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How the Neighbourhood Plan is organised

The Neighbourhood Plan is organised into the following sections:

Section 1: Introduction

This section provides an overview of what neighbourhood plans are and indicates where the Oundle Neighbourhood Plan boundary lays. It sets out the Plan period and the planning context together with a brief synopsis of the consultation undertaken and the evidence base and it provides a brief explanation of how the Neighbourhood Plan must contribute toward sustainable development and meet EU environmental and habitat regulations.

Section 2: About Oundle

This section provides a portrait of the Parish describing its location, brief history, key features and some background facts and figures.

Section 3: Key Issues

This section briefly sets out the process undertaken through the Oundle 2020 project evolving into the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and the issues which have been raised through community consultation.

Section 4: Vision and Objectives

This section sets out the overall vision and objectives for development.

Section 5: Neighbourhood Plan policies

This section sets out the policies that have been developed to support the overall vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Section 6: Plan Delivery and Implementation

This section outlines how the Neighbourhood Plan will be delivered over the Plan period to 2031.

Section 7: Monitoring and Review

This section outlines the monitoring and review mechanism for the Neighbourhood Plan.
1.0 Introduction

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

1.1 Neighbourhood plans were introduced as part of the Localism Act 2011. Their purpose is to enable local communities to have a greater say about the use and development of land and buildings in their area. Preparing a neighbourhood plan provides an opportunity to shape where development will go and what it will look like. Once ‘made’ (i.e. adopted) a neighbourhood plan forms part of the statutory Development Plan for the area. This means that planning applications must be determined by the local planning authority in accordance with the policies of the neighbourhood plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Oundle Neighbourhood Plan Area and Plan Period

1.2 The Oundle Neighbourhood Plan (the Neighbourhood Plan) covers the period 2011 to 2031. It includes a shared vision and objectives for Oundle together with planning policies and actions which will contribute towards achieving the vision. This corresponds with the current Local Plan period for the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011 – 2031 which was adopted in July 2016.

1.3 Oundle Town Council, which has overall responsibility for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, established a Working Group to undertake this task. The Working Group, which includes local residents and several town councillors, has undertaken this task through a process of research and evidence gathering together with stakeholder and community involvement (see paragraphs 1.10 – 1.12).

1.4 In December 2012 Oundle Town Council applied to East Northamptonshire Council for the whole of the Parish to be included within the Neighbourhood Plan Area (the Area). This was to ensure that, if appropriate, policies could be developed in respect of land outside the town but within the wider Parish. The application was subsequently approved in June 2013. The boundary of the Area is shown in Figure 1; it closely follows the River Nene to the East and South but does not encompass Oundle Marina or Barnwell Country Park, which are situated within the adjoining Barnwell Parish. To the West the Area extends just beyond Oundle Wood and incorporates Park Wood to the North. In total, the Area extends to approximately 900 hectares.
The Planning Context of the Neighbourhood Plan

1.5 The Neighbourhood Plan is required by legislation to meet a set of ‘basic conditions’. It must:

- have appropriate regard to national planning policy and guidance which is largely set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG);
- contribute to sustainable development through improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions or through the consideration of measures to prevent, reduce or offset any potential adverse effects arising from proposals;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the ‘Development Plan’.

For Oundle, the Development Plan currently consists of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Joint Core Strategy) 2011 - 2031; the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2011 - 2031; and a number of ‘saved’ policies in the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP). The RNOTP covers the period to 2021. East Northamptonshire Council is preparing a Local Plan Part 2 to update the RNOTP and supplement the policies of the
Joint Core Strategy; a draft version was published in November 2018 with an extended consultation in February 2019 for residential site allocations in Oundle; and

- be compatible with European Union obligations, most notably directives requiring consideration to be given to the likely significant effects of the plan on the environment and on European Sites recognised under the EU Habitats Directive.

1.6 Figure 2, below, illustrates which plans will form the Development Plan for Oundle once the Neighbourhood Plan is made and the Local Plan Part 2 is adopted.

![Figure 2. The Development Plan](image)

**Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment**

1.7 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) enables the environmental effects of a plan to be taken into consideration as part of the plan preparation process. However, a full SEA is only required where the effects upon the environment are judged to be ‘significant’. Similarly, a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required where there are likely to be significant effects on European Sites recognised under the EU Habitats Directive, including Special Protection Areas (SPA). The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA, an area of European importance for a wide variety of over-wintering birds, is located approximately 6.5kms from Oundle at its nearest point (Thorpe Waterville).

1.8 The process for determining whether or not it is necessary to undertake a full SEA and/or HRA is called ‘screening’. Screening reports have been prepared in support of the plan.
1.9 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) differs from SEA in that it examines not just the environmental effects of a plan but the wider social and economic impacts. Whilst SA is not required for neighbourhood plans, Government policy emphasises that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. To help determine the most appropriate sites to allocate for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan an assessment of Oundle sites was undertaken by East Northamptonshire Council in November 2018. The process that was followed is set out in the Housing Sites Assessment Background Paper.

**Evidence Base, Community Engagement and Consultation**

1.10 In 2010, the Town Council initiated the concept of Oundle 2020 Vision to develop a positive vision for the future of the town; to provide a framework for related town council activities and to ensure that Oundle could accommodate future development without losing the fundamental and defining characteristics of the town. The project was led by a steering group of residents and town and district councillors.

1.11 However, in 2011 Oundle was selected as a front runner for neighbourhood planning by the Government and funding was received to develop proposals. The Oundle 2020 Vision Steering Group evolved into the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group with responsibility for preparing the Plan on behalf of the Town Council. To date, consultation undertaken since 2010 has included an Oundle 2020 Vision survey, a survey of students at Oundle Middle School, a Neighbourhood Plan launch event, the Oundle Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, a young persons’ consultation event, public events and presentations, newsletter feedback and focus group workshops. The Working Group has worked closely with landowners and land agents in developing the Plan’s approach to housing land allocations and has also consulted a range of other stakeholders.

1.12 The policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan are not only underpinned by views expressed by the local community and other stakeholders but by evidence from a variety of other sources including Joint Core Strategy background documents; information available from East Northamptonshire Council and other agencies; published local sources; and reports prepared by the Working Group. The background information used to produce the Neighbourhood Plan is referred to as the ‘evidence base’. Key documents that form the evidence base are available on the Town Council’s Neighbourhood Plan web page at: [http://www.oundle.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan.html](http://www.oundle.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan.html).
2.0 About Oundle

Location and History

2.1 Oundle is an historic market town located towards the northern edge of East Northamptonshire. It is less than six miles from Thrapston to the south and approximately 12 miles from the centre of Peterborough to the north-east. Oundle is connected to Thrapston (A14) and Peterborough (A1) via the A605, which runs along the line of the former railway to the east of Oundle. The town is located on rising ground above the River Nene and is mainly between eight and twelve metres above river level. Most of the town is relatively flat. However, the difference in levels becomes obvious at certain points towards the south.

2.2 The Parish of Oundle covers approximately 900ha of land including the town Oundle Golf Club and Oundle Wood to the West; Park Wood to the North; and land to the East of the A605 and bounded by the River Nene. Oundle Marina, located just to the South of the Parish boundary and adjacent to Barnwell Country Park, is within the Parish of Barnwell whilst the vacant Riverside Hotel and the Laxton Drive development on the A605 roundabout are situated within the adjoining Parish of Ashton. The location of Oundle is shown in Figure 3.

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1 Percentage figures referred to in this section are derived from the 2011 Census unless otherwise specified.
2.3 The town is home to approximately 6,000 inhabitants. It acts as a rural service centre for several smaller villages in the surrounding area which rely on the town for shopping and a range of services.

2.4 Oundle has been settled since the Iron Age and was originally a trading place and market for local farmers and craftsmen. It is the death place of St Wilfrid in 709 AD and the location of one of his monasteries. The current St Peter's Church occupies the same site as St Wilfrid's original church. Saint Cetta or Cett, a 7th-century saint, is the Patron Saint of Oundle. He was buried in the monastery in the town around 1000 AD and a chapel was built in the 11th century to commemorate him. The presence of this shrine, and the market charter, explain much of the growth of Oundle in the 12th century.

2.5 Oundle has had a grammar school since at least 1465. Sir William Laxton, a former Lord Mayor of London, was educated at the school. He founded Laxton Grammar School in 1556, administered by the Worshipful Company of Grocers, from which Oundle School evolved.
Population and Demographics

2.6 Between 2001 and 2011 the population of Oundle increased by 7.2% to 5,735. This compares with an increase of 13.3% for East Northamptonshire as a whole and 11.4% for England and Wales.

2.7 The age profile of Oundle is significantly different from that for East Northamptonshire and England as a whole. Table 1, below, shows that Oundle has more than double the percentage of 15-19 year olds and a significantly higher percentage of 10 to 14 year olds than East Northamptonshire. The latter difference is due to the term time boarders at Oundle School. Approximately 900 people were living in communal establishments in 2011. Without these boarders the population profile of Oundle would be much closer to the normal distribution. However, there are consequently lower than average percentages of the population in all five year divisions between the ages of 20 and 69 in Oundle. The percentage of the population aged 70 and above is slightly greater in Oundle than in East Northamptonshire and England as a whole.
While the population of Oundle did not grow as quickly as some other towns in Northamptonshire or East Northamptonshire between 2001 and 2011, growth has not been insignificant and is in line with national population trends. The age profile suggests that a higher than average teenage population needs to be accommodated and served by local facilities in Oundle and that there is an increasingly aged number of inhabitants in the town. The population increase in those aged 65 and over was 2.6% between 2001 and 2011 in comparison to 1.9% for East Northamptonshire. (see Table 2).

### Employment

Oundle is served by a number of commercial areas. The first to be developed was around the Oundle Marina which is accessed from Barnwell Road and is approximately half a kilometre from the town centre. It lies across the River Nene
and its floodplain from the main town and is in the Parish of Barnwell. The businesses located here have been associated with boat building since the founder of Fairline Boats created the marina and established the firm’s first factory in 1967.

2.10 The second significant commercial area is Nene Valley Business Park which is located to the east of the town and is directly accessible from the A605. This employment area hosts a variety of different businesses including the headquarters of PGR Construction Group and a second production area for Fairline Boats which, following administration and a buy-out in 2016, is now operating as Fairline Yachts.

2.11 Further commercial areas exist along East Road and at the Wharf and small businesses also operate from the Courthouse and other properties along West Street. With the restructuring of Fairline Boats, Oundle School is now the largest employer with over 700 employees operating from 100 buildings across the town. Oundle’s town centre also provides employment, primarily in retail and service businesses with a mixture of national chains and independent stores which create a vibrant location for shopping, eating and meeting.

**Education, Qualifications and Occupations**

*Oundle School*

2.12 Oundle is synonymous with the public school established by Sir William Laxton in 1556 through an endowment by the Worshipful Company of Grocers. This created a ‘Free Grammar School’ in Oundle, where he had been educated at the original Gild School, founded in 1506.

2.13 The School’s buildings, date from the 17th to the 21st century, and are dispersed throughout the town. The School’s website comments that ‘this level of co-existence with the town gives the School a unique and distinctive character; pupils pass through the streets as they go to lessons, games or other activities and this instils in them an appreciation of being part of both a School and a local community.’

2.14 In 1876, the Worshipful Company of Grocers divided the school into two parts - Laxton Grammar School and Oundle School. In 2000, following a long period of integration, the two schools united under the common name of Oundle School and retained the name of Laxton for the Day House.

2.15 The school has completed a number of major developments recently including the Cripps Library, SciTec and the Advanced Centre for Modern Engineering, a significant

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2 http://www.oundleschool.org.uk/About-Oundle

Oundle Neighbourhood Plan

May 2019
upgrade to the Design and Technology Department within the Patrick Engineering Centre.

2.16 Oundle School is the third largest independent boarding and day school in England, and has 1400 pupils on it roll, including 860 full boarders who live at the school. Its continued success in has had, and will continue to have, a significant impact on how the town operates and its reputation both nationally and internationally. The extensive land holdings and buildings that the school has, many dating from the 17th and 18th century, gives Oundle a unique ‘university town’ appearance and feel within a much smaller market town. Within the Corporation of Oundle School is Laxton Junior School, a day school located in East Road, Oundle for children aged 4 to 11.

State Schools

2.17 Oundle has recently moved from a three to a two-tier education system. It has both Secondary (age 11-18) and Primary (aged 4-11) state schools. Prince William School, a secondary school located on Herne Road, has around 1,200 pupils including approximately 300 in the Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13). The school became an academy in 2015 sponsored by the EMLC Academy Trust.

2.18 Oundle Church of England Primary School is located west of Cotterstock Road to the north of the town and serves approximately 450 pupils between the ages of 4 and 11. The school merged in 2016 with Oundle and Kings Cliffe Middle School to form one primary school with the Kings Cliffe site being closed prior to this. Planning permission has been granted for housing on the site of the former Primary School in Milton Road, however this may be undeliverable due to covenants restricting the use of the site to educational purposes.

Occupation and Qualifications

2.19 The most frequent occupations listed by Oundle residents in the 2011 Census were ‘professionals’ (23.9% compared to the national average of 17.5%); ‘managers, directors and senior officials’ (14.7% compared to the national average of 10.9%); and ‘associated professional and technical’ (13.0% compared to the national average of 12.8%). Some 37.5% of Oundle’s population has either a degree or a level 4 qualification or above compared to 24.2% for East Northamptonshire. Approximately 17.6% of the population of Oundle has no qualifications compared to 22.3% for East Northamptonshire.

2.20 On average, Oundle residents have higher qualifications and tend to hold higher paid positions when compared with Northamptonshire and national figures. Oundle is therefore relatively affluent and has limited deprivation; the census indicates that 53%
of all households do not have any dimension of deprivation compared to 48% for East Northamptonshire and 42% for England.

**Services and Facilities**

**2.21** Oundle is an historic market town providing a wide range of services for its residents, for neighbouring villages and for visitors. The facilities and services are consistent with a settlement of its size and character and deliver a convenience offer primarily to meet local needs. A range of public services including the town council offices, a new community hub, a doctors’ surgery, a library and police and fire services are all co-located on Fletton Way off Glapthorn Road.

**2.22** The town has two medium sized supermarkets: the Cooperative, located in the town centre on St Osyths Lane, and a Waitrose store, developed in 2013, on East Road towards the edge of the town. Other retailers and service providers tend to be high quality independent traders including butchers, booksellers, gift shops, restaurants and florists which are concentrated around Market Place and adjoining streets. The town also has two banks. A local market is held every Thursday in the town centre and there is a farmers’ market on the second Saturday of the month. There are very few vacant shops within the town and the level of turnover of businesses is very low.

**2.23** The town hosts several festivals throughout the year including an international music festival, a literary festival and a food festival. The world conker championships are also held nearby. These events, together with the boarding school and the historic nature and pleasant environment of Oundle, attract a significant number of visitors to the town.

**Travel Patterns**

**2.24** The 2011 Census indicates that car ownership in Oundle averages 1.38 cars per household. Only 14.3% of households have no access to a car and over 40% have more than one car. This is in line with the average ownership recorded for East Northamptonshire (1.48) but higher than that for the East Midlands (1.24) and England (1.16). This high level of car ownership is partly explained by the rural location of Oundle with the private car being the only realistic option for many longer journeys outside the town due to limited public transport services.

**2.25** The proportion of journeys to work on foot or bike is higher in Oundle than for East Northamptonshire, the East Midlands or England. This may be because a significant proportion of the resident population work in the local area. Approximately 20% of those living in the Oundle Parish who travel to work choose to walk compared to 11% for England as a whole.
2.26  Oundle is served by two bus routes (24 and X4) that operate throughout the week. These serve bus stops at various locations along the A427 including West Street, Market Place and North Street. Most bus stops have shelters and those near Market Place have real-time information displays. The X4 provides an hourly bus service that passes through Oundle and operates between Peterborough and Milton Keynes. The 24 route operates between Peterborough and Thrapston, serving Oundle on an hourly frequency. However, only 4% of the local population travel to work by bus while two thirds of work journeys are by car, taxi or motorcycle.

**Housing and Tenure Mix**

2.27  Table 3 indicates that 67% of homes in Oundle are owner occupied compared to 63.3% in England and 72.4% across East Northamptonshire. However, the percentage of homes owned outright is higher in Oundle than East Northamptonshire whilst the percentage of homes owned with a mortgage is almost 11% lower. This difference is possibly because a higher percentage of the population of Oundle is of retirement age and this group are more likely to have repaid their mortgage.

Table 3

![Image of Table 3](image-url)
2.28 Table 4 indicates that approximately 44.7% of dwellings in Oundle are detached; this is above the average for East Northamptonshire and England. Semi-detached properties represent approximately one quarter of the housing stock of Oundle while terraced housing provides another fifth. Whilst the percentage of homes that are flats (6.2%) is consistent with the figure for East Northamptonshire, it is significantly lower than the national average.

The Historic Environment

2.29 Oundle Conservation Area is focused on the town centre. It includes about 210 listed building entries with a relatively high number (12) of Grade I and Grade II* buildings. Within the Conservation Area the former Saxon settlement enclosure, located to the north and west of St Peter’s church, is a Scheduled Monument. There are also several listed buildings outside the Conservation Area and a Scheduled Monument at South Bridge on Mill Road.

The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

2.30 Oundle town is surrounded by two Environmental Character areas; to the east is the Lower Nene (Aldwincle to Wansford) area and to the west lays the Rockingham Forest area. The Lower Nene is characterised by the progressively meandering course of the River Nene, swollen by an increasing number of tributaries and with some extensive flat floodplain landscapes either side of the river. Agricultural land use is a mixture of arable and pasture. To the west, the Rockingham Forest area is one of the most well-known and celebrated landscapes in Northamptonshire. It takes its name from the royal hunting forest that existed across the area. Today the forest is only a fragment...
of a much larger area which extended from Northampton to Stamford. A key issue in relation to this character area is to ensure the preservation of the remaining forest and woodland from further loss or degradation.

2.31 Oundle is approximately 6km north of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA)/Ramsar site which is characterised by reclaimed gravel pit workings and provides a wetland habitat of international importance for over-wintering birds. In 2012 the Government established 12 Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs), of which the Nene Valley was one. This area extends beyond the boundary of the SPA; it includes parts of Oundle, reaching as far as Peterborough. The Nene Valley NIA Partnership was formed by its stakeholders to develop a strategic and joined up approach to tackle the impact of growth on sensitive ecosystems in the Nene Valley.

2.32 The nearest Sites of Special Scientific Interest are located outside of the Parish at Ashton Wold to the east and Glapthorn Cow Pasture to the North West. However, Oundle and Park Woods are both designated as ancient woodland and Local Wildlife Sites of county importance. Snipe Meadow, located on the north-east edge of the town and Biggin Fishpond on the northern edge of Oundle Wood are also recognised as Local Wildlife Sites.

3.0 Key Issues

3.1 Initial consultation, undertaken as part of the Oundle 2020 Vision project, indicated that the community perceives Oundle as a friendly, safe and good place to live. While there is a preference for limiting future development there is an acknowledgement that the town has certain issues that should be tackled; in particular, the relief of traffic congestion and parking problems, the enhancement of leisure and recreational facilities, and the provision of a wider range of shops and more events were all identified as areas which could improve Oundle.

3.2 Results from the subsequent 2014 Oundle Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire indicated that respondents consider that improved medical facilities, better provision for young people, improved access to school facilities and protection of open spaces were also key issues for the Neighbourhood Plan to address. Consultation also indicated that the pattern of development to accommodate future growth should focus on the delivery of several small, dispersed around the town but within a 1 mile radius of the centre to maintain a compact and walkable community.
4.0 The Vision and Objectives

Our vision is that Oundle remains a stunningly beautiful, thriving market town renowned for being a fantastic place to live and to work and a joy to visit.

4.1 The vision will be realised in the following ways:
An active, inclusive community in which:

- Everyone can live an active healthy lifestyle and receive the encouragement and support required to do so - everyone has access to services and facilities for leisure, recreation, education, health and other needs for a secure and good quality day to day life.
- The town is linked to nearby villages and parishes who feel welcomed into Oundle and who participate fully in the life of the town, making many Oundle based organisations viable and successful.

A thriving market town with:

- A clear sense of place based on its historic character, the market place, and its links to the river and surrounding countryside.
- A successful and dynamic town centre with regular market days, supported by other businesses, providing employment for the community.
- Events and festivals that residents value and that bring in visitors - a strong commitment to environmentally sound practices.

A safe and distinctive environment including:

- The town’s historic character enhanced and accessible to experience and enjoy.
- A clean and pleasant town centre that is accessible and safe for all.
- A high quality and environmentally sustainable design for all developments.
- Improved links within the town and to surrounding villages and countryside.
- Accessible green space and open areas that enhance the character of the town and support informal outdoor leisure.
- Enable flood risk reduction, contribute to wildlife conservation and help reduce the use of cars within the town.

Development positively planned with:

- Housing that contributes to ENC plans and enhances the overall character of the town.
- Access and transport that enables the town centre and other businesses to thrive.
- The opportunity to enhance the viability of existing businesses and enable growth and new business investment.
- Health, education and leisure facilities that are accessible to all without undue reliance on cars, as the population using them grows and changes character.
- So the town centre and other facilities that can be enjoyed and experienced without excessive noise and impact from traffic and vehicles: a sense of being designed for people.
4.2 The following table lists the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan which will help to deliver the vision and the policies, proposals and supporting actions designed to contribute towards the achievement of each objective. The policies, proposals and supporting actions are set out in section 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Objectives</th>
<th>Related policies and supporting actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 To ensure adequate provision of community, recreation and sporting facilities is maintained over the Plan period, identifying options for enhanced facilities where required.</td>
<td>Policy 2, 3, 5, 12, 13, 20, 21, 22, 24. Supporting Action 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 To safeguard the mix of residential and thriving commercial uses in the town centre; encourage retail opportunities and develop market activity as a means of stimulating retail and tourism.</td>
<td>Policy 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 To reduce traffic in the town centre and address parking concerns at key locations.</td>
<td>Policy 14, 26. Supporting Action 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 To improve connections with community facilities and the countryside by introducing new cycleways and footpaths in and around the town.</td>
<td>Policy 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 To propose the preferred site or sites for future residential development in accordance with the requirements of North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and promote the development of any new housing within 1 mile of the town centre in order to support connectivity and maintain the compact nature of the town.</td>
<td>Policy 1, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26. Supporting Action 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 To identify sites for new business or industry where required, safeguarding existing sites for employment opportunities.</td>
<td>Policy 11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 To safeguard existing views and green spaces and, where possible, provide additional or enhanced green space as part of new developments.</td>
<td>Policy 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 To safeguard and promote those features of the town which encourage tourism and provide the opportunity for tourism related development.</td>
<td>Policy 6, 9, 10, 24, 26.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 To maintain Oundle as a centre of educational excellence.</td>
<td>Policy 12, 13.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.0 Neighbourhood Plan Policies and Proposals

Introduction

5.1 This section sets out the policies and proposals that will support and help to deliver the vision and objectives outlined in section 4. The Neighbourhood Plan does not include all land use planning policies relevant to Oundle and proposals for development will therefore be judged not only against all relevant policies of the Neighbourhood Plan but also against all other relevant policies of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Neighbourhood Plan also includes a Policies Map to illustrate policies and proposals which are capable of being shown on a map including areas of land allocated for development and sites protected by policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. This section also includes ‘supporting actions’ which the Town Council will pursue in order to help realise the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.2 The policies within this section are grouped under the following headings:

- Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Built Environment.
- Promoting and Enhancing the Economy.
- Protecting and Enhancing Community Services and Facilities.
- Improving Accessibility and Connectivity.
- Meeting Housing Requirements
- Securing Developer Contributions.

5.3 The key components of the overall strategy include:

- The allocation of land to deliver a minimum of 312 homes in addition to existing commitments and completions distributed across the town on a range of smaller sites;
- The protection of existing green spaces together with additional provision.
- The allocation of land for community use including a site for Festivals and land for cricket provision, allotments and cemetery expansion.
- The improvement and provision of additional pedestrian and cycle connections into, out of and around the town.
- The safeguarding of existing employment areas and the focus of commercial and economic activity within the town centre.
- The protection of existing heritage and the promotion of high quality design in new development.
Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Built Environment

The Oundle Settlement Boundary

5.4 Policy 11 of the Joint Core Strategy defines the roles that various settlements are to play in building a more sustainable and self-reliant North Northamptonshire. It defines Oundle as a ‘Market Town’ where the aim is to provide a strong service role for the local community and the wider rural hinterland. Development within the open countryside beyond the town is to be carefully managed to safeguard the character and beauty of the countryside and ensure that development does not result in coalescence between settlements.

5.5 The Neighbourhood Plan includes a ‘Settlement Boundary’ for the town of Oundle to enable a clear distinction to be made between the town and open countryside whilst planning positively for the growth of the town. The Settlement Boundary is shown on the Policies Map; it largely maintains the boundary in the current Local Plan Part 2 (the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan) but has been extended to include land allocated for development in the Neighbourhood Plan whilst addressing the plan objectives of keeping the town compact and walkable with new build development no more than a mile from the town centre.

5.6 Land and buildings outside of the Settlement Boundary are considered to be in the open countryside where development is regulated by stricter rural planning policies set out in the Local Plan. However, it should be noted that any land included within the Settlement Boundary does not have a guarantee of approval of planning permission, as proposals must be assessed against the policies in the Development Plan as a whole.

Policy O1 The Settlement Boundary

Development within the Settlement Boundary, as defined on the Policies Map, will be granted planning permission where it accords with other policies of the Development Plan. Outside the Settlement Boundary, development will only be permitted if it complies with rural planning policies in the Development Plan.

5.7 At its northerly end the Settlement Boundary coincides with the boundary of the Plan Area over part of its length. The adjacent land outside the Plan Area is within the Parish of Glatthorn and the Neighbourhood Plan cannot include policies which seek to manage development beyond the Plan Area. However, adequate provision has been made to meet the needs of Oundle. Therefore, proposals on land adjacent to the Settlement Boundary and outside the Plan Area will not be supported where the development would conflict with the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.
Supporting Action 1 – The Settlement Boundary

Oundle Town Council will support development adjacent to the Settlement Boundary on land outside the Plan Area where the proposal supports the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Protection of Green Spaces

5.8 Green spaces are a vital part of a vibrant and healthy community and are of great importance to the character and identity of a place. They include parks and gardens; natural and semi-natural open space; amenity greenspace; children’s play areas; allotments; cemeteries and churchyards; and outdoor sports and recreation facilities. These areas are valued for a wide range of reasons including visual amenity, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife. East Northamptonshire Council has published the Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy (April 2017), available HERE. This evaluates the quantity, quality and accessibility of existing open spaces and playing fields in the district, providing an important evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.9 Open spaces in Oundle contribute not only to the well-being and quality of life for residents and to the distinct, historic character of Oundle but also to the enduring appeal of the town for residents and visitors alike. However, uncontrolled changes can irrevocably alter the character or value of these areas of open space. Within Oundle a significant amount of open space is in the ownership of Oundle School or is used for specific sports uses. The accessibility of these areas of open space for the local community has diminished in recent years as safeguarding issues have placed a greater emphasis on security for children and schools.

5.10 The Joint Core Strategy indicates that individual areas of open space can be designated for protection through neighbourhood plans whilst the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) precludes development on existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, unless the facility is surplus to requirements; or equivalent or better replacement is to be made in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss. This requirement is also reflected in the Joint Core Strategy, Policy 7. Within the Neighbourhood Plan, sites afforded such protection are defined as 'Important Open Spaces'.

5.11 The National Planning Policy Framework enables the local community to designate areas of ‘Local Green Space’. These sites enjoy a higher level of protection than other open space and enable development of the land to be ruled out other than in very
special circumstances. The NPPF indicates that the Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most open space. The designation should only be used where the space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves and is not an extensive tract of land. It must also be demonstrably special to the local community and must hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty; its historic significance; its recreational value; its tranquillity or its richness of wildlife.

5.12 An Open Space Background Paper has been prepared to determine sites to be designated as Local Green Space or ‘Important Open Space’. Areas of Local Green Space are essentially unique and of a character which could not be replicated elsewhere. The background paper provides the rationale for the designation of the eight Local Green Spaces listed in Policy O2 and the fourteen areas of Important Open Space listed in Policy O3 which are shown on the Policies Map. Areas of Important Open Space enjoy a lower, though very significant, level of protection as outlined in Policy O3. Proposals which involve the loss of Important Open Space will need to be accompanied by an open space assessment in accordance with Paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

5.13 The intention of Policy O2 and Policy O3 is therefore to protect open space for Oundle’s future generations. This will generally safeguard these areas against development, preserving their special characteristics and their value to the community.

5.14 Minor amenity land, such as roadside verges or small pockets of amenity space within areas of development, can enhance the environment by providing green spaces which can provide visual amenity; improve biodiversity; or provide informal play space. The contribution that trees make to the quality of these green spaces can also be significant. Unlike areas of Local Green Space and Important Open Space, minor areas of amenity land are too numerous to show on the Policies Map. Policy O4 is intended to protect such areas unless it is concluded that the benefits of development outweigh the loss of the amenity land.
Policy O2 Local Green Space

Development on land designated as Local Green Space on the Policies Map will not be permitted except for very special circumstances such as:

1. Provision of appropriate facilities to service a current use or function; or
2. Alterations or replacements to existing buildings or structures, provided that these do not significantly increase the size and scale of the original building

The 8 sites proposed in this category are:
- Fletton Field
- Snipe Meadow
- Oundle Pocket, Skate and Recreation Park
- Lytham Park Play Area
- Oundle Town Cricket Pitch (owned by Oundle School)
- Land around The Most Holy Name of Jesus Church
- Land around Oundle School Chapel in Milton Road
- Land around St Peter’s Church
- Oundle Cemetery off Stoke Doyle Road
### Policy O3 Important Open Space

Areas designated as Important Open Space on the Policies Map will be safeguarded from development unless:

1. There are no significant adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, ecology or heritage assets and either:
2. There is not an over provision of that particular type of open space in Oundle and the site cannot be used to meet a deficiency in any other type of open space in Oundle; or
3. A site of equivalent or better quantity and quality can be made available to the community prior to the use of the existing site ceasing.

Planning permission may be granted for a small, ancillary building on an area of Important Open Space where related to existing sports provision on the site.

New areas of open space provided as part of the development of a site allocated for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan will be protected in accordance with criteria 1 to 3 of this policy.

**The 14 sites proposed in this category are:**
- Oundle C E Primary School Playing Fields
- The Play Area North of Creed Road
- Land between Creed Road and Hillfield Road
- Play Area at Cricketer’s Way
- The Rugby, Bowls and Tennis Clubs in Occupation Road
- Oundle School Sports Facilities and Playing Pitches (owned by Oundle School)
- Home Close Field
- Oundle Town Football Club pitches (owned by Oundle School)
- Wakerley Close Playing Area
- Red Kite Road Play Area
- Sutton Road Open Space and Play Area
- Oundle Junior Football Club Playing Area (owned by Oundle School)
- Prince William School site in Herne Road
Policy O4 Other Amenity Land

Proposals that would result in the loss of amenity land that contribute to the character and visual amenity of an area will be supported where the benefits of development clearly and demonstrably outweigh the loss of the amenity land.

The Provision and Enhancement of Open Space

5.15 New housing can create additional demand for open space and proposals, depending upon their size and location, may offer opportunities to provide public open spaces, other green spaces and landscaping as an integral part of the development. For example, the sites allocated for housing as part of the Neighbourhood Plan provide opportunities to deliver a number of key areas of open space that will benefit the town including a festival site, sports facilities, additional allotment land and footpath and routes for cyclists and walkers.

5.16 Policy 7 (Community Facilities and Services) of the Joint Core Strategy indicates that open space should be provided in accordance with local standards. The standards adopted by East Northamptonshire Council are included in an ‘Open Space Supplementary Planning Document’.

5.17 Policy O5 aims to secure high quality, public open space in relation to new housing either as an integral part of the development or, where more appropriate, through developer contributions towards improving existing provision in Oundle - for example, where the site is too small to accommodate open space or where it is agreed that it would be more appropriate to enhance existing provision in close proximity to the site. The Policy indicates that the threshold and standards adopted by East Northamptonshire Council, including any subsequent updates, will apply within the Neighbourhood Plan Area and requires legal agreements, suitable plans and arrangements to be put in place for the long-term management and maintenance of the open space. Open spaces should be multi-functional, where possible, and their location and design should be carefully considered to ensure that the site is easily accessible to users and that it is overlooked and feels safe.

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Policy O5 The Provision and Enhancement of Open Space

Proposals for new housing developments of 15 or more dwellings, or with a site area over 0.42ha, will need to:

1. Include on-site provision of open space and/or, where appropriate, contribute towards the enhancement of existing provision in Oundle in accordance with guidance set out in East Northamptonshire Council’s Open Space Supplementary Planning Document or any subsequent update; and
2. Make provision for the long-term management of open space made necessary by the development.

The open space should be overlooked and easily accessible by means of pedestrian connections.

Where practicable, the open space should provide other green infrastructure benefits such as tree planting, flood or water storage areas or new habitats.

The more significant Open Spaces proposed in new housing developments, as shown on the Policies Map, include the following:

1. New Cricket Facilities off Herne Road
2. Cemetery Extension Land adjacent to existing Cemetery off Stoke Doyle Road
3. Allotments and Wildlife Area at Miller’s Field
4. Country Park and additional Sports, Festival and Events provision to the North of Benefield Road referred to as the “Festival Site” elsewhere within this Neighbourhood Plan.

Achieving High Quality Design

a. The historic centre of Oundle is the focus of the Conservation Area and provides a ‘text-book’ example of a medieval planned settlement with over 200 listed building entries. However, the 2011 Oundle Design Statement survey indicates that over 90% of respondents were concerned about the appearance of buildings outside the Conservation Area whilst 95% commented that the design of buildings should be informed by the local setting.
b. The special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area is outlined in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal 5 which provides guidance on the importance of buildings, features, spaces and landscape within and adjacent to the Conservation Area and will be used to ensure that proposals help to protect, preserve and, where possible, enhance the historic environment in accordance with Policy 2 (The Historic Environment) of the Joint Core Strategy. The Oundle Town Design Statement 6 provides further guidance on the achievement of high quality design not only within the Conservation Area but across the wider urban area. It divides Oundle into several character zones and includes a set of design principles to be applied across the town as a whole.

5.19 Policy O6 is primarily concerned with the visual appearance of the built environment and should be read alongside other policies of the Development Plan – most notably other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan concerned with the protection of the built and natural environment and the core policies included in section A of the Joint Core Strategy.

### Policy O6 Achieving High Quality Design

1. New development will be supported where it is of a high quality and preserves and, enhances the positive characteristics of the area as described in the Oundle Town Design Statement and, where applicable, the Oundle Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

2. Proposals will need to be sensitive to the local context in terms of scale, height, spacing, layout, orientation, design, boundary treatment and use of materials.

3. Proposals should retain visually important landscape features. Where the loss of an important landscape feature is outweighed by the benefit of the development planning permission will be conditioned to require the replacement of the landscape feature.

4. Proposals should incorporate landscaping where appropriate to soften the visual impact of the development and enhance the quality of the environment.

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6 Oundle Town Council (2013) Oundle Town Design Statement

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Protecting Important Views

5.20 The protection of key views and vistas is supported through Policy 2 (Historic Environment) and Policy 20 (The Nene and Ise Valleys) of the Joint Core Strategy. Oundle, as an historic settlement, has a symbiotic relationship with the River Nene and its valley and there are many impressive views which are fundamental in establishing the character and nature of the town.

5.21 Important views within and out from the Conservation Area are highlighted in the Oundle Conservation Area Character Appraisal and shown on the Policies Map. The Appraisal outlines the importance of short views within the central area of Oundle and longer views to Jesus Church in the West and St Peter’s Church in the East.

5.22 The broad location of other important views, primarily into the town, have also been identified on the Policies Map with particular reference to St Peter’s Church, the tower and spire of which dominate the skyline, create a sense of place and identify the town from a considerable distance.

5.23 The protection of these views is of vital importance in maintaining the historic appearance and attractiveness of the town and should be a fundamental part of the consideration of any development proposals. However, these views are not intended to form an exhaustive list; there are many less distinguished, yet still significant views existing across the Neighbourhood Plan area as noted in the Oundle Town Design Statement. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore encourages the appreciation and respect of these views as part of any development proposals.

Policy O7 Protecting Important Views

Development proposals across the Neighbourhood Plan area should respect the important views including those identified on the Policies Map.

Where relevant, proposals should be accompanied by an assessment to illustrate the impact of the development on the important view.

Promoting and Enhancing the Economy

Oundle Town Centre and Retail Development

- Oundle is a large service centre providing community facilities for its residents, the additional term-time student population, residents from neighbouring villages and visitors. The town has a vibrant centre with a large number of businesses trading around Market Place, West Street and New Street. The challenge for these businesses and for Oundle over the Plan period will be to respond to the changing dynamic of
retailing and the increase in online transactions, the threat from edge of town and out of town retailers and the competition from other nearby centres.

- Oundle is well placed to maintain its level of retailing and services within the town centre. However, it will need to adapt and take advantage of new opportunities and the continued growth of leisure time and tourism to maximise the attractiveness of the town centre. The linkage of the town centre to parking areas and other retail uses, such as Waitrose and the Wharf, outside of the town centre will be important to maintain footfall and attract visitors to the primary shopping area.

- The intention of Policy O8 is to define the extent of the town centre area and primary shopping frontages, as allowed for through Policy 12 (Town Centres and Town Centre Uses) of the Joint Core Strategy. The defined town centre area and primary shopping frontages have changed very little since the boundaries were defined in the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan and it is therefore the intention to retain these boundaries as defined on the Policies Map as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Outside the defined town centre area, town centre uses will require a sequential and impact test, as required by Policy 12 of the Joint Core Strategy, to demonstrate that the proposal will not adversely impact on the town centre’s role and function.

5.25 The historic town centre of Oundle requires protection and investment to maintain its unique heritage and appeal. Shop frontages can have a significant impact on the character and quality of the town centre and it is therefore of vital importance to ensure that proposals respect the historic street setting and architectural character of Oundle. Guidance on the design of shop fronts is set out in the Shop Front Design Supplementary Planning Document, adopted by East Northamptonshire Council. Policy O8 indicates that proposals will be assessed against this guidance or any future update of that document.

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7 East Northamptonshire Council (2011). Shop Front Design Supplementary Planning Document. Oundle Neighbourhood Plan
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Policy O8 Town Centre and Retail Development

1. Within the primary shopping frontages defined on the Policies Map, existing retail uses should be retained unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal will add to the appeal of the town centre and will not critically undermine the predominance of retail uses on these streets.

2. Elsewhere within the town centre area defined on the Policies Map, town centre uses will be supported provided that the proposal is of a scale and nature consistent with the character of Oundle town centre and does not, either individually or cumulatively, undermine the focus of retail development.

3. New and altered shop fronts should be designed in sympathy with the historic street setting and the architectural character of Oundle town centre and should accord with adopted guidance.
5.26 Oundle and its immediate vicinity offer an eclectic mix of tourist attractions, including its historic town centre, which is one of the best examples of a 17th Century market town in the Country; the Oundle International Festival and other cultural events; beautiful, unspoilt countryside; and attractive outlying villages. Close by there are historic country houses and churches (including Lyveden New Bield, Prebendal Manor House, Elton Hall and Fotheringhay), former WWII airfields and access to country walks along the River Nene. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits (6km upstream from the town) have been designated as Special Protection Area/Ramsar site as of international importance for over-wintering birds.

5.27 The East Northamptonshire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 8 acknowledges that tourism makes a major contribution towards the economic well-being and quality of life of the communities and businesses in the rural areas of East Northamptonshire. The Strategy indicates that visitors spent an estimated £81.8 million in 2010. Initiatives such as ‘Destination Nene Valley’, developed by the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (now incorporated into the South East Midlands Local Economic Partnership), will increase people’s awareness of the area and promote the growth of tourism. Further increases in visitor numbers are therefore anticipated.

5.28 Policy 20 (The Nene and Ise Valleys) of the Joint Core Strategy supports development of the tourism potential of Oundle as a gateway to the Nene Valley whilst Policy 25 (Rural Economic Development and Diversification) encourages the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities, recognising that locations with access to local services and facilities by foot, cycle or public transport provide the greatest opportunity for sustainable rural development. The Neighbourhood Plan similarly seeks to deliver these outcomes.

5.29 The bulk of tourist trips to Oundle and Northamptonshire are by day visitors. The Economic Development and Tourism Strategy indicates that there is a lack of hotel or bed spaces to support tourism related activity whilst 50% of respondents to the 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire were of a similar opinion. It is therefore important for Oundle to maximise the opportunities that exist in this significant sector and provide the infrastructure that is necessary to retain visitors in the area for longer. Unfortunately, the Oundle Riverside Hotel, which sits just outside the Neighbourhood Plan boundary, has been unoccupied and derelict since 1986. Previous planning permissions to bring this back into use and the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (Policy 20, which proposes a range of potential acceptable alternative uses) have failed to be implemented. Increasing the number of bed and breakfast rooms within the town could be one means of increasing the provision of overnight accommodation.

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and could help serve a market for the town’s aspirations to develop into a festival location (see paragraph 5.30).

### Policy O9 Bed and Breakfast and Hotel Accommodation

The change of use of residential or commercial properties to provide bed and breakfast accommodation or small hotels will be supported provided that the proposal

- Will not have a significant adverse impact on neighbouring properties and the character of the area.

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5.30 2018 marked the 100th year of Oundle’s hosting of a competitive Musical Festival, which in 1968 expanded to include Speech and Drama, and draws performers from all over the region. 30 years ago, saw the birth of the Organ Festival and later the Oundle International Festival. The town also hosts the Oundle Festival of Literature which has a well-established all-year-round event. More recently still the town has hosted a number of Food and Drink related events and Festivals. The town has also very successfully staged the start of the Women’s Cycle Tour- an international event. The majority (94%) of respondents to the 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire judged these events to be either very important or very important in attracting visitors.

5.31 Festival events are held in a wide range of venues in the town, both indoors and outdoors. There has been a recent increase in out of doors events and the town aspires to build on this trend in order to increase the number of visitors and thereby boost tourism. The intention of policy 0.10 is to provide a long-term venue for festivals organised by the community, which would be available all year round, on relatively flat ground and safe from flooding. This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy 0.24.

### Policy O10 Site for Leisure and Recreation, Land off Benefield Road

A site of approximately 5.5ha, as identified in Policy O22, is allocated for the purpose of hosting festivals and events and a wide range of other leisure, recreational and sporting activities for the benefit of the community. Development should enhance the infrastructure of the site for this purpose, including the provision of utilities and car parking.
Employment Areas

5.32 Oundle acts as a rural service centre providing employment opportunities for local residents and other people in nearby settlements. To deliver long term sustainable development it is important that these employment opportunities are not reduced or limited in the future. The main employment areas within the town include the retail, service and catering businesses within the town centre area; Oundle School, as the largest employer within the town, and other educational and public services; and the manufacturing and service companies located at the Nene Valley Business Park. One of Oundle’s largest employers, Fairline Boats, went into administration in 2015; the assets were purchased and a new company, Fairline Yachts, was formed. The new company has restructured and contracted significantly, leaving several units on Nene Valley Business Park empty. Nevertheless, Fairline remains the major business and employer at Nene Valley Business Park.

5.33 The Rural North Oundle and Thrapston Plan (current Local Plan Part 2) identified a brownfield site on East Road as a location for high quality business uses. However, in 2013 planning permission was granted for the development of a Waitrose supermarket. While creating retail employment for the town, the development replaced the previous site specific proposals (now defunct Policy OUN2) for high quality, predominately office employment uses.

5.34 Policy 22 (Delivering Economic Prosperity) of the Joint Core Strategy indicates that a more sustainable economy will be sought for the area through the implementation of various measures including the enhancement of existing employment sites; the regeneration of previously developed land; and safeguarding existing and committed employment sites unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes.

5.35 As there are available employment premises within the town, it is not the intention of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify additional employment land. However, safeguarding existing sites and encouraging flexibility in the type of uses that are acceptable within the town centre (see Community Section) will be important in retaining employment opportunities within Oundle and reducing the need for out-commuting to work. Policy O11 therefore safeguards key employment areas unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes.
Policy 011 Safeguarding Employment Sites

Existing employment sites at Nene Valley Business Park, East Road and the Wharf, shown on the Policies Map, will be safeguarded for employment unless it can be demonstrated that this can no longer be sustained.

Protecting and Enhancing Community Services and Facilities

5.36 Community services and facilities are, for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan, defined as buildings where community led activities for community benefit are the primary use. This can include, but is not restricted to, leisure and cultural facilities including arts, entertainment, and buildings used for indoor sports provision etc; community offices and meeting places, including places of worship; children’s facilities (from nursery provision to youth clubs); and education, social services and healthcare facilities. Areas used for outdoor sports and recreation facilities are referred to under that part of this section of the Neighbourhood Plan relating to ‘protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment’.

5.37 Community facilities make a significant contribution to the vitality and viability of Oundle and have a positive impact on the sustainability of the town, enhancing the quality of life and often providing an important focal point for social interaction. They can provide local employment, reduce the need to travel and offer an important service, particularly for those who do not have access to a car.

5.38 Policy 7 (Community Services and Facilities) of the Joint Core Strategy requires development to support and enhance community services and facilities, where appropriate, and to safeguard existing provision unless no longer viable or not needed by the community.

5.39 In 2015 the Town Council relocated from the Courthouse, Mill Road to Fletton House off Glapthorn Road. The development has also provided a major opportunity to provide a hub for the local community and now includes a community space and café, meeting rooms, an arts and crafts room and a dance studio and is home to a pre-school. Fletton House is also located next to several other public services including a doctors’ surgery, the library and the fire station.

5.40 In response to the 2014 Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire 43% of respondents stated that public access to a leisure centre and swimming pool was ranked highest on their list of facilities which should be provided for the town. 25% of respondents also stated that better and more public access to sports facilities, particularly indoor
5.41 In 2016 Oundle School obtained planning permission for a new sports centre, a new pavilion, a new running track as well as several sports pitches and courts. The sports centre, which is proposed for completion by the end of 2019, will house a six lane, 50m swimming pool, an eight court indoor hall, four dance/fitness studios and a 70-station gym. Whilst the sports hall will be a school facility, it is also intended to offer public membership. The Town Council will work closely with Oundle School to ensure this facility is delivered not only for the benefit of the school’s pupils but also the wider local community.

Policy O12 Oundle School Sports and Leisure Facilities

Proposals to enhance or provide new sporting/leisure facilities at Oundle School will be supported where such facilities will be made publicly available.

5.42 Ideally, community facilities should be located in central locations where all residents can access them easily and this can enhance the sustainability of the town. However, this cannot always be achieved and flexibility should be adopted in any future considerations for the accommodation of new facilities. Policy O13 seeks to encourage new community facilities within the town, where appropriate, and to protect against the loss of existing provision.

5.43 Where planning permission is sought for a change of use that would result in the loss of a community facility it will be necessary to demonstrate that there is no reasonable prospect of securing either the continued use or an alternative community use of the land or building. The Community Right to Bid, introduced in the Localism Act 2011, provides additional protection against the loss of a community asset. It allows the
Town Council and community groups to nominate land and buildings for listing by East Northamptonshire Council as an ‘Asset of Community Value’ (ACV) where the facility has recently been, or is presently used, to further the social wellbeing or cultural, recreational or sporting interests of the local community. In 2016, Fletton Field, located off Gippsorn Road, was registered as an ACV.

5.44 When an ACV comes up for sale, the Town Council and community groups are given a six month period to develop a proposal and bid for the asset. However, the owner is not required to sell to the community and may choose to dispose of the asset on the open market following due consideration of the community bid. In circumstances where planning permission is required to change the use of an ACV, the listing will be a material consideration and a significant factor in the determination of a planning application.

**Supporting Action 2 – Assets of Community Value**

Oundle Town Council will nominate buildings or land for inclusion on the Assets of Community Value register held by East Northamptonshire Council, where justified.
Policy O13 The Enhancement of Community Facilities and Services

1. Proposals for new and/or improved community facilities and services within, and adjacent to, the urban area as defined by the Settlement Boundary will be supported provided that the facility is appropriately located having regard to its use, size and design, accessibility, impact on traffic, the environment and neighbouring uses.

2. Proposals to redevelop or change the use of an existing community facility or land or buildings last used as a community facility will be supported where at least one of the following conditions is met:
   A. A replacement facility of sufficient size, layout and quality to compensate for the loss of the existing facility is to be provided on an alternative site within, or adjacent to, the urban area as defined by the Settlement Boundary.; or
   B. It has been satisfactorily demonstrated that the existing use is no longer economically viable and that there is no reasonable prospect of securing either a continuation of the existing use or an alternative community use.

Included within this Policy are the following Car Parks, as shown on the Policies Map:
Drill Hall Car Park
St Osyth’s Lane Car Park
East Road Long Stay Car Park

The purpose of including these Car Parks within this Policy is to preserve and maintain the existence of these vital parking areas for the period of the Neighbourhood Plan.

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9 Evidence should be provided to demonstrate that the property has been satisfactorily marketed by a commercial property agent for a period of at least 12 months at a price which reflects an independent professional valuation and it is verified by the agent that no interest in acquisition has been expressed.
Improving Accessibility and Connectivity

Traffic management

5.45 A transport study\(^\text{10}\) was undertaken in 2014 to consider the impacts of future development on the town and identify measures required to mitigate these impacts. In combination, this and earlier studies set out a range of possible incremental transport and public realm measures to maintain the character of the town and mitigate against the impact of increased traffic on the pedestrian and cycling environment. These improvements can essentially be achieved within the highway boundary and do not require planning permission. Consequently, they are not matters that can be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, Policy O26 (Developer Contributions) indicates that financial contributions will, where possible, be sought from developers to assist in the delivery of these improvements. In addition, the following action indicates the desire of the Town Council to promote and support suitable traffic management measures in Oundle.

**Supporting Action 3 - Transport and Parking Improvements**

*Oundle Town Council will work closely with East Northamptonshire Council and the Highways Authority to implement the solutions to highway issues identified from the Oundle Transport Study Reports, prioritising projects based on need and available resources.*

Construction vehicles

5.46 The transport study, as noted above, highlighted that there is congestion on parts of the highway network in Oundle caused by a combination of pinch points in the carriageway, on-street parking, servicing, pedestrian crossing movements and the presence of large vehicles. During the construction phase of sites allocated for development in the Neighbourhood Plan it will therefore be important to minimise the impact of construction vehicles on the highway network.

5.47 Applicants should produce a traffic routeing plan that should include details of the likely timescale for the construction phase of the development and assess potential routes from the local strategic road network to the site for the delivery/removal of materials. Routes should avoid residential side streets, wherever possible, and should

\(^{10}\) TPP (2014) Neighbourhood Plan Transport Study

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be able to accommodate all construction related traffic in terms of capacity and geometry. Consideration should also be given to the location of major trip generators, such as schools, and other significant developments which are planned or under construction in Oundle. The assessment should determine the most appropriate route and outline any proposed mitigation measures that would help to minimise the impact of construction traffic on the local community.

Walking and Cycling

5.48 The transport study highlighted that there is significant potential for walking and cycling within the town. The report states that 'The 2011 census travel-to-work mode share for walking (15.3%) is above the national average (10.0%) and district and county-wide averages (both 9.5%). The whole of the town is within a maximum 15-20 minute walk of the town centre and the facilities in the town are suitable to serve the typical day-to-day needs of its local community.' Whilst most journeys are undertaken by car, the 2014 Oundle Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire indicated that 86% of respondents walk and 34% cycle at least weekly.

5.49 The Adult Participation in Sport report\(^\text{11}\) published by the Department for Culture, Media and sport in 2011 found that 68% of people walked for health and recreation purposes - more than any other physical activity or sport. A further 10.3% cycled for health, recreation and pleasure. The 2014 Community Survey indicated that Oundle residents’ value access to the countryside to be able to walk and cycle, particularly to Barnwell Country Park, and that improved recreational access to the countryside around the town is important.

5.50 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating and creating healthy, inclusive communities and should exploit opportunities to give priority to pedestrian/cycle movements whilst Policy 15 (Well-connected towns, villages and neighbourhoods) of the Joint Core Strategy highlights the need to strengthen connectivity within and around settlements to support more travel by foot, bike and public transport and enhance access to the countryside.

5.51 The Oundle Cycle Network study\(^\text{12}\) has taken the findings of the transport study further. It outlines an ambitious framework of cycle and pedestrian routes within and around the town which can be enhanced, added to and linked together over time to deliver a safe and comprehensive network that will help to reduce the reliance on private motor vehicles for short trips, reduce congestion and parking issues in the town centre and increase the health and physical activity of the community.

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\(^{11}\) DCMS (2011) Adult Participation in Sport

\(^{12}\) Sustrans (2015). Oundle Cycle Network Study
framework is illustrated on the policies map and the sections are listed in Policy O14. The routes shown in the figure are indicative only and illustrate the network that the Town Council will seek to secure, where opportunities arise.

5.52 The network will ultimately circumnavigate the town and help to improve access to and from the countryside. It will also provide direct access between areas of the town rather than relying on radial routes which need to go through the town centre. Sections will be delivered separately and independently of the whole network for which the approximate cost has been calculated at £2.3m. To deliver the network a combination of funding sources will be sought and organisations will need to work collaboratively to overcome the challenges involved. Developers may, as appropriate, be required to make direct provision or contribute towards the cost of the network. This town-wide infrastructure will be a high priority for funds secured through developer contributions, as outlined in Policy O26 (Developer contributions).
Policy O14 Circular Cycle/Pedestrian Network

The upgrade of existing footpath/cycleways and the creation of new sections of footpath/cycleways in the following locations, as identified in the Oundle Cycle Network Study and broadly illustrated on the Policies Map will be supported:

1. A427 Benefield Road.
2. Glapthorn Road.
3. Mill Road/Barnwell Road.
4. Glapthorn Road to Benefield Road (Town Perimeter) – new section.
5. Glapthorn Road to Benefield Road (Edge of Sports Field) – new section.
6. Benefield Road to Stoke Doyle Road – new section.
7. Milton Road to Glapthorn Road – new section required.
8. Stoke Doyle Road.
10. Riverside Path to Bassett Ford Road from A605 – existing footpath.
12. Glapthorn Road to Cotterstock Road – new section required. Part outside the Neighbourhood Plan boundary.
13. Cotterstock Road to New Road, via Occupation Road – new section.
14. Station Road to North Street.
15. Station Road to East Street – new section required.
16. Glapthorn Road to Middle Road via Cotterstock Road.
17. A605 Ashton Road to Herne Road – new section required.
18. Ashton Road to Herne Road – new section required.
19. Ashton Road.
20. Herne Road.

Developer contributions to facilitate the delivery of this network will be sought in accordance with the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 as amended, the Local Plan and Policy O26 (Developer Contributions) of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Subject to development viability, sites allocated for housing should secure delivery of those parts of the network as outlined in the site specific policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.
Meeting Housing Requirements

Introduction

5.53 This section of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out where new homes should be built to meet the needs of Oundle for new houses during the Plan period to 2031. Our approach is to engage with the people and organisations that wish to develop these sites and build a common understanding of the best way forward for each site in light of the number of houses required in the Plan period. This work with our development partners/developers will be taken forward through to submission for formal planning approval to ensure successful applications and development that delivers the benefits for the community agreed through the partnership work. We have carried out our partnership work in accordance with the LGA guidance on pre-application engagement.\(^{13}\)

5.54 We will continue to work with our development partners/developers as they prepare applications for planning approval for each site. This will ensure the proposals include the agreed contributions of wider community benefit and address the key issues relevant to Oundle that apply on each site. These include consideration of views of Oundle and the surrounding countryside, contributions to flood risks and helping walking and cycling as safe and easy ways of getting around Oundle.

5.55 We identified potential sites following a call for sites, considering previous work to identify possible sites for housing in Oundle, and then evaluating all sites to identify those suitable for development, eliminating those with significant barriers. The approach is set out in more detail in the paper Housing Methodology.

Housing Site Allocations

5.56 Policy 29 (Distribution of new homes) of the Joint Core Strategy requires Oundle to accommodate 645 new dwellings between 2011 and 2031. Existing commitments (i.e. homes completed since 2011 and dwellings which are on sites allocated in a Local Plan or have planning permission but have yet to be either completed or started) totalled 437 at 31\(^{st}\) March 2018\(^{14}\). This indicates that the Neighbourhood Plan needs to allocate land for a minimum of 208 dwellings.

\(^{13}\) Local Government Association (2014) 10 commitments for effective pre-application engagement

\(^{14}\) https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/817/planning_policy_committee

Oundle Neighbourhood Plan

May 2019
5.57 Responses to the 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire indicate that the local community values the compact nature of Oundle and the ability to get around it on foot. Some 62% of respondents wish to see housing located within walking distance of the town centre and 50% agreed that new developments should be within a one mile radius of the centre. A majority (65%) of respondents would prefer not to see large scale development on the edge of Oundle. 68% would favour a strategy of distributing the housing growth across a range of small sites. This is what we have done by considering all sites suitable for development identified.

5.58 The spatial approach identified 5 sites suitable for development within one mile of the town centre within Oundle Parish. These provide opportunities to build more houses than the minimum number required in the JCS. This Plan also recognises the potential for windfall sites to provide additional housing in Policy O17. Overall the Plan provides positive proposals for the growth of Oundle on a scale that will deliver significant benefits for the community as outlined in the policy for each site.

5.59 In order to deliver sustainable development it is critical to maintain a positive relationship with developers as they develop comprehensive proposals for each site to submit for planning permission. This will ensure the proposals address the needs of the community and are supported by the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site name</th>
<th>Policy No.</th>
<th>Dwelling allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land South of Herne Road</td>
<td>O18</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millers Field, Benefield Road</td>
<td>O19</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Adjacent to Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road</td>
<td>O20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land South of Wakerley Close</td>
<td>O21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land North of Benefield Road</td>
<td>O22</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total allocation</strong></td>
<td><strong>324</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Policy O15 Housing site allocations*

Housing site allocations are as set out in the table immediately below and as shown on the Policies Map:

Preparation of comprehensive masterplans involving Oundle Town Council, the local community and other organisations for the development of each site would be supported.
Housing Mix

5.60 Policy 30 (housing mix and tenure) of the Joint Core Strategy highlights the need to provide a mix of dwelling sizes and tenures to cater for current and forecast housing needs and indicates that a neighbourhood plan may identify more specific requirements for particular locations. The 2016 assessment for Oundle Ward\(^{15}\) indicates that the predominant need is for 1 and 3 bedroom properties with some need for 2 bedrooms. Whilst there is almost no need for 4+ bedrooms, due to the relatively large numbers in the existing stock, the assessment suggests that some houses of this size may be required to ensure developments are sustainable. An estimated 36% of the requirement is for affordable housing and approximately 5% is for shared ownership housing.

5.61 The 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire revealed that the most popular housing types were small starter homes (35%), family homes (24%) and bungalows (18%). There was a strong preference towards open market housing tenure followed by affordable homes and lastly private rented housing. In light of the evidence on housing need, the strategy adopted in the Neighbourhood Plan is to encourage higher levels of smaller homes and retirement flats or bungalows on certain sites in relatively close proximity to the town centre. OTC will continue to work with developers so the housing needs of Oundle are jointly understood and that the detailed planning applications reflect the most up to date information at the time they are submitted.

5.62 The intention of Policy O16 is to secure a range of house types and tenures to meet the needs of the local community. The appropriate mix will be influenced by the location of the site and the established character and density of surrounding development. The policy places particular emphasis on meeting the needs of vulnerable groups such as older people and those with mobility issues, which are close to services and facilities within Oundle whilst the affordable housing requirement reflects the requirement set out in Policy 30 (Housing mix and tenure) of the Joint Core Strategy.

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\(^{15}\) East Northamptonshire Council (2016) Oundle Ward Housing Needs and Mix Requirements Assessment
Oundle Neighbourhood Plan
May 2019
Policy O16 Housing mix

Proposals for 10 or more dwellings should include an appropriate mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures that contribute towards meeting the housing needs of Oundle having regard to:

1. The most up-to-date evidence of need; and
2. The location of the site and the character and density of surrounding development.
3. On sites within close proximity of the town centre, particular emphasis should be placed on the provision of housing to meet the needs of older people and those with mobility issues.

Windfall Sites

5.63 The Settlement Boundary (see Policy O1) has been drawn to limit the spread of the town whilst providing for the number of new homes required by the Joint Core Strategy. The Policy also enables suitable ‘windfall’ sites within the Settlement Boundary to be developed. The term ‘windfall’ refers to infill and redevelopment sites that are not allocated for development but unexpectedly become available. Whilst the number of windfall sites which remain within the town is likely to be very limited, such sites will contribute towards the objective of maintaining the compact nature of the urban area.

5.64 Policy O17 supports housing development on windfall sites where proposals meet relevant requirements in other policies of the Development Plan - most notably those concerned with the quality of design; the protection and enhancement of environmental assets; housing mix and tenure; and the provision of open space.

Policy O17 Windfall sites

Residential development on windfall sites will be supported where:

- The site is within the Settlement Boundary;
- Development is of a high quality and designed to reflect Oundle’s character in accordance with Policy O6 (Achieving High Quality Design) of the Neighbourhood Plan; and
- All other relevant requirements of the Development Plan are met.
Site Specific Housing Policies

Introduction

5.65 Policies O18 to O25 set out key site-specific considerations for each of the allocated sites listed in Policy O15.

Land south of Herne Rd

5.66 The site of approximately 8 hectares is located on greenfield land on the south-east side of Oundle and adjacent to the A605. Immediately to the north-east of the site there is a bridleway (UF6) with Prince William School beyond. The north-west boundary adjoins residential development whilst the A605 is located to the south-east of the site. The south-west boundary is formed by the River Nene and a field hedge. Existing hedgerows should be retained and reinforced, where possible.

5.67 The site is primarily allocated for housing and sports provision. It is situated relatively close to the town centre and small dwellings and retirement flats are therefore preferred. Locating the housing adjacent to the existing residential development on Hearne Road will encourage trips into the centre on foot.

5.68 The development provides a major opportunity to deliver an important sports and recreational asset for the town including a permanent cricket pitch with associated car parking and training and changing facilities. The sports facilities could also be made available for use by Prince William School. The site will provide opportunities for informal recreational open space including the provision of part of the town circular cycle/pedestrian network outlined in Policy O14 (Circular Cycle/Pedestrian Route).
Policy O18 Land South of Herne Road

Land South of Herne Road, as indicated in Site Plan below, is allocated for residential development.
The site will deliver high-quality development that shall:-
- Make provision for up to 120 dwellings (a mix of retirement flats and smaller self-contained houses will be encouraged)
- Provide approximately 4ha of land for recreational or sports uses which can also be facilities used by Prince William School.
- Create an access which does not conflict with the Prince William School exit.
- Take full account of flood risk and on-site drainage issues
- Upgrade footpath UF7 along the development site boundary and create a new footpath on the boundary of the recreational/sports use allocation to link to footpath UF6 as part of Oundle Circular Route.

Millers Field, Benefield Road

5.69 The site of approximately 1.1 hectares is on the south side of Benefield Rd (A427). Whilst the land is primarily used as a meadow there is an area of allotments on the eastern boundary. The access into the allotments is from Benefield Rd at the eastern end of the site. The topography of the site limits its development capacity. With the exception of the Benefield Road frontage, much of the site slopes down to Lyveden Brook which forms the southern boundary. Adjacent to the brook there are several trees which are protected by a tree preservation order. This area of the site is also within
flood zone 3 where development should be avoided in accordance with Policy 5 (Water resources, environment and flood risk management) of the Joint Core Strategy. The site is flanked by housing to the south and west and, to the east, by a field to the rear of houses along Benefield Rd.

5.70 Along the frontage to Benefield Rd there is a grass verge and bus shelter but no footpath. There are the remnants of a hedge at the back of the grass verge and there are several trees within or adjacent to the hedge. There are views from Benefield Rd across the site to the countryside beyond. Along the north side of Benefield Rd, opposite the site, there are several listed buildings of which the majority are within the Oundle Conservation Area.

5.71 The land is allocated for housing and open space. The site is in close proximity to the town centre and encouragement will therefore be given to the provision of small dwellings with a particular emphasis on housing that will enable older people to downsize. Proposals should be designed to minimise the impact of the development on views into the open countryside from Benefield Rd.

5.72 The proposed allotments should be located outside the flood zone and be provided with vehicular access, a water supply and on-site parking. Vehicular access to the allotments directly from Benefield Rd and not shared with the housing development is preferred. The number of parking spaces required to serve the allotments should be determined in consultation with the highway authority and allotment holders.

5.73 The area of informal open space along the brook should be landscaped to enhance its biodiversity value. A safe, cycle and pedestrian route should be provided between the open space and Benefield Road to link into the network outlined in Policy O14 (Circular Cycle/Pedestrian Route).
Policy O19 Millers Field, Benefield Road

Land south of Benefield Road, as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for residential development and open space. The site is expected to deliver high-quality development and shall:

1. Deliver at least 14 dwellings with particular encouragement given to the provision of dwellings to accommodate small households, including homes to meet the needs of older people;
2. Deliver approximately 0.55ha for allotments and informal, public recreational space;
3. Ensure that views into the open countryside from Benefield Rd are preserved; and
4. Not lead to a net increase in flood risk including fluvial flooding along the course of the Lyveden Brook.
5. The allotment land shall be in a suitable location with its own vehicular access, on-site water supply and adequate off-street parking.
6. Provide structural landscaping incorporating informal recreational space adjacent to the Lyveden Brook with access for maintenance vehicles.
7. Provide a new cycle and pedestrian route between the informal recreational space and Benefield Road.

Land adjacent to the Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road

5.74 This greenfield site of approximately 4.6 hectares is on the south-west side of Oundle adjacent to the west and to the rear of the cemetery. From Stoke Doyle Road the land rises to a ridgeline along which there is an existing hedge and the rear boundary of the cemetery. Beyond the ridge the land descends to Lyveden Brook, which forms the...
northern boundary. To the north of the brook there is a housing estate accessed from Benefield Rd. The westernmost edge of the site is defined by a hedge. Along the eastern boundary there is a hedge with a number of gaps. Beyond this hedge there is a small field with the small housing estate of Warren Bridge beyond.

5.75 The site is allocated for housing, ancillary open space and an extension to the cemetery. The land adjacent to Lyveden Brook is within flood zone 3 where development should be avoided in accordance with Policy 5 (Water resources, environment and flood risk management) of the Joint Core Strategy. This provides an opportunity to include open space along the brook to enhance its biodiversity value and, if feasible, to incorporate a pedestrian/cycle link across the brook and into the existing green corridor at the southern end of Lytham Park.

5.76 Proposals should include vehicular access up to the easternmost boundary of the site to enable development of the adjoining field at a later date. Landscape proposals should retain and reinforce the existing hedges along the boundaries of the site; this will be particularly important along the western boundary to provide a visually attractive edge to the development and reduce its visual impact on the open countryside.

5.77 The whole of the site is within a sand and gravel Minerals Safeguarding Area and proposals should therefore comply with Policy 28 of the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2011-2031.

Policy O20 Land adjacent to the Cemetery, Stoke Doyle Road

| Land adjacent to the Cemetery off Stoke Doyle Road, as indicated in Site Plan below, is allocated for residential development. |
| The site will deliver high-quality development that shall: |
| - Make provision for up to 50 residential dwellings |
| - Provide for an extension of approximately 0.5ha to the cemetery |
| - Take full account of flood risk and on-site drainage issues |
| - Upgrade and realign, if necessary, footpath UF3 creating a usable route between Stoke Doyle Road and Benefield Road as part of the Oundle Circular Route |
Land South of Wakerley Close

5.78 This greenfield site of approximately 1.2 hectares is located on the west side of Oundle to the rear of Wakerley Close, off Benefield Rd. The land falls to Lyveden Brook which forms the southern extent of the site. The eastern boundary adjoins a public footpath (UF3), beyond which is the residential development of Lytham Park. The western boundary is defined by a hedge.

5.79 The site is allocated for housing and open space. The land adjacent to Lyveden Brook is within flood zone 3 where development should be avoided in accordance with Policy 5 (Water resources, environment and flood risk management) of the Joint Core Strategy. This provides an opportunity to include a landscaped area along the brook to enhance its biodiversity value and to extend the existing green corridor on the north side of the brook at the southern end of Lytham Park.

5.80 Vehicular access to Benefield Rd should be provided to the west of Wakerley Close. In addition, a safe, cycle and pedestrian route should be provided between the public footpath (UF6) on the eastern boundary of the site and Benefield Road to form part of the circular cycle/pedestrian network outlined in Policy O14 (Circular Cycle/Pedestrian Route). This route should, where feasible, also link into the existing green corridor adjacent to the brook at the southern end of Lytham Park.
Policy O21 Land South of Wakerley Close

Land South of Wakerley Close, as outlined in the Site Plan below, is allocated for residential development.

The site will deliver high-quality development that Shall:-

- Provide for up to 10 dwellings
- Access to be provided to the west of Wakerley Close.
- Upgrade to footpath UF3 creating a usable pedestrian route between Stoke Doyle Road and Benefield Road

Land North of Benefield Road

5.81 The site of approximately 12.3 hectares consists of agricultural land on the western edge of Oundle and to the north of Benefield Rd. The land descends to Benefield Road and the outer boundaries are defined by hedges. The open space immediately to the east of the site forms part of Oundle School sports fields. There is an existing vehicular access directly to the west of the site which provides access to Biggin Grange Farm and forms part of a bridleway (UF10).

5.82 The development offers an exciting opportunity to deliver a venue that will enable the community to build on the success of existing festivals in the town and boost tourism in Oundle as outlined in Policy O10 (Festival site off Benefield Road). The precise location of the field should be determined in consultation with Oundle Town Council. The
community space should also serve as open space for the new housing and not be reserved exclusively for festival events.

5.83 Vehicular access arrangements should be designed to minimise the impact of traffic generated by the community site on the proposed housing development; this may necessitate the provision of discrete access to the community site from Benefield Road. Traffic management proposals will need to be developed to minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding highway network. Similarly, the impact of noise from the festival site on existing and proposed housing will need to be assessed and, where necessary, mitigated.

5.84 It will be important to provide high quality landscaping to reduce the visual impact of the development on the open countryside and screen the community space from adjoining housing.

5.85 The development also offers the opportunity to enhance connectivity through the provision of a safe pedestrian/cycle route to form part of the network outlined in Policy O14 (Circular Cycle/Pedestrian Route).

Policy O22 Land North of Benefield Road

Land is allocated North of Benefield Road, as outlined in the Site Plan below, for residential development.

The site will deliver high-quality development that shall:

- Provide for up to 130 dwellings
- Provide for a festival field (approximately 5.5ha) with separate access
- Provide natural screening and buffer between residential area and festival field
- Upgrade footpath UF10 and create a new footpath traversing north east at the boundary of the site to facilitate a link to footpath UF11 as part of the Oundle Circular Route.
Securing Developer Contributions

5.86 New development can bring significant benefits to the local community, including new homes and additional facilities. However, it can also have a negative impact on existing services and facilities such as schools, healthcare and leisure and on infrastructure such as roads, public utilities and waste services. To help address such issues, Policy 10 (Provision of Infrastructure) of the Joint Core Strategy requires development to be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure.

5.87 Planning obligations (also known as section 106 agreements) can be used to secure infrastructure or funding from a developer. For example, a planning obligation might be used to secure a financial contribution towards improving existing recreational facilities. However, planning obligations can only be sought where they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

5.88 A new system of developer contributions is gradually being introduced across the Country alongside section 106 agreements; the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a flat rate levy, based on floorspace area and the type of development, to be used to help fund the cost of strategic infrastructure. Section 106 agreements will continue to
be negotiated for certain site-specific infrastructure. In the event that CIL is introduced in East Northamptonshire, it would be expected that the CIL contributions received from development in Oundle would be used to provide the strategic infrastructure required by the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.89 Policy O26 has been informed by residents’ comments. It sets out the priorities for developer contributions in Oundle, although no priority is intended to be implied by the order in which the projects are listed. The Town Council will seek to work in partnership with East Northamptonshire Council and other bodies to secure funding through the use of planning obligations, CIL receipts and other sources to ensure that the necessary infrastructure can be provided at the requisite time to mitigate the impact of development.

**Policy O23 Developer Contributions**

New development in Oundle will be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities made necessary to provide a balanced, sustainable and more self-sufficient community. Subject to development viability, financial contributions will be sought from developers to a level that adequately mitigates any impact on existing infrastructure and contributes towards new local facilities where additional need is generated.

Contributions towards the provision of local community facilities and infrastructure gained either through the Community Infrastructure Levy or negotiated planning obligations shall be focused on assisting the delivery of the following priority projects:

- Pedestrian and cycleway enhancements outlined in Policy O14;
- Public realm and highway improvements within the town;
- Establishment of infrastructure to support the town’s festivals;
- New allotment space and open space provision; and
- Transport and parking provision, including cycle and school bus parking.

### 6. Plan Delivery and Implementation

6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will act as a framework for change and development within Oundle over the period to 2031. The Town Council will work in collaboration with East Northamptonshire Council, the highway authority, landowners, investors and
developers to ensure that private sector funds are channelled into delivering the Neighbourhood Plan and achieving the highest possible quality and standards of new development. The use and observance of the Oundle Town Design Guide will be closely monitored to ensure sympathetic design and layout in all planning applications, particularly where related to development in the Conservation Area.

6.2 The Town Council will lobby for public sector funds, where appropriate and available, and investment that can be utilised in the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan. The voluntary and community sector will also have a strong role in supporting and delivering the plan especially in the management and supervision of community infrastructure.

7. Monitoring and Review

7.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored by the Town Council to assess whether the objectives outlined in section 4 are being met. Monitoring may lead to the need to review the Neighbourhood Plan in due course to keep it up to date and relevant, for example where policies are not working as intended or where changes occur to national planning policy. Formal amendments will need to follow a similar process to that used to prepare this Neighbourhood Plan.