



Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan

Referendum Version

2021-2036

November 2024

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Section 1: Introduction

About Ringstead

1. Ringstead, though a small village, is considered a special place by its relatively small number of permanent residents and very many occasional residents and visitors, located as it is three kilometres inland from the coast, mostly in a shallow dry valley sheltered from the coldest offshore winds.
2. It has seen very great changes during the lives of more-long-standing residents. In the 1960s it was a thriving agriculturally based community, with most people employed in the village or locally, on the seven farms mostly on the le Strange Estate or in agriculturally related employment including a blacksmith, agricultural contractor, an agricultural and general contractor, and a garden nursery. There were, two general stores and a baker, two pubs, a cycle repairer a primary school, a resident parish priest shared with a neighbouring village, an active Methodist chapel, and a thriving community life, including children's activities and a youth club, and a regular bus service.
3. Since the late 1970s, with the consolidation of farms and the development of contract farming, local employment has declined. Increase in private car ownership has meant local shops are no longer necessary, the closure of the school, owing to declining numbers, and the then government's right to buy policy removed many of the then thirty-nine local authority houses reducing the availability of low rental properties for families. The provision of local authority bungalows and flats in Hunstanton and Heacham removed elderly people to more appropriate housing. Cottages, sold by the le Strange Estate to their tenants or local people in the late 1940s and 1950s, began to be bought and significantly upgraded and extended as retirement and holiday homes so that by the 2000s the demography of the village had radically changed, with an older population, and few people with school age children attending local schools. Many especially older terraced or semi-detached properties previously occupied by families have been significantly extended and are now occupied by a couple or are second homes or rented as holiday homes. Local employment other than in King's Lynn or in low paid jobs servicing the tourist, wild-life, and home-care industries in Hunstanton and coastal villages has largely disappeared. The winter months are very quiet, and are a lean time for the remaining shop and pub.
4. Like all the coastal villages Ringstead has seen significant development in the past ten years or so, probably more than in any decades in its existence. Three groups of cottages have been significantly extended and are let as holiday homes. Two small

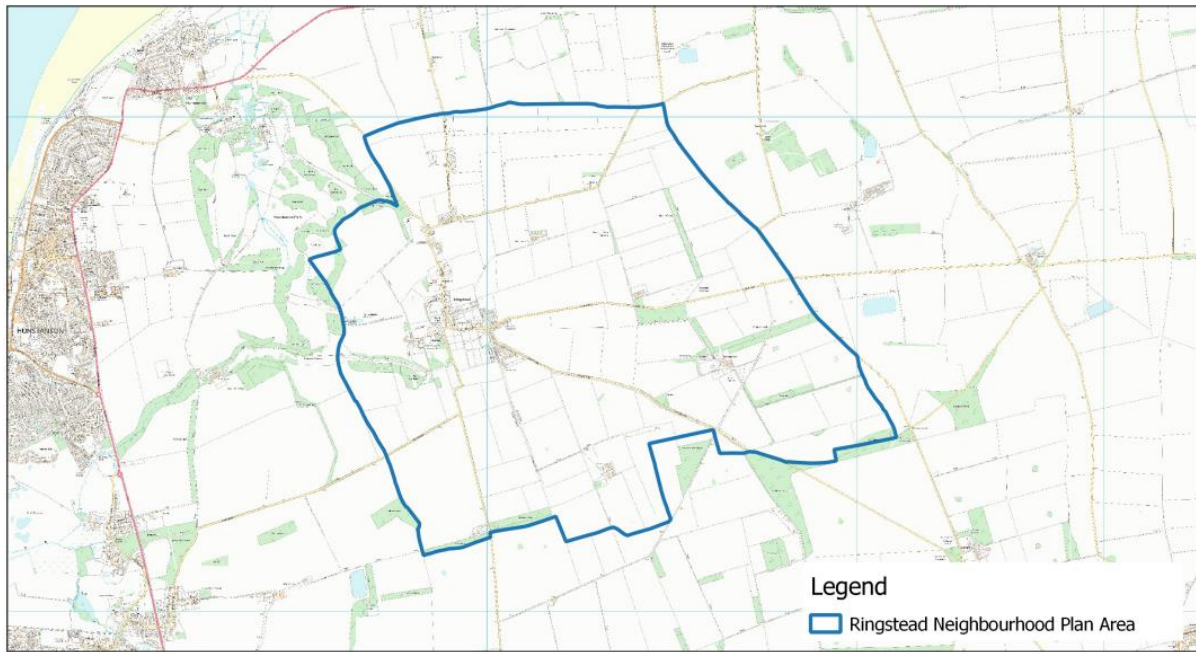
bungalows have been demolished and replaced with five bedroomed houses on prominent sites on the skylines, At Burnham Road Farm barns and outbuildings have been converted as residential units and five detached four bedroomed houses have been built, all used as second homes or holiday lets. In Chapel Lane eleven houses are under construction, three five-bedroomed, four four-bedroomed, and four three bedroomed, two of which are affordable, one for sale and the other for rent.

5. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan enables the existing, still relatively mixed, community to have a greater say in shaping the character of the built and natural environment, to get the sort of houses wanted by local people in the right locations and, very importantly, some which local people can afford and creates opportunities for more diverse employment. This will help to create a more sustainable future for the resident community and for second homeowners, who often, in due course, retire to become permanent residents, and a more interesting place for visitors who rent holiday cottages. It will help to sustain a mixed community and to diversify and promote the local economy, whilst protecting the environment in this National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty¹).
6. Our villages are changing. They are no longer, and will never again be, small working villages with the entire population living and working locally. Our villages have a reducing percentage of permanent residents, and within this population the percentage of retired people moving into these villages is increasing. The number of second homes and the impact of tourism have increased dramatically here, as elsewhere locally. Tourism, however, is not new. A house was advertised in the village as a prospective holiday home in 1811. The le Strange's development of Hunstanton as a seaside resort in the 1850s and the opening of golf courses and clubs in the 1880s brought visitors to enjoy the village and the Downs. The more recent development of nature reserves and walking brings people throughout the year. Tourism thus now forms a major part of the local economy. Without it we would not have a shop or a pub.
7. Continuing change, especially in relation to technological and communications development, and homeworking makes further change inevitable. The challenge is to provide suitable housing and other resources that can accommodate into the future that change for all sectors of the community, including people employed in servicing tourism and home-, social- and healthcare, and to ensure that the infrastructure, including electricity supply, access to broadband and roads and parking, are provided for future needs.

¹ The Government renamed Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty as "National Landscapes", from November 2023.

Neighbourhood Planning

8. Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. Neighbourhood Planning legislation came into effect in April 2012 and gives communities the power to agree a Neighbourhood Development Plan. It is an important and powerful tool that gives communities such as parish councils statutory powers to agree a shared vision and shape how their community develops and changes over time.
9. Great Ringstead, Norfolk (referred to throughout this document as Ringstead) is in the borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and so the neighbourhood plan sits within the context of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan. As of January 2025, the Borough Council's adopted Local Plan consists of the 2011 Core Strategy and the 2016 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document which covers the plan period to 2026. The replacement Local Plan 2021-2040, which will entirely replace the 2011 Core Strategy and 2016 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document, is anticipated to be adopted by spring 2025.
10. The neighbourhood plan will be a document that sets out planning policies for the Parish and these will be used, alongside the local plan, to consider whether planning applications are approved or not. It's a community document, that's written by local people who know and love the area.
11. The neighbourhood plan has to support the delivery of the 'strategic policies' contained in the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan, and so it cannot promote less development than set out in the local plan. The local plan sets the overall strategic policies such as the amount of new development and the distribution of that development across the district and the general protection of the environment. The local plan, and emerging revised local plan, do not allocate sites for development in Ringstead, although modest levels of development can be permitted to meet local needs and maintain viability of the community.
12. The neighbourhood plan can include 'non-strategic policies', such as the mix of housing, design principles for new development, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, protecting local green spaces from development, and setting out other development management policies. Importantly, the neighbourhood plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
13. Once a neighbourhood plan has been 'made', following consultation with residents, examination, and a local referendum, it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the parish and will be used by the borough council in deciding on all planning applications in the parish.



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Ordnance Survey 100024314

Ringstead Parish Boundary
and Neighbourhood Plan Area



1:35,000

25/02/2021

Figure 1- Designated Neighbourhood Area

Process of developing this Neighbourhood Plan

- The parish area shown in Error! Reference source not found. was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in February 2021. Working on behalf of the community, Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, in consultation with the Parish Council, has prepared this draft plan that will shape and influence future development and change across the parish.

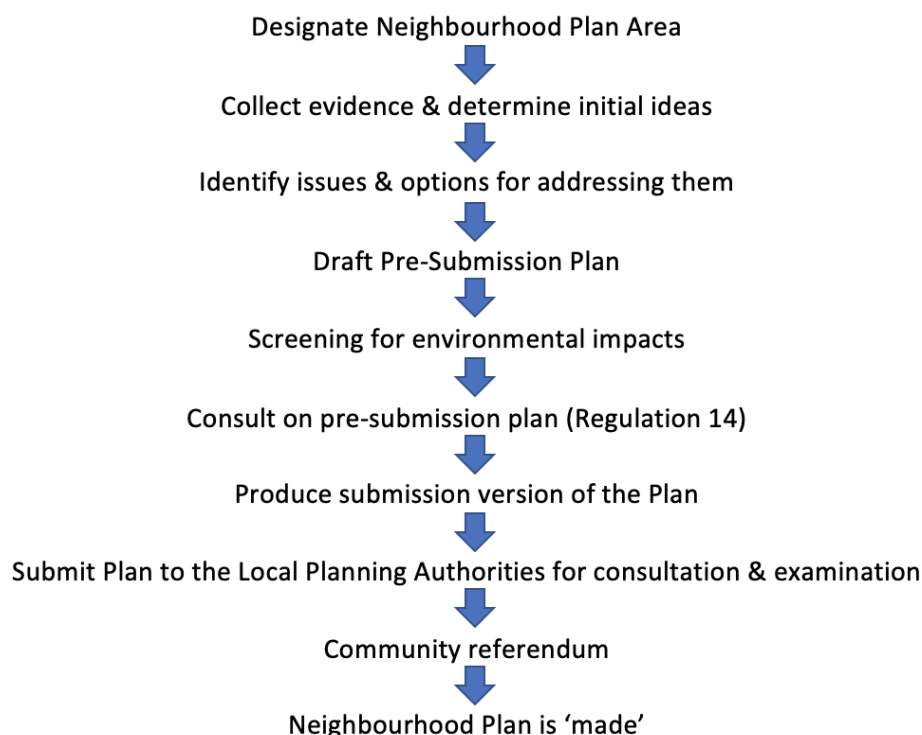


Figure 2: Process of Developing Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan

15. A broad range of evidence has been reviewed to determine issues and develop policies for the plan. This includes population data from the Office of National Statistics, housing data, a review of environmental designations and historical records. Further work to gather new evidence has also been undertaken, including an assessment of local green spaces, key views, heritage assets and the impact of second homes, all supported by consultation activities with the community.
16. Any new development should serve both current and future residents. The policies contained within this plan will enable us to influence the design and type of any new homes being delivered in the parish, as well as ensuring infrastructure improvements are delivered alongside growth to maximise community benefit.

Consultation with Residents

17. The Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by residents and Parish Councillors, reflecting the views and aspirations of the wider community. A Steering Group, comprising a mix of residents and councillors, has overseen the process throughout on behalf of the Parish Council as the 'qualifying body'. Engaging the wider community in the plan's development has been a key focus for the Steering Group.
18. A major consultation exercise ran for 7 weeks from 18 September to 5 November 2021. This included a survey with 31 questions. A hard copy of the survey was

distributed to all households in the neighbourhood area, over 200 in total. People were able to pick up additional copies of the survey from the village shop or they could complete it online. Overall, 88 responses were received. There was also a follow up community event to draw out the key issues and consider policy options for the plan, which was attended by 64 people.

19. The main issues and concerns raised during consultation activities included:

- The level of second homeownership and the impact this has on the community.
- The need to retain existing local services and facilities and provide support for encouraging more local business enterprise.
- Retaining the current character of Ringstead, of which heritage is a key part.
- Protecting the natural environment, such as identification of local green spaces and wildlife corridors.
- The design of any new housing, and ensuring new housing is in keeping with the existing village.
- Preserving the peaceful nature of Ringstead, with its dark skies.
- Improving access into the countryside, including possible more footpaths.
- The inadequate level of affordable housing in the village, and support for increasing this to help attract younger families into the village.
- Support (70% of respondents) for the plan promoting some residential development.
- A strong feeling that any new homes should be for local people rather than second homeowners.

20. A further consultation was held between October and November 2022 to gather the communities views on topics including local green spaces, important views, non-designated heritage assets and site options to help shape the development of the plan. A survey was circulated as well as an in person drop in event at the village hall. Many residents shared their views on the topics including the site options for possible social housing put forward which helped shape the agreement by the parish council to move forward with Peddars Way North in Policy 3.

21. Following the preliminary consultations, the feedback was used to inform the draft Neighbourhood Plan published for Regulation 14. A preliminary draft Plan was submitted to the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England in March 2023 for the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)/ Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) consultation. Natural England's and the Environment Agency's response indicated that the draft Plan would be likely to require a full SEA/HRA, due to implications of GI-RAMS (which came into force on 1 April 2022).

AECOM was commissioned to undertake the SEA and HRA in September 2023 and the report was published in January 2024 at Regulation 14².

22. The Regulation 14 Consultation took place for 6 weeks between 22 January and 1 March 2024. A number of activities were undertaken to bring the consultation to the attention of local people and stakeholders including leaflets distributed to every property and business, details on the parish council website, hard copies of the plan available in the General Store and Village Hall and a drop in event at the Village Hall on 10 February 2024. Further details of community engagement throughout the development of the plan and regarding the SEA/HRA is documented in the Consultation Statement.
23. The Plan was submitted to the Borough Council on 22 April 2024. The Borough Council took over the process then, with further consultation (June-July 2024) and an independent examination (September-October 2024). The independent examination on 21 October 2024 recommended the plan proceeds to referendum.

Section 2: Vision, Objectives and Approach

Approach

24. This plan is developed on the principle of achieving sustainable development, by which is meant development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations. To do this it must strike a balance between social and environmental and economic factors. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to address these issues by developing a series of policies devised to meet Ringstead's current situation and to achieve a sustainable future for the community.

Vision

25. Our vision is based on a desire to achieve organic growth that will be sustainable and will protect and enhance Ringstead's special characteristics by achieving a balance between social, environmental, and economic factors.
26. Social: The community will be strengthened by achieving a good balance in the housing stock to include people of a diverse range of incomes, ages, and

² These documents are available on the parish council website- [Ringstead Parish Council | Neighbourhood Plan \(ringsteadpc-norfolk.info\)](http://Ringstead Parish Council | Neighbourhood Plan (ringsteadpc-norfolk.info))

circumstances to complement one another and encouraging well-being from the benefits of the environment.

27. Environment: The character of the natural and built environment will be conserved and improved appropriately to reflect the parish's location within an National Landscape and designation as a Conservation Area, and to enhance the local economy.
28. Economic: The local economy will be sustained for the future by enhancing the natural and social capital of the parish and encouraging opportunities for local employment to ensure future prosperity.

Objectives

29. The longer-term vision for the village gives rise to the objectives set out below. These are closely related to the issues and opportunities already noted and reflect the feedback derived from the community consultations. They are reckoned to be achievable within the lifetime of the Plan and are the starting points for the Policies set out below. Three Community Actions have been identified through the plan preparation process, but these are not policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.
30. Community: To maintain the village's vitality, including the local amenities to promote the well-being of the community, and particularly by addressing issues relating to the balance between residents and non-residents and older and younger age groups.
31. Landscape: To conserve and enhance the local Norfolk Coast National Landscape valued for its peace and tranquillity and its wide and naturally dark skies and to conserve important local views and enhance and protect green spaces of particular value to the local community, whilst seeking ways to enhance and exploit these natural assets.
32. Natural environment and ecology: To conserve and enhance the natural environment, reversing decline, reducing pollution, and promoting biodiversity including habitats of ecological significance for protected and threatened species, includes promoting awareness of nearby sites with special environmental designations, the surrounding countryside and associated biodiversity networks characterised by trees and hedgerows, ponds, and ditches.
33. Heritage: To respect our predecessors' contributions to the village by identifying, conserving and where possible enhancing our heritage assets for the benefit of the local residents, visitors and future generations.
34. Built environment: To conserve and enhance the traditional form and character of the village and to encourage sustainable infill development in accordance with Local

Plan policy ensuring that the scale of both new and replacement buildings respects the character of their context and the community's needs.

35. Economy: To reinforce the existing local economy largely based on tourism and agriculture by conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and encouraging low impact employment opportunities consonant with the National Landscape setting and special designations of the parish.
36. Transport: To ensure that the village is as safe as possible for all pedestrians and road users, to reduce traffic conflict and to prevent unnecessary growth in vehicle traffic, congestion, emissions and on-street car parking which tends to damage the fabric of the village and contributes to the degradation of the natural and residential environment.

Guiding principles

37. The principles that have guided the development of this Plan have helped to shape the end result, especially in defining policies and gaining the support of stakeholders in the village. These are:
38. Inclusive: Planning for the benefit of the wider community – residents, second homeowners, business, visitors, and future generations and proactively engaging as wide a cross-section of the community as possible;
39. Comprehensive: Recognising the interrelationships between the society, the environment, and the economy;
40. Co-operative: Liaising with local organisations and landowners to help overcome the range of social and environmental pressures facing the parish;
41. Progressive: Seeking to achieve change for the better by improving, restoring, reconnecting, and taking advantage of changes in technology to build a better environment for the future. Encouraging attitudes and behaviours towards our environment and heritage so as to make a lasting and, positive impact on residents' and visitors' quality of life.

Section 3: Housing and Design

Housing mix

42. The National Planning Policy Framework requires plans to have policies that meet the housing needs of different demographic groups, such as older people, disabled people, self-builders, families etc. This provides an opportunity to include a policy in the Neighbourhood Plan [NP] that sets out the housing mix that is expected from new residential developments³.
43. The latest Census data (2021) suggests that there is a total of 140 households in Ringstead showing an increase of 5 households since Census (2011) which totalled 135.
44. As explained in the Ringstead Housing Needs Assessment (2022) and shown in Figure 3 the population of the Parish has declined by 22 people and the majority of the population in both 2011 and 2021 is aged 45 and over. Figure 3 is showing age categories 45-64 and 65-84 being one of the highest and 16-24 being amongst the lowest. Ringstead's population is significantly more skewed towards the older population compared to the borough and the country. Population growth to the end of the plan period can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with households with a household reference person aged 65 and over expected to increase by 44% between 2011 and 2036 (HNA, 2022).
45. The existing housing profile set out in the Housing Needs Assessment (2022) suggests:
 - The dominant dwelling type in the Parish was detached housing in both 2011 and 2021 followed by semi-detached.
 - The Parish had a significantly higher proportion of bungalows (27.3%) than England (9.4%) but similar to West Norfolk
 - The proportion of terraced properties remained somewhat stable.
 - The proportion of flats have stayed at a low percentage of 2% between 2011 and 2021.
46. Furthermore, the houses currently under construction within the village and due to be completed in Autumn 2024, will be made up of a number of detached and semi-detached houses with 3 to 5 bedrooms emphasising this housing size and type dominates the parish.

³ [NPPF \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/publishing-service)

All usual residents in mid-2011 and 2020	Total Population 2011: 324		Total Population 2020: 302	
0-15	57	17.59%	43	14.24%
16-24	26	8.02%	20	6.62%
25-44	58	17.90%	28	9.27%
45-64	108	33.33%	103	34.11%
65-84	67	20.68%	94	31.13%
85 and over	8	2.47%	14	4.64%

Figure 3- Table of the residents population for Ringstead (2011) and mid-year estimates in (2020) (Sourced: ONS, 2021; Nomis, 2021⁴)

Dwelling type	2011 (VOA)	2021 (VOA)
Bungalow	27.70%	27.30%
Flat	2.00%	2.00%
Terrace	11.90%	12.10%
Semi-detached	15.80%	16.20%
Detached	38.60%	39.40%
Unknown/other	4.00%	3.00%

Figure 4- Accommodation type in Ringstead in 2011 and 2021 (VOA, 2021, AECOM Calculations, 2022⁵)

47. The proportion of detached dwellings in Ringstead is above national levels which suggests the area is dominated by larger and more expensive properties. Regarding dwelling size, the parish was dominated in both 2011 and 2021 by 3-bedroom

⁴ Parish Population estimates for mid-2011 to mid-2020 based on best-fitting of output areas to Parishes - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

⁵ Note: As explained in para 123 of the Housing Need Assessment (2022) some data sources are only available at the LSOA level for Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data meaning that other Parishes including Burnham Norton, Burnham Overy, Burnham Thorpe and North Creake may fall into the data. This is why raw figures have been opposed and percentages are used instead.

dwellings, however this has decreased slightly from 48.1% to 42.6% during the period. Reasons suggested in the HNA (2022) for this could be due to the conversion of 3 bed dwellings to 4 bed or due to new 4 bed dwellings. The second dominant housing type is 2-bedroom dwellings. Figure 5 shows that over the decade there has been an increase in properties with 4 bedrooms which emphasises the dominance of larger dwellings overall.

48. Comparing the dwelling size to the borough of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk as shown in table 5-4 of the HNA (2022) the percentage of 1-bedroom dwellings in 2021 is significantly lower in Ringstead (3.2%) compared to West Norfolk (7.5%) and England (12.3%). For 2 bedrooms this is slightly lower than West Norfolk and England and for 3-bedroom dwellings the percentages over all three categories are relatively similar. However, for dwellings of 4 and 5+ bedrooms Ringstead is higher than West Norfolk and England; especially for 4 bedrooms which in Ringstead is 24.5% and both West Norfolk and England are between 12.2-14.3%. Emphasising again the issue of larger and expensive dwellings in the Parish which has been identified by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Number of bedrooms	2011 (Census)	2021 (VOA)
1	3.00%	3.20%
2	25.20%	23.40%
3	48.10%	42.60%
4	16.30%	24.50%
5+	7.40%	6.40%

Figure 5-Dwelling Size (Bedrooms) in Ringstead 2011 and 2021 (VOA,2021; AECOM Calculations, 2022)

49. Household composition (combinations of adults and children in a dwelling) is important for understanding Ringstead’s housing need and mix. Since the release of some of the Census 2021 data it is apparent that the composition of some households has changed in the last ten years. Figure 6 highlights that there has been an increase in the proportion of single person households in Ringstead particularly with older residents. There is a greater proportion of families with no dependent children (25.7%) compared to families with dependent children (12.8%) which has dropped by nearly 50% since 2011 in the parish.

Household composition (Census data)		2011		2021	
One person household	Total	29	21.50%	51	36.43%
	Aged 65 and over (changed to 66 in 2021)	14	10.40%	33	23.5
	Other	15	11.10%	18	12.8
One family only	Total	96	71.10%	89	63.57%
	All aged 65 and over (changed to 66 in 2021)	19	14.10%	22	15.7
	With no children	36	21.50%	36	25.7
	With dependent children	34	25.20%	18	12.8
	All children non-Dependent	14	10.40%	19	13.5
Other household types	Total	10	7.40%	0	0
	Total households	135	100%	140	100%

Figure 6-Household Composition of Ringstead in 2011 and 2021 (ONS, 2011; ONS, 20216)

50. The HNA (2022) identifies a large decrease in single person households in Ringstead between 2001 and 2011 of 31% which could indicate the lack of smaller dwellings suitable, or which are affordable for single persons. The HNA (2022) identifies that 81.5% of households are underoccupied, with at least one extra bedroom. This is predominantly with single person households and families aged 65+ which suggests that households are generally not downsizing when children leave the family home or when one gets older. This could be due to a lack of choice of more suitable property in the village.
51. Figure 7 sets out the recommended housing mix of new development up to 2036 that is required to meet local housing need. It is taken from the HNA (2022) and suggests that need is greatest for smaller dwellings. There is no need for further 5+bedroom dwellings. The feel from the community is that, should development

⁶ Household Composition for Ringstead output area- E00184646. Source: [Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/)

come forward, people feel there is most need for smaller 2- and especially 3-bedroom properties and there is a distinct lack of support for new larger 4 or 5 bed properties; showing that the evidence from the HNA and need from the community matches quite well. Given the need to meet the future housing requirements of an ageing population and the needs of younger people, the focus could be on providing small-sized homes, and homes suitable for older people such as bungalows.

Number of bedrooms	Current mix (2011)	Target mix (2036)	Balance of new housing to reach target mix
1 bedroom	3%	7.5%	36.1%
2 bedrooms	25.2%	30.1%	57.3%
3 bedrooms	48.1%	43%	1.6%
4 bedrooms	16.3%	15.2%	5%
5+bedrooms	7.4%	4.3%	0.0%

Figure 7-Suggested dwelling size mix to 2036 in Ringstead (AECOM Calculations, 2022)

52. Putting these findings together the HNA (2022) would suggest a housing mix policy that aims to provide for more homes that are predominantly three bedrooms or less would be a way forward. However, the parish council also believe three bedrooms could be beneficial to allow for growing families to retain people in the village. The figures from the HNA (2022) suggests that such smaller homes should comprise around 93.4% of new homes, but it is not good practice to be too precise or restrictive in this regard. It is recognised that with building conversions and self-build this may not be possible. As well as this consideration will be given to the adaptation of individual's economic status where one might need to adapt their home to provide working space in the coming years.

RNP POLICY 1: HOUSING MIX

Housing proposals will need to reflect local housing need using the best available and proportionate evidence. The Housing Need Assessment (2022) will be acceptable evidence unless more up-to-date robust evidence identifies different local housing need.

New residential open market development should offer a housing mix whereby at least 90% of homes are three-bedrooms or fewer, unless evidence is provided either showing there is no longer such a local need, or the scheme is made unviable.

Affordable Housing

53. Affordability is a serious and worsening challenge in Ringstead and the surrounding area, one that must be addressed through housing policy. In 2011 statistics show that 66.7% of households in Ringstead were owned. However, the Census 2021 data shows this has risen to 71.4% (either being owned outright or with a mortgage or loan). Affordable housing (socially rented and shared ownership) in 2011 equated to 11.1% which has since dropped to 10% in 2021. However, the 10% of social rented housing was made up of 'other social rent' rather than from a local authority.⁷
54. It is interesting to note that the HNA (2022) observed that the changes between 2001 and 2011 Census data showed that the proportion of households living in social rented dwellings fell by 36.4% compared to a 0.9% decline nationally. The HNA stated this may indicate higher levels of Right to Buy and loss of stock in the parish than nationally. Additionally, the private rented sector fell by -16.7% in this time (2001-2011) despite Borough growth of 96.2% and national growth of 82.4%. This equated to the private rented sector in Ringstead being 18.5%⁸ in 2011. However, Census 2021 data indicates that private rent is now 4.3% showing another staggering drop. This is likely due to second home ownership in the parish, with individuals preferring to rent their second homes as holiday lets as opposed to in the private rented sector.
55. It is likely that the low proportion of younger people in Ringstead is an indication that they find it difficult to get on the housing ladder. The HNA (2022) shows a 271.2% growth in all types of median house prices between 2012 (£163,250) and 2021 (£606,000) with some fluctuations. Semi-detached dwellings have increased in price the most, by 270.5% followed by Detached (55.3% growth); such sustained inflation will make Ringstead unaffordable for many.
56. Looking at the average price of housing on Zoopla and Rightmove in January 2024 reveals that the average property sold in the last 12 months was £360,000 whereas in August 2022 it was £467,500⁹. The average sold price however is based on 1 semi-detached property sold along Docking Road. Within the last 5 years there has been 32 properties sold with prices varying from £142,000 (Holme Road in June 2021) and £925,000 (Burnham Road in November 2021).

⁷ Ringstead Area code E00184646. Source: [Tenure of household - Census Maps, ONS](#)

⁸ [Local Area Report for areas in England and Wales - Nomis \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](#)

⁹ [House prices in Ringstead, Norfolk stand at £467,500 - Zoopla \(August 2022\) and House prices in Ringstead, Norfolk - sold prices and estimates - Zoopla \(January 2024\)](#)

57. Looking on Rightmove¹⁰ at the 6 properties sold in Ringstead over the last 2 years reveals how 4 properties have increased significantly in price over the years. For example:

- 5 Burnham Road (Detached house) sold for £78,000 in August 1995 and £615,000 in January 2023
- 33 Docking Road (2 bed semi-detached house) sold for £250,000 in April 2017 and £420,000 in May 2022
- 38 Docking Road (3 bed detached house) sold for £272,000 in June 2014 and £475,000 in November 2022.
- 2 Chapel Lane (semi-detached house) sold for £250,000 in July 2013, £307,500 in July 2015 and £485,250 in September 2022

58. Again, showing that the prices of properties coming forward on the market in current times will be out of reach for many local people on average wages. Locally in 2018, the average total household income, before housing costs, was £34,400¹¹ (excluding the lower quartile average earnings which is the income of the lowest 25% of earners). At the Local Authority level in 2020 the gross individual lower quartile annual earnings were £13,839, which doubling with two lower quartile earners would be £27,678. This shows how people on the lowest wages even in a couple have a large gap between their spending power compared with average earning households in the area.

59. The HNA (2022) states that local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry level homes for purchase on the open market unless they have a very large deposit, and even those with higher-than-average income are likely to struggle. The median house price would require an average income of almost 4x higher than the current average (£34,400) which would be £137,600.

60. Furthermore, the HNA (2022) also has highlighted that private renting is generally only affordable to households on average earnings which as stated previously is around £34,400. The HNA also explains that households made up of two of the lower quartile earners (average of £27,678 in total) can afford the given rental thresholds for entry level 1-bedroom properties but may not afford properties above this. However, whilst those on average incomes could generally afford rent, they would be unable to afford current levels unless they are willing to dedicate an unacceptably high proportion of their income to rental costs, which may have negative consequences for quality of life and is not considered sustainable.

¹⁰ [House Prices in Ringstead \(rightmove.co.uk\)](https://www.rightmove.co.uk/house-prices-in-ringstead)

¹¹ Average earnings are estimated firstly from the Census data looking at a locally specific area.

61. Affordable Housing (subsidised tenure products) can be a way to address this. The HNA (2022) identified a need for affordable homes, especially to rent. The community also support the need for more affordable housing. In the consultation analysis from November 2021 there was 88 responses to this survey. In Q6, 10 responses said there was a lack of affordable housing. Furthermore, in Q8 the community was asked if they would support the inclusion of a small allocation which nearly 68% said yes and 10 comments stating that this should be for affordable housing especially for younger people. Q9 also showed that 50% of respondents felt that an allocation should be for affordable housing (Figure 8).

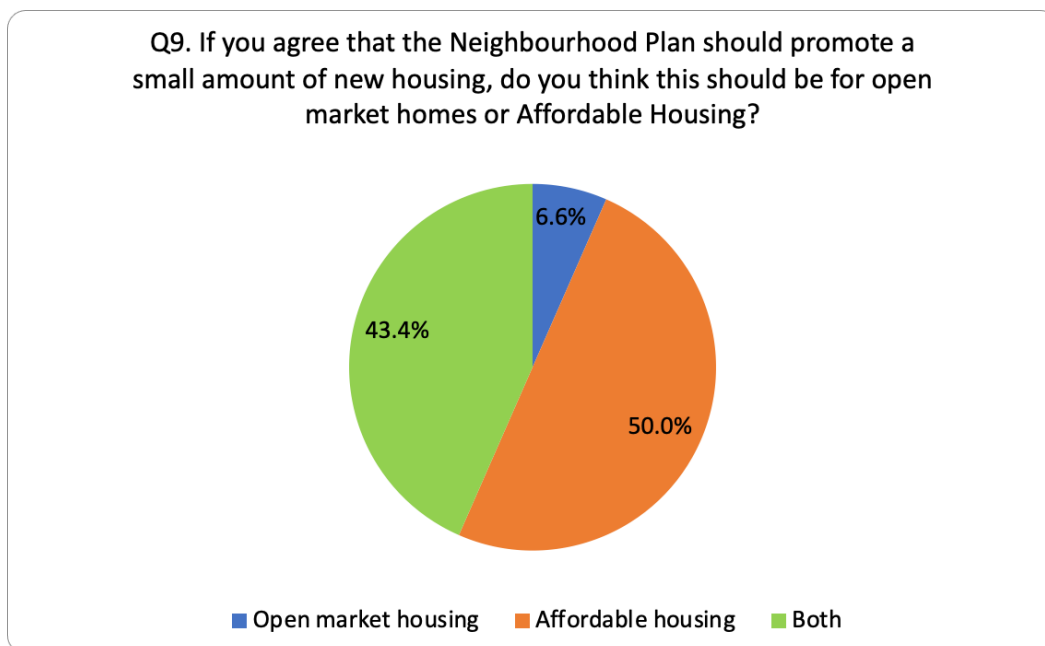


Figure 8- Question 9 from the Consultation Survey Analysis (November 2021)

62. The NPPF sets out a policy approach to affordable housing, including the need to ensure at least 10% of new houses are affordable homes to buy when major development comes forward. The Local Plan sets out the affordable housing threshold for development in rural areas as being sites of 0.165 ha or 5 or more dwellings¹². Policy on Rural Exception Sites¹³ for affordable housing is also covered in the NPPF, and reflected in the Local Plan supporting schemes for affordable housing on rural exception sites where:

- The site adjoins a sustainable settlement as defined in the settlement hierarchy,
- Supported by local affordable housing need evidence and viability assessments and

¹² [Complete Core Strategy 2011 \(1\).pdf](#)

¹³ Rural Exception Sites as stated in the BCKLWN Core Strategy (2011) may be when development plans allocate small sites within rural areas solely for affordable housing, which would not otherwise be released for general market housing.

- Future management of affordable housing is supported by a Registered Provider¹⁴.
63. It is important to note that Affordable Housing as defined in the NPPF (December 2023 version) is housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for local key workers). Examples of these will be housing that is discounted at least 20% below market value¹⁵. There is currently a new Government strategy for 'First Homes', which are only available for people buying their first home, with a minimum discount of 30% below full market value. The level of discount can be set higher, to 40 or 50% where suitably evidenced. After the discount is applied the initial sale price must not exceed £250,000. First Homes will be subject to legal restrictions ensuring discount is retained for future occupants and to stop renting or sub-letting. There is a national requirement that First Homes make up 25% of Affordable Housing provision on development sites.
64. It is also possible to set local eligibility criteria for First Homes¹⁶. Policy 2 sets local criteria in line with the guidance to ensure local connections such as current residency, employment requirements and family connections are considered. However, it is noted that the local eligibility criteria will apply for a maximum of 3 months from when a home is first marketed. If a suitable buyer has not reserved a home after 3 months, the eligibility criteria (including income caps) will revert to the national criteria, to widen the consumer base. The guidance also states local connection criteria should be disapplied for all active members of the Armed Forces¹⁷.
65. The HNA (2022) suggests that the First Homes in Ringstead are delivered at 50% discount. However, even doing this would only allow households of average income between £44,015 (the income threshold for First Homes at a 50% discount) to £82,736 (the income threshold for market entry-level housing) to access this product. So, for those who can afford this route it will allow for a greater ownership stake in the property.
66. Shared ownership also seems to be similarly affordable to First Homes and is broadly accessible to the same groups with the exception of shared ownership at 10% equity. However, the transition from 10% to 100% ownership would be long

¹⁴ [Local Plan Review Pre-Submission Stage 2021 - Keystone \(objective.co.uk\)](#)

¹⁵ [NPPF \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁶ [First Homes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes#first-homes-in-plan-making-and-decision-making>

and slow and the monthly costs will remain relatively high so may only be realistic to people wanting full ownership and prepared to take a long-term view.

67. All routes may be appealing to different local needs, so it is suggested that for affordable home ownership this is split into:
- First Homes (50% discount)
 - Shared ownership (10% equity)
68. The King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020) suggests that within the district there is a need for 16.7% social affordable rent and 7.7% shared ownership which the HNA (2022) splits to be 68% social/affordable rented housing and 32% affordable home ownership. Breaking up the data to Ringstead specifically this could suggest that the parish needs 5.6 homes over the neighbourhood plan period (2022-2036) or 0.4 homes per annum roughly equating to 1 affordable home every 2 years. This would mean 3.8 units of affordable rented housing and 1.8 units for affordable home ownership. However, it is worth noting that the Borough level estimates are likely to represent higher needs in urban areas over rural, which makes it difficult to identify the exact need for the parish.
69. However, as stated in the HNA (2022), the housing register data provided by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk indicates that as of March 2022, there were 2 households on the waiting list for social/affordable rented housing currently living in Ringstead. This should be considered as a minimum since it is likely to be higher if local connection to the parish was taken into consideration, or even those with a preference for living in the parish. The demand for social/affordable rented housing is highlighted by the number of bids on properties. In 2020/2021, one (4-bedroom) dwelling became available for let in Ringstead, which had 15 bids, emphasising the disparity between demand and supply.
70. Both forms of Affordable Housing appear to be valuable in meeting the needs of people on various incomes. Whilst it is unlikely that the number of dwellings delivered in the Plan period will meet the complete affordable housing need, an appropriate benchmark tenure mix included in the Policy, will ensure affordable rented housing is made a priority, at a ratio of 70:30 (70% rented and 30% ownership (suggested 25% being First Homes and 5% Rent to Buy)) going forward.
71. Providing an allocation for affordable housing in this plan can also positively contribute further to meet this local need. By providing affordable housing of quality this can also help improve people's quality of life such as mental health and clinical health related outcomes.

RNP POLICY2: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable Housing delivered within Ringstead should comprise:

- 70% Affordable Rented Housing
- 30% Affordable Home Ownership

In addition to the national eligibility criteria, the following local eligibility criteria, which aims to establish a local connection as a preference, will be applied to First Homes, with the requirement to meet at least one of the following:

- Current residents of the Parish who rent or live with other family members;
- Ex-residents of the Parish who rent or live with other family members and who moved away within the last three years; or
- People who rent or live with other family members outside the Parish but who have caring responsibilities in the Parish.
- People who are employed in the Parish.
- People who live or are employed in the locality.

The local eligibility criteria applies for the first 3 months of First Homes being advertised.

Site Allocation

72. In recent years, the parish has seen a modest level of residential development. Currently, there are eleven new houses being constructed on a former brownfield site. Most new dwellings in the last 10 years have come from newly built four-bedroomed houses, substantial extensions to existing houses, conversions of agricultural buildings/out-buildings or sub-divisions of existing houses. Subdividing plots or replacing homes with larger ones is not supported by the community.
73. It is considered that there are an insufficient number of appropriate new homes being provided to maintain the diversity and vitality of the village which meet the needs of residents. Indeed, the parish has a declining population, despite the increased number of residential units. There's a good level of support for the neighbourhood plan promoting a small amount of development, especially for affordable housing to rent. Sustainability of the village, and its ability to retain existing services, is a key concern. Modest additional housing could support the ongoing viability of local services, as well as maintain the social vitality of the village. For any new housing provided in the parish, it will be important to ensure it is of the right design and includes a mix of housing types that help to meet local needs.
74. Around 1 in 5 local people responding to the consultations felt up to 3 new homes would be appropriate over the plan period, just over half support between 4 and 6 homes, whilst 1 in 4 supported between 7 and 9 homes. The majority of the parish

falls within the Norfolk Coast National landscape, which has been designated for its outstanding landscape value. Major residential development, which is 10 or more dwellings, is therefore not supported by national policy.

75. Ringstead is designated as a Smaller Village or Hamlet in the local plan settlement hierarchy, growth will be delivered through committed developments. There may also be the delivery of additional growth through windfall development via planning applications and/or Neighbourhood Plan allocations.
76. In the replacement Local Plan 2021-2040, it is proposed that Ringstead has a development boundary, as a named smaller village and hamlet.
77. Looking at the policies in the local plan, there is some potential for new residential development to come forward as in-fill, but very modest, but, such development would be highly unlikely to provide any affordable housing. Affordability of housing is an issue for those looking to rent, or even buy and may prevent young people/families from staying or moving into the village. There is a poor supply of affordable housing in the parish (shared equity, discounted market sales or rent).
78. There's strong support locally for more affordable housing in the village and for the neighbourhood plan promoting this.
79. The NPPF sets out a policy approach to affordable housing, including the need to ensure at least 10% of new houses are affordable homes to buy. Policy on Rural Exception Sites¹⁸ for affordable housing is also covered in the NPPF and the local plan, with the local plan requiring such development to be of an appropriate size, adjacent the settlement and not detrimental to the local environment or residents. The local plan sets out that affordable housing is required for development of 5 or more dwellings in rural areas. This policy framework provides scope for some affordable housing to come forward. However, in practice there have been no recent applications for a Rural Exception Site.
80. There is no pressure to allocate a site for housing as part of the NP as the projected housing requirement (set by the Borough Council) is zero. However, there appears to be local support for including a small allocation within the plan, particularly for affordable housing, and in fact two 'affordable' units, one for rent and one for sale, are being provided in a current development of eleven units.
81. Three possible sites were identified by the steering group for a number of social housing units, along Peddars Way North, adjacent to former local authority housing built in 1939-40, along Holme Road between Top End Cottages and the former local

¹⁸ Exception Sites for affordable housing is usually on land where planning permission would not normally be granted.

authority housing built c1920, and between Docking Road and Burnham Road, behind existing houses on Docking Road and new houses on Burnham Road. Following consultation at the public consultation and in response to a questionnaire the site on Peddars Way North was favoured. A further site, further south on Peddars Way North, adjacent to a row of bungalows was also suggested.

82. After careful consideration the Parish Council expressed a preference for the site on Peddars Way North adjoining the former local authority housing, for that is the only site in the village where a connection to a main sewage system may be possible, as well as the other services available in the village. The owners of the site, who also own the other two sites, the Trustees of the le Strange Estate, had been consulted and are open to the sale of the land. Building on that site would not seriously obstruct the attractive view of the countryside to the east of Peddars Way North, whereas building on the site on Holme Road, would detract from the view across the fields to the Mill. The site between Docking Road and Burnham Road is adjacent to a former pond, on which, however, new houses have been built, and would require constructing a new road, and significantly extending the services.
83. It will make some affordable housing available for people on low incomes whose parents or families live in the village and also for people from surrounding villages in low-paid employment in the local tourist and service industries.
84. The site being allocated within the neighbourhood plan sits east of Peddars Way North adjacent to a number of existing residential dwellings which are predominantly semi-detached two storey properties with large front and back gardens.



Figure 9-RNP1- Allocation site map

85. Within the Ringstead Design Guidance and Codes (2022) this area falls within the Post World War I character area which might be considered for future development. The site itself occupies Grade 2 and 3 arable land and there is no priority habitats present according to the latest Natural England data.
86. The western boundary of the site, which is adjacent to the public footpath, is made up of a structure of hedgerows, where one could see over the top of this into the present field. Currently, there is an opening from the road to the preferred site, which gives access to the field, that could be improved as an access point for future development.



Figure 10: Image of the present private access used by farm vehicles.

87. Like most of Ringstead parish the site sits within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape designation and predominant key views which admire such beauty have been protected under key views Policy 9 and these sit outside of the site allocated for affordable housing. The view of the arable land at present is not considered to be of particular beauty. However, whilst the site is characterised by long views across open farmland the land gradually slopes upwards away from the road, which restricts views over the surrounding landscape. Development is therefore likely to result in only limited harm and minimal impact on important views or the wider landscape.

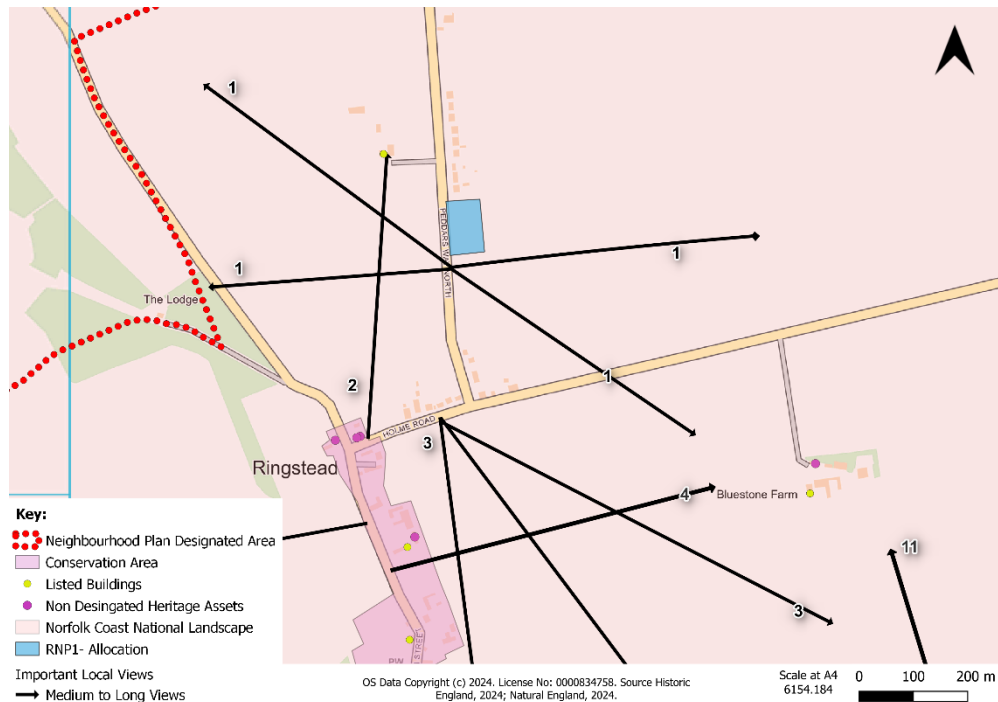


Figure 11: Map showing the different features within the parish close to the RNP1 Allocation

88. There are no nature conservation sites on this land though it does fall within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for Ringstead Downs SSSI. The proposed development would fall outside of that requiring further consultation with Natural England, which for residential development is 10 or more units, therefore no impacts are anticipated. Hunstanton Park Esker SSSI is also nearby but the site does not fall within the IRZ of this. There is little of ecological value on the site currently as it is in agricultural use.
89. At present there is an existing narrow footpath, west of the site, which runs the length of Peddars Way north just past the adjacent dwellings to the north and towards the inner village of Ringstead. This footpath intermittently links with other footways into the centre of the village where there is a limited range of local services including shop, pub, and village hall. However, the footpath is fragmented on part of Holme Road where one would need to walk on the road for a short period of time. It would be beneficial to get this improved. The footpath is part of the long-distance trails network – Peddars Way.
90. As shown in the picture below, to the west of the site and Peddars Way North, there is a Grade II Listed Building ‘Ringstead Mill’ which is in close proximity. However, the setting of this site is unlikely to be impacted through development on this site.



Figure 12: Picture of the existing footway along Peddars Way North. Source Google Images, Street View 2018 (however, rather unchanged)

91. Regarding townscape, the settlement already extends further than this site, which could be seen to represent infill between existing residential development. Since Ringstead is considered to be a Smaller Village and Hamlet in the Local Plan, the development boundary for Ringstead, shows the site to sit 165 metres north of the northern point of this boundary separated by one arable field (adapted image below).

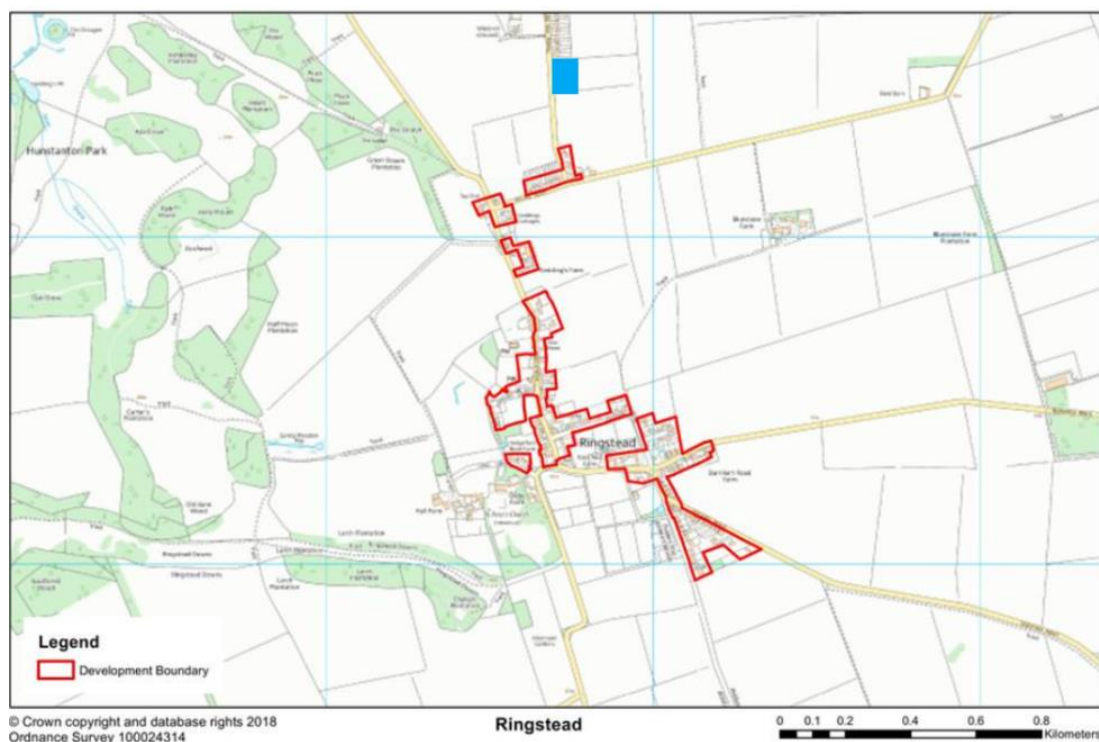


Figure 13: Ringstead Development Boundary in the Local Plan with BLUE example RNP1-Allocation (Adapted map source: Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, OS Copyright 2018.)

92. The site is approximately 15mins walk from the village centre, making sustainable travel a viable option for some. The footway is wide enough for a buggy or

wheelchair which is a positive consideration for meeting different people's needs. This part of the village has a speed limit of 30mph, though it is noted that this is a main route out of the village which turns to a 60mph further north of the Peddars Way North, and given its long and straight nature, it is possible that vehicles are travelling faster than 30mph. However, there have been no accidents nearby within the last 5 years.

93. A consultation exercise took place in October and November 2022 to get the community's views on the site options put forward. This included through a survey which ran for 5 weeks and also at a consultation event held in the village hall. Overall, there was 77% of support for allocating a site for affordable housing within the parish by 27 respondents. The scores were quite close with Site 1: Land off Peddars Way North, which is this allocated site, being the highest scorer.
94. In summary comments left for Peddars Way North in the consultation exercise expressed concerns raised particularly around this area's historic connection to a Roman road, the extensive views across the fields, being arable farmland and within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape. Other disadvantages mentioned here included there is no bus service or gas supply (neither of which exist in the village). Regarding advantages the site has a footpath, wide road, no dangerous junctions, and clear visibility both ways and there is access to a main sewer.
95. Other comments raised the need for adequate onsite parking, incorporating hedgerows and the highest environmental standards on new builds. Some people wished that such housing should not become second homes, but only available for local people at affordable rents. Concerns were expressed that local people would not be able to afford property within the village, and questions were raised about whether there is a need for affordable housing within the village and what type of housing would be proposed.
96. All concerns raised were supported by valid arguments. Importantly site selection will require finding suitable deliverable sites which can bring positive contributions to the area. A site has been put forward by a willing landowner who wishes to see solely affordable units provided on this site to help meet the needs of local people. Interest by registered social providers has also been expressed suggesting this allocation will most likely be deliverable through the development period.
97. Ringstead lies within the mitigation zones for The Wash & North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Roydon Common & Dersingham Bog SAC and The Wash Special Protection Area (SPA). The closest of these are The Wash & North Norfolk Coast SAC and The Wash SPA which lie approximately 2.3km to the west of Great Ringstead parish. Due to being in close proximity to these European Designated Sites a full Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) and Strategic

Environmental Assessment (SEA) was undertaken in 2023 and early 2024 by AECOM to assess the likely significant effects the site allocation or other policies would have on these habitat sites.

98. The conclusions stated that the Local Plan policies in force at the time were considered to provide protective policies (e.g. 2016 SADMP Policy DM 19 - Green Infrastructure/Habitats Monitoring and Mitigation) for Habitat sites. However, since a net new allocation is being made within the recreational pressure zone of influence of several Norfolk European sites it falls within the ambit of the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS).
99. GIRAMS as stated on the West Norfolk website is a strategic, cross-boundary approach to mitigate the in-combination effects of development on these designated areas and allows strategic mitigation to be delivered across Norfolk. The avoidance and mitigation measures will be funded via developer contributions as part of planning permissions given for new residential and other development. This cost is identified as £210.84 per dwelling and per 6 bedspace for tourist accommodation units or per 2.5 bedspace for student accommodation units and applies to the following applications: All new dwellings of 1+ units in current site allocations and windfall (excludes replacement dwellings and extensions):
- Houses in Multiple Occupancy e.g. hotels, guest houses and lodges
 - Student accommodation
 - Residential care homes and residential institutions (excludes nursing homes)
 - Residential caravan sites/mobile homes/park homes
 - Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people plots
 - Residential moorings, holiday caravans, touring pitches, and campsites'
100. The Ringstead HRA (2023) recommended that Policy 3: RNP1- Land off Peddars Way North makes specific reference to the need for net new residential dwellings within the Neighbourhood Area to contribute to the Norfolk GIRAMS tariff which can be found in Policy 3 clause j.

RNP POLICY 3: LAND OFF PEDDARS WAY NORTH

Land amounting to approximately 0.6ha, as shown in Figure 14, is allocated for affordable residential development of up to 6 dwellings for rent. Development will be subject to compliance with all the following:

- a) Provision of 100% affordable housing in line with Policy 1, 2 and 4 of the Neighbourhood Plan;

RNP POLICY 3: LAND OFF PEDDARS WAY NORTH

- b) Demonstration that the development proposals reflect local housing need identified in the Housing Need Assessment (2022) or submission of an up-to-date housing needs survey to the satisfaction of the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, in relation to the need of local residents;
- c) Peddars Way North must be widened to match the road and footway dimensions to the north of the site allocation;
- d) Demonstration of suitable on-site car parking in accordance with Policy 14 and preferably to the side of properties. Visitor car parking should be provided onsite;
- e) Development must have regard to Policy 5 and specifically Character Area 2- Post WW1 Development when complying with the relevant design codes;
- f) New boundary treatments should consist of soft boundaries such as hedgerows, with a management plan, for how these will be maintained;
- g) Submission of details showing how sustainable drainage measures will integrate with the design of the development and how drainage will contribute to the amenity and biodiversity of the development. A suitable plan for the future management and maintenance of the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) should be included with the submission;
- h) Submission of a Heritage Statement that establishes that development would not adversely impact the setting of the adjacent Grade II Listed Ringstead Mill;
- i) Submission of an Archaeological Field Evaluation based on the potential for findings in relation to archaeological findings and being adjacent to an ancient trackway which should be used to inform the planning application¹⁹;
- j) Any net new residential dwellings on this site must contribute to the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS) tariff;
- k) Improvements to the footway along Peddars Way North should be delivered as part of the development and, subject to meeting the requirements for planning obligations and being viable, to ensure a continuous link is provided along Holme Road to the top of High Street.

¹⁹ It is recommended that the applicant engages with the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (HES) in their application about expected requirements such as desk based or trial trenching.

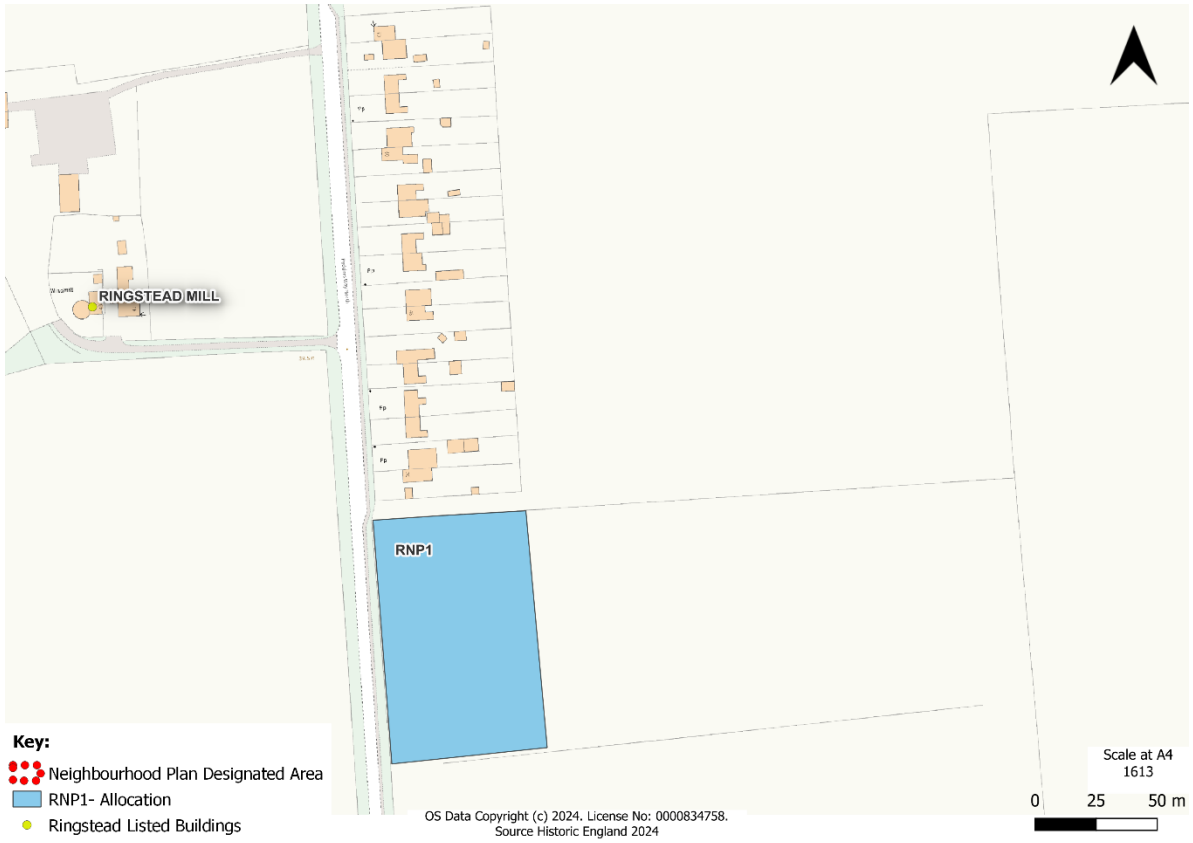


Figure 14- RNP1 Site Allocation

Principal Residence Housing

101. As mentioned earlier, the parish has a declining population which may be linked to limited housing development and a trend for smaller household units. It may also indicate a growing number of second homes. The prevalence and impact of second and holiday homes in Ringstead is explored in some detail in the supplementary evidence that accompanies this Neighbourhood Plan.

Overall, the 2011 census data shows that the percentage of households with no usual residents in the plan area is markedly greater than across the borough or county as a whole. A third of homes were not occupied at the time of the 2011 Census, which likely indicates that they are second homes or holiday lets. This is high, particularly considering Ringstead is a small community. Figure 15 shows that over the years from 2008 to 2023 around 25% of homes in the community have been classed as second homes under the Borough Council Tax Reports.

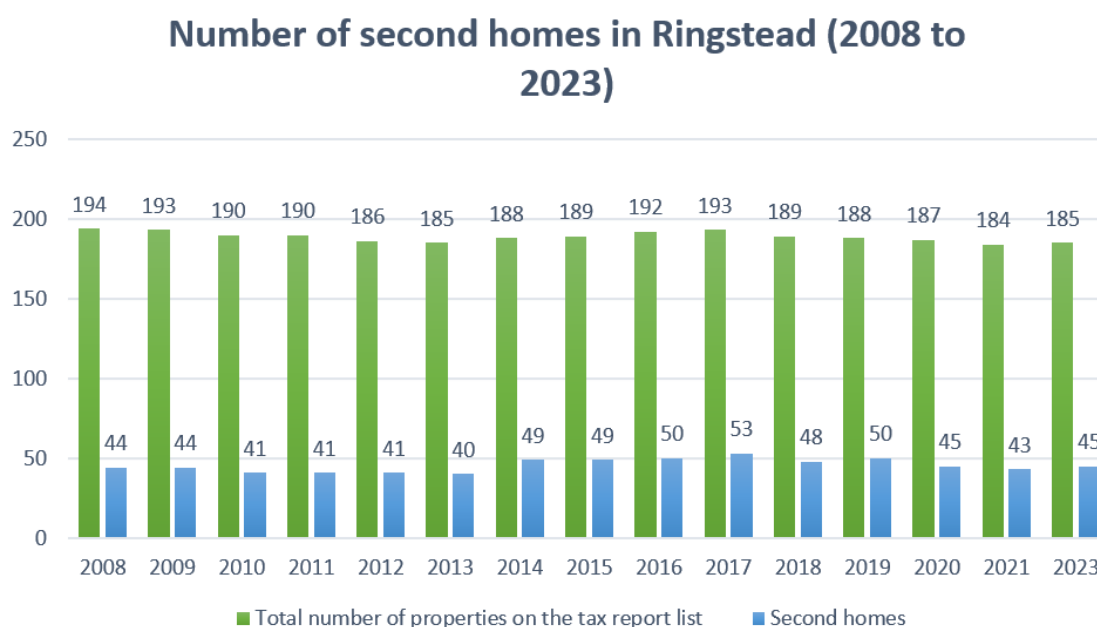


Figure 15-Number of second homes in Ringstead between 2008 and 2023 (BCK WLN, 2023 Council Tax data)

102. The Census 2021 data does not indicate at a parish level currently the latest figures on no usual residents in Ringstead. However, the percentage of second homes was investigated in 2022 and 2024 to see how many properties within Ringstead were classed as second homes according to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk council tax records. Second homes are those for personal use or only available for let for fewer than 140 days a year. Within the 2022 council tax report alone this was showing that 43 dwellings within the parish were classified as second homes (24% of total domestic dwellings). In the 2024

council tax report the number of second homes rose to 45 dwellings (see further detail in the evidence base).

103. As well as this from April 2020 the Borough Council calculated the properties in the national non-domestic rates list (business) with a description of holiday homes (self-catering). These are properties available to commercially let for 140 days or more a year and actually let for more than 70 days. When searching the GOV Valuation Office Agency (VOA) business rates website under Ringstead's relevant postcodes²⁰ the search showed that there are currently 26 self-catering properties in Ringstead out of 1669 self-catering properties in the district (January 2024).

104. This then accounts to a total of 71 residential properties out of 211 properties in the parish being considered as second homes or holiday homes which makes up 33.6% of the parish²¹. Having such a large proportion of housing stock in the parish being for second homes or holiday rental can also have an adverse effect on affordability for local people. The HNA (2022) also investigated this issue and looked at the number of property holiday lets available for a week's rental in the holiday season (July- September 2022) on the established site Airbnb²². At this time there were 19 entire property lets available for weekly lettings in this time period. There is the caveat with this finding that not all holiday lets will be listed on this site, and that some high demand properties may already be fully booked for summer 2022 and therefore not listed. It was then determined the average letting price, which could then be compared to the average rental price of private rented properties in Ringstead. This process is outlined below:

- Average nightly cost of Ringstead holiday let (July/August/September 2022) from Airbnb properties = £203.11
- Average weekly cost of above = £203.11 * 7 = £1,421.74
- Average monthly cost of above = £1421.74 * 4 = £5,686.95
- Average monthly cost of private rented dwelling in the NA17 = £736.11

105. These calculations show that if a holiday let was rented back-to-back, as it could be in the summer months, the income (exclusive of any related costs) associated with the holiday let would be 672.6% greater than associated with longer term private rental. This may explain the dominance of holiday lets in the parish and the impact on the private rental sector, which as of 2021 makes up only 4.3% of Ringstead housing tenure, when it was 18.5% in 2011. Private rent also fell by 16.7% between 2001 and 2011, compared to increases of 96.2% across King's Lynn & West Norfolk

²⁰ Postcodes Searched PE36 5LA, 5LB, 5LE, 5JU, 5JX, 5JS

²¹ Percentage is done by dividing 71 properties by 211 residential properties as shown in the council tax report plus the business rates list and x 100. $71/211 \times 100 = 33.6\%$

²² Search was done on Airbnb 10/01/2022.

and of 82.4% nationally showing the decreasing interest for property to privately rent to locals. Whilst it is noted that second homes and holiday rental contribute considerably to the local economy, housing for local people which is affordable and accessible is also equally important. Particularly providing housing for individuals who may be on lower wages providing services to support housing rentals and second homes including cleaning, gardening, maintenance, and hospitality.

106. A search on Air bnb was undertaken again in January 2024 showing 27 listings (excluding the Gin Trap public house). The prices were listed between £45 to £382 a night. The average nightly cost in Ringstead for a holiday let in January 2024 is £177.50 a night. However, when doing this search again for July 2024 the cost goes up to an average of £255 a night.
107. Almost two-thirds of residents responding to a consultation survey feel that the level of second homes / holiday homes in the village is a problem. The socio-economic effects of second homes are being felt by the local community. The impact of this is most felt in relation to the level of community spirit, with fewer people knowing or supporting each other and being involved in village life. Some residents report feeling isolated as they have few permanent neighbours, especially in winter months. There are also perceived impacts on the availability of housing for local people with the second home market driving up house prices, both for purchase and rental, putting it well beyond reach for many people, especially younger people hoping to get onto the housing ladder. This threatens the long-term viability and vitality of the village as a sustainable mixed community.
108. It must be noted some respondents did leave positive comments including that second homeowners or holiday makers do use the village services including the pub, shop, and Wards Nursery. They can also create local jobs for local people including cleaners, painters & decorators, gardeners, and various jobs in hospitality, etc.
109. The NPPF doesn't make any allowance for the impact of second homes or holiday homes in a local authority's housing target. Whilst every effort is made to reduce the number of empty properties there are in the community and bring them back into use, no such device exists for second homes.
110. 61% of respondents would support the Neighbourhood Plan having a policy that requires new-built homes to be occupied by people who live permanently in the village (Figure 16). Such a policy intervention is considered necessary to manage the number of new dwellings which are built as, or become, second homes, particularly bearing in mind the sensitive local environment and the need to provide homes for local people. The plan supports the development of new housing that will be permanently occupied, defined in the plan as Principal Residence housing. The

effect of this policy intervention is to support an increase in the number of year-round residents in the village, thus creating a more sustainable community.

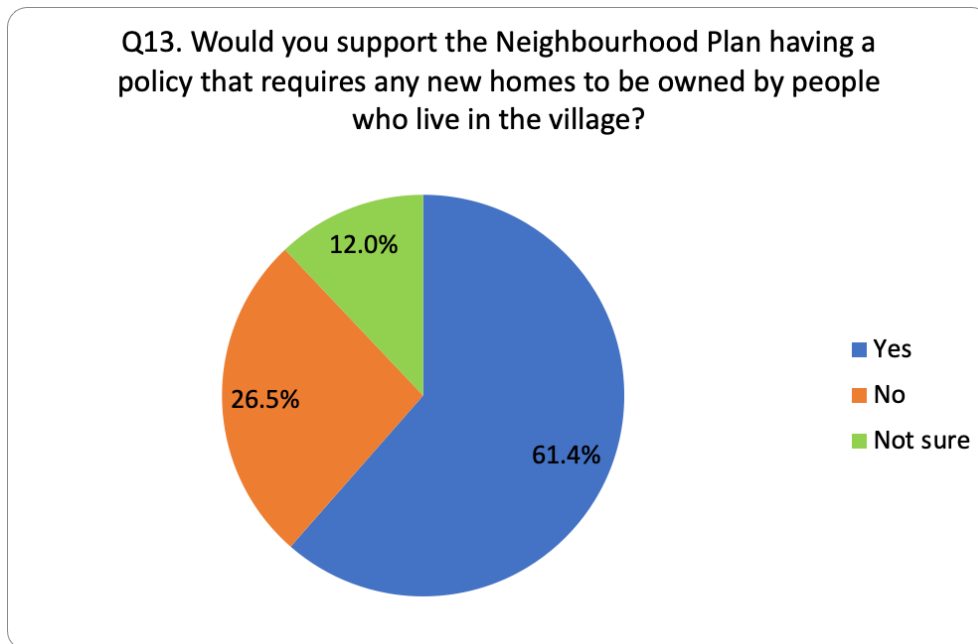


Figure 16- Q13 of the Consultation Survey in November 2021

- 111. Principal Residence housing is that which is occupied as the sole or main home of the occupants. The condition or obligation on new open market homes will require that they are occupied only as the primary (principal) residence of those persons entitled to occupy them.
- 112. It will be important to monitor and review the outcomes of this Policy over the early years of the Neighbourhood Plan. If it is considered that this is having a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of Ringstead, then there may be an early review of the Plan and Policy 4 in particular.
- 113. Occupiers of homes with a Principal Residence condition or obligation will be required to keep proof that they are satisfying the requirements as set out in this policy and will be obliged to provide this proof if/when the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk requests it. Registration on the local Register of Electors will not alone be sufficient for this purpose and the Parish Council will co-operate with the Borough Council to monitor compliance with the restriction and in gathering and assessing evidence of any breach that may lead to enforcement action.
- 114. Proof for Principal Residence is not required at planning application stage. However, where this is requested, suitable evidence includes but is not limited to: copies of drivers licence (DVLA), utility bills, education, healthcare, electoral register

and council tax (HMRC) for all occupiers of the house for example a married couple or civil partners²³.

RNP POLICY 4: PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE HOUSING

Proposals for all new market housing, including new single dwellings and conversions, will only be supported where first and future occupation is restricted in perpetuity to ensure that each new dwelling is occupied only as a Principal Residence. Proposals for new market dwellings will be supported when it can be demonstrated that a planning condition and supporting Section 106 Legal agreement will be imposed to guarantee that such dwellings will be the occupants sole or main residence. This Section 106 Agreement will appear on the Register of Local Land Charges.

Design

115. Design is another key area where the Neighbourhood Plan can have influence.

Ringstead is a very attractive village, and any new housing will need to respect its character. There is a Conservation Area and effort should be made to retain the character and setting of this, ensuring it is not diluted through inappropriate new development and large extensions to small properties or replacement of small bungalows by large houses which occupy most of a small plot. The wider area is largely undeveloped and tranquil in its nature. Any future development should respond to the existing settlement pattern.

116. The design of any new homes is considered important to the community. Local people feel that emphasis should be on ensuring new development does not harm the character of the village. There is strong support for the use of traditional building materials in new development as shown in Figure 17 which is from Q20 of the November 2021 consultation survey.

²³ Must comply with Section 222 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 Source: [Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/23/section/222)

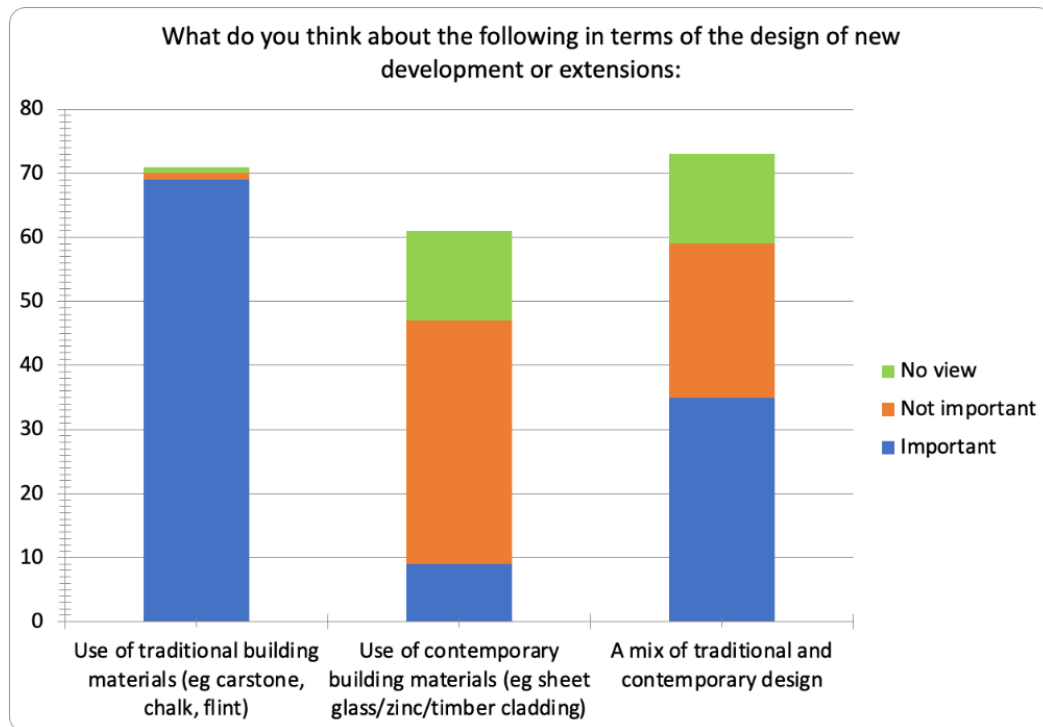


Figure 17- Q20 of the Consultation Survey (November 2021)

117. The Government is raising the importance of good design with the development of national design guides, and encourages neighbourhood plans to have design policies. NPPF Chapter 12 requires plans to have design policies that have community support and pick up the defining characteristics and historic character of the area, but also encourages innovative design with high levels of sustainability. Innovative design with high levels of sustainability is supported and trees are seen as an important part of design, as is integrated biodiversity net gains. There is strong support for good design and beautiful homes, and the requirement is for poor design to be refused. Design covers not just appearance but how a place functions.

118. As set out in the National Design Guide (2021)²⁴ a well-designed place comes through making the right choices at all levels including layout, form and scale of buildings, appearance, landscape, and materials. A number of other characteristics include the climate, character, and community. The ten characteristics set out in the National Design Guide reflect the importance of a well-designed place as set out in Figure 18.

²⁴ [National design guide.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97122/national-design-guide.pdf)

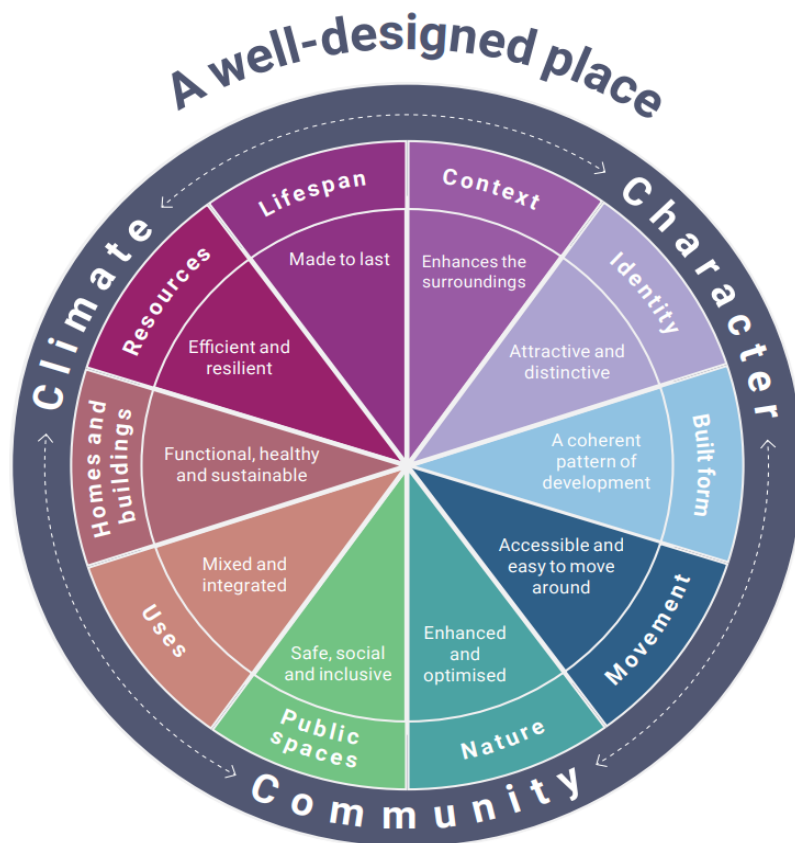


Figure 18-The Ten Characteristics of a Well-designed Place (National Design Guide, 2021)

119. The Local Plan requires all new development to be of high-quality design. It requires proposals to demonstrate factors such as the ability to protect and enhance the historic environment, respond to the context and character of the environment ensuring the scale, density, layout, and access will enhance the quality of the environment and to also enhance community wellbeing etc. It also details the promotion of opportunities to achieve high standards of sustainable design and efficiency, flood risk, climate change and renewable energy. Regarding efficiency measures, designs are encouraged to exceed the present technical standards set by Building Regulations. There is opportunity for Local Planning Authorities such as the Borough Council to set energy performance technical standards for new homes that exceed those required by Building Regulations. Neighbourhood Plans cannot do this, although they can include more general policies, such as requiring a Sustainability Statement as part of any planning application, setting out how new development will meet a high level of sustainable design and construction and optimising energy efficiency.

120. The Local Plan contains a suite of sustainable development criteria to be met by new development, such as construction techniques to improve energy efficiency and good access by walking and cycling. The intention is to promote behavioural change in applicants and thereby encourage greater thought in the design of future

developments, whilst at the same time, recognising how their proposal may meet high levels of sustainable design and construction.

121. There is therefore already a considerable amount in existing policy on general approaches to design, but the Neighbourhood Plan could usefully have a more specific policy based on specific Design Guides for the parish and that is supported by the community.
122. AECOM was commissioned to provide high level design support to the Parish Council. This focused on developing design guidelines and codes which could be used to inform the design of future planning applications and developments in Ringstead. This included a high-level assessment of the neighbourhood area, site visit and meeting with representatives of the community and preparation of a bespoke design guide and codes. Policy 5 on design is based on this work and sets clear expectations on design.
123. In terms of context, the area is characterised by rolling open farmland with isolated farmsteads and dispersed deciduous woodland shelterbelts, with the majority of the parish falling within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape. Regarding the built character much of this consists of low density two storey detached dwellings with historic dwellings incorporating local material including carrstone, clunch and flint.
124. Figure 22 is an extract from the Ringstead Design Guidelines and Codes (AECOM, 2022) and shows the three distinct character areas of the parish, namely, the Conservation Area, Post WW1 Development, and the Countryside. These have been summarised below.

CA1- Conservation Area

125. This area forms the historic core of the village and is situated geographically in the west of the parish. The pattern of development is a compact linear settlement centred along the High Street. The heights of most buildings are 2 storeys with predominantly hipped and open gable pitch rooflines. Materials of buildings used in the area are red brick, carrstone and clunch with, brick galleting, with brick dressings, flint, gault brick, red pantiles, black glazed pantiles. The properties consist of a range of plot sizes and arrangements with boundary treatments including red brick, carrstone, or flint walls or hedges and picket fencing. On the High Street residential development either fronts onto the road or lies at right angles to it.
126. Properties fronting the High Street have narrow setbacks, and, in places are only separated from the road by a footpath. These houses have narrow back gardens.

127. Some properties at right angles to the road have plot sizes which can accommodate front and back gardens.
128. Some properties along the High Street are laid out in a loose courtyard form. Most properties along Foundry Lane front onto the roadway and have balanced ratios of front and back garden sizes. The boundary treatments of development along this lane are separated by low red brick walls, picket fencing, hedges, and stone walls.
129. This character area is primarily residential and the majority of properties within this character area date back to the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This character area also contains a number of community and retail uses including The Village Store, The Gin Trap Inn, St Andrew's Church, Ward's Nurseries, the Playing Field, and the former school.



Figure 19- Example pictures from CA1 (AECOM, 2022)

CA2- Post WW1 Development

130. This area consists of four separate linear residential developments centred along roads leading into CA1, Docking Road, Peddars Way North, Holme Road, and Burnham Road. The historic cores on which these post-World War 1 developments lead are separated from these 'Top End' and Lower End's of the village by fields and are inset into the countryside. More recent development (constructed in the 1990s and 2000s) are situated along Burnham Road and Hall Farm Lane. Whilst most development within the character area originates from post WW1, Ringstead Mill is a Grade II listed early 19th century tower mill situated in CA2 in the north of the parish. The mill was converted to domestic use in 1927.
131. In this character area, detached and semi-detached houses are the main building typologies, and the rooflines are 2 storey with a number of one storey bungalows in Docking Road and Peddars Way North and South. Materials used in this area are

red brick, clay tiles, red pantiles, white rendering. The properties tend to have various sizes of front and back gardens. The boundary treatments are made up of a mix of low wooden fencing, hedges, shrubs, and low red brick borders.

- 132. Docking Road- mainly short setbacks and well-proportioned back gardens
- 133. Peddars Way South- smaller back and front gardens to accommodate a driveway.
- 134. Peddars Way North and Holme Road- have long narrow plots which accommodate short driveways, and large back gardens.



Figure 20- Example pictures from CA2 (AECOM, 2022)

CA3- Countryside

- 135. This is the largest character area within the parish and includes land outside Ringstead village and the clusters of post-World War One developments. Land within this character area is typically characterised as rolling open farmland which includes large arable fields interspersed with hedgerows and shelterbelts.
- 136. Typical typologies found in CA3 include isolated farmsteads and agricultural buildings on large plots inset within open arable fields. They have dispersed layouts and are usually 1 to 2 storey with pitched roofs. The materials used in CA3 Red brick, carrstone, red pantile. Some farm buildings have slate or corrugated iron roofs. Regarding boundary treatments, the farmsteads are separated from the surrounding countryside by dense hedgerows and tree lines, which help to soften barriers, retain countryside views, and maintain the rural setting.
- 137. There is minimal development within CA3, and the public realm is confined to the Public Rights of Way network, which provides onward links into the Norfolk Coast National Landscape and surrounding countryside.



Figure 21- Example pictures of CA3 (AECOM, 2022)

138. The Ringstead Design Guidance and Codes 2022 has further detail on the characteristics of each area. These design codes can be a valuable tool for securing context-driven, high-quality development in Ringstead, especially on potential sites that might come forward in the future. They will provide more certainty to both developers and the community in securing developments that are designed to meet the aspirations of the community.



Figure 22: Character Areas in Ringstead (Source AECOM 202)

RNP POLICY 5: DESIGN

All development, including extensions and conversions, will be expected to be consistent with the Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidance and Codes (2022) in general, and specifically as they apply to the following distinct character areas:

- CA1- Conservation Area
- CA2- Post WW1 Development
- CA3- Countryside

The Design Codes and the Checklist set out in Appendix B will be used to help assess all planning applications to determine their acceptability. The following design considerations from the Design Codes are especially important to the area:

- a) Density in new residential developments should take into consideration the low-to medium density ranges of the relevant character area as set out in The Ringstead Design Codes (BF02). A density beyond that range will not generally be acceptable.
- b) New development must have due regard to the heights and rooflines of other buildings in the area and the generally low profile of buildings. Typically, 1 to 2 storey buildings with pitched or hipped roofs depending on the character area.
- c) Materials and colours should respect the local vernacular and adjacent built environment as set out in each character area (Examples given in BF09).
- d) Any new development should respect the linear settlement pattern and building layouts present in the relevant character areas (CA1 and CA2).
- e) Buildings should be designed to front onto streets and ensure that streets or public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from adjacent buildings.
- f) New or existing development proposing boundary treatments are encouraged to use features set out in the relevant character area and built from local materials such as hedgerows, trees, low red brick, or stone walls.
- g) Provide front and back gardens in new developments which respect the ratio of garden space to built form within the overall plot as set out in the relevant character area under Design Code BF-03. Wherever possible car parking spaces should not be located to the front of dwellings.
- h) Protect, retain, and enhance existing landscape features including the Local Green Spaces designated in Policy 8 to preserve the natural character of the village.
- i) New developments should integrate new native trees and achieve biodiversity net gain.
- j) Wherever possible proposals should improve active travel by linking new pedestrian and cycleways to the existing Public Rights of Way.

RNP POLICY 5: DESIGN

- k) The redevelopment of agricultural/ farm buildings should pay particular attention to Design Code BF07 within their application.
- l) New developments should strive for a high-quality energy efficient design with regard to Design Codes EE01-05.
- m) New development proposals within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape designation should also take account of the Norfolk Coast National Landscape Integrated Landscape Guidance Assessments (2021) when submitting an application²⁵
- n) Any replacement dwellings that result in an increase in the height or scale of the original dwelling must be appropriate to their location with respect to the character and height of surrounding buildings and should not have a significant detrimental impact on the surrounding landscape. This includes the ratio of plot size to dwelling.

Extensions, Annexes and Outbuildings (including Cart lodges and Garages)

139. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure people have the flexibility to extend and improve their property whilst limiting the creation of excessively large houses which are damaging the balance of Ringstead's housing stock as established in the HNA (2022).
140. It is recognised that individuals in moving through their life stages may have different needs and may have to extend or change the use of their property for varying reasons including working from home, and this is supported. The emphasis on home working and a shift in how one balances one's home and work life is something many of us experienced through the Covid-19 pandemic.
141. Residential annexes should be designed so that the dwelling unit as a whole provides genuine flexible accommodation that can be adapted and re-adapted to meet the changing needs of an extended family over time. It is essential that annex accommodation is directly connected by an internal link or otherwise have a close spatial relationship with shared facilities and space.

²⁵ Norfolk Coast AONB Integrated Landscape Guidance- Section 1 (2021): [Integrated-landscape-character-intro-section-1.pdf \(norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk\)](https://www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk/integrated-landscape-character-intro-section-1.pdf)

²¹ Norfolk Coast AONB Integrated Landscape Guidance- Section 2 (2021): [Integrated-landscape-character-intro-section-2.pdf \(norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk\)](https://www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk/integrated-landscape-character-intro-section-2.pdf)

²¹ Norfolk Coast AONB Integrated Landscape Guidance- Section 3 (2021): [Integrated-landscape-character-intro-section-3.pdf \(norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk\)](https://www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk/integrated-landscape-character-intro-section-3.pdf)

142. Over recent years there have been a number of planning applications for extensions some of which have been substantial, nearly filling a plot, and cart lodges which have introduced lofts and one of which has been turned into a holiday let. This trend locally for annexes to be let or used separately from the main dwelling can create substandard dwellings with inadequate standards of access, parking, amenity, and space resulting in a land use which is out of character with the settlement. Whilst we recognise that some works, such as small extensions, can be completed under permitted development rights we wish to have more of a say on the approach and design of applications which require planning permission in the village.



F.78

Figure 78: A positive example of a side extension on High Street

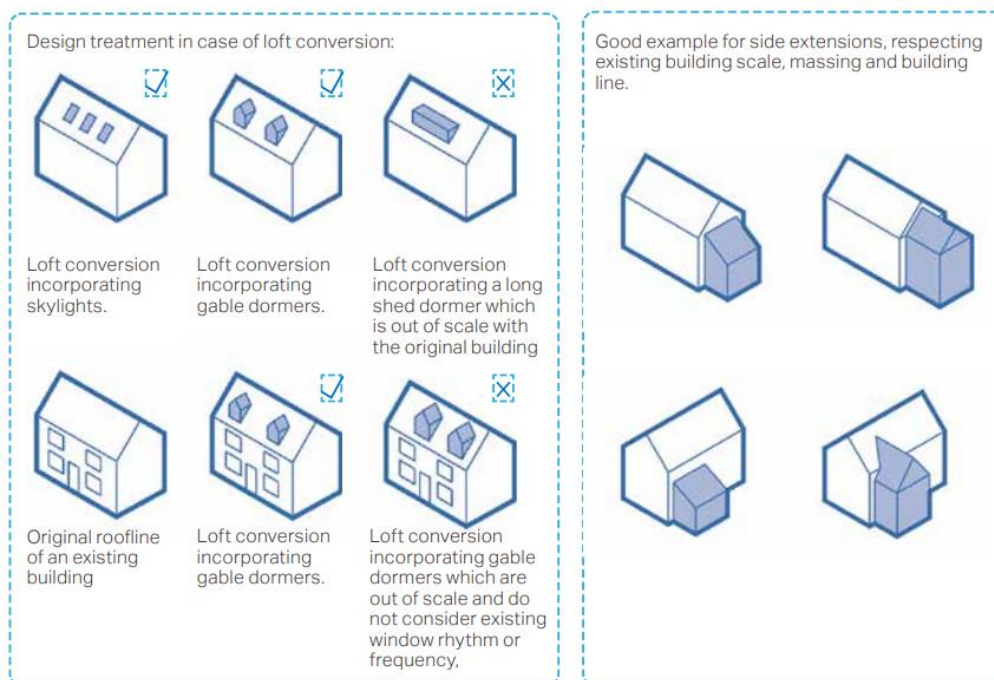


Figure 23- Examples of different extensions and a positive example of a side extension in the Design Guide Document (2022)

RNP POLICY 6: EXTENSIONS, ANNEXES AND OUTBUILDINGS (CARTLODGES AND GARAGES)

Development proposals for extensions to existing dwellings and the provision of annexes and outbuildings, including cart lodges and garages, will be supported provided that they are appropriate to their location.

Extensions & Conversions

Proposals should demonstrate regard for the design guidance set out under BF07-Extensions and Conversions of the Design Codes and Guidance Document (2022).

Annexes and Outbuildings

Proposals for residential annexes and outbuildings should be designed so that they can be used as part of the main dwelling.

Proposals for outbuildings should show that they are required for purposes that are incidental to the use of the host dwelling and its occupants.

New development, including annexes and outbuildings, must remain in the same ownership and as part of the same planning unit as the host dwelling and must share its access, parking, and garden. Any subdivision of the site or use of any annexe or outbuilding as an independent dwelling would require permission in its own right.

Section 4: Natural Environment

Biodiversity

143. The parish almost entirely falls within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape which was formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. On Wednesday 22 November 2023 all designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in England and Wales became known as National Landscapes²⁶. This change came about after the government asked for an independent review into whether the protections for National Parks and National Landscapes were still fit for purpose. Julian Glover and an expert team led on a landscape review across England and summarised in their final findings that National Landscapes should be strengthened with government form, increased funding, and a greater voice on development. It was the Glover report which suggested the title to be replaced to National Landscapes²⁷.
144. There are 34 National Landscapes in England where areas of land are protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to conserve and enhance their natural beauty. Designation of these sites must meet natural beauty criterion comprising a combination of factors including landscape and scenic quality, tranquillity, and natural heritage features. As stated in the NPPF great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty within National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection similar to National Parks in relation to these issues. National and local policy is also clear that major development should be refused within National Landscapes. The Norfolk Coast Management Plan 2019-2024 sets out the visions, objectives and policies needed to ensure all is being done to keep this National Landscape thriving sustainably whilst addressing key issues. This plan highlights issues which are apparent within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape such as trying to sustain communities whereby local businesses and people can interact, live, and work within this landscape. ²⁸.
145. The Norfolk Coast National Landscape was designated in 1968 and includes the greater part of the remaining unspoiled coastal areas between the Wash and Great Yarmouth. The Norfolk Coast landscape displays a striking diversity of scenery, embracing a rich mix of coastal features and contrasting inland agricultural landscapes, of which are influenced by the proximity of the sea. Although a

²⁶ [National Landscapes - Home \(national-landscapes.org.uk\)](https://national-landscapes.org.uk)

²⁷ [Landscapes review: final report - summary of findings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/landscapes-review-final-report-summary-of-findings.pdf)

²⁸ The Norfolk Coast National Landscape Management Plan (2019-2024). Source: [Norfolk Coast area of outstanding natural beauty](#)

landscape designation, natural beauty includes wildlife and historic and cultural heritage as well as scenery, and all of these are closely linked.



Figure 24- View north of Holme Road within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape with the Grade II Listed Tower Mill in the background

146. As shown within Figure 26, there are a number of wildlife designations and habitat which fall within or adjacent to the parish. Regarding statutory designations, the Neighbourhood Plan area does not encompass any of these wildlife designations, however adjacent to the parish to the west lies Hunstanton Park Esker a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ringstead Downs SSSI. There are also a number of non-statutory designations within and adjacent to the parish. In Ringstead itself there is one County Wildlife Site called the Ringstead Common, this is a 7.2ha site of unimproved grassland surrounded by scrub which lies to the east of the parish. This contains some species-rich grassland, especially in the northern half. This site itself is considered important to the village for wildlife purposes so has also been designated as a Local Green Space under Policy 8.



Figure 25- Picture of Ringstead Common (CWS)

147. Other County Wildlife Sites which are adjacent to the parish lie to the west, these are Catlane Wood, South Hill Wood, Ada Grove, and Whin Covert. There are also two Roadside Nature Reserves within the area including RNR 35 on Docking Road and RNR 76 on Peddars Way South.

148. Natural England identifies that there are or is potential for important habitat networks and parts of the parish contain Habitats of Principle Importance for biodiversity conservation. These include those which are most threatened, in greatest decline or where the UK holds a significant proportion of the world's total population. The predominant type of priority habitat is 'no main habitat, but additional habitats are present'. There are also small patches of deciduous woodland, good quality semi-improved grassland and lowland calcareous grassland.

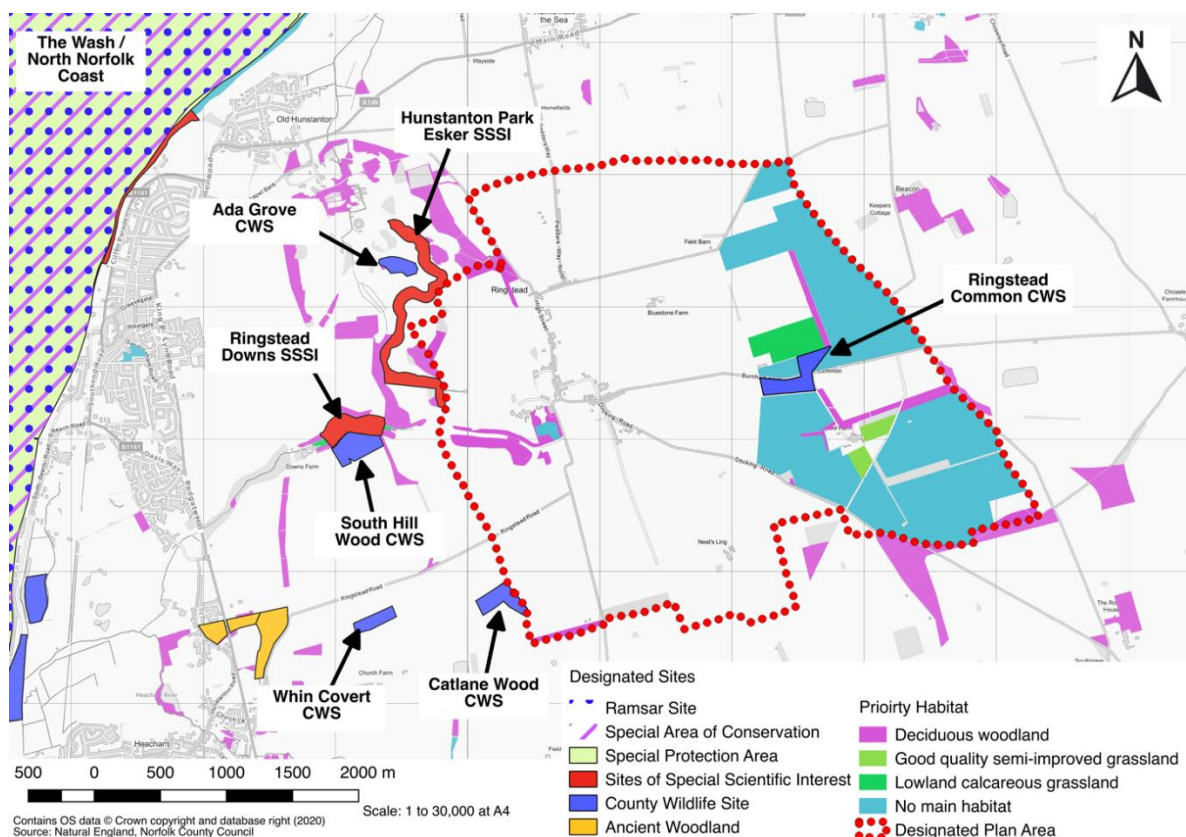


Figure 26- Wildlife Designations and Habitat within or adjacent to Ringstead

149. The neighbourhood area contains Ringstead Downs; although, the part of the Downs which holds the statutory designation of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is not within the parish itself. Nonetheless, the whole area of the Downs is important for wildlife, not just that which has a designation. It is a tree-lined valley representing a geological feature surviving from the last Ice Age leading down to the Wash. Ringstead Downs is one of the largest remaining unimproved chalk grassland areas in the East of England. With a steep sided valley supporting a range of local wildlife, species including declining birds' species such as the

yellowhammer, whitethroat, and linnet. The disused chalk quarry (from which many of the older buildings in the village were built) provides an attractive woodland walk. The Downs provide an attractive permissive walking route from Ringstead to Hunstanton. The part of the Downs which is not designated a SSSI is protected as a Local Green Space under Policy 8.



Figure 27- Pictures within Ringstead Downs

150. Mature trees and hedgerows make a vitally important contribution to the character of Ringstead. This is both within the settlement itself, as noted by the Conservation Area Character Statement²⁹, and within the wider parish where there are strips of woodland which break up the long expansive views across fields, which are noted within the Landscape Character Assessment³⁰.
151. Much of the parish beyond the settlement is arable farmland, which also has environmental and wildlife benefits. Courtyard Farm, in the eastern half of the parish, aims to create an environment where native wildlife can thrive, and public access is encouraged. For wildlife this means building up a healthy, living soil to benefit insects and native plants which, in turn, attracts birds and mammals. The farm completed converting to organic practices in 2000 and meets the highest Soil Association organic standards.
152. National policy is increasingly focused on protecting and enhancing the natural environment, and the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan³¹ is underpinned by the commitment to make ours 'the first generation to leave the natural environment in a better state than we found it'.

²⁹ https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1927/ringstead_conservation_area_leafletpdf.pdf

³⁰ BKLWN Landscape Character Assessment, Final Report March 2007, Chris Blandford Associates

³¹ A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment : https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

153. Legislation and the NPPF afford considerable support for conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including protecting and enhancing key landscapes and areas of value in terms of biodiversity. This also includes the need for biodiversity net gains in developments. Methods of analysing biodiversity net gain include the mapping of ecological assets and networks, including for enhancement or creation. The NPPF also includes policies for protecting existing green open spaces (e.g. Local Green Spaces) and creation of new ones.
154. The Environment Act (2021)²⁸ Schedule 14 sets the requirement for mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG) of at least 10% on development proposals which should be maintained for a period of at least 30 years. The concept seeks measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Proposals must 'leave biodiversity in a better state than before'. There are three ways to deliver BNG, onsite within the red line, off-site locally with biodiversity enhanced in conjunction with nearby landowners, or through statutory credits. The requirement for BNG is in addition to following the usual mitigation hierarchy to avoid, mitigate or compensate for biodiversity losses.
155. Local plan policies require that development avoids, mitigates, or compensates for any adverse impacts on biodiversity. The Local Plan also provides a level of protection for County Wildlife Sites and priority habitat and ensuring an integrated network of green infrastructure.
156. Consultation activity identified that there is strong support for protecting and improving wildlife habitat and many special green spaces were put forward for potential Local Green Space designation, primarily for ecological reasons. There is also strong support for maintaining green open spaces within the village and dark skies are valued by many residents, with 73% feeling it is important to minimize light pollution in the parish (this is reflected in Policy 8).
157. Policy 7 on Biodiversity seeks to ensure that the special importance of the area for wildlife is protected and enhanced through development. It also ensures a focus on improvements that will add value locally, for example making use of flora and fauna of local provenance.
158. There is a focus in Policy 7 on safeguarding trees and hedges. This is of particular importance within Ringstead as mature trees and hedgerows contribute towards the historic character of the parish.

RNP POLICY 7: BIODIVERSITY

To be supported development proposals must demonstrate how they seek to safeguard, retain, and where possible enhance, County Wildlife Sites, Priority Habitats, and other important wildlife and high biodiversity habitats, including Roadside Nature Reserves. Proposals for buffer zones providing ecological benefits around sensitive sites will be supported.

Biodiversity Net Gain

All development proposals will need to demonstrate at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity, which should be achieved in the following ways unless alternative methods are shown to be necessary:

- a) In consultation with the local planning authority, use of an agreed biodiversity metric and biodiversity net gain plan;
- b) Habitat secured for at least 30 years via planning obligations or conservation covenants;
- c) Delivery of biodiversity net gain on site wherever possible and if it can be demonstrated that this is not feasible then delivery elsewhere within the parish boundary³²;
- d) Contribute towards enhancing, restoring or maintaining existing green infrastructure such as county wildlife sites, Priority Habitats and other important wildlife and high biodiversity habitats, and strengthening green corridors to link habitats and improve connectivity for wildlife;
- e) Wherever possible extending priority habitats, to reduce the loss of these valued habitats through fragmentation;
- f) Through effective layout and design, development should recognise the location of existing green infrastructure and support appropriate uses and functions e.g. through incorporation of invertebrate, swift or bat boxes into the design of built infrastructure; and
- g) Use of native British species of flora and fauna of local provenance.

Trees and Hedgerows

Proposals that will affect trees or hedgerow must be accompanied by a survey which establishes the health and age of affected trees and/or hedgerow, and, and appropriate management plan. Where the incorporation of existing trees and

³² Note: off-site BNG can only be delivered on the applicants and /or developers owned land, and if there is none available then the contribution will have to go towards the habitats general pot and will be re-allocated automatically to the necessary sites.

RNP POLICY 7: BIODIVERSITY

hedgerows in the development design or translocation is not feasible and only as a last resort, any loss of trees or hedgerow must be compensated for by adequate replacement provision of greater value than the tree or hedgerow lost. Replacement species must be native British species of local provenance.

RNP COMMUNITY ACTION 1: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN CREDITS

The Parish Council will investigate and work proactively with relevant stakeholders and landowners of Ringstead Common (County Wildlife Site) and the Chalk Pit/Ringstead Downs to see if there could be a focus for biodiversity net gain credits used on these local sites or any other ones put forward.

Local Green Space

159. The NPPF sets out that specific areas of land that are demonstrably special to the local community may be protected against development through designation as Local Green Space. These are often found within the built-up area and contribute to the character of a settlement. They can vary in size, shape, location, ownership, and use.
160. The designation should only be used where:
- The green space is reasonably close to the community it serves;
 - The green space is demonstrably special to the community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife;
 - The green space concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
161. A robust process has been followed to determine which green spaces within Ringstead should be designated:
- Initial ideas were suggested by residents as part of consultation activities in 2021, with residents also asked to provide reasons as to why their ideas were special. Ideas were also explored by the Steering Group itself and consultation was considered on some of these ideas again in November 2022 to get the views of the public. This included adding Ringstead Common the County Wildlife Site. Further on from this other sites were considered by the Parish Council in late 2022 and early 2023. Landowners were contacted following these suggestions before Regulation 14 this included LGS6, LGS7 and LGS8.
 - These were reviewed to consider at a glance whether they would meet the national criteria for designation. Some suggestions such as highway verge or public footpaths were removed at this stage;
 - A site visit was undertaken by the working group and further evidence gathered on each of the remaining green spaces;
 - An assessment against the national criteria for Local Green Space was made for each of the potential areas;
 - Landowners were contacted to make them aware that their land was being considered for local green space designation and to invite them to make representations;
 - A final decision was recommended by the Steering Group, and confirmed by the parish council, as to which green spaces to designate.
162. This Neighbourhood Plan designates eight Local Green Spaces for protection across the plan area, these are identified in Figure 29. They are important not only

for the wildlife they support, but provide significant quality of life benefits to residents, for example through encouraging recreation. Further maps of a better scale are within the Local Green Space Assessment.



Figure 28- Photos of Ringstead Playing Field (Top) and Ringstead Common (Bottom)

163. Many of these contribute to the distinctiveness of their local community, making it an attractive place to live. Justification for each of the Local Green Spaces is found in Ringstead Local Green Space Assessment 2023.

164. Policy 8 on Local Green Space conforms with national policy on Green Belt, the justification for this is provided in detail in the Ringstead Local Green Space Assessment.

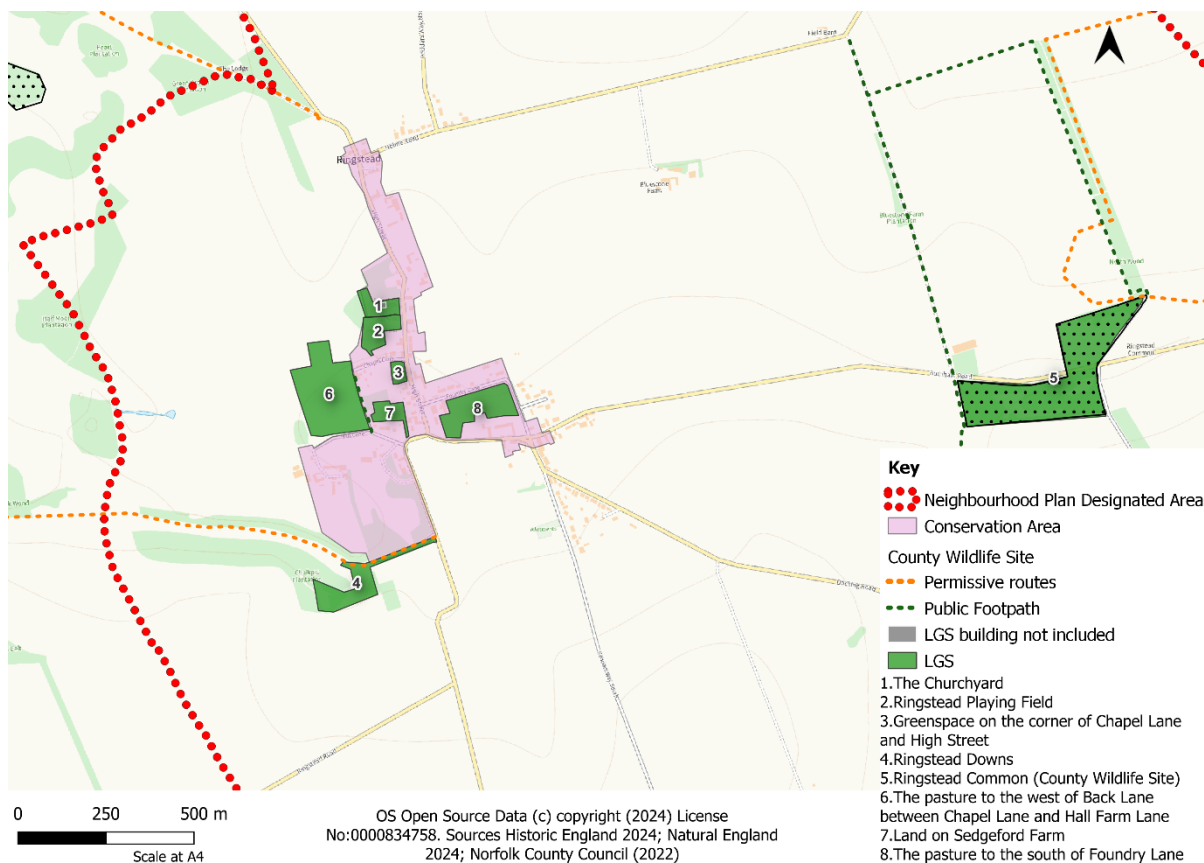


Figure 29- Local Green Space

RNP POLICY 8: LOCAL GREEN SPACE

The following areas as shown in Figure 29 are designated as Local Green Space for special protection:

1. The Churchyard
2. Ringstead Playing Field
3. Greenspace on the corner of Chapel Lane and High Street
4. Ringstead Downs
5. Ringstead Common (County Wildlife Site)
6. The pasture to the west of Back Lane between Chapel Lane and Hall Farm Lane
7. Land on Sedgeford Farm
8. The pasture to the south of Foundry Lane

Protecting Landscape Quality

165. Almost the entire parish of Ringstead is designated in the North Norfolk Coast National Landscape (Figure 30). It is a distinctive landscape containing special habitats, heathland, long views into the distance, historic and cultural features, and a historic settlement. This creates a unique sense of place which is cherished by residents and visitors alike.

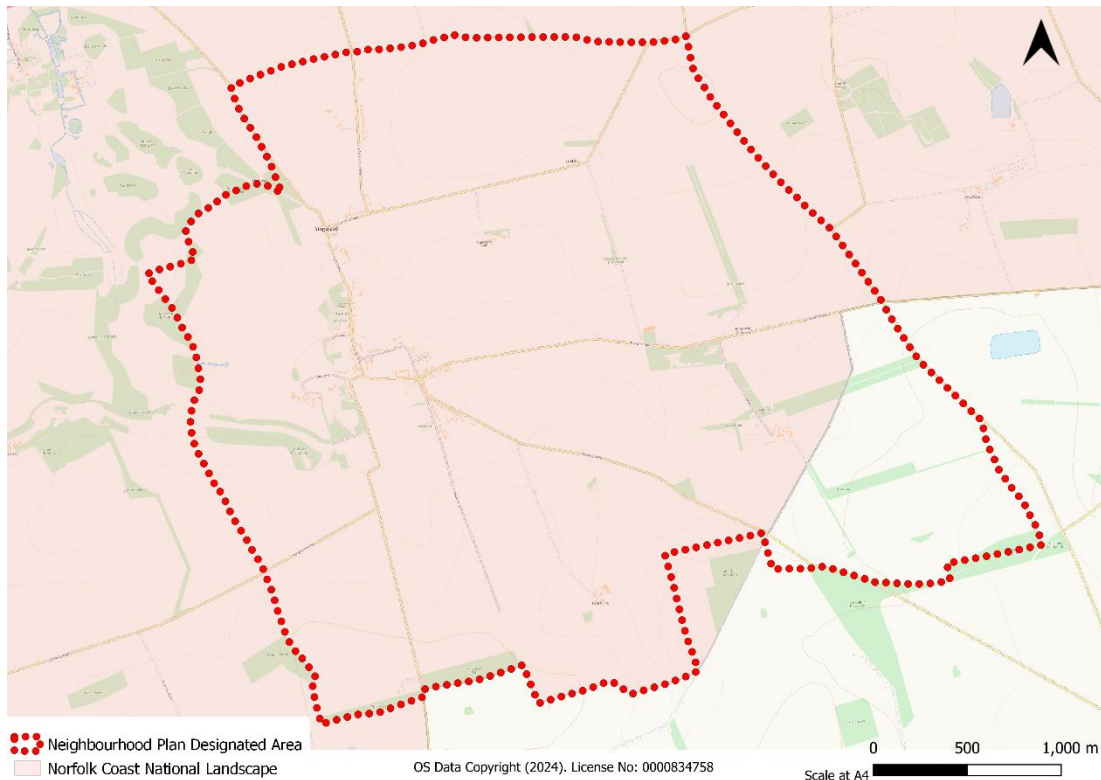


Figure 30- Norfolk Coast National Landscape Designation and Ringstead Parish

166. The West Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment³³ identifies that the parish falls within the 'Rolling Open Farmland' character area. The assessment describes the visual character of Ringstead:

167. "The area is characterised by open rolling arable farmland that slopes gently down to the north. The northern half of the area is within Norfolk Coast National Landscape. There are few strips or areas of woodland to break up the long expansive views across the patchwork of irregular (predominantly arable) fields. Straight, well-maintained hedgerows delineate the field boundaries. Outside Ringstead scattered isolated dwellings and farmsteads dominate settlement character. These are accessed by the straight narrow country lanes that criss-cross the fields. A few footpaths and tracks including the Peddar's Way and Norfolk Coastal Path also dissect the fields in

³³ KLWN Landscape Character Assessment, Final Report March 2007, Chris Blandford Associates

straight lines and often following field boundaries. There is a strong sense of isolation and tranquillity throughout the character area.”

168. The West Norfolk Landscape Character assessment states the inherent landscape sensitivities are:

- Landscape setting of Ringstead.
- Distinctive combinations of traditional building materials within small village settlements.
- Strong sense of tranquillity and isolation throughout the area.

169. The assessment gives planning advice to ensure any new appropriate development must respond to the historic settlement pattern and is well integrated into the surrounding landscape, sensitive to the prominent skyline within the character area and conserves the landscape quality of the existing landscape setting and its remoteness and tranquillity.



Figure 31- View south of Holme Road of one of the spectacular long views within Ringstead

170. The Norfolk Coast National Landscape website recently had some useful guidance relevant to the area including Integrated Landscape Guidance- Rolling Open Farmland (2021)³⁴. Ringstead and Ringstead Downs fell under the character area ROF2 and ROF3. The Ringstead Downs distinctive character area was described as:

171. *“The northern boundary of the area encloses the woodland plantations around Hunstanton Hall. This designed parkland is crossed by strips of linear mixed woodlands and plantations with irregular edges. Elsewhere there are few dwellings or*

³⁴ [Integrated-landscape-character-Part-5-Rolling-Open-Farmland.pdf \(norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk\)](https://www.norfolkcoastnlnl.org.uk/integrated-landscape-character-part-5-rolling-open-farmland.pdf)

farmsteads outside Ringstead, Hunstanton or associated with Hunstanton Hall. The large area of unimproved chalk grassland at Ringstead Downs Nature Reserve provides diversity and an area of ecological value within the landscape. Other than the main A149 coastal road which runs along the eastern edge of the area, roads and communications are infrequent, with a few minor roads and tracks providing access, particularly to Hunstanton Hall and Park. Linear woodlands, plantations and hedgerows contribute a sense of enclosure and intimacy and limit long distance views. Throughout the area there is a strong sense of tranquillity away from the urban edges and the A149 road corridor."

172. Further detail which was set out in the Norfolk Coast National Landscape Integrated Guidance (2021) noted the risk that potential change to the historic landscape pattern may be lost due to reasons listed below:

- Potential farm diversification, resulting in conversion of agricultural buildings to houses and recreational facilities
- Potential loss of mature hedgerow field boundaries as a result of agricultural intensification
- Pressure for development of second or holiday homes
- Small-scale development within villages, which may be out of character with existing settlement patterns.
- Increased pressure on rural roads as a result of increased second home ownership, contributing to increased tourist activity along the North Norfolk Coast
- Exception sites for low-cost housing
- Minor changes to rural roads on the approaches to villages and towns to improve widening, sightlines etc.

173. The National Landscape guidance explained why it is important to conserve the landscape setting of Ringstead as a rural village giving particular priority to gateway views on the approaches to the village, to views from public rights of way and the characteristic layout of the settlement.

174. The peaceful nature and attractiveness of the village and its surrounding countryside is something that residents of Ringstead value most. This came through really strongly in the consultation activities that were held as part of developing the neighbourhood plan. Retaining these qualities, which are a fundamental part of the character of Ringstead, is important. For example, over 70% of respondents to a survey indicated they felt it important to minimise light pollution from security and garden lights and many views of the surrounding countryside were identified as precious.

175. The NPPF explains that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscape areas, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. It goes on to specify that the scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts.
176. Policy 9 aims to ensure that the scenic beauty, tranquillity, and dark night skies are conserved and enhanced for future enjoyment. It seeks to protect 12 public views, with the intention not to stop development within these views, but to ensure that their distinct character is retained. Within the views afforded protection through Policy 9 development that is overly intrusive or prominent will not be supported locally. Any proposals within these views will need to demonstrate that they are sited, designed and of a scale that does not significantly harm them.
177. The views were identified by the community as part of consultation activity in 2022, with each view assessed by the Steering Group and evidence gathered to demonstrate its special qualities. This can be seen in the Views Assessment document that accompanies the plan. All views presented in this assessment and within the Neighbourhood Plan (2022-2036) are within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape designation as shown in Figure 32.
178. These have been proposed and consulted on because they illustrate the distinctive and subtly attractive nature of the landscape of this part of Northwest Norfolk. They provide views across the gently undulating countryside towards the west from Peddars Way North, and the High Street to the woodland of Hunstanton Park and towards the east across arable farmland interspersed with hedgerows and trees and belts of woodland. Towards the south from Holme Road and Foundry Lane and Docking Road the shallow dry valley in which most of the village lies is spread out before one. The view north from Holme Road shows the Mill across arable fields against the skyline.

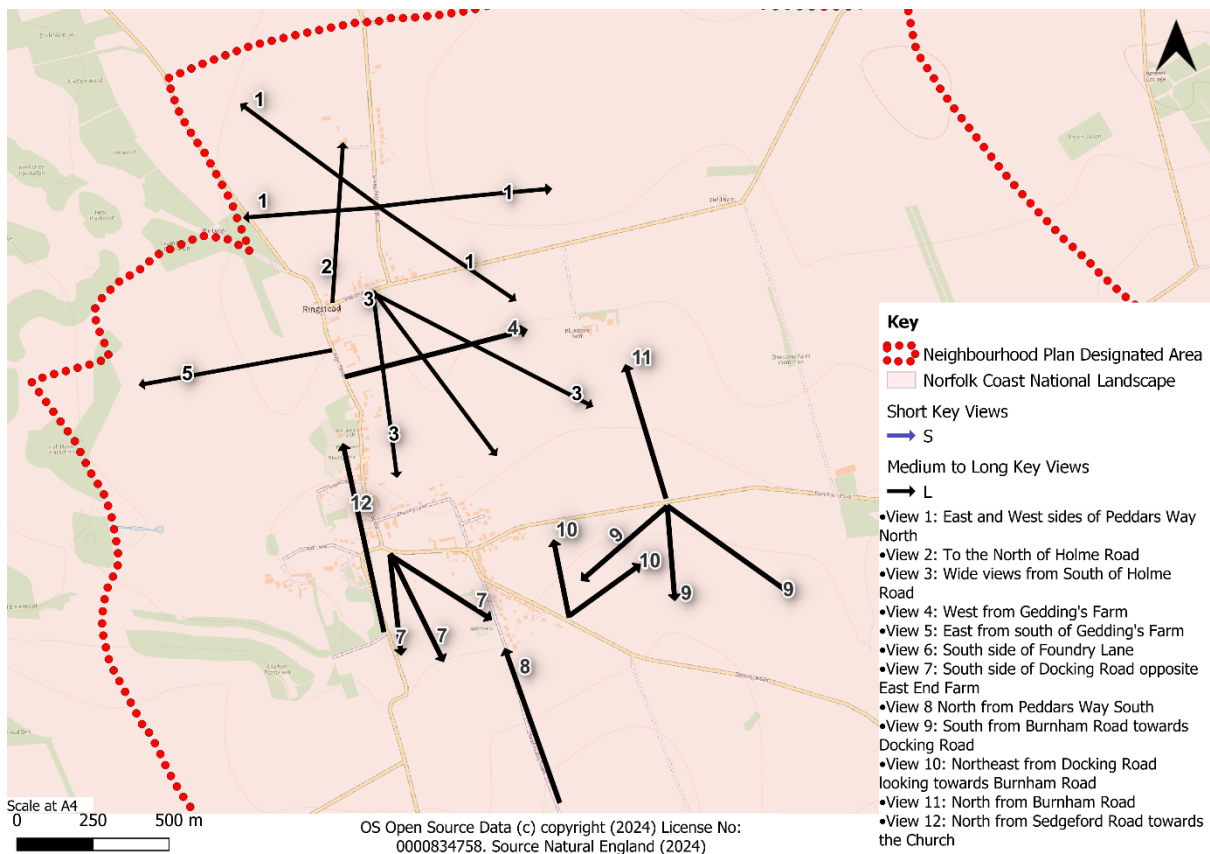


Figure 32- Norfolk Coast National Landscape Designation and Key Views in Ringstead

RNP POLICY 9: LANDSCAPE QUALITY

Development proposals will be required to conserve and enhance the scenic beauty and special qualities of the Norfolk Coast National Landscape.

Proposals which could cause coalescence with neighbouring settlements will not be supported.

Important local views of the landscape

The views identified in Figure 33 and described in Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan Views Assessment Document are important public local views in Ringstead. These are:

- View 1: East and West sides of Peddars Way North
- View 2: To the North of Holme Road
- View 3: Wide views from South of Holme Road
- View 4: West from Gedding's Farm
- View 5: East from south of Gedding's Farm
- View 6: South side of Foundry Lane
- View 7: South side of Docking Road opposite East End Farm
- View 8 North from Peddars Way South
- View 9: South from Burnham Road towards Docking Road
- View 10: Northeast from Docking Road looking towards Burnham Road

RNP POLICY 9: LANDSCAPE QUALITY

- View 11: North from Burnham Road
- View 12: North from Sedgeford Road towards the Church

Development proposals that would significantly adversely affect these key views will not be supported. Proposals are expected to demonstrate that they are sited and designed to be of a form and scale that avoids or mitigates any significant harm to the key views.

Dark Skies

To be supported development proposals that include external lighting must be:

1. Fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments)
2. Directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards)
3. Switched on only when needed (no dusk to dawn lamps)
4. White light low-energy lamps (preferably LED's*) and not orange or pink sodium sources

Proposals including external lighting in prominent locations likely to be visible from the surrounding landscape will not normally be supported except where a requirement can be demonstrated in the interests of safety and security on public footways.

Development proposals should demonstrate compliance with best practice guidance for avoiding artificial lighting impacts on bats³⁵, birds and other species. Where internal lighting is likely to cause harm to the landscape, or disturbance and risk to wildlife, proposals will be sought for mitigating pollution from internal light sources. Large windows, roof lights and large areas of glazing are particularly relevant in this context.

³⁵ <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

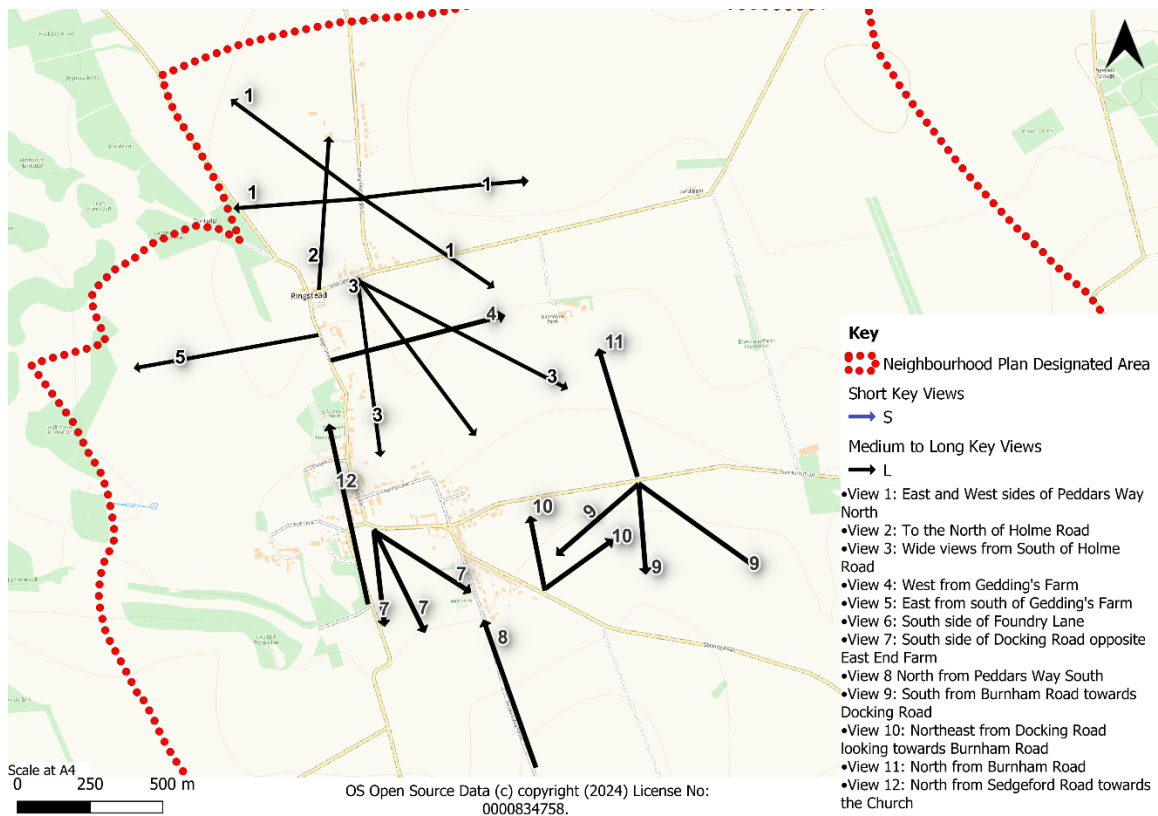


Figure 33- Important local views

Flood and Water Management

179. Flooding can cause serious damage and have significant impacts for homeowners. By thinking about flood risk early, it may be possible to avoid it, manage it more efficiently or in a way that adds value to the natural environment and biodiversity.
180. According to Environment Agency mapping fluvial flood risk is not a problem, with the parish falling within Flood Zone 1. This means there is a less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea in any given year. These flood zones have been defined following a national modelling project and are regularly updated using recorded flood extents and local modelling. The flood zones are based on the likelihood of an area flooding, with Flood Zone 1 areas least likely to flood and flood zone 3 areas more likely to. The modelling does not account for blocked drains or very heavy rainfall, so sites in a low-risk flood zone may still experience flooding.
181. Surface water flooding is an issue in part of the built-up area of the parish, including along Burnham Road and Docking Road (Figure 34³⁶). The risk of surface water flooding is mostly low, but there is medium risk to some properties.

³⁶ [Learn more about this area's flood risk - GOV.UK \(check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk)

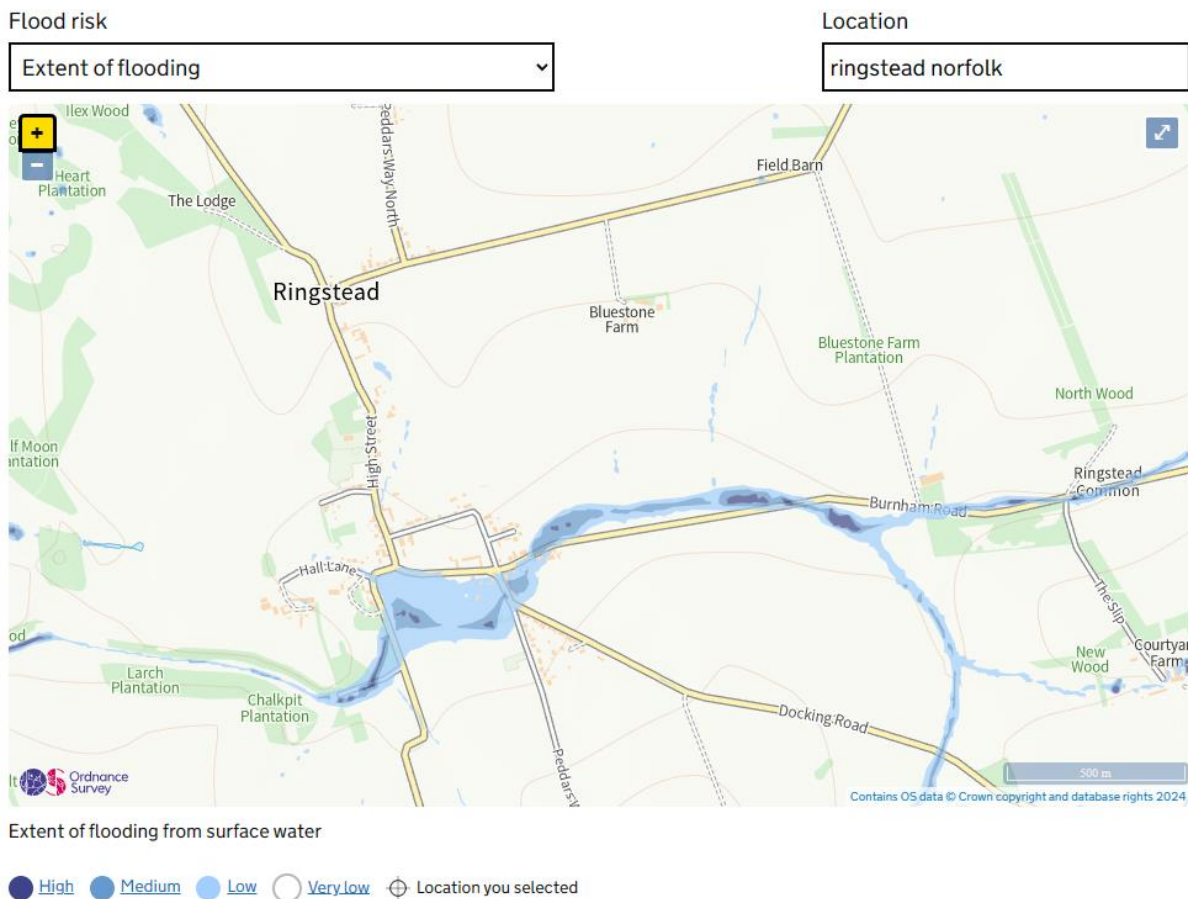


Figure 34- Example of Surface Water Flood Risk (Environment Agency, 2024)

182. Strategic policy in the NPPF seeks to minimise development in areas at risk from flooding and reduce the risk of flooding associated with development, both on the development site and elsewhere. The Local Plan requires that flood risk is fully mitigated through appropriate design and engineering solutions. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to strengthen the recognition of local flood issues and ensure these are adequately considered in future planning proposals. The plan also seeks to ensure Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are incorporated as both an effective way of reducing runoff rates and delivering wider biodiversity, water, and public amenity benefits.

183. Drainage systems can contribute towards sustainable development and improve places where people live and work. Approaches to manage surface water that take account of water quantity, quality, biodiversity, and amenity are collectively known as SuDS. Traditionally piped drainage networks convey water much more quickly than natural processes. Flooding can occur when housing and other development such as paving increases the volume and speed of run-off. SuDS seek to manage rainfall in a way similar to natural processes, by using the landscape to control the flow and volume of surface water, prevent or reduce pollution downstream of development

and promote recharging of groundwater. Natural vegetation, including trees, in SuDS helps attenuate flows, traps silts and pollutants and promotes infiltration.

184. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) also provides guidance for developers regarding surface water flood risk and drainage for proposed development³⁷. Policy 10 focuses on maximising the use of natural SuDS features which manage flood risk but also provide benefits such as enhancing public open space, contributing to the character of an area, and providing wildlife habitat. SuDS schemes that consist of underground concrete boxes to store rainwater, although recognised to reduce flood risk by releasing rainwater more slowly will not deliver the additional benefits.

RNP POLICY 10: SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT

Development proposals must be designed to manage flood risk effectively and not increase, and wherever possible reduce, the overall level of flood risk both to the site and elsewhere. Proposals specifically to improve surface water drainage, such as works to reinstate an effective drainage scheme, are encouraged.

All proposals must incorporate natural Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) that are appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and designed to be an integral part of the green infrastructure. These may include:

- Attenuation ponds;
- Planting;
- Introduction of permeable driveways or parking areas;
- Rainwater harvesting and storage features;
- Green roofs.

Such measures will be required except where this is not technically feasible or where it can be demonstrated that other factors preclude their use.

185. Flooding from local surface water runoff is usually caused by intense rainfall that may only last a few hours, occurring often where the natural drainage system is unable to cope with the volume of water. Surface water flooding problems are inextricably linked to issues of poor drainage, or drainage blockage by debris, and sewer flooding.

³⁷Norfolk County Council. LLFA Statutory Consultee for Planning: Guidance Document. Source: [Information for developers - Norfolk County Council](#)

RNP COMMUNITY ACTION 2: MAINTENANCE OF DRAINAGE DITCHES

The Parish Council will work proactively with riparian owners, landowners, and statutory agencies, such as the Lead Local Flood Authority, to ensure that watercourses are properly maintained with a view to ensuring that they continue to play their role in the management of water and flood risk.

Section 5: Community Infrastructure

186. Ringstead has a range of day-to-day local services and facilities for residents and visitors. This includes the Gin Trap Inn, The General Store, garden nursery (Wards Nurseries), village hall, picnic area, playing field and bowling green. There is good range of clubs and activities, including visiting walking groups, which adds to a strong sense of community. Not only this, but these services also contribute to the local economy, creating some jobs, and supporting the tourist trade.



Figure 35- Pictures of community facilities within Ringstead (Children's Play area, The General Store, Wards' Nursery and The Gin Trap Inn- Image Source- Bing and Google Maps, 2022)

187. The existing local services, facilities and activities are valued by both residents and visitors. Retaining these is important and consultation found there is support for encouraging more business enterprise locally.

188. The NPPF supports the protection of existing village services and the delivery of new ones in order to maintain the vitality of rural communities. The local plan aims to protect community facilities where possible, particularly where there is no alternative provision within the settlement, where there is proven demand and encourages replacement facilities in the immediate locality where this is not viable.
189. In terms of the rural economy, Local Plan policies are supportive of the rural economy and diversification through a rural exception approach. This means permission may be granted on land which would not otherwise be appropriate for development and where it meets a local business need. It should be appropriate in size, adjacent the settlement and not detrimental to the local environment or residents.
190. Traditional farm buildings make a significant contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of Ringstead, they are an integral part of the rural landscape. As a result of changing agricultural practices the future of such buildings is increasingly dependent on finding a use for which they were not originally intended. Over the last 10 years some such buildings locally have been converted to residential use, including the barns at the farm on Burnham Road. There are a wide variety of alternative uses for rural buildings, including commercial/industrial use, leisure and recreation, tourism, community, and residential use. Generally, extensions to a rural building as part of its conversion are unacceptable and proposals to convert buildings should be contained within the confines of the existing building shell.
191. To support rural enterprise and encourage jobs locally this neighbourhood plan supports conversion and enlargement of rural farm buildings where it will have a commercial or community use, subject to the conditions of Policy 11. This could help provide economic and social benefits within the village by having existing underused buildings be used by certain businesses. Further boosting local employment and economic gain in the area.

RNP POLICY 11: CONVERSION OF RURAL FARM BUILDINGS

Enlargement of redundant farm buildings for certain types of commercial use or community use will be viewed favourably such as offices, workshops, and nurseries.

Extensions should not detract from the character and appearance of their immediate surroundings. Extensions should be subordinate in scale to respect the character of the existing building.

Proposals should have regard to the Design Codes and Guidance Document (2022) and pay particular attention to the principles within Design Code BF07 and Policy 4.

Section 6: Built and Historic Environment



Figure 36- St Andrew's Church

192. The parish has a rich heritage which makes a significant contribution towards the community's sense of place. On Ringstead Downs excavation has revealed evidence dating from the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age (c 2500 to 2000BC, contemporary with the 'Sea Henge' at nearby Holme-next-the-Sea). The Downs has also been a pathway used for recreation over many years as shown in one historical photograph below most likely from the late 1800s/early 1900. Further examples may be found online³⁸.



Figure 37- Ringstead Downs³⁹

³⁸Further Historic Photos of Ringstead Downs. Source: [Photo of Ringstead, Downs 1901 - Francis Frith](#)

³⁹ Ringstead Downs. Source: [Ringstead Downs | North Norfolk Coast | Anna's House Hotel & B&B \(annasnorfolk.co.uk\)](#)

193. The ancient trackway, the Icknield Way is claimed to run along the western boundary of the parish. The name, Ringstead, however, perhaps is a Viking derivation from Ringsted in Denmark. The settlement was certainly well established by the time of the Norman Conquest, its population, land ownership and productive resources including a mill being detailed in the Domesday Book of 1086. There were originally three parishes – Ringstead Magna, with St Andrew’s church, Ringstead Parva, with St Peter’s and Barret Ringstead, the ruins of that church being near Downs Farm, now united with Old Hunstanton parish. St Andrew’s and St Peter were united in 1771. After the Reformation in the 16th century, the Le Strange family of Hunstanton Hall, became the principal landowners of Ringstead purchasing the manor of Ringstead, which had been part of the endowment of Ramsey abbey since at least the 11th century, in 1540. Ringstead then became part of their c8,000-acre estate. There are maps of Ringstead dated c1625, 1690 and 1842.

194. Most of the historic buildings in the village date from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, reflecting a long period of prosperity based on sheep and corn farming and improved agricultural methods. A Conservation Area exists for the village centre, where all but one of the listed building are located. The Church of St Andrew, located on the High Street is Grade II* listed. This dates from the 14th and 15th centuries but was extensively rebuilt in 1864. It is a fundamental component of the historic environment. Hunstanton Park was extended into Ringstead during extensive planting programmes between 1760 and 1779 and again in 1853.

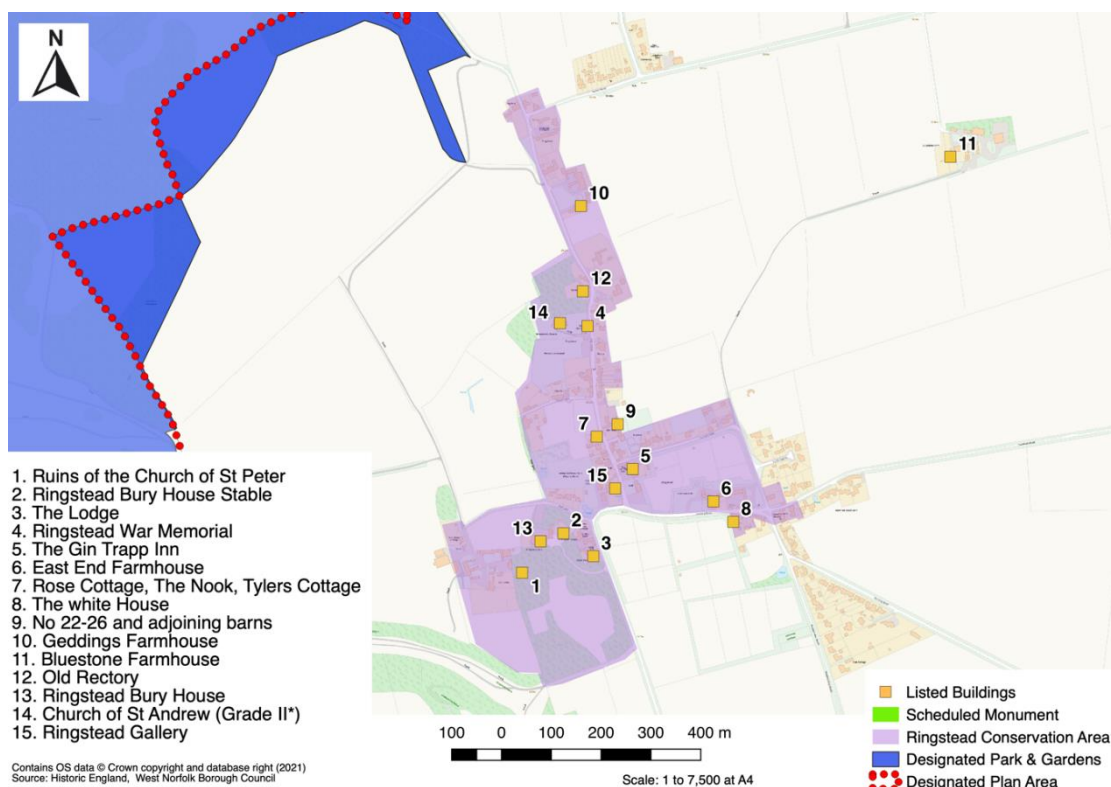


Figure 38: Heritage Assets

195. The NPPF defines historic environment as ‘all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planned or managed flora’. It covers the conservation of the historic environment comprehensively, including the planning balance to be applied to different levels of protection, such as non-designated heritage assets and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Legislation also provides protection for certain assets such as listed buildings.

196. Local Plan policies for the historic environment state that development should avoid, mitigate, or compensate from any adverse impacts on heritage. This may include supporting the repair and appropriate re-use of buildings/structures, requiring the highest standard of design to protect the historic environment and by protecting archaeology from inappropriate development. The Local Plan recognises that there are many non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) across the borough. This plan identifies NDHAs which are important to the community and worthy of protection in Ringstead.

Conservation Area

197. Ringstead’s Conservation Area includes the historic core of the settlement (Figure 39).

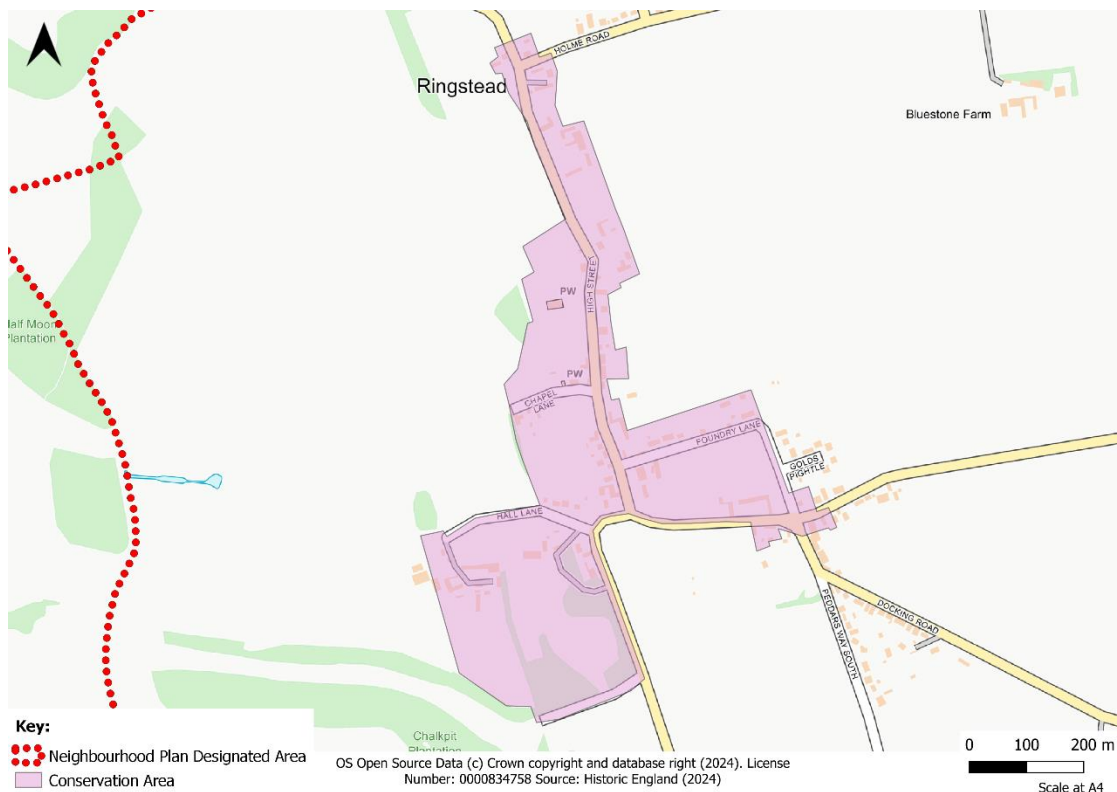


Figure 39- Ringstead Conservation Area

198. It can be divided into four parts, each with its distinct character. The northern part of the High Street, from Top End to the Old Rectory. This comprises a tight knit group of buildings at Top End and widely spaced groups of cottages and farm buildings, some converted to dwellings. Most buildings face south and are aligned at right angles to the road, presenting an attractive picture against the open skyline.
199. The southern part of the High Street, from the Old Rectory to the Village Hall, together with Chapel Lane and Foundry Lane. A sudden bend in the road, and the start of its descent into the valley bottom marks the change from the open northern section of the High Street to the more enclosed section to the south. The Old Rectory, with a date stone of 1643, dominates this part of the village. There are mature trees and old Carstone walls. Opposite, Hillside, a Georgian house, has a fine view down the hill and is an important part of the street scene. Setback, largely screened by trees and hedging, is St Andrew's Church, which stands on a terrace and has a commanding view over the playing field, village below and surrounding countryside.
200. South of the church is the main heart of the historic village, and the most densely populated part. The buildings and spaces between them vary greatly, providing constant interest and changing views. The only unbroken frontage is on the west side stretching from the shop to the corner of Chapel Lane, an attractive and irregular group of cottages of Carstone and whitewashed chalk and brick.
201. South of Chapel Lane the space opens out, with a paddock on the west side and a large open garden on the east. Attractive cottages, with yards or gardens line either side of the street, some parallel, others at right angles to it. The character of Chapel Lane changes quickly from one end, where it is at the heart of the village, to the other, at the end, with open countryside beyond.
202. Docking Road and the crossroads at Peddars Way. A saddle-capped rubble wall screening the Village Hall carpark continues round the corner of the north side of Docking Road as far as East End Farm. Here, in a fine example of the built settlement, it merges with the farmhouse then goes on to form the backs of the farmyard buildings. It finally bends round into the 'Lower End' with Docking Road and Burnham Road. In contrast the south side provides open views over hedged fields until you reach a continuous frontage of houses before the junction. The road junction is attractive with a small green, and large tree.
203. The area centred on Ringstead Bury. This area is predominantly rural, with two historic groups of buildings; Ringstead Bury, Glebe Farm, and Hall Farm. Historically the Bury and Glebe Farm were one unit, the Bury being the former rectory of St Peter's, with the ruined church tower in the grounds, with its associated

farmhouse and farm buildings, which have been converted to residential units with a new house in the former farmyard, off Sedgeford Road and Hall Farm Lane, which meet by a tree-fringed pond.

204. The special qualities and features of the Conservation Area are described in detail in the Ringstead Conservation Area Character Statement. Together, they define the significance of the Conservation Area as a heritage asset. Planning applications should be assessed according to their impact on the character and appearance of such features and the sense of place they create. The NPPF requires in determining planning applications that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made to their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance. This suggests the detail required for applications within the Conservation Area is such that cannot be achieved at the outline planning application stage.

205. The purpose of Policy 12 is to reinforce the account set out in the Ringstead Conservation Area Character Statement (2009)⁴⁰ to provide a more explicit basis for interpretation and application. The Character Statement provides detailed analysis of heritage assets, important spaces and trees. It includes a detailed Conservation Area map, showing listed buildings, and non-designated heritage assets and other locally valued important buildings (referred to as "important unlisted buildings"). The policy also aims to encourage development proposals to enhance the character and unique qualities of the Conservation Area.

RNP POLICY 12: RINGSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA

Development proposals within Ringstead Conservation Area must have particular regard for the following:

- A. Ringstead Conservation Area Character Statement which identifies four areas, each with its own distinct character;
- B. The effect of the proposal on the significance of all designated and non-designated heritage assets (see also policy 13) or other locally valued important buildings that are identified in the BCKLWN Ringstead Character Statement;
- C. The setting, which is characterised by a settlement which predominantly lies within a relatively flat valley bottom, but with a steep ascent up the High Street past the church, and the key views and vistas into the countryside this affords;

⁴⁰ (https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1927/ringstead_conservation_area_leaflet.pdf)

- D. Use of locally distinct building materials, such as Carstone, chalk and flint, building styles and techniques;
- E. The mix of building types and their arrangement with respect to each other and the street, with effort taken to retain gaps within the settlement that create interest and changing views; and
- F. Significant townscape and landscape features, such as historic walls, ponds, trees, hedges, and open spaces, including those at junctions within the Conservation Area;
- G. All proposals should identify opportunities for enhancing the Conservation Area and should be supported by appropriately detailed information to allow an informed assessment of any impacts.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

206. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance recognises that there are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas, or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas local authorities keep a local list of non-designated heritage assets, incorporating those identified by neighbourhood planning bodies. The NPPF determines that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be considered in determining the application.
207. Non-designated heritage assets should be identified against a clear set of consistent criteria. A comprehensive review by the Steering Group and Parish Council of designated heritage assets, the Conservation Area appraisal and the Historic Environment Record was undertaken prior to considering whether there were other assets of heritage value worth identifying in the neighbourhood plan.
208. The Conservation Area Appraisal also notes the special quality of the area is greatly enhanced by the large number of important unlisted buildings. These are traditional buildings, which by their position, group value in relation to other buildings close by and their use of local materials, contribute much to the character of the village. 60 such buildings have been identified, representing 76% of the total number of unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area. In terms of archaeological interest, the ruins of St Peter's Church in the grounds of Ringstead Bury are scheduled.
209. Local knowledge and the Historic Environment Record was used to find out more about their history. These were subsequently assessed in accordance with Historic

England's guidance on Local Heritage Listing, using the commonly applied selection criteria. Those determined to have historic significance are identified as non-designated heritage assets in this Neighbourhood Plan and they will receive protection in accordance with Policy 13: Non-Designated Heritage Assets.

210. It should be noted that these are not the only non-designated heritage assets in Ringstead, just those considered of local importance when developing this plan; particularly from suggestions by the community in Q21 of the initial consultation survey in November 2021 such as two examples shown in Figure 40.



Figure 40-Old School (Y:1852) and former Methodist Chapel (Y:1865)

211. The following buildings identified on Figure 41 of the Neighbourhood Plan are identified as non-designated heritage assets. In weighing applications that affect these heritage assets, directly or indirectly, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

- NDHA1-Top End Farmhouse
- NDHA2- 2 and 3 Top End Cottages
- NDHA3-Geddings Farm and Surrounds
- NDHA4-The Old School the former school building.
- NDHA5- Village Store, 41 High Street
- NDHA6-former Methodist Chapel and 8-18 Chapel Lane
- NDHA7-The Old Bakery, 14 High Street
- NDHA8- Manningham House
- NDHA9-Wards Nursery Buildings, Foundry Lane
- NDHA10- Foundry House
- NDHA11-The complexes of farm buildings at Bluestone, East End Farm and Hall Farm
- NDHA12- 18-22 Docking Road
- NDHA13- 4-6, Burnham Road

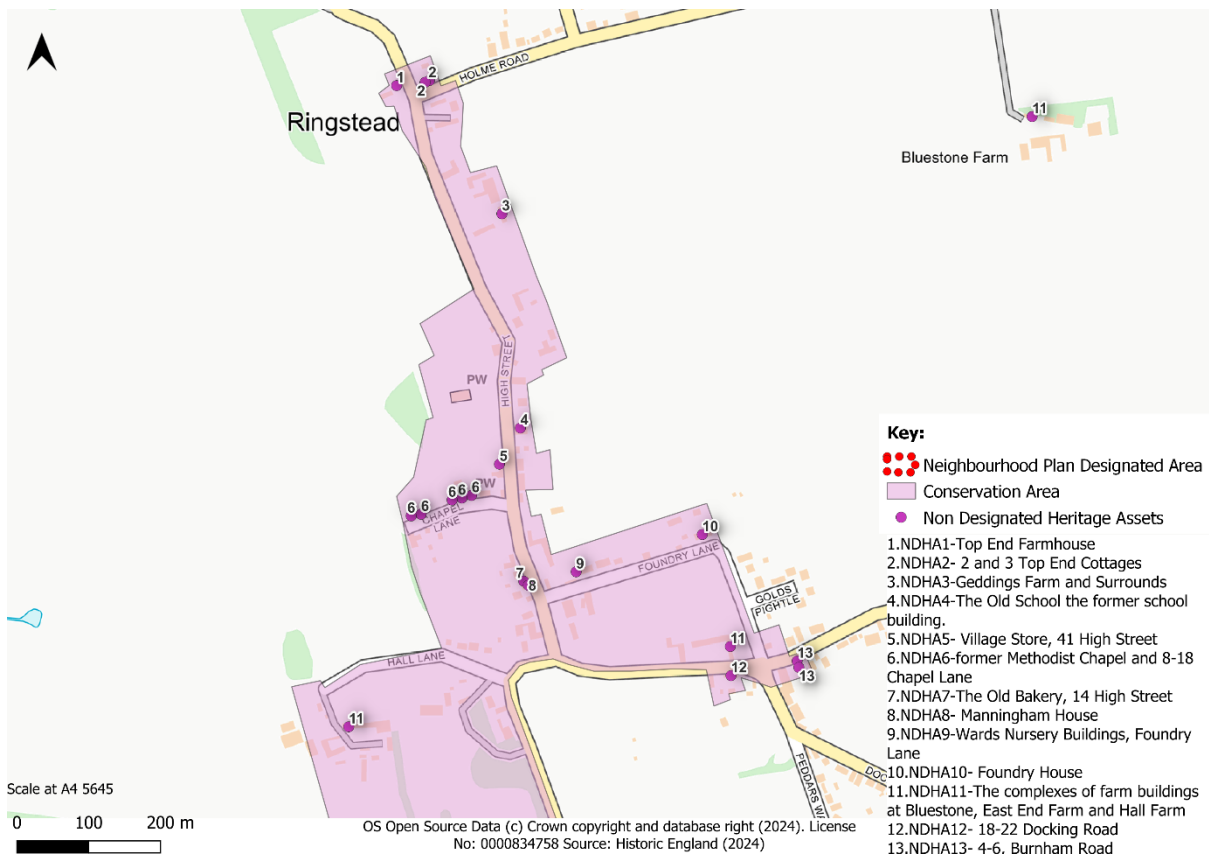


Figure 41-Map of NDHAs

212. The Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Strategy and Advice Team issues advice to the local planning authorities about all new developments, for which planning permission is applied for, which may significantly affect all heritage assets, designated or undesignated, known or currently unknown, which is normally acted upon and included as a planning condition if the development proposal is approved and given planning permission.

RNP POLICY 13: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

The following buildings identified on Figure 41 of the Neighbourhood Plan are identified as non-designated heritage assets. In weighing applications that affect these heritage assets, directly or indirectly, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

- NDHA1-Top End Farmhouse
- NDHA2- 2 and 3 Top End Cottages
- NDHA3-Geddings Farm and Surrounds
- NDHA4-The Old School the former school building.
- NDHA5- Village Store, 41 High Street
- NDHA6-former Methodist Chapel and 8-18 Chapel Lane
- NDHA7-The Old Bakery, 14 High Street

RNP POLICY 13: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

- NDHA8- Manningham House
- NDHA9-Wards Nursery Buildings, Foundry Lane
- NDHA10- Foundry House
- NDHA11-The complexes of farm buildings at Bluestone, East End Farm and Hall Farm
- NDHA12- 18-22 Docking Road
- NDHA13- 4-6, Burnham Road

Section 7: Access and Transport

Walking

213. As mentioned earlier, Ringstead has a small number of local services and facilities, such as the Gin Trap and the General Store. For those who live in the village, these are all within walkable distance. There are footways for people to use to get to local services and so that they don't have to walk in the road. However, there are missing sections and usually the footway is narrow and only available on one side of the road. Nevertheless, in light of the 30mph speed limit, getting around within the village is straightforward for most; others, such as those with buggies or wheelchairs might experience some difficulties. Additionally, frequently because of vehicles parked on the only footpaths in narrow streets, people have to walk in the road with their backs to the traffic. However, wider, and more extensive footway provision might clash with the essentially rural and tranquil character.
214. The NPPF supports walking and cycling being integral to design considerations for new developments. It also sets out that development should maximise opportunities to promote walking and cycling and the use of sustainable transport. The Local Plan includes more detailed policies on the need for sustainable transport provision, requiring development to reduce the need to travel and support sustainable modes of transport. There is not really a need for a policy on this in the neighbourhood plan.
215. Access into the countryside and open spaces for recreational reasons is good in Ringstead, and this brings benefits for physical health and mental well-being. Such benefits are recognised in the NPPF. All survey respondents in a consultation considered that walks on public rights of way to be important.

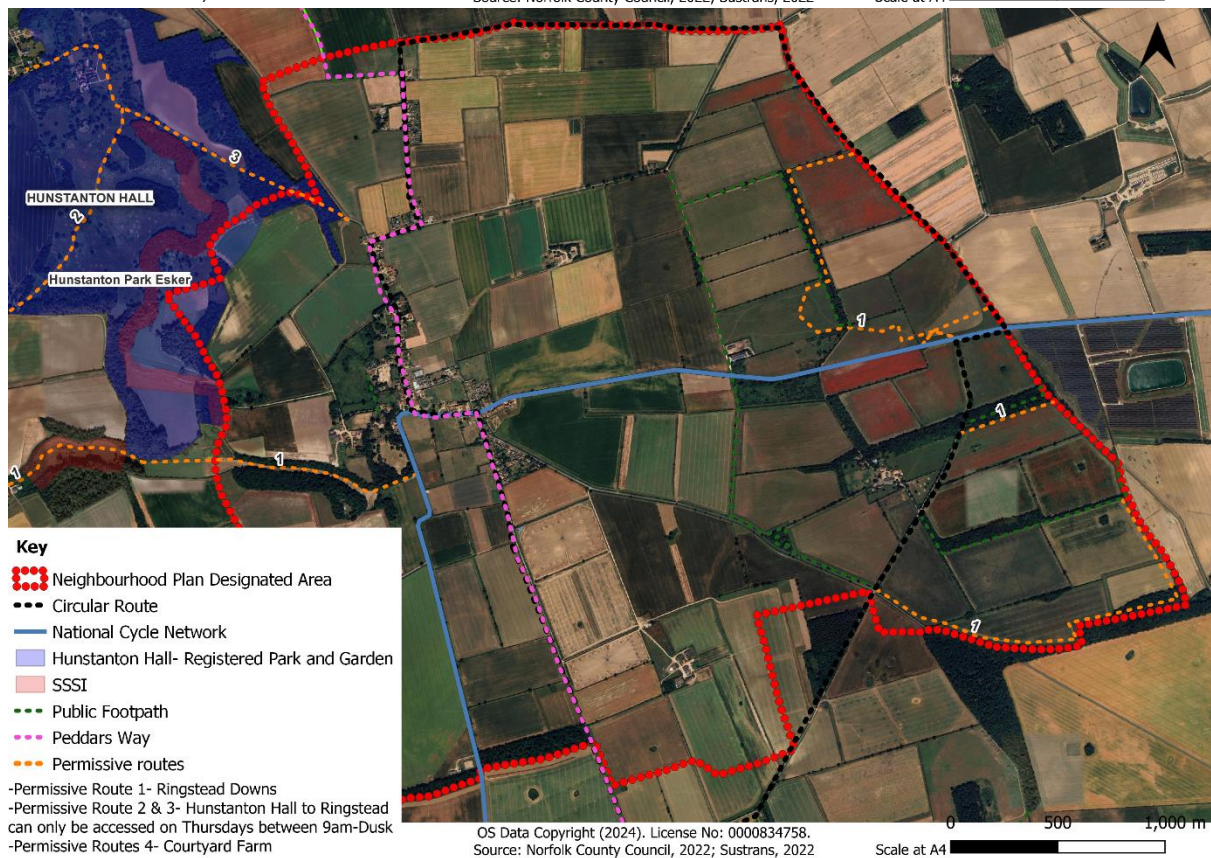
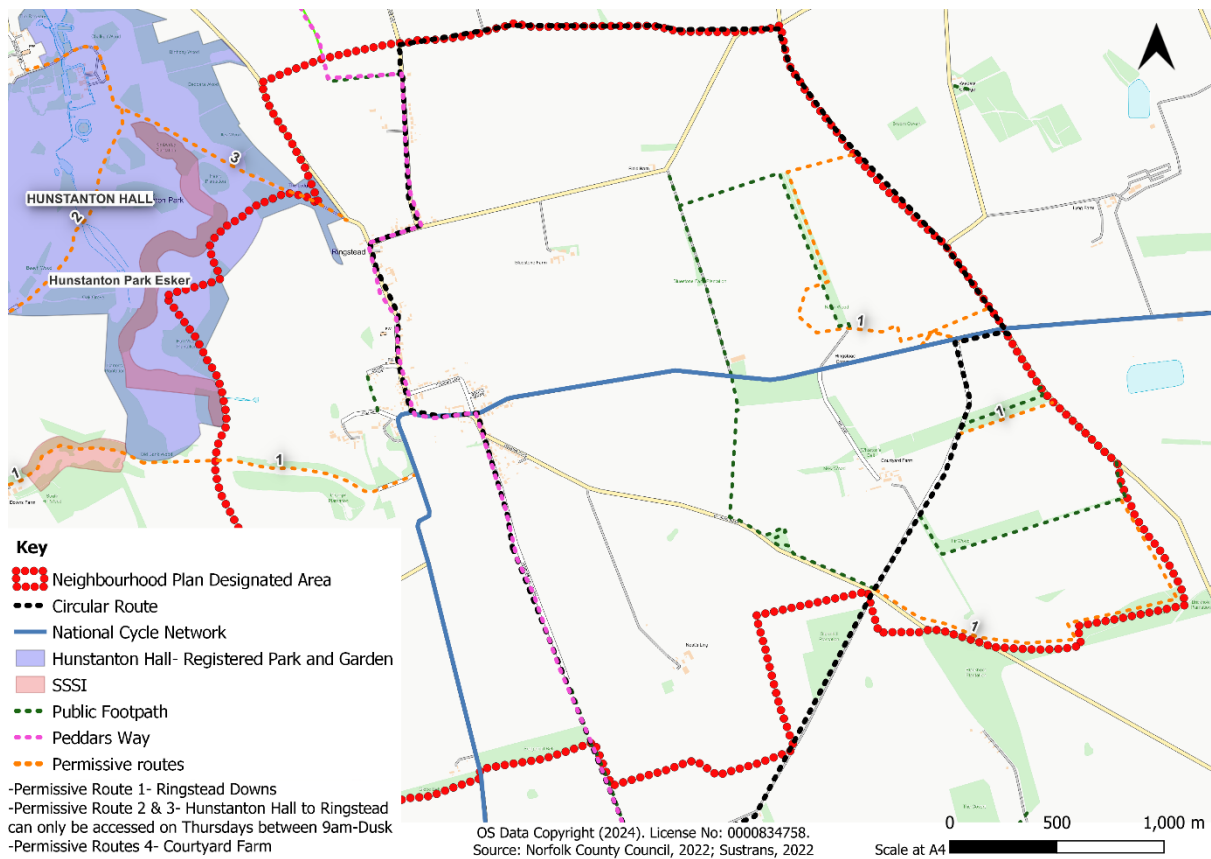


Figure 42: Footpaths and the National Cycle Network Source: OS Open Source 2024 and Google Maps 2024.

216. Figure 42 shows the public footpath and national cycle network, circular walking route⁴¹ and some of the permissive routes which are popular with residents and visitors to the area. A number of permissive routes are available through Ringstead Downs, around the organically farmed Courtyard Farm⁴² and through Hunstanton Park (but only on Thursdays between 9am and dusk). The village is therefore a good location for walkers and cyclists, being on the Peddars Way long-distance footpath, the Ringstead Circular Walk (as well as a National Cycle Route).



Photo of Ringstead Circular Walk Sign

⁴¹ Circular walking route. Source: [Ringstead map \(norfolk.gov.uk\)](http://Ringstead map (norfolk.gov.uk))

⁴² Walking Round Courtyard Farm | Norfolk



Photo of the Courtyard Farm Permissive Routes Leaflet

RNP COMMUNITY ACTION 3: PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND COUNTRYSIDE WALKS

The Parish Council will work with partners such as landowners and the County Council to ensure that Public Rights of Way and permissive routes within the parish are well maintained for the continued enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Parking

217. Although the local plan promotes integrated and safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists, it also recognises that the car remains an important means of travel in rural areas. Given that there is no local public transport provision in Ringstead, the car is an essential means of getting to various facilities and meeting many needs. This

raises issues of parking availability, especially since the withdrawal of the bus service from the village and visitor parking being an additional factor. Often cars are parked inappropriately in the village centre, especially in the busier summer months.

218. The narrowness of the roads makes two-way passing very difficult and means that parking on the roads needs to be discouraged as much as possible. The high car ownership levels in the parish, no doubt in part because of the need to own a car to access shops, schools, work, and leisure would suggest a requirement to have adequate levels of off-road parking spaces in any new developments. Almost three quarters of local people support a policy to address parking. A new public car park is not, however, a popular intervention, with many people believing it would not solve the issue in the centre.
219. Be that as it may, at the very least the neighbourhood plan could help to ensure that new residential and commercial development does not make the matter worse by failing to provide adequate off-road parking. It is now widely recognised that restricting the off-road space to park vehicles at home does not reduce car ownership, but instead leads to indiscriminate on-street parking. The national Planning Practice Guidance now discourages the use of maximum parking standards unless clearly justified, but minimum standards can be used such that development needs to provide at least a given amount of parking. In light of the relatively high car ownership levels in the parish and non-availability of local services and facilities, the use of minimum parking standards, where possible, in this Neighbourhood Plan is fully justified and based on an analysis of vehicle ownership.
220. The Local Plan sets specific minimum parking standards for residential development.
221. As set out in the Ringstead Design Guidance and Codes Document (2022) parking areas are a necessity of modern development. However, they do not need to be unsightly or dominate views towards the house. Parking provision should be undertaken as an exercise of placemaking. Design Code SP02 offers solutions which proposals within Ringstead should consider when designing on street, on plot or courtyard parking.
222. On-street parking is the only parking option for several dwellings and commercial services within character area CA1 such as the High Street. In order to reduce the visual impact of parked cars on the street, on-street parking as the only means of parking should be avoided in future development wherever possible. It is suggested in areas such as CA1 with houses fronting onto busier roads any new-build houses should have more appropriate parking arrangements such as courtyards.

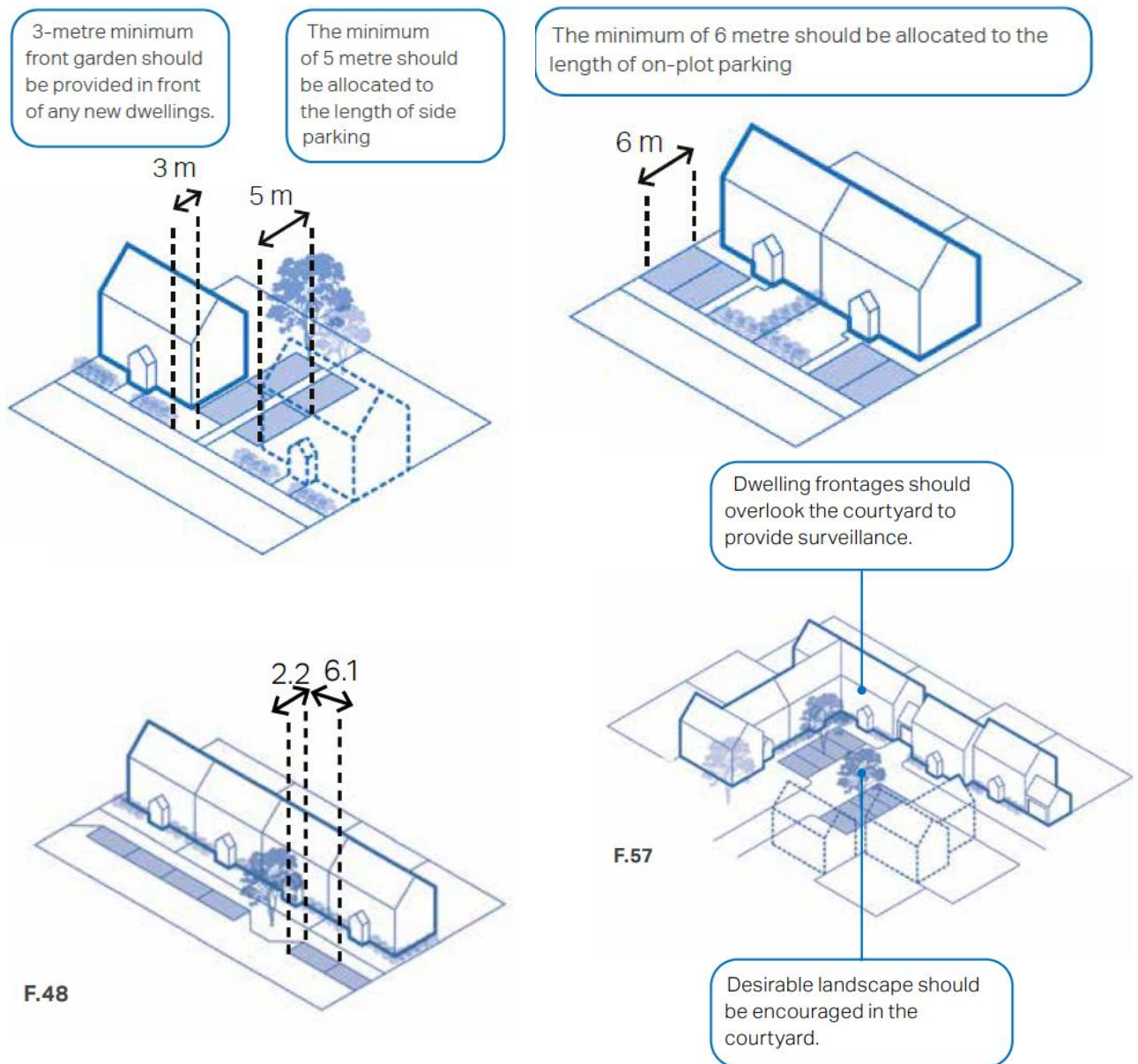


Figure 43: Parking design examples for on-street, on-plot and courtyard schemes as shown in the Design Guidance and Codes Document (AECOM, 2022)

RNP POLICY 14: RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PARKING PROVISION

Residential and commercial proposals should consider all appropriate points made under Design Code SP02 Car Parking Solutions, and the Car Parking section of the Design Guidance and Codes Checklist in Appendix B of the Neighbourhood Plan.

All parking areas and driveways should be designed to provide permeable surfaces such as paving and are encouraged to provide opportunities for electric vehicle charging points.

RNP POLICY 14: RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PARKING PROVISION

Proposals by existing householders to create additional off-road car parking spaces, where a planning consent is required, will be supported as long as it is not to the detriment of the environment or flood risk and has taken SPO2 into account.

On-street parking

On-street parking should be avoided in future development wherever possible particularly in character area CA1 to avoid car dominated street scenes.

In addition, new residential development will need to provide a passing bay where possible, except where this clearly harms the local character.

On-plot side or front parking

Where possible locate parking to the side of properties and ensure landscaping is used to avoid car parking being obtrusive in the street scene. Parking being provided on a driveway to the side of a dwelling should be of sufficient length (5m minimum) so the car can park behind the frontage line of the dwelling. When parking is provided to the side a minimum front garden depth of 3m should be provided.

If front parking is used, then its presence should be minimised with thorough soft landscaping. A minimum depth of 6m should be allocated to the length of on-plot parking to allow movement around parked vehicles and the screening of hedgerows or other boundary treatment features when parking is provided to the front of a dwelling.

Garage parking

Parking being provided in a garage to the side of a dwelling should be in line with, or slightly set back from the frontage line of the existing dwelling, which is in-keeping with the character of the existing village and will reduce the visual impact of cars on the street. Garages should also provide sufficient room for cars to park inside them as well as providing some room for storage. The minimal dimensions should be 7m x 3m.

Courtyard parking

This arrangement could be appropriate for development in CA1. Proposals for courtyard parking should complement the public realm through a high-quality design and use of materials, benefit from natural surveillance and bays must be arranged into groups of 4 spaces as a maximum.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Affordable Housing (NPPF 2023 Definition)	<p>Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:</p> <p>A. Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).</p> <p>B. Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household’s eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.</p> <p>C. Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local</p>

Term	Definition
	<p>incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.</p> <p>D. Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.</p>
Affordable Rented Housing	Rented housing let by registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is not subject to the national rent regime but is subject to other rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).
BNG	Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land. It is making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development ⁴³ .
Dark Skies	Places where the darkness of the night sky is relatively free of interference from artificial light.
Energy Efficient	The practice of using less energy to perform the same amount of output for a task, service or produce the same result.
Green Infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities, and prosperity.

⁴³ [Understanding biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-biodiversity-net-gain)

Term	Definition
Local Green Space (LGS)	Local Green Space is a way of designating local green areas, which meet a set of criteria, in order to protect them from inappropriate development.
National Landscape	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) were re-branded National Landscapes from November 2023.
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPA	Neighbourhood Plan Area
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Open Market Housing	Open market housing is housing which is built by developers (which may be private companies or housing associations, or Private Registered Providers), for the purposes of sale (or rent) on the open market.
Sheltered Housing	<p>Sheltered housing (also known as retirement housing) means having your own flat or bungalow in a block, or on a small estate, where all the other residents are older people (usually over 55). With a few exceptions, all developments (or 'schemes') provide independent, self-contained homes with their own front doors. There are many different types of scheme, both to rent and to buy. They usually contain between 15 and 40 properties, and range in size from studio flats (or 'bedsits') through to 2 and 3 bedroomed. Properties in most schemes are designed to make life a little easier for older people - with features like raised electric sockets, lowered worktops, walk-in showers, and so on.</p> <p>Some will usually be designed to accommodate wheelchair users. And they are usually linked to an emergency alarm service (sometimes called 'community alarm service') to call help if needed. Many schemes also have their own 'manager' or 'warden', either living on-site or nearby, whose job is to manage the scheme and help arrange any services residents need. Managed schemes will also usually have some shared or communal facilities such as a lounge for residents to meet, a laundry, a guest flat and a garden⁴⁴.</p>
Social rented housing	Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in Section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.).

⁴⁴ 4 See <http://www.housingcare.org/jargon-sheltered-housing.aspx>

Term	Definition
	Guideline target rents for this tenure are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with Homes England ⁴⁵
SuDS	Sustainable urban drainage system

⁴⁵ See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/doc/1980960.doc#Housing>

Monitoring, review, and implementation

223. Ringstead Parish Council will take responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This will be undertaken monthly by capturing the outcome of planning applications determined by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

224. A monitoring spreadsheet, similar to that recommended by Locality⁴⁶ will be used. This considers how effective each policy has been in both influencing the outcome of decisions and any conditions applied to development that is permitted.

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

225. The Plan was prepared with reference to the 2011 Core Strategy, 2016 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies and emerging replacement Local Plan 2021-2040. It is anticipated that the replacement Local Plan will be adopted by spring 2025. The Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed should adoption of the replacement Local Plan necessitate such a review, in order that the Plan remains in conformity with the relevant strategic policies of the Local Plan. Similarly, the Plan will be reviewed should any changes in national policies necessitate revisions to the Plan's policies. Additionally, the Parish Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policies within the Plan. The monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis, and a decision can be made whether this requires a review of the Plan.

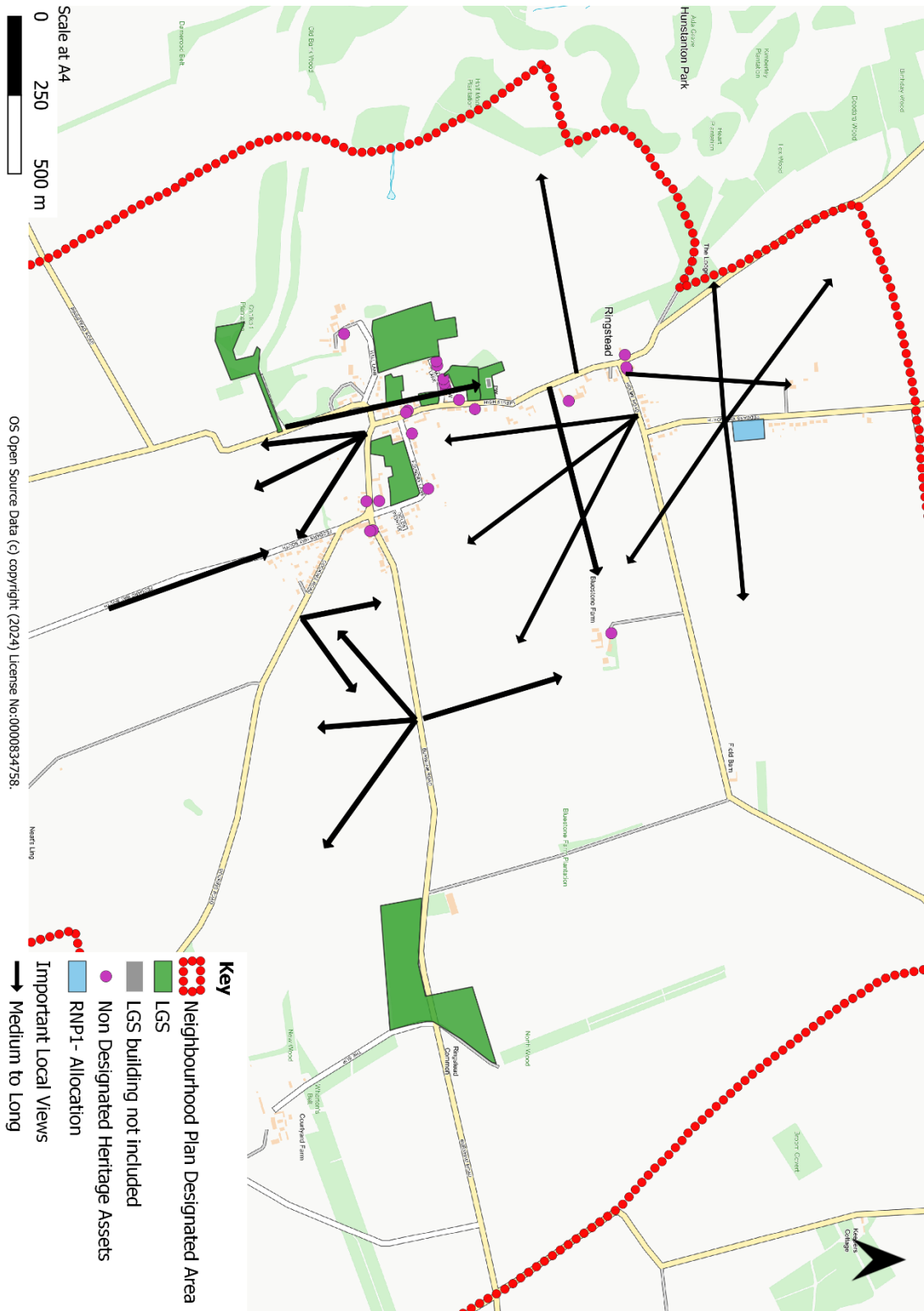
226. The table below sets out the community actions and relevant partnership/stakeholders for delivery. The community actions and the implementation of these will be reviewed annually as well to monitor working relationships and necessary changes.

⁴⁶ [How to implement, monitor, and review your made neighbourhood plan - Locality Neighbourhood Planning](#)

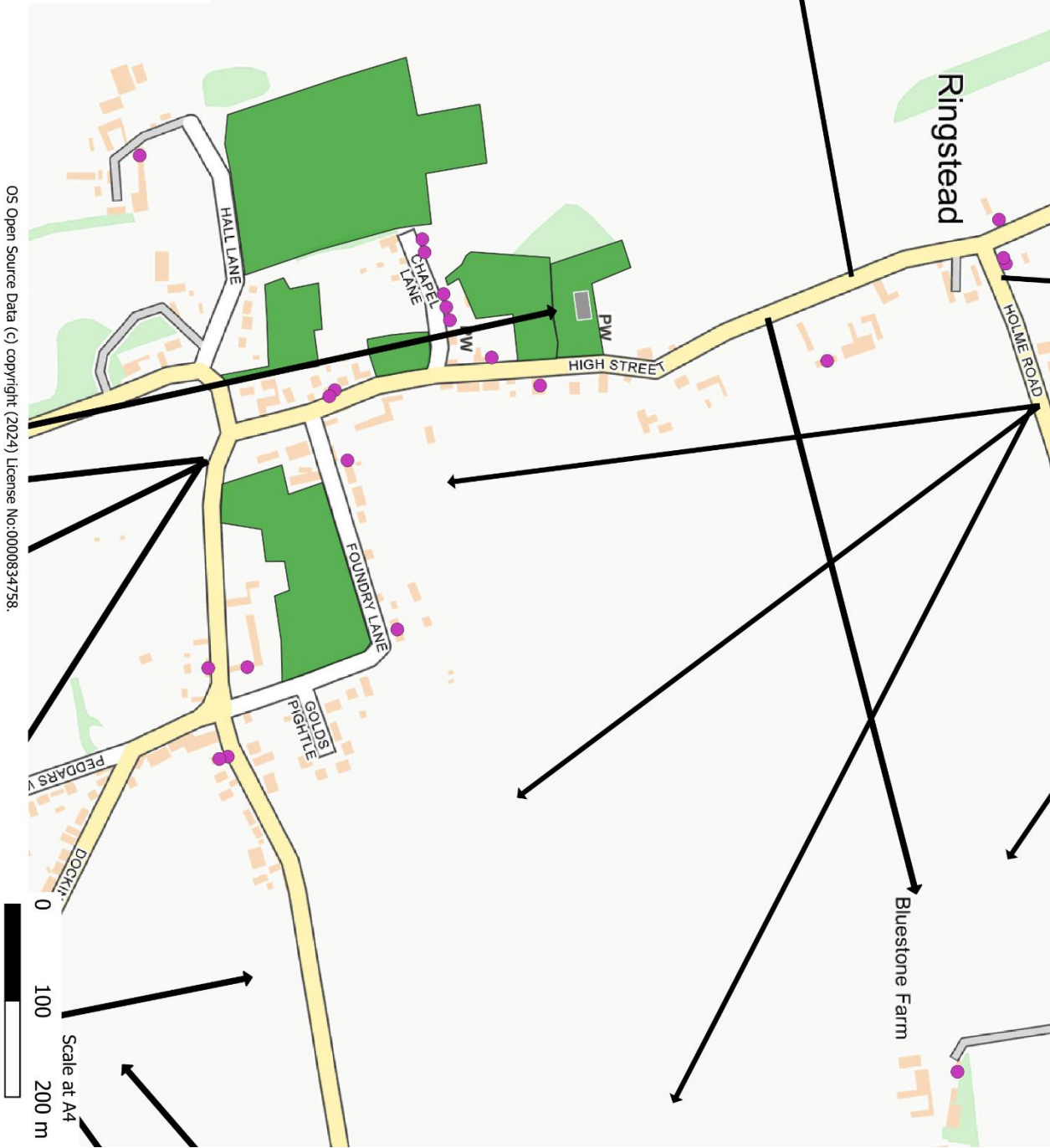
Community Action	Relevant Stakeholders/Partners
<p>Community Action 1: Biodiversity Net Gain Credits</p> <p>The Parish Council will investigate and work proactively with relevant stakeholders and landowners of Ringstead Common (County Wildlife Site) and the Chalk Pit/Ringstead Downs to see if there could be a focus for biodiversity net gain credits used on these local sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local landowners • Norfolk Wildlife Trust • Great Ringstead Allotment Charity • Le Strange Estate
<p>Community Action 2: Maintenance of Drainage Ditches</p> <p>The Parish Council will work proactively with riparian owners, landowners, and statutory agencies, such as the Lead Local Flood Authority, to ensure that watercourses are properly maintained with a view to ensuring that they continue to play their role in the management of water and flood risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riparian owners and landowners • Statutory agencies such as the Lead Local Flood Authority, Environment Agency, and Local Internal Drainage Boards.
<p>Community action 3: public rights of way and countryside walks</p> <p>The Parish Council will work with partners such as landowners and the County Council to ensure that Public Rights of Way and permissive routes within the parish are well maintained for the continued enjoyment of residents and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowners • Norfolk County Council

Appendix A: Policies Map

The policies map aids users to see where all the designated assets, green spaces, views, and the site allocation in the designated area are located in relation to each other.



- Key**
- LGS
 - LGS building not included
 - Non Designated Heritage Assets
 - Important Local Views
 - Medium to Long



Appendix B: Design Checklist Questions from the AECOM Design Guidance & Codes Document (2022)

227. Planning applications should comply with all that are applicable and provide as much detail as possible about the application and to show how the proposal has had due regard to the Ringstead Design Guidance & Codes Document 2022).

228. Set out below is the checklist provided by AECOM in the Design Guidance. All questions have been broken down under 10 headings. Answer all which are relevant either by providing with the application a form similar to below with a column box of the answers or within another appropriate written document.

Street grid and layout:

Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?

Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists, and those with disabilities?

What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?

How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?

Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?

Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Local green spaces, views & character:

What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?

Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?

Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.

Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?

Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?

In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?

How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?

Can any new views be created?

Is there adequate amenity space for the development?

Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?

Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?

Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?

Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

Gateway and access features

What is the arrival point, how is it designed?

Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?

Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?

Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

Buildings layout and grouping

What are the typical groupings of buildings?

How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?

Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?

What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?

Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?

Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles?

If any of the buildings were to be heated by an individual air source heat pump (ASHP), is there space to site it within the property boundary without infringing on noise and visual requirements?

Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night to reduce peak loads? And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

Building line and boundary treatment

What are the characteristics of the building line?

How has the building line been respected in the proposals?

Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Building scale and height

What are the characteristics of the roofline?

Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing, and scale?

If a higher-than-average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?

Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

Household extensions

Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?

Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?

Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?

In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?

Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?

Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?

Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?

Can any materials be re-used on site to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

Building materials & surface treatment

What is the distinctive material in the area?

Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?

Does the proposal use high-quality materials?

Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves, and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?

Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?

Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.

Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

Car parking

What parking solutions have been considered?

Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?

Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?

Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?

Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?

Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/communal facility where appropriate?

If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

Architectural details and design

If the proposal is within a conservation area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?

Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.

Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?

Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?

If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

Is it possible to incorporate passive environmental design features such as larger roof overhangs, deeper window reveals and/or external louvres/shutters to provide shading in hotter months?

Can the building designs utilise thermal mass to minimise heat transfer and provide free cooling?

Can any external structures such as balconies be fixed to the outside of the building, as opposed to cantilevering through the building fabric to reduce thermal bridge?