



Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Planning Referendum 28 September 2017

Information Pack

Contents:

1. **Information Statement**
2. **Information for Voters** (including general information as to town and country planning and neighbourhood planning)
3. **The Draft Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan**
4. **Report of the Independent Examiner** on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan
5. **Summary of representations** received in response to publication of the Draft Plan
6. **Statement that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions** by the local planning authority



Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Planning Referendum

Information Statement

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk hereby gives notice that a Referendum relating to the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan will be held.

The Referendum will be held on Thursday 28 September 2017 to decide on the question below:

Do you want the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to use the neighbourhood plan for Walpole Cross Keys to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

The Referendum area is identical to the area that has been designated as the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan area which covers the Parish of Walpole Cross Keys, as shown on the following map.



A person is entitled to vote in the Referendum if, on Tuesday 12 September 2017:

- (a) he/she is entitled to vote in an election of any Councillor of the Walpole Cross Keys Parish Council whose area is in the Referendum area and
- (b) his/her qualifying address for the election is in the Referendum area. A person's qualifying address is, in relation to a person registered in the register of electors, the address in respect of which he or she is entitled to be so registered.

The Referendum expenses limit that will apply in relation to the Referendum is £2,362; plus the number of persons entitled to vote in the Referendum by reference to which that limit has been calculated (number of entries in the register x 5.9p).

The Referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures which are similar to those used at local government elections.

A number of specified documents may be inspected at:

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn. PE30 1EX Opening times: 9 am-5 pm Monday – Thursday and 9 am-4.45 pm on a Friday Tel: (01553) 616200 or email contact@west-norfolk.gov.uk

The specified documents are:

- (i) the draft neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order;
- (ii) the report made by the independent examiner under paragraph 10 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 (in the case of a neighbourhood plan, as applied by section 38A(3) of the 2004 Act);
- (iii) a summary of any representations submitted to the independent examiner pursuant to paragraph 9 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act;
- (iv) a statement –
- (bb) in the case of a draft neighbourhood plan, that the local planning authority are satisfied that the draft plan meets those basic conditions and complies with the provision made by, or under, sections 38A and 38B of the 2004 Act;
- (v) a statement that sets out general information as to town and country planning (including neighbourhood planning) and the referendum, which is prepared having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

For further information about the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan, including all background documents, please [see our Neighbourhood Planning webpages](#):

- Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans:

https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/43/neighbourhood_planning

- Neighbourhood Plans in Progress in West Norfolk:

https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/116/plans_being_prepared



Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Planning Referendum

Information for Voters

About this document

On Thursday 28 September 2017 there will be a Referendum on a Neighbourhood Plan for your area. This document explains the Referendum that is going to take place and how you can take part in it. It explains:-

- Why there are neighbourhood plans and other development plans
- The Referendum and how you can take part

Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan

A Referendum asks you to vote yes or no to a question.

For this Referendum you will receive a ballot paper with this question:

Do you want the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Walpole Cross Keys to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

What does my vote mean?

You show your choice by putting a cross (X) in the 'Yes' or 'No' box on your ballot paper.

Put a cross in only **one** box or your vote will not be counted.

If more people vote 'yes' than 'no' in this Referendum, then the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk will use the Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in the Parish of Walpole Cross Keys.

The Neighbourhood Plan will then become part of the Development Plan. This is a set of documents which sets out planning policies to guide development in King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

If more people vote 'no' than 'yes', then planning applications will be decided without using the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Development Plan for the local area.

Neighbourhood Plans

What is a neighbourhood plan?

A local community can prepare a neighbourhood plan to help shape future development in its area.

If it successfully passes all the stages, including being supported by a majority of votes in a Referendum the neighbourhood plan will become part of the official 'development plan' for the area, alongside the Borough Council's local plan. It then must be taken into account when the Borough Council, or a planning inspector, is deciding planning applications in the area.

Who can do a neighbourhood plan?

A neighbourhood plan is prepared by the relevant parish/town council, except in unparished areas (e.g. King's Lynn town), where a local group must first apply to be designated as a 'neighbourhood forum' before it can prepare a neighbourhood plan.

What can be in a neighbourhood plan?

Neighbourhood plans are about 'development' (broadly speaking, building construction and changes in the use of land). A neighbourhood plan can shape the future development in an area, but it cannot stop all development, or plan for less than that included in the Borough's Local Plan.

A neighbourhood plan must:

- support sustainable development,
- generally conform to the strategic policies in the local plan,
- have regard to national planning policies, and
- comply with relevant legislation to, e.g, ensure environmental matters are taken into account, protect certain species and habitats, human rights, etc.
- specify the period it will cover.

While a neighbourhood plan must in general conform to the local plan strategic policies for the area (e.g. the overall role of the area, the general scale and type of development planned), it can vary in detail from the local plan. This can involve additional or different allocations of land for development, different development boundaries, different design and other criteria to be applied in the area, etc. Where there is a contradiction between a neighbourhood plan and the local plan, it is the most recent one that counts.

Neighbourhood plans often contain policies to reinforce the local character of the area, to protect local green spaces and other features of particular local importance, and measures to address particular local problems or shortages.

There is no set format for a neighbourhood plan. It could be very brief and focused (perhaps just one policy) or very long and complex. Much will depend on what are the agreed local priorities, and what resources, interests and skills are available in the local community who prepare it.

How is a neighbourhood plan prepared?

Because neighbourhood plans will affect what may, or may not, receive planning permission they must go through stages of formal consultation to make sure everyone has an opportunity to comment on them, and that they meet tests laid down in legislation. These procedures include examination by an independent expert, to decide whether the plan meets the legal tests mentioned above, and a referendum to gauge the level of local support for the plan.

The Borough Council (as local planning authority) has to administer key parts of this process. The decisions it has to make in this process are not whether the Borough Council agrees with or supports the content of the neighbourhood plan, but whether the plan complies with nationally laid down rules and policies.

It is the local community's plan, and it is they who will have to do most of the work (or commission consultants to do this for them) and make the decisions on what they want in their plan, although the Borough Council will provide advice and assistance.

For further information on neighbourhood plans see:

Borough Council Information:

- Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans: https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/43/neighbourhood_planning
- Neighbourhood Plans in Progress in West Norfolk: https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/116/plans_being_prepared

Planning Aid <http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/>

Locality <http://locality.org.uk/projects/building-community/>

Town and Country Planning

Background

The town and country planning system exists to protect and promote the public interest in the way land is used and developed. All advanced economies have formal planning systems, though the details of how they operate vary, while simpler societies usually have less formal controls on new building.

The current British planning system was established in 1947, and grew out of concern that uncoordinated development in the 19th and early 20th century had resulted in severe adverse impacts on health, economic efficiency, quality of life and the environment. Owners of property in Britain do not have a right to build or change the use of land as they please, but must obtain planning permission to do so. (Some development, typically minor changes, is 'permitted development', and benefits from an automatic permission.)

The planning system endeavours to -

- Coordinate the activities of different developers and agencies,

- Protect features and qualities of acknowledged public interest,
- Provide a degree of certainty for investors, landowners, residents and other stakeholders, and
- Coordinate the provision of infrastructure and other facilities.

More broadly the system aims to balance the needs and aspirations of the immediate site or locality with those for the wider area and country within which it sits, and to balance current concerns against longer term interests.

Inevitably these different aims and considerations are often in tension, and so there are difficult and controversial decisions to be made in balancing them when considering whether to grant planning permission or include something in a plan. (Planning decisions often seem easy if only one consideration is taken into account!)

Local Planning Decisions

The responsibility for making most of these difficult decisions is given by Parliament to the local planning authority which, in this area, is the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

Planning authorities cannot, however, make a decision any way they may please. Prior public consultation is required in most cases. Decisions on applications must be made in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless there are proper planning considerations suggesting otherwise.

One of the important considerations which must be taken into account is national (government) planning policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework. This tells local planning authorities which issues they should consider most important, how decisions should be reached, how plans should be prepared and what they should contain, etc.

Decisions are made by elected councillors, advised by specialist planning officers, though routine decisions (e.g planning applications clearly in accordance with, or contrary to, adopted plans) will usually be delegated by councillors to senior officers; because of the volume of work and pressures of time.

There is provision for the planning decisions of the local planning authority to be challenged and reviewed by an independent planning inspector (or, if the issue is the legality of the decision or the way it was reached, the courts).

Local Plans

The local planning authority has to produce local plans for the future development of the area. Local plans (previously known as local development frameworks) may consist of one or more separate plans or documents. These would commonly include (as is the case in West Norfolk) a core strategy document setting out the overall scale and broad location of development, and a site allocations document

identifying the specific sites and the type and amount of development sought on each.

Local plans usually look forward at least 15 years, and must provide for enough housing and employment development to meet the anticipated growth in the area over that period, and have to be in general accordance with national planning policy. Ideas for how this might be done are refined and reconsidered through successive rounds of consultation and discussion, often over a period of several years, but rarely is consensus reached, so the local planning authority must make difficult choices between competing views and proposals. Once the local planning authority has decided the plan it wishes to adopt, it is tested against legal requirements and national policy by an independent planning inspector, who will consider the views of those who oppose or support the plan, and decide whether it can be adopted and brought into force.

Under current national policy, if local plans are not successfully brought-up-to-date and adopted, or less housing development than needed actually takes place, it will be difficult for the local planning authority to refuse a planning application for housing development unless it seriously contravenes national policy, even if it contravenes the local or neighbourhood plan.

Neighbourhood Planning

Parish and town councils are statutory consultees for planning applications and local plans. This means they are consulted about these and are able to put forward any views they may have on these.

The 2011 Localism Act gave them (and communities in unparished areas that had successfully applied for designation as a neighbourhood forum) additional new planning powers to produce neighbourhood development plans, or to grant planning permission for specified developments or types of development (neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders). Of these, neighbourhood plans have been by far the most popular. (For further information on neighbourhood plans, see section above.)

Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan Referendum Area

The Referendum area is identified on the map below. This is the same as the area of Walpole Cross Keys Parish, and the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan area.



Voting in the Referendum

The Referendum area

The Referendum area is identified on the map shown on Page 12 as the parish area of Walpole Cross Keys and is identical to the area which has been designated as the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan area.

Referendum Expenses

The Referendum expenses limit that will apply in relation to the Referendum is £2,362, plus the number of persons entitled to vote in the Referendum by reference to which that limit has been calculated i.e number of entries in the current register 418 x 5.9p.

Specified Documents

A copy of the specified documents, that is the documents listed below, may be inspected at the following:-

- Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn PE30 1EX between the hours of 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday – Thursday and 9.00 am - 4.45 pm on a Friday.
Tel: (01553) 616281 or email register.electors@west-norfolk.gov.uk.

The specified documents are:-

- The draft Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan
- A statement that sets out general information as to town and country planning including neighbourhood planning and the Referendum
- Report of the Independent Examiner
- Summary of the representations submitted to the Independent Examiner
- Statement by the Local Planning Authority that the Draft Plan meets the basic conditions

All of the above documents can be viewed on the Council's website.

Can I Vote?

You can vote in the Referendum if you live in the Parish of Walpole Cross Keys and:-

- You are registered to vote in Local Government Elections, and
- You are 18 years of age or over on Thursday 28 September 2017

You have to be registered to vote by Tuesday 12 September 2017 to vote in the Referendum. You can check if you are registered to vote by calling (01553) 616773 or 616200.

The Referendum will be conducted in accordance with the procedures which are similar to those used at Local Government Elections.

Ways of Voting

There are three ways of voting:-

In person on Thursday 28 September 2017

- Most people vote in person at their local polling station. It is easy and the staff on duty will always help if you are not sure what to do.
- In Walpole Cross Keys the polling station is:
Jephson Hall, Sutton Road, Walpole Cross Keys, King's Lynn
PE34 4HD
- You will receive a poll card telling you that this is your polling station.
- If you do not receive your poll card you can contact Electoral Services on (01553) 616773 to find out where your polling station is.
- The polling station will be open from 7 am to 10 pm.
- If you are not in the queue for a ballot paper by 10 pm you will not be able to vote; so make sure you arrive in plenty of time.

By post

- To vote by post you need to complete an application form and send it to Electoral Services, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, KING'S LYNN PE30 1EX to arrive by 5 pm on Wednesday 13 September 2017.
- Ballot papers can be sent overseas, but you need to think about whether you will have time to receive and return your ballot papers by 10 pm on Thursday 28 September 2017.

- You should receive your Postal Vote about a week before polling day. If it does not arrive in time, you can get a replacement up to 5 pm on Thursday 28 September 2017.

By Proxy

- If you cannot go to the polling station, and do not wish to vote by post, you may be able to vote by proxy. This means allowing somebody you trust to vote on your behalf.
- To vote by proxy, you need to complete an application form and send it to Electoral Services, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, KING'S LYNN PE30 1EX to arrive by 5 pm on Wednesday 20 September 2017.
This is for a new Proxy only. Changes to existing arrangements need to be made by 5 pm on Wednesday 13 September 2017.
- When you apply for a proxy vote you must say why you cannot vote in person.
- Anyone can be your proxy as long as they are eligible to vote and are willing to vote on your behalf. You will have to tell them how you want to vote.

Postal and proxy vote application forms are available from Electoral Services on (01553) 616773 or by downloading from the Council's website at www.west-norfolk.gov.uk.

Am I Registered to Vote?

- If you are not registered you will not be able to vote.
- If you are not on the Electoral Register, you will need to complete an Invitation to Register form and send it to Electoral Services, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn PE30 1EX to arrive no later than Tuesday 12 September 2017.

Registration forms are available from Electoral Services on (01553) 616773 or alternatively you can register yourself at www.gov.uk/registertovote.

How to find out more

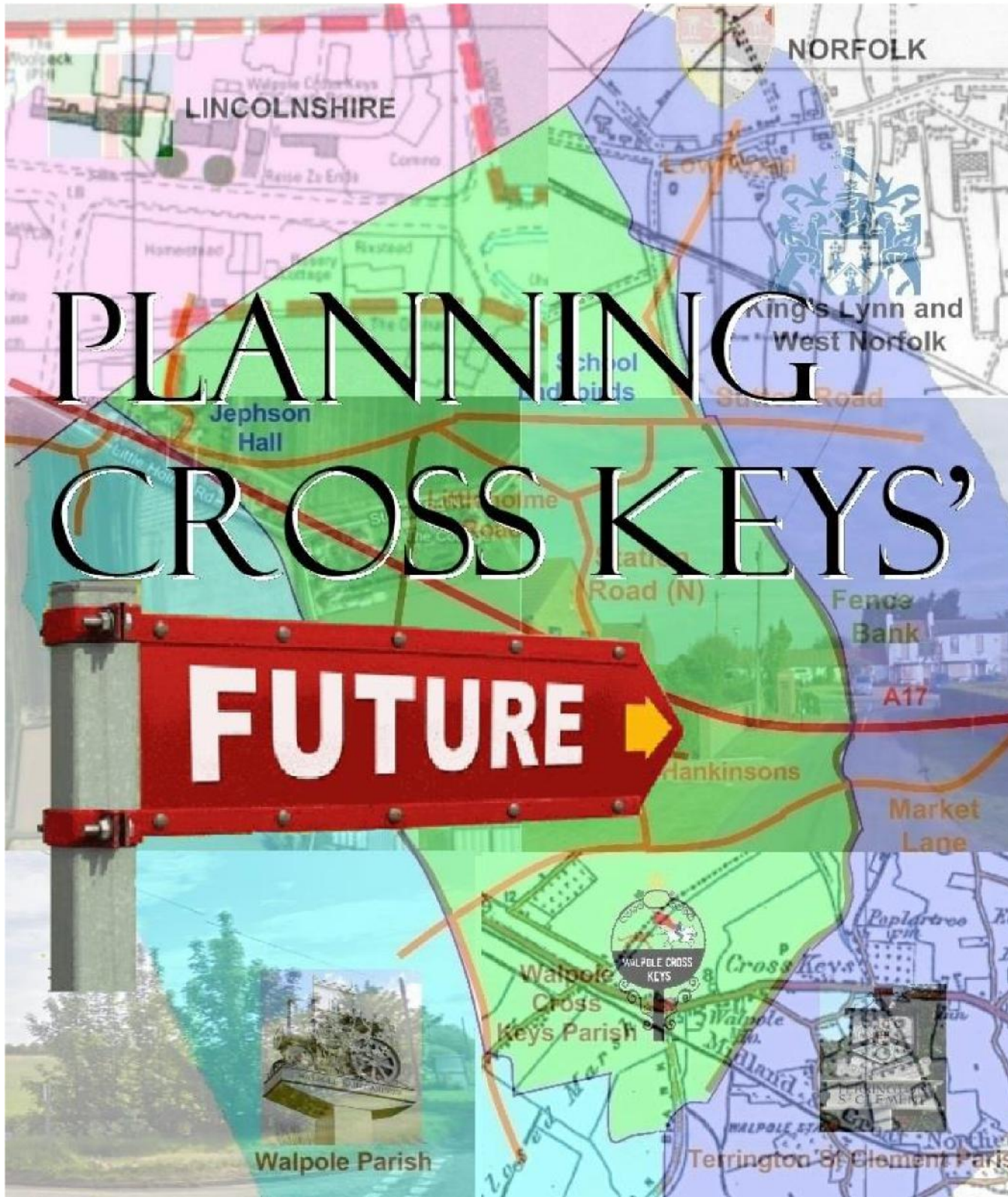
- Further general information on neighbourhood planning is available on the following websites www.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning and https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans
- For queries about planning issues, please contact the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Planning Policy on (01553) 616200. For queries about the Referendum and voting please contact Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Electoral Services on (01553) 616773 or email: register.electors@west-norfolk.gov.uk.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2015 – 2026

**DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
POST EXAMINATION VERSION**

(REGULATION 18) (JUNE 2017)



**WALPOLE CROSS KEYS'
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
2015-2026**

Draft Neighbourhood Plan Post Examination Version (Regulation 18) (June 2017)

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CONTENTS

1. Producing this Neighbourhood Plan
2. The Parish in Perspective
3. The Vision and Objectives
4. The Strategy
5. The NP Policies
6. How will the NP be implemented

Maps:

Map 1

Tables:

Table 5.1 Description of built up areas in Walpole Cross Keys

Appendices

1: Community Aspirations

2: Population Trends Household Trends Employment

CHAPTER 1. CREATING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The parish of Walpole Cross Keys was designated as a neighbourhood area by the Borough Council on 12 November 2013.

Work on the plan started earlier than this in August 2012 and in early 2013 preliminary village consultation took place on the emerging plan proposals. At a well attended meeting on 25 February 2013 broad agreement was reached that the plan's proposals was a faithful record of the way that villagers would want to see the future of the village. It was also agreed that the plan should be formalised into a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Parish Council were tasked with putting this process in place. The application for neighbourhood area designation for the parished area of Walpole Cross Keys was submitted by the Parish Council to the Borough Council. The Borough Council consulted on this area application from 27 August 2013 to 8 October 2013. The Neighbourhood area was subsequently designated on 12 November 2013.

During the period 16 December 2013 to 12 March 2014, a previous draft of the Neighbourhood Plan was made available for public consultation and, as part of this, a range of statutory consultees were directly consulted. Further information on this consultation is set out in the Consultation Statement.

Following this, further work was undertaken on the plan in order to ensure the planning policies were fit for purpose in terms of implementing the intentions which underpin the plan.

The plan was amended in light of comments received and then submitted to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. The Borough Council published the plan for a further six week consultation. Any comments received at this stage were submitted along with the Neighbourhood Plan for Examination.

NEXT STEPS

This draft version of the Neighbourhood Plan is a version which was submitted to the Borough Council but incorporates modification recommendations suggest by the Examiner. This is the version that will be made available at the Referendum stage

The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period from 2015 through to 2026. This is aligned with the Core Strategy end date.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

BASIC CONDITIONS

The examiner will make an independent review of the Plan and will establish whether the plan meets basic conditions set out in planning legislation. In particular any neighbourhood plan must:

- a) have regard to national planning policies and guidance
- b) contribute towards achieving sustainable development
- c) be in general conformity with strategic policies of the Borough Council's Local Plan. This currently comprise the Core Strategy (2011) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Polices Plan (2016)
- d) be compatible with European Union law and human rights legislation.

A basic conditions statement has been prepared alongside the Neighbourhood Plan and will set out how this plan meets the basic conditions.

Cabinet Version - Pre Referendum

CHAPTER 2. THE PARISH IN PERSPECTIVE

i. Demographics

The population of Walpole Cross Keys rose from 469 in 2001 to 519 in 2011, an increase of 11%. This increase was slightly more than the BCKLWN (Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk) area as a whole, which rose 8.9% in the same time period.

The 2011 census reflects that Walpole Cross Keys had a significantly higher percentage of people within the 0-14, and the 45-59 years age group, when the figures were compared with the BCKLWN area as a whole. There was however a significantly lower percentage of people in both the 20-29, and the 60-85+ years age groups, compared with the figures for the wider area.

In 2011, Walpole Cross Keys had much fewer one person households as a percentage, when compared to BCKLWN; however the parish has a much higher percentage of one family only households. The proportion of 2 person households in the village is however slightly higher compared to borough and regional level at 43% compared to 41% and 36% respectively and the proportion of 3 person households in the village is comparable to borough and regional levels at 15%.

Data collected by the census shows that home ownership has not changed much in the parish over the last ten years, but when comparing the 2011 figures for both the village and the BC, Walpole Cross Keys did appear to have a much larger percentage of dwellings owned with a mortgage or loan, but a much lower percentage of social and privately rented dwellings.

Over the ten year period from 2001 to 2011, occupation trends in the village have shifted away from skilled trade and customer service occupations, and into other areas, with increased numbers seen working in: professional; associate and technical operations; caring, leisure and other service occupations; and process, plant and machine operatives. When comparing occupational statistics from the 2011 census between the parish and the BCKLWN area as a whole, many of the occupations are at a similar percentage level; suggesting that these changes in occupation trends are in line with those in the wider area.

ii. Properties

Walpole Cross Keys is a small Parish which is centred on the school and parish sign. Development is of a ribbon nature and spreads thinly along Sutton Road toward the western border; down Low Road, towards the eastern border and along Station Road North – petering out as it approaches the A17 bypass. More ribbon development exists along Littleholme Road. On the southern side there is further ribbon development on Station Road South stretching from along the old piece of road to the junction with Market lane. Further sporadic ribbon development exists west of that junction with only occasional houses to the east. The only estate-type development is Hankinson's which has its own sewage system – unlike the rest of the parish which is not likely to be on a mains sewage system at any time in the foreseeable future.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

iii. Stock mix

a. Residential

Housing stock is mixed in terms of age and style – although there are far more houses than bungalows – the latter being in the following places: mixed in along Low Road; one single bungalow on Sutton Road; a small group near the junction of Sutton Road and Station Road North; a group of bungalows at the southern end of Littleholme Road; a single one on Station Road North nearing the bypass; a mix along Station Road South near the mouth of Hankinsons Estate; and a mix along Market lane. A number of properties are owned by the Crown and a few by Freebridge Housing Association – we find that this mix works well by providing some affordable housing.

Larger houses in their own grounds are dotted around the parish with a small concentration along the central part of Littleholme Road.

In 2011, census data shows that Walpole Cross Keys had several more detached and semi-detached dwellings, as a percentage of the overall dwellings, compared to the BCKLWN as a whole. It also had greatly fewer terraced properties; and flats, maisonettes, and apartments.

The data also demonstrated that the village has no properties which have less than one separate bedroom, but when compared to the BCKLWN as a whole, the village has a much lower percentage of properties with one and two bedrooms, and a significantly higher percentage of properties with four bedrooms.

As at February 2015, there are 15 socially rented properties in the Neighbourhood Plan area and there is evidenced need¹ at least one additional 3 bedroom affordable housing unit.

b. Non-residential

In terms of other structures these are few and far between. The school is tucked out of sight on Sutton Road. A currently unused onion factory sits back from the road on Fence Bank. A window firm is effectively hidden behind tall fencing on Sutton Road. The garage sits next door to the old church which is now a private dwelling. The parish hall sits in its own car park close to the western border. A transport firm is located on Market Lane. On the site of the old station there is a large pallet yard – in more recent years natural screening has reduced its visual impact on neighbouring properties and passing traffic.

The derelict Woolpack public house is awaiting demolition and a planning application has been permitted to build 4 detached four bedroom houses on the site.

c. Agricultural/Horticultural

There are a number of working farms in the parish – one down Low Road, one just south of the A17, one on Market Lane near the junction with Station Road South, and a smallholding near the western border on Market Lane. One of these runs a traditional farm shop with pick your own facilities and another does some trade around Christmas time in birds such as turkeys. There is one nursery along Market Lane, one on Littleholme Road and another along Station Road North near the bypass.

¹ As per housing register February 2015.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

iii. Infrastructure

a. Roads

The roads in the parish vary in quality. The main A17 bisects the parish and carries heavy and unrestricted traffic. Sutton Road (the old A17) is beginning to deteriorate and attracts those seeking a shortcut through to King's Lynn – in spite of its 40 mph, 30 mph speed limits (and an advisory 20 mph at school times) traffic often speeds along this relatively straight road. Low Road is little more than single track – as is Littleholme Road which is also suffering from collapsing into the nearby dyke – traffic is limited to 30 mph on both roads. The two parts of Station Road are relatively narrow and winding – although part of the northern half carries a 30 mph limit. Market Lane suffers from the same kinds of problems as Sutton Road – whilst not as wide but considerably straighter it is limited by the national speed limit.

b. Footpaths

A single footpath runs the length of the northern side of Sutton Road. There is also a footpath connecting Station Roads North and South across the A17. Paving is provided around the entrance and into Hankinson's Estate.

c. Tracks

There are three main tracks that cross the parish – Fence Bank, Pingle Lane and Eastlands Bank which are not open to public transport but are used by farm traffic, walkers and horse riders. Parts of these form the parish walk which is advertised within the parish.

d. Drainage

The parish is criss-crossed with working dykes of varying sizes which drain the land and properties and can become quite full in wet weather. Repeated filling in by private property owners has rendered parts of the system inoperative as the backfills have not always been efficiently piped (if at all). This is a matter of serious importance as evidenced by a Flood Investigation Report prepared by Norfolk County Council on 15 August 2013 in response to two flood incidences in the neighbourhood plan area on 6 November 2012 and 23 December 2012. Consideration should be given to opening blocked drains. Similarly, extreme care needs to be taken with run-off water from roads and other hard developments. It would be useful to carry out a Parish-wide survey into the current drainage pattern and where there are blockages in this system.

e. Lighting

Four footpath lights have been erected – at the following junctions: Low Road and Sutton Road; Sutton Road and Station Road North; Station Road South and Hankinsons; and Station Road South and Market Lane.

f. Gardens

The Parish Council has undertaken to cultivate three areas of the parish: the **Eva Kemp Memorial/Station Garden** near the A17; the **Village Sign Garden** opposite the school; and the **Millennium Garden** at the junction of Littleholme Road and Sutton Road.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

g. Bus services

There are two regular bus services - the 55 (Lynn/Wisbech) and 505 (Lynn/Spalding) routes. Each has bus stops along Market lane and Sutton Road respectively. 55s did stop at Hankinson's Estate but no longer do so. The Parish Council has provided four bus shelters (two brick and two plastic and metal) – two near the school and one near the Millennium Garden (serving the 505) – the fourth being on Market Lane (serving the 55). Public transport links north/south across the parish are non-existent. Some consideration should be given to re-siting bus stops

h. Environment

The Parish Council is keen to maintain, support and celebrate the rural environment and will make decisions that are in keeping with (as appropriate) maintaining, protecting or improving that environment.

i. Community

There are very few village-based facilities that encourage people to remain within the village – the school and the Jephson Hall offer the only public places. It is crucial to the longer-term viability of the community that no more services are lost forever and that the village does not become a dormitory “town” to other places. Making every effort to maintain and promote the use for community facilities should be a Parish Council priority.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CHAPTER 3. THE VISION & OBJECTIVES

The local community wish Walpole Cross Keys to continue to thrive as a small rural community where new development in keeping with the village is supported, comprising mixed residential development, further employment uses, new community facilities and improvements to infrastructure.

Underpinning this vision are the following objectives:

- i. Walpole Cross Keys will continue to be a small parish made up predominantly of a mixed variety of dwellings mainly built in ribbon development.
- ii. New housing development comprising a range of house sizes including smaller 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings providing opportunities for older people to stay in the village and younger adults looking for their own home to stay in the village
- iii. New housing will be sensitively designed and will be appropriately located in existing built up areas both north of the A17 and south of the A17
- iv. Any traffic impacts associated with new development will be acceptable and distributed more evenly throughout the built up areas.
- v. Problems associated with existing drainage in the Neighbourhood Plan area will have been addressed and any new development will where possible contribute towards improvements and otherwise not exacerbate existing drainage problems.
- vi. The next generation of this village's inhabitants will inherit a community that has its own integrity, and continues to offer facilities, and a strong sense of community spirit, all of which have been important vestiges found here in both the past and present.

In order to realise these objectives the Neighbourhood Plan:

- a. Requires all development proposals to meet criteria relating to design, drainage and highways.
- b. Identifies the primary school and Jephson Hall to be retained as an important community facility crucial to the continued viability of the village and seeks provision of additional community facilities.
- c. Encourages additional employment uses.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CHAPTER 4. THE STRATEGY

The Parish Council recognises the points in the National Planning Policy Framework on sustainability and does not envisage that this tiny village could or should develop beyond its means. Walpole Cross Keys is a small rural village and long may it remain so. Supporting a prosperous and rounded rural economy is central to the thinking behind this plan as are the considerations of sustainable transport and other communications infrastructure. We want people to live healthy lives in well-designed homes. We are also very conscious of the changes made to the environment by indiscriminate planning and would always take cognisance of the dangers of flooding prevalent in this low-lying area.

The Plan reflects a healthy interest in the history of the village and in its natural environment which must be protected.

Whilst the Parish Council agrees with the principles behind the Borough Council's delineated "building envelope" it believes that there is scope for development in the area south of the A17 and that including development in this area would be good for the long term sustainability of the village.

The building envelope defined by the Borough Council excludes all areas south of the A17 Bypass. This is despite the fact that this part of the Parish is serviced by both the A17 Bypass and Market Lane; a road in considerable better condition than Station Road North and Littleholme Road which are beginning to deteriorate. There are potential infill opportunities in the area south of the A17 which would have less impact than some of the areas which currently lie within the Borough Council's defined building envelope.

This plan is based on the premise that we should encompass and consider all areas inclusive within our Parish Boundary as part of our overall strategy for sustainability in Walpole Cross Keys. It, therefore, looks to expand the possible areas for development whilst continuing to limit development at a sustainable level.

The Parish Council recognises the requirement for the Plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan. The Core Strategy states that land for 215 dwellings will be allocated in Rural Villages over the period to 2026 representing about six dwellings in this village. This Plan recognises that figure, and the thinking behind it, but is also mindful of the fact that it is not intended to be rigidly applied. The Parish Council believes that this Plan is in general conformity with the Core Strategy, and works with that strategy to provide the best in terms of long term growth for the village.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CHAPTER 5. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

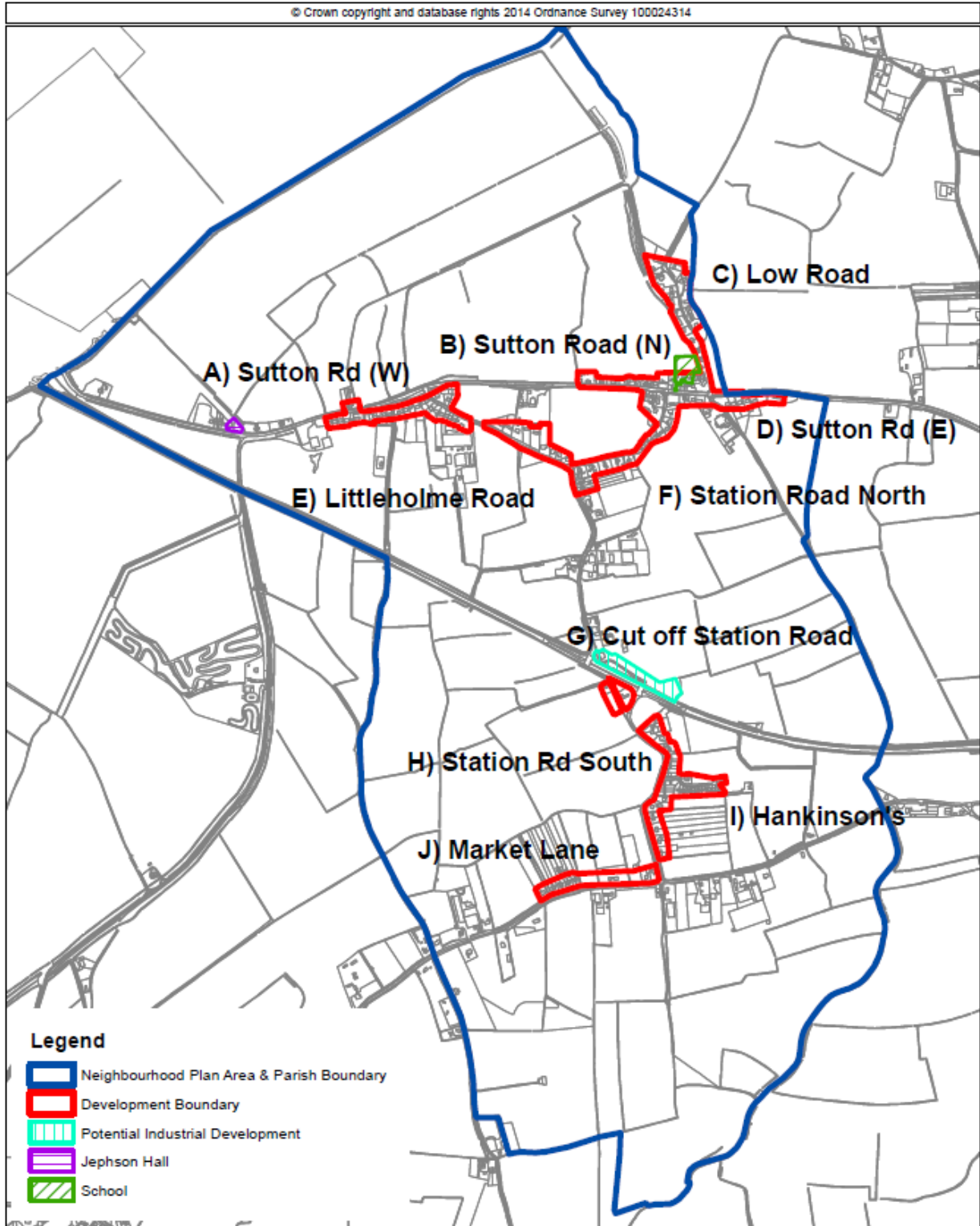
Housing

The Development Boundary defined in the Local Plan (the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan, Adopted September 2016) provides a useful starting point when considering the relationship of proposed development in relation to the existing pattern of development for the Parish and for defining the extent of its developed area and a distinction between the built up area and the countryside.

The existing built up area however does extend beyond the areas defined in the Development Boundary. The Neighbourhood Plan's development boundary extends to include these other parts of the existing built up area. These other areas, south of the A17, are shown in Map 1 overleaf.

Cabinet Version - Pre Referendum

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



<p>Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk</p> <p>Tel. 01553 616200 - Fax. 01553 691663</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan</p>		<p>Scale</p> <p>1:15,000</p>
	<p>Project / Details</p> <p>Map 1</p>		<p>Date</p> <p>28/07/15</p>
			<p>Drawn by</p> <p>JM/Policy</p>
			<p>Drawing / Reference Number</p> <p>20152807/Walpole NP</p>

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Map 1

A description of existing built up areas in the Parish, alongside an analysis of capacity to incorporate additional infill dwellings is set out below:

Built up area (as indicated on Map 1)	Description	Development Considerations	Already in the Defined Development Boundary (as per Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan Adopted September 2016)
A. Sutton Road (West)	Existing ribbon development on the southern side made up of large detached homes with front and back gardens. Petrol station/convenience store also located here. Small row of terraced housing on the northern side of Sutton Road.	This area has very limited sites available for continuation of ribbon development.	Yes
B. Sutton Road (North)	Existing ribbon development on the northern side made up of a mixture of bungalow, semi detached, detached and terraces. All with short front gardens. Opposite Station Road North is the site of the closed down Woolpack pub. Village school located next to Woolpack pub. Some development behind development fronting on to the Sutton Road North	Little room here for even ribbon development except on the site of the Woolpack pub.	Yes

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Built up area (as indicated on Map 1)	Description	Development Considerations	Already in the Defined Development Boundary (as per Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan Adopted September 2016)
	near to the Low Road intersection. One large corner plot with bungalow sited.		
C. Low Road	<p>Ribbon development on western side of the road comprising a mixture of bungalows, semi detached and detached. With spacious gardens</p> <p>Ribbon development on eastern side comprising bungalows and semi detached with large gardens</p>	Opportunities for further infill are limited. Any development proposals would need to address the existing drainage problems.	Yes
D. Sutton Road East	Ribbon development on the southern side comprising detached homes with large gardens and one bungalow at the end.	Only a few gaps for ribbon development. Large scale backfill development would be discouraged here.	Yes
E. Littleholme Road	<p>Existing ribbon development on the western side made up of large detached homes with large front and back gardens.</p> <p>Existing ribbon development on the eastern side set back some distance from Littleholme Road. All with large front and back</p>	Has been developed at both ends but on opposite sides of the road – there is some room for infill at either end. Development of green field sites here would be discouraged when there is brown field and infill sites at either end.	Yes

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Built up area (as indicated on Map 1)	Description	Development Considerations	Already in the Defined Development Boundary (as per Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan Adopted September 2016)
	gardens, some with considerably larger gardens than on the western side of Littleholme Road		
F. Station Road North	<p>Road south of Littleholme Road: Ribbon development of semi detached housing with one detached dwelling, on eastern side.</p> <p>Middle part: Ribbon development of semi detached housing (some smaller housing with large gardens to front and side). Also one gap in frontage providing open views into countryside, on south-eastern side.</p> <p>Northern part: Ribbon development of bungalows with large front gardens, on both sides of road</p>	There could be some room for infill here. New development should only take place up to the point at which the current dwellings peter out.	Yes
G. The cut-off part of Station Road South	Intersection with A17. One large detached properties offset and screened from the road plus storage yard	Could take some further Infill. Consideration would need to be given to farm access issues.	No

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Built up area (as indicated on Map 1)	Description	Development Considerations	Already in the Defined Development Boundary (as per Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan Adopted September 2016)
	<p>for used vehicles on the eastern side.</p> <p>In addition, two semi detached dwelling to southern side</p>		
H. Station Road South	Only developed along its eastern side	Further development limited to the eastern side only.	No
I. Hankinson's Estate	This estate was designed so as to provide limited room for further development	Further development possible but some work would be required to upgrade the sewerage system on the estate if new development was to take place.	No
J. Market Lane	Has occasional dwellings along its southern side but a more concentrated one on the north near the junction with Station Road South	Some infill could be considered but should be restricted to the north near the junction with Station Road South.	No.

Table 5.1 Existing built up areas in Walpole Cross Keys

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Housing

Policy 1 – New Residential Development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area

Proposals for new residential development in the NP area will be approved where they score positively when assessed against the following criteria:

- a. **it is adjacent or well related to the existing pattern of development and is within the boundaries shown on map 1 and explained further in Table 5.1**
- b. **it takes account of “Development Considerations” set out under Table 5.1 and other relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan**
- c. **it comprises a form of ribbon development close to the existing building line**
- d. **it complies with policies in the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework**

Small scale first-home housing is encouraged, particularly in locations where necessary amenities can be met such as within safe walking distance to a bus stop.

For the purposes of this policy small scale first-time housing is defined as developments of less than five in number of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Policy 2 - Extensions and Conversions to form Residential (including from commercial uses)

- a. **Extensions to current dwellings should be sympathetic to the property in terms of shape, size, and material, and consider the visual impact on the immediate area.**
- b. **Extensions will be constructed in such a way as to blend with the materials used in the existing building.**
- c. **Conversions of non-residential properties to dwellings should be sympathetic to the existing design, materials, and character of the immediate area, except where these are of poor amenity value and a departure from this requirement would result in a clear improvement to the appearance of the area.**

Cabinet Version - Pre Referendum

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Housing Mix

When compared to the BCKLWN as a whole, the village has a much lower percentage of properties with one and two bedrooms 25.5 % (compared to 36.8% at borough level), and a significantly higher percentage of properties with four bedrooms.

The village also has a high average household size at 2.76% compared to 2.34% at borough level and 2.3% at national level. This can be explained by a low 1 person occupancy rate at 14% compared to 27% at borough level and by a high proportion of households with 5 or more people which is at 14% compared to 5% at borough level.

The proportion of 2 person households in the village is however slightly higher compared to borough and regional level at 43% compared to 41% and 36% respectively and the proportion of 3 person households in the village is comparable to borough and regional levels at 15%.

This plan identifies a need to address the existing imbalance in dwelling size in the village in order to ensure housing choice exists for older people seeking to downsize but stay in the village and younger adults seeking a home of their own.

Policy 3 - Housing Mix

- a. **Residential proposals comprising three or more homes will be expected to include smaller (1 – 3 bedroom) properties unless otherwise justified on site specific grounds or demonstration of a different need**
- b. **The development of small scale 'starter' homes will be encouraged, in order to retain and increase the proportion of young people in the parish.**

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Affordable Housing

The supply of affordable homes is key to sustaining the rural community. As at February 2015, there are 15 socially rented properties in the Neighbourhood Plan area. This number does not include any housing units let by private landlords who may choose to let their properties at rents similar to social housing rents. As at February 2015, the housing register showed an evidenced need² of at least one additional 3 bedroom affordable housing unit. Affordable housing need however may be higher than this and may also change during the plan period. The rural exceptions policy set out below is intended to allow for additional affordable housing sites to come forward in locations that would not normally be allowed to come forward for development and subject to an identified local need for more affordable housing.

Policy 4 - Rural Exceptions: Affordable Housing for Local People

Where necessary to meet local affordable housing needs, development schemes for affordable housing may be permitted on small sites which would not otherwise be appropriate for housing within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The tenure split and housing mix must be reflective of the most up to date housing needs information. Schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the properties will remain affordable for people with a local connection in perpetuity. Affordable housing for local people will be secured as such for its longevity through a Section 106 Agreement.

Schemes must:

- **Comprise development that respects the pattern, form and character of development in the site's context and ribbon development close to the existing building line or otherwise be in keeping with the form and character of surrounding buildings and landscape; and**
- **ensure ancillary works such as access, outbuildings, curtilage boundaries also should not have an unacceptable impact on the visual and landscape amenity of the area; and**
- **be supported by an up to date housing needs assessment.**

² As per housing register February 2015.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Design

All development schemes in the Neighbourhood Plan area must contribute positively to the character of the village. Overall, housing stock is mixed in terms of age and style but certain areas are characterised by particularly building types as described in Table 5.1.

Policy 5 - Development Design (all developments)

- a. **All developments will be sympathetic to neighbouring properties in terms of size, general design features, and materials. These sympathies will be greater depending on their proximity.**
- b. **Where an area is already a mix of building styles there can be more leeway for further variety.**
- c. **Where one building style predominates, this should inform the size, material, and design of newer properties.**
- d. **Development will ensure maintenance of a good standard of residential amenity for nearby occupiers.**
- e. **Developments will be carried out in such a way that is mindful of the safety of road users.**

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Flood Risk

As is typical for this part of the borough, the Parish is located in flood zones 2 and 3 of the Environment Agency's flood map. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan area is vulnerable to flooding caused by surface water and drainage issues during times of heavy rainfall.

The parish is criss-crossed with working dykes of varying sizes which drain the land and properties and can become quite full in wet weather. Repeated filling in by private property owners has rendered parts of the system inoperative as the backfills have not always been efficiently piped (if at all).

The purpose of policy is to ensure that additional development taking place does not exacerbate existing problems in the parish and that where possible, opportunities are utilised to improve the management of flood risk in the parish.

Policy 6 – Managing and Reducing Flood Risk

All development proposals will be expected to contribute towards effectively managing flood risk in the Neighbourhood Plan area. This means (but may not be limited to):

- a. the development being designed and constructed so as not to increase, and wherever possible to reduce, the overall level of flood risk both to site and elsewhere when compared to the current situation**
- b. rates and volumes of surface water run-off being discharged from a site will be minimised, and wherever possible will be no greater than the appropriate greenfield rates and volumes**
- c. proposals that would create new culverts or result in the loss of an open watercourse will not be permitted unless the culvert is essential to the provision of an access and it can be demonstrated that the culvert will have no adverse impact on the ability to manage and maintain surface water drainage in the Neighbourhood Plan area**

Planning applications designed specifically to improve surface water drainage such as works to reinstate an effective drainage scheme are encouraged.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Employment Uses

There are a limited number of employment uses in the parish. A window firm is effectively hidden behind tall fencing on Sutton Road. A transport firm is located on Market Lane. On the site of the old station there is a large pallet yard.

The plan supports employment uses in the parish subject to their being no adverse amenity impacts on residential areas and subject to maintenance of vehicular and pedestrian safety.

Policy 7 – Employment Related or Agriculture and Horticulture Related Development

Employment related uses and development related to the agricultural and horticultural sector are encouraged on suitable sites (buildings and land) in the Parish.

In deciding whether a site is suitable for such development including the expansion or redevelopment of existing employment sites, consideration will be given to the effect on the character and appearance of the area from any new buildings or related infrastructure, the effect on the amenity of nearby occupiers and the benefits brought by the proposal in terms of new jobs and services.

Employment

- a. **The development and redevelopment of existing business sites for employment uses is encouraged.**

Agriculture/Horticulture

- b. **Development to support the agricultural and horticultural purposes of sites is encouraged.**

Policy 8 – Site at Old Station

The enhancement or redevelopment of the Site at Old Station identified on Map 1 will be supported where a proposal accords with Policy 7 of the Neighbourhood Plan and other relevant policies of the development plan.

Cabinet Version - Pre Referendum

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Community Facilities

There are very few village-based facilities that encourage people to remain within the village – the school and the Jephson Hall offer the only public places. It is crucial to the longer-term viability of the community that no more services are lost forever and that the village does not become a dormitory “town” to other places.

Policy 9 – Protection of Community Facilities

The village school and the Jephson Hall are identified as community facilities essential to the longer term viability of the community. Development Proposals which would result in the loss of these facilities or otherwise prejudice their continued use will not be permitted. This protection should only be relaxed under the criteria mentioned in the Borough Council’s Policy DM9 and supporting text in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.

New or enhanced community facilities and infrastructure will be supported where proposals comply with other policies of the development plan.

Cabinet Version - Pre-Referendum

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Transport and Access

The roads in the parish vary in quality. The main A17 bisects the parish and carries heavy and unrestricted traffic. Sutton Road (the old A17) is beginning to deteriorate and attracts those seeking a shortcut through to King's Lynn – in spite of its 40 mph, 30 mph speed limits (and an advisory 20 mph at school times) traffic often speeds along this relatively straight road. Low Road is little more than single track – as is Littleholme Road which is also suffering from collapsing into the nearby dyke – traffic is limited to 30 mph on both roads. The two parts of Station Road are relatively narrow and winding – although part of the northern half carries a 30mph limit. Market Lane suffers from the same kinds of problems as Sutton Road – whilst not as wide but considerably straighter it is limited by the national speed limit.

Policy 10 – Transport and Access

- a. **Improvements to the road network in the Parish are encouraged provided that the rural character and appearance of the area is respected.**
- b. **Proposals should ensure that any requirements generated by the proposed development do not harm the highway network, verges or dykes.**

CHAPTER 6. HOW WILL THE PLANNING POLICIES BE IMPLEMENTED

b. The Vision, Objectives, planning policies and projects in this plan::

1. Form the basis of an understanding of the will of the parishioners; and
2. Form a blueprint for how the residents of this parish wish to see it develop (or be protected) in the future.

c. The aims of the Neighbourhood Plan will be met through a variety of means:

1. Implementation of the planning policies.
2. Through informing Parish Council policy which will be reflected in its dealing with such issues as planning;
3. Through informing Parish Council longer term planning in terms of development of those areas of the parish for which it has responsibility;
4. Through providing a target for pressure on other statutory and non-statutory bodies as may be responsible for decisions affecting the parish; and
5. Through providing a guide for the pressure brought to bear on individuals and private concerns regarding their effects on the shorter and longer term future of the parish.

d. The Parish Council will monitor the implementation of the planning policies contained within this plan to assess whether they are being implemented as intended and whether the policies are sufficiently effective in addressing the overall aims of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix 1

COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

The following matters show the Parish Council's intentions and reflect the wishes expressed by the community in the neighbourhood plan making process.

Cabinet Version - Pre Referendum

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Footpaths/Tracks	
1.	The footpaths, such as they are, are essential to the safety of pedestrians and every effort must be made to ensure that the surface is kept in good order and that they are clear of vegetation that might impede those using them.
2.	The Parish Council will commit to ensuring that public footpaths and public walks are kept open in the parish.
3.	The Parish Council will work towards keeping footpaths within the Parish, clear of dog foul by promoting the use of dog waste bins.
Dykes	
1.	The dyke system is essential to the good drainage of the land and residential properties
2.	Dykes should never be filled in without permission and guidance from the relevant authorities
3.	More efforts should be made to unblock dykes
4.	Dykes should be kept clear and properly maintained.
5.	<p>Walpole Cross Keys Parish Council will work alongside Norfolk County Council's Flood and Water Management Team, Norfolk County Council's Highways Department, the King's Lynn Internal Drainage Board, the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk and other stakeholders to identify solutions and measures to help effectively manage flood risk in the Neighbourhood Plan area. For example, we will seek to work alongside these partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and establish an overview of the drainage and water course systems in the Neighbourhood Plan area • Identify structures and features (such as open watercourses) that are important for managing local flood risk, allowing for quicker identification of the relevant authority/ies to contact regarding flood risk and incidences of flooding • Ensure effective communication with our residents so that land and property owners are aware of their riparian rights and responsibilities and who to contact for further guidance and advice • Identify possible sources of funding for schemes to address issues relating to surface water

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

	drainage and flood risk.
Lighting	
1.	The Parish Council will commit to maintaining the current level of footpath lighting. It is very conscious of the effects of light pollution in the rural environment
2.	No further footpath lighting will be provided.
Gardens	
	The Parish Council will continue to maintain the Parish Sign, Millennium and Eva Kemp/Station Gardens.
Bus services	The current bus service is essential to the continued viability of the parish and represents an absolute minimum. Improvements to the service should be encouraged.
	Any extension of the 55 service on Market Lane and the 505 service on Sutton Road, in terms of the number of buses per day, is to be fully supported
	Additions to public transport in the parish, to aid those who rely upon it and to reduce private traffic where practical, are to be fully supported
	The Parish Council will continue to work with stakeholders including Norfolk Green, Norfolk County Council's Highways Department and other villages to work towards improvements to the bus service.
	The Parish Council will continue to maintain the existing bus shelters.
	Where practical and when budgets allow the Parish Council will favourably consider an increase in appropriate bus shelters at other locations in the parish.
Environment	The Parish Council will commit to maintaining the relative rural nature of this village and protecting the history and roots of the area whilst promoting a more flourishing local community.

Appendix 2

Population Trends

Table 1 (*Population Age Structure 2001-2011*) shows the changes that have taken place in the village between the last two censuses, and compares the village with the age structure in the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) area as a whole, for 2011.

Table 1 Walpole Cross Keys: Population Age Structure 2001-2011

		2001	2011	2011
		Walpole Cross Keys	Walpole Cross Keys	BCKLWN
All People		469	518	147451
0-4 yrs	no.	32	35	7970
	%	6.8	6.8	5.4
5-7 yrs	no.	19	24	4372
	%	4.1	4.6	3.0
8-14 yrs	no.	47	50	10777
	%	10.0	9.7	7.3
15-19 yrs	no.	17	29	8197
	%	3.6	5.6	5.6
20-29 yrs	no.	33	41	16354
	%	7.0	7.9	11.1
30-44 yrs	no.	111	94	25570
	%	23.7	18.1	17.3
45-59 yrs	no.	104	120	29117
	%	22.2	23.2	19.7
60-74 yrs	no.	71	84	29046
	%	15.1	16.2	19.7
75-84 yrs	no.	22	34	11584
	%	4.7	6.6	7.9
85+ yrs	no.	13	7	4464
	%	2.8	1.3	3.0

The village population in 2001 was 469 and rose to 519 in 2011, an increase of 11%. This compares with 8.9% in the BCKLWN area as a whole.

The 15-19 years age group has increased significantly from 3.6% of the population in 2001 to 5.6% of the population in 2011. The 30-44 years age group has significantly decreased from 23.7% of the population in 2001 to 18.1% of the population in 2011.

The 2011 census reflects that Walpole Cross Keys had a significantly higher percentage of 0-14 years age group (21.1% compared to 15.7%) and 45-59 years age group (23.2% compared to 19.7%) compared to the BCKLWN area as a whole, and a significantly lower percentage of 20-29 years age group (7.9% compared to 11.1%) and 60-85+ years age groups (24.1% compared to 30.6%).

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Household Trends

Below, Table 2 shows the household spaces and accommodation types in the village for the two census years, and also compares 2011's records with BCKLWN as a whole.

Table 2 Walpole Cross Keys: Household Spaces and Accommodation Type

		2001	2011	2011
		Walpole Cross Keys	Walpole Cross Keys	BCKLWN
All dwellings		191	188	62977
Detached house or bungalow	no.	103	104	28085
	%	53.9	55.3	44.6
Semi-detached house or bungalow	no.	68	69	19652
	%	35.6	36.7	31.2
Terraced house or bungalow	no.	17	14	9392
	%	8.9	7.5	14.9
Flat, maisonette, or apartment	no.	3	1	5349
	%	1.6	0.5	8.5
Caravan or temporary structure	no.	0	0	448
	%	0.0	0.0	0.7
Shared dwelling	no.	0	0	51
	%	0.0	0.0	0.1

In 2011, Walpole Cross Keys had more detached dwellings as a percentage of the overall dwellings when compared to the BCKLWN as a whole (55.3% compared to 44.6%), and similarly, higher numbers of semi-detached dwellings (36.7% compared to 31.2% in the BCKLWN area); however the data does demonstrate there are much less terraced properties in Walpole Cross Keys (7.5% compared to 14.9% in the BCKLWN area), as well as flats, maisonettes or apartments (0.5% compared to 8.5% in the BCKLWN area).

Below, Table 3 shows the Occupancy Rate in the village for the two census years, and also compares 2011's records with BCKLWN as a whole.

Table 3 Walpole Cross Keys: Occupancy Rate 2001 & 2011

		2001	2011	2011
		Walpole Cross Keys	Walpole Cross Keys	BCKLWN
All Households		179	188	62977
One Person Household; Total	no.	28	27	17116
	%	15.6	14.4	27.2
One Person Household; Aged 65 and Over	no.	17	11	9059
	%	9.5	5.9	14.4
One Person Household; Other	no.	11	16	8057
	%	6.1	8.5	12.8

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

One Family Only (OFO); Total	no.	145	147	41940
	%	81.0	78.2	66.6
OFO; All Aged 65 and Over	no.	27	31	8187
	%	15.1	16.5	13.0
OFO; Married Couple; Total	no.	97	83	22170
	%	54.2	44.1	35.3
OFO; Married Couple; No Children	no.	37	29	10051
	%	20.7	15.4	16.0
OFO; Married Couple; Dependent Children	no.	46	36	8625
	%	25.7	19.1	13.7
OFO; Married Couple; All Children Non-Dependent	no.	14	18	3494
	%	7.8	9.6	5.6
OFO; Cohabiting Couple; Total	no.	16	23	6721
	%	8.9	12.2	10.6
OFO; Cohabiting Couple; No Children	no.	13	12	3447
	%	7.3	6.4	5.4
OFO; Cohabiting Couple; Dependent Children	no.	3	10	2905
	%	1.7	5.3	4.6
OFO; Cohabiting Couple; All Children Non-Dependent	no.	0	1	369
	%	0.0	0.5	0.6
OFO; Lone Parent; Total	no.	5	10	4862
	%	2.8	5.3	7.7
OFO; Lone Parent; Dependent Children	no.	5	6	3087
	%	2.8	3.2	4.9
OFO; Lone Parent; All Children Non-Dependent	no.	0	4	1775
	%	0.0	2.1	2.8
Other Household Types (OHT); Total	no.	6	14	3921
	%	3.4	7.4	6.2
OHT; With Dependent Children	no.	3	5	1359
	%	1.7	2.7	2.2
OHT; All Full-Time Students	no.	0	0	10
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0
OHT; All Aged 65 and Over	no.	0	1	325
	%	0.0	0.5	0.5
OHT; Other	no.	3	8	2227
	%	1.7	4.3	3.5

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Table 4 Walpole Cross Keys: Household size in parish compared to borough, region and country.

Household size (persons)	Walpole Cross Keys	BCKLWN	East of England	England
1	14%	27%	28%	30%
2	43%	41%	36%	34%
3	15%	15%	16%	16%
4	32%	29%	39%	38%
5	9%	4%	5%	5%
6	3%	1%	1%	2%
7	1%	0%	0%	0%
8 people or more	1%	0%	0%	0%

In 2011 Walpole Cross Keys had significantly less one person households as a percentage when compared to BCKLWN (14.4% compared to 27.2%) and also when compared with a typical predominantly rural area (at 28.1% according to 2011 Census data as reported in the online resource made available by the Rural Services Network) The village has a much higher percentage of one family only households compared to BCKLWN (78.2% compared to 66.6%).

In contrast to this, Table 4 shows that Walpole Cross keys has a higher proportion of households comprising only two people where this makes up for 43% of households compared to 41% for the borough, 36% for the East of England and 34 % for the country. Proportionately, Walpole Cross Keys has a high percentage of larger households compared with other areas. These larger households together with the low number of one person households help to explain Walpole Cross Key's high dwelling occupancy rate which is at 2.76% compared to 2.34% for the borough at large and 2.3 for the country.

Walpole Cross Keys also has a high proportion of one family households where all members are aged 65 or over. These households make up 16.5% of the households compared with 13% for BCKLWN and 11.1% for a predominantly rural area.

Within the one family households in the village married couples make up the largest percentage at 44.1% which compares to 35.3% for the BCKLWN area as a whole.

Table 5 (below) shows the census records for 2001 and 2011 for housing tenure in the village, and shows comparative figures for BCKLWN from 2011.

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Table 5 Walpole Cross Keys: Housing Tenure 2001-2011.

		2001	2011	2011
		Walpole Cross Keys	Walpole Cross Keys	BCKLWN
All dwellings		184	188	62977
Owned outright	no.	73	73	24908
	%	39.7	38.9	39.6
Owned w/ mortgage or loan	no.	83	88	18799
	%	45.1	46.8	29.9
Shared ownership	no.	0	0	275
	%	0.0	0.0	0.4
Social rented from LA	no.	16	4	1946
	%	8.7	2.1	3.1
Social rented: other	no.	0	7	6447
	%	0.0	3.7	10.2
Private rented	no.	9	12	9278
	%	4.9	6.4	14.7
Living rent free	no.	3	4	1324
	%	1.6	2.1	2.1

Home ownership has not changed much in the village over the last ten years but when comparing 2011 with the BCKLWN area as a whole the village has a much larger percentage of dwellings owned with a mortgage or loan (46.8% compared to 29.9%); though a lower percentage of social rented (3.7% compared to 10.2%) and private rented (6.4% compared to 14.7%).

Table 6 below shows the size of the accommodation by number of bedrooms in 2011 and compares this with the BCKLWN as a whole.

Table 6 Walpole Cross Keys: Accommodation size by number of bedrooms.

		2011	2011
		Walpole Cross Keys	BCKLWN
All dwellings		188	62977
No bedrooms	no.	0	107
	%	0.00	0.2
1 bedrooms	no.	9	4629
	%	4.8	7.4
2 bedrooms	no.	39	18495
	%	20.7	29.4
3 bedrooms	no.	88	27311
	%	46.8	43.4
4 bedrooms	no.	44	9671
	%	23.4	15.3
5 or more bedrooms	no.	8	2764
	%	4.3	4.3

The village has no properties without at least one separate bedroom. When compared to the BCKLWN as a whole the village has a significantly

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

lower percentage of properties with one bedroom (4.8% compared to 7.4%) and properties with two bedrooms (20.7% compared to 29.4%); however a significantly higher percentage of properties with four bedrooms (23.4% compared to 15.3%).

Employment

Table 7 shows the changes in types of occupation of residents in the village from 2001 to 2011 and compares this with the BCKLWN as a whole in 2011.

Table 7 Walpole Cross Keys: Occupation

		2001	2011	2011
		Walpole Cross Keys	Walpole Cross Keys	BCKLWN
All usual residents aged 16-74 in employment		216	241	67268
Managers, Directors & Senior Officials	no.	29	26	7047
	%	13.4	10.8	10.5
Professional Occupations	no.	8	19	8130
	%	3.7	7.9	12.1
Associate Professional & Technical Occupations	no.	21	29	7219
	%	9.7	12.0	10.7
Administrative & Secretarial Occupations	no.	25	23	6720
	%	11.6	9.5	10.0
Skilled Trade Occupations	no.	46	38	9987
	%	21.3	15.8	14.8
Caring, Leisure & Other Service Occupations	no.	14	22	6979
	%	6.5	9.1	10.4
Sales & Customer Service Occupations	no.	13	17	5295
	%	6.0	7.1	7.9
Process, Plant & Machine Operatives	no.	22	38	7243
	%	10.2	15.8	10.8
Sales & Customer Service Occupations	no.	38	29	8648
	%	17.6	12.0	12.8

Over the ten year period from 2001 to 2011 occupations have changed in the village with significant increases in professional occupations (3.7% compared to 7.9%); associate professional & technical occupations (9.7% compared to 12.0%); caring, leisure & other service occupations (6.5% compared to 9.1%); and process, plant & machine operatives (10.2% compared to 15.8%). Significant decreases have occurred in skilled trade occupations (21.3% compared to 15.8%) and sales & customer service occupations (17.6% compared to 12.0%).

When comparing the village with the BCKLWN as a whole in 2011 many of the occupations are at a similar percentage level with significant variations only in professional occupations where the village has a lower percentage

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

(7.9% compared to 12.1%) and process, plant & machine operatives where the village has a higher percentage (15.8% compared to 10.8%).

Cabinet Version - Pre Referendum

Cabinet Version - Pre Refer

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS PARISH COUNCIL

WALPOLE CROSS KEYS

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2015 – 2026

Planning Cross Keys' Future

Independent Examiner's Report

By Ann Skippers BSc (Hons) MRTPI FRSA AoU

14 June 2017

Pages 57 – 78

Walpole Cross Keys Parish Council

**Walpole Cross Keys
Neighbourhood Plan 2015 - 2026
Planning Cross Keys' Future**

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Contents

	Summary	3
1.0	Introduction	4
2.0	The role of the independent examiner	4
3.0	Neighbourhood plan preparation and the examination process	6
4.0	Compliance with matters other than the basic conditions	7
5.0	The basic conditions	8
	<i>National policy and advice</i>	8
	<i>Sustainable development</i>	9
	<i>The development plan</i>	10
	<i>European Union (EU) obligations</i>	10
	<i>Strategic Environmental Assessment</i>	11
	<i>Habitats Regulations Assessment</i>	11
	<i>European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)</i>	12
6.0	Detailed comments on the Plan and its policies	12
	<i>Chapter 1 Creating the Neighbourhood Plan</i>	12
	<i>Chapter 2 The Parish in Perspective</i>	12
	<i>Chapter 3 The Vision & Objectives</i>	12
	<i>Chapter 4 The Strategy</i>	13
	<i>Chapter 5 The Neighbourhood Plan Policies</i>	13
	<i>Housing (Policies 1, 2)</i>	13
	<i>Housing Mix (Policy 3)</i>	16
	<i>Affordable Housing (Policy 4)</i>	16
	<i>Design (Policy 5)</i>	17
	<i>Flood Risk (Policy 6)</i>	17
	<i>Employment Uses (Policies 7, 8)</i>	18
	<i>Community Facilities (Policy 9)</i>	19
	<i>Transport & Access (Policy 10)</i>	20
	<i>Chapter 6 How will the Planning Policies be Implemented?</i>	20
	<i>Appendix 1</i>	21
	<i>Appendix 2</i>	21
7.0	Conclusions and recommendations	21
	Appendix 1 List of key documents	22

Summary

I have been appointed as the independent examiner of the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Plan is clearly presented and generally well organised; planning policies are clearly differentiated and community aspirations found in a separate appendix. It takes an innovative approach by extending the development boundaries south of the A17 which effectively bisects this rural Parish. This will allow for some growth, but growth which will not undermine the Borough Council's strategic growth strategy or harm the special character of this rural village. Other policies relate to the protection of the local school and Jepshon Hall and support for appropriate employment and agricultural and horticultural related uses.

Further to consideration of the Plan and its policies I have recommended a relatively few number of modifications that are intended to ensure that the basic conditions are met satisfactorily and that the Plan is clear enabling it to provide a practical framework for decision-making as required by national policy and guidance.

Subject to those modifications, I have concluded that the Plan does meet the basic conditions and all the other requirements I am obliged to examine. I am therefore pleased to recommend to the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk that the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Development Plan can go forward to a referendum.

In considering whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Neighbourhood Plan area I see no reason to alter or extend this area for the purpose of holding a referendum.

Ann Skippers MRTPI
Ann Skippers Planning
14 June 2017



1.0 Introduction

This is the report of the independent examiner into the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan).

The Localism Act 2011 provides a welcome opportunity for communities to shape the future of the places where they live and work and to deliver the sustainable development they need. One way of achieving this is through the production of a neighbourhood plan.

I have been appointed by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk with the agreement of Walpole Cross Keys Parish Council, to undertake this independent examination. I have been appointed through the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS).

I am independent of the qualifying body and the local authority. I have no interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan. I am a chartered town planner with over twenty-five years experience in planning and have worked in the public, private and academic sectors and am an experienced examiner of neighbourhood plans. I therefore have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out this independent examination.

2.0 The role of the independent examiner

The examiner must assess whether a neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

The examiner is required to check¹ whether the neighbourhood plan:

- Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body
- Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation
- Meets the requirements to i) specify the period to which it has effect; ii) not include provision about excluded development; and iii) not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and that
- Its policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

¹ Set out in sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Localism Act

The basic conditions² are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) set out two additional basic conditions to those set out in primary legislation and referred to in the paragraph above. Only one is applicable to neighbourhood plans and is:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site³ or a European offshore marine site⁴ either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

I must also consider whether the draft neighbourhood plan is compatible with Convention rights.⁵

The examiner must then make one of the following recommendations:

- The neighbourhood plan can proceed to a referendum on the basis it meets all the necessary legal requirements
- The neighbourhood plan can proceed to a referendum subject to modifications or
- The neighbourhood plan should not proceed to a referendum on the basis it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

If the plan can proceed to a referendum with or without modifications, the examiner must also consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood plan area to which it relates.

If the plan goes forward to referendum and more than 50% of those voting vote in favour of the plan then it is made by the relevant local authority, in this case the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk. The plan then becomes part of the

² Set out in paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

³ As defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012

⁴ As defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007

⁵ The combined effect of the Town and Country Planning Act Schedule 4B para 8(6) and para 10 (3)(b) and the Human Rights Act 1998

‘development plan’ for the area and a statutory consideration in guiding future development and in the determination of planning applications within the plan area.

3.0 Neighbourhood plan preparation and the examination process

A Consultation Statement has been submitted which meets the requirements of Regulation 15(2) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Work on the Plan started in August 2012. A Village consultation was held in early 2013 to seek agreement to the direction of the Plan.

Consultation on an early draft of the Plan took place between 16 December 2013 – 12 March 2014. A range of organisations and bodies were consulted in addition to the community. This resulted in a number of responses and changes to the Plan.

A Health Check was carried out in July 2014 on the advice of the Borough Council as the Plan was the first in the Borough area. This resulted in professional assistance being brought on board and what is described in the Consultation Statement as a major redrafting of the Plan took place.

Pre-submission (Regulation 14) consultation took place between 2 November – 14 December 2015. A leaflet and public meeting together with an opportunity to offer informal feedback was held just before this period.

I consider that the consultation and engagement carried out is satisfactory.

Submission (Regulation 16) consultation was carried out between 5 December 2016 - 30 January 2017. The Regulation 16 stage resulted in a number of representations which I have considered and taken into account in preparing my report.

I have set out my remit earlier in this report. It is useful to bear in mind that the examiner’s role is limited to testing whether or not the submitted neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).⁶ PPG confirms that the examiner is not testing the soundness of a neighbourhood plan or examining other material considerations.⁷ Where I find that policies do meet the basic conditions, it is not necessary for me to consider if further additions or amendments are required. Some representations suggested amendments or additional policies that may well be useful and I feel sure the Parish Council will wish to consider these as it revises the Plan in the future.

⁶ PPG para 055 ref id 41-055-20140306

⁷ *Ibid*

PPG explains⁸ the general rule of thumb is that the examination will take the form of written representations,⁹ but there are two circumstances when an examiner may consider it necessary to hold a hearing. These are where the examiner considers that it is necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue or to ensure a person has a fair chance to put a case. After careful consideration of all the documentation and representations, I decided that neither circumstance applied and therefore it was not necessary to hold a hearing.

I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Plan area on 18 May 2017.

Where I recommend modifications in this report they appear as bullet points in **bold text**. Where I have suggested specific changes to the wording of the policies they appear in **bold italics**.

4.0 Compliance with matters other than the basic conditions

I now check the various matters set out in section 2.0 of this report.

Qualifying body

The Basic Conditions Statement (BCS) confirms that Walpole Cross Keys Parish Council is the qualifying body able to lead preparation of a neighbourhood plan. This requirement is met.

Plan area

The Plan area is coterminous with the Parish Council administrative boundary. The Borough Council approved the designation of the area on 12 November 2013. The Plan relates to this area and does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and therefore complies with these requirements. The Plan does not include a map of the Plan area and I suggest a modification elsewhere in this report to remedy this.

Plan period

The BCS indicates that the Plan covers the period 2015 - 2026 to align with the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Core Strategy. The time period is also shown on the front cover of the Plan, but this is not stated in the Plan itself. It is recommended that a sentence be added to the Plan to indicate the time period is 2015 to 2026 to align with the Core Strategy end date.

- **Add a sentence to the Plan to indicate the time period is 2015 - 2026 to align with the Core Strategy end date**

⁸ PPG para 056 ref id 41-056-20140306

⁹ Schedule 4B (9) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Excluded development

The Plan does not include policies that relate to any of the categories of excluded development which includes development normally dealt with by a county planning authority, for example minerals and waste related development, development described in Schedule 1 to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (as amended) which automatically requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (and in the case of a Community Right to Build Order any Environmental Impact Assessment development) and development of nationally significant infrastructure projects (which are defined in the Planning Act 2008). The Plan therefore meets this requirement. This is also helpfully confirmed in the BCS.

Development and use of land

Policies in neighbourhood plans must relate to the development and use of land. Sometimes neighbourhood plans contain aspirational policies or projects that signal the community's priorities for the future of their local area, but are not related to the development and use of land. Should I consider a policy or proposal to fall within this category, I will recommend it be moved to a clearly differentiated and separate section or annex of the Plan or contained in a separate document. This is because wider community aspirations than those relating to development and use of land can be included in a neighbourhood plan, but actions dealing with non-land use matters should be clearly identifiable.¹⁰ Subject to any such recommendations, this requirement can be satisfactorily met.

5.0 The basic conditions

Regard to national policy and advice

The main document that sets out national planning policy is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012. In particular it explains that the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development will mean that neighbourhood plans should support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan and identify opportunities to use Neighbourhood Development Orders to enable developments that are consistent with the neighbourhood plan to proceed.¹¹

The NPPF also makes it clear that neighbourhood plans should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. In other words neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. They

¹⁰ PPG para 004 ref id 41-004-20140306

¹¹ NPPF paras 14, 16

cannot promote less development than that set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.¹²

On 6 March 2014, the Government published a suite of planning guidance referred to as Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This is an online resource available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>. The planning guidance contains a wealth of information relating to neighbourhood planning and I have had regard to it in preparing this report.

The NPPF indicates that plans should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency.¹³

PPG indicates that a policy should be clear and unambiguous¹⁴ to enable a decision maker to apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. The guidance advises that policies should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence, reflecting and responding to both the context and the characteristics of the area.¹⁵

PPG states there is no 'tick box' list of evidence required, but proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken.¹⁶ It continues that the evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies.¹⁷

The BCS offers a commentary on how the Plan and its policies address the 12 core planning principles in the NPPF and are consistent with it.

Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development

A qualifying body must demonstrate how the making of a neighbourhood plan would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF as a whole¹⁸ constitutes the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for planning. The Framework explains that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.¹⁹

The BCS offers a short statement on how the Plan contributes to sustainable growth

¹² NPPF para 184

¹³ *Ibid* para 17

¹⁴ PPG para 041 ref id 41-041-20140306

¹⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁶ *Ibid* para 040 ref id 41-040-20160211

¹⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁸ NPPF para 6 which indicates paras 18 – 219 of the Framework constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice

¹⁹ *Ibid* para 7

General conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan

The development plan consists of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy (CS) adopted on 28 July 2011 and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (SADMP) adopted on 29 September 2016.

In places the Plan refers to the saved policies of the Local Plan 1998. These are no longer saved or form part of the development plan as time has moved on. Any references to it should therefore be removed from the Plan in the interests of accuracy.

The CS sets out the spatial planning framework to 2026. CS Policy CS01 sets out the spatial strategy explaining that for the rural areas the promotion of sustainable communities and sustainable patterns of development, a strong economy and high quality environment are important. CS Policy CS02 introduces a settlement hierarchy; Walpole Cross Keys is identified as a "Rural Village". Limited minor development which meets the needs of settlements and helps to sustain existing services is permitted.

The SADMP gives effect to and complements the CS, guiding development up to 2026. It contains some amendments to CS Policies CS02 and CS06, neither of which fundamentally affect this Plan.

The SADMP describes Walpole Cross Keys as a "comparatively small village"²⁰ and as mainly linear in form with few services and limited employment opportunities.

The Borough Council is currently preparing a review of the CS and SADMP, but this is at a relatively early stage.

- **Delete all references to the saved policies of, or to, the Local Plan 1998 in the Plan (this includes criterion c) on page 4, criterion a) on page 9 and criterion a) on page 23 but there may be other references I have not picked up**
- **Update references to the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan as this was adopted in 2016, but some references to earlier versions of this Plan remain (this includes a reference on page 11, but there may be other references too)**

European Union Obligations

A neighbourhood plan must be compatible with European Union (EU) obligations, as incorporated into United Kingdom law, in order to be legally compliant. A number of EU obligations may be of relevance including Directives 2001/42/EC (Strategic Environmental Assessment), 2011/92/EU (Environmental Impact Assessment), 92/43/EEC (Habitats), 2009/147/EC (Wild Birds), 2008/98/EC (Waste), 2008/50/EC (Air Quality) and 2000/60/EC (Water).

²⁰ SADMP page 383

PPG indicates that it is the responsibility of local planning authorities to ensure that the Plan is compatible with EU obligations (including obligations under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) when it takes the decision on a) whether the Plan should proceed to referendum and b) whether or not to make the Plan.²¹

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment is relevant. Its purpose is to provide a high level of protection of the environment by incorporating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes. This Directive is commonly referred to as the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Directive. The Directive is transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations).

A screening opinion dated 10 July 2015 and undertaken by the Borough Council has been submitted. This concluded that a SEA is not required. I note that the screening opinion has considered the implications arising from the proposed additional development boundaries which is the only area in which the Plan might be regarded to differ from the CS.

The requisite consultation with the statutory consultees was undertaken. All three statutory consultees, the Environment Agency (EA), Natural England (NE) and Historic England (HE) responded. Whilst NE did not offer a view, both the EA and HE concurred that a SEA would not be required.

I am of the view that EU obligations in respect of SEA have been satisfied.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats, commonly referred to as the Habitats Directive, is also of relevance to this examination. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) identifies whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.²² The assessment determines whether significant effects on a European site can be ruled out on the basis of objective information.

As part of the SEA screening process, the need for a HRA was also considered. The Borough Council concluded that a HRA will not be required. Whilst NE responded to the consultation it did not offer any substantive comments.

In its response to the Regulation 16 period of consultation, NE confirms there are no European sites within the Plan area, but that much of the Plan area may act as “functionally linked land” for the Pink Footed Goose, a designated feature of the Wash Special Protection Area. NE advises that “any substantial developments” should be

²¹ PPG para 031 ref id 11-031-20150209

²² *Ibid* para 047 ref id 11-047-20150209

within the scope of HRA. The Plan does not propose any specific development that would, in my view, fall within this category. Nevertheless this is an issue for the Borough Council to further consider when it takes the decision on a) whether the Plan should proceed to referendum and b) whether or not to make the Plan.

Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out another basic condition in addition to those set out in primary legislation as detailed in section 2.0 of this report. In my view, the Plan complies with this basic condition.

European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

The BCS contains a short statement on human rights. There is nothing in the Plan that leads me to conclude there is any breach of the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the ECHR or that the Plan is otherwise incompatible with it or does not comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.

6.0 Detailed comments on the Plan and its policies

In this section I consider the Plan and its policies against the basic conditions. Where modifications are recommended they appear in **bold text**. As a reminder, where I suggest specific changes to the wording of the policies or new wording these appear in ***bold italics***.

The Plan is simply, but effectively presented with an eye catching front cover. Policies are clearly differentiated in bold text.

Chapter 1 Creating the Neighbourhood Plan

This is a short and informative section.

Chapter 2 The Parish in Perspective

Setting out the context and characteristics of the Parish, this is an interesting and informative section packed with information.

Chapter 3 The Vision & Objectives

The vision for the Plan area is:

“The local community wish Walpole Cross Keys to continue to thrive as a small rural community where new development in keeping with the village is supported,

comprising mixed residential development, further employment uses, new community facilities and improvements to infrastructure.”

The vision is underpinned by six objectives. Both the vision and objectives are clearly articulated and relate to the development and use of land. To deliver the vision the Plan essentially focuses on four elements; support for sustainable development, a high standard of development in relation to design, drainage and transport issues, protection of community facilities and the provision of new ones and additional employment uses.

Chapter 4 The Strategy

This section sets out further explanation of and ambition for the Plan. In particular it explains that it is considered that there is scope for development in the area south of the A17 which bisects the Plan area. At present development boundaries have been defined by the Borough Council in the updated SADMP adopted in 2016 and focus development only to the north of the A17.

The SADMP apportions some 215 dwellings to the Rural Villages equating to an average allocation of six dwellings per Rural Village although this is not rigidly applied. Then service provision and population to allow for the amount of development most closely related to a particular settlement’s scale was considered. The SADMP explains that it is important that the overall cumulative growth in the rural areas does not exceed stated figures as this would weaken the deliverability of strategic growth areas and other urban sites. Walpole Cross Keys has been identified for an allocation of five dwellings, but the SADMP explains no suitable site has been identified due to the settlement’s constraints and therefore no allocation is made.

Chapter 5 The Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Housing

As the previous section explained, the development boundary defined in the SADMP only encompasses areas to the north of the A17. The Plan seeks to extend the development boundary to areas south of the A17 too. These areas are shown on a Proposal Plan (Map 1) on page 12 of the Plan and a table (5.1) on page 13 provides further information about each of the defined areas.

I consider there is some confusion in regard to the Proposal Plan (Map 1) on page 12; I am not sure whether it should be referred to as the Proposal Plan or Map 1. Having sought a view from the Parish Council there is a preference to use Map 1 and this would be consistent with the table on page 13 too.

In addition there is no map of the Plan area. I have assumed it is the same as the Parish boundary shown on the Proposal Plan/Map 1. It would be useful to add a notation just to confirm this in the interests of clarity.

There is a typo on page 11 as the A47 should be the A17.

- **Retitle the Proposal Plan/Map 1 on page 12 of the Plan to “Map 1”**
- **Add a notation to the legend of what is now Map 1 to indicate this is also the Plan area**
- **Make any resultant changes to references to what is now Map 1 throughout the Plan as necessary**
- **Change the reference to the “A47” on page 11 to “A17”**

Policy 1 New Residential Development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area

This policy supports residential development in the form of ribbon development within, adjacent to or well related to the development boundaries defined on Map 1.

Given the nature of the Parish and its characteristic ribbon development, there is not a single development boundary. Rather ten separately identified areas are defined. Of these ten, six are to be found in SADMP, but are presented as a continuous boundary in that document although the definition of the boundary is the same.

In principle, the identification of further areas with a designated development boundary is acceptable. The SADMP allows for neighbourhood plans to revise development boundaries, policies and allocations to those contained in the SADMP in line with community aspirations. The supporting text to SADMP Policy DM 2 is clear that the Borough Council will support alternative boundaries where these facilitate an amount and mix of housing that is consistent with the settlement’s role in the CS.²³ I consider this to be the case. I also note that the Borough Council considers that the potential amount of housing development which could take place as a result of this policy would not undermine the strategic growth strategy. This is outlined in CS Policies CS02, CS06 and CS09.

I visited all ten areas and consider all have been identified logically and appropriately given the character of the local area and its distinctiveness. I noted that development was under construction along Sutton Road and Station Road North. In my view it would be helpful to update Map 1 so that it reflects the ‘on the ground’ situation. Nevertheless this is not a matter that I need to make a recommendation on in order for the Plan to meet the basic conditions.

Any proposals are also to take account of the development considerations in Table 5.1 which details further what type of opportunities exist and where other issues such as access or sewerage need to be considered.

²³ SADMP page 18

Small scale first homes are also encouraged. The Borough Council makes the point that it would be useful to define this term and I agree this would incorporate the clarity and precision sought by national policy and guidance. In response to my query on this, the Parish Council has suggested “developments of less than five in number of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings”. Given the nature and characteristics of the Plan area that this is an appropriate definition.

Amongst other things, the NPPF seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing and expects neighbourhood plans to support the strategic needs set out in Local Plans.

The policy allows development adjacent to or well related to the development boundaries as well as within them. This is a more flexible and permissive approach than SADMP Policy DM 2. However, I agree with the Borough Council that this will not undermine the strategic growth strategy. The policy takes account of national policy and guidance and will help to achieve sustainable development.

Subject to the modification below regarding definition of terms, the policy will take account of national policy and guidance and will help to achieve sustainable development.

- **Add the following definition for small scale first-home housing to the policy by adding a new paragraph at the end which reads: “For the purposes of this policy small scale first-time housing is defined as developments of less than five in number of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings.”**

Policy 2 Extensions and Conversions to form Residential (including from commercial uses)

Policy 2 seeks to ensure that any extensions to existing dwellings are designed well and respect the local context of the site. Conversions to residential uses are also expected to be sympathetic to their immediate area or improve its visual appearance. This approach reflects SADMP Policies DM 5 and DM 15.

The NPPF explains that the Government attaches great importance to design. Good design, it says, is a key aspect of sustainable development and indivisible from good planning.²⁴ Neighbourhood plans should set out the quality of development expected for an area. This policy is clearly worded and achieves that aspiration and will help to achieve sustainable development. It meets the basic conditions and no modifications are recommended.

²⁴ NPPF para 56

Housing Mix

Policy 3 Housing Mix

National policy is clear that a wide choice of high quality homes should be delivered to, amongst other things, create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.²⁵ The NPPF indicates that a mix of housing should be planned for.

The Plan explains that Policy 3 seeks to redress an imbalance in dwelling size to provide more choice particularly for older people and young people.

On schemes of three or more homes, the policy expects smaller properties, defined as 1 – 3 bedroom, to be provided unless site-specific issues or housing needs information demonstrates otherwise.

It also supports “small scale starter homes” and “small scale first-time housing”. I have already mentioned the need to define such terms in the discussion of Policy 1. The last paragraph in this policy largely repeats the reference to small scale first-home housing in Policy 1 and is therefore unnecessary.

“Starter homes”, used in criterion b. of the policy, has a particular meaning in planning terms and is commonly used to describe a house that meets the needs of young first time buyers offered to them at below open market value. In contrast to Policy 1, it is clear here that in addition to the mix of smaller homes the first criterion seeks, the second part of the policy supports starter homes. These can be distinguished from the support for small scale first-home housing given in Policy 1.

Given the environmental characteristics of the locality largely derived by ribbon development and the flexibility within the policy, subject to the modification below regarding definition of terms, the policy will take account of national policy and guidance and will help to achieve sustainable development. It is clearly worded.

- **Delete the last paragraph of the policy that begins “Small scale first-home housing...” in its entirety**

Affordable Housing

Policy 4 Rural Exceptions: Affordable Housing for Local People

Affordable housing on exception sites is supported by this policy. The policy requires such sites to be ribbon development and this may stifle the provision of such housing. Reference is then made in the policy to acceptable effects on visual and landscape

²⁵ NPPF para 50

considerations and this should be sufficient to resist inappropriately located or designed sites. A modification which brings these two points together is made. Reference is also made to up to date housing needs assessment to support any such schemes. Finally the policy refers to local affordable housing needs which should be retained in perpetuity for those with a local connection.

The policy takes account of national policy in setting out the expectation for rural exception sites in this Parish and reflects CS Policy CS06 which supports the provision of affordable housing or exception housing. Local needs and local connection are not defined in the policy or the Plan which allows for some flexibility on a case by case basis.

In order for the policy to meet the basic conditions and in particular to ensure that rural exception sites can be delivered taking account of national policy and guidance and the achievement of sustainable development, two modifications are suggested. The second is made in the interests of clarity and the operation of the policy.

- **Change the first bullet point of the policy to read: “*comprise development that respects the pattern, form and character of development in the site’s context and*”**
- **Add an “*and*” to the end of the second bullet point**

Design

Policy 5 Development Design (all developemnts)

Good design is at the heart of this policy. It is clearly worded and sets out the expectations with sufficient flexibility to ensure that good design is achieved but that particular styles and tastes are not imposed and innovative design is not stifled. It also covers amenity for occupiers and road safety.

It takes account of national policy and guidance interpreting this at a local level and providing an additional layer of detail to CS Policy CS08 and reflecting SADMP Policy DM 15, and will help to achieve sustainable development. It meets the basic conditions and therefore there is no need for me to recommend any modifications.

Flood Risk

Policy 6 Managing and Reducing Flood Risk

The supporting text to this policy explains that its purpose is to ensure that new development does not worsen existing problems in the Parish and that any opportunities to improve the management of flood risk are taken. In general the policy

is clearly worded and I note Anglian Water supports it. However, the last paragraph of the policy gives blanket support to schemes that improve surface water drainage. This could, inadvertently, result in otherwise unacceptable schemes gaining support. A modification is recommended to address this concern. Subject to this, the policy sets out a positive strategy to take account of flood risk and will meet the basic conditions.

- **Reword the last paragraph of the policy to read: “Planning applications *designed specifically to improve surface water drainage such as works to reinstate an effective drainage scheme are encouraged.*”**

Employment Uses

Policy 7 Employment Developments

The Plan explains that there are few employment uses in the Parish. The policy seeks to support employment uses as long as their impact on both amenity and vehicular and pedestrian safety is acceptable. The intent of the policy aligns with the NPPF’s support for economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity.²⁶

However, the wording of the policy does not have the clarity and precision sought by PPG.²⁷ To address this concern so that the policy will meet the basic conditions, the following modifications are recommended:

- **Retitle the policy “*Employment Related or Agriculture and Horticulture Related Development*”**
- **Reword the policy to read:**

“Employment related uses and development related to the agricultural and horticultural sector are encouraged on suitable sites (buildings and land) in the Parish.

In deciding whether a site is suitable for such development including the expansion or redevelopment of existing employment sites, consideration will be given to the effect on the character and appearance of the area from any new buildings or related infrastructure, the effect on the amenity of nearby occupiers and the benefits brought by the proposal in terms of new jobs and services.”

²⁶ NPPF para 28

²⁷ PPG para 041 ref id 41-041-20140306

Policy 8 Neighbourhood Plan Proposal Plan Map

This policy does not appear in bold text, but I have assumed this is a simple presentational error. It is clear from the title it is intended to be a policy and I have examined it as such.

The policy supports “proposals to upgrade or redevelop existing employment buildings and grounds at site marked on map”. This policy does not offer the practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency sought by the NPPF.²⁸ It is not clear and unambiguous as sought by PPG to enable a decision maker to apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications.²⁹

The land in question is identified on Map 1 as “potential industrial development”. The site is located to the northern side of the A17 and is currently in use as, what the Plan describes as, “a large pallet yard”. I saw on my visit the site would, in principle, be appropriate for employment related uses.

The policy offers blanket support for employment uses on this site.

In order for the policy to meet the basic conditions, the following modifications are recommended in the interests of providing a practical framework and clarity sought by national policy and guidance.

- **Retitle the policy “Site at Old Station”**
- **Reword the policy to read:**

“The enhancement or redevelopment of the Site at Old Station identified on Map 1 will be supported where a proposal accords with Policy 7 of the Neighbourhood Plan and other relevant policies of the development plan.”

Community Facilities

Policy 9 Protection of Community Facilities

Presentationally, the title of the policy sits before the explanatory text and this should be changed in the interests of clarity.

The policy seeks to protect the school and Jephson Hall as community facilities. Both are usefully identified on the Proposal Plan (Map 1). It resists the loss of the facilities or any other proposals that might adversely affect their continued use. The NPPF

²⁸ NPPF para 17

²⁹ PPG para 041 ref id 41-041-20140306

promotes the retention of and development of local services and community facilities.³⁰ CS Policy CS02 recognises the importance of sustaining existing services. Policy 9 cross-references SADMP Policy DM 9 and this provides the necessary flexibility for this policy by outlining the circumstances in which a loss of a facility would be permitted.

The latter part of the policy offers blanket support for community infrastructure proposals. As previously mentioned, such blanket support can sometimes result in otherwise unacceptable development being supported. Therefore to address this, a modification is recommended.

- **Move the title of the policy to sit above the policy in bold text**
- **Reword the last paragraph of the policy to read: “*New or enhanced community facilities and infrastructure will be supported where proposals comply with other policies of the development plan.*”**

Transport and Access

Policy 10 Transport and Access

This policy seeks improvement of the road system in the Parish and other movement infrastructure. The explanatory text points out the importance of the road and dyke system. Whilst the intent of the policy meets the basic conditions, the wording is not clear or precise enough taking account of national policy and guidance so a modification is recommended to address this concern.

- **Reword the policy to read:**
 - “a. Improvements to the road network in the Parish are encouraged provided that the rural character and appearance of the area is respected.*”**
 - “b. Proposals should ensure that any requirements generated by the proposed development do not harm the highway network, verges or dykes.”***

Chapter 6 How Will the Planning Policies be Implemented?

This is a helpful section that explains how the Plan fits into the planning system and how it will be used.

³⁰ NPPF para 28

Appendix 1 Community Aspirations

This sets out a number of community aspirations. They are clearly separate from the planning policies.

Appendix 2

This appendix contains useful supporting information about population and household trends, employment and other key characteristics of the Parish. It is not essential to retain in the Plan, but I do not need to make any recommendations in this respect in relation to the basic conditions.

7.0 Conclusions and recommendations

I am satisfied that the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Development Plan, subject to the modifications I have recommended, meets the basic conditions and the other statutory requirements outlined earlier in this report.

I am therefore pleased to recommend to the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk that, subject to the modifications proposed in this report, the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Development Plan can proceed to a referendum.

Following on from that, I am required to consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan area. I see no reason to alter or extend the Plan area for the purpose of holding a referendum and no representations have been made that would lead me to reach a different conclusion.

I therefore consider that the Plan should proceed to a referendum based on the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan area as approved by the Borough Council on 12 November 2013.

Ann Skippers MRTPI
Ann Skippers Planning
14 June 2017

Appendix 1 List of key documents specific to this examination

Planning Cross Keys' Future, Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan 2015 -2026
Submission Version September 2016

Basic Conditions Statement

Consultation Statement

Strategic Environmental assessment & Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening
Determinations of 10 July 2015

Local Development Framework Core Strategy adopted July 2011

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan adopted September 2016

List ends

Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan

- Summary of the representations submitted to the independent Examiner

The Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan was published and consulted on by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk from 5 December 2016 to the 30 January 2017

6 representations were received in response to that consultation, and provided to the independent Examiner. These representations came from (or on behalf of):

- The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
- Historic England
- Anglian Water Services
- Natural England
- Norfolk County Council
- Sport England

Summary of the representations made:

- General guidance received from Historic England, Natural England and Sports England
- General advice from Norfolk County Council in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and flooding in their role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)
- Support from the Borough Council and suggests to aid clarification

These representations were provided to the independent examiner to inform the examination of the Neighbourhood Plan. They are available for inspection on the Borough Council's website via the following link:

http://consult.west-norfolk.gov.uk/portal/neighbourhood_plan/neighbourhood_plan_consultations/walpole_cross_keys_np/walpole_cross_keys_np_consultation_2016?tab=info

Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan

- Statement by the local planning authority that the Walpole Cross Keys Draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions.
-

The Draft Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan was considered by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk's Cabinet on 1st August together with the Report of the independent Examiner.

The Cabinet agreed, on behalf of the Borough Council, with the Examiner's recommendations that the submitted Draft Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan should be amended in the ways specified by the Examiner in order to ensure it meets the basic conditions, and that, so modified, it should proceed to a local referendum covering the area of Walpole Cross Keys Parish.

The Draft Neighbourhood Plan has now been so amended, and thus the Borough Council is satisfied that the Draft Neighbourhood Plan being presented in the referendum meets the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Alan Gomm
Planning Policy Manager
Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk