



# **Sedgeford**

Neighbourhood Planning Referendum

**5 September 2019**

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## **Information Pack**

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- 1. Information Statement**
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- 4. Report of the Independent Examiner** on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan
- 5. Summary of representations** received in response to publication of the Draft Plan
- 6. Statement that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions** by the local planning authority
- 7. Decision Statement**





# **Sedgeford**

# **Neighbourhood Planning**

# **Referendum**

# **Information**

# **Statement**

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

The Referendum will be held on **5 September 2019** to decide on the question below:

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

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



A person is entitled to vote in the Referendum if, on 5 September 2019:

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

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

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

A number of specified documents may be inspected at:

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk  
King's Court  
Chapel Street  
KING'S LYNN  
PE30 1EX

**Opening times:** 9am-5pm Monday – Thursday  
9am-4.45 pm on a Friday.  
**Tel:** 01553 616200  
**Web:** [www.west-norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk)

**The specified documents are:**

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

For further information about the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan, including all background documents, please see our Neighbourhood Planning webpages:

- Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans:  
[https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood\\_plans/43/neighbourhood\\_planning](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/43/neighbourhood_planning)
- Neighbourhood Plans in Progress in West Norfolk: [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood\\_plans/116/plans\\_being\\_prepared](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/116/plans_being_prepared)



# **Sedgeford Neighbourhood Planning Referendum**

## **Information for Voters**

## About this document

On 5 September 2019 there will be a Referendum on a Neighbourhood Plan for your area. This document explains the Referendum that is going to take place and how you can take part in it. It explains:-

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

## Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan

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

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

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

## What does my vote mean?

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

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

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

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

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



## **Neighbourhood Plans**

### **What is a Neighbourhood Plan?**

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

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

### **Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?**

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

### **What can be in a Neighbourhood Plan?**

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

A neighbourhood plan must:

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

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

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

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

## **How is a Neighbourhood Plan prepared?**

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

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

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

For further information on neighbourhood plans see:

Borough Council Information:

- Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans: [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood\\_plans/43/neighbourhood\\_planning](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/43/neighbourhood_planning)
- Neighbourhood Plans in Progress in West Norfolk: [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood\\_plans/116/plans\\_being\\_prepared](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/116/plans_being_prepared)

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

## **Town and Country Planning**

### **Background**

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

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

The planning system endeavours to -

- Coordinate the activities of different developers and agencies,
- Protect features and qualities of acknowledged public interest,

- Provide a degree of certainty for investors, landowners, residents and other stakeholders, and
- Coordinate the provision of infrastructure and other facilities.

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

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

### **Local Planning Decisions**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Local Plans**

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

Local plans usually look forward at least 15 years, and must provide for enough housing and employment development to meet the anticipated growth in the area over that period, and have to be in general accordance with national planning policy. Ideas

for how this might be done are refined and reconsidered through successive rounds of consultation and discussion, often over a period of several years, but rarely is consensus reached; so the local planning authority must make difficult choices between competing views and proposals. Once the local planning authority has decided the plan it wishes to adopt it is tested against legal requirements and national policy by an independent planning inspector; who will consider the views of those who oppose or support the plan, and decide whether it can be adopted and brought into force.

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

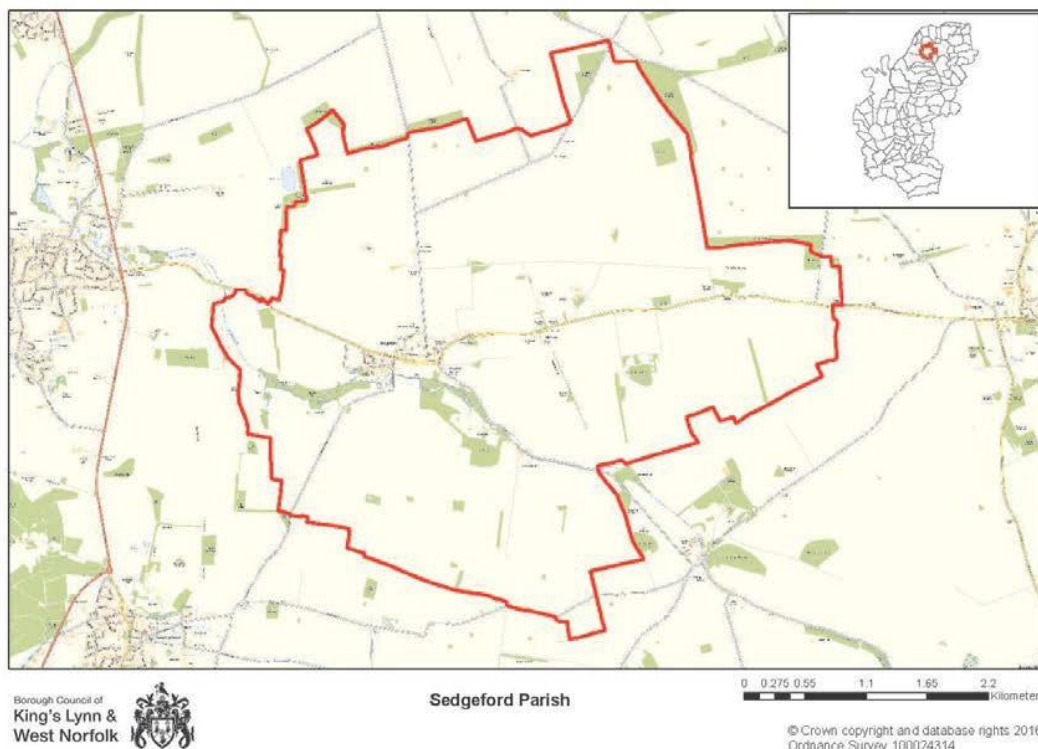
### **Neighbourhood Planning**

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

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

## Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan Referendum Area

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



## Voting in the Referendum

### The Referendum area

The Referendum area is identified on the map shown on Page 13 as the parish area of Sedgeford and is identical to the area which has been designated as the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan area.

### Referendum Expenses

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

### Specified Documents

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

- Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, KING'S LYNN, PE30 1EX between the hours of 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00 am to 4.45 pm on a Friday.  
Tel: (01553) 616200 or email [register.electors@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:register.electors@west-norfolk.gov.uk).
- Sedgeford Parish Clerk, 1 Rudham Road, Syderstone, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 8SL, [sedgeford.parish@outlook.com](mailto:sedgeford.parish@outlook.com)

The specified documents are:-

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

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

### Can I Vote?

You can vote in the Referendum if you live in the Parish of Sedgeford and:-

- You are registered to vote in Local Government Elections, and
- You are 18 years of age or over on 5 September 2019

You have to be registered to vote by 19 August 2019 to vote in the Referendum. You can check if you are registered to vote by calling (01553) 616773 or 616200.

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

## **Ways of Voting**

There are three ways of voting:-

### **In person on 5 September 2019**

- Most people vote in person at their local polling station. It is easy and the staff on duty will always help if you are not sure what to do.
- In Sedgeford, the Polling Station is:  
- **Sedgeford Village Hall, 30 Jarvie Close, Sedgeford, HUNSTANTON, PE36 5NF**
- You will receive a poll card telling you that this is your polling station.
- If you do not receive your poll card you can contact Electoral Services on (01553) 616773 to ensure you are registered.
- The polling station will be open from 7am to 10pm.
- If you are not in the queue for a ballot paper by 10pm you will not be able to vote; so make sure you arrive in plenty of time.

### **By post**

- To vote by post you need to complete an application form and send it to Electoral Services, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, KING'S LYNN. PE30 1EX to arrive by 5pm on Tuesday 20 August 2019
- Ballot papers can be sent overseas, but you need to think about whether you will have time to receive and return your ballot papers by 10pm on 5 September 2019.
- You should receive your Postal Vote about a week before polling day. If it does not arrive in time, you can get a replacement up to 5pm on 5 September 2019.

### **By Proxy**

- If you cannot go to the polling station, and do not wish to vote by post, you may be able to vote by proxy. This means allowing somebody you trust to vote on your behalf.
- To vote by proxy, you need to complete an application form and send it to Electoral Services, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, KING'S LYNN. PE30 1EX to arrive by 5pm on Wednesday 28 August 2019.

This is for a new Proxy only. Changes to existing arrangements need to be made by 5pm on Tuesday 20 August 2019.

- When you apply for a proxy vote you must say why you cannot vote in person.
- Anyone can be your proxy as long as they are eligible to vote and are willing to vote on your behalf. You will have to tell them how you want to vote.

Postal and proxy vote application forms are available from Electoral Services on (01553) 616773 or by downloading from the Council's website at:

[www.west-norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk).

### **Am I Registered to Vote?**

- If you are not registered you will not be able to vote.
- If you are not on the Electoral Register, you will need to complete an Invitation to Register form and send it to Electoral Services, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, King's Court, Chapel Street, KING'S LYNN. PE30 1EX to arrive no later than Monday 19 August, or go online.

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

### **How to find out more**

- Further general information on neighbourhood planning is available on the following websites <https://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/make-a-neighbourhood-plan> and [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood\\_plans](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans)
- For queries about planning issues, please contact the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Planning Policy on (01553) 616200. For queries about the Referendum and voting please contact Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Electoral Services on (01553) 616773 or e-mail: [register.electors@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:register.electors@west-norfolk.gov.uk)



**SEDGEFORD  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**PLAN PERIOD 2017-2036**

**DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
POST EXAMINATION VERSION**

**REGULATION 18**



**Sedgeford  
Neighbourhood Development Plan  
2017-2036**



**Referendum Version  
July 2019**



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3. Planning permissions and completions
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12. Archaeological Research undertaken by the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project in Sedgeford Parish 1996-2017
13. Listed Buildings
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## Foreword

Sue Crump Chair of Sedgeford Parish Council

The Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for everyone in the village to have a real influence on the way Sedgeford develops over the period up to 2036. Neighbourhood Plans were introduced by the government in 2011 and may contain policies relating to the development and use of land. When the Plan is brought into effect these policies will have real force as they will form part of the statutory development plan and will therefore be applied in the determination of planning applications.

The Draft Plan has been prepared by a Working Group set up by the Parish Council assisted by a consultant with planning experience and expertise and supported by a grant from the Community Rights Programme.

In preparing it we have tried to ensure that we understand the views of residents and businesses through several stages of consultation with residents, businesses and statutory consultees prior to the statutory six-week period of consultation in September/October 2018. The comments which have been made have mostly been supportive of the Plan: we have considered all the feedback we have received and made some changes to the Pre-Submission Draft where necessary to reflect these comments.

The Plan is now being submitted to the Borough Council and will be the subject of an independent examination to check whether it complies with national policy and guidance, the strategic policies of the Borough Council and European regulations. If it passes this test it will be the subject of a referendum of all those registered on the electoral roll. If it is supported by over 50% of those who vote in the referendum it will be brought into effect and its policies will be important considerations in the determination of planning applications.

I would like to thank all those who have been involved in the preparation of the Plan, and all those who have taken the time to become familiar with it and let us have their views.





## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1.** Neighbourhood plans were introduced in the Localism Act 2011. In very simple terms, a neighbourhood plan is a document that sets out planning policies for a local area, in this case Sedgeford. Planning policies are used to decide planning applications. Local people can create a plan that allows them to develop planning policies that reflect the priorities for their area. The whole community then decides at a referendum vote whether the local authority should bring the plan into force.
- 1.2.** A neighbourhood plan is an important document with real legal force. However, as it forms part of a hierarchy of planning policies there are some limitations on what it can do, known as the basic conditions:
- It must have regard to government planning policies and guidance.
  - It must contribute to sustainable development
  - It must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan produced by the local planning authority (in this case the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk)
  - It must conform to European environmental legislation.
  - It must not conflict with the European Convention on Human Rights
- 1.3.** It must also meet legal requirements contained in the Town and Country Planning Act 1991 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

## **2. Preparation of the Plan**

- 2.1.** The draft Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by a Working Group set up by the Parish Council consisting of Parish Councillors and volunteers.
- 2.2.** The Parish of Sedgeford was designated as a neighbourhood area in July 2016. The area is shown in Map 1. Since then the Working Group has worked with the community to develop the draft plan. There have been three main opportunities so far for residents and those who work or do business in the area to contribute to and comment on the emerging plan:
- A questionnaire circulated to all households and to other interested parties in April 2017; this gave us information about the village and identified the key issues which are important to local people
  - A drop-in session to present the findings of the questionnaire held on 9-10 June 2017
  - A further drop-in session to present the emerging policies of the Plan on 17 October 2017.
  - The statutory Consultation period on 6 weeks in September/ October 2018
- 2.3.** Throughout the process of preparing the Plan the working group has liaised closely with planning officers at the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, to ensure that the draft plan is aligned with the Council's strategic policies and to understand the evidence which will influence the Borough Council's emerging Local Plan.

**Map 1: The Neighbourhood Area**



### **3. The Next Steps**

- 3.1.** This version of the Plan has been prepared taking account of the response to consultation carried out on the pre-submission draft of the Plan.
- 3.2.** The amended plan is submitted to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk who are required to appoint an independent examiner to see if the Plan meets the basic conditions and legal requirements. The examiner may recommend some modifications and will make a recommendation to the Borough Council on whether or not the Plan can proceed to a referendum. If the Plan receives the support of over 50% of those voting at a referendum it can be brought into effect. It will then become part of the statutory development plan. This means that it carries real weight in the determination of planning applications.

### **4. A Portrait of Sedgeford**

- 4.1.** Sedgeford is a relatively small village with a very long history. The main settlement is now on the north side of the valley of the Heacham River about 3 miles east of the Wash, 4 miles from the seaside resort of Hunstanton and 16 miles from the market town of King's Lynn. Its location and transport connections are shown on Map 2.



## Map 2: Sedgeford Location

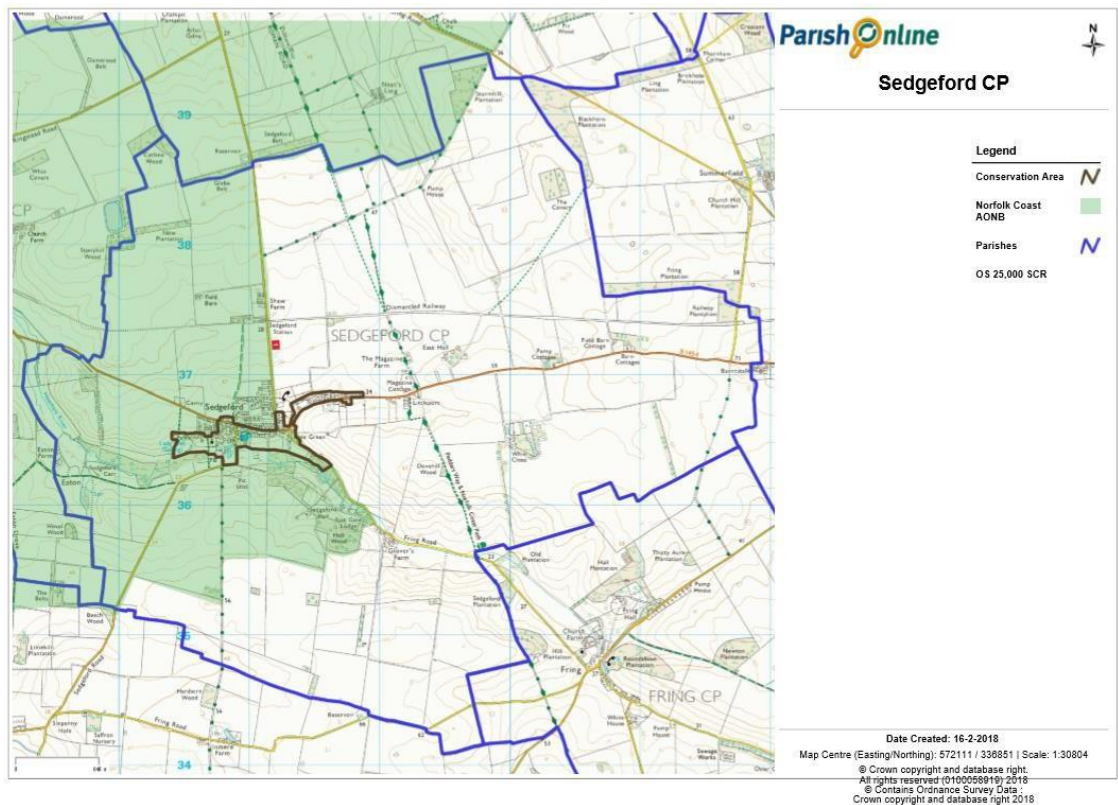


There is evidence of a settlement in the vicinity of Sedgeford for over 2000 years. Human remains and tools have been found dating from at least 4000BC. The Iron Age settlement of 100BC-60AD appears to have been very significant and there is also evidence of settlement in Roman and Anglo-Saxon times. All the early settlement was on the south

side of the river which is the site of the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) which has been excavating the sites of the various settlements since 1996.

- 4.2.** Around 1100, settlement moved to the north bank of the river in the vicinity of the existing church of St Mary, which dates from the thirteenth century. The size of the church is evidence of the importance of Sedgeford in Mediaeval times. The village has extended to the east since then, mainly in a linear fashion along the existing B1454, which runs between Heacham and Docking, but also in the twentieth century northwards along Ringstead Road.
- 4.3.** Much of the village is included within the Sedgeford Conservation Area shown on Map 3. This includes most of the built up area to the south of the B1454 and includes the meadows between this line of development and the Heacham River in recognition of the importance of the valley setting to the character of the village. It includes two main clusters of development which are of particular quality, one around the church and a separate core of development at Cole Green. The Conservation Area also extends to the east some way along Docking Road and Fring Lane. More modern development to the north along Ringstead Road and the Goodminns Estate south of Heacham Road lies outside the Conservation Area.

**Map 3: AONB and Conservation Area**



- 4.4.** The Heacham River is a chalk stream which is fed by springs from the underlying chalk aquifer which also forms the higher ground to the north and east. The western part of the

parish also lies on the edge of the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). (See Map 3). The importance of the AONB is based on the relationship between the saltmarsh, dunes and cliffs of the coast and the higher land to the south, reflecting the distinctive geology which gives rise to a variety of landforms and associated biodiversity of national significance.<sup>1</sup> A summary of the AONB “Statement of Significance” is attached as Appendix 1. The landscape is mostly classified as rolling open farmland with some plateau farmland in the north-eastern part of the Parish.<sup>2</sup>

- 4.5. The Peddars Way long distance footpath runs along the high ground towards the eastern edge of the Parish and National Cycle Route 1 also passes north- south through the village, along Ringstead Road and Snettisham Road.
- 4.6. As a small village Sedgeford has relatively few services and facilities. However, it does have a primary school, a village hall and recreation ground, the King William IV Country Inn and the St Mary’s Church. The nearest shops are in Heacham 2 miles to the west. There is only a bus service in school term times which runs from Sedgeford to King’s Lynn via Docking, mainly carrying students to and from the College of West Anglia.
- 4.7. Appendix 2 contains a selection of demographic data relating to Sedgeford. The most notable features of this are:
  - The age structure of the population of the village is older than that of the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) which itself is older than the age structure of England. 63% of the population are over 45, compared with 52% for BCKLWN and 42% for England. This imbalance is also increasing with a large increase in the proportion of the population aged over 65 between 2011 and 2016.
  - 24% of dwellings in Sedgeford have no permanent residents compared to 15% in BCKLWN and 4% for England. This suggests a large number of second homes and holiday lets.
  - 42% of dwellings are detached houses or bungalows, slightly more than BCKLWN but almost double the figure for England. The proportion of semi-detached houses is also higher than both BCKLWN and England and the proportion of terraced houses or apartments is correspondingly lower.
  - One person households make up a lower proportion of the total than in BCKLWN and West Norfolk but of these the proportion aged over 65 is much higher.
  - The proportion of households with dependent children and the proportion of dwellings in multiple occupation is significantly lower than in the Borough and the country.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk/partnership/aonb-management-plan/377>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/downloads/download/77/landscape\\_character\\_assessment](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/downloads/download/77/landscape_character_assessment)

- 72% of dwellings are owner occupied, compared with 66% for KLWN and 63% for England.
- The population is more highly qualified than that in the borough or England, with many more having level 4 qualifications or above and far fewer having no qualifications. This is reflected in higher proportions whose occupation is managerial, professional or skilled trade and less in lower skilled occupations.
- Car ownership is higher in Sedgford than BCKLWN with 51% of households having 2 or more cars compared with 40% in the borough and 32% in England.

## **5. Summary of Consultation Findings**

- 5.1.** Responses to the questionnaire distributed in April 2017 were in two sections. Quantitative data from the 247 forms returned was entered into a spreadsheet and presented in chart format while comments were collated into a Word file.
- 5.2.** Respondents particularly valued Sedgford as a safe and secure neighbourhood, enjoying its peace and tranquillity. They highlighted the importance of the natural environment, including green open spaces, footpaths and the river valley, and also the sense of community and opportunities for social interaction.
- 5.3.** Traffic growth and road safety were major issues and many also commented on the lack of public transport. In relation to new housing, concerns were expressed about the scale and appropriateness of future development and its potential impact on the environment – landscape, wildlife and tranquillity.
- 5.4.** Most thought that Sedgford should remain much as it is, if a little larger – a residential village depending to a significant extent on local towns and other villages for jobs and services. However, they wished to preserve the amenities which currently exist and would welcome some expansion of services, particularly public transport.
- 5.5.** The favoured location for additional housing was within the existing built-up area, with most preferring small groups of houses and opposing larger developments, especially if this took the form of a new housing estate.
- 5.6.** Respondents considered that the greatest need was for homes which would be occupied full-time by the owners and for various types of affordable housing, for rent, shared ownership or suitable for first-time buyers. Nearly all agreed there was no need for any further second homes or for any more ‘high end’, expensive housing.
- 5.7.** Most of the response to the pre-submission plan supported the policies it contained. Some comments expressed concern about the impact of the allocations on Site 1 and 2 on the character of the village and neighbouring residents. The County Council also raised some concern about the absence of a footpath to the school from site 2. Modifications have been made to the Plan in response to these comments. Some comments from the Borough

Council related to the detailed justification for policies and minor modifications have been made to reflect these points. A full report on consultation is contained in the Consultation Statement.

## **6. Strategic Context**

- 6.1.** One of the statutory requirements for a neighbourhood plan is “general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan”. The development plan relating to Sedgeford is:
- The King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2011
  - The King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Site allocations and Development Management Policies adopted in September 2016
- 6.2.** Both these documents set out proposals for development up to 2026. The Borough Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which will guide development up to 2036 and this Neighbourhood Plan also has this timescale. While a neighbourhood plan is not required to conform to the policies of an emerging plan, as they are subject to change, it should take account of the evidence which is informing it. The Parish Council has maintained a continuing dialogue with officers of the Borough Council to ensure that the strategic context is understood.
- 6.3.** Sedgeford is identified as a Rural Village within the settlement hierarchy defined in Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy. The policy for Rural Villages is:  
*“Limited minor development will be permitted which meets the needs of settlements and helps to sustain existing services in accordance with Policy CS06 Development in Rural Areas”.*
- 6.4.** Policy CS06 aims to focus most development in key rural service centres. In rural villages it aims to provide for *“more modest levels of development, as detailed in policy CS09 to meet the local needs and maintain the vitality of these communities where this can be achieved in a sustainable manner particularly with regard to accessibility to housing, employment services and markets without detriment to the character of the surrounding area or landscape.”*
- 6.5.** Policy CS09 Housing Distribution indicates that in the 34 Rural Villages a total of at least 1280 new dwellings will be provided between 2011 and 2026 including the allocation of new sites to accommodate 215 dwellings.
- 6.6.** Policy G78.1 in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document adopted in 2016 allocates a site off Jarvie Close (shown on Map 4 ) for the development of 10 dwellings. In addition to these, 20 dwellings have been completed since 2011, 7 were under construction in early 2018 and there are outstanding planning permissions for a further 7. There is thus potential for at least a further 24 dwellings to be built up to 2025. (though some are replacement dwellings) These developments are listed in Appendix 3.



- 6.7. The Borough Council does not envisage any change in the position of Sedgeford in the settlement hierarchy in the roll forward of the Local Plan to 2036. The recently issued second edition of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) indicates that local planning authorities should provide an indicative figure of the number of new dwellings that should be provided, if requested. In response to such a request the Borough Council has indicated that “So as part of emerging strategy we are not seeking any additional growth via allocations at Sedgeford, and wouldn’t be if a neighbourhood plan wasn’t being prepared. So from our end the indicative figure for allocation would be 0 for Sedgeford. However, if the parish did want to allocate a site that wouldn’t be a problem and would more than likely be welcomed.”<sup>3</sup>
- 6.8. In order to provide some smaller scale housing for permanent residents and to maintain the vitality of the village the Plan has sought to identify sites for about 10 new dwellings. It is likely that in addition to this some further dwellings will be accommodated on infill windfall sites.

## 7. Vision and Objectives

- 7.1. The vision for the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan has been developed on the basis of the views expressed in the responses to the questionnaire issued in April 2017 to all households.

**Sedgeford will remain a cohesive and sustainable community with an appropriate range of local services and, while accommodating sufficient new development to meet local needs for housing and jobs, will retain its rural character and setting.**

- 7.2. Sedgeford residents enjoy the sense of community and the feeling that this is a safe and secure neighbourhood. The peace and tranquillity, the footpaths and walks and the green open spaces within the village are particularly valued. The school, the church, the King William IV public house and the village hall are also very important to residents.
- 7.3. From the Vision, four main objectives have been developed and the policies of the Plan are designed to deliver the Vision and Objectives. Neighbourhood Plans must demonstrate that they contribute to sustainable development. Sustainable development has three dimensions: economic, social and environmental<sup>4</sup> and the four objectives are closely aligned with them.

### 1. Housing

**To provide new housing that will meet the needs of the community and relate well to the existing village in terms of location and character.**

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<sup>3</sup> E mail from Borough Council dated 12 September 2018

<sup>4</sup> National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 7

## **2. The Natural and Built Environment**

**To conserve the characteristics of the natural and built environment that contribute to the identity of this part of West Norfolk and to the quality of life in the village.**

## **3. Community Facilities and Services**

**To maintain or improve the existing community facilities and services.**

## **4. Employment Opportunities**

**To provide opportunities for new employment of appropriate nature and scale and maintain existing employment opportunities.**

# **8. Policies**

## **8.1. Housing**

### Development at Jarvie Close

- 8.1.1. A site of 0.57ha. on the south side of Jarvie Close has been allocated for the development of at least 10 dwellings through policy G78.1 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. Outline planning permission was granted in October 2016 for the development of 9 dwellings on the site (application ref 16/01414/O), but the reserved matters have not been determined at the time this plan is being drafted. There is therefore an opportunity for the neighbourhood plan to influence the final form of development. This would apply in circumstances either where the extant outline planning permission lapses or where a new outline application is submitted.
- 8.1.2. Policy H1 provides a context for the determination of planning applications on the site in the event that the proposal associated with the extant outline application does not proceed. Its ambition is to make the best and most efficient use of land in a sustainable location in general, and to deliver affordable housing in particular. The delivery of affordable housing will be subject to the tests in Policy CS09 of the Core Strategy. The second criterion of the policy has been designed to ensure that new development on the site respects the density, form and layout of existing dwellings in the immediate locality.
- 8.1.3. A footpath runs along the western boundary of the proposed site and provides easy access to the countryside and to Heacham Road for existing residents. The maintenance of access to this footpath can easily be incorporated into the design of the development and would contribute to sustainable development.
- 8.1.4. Jarvie Close is in a fairly elevated position within the village and offers commanding views across the valley of the Heacham River. While the development of the site will inevitably have an impact on these views from some locations, careful treatment of rooflines and

spacing between dwellings can help to retain the important relationship with the valley

from public viewpoints.

**Policy H1: Development of site allocated at Jarvie Close**

**The development of the site allocated under Policy G78.1 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD will be supported where it would meet the following criteria:**

- a) The development shall be for a minimum of 11 dwellings or 1000sq m ;**
- b) The development respects the density, form and layout of houses in the immediate locality**
- c) The layout of the development will provide for the maintenance of access from Jarvie Close to the footpath that runs along the western boundary of the site;**
- d) The rooflines and spacing of the development should be designed to minimise the obstruction of views across the river valley from public places on Jarvie Close and should not appear higher than those in the existing Jarvie Close development in views across the valley from the south.**

New Allocations

- 8.1.5. One of the main requirements for neighbourhood plans is that they should not “*promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies*”.
- 8.1.6. The expectation that the rate of development in the village up to 2036 should be similar to that proposed in the Local Plan up to 2026 suggests the need for an additional site for 5-10 dwellings. It is possible that sufficient new dwellings will be built in the form of infill development without the need for a new allocation. However, there can be no certainty of this and one of the opportunities presented by neighbourhood plans is to influence the location of new development. If no allocations are made it is possible that development will come forward in locations which would not be preferred by the community. Also, one or more new allocations could provide relatively small permanent dwellings for which a need has been identified and may include affordable housing, which would be unlikely in the case of infill development. Moreover, a Neighbourhood Plan which makes allocations for housing carries more weight in the event that the Borough Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land.<sup>5</sup>
- 8.1.7. 6 Sites were submitted to the Borough Council in response to its “Call for Sites” for the Local Plan roll forward. However, The Borough Council has agreed than any allocations should be made through the Neighbourhood Plan. Three additional sites have been identified by the Parish Council for consideration.

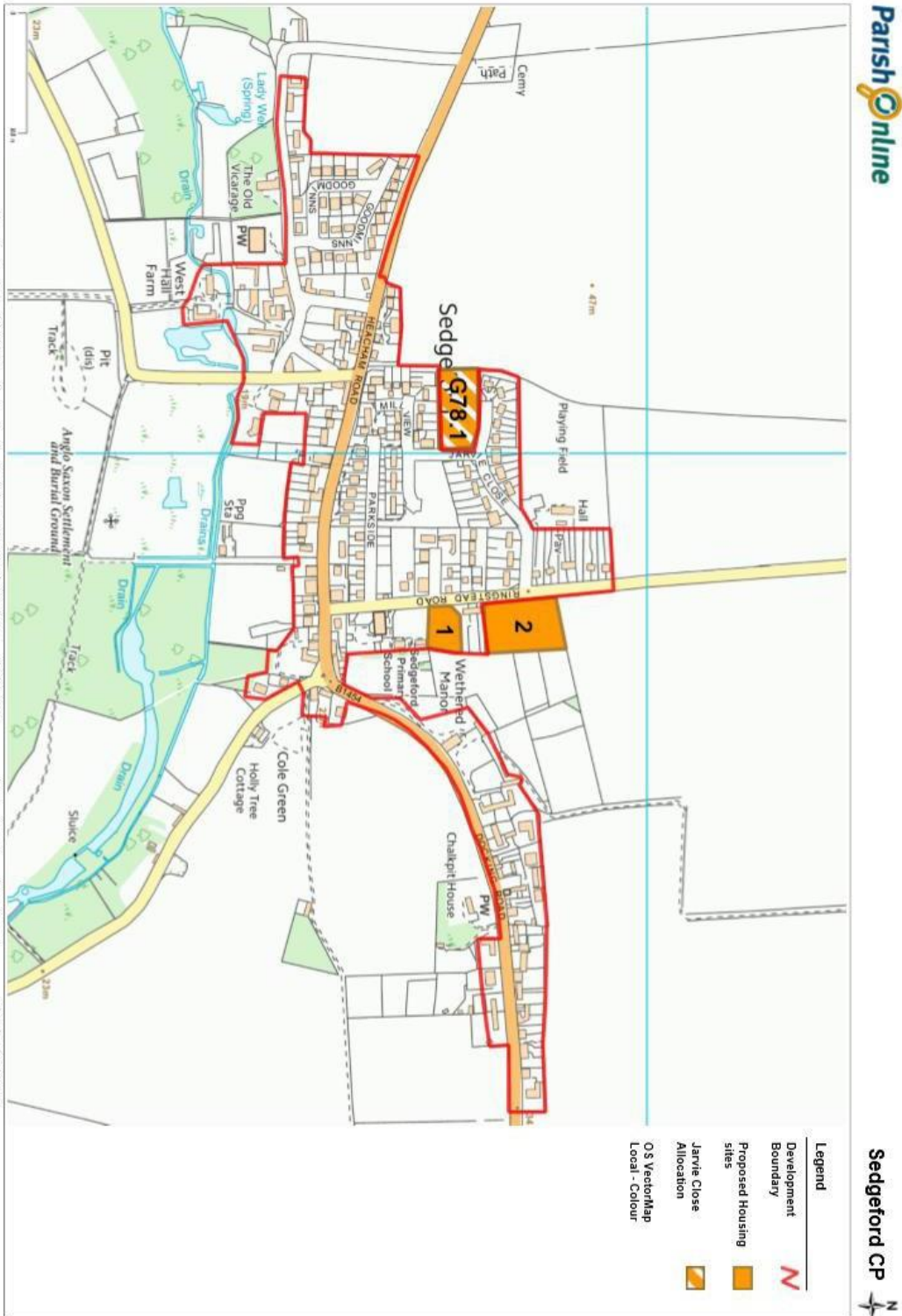
<sup>5</sup> NPPF 2018 paragraph 14

8.1.8. The potential of these sites has been initially evaluated using the Housing and Economic Land Allocations Assessment (HELAA) methodology which has been agreed by all the Norfolk Local Authorities and is consistent with Planning Practice Guidance.<sup>6</sup> The methodology is described and applied to each of these sites in Appendix 5. This

**Map 4: Proposed Housing Sites, Jarvie Close Allocation and Development Boundary**

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20216/local\\_plan\\_review\\_2016\\_-\\_2036/630/local\\_plan\\_review\\_call\\_for\\_sites](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20216/local_plan_review_2016_-_2036/630/local_plan_review_call_for_sites)



8.1.9. methodology has been designed for use in relation to locations for relatively large-scale growth but is also used by the Borough Council in smaller locations. It is used to screen out sites that have constraints that cannot be overcome. It does not provide a basis for

comparing sites that could be suitable for development. A further evaluation has therefore been carried out to compare the seven sites remaining. This methodology and the results of applying it are contained in Appendix 6.

- 8.1.10. As a result of this process Site 1 (land to the east of Ringstead Road and to the north of the School) and Site 2 (Land east of Ringstead Road opposite Jarvie Close) have emerged as the most suitable sites for development. They are within easy walking distance of the School, and other facilities in the village. Site 1 is within the development boundary. Policy H2 sets out a series of criteria with which development proposals would need to comply. They address a series of environmental matters including boundary treatments, layout and design and parking/access matters.

#### **POLICY H2: The location of new residential development**

Land to the east of Ringstead Road and to the north of the School as shown on Map 4 is allocated for residential use.

Development proposals for residential use on the site will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- they provide safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access;
- they incorporate boundary treatments to the east (to the existing paddock) and to the north (to the existing residential property to the immediate north) that are sensitively designed to respect the semi-rural location of the site and to safeguard the amenities of surrounding properties;
- they are designed to ensure that the layout of the site reflects the character and layout of properties in Ringstead Road; and
- they provide off street car parking to the required standards in Policy DM17 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.

Land east of Ringstead Road opposite Jarvie Close as shown on Map 4 is allocated for residential use.

Development proposals for residential use on the site will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- they provide safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access;
- they incorporate boundary treatments to the north (to the surrounding countryside) to the east (to the existing paddock) and to the south (to the existing residential property to the immediate south) that are sensitively designed to respect the semi-rural location of the site and to safeguard the amenities of surrounding properties;
- they are designed to ensure that the layout of the site reflects the character and layout of properties in Ringstead Road. In particular the development should be designed so that it is of single-plot development with gardens running in an east to west direction to the east of the new dwellings; and



- they provide off street car parking to the required standards in Policy DM17 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.

### Development Boundary and Affordable Housing Exception Sites

- 8.1.11. The development boundary of Sedgeford was defined in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Document and is shown on Map 4. It closely follows the boundary of the built-up area of Sedgeford which is generally quite tightly defined. This boundary has been retained in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 8.1.12. Within the development boundary, infilling with individual dwellings or small groups will be supported subject to design criteria to ensure that the character of the village is respected and the development is not harmful to the amenity of neighbouring residents or highway safety. The spacing and density of development of particular concern. Sedgeford is a rural village with a fairly spacious pattern of development. In order to retain the character of the village it is important that this spaciousness is not eroded through a cramped or urbanised form of development. Very few premises in Sedgeford cover more than 40% of the plot area and this figure may be used as a guideline for maximum plot coverage of new dwellings.

### **Policy H3: Infill development within the Development Boundary**

**Within the development boundary of Sedgeford infill development, of individual, or small groups of dwellings will be supported where:**

- **they would relate well to the neighbouring development in terms of height, scale and impact on the street scene, and, where applicable, would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, and**
- **they would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring property, and**
- **The provision of a vehicular access would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on to highway safety and on-site parking can be provided in accordance with NCC standards.**
- **Dwellings should maintain adequate spacing and not appear cramped on the plot or in relation to neighbouring dwellings and their footprint should not normally exceed 40% of the plot area;**
- **The development does not conflict with other development plan policies**

- 8.1.11. Only 10% of the housing stock in Sedgeford is social-rented housing, well below the figure for West Norfolk which is 14%. House prices in Sedgeford are high. The average house price in England in September 2017 was £243,945 and in King's Lynn and West Norfolk £206,639.<sup>7</sup> Strictly comparable figures are not available at a local level, but the Zoopla Zed index gives an average value for Sedgeford of £344,900 in November 2017. This no doubt

<sup>7</sup> UK House Price Index – England September 2017

partly reflects the higher representation of relatively large houses in Sedgeford. It is, though, evident that at these price levels houses are not easily affordable for first time buyers or those on low incomes.

#### Rural Exception Sites for Affordable Housing

- 8.1.12. A local Housing Needs Survey for Sedgeford was commissioned by Hastoe Housing Association (Appendix 7). This shows a need for 9 affordable houses. The survey recommends the provision of a minimum of 5 affordable houses as need identified in a survey does not always translate into effective demand. There is therefore clear evidence of a need for affordable housing.
- 8.1.13. Because of the recent changes to legislation referred to in paragraph 8.1.2 there is no certainty that any affordable housing will be provided in association with small scale market housing developments. For this reason rural exception sites, where planning permission would only be granted for affordable housing to meet clearly identified local needs outside the development boundary, offer the best prospect for the provision of affordable housing. For such schemes, the allocation of new dwellings to people with a local connection can be ensured through a planning obligation under s.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

#### **Policy H4: Development outside the development boundary**

**Outside the village development boundary new housing development will only be supported in accordance with Local Plan and national policies for development in the countryside, including, where there is clear evidence of local need, the development of affordable housing, to be retained as such in perpetuity on rural exception sites. Development proposals outside the development boundary should demonstrate that:**

- They are adjacent to the development boundary,
- They would not be intrusive in the countryside, particularly the AONB,
- They would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residents and

**To ensure that priority in the allocation of dwellings on rural exception sites which deliver affordable housing will be given to people who can demonstrate a local connection planning permissions for rural exception sites will be subject to a planning obligation will require that dwellings are allocated in accordance with the following priorities:**

- 1) Existing residents of Sedgeford who have lived in the village for more than 12 months;
- 2) Past residents of Sedgeford who have lived in the village for a minimum period of 5 years and who moved away within the last 3 years because no suitable accommodation was available;
- 3) People who need to live in Sedgeford because of their permanent employment or offer of permanent employment;
- 4) People who are not resident in Sedgeford who need to live near family members resident in the village;

- 5) Existing residents of the neighbouring villages of Fring, Snettisham, Heacham, Ringstead, and Docking;
- 6) Existing residents of the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk who have lived in the Borough for a period of 5 years or more.

Housing Mix Table 2 in Appendix 2 shows that Sedgeford has a higher proportion of detached, and to a lesser extent, semi-detached houses than BCKLWN as a whole or the country. At the same time, the results of the parish questionnaire showed that residents felt that the greatest need was for smaller dwellings. Table 3 of the Appendix 2 shows that 57% of households have two or more bedrooms in excess of their theoretical need. While many families may choose to have this surplus accommodation, these statistics suggest that there may well be older people living in relatively large houses who may wish to downsize. The evidence certainly suggests that the need is more likely to be for smaller rather than larger houses.

8.1.15. The 2014 update of the Strategic Housing Needs Assessment for the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk provides the most up to date borough wide evidence on the types of housing needed. It is difficult to summarise the very detailed information it provides and to extract their implications for one village. However, among the key findings are:

- House prices are significantly higher in the northern rural part of the borough than in other parts of the borough<sup>8</sup>
- The gap between affordable rents and market rents and between social rents and market rents is much higher in the northern parts of the borough
- 67% of new housing should be market housing, 21.4% affordable rent, 6.1% social rented and 5.9% shared ownership<sup>9</sup>
- For market housing the greatest need is for three bedroom dwellings (35%) followed by 4 bedroom (30%) and then 2 bedroom (25%)
- For affordable rented, social rented and shared ownership housing the greatest need is for 2 bedroom houses

8.1.16. In some cases, the characteristics of the site may lend themselves to larger dwellings, but where possible the layout should aim to provide mainly two and three-bedroom dwellings. There is a risk that over time relatively small dwellings may be extended repeatedly and become much larger. Careful design and strict adherence to the limits on plot coverage and extensions can limit the potential for this to happen.

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<sup>8</sup> Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 update pp 46-56

<sup>9</sup> Ibid p117

### **Policy H5: Housing Mix**

**Proposals for new residential development of two or more houses should demonstrate how the housing mix reflects the identified need for two and three-bedroom dwellings, or the need identified by the most up to date published information on housing need, having regard to the characteristics of the site.**

### Replacement dwellings

- 8.1.17. In recent years several of the new houses in Sedgeford have taken the form of replacement dwellings. In principle there is no objection to this form of development. However, if relatively small dwellings are replaced by very large ones the stock of smaller dwellings is further eroded. It is also important that replacement dwellings do not give rise to an overcrowded or urbanised street scene which would detract from the character of the village. The generally linear layout of Sedgeford means that in many places there are views of open countryside or the river valley between houses. This contributes to local distinctiveness and the erosion of these gaps would detract from the rural character of the village.

### **Policy H6: Replacement dwellings**

**Within the development boundary replacement dwellings will be supported where they meet the requirements of Policy H3 and the footprint, or internal floor area of the new dwelling does not exceed that of the original dwelling by more than 40% unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:**

- **There is a demonstrable need for the intended first occupants for the dwelling and**
- **The new building will not be disproportionately large for the plot size concerned or inappropriate in its setting in the village, or significantly reduce gaps in frontage development which offer views of open countryside.**

### Extensions to existing dwellings

- 8.1.18. The justification for policy H6 relates both to the quality of the built environment and to the evidence of housing need. Sedgeford benefits from a relatively spacious pattern of development and very few dwellings have a plot coverage, taken together with existing outbuildings of more than 40%. The spaces between dwellings also help to retain the important relationship with the surrounding countryside. The expansion of existing dwellings could undermine this and over time lead to a more intense and urban character. This would undermine local distinctiveness and the important relationship between the village and the surrounding countryside. It is therefore important to ensure that new

extensions are in proportion to the size of the original dwelling and do not excessively erode the spaces between dwellings.

- 8.1.19. There is also a strong case for limiting the scale of extensions to existing dwellings because of the evidence that there is already an over-representation of larger dwellings in relation to the size of households. The progressive expansion of existing dwellings would tend to further skew the housing mix towards larger dwellings and reduce the already limited availability of relatively small dwellings. The limit of 40% for the extension of existing dwellings has been chosen as it offers a balance between the understandable desire of residents to expand their homes to meet their needs and the desirability of ensuring that a supply of relatively small dwellings is retained.

#### **Policy H7: Residential Extensions**

**Extensions to existing dwellings will be supported where they:**

- **Respect the character of the original dwelling and neighbouring development**
- **Do not reduce the gaps between existing dwellings in a way which leads to a cramped appearance or undermines the rural character of the village**
- **Are subordinate to the original dwelling and, unless allowable under permitted development do not increase the total internal floorspace of the dwelling by more than 40%**
- **Retain sufficient space for off street parking for the expanded dwelling in accordance with Norfolk County Council parking standards.**

#### Second Homes

- 8.1.20. In 2011 census figures show that almost 24% of the households in Sedgeford were not permanently occupied as a main residence. While this figure is not as high as in some other villages on the North Norfolk coast, it is comparable with the figure in St Ives in Cornwall where a policy to prevent the use of new dwellings as second homes has been accepted. Much of the North Norfolk coast has exceptionally high proportions of second homes or holiday lets. In some villages the proportion is over 50%. There is evidence that the proportion of homes without permanent residents in Sedgeford is rising rapidly as in 2001 it was only 17%<sup>10</sup>. (see Appendix 2 Table 2 ).
- 8.1.21. It is difficult to reconcile more up to date Council Tax and business rates information with the census data. The latest council Tax and business rate information shows 51 second homes and 16 holiday lets out of 305 dwellings. This equates to 22%. However, this is likely to be a significant under-estimate as there is now no incentive to register a house as a second home as there is not Council Tax rebate for second homes. Members of the working group can identify several dwellings which have come onto the market and have become holiday homes or lets since 2011. For example, during the past 3 years, at least 4 houses along Docking Road, which were previously permanent residences, are now either

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<sup>10</sup> 2001 census data is not available for parishes and the figure quoted is the aggregation of two enumeration districts which equates very closely with Sedgeford but also includes the small village of Fring.

occupied on a part-time basis or (in one instance) unoccupied. Around Cole Green, which may be regarded as the heart of the village of the 13 homes 6 are permanent dwellings, 3 are second homes and 4 are holiday lets. Of the second homes and holiday lets 5 are estimated to have been in that use for 5 years or less, illustrating the rate at which change is occurring. Of the 6 permanent dwellings 2 have previously been holiday lets. Similarly along Docking Road, east of Wethered Farm, over half the houses are second homes or holiday lets.

- 8.1.22. Second homes and holiday homes bring some economic benefits by generating some employment opportunities in activities such as maintenance and cleaning, but this may not be of direct benefit to the village. They can also result in expenditure in pubs and restaurants, tourists attractions and shops. However, Sedgeford is not itself a tourist destination in the way the north coast villages are and therefore gains little benefit from such expenditure.
- 8.1.23. Any such benefits in Sedgeford appear to be clearly outweighed by the harmful effects on the village. The increase in second homes has increased house prices disproportionately so that local people, particularly first-time buyers, cannot compete with second home owners. The number of second homes also reduces the support for local facilities such as the school, the village hall and recreation ground and reduces the cohesion and feelings of security in the community. The school is quite small and would be vulnerable to a reduction in the resident population. A further effect of the steady increase in the number of second homes is a reduction in community cohesion and the potential for social isolation. This is particularly pronounced in a village with a very linear pattern of development which reduces the number of close neighbours people have. The effects of Second homes and holiday lets in Sedgeford are considered in more detail in Appendix 8.
- 8.1.24. While a policy to require that new dwellings are occupied as a permanent residence will only affect a small proportion of the housing stock because of the relatively small amount of development envisaged during the plan period, it will increase the potential for local people to purchase property in the village as their main home. The Plan allocates two sites for development, which is not essential to meet the needs identified by the Borough Council, in order to make a small contribution to the need for new dwellings so as to increase the supply of relatively small, more affordable dwellings and help maintain the sustainability of the village. Most importantly, if these houses are built and all or most of them are sold as second homes or holiday lets, the purpose of providing the houses will not be met.

**Policy H8: New Housing as Permanent Dwellings**

**New open market housing, excluding replacement dwellings, will only be supported**

where there is a restriction to ensure its occupancy as a Principal Residence.

Sufficient guarantee must be provided of such occupancy restriction through the imposition of a planning condition or legal agreement. New unrestricted second homes will not be supported at any time.

Principal Residences are defined as those occupied as the residents' sole or main residence, where the residents spend the majority of their time when not working away from home.

The condition or obligation on new open market homes will require that they are occupied only as the primary (principal) residence of those persons entitled to occupy them.

Occupiers of homes with a Principal Residence condition will be required to keep proof that they are meeting the obligation or condition, and be obliged to provide this proof if/when Kings Lynn Borough Council requests this information. Proof of Principal Residence is via verifiable evidence which could include, for example (but not limited to) residents being registered on the local electoral register and being registered for and attending local services (such as healthcare, schools etc).

## 8.2 The Natural and Built Environment

### The River Valley Setting

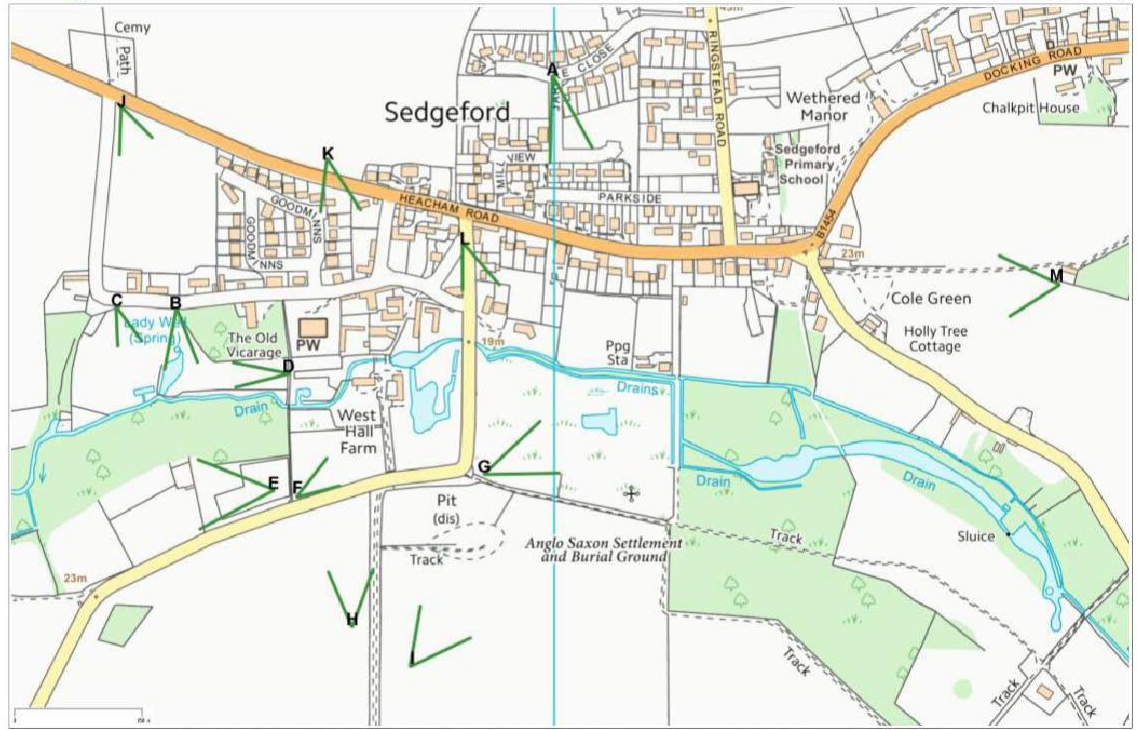
- 8.2.1. The village has a predominantly linear form along the side of the valley and the relationship of the village to the valley is one of its defining characteristics. The position of Sedgeford in a clearly defined, narrow and quite steep sided valley is quite unusual in this part of West Norfolk. Most villages are either in low lying positions along the coast or in the Fens, or in more elevated positions. Views of the village across the valley, along the valley and over the village from more elevated positions to the north of Heacham Road are all important. Maps 5 and 6 identify the most significant of these views and Appendix 9 illustrates and defines them. Where new development would impact on these characteristics it is important that it is sensitive to them.

### **Policy E1: The River Valley Setting**

**All new development will be required to respect the distinctive relationship between the built form of the village and the valley of the Heacham River. Where development proposals would impact on the views across and along the valley including those shown on Maps 5 and 6 a landscape character assessment will be required to demonstrate that they will complement the form of the village and its relationship to the valley.**

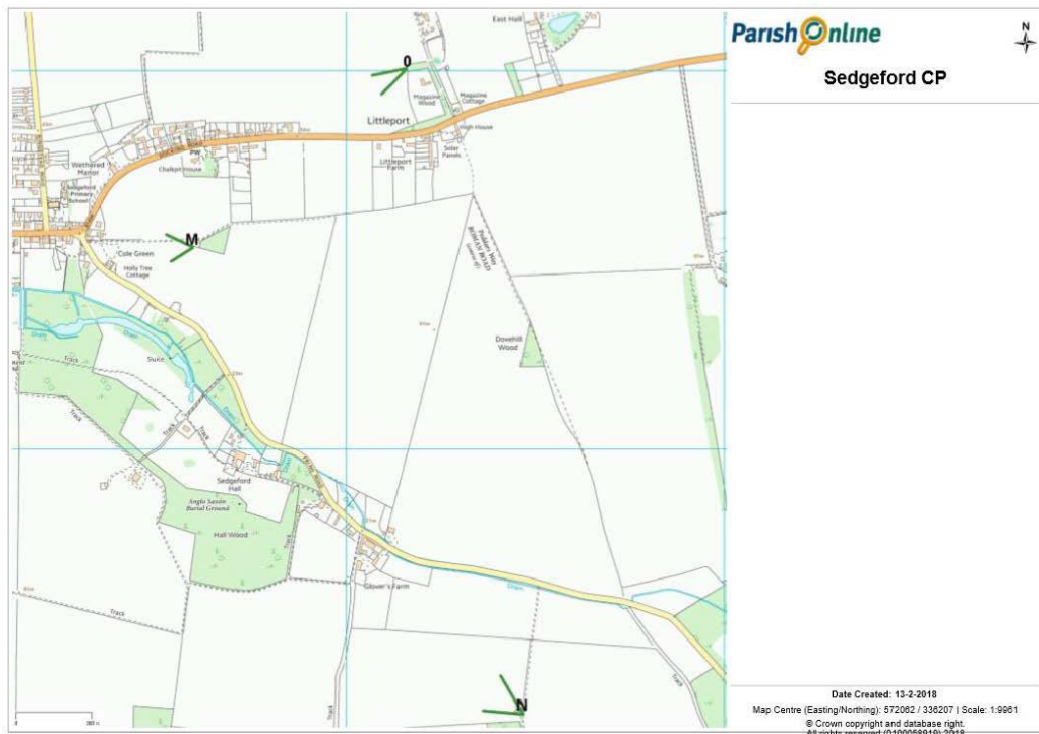
**Development proposals which would be intrusive to the relationship between the form of the village and its relationship to the river valley will not be supported.**

### Map 6 Important valley views A to M



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### Map 7 Important Valley Views M-O



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### The Heacham River

- 8.2.2. The level of water in the Heacham River is a cause of concern and any further reduction will be damaging to the chalk stream habitat provided by the river; the Parish is committed to working with the Environment Agency to reverse this trend. It is also vital to ensure that new development will not be harmful to the quality of water in the river.
- 8.2.3. The Heacham River rises near Fring, but the flow on the section between Fring and Sedgeford has been ephemeral in recent years. The permanent source of the River Heacham is found in an area of springs at Sedgeford; these are located in the grounds of Sedgeford Hall, with further springs at the Ladywell and nearby, which provide a high proportion of the river flow. In this area, water comes from crystal clear pools and results in clear gravels and high-quality water. The Heacham River is classified as a chalk river from Sedgeford to Heacham. The water in chalk rivers is highly alkaline, which gives rise to a distinctive ecology and variety of plants and animals, eg brown trout and water crowfoot. Wildlife in chalk rivers is particularly vulnerable to changes in river structure and processes. Over-abstraction can lead to lowered flows and siltation.
- 8.2.4. In the 1950s, boreholes were installed near the head of the valley at Bircham, lowering water levels in the aquifer. A water treatment plant has recently been installed near Fring because of nitrate pollution entering the aquifer from agriculture.
- 8.2.5. In July 2014 the Norfolk Rivers Trust, in partnership with the Environment Agency, published a Water Framework Directive local catchment plan for the Heacham River. (Attached at Appendix 10). The Water Framework Directive was introduced in 2000 and commits EU member states to improving the physical and ecological quality of their rivers, groundwater areas and lakes.
- 8.2.6. The Environment Agency carried out a detailed study to find out whether there might be a problem with over-abstraction in 2014. The Norfolk Rivers Trust Action Plan to 2021 includes a proposal to carry out a hydrological modelling ‘ephemeral reach analysis’, to obtain clearer information about the actual size of the catchment of the river.

#### **Policy E2: The Heacham River**

**Where appropriate new development will be required to demonstrate that it will not have a detrimental effect on the flow of water in the Heacham River. Any proposed development that would enhance the flow and is consistent with other development plan policies will be supported.**

### Local Green Spaces

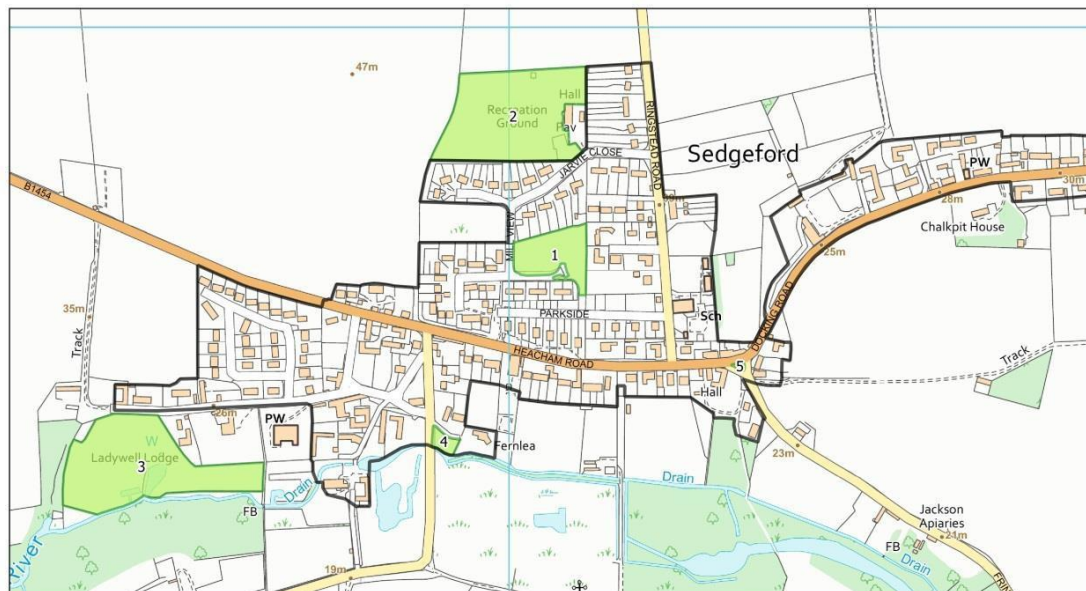
- 8.2.7. There is relatively little open space in Sedgeford and it is important for the character of the village that the space that is available is protected. The NPPF makes provision for

neighbourhood plans to identify for special protection areas of particular importance to them.<sup>11</sup> However, the designation should only be used:

- Where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

All of the spaces listed in Policy E3 and shown on Map 7 have been evaluated against these criteria in Appendix 11 and are consistent with them. Local Green Spaces are intended to have comparable protection to Green Belts. Thus, while development that relates directly to their function as Local Green Spaces may well be appropriate, other development will only be appropriate in exceptional circumstances.

### Map 8: Proposed Local Green Spaces



### Policy E3: Local Green Spaces

The areas listed below and defined on Map 7 are allocated as Local Green Spaces. Within these areas development will only be supported in very special circumstances unless it can be demonstrated that it is clearly related to their function as Local Green

<sup>11</sup> NPPF Paragraphs 75-78

**Spaces:**

- 1) The Green near the Mill/ Jarvie Close**
- 2) The Recreation Ground**
- 3) The Ladywell**
- 4) The Washpit**
- 5) Cole Green War Memorial**

Archaeology

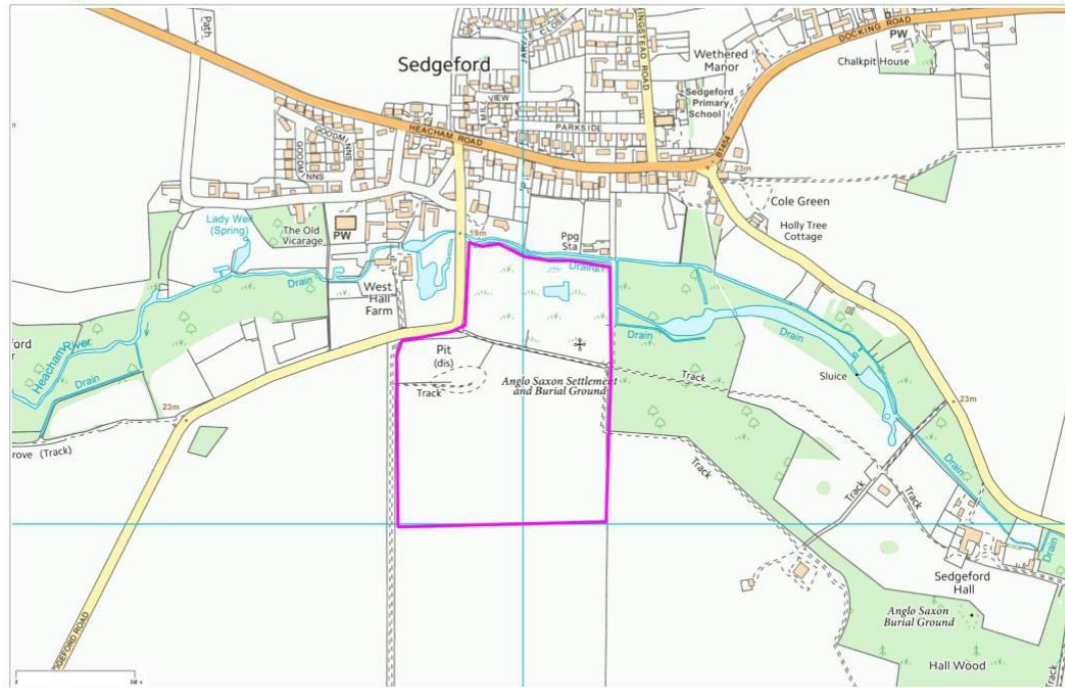
- 8.2.8. Norfolk County Council has commented that “Sedgeford may have been subject to more archaeological investigation than any village in Norfolk.” The Norfolk Historic Environmental Record identifies 295 archaeological records in Sedgeford. The Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) was set up in 1995 to investigate the history of settlement and land use in the village. It is unusual in that it is both a long-term field research project and an experiment in ‘democratic archaeology’, which has attracted widespread interest, bringing many visitors to the village. Every summer volunteer archaeologists, mainly students, spend several weeks camping on the site, studying and progressing the dig, thus contributing to the local economy. It is known that there is still an extensive area on the site and in other areas in the village which are rich sources of archaeological information but have not yet been investigated. A key theme of the research is the reasons for the relocation of the main settlement to the north side of the river. SHARP believes that further finds of international significance are likely in the next few years. A fuller commentary which describes the very wide range of investigations undertaken by SHARP and the potential for further investigation is available at Appendix 12. The Norfolk Historic Environment Record also contains a summary of the Archaeological investigations which have taken place at Sedgeford<sup>12</sup>

**Policy E4: Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project**

**Any development proposals in the area of the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) as shown on Map 9 should demonstrate the way in which they would safeguard its archaeological significance.**

**Map 9: Main Focus of Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project**

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF1540-Parish-Summary-Sedgeford-\(Parish-Summary\)](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF1540-Parish-Summary-Sedgeford-(Parish-Summary))



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### Heritage Assets

8.2.9 There are 11 listed buildings in Sedgeford, listed below and shown on Map 9. Further detail on these buildings is provided in Appendix 13. Development affecting these buildings will be considered in the context of the policies in the Local Plan and the NPPF.

Within the Conservation Area:

- |          |                                                  |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Grade I  | 1) Church of St Mary                             |
| Grade II | 2) Lych Gates, Church Lane                       |
|          | 3) Greyfriars, Church Lane - former rectory      |
|          | 4) Buckland, Church Lane - formerly the Buck Inn |
|          | 5) West Hall Farm House                          |
|          | 6) Wethered Manor, Docking Road                  |

Outside the Conservation Area

- |          |                                       |
|----------|---------------------------------------|
| Grade II | 7) High House, Docking Road           |
|          | 8) Magazine Cottage, Docking Road     |
|          | 9) East Hall Farm House, Docking Road |
|          | 10) Sedgeford Hall, Fring Road        |

## 11) Sedgeford Hall Barn, Fring Road

There is also a site of a Roman villa which is a scheduled monument to the west of the village on the north side of the Heacham River.

The Sedgeford Conservation Area Character Statement (Appendix 14) was prepared in 1990. Although it has not been formally adopted by the Borough Council, it remains a useful guide to the qualities of the Conservation Area.

8.2.10 In addition to the listed buildings, there are other buildings in the Parish which are considered to be of historic interest. The Borough Council does not have a “local list” of non-designated heritage assets, but the Parish Council considers that the historic interest of the following buildings is worthy of recognition and that new development should not be harmful to their character:

- The King William Public House on Heacham Road was originally a farmhouse and the building first became a pub in 1836, when the farmer extended the frontage and became innkeeper of the Kings Head. By 1879 it had become the King William Inn.
- The Old Station, Ringstead Road was opened by the West Norfolk Junction railway in 1866, it closed with the line in 1952. Sedgeford station was the first station after Heacham. It was a small station equipped with a single platform on the down side, built to smaller dimensions than other stations on the Lynn and Hunstanton Railway, and without a stationmaster's residence. The station buildings have been particularly well preserved as a private residence, complete with the station sign and Great Eastern Railway notices. The level crossing gate remains with a notice reading "*Failure to shut the gate - fine 40/-*".<sup>13</sup>
- Sedgeford Primary School is a typical Victorian school building. It was built in three stages, each of which is readily identifiable. The oldest part dates from 1838, a second classroom was added in 1875 and the final phase was added in 1911. An additional corrugated iron classroom dates from about 1916. More detail on the school is to be found in the Norfolk Historical Environment Record.<sup>14</sup>

8.2.11. Several other buildings are identified as being of some historic interest with others recorded in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record. However, insufficient information is available about them to define their significance. Development affecting them will therefore be considered against the other policies in this plan and national and Local Plan policies.

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<sup>13</sup> Wikipedia

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?MNF61431-Sedgeford-Primary-School-and-Nursery-Ringstead->



Policy E5: Conservation Area and buildings of local historic interest

**New development should respect the built heritage of Sedgeford and proposals for development within the Conservation Area will be required to demonstrate that they have taken the Sedgeford Conservation Area Character Statement (draft) of 1990 into account.**

**Development that would affect the buildings listed below and shown on Map 9 which do not have a formal heritage designation should take account of their historic interest and character.**

- 1. King William IV Public House**
- 2. Former Sedgeford Railway Station**
- 3. The Primary School**

### Dark Skies

8.2.12. The protection of dark skies is a key element of the Vision of the Norfolk Coast Partnership for the AONB.

*“by 2036 “...the area will still be essentially unspoilt with a strong feeling of remoteness, peace and tranquillity, with wide skylscapes, seascares and dark night skies that show the richness and detail of constellations.”*

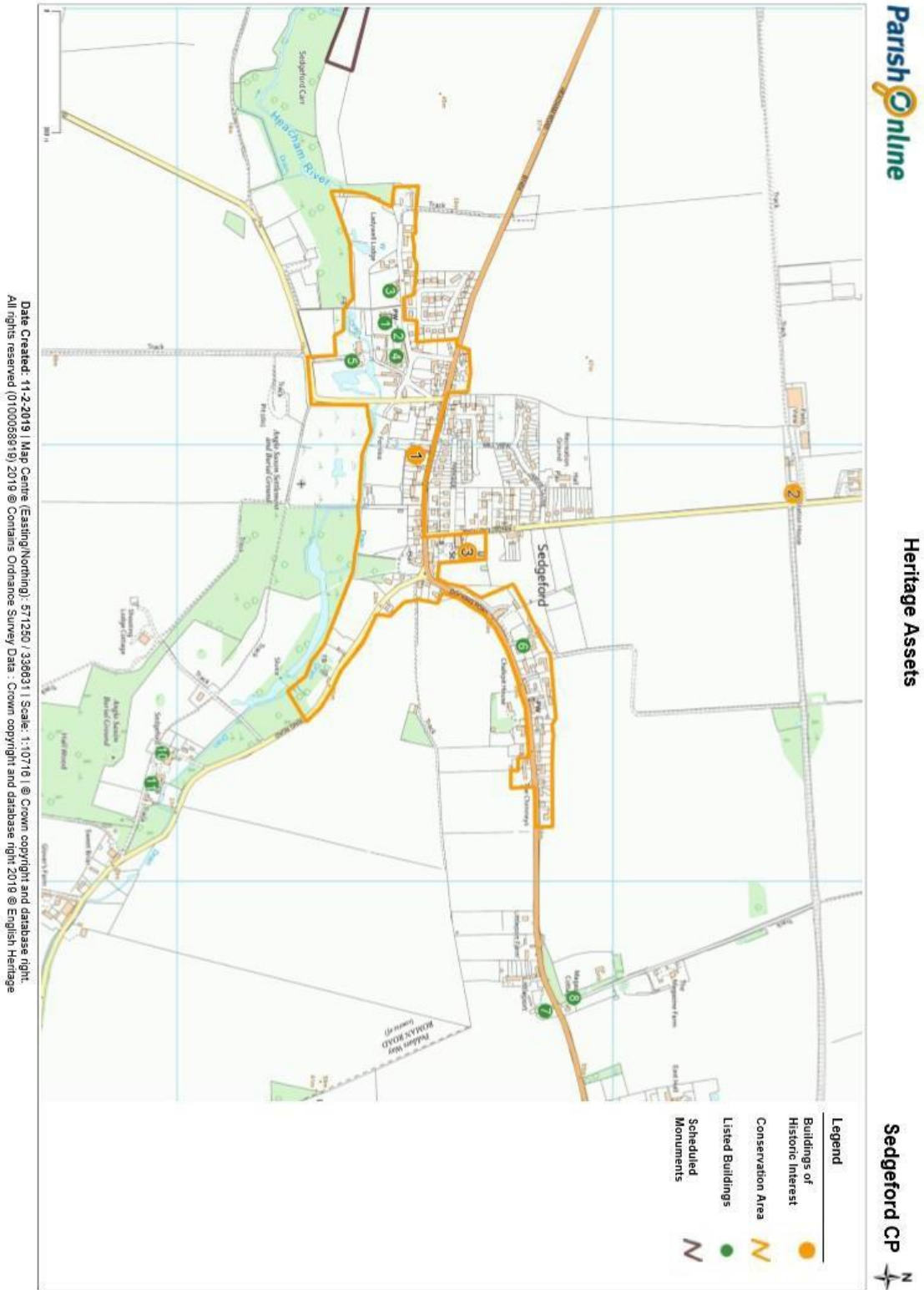
The NPPF also notes how good design can help to “limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation”.<sup>15</sup>

8.2.13. Although Sedgeford does have street lighting the LED bulbs are focussed downwards and cause little light pollution. The CPRE Dark Skies Map shows that the village itself has relatively dark skies and in the surrounding countryside there is very little light pollution. Currently, timers are set so that most street lights are switched off between midnight and 5.00am. Additional street lights or intrusive external lighting associated with new development would be detrimental to the character of the village. Although in many cases

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<sup>15</sup> NPPF paragraph 125

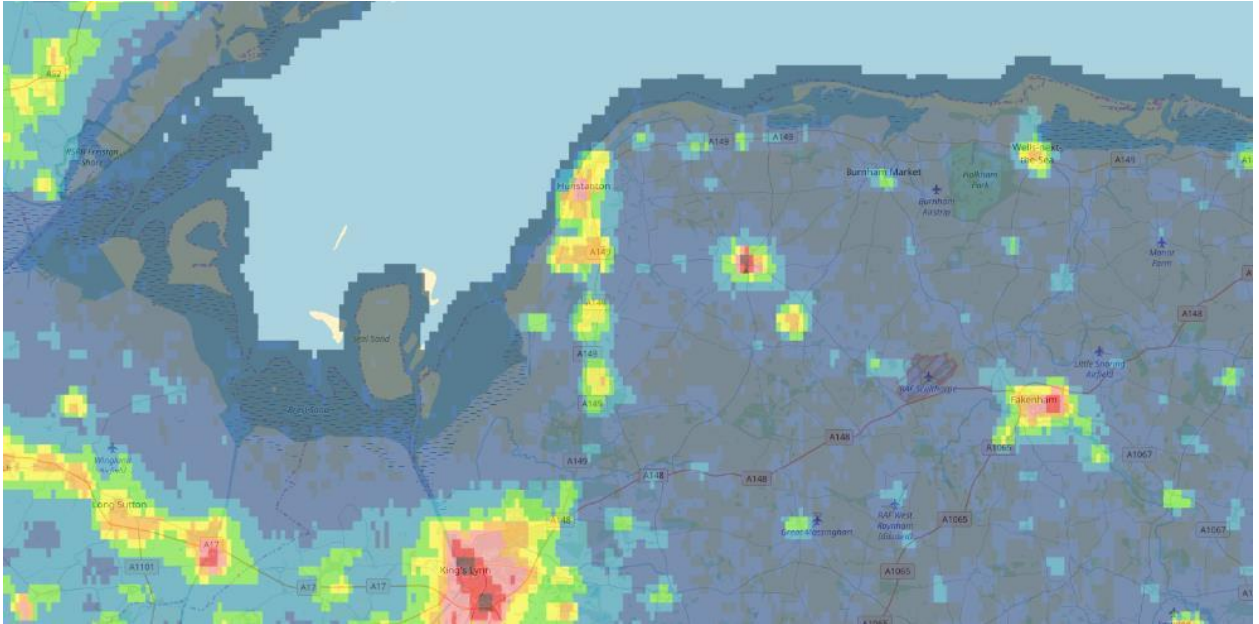
Map 10: Conservation Area and Heritage Assets





external lighting is permitted development, it is possible to influence external lighting associated with new development and the evidence of the benefits of sensitive lighting may influence the choices of others.

Map 11: Extract from CPRE Dark Skies Map



**Policy E6: Dark Skies**

**Development proposals that include external lighting should minimise the extent of any light pollution that could be harmful to the dark skies that characterise this part of Norfolk.**

8.3 Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Community Facilities

- 8.3.1 The limited range of facilities and services in Sedgeford is greatly valued by the community. The School, the Parish Church the Village Hall and Recreation Ground and the King William IV pub are all vital and well used facilities for the community. These assets bring cohesion to the community, ensure that people meet and communicate and contribute to the quality of life in the village. Without some new development to accommodate younger families, the increasingly elderly age structure of the village may threaten the viability of some of these facilities, particularly the school.
- 8.3.2 The questionnaire identified that the community would very much like to add to these facilities with a village shop and a regular bus service. The existing term-time bus service to King's Lynn provided primarily for sixth form students, but available to the public, is of limited general value. There is probably very little that can be done through planning policies to realise these aspirations, given the very limited scale of development that is envisaged in Sedgeford. However, the parish will seek to explore the potential for these

facilities whenever it can.

**Policy C1: Community Facilities**

**Development proposals that would result in a change of use or the redevelopment for non-community use of the School, the Village Hall, the Recreation Ground or the King William IV public house will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:**

- **There is insufficient demand to justify the retention of the facility or**
- **Equivalent or better provision has been made in a location where it can be easily accessed by the village.**

Development which would increase the sustainability of these facilities and would be consistent with other policies in the development plan will be supported.

Broadband

- 8.3.3 Access to high speed broadband is particularly important in a rural area as it improves access to services which may not be present in the village. Although many residents have been able to access higher speeds since the installation of fibre optic cable to the junction box near the Washpit, speeds can vary considerably depending on the distance from this junction box. The proportion of people working from home in the village is almost 60% higher than in England as a whole and 37% higher than in the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk. Working from home is a sustainable form of economic activity which can increase the vitality of the village. However high speed broadband is an essential requirement for it.

**Policy C2: Broadband**

**Any new development will be required to include access to high speed broadband, or where this is not possible to include ducting and cabling to facilitate such access when it is available.**

**Development which will improve the availability of high speed broadband will be supported.**

Traffic in Sedgeford

- 8.3.4 The B1454 runs in a fairly straight line through Sedgeford and, while not a major road, carries a significant volume of traffic. The same is true of Ringstead Road. The entrances to the village from both the east, west and north are downhill and residents are very concerned about the speed of vehicles passing through the village, notwithstanding the 30 and 40mph limits. The effect of this in terms of highway safety emerged as a particularly important issue in the questionnaire, as footpaths along the B1454 are narrow. While the potential to address this through planning policy is very limited, it is important to ensure that new development does not increase the problem or result in harm to road safety. New development may be required to provide offsite highway improvements or appropriate traffic calming to ensure a safe access and to avoid any adverse effect on road safety. This and other matters are addressed in the Parish Aspirations and Initiatives in paragraph 10.1

of this Plan.

## 8.4 Employment

- 8.4.1 The number of businesses in Sedgeford is limited. Most jobs are in agriculture or in the school and the King William IV. Other employment will relate to holiday accommodation and working from home is also important. The environmental constraints clearly limit the potential for new employment-generating uses on a significant scale, but where they can be accommodated without harm to the character of the village or the surrounding countryside they will be encouraged. There are a number of craft industries in the village and more businesses of this sort would be consistent with the character of the village.

### **Policy EMP1: Employment related development**

**Proposals for small-scale development which would create new employment opportunities in the form of new buildings, the re-use of redundant buildings or working from home will be supported where they:**

- **Would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on to the visual character of the village or the countryside**
- **Do not result in traffic generation that would be harmful to highway safety ;and**
- **Would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on to the living conditions of neighbouring residents**

## 9 Monitoring and Review

- 9.1 It is hoped that these policies will be helpful in guiding development in Sedgeford over most if not all of the Plan period. However, the Parish Council will monitor the performance of the Plan on an annual basis and consider the continuing relevance of its policies in the light of new information and evidence. This may include: changes in government policies and guidance, the policies that are eventually adopted in the emerging Local Plan, up to date evidence of housing need, changes in the availability and access to local services, the impact of individual planning decisions or many other factors. The Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed when this evidence suggests that it is necessary to do so.
- 9.2 A key stage in the monitoring a review process review will be reached once the emerging Local Plan is adopted. This may have an impact on the strategic need for future development in the neighbourhood area. Any review process could usefully address the development or otherwise of the housing sites included in Policies H1 and H2 of this Plan.

## **10 Parish Aspirations and Initiatives**

10.1 The policies of the Plan all relate to the development or use of land and are to be applied in the determination of planning policies. There are, however, some issues that have been identified during the preparation of the Plan which do not relate to land use planning but which the Parish Council wishes to progress pro-actively; these are listed below. These topics will all be discussed by the Parish Council in the coming months and, where appropriate, small working groups could then be set up to discuss the issue.

- **The level and quality of flow in the Heacham River**
- **The designation of the King William IV Inn and the Old Station as “non-designated heritage assets”**
- **The designation of the King William IV Inn as an asset of community value**
- **The provision of a regular bus service to serve the village**
- **The designation of Fring Road as a Green Lane**
- **Investigate the potential to deliver superfast broadband to all households**
- **The continued monitoring of traffic volume and speed and exploration of measures to improve these**
- **The problems associated with parking, especially around Cole Green**
- **Investigate the need for future planning applications to be accompanied with planning obligations to provide or to contribute to off-site highway improvements or traffic calming measures where the need for such works directly arises from the development proposed.**

**Independent Examiners**  
**Report of the Sedgeford**  
**Neighbourhood Plan**

# **Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2036**

**A report to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and  
West Norfolk on the Sedgeford Neighbourhood  
Development Plan**

**Andrew Ashcroft  
Independent Examiner  
BA (Hons) M.A. DMS M.R.T.P.I.**

**Director – Andrew Ashcroft Planning Limited**

## **Executive Summary**

- 1 I was appointed by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk in March 2019 to carry out the independent examination of the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 2 The examination was undertaken by written representations. I visited the neighbourhood plan area on 23 April 2019.
- 3 The Plan includes a range of policies and seeks to bring forward positive and sustainable development in the neighbourhood area. There is a very clear focus on promoting new residential development and safeguarding its historic character. It also proposes the designation of a suite of local green spaces
- 4 The Plan has been underpinned by community support and engagement. It is clear that all sections of the community have been actively engaged in its preparation.
- 5 Subject to a series of recommended modifications set out in this report I have concluded that the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan meets all the necessary legal requirements and should proceed to referendum.
- 6 I recommend that the referendum should be held within the neighbourhood area.

**Andrew Ashcroft**  
**Independent Examiner**  
**27 June 2018**

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings of the independent examination of the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2036 (the 'Plan').
- 1.2 The Plan has been submitted to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (KLWNBC) by Sedgeford Parish Council in its capacity as the qualifying body responsible for preparing the neighbourhood plan.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood plans were introduced into the planning process by the Localism Act 2011. They aim to allow local communities to take responsibility for guiding development in their area. This approach was subsequently embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012, 2018 and 2019. The NPPF continues to be the principal element of national planning policy.
- 1.4 The role of an independent examiner is clearly defined in the legislation. I have been appointed to examine whether or not the submitted Plan meets the basic conditions and Convention Rights and other statutory requirements. It is not within my remit to examine or to propose an alternative plan, or a potentially more sustainable plan except where this arises as a result of my recommended modifications to ensure that the plan meets the basic conditions and the other relevant requirements.
- 1.5 A neighbourhood plan can be narrow or broad in scope. Any plan can include whatever range of policies it sees as appropriate to its designated neighbourhood area. The submitted plan has been designed to be distinctive in general terms, and to be complementary to the development plan in particular. It addresses a series of environmental and community issues and proposes residential allocations.
- 1.6 Within the context set out above this report assesses whether the Plan is legally compliant and meets the basic conditions that apply to neighbourhood plans. It also considers the content of the Plan and, where necessary, recommends changes to its policies and supporting text.
- 1.7 This report also provides a recommendation as to whether the Plan should proceed to referendum. If this is the case and that referendum results in a positive outcome the Plan would then be used to determine planning applications within the plan area and will sit as part of the wider development plan.



## 2 The Role of the Independent Examiner

- 2.1 The examiner's role is to ensure that any submitted neighbourhood plan meets the relevant legislative and procedural requirements.
- 2.2 I was appointed by KLWNBC, with the consent of the Parish Council, to conduct the examination of the Plan and to prepare this report. I am independent of both KLWNBC and the Parish Council. I do not have any interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan.
- 2.3 I possess the appropriate qualifications and experience to undertake this role. I am a Director of Andrew Ashcroft Planning Limited. In previous roles, I have over 35 years' experience in various local authorities at either Head of Planning or Service Director level. I am a chartered town planner and have significant experience of undertaking other neighbourhood plan examinations and health checks. I am a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service.

### *Examination Outcomes*

- 2.4 In my role as the independent examiner of the Plan I am required to recommend one of the following outcomes of the examination:
- (a) that the Plan is submitted to a referendum; or
  - (b) that the Plan should proceed to referendum as modified (based on my recommendations); or
  - (c) that the Plan does not proceed to referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 2.5 The outcome of the examination is set out in Section 8 of this report.

### *Other examination matters*

- 2.6 In examining the Plan I am required to check whether:
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood plan area; and
  - the Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Plan must specify the period to which it has effect, must not include provision about development that is excluded development, and must not relate to more than one neighbourhood area); and
  - the Plan has been prepared for an area that has been designated under Section 61G of the Localism Act and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.
- 2.7 Having addressed the matters identified in paragraph 2.6 of this report I am satisfied that all of the points have been met.

### 3 Procedural Matters

3.1 In undertaking this examination I have considered the following documents:

- the submitted Plan and the various Appendices;
- the Basic Conditions Statement;
- the Consultation Statement;
- the SEA and HRA report;
- the Parish Council's responses to my Clarification Note;
- the representations made to the Plan;
- the adopted King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy 2011;
- the adopted King's Lynn and West Norfolk Sites Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016;
- the National Planning Policy Framework 2019;
- Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014 and subsequent updates); and
- relevant Ministerial Statements.

3.2 I carried out an unaccompanied visit to the Plan area on 23 April 2019. I looked at its overall character and appearance and at those areas affected by policies in the Plan in particular. My site inspection is covered in more detail in paragraphs 5.9 to 5.16 of this report.

3.3 It is a general rule that neighbourhood plan examinations should be held by written representations only. Having considered all the information before me, including the representations made to the submitted plan, I was satisfied that the Plan could be examined without the need for a public hearing. I advised KLWNBC of this decision early in the examination process.

3.4 On 24 July 2018 a revised version of the NPPF was published. This fell within the plan-making process. Paragraph 214 of the 2018 NPPF identifies transitional arrangement to address these circumstances. As the Plan was submitted after 24 January 2019, I am required to examine the Plan on the basis of the most recent version of the NPPF. All references to paragraph numbers within the NPPF in this report are to those in the 2019 version. The 2018 version of the NPPF was subsequently updated in February 2019. However, those updates did not affect the transitional arrangements.

## 4 Consultation

### *Consultation Process*

- 4.1 Policies in made neighbourhood plans become the basis for local planning and development control decisions. As such the regulations require neighbourhood plans to be supported and underpinned by public consultation.
- 4.2 In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 the Parish Council has prepared a Consultation Statement. This Statement is proportionate to the Plan and its policies. It includes an assessment of the consultation undertaken during the various stages of Plan production. It also provides specific details about the consultation process that took place on the pre-submission version of the Plan (September to October 2018).
- 4.3 The Statement sets out details of the range of consultation events that were carried out in relation to the initial stages of the Plan. They include:
- the discussions with local groups;
  - the distribution of questionnaires in the neighbourhood area;
  - the meetings with landowners;
  - the use of leaflets to explain the proposed housing allocations;
  - the visits to the school; and
  - the use of a Facebook page.
- 4.4 From Section 8 onwards the Statement also provides specific details on the comments received as part of the consultation process that took place on the pre-submission version of the Plan. It identifies the principal changes that worked their way through into the submission version. They are captured in Appendix 6. They help to describe the evolution of the Plan.
- 4.5 It is clear that consultation has been an important element of the Plan's production. Advice on the neighbourhood planning process has been made available to the community in a positive and direct way by those responsible for the Plan's preparation.
- 4.6 From all the evidence provided to me as part of the examination, I can see that the Plan has promoted an inclusive approach to seeking the opinions of all concerned throughout the process.

### *Representations Received*

- 4.7 Consultation on the submitted plan was undertaken by the District Council for a six-week period that ended on 8 April 2019. This exercise generated comments from a range of organisations and private individuals as follows:

- Mrs V Danziger
- Mr K Mills
- Historic England
- Norfolk County Council
- Mr A Ramsay
- KLWNBC
- Anglian Water Services
- Mr H Head
- Natural England
- Sport England
- Forestry Commission

4.8 Where it is appropriate to do so I make specific references to some representations in the detailed sections of this report

## 5 The Neighbourhood Area and the Development Plan Context

### *The Neighbourhood Area*

- 5.1 The neighbourhood area consists of the parish of Sedgeford. Its population in 2011 was 613 persons. It was designated as a neighbourhood area on 20 July 2016. It is located to the east of Heacham and approximately three miles inland from The Wash to the west. The western half of the neighbourhood area is within the Norfolk Coast AONB
- 5.2 The village of Sedgeford dominates the neighbourhood area. Its layout reflects its location along the B1451. Its vernacular buildings contain a traditional mix of carstone, red brick and clunch materials. The attractive historic core of the village is located around Saint Mary the Virgin Church. It is a designated conservation area. More modern development has generally taken place in a linear fashion along the B1451. Given its limited size Sedgeford has relatively few services and facilities. However, it enjoys a primary school, a village hall and an associated recreation ground, the King William IV public house and St Mary's Church.
- 5.3 The remainder of the neighbourhood area is predominantly rural in character. Its landscape predominantly consists of rolling open farmland with some plateau farmland in the north eastern part. The Peddars Way long-distance footpath runs along the high ground towards the eastern edge of the neighbourhood area. In addition, National Cycle Route 1 also passes on a north-south alignment through the village, along Ringstead Road and Snettisham Road. The disused railway line of the former West Norfolk Junction railway sits to the north of the village. It remains visible within the wider landscape. The former railway station off Ringstead Road has been converted to a private dwelling.

### *Development Plan Context*

- 5.4 The development plan covering the neighbourhood plan area is the adopted King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy 2011 and adopted King's Lynn and West Norfolk Sites Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016. The Core Strategy sets out a vision, objectives, a spatial strategy and overarching planning policies that guide new development in the Plan period.
- 5.5 Policies CS02 and CS06 of the Core Strategy provides a focus for new development in the neighbourhood area. Sedgeford is identified as a Rural Village (CS02) where limited minor development will be permitted which meets the needs of settlements and helps to sustain existing services. Policy CS06 continues this approach based on the settlement hierarchy identified in CS02. In respect of rural villages, it comments that modest levels of development will be permitted to support local needs and to maintain the vitality of the various communities.
- 5.6 The Sites Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016 (SADMP) gives effect to and complements the Core Strategy. As its name suggest it allocates

land to meet the development requirements identified in the Core Strategy. In addition, it includes a series of development management policies. The following policies in the SADMP are particularly relevant to the submitted Plan:

DM2 Development boundaries  
 DM5 Enlargement or replacement of dwellings in the countryside  
 DM9 Community Facilities  
 DM11 Touring and Permanent Holiday Sites  
 DM15 Environment, Design and Amenity  
 DM22 Protection of Local Open Space  
 G78.1 Sedgeford

- 5.7 The Borough Council has embarked on the preparation of a new Local Plan. The Local Development Scheme indicates that the Local Plan will be submitted for examination in 2020. On this basis it is not at a sufficiently advanced stage to play any significant role in the examination of the submitted neighbourhood plan.
- 5.8 The submitted Plan has been prepared within its wider adopted development plan context. In doing so it has relied on up-to-date information and research that has underpinned existing planning policy documents in the Borough. This is good practice and reflects key elements in Planning Practice Guidance on this matter. It is clear that the submitted Plan seeks to add value to the Core Strategy and to give a local dimension to the delivery of its policies. This is captured in the Basic Conditions Statement.

*Unaccompanied Visit*

- 5.9 I carried out an unaccompanied visit on 23 April 2019. The weather was bright and breezy and provided a perfect context within which to look around the neighbourhood area.
- 5.10 I drove into the neighbourhood area from the west from Heacham along the B1451. This gave me an initial impression of its setting and the character in general, and its relationship to The Norfolk Coast AONB in particular.
- 5.11 I looked initially at that part of the neighbourhood area around Ringstead Road and Jarvie Close. I looked in detail at the proposed Jarvie Close housing site and the two sites proposed to the east of Ringstead Road. In doing so I saw the importance of the School to the local community.
- 5.12 I also took the opportunity to look at two of the local green spaces proposed in the Plan. I saw the scale and size of the Recreation Ground and the associated Village Hall. I saw that the Recreation Ground was being well-used. I then walked down to The Green near the Mill. I saw its close relationship to the surrounding houses to the east and to the south.

- 5.13 I continued walking to the main road and then down Snettisham Road towards the Church. In doing so I saw the proposed local green space at The Washpit adjacent to the River Heacham. I saw that it was a pleasant triangular grassed area. I sat in the sunshine for a while on the metal bench provided by the Sedgeford Carol Singers to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002.
- 5.14 I spent some time in the Church grounds. I saw its 14<sup>th</sup> century very distinctive round tower. I also found several interesting elements of the history of the village. I saw the gates erected in memory of those who died during the typhus epidemic in 1852. I also saw the Lamp erected in memory of the 'Men of Sedgeford who gave their lives to keep the light of freedom burning'.
- 5.15 I then walked along the footpath between the Church and The Old Vicarage, over the River Heacham and onto the Snettisham Road as it turns to the west to the south of the village. I walked back along that road into the centre of the village. In doing so I saw the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project site to the immediate east of the road. I carried on back into the village and continued down to Cole Green. I saw the impact of traffic movements on the character and appearance of the village. I also saw the proposed local green space around the War Memorial.
- 5.16 I finished my visit by looking at the more outlying parts of the neighbourhood area. In particular I drove to the east along the B1451 towards Docking. I also drove to the north on the Ringstead Road. In doing so I saw the successful residential conversion of the former railway station. This part of the visit also helped me to understand further the wider landscape setting in which the neighbourhood area is located.

## 6 The Neighbourhood Plan and the Basic Conditions

6.1 This section of the report deals with the submitted neighbourhood plan as a whole and the extent to which it meets the basic conditions. The submitted Basic Conditions Statement has helped considerably in the preparation of this section of the report. It is a well-presented, informative and very professional document.

6.2 As part of this process I must consider whether the submitted Plan meets the Basic Conditions as set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. To comply with the basic conditions, the Plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in the area;
  - be compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations; and
- not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (7).

6.3 I assess the Plan against the basic conditions under the following headings.

### *National Planning Policies and Guidance*

6.4 For the purposes of this examination the key elements of national policy relating to planning matters are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued in February 2019. Paragraph 3.4 of this report has addressed the transitional arrangements which the government has put in place as part of the publication of the 2018 and 2019 versions of the NPPF. As the plan was submitted in February 2019 it is assessed against the most recent version of the NPPF. This approach is reflected in the submitted Basic Conditions Statement.

6.5 The NPPF sets out a range of core land-use planning principles to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The following are of particular relevance to the Sedgford Neighbourhood Plan:

- a plan led system– in this case the relationship between the neighbourhood plan, the adopted Core Strategy and the SADMP;
  - recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving local communities;
- taking account of the different roles and characters of different areas;
- always seeking to secure high quality design and good standards of amenity for all future occupants of land and buildings; and
- conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.



- 6.6 Neighbourhood plans sit within this wider context both generally, and within the more specific presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is identified as a golden thread running through the planning system. Paragraph 29 of the NPPF indicates that neighbourhoods should both develop plans that support the strategic needs set out in local plans and plan positively to support local development that is outside the strategic elements of the development plan.
- 6.7 In addition to the NPPF I have also taken account of other elements of national planning policy including Planning Practice Guidance and ministerial statements.
- 6.8 Having considered all the evidence and representations available as part of the examination I am satisfied that the submitted Plan has had regard to national planning policies and guidance in general terms. It sets out a positive vision for the future of the plan area within the context of its position in the settlement hierarchy. In particular it positively allocates sites for residential development. It includes a series of policies that seek to safeguard the quality and nature of its natural environment and designates local green spaces. The Basic Conditions Statement maps the policies in the Plan against the appropriate sections of the NPPF.
- 6.9 At a more practical level the NPPF indicates that plans should provide a clear framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made and that they should give a clear indication of how a decision-maker should react to a development proposal (paragraphs 17 and 154). This was reinforced with the publication of Planning Practice Guidance in March 2014. Its paragraph 41 (41-041-20140306) indicates that policies in neighbourhood plans should be drafted with sufficient clarity so that a decision-maker can apply them consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. Policies should also be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence.
- 6.10 As submitted the Plan does not fully accord with this range of practical issues. The majority of my recommended modifications in Section 7 relate to matters of clarity and precision. They are designed to ensure that the Plan fully accords with national policy.

#### *Contributing to sustainable development*

- 6.11 There are clear overlaps between national policy and the contribution that the submitted Plan makes to achieving sustainable development. Sustainable development has three principal dimensions – economic, social and environmental. It is clear that the submitted Plan has set out to achieve sustainable development in the neighbourhood area. In the economic dimension the Plan includes policies for housing and employment development (Policies H1-H3 and EMP1 respectively). It also offers support for broadband connectivity (Policy C2). In the social role, it includes a policy on community facilities (Policy C1) and on housing mix and type (Policy H5). In the environmental dimension the Plan positively seeks to protect its natural, built and historic environment. It has specific policies on the conservation area (Policy E5), on its river setting (Policies E1/E2) and on local green spaces

(Policy E3). The Parish Council has undertaken its own very impressive assessment of this matter in the submitted Basic Conditions Statement.

*General conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan*

- 6.12 I have already commented in detail on the development plan context in the wider King's Lynn and West Norfolk area in paragraphs 5.4 to 5.8 of this report.
- 6.13 I consider that the submitted Plan delivers a local dimension to this strategic context. The Basic Conditions Statement helpfully relates the Plan's policies to policies in the development plan. I am satisfied that the submitted Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan.

*European Legislation and Habitat Regulations*

- 6.14 The Neighbourhood Plan General Regulations 2015 require a qualifying body either to submit an environmental report prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 or a statement of reasons why an environmental report is not required.
- 6.15 In order to comply with this requirement, KLWNBC undertook a screening exercise on the need or otherwise for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be prepared for the Plan. The report is thorough and well-constructed. It comments that the submitted Plan can be seen as a minor adaptation of the Core Strategy/SADMP. As a result of this process KLWNBC concluded that the Plan is not likely to have any significant effects on the environment and accordingly would not require SEA.
- 6.16 KLWNBC also prepared a parallel Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Plan. It concludes that the Plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects on a European nature conservation site or undermine their conservation objectives alone or in combination taking account of the precautionary principle. As such Appropriate Assessment is not required. The assessment has been produced in a similar standard to the SEA screening report. Whilst there are no designated sites within the neighbourhood area itself the screening report addressed the potential impact of the Plan following protected sites elsewhere:
- Dersingham Bog (SAC, RAMSAR);
  - The Wash (SPA, SAC, RAMSAR); and
  - North Norfolk Coast (SPA, SAC, RAMSAR).

- 6.17 Having reviewed the information provided to me as part of the examination, I am satisfied that a proportionate process has been undertaken in accordance with the various regulations. None of the statutory consultees have raised any concerns with regard to either neighbourhood plan or to European obligations. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, I am entirely satisfied that the submitted Plan is compatible with this aspect of European obligations.

- 6.18 In a similar fashion I am satisfied that the submitted Plan has had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on

Human Rights (ECHR) and that it complies with the Human Rights Act. There is no evidence that has been submitted to me to suggest otherwise. There has been full and adequate opportunity for all interested parties to take part in the preparation of the Plan and to make their comments known. On this basis, I conclude that the submitted Plan does not breach, nor is in any way incompatible with the ECHR.

*Summary*

- 6.19 On the basis of my assessment of the Plan in this section of my report I am satisfied that it meets the basic conditions subject to the incorporation of the recommended modifications contained in this report. Section 7 assesses each policy against the basic conditions. Where necessary it recommends modifications on a policy-by-policy basis.

## 7 The Neighbourhood Plan policies

- 7.1 This section of the report comments on the policies in the Plan. In particular, it makes a series of recommended modifications to ensure that the various policies have the necessary precision to meet the basic conditions.
- 7.2 My recommendations focus on the policies themselves given that the basic conditions relate primarily to this aspect of neighbourhood plans. In some cases, I have also recommended changes to the associated supporting text.
- 7.3 I am satisfied that the content and the form of the Plan is fit for purpose. It is distinctive and proportionate to the Plan area. The wider community and the Parish Council have spent time and energy in identifying the issues and objectives that they wish to be included in their Plan. This sits at the heart of the localism agenda.
- 7.4 The Plan has been designed to reflect Planning Practice Guidance (41-004-20170728) which indicates that neighbourhood plans must address the development and use of land.
- 7.5 I have addressed the policies in the order that they appear in the submitted plan. Where necessary I have identified the inter-relationships between the policies.
- 7.6 For clarity this section of the report comments on all policies whether or not I have recommended modifications in order to ensure that the Plan meets the basic conditions.
- 7.7 Where modifications are recommended to policies they are highlighted in bold print. Any associated or free-standing changes to the text of the Plan are set out in italic print.

### *The initial sections of the Plan*

- 7.8 These introductory sections of the Plan set the scene for the range of policies. They do so in a concise and proportionate way. The Plan is presented in a very professional way. It is colourful and makes a very effective use of maps. A very clear distinction is made between its policies and the supporting text. It also draws a very clear connection between the Plan's objectives and its resultant policies.
- 7.9 The 'Preparation of the Plan' section provides a very clear context to the neighbourhood area and when it was designated. It identifies how the Plan was prepared, how it will fit into the wider planning system in the event that it is 'made' and what the Plan sets out to achieve. It includes a map of the neighbourhood area (Map 1).
- 7.10 Section 4 provides a very helpful and comprehensive context to Sedgford. It draws a useful comparison between its history and its current character and appearance. Map 3 provides a very useful summary of the extent of the AONB and the designated

conservation area. It also provides useful information on the neighbourhood area. It highlights its ageing population and that a significant number of dwellings have no permanent residents.

- 7.11 Section 5 summarises the consultation exercises undertaken as part of the plan-making process. It provides a useful context for the more detailed Consultation Statement.
- 7.12 Section 6 sets out the strategic planning context that has underpinned the plan-making process. It makes appropriate references to both the Core Strategy and to the SADMP. It highlights that Sedgeford is identified as a Rural Village in the settlement hierarchy in the Core Strategy.
- 7.13 Section 7 establishes a Community Vision for the Plan. The vision is underpinned by four community objectives.
- 7.14 The remainder of this section of the report addresses each policy in turn in the context set out in paragraphs 7.5 to 7.7 of this report.

Policy H1: Development of site allocated at Jarvie Close

- 7.15 This policy refers to a parcel of land on the south side of Jarvie Close. It was allocated for residential development in Policy G78.1 of the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD.
- 7.16 As paragraph 8.1.1 of the submitted plan comments outline planning permission was granted in October 2016 for the development of nine dwellings on the site. At the time of the submission of the Plan a reserved matters application had not been submitted to KLWNBC. In this context the Plan comments that these circumstances provide an opportunity for it to influence the detailed layout of the site in general, and its size and associated ability to deliver affordable housing in particular. This theme is explored in detail in paragraph 8.1.2 of the Plan. It translates into the policy with a requirement in its first criterion for the development to provide a minimum of 11 dwellings or 1000 square metres of floorspace to facilitate the provision of two affordable houses.
- 7.17 I have sympathy for the approach taken. However, it is somewhat prescriptive. I recommend that the reference to the delivery of affordable housing in the policy is addressed in the supporting text. The delivery of affordable housing would be a consequence of the implementation of the policy rather than directly a policy matter.
- 7.18 In addition the policy approach may have unintended consequences. The reference to a minimum of 11 dwellings may detract from the ability of KLWNBC to resist a development of a significantly greater number of dwellings which would conflict with the character and appearance of the neighbourhood area. In this context I recommend an additional criterion is included within the policy to address this matter.
- 7.19 The approach taken in the supporting text also fails to recognise fully that a neighbourhood plan cannot directly or indirectly influence the process by which a developer/landowner continues the outline planning application process into a reserved matters application. I recommend that this matter is made clear in the

supporting text together with an indication that the policy would apply in circumstances either where the extant outline planning permission lapses or where a new outline application is submitted.

- 7.20 The other elements of the policy are well-considered. They relate to design and access arrangements.

**In the opening part of the policy replace ‘required to’ with ‘supported where it would’**

**In a) delete ‘to facilitate.... affordable dwellings’**

**Thereafter insert an additional criterion to read: ‘the development respects the density, form and layout of houses in the immediate locality’**

*At the end of paragraph 8.1.1 add: ‘This would apply in circumstances either where the extant outline planning permission lapses or where a new outline application is submitted.’*

*Replace paragraph 8.1.2 with: ‘Policy H1 provides a context for the determination of planning application on the site in the event that the proposal associated with the extant outline application does not proceed. Its ambition is to make the best and most efficient use of land in a sustainable location in general, and to deliver affordable housing in particular. The delivery of affordable housing will be subject to the tests in Policy CS09 of the Core Strategy. The second criterion of the policy has been designed to ensure that new development on the site respects the density, form and layout of existing dwellings in the immediate locality.’*

Policy H2: The location of new residential development

- 7.21 This policy is an important part of the Plan. It allocates two sites off Ringstead Road for residential development. They are Site 1 (Land North of the Primary School – 0.28 hectares) and Site 2 (Land east of Ringstead Road opposite Jarvie Close – 0.67 hectares). The former is anticipated to yield four dwellings and the latter to yield eight dwellings. The supporting text comments on how the site selection process was undertaken in general, and how it overlapped with the call for sites as part of the Local Plan review process being undertaken by KLWNBC. The submitted Plan includes two appendices that set out the process followed and the various sites which were assessed. It is clear that the process followed has been thorough.
- 7.22 I looked at the two sites carefully when I visited the neighbourhood area given the significance of the proposed allocations within the context of the village, and the representations received from local residents and the County Council in particular. I looked at the two sites from both the Ringstead Road and from the fields to the north and east of Site 2. I saw that in both cases they comprised the western parts of land which extended farther to the east. In the case of Site 2 I saw that it largely consisted of a succession of paddock strips running in an east-west direction.
- 7.23 The two sites are located to the north and to the south of a terrace of four cottages on the eastern side of Ringstead Road. Map 5 shows a potential footpath through the

site to the immediate east of the four cottages. The effect of this proposal would be to allow safe and convenient access from the school to the immediate south of Site 1 into both the proposed allocated sites. This has generated objections from two of the owners of the cottages. The County Council has also commented on this issue. It objects to Site 2 because of the inability to deliver a continuous footway link from the site to the school along Ringstead Road.

- 7.24 The proposed allocation of the two sites for residential purposes raises a series of potentially-conflicting issues. On the one hand the two sites have been carefully selected as a result of a comprehensive site assessment process. In this context Site 1 is within the settlement boundary and Site 2 is immediately adjacent to the boundary. Together they would significantly boost the supply of housing in the neighbourhood area (NPPF paragraph 59). On the other hand, the sites have the ability to detract from the existing amenities of the terrace of cottages off Ringstead Road. In addition, they do not have fixed or natural boundaries along their eastern flanks. In this context they have the ability to sit uncomfortably within the context of the wider village and its relationship with the surrounding countryside.
- 7.25 Appendix 5 has also provided useful information on the deliverability of the two sites concerned. Site 1 is indicated as having a restricted covenant until 2021. Site 2 is indicated as having a restricted covenant for the next ten years. The assessment indicates that Site 2 is therefore unlikely to be available for development for the next ten years.
- 7.26 The Parish Council corrected and updated this information during the examination. It is now the case that the site would be able to be delivered from 2021.
- 7.27 Taking all these matters into consideration I am satisfied that Site 1 is a well-considered site that is capable of being delivered within the Plan period. It relates well to the remainder of the village in general, and to the school in particular. Within the general context I recommend a series of modifications to the policy. The first is designed to ensure that its development safeguards the amenities of the southern-most cottage in the terrace of cottages off Ringstead Road. This can be achieved by a series of design, plot location and landscaping arrangements. The second is that its eastern boundary is sensitively-designed to ensure that it sits apart from the remainder of the paddock to the east and provides a boundary treatment appropriate to this rural location. The third is to ensure that the design and layout of any new development respects that of the existing residential development in Ringstead Road.
- 7.28 I am also satisfied that Site 2 is a well-considered site that is capable of being delivered within the Plan period. It will function as a modest extension of the village to the north. Within the general context I recommend a series of modifications to the policy. The first relates to the need for its northern and eastern boundaries to sensitively-designed to ensure that it sits apart from the remainder of the paddocks to the east and provides a boundary treatment appropriate to this rural location. In particular these boundary treatments should provide a clear visual separation between the allocated site and the surrounding countryside.

- 7.29 The second is to ensure that the design and layout of any new development respects that of the existing residential development to the south of the site in Ringstead Road. They are single-plot developments. This arrangement sits comfortably with the street scene and provides for attractive rear gardens. The continuation of this approach in Site 2 would be appropriate both in general terms, and to safeguard and respect the existing character of Ringstead Road in particular.
- 7.30 The third is designed to ensure that its development safeguards the amenities of the northern-most cottage in the terrace of cottages off Ringstead Road. This can be achieved by a series of design, plot location and landscaping arrangements. I also recommend the deletion of reference to an indicative line of a possible footpath from the supporting text and the deletion of Map 5. I do so for two principal reasons. The first is that it is merely indicative. As such it would be inappropriate for inclusion within a development plan. The second is that the relatively modest traffic levels in Ringstead Road, and the availability of a pedestrian access on one or the other side of Ringstead Road between the School and Jarvie Close are such that this approach may be one of a series of options which could be considered when a detailed layout was being designed. In these circumstances the Borough Council will be able to assess all the technical details at that time, including any comments from the County Council.
- 7.31 Plainly circumstances may change within the Plan period. A key element of this change will be the adoption of the emerging Local Plan. This may have implications on the amount of new residential development required in the neighbourhood area. In addition, at that stage there will be greater clarity on the delivery or otherwise of these two allocated sites (and the site off Jarvie Close) for development. I recommend a modification to Section 9 on Monitoring and Review later in this report to address this matter.
- 7.32 I recommend modifications to the policy accordingly. I also recommend consequential modifications to the supporting text.

**Replace the policy with:**

**‘Land to the east of Ringstead Road and to the north of the School as shown on Map 4 is allocated for residential use.**

**Development proposals for residential use on the site will be supported subject to the following criteria:**

- **they provide safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access;**
- **they incorporate boundary treatments to the east (to the existing paddock) and to the north (to the existing residential property to the immediate north) that are sensitively designed to respect the semi-rural location of the site and to safeguard the amenities of surrounding properties;**
- **they are designed to ensure that the layout of the site reflects the character and layout of properties in Ringstead Road; and**



- they provide off street car parking to the required standards in Policy DM17 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.

**‘Land east of Ringstead Road opposite Jarvie Close as shown on Map 4 is allocated for residential use.**

**Development proposals for residential use on the site will be supported subject to the following criteria:**

- they provide safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access;
- they incorporate boundary treatments to the north (to the surrounding countryside) to the east (to the existing paddock) and to the south (to the existing residential property to the immediate south) that are sensitively designed to respect the semi- rural location of the site and to safeguard the amenities of surrounding properties;
- they are designed to ensure that the layout of the site reflects the character and layout of properties in Ringstead Road. In particular the development should be designed so that it is of single-plot development with gardens running in an east to west direction to the east of the new dwellings; and
- they provide off street car parking to the required standards in Policy DM17 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.’

*Delete Map 5*

*Replace paragraph 8.1.10 with:*

*‘As a result of this process Site 1 (land to the east of Ringstead Road and to the north of the School) and Site 2 (Land east of Ringstead Road opposite Jarvie Close) have emerged as the most suitable sites for development. They are within easy walking distance of the School, and other facilities in the village. Site 1 is within the development boundary. Policy H2 sets out a series of criteria with which development proposals would need to comply. They address a series of environmental matters including boundary treatments, layout and design and parking/access matters.’*

Policy H3: Infill Development within the Development boundary

- 7.33 This policy complements the approach taken in Policy H2. In this case it offers support to development proposals within the development boundary. It includes five environmental criteria.
- 7.34 The approach is appropriate to the neighbourhood area. In addition, it will encourage sustainable development that will be close to community and other services. I recommend a series of modifications to the detailed wording in the policy and the supporting text so that it has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

**In the opening part of the policy replace ‘permitted’ with ‘supported’**

**In the second criterion replace ‘be harmful to’ with ‘have an unacceptable detrimental impact on’**

**In the third criterion replace ‘would not be harmful’ with ‘would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on’**

*In paragraph 8.1.12 replace ‘is supported’ with ‘will be supported’*

Policy H4: Development outside the development boundary

- 7.35 This policy complements to the approach taken in Policy H3. In this case it relates to development proposed outside the settlement boundary. It takes a restrictive approach to such development except where it would be in accordance with national and local policies. It has two principal parts. The first outlines a series of criteria that need to be met locally for development outside the development boundary to be supported. The second part relates to occupancy restrictions for new dwellings in the countryside.
- 7.36 The generality of the approach taken in the Plan is distinctive to the neighbourhood area. In addition, in principle it has regard to national policy and is in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan. Nevertheless, the wording and structure of the policy is unclear in places, and fails to provide a clear and consistent basis for decision-making. In this context I recommend a series of recommended modifications as follows:
- detailed word changes appropriate to a neighbourhood plan;
  - providing a clear context for the bullet points;
  - providing clarity on the application of the second part of the policy to rural exception sites for affordable housing. Otherwise the policy would inadvertently apply to more general proposals such as replacement dwellings and agricultural dwellings; and
  - deleting the fourth criterion in relation to the need for an appraisal of development proposals outside the development boundary on the basis of the criteria used to select the two housing sites included in Policy H2.
- 7.37 On the latter point above I have taken into account the Parish Council’s response to my question on this matter in the clarification note. I appreciate that its intentions were to prevent otherwise unacceptable site from coming forward. However, the policy is otherwise suitably robust both in its own right and within the wider development plan context.

**In the opening part of the policy replace ‘permitted’ with ‘supported’**

**Before the series of bullet points add: ‘Development proposals outside the development boundary should demonstrate that:’**

**In the first bullet point replace ‘that’ with ‘they’**

**In the second bullet point replace ‘Where development’ with ‘they’**

**In the third bullet point replace ‘Where the development’ with ‘they’ and ‘not be harmful to’ with ‘would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on’**

**Delete the fourth bullet point.**

**In the beginning of the second part of the policy replace ‘these dwellings’ with ‘dwellings on rural exception sites which deliver affordable housing’**

Policy H5: Housing Mix

- 7.38 This policy seeks to ensure that two- and three-bedroom houses are delivered on any residential development sites in the neighbourhood area. Its approach is underpinned by the findings of the KLWNBC Strategic Housing Needs Assessment 2014.
- 7.39 Within the context of its overall approach it seeks to ensure that where dwellings of this size are provided on a development sites that their design and layout should aim to limit the potential for large extensions or indeed the amalgamation of dwellings. The intention is to safeguard the supply of smaller dwellings which would come forward on such sites
- 7.40 I have taken account of the Parish Council’s response to my question on this latter matter in my clarification note. Whilst I recognise that the ambition is appropriate it is not capable of being incorporated within a development plan policy. To a certain extent this is already acknowledged in the policy by its use of the wording ‘should aim to limit’. In any event such an approach would not remove the ability of householders to extend their houses within permitted development rights. In these circumstances I recommend that the matter is deleted from the policy. It is already adequately addressed in the supporting text.
- 7.41 The principal part of the policy is appropriate and evidence-based. I recommend detailed modifications to its wording so that it can be applied clearly and consistently through the Plan period.

**Replace ‘All development proposals...required to’ with ‘Proposals for new residential development of two or more houses should’**

**Delete the second sentence.**

Policy H6: Replacement dwelling

- 7.42 This policy relates to proposals for replacement dwellings within the settlement boundary. Paragraph 8.1.17 comments that there is no objection in principle to such development. However, the purpose of the policy is both to assist in retaining smaller dwellings and to avoid a resulting overcrowded or urbanised street scene.
- 7.43 The resulting policy supports replacement dwellings where the footprint of the new dwelling does not exceed that of the original dwelling by more than 40% unless two sets of circumstances are met.

- 7.44 I sought advice from the Parish Council on the basis on which it had chosen the 40% limit. It advised that it had applied its local judgement to this matter based on the traditional relationship between houses and plot sizes in the neighbourhood area.
- 7.45 On balance I am satisfied that the application of a 40% indicative extension figure is appropriate for replacement dwellings. It relates well to the distinctive character of the neighbourhood area. In addition, the two circumstances identified in the policy where a larger replacement dwelling may be appropriate provide sufficient flexibility within which KLWNBC can make judgements on a case-by-case basis. The most important is the second set of circumstances which would apply where a larger proportionate increase in the scale of the dwelling would not appear inappropriate for the plot size.
- 7.46 I recommend detailed modifications to its wording so that it can be applied clearly and consistently through the Plan period.

**Replace ‘permitted’ with ‘supported’**

**In the first bullet point replace ‘for an identified first occupant’ with ‘for the intended first occupants’**

**In the second bullet point replace ‘not appear cramped’ with ‘not be disproportionately large for the plot size concerned’**

Policy H7: Residential Extensions

- 7.47 This policy continues the approach in Policy H6 into a more general policy on residential extensions. In this case it also applies a 40% limit on the total internal floorspace of an extended dwelling over and above the original dwelling.
- 7.48 As with Policy H6 I am satisfied that this is an appropriate figure. In some case it would support a significant extension to the floorspace available to existing or future occupants. As with Policy H6 this policy is supported by a series of environmental criteria. In this case it also includes a parking space requirement. I recommend a detailed modification to the wording of the policy. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

**Replace ‘permitted’ with ‘supported’**

Policy H8: New Housing as Permanent Dwellings

- 7.49 This policy is an important element of the Plan. It indicates that new open market housing will only be supported where there is a restriction to ensure its occupancy as a principal residence.
- 7.50 The policy approach is underpinned by robust evidence in paragraphs 8.1.20 to 8.1.24 of the Plan. It includes information on the number of existing dwellings being used as holiday homes/holiday lets and the community’s views about the advantages and disadvantage of the village’s attractiveness as a location for second home ownership.

- 7.51 Paragraph 8.1.24 is explicit in applying this policy to the two sites proposed in Policy H2 of the Plan. I recommend a consequential change to this paragraph to take account of my recommended modification to Policy H2.
- 7.52 On the basis of the evidence in the Plan I am satisfied that the general approach of the policy meets the basic conditions. I am also satisfied that its details and their ability to be applied and monitored through the development management process are robust.

*In paragraph 8.1.24 replace 'allocates two sites' with 'allocates a site'*

#### Policy E1: The River Valley Setting

- 7.53 This policy requires that new development should respect the relationship between the built form of the village and the valley of the Heacham River. I saw both its attractiveness and its role within the village when I visited the neighbourhood area.
- 7.54 The policy is both appropriate and distinctive to the neighbourhood area. I recommend a series of modifications to the wording used in the policy to ensure that it has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

#### **Replace 'unique' with 'distinctive'**

**Insert a full stop after 'the valley' in the final sentence. Replace 'and will not be intrusive' with 'Development proposals which would be intrusive to the relationship between the form of the village and its relationship to the river valley will not be supported'**

#### Policy E2: The Heacham River

- 7.55 This policy is specifically related to the River itself. It has two related parts. The first requires where necessary that development proposals should demonstrate that they would not have a detrimental effect on the flow of water in the river. The second offers support to proposals which would enhance the flow of water.
- 7.56 The technical nature of the policy is reflected in the supporting text. It comments about the origins of the river, its associated habitats and its highly alkaline nature. It also makes reference to national and local publications.
- 7.57 The policy is both appropriate and distinctive to the neighbourhood area. I recommend that the two parts of the policy are captured in separate sentences. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

**Inset a full stop after Heacham River. Thereafter delete 'and' and replace 'any' with 'Any'**

#### Policy E3: Local Green Spaces

- 7.58 This policy proposes the designation of five parcels of land as local green space (LGS). In doing so it has regards to paragraphs 99-101 of the NPPF.

- 7.59 Appendix 11 assesses the five proposed LGSs against the three criteria in the NPPF. In response to my clarification note the PC supplied the sizes of the proposed LGSs where the information concerned had not been included in the Appendix.
- 7.60 I looked at the various sites as part of my visit. They are clearly important local green spaces in their different ways within the context of the village. The formal green spaces to be found at the Green (LGS1) and the Recreation Ground (LGS2) contrasted with the more informal areas of the Washpit (LGS4) and the Cole Green War Memorial (LGS5).
- 7.61 On the basis of the evidence and my own observations I am satisfied that the LGSs properly relate to the three criteria in the NPPF and therefore meet the basic conditions.
- 7.62 In relation to proposed LGS 1 (the Green) I sought advice from the Parish Council on its detailed boundary as it connects to Parkside. The Parish Council clarified this matter and has suggested a revised boundary which is more focused on the substantive open area between Parkside and Jarvie Close. I recommend the revised area accordingly.
- 7.63 I recommend a detailed modification to the wording of the policy. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

**Replace ‘permitted’ with ‘supported’**

*In Map 8 replace the boundary of LGS1 with the boundary in the map included as Appendix 1 of this report.*

**Policy E4: Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project**

- 7.64 This policy seeks to safeguard potential archaeological remains on a site to the immediate south of the village. As the supporting text in paragraph 8.2.8 helpfully explains the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) was established in 1995 to investigate the history of settlement and land use in the village. It is clearly an exciting experiment in democratic archaeology which has attracted widespread interest and volunteer activity.
- 7.65 The policy is a combination of background to the SHARP initiative and a planning-based approach which requires archaeological investigation and recording if any development comes forward within the site. I sought advice from the Parish Council on the status of the site and the purpose and design of the policy. I was advised that the site is not formally protected.
- 7.66 Taking all matters into account I recommend that the policy is recast so that it adopts a more policy-based approach to safeguard the potential of important archaeology in a manner proportionate to its importance. In any event the submitted policy reads in a way in which development proposals would otherwise be supported on the identified SHARP site. However, this would not necessarily be the case as it sits outside the development boundary and adjacent to the low-lying Heacham River flood plain.

**Replace the policy with:**

**‘Any development proposals in the area of the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) as shown on Map 9 should demonstrate the way in which they would safeguard its archaeological significance’**

Policy E5: Conservation Area and buildings of local historic interest

- 7.67 This policy has been designed to safeguard the built heritage of the neighbourhood area. It has two related parts. The first refers to the conservation area. The second requires that new development takes account of three specific non-designated heritage assets.
- 7.68 The thrust of the policy meets the basic conditions. In particular it has regard to paragraphs 189 to 202 of the NPPF. I recommend a modification to the wording of the first part of the policy so that it has the clarity required by the NPPF in general, and makes a direct connection with the development management process in particular. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions. It will do much to assist in the Plan delivering the environmental dimension of sustainable development.

**In the first part of the policy replace ‘will’ with ‘should’**

Policy E6: Dark Skies

- 7.69 This policy seeks to ensure that the dark skies environment is sustained within the neighbourhood area. The protection of dark skies is a key element of the Norfolk Coast AONB. The CPRE Dark Skies Map indicates that the village has relatively dark skies.
- 7.70 The policy is evidence-based and distinctive. I recommend a series of word changes so that it has the necessary clarity for development control purposes. They have the indirect effect of simplifying the policy. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

**Replace ‘will’ with ‘should’ and delete ‘will be supported.... development plan policies’**

Policy C1: Community Facilities

- 7.71 This is an important policy within the context of the social well-being of the neighbourhood area. It identifies four community facilities (the school, the village hall, the recreation ground and the King William IV public house) where a change of use will only be supported in certain identified circumstances.
- 7.72 I looked at the four identified facilities. They are clearly important to the integrity and vitality of the neighbourhood area.
- 7.73 The cases where a change of use would be supported relate to an insufficient demand to justify the use of the facility or where an equivalent or better provision has been made in an appropriate and accessible location.
- 7.74 A second part of the policy offers support to proposals which would increase the sustainability of the four facilities.

- 7.75 I recommend two modifications to the first part of the policy. The first includes the potential redevelopment of the facilities concerned. As submitted the policy refers only to application for a change of use. I also recommend a detailed word change in the first part of the policy.

**After change of use add ‘or the redevelopment for non-community use’.**

**Replace ‘permitted’ with ‘supported’**

Policy C2: Broadband

- 7.76 This policy seeks to ensure that new development is broadband compatible. It also supports the more general improvement of the availability of high speed.

- 7.77 It meets the basic conditions.

Policy T1: Speed and volume of traffic passing through the village

- 7.78 This policy reflects the community’s concerns about traffic within the village on the B1451. In particular they relate to traffic speeds and their impact on highway safety.

- 7.79 The resulting policy requires that where appropriate development proposals should provide or contribute to offsite highway improvements or traffic calming measures. It has overlaps with the Parish Aspirations and Initiatives included at the end of the Plan. I sought advice from the Parish Council about the extent to which the policy was land use based rather than an expression of process. I was advised about the importance of this matter to the community and that the policy had been carefully designed to attempt to ensure that it is land used based.

- 7.80 I recognise the importance of this matter to the local community. However as submitted the policy has a clear focus on process requirements which may arise from developments elsewhere in the village. In any event that scale of new development being promoted elsewhere in the Plan (Policies H1/H2/H3) would be unlikely, either individually or cumulatively, to generate the need for the type of measures that the Parish Council has in mind.

- 7.81 In these circumstances I recommend that the policy is deleted. However, given the importance of this matter to the community I recommend that the issue about planning obligations to provide or to contribute to off-site highway improvements or traffic calming measures should be added to the list of Parish Aspirations and Initiatives. In this context it would complement other highways-related matters already included in that schedule.

- 7.82 I am satisfied that the supporting text should remain in the Plan notwithstanding my recommended deletion of the policy. I recommend a modification which refers to the Parish Aspirations and Initiatives as a means of addressing the matters included in the supporting text.

**Delete the policy**



*At the end of 8.3.4 add: 'This and other matters are addressed in the Parish Aspirations and Initiatives in paragraph 10.1 of this Plan'*

*In paragraph 10.1 add a further bullet point to read: 'Investigate the need for future planning applications to be accompanied with planning obligations to provide or to contribute to off-site highway improvements or traffic calming measures where the need for such works directly arises from the development proposed'*

Policy EMP1: Employment related development

- 7.83 This policy reflects the limited employment opportunities in the neighbourhood area. It offers support for small-scale employment development including new buildings, the re-use of redundant buildings or proposals for working from home. It includes three well-chosen criteria.
- 7.84 The policy is well-constructed and has regard to national policy. I recommend detailed changes to the wording used, and to ensure that any development needs to meet all of the three criteria. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

**In the first and third bullet points replace 'are not harmful' with 'would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on'**

**At the end of the second bullet point add '; and'**

Monitoring and Review

- 7.85 Section 9 of the Plan addresses monitoring and review issues. It comments in general terms that the Plan will be monitored on an annual basis and that the Plan will be reviews when evidence suggests that this approach is necessary.
- 7.86 I recommend the addition of an additional paragraph to tie this process into the ongoing process for the review of the Local Plan. This may have an impact on the strategic need for future development in the neighbourhood area. I also recommend that this process addresses the development of Policies H1 and H2 of the Plan. This overlaps with my comments in paragraph 7.30 of this report.

*Insert a new paragraph (9.2) to read:*

*'A key stage in the monitoring a review process review will be reached once the emerging Local Plan is adopted. This may have an impact on the strategic need for future development in the neighbourhood area. Any review process could usefully address the development or otherwise of the housing sites included in Policies H1 and H2 of this Plan.'*

Parish Aspirations and Initiatives

- 7.87 The Plan includes a series of Parish Aspirations. They are matters which have naturally arisen during the plan-making process but which are not land use matters.
- 7.88 They include the designation of assets of community value, monitoring traffic speeds and the designation of Fring Road as a green lane. In their different ways these

aspirations are appropriate and distinctive to Sedgford. In several cases they have been carefully designed to be complementary to land use policies in the main body of the Plan.

#### Other matters

- 7.89 This report has recommended a series of modifications both to the policies and to the supporting text in the submitted Plan. Where consequential changes to the text are required directly as a result of my recommended modification to the policy concerned, I have highlighted them in this report. However other changes to the general text may be required elsewhere in the Plan as a result of the recommended modifications to the policies. It will be appropriate for KLWNBC and the Parish Council to have the flexibility to make any necessary consequential changes to the general text. I recommend accordingly.

*Modification of general text (where necessary) to achieve consistency with the modified policies.*

## 8 Summary and Conclusions

### *Summary*

- 8.1 The Plan sets out a range of policies to guide and direct development proposals in the period up to 2036. It is distinctive in addressing a specific set of issues that have been identified and refined by the wider community.
- 8.2 Following my independent examination of the Plan I have concluded that the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions for the preparation of a neighbourhood plan subject to a series of recommended modifications.

### *Conclusion*

- 8.3 On the basis of the findings in this report I recommend to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk that subject to the incorporation of the modifications set out in this report that the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan should proceed to referendum.

### *Referendum Area*

- 8.4 I am required to consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Plan area. In my view, the neighbourhood area is entirely appropriate for this purpose and no evidence has been submitted to suggest that this is not the case. I therefore recommend that the Plan should proceed to referendum based on the neighbourhood area as approved by the Borough Council on 20 July 2016.
- 8.5 I am grateful to everyone who has helped in any way to ensure that this examination has run in a smooth and efficient manner. The responses to my Clarification Note were very helpful in preparing this report.

**Andrew Ashcroft**  
**Independent Examiner**  
**27 June 2019**

# Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan

## - Summary of the representations submitted to the independent Examiner

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The Draft Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan was published and consulted on by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk from

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

- Ms Verity Danziger
- Mr Kevin Minns
- Historic England
- Norfolk County Council
- Mr Andrew Ramsay
- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
- Anglian Water
- Mr Henry Head
- Natural England
- Sport England
- Sport England
- Forestry Commission England

The main issues raised in these representations were:

- Footway provision to Site 2
- Wording suggestions surrounding the proposed allocations
- Support for the Plan

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

[https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood\\_plans/708/sedgeford\\_neighbourhood\\_plan](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/708/sedgeford_neighbourhood_plan)



# Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan

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- Statement by the local planning authority that the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions.
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The draft Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan was considered by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk. On behalf of the Borough Council it was agreed by Geoff Hall the Executive Director (Environment and Planning) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Cllr Richard Blunt, that the amended Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan in the spirit of the Examiner's recommendations meets the basic conditions, and that, so modified, it should proceed to a local referendum covering the area of Sedgeford Parish.

The Borough Council Decision Statement in full can be read on the following pages.

[https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood\\_plans/708/sedgeford\\_neighbourhood\\_plan](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/708/sedgeford_neighbourhood_plan)

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

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



# **Sedgeford Neighbourhood Planning Referendum**

## **Decision on examiner's recommendations**

### **July 2019**



Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk:

Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan - Decision on examiner's recommendations

15 July 2019

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



## Borough Council Decision on the Examiner's recommendation for the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan

### Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2012

Name of neighbourhood area	Sedgeford Parish Neighbourhood Area
Parish Council	Sedgeford Parish Council
Submission	25/02/2019 - 08/04/2019
Examination	May/June 2019
Inspector Report Received	27/06/2019

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), states that the Council has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans and to take the plans through a process of examination and referendum .
- 1.2 The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6 chapter 3) details the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities under Neighbourhood planning.
- 1.3 This Decision Statement confirms that the modifications proposed by the examiner's report on the whole have been accepted. Accordingly the draft Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan has been amended taking into account these modifications, and the Borough Council has reached the decision that the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan may proceed to referendum.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Area of Sedgeford Parish was designated on 20/07/2016. The Neighbourhood Area corresponds with Parish boundaries for Sedgeford Parish Council. The Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Sedgeford Parish Council. Work on the production of the plan has undertaken by members of the Parish Council and the local community, since 2016.
- 2.2 The Plan was submitted to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and the consultation under Regulation 16 took place between 25/02/2019 - 08/04/2019. As part of this the plan was publicised and representation invited.

2.3 In March 2019 Independent Examiner Andrew Ashcroft was appointed by the Borough Council with consent of the Parish Council, to undertake the examination of the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan. This culminated in the Examiner's Report being issued on 27/06/2019.

2.4 The Examiner's Report concludes that subject to making the modifications recommended by the examiner, the plan meets the basic conditions as set out in legislation and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum .

2.5 Having carefully considered each of the recommendations made within the Examiner's Report and the reasons for them, the Borough Council (in accordance with the 1990 Act Schedule 48 paragraph 12) has decided to make the modifications to the draft plan referred to in Section 3 below to ensure that the draft plan meets the basic conditions set out in legislation.

### 3. Recommendations by the Examiner

Policy/ Area	Modification Recommended
Policy H1: Development of site allocated at Jarvie Close	In the opening part of the policy replace 'required to' with 'supported where it would'
	In a) delete 'to facilitate.... affordable dwellings'
	Thereafter insert an additional criterion to read: 'the development respects the density, form and layout of houses in the immediate locality'
	<i>At the end of paragraph 8.1.1 add: 'This would apply in circumstances either where the extant outline planning permission lapses or where a new outline application is submitted.'</i>
	<i>Replace paragraph 8.1.2 with: ' Policy H1 provides a context for the determination of planning application on the site in the event that the proposal associated with the extant outline application does not proceed. Its ambition is to make the best and most efficient use of land in a sustainable location in general, and to deliver affordable housing in particular. The delivery of affordable housing will be subject to the tests in Policy CS09 of the Core Strategy . The second criterion of the policy has been designed to ensure that new development on the site respects the density, form and layout of existing dwellings in the immediate locality.'</i>
Policy H2: The location of new residential development	Replace the policy with:  <b>'land to the east of Ringstead Road and to the north of the School as shown on Map 4 is allocated for residential use. Development proposals for residential use on the site will be supported subject to the following criteria:</b>

Policy/ Area	Modification Recommended
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they provide safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access;</li> <li>• they incorporate boundary treatments to the east (to the existing paddock) and to the north (to the existing residential property to the immediate north) that are sensitively designed to respect the semi- rural location of the site and to safeguard the amenities of surrounding properties;</li> <li>• they are designed to ensure that the layout of the site reflects the character and layout of properties in Ringstead Road; and</li> <li>• they provide off street car parking to the required standards in Policy DM17 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.</li> </ul>
	<p>'Land east of Ringstead Road opposite Jarvie Close as shown on Map 4 is allocated for residential use. Development proposals for residential use on the site will be supported subject to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they provide safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access;</li> <li>• they incorporate boundary treatments to the north (to the surrounding countryside) to the east (to the existing paddock) and to the south (to the existing residential property to the immediate south) that are sensitively designed to respect the semi- rural location of the site and to safeguard the amenities of surrounding properties;</li> <li>• they are designed to ensure that the layout of the site reflects the character and layout of properties in Ringstead Road. In particular the development should be designed so that it is of single-plot development with gardens running in an east to west direction to the east of the new dwellings; and</li> <li>• they provide off street car parking to the required standards in Policy DM17 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan .' </li></ul>
	<i>Delete Map 5</i>
	<p><i>Replace paragraph 8.1.10 with:</i>  <i>'As a result of this process Site 1 (land to the east of Ringstead Road and to the north of the School) and Site 2 (Land east of Ringstead Road opposite Jarvie Close) have emerged as the most suitable sites for development. They are within easy walking distance of the School, and other facilities in the village. Site 1 is within the development boundary. Policy H2 sets out a series of criteria with which development proposals would need to comply. They address a series of environmental matters including boundary treatments, layout and design and parking/access matters.'</i></p>
Policy H3: Infill Development within the Development boundary	In the opening part of the policy replace 'permitted' with 'supported'
	In the second criterion replace 'be harmful to' with 'have an unacceptable detrimental impact on'
	In the third criterion replace 'would not be harmful' with 'would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on'

Policy / Area	Modification Recommended
	<i>In paragraph 8.1.12 replace 'is supported' with 'will be supported'</i>
Policy H4: Development outside the development boundary	In the opening part of the policy replace 'permitted' with 'supported'
	Before the series of bullet points add: 'Development proposals outside the development boundary should demonstrate that:'
	In the first bullet point replace 'that' with 'they'
	In the second bullet point replace 'Where development' with 'they'
	In the third bullet point replace 'Where the development' with 'they' and 'not be harmful to' with 'would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on'
	Delete the fourth bullet point.
	In the beginning of the second part of the policy replace 'these dwellings' with 'dwellings on rural exception sites which deliver affordable housing'
Policy HS: Housing Mix	Replace 'All development proposals...required to' with 'Proposals for new residential development of two or more houses should'
	Delete the second sentence.
Policy H6: Replacement dwelling	Replace 'permitted' with 'supported'
	In the first bullet point replace 'for an identified first occupant' with 'for the intended first occupants'
	In the second bullet point replace 'not appear cramped' with 'not be disproportionately large for the plot size concerned'
Policy H7: Residential Extensions	Replace 'permitted' with 'supported'
Policy HS: New Housing as Permanent Dwellings	<i>In paragraph 8.1.24 replace 'allocates two sites' with 'allocates a site'</i>
Policy E1: The River Valley Setting	Replace 'unique' with 'distinctive'
	Insert a full stop after 'the valley' in the final sentence. Replace 'and will not be intrusive' with 'Development proposals which would be intrusive to the relationship between the form of the village and its relationship to the river valley will not be supported'
Policy E2: The Heacham River	Inset a full stop after Heacham River. Thereafter delete 'and' and replace 'any' with 'Any'
Policy E3: Local Green Spaces	Replace 'permitted' with 'supported'
	<i>In Map 8 replace the boundary of LGS1 with the boundary in the map included as Appendix 1 of this report.</i>
Policy E4: Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project	Replace the policy with: 'Any development proposals in the area of the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) as shown on Map 9 should demonstrate the way in which they would safeguard its archaeological significance'
Policy ES: Conservation Area and buildings of local historic interest	In the first part of the policy replace 'will' with 'should'

Policy / Area	Modification Recommended
Policy E6: Dark Skies	Replace 'will' with 'should' and delete 'will be supported .... development plan policies'
Policy CI: Community Facilities	After change of use add 'or the redevelopment for non-community use'.
	Replace 'permitted' with 'supported'
Policy TI: Speed and volume of traffic passing through the village	Delete the policy
	<i>At the end of 8.3.4 add: 'This and other matters are addressed in the Parish Aspirations and Initiatives in paragraph 10.1 of this Plan'</i>
Parish Aspirations and Initiatives	<i>In paragraph 10.1 add a further bullet point to read: 'Investigate the need for future planning applications to be accompanied with planning obligations to provide or to contribute to off-site highway improvements or traffic calming measures where the need for such works directly arises from the development proposed'</i>
Policy EM PI: Employment related development	<b>In the first and third bullet points replace 'are not harmful' with 'would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on'</b>
	<b>At the end of the second bullet point add'; and'</b>
Monitoring and Review	<i>Insert a new paragraph (9.2) to read : 'A key stage in the monitoring a review process review will be reached once the emerging Local Plan is adopted. This may have an impact on the strategic need for future development in the neighbourhood area . Any review process could usefully address the development or otherwise of the housing sites included in Policies H1 and H2 of this Plan .'</i>

#### 4. Decision

4.1 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 requires the local planning authority to outline what action to take in response to the recommendations that the examiner made in the report under paragraph 10 of Schedule 4A to the 1990 act (as applied by Section 38A of the 2004 Act) in relation to a neighbourhood development plan.

4.2 King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council have carefully considered each of the recommendations made in the examiner's report and the reasons for them and have decided to accept the modifications to the draft plan.

4.3 Following the modifications made, the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan will meet the basic conditions:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the plan;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan - Core Strategy (2011) and Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016);
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations; and;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

4.4 It is recommended that the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan progresses to referendum. Consideration has been given as to whether the area should be extended beyond that of the neighbourhood area. The Borough Council concur with Examiner's conclusion that nothing has been suggested which would require an extension of the area beyond that originally designated (20/ 07/ 2016) .

Decision made by:



.....  
Geoff Hall  
Executive Director Environment and Planning

15/07/19

Date

