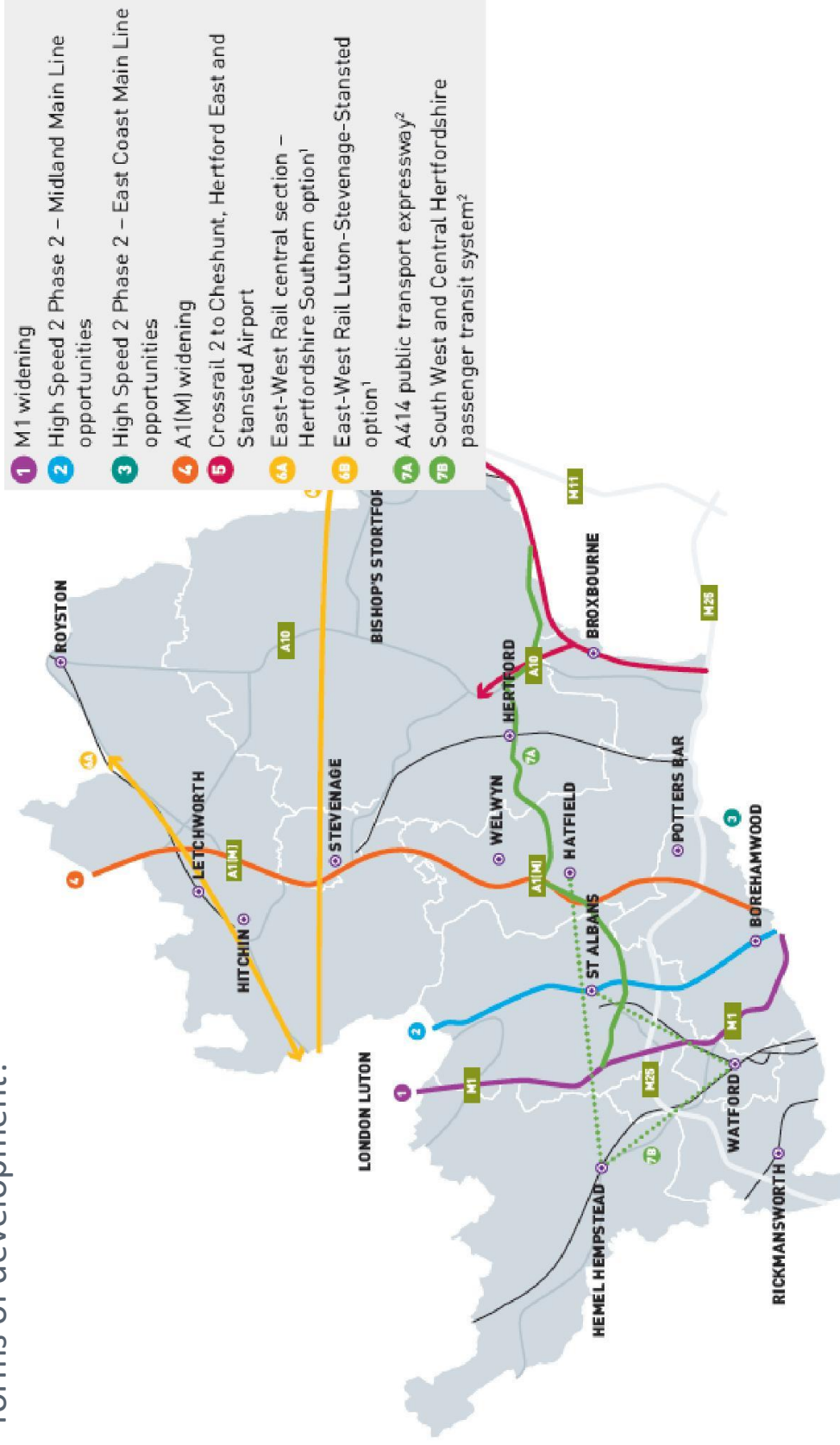
1. Surface water flooding frequently develops quickly and can be difficult to predict. Flooding occurs when man-made and natural drainage systems have insufficient capacity to cope with the amount of rainfall. The critical factors for surface water flooding are the volume of rainfall, the rainfall intensity and the permeability of the surface onto which the rainfall falls. In urban areas where the ratio of impermeable surfaces to vegetated areas is high, sudden and intense rainfall drained through conventional drainage piped systems designed to remove surface water from a site as quickly as possible, can lead to downstream flooding problems.
2. The urban drainage system is a complex interaction of the urban landscape including buildings, roads, public sewers, private sewers and watercourses. The integrated approach by partners and stakeholders in the preparation of Surface Water Management Plans (SWMPs) will give the roads authorities clear roles where the roads form a key part of the drainage or alleviation of flood risk, namely:
 - a) Retain data relating to location and serviceability of existing road drainage; and
 - b) Design road drainage to minimise surface water run-off.
3. SWMPs should be referred to in planning policy as a tool to manage surface water flood risk on a local basis by improving and optimising coordination between relevant stakeholders. SWMPs build on Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs) and provide the vehicle for local organisations to develop a shared understanding of local flood risk, including setting out priorities for action, maintenance needs and links into local development frameworks and emergency plans.
4. The purpose of the SWMP is to make sustainable urban surface water management decisions that are evidence based, risk based, future proofed and inclusive of stakeholder views and preferences.
5. The key aims of the SWMP are:
 - a) Ensuring that development allocations within an area are properly supported by adequate surface water management; and
 - b) Providing a common framework for stakeholders to agree responsibilities for tackling existing drainage problems and preventing future problems.
 - c) Where development pressures are high it can be part of a Water Cycle Strategy
 - d) Demonstrating how capital investment, infrastructure and maintenance can deliver the required surface water management
6. The SWMP considers the regional management of surface water under a full range of rainfall events, from short, high intensity rainfall events that impact on water quality to the longer duration infrequent events that may generate overland flood flows.
7. Central to a risk based surface water management approach is the prediction of the occurrence and frequency of flooding events. Provision should be made in relation to the following areas:

- a) Coordination and cooperation within the domain of flood risk management;
- b) Assessment of flood risk and preparation of flood risk maps and flood risk management plans;
- c) Amendments to local authority and Environment Agency functions for flood risk management;
- d) A revised statutory process for flood protection schemes; and
- e) Amendments to the enforcement regime for the safe operation and monitoring of flood and surface water attenuation areas.

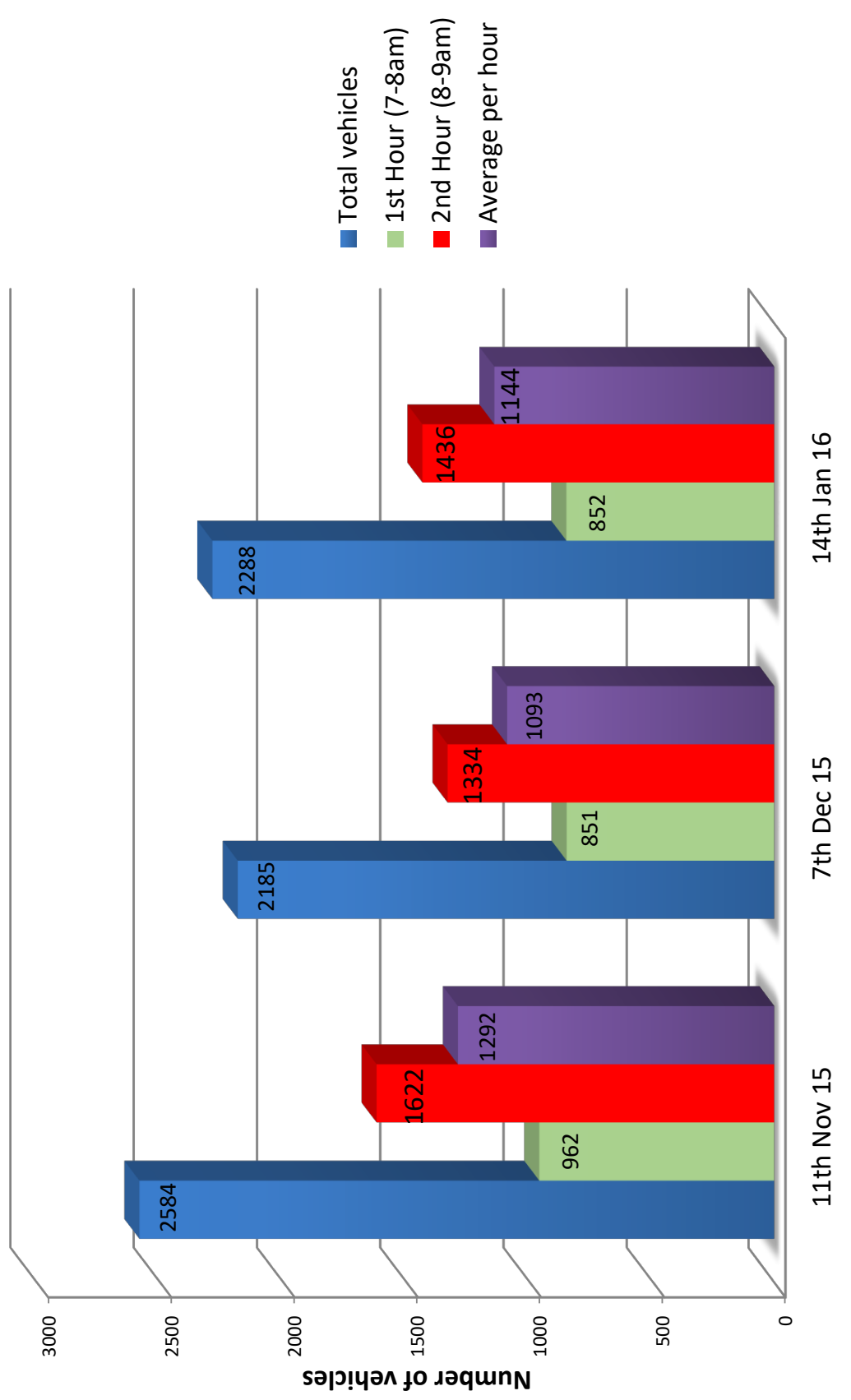
HCC Potential Long-term Transport Links

Long Term – Urban Extensions & Densification

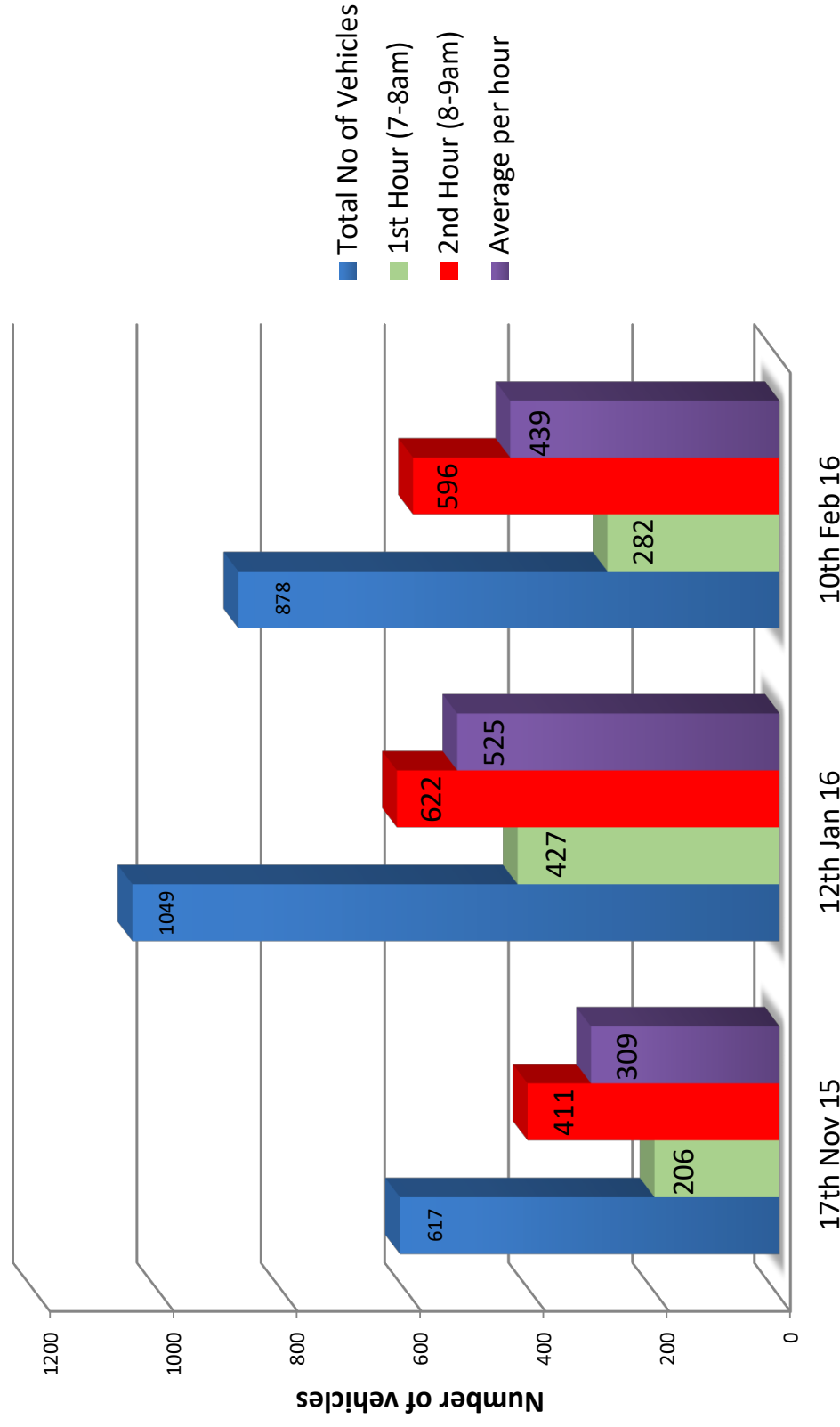
What transport schemes would be needed for the long term if growth is concentrated in and around Hertfordshire's existing urban areas through large-scale urban extensions, and more dense forms of development?



Green Man intersection, Great Wymondley, 7am - 9am

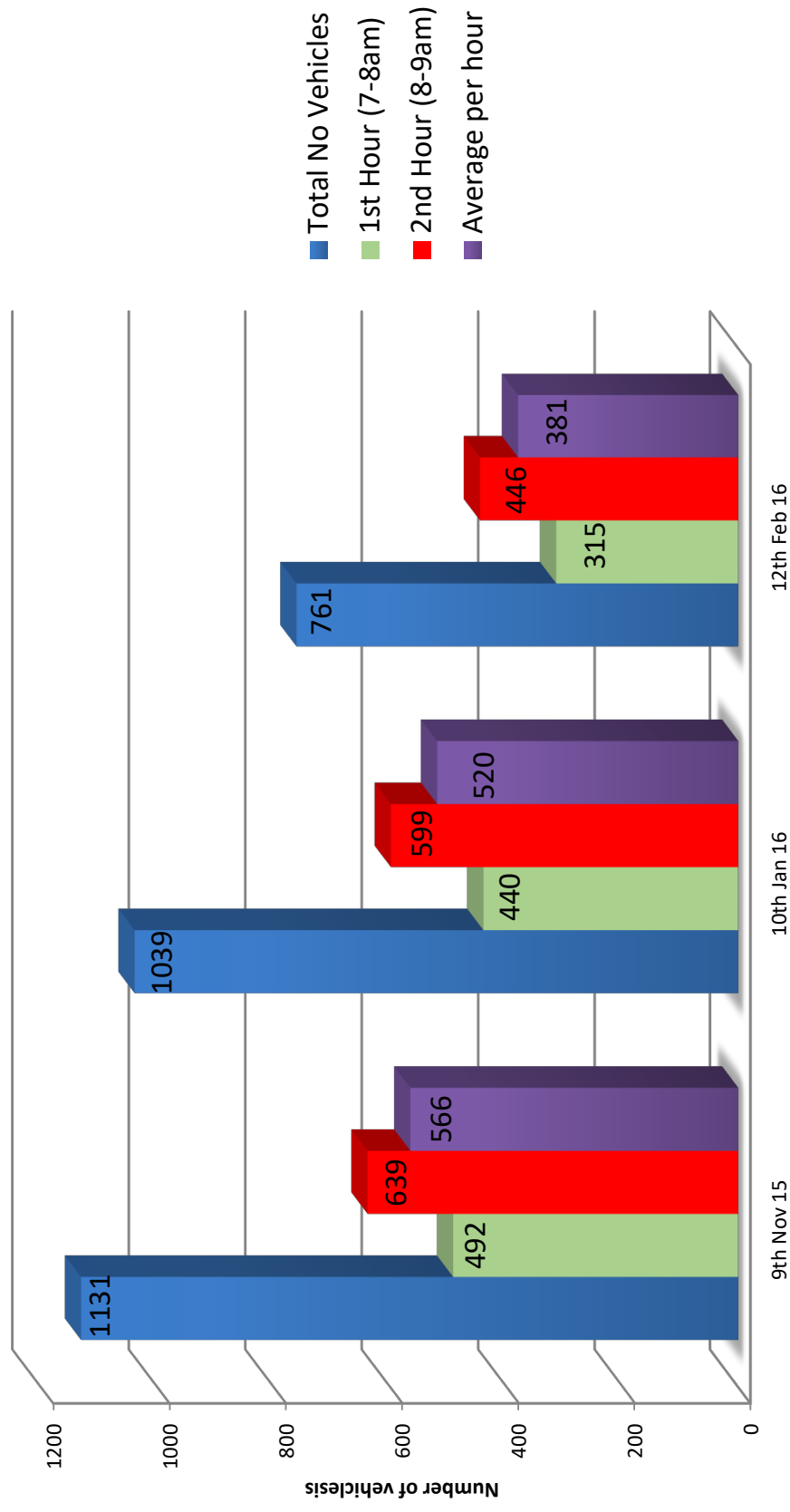


Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley, 7am - 9am

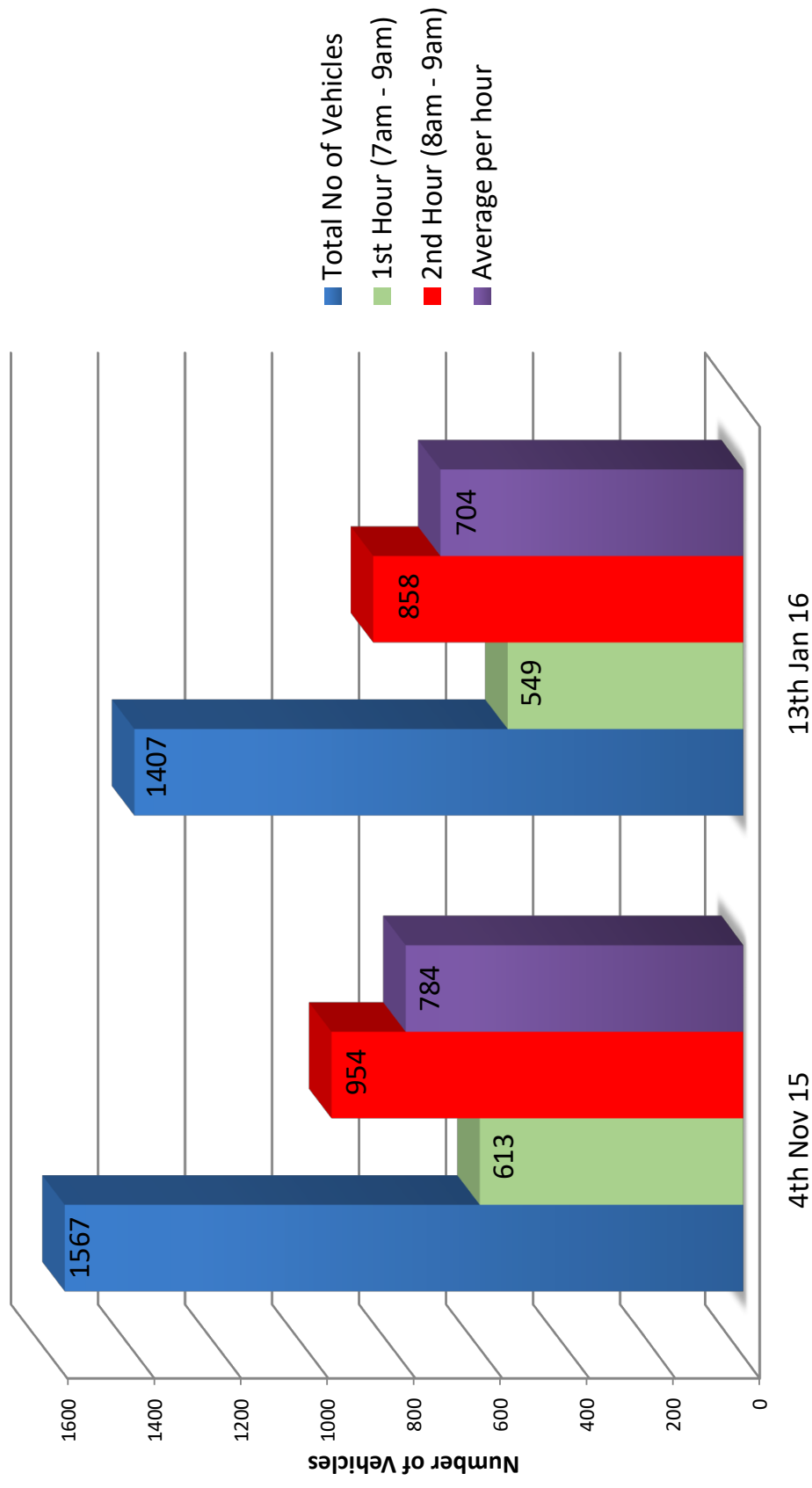


Blakemore End Road, Little Wymondley 7am - 9am

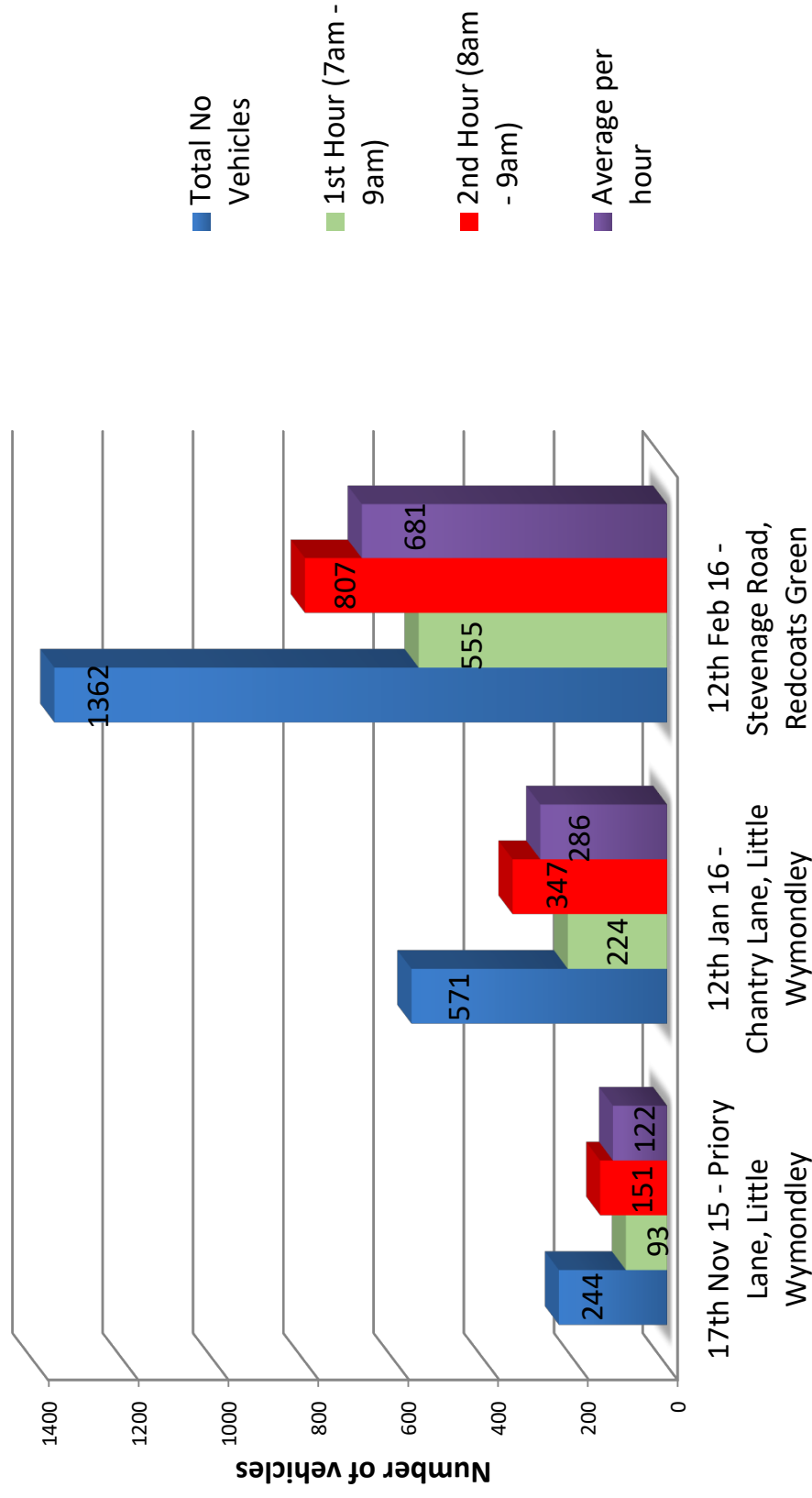
** note that there were roadworks along this route in February, hence the reduced traffic*



Arch Road, Great Wymondley, Traffic between 7am - 9am



Other Roads in the Parish - traffic 7am - 9am

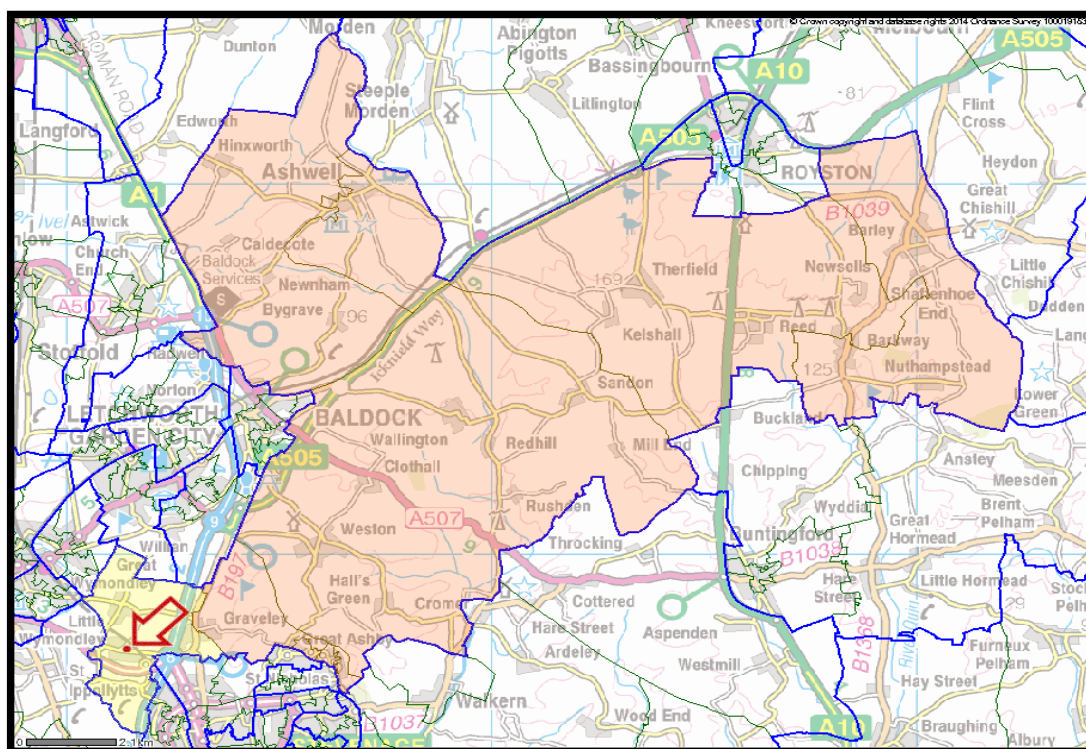


Wymondley Parish Demographic according to the 2011 census

Neighbourhood Definition

Your neighbourhood contains roughly **1600 people or 670 households**. The Office for National Statistics calls these neighbourhoods 'Lower Layer Super Output Areas' (LSOAs). The area covered by the ONS report is designated 005F with North Hertfordshire.

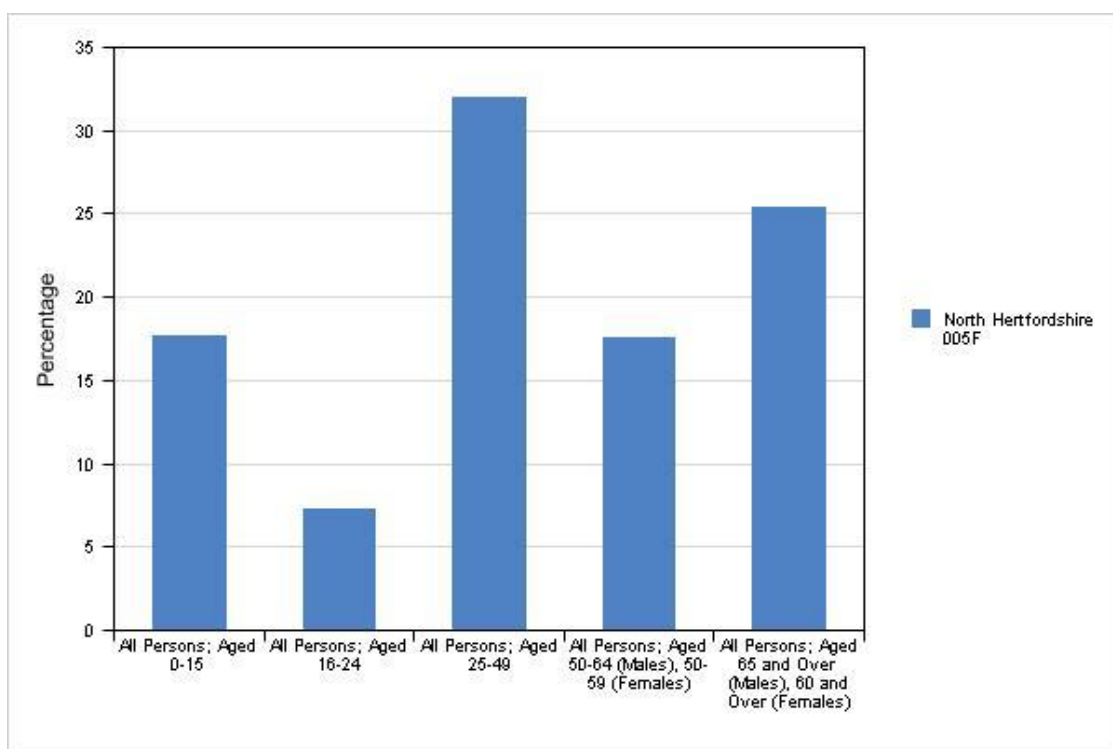
The area highlighted yellow is representative of the data set used in the 2011 census, **which is larger than Wymondley Parish.**



Mid-2011 population estimates

Variable	Measure	Your neighbourhood	Your area
All people	Count	1,392	14,828
Males	Count	667	7,343
Females	Count	725	7,485

Percentage of people in each age band in your neighbourhood, mid-2011



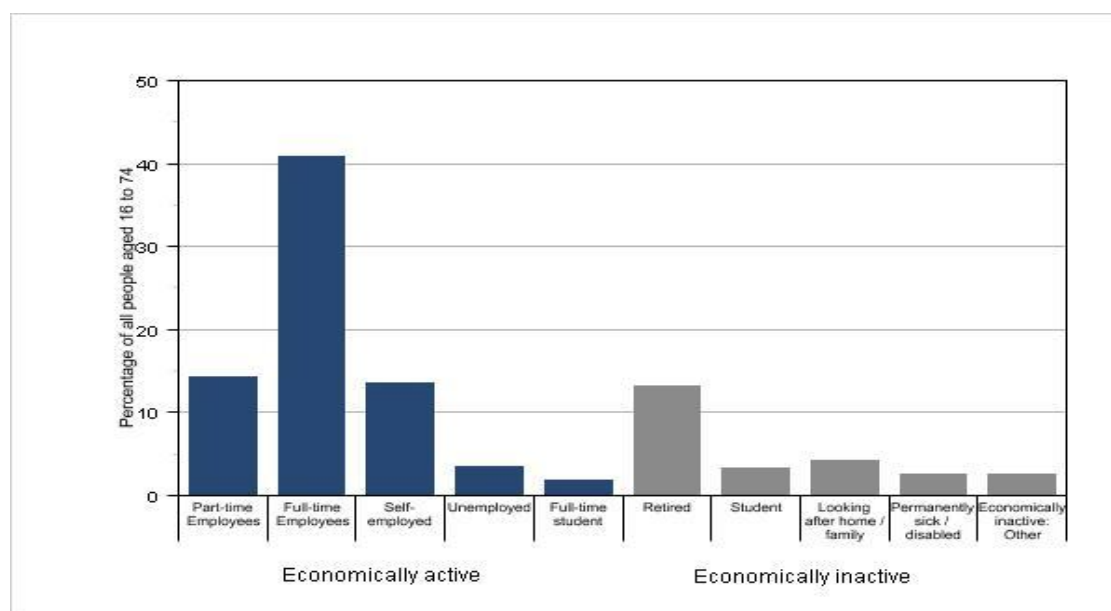
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People's general health, March 2011

Variable	Measure	Your neighbourhood	North Hertfordshire	England
Very good	%	46.4	50.2	47.2
Good	%	33.5	34.1	34.2
Fair	%	12.0	11.8	13.1
Bad	%	7.3	3.1	4.2
Very bad	%	0.8	0.8	1.2

Economic activity in your neighbourhood, March 2011

The 2011 Census asked people about their working lives.



Note:

- The Local Economy tab of this Neighbourhood Summary shows overall employment, unemployment and economic activity rates, taken from the most recent official sources. The chart, above, supplements this information, showing further detail, as recorded at the time of the 2011 Census. The figures are not directly comparable, due to the different time periods.
- Part-time employees worked 30 hours, or less, a week.

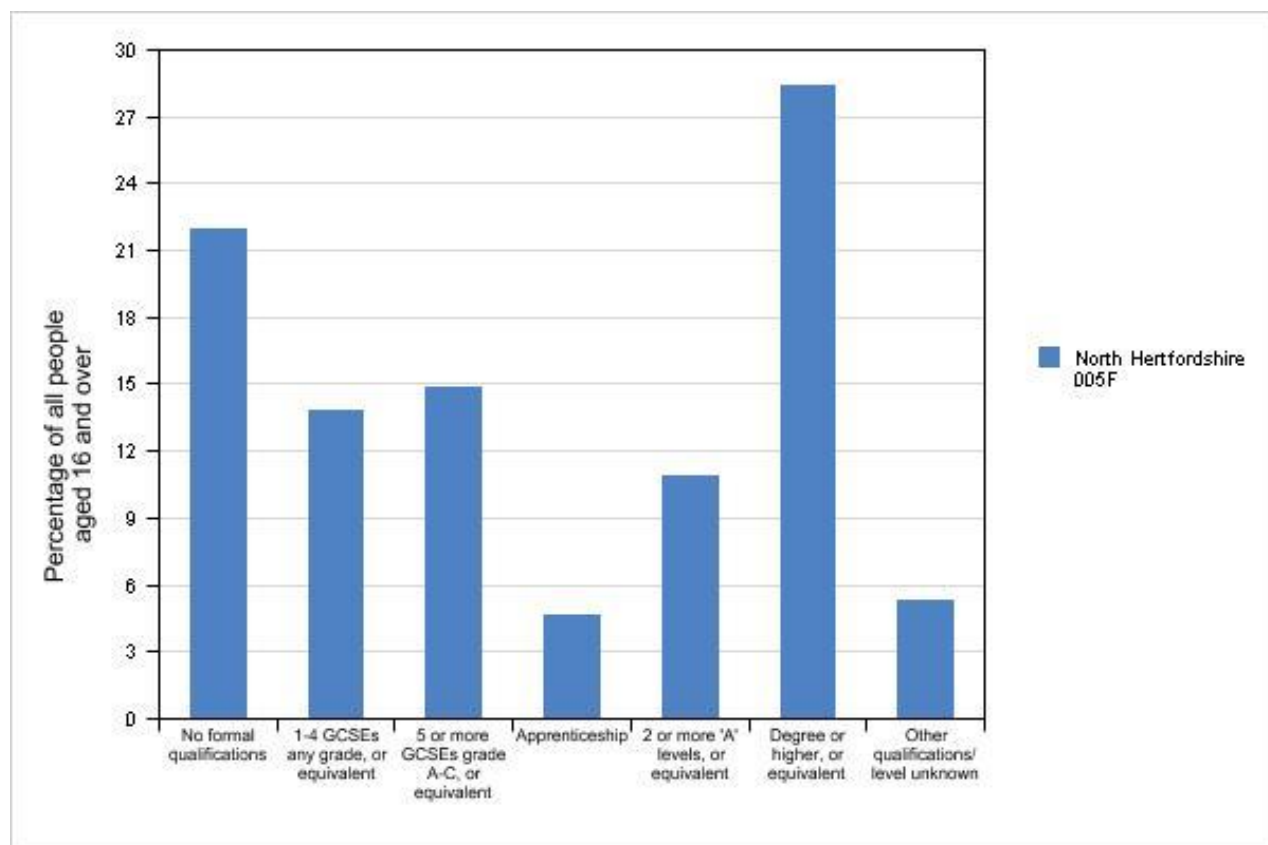
Occupations of all people in employment, March 2011

Variable	Measure	Your neighbourhood	North Hertfordshire	England
Managers, directors and senior officials	%	16.3	12.8	10.9
Professional occupations	%	19.2	22.2	17.5
Associate professional and technical occupations	%	14.7	14.7	12.8
Administrative and secretarial occupations	%	11.3	11.1	11.5
Skilled trades occupations	%	13.1	9.9	11.4

Caring, leisure and other service occupations	%	7.4	8.3	9.3
Sales and customer service occupations	%	4.1	6.9	8.4
Process, plant and machine operatives	%	5.2	5.9	7.2
Elementary occupations	%	8.7	8.3	11.1

Qualifications held by people in your neighbourhood, March 2011

The chart, below, shows percentages of people aged 16 and over in your neighbourhood by their highest qualification.



Employment

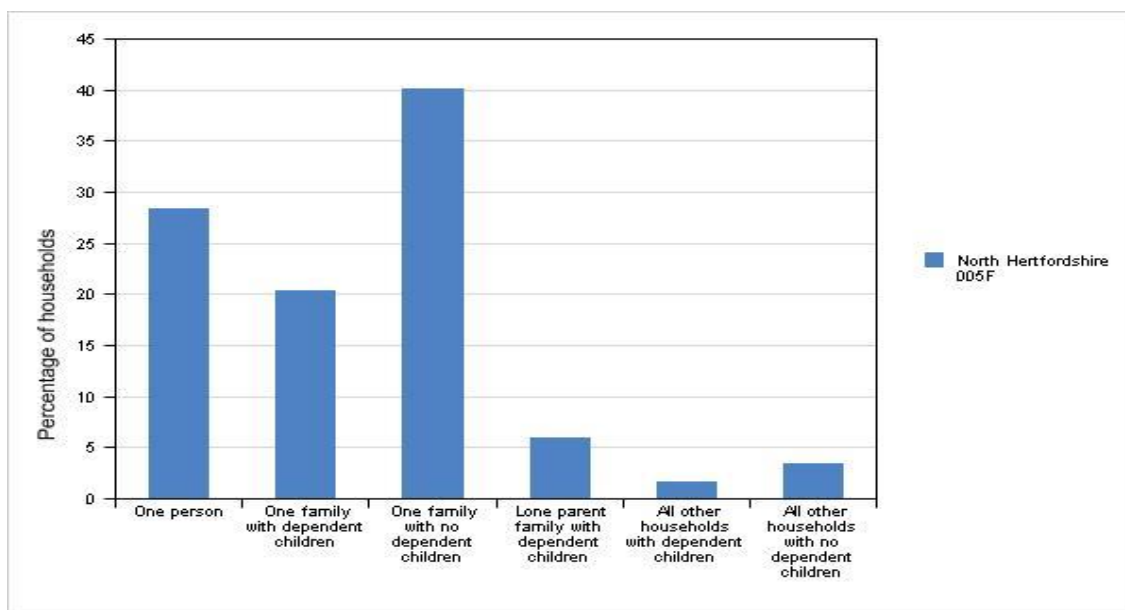
Labour market, April 2012 - March 2013

Variable	Measure	North Hertfordshire	England
Economic activity rate	%	81.6	77.3
Employment rate	%	73.2	71.1
Unemployment rate	%	6.9	7.8

Benefits claimants as percentage of working age population, August 2010

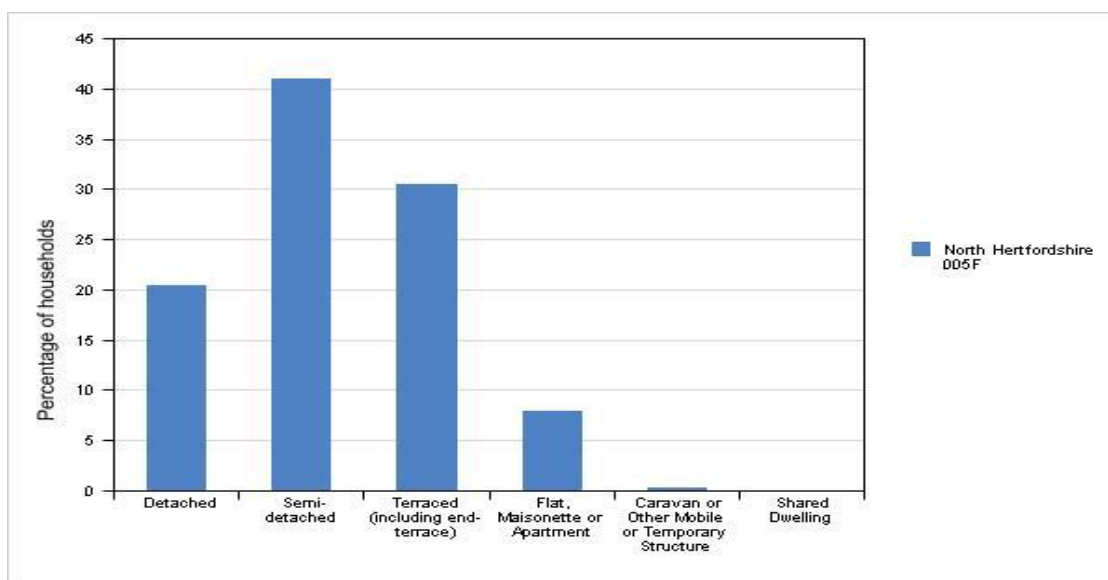
Variable	Measure	Your neighbourhood	North Hertfordshire	England
Any Key Working Age Benefit (16-64, Males; 16-59, Females)	%	11	10	15
Jobseeker's Allowance	%	3	3	4
Incapacity Benefits	%	4	4	7

Household composition in your neighbourhood, March 2011



People were asked in the 2011 Census about what kind of dwelling they were living in at the time. The chart, below, shows the percentage of different types of accommodation in your neighbourhood.

Accommodation type in your neighbourhood, March 2011



Note:

1. All dwellings are unshared unless stated otherwise. Detached, semi-detached and terraced refer to houses or bungalows.

Dwellings by tenure, April 2011

Variable	Measure	North Hertfordshire	England
Owner occupied/private rented	%	80.6	82.1
Local authority	%	0.0	7.5
Registered social landlord	%	19.2	10.1
Other public sector	%	0.1	0.3

Housing condition, April 2011

Decent Home Standard (DHS) - each local authority uses this to measure the general standard of its dwelling stock.

Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) Rating - the Government's approved procedure for calculating an energy rating. The measure ranges from 1 (highly inefficient) to 100 (highly efficient).

Variable	Measure	North Hertfordshire	England
Local authority dwellings that fall below the 'Decent Home Standard'	%	n/a	n/a
Energy efficiency of private sector housing: average 'SAP' rating	Score	57.0	n/a

Emergency Service Vehicle Access Requirements

Fire Safety Department

ACCESS FOR APPLIANCES AND FIRE-FIGHTING FACILITIES FOR FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE USE

REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESS ROADS

ROAD WIDTHS

Access roads may be public highways, private roads, footpaths or specially strengthened and defined routes through the land surrounding the building(s). The requirements for pumping appliances and hydraulic platforms are as follows:

Type of appliance	Minimum width of access rd	Minimum clearance height	Turning circle between walls	Turning circle diameter between kerbs	Minimum width of gateways etc.	Laden weight
Pumping Appliances	3.7m	3.7m	19.2m	16.8m	3.1m	12.5 tonnes
Hydraulic Platform	3.7m	4.0m	29.0m	29.0m	3.1m	17 tonnes

ACCESS FOR A HYDRAULIC PLATFORM

Where access for a hydraulic platform is specified, the roadway should be positioned with its nearest edge a maximum of 2 metres from the face of the building and its furthest edge a minimum of 7.5 metres from the building. This will enable the appliance to operate at its optimum height and reach, (see Diagram 1, App III). Roads, including any manhole covers and public utility service pits, should be capable of carrying the weights set out above for the respective appliances.

Hardstanding for Hydraulic Platforms should be as level as possible, and should not exceed a gradient of 1 in 12(8%).

TURNING AND SWEEP CIRCLES OF APPLIANCES

When providing access for appliances, allowance should be made for a pumping appliance's turning circle of 16.8m diameter, and sweep circle of 19.5m diameter. Hydraulic platforms have a turning circle of 29.0m diameter with a sweep circle of 29.0m diameter. Additional turning space should be provided where corners have to be negotiated, and sweep circles should not be obstructed above kerb height.

Appendices I and II show the other relevant details of pumping appliances and hydraulic platforms. Although the diagrams show transition curves for travel in one direction only, it should be remembered when planning suitable turning and sweep circles that the curves need to be repeated in the opposite direction.

CUL-DE-SAC

Turning facilities should be provided on cul-de-sac roads exceeding 20m in length by means of a turning circle or a hammerhead.

OBSTRUCTION TO ACCESS

All access roads for Fire & Rescue Service appliances should be kept clear of any obstructions, including trees, lamp standards, etc. It may, however, be considered necessary to restrict unauthorised entry and various arrangements are set out below.

Before any obstructions are installed the proposed arrangements should be agreed with the Fire & Rescue Service.

POSTS AND BOLLARDS

Siting of bollards must not obstruct the use of hydrants.

(a) Fixed and removable posts or bollards

When considering the type of post or bollard to be used, either fixed or removable, it is particularly important to bear in mind the type of scheme being considered.

If the scheme is a simple environmental improvements scheme in a thoroughfare it may be acceptable for a row of fixed bollards to be spaced along the kerb line. If this is not acceptable to the traffic authority, there are a number of options:

- (i) Intermediate bollards of a lower height, i.e. below 230mm in height.
- (ii) A removable bollard - one only for any access route. Removable bollards may be of galvanised steel tube and of the standard design. They should be secured in position with a standard padlock.

(b) Collapsible posts or bollards

Collapsible posts and bollards are acceptable in certain cases provided they do not project more than 150mm above ground level when folded and are not of such a type that an appliance passing over one end of the collapsed bollard will raise the other end and foul the appliance. Collapsible posts may be of iron, pivoted near the ground. They should be secured by a standard padlock.

(c) Flexible posts or bollards

Any proposal to use flexible bollards of a new or improved design should be referred (with particulars of the design) to Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Old London Road, Hertford.

The design should incorporate features that prevent damage occurring to fire appliances. They should not be used in conjunction with any other scheme.

Standard Form 2/1/1 (2)

SPEED CONTROL HUMPS

Speed control humps (these may sometimes alternatively be referred to as 'sleeping policemen', 'speed retardant humps' or 'road ramps') are generally not accepted, but where they form part of a traffic management scheme their installation should be considered on their merits.

PEDESTRIANISED AREAS/TRAFFIC CALMINGSCHEMES

Local authorities are increasingly making alterations to certain areas of towns and villages for reasons of road safety and to try to enhance the appearance of the areas. Included within these schemes are pedestrianisation of high streets and shopping areas, and 'traffic calming' at certain accident problem areas. Some of these schemes may affect attendance times by slowing down appliances dramatically on through routes, or prevent access into areas where they may be required. It is important that they do not impede appliances unnecessarily.

Schemes should meet the following criteria:-

- (a) A clearly defined fire path at least 3.7m wide, and capable of supporting the weight of a Service appliance, i.e. minimum 17 tonnes, is required through a pedestrianised area. (This may be indicated by the use of different coloured concrete or different paving patterns). Where tall buildings abut, the fire path will need to be 5.5m wide for use by hydraulic platforms as per diagram 2 in Appendix III.
- (b) The siting of the fire path should take into account building design features, e.g., canopies, extended shop fronts, etc. (these features may affect the positioning and operational use of hydraulic platforms and/or extension ladders).
- (c) No seating, trees or flower beds should obstruct the fire path and no street furniture, e.g. , lamp posts, should be allowed which could foul the ladders, etc. , on appliances.
- (d) If appliance access to a pedestrianised area crosses a kerb, it should be ramped with a steady incline for a minimum length of 500mm with the difference in levels not exceeding 100mm and both ends inset.
- (e) Any raised platforms should be at least 14m in length to prevent the grounding of hydraulic platforms.
- (f) Corner blips should not obstruct fire appliances that may need to negotiate the corner (see Appendix I and II).
- (g) Width restrictions should be a minimum of 3.7m, and have a "straight" approach on either side.
- (h) The provision of passing bays on roads reduced to a single lane will mean that in the event of an incident occurring parked fire appliances will not immediately close the road.
- (i) Chicanes must be capable of being negotiated by hydraulic platforms and pumping appliances, and have a "straight" approach on either side.
- (j) Speed tables should conform to (e)above.

Standard Form 2/1/1(3)

STANDARD PADLOCKS

These are suitable padlocks for the purpose of securing bollards or posts, but must be capable of being cut open in an emergency with the bolt croppers carried on Hertfordshire Fire appliances.

ACCESS TO BUILDINGS

ALL BUILDINGS NOT FITTED WITH FIRE MAINS

Access should be provided in accordance with Table 1 below:-

TOTAL FLOOR AREA OF BUILDING M ²	HEIGHT OF FLOOR OF TOP STOREY ABOVE GROUND	PROVIDE VEHICLE ACCESS TO	TYPE OF APPLIANCE
UP TO 2000	UP TO 9m OVER 9m	SEE NOTE 3 BELOW 15% OF PERIMETER	PUMP HYDRAULIC PLATFORM
2000 - 8000	UP TO 9m OVER 9m	15% OF PERIMETER 50% OF PERIMETER	PUMP HYDRAULIC PLATFORM
800 - 16000	UP TO 9m OVER 9m	50% OF PERIMETER 50% OF PERIMETER	PUMP HYDRAULIC PLATFORM
16000 - 24000	UP TO 9m OVER 9m	75% OF PERIMETER 75% OF PERIMETER	PUMP HYDRAULIC PLATFORM
OVER 24000	UP TO 9m OVER 9m	100% OF PERIMETER 100% OF PERIMETER	PUMP HYDRAULIC PLATFORM

NOTE1 The TOTAL FLOOR AREA is the appropriate aggregate of all the floors in the building.

NOTE2 In the case of PURPOSE GROUP 7(a) (Storage) buildings height should be measured to mean roof level, as defined in Diagram C3 to Appendix C of Approved Document B to the Building Regulations 1991.

NOTE3 There should be vehicle access to small buildings (those up to 2000m²) with a top storey less than 9m above ground level) to within 45m of any point on the projected plan or "Footprint" of the building (See diagram 1 Appendix IV).

NOTE4 Any elevation to which vehicle access is provided in accordance with TABLE 1 should have a suitable door (not less than 750mm wide) giving access to the interior of the building.

Standard Form 2/1/1 (4)

BUILDINGS FITTED WITH DRY FIREMAINS

There should be access for a pumping appliance to within 18m of each fire main inlet connection point. The inlet should be visible from the appliance.

BUILDINGS FITTED WITH WET FIREMAINS

There should be access for a pumping appliance to within 18m, and within sight of, a suitable entrance giving access to the main and in sight of the inlet for the emergency replenishment of the suction tank for the main.

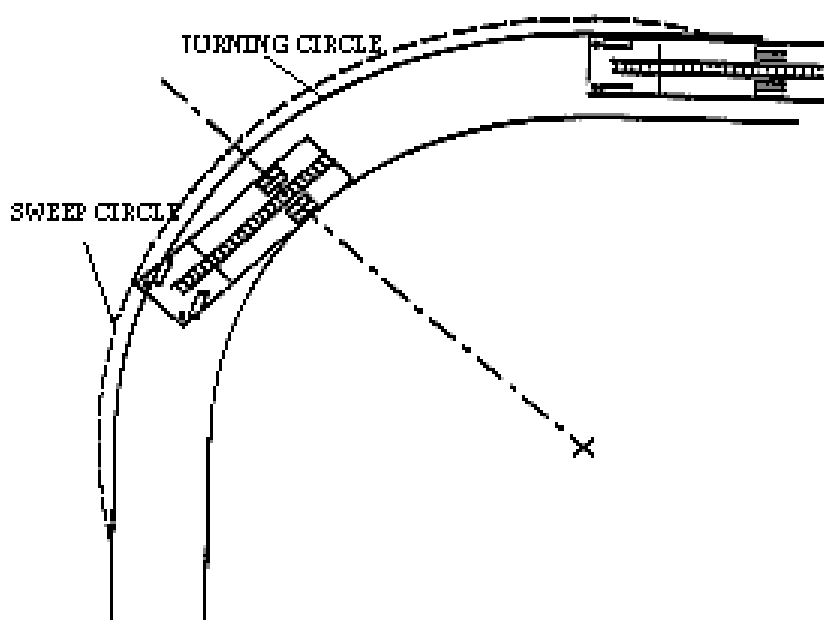
(NOTE To 3.2 and 3.3 see also Standard Forms 3/2/1/1 and 3/2/2/1)

DETAILS OF PUMPING APPLIANCES

APPENDIX I

Maximum length	8.5m
Maximum height	3.3m
Maximum width	2.3m
Maximum weight	12.5tonnes
Maximum weight front axle	5.5tonnes
Maximum weight rear axle	6.1tonnes
Maximum length wheelbase	3.81m
Track rear wheels	2m
Ground clearance	229mm

Turning and sweep circles



Width of roadway	3.7m
Turning circle.....	16.75m
Sweep circle	18.3m

This diagram shows the path of the appliance and is not intended to indicate kerb lines.

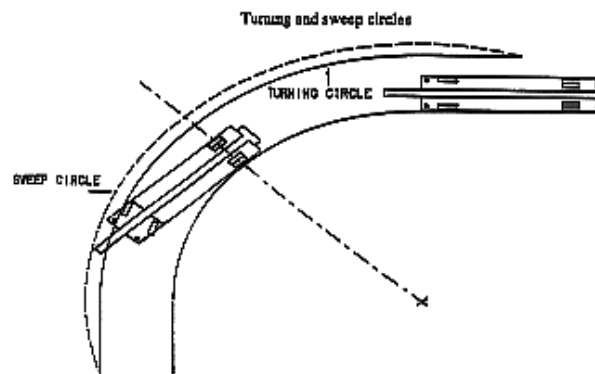
APPENDIX II

DETAILS (AT MAXIMUM) OF HYDRAULIC PLATFORM

Maximum length.....	10m
Maximum height.....	3.5m
Maximum width.....	2.5m
Maximum width with jacks out.....	4.4m
Laden weight.....	18.00 tonnes
Average weight front axle.....	7 tonnes
Average weight rear axle.....	11 tonnes
Maximum length wheelbase.....	5.33m
Track rear wheels..	2m
Minimum ground clearance	229mm

NOTE: Overhang of booms on headrest do not exceed 1.83m from foremost part of the vehicle. Hydraulic platforms are fitted with four ground jacks as stabilisers. Under normal working conditions the weight on a jack should not exceed 7.5 tonnes.

Turning and sweep circles

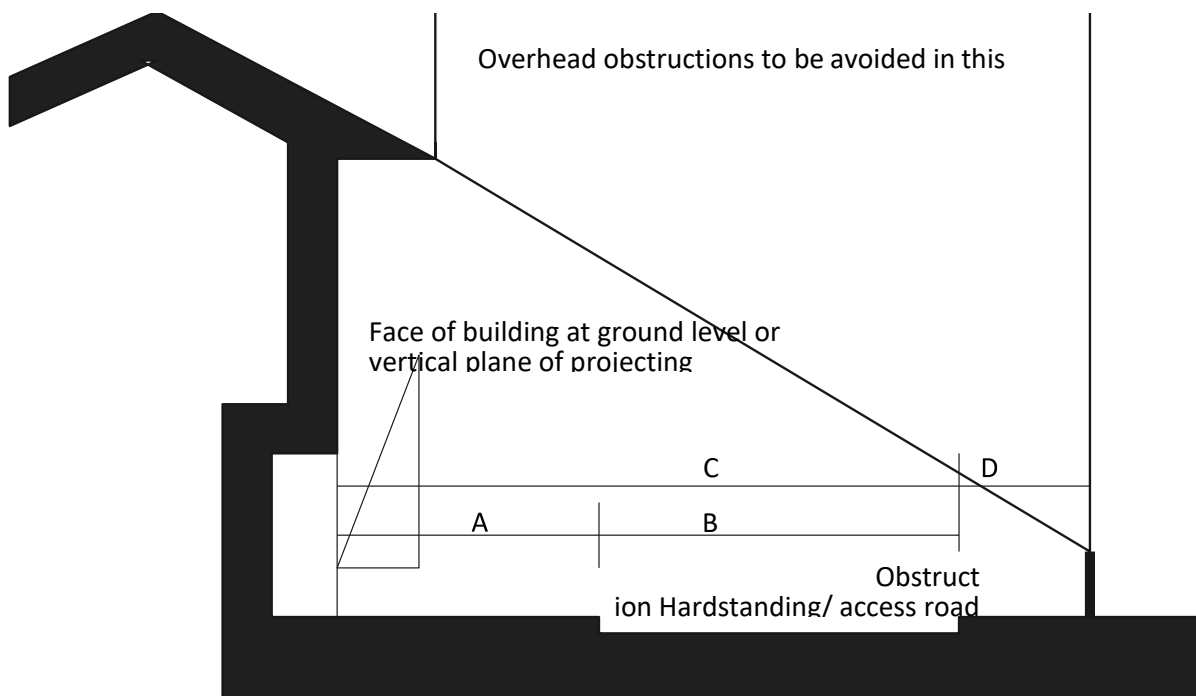


The diagram shows the path of an appliance and is not intended to indicate kerb lines.

Width of roadway.....	6m
Turning circle.....	20.12m
Sweep circle	24.5m

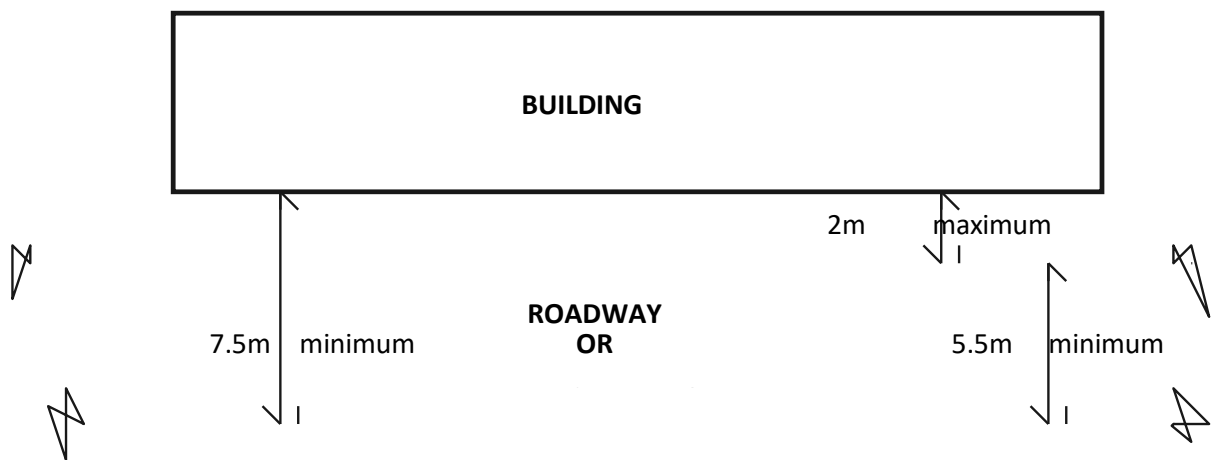
**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUILDING AND HARDSTANDING/ ACCESS ROADS
FOR HYDRAULIC PLATFORMS.**

DIAGRAM 1



- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| A. | Minimum distance of near edge of hardstanding from building. | 2.0m |
| B. | Minimum width of hard standing. | 5.5m |
| C. | Minimum distance of further edge of hard standing from the building | 7.5m |
| D. | Minimum width of unobstructed space (for swing of appliance platform) | 2.2m |

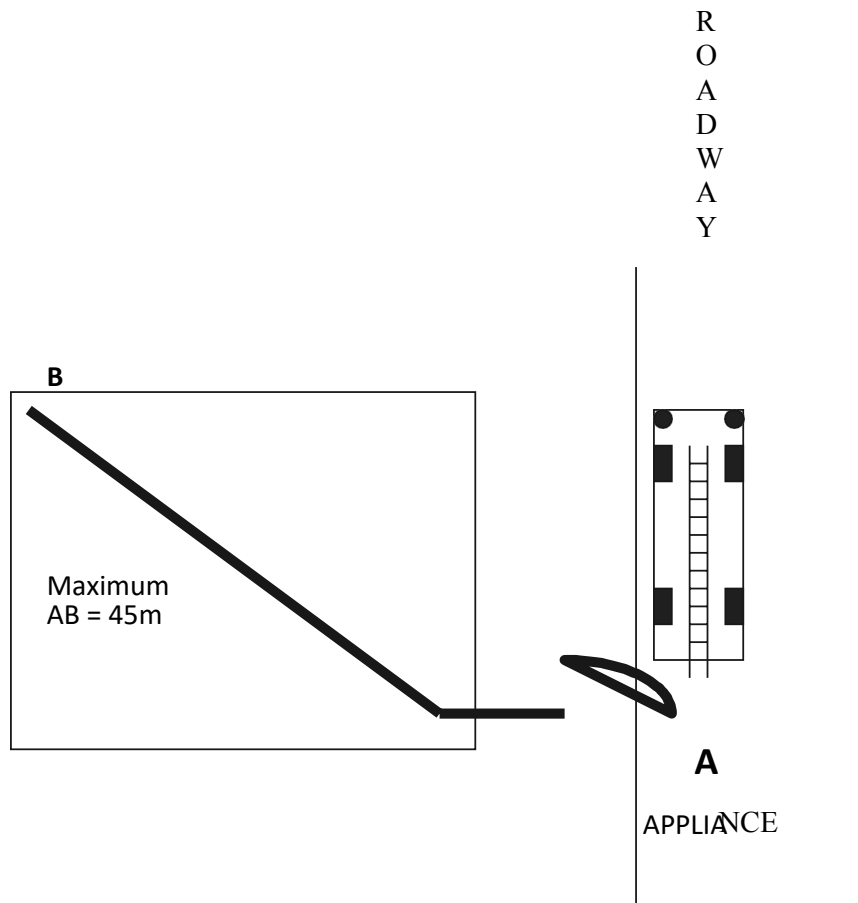
DIAGRAM 2.



Standard Form 2/1/1 App.3 (8)

APPENDIX IV

DIAGRAM 1



Consultation List

In developing our Neighbourhood Plan we have consulted the following statutory and non-statutory consultees, who we believe may have an interest in the policies it contains:

- Wymondley Parish residents
- Wymondley Parish businesses
- Wymondley Parish Council
- Local landowners and developers
- Wymondley Parish places of worship
- Gravely Parish Council
- St Ippolyts Parish Council
- Hitchin Forum
- Hertfordshire County Council
- North Hertfordshire District Council
- East Hertfordshire District Council
- Welwyn and Hatfield District Council
- Stevenage Borough Council
- biz4Biz
- Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Hertfordshire Chambers of Commerce
- Federation of Small Business
- North Herts Partnership (LSP)
- Homes and Communities Agency
- North Hertfordshire Homes (NHH)
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Friends of Forster County
- Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation
- North Herts Action Group
- Wymondley Action Forum
- Open Spaces Society
- Save Our Green Belt
- Sport England
- Stevenage Riding for the Disabled Association

- Ramblers' Association
- North Herts Ramblers' Group
- Hertfordshire and North Middlesex Ramblers
- East Herts Ramblers
- Herts Natural History Society
- Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- British Horse Society
- Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Cycling Touring Club....
- National Allotments Society
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- Virgin Trains East Coast
- Great Northern Rail
- Highways Agency
- Hertfordshire Police
- Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Broadband Delivery UK
- British Telecom
- Openreach
- Sky
- Virgin Media
- E.on
- British Gas
- Eastern Electricity
- North Herts Health and Well-being Partnership
- East and North Herts NHS Trust
- Affinity Water
- Anglian Water
- Thames Water
- Rt Hon Peter Lilley MP
- Sir Oliver Heald QC MP
- Rt Hon Steven McPartland MP

Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee

Adrian Hawkins (Chair)

Adrian is the Chairman of Weldability Sif, a welding products business based in Letchworth Garden City, with a history dating from 1925. The company supplies distributors and major fabrication and engineering companies nationally and internationally. In 2015 it launched its state of the art Technology & Training Centre to support the training of much needed welders for this country. (Adrian has also created the Weldability Sif Foundation a registered charity to support vocational skills training in colleges across the UK; and he is Managing Director of Welding World a specialist magazine for the welding sector.)

He is passionate about Hertfordshire as he was born in Stevenage and lives and works in the county. He is the Chairman and Co-Founder of biz4Biz, an organisation established to support business owners and like-minded business people in and around Hertfordshire and has enjoyed the support of co-directors and many business professionals in raising the profile of the group. He is one of two SME Representatives on the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board.

He is also a Governor of the North Herts College and Director, Trustee and Chair of Governors of the North Herts Studio Schools Trust. In the past four years, the Trust has been responsible for establishing two Da Vinci Studio Schools in Hertfordshire, one in Stevenage (Science and Engineering) and one in Letchworth (Creative); and recently welcomed The Thomas Alleyne Academy in Stevenage to the fold.

Chris Turvey (Treasurer)

Chris is recently retired, having spent in excess of 40 years in the construction industry, mostly as a Contract Manager/Director. His skill-set includes 12 years running Piling Contracts for developments requiring specialist foundation solutions where he was required to develop geotechnical expertise. Latterly in his career he was tasked with running contracts for flood damage insurance claims both for refurbishment and future proofing to mitigate possible future losses.

Chris has lived in North Hertfordshire for 32 years, the last 28 of which in Little Wymondley - within a community and area about which he cares passionately.

Hayley Ward (Secretary)

Hayley's career for the past 21 years has been in marketing for various international business intelligence/events companies, working across several industries in that time, including commodities, financial services, law and architecture.

Hayley has lived in North Hertfordshire for 21 years, and chose to settle in Little Wymondley 18 years ago due to the character, ambience and community spirit of the village. Hayley is passionate about preventing the villages of the Parish from becoming part of "Stitchin" - whereby the areas around the towns of Stevenage and Hitchin become so developed, that they eventually form one huge town, with the villages of Wymondley Parish being swallowed up into this "mega-town" and losing their individual characters forever.

Cathy Kerby (NP Author)

Cathy took (very) early retirement in March 2009, having worked as a civil servant for 33 years. Much of that time was spent interpreting and applying legislation in a regional adjudication role; and subsequently working as a senior policy advisor for the Health and

Safety Executive, in areas such as Better Regulation, changing patterns of employment, and construction.

Born in Hertford, and having lived in the county all her life, Cathy became involved in Parish life about two years ago and now lives with her partner in Little Wymondley, where she enjoys village life and walking her dog through the surrounding fields and countryside. A keen genealogist, she is passionate about protecting our heritage and natural environment for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

Derek Carter

Derek is a retired teacher who has lived in Great Wymondley for 41 years, and is actively involved in village and parish life.

Ken Crowe

Ken has lived in the Hitchin area for most of his life, and has been a resident of Little Wymondley for the last 24 years. With children and grandchildren who live in the Parish, (the latter who attend Wymondley JMI School) he is particularly keen to ensure a sustainable future for them within the community.

Jennie Hawkins

Jennie has been employed as a Company Secretary, Finance & HR Director since 1981, working alongside her husband to establish a successful international business, based in Letchworth.

She has been living in the Parish for 17 years, having moved to Little Wymondley from Stevenage, and enjoys village life and the community spirit that exists locally. She believes the Green Belt is important to prevent the coalescence of major local towns; and strongly believes that maintaining the openness of the countryside is important for the well-being and happiness of the local community.

Robert Howard

Robert is a life-long resident of Little Wymondley, who owns a home here and wishes to remain for the rest of his life. He is an active and passionate member of the community, with a keen interest in its history, environment and way of life.

His local family history can be traced back to the early 18th century and, notably, two of his great-uncles gave their life serving their country and are commemorated on the World War 1 memorial plaque in St Mary's church, Little Wymondley.

Simon Martin

Simon has worked in the Commercial Transport sector in excess of 30 years, managing workshops and commercial vehicle fleets. In the last 11 years he has worked for local government, managing many elements associated with fleet vehicles and, more recently, in Waste Management.

He moved to Little Wymondley in 2013 with his partner after a long search looking for the right house and location for their needs. Having found this they integrated into the community quickly, by actively joining in with social events and meeting people whilst also making new friends. The appeal of the village was its open spaces, accessible country walks and community spirit that fits in with their lifestyle.

Julian Tribe

Julian moved to Little Wymondley with his parents as a baby in 1973. Having moved away as a young adult, he always enjoyed visiting his parents, (who still live in the village). Julian moved back to the village in 2015, something he always wanted to do, and learned of the WPNPF group. He eagerly joined up, to help make the right decisions for the Parish based

on the survey results, as he strongly agrees with preserving the Green Belt and maintaining the unique character of the Parish for future generations.

Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee Contact Information

Contact Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan Committee on 0330 900 2777

Name	Location	Phone number	Email address
Adrian Hawkins (Chairman)	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Chris Turvey (Treasurer)	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Hayley Ward (Secretary)	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Cathy Kerby (NP Author)	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Derek Carter	Great Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Ken Crowe	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Jennie Hawkins	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Robert Howard	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Simon Martin	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups
Julian Tribe	Little Wymondley	0330 900 2777	wymondleyactionforum@googlegroups

Annex 13 – Statutory Consultee Letter



CONSULTATION PERIOD 11TH APRIL 2016 – 25TH MAY 2016.

We have identified your organisation as one that may have an interest in our Neighbourhood Plan.

The Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Plan is available to view online at:

www.wymondley.org

On the website you will be able to leave your comments about the plan.

C. Turvey.

For and on behalf of

Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Planning Forum (WPNPF)

Annex 14 – Consultation Leaflet



Draft Neighbourhood Plan for Wymondley Parish 2015-2031

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

DEADLINE FOR YOU TO HAVE YOUR SAY – 25th May 2016

The Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Planning Forum have put together a draft Neighbourhood Plan, based on the survey responses you gave last summer. North Herts District Council's Local Plan will be back for public consultation in the summer. By having our own Plan, we can set policies for our Parish and, once the draft Plan has been through the legal process and formally made, it becomes part of the strategic Local Plan for the area and must be taken account of by local planning authorities.

We now need **your** opinion on the draft plan so we can ensure it reflects what **YOU** want before we submit it to NHDC. This is your chance to tell us if we have the draft plan right. **Please tell us by 25th May 2016.**

You can view the plan and make your comments online at www.wymondley.org



or email us at: info@wymondley.org

No internet access? No problem!

Printed copies of the draft Plan are available at the following places (along with response forms):

- The Plumet of Feathers and The Buck's Head (public houses), Little Wymondley
 - Redcoats Farmhouse Hotel, Redcoats Green
- The Green Man (public house), Great Wymondley
 - St. Mary's Church, Little Wymondley
 - St. Mary's Church, Great Wymondley
 - The Chapel, Little Wymondley

Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Draft Plan: YOUR Views Count!

What's the Wymondley Parish Draft Plan about?

Based on your Survey Responses, the Plan aims to offer sustainable quality of life improvements to Wymondley Parish and its visitors, while taking account of our Parish character and heritage, and protecting the intrinsic beauty of its surrounding countryside and Green Belt.

The Draft Plan focuses on the issues you said mattered most to you:

1. Preservation of the Existing Green Belt
2. Alleviation of Flood Risk
3. Traffic Management

Contents List of the Draft Plan:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning System | 7. Green Infrastructure and Spaces |
| 2. About the Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Planning Forum (WPNPF) | 8. Transport Links |
| 3. Strategic Overview of our Planning Policies | 9. Traffic Management |
| 4. Natural and Historic Environments | 10. Education |
| 5. Green Belt | 11. Telecommunications and Broadband |
| 6. Flood Risk | 12. Supporting Local Business and Employment |
| | 13. Social Cohesion and Well-being |
| | 14. Housing and Other Development |
| | 15. Next Steps |

Please don't leave it to everyone else to give their views!

Please take your part in the Draft Plan - it's your neighbourhood!

If you have questions, please come along to the

Wymondley Parish Council's Annual Assembly

on 18th April, at 7:30pm,

at Wymondley M.I. School, Sicut Road, Little Wymondley, where the Chairman of the WPNPF will be happy to take your questions.

Or you can call us on 0330 900 2777

THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION CLOSES ON 25th MAY 2016

Please let us have your comments before then

THANK YOU

Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Planning Forum