

Postwick with Wotton Neighbourhood Plan 2024-2038



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Introduction

1. The parish of Postwick with Witton falls within Broadland District and the Broads Authority Executive Area. It is situated between Norwich and Great Yarmouth, with Norwich city centre just 5 miles north-west of the parish. It comprises three distinct settlement areas. The village of Postwick in the west of the parish and a long-established self-contained settlement that was until recently the main community in the parish. The hamlet of Witton, which is bisected by the A47, with North Witton located to the north-east of the parish and South Witton to the east. The north-west of the parish also contains a built-up area contiguous with neighbouring Thorpe St Andrew. It includes a new community at the Oaks, which is being developed as part of the Greater Norwich Growth Triangle. This area is more urban in character and located away from Postwick and Witton and differs markedly from the rural aspect of the rest of the Parish. It has now become, however, the largest settlement in the parish.
2. There is a wide range of local services, primarily within three business parks located on the edge of Norwich off the A47/Postwick Hub Interchange. The majority of this economic activity falls within Postwick with Witton. This includes Broadland Business Park, Broadland Gate and Meridian. There is a significant number of large businesses including major retailers and nationally branded food service and hospitality outlets and other service businesses. There are substantial offices such as the Broadland and South Norfolk Council, Marsh MacLennan, the Police, car dealerships, EV charging stations, trade counters, manufacturing and distribution. There are also a number of Small to Medium Sized Enterprises.
3. Figure 1 highlights the main settlement areas and the business parks.

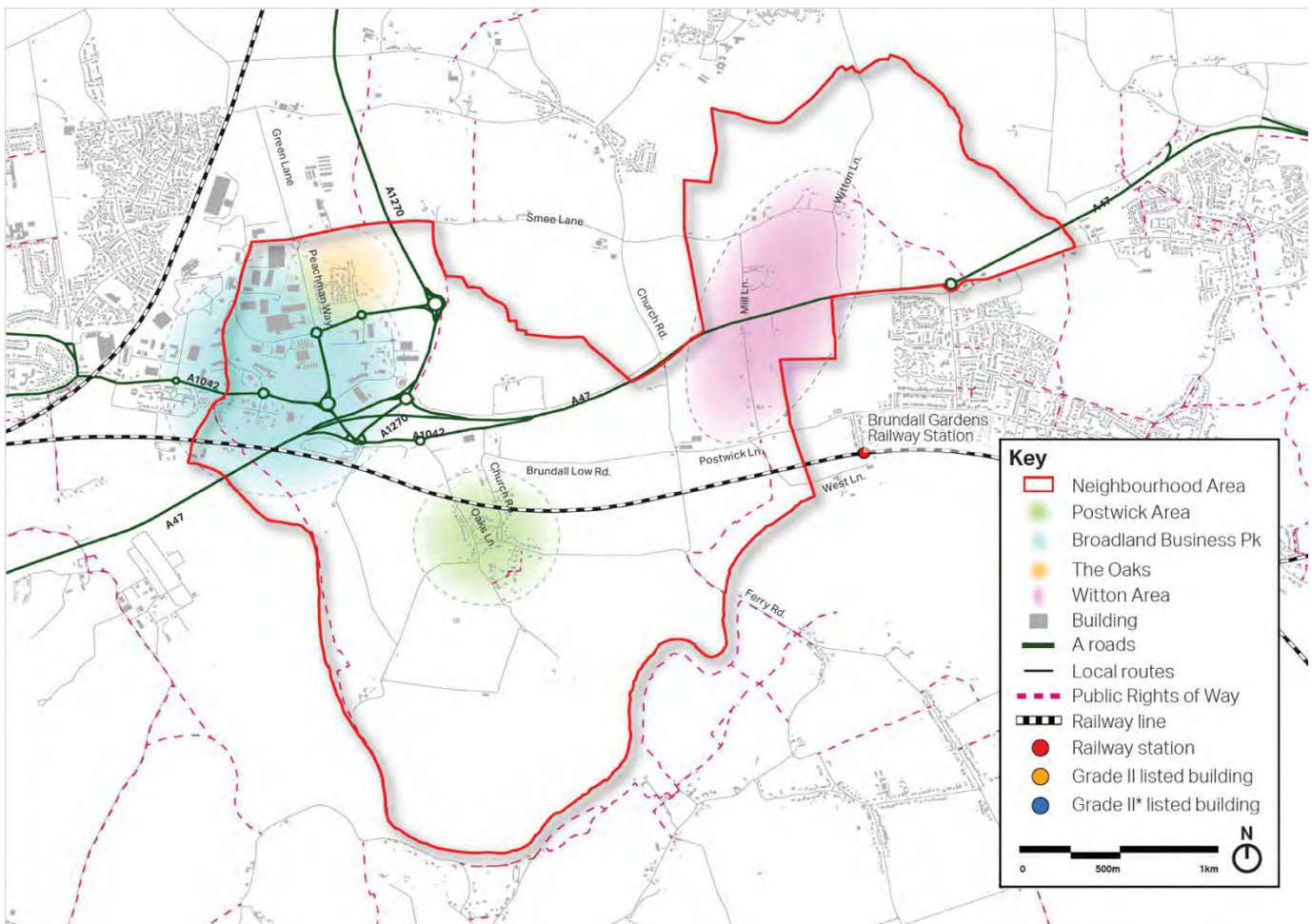


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Plan Area with key settlement and business areas (Source: AECOM Design Guidance and Codes 2024)

4. Despite this substantial development, much of it occurring in the past 20 years, a large proportion of the parish is still devoted to arable and livestock farming with only the occasional scattered dwelling. There is also a number of significant natural habitats, mainly alongside the river Yare.
5. The Broads Executive Area covers a large proportion of the parish to the south - the flood plain and marshlands of the River Yare, as shown in Figure 2. The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads is Britain's largest protected wetland and third largest inland waterway, with the equivalent status of a national park. It is a unique mosaic of gentle landscape, lakes and rivers covering a total of 303 square kilometres and the length of the navigable waterways (rivers and broads) is more than 125 miles long. The Broads is also home to some of the rarest plants and animals in the UK including the crane, bittern, and marsh harrier (birds), fennel-leaved pondweed, stoneworts (plants) and the Swallowtail butterfly and Norfolk hawker dragonfly (insects) and more¹. Whilst the parish does not include any of the European or Nationally designated wildlife sites, it still hosts landscapes and habitats that are highly valued. The Broads landscape also plays a large part in recreational and tourism activity and the interests of visitors from further afield, although direct access to this resource in Postwick is limited. It should also be noted that although there are no European designated wildlife sites within the parish, the Broads Special Area of Conservation, Broadland Ramsar and the Yare Broads and Marshes and Bramerton Pits Sites of Special Scientific Interest are immediately adjacent, across the River Yare.

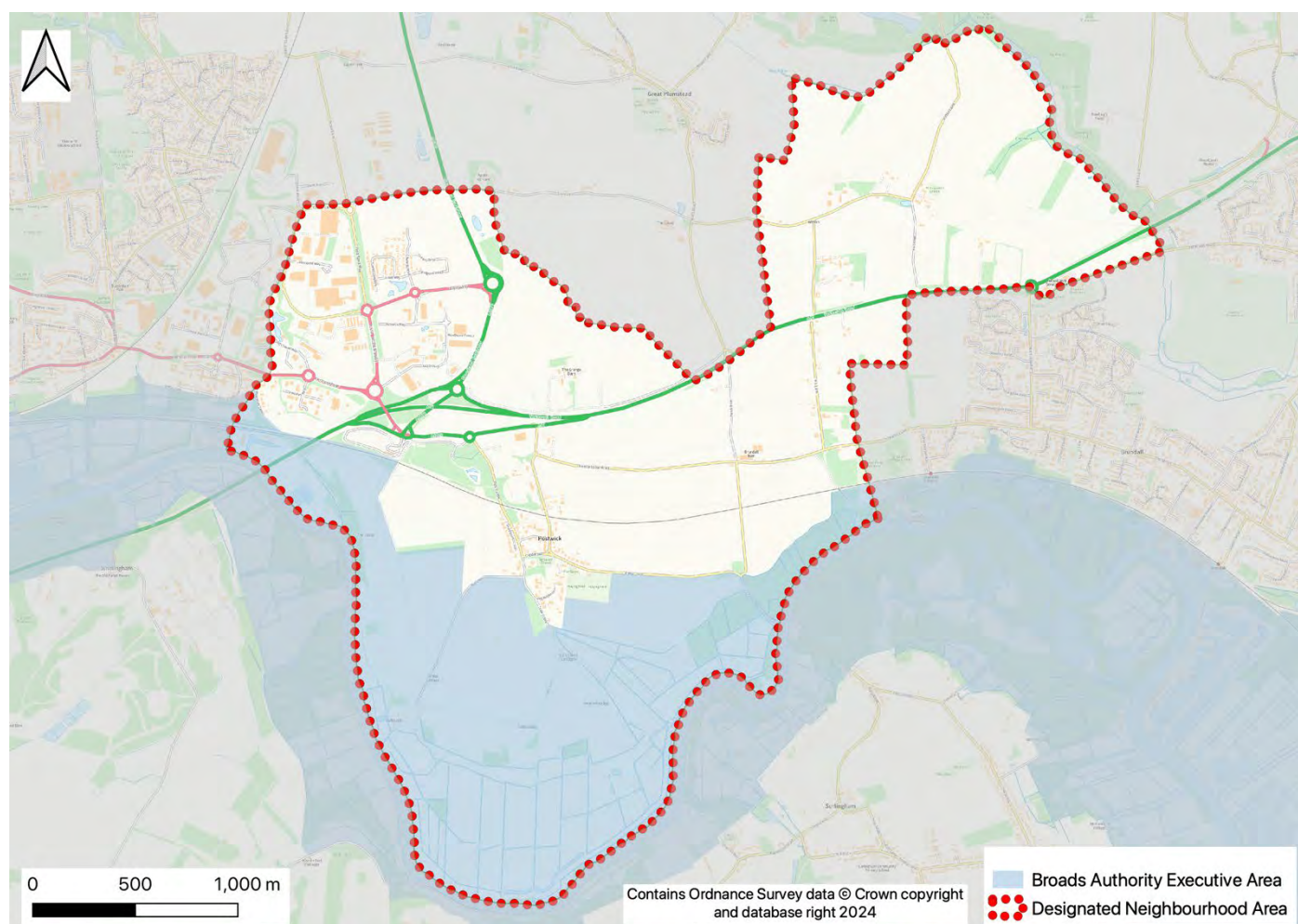


Figure 2: Designated Neighbourhood Area with Broads Authority Executive Area Shown

¹ [Facts and figures \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](https://factsandfigures.broads-authority.gov.uk/)

6. The total resident population is 406 living in 167 households according to the Census 2021², although this figure will have increased significantly and will continue to grow with the new community being built at The Oaks, which comprises over 500 new homes.
7. Connectivity within and to areas outside the parish by sustainable travel modes is relatively poor. Although the area of the parish around the business parks, and the new housing development at The Oaks, has fairly good walking, cycling and public transport connectivity to Norwich, there are improvements that could be made. There is a Park and Ride site close to Postwick Village, which provides bus access into the city. There is a permissive path that connects residents of the village to the Park and Ride site. Beyond this, there are no bus services that currently serve Postwick Village or Witton, and footway/cycle links are limited. Ninety-five percent of households own at least one car, with 70% owning 2 or more.
8. This Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity for the residents of Postwick with Witton to shape future development of the parish. The plan identifies a shared vision and objectives for the area and a series of planning policies that will help move the parish towards this. The plan also contains a number of community actions that are not planning related but capture the parish's collective ambitions and activities that will be undertaken by the Parish Council and local residents.
9. Connectivity is a key constraint within the parish, with the A47 and existence of the River Yare being key barriers to accessibility on foot or by bike. Policies within the plan seek to promote ways to overcome this constraint and create safer routes for walking and cycling that connect key centres of population with services, employment and the countryside. A further consideration important to residents is balancing the major growth taking place, around Broadland Business Park and Norwich, with preserving the existing character of the smaller villages of Postwick and Witton.
10. Community engagement has been an important foundation for the plan, with feedback from residents throughout its development helping to identify the priorities and key issues that need to be addressed. It is recognised that mostly this was with people from Postwick Village and Witton. This is because at the time of developing the plan not many people were living in the new housing estate at The Oaks. This part of the community will grow to be a large residential area within the parish, and it is possible that the people living here will raise different issues or priorities. In recognition of this the plan will be reviewed within 2-3 years, once the new housing at The Oaks is fully occupied.
11. The plan, once made, will form part of the development plan for the area. Alongside the Greater Norwich Local Plan, Broadland Development Management Document and the Local Plan for the Broads, its policies will be used to help determine planning applications in the parish.
12. Although this document contains the strategy and policies, it sits alongside a number of other supplementary documents which provide evidence and justification for the policies included. There is also guidance on how to interpret the Policy PW13 contained within the Postwick with Witton Design Guidance and Codes document which should be referred to by applicants and developers when developing planning proposals, including those for householder extensions. A list of the supplementary documents which support this Neighbourhood Plan includes:
 - Postwick with Witton Design Guidance and Codes 2024

² Census 2021. Population. Source: [Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS](#)

- Housing Needs Assessment 2024
- Local Green Space Assessment
- Postwick with Witton Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base Paper.

Vision

Postwick with Witton now contains a major centre of economic activity and there has been significant housing growth as part of the Greater Norwich Growth Triangle. The character of the village of Postwick and the scattered hamlet of Witton to the east of Broadland Northway and south of the A47 has seen much less change. These settlements have largely retained their rural characters, especially the area bordered by the River Yare partly within the Broads Authority area, characterised by arable farming and livestock.

The vision is to protect the rural character of Postwick village and the hamlet of Witton, whilst supporting proportional housing growth and associated community facilities at The Oaks, and appropriate economic activity within the boundaries of the existing Business Parks.

We will look to significantly improve connectivity through the delivery of new and improved public transport, walking and cycling links. These will provide better connectivity within the parish, access to essential services, employment opportunities and into the countryside for recreational benefits.

Key Development Priorities

- A. Support major planned growth and economic activity in key locations, at Broadland Business Park and as part of the Norwich growth triangle at The Oaks.
- B. Establish new and improved cycling routes between the key settlement areas and to areas outside the parish, in particular Norwich and Brundall.
- C. Improve the provision of public footpaths to enhance access to the Broads for recreational benefit.
- D. Ensure biodiversity and wildlife connectivity, particularly in key corridors of movement, is a key consideration in all planning decisions.
- E. Protect and enhance valued green spaces and the unspoiled nature of the parish around the Broads.
- F. Ensure development is designed to a high standard that is appropriate to its location.

Delivering the Key Development Priorities

13. This neighbourhood plan provides the key priorities relating to how Postwick with Witton parish grows over the next 15 years. The plan is structured according to these key priorities with individual more detailed policies included to help guide development decisions.
14. PW1 is overarching and encourages developers to consider how the priorities for the area have been considered when developing planning applications, and how they will be achieved through the development. Ideally proposals should be aiming to support achievement of the priorities and move the parish forward towards its vision. The policy aims to be proportionate. It is recognised that not all proposals will be able to support delivery of each of the priorities. However, even householder applications and small-scale development of one or two dwellings can still achieve a high standard of design, and should demonstrate this within a short covering statement that accompanies the planning application.
15. Of particular importance are the priorities of supporting planned growth and economic activities in key locations and ensuring that biodiversity and wildlife connectivity is a key consideration.

Policy PW1: Key considerations for all development proposals in Postwick with Witton

All development proposals should consider at an early stage how they can support achievement of some or all of the key priorities for Postwick with Witton. These include:

- Supporting major planned growth and economic activity in key locations, at Broadland Business Park and as part of the Norwich growth triangle at The Oaks.
- Establishing new and improved walking and cycling routes between the key settlement areas and to areas outside the parish, in particular Norwich and Brundall.
- Improving the provision of public footpaths to enhance access to the Broads for recreational benefit.
- Ensuring biodiversity and wildlife connectivity, particularly in key corridors of movement, is a key consideration in all planning decisions.
- Protecting and enhancing valued green spaces and the unspoiled nature of the parish around the Broads.
- Ensuring development is designed to a high standard that is appropriate to its location, in accordance with Policy PW13 and the Postwick with Witton Design Guidance and Codes.

Applications should demonstrate how these priorities have influenced development of the proposal within a covering statement, Design and Access Statement or Planning Statement.

Priority A: Support major planned growth and economic activity in key locations, at Broadland Business Park and as part of the Norwich growth triangle at The Oaks

Policy Context

16. Postwick and Witton is within the Norwich Policy Area (NPA), which is the focus for major growth and development in the Greater Norwich area. Whilst there are no allocations for Postwick village in the current Greater Norwich Local Plan, or in the Local Plan for the Broads, the north-west of the parish is part of The Growth Triangle, see Figure 3. This area is north of the A1042 around Peachman Way, Smee Lane and east of Green Lane. 520 new homes and public open spaces are planned for this area alongside the provision for one or more of the following, a new school and creche, community hall, day nursery, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, a continuing care retirement community and nursing home. The number of new homes will be significant in comparison to the 167 households within Postwick with Witton parish at the 2021 Census.

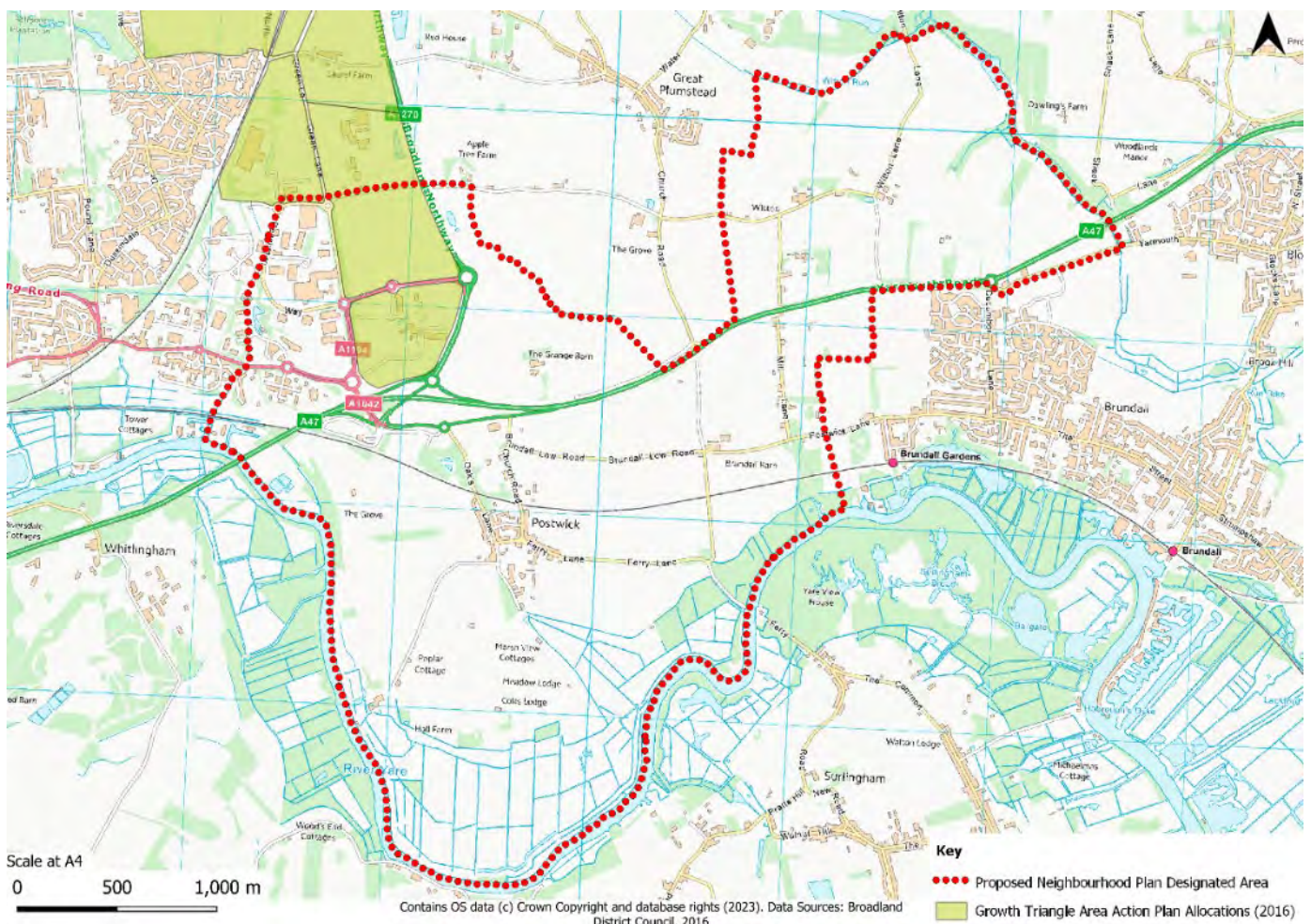


Figure 3: Norwich Growth Triangle Allocations

17. The Greater Norwich Local Plan provides a strategy for economic growth, with an emphasis on supporting continued growth and a vibrant economy by providing the right sites for sectors with the greatest economic potential. It allocates around 360 hectares of land for employment, with Broadland Business Park identified as one of the key strategic employment locations. These are identified as providing for growth of all the key sectors, with good quality infrastructure and nearby housing, either existing or planned.

Commercial Development

18. The business parks are a major centre of economic activity in the area and are identified as key employment sites in the Greater Norwich Local Plan. Further land for commercial growth is also allocated in this area. The commercial activity is centred north of the A47 and Postwick Hub Interchange. The A47 therefore provides a clear and natural boundary between the commercially developed areas of the parish and Postwick Village and the countryside beyond. The area south of the A47 does have some existing development, including the water treatment works, Plymouth Brethren Meeting Room and Postwick Park and Ride Site. However, this is fairly low profile in nature and has a green setting. Overall, much of the general area remains undeveloped land and has a rural open feel, which creates a transitional feel to the countryside. It is accepted that part of this area was used as a temporary construction site when building the Norwich Northern Distributor Road, and remains disturbed, but there is potential for this to be returned to its natural state through the reinstatement of trees, hedgerow and meadow. Feedback from residents indicates that they feel commercial development should continue to be focused north of the A47 and west of Broadland Northway.
19. Although there is a range of viable employment locations within the area north of the A47, proposals have recently come forward outside of this area. Such proposals south of the A47 have the potential to have a detrimental impact on the landscape character of the area. Given the slightly elevated position of land directly south of the A47 this is particularly the case for large scale proposals involving larger or tall built units. Proposals in this area would also have an impact on local traffic using the A1042, including residents of Postwick Village. In addition, there will inevitably be a lighting and noise impact of proposals south of the A47, with development in this location effectively suburbanising the area. Any proposal that is operational beyond daylight hours will impact on the nocturnal environment and create additional light pollution.
20. Residents would like to retain this divide to protect the tranquillity of the village and Broads area. Despite its proximity to the business parks and major transport network, the village retains its peaceful countryside feel.

Policy PW2: Commercial Growth in Postwick with Witton

Proposals for commercial development within existing, allocated key employment locations identified within the Greater Norwich Local Plan are supported in line with relevant policy.

To retain the setting and tranquillity of Postwick Village, Witton and the Broads, proposals for commercial development south of the A47 will not be supported where there are employment sites available within the designed employment locations identified within the Greater Norwich Local Plan. Any proposals that come forward under these circumstances will need to demonstrate how the design (including lighting – see Policy PW13), layout and scale conserves and enhances landscape features. Applications will need to be accompanied by a landscape and visual assessment (or landscape and visual impact assessment) to demonstrate the anticipated landscape and visual effects will not have a significant impact on the landscape character of the area.

Residential Development

21. In accordance with the local plan allocation (GT11: Land East of Broadland Business Park), permission has been granted for 520 new homes and social infrastructure on land south of

Smee Lane. This development falls entirely within Postwick parish and is known as The Oaks. It is part of the Norwich Growth Triangle.

22. Full planning permission was granted for phases 1 and 2 of the development in 2018 which included 315 dwellings. A proportion of the homes have been built and are now occupied, with the remaining currently under construction.
23. At the time of writing, an application detailing the appearance, layout, landscaping and scale for the construction for the remaining 205 dwellings, alongside new areas of public open space, landscaping, drainage and associated infrastructure is being considered by Broadland District Council. It is a key priority for the community that the social infrastructure associated with the site allocation within the local plan is delivered to support the planned housing growth. This can be achieved in a phased manner, but it is considered essential to support sustainable growth, particularly given the constraints identified in walking and cycling connections both within and to areas outside of the parish. This priority is reflected in Policy PW3.

Policy PW3: Development on land south of Smee Lane

Proposals for the mixed-use development of Land South of Smee Lane will be strongly supported where they can be shown to provide a mix of housing to meet local need. Proposals need to provide social infrastructure, which includes a new school, creche, community hall and nursery, as detailed in the Growth Triangle Area Action Plan, unless it can be clearly demonstrated through a bespoke, local assessment, that these are no longer required to meet local need. Proposals need to include a phasing plan for the delivery of the social infrastructure.

Infrastructure Priorities

24. Infrastructure is usually delivered using a combination of income sources including central government funding, local authority funding and funding from development. Whilst income received from new development is critical, the primary source of funding for infrastructure improvements comes from central government.
25. In relation to developer funding, all new development is required to pay a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This is required to help fund the infrastructure needed, such as schools, transport and leisure facilities, to support new homes and businesses. The majority of CIL is pooled into the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Investment Fund, which is used to support a list of infrastructure projects, known as the Growth Programme, which have been approved annually. Development in the Broads Authority area is not subject to CIL as they have their own charging schedule.
26. Broadland District Council must pass a proportion of all CIL receipts from any development to the Parish Council, up to 15% or 25% if there is a made neighbourhood plan in place. The Parish Council must use the CIL money to provide or enhance local infrastructure, or to support anything else that addresses the demands that development places on the area. It is for individual Parish Councils to agree how the funding is allocated.
27. Figure 4 is a list of the ideas for CIL funding within the parish. These were put forward by the community when developing the neighbourhood plan, with respondents to a community survey given the opportunity to identify three priorities for infrastructure funding. Further ideas and key priorities will be developed over the course of this neighbourhood plan's implementation. This is

includes engagement with residents at The Oaks on improvements that can be delivered there. This is reflected in the list of community actions at the end of the neighbourhood plan.

Ideas for Community Infrastructure Levy Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve existing public footpaths and cycleways • Establish new public footpaths and cycleways • Tree/hedgerow planting • Replace aging equipment in the playground at the village hall • Renovate the old changing room area in the village hall • Replace failing ground source heat pump at the village hall with similar green technologies • Improve parking provision for the benefit of the village hall and cricket club • Establish a cycle hub at the village hall • EV charging points at the village hall • Public bins

Figure 4: Community Ideas for CIL Funding

28. In relation to water, in accordance with strategic planning policies, developers will need to demonstrate that there is sufficient water available to support proposed development and that adequate mains foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development. In this area Anglian Water provides water supply services. It is imperative that there is sufficient capacity or the ability through a phased approach to support new development prior to sites being occupied for use. Anglian Water, in their response to the Regulation 14 Consultation on this neighbourhood plan encourage developers to undertake pre-planning engagement at the earliest opportunity. This will allow them to assess infrastructure capacity, and any specific requirements that may be needed to deliver the proposed development, which may include sustainable points of connection to the water supply and waste water networks. This will ensure that impacts on existing communities and the environment is minimised.

Priority B: Establish new and improved cycling routes between the key settlement areas and to areas outside the parish, in particular Norwich and Brundall

Policy Context

29. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that strategic policies should make provision for infrastructure for transport, water, energy, health, education and green infrastructure. Section 9 of the framework covers transport issues, stating that transport should be considered from the earliest stages of plan making and address the potential impacts of development, take advantage of existing and proposed infrastructure and new technology to promote public transport, walking and cycling. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.
30. The Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy 4 aims to ensure the timely delivery of strategic infrastructure to support growth. The Greater Norwich Growth Programme sets out the priorities for infrastructure funding over the 5-year period 2023-28. There are a range of projects listed including those to enhance walking and cycling links. None of these are within the parish.
31. The Transport for Norwich Strategy guides development of future transport interventions and investment in and around Norwich. It sets out that the network will continue to be developed to promote public transport use in key growth areas, which includes Broadland Business Park. The Park and Ride network is considered a key component of this. Further developing the role of the Park and Ride system is also recognised within Policy 4 of the Greater Norwich Local Plan. There is a Park and Ride site located in Postwick.
32. The Greater Norwich Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was completed in 2022. It contains a cycling and walking network plan which takes account of planned growth and a prioritised programme of improvements which can be put forward for existing and future funding opportunities. The Green Route links Broadland Business Park to Norwich City Centre, with three schemes identified to create more direct access and remove barriers to cycling for example at junctions. The route lies adjacent the neighbourhood plan area.
33. To promote good local access to facilities, Policy 4 of the Greater Norwich Local Plan also sets a requirement for development to provide or support local infrastructure, services and facilities. This can be directly through providing infrastructure or land, or indirectly through financial contributions which can include providing good access to existing services and facilities.
34. The Local Plan for the Broads Policy SP8 identifies the creation of links to/from settlements and the introduction of additional cycleways as a priority for improvement. All transport schemes should be compatible with sustainability objectives and the special qualities of the Broads.

Cycle Improvements

35. The provision of safe cycle routes within the parish and to areas outside of the parish, particularly Norwich and Brundall, is a key constraint. This is primarily due to the complex layout of strategic roads, the Postwick Interchange, which needs to be navigated by any cyclist travelling to/from Norwich.

36. Cycle access from Postwick Village or the hamlet of Witton to Broadland Business Park or Norwich City Centre is generally poor. Dedicated or shared cycle routes are mostly limited to within the business parks, where there is a fairly extensive network of cycleways, see Figure 5, although these could still benefit from improvement.

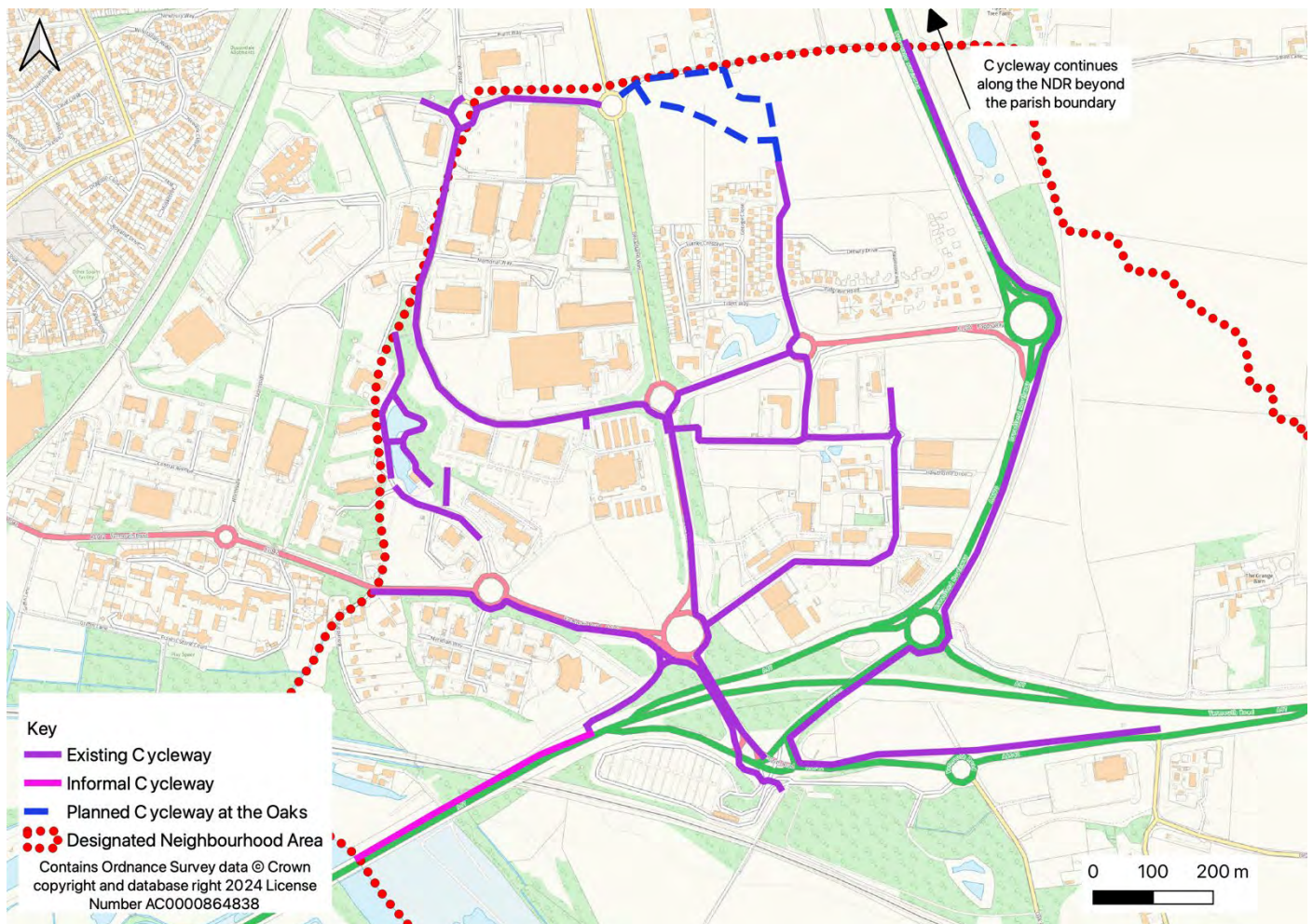


Figure 5: Cycleways at the Business Parks

37. The Broadland Northway Cycle Route (Green Route) identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Greater Norwich, links with Broadland Business Park and housing development in the growth triangle, which includes the new development at the Oaks. The LCWIP also identifies connections to the south-west, to Whitlingham Country Park as a recreational area, linking with Sustrans Cycle Route 1, as part of the Thorpe Marriott to Whitlingham Route (Red Route).
38. There is a lot of new housing being delivered in the northern part of the parish and beyond as part of the growth triangle, and it is positive to have these links and connections to promote sustainable travel options. Encouraging use of these and ensuring they are well maintained and expanded is a priority.
39. The proposed improvements within the LCWIP may result in some enhancement for those cycling to/from Norwich City Centre, however this is unlikely to provide the most direct route for those living in the parish and does not address the barriers associated with crossing the Postwick Interchange for residents of Postwick Village. Although mostly outside of the parish, a new cycle path along Yarmouth Road would provide a flatter route that is easier to navigate for those travelling to/from Broadland Business Park or Norwich city centre.

40. Postwick and Witton residents, as well as people living further east or those visiting the Business Parks from Norwich, may use an unofficial off-carriageway cycleway [that runs] along the westbound carriageway of the A47. Despite the section of path on the A47 bridge being unofficial, there are official routed cyclepaths leading to it from east and west. At present there are several barriers associated with accessing this off-carriageway route. This includes the A1270 and the need for cyclists to use the roundabout at the Postwick Interchange, or cross traffic from the A47. It should also be noted that when travelling to Norwich cyclists are travelling against the direction of traffic on the A47, and the route is fairly narrow and passing another cyclist travelling in the opposite direction can be a challenge. Just over half of respondents to a community survey circulated as part of the neighbourhood plan indicated that they use this route on a regular or occasional basis. For those who don't currently use it most indicated that safe crossing of the A roads or a segregated cycle route would encourage them to.
41. The residents of Postwick would like to see this cycle link to Norwich improved, with a formalisation of the route and extension of it to the Postwick Park and Ride site. This would also support enhanced cycle access to the business parks, connecting with existing cycle links as shown in Figure 5.
42. There are also aspirations to provide a cycle link from Postwick to Brundall via Brundall Gardens rail station. This would significantly enhance sustainable travel access into Norwich, enabling residents of Postwick village to cycle to the rail station and connect with a train. Feasibility work to upgrade a section of Postwick Footpath 3, as highlighted on the map has already been undertaken. Potential funding options are being reviewed.

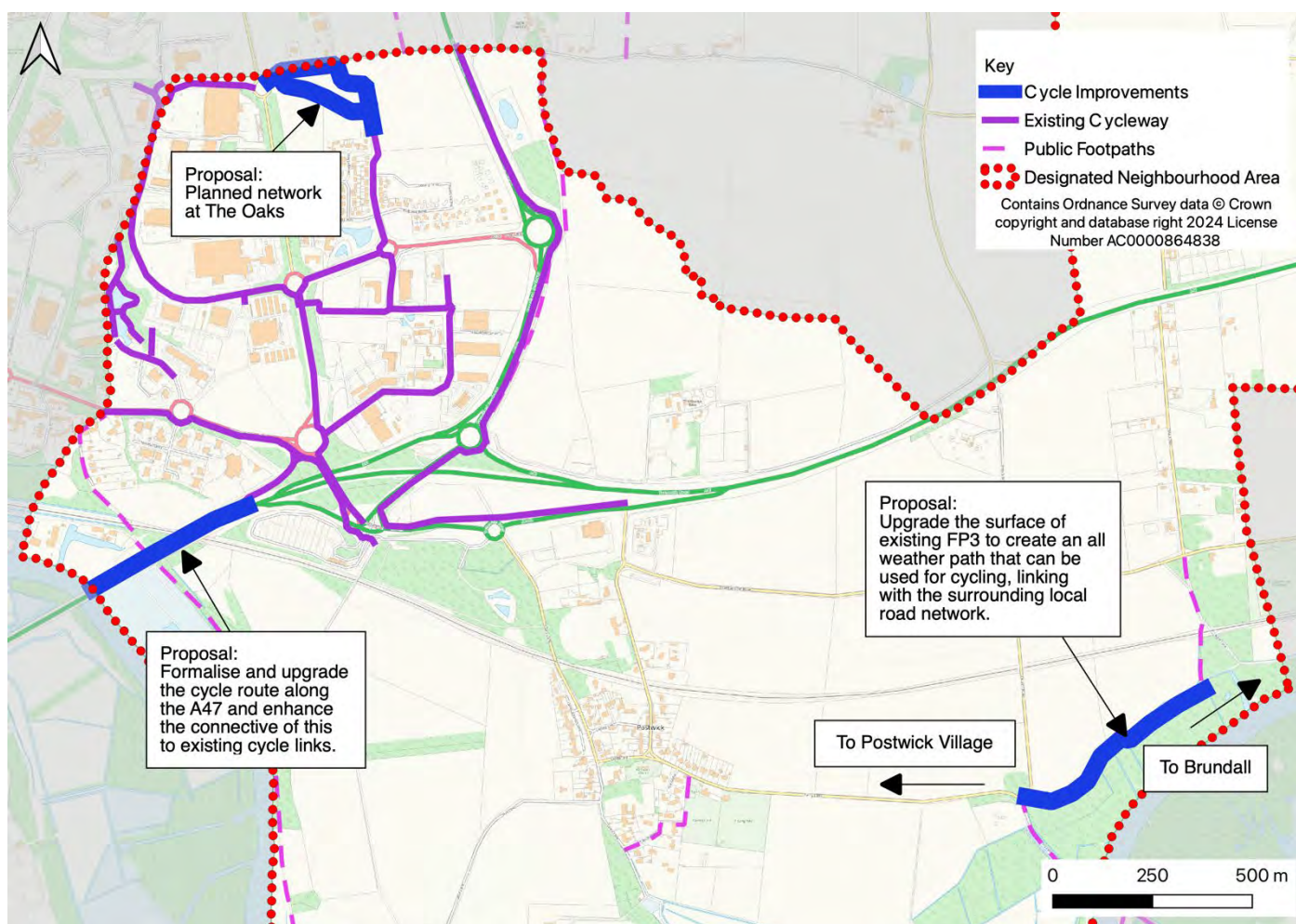


Figure 6: Priorities for Cycle Improvements

43. Figure 6 shows the two cycle links described above. These are a priority for infrastructure funding locally, with their improvement significantly enhancing cycle/sustainable travel access from Postwick, and wider from Brundall, into Norwich.
44. Leisure cycling increased in popularity during lockdown in 2021 with the lanes through Postwick and Witton hosting large numbers of cyclists. This trend has continued, and the parish would like to encourage more cycling and enhance facilities that are available. It is very common in mainland Europe for cycle hubs to pop up on popular circular or long-distance routes. Postwick in particular is on a circular route that takes in both sides of the Yare, crossing at Reedham. A hub can include technical equipment, Ebike charging, a rest area, route maps and refreshments. A range of bike spares and accessories can also be available. Policy PW4 supports proposals that will enhance cycle facilities in key locations, which could include the Postwick Village Hall or on the business parks. Improved cycle facilities at the business park would also encourage cycling to work.

Policy PW4: Cycle Routes

Support will be given to development proposals that would result in enhanced or new cycle links between the key settlement areas within the parish or links with Norwich and Brundall. This includes cycle links:

- On the business parks and northwards as part of the Broadland Cycleway

Policy PW4: Cycle Routes

- That connect The Oaks development
- Along the A47
- That enable safer crossing points to access the A47 cycle route
- Yarmouth Road
- Ferry Lane through to Brundall Gardens Rail Station

Proposals that deliver enhanced cycle facilities, such as cycle parking, Ebike charging or route maps, at key locations will be supported.

Priority C: Improve the provision of public footpaths to enhance access to the Broads for recreational benefit

Policy Context

45. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks. They should also provide attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking.
46. Policy SP8 of the Local Plan for the Broads supports improvements that introduce new footpaths that create access to and views of the waterside and the creation of links to and from settlements. Policy SP9 also supports safe recreational access to both land and water and between the water's edge and the water.
47. Part II of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act seeks to modernise the rights of way system to reflect current culture and to complement the provisions with regard to access to open countryside. The Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (2019-29) sets out the priorities for improving access to the countryside for residents and visitors. This recognises that maintaining and improving access to Norfolk's beautiful landscapes is essential for enabling people to enjoy Norfolk to the full and for the longer-term sustainability of the landscape.
48. The Broads Authority's Integrated Access Strategy aims to maintain and improve access routes, including over land and between land and water, and their connections to key visitor facilities and sustainable transport links. Enhancement to Public Rights of Way is a key component of this. Aims include the development of new access routes to improve connectivity of the existing public access network, including rights of way, permissive paths and long-distance routes.

Improving Public Footpaths

49. Within the parish there is poor pedestrian access into the countryside, to the river and neighbouring settlements due to the low number of Public Rights of Way. The A47 also creates a major physical divide within the parish. Existing footpaths are shown on Figure 7. The rights of way network is composed of many historic routes, and there have been limited improvements or new routes created within the parish in recent years. In addition to Rights of Way there are also a few permissive paths, across farmer's fields which are accessible at the discretion of the landowner.
50. It is possible to reach the River Yare at the eastern edge of the parish, via Ferry Lane. However, this is not an official footpath path and continues for a short distance until it reaches private land and the way is blocked. A path also runs from Thorpe St Andrew, and runs south along the Yare, through Postwick Grove before petering out opposite the Woods End in Bramerton. It does not connect with the Ferry Lane path, and it is a lengthy return walk for villagers to access it. This is achieved via the A47, dropping down via steps close to the railway bridge. There is also no way of crossing the river to join the more extensive network of footpaths on the opposite bank around Surlingham.

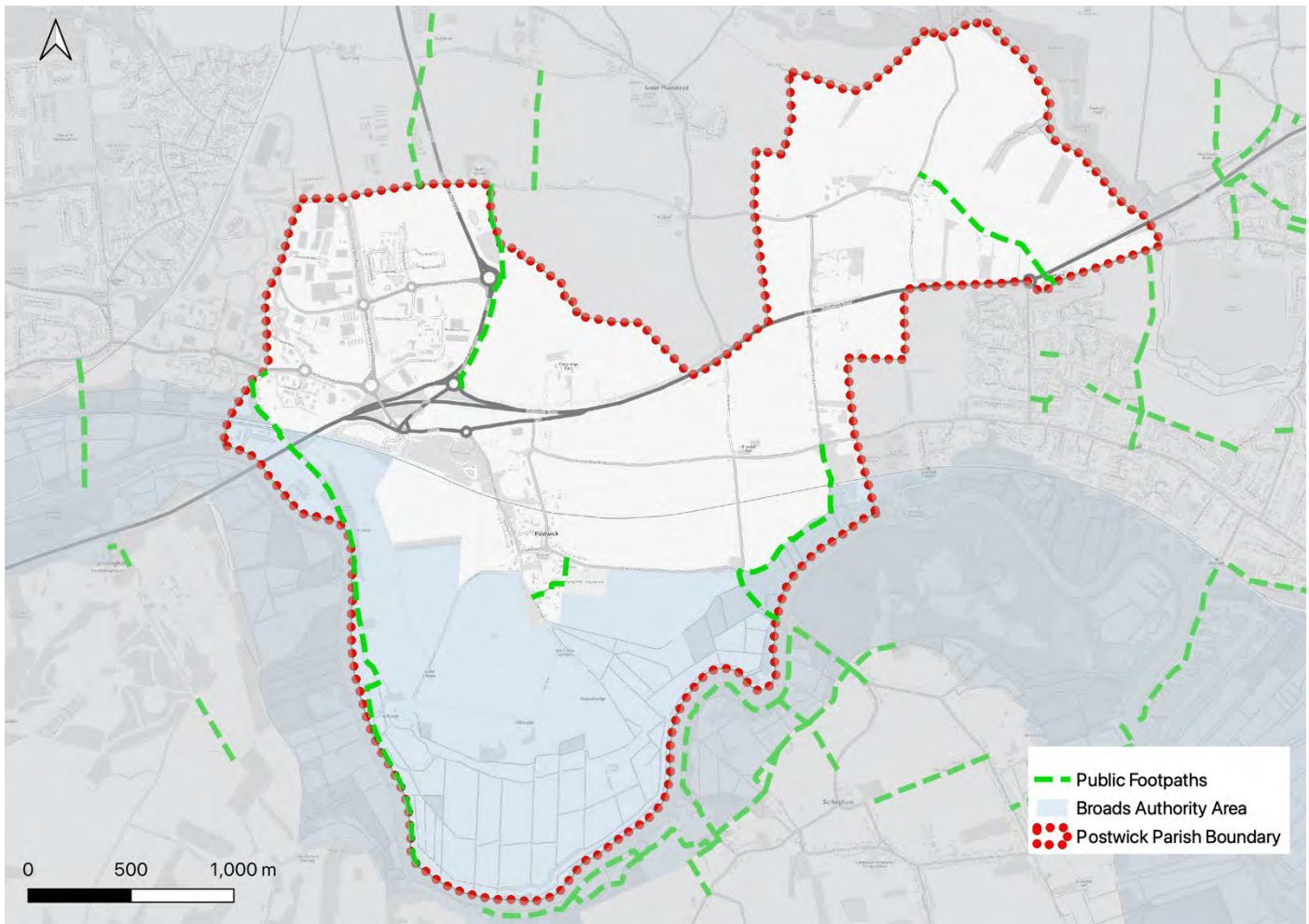
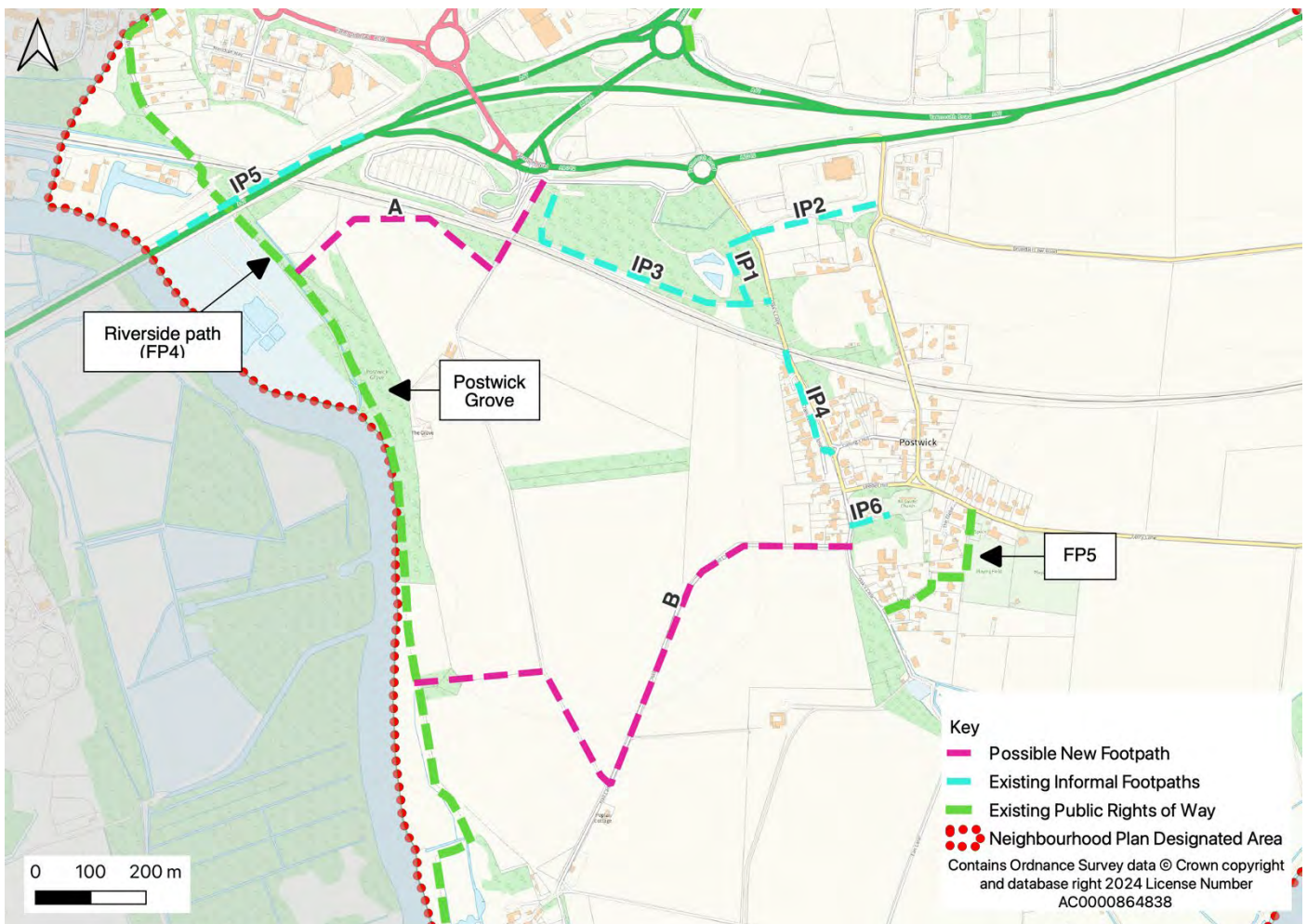


Figure 7: Map of public rights of way

51. There are also a number of informal footpaths, not registered as Public Rights of Way. These are shown and described in Figure 8, alongside possible improvements to the network. Whilst the informal footpaths are helpful and do provide greater and more convenient access, they are at the discretion of the landowner, so routes could become unavailable or change at any point.
52. Enhancing public footpath provision to improve access to the River Yare, the Broads and surrounding countryside for recreational benefits is a key priority for residents of the parish. These footpaths contribute towards people's wellbeing and also provide green corridors for wildlife within the parish. A community survey undertaken for the neighbourhood plan asked residents to select which transport improvements they would like to see delivered within the parish. New footpaths into the countryside received the most support, with 88% of respondents identifying this as a priority.
53. New footpaths ideally should be registered as Public Rights of Way to ensure they continue to be available and maintained. Figure 8 shows the new footpaths that would be particularly welcome.



IP1: A short path through recently planted woodland to the west of Oaks Lane

IP2: A permissive path south of the Plymouth Brethren Meeting Hall, linking Oaks Lane with Brundall Low Road

IP3: A footpath and cycleway established by Norfolk County Council when it leased the land over which it runs, for the purpose of creating access to the existing Park and Ride site.

IP4: An informal path created as part of the development of 12 new bungalows on Oaks Lane.

IP5: An unofficial path that is heavily used by pedestrians and cyclists to access Whitlingham Country Park and the city as well as residents to access the business park.

IP6: Long established footpath from Oaks Lane to All Saints Church

FP4: Postwick Grove Riverside Footpath as it currently exists, running through Postwick Grove, heading towards Hall Farm. The path continues along the riverside, petering out almost opposite the Woods End pub in Bramerton where it is thought a ferry enabled walkers to cross the River Yare, to continue on to Surlingham where the Ferry could return walkers on the north side.

FP5: Footpath link from Oaks Lane through to Ferry Lane, partly running along the playing field boundary

A: A possible footpath route that would enable more convenient access for residents to the riverside path (FP4) using a combination of existing tracks and a new path.

B: A second possible footpath route that would enable more convenient access to the riverside path (FP4).

Figure 8: Enhancements to Public Rights of Way that are a priority for residents

54. It is important to ensure that future development where possible plays a role in enhancing Public Rights of Way, and that it does not have a negative impact on availability of walking routes. Policy PW5 aims to provide a level of protection and encourage improvements.

Policy PW5: Protection and Enhancement of Public Rights of Way

Development proposals affecting sites on which Public Rights of Way or Informal Footpaths exist, shown in Figure 8, should protect and incorporate these routes into the scheme. Justification will be required where this is considered not possible, and appropriate diversions or new routes that are convenient for users should be provided at the expense of the developer.

In agreement with Norfolk County Council, where possible, routes should be enhanced in an appropriate and sympathetic manner, and this would be considered a planning benefit. Enhancement works would include new routes, turning permissive paths into public rights of way, improving linkages, upgrading surfaces, signage or incorporating green infrastructure into routes.

Development schemes that include proposals to establish new Public Rights of Way that improve access to the River Yare and the Broads in accordance with those depicted in Figure 8 will be considered to deliver a significant community benefit and supported in principle.

Priority D: Ensure biodiversity and wildlife connectivity, particularly in key corridors of movement, is a key consideration in all planning decisions

Policy Context

55. Biodiversity should be considered at all levels of planning. It plays an important component of the green infrastructure of a local area, along with footpaths, allotments, and green open space. Every public body, including parish councils, have a duty to conserve biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). Government guidance on this Act includes recommendations to identify local sites of importance for biodiversity.
56. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on development sites is required in legislation and the National Planning Policy Framework. Chapter 15 of the framework supports the mapping of ecological assets and networks, including for their enhancement and creation, and encourages protection of existing green open spaces and the creation of new ones. Trees are also recognised to make an important contribution to the character and quality of an area, and support climate change mitigation.
57. Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021) requires all development schemes to deliver a mandatory 10% BNG, to be maintained for a period of at least 30 years. This seeks measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Proposals must leave biodiversity in a better state than before. In England, BNG became mandatory from 12 February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. There are three ways to deliver BNG, onsite within the red line that defines the site, off-site locally with biodiversity enhanced in conjunction with nearby landowners, or through statutory credits.
58. Planning Practice Guidance states that it would be inappropriate for local plan policies to be inconsistent with the statutory framework, which sets the national approach and benchmark for BNG in planning. It also states that policies should not require BNG for types of development that are exempt. Local plans are allowed to include local biodiversity policies which require specific enhancements to support biodiversity where appropriate.
59. Policy SP6 of the Local Plan for the Broads sets out that development will protect the value and integrity of nature conservation interest and objectives of European, international, national and local nature conservation designations. Development should aim to link fragmented habitats of high wildlife value. Policy DM13 seeks to protect local nature reserves, County Wildlife Sites and priority habitat.
60. The Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy 3 relates to environmental protection and enhancement. It sets out that development proposals should enhance the natural environment by being designed to respect, conserve and enhance natural assets, avoiding harm to the natural environment, providing new or conservation or enhancement of existing green infrastructure networks and respect the landscape character. It identifies Green Infrastructure Corridors.
61. The East Broadland Green Infrastructure Project Plan identifies a number of projects that fall within the parish. This includes the Growth Triangle Green Infrastructure (GI) project, the Witton Run GI project and the West Brundall GI project. Witton Run is identified as a crucial green infrastructure corridor, with significant potential to use this corridor to increase access links

around Blofield and Brundall. The project includes footpath improvements, including access alongside Witton Run.

62. The emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy will identify opportunities and priorities for nature restoration that will benefit the area. This will include a habitat map showing where valuable areas for nature are currently located; a statement of biodiversity priorities; and a map of locations and actions showing where and how habitats can be created and connected, and how the wider environment and economy can benefit.
63. The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies should contribute to enhancing the natural environment by recognising the wider benefits from natural capital such as trees and woodland. It states that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of environments and help mitigate and adapt to climate change by providing shade and cover. Existing trees should be retained where possible and new development should take opportunities to incorporate trees in developments and guarantee appropriate measures are taken to secure long-term maintenance of newly planted trees.
64. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that specific areas of land that are demonstrably special to the local community may be protected against development through designation as Local Green Space. These are often found within the built-up area and contribute to the character of the settlement. They can vary in size, shape location, ownership and use, but such spaces will have some form of value to the community and help define the settlement character.
65. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character of the countryside. This is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework in Chapter 15.

Biodiversity

66. The southern half of the parish contains a range of habitats that are important for wildlife. Although there are no statutory designated sites within the parish, there are several designations within close proximity. This includes the Broads Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar and Special Protection Area (SPA), and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). These are identified as ecologically important habitat types and locations. The Priority Habitats identified along the southern edge of the parish, including grazing marshes and deciduous woodland, create buffers for the designated sites and enhance ecological connectivity, allowing wildlife to move. Wildlife present within the designated sites will also be present within the parish.
67. There are two County Wildlife Sites within the parish, Witton Lane and Blackwater Carr, which was notified in 2024 and is identified in figure 10 as one of the key sites of ecological interest. The wildlife sites within and adjacent to the parish are shown on Figure 9.

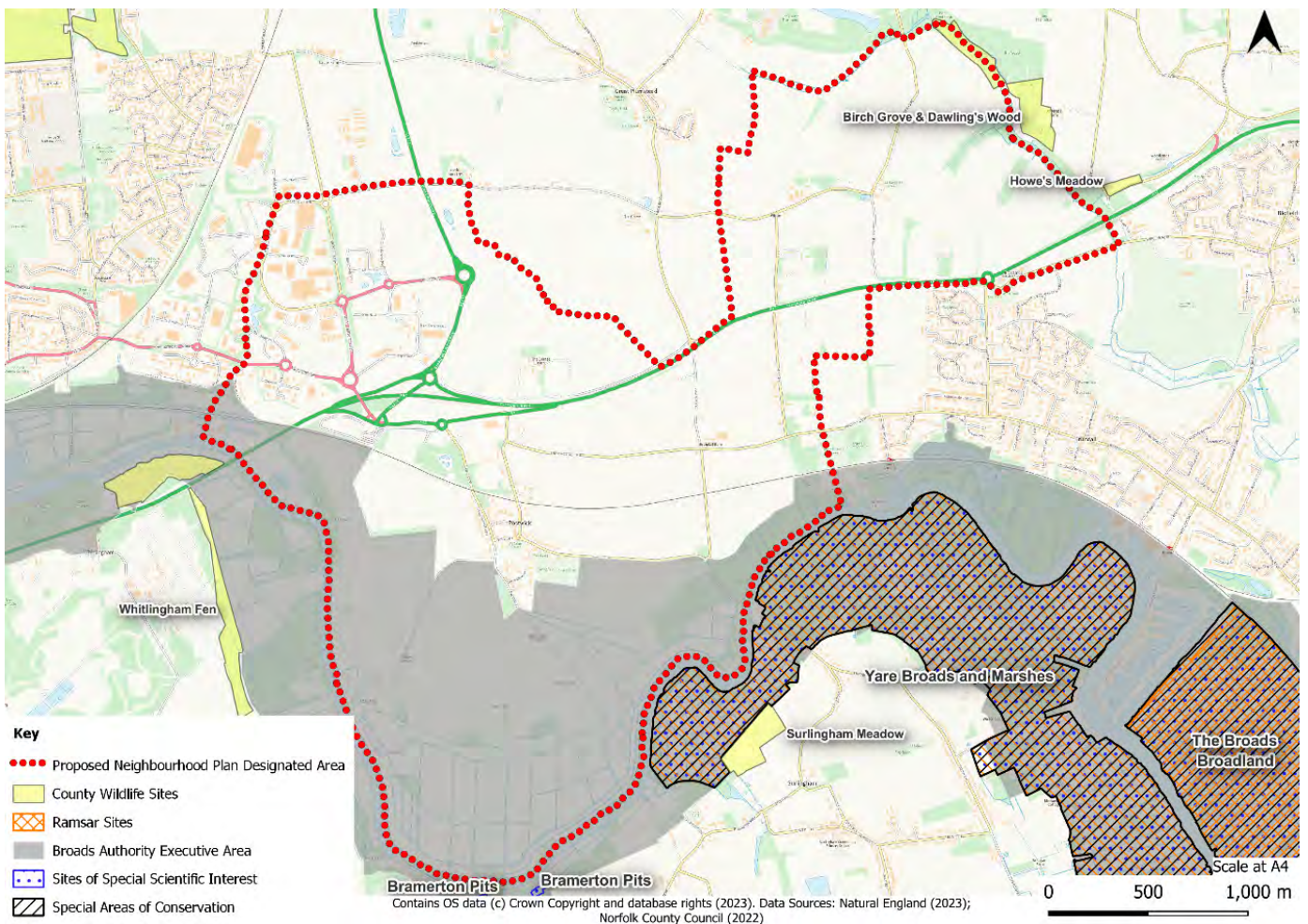


Figure 9: Wildlife Sites within and adjacent to the Parish

68. As part of developing the neighbourhood plan survey work was undertaken with an ecologist to determine the key areas of habitat and their ecological value. This involved a walk around with members of the community, advice on what could be done to better understand and document the ecology of the parish as well as enhance it.
69. The primary extent of natural green space lies to the south of the parish along the River Yare and is associated with the river itself and with the adjacent floodplain, grazing marshes and alder carr. This area is within the Broads Authority Executive area and includes:
- River Yare
 - Ferry Lane and associated river edge
 - Postwick Grove
 - The marshes
 - Blackwater Carr
70. Within Postwick village, whilst there is extensive tree cover, the areas of accessible natural green space are relatively limited as the parish outside of this area is predominantly arable land and of limited value for ecology; and the footpath network and access rights are extremely limited. The key sites of ecological interest identified within the broader parish as part of the ecology survey include land west of Oak Lane, Snowdrop Acre, woodland at the road junction west of Snowdrop Acre, All Saints Parish Churchyard, Witton Run and Memorial Garden at Broadland Business Park. A number of these spaces have the potential for enhancement. Key sites of ecological interest are noted in Figure 10.

Site	Public Access	Management	Potential for Enhancement
River Yare (shown in blue)	Limited	Broads Authority	N/A
1: Postwick Grove	Limited	Private	N/A
2: The marshes	No	Private	N/A
3: Land west of Oaks Lane	Yes	Private	Yes
4: Woodland at the road junction west of Snowdrop Acre	Yes	Private	Yes
5: Ferry Lane and associated river edge including Blackwater Carr	Yes	Broads Authority/ Private	Yes
6: Snowdrop Acre	No	Blofield and District Conservation Group	Yes
7: All Saints Parish Churchyard	Yes	Diocese	Yes
8: St Margaret's Churchyard	Yes	Diocese	Yes
9: Witton Run	Yes	Private	Yes
10: Memorial Garden	Yes	Private	Yes

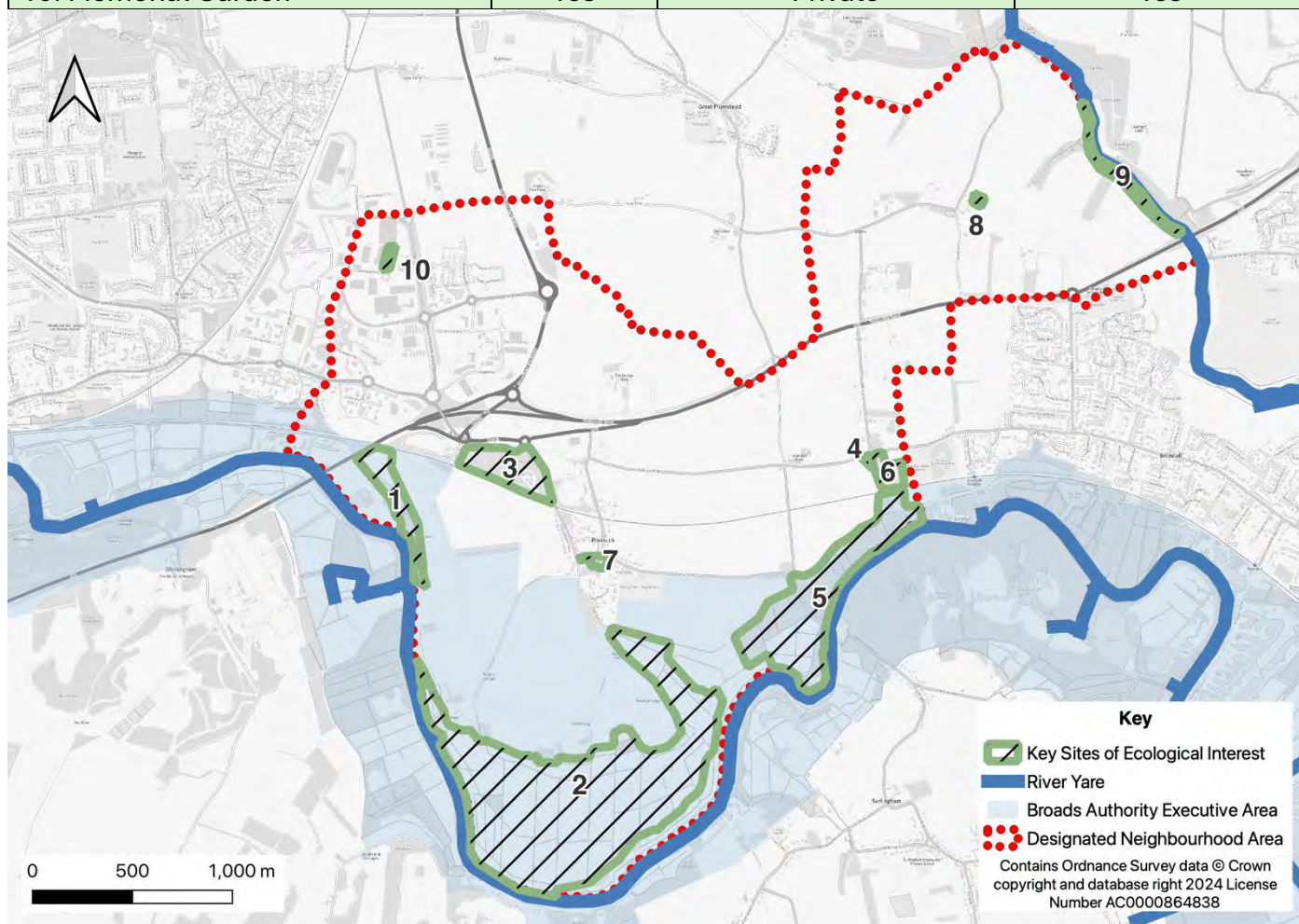


Figure 10: Key Sites of Ecological Interest

71. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure that planning proposals help to support and benefit existing habitat and wildlife that is present within the parish, with PW6 setting out locally specific actions that will add value.

Policy PW6: Biodiversity

New development proposals must take opportunities to improve the connectivity of existing habitats and create safe corridors of movement with good continuity and cover for wildlife. This should be delivered through:

- Planting new native hedgerows, or improving hedgerows through appropriate planting in gaps, to create safe corridors of movement with good continuity and cover for wildlife such as bats and small mammals.
- Planting a fruit tree in every garden on new development sites.
- Planting of new native woodlands, with these sited next to existing conservation features such as woodlands, meadows or scrub³.
- Incorporating the British Standard BS 42021:2022 of one bird box per dwelling and one bat box per four dwelling into the design of new development.
- Incorporating two hedgehog accessible gaps in each garden, which could include raised gates for discretion and tidiness.
- Incorporating green roofs, walls and screens into the design of new buildings.
- The use of green hay on sites or specific seed mixes depending on the soil type. Green hay is formed from harvested wildflowers and grasses and considered to be taken from a species rich site and transport and spread instantly on a recipient site that is low on plant species. This can be helpful for grassland restoration or recreation⁴.
- Setting aside specific areas for wildlife on development sites.
- Ensuring that measures to manage surface water are designed to deliver biodiversity benefits.
- Restoration of ghost ponds and the creation of new ponds on development sites.
- Planting of native hedgerow along site boundaries rather than the use of close board fencing.

Planting schemes must include at least 80% native plants and trees of local provenance. Non-native plants must provide ecological value, eg through following the advice provided by the Royal Horticultural Society⁵.

Major development proposals within or adjacent to the key sites of ecological interest shown on Figure 10 must provide an ecological impact assessment that demonstrate they will not have an adverse impact on these habitats and will retain or enhance these areas as part of the development process.

Establishment of Biodiversity Net Gain sites, to create enhanced areas of habitat within the parish, are supported.

³ [woodlands-for-wildlife \(norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk\)](https://www.woodlands-for-wildlife.org.uk/)

⁴ [Norfolk Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/consultations/2022/04/norfolk-farming-and-wildlife-advisory-group)

⁵ <https://www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife/plants-for-plant-dwelling-invertebrates>

Trees

72. The parish contains a significant concentration of large and old trees, especially
 - Within Postwick village itself, especially along Oaks Lane and around the church and Postwick Hall
 - Along main roads within rural sections of the parish, including at Snowdrop Acre and within Postwick Grove
 - Within Postwick Grove
 - Formal avenues of hybrid Limes Tilia within Broadland Business Park, which partly lie within the parish, associated with Victorian plantings around the former Saint Andrews Hospital and nearby roads, the remnants of which are still visible.
73. These trees have a range of functions, contributing towards biodiversity, mitigating climate change, providing amenity and historic value. For example, bats as a protected species are reliant upon these key habitat features, with mature trees important for roosting bats and trees/hedgerow corridors used by commuting bats. There are fewer older trees within the built-up area, around Broadland Business Park, but these are important to protect as these individual trees have the potential to grow, and they also add amenity value, helping to create a more attractive street scene.
74. Tree Preservation Orders exist to protect individual trees or groups of trees and woodlands to protect them. They are protected where they are thought to be significant in the landscape, important for wildlife or are under threat. Figure 11, taken from the District Council's mapping system identifies the trees with TPOs. These are mostly within Broadland Business Park, Postwick Village or along Brundall Low Road.
75. Policy PW7 seeks to protect trees and hedgerow on sites proposed for development. Where appropriate to meet Policy PW7, a Design, Access and/or Planning Statement or proportionate covering statement should demonstrate how trees and hedgerow have been considered when developing proposals. This can be used to highlight how the presence of trees or hedgerow has affected the design and layout of schemes and the choice of trees that will be planted. This includes householder applications, such as extensions, where trees are present, and their root protection area could be affected, or canopy could create shade. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment should be undertaken by a qualified professional.



Photo taken at Snowdrop Acre, Witton



Figure 11: Tree Protection Orders, source Broadland District Council Interactive Map, November 2024

Policy PW7: Trees

Tree planting is encouraged as part of all development proposals to achieve ecological connectivity and enhance the character of the settlement.

All planning applications should take account of trees and make allowance within the design and implementation for their protection and enhancement. Where trees are present on and/or adjacent to the site (within margins set out by British Standard(s) and Standing Advice) an Arboricultural Impact Assessment will be required.

Where there is an unavoidable loss of trees, the number and type of replacements should be informed by the quality and size of the removed trees. Trees must be replaced to a minimum ratio of 2:1 unless evidence is provided that demonstrates this would make the scheme unviable. It is important to ensure the right tree is planted in the right place. Replacement trees should ideally be of native British species of local provenance and be suitable for the plot size. Developers should ensure local ecological connectivity is maintained and sufficient space is made available on the development site for this unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

Green corridors

76. The key components of the ecological networks within the parish consist of core areas of habitat and key corridors. The core areas include the River Valley of the River Yare and associated grazing marshes and carr woodland and the significant concentration of woodland and old trees in and around Postwick village. Key corridors include:
- Oaks Lane and its significant concentration of old trees which runs north-south along the western edge of Postwick village;
 - The railway line running through the parish from east to west;
 - The watercourses within the parish, including Witton Run to the north east; and
 - The wooded lanes and hedgerows within the parish.
77. The ecology audit of the parish highlighted a large number of different species present. This includes barn owl, water vole, otter, hedgehog, soprano pipistrelle and barbastelle bats. There is potential to enhance these species through community action.
78. In addition to wildlife benefits, the green corridors have other important benefits for residents and visitors to the area. Some of them are publicly accessible, via public footpaths or along rural lanes, providing recreational value to residents of the parish. Spending time with nature is good for mental health and physical wellbeing and the publicly accessible corridors increase the opportunity for people to do this.
79. A number of the green spaces within the corridor are designated as Local Green Spaces in the Plan, including the wooded area west of Oak Lane, the Burial Ground at All Saints Church and Snowdrop Acre. These are defined in their own right for being demonstrably special to the local community.
80. Development proposals could introduce barriers to the movement of wildlife within a green corridor through new structures, boundary treatments, buildings and hard surfaces, redirecting water courses, adding artificial lighting or through management of habitats as part of building, such as hedge cutting. Where this is unavoidable mitigation measures should be put in place.
81. Policy PW8 identifies and protects four green corridors, as described below and shown in Figure 12.



Photo taken at the last fishing peg looking West at the River Yare bend back to Postwick marshes

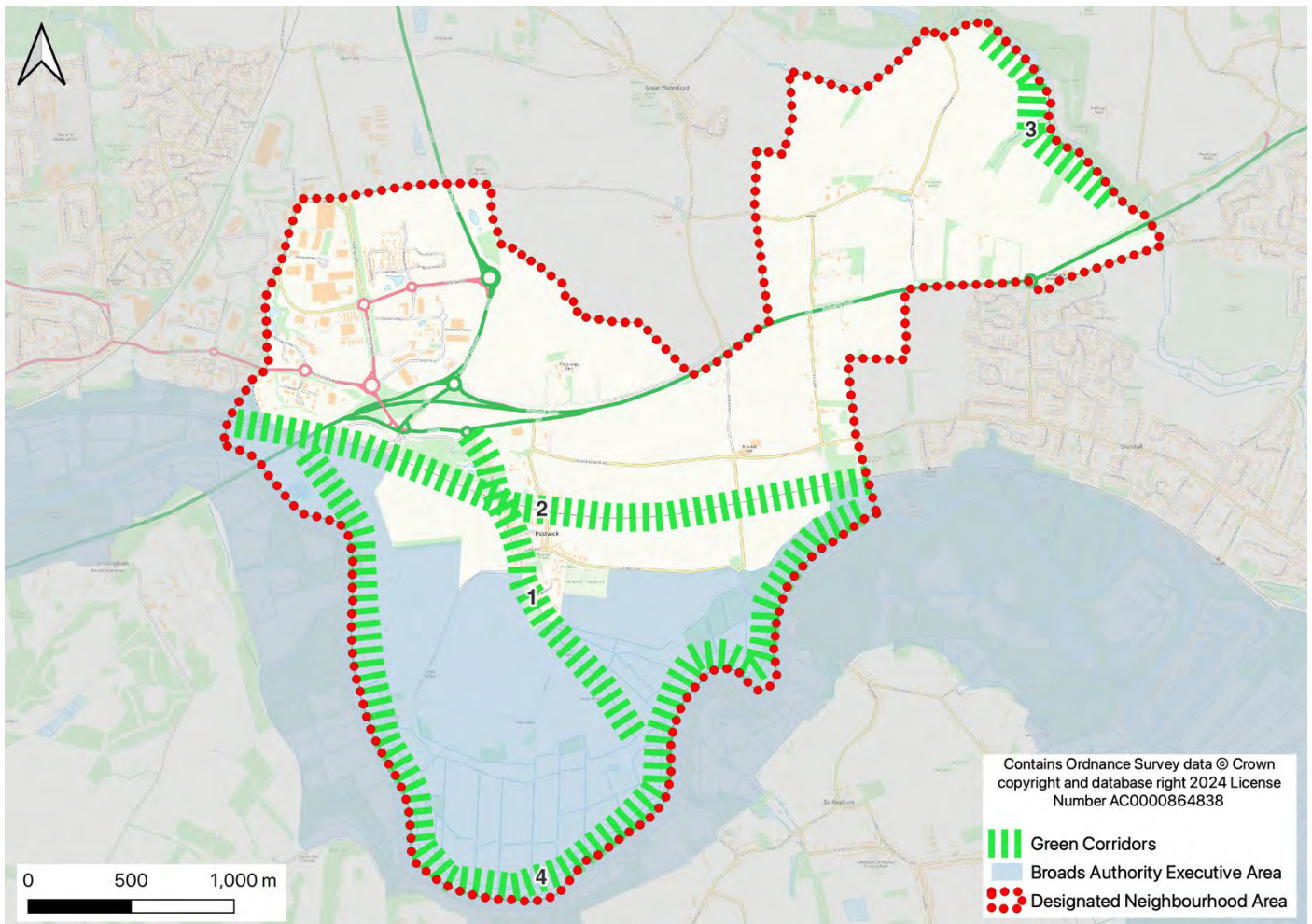


Figure 12: Green Corridors

Policy PW8: Green Corridors

The Plan identifies four green corridors identified in Figure 12. Development proposals within or adjacent to these corridors should:

- Not have a detrimental impact on the green open nature of the corridor; and
- Enhance public access to or within the corridor where possible; and
- Demonstrate how the proposal will contribute to improving habitat connectivity within the corridor; and
- Avoid introducing barriers to the movement of wildlife within the corridor and demonstrate how the proposal will incorporate suitable mitigation where this is unavoidable.

Priority E: Protect and enhance valued green spaces and the unspoiled nature of the parish around the Broads

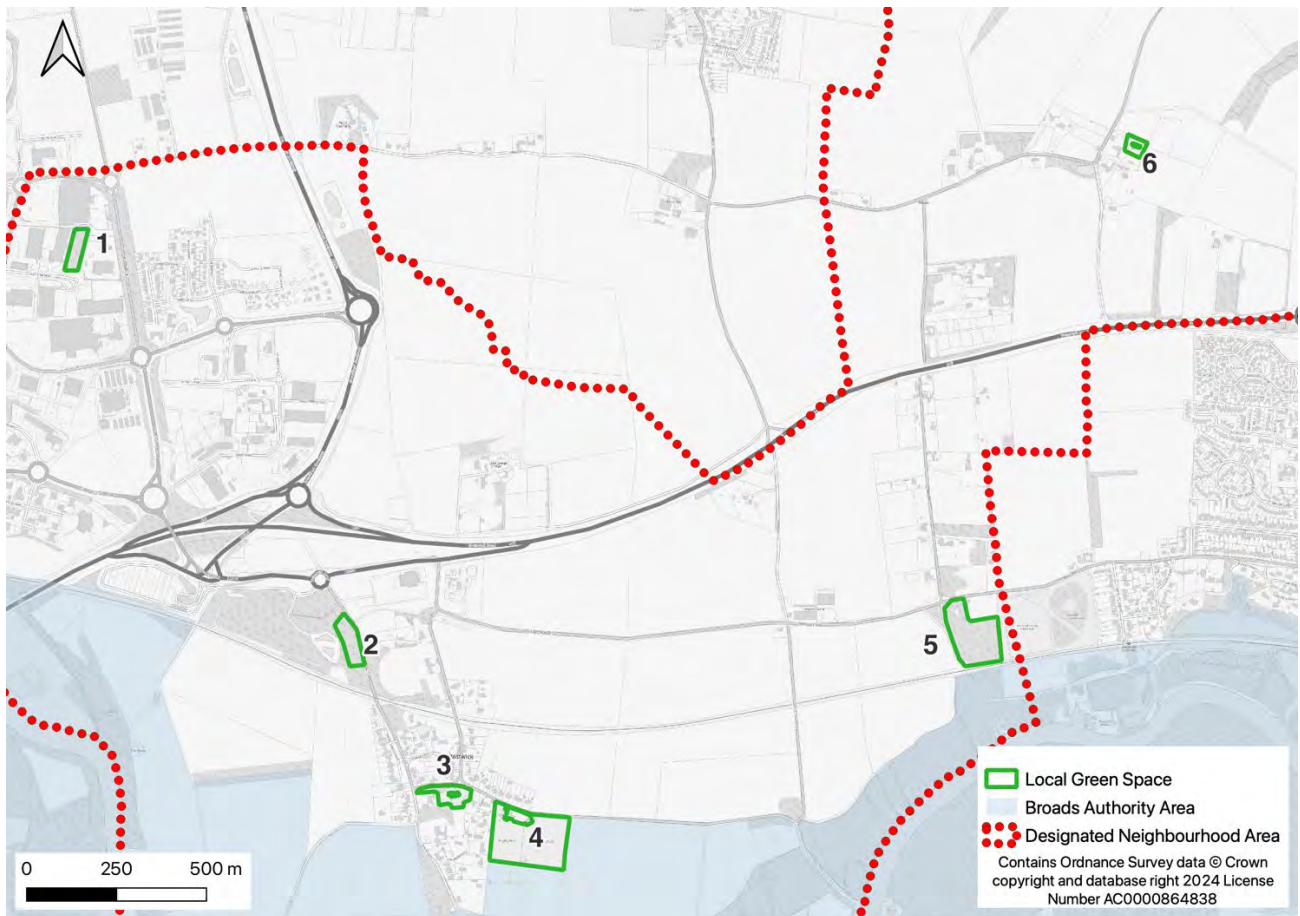
Policy Context

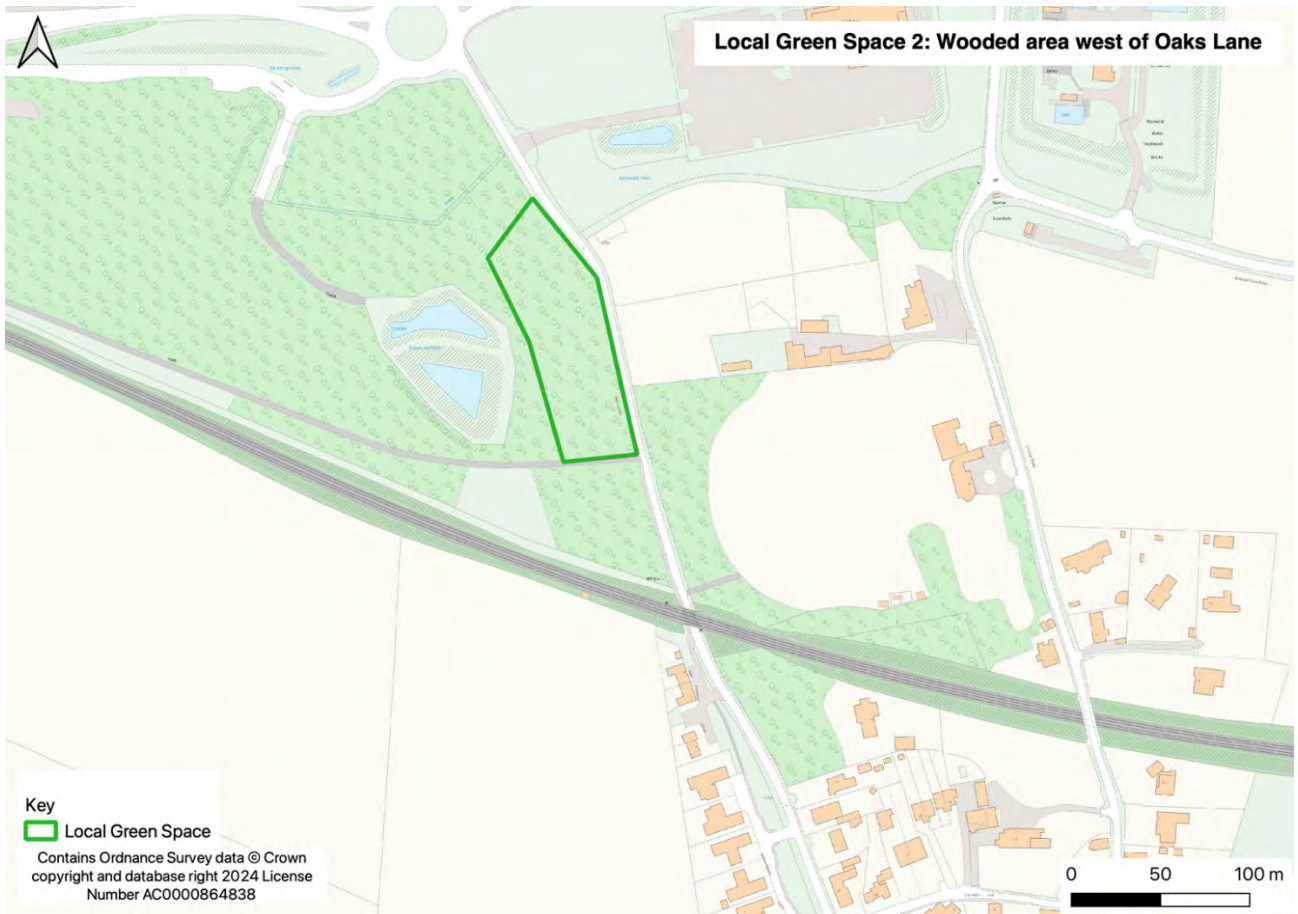
82. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character of the countryside. This is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework in Chapter 15.
83. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that specific areas of land that are demonstrably special to the local community may be protected against development through designation as Local Green Space. These are often found within the built-up area and contribute to the character of the settlement. They can vary in size, shape location, ownership and use, but such spaces will have some form of value to the community and help define the settlement character.
84. The Local Plan for the Broads Policy SP7 requires development proposals to ensure that the location or intensity of the use or activity is appropriate to the character and appearance of the Broads. DM16 requires proposals to demonstrate how they have been informed by the Broads Landscape Character Assessment and appropriate site-based investigations. The design, layout and scale conserves and enhances landscape features that are worthy of retention and that contribute positively and typify the traditional characteristics of the area. Development proposals that have an adverse impact on the character of the immediate or wider landscape or the special qualities of the Broads are not permitted.
85. Policy 3 of the Greater Norwich Local Plan requires that development proposals enhance the natural environment by respecting landscape character and retaining important views and features, having regard to landscape character assessments and sensitive areas such as landscape settings, and green spaces. The importance of Broads and its setting is also identified within the policy.
86. The Broadland District Council Development Management Policies Document recognises the importance of the quality and accessibility of informal open space to communities. It requires that residential development of five dwellings or more provides at least 4 hectares of informal open space, and at least 0.16 hectares of allotments, both per 1,000 population.
87. The Local Plan for the Broads includes Policy DM22 on light pollution and dark skies. This identifies the importance of conserving and enhancing the tranquillity and dark sky experience of the Broads. Development proposals are required to address light spillage and eliminate all unnecessary forms of artificial outdoor lighting.

Local Green Space

88. Most of the parish consists of unbuilt land. There are however few areas of designated open green space. When we engaged residents, we asked them which spaces they felt were particularly important to them and why. Many green areas of the parish were identified through this process. We are seeking to protect those which are recognised as being special by a large proportion of the community and meet the national criteria for designation as Local Green Spaces. These are identified in Figure 13, described in detail in the Local Green Space assessment and summarised in Figure 14 with their reason for designation. As part of the

process of developing this Plan owners of the Local Green Spaces were contacted for their feedback. This is summarised in the Consultation Statement.





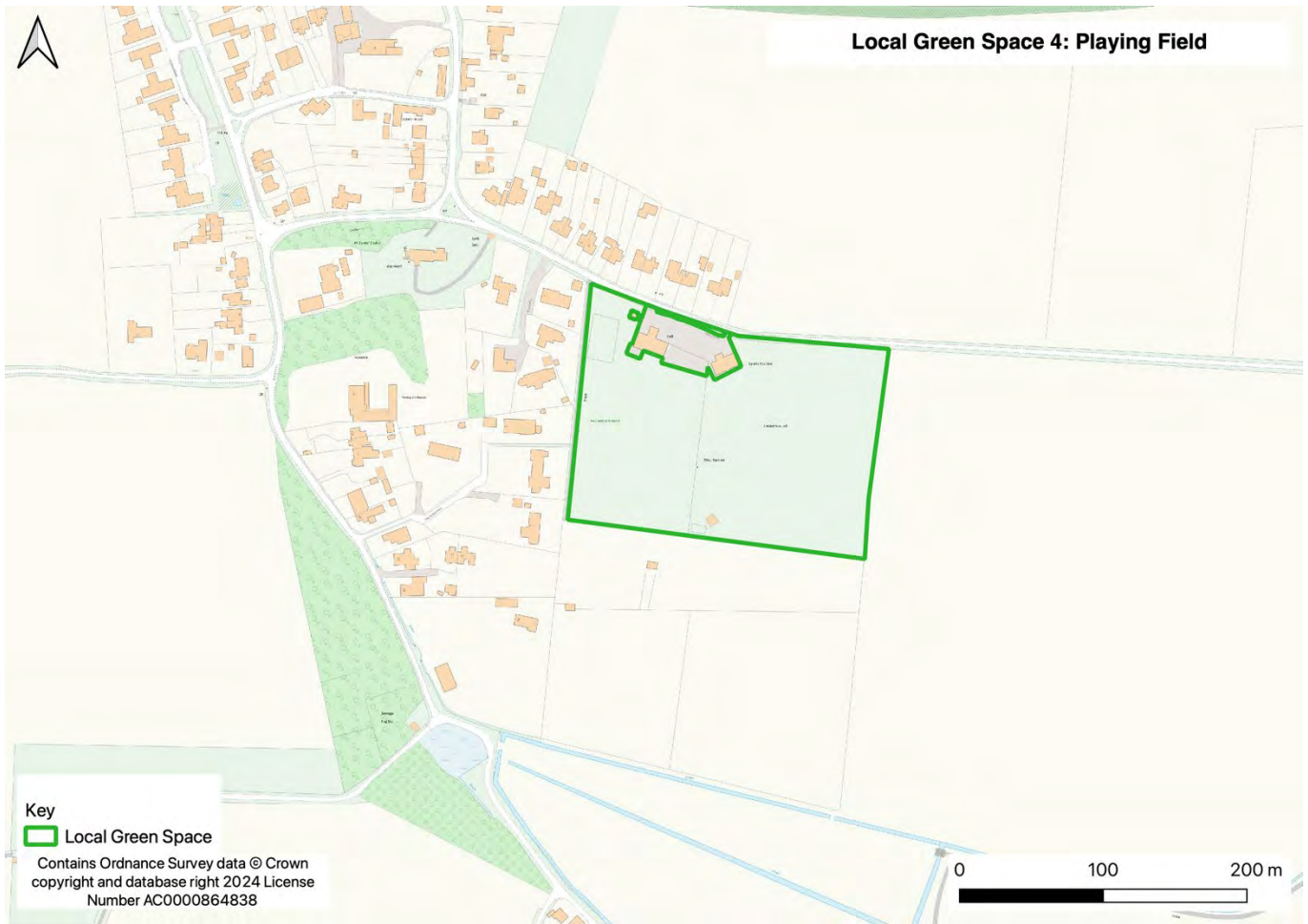




Figure 13: Local Green Spaces

LGS1: Memorial Garden, the graveyard in the middle of Broadland Business Park

This greenspace sits in the built-up part of Broadland Business Park. The area has seating and is surrounded by trees and used by residents and workers in the area. It is designated for its recreational, amenity and health and wellbeing value.



LGS2: Wooded Area, West of Oak Lane, Postwick

This is a relatively new greenspace created when the drainage works were established for the Postwick junction. There is a path that meanders through it, enabling walkers to join a permissive path up to Brundall Low Road. It is designated for its recreational and wildlife value.



LGS3: All Saints Church Burial Ground, South of Ferry Lane, Postwick

This is an open green space and burial ground for residents of the parish. The war memorial is also within the grounds. The greenspace is designation for its historical and spiritual connection for current and previous villagers.



LGS4: Playing Field South of Ferry Lane, Postwick

This greenspace is used by residents and visitors for recreational purposes. It is a large grassy area with children's play equipment and cricket grounds. It is designated for its recreational and health and wellbeing value.



LGS5: Snowdrop Acre, Witton

This greenspace is within short walking distance of properties in South Witton. The area is in the back of a garden where there is a large snowdrop field. It is designated for its historical and botanical importance to the community.



LGS6: St Margaret's Churchyard, Witton

This is an open green space and burial ground for residents of the parish. The war memorial is also within the grounds. The greenspace is designation for its historical and spiritual connection for current and previous villagers.



Figure 14: Description & photo of each Local Green Space

Policy PW9: Local Green Space

The areas listed below and shown in Figure 13 are designated as Local Green Space:

1. Memorial Garden, the graveyard in the middle of Broadland Business Park
2. Wooded Area, West of Oak Lane, Postwick
3. All Saints Church Burial Ground, South of Ferry Lane, Postwick
4. Playing Field, South of Ferry Lane, Postwick
5. Snowdrop Acre, Witton
6. St Margaret's Churchyard, Witton

Development proposals in the designated Local Green Spaces listed above will be managed in accordance with national policy for Green Belt.

Landscape Character

89. The landscape character of the parish is largely rural, although the area to the north of the A47 around the business parks is characterised by urban development. The landscape south of the A47 is dominated by the Broads and falls within the Broads National Character Area. The landscape is low-lying and has characteristic open, extensive panoramic views over drained marshland and the slow meandering rivers. Field patterns are principally defined by drainage and vertical features on the landscape can be very distinctive. The area around Witton falls within the Northeast Norfolk and Flegg National Character Area. This is a rich agricultural area with small to medium sized fields and blocks of woodland and copses. Further information is provided in the Postwick with Witton Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base Paper.

90. Some areas of the parish are more able to accommodate change than others without affecting the landscape character or setting of the area. This neighbourhood plan is concerned with protecting the rural character of the parish, ensuring that future development is sited and designed appropriately to achieve this.

Policy PW10: Landscape Character

All development proposals should help to conserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of the parish. Proposals should demonstrate how the design and layout of the development helps to retain, enhance and restore key landscape features.

Proposals that would have an adverse impact on character of the immediate or wider landscape or the special qualities of the Broads will not be supported.

Proposals adjacent to the Broads must reflect the transitional nature of this part of the parish by reinforcing hedgerow and conserving wetland areas.

Important Local Views

91. There are some specific views and vistas within Postwick with Witton parish that are of particular importance to the local community. Policy PW11 protects six such views for future enjoyment.
92. These important local views were suggested by residents as part of the neighbourhood plan survey that was circulated in January 2024. Each of the views suggested as part of the survey were reviewed by the steering group and further evidence was gathered on site visits, including photographing the views to determine whether they should be included. A shortlist of views were also displayed for comment and further discussion at a community consultation event in March 2024. These five views are particularly special to the local community.

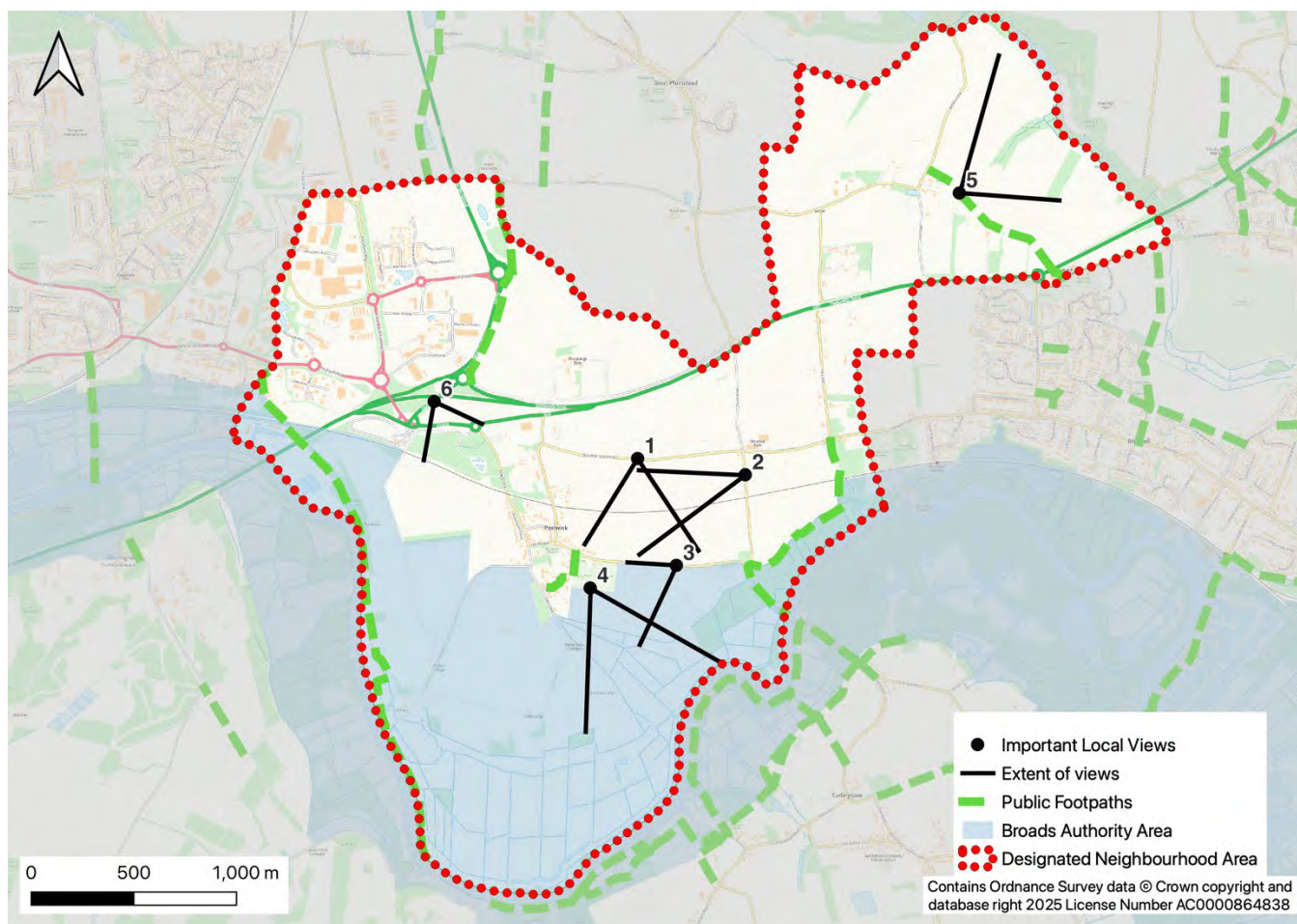


Figure 15: Important Local Views

View 1: Brundall Low Road
 looking south towards
 Surlingham



View 2: Church Road, South Witton, looking towards Postwick village



View 3: Ferry Lane looking south west towards Postwick village



View 4: From Postwick playing field looking south east



View 5: East of Witton Lane
from Postwick Footpath 1



View 6: South towards Postwick
Village from Postwick Hub



Policy PW11: Important Local Views

The following five views, shown on Figure 15 are identified as important local views:

- View 1: Brundall Low Road looking south towards Surlingham
- View 2: Church Road, South Witton, looking towards Postwick village
- View 3: Ferry Lane looking southwest towards Postwick village
- View 4: From Postwick playing field looking southeast
- View 5: East of Witton Lane, from Postwick Footpath 1
- View 6: South towards Postwick Village from Postwick Hub

Proposals located within these views should demonstrate that they are sited and designed to be of a form and scale that avoids or mitigates any harm to the view. Development proposals that would adversely affect these important local views will not be supported.

Dark Skies and Lighting

93. The existence of the A47 and development on the edges of Norwich and at Broadland Business Park have impacted upon the presence of dark skies, though looking towards the Broads the parish has very little light pollution. Residents of Postwick Village and Witton value the darkness at night and would like to see future development preserve this where possible.

Policy PW12: Lighting

All proposals within the parish must follow the mitigation hierarchy for lighting. Avoidance should be a priority to minimise unnecessary light pollution. If this is not possible, minimisation of light through optimised lighting controls and fixture selection. Finally, and only if necessary, restoration or offsetting of light pollution by implementing measures to counteract residual impacts on the environment, like using specific light wavelengths or shielding to reduce disruption to wildlife.

Proposals will need to demonstrate that they meet or exceed the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance and other relevant standards or guidance for lighting. Criteria to be considered includes:

- Fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fittings)
- Directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards)
- Avoid dusk to dawn lighting introducing timed motion detectors; and
- Use low-energy lamps such as LED, metal halide or fluorescent sources.

Development proposals within the Broads Authority area will need to comply with the relevant policy within the Local Plan for the Broads.



Photo of St Margaret's Church and war memorial

Priority F: Ensure development is designed to a high standard that is appropriate to its location.

Policy Context

94. The National Planning Policy Framework Chapter 12 on achieving well-designed places sets out that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, it creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Design guides and codes developed as part of plan making, including at a neighbourhood level such as this, are encouraged and carry weight in decision making. They should be developed with effective community engagement and reflect local aspirations for development of an area.
95. New development should add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history whilst not preventing innovation, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site and create places that are safe. This is set out in para 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
96. Design is not just about appearance, but how a place functions. The National Design Guide (2021) sets out that a well-designed place comes through making the right choices at all levels including layout, form and scale of buildings, appearance, landscape and materials.
97. The Greater Norwich Local Plan sets out in Policy 2 that development should create beautiful, well-designed places and buildings which respect the character of the local area and seek to enhance it through appropriate design, having regard to any local design guidance (including design codes).
98. In Policy GC4, the Broadland Local Plan Development Management Document requires development to achieve a high standard of design and avoid any significant detrimental impact. It sets a range of criteria that should be considered in the development of proposals.
99. Local Plan for the Broads Policy DM43 on design requires all development to be of a high design quality, integrating effectively with its surroundings, reinforcing local distinctiveness and landscape character.

Design of New Development

100. The parish has an attractive rural character, with some residential areas near to natural assets and valuable habitats including the River Yare and the Broads. There are attractive long-distance views through the open countryside and along the River Yare. High-quality examples of Norfolk vernacular exist. More modern development in Postwick village has been small scale and mostly in-keeping with the dominant local red brick and flint vernacular, taking cues from traditional building materials and architectural details. In relation to the layout of development, Postwick village is characterised by narrow roads and mostly single tracks, with few passing places and no footpaths. This requires shared use of routes between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.
101. Most buildings in Postwick village and Witton reflect a range of building shapes and styles associated with the rural Norfolk vernacular. The variety of forms and construction periods reinforce the informal character of settlements built over time. Constructions in the Broadland Business Park are larger and more urban in character.

102. Owing to the absence of any large-scale estate developments in Postwick and Witton, most buildings reflect the local traditional materials. The main construction material for homes is red brick, either used as the main material or as dressing with flint infilling. Off-white render is another common material. Some outbuildings and agricultural buildings use timber weatherboarding. Roofs are predominantly clad in red clay or blue-glazed pantiles. Boundaries are traditionally delineated by either low walls in red brick and flint or landscaped hedges.
103. Development at The Oaks, allocated as part of the Norwich Growth Triangle, is still being built out. This is a new estate development for 520 homes, 315 with full permission and 205 with outline consent, the character of which is much more urban. A master plan for the design of the development was approved by the planning authority in 2021.
104. As part of developing the Neighbourhood Plan technical design support was received from AECOM who worked with the community to develop design guidance and codes for Postwick with Witton. The document aims to offer guidance for future development that promotes good design, respects and preserves local characteristics whilst encouraging modern and innovative design. It sets a series of principles that are intended to influence the design of potential new development and inform alterations to existing properties in the parish.
105. The design guide splits the parish into ten character areas, as detailed in Figure 16 below.

Character area	Brief description
A. The Oaks	A substantial new housing area at the northern extremity of the parish. It is fully allocated, although reserved matters still need to be agreed for some of the phases. This allocation is part of the Greater Norwich Growth Triangle which will deliver at least 10,000 new homes, along with commercial and community facilities.
B. Rural Countryside (Postwick)	<p>Much of Postwick and Witton is still rural farmland. This area, on the western side of the parish seeks to identify land in Postwick that is more suitable for arable farming, located a little above the flood plain. Some parts may be grazed. It also includes a handful of scattered farmhouses, barns, cottages and other buildings, with some woodland. The Broads Authority's jurisdiction strays into this area.</p> <p>The area also includes the land between the A47 and the westbound off-slip road, part of which was used by the County Council as the compound for the construction of the Broadland Business Park and NDR. Since it was vacated, proposals have come forward for commercial use that are yet to be determined. It remains a greenfield site.</p>
C. Witton Rural Area	An area that is wholly divided by the A47, subsequently impacting connectivity and access between dwellings both north and south of the area. The area's character is similar to B, although there is little, if any marshland and no Broads Authority coverage. Area C also contains several scattered dwellings and also another small collection of homes on Mill Lane, to the south of the A47.
D. Postwick Marsh	A low-lying area that extends from the north bank of the river Yare throughout its journey through the parish. It comprises a mix of flooded carr, dykes, grazing marsh, reedbeds and woodland. Sometimes this land type extends only a few metres from the river, before the land rises. Elsewhere the land type is quite extensive.
E. Postwick village	The cluster of dwellings, village hall, All Saint's Church and the Brethren meeting room that comprises the village itself. The boundary has been drawn quite tightly.

Character area	Brief description
F. Postwick Park and Ride	One of six park and rides around Norwich. It was established over 15 years ago. It is the least well used P&R and the last to resume operation after lockdown. Its future is uncertain. As a result, the large site to the east, designated as an extension site, will not progress. The County Council is returning the land to the owner, who has no plans for development.
G. Broadland Business Park	<p>This area includes Broadland Gate, Meridian Way, Lakeside, and Bankside. It is major employment allocation serving the Greater Norwich area. It comprises a wide mix of uses including office, warehousing, hotel, retail, car dealerships, wholesale, EV charging, food service, DIY, trade counter and a few manufacturing businesses. There is a large site, the premier location, which has never been developed. Prior to the 2008 financial crash it had been expected that Aviva would continue its expansion out of the city centre. In the event, Aviva has decamped back to the city centre and the two buildings sold to Broadland/South Norfolk Council and Marsh MacLennan respectively.</p> <p>This area also contains a small cluster of dwellings, around Heath Farm that is entirely surrounded by the business park.</p>
H. Yarmouth Road Rest Area	An area located at the far eastern edge of the parish, includes a filling station, McDonald's and a proposed new charging station with solar panels.
I. Boatyard	A small area of land, accessible from Boundary Lane, with dyke access that leads to the river, which includes a few mooring sites and boatyards
J. Boundary Lane Housing	A small cluster of homes that border Thorpe St Andrew but which fall within the Neighbourhood Area.
K. Witton	A much more scattered and sparse hamlet that has no easily identified boundary. The area features a cluster of dwellings, as well as St Margaret's Church. Like Area C, this area is severely divided from other parts of Witton south of the A47.

Figure 16: Postwick with Witton Character Areas, taken from the Design Guide (AECOM 2024)

106. Policy PW13 requires future development proposals to be in accordance with the Postwick with Witton Design Guidance and Codes. Evidence of how the design codes have been considered when developing proposals should be provided through a Design and Access Statement submitted as part of any planning application.

Policy PW13: Design

Development proposals should be consistent with the design codes identified in the Postwick with Witton Design Guidance and Codes document.

As a minimum, where relevant, development proposals should provide evidence of how their design:

- a) Has soft landscaped edges where it meets the rural countryside;
- b) Incorporates green assets and conserves native trees and shrubs;
- c) Incorporates front gardens that are bordered by hedging, flowerbeds, bushes or trees to mitigate the visual impact of parked vehicles;
- d) Provide off-street parking;
- e) Provides adequate provision of visitor parking in line with Norfolk County Council's Parking Guidelines;
- f) Incorporates garages with sufficient space for storage and wheeling of bicycles and bins;
- g) Orientates buildings or extensions within the plot, along with the site topography, to maximise solar gain, while keeping a consistent frontage to the street; and
- h) Incorporates renewable energy generation, and where this includes heat pumps these are placed to the side or rear of properties to avoid visually damaging the street scene and the main, front elevation of a building.

For all new development it must be demonstrated how surface and foul water management solutions have been considered at an early stage of the planning process. Proposals that incorporate a high standard of water efficiency will generally be supported.

Extensions or modifications to buildings should retain the existing number of parking spaces on a site.

Community Actions

Community Action 1: Wildlife

The Parish Council will work with residents and local landowners to encourage the movement of wildlife through the green corridors by planting trees, hedgerow, wildflowers and replacing fencing with hedgerow where possible.

Community Action 2: Trees

A formal audit of large and old trees within the parish will take place to identify the resource present and allow an appropriate action plan to be put in place to protect them. A desktop audit for tree cover will be carried out to develop a programme of woodland and hedgerow planting. The Parish Council will also work to encourage tree and hedgerow planting within gardens and public spaces.

Community Action 3: Natural Green Space

The Parish Council will undertake an audit of natural greenspace to develop a better understanding of the key sites of ecological interest and their potential for enhancement within the parish. This will include the accessibility of such sites to determine any shortfalls in accessible natural green space and where protection is needed for existing green space where access is on an informal basis. Consideration will be given to enhancement of land west of Oak Lane for development as a formalised area of accessible natural green space. The Parish Council will review the use of Community Infrastructure Levy as a source of funding for delivering improvements.

Community Action 4: Cycle Links

The Parish Council will engage with public sector organisations to raise the importance of improving the cycle link between Postwick village and Norwich, with a view to this being included within the Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan.

Community Action 5: New Footpaths

The Parish Council will work with local landowners to take what action they can to deliver new public rights of way and cycle routes within the parish. This includes the improvements and potential new routes identified on figures 6 and 8.

Community Action 6: Community Infrastructure Levy

The Parish Council will continue to engage with residents to determine projects that can be funded through Community Infrastructure Levy.

Community Action 7: Walking connections to Witton

The Parish Council will consider how to improve accessibility by walking to/from the area of Witton that lies north of the A47.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring

107. Postwick with Witton Parish Council will take responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Plan. This will be undertaken formally on an annual basis by capturing the outcome of planning applications determined by Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority. A monitoring spreadsheet, similar to that recommended by Locality⁶ below will be used to consider how effective each policy has been in both influencing the outcome of decisions and any conditions applied to development that is permitted.

Example Spreadsheet

Policy Number	Usage in planning applications/ decisions	Issues addressed	Issues not addressed satisfactorily	Comments
Policy 1	Twice	Affordable provision within the development	Housing mix does not meet aspirations	Policy too vague on housing mix

108. The neighbourhood plan contains 7 Community Actions. The Parish Council will take responsibility for delivering and monitoring progress towards achieving these. This will be minuted at Parish Council meetings with actions reviewed on an annual basis.

Review

109. At the time of writing, as described throughout various sections of this neighbourhood plan, a large new housing estate on the edge of the parish near to the business parks, The Oaks, was being built. It is recognised that the focus of engagement which has shaped the vision, development priorities and policies in the plan was with residents of Postwick village and Witton. This is because many of the new homes at The Oaks were yet to be completed or occupied by new residents. However, this new estate once completed will be the main centre of population within the parish, and the views of these residents should equally influence development going forward. For this reason, the Parish Council commits to reviewing the neighbourhood plan once development at The Oaks is complete and fully occupied. This could be within 2-3 years.
110. The neighbourhood plan may also need to be reviewed at an appropriate time to ensure that its policies remain in general conformity with national and local plan policies. A review could be triggered should there be changes in local evidence relating to policies such as local green spaces or important local views, or where other key issues for the community arise.

⁶ [How to implement, monitor, and review your made neighbourhood plan - Locality Neighbourhood Planning](#)