



# Burton Overy Neighbourhood Plan

**2018 -2031**



Submission version

MARCH 2018

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# Foreword

On 31 July 2015, Burton Overy Parish Council was successful with its application to Harborough District Council to become a Qualifying Body for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. The Designated area was the existing Parish Council boundary.

The Parish Council has produced the Burton Overy Neighbourhood Plan with assistance from an Advisory Committee including Parish Council members, community volunteers, and interested individuals in the community and help from the District Council and other agencies.

The Neighbourhood Plan will form the basis for planning decisions applicable to Burton Overy Parish, up to 2031, together with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which embrace the whole of the country and the Local Plan for Harborough District which covers the area controlled by the District Council. It is the District Council as the Local Planning Authority who will continue to determine planning applications, but they will have to consider the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan when reaching their decision.

The Burton Overy Neighbourhood Plan reflects community-wide comments, observations and concerns about its future, bringing them together with Census information, strategic and statistical evidence into a document that mirrors the community's overwhelming desire to make Burton Overy an even better place to live, both now and for future generations. The Census information covers areas outside of the Parish due to its small size, but the trends and general make-up of the Parish remain valid.

The Plan sets out a Vision with aspirations and planning policy aims to help shape future development in Burton Overy. The policies aim to address key concerns raised by local people including protecting the character of the village and surrounding area. Some of the issues raised cannot be directly addressed by planning policies within the Neighbourhood Plan but are included as 'Community Actions' to support the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Community consultation events including Open Events and a Community Questionnaire have sat alongside membership of the Advisory Committee and several 'Theme Groups' and have enabled local people to be involved at a level to reflect their circumstances to contribute to identifying the changes that the local community wishes to see in Burton Overy. A detailed description of community consultation activities is available as Appendix 1.

Having incorporated comments from residents and local and statutory consultees, the Neighbourhood Plan is now ready to be submitted to Harborough District Council. A Basic Condition Statement, detailing the relationship between the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and local, national and EU strategic policies is

attached as Appendix 2.

We are grateful to Officers at Harborough District Council and the wider community for their involvement in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Burton Overy is an attractive and popular place in which to live, and the contribution from people who care about their community and want to make it better for generations to come is greatly appreciated.

***Mark Firth***

*Chair, Burton Overy Neighbourhood  
Plan Advisory Committee*

***Frances Brown***

*Chair, Burton Overy Parish Council*

**March 2018**



# 1. Background and context

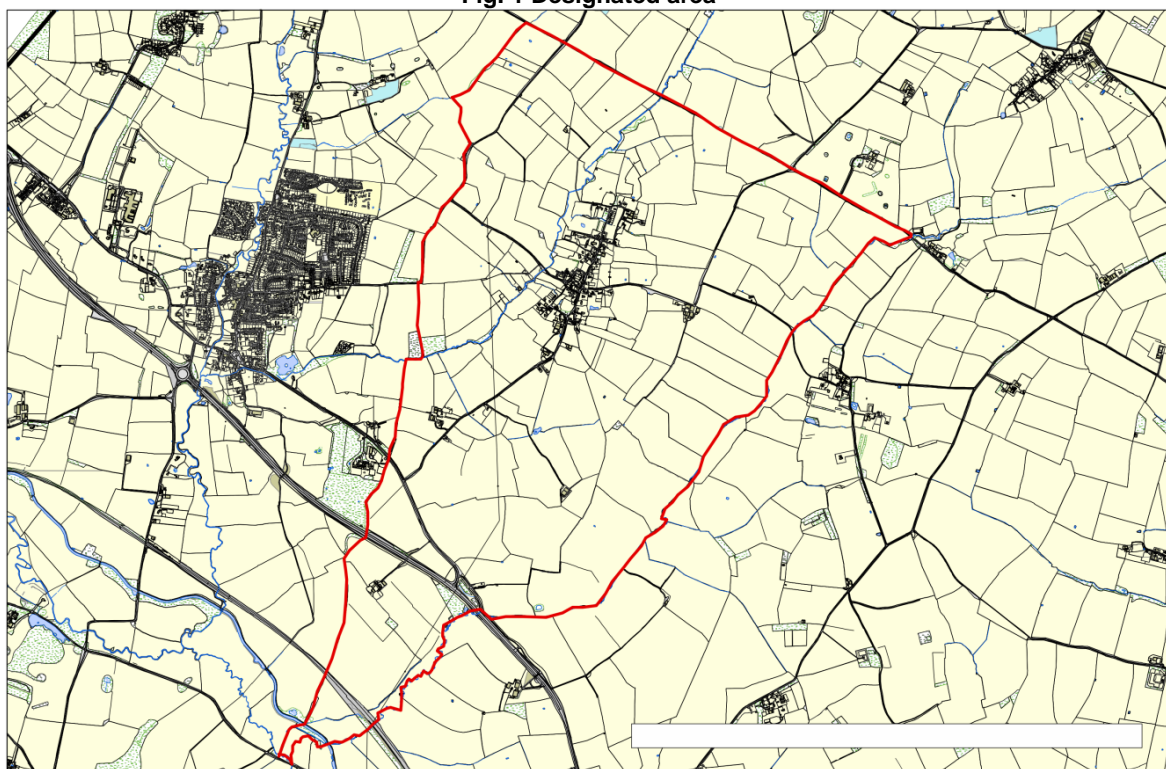
## Introduction

A key part of the Government's Localism agenda, a Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document that gives local people greater control and say over how their community develops, now and in the future. This includes, for example, where new homes and businesses etc. should be built; what new buildings and extensions should look like and which areas of land should be protected from development.

As the *Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011* states, "Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live".

The Plan covers the whole of the Parish of Burton Overy. It sets out a long-term approach for the development of Burton Overy and set out clear development-related policies to realise this.

Fig. 1 Designated area



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In preparing a Neighbourhood Plan a community is not working from 'a blank piece of paper'. Legislation requires that the Plan, and the policies it contains, must be prepared in a prescribed manner; in particular, the policies must be in general conformity with relevant national and district wide (i.e. Harborough) approved strategic planning policies.

The Plan is now being formally submitted to Harborough District Council.

Once it has successfully passed this stage, it will then go to an Independent Examiner, who will check to see that it has been prepared in the prescribed manner. If the Plan successfully passes this stage, with any modifications, it will be put forward to referendum, where those on the electoral register in Burton Overy Parish will be invited to vote on whether or not they support it. At least 50% of those voting must approve it for the Burton Overy Neighbourhood Plan to become a 'Made' statutory planning document.

Whilst planning applications will still be determined by Harborough District Council, and in special circumstances Leicestershire County Council, the production of a Neighbourhood Plan will mean that they must have regard to the provisions of the Plan and the relevant locally formulated criteria when reaching planning decisions that affect Burton Overy Parish. This means that the residents of the Parish will have a far greater control over where development takes place, and what it looks like.

It should be noted, however, it is not at the 'Made' stage when the provisions of the Plan first need to be taken into account when considering planning decisions by Harborough DC and others. It is at the submission stage, whereby while decision makers need to bear in mind that it is still a draft, legislation requires that the more advanced the preparation of the Plan the greater the 'weight' that may be given to its contents. Indeed, the Plan has added importance in guiding and shaping development in the absence of an up to date district wide Local Plan.

## How the Plan was prepared

The Plan has been prepared by the Burton Overy Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee.

This Advisory Committee comprises members of the local community and local Parish Councillors, with the support of Harborough District Council and consultants *Yourlocale*, and under the direction of Burton Overy Parish Council (the Accountable Body for the Plan).

It is based on a range of evidence sources. This includes statistical information gathered through the Census as well as from community consultation and engagement.

Effective and extensive consultation has been at the heart of the preparation of the Plan. This is key to ensuring that the Plan fully reflects local need and priorities. There have been a variety of consultation exercises over the last 12 months, at which many local people have taken part. These include drop-in sessions, a questionnaire, and focussed meetings on specific topics with residents and stakeholders.

## How the Plan fits into the planning system

The right for communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans was established through the Localism Act 2011, which set out the general rules governing their preparation.

A Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area in which it is prepared. This statutory status means that it must be taken into account when considering planning decisions affecting that area.

One of the main rules governing the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan is that it must be in line with European regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations. It must also be in general conformity with national, county and district wide (i.e. Harborough) planning policies. This means that it cannot be prepared in isolation. It will need to take into account, and generally work with, the grain of the district wide and national policies unless there are good reasons for not doing so.

At the local level, the key planning document which a Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to is the District Wide Local Plan. In the case of Burton Overy, this is the Harborough District Local Plan.

This requirement, however, for the Plan to be in general conformity with the adopted District Wide Local Plan is complicated by the revised timescale for the production of the new Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 (which will replace the saved policies from the Harborough Core Strategy 2006-2028 [including retained policies from the Harborough District Local Plan 2001] and are now a bit dated). The new Local Plan is now expected to be Adopted in 2018. Nevertheless, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considered it expedient to proceed with the Plan based on the best available evidence, including that contained in the draft Local Plan.

Also important is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF requires the planning system (including Neighbourhood Plans) to encourage sustainable development and details three dimensions to that development:

- An economic dimension – policies should contribute to economic development;
- A social dimension – policies should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the right supply of housing and creating a high quality built environment with accessible local services; and

- An environmental dimension – policies should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

## The Neighbourhood Plan and what we want it to achieve

The Plan area encompasses the whole of the Parish of Burton Overy and covers the period up to 2031, a timescale which deliberately mirrors that for the draft Harborough Local Plan.

The main purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is not to duplicate national or district-wide (i.e. Harborough) planning policies, but to sit alongside these, to add additional or more detailed policies specific to Burton Overy Parish. Where there are national and district-wide planning policies that meet the needs and requirements of the Parish they are not repeated here.

Instead, the Plan focuses on those planning issues which consultation shows matter most to the community, and to which the Plan can add the greatest additional value. These include policies that:

- Ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations;
- Encourage the right types of development that meet local needs;
- Protect important buildings and structures of historic and architectural interest;
- Protect important community facilities and shops;
- Promote high quality design in new development;
- Protect the countryside and special landscape; and
- Protect open spaces that are important to the community and/or wildlife.

Furthermore, these locally formulated policies will be specific to Burton Overy Parish and reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

**It is important to note that when using the Plan to form a view on a development proposal or a policy issue the whole document and the policies contained in it must be considered together.**

While every effort has been made to make the main parts of this Plan easy to read and understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal, so that it complies with statutory requirements.

The Plan will be kept under review and may change over time in response to new and changing needs and requirements.



## How the Neighbourhood Plan supports sustainable development

According to the key national planning document – the NPPF- the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development.

The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and to enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own social, economic and environmental needs.

The NPPF carries a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, environmental and economic, all of which are important and interrelated. In accordance with this, the Plan's aims and policies are centred on the achievement of sustainable development, including by, for example:

### **a) Social**

- To safeguard existing open space for the enjoyment of residents;
- To protect existing community facilities; and
- To deliver a mix of housing types, so that it can meet the needs of present and future generations.

### **b) Environmental**

- To ensure that housing development is of the right quantity and type in the right location, so that it does not harm but instead positively reflects the existing and historic character of the area;
- To protect important open spaces from development,
- To ensure that the design of development enhances the Parish's special character and identity;
- To protect and, where possible, improve biodiversity and important habitats; and
- To make provision for improved pedestrian and cycling facilities, as appropriate.

### **c) Economic**

- To protect existing employment uses;

- To ensure effective broadband speeds in new development;
- To support appropriate small-scale farm diversification and business development; and
- To encourage appropriate start-up businesses and home working.

## 3. Burton Overy Village

### A brief history of the Parish

Burton Overy village is set in a hollow amidst trees, some two kilometres from the A6 Market Harborough to Leicester Road.

Although linked to other villages by very minor roads Burton Overy gives the impression of being a cul-de-sac village; indeed, the northern part of the village is of this built form. The village has a tapering linear form 0.8km long with a long loop at its northern end and two significant loops at the wider southern base forming back-lanes. Granite kerbs and brick walls are a feature on many of the village streets. The building development runs along Main Street, around the loops and along short cul-de-sac lanes leading off the main thoroughfares.

The buildings of the village display considerable variety in age, style, building materials and relationship with the streets. Some are close against the road, as the range in Bell Lane and adjacent Main Street, others are set back with small front gardens, others are further back, often at a higher level. The slight curves in the roads and the changes in levels, as southwards from the church, result in attractive groupings and placing of buildings. There are several examples of the timber frame tradition of the 16th and 17th centuries with brick and mud infill panels and partitions; these are thatched and include South View standing high near the southern entrance to the village and the former butcher's shop and cottage in the Main Street. Some of the older properties have lost their thatch which has been replaced by slate. Apart from the iron-stone and limestone church and the churchyard wall which is constructed in granite, stone (ironstone and river cobbles) is confined to the plinths and lower walls of some of the older buildings. The rest is red brick of varying ages, including interesting brick detailing such as the Springs in Carlton Lane built in the late 1930's. Roofing is of Welsh or Swithland slates. Some plots in the village have been infilled with later twentieth century buildings.

There are several significant open areas between the buildings. These include most of the southernmost loop (an area of garden with mature trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order), the field in the centre of the village and an enclosed area of paddock within the loop of Scotland Lane and Elms Lane. At the end of Scotland Lane (deriving from the medieval scot or tax) are a number of assarts (medieval land clearances).

Farms are found at the entrances to the village. The Conservation Area not only includes the settlement along the roads but also some of the narrow fields at the back of the houses and gardens or roads. An example of such would be from Carlton Road and Elms Lane behind Main Street, or alongside Scotland Lane, which areas provide a setting for the built-up area.

The churchyard itself forms an interesting space with the elegant former Rectory behind it and farm buildings flanking its southern side. Although not in the Conservation Area, there is an area of field under the ownership of the Church, known as The Glebelands, beyond Rectory End and crossed by a public footpath. This provides an important open space at the edge of the village alongside the village hall.

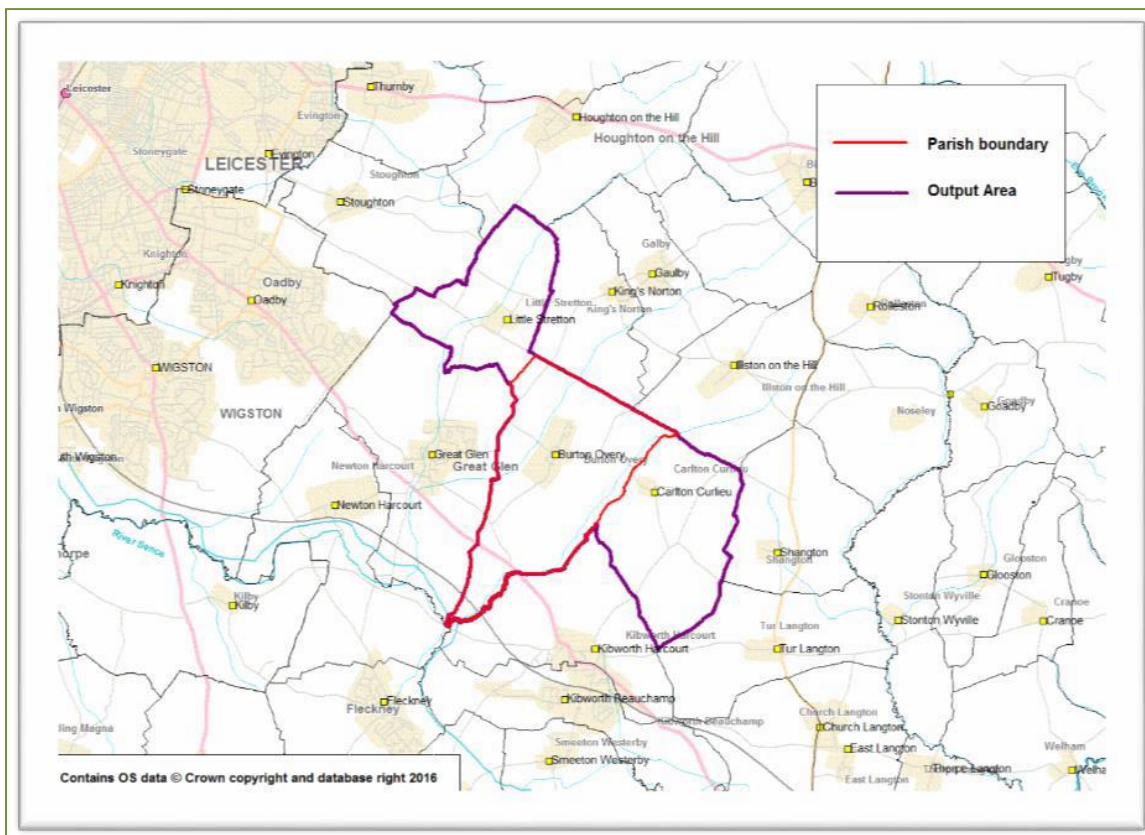
## Burton Overy Parish Profile

The Census data from which the following statistics have been drawn has been taken from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website. Entering 'Burton Overy Parish' provides the data used in this Plan. However, during the course of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan it became clear that the figures reflected a wider area than the Parish boundary. It is however the smallest geographical area that the ONS provides data for.

The Parish has 135 houses and a population of 293, however the ONS data suggests that the Parish has 191 houses and a population of 440.

The tiny hamlets of Carlton Curlieu and Little Stretton are within the same output area as Burton Overy. The characteristics of these settlements are broadly the same as Burton Overy and the trends highlighted within this Plan are therefore appropriate.

Fig. 2. Census data: Output area compared to Parish Boundary.



Levels of deprivation are well below the district, regional and national averages. 59.2% of households are classified as not deprived compared to 54.1% across Harborough and 42% in the East Midlands and England. The levels of health are in line with Harborough District generally, with the proportion of residents who consider that their health is very good being (49.5% in Burton Overy compared to 50.9% across Harborough, 45.3% regionally and 47.2% in England).

The levels of unemployment are very low at 0.3% and levels of self-employment at 19.9% more than double regional and national levels and a third higher than Harborough District. Levels of economic activity, at 63.9%, are lower than District (74%); region (69%) and England (70%) levels, reflecting an older population than elsewhere in Harborough or regionally or nationally. There are very limited employment opportunities in the village.

A high proportion of residents (49.2%) travel to work by car – slightly lower than across Harborough but higher than is the norm in the East Midlands or across England. Car ownership is high. The proportion of households with no car is 4.2%, compared to 11.8% (District); 22.1% (region) and 25.8% (national). The proportion of working age residents (7.6%) who state they work from home is higher than the local average (5.7%) and more than double regional and national averages.

People living in the parish are more likely to be living in dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms. Results from the 2011 Census show that around 43% of households live in housing with more than 4 bedrooms which is above the district (34%), regional (20%) and England (19%) averages. There is also an under representation of housing for single people with around 5% of dwellings having one bedrooms against 6% for the district, 8% for the region and 12% for England as a whole.

### Number of bedrooms

Bedrooms	Burton Overy		Harborough District	
1	8	4%	2,033	6%
2	32	17%	7,853	22%
3	67	35%	13,018	37%
4	53	28%	8,975	26%
5+	29	15%	2,968	9%

Data from the 2011 Census shows that the majority (62%) of residential dwellings are detached which is significantly higher than the district (48%), regional (32%) and national (22%) share. Semi-detached housing accounts for a quarter (25%) of residential housing stock compared with 29% for the district, 35% for the region and 30% for England as a whole. Detached and semi-detached dwellings account



for 87% of the total housing stock in the Burton Overy Parish whereas terraced housing and flats provide 13% of accommodation spaces. Levels of affordable housing are relatively low at 4.2%.

There is also an ageing population in Burton Overy, with over 25% of the population aged 65+. There is evidence of widespread under occupancy in the parish (having more bedrooms than the notional number recommended by the bedroom standard). Analysis of the 2011 Census shows that more than three fifths (62%) of all households in the Burton Overy Parish have two or more spare bedrooms and more than a quarter (27%) have one spare bedroom. Under occupancy is somewhat higher than district, regional and national rates.

The fit between demand and the available type and tenure of housing is an issue as well as the affordability of existing and new housing.

The Parish has a limited social and community infrastructure which includes a Pub, Village Hall and Church.

The area is strategically well located in relation to the national road network and has a number of walking routes. Public transport is limited and there is a very high dependency on the car for travel purposes.

The built environment is good. This includes 22 Listed Buildings. All of the village is in the Conservation Area.

Census data from which this analysis is drawn is available Appendix 3.

## 4. Community Engagement

After the Parish Council took the decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan a process was set in motion to establish an Advisory Committee to drive the process forward.

### Open Event

A consultation event on 23 April 2016 set out the context and stages of the project and asked questions about people's thoughts about Burton Overy. An analysis of the event is included in the evidence base.

The views expressed by the residents were used to shape the strategy in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan for Burton Overy. Over 60 people attended and offered their views.



### Community Questionnaire

Copies of the community questionnaire were distributed to every household in the Parish.

In total, 39 copies of the questionnaire were completed and returned, representing a third of households in the Parish.

### Theme Groups

Following the Open Event in April 2016, residents signed up to become part of 'Theme Groups' to explore the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan; to build the evidence base and to lay the foundation for the draft Neighbourhood Plan. An environmental Theme Group was established, along with a theme group on housing and the built environment. This work continued until early 2017.

## Further Open Event

A further Open Event took place on 8 July 2017 at which over 40 people were in attendance and the emerging policies were put to the community and were overwhelmingly endorsed. The responses are in the supporting information on the Parish Council website and detailed within the consultation statement.



## 5. A Vision for Burton Overy

The Plan area encompasses the whole of the Parish of Burton Overy and covers the period up to 2031, a time scale which deliberately mirrors that for the Harborough Local Plan

The Plan comprises a number of key elements:

A simple and clear vision for the future development of the Parish based on local consultation.

This is to “**maintain and enhance the good quality of life, community spirit and attractive natural and built environment in the Burton Overy Parish now and for future generations**”. This will be realised by a small number of planning policies specific to Burton Overy grouped around the key policy issues identified by the community as being of special importance to them. These include policies that:

- Ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations;
- Encourage the right types of development that meets local needs;
- Protect important community facilities that are special to the local community;
- Promote good design;
- Facilitate appropriate employment opportunities;
- Ensure that the community continues to have good access to the surrounding countryside and green spaces;
- Protect open spaces that are important to the community and/or wildlife;
- Improve pedestrian and cycle connections within the Plan area and into the surrounding areas.

The Plan will be kept under review.

# 6. Policies

## A. STRATEGY

### Introduction

The purpose of the UK Planning System as set out in the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. 'Sustainable' is defined in the NPPF as ensuring that providing for the needs of the current generation does not make life worse for future generations. The Burton Overy Neighbourhood Plan is a key part of securing sustainable development. The NPPF states that all plans should be based on and reflect the presumption of sustainable development and that neighbourhoods should plan positively to support local development.

When considering development proposals, the Plan will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Through the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan, consideration has been given to the type and extent of new development required to meet the needs of the local community, where it should be located in the Parish, and how it should be designed.

The Parish of Burton Overy does not have a housing target and the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any development sites. A Limits to Development has been drawn to enable appropriate housing and business growth within the Parish up to 2031. In this regard, the Neighbourhood Plan supports windfall housing development and supports business development in appropriate locations that do not impact on residential amenity. The Neighbourhood Plan also states how new housing should be designed and supports the improvement to the infrastructure that is needed to meet the requirements of new development. Through a range of Community Actions, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies ongoing improvements not directly related to land use that otherwise support the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Limits to development

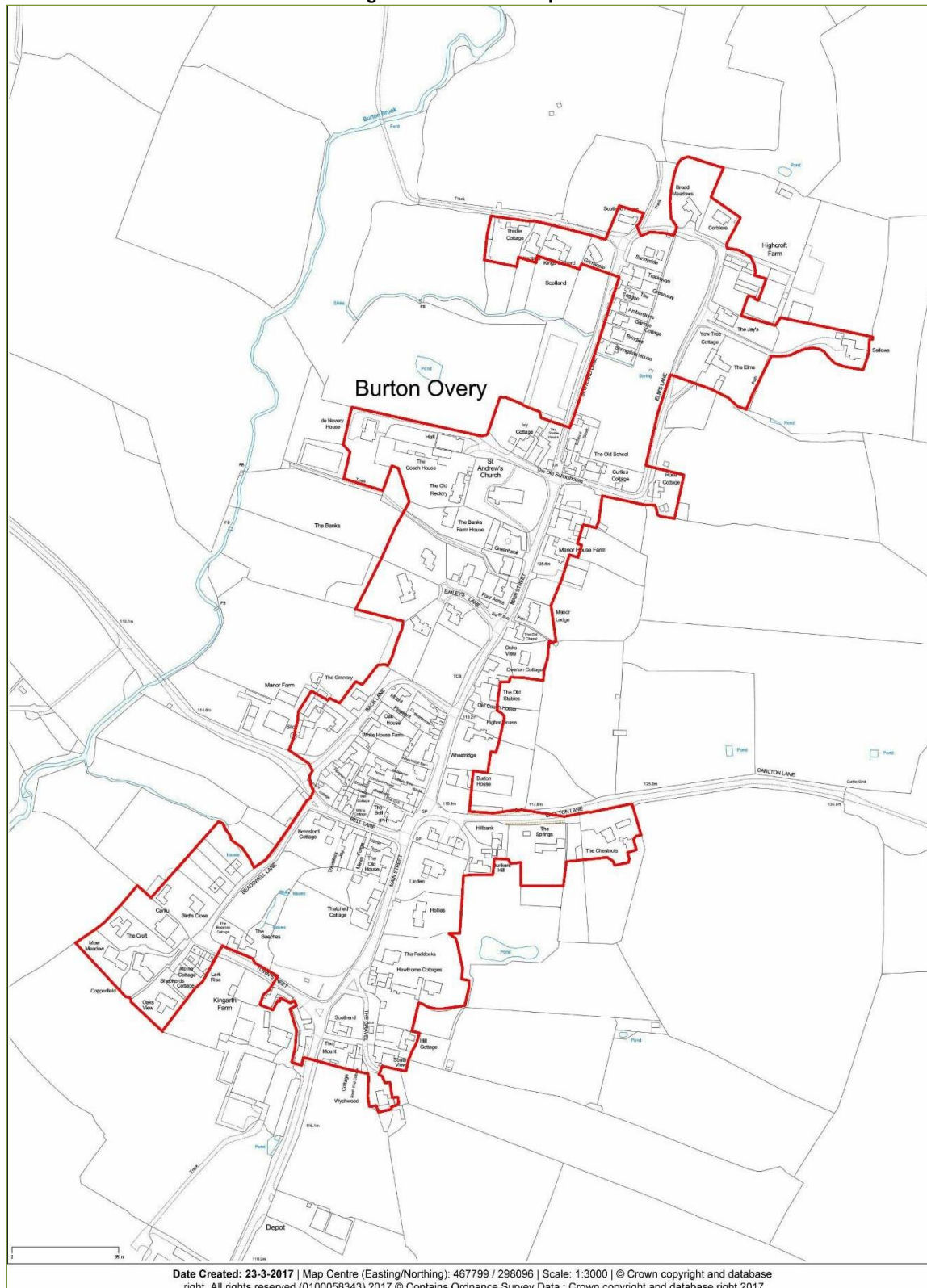
The purpose of Limits to Development is to ensure that sufficient housing and economic activity land is available, in appropriate locations, that can be supported by existing transport infrastructure and avoid impinging into the local countryside.

Limits to Development were established by Harborough District Council in order to clarify where new development activity is best located. They are used to define the extent of a built-up part of a settlement and distinguish between areas where, in planning terms, development would be acceptable in principle, such as in the main settlements, and where it would not be acceptable, generally in the least



sustainable locations such as in the open countryside. Such growth would risk ribbon development and the merging of settlements to the detriment of the community and visual amenity of the Neighbourhood Plan area's surroundings.

Fig. 3 – Limits to Development



The Neighbourhood Plan supports the retention of Limits to Development for the

built-up part of Burton Overy. The Limits to Development that were drawn up by Harborough District Council and adopted in 2001 have been reviewed through the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and have been confirmed as remaining appropriate, as they allow for suitable growth within the red-line boundary and therefore to accommodate the limited organic growth that is required by Harborough District Council and welcomed by the community.

Within the defined Limits to Development an appropriate amount of suitably designed and located development will be acceptable in principle, although some sites within this area are protected from development and all development will be required to take into account the policies within this Plan.

Focusing development within the agreed Limits to Development will support existing services within the village and help to protect the countryside and the remainder of the Neighbourhood Plan area from inappropriate development.

There is sufficient developable and deliverable land within the Limits to Development to meet the housing growth required by Burton Overy to help meet the District's housing growth requirements during the Plan period as well as supporting its own requirement for housing to support local community services.

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**POLICY S1: LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT – Development proposals on sites within the Limits to Development, or (in terms of new sporting facilities) close or adjacent to the Limits to Development as identified in Figure 3, will be supported where it complies with the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan.**

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## **Development in the Countryside**

The parish is predominately rural in nature, with the built-up area of Burton Overy surrounded by open and attractive countryside.

In planning terms, land outside a defined Limits to Development is treated as countryside. This includes any small groups of buildings or small settlements that may be found there.

It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully controlled. Supporting “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it” is identified as a core planning principle in the National Planning Policy Framework, for example. This approach is also supported by this Plan, in particular, because it will help ensure that development is focused in more sustainable settlements with a greater range of services and facilities and infrastructure that has capacity for the

expansion, as well as helping to maintain the special landscape character of the Parish and protecting the countryside for its own sake as an attractive, accessible and non-renewable natural resource.

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**POLICY S2: DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS OUTSIDE THE DEFINED LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT - Land outside the defined Limits to Development will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully controlled in line with local and national strategic planning policies.**

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## B. HOUSING

### Introduction

Burton Overy is seven miles south-east of Leicester. The village stands on rising ground which forms the eastern slope of the Sence valley, and in the north-east the land rises to over 500 ft. The parish is wedge-shaped, the north-eastern boundary running along the Gartree Road for about two miles. The south-eastern boundary, about three miles long, is formed by a small tributary of the Sence. The road from Market Harborough to Leicester crosses the south-west of the parish, about a mile from the village.

The main street of the village runs approximately north to south, ending to the north in a cul-de-sac at the group of buildings known as Rectory End. From here a footpath leads north to join the Gartree road where it fords the tributary of the River Sence. Most of the houses lie near the junction of the main street with the roads leading east and west to Carlton Curlieu and Great Glen respectively. Slightly further north a group of houses surrounds the parish church and the former school. A row of small houses and bungalows, built in 1956–7, now fills the gap between this group and Scotland Lane. There are 9 farmhouses in the village itself and a single isolated farm, Burton Grange, in the fields to the south-west.

The buildings are mostly of red brick but there are at least 8 houses which are wholly or in part timber-framed. In general, these are rectangular three-bay buildings of post and truss construction without cross-wings, having steeply-pitched roofs which were originally thatched. None appears to date prior to the 17th century. On Main Street, The Higher House incorporates a timber structure building, but a tall front wing was added in the early 19th century. The roof of this wing has trusses with curved principals and old tie- beams, probably indicating the re-use of earlier timbers. In the angle between Bell Lane and the main street are ranges of timber-framed houses with brick panels which may date from as late as 1700. Further south a similar house adjoins the Old Post Office. At the south-east corner of the village, South View is a timber-framed cottage retaining some original mud walling but with a brick gable end dated 1739. The most substantial of the early houses is Manor House Farm in Back Lane. This is a three-bay building of which the lower story is of ironstone, retaining stone mullioned windows and an original doorway. The upper story, now faced with brickwork, is timber-framed and there are original attics. Between the central hall and the south bay is a stone chimney, having a four-centred fire-place in the south room. A moulded beam in this room is inscribed: F.R.A. 1650 W.M. A staircase wing and a service wing at the rear, both of brick appear to be 18<sup>th</sup> century additions.

In addition to the Rectory, a most imposing house dating from approximately 1720, there are several houses with good Georgian brick fronts. These include Manor Farm, a mid-18th-century building east of the church, The Elms, on Elms

Lane, a late-18th-century private residence now two residential dwellings, White House Farm, and Burton House. At Banks Farm on Main Street, there is a fine five-bay barn of ironstone and Georgian brick. The house appears to consist of a stable range enlarged in the 19th century. Both this and the barn were doubtless originally attached to the Rectory. The former coachman's cottage, north of the Rectory, forms part of the recently extended village hall, renovated in 2000. Among the early-19th-century cottages in the village is a row incorporating the Old Post Office, having a thatched roof and pointed Gothic windows. The Bell Inn in the main street dates from the 20th century, the previous inn being an early-19th-century cottage in Bell Lane. Two Swedish timber former Local Authority houses were erected near the cross-roads, on Beadswell Lane post the Second World War.

Between 1945 and 1958 about a dozen new houses were built at Burton Overy for people working in Leicester, and existing houses were increasingly occupied by people working in the city.

## Housing provision

As the Proposed Submission Harborough Local Plan (July 2017) states 'The full objectively assessed housing need for the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA is 4,829 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2031 (96,580 total) and for Harborough District is 532 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2031 (HEDNA), giving a total plan requirement across the 20-year plan period of 10,640 dwellings'.

The Proposed Submission Local Plan was consulted on in late 2017 and states there is a residual requirement of 4,660 dwellings to 2031. Core Strategy policy CS1 describes the spatial strategy as being to support rural housing which contributes to affordable housing where there is a need to protect existing services. CS17 states that development in settlements such as Burton Overy which are classed as 'Countryside' should be strictly controlled and where there are identified Limits to Development (such as in Burton Overy) should involve 'very limited small-scale infill development'.

The Proposed Submission Local Plan (July 2017) establishes a hierarchy of settlements to help to determine the most appropriate locations for development. On the basis of this hierarchy, Burton Overy is classified as an 'Other Village or Rural Settlement' which the draft Local Plan describes as 'the least sustainable locations for growth and are covered by housing in the countryside policy. New housing will be limited to small sites to meet a locally identified need (either through a housing needs survey or neighbourhood plan), housing to meet the needs of a rural worker, isolated homes in the countryside in accordance with NPPF paragraph 55, and replacement dwellings'.

Through the Neighbourhood Plan, the opportunity has been taken to positively



plan for development within Burton Overy that meets a local need and helps to support local services. The Limits to Development have therefore been reinforced in order to accommodate the potential for housing growth to meet a local need and to support the existing services up to 2031 and to direct development to the most suitable locations.

This will enable the Parish to secure the growth that is recognised as being necessary through windfall developments in locations that are favoured by the community, avoiding the uncertainty that comes with speculative development proposals that threaten the character of the village into the future.

After community consultation, there was a clear preference to keep the special nature of the village intact for future generations to enjoy, therefore any new sites and density of development will be kept proportional to the size and character of the Parish.

## Housing Mix

The mix of housing proposed within the Neighbourhood Plan is based on statistical data and the views of residents obtained through various consultation exercises including open events and a community questionnaire.

The Census data for Parishes is built up from output areas which are the smallest geographical unit for which Census data is released, and thus, they act as the basic “building-blocks” for the creation of other “higher” geographies, e.g. wards, council areas, etc.

The Burton Overy Parish is a very small parish and comprises of only one output area which also takes in some households in Little Stretton and Carlton Curliu which lie outside the parish boundary. Figure 2 on page 12 illustrates the parish and census output area boundaries. Further references to the Parish include this wider area.

Analysis of the Census shows that between 2001 and 2011 the parish population increased by around 8% (+34 people) and the number of households by 2%. The area has a higher than average propensity of older people. There is evidence that the population is ageing and in line with national trends the local population is likely to live longer and require “old persons friendly” housing provision as average life expectancy continues to rise.

Home ownership is very high and there is a high share of detached housing, under occupied dwellings particularly those with 4 or more bedrooms. Although data from the Census suggests the number of dwellings in the parish has increased by around 8 properties there is no evidence of new build home sales being recorded by the Land Registry suggesting that the growth in dwellings could be due to conversions and/or houses exempt from Land Registry registration as noted above.

The high level of under occupancy suggests a need for smaller homes of one to two bedrooms which would be suitable for residents needing to downsize, small families and those entering the housing market. Providing suitable accommodation for elderly residents will enable them to remain in the local community and release under-occupied larger properties onto the market which would be suitable for growing families. The debate is what type of smaller housing units are required for older people. The initial community consultation suggests a strong preference for bungalow style property, although a minority would consider living in an apartment. There is also a clear preference for small family homes or older persons' provision that provide adequate off-street parking and are in keeping with the vernacular of the local country style environment.

A housing need report is available as Appendix 4.

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**Policy H1: HOUSING MIX - New housing development proposals should provide a mixture of housing types specifically to meet identified local needs in Burton Overy as evidenced in the Parish Housing Needs Report (2016) and the 2017 HEDNA or more recent documents updating either of these reports.**

**Dwellings of 3 bedrooms or fewer and single storey accommodation suitable for older people will be supported where in accordance with other policies.**

**In any development proposal, dwellings of 4+ bedrooms should be in the minority.**

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## **Brownfield sites**

Derelict sites and empty buildings within the limits to development create a drag on the Parish's vibrancy and attractiveness. Redevelopment of any derelict and redundant 'brownfield sites' instead of building on greenfield sites will be strongly supported as a priority.

This is also a core principle of the NPPF (paragraph 17) which is to "encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that is it not of high environmental value". Policy CS1 of the Harborough Core Strategy also prioritises redevelopment on previously developed land.

Development on brownfield land which is not of high environmental value will be supported.

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**POLICY H2: SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT ON BROWNFIELD SITES –** Development proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of redundant land or buildings within the village envelope are supported, provided the site has limited environmental, landscape or ecological value.

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## **Windfall sites**

To help protect the nature of the Village character, development will be restricted to windfall sites within the limits to development which should reflect the following windfall policy to preserve the character of the village.

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**POLICY H3: WINDFALL SITES –** Small scale development proposals within infill and redevelopment sites will be supported where:

- a. It is within the Limits to Development for Burton Overy;
  - b. It retains existing important natural boundaries such as trees and hedges; and
  - c. It provides for a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site.
  - d. It does not reduce garden space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area, the amenity of neighbours and the occupiers of the dwelling or has a significant detrimental environmental or heritage impact.
-

## C. DESIGN AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

It is the strong view of the Burton Overy community, as expressed through consultation exercises, that the Neighbourhood Plan should ensure that any future development either reflects the village's architectural character and fully integrates into the village environment or makes a positive high level architectural contribution to the specific location.

There is an expectation of high quality materials and sustainability in any future house building in order to sympathetically integrate with the character and environment of Burton Overy. The proposed location of any development should not adversely influence any of the Local Green Space or community-defined Green Space areas within the village and concern for bio-diversity that make a strong contribution to the overall character and physical form of Burton Overy.

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**POLICY DBE1: DESIGN - All new development proposals of one or more houses, replacement dwellings and extensions are encouraged to have regard for the following building design principles to a degree that is proportionate to the development:**

- a) New development should enhance and reinforce the local distinctiveness and character of the area in which it is situated, and proposals should clearly show within a Design and Access Statement how the general character, scale, mass, density and layout of the site, of the building or extension fits in with the aspect of the surrounding area. Care should be taken to ensure that the development does not disrupt the visual amenities of the street scene and impact negatively on any significant wider landscape views;
- b) Adequate off-road parking should be provided as a minimum of two car parking spaces for dwellings of three bedrooms or less and three spaces for dwellings of four bedrooms or more;
- c) All new housing should continue to reflect the character and historic context of existing developments within the Parish and incorporate a diversity of materials. However, contemporary and innovative materials and design will be supported where positive improvement can be robustly demonstrated without detracting from the historic context;
- d) Redevelopment, alteration or extension of historic farmsteads and agricultural buildings within the Parish should be sensitive to their distinctive character, materials and form;
- e) Development should be enhanced by biodiversity and landscaping with existing trees and hedges preserved whenever possible. Where this is demonstrably not practicable, they should be replaced with new

- plantings on a two-for-one basis, using native species, either on site or elsewhere in the parish;
- f) Within new residential layouts provision should be made for wildlife, including roof design and construction meeting RSPB guidelines for internal bird nest boxes, and use of hedges (or fences with ground level gaps) to maintain connectivity of habitat for hedgehogs;
  - g) Where possible, enclosure of plots should be of native hedging, rural wooden open fencing, or brick/stone wall of rural design;
  - h) Development should incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques to meet high standards for energy and water efficiency, including the use of renewable and low carbon energy technology, as appropriate, and incorporate sustainable drainage systems with maintenance regimes to minimise vulnerability to flooding and climate change; ensuring appropriate provision for the storage of waste and recyclable materials;
  - i) Having regard to climate change, development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems with viable long-term maintenance regimes to minimise vulnerability to flooding from streams, dykes and surface water run-off, by ensuring appropriate provision for the storage of waste and recyclable materials; all developments must consider impacts both within the site and in the surrounding area of the development within the development period;
  - j) The use of street lighting will not be supported unless it is deemed necessary for reasons of safety, in which case it should be sympathetic in design and luminosity to the surrounding area. Development must limit the impact on light pollution of artificial externally visible light sources, including security lights.
-

# D. Natural and Historic Environment

## Introduction

**Landscape and geological setting** The Plan Area lies at the meeting of two National Character Areas (designated, for planning purposes, by Natural England): *NCA 93 High Leicestershire* and *NCA 94 Leicestershire Vales*. This is where the folded uplands and valleys formed by several eroded, sinuous escarpments roll down into the broad clay lowlands of the central Midlands. The meeting of High Leicestershire with the Vales in the parish provides very extensive views – ‘half way across the County’ from the highest points in the parish. The Plan Area’s southern boundary is also close to an important watershed: to the southeast, streams flow into the river Welland and down to the Wash, while Burton Brook and the Washbrook are headwaters of the river Soar, itself part of the Trent drainage basin. The valleys are too big for the small streams – this is because the valleys were shaped during the ice ages. The modern streams have cut their own narrow valleys, in some places as attractive, wooded mini-gorges, into the bottoms of the larger valleys.

Geologically, the Plan Area is almost entirely situated on Quaternary (ice age) stony clay called *till* (or ‘*boulder clay*’), with Jurassic clay and limestone beneath. The Jurassic rocks are only seen where the streams cut down to them through the till, and these include the places where fossilised ammonites and belemnites have been found by generations of local children. The village itself is situated on a patch of gravel, also of ice age origin, that attracted the original settlers because of the combination of the drier ground and accessible fresh water (wells and

**burh-tūn** (Old English) A fort enclosure; a farm with a palisade; a farm at, or belonging to, or which is, a fortification, fortified house, or manor house.

**de Noveray** (family name, Norman French, 1261). There were still Noverays in this part of the County in the 15<sup>th</sup> century

springs) it provided.

**Existing environmental designations** The Plan Area is situated in *National Character Areas 93 and 94*. There are 22 *Listed Buildings* and other structures, one *Scheduled Monument* and 12 significant historical or archaeological site records in the *Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record* database. Natural England has mapped two areas of deciduous woodland, one traditional orchard and one lowland meadow as *priority habitats*. No recent Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been conducted.



**Historical environment** Burton Overy parish includes habitation evidence dating from Roman and Romano-British times (Gartree Road and settlement). Since the end of the Roman period in about 410AD, occupation in the Plan Area may well have been continuous or was the result of 8<sup>th</sup>-century re-settlement by Anglo-Saxons moving northwest from East Anglia and up the Welland Valley.

The medieval period was one of growth and contraction, with several manors and ownerships. Traces of the medieval open fields are evident in the considerable ridge and furrow remaining in the parish, and medieval village earthworks (Including the Scheduled Monument) indicate apparent remains from the Noveray Manor gardens and abandoned parts of the medieval settlement (e.g. nearer to the stream); a number of present houses dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries incorporate re-used timbers from earlier structures.

Unusually for Leicestershire, the Enclosure (1766) of Burton Overy rationalised ownership among a relatively large number of landowners, resulting in modest fields and helping to explain the continuing local family dominance of the farming in the parish, with its positive impacts on the environment (see also below). The parish's principal economy has been largely agricultural throughout its history, though in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century some villagers worked at home in textile-related trades.

Population reached a peak of 483 in 1851, and in 2001 stood at 289.

**Natural environment** Topographically, the parish is shaped by the relatively steeply rising land of the eastern slope of the Sence valley. This aspect, together with the land use history – which has produced an abundance of excellent hedges and grassland managed for wildlife – means that, despite a relative paucity of woodland, the parish has fairly good biodiversity. It includes small pockets of wetland and riverine habitat. It incorporates two principal brooks and, at its southwestern edge, a stretch of the Grand Union Canal. Farming is mixed, with the bulk of acreage laid to pasture (including many old pastures and a number of flood meadows).

**The special character of Burton Overy** Burton Overy is a small village that, extraordinarily, retains its rural character, open countryside setting, uninterrupted and extensive views in all directions, and largely intact medieval layout, despite proximity to the greater Leicester area. The parish's topography, lack of main roads and modern and historical agricultural economy, including unusually dispersed land ownership pre- and post-Enclosures and a still remarkable number of working family farms, are responsible for its landscape, which is considered by local people to be of great importance. Moreover, there is a continued presence of farmed agricultural land within the village itself. The particular relationships of the village to the farmed landscape within and around it, are fundamental to Burton Overy's exceptional and precious character and attractiveness as a place to live. The parish's distinctive social history has enabled the preservation of small fields, numerous hedgerows, riverine habitat and good biodiversity, alongside a

Scheduled Monument, visible traces of medieval settlement and extensive ridge and furrow. The village's small size and continuingly strong sense of identity have also produced an outstanding contemporary community spirit. These elements, combined with locally collected oral histories of place, buildings and people, make Burton Overy simultaneously characteristic of agricultural southeast Leicestershire and vitally unique.

## Environmental Inventory

An environmental inventory (see Appendix 5) of all undeveloped land in Burton Overy was carried out during September-November 2016. The work comprised two elements:

- Review of all existing designations and available information and
- Fieldwork to identify sites and features of natural and historical environment significance in the context of the Plan Area.

The review compiled information from many sources, including:

- DEFRA
- Natural England
- Historic England
- Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records
- Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Record Centre records (biodiversity and geology)
- Environment Agency
- British Geological Survey
- Leicestershire County Council Phase 1 Habitat Surveys
- Old maps (Ordnance Survey, manuscript)
- British History Online
- Local history and archaeology publications
- Local knowledge

The fieldwork to gather the necessary supporting evidence was conducted between September and December 2016. All accessible open land in the Plan Area was visited and its significant species, habitats, landscape characteristics, earthworks and other extant features were recorded on a site-by-site basis.

These data, along with all relevant site-specific data from the existing information review, were mapped and tabulated, and each site was scored and evaluated

using the nine criteria for Local Green Space selection in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2012*:

The purpose of this exercise was to help determine the most special local green spaces and to identify those elements of other open spaces that should be taken into account within the planning system. Its intention is not to introduce a blanket protection of all open spaces in the Parish. However, development affecting open spaces other than those proposed for designation as Local Green Space will be expected to take the identified feature into account.

**Table ENV A. INVENTORY SCORING SYSTEM**

Criterion (NPPF 2012)	Score range			Notes
	0	1-3	4	
ACCESSIBILITY	0	1-3	4	e.g. private, no access (0) – could be made accessible – accessed via PRoW – fully open to the public (4)
PROXIMITY / LOCAL	0	1-3	4	Distant (0) --- fairly near to --- adjoins (3) or is within (4) settlement
BOUNDED	0	1-3	4	Individual parcel of land (not an undefined or large area)
SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY	0	1-3	4	Opinion of local people via questionnaire or at consultation events
RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL USE	0	1-3	4	Actual or potential, informal sports, dog-walking, Forest School use, informal or official open space, etc.
BEAUTY (including views)	0	1	2	Subjective, relative (give justification); use consultation map results
TRANQUILITY	0	1	2	Subjective, relative (give justification)
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE	0	1-3	4	Extant, visible evidence. Number of periods/features/records etc. / Relevant existing designations (Historic Environment Records)
WILDLIFE SIGNIFICANCE, GEOLOGY	0	1-3	4	Richness of species and habitats (Priority (BAP) spp. / Priority habitats) / relevant existing designations (Habitat Survey, Local Wildlife Sites / site of geological/industrial history significance)
[Maximum possible score]			<b>32</b>	



## Local Green Spaces





Of the approximately 182 inventoried parcels of undeveloped or open land in the parish, some 112 were identified as having notable environmental (natural, historical and/or cultural) features. The sites were scored, using the nine criteria for Local Green Space designation outlined in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2012* (see above for the criteria and scoring system adopted for this Plan) and allocated to several categories for protection or notification under policies and community actions in the Plan. The full inventory, giving the detailed evidence base for identifying Local Green Spaces (and other environmentally significant sites) is in the supporting information.

Six sites are designated as Local Green Spaces (LGS). The list includes five sites (entirely or partially) already recommended by Harborough District Council for designation as LGS. Three sites (evidence summaries below) score at least 24/32 (75%) using the LGS eligibility criteria and scoring methodology used for this Plan (see p. 31); the other three are included for consistency with the [emerging] Local Plan (2018).

Statutory protection will ensure that these most important places in Burton Overy's natural and human environment are protected.

### SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE FOR NEW LOCAL GREEN SPACE DESIGNATIONS

Ref.	EVIDENCE	NPPF (2012) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA									
		Access /4	Proximity /4	Bounded /4	Special /4	Rec/Ed /4	Beauty/ Views /2	Tranquillity/2	History /4	Wildlife /4	TOTAL
045	<p><b>Fish Pond field</b></p> <p>Permanent grass. Stream (natural meanders and vegetation) to north boundary, hedges elsewhere with native standards, pond (amphibians), all locally good for biodiversity with 4 BAP birds and a range of other farmland species. Bat foraging area.</p> <p>Ridge and Furrow and other earthworks (L&amp;R HER).</p> <p>Unregulated access via footpath C11 – local and visitor use. Historic and recent use for village events.</p> <p>Viewpoint from built-up area northwest to open countryside.</p>	3	3	4	4	2	2	2	3	3	26
	 <p>Fish Pond Field. Northwest view from Rectory End</p> 										

Ref.	EVIDENCE	NPPF (2012) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA									
		Access /4	Proximity /4	Bounded /4	Special /4	Rec/Ed /4	Beauty/ Views /2	Tranquillity/2	History /4	Wildlife /4	TOTAL
143	<p><b>Spring Field</b></p> <p>Informal access: owned (for protection as community asset and important open space) by Burton Overy Village Land Co.</p> <p>HDC designation as Local Green Space LGS BO/2, 2016, is supported by this Plan. Permanent grass field, controlled let grazing, with mature species-rich hedged boundaries (standard native trees). 'Ancient' ash tree growing close to spring – the latter is likely to have pre-Christian sacred associations and still has cultural significance for villagers. 4 BAP species birds, also woodcock, bats.</p> <p>Ridge and furrow, in part; L&amp;R HER site for earthworks representing greatest medieval (14<sup>th</sup> century?) village extent.</p>	2	4	4	4	2	2	2	3	3	26
		Spring Field from the southeast									
144	<p><b>Banks Field</b></p> <p>The bounded parcel is owned (for protection as a community asset and important open space) by Burton Overy Village Land Co. HDC designation as Local Green Space LGS BO/1, 2016, is supported by this Plan.</p> <p>The area of LGS designated in this Plan includes the roadside verges on Back Lane and Main Street, which are managed by the Parish Council as community as open spaces, include an area of grassland wildflowers, a Listed K6 telephone box (List Entry 1250978) and a commemorative oak tree and a village notice board.</p> <p>The site has hedged and fenced boundaries, the former with local biodiversity importance, while the (only marginally improved) grass forming the body of the site is let for occasional grazing.</p>	3	4	3	4	2	2	1	2	3	24
		Banks field: traditional management helps to maintain its biodiversity									

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**POLICY ENV 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES – Within the area of Local Green Space sites designated in this policy and identified on the map below (figure 4), development is ruled out, other than in very special circumstances.**

**THIS PLAN (supported by inventory scores, see above)**

**'Fish ponds field' (inventory site number 045)**

**Springs Field (pasture land east of Scotland) (143) (also as HDC LGS BO2)**

**Banks Field ('Main Street Pasture') and verges (144) (includes HDC LGS BO1)**

**HDC PROPOSALS, 2015**

**Main Street Spinney (Perry's) (147) (as HDC LGS BO/3)**

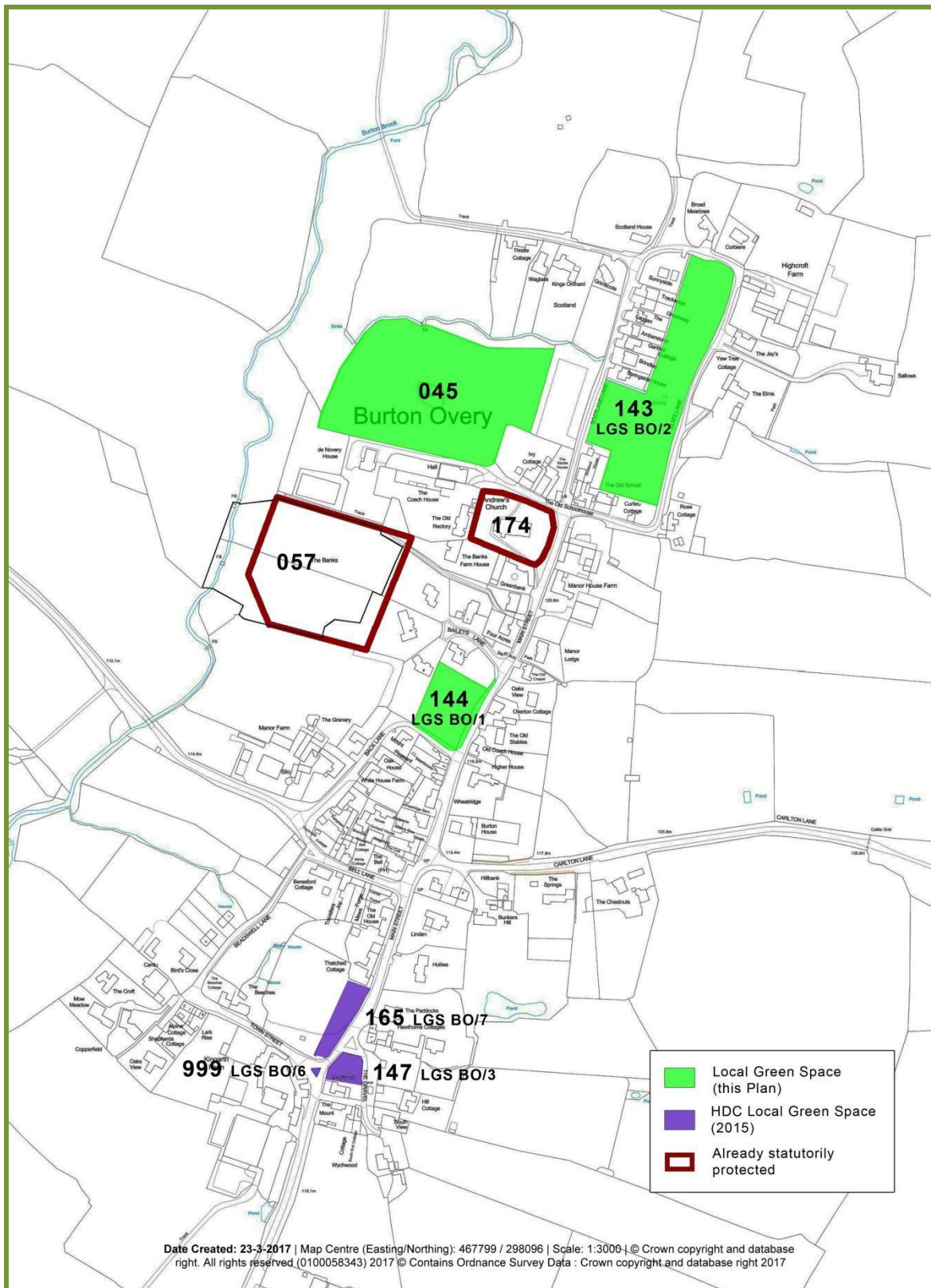
**Strip of Land along the front of the Old Heather Garden (165) (as HDC LGS BO7)**

**Traffic Island bearing the village sign (999) (as HDC LGS BO/6)**

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**Fig. 4: Local Green Spaces and other sites with statutory protection**



## Other sites of environmental significance

A second group of inventory sites scores well for 'wildlife' and/or 'history' but, because their community value and accessibility scores are moderate or low, they are not eligible for Local Green Space designation. The criterion used in this Plan for allocating sites to this category is that the combined score for 'history' and 'wildlife' is at least 4/8 (50%).

For wildlife, the sites include a) those where *priority habitats*<sup>1</sup> occur, b) confirmed, candidate and potential Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), and c) sites identified by local subject specialists as being of high biodiversity significance in the context of the Plan Area. For history, they include all parcels of land of known local historical significance (Historic England; Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records; local knowledge) that have extant, visible expression in the landscape.

Together, these sites are essential for biodiversity conservation in the parish and for the preservation of Burton Overy's historical and cultural heritage.

Other environmental topics – ridge and furrow, species-rich hedgerows, wildlife corridors and biodiversity in general – are identified and dealt with in specific policies elsewhere in the Plan; it should be noted that where the above biodiversity and historical features occur on the sites protected here by Policy ENV 2, these features have been taken into account when evaluating and identifying the sites for inclusion.

This policy does not seek to preclude development, but rather to ensure that any development activity takes the identified features into account.

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**POLICY ENV 2: PROTECTION OF SITES OF ENVIRONMENTAL (NATURAL AND HISTORICAL) SIGNIFICANCE – The sites indicated on the map below and in the Environmental Inventory (see Appendix 5)) have been identified as being of local significance for wildlife (biodiversity) and/or history. They are important in their own right and are locally valued. Development proposals that affect them will be expected to protect or enhance the identified features.**

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<sup>1</sup> *Priority Habitat* as listed in the Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan, or *Habitat of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity* under the Natural Environment and Communities Act 2006

**Fig. 5a: (detail) Sites of Environmental Significance within and adjacent to the Limits to Development**

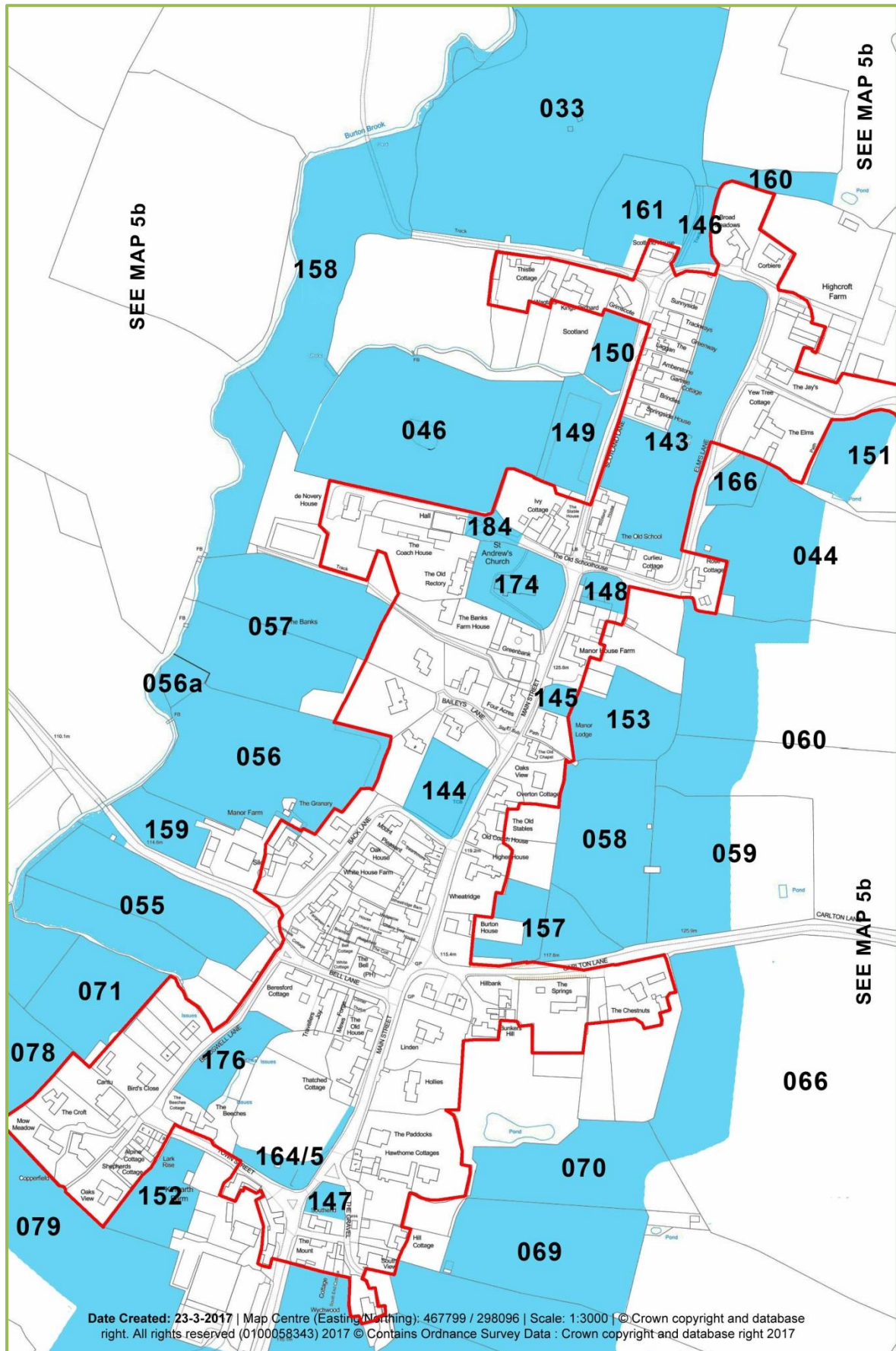
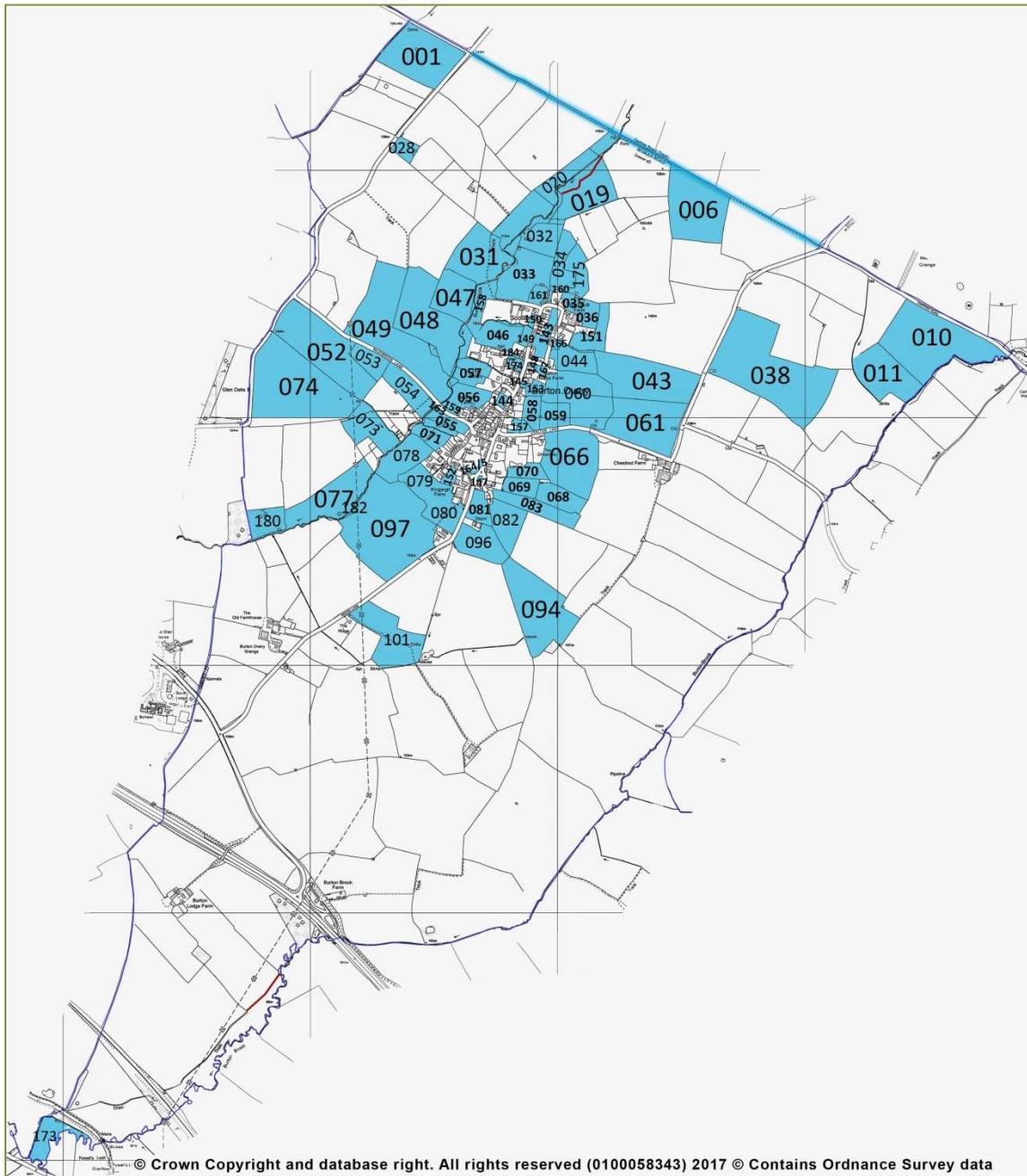




Fig. 5b: Sites of Environmental Significance in the full Plan Area



## Biodiversity

Wildlife, both habitats and species, is of great importance for many reasons; it is valuable in its own right, and people take great pleasure from thriving natural surroundings. Well-functioning ecosystems are vital for a healthy environment and contribute to physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Biodiversity (species and habitats) protection and enhancement is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, which is itself compliant with the UK *Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations, 2010, Amended 2012*, and the European Habitats Directive 1992 (*Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the*

*Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora).*



Leicestershire is one of the least wooded counties in England, so the conservation of existing trees and woodland and planting of new is an important factor for protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Burton Overy is a poorly wooded parish even by comparison with the rest of the County, with few important individual or groups of mature trees and no extensive mature woodland. The 'next best' include streamside woodland strips, a small number of coverts and spinneys, ornamental plantings in the gardens of larger 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century houses, and plantings associated with the A6 road screening. One area of new woodland, of which half is in the parish, has recently been established.

woodland, of which half is in the parish, has recently been established.

The few trees in the parish are nevertheless intrinsic components of the village's rural setting. There are also pockets of habitat which, with the streams by which they are often situated, form wildlife corridors, providing species and habitat connectivity through the parish and into the village.

In contrast to woodland, farmland hedgerows of biodiversity and landscape value survive well in the parish, probably for reasons connected with land use and ownership history (including the date (1766) and method of the Enclosure of the old open fields). Farms in Burton Overy are typically still locally owned and more diversified than those in some neighbouring parishes, and hedges are a particularly important and characteristic environmental feature that is both valued by the community and supported by local farmers. This Plan recognises that the survival of farmland hedgerows in Burton Overy is highly significant at both Parish and District levels.

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**POLICY ENV 3: BIODIVERSITY GENERAL – Development proposals that cannot avoid (through, for example, locating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigate, or, as a last resort, compensate for, the loss of a nationally or locally identified site of biodiversity value will not be supported.**

**Development proposals that conserve or enhance biodiversity, and incorporate biodiversity in and around them, will be supported.**

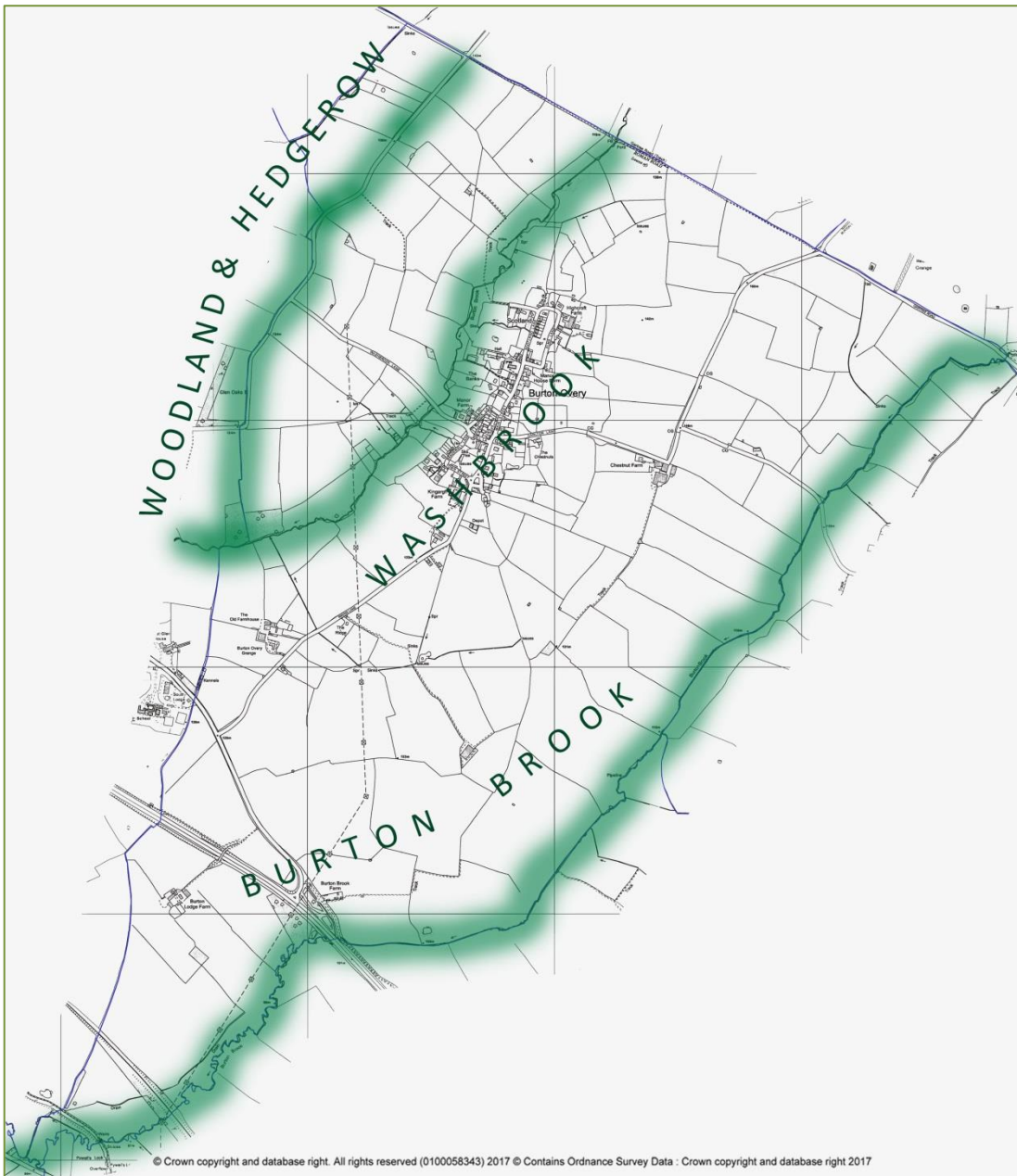
**Where a development proposal will affect a protected species, an up to date ecological assessment should be undertaken prior to development, and**

mitigation measures will be required as a development condition.

In addition, the Plan designates three wildlife corridors as follows (map Fig. 6).

- a) Riparian corridor along Burton Brook, following the entire eastern and southern Burton Overy parish boundary to its southernmost tip.
- b) Riparian corridor along the Washbrook, from the parish boundary at the Gartree Road, downstream to the western edge of the parish where it borders with Great Glen.
- c) Woodland and hedgerow habitat corridor, running from where the Washbrook meets the parish boundary with Great Glen, north along the ancient boundary hedge line to the Gartree Road.

**Fig. 6 Wildlife Corridors**





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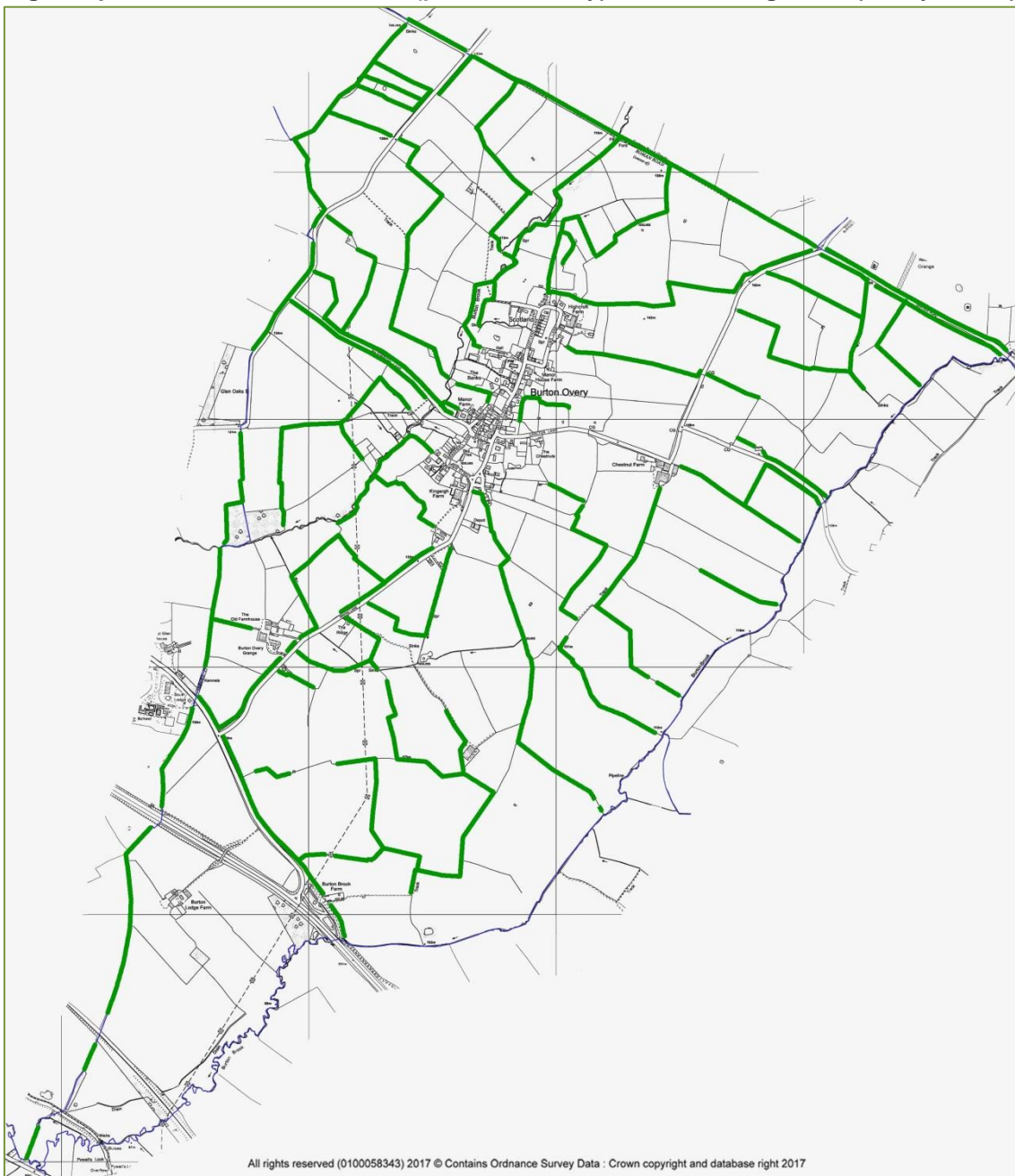
**COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 1: BIODIVERSITY GENERAL – The Parish Council, in conjunction with other bodies, will prepare and keep updated an environmental inventory list of known sites of biodiversity interest.**

**The Parish Council will actively seek to work with community groups and other bodies to enhance the biodiversity of the designated wildlife corridors.**

**The Parish Council will continue to identify trees and woodland of value, as above, for recommendation to Harborough District Council for Tree Preservation Orders.**

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**Fig. 7: Species-rich and/or 'ancient' (pre-19<sup>th</sup> century) farmland hedgerows (Policy ENV 4)**



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**POLICY ENV 4: BIODIVERSITY, WOODLAND, TREES AND HEDGES –** Development proposals that will adversely affect trees, woodland and hedges of environmental (biodiversity, historical, arboricultural) significance, or of landscape or amenity value, will be resisted. Proposals for new build housing should be designed to retain such trees and hedges wherever possible. Where destruction cannot be avoided developers will be required to plant replacement native species trees (on a two-for-one basis) or hedges using native species either on the site or elsewhere in the parish.

Mature farmland hedgerows of ecological, historical and/or landscape significance (map, Fig. 7) should be retained and protected wherever possible. Where loss is unavoidable, it must be minimised and mitigated by replacement planting of locally appropriate native species providing a net gain in length and quality.

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## **Important Open Spaces**

A group of sites scored highly in the Inventory for their outstanding community value. They have been identified in community consultations and fieldwork, in Parish records; one (the Churchyard) is an existing Open Space, Sport & Recreation (OSSR) site (e.g. in Harborough District Council (HDC) Consultation documents for *Local Green Space, Open Spaces Strategy* and *Provision for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2015-2016)* carried out in preparation for the HDC Local Plan (2017)).

In Burton Overy these sites include the parish churchyard and other open spaces which are part of the historic layout of the settlement, are publicly accessible and/or have customary community use.

Their value as open space *within and close to the built-up areas* and/or their current, or potential, value, as community resources are recognised in this Community Action.

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**COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 2: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES -** The Parish Council will actively work with Harborough District Council, landowners, the community and other partners to secure the protection of the locations and features of the following sites (listed below and mapped in Fig. 8 and detailed in the supporting information) through confirmation as existing (site 174), or designation as new, Open Space, Sport and Recreation (OSSR) sites in appropriate typologies.

### **Natural and semi-natural greenspace**

Little Easom (inventory site number 058)

Spring Field (143)

Banks Field (144)

Scotland Meadow (033) Wooden Bridge Meadow (158) The Banks (057)

Spring Corner (157)

Morrill's Close (079)

Scotland Thicket (146)

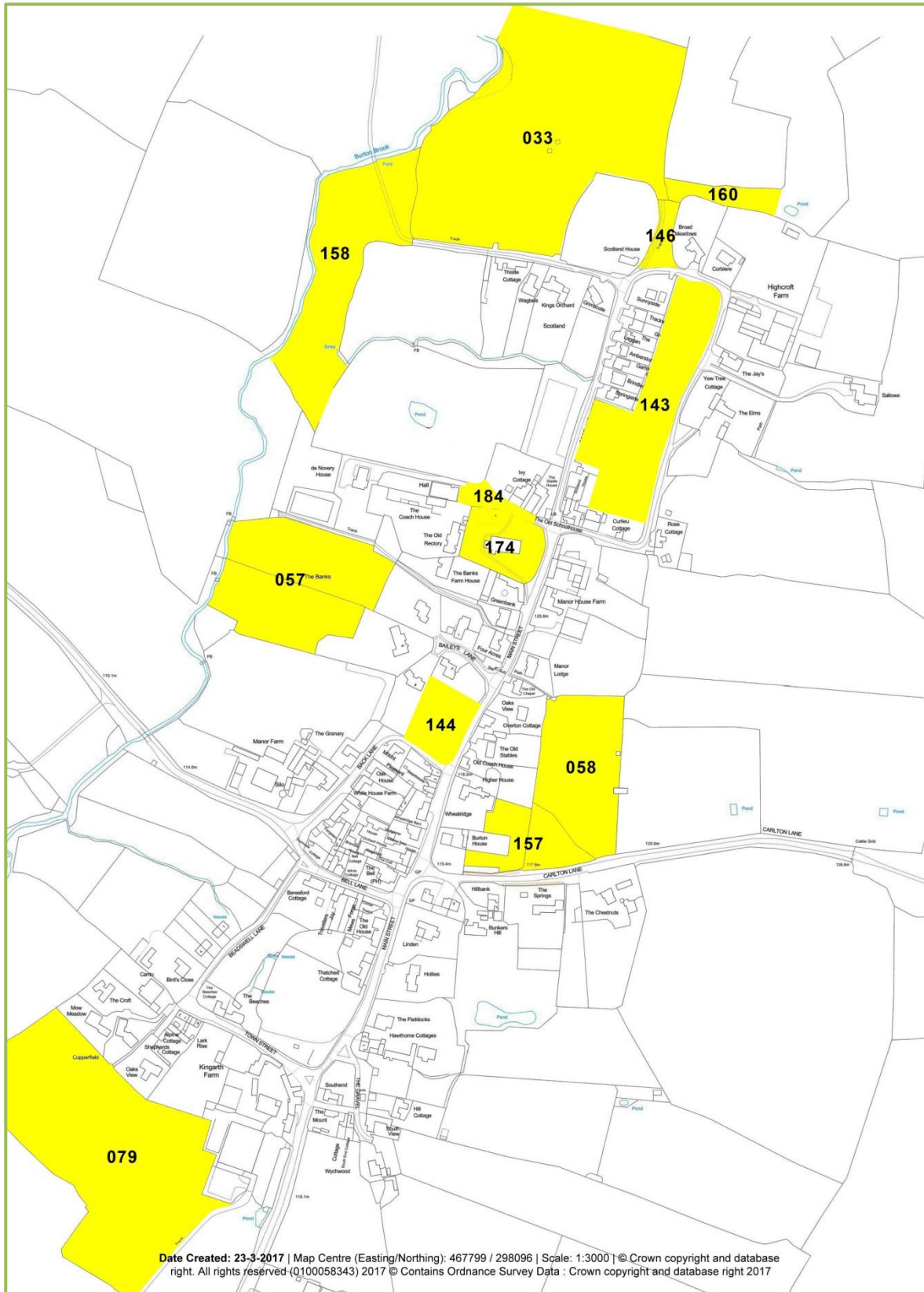
Millennium Wood (160)

### **Cemeteries and burial grounds**

St Andrew's churchyard (174) (existing HDC OSSR)

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**Fig. 8: Important Open Spaces in and close to Burton Overy village**



## Ridge and furrow

A characteristic and important feature of Burton Overy is the survival of a number of good quality areas of ridge and furrow in the modern fields. A field-by-field survey was done in 2016 to record ridge and furrow throughout the parish using satellite imagery and fieldwork. Fig. 9, below, provides an inventory of the results and represents current situation.

The historical parish of Burton Overy, with the village at its centre, was farmed using the 'open field' system for nearly a thousand years, from its establishment in the Early Medieval Period until 1766, the date of its *Enclosure Award*. Like most townships (parishes) Burton Overy had three open fields. Cultivation - arable crops and pasturage - was rotated on a 3-year basis and the land was managed communally. Ploughing was by oxen; the medieval plough did not have a reversible coulter, meaning that as the furlongs were ploughed in a clockwise spiral the soil was always thrown to the same side, forming ridges and furrows with a height difference of up to 2 metres. After the Enclosure, the fields were subdivided and almost all were converted to permanent grazing land, thus 'fossilising' all the features of the medieval farmed landscape, including the furlongs, headlands, sikes and baulks.

A return to arable farming, using modern ploughs, during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century caused the destruction of most ridge and furrow across the Midlands<sup>1</sup> (. The national trend has been a loss of between 85% and 100% per parish, most since 1940.

Burton Overy is typical of this pattern. Of the c.182 agricultural fields in the Plan Area, 25 (14%) still retain traces of ridge and furrow (roughly 74 hectares of the c.745 hectares of open land, 10% by area).

In English legislation ridge and furrow fields (except for the few that are also Scheduled Monuments) are not statutorily protected, despite a recognition that "as *the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international importance*" (English Heritage, 2012). Individual fields in Burton Overy are not claimed to be of international importance, but the survival of a large group of well-preserved ridge and furrow fields here is highly valued by the local community, and any loss would be significantly detrimental to both local and national heritage. While this policy is primarily aimed at non-agricultural developers, the involvement of farmers and agricultural landowners on a case-by-case basis will be necessary to achieve a sustainable balance between this important heritage asset and the viability of local agriculture.

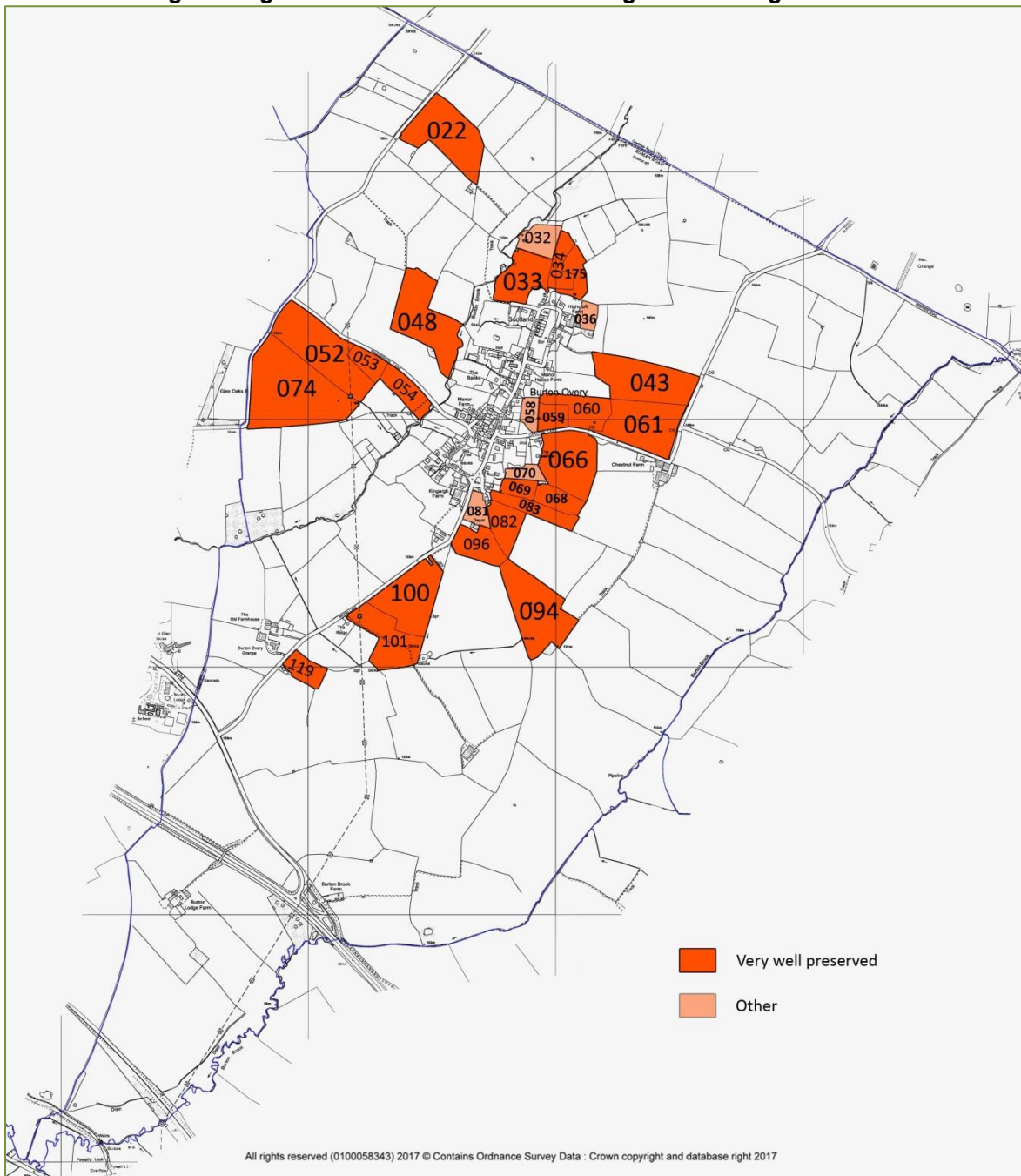
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<sup>1</sup> Hall, D 2001. *Turning the Plough. Midland open fields: landscape character and proposals for management*. English Heritage and Northamptonshire County Council



**POLICY ENV 5: RIDGE AND FURROW** - The surviving areas of Ridge and Furrow fields are non-designated heritage assets and any harm arising from a development proposal will need to be balanced against their significance as heritage assets.

**Fig. 9: Ridge and Furrow fields as non-designated heritage assets**

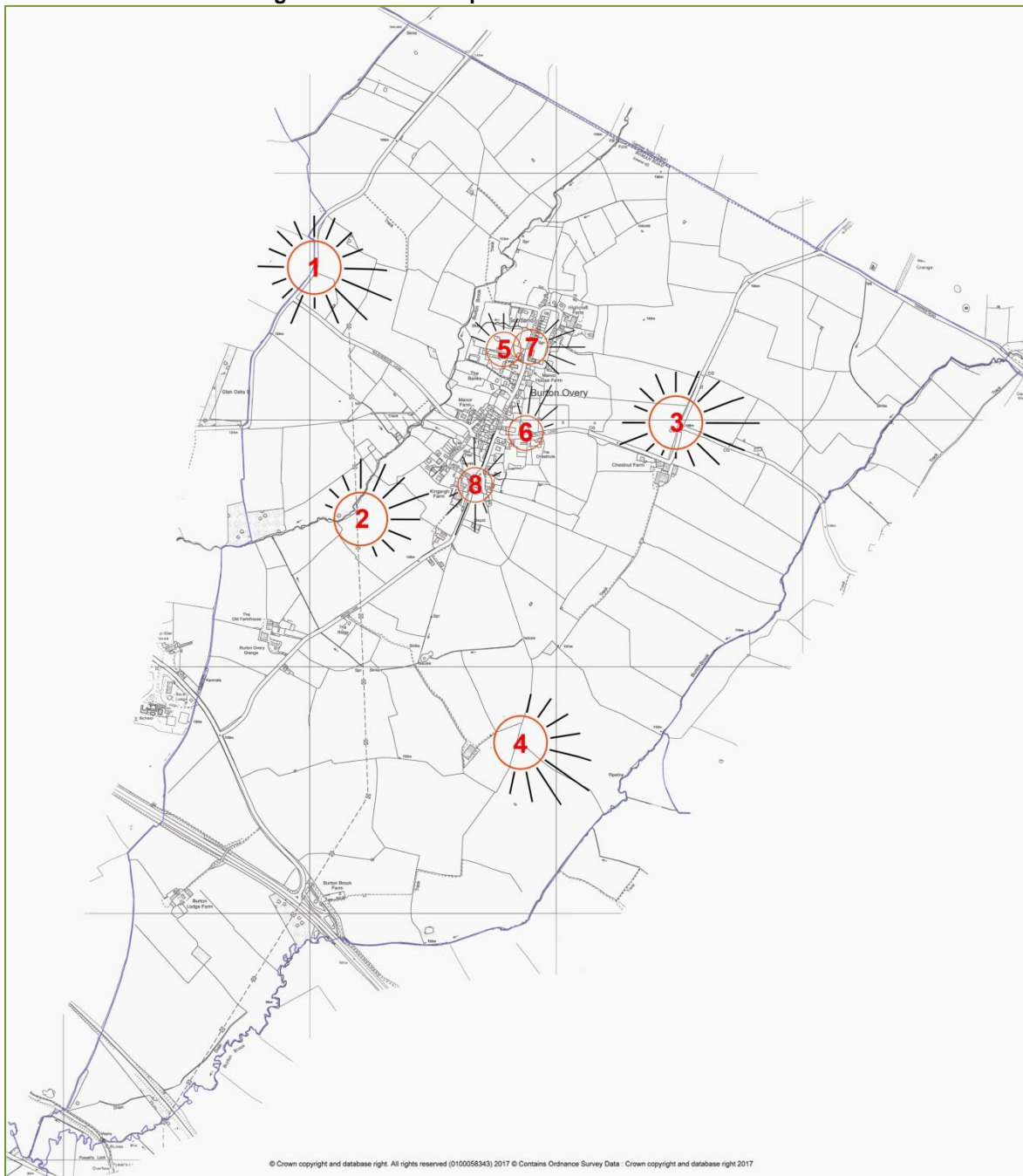




## Protection of valued and important views

Because views frame and delineate open countryside, they are regarded by the community as essential for protecting the valued rural context of the village and for maintaining its geographical and landscape relationship with the whole parish. Walking is a significant leisure activity in the Plan Area, both for residents and visitors, while the benefits of walking to physical and mental health and general wellbeing are recognised by health professionals and in the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Fig. 10 Valued and important views in the Plan Area**



The parish is mainly in the *High Leicestershire National Character Area*, which is

defined as an NCA in part because of its 'predominantly rural nature' and extensive countryside views.

Eight views in and around Burton Overy have been identified using fieldwork and community consultations. Their protection will help preserve residents' and visitors' experience of the rural setting of the village and deliver the health and wellbeing benefits described above, while being compatible with the sustainable development of the Plan Area.

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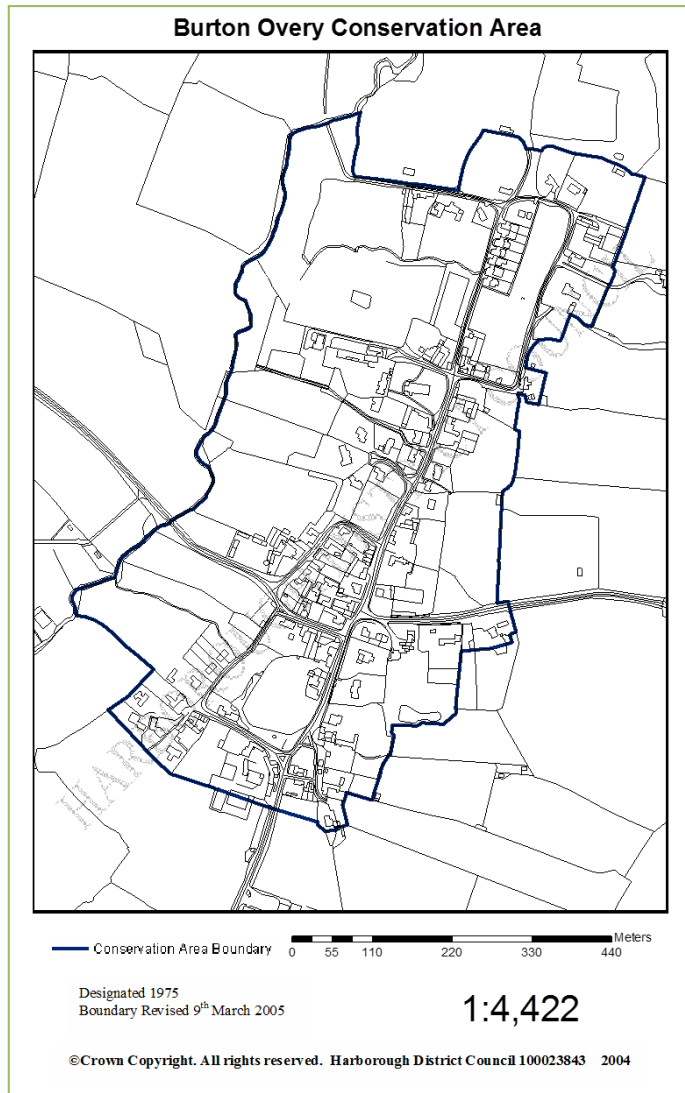
**POLICY ENV 6: PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS** - Development proposals should respect the open views and vistas as shown in Figure 10 above.

Proposals which would have an unacceptably detrimental impact on these views and vistas will not be supported.

1. From the Great Glen/Kings Norton Road extensive views in all directions including South East towards the Washbrook and Burton Overy village and north towards Kings Norton.
  2. From the public footpath alongside the Washbrook leading from Burton Overy to Great Glen looking north towards Burton Overy village, west over the Washbrook and east over the fields to Maynes Lane.
  3. From the top of Carlton Lane with far reaching views in all directions including west towards the village, east to Carlton Curlieu and north towards Kings Norton.
  4. From the public footpath between Burton Overy and Kibworth at the top of the ridgeline looking east to Burton Brook and with extensive views north south and east over the valley towards Carlton Curlieu and Kibworth.
  5. From the public footpath close to the village hall leading from Rectory End looking north and west over the Glebe land and beyond towards the Great Glen/Kings Norton road.
  6. From the public footpath leading from Carlton Lane to Main Street looking north, northeast and northwest along the fields bounding the eastern edge of the village.
  7. Looking north and east from Scotland Lane over the pasture land east of Scotland Lane known as Spring Field towards Elms Lane.
  8. North and south along Main Street, taking in three Important Open Spaces with trees of landscape value and a vista that characterises the rural appearance of the village.
-

## Heritage assets

Burton Overy's historic character is one of its most important assets, and the community wishes to see it protected and enhanced.



The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance of the Burton Overy Conservation Area and its importance in protecting the character of the centre of the village. It supports proposals that preserve and enhance the unique character of this area.

In addition to the Conservation Area, there is a rich built heritage within the Parish. This heritage is not only important to the Parish, because of its contribution to its history, but also because of the contribution it makes to the distinct and special character of Burton Overy.

Twenty-one buildings/structures have been granted national Listed Building Status, in recognition of their special

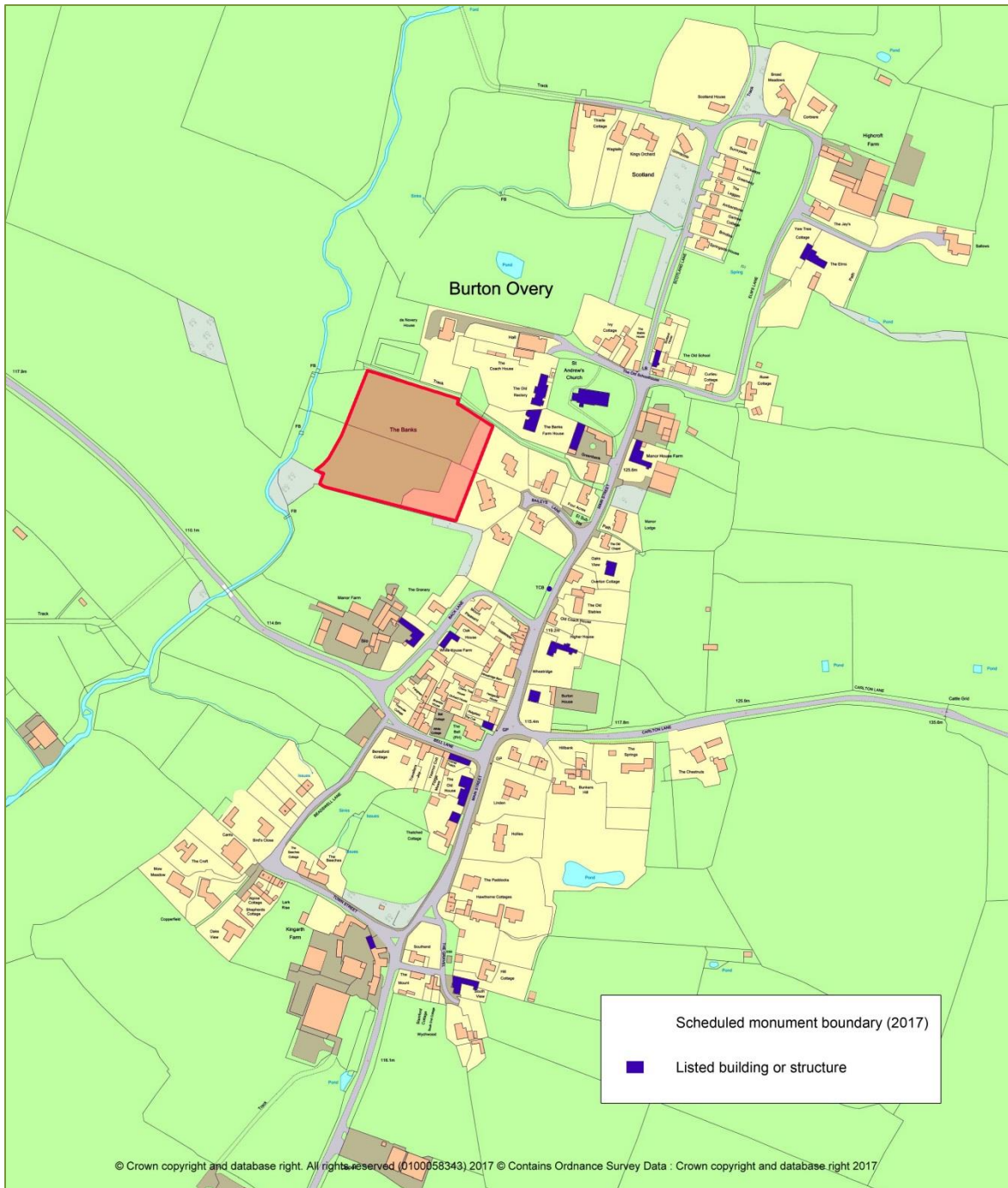
historical or architectural interest (See Appendix 6)

Their designations give them special legal protection beyond that which can be provided through a Neighbourhood Plan. It is important, however, that the Neighbourhood Plan highlights them, especially to ensure that all parties are aware of their national importance and merit, and of the need to protect and enhance these structures.

In addition, however, part of the character of the village derives from the relationships between buildings and the spaces in which they sit. The *settings* of the Listed Buildings and of those recognised below as *non-designated heritage assets* are essential for the preservation of the village's layout and its ambience – the way people experience the village. Developers will be required to take the settings of all heritage assets into consideration in their proposals, and the Planning Authorities should apply Historic England guidelines on *Local Heritage*

Listing and The Setting of Heritage Assets when determining Planning Consent in respect of proposals in Burton Overy.

**Fig. 11: Statutorily protected historic environment: Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monument**



## Area of Separation

Burton Overy is a small, rural village surrounded by open countryside. Its medieval layout is preserved almost intact, with only minor additions to the built environment during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. It has no main roads, and the topography of the parish means that there are extensive views in all directions that are uninterrupted

by any other substantial settlements. This is a precious characteristic, especially in a village situated only four km from the greater Leicester built-up area.

Its near neighbour, Great Glen, is expanding, both actually and potentially, toward Burton Overy. Residents are concerned that there should be no encroachment of new large-scale development into either the parish of Burton Overy or its *setting* – which (based on the criterion used by Historic England for defining the settings of heritage assets) includes all of the area visible from within the parish *and* the area surrounding it from which Burton Overy can be experienced.

The Area of Separation Review commissioned by Harborough District Council in 2017 recognises that the function of an area of separation is to ensure that development does not harmfully reduce the separation between settlements where there is a potential risk of merging. The 2017 study reinforces the importance of ‘prevention of coalescence’ and the sense of separation between settlements. The review identifies two large scale and strategic areas for inclusion within the Proposed Submission Local Plan (between Great Bowden and Harborough and Lutterworth/Bitteswell and Magna Park). The review acknowledges that further areas of separation will come forward in Neighbourhood Plans.

The Area of Separation identified within the Neighbourhood Plan has been recognised to help retain the physical separation between the built-up area of Burton Overy and the adjoining village of Great Glen in order to maintain the identity and distinctiveness of both settlements, as well as their landscape setting, built environment and the views across open countryside. By so doing it will help to preserve the character of burton Overy and to prevent harmful encroachment into the countryside.

The boundary extends up to the border with Great Glen Parish because development linked to Great Glen would create a satellite settlement of Burton Overy that is disconnected from the village itself whilst also being distant from the facilities in Great Glen itself. The Area of separation seeks to recognise the difference in scale and character between Great Glen (large housing developments and commercial settings) and Burton Overy (deeply rural, small settlement, surrounded by open countryside).

This is undertaken in awareness of the considerable large-scale developer interest in developing the land between these two communities.

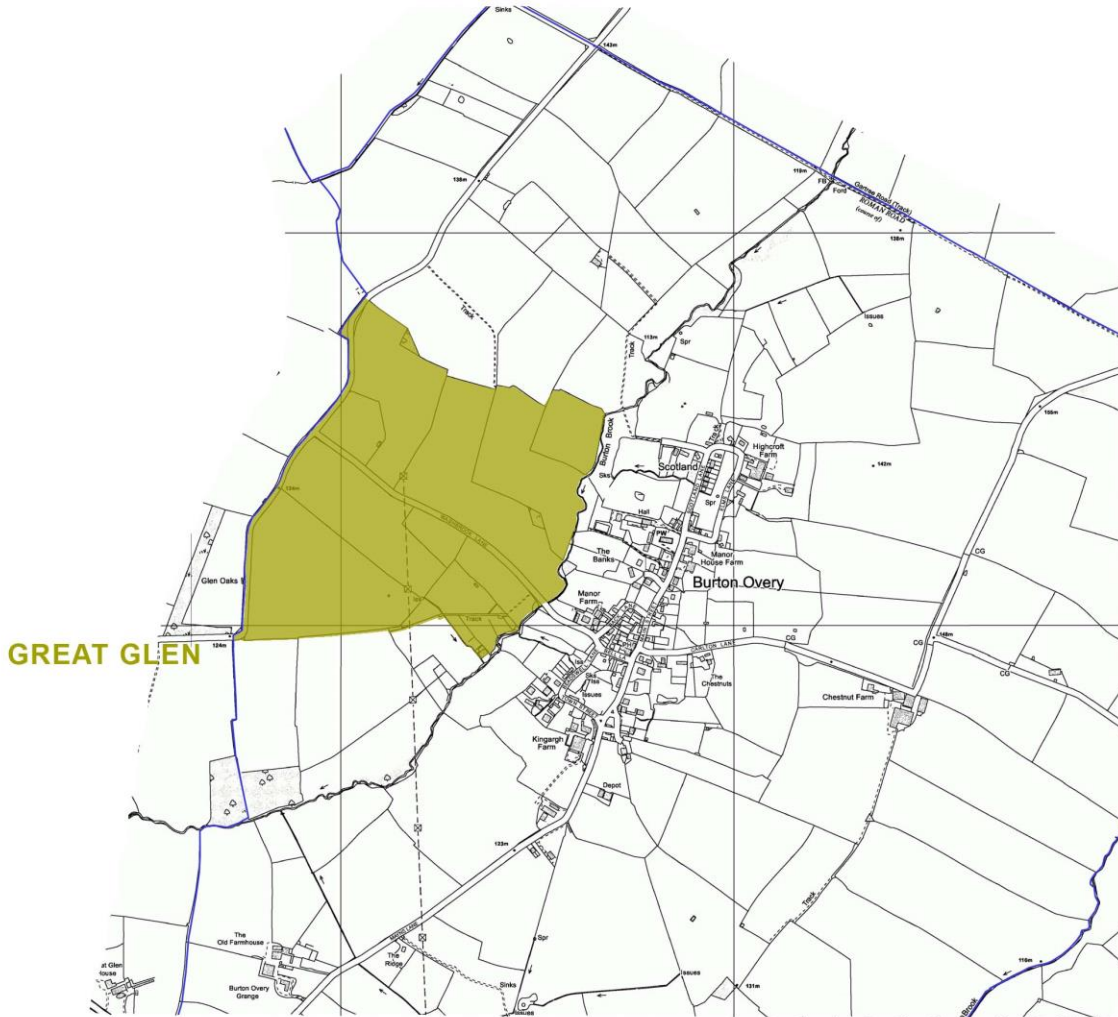
The Area of Separation represents that area which is necessary to be maintained as open land so as not to reduce the existing degree of separation between the two settlements.

In doing so, the Neighbourhood Plan follows the principle established within the Area of Separation Review in drawing the area of separation between Harborough and Great Bowden, namely to designate the whole area between the two



settlements in recognition of the harm that would be caused by the encroachment by development in this area.

**Fig. 12: Areas of Separation**



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**POLICY ENV 8: AREA OF SEPARATION** – To protect the geographical and visual separation between Burton Overy and neighbouring expanding settlements, an Area of Separation between Burton Overy and Great Glen is designated in the location shown in Fig. 12 (above).

Development will not be supported which, either individually or cumulatively, would demonstrably adversely affect or diminish the present open and undeveloped character of the area, unless located and designed to preserve the physical and functional separation of the villages.

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Community Action ENV 3 records residents' aspiration that a matching Area of Separation will be established on the Great Glen side of the parish boundary.

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**COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 3: AREA OF SEPARATION – Burton Overy Parish Council and parish residents will work with Harborough District Council and the Parish Council of Great Glen to delineate and designate an Area of Separation in that parish on review of its Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that development respects the intention of policy Env8.**

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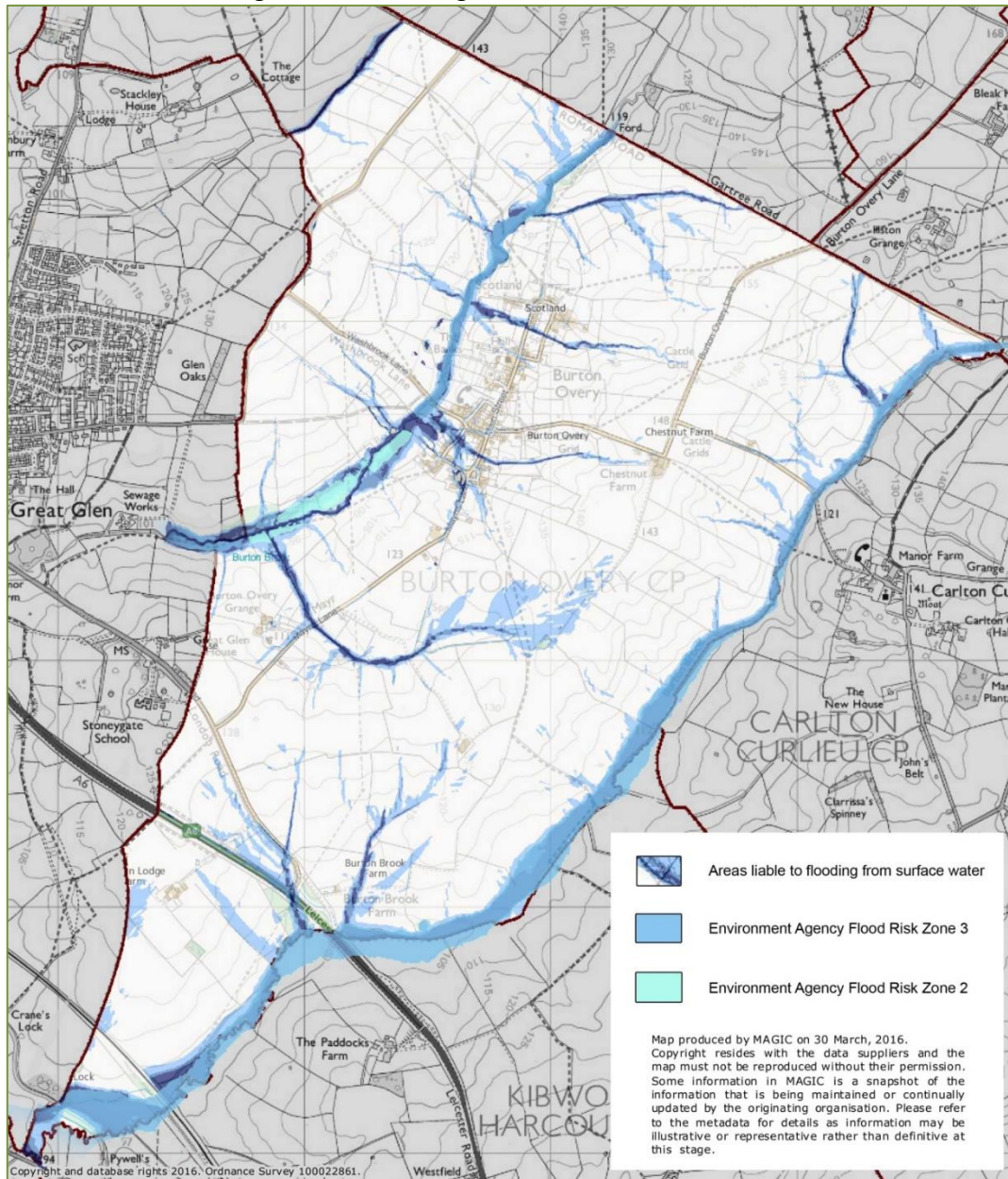
## **Flooding from rivers, surface water, culverts and ditches**

The present built-up area of the village is not at risk of flooding from rivers. However, the Environment Agency map of 'Flood Risk for Planning' shows that the Washbrook flows within 100m of properties and that the entire strip of land west of the village is in Flood Risk Zone 3 (see below). In village lore, the part of the medieval village (now visible as earthworks) located by the brook is said to have been washed away in a flooding event. No new development should be allowed in the floodplain of the Washbrook.

The important issue for today's residents is that of flooding from surface water, which is known to have become a problem in the parish over recent years. Possible causes are increased rainfall overall, more intensive rainfall events, intensification of agriculture, and new development being permitted without recognition of its effects on local hydrology. Within the parish, flooding from surface water (run-off and 'flash flooding') is an actual or potential risk generally, and specifically at sites adjacent to *ordinary watercourses*, i.e. 'rivers, streams, ditches, drains, cuts, culverts, dikes, sluices, sewers (other than public sewers within the meaning of the Water Industry Act 1991) and passages, through which water flows'.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) does not prohibit development in areas of high flood risk (e.g. Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone 3); NPPF paragraphs 100 – 103 are advisory on Local Planning Authorities. Flooding from surface water was excluded from the National Flood Resilience Review (September 2016). This Policy therefore represents a local determination to strengthen the conditions in respect of flooding and hydrology to be applied to all substantial development in the parish.

Fig 13 Risk of Flooding from rivers and surface water



**POLICY ENV 9: FLOODING – Development proposals of appropriate scale and where relevant will be required to demonstrate that:**

1. Its location takes geology, flood risk and natural drainage into account, including undertaking a hydrogeological study whose findings must be complied with in respect of design, groundworks and construction;
2. Its design includes, as appropriate, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), other surface water management measures and permeable surfaces;
3. It does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

# E. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

## Introduction

The presence of community facilities and diverse amenities make a significant contribution to the vitality, community spirit and overall viability of Burton Overy. They have a positive impact on the sustainability of the Parish, enhancing quality of life and providing an important focal point for social interaction. They also provide local people with employment opportunities, reduce the need to travel and offer valued services, not only for those who do not have access to a car.

However, the loss and threatened closure of facilities and services is a common feature of village life. An increase in car ownership has opened up access to a wide range of leisure activities, other than those that are available locally, a trend that is also encouraged by frequent commuting to work, whether to places of employment or to deliver products or services. While village communities have become more mobile some rural service providers have decided, as they seek to become more efficient, that it is not viable to maintain service levels. These trends taken together threaten the viability of many rural services and amenities.

## Protecting existing community facilities

The main community facilities in Burton Overy are as follows:

### **Village Hall**

Burton Overy has had a Village Hall since 1922. The hall, situated in the quiet backwater of Rectory End originally comprised of two 18th century cottages, former homes of gardeners employed at the Rectory. The cottages now form a meeting room within the new modern hall. The Village Hall, which has its own kitchen, accommodates village and private functions and is well used by the clubs and societies of the village.

In 2017, The Village Hall was awarded a Lottery Grant of £10,000 to renovate the entrance to the Hall, to make it safer and more user friendly, with better access and more suitable parking for disabled users.

The Hall is also the location for the community heart defibrillator.

### **St Andrews Church**

The church in Burton Overy dates from the medieval period, being the most ancient building in the village, with the Font dating to the 13th Century. The church is dedicated to St Andrew; it consists of a nave, a north aisle, a spacious chancel,



and a tower in which there are three bells. Inside there is a 15th century screen of richly carved oak and an old ironbound chest. The font is circular and plain. In 1220, this church was under the patronage of the abbey of St. Ebrulf at Urica in Normandy.

St Andrew's is open every day in the daytime all year round for visitors and forms an important part of village life, hosting events such as the annual Christmas Tree festival which attracts visitors from far and wide.

### **The Book Exchange**

In the spirit of sharing and keeping a much-loved landmark Burton Overy has re-commissioned its red telephone box into a book exchange. Since its launch many of the local residents have put the exchange to good use and it has become a much-used asset within the village.

### **The Bell Pub.**

The Bell pub is a much-loved asset to local village life in Burton Overy, both as a meeting place and a landmark restaurant to enjoy with friends and family from outside of the village. As such a key community asset, the plan would set out to protect its status as a public house and would not support any change of use.

The importance of the existing facilities and amenities were highlighted in the consultation events that have taken place across the Parish through the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Both the NPPF and the Harborough Core Strategy indicate that valued community facilities should be retained. Policy CF1 explains how the Plan will contribute towards the objective of maintaining the existing level and range of facilities.

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**POLICY CF1: THE RETENTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES - Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility or which detrimentally impacts on an existing community facility in such a way that it loses amenity value (including but not limited to the village hall and pub) will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:**

- a. There is no longer any need or demand for the existing community facility; or**
  - b. The existing community facility is no longer economically viable; or**
  - c. The proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish which complies with the other general policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.**
-



# F. EMPLOYMENT

## Introduction

Supporting a healthy and diverse local economy is an important theme of the Neighbourhood Plan. This support recognises the constraints imposed by the fact that Burton Overy is a rural parish and thus relatively remote from the major employment centres and by the fact that its residents place a high value on its rural character in all its aspects.

However, increased opportunities for home working and the potential for farm diversification offer opportunities for businesses to grow and flourish. Both these trends benefit the overall sustainability and diversity of the Parish.

There is an increasing number of residents who are home workers (7.6% of people living in the Parish who are aged 16-74 and in employment compared to 5.7% in Harborough District and more than double regional and national levels) choosing or needing to work from home. Self-employment rates are a third higher than across Harborough (20% compared to 13%) and more than double regional and national levels.

## Farm diversification

There are still some working farms remaining in the Parish. To help maintain the rural economy and protect the open countryside from inappropriate development, the Plan supports the sustainable growth and expansion of business and enterprise through the conversion of existing buildings in the countryside. Specifically, this is intended to:

- Promote a viable and sustainable farming and rural economy in the Parish;
- Promote the diversification of rural businesses;
- Encourage new businesses to provide a wider range of local produce, services and leisure facilities, to provide local employment and attract visitors to the Parish;
- Maintain and enhance the local environment of rural and agricultural lands.

The change of use of some rural buildings to new uses is already permitted under the General Permitted Development Orders. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment and Consequential Provisions) (England) Order 2014 allows, under certain circumstances, the change of use of agricultural buildings to residential use and change of use of agricultural buildings to registered nurseries providing childcare or state-funded schools, under the prior approval system.

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## **POLICY E1: RE-USE OF AGRICULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS -**

**The re-use, conversion and adaptation of rural buildings for small businesses, recreation, or tourism purposes will be supported where:**

- a) The use proposed is appropriate to the rural location;**
  - b) The conversion/adaptation works respect the local character of the surrounding area;**
  - c) The development will not have an adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;**
  - d) The local road system is capable of accommodating the traffic generated by the proposed new use and adequate parking can be accommodated within the site;**
  - e) There is no significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light pollution, increased traffic levels or increased flood risk.**
- 

## **Broadband infrastructure**

The modern economy is changing and increasingly requires a good communications infrastructure as a basic requirement for commonly adopted and effective working practices. The internet is driving business innovation and growth, helping people access services, opening up new opportunities for learning and defining the way businesses interact with and between their employees, with their customers and with their suppliers. This is particularly important in small rural settings where better broadband will enable home-working, reducing dependence on the car; will enable small businesses to operate efficiently and compete effectively in their markets; and where improved access to an increasing number of on-line applications and services provided by the public and private sector can help to reduce social exclusion.

The 2011 Census highlights how people are working differently to a generation ago – in Burton Overy Parish 7.6% of people work from home and 20% are self-employed –significantly higher figures than district, regional or national levels.

The need for high speed broadband to serve Burton Overy is therefore very important. Broadband speeds are reported by the majority of residents to be poor and sporadic, and it is therefore a fundamental constraint to the continuing expansion of self-employed activity for those working from home or from a small office. In the Open Event respondents referenced the poor quality of broadband speed.

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**POLICY E2: BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE** - Every individual dwelling in new housing developments should have a connection installed capable of supplying broadband operation at speeds of 30 megabytes per second (as at the date of publication) or better to reflect higher minimum speeds that may be recommended through the lifetime of the Plan.

Proposals to provide access to a super-fast broadband service and improve the mobile telecommunication network that will serve businesses and other properties within the Parish will be supported. This may require aboveground network installations, which must be sympathetically located and designed to integrate into the landscape.

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## Homeworking

In rural areas such as Burton Overy with limited full-time employment opportunities the benefit of supporting home working is that it helps to promote business activities, encouraging local employment and reduce the dependency of the car for long journeys to employment sites outside the Parish.

The intention of Policy E3 is to recognise that people may not have a suitable space within their home from which to run a business, or they may wish to distinctly and deliberately separate their work and living space. Policy E3 supports the construction of extensions, the conversion of outbuildings, and the development of new free-standing buildings in gardens from which businesses can operate. This is intended to maximise the opportunity for home run enterprises to be created and supported in the long term in Burton Overy Parish, recognising the reality of employment patterns and work habits in a rural location.

Policy E3 would apply where a material change of use occurs, such that planning permission is required. It reflects positive support for entrepreneurial activity.

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**POLICY E5: WORKING FROM HOME** - Proposals for the use of part of a dwelling for office and/or light industrial uses, and for small scale free standing buildings within its curtilage, extensions to the dwelling or conversion of outbuildings for those uses, will be supported where:

- a) No significant and adverse impact arises to nearby residents or other sensitive land uses from noise, fumes, odour or other nuisance associated with the work activity; and
- b) Any extension or free-standing building shall be designed having regard to policies in this Plan and should not detract from the quality and character of the building to which it is subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction.

## 7. Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan will last up to 2031. During this time, it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. This will be led by Burton Overy Parish Council on at least an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan on a five-year cycle commencing in 2023 or to coincide with the review of the Harborough Local Plan if this cycle is different.