



Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan

2026-2046

Submission version,
May 2026

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	4
2. National and Local Planning Policy Context	8
3. Swainsthorpe parish in 2025	11
4. How the Plan was prepared	14
5. Vision, objectives, policies and projects	18
6. POLICIES: Development and design	23
7. POLICIES: Access	31
8. POLICIES: Environment	36
9. POLICIES: Community	70
10. Implementation and monitoring	73
Appendix	76
A. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members	
B. Swainsthorpe Design Guidance and Codes (2025)	
C. Justification for Local Green Spaces	
D. Justification for Non-designated Heritage Assets	
E. Glossary	



STOP
when
lights show

Blue informational sign

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan provides a vision for the future of the Parish of Swainsthorpe up to 2046. Fundamentally, the Plan also provides a number of policies that future development must take into account which will help to ensure that the vision is achieved.
- 1.2 The Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan provides guidance that complements existing local, national and strategic planning policy. The policies in this Plan are intended to provide additional detail and subtlety that reflect the special characteristics of the village that cannot reasonably be addressed by higher level guidance.
- 1.3 The Plan has been 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 Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan has been strongly influenced by the views of the community.
- 1.4 This Neighbourhood Plan has been 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).
- 1.5 The Neighbourhood Plan is not a mechanism for stopping development, it is there to ensure that development takes place in an appropriate way for the parish. It 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 South Norfolk district) cannot feasibly deal with all of the issues particular to every town and village across three districts, whereas the Neighbourhood Plan can add value and specificity by providing additional details which reflect specific local circumstances and conditions.
- 1.6 The Neighbourhood Plan covers the civil parish of Swainsthorpe (figure 1). The Neighbourhood Area was designated in August 2024.

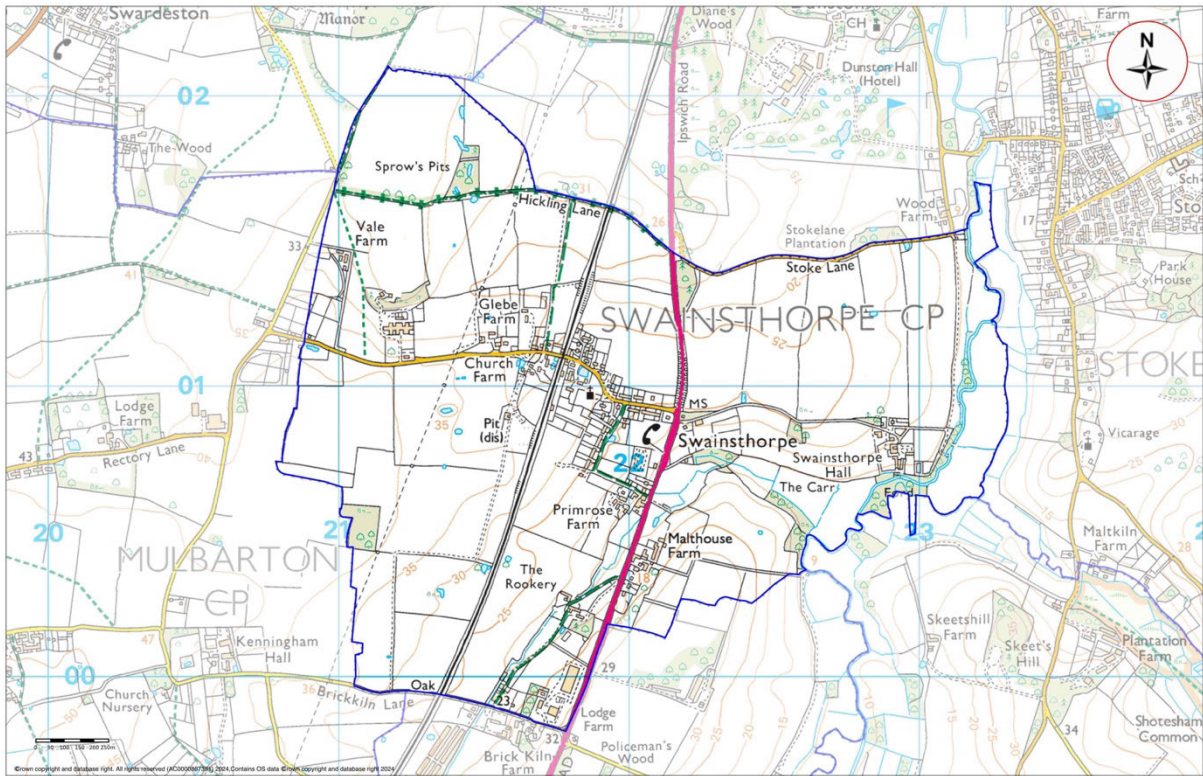


Figure 1: Swainsthorpe parish, the Neighbourhood Area (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

- 1.7 The Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan will provide the first ever statutory planning policy document specifically for the parish. The Neighbourhood Plan is concerned with the use and development of land up to 2046. Once the Plan is 'made' and comes in to force it will be used by South Norfolk District Council to determine planning applications in the parish. The Parish Council will also use it to respond to consultations on planning applications in the parish.
- 1.8 This draft of the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led plan and has been prepared by a small Steering Group consisting of a mix of Parish Councillors and local volunteers (see Appendix A for a list of Steering Group members).



Figure 2: Steering Group workshop, November 2024.

- 1.9 The aims of the planning system and those of Neighbourhood Plans are set out in guidance, and therefore by undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan, the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group aims to:
- Enable the local community to influence and shape the design and location of any new development in the parish.
 - Establish what is special about the parish of Swainsthorpe and provide for its protection and enhancement.
 - Provide a clear and locally distinctive set of policies to determine future planning applications in the parish and assist the Parish Council in responding to future consultations on applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

Supporting documents

- 1.10 In order to ensure that the policies in this plan are robust and justified, it has been necessary to create an evidence base to support the Neighbourhood Plan's policies. The Neighbourhood Plan is therefore accompanied by the following supporting documents:
- Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan Data Profile (March 2025) – baseline descriptive data providing the background to the parish.
 - Swainsthorpe Design Guidance and Codes (May 2025) – a set of illustrative design codes and design guidelines for the parish, produced by consultant AECOM¹ using Locality technical support.



Data Profile
March 2025

Figure 3: Swainsthorpe parish Data Profile, March 2025.



Figure 4:
Swainsthorpe Design
Guidance and
Codes, May 2025.

¹ AECOM stands for Architecture, Engineering, Construction, Operations, and Management - multinational infrastructure consulting.



2: National and Local Planning Policy Context

Development

- 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.

National planning policy

- 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),² 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.
- 2.3 In December 2025, the Government published a range of proposed changes to national planning policy and these were the subject of public consultation it is therefore expected that a new NPPF and appropriate additional guidance will be issued in 2026. This Neighbourhood Plan will reflect the guidance in place at the time of writing.
- 2.4 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

- 2.5 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 identifies how land is used, determining what will be built and where. South Norfolk 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

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

its replacement, the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) which was adopted in March 2024. The Greater Norwich Authorities have indicated that they will begin a review of the existing Local Plan in 2027, and a Call for Sites was made which ended in March 2026. It is therefore likely that as part of the Local Plan review that further housing allocations across Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk to meet the additional need derived from the housing methodology contained the most recent NPPF, will need to be made during the life of this Neighbourhood Plan.

- 2.6 Policy 7.4 of the GNLP indicates that the planning policy framework for villages within South Norfolk will be provided by the South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Site Allocations Local Plan (VCHAP). The VCHAP is a Local Plan document which, once adopted, will become part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk. The proposed VCHAP allocates new sites for housing in South Norfolk's villages, which will deliver the bulk of the approximately 1,200 new homes that are required to be delivered by 2038. The VCHAP is still in production and is currently at Examination Stage. The submitted VCHAP identifies Swainsthorpe as falling within a 'village cluster' with Newton Flotman. The VCHAP makes two specific housing allocations in Newton Flotman but does not make any allocations for Swainsthorpe.
- 2.7 The VCHAP defines the 'settlement limit' for Swainsthorpe, which has been drawn to include the main built form of the settlement, preventing further extension into the surrounding countryside. Due to the limited services and facilities available, the narrowness of local roads, the boundary has been drawn to allow for only very limited infill.

NORWICH

5

MILES

3. Swainsthorpe parish in 2025

- 3.1 Swainsthorpe is a rural village, located five miles south of Norwich. This small parish offers a rural setting yet in proximity to the city of Norwich. Residents responding to the Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey reiterated the value of this connection to Norwich yet enjoy the peace and support of a rural community, where light pollution is kept to a minimum and there is a deep sense of the seasons. There is an active Parish Council, The Community Charity Trust and the Parochial Church Council.

History

- 3.2 Swainsthorpe's origins can be traced back to Saxon times and is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as "Swenestorp," highlighting its longstanding presence in the Norfolk landscape. Swainsthorpe has remained agricultural, with its arable fields and hedgerows abundant with wildlife.
- 3.3 The village's historical heart is marked by St. Peter's Church, a Grade II* listed building. This medieval church, with its flint walls and distinctive round tower, stands in the centre of the village. It serves the community for religious ceremony, and is the Village Community Centre hosting events throughout the year.
- 3.4 The Vale is also a prominent feature, situated in its original spacious rural setting. Built as the Henstead Union Workhouse using locally made bricks, then converted to a hospital, it is now a series of interwoven houses, bungalows and flats, interspersed with interesting walkways. A management committee undertakes community administration and maintaining the substantial grounds.
- 3.5 The railway came in 1849. The station closed in 1955. At its peak, Swainsthorpe station employed 11 people and the journey to Norwich took 9 minutes. It was a hub for local businesses in surrounding villages and had 3 adjoining tracks for coal, sugar beet and a cattle pen. There was a Victorian Station Masters House, a station clock and Swainsthorpe sign. The signal box is now part of the North Norfolk Railway.



Figure 5: Painting of Swainsthorpe Station by Ian Gartska (with permission).

Landscape

- 3.6 Nestled in the gentle undulating countryside of South Norfolk, the parish area is 338 hectares. The land is mainly classified as agricultural grade 3 with some grade 2.
- 3.7 The part of the village east of the A140 is designated as A1 Tas Rural River Valley, much of the village West of the A140 is designated as B1 Tas tributary farmland and a small area West of the current line of pylons and South of Church Road is designated as D1 Wymondham settled plateau farmland. Of the two larger areas, A1 is considered the more distinctive and its overall landscape strategy is to conserve its peaceful rural quality. The overall landscape strategy for B1 is to maintain the open agricultural character of the landscape, conserve the ecological value of the area and protect key views, which reflects the views of residents responding to the Household Survey.
- 3.8 Within the parish there are 4 bridleways, 1 byway open to all traffic (Hickling Lane), 1 footpath and 1 permissive path, all valued and used regularly by residents.

Demographics

- 3.9 Swainsthorpe's population is approximately 392 people in 160 households. On Census Day 21st March 2021, 50.3% were male and 49.7% female. This represented an 8.9% increase from the Census of 2011. There are 15.1% children under 16 yrs and 23.8% of residents over 65yrs. Of the 96 households responding to the Household Survey, 92.6% were residents, 4% business owners and 23.2% working from home. There are 7 businesses registered within the parish.

Village amenities and facilities

- 3.10 Although Swainsthorpe is a small community, it boasts several essential amenities:
- Village Community Centre St Peter's Church – the hub for community events.
 - Village Green – play area and venue for the annual village fete.
 - Sugar Beat Eating House – popular venue for some local events.
 - Allotments – popular with gardeners of all ages.
 - Millennium Green and recycling area.
 - Jubilee Garden.
 - Transport – local bus services on A140 connect Swainsthorpe with Norwich, Long Stratton and beyond.
- 3.11 The Parish does not contain any medical or education facilities and residents are reliant on other nearby settlements for those services. It is recognised that as new housing growth occurs across South Norfolk that this will place additional pressure on those services. To ensure sustainable healthcare , education and other provision for current and future residents, the Parish

Council would support the use of appropriate developer contributions via CIL and/or S106 to support nearby services used by Swainsthorpe residents.

Challenges

- 3.12 Swainsthorpe's location south of the Norwich Substation has put the village at the centre of a number of renewable green energy projects. This has resulted in a number of proposals consuming the arable fields surrounding the village. Whilst wishing to support green energy, many residents are concerned about the effects on the village during construction, the potential loss of food production and the effects on wildlife and eco-systems. The aesthetics of a further proposed line of pylons will also spoil the landscape.
- 3.13 The current developments and proposals affecting Swainsthorpe are:
- Bloy's Grove Solar Farm – EDF.
 - Hickling Lane /A140 – Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) – EDF.
 - Stoke Lane/A140 - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) – Electric Land Ltd.
 - Hickling Lane Hall Farm - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and substation – Innova.
 - New line of pylons – west of existing pylons Norwich to Tilbury – National Grid.
 - Electricity substation at Hickling Lane.

4. How the Plan was prepared

- 4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared the Neighbourhood Plan with support from a team of independent consultants. The process of the producing the Neighbourhood Plan began in August 2024.
- 4.2 The Plan has been commissioned by Swainsthorpe Parish Council and funding has come from a central government Locality grant, a South Norfolk District Council grant and Swainsthorpe Parish Council’s own funds.

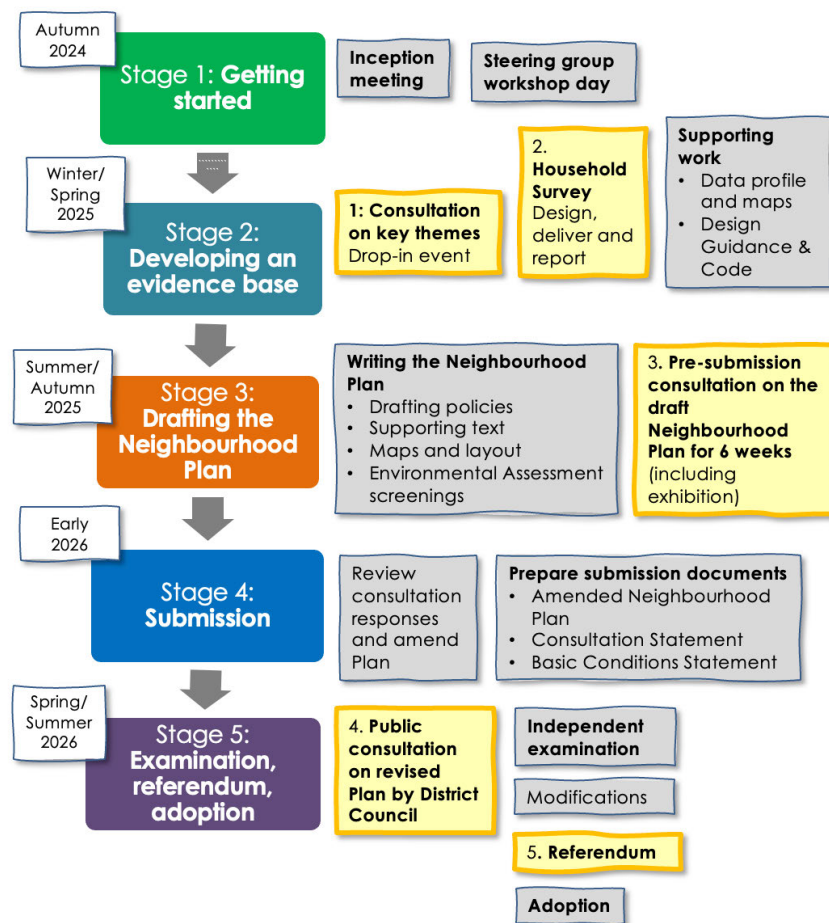


Figure 6: The process of producing the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan.

Community engagement and consultation

- 4.3 The process of preparing the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken with community engagement and consultation beginning with a key issues drop-in event in November 2024.

1. Consultation on key themes: drop-in event (3pm-8pm on Monday, 25th November 2024, St Peter's Church)

The purpose of the initial consultation event was to identify key issues and themes in the parish. Below is a summary of the key findings:

 - What is special about Swainsthorpe? – Heritage; community; location and access to Norwich; access to the countryside, walks and views; limited services; quiet and peaceful; low crime; wildlife.
 - What are the big planning issues for Swainsthorpe? – Church Road; positive comments about green projects; negative comments about green infrastructure/energy projects; traffic, speeding and rat run; becoming a suburb of Norwich; industrialisation.
 - Comments on the draft vision – broadly supportive.
 - Do you think there is a need for new housing in Swainsthorpe? – YES: 5 dots. MAY BE: 5 dots. NO: 19 dots.
 - If yes, what type of housing should there be to meet local needs? – various responses.
 - GOOD DESIGN: What does good design mean for Swainsthorpe? – materials; eco design and energy efficiency; connections; no large development; density; village; parking; in-keeping; sympathetic.
 - COMMUNITY: What do we want for Swainsthorpe? – extension to the church; allotments; events; shops; parking; access to the Vale; cycle path; sports facilities; train station; pool; activities for children; facilities for elderly.
 - BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT: What do we want for Swainsthorpe? – better internet; shop/coffee shop; communal space.
 - ACCESS IN THE PARISH: What do we want for Swainsthorpe? – cycle track on A140; cycleway to Norwich; speeding; footpath and access to the Vale; crossing of A140; more footpaths; maintenance of footpaths; dog areas; pavements; A140 crossing; decrease speed on A140; access to and from A140; parking.
 - ENVIRONMENT & WILDLIFE: What do we want for Swainsthorpe? – protect countryside, walks and views; dog mess; no more solar and battery farms; water quality; floodplain; wildlife; keep fields for farming; trees and woodland.



Figure 7: Photographs of the drop-in event, November 2024.

2. Swainsthorpe Household Survey (February/March 2025). 96 households responded out of 160 total households (Census 2021) in Swainsthorpe, a 60% response rate. Results of the Household Survey are referred to throughout the Neighbourhood Plan as important evidence for policy development.

Figure 8: Front cover to the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey.



3. Pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 14 (2nd December 2025 to 20th January 2026).
 - Following approval from the Parish Council on 12th November 2025, the draft Neighbourhood Plan was published for pre-submission consultation (from 2nd December 2025 to 20th January 2026). It was sent to statutory agencies and available for residents to comment on.
 - Consultation launched with an exhibition on 2nd December 2025, including the opportunity to complete consultation response forms. Subsequently, the documents and response forms were available at St Peter's Church and on the Parish Council website.
 - Representations were received from the statutory consultees and 35 local residents.



Figure 9: Flyer/poster for the pre-submission consultation.

Figure 10: Photographs of Pre-submission consultation exhibition, 2nd December 2025.



4. Public consultation on revised Plan by South Norfolk Council, Regulation 16.
 - Following submission of the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan, it will be checked and public consultation will be undertaken by South Norfolk Council.
 - Representations will be passed to the Independent Examiner.

5. Referendum
 Following independent examination, it is expected that the Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to referendum. Registered voters will be asked the question, 'Do you want South Norfolk Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Swainsthorpe to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'

5. Vision, objectives, policies and projects

- 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., 2046. A vision should be developed with local people and refined and adapted through consultation.
- 5.2 The draft vision for Swainsthorpe is set out below. It aims to capture the essence of what makes Swainsthorpe special, highlights it's valued characteristics, and identifies some of the key future challenges.

Vision statement

Swainsthorpe will retain and enhance the strong community spirit. The peace, tranquility and wildlife of the village will be maintained.

Any new buildings will be well designed, environmentally sustainable and respect the character of Swainsthorpe.

Positive mitigation measures will be sought to offset the impact of new energy and infrastructure projects in the parish.

There will be good footpaths, cycleways and bridleways which provide connections both within the parish and beyond, accessible for all users.

Our existing views (particularly the iconic views of St Peter's Church) and green spaces will be valued, protected and enhanced.

- 5.3 The vision is underpinned by a series of themed objectives and policies which seek to deliver the vision. The diagram below outlines the relationship.

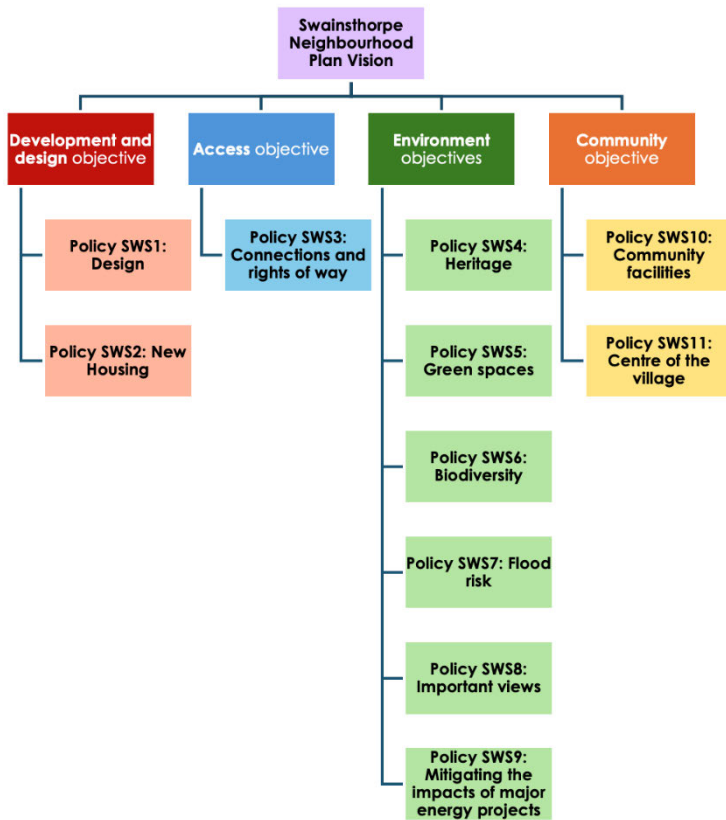


Figure 11: Structure of the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan.

Objectives

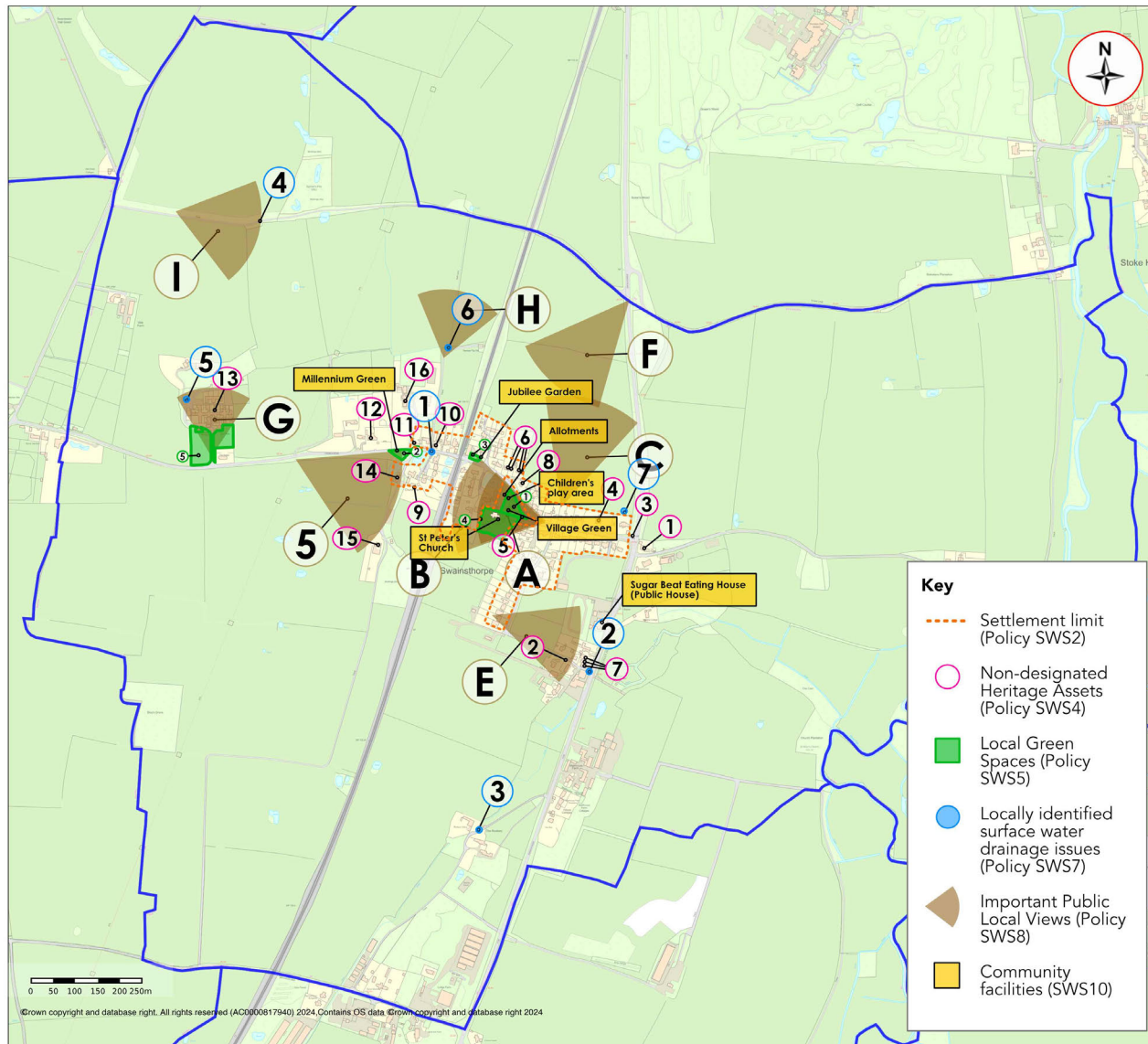
- 5.4 The objectives of the Neighborhood Plan are broad statements of intent which link to the issues that Swainsthorpe is seeking to address. They have been drafted using themes picked up through the early consultation stages .
- 5.5 The draft objectives for the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan are shown below.

Subject area	Objectives
Development and design objective	Objective 1: To support very limited infill development within the settlement boundary that is well-designed, environmentally sustainable and respects the character of Swainsthorpe.
Access objective	Objective 2: To encourage safe, convenient and accessible pedestrian, cycle, equine and vehicular access within Swainsthorpe parish and to surrounding parishes.
Environment objectives	Objective 3: To protect and enhance the heritage and natural environment of Swainsthorpe. Objective 4: To mitigate against detrimental change, including new energy and infrastructure projects.
Community objective	Objective 5: To ensure Swainsthorpe maintains social cohesion with the right facilities for the future needs of the community.

Policies

- 5.6 The vision and objectives provide the framework for developing the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Each policy relates to a particular objective under the same four themes: **Development and Design**, **Access**, **Environment** and **Community**.
- 5.7 The Neighbourhood Plan is first and foremost a land use document for planning purposes. All policies in the Plan have been derived from a series of consultation exercises and specific research which provide the justification for the selection and direction of the policies.
- 5.8 To aid interpretation for decision takers and planning applicants, each policy is accompanied with supporting text which includes the context for the theme, the views of residents, and national and local planning policy context. The supporting text precedes each of the policies.
- 5.9 The titles of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are set out below.

Subject area	Policies
Development and design policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWS1: Design • SWS2: New development
Access policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWS3: Connections and rights of way
Environment policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWS4: Heritage • SWS5: Green spaces • SWS6: Biodiversity • SWS7: Flood risk • SWS8: Important views • SWS9: Mitigating the impacts of major energy projects
Community policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWS10: Community facilities



Non-designated Heritage Assets

1. The Old School House, Ipswich Road
2. Ransome Old Smithy, Briar Lane
3. Milestone at A140/Church Road junction
4. The Old Rectory, 6 Church Road
5. New Village Sign 1996
6. 1920s Council Houses, 30-36 Church Road
7. Yew Tree Cottages, junction Briar Lane and the A140
8. Beehive Cottage, 28 Church Road
9. Church Farm, 6 Longbrooke Drive
10. Ivy House, 52 Church Road
11. Orchard Cottage, 58 Church Road
12. Violet Bank, 66 Church Road
13. The Vale, Church Road
14. The Granary, 45 Church Road
15. The Barn, 43 Church Road
16. The Croft, 60 Church Road

Local Green Spaces

1. Village Green (including children's play area)
2. Millennium Green
3. Jubilee Garden
4. Churchyard
5. Green space at The Vale

Locally identified surface water drainage issues

1. Junction of Longbrooke Drive and Church Road
2. Junction of Briar Lane and the A140
3. Bridleway to Rookery Barn
4. Hickling Lane
5. The Vale
6. Bridleway from Church Road
7. Land to rear of Church Road

Important Public Local Views

- A. St Peter's Church.
- B. Entrance to the village, looking west towards St Peter's Church from Church Road.
- C. From the end of Church View looking north across the fields.
- D. View from the A140 looking east across to the Tas Valley both from The Sugar Beat Eating House and from Briar Lane across the new vineyard.
- E. Church Farm from Church Road west of the village looking east across the fields.
- F. View from the A140 /Hickling Lane looking south-west across the fields with the outline of St Peter's Church on the horizon.
- G. View of the entrance to The Vale.
- H. View of the bridleway beside Ivy House leading to Hickling Lane.
- I. Views from Hickling Lane which runs east-west from the A140 to Gowthorpe Lane and forms part of the northern border of the Parish of Swainsthorpe.

Key

- Settlement limit (Policy SWS2)
- Non-designated Heritage Assets (Policy SWS4)
- Local Green Spaces (Policy SWS5)
- Locally identified surface water drainage issues (Policy SWS7)
- Important Public Local Views (Policy SWS8)
- Community facilities (SWS10)

Figure 12: Composite policies map (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue lined denotes parish boundary.

Community projects

5.10 The Neighbourhood Plan is principally concerned with land use planning matters. However, it is often the case that through public consultation and discussion with local stakeholders, issues emerge which are not land-use planning matters within the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, but instead are issues which need to be dealt with in a different way. These are issues of legitimate concern to local residents and it is important that when these issues are raised, they are acknowledged and the most appropriate mechanism for dealing with them is identified. Where non-Neighbourhood Plan issues have been raised, these issues can be dealt with separately by the parish as projects:

- Homeworking – faster reliable Broadband.
- Village Hall, still connected to the Church, but providing a ‘warm space’.
- Parking for events.
- Crossing the A140 safely – traffic lights suggested.
- Covered seating area also bench between the bus stop and village centre.
- Community shop.
- Measures to reduce and slow traffic through the village.
- Community composting.
- Community orchard.
- Adult and teenage outdoor trim trail/sport.
- Modern efficient heating system in St Peter’s Church.

6. POLICIES: Development and design

Objective 1: To support very limited infill development within the settlement boundary that is well-designed, environmentally sustainable and respects the character of Swainsthorpe.

The design of new development in Swainsthorpe

- 6.1 National planning policy indicates that 'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve'.
- 6.2 How well a new development is received by the local community is dependent upon how well it is considered to integrate with its surroundings. For example, does it 'respect' the character of Swainsthorpe as required by Objective 1 above. The impact on local character, layout, access, scale and parking are the most common design issues that will cause the local community concerns about any proposed new development. Being able to influence the design of a development at an early stage will increase the likelihood that proposed development in Swainsthorpe will be considered acceptable.
- 6.3 Neighbourhood Plans have a key role to play in helping to influence the designers and proposers of development at an early stage. The Plan can also help promote an understanding of what 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 achieving well-designed places and national policy describes it as 'fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve'. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.
- 6.5 Government guidance states that 'Design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics.' Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.

6.6 The Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey (February/March 2025) asked residents two specific questions regarding design of development. These were:

1. What does good building design in Swainsthorpe mean to you?
2. Are there any other design features that should be included?

6.7 The most popular answers to the first question were:

- Connecting footpaths (75.5%).
- Gardens (73.5%).
- Homes no higher than 2 storeys (68.1%).
- Outdoor community space (64.9%).

Respondents also expressed some important design preferences:

- Greater support for traditional design (45.7%) compared to modern design (5.3%). Although, slightly more support for a mixture of traditional and modern (51.1%).
- Some support for heat pumps (33%), grey water recycling (25.5%) and rainwater collection (44.7%).
- Much more support for homes no higher than 2 storeys (68.1%) compared to homes no higher than 3 storeys (6.4%).
- Slightly more support for street/pathways lighting (38.3%) compared to no streetlighting (25.5%).

6.8 Responses to the second question were more varied and can be summarised as follows:

- New building to be 'in keeping' with the existing character of the village.
- The existing village layout should be maintained.
- No new large developments in Swainsthorpe.

Design Guidance and Codes

6.9 National guidance makes it 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. They 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.

6.10 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. National guidance on this subject comes in the form of the National Design Code and the National Model Design Code. South Norfolk Council (working with Broadland District Council) is in the process of producing District Wide Design Codes which take their lead from the national guidance and are near completion at the time of writing.

- 6.11 However, as design is such a localised issue and that 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 Swainsthorpe using Locality Technical Support. The results of the Household Survey were fed into the Design Code work to ensure that local views were taken on board. Consultants AECOM completed the work in May 2025 and the work is an Appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.12 Policy SWS1 below reflects the local preferences expressed by the community and draws from the Design Code work. The policy requires that proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Area should demonstrate how the design guidance has informed the design, and how the design codes have been complied with. Where a proposal cannot comply with a code (or several) a justification must be provided. The policy applies to all forms of development not just housing.

Policy SWS1: Design

The design of all new development will reflect the local distinctiveness and character of the parish and seek to enhance its quality.

When considering proposals for new development, irrespective of scale or use, proposals must demonstrate how the design of the proposal has been developed with regard to the Character Area analysis in the Swainsthorpe Design Guidance and Codes 2025.

Proposals for new development in Swainsthorpe should accord with the following:

- a. Layout: New development must reflect the rural nature of the village and keep suitable gaps between buildings to preserve short views, as their loss would harm the village's natural, rural character. New development must maintain visual connections to the surrounding landscape and long views out of the settlement through careful consideration of site layout. (See Policy SWS8 and Views 4,5 and 8). Important views of the church must be protected. Proposals must reflect the topography of the site and maintain Swainsthorpe's open feel and rural character (See Policy SWS8 – Views 1 and 2).
- b. Building line and front gardens: Development should follow the existing informal building line (where there is a clear and obvious building line) relative to neighbouring dwellings and to the wider streetscape. The setback of new development must allow for adequate space to accommodate front garden space. All dwellings should have a clear separation between private and public realm.
- c. Scale: The height and scale of new buildings must respect the overall scale and height of adjacent buildings. Large blank facades with no openings should be avoided. The scale and design of development, including landscape screening, should not be intrusive to internal or external views. New development must be proportionate to the rural nature of the existing village, and the scale and pitch of roof design should integrate with surrounding development, whilst avoiding overly complex design.

- d. Landscaping and views: Locally important views of the church must be protected. Screening measures must be used, such as planting of trees and hedgerows, to mitigate the impact on the landscape or views of any development, including energy projects or industrial/commercial development. Any major changes to the landscape or view, which is temporary (for construction purposes) must be restored to its original or enhanced quality. Gaps between neighbouring tandem properties should be wide enough to maintain views of the countryside.
- e. Streetscape: Development must provide adequate separation distances between facing windows to ensure privacy from overlooking is maintained. Development must respect the existing surrounding context. Development should ensure that there is diversity and variety in scale and bulk informed by the building types of the surrounding context.
- f. Parking: Parking should be integrated on-plot and with parking spaces set behind the building line, preferably to the side of the plot. For narrow dwellings, where front-of-building parking is the only possible option, the development must ensure manoeuvring areas for car parking does not dominate the street frontage. Parking should not be placed in front of the ground floor windows of any habitable rooms. Car parking ports could be used for variety and should be designed to sensitively complement the surrounding dwellings, considering form, materiality and placement. On-street-parking should be avoided wherever possible, particularly within the village centre.
- g. Lighting: All external lighting should be kept minimal, at low level and at low intensity. Development proposals should demonstrate compliance with best practice guidance for avoiding artificial lighting impacts on bats.³ 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.
- h. Design features and materials: Development proposals must demonstrate that the materials used have been selected based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment and refers to the outlined Swainsthorpe material and vernacular palette. Dormer windows, whether added later or included in the original scheme, should reflect the form of the main roof and be of an appropriate and proportional size to the original building, whilst not increasing the overall height of the dwelling.
- i. Waste Storage: Where purpose-built structures to house waste and recycling bins these should not be located immediately adjacent to dwellings.
- j. Climate Change: All new development must demonstrate that it is responding to climate change and aim to meet the highest standards of energy efficiency by reducing its carbon dependency. New development should also as a minimum, meet the highest levels of water efficiency as per the policies in the adopted Local Plan.

³ <https://theilp.org.uk/resource/gn08-bats-and-artificial-lighting-pdf.html>

New housing in Swainsthorpe

- 6.13 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.
- 6.14 Swainsthorpe is identified by the strategic policies of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) as falling within a village cluster with Newton Flotman. The emerging South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (VCHAP). The cluster is envisaged to accommodate approximately 55 dwellings, however two allocations to deliver this figure have been identified in Newton Flotman and there are no specific allocations in Swainsthorpe. The VCHAP has been the subject of examination with hearings held in January 2026. The Inspector's Post Hearing Letter was received in March 2026.
- 6.15 The VCHAP contains the following description of Swainsthorpe: *"existing development is concentrated between the A140 and the Norwich/London railway line and is characterised by detached dwellings with the central focus being around the Church and its setting. This is an attractive undeveloped space in the village where development would be inappropriate. Despite recent new development the village has maintained a rural feel which has been achieved by the retention of attractive features such as ponds within the village.*
- 6.16 The settlement limit has been drawn to include the main built form of the settlement, preventing further extension into the surrounding countryside. It is acknowledged that this boundary may change through the life of this Neighbourhood Plan if it is amended through the Local Plan process. Due to the limited services and facilities available, the narrowness of local roads, the boundary has been drawn to allow for only very limited infill and therefore the level of new housing development in the parish is expected to be low. This is consistent with the results of the Household Survey in which residents made clear that they valued the existing rural character of the village, views over countryside and its community spirit.
- 6.17 It should be noted that the any new development may increase traffic crossing the existing level crossing. Given the existing risk profile of the level crossing, it is essential that any development proposals within the parish that are located near the operational railway or associated infrastructure, or which may result in increased use of the Church Road level crossing (including vehicular, pedestrian, or cycle movements), are subject to early engagement and consultation with Network Rail.

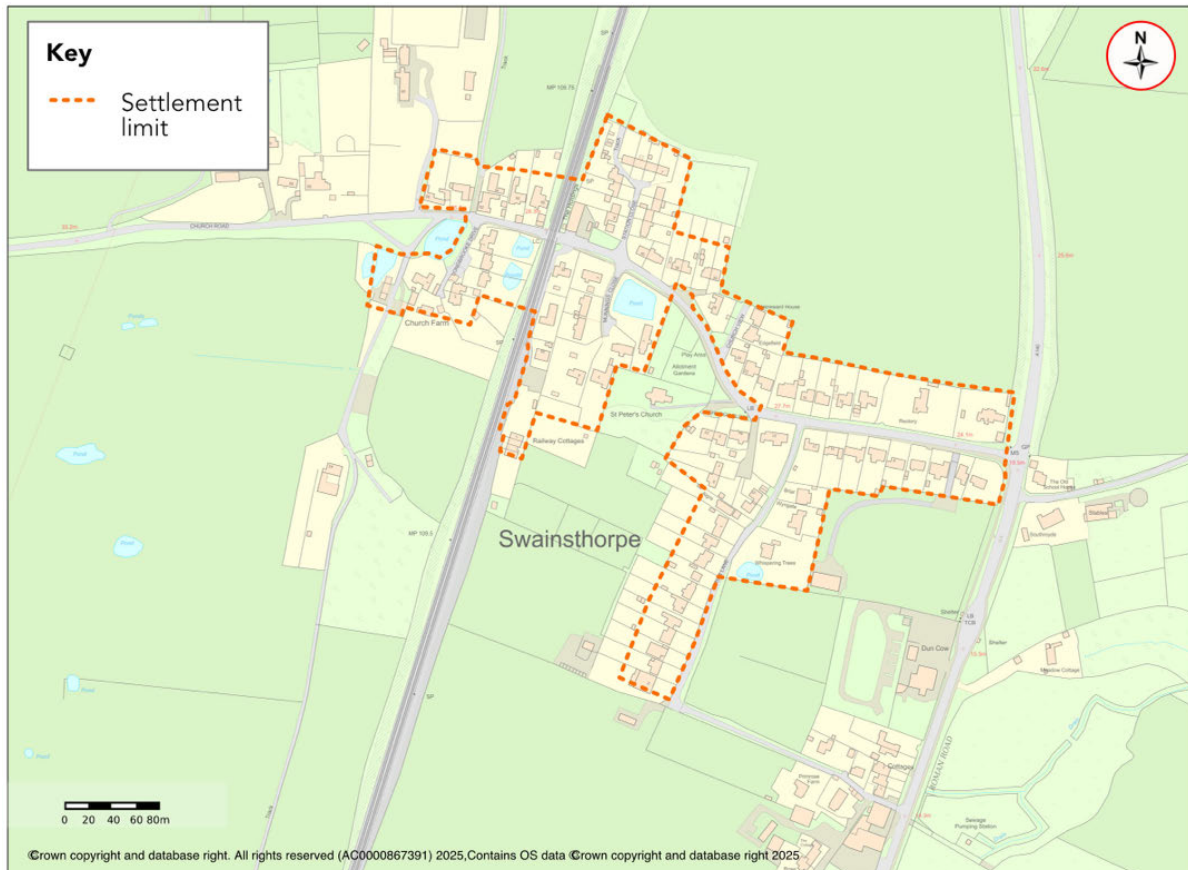


Figure 13: Settlement limit for Swainsthorpe, as outlined in the Greater Norwich Local Plan (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).

- 6.18 Policy SWS2 below seeks to reinforce the limited level of growth expected in the parish over the plan period and seeks to provide some guidance on the suitability of infill development, directing it away from the setting of the Church.

New business in Swainsthorpe

- 6.19 There are minimal employment opportunities within Swainsthorpe for residents, with most people travelling to work outside of the parish. However, responses to the Household Survey indicate that there is a high level of home working (23.2% of respondent households have at least one home worker) and there are a few businesses conducted from domestic premises. Residents indicated that they would support agricultural small holdings, tourist accommodation and small food and beverage providers. There was little support for offices, industrial units, retail units and large food and beverage outlets.
- 6.20 Good Internet connection is essential for residents working from home and businesses operating in Swainsthorpe. Any building extension for a business or to facilitate home working must comply with the Swainsthorpe Design Guidance and Codes. Any new business development should utilise existing buildings and be proportionate to the parish. All developments should have

sufficient land to provide for the parking needs of staff and visitors to ensure no overspill into residential areas.

- 6.21 It should be noted that increases in population place additional demand on a range of local services including policing, health, education and fire and rescue resources, both in terms of the need for additional capital investment in new facilities and vehicles and funding for additional equipment based on increased risks. Through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) developers will be asked to contribute to a range of services, equipment, facilities and response provision through s106 agreements, where this meets the legal tests set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations.

Policy SWS2: New development

The scale and pattern of new development (housing and business development) in the parish should conserve and enhance the form and character of the existing settlement of Swainsthorpe.

New housing development, within the parish over the plan period, should be consistent with national and local policies, located within or immediately adjacent to the defined settlement limits as set out in the South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan as shown in figure 13 or through any site-specific allocations made in the Local Plan. The settlement limits have been drawn to allow for only very limited 'infill' development preventing further extension into the surrounding countryside due to the limited services and facilities available, and the narrowness of local roads.

Where new development (housing and business development) is to occur in the parish, the development of brownfield sites will be prioritised, and the scale of development proposed should reflect the position of Swainsthorpe within the identified settlement hierarchy for the district.

Proposals for new infill or windfall housing development within the settlement limit, such as individual dwellings, will be supported provided that the proposal maintains or enhances the form, character and setting of the existing settlement pattern and that they do not detract from views of St Peter's Church.

Proposals for development (housing and business development) outside of the identified settlement limits will only be supported where it meets the criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 84), or it accords with other national, district or neighbourhood level policies, or is an exception site for Affordable Housing to meet identified local needs.

PUBLIC
FOOTPATH

7. POLICIES: Access

Objective 2: To encourage safe, convenient and accessible pedestrian, cycle, equine and vehicular access within Swainsthorpe parish and to surrounding parishes.

- 7.1. Swainsthorpe's location in close proximity to the A140 means that it is relatively well served by public transport, with bus services running between Norwich and Long Stratton. The railway line passes through the parish but there is no station. There are footways in the village centre but these are not wholly contiguous and there is no public footpath or safe route between the village and The Vale. There are rural footpaths in the form of formal Public Rights of Way including bridleways and there is one 'permissive' route. There are no formally identified cycle routes in the parish.
- 7.2. Government guidance in respect of plan making and transport issues tends to focus on promoting sustainable transport. Plans are urged to consider at an early stage the impacts of development on transport networks, realise opportunities for improvement, promote walking and cycling, public transport use, and ensure that any adverse impacts of traffic are mitigated. It is acknowledged that when designing new development, the pattern of movements, roads, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of new development and contribute to creating high quality places.
- 7.3. Walking and cycling as modes of transport have benefits for mental and physical health, and general wellbeing. Government guidance encourages both as forms of active travel for these reasons and encourages new development to build them into the early stages of any new development.
- 7.4. National planning 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 meaningful routes that can be realistically 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 cycling and pedestrian routes should be safe, secure and attractive, minimise the scope for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists, and respond to the character of the area and any relevant design standards. Encouraging and facilitating active and sustainable travel can reduce vehicles on the road, and therefore pollution and poor air quality, and can help to improve mental and physical health and create a stronger sense of place.

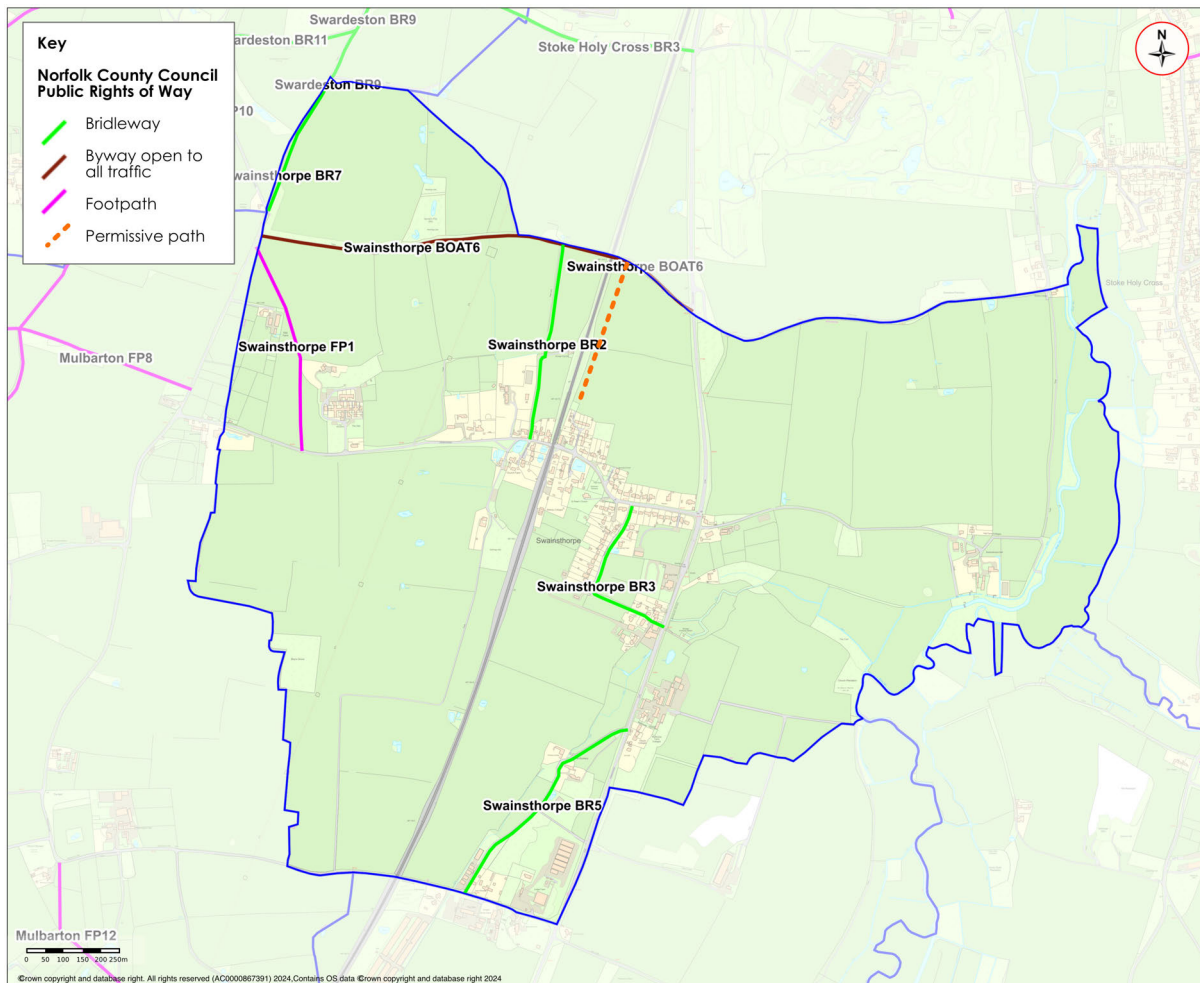


Figure 14: Public Rights of Way and permissive path (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

7.5 The results of the Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey indicated that there was support from local people for some specific footpath improvements/new connections. The most popular suggestions are as follows. Footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways:

- Convert Hickling Lane from a BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic) to a bridleway and improve the surface for year-round accessibility.
- New foot and cycle path to The Vale.
- New access from the A140 through to Swainsthorpe Hall and north across the field to Stoke Lane.
- New access to the River Tas from behind Malthouse Farm.
- New connection of Briar Lane, Bridleway no 3 to Bridleway no 5, alongside The Rookery to Brick Kiln Lane, by using the field on the western side of the A140.
- Reinststate the permissive path around the fields now owned by Ben Burgess Ltd.
- Improve Bridleway no 2 from Church Road beside Ivy House to Hickling Lane, making it accessible for wheelchairs, pushchairs and people with limited mobility.
- Enhance the adjoining field (beside the railway track) on Bridleway 2 with wildflower and tree planting plus destination benches.

- 7.6 For the creation of any new routes, it is recognised that landowner permission would be necessary to add these suggested routes as permissive paths in the first instance. The principle of greater connectivity between parts of the parish, and also between Swainsthorpe and the neighbouring parishes, is supported by this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.7 Where there are existing routes, these should be protected from development. In exceptional cases, where existing routes must be moved as a consequence of development, they must be re-routed in a manner that is equally accessible and convenient to users. Public consultation on the re-routing or diversion of such paths should be undertaken to ensure that new routes will be used.
- 7.8 The enhancement of existing routes and creation of new routes is supported. Where this occurs, routes should be safe and convenient for all users, including those with limited mobility, people using pushchairs, cyclists and horse riders.
- 7.9 Whilst new development in the parish is likely to be limited, where it does occur, opportunities should be taken to link it to the existing rights of way network, the village centre and where possible the adjoining countryside. Policy SWS3 below seeks to address these issues.

Policy SWS3: Connections and Rights of Way

Where new development is likely to affect the route of an existing right of way, that right of way should be retained unless it can be demonstrated that the re-routing is the only viable option and the proposed new route is of equal amenity value to users as the original route.

Where existing Public Rights of Way are unavoidably to be lost or impacted, appropriate diversions and new routes should be provided that are equally safe and convenient for all users including people with limited mobility, people using pushchairs or in wheelchairs, and cyclists and horse riders.

New development proposals should, as appropriate to their scale and nature improve or enhance Public Rights of Way for example, through the provision of new routes, new connections, improved surfaces or signage.

New connections

Otherwise acceptable proposals, which would contribute to making the parish safer and more accessible for active travel and would contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents will be supported. Where new pedestrian or cycle routes or crossings are to be provided, they should be safe, accessible and suitable for all users. Opportunities should be sought to incorporate green infrastructure into new pedestrian/cycle routes, for example, trees, shrubs, rain gardens, swales etc. as appropriate.

All new developments should, as appropriate to their scale, nature and location have, where reasonably possible, new footpath and/or bridleway connections

created, linking to the existing right of way network surrounding the village, and provide a comprehensive and cohesive network which allows for access to the wider countryside and adjoining parishes.



8. POLICIES: Environment

Objective 3: To protect and enhance the heritage and natural environment of Swainsthorpe.

- 8.1 Swainsthorpe is unusual from a heritage perspective in that the parish originally had two churches serving the local community. St. Peter's Church is a significant structure in the centre of the village which was substantially restored in 2013. Today the church serves as the village community centre and a place of worship with regular Sunday services. There was a second church, St Mary's by the River Tas, but there is no obvious evidence of it today.
- 8.2 The parish is also home to buried archaeological remains. There are cropmarks surrounding the village and recent works on the Bloys Grove Solar Farm to the southwest of the village have returned significant results, although investigations to the north of the village generally have not.

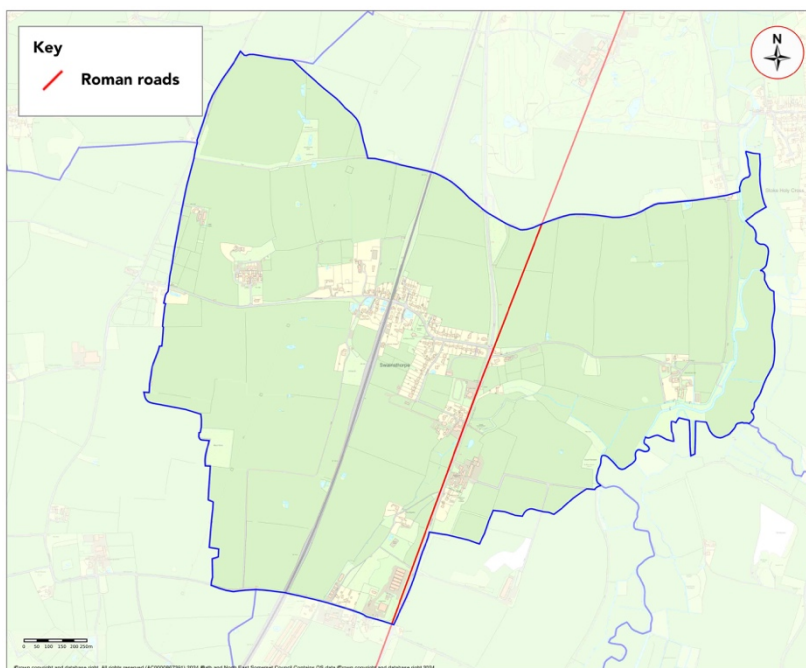


Figure 15: Roman Road, now A140, through Swainsthorpe (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

- 8.3 There is no Conservation Area in the parish. There are eight listed buildings:
- Barn 30 metres south-west of Swainsthorpe Hall (Grade II)
 - Memorial to Joseph Dunton 9 metres south-east Chancel of Church of St Peter (Grade II)
 - Swainsthorpe Hall (Grade II)
 - Barn 25 metres north west of the Rookery (Grade II)
 - Glebe Farmhouse (Grade II)
 - Dun Cow Inn (currently the Sugar Beat) (Grade II)
 - The Rookery (Grade II)

- Primrose Cottage (Grade II)
- Church of St Peter (Grade II*)

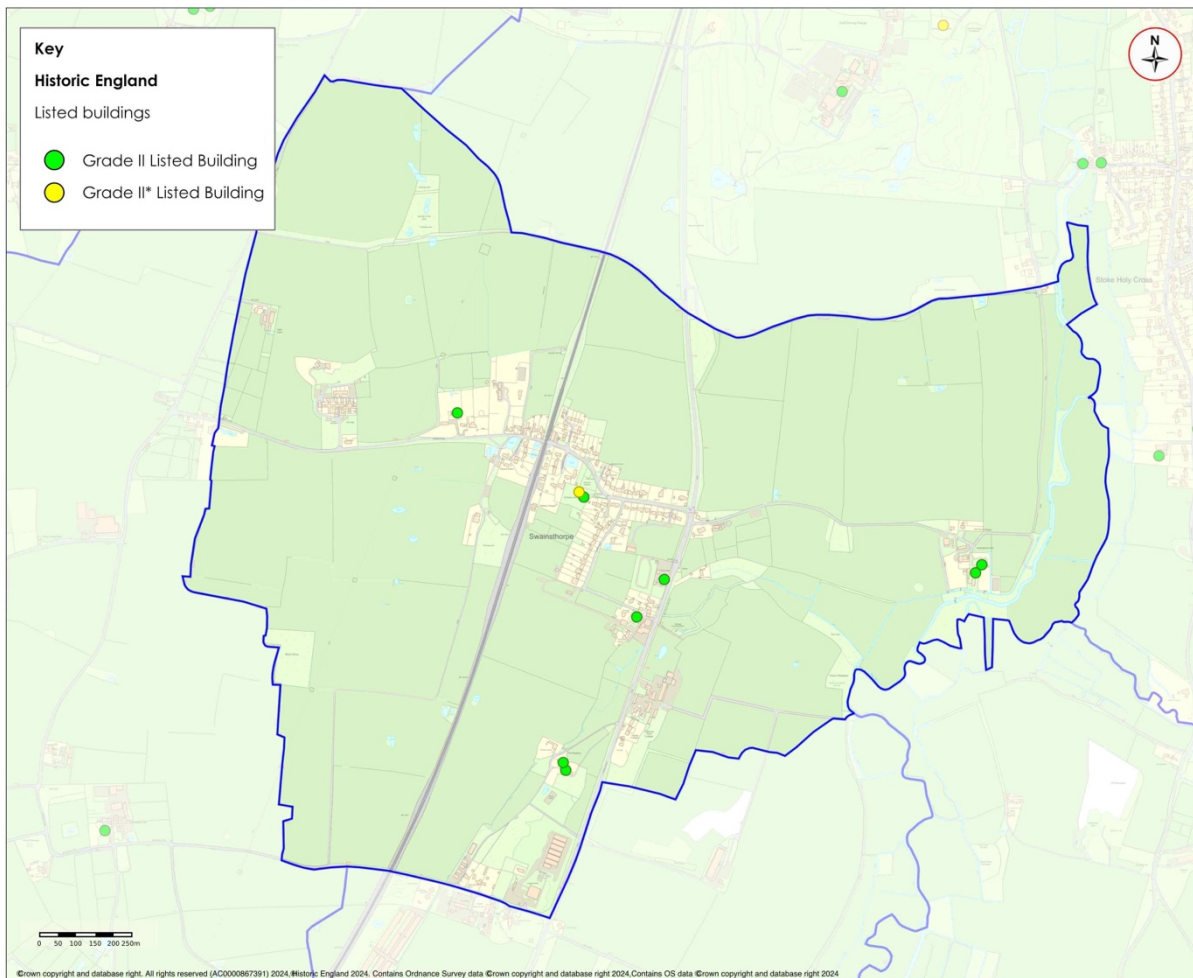


Figure 16: Listed Buildings (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

- 8.4 Traditional materials used in Swainsthorpe found on the Listed Buildings include flint, red brick, render, with gabled and hipped tiled roofs.
- 8.5 In addition to the Listed Buildings, there are other traditional style, historic buildings in the parish that contribute to its distinctive character. The Household Survey sought to gauge whether there was support for a policy which would protect buildings or structures which are currently unlisted and which are important in the context of the local character of the parish. Such buildings and structures can be identified as Non-Designated Heritage Assets which gives them greater weight in the determination of planning applications that may affect them. The results of the Household Survey indicated that there was support from the community for such a policy and a range of potential candidates were put forward by residents.
- 8.6 Each potential candidate has been investigated further by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the consultant advisors. The criteria from the Historic England Listing Historic England Advice Note 7 (2021) has

been used to assess the potential candidates suitability. The criteria include age, rarity, architectural and artistic interest, group value, archaeological interest, historic interest and land mark status. The assessments for the proposed Non-Designated Heritage Assets are reincluded in Appendix D and the candidate are listed in Policy SWS4 below. It should be noted that the owners of each potential Non-designated Heritage Asset have been contacted and information on the implications of the property being identified have been explained.

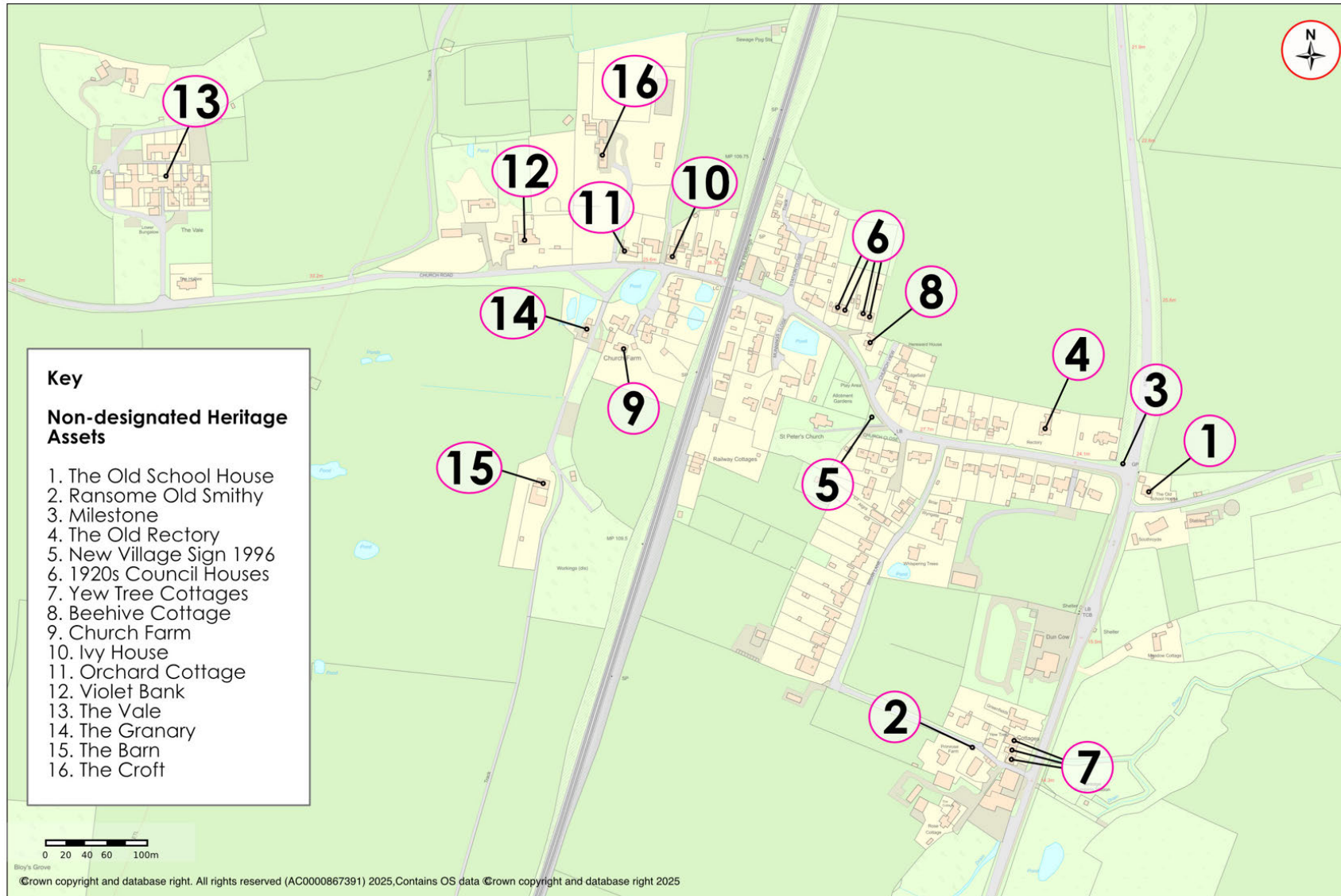


Figure 17: Non-designated Heritage Assets (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).

Policy SWS4: Heritage

The historic significance of existing heritage assets in the parish, both designated and non-designated, will be protected.

Proposals for new development should ensure that its design complements the shape and form of the existing settlement pattern. The design should respect the setting of designated heritage assets and views of St Peter's Church.

The following are heritage assets that are considered to be locally important to Swainsthorpe in terms of their architectural, historical, or cultural significance.

These will be treated as Non-designated Heritage Assets (shown in figure 17):

1. The Old School House, Ipswich Road
2. Ransome Old Smithy, Briar Lane
3. Milestone at A140/Church Road junction
4. The Old Rectory, 6 Church Road
5. New Village Sign 1996
6. 1920s Council Houses, 30-36 Church Road
7. Yew Tree Cottages, junction Briar Lane and the A140
8. Beehive Cottage, 28 Church Road
9. Church Farm, 6 Longbrooke Drive
10. Ivy House, 52 Church Road
11. Orchard Cottage, 58 Church Road
12. Violet Bank, 66 Church Road
13. The Vale, Church Road
14. The Granary, 45 Church Road
15. The Barn, 43 Church Road
16. The Croft, 60 Church Road

Local Green Spaces

- 8.7 The National Planning Policy Framework 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 107 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.
- 8.8 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.

- 8.9 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 wellbeing and help define what makes that specific settlement what it is.
- 8.10 The Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey included a question on Local Green Spaces and identified some existing green spaces in the parish which may be suitable for protection under the Local Green Space designation. These were: the Village Green; allotments; Jubilee Gardens; Green surrounding The Vale; woodland around the Vale; woodland in front of Church View; woodland at Sprow's Pits; vineyard on Briar Lane; green area along Hickling Lane footpath; woodland at Hickling Lane.
- 8.11 The survey results revealed a high degree of support for the principle of the policy and also for the suggested spaces. A number of other potential candidate spaces were also suggested.
- 8.12 Following the Household Survey a more detailed assessment of the candidate spaces against the NPPF criteria was undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Some candidates did not meet all of the criteria and therefore have not been taken forward. The remaining candidates have been identified in Policy SWS5 below. Assessments for each one against the criteria are set out in Appendix C.
- 8.13 In terms of the potential for new green spaces in the parish, whilst this may be limited in terms of new development, there may well be opportunities for new green spaces as a result of discussion and negotiation with landowners. If the opportunity for new green spaces arises, there was public support in the survey results for informal amenity areas, dog walking areas and children's play spaces. This is also reflected in the policy below.



Figure 18: Local Green Spaces (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).

Policy SWS5: Green spaces

Local Green Spaces

The following existing green spaces within the parish are identified as Local Green Spaces (as shown on figure 18):

1. Village Green (including children's play area)
2. Millennium Green
3. Jubilee Garden
4. Churchyard
5. Green space at The Vale.

Development within Local Green Spaces will be managed consistent with the approach taken to managing Green Belts.

New green spaces

The creation of new green spaces, such as informal amenity areas, play spaces and areas for dog walking, will be supported where they comply with other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

Biodiversity

- 8.14 The rural character of the parish is one of the attributes most valued by the local residents. The Household Survey results indicated that words such as small village, rural, quiet, countryside and peaceful were some of the most commonly used when residents were asked about what makes Swainsthorpe special. The ability to get out in the countryside is important to Swainsthorpe residents together with the opportunities to engage with the natural environment more generally.

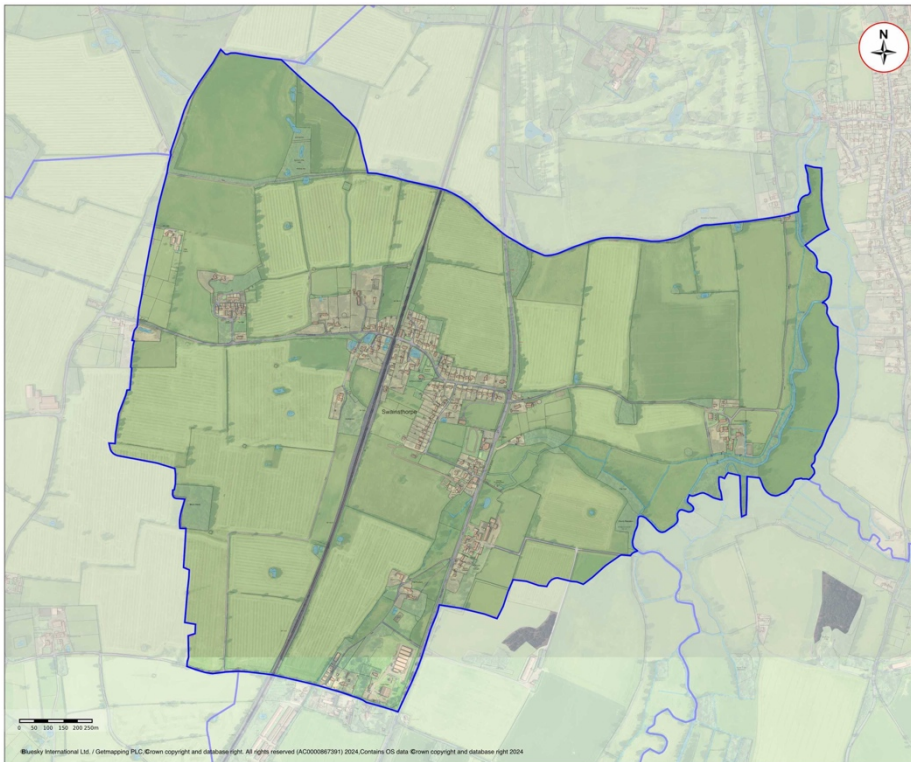


Figure 19: Aerial photograph of Swainsthorpe (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

8.15 There are no nationally or internationally designated nature conservation sites within Swainsthorpe, although the parish lies within the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Risk Zone for the Norfolk Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which lies approximately 5.km to the southeast – Shotesham Common . The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a mapping tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessments of the potential risks to SSSIs from development proposals. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposals which could potentially have adverse impacts (see figure 20).

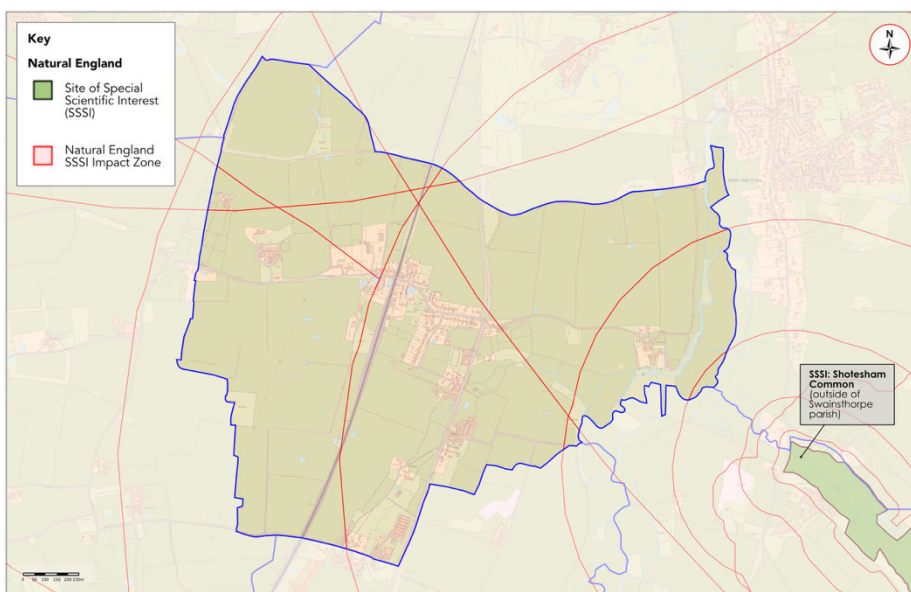


Figure 20: Site of Special Scientific Interest – Shotesham Common (outside of the parish) and Impact Zone – the area around the SSSI where there could be an impact on the SSSI (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

- 8.16 There are other environmental designations outside Swainsthorpe parish which include:
- River Wensum, SAC approximately 8km north.
 - Broadland, Ramsar/ Special Protection Area (SPA) approximately 9km north east.
 - The Broads, SAC approximately 9km north east.
 - Dunston Common, Local Nature Reserve (LNR) approximately 1km northeast.
- 8.17 Whilst not having many formally designated sites of biodiversity value in the parish, there is an important habitat in the form of blocks of deciduous woodland, which is a Priority Habitat under Natural England’s Inventory of Habitats and good quality semi-improved grassland Priority Habitat. There is also a Roadside Nature Reserve (RNR13) which is noted in the citation as having Pyramidal Orchid on it. (This RNR is along the A140, Ipswich Road and Norfolk County Council oversee RNR’s.) RNR’s are important for scarce and unusual plants, and they act as wildlife corridors for many species, proving invaluable for nature recovery.



Figure 21: Roadside Nature Reserve (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

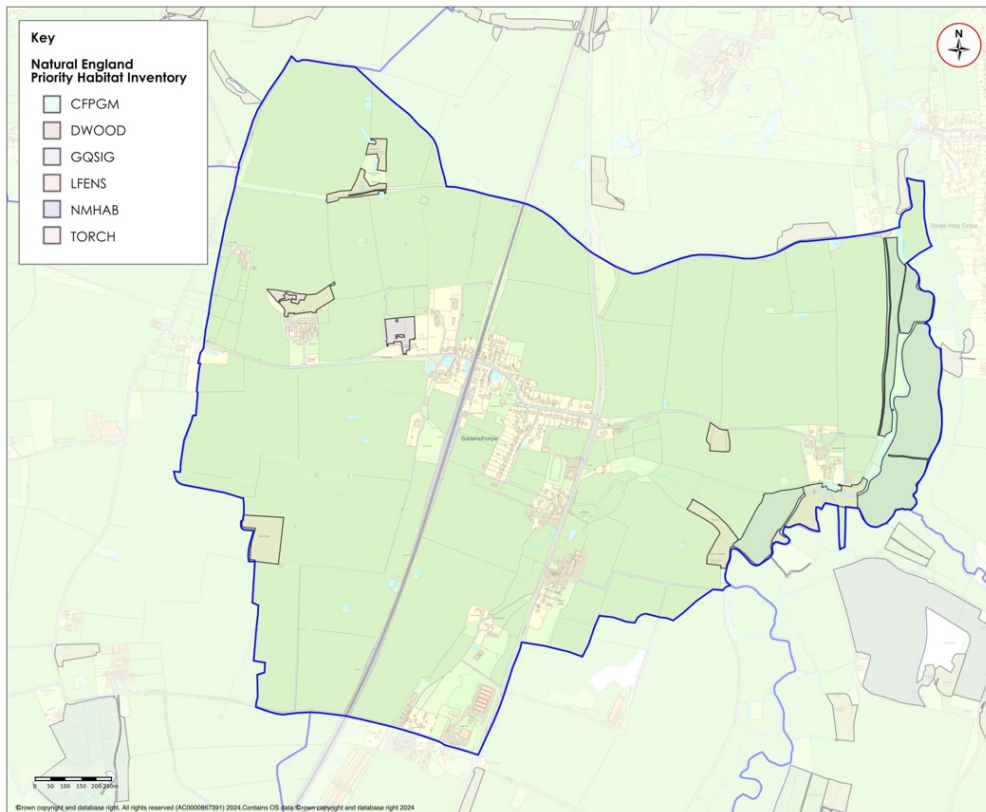


Figure 22: Natural England Priority Habitat Inventory (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

CFPGM: Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
 DWOOD: Deciduous woodland
 GQSIG: Good quality semi-improved grassland
 LFENS: Lowland fens
 NMHAB: No main habitat
 TORCH: Traditional orchard.

8.18 Whilst the majority of the agricultural land in the parish is Grade 3, there is an extensive area along the eastern boundary of the parish which is Grade 4. Grades 1, 2 and 3a are identified as the Best and most versatile land in the NPPF and the emphasis is usually for them to remain in agricultural production.

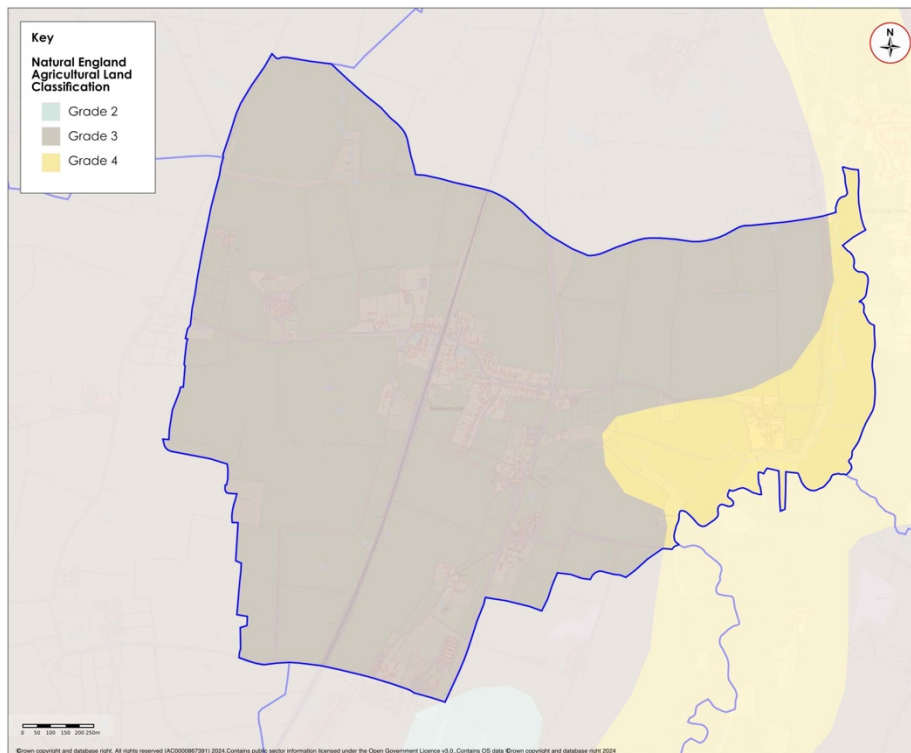


Figure 23: Natural England Agricultural Land Classification (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Biodiversity net gain

- 8.19 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”.
- 8.20 The Environment Act 2021 received Royal Assent in Autumn 2021. 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.
- 8.21 A minimum of 10 per cent gain in biodiversity will be required either on-site or via enhancement elsewhere within the parish. BNG is mandatory for almost all types of development including housing, commercial development, minor development and from May 2026 also to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). 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 SWS6 below has been developed to provide guidance on this issue.

- 8.22 BNG can be delivered through the enhancement of existing biodiversity features such as wildlife 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.
- 8.23 Furthermore as part of the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Norfolk and Suffolk,⁴ 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 Important to Biodiversity (ACB) is useful for identifying future areas for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) within the parish.

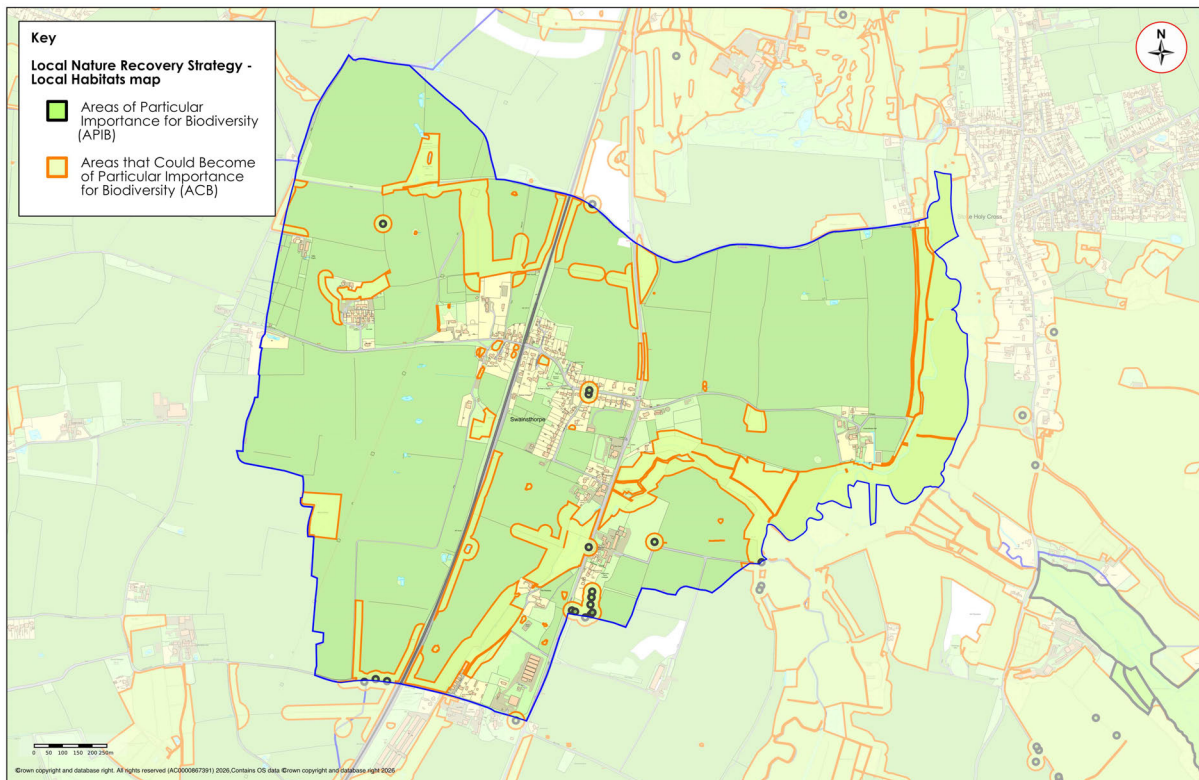


Figure 24: Biodiversity – APIB and ACB areas (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

- 8.24 The policy also refers to ‘wildlife 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 the isolation of populations. Linear features may vary and may also not be continuous; however, patches of natural habitat can benefit wildlife and

⁴ <https://www.nsnrp.org/>

occasionally, the term 'stepping stones' is used to refer to them. The role of wildlife corridors is assuming greater importance and opportunities should be taken to retain them, enhance them and create them as a consequence of new development.

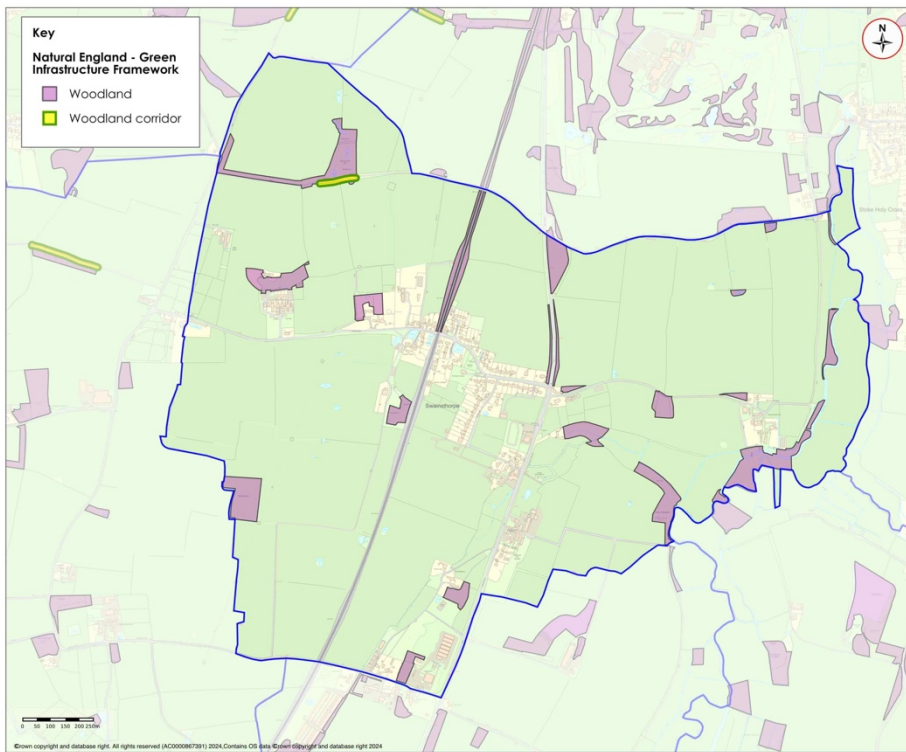


Figure 25: Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework – woodland and woodland corridors (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

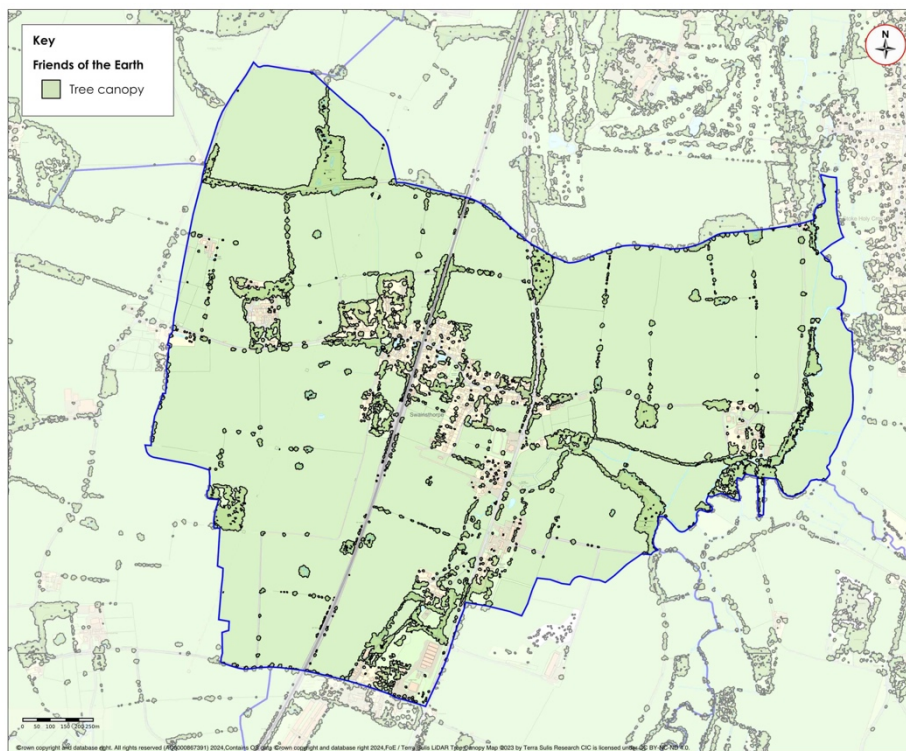


Figure 26: Friends of the Earth – tree canopy (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Design features benefiting wildlife

- 8.25 The design of individual buildings and green and open spaces, including private gardens, will help to ensure that existing habitats present in Swainsthorpe 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.
- 8.26 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.
- 8.27 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.

Policy SWS6: Biodiversity

Retention of existing biodiversity features

Proposals for new development⁵ will be expected to protect and enhance existing ecological networks, wildlife corridors and priority habitats and species including the River Tas, Roadside Nature Reserves and other sites of high biodiversity value such as the ecologically rich upper tributary valleys. Buffer zones should be implemented around sensitive wildlife sites and sites of high biodiversity value, as appropriate, to protect them from any adverse impacts from development.

Existing priority habitats, such as woodland areas and other features of biodiversity value within the parish, should be retained, and where practicable be incorporated into the design of new proposals. These include:

- Trees, both individual trees and narrow woodland belts.
- Hedgerows, including ancient hedgerows.
- Reed filled ditches.
- Ponds, including the existing network of waterbodies in the parish.
- Blocks of managed mixed deciduous woodland.

Development proposals must avoid the loss of trees and hedgerows. They must protect and enhance local habitats and wildlife corridors. New wildlife corridors

⁵ There are exemptions from BNG <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

should be designed and located to help increase movement between isolated populations.

Where loss or damage to a biodiversity feature is unavoidable, the benefits of the development must clearly outweigh the impacts and the development, shall provide for mitigation in the form of appropriate replacement or replanting, or creation of appropriate natural features on site, together with a method statement for the ongoing care and maintenance of that planting or feature, or, as a last resort, compensation measures will be sought. If suitable mitigation or compensation measures cannot be provided, planning permission will be refused.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Otherwise acceptable development proposals will be supported where they provide a minimum net gain of 10 per cent in biodiversity, delivered on-site in the first instance through, for example the creation of new and the restoration and enhancement of existing natural habitats, e.g. ponds, hedgerows, wildflower meadows, new woodlands and the planting of additional trees and hedgerows.

Where biodiversity net gain is to be delivered via off-site habitat creation, this should preferably be delivered elsewhere in the parish and targeted at the Areas that Could Become of Importance to Biodiversity (ACB) as shown on the LNRS Map (figure 24).

The design of new development should, as appropriate to their scale and nature connect existing landscape features and promote biodiversity through the planting of local trees, plants and hedgerows. Existing road verges should be enhanced to increase biodiversity and act as wildlife corridors of safe passage for wildlife; and development should provide bat, owl and bird boxes and bat friendly lighting to maintaining foraging routes.

Opportunities should be sought for the addition of green roofs and/or green walls, particularly on any new community buildings, and these should be supported where possible.

Flood risk

- 8.28 National planning policy guidance seeks to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding whether existing or in the future. Local Plan policies are informed by a strategic flood risk assessment which seeks to manage flood risk from all sources and considers cumulative impacts in or affecting local areas susceptible to flooding.
- 8.29 The majority of Swainsthorpe parish is in Flood Zone 1 which means that it is at low risk of flooding from rivers. There is an area to the east of the parish which is close to the River Tas, which falls into Flood Zone 3. This is well away from the main village.
- 8.30 However, with changes in climate, the risk of localised flooding from surface water through heavy rainfall is increasing in intensity and in occurrences. The

Household Survey asked local residents to identify any areas of localised flooding in the parish. A number of locations were identified, many in and around the main part of the village or close to the A140. It is important that new development (even small-scale development) does not exacerbate existing incidences of localised flooding nor create new ones, either through surface water run off or displacement. New development should therefore be directed away from known areas of all sources of flooding including ground water. Policy SWS7 indicated where the known areas in Swainsthorpe are and seeks to ensure that new development does not exacerbate these existing issues nor create new ones. The Plan period for this Neighbourhood Plan looks ahead to 2046. It is important to consider the issues of climate change and future sustainability including taking account of flood risk.

- 8.31 Under Building Regulations, new development is required to have separate foul and surface water systems. Where new development is proposed it should include appropriate drainage details that conform to the relevant standards of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), which is currently Norfolk County Council.⁶
- 8.32 The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) is now commonly promoted due to their benefits not only to flood relief but also in preventing pollution and their potential to benefit wildlife. Policy SWS7 below 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 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.

⁶ Norfolk County Council (NCC) – Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Statutory Consultee for Planning: Guidance Document <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/38642>

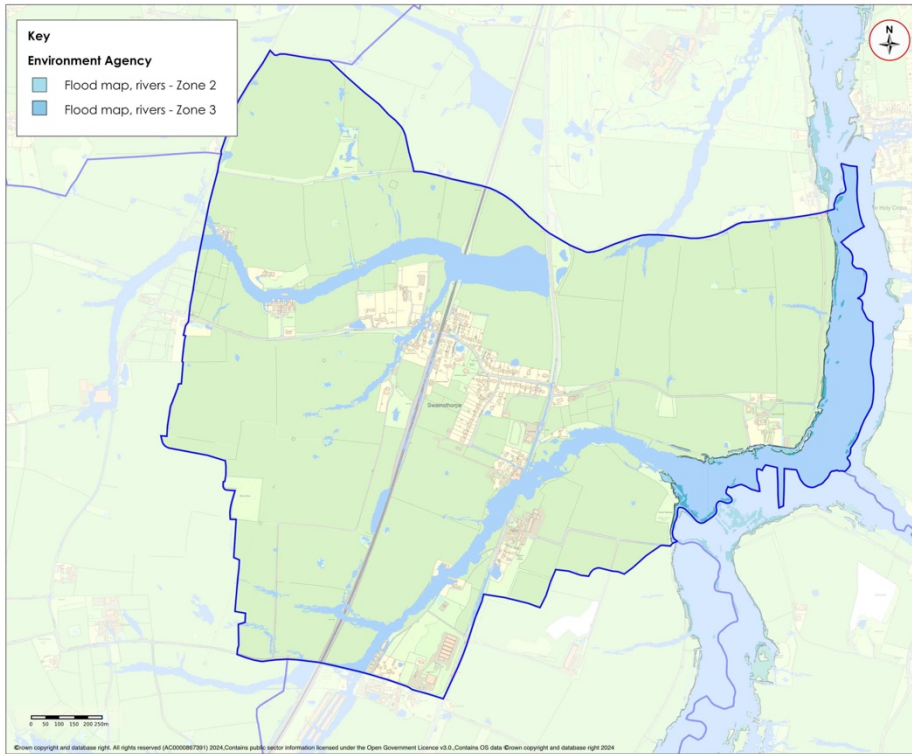


Figure 27: Environment Agency flood map (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

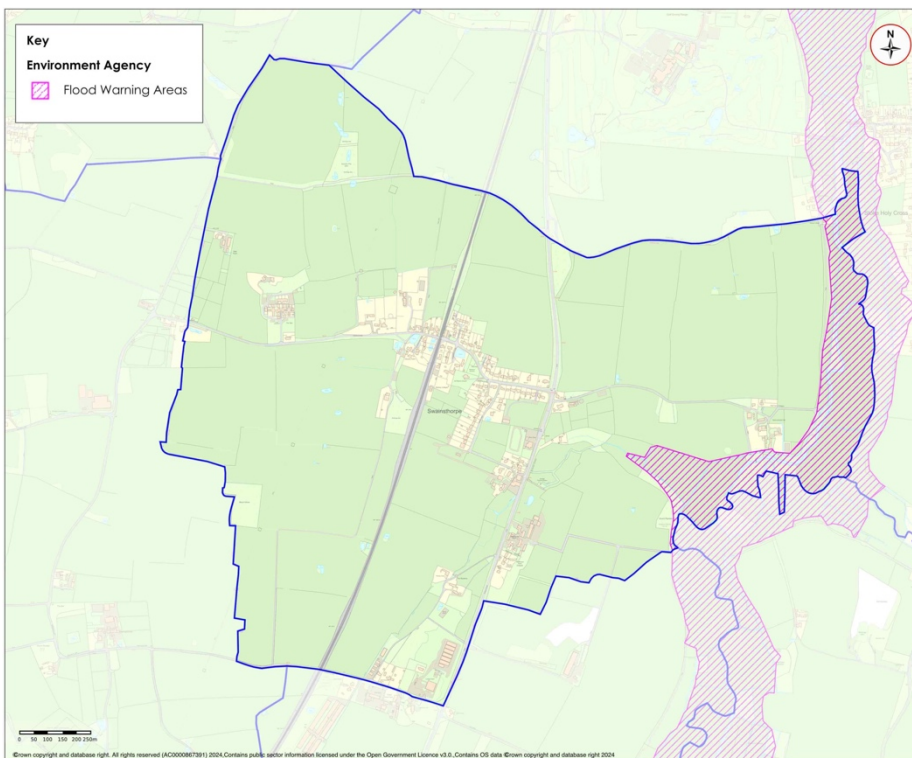


Figure 28: Environment Agency flood warning areas (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

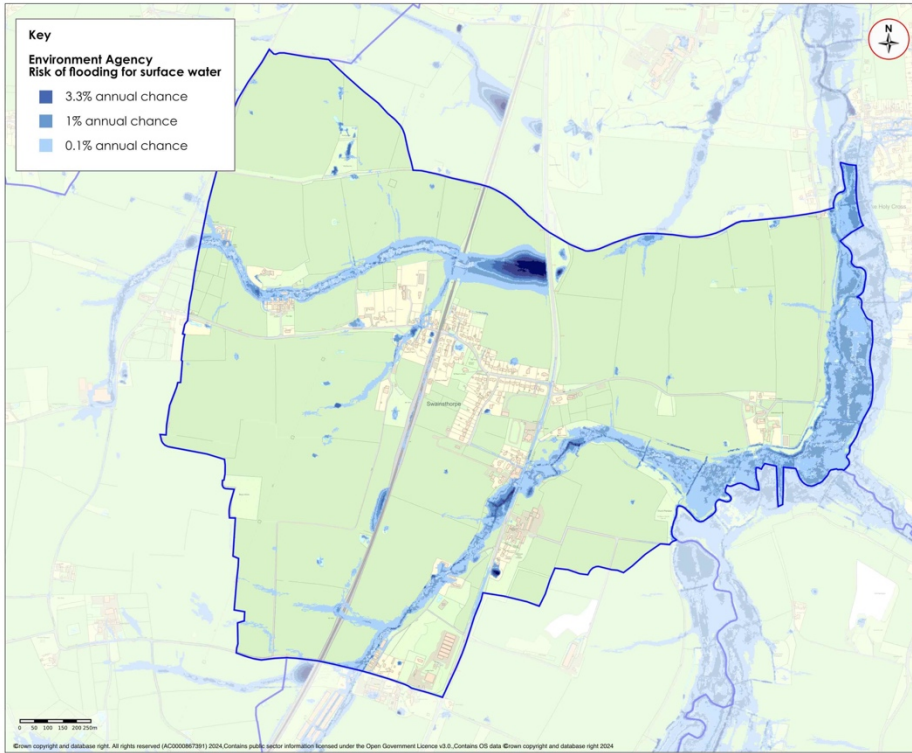


Figure 29: Environment Agency risk of flooding for surface water (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

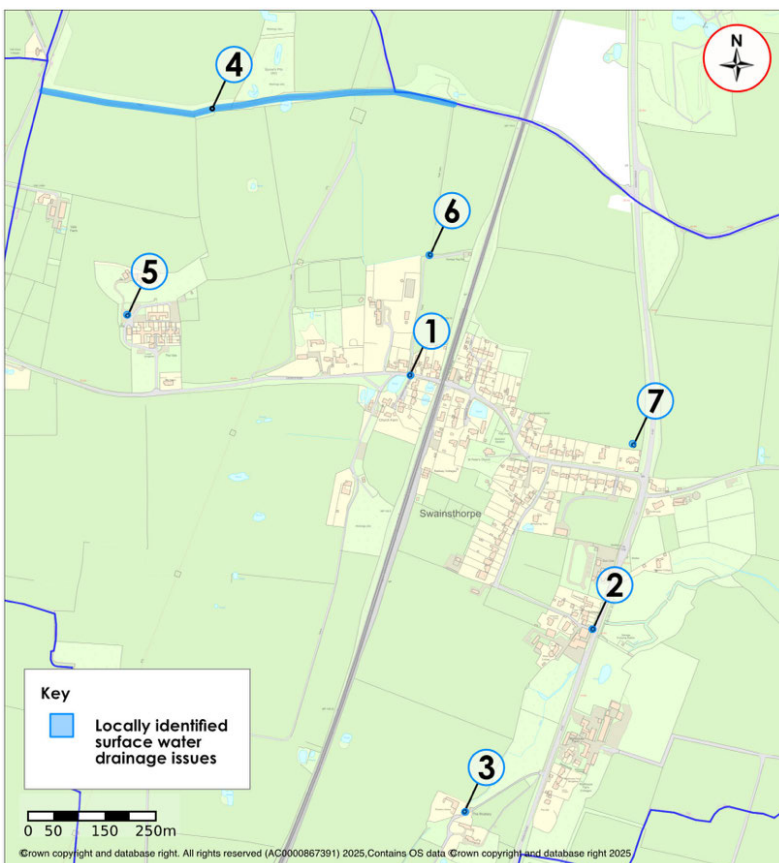


Figure 30: Locally identified surface water drainage issues (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Policy SWS7: Flood risk

All proposed development should be directed away from areas of the parish at highest risk of flooding from surface water (whether existing or future) as shown on figure 30 and listed below:

1. Junction of Longbrooke Drive and Church Road
2. Junction of Briar Lane and the A140
3. Bridleway to Rookery Barn
4. Hickling Lane
5. The Vale
6. Bridleway from Church Road
7. Land to rear of Church Road



Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk from all sources including surface water and groundwater. .

All new development, including minor development, is required to use appropriate sustainable drainage systems (commensurate with the size of the development proposed). These will mitigate and protect against pollution, provide drainage and wider amenity, recreational and biodiversity benefits. SuDs features should have a natural rather than engineered appearance.

Development will be expected to demonstrate (through the submission of a drainage strategy to accompany the submission of a planning application) how it will seek to achieve lower than greenfield run off rates, mitigate its own flooding and drainage impacts, whilst avoiding increases of flooding elsewhere.

Landscape Character

- 8.33 The South Norfolk Landscape Local Landscape Designations Review 2012,⁷ identifies the parish of Swainsthorpe as comprising three broad landscape character types. These are:

-  A1 Tas Rural River Valley
-  B1 Tas Tributary Farmland
-  D1 Wymondham Settled Plateau Farmland

⁷ <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/chris-blandford-june-2012-south-norfolk-local-landscape-designations-review.pdf>

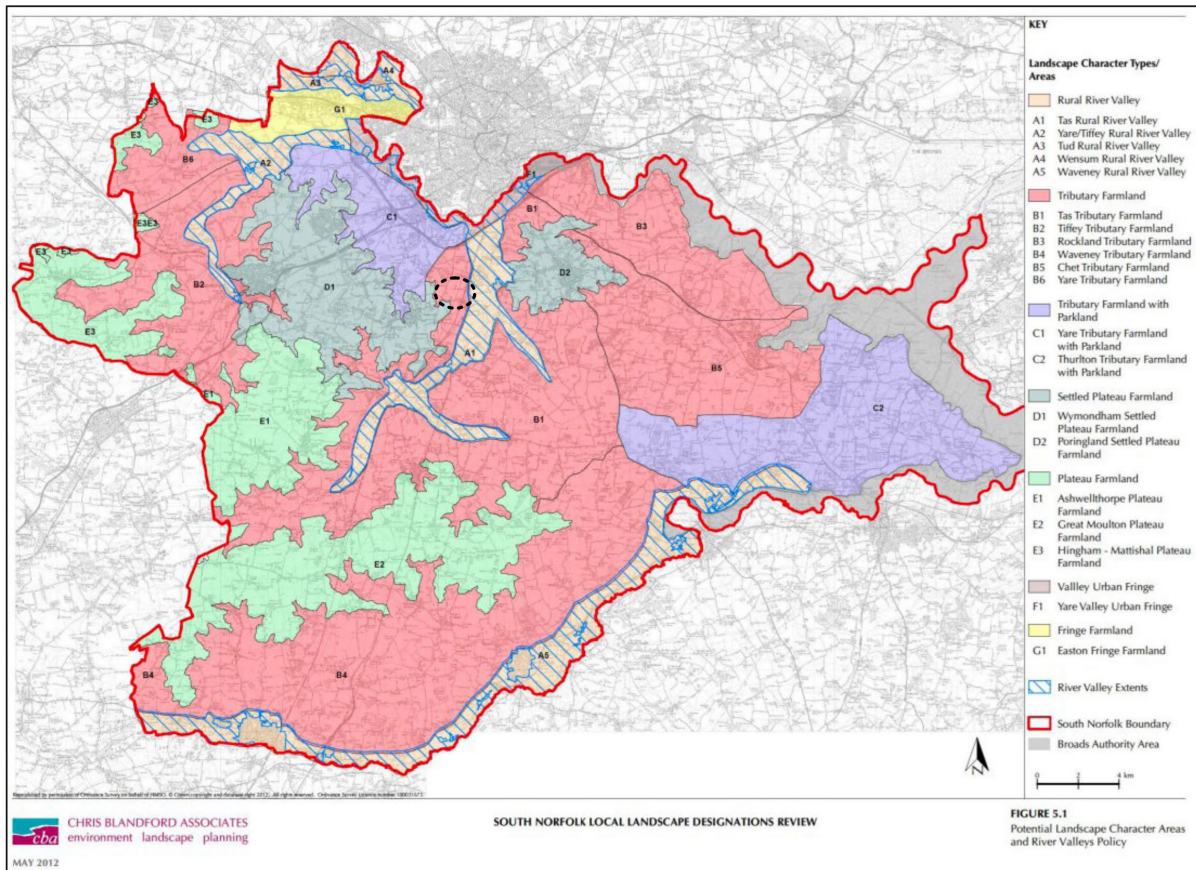


Figure 31: Local Landscape Designations in South Norfolk (source: The South Norfolk Landscape Local Landscape Designations Review 2012. Information retrieved 02.10.2024). Black dotted line shows approximate area of Swainsthorpe parish.

- 8.34 The Tas Rural River Valley runs in an approximately south to north direction from Tasburgh in the south to the Norwich Southern Bypass (A47) in the north. The boundaries are defined topographically, in relation to the top of the valley sides and roughly follow the 30m contour, except where human influences have caused a distinct change in character. For example, in the lower part of the valley the A140 defines the boundary on the west side as the road creates a clear division on the upper valley side.
- 8.35 The key characteristics of the Tas Rural River Valley are:
- o Distinct, moderately wide simple valley form with medium-scale clearly defined flat valley floor, shallow side slopes and adjoining smaller-scale tributary valleys.
 - o Less enclosed than some other valleys with a feeling of exposure and openness and some long views within the valley but restricted external views.
 - o River alternately visible and hidden marked by sparse waterside vegetation including reed filled ditches and narrow woodland belts. The flat, wide, green valley floor is a distinctive feature.
 - o A large number of attractive fords and small bridges occurring at regular intervals along the river and side tributaries.
 - o Pastoral valley floor with cattle grazing and distinctive willow pollards lining the watercourses on the valley floor.

- Upper tributary valleys of great ecological richness and importance, including areas of fen, marsh and unimproved wet and neutral grassland.
- Fragmented woodlands and shelterbelts on the valley sides creating a wooded fringe to much of the valley interspersed with more open areas of arable land.
- Presence of historic earthworks including Scheduled Ancient Monuments, including the large highly visible defensive earthworks of Venta Icenorum and the earthworks at Tasburgh.
- Sparsely settled character with buildings clustered around fording points and at the top of the valley sides.
- Characteristic vernacular buildings particularly notably including weather boarded mill houses and Dutch gable ends.
- Presence of a small number of distinctive halls and parkland including English Heritage listed parkland at Rainthorpe Hall.
- Network of narrow peaceful rural lanes throughout the valley including sunken lanes.
- A more disturbed character in the north of the area due to the influence of pylons, railway and roads.
- Role in dividing and defining east and west of South Norfolk district.

8.36 Development considerations are that any development must respect the character of the Tas Rural River Valley and conserve and enhance the key landscape assets as described in the landscape character assessment. In particular it must seek to maintain the peaceful rural qualities of the valley. This will include reference to the following considerations:

- Respect the sparsely settled character of the valley, with its occasional buildings of local rural vernacular character, with a clear relation to the landscape context;
- Maintain the distinctive settlement pattern, either nucleated around bridges or around ford crossing points or as linear settlements along roads on the valley sides. The objective should be to maintain the linear settlements (e.g. Stoke Holy Cross) as discrete areas and prevent gradual and incremental extension along the roads;
- Consider the impact of developments within the adjacent landscape character areas, particularly the higher land of the Tas Tributary Farmland (character area B1) on the character of the rural valley. The openness of parts of the valley and views that can be obtained make it particularly vulnerable;
- Ensure that the northern part of the Tas Valley is not further degraded, by large scale of infrastructure developments associated with the roads. Ensure the rural character of the area adjacent to the Norwich Southern Bypass is maintained;
- Consider the impact of any proposals on the rural lane network;
- Maintain the role of the sparsely-settled Tas Valley in dividing the more settled areas to the east and west and avoid developments that may create the impression of developed corridors running across the valley.

8.37 The *Tas Tributary farmland* is a large area of land encompassing the Tas River Valley character area. Located in the heart of South Norfolk, it lies at an elevation of between about 30m AOD and up to 50m AOD. The character

area is bounded to the north, south and west by surrounding Plateau areas. To the east the character area adjoins Chet Tributary Farmland and Waveney Tributary Farmland.

- 8.38 Any development permitted should respect the character and features of the Tas Tributary Farmland including:
- Respect the existing small-scale and dispersed settlement pattern
 - Avoid infill and edge development that would result in merging of settlements;
 - Ensure any developments respect the vernacular character of existing settlements and avoid urbanising of rural lanes and loss of grass verges and hedges forming property boundaries;
 - Maintain positive views of the Tas Tributary Farmland from the Norwich Southern Bypass and to/from the city of Norwich;
 - Consider the impact of any development upon the skyline and sense of openness of the character area;
 - Maintain positive views to/from Venta Icenorum in the Tas Valley.
- 8.39 The Wymondham Settled Plateau Farmland occurs to the southwest of Norwich, above contour level 40m AOD. It covers a large part of the area to the south of Norwich and includes the settlements of Wymondham and Hethersett.
- 8.40 Any development must respect the character of the Wymondham Settled Plateau Farmland. This will include reference to the following criteria:
- Respect the distinctive settlement pattern comprising concentrations of development at plateau edge locations and smaller nucleated village settlements and dispersed buildings across the plateau;
 - Maintain the nucleated clustered character of the settlements and limit edge sprawl out into the adjacent landscape; well-planned infill and edge development may be acceptable;
 - Consider (cumulative) impact of all tall structures such as masts, energy developments, farm buildings on skyline views and sense of 'openness' and particularly on views to the plateau skyline from the surrounding lower tributary farmland;
 - Maintain key views from the plateau edge to/from the City of Norwich;
 - Maintain strategic gaps between settlements, and in particular prevent further growth of Wymondham and/or Hethersett which would lead to coalescence of settlement along the A11 leading to the merger of Wymondham/Hethersett or Hethersett/Norwich.

Important views

- 8.41 Early key issues consultation highlighted that views of the countryside were important to local residents, with the Household Survey asking for more detail. A number of important public views were highlighted by the results of the survey. It is important that if such views are to be reflected in a planning policy they must be views from a public viewpoint e.g. a public footpath, the highway, a glimpse between buildings etc., and are not private views from a dwelling or domestic garden. The Household Survey results identified a

number of key views and these have been refined by the Steering Group to reflect the above criteria and are shown below.

View A

St Peter's Church, 32 Church Road, Swainsthorpe.

94.5% of residents completing the Household Survey attached importance to this view and wish it to be retained.

St Peter's Church is a Grade II listed building dating back to the late Saxon period and stands sentinel with its distinctive round tower in the centre of the village. It has remained largely unencumbered by buildings. It is surrounded by a graveyard, the village green and the Swainsthorpe village sign, presenting a pleasant foreground to this historic building. It is used regularly for worship and the building has been adapted to be used as a community centre for the village and many events are held here.

View B

Entrance to the village, looking west towards St Peter's Church from Church Road.

78.9% of residents completing the Household Survey attached importance to this view and wish it to be retained.

This view has been described as 'one of the most splendid village entrance views in Norfolk'. The road leads up a small incline with St Peter's Church standing sentinel at the top. This view is created by the position of the road in relation to St Peter's Church making the church the centre of the view on entering the village from the A140. The village sign and the village green provide a pleasing backdrop whilst well maintained garden hedges and green verges bordering the road take the eyeline forward to the centre.

View C

From the end of Church View looking north across the fields.

71.4% of residents completing the Household Survey attached importance to this view and wish it to be retained.

These agricultural fields are important to the village and are walked regularly by residents and dog walkers as part of a circular walk linking to Hickling Lane and beyond. The peaceful fields enhance the well-being of residents who value 'this beautiful countryside' (quote from Household Survey).

View D

View from the A140 looking east across to the Tas Valley both from The Sugar Beat Eating House and from Briar Lane across the new vineyard.

70.3% of residents completing the Household Survey attached importance to this view and wish it to be retained.

The unencumbered undulating green slopes provide a pleasing foreground to this landscape character area reaching into the Tas Valley. Residents value the peaceful view which off sets the traffic on the A140 corridor of movement.

View E

Church Farm from Church Road west of the village looking east across the fields.

64.8% of residents completing the Household Survey attached importance to this view and wish it to be retained.

The outline of Church Farm and the cluster of converted agricultural buildings present a pleasing rural view across the arable fields in the foreground. Church

Farm was the home of Sir Alfred Munnings (1906 -1911) who used the view in his famous paintings e.g. The Horse Fair. Residents are proud of this connection to this famous artist who used many of the surrounding fields as inspiration for his paintings.

View F

View from the A140/Hickling Lane looking south-west across the fields with the outline of St Peter's Church on the horizon.

This view is as you approach Swainsthorpe travelling south from Norwich on the A140. As you pass Stoke Lane on the left, you see in the distance, the outline of St Peter's Church with its unique round tower, surrounded by trees and giving the appearance of watching over the land as it has for hundreds of years. The two fields seen from this viewpoint are undulating and give a feeling of depth and space, broken by native hedges and an abundance of trees, giving a clear view towards the village. The fields are a haven for wildlife; roe and muntjac deer, hares and rabbits, pheasants, birds of prey, along with birds of the fields and hedgerows who thrive here and enrich the view as well as lifting the spirits for all travelling along the A140 or walking on the footpath in the fields themselves. This iconic view of rolling arable fields in the foreground, an outline of St Peter's Church and village on the horizon, demonstrates the essence of a small rural Norfolk village with its natural green surroundings.

View G

View of the entrance to The Vale.

The Vale was originally built as the Henstead Union Workhouse in 1836, later becoming The Vale Hospital for the NHS. In 1984 it was sympathetically converted to residential properties, retaining the unique character of its original purpose. The architect in 1836 was John Brown, the county surveyor and it was built using around a million bricks which were carried across direct to the site from the local Swainsthorpe brickyard, located on Brick Kiln Lane. The imposing entrance to The Vale has been retained and maintained throughout its varied history. The long straight drive leads down to the red brick dwellings, with green lawns to either side giving a welcoming peaceful view greatly valued by the residents.

View H

View of the bridleway beside Ivy House leading to Hickling Lane.

The tree-lined path, featuring hawthorn, blackthorn and birch is central to the village's character and ecology by supporting local wildlife and connecting residents with nature. Its natural tunnel offers shade and beauty, while a prominent tree serves as a landmark. The western view opens to the Vale, providing a sense of space and calm, while the eastern field slopes to the historically significant railway line.

View I

Views from Hickling Lane which runs east-west from the A140 to Gowthorpe Lane and forms most of the northern border of the Parish of Swainsthorpe.

Hickling Lane is classified as a BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic) and is a significant amenity to the village enjoyed by walkers, dog walkers and horse riders. It connects to other Public Rights of Way making it a vital throughfare. The eastern end (A140) to the middle section passes through arable fields bordered with deep

natural hedging and trees which form a natural canopy. It opens out at the western section, with natural trees and hedging on the right-hand side whilst on the left-hand side it opens into arable fields with views of The Vale and Vale Farm in the distance.

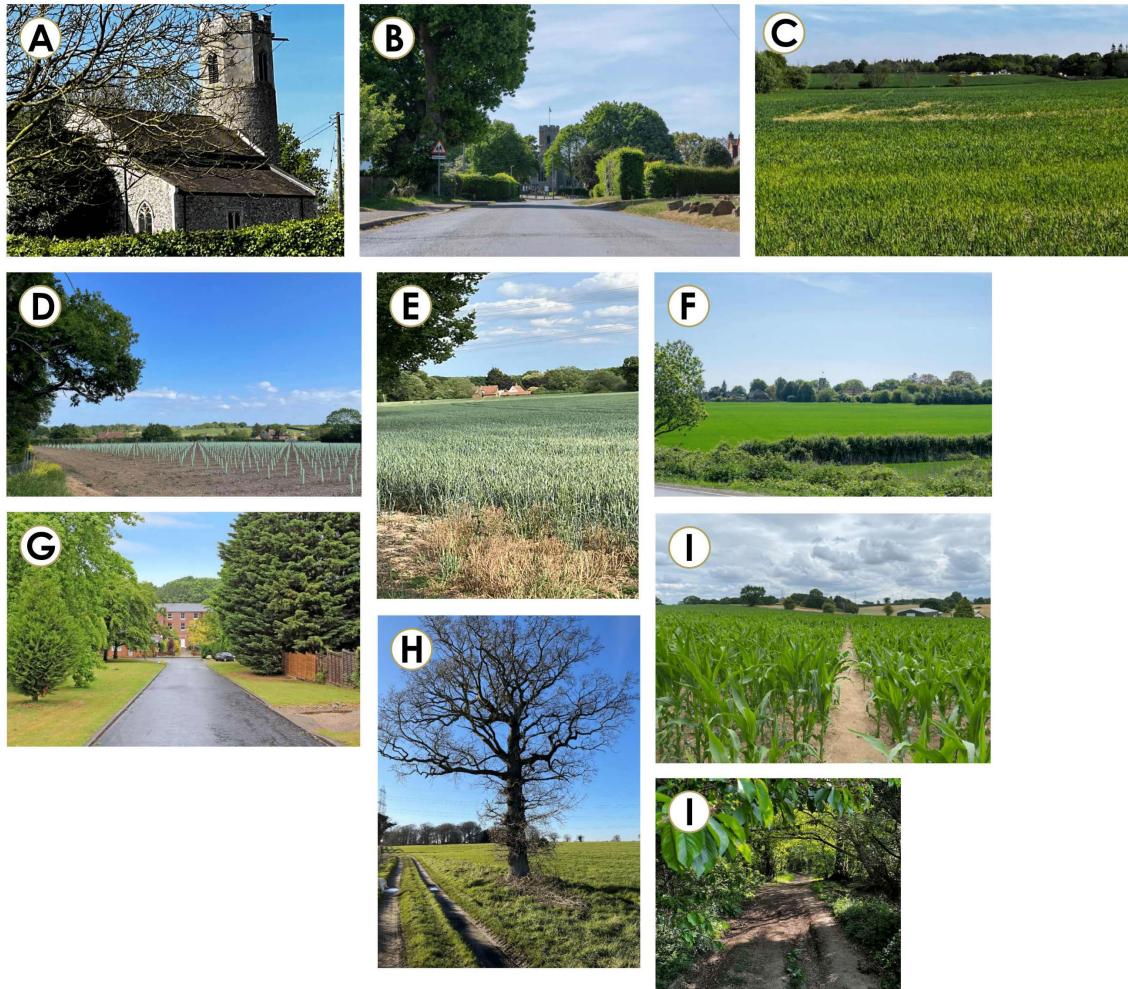


Figure 32: Photographs of Important Public Local Views.

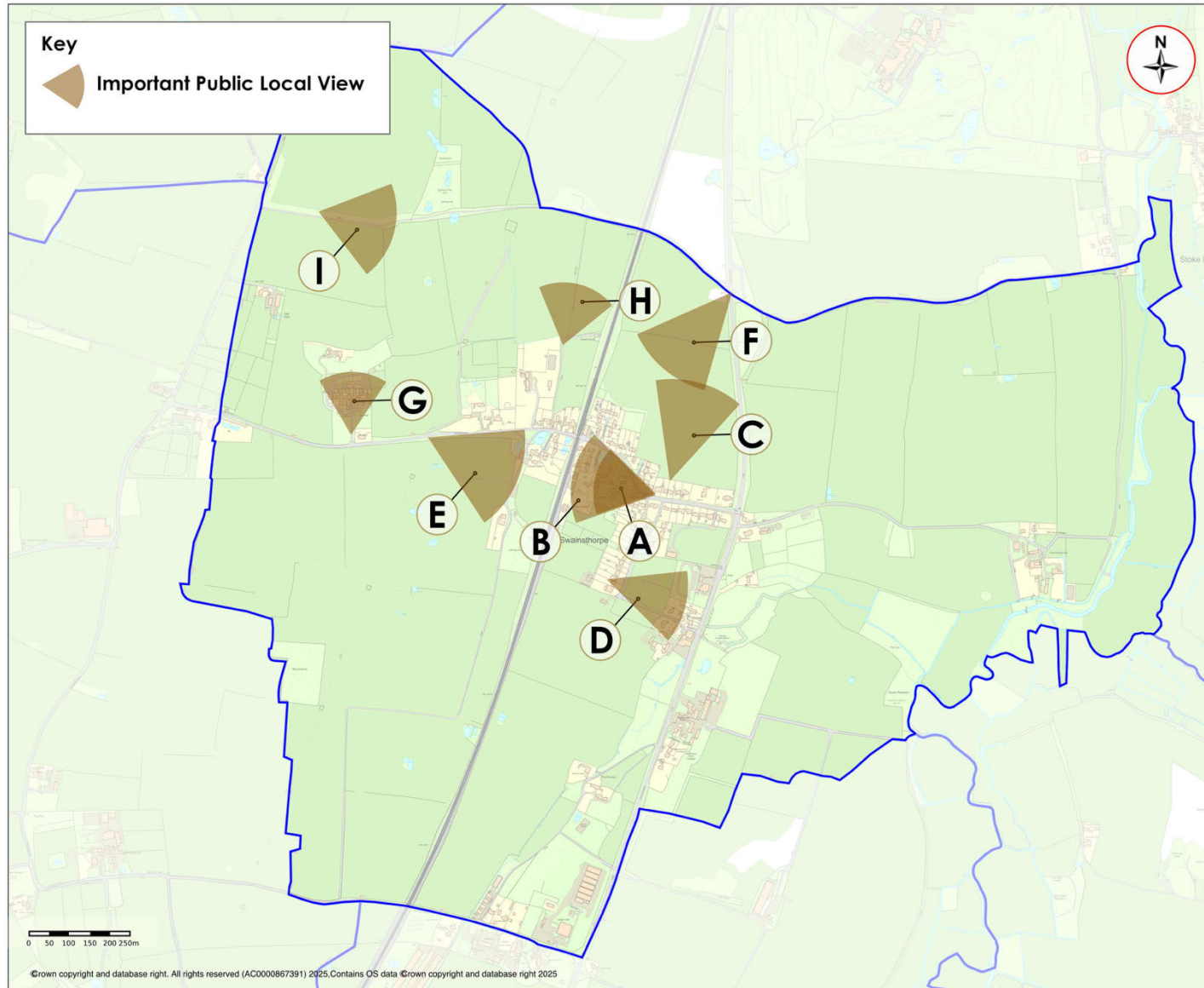


Figure 33: Important Public Local Views (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Policy SWS8: Landscape Character and Important Public Local Views

Proposals for new development in the parish should take into account the distinctive landscape features and character of the landscape character type within which the proposal is located demonstrating how it has taken account of the specific guidance for that character type.

The following views and vistas within Swainsthorpe are identified as Important Public Local Views (figure 33):

- A. St Peter's Church.
- B. Entrance to the village, looking west towards St Peter's Church from Church Road.
- C. From the end of Church View looking north across the fields.
- D. View from the A140 looking east across to the Tas Valley both from The Sugar Beat Eating House and from Briar Lane across the new vineyard.
- E. Church Farm from Church Road west of the village looking east across the fields.
- F. View from the A140 /Hickling Lane looking south-west across the fields with the outline of St Peter's Church on the horizon.
- G. View of the entrance to The Vale.
- H. View of the bridleway beside Ivy House leading to Hickling Lane.
- I. Views from Hickling Lane which runs east-west from the A140 to Gowthorpe Lane and forms part of the northern border of the Parish of Swainsthorpe.

Development proposals within or which would affect an important public local view should not detract from or have an adverse impact upon the landscape or character or any key features of these views.

Proposals for new buildings outside the Settlement Boundaries should be accompanied by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, or other appropriate and proportionate evidence, which demonstrates how the proposal can be accommodated in the countryside without having a significant detrimental impact, by reason of the buildings' scale, materials and location, on the key features of the views.

Any development which would have a significant adverse impact upon the landscape or character of the view concerned will not be supported.

Objective 5: To mitigate against detrimental change, including new energy and infrastructure projects.

Major energy projects

- 8.42 Parts of the parish of Swainsthorpe lie within 0.1-0.8 miles from the Norwich Electricity Substation. The substation is undergoing major upgrading to allow for a significant increase in capacity to accommodate electricity generated

from the offshore windfarms in the North Sea. The additional capacity will facilitate ongoing electricity distribution to the rest of the country.

- 8.43 This rapid and significant expansion has resulted in a number of green energy transmission and storage developments either approved or currently proposed in the wider area. All of these developments will directly impact Swainsthorpe, by converting the arable fields around the built up area of the village including routes for substantial new pylons.
- 8.44 As at November 2025, these developments included the following (projects are shown on figure 34):
- Upgrade to the existing power line that runs through Swainsthorpe (completed in 2024).
 - National Grid has submitted an application for a Development Consent Order for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) consisting of an additional power line and pylons from Norwich Sub Station to Tilbury. The first part of the line directly impacts the village, particularly The Vale.
 - An extension to Norwich Main Substation more than doubling its size to allow the connection of the Hornsea 3 (Orsted) and the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extension Project (Equinor) wind farms and the connection of the Bloys Grove Solar Project and three BESS's as well as preparation for the connection of the Norwich to Tilbury.
 - A new Substation north of Hickling Lane to allow Equinor's SEP and DEP to connect to the Norwich Main Substation.
 - An 81 hectare solar farm (Bloys Grove) immediately south of Church Road with associated cabling, requiring major road works.

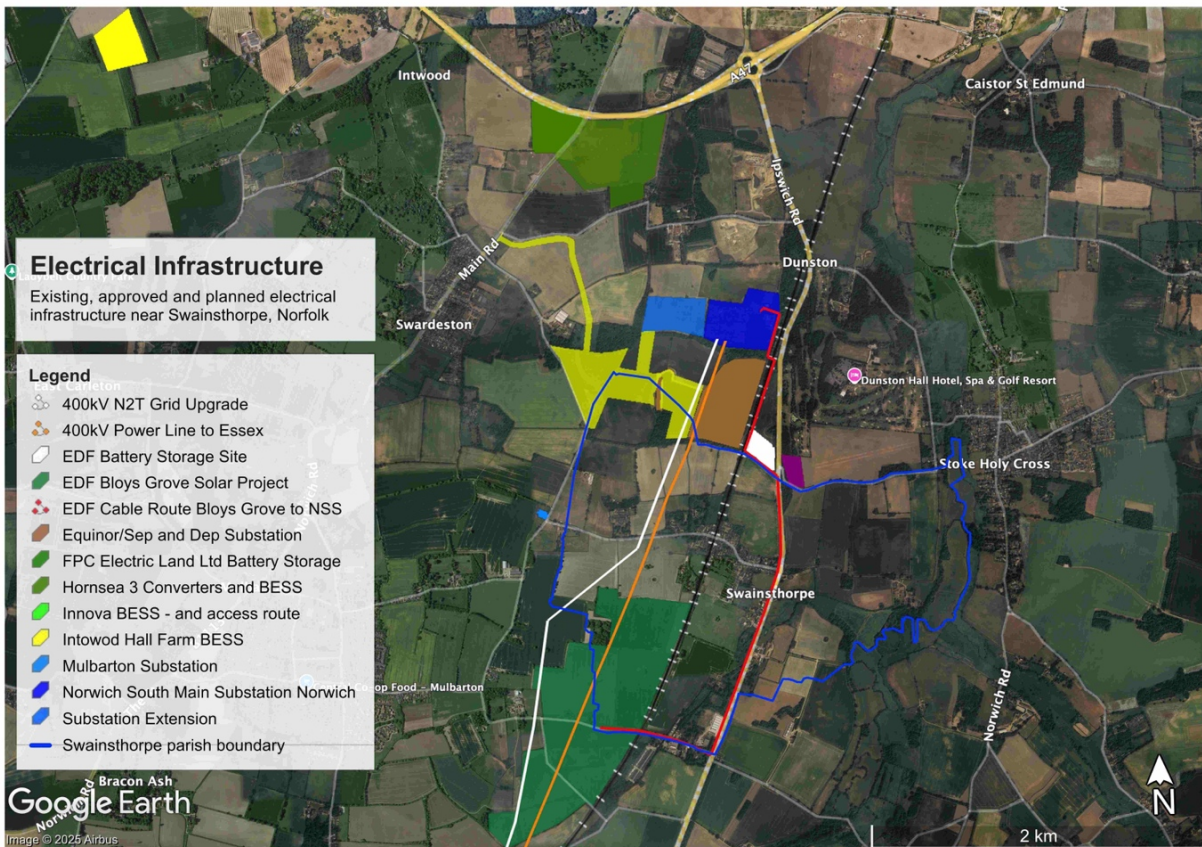


Figure 34: Electrical infrastructure projects in and around Swainsthorpe, (National Grid, with annotations with kind permission from Charles Carron-Brown). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

- 8.45 Given the relatively sudden proliferation of large-scale energy projects in the area, it is understandable that the subject was significantly represented in both the key issues consultation and the Household Survey results. Changes to the tranquil, rural character of the landscape and a transition to a more industrial landscape populated by large, imposing structures are key concerns.
- 8.46 Where energy projects are of a large scale they are often classed as 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects' (NSIPs) which means that instead of being determined locally by the local planning authority – in this case South Norfolk Council, they are instead determined by the Secretary of State because of their importance to the nation as a whole. NSIPs are determined using different weighting and therefore policies in the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans do not carry the weight they would if the proposals were to be determined more locally. This does make influencing them much more difficult. Swainsthorpe Parish Council would still be a statutory consultee on such projects, as would South Norfolk, Norfolk County Council Natural England and Historic England. However, because the decisions on such projects are made at a national level, there is a limit to the weight that can be given to adopted development plan policies such as the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.

- 8.47 However, the Secretary of State (SoS) must have regard to any Local Impact Report (LIR) submitted when deciding the application. The relevant county and district councils will each (or jointly) produce a Local Impact Report on each NSIP in their administrative boundaries. The LIR is expected to contain (amongst other matters) an appraisal of the project's compliance with all relevant local planning policy and guidance. Once adopted, the Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the local development plan and will thus be included in this appraisal.
- 8.48 Applications for some energy infrastructure and the majority of solar farms are however made at a more local level and determined by the Local Planning Authority. The NPPF advises that, when determining planning applications for all forms of renewable energy and low carbon energy, development and their associated infrastructure, that local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and should give significant weight to the benefits associated with them and their contribution to a net zero future.
- 8.49 In an attempt to address some of the main issues with developments of this nature, i.e. impacts on landscape South Norfolk Council commissioned The Landscape Partnership to undertake a study. This assesses the sensitivities and capacities of the various landscapes of South Norfolk district to accommodate energy-related NSIP and non-NSIP projects.
- 8.50 It is recognised that the district encompasses a number of different types of landscape, including river valleys, farmland plateau, settled plateau parkland, and urban fringe, as well as transitional areas, for example, between the plateau and the river valleys. Since different landscapes are defined by different physical and perceived qualities and attributes, it is likely that they will have differing resilience to a particular form of development. For example, a rural landscape could more readily accommodate a traditional barn, without changing the character of the area, whereas other types of development such as a distribution warehouse could potentially result in a significant change to the character of the landscape.
- 8.51 The aim of the study is to provide guidance for those seeking to identify suitable sites for the location of energy generation, storage and transmission projects. It will also be used to inform the council's responses to such proposals in the context of national and local planning policies and the need to reasonably minimise any adverse effects on the landscape and communities of South Norfolk. The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) plans positively for energy-related infrastructure but there is also high regard for the intrinsic beauty of the district and to safeguard it for generations to come. The study is written as an evidence document for protecting South Norfolk landscapes from inappropriate development that would harm that intrinsic beauty and character.
- 8.52 Applicants for energy-related projects should not underestimate the importance of landscape-related considerations when making a planning application. Development proposals in landscapes with a high susceptibility

and vulnerability to change will be considered less favourably, unless they provide significant and appropriate mitigations that reduce the harm.

- 8.53 The energy-related development scenarios considered in this study are:
- Solar photovoltaic panels (small scale up to 5MW, medium-field scale up to 15MW, and larger-scale 15to 50MW);
 - Larger scale solar 50+ MW
 - Anaerobic digestion (AD) plants (farm scale up to 1ha in size and larger installations up to 5ha);
 - Large scale battery storage facilities 1+ha;
 - Overhead powerlines (132kV lines that utilise smaller pylons) and 400kV lines that utilise the largest pylons;
 - Underground cable routes;
 - Substations.
- 8.54 The draft SPD was the subject of public consultation which ended in early September 2025. The final version was adopted in February 2026⁸. The document summarises the sensitivity of the three landscape character type within Swainsthorpe and their sensitivity to change. The A1 Tas Rural River Valley having a medium to high sensitivity to change and the B1 Tas Tributary Farmland and the D1 Wymondham Settled Plateau Farmland as having medium sensitivity. The sensitivity of the relevant landscape character types should be a consideration in the determination for such proposal and should also be taken into account to ensure that where schemes are permitted that suitable mitigatory measures are provided.
- 8.55 Where temporary impacts are anticipated as a result of construction; there should be an emphasis on timely restoration once works are complete. Local monitoring of the energy projects will be achieved through residents reporting to the Parish Council who will liaise directly with developers and on-site managers.

Note: It should be noted that the policy/supporting text does not relate to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) as this is 'excluded development' in relation to neighbourhood planning. See section 61K of [Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011](#)

Policy SWS9: Mitigating the impacts of energy projects

The impacts on the Neighbourhood Area (landscape, biodiversity, noise and disturbance) of energy infrastructure projects and associated developments (e.g. renewable energy projects, interconnectors, pylons, overhead wires, converter stations, pipelines etc.), including the cumulative impacts from multiple schemes, should be given significant weight in the determination of such schemes.

⁸ <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/planning/future-development/supplementary-planning-documents/supplementary-planning-documents-south-norfolk>

The sensitivity to change of the relevant landscape character type should be given significant weight in the determination of proposals. This could include the prominence and appearance of the scheme.

Where works take place which have temporary impacts, the emphasis should be on timely restoration once works have been completed.

All energy projects should seek to avoid/minimise any adverse impacts on the natural environment. High-value conservation sites, including designated sites should be avoided and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) should also be used to inform site selection. Once a site is selected and approved, opportunities to enhance local biodiversity should be maximised with existing ecological features retained. Appropriate species-rich buffers (at least 15m wide) should be used around the margins of solar farms and these buffers should be maintained as dark corridors for wildlife.

Where mitigatory or compensatory measures are identified which are considered necessary to remedy the permanent or long-term impacts of energy schemes on the landscape, natural environment, wildlife and nature recovery, historic environment or the residential amenity for the parish, these should be provided in the first instance directly where those impacts are most felt.

Only if this is not possible or practicable should they be provided elsewhere in the parish. Where such mitigations are required in respect of biodiversity, the standard biodiversity net gain metric of 10% should be applied in accordance with national policy.



DEFIBRILLATOR

DEFIBRILLATOR

P
OG

9. POLICIES: Community

Objective 5: To ensure Swainsthorpe maintains social cohesion and has the right facilities for the future needs of the community.

Community facilities

- 9.1 Whilst the parish has few community facilities (which limits its sustainability in terms of new development), those that exist are valued. The community wishes to see them protected from development or change of use which may adversely impact their community value.
- 9.2 The NPPF includes social, recreational and cultural facilities and services within this broad definition which includes local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. In Swainsthorpe, the principal facilities which would fall within his category are St Peter's Church, Village Green, the children's play area, the allotments and The Sugar Beat Eating House.
- 9.3 The Household Survey results indicated that although facilities were few there was support for their continued retention. Policy SWS10 below seek to address this issue. The community facilities are managed by The Parish Council, The Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust and the Parochial Church Council.

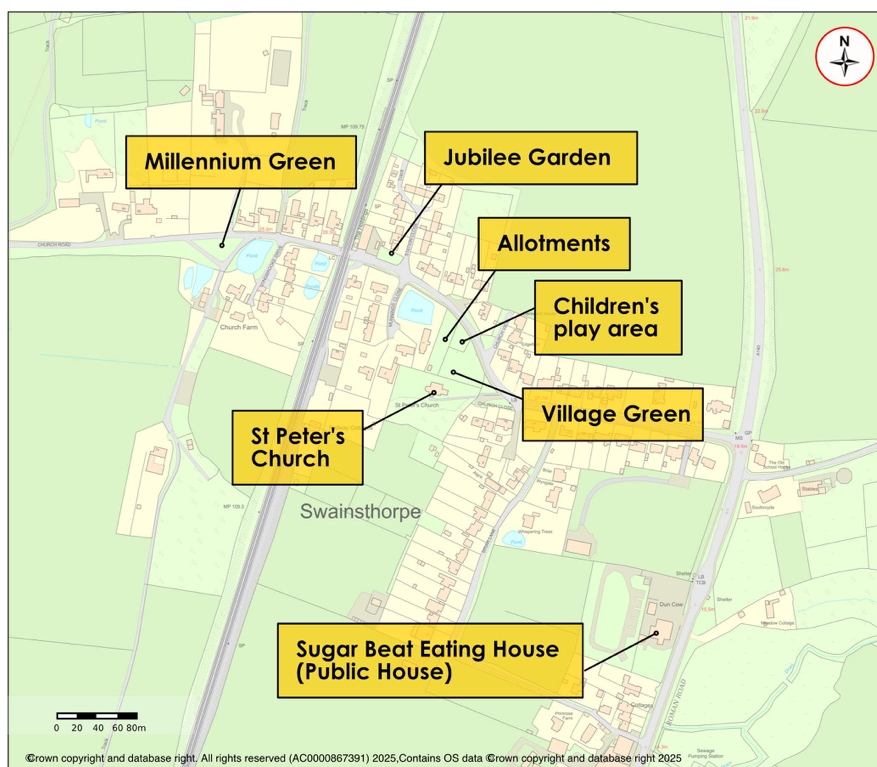


Figure 35: Community facilities (source: Parish Online, with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

Policy SWS10: Community facilities

The parish has the following community facilities (figure 35):

- a. St Peter's Church, including community centre.
- b. Village Green.
- c. Children's Play area
- d. Sugar Beat Eating House (Public House).
- e. Millennium Green.
- f. Jubilee Garden.
- g. Allotments.

Proposals for development including changes of use which would involve the potential loss of one of the existing community facilities (identified above) will not be supported. The exception will be where an improved or equivalent facility can be located elsewhere in the parish in an equally convenient, safe and accessible location, or where there is no reasonable prospect of continued viable use, and this can be sufficiently demonstrated.

New community facilities

- 9.4 In the context of understanding what if any new community facilities might be supported by residents, the Household Survey asked a specific question about the village centre and how it might be improved. Notwithstanding the fact that the village centre is very sensitive due to its important views of St Peter's Church and its heritage setting, there are established issues associated with it in terms of on street car parking, particularly as the church is used as the main community meeting place in the parish.
- 9.5 The survey results revealed a desire to improve the parking position and there was a high degree of localised support should an opportunity for a community building in this or another location come forward. This would be particularly supported if it helped to alleviate the current parking issues. However, It was also clear that the historic and environmental sensitivity of this part of the village centre was understood by the community and therefore this remains an aspiration rather than a firm proposal. There was also very little support for additional streetlighting here.
- 9.6 This Neighbourhood Plan is not seeking to allocate or identify land for a site-specific proposal.



10. Implementation and monitoring

Implementation

- 10.1 The Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to assist with the planning of sustainable growth across the parish for a period up to 2046. The implementation of the 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.
- 10.2 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 district council and a developer, or landowner (usually in the context of a planning application). Planning obligations⁹ 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, libraries or transport.
- 10.3 In order to see delivery realised, it will require Swainsthorpe Parish Council and partner organisations to be proactive in getting the best results for the parish of Swainsthorpe.

Monitoring

- 10.4 There is no formal requirement or timetable for the review of neighbourhood plans. However, it is good practice to report on the use of the 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.
- 10.5 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, Swainsthorpe Parish Council will monitor development in the parish along with local and national planning policy and the appropriate legislative context.

⁹ Norfolk County Council's Planning Obligations Guidance:
<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/38629/Planning-obligations>

- 10.6 Paragraph 14, of the National Planning Policy Framework (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 Swainsthorpe 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.



Appendix A: Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members

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

- Elaine Parkinson, Chair Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- Andy Haggith, Vice Chair Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Vice Chair Swainsthorpe Parish Council, Member Parochial Church Council

- Ros Callis, local resident
- Joe Casey, Swainsthorpe Parish Councillor
- Ann Chandler, Chair Swainsthorpe Parish Council, Member Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust
- Maureen Chapman, local resident of The Vale. Member The Vale Directors
- Annette Cooper, Swainsthorpe Parish Councillor
- Nicki Craft, Swainsthorpe Parish Councillor
- Geoff Curran, Swainsthorpe Parish Councillor
- Sheena Curran, Member Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust
- Robin Parkinson, Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust
- Susan Peters Corbett, Member Parochial Church Council, Member Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust
- Margaret Robins, Swainsthorpe Parish Councillor, Member Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust
- Gail Wilson, local resident

Consultant Team:

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

Appendix B: Swainsthorpe Design Guidance and Codes (2025)

Attached document.

Appendix C: Justification of Local Green Spaces

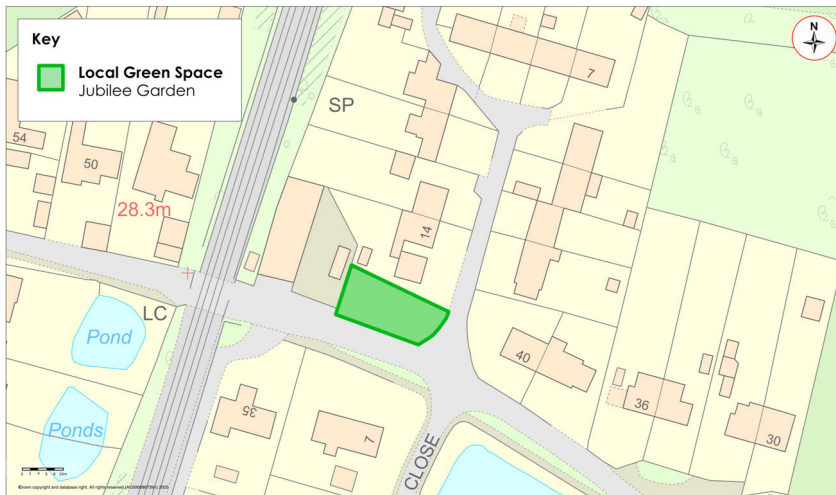
The tables below outline the justification for the inclusion of each Local Green Space identified. The criteria are based on the National Planning Policy Framework.

1. Village Green (including children's play area)	
<p>Situated in the centre of the village adjoining the Church. It was acquired in the late 1990s as a community facility and is managed by the Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust. This part has a fenced play park and is the venue for many village events e.g. the summer fete, Christmas Carols on the green, children's events and is a popular meeting space. The small green triangle with the village sign and phone box is common land managed by Swainsthorpe Parish Council.</p>	
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Centrally located within the main built-up area of the village. Surrounded by existing development.
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 or richness of its wildlife	Community value through its use for community events, the location of the children's play area, the village sign and the old phone box which contains a defibrillator and library.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Approximately 0.25 hectares in total with clearly defined boundaries within the built-up area.

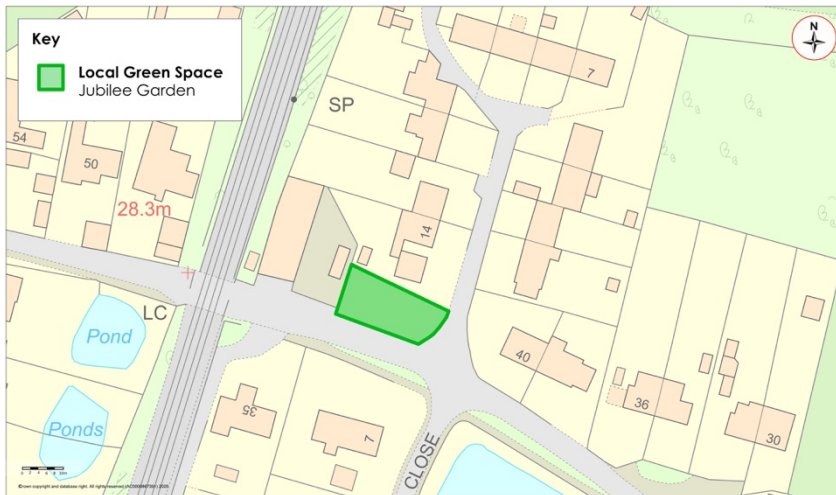




2. Millennium Green	
<p>Located west of the railway line and bordered by Church Road, surrounded by farmhouses, converted barns and a 17th century cottage with lots of mature trees. Contains a bench seat. Ducks and moorhens frequent the green from the many ponds round about. The western corner houses the village recycling area hidden by green hedging. In 2005 villagers celebrated the bicentenary of the battle of Trafalgar by planting an oak tree in the centre called Nelson's Oak.</p>	
<p>In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves</p>	<p>Located west of the railway in the historic part of the village, with residential dwellings in close proximity.</p>
<p>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 or richness of its wildlife</p>	<p>Community value through its establishment as a green, its use for the village recycling area and the bench seat for community use. Also has historic value through its commemoration of the battle of Trafalgar and the planting of the oak tree.</p>
<p>Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land</p>	<p>Approximately 0.05 hectares in total, has clearly defined boundaries and does not extend into open countryside.</p>



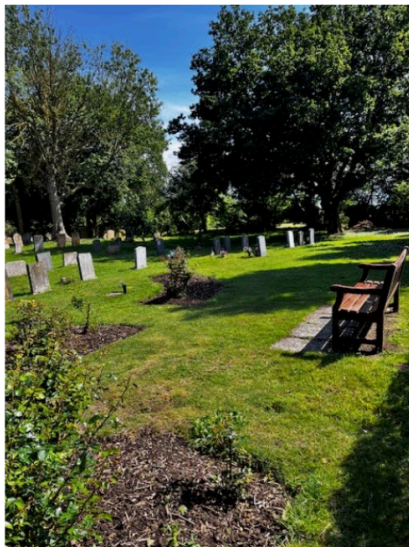
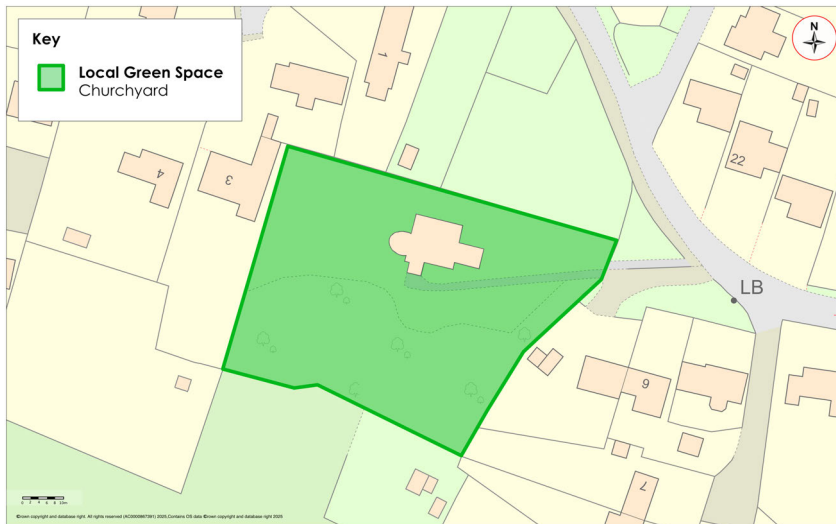
3. Jubilee Garden	
This recently acquired green space has been cleared entirely by residents of the village working together to create a small oasis in the centre of the village. It is situated at the entrance to Station Close and bordered by a mature hedge screening Church Road. The garden has a bench donated by a local family. It is planted with trees, roses and a small box hedge at its entrance. A small plaque dedicates the garden to Queen Elizabeth’s Jubilee in 2022.	
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Located centrally in the village, east of the railway and at the entrance to a residential development.
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 or richness of its wildlife	Community value through its establishment as a garden for community use. Historic value due to its association with Queen Elizabeth II.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Approximately 0.02 hectares in total with clearly defined boundaries within the built up area of the village.



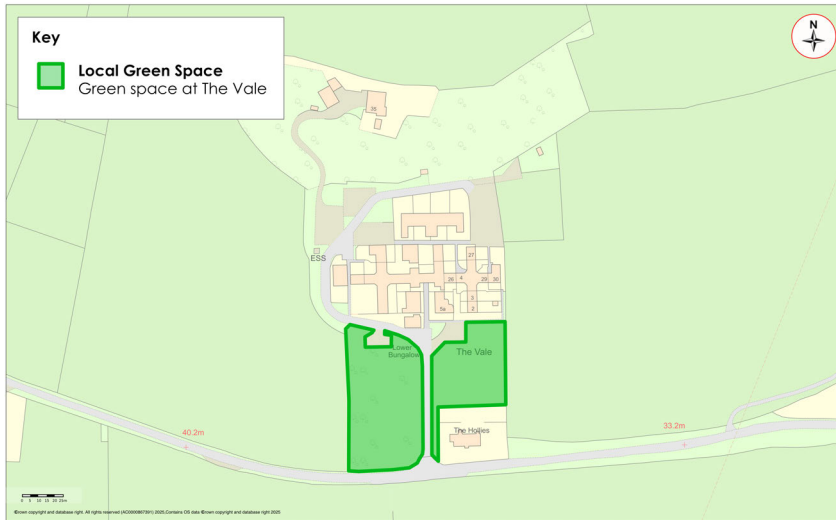
4. Churchyard

The Church is surrounded by the churchyard, which is an active burial ground for residents of the parish and includes a wildflower meadow and mature trees. It is used by villagers and visitors for relaxation and contemplation. The churchyard has been well managed by the Parochial Church Council and Swainsthorpe Parish Council. The gravestones have all been documented and include a notable Art Deco gravestone and Commonwealth War Grave of historical interest. The oldest gravestone dates from 1699. There are native hedges surrounding the church on three sides and the south side borders a meadow. There are ruins of a flint wall by the gateway entrance and on the south side.

In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Located centrally within the main built-up area of the village
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 or richness of its wildlife	Space has community value by virtue of its use as a churchyard and burial ground. It has historic value due to its association with the church and has a wildlife value due to the specific way it is managed by the Parochial Church Council to the benefit of wildlife.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Approximately 0.4 hectares; located centrally with clearly defined boundaries.



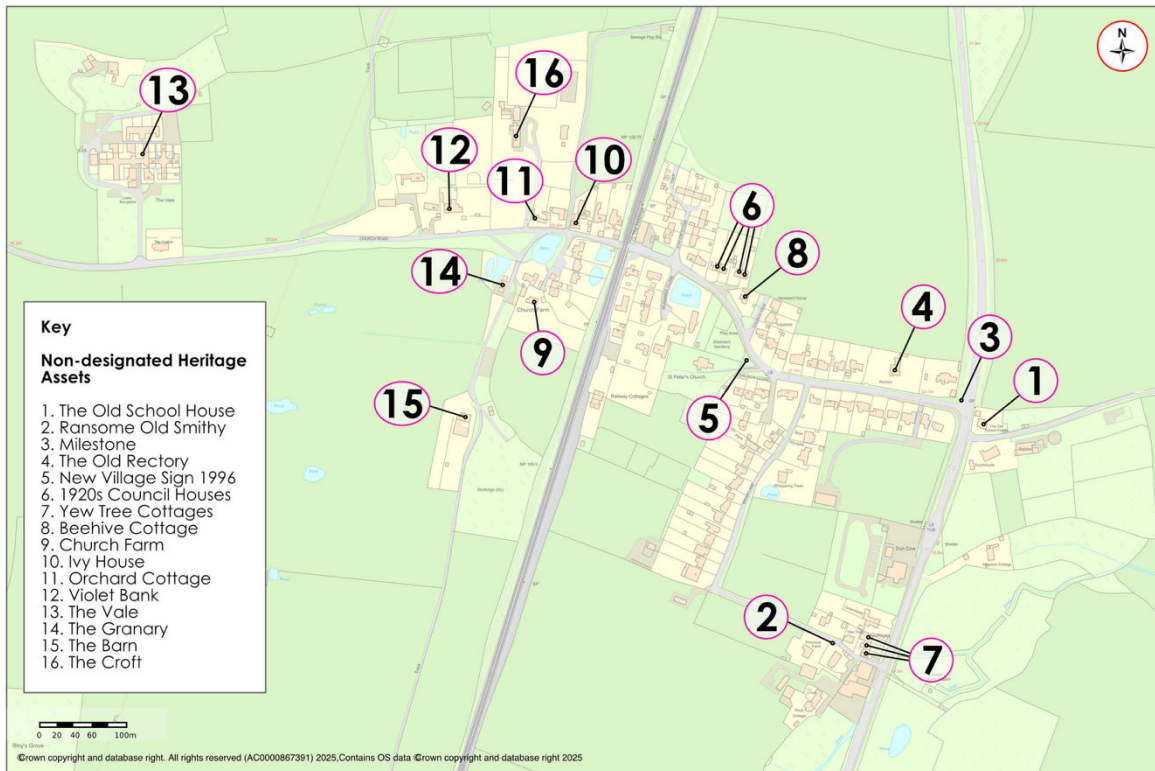
5. Green space at The Vale	
The extensive private grounds surrounding The Vale are well maintained with seating to enjoy the pleasant green vistas.	
In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves	Immediately surrounds The Vale which is a former workhouse and now an area of private housing.
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 or richness of its wildlife	Holds a community value to the residents of The Vale and is part of the communal grounds to the development. Has an historic value providing the setting for the former Victorian workhouse building.
Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land	Approximately 0.9 hectares; clearly defined boundaries within the specific setting of The Vale building.



Appendix D: Justification of Non-designated Heritage Assets

The tables below outlined the justification for the inclusion of important character buildings and historic features. The criteria are based on the 'Local Heritage Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7', page 9.

- Age: The age of an asset may be an important criterion, and the age range can be adjusted to take into account distinctive local characteristics or building traditions.
- Rarity: Appropriate for all assets, as judged against local characteristics.
- Architectural and Artistic Interest: The intrinsic design and aesthetic value of an asset relating to local and/or national styles, materials, construction and craft techniques, or any other distinctive characteristics.
- Architectural and Artistic Interest: The intrinsic design and aesthetic value of an asset relating to local and/or national styles, materials, construction and craft techniques, or any other distinctive characteristics.
- Group Value: Groupings of assets with a clear visual design or historic relationship.
- Archaeological Interest: The local heritage asset may provide evidence about past human activity in the locality, which may be in the form of buried remains, but may also be revealed in the structure of buildings or in a designed landscape, for instance. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are primary sources of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
- Historic Interest: A significant historical association of local or national note, including links to important local figures, may enhance the significance of a heritage asset. Blue Plaque and similar schemes may be relevant. Social and communal interest may be regarded as a sub-set of historic interest but has special value in local listing. As noted in the PPG: 'Heritage assets ... can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity'. It therefore relates to places perceived as a source of local identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence, contributing to the 'collective memory' of a place.
- Landmark Status: An asset with strong communal or historical associations, or because it has especially striking aesthetic value, may be singled out as a landmark within the local scene.



Repeated Non-designated Heritage Assets map (source: Parish Online, with own annotations).

1. The Old School House, Ipswich Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PU, A140 east side opposite Church Road junction.
Age	1874.
Rarity	Unique to Swainsthorpe,
Architectural & artistic interest	Brick built and tiled construction with original large hall with two fireplaces.
Group Value	Was the village school and then used as a community centre for the village.
Archaeological interest	None.
Historic interest	It was built as the village school with funding from Rev Long of Dunston Hall. At one point it had 80-90 pupils including children from the workhouse. It closed in the 1920's and briefly re-opened in 1939 during the war. It was listed in the 1957 auction of the Dunston Estate when Rev Long acquired it and gifted it to the village as a community centre. It was a popular venue for dancing and events with a thriving social club. Gradually attendance dropped, the A140 became busier and residents wanted to find a new village hall, so in 1969 it was sold and the money raised put into trust for the local community.
Landmark status	Visible on the A140 and throughout its various functions, residents would have known where the building was.



2. Ransome Old Smithy, Briar Lane	
Location/address	NR14 8PJ, eastern end of Briar Lane, next to Primrose Cottage, behind the garages on the A140.
Age	Is on the map of 1817.
Rarity	Sign states 'Ransomes Patent Ploughs and Irons kept in stock'.
Architectural & artistic interest	Traditional gable end clay tiled roof. The external walls remain in the original footprint and status. It does not appear to have been converted into living accommodation.
Group Value	Old building in the village.
Archaeological interest	Unknown.
Historic interest	Old business from the past in Swainsthorpe, reflecting the agricultural history. Later years, teenagers used to meet there and socialise.
Landmark status	Obvious old building would have originally fronted on to the Norwich Road (A140).



3. Turnpike Milestone at A140/Church Road junction	
Location/address	At the junction of Church Road with the A140. Surrounded by a maintained patch of land with a trough of seasonal flowers and greenery.
Age	Unknown.
Rarity	None, many milestones exist.
Architectural & artistic interest	Similar to other milestones.
Group Value	Denotes the importance of the village as a throughfare to Norwich through the ages and has been recently listed for Group value with the Bridge (https://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?MNF63908)
Archaeological interest	A140 used to be the Pye Road in Roman times and the Sugar Beat (previously the Dun Cow) was a coaching house so a sign was probably there for a long time.
Historic interest	Traditional milestone.
Landmark status	Indicates the distance to Norwich.



4. The Old Rectory, 6 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PH, 6 Church Road
Age	Mid-Victorian
Rarity	Distinctive.
Architectural & artistic interest	Typical Victorian Rectory.
Group Value	Home of Rectors until 1970s.
Archaeological interest	None known.
Historic interest	Important to village, Victorian.
Landmark status	Visible from A140 on approach to village.



5. New Village Sign 1996	
Location/address	NR14 8PH, centre of the village by St Peter's Church, at the entrance to the village green.
Age	The new sign was created by residents in 1996 and renovated by Swainsthorpe Parish Council in 2022.
Rarity	Unique to Swainsthorpe.
Architectural & artistic interest	Denotes the rural nature and history of the village with a plough and horses with the Church and village green in the background.
Group Value	Valued by residents of the village and visitors as a reference point.
Archaeological interest	Copied from a previous sign and hand painted by a local artist Robin Harrison.
Historic interest	Residents of the village were very involved in the design of the new sign and raised £750. It was unveiled at a ceremony on 20 th July 1996 by Daphne Collins who had lived in the village for 78 years.
Landmark status	Indicates where the centre of the village is and the name of the village.



6. 1920s Council Houses, 30-36 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PH, 30-36 Church Road.
Age	1921.
Rarity	None – occur in many villages.
Architectural & artistic interest	Standard design of council houses in 1920s.
Group Value	Now owner occupiers.
Archaeological interest	None known.
Historic interest	May have been built in response to the Housing Act 1919 'Addison Act' which was an ambitious attempt to create homes following WW1. Building in villages was to relieve overcrowding in towns and give families more open healthy spaces. 6 Church Close was the post office for a while.
Landmark status	Centre of the village.



7. Yew Tree Cottages, junction Briar Lane and the A140	
Location/address	NR14 8PU, A140 and Briar Lane junction.
Age	Typical C19th tudor-inspired estate cottages and probably replaced the earlier C17 th cottages (probably built at same time as Dunston Hall – mid to late C19th).
Rarity	Old Norfolk building.
Architectural & artistic interest	Yew Tree Cottages with their distinctive chimneys. Fishscale slate also fairly typical of C19th estate cottages. Initially, Yew Tree Farmhouse, which now comprises the cottages, was part of a larger farm complex, including a barn with timber frame and clay lump architecture.
Group Value	Would have been an asset to the village.
Archaeological interest	None known.
Historic interest	Was the first village Post Office opened in early 1900s until 1960s. Prior to that was a shop selling homemade butter and home-produced pork. Became a care home and now converted to three separate residences.
Landmark status	Noticeable from A140.



8. Beehive Cottage, 28 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PH, 28 Church Road.
Age	Not known, but there is a property marked in the Ordnance Surveyor's drawing of 1817. At least early Victorian. Its name has changed over the years and for a while was known as Violet Bank. Beehive Cottage as a name only appears in the 1939 Register.
Rarity	One of the older properties on Church Road.
Architectural & artistic interest	Attractive half-timbered style, with dormer window in keeping with Orchard Cottage and Ivy House. Cruciform layout.
Group Value	Medium, as part of pre-1900 heritage.
Archaeological interest	None known.
Historic interest	Was part of the Dunston Estate Auction 1957.
Landmark status	Visible from Church Road.



9. Church Farm, 6 Longbrooke Drive	
Location/address	NR14 8SN, 6 Longbrooke Drive
Age	Pre-1817 and over 200 years old.
Rarity	Norfolk farmhouse
Architectural & artistic interest	Originally traditional timber frame farmhouse with brick extension. It was adapted into two residences at the turn of the century.
Group Value	Reflects the agricultural heritage of the village.
Archaeological interest	Adjoining fields have yielded a rich history of Anglo-Saxon finds.
Historic interest	Was the centre of a large farm complex with barns and cart sheds working over 200 acres of farmland, owned by the Dunston Estate. It was sold at the Dunston Estate auction in 1957 then became derelict by 1976. It was renovated and in 1977 bought as a single family home. It was the home of Sir Alfred Munnings between 1906 -1911 who described the farm and took inspiration from it and the surrounding countryside in his famous paintings.
Landmark status	Would have been a central landmark in the village. Now less visible as the surrounding land sold off for housing development.



10. Ivy House, 52 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PR, 52 Church Road.
Age	Pre-1817.
Rarity	Typical of the period.
Architectural & artistic interest	One of the older houses in the village with red Brick and tiled roof.
Group Value	Reflects the history of the village.
Archaeological interest	None known.
Historic interest	Part of the Dunston Estate Auction 1957.
Landmark status	Visible from Church Road Known by residents of the village.



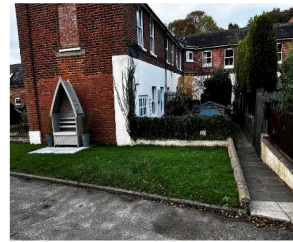
11. Orchard Cottage, 58 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PR, 58 Church Road.
Age	Mid-17 th century
Rarity	One of few remaining old cottages in the village.
Architectural & artistic interest	Brick construction under pantile roof.
Group Value	Classic Norfolk cottage.
Archaeological interest	None known.
Historic interest	Was the Wheelwrights cottage on the 1901 census with large grounds (later sold).
Landmark status	Indicated as cottage, garden, and orchard on the 1839 tithe map.



12. Violet Bank, 66 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PR, 66 Church Road.
Age	Small original part dates back to 1570.
Rarity	Individual yet in keeping with local rural architecture.
Architectural & artistic interest	All replacements and renovations done aesthetically and in keeping with the original structure.
Group Value	Part of the rural historic sense of the village.
Archaeological interest	None – reputed to have a well.
Historic interest	Violet Bank has undergone many alterations over the years and it is thought that the Havers family, descendants of Gilbert Havers (1541-1628), lived here. Gilbert Havers is commemorated with a special brass plaque seen on the south wall of the chancel in St Peter’s Church. He married Francis (Dr) heir of Thomas Nash formerly of Swainsthorpe. More recent times was the home of Ursula and Major - General Lloyd Owen DSO, MC, OBE,CB (1917-2001) (ref: <i>David Chapman History Guide 2020</i>).
Landmark status	Known to residents of the village.



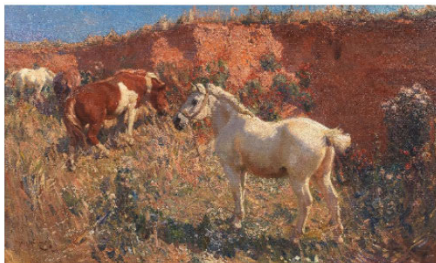
13. The Vale, Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PL, Church Road Swainsthorpe.
Age	1836.
Rarity	Typical workhouse design.
Architectural & artistic interest	Classic workhouse cruciform design by John Brown the County Surveyor. Built using around a million bricks made locally.
Group Value	Residents value the peaceful unspoilt setting of well-maintained green spaces.
Archaeological interest	Surrounding fields yielded Anglo-Saxon finds.
Historic interest	Workhouse built in 1836 following the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. Local bricks were used. It housed approximately 100 people. During WW1, between 1915 - 1919, part was converted to a VAD Hospital. In 1948 it became an NHS hospital serving elderly mentally ill people. This closed in 1984 and was then sympathetically converted into residencies.
Landmark status	Has maintained mostly the original footprint and unencumbered setting. Visible and known to the village.



14. The Granary, 45 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PR, The Granary, 45 Church Road
Age	Church Farm on map dated 1817.
Rarity	Typical Norfolk barn.
Architectural & artistic interest	Old red brick with wood cladding and internal beams and clay tiles.
Group Value	Reflects the agricultural heritage of Swainsthorpe.
Archaeological interest	Surrounding fields yielded Anglo-Saxon finds.
Historic interest	Old converted farm building on what was Church Farm. Has old farm ponds which encourage wild life.
Landmark status	Identified from Church Road bordering the Millenium Green.



15. The Barn, 43 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PR, 43 Church Road.
Age	Originally built early to mid C19th as a hay barn, one of several agricultural buildings servicing Church Farm.
Rarity	A common Norfolk vernacular building, originally comprising two storeys used for storage, with a number of sheds attached as storage for agricultural carts and machinery. The barn was built of brick; probably sourced locally, as would be the timber.
Architectural & artistic interest	A typical Norfolk tithe barn, with elevated gable ends, access doors to the upper and lower floors with a pantile roof. The cart sheds were open. The building became derelict and was sympathetically converted to a residence in the early 1990s. The cart shed was converted into a garage and the storage yard reconfigured into a courtyard garden. Historic Environment Record refers to a timber framed barn on the site: MNF14129 - Norfolk Heritage Explorer.
Group Value	Agricultural heritage of Swainsthorpe.
Archaeological interest	Surrounding fields subject to recent archaeological surveys with many interesting finds.
Historic interest	Was originally the barn and cart sheds attached to Church Farm. Alfred Munnings painted in the land surrounding the barn. A famous painting being 'The Old Gravel Pit Swainsthorpe' 1902.
Landmark status	None.



Painting photograph with permission from the Munnings Museum, Dedham

16. The Croft, 60 Church Road	
Location/address	NR14 8PR, 60 Church Road.
Age	1923.
Rarity	Unusual in Norfolk.
Architectural & artistic interest	Sussex house style made famous by the Arts and Crafts architectural movement. Handmade pantile roof with side hung tiles to the upper storey and has casement leaded windows throughout. Original stables, tack room and workshops remain. All additional buildings built with original reference to the arts and craft style using identical materials.
Group Value	Stands in 5 acres with 400 mature trees including 10 black poplar trees which are the rarest species in Britain (only 700 female black poplars remaining).
Archaeological interest	Surrounding fields subject to recent archaeological survey with many interesting finds.
Historic interest	The house was built in an orchard originally attached to Orchard Cottage. It had an internal well with water pumped by a Lister pump.
Landmark status	Hidden from the road.



Appendix E: Glossary

Glossary of terms used and/or relevant to the Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan and supporting submission documents. Definitions are taken directly from the glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024, except where stated.

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:

- a) **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.
- b) **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).
- (c) **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.
- (d) **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 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.

Brownfield land: see Previously developed land.

Build to Rent: Purpose built housing that is typically 100% rented out. It can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses, but should be on the same site and/or contiguous with the main development. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more, and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control.

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: Is 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.

Early years: The provision of childcare (including education) for a young child, meaning a child from birth to the September after the child turns 5.

Geodiversity: The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

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 wellbeing 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 and 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.

Non-strategic policies: Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.

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: 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.

Post-16: Young people who are over compulsory school age but under 19, or aged 19 or over and for whom an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is maintained.

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.

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.

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.

Spatial development strategy: A plan containing strategic policies prepared by a Mayor or a combined authority. It includes the London Plan (prepared under provisions in the Greater London Authority Act 1999) and plans prepared by combined authorities that have been given equivalent plan-making functions by an order made under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (as amended).

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: 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.

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.

