

NDP33

LONGWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2015-2031



ADOPTED OCTOBER 2016

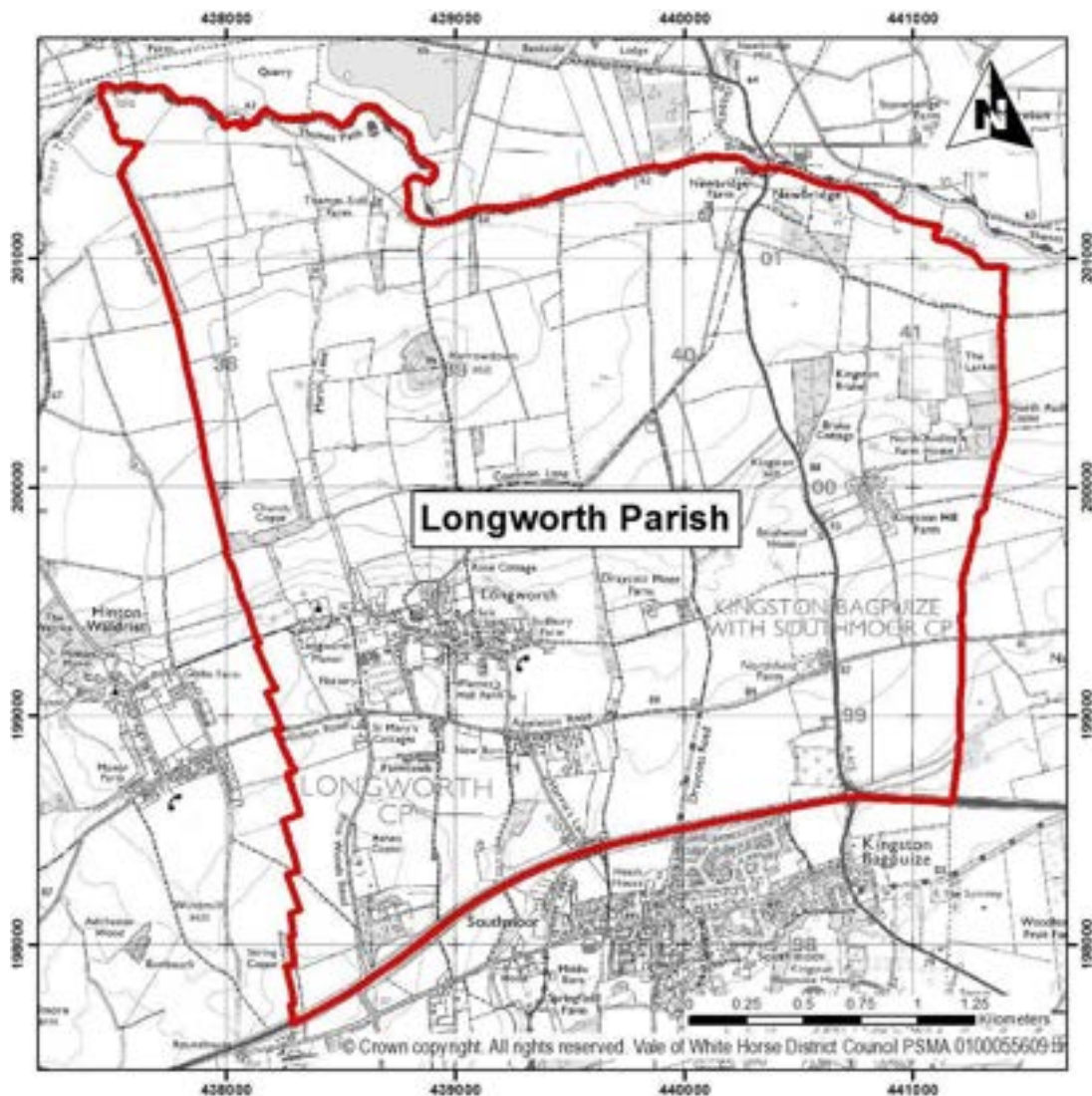
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1. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

1.1 Longworth Parish Council (LPC) has prepared a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated on 13 December 2013 by the local planning authority, Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC), under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The designated area is shown in Plan A below.



Plan A: Longworth Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area

1.2 The purpose of the Longworth Neighbourhood Plan (LNP) is to make planning policies that can be used to determine planning applications in the area. Its policies are primarily aimed at protecting the special rural character of the village and parish.

1.3 Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan for the area and will carry

significant weight in how planning applications are decided. Plans must therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Plan if they are not directly related to planning. The Parish Council will look to find other ways of addressing these in due course.

1.4 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Plans must meet four 'basic conditions'. These are:

- Is the Plan consistent with national planning policy?
- Is the Plan consistent with local planning policy?
- Does the Plan promote the principles of sustainable development?
- Has the process of making of the Plan met the requirements of European environmental standards?

1.5 In addition, the LPC must be able to show that it has properly consulted local people and other relevant organisations during the process of making the Plan and has followed the Regulations. It has therefore prepared a Consultation Statement that describes all that it has done, both formally and informally, throughout the project, to engage people in the making of the Plan.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.6 LPC requested a screening opinion from VWHDC in respect of the need for the LNP to have a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under EU Directive 42/2001 and the 2004 Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations.

On August 24th 2015, SEA screening opinion was delivered by the Vale of the White Horse District Council and stated:

“Vale of White Horse District Council has carried out a screening of the Longworth Neighbourhood Plan. The Council has determined under Section 9 of the Regulations, and in consultation with Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency, that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and therefore that a full strategic environmental assessment is not required. A copy of the determination and screening statement is available at the district council offices, Vale of White Horse District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB or our website www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans.”

For more details on the SEA opinion, please refer to “Longworth SEA Screening Report Final” and “Longworth SEA Notice” documents in the evidence base documents.

Longworth – the place

1.7 Longworth is a village and parish about 7 miles west of Abingdon and a similar distance east of Faringdon and south of Witney. It is 12 miles south west of Oxford. The village historically was located in the county of Berkshire, however, since 1974 it was located in the Vale of White Horse district of Oxfordshire.

1.8 As early as Saxon times a charter outlined the boundaries of Longworth (the long homestead) and described a narrow belt of land stretching from the Thames in the north to the Ock in the south. This allowed farming from the water meadows of the Thames flood plain to the drier richer soils along the Corallian limestone of the Golden Ridge. The boundary was subsequently changed in July 2008 to border the A420 to the south.

1.9 The Domesday survey of 1086 shows Longworth belonging to Abingdon Abbey by which time the village had its own church on the same site as the present Church of St Mary's built from the 13th century onwards.

1.10 In 1538 after the dissolution of the monasteries the village ownership passed from the Abbot of Abingdon to Henry VIII who gifted the village to the Lords of the Manor of Longworth and in 1618 was purchased by Henry Marten. The Marten family were active in the civil war, calling for the deposition of King Charles and after the restoration Henry Marten the younger was imprisoned in the Tower of London. All his Longworth property was forfeited.

1.11 The industrial revolution had its impact on Longworth despite the village remaining rural and agricultural. In the days when the cost of moving bulky goods such as coal, corn, timber or stone was very expensive, settlements near the Thames took advantage of cheap water transport provided by barges. In particular coal barges would arrive at a landing stage at the back of Harrowdown Hill where the coal would be transported up Tucks Lane by horse and cart and then on to the neighbouring settlements.

1.12 But the main “industry” of Longworth from the mid-19th century was rose growing with the arrival of a group of nurserymen families of which the best known were the Prince and Drew family. It was said that rose fields of Longworth could be smelt long before the village was seen.

2. THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 The parish lies within Vale of White Horse District in the County of Oxfordshire. VWHDC has planning policies and proposals that are helping to shape the strategy and policies of the LNP, which are summarised below.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government in 2012 is also an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The LNP must demonstrate that it is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF.

2.3 The LNP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan as required by the 2012 Neighbourhood Plan Regulations. The development plan currently comprises the policies of the 2011 Vale of White Horse Local Plan (VWHLP). However, the strategic policies of this plan are being replaced by the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan Part 1 (VWHDLP1) to cover the period 2014 to 2031.

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011

2.4 The VWHLP was adopted by VWHDC in 2006 and many of its policies have been saved for continuing development management purposes, if they are in conformity with the NPPF. Most of the saved policies are consistent with the NPPF apart from those relating to housing land supply.

2.5 The most relevant policies to the LNP are listed below:

- DC1 - design (to be replaced through the emerging VWHDLP)
- DC9 – Impact of development on neighbouring uses
- HE1 – preservation and enhancement of conservation areas (the Longworth Conservation Area is shown on the Proposals Map)
- HE4 – development within the setting of a listed building
- NE7 – North Vale Corallian Ridge (the whole of the parish falls within this policy area, as shown on the Proposals Map)
- H17 – affordable housing (to be replaced through the emerging VWHDLP)
- CF2 – community facilities

2.6 These policies indicate that the policies of the LNP will have to have regard to the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings and may refine more general development management issues to fit specifically to Longworth.

Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1

2.7 The Pre Submission version of the VWHDLP1 was submitted for independent examination in March 2015. The LNP should have regard to its proposed strategic policies, its evidence and the plan's reasoning in general. Once adopted, VWHDC will bring forward the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 'Detailed Policies and

Local Sites' (LPP2) document to replace the remaining saved policies. The Part 2 document will sit alongside made neighbourhood plans in complementing the strategic policies of Part 1.

2.8 The Spatial Vision for the district where it relates to Longworth is as follows:

“The Vale’s villages will continue to provide thriving rural communities where appropriate growth has supported local services. New development will have respected the local character of the Vale, protecting its outstanding and distinctive natural and built environment and will continue to conserve and enhance its important heritage. High design and environmental standards will have been achieved through new development, which will be resilient to the likely impacts of climate change.”(p29)



Plan B: VWHDL P1 Key Diagram: Abingdon Sub-Area

2.9 The spatial strategy shows Longworth being within the Abingdon & Oxford Sub Area of the district. By 2031, the strategy envisages the following for the rural part of the Sub-Area:

“The countryside and villages will have maintained their distinctive character and will be much enjoyed by those living, working and visiting the Vale. Growth within the larger villages will have helped to maintain or enhance their services and to provide for residents’ day-to-day needs. New residents in

the villages will be helping to sustain the services and social life of the rural communities.” (p51)

2.10 The Settlement Hierarchy in Core Policy 3 identifies Longworth as a one of the 12 smaller villages in the Sub Area and describes these as settlements which have a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest and proportionate in scale.

2.11 The housing targets for the District are set out in Core Policy 4 Housing Delivery and the sub area strategy in relation to Longworth can be found in Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for Abingdon & Oxford Sub-Area. Neither of these policies identifies Longworth as a location for housing growth. Rather, in defining Longworth as a ‘smaller village’, Policy 4 states:

At the Smaller Villages, limited infill development may be appropriate within the existing built areas of these settlements or if it is allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. Proposals for development will be supported where they are in keeping with local character and are proportionate in scale and meet local housing needs, and/ or provide local employment, services and facilities.

2.12 Of the other policies in VWHDL1, there are a number that are relevant for the LNP. Policy 24 on affordable housing proposes a requirement for 35% of homes though its minimum scheme thresholds will need to be amended in the light of more recent national planning guidance changes. The result will be that it will be unlikely that any housing schemes in the parish will be required to deliver a proportion of affordable homes.

2.13 Although it proposes no specific policy on the North Vale Corallian Ridge, its Policy 44 does provide for development proposals having to demonstrate they will protect, maintain and enhance local valued landscapes like the Ridge. Policy 37 sets out a series of key design principles for development in the District, which will be informed by the proposed Vale of White Horse Design Guide, which was adopted in March 2015.

2.14 Policy 39 recognises and supports the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment in the district such as conservation areas, listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments.

3. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES

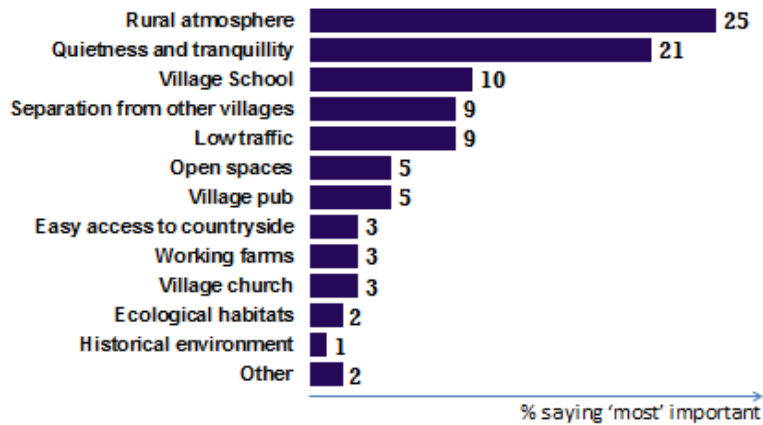
3.1 Following a lively and well-attended Parish Council meeting in early 2013, which registered concern at perceived threats of unwelcome housing applications, a Neighbourhood Plan Committee was formally established as an official sub-committee of the Parish Council (minutes 18/13, 16 August 2013). The Committee was composed of one elected councillor, the parish clerk and seven residents. It then set about establishing a wider village involvement in a Neighbourhood Plan by running three public events during the summer of 2013, at the village hall and the school; these described the aims and objectives of a Neighbourhood Plan and invited residents' written comments on local issues under eight headings – Housing, Schooling, Communications, Transport, Environment, Facilities & Amenities, Sports and Recreation and Community. Some 60 residents attended these events, and their written observations fill eight loose-leaf folders. The level of interest provoked confirmed the committee's view that a broadening of the remit was appropriate.

Following the three village events, the Committee prepared a Questionnaire for the entire village, based on the input from these. As a matter of courtesy, this was submitted in draft form to the Vale for comment. The Vale made a number of suggestions for amendment; these the Committee subsequently incorporated. However, this exercise had by then taken longer than expected, and was clearly straining the group's abilities and resources; it was decided to seek outside professional help to continue the project. After a survey of the few appropriate resources available and a visit by two of the Committee to their offices, rCOH Ltd. was selected as a suitable partner for the remainder of the exercise.

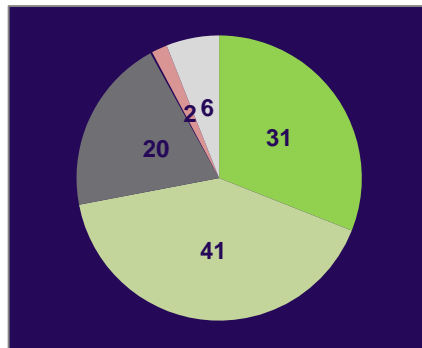
The Questionnaire was finalised with the guidance of rCOH, and copies, with reply-paid envelopes, were delivered by hand to all 221 households. Return boxes were also placed at two central sites. Over a period of three weeks 193 responses were received from the 466 residents – a 42% return.

3.2 Those who did participate in the survey clearly stated that the rural nature of the village and quietness and tranquillity are the key characteristics of the village that they wished to preserve. As the graph below demonstrates these two factors were by far the most likely to be chosen as important to the character of the village (52% said the rural atmosphere was in the top 4 factors; 49% quietness and tranquillity). The Village School, separation from other villages and low traffic forming a second tier of important attributes.

Most Important to the Character of Longworth



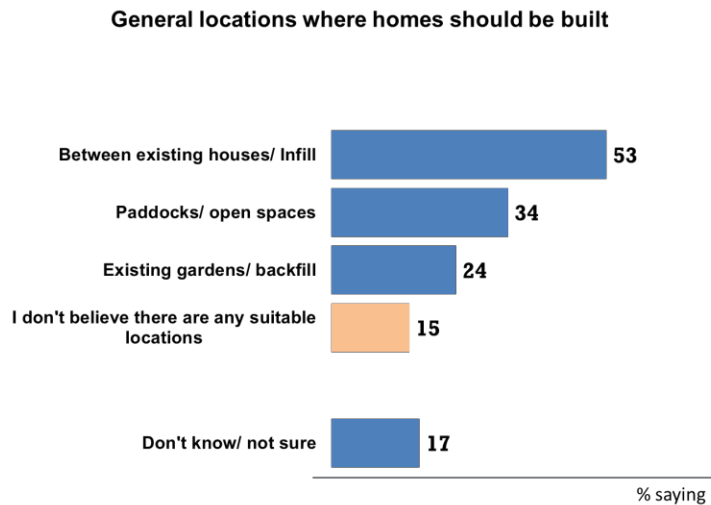
3.3 When asked about the importance of ensuring plenty of open space is retained when deciding on number and location of new homes, 72% of respondents deemed the retention of open space when deciding on the number or location of new homes to be either the most important or one of the most important factors to be considered.



- Most important
- One of the most important things
- It is quite important but other things are more important
- Not likely to be a concern
- Don't know

3.4 When asked where any potential development could take place the majority (53%) said that this should be infill between existing houses. This is in line with the Vale of White Horse’s plans for smaller villages – at the time of the survey the stated policy of the Vale was “At the smaller villages, limited development may be appropriate” (Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Core Policy 4). In the Vale Local Plan 2031 Part One, as submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2015, this statement

has been amended to “*At the smaller villages, limited **infill** development may be appropriate*”. The survey provides evidence that the majority of those responding to the survey would support this subtle but important change in terminology:



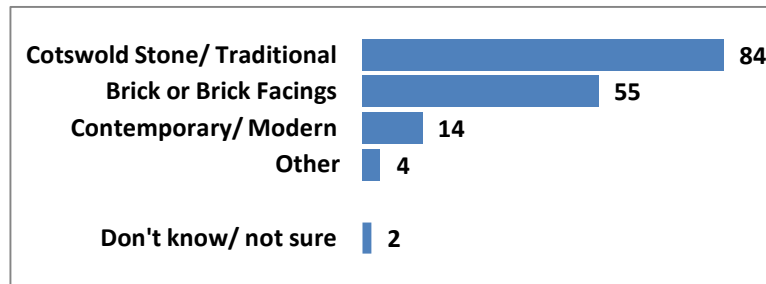
3.5 When asked to specify locations for any such development there was no consensus on a suitable location even amongst this minority of respondents (59% of respondents failing to specify any suitable location).

3.6 The LNP Committee decided against identifying or allocating potential sites for future development for the following reasons:

- there are more sustainable nearby locations for development than Longworth village
- there is no clear need for Longworth village to identify additional sites, especially bearing in mind recent large developments in the nearby larger village of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor
- since the NPPF policy emerged, there has been and is likely to continue to be adequate development within the village through limited infill to meet local needs

3.7 When asked what types of materials should be used for the construction of new homes in the village, the majority of the respondents indicated that Cotswold stone/Traditional materials would be preferred so that any new housing would be in keeping with and maintain the style and character of the village.

Suitable styles of housing for the village



% saying style of housing was suitable for the village

3.8 The survey also strongly suggests that if new housing is needed, these should be smaller properties (either properties suitable for ‘downsizing’ for current residents on retirement or smaller family properties of up to four bedrooms).

3.9 The results from this survey were presented at a public village meeting in February 2015. Slides of the presentation were posted on the village website and an analysis of some figures was featured in the monthly parish magazine.

3.10 There has been some anecdotal evidence since the survey took place and since Local Plan 2031 Part 1 was released that the need for even limited infill development may not be as great as suggested within the survey. Whilst 16% of those responding to the survey outright rejected any new properties being built within the village, there has been some suggestion that respondents felt there was an inevitability about the village being forced to take some housing and were therefore nominating the least negative options when responding to the questionnaire. The size of developments in neighbouring Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor have also been much greater than was anticipated at the time of the survey and the view by many in the village is that this has more than removed the need for development within the smaller village of Longworth. Written feedback provided to the committee after the public village meeting gives some evidence to this view – the questionnaire was completed when government policy was such that it led to an *“inbuilt assumption that some development would be required and the responses reflected this presumption”* and that *“the nearby considerable developments in Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor surely will provide such [affordable/social] housing which is likely to more than meet the local need”*.

3.11 Whilst there will always be some diversity in opinion when it comes to issues of development, the committee believe there is a strong overriding will amongst the majority of those who have participated in the consultation to limit any development within Longworth to infill properties that are modest in size and in keeping in style to the older properties within the village. It does not support more substantial development as this would put at risk the rural nature of the village that is seen as the key to its character and indeed the impact on this most important attribute needs to be considered before even allowing any infill development.

Given the importance of the rural nature of the village, it is clear the Vale of White Horse’s categorisation of Longworth as a smaller village is accurate and

the residents of Longworth agree with this classification. It is important that any future development within the village is limited to ensure that it does not impact on this or threaten the protection provided by this classification.

4. VISION, OBJECTIVES & LAND USE POLICIES

Vision

4.1 The vision for Longworth is:

To protect the rural environment and retain the quietness and tranquillity of Longworth as a Small Village for this and future generations of village residents while retaining and developing those facilities that make the village an attractive place to live.

Objectives

4.2 In addition to providing a general development plan for the parishes, this vision translates into a framework of key objectives for the LNP that secure:

A Cherished Local Environment

- to define the term “built-up areas” for the Longworth Neighbourhood Plan to reflect the current extent of the village to guide acceptable limited infill development
- to retain the rural character of the parish
- to sustain the historic character of the Conservation Area
- to protect important green spaces from development

Valued Community Facilities

- to protect existing community facilities from unnecessary loss and to encourage their ongoing development and viability as valuable community assets

Land Use Planning Policies

4.3 The planning policy context and the community engagement work already undertaken have raised a number of issues for the Neighbourhood Plan to address:

- How can new infill housing in Longworth be contained in the village?
- What are the most important characteristics of the village that new housing should respect?
- What community facilities would be on the list of those to be protected from a change of use?
- Which spaces meet the criteria for designation as Local Green Spaces?

4.4 Land use policies are used to determine planning applications made for development proposals. They can establish the principles for retaining or changing the use of land in settlements and in the countryside. They can also set

out the conditions against which development proposals will be judged in terms of their design, access etc.

4.5 The Plan deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies. The proposed policies therefore focus on a relatively small number of key development issues in the area. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents – the National Planning Policy Framework and the saved and forthcoming policies of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan – will continue to be used.

4.6 Set out below are the proposed policies of the Plan. Each policy has a number and title and the policy itself is written in bold italics for ease of reference. There is also a short statement explaining the intention of the policy and any other relevant background information. At the end of this document is the Policies Map – where a policy refers to a specific site or area then it is shown on the Map.

Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parish

Proposals for limited infill development inside the Village’s built-up areas will be supported, provided they:

- i. are in keeping with the character of the local dwellings and landscapes***
- ii. are proportionate in scale to existing buildings in the close vicinity***

Development proposals on land outside the Village’s built-up areas will be resisted unless they are in accordance with other development plan policies managing development in the countryside.

4.7 This policy defines the term “built-up areas” for the purpose of enabling limited infill development and resisting other development outside of the built-up areas. It therefore refines policies GS2, GS7 and GS8 of the VWHLPP for application in the village.

4.8 The built-up areas are defined as a group of existing non-agricultural buildings of a permanent nature and their immediate surroundings. They therefore do not include:

- i. individual buildings and groups of dispersed or intermittent buildings that are clearly detached from the continuous built-up areas of the settlement;***
- ii. gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land in the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where they provide a transition between the surrounding countryside and the built-up areas of the settlement;***
- iii. agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the settlement;***
- iv. outdoor sports and recreation facilities and other formal open spaces on the edge of the settlement.***

4.9 It is also consistent with the status of Longworth as a ‘Smaller Village’ under Policy CP3 of the VWHDL1 in the district settlement hierarchy and with its Policy CP4 managing development in the smaller villages. Proposals for development beyond the built-up areas will need to conform to Policy CP44 on landscape.

Longworth has two separate and distinct built-up areas, namely:

- i. the main built-up area around the centre of Longworth village; and
- ii. the separate built-up area around the crossroads of Appleton Road and Harris’s Lane, to the South of the centre of the village.

4.10 The policy defines “limited infill” as follows:

- developments to be allowed only within the built-up areas on available sites that fall between existing houses
- design must be in keeping with the majority of properties in the immediate area
- developments must retain appropriate road frontage to substantiate the proposed development and also with access direct from an existing adopted/adoptable road
- Provision for off road parking for at least two vehicles per property is desirable for all developments to avoid congestion
- Development must consist of no more than one of the following on any single site:
 - o 2 detached homes
 - o 1 pair of semi-detached home and 1 detached home
 - o 1 terrace of up to 3 homes

Policy 2: Design

Within the Village’s built-up areas, the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all development proposals, including alterations to existing buildings, will be required to sustain and enhance the distinctive character of each part of Longworth village and its setting. For clarity, the character areas are described in the Longworth Character Areas Assessment in Appendix C.

Development proposals outside the village’s built up areas that are considered acceptable in principle in land use terms by other national and development plan policies should have special regard to the setting, amenity and character of any nearby dwellings and, wherever possible, should contribute to local distinctiveness; should be of an appropriate scale and massing to reflect and enhance the surroundings; and should protect and enhance nature conservation, water courses, wildlife habitats, trees and landscape character.

4.11 This policy requires all development proposals to deliver high quality schemes that reflect the distinct character of the Conservation Area, within which most of the village lies. Those proposals elsewhere within the built-up areas must also have regard to its setting if they are located in such a way that their impact will have significance for the character of the Area. Proposals beyond its setting should reflect the wider landscape character of the parish.

4.12 Within the Conservation Area, and throughout the rest of the village, there are differences in character and a number of character areas have been identified to inform the application of this policy. Applicants will be expected to consider the description of each character area in the development, justification and presentation of their proposals. For clarity, the character areas are described in the Longworth Character Areas Assessment in Appendix C.

4.13 This policy complements the VWHDC policies CP37 Design & Local Distinctiveness and CP39 The Historic Environment as it requires all new development to respect the character, identity and context of the district's villages and countryside and helps to create places where people want to live, work and visit.

Policy 3: Community Facilities

Proposals that will result in the unnecessary loss of a community facility, as listed below, will be resisted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the use of the building and ancillary land is no longer viable or that the use can be satisfactorily re-located for the ongoing benefit of the local community:

- i. Longworth Primary School and field***
- ii. Longworth Pre School***
- iii. Longworth Village Hall***
- iv. St Mary's Church***
- v. The Blue Boar Public House***

Proposals to improve the viability of an established community use of the buildings and ancillary land by way of its extension or partial redevelopment will be supported, provided the design of the scheme and the resulting increase in use are appropriate in design terms and will not harm the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

4.14 The policy firstly seeks to protect a specific number of community assets from unnecessary loss, in line with the VWHLF policies CF1 and CF5 that support the retention of existing community facilities and public houses if their viability can be demonstrated. They comprise a range of buildings and associated land, all of which may be capable of being extended or redeveloped in ways that are suitable to a rural location

4.15 This policy supports development proposals intended to secure the long term benefit of a range of facilities that are important to the local community. In some cases, remaining viable will require investment in updating and/or increasing the size of the facility to support new uses. However, the policy requires that proposals avoid increasing the use of community facilities to the extent that they may harm the amenities of adjoining residential properties, for example through traffic movements, on-street car parking and noise or light pollution.

Policy 4: Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces in the following locations, as shown in the LGS Evidence Base in Appendix D:

- i. The parish allotments***
- ii. Longworth Recreational Playing Field***

Proposals for development on the land that will undermine its essential character openness and permanence will be resisted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Development which would enhance its use but remain ancillary to its function as LGS would be considered.

4.16 This policy proposes a number of important green spaces in the parish to be protected from development by the designation as Local Green Spaces in accordance with the NPPF.

4.17 In each case, the green spaces are an integral part of the village character and are therefore regarded as special to the local community. The LNP Local Green Spaces study (in the evidence base) sets out the case for each site to be designated. Once designated, the policy will resist all proposals for development unless it can be clearly demonstrated they are minor, they are required utilities development. Owners of both spaces (Longworth Parish Council and Vale of the White Horse District Council respectively) have been contacted and permission obtained to include these sites as protected local green spaces in the Longworth Neighbourhood Plan.

Non-Land Use Proposals

4.18 The Neighbourhood Plan can only contain land use policies that can be used by the VWHDC to determine planning applications. However, the Plan may identify proposals that relate to other planning matters that are not directly related to planning applications, for example infrastructure projects.

Appendix A

Evidence Base

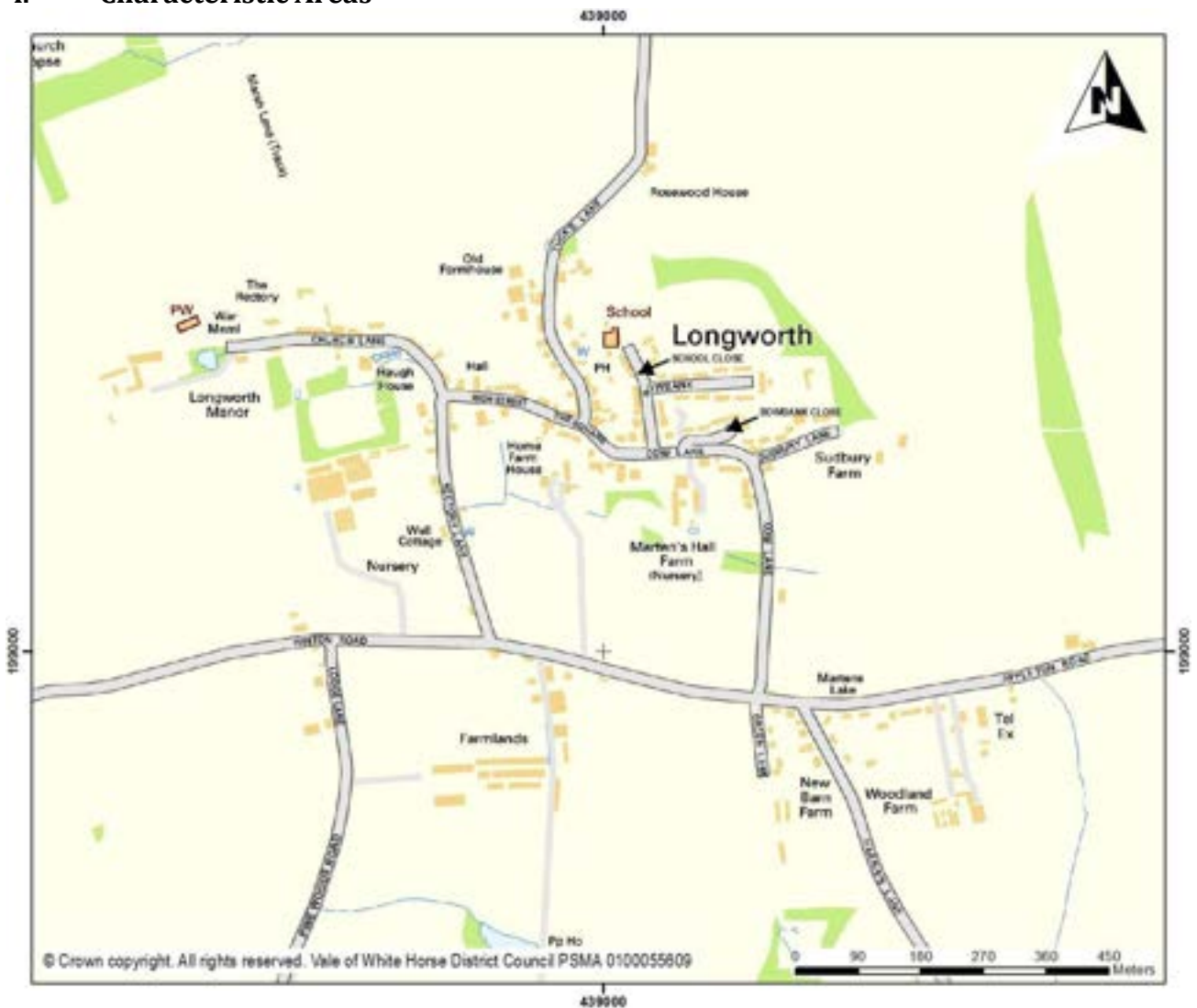
- Longworth Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey (2014) (to be replaced by the Longworth Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Report 2016)
- Vale of White Horse Local Plan (2011)
- Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1: Submission (2014)
- Vale of White Horse Design Guide (2015)
- Longworth Character Areas Appraisal – see Appendix C
- Local Green Space Evidence Base – see Appendix D
- Longworth SEA Screening Report – Final
- Longworth SEA Notice

Appendix B

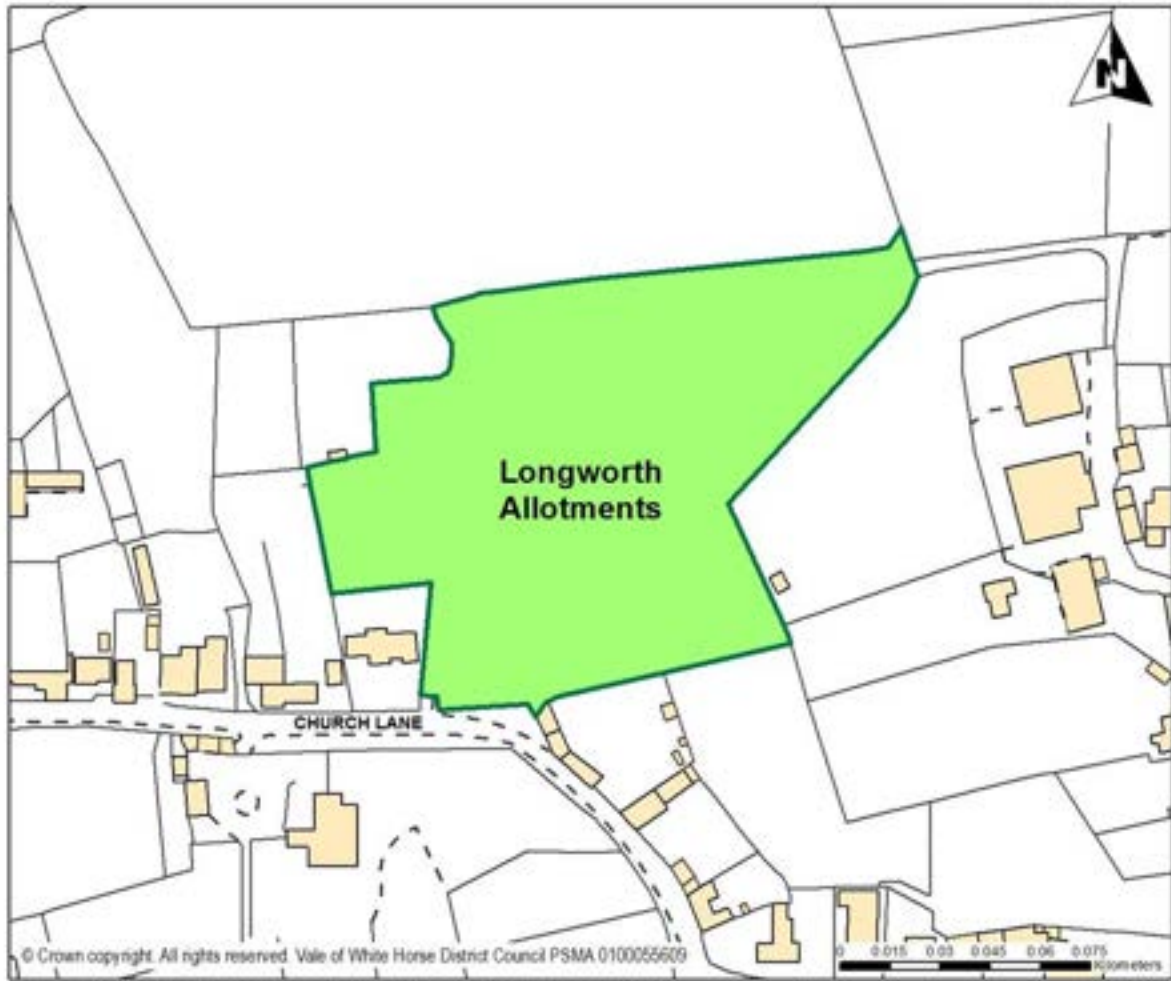
Neighbourhood Plan

Maps

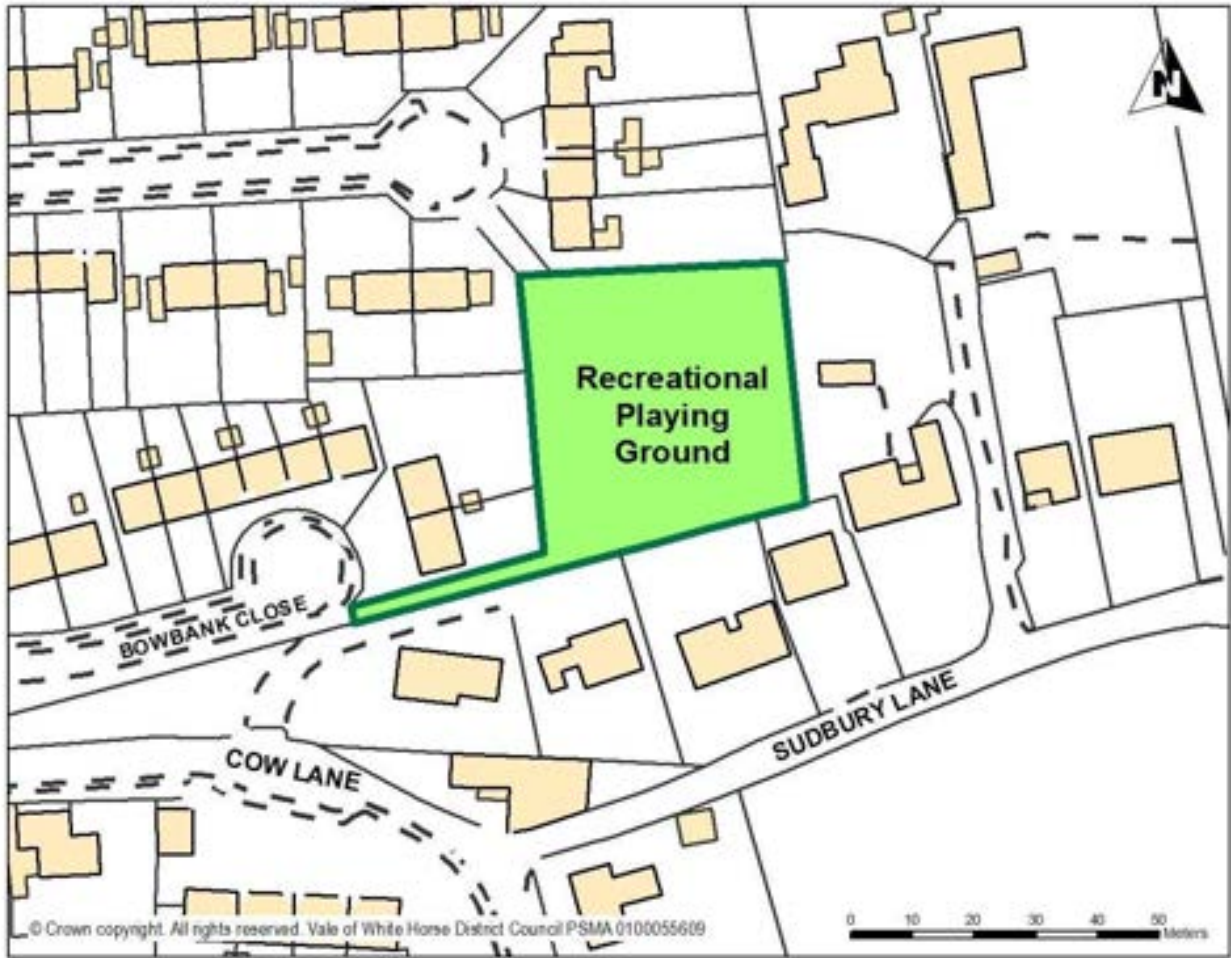
i. Characteristic Areas



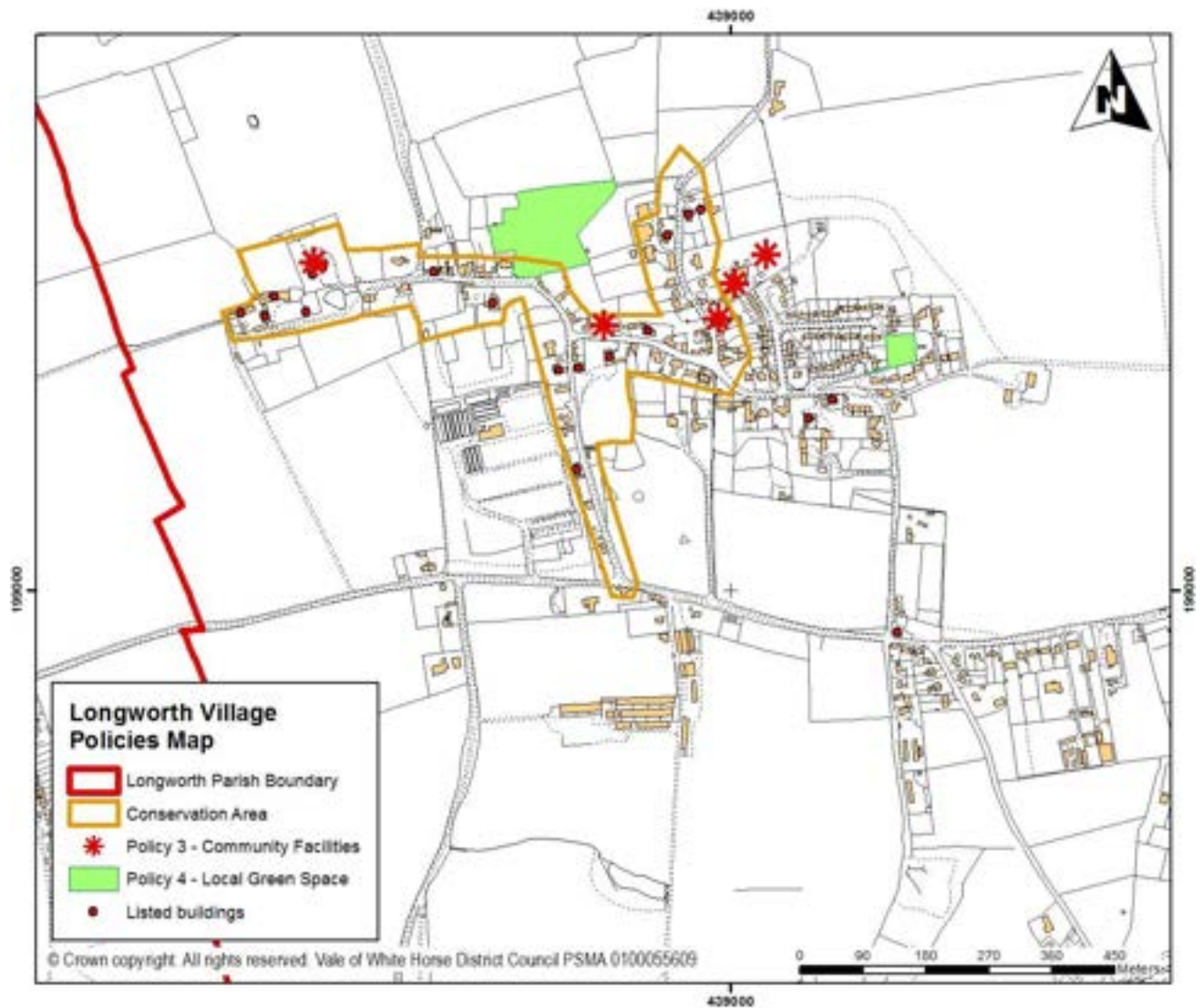
ii. Longworth Allotments



iii. Longworth Recreational Playing Field



iv. Longworth Policies Map



Appendix C

Longworth Character Areas Appraisal

The map below contains all the character areas to be described in this assessment.



i. The Square and Tuck's Lane (south)

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

The Square is a wide triangular junction of 3 main roads, one of which is Tuck's Lane (south), set hard to the roadside on the north-west and north-east sides of the junction. The most open space in the core of the village, roads are macadamed and the Square is used for extra parking for the Blue Boar public house on Tuck's Lane (south) and some village events (for example, the millennium celebrations and photo).

There are a few street lamps for night-time illumination.

BUILDINGS:

Most properties are detached and are on small plots and are set tightly together forming a distinct cluster extending up Tuck's Lane and including the Blue Boar. Most are constructed of traditional stone and brick. All front onto one of the 3 roads at the junction. The tall, rendered elevation of The Old Post Office and adjacent house is a dominant feature in the street scene and contrasts with most other buildings in the conservation area in its scale and rendered elevation.

VIEWS:

From the square there are excellent views of the High Street giving a good feel of the old character of the village centre. This includes a view of the attractive frontage of The Blue Boar.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

Most properties have trees and shrubs to the rear, only those to the south of the junction have trees to the front as the houses on those properties are positioned further away from the road than those to the north of the Square and on Tuck's Lane (south). There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

Occasional odours from farming fertilisers can be detected. Occasional noise from the Blue Boar public house can be detected on evenings/afternoons.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

The Square is the heart of the village, some events being held all along High Street and the Square throughout the year. There is a lot of activity surrounding the Blue Boar public house which is a highly patronised establishment welcoming customers from not only the village but surrounding towns and counties.

ii. High Street and Tuck's Lane

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

High Street winds its way throughout the core of the village and includes some very large homes and the Village Hall. The High Street has a slightly greater width, a feeling enhanced by the fact that most properties are detached and set back from the street frontage with the exception of the tall stone and brick topped wall of The Old Rectory on the south/west side of High Street.

Plots are relatively large, with spaces in between and (with the exception of The Old Rectory) all properties front onto the street with space on most for off-street parking and garages. High Street is macadamed and is provided with street lighting.

Tuck's Lane is relatively narrow lane which leads from the Blue Boar public house down a substantial hill towards Harrowdown Hill and the Thames. Properties, mainly on the end of the road adjacent to the High Street, are also reasonably large, have more space between them than those on High Street. They also front onto the road with space for off-street parking.

BUILDINGS:

Most of the properties on both High Street and Tuck's Lane are traditionally built (stone, brick) with the exception of one very modern home on Tuck's Lane. Red brick is possibly more evident in the High Street character area than elsewhere in the village due to its use in The Red House, Betteshanger House and Moorlands between the two.

The Tuck's Lane character area is primarily stone-built housing. Former farmhouses with associated agricultural buildings make up the major building types that help define the particular character of this area together with medium sized houses in larger plots. They are all detached and are some of the best examples of extremely high quality properties in the village. Most have attached or detached garages and most have space for off-road parking.

Boundary walls are an important element of the street scene throughout the character area although hedges are also important along Tuck's Lane.

VIEWS:

Standing on the High Street, you are surrounded by large houses behind stone walls built from traditional materials, mainly stone and brick, with the rendered Old Post Office at the end on the square. Most gardens seem to have mature trees, there is a feeling of light and space around because the houses are quite well spaced out.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

All properties on both High Street and Tuck's Lane have trees and plants at the front of, beside and to the rear of the properties. Boundary walls and hedges are used to delineate boundaries between properties. High Street remains level throughout, whilst Tuck's Lane descends down a fairly steep incline towards Harrowdown Hill. There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day, although more shade is available on their properties due to the larger

number of trees.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

Occasional odours from farming fertilisers can be detected. Occasional noise from the Blue Boar public house can be detected on evenings/afternoons for those living closer to the pub. Occasional noise from the Village Hall can be heard on evenings/afternoons for those living closer to the hall.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

High Street forms the core of the village and as such is used for many activities for the village on the street itself and at the Village Hall. As such, this can be one of the most active areas of the village. However, due to the size and structure of the properties, it is also one of the most attractive and holds some of the highest priced properties in the Village.

iii. Rectory Lane

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

Rectory Lane is a straight road leading from High Street to Hinton Road, the lane is macadamed and forms the western border of the village. It runs parallel to Cow Lane which forms the eastern border. Multiple properties run down the west side of Rectory Lane from the High Street whilst The Old Rectory together with its garden and surrounding land continues on the east side of Rectory Lane all the way down to Hinton Road. Excepting the north end of Rectory Lane, where the High Street character area tends to overlap, the properties along the lane are set in narrow plots that lie with their greater length parallel to the street. Squirrel Cottage closes the view along the lane to the south (although this property is on Hinton Road, please see that section for more details).

The feeling of being outside of the core of the village is enhanced by the field to the east with its large roadside hedge, the spaces between houses and the use of hedging or shrubs to the boundaries of some of the gardens although these can be associated with low stone walls. The garden of The Old Rectory is bordered by medium height hedges along its eastern border.

There are few street lamps for night-time illumination.

BUILDINGS:

Many of the west side properties along Rectory Lane originated as relatively small cottages set within plots that appear to have been taken out of roadside waste. They are medium-to-large in size with plots smaller than those on High Street and with buildings, both houses and barns, predominantly set gable end on to the street, fronting the lane. All have spaces in between and have room for off-road parking to the front of the houses.

VIEWS:

Due to the set back nature of The Old Rectory on the east-side of Rectory Lane, the views along

the lane are a mix of housing to the west and hedges/grazing fields to the east.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

The properties on Rectory Lane have a variety of tree and plant levels. Those closer to the High Street and Hinton Road contain more trees and plants than those in between. The grounds of The Old Rectory to the east of the lane consists of a large amount of trees and shrubs, opening up to a substantial field on the south portion of the property (and north of Hinton Road) that is used for grazing.

There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day, although more shade is available to the grounds and gardens of The Old Rectory due to the amount of trees within the boundaries.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

The occasional odour of farming fertiliser can be detected.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

Rectory Lane continues the built-up area of the core of the village by containing contiguous housing all along the lane down to Hinton Road although there is an increasing impression of being outside the core and feeling of open spaces and rural atmosphere due to the fields to the east

iv. Church Lane

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

Church Lane is accessed from the western end of the High Street. Initially the lane, the surface of which is macadamed, progresses north turning west toward Longworth Manor and St Mary's Church after about 80 yards. Church Lane is a cul de sac and although two way, is not wide enough for pavements on either side.

Most of the houses to the northern side of the lane have been built very close to the lane itself and apart from frontages to the village allotments towards the eastern end of the lane and a field between St Mary's Church and The Rectory to the western end provide a continuous built environment.

To the south side of the lane there are three houses at the western end with the rest of the frontage being within the ownership of Haugh House, a substantial dwelling with a large stone walled garden. Also within the curtilage of Haugh House is a paddock with an approximate lane frontage of about 80 yards.

Street lighting is provided to the eastern end of the lane.

BUILDINGS:

There are a few semi-detached homes on Church Lane but most are detached and built of stone although there are also some of brick construction with a few rendered. The houses sit on plots of varying size and some of irregular shape. The majority of the houses were built during the 20th Century however some dwellings date back some 200 or more years. Church Cottage, one of the older buildings in the lane is thatched whilst the roofs of the others are tiled. St Marys Church dating back to the 13th Century, is stone built and largely rendered with exposed quoins and set within a reasonably sized churchyard.

VIEWS:

Views from the eastern end of the lane are over the village allotments and beyond to the north and from the western end, extensive views are provided also to the north toward the River Thames and beyond. Westward views capture St Mary's Church and Longworth Manor and part of the grounds thereof.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

All properties along Church Lane have trees and plants to the front and rear of the properties. There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

The occasional odour of farming fertiliser can be detected.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

With the allotments, which are regularly used by residents of both Longworth and neighbouring villages, and Longworth Manor together with St Mary's Church, the former hosting various annual village events, located at opposite ends of Church Lane, the area is probably the most traversed by differing members of the neighbourhood. The area does however remain tranquil and quiet as the lane is a cul de sac and as such is not part of the main vehicular thoroughfare through the village.

v. Bowbank, Bowbank Close and School Close

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

Bowbank, Bowbank Close and School Close are some of the newer areas of housing within the village, with most properties being semi-detached, mid-20th century homogeneous style. This area also encompasses the Longworth Primary and Pre-Schools at the end of School Close and the Longworth playground is located on Bow Bank, at the end of a cul-de-sac.

Plots are generally regular in shape and are fairly large but quite closely positioned, not allowing for much space between properties.

Whilst the roads leading to/from the school/ pre-school are built to accommodate modern

vehicles, on-street parking causes some traffic issues with children being brought to or picked up during peak hours. The number of vehicles using these roads can regularly cause some congestion around school pick up/ drop off times.

The Longworth Playground is listed in the Longworth Neighbourhood Plan as a protected Local Green Space. It is used by many children within the village and from neighbouring communities. It contains many pieces of play equipment, is bordered by a fence and trees/shrubs on all sides.

All the roads within this area are macadamed and there are many street lamps for night-time illumination.

BUILDINGS:

Houses are predominantly red brick and tile facing the road, on relatively large plots of land providing rear gardens. Houses are set back slightly from the road, most with off road parking and front gardens. Red brick walls and tree lined streets are a feature of the development. Many properties in this area were originally Council housing but are now mainly privately owned.

VIEWS:

The area is fairly self-contained with most properties in this area backing on to other properties (however buildings to the north of Bow Bank benefit from rural views over paddocks and trees from their back gardens). The use of grass verges and trees throughout maintains a rural landscape within this area.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

The streets are tree-lined, but the properties themselves do not contain as many trees or shrubs as other areas of the village. All the properties are on mains water. There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

The occasional odour of farming fertiliser can be detected.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

With the close proximity of the schools and the playground, this area of the village is frequented and used by children of the village probably more than any other area. The number of families with younger children living in this area mean that the cul-de-sac on Bow Bank often has children playing in the street. The look and feel of the housing is more modern than most of the other areas of the village.

vi. Cow Lane

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

Cow Lane forms the eastern border of the core of the village and runs parallel to Rectory Lane which forms the western border. It is a narrow, rural lane.

The number of houses decreases the farther south on the lane, with open spaces increasing as the number of houses decreases. Due to the lane being very narrow there are occasional issues with traffic, especially with farm or larger vehicles going in opposite directions at the same time.

The feeling of being outside the built-up areas of the village is enhanced by fields to the east and the west together with high roadside hedges on both sides of the lane and significant spaces between houses.

There are few street lamps for night-time illumination and the surface of the lane is macadamed.

BUILDINGS:

There is little consistency of the type, form and scale or positioning of houses/properties on the lane ranging from farmhouses to 1950s builds such as Orchard Cottage and its neighbours. Substantial gaps exist between properties, with open fields and paddocks on both sides.

VIEWS:

The view is narrow, and channelled by the high hedges. Glimpses of open farmland, paddocks and gardens complement the rural feel of the place.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

All the properties on the lane have a substantial amount of trees and plants. There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

The occasional odour of farming fertiliser can be detected.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

This area of the village is one of the least populated in the village and contains a very low number of properties. The sense of open spaces and rural atmosphere is particularly strong due to the low level of housing.

vii. Sudbury Lane

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

Sudbury Lane is a single, narrow lane that leads to a rural farm track. Plots are quite large with both front and back gardens and space to the front for off-road parking which is necessary due to the extreme narrowness of the road. All houses are set back from the lane facing the views to the South, set behind low stone walls.

There are no street lamps which befits the rural nature of the place. The lane which is macadamed turns into a footpath to the East.

BUILDINGS:

Housing exists solely to the north of this lane, with the south side consisting of open farm land. There is a variety in form and scale of the housing, a mixture of farm houses and newer builds. Older farmhouses are built of stone and slate roofs. More recent developments are red brick or rendered with tile roofs.

VIEWS:

Wide rural views of the fields to the South are afforded at all points along the Lane. Short views of the footpath to the East are visible at the end of the lane.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

All the properties on Sudbury Lane have substantial trees and shrubs. There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

The occasional odour of farming fertiliser can be detected.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

This area is located outside the core of the village and due to its views of the expanse of farmlands to the south have the look and feel of open spaces and rural atmosphere.

viii. Harris Lane, Appleton Road and Green Lane

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

This area which consists of ribbon development sits on the outskirts of the village, which stretches from Cow Lane to the west to the A415 to the east. However, due to the number of houses and properties, there is a sense of being within a built-up area, particularly on Harris Lane. Two of the three roads are macadamed, Appleton Road experiences some traffic issues with speed as it is a continuation of Hinton Road which runs fairly straight between Hinton Waldrist (the village to the west of Longworth) and the A415 to the east.

The junction of Appleton Road, Green Lane and Cow Lane (heading north) can cause traffic issues due to the closeness to the road of the houses on the corners and the narrowness of the roads.

There are occasional street lamps and speed restriction signs.

BUILDINGS:

There is a variety of types of housing in this area, mostly made up of detached and semi-detached houses, with one substantial farm to the south on Green Lane and another to the east on Appleton Road heading towards the A415. Houses are predominantly built of red brick and tile, set back from the road set behind hedges and have low stone walls with front and back garden areas. Most are modern builds.

VIEWS:

This character area contains a mixture of types of housing and is surrounded on all sides by farmlands and open fields.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

The properties on these roads have limited amounts of trees and shrubs on or near their properties as the surrounding area is mostly farm land. There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

The occasional odour of farming fertiliser can be detected.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

This area is the farthest away from the core of the village and being surrounded by farmlands is one of the areas which feels the open spaces and rural atmosphere the most.

ix. Hinton Road and Lodge Lane

SPACES: GAPS BETWEEN BUILT ELEMENTS – STREETS, GARDENS, ETC.

The area of Hinton Road and Lodge Lane encompasses the north section of the road that becomes Pinewoods Road as it continues south and the east-west running as Hinton Road up to Cow Lane/Green Lane. Both are macadamed. Hinton Road is a continuation of a fairly straight road running from Hinton Waldrist (village neighbouring to the west) and becomes Appleton Road (see that section for more information). The straightness of this road causes some traffic issues with speeding. The properties are well-placed with good amounts of space in between.

There are few street lamps and some speed restriction signs.

BUILDINGS:

There is a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties in this area which also encompasses a sizable nursery on the north side of Hinton Road. The type, size and positioning of the houses also varies, some close to the road, some set back from the road. All have off-street parking and some have garages. Materials mostly include traditional stone and brick edging. Some properties date back to the early 19th century whilst others are new builds designed and built in keeping with the character of the neighbouring properties.

VIEWS:

Located well outside the core of the village, all the properties in this area are surrounded by farmlands and have substantial views of the same.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

The properties in this area have substantial trees and plants throughout their properties. There is an even balance of shade and light throughout the day.

NOISE & SMELL: MAN MADE OR NATURAL

The occasional odour of farming fertiliser can be detected.

SPIRIT OF PLACE:

Being surrounded by extensive farmlands and open fields, this area is one where the sense of open spaces and rural atmosphere is most heavily experienced.

Appendix D

Local Green Spaces Evidence Base

The Neighbourhood Plan designates two Local Green Spaces:

- i. **The Parish Allotments**
- ii. **Longworth Recreational Playing Field**

We have shown their locations on the maps below and on the policies map elsewhere in this LNP.

We set out below justification as to why we believe these important spaces meet the criteria established in the NPPF for Local Green Spaces.

i. **The Parish Allotments**

NPPF Criteria 1: The designation should only be used where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.

The site comprises 1.55 hectares (3.825 acres) and is centrally located in the village broadly to the northern periphery with views overlooking Harrowdown Hill (*see map*).

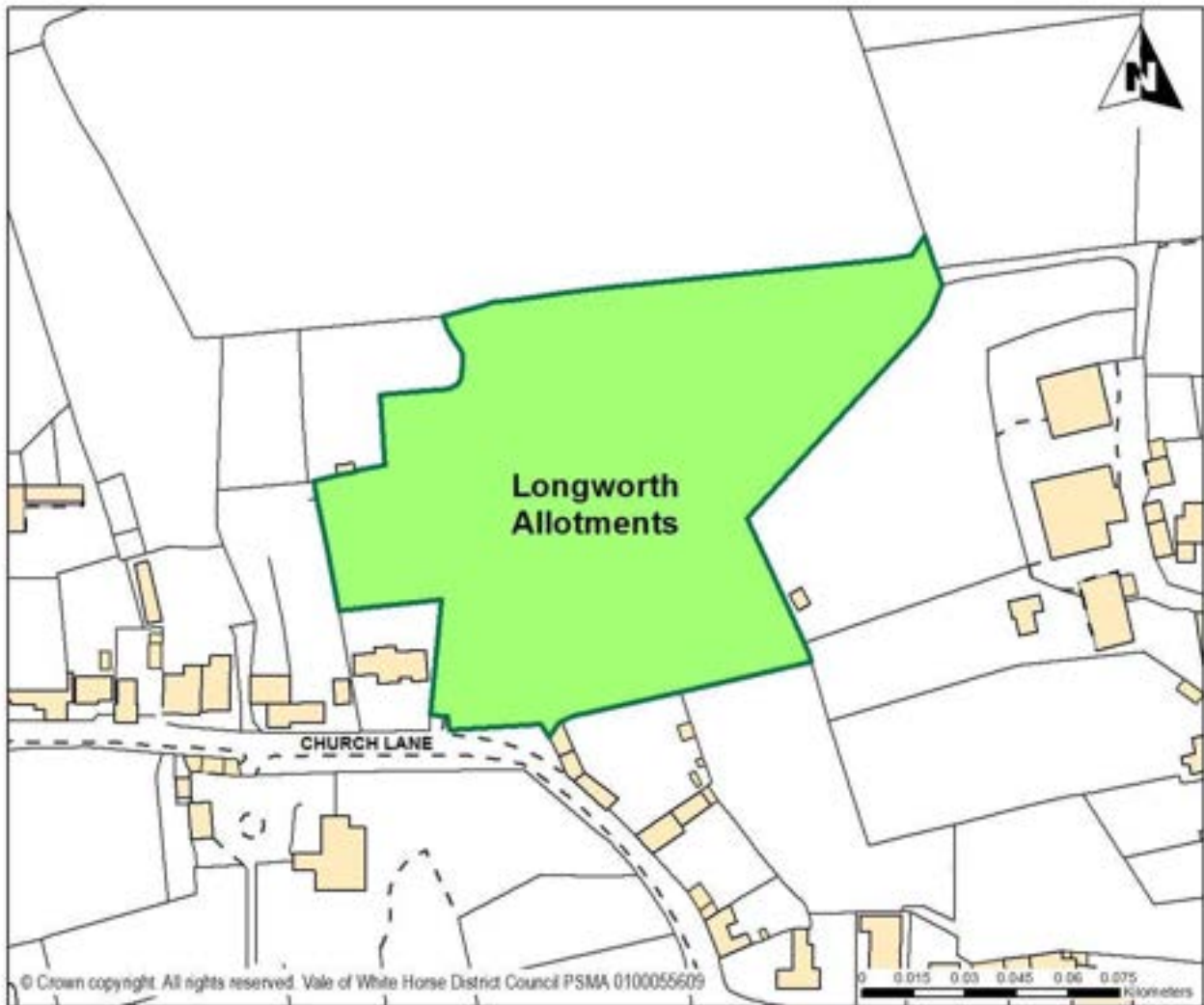
NPPF Criteria 2: The designation should only be used where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife.

The land is owned by the Parish Council and has been dedicated to the villagers' use of allotments for over 114 years. The majority of the allotment plots are farmed by Longworth villagers and a limited number have been made available and have been taken up by residents in adjoining villages.

The allotments allow and encourage a cross section of villagers to integrate and communicate which provides a huge benefit to and enhances the furtherance of "village community life". The allotments provide environmental and social benefits to the community. The area also provides considerable tranquility and promotes and encourages a rich form of wildlife.

NPPF Criteria 3: The designation should only be used where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The allotments are most definitely local in character – a wide cross-section of the local community use the allotments. They have been in existence and farmed by the community for over 114 years which confirms its significant local character.



ii. Longworth Recreational Playing Field

NPPF Criteria 1: The designation should only be used where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.

The Recreational Playing Field comprises a rectangular area of land computing to approximately 0.2 hectares (0.487 acres). The Playing Field is located to the eastern side of the village within the built up area and is surrounded on all sides by established housing. Longworth Primary School is within a few minutes' walk.

The surrounding houses typically accommodate a larger proportion of children than elsewhere in the village given firstly the close proximity of Longworth Primary School and secondly the area benefits from a large concentration of family homes.

NPPF Criteria 2: The designation should only be used where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for

example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife.

The site was established as a recreational playing field some 13 years ago (30 – Sep- 2002) and has been recently substantially improved with the replacement of a number of play items and equipment. The total cost of the work amounted to approximately £32,000 and was funded in its entirety through local fundraising and successful grant applications. Needless to say the fundraising required to provide the capital needed would not have been successful unless the playing field was popular and well used.

NPPF Criteria 3: Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The Recreational Playing Field provides an important safe and secure environment within which children can exercise and play. Its popularity continues and it forms an integral part of village community life.

The site is bounded on all sides by existing residential development in the village and only measures approx. 0.2ha which is not considered to be extensive.

