



Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan

Made – November 2022

31st December 2020 - 31st December 2035

Gamlingay Parish Council

Foreword

A neighbourhood plan is a way of helping local communities to influence positively the planning of the area in which they live and work. It means we can:

- Have a say where new developments should be built and what they should look like
- Make sure there are enough community facilities for current and future residents
- Protect the local character and landscape, including important green spaces

Neighbourhood plans were introduced through the Localism Act in 2011. Gamlingay's Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory development plan and this means that South Cambridgeshire District Council must use our neighbourhood plan in determining planning applications.

People living and working in Gamlingay value and appreciate its special qualities – its rural feel, the wealth of amenities and local businesses and being part of a friendly community. Residents clearly told us that protecting our characteristic settlement pattern as a village with satellite hamlets and not eroding the open countryside are a priority.

The Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by a steering group made up of residents and members of Gamlingay Parish Council and will run from 2020 – 2035. The Steering Group have listened and consulted on a wide range of issues in order to draft a plan which details how we see our parish developing. Every effort has been made to ensure that the vision, objectives and policies in our Neighbourhood Plan accurately reflect the views and future aspirations of local people.

Samantha Martin

Vice Chair of the Parish Council

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group consists of: Christopher Barker, Sarah Groom, Rachel Lee, Samantha Martin, Kirstin Rayner (Parish Clerk) and Bridget Smith. The Steering Group would like to thank all the other volunteers who have given their time over the past 5 years to bring the Plan to fruition.

Contents

Foreword	1
Contents	2
Maps	5
Charts	5
Tables	6
Executive Summary	7
Vision	8
Objectives and policies at a glance	8
Housing growth	8
Local character	8
Local economy and employment	8
Community amenities and facilities	9
How we get about (transport)	9
Natural environment	9
1. Introduction	10
Plan location	10
Meeting basic conditions	12
Contributing to sustainable development	14
Climate change	14
Gathering evidence	15
Community engagement	15
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)	16
Regulation 14 and 16 Consultations	17
Examination, Referendum and Making of the Neighbourhood Plan	17
2. Gamlingay past and present	18
History and settlement	18
East West Rail and housing growth	22
Current demography and socio-economic profile	24
Local infrastructure	25
Public transport	29
Local business and employment	29
3. Our vision for the future	31
The Parish Survey	31
Supporting documentation	32
Business Consultation	32
Consultation (October 2019)	33
Aim, vision and objectives	34

Vision	34
Objectives	34
Monitoring and Review	35
4. Our policies	37
Housing growth	37
Justification	37
Affordability	38
Fuel poverty and climate change	40
Adaptability	41
Community Feedback	42
Summary	42
GAM1 – New houses and employment buildings	42
GAM2 – Site allocation at West Road	43
Local character	44
Justification	44
Community feedback	47
Summary	48
GAM3 – Local Character	48
Local economy and employment	48
Justification	48
Community feedback	52
Summary	52
GAM4 – Local Employment Sites	52
Community amenities and facilities	55
Justification	55
Community feedback	56
Summary	56
GAM5 – Community amenities and facilities	57
GAM6 – Reuse of the former First School buildings, Green End (TL 23647 52413)	57
How we get about (transport)	59
Justification	59
Community feedback	61
Summary	62
GAM7 – Transport provision on developments	62
GAM8 – Contributions towards providing new infrastructure for walking, cycling and horse riding	62
Natural environment	64
Justification	64
Community feedback	66

Summary	66
GAM9 – Landscape and natural environment	67
GAM10 – Gamlingay Wood	67
Appendix 1: Datasets and documents	70
Building Standards	70
Commissioned reports	70
Correspondence	70
Datasets	70
Environment	71
Local consultation	71
Planning documents	71
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Strategies	72
Appendix 2: Gamlingay's green infrastructure	73
Sites of nature conservation value	73
County Wildlife Sites	73
Protected Road Side Verge	73
Sites of Open Space value	73
Designated Local Green Space	74
Sites of sport, recreation and amenity value	74
Allotments	74
Cemeteries	74
Views and vistas	74
Appendix 3: Developer contributions	75
Infrastructure requirement	75
Infrastructure cost	75
Housing / employment development contribution	75
Appendix 4: Biodiversity projects	76

Maps

Map	Title	Page
1	Gamlingay location	10
2	Gamlingay Designated Neighbourhood Area	11
3	Development Framework and Conservation Area	13
4	Gamlingay's field system 1602	19
5	Landscape Setting	21
6	Proposed East West Rail corridor	23
7	Village Amenities Audit Map (2014)	28
8	Policies Map	36
9	Site allocation at West Road	43
10	Existing Employment Sites	54
11	Former First School Buildings, Green End	58
12	Walking Cycling and Horse-Riding Routes	63
13	Landscape, recreation and natural environment features	68
14	Gamlingay Wood – GAM10	69

Charts

Chart	Title	Page
1	Households by tenure in Gamlingay Parish	25
2	School children and students in full-time education in Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire and England	30

Tables

Table	Title	Page
1	Annual survey of hours and earnings	25
2	Environmental priorities	32
3	Provision of housing need identified in the BRCC (2018) survey by tenure, type of property and property size	40
4	Carbon Dioxide emissions from transport per capita (t CO ₂)	59

Executive Summary

Gamlingay was designated as a Neighbourhood Area in 2015. Since then the Steering Group has reviewed a wide range of published evidence, conducted workshops and carried out extensive local consultation with residents and businesses in order to inform the Neighbourhood Plan. All this evidence brought together builds a picture that many people who live and work in Gamlingay will find familiar, that:

- Gamlingay is unusual because it is not a dormitory village, it has a thriving local economy providing jobs for many residents;
- Local people struggle to afford homes for sale in the parish, in common with many villages in South Cambridgeshire;
- The surrounding countryside and woodland are special to the people who live here.

The Neighbourhood Plan is not against development – that would be impossible – but it does try to make it work for all those who live here.

The vision below describes what it is we are working towards – all the things residents and businesses told us they value. Six objectives set out how we (the Gamlingay community) think new development should help to achieve this. Policies specific to each objective set out detailed planning requirements (complementary to the Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework) that we believe are necessary to meet these objectives.

In 2019, a Village Design Guide for Gamlingay was produced in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council. This guide is supplementary to the South Cambridgeshire District Local Plan (2018) and provides more detail on the distinctive character of the village with guidelines on how new developments should be designed.

A Submission version of the plan was prepared, following the Regulation 14 consultation which took place in September and October 2020. All comments received were reviewed and taken into account, as identified in the Consultation Statement 2021. A Submission version of the Plan was submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council in August 2021, following adoption by Gamlingay Parish Council. The Plan was examined to ensure it complies with legislation. A referendum version of the Plan was prepared taking on board the modifications recommended by the examiner in his report and some minor updates. A referendum was held on 10 November 2022 and residents were asked to vote as to whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be used by South Cambridgeshire District Council to determine planning applications in the parish of Gamlingay. 76.62% of those that voted were in favour of its use, and 23.38% of those that voted were against its use. Following this successful referendum, South Cambridgeshire District Council made (adopted) the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan on 24 November 2022.

The vision, objectives and policies are summarised below. The full policy wording can be read in the relevant section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Vision

For Gamlingay to continue to be a thriving and sustainable community and an attractive, friendly and safe place to live and work.

The Parish will seek to conserve its distinctive character as a radial village with satellite hamlets and easy access to open countryside, while nurturing and growing local employment and community facilities to ensure an outstanding quality of life for all residents.

Objectives and policies at a glance

Housing growth

Objective 1: We will meet the needs of the local community by supporting new housing that is of appropriate size, affordable and adaptable. All new buildings will be built to high environmental standards.

Gamlingay already has plenty of large, expensive houses. What we actually need are small, affordable (to buy and heat) and adaptable homes. Policy GAM1 will ensure new housing developments provide a mix of homes, in particular affordable 1-2-bedroom dwellings and bungalows. Homes will be designed to be adaptable to the needs of occupants across the lifetime of the building.

Since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2018 planning permission has been granted for 29 dwellings south of West Road in Gamlingay. The site allocation for West Road is in policy GAM2.

Local character

Objective 2: In order to maintain the integrity of Gamlingay as a radial village with satellite hamlets and smallholdings, we will protect the open countryside and landscape setting. We will protect our built heritage. Alterations to existing buildings and new buildings will reflect and contribute to the strong character of the built heritage expressed in the Village Design Guide.

People born in Gamlingay and the people who move here love living in a rural area. The Plan will ensure the right kind of development in the right places and in keeping with its built heritage and surroundings. Policy GAM3 will ensure housing is located and designed to prevent the village, the hamlets and smallholdings from joining up, to preserve the visual quality of the landscape and to retain the separate identities of the settlements. Housing and employment buildings will draw upon the scale, form, materiality and massing of existing vernacular buildings (e.g. traditional barns) described in the Village Design Guide.

Local economy and employment

Objective 3: We will nurture and grow local businesses to sustain and develop new employment opportunities in the parish for our residents.

We need a mix of local jobs available and easily accessible for residents. Policy GAM4 will support and develop existing local employment sites such as Station Road & Green End

Industrial Sites, Church Street and Drove Road, where appropriate. All proposals will be expected to protect landscape features and to not cause adverse impact on the rural environment or nearby residents.

Community amenities and facilities

Objective 4: We will protect valued local amenities and seek developer contributions to ensure that local facilities adapt to meet the needs of our growing community.

Our Neighbourhood Plan will give local people the opportunity to say what development they want and where. Policy GAM6 will ensure that all new developments address the impact they are likely to have on community amenities and facilities. In particular, developments will be expected to contribute towards new facilities to enable more cycling, walking and riding.

In 2019, 524 people signed a petition to retain the former First School field as a formal recreation space for sport and informal recreation use in perpetuity. Policy GAM6 supports development of the former First School buildings for educational and community uses and safeguards the site for 10 years.

How we get about (transport)

Objective 5: We will develop a network of paths to promote walking, cycling and riding for everyday journeys and recreation. We will reduce congestion by encouraging more parking provision.

Congestion, parking and speeding have put people off walking, cycling and riding in Gamlingay. We need better, safer places to walk, bike and ride. Developer contributions to Gamlingay's Cycle and Footway Improvement Plan are the way to help that happen. Policy GAM7 will ensure all new housing is located within convenient walking or cycling distance to village facilities with developments expected to provide appropriate car parking. Policy GAM8 outlines how developments will contribute towards the provision and maintenance of new paths between the village, hamlets, employment sites and neighbouring villages.

Natural environment

Objective 6: We will protect and enhance the natural environment and the biodiversity of the parish.

Our green spaces ('green infrastructure') is important to us in Gamlingay. By consolidating green spaces in line with the Cycle and Footway Improvement Plan, we can make it easier for people to access and enjoy the open countryside. We also need to continue to protect wildlife and wildlife habitats, especially Gamlingay Wood. Policy GAM9 will support this through requiring developers to protect and enhance the wildlife value within their proposals, ensuring developments do not harm our important views and vistas in and around the village. Policy GAM10 safeguards the immediate vicinity around Gamlingay Wood to protect it from harmful development.

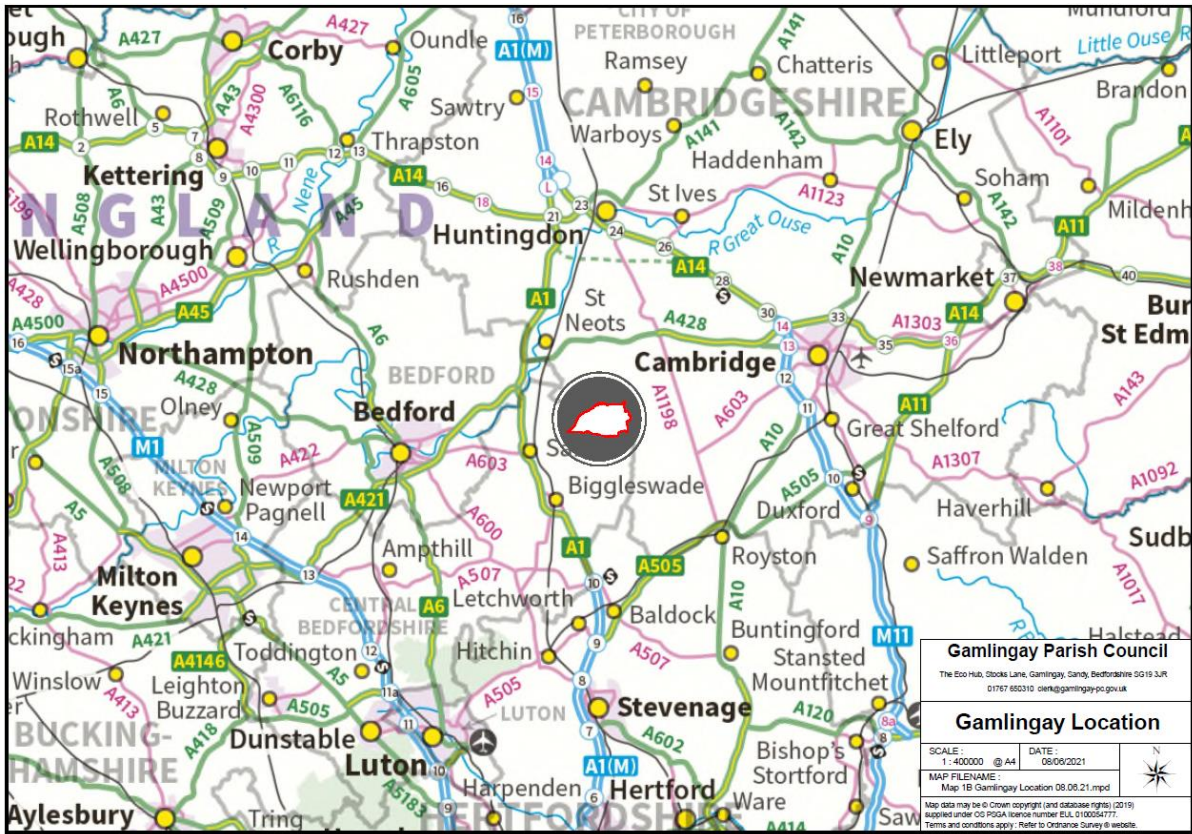
Disclaimer: members of the Steering Group hereby declare that they have received no financial incentive to prepare this Plan and will not benefit financially from its adoption.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan process enables communities to better shape their place, to inform how development takes place and helps to influence the type, quality and location of that development, ensuring that change also brings local benefit. This is our opportunity to use the planning system to address the challenges and opportunities facing the future vitality of the parish.
- 1.2 This Neighbourhood Plan aims to make the parish of Gamlingay an even better place to live and work, now and for future generations. It covers a 15-year period 31st December 2020 to 31st December 2035 with a review every 5 years. It is based on extensive research and robust engagement with the local community. This Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for South Cambridgeshire alongside the adopted Local Plan. Planning applications must by law be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

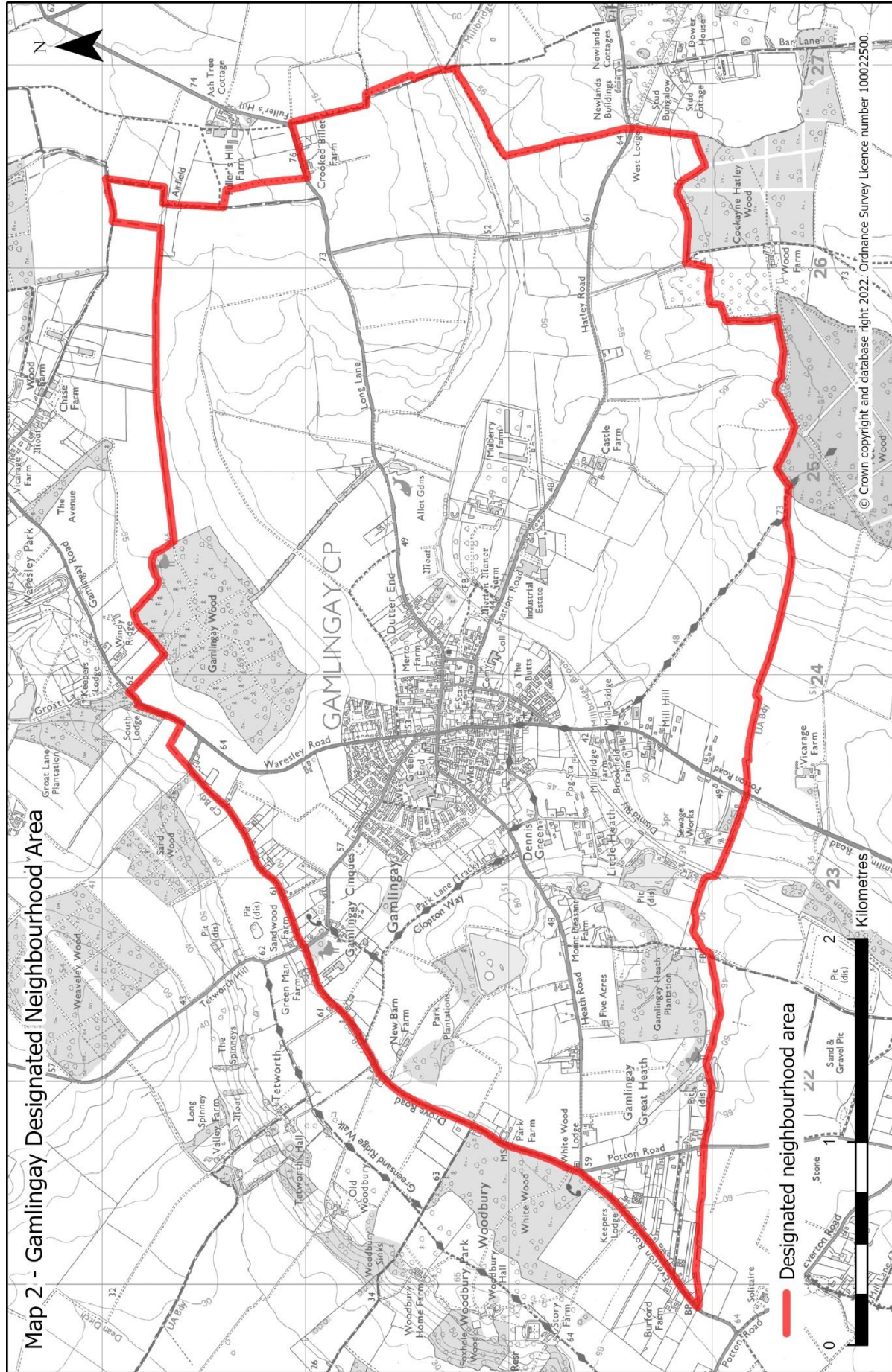
Plan location

- 1.3 Gamlingay Parish was designated as a neighbourhood area (for the purpose of preparing a plan) on 3rd February 2015 (see Map 2). The parish is about 15 miles west of Cambridge, on the border of South Cambridgeshire with Central Bedfordshire and within easy commuting distance of Bedford, Cambridge, London (by train), Milton Keynes and Stevenage. The village lies on the B1040 which runs from Biggleswade to St Ives. The market towns of Pottun, Sandy, St Neots and Biggleswade are from 3 to 9 miles distant, and in close proximity to the A1.



— Parish / Designated Neighbourhood Area

Map 1: Gamlingay location



Map 2: Gamlingay Designated Neighbourhood Area

Meeting basic conditions

1.4 Gamlingay's Neighbourhood Plan was prepared by residents and members of Gamlingay Parish Council working as part of a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group, with support from the Gamlingay Parish Clerk. Additional technical support has been provided by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Locality¹.

1.5 Paragraph 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) states:

“Plans should:

- a) be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;*
- b) be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;*
- c) be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;*
- d) contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;*
- e) be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and*
- f) serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant)”.*

1.6 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (the Local Plan) provides the strategic context for our Neighbourhood Plan. In the Local Plan, Gamlingay has been designated as a Minor Rural Centre². Policy S/9 **Minor Rural Centres** states that:

“Residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 30 dwellings will be permitted within the development frameworks of Minor Rural Centres, as defined on the Policies Map.”

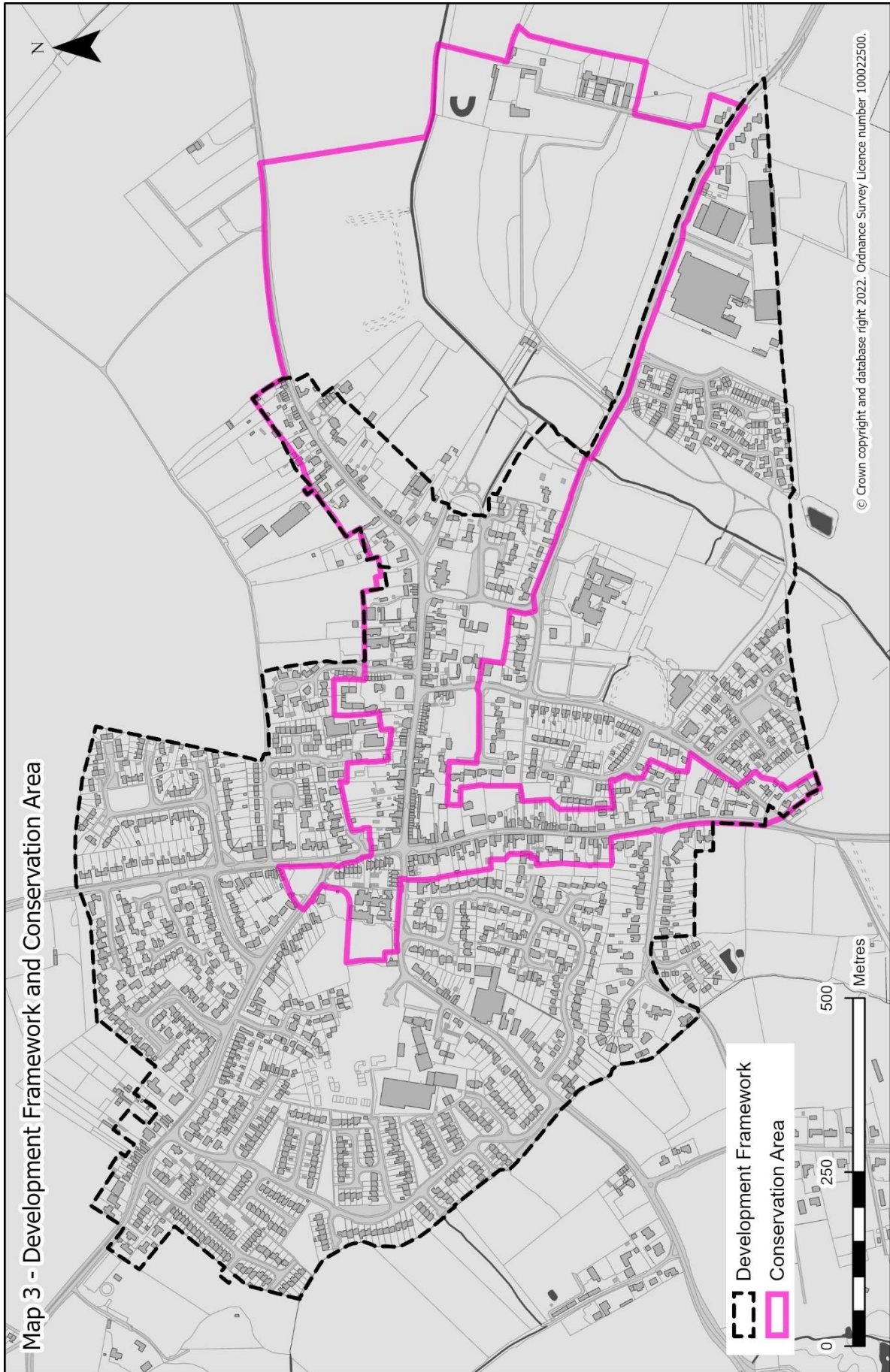
1.7 The development framework is the area within which development is ordinarily permitted subject to compliance with the applicable, prevailing local and national planning policies. Local Plan paragraph 2.50 notes the “development frameworks define where policies for the built-up areas of settlements give way to policies for the countryside”. Development may be permitted within the boundary marked around Gamlingay village (see map 3, overleaf). Although this policy should prevent the village of Gamlingay merging with the hamlets within the parish, the community still considers itself vulnerable to too much development. This would risk the loss of rural character and valued open space.

1.8 Once the Plan has secured the consent of local people via a referendum, the community will be in a position to benefit from 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) arising from any development that takes place in the Plan Area³. This can be used for community projects that support the vision and aims in the Plan. Additionally, CIL monies can act as leverage on a range of other public funds and programmes providing a platform for community investment.

¹ Locality is the national membership network supporting local community organisations to be strong and successful, <https://locality.org.uk/>. They run a dedicated neighbourhood planning website (<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/>) and provide grant funding and/or technical support (via application) on behalf of the Government to support the development of neighbourhood plans.

² South Cambridgeshire Local Plan was adopted on 27 September 2018. See appendix 1.

³ South Cambridgeshire District Council does not have a formal CIL strategy at present.



Map 3: Development Framework and Conservation Area

- 1.9 This Plan is accompanied by a basic conditions statement, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report, Gamlingay Parish and South Cambridgeshire District Council SEA Screening Determination Statement and the Strategic Environmental Assessment⁴.

Contributing to sustainable development

- 1.10 People living in Gamlingay appreciate the special qualities the parish possesses. It is a great place to live and in accommodating housing growth it will be vital that the qualities which make Gamlingay special are protected. Current residents accept that more people will want to come and live here, and this is important to any thriving and evolving community. However, it is essential that the very qualities that make Gamlingay special are not lost along the way.
- 1.11 Sustainable development is about positive growth ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (paragraph 7, NPPF 2021). The planning system contributes to the three dimensions of sustainable development in the following ways:

Economic – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy

Social – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities

Environmental – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment

- 1.12 To achieve this, a thoughtful and innovative approach is required, which works positively with residents, businesses, landowners and developers, and takes continuing interest in the future of the parish. This Neighbourhood Plan promotes local employment, reducing the need to travel and improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure. It encourages developers to build new housing and employment premises that meet local needs, respect local character and are of a high environmental standard. It aims to safeguard green spaces within the village, places of biodiversity value in the parish and the rural separation from the hamlets which gives the parish its unique character.

Climate change

- 1.13 In 2019, South Cambridgeshire District Council declared a climate emergency. The Strategic Assessment (SEA) of this Neighbourhood plan notes that the district has had higher per capita emissions in comparison to the East of England and the whole of England since 2005 – despite higher reductions in the percentage of total emissions per capita between 2005 and 2016 (South Cambridgeshire 39.5%, East of England 33.3% and England 37.6%). South Cambridgeshire also has higher per capita emissions for transport than rural East of England and England⁵. Gamlingay is a rural location, bus services are infrequent and do not support travel to work; for most people living in the parish the car is their principal mode of transport, even for some of the shortest journeys.
- 1.14 According to the SEA, the effects of climate change, based on medium emission scenarios, will see an estimated increase in annual mean temperatures of between 2°C and 3°C during the period 2040-2059 compared to the period 1981-2000 in the East of England. The estimated change in annual mean precipitation is +20 to +30% in winter and -10% to -20% in summer, during the period 2040-2059 compared to the period 1981-2000 in the East of England. The areas at highest risk of flooding (Flood Zone 3)

⁴ Links to all these documents are available in appendix 1.

⁵ See Table 4.

in the Neighbourhood Plan area are adjacent to Millbridge Brook. Within Gamlingay, there are areas of land at medium-high risk of surface water flooding. An Environment Agency flood risk alert (due to an unstable underground reservoir at Vicarage Farm, Potton Road) affects part of the south of the parish.

- 1.15 This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to increase the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change by supporting and encouraging adaptation strategies. Such as: improving the energy efficiency of new homes and employment buildings; promoting renewable energy generation; rainwater harvesting and flood mitigation (e.g. utilising Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems); and promoting active travel. New residential and business units are expected to contribute towards new infrastructure for walking, cycling and horse riding. All new development (residential and business) is expected to deliver measurable, proportionate and appropriate biodiversity net gains.

Gathering evidence

- 1.16 Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of the Plan are informed by a range of published data sets, plans, reports and strategies, such as:
- 2001 and 2011 census data for Gamlingay Parish
 - Socio-demographic analysis from Cambridgeshire Insight
 - Housing and employment strategies for South Cambridgeshire
 - Commissioned housing needs survey and Village Design Guide for Gamlingay.
- 1.17 Documents are referenced in the footnotes where cited. A full list of documents used (including some not directly mentioned in this Plan) is listed in Appendix 1.

Community engagement

- 1.18 Extensive community engagement has taken place in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is essential to creating a Plan that the community will support. It also ensures that the Plan is compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations.
- 1.19 During the summer of 2015 four public meetings were held to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan and to invite volunteers to join in its preparation. The Steering Group also had an exhibition at Gamlingay Village Show (17th September 2015) to inform residents more widely. As part of engagement activities at the Village Show in 2015 a face-to-face survey was conducted with 68 residents. This built on discussions held during the summer. Participants were asked what they liked and disliked about the parish, including: shops and local services, community facilities, health services, education, parks and play areas, traffic, parking road capacity, public transport, housing types and sites, and green spaces.
- 1.20 In the following months the results were collated, published and with the intention of developing a village-wide questionnaire. Surveys used in the preparation of other neighbourhood plans were reviewed for that purpose too. In addition, during the first half of 2016 a series of consultation workshops were held for local businesses, landowners, and residents.
- 1.21 The former led to the creation of a local business directory of 140 businesses and explored the conditions needed for new businesses to start-up and the retention or expansion of existing employment. Residents were invited to two workshops to discuss design considerations for the development of housing on the former Green End Industrial Estate and building design more generally.

- 1.22 Children (years 3, 4, 5 and 6) were also asked what they liked most about the village and how they would like to see it develop. They designed their ideal houses, identified traffic as a big issue and surveyed the speed of vehicles travelling through the village, and predicted how the village would look in the future. Posters illustrating the results were exhibited in the Eco Hub and residents invited to comment during Easter 2016.
- 1.23 This community engagement helped to shape a detailed questionnaire which was sent to every household in the parish and further publicised at the Village Show in September 2016. The results were analysed and used to draft a vision and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan. The findings were grouped into themes, with each theme identifying the local issues for the topic and the proposed actions to address them. Further detail is given in chapter 3.
- 1.24 A need was also identified for professional assistance to provide an up-to-date assessment of local housing need and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) was commissioned to conduct a further survey with the help of Locality funding. Additional surveys were also carried out with residents of the parish hamlets of Little Heath, Dennis Green and The Cinques in 2017-18.
- 1.25 Throughout 2017-18 the Neighbourhood Plan was frequently discussed at parish council meetings and slowly took shape around busy schedules. In 2019 the basic conditions statement and draft Neighbourhood Plan were prepared for consultation and screened for the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)⁶. Further consultation with the residents and businesses of Gamlingay took place in October 2019 when each household and premises were sent a booklet outlining the draft vision and policies for the Neighbourhood Plan. This was accompanied by a series of drop-in events at the Eco Hub. Feedback was invited online, in writing and face-to-face at the consultation events.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 1.26 The HRA screening indicated that the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan was not predicted to have likely significant effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. No further assessment was required under the Habitats Regulations 2017. However, the earlier version of the plan that was screened allocated two new rural business development areas. It was then considered that both may have cumulative effects on biodiversity, because 'no assessment of these sites for their intended uses has been undertaken at this point in time'⁷.
- 1.27 The Drove Road Local Employment Site was proposed in the earlier version of the Plan that was screened. It surrounds Gamlingay Cinques Common County Wildlife Site and includes Grade II Listed '1 and 3, The Cinques', which could be affected by any E(g) or B2 employment development or associated residential dwellings. The effects of any development on the Drove Road Local Employment Site on the Listed Building '1 and 3, The Cinques' was unknown because at the time of screening there was unclear identification of development type or form at this stage.
- 1.28 Efforts were made to clarify the scale and extent of development expected on Drove Road. However, for the above reasons the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan was screened in for Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC. A SEA was carried out which then shaped the policies in this Plan.

⁶ SEA/HRA Screening Report, September 2019. See appendix 1.

⁷ Screening report *Ibid.*

Regulation 14 and 16 Consultations

- 1.29 Over 30 groups and organisations were identified and formally consulted prior to the Regulation 14 consultation in Autumn 2020. Other consultees contacted for views included neighbouring parish / town councils (including Potton, Waresley and Wrestlingworth), The Wildlife Trust, and Cambridgeshire County Council Rights of Way team. Local businesses received an individual approach in consultation, specifically catering for identified needs resulting from an initial survey approach. Landowners who expressed an interest in the process were kept informed of the progress of the Plan. South Cambridgeshire District Council met with the group at each required stage. Residents were informed of public meetings and informed through the local magazine, the Gamlingay Gazette, on the progress made.
- 1.30 When the Plan was submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council they carried out a Regulation 16 consultation in Autumn 2021 and the representations received during this consultation were provided to the examiner.

Examination, Referendum and Making of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.31 An independent examiner was appointed to examine the plan, and the Examiner's Report was received in March 2022. The Plan was examined to ensure it complies with legislation. A referendum version of the Plan was prepared taking on board the modifications recommended by the examiner in his report and some minor updates.
- 1.32 The referendum was held on 10 November 2022 and residents were asked to vote as to whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be used by South Cambridgeshire District Council to determine planning applications in the parish of Gamlingay. 76.62% of those that voted were in favour of its use, and 23.38% of those that voted were against its use.
- 1.33 The Neighbourhood Plan was successful at its referendum as more than half of those that voted were in favour of it being used to determine planning applications, and South Cambridgeshire District Council made (adopted) the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan at its meeting of full Council on 24 November 2022.

2. Gamlingay past and present

- 2.1 This chapter gives the context for the Neighbourhood Plan. It details a brief history of the parish settlement, outlines current demographic and social data, describes local facilities and services, local transport and local employment.

History and settlement

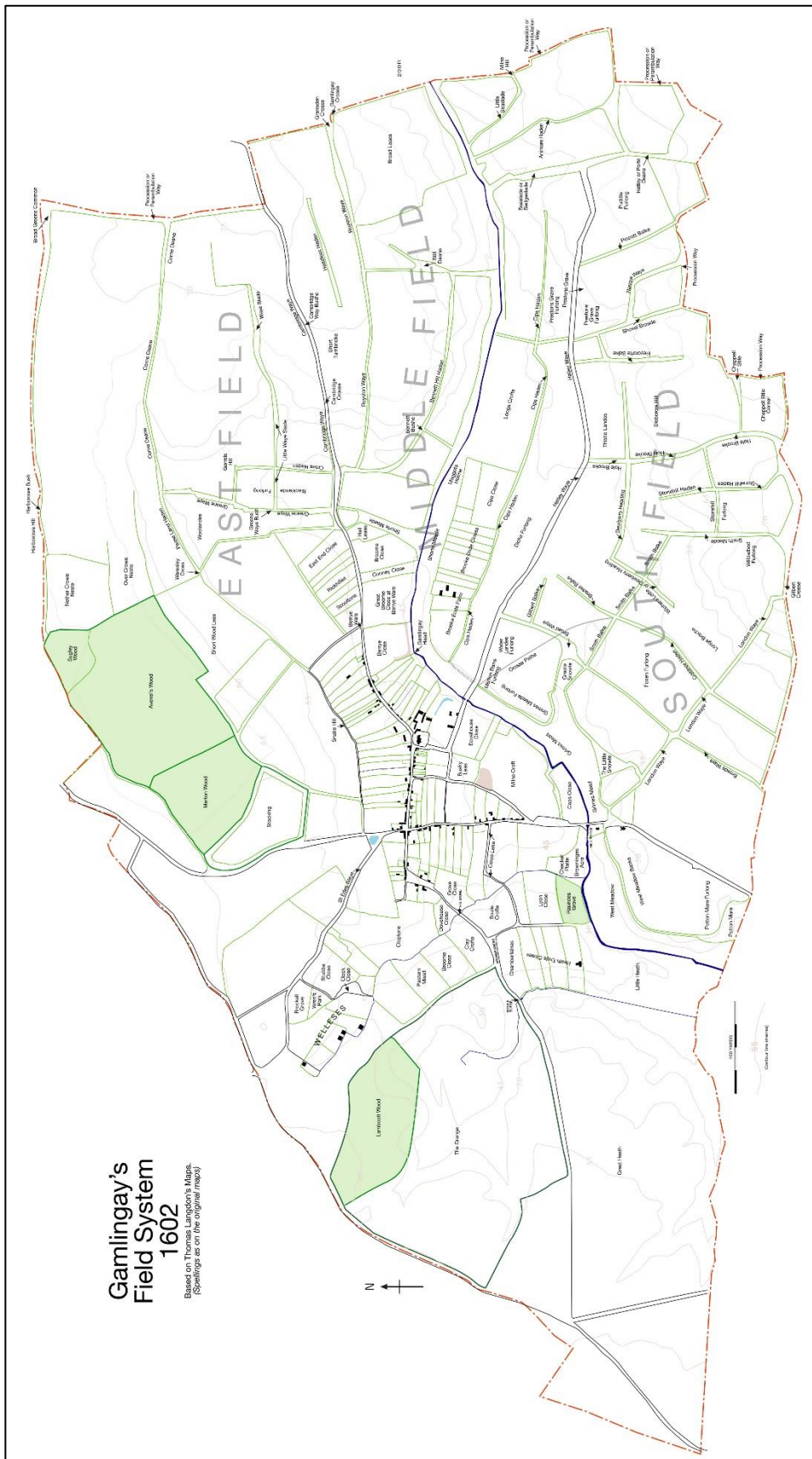
- 2.2 The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record records prehistoric remains and Palaeolithic tools found in Gamlingay Parish⁸. The modern parish boundaries on the north side adjoin Waresley and Tetworth, and on the southern boundary adjoin Potton and Cockayne Hatley in Bedfordshire.
- 2.3 A charter dating from c. 975 provides the earliest record of an established settlement and Gamlingay Wood is recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086. In 1279, Gamlingay was divided between three manors: Avenel's, Merton (part of Merton College, Oxford) and Woodbury. Merton College remains a major landowner to this day. Map 4 shows Gamlingay's field system in 1602.
- 2.4 Five small hamlets: The Cinques, Little Heath, Dennis Green, Great Heath and Mill Hill – a legacy of local agriculture and industry – radiate around a central village. There were extensive heaths and common lands around the parish settlements before the 19th century enclosure. The main village settlement grew from a triangular green by the church. Roads entering the village and crossing the parish have remained unchanged since the 17th century. Today local employment sites are situated on Church Street, Green End and Station Road in the village, on Mill Hill and along Drove Road.
- 2.5 Beside St Mary's Church, The Emplins the former 15th century rectoral house survives today; the sites of the three manors can still be identified. Merton Manor farmhouse is built on the site of the former manor house. The Grange was emparked by 1601 with landscaped gardens by the 18th century. To the west of the village, Gamlingay Park, an 18.5-hectare park, contains the extensive earthwork remains of an early formal garden laid out in 1712 for Sir George Downing; it is grade II listed on the National Heritage List for England⁹. Features of these gardens and pleasure grounds remain forming part of the rural character of the parish. The land today is farmed mainly as arable.
- 2.6 Bricks were made in the parish from 1601 to 1920 initially as a result of a fire which destroyed 76 houses. The buildings vary in style and material. The earliest buildings date from the 15th century and are timber-framed and plastered with plain tiled or thatched roofs. There are several outstanding buildings; the almshouses and chapel dated 1665, and the 12th century church are notable. There are 81 registered heritage assets including 62 listed buildings concentrated in the conservation area (see paragraph 2.8)¹⁰. Gamlingay's two surviving pubs, The Cock Inn and The Wheatsheaf Public House are grade II listed buildings.
- 2.7 After the Second World War considerable building activity took place to the north of the village. Later development, including the site of the former village college (now the primary school) filled open areas to the south and east along Stocks Lane and consolidated areas west of Waresley Road and to the rear of Mill Street. Recent development added 85 dwellings along Station Road. A number of smaller infill

⁸ The National Gateway. See appendix 1.

⁹ See Appendix 1.

¹⁰ The National Heritage List for England. See appendix 1.

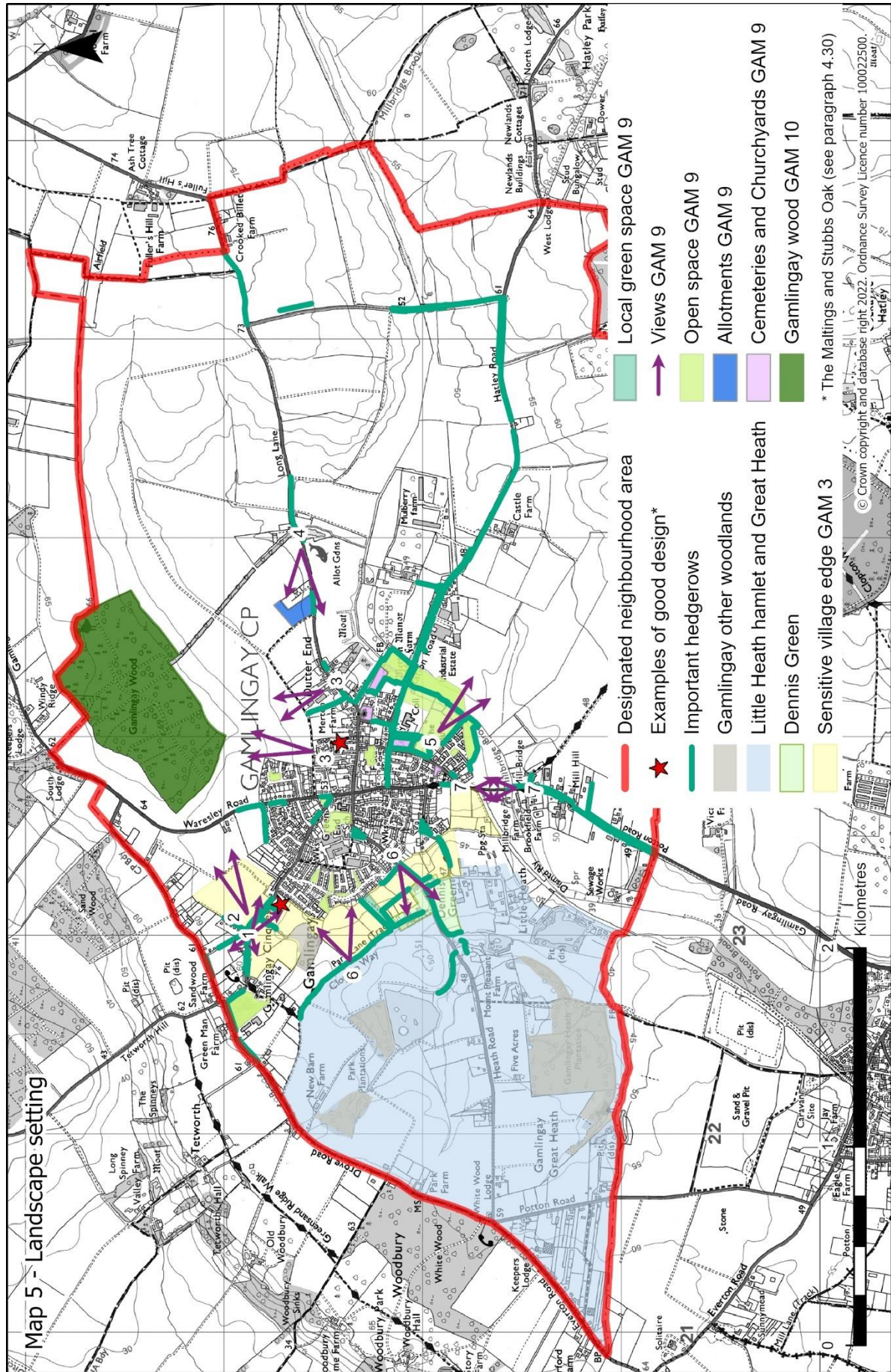
developments were also approved and built prior to the adoption of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.



Map 4: Gamlingay's field system 1602

- 2.8 Church Street and Church End with their low density, linear character and wide frontages give a rural feel to this part of the village. A conservation area covers a large number of Listed Buildings on Church Street, Church End and Mill Street¹¹. Modern housing estate to the west provides a clear edge to the village.
- 2.9 The parish sits across two Natural England 'National Character Areas' – mostly the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge to the west and the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands to the east. Gamlingay Wood is the best documented historic wood in England (over 750 years of recorded information) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (grid reference TL242534). Cambridge - Bedford Disused Railway (Hatley, TL2752), Gamlingay Heath Plantation (TL2251), New Barn grassland (TL226529), Gamlingay Cinques Common (TL226529), Gamlingay Cemetery (TL239521), Gamlingay (East) RSV (TL261526) and West Road RSV (TL235519) are County Wildlife Sites. Gamlingay Long Road (TL262516 - TL261529) is a protected road verge. The landscape setting is shown in map 5.
- 2.10 Sites of archaeological interest include two moated sites at Merton Manor Farm and Dutter End, and garden remains of Gamlingay Park.
- 2.11 The non-developed areas of the parish area consist of various grade soils. Grade 1 Agricultural Land ('excellent') exists in a pocket of land adjoining the eastern part of the development framework. Grade 2 ('good-moderate') exists in the majority of the eastern part of the wider Plan area. Grade 3 ('good-moderate') makes up a large area of the west and south-west parts of the Plan area. Grade 4 soils ('poor') are associated with the areas of heath within the Plan area. Grade 1 Agricultural Land represents the best and most versatile soil within the wider District context and also the country.

¹¹ Gamlingay Conservation Area (SCDC) Adopted 02.03.1973, amended 08.03.2000. See appendix 1.



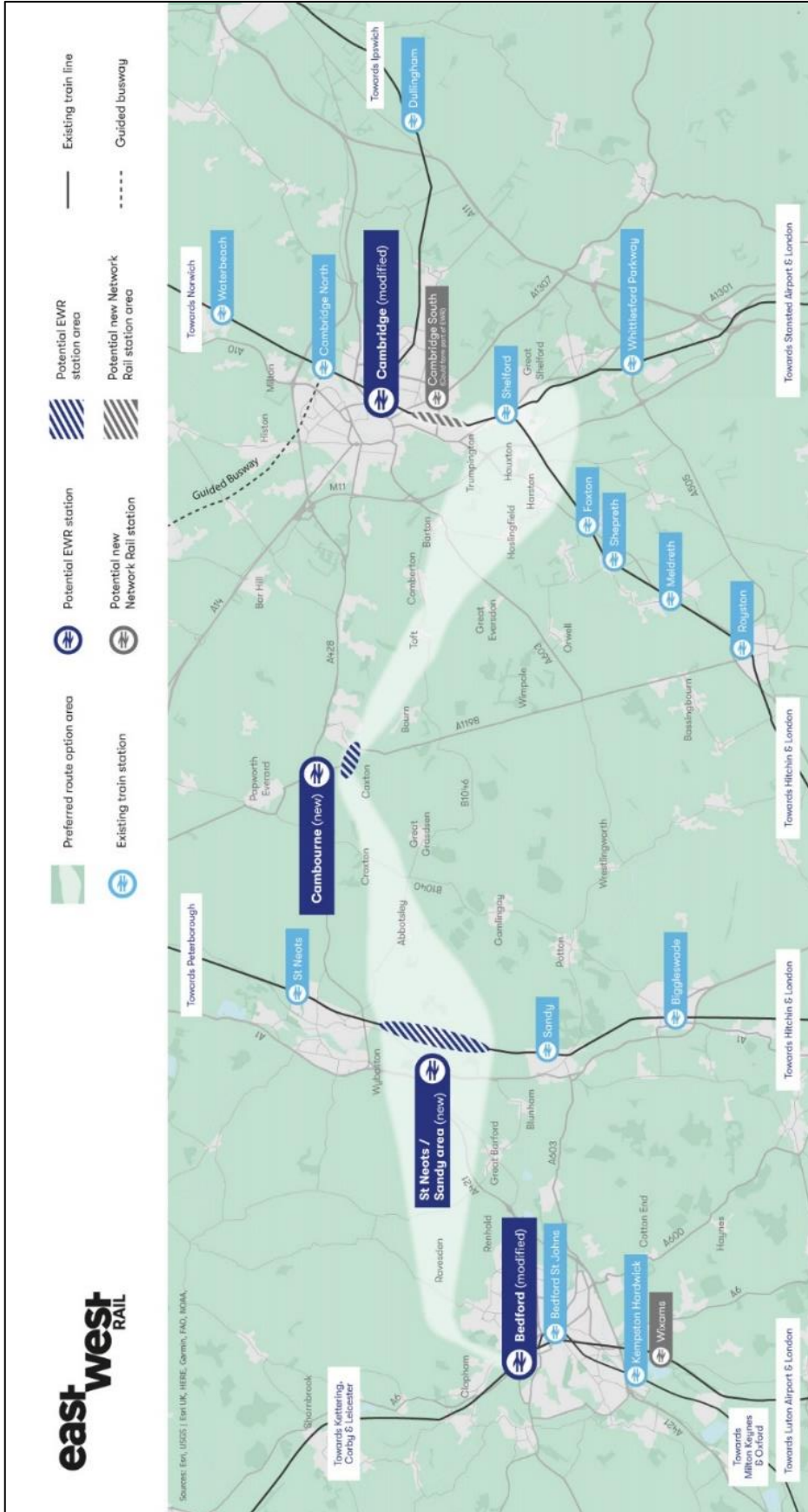
Map 5: Landscape setting

East West Rail and housing growth

- 2.12 The East West Rail Consortium was formed in 1995 with the objective of promoting and securing a strategic railway connecting East Anglia with Central, Southern and Western England. Funding for the Western section (between Oxford and Bedford, and Aylesbury and Milton Keynes) was announced by the Department for Transport in 2011. The East West Railway Company was established by Government in 2017 to accelerate delivery of the remainder of the scheme. In 2019, the East West Railway Company consulted on route options for the central section between Bedford and Cambridge. The proposed Route B would run north of Gamlingay, incorporating a relocated railway station at Sandy and a new station at Cambourne.
- 2.13 The National Infrastructure Commission¹² concluded that the new rail route provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to unlock land for new settlements, enabling the development of 1 million homes across the corridor that includes Milton Keynes, Bedford, Luton and large areas of Bedfordshire's countryside. Land at North, South and East of Tempsford (6 miles away from Gamlingay) has been safeguarded in the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan for future development, to be assessed further in the Partial Plan Review to consider the potential capacity for 10,000+ homes¹³. Construction and development at this scale will increase traffic and bring in more people. Together with rail capacity unlocked by the completed east west rail route, it will inevitably put pressure on existing infrastructure, create demand from developers for development land and have a detrimental impact on the natural environment in and around Gamlingay.

¹² National Infrastructure Commission (2017). 'Partnering for Prosperity: A new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc'. See appendix 1.

¹³ Central Bedfordshire Local Plan, pre-submission (2018). See appendix 1.



Map 6: Proposed East West Rail Corridor north of Gamlingay¹⁴

¹⁴ Copyright East West Rail, reproduced with permission.

Current demography and socio-economic profile

- 2.14 At the time of the 2011 census¹⁵, Gamlingay parish had a resident population of 3,568 (up from 3,535 in 2001¹⁶). The predominant age band was 'age 45 to 59' representing 22.25% of the total Ward population. Although 96% of the population described themselves as being in very good, good or fair health, 24% of households included one person with a long-term health problem or disability.
- 2.15 Gamlingay parish had 1,501 households, of these the highest proportion (38%) owned their properties outright (see chart 1)¹⁷. That compares with 34.6% for South Cambridgeshire district as a whole and 32.9% for the East of England¹⁸. The second largest number of households owned their property with a mortgage or loan (36.2%). However, almost a quarter of households (23.4%) lived in rented accommodation (council, social landlords, private owners, private landlords or letting agents). More detailed analysis shows that a third of Lower Super Output Areas in Gamlingay Ward fall into Decile 1 (representing the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in England) for the barriers to housing and services domain^{19,20}. 9% of households had no cars or vans.
- 2.16 1.7% of households had no central heating compared to 1.5% for South Cambridgeshire²¹. However, the Cambridgeshire Atlas of fuel poverty (2008-2014) reveals Gamlingay to have one of the highest levels of fuel poverty in Cambridgeshire: in 2014, 141 households were spending more than 10% of gross income on maintaining a reasonable level of thermal comfort (between 18 and 21C), up from 82 households in 2011²². This is exacerbated by the poor energy efficiency of housing stock²³.
- 2.17 Gamlingay had 143 households with dependent children aged 0 to 4, representing 9.53% of the Ward's households. 406 households in the Ward (27.05% of the Ward's households) had dependent children of all ages.
- 2.18 The parish had low levels of unemployment (2.9%); 69% of residents aged 16 to 74 were in employment (16% part time, 41% full time and 13% self-employed), 15% were retired. More women work part time (25.9%) than men (5.3%). However, a higher rate 6% of 16-24-year olds were unemployed (20 out of 326).
- 2.19 The highest proportion of the parish's population (23%) were employed in lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations²⁴. The highest proportion of 16-74-year-old males (20%) in employment work in manufacturing; an equivalent 17% of females work in education. The average salary for a resident working full-time in South

¹⁵ NOMIS: 2011 Census data, Gamlingay local area report. See appendix 1.

¹⁶ NOMIS: 2001 Census data, table KS001 – usual resident population for the parish of Gamlingay. See appendix 1.

¹⁷ NOMIS: 2011 Census data, table KS402EW – tenure. See appendix 1.

¹⁸ Cambridgeshire Insight: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Housing Overview Report. See appendix 1.

¹⁹ This measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: 'geographical barriers', which relate to the physical proximity of local services, and 'wider barriers' which includes issues relating to access to housing such as affordability.

²⁰ Cambridgeshire Insight interactive report for Gamlingay ward. See appendix 1.

²¹ NOMIS: Table KS403EW, 2011 Census: Rooms, bedrooms and central heating, local authorities in England and Wales. See appendix 1.

²² Gamlingay Ward is divided in four LSOAs; figures quoted are for SC 013C Gamlingay. These are estimates of the number and percentage of households in fuel poverty from 2008 to 2014 for Lower Super Output Areas in the Cambridge sub-region. See appendix 1.

²³ 211 properties in LSOA SC013C are listed as having EPC ratings F to G (data 2015). See appendix 1.

²⁴ National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification – 2.

Cambridgeshire is £40,050, for the lowest 10 percent of incomes the average is £19,184 (there is no data for the top earning the 90th percentile); there is a significant income gap for male and female full time workers (see table 1 below).

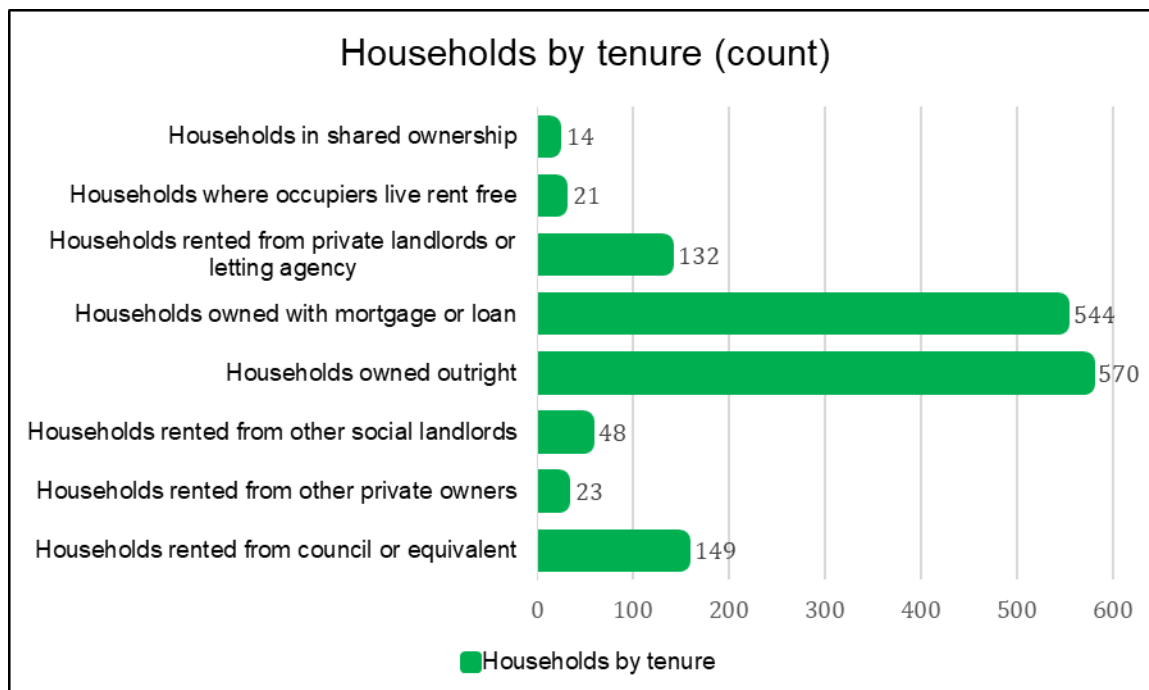


Chart 1: Households by tenure in Gamlingay Parish

Table 1: Annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis of gross annual pay for South Cambridgeshire (2019)²⁵

	£Average income (median)	10th percentile
Male full-time workers	43,634	24,768
Male part-time workers	No data	No data
Female full-time workers	29,036	16,173
Female part-time workers	13,687	No data
Male	42,000	20,130
Female	24,900	No data
Full time	40,050	19,184
Part time	13,089	No data

2.20 Over a quarter (26%) of Gamlingay's residents have achieved level 4 qualifications and above, compared to 40% in South Cambridgeshire as a whole. 22% of Gamlingay's residents had no qualifications; this is noticeably higher than for the district as a whole (15%). 15% of the population held no passport.

Local infrastructure

2.21 Community facilities are shown on map 7. The village is served by a number of shops and small businesses including: the Co-op, newsagent, post office (and shop) and a hairdresser. The post office also provides banking facilities. Other facilities include a GP surgery, a pharmacy, a petrol station, two cafes, farm shop and two churches. There is

²⁵ The annual survey of hours and earnings can be edited to show the variables of your choice – in this case geography = South Cambridgeshire, date = latest 2019 data, pay and hours = gross annual income, sex and full/part-time = tick every box, and the variable = 10th percentile. See appendix 1 for the link to the Nomis website.

limited capacity at the GP surgery; in 2016 the practice list size per full time GP equivalent was 2094 patients compared to a national average of 1731 patients²⁶. The appropriate authorities will have to consider increasing capacity as the parish population continues to grow (e.g. 90 new dwellings at Green End). There are also two pubs (which provide a range of dining options), two restaurants and a takeaway.

- 2.22 There are over 50 clubs and societies in the parish (e.g. Gamlingay United Football Club, Gamlingay and District Gardening Club or the Gamlingay Photography Society). The Baptist Church, church hall, Eco Hub, Old Methodist Chapel and the Working Men's Club are frequently used for pre-school clubs, events and meetings.
- 2.23 The Gamlingay Community Wind Turbine went into operation in 2013 just outside the village. Entirely funded by local residents and businesses, it generates 10% of the village's electricity (about 206 houses per year)²⁷. Gamlingay Community Turbine Ltd gives 10% of its net income to a Tithe Fund for any project designed to improve the village, for example new goal posts and floodlights on the football pitch, LED lighting installed at the church and conservation work at Gamlingay Wood²⁸.
- 2.24 The Eco Hub won the RIBA East Award 2016 for the conversion of the old community hall and external areas to a zero carbon multi-purpose community facility. A ground source heat pump and solar thermal panels heat the building (a constant 20°C) and water, and solar photovoltaic panels generate all the electricity needed, feeding the excess back into the grid²⁹. The Eco Hub now hosts the local library and Parish Council Office and provides a meeting room and a large hall for events, sports and functions, a kitchen, a cafe servery, changing rooms for sports pitches, a new dance studio, a youth wing, seminar and meeting spaces. The multi-use Queen Elizabeth II recreation ground at the Eco Hub provides a playground, skate park and sports pitches – in addition to the bowls green and tennis courts. Gamlingay Village Primary (the former Village College) has gym facilities and a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). The adjoining Millbrook Meadows is well used by families and dog walkers.
- 2.25 All homes in the village are within 800 m of the Co-op on Church Street, but a proportion have to travel further to reach the Eco Hub. Residents in the hamlets (The Cinques, Little Heath, Dennis Green, Great Heath and Mill Hill) have to travel more than 800 m to reach shops and community facilities. Local employment is essential for the retention of Gamlingay's volunteer-run fire station.
- 2.26 There are two early years providers in Gamlingay: the Children's Montessori Nursery and Gamlingay Rainbow Pre-School. Two other childcare settings in the village closed in 2017, leaving a shortfall of places in the village. The two remaining childcare settings provide 46 places compared to the number of children living in the village and eligible for free places, which was 59 in summer 2018 and is expected to remain around this level³⁰. The Gamlingay First School was recently converted to an Academy and has capacity for 420 pupils aged 4 to 11.
- 2.27 The majority of Gamlingay should be able to access superfast broadband speeds (>24 Mbps) from a Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) solution. However, there are premises in The Cinques, Little Heath and Mill Hill too far away from their connecting cabinet to receive superfast speeds. The Connecting Cambridgeshire digital connectivity programme, led

²⁶ Greensands Medical Practice submission (2016). See appendix 1.

²⁷ See [Gamlingay Community Turbine \(gamlingay-community-turbine.co.uk\)](http://gamlingay-community-turbine.co.uk)

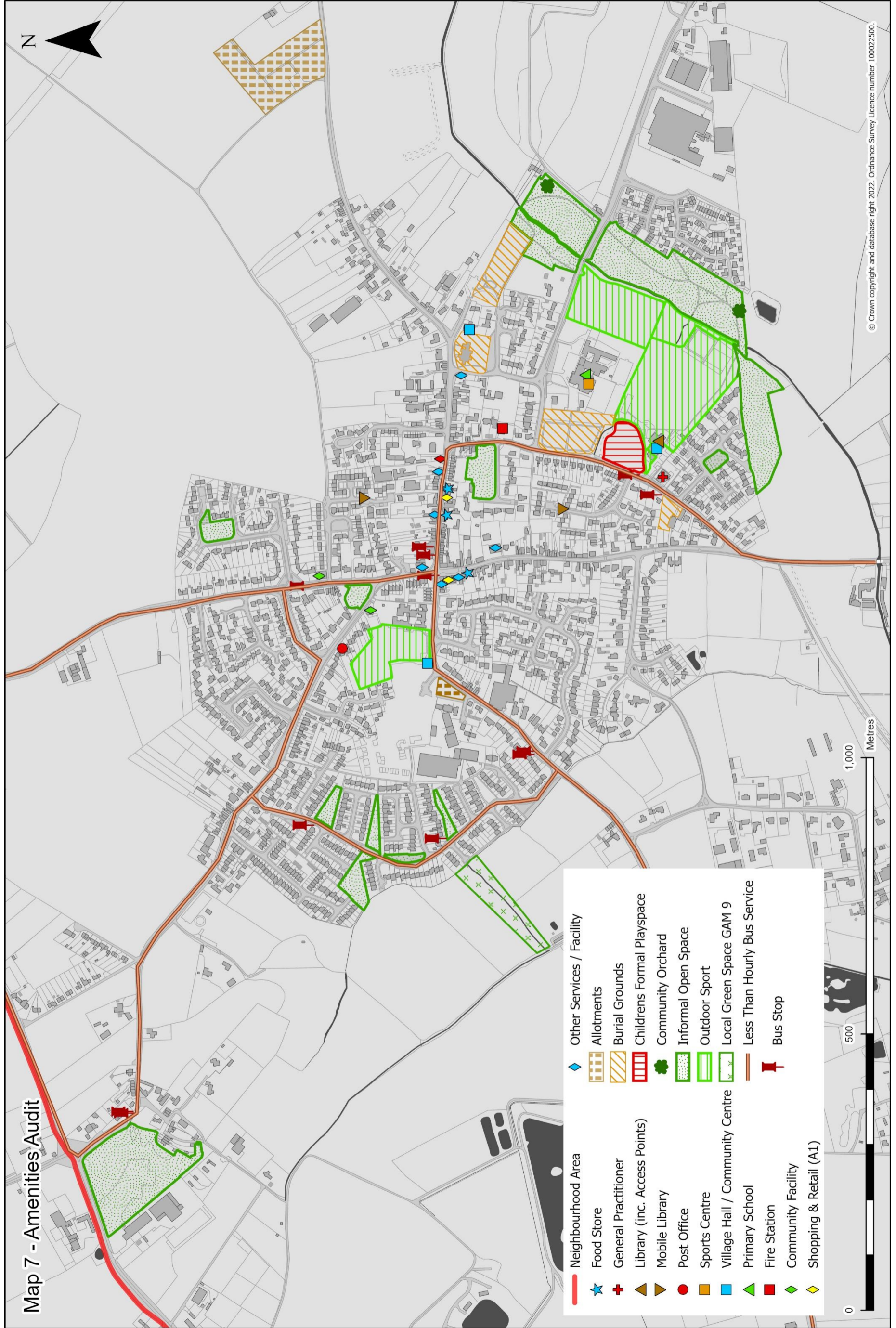
²⁸ See [Energised village: Gamlingay Community Turbine | Opus Energy](#)

²⁹ See <http://www.gamlingayecohub.org.uk/history/>.

³⁰ Jo German, South Cambridgeshire Education Capital Projects Officer letter to Richard Hawley dated 8th February 2019. See appendix 1.

by Cambridgeshire County Council, is being extended to improve mobile, broadband and public Wi-Fi coverage – particularly in rural villages across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Over the next four years, there should be a significant increase in the full fibre footprint across the area, improvements in voice and data mobile coverage (2G & 4G), better public access Wi-Fi and trials of 5G (next generation mobile)³¹.

³¹ Connecting Cambridgeshire and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (undated). 'Delivering a Digital Connectivity Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough 2018 -2022'. See appendix 1.



Map 7: Village Amenities Audit Map

Public transport

- 2.28 The parish is poorly served by public transport. There are two services. The 190/188 Centrebus³² service runs between Biggleswade and Sandy via Gamlingay, Everton and Pottton on their way to / from Hitchin. It operates six times a day, Monday to Friday, and three services on Saturday. The C2³³ service (subsidised by Cambridgeshire County Council) between St Neots and the Hatleys (via Gamlingay) operates a weekly return journey each Thursday (for St Neots market). There is also a subsidised Gamlingay and Hatleys Car Scheme run by local volunteers; it is a door-to-door service for visits to doctors, hospitals and other places. The majority of journeys are made by private transport.

Local business and employment

- 2.29 There are three employment sites in the village in Church Street, Green End industrial estate and Station Road industrial estate, with additional clusters located on Mill Hill and Drove Road (see Map 10). The loss of employment land at Green End (75% of the site was allocated for housing in South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (policy H/1 **Allocations for Residential Developments at Villages**: part f) has led to relocation and loss of business - and jobs - from the parish. However, there remains a wide variety of established businesses in the parish, including manufacturing industry (e.g. KMG, Pinewood Structures, RNT tanks and silos). Consultation with stakeholders for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plan led to the creation of a directory of 66 Gamlingay businesses (there are an estimated further 60 cottage industries / sole traders on a business email list) and of Solution Gamlingay – a responsive website and App specifically designed to support business growth in Gamlingay and Hatley³⁴.
- 2.30 Gamlingay has historically sourced most of its employment locally. The continued reduction of rural bus services has made it even more difficult for people without access to private transport to find work. Younger people are particularly affected and there is anecdotal evidence of young people leaving education and training due to the logistics and costs associated with commuting. This is reflected in the data³⁵ (see chart 2). 16-17-year-old schoolchildren and students account for 3.3% of the population of Gamlingay Ward (slightly higher than the Cambridgeshire and England average) dropping to 2.1% 18 years and over; compared to 6.8% for Cambridgeshire and 5.5% for England. It is a key strategic aim for the Community Development charity, Forward Gamlingay³⁶, to improve the opportunities for young people to gain employment and training locally from local providers.

³² See <https://www.centrebus.info/bus-services/bedfordshire/190/> and <https://www.centrebus.info/media/2074/188-190-hitchin-to-sandy-mon-sat-290919.pdf> and <https://www.centrebus.info/media/2768/188-190-biggleswade-to-sandy-mon-sat-03082020.pdf>

³³ See <https://bustimes.org/services/c2-st-neots-longstowe-orwell-arrington-croydon-the>

³⁴ See [Gamlingay \(solutiongamlingay.com\)](http://Gamlingay.solutiongamlingay.com)

³⁵ Cambridgeshire Insight, interactive report 'children, young people and education' for Gamlingay Ward. See appendix 1.

³⁶ See <https://forwardgamlingay.webs.com>

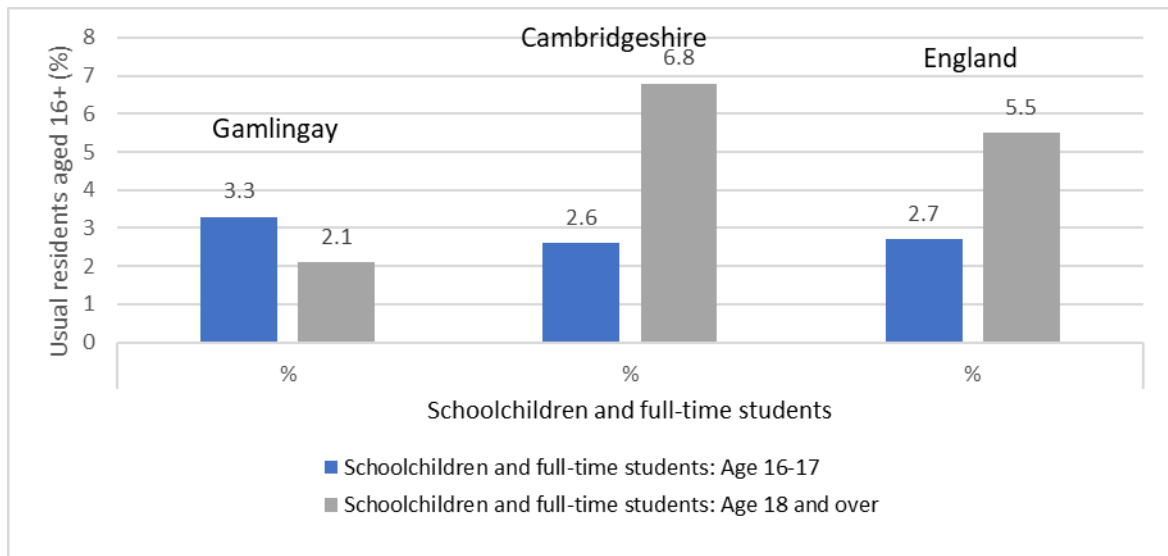


Chart 2: School children and full-time students in Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire & England

3. Our vision for the future

- 3.1 This chapter provides an overview of the parish survey, consultations and additional resources developed in the preparation of the Plan. These inform the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and form the basis of policies in the next chapter.

The Parish Survey

- 3.2 The vision and objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan were shaped through extensive consultation with the residents and businesses of Gamlingay. This culminated in a village wide survey (developed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group) delivered to every household in the parish in October 2016. Additional copies were available in the Eco-Hub and online³⁷. Individuals were able to respond to the online version or by completing the paper copy and posting it into ballot boxes at locations around the village. The survey ran for six weeks. There were 401 responses out of 1501 households.
- 3.3 The aim of the survey was to collate people's likes and dislikes about the community, identify local issues and to understand how residents want the community to develop over the next 15 years. This was essential to the development of a vision, objectives and policies that would reflect the views of the community as a whole.
- 3.4 Key findings include:
- The adjectives most commonly used to describe the village and wider parish hamlets (respectively) in 15 years' time were: 'safe' (83%; 80%), 'friendly' (82%; 72%), 'rural' (69%; 74%) and 'attractive' (47%; 48%). 38% of respondents wanted the village to be described as 'affordable' and 39% wanted the wider parish to be described as 'traditional'.
 - The biggest concerns with additional development in the parish were about: increased traffic (70%), oversubscribed medical and care facilities (59%), loss of countryside and/or green space between existing settlements (56%) and lack of adequate parking in the village (47%).
 - Over half the respondents said it was essential or important for the village and hamlets to remain physically separate from each other to maintain their identity.
 - Small housing developments (less than 10 dwellings, 27%), individual plots (35%), and a mixture of small/medium developments (e.g. 10-25 dwellings; 27%) were considered most suitable.
 - Thinking of their next home, the two top responses were to move to a detached property (36%) or a bungalow (22%).
 - Most respondents agreed that developers should make space for cars within the premises of a dwelling (67%).
 - A majority (78%³⁸) wanted new housing that was "designed to fit in with the architecture and character of the village and built to the highest environmental standards" (54%). 82% said new homes (and industrial buildings) should meet EPC rating A.
 - People thought that developers should provide energy from renewables (22%), the majority wanted the most efficient heating and lighting available at the time (69%). Only a few responses thought that conventional energy would be good enough (6%).
 - A small majority thought that new developments (53%) should supply a quarter of their energy needs (but 36% 'don't know').

³⁷ Gamlingay Parish Survey (2016). See appendix 1.

³⁸ Respondents could tick more than one option; 306 out of 401 responses wanted new housing that was "designed to fit in with the architecture and character of the village".

- Gamlingay already has a community wind turbine and most respondents thought land should be made available for renewable energy generation (wind and solar 27% respectively, geothermal 24% and biomass 13%).
- Almost a fifth of respondents worked in the village (18%); over two thirds of respondents supported light industrial use on Drove Road, Mill Hill and Station Road industrial estate.
- Respondents considered the following infrastructure to be 'poor': mobile reception (57%), roads (47%), pavements (47%) and broadband (24%).
- Many people would like to walk (41%), cycle (47%), use the bus (55%) and take the train more (39%). Very few want to drive more (5%).

3.5 Table 2 shows how residents' value Gamlingay's rural location. Protecting the open countryside, wildlife and retaining or adding to green spaces are the most 'essential or very important' issues. Good design ranks fourth. Improving and providing new paths for walking cycling and riding within the village, between the village and hamlets, and further afield also rank highly. 'Reducing carbon footprint' came top of the very important column.

Table 2: Environmental priorities (Parish Survey 2016)

Environmental Issues	Not Important	Somewhat	Very	Essential
Keeping/Adding Green Spaces	1	29	108	250
Protecting Open Countryside	2	16	98	277
Protecting Local Wildlife	3	22	108	260
Footpaths, etc within village	16	74	121	173
Footpaths, etc outside village	43	98	114	135
Good Housing Design	8	42	150	189
Reducing Carbon Footprint	21	83	150	138

Supporting documentation

- 3.6 The parish survey was designed by resident volunteers. As such the final result revealed the need for more information and a more professional approach to assess housing need. A Locality grant was used to commission Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity to conduct an up-to-date local housing needs assessment (the previous assessment was dated 2011). The results of this survey are referenced in the housing policy for Gamlingay.
- 3.7 Funding also became available for the development of a Village Design Guide (adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in January 2020). This is a document which complements this Plan, providing guidance on specific design issues including existing village character, landscape, appropriate design in the village centres, residential design (extensions, alterations and new build) and materials.

Business Consultation

- 3.8 From the outset in June 2015 and throughout the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan (culminating September 2019) businesses in the parish were approached to inform the emerging employment policies in the draft Plan.³⁹ This consultation included the following:
- Creating a business directory of 120 Gamlingay businesses

³⁹ A full summary of the Business consultation can be found in appendix 1.

- Mapping existing and potential employment sites and premises
- Holding meetings with owners of employment sites to ask how the Neighbourhood Plan could help them
- Holding two business development workshops, attended by 50 local businesses, to ask how the Plan could help them
- Creation of an economic development action plan created with a supporting project to develop a local business 'app'
- Circulation of two questionnaires to landowners and businesses
- Gathering feedback on draft employment policies at the Village Show in September 2019

3.9 We received feedback from just over half of the 120 businesses and spoke to 200 businesses owners and residents at the Village Show. The overwhelming majority agreed with the vision of the Neighbourhood Plan and agreed with the proposals for two new employment sites, at Drove Road and Mill Hill. However, concerns were raised – echoed in the Strategic Environmental Assessment – about the potential impact of employment development on the rural surroundings of Drove Road and The Cinques. As a result, this policy was changed. Problems such as slow broadband and difficulty expanding premises due to high business rates or obtaining planning permission were also highlighted.

3.10 Key findings of the consultations included:

- 80% strongly agreed with the vision of the Neighbourhood Plan
- 82% agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan should set aside land for employment
- 54% felt that Drove Road would be a good place for business development
- 60% of people felt that Mill Hill was a good area for business development and new employment
- 78% supported business development on Station Road
- 51-54% of people supported light industry as a suitable type of business for these areas
- 80% agreed to support existing employment sites on Station Road
- 80% agreed that places of work needed to be accessible by foot or bike
- 60% agreed that employment developments should be built to high environmental standards
- 60% agreed that developments should not obstruct special views and vistas
- 70% agreed that employment sites should address the impact they could have on community facilities

Consultation (October 2019)

3.11 In October 2019, an informal consultation was carried out by the Steering Group on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan⁴⁰. All households and businesses received a booklet summarising progress to date on the Plan, including vision, objectives and draft policies. Feedback was gathered via paper/online survey, public meeting, a series of drop-in consultation sessions during October, a workshop with businesses and a stall at the Village Show. There were 151 responses to the survey and over 150 people attended the different consultation sessions.

3.12 Key findings of the consultation included:

- 57% of respondents agreed with the vision
- 69.6% agreed with objective 1 on housing. Comments supported the need for more affordable housing in the parish

⁴⁰ A full summary of the October 2019 consultation can be found in appendix 1.

- 63.9% agreed with objective 2 on local character, demonstrating strong support for the areas to be protected from development to maintain Gamlingay's landscape setting
- 70.2% agreed with objective 3, local economy. Some concerns highlighted on the employment areas on Mill Hill and Drove Road have been addressed (through the SEA) to ensure they do not have a detrimental impact on nearby residents or the environment. Non-land use issues such as connectivity / broadband speed have been raised as community actions.
- 68.2% agreed with objective 4, community facilities. Comments supported the need for more amenities on the west side of the village, particularly shops and playing areas. Access to health services has been raised as a community action.
- 80.1% agreed with objective 5 relating to transport (how we get about). Comments supported the need for more cycleways, circular routes around the village and more parking.
- 65.5% agreed with objective 6, environment, demonstrating strong support for maintaining green spaces across the parish and protecting Gamlingay Wood from harmful development.

Aim, vision and objectives

3.13 The aim of this Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that the future development of the parish is carefully managed in terms of its scale and design.

3.14 Community engagement demonstrates that the people living in the parish of Gamlingay appreciate the special qualities it possesses. It is a great place to live and work. Current residents accept that more people will want to come here, and this is important to any thriving and evolving community. They understand the need to accommodate housing growth, but there is great concern that new development could erode the very qualities that make the village and its hamlets unique.

3.15 Six key themes which emerged from community engagement and which are addressed by policies in this Plan are: housing, local character, local economy and employment, community facilities, how we get about (transport) and the natural environment. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group adopted the following vision and objectives to reflect the community's views and aspirations:

Vision

3.16 For Gamlingay to continue to be a thriving and sustainable community and an attractive, friendly and safe place to live and work.

The parish will seek to conserve its distinctive character as a radial village with satellite hamlets and easy access to open countryside, while nurturing and growing local employment and community facilities to ensure an outstanding quality of life for all residents.

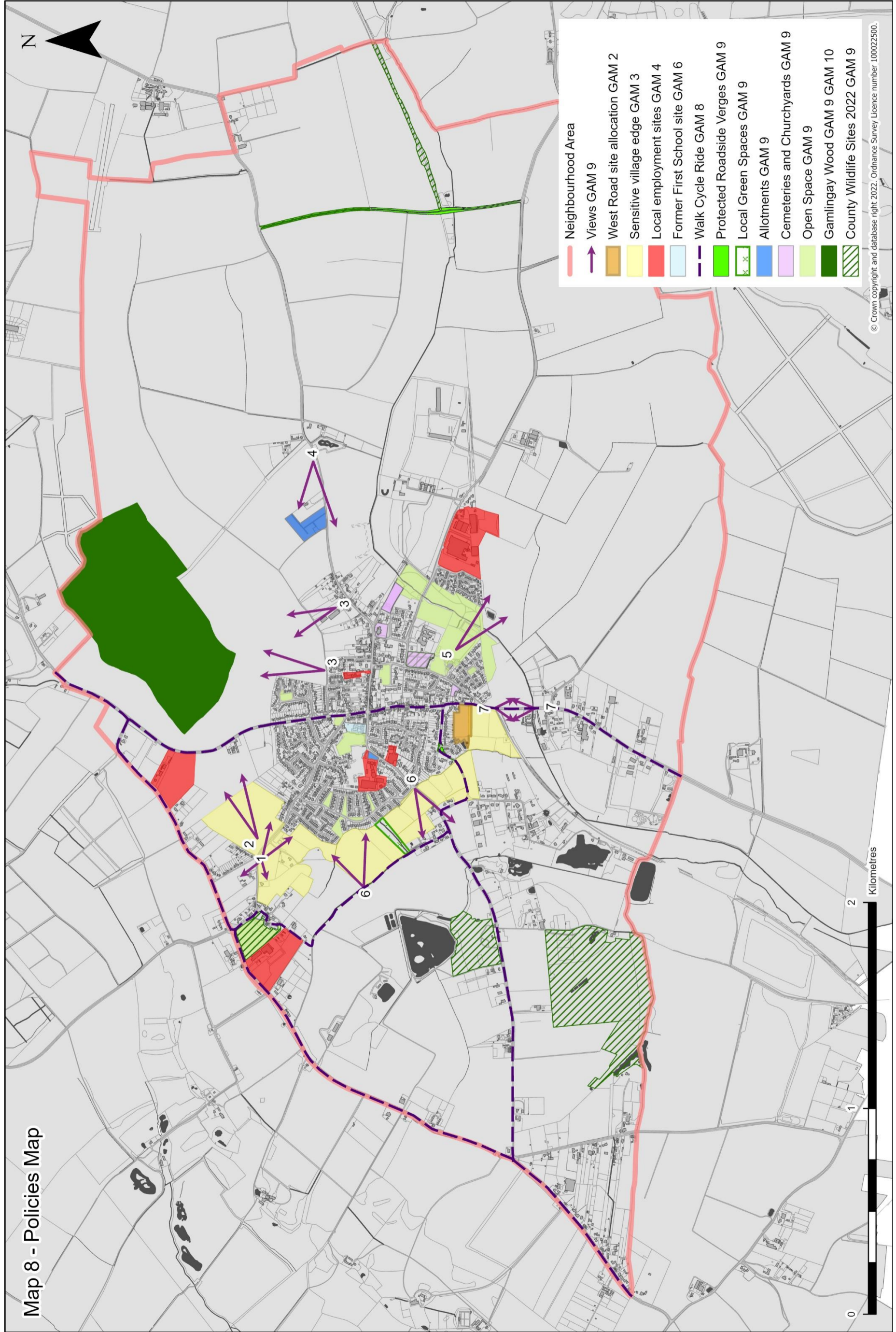
Objectives

- 1. We will meet the needs of the local community by supporting new housing that is of the appropriate size, affordable and adaptable. All new buildings will be built to high environmental standards.**
- 2. In order to maintain the integrity of Gamlingay as a radial village with satellite hamlets and smallholdings, we will protect the open countryside and landscape setting. We will protect our built heritage. Alterations to existing buildings and new buildings will reflect and contribute to the strong character of the built heritage expressed in the Village Design Guide.**

3. **We will nurture and grow local businesses to sustain and develop new employment opportunities in the parish for our residents.**
4. **We will protect valued local amenities and seek developer contributions to ensure that local facilities adapt to meet the needs of our growing community.**
5. **We will develop a network of paths to promote walking, cycling and riding for everyday journeys and recreation. We will reduce congestion by encouraging more parking provision.**
6. **We will protect and enhance the natural environment and the biodiversity of the parish.**

Monitoring and Review

- 3.17 The Parish Council acknowledge that circumstances may change within the Plan period. In addition, some policies will work better than others. On this basis the Parish Council will review the effectiveness of the Plan's policies on an annual basis.
- 3.18 Where appropriate the Parish Council will consider either a full or a partial review of the Plan. This will be based around the monitoring information gathered, and any changes to the planning policy in the wider District.
- 3.19 In particular the Parish Council will assess the effectiveness of Policy GAM4 given the significance of employment uses to the wider Plan. It will also assess the need for any modifications to Policy GAM6 once the County Council has agreed an approach for the re-use of the former First School site.



Map 8: Policies Map

4. Our policies

- 4.1 The following suite of policies has been developed to manage the future development of Gamlingay in order to achieve the aim, vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. Decision makers and applicants must accept the policies as a whole when judging if a proposal would be acceptable. Policies are designated GAM1, GAM2, through to GAM10.
- 4.2 To reflect the results of the consultation events undertaken during the Plan's preparation and evidence of local issues and characteristics the policies are separated into six themes – housing growth, local character, local employment, community facilities, how we get about (transport) and the natural environment.
- 4.3 Each policy theme is accompanied by supporting explanation of the local context, the local community's views on that subject and the evidence, plans and strategies informing the approach taken. All policies have been framed in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) and the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (SCLP).
- 4.4 Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is first and foremost a land-use document, several issues falling outside of the planning system's remit were identified by the local community during consultation events. Alongside its core policies the Plan therefore includes aspirations to encourage interventions by wider stakeholders. These are included within each topic where relevant.

Housing growth

- 4.5 **We will meet the needs of the local community by supporting new housing that is of the appropriate size, affordable and adaptable. All new buildings will be built to high environmental standards.**

Justification

- 4.6 The NPPF 2021 advises that planning policies and decisions in rural areas should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs⁴¹. Reflecting this approach, the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy (2019-2023)⁴² aims to build 'the right homes in the right places that people need and can afford to live in'. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (SCLP) policy S/7 **Development Frameworks** supports development of unallocated land within the development framework (in this case the village of Gamlingay).
- 4.7 The current development framework set by South Cambridgeshire District Council is identified on Map 3. It is understood that the Statutory Planning authority will undertake a review of all development frameworks for the emerging Greater Cambridgeshire Plan. This Neighbourhood Plan does not make any changes to the development framework.
- 4.8 New homes and employment buildings will be here for decades to come. In its 6th Carbon Budget⁴³ the Committee on Climate Change states 'there is minimal room for delay if UK buildings are to reach zero emissions by 2050'; it recommends that all new

⁴¹ National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Paragraph 78. See appendix 1.

⁴² Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (2018). 'Homes for our Future'. See appendix 1.

⁴³ Committee on Climate Change (2020). '6th Carbon Budget', table 3.2a. See appendix 1.

buildings are carbon zero by 2025 at the latest. To achieve this, they must be built with high-levels of energy efficiency and low-carbon heating (e.g. heat pumps or low-carbon heat networks). Given the urgent need for action, new development should exceed the baseline policy requirements for sustainability set out in the Local Plan (section 4: supporting the transition to net zero carbon and the move away from fossil fuels).

- 4.9 Based on the Cambridge Sub Region Housing Market Area assessment (and additional evidence) the SCLP housing target is to build 19,500 new homes in South Cambridgeshire for the Plan period. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)⁴⁴ call for sites in Gamlingay, issued as part of the Local Plan preparation, led to the allocation of c. 4 hectares of land at Green End industrial estate for 90 dwellings (policy H/1f **Allocations for Residential Developments at Villages: part**)⁴⁵. This site counts towards the Plan's 5-year housing land supply. Policy S/9 **Minor Rural Centres** of the Local Plan sets a maximum scheme size of 30 dwellings for Gamlingay.
- 4.10 The Local Plan also includes an allowance for 'windfall development', these are sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. Windfall sites can form a significant part of the overall supply of residential development across the lifetime of the Plan. The SCLP windfall allowance for South Cambridgeshire is the provision of 1950 new homes from 2011 to 2031⁴⁶. Gamlingay's population represents 2.4% of the District total: 2.4% of the allowance for Gamlingay equals 47 additional homes. SCDC have since revised these figures and provided a more up to date figure of 26 homes to be provided through windfall sites (2021). This quota has been met through granting of planning permission of 26 new homes between 2016 to 2019 (11 of which were self-build) in Denis Green (5), Great Heath (9), Little Heath (11) and The Cinques (1)⁴⁷. A further 9 nine self-build homes have been approved on appeal outside the development framework (see paragraph 4.25).
- 4.11 Demographic data for Gamlingay shows that the key challenges faced by residents are the affordability of the housing stock (owned and rented), high levels of fuel poverty (in South Cambridgeshire) and an ageing population where a quarter of households include one person with a long-term health problem or disability. Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) was commissioned to provide an up-to-date assessment of housing need in the parish. BRCC assessments have been used to support four made neighbourhood plans in Bedfordshire.

Affordability

- 4.12 The BRCC report (2018)⁴⁸ provides a recent snapshot of housing need in Gamlingay. It indicates a particular demand for smaller 1-2-bedroom homes and bungalows in order to meet the needs of single people requiring accommodation on their own, as well as older people seeking to downsize. Families with dependent children are the next largest group. Almost half of respondents moved to Gamlingay from more than 15 miles away and one of the most popular reasons for moving to Gamlingay is its rural location.
- 4.13 Market conditions (2017, 2018, 2019⁴⁹) showed a glut of larger 4- and 5-bedroom houses for sale in the parish, with only one 2-bedroom property available in December

⁴⁴ South Cambridgeshire District Council (2013). 'Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment'. See appendix 1.

⁴⁵ After significant delay site clearance began autumn 2021. The development is expected to take 3 years to complete.

⁴⁶ Table A6, in Appendix A of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018). See appendix 1.

⁴⁷ Gamlingay Parish Council (2019). Appeal reference APP/W0530/W/19/3230103. See appendix 1.

⁴⁸ BRCC (2018). Housing needs survey. See appendix 1.

⁴⁹ Using Rightmove and Zoopla

2017. The average house price in 2019 (£382,681) was more expensive than nearby St. Neots (£269,438) and Caxton (£325,750) but was cheaper than Croydon (£468,000). In 2020, house prices in Gamlingay were 22% up on the year before and 19% up on 2016 when they averaged at £320,711⁵⁰. This is too high for people on average incomes. In future, developers are recommended to focus on the community's preference for less expensive, smaller and adaptable (see paragraph 4.20) 2 to 3-bedroom houses and bungalows. To meet local targets for affordable housing provision policy H/10 **Affordable Housing** in the Local Plan states that at least 40% of homes should be affordable in developments of 11 or more dwellings.

Key findings from the Housing Needs Survey

- 49.4% respondents moved to Gamlingay from more than 15 miles away.
- The three most popular reasons for moving to Gamlingay were: wanted to live in a rural area, liked the feel of the area and housing was more affordable (this response was the main reason given by people who have lived in the village 15 years or more).
- 59% of respondents described themselves as an older single person or a couple without dependent children; 24.6% described themselves as single or a couple with dependent children or other dependents.
- 66.7% respondents expressed a need for 1-2-bedroom housing in the village.
- 52.2% respondents expressed a need for bungalow/retirement housing.
- 90% respondents looking for a property in the next 20 years will want a 2 to 3-bedroom home or a bungalow.
- In total 44 units of affordable accommodation should be supplied to meet local needs across the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2035.

4.14 The Housing Needs Survey identifies the need to provide up to 44 affordable homes for 44 households in need across the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan. Table 3 presents housing supply against housing sought by those households (respondents could select more than one option) – by tenure, type and size. This highlights the undersupply of bungalows. The table also demonstrates how local housing need has been met through the provision of 60 affordable units provided by or secured: in the newly rebuilt Robinson Court, Green End industrial estate site allocation (see paragraph 4.9) and proposed West Road development (GAM2). These affordable units will be reserved for households with a local connection as agreed with Gamlingay Parish Council and will remain affordable, being managed by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL).

⁵⁰ Rightmove, accessed 14 November 2019. See appendix 1.

Table 3: Provision of housing for households in need identified in the BRCC (2018) survey by tenure, type of property and property size

Tenure	Number of households	Robinson court	Green End	West Road	Need met?
Private rent	11				No data
Affordable rental (Housing Association)	22	6	24	8	Yes
Buy on open market	11	0	56	17	Yes
Shared ownership	16	4	10	4	Yes
Starter home	12	4	Awaiting data from developer	Awaiting data from developer	Yes
Type of property					
Flat	8	6	14	4	Yes
House	34	8	76	23	Yes
Bungalow	24	0	0	2	No
Size of property					
1 bedroom	7	6	14	4	Yes
2 bedrooms	25	6	29	6	Yes
3 bedrooms	14	2	27	9	Yes
4 bedrooms	4	0	18	7	Yes
5 bedrooms	0	0	2	3	No

- 4.15 Policy H/11 **Rural Exception Site Affordable Housing** of the Local Plan states that development may be permitted on small sites adjoining a development framework boundary to provide affordable housing. As noted above (paragraph 4.10), 26 dwellings have been approved outside the village framework between 2016 and 2019. This Plan notes that the hamlets are at least 500 m from the village boundary and 1300 m from the village centre. They are not suitable locations for housing exception sites.

AT A GLANCE: Gamlingay already has plenty of large, expensive houses. What we actually want are more small, affordable (to buy and heat) and adaptable homes to meet our needs now and in the future.

Fuel poverty and climate change

- 4.16 Gamlingay Parish experiences some of the highest rates of fuel poverty and energy consumption in the South Cambridgeshire area; several properties are still supplied by fuel oil because they are not connected to the gas supply network. Lower running costs are an integral feature of affordable homes. All new homes should be as well insulated as possible (EPC rating A). The Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council Housing Strategy⁵¹ notes that 'we want to see homes built that are environmentally sustainable, and to encourage well-designed developments, especially in terms of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies'.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

- 4.17 It is essential for all communities to address the climate change emergency. Steps must be taken to ensure that new residential and non-residential developments, which residents will have to live with and work in for decades to come, are more energy and resource efficient and use renewable energy. For example, the Gamlingay Environment Action Group recommended that industrial buildings should automatically be fitted with solar photovoltaic panels⁵². In 2017 Cambridge was ranked the second driest – and warmest – place in the UK⁵³. The following policies place a clear presumption in favour of climate change mitigation, on-site renewable and low carbon technologies, water conservation and to showcase sustainable show homes alongside their standard equivalents, to demonstrate what is actually possible beyond the usual basic standards agreed by developers:
- **CC/1 Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change,**
 - **CC/3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments,**
 - **CC/4 Water Efficiency,** and
 - **CC/5 Sustainable Show Homes.**

The Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (2020)⁵⁴ sets out the baseline requirements in the Local Plan – such as, 10% onsite renewable or low carbon energy for all new residential development. The news that the installation of traditional gas boilers in new homes could be banned from 2025 underlines the importance of providing alternatives, such as ground source heat pumps⁵⁵. The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Guidance⁵⁶ provides guidance on the sustainable management of surface water drainage on new development.

- 4.18 Policy GAM1 aims to provide a context within which new residential development will be able to come forward to sustainable standards. It takes account of national guidance for the level of detail which can be provided in a neighbourhood plan on this matter. Appendix 4 provides examples for developers of areas where biodiversity measures can enhance the setting of new homes rather than providing benefits to the occupiers of the houses. The policy will also apply where individual applications come forward on a piecemeal basis for a larger site.
- 4.19 The Parish Survey showed that residents care about the environment, they want homes that are well insulated and efficient to heat. This demonstrates a willingness to pay for a higher standard of design and construction. Upgrades should be available for all properties where these are available for sale ‘off-plan’. With the ban on sales of petrol and diesel vehicles being brought forward from 2040 to 2030, developers should also be providing electric vehicle charging points⁵⁷.

Adaptability

- 4.20 The majority of respondents to BRCC survey expressed the reason for their housing need was ‘for a property more suited to older people’, and a significant proportion wished to downsize. This evidence supports the local requirement for fewer 4-bedroom houses and more 2-bedroom properties on the open market. A significant proportion required adaptable properties consisting of a single storey or with wheelchair accessible first floor accommodation. Policy H/9 **Housing Mix** of the Local Plan states that “a wide

⁵² GEAG report back to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group email dated 27th November 2017.

⁵³ Cambridge News (16th May 2017). 'Cambridge is the second driest - and warmest - place in the UK, survey claims'; <https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/cambridge-news/cambridge-second-driest--warmest-13042261>

⁵⁴ See appendix 1.

⁵⁵ See [Climate change: Ban new gas boilers from 2025 to reach net-zero - BBC News](#)

⁵⁶ See appendix 1.

⁵⁷ See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-54981425>.

choice, type and mix of housing will be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community". This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure new buildings contribute an adaptable housing stock and protect the open countryside which is a distinctive feature of this parish.

Community Feedback

4.21 The Parish Survey (2016) revealed that:

- 89% of respondents think that small (less than 10 dwellings), individual or a mix of small and medium (10-25 dwellings) sized developments are most suitable for the village.
- 94% support low/medium housing density or similar to the surrounding area.
- 82% agreed that new homes should be insulated to Energy Performance Certificate rating A.
- 69% said that developers should provide the most efficient energy available.

4.22 The October 2019 consultation demonstrated strong support for the objective that developers should provide the most efficient energy available (69.6% of respondents agreed). Comments supported the need for smaller, more affordable housing.

Summary

4.23 Gamlingay will plan positively for housing growth across the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan (2020-35). Housing sites will be considered carefully and will be acceptable only where they reflect the principles of affordability, sustainability and adaptability outlined above, and are consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan (policies) taken as a whole (including GAM3). For clarification all hamlets are classified outside the Village Framework, as located in the open countryside.

GAM1 – New houses and employment buildings

4.24 **As appropriate to their scale, nature and location new housing development should provide a mix of housing sizes in general and one and two bed houses in particular.**

Development proposals for new buildings which incorporate renewable energy generation (geothermal, solar and wind power) and water saving measures will be particularly supported where they otherwise comply with development plan policies.

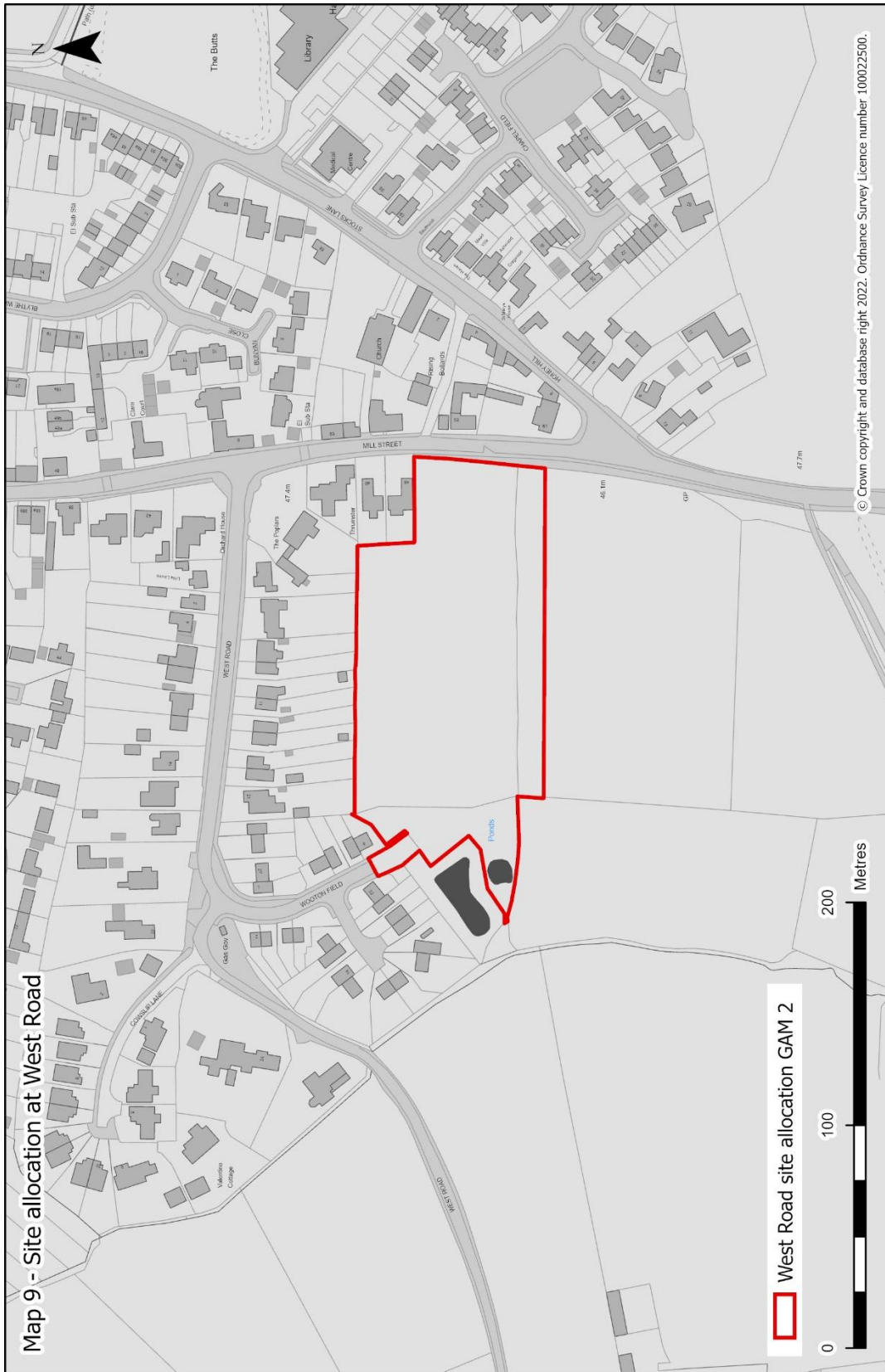
4.25 Since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2018, planning permission has been granted (in both case on appeal) for a further 29 dwellings south of West Road in Gamlingay⁵⁸ and for nine self-build dwellings adjacent to Heath Road⁵⁹. By allocating sites and meeting the identified housing requirement, the Neighbourhood Plan fully accords with the requirements of Paragraph 14 of the NPPF 2021 in meeting the identified housing requirement in full and therefore providing some certainty in determining proposals for new housing should the District Council not be able to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing sites in the near future. There is no current requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to bring forward further sites for development for the period 2020 – 2025. This matter will be reviewed within the Plan period.

⁵⁸ Planning reference S/3868/18/RM.

⁵⁹ Planning reference S/3170/17/OL.

GAM2 – Site allocation at West Road

4.26 The Plan allocates land off West Road (as shown on Map 9) for residential development.



Map 9: Site allocation at West Road

Local character

- 4.27 In order to maintain the integrity of Gamlingay as a radial village with satellite hamlets and smallholdings, we will protect the open countryside and landscape setting. We will protect our built heritage. Alterations to existing buildings and new buildings will reflect and contribute to the strong character of the built heritage expressed in the Village Design Guide.

Justification

- 4.28 Sensitive development which respects and enhances the natural, built and historic environment is a key objective of the Gamlingay Plan. Paragraph 124e of the NPPF 2021 states that “the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places”. Protecting the built and natural heritage which together characterise South Cambridgeshire, is also central to the Local Plan (policy S/2 **Objectives of the Local Plan**, NPPF 2021 Paragraph 124e).
- 4.29 A significant amount of local work has already taken place to identify the features that make Gamlingay unique. In 2001 the community published the Gamlingay Village Design Statement⁶⁰ establishing a detailed understanding of the village’s landscape setting and its buildings. More recently funding from South Cambridgeshire District Council enabled the development of a new Village Design Guide in collaboration with residents. The Gamlingay Village Design Guide (VDG, 2020) provides detailed contextual guidance for new development and is complementary to the District Design Guide (adopted 2010)^{61,62}. The VDG is integral to the Neighbourhood Plan policy GAM3 on local character.



The Maltings⁶³

- 4.30 Policy HQ/1 **Design Principles** of the Local Plan states that all new developments must be of high quality design, responding to its setting and be compatible with its location ...

⁶⁰ Gamlingay Village Design Statement (2001). See appendix 1.

⁶¹ South Cambridgeshire District Adopted Design Guide (2010). See appendix 1.

⁶² Gamlingay Village Design Guide (2020). See appendix 1.

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mak[ing] the effort to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change on development through location, form, orientation, materials and design of buildings and spaces. The most successful new developments in Gamlingay are in harmony with the existing character of the village setting (e.g. The Maltings and Stubbs Oak developments). The supply of new homes in the village and wider parish must be realised in accordance with the distinctive characteristics, scale and grain of the local area identified in the VDG.



Stubbs Oak (from Cinques Road)⁶⁴

AT A GLANCE: people born here and the people who come here love living in a rural area. We want the right kind of development in the right places. The right kind of development is in keeping with its surroundings. The right place for new homes is within the boundary of the village.

- 4.31 Policy NH/2 **Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character** in the Local Plan already requires development to respect, retain or enhance the character and distinctiveness of the local landscapes and national character areas. Protecting the open countryside between the village and hamlets – a defining characteristic of the settlement pattern – is a central objective of this Neighbourhood Plan. New homes should be located within the boundary of Gamlingay village (its development framework) to prevent the village, the hamlets and smallholdings from joining up. The hamlets are more than 1300 m from shops and community facilities and are not suitable locations for housing exception sites.
- 4.32 The Village Design Guide identified a ‘sensitive village edge’ bounded by the brook and Great Heath and including the Lupin Field and Log Field to the south west of the village. It also advised maintaining the integrity of the hamlets, in particular the separation of The Cinques and Little Heath, by retaining the open landscape character between these

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and the village. This 'settlement gap' between the village, The Cinques, Dennis Green and Little Heath is coloured yellow on Map 5 showing landscape setting and Map 8 the policy areas. It will be protected from development in order to safeguard the open countryside between the hamlets and the village from further encroachment (see paragraph 4.10), thereby preserving the visual qualities of the landscape and maintaining the separate identity of the hamlets. Policy GAM9 protects views and vistas identified in the Village Design Guide. A landscape and visual assessment of the settlement character of the parish and its landscape setting commissioned for the Neighbourhood Plan identified two additional views included in this Plan⁶⁵. To aid developers, the maps identify 7 key views to and from the village (indicated by <-> arrows) which the Plan seeks to preserve from development; these are listed and illustrated in Appendix 2⁶⁶ and shown on the Policies Map (Map 8).

- 4.33 Similarly, policy NH/14 **Heritage Assets** supports development which will enhance and sustain heritage assets such as buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes which are significant because of their historic interest. Gamlingay Park (including a lake) and the Full Moon Gate are designated heritage assets⁶⁷ and situated within the settlement gap identified in Map 5. The Full Moon Gate is in deteriorating condition; the park also contains a County Wildlife Site (5.33Ha)⁶⁸. Development proposals within this Plan seek to enhance and will not harm buildings in the conservation area (see Map 3) or other designated heritage assets.

⁶⁵ CSA Environmental (2021). 'Landscape and Visual Assessment' on behalf of Gamlingay Parish Council. See Appendix 1.

⁶⁶ The views identified on maps 4 and 7 were selected from the Village Design Guide and the Visual Landscape Assessment. The VDG was subject to public consultation by South Cambridgeshire District Council prior to its adoption in 2019.

⁶⁷ Historic England list entry number 1000620. See Appendix 1.

⁶⁸ County Wildlife Site: New Barn Grassland, map reference TL226519. It supports populations of vascular plant species which are rare in the county (*Galium saxatile*, *Stellaria uliginosa* and *Carex ovalis*).



Gamlingay Park from above⁶⁹

- 4.34 These protective measures will help to retain and manage existing hedgerows in the village (see Map 5) and on roads leading to the village, especially along Mill Hill/Little Heath and Cow Lane/West Road (a County Wildlife Site). Trees and hedgerows support the integrity of protected species by maintaining corridors and connectivity within and between habitats (e.g. for local bat populations) – Map 5 shows existing hedgerows in the parish. Boundaries to new residential and employment development should include suitable landscape treatments, such as hedgerows and trees, in-keeping with the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge National Character Area. As noted by the VDG, oak, hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn, dog rose, crab apple and field maple would be appropriate species. Policy NH/13 **Important Countryside Frontage** states that planning permission for development will be refused if it would compromise important countryside frontages.
- 4.35 Policy GAM3 seeks to ensure that there is a local dimension to the Local Plan policies listed above. In particular it reinforces the issues highlighted in paragraph 4.32 about the sensitivity of the south-western edge of the village.

Community feedback

- 4.36 Reflecting the concerns outlined above, the Parish Survey told us that:
- 78% agreed that new homes should be designed to fit in with current village character. This has since formalised through the adoption of the Gamlingay Village Design Guide.
 - 25% of respondents wanted new homes to be ‘self-build’ (compared to the 78% responding to the same question who wanted new homes to fit in).
 - 93% agree that it is very important or essential to protect open countryside.

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- 4.37 The October 2019 consultation demonstrated strong support for this objective (63.9% of respondents agreed). Comments supported protecting the 'buffer' areas to maintain Gamlingay's landscape setting.

Summary

- 4.38 Building design will be informed by existing vernacular buildings described in the Village Design Guide and will include suitable landscape treatments. New (housing and employment) buildings must protect and enhance built heritage and landscape character described in the Village Design Guide and preserve the 7 key views to and from the village identified in this Plan (see Map 5). Development of new homes (including self-build) must take place within the village framework in order to protect the integrity of Gamlingay's radial village with satellite hamlets and smallholdings. The hamlets are not suitable locations for exception sites.

GAM3 – Local Character

- 4.39 **Development proposals will be supported where they respond positively to the guidance in the Village Design Guide (or to any document which supersedes the Guide).**

Housing and employment development should draw upon the scale, form, materiality and massing of existing vernacular buildings as described in the Village Design Guide. In addition, they should include suitable landscape treatments (for example hedgerows in keeping with the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge National Character Area).

New housing should be located and designed to prevent the village, the hamlets and smallholdings from joining up, to preserve the visual quality of the landscape and to retain the separate identities of the settlements. The Plan places particular emphasis on the settlement gap between The Cinques, Dennis Green and Little Heath as identified in the Policies Map (Map 8).

Local economy and employment

- 4.40 **We will nurture and grow local businesses to sustain and develop new employment opportunities in the parish for our residents.**

Justification

- 4.41 The NPPF 2021 recommends that planning policies should take the needs of local businesses into account and allow each area to build on its strengths⁷⁰. It also acknowledges that in order to do so, sites in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements⁷¹. The Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire sets a target for creating 22,000 additional jobs in the district for the period 2011-2031 (policy S/5 **Provision of New Jobs and Homes**) and the South Cambridgeshire business plan focuses on growing local businesses and economies 'including rural enterprise and farming, to help create new jobs and opportunities near to where people live'⁷². Creating jobs is as important as providing homes and this is the policy context for Gamlingay's Neighbourhood Plan.

⁷⁰ National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Paragraph 81. See appendix 1.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* Paragraph 85.

⁷² South Cambridgeshire District Council (undated). 'Business Plan 2019-2024'. See appendix 1.

- 4.42 The Greater Cambridge area is experiencing rapid economic growth⁷³ and Gamlingay should be in a strong position to contribute towards the creation of additional jobs in the district. It has a thriving local economy with a wide variety of established businesses (ranging from manufacturing to market gardening). Almost a fifth of respondents to the Parish Survey who were in employment worked in or around the village confirming that this is not a dormitory parish. However, there is a real risk that Gamlingay could be left behind.
- 4.43 Local employment (within a five-mile radius of the village) is particularly important for the parish. Gamlingay has a higher proportion of unskilled labour compared to the rest of the district; people who have traditionally found work locally. It may be essential for the 9% of households without access to a car or van and poorly served by public transport. Moreover, education figures for 16-17-year olds and 18+ support anecdotal evidence that the cost of commuting is preventing the take-up of education and training opportunities among young people in Gamlingay.

AT A GLANCE: we need jobs to be close to residents because not everyone has a car. We need a mix of jobs because not everyone has qualifications. By widening local employment and training opportunities for young people we can help them to stay in education/training.

- 4.44 The principal employment site in the village at Green End received planning permission for housing to be built on 75% of its area (policy H/1 **Allocations for Residential Developments at Villages:** part f). This resulted in a significant number of businesses relocating away from the village and outside the parish, and associated job losses for local people. Further losses of employment land will be resisted in keeping with policy E/14 **Loss of Employment Land to Non Employment Uses** of the Local Plan. The potential to expand employment sites within the village framework is limited (e.g. on Church Street) but will be supported in keeping with the character and scale of the location on Green End and Station Road (supported by policy E/12 **New Employment Development in Villages**).
- 4.45 Extensive consultation with local businesses and owners of employment land identified two key barriers to growth⁷⁴:
- The demand for housing is a threat to employment sites and discourages developing and securing local employment sites and premises.
 - Isolated businesses have serious security problems and there is a shortage of small, secure and affordable premises.
- 4.46 We need to make space to support local businesses, provide for new start-ups and invite businesses to relocate to the parish. Policies E/13 **New Employment on the Edges of Villages** and E/16 **Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside** of the Local Plan allow for the creation of new employment sites and expansion of existing firms outside the village framework as long as ‘there is no unacceptable adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area [...] and is in scale with the location, and; the site can be easily accessed on foot or cycle’.

⁷³ Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (2019). ‘Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Industry Strategy: A Partner in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc’. See appendix 1.

⁷⁴ Business consultation summary, appendix 1.



1 and 3, The Cinques⁷⁵

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987* (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. The use classes in policies GAM4 and GAM6 are:

- B2 – general industrial
- B8 – storage or distribution
- E(a) – shops (not selling hot food)
- E(b) – sale of food and drink on the premises e.g. cafe
- E(e) – provision of medical or health services
- E(f) – creche, day nursery or day centre (non-residential use)
- E(g) - uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity

*https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use

4.47 In the draft Neighbourhood Plan two sites were proposed as new Rural Business Development Areas for two distinct types of employment: Drove Road and Mill Hill. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) concluded that development of previously undeveloped land at Drove Road has increased potential to lead to the loss of productive agricultural land, and has increased potential to impact on biodiversity habitats and local character without mitigation measures. It also noted that both sites offer significant opportunities for the avoidance and mitigation of potential negative effects, as well as opportunities for delivering enhancements through environmental net gain, improvements in green infrastructure provision and the delivery of community

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infrastructure (e.g. improvements for walking and cycling or traffic calming). The decision was taken to not designate Drove Road as a new employment area in response to residents' concerns about the potential scale of development. Individual Drove Road sites were added to Policy GAM4. However, applications will be supported to increase the footprint of businesses already in situ – to allow them to grow and to retain jobs within the parish. Businesses along Drove Road were asked if they were planning to expand and, if so, what percentage expansion would meet their needs⁷⁶. Three responded: two businesses stated a 25% expansion would meet their needs and one business indicated a 50% expansion. In these circumstances Policy GAM4 takes a general approach to this matter and comments that extensions to business premises should be proportionate to the existing building. Clearly this will be a matter of judgement for the District Council through the development management process. However, as a general rule extensions of up to 25% of the footprint of existing buildings have the potential to be appropriate in this part of the parish. The policy relating to Mill Hill was deleted by the examiner, but the area with existing businesses is shown on Map 10 for information.

- 4.48 Drove Road is predominantly agricultural, with residential clusters (including Grade II Listed '1 and 3, The Cinques', pictured) and light industrial employment development to the west (E(g) and B2). Within this area lies the 'Gamlingay Cinques', a 3-ha nature reserve, Village Green, and County Wildlife Site. Businesses in situ seeking to expand their premises will be encouraged to adopt low density development incorporating small single storey, affordable and secure barn style buildings (see example pictured below) in keeping with the agricultural setting. The Secured By Design police initiative also provides valuable advice on designing out crime⁷⁷.



An example of a small single storey, affordable and secure barn style building⁷⁸

⁷⁶ See Drove Road Business Questionnaire in appendix 1.

⁷⁷ See [Secured by Design - Secured By Design](#)

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- 4.49 As one of the ‘greenest’ villages in South Cambridgeshire, environmental sustainability will be an essential consideration (see GAM1). New buildings for employment use should demonstrate energy efficiency. Desirable features include energy generation, rainwater harvesting, flood mitigation and waste recycling facilities. Developers will be asked to contribute to improved pedestrian and cycle connections (see GAM7). In order to further mitigate and adapt to climate change, employment sites should include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) within the design of development proposals to minimise the risk of surface water run-off.

Community feedback

- 4.50 The Parish Survey showed that:

- 29% of residents saw more local employment as an advantage to be gained from more development in the village.
- Respondents strongly agreed or agreed they would support development of light industry at sites inside and outside the village boundary at Station Road (81%), followed by Mill Hill (57%) and Drove Road (56%).
- 51% disagreed or strongly disagreed with further development on Church Street (behind the pharmacy) - although 81% of respondents supported office use on the Church Street site.
- Over two thirds of respondents supported light industrial use on Drove Road (66%) and Mill Hill (65%). 70% supported light industrial use on the Station Road industrial estate.
- More than 80% of respondents agreed that new industrial buildings should be EPC rated A. While not suitable for all buildings (e.g. warehousing) this supports the application of high environmental standards to buildings for employment use in policy GAM1.

- 4.51 The October 2019 consultation demonstrated strong support for this objective (70.2% of respondents agreed). Some concerns highlighted on the employment areas on Mill Hill and Drove Road were addressed (through the SEA) in the Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan where Drove Road was added to the Local Employment Sites policy and Mill Hill included in its own policy which was subsequently deleted by the examiner.

Summary

- 4.52 The Neighbourhood Plan will help existing businesses to grow and flourish, it makes provisions for new companies to start-up and to encourage others to relocate to Gamlingay. It does this by safeguarding and supporting the improvement and enhancement of sites within the village framework. Environmental sustainability (of buildings and travel) will be a key consideration.

GAM4 – Local Employment Sites

- 4.53 **Proposals for the improvement, enhancement and development of employment opportunities on the following employment sites (as shown on Map 10) will be supported as set out on a site-by-site basis below:**

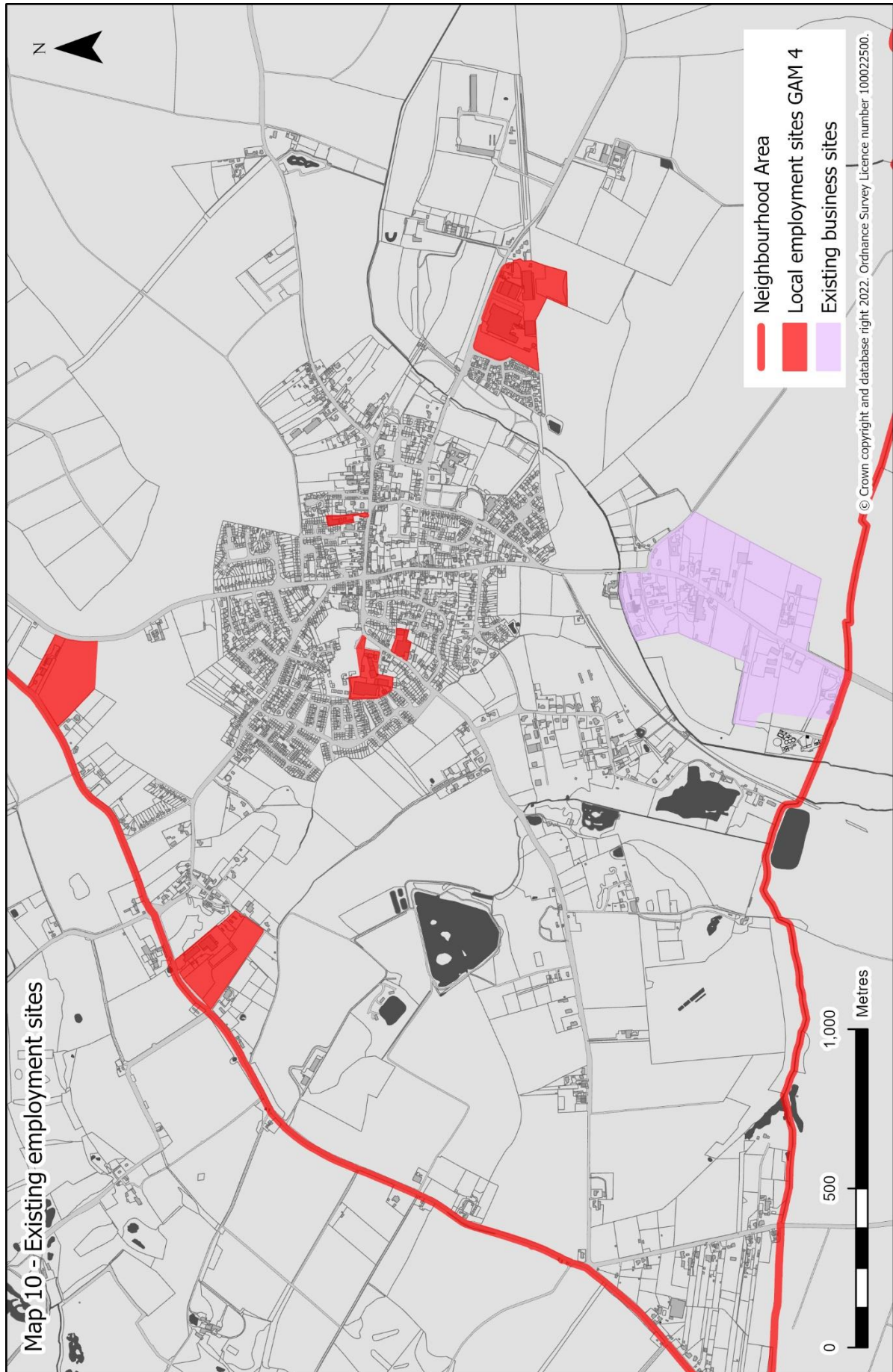
- **Station Road Industrial Site – for employment uses Use Class E and B2.**
- **Church Street – for employment uses Use Class E.**
- **Green End Industrial site – will be safeguarded for employment uses Use Class E and B2.**
- **Drove Road sites – the expansion of existing businesses will be supported where they are proportionate to the existing building, where they are single storey and where the resultant development as a whole is appropriate in scale**

for a countryside location and can be satisfactorily integrated within the local landscape. In addition, development proposals should be designed to avoid any impact on local biodiversity and habitats, or where this is not practicable that the impacts are mitigated.

All applications for new buildings or additional office space must include at least one electric vehicle charging point.

All applications will need to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact on the rural environment and amenity or property of nearby residents (e.g. unsocial hours of operation, noise impacts, appearance of the development from public roads, damage to buildings and congestion on local roads, due to number, size or weight of vehicles requiring access to the site).

All proposals are expected to protect and safeguard landscape features and designations which contribute to visual amenity and local distinctiveness, including trees and hedgerows following the principles set out in the Village Design Guide. Development proposals will incorporate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures (e.g. SuDs) through design.



Map 10: Existing Employment Sites

Community amenities and facilities

- 4.54 **We will protect valued local amenities and seek developer contributions to ensure that local facilities adapt to meet the needs of our growing community.**

Justification

- 4.55 It is essential that Gamlingay retains and provides local services to sustain the vitality of the community and encourage local spending. The number of shops has declined in recent years, but a range of services has been maintained and patronage by residents is high. Policy SC/3 **Protection of Village Services and Facilities** of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be refused for proposals which would result in the loss of a village service (e.g. village pubs, shops, post offices, community buildings and meeting places, sports facilities, community gym, cultural buildings, places of worship or health facilities) and that “all housing developments will include or contribute to the provision of the services and facilities necessary to meet the needs of the development”, including indoor facilities and be “responsive to local need” (policies SC/4 **Meeting Community Needs**, SC/6 **Indoor Community Facilities**, SC/8 **Protection of Existing Recreation Areas, Playing fields Allotments and Community Orchards** and TI/8 **Infrastructure and New Developments**).
- 4.56 Local Plan policy **SC/7: Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments** requires all housing developments to contribute towards Outdoor Playing Space and Informal Open Space to meet the need generated by the development. Large scale development, such as the redevelopment of Green End Industrial Estate for residential purposes offers a substantial opportunity to enhance existing infrastructure to the west of the village where formal open space and playing fields are in short supply. South Cambridgeshire District Council’s Playing Pitch Strategy identifies an undersupply of senior playing pitches in the south-west of the district⁷⁹. The Parish Survey also identified a demand for more walking and cycling in the village and around the parish.
- 4.57 All new developments will be expected to contribute to community facilities in Gamlingay (GAM5). Receipts received through planning obligations will be used to deliver new community infrastructure, such as improving walking and cycling in the village, between the village and hamlets, and links to nearby settlements and market towns (see GAM7 and GAM8). The appeal decision for the West Road development (GAM2) secured £10,000 towards a feasibility study⁸⁰ for a cycle link between Gamlingay and Potton (which would pass the site and improve sustainable access) to make the development acceptable in planning terms⁸¹.

AT A GLANCE: neighbourhood plans give people the opportunity to say what development they want and where. 524 people signed a petition to retain the former First School field as a formal recreation space for sport and informal recreation use in perpetuity.

- 4.58 The relocation of the Former Gamlingay First School (now Primary School) to the Gamlingay Village College site in 2019 has left its former site vacant. There is a shortfall of places for care of children during their early years in Gamlingay. The Children’s Montessori and Rainbow Preschool provide 46 places and there were 59 children living in the parish and eligible for free places in 2018 (see paragraph 2.26). Both pre-school

⁷⁹ Table 7.23 ‘South West Area - Current and Future Demand Football’, page 225. See appendix 1.

⁸⁰ See Appendix 1, commissioned reports, Gamlingay Cycle and Footway Improvement Plan’.

⁸¹ NPPF 2021, paragraph 57.

facilities currently operate in unsuitable buildings. In 2019, the Children’s Montessori in Gamlingay was granted planning permission to erect a mobile classroom on the playground of the former First School site. Policy GAM6 sets out a positive context for the reuse of buildings on the First School site and possible new buildings for mixed use purposes. It acknowledges that Cambridgeshire County Council is currently assessing options for the use of the site. The policy offers particular support for educational and community purposes. Examples could be pre-school provision, a new doctors’ surgery or the relocation of the Co-op store from Church Street.

- 4.59 The land is owned by Cambridgeshire County Council. However, there is a strong sense of community ownership of the former First School field and a widely held belief among older residents (though unproven) that the purchase was made with the assistance of funds raised by the people of Gamlingay⁸². In 2019, 524 people signed a petition to retain the First School field as a formal recreation space for sport and informal recreation use in perpetuity⁸³.
- 4.60 The Village Design Guide notes that “The majority of amenity space, playgrounds, sports facilities, open green space; is situated to the south east of Gamlingay. The school, the Eco Hub, the church, shops and cafés of Church Street are also to the east of the village”.
- 4.61 It is identified as a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA) in the Local Plan and was registered as a Community Asset in 2017⁸⁴. The long-term use of the site will be influenced by the ongoing work which the County Council is undertaking to secure a mixed-use development.

Community feedback

- 4.62 The Parish Survey told us that:
- When asked about the pros and cons of any new development residents were concerned about the pressure this would put on existing amenities, but also saw this as an opportunity to support local facilities, such as shops and services.
 - The Co-op, pharmacy and Post Office were the most frequently used amenities. This suggests that some residents rely on local retail facilities.
 - Pavements and roads were amongst the most poorly rated infrastructure (after mobile reception) in the parish.
 - Over a quarter of respondents (27%) felt that keeping and adding green spaces in the village was very important.
- 4.63 The October 2019 consultation demonstrated strong support for this objective (68.2% agreed). Comments supported the need for more amenities on the west side of the village, particularly shops and playing areas. We also asked for specific feedback regarding the First School playing fields and former school buildings. 62.9% agreed with designating the playing fields as a Local Green Space and 64.9% agreed with supporting the reuse of the former school buildings and any new buildings on the site for educational and community purposes.

Summary

- 4.64 The Neighbourhood Plan will protect and seek to enhance local services and amenities. New residential and business developments must address the impact that they are likely

⁸² A Freedom of Information request dated 25 May 2011 querying the gifting of the field to the people of Gamlingay. [Ownership of School Field - a Freedom of Information request to Cambridgeshire County Council - WhatDoTheyKnow](#)

⁸³ Gamlingay Parish Council.

⁸⁴ South Cambridgeshire District Council (2018). ‘Community Right to Bid: register of Assets of Community Value. See appendix 1.

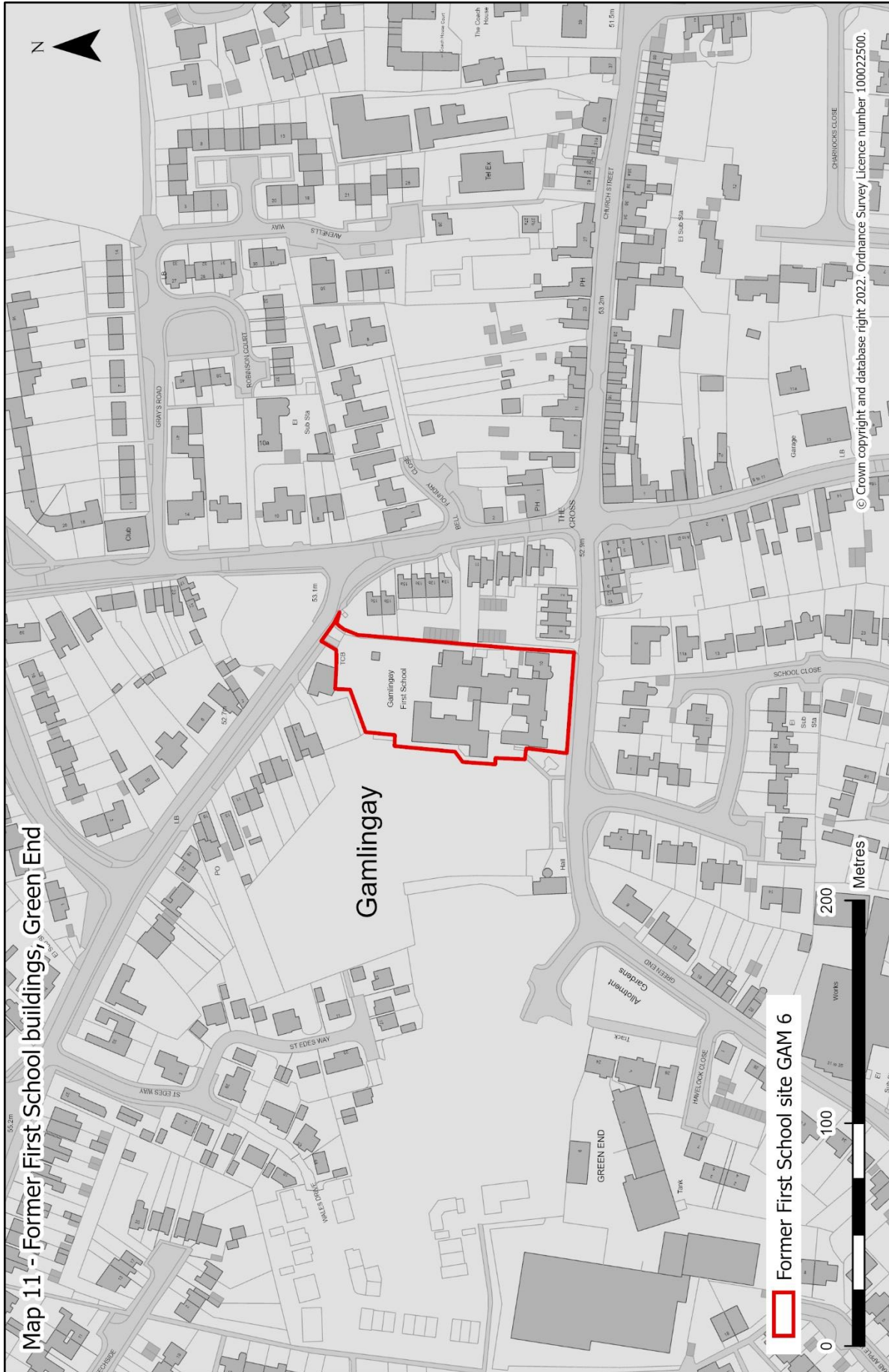
to have on community amenities and facilities (e.g. commercial, health, social, recreational and cultural). All developments are expected to make a contribution; a combination of new green spaces, and better walking and cycling infrastructure have been identified as priorities. The use of the former school buildings will be supported for community and educational purposes.

GAM5 – Community amenities and facilities

4.65 **Proposals for the development of additional sports pitches will be supported.**

GAM6 – Reuse of the former First School buildings, Green End (TL 23647 52413)

4.66 **Mixed-use development proposals involving the sensitive re-use of the former First School buildings will be supported. Proposals which incorporate educational and community uses will be particularly supported.**



Map 11: Former First School buildings, Green End

How we get about (transport)

- 4.67 **We will develop a network of paths to promote walking, cycling and riding for everyday journeys and recreation. We will reduce congestion by encouraging more parking provision.**

Justification

- 4.68 Transport emissions make the largest contribution to UK domestic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; in 2018, road transport accounted for 91% of UK domestic transport emissions⁸⁵. South Cambridgeshire historically has higher per capita emissions for transport than rural East of England and England (see table 4). Gamlingay is a rural location, bus services are infrequent and do not support travel to work; there is a school bus in term time taking children to local Secondary Schools (the village Primary School is part of the Comberton Academy) and sixth form colleges in Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire. For most people living in the parish the car is their principal mode of transport, even for some of the shortest journeys.

Table 4: Carbon Dioxide emissions from transport per capita (t CO₂)⁸⁶

	South Cambridgeshire	East of England	England
2005	4.6	2.6	2.3
2016	4.0	2.3	1.9

- 4.69 The Parish Survey asked residents what other forms of transport they would like to use more. Over half wanted to use buses more (55%), followed by cycling (47%), walking (41%) and taking the train (38%)⁸⁷. Almost half of respondents regularly walk (47%, 30% dog walking). Very few people want to drive more (5%). ‘Concerns about safety on local roads’ is the main reason given for not cycling more. Gamlingay lies at the end of two long distance paths: the Clopton Way and Greensand Ridge walk. It has 13 rights of way, but these form a rather fragmentary network. The road between Gamlingay and the Hatleys has been a National Byway, a leisure cycling route, for over 10 years⁸⁸. People walking, cycling and horse riding would benefit from increased bridleways, connectivity, circuits and better maintenance of routes. There is unanimous support for improving and creating better paths and rights of way in the parish.
- 4.70 The NPPF 2021 encourages development proposals to promote walking, cycling and notes that parking provision is integral to the design of schemes that make high quality places⁸⁹. Policies HQ/1 **Design Principles** and TI/2 **Planning for Sustainable Travel** of the Local Plan build on this by requiring development to deliver safe and attractive opportunities for walking and cycling, by making provision for safe and direct routes for walking and cycling. Policy TI/3 **Parking Provision** sets standards for cycle and parking provision. The way that these provisions are made will be dependent on site location and local context.
- 4.71 The particular issues of concern to the community are:
- Congestion is experienced in the village at peak times along Mill Street and Church Street, Stocks Lane and Station Road (e.g. school drop-off and pick up and

⁸⁵ Department for Transport (2020). ‘Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge’

⁸⁶ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2018) data on UK local and regional carbon dioxide emissions cited from table 4.1 of the Strategic Assessment for Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan. See appendix 1.

⁸⁷ Respondents could choose more than one option.

⁸⁸ See <https://www.thenationalbyway.org/>

⁸⁹ NPPF (2021). Paragraph 106(d).

commuter traffic), although in theory the cross-roads junction (Mill Street-Church Street) remains well within capacity⁹⁰.

- Heavy vehicles travel through the village to access local businesses (e.g. on Station Road industrial estate), as well as to travel to other parts of the country. Combine harvesters and tractors pulling trailers require access along all village streets at harvest time.
- Rat running for traffic between Bedford and Cambridge (via Sandy) seeking to avoid the A1/A421 Black Cat Roundabout and the B10402/A428 junction at Eltisley and speeding down Drove Road.

4.72 The narrowness of the streets combined with parked vehicles creates bottlenecks for cars and larger traffic. This is a problem with existing infrastructure and beyond the scope of this plan. However, people living in the parish are concerned that new housing development will make the situation worse by increasing traffic and the demand for on-street parking. Concerns have also been expressed about increased vehicular traffic as a result of employment development.

4.73 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address the declared Climate Emergency by reducing carbon emissions from transport and to address the community's aspirations and concerns (identified above) by improving provision for active travel on new developments and in the wider parish. GAM7 sets out how improvements for walking, cycling and horse riding, such as new paths, cycleways and bridleways or enhancement of adjacent rights of way (e.g. the Green End-Cinques footpath) will be welcomed on new developments.

AT A GLANCE: congestion, parking and speeding put people off walking and cycling (and horse riding) in Gamlingay. We want better, safer places to walk, bike and ride. Developer contributions are the way to help that happen.

4.74 Policy GAM4 supports local employment, reducing the need to travel by car. Surveys of Little Heath, The Cinques and Dennis Green demonstrated residents' support for increased connectivity to the village without compromising character and environment that defines each separate hamlet. The Parish Council commissioned Sustrans to assess the feasibility of a shared use cycle route between Gamlingay and Potton – the Cycle and Footway Improvement Plan (CFIP) (2019)⁹¹. This Plan builds on this and proposes 12.5 km (8 miles) of shared use routes between the village, proposed local employment sites and local transport hubs (see Map 12) – St Neots, Cambourne (via Waresley/Little Gransden/Great Gransden), Sandy railway station (via Potton) and Biggleswade (via Everton). The Parish Council will take this project forward – for the benefit of people walking, cycling or horse riding – in partnership with our neighbours (to ensure consistency e.g. with Potton's Green Wheel)⁹². New development has the potential to impact negatively on traffic, parking and road safety. Therefore, where appropriate developer contributions will be sought from residential and business developments to mitigate that impact by contributing towards improvements in active travel infrastructure in the local area. Based on the assessment of the costs of enhancing the existing footpaths cycle routes and horse-riding routes in Appendix 3 an

⁹⁰ South Cambridgeshire District Council (2015). 'Transport Assessment for Green End housing development'. See appendix 1.

⁹¹ Sustrans (2019). 'Gamlingay Cycleway Improvement Plan'. See appendix 1.

⁹² The plan for new walking, cycling and horse-riding infrastructure is a local ambition and has not been adopted by Central Bedfordshire Council or Cambridgeshire County Council.

indicative amount for contribution would be £21 per square metres of internal floor space (for business developments), and £10 per square metres of internal floor space (for housing developments).



The Gamlingay Community Speedwatch Group regularly monitors speeds around the parish. Volunteers are trained by South Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

The Parish Council provides financial support for new equipment. If you would like to become a member of the Community Speedwatch Group please contact csw.gamlingay@gmail.com

Community feedback

4.75 The Parish Survey showed that:

- For 85% of residents in the parish the car was the most frequently used form of transport. However, 21% of respondents would like to walk more in the village, 24% would like to cycle more and 29% would like to use the bus more.
- 70% thought that increased traffic would be the biggest problem caused by new development (this was the biggest issue followed by loss of countryside).
- 85% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that parking was a problem in Gamlingay.
- 94% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan should support the creation of better paths and 80% strongly agreed or agreed that the Plan should support the creation of better bridleways.

4.76 The October 2019 consultation demonstrated very strong support for this objective (80.1% agreed) and to make it even clearer we changed the title from transport to 'how we get around'. Comments supported the need for more cycleways and cycle parking in the village, circular routes around the village and more parking for residential developments. On street parking / congestion on central village roads was a concern for some, as was speeding. These have been raised as a community action.



There is overwhelming support to make it easier and safer to walk, cycle and ride in the parish – and support for protecting and enhancing green spaces.

The Parish Council will take this project forward and the neighbourhood plan explains how developers are expected to make their contribution.

Summary

- 4.77 The Plan seeks to ensure that new development complies with parking and access requirements as applied by the District and County Councils. It has a clear focus on supporting proposals which would enhance the ability of local people to move within the parish in a more sustainable fashion. This approach extends both to such improvements in their own right and where they can be secured through residential or other development which otherwise complies with development plan policies.

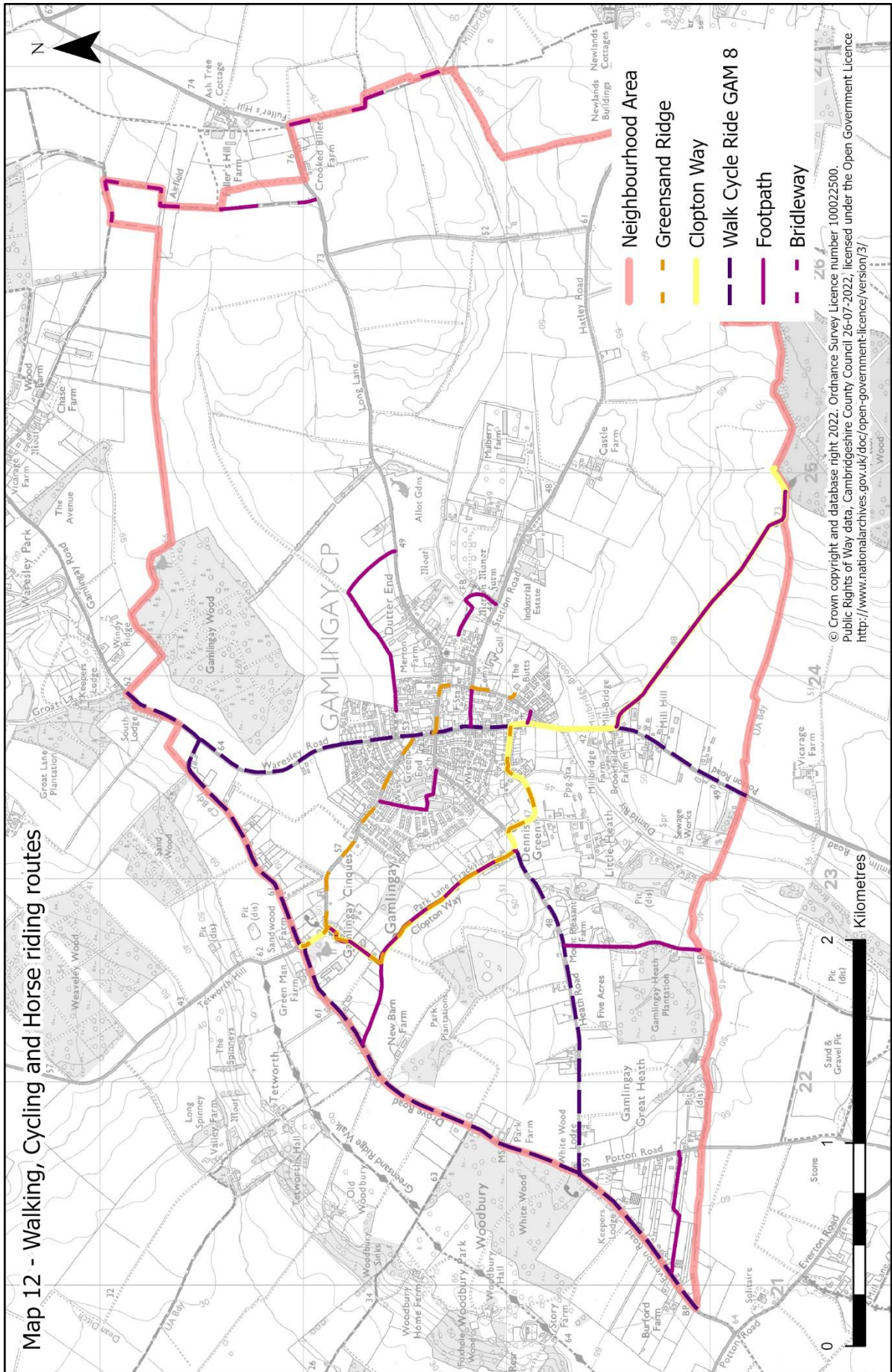
GAM7 – Transport provision on developments

- 4.78 **Proposals for the improvement of the public rights of way network for walking, cycling and horse riding will be supported.**

GAM8 – Contributions towards providing new infrastructure for walking, cycling and horse riding

- 4.79 **Proposals for the development of new or improved walking cycling and horse-riding routes will be supported. The implementation of the package of measures as shown on Map 12 will be particularly supported.**

As appropriate to their scale nature and location, new residential and business units should mitigate their impact on the local road network by their design and layout and contributing towards the provision and maintenance of new paths for cycling, walking and horse riding between the village, hamlets, employment sites and neighbouring villages.



Map 12: Walking Cycling and Horse-Riding Routes

Natural environment

4.80 We will protect and enhance the natural environment and the biodiversity of the parish.

Justification

- 4.81 New development should meet the aspirations of the NPPF 2021, the Defra⁹³ 25 Year Environment Plan and the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy with regard to the delivery of environmental enhancements including green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain. It is Government policy to refuse development that will result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland, unless ‘there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists’⁹⁴. The NPPF 2021 allows planning policies and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, for example, by:
- a. protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils,
 - b. recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside,
 - c. minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future development pressures⁹⁵.
- 4.82 The NPPF 2021 also states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, for example, through the planning of ‘green infrastructure’⁹⁶. Green infrastructure may be defined as “a strategic, multi-functional network of public green spaces and routes, landscapes, biodiversity and heritage”⁹⁷. It includes parks, playing fields, woodland, street trees, rights of way, allotments, canal towpaths, green walls and roofs – providing environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Forestation projects (e.g. the Sugeley Wood extension to Gamlingay Wood) and ‘tiny forests’ can contribute to carbon reduction⁹⁸⁹⁹, and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) can help to protect water courses. The importance of these and other matters is now captured in the Environment Act 2021. Policy GAM9 seeks to identify elements of the natural environment which are important to the neighbourhood area.
- 4.83 Gamlingay is mostly situated on the Greensand Ridge (Natural England National Character Area 90¹⁰⁰) where lighter soils have typically created a pattern of land use with a relatively high proportion of woodland and parkland landscapes, mixed with smaller areas of pasture, acid grassland and heath. Grade 1, 2 and 3a arable land in the parish is protected by policy NH/3 **Protecting Agricultural Land** of the Local Plan against development which would lead to its irreversible loss.
- 4.84 The Landscape Conservation Action Plan (2016) produced as part of the Heritage Lottery funded Greensand Country Landscape Partnership¹⁰¹ promotes the reinstatement of acid grassland, creation of new heathland and grassland habitat on low

⁹³ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

⁹⁴ NPPF (2021). Paragraph 174.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* Paragraph 174(d).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* Paragraphs 153 and 154.

⁹⁷ South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018). Paragraph 6.27.

⁹⁸ Woodland Trust (2013). See appendix 1 and appendix 4, Biodiversity Projects.

⁹⁹ See [UK’s first-ever Tiny Forest seeks to deliver big benefits for people and the environment \(earthwatch.org.uk\)](https://www.earthwatch.org.uk).

¹⁰⁰ Natural England (2013). ‘National Character Areas: 90. Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge’

¹⁰¹ Greensand Country Landscape Partnership (2016). Landscape Conservation Action Plan. See appendix 1.

nutrient soils, the planting of new woodland in appropriate locations and countryside stewardship to restore parkland character and manage other sites for biodiversity, such as roadside verges and horse pastures. Local plan policy NH/2 **Protecting and Enhancing Local Character** requires development to “respect and retain or enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the local landscape and of the individual National Character Area in which is it located”.

- 4.85 The parish’s open fields support brown hare and corn bunting. Gamlingay Wood supports a variety of wildflowers, such as dog’s mercury, yellow archangel and wood anemone and oxlip. The flora’s diversity is due to the varied soils (e.g. sandy loam), and there are hundreds of species of mushroom and toadstool. Birds include barn owls, garden warblers and blue tits; the parish’s built up areas provide important homes for nationally declining swifts, house sparrows and starlings. Hedgerows in the parish form important corridors for wildlife including badgers, foxes and local bat populations; small birds such as finches and great tits; dragonflies and butterflies. Small woodland areas in the parish also provide important habitat for many species including the tawny owl. In addition, Millbridge Brook Meadows provides an important habitat for water voles. Policy NH/4 **Biodiversity** of the Local Plan states that new development must aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity.
- 4.86 As discussed in the section ‘How we get about (transport)’ many people enjoy walking their dogs and rambling in the countryside in the parish. A smaller number also cycle and ride horses. Access to the natural environment contributes to better physical and mental health. Cambridgeshire’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2017)¹⁰² highlights the importance of accessible green space and parks, and the need for this green infrastructure to enable people to make more active travel choices.

AT A GLANCE: By consolidating green spaces – our ‘green infrastructure’ – on new developments in line with the Cycle and Footway Improvement Plan, we can make it easier for people to access and enjoy the open countryside. We want to protect wildlife and wildlife habitats, especially Gamlingay Wood.

- 4.87 Although the village of Gamlingay has grown significantly in the second half of the 20th century it retains several areas of open ground which provide opportunities for informal and formal recreation. GAM3 establishes that the Village Design Guide will form a key part of assessing development proposals to ensure that as the village grows, it will retain its distinct landscape character and setting. Policy GAM9 protects the views and vistas identified by the VDG (see Maps 5 and 13 and Appendix 2); two additional views recommended by an assessment of the settlement character of the parish and its landscape setting are included in this Plan (see paragraph 4.32)¹⁰³. GAM9 requires developers to support the creation of a network of formal and informal green spaces for sport and outdoor recreation. It complements GAM8 contributions to Gamlingay’s Cycle and Footway Improvement Plan (CFIP). The creation of a network of public and permissive paths across the parish will enable better access to (and appreciation of) the surrounding countryside. The Log Field (Merton Field) off Green Acres is designated as a Local Green Space in the Local Plan.

¹⁰² Cambridgeshire County Council (2017). ‘Joint Strategic Needs Assessment’. See appendix 1.

¹⁰³ CSA Environmental (2021). ‘Landscape and Visual Assessment’ on behalf of Gamlingay Parish Council. See Appendix 1.

- 4.88 Gamlingay Wood was described by Oliver Rackham as "the best-documented historic wood in the country"¹⁰⁴ because the wood belonged to Merton College, Oxford for 650 years. Now owned and managed by the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire it is part of the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds Living Landscape¹⁰⁵, a necklace of ancient woods (e.g. Weaverley and Sand Woods, Waresley Wood, Hayley Wood, Potton Wood and Buff Wood) which surround the settlement to the West and South. These are also the focus of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011; target area 6.6 West Cambridgeshire Woodlands) which seeks to 'create a high quality ecological network based around linking the ancient woodlands, better management of the woodlands and restoring / creating other lost habitats such as species-rich meadows'¹⁰⁶. In addition to protection afforded by the NPPF 2021, Local Plan policies NH/5 **Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance** and NH/7 **Ancient Woodlands and Veteran Trees** protect against development that might cause the loss and deterioration of Gamlingay Wood because it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and an ancient woodland.
- 4.89 The Wood's proximity to the village raises ongoing management and maintenance challenges. Gamlingay Wood SSSI status is currently 'unfavourable recovering'¹⁰⁷. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to avoid new housing development and development impacts that will lead to further deterioration of this irreplaceable woodland habitat. Policy GAM10 has been designed to protect and promote the recovery of the flora and fauna of Gamlingay Wood, helping to achieve the Government's objective (set out in its 25 Year Environment Plan) to restore 75% of England's protected sites to favourable condition. This will also secure the use of Gamlingay Wood for the enjoyment of present and future generations. For the purposes of the application of the policy the immediate vicinity of the Wood has not been defined. Different proposals in different locations will have different effects on the integrity of the Wood. Nevertheless, as a general rule proposals within 200 metres from the edge of the Wood have an ability to affect its integrity.

Community feedback

- 4.90 The parish survey showed that what residents like most about the village and the Parish, and want to protect, is its rural location and scenery:
- 92% of the people who responded said that keeping and/or adding to green spaces in the village was essential or very important.
 - 95% said it was essential or very important to protect open countryside.
 - 94% said it was essential or very important to protect local wildlife.
- 4.91 The October 2019 consultation demonstrated strong support for this objective (65.5% agreed). Comments received noted the need for clearer referencing of the different green spaces across the parish, which has been addressed in the plan. Respondents supported more green spaces on the west side of the village and protecting Gamlingay Wood from harmful development.

Summary

- 4.92 The Neighbourhood Plan will protect and enhance the natural environment of the parish. It will do this within the village by protecting green spaces within the village and encouraging developers to consolidate green spaces within developments in order to create a network of publicly accessible formal and informal green spaces for sport and recreation, and creation and enhancement of wildlife corridors. New development

¹⁰⁴ Rackham, O. (2006). 'Woodlands' volume 100, New Naturalist Series.

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/westcambshundreds>

¹⁰⁶ See appendix 1.

¹⁰⁷ Natural England designated sites listing for Gamlingay Wood, see appendix 1.

should not obstruct or harm the special views and vistas identified by the Village Design Guide. Gamlingay Wood – and the views to and from Gamlingay Wood – will be protected from harm.

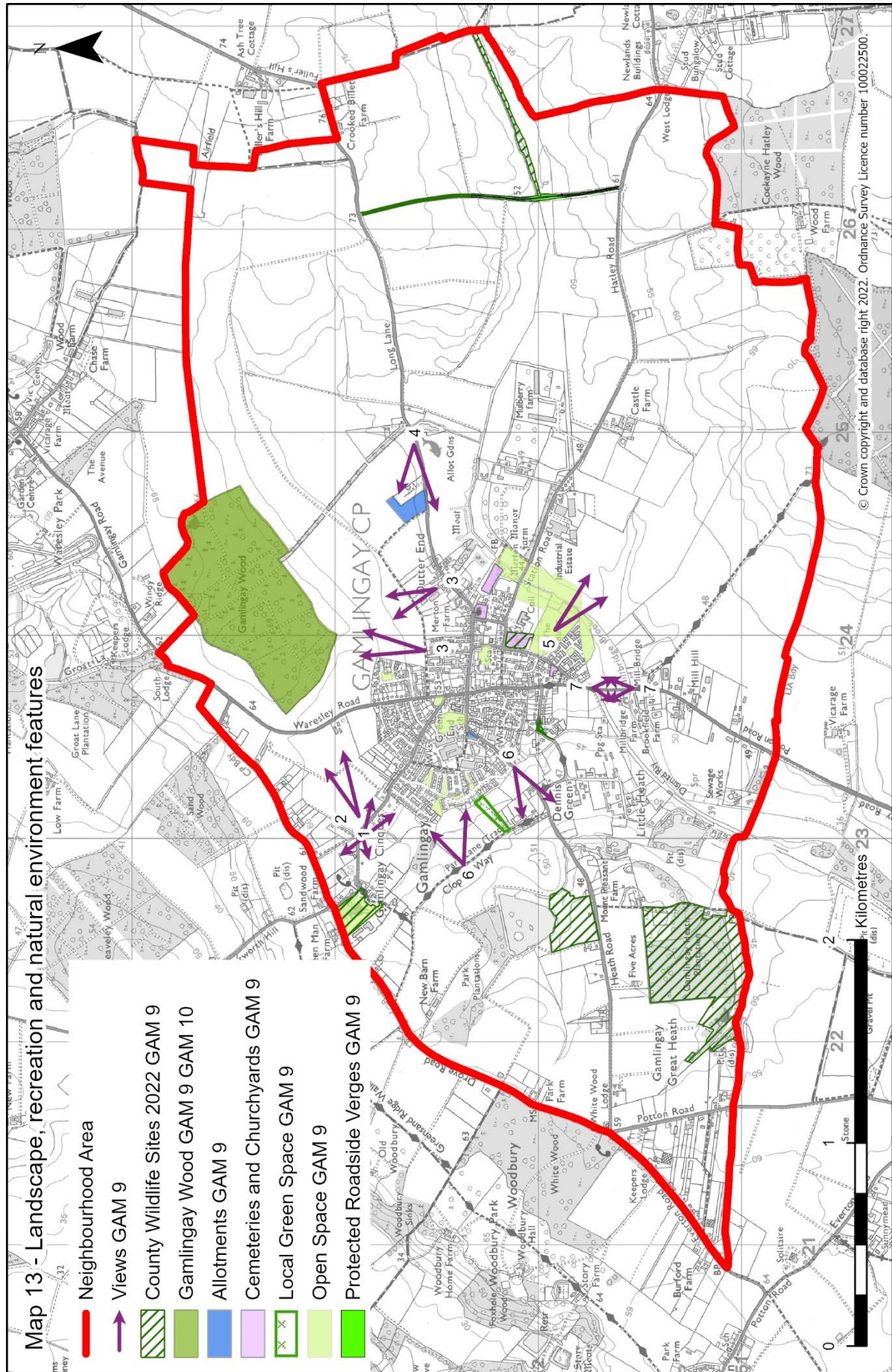
GAM9 – Landscape and natural environment

- 4.93 **Development should be designed to safeguard and where practicable enhance the landscape, recreation and natural environment features as shown on Map 13 and in Appendix 2. Where appropriate, development proposals should incorporate proportionate mitigation measures to keep any effects to a minimum.**

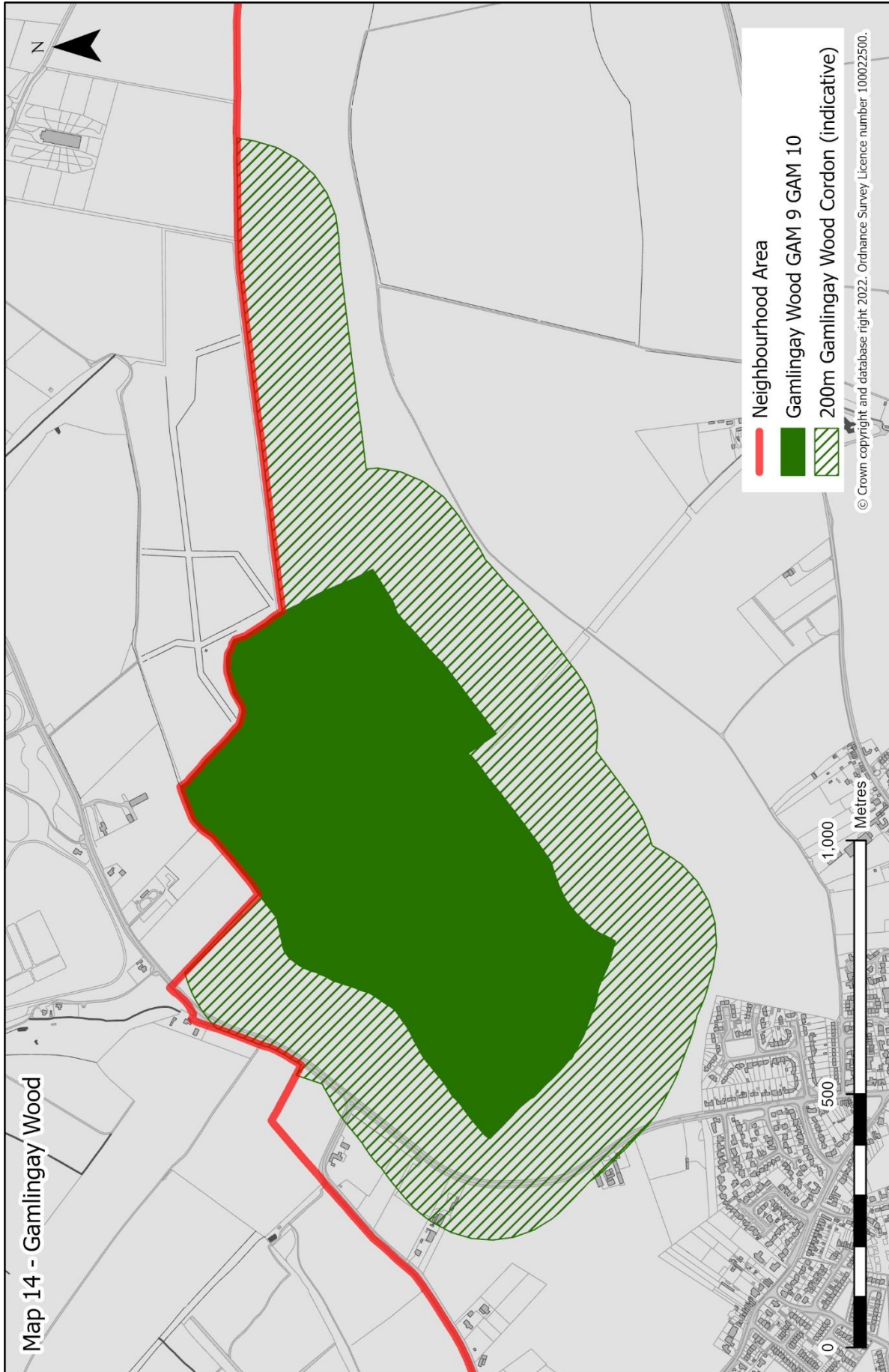
Development proposals which would have an unacceptable impact on the identified landscape, recreation and natural features will not be supported.

GAM10 – Gamlingay Wood

- 4.94 **Development proposals should safeguard the integrity and scientific importance of the Gamlingay Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest. Development in the immediate vicinity of the Woods which would have such a safeguarding role, which would enable the growth of existing farming activities or which would have a specific nature conservation benefit (such as traditional woodland industry) will be supported.**



Map 13: Landscape, recreation and natural environment features



Map 14: Gamlingay Wood

Appendix 1: Datasets and documents

Building Standards

The Design Council (2015). [‘Building for Life 12: the sign of a good place to live’](https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/guide/building-life-12-third-edition)
<https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/guide/building-life-12-third-edition>

Commissioned reports

All located at: <https://www.gamlingay-future.uk/documents/np-documents-index.html>
 BRCC (2018), ‘Housing Needs Assessment’
 Sustrans (2019). ‘Gamlingay Cycle and Footway Improvement Plan’
 CSA Environmental (2021). ‘Landscape and Visual Analysis’

Correspondence

Jo German, South Cambridgeshire Education Capital Projects Officer letter to Richard Hawley dated 8th February 2019

Datasets

Cambridgeshire [Insight](https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/)

<https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/>

- Cambridgeshire Atlas: [fuel poverty in the Cambridgeshire sub-region 2008-14;](http://atlas.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/Housing/FuelPoverty/atlas.html)
<http://atlas.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/Housing/FuelPoverty/atlas.html>
- Cambridgeshire Atlas: [Cambridge and Peterborough sub-region housing stock condition;](https://tinyurl.com/yypaexty)
<https://tinyurl.com/yypaexty>
- [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Housing Overview Report;](https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing/)
<https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing/>
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Appendix 2: Gamlingay's green infrastructure

Sites of nature conservation value

There are a number of sites in the Parish that are significant in terms of their wildlife value which warrant protection. The sites listed below are all managed to safeguard and enhance their biodiversity. This information was provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Environmental Records Centre (2018)¹⁰⁸.

- Gamlingay Wood (SSSI) (48.43 ha) Woodland of ancient origin-unusual for county. Gamlingay Wood is also a nature reserve of the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/nature-reserves/gamlingay-wood>

County Wildlife Sites

- Cambridge-Bedford disused railway (Hatley) (3.27 ha)
- Gamlingay (East) Road Side Verge (RSV) (0.6 ha)
- Gamlingay Stocks Lane cemetery (0.82 ha)
- Cinques Common (2.34 ha)
- Heath plantation (25.45 ha) – end of Little Heath
- New Barn Grassland (5.33 ha) – Adjacent to Cambridgeshire Lakes
- West Road RSV (0.09 ha)
- Gamlingay Park, Heath Road

Protected Road Side Verge

- Gamlingay (East) RSV (0.6 ha)
- Long Lane (grid reference TL262516 - TL261529)
- West Road RSV 0.09 ha)

Sites of Open Space value

Grassed areas provide relief to the built form of the village. They are an important feature in the village and contribute to its character, adding to the distinctive open feel and reinforcing the sense that you are in a village rather than an urban area.

- The Pitt – land at Waresley Rd and Cinques Road junction (0.15 ha)
- Land at Murfitt Way (0.22 ha)
- Land east of Green Acres, north of Maple Court junction (0.08 ha)
- Land north of Charnocks Close (0.42 ha)
- Land east of Green Acres, north of Maple Court (0.14 ha)
- Land south of Beechside, east of Plane Tree Close (0.16 ha)
- Land south of Chapel field (0.10 ha)
- Land south of Maple Court (0.11 ha)
- Land south of Plane Tree Close (0.29 ha)
- Millbridge Brook Meadows and Lower Field, Station Rd (2.03 ha) including community orchards

¹⁰⁸ See appendix 1.

Designated Local Green Space

- The Log field (Merton Field), off Green Acres – (0.8 ha) –Designated in Local Plan (2018)

Sites of sport, recreation and amenity value

These are sites valued for their open access for Sport, Recreation and Amenity. They are areas where residents can come together both informally and where community events are held.

- The Butts Play Area, off Stocks Lane (0.48 ha) (Children’s equipped Play space-NEAP)
- The Queen Elizabeth 2 Recreation Field, Stocks Lane (3.0 ha) football pitches
- Gamlingay First School playing fields, Green End (0.8 ha) (Asset of Community Value-ACV)
- Gamlingay Primary School site, Station Road (1 ha) (MUGA, Tennis Courts, Fitness Gym, football pitches)

Allotments

- Land west of Green End (0.11 ha)
- Land north of Long Lane (1.61 ha) (including a community orchard)

Cemeteries

- St Marys Field Cemetery, off Church St – open cemetery (1 ha)
- St Marys Churchyard, Church St – closed churchyard (0.2 ha)
- The Baptist Churchyard, Stocks Lane – closed churchyard (0.1 ha)
- Stocks Lane Cemetery, open cemetery (0.5 ha)

Views and vistas

1. Cinques Road between Gamlingay village and Gamlingay Cinques
2. View to Gamlingay Wood from Cinques Road
3. Views from the north eastern settlement edge of Gamlingay village
4. View from eastern approach into Gamlingay
5. View from recreation ground to Potton Wood
6. Views of the western edge of Gamlingay village
7. View to and from Mill Bridge

Appendix 3: Developer contributions

New housing developments of over 10 units already provide financial contributions (per m² developed) towards community benefits: for public open space, children's play, sports facilities, community buildings and informal open space. The contribution expected for improvements for walking, cycling and horse riding should be proportionate to these existing requirements.

Business and Industry (including offices) are not currently required to provide any community benefits. However, all development has the potential to impact negatively on traffic, parking and road safety. Therefore, all developments are expected to mitigate that impact by contributing towards improvements in active travel infrastructure in the local area.

This plan requires a contribution commensurate with housing, which equates approximately to three quarters of the total costs for infrastructure associated with housing. The following calculations allow for the developer to provide for cycling facilities such as cycle parking and storage on site, and provision for showering facilities within the building.

A standardised template legal agreement will be used for individual / small scale property development, similar to the one in use by Huntingdonshire District Council:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1676/unilateral-undertaking-wheeled-bin-contribution.pdf>

Infrastructure requirement

- 1) Gamlingay to Potton-3km
- 2) Gamlingay to Waresley (within boundary) 2km
- 3) Gamlingay to The Cinques 2.5km
- 4) Gamlingay Great Heath to West Road-5km

Total infrastructure required- 12.5km

Infrastructure cost

The cost (2020, to be index linked) of new cycleway is £320,000 per km (excluding land acquisition costs). The total required for 12.5km is £5 million.

Based on an existing housing stock of 1700 dwellings (2018), a proportionate contribution is calculated as:

$$£5 \text{ million} / 1700 = \mathbf{£2,941 \text{ per dwelling at average size of } 100 \text{ m}^2}$$

Assuming that each house is an average 100 m², the cost per square metre is:

$$£2,941 / 100 = \mathbf{£29 \text{ per square metre}}$$

Housing / employment development contribution

The proposed split in infrastructure costs for carbon neutral travel within the parish is set out below. All prices are to be index linked.

Housing cost per m² – £10

Employment cost per m² – £21

Total cost per m² – £31 (to include land acquisition costs)

Appendix 4: Biodiversity projects

Developers are required to deliver measurable, proportionate and appropriate biodiversity net gains, preferably on the application site.

Examples include:

- Nest bricks for house sparrows, starlings and swifts– nationally the swift population has declined by 90%
- Bee bricks
- Bat roosts
- Hedgehog highways
- Green spaces featuring native seed-bearing trees and native wildflowers
- Planting hedgerows with seed bearing trees
- Permeable surfaces
- Rain gardens (sustainable urban drainage systems)

This is in line with South Cambridgeshire District Council's Doubling Nature Strategy:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/nature-and-climate-change/doubling-nature/>