



WATERBEACH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020 TO 2031

REGULATION 15 SUBMISSION VERSION

JANUARY 2021



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is the submission version of the Waterbeach Neighbourhood Plan (NP). It has been prepared by the Waterbeach NP group on the behalf of the Waterbeach community. The NP group comprises a group of parish residents and councillors. The Waterbeach NP has been approved and submitted by Waterbeach Parish Council.
- 1.2 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a number of measures allowing communities to shape the future of their area and to deliver the sustainable development that they need. One of these measures is the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). A NP can set policies for the use of land and rules for local development. Once a NP is made it will become part of the statutory development plan for the area and will be used in determining planning applications.
- 1.3 This plan has been widely consulted on prior to submission. At submission stage it will be published by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) for a six-week consultation stage. Following this, the plan will be examined by an independent examiner. Subject to a successful examination, the plan must then gain community support at a parish-wide referendum.
- 1.4 At examination, the role of the examiner is to check that the plan meets a set of basic conditions. These include:
 - Are the planning policies appropriate, having regard to the national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
 - Does the NP contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development?
 - Are the neighbourhood planning policies in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan?
 - The plan must also not breach, and otherwise be compatible with, EU obligation and Human Rights requirements.
- 1.5 The Waterbeach NP cannot be used to stop development which is required of it by the District Council Local Plan and the national planning policy context set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.6 The Waterbeach NP covers the period 2020 to 2031. The plan relates to the development and use of land within the parish of Waterbeach.

2. POLICY CONTEXT

National

- 2.1 The national planning context for the Waterbeach NP is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and national planning practice guidance.
- 2.2 ‘Having regard to’ national policy means that the NP must not constrain the delivery of important national objectives. The NPPF is important in that it provides an overarching steer for the planning system. For example, it introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development in determining all planning applications (and provides a definition of sustainable development). It emphasizes the links between planning and other agendas such as climate change and health. It also describes how Green Belt policy should be applied.

District

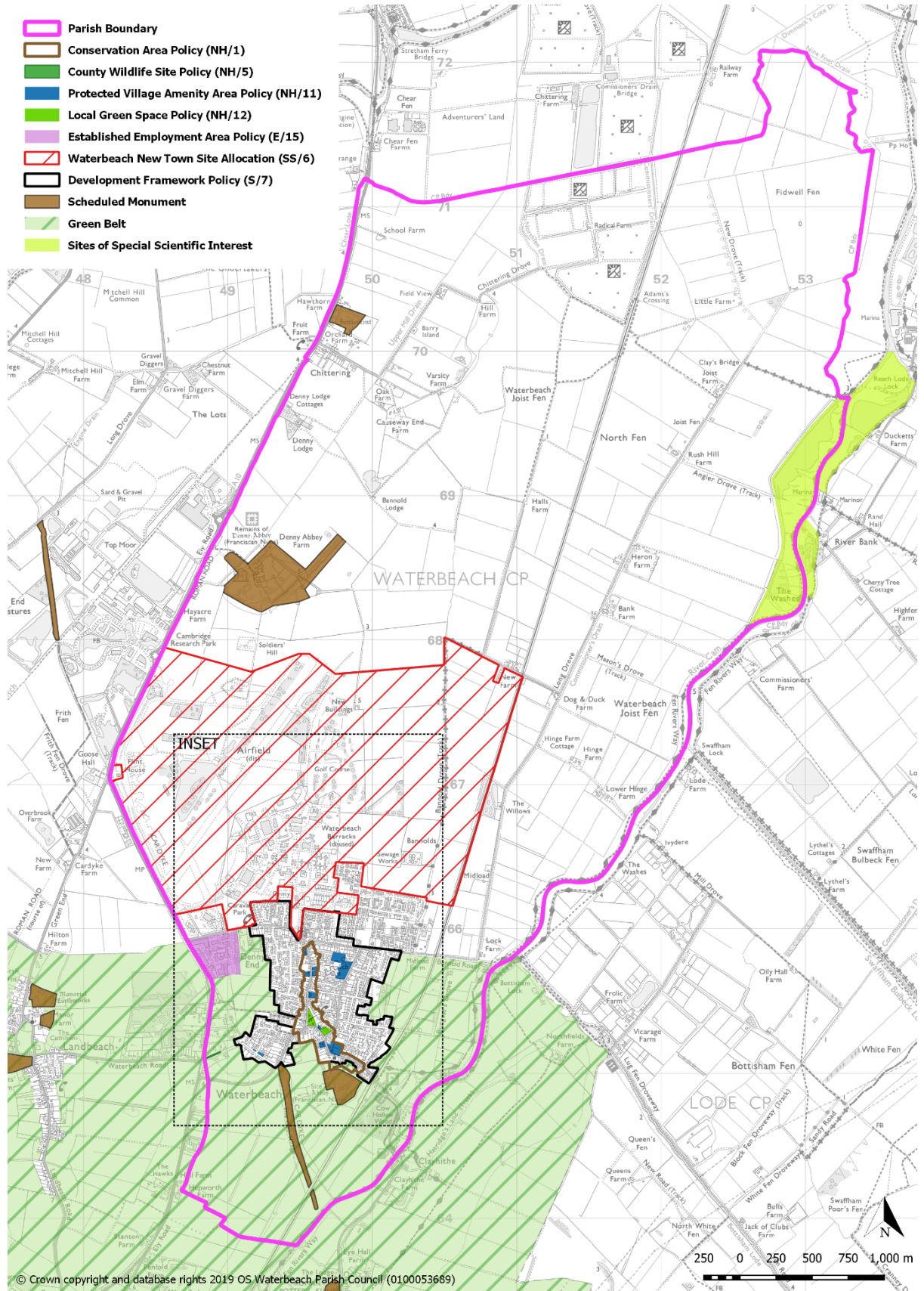
- 2.3 The district planning context is provided by the adopted development plan for South Cambridgeshire. This is the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan adopted in September 2018.
- 2.4 South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) has published its assessment of which policies it considers to be strategic. Virtually all policies are considered to be strategic. Whilst NP policies cannot contradict these, having to be in general conformity with them, they can provide more detail by, for example, applying them to specific sites or relating them to a Waterbeach parish specific context.
- 2.5 Key policies in the Local Plan applicable to the Waterbeach NP are set out in the table below.

Table 2.1: Implications of the Local Plan for the neighbourhood plan area.

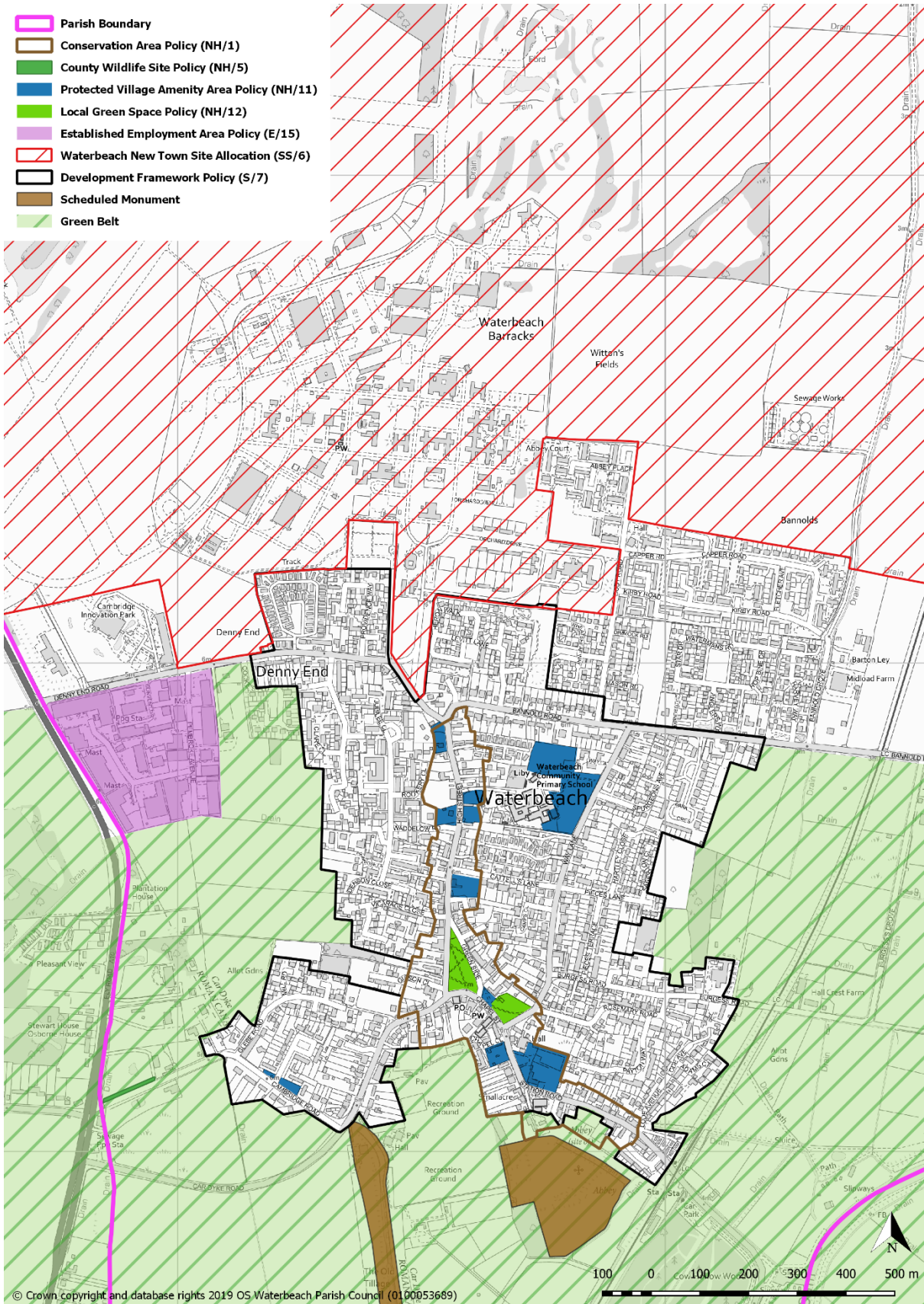
Adopted Local Plan	Implications for the Waterbeach NP area
Policy SS/6 Waterbeach New Town	This policy proposes a new town of approximately 8,000 to 9,000 dwellings and associated uses on the former Waterbeach Barracks and land to the east and north. The policy envisages Waterbeach to be a “sustainable and vibrant new community that is inclusive and diverse with its own distinctive local identity which is founded on best practice urban design principles, drawing on traditions of fen-edge market towns, which encourages the high-quality traditions and innovation that are characteristic of the Cambridge sub-region”.

Adopted Local Plan	Implications for the Waterbeach NP area
	In line with the policy, SCDC adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in February 2019 to cover the Waterbeach New Town.
Policy S/7 Development Frameworks	Waterbeach village itself has a settlement boundary and this policy restricts development (other than that coming forward as part of the new town) to the area that falls within this settlement boundary which is called a development framework.
Policy S/9 Minor Rural Centres	Identifies Waterbeach village as a minor rural centre within which residential development schemes of up to 30 dwellings can come forward (inside the development framework).
Policy NH/11 Protected Village Amenity Area	Waterbeach includes a number of protected village amenity areas (these are marked on the Local Plan Proposals Map). These are: 1) amenity land in front of bungalows on Cambridge Road at the Coronation Close junction 2) an area of green space, comprising private gardens and public amenity grassed area with bench next the chip shop (opposite Bannold Road junction) on the High Street 3) private gardens with mature planting and attractive wall on the corner plot of Waddelow Road and the High Street 4) a large area of a public and private land alongside the Primary School fronting the High Street 5) the school amenity land on the eastern side fronting Way Lane 6) a corner plot of private garden space including mature trees and attractive wall at the junction of Cattel's Lane and the High Street 7) a small plot of land between the Green and the Gault outside the Chinese takeaway on Greenside /Chapel Street 8) private gardens with mature planting and attractive wall on the Chapel Close/Station Road corner plot and 9) large plot of private land including mature gardens, wall and historic buildings of The Hall along Station Road. This policy does not allow for development within or adjacent to those areas if it would have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village.
Policy NH/12 Local Green Space	Waterbeach includes 2 areas of land which are designated as Local Green Spaces. This designation applies to the Green in the middle of the village and the open space area to the south east of this referred to as the Gault.
Policy NH/14 Heritage Assets	The Waterbeach Plan Area includes 4 parcels of land which are designated as scheduled monument. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denny Abbey • Car Dyke • Site of the Waterbeach Abbey • Romano-British Settlement at Chittering
Policy E/15 Established Employment Areas	The NP area includes one designated employment area bounded by the A10 to the west and Denny End Road to the north.

2.6 Map 2.1 shows the adopted Local Plan designations specific to Waterbeach parish (the NP area) and Map 2.2 shows a close up of this (the village inset) focusing on Waterbeach village



Map 2.1 Local Plan designations – parish wide

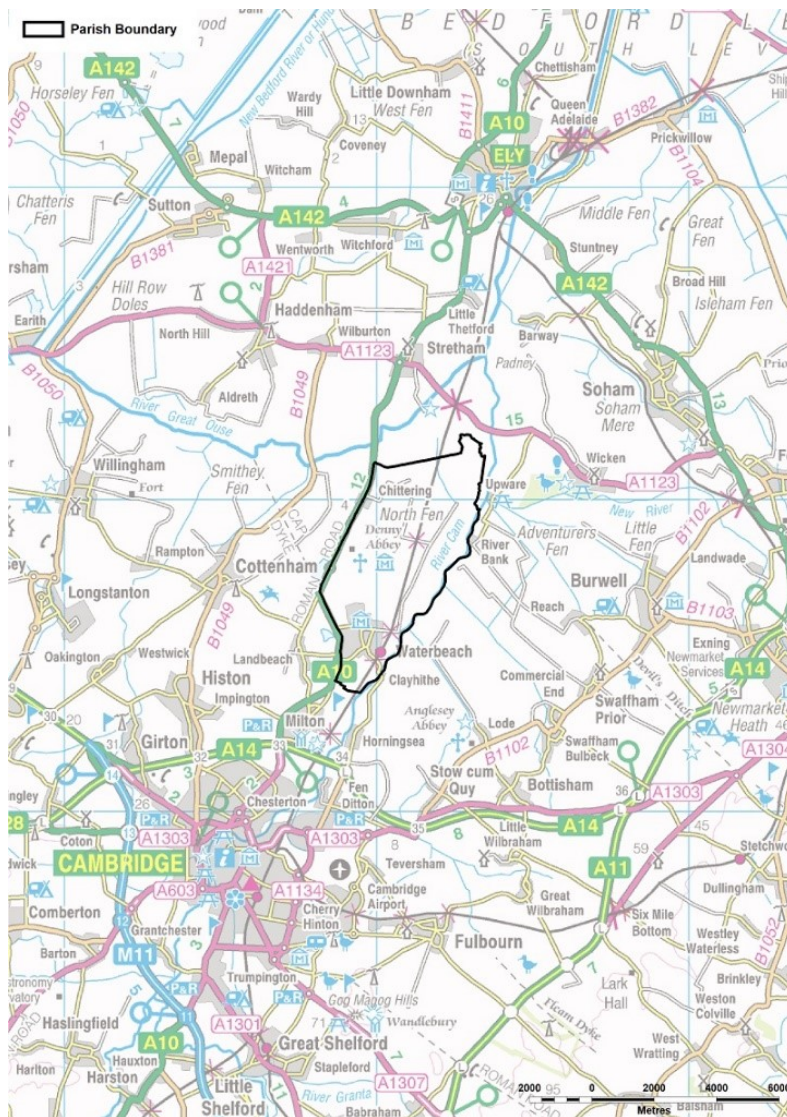


Map 2.2 Local Plan designations – village inset

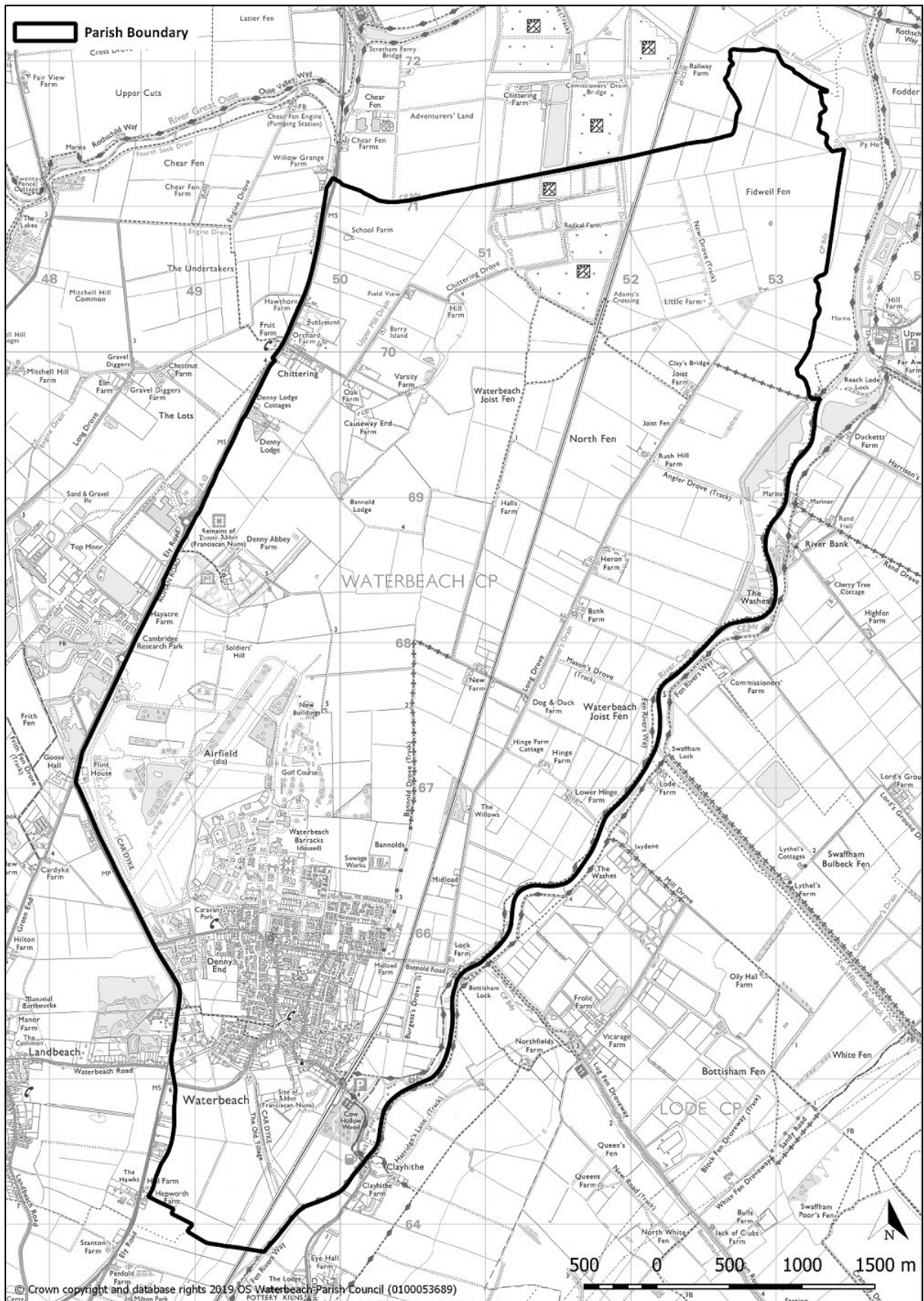
3. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

Geography

3.1 The parish of Waterbeach is relatively large in land area terms covering about nine square miles. The majority of this land area is undeveloped and made up of the fens and farmland. The village lies in the south of the parish and is about six miles north of Cambridge. The parish also includes the hamlet of Chittering to the north. Much of the land between the hamlet of Chittering and Waterbeach village is the former RAF base/army barracks. It is this area of land and adjoining farmland which comprises the Local Plan strategic site allocation of Waterbeach New Town.



Map 3.1 NP area and wider area



Map 3.2: The Neighbourhood Plan Area

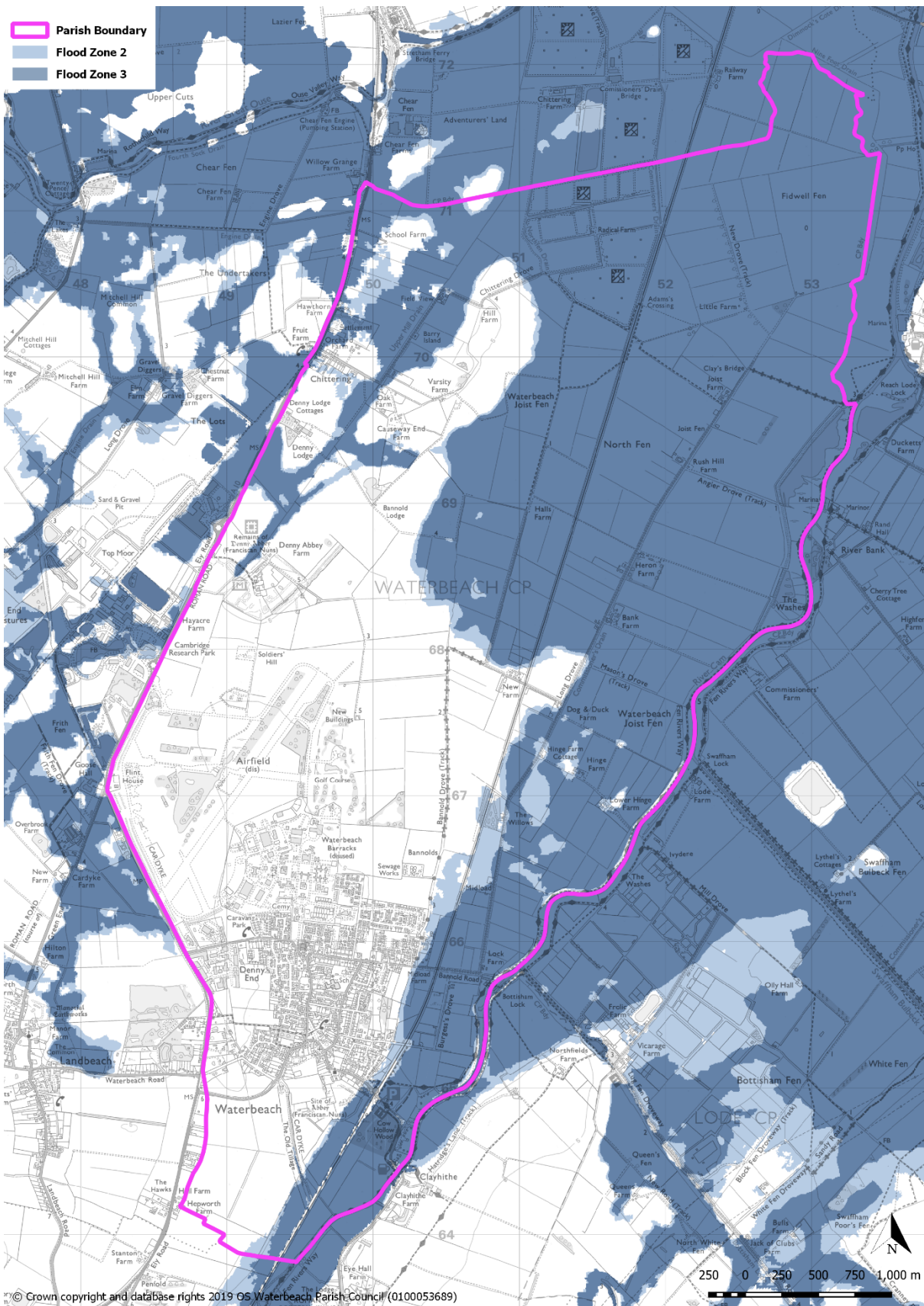
- 3.2 The A10 forms a western boundary to the parish and a rail line runs north/south through the parish linking Cambridge and Ely and beyond. Waterbeach has a railway station from which a regular half hourly service runs during peak times and an hourly service runs during the non-peak period (although the off-peak service is expected to increase soon).

Local Facilities

- 3.3 The scale of Waterbeach means it is well served in terms of local facilities for a village. There are a range of shops, a library access point, a range of community meeting spaces (Salvation Army Hall, Denson Close Day Centre, St Johns Church Community Room, village hall and community room), outdoor recreation space at Waterbeach Recreation Ground, and two allotment sites. There is also a primary school and doctor's surgery.

Landscape

- 3.4 In terms of landscape, Waterbeach village is often described as a fen edge settlement. The northern and eastern parts of the parish fall within the Fens National Landscape Character Area and is notable for its large-scale, flat, open landscape with extensive vistas to level horizons. The level, open topography shapes the impression of huge skies which convey a strong sense of place, tranquillity and inspiration. It is a large, low-lying, flat landscape with drainage ditches, dykes and the River Cam flowing along the eastern parish boundary. The eastern horizon comprises the Wicken Fen Vision area which is a 100-year plan to deliver 53 square kilometres of diverse fenland landscape for wildlife (we are 20 years into this plan). To the north east of Waterbeach Parish is Cam Washes, a Site of Special Scientific Interest which is a site on the banks of the River Cam composed of pastures which are seasonally flooded. It is described by Natural England as an important site for wintering and breeding wildfowl and waders.
- 3.5 The south-western part of the plan area falls within the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands National Landscape Character Area.
- 3.6 No area of land within the plan area falls above 10 metres above sea level.
- 3.7 The Cambridge Green Belt wraps around Waterbeach village in the southern part of the parish.
- 3.8 Map 3.3 shows the extent of the fluvial flood risk in the plan area



Map 3.3 Flood map

Population

- 3.9 Population, in 2013, was estimated to be 3,980¹ which marks a fall from over 5,000 in 2011. 2015 population estimates however show some recovery in population; 4,150 in 2013 and 4,420 in 2015. This fall in population reflects the closing of the army barracks (which was previously an RAF base until 1966) in early 2013. Most of the people reside in Waterbeach village with only about 100 people in Chittering and a similar number in outlying dwellings.
- 3.10 Since 2013, the population of Waterbeach is thought to have grown again and is expected to grow significantly further. This growth is linked to completed and planned housing developments. During the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2019, SCDC have recorded 351 completed dwellings (net) in the parish. As of the end of March 2019, and as reported in SCDC's 2019 Annual Monitoring Report, existing dwelling commitments in the parish include 9,000 for the Waterbeach New Town (through the local Plan allocation), 20 dwellings (via consent not allocated) on land off Gibson Close (now constructed), and further dwelling commitments for a further 20 dwellings on sites of 9 units or less.
- 3.11 An outline planning application S/0559/17/OL was approved in September 2019 for up to 6,500 new homes and associated facilities by Secretary of State for Defence and Urban and Civic Plc. The planning application covers the MoD-owned land (former barracks and airfield) that falls within the Waterbeach New Town strategic site allocated in the Local Plan. The remainder of the Waterbeach New Town strategic site is the subject of a planning application from RLW Estates. They have consulted the community once in April 2017 and a second time in November 2017 with their emerging proposals for their part of the site. Their proposals include 4,500 new homes in the eastern part of the allocated strategic site. They refer to their scheme as Fen Edge Area comprising Station Quarter, Fensteads and Fenland Parks. In March 2018, they submitted a planning application (planning reference S/0791/18/FL) to SCDC with proposals to relocate the existing Waterbeach railway station. This was approved on 9 January 2020. According to RLW proposals, the new station is set to open in 2021 and will be built for eight carriage trains with land safeguarded to allow future expansion to twelve carriage platforms.

Housing

- 3.12 An analysis of existing dwelling stock as well as other demographic indicators was provided by Cambridgeshire ACRE in 2017 in a report called the Demographic and Socio-Economic Review for Waterbeach (DSE Review). It is estimated that there were

¹ Cambridgeshire Population and Dwelling Stock Estimates: mid 2013, Cambridgeshire County Council 2014

2,070 dwellings in Waterbeach in 2015². Across the whole housing stock, detached and semi-detached are the dominant types although less so than in many villages. Terraced houses account for a quarter of all dwellings. Flats (seven per cent) and park homes (five per cent) also make up a significant minority of stock.

- 3.13 Affordable housing (see glossary for definition) makes up a similar proportion of the housing stock as elsewhere in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridgeshire. In 2011 there were 280 affordable homes available on a rented basis and 17 shared ownership properties. Together these accounted for 15 per cent of housing stock.
- 3.14 Market prices for both purchase and rent are beyond the means of many Waterbeach households. As at September 2018, there were 116 households with a local connection to Waterbeach parish on the Housing Register. The vast majority of need (based on eligibility rather than preference) is for small dwellings (2 bed or less) and is predominantly from people aged below 60.

Employment

- 3.15 As noted in the DSE Review undertaken by Cambridgeshire ACRE in 2017, the industrial structure of employment in Waterbeach has changed significantly in recent years. Prior to 1993, employment was dominated by the army barracks to the north of the village. However, a strong employment base in the parish has continued since the closure of the barracks in 2013 via, for instance, the operation of Denny End Industrial Estate. Business Register and Employment Survey data is available and excludes HM armed forces personnel (and the self-employed) thereby avoiding any data issues resulting from the barracks closure. It highlights that although manufacturing employment has declined between 2011 and 2015, it remains a significant employer in Waterbeach accounting for 18 per cent of employees in employment (12 per cent in South Cambridgeshire). Much of the growth has been in 'high-tech' sectors such as 'computer programming, consultancy and related activities', 'scientific research and development' and 'other professional, scientific and technical activities'. There has also been growth in construction and wholesale trade. Cambridge Innovation Park on Denny End Road has also been growing with the recent addition of Blenheim House to Stirling House.

Work- life patterns

- 3.16 The DSE Review reports that, unusually for a village, there are significant commuting flows in and out of Waterbeach. The out-commuting is largely accounted for by Waterbeach and nearby village residents commuting to Cambridge and by train to

² Cambridgeshire Population and Dwelling Stock Estimates: mid 2015, Cambridgeshire County Council 2017

London with a smaller amount commuting into South Cambridgeshire. The in-commuting is accounted for by workers travelling in from other local authority areas such as East Cambridgeshire. The level of commuting in and out of Waterbeach parish is also reflected in the figures on annual passenger usage at Waterbeach station. The Ely to Cambridge Transport Study published by the Greater Cambridge Partnership in January 2018 reports that annual passenger figures for entries and exits in 2016/2017 was 420,730. This has increased significantly since 2011/12 when total passenger numbers at Waterbeach station was recorded at 312,220, this again representing an increase of 118% since 2001/2002. The Ely to Cambridge Transport Study states that growth at Waterbeach railway station has increased fivefold since 1997/98. Overcrowding on the train is now common with some services not accommodating all passengers wanting to travel. Since the opening of Cambridge North railway station, passenger numbers using Waterbeach railway station have started to decline but numbers are still significant (recorded as 407,000 in the 2018/2019 figures published by Office of Rail and Road).

A Thriving Community

3.17 In many respects Waterbeach is a thriving community. It has many strong community groups and well-attended community events throughout the year. The annual village Feast, a major village event, draws a significant proportion of the village onto the village green for the day to see the parade, shows and community group stalls. For many years there has been a Christmas Carol service attended by hundreds of villagers also on the green. Both the events are run by the Waterbeach Community Association which organises social events and fundraising throughout the year. The Community Association also publishes the village magazine, the Beach News, several times a year.

Another well-attended annual event is the beer festival run by Waterbeach Colts football club which has now been running for 16 years. The village also has a thriving art community. An event which has been running for several years now is Summer at the Beach, an exhibition of local artists work, run over a 3 week period each July. The event also includes live music, other live performances and a pop-up café. Further examples of other community events include the Beach Sessions which provides the village with a diverse range of live music on a frequent basis, and annually the Waterbeach running festival and Waterbeach yard sales.

Waterbeach Community Groups include:

Guides and Scouts

Beach Bowls Club

Happy Folks Club

Waterbeach After School Playscheme
Waterbeach & District Gardening Club
Waterbeach Angling Club
Waterbeach Badminton Club
Waterbeach Brass
Waterbeach Colts F.C.
Waterbeach Community Land Trust
Waterbeach Community Playgroup
Waterbeach Cricket Club
Waterbeach Day Centre for the Elderly
Waterbeach Juggling Club
Waterbeach Theatre Company
Waterbeach Toddler Playgroup
Waterbeach Village Society
Waterbeach WI
WAY (Waterbeach & Landbeach Action for Youth) which runs the youth club

The village also greatly benefits from:

Beach Social Club
Waterbeach Military Heritage Museum
Waterbeach Independent Lending Library

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The key issues facing Waterbeach parish today are set out in this chapter:

Issue 1: Transport

4.2 Transport infrastructure is the number one concern shared by the community. In an early community engagement exercise undertaken by the NP steering group, the community were asked to rank in order of importance the areas of most concern. From a response count of 155, transport infrastructure received the highest average rating.

4.3 The concerns can be broken down into three key areas:

- Congestion at pinch points on the A10 between Ely and Cambridge
- Traffic volume and speed through the village
- Impact of on street parking on local business and residential amenity

Issue 1i: Congestion on the A10

Congestion at pinch points on the A10 corridor between Ely and Cambridge is undisputed¹. It is a significant issue with daily delays experienced in peak hours.

Who is it an issue for?

- Parish residents needing to access A10 during peak hours.
- Non-parish residents driving along the A10 Ely to Cambridge road corridor

¹ A variety of studies have been undertaken including the Ely to Cambridge Transport Study 2018, Feb 2018 (undertaken by Mott McDonald for Cambridge County Council) and a consultation undertaken by Jacobs in summer 2020 on behalf of the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r3jEcWWNf_SXP6RaKtFUjjeMKXoMrmJE/view)

Issue 1ii: Traffic volume and speed in the village

Drivers use the village as a through route as a way of by-passing congestion on the A10. Traffic entering the village from the A10 onto Denny End Road is often travelling at inappropriate speeds which impacts negatively on the pedestrian environment and residential amenity along Denny End Road particularly where this includes HGV vehicles.

Who is it an issue for?

- Waterbeach parish residents
- Children and carers walking to and from school using the high street entrance
- Impacts on village centre, conservation area etc.

Issue 1iii: On street parking in village centre

Unavailability of parking spaces close to shops and services. There is evidence of users of Waterbeach station leaving their cars parked on streets within the village all day.

Who is it an issue for?

- Local businesses
- Local users of local shops and businesses
- Pedestrian environment and residential amenity where parked cars obstruct pavement/safe crossing points



Figure 4.1 Commuter parking alongside St Andrews Hill at the Station Road junction undermining pedestrian safety at an already wide crossing point.

Issue 2: Pressure on Local Services and Communities

- 4.4 There is a concern among the local community that local facilities such as pre-school services are nearing capacity in the parish. There is a fear that this pressure will continue as the population rises due to a growing population from recently completed development prior to the additional infrastructure that is anticipated as part of the Waterbeach New Town strategic development.

- 4.5 There is a medical surgery in the parish of Waterbeach located in Rosalind Franklin House on Bannold Road. This surgery serves Landbeach, Horningsea, Clayhithe and Chittering. Currently the practice has three GPs. The surgery is very busy (as at 2017, it had nearly 5,000 registered patients) and under increasing pressure as new residents move into the area for example into the completed development on Cody Road. The Local Plan requires, as part of the Waterbeach New Town, the provision of additional healthcare provision including a new GP surgery, to be phased as new development comes forward. In the interim, the community and the GP surgery are concerned about existing capacity at Rosalind Franklin House.
- 4.6 Community groups run by volunteers are considered fundamentally important to the cohesion, sustainability and quality of life for Waterbeach residents. The biggest threat to the 30 plus community groups operating within the parish is their reliance on a relatively small pool of volunteers. To sustain the current level of community groups (and meet the increased demand due to housing development already taking place) it is necessary to enable residents and those working locally to achieve a work-life balance that enables them to become part of the essential volunteer work force by reducing time spent commuting and providing affordable housing solutions.
- 4.7 Historically many of the community groups have made use of the facilities at what was the MOD barracks. Prior to closure the barracks provided facilities for parish residents to swim, play golf and fish in the lakes. Facilities are currently used for Brass Band rehearsals, winter football training, Waterbeach Running Festival, Junior Triathlon Club and temporarily for Brownies (for full list see magazines from Waterbeach Barracks developer Urban & Civic). It is essential that existing facilities are safeguarded, that the new provision of facilities keeps pace with the recent new housing developments, and that there is no lag in the provision of facilities required to support the new residents of the strategic site. Facilities must be accessible through appropriate transport infrastructure.
- 4.8 The issue can be broken down into two key elements:
- Pressure on existing community services such as primary school and GP provision in meeting the demands of a growing population before additional infrastructure is provided as part of Waterbeach New Town.
 - Pressure on existing volunteering sector in the parish due to difficulty in recruiting volunteers and concern over meeting space facilities.

Issue 2i: Social infrastructure (e.g. schools and health) does not meet demand

Pressure on existing community services such as primary school and GP provision in meeting the demands of a growing population before additional infrastructure is provided as part of Waterbeach New Town. However, the recent expansion of the existing primary school provides capacity for educating village primary age children for the foreseeable future.

Who is it an issue for?

- Service providers (schools and GPs) and service receivers

Issue 2ii: Capacity of the volunteering sector in Waterbeach meeting demand

Pressure on existing volunteering sector in the parish due to difficulty in recruiting volunteers and concern over meeting spaces.

Who is it an issue for?

- The community as a whole

Issue 3: Cost of Local Housing

- 4.9 The average cost of a 2-bedroom house in Waterbeach as at December 2017 was £297,700 and the average weekly rental level in Waterbeach was £199 per week (average over the period February 2017 to January 2018) (source: hometrack). This is out of the reach for many local people and reflects the cost of housing versus average earnings district wide. The National Housing Federation maintains data³ for the purpose of monitoring the national housing crises. Data made available in October 2020 shows that the average (mean) house price across South Cambridgeshire was £408,857 and the mean monthly private sector rents was £1012.00. Meanwhile mean annual earnings in 2017 in the district were £38,766 giving the district an affordability ratio of 11 (higher than East Cambridgeshire and lower than Cambridge).
- 4.10 An indication of the need for more affordable housing is the Housing Register maintained by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). In September 2018 there were 116 households with a local connection to Waterbeach on the SCDC Housing Register. The vast majority of need in terms of affordable housing is for

³ Accessed via <https://www.housing.org.uk/resources/home-truths/>

small dwellings (2 bed or less) where this is based on eligibility rather than preference (i.e. a 2-bed property could include four people where a couple have two children of different sex under the age of 10 or two children of the same sex under the age of 16).

Issue 3i: Shortage of affordable housing

There is a shortage of affordable housing in the parish.

Who is it an issue for?

- Local residents who would be eligible for affordable housing not having access to adequate housing.

- 4.11 The cost of housing doesn't just affect those with affordable housing needs but also those reliant on the market to meet their needs. Housing costs will have the effect of driving many people away from an area in search of lower cost market housing.
- 4.12 The issue can be broken down into three related elements.
- Need for more affordable housing⁴ to meet the needs of those local residents who are eligible for affordable housing.
 - An increasing trend for Waterbeach residents to be working out of parish
 - A risk that local employers will not be able to employ local residents if their salaries are not sufficient to cover the costs of housing.

⁴ For definition of affordable housing please see glossary

Issue 3ii: An increasing trend for Waterbeach residents to be working out of parish

There is a significant level of in and out commuting of the parish on a daily basis. Whilst this reflects the employment opportunities within the parish it is probably that is also a symptom of the cost of housing within the parish. There tends to be a 'north to south' flow with in-commuters commuting from cheaper housing market areas to the north of Waterbeach whilst Waterbeach residents commute southwards to employment centres where housing costs are considerably higher.

Who is it an issue for?

- Waterbeach residents who may have to travel out of the parish (Cambridge or Cambridge area and some to London) to place of employment to pay cost of housing. Journey times can be very unpredictable. This has a knock-on impact for work/life balance e.g. young families where parents have to leave children in nursery for long hours
- Community groups within the parish such as Denson Close Day Centre, Happy Folks Club, the community car scheme, the Community Association who are increasingly struggling to source volunteers and consider (as reported during early community engagement with the community groups) a key reason for this to be the poor access (experienced by volunteers) to housing close by and cost/difficulty of transport to Waterbeach.
- Local employers seeking to employ local people and local residents if this leads to relocation of valued local businesses.

Issue 4: A Vulnerable Village Centre

4.13 In many respects, Waterbeach village has a strong and thriving village feel, full of character and providing a range of services (particularly around Greenside) including a post office, hairdressers, restaurants, pubs, takeaways, a pharmacy, a bakery, a coffee shop and until recently a family butchers. The much-valued family butcher's shop on the High Street closed down in October 2017 and has now been occupied by a local optician. The range of facilities and shops have declined dramatically since the 1970s and 1980s. In comparison with then, residents consider there is a limited choice in shops in Waterbeach village.

4.14 At an early stage of community engagement, local businesses in the Village Heart were asked about positive aspects, negative aspects and any specific needs they had. The following was reported:

Good Aspects:

- Friendly nature/good local shops and good community spirit

- Most of the customers were local
- Good access to road and rail access to Cambridge and London

Bad aspects:

- Bad parking and road network
- Unavailability of parking spaces for the local shops (and their customers)
- Traffic congestion through the village at peak times
- No bank or variety of attractions/shops
- Very poor facilities for pedestrians particularly at village stores

Some requested improvements:

- Improved parking arrangements such as resident permits and 3hr limit parking for non-residents
- Restricting through traffic on the eastern side of the green making this more appealing for cyclists and pedestrians but not restricting residents' parking.
- Cheaper business rates and tax
- More events in the village to attract more people
- Make village much more pedestrian and cycle friendly – priority for pedestrians and cycles over cars
- Areas dedicated to cycle parking
- A wider pavement outside the village stores

4.15 A key challenge for the Waterbeach NP and for the Waterbeach community is to make sure the Village Heart continues to function as a local shopping parade for local people as progress on the Waterbeach New Town comes forward. There will also be opportunities to be realised from the expanded customer base but retail facilities in the Waterbeach New Town could potentially undermine the viability of shops and service in Waterbeach village by drawing customers away. It also has some key strengths including its location in the attractive historic heart of the village close to other village amenities.

Issue 4: A vulnerable village centre

It is important that the village centre can adapt to change and be strengthened as a focus for local shops and services in the historic heart of the parish

Who is it an issue for?

- Owners/operators of local shops and services
- Local residents who are dependent on local shops and services to meet their daily needs
- For the village community as a whole it is important because it provides the village with a sense of identity

Issue 5: Development of the Former Army Barracks

- 4.16 The development of the former army barracks and land to the east of this area is undoubtedly a significant issue for the Waterbeach community. In the early community engagement work undertaken in November 2016, this issue ranked as third most important out of a choice of nine. Primary concerns are those associated with impact on transport infrastructure (covered above under issue 1 and impact on local services and community infrastructure (covered above under issue 2).
- 4.17 There are also concerns regarding the physical impact on the existing special qualities of the NP area including the rural nature of the settlement, the special qualities of the landscape, the impact on the River Cam and its setting and the impact on key heritage assets, in particular, Denny Abbey.
- 4.18 The community are also concerned about the quality of some of the development schemes that have come forward within the parish to date as well as the wider impact of the development on the identity of Waterbeach as a place. A priority for the community is that a sense of place is maintained or strengthened through the plan period.

Issue 5: Development of the former army barracks and land to the east and north

- Impact on transport infrastructure, local services and community infrastructure.
- Physical impact on aspects of the parish which residents and others have a particularly high regard for including the landscape, River Cam, Denny Abbey and public rights of way network (including bridleways).
- Concerns about the overall quality of development coming forward.
- Impact on identity.

Who is it an issue for?

- Everybody and the parish as a whole.

Issue 6: Potential Relocation of Waterbeach Railway Station

4.19 Plans are in place to relocate the existing railway station currently located in the south eastern corner of the parish within close walking distance to Waterbeach village. The Local Plan includes in strategic policy SS/6 a commitment for the relocation of the railway station and in March 2018, RLW Estates submitted a planning application (planning reference S/0791/18/FL) to SCDC with proposals to relocate the existing station. This was approved by SCDC in January 2020. The closure of the existing railway station will have direct impacts on those residents who are currently within easy walking access of the station. It is also anticipated there will be a noticeable change in the feel and character of this part of the village which currently experiences high pedestrian footfall and parking activity during the morning and afternoon peak.

Issue 6: Relocation of Waterbeach Railway Station

- Reduction in access to convenient public transport service for residents located in this part of the parish.
- Impact on street scene along Station Road including reduction in commuter parking, reduction in pedestrian footfall during morning and afternoon peak
- Potentially an increase in speed of road traffic if reduction in on street parking levels
- Potential for street scene improvements along Station Road

Who is it an issue for?

- Residents in this part of parish
- Important heritage assets in this part of the parish.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities

- 4.20 In order to inform plan development, the NP steering group drafted an analysis of the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This is an important part of the planning process since the NP should be (as far as is within its scope) focused on protecting the good, managing the threats, addressing the weaknesses and making the most of its opportunities.

Table 4.1: SWOT Analysis of the Waterbeach NP area

<p>The Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thriving volunteer and community sector • Strong sense of identity with events such as Waterbeach Feast • For businesses: Friendly nature with good local shops • For businesses: Good road and rail access to Cambridge and London • Semi-rural setting • River including cycle path during summer • Recreation ground and all open spaces • Heritage (Cardyke, Denny Abbey, Conservation Area and other locally important buildings) • Built environment varying character 	<p>The Threats (to the good)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer resources are affected by lack of access to housing close by and cost/difficulty of transport to Waterbeach • For businesses: employees increasingly not from Waterbeach due to barriers created by cost of housing. How sustainable is this for the businesses? • Work/life balance as employees need to travel further to get home • New housing in Waterbeach New Town: will it be too uniform undermining local distinctiveness? • Threat to existing identity as a semi-rural location
<p>The Bad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport infrastructure • For businesses: road network, unavailability of parking spaces to support local shops, traffic volumes and speed through the village at peak times. • Congestion around the green • Lack of buses • Limited choice in shops • Cost of housing • Local employees increasingly less able to live locally due to cost of housing • Social Infrastructure (example pre-school services) under pressure from rise in population before the Waterbeach New Town comes on board. • Poor access to facilities out of hours • Poor pedestrian facilities/priority especially at school and around village green • Some areas of poor public realm around village green • Limited cycle routes • Poor conditions of roads • Lack of meeting places 	<p>The Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new supermarket in the village? • For businesses: Attract more people through events in the village • New Town – more affordable? • Opportunities for self-build? • Opportunities for community led housing • Provision of high-quality landscaping providing a soft edge to the village. • Provision of a much-improved cycle and pedestrian network to Cambridge, neighbouring villages and areas of employment (e.g. Research Park) • Opportunities to improve public realm in areas around village green