

# Docking Neighbourhood Plan

## 2023-2039



**Submission Version**

## **Table of Contents**

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>OVERVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP) .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>COMMUNITY CONSULTATION .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>NATURAL ENVIRONMENT .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>BIODIVERSITY AND GREEN ECOLOGICAL CORRIDORS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>TREES .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>LOCAL GREEN SPACES .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>IMPORTANT LOCAL VIEWS .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>DARK SKIES .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>DESIGN AND HERITAGE .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>HERITAGE .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>DESIGN .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>HOUSING .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>HOUSING MIX .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>ACCESS AND MOVEMENT .....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>MONITORING, REVIEW, AND IMPLEMENTATION .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: POLICIES MAPS .....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>APPENDIX B- LIST OF POLICIES AMEND ONCE AGREED .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>APPENDIX C- ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY .....</b>	<b>82</b>

## **List of Figures**

FIGURE 1: THE DOCKING SITE ALLOCATION G30.1 IN THE SUPERSEDED BCKLWN SADMP (2016) .....	4
FIGURE 2: DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN AREA .....	7
FIGURE 3- INITIAL CONSULTATION SURVEY TOPICS AND SUMMARY RESPONSES .....	10
FIGURE 4- ECOLOGICAL NETWORK .....	13
FIGURE 5- GREEN CORRIDORS .....	19
FIGURE 6- GREEN CORRIDORS KEY HABITATS (SOURCE: NATURAL ENGLAND, 2024 AND NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL, 2024) .....	20
FIGURE 7- Q14 RESPONSE FROM THE INITIAL CONSULTATION SURVEY .....	25
FIGURE 8- LOCAL GREEN SPACE PHOTOS .....	30
FIGURE 9- LOCAL GREEN SPACES .....	34

FIGURE 10- IMPORTANT LOCAL VIEWS.....	37
FIGURE 11- DARK SKIES IN DOCKING (SOURCE: CPRE, 2024) .....	39
FIGURE 12- EXTERNAL LIGHTING MITIGATION OPTIONS. SOURCE: INSTITUTION OF LIGHTING PROFESSIONALS, 2023. ....	40
FIGURE 13- INTERNAL LIGHTING MITIGATION OPTIONS. SOURCE: INSTITUTION OF LIGHTING PROFESSIONALS, 2023.. ....	40
FIGURE 14- HISTORIC ASSETS .....	44
FIGURE 15-EXAMPLES OF LOCAL BUILDINGS.....	45
FIGURE 16- THE TEN CHARACTERISTICS OF A WELL-DESIGNED PLACE (NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE, 2021). ....	47
FIGURE 17-DOCKING CHARACTER AREAS (AECOM 2024) .....	49
FIGURE 18-EXAMPLES OF ENERGY EFFICIENT MEASURES FROM DESIGN CODE DC20 (SOURCE AECOM DESIGN CODE DOCUMENT ) .....	53
FIGURE 19- EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS (SUDS) FROM DESIGN CODE DC22 (SOURCE AECOM DESIGN CODE DOCUMENT) .....	54
FIGURE 20- THREE NEW RESIDENTIAL ESTATES IN DOCKING .....	56
FIGURE 21- PHOTOS FROM THE VARIOUS NEW RESIDENTIAL ESTATES (SOURCE: AECOM).....	56
FIGURE 22-SIGN OF THE HEARTWOOD ESTATE SITE LAYOUT AND PLOT INFORMATION (SOURCE: AECOM 2024) ....	58
FIGURE 23- DOCKING HOUSING PROFILE OVERVIEW (CENSUS, 2021) .....	59
FIGURE 24: SUGGESTED DWELLING SIZE MIX TO 2039 IN DOCKING (AECOM CALCULATIONS, HNA, 2024).....	60
FIGURE 25: PARISH CONSULTATION SURVEY MAY 2024: QUESTION 7 RESULTS.....	60
FIGURE 26- HOUSING MIX 85% EXAMPLE FROM 1 TO 10 DWELLINGS .....	61
FIGURE 27- COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROTECTED IN POLICY 10 .....	70
FIGURE 28-DOCKING'S PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY .....	73
FIGURE 29- EXAMPLE OF PARKING ALONG ONE SIDE OF THE HIGH STREET (AECOM, 2024) .....	74
FIGURE 30- PICTURES OF THE ENTRANCE TO THE BRIDLEWAY ALONG MILL LANE (SOURCE: AECOM, 2024).....	75



# Introduction

- 1 Docketing developed as an important agricultural village, with this influencing its subsequent growth and transport links with other settlements, including its presence on the former trainline. The village has gradually changed with the settlement itself expanding outwards and recent development within the centre taking place on the former Limagrain site. Despite this, agriculture remains an important influence and backdrop to the village. Residents value living in what is a quiet rural village surrounded by fields and open countryside. This is an important aspect of its character and there is a desire to ensure this is maintained through future development of the parish. Unlike many other villages closer to the coast, Docketing also feels like a 'working village' that attracts a good mix of residents, including those with young families, as well as second homeowners and holiday makers. The current mix of housing available and level of service provision, including the school and doctor's surgery, helps to sustain this, though there is a feeling that future development would need to be supported by further investment in infrastructure to continue to support this balance. Ensuring the right mix of housing is delivered going forward will also be important.
- 2 Docketing is a civil parish in the borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk with approximately 1,100 residents (Census 2021). The parish is 14 miles east of King's Lynn and 12 miles west of Fakenham and is linear in form centring along the B1454/Fakenham Road and the B1153/Station Road.
- 3 Docketing is the highest village in Norfolk sitting at 82.7m above sea level. The village was once coined 'Dry Docketing' due to the absence of a steady water supply and as a result, a number of ponds and reservoirs were excavated to provide water storage. These landmarks amongst others form an important part of Docketing's cultural and landscape heritage today. As well as several ponds playing an important part in Docketing's natural environment there are also several existing green spaces which people enjoy for recreational use.
- 4 Docketing's historical development was shaped by a number of factors including its abundance of agricultural land, dominance of key farming families, the opening of the railway in the north of the village in 1866 and the surrounding radial road network. Today, Docketing's rich heritage is evidenced by the extensive Conservation Area which covers the majority of the main settlement and fifteen listed buildings, which include the Grade II\* Church of St Mary the Virgin and the Grade II Docketing Hall. Docketing Railway Station subsequently closed to passengers in May 1952.
- 5 Within the parish there are a number of core services and facilities including but not limited to Bayfield surgery, Docketing Primary and Nursery School, St Mary's Church, Docketing House (Assisted Living Residence), allotments, playing field/play park, village hall, Spar village shop and post office, angling fishing club, and the Bus Service (33, 33A and 414). The primary school has a wide catchment area and when other parish schools

closed such as Bircham a couple of children came to Docking and now Brancaster school is proposed to close and transfer pupils to Docking.

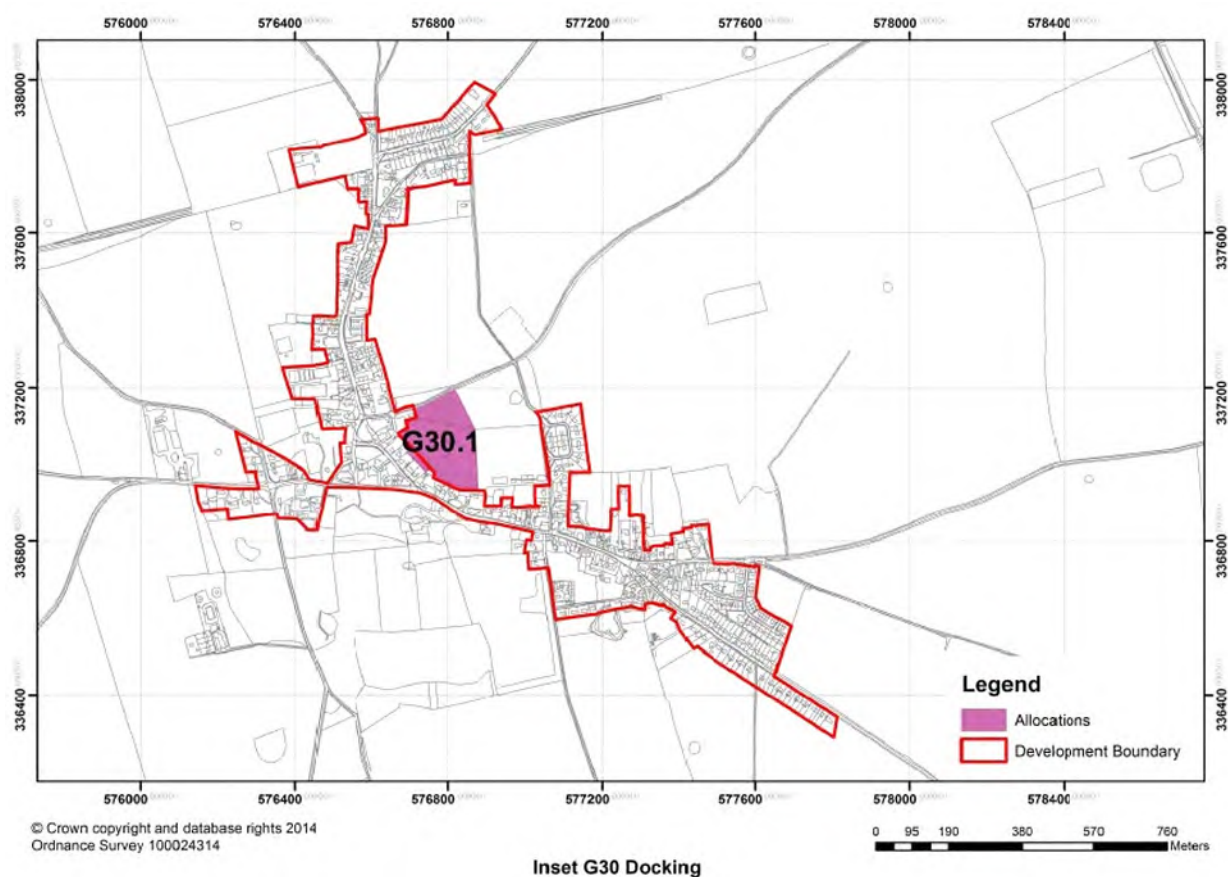
- 6 There are a range of local businesses within the parish. This includes holiday accommodation options (such as holiday homes, Air BnBs and campsites). Employment units are situated around Station Rd and the High St (B1454) and include the Railway Inn public house, Dennis Wright Car Body Repairs, Docking fish and chip shop, doggy day care centre and recording studio. There is also the Winery at Cobble Hill, a part time recycling centre and new boutique restaurant with rooms. The village has a well-attended Wednesday Market held at the Ripper Hall which includes a farmers market, craft stalls and community café. Further detail can be read in the Docking Evidence Base Paper.
- 7 Docking employment opportunities have changed over the decades with the loss of major employers including Marsters Seeds, Wagg Bakery, Limagrain as well as several shops, hairdressers, garage, pubs and restaurants including the Pilgrims Reach, Hare Inn, and the King William. Local employment is now mainly tourism with hospitality and holiday accommodation providing opportunities.
- 8 Whilst the area has a range of services and facilities to offer there is a concern amongst the community that the infrastructure of the village is straining particularly with the amount of traffic going through the village, parking from recent major development and the influx of tourism and holiday homes, and capacity of current services/facilities such as the doctors, existing public green space, and the school. AECOM Design Codes and Guidance Report 2024 does state that some roads in Docking are already at capacity.
- 9 A key concern from the community is the overwhelming desire to not have any further development encroaching onto agricultural land or changing the density and linear nature of the village which could change the overall character of Docking. The community want to ensure that any future development in the area considers these concerns sensitively. There have been three major estates built out in the village in recent years which at the point of writing this plan have still not managed to sell all of their homes.

## Overview of Neighbourhood Planning

- 10 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011, the legislation for which came into effect in April 2012, giving communities the power to agree a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). It is an important and powerful tool that gives communities such as parish councils statutory powers to agree a shared vision and shape how their community develops and changes over time.
- 11 There is already a policy framework in place that applicants must have regard to when proposing development in Docking; these are the national and Local Plan policies. Docking is in the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN), and the

Neighbourhood Plan sits within the context of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan. The Borough Council in March 2025 adopted their Local Plan 2021-2040. This replaced the 2011 Core Strategy and the 2016 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) documents which covered the Plan period up to 2026. The Development Plan for the area also includes the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (NM&WLP), which identifies the minerals and waste development needs and safeguarded minerals and waste sites in Norfolk.

- 12 The Local Plan sets the overall strategic policies for the borough, such as the amount of new development and the distribution of that development across the borough, as well as promoting sustainable development and protecting the environment. The policies in this NDP need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies and support the delivery of those contained in the BCKLWN Local Plan. The NDP cannot, for example, promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or restrict the delivery of strategic policies. As well as being in general conformity with the Local Plan, the NDP must also have due regard to national planning policy and guidance documents, which is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 13 Within the adopted Local Plan Docking is designated a Key Rural Service Centre (KRSC). KRSCs are designated to help sustain the wider rural community. They provide a range of services that can meet basic day-to-day needs, and a level of public transport can enable access to and from the settlement. The now superseded SADMP (2016) allocated G30.1-Land situated off Pound Lane (Manor Pasture), which totalled at least 20 residential dwellings (**Figure 1**). The site subsequently achieved permission for 33 dwellings including 7 affordable units (16/00866/OM, 18/01960/RMM). Building work commenced in July 2022 (according to information provided by the borough council) and was completed in 2024 with units on the market.



**Figure 1: The Docking Site Allocation G30.1 in the superseded BCKLWN SADMP (2016)**

- 14 An NDP contains non-strategic policies to support and add further detail to policy matters already adopted in the Local Plan which are specifically relevant to Docking. This includes the mix of housing, design principles for new development, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, protecting local green spaces from development, and setting out other development management policies which are not addressed at a borough level. Importantly, the NDP will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Some of the policies in the following sections are not strictly 'planning' related, but it was felt that they were important enough to include in the NDP and designate as 'Community Actions'; something on which the local community and Parish Council will lead the initiative.
- 15 The Policies are intended to meet the Vision and Objectives set out in the following section. They are aimed at guiding decision makers and applicants to address the needs and wants of the community. Development proposals should have regard to all the relevant planning policies in this NDP, and of course those in the Local Plan and national policy.
- 16 Once a NDP has been 'made', following consultation with residents, examination, and a successful local referendum, it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the Parish and will be used by the Borough Council when considering planning applications.

## Vision and Objectives

- 17 The vision and objectives are set out below which Docking Parish Council and the community wish to address in this NDP.

### Vision

*Our vision for Docking is that the village stays an agricultural working village and any development coming forward in the next 15 years should not encroach on the countryside whereby it changes the character of our linear village and should strengthen the community by achieving a good balance of housing stock to meet local need and be of a high-quality design whilst respecting our local character and identity.*

*The plan will protect and enhance our beloved local environment including our natural and historical built assets by designating a few local green spaces, important views, safeguarding green corridors to promote wildlife enhancements and emphasising the historic core of the area.*

*The plan supports the local businesses and community facilities present in the village and wishes to retain and support any further economic or community facilities which will benefit the residents.*

### Objectives

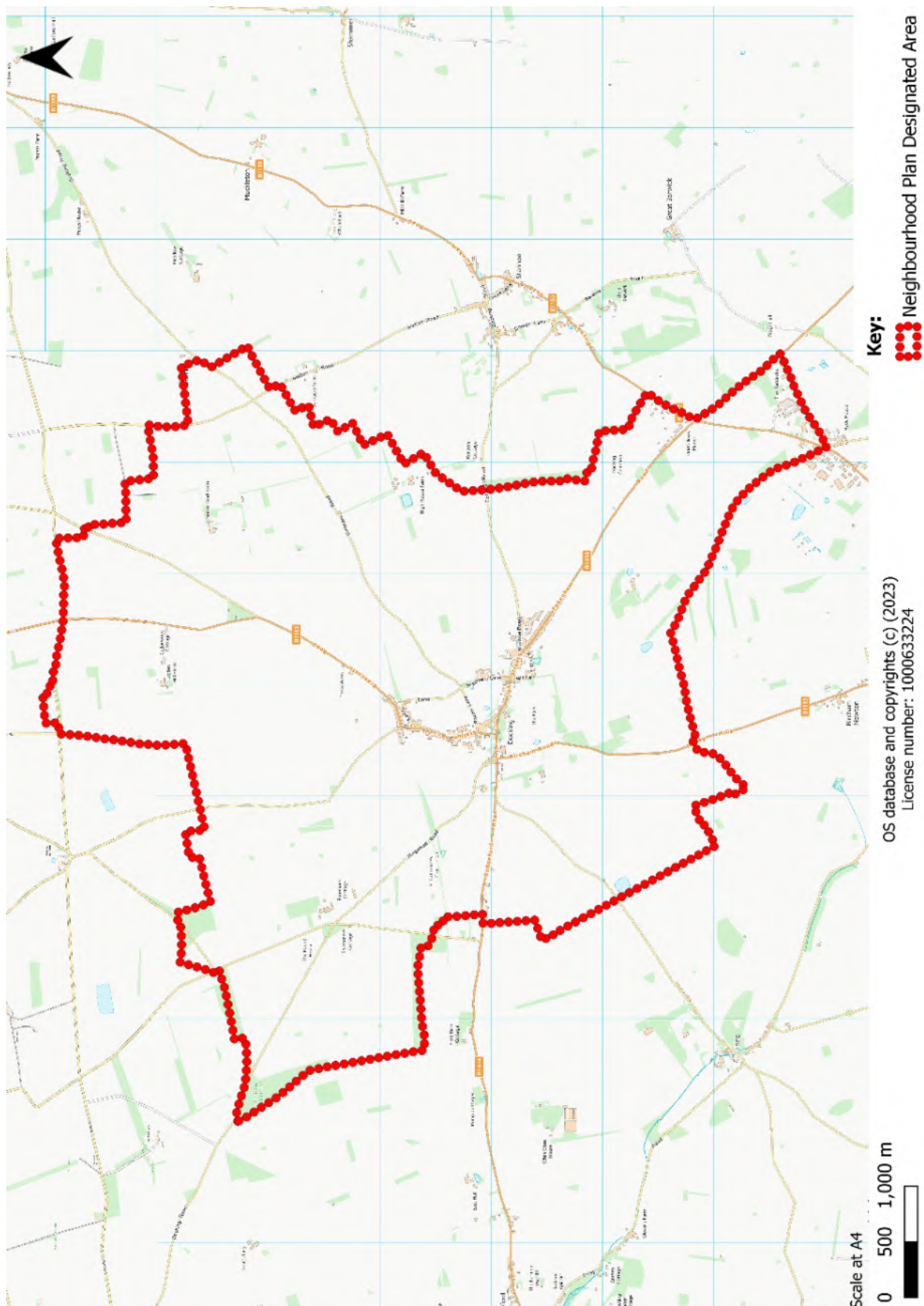
- A. Protect and enhance Docking's natural environment including locally important green spaces and views, trees, hedgerows, and areas which play a role for the local wildlife.*
- B. Protect and enhance the local character of Docking, ensuring that new development is of a high-quality design and sensitively located in line with our local design codes and distinctive character areas.*
- C. Ensure future housing development, including the tenure, mix and number of bedrooms, meets the needs of the local population to help retain residents in Docking.*
- D. Protect existing community facilities that meet the needs of the resident population and encourage further community services, and businesses to come forward to enhance opportunities and quality of life while remaining appropriate to the rural location.*



*E. Ensure future development helps to improve the connectivity and access within the parish by creating accessible, safe and direct links to existing footpaths or by creating new footpaths which have natural surveillance and easy to locate. Aswell as this explore opportunities for the community to have access to circular routes to improve connectivity within the surrounding countryside and to more isolated parts of the parish not served easily by the village centre.*

### **Process of Developing this Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)**

- 18 The Parish area shown in **Figure 2** was designated as the NDP Area in December 2023. The Plan period is 2023 to 2039. Working on behalf of the community, the Docking Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared this Plan that will be used to shape and influence future development and change across the Parish.



**Figure 2: Designated Neighbourhood Development Plan Area**

- 19 A broad range of evidence has been reviewed to determine issues and develop Policies for the NDP. This includes population data from the Office of National Statistics, housing data, a review of environmental designations and historical records. Further work to gather new evidence has also been undertaken, including an assessment of green corridors, local green spaces, key views, and all supported by consultation activities with the community. AECOM have also commissioned a Design Code and Guidance Document and Housing Needs Assessments for the parish.
- 20 Any new development should serve both current and future residents. The Policies contained within this NDP will enable us to influence the design and type of any new homes being delivered in the Parish, as well as ensuring infrastructure improvements are delivered alongside growth to maximise community benefit.

## Community Consultation

- 21 An initial survey was conducted with residents and people who work in the area in May 2024. The survey included 29 questions and was advertised in numerous ways including on the parish council website, within the village newsletter, social media platforms and hard copies were available to collect and drop off in the local shop (SPAR). Overall, there were 201 survey responses.
- 22 The main issues and concerns have been summarised below under a number of survey topics and will be addressed where relevant and possible in our NDP. Overall, many respondents said what they love about Docking was the sense of community, the fact the village is active with numerous village activities/events and is a great location with close access to the coast, countryside and other areas and core facilities. People love that the village has a quiet nature, they enjoy the historic character and architecture the village offers such as the various traditional materials. All these points above are important and play a key factor in what the community wish to retain in future years when it comes to the character of their area.

Survey Topic	Summary Response
Design and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most respondents (152 people) think the neighbourhood should provide guidance on the size and type of new homes built in the parish.</li> <li>If new homes were built in the parish many said they want to see more affordable homes (136 people) and first homes (146 people) within the parish. The majority of people did not want to see any more holiday accommodation in the parish (117 people).</li> <li>The majority of respondents said it was essential for the design of new development to include features that are common within the surrounding area such as local building materials (150 people),</li> </ul>

Survey Topic	Summary Response
	<p>provide parking (149 people) and include trees and other planting (139 people).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If new homes were built in the parish many said the size of these should be 2 beds (116 people) or 3 beds (111 people). Respondents were least keen on 5 beds or larger coming forward (94 people) and respondents were most unsure on 1 bed (59 people)). 54 people would rather not see more 5+ beds.</li> <li>• Many saw the benefits that second homeowners/holiday makers can bring to the local area such as for tourism, local jobs/trades, and services. Around 29 respondents were surprised that only 32% of homes are holiday lets or second homes, expecting this to be higher.</li> <li>• Under 50% of respondents (84 people) supported making an allocation in the plan. A large number of respondents did not feel it was necessary to promote further development given the recent completion of three new estates in the village. A large number of people stated if a new site came forward it should be for local people with a set covenant and affordable.</li> </ul>
<b>Natural and Historic Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most respondents (179 people) agreed it is important to protect existing habitats such as trees and hedgerows.</li> <li>• Many respondents shared ideas to improve the natural environment such as the need to set up a village volunteer group to help maintain current green spaces and ponds. Some suggested wildlife corridors to link up with other villages.</li> <li>• 191 people supported the idea of protecting green spaces such as the allotment, church memorial grounds, playing field and village ponds.</li> <li>• 109 people suggested locally important views for protection. Many respondents mentioned the views towards Honey Hill, towards the coast and from public paths looking out of the village.</li> <li>• Most respondents (183 people) said that heritage is important with 96 people listing specific buildings such as the public house, the cage and pound and the old blacksmith.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Facilities.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most respondents stated they would like to see Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds spent on new improved footpaths</li> </ul>

Survey Topic	Summary Response
Infrastructure and Employment	<p>(129 people) and children's play area and equipment (117 people). 65 people left comments mentioning the need to support and invest in the playing field and create circular walks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 116 people put forward community facilities for protection including the doctor's surgery, bus service and playing field.</li> <li>• 118 people suggested ideas of improvements they would like to see in the village. Numerous people said a better bus service, café, pub/restaurant and more leisure and social activities for all age groups.</li> <li>• The majority of respondents said they would support small business growth (148 people). The majority of respondents said they would want to see a restaurant (147 people) or pub (136 people). However, they would not want to see more holiday lets (142 people), caravans/camping sites (138 people) or second homes (30 people).</li> </ul>
Transport and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 166 respondents shared their views on the impact of the traffic in the area. Many people raised concerns with speeding, parking and the number of heavy vehicles which go through the village.</li> <li>• Respondents also raised concerns on the lack of footpaths with the parish and the lack of circular routes or accessibility into the surrounding countryside for recreational use e.g. walking.</li> </ul>
Other Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People raised strategic issues relating to infrastructure and capacity issues, such as healthcare and public transport provision, surgery waiting times and broadband/phone line connectivity which cannot be addressed through the neighbourhood plan. However, engagement with relevant key stakeholders could get conversations going on some of these matters.</li> <li>• People wanted the village to stay as a village and not become significantly bigger by building more new houses.</li> <li>• Other comments were also raised on littering, lack of dog bins and the need for better community morale.</li> </ul>

**Figure 3- Initial Consultation Survey Topics and Summary Responses**

23 Docking conducted its Regulation 14 consultation with the community and relevant stakeholders between February and March 2025. This allowed residents to have a further say on the pre-submission draft. There was a total of 94 responses on the online survey with people either completing the survey in full or partially. The majority of



responses were from residents (75 people) followed by those owning a second home (12 people), holiday home (9 people), working in the village (6 people) or is a landowner (2 people).

- 24 Most respondents supported all the policies within the plan and provided comments which have been summarised and addressed in the Consultation Statement. Where it was felt, appropriate revisions were made to the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents.

## Natural Environment

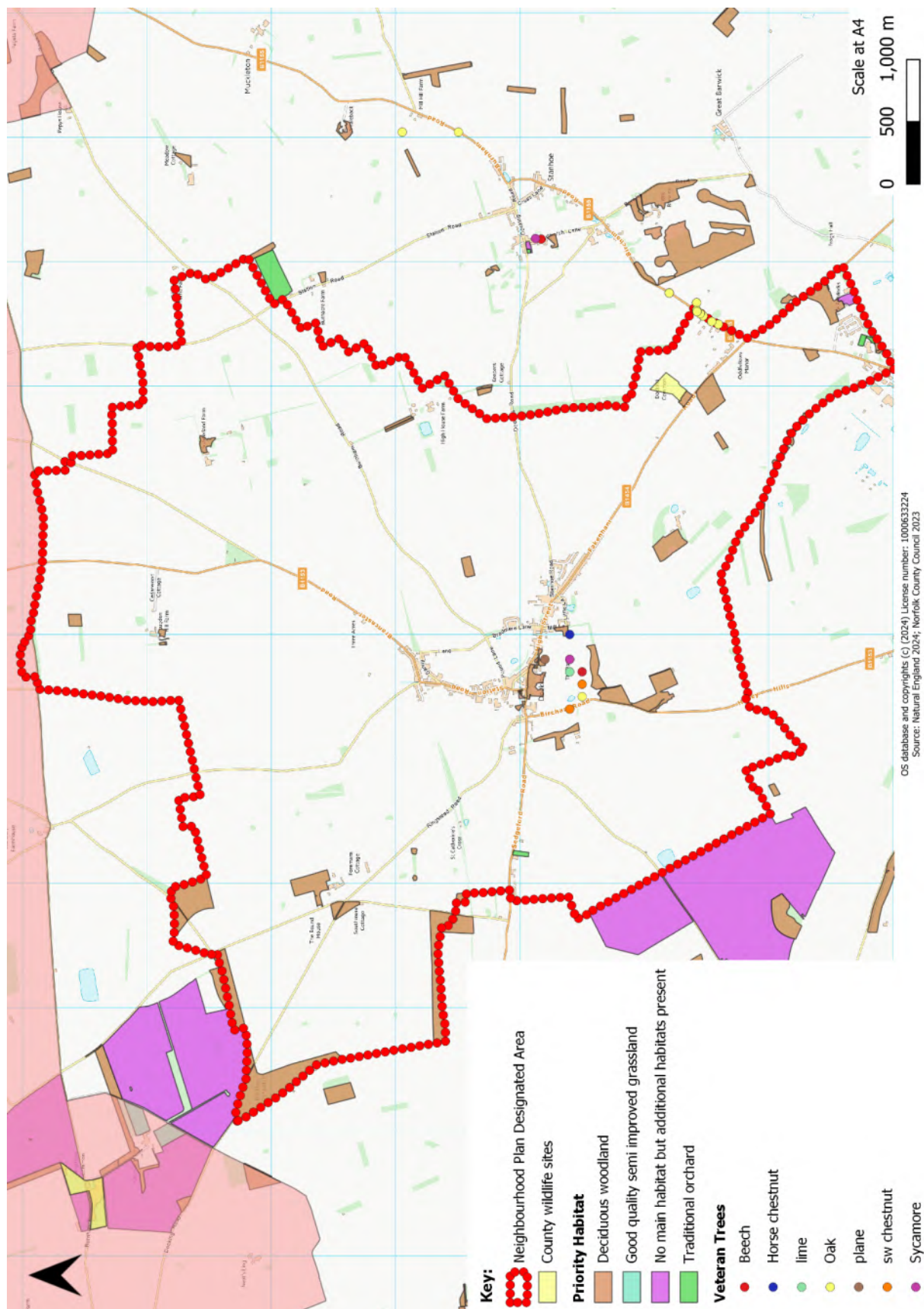


***This section supports delivery of the following NP objective:***

- A.** *Protect and enhance Docking's natural environment including locally important green spaces and views, trees, hedgerows, and areas which play a role for the local wildlife.*

- 25 There are no European or Natural England statutory designated sites within the parish but there is one County Wildlife Site, Docking Borrow Pit. The neighbourhood area contains priority habitat also known as Habitats of Principle Importance for biodiversity conservation. These are habitats which are most threatened, in greatest decline, or where the UK holds a significant proportion of the world's total population. There are three main types of priority habitat in the parish deciduous woodland: good quality semi-improved grassland and traditional orchard.
- 26 As well as this a small part of the parish, north of Burnham Rd, falls within the Norfolk Coast National Landscape (see **Figure 4**). This part of the parish is arable land and is not near the built-up settlement. The Norfolk Coast National Landscape, formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), was designated in 1968 and includes the greater part of the remaining unspoiled coastal areas between the Wash and Great Yarmouth. The Norfolk Coast landscape displays a striking diversity of scenery,

embracing a rich mix of coastal features and contrasting inland agricultural landscapes, of which are influenced by the proximity of the sea.



**Figure 4- Ecological Network**

- 27 The parish has a rich amount of ecological assets including trees, hedgerows, and several waterbodies such as ponds. The NPPF (December 2024<sup>1</sup>) Chapter 15 affords considerable support for protecting and enhancing the natural environment, key landscapes, and areas of value in terms of biodiversity. Examples include:
- a) NPPF paragraphs 106-108 cover protecting existing local green spaces and the creation of new high quality open spaces.
  - b) NPPF para 136 states that all new streets should include trees, and that planning policies should ensure streets are tree lined, take opportunities to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments, existing trees are retained wherever possible, and measures are in place for the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees.
  - c) NPPF para 187 addresses the need for biodiversity net gains in developments.
  - d) NPPF para 192 supports the mapping of ecological assets and networks, including for enhancement or creation.
- 28 Schedule 14 of the Environment Act (2021) requires all development schemes to deliver a mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) to be maintained for a period of at least 30 years. The concept seeks measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Development proposals must 'leave biodiversity in a better state than before'. In England, BNG became mandatory from 12 February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. There will be three ways to deliver BNG, onsite within the red line, off site locally with biodiversity enhanced in conjunction with nearby landowners, or through statutory credits. The requirement for BNG is in addition to following the usual mitigation hierarchy to avoid, mitigate or compensate for biodiversity losses.
- 29 PPG makes clear that it would be inappropriate for local plan policies to be inconsistent with the statutory framework as this sets the national approach and benchmark for BNG in planning. It also states that policies should not require BNG for types of development that are exempt. Local plans are allowed to include local biodiversity policies which require specific enhancements to support biodiversity where appropriate<sup>2</sup>.
- 30 The Local Plan requires that development avoids, mitigates, or compensates for any adverse impacts on biodiversity. It also provides a level of protection for County Wildlife Sites and priority habitat. The Local Plan also details requirements with respect to ensuring an integrated network of green infrastructure.
- 31 The NDP contains a number of policies which aim to protect Docking's environment. **Policy 1** identifies green ecological corridors, based on environmental data gathered for the parish. These should be preserved and may support the delivery of BNG, where this has to be delivered on site or off site. Green ecological corridors can also play a part in the importance of current habitat networks and through policy can set out how any

---

<sup>1</sup> [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>



development along these should be designed to avoid fragmentation or loss of current species present.

## Biodiversity and Green Ecological Corridors



- 32 As set out in Norfolk Wildlife Trust guidance<sup>3</sup> biodiversity should be considered at all levels of planning and plays an important component of the green infrastructure of a local area, along with footpaths, allotments, and open green space. Every public body including town and parish councils have a duty to conserve biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). Government Guidance on this Act includes recommendations to identify local sites of importance for biodiversity and to protect and enhance biodiversity within the management of local authority land holdings.
- 33 As part of developing the NDP green ecological corridors have been identified to connect areas of wildlife habitat across the Parish. Each green ecological corridor will be a focus for the community and landowners to increase biodiversity and connectivity, for example by planting more trees and hedges, by allowing grassland areas to grow wilder, and by installing features like bird and bat boxes. Green ecological corridors can also play a part in the importance of current habitat networks and through policy can set out how any development along these should avoid fragmentation or loss of current species present. The corridors will also be a guiding tool for applicants addressing BNG where it is not feasible to deliver improvements on site. Further information and evidence gathered can be read in the **Docking Green Ecological Corridors Paper**.
- 34 The green ecological corridors in **Figure 5** and shown on the **Policies Map in Appendix A** have been identified after gathering the below evidence (as shown in **Figure 6** or the **Docking Green Ecological Corridors Paper**):
- Analysing data shared by the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service (NBIS) including the number of species recorded over the years (1840-2024).
  - Analysing data by NBIS in the public domain such as the types of species recorded in the parish and the locations these were marked including bees, wasps, ants &

---

<sup>3</sup> [\(biodiversity-factsheet-for-neighbourhood-plans-\(re.aspx\) \(norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk\)\)](https://norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/biodiversity-factsheet-for-neighbourhood-plans-(re.aspx))



sawflies, birds, butterflies & moths, fungi, lichen & slime moulds, mammals, other invertebrates, plants, reptiles, and amphibians. NBIS also included details on the different trees and hedgerows present in the parish and a living map of the different types of habitat such as arable land or grassland.

- Explored if there were any international, national, or locally designated sites present in the parish, for example county wildlife sites. Shape files were downloaded from open-source data via Natural England and Norfolk County Council.
- Explored where public rights of way currently exist in the parish and if these link up to areas where locally important habitats and species are present since it is important to consider recreational pressure in these areas from walkers and animals.
- Gathered details taken by locals such as a bird list to understand current species in the parish.
- An initial community survey was conducted in May 2024 to find out current residents and business owners' viewpoints on the importance of the natural environment. In Q13, respondents were asked what ideas they have in improving the natural environment within the parish. 141 people answered this free text question. Suggestions included but were not limited to have areas for wildlife, protect and manage the frogs, maintain village ponds/green spaces and create wildlife corridors to link with other settlements and organisations sympathetic to sustainable land management.

- 35 The green ecological corridors link key blocks of habitat and species in Docking, identifying where there is likely to be best opportunity for improved ecological connectivity if development comes forward.
- 36 In addition to wildlife benefits, green corridors can be combined with other uses such as footpaths, which means there would also be benefits for residents and visitors in Docking. Spending time close to nature is good for people's health physically and mentally and improving these Green Ecological Corridors could bring opportunities for people to enjoy further green areas through recreation on publicly accessible land or through assisting with conservation activities.
- 37 In Norfolk there is the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Local Nature Recovery Strategies in England are a new approach to restoring and protecting nature. They are part of a nationwide move to create space for nature to thrive and are a requirement of the Environment Act 2021. The LNRS will aim to identify opportunities and priorities for nature restoration across Norfolk and will map where valuable areas for nature are currently located, where new or improved areas could bring most benefit and how they can be created and connected to the wider environment.
- 38 The draft Norfolk Local Habitat Map showed that there was a number of areas within Docking which could become of particular importance for Biodiversity<sup>4</sup>. Reasons given include but are not limited to restoring and enhancing the current habitats through

---

<sup>4</sup> [Norfolk Local Habitat Map](#)

appropriate management, improving water quality, supporting community projects for pond development/maintenance and buffer existing trackways. The sites mapped included areas adjacent to the green ecological corridors we have mapped locally for Docking.

### **Policy 1: Biodiversity and Green Ecological Corridors**

**Development proposals where relevant should give consideration to Design Code DC.19 “Biodiversity and Wildlife” in the Docking Design Codes and Guidance Report (2024).**

#### **Biodiversity**

**Development proposals that will deliver biodiversity net gain greater than the mandatory 10% will be supported and considered to deliver a planning benefit.**

**Development proposals within or adjacent to areas occupied by Priority Habitats<sup>5</sup> should demonstrate they will not have an adverse impact on these habitats and will retain or enhance these areas as part of the development process. The use of buffer zones around sensitive sites will be supported<sup>6</sup>.**

**New built development proposals, excluding householder applications, should take opportunities to improve the continuity of existing habitats, such as hedgerows and trees, to create safe corridors of movement with good continuity and cover for wildlife moving through the local landscape.**

#### **Green Ecological Corridors**

**The Plan identifies a series of green ecological corridors in Figure 5 and proposed developments within or adjacent to these corridors should:**

- **Demonstrate an improvement in habitat connectivity by enhancing or restoring the function of the corridor to help increase biodiversity and other environmental benefits; and**
- **Demonstrate the way in which it will incorporate suitable mitigation for any aspects of the proposed scheme which would reduce the ability of wildlife to move through the corridor, including barriers like buildings and hard surfaces, redirecting water courses, adding artificial lighting, and insensitive management of habitats e.g. hedge cutting in the bird breeding season.**

---

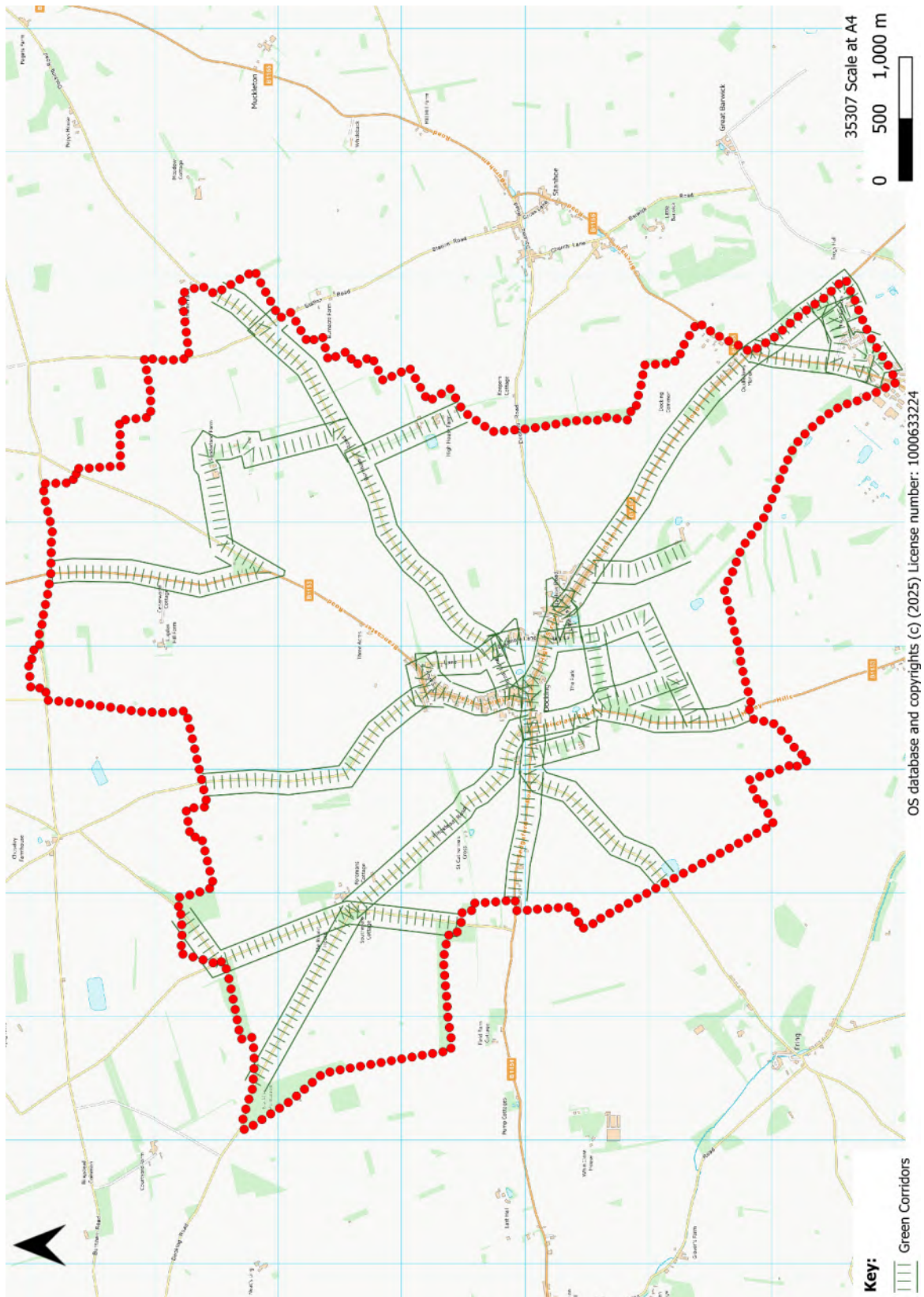
<sup>5</sup> Priority Habitats are those defined and mapped in the Priority Habitats Inventory England which were first identified as priority habitats and species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

<sup>6</sup> Sensitive sites would include priority habitats, county wildlife sites or other natural environmental designations.

## **Community Action 1: Local Action to Encourage Wildlife and Improve Local Habitats**

**The Parish Council will work with the local community, landowners and relevant stakeholders to encourage action to enhance habitat and wildlife in public and private areas including gardens. This may include activities to encourage insect friendly planting, bird, and bat boxes, making the most of compost and encouraging wild patches. In relation to this, priority will be to work with local landowners to improve habitat for wildlife within the green corridors.**

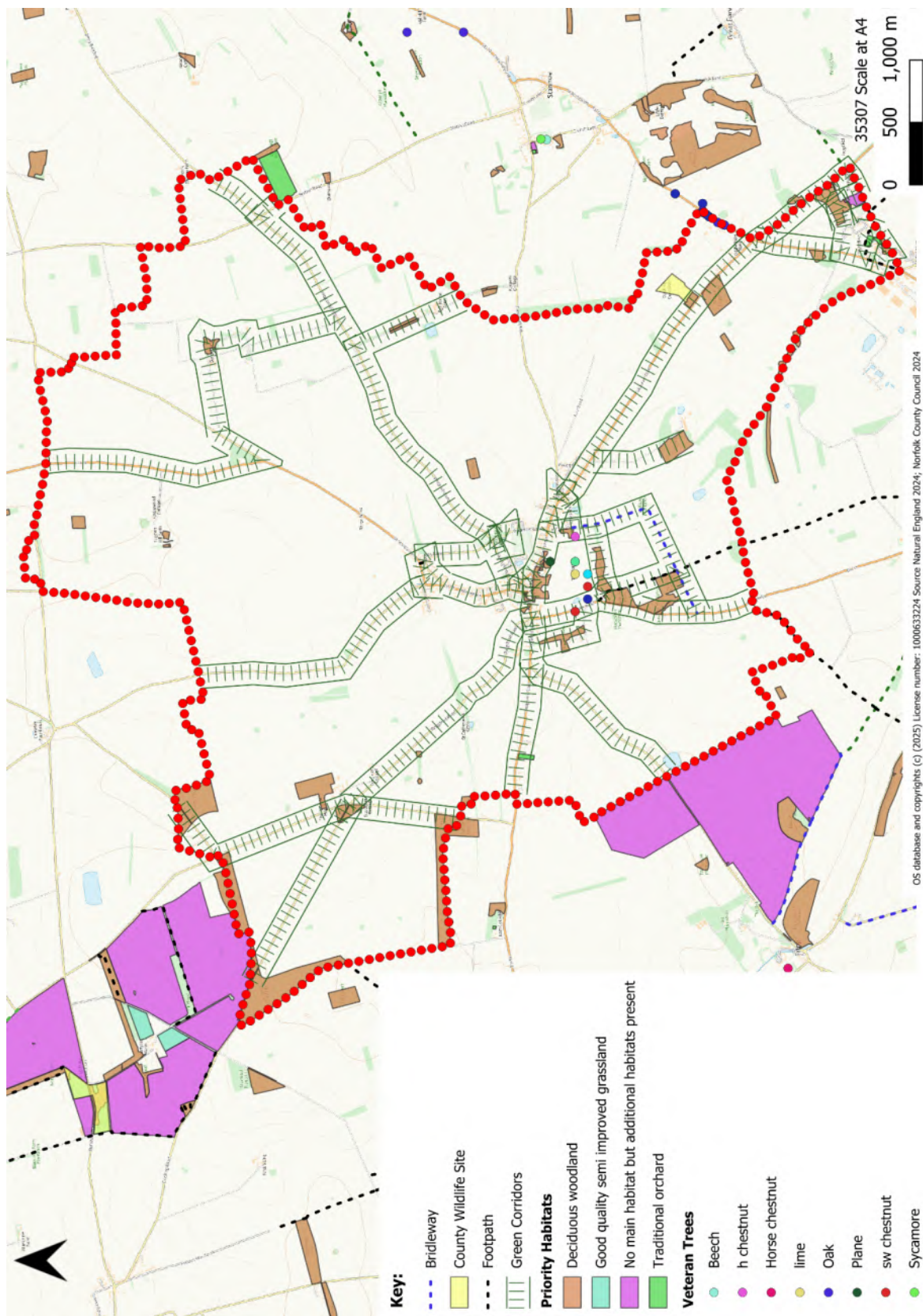
**In public areas actions will be investigated including less frequent mowing, pond maintenance and planting trees, which may include setting up volunteer groups.**



**Figure 5- Green Corridors<sup>7</sup>**

The Green Corridors Document includes larger scale maps of the area.





**Figure 6- Green Corridors Key Habitats (Source: Natural England, 2024 and Norfolk County Council, 2024)**



## Trees



- 39 As stated in the NPPF (December 2024) planning policies should contribute to enhancing the natural environment by recognising the wider benefits from natural capital such as trees and woodland. NPPF para 136 identifies that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of environments and help mitigate and adapt to climate change such as providing shade and cover. National policy states that local planning policies should ensure that existing trees are retained where possible and that new development should take the opportunity to incorporate trees in developments and guarantee appropriate measures are taken to secure long-term maintenance of newly planted trees.
- 40 The Local Plan states how proposals should protect and enhance our landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity and goes on to state developments should seek to avoid, mitigate, or compensate for adverse impacts on biodiversity. However, trees and hedgerows are not specifically mentioned.
- 41 Trees in Docking have a range of functions such as contributing towards amenity value and supporting biodiversity. According to NBIS data there are 12 recorded Veteran Trees in Docking which mainly consist of Oak Trees as well as Chestnut, Lime, Plane and Sycamore. Most of the Veteran trees are within the Conservation Area or on the designated boundary along Bircham Road. There are only two Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) in Docking because of the extent of the conservation area within the parish. These TPOs sit on the edges of the recently built out new estates including Pound Lane ([2/TPO/00551](#)) and within Blenheim Place ([2/TPO/00582](#)).
- 42 An initial community survey in May 2024 was conducted to find out current residents and business owners' viewpoints on the importance of the natural environment. In Q12, the majority of respondents said they strongly agreed/agreed that it is important to protect existing habitats such as trees and hedgerows (89.5% or 179 people). With this response in mind, it was considered useful to provide a policy specifically on trees and hedgerows within the NDP.

- 43 As stated in environmental guidance such as CPRE<sup>8</sup> or the Woodland Trust<sup>9</sup>, neighbourhood plan policies could consider having criteria to address protecting existing trees and woodlands. In the Woodland Trust guidance, it is suggested that in order to go above and beyond standard policies, neighbourhood plans could set a specific requirement that trees are replaced on a 2 to 1 or 3 to 1 ratio. A key recommendation by Norfolk Wildlife Trust is to plant 2-3 trees to replace every tree that is removed. However, this is not suitable for ancient woodland or veteran trees as these are irreplaceable and there are a few veteran trees present in the parish. This was an important point to consider to aim to better the environment when replacement planting has to occur for every tree felled by development.
- 44 The Local Authority does not currently have an adopted policy regarding replacement trees meeting a specific requirement so we feel adding this detail for Docking would be beneficial on a local level.

## Policy 2: Trees

**Development proposals where relevant should give consideration to Design Code DC.17 “Conserve and enhance existing green and blue infrastructure” in the Docking Design Codes and Guidance Report (2024).**

### Existing Trees

**Existing trees and hedgerows on development sites should be considered throughout the design process. Development proposals, excluding householder applications, should be informed by an Arboricultural Survey addressing existing trees. Wherever possible, existing trees should be protected, without damage or loss of value, particularly those which demonstrate good arboricultural biodiversity value.**

### Replacement Trees

**Where there is an unavoidable loss of trees on site, the number and type of replacement trees should be informed by the quality and size of the lost trees.**

**Replacement trees must be native British species of local provenance. Developers should ensure local ecological connectivity is maintained and sufficient space is made available on the development site for this unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.**

**Developers should replace trees on a 2 to 1 ratio requirement unless robust evidence suggests this would make the scheme economically unviable.**

### New Trees

**New tree planting, in development proposals and throughout the built and natural environments of the Plan area, will be supported to maintain and increase the overall tree canopy cover of the Neighbourhood Area, and to provide gateway and landmark**

<sup>8</sup> [CPREZLandscapeZZNeighbourhoodZPlanningZtextZonly.pdf](#)

<sup>9</sup> [How to create a neighbourhood plan - Woodland Trust](#)

## **Policy 2: Trees**

**trees that contribute to local distinctiveness. This should be informed by relevant ecology and arboricultural assessment.**

## Local Green Spaces



- 45 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that specific areas of land that are demonstrably special to the local community may be protected against development through designation as Local Green Space (LGS). These are often found within the built-up area and contribute to the character of a settlement. These can vary in size, shape, location, ownership, and use, but such spaces will have some form of value to the community and help define what makes that specific settlement what it is.
- 46 In Q14 of the initial consultation survey (May 2024), respondents were asked about green spaces in the parish that they would like to see protected. Answers could be given for each choice. 191 people answered this question with the majority of people wishing to see all options listed in the table as protected. 86 respondents left comments on other green spaces they would like to see protected. This was a free text question box under Q14. Most who answered supported the idea of protecting green space. Some respondents gave specific suggestions for spaces to protect which are listed below. The spaces that were mentioned multiple times were: Oak Tree Triangle, The Pound, and the village ponds. **Further detail and justification of the green spaces can be read in the Local Green Space Assessment.**

**The Neighbourhood Plan could identify local green spaces within the Parish these could have recreational, wildlife or historic value. What areas, if any, of existing green space would you like to see protected in the Parish?**

Answer Choice		Yes	No	Not sure	Response Total
1	Allotments	174	6	7	187
2	Bayfield green space next to the surgery	143	18	23	184
3	Church memorial grounds	170	6	9	185
4	Docking fishing pond in Little Lane	176	8	3	187
5	Grove Field in Mill Lane/Little Lane	141	15	23	179







The Neighbourhood Plan could identify local green spaces within the Parish these could have recreational, wildlife or historic value. What areas, if any, of existing green space would you like to see protected in the Parish?					
6	Old Recreation Ground, Station Road	141	8	30	179
7	Playing field	177	3	2	182
8	The Park at Docking Hall	144	12	22	178
Are there any other green spaces you value?					86
<b>answered</b>					<b>191</b>


**Figure 7- Q14 Response from the Initial Consultation Survey**





47 A robust process has been followed to determine which green spaces within Docking should be designated:

- Initial ideas were suggested by the community as part of consultation activities in May 2024. These were reviewed to consider at a glance whether they would meet the national criteria for designation.
- An assessment against the national criteria for LGS was made for each of the potential areas.
- Landowners were contacted via letter in the early stages of plan preparation before the Regulation 14 Consultation to make them aware that their land was being considered for local green space designation. Letters were sent out in September 2024 to invite them to make representations at the pre-submission stage or beforehand if they wished;
- After the Regulation 14 consultation, responses received by landowners were considered in relation to the green spaces proposed. Their representations and the Steering Groups responses can be read in the Consultation Statement. It was agreed to remove or amend some of the green spaces in light of the comments. The Local Green Space Assessment 2025 document sets out these revisions.
- A final decision was made by the Parish Council as to which green spaces should be designated for the final submission document.





48 This Neighbourhood Plan designates **16** Local Green Spaces for protection, these are identified in **Figure 9** and on the **Policies Map in Appendix A**. These are important not only due to the recreational value they provide but also due to their historic significance in the parish and for the wildlife they support.




LGS	Photo
<b>LGS1- Allotments , North of Burnham Road and East of Sandy Lane</b>	
<b>LGS2- Village Pond, West on Bradmere Lane</b>	
<b>LGS3- Burial Ground, North of Pound Lane</b>	
<b>LGS4- Old Recreation Field, Station Road</b>	

LGS	Photo
<b>LGS5- Village Pond, West on Station Road</b>	
<b>LGS6- Field of Dreams, rear of Docking Church of England Primary and Nursery School</b>	
<b>LGS7- Village Pond, West of Chequer Street</b>	
<b>LGS8- Docking Village Sign Green Space North of High Street and South of Well Street</b>	

LGS	Photo
<b>LGS9- Recreation Ground, West of Bradmere Lane</b>	
<b>LGS10- Bowling Green, North of the High Street</b>	
<b>LGS11-Bayfield Pond, North of the High Street</b>	
<b>LGS12-Grove Field, Mill Lane</b>	



LGS	Photo
<b>LGS13- Pond North of Stanhoe Road</b>	
<b>LGS14- Greenspaces within Woodgate Way</b>	  

LGS	Photo
	
<b>LGS15- Play Area within Monks Close</b>	
<b>LGS16- Recreation Ground within Monks Close</b>	

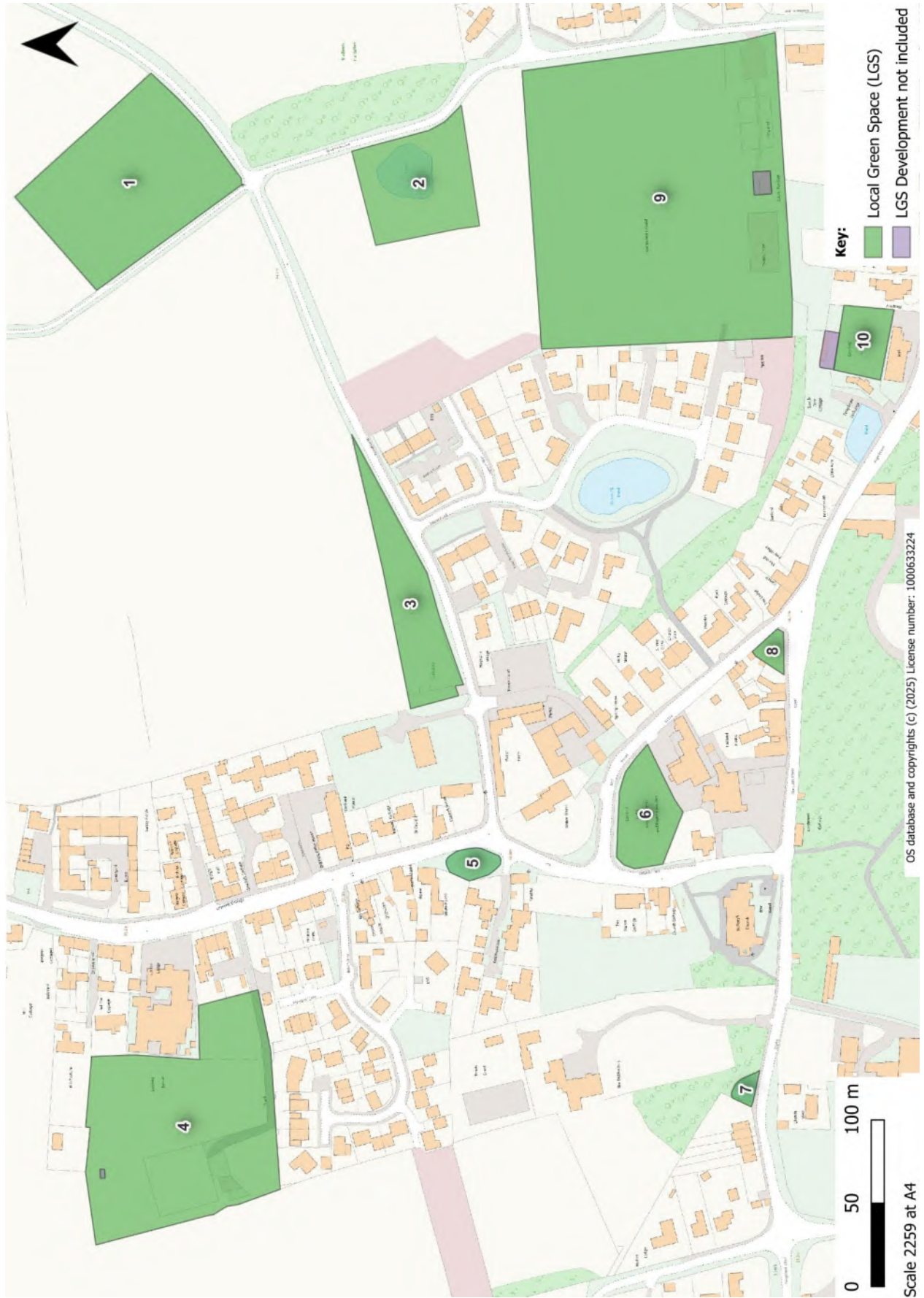
**Figure 8- Local Green Space Photos**

### **Policy 3: Local Green Spaces**

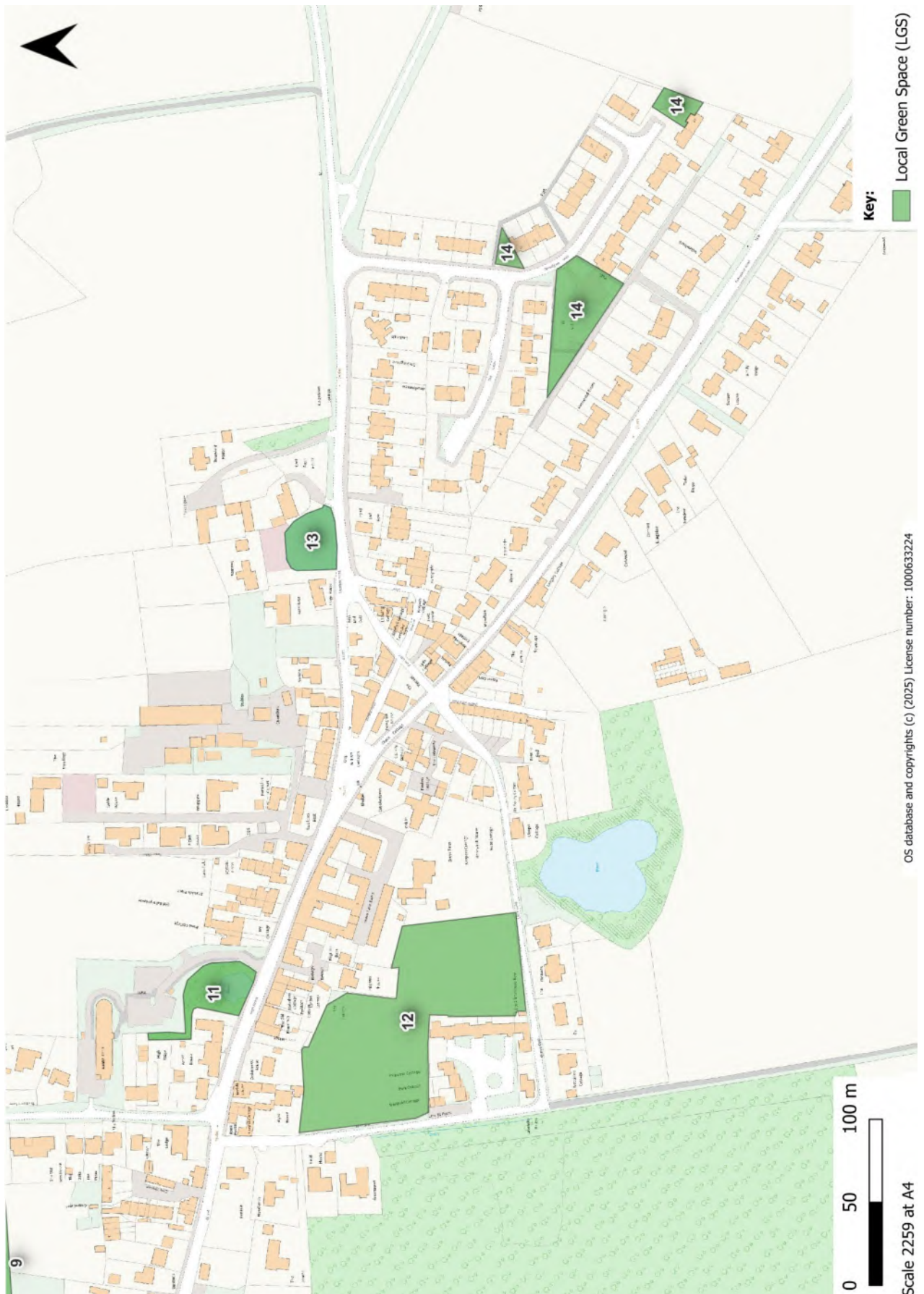
**The areas listed below and shown in Figure 9 are designated as Local Green Spaces:**

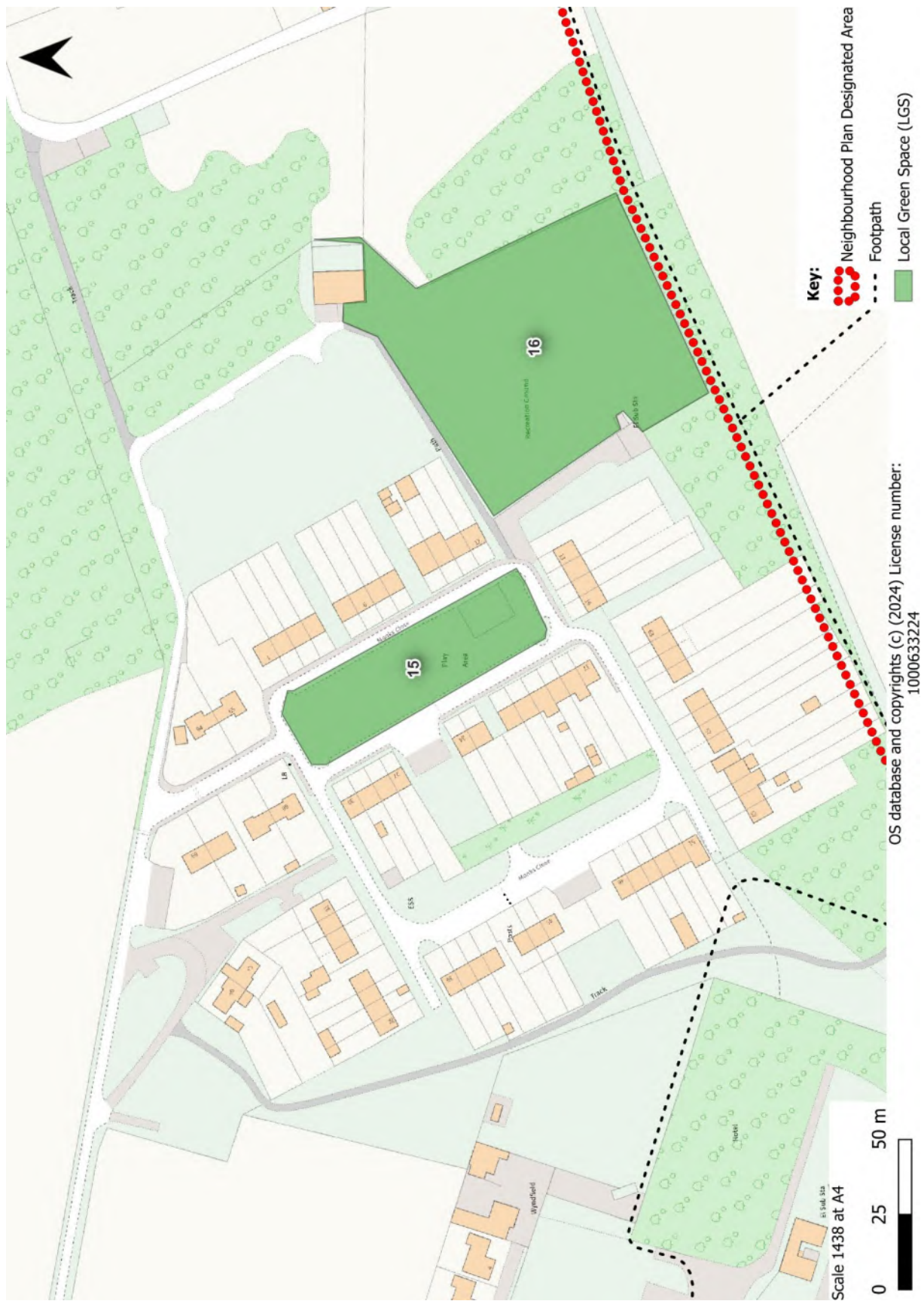
- **LGS1- Allotments , North of Burnham Road and East of Sandy Lane**
- **LGS2- Village Pond, West on Bradmere Lane**
- **LGS3- Burial Ground, North of Pound Lane**
- **LGS4- Old Recreation Field, Station Road**
- **LGS5- Village Pond, West on Station Road**
- **LGS6- Field of Dreams, rear of Docking Church of England Primary and Nursery School**
- **LGS7- Village Pond, West of Chequer Street**
- **LGS8- Docking Village Sign Green Space North of High Street and South of Well Street**
- **LGS9- Recreation Ground, West of Bradmere Lane**
- **LGS10- Bowling Green, North of the High Street**
- **LGS11-Bayfield Pond, North of the High Street**
- **LGS12-Grove Field, Mill Lane**
- **LGS13- Pond North of Stanhoe Road**
- **LGS14- Greenspaces within Woodgate Way**
- **LGS15- Play Area within Monks Close**
- **LGS16- Recreation Ground within Monks Close**

**Development proposals in the 16 designated Local Green Spaces listed above will be managed in accordance with national policy for Green Belts.**









**Figure 9- Local Green Spaces**



## Important Local Views



- 49 The National Planning Policy Framework indicates that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes recognising the intrinsic character of the countryside. There are some specific views and vistas within Docking NDP area that are of particular importance to the local community. Building on national and local planning policy, Docking NDP identifies these, provides justification for their significance in a supporting assessment, and seeks to protect them for future enjoyment.
- 50 The community were offered the opportunity in Question 15 of the initial survey (May 2024) to identify any views in the village which were considered to be special and worthy of protection in the NDP. 109 people chose to answer with many comments suggesting the views towards Honey Hill, towards the coast and from public paths looking out of the village. Specific views mentioned in the survey included but were not limited to the Church, Docking Hall, High Street, surrounding fields and ponds. All views were reviewed by the Steering Group and further evidence was gathered on a site visit including photographing the views worthy of protection to determine whether they should be included.



*Image: Docking Hall Park*

- 51 Overall, the NDP seeks to protect 10 public locally important views, many of which include local features of the landscape, key buildings, and landmarks in the Parish. Justification for each of the views is provided in **Docking's NDP Views Assessment** document. The intention is not to stop development within these views, but to ensure

that their distinct character is retained. Development within the views listed in **Policy 4** that are overly intrusive or prominent will not be supported. Any proposals within these views will need to demonstrate that they are sited, designed and of a scale that does not significantly harm them.

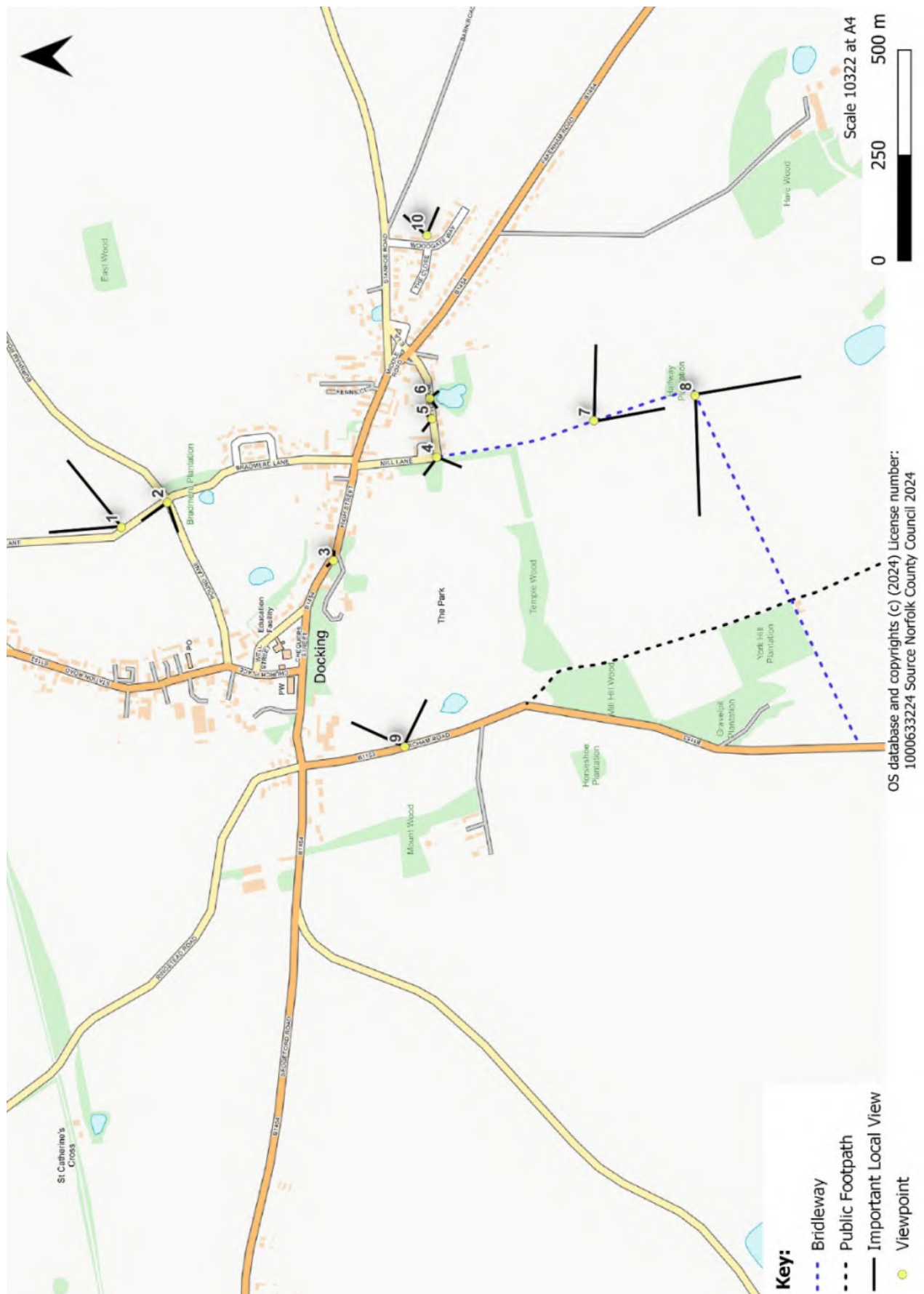
#### **Policy 4: Protection of Important Local Views**

**The following 10 views, shown in Figure 10 and described in Docking's Views Assessment are identified as important public local views:**

- **View 1: View from looking north from Sandy Lane towards the sea**
- **View 2: Views looking north from Pound Lane**
- **View 3: View looking north along the High Street**
- **View 4: View of The Park looking west at the rear of Docking Hall along Mill Lane**
  
- **View 5: View of Grove Field looking north along Little Lane**
- **View 6: View looking south from Little Lane towards Docking Fishing Lake**
- **View 7: View looking south from Mill Lane Bridleway towards Halfway Plantation and Hare Wood**
- **View 8: View looking west along the Bridleway towards Honey Hills Road**
- **View 9: View looking east from Bircham Road towards Docking Hall and St Mary's Church**
- **View 10: View looking east from Woodgate Way towards Stanhoe**

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





**Figure 10- Important Local Views**

## Dark Skies



10

- 52 The NPPF (December 2024) notes how planning policies should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location considering effects of pollution (including light pollution) that could arise from the development on site and with its wider surroundings. In paragraph 191 Clause C planning policies and decisions should: *“limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation”*<sup>11</sup>. Guidelines have been created around planning for good exterior lighting which will be relevant for the Dark Skies policy.
- 53 Outdoor lighting should be carefully designed to ensure appropriate placement, duration, colour, and timing. The quote *“more light is not necessarily better light”*<sup>12</sup> is discussed in some detail in the GOV Light Pollution Guidance and Dark Sky Society (2020) paper in relation to promoting safety. Where light fixtures give off an unsafe glare it can result in reduced visibility and accidents on the road and streets, especially when vision is readapting to darker areas<sup>13</sup>. Examples of fixture types that can be used to reduce glare and light trespassing in the night sky include:
- Fully shielded fixtures (enclosed in full cut off or canopy fixtures);
  - Lighting which is directed downwards.
  - Using energy efficient bulbs/low light levels such as white LED, metal halide or fluorescent sources.
  - Controlled lighting on timers, motion detectors when needed including no dusk to dawn lights<sup>14</sup>.
  - Using warmer colour lights such as yellow where possible avoiding blue, or ultraviolet content as these are generally more disruptive to humans and wildlife.
- 54 The CPRE Dark Skies Mapping<sup>15</sup> shows the majority of the NDP designated area which is not built-up falls into the dark-darkest categories with very little light pollution. However, the built-up settlement of Docking has bright night lights (**Figure 11**). Brightness from lights may have also increased in Docking since the CPRE dark skies map

<sup>10</sup> Images taken at nighttime within the Parish including on a night where the Aurora light display was visible on camera

<sup>11</sup> [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

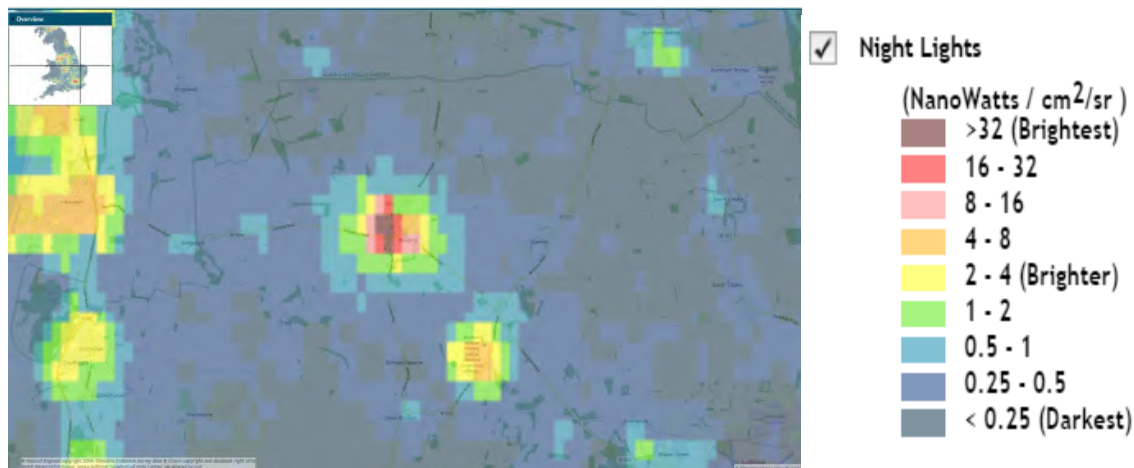
<sup>12</sup> [Light pollution - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

<sup>13</sup> [LightingPlanGuidelines.pdf \(darkskysociety.org\)](https://darkskysociety.org)

<sup>14</sup> [Towards-A-Dark-Sky-Standard-V1.1.pdf \(southdowns.gov.uk\)](https://southdowns.gov.uk)

<sup>15</sup> [England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies \(cpre.org.uk\)](https://cpre.org.uk)

was published, three new estates have been built within the parish as detailed in the housing section of the **Docking Evidence Base Paper**. In the initial consultation survey (May 2024) some respondents commented that the dark skies experienced in Docking is something they liked about living in the parish. Some commented that the neighbourhood plan should have a dark skies policy requiring for lights to face downward.

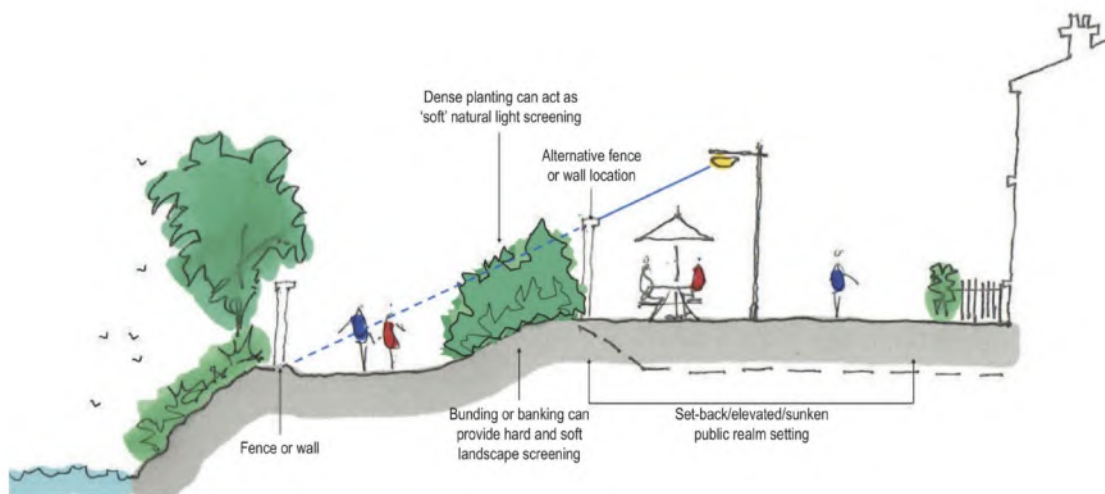


**Figure 11- Dark Skies in Docking (Source: CPRE, 2024<sup>16</sup>)**

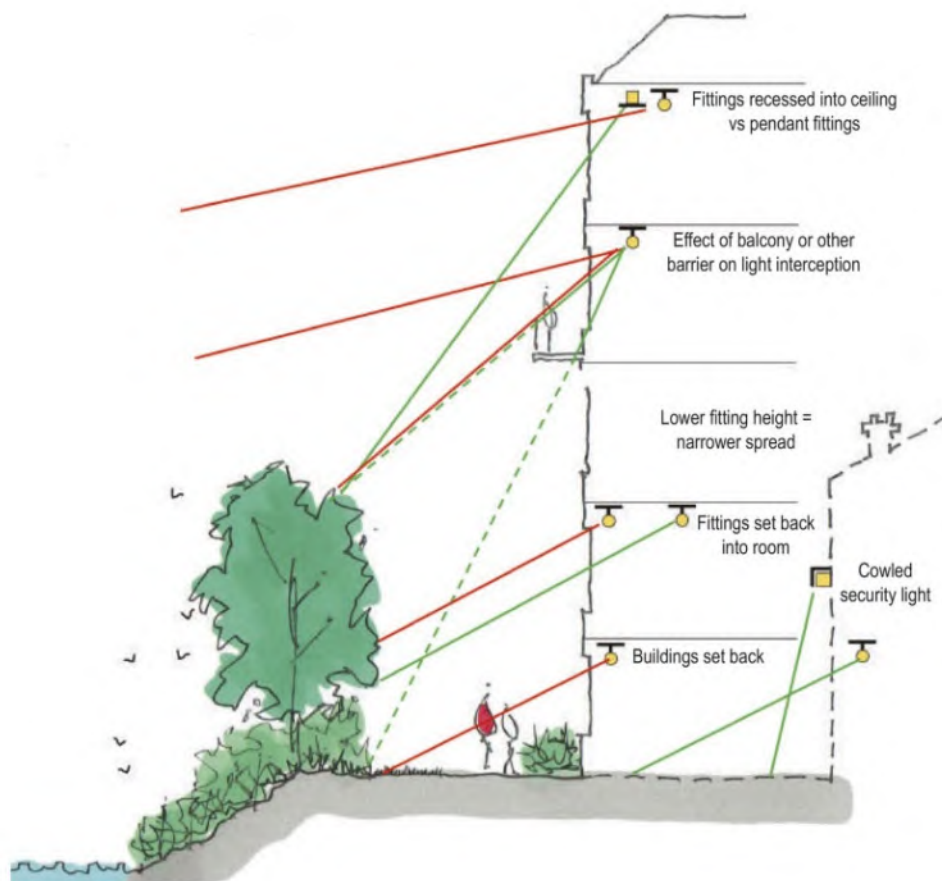
55 Additional intrusive external or internal lights associated with new development could be detrimental to the character of the village, particularly outside of the settlement, and could harm local wildlife such as bats and insects. Useful practice guidance documents have been made in relation to obtrusive lighting which applicants are encouraged to make themselves aware of and review these when developing proposals<sup>17</sup>. The location, height and orientation of new development can have a considerable impact on light spill. Small changes in terms of the placement of windows, open space and footpaths can all help to achieve a better outcome in terms of minimising light spill onto habitats and green areas. Examples of physical light screening options for external or internal lights are shown below from the Institution of Lighting Professional Guidance on Bats.

<sup>16</sup> [England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies \(cpre.org.uk\)](https://cpre.org.uk/)

<sup>17</sup> [Artificial Lighting Guidance - Buildings, planning and development - Bat Conservation Trust \(bats.org.uk\)](https://bats.org.uk/), [layout \(bats.org.uk\)](https://bats.org.uk/) and [Guidance Note 1 for the reduction of obtrusive light 2021 | Institution of Lighting Professionals \(theilp.org.uk\)](https://theilp.org.uk/)



**Figure 12- External lighting mitigation options. Source: Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2023**



**Figure 13- Internal lighting mitigation options. Source: Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2023**

56 It is noted that in many cases external and internal lights fall into permitted development, however, it is possible to influence lighting associated with new

development and the evidence and national guidance on the benefits of sensitive lighting may encourage better design choices by others.

### **Policy 5: Dark Skies**

**Development proposals, which plan to increase the existing footprint on site, should give consideration to Design Code DC.24 “Dark Skies” in the Docking Design Codes and Guidance Report (2024) and demonstrate how they have considered the location, height, and orientation of their development to avoid obtrusive light spill from internal and external fittings.**

**External light proposals should address the following principles:**

- a) Fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fittings).**
- b) Directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards).**
- c) Avoid dusk to dawn lighting by introducing timed motion detectors; and**
- d) Ensure lighting schemes such as LED streetlights will not cause unacceptable levels of light pollution particularly in intrinsically dark areas.**
- e) Use low-energy lamps such as LED, metal halide or fluorescent sources.**

**Proposals including external lighting in prominent locations<sup>18</sup> likely to be visible from the surrounding landscape will not normally be supported except where a requirement can be demonstrated in the interests of safety and security on public footways.**

**Development proposals should demonstrate compliance with best practice guidance for avoiding artificial lighting impacts on bats<sup>19</sup>, birds and other species. Where internal lighting is likely to cause harm to the landscape, or disturbance and risk to wildlife, proposals will be sought for mitigating pollution from internal light sources. Large windows, roof lights and large areas of glazing are particularly relevant in this context.**

---

<sup>18</sup> Prominent locations would include the open rural landscapes or locations with landmarks such as the Church.

<sup>19</sup> <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>



## Design and Heritage



***This section supports delivery of the following NP objective:***

***B. Protect and enhance the local character of Docking, ensuring that new development is of a high-quality design and sensitively located in line with our local design codes and distinctive character areas.***

## Heritage

- 57 Docking's origins stem back to the early medieval period (AD410-1066) where the parish was recorded in the Domesday Book, 1086. St Mary the Virgin Church a distinctive Grade II\* listed landmark in the parish was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. It would have been one of the earliest buildings in the area. Following on from this in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the area saw the beginning of village infrastructure developing with a larger growth of permanent brick and flint houses coming forward. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the construction of larger farmhouses became apparent and improved connectivity to other areas came from the opening of the nearby railway in 1862, which no longer exists.
- 58 In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the village expanded with additional housing developments, such as council houses, particularly at the eastern and northern ends of Docking. Heritage designations from the 20<sup>th</sup> century include defence structures from the First and Second World Wars, in addition to the war memorial in the churchyard. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has incorporated a blend of preserving historical buildings as well as the construction of new homes including three new residential estates.
- 59 The rest of the land in the parish beyond the village settlement is dominated by agricultural fields, with individual farms. The land is also recorded as such on the historic mapping. The fields are mostly recorded as rectilinear shaped on the 19<sup>th</sup> century mapping. A number of these field boundaries have survived with some amalgamation of smaller fields.

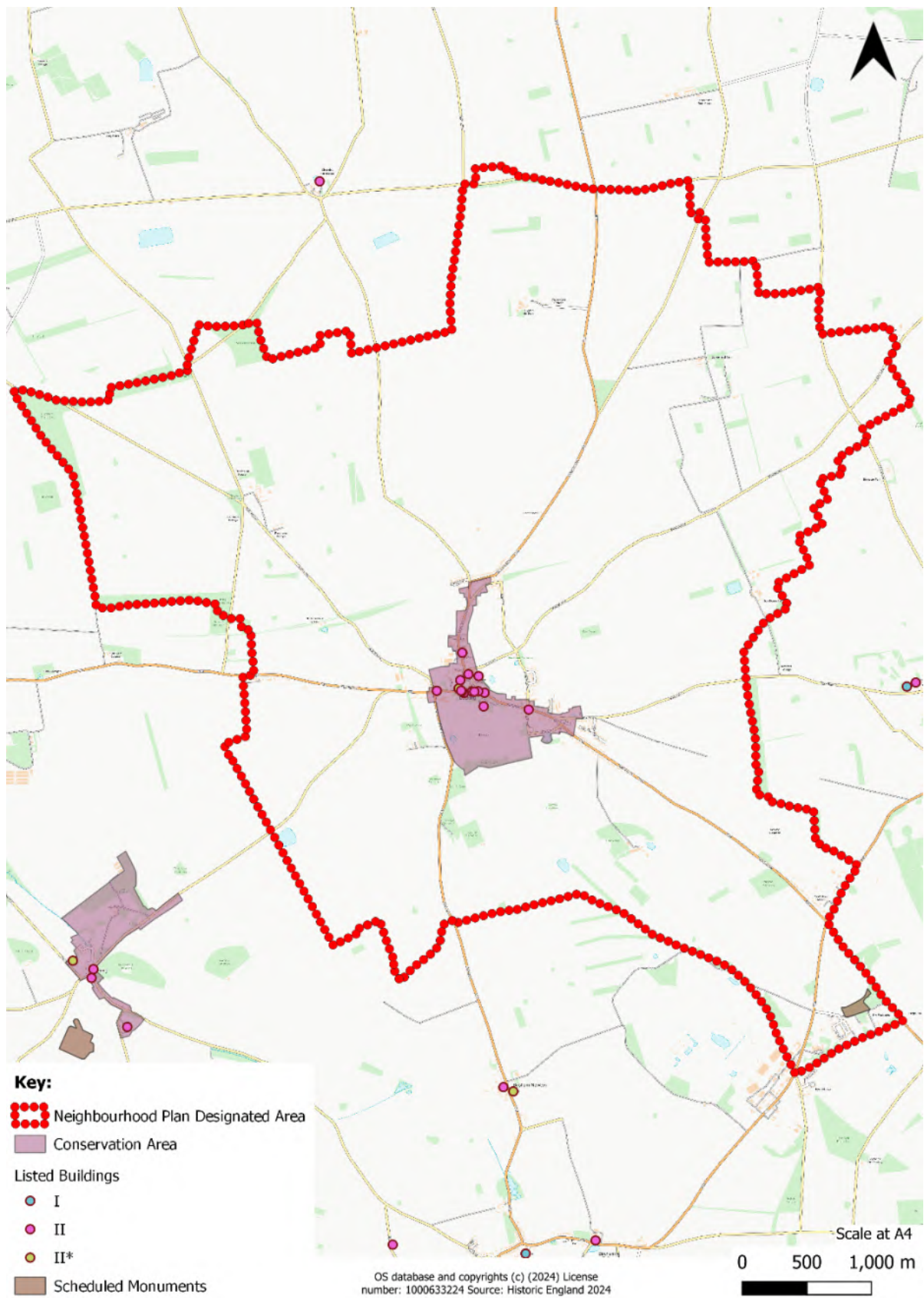
- 60 In the initial consultation survey (May 2024) respondents were asked how important they think it is to protect the heritage of Docking. Almost all respondents (95.8% or 183 people) said they felt that heritage is very important/important. Within Docking there are fifteen listed buildings, all located within the built-up settlement and the Conservation Area. The majority of the listed buildings are Grade II and many of these are situated around Chequers Street and Church Place. One of the listed assets are a pair of Tett Turrets which are very rare and linked by a narrow tunnel and there is one Scheduled Monument which is a Lovat Scouts' First World War training trenches which is north of Monks Close.
- 61 Docking Conservation Area was designated in October 1978 and covers the centre of the village representing the historic core which is recorded on the 19th century Ordnance Survey mapping. The core of the village and street pattern has remained largely unchanged, including the central triangular road pattern of Church Place, Well Street and Chequers Street, as well as Station Road extending to the north and the High Street to the east.
- 62 As stated in the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk wrote a Conservation Area Statement for Docking in 1992<sup>20</sup>, the character overview of Docking is essentially an 'L' shape and follows the linear settlement along Fakenham Road and Station Road. There are a variety of buildings and spaces which add to the character of Docking and fall within the conservation area including the church, school, Docking Hall, Manor Farm, and several other important listed and non-listed buildings. Traditional materials listed include carstone, yellow and red local brick, chalk, flint, orange/red pantile, clay peg tiles, Welsh slate, ashlar limestone and Colourwashed masonry render. One building which wasn't mentioned in the Conservation Area Statement but is considered significant to some residents is the Court on Station Road which was built in 1854 and is a rare example of courthouse, stables, constable's quarters and jail.



*Image: The Old Courthouse (taken July 2025)*

---

<sup>20</sup> [Conservation areas | Conservation areas | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)



**Figure 14- Historic Assets**





***Figure 15-Examples of local buildings***



## Design



- 63 Design is an area where the NDP can have significant influence and is a key aspect in achieving sustainable development. It plays a critical role in shaping better places in which people can live and work. Whilst design covers not just appearance, but how a place functions, the appearance is seen as a critical factor within national policy. As stated in paragraph 131 of the NPPF (December, 2024<sup>21</sup>) *“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.”*
- 64 As set out in the National Design Guide (2021)<sup>22</sup> a well-designed place comes through making the right choices at all levels including layout, form and scale of buildings, appearance, landscape, and materials. Other aspects include the climate, character, and community and the ten characteristics in the National Design Guide reflect the importance of a well-designed place as set out in **Figure 16**.
- 65 NPPF Chapter 12 (December 2024) requires Local Plans to have design policies that have community support and that pick up the defining characteristics of the area. The Government has been raising the importance of high-quality design with the development of national design guides, codes, and policies and encourages NDPs to have their own design policies and codes to identify the special qualities of their areas which should be reflected in development. Although national policy supports development that is sympathetic to the local and historic character of an area, it also encourages innovative design, and high levels of sustainability to support movement towards a carbon zero future. Another national requirement is for poor design to be refused.

---

<sup>21</sup> [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

<sup>22</sup> [National\\_design\\_guide.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



**Figure 16- The Ten Characteristics of a Well-designed Place (National Design Guide, 2021).**

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

67 The Local Plan sets out the expected sustainability criteria to be met by new development, such as construction techniques to improve energy efficiency and good access by walking and cycling. The Local Plan has introduced a sustainability and climate change statement that must be provided as part of certain planning applications. The intention is to promote behavioural change in applicants and thereby encourage greater thought in the design of future developments, whilst at the same time, recognising how

their proposal may meet high levels of sustainable design and construction.

- 68 In relation to sustainable practices the majority of people in Q6 of the initial community survey (May 2024) said that essential factors within the design of new housing or extensions should be incorporating renewable energy (82 people) and rainwater harvesting systems (84 people). As well as this respondents in Q6 stated it was essential for the design of new development to include features that are common within the surrounding area such as local building materials (150 people), provide parking (149 people) and include trees and other planting (139 people). Respondents stated that having car parking that is screened from the street was not important (46 responses).
- 69 In May 2024, AECOM was commissioned to provide high level design support to the Parish Council. This focused on developing design guidelines and codes which could be used to inform the design of future planning applications and developments in Docking. This included a high-level assessment of the neighbourhood area, site visit and meeting with the NDP steering group, and preparation of a bespoke design guide and codes.
- 70 The design guide included area wide design codes which should be considered within the whole parish as well as the identification of seven-character areas within Docking. **Figure 17** is an extract from the Docking Design Guidelines and Codes (AECOM, 2024) and shows the seven distinct character areas being Docking Conservation Area (CA1), Edge Development (CA2), New Estates (CA3), Bircham Newton College Industry Training College (CA4), Residential Area East of B1155 (CA5), Rural Area (CA6) and Open Countryside (CA7). Further detail on these have been summarised below. The guide provides more detailed design codes for each character area.

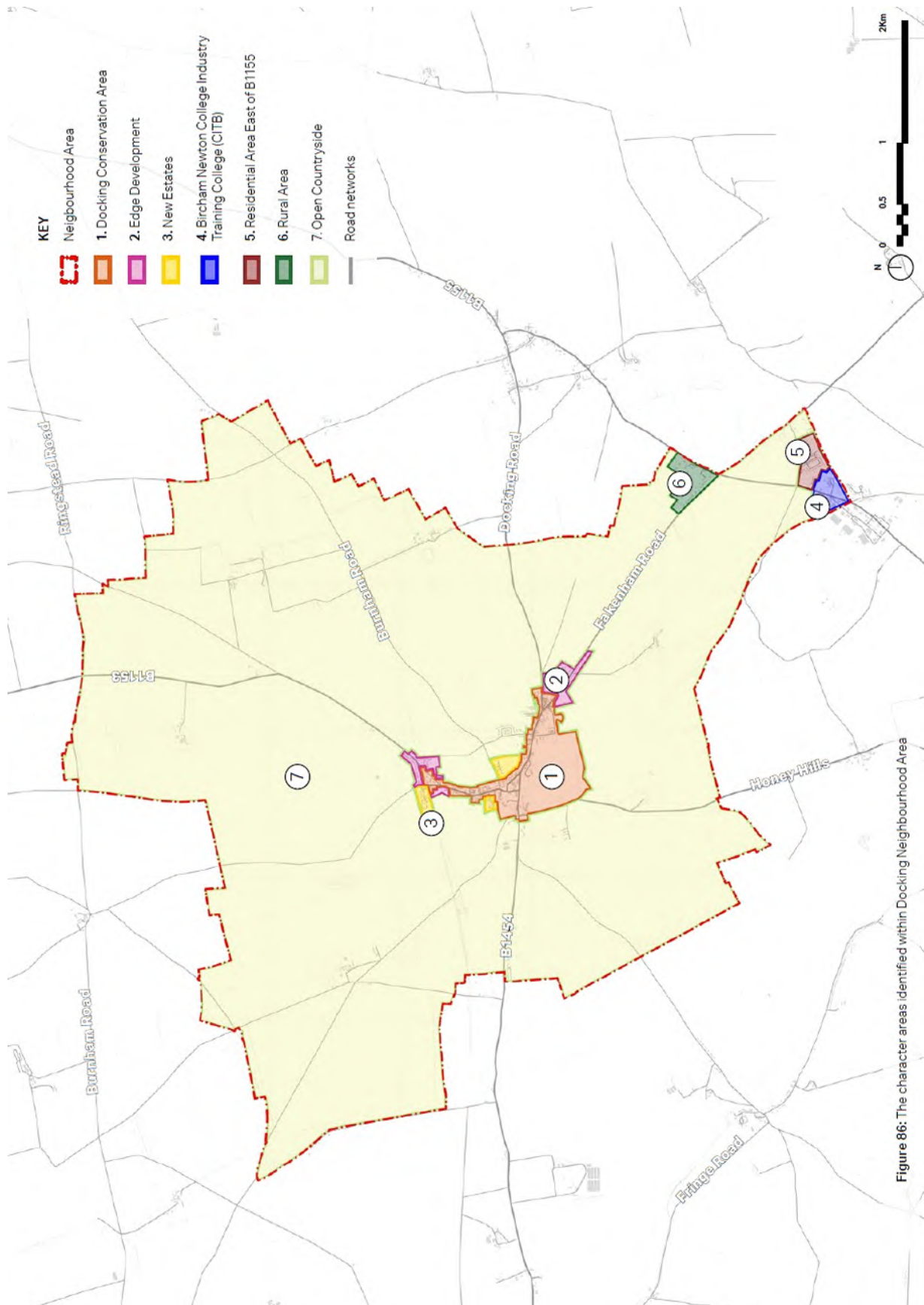


Figure 86: The character areas identified within Docking Neighbourhood Area

Figure 17-Docking Character Areas (AECOM 2024)



### **CA1- Docking Conservation Area**

The Docking Conservation Area is the historic core of the village. Radiating outwards from St Mary's Church, this character area includes development off Station Road. The current density is approx. 20 dwellings per hectare (dph) and there are high levels of enclosure in the area with short setbacks from the street. The layout of the area is a strict linear settlement pattern with some informal low-density housing and setbacks are typically narrow with most properties fronting directly onto the roadway. The typology mix includes detached, semi-detached and terrace houses which are mainly 2 storeys high with open gable roofs or hipped roofs. Materials visible in the area include flint (rubble, knapped or galleted styles), carstone, red and yellow brick, orange/red pantiles and blue/black glazed pantiles. There are mixed boundary treatments such as flint and red brick walls, timber fencing are encouraged, and iron railings should be avoided.

### **CA2- Edge Development**

Edge Development consists of clusters of linear development off Fakenham Road, Stanhoe Road and Brancaster Road that sit outside the designated Conservation Area on the edge of the settlement area. These areas are visible on approach to the village centre. The current density is approx. 20 dwellings per hectare (dph) and the area has low levels of enclosure. The layout of the area is currently irregular cul de sac developments and future setbacks should allow for a front garden and on-plot parking with an irregular building line and soft edge. The typology is a mix of detached and semi-detached houses which are 2 storeys with open gable roofs and hipped roofs. Materials include flint, clay brown tile, red pantile, brown and red brick and soft boundary treatments (low hedges, treelines).

### **CA3- New Estates**

This character area comprises the three recently permitted schemes; Manor Road (Heartwood), Bakers Way (Blenheim Place), and Sandringham Avenue (Four Miles). The density of the new estates varies, whilst the AECOM report states the current density is approx. 20-25 dwellings per hectare (dph), the calculation works out to be that Four Miles is 27.5 dph, Blenheim Place is 24dph, and Heartwood is 9.5dph. The street enclosures also vary in the new estates. The layout of the area is irregular and sinuous/flowing with no defined setbacks. The typology is a mix of detached and semi-detached houses which are 1-2 storeys with open gable roofs and some scope for hipped roofs in future development. Materials include slate tile, red pantile, timber cladding, white render, red brick and there are various boundary treatments, but hedges, treelines and informal planting is common.

### **CA4- Bircham Newton CITB**

The site was first used during the First World War. The site served many military functions until its closure in 1962. In 1966 the site opened as a training centre for the construction industry. Today it is the location for the National Construction College

East. Current density is low and there is a low street enclosure allowing for far reaching views. The layout of the area has a functional inter-linking grid layout with warehouses and college buildings set within expansive grounds with a gridded road system. Setbacks are expansive with two-story brick buildings fronting the B1155 separated with a grass verge and the typology is administrative, residential and light industrial warehouses. Buildings are 2-3 storeys with open gable and flat roofs and materials present include slate, white render, gault, red and brown brick. There are no defined boundary treatments, but the site is open with a verge/open grass areas.

#### **CA5- Residential Area East of B1155**

This character area comprises the Range Farm glamping site, The old Birches conference centre and residential development on Monks Close. It has a relationship with the adjoining Bircham Newton College Industry Training College Character Area. The current density in this Character area is approx. 19 dph with low levels of enclosure allowing for far reaching views towards the open hinterland. The layout of the area is permeable development made up of a series of houses overlooking a square greenspace and setback is consistent with a strong edge building line with groups of neighbouring dwellings. The typology is terraced and semi-detached properties which are 2 storeys high with open gable, hipped or dormer roofs. Materials include clay tile, white render, red and brown brick and softer boundary treatments (shrubs/hedges).

#### **CA6- Rural Area**

This character area comprises isolated linear development centred along the B1155 and B1454 junction. Current density is low (5 dph) with low street enclosures of extensive setbacks, low building heights and flat topography allowing for far reaching views. The layout of the area is linear settlement patterns with various setbacks and a slightly irregular building line without a strong edge. The typical typology is a mix of detached buildings, bungalows and barns which are 1-2 storeys high with open gable and hipped roofs. Materials include slate tiles, clay tile, red pantile, white render, gault and brown brick and softer boundary treatments (shrubs/hedges).

#### **CA7- Open Countryside**

The expansive undeveloped parts of the parish, comprising open arable fields, woodlands and standalone farms. The current density is low with less than 5dph. There is a low street enclosure due to expansive setbacks and large open front gardens, and the layout includes isolated pockets of linear development and farmsteads. There are various setbacks and a irregular building line in the area and the typical typology is detached and demi-detached properties on sizeable plots. Most buildings are 1-2 storeys high with open gable and hipped roofs and materials including slate tiles, clay, white render, brown brick and timber cladding. Softer boundary treatments (shrubs/hedges) are present.

- 71 **Policy 6** in this NDP is based on AECOM's detailed design guidance and codes and sets clear expectations for the area. Applicants and officers should make themselves aware of the **Docking Design Codes and Guidelines Report** to see the full detail of the codes when preparing or considering proposals. This report will be used by the parish council to help assess all planning applications to determine their acceptability.

### **Policy 6: Design**

**As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should be consistent with the Docking Neighbourhood Plan Area Wide Design Codes (DC01-DC24) and the relevant character area in which the proposal falls within.**

**There are seven-character areas in Docking:**

- 1. Docking Conservation Area (CA1)**
- 2. Edge Development (CA2)**
- 3. New Estates (CA3)**
- 4. Bircham Newton College Industry Training College (CA4)**
- 5. Residential Area East of B1155 (CA5)**
- 6. Rural Area (CA6)**
- 7. Open Countryside (CA7)**

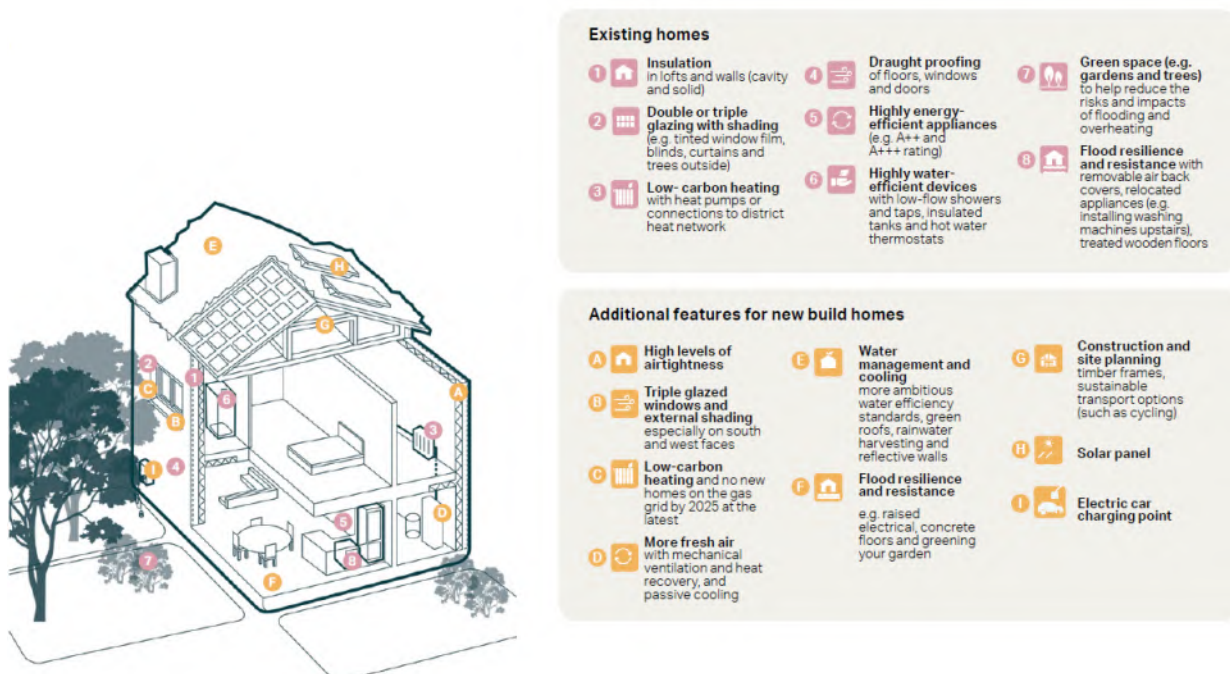
**All development proposals should provide evidence, such as through a Design, Access and Planning Statement, when considering the design codes. The following characteristics in the Docking Design Guide Document are especially important to the area:**

- a) New development proposals are in keeping with the surrounding local character respecting existing patterns of development, low to medium density, building setbacks, historic assets and landmarks (DC01-DC03)**
- b) Suitable access and movement has been considered in line with Design Codes DC04-DC06 such as accessible footpaths, legibility and wayfinding.**
- c) All parking arrangements should have regard to Design Code DC.05 to ensure these features are sensitively designed to suit the street character and onsite parking should use permeable surfacing.**
- d) Consideration should be given to the proposal's relationship with the street and other spaces in line with Design Codes DC07-DC09 and with the distinctive character areas such as having an active frontage with good levels of enclosure and natural surveillance from adjacent buildings.**
- e) Built form and scale have been considered in line with Design Codes DC10-DC14 and the distinctive character areas such as conforming with the surrounding localities pattern, scale, height, massing, spacing and boundary treatments.**

## Policy 6: Design

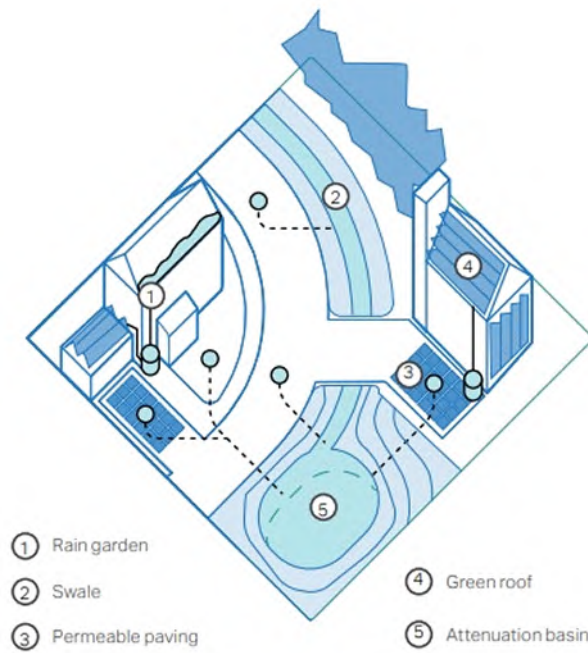
- f) Development proposals for residential conversions and extensions should demonstrate in their application how Design Code DC.13 has been considered.
- g) Architectural detailing and colours of the local vernacular have been considered for the distinctive character areas and reflected in the scheme as set out in Design Codes DC15-DC16. The use of blank facades or buildings which ignore their street or corner frontage should be resisted.
- h) Green and blue infrastructure have been considered in line with Design Codes DC17-DC19 such as providing appropriate garden sizes for the area, preserving existing maturing trees and ensuring new trees are integrated into the design at the offset to increase visual interest.
- i) All development proposals should strive to use sustainable design including energy efficient measures and sustainable drainage systems and consider incorporating sustainable principles in the scheme as set out in Design Codes DC20-DC24. Examples are set out in Figures 18 and 19.

Proposals should demonstrate that development does not result in a detrimental impact on the environment and water infrastructure, including sewers and surface water and other flooding.



**Figure 18-Examples of energy efficient measures from Design Code DC20 (Source AECOM Design Code Document )**





**Figure 19- Examples of Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) from Design Code DC22 (Source AECOM Design Code Document)**

## Housing



***This section supports delivery of the following NP objective:***

- C. Ensure future housing development, including the tenure, mix and number of bedrooms, meets the needs of the local population to help retain residents in Docking.***

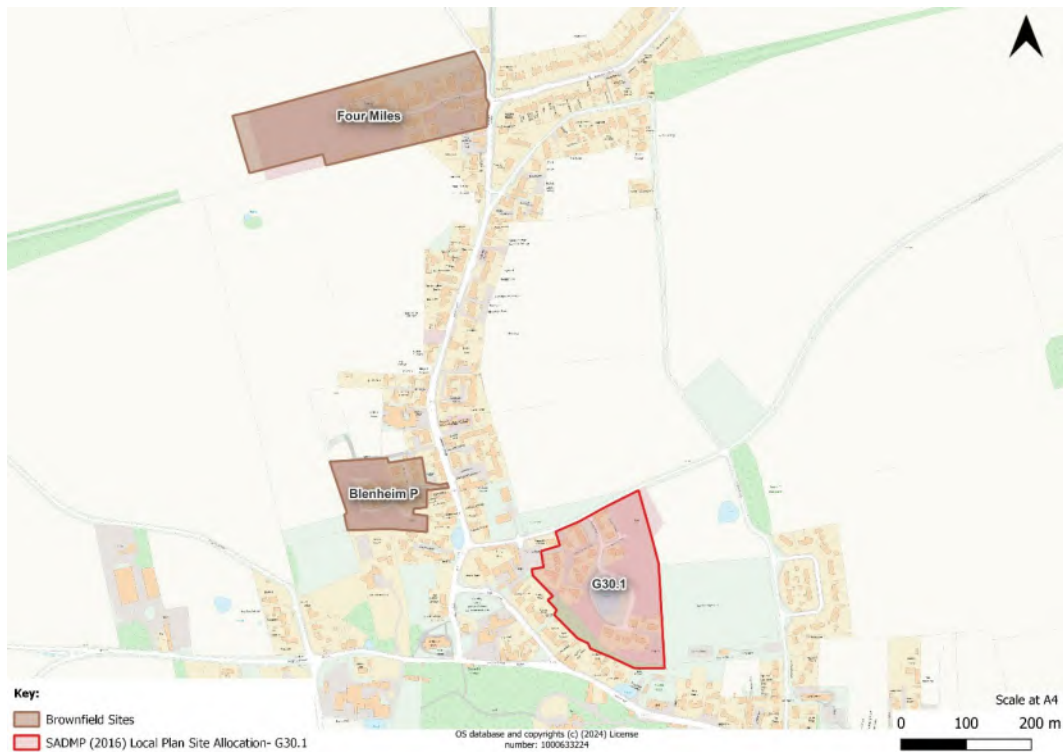
## Housing Mix

72 The NPPF (December 2024) Paragraph 63 requires plans to have policies that meet the housing needs of different demographic groups, such as older people, disabled people, families, self-builders etc, which provides an opportunity to include a Policy in the NDP that sets out specific detail for the local housing mix that is expected from new residential development<sup>23</sup>. In Q4 of the initial community survey (May 2024) respondents were asked if the NDP should have a policy which provides guidance on the type and size of new homes that may be built in the parish. This question received support with 80% (152 people) of 190 respondents answering there should be a policy in the NDP on housing mix.

73 According to the Census 2021 the current population of the parish is approximately 1,100 with a high proportion of the usual resident population being of typical working age (25-64 yrs). In the last ten years there has also been an increase in the age group 75+ years. However, the population number will have risen, and age groups may have differed since the Census 2021 data release due to the completion of new homes on three estates, Heartwood formerly Manor Pasture, the site allocation G30.1 on Pound Lane, and two estates on brownfield sites named Four Miles and Blenheim Place (**Figure 20**). This development totals 144 new homes, some of which are still to be built out and Blenheim Place in particular has been slow to sell their properties which will include four self-build plots.

---

<sup>23</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). Source: [National Planning Policy Framework](#)



**Figure 20- Three new residential estates in Docking**



**Figure 21- Photos from the various new residential estates (Source: AECOM)**

74 Census 2021 data indicates that nearly half of the parish (44%) is made up of individuals aged 25-64 years followed by 65+ years (32%) and then 0-25yrs (25%). This age profile has remained fairly static over the last ten years since Census 2011, though there has

been a 7% increase of people aged 75+ living in the parish. This highlights that there is a real mix of age groups within the parish we must cater for.

- 75 The Census 2021 data and supporting neighbourhood plan documents (**including the Docking Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (2024) and Evidence Base Paper**) gives detail about Docking's housing profile. As mentioned previously in this NDP, Docking had one site allocated for development in the parish named G30.1 in the now superseded Local Plan (SADMP, 2016) which is now built out and all dwellings sold.
- 76 Outside of this, there have been 61 planning permissions either granted, started, or completed in the last 11 years (2012-2023) in Docking according to housing data supplied by Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk in December 2023 and presented in the **Evidence Base Paper**. The total net gain for the 61 planning permissions is 230 dwellings. 197 dwellings given permission are considered as windfall development, not allocated in the Local Plan. At the point of writing this plan, 45 of the planning permissions have completed (between January 2012 and August 2023), 7 have been started (March 2014- June 2023) and 9 granted (between July 2013 and February 2022). Most of the permissions (43) have been for the construction of new residential properties.
- 77 The HNA (2024) highlights that semi-detached homes are most common in the parish (41%) followed by detached dwellings (34.7%) then terrace (21.6%). As shown in **Figure 23**, the greatest proportion of current dwelling size (bedrooms) in Docking are 3 bedrooms or higher (64.4%). This is also reflected in examples of newer residential developments which have been built out after the Census 2021 data was released. This includes the image in **Figure 22** where 28 out of 33 plots on Heartwood Estate (Site Allocation G30.1) have been sold/reserved for people buying 3 bed or 4 bed properties.
- 78 Understanding household composition (combinations of adults and children in a dwelling) is important for considering Docking housing need and mix. The Census 2021 data and **Figure 23** states that single family households make up around 65.5% of the parish followed by one person households (30.5%) and other household types (4%)<sup>24</sup>. Single family households can include couples or families with dependent or non-dependent children. In 2011 the household composition in Docking was slightly different with one family households making up 67.1% of the parish (+1.6%) and single households 26.1% (-4.4%) followed by other types (6.7%)<sup>25</sup>. This shows there has been a slight increase in the last decade by 4.4% of those living alone which may also relate to the fact the parish has increased in age. The biggest percentage of single-family households in 2021 were couples with dependent children (21.8%), which has been a significant increase since 2011 (12%). This could point to the ability of recent development being larger and attracting more families into the area.

---

<sup>24</sup> Docking. Source: [Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS](#) and AECOM HNA 2024

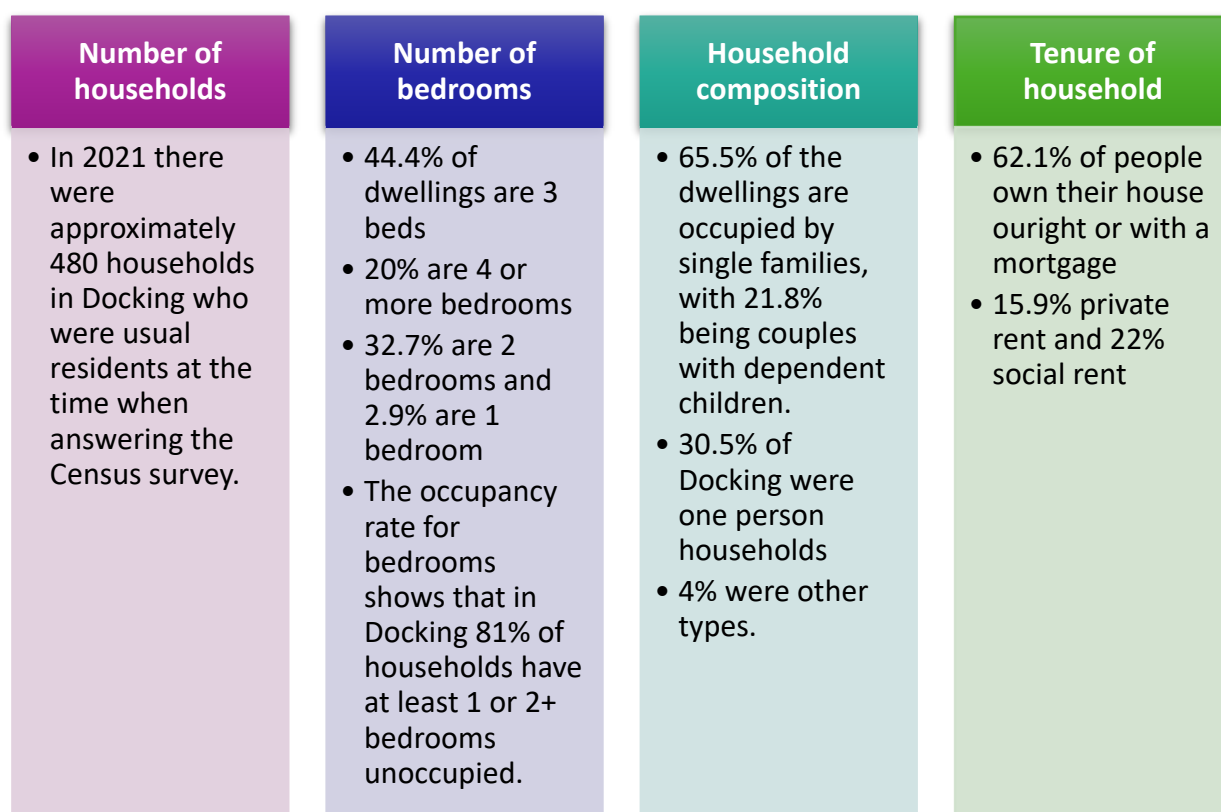
<sup>25</sup> [2011 Census Report for areas in England and Wales - Nomis \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](#)





**Figure 22-Sign of the Heartwood Estate Site Layout and Plot Information (Source: AECOM 2024)**

79 The Census 2021 identifies that 81% of households in Docking are under-occupied with at least one extra bedroom than they would be expected to need. Under occupancy is most common in households with couples over 65 and families without children. This suggests that larger dwellings are not necessarily occupied by households with the most family members but by those with the most wealth or households who are unable (or do not wish to) downsize such as when children leave the family home for example. This could be due to personal choice, or potentially a lack of availability of more suitable property within the parish. The HNA (2024) also states there are very few households with too few bedrooms, but this situation is only apparent among those with dependent or adult children – suggesting that affordability or other difficulties are causing a small number of family households to live in unsuitable accommodation (or again reflecting the unusual timing of the 2021 Census being in the Covid-19 pandemic).



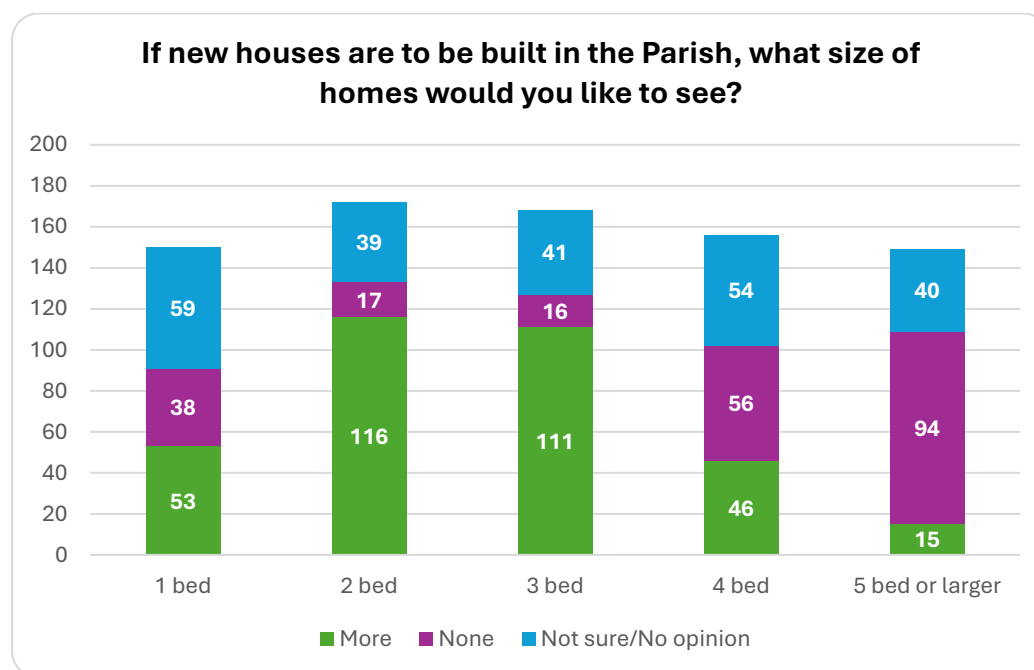
**Figure 23- Docking Housing Profile Overview (Census, 2021)**

80 The Docking HNA (2024) uses a life-stage modelling process to determine likely dwelling mix needed for the future. The life stage (age) of households is strongly correlated with the size of home they tend to occupy. The occupation data is only available at the Local Authority level rather than parish specific, so there could be different preferences, but this is a recognised approach. The projected distributions of households by age in Docking is considered to increase for age groups 65 years and higher moving forward to 2039 rather than younger age groups. The model recommends that future housing delivery offers a range of dwelling sizes but focuses particularly on 1- and 3-bedroom homes up to 2039 to meet projected population requirements as shown in **Figure 24**.

Number of bedrooms	Current mix (2021)	Suggested mix (2039)	Balance of new housing to reach suggested mix
1 bedroom	2.9%	7.8%	43.4%
2 bedrooms	32.7%	30.8%	16.9%
3 bedrooms	44.4%	42.6%	29.2%
4+ bedrooms	20%	18.8%	10.5%

**Figure 24: Suggested dwelling size mix to 2039 in Docking (AECOM Calculations, HNA, 2024)**

81 It is important to allow some flexibility in future housing policy, rather than be too rigid with respect to the size of new dwellings. The initial community survey (May 2024) Q7 indicated that respondents would rather see more 2 bed and 3 beds built in the future over other bedrooms such as 5+ beds (**Figure 22**).



**Figure 25: Parish Consultation Survey May 2024: Question 7 Results**

82 Putting these findings together would suggest a Housing Policy that aims to provide more homes with three bedrooms or fewer, would be a way forward. Figures from the HNA (2024) suggest that such smaller homes should comprise around 89.5% of new homes, but it is not good practice to be too precise or restrictive in this regard as there may be a strong justification to build larger homes for growing families for example.

83 However, the policy approach in **Policy 7** aims to prioritise smaller homes, with at least 85% of homes as three bedrooms or fewer. This would provide for families, households downsizing or needing to access more affordable dwelling types and sizes. **Figure 26** gives an example of how the % would work out up to 10 dwellings. If housing of a larger size than 3 beds is needed within development proposals being put forward in Docking evidence would need to be supplied with the application to make this case.

Number of dwellings	85% (to the closest whole number)	Suggested bedroom sizes
1 dwelling	0.85	3 beds or below
2 dwellings	1.7	3 beds or below for both dwellings
3 dwellings	2.55	3 beds or below for all dwellings
4 dwellings	3.4	3 beds or below for at least 3 dwellings
5 dwellings	4.25	3 beds or below for at least 4 dwellings
6 dwellings	5.1	3 beds or below for at least 5 dwellings
7 dwellings	5.95	3 beds or below for at least 6 dwellings
8 dwellings	6.8	3 beds or below for at least 7 dwellings
9 dwellings	7.65	3 beds or below for at least 8 dwellings
10 dwellings	8.5	3 beds or below for at least 8 dwellings

**Figure 26- Housing Mix 85% Example from 1 to 10 dwellings**

Policy 7: Housing Mix
<p>Housing proposals will need to reflect local housing need using the best available and proportionate evidence. The Docking Housing Needs Assessment (2024) will be acceptable evidence.</p> <p>New residential open market development should offer a housing mix whereby at least 85% of homes are three bedrooms or fewer<sup>26</sup>, unless evidence is provided either showing there is no longer such a local need for smaller dwellings, or the scheme is made unviable.</p>

<sup>26</sup> Review Figure 26.



## Affordable Housing



- 84 Affordable Housing is defined in the NPPF (December 2024) as housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers). Examples of these will be social rent or housing that is discounted at least 20% below market value<sup>27</sup>.
- 85 The current tenure profile is a key feature of the parish. Patterns of home ownership, private renting and social renting reflect demographic characteristics. This includes age (with older households more likely to own their homes), and patterns of income and wealth which influence whether households can afford to rent or buy and whether they need subsidy to access housing. Census 2021 data show 62.1% of the population of Docking own their property outright or with a mortgage. Around 22% of the parish social rent and 15.9% privately rent<sup>28</sup>. These statistics are relatively similar to the Census 2011<sup>29</sup>.
- 86 According to the data supplied by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk in January 2024, there are currently 95 affordable homes in Docking. This means affordable housing is around 20% of the housing stock lived in on a permanent basis. The 95 properties comprise 86 affordable homes for rent and 9 shared ownership homes as detailed in the **Evidence Base Paper**. The majority of the 86 affordable rented homes are 2 beds for general needs followed by 3 beds and there is no sheltered housing for older people in the village.
- 87 The three new estates, with permission or being built out will result in 28 new affordable homes being made available. These will be provided by Broadland Housing Association at Four Miles, Freebridge at Heartwood and Flagship are in partnership with Elemento Group at Blenheim Place either for social rent or shared ownership. The Council are also aware that Broadland have 2 shared ownership units at Blenheim Place along Station Road which are currently under construction.

---

<sup>27</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). Annex 2: Glossary. Source: [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

<sup>28</sup> Tenure of household. Source: [Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS](#)

<sup>29</sup> [2011 Census Report for areas in England and Wales - Nomis \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](#)

- 88 There are currently 18 households on the housing waiting list for Docking looking for 1 to 3 beds and these households all currently reside in Docking. In the initial community survey (May 2024) respondents were asked in Q8 if they, or anyone in their family, are currently looking for housing in Docking. 8 people said yes, and the majority said no (179 people). However, from some of those who were needing affordable housing they stated that they will need this when they retire and can no longer afford their private rent.
- 89 House prices provide an indication of the level of demand for homes within an area. The relationship between house prices and incomes determines whether housing is affordable to local households and, to a large extent, what tenure, type, and size of home they occupy. Changes in affordability over time can indicate pressures in the housing market. The HNA (2024) shows that there has been a 117.4% growth in all types of median house prices between 2014 (£230,000) and 2023 (£500,000), with some fluctuations. It also shows that semi-detached and terraced homes appeared to appreciate by the greatest extent – in part due to their disproportionate representation in new build completions since 2021. However, the 2022 and 2023 figures for semi-detached homes (and, to a lesser extent, other types) are skewed by the Four Miles development, which includes a number of high value new homes, some of which exceed £1 million.
- 90 The HNA (2024) determined thresholds for the income required in the parish to buy a home in the open market (average and entry level prices) or rent privately. AECOM have used standard assumptions practiced elsewhere in that the maximum percentage of household income that should be spent on rent is 30% and that mortgage financing will be offered at a maximum of 3.5 times household income. However, there will be different circumstances for every individual. The median house price as stated in paragraph 100 of the HNA (2024) would require an annual income almost three times the current average.
- 91 In summary, the HNA (2024) considers that most people on average incomes are unable to access entry level requirements for open market homes for purchase or rent unless they have a very large deposit. This is also the case for private rent when it comes to single lower earners or for average or dual earning households trying to afford properties to rent over 3+ bedrooms. A broader challenge in relation to private renting is that too few rental properties tend to be available to make this a reliable option and only three were listed to rent in Docking when doing an online search in June 2024.
- 92 Regarding affordable home ownership, there is a potentially large group of households in Docking who may be able to afford to rent privately rather than owning a home from their incomes if they do not occupy their own homes already due to having purchased in the past when homes were cheaper, benefitted from inheritance, or for other reasons). This ‘can rent, can’t buy’ cohort may benefit from the range of affordable home ownership products, such as First Homes. Further detail can be read in the Docking HNA 2024.

- 93 In the initial community survey (May 2024) Q5 asked what kind of homes people would like to see in Docking if any were built. 193 respondents answered with the majority wanting to see more affordable housing (136 people) and first homes (146 people) within the parish. The majority of people did not want to see any more holiday accommodation in the parish (117 people).
- 94 The NPPF (December 2024) Para 66 sets out a policy approach to affordable housing stating *“where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs, across both affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures”*.
- 95 The Local Plan sets out the affordable housing threshold for development in rural areas as sites of 0.165ha or 5 or more dwelling<sup>30</sup>. It also sets out that the tenure mixes for affordable housing are 70:30 being 70% affordable rented housing and 30% affordable ownership (25% First Homes and 5% Shared Ownership). AECOM proposed in the Docking HNA (2024) that the balance sought in the Local Plan appears appropriate, by prioritising affordable renting but allowing for the meaningful delivery of routes to ownership alongside this so no alternative tenure mix has been suggested.
- 96 Rural Exception Sites for affordable housing has already been covered in national policy and the Local Plan. The Local Plan supports schemes for affordable housing on rural exception sites where the site is reasonably related to an existing settlement and amenities as defined in the settlement hierarchy, supported by local affordable housing need evidence and viability assessments and future management of affordable housing is supported by a recognised Registered Provider of Social Housing or other arrangements for the effective management of affordable homes<sup>31</sup>.

### Policy 8: Affordable Housing

**Affordable homes should not be readily differentiated from the open market homes by their design, quality, location and distribution within a site.**

**Schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the properties will remain affordable in perpetuity and affordable housing will be secured through a Section 106 Agreement.**

**Schemes should be in line with the Local Plan Affordable Housing Standards.**

<sup>30</sup> [Local Plan final April 2025.pdf](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Local Plan Review Pre-Submission Stage 2021 - Keystone \(objective.co.uk\) and Local Plan review \(2016-2036\) examination | Local Plan review \(2016-2036\) examination | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

## Principal Residence Requirement



- 97 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. Principal residences would include those who own their home outright or with a mortgage and spend the majority of their time there or long-term renters who have long term contracts.
- 98 Due to the impact upon the local housing market of the continued uncontrolled growth of dwellings used for holiday accommodation (as second homes or holiday homes) Docking Neighbourhood Plan in **Policy 9** will restrict further new open market housing or any net new additional dwellings on a site which have replaced a single property being for second homes or holiday lets. The purpose of this Policy is to safeguard and strengthen the residential community in Docking. Second homes and holiday homes are defined in the glossary.
- 99 As set out in more detail in the **Docking Evidence Base Paper**, in August 2024 around 32.3% of domestic properties (268 out of 829) within Docking were either second homes, holiday homes or empty properties according to Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Council Tax records and the April 2024 GOV UK of the Business Rates Valuation List<sup>32</sup>. According to the Business Rates List, 72 properties were classed as self-catering holiday homes in the parish, the most popular locations for holiday homes included the High Street, Fakenham Road and Station Road. Those properties classed as self-catering accommodation in the business rates list were commercially let properties available for more than 140 days and let for more than 70 days.
- 100 In the initial community survey (May 2024) respondents were asked what their views are on the fact that 32% of the village is made of second homes, holiday homes or empty properties. 183 people answered this free text question. Many saw the benefits that second homeowners/holiday makers bring to the local area such as for tourism, local jobs/trades, and services. Some were surprised by the percentage and expected it to be higher. Many did state that the 32% statistic should now be capped if possible and restrictions should take place for this to not increase. Other comments raised included but were not limited to:
- Concerns about the sustainability of services such as the school.

---

<sup>32</sup> [Search results - Valuation Office Agency - GOV.UK \(tax.service.gov.uk\)](#)



- Impact on community spirit and isolation of current residents if the % increases further.
- Suggestions that empty properties should be considered for local people in need of housing.
- Suggestions that the % of holiday lets is actually higher as not all will be registered for business rates.
- Some locals feel they are being priced out of the market or cannot find places to rent or buy as a result of the growing proportion of second homes or holiday lets.
- Holiday lets can on occasion result in anti-social behaviour such as noise.

101 It is important to note that the Parish Council and many people in the community understand the benefits second homeowners and properties being used for holiday lets/self-catering accommodation bring. Some do not wish to see the village make others feel unwelcome such as new incomers or cause an unnecessary divide within the community due to people's choice of living. The area is a desirable place to live and a holiday destination where some own second homes awaiting to retire in Docking but could not work permanently in the area due to limited jobs. Many of the businesses and property owners bring trade to local residents within and beyond the parish and help keep businesses viable in the surrounding local area.

102 The principle residency policy will not affect existing built development in the parish including the newly built residential estates permitted prior to this NDP, or those already residing within the parish as second homeowners. Some considered (initial survey May 2024) that putting restrictions on new housing could push prices up on existing built development not under this restriction, making these properties more out of reach for locals, though there is no evidence to suggest this would be the case.

103 Nevertheless, with all this in mind it is felt that since housing is a contentious issue already when development is to be built out if further housing is granted in the parish this should be for people who wish to live in the village permanently and need a home full time. The neighbourhood plan cannot influence the market prices of housing and issues of affordability are problems we are aware of but cannot control. It will be important to monitor and review the outcomes of this Policy over the early years of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. If it is considered that this is having a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of Docking, then the parish council will consider conducting an early review of the Plan. The Parish Council will closely monitor if Policy 9 is working effectively.

### **Policy 9: Principal Residence Requirement**

**Proposals for new affordable and market dwellings (including any net new additional dwellings on a site which have replaced a single property), will only be supported where there is a restriction to ensure its occupancy as a Principal Residence<sup>33</sup>.**

**Sufficient guarantee must be provided of such occupancy restriction through the imposition of a Section 106 legal agreement. New unrestricted second homes will not be supported at any time.**

**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<sup>34</sup>.**

---

<sup>33</sup> 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. This includes homeowners and long-term renters.

<sup>34</sup>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 services, schools etc).

## Community Services and Facilities



***This section supports delivery of the following NP objective:***

***D. Protect existing community facilities that meet the needs of the resident population and encourage further community services, and businesses to come forward to enhance opportunities and quality of life while remaining appropriate to the rural location.***

104 Docking is identified as a Key Rural Service Centre (KRSC) in the Local Plan. KRSCs are designated to help sustain the wider rural community and provide a range of services that can meet basic day-to-day needs, and a level of public transport can enable access to and from the settlement.

105 In Docking existing community services and facilities include but are not limited to the Bus Service (33,33A and 414), Bayfield surgery, Docking Primary and Nursery School, St Mary's Church, Docking House (Assisted Living Residence), allotments, playing field/play park, Spar village shop and post office, angling fishing club, bowls green and the village hall. The village hall (also known as the Ripper Hall) has a well-attended Wednesday Market which includes a farmers market, craft stalls and community café. As well as this the primary school has a wide catchment area and when other parish schools closed such as Bircham a couple of children came to Docking and now Brancaster school is proposed to close and transfer pupils to Docking.

106 In 2024 the sports pavillion adjacent to the playing field has been refurbished and the previous tennis courts have been upgraded into a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) which will bring benefit to the community for different uses.

107 Docking has a range of local businesses including holiday accommodation options (such as holiday homes, Air BnBs and campsites). There is employment areas situated

around Station Rd and the High St (B1454) where the Railway Inn public house, Dennis Wright Car Body Repairs, Docking fish and chip shop, doggy day care centre and recording studio is located. There is also the Winery at Cobble Hill, a part time recycling centre and the recently opened Nest Farmhouse and Restaurant. Further detail can be read in the Docking Evidence Base Paper.

- 108 Existing local services within Docking are valued by residents and retaining these is important. In the consultation survey (May 2024) Q19 asked respondents what facilities in Docking they would like to protect. 116 people answered this question with responses including the bus service, doctors surgery, playing field, post office, public house, school, spar shop and village hall. Docking NDP will afford protection via **Policy 10** for a number of community facilities as shown in **Figure 27**. As well as protecting existing facilities, respondents to the community survey in May 2024 also gave suggestions on new services and facilities they would like to see in the parish. 118 ideas were received including a better bus service, café, dog paddock, pub/restaurant and more leisure and social activities for all age groups.
- 109 NPPF (December 2024) paragraph 98 supports the protection of valued existing services and the delivery of new ones to maintain the vitality of rural communities. In the Local Plan, community facilities are protected by Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM9 of the SADMP Plan, and new cultural facilities are actively encouraged. The NDP aims to support new facilities when they accord with their appropriate character area and other local policies.
- 110 In terms of the rural economy, the Local Plan is supportive of the rural economy and diversification through a rural exception approach. This means permission may be granted on land which would not otherwise be appropriate for development and where it meets a local business need. It should be appropriate in size, adjacent the settlement and not detrimental to the local environment or residents.





**Figure 27- Community Facilities Protected in Policy 10**

## **Policy 10: Protected Community Facilities**

The following community facilities (identified in Figure 27) are designated for protection:

1. Railway Inn Public Housing
2. Spar Shop and Post Office
3. Docking CoE Primary School
4. Docking Village Hall
5. Sports Pavillion
6. Doctors Surgery

Development leading to the loss of these community facilities will not be permitted in line with criteria set within the Borough Council Local Plan.

## **Community Action 2: Improving Community Facilities and Services within the Parish**

The parish council will proactively work with the appropriate stakeholders, landowners and the community with regards to improving infrastructure, facilities and services within the parish such as encouraging more activities and clubs for all ages, improving the bus service and improving broadband.

## **Policy 11: Employment Opportunities**

Proposals regarding the expansion or creation of new community facilities or employment opportunities<sup>35</sup> will be supported where they conform to other relevant development plan policies.

Any employment proposals which want to provide outdoor seating or street furniture should consider Design Code DC09 and ensure materials complement their surroundings with high quality materials.

Onsite parking for employees and visitors should be in line with the Norfolk County Council Parking Standards . Parking should have appropriate boundary treatments in line with the character area the development falls within.

Proposals which will bring employment and spaces for the community to gather, such as a café, food establishment or community hub with informal meeting workspaces, will be strongly supported where such proposals conform to any other relevant development plan policies.

---

<sup>35</sup> Examples could include but are not limited to those which were encouraged in the community survey in April/May 2024 such as a café/food establishment, bed and breakfast, small scale workshops or office spaces, sport and social club or independent businesses such as a bookshop, brewery, butchers, fruit and veg shop or craft shop.

## Access and Movement



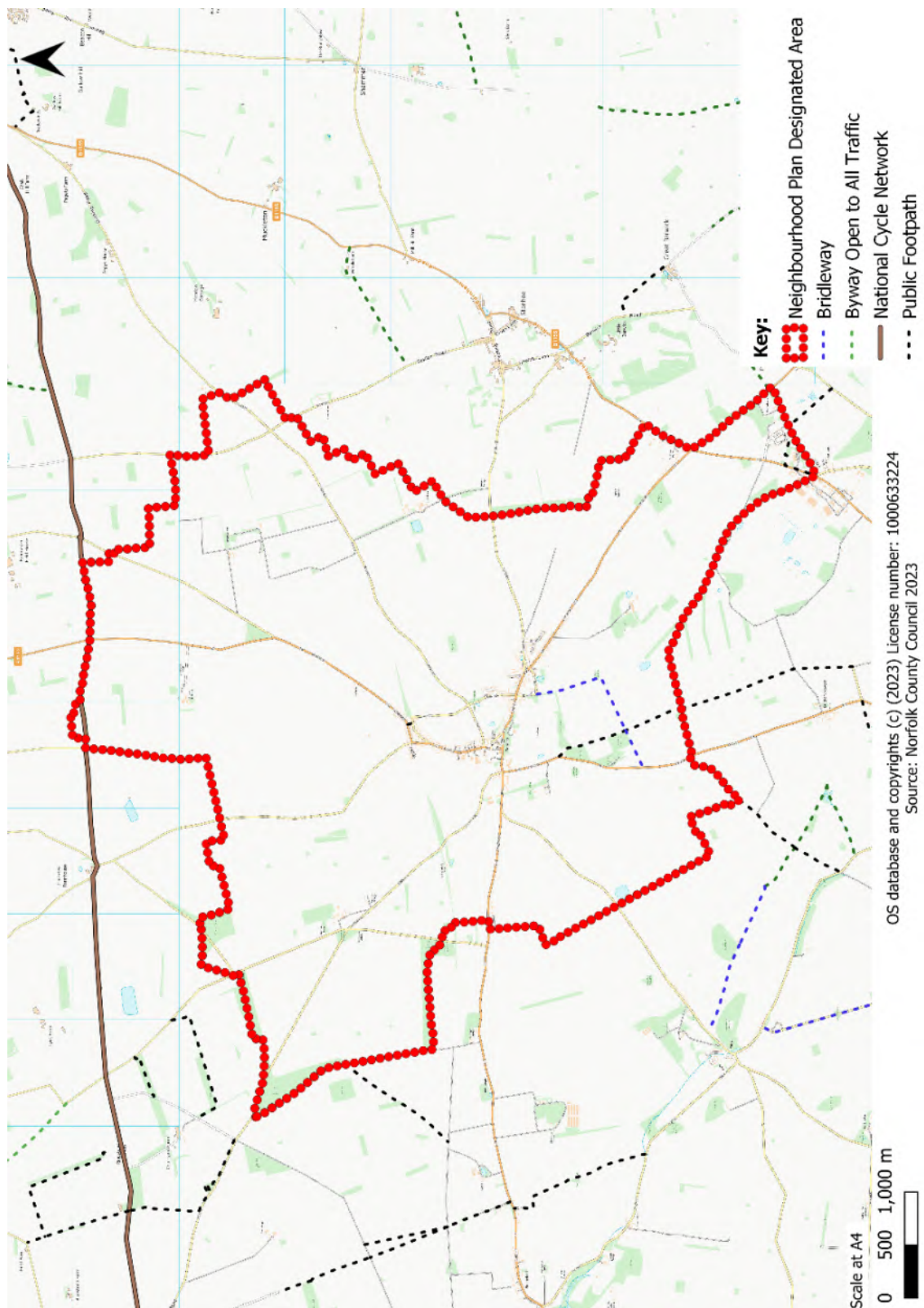
***This section supports delivery of the following NP objective:***

- E. Ensure future development helps to improve the connectivity and access within the parish by creating accessible, safe and direct links to existing footpaths or by creating new footpaths which have natural surveillance and easy to locate. Aswell as this explore opportunities for the community to have access to circular routes to improve connectivity within the surrounding countryside and to more isolated parts of the parish not served easily by the village centre.***

- 111 Docking is situated in West Norfolk between the towns Hunstanton and Fakenham. It is around 8 miles from Hunstanton (15min drive) and 12.5 miles from Fakenham (20min drive). There are three bus services (33, 33A and 414) which travel through the parish from King's Lynn to Hunstanton. The 33 and 33A services are part of Lynx Bus and allow residents/visitors to travel to nearby villages and towns including Kings Lynn, Hillington, Great Bircham, Sedgeford and Hunstanton. The 414 service runs from Wells Next The Sea towards Dersingham allowing school children who attend Wells Primary or High School to get off in Docking. The 33A and 414 run on school days only and the 33 does not run on Sundays.
- 112 According to the Census 2021 data around 15.1% of the parish are school children or full time students. The current service limits accessibility for local residents and visitors who would wish to rely on local buses rather than private vehicles for leisure or employment purposes outside of weektime school hours. The Parish Council will actively communicate with relevant stakeholders on the possibility of improving the bus service in the village, as set out in Community Action 3.
- 113 In line with national and local planning policy, active modes of travel such as walking or cycling should be prioritised in new developments. In Docking the existing network of footpaths in the parish are limited and at times narrow, thus undermining walking and cycling across the Parish. Although there are National Trail routes nearby (8km to Norfolk Coast Path and 4km to the Peddars Way) there are no public rights of way



linking them to Docking. Looking at the data available via Norfolk County Council there are two public rights of way in the parish, a bridleway route south of Mill Lane and a public footpath south of Bircham Road (**Figure 28**).



**Figure 28-Docking's Public Rights of Way**



114 As set out in the AECOM Design Codes document (2024) Docking village centre does not have the capacity to support significant additional vehicle use. Many people who answered the initial survey (May 2024) stated concerns with speeding, parking and the number of heavy vehicles which go through the village centre particularly near the High Street, Station Road and Fakenham Road. Some people said this is not surprising as Docking is an agricultural area and close to the coast, however, others felt this was causing difficulty when turning into junctions off the High Street or trying to pass local amenities where parking issues occur near the Primary School, Spar Shop and Village Hall.



***Figure 29- Example of parking along one side of the High Street (AECOM, 2024)***

115 There is a general consensus from the initial community survey (May 2024) that the existing footpath network should be improved and enhanced to provide safe and easy access within the village and to the surrounding countryside. Examples of roads which residents felt need improvement for access and connectivity included Bradmere Lane with Manor Road and creating a new footpath along Bircham Rd.

116 Residents also suggested the introduction of new circular walks in the parish with better signage to improve wayfinding for residents and visitors. Having circular walks taking place on new permissive routes could also allow residents and visitors especially if walking with children or dogs to exercise for recreational purposes around the parish safely avoiding the main coastal road which is a through road with exceptional traffic going between 30-60mph. Currently the existing public right of ways can only be accessed by walking down narrow lanes with no pavements. The bridle path south of Mill Lane is only 1.6km in length, is not circular and ends at the main road between Docking and Bircham with no onward connectivity. For this reason, the Parish Council would welcome exploring better connecting routes and movement in the parish and will look into this community action with relevant stakeholders.



**Figure 30- Pictures of the entrance to the bridleway along Mill Lane (Source: AECOM, 2024)**

117 Whilst a number of the issues related to access and movement cannot be addressed within the NDP, the Parish Council thought it was important to understand current issues and bringing these matters to light in any relevant future planning applications.

### **Policy 12: Access and Movement**

**Planning applications for new built development should demonstrate they have considered the Access & Movement Design Codes DC04-DC06 in the Docking Design Codes Document.**

**Any major development<sup>36</sup> within the existing footway network, or adjacent, will be expected to provide new or improved links to the network which are safe and accessible for all (including disabled, pram and pushbike users). Smaller scale development providing new or improved links will be seen as a planning benefit.**

**Active travel routes should deliver improved accessibility and connectivity by using materials which are non-slip and are permeable.**

**Any newly developed areas must:**

- a) Be designed to prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists with natural surveillance, good sight lines and unrestricted views; and**
- b) Have footpath networks should be in place before first occupation of houses on the site, in line with Design Code DC04.**

<sup>36</sup> Major development is considered to be schemes of 10 dwellings or more.

### **Community Action 3: Transport and Movement**

- 1. The Parish Council will work with local landowners, statutory stakeholders, and adjacent parishes to investigate establishing new permissive routes within the countryside. The Parish Council will also liaise with the above bodies when addressing how to improve our existing footpaths and routes.**
- 2. The Parish Council will investigate with the relevant statutory stakeholders such as Norfolk County Council Highways how to address other matters in the village which the neighbourhood plan cannot influence including improving the bus service and addressing speeding within the village.**

## Monitoring, review, and implementation

118 The Borough Council (local planning authority) has statutory responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the development plan. However, Docking Parish Council will also take responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Development Plan to provide further support to the Local Authority. This will be undertaken annually by capturing the outcome of planning applications determined by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

119 A monitoring spreadsheet, similar to that recommended by Locality<sup>37</sup> will be used. This considers how effective each policy has been in both influencing the outcome of decisions and any conditions applied to development that is permitted.

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

120 The Plan was prepared with reference to the Local Plan 2021-2040 which was adopted in March 2025. The Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed should the adoption of an emerging Local Plan necessitate such a review, in order that the Plan remains in conformity with the relevant strategic policies of the Local Plan. Similarly, the Plan will be reviewed should any changes in national policies necessitate revisions to the Plan's policies.

121 Additionally, the Parish Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policies within the Plan. The monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis, and a decision can be made whether this requires a review of the Plan.

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

---

<sup>37</sup> [How to implement, monitor, and review your made neighbourhood plan - Locality Neighbourhood Planning](#)

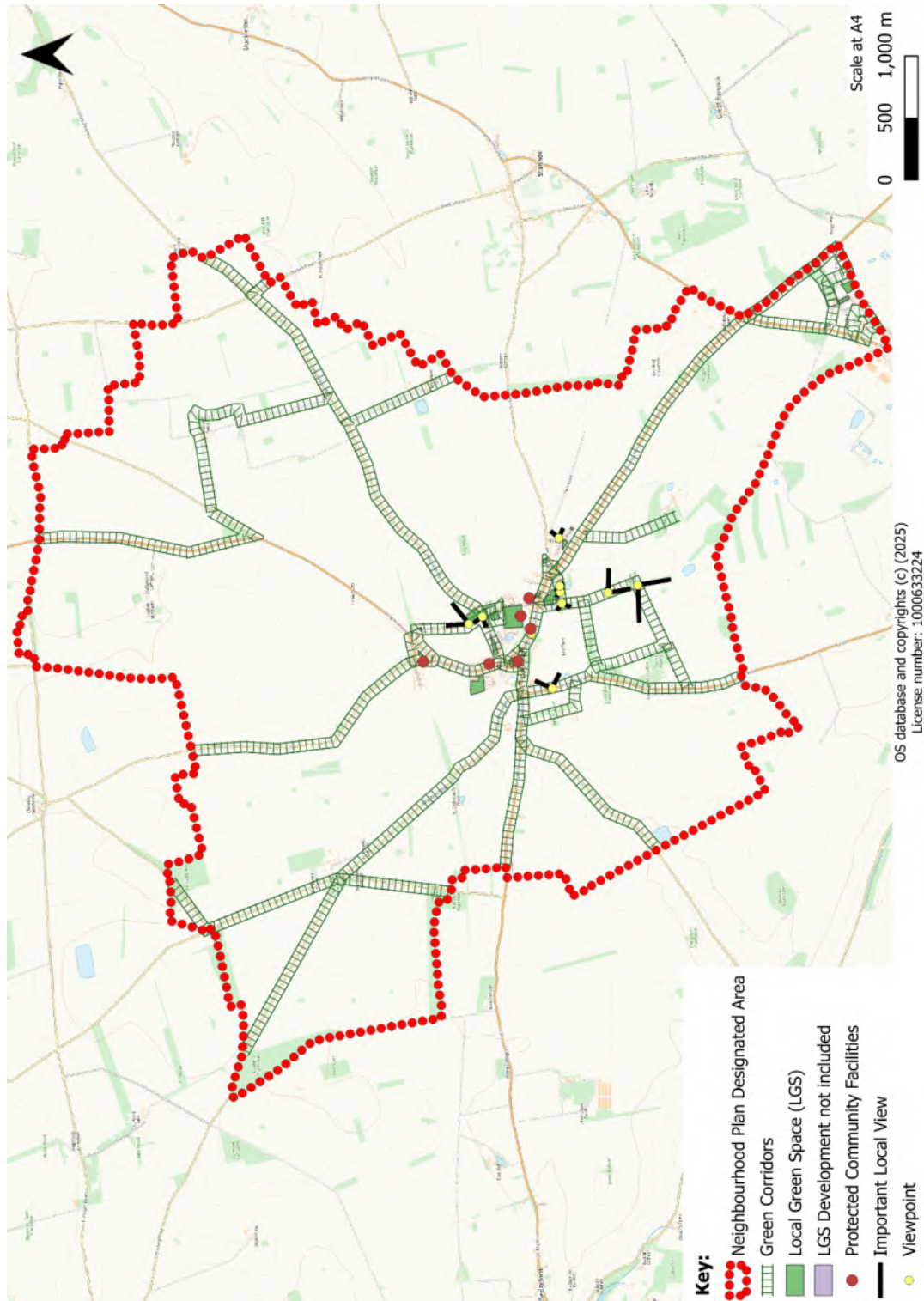


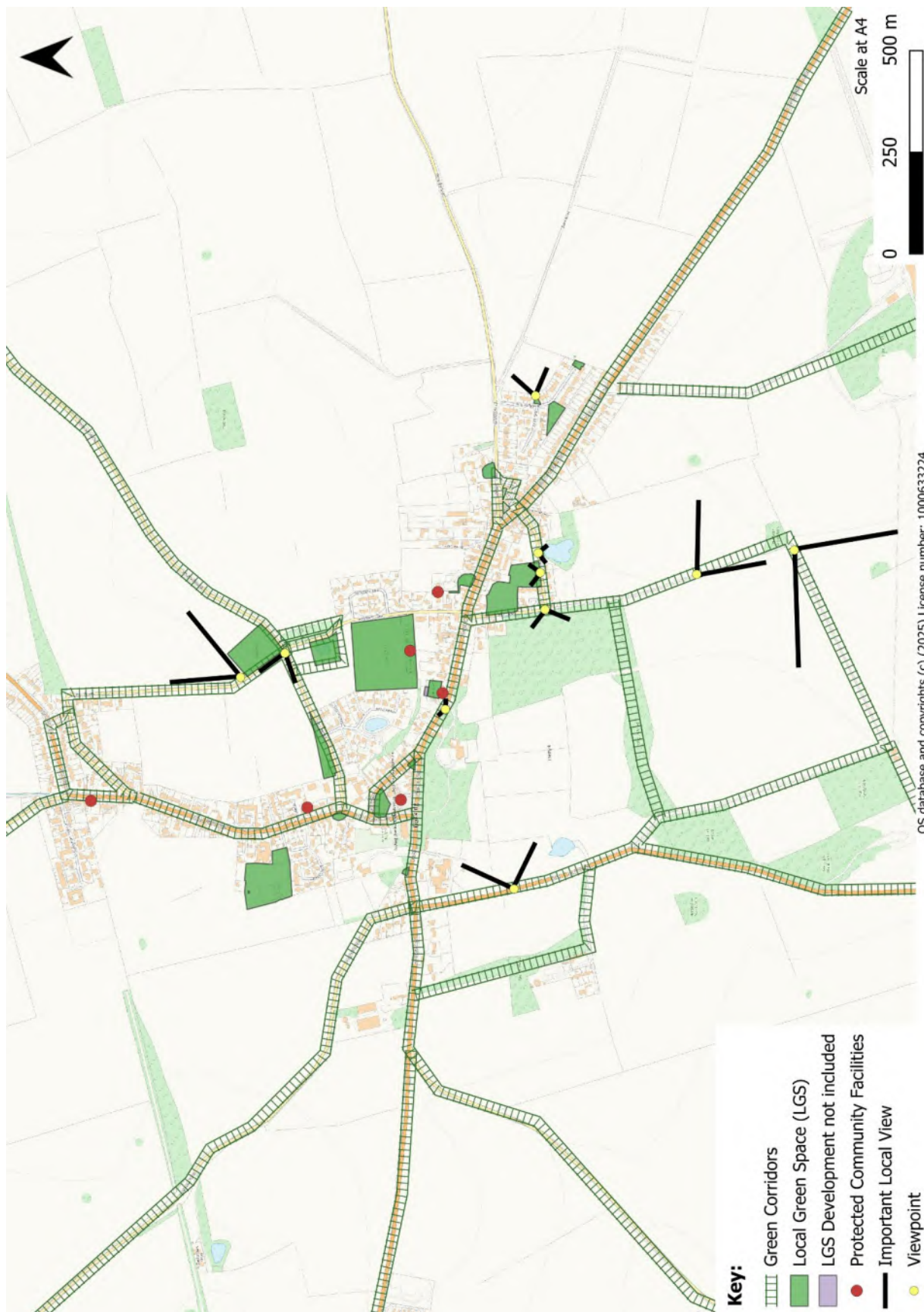
Community Action	Relevant Stakeholders/ Partners
<p><b>Community Action 1: Local Action to Encourage Wildlife and Local Habitats</b></p> <p>The Parish Council will work with the local community, landowners and relevant stakeholders to encourage action to enhance habitat and wildlife in public and private areas and including gardens. This may include activities to encourage insect friendly planting, bird, and bat boxes, making the most of compost and encouraging wild patches. In relation to this, priority will be to work with local landowners to improve habitat for wildlife within the green corridors.</p> <p>In public areas actions will be investigated including less frequent mowing, pond maintenance and planting trees this may include setting up volunteer groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local community including businesses</li> <li>• Local landowners</li> <li>• Statutory bodies where appropriate.</li> <li>• Wildlife charities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Action 2: Improving Community Facilities and Services within the Parish</b></p> <p>The parish council will proactively work with the appropriate stakeholders, landowners and the community with regards to improving infrastructure, facilities and services within the parish such as encouraging more activities and clubs for all ages, improving the bus service and improving broadband.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landowners</li> <li>• Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk</li> <li>• Local businesses, community groups and residents</li> <li>• Relevant stakeholders such as local broadband providers and bus companies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Action 3: Transport and Movement</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Parish Council will work with local landowners, statutory stakeholders, and adjacent parishes to investigate establishing new permissive routes within the countryside. The Parish Council will also liaise with the above bodies when addressing how to improve our existing footpaths and routes.</li> <li>2. The Parish Council will investigate with the relevant statutory stakeholders such as Norfolk County Council</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Landowners</li> <li>• Statutory Agencies such as Norfolk County Council, Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk</li> <li>• Bus companies (Lynx)</li> <li>• Local Community</li> </ul>

Community Action	Relevant Stakeholders/ Partners
<p>Highways how to address other matters in the village which the neighbourhood plan cannot influence including improving the bus service and addressing speeding within the village.</p>	

## Appendix A: Policies Maps

The policies maps aids users to see where the protected community facilities, the designated local green spaces, important local views and green corridors are in relation to one another in the designated area and in the built-up settlement.







## Appendix B- List of Policies

### Policy 1: Biodiversity and Green Ecological Corridors

Development proposals where relevant should give consideration to Design Code DC.19 “Biodiversity and Wildlife” in the Docking Design Codes and Guidance Report (2024).

#### **Biodiversity**

Development proposals that will deliver biodiversity net gain greater than the mandatory 10% will be supported and considered to deliver a planning benefit.

Development proposals within or adjacent to areas occupied by Priority Habitats<sup>38</sup> should demonstrate they will not have an adverse impact on these habitats and will retain or enhance these areas as part of the development process. The use of buffer zones around sensitive sites will be supported<sup>39</sup>.

New built development proposals, excluding householder applications, should take opportunities to improve the continuity of existing habitats, such as hedgerows and trees, to create safe corridors of movement with good continuity and cover for wildlife moving through the local landscape.

#### **Green Ecological Corridors**

The Plan identifies a series of green ecological corridors in Figure 5 and proposed developments within or adjacent to these corridors should:

- Demonstrate an improvement in habitat connectivity by enhancing or restoring the function of the corridor to help increase biodiversity and other environmental benefits; and
- Demonstrate the way in which it will incorporate suitable mitigation for any aspects of the proposed scheme which would reduce the ability of wildlife to move through the corridor, including barriers like buildings and hard surfaces, redirecting water courses, adding artificial lighting, and insensitive management of habitats e.g. hedge cutting in the bird breeding season.

<sup>38</sup> Priority Habitats are those defined and mapped in the Priority Habitats Inventory England which were first identified as priority habitats and species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

<sup>39</sup> Sensitive sites would include priority habitats, county wildlife sites or other natural environmental designations.

## **Community Action 1: Local Action to Encourage Wildlife and Improve Local Habitats**

The Parish Council will work with the local community, landowners and relevant stakeholders to encourage action to enhance habitat and wildlife in public and private areas including gardens. This may include activities to encourage insect friendly planting, bird, and bat boxes, making the most of compost and encouraging wild patches. In relation to this, priority will be to work with local landowners to improve habitat for wildlife within the green corridors.

In public areas actions will be investigated including less frequent mowing, pond maintenance and planting trees, which may include setting up volunteer groups.

In public areas actions will be investigated including less frequent mowing, pond maintenance and planting trees, which may include setting up volunteer groups.

## **Policy 2: Trees**

Development proposals where relevant should give consideration to Design Code DC.17 “Conserve and enhance existing green and blue infrastructure” in the Docking Design Codes and Guidance Report (2024).

### **Existing Trees**

Existing trees and hedgerows on development sites should be considered throughout the design process. Development proposals, excluding householder applications, should be informed by an Arboricultural Survey addressing existing trees. Wherever possible, existing trees should be protected, without damage or loss of value, particularly those which demonstrate good arboricultural biodiversity value.

### **Replacement Trees**

Where there is an unavoidable loss of trees on site, the number and type of replacement trees should be informed by the quality and size of the lost trees.

Replacement trees must be native British species of local provenance. Developers should ensure local ecological connectivity is maintained and sufficient space is made available on the development site for this unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

Developers should replace trees on a 2 to 1 ratio requirement unless robust evidence suggests this would make the scheme economically unviable.

### **New Trees**

## **Policy 2: Trees**

New tree planting, in development proposals and throughout the built and natural environments of the Plan area, will be supported to maintain and increase the overall tree canopy cover of the Neighbourhood Area, and to provide gateway and landmark trees that contribute to local distinctiveness. This should be informed by relevant ecology and arboricultural assessment.

## **Policy 3: Local Green Spaces**

The areas listed below and shown in Figure 9 are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- LGS1- Allotments , North of Burnham Road and East of Sandy Lane
- LGS2- Village Pond, West on Bradmere Lane
- LGS3- Burial Ground, North of Pound Lane
- LGS4- Old Recreation Field, Station Road
- LGS5- Village Pond, West on Station Road
- LGS6- Field of Dreams, rear of Docking Church of England Primary and Nursery School
- LGS7- Village Pond, West of Chequer Street
- LGS8- Docking Village Sign Green Space North of High Street and South of Well Street
- LGS9- Recreation Ground, West of Bradmere Lane
- LGS10- Bowling Green, North of the High Street
- LGS11-Bayfield Pond, North of the High Street
- LGS12-Grove Field, Mill Lane
- LGS13- Pond North of Stanhoe Road
- LGS14- Greenspaces within Woodgate Way
- LGS15- Play Area within Monks Close
- LGS16- Recreation Ground within Monks Close

Development proposals in the 16 designated Local Green Spaces listed above will be managed in accordance with national policy for Green Belts.

## **Policy 4 : Protection of Important Local Views**

The following 10 views, shown in Figure 10 and described in Docking's Views Assessment are identified as important public local views:

- View 1: View from looking north from Sandy Lane towards the sea
- View 2: Views looking north from Pound Lane

#### **Policy 4 : Protection of Important Local Views**

- **View 3: View looking north along the High Street**
- **View 4: View of The Park looking west at the rear of Docking Hall along Mill Lane**
- **View 5: View of Grove Field looking north along Little Lane**
- **View 6: View looking south from Little Lane towards Docking Fishing Lake**
- **View 7: View looking south from Mill Lane Bridleway towards Halfway Plantation and Hare Wood**
- **View 8: View looking west along the Bridleway towards Honey Hills Road**
- **View 9: View looking east from Bircham Road towards Docking Hall and St Mary's Church**
- **View 10: View looking east from Woodgate Way towards Stanhoe**

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

#### **Policy 5: Dark Skies**

Development proposals, which plan to increase the existing footprint on site, should give consideration to Design Code DC.24 "Dark Skies" in the Docking Design Codes and Guidance Report (2024) and demonstrate how they have considered the location, height, and orientation of their development to avoid obtrusive light spill from internal and external fittings.

External light proposals should address the following principles:

- f) Fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fittings).
- g) Directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards).
- h) Avoid dusk to dawn lighting by introducing timed motion detectors; and
- i) Ensure lighting schemes such as LED streetlights will not cause unacceptable levels of light pollution particularly in intrinsically dark areas.
- j) Use low-energy lamps such as LED, metal halide or fluorescent sources.



## Policy 5: Dark Skies

Proposals including external lighting in prominent locations<sup>40</sup> likely to be visible from the surrounding landscape will not normally be supported except where a requirement can be demonstrated in the interests of safety and security on public footways.

Development proposals should demonstrate compliance with best practice guidance for avoiding artificial lighting impacts on bats<sup>41</sup>, birds and other species. Where internal lighting is likely to cause harm to the landscape, or disturbance and risk to wildlife, proposals will be sought for mitigating pollution from internal light sources. Large windows, roof lights and large areas of glazing are particularly relevant in this context.

## Policy 6: Design

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should be consistent with the Docking Neighbourhood Plan Area Wide Design Codes (DC01-DC24) and the relevant character area in which the proposal falls within.

There are seven-character areas in Docking:

8. Docking Conservation Area (CA1)
9. Edge Development (CA2)
10. New Estates (CA3)
11. Bircham Newton College Industry Training College (CA4)
12. Residential Area East of B1155 (CA5)
13. Rural Area (CA6)
14. Open Countryside (CA7)

All development proposals should provide evidence, such as through a Design, Access and Planning Statement, when considering the design codes. The following characteristics in the Docking Design Guide Document are especially important to the area:

- j) New development proposals are in keeping with the surrounding local character respecting existing patterns of development, low to medium density, building setbacks, historic assets and landmarks (DC01-DC03)
- k) Suitable access and movement has been considered in line with Design Codes DC04-DC06 such as accessible footpaths, legibility and wayfinding.
- l) All parking arrangements should have regard to Design Code DC.05 to ensure these features are sensitively designed to suit the street character and onsite parking should use permeable surfacing.
- m) Consideration should be given to the proposal's relationship with the street and other spaces in line with Design Codes DC07-DC09 and with the

<sup>40</sup> Prominent locations would include the open rural landscapes or locations with landmarks such as the Church.

<sup>41</sup> <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

## Policy 6: Design

distinctive character areas such as having an active frontage with good levels of enclosure and natural surveillance from adjacent buildings.

- n) Built form and scale have been considered in line with Design Codes DC10-DC14 and the distinctive character areas such as conforming with the surrounding localities pattern, scale, height, massing, spacing and boundary treatments.
- o) Development proposals for residential conversions and extensions should demonstrate in their application how Design Code DC.13 has been considered.
- p) Architectural detailing and colours of the local vernacular have been considered for the distinctive character areas and reflected in the scheme as set out in Design Codes DC15-DC16. The use of blank facades or buildings which ignore their street or corner frontage should be resisted.
- q) Green and blue infrastructure have been considered in line with Design Codes DC17-DC19 such as providing appropriate garden sizes for the area, preserving existing maturing trees and ensuring new trees are integrated into the design at the offset to increase visual interest.
- r) All development proposals should strive to use sustainable design including energy efficient measures and sustainable drainage systems and consider incorporating sustainable principles in the scheme as set out in Design Codes DC20-DC24. Examples are set out in Figures 18 and 19.

Proposals should demonstrate that development does not result in a detrimental impact on the environment and water infrastructure, including sewers and surface water and other flooding.

## Policy 7: Housing Mix

Housing proposals will need to reflect local housing need using the best available and proportionate evidence. The Docking Housing Needs Assessment (2024) will be acceptable evidence.

New residential open market development should offer a housing mix whereby at least 85% of homes are three bedrooms or fewer<sup>42</sup>, unless evidence is provided either showing there is no longer such a local need for smaller dwellings, or the scheme is made unviable.

---

<sup>42</sup> Review Figure 26.

### **Policy 8: Affordable Housing**

**Affordable homes should not be readily differentiated from the open market homes by their design, quality, location and distribution within a site.**

**Schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the properties will remain affordable in perpetuity and affordable housing will be secured through a Section 106 Agreement.**

**Schemes should be in line with the Local Plan Affordable Housing Standards.**

### **Policy 9: Principal Residence Requirement**

**Proposals for new affordable and market dwellings (including any net new additional dwellings on a site which have replaced a single property), will only be supported where there is a restriction to ensure its occupancy as a Principal Residence<sup>43</sup>.**

**Sufficient guarantee must be provided of such occupancy restriction through the imposition of a Section 106 legal agreement. New unrestricted second homes will not be supported at any time.**

**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<sup>44</sup>.**

### **Policy 10: Protected Community Facilities**

**The following community facilities (identified in Figure 27) are designated for protection:**

- 7. Railway Inn Public Housing**
- 8. Spar Shop and Post Office**
- 9. Docking CoE Primary School**
- 10. Docking Village Hall**
- 11. Sports Pavillion**
- 12. Doctors Surgery**

**Development leading to the loss of these community facilities will not be permitted in line with criteria set within the Borough Council Local Plan.**

<sup>43</sup> 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. This includes homeowners and long-term renters.

<sup>44</sup>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 services, schools etc).

## **Community Action 2: Improving Community Facilities and Services within the Parish**

The parish council will proactively work with the appropriate stakeholders, landowners and the community with regards to improving infrastructure, facilities and services within the parish such as encouraging more activities and clubs for all ages, improving the bus service and improving broadband.

### **Policy 11: Employment Opportunities**

Proposals regarding the expansion or creation of new community facilities or employment opportunities<sup>45</sup> will be supported where they conform to other relevant development plan policies.

Any employment proposals which want to provide outdoor seating or street furniture should consider Design Code DC09 and ensure materials complement their surroundings with high quality materials.

Onsite parking for employees and visitors should be in line with the Norfolk County Council Parking Standards . Parking should have appropriate boundary treatments in line with the character area the development falls within.

Proposals which will bring employment and spaces for the community to gather, such as a café, food establishment or community hub with informal meeting workspaces, will be strongly supported where such proposals conform to any other relevant development plan policies.

### **Policy 12: Access and Movement**

Planning applications for new built development should demonstrate they have considered the Access & Movement Design Codes DC04-DC06 in the Docking Design Codes Document.

Any major development<sup>46</sup> within the existing footway network, or adjacent, will be expected to provide new or improved links to the network which are safe and accessible for all (including disabled, pram and pushbike users). Smaller scale development providing new or improved links will be seen as a planning benefit.

Active travel routes should deliver improved accessibility and connectivity by using materials which are non-slip and are permeable.

<sup>45</sup> Examples could include but are not limited to those which were encouraged in the community survey in April/May 2024 such as a café/food establishment, bed and breakfast, small scale workshops or office spaces, sport and social club or independent businesses such as a bookshop, brewery, butchers, fruit and veg shop or craft shop.

<sup>46</sup> Major development is considered to be schemes of 10 dwellings or more.



**Any newly developed areas must:**

- c) Be designed to prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists with natural surveillance, good sight lines and unrestricted views; and**
- d) Have footpath networks should be in place before first occupation of houses on the site, in line with Design Code DC04.**

### **Community Action 3: Transport and Movement**

- 3. The Parish Council will work with local landowners, statutory stakeholders, and adjacent parishes to investigate establishing new permissive routes within the countryside. The Parish Council will also liaise with the above bodies when addressing how to improve our existing footpaths and routes.**
- 4. The Parish Council will investigate with the relevant statutory stakeholders such as Norfolk County Council Highways how to address other matters in the village which the neighbourhood plan cannot influence including improving the bus service and addressing speeding within the village.**

## Appendix C- Abbreviations and Glossary

Term	Definition
Affordable Housing (NPPF 2024 Definition)	<p>Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions<sup>90</sup>:</p> <p>a) <b>Social Rent</b>: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent; (b) the landlord is a registered provider; and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.</p> <p>b) <b>Other affordable housing for rent</b>: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).</p> <p>c) <b>Discounted market sales housing</b>: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.</p> <p>d) <b>Other affordable routes to home ownership</b>: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable</p>

Term	Definition
	housing provision or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.
BCKLWN	Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk
BNG	Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land. It is making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development <sup>47</sup> .
Dark Skies	Places where the darkness of the night sky is relatively free of interference from artificial light.
Energy Efficient	The practice of using less energy to perform the same amount of output for a task, service or produce the same result.
Green Infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities, and prosperity.
Holiday Let Homes (or Self Catering Properties)	<p>A property which is commercially let. The owner does not pay Council Tax or Parish Precept. Some holiday homes operate without formally being registered as a business as they do not meet the criteria set out by the Government.</p> <p>For self-catering and holiday let accommodation if a property is in England, it will be rated as a self-catering property and valued for business rates if over the last 12 months both the following were true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it was available to let for short periods commercially for at least 140 nights in total</li> <li>• it was actually let for at least 70 nights<sup>48</sup></li> </ul>
Local Green Space (LGS)	Local Green Space is a way of designating <b>local green areas</b> , which meet a set of criteria, in order to protect them from inappropriate development.
NDP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPA	Neighbourhood Plan Area
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Open Market Housing	Open market housing is housing which is built by developers (which may be private companies or housing associations, or Private Registered Providers), for the purposes of sale (or rent) on the open market.
Priority Habitats	Priority Habitats are those defined and mapped in the Priority Habitats Inventory England which were first identified as priority habitats and species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. <a href="#">Priority Habitats Inventory (England) - data.gov.uk</a>

<sup>47</sup> [Understanding biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>48</sup> [Business rates: Self-catering and holiday let accommodation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Term	Definition
Second homes	A property purchased, or inherited, which is occupied in addition to the owner's main residence. These properties will pay Council Tax and Parish Precept.
Sheltered Housing	<p>Sheltered housing (also known as retirement housing) means having your own flat or bungalow in a block, or on a small estate, where all the other residents are older people (usually over 55). With a few exceptions, all developments (or 'schemes') provide independent, self-contained homes with their own front doors. There are many different types of scheme, both to rent and to buy. They usually contain between 15 and 40 properties, and range in size from studio flats (or 'bedsits') through to 2 and 3 bed roomed. Properties in most schemes are designed to make life a little easier for older people - with features like raised electric sockets, lowered worktops, walk-in showers, and so on.</p> <p>Some will usually be designed to accommodate wheelchair users. And they are usually linked to an emergency alarm service (sometimes called 'community alarm service') to call help if needed. Many schemes also have their own 'manager' or 'warden', either living on-site or nearby, whose job is to manage the scheme and help arrange any services residents need. Managed schemes will also usually have some shared or communal facilities such as a lounge for residents to meet, a laundry, a guest flat and a garden<sup>49</sup>.</p>
Social rented housing	Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in Section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.). Guideline target rents for this tenure are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with Homes England <sup>50</sup>
Specialist housing for older people	<p>A wide range of housing types specifically aimed at older people, which may often be restricted to those in certain older age groups. This could include residential institutions, sheltered housing, extra care housing, retirement housing and a range of other potential types of housing which has been designed and built to serve the needs of older people, including often providing care or other additional services.</p> <p><b>Sheltered Housing:</b> self-contained flats or bungalows where all the residents are older people. Schemes on the whole provide independent, self-contained homes, either to rent or buy. Properties in most schemes</p>

<sup>49</sup> 4 See <http://www.housingcare.org/jargon-sheltered-housing.aspx>

<sup>50</sup> See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/doc/1980960.doc#Housing>



Term	Definition
	<p>have features like raised electric sockets, lowered worktops, walk-in showers, and so on, as well as being linked to an emergency alarm service. Some will be designed to accommodate wheelchair users. Managed schemes will also usually have some shared or communal facilities such as a lounge for residents to meet, a laundry, guest flats and gardens.</p> <p><b>Extra Care Housing:</b> housing which usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required. Residents are able to live independently with 24-hour access to support services and staff, and meals are often also available. In some cases, these developments are included in retirement communities or villages - the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.</p>
SuDS	Sustainable urban drainage system

Development of this neighbourhood plan was supported by

[Collective Community Planning Ltd](#)

