Draft modified

Acle

Neighbourhood Plan

2025-2040



Submission version,
May 2026

Contents

	Page
Preface	4
1. Introduction	7
2. National and Local planning policy context	11
3. Acle parish in 2025	17
4. How the Plan was prepared	23
5. Vision and Objectives	27
6. Policies: Housing and Development	32
7. Policies: Business and Employment	45
8. Policies: Community and Leisure	50
9. Policies: Movement and Transport	56
10. Policies: Natural Environment	59
11. Implementation and monitoring	98
Appendix	101

A. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members
B. Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes – attached document
C. Justification for Local Green Spaces
D. Important Trees, Hedgerows and Trackways
E. Glossary
F. Policies in the 2015 Neighbourhood Plan
G. Other useful guidance


PEACE

Preface:
Acle Neighbourhood Plan

The first Acle Neighbourhood Plan was 'made'(adopted) in February 2015 following a *YES* vote at a referendum held in January 2015.

The 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan has been used by Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority to determine planning applications and Acle Parish Council has used it to help formulate its response to planning applications within the parish.

Over 10 years have elapsed since the Plan was made, and there have been numerous changes in the national and local planning policy context. These include a change in national government, several revisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), changes in environmental legislation and the adoption of new Local Plans for the Greater Norwich Area (GNLP) and the Broads. Change on the ground has also been evident with 267 new dwellings built in the parish of Acle between 2014 and 2023.

Further development is planned through the allocations in the Adopted Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) between Norwich Road and South Walsham Road, and permission was granted in October 2025 for 200 dwellings and 90 retirement apartments on land south of Leffins Lane.

Acle Parish Council has embarked on a review of the 2015 Neighbourhood Plan, to ensure it is up-to-date and in a strong position to influence the future development of the village. The Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan will supersede the 2015 Neighbourhood Plan once it has completed its process.

The review process began in 2024 and is led by a Steering Group of Parish Councillors. The first stage was to review the existing policies and assess their robustness in the current policy context. The need for some new policies was identified and new supporting evidence in the form of a Data Profile, Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) and a Design Guidance and Codes document was commissioned and completed.

This document is the **Submission version** of the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan, and its content has been shaped by comments received during the Pre-Submission consultation.

Whilst the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan introduces new policies and updates a number of the existing policies, the vision and direction remain unchanged from the original. The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for new housing development. Instead, it provides a robust policy framework for managing new development as it comes forward. For this reason, this document is considered to be a *'Material modification' i.e. one that does not change the nature*

of the plan and would require examination but may not require a referendum.' The decision as to whether a referendum will be required will be made by the Examiner.

Acle Neighbourhood Plan


ACLE
GIVE WAY
Royal Mail
Sweetcorn Cafe
01493 741000

1. Introduction

1.1 This modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan provides a vision for the future of the Parish of Acle up to 2040. Fundamentally, the Plan also provides a number of policies that future development must take into account to ensure that the vision is achieved.

1.2 The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan provides guidance that complements existing local, national and strategic planning policy. The policies in the modified Plan are intended to provide additional detail and reflect the special characteristics of the village that cannot reasonably be addressed by higher level guidance.

1.3 The 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan was made possible by powers contained within the Localism Act (2011) which seek to decentralise policy making and increase the extent to which local neighbourhoods and communities can determine their own future. This modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan remains strongly influenced by the views of the community, expressed most recently through the Household Survey of February 2025.

1.4 As with the 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan, this modified version was prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). Once the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan is 'made', it will have full statutory weight and will be used by the Local Planning Authority to determine planning applications in the parish.

1.5 **Figure 1** outlines the stages the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan has completed and those it is still to achieve.

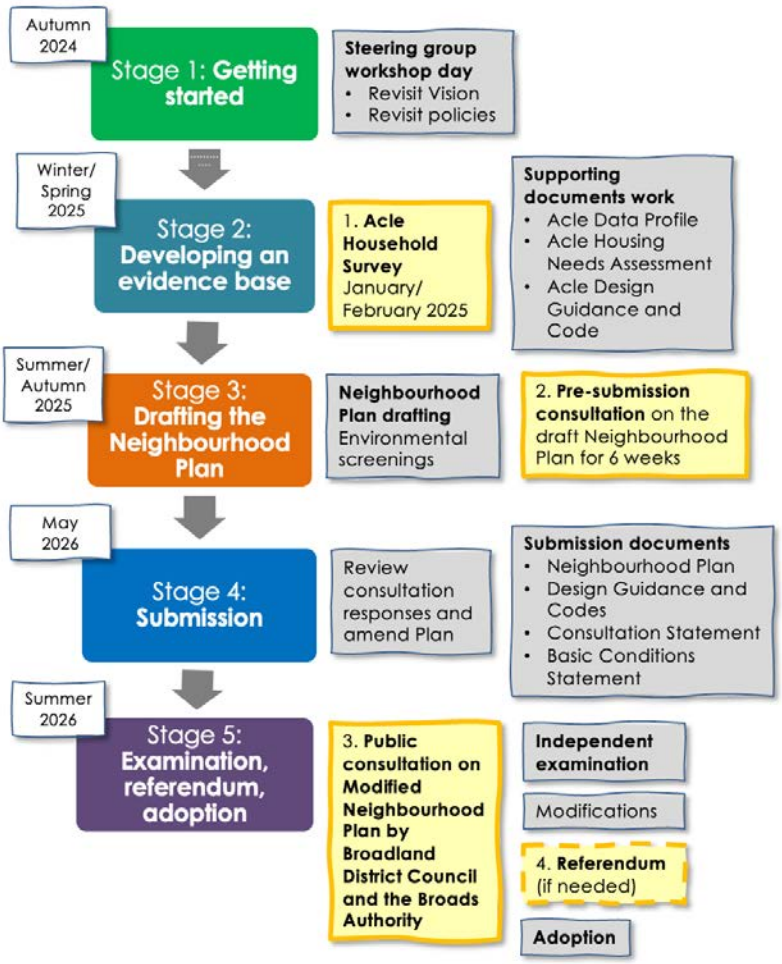


Figure 1: The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan process (source: own).

1.6 Neighbourhood Plans are not a mechanism for stopping development; they are there to ensure that development takes place in an appropriate way for the parish. This Neighbourhood Plan has been positively prepared, with the purpose of supporting and managing growth, not to prevent it. In practice, higher level planning documents such as the Greater Norwich Local Plan (which includes the Broadland district) and the Local Plan for the Broads cannot feasibly deal with all of the issues particular to every town and village across three districts, whereas Neighbourhood Plans can add value by providing additional details which reflect specific local circumstances and conditions.

1.7 The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan covers the same geographical areas as the 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan, which is the civil parish of Acle. The geographical extent of the Neighbourhood Area remains unchanged from that designated on 20th August 2013 (**figure 2**).

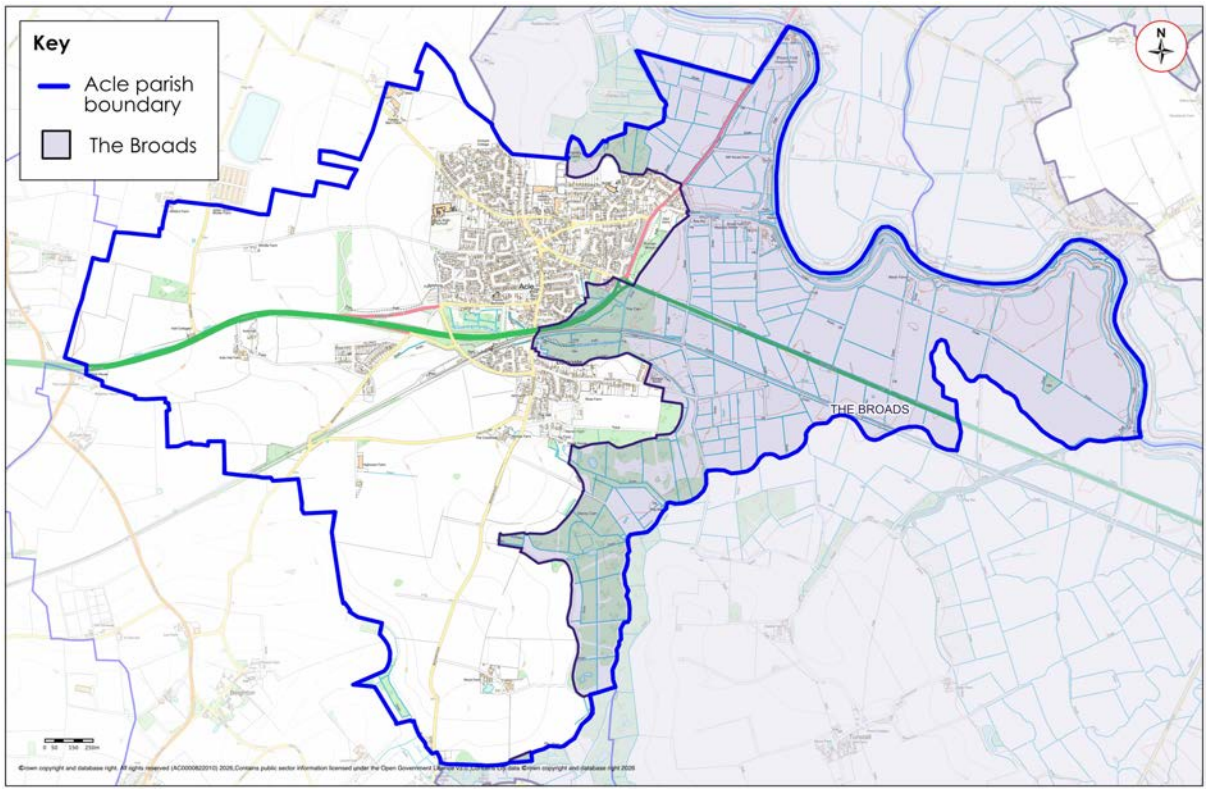


Figure 2: The Neighbourhood Area, the parish of Acle (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Supporting documents

1.8 In order to bring the Acle Neighbourhood Plan up to date it has been necessary to update the evidence base which supports the Neighbourhood Plan's policies. The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan is therefore accompanied by the following new supporting documents:

- **Acle Neighbourhood Plan Data Profile** (December 2024) – baseline descriptive data providing the background to the parish.
- **Acle Housing Needs Assessment** (April 2025) – produced by consultants AECOM using Locality Technical Support, which looked at the size, type and tenure of new housing required during the Plan period.
- **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes** (October 2025) – produced by consultants AECOM using Locality Technical support; a set of illustrative design codes and design guidelines for the parish.



2. National and Local Planning Policy context

National planning policy

2.1 Development is defined as 'the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land' as set out in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 emphasises that the planning system continues to be a 'plan-led' system and restates the requirement that 'determination must be made in accordance with the 'Development Plan' unless material considerations indicate otherwise'. The 'Development Plan' for the Neighbourhood Area is set out below in paragraph 2.5.

2.2 Neighbourhood Plans are prepared in the context of the existing national and local planning policy that is in force at the time that the Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared. National planning policy is found in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[1], the most recent version of which was published in December 2024. This sets out the government's broad intentions in terms of the purposes of the planning system and their expectations in terms of the delivery of sustainable development. It is noted that in December 2025, the Government published and consulted on proposed changes to the NPPF. However, at the time of writing these have yet to be brought into force in the form of a new NPPF.

2.3 National planning policy is not part of the Development Plan that is used to determine planning applications but is a material consideration which is given due weight depending upon the age of the various components of the development plan in force for the area. Local planning policies are required to be in general conformity with national planning policies as set out in the NPPF.

Local planning policy

2.4 Every local planning authority in England is required to prepare a Local Plan. Local Plans include all of the local planning policies for the district's area and identify how land is used, determining what will be built and where. Broadland District Council is part of the trio of Greater Norwich Authorities who worked together initially to produce a Joint Core Strategy (JCS) adopted in 2014, and its replacement, the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) which was adopted in March 2024. Part of the eastern part of the Neighbourhood Area falls within the Broads Authority Executive Area and the Broads Authority (BA) is the local planning authority for that area.

[1] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework

2.5 Currently, the statutory Development Plan for the area consists of:

- The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP),
- The Broadland Development Management Development Plan Document (DMDPD) adopted in August 2015,
- The Broads Local Plan 2019, (produced by the Broads Authority),
- The Acle Neighbourhood Plan (2015),
- The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (NM&WLP) adopted in May 2025.

2.6 This modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan will (once complete) replace the existing 'made' Acle Neighbourhood Plan (2015) and future planning applications for new development will be determined using its policies.

Policy framework for Acle Neighbourhood Plan

2.7 Acle is identified as a 'Key Service Centre' in the settlement hierarchy of the Adopted GNLP which has a plan period to 2038. The approach to such settlements is that they will continue to be developed to enhance their function as places to live, and providers of employment and services to serve the settlement and its hinterland, with significant levels of development expected to take place in the majority of Key Service Centres. The GNLP makes provision in Acle for both residential and employment development.

2.8 The GNLP makes provision for 580 dwellings in Acle between 2018 and 2038. This provision is made up of a new allocation (B.AC.1) which will provide 340 new homes, and a further 240 homes which have either been completed, received planning permission, or are rolled-forward allocations, from the previous Joint Core Strategy.

Site B.AC.1: Land west of Acle, north of Norwich Road, south of South Walsham Road (340 dwellings)

Land west of Acle (north of Norwich Road, south of South Walsham Road, 25.5 hectares) is allocated for residential development. This will accommodate approximately 340 homes, associated open space and community facilities.

The development will achieve the following site-specific requirements:

1) Preparation of masterplan to guide the development of the two sites, submitted with or in advance of the first application for planning permission.
2) Early assessment of the roundabout junction and the A47 at this location is required, in order to consider capacity.
3) The site's proximity to the Broads.

The masterplan should demonstrate:

4) Provision of a link road between Norwich Road and South Walsham Road of a sufficient standard to accommodate HGV and agricultural traffic.
5) Access (vehicular and pedestrian) provided through allocation B.AC.2 to the east.

6) The Public Right of Way along Mill Lane is protected for continued use as a footway and bridle path.
7) Development does not prevent the potential future expansion of Acle Academy.
8) Open space providing leisure opportunities and enhancing the green infrastructure network.
9) Off-site requirements include a footway along the west of Mill Lane and east at South Walsham Road.
10) Mitigation and further investigation with regards to site susceptibility to surface water flooding and any potential risk of flooding from the reservoir.
11) Phasing of Link Road between Norwich Road and South Walsham to ensure delivery across the different ownerships.

.

2.9 In addition, the GNLP allocates land for mixed residential and employment use at land south of Acle Railway Station, known as site B.AC.3. The allocation is for 2.2 hectares including 30 homes and with the remainder for class E(g)[2] employment. This has been constructed.

2.10 The GNLP makes an employment allocation at site B.AC.4, land at the former Station yard, where 1 hectare is identified for small scale employment use of B2 class. The site was allocated in 2016 as part of the Broadland Local Plan but was not developed and is re-allocated through the GNLP.

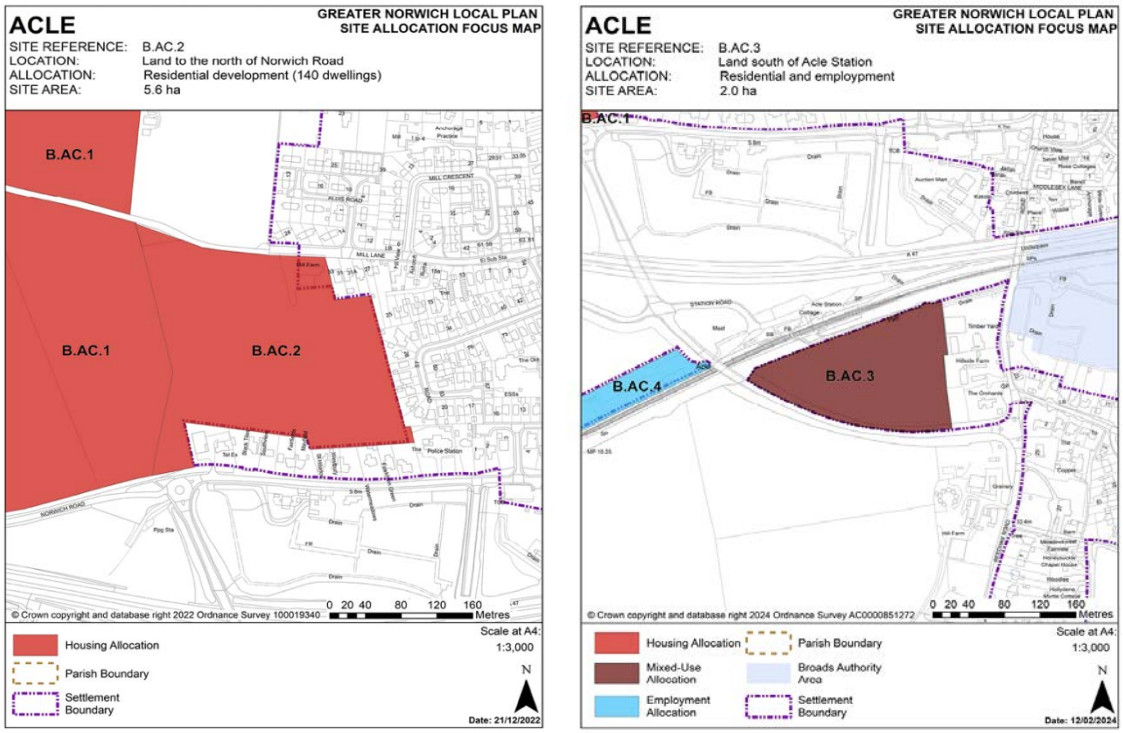


Figure 3: Greater Norwich Local Plan settlement map for Acle (source: Greater Norwich Local Plan).[3]

[2] E (g) ii) – the research and development of products and processes
[3] https://www.gnlp.org.uk/regulation-19-publication-part-2-sites-5-key-service-centre/acle (accessed 22.09.25)

Broads Authority Local Plan

2.11 The Local Plan for The Broads was adopted in 2019 and makes two allocations. The first is for an extension to the existing cemetery (ACL1) and the second is an extension to the existing playing field at Acle Recreation Centre (ACL2). However, both allocations are in Upton and therefore outside the Neighbourhood Area.

2.12 The existing cemetery at Acle is close to capacity and Acle Parish Council has, over a period of time, actively sought a site to accommodate further burials. Acle Parish Council has purchased some land for a new cemetery. More space will be needed in the future and therefore ACL1, remains the preferred site. The location adjacent to the existing cemetery makes practical sense.

2.13 The Recreation Centre is a well-used local resource. The Trust which operates it identified a need for additional playing field capacity. Extending the existing playing fields meets a social need in a location well related to the village and built surroundings. The proposed extension is around 0.44ha (1 acre).

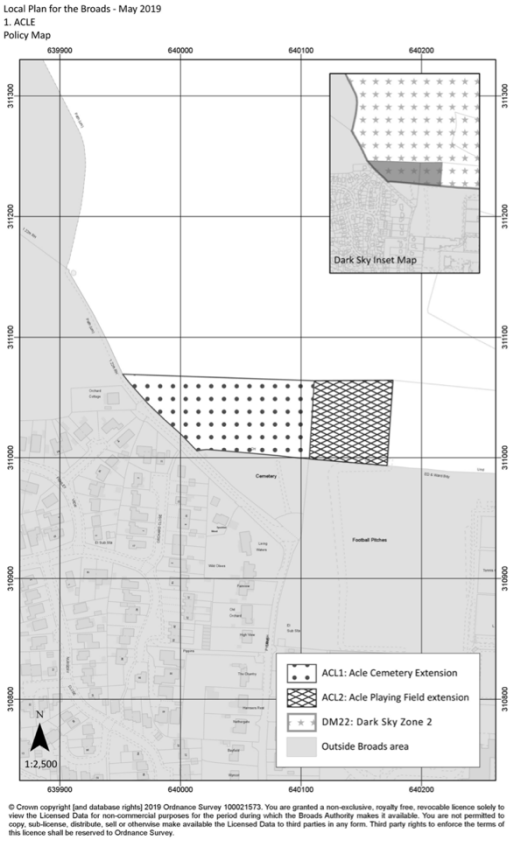


Figure 4: Policy ACL1 Acle Cemetery extension, and Policy ACL2 Acle Playing Field extension (source: Local Plan for the Broads).[4] Note, the sites are outside the parish of Acle.

[4] https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/122069/1.-ACLE.pdf

2.14 The Local Plan for the Broads - Review has been submitted for examination and an update on the timetable for this is expected soon. The submitted Plan rolls forward ACL1 and ACL2.

2.15 Due to the level of new housing growth proposed in the Greater Norwich Local Plan, the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan is not proposing to specifically allocate further sites for housing development. Instead, its proposed policies will focus on managing the impacts of the proposed growth and ensuring that the community benefits are realised.



3. Acle parish in 2025

Introduction to Acle

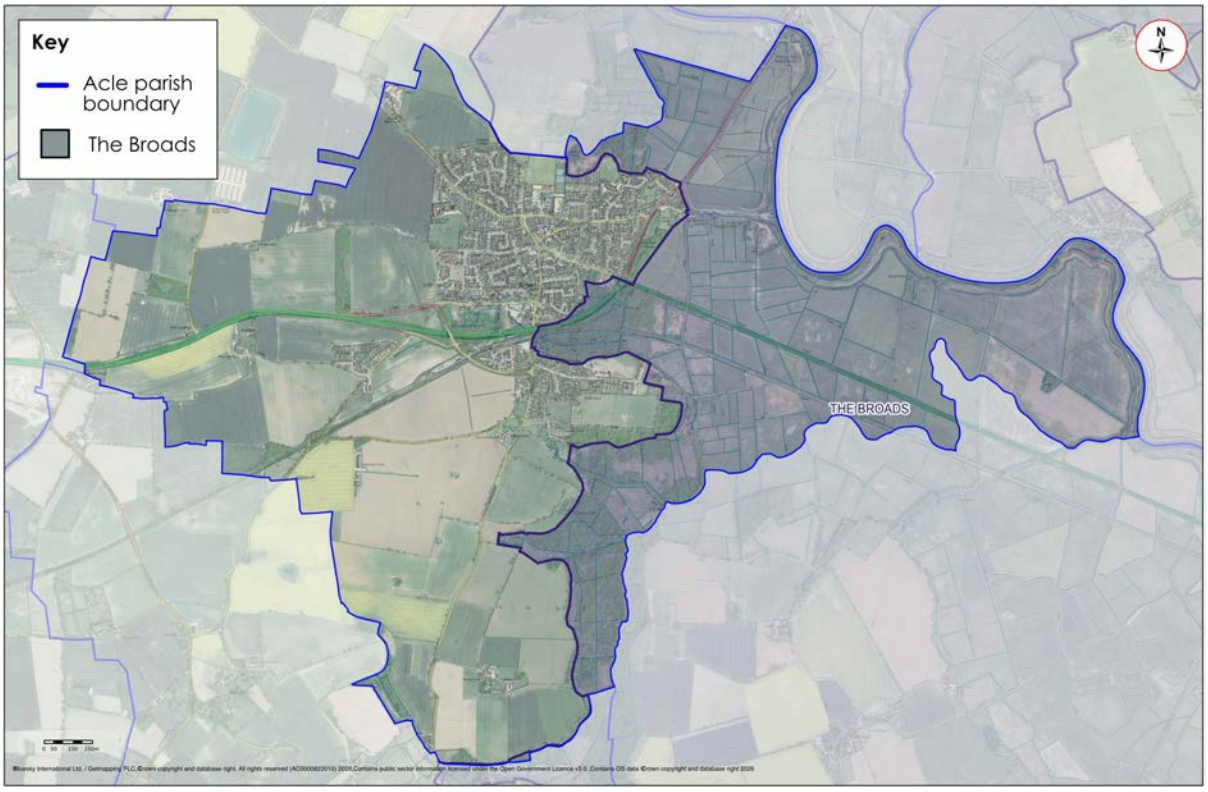


Figure 5: Aerial photograph map of Acle (source: Parish Online).

3.1 Acle is a historic village situated between Norwich to the west and Great Yarmouth to the east. The civil Parish of Acle is located within Broadland Local Authority District, but a significant proportion of the east of the Parish falls within the Broads Executive Area (the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, which has an equivalent status to a National Park).

3.2 The Parish of Acle is largely rural, characterised by arable farmland on higher ground in the west and south, with marshland / pasture on low-lying land in the north and east. The village of Acle is located in the centre of the Parish on the edge of the higher ground.

3.3 The village is a nucleated settlement that has grown around the confluence of a number of radial routes linking it to surrounding towns and villages. In 1989 the A47 was upgraded and a bypass was created to the south-east of the village.

3.4 Acle contains 15 nationally listed buildings and structures. These include the Grade I Listed Church of St Edmund, the Grade II Listed Jubilee Monument and a number of other Grade II Listed buildings mainly in and around the

village centre. In addition, within the Parish at Acle Bridge there is the site of St Mary's Priory which is a scheduled ancient monument.

3.5 The overlap between the Parish of Acle and the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads means that the Neighbourhood Plan area contains a number of important landscapes, wildlife areas and green spaces. Primarily, to the southeast of the village there is a large low-lying area known as Decoy Carr which is designated as a Ramsar site, Special Area of Conservation, Special Protected Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest. In addition to this there are a number of important wildlife sites and natural assets such as Roman Wood.

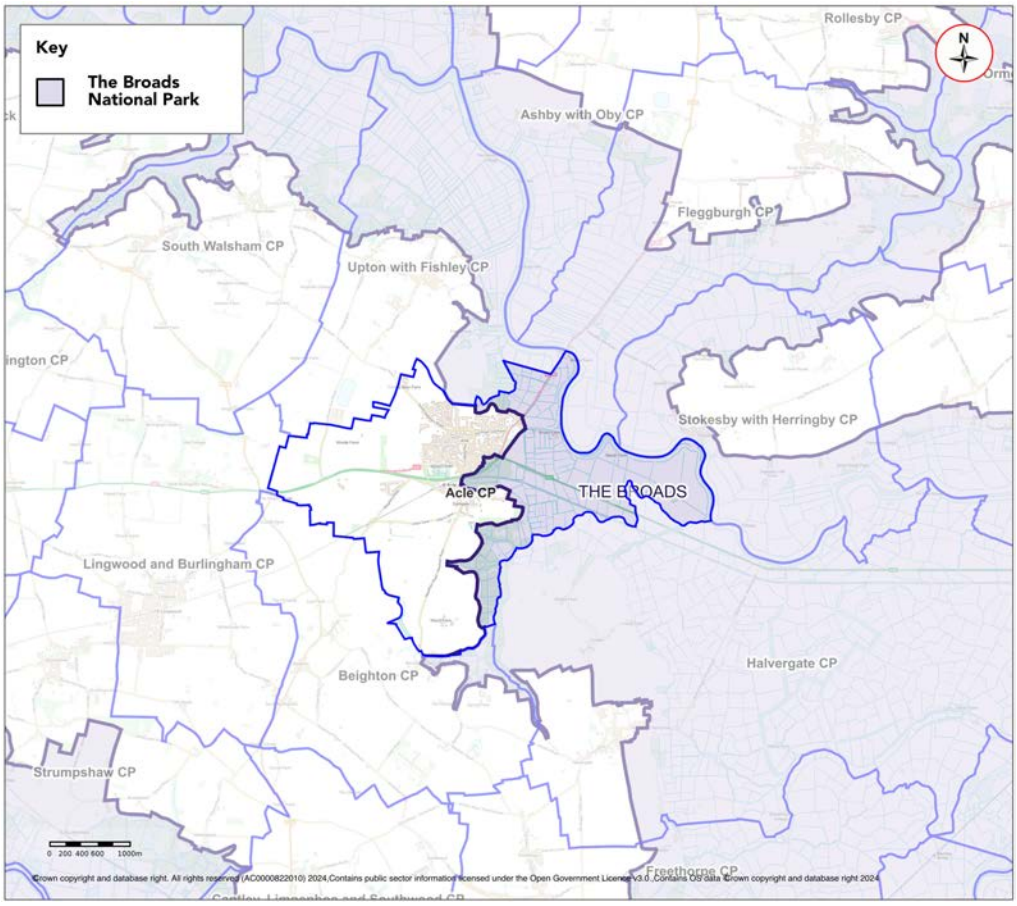


Figure 6: Location of Acle Parish in the Broads National Park (source: Parish Online). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Community and leisure

3.6 The population of the village at the time of the last Census (2021) was 2,824, living in approximately 1,300 households. This was not a significant increase from the 2011 figures, however housebuilding rates since the 2021 census would indicate this has now further increased. The levels of homeownership dropped slightly between 2011 and 2021 (from 76% to 71%) and there were slight increases in both private and social renting (rising from 13% to 16% for private rented and from 10% to 11% for social rented). The proportion of residents aged over 60 rose from 27% in 2011 to 31% in 2021 and is illustrative of Acle's attractiveness as a retirement community. The proportion of

residents aged under 16 fell from 16% in 2011 to 13% in 2021 and working age residents (aged 17-60) also reduced from 56% in 2011 to 54% in 2021.

3.7 Unemployment in the village remains low, with only around 2.5% of residents classed as unemployed. The rate is higher than the Broadland average from the census at 2%, but lower than the Norfolk average of 2.8%. In line with the Broadland area, the largest occupational classification group of residents in Acle is lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations which is illustrative of a relatively affluent professional working population. However, relative to Broadland, there is a higher proportion of residents with no qualifications (21% for Acle and 17.6% for Broadland).

3.8 Deprivation in the village remains low with both Acle Wards registering in the 20% least deprived in England, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, in 2024. However, within those wards there are specific pockets of deprivation.

3.9 Acle is well served by community and sports facilities with a large recreation centre and grounds, a library, health centre and various community meeting rooms. The recreation centre provides outdoor sports pitches, children's play areas, lawn bowls and indoor bowls facilities, tennis courts, five-a-side pitches and a social club. There are four other play areas within the village.

3.10 The village has a secondary school in Acle Academy which serves the village and a large rural hinterland, a primary school and pre-school facilities.

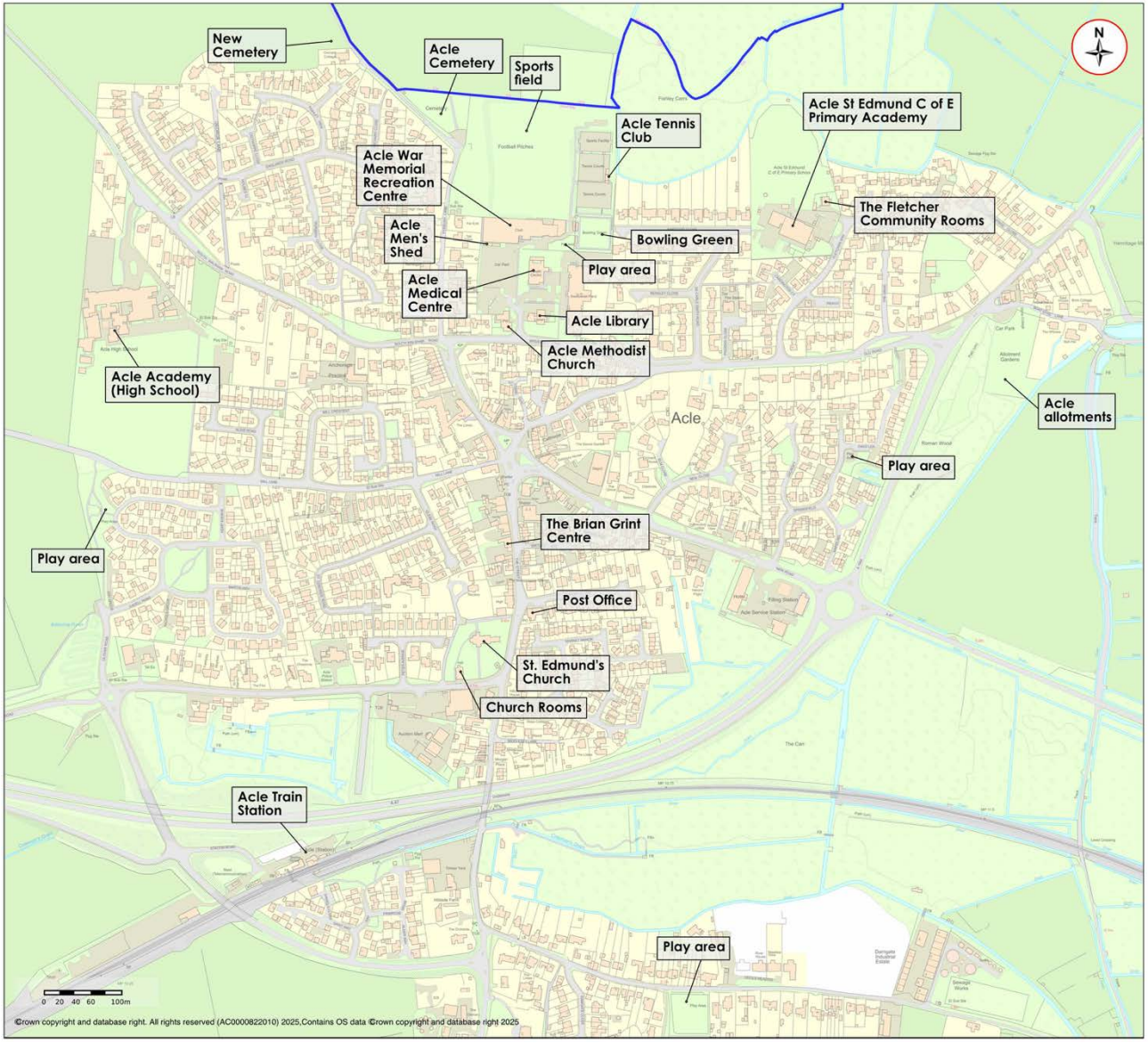


Figure 7: Community facilities and infrastructure (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Movement and transport

3.11 Acle is well connected. It has direct access to the A47 which links it to Great Yarmouth and Norwich and the wider strategic road network. It has a train station on the Wherry Line which has regular stopping services to Great Yarmouth and Norwich, and is well served by buses.

3.12 The village is reasonably well served by a network of footpaths which link it to the Broads and surrounding countryside.

3.13 The quality of the pedestrian environment within the village varies. The village centre in particular is dominated by large areas of highway which can be difficult to cross and in some areas, pavements are narrow and dropped kerbs are lacking.

Business and employment

3.14 Data from the 2021 Census shows the industries in which Acle parish residents are employed. The highest percentage of residents are employed in public administration, education and health, followed by distribution, hotels and restaurants.

3.15 In 2008 there were around 130 VAT-registered businesses based in Acle. Information from Broadland District Council in 2021 indicated that there were around 120 individual businesses operating in the parish covering a range of sectors.

3.16 There are two main concentrations of employment buildings in Acle, at the Damgate Lane industrial estate and in the village centre. The Damgate Lane site comprises a number of small, light-industrial units. The village centre, including The Street, comprises a mixture of retail units, retail services and small office space.

Housing

3.17 There are currently around 1,300 dwellings in Acle, the majority of which are detached and semi-detached with the majority being 3-bedroomed. Areas of housing have grown around the centre of the village with housing estates built off arterial routes throughout the twentieth century. The most recent developments are north of Springfield, north of Leffins Lane and north of Norwich Road. The village will experience further growth through the GNLP allocations and planning permission granted from October 2025 on land south of Leffins Lane.

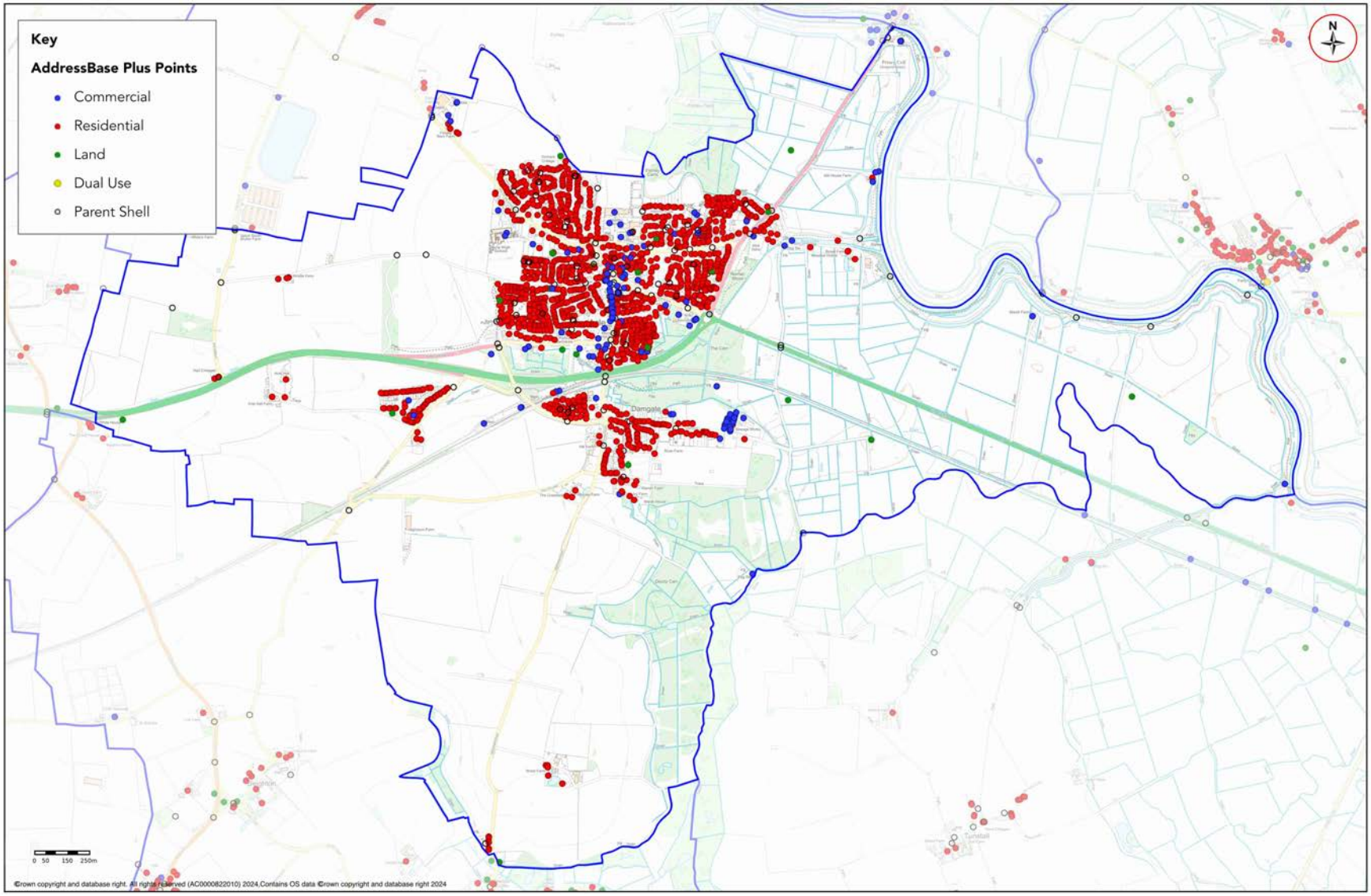


Figure 8: Address points in Acle parish (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

4. How the Plan was prepared

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan with support from a team of independent consultants. The process of the review began in Autumn 2024.

4.2 The Plan was commissioned by Acle Parish Council and funding was received from a central government Locality grant, a Broadland District Council grant and Acle Parish Council's own funds.

Community engagement and consultation

4.3 The process of reviewing the 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken with community engagement and consultation and began with a Household Survey in February 2025.



Figure 9: The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan community engagement and consultation (source: own).

1.	**Acle Household Survey** • The Household Survey was open from early January to 14th February 2025. • Distributed by members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in early 2025. The survey was also available online. • 356 households responded out of 1316 total households (Census 2021) in Acle - a 27% response rate. • The survey covered: housing need, distribution of new housing, design features, retaining retail in the village centre, brownfield land, heritage assets, important local landscape views, localised flooding, new rural footpaths, protection of green spaces, climate change initiatives, outdoor open space uses, community facilities, local employment opportunities, tourism.

- A full report was available on the Acle Parish Council website. Results were fed into the development of Neighbourhood Plan policies.



Figure 10: Front cover to the Acle Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey.

2. **Pre-submission consultation on the draft Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan**
   - Following approval from Acle Parish Council on 10th November 2025, the draft modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan was published for pre-submission consultation (from 22nd November 2025 to 16th January 2026). It was sent to statutory agencies and available for residents to comment on.
   - Consultation launched with an exhibition on 22nd November 2025 at the Fletcher Community Rooms, including the use of consultation response forms. Subsequently the documents and response forms were available at Acle Library and on the Acle Parish Council website.

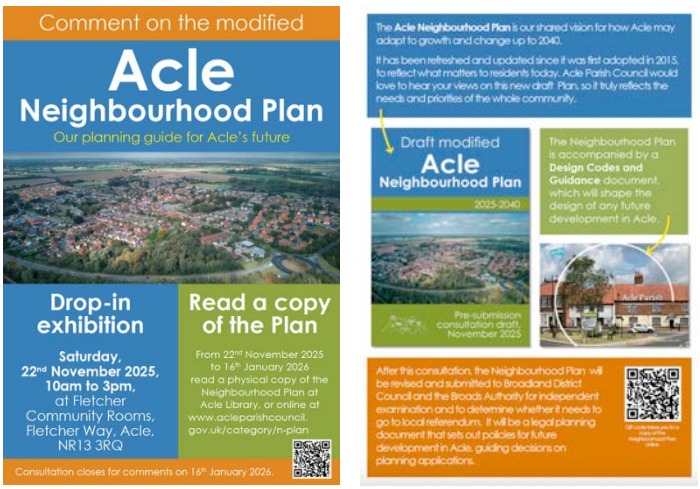


Figure 11: Flyer/poster for the pre-submission consultation.

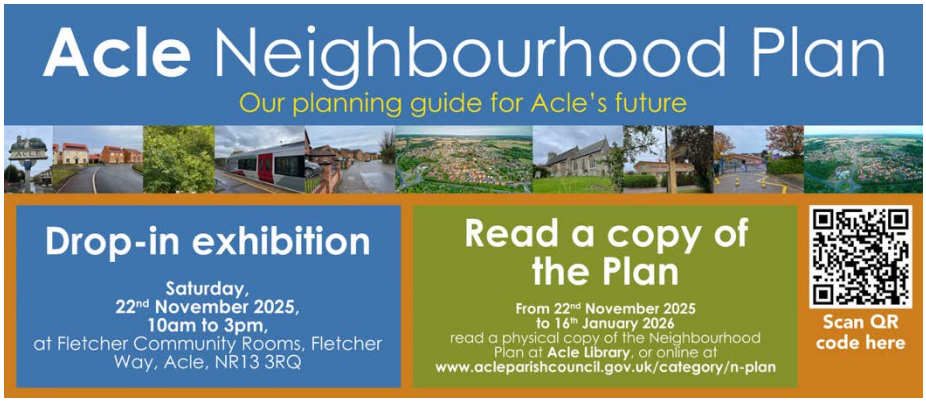


Figure 12: Banner for the pre-submission consultation.

3.	**Public consultation on the modified Plan by Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority** • Following submission, the Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan will be checked, and public consultation will be undertaken by Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority. • Representations will be passed to the Independent Examiner.

4.	**Referendum** • The Independent Examiner will determine if there has been significant change to the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan, and therefore whether a referendum is required. • If a referendum is required, the referendum will ask the question, '*Do you want Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Acle to help them decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?*'


Pillbox
50 yards
Circular Walk
Circular Walk

5. Vision and Objectives

5.1 It is important that any Neighbourhood Plan contains a simple vision statement which sums up the community's aim for the future of the parish. A Neighbourhood Plan vision is an overarching statement describing what the Neighbourhood Area should be like at the end of the Plan period i.e. 2040. A vision should be developed with local people and refined and adapted through consultation. In this case, the original vision was reviewed and updated to better reflect the Acle of 2025.

***Updated* Vision**
As the "Gateway to the Broads", Acle will continue to flourish as a key service centre, whilst maintaining its rural village identity. Development will be sustainable, well designed, create healthy and safe places, environmentally conscious and community focused. Acle will be a prosperous place for all generations to live, work and visit.

5.2 In addition, the original objectives were reviewed and updated as necessary. The objectives, (and the subsequent policies which flow from them), have been re-ordered from the existing Plan; to reflect the current priorities of the village; a new natural environment objective and subsequent set of policies have been added. These are shown below:

- **Objective 1: Housing and Development**
  To support development which meets the needs of the community, promotes community safety, cohesion and well-being, through the environmentally positive design of buildings and spaces and is sympathetic to the character of Acle.
- **Objective 2: Business and Employment**
  To enhance the attractiveness, vitality and viability of Acle for employment, retail, tourism and commercial uses.
- **Objective 3: Community and Leisure**
  To ensure that Acle has sufficient and appropriate social, health, leisure, tourism and educational facilities to support the local area.
- **Objective 4: Movement and Transport**
  To encourage safe, convenient and accessible pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access within Acle and beyond.
- **Objective 5: Natural Environment**
  To protect and enhance the natural environment of Acle.

5.3 The different objectives of the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan flow from the vision and from there, the policies. **Figure 13** outlines this relationship.

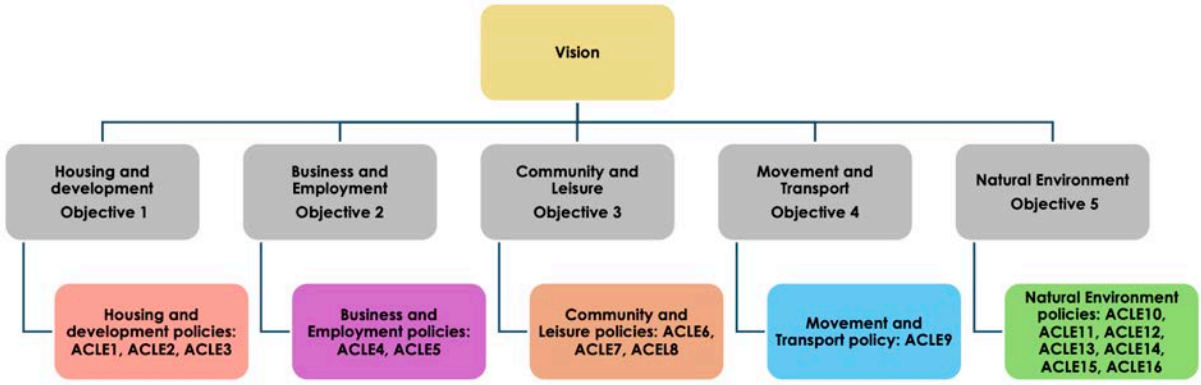


Figure 13: Relationship between the vision, objectives and policies in the Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan.

5.4 The process of reviewing the 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan policies has resulted in the deletion of some existing policies, where they are either achieved or no longer relevant; the re-wording of others, where matters have changed and they require bringing into line with current national and local policy; some new policies where gaps in the policy coverage were identified. The relationship between the new and existing policies is shown below.

Policies in the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan

Modified and new policies in the Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan
ACLE1: The Design of New Development Includes much of former Policy 10 and acts as principal design policy for the Neighbourhood Plan
NEW ACLE2: New housing New Policy covering scale, type, tenure and location of new housing.
ACLE3: Residential Car Parking Includes former Policy 11 as a wider parking policy.
ACLE4: Village Centre Merger of former Policy 2 and Policy 8 to create new policy; covers both uses and public realm. Wording updated.
ACLE5: Mixed uses, underused and vacant land New policy covering potential redevelopment sites within the built-up area with elements of former Policy 9.
ACLE6: Acle Bridge Improvements Formerly Policy 1. Largely unchanged.
ACLE7: Education and Health Provision Merger of Policy 3 and Policy 4 to create single education-based policy with updated wording.
NEW ACLE8 New Cemetery Provision
ACLE9: Improving health, accessibility and connectivity Incorporated former Policy 5 into new policy as a wider connections and accessibility policy.
NEW ACLE10: Flood risk : Promotes sustainable urban drainage systems and seeks to direct development away from areas at risk of flooding from all sources.

Modified and new policies in the Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan
NEW ACLE11: Light Pollution and Dark Skies: Protects the existing dark skies of the parish and provides guidance on lighting schemes.
NEW ACLE12: New and Existing Green Spaces: Identifies a number of Local Green Spaces and sets out the priorities for new green spaces.
NEW ACLE13: Biodiversity and Ecological Corridors: Identifies the important ecological corridors in the parish which are to be protected and enhanced.
NEW ACLE14: Landscape and Important Public Views: Identifies a number of important public views in the parish which new development must take account of.
NEW ACLE15: Responding to Climate Change: Promotes climate change adaption and mitigation.
NEW ACLE16: Heritage: Heritage protection policy.

Introduction to Planning Policies

5.5 Neighbourhood Plans are first and foremost a land-use document for planning purposes. All policies in the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan have been derived from evidence and the results of consultation, which provide the justification and evidence base for their selection.

5.6 Neighbourhood Plan policies are required to follow the government's guidance. They exist to:

- Set out locally-led requirements in advance for new development in the parish.
- Inform and guide decisions on planning applications.
- Ensure that individual decisions contribute to a coherent vision for the area as a whole.

5.7 To aid interpretation for decision makers and planning applicants, each policy is accompanied by supporting text, which includes context for the theme, the views of residents, and national and local policy context, including reference to strategic plans and published guidance where appropriate. This is set out before each of the policies.

5.8 Where there is a legislative or statutory backing to require something to be delivered by a policy, the policy will use ***'must'*** in its wording. Where it is preferential to achieve something and there is guidance or evidence to support it, the word ***'should'*** is used. Where there is no formal requirement or evidence to support something, but it is considered to be important to the community then the words ***'encouraged'*** or ***'supported'*** or '***could'*** may be used.

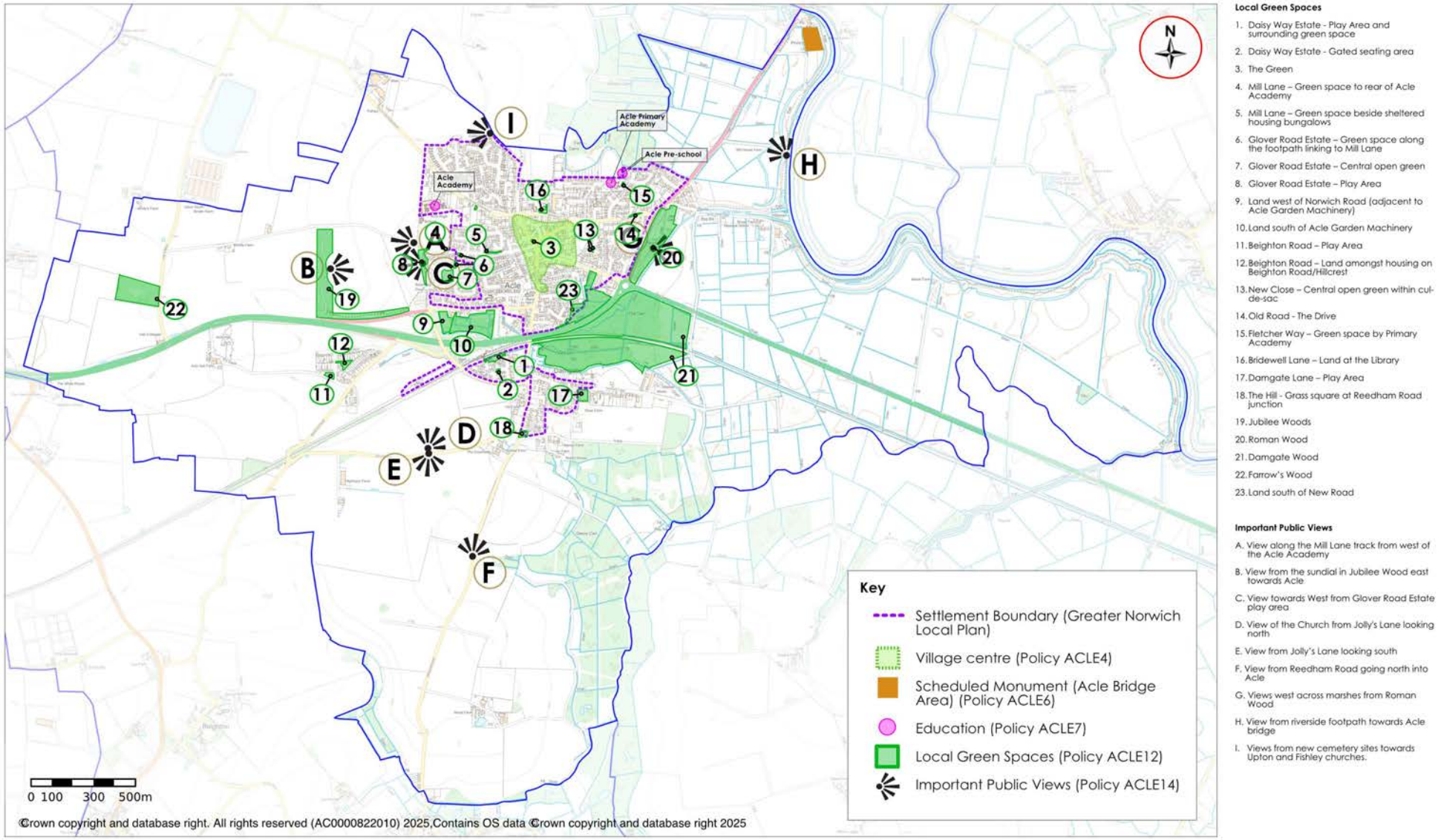


Figure 14: Policies map (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.


30
Welcome to
ACLE
Gateway to the Broads
Broads National Park

6. Policies: Housing and Development

Objective1: Housing and Development
To support development which meets the needs of the community, promotes community safety, cohesion and well-being, through the environmentally positive design of buildings and spaces and is sympathetic to the character of Acle.

Integration through design

6.1 The Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that any new development in or around the village should be mindful of the special physical characteristics of Acle and its sense of community identity. It expects that house builders and promoters will take steps to ensure that any new housing developments integrate socially as well as physically into the existing settlement.

6.2 One of the determinants of whether any new development is successfully integrated or not will be dependent upon how well it is considered to 'fit' with its surroundings. Aside from concerns over the impacts of growth on infrastructure, matters such as design, impact on local character, layout and scale are the most common issues that will cause the local community concerns about any proposed new development. If a community believes that it has been involved in and been able to influence the design of a development at an early stage, the higher the likelihood that the development will be considered to be acceptable.

6.3 Whilst to an extent design and impact on local character are subjective judgments, these can be influenced by breaking design elements down into component parts and attempting to address them. Whether a proposed new development relates well to, and enhances, the existing character and context, is one of the most common judgments to be made, yet there is often little evidence or guidance to assist local people in making that judgement. Neighbourhood Plans can assist with filling that gap by promoting an understanding of which elements make up the character of the area and what constitutes good design that respects local character.

6.4 Government guidance places considerable emphasis on creating high quality, beautiful and sustainable places. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF[5] describes it as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development,

[5] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development proposals acceptable to communities.

6.5 In addition, the NPPF, at paragraph 133, makes clear that local planning authorities should ensure that visual tools such as design codes and guides are used to inform development proposals to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage and reflect local character and preferences. Design Codes should provide a framework for creating high-quality places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design to inform development proposals. It also makes clear that the level of detail and degree of prescription within design codes and guides should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.

6.6 Design coding is one tool available to local planning authorities, communities, and developers to define and deliver design quality. A design code is a set of simple, concise, illustrated design requirements that are visual and numerical wherever possible to provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.

6.7 National guidance on this subject comes in the form of the National Design Code[6] and the National Model Design Code.[7] Broadland District Council (working with South Norfolk Council) is in the process of producing District Wide Design Codes which take their lead from the national guidance, and should be completed in 2026.[8] The Broads Authority also has an adopted Design Code.[9]

6.8 However, as design is such a localised issue because no one place is exactly like another, the more localised the design guidance can be, the more effective it is. The Parish Council commissioned a specific Design Code for Acle using the Locality Technical Support. Consultants AECOM completed the work in October 2025 which is an Appendix to the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan.

6.9 The Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025 has been influenced by the national and district wide guidance but also by a detailed character appraisal of the existing built form of Acle. The community has also influenced its content through the results of the Household Survey which indicated that the most important design elements for new development in Acle were as follows:

- Off-street parking (81%)
- Connecting footpaths (78%)
- Pavements (78%)
- Trees, hedging and planting (74%)
- Lighting (74%)

[6] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide
[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code
[8] https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/planning/future-development/supplementary-planning-documents/broadland-and-south-norfolk-district-wide-design-codes
[9] https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/136555/Appendix-1-Design-Guide-and-Code-for-the-Broads-FINAL-DRAFT-13.11.2024.pdf

- Gardens (67%)
- Planting at entrances to development (61%)
- Variety of housing styles (61%)

6.10 There was little interest from respondents for uniform housing styles, modern design, no street/pathway lighting, or on-street parking. It has therefore been important to ensure that the Design Code work undertaken by AECOM reflects these key issues and **Policy ACLE1** has been developed accordingly. The policy is applicable to housing developments both large and small-scale, allocations and windfall development, although some criteria may not be appropriate for smaller development and the guidelines and codes should be applied proportionately to development proposals.

6.11 Furthermore the design of new development should take into account the principles of community safety, health and well-being by:

- Ensuring developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.
- Promoting health and well-being.
- Employing suitable layout/ design principles to address crime and disorder and the fear of crime – so that the quality of life, community cohesion and resilience are not impacted.

Policy ACLE1: The Design of New Development

The design of all new development in Acle should reflect the village's local distinctiveness and identity and seek to enhance the quality of the built environment and Acle's overall character.

Proposals for new development, including residential and non-residential development, should be of a high standard of design and have regard to the guidance set out in the **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025**.

Development proposals should make reference to the relevant Character Area analysis found in **Appendix A of the Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025**, to have a better understanding of Acle's context. This applies to larger-scale development and small-scale development such as infill and extensions.

Proposals for new housing development, as appropriate to the scale of development proposed, should pay careful attention, in particular to the following design code themes:

1. A rural Norfolk village (RV)

RV.01 Responsive to context and pattern of development:

i. **RV.01.1 Settlement Pattern**: New development must respect the context of its location, be responsive to Acle's historical context, and not diminish existing historical qualities. New development must respect the significance of the village centre and the radial pattern of streets and roads.

ii. **RV.01.2 Settlement Edge**: Village edge developments must integrate sympathetically into the village and avoid disproportionally high, dense,

urbanised layouts; development must gradually transition into the countryside by using comprehensive landscaped buffering and avoid hard edges to development with little vegetation or landscaping. Larger developments must ensure that access to existing Public Rights of Way (footpaths and bridleways) connecting the village to the countryside are incorporated into the design. Developments must have dedicated green spaces and green verges within the layout that link to create 'green corridors' which link the countryside to the village.

iii. **RV.01.3 Building Placement**: Where there is no established building line, the setbacks of dwellings must allow for adequate space to accommodate on-plot parking and allow room for a well landscaped front garden, maintain gaps between dwellings to minimise overlooking and prioritise amenity space.

iv. **RV.01.4 Building Form**: Dwellings should be either single storey bungalows or 1.5–2.5 storey houses. Houses must not go above 2.5 storeys and should refer to existing context.

v. **RV.01.5 Extensions:** Extensions must be appropriate in size and scale to the massing and layout of the existing main building, which must remain the dominant element. Extensions should be designed so as not to result in a significant impact in terms of loss of privacy and overlooking, overshadowing or an otherwise overbearing impact on neighbouring properties. Extensions should not reduce the amount of off-street parking below the required standards.

RV.02 Local vernacular and use of materials:

vi. **RV02.1 Facades and Materials**: Façades should be sympathetic to the traditional buildings of Broadland and complement the more historic vernacular styles found throughout Acle. Traditional façade material used in Acle includes brick ranging in shades from white, buff, cream and orange through to a darker red. Materials should seek to reinforce local character, where that exists. New development should incorporate traditional materials, to reinforce local distinctiveness, unless the use of different materials is justified in relation to the development of a standalone contemporary house without a strong context.

vii. **RV.02.2 Fenestration**: Fenestration design should be complementary between neighbouring properties in terms of style, scale and alignment. For a development of multiple dwellings, a consistent fenestration design should be incorporated across all dwellings.

viii. **RV.02.3 Roofline**: Traditional Broadland roof design has a pitched gable roof of 30–40 degrees. A variety of roof pitches adds interest to the roofline and is appropriate to the material, such as pantiles (S-tiles) which are used on pitches of 40–50 degrees.

ix. **RV.02.4 Boundary Treatments**: Front boundary walls must remain under 1m in height and retain visual connections. Appropriate boundary treatments must be used for plots in sensitive locations e.g. those which back onto the countryside or open spaces. Hedgerows at the front of properties must be well-defined and not obstruct pedestrian movement. Original boundary treatments of existing building plots must be left intact, including hedgerows which should not be chopped through or significantly reduced for extensions or access points.

2. A green and natural village (GV)

GV.01 Protect environmentally focused spaces and enhance biodiversity

x. **GV.01.1 Open Spaces** (see Policy ACLE12).

xi. **GV.01.2 Blue and green network**: Development that is placed along the riverside must respect the context of the river and be built to the standards of the Broads Authority. Existing development that fronts or backs onto ponds, wetlands or swales must take every effort to mitigate flooding, by maximising the use of permeable paving materials and soft landscaping. New blue and green networks must connect with existing blue and green infrastructure to create new and consolidate existing networks

xii. **GV.01.3 Biodiversity** (see Policy ACLE13).

GV.02 Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) and fire prevention

xiii. **GV.02.1 SuDS design** (see Policy ACLE10).

xiv. **GV.02.2 Fire Prevention** (see Policy ACLE15). Development should make appropriate provision for fire hydrants and any purpose-built structure to house communal refuse or recycling bins should not be located immediately adjacent to dwellings

3. *A connected village (CV)*

CV.01Active travel and an interconnected neighbourhood

xv. **CV.01.1 Connectivity** (see Policy ACLE9).

xvi. **CV.01.2 Legibility and Wayfinding**: Streets contribute to the character of the area, taking into consideration features such as active frontages, enclosure and high-quality landscaping. Pedestrian routes should be furnished and integrated into the existing street network. Wayfinding could be aided by appropriate signage, for example, timber signage in the countryside being mindful not to create unnecessary visual clutter.

xvii. **CV.01.3 Traffic Calming**: Layouts must balance traffic calming with access for emergency vehicles and the needs of those with mobile disabilities. Vertical traffic calming features such as raised tables must be designed to complement the character of the street, using materials such as block paving and stone chippings rather than tarmac.

CV.01.4 Landscaping and Street Trees (see Policy ACLE13).

CV.01.5 Shopfronts: The design of shop fronts should take account of the rhythm and character of Acle, such as the building width, the horizontal or vertical emphasis and the variety of style and vernacular of the building and surrounding shopfronts.

CV.01.6 Lighting (see Policy ACLE11).

CV.02 Parking Design

xxii. **CV.02.1 Street parking** (see Policy ACLE3).

xxiii. **CV.02.2 On-plot parking** (see Policy ACLE3).

The location and mix of new housing

6.12 Government guidance advises that Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area. In addition, they should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.

6.13 The issue of future housing development in Acle is a key issue for the village over the next 20 years, particularly its potential impacts upon the people, services and environment of the village. Acle has experienced considerable housebuilding in the parish over the last 10 years and with the allocations identified in the GNLP will see further growth as those come forward. Not all of the allocated sites currently benefit from planning permission and therefore the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan is able to influence how they are developed with **Policy ACLE1** being a key influence on their visual appearance and **Policy ACLE2** influencing the size, type and tenure of housing delivered on those sites.

6.14 In addition, this modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan recognises that there may be additional 'windfall'[10] development which will also come forward during the Neighbourhood Plan period, which is likely to be smaller scale, infill development within the existing settlement boundary[11]/limit and potentially the redevelopment of brownfield sites. It should also be noted that the Local Plan will be reviewed during the lifetime of this modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan and there may be further development identified in Acle as part of that review process.

6.15 **Policy ACLE2** has been developed to give broad strategic guidance for the location of new 'windfall' development in the village that may come forward in addition to the GNLP allocations. New 'windfall' housing development should be located inside the adopted settlement limit for the village, close to existing development and within easy reach of the village centre, where good access to local facilities can be achieved.

10 See glossary for definition

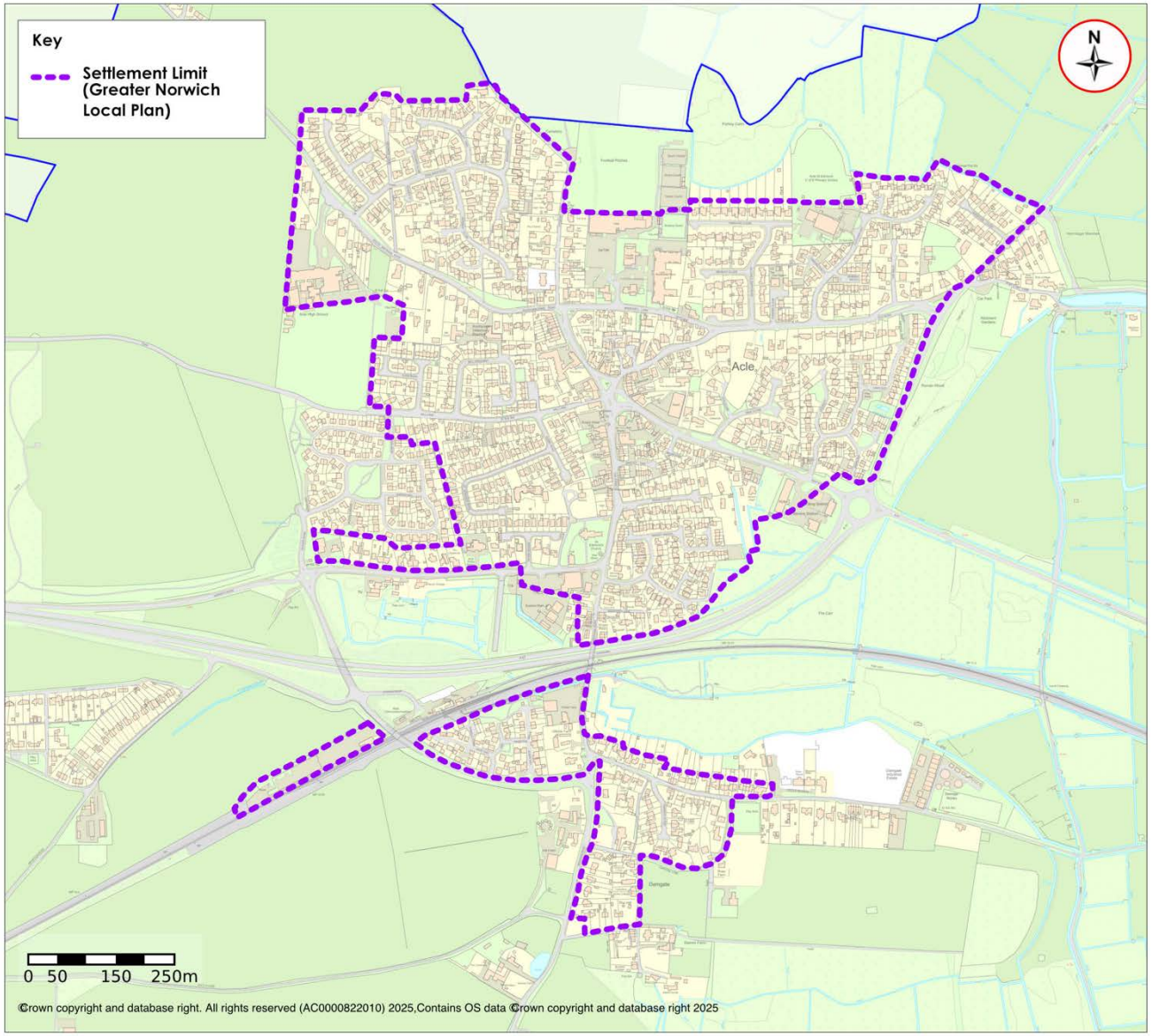


Figure 15: Settlement Limit for Acle, Greater Norwich Local Plan (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

6.16 In addition to scale and location of new development, the size, type and tenure of any new housing will be a key issue for local communities. The specific mix of housing will clearly have an impact on the existing community and therefore careful consideration needs to be applied in determining that mix.

6.17 The NPPF emphasises that delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes is essential to support a sustainable, vibrant, and mixed community. Community opinion expressed in the form of the results of the Household Survey revealed the following:

- Almost a third of current residents (30%) felt they would be likely to change their accommodation in the next 5 years.
- The greatest interest for new housing was for 2 and 3 bedroomed houses and 2 and 3 bedroom bungalows, retirement properties and some interest in flats.
- The most popular tenure for new accommodation was to buy on the open market, followed by discounted sales (First Homes) and social rented housing.
- Priority for affordable housing should be for people with a local connection to Acle.[12]

6.18 Other issues raised by the community included the need to enable older people to remain in their own home or supported by their families, as long as possible, and flexibility in how that care might be provided was important. This could include annexes or other ancillary accommodation.

6.19 To add to the evidence base on this subject, the Parish Council commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) through the Locality Technical Support. This was completed by consultants AECOM in April 2025. The HNA is a supporting document to the Neighbourhood Plan. The HNA does not address overall housing numbers but instead explores the potential appropriate housing mix for Acle in terms of size, type and tenure together with any potential need for specialist housing.

6.20 The key findings from the HNA are set out in the Executive Summary of the HNA itself and these are summarised below:

- Home ownership is the current dominant tenure in Acle.
- Private renting is affordable to households where there are two earners on average wages, but not to single households.
- First Homes[13] would need to be delivered at the 50% discount to be affordable to most households.
- Shared ownership properties are more affordable to Acle households than discounted market homes.
- Affordable rented housing is affordable to most households with two earners on average wages but not to single households or low wage earners.

[12] BDC has introduced a new Local Lettings policy which, means that all new affordable, rented homes will be for local lettings (in perpetuity), rather than only a third being for local let (and at first let only) as previously

[13] https://www.gov.uk/first-homes-scheme

- The need for affordable housing over the plan period is approximately 126 dwellings (9.7 per annum).
- The mix of Affordable Housing required is 60% social/affordable rent and 40% home ownership products.
- The majority of the current dwelling stock in Acle is 3 bedrooms.
- 81% of Acle households currently 'under occupy' their home.
- Around 5% of households currently live in overcrowded accommodation.
- Future housing delivery of open market housing should be focussed on 3 bedroomed dwellings which would allow for some downsizing, and also some upsizing, depending on the needs of the household.
- There will be a greater need for accessible and adaptable housing over the plan period as the population ages.
- There is a need for some specialist housing which can take the form of extra care or retirement housing.
- Information from Broadland indicates that In terms of Affordable Housing for rent, the greatest housing need is for 1 bedroom and then 2 bedrooms property types.

6.21 **Policy ACLE2** below has been developed taking into account the results of the Household Survey and the Housing Needs Assessment.

Policy ACLE2: New Housing in Acle

The location of new housing in Acle
The focus for new development in Acle over the plan period will be within the adopted settlement limit (**figure 15**) or within specific allocations made in the Adopted Local Plan.

New housing development should be located where it can best integrate with existing development and benefit from proximity to the existing community facilities.

Within the settlement limit, proposals for small windfall and infill sites consisting of individual dwellings or small groups of dwellings will only be supported where they are well related to the existing built-up area, where their development would incorporate good quality design which maintains or enhances the character and appearance of existing buildings, street scene and surroundings and where safe pedestrian and cycle connections to existing community facilities can be provided.

The mix of new housing in Acle
Proposals for new housing should seek to meet local needs (both current and future).

Size: where new housing is to be provided, the focus should be on providing a mix of housing with particular importance given to mid-sized 3 bedroomed dwellings, as open market dwellings and 1-2 bedrooms for affordable housing to rent which would retain the current range and mix of housing available and maintains a balanced and inclusive community.

Affordable Housing:[14]where affordable housing is to be provided, as part of a mixed development site, this should be delivered as a minimum of 1/3 of the total units on the site or in line with the relevant Adopted Local Plan policy, whichever is higher. The affordable units should be fully integrated with the open market housing and 'pepper-potted' around the site.

The mix of Affordable Housing should be provided in line with the recommendations of the Acle Housing Needs Assessment[15] (or successor document) which at the time of writing recommends the following mix:

a. 60% as social/affordable rent.
b. 40% affordable routes to home ownership.

Priority for affordable housing will be given to those who can prove a local connection to Acle parish.[16]

Specialist housing: new development should provide for a mix of housing type including those that can be adapted to meet the needs of older people, people with disabilities or limited mobility, such as ground floor flats and bungalows. Specialist housing must demonstrate proximity and safe access to primary care and pharmacy services and, as appropriate provide on site features supporting independence and prevention.

In accordance with Adopted Local Plan policy, at least 20% of new homes on major[17] developments should meet Building Regulations M4(2) standards of adaptability and accessibility.

Annexes and ancillary accommodation: where a need for an annexe or ancillary accommodation is established, and care can be provided which allows for people to remain in their own homes for longer, this will be supported in principle, subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan.

Residential Car Parking

6.22 Government guidance recognises that there continues to be a demand for parking in both residential and non-residential developments. The NPPF makes it clear that parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there are clear and compelling reasons for doing so that are necessary to manage the local road network.

6.23 Parking provision for new developments should be made in accordance with the adopted standards of the Highway Authority. Adequate and well-maintained parking provision is an important element of new development, whether it is for a single dwelling or for a major housing scheme or business

[14] See Glossary for definitions
[15] AECOM Acle Housing Needs Assessment (April 2025).
[16] Local connection cascade: priority to existing residents followed by former residents, residents of neighbouring parishes, See Broadland Local Lettings policy.
[17] 10+ dwellings.

premises. It is a reality that private cars will be used to access services and employment either within or beyond the village.

6.24 Allocated parking on new residential estates should discourage indiscriminate and on-kerb parking. As demand for electric vehicles is expected to increase over the plan period, opportunities should be taken to encourage the installation of electric charging points both in residential and non-residential developments.

6.25 In larger housing developments, unless parking provision is well designed it can either dominate or detract from the overall visual appearance of that development. If parking is not conveniently located and accessible for the user then it will ultimately not be properly used and instead parking will occur on verges, green areas or unsafe locations resulting in potential congestion and highway safety issues for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users. Where parking is to be provided it should be an integral part of the design and layout and it should also be designed to meet the needs of residents it is intended to serve.

6.26 The most common issue raised through the Household Survey was inadequate parking and specifically the need to ensure that new developments make sufficient provision for parking and that this is provided off-street. Other common responses included the need to design in sufficient visitor parking areas in new developments, that parking for new properties should include at least two vehicles, the fact that parking restrictions may be appropriate in some areas and that preferably off-street driveway parking should be wide enough for cars to park side-by-side.

6.27 The Highway Authority has published guidance on parking for new developments, and these are the guidelines currently in force for the area[18]. The guidance covers parking standards and minimum provision for a range of uses including new residential development. The standards cover parking for cars and for cycles and powered two-wheelers and the design, layout and construction of parking.

6.28 Recent housing development in Acle has been characterised by a lack of sufficient off-road car parking for residents and visitors. This has led to parking on pavements and narrow residential streets with the effect of clogging up neighbourhoods and making it difficult for pedestrians to use pavements. Whilst it is recognised that Acle is well served by public transport, and there is a need to encourage people away from using the private car towards more sustainable modes, the village remains rural in character and a large proportion of working households rely on the car to travel to work to locations not served by bus or train.

6.29 The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that off-road parking provision in new developments reflects the needs of a rural village and that sufficient parking spaces are provided in a form that is visually attractive and

[18] https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/38633

designed to not obstruct residential streets. **Policy ACLE3** has been developed to provide some specificity to address the issues raised by the community.

Policy ACLE3: Residential Car Parking

New residential developments should not be visually dominated by the car and sufficient, safe and secure parking should be provided to meet the needs of the development.

Design
Householder parking should be provided on-plot for new residential developments. Where garages, under-croft parking or car ports are to be provided, they should be of sufficient dimensions to allow access and egress from the vehicle and provision should also be made for electric charging facilities.

All forms of parking areas should be designed to minimise the visual impact of the car on the street scene and the amenity of residents. Parking associated with new dwellings should be well connected, not in front of, or divorced from the dwelling, and appropriately lit to allow natural surveillance and safety.

Residential parking should be fully integrated within the curtilage of a property. Where on-street parking is unavoidable, parking spaces must be integrated within the streetscape and be parallel to the street. The preference is for side-by-side parking where this is practicable on-plot. On-street parking should not impede the access of pedestrians and vehicles. There must not be more than 3 spaces in a row without a break indicated through street trees or planters whilst ensuring this does not impact upon access for emergency, service or delivery vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists or adversely affect traffic flow.

New roads should be designed to adoptable standards and to safely accommodate unallocated on-street parking. Road design should include a clear demarcation between highway and footways and should not include shared surfaces unless it can be demonstrated that the arrangements are safe for all users.

Parking Provision
The quantity of parking should be as, a minimum, that which is outlined in the Norfolk County Council Parking Guidelines (2022).[19] For residential dwellings this should be consistent with the size of the dwelling, as follows:

a. 1 bedroomed unit – a minimum of at least 1 space
b. 2-3 bedroomed unit – a minimum of at least 2 spaces.
c. 4+ bedroomed unit – a minimum of at least 3 spaces.

Where communal parking is necessary, it should be sited in small groups, close to adjacent to homes, within view of active rooms, and bays clearly marked, so that it is obvious which parking spaces belong to which dwellings .

[19] https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/media/20274/download/pdf/norfolk-parking-guidelines-2022.pdf (accessed 03.10.25)

Visitor parking should also be provided at a minimum of one space per 5 new dwellings.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025 (CV.02.1 and CV.02.2**).

7. Policies: Business and Employment

Objective 2: Business and Employment
To enhance the attractiveness, vitality and viability of Acle for employment, retail, tourism and commercial uses.

Acle Village Centre

7.1 Before the village was bypassed in 1989 by the A47, vehicular traffic travelling between Great Yarmouth and Norwich passed through the centre of Acle. Whilst the bypass removed through traffic from the village and had the potential to create a more pleasant physical environment, the amount of land required for roads, junctions and filter lanes to keep traffic flowing freely was significant and areas of public realm and the pedestrian environment were reduced to provide more space for vehicles and highway.

7.2 As a result of this legacy the village centre has very limited areas of public realm and no natural outdoor focal point for gathering or use as a public space. This in turn means that the village centre is largely unsuitable for active retail and leisure uses which spill out onto the pavement and create active frontages and a vibrant atmosphere. This lack of public space makes it unsuitable for community activities and events that would typically be held in town and village centres.

7.3 Additionally, the scale and width of highway in some places, combined with limited pavements, the slope of the pavement and a lack of dropped kerbs, makes it difficult for residents, particularly the elderly, to move around and access facilities in the village centre on foot. There are areas of the village centre without continuous pavements making it difficult to navigate safely. An ambition of the 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan is to provide Acle with a village centre where the design emphasis is on the needs of the community, and not the needs of the car. It is hoped that the area of land given over to highway can be reduced and replaced with improved pavements and public spaces whilst maintaining vehicular access and car parking.

7.4 A village centre that is designed for the community will provide a more attractive hub for vibrant and active businesses to locate and take advantage of greater levels of public space. It will be easier for residents to move around the village centre and provide a space that is capable of holding community events, fetes and markets.

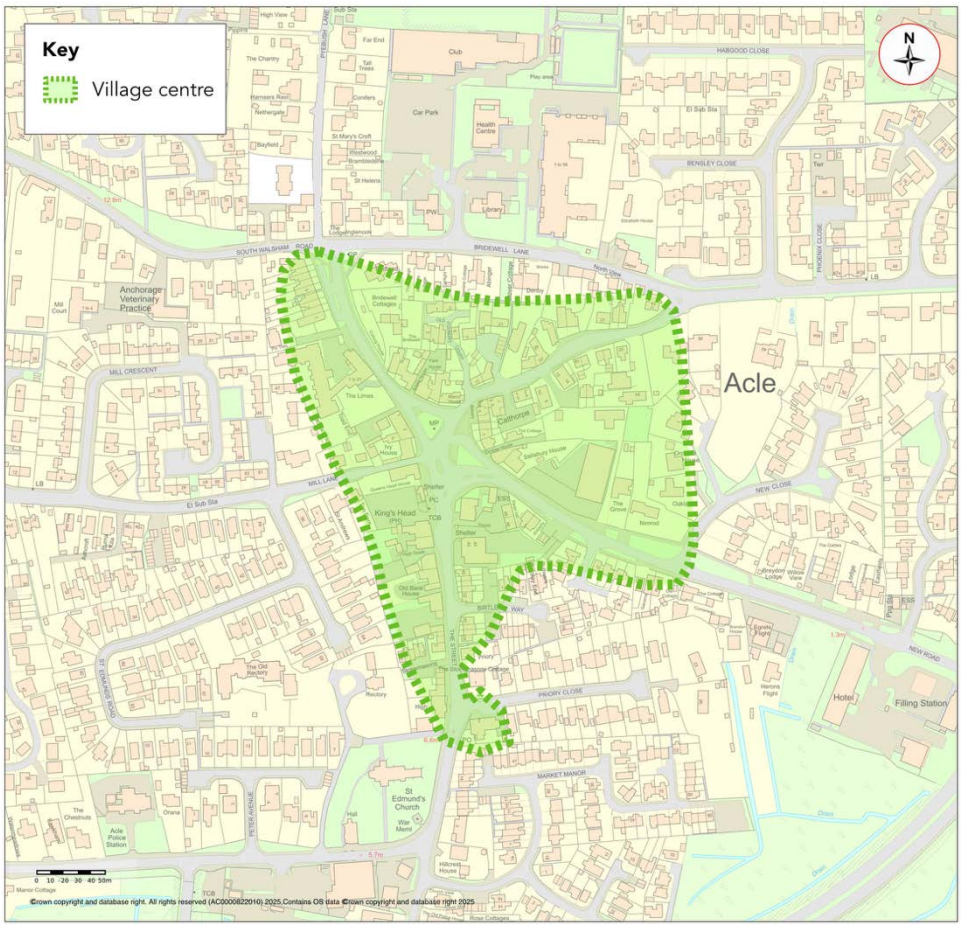


Figure 16: Acle village centre, as outlined in the 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).



Figure 17: Aerial photograph of Acle village centre.

7.5 The results of the Household Survey reinforced the issues raised during the evolution of the existing Neighbourhood Plan – concerns over safe crossings, pavement widths, connecting footpaths, parking and public spaces were all still very important to the community. Responses to the Household Survey indicated a recognition of the dual role of Acle – as the centre of commercial

and retail activity for its own population but also Acle's function as an important centre for a wider rural hinterland . There is a strong desire to retain the vitality and viability of the village centre through maintaining a range of diverse uses with an emphasis on retaining the existing village centre businesses, particularly those important retail uses.

7.6 The survey highlighted community support for using vacant property above ground floor level for residential accommodation, such as flats, particularly for those who may have limited transport options and do not rely on car use.

7.7 High-quality, well-connected public spaces are essential for the livelihood of all communities. They create informal meeting places, offer a place to rest, and can even provide shelter. Public realm should be coordinated and strengthen local distinctiveness making it a more legible and user-friendly environment. The sense of place, especially within the village centre, is especially important in creating a distinctive identity.

7.8 The **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025** contains guidance on Shopfronts (CV01.5) which identifies best practice for shop frontage design. Such ideas need not only be limited to areas currently dedicated to mixed use, such as The Street, but should be incorporated into the centre of new developments wherever possible to expand the community facilities of the whole village and is reflected in **Policy ACLE4**.

Policy ACLE4: Village Centre

Within the village centre (**figures 16 and 17**), proposals will be supported in principle which contribute to achieving a vibrant and viable village centre comprising a mix of retail, service sector, business, hospitality, tourist, cultural and residential uses.

Development proposals which would assist with the diversification and retention of existing retail uses within the village centre will be supported. The retention of existing retail uses and 'active frontages'[20] within the centre will be encouraged.

Proposals for residential development at first floor level above existing retail uses e.g. 'living over the shop' will be supported in principle where the retail use is compatible with residential use above.

Proposals in the village centre will be expected to be of a high-quality design consistent with **Policy ACLE1.** Proposals within the village centre should be, as appropriate to their scale and nature, designed with an emphasis on improving public realm, creating social and community spaces whilst contributing to enhancing the visual appearance of the area through the provision of high-quality public realm, street furniture and signage.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025 (CV01.5)**.

[20] Frontages containing uses that contribute to the vitality and engagement of public spaces and where the public are 'invited in' e.g. cafes, shops, bars, etc.

Underused or 'vacant' land in the village centre

7.9 Development in the heart of the village is relatively low density. There are large areas of under-used or unused brownfield land to the rear of properties along The Street and New Road and gaps between buildings along street frontages. The pattern of low-density development in the village centre means that there is a limited supply of suitable employment premises for retailers and other businesses.

7.10 Over time, with no new available space around the village centre, retail uses have gradually crept southwards along The Street into converted properties. Once these properties were converted and occupied, with no new development taking place, the supply of commercial premises for new or growing businesses became significantly constrained.

7.11 The lack of a relatively high-density village 'core' impacts upon the village's sense of cohesion and sense of place. It also undermines the function of the village centre as the heart of the settlement. These conditions limit the success of the local economy by frustrating inward investment and undermining a critical mass of activity sufficient to create a vibrant and attractive village centre.

7.12 It is the intention of the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan to create a thriving village centre by encouraging the sensitive development of under-used brownfield sites for small-scale mixed-use activities such as retail, office and residential.

7.13 There are two main concentrations of business activity in Acle; the first is at the Damgate Lane Industrial Estate, which comprises mainly light industrial uses, and the second is in the village centre and along The Street which comprises a mix of small retail and business services activities. Commercial space at both locations is generally fully occupied with little or no vacant space for inward investment or expansion.

7.14 This pattern of strong demand, low levels of vacancy and a lack of new supply of space stifles local economic growth and the creation of business space and jobs for the local community. It also means that when a local business is successful and outgrows its current premises, it is forced to leave the village and find alternative space elsewhere.

7.15 The Greater Norwich Local Plan makes two employment-related allocations in Acle. *Site B.AC.3*, south of the Acle Railway Station is for mixed and employment uses and *Site B.AC.4* at the former Station Yard is for industrial uses. Site B.AC.3 is now complete.

7.16 The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan recognises that there may be additional scope for other employment space within the village. As described earlier there are a number of potentially under-used sites in and around the village centre which could come forward over the life of this Neighbourhood Plan for some form of redevelopment or reuse.

7.17 The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote the development of new business space in the village to provide opportunities and jobs for local residents and for those in the rural hinterland and should such proposals come forward then the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan should provide some guidance on what might take the form of acceptable development.

7.18 Mindful of the results of the Household Survey, where a proposal is located in or immediately adjacent to the village centre with a frontage onto one of the key radial routes into the centre such as Norwich Road, The Street, New Road, Old Road or Reedham Road then retail uses, including food retail, would be encouraged along the site frontage to either retain (if the proposals re-use existing buildings) or create (if the site is vacant) an active and vibrant frontage. Other uses which may be ancillary such as parking or offices could be located to the rear of the retail uses, and residential accommodation would be encouraged above or also to the rear, creating a mix of uses. It is however important that parking is suitably discreetly located off-street, so as not to impede the flow of traffic around the village or cause highway safety issues for road users or pedestrians.

Policy ACLE5: Mixed Uses and Underused and Vacant Land

Proposals for the mixed use or redevelopment or re-use of underused or vacant land will be supported where all the following criteria are met:

a. The site is located either within or adjacent to the village centre.
b. The proposal includes a mix of uses such as office or business uses, tourist facilities or accommodation, cultural, retail or commercial uses.
c. Any housing proposed is ancillary to the other proposed uses on the site or includes live/work units.
d. Appropriate safe vehicular access to and from the site can be achieved.
e. Sufficient off-street parking to serve the proposed uses can be provided on the site.
f. The proposal provides safe pedestrian and cycle connections to the village centre and other important community facilities.
g. The proposed mix of uses will not result in the loss of amenity of adjoining users.
h. The proposal will provide a visual enhancement to the character of the area.

Where the proposed development site is located within or immediately adjacent to the village centre[21] and has a site frontage to either Norwich Road, The Street, New Road, Old Road and Reedham Road, retail uses, including food retail, will be encouraged on the site frontage. Other uses such as parking, employment and housing, either behind or above, will be supported where they would maintain or improve the vitality and viability of the village centre.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025**.

[21] See Broadland DMDPD Policy R1 Local Centres.

8. Policies: Community and Leisure

Objective 3: Community and Leisure
To ensure that Acle has sufficient and appropriate social, health, leisure, tourism and educational facilities to support the local area.

8.1 The area at Acle Bridge is the main local link between the village and tourism activity on the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads. Tourism associated with the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads is a major part of the regional economy and has the potential to generate significant local economic development for Acle.

8.2 The range and visual quality of development at Acle Bridge is mixed and the density of development is relatively low. Existing activities and any potential expansion are constrained by difficult vehicular access off the A1064 . Pedestrian links to the village have recently been upgraded.

8.3 The area has World War II heritage significance and the setting of this is an important consideration for future development. Both the Broads Authority and Historic England have indicated support for measures to reinforce and promote this heritage value through the provision of heritage interpretation. Some recent investment has taken place in the area aimed at improving its potential for leisure and tourism-related activity as a positive economic area for Acle.

8.4 The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan is keen to support the growth of high-quality leisure and tourism activity around the Acle Bridge as a means of developing and enhancing the economy of Acle, whilst recognising that some of the area lies outside of the Neighbourhood Area. **Policy ACLE6** is retained from the 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan and seeks the improvement of paths alongside the River Bure.

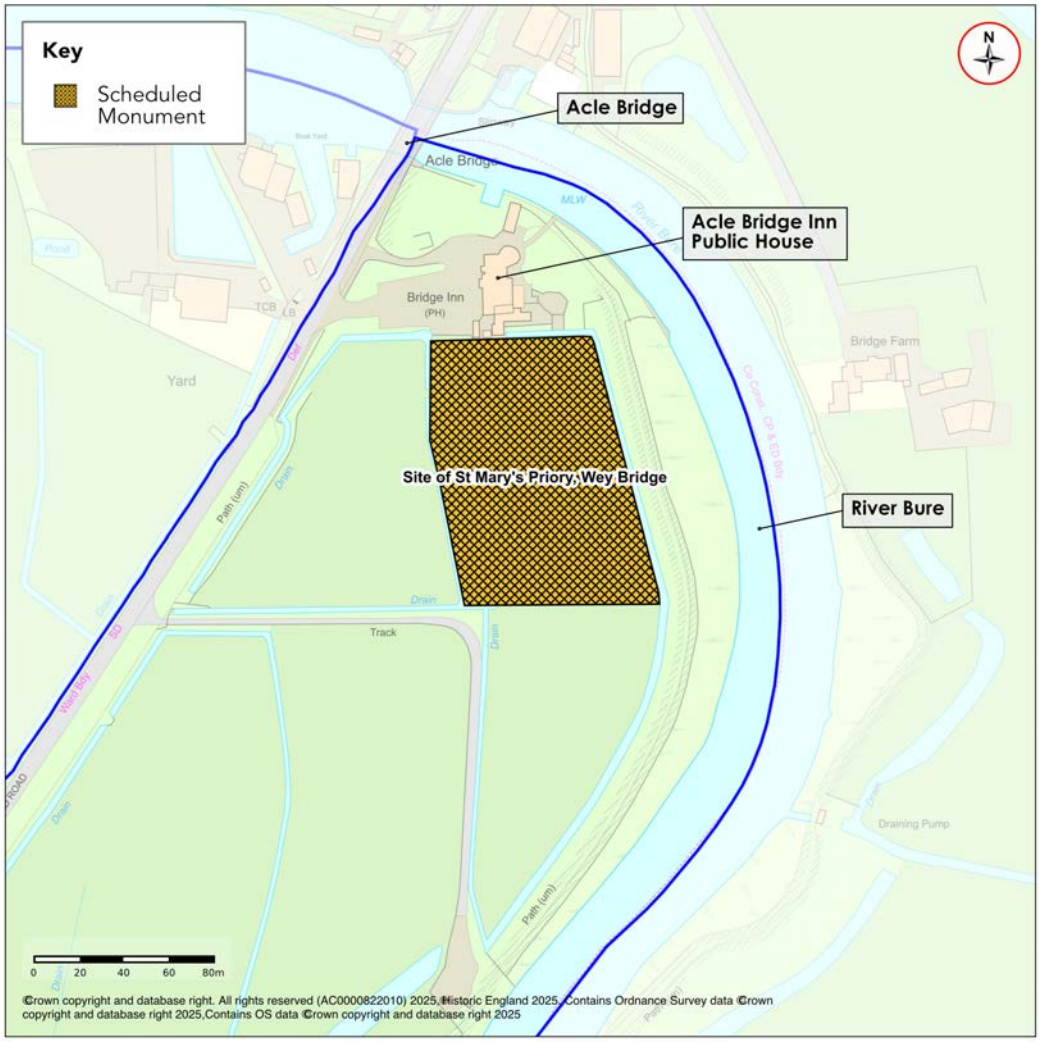


Figure 18: Acle Bridge area (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary

Policy ACLE6: Acle Bridge Improvements

The area at Acle Bridge (**figure 18**) shall be safeguarded for high-quality leisure and tourism uses, including food and drink premises, marinas and moorings which are consistent with its location in the Broads,(an internationally important wetland and nationally protected landscape).

Proposals for improvements to the facilities in the area should seek to create a high-quality visual gateway to the village. This would include improvements to the environment, access road, public realm, interpretation and signage promoting footpath and cycle links to Acle village which support well-being and tourism.

Any development proposals should refer to the relevant policies in the Adopted Broads Local Plan and to appropriate national and local technical guidance regarding flood risk which will be used to assess the suitability of proposals in this area.

Any new development should respect the setting of the St Mary's Priory scheduled monument which is located on adjacent land.

Where appropriate, archaeological investigations may be required as part of any work in this area.

Education and Health Facilities

8.5 Acle Academy (secondary school) is a centre for community activity in the village. It plays a vital role serving over 700 young people from Acle, and the surrounding, large rural hinterland. However, the Academy is constrained by ageing buildings and facilities that do not fully meet the needs of young people and the wider community today. Investment has been made in parts of the school in recent years, but some buildings have not been altered since the school opened in the late 1950s and were designed to provide facilities for a much smaller learner population of around 300. The 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan observed that particular facilities, such as the sports hall were becoming increasingly unfit for purpose and creating a challenge for the school to provide the level of facility it desired.

8.6 The allocation made in the GNLP between South Walsham Road and Norwich Road, provides the opportunity for expansion/reconfiguration of the Academy as may be required. However, it is important that the layout of this takes into account the full potential of the school site and possible enhancement and so as not to prejudice the future expansion of the school. The Local Plan policies highlight the need to encourage a masterplan style approach to achieve this.

8.7 It is the intention of the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan to support improvements to the Acle Academy so that it can provide the highest quality facilities - for students and the local community. The school playing fields are already available for dual use by the community and the school. This Plan is intended to support any applications to relevant agencies for funding to deliver this aspiration.

8.8 Furthermore, improvements to pre-school provision in Acle have recently been completed. The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan supports the development of high-quality pre-school facilities. If the future growth of Acle requires additional space to meet education needs, the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan would support in principle the co-location of the Primary and Pre-School onto one site with the Academy should such proposals come forward. **Policy ACLE7** combines Policies 3 and 4 of the 2015 Acle Neighbourhood Plan, to provide a comprehensive policy framework for future educational development in the parish. Developers will be expected to liaise with Acle Academy, Acle Primary Academy and Acle Pre-School to ensure the schools' potential future growth needs will not be compromised



Figure 19: Schools in Acle (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Health Care

8.9 Primary Health Care provision is always an issue of concern to the community when new housing growth is proposed. The Household Survey results revealed that the ability to obtain a timely GP appointment in Acle remains a key concern. Given the scale of growth proposed in Acle over the plan period there may be a need for further provision over the lifetime of the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan. Where this is the case any new provision, either in the form of new facilities or extensions or enhancement to existing facilities, will be supported. Where medical services such as dentistry could be provided using shared spaces such as sharing the building of another community facility this will also be supported in principle, subject to the details. The Parish Council will encourage prospective developers to liaise with the Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Board at pre-application stage to assess impacts on primary care capacity and secure proportionate financial contributions to deliver additional floorspace capacity.

Policy ACLE7: Education and Health Provision

Acle Academy
Proposals for the enhancement and extension of Acle Academy (**figure 19**) including the provision of new high-quality sports facilities for students and the wider community, will be supported.

The design and layout of proposals for new housing adjacent to the Acle Academy– that is site B.AC.1 (*Land west of Acle, north of Norwich Road, south of South Walsham Road)* - should ensure that it does not compromise any future expansion of the academy or any future proposals involving the co-location or

consolidation of Acle Academy with the primary school and the pre-school, which may be required to accommodate the planned levels of new growth.

Development in this location should be aided by a strategic masterplan, produced through community collaboration, which guides the development of the sites in a comprehensive manner to ensure the safeguarding of land for educational uses.

Primary and Pre-School Provision
Proposals which would result in the provision of new, enhanced and multi-purpose buildings/spaces will be supported where these allow for physical and social integration with the existing primary school, in order to create an improved learning environment.

Health Care Provision
Proposals for future enhancements to medical and dental services either through the provision of new buildings, the expansion or extension of existing facilities or through the use of shared community spaces will be generally supported in subject to the detail.

Such provision should be easily accessible by pedestrians and cyclists but also make sufficient provision for parking, taking into consideration patient needs.

Cemetery Provision in Acle

8.10 The Parish Council has been keen for some time to ensure that the parish has sufficient cemetery provision. The need for a cemetery was established prior to the Neighbourhood Plan Review process. The Parish Council has monitored the current space and the number of new burials taking place for the last 32 years. The proposed new housing planned for the village will further increase the population and therefore the requirement for burials. The existing cemetery is located on Pyebush Lane. Acle Parish Council obtained planning permission for a new cemetery, and the land is being prepared for burials. It may be required for burials from 2026. The Parish Council would also like to obtain land north of the current cemetery for future use when the new cemetery reaches capacity. Applications for a Compulsory Purchase Order to obtain the land in 2016 and 2017 were unsuccessful.

8.11 The Broads Authority has recognised the issue and in its 2019 Local Plan allocated the site north of the current cemetery. The land is in Upton with Fishley and therefore outside of the Neighbourhood Area. The allocation is being rolled forward in the emerging Broads Local Plan Review (ACL1).

8.12 Given the importance of the issue and the level of proposed growth in Acle identified in the Local Plan , it is considered pragmatic to include a policy in the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan. This policy provides guidance on the determination of applications for a new cemetery within the Neighbourhood Area should a proposal and prospective site become available during this

time. **Policy ACLE8** is not allocating a specific site but instead is a criteria-based policy which would be used to determine relevant applications.

Note: It should be noted that there is in principle support from the Parish for additional cemetery provision even if this were to be located outside of the Neighbourhood Area.

NEW Policy ACLE8: Cemetery Provision

Where a need for new cemetery provision is established for Acle, proposals for a new cemetery which meet all of the following criteria will be supported:

1. The proposal meets an identified need for new cemetery provision and is of sufficient size and scale to meet the identified need.
2. The proposed location is outside of any known areas of archaeological importance, and an archaeological evaluation/assessment of the site is undertaken prior to permission being granted.
3. The site is located outside of any areas of flood risk including areas of surface water flooding.
4. The proposal is supported by a groundwater protection risk assessment in accordance with Environment Agency Guidance: Assessing Groundwater Pollution for Cemetery Developments (or successor document or advice).
5. The proposal can be integrated into the wider surroundings by a landscaping scheme, including boundary hedge and tree planting.
6. The proposal is supported by a management plan that addresses how the site will be managed to benefit biodiversity.

9. Policies: Movement and Transport

Objective 4: Movement and Transport
To encourage safe, convenient and accessible pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access within Acle and beyond.

9.1 Acle is set within a beautiful and fascinating landscape with areas to the east falling within the Broads and rolling agricultural land to the west. The local landscape is punctuated by a variety of protected ecological sites, woodlands, rivers, dykes, archaeological and built heritage. However, recognition of the quality and diversity of the landscape around the village and the assets it contains is relatively limited.

9.2 The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan is keen to provide a basis for improving pedestrian links to the countryside and surrounding villages. By providing improved links it is hoped that more residents will access the surrounding landscape and that this will help to improve their understanding of their local environment and deliver health and well-being benefits.

9.3 Government guidance encourages development proposals to provide for high-quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking. Such networks should be comprehensive and provide not only for recreational routes but also for routes that can realistically be used for commuting to work or school. In addition, new routes should connect to the existing network and be suitable for use by people with disabilities and reduced mobility. New Active T[22]ravel routes (cycling, wheeling and walking) should be safe, secure, and attractive, and respond to the character of the area and any relevant design standards.

9.4 Government guidance in respect of plan making and transport issues tends to focus on promoting sustainable transport e.g. public transport, walking and cycling, rather than addressing issues of speeding and traffic congestion. Plans are urged to consider at an early stage the impacts of development on transport networks, realise opportunities for improvement, promote walking and cycling and public transport use and ensure that any adverse impacts of traffic are mitigated. It is also acknowledged that the pattern of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. Developers should take account of the guidance in the Norfolk Local Cycling and Walking

[22] Active travel refers to making journeys using physically active modes of transport, such as walking, cycling, wheeling, or scootering, rather than relying on motorised vehicles.

Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and the Broads LCWIP. **Policy ACLE9** addresses these matters. Wherever practicable, the creation of new access arrangements should complement the existing routes in the neighbourhood area as shown on **figure 20.**

9.5 The Weaver's Way long distance footpath links Cromer to Great Yarmouth and is a 61-mile route passing through a diverse landscape of woodland, mixed farmland, historic country estates, disused railway lines, riverside walks and the Norfolk Broads. The Weavers Way runs through Acle Parish.

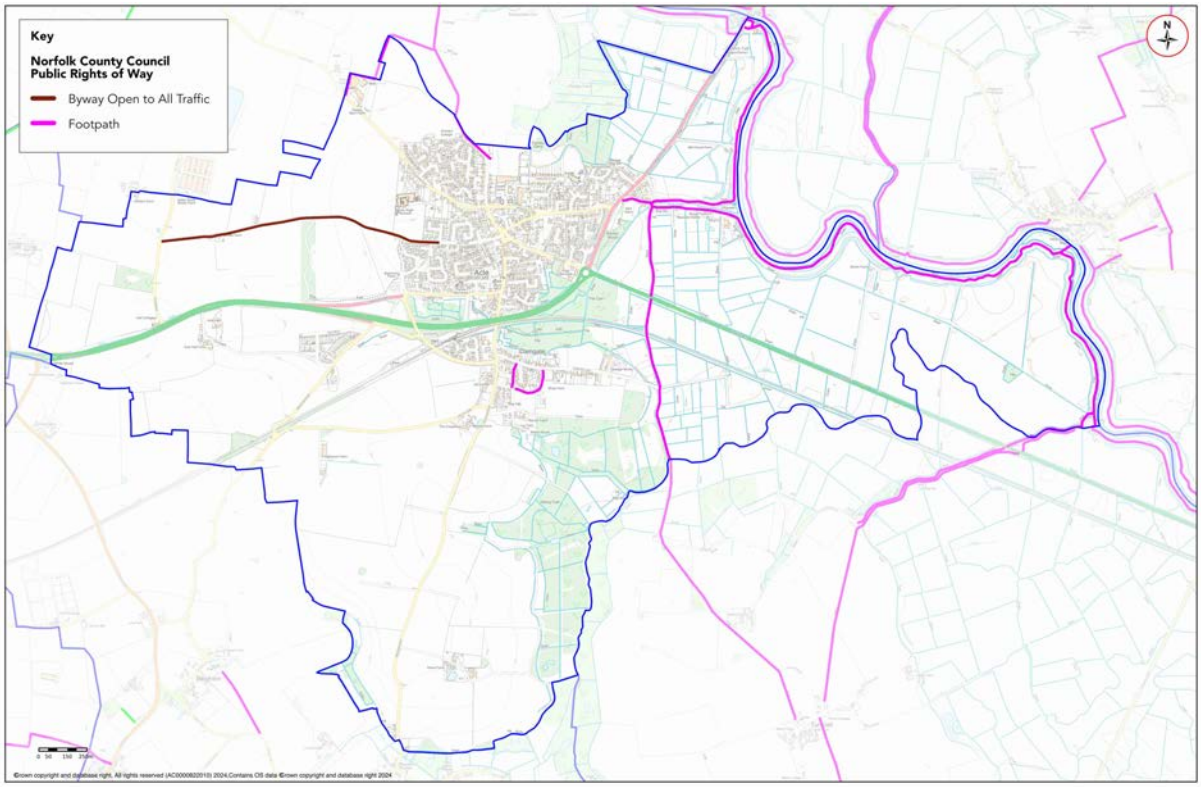


Figure 20: Public Rights of Way (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

9.6 The Household Survey asked residents for ideas for potential new routes and there were a range of ideas put forward which would enable links to surrounding villages. These are captured in **Policy ACLE9** . It should be noted that these are 'indicative' routes only and are aspirational . Further work would need to be carried out on their feasibility before they can be brought to fruition.

NEW Policy ACLE9: Improving Health, Accessibility and Connectivity
Proposals which would contribute to making the parish safer and more accessible for residents, including pedestrians and cyclists, and would contribute to the health and well-being of residents, through the provision of a network of green walking/cycling routes will be supported.

Major new developments must include a comprehensive connection of pavements throughout the whole development. These must be accessible for a variety of mobility needs (such as wheelchair users and pushchairs) providing an appropriate minimum width. Any lighting of routes should be in accordance with **Policy ACLE11**.

Major new development should create opportunities to encourage the use of sustainable transport through the provision of public transport infrastructure such as bus stops and shelters. Pedestrian and cycle connections should be provided, both within the site, and also linking the site to the existing network to create continuous footway links, in particular where these link to schools, public transport, community and medical facilities and recreational spaces.

This will be achieved by:

a. Providing safe, attractive and convenient active travel routes. Routes must follow "desire lines" and link with potential destinations, particularly bus stops, schools, the village centre, community facilities, and access to the countryside.
b. Providing crossing points at the intersection with roads to enable safe passage for pedestrians and cyclists within Acle.
c. Ensuring footways, crossing points and parking bays are designed to safely accommodate the needs of people with mobility difficulties or pushchairs .
d. Ensuring that footways, crossing points and parking bays are designed with adequate drainage to prevent creating areas of standing surface water.

New Routes and Connections

Development proposals which seek to deliver any of the new routes below will be supported, in principle.

i. Connections between Leffins Lane and the village centre
ii. New pedestrian route between The Windle and North Burlingham (and on to Lingwood) via the former A47 layby.
iii. New connection between South Walsham Road and Mill Lane track.
iv. Improved connections between the Village Centre and Acle Bridge
v. Improved connections between the Village Centre and the railway station.
vi. Improved routes from Acle to Upton and Fishley.
vii. Connections between Acle and Moulton St Mary
viii. Connections between Acle and Beighton

Existing Public Rights of Way

Development which would affect an existing Public Right of Way must take its route into account and incorporate it into the scheme. Where Public Rights of Way are impacted, appropriate diversions or new routes should be provided that are more, or at least equally, safe, accessible, and convenient for users.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025 (CV.01.1)**.

10. Policies: Natural Environment

Objective 5: Natural Environment
To protect and enhance the natural environment of Acle.

Flood Risk

10.1 Acle's proximity to The Broads means that there are areas within the Parish which are at a significant risk from flooding from tidal rivers. Parts of Acle Parish are covered by the tidal River Bure from Acle Bridge to Hoveton Flood Warning Area and the tidal River Bure from Scare Gap to Acle Bridge Flood Warning Area. This is in the east and north of the Parish.

10.2 However, the Parish is also at risk of flooding events from surface water which tends to be predominantly (although not exclusively) in the east of the Parish.

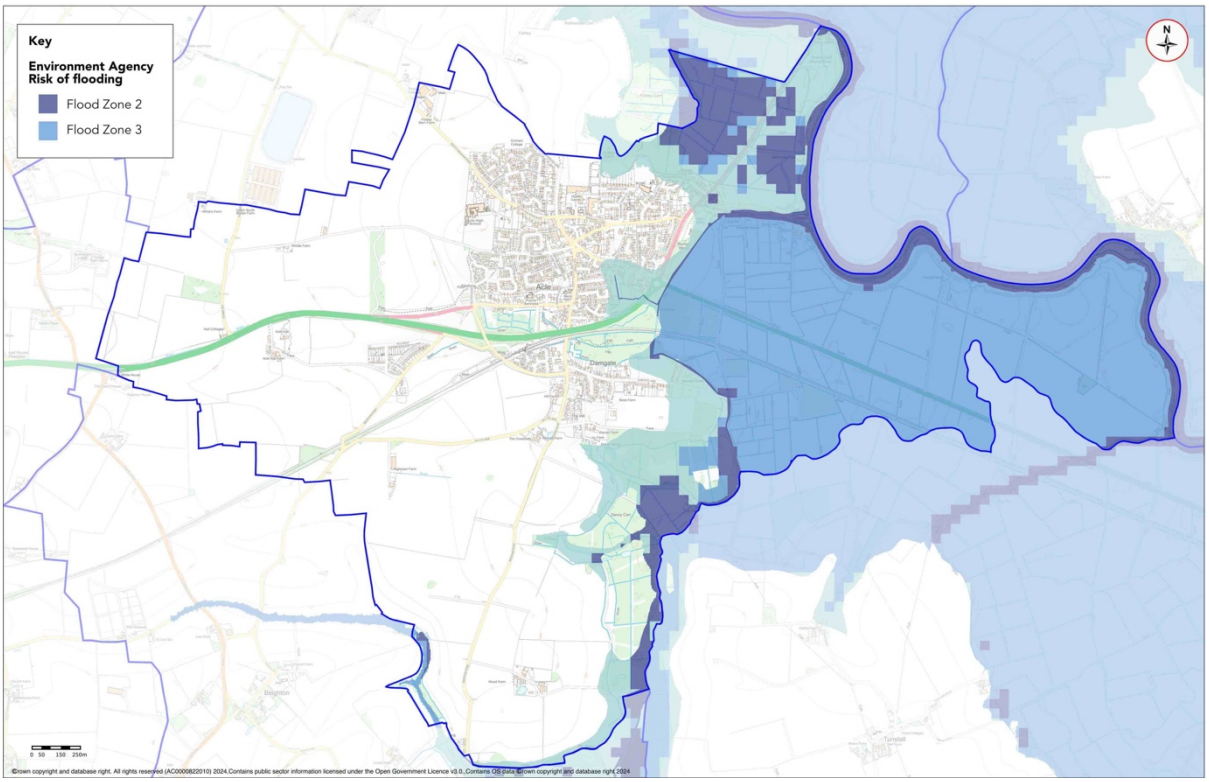


Figure 21: Risk of flooding from Rivers and the Sea (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

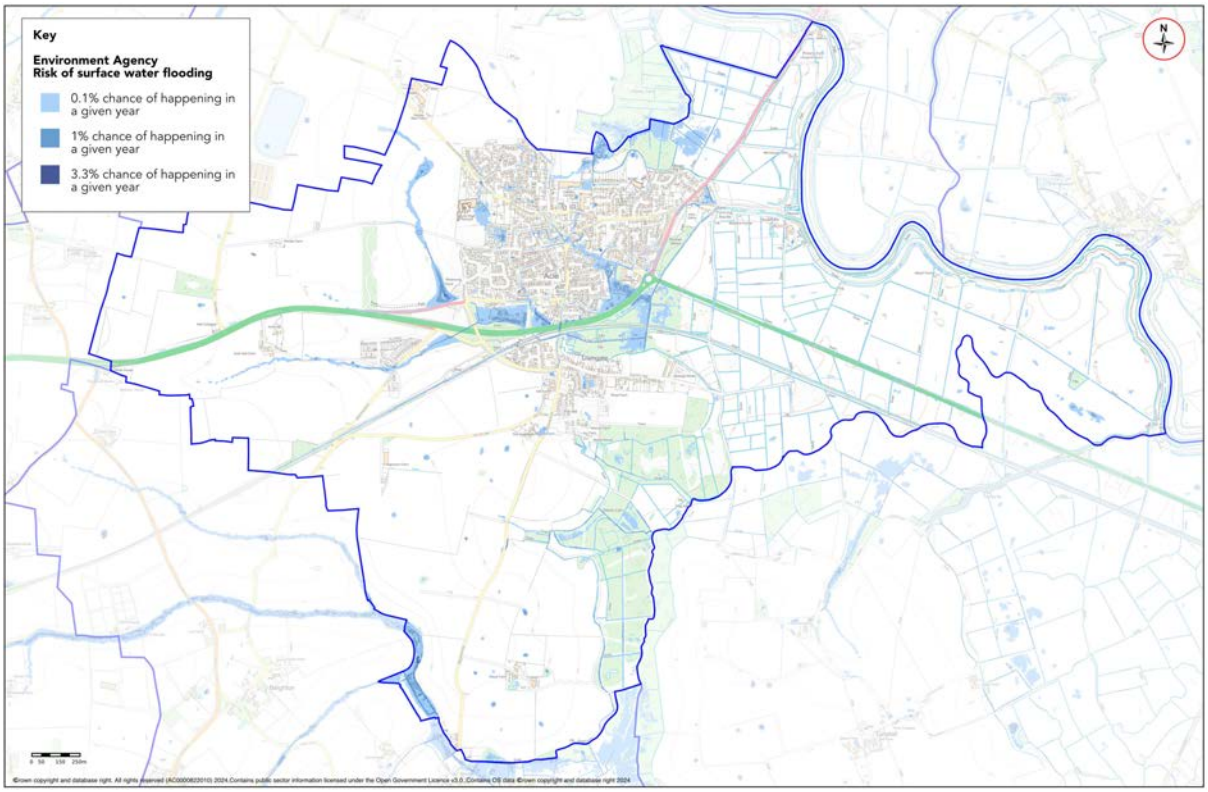


Figure 22: Risk of surface water flooding (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

10.3 The response to the Household Survey highlighted where a number of regular surface water floods are located and it is important that new development does not exacerbate existing influences of localised flooding nor create new ones either through surface water run off or displacement.

10.4 The period for this Neighbourhood Plan looks ahead to 2040. When looking into the future, it is important to consider the issues of climate change and future sustainability including taking account of flood risk.

10.5 Under Building Regulations, new development is required to have separate foul and surface water systems. Proposals for all new development should include appropriate drainage details that conform to the relevant standards of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), which is currently Norfolk County Council.[23]

10.6 The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is now commonly promoted by the County Council as LLFA due to their benefits not only to flood relief but also in preventing pollution and their potential to benefit wildlife. **Policy ACLE10** has been developed with this mind. Developments should seek to improve the four pillars of SuDS – water quality, water quantity, amenity, and biodiversity. Development proposals should take account of the advice and guidance on surface water drainage and the mitigation of flood risk

[23] Norfolk County Council (NCC) – Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Statutory Consultee for Planning: Guidance Document https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/38642

obtainable from Norfolk County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority) and the relevant Internal Drainage Board (as the statutory Drainage Board for the Plan area). In addition, development proposals should secure the necessary consents and approvals from those bodies which lie outside the planning system. References for other useful guidance are contained in **Appendix G**

NEW Policy ACLE10: Flood Risk

All new development should be directed away from areas at risk of flooding from the river, the Broads and other waterways.

New development should not create new, or exacerbate existing, surface water flooding issues and should take into account the known and expected impacts of climate change.

New development will be expected to demonstrate how it can mitigate its own flooding and drainage impacts, avoid the increase of flooding elsewhere and seek to achieve lower than greenfield runoff rates.[24] This would include assessing the cumulative impacts of developments and not just the individual proposed site. All proposals for new development within the Neighbourhood Plan area must take account of the advice and guidance on surface water drainage and the mitigation of flood risk obtainable from Norfolk County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority) and the relevant Internal Drainage Board (as statutory Drainage Board for the Plan area). Developers should consider the potential for flooding from all sources including surface water and groundwater sources.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
All new development is required to use proportional and appropriate sustainable drainage methods, for example, drainage lagoons, wetland and water features to prevent localised flooding, protect against pollution (particularly in proximity to The Broads) and provide wider amenity, recreational and biodiversity benefits. Development proposals should outline how they will meet the four pillars of SuDS design: water quantity, water quality, amenity and biodiversity

Where SUDs are proposed they should be:

a. well designed to ensure that they are integrated into the landscape and, if located at the entrance to the development, care should be taken over their visual appearance, with planting of native species to reduce flooding, where appropriate.
b. sensitively and safely located within new developments, for example away from children's play areas and include appropriate safety precautions.
c. excluded from the open space calculation for the site, unless it can be practically and safely used for recreation in its own right.

Opportunities should be sought for SuDS features such as swales and rain gardens to be integrated along the verges of roads/residential streets and along Active Travel routes

[24] The expected peak runoff rates for an undeveloped site, typically calculated based on factors such as soil types and annual rainfall.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025 (GV02.1)**.

Light Pollution and Dark Skies

10.7 The NPPF indicates that development proposals should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation.

10.8 The Adopted Broads Local Plan, 2019 contains Policy DM22 on Light Pollution and Dark Skies. The ambition of the policy is to conserve and enhance the dark skies and tranquillity of the Broads. The policy is supported by a map of Dark Skies Zones,[25] with the Broads area of Acle Parish falling within Zone 1.

10.9 According to the CPRE light pollution maps,[26] the built-up area of the village has some areas of 'light polluted skies' of 2-4 and 4-8 nano watts/cm2. (Category 5 and 6 of 9, with 9 being the most polluted) although outside the main built-up area of the parish, in the rural hinterland and specifically The Broads, skies are darker at 0.25-0.5 nano watts/cm2 which is Category 1 and 2. High levels of lighting can affect the health, well-being and amenity of adjacent residents but also have impacts for natural habitats and species.

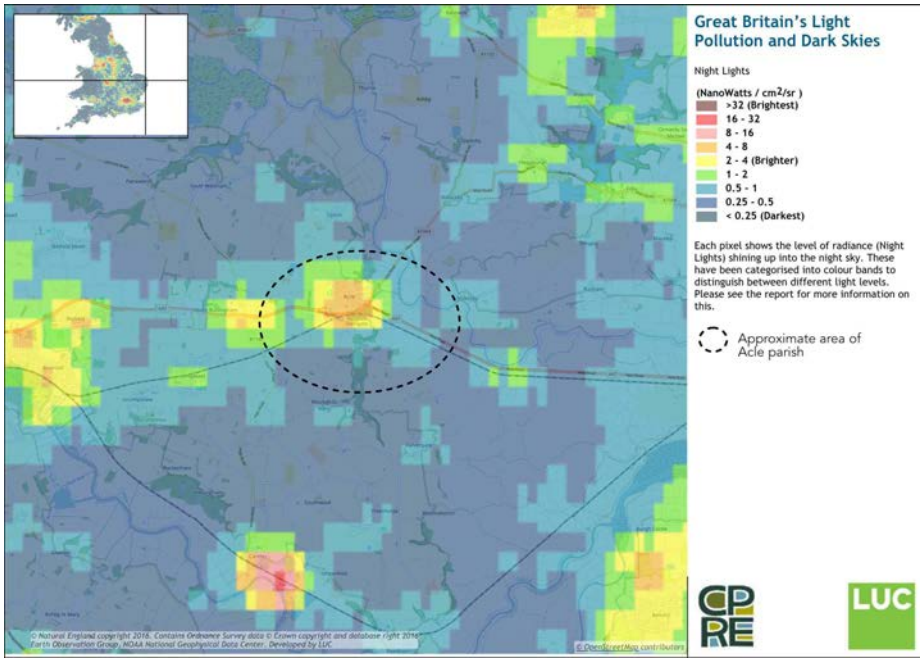


Figure 23: Light pollution and dark skies (source: Commission for the Protection of Rural England).

10.10 Nil or low levels of light pollution are an important aspect of tranquillity. Light pollution comes in many forms including 'sky glow' which forms as a consequence of water droplets in the air, and illumination from artificial light and glare. Artificial light is not detrimental in all cases and the solution to light

[25] https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/122246/Local-Plan-for-the-Broads.pdf
[26] England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies, https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/

pollution is not turning off all lighting. Light pollution is where light is excessive or intrudes where it is not wanted or expected. Well-designed lighting sends light only where it is needed and without scattering it elsewhere. The **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025** provides further guidance on the issue – *CV.01.6 External lighting*. The NPPF advises encouraging good design in planning policies which should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation. Further references are shown in **Appendix G**

10.11 It should be noted that not all lighting schemes require planning permission, however where they are part of a proposal it is reasonable to seek to control them on residential or commercial buildings. **Policy ACLE11** has been devised to provide guidance on this issue.

NEW Policy ACLE11: Light Pollution and Dark Skies

Where development includes new lighting, it must take account of Acle's proximity to the Broads and the area's intrinsically dark skies.

New street-lighting must not be located at the edge of the settlement. Both residential and commercial lighting may be provided where necessary for security or safety but must be designed to minimise the impact on dark skies and the environment by having minimal light spillage, using downlighting, LED bulbs and restricting hours of lighting (for example through the use of motion detectors which increases in lux[27] when approached and return to dim setting after (and timers). Within the domestic curtilage of new dwellings located on the edge of a development outward facing lights are discouraged.

Proposals including lighting likely to cause disturbance or risk to nocturnal wildlife must reduce and mitigate such disturbance or risk.

Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with best practice guidance for avoiding artificial lighting impacts on bats and other wildlife species. The use of blue lighting must be avoided. Where lighting cannot be avoided altogether in proposals then it must be designed to avoid light spill onto wildlife roosts, foraging habitat, and commuting routes for bats, birds, and other species.

Proposals including prominent lighting visible from the surrounding protected landscape, including from large, glazed areas will not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that such lighting is required in the interests of safety and security.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025.(CV.01.6)**.

[27] Lumens measure the total light emitted by a source, while lux measures how much of that light illuminates a surface.

Green Spaces

Local Green Spaces

10.12 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024, at paragraphs 106-108, introduces the concept of Local Green Spaces which can be identified through neighbourhood plans by local communities and allows green areas identified as being of particular importance to be protected. Paragraph 106, sets out 3 broad criteria for identifying and designating such spaces as follows:

The Local Green Space designation should only be used when the green space is:

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

10.13 The NPPF at paragraph 108 then goes on to state that 'policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for green belts' and therefore affords them a very high level of protection. It is also clear that the designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used as a mechanism to try to block or resist development on agricultural land immediately adjacent to village development boundaries and that a successful designation must meet the criteria outlined above.

10.14 Such spaces can be viewed locally as equally important as the landscape setting of an area. Such spaces are green spaces found within the built-up area that contribute to the character of a settlement. These can vary in size, shape, location, ownership and use but such spaces will have some form of value to the community particularly for benefits to mental and physical health and well-being and help define what makes that specific settlement what it is.

10.15 The Household Survey included a question on Local Green Spaces and asked the community to identify spaces that would meet the criteria and should be protected because of their value to the local community. Over 339 responses were received, and a number of different spaces were identified through the survey results. These included formal recreation areas, play areas, roadside verges, woodlands, marshlands, and spaces both within and at the entrance to housing estates.

10.16 The candidate spaces and some additional spaces identified by the Steering Group were assessed against the NPPF criteria. The result is the 23 spaces shown in **figure 24** and listed within **Policy ACLE12**. Assessments for each one against the criteria set out in the NPPF have been carried out and these are shown in **Appendix C.**

10.17 It should be noted that where areas of marshland were identified which fall within the Broads Executive Area these tended not to meet the criteria for Local Green Space designation but are protected because of the nationally protected landscape, protected wildlife designations and flood zones which restricts their likely development.

10.18 Both green visibility splays and large verges within existing developments are a characteristic of recent development in Acle. Their presence helps to green the overall development, provide attractive entrances to the developments as well as assist with highway safety and visibility. Where such verges and splays are provided these should be maintained as undeveloped open green areas in order to maintain their important highway safety purpose but also due to the contribution they make to the character of the area.

10.19 It should be noted that the designation of Local Green Space does not change any existing access, maintenance or ownership rights.

New Green Spaces

10.20 In addition to protecting existing green spaces it is important to ensure that new development provides sufficient new green spaces to cater for the likely amenity and recreational needs of the occupiers of that new development. Access to a network of high-quality green spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation is important for the health and well-being of communities with the additional benefits of improving nature and addressing climate change.

10.21 Existing policy on green space requirements is set out in the Broadland Development Management Development Plan Document 2015 (DMDPD). Policy EN3 on Green Infrastructure makes it clear that open space will be required as a consequence of new development and in particular that new residential development of 5 dwellings or more will be expected to deliver 4 hectares of informal open space per 1,000 head of population, This equates to 40m^2 pro-rata of new provision per person. In addition, 0.16 hectares of allotments per 1,000 population is also required. In April 2016, Broadland District Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document[28] on Recreational Provision in Residential Development which provides more detail on the types of green space included in this calculation e.g. play areas, equipped play areas, informal/amenity space. Where development is proposed within the Broads, the policies of the relevant district are deferred to in terms of provision of new green space.

10.22 Whilst the quantity of new green space provided is important, it is also the quality that matters to communities. The design and location of new green spaces is critical to their successful use by the community. A range of green space suitable for all ages should be provided including small children, and teenagers. New green spaces should be overlooked by natural surveillance, feel safe and secure to users and be conveniently located. They should take into account the diverse needs of potential users. Further guidance on the

[28] https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/recreational-provision-in-residential-development-supplementary-planning-document-spd.pdf

detailed design of new green spaces can be found in the **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes** (GV01.1 – Open Spaces).

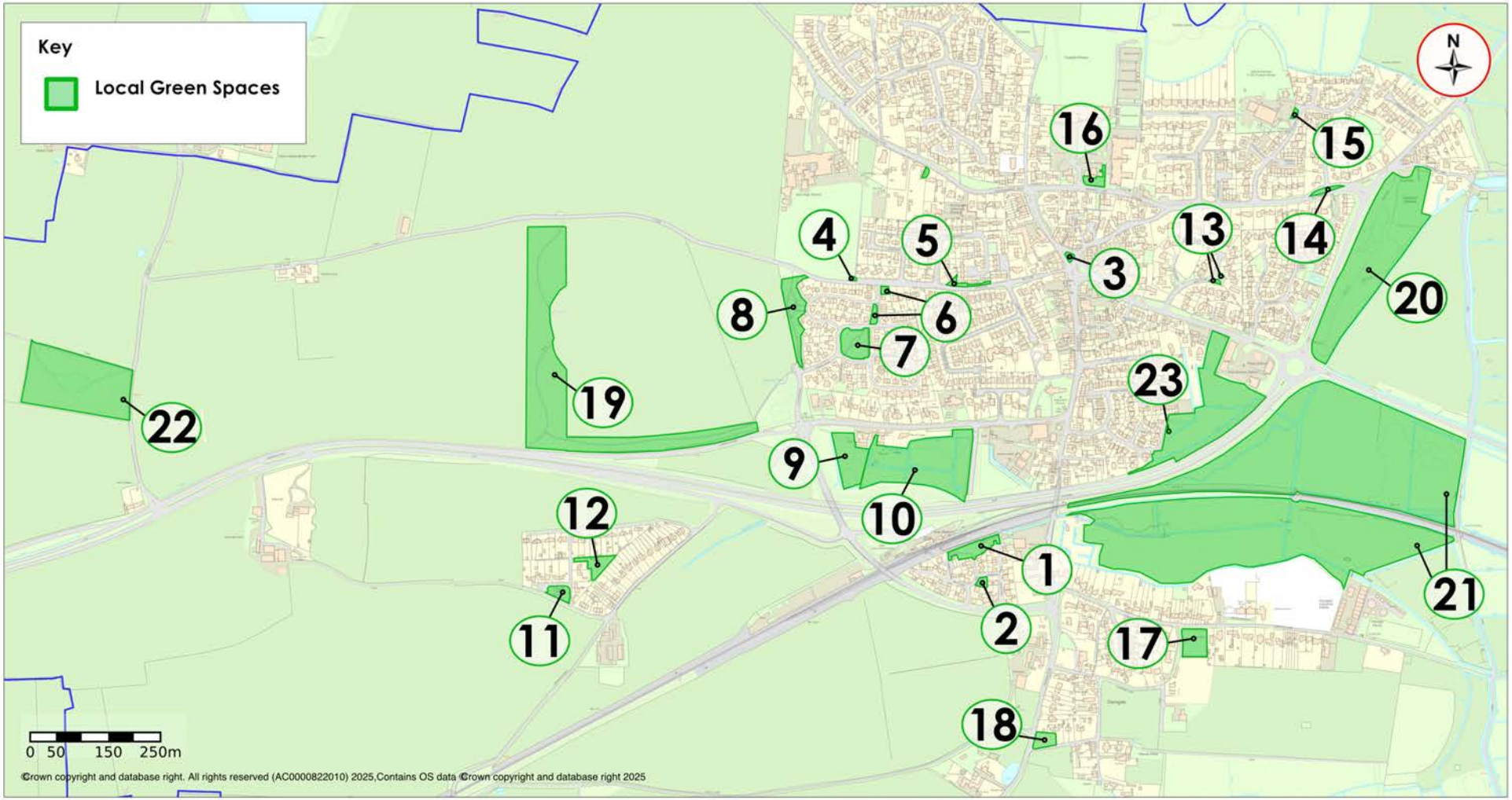


Figure 24: Local Green Spaces (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

NEW Policy ACLE12: New and Existing Green Spaces

Local Green Spaces
The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following as Local Green Spaces (**figure 24**):

1. Daisy Way Estate - Play Area and surrounding green space
2. Daisy Way Estate - Gated seating area
3. The Green
4. Mill Lane – Green space to rear of Acle Academy
5. Mill Lane – Green space beside sheltered housing bungalows
6. Glover Road Estate – Green space along the footpath linking to Mill Lane
7. Glover Road Estate – Central open green
8. Glover Road Estate – Play Area
9. Land west of Norwich Road (adjacent to Acle Garden Machinery)
10. Land south of Acle Garden Machinery
11. Beighton Road – Play Area
12. Beighton Road – Land amongst housing on Beighton Road/Hillcrest
13. New Close – Central open green within cul-de-sac
14. Old Road - The Drive
15. Fletcher Way – Green space by Primary Academy
16. Bridewell Lane – Land at the Library
17. Damgate Lane – Play Area
18. The Hill - Grass square at Reedham Road junction
19. Jubilee Woods
20. Roman Wood
21. Damgate Wood
22. Farrow's Wood
23. Land south of New Road

These Local Green Spaces will receive special protection in accordance with national policy.

New Green Spaces
Proposals for new housing development should include quality outdoor green amenity space. Where new developments provide elements of green infrastructure (such as open space, natural green space, recreational areas, allotments, community woodland and orchards) these should be designed with child-friendly interventions (such as play spaces) or should be aligned with key routes that connect schools and residential estates. Proposals must where feasible, enhance access to green spaces and trackways, with seating and signage to support social prescribing and mental well-being of residents.

Surrounding buildings must overlook public spaces to provide natural surveillance. Landscaping should be designed to ensure that it does not obstruct views of these spaces. Layouts should include a mix of green verges and green grassed areas, similar to that in existing Acle developments, to create a visually pleasant entrance to new developments to reinforce the existing character of Acle.

Appropriately sized informal amenity areas, play areas and natural features should be provided for major developments and should be phased to for every 25 dwellings constructed.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025.GV.01.1**.

Biodiversity

10.23 In terms of nature conservation sites, the Parish contains both nationally and locally designated nature conservation sites which form part of the wider green infrastructure of the parish. Whilst the Broads is a landscape designation, it is inevitably a landscape constructed of important wetland nature conservation features and includes the international designations of the Broads Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Broadland Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Broads Ramsar.

10.24 At a national level there are also two protected sites. These are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Decoy Carr and Damgate Marshes. There is also a County Wildlife Site (CWS) at Damgate Wood and a Road-Side Nature Reserve (No 143) at Jolly's Lane.

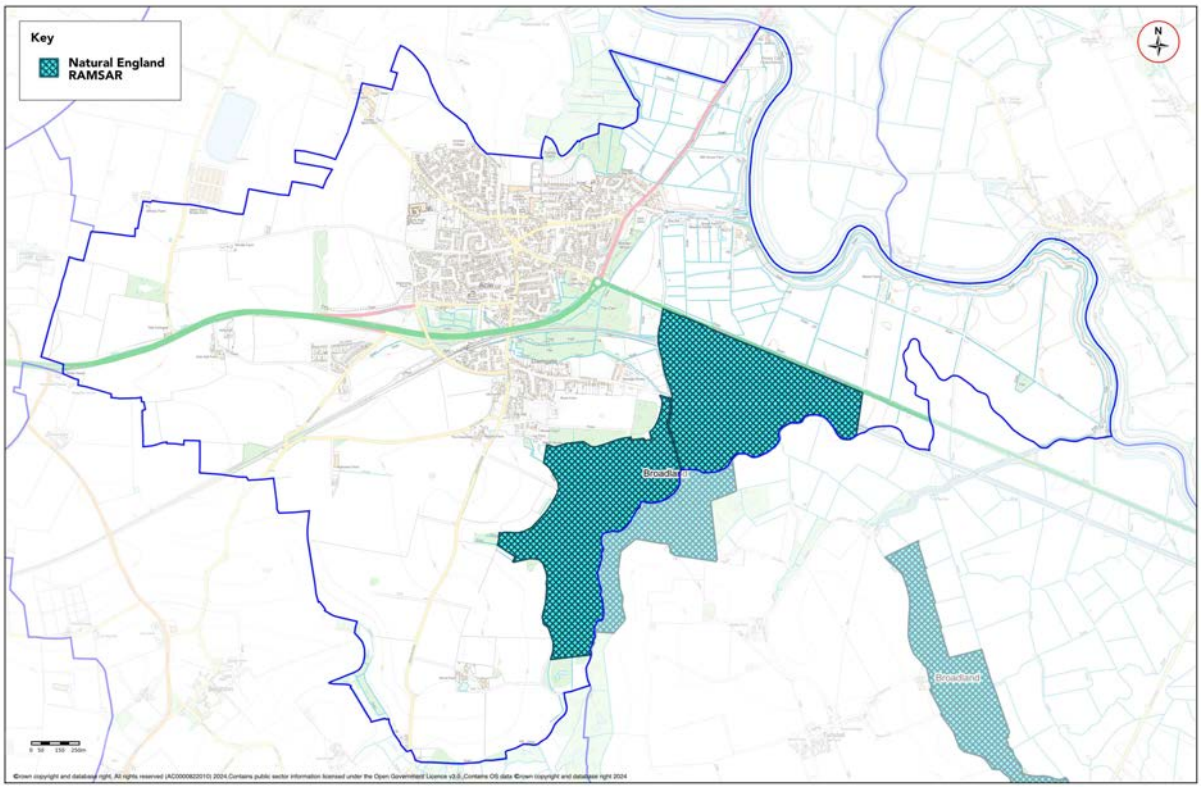


Figure 25: Ramsar site (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

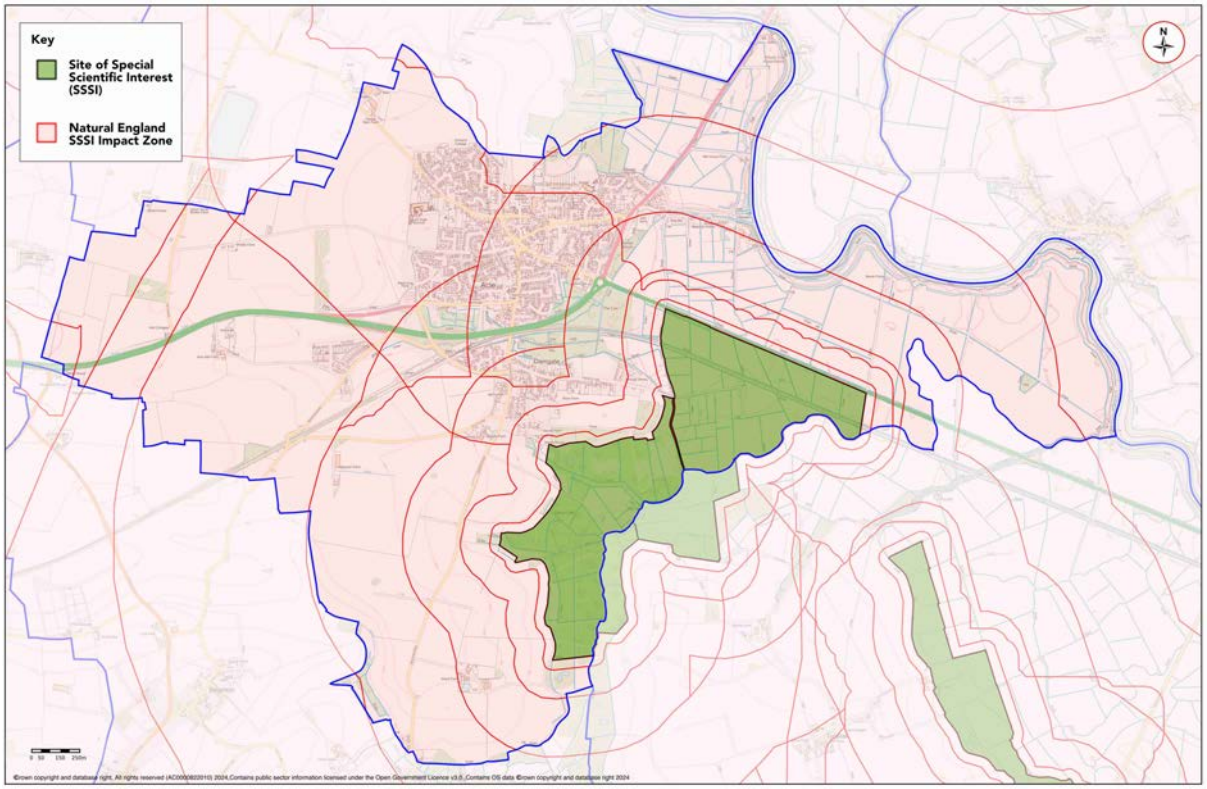


Figure 26: Site of Special Scientific Interest sites (SSSI) and SSSI Impact Zone (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

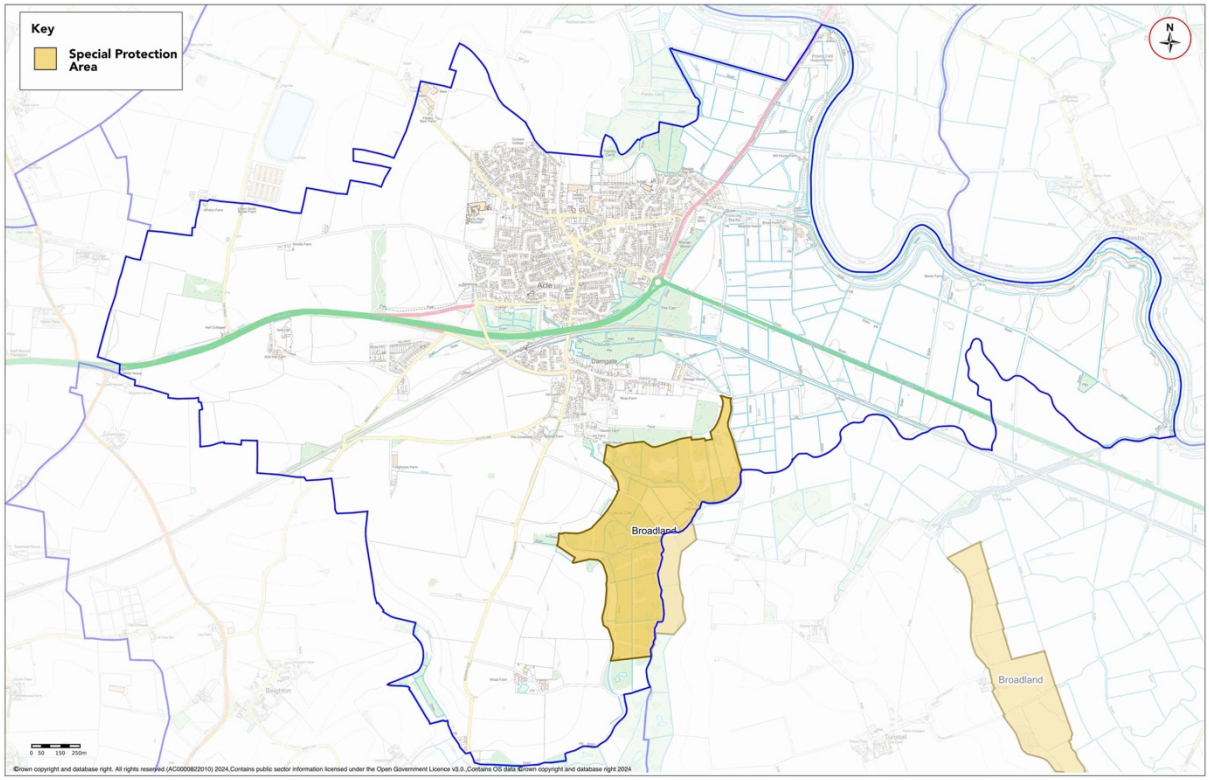


Figure 27: Special Area of Protection (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

10.25 In addition to the protected sites there are also areas of priority habitat in the Parish which includes 'coastal and floodplain' grazing marsh, reedbeds and lowland fens. These sites and the protected sites above collectively add up to a considerable network of important habitats within the parish.

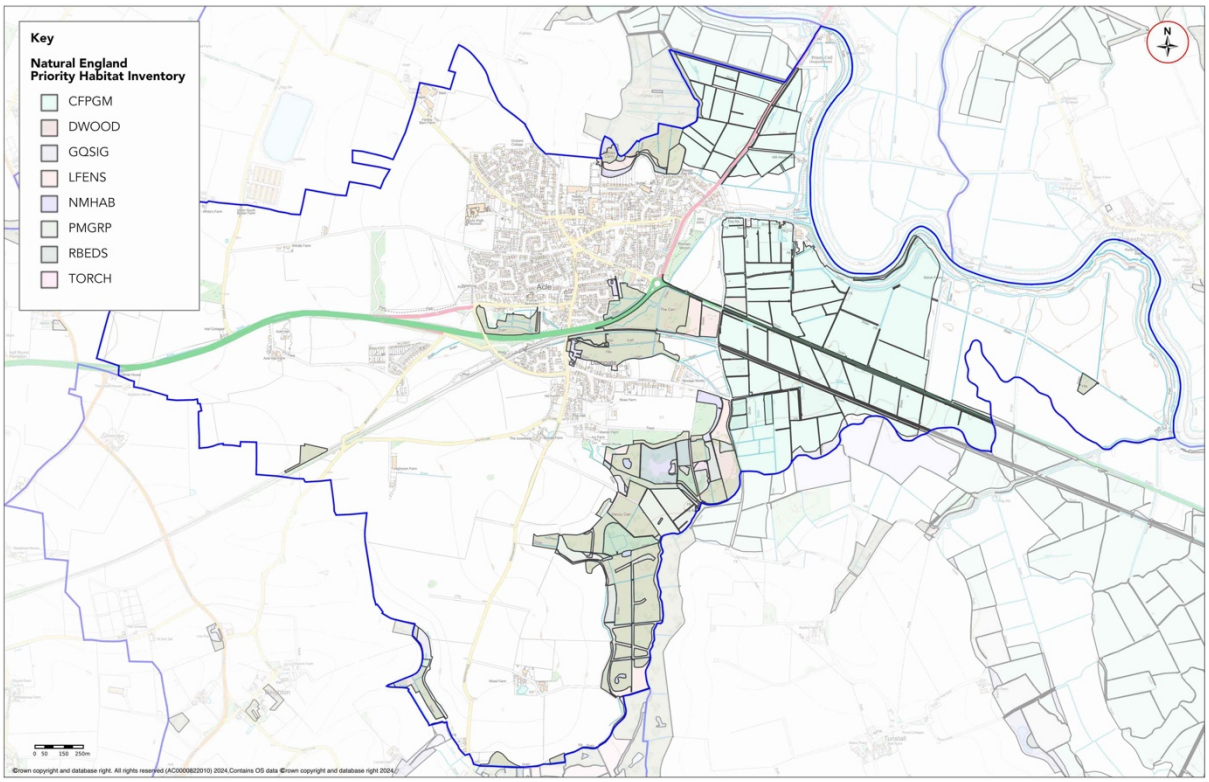


Figure 28: Priority Habitat Inventory (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

CFPGM: Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
DWOOD: Deciduous woodland
GQSIG: Good quality semi-improved grassland
LFENS: Lowland fens
NMHAB: No main habitat
PMGRP: Purple moor grass and rush pastures
RBEDS: Reedbeds
TORCH: Traditional orchards

10.26 Whilst internationally and nationally designated sites are protected through national planning policy in the NPPF and also in specific legislation, there is often less protection for locally designated sites or non-designated local sites which have a wildlife value. **Policy ACLE13** seeks to protect locally designated sites such as County Wildlife Sites from development that would damage their wildlife value.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

10.27 The NPPF, in Paragraph 187, requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This includes protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, minimising impacts on biodiversity and

providing net gains in biodiversity. One of the principles to protect and enhance biodiversity in Paragraph 193 a) states:

> *"if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused".*

10.28 The Environment Act 2021 received Royal Assent in Autumn 2021,which was over 5 years after the existing Neighbourhood Plan had been 'made'. The Act introduced a new system for the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). In simple terms, BNG is an approach to development which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. Planning policy that seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity is not new, but this latest approach focuses more on the measurability aspect. Planning applications are now required to quantify the different habitat types on site both before and after the proposed development using the latest Biodiversity Metric.

10.29 A minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity will be required either on-site or via enhancement elsewhere within the parish. BNG is mandatory for all sites. However, it is important that this Neighbourhood Plan considers the issue and identifies ways in which this might be achieved and also, in consideration of the length of the plan period, looks ahead with in principle support for a move towards a 20% net gain where this is achievable. **Policy ACLE13** has been developed to provide guidance on this issue.

10.30 BNG can be delivered through the enhancement of existing biodiversity features such as ecological corridors, tree belts, areas of woodland, hedgerows, ponds etc or the creation of new features. Where possible, opportunities to join up existing fragmented habitats or corridors in the Parish should be taken. The Parish Council has produced a list of important veteran or ancient trees, hedgerows and trackways in the parish which should be protected and retained. This is included in **Appendix D.** This is not a conclusive list, and applicants should check that their trees are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order or being within a Conservation Area.

10.31 Furthermore as part of the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Norfolk and Suffolk,[29] a number of priorities for aiding nature recovery have been identified. As the strategy moves forward it will be possible for practical actions to be taken which would make positive contributions to delivering the nature recovery priorities identified by the strategy. The policy below makes reference to the LNRS and their identification of Areas that Could Become of Importance to Biodiversity(ACB) will be useful for identifying future areas for BNG within the parish. See Appendix G for further information.

10.32 The policy also refers to 'ecological corridors' which is a term used to refer to any linear feature in the landscape that can be used for the migration or dispersal of wildlife. Such corridors allow for the linking of habitats and reduce

[29] https://www.nsnrp.org/

the isolation of populations. Linear features may vary and may also not be continuous; however, patches of natural habitat can benefit wildlife and occasionally, the term 'stepping stones' is used to refer to them. The role of ecological corridors is assuming greater importance and opportunities should be taken to retain them, enhance them and create them as a consequence of new development.

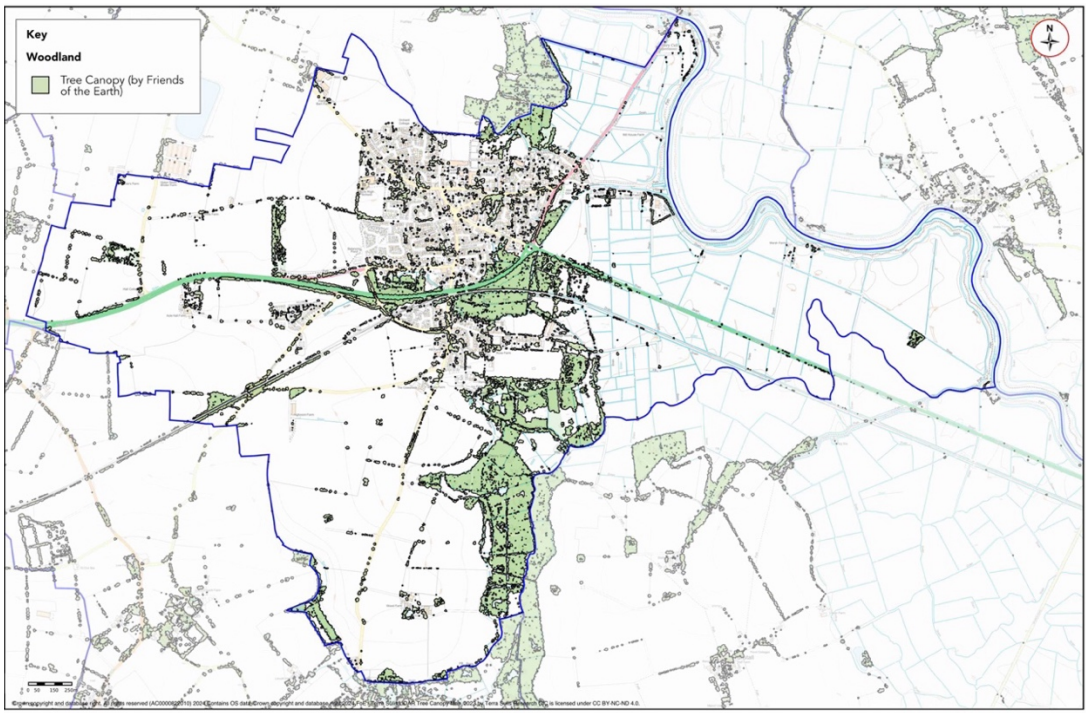


Figure 29: Tree canopies (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

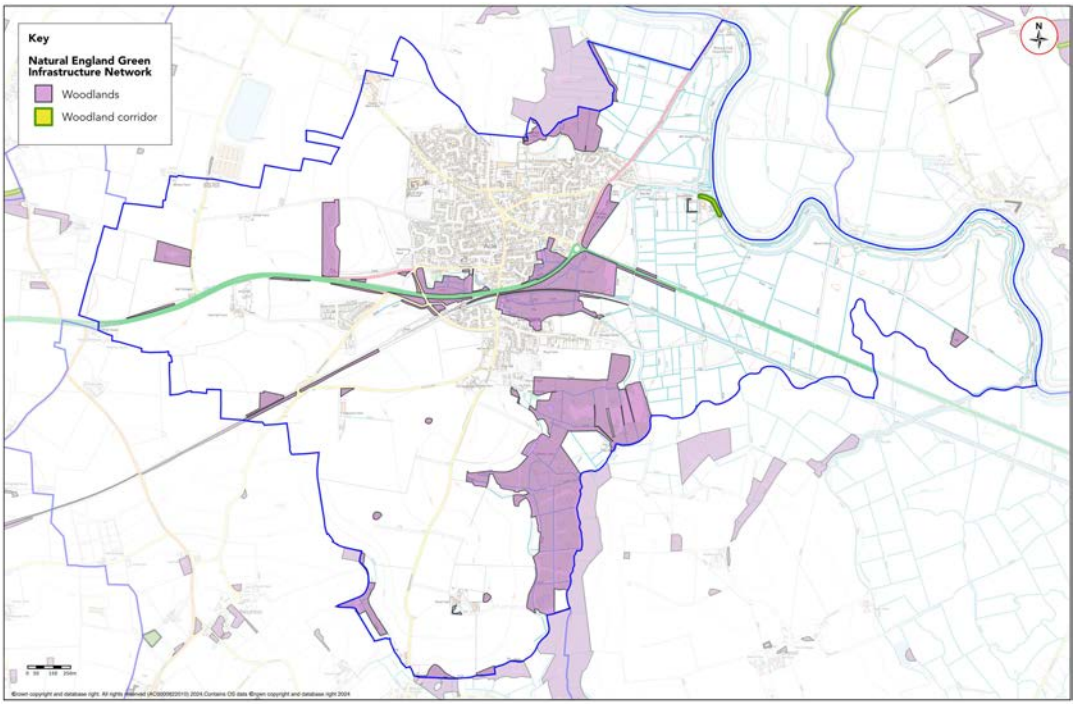


Figure 30: Woodland and woodland corridors (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

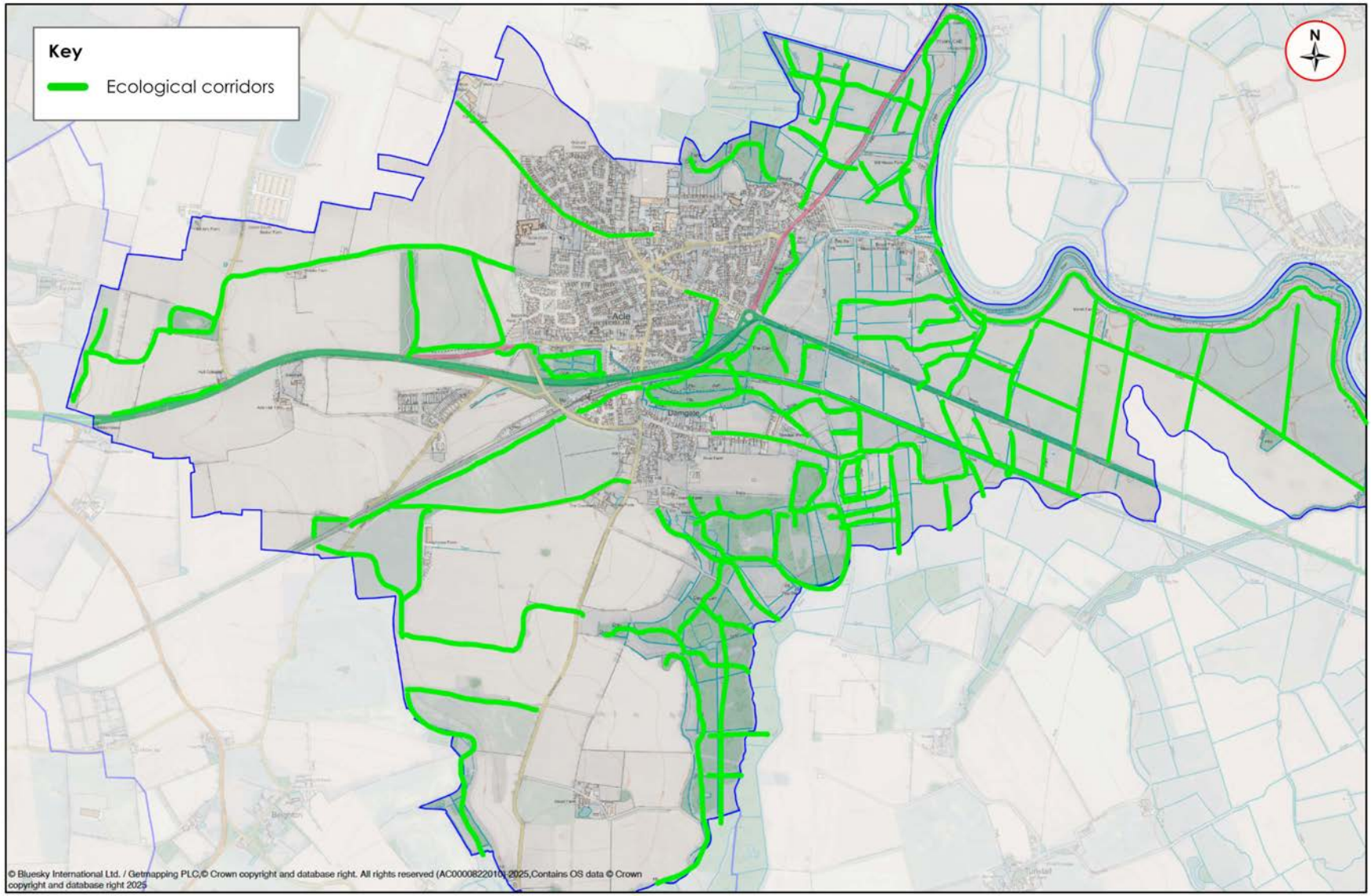


Figure 31: Ecological corridors (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

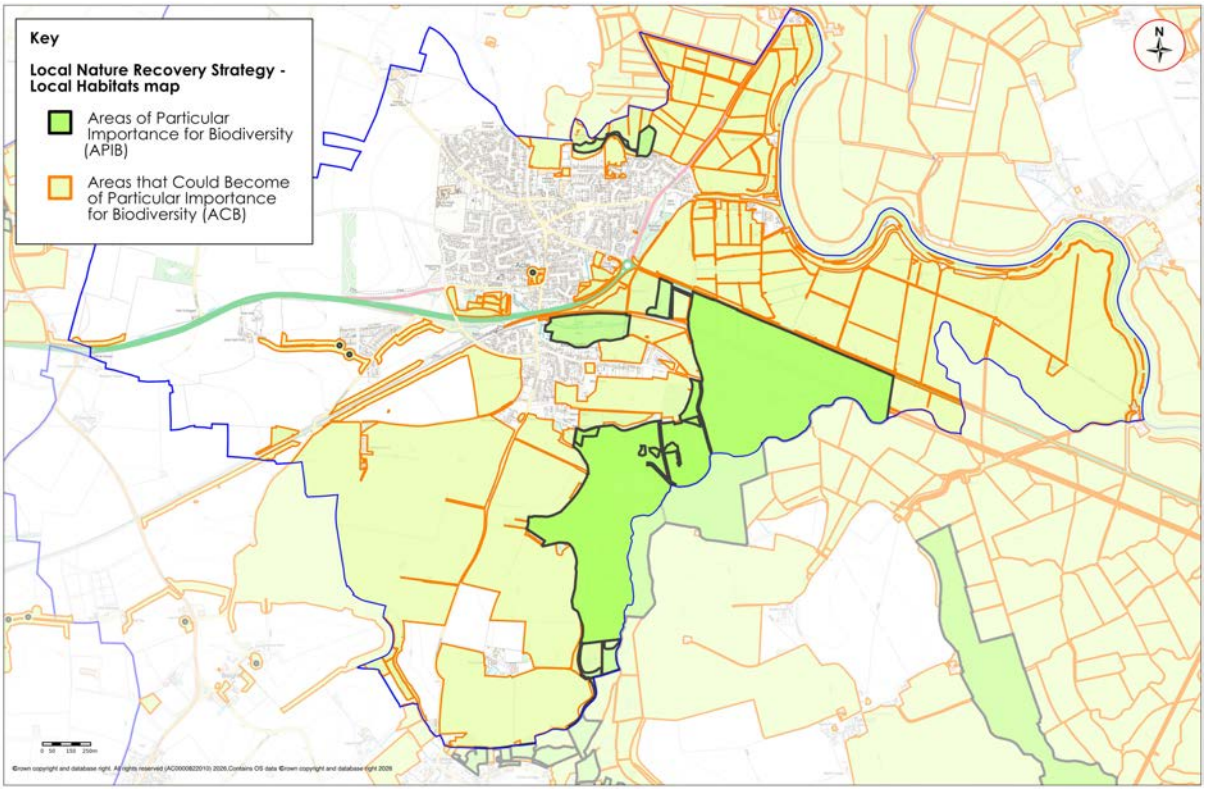


Figure 32: Biodiversity – APIB and ACB areas (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Design Features Benefiting Wildlife

10.33 The design of individual buildings and green and open spaces, including private gardens, will help to ensure that existing habitats present in Acle can thrive and a range of new habitats can be created. Planting is an important aspect of development and habitat creation. A well-designed planting scheme can provide high-quality landscaping and can be a fundamental aspect of enhancing biodiversity that otherwise would be lost.

10.34 Planting schemes should ensure that tree species should be carefully selected to be responsive to landscape and historic character and to suit the planting location. Planting should not simply consist of trees but a range of shrubs and grasses too. Other creative ways of providing habitats can be designed easily into developments of any size. Features such as integral bird and bat boxes under the eaves of the new houses, or artificial nests sited in places away from windows and doors, can create vital new roosting sites to support populations of birds and bats. Boundaries between dwellings can be made hedgehog-friendly by including pre-cut holes for hedgehogs to more effectively move across neighbourhoods to forage. New planting schemes can support bees and other pollinators by including nectar-rich plants.

10.35 Even very small ponds provide a haven for insects, frogs and other wildlife. Where sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are required to support major development, these should also be designed with wildlife in mind.

NEW Policy ACLE13: Biodiversity and Ecological Corridors

All development proposals will be expected to protect, improve and enhance existing ecological networks, wildlife corridors and priority species in the Parish. This includes all designated sites, County Wildlife Sites, Priority Habitats, Roadside Nature Reserves, the River Bure and other high biodiversity habitats. Buffer zones should be implemented around sensitive wildlife sites, as appropriate, to protect these sites from any adverse impacts from development.

Using national policy guidance and DEFRA metrics, development proposals will be expected to provide a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity.

Net gains should be achieved through the creation of new, and the restoration and enhancement of existing natural habitats, such as:

a. The planting of additional trees and hedgerows, and,
b. The creation of new ponds, restoration of former ponds, or
c. The restoration, connection and repair of existing fragmented biodiversity networks, and
d. The creation of new wildlife corridors and habitat areas.

Existing green corridors in the parish which are important for their biodiversity value include, but are not limited to:

i. Railway Footpaths – 2 x Pedestrian access routes from Reedham Road to Great Yarmouth and Norwich platforms
ii. Mill Lane including footpath leading to Jubilee Woods
iii. Old Track to Railway
iv. Damgate Lane - Ancient Hedgerow
v. Damgate Lane – Track beyond the Industrial Estate
vi. Damgate Lane – Open pasture field at the end of the lane
vii. Damgate Lane – Weaver's Way route to Tunstall Constable Doles SSSI
viii. Carters Loke
ix. The Hill - Field off Carters Loke via The Hill

Biodiversity Net Gain should preferably be achieved on site, but where off-site net gain can be justified in line with national policy, this should be preferably located elsewhere in the parish, consistent with the relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Priorities for Biodiversity Net Gain and enhancement within the Parish include the existing strategic tree belts and green corridors (**figures 29, 30, 31and 32**) which will be protected, extended and linked to other existing tree belts, creating circular routes and ecological routes for wildlife within the parish. Any access arrangements should not be at the expense of, or result in the loss of existing trees or habitats

Any development site which contains tree belts should facilitate access to and through them with footpaths and cycleways, as appropriate, for both wildlife and people to connect with open spaces, the Broads and the surrounding countryside, wherever possible, in order to maintain and enhance the rural character.

Development proposals should conform to the mitigation hierarchy[30] and seek to retain existing features and avoid loss or damage to biodiversity. Development proposals should seek to retain mature or significant trees, groups of trees, orchards, hedgerows and woodland to sustain the rural character of Acle.

Trees and Hedges
Development that damages, or results in the loss of, ancient trees or hedges, trees with a veteran feature or trees with a good aboricultural or amenity value will not be supported unless it can be justified by a professionally-prepared tree survey and aboricultural statement.

Where loss or damage to trees or hedges is unavoidable, the benefits of the development must clearly outweigh the impacts. The development shall provide for mitigation in the form of equivalent or better replacement or replanting or appropriate natural feature on site before offsetting elsewhere within the Parish will be considered. Off-site biodiversity enhancements should be directed to areas identified in any Local Nature Recovery Strategy within the Parish.

New tree and hedge planting should be of a scale, location and type which adds value, and with a view to optimising benefits to wildlife with long-term management plans included within proposals.

Planting plans should take account of the expected eventual size of the tree or hedge including future shading, water requirements, the impact of root growth, and leaf fall on surrounding features such as buildings, pavements and car parking areas and the relationship with surrounding buildings.

Species selection should take into account the changing climate and tree disease and seek to include a mix of native and climate-resilient species whilst avoiding invasive species. Landscaping design must be layered with a variety of species suitable for the local wildlife, soil conditions, and climate.

Wildlife Measures
Proposals for new buildings (including non-residential development) should incorporate measures to protect and enhance wildlife species including the incorporation of wildlife-friendly measures such as green roofs, green walls, green screens (where appropriate), swift bricks, hedgehog access gaps and insect bricks, new garden hedgerows and trees which include a variety of nectar and pollen-producing plants which are in flower across the seasons.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025 (GV.01.3)**.

Landscape and Important Views

[30] Mitigation Hierarchy: Avoidance: Preventing negative impacts from occurring in the first place.
Minimisation: Reducing the extent or severity of impacts that cannot be avoided.
Restoration: Restoring impacted areas to their original state.
Offsetting: Compensating for unavoidable impacts by providing equivalent benefits elsewhere.

10.36 As described earlier, the northern and eastern rural parts of the Parish fall within The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads which is a nationally protected landscape with equivalent status to a National Park. There is national guidance and legislation, and local planning policy, in the Broads Local Plan 2019 which guides development proposals in the area.

10.37 The Broadland Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (September 2013),[31] identifies Acle Parish as C2 Freethorpe Plateau Farmland, F2 South Walsham to Marsham Marshes Fringe and Broads Authority Area within Broadland District.

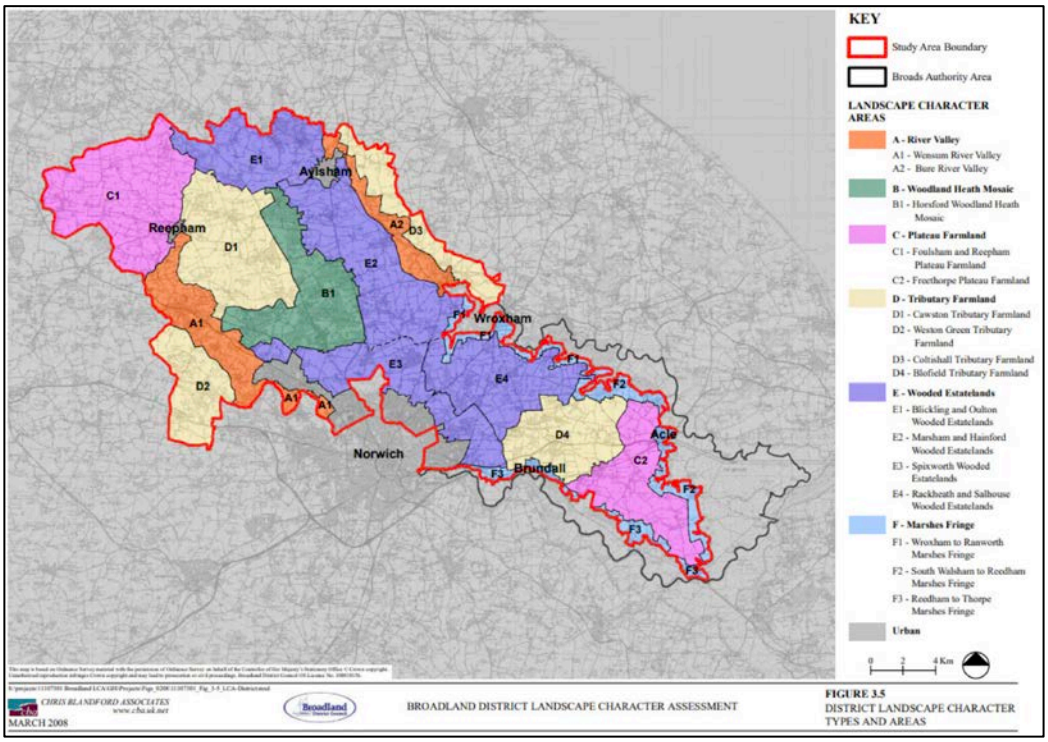


Figure 33: Landscape Character of Acle Parish (source: Broadland District Council Landscape Character Assessment SPD 2013).[32]

10.38 The following Landscape Planning Guidelines are applicable to Acle within the *Freethorpe Plateau Farmland Landscape Character Type:*

- Seek to conserve the open, rural character of the area.
- Resist new development that would result in any diminution of the sparsely settled nature of the area or in any reduction in the sense of peace and isolation within the area, which is devoid of large settlements.
- Seek to conserve subtle features of the historic landscape, including hedgerows and tracks.

[31] https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/lca-spd-adopted-final-part-2.pdf (accessed 22.10.2024).
[32] https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/downloads/file/287/landscape-character-assessment-supplementary-planning-document-part-2- (accessed 22.10.2024).

- Seek to ensure new development does not disrupt the smooth, predominantly uninterrupted skyline within the area.
- Seek to conserve open views across the farmland.
- Seek to maintain the traditional character of isolated farmsteads.
- Seek opportunities for the restoration of hedgerows where fragmented.
- Seek to ensure that potential new developments comprise a fully integrated landscape and urban design strategy, which is consistent with the local landscape character and screen potential harsh settlement edges.
- Seek to conserve small pits, ponds and extraction sites.

10.39 The following Landscape Planning Guidelines apply Acle within the *South Walsham to Marsham Marshes Fringe Landscape Character Area:*

- Seek to conserve the diverse and interesting landscape character.
- Seek to conserve the wildlife habitats characteristic of the Marshes Fringe and adjacent Broads landscape including watercourses and broads, fens, carr woodland and grazing marshes including buffering adjoining the European sites.
- Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern and is well integrated into the surrounding landscape.
- Seek to ensure the sensitive location of development involving tall structures (such as steel pylons and telecommunication masts) in relation to prominent skyline locations both within the character area and within adjacent character areas.
- Seek to ensure that potential new small-scale development within villages is consistent with the existing settlement pattern, density and traditional built form.
- Seek to conserve the landscape setting of market towns and villages, and seek to screen (where possible) harsh settlement edges and existing visual detractors.
- Seek to promote use of local vernacular buildings materials, including red brick and pantiles.
- Seek to ensure new development does not reduce the vertical significance of important historical and architectural features within the landscape, such as church towers.
- Seek to conserve blocks of carr woodland at the edge of Halvergate Marshes.

10.40 Parts of Acle Parish are also located within the Broads Landscape Character Area 24 South Walsham to Acle Marshes and Fens[33].

10.41 The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan recognises the intrinsic value and special qualities of this area of landscape and proposes to ensure that distinctive features of the parish are protected.

10.42 Opinions were sought on important views and vistas into and out of the village through a specific question in the Household Survey. The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan is mindful that any policy which seeks to protect

[33] https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/117046/LCA_Part-3_Areas-24-to-31.pdf (accessed 22.10.2024).

views should focus on those that are 'important' to the overall landscape character of the Parish and which can be enjoyed from publicly accessible locations, e.g., footpaths, public highway, or an existing open space. Many of the views identified in **Policy ACLE14** offer easy access to countryside experiences for the local community and feature views both into and out of the built-up area of the village.

VIEW A
View along the Mill Lane track from west of the Acle Academy Mill Lane.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
Large, farmed fields providing tranquil views.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
• Provides views of the sunset. • Sweeping views of large open areas. • Solitary and peaceful. • Views from a well-trodden footpath used by many residents of Acle.
Can the public see it easily?
Yes.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
Fields either side of the lane track have been allocated for housing as part of the GNLP although development can be designed to respect the view.





Figure 34: Left: Milll Lane - view to the north.
Figure 35: Rights: Mill Lane - view to the north.





Figure 36: Left: Mill Lane - view to the south.
Figure 37: Right: Mill Lane - View to the East.

VIEW B
View from the sundial in Jubilee Wood east towards Acle.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
View towards the east overlooking the village. St Edmunds church can be seen from this view.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
• Provides views of the sunrise. • Sweeping views of large open areas. • Solitary and peaceful. • A wide-open area with meadow flowers in the spring/summer. • A favourite spot for residents and walkers. • A bench is located for visitors to sit, rest, and take in the view.
Can the public see it easily?
Yes.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
The fields either side of Mill Lane track have been allocated for housing as part of the GNLP. Development on the large field directly in front of Jubilee Wood threatens the view.



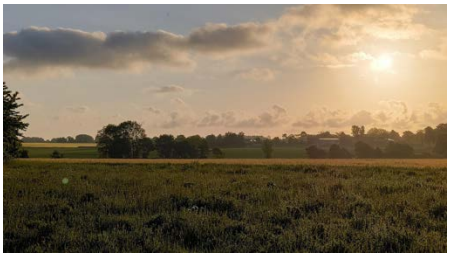


Figure 38: Left: View from the sundial towards Acle village.
Figure 39: Rights: View from the sundial towards the academy.

VIEW C
View towards West from Glover Road Estate play area.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
Jubilee Plantation. Sunsets. Rolling fields of corn/barley.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
Beautiful, gives peace and tranquility, shows character.
Can the public see it easily?
Yes.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
Field has been put forward for allocated for housing by NCC. Development can be designed to take account of the view.



Figure 40: View towards West from Glover Road Estate play area.

VIEW D
View of the Church from Jolly's Lane looking north.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
The church tower which is highly visible.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
Character of the area.
Can the public see it easily?
You can currently only see it from certain areas on Jollys Lane.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
Planning for a housing estate on an adjacent field has been submitted.



Figure 41: View of the Church from Jolly's Lane looking north.

VIEW E
South off Jollys Lane.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
Picturesque view of surrounding countryside.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
Beautiful view of surrounding fields and countryside.
Can the public see it easily?
You can currently only see it from certain areas on Jollys Lane.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
There could be applications for housing on the agricultural land in the future. It should be noted that planning permission for a housing estate on an adjacent field has been submitted, however this will not affect the view which is orientated in the other direction.



Figure 42: View from Jollys Lane.

VIEW F
View from Reedham Road going north into Acle.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
View of old barns and housing over rolling countryside.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
Character of the area.
Can the public see it easily?
It is the view the public will see as they enter one of the main gateways into the village.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
There could be applications for housing on the agricultural land in the future.



Figure 43: View from Reedham Road going north into Acle.

VIEW G
Views east and west across marshes from Roman Wood.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
View of over rolling countryside.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
View of iconic marshes.
Can the public see it easily?
Yes.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
There could be applications for housing on the agricultural land in the future.



Figure 44: View west across marshes from Roman Wood.

VIEW H
View from Riverside footpath towards from Acle Boat dyke to Acle Bridge Inn.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
Acle Bridge Inn, River and St Margaret's Mill.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
Character of the area, beautiful and historic view.
Can the public see it easily?
Yes.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
There could be applications for housing on the agricultural land in the future.



Figure 45: View from Riverside footpath towards from Acle Boat dyke to Acle Bridge Inn.

VIEW I
Views from new cemetery towards Upton and Fishley Churches.
What can you see from this spot? (e.g. church tower, open countryside, village green)
Upton Church and Fishley Church, and views across fields to River Bure, with occasional views of sails from boats on the River Bure.
Why is this view important? (e.g. beautiful, historic, well-loved, shows character of the area)
Beautiful view, with a combination of arable fields, listed buildings and the Broads.
Can the public see it easily?
Yes, easy to see from the public footpath from Acle to Fishley and on to Upton.
Is anything threatening the view? (e.g. new building planned, trees growing tall)
There could be applications for housing on the agricultural land in the future., for example following a new Call for Sites.





Figure 46: Left: View of Upton Church.
Figure 47: Right: View of Fishley Church.

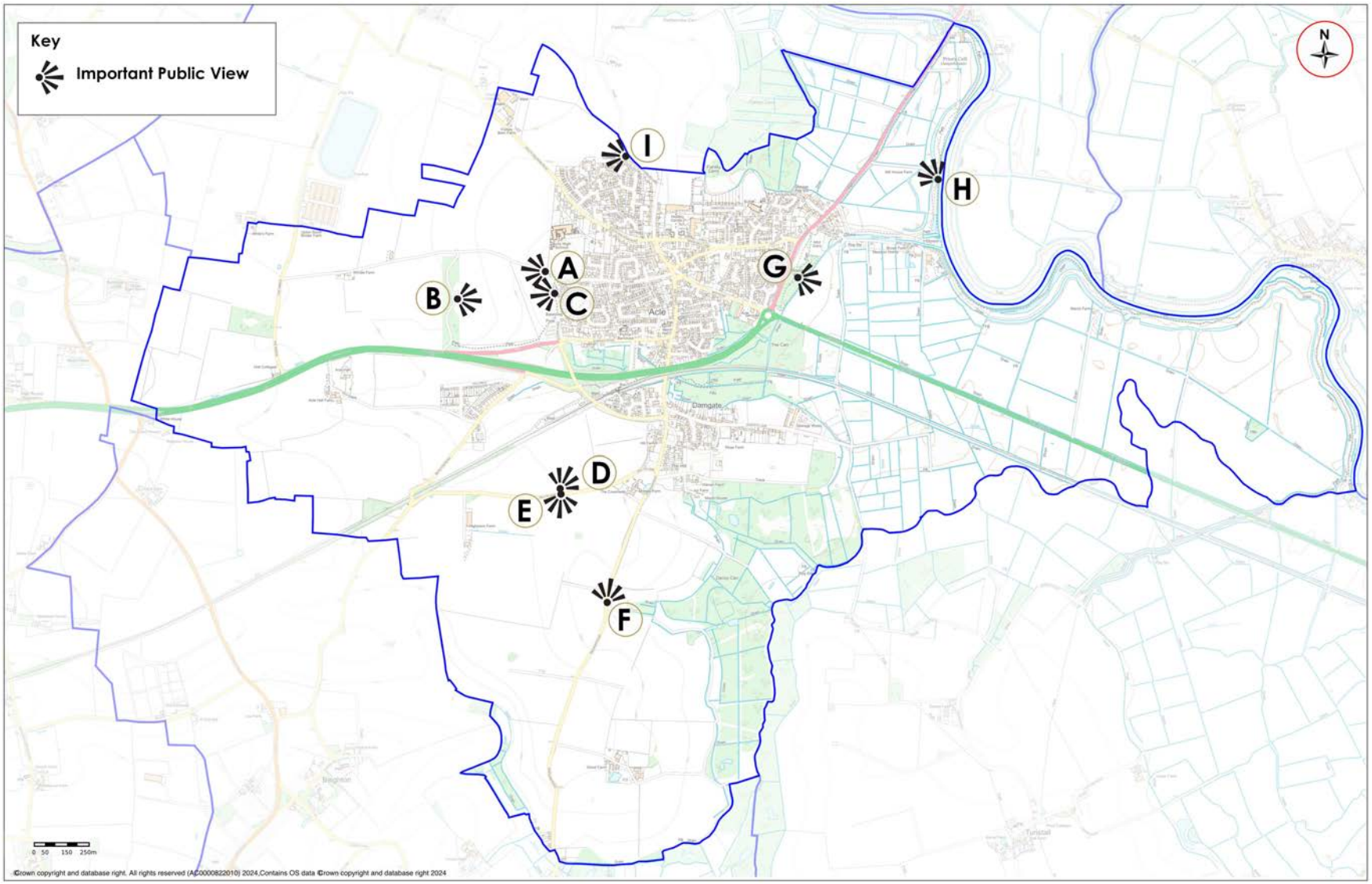


Figure 48: Important Public Views (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

NEW Policy ACLE14: Landscape and Important Public Views

The following views and vistas (**figure 48**) are identified as important public views. Development within these views that would be to the detriment of the view as a whole, will not be supported.

Proposals should be accompanied by a statement, appropriate to the scale of the proposal, which demonstrates how the view has been taken into consideration. Any proposal that would have a significant adverse impact on the landscape or character of the view concerned will not be supported.

The following views are considered particularly important:

A. View along the Mill Lane track from west of the Acle Academy
B. View from the sundial in Jubilee Wood east towards Acle
C. View towards West from Glover Road Estate play area
D. View of the Church from Jolly's Lane looking north
E. View from Jolly's Lane looking south
F. View from Reedham Road going north into Acle
G. Views west across marshes from Roman Wood
H. View from riverside footpath towards Acle bridge
I. Views from new cemetery sites towards Upton and Fishley churches.

New settlement edges
Where new edges to the settlement of Acle are to be created by new development, these should reflect the characteristics of the specific landscape character type in which they are located and maintain and enable a rural feel, whilst providing for views and vistas over the surrounding countryside and The Broads.

Responding to Climate Change

10.43 Government guidance encourages the planning system to support the transition to a low-carbon future in a changing climate. Planning policies should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, encourage the re-use of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings and support renewable and low-carbon energy.

10.44 Energy-efficient or eco-design combines all around energy-efficient appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar electricity and/or solar water heating. Starting from the design stage there are proposals which can incorporate technologies such as passive solar heating, cooling and energy-efficient landscaping, determined by local climate and site conditions. **Policy ACLE15** has been devised as a response to the increasing prominence of climate change and low-carbon issues. It also has regard to the Written Ministerial Statement dated 13 December 2023 which makes it clear that the Government does not expect

plan-makers to set local energy efficiency standards for buildings that go beyond current or planned buildings regulations.

10.45 The recent proliferation of applications for large-scale renewable energy projects in the form of solar farms has prompted the Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that adequate guidance is available to assess such applications should they occur in the Parish. Whilst truly large-scale energy projects are dealt with as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), and generally avoid National Parks and nationally protected landscapes, there are still proposals for relatively large-scale energy proposals which would be dealt with by the respective local planning authority. National guidance in the NPPF makes it clear that there is no requirement for the overall need for the project to be demonstrated and that significant weight should be given to the proposal's contribution to net zero. However, there is scope for more localised criteria to be used to determine the suitability of proposals within Acle Parish.

Fire breaks

10.46 With drier summers, one issue that is gaining in prominence is that of wildfires. The summers of 2024 and 2025 saw increasing numbers of agricultural field fires and these are likely to become more regular if long dry summers continue to be the normal climate. The modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan gives consideration to this issue and whether there are opportunities for designing development to be more resistant to the dangers of adjacent agricultural field fire. Designing measures to mitigate fires from adjacent fields such as '*fire breaks*' and to prevent spread within a development are important. The **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025** provides some guidance on the potential to use Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to prevent these occurrences (*GV.02*) and also guidance on fire prevention specifically in Section *GV0.2.2*, which considers fire prevention within a development and the use of distances between structures, the use of road and footway materials, hard and soft landscaping and water features.

10.47 Guidance from Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service advises that where residential properties (dwellinghouses) are located more than 45 metres away (furthest point of floorplan) from the closest fire appliance access location, British Standard 9991 directs that domestic sprinklers should be installed in accordance with British Standard 9251 and this will allow a maximum access distance of 90 metres to the furthest point of the floorplan in dwellinghouses with no floor more than 4.5 metres above ground. This is reduced to 75 metres where a floor is over 4.5 metres above ground. Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service would expect developers to adhere to the access distances given above or prove comparable safety of occupants should they wish to deviate from these. Consultation at an early stage with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is encouraged.

10.48 The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) will be used to inform site selection. Once a site is selected, opportunities to enhance local biodiversity should be maximised and existing wetland ecological features should be

retained and further ponds or wetlands created on site where appropriate within the site to help mitigate potential fire incidents.

10.49 **Policy ACLE15** has been devised as a response to these issues.

NEW Policy ACLE15: Responding to Climate Change

Proposals for new developments in Acle should (in proportion to their scale and nature) seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all development types, promote renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure and enhance climate resilience through sustainable design and nature-based solutions.

Where new development is proposed (residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial buildings), provision should be made for the incorporation of low- carbon sustainability measures for example:

- ground/air source heat pumps,
- roof-mounted solar panels
- water management measures.

Where planning permission is required for the retrofitting of energy-efficiency and low-carbon measures to existing buildings, both residential and non-residential, these will be supported in principle.

Non-Domestic Scale Energy Developments
Where renewable or other energy developments are proposed (including associated development such as cables, fencing, overhead wires, ancillary buildings etc), these will only be supported where the proposal:

a. Would not have an adverse impact upon biodiversity interests including nationally, internationally or locally designated sites or protected habitats and species and the proposal would contribute to a measurable net gain in biodiversity in accordance with **Policy ACLE13.**
b. Is located outside of The Broads nationally protected landscape, would not impact upon the setting of the Broads and would not have an adverse impact upon the landscape character of the Parish more generally.
c. Is located outside of the views identified in **Policy ACLE14.**
d. Would not adversely impact upon the heritage significance of the Halvergate Conservation Area, other designated assets or Non-Designated Heritage Assets as identified in **Policy ACLE16.**
e. Would not have adverse impacts upon residential amenity in terms of noise, glare or dust.
f. Can be safely accessed from the highway without detriment to the above criteria.

Fire Breaks
Where the site boundary of a new development is between (a) residential housing or commercial/communal buildings and (b) agricultural land, consideration must be given to appropriate materials, landscaping, building placement and route mapping. A Fire Risk Assessment should be undertaken which takes into account

the provision of suitable areas of land within the proposed development to be used as fire breaks.

Such areas would act as a buffer between agricultural land and new development in the event of an agricultural fire. Fire breaks should be a minimum of 15m in width and may include bunds, drainage lagoons, wetland areas, ponds, tree planting, green screens, water features and separation distances which should be incorporated into phases of development.

For buildings located on the edge of the countryside, periodic breaks between the roof eaves of neighbouring buildings through spaces between buildings must be provided.

Major routes through development must ensure they are accessible to emergency vehicles and overlooked foot paths should be placed periodically between dwellings as an emergency exit.

Properties that front or back onto the countryside must have a garden adjacent to the landscape to provide additional opportunities to reduce the risk of wild-fires ever reaching properties. The minimum distance between adjacent planted tree canopies on the edge of the countryside must be 2 metres at the point of the tree reaching full maturity. The positioning of these must ensure that the canopy does not overhang structures.

See also **Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes 2025.(GV.02.2)**.

Heritage and the Historic Environment

10.50 The name Acle derives from the Old English meaning an 'oak clearing'. The village has archaeological remains from a variety of periods, and a nationally important complex of World War Two defences. Much of the Parish is situated on low-lying land and was once on the edge of a large estuary, which gradually silted up to become marshland in the early medieval period.

10.51 In 1382 the inhabitants of Acle were granted the right of turbary, allowing them to remove turf or peat for fuel, in the park of Acle, which would have been situated on the margins of the parish, in the marshes. Peat digging on a large scale in the medieval period created the Broads, which are the flooded remains of turbaries. Medieval pottery, coins and metalwork, including medieval seal matrices and harness pendants have been found in the Parish.

10.52 There are thirteen Grade II Listed Buildings, and one Grade I Listed Building (the Church) and one Scheduled Monument in Acle parish on the National Heritage List for England. Listed Buildings are protected under national guidance and legislation and in Local Plan policy and therefore this Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan does not need to duplicate this approach.

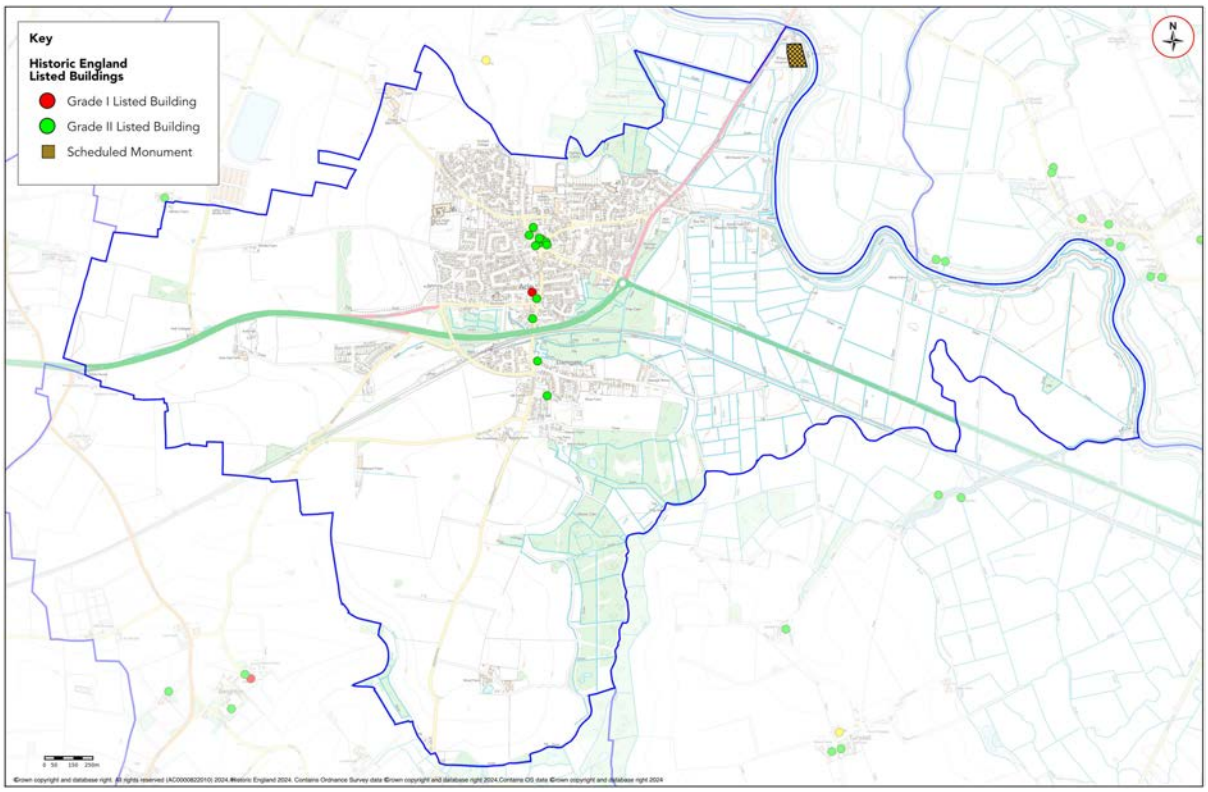


Figure 49: Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monument (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

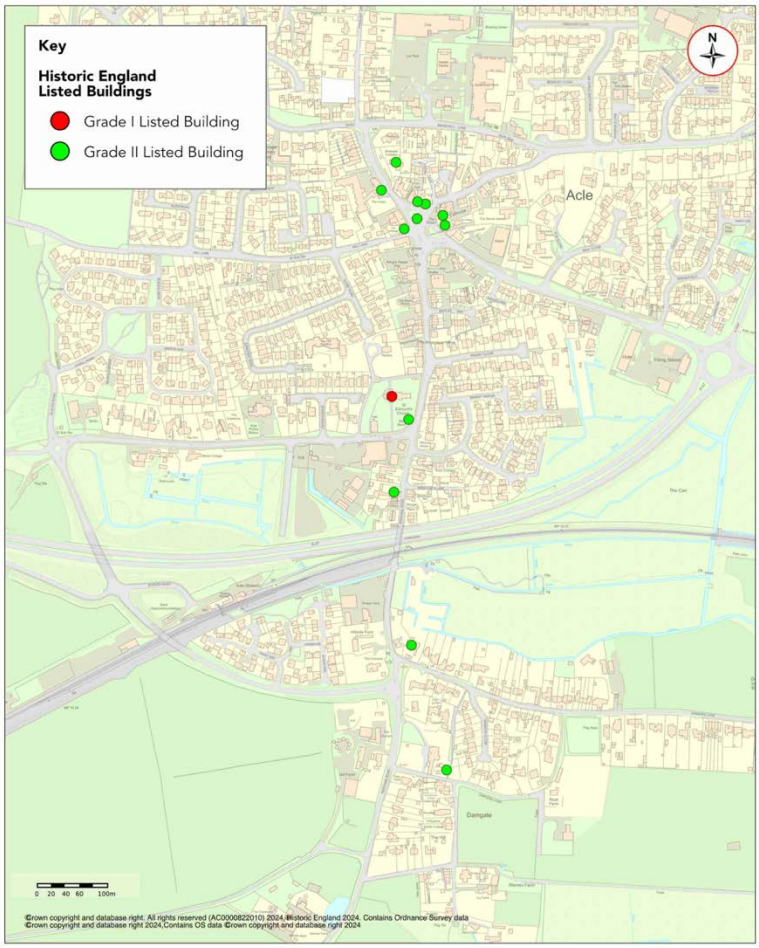


Figure 50: Listed Buildings (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Non-designated Heritage Assets (NDHA)

10.53 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) recognises that there are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some Non-designated Heritage Assets (NDHA) as 'locally Listed'. The PPG goes on to explain that these can be identified through Local Plans (and now most commonly through Neighbourhood Plans) and can be a positive way for the local community to identify NDHA against consistent criteria so as to improve the predictability of the potential for sustainable development.

10.54 The Broads Authority has undertaken a themed approach to the identification of NDHA and identified WWII structures, unlisted Mills and Waterside Chalets of local importance. There is one structure within Acle Parish which is included on the Broads Authority' s Local List. This is Charlie Water's Drainage Mill.

10.55 The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 216 indicates that the effects of an application on the significance of a NDHA should be taken into account in determining applications.

10.56 The Household Survey asked a specific question in respect of local heritage and asked the community to identify any buildings or structures which they felt were of local importance and significance in terms of their heritage value. 214 responses were received to the specific question and over 30 candidates were initially identified. In addition, there was clear support for the inclusion of a policy within the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan that would seek to protect the heritage value of NDHA including their setting.

10.57 However after some further investigation by the Steering Group, it emerged that this list could be significantly longer. This was partly due to the size of the Parish and the fact that there is no Conservation Area for the village centre - a Conservation Area as a designated asset in its own right would offer some protection to unlisted buildings within it and it could be argued they would not have to be individually identified. It was therefore concluded that rather than attempt to identify individually all potential NDHA within the parish which would be potentially numerous, and risk missing a potential candidate, a themed approach be taken. This themed approach was not supported at Pre-Submission consultation and therefore has been reviewed. Whilst there are some obvious potential 'categories of NDHA' within Acle Parish which include the following, it is considered that this is not comprehensive and leaves room for ambiguity in policy without very specific examples and without consistent assessment being undertaken.

- **WWII Heritage** – buildings or structures within Acle which have an association or connection with WWII, examples would include the pillboxes and spigot mortar pedestals located within the Broads Authority area of the Parish and the 'disguised pillbox' built into the east gable of the Manor House in the centre of Acle and the pillbox at the Springfield development.

- **Traditional Shop Fronts in the Village centre** – those buildings in the village centre which retain elements or remnants of a current or former retail use; these may have features such as mullion windows, recessed doorways, fascias separating ground and first floor, pillars, transom bars over a window or door etc.
- **Residential Villas** – large, individual, domestic detached, semi-detached or terraced dwellings set back from the road in mature grounds, often with hedges or brick walls to the highway with individual driveways. Often Edwardian or Victorian in style and detailing. These tend to be located at the entrance to the village centre on the main roads such as Norwich Road, South Walsham Road, Old Road, Reedham Road, and also along Damgate Lane.
- **Civic Buildings** – buildings constructed for a specific community use in a traditional civic style for example the fire station, the Library, the Railway Station



Figure 51: Example of WWII Heritage ('Type 22' pillbox MNF16801, Acle).



Figure 52: Example of Traditional Shop Fronts in the Village centre.



Figure 53: Example of a villa

10.58 The Norfolk Heritage Explorer website is an abridged version of the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (HER) and contains 153 records for Acle. This information is the starting point for determining if a particular building or structure is likely to have sufficient heritage significance to be considered as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset. Prospective applicants should therefore consult the HER and should take into account the potential for the building or structure to be a NDHA and design the scheme accordingly.

10.59 In addition, the Parish is an area of important archaeology with recent archaeological excavations taking place at Springfields. The potential for the presence of buried archaeology should be taken into account by developers. **Policy ACLE16** below ensures that buried archaeological remains—whether designated or non-designated—are identified, protected, and, where appropriate, enhanced as part of the planning process. These remains form an irreplaceable record of past human activity and contribute to local character, identity, and understanding.

Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area

10.60 The Parish is home to part of the Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area which was designated a Conservation Area in 1995. The Conservation Area comprises a large area of the Halvergate Marshes (the Halvergate Triangle) and part of Haddiscoe Marshes (The Island), north of the New Cut, together with the areas forming the eastern fringe of the River Yare.

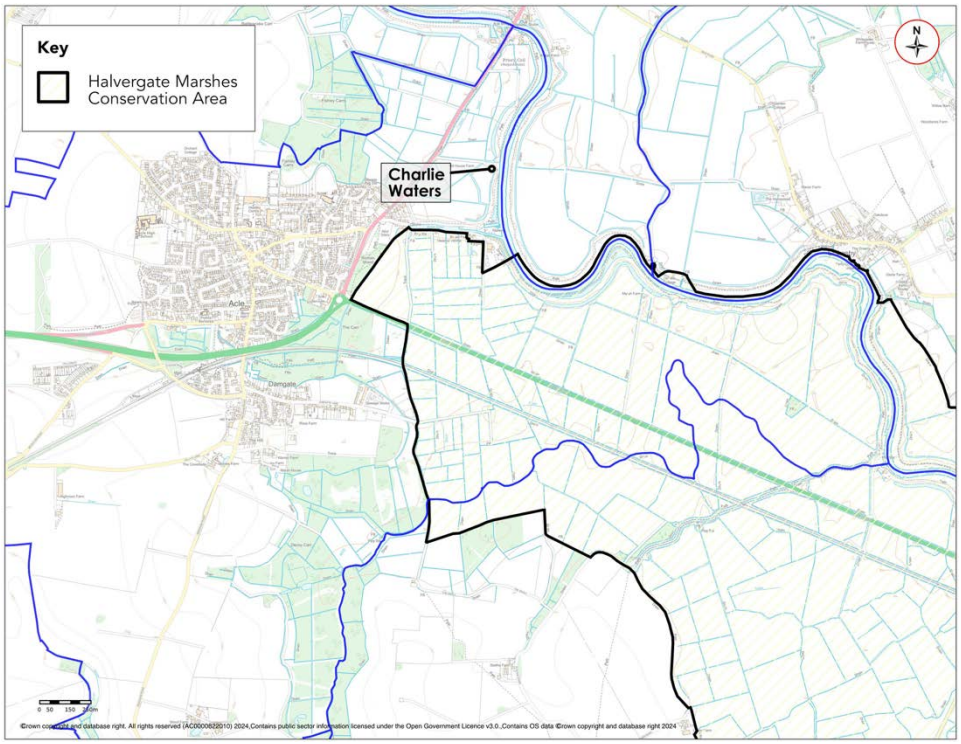


Figure 54: Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

10.61 Halvergate Marshes and Haddiscoe Island contain the largest area of grazing marshes in the east of England and epitomise the marshland landscape of the Broads area - vast panoramic grazing marshes, winding waterways, wide open skies, openness and a high level of visibility within a wide valley floodplain. Within this large-scale landscape, there is a strong dyke pattern evident within areas of marshland, most of which is still used in the traditional way for cattle grazing. The landscape is punctuated by drainage mills formerly used to drain the grazing marshes. Although other marshland areas of the country, including the Fens, were drained by such mills, unlike Halvergate, most retain only the scant remains of their wind-powered mills and only the Netherlands is comparable in terms of the number of remains.

10.62 The Conservation Area is bounded by the higher land between Stokesby and Caister to the north, between Reedham and Acle to the west; to the east it includes the marshland areas adjoining the Rivers Yare and Waveney from their confluence at the southern end of Breydon Water, with the New Cut forming the western boundary. The River Yare marks the boundary between Halvergate Triangle and Haddiscoe Island. The conservation area includes the east-west reaches of the River Bure between Acle and Yarmouth and a section of the A47 Norwich-Yarmouth road.

10.63 The Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area is one of the distinctive Broads landscapes. The panoramic grazing marshes give a sense of openness and remoteness. Big skies, simple skylines, meandering rivers and important nature conservation interest all contribute to the special and unique character of the area. It is a working, rather than a leisure, landscape. Although public access by land is limited, the rivers, through opportunities for boating and sailing, allow a glimpse into this special landscape. Halvergate Marshes are a powerful reminder of what much of the coastal fringe of the east coast must have been like before the widespread conversion to arable. The combination of marsh and sky continually reflects changes in weather patterns and the seasons.

10.64 From a development perspective, the greatest pressures on Halvergate Marshes are:

- Saline incursion
- Water quality
- Conversion of grazing land to arable or other land uses
- Agricultural buildings of inappropriate scale, design and materials within the marshland and on the upland edge, particularly where they are not screened by vegetation
- Pylons/cables on the skyline
- Impacts of flood alleviation works
- Changes to the Acle Straight
- Deterioration/dereliction of structures within the conservation area, principally drainage mills, pumps and marsh houses
- Potential installation of modern water pumping facilities of inappropriate design and materials
- New development on the skyline
- Climate change effects

10.65 The Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area is designated for its exceptional landscape character, historic drainage patterns, ecological value, and the intactness of its traditional marshland setting. **Policy ACLE16** below applies to all development proposals within the Conservation Area and to proposals outside the boundary that may affect its setting, views, or environmental integrity.

NEW Policy ACLE16: Heritage

Non-designated Heritage Assets
The following structure has been identified by the Broads Authority (see **figure 54**) as a Non-designated Heritage Asset and is included on their Local List:[34]

- Charlie Water's Drainage Mill.

Buried Archaeology
Development proposals within areas of known or potential archaeological interest must be informed by proportionate archaeological assessment. This may include desk-based assessment, geophysical survey, or trial trenching, depending on site sensitivity. Where significant archaeological remains are identified, applicants must demonstrate that the layout and design of development has sought to avoid harm. Preservation in situ will be the preferred approach, particularly for remains of high significance. If harm cannot be fully avoided, proposals must include an agreed programme of archaeological investigation, recording, analysis, and public dissemination. This should be secured through planning conditions or obligations

Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area
Development proposals within the Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area, or those that may affect its setting, will be supported where they:

a. Maintain the open, expansive marshland landscape and avoid introducing visually intrusive or urbanising features.
b. Protect key views, including long views across the marshes and towards historic drainage mills.
c. Conserve and, where possible, enhance the historic drainage network, including dykes, ditches, and field boundaries.
d. Use materials and design approaches that are simple, rural, and in keeping with the traditional marshland character.
e. Do not introduce lighting, noise, or activity that would harm the tranquillity and dark skies of the area.

Proposals must demonstrate an understanding of the historic environment and show how they will:

- Preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets, including drainage mills and historic marshland structures.
- Retain the pattern of watercourses, reedbeds, and grazing marshes that contribute to the area's character.

[34] https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/other-planning-issues/protected-buildings/broads-local-list-of-heritage-assets (accessed 03.10.25)

- Avoid the loss of traditional features such as timber gates, bridges, and rural trackways unless clearly justified.

Any proposals would need to demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the designated heritage asset (Halvergate Marshes Conservation Area) and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits, whilst providing clear justification, in a heritage statement, for any harm to its significance.



11. Implementation and monitoring

Implementation

11.1 The original and modified Acle Neighbourhood Plans have been developed to assist with the planning of sustainable growth across the parish for a period up to 2040. The implementation of the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan will require the co-ordinated input and co-operation of relevant statutory and non-statutory agencies, private sector organisations and the local community.

11.2 The policies in this document shape the way in which development happens within the parish. Where development is proposed, it may be required to deliver other uses on site in order for that development to be considered to be acceptable, e.g. new open space or biodiversity enhancements. Where this occurs, these will be delivered through planning obligations, often referred to as section 106 agreements, which are legal agreements negotiated between the Local Planning Authority and a developer or landowner (usually in the context of a planning application). Planning obligations are typically used to ensure that new developments:

- comply with planning policy, for instance, by requiring affordable housing or public open space to be provided; and
- do not impose undue burdens on existing facilities, for instance, by requiring financial contributions to increase/improve local services such as schools, health, libraries or transport.

11.3 Given the length of the Plan period and the expected population growth, demand on medical facilities and existing schools is anticipated to grow over the Plan period . The ability for these services to keep pace with demand is to some degree reliant on developer CIL[35] contributions which will need to be prioritised for these services. For example, the Integrated Care Board is working with the Acle Medical Partnership on options, including feasibility for premises extension/reconfiguration and therefore health infrastructure is identified as a priority for developer mitigation.

11.4 The delivery of the ambitions of this Plan will require the Parish Council and partner organisations to be proactive in getting the best results for the Parish of Acle.

Monitoring

11.5 There is no formal requirement or timetable for the review of Neighbourhood Plans. However, it is good practice to report on the use of a Neighbourhood Plan and monitor the use of its policies, ideally on an annual basis, through a report to the Parish Council. This information would be used to identify the need for any formal reviews – either partial or in full.

[35] Community Infrastructure Levy: The Community Infrastructure Levy (the 'levy') is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to use to help them deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area

11.6 Any review process would need to be undertaken in consultation with the local community and the relevant Local Planning Authority and should be instigated by the Parish Council to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is still current and remains a positive planning tool to deliver sustainable growth. In order to determine when a review is necessary, the Parish Council will monitor development in the Parish along with local and national planning policy and the appropriate legislative context.

11.7 Paragraph 14, of the NPPF December 2024, emphasises the importance of keeping Neighbourhood Plans up to date, as the weight assigned to their policies may diminish after it has reached 5 years since it was 'made'. It is anticipated the modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan will require review before it reaches the end of the Plan period and that it will be the role of the Parish Council to update the Neighbourhood Plan at the appropriate time.


ACLE
PARISH COUNCIL
ST EDMUND'S CHURCH
TRAIN STATION
SHOPS
SHOPS
RIVER BURE
ACLE BRIDGE
East of England
COOP
VICT
1837
REG
1887
YARMOUTH
11 MILES
NORWICH
11 MILES

Appendix

Appendix A: Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members

The Acle Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group consisted of the following members:

- **Tim Brown**, Parish Councillor and Local Resident
- **Sarah Carter,** (until July 2025), Parish Councillor and Local Resident)
- **Jamie Pizey**, Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Chairman of the Parish Council and Local Resident.
- **Richard Powell**, Parish Councillor and Local Resident
- **Jess Roya**l, Parish Councillor and Local Resident (until December 2025))
- **David Stephenson**, Vice Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Parish Councillor and Local Resident.

Supported by:

- **Pauline James**, Parish Clerk
- **Fiona Richardson**, Deputy Parish Clerk

Consultant Team:

- **Rachel Leggett**, Rachel Leggett & Associates, Independent Consultant
- **Andrea Long**, Compasspoint Planning, Independent Consultant
- **Emma Harrison**, Rachel Leggett & Associates, Independent Consultant

Photos taken and supplied by Steering Group members and the consultant team.

Appendix B: Acle Parish Design Guidance and Codes

Attached document.

Appendix C: Justification for Local Green Spaces

The table below outlines the justification for the inclusion of each Local Green Space identified. The criteria are based on the National Planning Policy Framework.

1. Daisy Way Estate - Play Area and surrounding green space	
Location (What3Words)	///tomorrow.beats.carbonate
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Yes, immediately adjacent to new residential development. Space originated as part of the open space provision for the estate.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	This space includes a play area, seating, and bins, making it a recreational spot for all ages of the community. It also serves as a buffer zone between the housing estate and the railway line.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes. Approximately 0.029 hectares and has well defined boundaries that do not extend into countryside.





2. Daisy Way Estate – Gated seating area	
Location (What3Words)	///choppy.magic.intestine
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Yes, surrounded by residential development
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The seating area on Daisy Way is important since Daisy Way can be used as a shortcut for people who live further out of the village. It gives them a place to sit and rest if they need to take a break while passing through. The area arose as part of the open space requirement for the development
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes. Approximately 0.015 hectares. Within the built-up area.



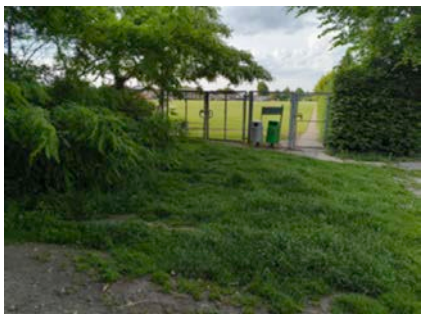


3. The Green	
Location (What3Words)	///tolerable.arrived.townhouse
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Yes, in the village centre
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The Green is a large open space in the centre of the village. It features a tree of local importance and offers multiple benches for people to sit on. The area also includes the memorial, village map, fingerposts and several decorative planting beds.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes, Approximately 0.0169 hectares.





4. Mill Lane – Green space to rear of Acle Academy	
Location (What3Words)	///posed.office.objective
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Yes. Close to the school and adjoining residential development
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Small informal amenity area. Location for dog bins and waste bins.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Approximately, 0.244 hectares



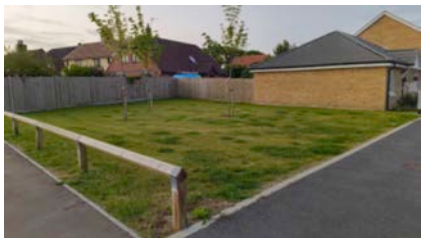


5. Mill Lane – Green space beside sheltered housing bungalows	
Location (What3Words)	///cheetahs.boxing.cards
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Mill Lane is accessed from The Street.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Green space that sets property lines back from busy roads and pavements provides both visual relief and environmental value. There are a large number of trees planted on this area.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





6. Glover Road Estate – Green space along footpath linking to Mill Lane	
Location (What3Words)	///awaiting.laminated.limiting
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Yes.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Several properties on the estate have green spaces that blend in with the property boundary. It is difficult to ascertain if it's an open green space or is part of the property boundary.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes.



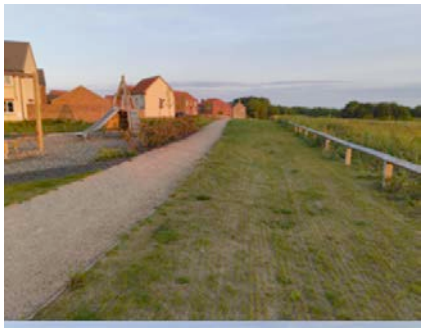


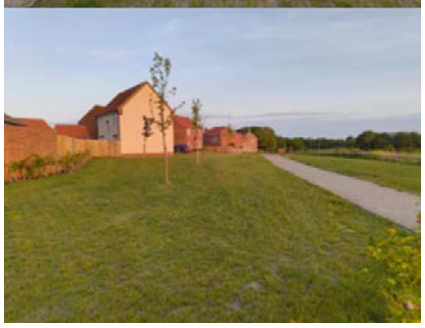
7. Glover Road Estate – central open green	
Location (What3Words)	///airports.punctual.land
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Yes.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	A large open green space with a small number of planted trees gives the estate a spacious, welcoming character. It provides recreational opportunities for residents while also supporting natural surveillance of the surrounding area.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes.





8. Glover Road Estate – Play Area	
Location (What3Words)	///flock.player.enveloped
In reasonably close proximity to the community, it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Play area.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes

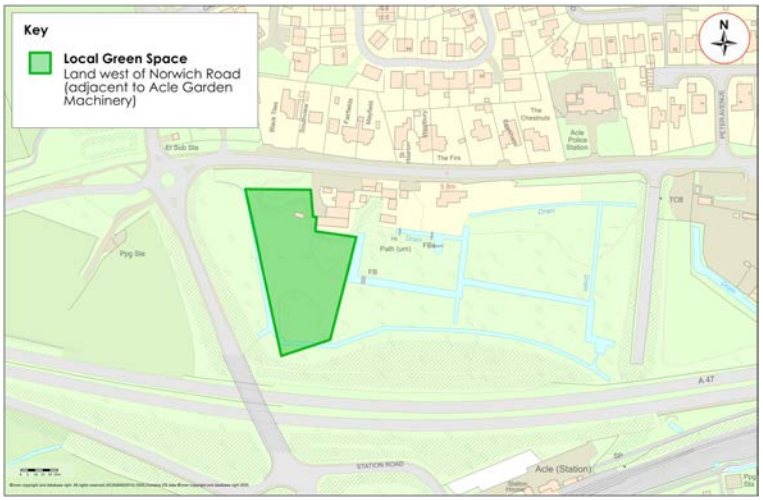






9. Land west of Norwich Road (adjacent to Acle Garden Machinery)	
Location (What3Words)	///flinch.showdown.serenade
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	A large, grassed area that forms a green corridor linking the dyke with the wooded area to the rear.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





1. Land south of Acle Garden Machinery	
Location (What3Words)	///educates.plunger.voltage
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The land is critically important for biodiversity, with a well-established ecological presence. It also serves as one of the main drainage areas for the southeast part of the village.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





11. Beighton Road – Play Area	
Location (What3Words)	///pothole.comedians.basic
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Play area
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





12. Land amongst housing on Beighton Road/Hillcrest	
Location (What3Words)	///care.seriously.linked
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The land is critically important for biodiversity, with a well-established ecological presence.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





13. New Close – Central open green within cul-de-sac	
Location (What3Words)	///completed.energetic.sofas
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Provides green space and a feeling of openness in a densely populated cul-de-sac
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes

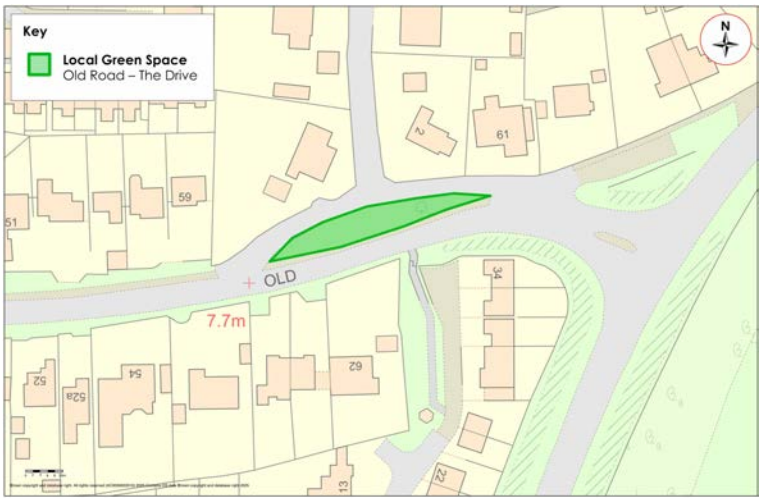




14. Old Road – The Drive	
Location (What3Words)	///sheepish.define.branching
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Green space with benches, fingerposts and well-established trees.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes







15. Fletcher Way – Green space by Primary Academy	
Location (What3Words)	///much.huddled.backhand
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Green space that sets property lines back from busy roads and pavements provides both visual relief and environmental value. The areas further enhance the aesthetics and create a more welcoming streetscape.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





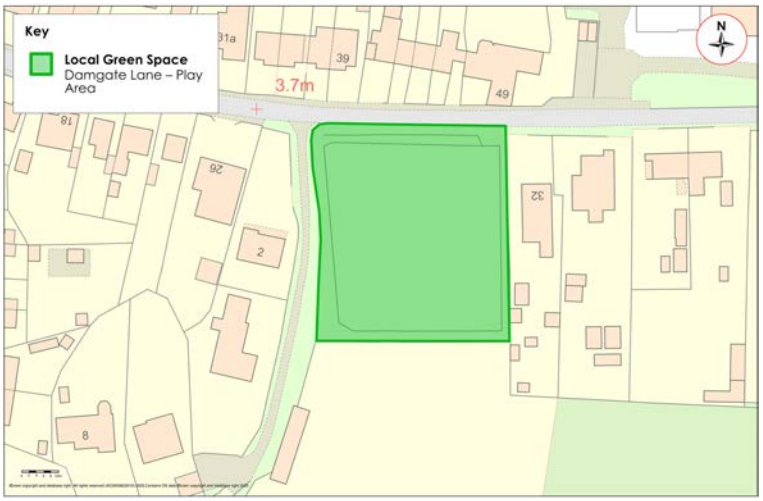
16. Bridewell Lane – Land at the Library	
Location (What3Words)	///assurance.vast.excusing
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes, in front of Acle Library.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Part of the rural character of Acle village, provides a green edge to the site containing the library and other community facilities.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





17. Damgate Lane – Play Area	
Location (What3Words)	///submerged.tenses.handy
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Play area. Area for wild flowers
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





18. The Hill – Grass Square at Reedham Road junction	
Location (What3Words)	///sparrows.newsstand.steep
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Open green space at the end of the row of council houses on The Hill.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





19. Jubilee Wood	
Location (What3Words)	///guarding.sniff.usual
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	On the western edge of the village lies a woodland rich in flora and fauna, owned by Norfolk County Council and managed by conservation volunteers. A path, suitable for walking and wheeling, runs through the woods and opens onto a wildflower meadow with views back towards the village. The woodland also serves to break up the surrounding agricultural fields, adding visual and ecological interest to the landscape.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





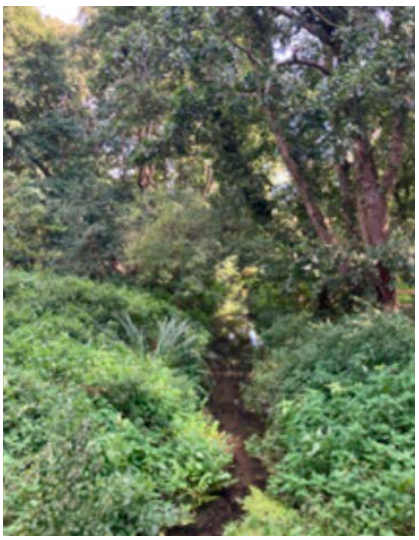
20. Roman Wood	
Location (What3Words)	///parkland.tinsel.riders
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Historic woodland offering a tranquil amenity space for the community. A path suitable for walking and wheeling runs through the woods, with benches providing resting points along the route.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes

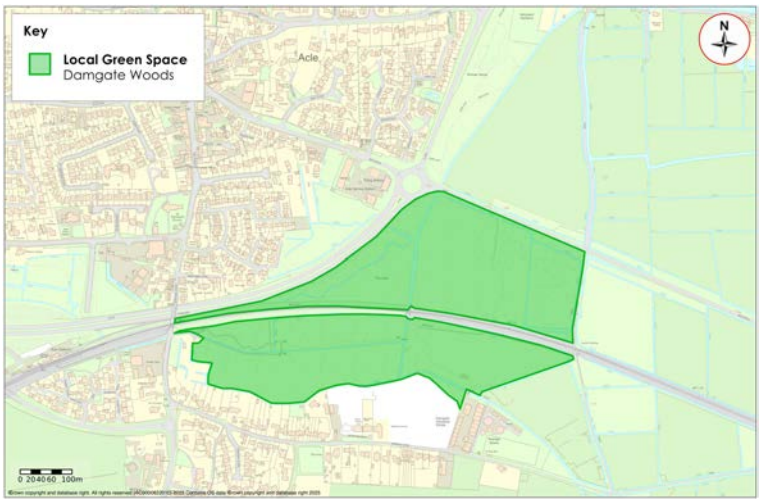




21. Damgate Wood	
Location (What3Words)	///elephant.hedgehog.trespass
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Damgate Woods is a historic woodland providing a relaxing amenity space for the community. A path suitable for walking and wheeling runs through the woods, with benches offering places to rest and enjoy the surroundings. The woodland also connects with the Weavers' Way, linking the village to the wider Norfolk trail network.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes







22. Farrow's Wood	
Location (What3Words)	///newsstand.paper.fled
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	Historic woodland offering a tranquil amenity space for the community. A path suitable for walking and wheeling runs through the woods.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Yes





23. Land south of New Road	
Location (What3Words)	///oxidation.again.diplomat
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Yes, it is adjacent to New Road, Market Manor, Old Market Close and visible from A47.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	It is a fantastic, unspoilt area, neglected for many years, with a wide mix of small trees, native plants and brambles, and must be a great habitat for a wide range of insects and wildlife. It serves as a buffer between the busy A47 and several areas of housing.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	It is low-lying and marshy, so a good example of the landscape locally.





Appendix D: Important Trees, Hedgerows and Trackways

Descrip-tion	Grid Refere-nce	X	Y	Address (near)	what3words
Willow	TG 40995 09752	64099 5	3097 52	New Road, Acle, Damgate, NR13 3AZ	subject.helped.recently
Damgate Oak 1	TG 40885 09779	64088 5	3097 79	New Road, Acle, Damgate, NR13 3AZ	trusts.dignitary.costly
Damgate Oak 2	TG 40869 09786	64086 9	3097 86	New Road, Acle, Damgate, NR13 3AZ	typed.kiosk.slurred
Carters Loke Oak1	TG 40287 09719	64028 7	3097 19	Carters Loke, Acle, NR13 3DL	aimlessly.active.info
Carters Loke Oak 2	TG 40256 09734	64025 6	3097 34	Carters Loke, Acle, NR13 3DL	tutored.asks.steam
Craters Loke Oak 3	TG 40275 09720	64027 5	3097 20	Carters Loke, Acle, NR13 3DL	alienated.steamed.rust
Damagte Lane Lime1	TG 40133 09905	64013 3	3099 05	Damgate Lane, Acle, NR13 3DS	guards.playfully.snails
DamagteLane Lime 2	TG 40131 09903	64013 1	3099 03	Damgate Lane, Acle, NR13 3DS	trainer.engulfing.scrubber
PyeBush Limes	TG 40068 10943	64006 8	3109 43	Living Waters, Pyebush Lane, Acle, NR13 3EJ,	copy.stockpile.herb
Point P	TG 39736 09497	63973 6	3094 97	Jollys Lane, Acle, Damgate, NR13 3DD	volunteered.pays.ounce
Damgate Lane Ash	TG 40908 09765	64090 8	3097 65	New Road, Acle, Damgate, NR13 3AZ	inert.triathlon.swooning
Old Market Close Oak	TG 40348 10238	64034 8	3102 38	Market Manor, Acle, NR13 3ET	wounds.warbler.forkful
Folly Tree on the Green in the village centre	TG 40148 10560	64014 8	3105 60	Outside No1 Old Road, Acle	Wimp.riskiest.pigtails

Appendix E: Glossary

Glossary of terms used and/or relevant to the Modified Acle Neighbourhood Plan and supporting submission documents.

Affordable housing
Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

i. Social Rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the government's rent policy for Social Rent; (b) the landlord is a registered provider; and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
ii. Other affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the government's rent policy for affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
iii. Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
iv. Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision or refunded to government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Ancient or veteran tree
A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

Ancient Hedgerow
A hedge which was in existence before the Enclosure Acts, passed mainly between 1720 and 1840 in Britain. Species-rich hedgerows may be taken as those which contain 5 or more native woody species on average in a 30-metre length, or 4 or more in northern England and upland Wales. Hedges which contain fewer woody species, but a rich basal flora of herbaceous plants are also included here, as are recently planted species-rich hedges. Where boundary lines of trees or shrubs are associated with features such as banks, ditches, trees or verges, these features are considered to form part of the hedgerow.
Source: https://www.buglife.org.uk/resources/habitat-management/ancient-and-species-rich-hedgerows/

Ancient woodland
An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Archaeological interest
There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Blue infrastructure (see also Green Infrastructure):
Encompasses both natural and engineered water features in urban and rural environments. Natural elements include rivers, lakes, ponds, wetlands, and coastal areas, while engineered components can include canals, harbours, quays, stormwater systems, and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) such as swales and rain gardens. These features are often integrated with green infrastructure—trees, parks, and gardens—to form blue-green infrastructure networks that manage water sustainably while providing multiple societal benefits.

Brownfield land - see Previously developed land.

Climate change adaptation
Adjustments made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Climate change mitigation
Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Community-led development
A development taken forward by, or with, a not-for-profit organisation, that is primarily for the purpose of meeting the needs of its members or the wider local community, rather than being a primarily commercial enterprise. The organisation should be created, managed and democratically controlled by its members, and membership of the organisation should be open to all beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of that organisation. It may take any one of various legal forms including a co-operative society, community benefit society and company limited by guarantee. The organisation should own, manage or steward the development in a manner consistent with its purpose, potentially through a mutually supported

arrangement with a Registered Provider of Social Housing. The benefits of the development to the community should be clearly defined and consideration given to how those benefits can be protected over time, including in the event of the organisation being wound up.

Conservation (for heritage policy)
The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Design code
A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Design guide
A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.

Designated Heritage Asset
A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Developable
To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

Development plan
Defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Green infrastructure
A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and well-being benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

Habitats site
Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

Heritage asset
A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic environment
All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Historic environment record
Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity
All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Irreplaceable habitat
Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

Local housing need
The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.

Local Nature Partnership
A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, established for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it.

Local planning authority
The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority, the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local plan
A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community, under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Major development
For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m2 or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Natural Flood Management
Managing flood and coastal erosion risk by protecting, restoring and emulating the natural 'regulating' function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts.

Nature Recovery Network
An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.

Neighbourhood plan
A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Older people
People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Open space (also known as green space)
All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

People with disabilities
People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.

Planning condition
A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Playing field
The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Previously developed land
Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Priority habitats and species
Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Rain gardens
A rain garden is a shallow, planted depression designed to collect and absorb rainwater runoff from impervious surfaces, filtering pollutants and recharging groundwater.

Renewable and low-carbon energy
Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low-carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Setting of a heritage asset
The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Settlement boundary/limit
A notional line drawn around the built-up-area of a settlement which delineates where certain policies, relating to new housing and employment, apply. The principle of development inside the settlement boundary is generally considered acceptable subject to the details of the proposal. Development outside of the settlement boundary is only suitable where it meets criteria set out in the NPPF.

Significance (for heritage policy)
The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

Special Areas of Conservation
Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.

Special Protection Areas
Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

Site of Special Scientific Interest
Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Stepping stones
Pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.

Strategic environmental assessment
A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Strategic policies
Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of section 19(1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Strategic policy-making authorities
Those authorities responsible for producing strategic policies (local planning authorities, and elected Mayors or combined authorities, where this power has been conferred). This definition applies whether the authority is in the process of producing strategic policies or not.

Supplementary planning documents
Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)
A sustainable drainage system controls surface water run off close to where it falls, combining a mixture of built and nature-based techniques to mimic natural drainage as closely as possible, and accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change. The type of system that would be appropriate will vary from small scale interventions such as permeable paving and soakaways that can be used in very small developments to larger integrated schemes in major developments.

Sustainable transport modes

Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, ultra-low and zero emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Swales
Shallow, gently sloping channels designed to slow, capture, and filter water, promoting infiltration and reducing runoff. Swales are landscape features that can be either natural or human-made, typically appearing as broad, flat-bottomed channels lined with vegetation such as grasses or native plants

Transport assessment
A comprehensive and systematic process that considers and sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development, in the context of the vision for the scheme. It identifies measures required to support alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport, and to promote accessibility and safety, together with measures that will be needed deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Transport statement
A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising from development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

Wildlife corridor
Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

Windfall sites
Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

Appendix F: Policies in the 2015 Neighbourhood Plan

Policies in the 2015 adopted Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary
Policy 1: Acle Bridge Area Improvements	Now Policy ACLE6
Policy 2: Village Centre Public Realm Improvements	Merged with Policy 8 to create comprehensive village centre policy – now Policy ACLE4.
Policy 3: Acle Academy	Merged with former Policy 4 to create single education-based policy with updated wording. Now Policy ACLE7
Policy 4: Pre-school Provision	Merged with former Policy 3 to create single education-based policy with updated wording. Now Policy ACLE7
Policy 5: Improving links to the countryside and surrounding villages	Incorporated into a new wider connections and accessibility policy. Now Policy ACLE8
Policy 6: Improving access to the Wherry Line	Deleted
Policy 7: Reducing the severance effect of the A104	Deleted
Policy 8: Village Centre Development	Merged with Policy 2 to create a comprehensive village centre policy – now Policy ACLE4.
Policy 9: Business Space	Essence incorporated within ACLE5 for a more comprehensive business employment and redevelopment approach
Policy 10: Future Housing Integration	Now Policy ACLE1 and broadened to become the principal design policy.
Policy 11: Residential Car Parking	Now Policy ACLE3 and broadened to include all forms of parking

Appendix G: Other useful guidance

This is a list of other guidance which may be useful for developers and promoters of development. Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

Design

- National Model Design Code: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957205/National_Model_Design_Code.pdf
- Secured by Design - SBD Design Guides : https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides
- South Norfolk and Broadland Design Code: https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/planning/future-development/supplementary-planning-documents/broadland-and-south-norfolk-district-wide-design-codes

Highways and Parking

- Norfolk County Council Parking Standards: https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/38633

Floodrisk

- GOV.UK – Flood map for planning
- GOV.UK – Check your long-term flood risk
- Norfolk County Council (NCC) – Flood and Water Management Policies
- Norfolk County Council (NCC) – Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Statutory Consultee for Planning: Guidance Document

Dark Skies and Light Pollution

- Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' ILP Guidance: https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note-update-released
- England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies (CPRE): England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies, https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/

Biodiversity

- Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Habitat Map: https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/3425559ce5b94929b6865d0ba7e34f50#data_s=id%3AdataSource_4-199dcef611c-layer-72%3A4423&widget_7=active_datasource_id:dataSource_4,center:641046.6232883416%2C310318.830104926%2C27700,scale:19367.485672710056,level:12.92504576,rotation:2.327619908064877,viewpoint:%7B%22rotation%22%3A2.327619908064877%2C%22scale%22%3A19367.485672710056%2C%22targetGeometry%22%3A%7B%22spatialReference%22%3A
- Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Open Space

- Draft Implementation of the Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-12/GNGIS_SPD_2025_Draft.pdf

- Guidance on designing safe open spaces: https://www.college.police.uk/research/projects/safer-parks-design-utilising-open-data-enhance-safety-women-and-girls

Planning Obligations

- Planning obligations - Norfolk County Council: https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/38629/Planning-obligations

Acle Neighbourhood Plan